



*“Mastering various elements of music on your instrument, and then abandoning that ‘learned mind’ to embrace the playfulness of that 9-year old kid within, playing the piano for no one to just create music in the moment just for the sake of doing - and in doing so, reaching some deeper level of self-expression that we tend to keep at bay as we grow older... I want to keep that playful spirit till the day I take my last breath.”*

Playing music since the age of 6, the remarkable composer/guitarist Brad Myers decided to pursue transcendence through jazz expression at the age of 13. And that purity of spirit and joy of creativity has been at the core of his artistry throughout his musical life. After more than 20 years as a much sought after sideman and co-directing a variety of acclaimed ensembles that crossed the boundaries of multiple musical genres, Brad has decided to emerge as a leader. The 2015 release of *Prime Numbers*, the first album released on his own label, Colloquy Records, is a stunning showcase for his brilliant talents as both composer and guitarist. *Prime Numbers* earned worldwide praise from critics and jazz radio alike, including “4 Stars” from Downbeat Magazine and rotation on PRI's *Jazz After Hours* program. In 2017, Brad and Colloquy have released *Sanguinaria (Hopefulsongs)*, a breathtaking and uplifting collaboration with bassist Michael Sharfe that focuses on the beautiful dialogue and interplay between jazz guitar and double bass in both duo and trio settings.

For the majority of musicians who possess Brad's level of artistry, there is a tendency to move to a major city on either coast to develop their careers. But Brad went against the grain, leaving his home in the Washington D.C. area in 1994 and moving to Cincinnati to study Jazz Guitar with James E. Smith at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) on an Honors Scholarship. There he discovered not only a large number of outstanding musicians who shared his wide-ranging musical visions, but also a rich musical history. *“This was the home of King Records and its classic James Brown albums. Louis Armstrong's first recordings, Bix Beiderbecke and the Wolverines sides and Jelly Roll Morton's piano rolls were all recorded at the legendary Gennett Records; and so many of Hank Williams great songs were recorded here at Herzog Studios. George Russell, Frank Foster, Fred Hersch, and Cal Collins all came from Cincinnati. With so many great musicians living here, I want to make a contribution to that legacy.”*

Embracing every opportunity that CCM offered him for his personal and artistic growth, Brad honed his skills in the diverse environments of musical theater pit orchestras, big bands, jazz combos and in 1996, Brad made his first of many recordings, as featured soloist with Pat Harbison's 2:00 Combo on the SeeBreeze release *Lady Bird*.

In 1998, Brad made a sharp left turn from the conservatory to professional life by joining Ray's Music Exchange, a popular Cincinnati based funk jazz outfit famed for long energetic improvisational grooves, contributing as guitarist, composer and producer. Drawing upon such diverse inspirations as Miles Davis' electric bands, Frank Zappa, Medeski, Martin & Wood, The Meters and John Zorn, this groundbreaking ensemble toured from coast to coast for the next 8 years. The group reunited in 2010 and Brad produced their live DVD, *A Live Rayunion*.

Over all these years, Brad has shared the stage with a variety of top names including John Scofield, Stanley Jordan, Victor Wooten, Bela Fleck, Hammond Artist Brian Charette, the Cincinnati Pops, the Kentucky Symphony Orchestra and many more. He was a featured guest soloist playing the "part" of Cal Collins in Nancy James and Carmen DeLeone's *A Salute to Rosemary Clooney*; and he performed with Pernell Santurnini in a live broadcast from the renowned percussionist's native Curaçao. Brad recently recorded with Fareed Haque in a big band recording of pieces from the guitar great's Garaj Mahal, and then premiered the music live with him at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola at Lincoln Center in NYC.

Continuing to create on an eclectic canvas, Brad is heavily involved on the local scene – as a member of Steve Schmidt's Organ Trio for the past six years; wielding a telecaster with the country/honky tonk group Jeremy Pinnell & the 55s; playing Western Swing music with The Midwestern Swing; performing progressive original jazz with The David McDonnell Group; acoustic vocal jazz and roots music with Jacklyn Chitwood in The Fraid Knots; the music of Steely Dan with the 10 piece supergroup Aja; and funky experimental jazz with Ray's Music Exchange.

With true 24/7 dedication and commitment to music, education is another key component of Brad's devotion. *"My second great love is to share my knowledge with aspiring musicians."* At CCM Brad began teaching privately through the CCM Preparatory Department and at Cincinnati's School for the Creative and Performing Arts, and for years he's maintained a teaching studio that balances his performance schedule with his proclivity for passing on his knowledge. In 2013, Brad returned to CCM to pursue his formal studies and in 2015 received his Master's Degree in Jazz Studies. *"Reflecting upon my personal epiphanies as a teenager - hearing Pat Metheny Group at Wolf Trap and John Scofield Trio at Blues Alley; a summer Jazz intensive with Dan 'Smitty' Smith at 16 – I know how receptive and open the mind is in young hopeful musicians. I want to contribute positively to that development through everything I've learned on and off the bandstand."*

For all musicians who strive for the profound, Brad knows that education is a never-ending process. Combining his earliest studies on piano and switching to guitar at age 10 under the early influence of The Beatles, Hendrix, Yes, Rush and the Allman Brothers; maturing under the later inspiration of Jim Hall, the Bill Evans Trio, Keith Jarrett, Metheny and Scofield; and catalyzing all of that with his own vast set of personal musical experience, Brad Myers is staying busy and happily engaged in making his own powerful mark on the glorious legacy of jazz.

The 2017 release of *Sanguinaria (Hopefulsongs)* is only one event in a long list of activities which should make it a busy year for Brad. In addition to maintaining an active schedule of dates with his jazz groups, he has recorded a new set of Honky Tonk country songs with Jeremy Pinnell, he's working with The Midwestern Swing on their first release, and has planned to record a classic organ trio album with Steve Schmidt. All of Brad's focus speaks to his commitment to the highest principles and goals to which an artist can hope to aspire.

*"Jazz music should be able to demonstrate that people of all stripes can come together to have a musical conversation and connect on a deep and meaningful level without any kind of negative confrontation...to truly come away from the experience with a deeper understanding and respect for the other person. No negativity – just a determination to understand one another and peacefully coexist in a connected way."*

