

**John Daversa** is a distinguished trumpet-player, composer, arranger, producer, bandleader and educator. He is a multiple Grammy Award winner and nominee and the recipient of many other awards and honors. In addition to his active career as a performer and recording artist he is currently Professor and Chair of Studio Music and Jazz at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Daversa grew up in a musical household, where he passionately sang and played various instruments from a very young age, eventually picking up the trumpet at age eleven. Throughout this childhood the family moved several times, residing in Oklahoma, Las Vegas, and Sacramento, and ultimately returned to Los Angeles where he attended Hamilton Academy of Music for his final two years of high school. While still a student at Hamilton he began writing for large and small jazz ensembles and performed regularly with his high school quartet, Second Generation. It was during this time that he began playing the Electronic Valve Instrument (EVI). As a member of the Monterey All-Star High School Big Band for four years, he was able to tour Japan and perform with iconic guest artists such as Dizzy Gillespie, J.J. Johnson, and Clark Terry. Upon high school graduation, he was recognized with both the Herb Alpert Award and the Italian Heritage Award and soon began pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree at UCLA in music composition and performance.

Throughout the 1990's, Daversa continued to be recognized as one of the jazz world's most promising young performers and composers, winning the National Trumpet Competition, the International Trumpet Guild Jazz Soloist Competition, and the David Joel Miller Award for Composition and Performance, and placing as a semi-finalist in the Thelonious Monk Institute Jazz Trumpet Competition. During this time he founded and led various ensembles including the Junk Wagon Trio, The D.a.M. Band, which released an album in 1994, and the John Daversa Progressive Big Band, founded in 1996, which recorded *Live at Catalina's* in 2000.

From 2000 to 2003, Daversa toured Europe as the musical director for *Holiday On Ice: In Concert*, performing on trumpet, EVI, electric bass and spoken word. During the production's summer hiatuses, he returned to the U.S., performing at the legendary Moon River Theatre in Branson, Missouri with renowned American crooners Andy Williams and Glen Campbell.

In 2004 Daversa returned to Los Angeles with a focus on higher education, earning a Masters of Fine Arts degree in Jazz Studies at the California Institute of the Arts in 2006 and a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Jazz Studies at University of Southern California in 2009, where he was recognized with the USC Jazz Studies Department Award. For the following two years he remained at USC as an adjunct instructor where he was nominated for the Mellon Award for Excellence in Mentoring. In 2011 he accepted a full-time position at California State University, Northridge. Under Daversa's direction, the school's Jazz "A" Band was named the winner of the Collegiate Division Best Large Jazz Ensemble at the Monterey Next Generation Jazz Festival, Best Collegiate Jazz Band in the Downbeat Awards, and placed first at the California Allegiance for Jazz State Championship.

During this time, Daversa formed the John Daversa Small Band and re-established the John Daversa Progressive Big Band. Lively monthly residencies at local jazz venues such as the Baked Potato, the Blue Whale, and Seven Grand established the personnel and chemistry, not to mention an enthusiastic following, for both of these ensembles. The compositions created for these performances generated the material for Daversa's next few albums, including *Junk Wagon: The Big Band Album* (2011) and *Artful Joy* (2012). *Junk Wagon: The Big Band Album* received several Global Music Awards, including Best in Show, Creativity/Originality and Album Production.

Throughout this period, Daversa was the musical director for the popular TV actress and singer Renee Olstead, touring internationally and appearing on television shows such as The Oprah Winfrey Show, Late Night with David Letterman, and the Today Show. He composed numerous commissions for various universities and chamber music organizations, and in recognition of his songwriting, won an IAMA Songwriting Award. As an active member of the Los Angeles musical milieu, he performed and/or recorded with Fiona Apple, Burt Bacharach, Dori Caymi, André Crouch, Dr. Dre, Herbie Hancock, the Bob Mintzer Big Band, Regina Spektor, and the Yellowjackets, and played on various television and films soundtracks including *King of Queens*, *The Five-Year Engagement* and *Promised Land*. He also had the unusual distinction of being the trumpet player behind the scenes on Key and Peele's comedy episode "Overly Competitive Trumpeters."

In 2013 Daversa was offered a position as Chair of Studio Music and Jazz at the Frost School of Music, University of Miami. Relocating from Los Angeles to Miami and teaching at this vibrant school turned out to be a creative and musical triumph. Within his role as professor and chair, he has aimed to create a space for an inclusive environment, encouraging collaboration, imagination, creativity, and free thinking. Under Daversa's direction, the

Frost Concert Jazz Band was awarded winner of the Collegiate Division Best Large Jazz Ensemble from the Downbeat Awards and twice awarded the Monterey Next Generation Jazz Festival award. The Frost Concert Jazz Band has performed in New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago and produced multiple original albums. In 2020, Daversa received the Frost Award for Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship. He was also honored by the The City of Miami Beach, which proclaimed February 23, 2020, “John Daversa Day”.

Since moving to Miami, Daversa has produced several noteworthy albums for both himself and other artists outside the realm of academia. In 2017 the John Daversa Big Band’s album, *Kaleidoscope Eyes: Music of the Beatles* garnered three Grammy nominations for Best Large Jazz Ensemble, Best Arrangement Instrumental, and Best Arrangement Vocals or A Cappella. In 2019, *American Dreamers: Voices of Hope, Music of Freedom*, a big band album featuring young DACA artists, won three Grammy awards for Best Large Jazz Ensemble, Best Arrangement Instrumental, and Best Improvised Solo.

In 2019 and 2020 Daversa was musical director and producer for two important projects spearheaded by women: in 2019, Daversa was musical director and co-producer for the album *Shoulder to Shoulder: Centennial Tribute to Women’s Suffrage*, by the Karrin Allyson Sextet. And in 2020, he musically directed, co-produced, and played on Regina Carter Freedom Band’s *Swing States: Harmony in the Battleground*. The same year, the John Daversa Quintet released *Cuarentena: With Family at Home*, an album of original and traditional Cuban boleros that paid homage to familial love and the healing power of music during the time of COVID, featuring musicians Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Carlo De Rosa, Dafnis Prieto, and Sammy Figueroa.

Daversa’s most recent project, *All Without Words: Variations Inspired By Loren* (release April 30, 2021) is a lush orchestral trumpet concerto played by the John Daversa Jazz Orchestra, composed by Daversa’s friend Justin Morell, and dedicated to Morell’s autistic son Loren. Celebrating the bond between a parent and child, the album is a paean to the trials, tribulations, successes and heart-warming moments of raising a non-verbal son.

Daversa is dedicated to creating meaningful, honest music with positive intention. Surely his work will continue to gain recognition and his brilliance as both musician and educator will continue to thrive and entertain, bringing benefit both to students and music lovers throughout the world.

John Daversa is a Schilke Music Artist (trumpet) and a Burglund Artist (NuEVI ).