

OBERLIN

COLLEGE & CONSERVATORY

Office of Conservatory Communications

Bobby Ferrazza

“...Ferrazza works in a personalized mainstream jazz-guitar tradition that shows he has done his homework, but has his own ideas as well... a clean, fat-bodied guitar tone and a satchel of clean but probing lines.” – *Downbeat*

Bobby Ferrazza was born in Cleveland Ohio and began studying the guitar at fifteen years of age after having developed a passion for music from listening to rock and the popular music of the time. Very shortly after picking up the guitar, Ferrazza's interests branched out dramatically into many diverse forms of music including classical, blues, ragtime, bluegrass and others.

It wasn't until he heard a George Benson record, however, that Ferrazza started to concentrate his efforts on jazz, an entirely new genre to him. Inside of his first year on the guitar, Ferrazza sought out jazz guitar legend Bill deArango for lessons.

DeArango had been a jazz star in the 1940s, having played with all of the greats of those days: Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Ben Webster and many others. The lessons with deArango were extremely formative for Ferrazza who went on to study music at the Cleveland State University. Other lessons followed with jazz guitar greats such as Joe Pass and Pat Martino.

Having been a professional musician for over 25 years, Ferrazza has performed all over the United States and beyond, including such places as Japan and Europe, concertizing with some of the most celebrated jazz musicians in the world, including: Donald Byrd, Joey DeFrancesco, Joe Lovano, Art Farmer, Benny Golson, J.J. Johnson, Slide Hampton, Curtis Fuller, Billy Hart, Robin Eubanks, Gary Bartz, Dan Wall, Marcus Belgrave, Clark Terry, Steve Turre, Bill Watrous, Jack McDuff, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Greg Bandy, Ernestine Anderson, Vanessa Rubin and many others.

All of these musical experiences, both educational and professional, have instilled in Ferrazza the passion to pass music on to others and to teach. Bobby Ferrazza has taught at the Oberlin Conservatory since 1988, where he is currently Associate Professor of Jazz Guitar and Director of the Jazz Studies Division. He also taught at the Interlochen Arts Academy from 1992-1996.