

## **Theron Brown, Biography**

**Pianist, Educator (1986 - )**

### **Early Years**

Theron Brown was born December 31, 1986, in Zanesville, Ohio, the middle child of Terrence and Denise Brown, Pastor and First Lady of Greater Apostolic Church of Christ located in Zanesville, Ohio. Theron's first musical influence was discovered at church, under the former pastor, Bishop James W. Gaiters, Sr., while listening to Marcia H. Gaiters (former first lady) play the organ. He began playing the drums under his father's pastorate at age five, followed by the piano at eight years of age, as well as the viola at Grover Cleveland Middle School and Zanesville High School from age ten to eighteen. As his knowledge, curiosity, and passion for music increased, Theron played piano and organ for the Southeast region of The Ohio District Council, traveling to his father's preaching engagements. Theron loved embracing the opportunities to learn from, and play with other musicians that he met through the church's gatherings. His talent flourished as he experienced more diversity.

The artist that first stimulated Theron's interest in Jazz music was pianist, Thelonious Monk. Although, Monk's genius was hard for him to digest at first listen, he found something very intriguing about his sparse touch and exotic harmonies. Through Monk's music, Theron was inspired to seriously pursue jazz in his senior year of high school. This led to him discovering many other great pianists and a deeper love for music.

### **Education**

Theron's musical studies include the University of Akron, where he pursued a bachelor's degree in jazz studies in between performing and traveling. During his time at the University of Akron, he served as a student ambassador.

### **Career**

As an artist, the musicians that Theron has performed with have been many and varied, and across all genres. Theron has played with musicians such as The Cleveland Orchestra, Dan Wilson, Sean Jones, The Hunteertones (formerly DW6), The Jazz Heritage Orchestra, The Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, The Glenn Miller Orchestra, Chris Coles, Greg Banasak, Javon Jackson, Snarky Puppy, Donny McCaslin, Peter White, Walter Beasley, Christian McBride, Ken Peplowski, Gary Smulyan, Warren Wolf, The Admirables, Nathan Davis, and Bobby Selvaggio. Theron's worldwide performances, particularly those with trios, quartets, and big bands, brought him recognition from numerous places all around the world.

Theron has played at venues and events such as: Blossom Music Center, The Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.) Blu Jazz+ (Akron, Ohio), The Bop Stop (Cleveland, Ohio), Nighttown (Cleveland, Ohio), The Lincoln Theater (Columbus, Ohio), Small's Jazz Club (New York, New York), Mumbai Jazz Festival (Mumbai, India) The Montreal Jazz Festival (Montreal, Canada), The Tri-C Jazz Festival (Cleveland, Ohio), The Toronto Jazz Festival (Toronto, Canada), The Blue Plum Jazz Festival (Johnson City, Tennessee), Place des Arts (Montreal, Canada), Sapporo Concert Hall (Sapporo, Japan), Olympus Hall Hachiouji, Tokyo Kokusai Forum Hall C, (Tokyo, Japan), Sun Plaza Hall (Sendai, Japan), Ishikawa Kenritsu Ongakudo (Kanazawa, Japan), and Izumi No Mori Hall (Urayasu, Japan), and many more. Theron enjoyed traveling and learning the culture of so many different geographical areas.

Theron came across an amazing opportunity, when he was encouraged by the producer, family, and friends; he auditioned for and was cast as young Herbie Hancock in the 2016 film, *Miles Ahead*, directed by and starring Don Cheadle. This movie is an intimate look into the life of jazz artist, Miles Davis. Working with Don Cheadle inspired Theron to give more consideration to acting.

Theron currently resides in Akron, Ohio, where he is the artist coordinator for I Promise School through Curated Storefront and he is immensely involved in promoting the music scene and the arts. He takes pride in teaching musicians of all ages the fundamentals/advanced techniques of music, and volunteering his musical talent at community activities, while uplifting the Northeastern Ohio region with his sound. Theron is the founder of the Rubber City Jazz & Blues Festival, which takes place in Akron, Ohio's downtown historic district. Theron stringently continues to dedicate his life to the infinite pursuit of musical knowledge. Theron frequently tours and plays in northeast Ohio with his trio including Zaire Darden on drums and Jordan McBride on bass.

In 2019, Theron released his first album entitled "No Concepts". Keep an eye out for Theron's second project entitled "Spirit Fruit" which is to be recorded in the near future. He hopes to touch people's hearts as he reaches into his gospel and jazz influences to inspire the world. We all need LOVE!

### Boards/Committees/Volunteer

Knight Foundation Advisory Committee – 2015-2018  
Summit Art Space – Board member – 2015-present  
Leadership Akron – Class 33 – 2016-2017  
Bebop On the Block – Artistic Director – 2017  
Downtown Akron Partnership Emerging Leaders – 2015  
Akron Civic Theater – Board Member – 2018-present  
Nightlight Cenama – Board Member – 2018 - present  
Rubber City Jazz and Blues Festival (Founder/Artistic Director) 2015-present  
Leadership Akron Arts & Culture Committee – 2017-present  
Dreams Academy – 2018-present

### Teaching

Firefly Music School – 2006-2009  
Aurora School of Music- 2014-2017  
Youngstown State University – 2015-2018  
Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) Jazz Prep Program – 2014-present  
Open Tone Music – 2015 - present  
Kent State University – 2016 – present  
Private Teaching – 2005- present

### Recordings

Keith McKelley - *Keith McKelley (2010)*  
Dan Wilson – *To Whom It May Concern (2012)*  
Dan White Sextet – *Play (2013)*  
Hunbertones – *Live (2016)*  
Bobby Selvaggio – *Quantum Man (2016)*  
Theron Brown – *No Concepts (2019)*

### Residencies/Guest Artist/Guest Teaching/Seminars

Glenn Oak High School – Canton, OH (2012,2014) Artist in Residence  
National Center for Performing Arts – Mumbai, India (2015,2017) Guest Artist  
Cleveland Heights High School – (2017) Artist in Residence  
Strings Music Festival – Steamboat Springs, CO (2018) Artist in Residence  
Canton Symphony Orchestra “ConverZations” – Canton, Ohio (2018) – Seminar  
Miller South Middle School – Akron, OH (2020) – Guest Speaker

### Awards/Honors

Knight Arts Challenge – Knight Foundation (2016)  
30 for the Future – Greater Akron Chamber (2017)  
Artist of the Year – Summit Art Space (2016)  
Top Music Teacher of the Year – Steinway & Sons (2016) (2018)

