

Alex Merritt

Alex is a visiting saxophone teacher and tutor who coordinates the 2nd year transcription module, teaches on the repertoire and style and performance modules and gives one-to-one lessons at the college.

Alex has a distinctive approach as an improviser and composer; his debut album 'Anatta', featuring legendary American drummer Jeff Williams, received critical acclaim as a "promising debut, of striking quality" from the Guardian's John Fordham and was praised as "one of the best UK jazz recordings I've heard this year" by Marlbank's Stephen Graham on its release. Alex is likely to follow this up with an album for the prestigious Fresh Sound New Talent label featuring a quintet that Alex co-runs with leading UK trumpeter Steve Fishwick.

At home in a variety of musical situations, Alex often finds himself in straight ahead modern jazz contexts as well as improvised music and more third-stream environments that blend jazz with contemporary classical music. Exciting recent performances include premieres of a new project of Alex's at the London Jazz Festival and an Arts Council England funded UK tour that featured leading German pianist Pablo Held and top UK jazz musicians Percy Pursglove, Oli Hayhurst and Joshua Blackmore that performed at Ronnie Scott's and The Vortex.

With a personal approach to teaching that focuses on the development of each student's general musicianship skills as well as instrumental technique; Alex's lessons often also integrate different approaches to ear training, work with transcriptions, piano skills and creative metronome practice and rhythm skills.