

## Mark Lewandowski - Long Biography 2025

Award winning New York City based bassist and composer **Mark Lewandowski** originally hails from Nottingham, England. A graduate of the Guildhall School of Music in London and New York's prestigious Juilliard School, he has earned the respect of his peers and elders alike as a creative, supportive and individual sideman and bandleader. After graduating with a first class honors degree from the Guildhall School, Mark had the great honor of being awarded the Yamaha Jazz Award, which was presented to him by the UK Government at the Houses of Parliament.

Since relocating to New York City, Lewandowski's performance credits include such luminaries as Joe Chambers, David Liebman, George Cables, Lew Tabackin, Cyrus Chestnut, Steve Wilson, Buddy Greco, The Mingus Big Band, Peter Bernstein, The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Jeremy Pelt, Billy Drummond, Javon Jackson, Kirk MacDonald, Mark Whitfield, Ed Cherry, Jon Faddis, Willie Jones III, Sullivan Fortner, Freddie Hendrix, Joe Magnarelli, Stacy Dillard, Josh Evans, Philip Harper, Nasheet Waits, Dayna Stephens, Mike Ledonne, Vic Juris, Frank Lacy, Rick Germanson, Wayne Escoffery Sherman Irby, Joe Cohn, Joseph Farnsworth, David Hazeltine, Johnny O'Neal, Wayne Escoffery, Eric Alexander, Steve Nelson, Warren Wolf, Philip Harper, Sheila Jordan, JD Allen, Jeb Patton, Grant Stewart, Bruce Harris, Benny Green, Aaron Goldberg, Dave Kikoski and Jerry Weldon.

Lewandowski has also performed frequently as a member of Pulitzer Prize winning trumpeter Wynton Marsalis' quartet including performances in such esteemed venues and festivals as London's Barbican Hall, Cheltenham Festival and The Institute of Peace, Washington D.C.

He has toured internationally in Europe, Asia, Africa, North America and South America and is frequently found on many of New York City's famed stages including Blue Note, Jazz at Lincoln Center, The Village Vanguard, Birdland, The Jazz Standard, 55 Bar, Smalls, Mezzrow, Smoke and Minton's Playhouse.

Mark's work as a bandleader include three releases - 2017 saw the release of Mark's debut release '*Waller*' on the Whirlwind Recordings label. This debut album solidified

his reputation as a stellar bandleader and received rave reviews internationally. Featuring two of the most respected musicians on the European jazz circuit, pianist

Liam Noble and drummer Paul Clarvis, *Waller* is an exploration of the music of one of the early innovators of the jazz genre, Thomas 'Fats' Waller. The album featured highly in critical polls ranking at Number 3 in Chris Phillips' Jazz FM Charts.

2021 saw the highly successful release of Lewandowski's second record as band leader, *'Under One Sky'* which has attracted press attention and airplay internationally. Comprised of exclusively original material, the album features two of the young stars of the New York City jazz scene - award winning pianist, Addison Frei and Washington D.C born drummer Kush Abadey. Lewandowski's unique and personal compositional style is at the foreground of this album which was described by the UK's renowned critic, John Fordham (The Guardian, Jazzwise Magazine) as *'a sublime confection on compositional class and individual improv skill'*.

A highly anticipated duo recording (the third under Lewandowski's own name) featuring 'Waller' collaborator, Liam Noble was released in 2023. An imaginative reimagining of music associated with Billie Holiday, featuring U.K vocalist Heidi Vogel, the album *'A Bouquet (For Lady Day)'* was celebrated widely by the international jazz community and received much critical interest from press both sides of the Atlantic.

2022 Saw Lewandowski again on the international stage, as 1st prize winner of the prestigious UNISA International Jazz Strings Competition held in Pretoria, South Africa. In this 40th year of the competition's existence, he was awarded the prize by South Africa's former president, Thabo Mbeki. The Jury also awarded Mark 2 out of 3 of the competition's special prizes - *'Best Performance of a Ballad'* and *'Best Performance of a Rhythm Changes'* respectively.

Other career highlights include his 2015 commission by the EFG London Jazz Festival, reimagining the music of one of his great influences, Charles Mingus; performing as special guest soloist in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall as part of Igor Butman's Future of Jazz Festival; leading his trio at the 2018 Rochester International Jazz Festival as part of the 'Made in the UK series; work for the British Arts Council in the Middle East, and two successful trips to Shanghai, China as a 'Cultural Ambassador' for Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Mark Lewandowski's multiple recording credits occupy a diverse range of the jazz genre, ranging from such major artists as Joe Chambers (who Mark is featured on his 2023 Blue Note Records release 'Dance Kobina') to American cult composer and saxophonist John Zorn (with whom Mark is featured on his Tzadik release '*The Book of Beriah*'). Also closer to home in the U.K with the Leo Richardson Quartet, who's record 'The Chase' was selected as one of the Sunday Times 'Best 100 Albums of the Year' in all genres.

2025 signaled Mark's debut on Broadway as he performed at the legendary Winter Garden Theater in New York City as part of George Clooney's Tony nominated play '*Good Night and Good Luck*'. Box office records were broken by this production which became the highest grossing show in Broadway History. Following a successful run of 99 shows, the play again made history as the first of its kind, streaming live on CNN to 7.34 million around the world.

As an educator, Lewandowski is on the faculty of the renowned Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz Studies at the University of Hartford, Connecticut. He has also had experience teaching in a number of major institutions including Torino Conservatory (Italy), Birmingham Conservatoire (U.K) and his position as 'Professor of Bass Studies' at the prestigious Hampton School. Mark has lead workshops in cultural exchange visits to China in-front of 2000 elementary school children. He also has worked for Jazz at Lincoln Center's *Jazz for Young People* and *Essentially Ellington* programs in and around New York City.