

# Aakash Mittal

**Performer, Composer, Educator**

Hailed as “A fiery alto saxophonist and prolific composer” by the Star Tribune (Minneapolis), Aakash Mittal is emerging as a fresh voice in creative music. His self-released album, *Videsh*, has been regarded as, “point[ing] toward new possibilities in improvised music.” (The Denver Post) As a composer and improviser, Mittal employs colorful dissonances, meditative silences, and angular rhythms to express environments and spaces ranging from the American west to the dense streets of Kolkata.

Mittal has performed nationally at such venues as The Dakota (Minneapolis), The Cultural Center of Chicago, The Blue Room, (Kansas City) and Dazzle Jazz Club (Denver). Internationally, Aakash Mittal has led a quartet at the Congo Square Jazz Festival in Kolkata, India. As a sideman, Mittal has performed in Kolkata with world-renowned percussionist Pandit Tanmoy Bose’s *Taal Tantra*, and with the creative music ensemble *Kendraka*. In 2012 Mittal toured Mexico with Ravish Momin’s *Trio Tarana*. Other collaborations include PI Recordings artist Amir ElSaffar, avant-garde poet Bhanu Kapil, *Yells at Eels* with Dennis Gonzalez, and *Joining Hands* with bharatnatyam dancer Anjal Chande.

As a composer, Aakash Mittal has written extensively for jazz quartet composing over fifty new works. Commissions include, *Urban Raga* (2011), *Transitions* (2011), and *Questions of Identity* (2012) for the *Playground Ensemble*; *Octet on Raga Yaman* (2009) for the *Ethos West Chamber Orchestra*. In 2012 Mittal wrote *Meditation* for *Pictures on Silence* saxophone and harp duo. As a leader, Mittal has self-released four recordings, *Possible Beginnings*, *Videsh*, *Thumbs Up EP*, and *Ocean* to rave reviews.

In 2012 Aakash Mittal was awarded the *Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music*. In 2013 Mittal was awarded the *Herb Albert/ASCAP Young Jazz Composers Award*. Aakash Mittal is a 2013 *American Institute of Indian Studies Creative and Performing Arts Fellow*.