

DARRELL GRANT BIOGRAPHY

Darrell Grant, born May 30, 1962 in Pittsburgh, grew up in Denver, Colorado in a musical family, and having begun piano lessons at age seven, quickly received honors for his prowess on piano. At 17 Darrell won a scholarship to the famed Eastman School of Music. After Eastman he pursued graduate studies in jazz at the University of Miami. In 1986 he relocated to New York City, where he broke into the jazz scene performing with Woody Shaw, Junior Cook, and Charlie Persip. At the same time he took advantage of New York's diverse musical scenes to work with artists as varied as Lesley Gore, Phyllis Hyman and the American Tap Dance Orchestra.

Darrell was introduced to international audiences in 1988 as the pianist with the legendary vocalist, Betty Carter. His first recording came in 1989, fronting the group Current Events. Playing funk, worldbeat and jazz, the band "was my first attempt to put everything in one package." The group made one album for the Verve-Forecast label. Shifting his focus to mainstream jazz, Darrell quickly became one of New York's most in demand players, touring and recording with artists such as Frank Morgan, Sonny Fortune, Craig Harris, Greg Osby, Don Braden and Roy Haynes. In 1992 he replaced Mulgrew Miller as pianist in Tony Williams' quintet. In 1994 he released *Black Art* (Criss Cross), which was selected one of the top 10 jazz recordings of the year by *The New York Times*. Two subsequent small group recordings 1995's *The New Bop* (Criss Cross) and 1998's *Twilight Stories* (32 Jazz) received high critical marks, and spent several weeks at the top of the jazz radio charts. Yet at the height of an active touring and recording career, Darrell left New York in search of something more. "I was looking for a sense of community. It had gotten to the point where I was hardly in New York. While I enjoyed touring and performing in different places, I wanted to explore the possibilities of having an impact in one place."

Arriving in Portland, Oregon in 1997 Darrell replaced pianist Andrew Hill on the jazz faculty of Portland State University, where he is now a tenured professor. Embracing a leadership role in the musical life of the Pacific Northwest, he developed his gifts as an educator and entrepreneur. In 1999, he started Lair Hill Records and released *Smokin' Java* (Lair Hill). A swinging love letter to his newfound sense of community in the Northwest, that featured all-stars Donald Harrison, Brian Blade and Joe Locke. 2003's *Spirit* was a departure for Grant, a deeply personal record that highlighted his skills as a solo pianist, songwriter and featured his debut as a vocalist. His new double CD recording, *Truth & Reconciliation*, will be released on Origin Records on April 17, 2007. The new disc features a stellar lineup that includes John Patitucci, Brian Blade, Bill Frisell, Joe Locke, Steve Wilson and Adam Rogers.

Darrell performs extensively as a bandleader and solo artist throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe in venues ranging from clubs to major jazz festivals. He has been a featured guest on the BET On Jazz "Jazz Central" program, and has performed on Marian McPartland's "Piano Jazz" on National Public Radio. As a composer, Darrell has penned numerous gems, many of which are highlighted on his recordings as a leader. His commissions include the anthem for the 1998 Nike World Masters Games and a major Duke Ellington tribute for the Mount Hood Jazz Festival's celebration of the Ellington centennial.