

Kobie Watkins

A native of Chicago, Illinois, Kobie began as a small child listening and watching his father (Alious C. Watkins) playing drums in the church. Kobie started with pots and pans as a toddler. Yet over time he has developed a personal system of timely discipline and structure for music and life skill. He has progressed into who he is today-- professional drummer/percussionist and music educator.

Pursuing his true passion and enhancing his talent through education, Kobie attended Vandercook College of Music studying all forms and genres of the percussion family with Marc "Max" Jacoby (vibraphonist/mallet) and Kevin Lepper (percussionist), both teachers igniting him to reach greater achievements and goals. While learning percussion and all other instruments, Kobie's extra curricular time was spent playing jazz standards and trading solo-s with alto saxophonist Dennis Winslett. Kobie could also be found playing in local theatre and cabaret shows. In 1998, Kobie played in the Walt Disney World American All-Star Band in Magic Kingdom (Orlando, FL).

Conferred with a Bachelors of Music Education in 1999, Kobie became a public school band / music teacher by day, by night he played gigs around the Chicago land area and throughout the United States. Kobie eventually became known as the "Swing Master" of Chicago. He was depicted in a front-page article in the Joliet, Illinois'- "Herald", -a local newspaper titled, "Teacher has Alter Ego as Jazz Musician."

-Kobie received his Masters of Music from Northwestern University in Jazz Pedagogy 2003.

*Kobie has cultivated dynamic relationships with his peers in and out of the Jazz, Latin, and Gospel community as a drummer, percussionist and a mentor. Living out his commitment to the music he holds a long list of great musicians he has played and recorded with- jazz legend **Sonny Rollins, Joe Lovano, Branford Marsalis, Terence Blanchard, Curtis Fuller, Bob Mintzer, John Patitucci, Arturo Sandoval, George Coleman, Ira Sullivan, Sonny Fortune, Roy Haynes, Benny Green**; including **Kurt Elling, Fred Anderson, Bobby Broom, Christian McBride, Roy Hargrove**, Orbert Davis, Ken Chaney, Ron Perrillo, Bethany Pickens, Ryan Cohan, Jarrard Harris and James Austin.*

*Additionally, Gospel singer **Kim Burrell**, R&B and Neo Soul artists Julie Dexter, Javier, Kendra Ross, Chris Robinson, and many others. Kobie has toured extensively in Africa, Europe, Asia, Canada, South America and the United States.*

Kobie's educational and mentoring relationships include working with Wynton Marsalis at Martin Luther King High School, (Chicago IL.) a clinic for high schooler's aspiring to play jazz. The Ravinia mentors program for the Chicago Public High School students, and "Attention for Boys" a MusicAlive mentoring and teaching program, founded by Orbert Davis and Mark Ingram for inner-city youth ages 8 to 18 years. Additionally, since 2004 Kobie has played with a band leading teens in worship at a Christian Teen Camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. His experiences include a rich mosaic of styles, genres, interests and qualifications.

2008 & 2009 Kobie participated with the World reknown ambassador opportunities with the US State Department, American Music Abroad "The Rhythm Road." (In Partnership with Jazz at Lincoln Center)

Kobie is a product level Artist with Sabian cymbals (05), Sonor Drums (09), Aquarian Drum heads (10), Vic Firth Drum Sticks (12).