

Brandon Ridenour

It all began one afternoon when his father gave five-year old Brandon his first piano lesson in Grand Rapids, MI. Like every other boy, he didn't particularly want to practice, but he thinks it might have paid off later for the times when he'd present his unrefined "piano skills" as an "adult". His dad also had an old Bach Stradivarius trumpet (no relation to J. S.) in the basement, so when it came time for Brandon to choose an instrument in the 5th grade band, naturally he said "no way". Young Ridenour really wanted to play the drums, but his parents and band director strongly encouraged him to play literally anything else. Was he a bad drummer? Would he have become the greatest percussionist of all time? Who knows, but his parents were relieved to not buy a drum set and listen to that crap day in and day out.

Instead, they got duck sounds for a solid year or so, until he started taking lessons from one of the best teachers in the city. The quacking sound of Brandon's trumpet, soon upgraded to a trumpeting elephant. Just before high school, Brandon's family moved to Kalamazoo, MI and it was there where he met some more excellent teachers. His new trumpet teacher along with his band director and choir director all played a strong role in developing his passion for music.

Although Brandon also had interest in science and theatre, he decided to audition for music schools. He never expected to get in to "The" Juilliard School, but spoiler alert, he did...so he went. While at "The" Juilliard, Brandon had more excellent teachers along with the newfound desire to compose and arrange music for himself and colleagues. Half way through his undergrad studies, he met and played with the Canadian Brass in a side by side concert with students, a major turning point in his musical life. Fortunately, Canadian Brass remembered Brandon and a year later he was asked to come tour with the group, becoming the youngest member ever to join. He played in distinguished venues, television and radio productions around the world, recorded ten albums, appeared on NPR's Tiny Desk, and received three Juno Award nominations. He also created a catalog of new arrangements for the ensemble, some of which have gone viral. After 7 years with Canadian Brass, Brandon decided it was time to leave and do something else...because he thought he was cool.

The year was 2013 and after some much needed reflection, Brandon began some of his own creative projects, including Founders, usefulCHAMBER, and other solo pursuits. He had a persistent drive to create and present untraditional concepts, while using the best thing traditional classical music has to offer...its composers/music. Through arranging, Brandon always wanted to present great music in a more modern light, so it could have a wider appeal to non-classical ears. He had a newfound passion for writing music in a more singer-songwriter style, perhaps due to living in ultra cool Brooklyn (where he still lives, please no stalking), or perhaps due to meeting and playing with some fancy famous people like Sting, James Tayler, and Esperanza Spalding, OR perhaps it was due to reconnecting with bands he heard when he was a younger. Either way, the result of meshing different worlds of music together was constantly on Brandon's mind.

He bopped around for a bit, played with various groups, won some competitions...yada yada. He even took some classes at "The" Upright Citizens Brigade and eventually rejoined Canadian Brass. It seemed nice, but Brandon felt the need to do something impactful and meaningful beyond music. So in 2019, Brandon launched Come Together, an album/project of reimagined Beatles music celebrating the 50th anniversary of the classic Lennon/McCartney song. Brandon has since developed this collaborative album into a larger social impact and environmentalism project, with the mission of conveying, through music, the importance of humanity coming together to take better care of our planet and each other.