

# CHARLIE REES

Saxophonist | composer/arranger | journalist



Charlie was born on 3 August 2001 in Guildford, Surrey (UK), but spent most of his childhood growing up in Shropshire. He recalls being exposed to the likes of Charlie Parker, Frank Sinatra and Keith Jarrett's music from a very young age by his father, who was himself an amateur saxophonist.

Inspired by these surroundings, Charlie began lessons on curved soprano saxophone at the age of 6 and started to attend local jam sessions. By the age of 10, he was playing in the Shropshire Youth Jazz Orchestra and was awarded a place at Manchester-based specialist music school for under-18s, Chetham's School of Music.

Charlie officially joined "Chet's" in September 2012. Over the course of his 8 years there, he studied soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxes with Jim Muirhead and Iain Dixon; with whom he also learned some of the fundamentals of jazz harmony. He soon began composing his own music and arranging for a variety of ensembles, later taking formal lessons with Richard Iles. He spent five years playing in the senior jazz orchestra, penning a number of arrangements for them and holding down all five sax chairs at different points, and additionally held the tenor 1 chair in the Greater Manchester Hub Jazz Orchestra from 2017 to 2019.

At the age of just sixteen, Charlie was recruited as a staff arranger for the 'Woman to Woman' tour by UK chart-topping singer/songwriters Beverley Craven, Judie Tzuke and Julia Fordham. Having finished school in 2020, he accepted a place to study jazz saxophone at the Royal Academy of Music in London (class of 2024) where he studied with Stan Sulzmann and Martin Speake. He also receives frequent external mentorship and teaching from American jazz pianist Richie Beirach, as well as from NEA Jazz Master Dave Liebman and American drummer Jeff Williams on a less frequent basis.

A key highlight since arriving in London is Charlie's frequent appearances on lead alto sax with the London Jazz Orchestra, and once as conductor. Several of his arrangements have also been performed by the LJO at most of their concerts in the 2022-23 season, becoming core repertoire for the band.

He has also worked as a writer and editor for media company LondonJazz News since October 2021, starting as an intern, working his way up to the position of Assistant Editor and contributing over 50 articles to the LJN archive in that time. In addition to his love of music and writing, Charlie maintains a great love of the game of baseball, following the Kansas City Royals of Major League Baseball keenly through each season.

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