

## **John Jensen - Bio**

John Jensen is a musician whose virtuosity spans classical performance, jazz improvisation, and collaborative music-making. His New York debut performance of Charles Ives' "Concord Sonata" earned praise from New York Times critic Raymond Ericson as "a first-rate performance of a great work"—a benchmark in a career marked by exceptional musical memory and mastery of complex repertoire.

Jensen studied piano with John Crown and Gwendolyn Koldofsky and composition with Ingolf Dahl and Halsey Stevens at Occidental College and the University of Southern California. He freelanced in Los Angeles, playing on the Andy Williams show and touring with Columbia Artists Management before becoming pianist for the Mirecourt Trio with cellist Terry King and violinist Ken Goldsmith. As artists-in-residence at Grinnell College, where Jensen taught for 15 years, the trio commissioned over 30 works for piano trio, produced more than 20 albums, and toured Europe and China.

Since 1990, Jensen has freelanced with the Minnesota Orchestra and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in the Twin Cities. He served as collaborative pianist at St. Olaf College, director of music at First Universalist Church of Minneapolis for 22 years, and taught jazz improvisation at the University of St. Thomas.

His extensive discography includes the Ives "Concord Sonata" and piano music of Aaron Copland and Paul Reale (Music & Arts and Naxos labels), plus Martinu's *Tre Ricercari* with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra (London Records). His accolades include a Grammy nomination, a Stereo Review "Record of Special Merit" award, and "Record of the Year" from the Village Voice.

Recent projects include performing and recording a Paul Reale piano concerto with the Yale Symphony Orchestra (Naxos, 2023) and upcoming releases featuring Martinu and Hindemith chamber works. Jensen is featured in the recently completed documentary "Jensen's Still At It," produced by a former student, director JB Letchinger. The film includes Mirecourt co-founder Terry King, wife Gayle Burdick, and collaborator

Carleton Macy. It was created with financial support from friends, former students, and collaborators; Grinnell alums are featured both on-camera and behind it. Jensen continues championing contemporary repertoire alongside celebrated interpretations of classic works.