

Alexander Ambrose

Short Biography:

Zander Ambrose's passion for music as a performer and music educator is infectious. In 2014 he enrolled with a scholarship to the prestigious University of Miami, Frost School of Music in Coral Gables, Florida. Ambrose received his Bachelors of Music degree (B.M) in the Studio Music and Jazz program in the studio of his mentor Stephen Rucker in May 2018. As an undergraduate student, Zander played in the DownBeat award-winning Studio Jazz Big Band, the perennial DownBeat award-winning UM Funk/Fusion Ensemble where he and his ensemble received a Down Beat ensemble award and the multiple Grammy award-winning artist and faculty mentor Brian Lynch Artist Ensemble. Zander's passion for rudimental percussion persisted still and he participated for three years in the drumline in the Frost Band of the Hour Marching Band. He was awarded the drumline captain honors and center snare drum role for his junior and senior year. Upon completing his final season, he was awarded the For Greater Bands Award from the Gamma Epsilon Chapter of Tau Beta Sigma for his impact in the program, as well as the Band of The Hour's most prestigious Most Valuable Player Award for outstanding contribution, given to one student at the end of each season. Ambrose was also an active member during this time in the winter drumline as well as the pep band where he played drums for the basketball and volleyball games.

In the Winter of 2018, Ambrose was awarded a full scholarship to pursue his Master's Degree in Jazz Pedagogy from the University of Miami where he was selected as the graduate teaching assistant for the drum set studio under the direction of Steve Rucker. Here, he was able to hone his craft both as a performer and as an educator at the college level. His assistantship position required 20 hours of teaching responsibilities per week. He was required to teach private lessons to undergraduate drum students, along with teaching group classes in the following subjects: drum set proficiency, jazz theory and improvisation, large ensemble conducting, jazz history and music appreciation, and small jazz ensemble coaching. In his masters program, Ambrose held the drum set chair in the Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra artistically directed by NEA jazz master Maria Schneider. This group was a big band jazz ensemble, and full orchestra combining the jazz and classical departments of the Frost School of Music. This prestigious ensemble represented the University of Miami in many high level performances. As a member of this group, Ambrose was able to perform alongside artists such as John Williams, Quincy Jones, Maria Schneider, Arturo Sandoval, Donny McCaslin, Dave Koz, Jose Feliciano, Tim Reis, Kristin Chenoweth, Matthew Morrison and Lucy Woodward.