

Originally from West Terre Haute Indiana, **PETE FORD** earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana State University. There he was mentored in Music Theory by Dr. John Ibberson and Dr. William Denton. He studied composition with David Ott, John Muehleisen, Timothy Kramer, and others, and began his first study of jazz at Indiana State with Dr. John Spicknall. In the late 1980's he co-wrote and recorded several commercial jingles in the Indianapolis market.



Upon moving to Northwest Ohio in 1991 with his wife and fellow musician Shannon Ford, he pursued further jazz study with Gene Parker and Mark Kieswetter. Concurrently he gained invaluable experience “sitting in” on piano at former Toledo jazz clubs Rusty's and Murphy's.

Professor Ford has taught music in higher education for over two decades, with the bulk of his experience at Adrian College. While his focus at Adrian is Music Theory, at other institutions he taught a variety of classes including Jazz History and Rock History. Equipped with a "classical" music theory education, these experiences couple with his jazz and popular music performing background to positively and pragmatically inform his present-day teaching and composing.

Pete Ford has composed chamber music for various combinations including pipe organ with saxophone, saxophone quartet, string ensemble, and string quartet. He is the primary musical arranger for the the saxophone quartet Sax 4th Avenue. His choral composition “Nahamasa (a Choral Fanfare for Asa Mahan),” which also includes saxophone and clarinet obbligato, was performed at Carnegie Hall in 2010 by the Adrian College Choir, with Pete Ford at the piano. The Toledo Choral Society has performed his piece “The Night Sky at Christmas Time.” He has authored a series of music theory textbooks and is also a published composer. He is mentioned multiple times in the Acknowledgements for his contributions to Mark Gridley’s Jazz History text Concise Guide to Jazz. Ford is an internationally recognized scholar on the music of the late progressive rock keyboardist Keith Emerson.

Ford actively gigs (except during the Covid-19 pandemic) on jazz and rock piano around the Midwest as a freelance musician. He can be found playing keyboards in a variety of musical situations ranging from jazz clubs to planetarium programs to playing keys behind Elvis tribute artists(!).

In August 2019, Ford was invited by members of the Toledo Symphony to participate as a serious composer in the 4(19) festival at the Toledo Museum of Art. This festival featured 19 composers’ works over the course of four concerts (within the area code of (419)). Ford’s works were featured on three separate performances that included Sax 4th Avenue and a string quartet of Toledo Symphony musicians. Most of Ford’s works in this festival explored the intersection between imitative baroque fugal procedures and later musical genres.