

An artist long intrigued by contrasts and hybrids, Carter resists comfortable categorization. Born (1969) and raised in Detroit, Carter grew up surrounded by music, soaking up everything from funk and fusion to rock, soul, and various strains of acoustic jazz. It was the late trumpeter Lester Bowie who first brought Carter to New York, inviting him to perform with his New York Organ Combo. The Bowie connection led to Carter's debut recording, 1993's *JC on the Set*, a quartet tour de force that announced the arrival of a superlative new talent equally expressive on alto, tenor, and baritone sax (though he's added several other horns over the years, most importantly soprano sax).

Carter always finds a way into whatever musical situation he finds himself in. "You have to be totally comfortable wherever," Carter says. "I think there's tremendous beauty in cross-pollinations of music and influences." In 2000, he released two albums simultaneously that seemed to proclaim everything fair game: *Chasin' the Gypsy*, a voluptuous, lyrical session partly inspired by the timeless collaboration between Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli, and the groove-laden *Layin' in the Cut*, which combines harmolodic freedom with a deep reservoir of funk. He explored the music of alt-rock band Pavement (on 2005's *Gold Sounds*), and paid loving tribute to Billie Holiday (on 2003's *Gardenias for Lady Day*).

He's reinvented the organ combo with 2005's *Out of Nowhere*, in 2009 with John Medeski on *Heaven and Earth* and in 2011 with *At the Crossroads*. *At the Crossroads* marks the 10th anniversary of the multigenerational James Carter Organ Trio. A sensational follow-up to the saxophonist's acclaimed Emarcy release *Caribbean Rhapsody* featuring Carter performing Roberto Sierra's Concerto for Saxophones and Orchestra, Carter's 15th album documents his trio's combustible chemistry, with a Detroit-centric cast of special guests adding fuel to the celebratory fire. Along with James Carter, the trio features the lithe and muscular keyboard work of Detroit's rising B3 star Gerard Gibbs and the next great Detroit drummer of his generation, Alex White.