



Matt Strand is a freelance jazz, blues, and rock musician based out of Grand Forks, ND. He began his musical journey in the Sacramento area as a saxophonist, and picked up piano, bass, and percussion in high school. During this time, he began formally studying jazz with George Tricomi. Strand continued his studies under Greg McLaughlin at Sierra College in Rocklin, CA. At the University of North Dakota, Strand played keys with the UND Jazz Ensemble and studied under the direction of Mike Blake, with whom he still periodically shares the stage.

Strand's own past groups include Project 24, a Grand Forks-based contemporary jazz group with Jared Johnson and Jean-Luc Davis. Along with establishing himself within the jazz community, Strand has also been closely involved in musical theatre since high school, participating in 23 musicals and revues as an orchestra member and conductor. He has also served as music director for several shows, including *Hair!*, *Oklahoma!*, *Cabaret*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Chicago*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Strand's multifaceted sensibilities have led to performances with Larry Goldings, Martin Short, Ruben Alvarez, Allyson Gilbert, Dennis Connolly, and Chris Thomsen. Strand also periodically sits in with Grand Forks staples such as the Dick King Classic Swing Orchestra and Jazz on Tap.

Strand currently plays and sings in three bands in the Grand Forks area: The Matt Strand Group, a jazz quartet, Still Fighting It, an acoustic rock band, and The Heavy Rotation, a 9-piece funk and soul group. He also plays numerous duo gigs, playing jazz piano opposite vibraphonist Dr. James Popejoy as well as acoustic rock piano and bass with Jarrod Schell.

Strand maintains a private lesson studio in Grand Forks and teaches jazz bass lessons at the University of North Dakota. When not playing music, Strand manages the guitar, drum, and keyboard department at Popplers Music in Grand Forks, where he presents clinics and educational workshops around the area.