

As a guitarist, bandleader, composer and co-producer, what truly nourishes Peter Kavanaugh's soul are jazz standards and the great American songbook. "I like injecting unexpected elements into songs from the great 20th century composers."

Peter's appreciation for the rich harmonic structure and deep chordal textures of standards can partly be attributed to his classes with Joe Pass — the jazz guitar icon best known for accompanying Sara Vaughn, Frank Sinatra, and Ella Fitzgerald. Peter showed rare talent even before then, emerging from a statewide jazz competition as the best high school jazz guitarist in Illinois. But then, one "nice, safe, day job" led to another career path altogether, which led further and further away from the one thing he really wanted to do — play guitar.

Pangs of regret lingered for years until the day that Peter lived out the fantasy of millions by quitting his day job and moving to a cheap neighborhood where he could devote his days to practicing and his nights to taking every available gig.

After nearly a decade of eking out a sideman's living playing swing, gypsy jazz, blues, country, rockabilly and soul, Peter finally took center stage with the release of the 2015 album "Whisper Not." His debut established his West Coast Cool Jazz take on lesser-known nuggets from the American songbook — from his breezy bossa nova-meets-baritone guitar interpretation of "Poinciana" to his pairing of sun-dappled vibraphone with toothy blues guitar on the title track "Whisper Not."

The self-released album was played on over 50 radio stations and Jazziz Magazine called it, "A refreshingly old-school approach to songbook standards ... he allows the original harmonies and melodies to shine, even as he overlays tones and textures from his vast library." The UK jazz blog Bebop Spoken Here called it, "A choice selection of tunes played to perfection."

Fueled by the positive response, Peter immediately returned to the studio ("I finally love my job!") and began recording his 2016 follow-up album "Look for the Silver Lining."

"Silver Lining" builds on the sophisticated, luxurious, midcentury sound of "Whisper Not" with its guitar and vibraphone base, but takes the arrangements in exciting new directions with more horns, more blues, and ambitious arrangements of tunes from Dave Brubeck, Rodgers & Hart and more great 20th century composers. From the sparkling, title track to a soulful rendition of "Sunny" featuring electric piano, a Latin jazz take on "Our Day Will Come" and the minor blues of the original closing composition "Blue and Then You," Peter Kavanaugh inspires listeners to take a fresh look around and see the potential of the future...the sky's the limit!