

Jua's Bio

Some individuals may recognize early in life their dreams yet only a few dedicate themselves to the actual realization of those same dreams. And then there's Jua.. Jua brings a vocal sound reminiscent of jazz and soul singers such as Nat King Cole, Nancy Wilson, Donny Hathaway, Will Downing, and Luther Vandross. However, Jua's rich voice resonates with a combination of depth and fresh emotion that is uniquely Jua.

Jua (Swahili for the Sun) was born January 6, 1979 in Chicago, Illinois; home of the "Musical Melting Pot". Encouraged to share this talent, by the time his family moved to Alabama in 1989, Jua had developed an undeniable love for singing. He continued performing as a soloist with choruses and church choirs, in school musicals, community pageants, fashion shows and weddings throughout high school. During his junior year in high school in 1996, Jua was selected to perform with the Alabama All-State Boys Choir. That same year, he was awarded not only the "Best Choral Member's" award by the Alabama Boys State Chorus but received a full four year vocal scholarship to the University of Montevallo in Montevallo, Alabama. Before moving to Atlanta, Georgia to attend Emory University, Jua participated in the annual highly regarded All-Atlanta Chorus Gospel Christmas performance with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

While in college, Jua continued singing in talent shows and athletic events including the 1998 AT&T Professional Tennis Championship where he accepted the invitation to sing the National Anthem. Revisiting his gospel background, Jua was a member of the Emory University Voices of Inner Strength Gospel Choir from 1997-2000. The year 2000 found Jua in

London, England studying abroad. Attempting to take full advantage of his time in the UK, Jua continued to hone his craft at Open-Mic night performances at local London clubs and venues. Returning to the States with newfound aspirations, Jua graduated from Emory and returned to his hometown.

Back in Chicago, Jua directed his energy to honing his craft and started by taking vocal lessons from Sondra Davis, a now close friend and musical mentor. In 2002, Jua moved to the Washington DC area where he pushed forward with his dream of being a professional artist. Jua performed with a couple of local groups before landing a prized opportunity to gig with the legendary Blackbyrds as a featured background vocalist. Determined not to wait for a major label to determine his musical destiny, Jua self-released his debut album *Anticipation* in October 2007. Jua's other musical projects include being featured on *Contemporary Soul Songbook: Volume I* released by Soul Unsigned that fuses neo-soul, jazz and funk, as well as, a soundtrack for the novel, *7:33 a.m.* written by Monda Webb; both projects were released in 2009.

After moving to the San Francisco Bay Area, Jua attended the California Jazz Conservatory in Berkeley, CA and was the first recipient of the prestigious Mark Murphy Vocal Scholarship. Currently, Jua is working on his sophomore project "*Colors of Life*" and deepening his commitment to artistic growth and integrity.