

December 2007

# AUSTRALIA'S CHRIS BRIEN

PG. 2



## **WHEN YOUR THIS GOOD THEY CALL YOU MR.**

Article by Jill Schettler pg. 9

## **REVENGE OF THE DRUMGEEK**

Article by Jayson Brinkworth pg. 14



## **THE FINAL WORD**

pg. 17

## **RYAN CARVER: EXERCISES FOR MOBILITY**

pg. 12

**THE BLACK PAGE**



**The Thunder From Down Under, errr....uhh no. Ummm, Crocodile Drumdee! Hmmm, maybe not. It would seem that my feeble attempt at being witty has produced no Aussieisms that can accurately answer the question, “*How astounding is the drummer who holds the throne behind the kit pictured above?*” Put it this way, Australia’s Chris Brien (otherwise known as “The Drumming Wizard of Oz”) can do with four limbs what King Vidor did with a pair of ruby slippers and a yellow brick road. Chris’s style and techniques are all that masterpieces are made of.**

**Chris, your solos, and your style for that matter, involve the best of both worlds: the intricate touch of polyrhythmic playing and the pulse of a really fat groove. How have you developed this ability over the years?**

Thanks for your kind words, Sean. How I have developed my approach to combining “Polyrhythmic playing with a strong groove” is due to two things: firstly, my love for African and Latin rhythms; and, secondly, due to the fact that from 1992-1999 I was playing in a band in Australia called Swoop that was essentially a “Hip-Hop” come “Funk” band. The role of a drummer in a Funk band is to lay down fat and funky grooves. When I mixed this drumming approach with 6 to 8 hours a day of drum practice, over the years I then ended up with my unique style of drumming. Incidentally, Swoop reached No.3 on the Charts in Japan in 1996 and also achieved No.1 on the charts in Australia, as well as many other top 40 hits in Australia between 1993-1998.

**For a drummer who is trying to "cop your chops," what is the method behind the madness of your incredible footwork?**

Firstly, it is extremely important to understand that slow, relaxed practice develops control which, in turn, develops speed. In saying this, of course exercises of which at first you practice slowly, in time will be practiced fast, but at first everything needs to be practiced slowly so as to develop the muscle memory and also to avoid repetitive, strain-related injuries. A use of a metronome or click track is essential for most of the following patterns. The patterns I focus on with my feet are :

- 1. Single Strokes**
- 2. Double Strokes**
- 3. Flams**
- 4. Paradiddles (The Single, Double, Triple, Inward, Reverse and Outward Paradiddles)**
- 5. Funkadiddles (Funkadiddles are my own variations of the 4 essential Paradiddles being the Single, Inward, Reverse & Outward Paradiddles. These are explained thoroughly in my book "Progressive Rhythms" & demonstrated on my DVD "Independence Part II" & the "on-line" lessons at my website)**
- 6. Fundamental Latin Rhythms (The Son Clave, The Rhumba Clave, The Brazilian Clave, The African Clave, The Cascara, The Palitos, The Timbale Cowbell Pattern (Mambo) and The Mozambique)**

As far as developing these fundamental Latin Rhythms with your feet, they just require repetition at comfortable tempos, preferably with music so as to help you to create a musical feel not a metronomic feel. Developing Single Strokes, Doubles Strokes, Paradiddles etc. with your feet, requires the use of a metronome.



## **"CHRIS'S 10 MINUTE DAILY EXERCISE"**

- Play Double Strokes @ 50 BPM for 2 minutes playing 1/8 Notes.**
- Play Double Strokes @ 55 BPM for 2 minutes playing 1/8 Notes.**
- Play Double Strokes @ 60 BPM for 2 minutes playing 1/8 Notes.**
- Play Double Strokes @ 65 BPM for 2 minutes playing 1/8 Notes.**
- Play Double Strokes @ 70 BPM for 2 minutes playing 1/8 Notes.**

**The following day begin 5 BPM faster.**

If this exercise is practiced daily without fail, within 30 days you will be starting the exercise @ 195 BPM. Once this is achieved begin the "10 Minute Daily Exercise" @ 100 BPM playing 1/16 Notes. Within a few months you should be playing 1/16 Note Double Strokes @ 200 BPM. Lastly, apply this exercise to Single Strokes and Paradiddles as well. The idea is to develop your muscle memory and control as opposed to just trying to force out fast double strokes with your feet, which will not only sound tense but can also cause injury to your knees and ankles.

### What's your history with World Music?

When I was younger, I heard some music coming out of my older brother's music room which intrigued me. The music I heard made me want to play the drums, and my aim was to sound like that drummer on that recording. Anyway, the band was Santana, and I didn't know back then that the drummer I heard was a drummer and 3 percussionists. Nevertheless, ever since I still wanted to sound like that "drummer". That was my childhood dream and I think I've achieved it. Some kids want to be firemen whereas I wanted to sound like the drummer on that record.

I have only ever played in one World Music Band. The band is called Heval. Heval won an award at the 2006 Oz Music Awards in Australia for being the best World Music Band in Australia in the year of 2006. I joined Heval in late 2005. They play mainly Turkish and Kurdish influenced music. Most of the tunes were either in 7/8, 5/8 and 6/4.

Other than Heval, I have spent most of my drumming life listening to non-drummers, such as Guitarists, Keyboard Players, Saxophonists, Singers and percussion rhythms, etc. which probably explains why I have a different approach to the drumset.

Some drummers may find a few of my drumset compositions and solos repetitive, but, to me, I'm thinking more melodically, which is how traditional ethnic rhythms tend to be played. More often than not each percussion instrument plays a melody and then there may also be some solo sections featuring some of the percussion instruments in the percussion ensemble. Music cannot exist without rhythm and melody. I never think of ways I can impress a bunch of drummers with stick tosses, backward somersaults and playing as fast and as complicated as possible, which I think in moderation is fine, but when drummers use this approach constantly I personally think it is totally unmusical and "stupid" and driven by an ego problem.

My biggest influences are George Benson, Carlos Santana, Stevie Wonder, Bach, Mozart, Giovanni Hidalgo, Steve Gadd, Gene Krupa, Paul McCartney, etc. and every Ethnic rhythm whether it be from China, Brazil, Ethiopia, Cuba, Australia or wherever that I have ever heard.





**Your style proves that a drum solo is a living breathing musical entity, rather than an impressive flurry of fragmented chops. What is the recipe for a great drum solo?**

Firstly, I think it's important to define "A Great Drum Solo." It all depends on the context. Personally, I love to listen to someone like Dave Lombardo or Deen Castonovo thrash out a drum solo. These guys and others like them are amazing! Or to see Dave Weckl play with Chick Corea or to watch and listen to the unbelievable brilliance and musicality of Simon Phillips.

Check out Steve Gadd's solo on the song "Aja" by Steely Dan. Besides being a first take recording, it is totally musical. But, what else would you expect from Steve Gadd?

I always think of having an underlying pulse and to produce the sound of a percussion section with a drummer, not just the sound of one drummer.

For myself, the recipe for a great drum solo will usually employ the use of ostinatos (repetitive patterns). Ostinatos not only help you sound like more than one drummer but more importantly allow the drummer to incorporate melodic layers into his or her drum solo. I find that a musical drum solo not only sounds great but also appeals to non-drummers as well as non-musicians. I don't want to just cater to drummers who want to get excited over a pair of fast hands and fast feet. There's a lot more to drumming than playing loud and fast; it's called music!

**Straying from drums for a moment, what brought you to Hong Kong?**

The reason I relocated to Hong Kong from Sydney, Australia in November 2006, was because I was performing with some local and international artists here in Hong Kong as well as in China; and, while I was here, I was invited to set up my drumming course in conjunction with the largest music retail store and private music college in China and South east Asia, "Tom Lee Music" and "The Tom Lee Music Foundation." My course "The Chris Brien Drumming System" was launched here in Hong Kong in late April of 2007.

**Chris I find it interesting that you are one of only a few drummers from Australia who have appeared in Modern Drummer magazine. Can you give me a sense of what the drumming community is like in the Land Down Under?**

Australia produces many of the best drummers in the world. The reason being is that Australians are extremely competitive when it comes to the Arts and Sports, as well as that there is a very strong drumming foundation in Australia. Australia has many fantastic drumming stores with very knowledgeable staff, and most drummers are very keen to learn as much about drums and drumming as possible. When you live in a country as beautiful and relaxed as Australia, it just makes sense to either play a sport or an instrument or both. It is simply the best country in the world.

## **Tell me about your drumming schools in Australia.**

I currently have 2 drumming studios operating in the Northern Beaches area of Sydney. There are several drum tutors, all of whom are previous students of mine who teach my drumming system to many Sydney drummers each week. Many of my students in Australia have had great success in the music industry in Australia and overseas. I established my first drumming studio in Sydney in 1988.

## **How did you get the nickname "The Drumming Wizard of Oz"?**

This nickname was suggested to me from a friend as it was a way of people seeing me as a solo drummer and not just as a freelance session drummer, if that makes any sense? It was one of those things that stuck as Australian's like nicknames. But these days I don't hear it much any more since I spend most of my time outside of Australia.

## **You seem to lead a hectic life, how do you keep yourself grounded?**

For me it is a strong faith in God, I don't smoke or drink, I do regular exercise, eat lots of healthy food, I have an extremely positive outlook on life while still practicing many hours each week; and, I love every second of life that God has blessed me with. I love spending quality time with my wife, family and friends as well. Just as drummers such as John Blackwell, Gregg Bissonette and Alex Acuna have to say.



## **What does it take to break into the clinician circuit these days?**

4 words: "Practice", "Dedication", "Originality" and "Contacts". Never say die. I've had success on the pop charts and recorded and performed with some big names, but to tell you the truth, it takes a lot more work to make it as a drum clinician than to make it in a band.

Understand that being a clinician for percussion companies is about two things i.e. selling equipment, and educating drummers about equipment and playing styles, which in turn makes everyone happy. If you're just after cheap gear it won't work and you will be black listed by all of the sales reps from the drum companies who service your state. No one is going to give you something for nothing.

Just because you're a good drummer doesn't mean that you will get endorsed or deserve to be endorsed. If you're in a famous band, regardless of how well you do or don't play, you will get endorsed. Unfortunately some drum companies do put some of their endorsees on clinic tours when they do not have drumming or people skills to do so, which is totally counter productive for all parties involved.

Please understand that the clinician circuit does not need another Virgil Donati or John Blackwell clone etc. There are way too many copycat drummers in the world, and they are all so boring and predictable. It's much easier to "imitate than to innovate".

If you are serious about getting into the clinician circuit, make sure that you have a totally unique style and that you have great self promotion, selling, teaching, presentation and people skills and always have an up to date biography on hand. On top of this you have to be an amazing player.

You will need to get to know the sales reps who visit your local music stores as well as the people at your local music store who arrange clinics and ask them what it is they want and look for in a clinician. Remember, people don't want to see just another clone; they want to see something new so that they can be inspired. Every great drummer in this world has their own sound and this has nothing to do with technical ability (Ringo Starr, Mick Fleetwood, Steve Gadd, Max Roach, Phil Rudd, Marco Minnemann, Karen Carpenter, Billy Cobham, Phil Collins) etc.

### **Tell me a bit about Chris Brien Drumming System.**

The Chris Brien Drumming System is mapped out in my book Progressive Rhythms, one of the most comprehensive drum books ever released, and focuses on the following areas:

**RHYTHMIC STUDIES**  
**1/8 NOTE AND 1/16 NOTE ROCK BEATS (320 BEATS)**  
**LAYERED GROOVES**  
**SHUFFLE BEATS (150 BEATS)**  
**LAYERED SHUFFLE GROOVES**  
**FUNKADIDDLES**  
**MIXED STICKINGS**  
**ACCENTED 1/16 NOTES**  
**ACCENTED TRIPLETS**  
**LATIN RHYTHMS**  
**1/16 NOTE PERMUTATIONS**  
**1/8 NOTE TRIPLET PERMUTATIONS**  
**OSTINATOS (60 EXAMPLES)**  
**SOLO EXERCISES**  
**TRIPLET BASED SOLO EXERCISES**  
**M.L.R.G'S (MULTI-LAYERED RHYTHMIC GROOVES)**  
**THE ESSENTIAL 48 SNARE DRUM RUDIMENTS**

There are literally tens of thousands of combinations within the Chris Brien Drumming System. One of the many unique features of "PROGRESSIVE RHYTHMS" is that anyone who purchases a copy gets free access to video files at [www.chrisbrien.com](http://www.chrisbrien.com) that demonstrate and explain many of the fundamental patterns and exercises in Progressive Rhythms.

**With the advancement of drum systems such as yours, the emphasis now put on hand and foot techniques and the floating feet techniques, what are we going to see players capable of in the decades to come?**

The drum kit is the fastest evolving instrument in the world today. Classical composers are now using more percussion in their music than ever before. With the advancement of hand and foot techniques the only limitations are what we and future drummers put upon themselves. The internet has totally revolutionized drumming by giving access to drummers all over the world on how to play what was once considered impossible, including such techniques as playing fast single stroke rolls with one hand or playing 7 or more rhythms simultaneously. We are still going to have great groove players and drum soloists in future but we are also going to have the musical monsters that compose incredible music and can play the most amazing drum solos while also playing keyboards with one hand and singing at the same time. I feel the best person to answer this question would be Kenwood Denard.

## What goes into writing and/or producing an instructional DVD?

I've discussed this with several other drummers who have also released instructional DVD's, and we all agree that most drummers don't understand the amount of work and money it takes to produce an instructional DVD. A lot of work goes into writing and producing the DVD, as all of the material has to be original. Myself, I have released three instructional DVD's to date, and I have plans of releasing a fourth in 2008.

Firstly, you have to develop your pieces/solos etc, so as you can play them in your sleep, as there is little time on the film set of an instructional DVD for 2nd and 3rd takes. Time is money in expensive recording studios. If you have several takes at recording a track and you're filming with 6 different cameras this makes the editing process extremely difficult, frustrating, confusing and expensive, so you have to make sure that what you are going to put down is 100% comfortable!

**CHRIS BRIEN**  
**WORLD RHYTHMS**  
百乐文的鼓乐世界

01. Cascara
02. Feet First
03. Bomba
04. African Six
05. Australia
06. Puerto Rico
07. Cuba
08. Ethiopia
09. Iraq
10. Sudan
11. Mozambique
12. Somalia
13. Uruguay
14. Walking with elephants
15. The Belly Dance
16. Five
17. Guaguango

中国唱片广州公司出版 出品人：罗天平  
ISRC CN-F13-07-344-00A16  
互动和弦影视文化有限公司录制、发行 发行人：安爽  
MUTUAL CHORD VIDEO CULTURE CO.,LTD.  
Tel: 020-38207371 38207391 38207392 38207393  
Fax: 020-38207370  
E-mail: mutualchord@163.net  
Http://www.mcmusic.com.cn (中文网址: 互动和弦)

录音室：互动和弦 & 录音室  
Sound Check Recording Station, Noise Gate  
Recording Studios and JMC Recording Studios.  
作曲、编曲、监制：CHRIS BRIEN(百乐文)  
网址：www.chrisbrien.com (百乐文网址)  
后期DAM：周子 平面设计：张文涛

ISBN 978 7 88714 319 2  
9 787887 143192 >  
录音室：互动和弦 MC-009

互动和弦  
MC-9022

CHRIS BRIEN 百乐文的鼓乐世界  
WORLD RHYTHMS

**CHRIS BRIEN**  
**WORLD RHYTHMS**  
百乐文的鼓乐世界

Hi-Fi喇叭试验室 DAM 数字音频技术

## What do you have coming up in the new year?

I am releasing a new solo CD entitled World Rhythms By Chris Brien. The release date is December 2nd 2007. A Chinese based record company called Mutual Chord asked me in July of 2007 to release a solo CD, which was a great honor as very few drummers are asked to release solo drum albums by record companies that usually only deal with singers, bands and orchestras. World Rhythms is my 2nd CD release to date. In 2008, I will be doing a lot of clinics and drum seminars in China on behalf of Tom Lee Music, Gretsch Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Latin Percussion, Gibraltar Hardware and Vic Firth Drumsticks. As well as performing with different artists and teaching lots of drummers how to improve their lives by having fun playing drums and percussion.

For more information on Chris click on the links below

[WWW.CHRISBRIEN.COM](http://WWW.CHRISBRIEN.COM)

[WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHRISBRIEN](http://WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHRISBRIEN)

# When your this good they call you



# MR.

by Jill Schettler

Like the assembly of boundless anticipation surrounding myself, I, too, awaited his greatness. Myself, and the countless other fanatics each spanning multiple generations and hierarchy, simultaneously buzzed with speculations of the evening's events. Regardless of who we were or why we were there, the topic of every conversation rested on the lone and lustrous red kit glistening on the vacant stage. It was this particular kit that concealed the unforeseen secrets of its owner and the evening to come.

At the moment I felt my anxiety reach its peak, the M.C swaggered onstage and eagerly greeted the theatre's patrons with the anticipated "thanks so much for coming." He then followed up with these six magical words that I will remember always: "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Dennis Chambers!" Without delay, the house erupted in a grandiose ovation fit for a king, as I sat upright in my seat, straining to catch a glimpse of the virtuoso.

From the back of the theatre, stepped a man of confidence, grace, and colossal determination. Entourage by his side, Mr. Chambers sauntered down the long aisle to the pulse of the vibrant crowd's uproar and continued all the way to his throne. Naturally, the moment Dennis reached his throne was marked with absolute silence as a hush fell over his disciples respectively. It was then that he grabbed his sticks and began to play.

Retrospectively, I'll admit I found myself dumbstruck and astonished by his mere presence let alone his extremely accurate and inspirational performance. I couldn't help it! No one in the theatre could. It was unmistakably Dennis Chambers, the Dennis Chambers; and, yet, I found myself needing to analyze his every move just to confirm that, in fact, it was Dennis—drummer extraordinaire for Steely Dan, John Scofield, George Clinton, and most recently Carlos Santana—in session before me. It was his strict and controlled composure while at the kit that acted as my first affirmation, and then when he hit us with his signature warp-speed tom rolls (with his eyes closed I might add), I was a believer. All I can say is, "Wow!"

We have all experienced times like these that are so mind-blowing and surreal, and it is these moments that are some of the most intimidating and valuable learning experiences that you will have to go through as a musician. So many emotions in such a short period of time. For your reading pleasure, I have devised three categories through which I hope to explain my own experience at a Dennis' clinic. Enjoy!

**Phase One- The Flabbergasted Phase:** Your initial reaction when coming face to face with an inspirational legend is as follows: you find yourself absolutely amazed by said player, your eyes are wide, your jaw dropped, and perhaps there's even a little trickle of drool running down your chin. Not pretty, but hey...it happens!

**Phase Two- The Self-Evaluation Phase:** This is the turning point when you collect yourself, and begin a self-reflecting, maybe self-bashing "I'm not as good as" phase. This is the hardest part of the experience, and self-esteem can get pretty low at times. Intimidation rules in this phase.



Photo: Ronn Dunnet

## DrumSoloArtist.com

The internet's  
most innovative  
site for drummers

Links  
Techniques  
Classifieds  
Drum Wiki  
Black Page back issues

click here to go to  
[drumsoloartist.com](http://drumsoloartist.com)



[www.theblackpage.net](http://www.theblackpage.net)

**Phase Three- The Cop-out Phase:** Lastly, you go through Phase 3, which is what I like to refer to as the Cop-out Phase, and it goes a little something like this: "Alright, I think I've got it! I've discovered his secret....it's the gum. It has to be! I mean he doesn't play a beat without it. I don't know maybe I'm reaching, but it just doesn't seem real. He must be superhuman!" Indeed, every great musician has his or her own ritual, whether it's wearing lucky socks, religious rituals, or sippin' on gin and juice; however, I don't think it is enough to add "other-worldly" aspects to their playing (as deep down I think you already know). To me, the real reason we reach the Cop-out Phase is that we adopt Phase 2 (the Self-Evaluation Phase) in a negative way. Sure, there may be some forms of our playing that are not inline with what we want, but why does the acknowledgment of these shortcomings have to be negative? Couldn't this experience be viewed as a positive one, since you are becoming consciously aware of techniques you can upgrade to establish yourself as a better player?

Referring back to my own experience, these phases were quite relevant. As Mr. Chambers dazzled his audience with rhythm and meter (for over an hour I'd like to add), I began to self-evaluate my own musicianship. Yes, I, too uncovered a few things I didn't like. Am I the best musician that I can be, or should I be pushing harder? Will I ever get to this level? and so forth. We all go through this at one point in our career. Even Dennis, who hasn't practised since the age of 18, admitted to his audience that now it was time to arrange practise times into his busy schedule. Wow! Suddenly I don't feel so bad about myself. I guess you just have to keep reminding yourself that life is a continuous learning experience, and we are always learning and growing in our craft. And, sure, you may find out things that can really bum you out at times, but in the end, it can be empowering once you overcome said feat.

Needless to say, this month I encourage you to attend even one drum clinic. Follow up on your idols for that necessary ego-check, and strive to be the player you desire to be. Plus, imagine what you'll learn from the experience. I mean, look at me! I got all of this inspiration and an article out of my experience, and all for just 10 bucks!!! Why not, right?

# EXERCISES FOR MOBILITY

BY RYAN CARVER

THE FOLLOWING EXERCISES ARE DESIGNED TO HELP YOU MOVE AROUND YOUR DRUMSET SMOOTHLY AND WITH EASE. THESE ARE NOT INTENDED TO SEE HOW FAST YOU CAN MOVE, BUT ARE SUPPOSED TO HELP YOU MOVE FREELY AROUND THE KIT TO EXECUTE YOUR IDEAS SMOOTHLY. START SLOW AND MAKE SURE EACH STROKE AND MOTION FROM DRUM TO DRUM IS RELAXED, AND PLAYED THE SAME WAY EACH TIME FOR ACCURACY. YOU CAN SLOWLY START TO INCREASE THE SPEED. DON'T SACRIFICE YOUR SOUND QUALITY JUST TO PLAY FASTER. EVENTUALLY YOU CAN BUILD UP TO THE FASTER TEMPOS. IF YOU ARE PLAYING A 4 PIECE KIT, JUST LEAVE OUT THE MIDDLE TOM, OR IF YOU HAVE MORE TOMS ADD THEM IN. TRY TO MAKE YOUR OWN PATTERNS AS WELL.

- 1 THIS EXERCISE MOVES AROUND THE KIT IN A CLOCKWISE MOTION. THE FIRST STROKE IS ON THE FLOOR TOM TO AVOID ANY CROSSOVERS.



- 2 THIS ONE MOVES AROUND THE KIT CLOCKWISE, THEN BACK UP THE KIT COUNTERCLOCKWISE. PLAY A PARADIDDLE AT EACH END TO AVOID A CROSSOVER.



- 3 THIS ONE IS CALLED "SEVEN UP, SEVEN DOWN", AND WAS SHOWN TO ME BY A FRIEND. YOU PLAY SEVEN STROKES UP AND DOWN THE KIT. IT CAN BE DIFFICULT AT FASTER TEMPOS BECAUSE OF THE SHORTER AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT ON EACH DRUM.



**Ryan Carver is a member of the Academy of Drums faculty as well as the Vic Firth education team and the Percussive Arts Society. Feel free to contact Ryan if you have any questions or groove ideas. Click on his image to link to his website.**





# Presents clinician **Billy Ward**

**Sunday, December 16th - 7pm at The Exchange  
2431 8th Avenue - Regina, Saskatchewan**



**B.B. King  
Joan Osbourne  
Robbie Robertson  
Carly Simon  
Yoko Ono  
The Knack  
Bill Champlin**

**Tickets \$10 at the door, Music In The House,  
St. John's Music and Sask Music  
Email: [jayzdrumz@yahoo.ca](mailto:jayzdrumz@yahoo.ca) for more info**

**Thank you to our sponsors:**

**Zildjian**

**SASKO MUSIC**

**EVANS**  
DRUMHEADS

**TRUeline**  
Drumsticks

**THE BLACK PAGE**

**drums**  
**DW**

**D'Addario**

**St. John's**  
**Music**

**SHURE**

# REVENGE OF THE

# DRUMMING GEEK

by Jayson Brinkworth

In this month's article, I want to share my thoughts on being a drum geek. I know you are thinking, "What is a drum geek, and why would I want to be one?" My definition of the term "drum geek" is this: a drummer who is very passionate about drumming and music; he or she loves to talk about drum gear, talk about drummers and music, watch and listen to drummers play, read about technique and licks, and just generally be consumed by their love of drumming. I am a drum geek, and I am sure that if you are reading this article right now, you fit into this category as well.

Have you ever spent time with other drummers and just went on and on about new drum gear? DRUM GEEK. Have you spent hours on the internet watching clips of drummers playing? DRUM GEEK. Do you read the liner notes on CD's to see who played drums on what tracks? DRUM GEEK. Do you own so much gear that you have to keep some at another residence? DRUM GEEK. I think I should turn this subject into a spin off of Jeff Foxworthy's "You might be a redneck". I will call it "You might be a drum geek", email me at [jayzdrumz@yahoo.ca](mailto:jayzdrumz@yahoo.ca) with your answers, and I will include them in an upcoming Black Page issue.

The best part about being a drum geek is that we are constantly learning new things. I remember being in high school and wanting to learn everything about drums and drumming. I would ask questions, read magazine, listen to a lot of music and watch whatever live music I could. It was different back in those days (I know, I sound old), but there was no internet and only a hand full of drumming video resources (thanks to Star Licks for these, they are great). I spent hours reading Modern Drummer and learning from authors like Roy Burns and Ronald Spagnardi. I would also try and get in touch with any drummers coming through town to pick their brain on drumming and music. One drummer that I ended up hanging out with a lot was Jeff Randolph. Jeff was the drummer in a Florida based band that would be in Canada playing a couple of times a year. He had attended the University of Miami for music and was a wealth of knowledge. When we would get together we would discuss the Moeller method, work through funk grooves and licks, and record ourselves playing. We would also work with the click and listen to great music by Tower of Power, Sly and the Family Stone, Chicago and many others. These lessons were so valuable. I thank you, Jeff, for your time and wisdom.

I still to this day, will try and track down drummers when they are through town, I just need to learn and love sharing information. Some great moments in my "drummer stalking" history include: hanging out with Mark Schulman while he does his laundry, spending an hour with John Blackwell before a Prince show, supper with Cactus Moser, lunch with Billy Thomas, hanging after the show with Billy Kilson , long chats with Dom Famularo and Dave Weckl and many other very positive experiences.

## TEACHING MUSIC in 2007

As teachers in this day and age, we have access to some amazing resources in our musical journey. The internet is an extremely inspiring tool, as well as all of the instructional DVD's out there. Drum companies also have educational spots on their websites for all to enjoy and learn. All of this information can be inspiring, but can also be confusing if we don't know what to look for.

In the remainder of the article, I have listed some of these resources that will let you see and hear great drummers playing, and get some very valuable lessons for your own playing. If you have any questions, please contact myself, or if you have any particular sites that you visit, let me know.



This is my favorite, thanks to Bernhard Castiglioni for all of his hard work. Here you will find everything drumming, from video and audio clips, music, books, to pictures and bios of your favorite players. This is where you can read about drummers you don't know and learn a lot about the history of this instrument. Go to the video collection and watch all of the incredible players. You can also go to the drum clinic section and get lessons from Peter Erskine, Stanton Moore, Keith Carlock, Freddie Gruber, and Joe Morello. Again, too many to list, but you will be a better musician for this.

I love being away on a gig and taking a few hours on a Saturday afternoon to just "Geek Out" on the computer and take all of this in. Check out all of the sections on the site; you will find some very cool stuff, and learn a lot. Also, keep your practice pad close by the computer as you will be inspired to play after watching for a while.

### OTHER EDUCATIONAL SITES

Quite a few drum companies have great instructional audio and video on their sites as well. The most notable is probably Vic Firth. These lessons aren't just drumset; you will find marching, classical percussion, and Latin throughout. [www.vicfirth.com](http://www.vicfirth.com)

Evans drumheads also has an educational element on their site, and it is located in the media library. You can watch clips from Chris Pennie, Chad Wackerman, and Billy Cobham, have some conga lessons with Brian Kilgore or hear an interview with Dennis Chambers. The list goes on and on, but again it is not limited to just drumset. [www.evansdrumheads.com](http://www.evansdrumheads.com)

Remo also has a wonderful site with education available. Click on drumming in the toolbar and you find lessons on developing your sound, hand techniques, the history of Latin percussion instruments and many other subjects. Remo also has resources on world drumming and drum circles for all hand drumming enthusiasts. [www.remo.com](http://www.remo.com)

Zildjian has lesson online as well. Go to the Zildjian-U icon and find percussionist resources. Here you will find lessons on cymbals sounds and playing from Ed Soph, John Riley, Steve Smith and others. They also have plenty of education on cymbals in classical music as well as marching. [www.zildjian.com](http://www.zildjian.com)

### TO GEEK OR NOT TO GEEK

We can spend hours researching, watching, listening and being inspired, the true value in this is applying it to our own practicing. Nothing will replace sitting at your drumset, conga, djembe, timpani, or whatever your drum of choice is, and just playing. Take all of the information you learn from these sites and put it into your own style of playing. In the end, this is what a being a creative musician is all about. And finally, try being a drum geek for a little while, you just might like it.



**Jayson Brinkworth is an accomplished drummer, percussionist, vocalist and admitted drum geek. Click on the link below to visit his website.**

**[www.jaysonbrinkworth.com](http://www.jaysonbrinkworth.com)**

# The Final Word



MY BEST INVESTMENT IS MY  
IMAGINATION BECAUSE IT HAS  
NEVER FAILED TO BRING ME MY  
GREATEST RETURNS.

RANDY CASTILLO  
1950 - 2002