

Jason Harnell

8014 Lesner Avenue
Lake Balboa, CA 91406 | 818-414-9184
jharnell@gmail.com | jasonharnell.com

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Coming from a musical family, Jason was practically born with drum sticks in his hands and started playing drums at the ripe old age of six when close family friend and jazz drumming legend, Louie Bellson gave Jason his first real set of drums. Jason's father, Joe Harnell, was a Grammy award winning pianist, composer, and arranger, who's credits range from musical director for Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee and Judy Garland, to the Mike Douglas Show, to composing music for such television series as "The Incredible Hulk" and "The Bionic Women". Jason's mother, Margaret Crockett, was a jazz vocalist who performed with Dick Hyman, Paul Whiteman, and Hank Jones.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Jason has almost 40 years of teaching experience and is one of the most in demand drum set educators in his field. Jason began teaching drum lessons at age fifteen when hired by a local Florida music store to teach private drum lessons. Prior to graduating high school, Jason was hired by two Pinellas County high schools (Countryside and Tarpon Springs) to instruct and compose for their percussion ensembles and drumlines. He worked with both schools for two years and took top honors at statewide competitions numerous times (1988-89).

Jason is currently on faculty as a lecturer in jazz drum performance at the University California Irvine (2004-present) and California State Northridge (2019-present) Jason was also on the faculty at Musicians Institute in Hollywood for 15 years (2005-2020). At MI, Jason taught private lessons, open (career) counseling sessions and an advanced jazz drum set class he wrote the curriculum for, entitled "Bebop and Beyond: Developing Musical Creativity on the Drum Set".

Jason has appeared as a guest lecturer/clinician at such fine institutions as Cornell University, California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), University Nevada Reno, University of Kansas, Morehead University Kentucky, Saddleback College, Cuesta College, University California Los Angeles (UCLA), University Southern California (USC), Cal State University Northridge (CSUN) and at University California Irvine (UCI). Jason has conducted master classes, clinics and workshops in Australia, Denmark, Canada, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Sweden, Liechtenstein, and Japan.

Some of Jason's teaching methods include:

- Developing creativity
- Technical studies (hands and feet) -- grip, posture, balance, rudiments, Moeller stroke, Wilcoxon, Cirone, Chaffee, Dawson, Riley, etc.
- Developing your touch/sound on the instrument
- 4-way Coordination/Independence
- Swing, Bebop, Post Bop and current jazz drumming styles
- Establishing an effective daily practice routine
- Soloing on the drum set (in all meters- over song forms, vamps, etc.)
- The art of accompanying (comping)
- Odd meters/Compound meters
- Brush technique
- Ride Cymbal approach
- History of jazz and jazz drumming (past and present)
- Funk Drumming concepts
- Linear and Layered Sticking patterns
- World Music studies (Afro-Cuban; Brazilian; Indian; African)
- Drum set adaptations of Ted Reed's Syncopation book
- Developing vocabulary on the drum set
- Developing your inner clock
- Improving your feel/groove
- Metronome techniques for developing a stronger inner clock
- The history of the drum set
- Professional and music business skills
- Transcribing/memorizing solos
- Advanced rhythmic techniques (displacement, polyrhythmic overlap, rhythmic expansion/contraction, etc.)
- Odd Groupings/Polyrhythms
- Drum Solos: The art of developing a musical/logical drum solo
- Balance (in life and behind the drums)
- Composition
- Interpretation of graphic scores
- Learning to play by ear
- Memorizing tunes/chord progressions
- Live performance and recording techniques
- Developing a personal sound/approach on the drum set
- The art of improvisation
- Drumming in the now. "Don't think...feel"
- Creative use of APPs, loops and visual elements
- Multimedia explorations
- Thinking outside the box

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE:

Jason was only eleven years old when he worked his first professional job in St. Petersburg, Florida with his grandfather, saxophonist and bandleader Dick Crockett. He worked regularly with his grandfather's seven-piece dance band and by the time he was in high school he was also gigging locally with a wide variety of musicians.

Shortly after relocating to Los Angeles in 1990, Jason landed the prestigious Maynard Ferguson gig and toured all over the world with Maynard from 1991-94. Jason recorded the critically acclaimed album "These Cats Can Swing" with Maynard in 1992. Other roadwork included extensive touring with contemporary jazz keyboardist Keiko Matsui from 1997-99 and vocalist Helen Reddy from 1999-2000.

Jason has been a major contributor to the Southern California jazz scene for over thirty years. He has lead a popular monthly residency gig at the world famous Baked Potato in Studio City, CA for over 20 years. These performances are consistently sold out and feature the finest jazz musicians from Los Angeles, New York and elsewhere. Jason is consistently creative and swinging whether playing straight ahead jazz or free explorations. He has performed, recorded and toured with many of the world's top jazz musicians including Ben Monder, Larry Goldings, Mark Turner, Bob Sheppard, Dave Douglas, Anthony Wilson, Alan Ferber, Kate McGarry, Steve Cardenas, Theo Bleckmen, Joel Harrison, Ben Wendel, Rick Margitza, John Beasley, Alan Pasqua, Walter Smith III, Kei Akagi, Jack Sheldon & Maynard Ferguson. Jason is also a member of the long established Los Angeles Jazz Quartet featuring Larry Koonse, Chuck Manning and Darek Oles.

Jason is the co-leader of five separate critically acclaimed original bands. Formed in 2002, **JoE-LeSs ShOe** is an eclectic, bass-less trio featuring Matt Otto on saxophone and Jamie Rosenn on guitar. JoE-LeSs ShOe has four albums out on Jazz Collective Records. **3-ish**, the adventurous chord-less trio co-lead by bassist Ryan McGillicuddy, Matt Otto and Harnell has been together since 2004 and has two albums out on Jazz Collective Records. **Sigmund Fudge** is an electric modern jazz quartet formed in 2010 featuring Joe Bagg on Fender Rhodes, Jamie Rosenn on guitar and Ryan McGillicuddy on bass. Sigmund Fudge released their debut, self titled album in October of 2016. Another of Jason's collaborative efforts is the daring keyboard/drum duo project known as, **GO SHLOMO!. GS!** released their first album in 2014 on Fboo records and features Grammy Nominated keyboardist, Adam Benjamin from the popular band, Kneebody. **The Ithaca Trio**, where free improvisation, jazz and Americana come together in a bold and impressionistic trio, features Adam Benjamin on piano/rhodes and Storm Nilsen on guitar released their first album "Jazz Goes Up" on Sam First records in January 2024. All five of these bands focus on original compositions, with each group displaying a unique ability to traverse boundaries while exploring the very deepest levels of empathetic group interplay and improvisation.

In 2017, Jason launched his most personal and ambitious project to date, the **Jason Harnell Solo Drum Experience**: a live one-of-a-kind, sense tingling multimedia exploration through sight, sound and rhythm. It's a completely unique and inclusive experience, as well as being interactive, imaginative and fun (even for non-musicians!) Jason has performed his solo drum experience to sold out crowds and delighted audiences at colleges and venues all over the country. His very first solo album, "TOTAL HARNAGE" was released in May 2019 on Fboo Records and his second solo album, "HARNOLOGY" was just released in December 2023.

DISCOGRAPHY:

Ithaca Trio: Jazz Goes Up (2024); Jason Harnell: HARNOLOGY (2023); JoE-LeSs ShOe: Old Soles (2023); The Ornerly Coleman Trio: The Ornerly Coleman Trio (2022); Jason Harnell: TOTAL HARNAGE (2019); Los Angeles Jazz Quartet: Live at Jazz Odra (2019); Jamie Shew: Eyes Wide Open (2018); Sigmund Fudge: Sigmund Fudge (2016); Trio Eclectic: Trio Eclectic (2014); JoE-LeSs ShOe: MidSole (2013); 3-ish: Events (2013); GO SHLOMO: GO SHLOMO! (2013); Matt Otto: Broken Waltz (2012); Duane Allen: In Transit (2011); Mike Scott: Fallen Peach (2011); Lulee Fisher; The Great American Songwriters (2011); Matt Otto: La Commune (2010); JoE-LeSs ShOe: Outsole (2010); Innocent When You Dream: Celebrating the Music of Tom Waits (2010); 3-ish: Baobab (2009); Los Angeles Jazz Collective: Sampler Vol. 1 (2008); Roger Cairns: Let's... (2008); Kimberly Ford: Songs in the Key of Sea (2007); JoE-LeSs ShOe: JoE-LeSs ShOe (2007); Ronnie Crumbly: Like Father, Like Son (2004); Robert Kyle: Northern Roads (2003); Steve Venz: Scoop (2003); Lulee Fisher: In Love Again (2002); Bill Fulton: Time (2001); Jonathan Dane: Very Life (2000); Kenny Kotwitz: The Moon is Blue (2000); Keiko Matsui: Light Above the Trees Concert Video (1999); Robert Kyle: Blue Winds (1999); Levi Chen; Liquid Gardens (1999); Mark Chosak: Perception (1998); Four Feet Down: The Fire Between Us (1998); Robert Van: Penumbra (1997); Debby Yeager: Mood Swings (1996); Robert Kyle: That Other Place (1996); Maynard Ferguson: These Cats Can Swing (1995); Charlie Lustman: The Golden Road (1994); Steady Freedy: Collective Cuts (1993); The University of South Florida Jazz Ensemble I: Suncoast '90 (1990).

Jason can be heard/seen in the Clint Eastwood film "J. Edgar", the Judd Apatow film "Funny People" and the Ridley Scott film "American Gangster". Jason's work can also be heard on the television shows "Tosh.O", "Married with Children", "Beverly Hills 90210" and on commercials for Verizon, Nissan, Chili's, Cheetos, the Houston Chronicle, Taco Bell and Suntory Royal Whisky.

EDUCATION:

Jason attended Seminole High School in Seminole, FL and graduated top of his class in 1988. Jason was section leader of the award winning Seminole High drumline, was in the All-State High School Jazz Band 3 years in a row and received multiple superior ratings at several solo/ensemble contests. Directly out of high school, he

went on to teach, compose and arrange for percussion ensembles and drumlines at local high schools in and around Pinellas County, Florida.

From 1989-1990, Jason attended University of South Florida in Tampa, FL on a jazz performance scholarship and studied under Chuck Owen (I.A.J.E.) and Bob McCormick (percussionist with the Florida Orchestra). Jason was awarded drum set chair in the highly acclaimed University of South Florida Big Band (under the direction of C. Owen) and recorded and toured Scandinavia in his sophomore year. Jason left USF and moved to Los Angeles to tour the world with Maynard Ferguson.

Jason has made it his mission to seek out and study with some of the world's top drummers. He has studied privately, since the age of six, with teachers such as: Louie Bellson; Hank Bellson; Shelly Manne; Lou Vadala; Tom Glaister; Bob McCormick; Joe Porcaro; Vinnie Colaiuta; Dick Wilson; Murray Spivack; Wally Snow; Dave Weckl; Jeff Hamilton; Joe LaBarbara; and Larry Goldings.

PUBLICATIONS/ENDORSEMENTS:

Jason has been featured in such publications as Downbeat Magazine, Jazziz Magazine, Modern Drummer Magazine, DRUM Magazine, the L.A. Jazz Scene and LA Weekly.

Jason currently endorses Yamaha Drums, Istanbul Cymbals, Aquarian Drumheads and Vic Firth Drumsticks.

Jason is a member of the Los Angeles Musician's Union Local 47 and has been a member of the American Federation Of Musicians since 1983.