



Bandleader, composer and much in-demand sideman, Billy Drummond's thrilling, powerful and highly musical playing has made him one of the most called-for players of his generation.

Mentored in the bands of jazz legends **Horace Silver, Joe Henderson, Bobby Hutcherson, J J Johnson** and **Sonny Rollins**, Drummond has gone on to record over 350 albums as a sideman with a veritable [who's who of jazz greats](#). "I consider myself very fortunate to have come up playing with some of the innovators of jazz who, in many instances, helped shape the way this music is and will always be played," says Drummond. "Priceless experience for a young person learning how to be a musician. They taught me how to be a professional – to know the material, to be on time and, most of all, to play from your heart."

Now widely acknowledged as one of today's most versatile drummers, Drummond is equally at home in the avant garde as well as hard-swinging bop realms. He has made three albums as a leader, including his cult-followed *Dubai* (featuring Chris Potter, Walt Weiskopf and Peter Washington), which was picked as the **Number 1 Jazz Album of the Year** by the **New York Times** when it was released. *Dubai* was recently honored as one of the "**50 Crucial Jazz Drumming Recordings of the Past 100 Years**" by *Modern Drummer* magazine – distilling to only 50, "... a century's worth of drumming on jazz recordings, which by any reasonable guess would comprise

tens if not hundreds of thousands of titles.” He has made five albums as a co-leader, including 2016’s *We’ll Be Together Again* (Chesky), in **Three’s Company** – a trio with **Javon Jackson** and legendary bassist, **Ron Carter** – which made many of the year’s Top Ten lists. Acclaimed by Downbeat as “one of the hippest bandleaders now at work,” Drummond is looking forward to recording with his New York band, Freedom of Ideas.

Born in Newport News, Virginia, where he grew up listening to his father’s extensive jazz record collection, Drummond was leading his own bands from the age of eight, and teaching adults from the age of just 14, before going on to study classical percussion at the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music. In the late 1980s, he was encouraged by Al Foster to move to New York, where he was almost immediately recruited to the young band Out of the Blue (OTB), recording *Spiral Staircase* for Blue Note Records. When OTB disbanded, Billy joined Horace Silver’s Sextet, simultaneously starting life-long associations with Buster Williams and Bobby Hutcherson, and subsequently joining J J Johnson’s band, followed by a three-year stint touring with Sonny Rollins.

Since then, Drummond has performed and recorded with many of the world’s jazz greats, including Horace Silver, Joe Henderson, Bobby Hutcherson, Buster Williams, Steve Kuhn, JJ Johnson, Sonny Rollins, Charles Tolliver, Nat Adderley, Charles McPherson, Eddie Henderson, James Moody, Sheila Jordan, Andrew Hill, Ron Carter, Carla Bley, Eddie Gomez, Larry Willis, Hank Jones, Freddie Hubbard, Lee Konitz, Stanley Cowell, Archie Shepp, Joe Lovano, Javon Jackson, Chris Potter, Eric Reed, Ralph Moore, Vincent Herring, Franco Ambrosetti (Italy), Karin Krog (Norway), Sadao Wantanabe (Japan), Toots Thielemans (Belgium), Barney Wilen (France), Laurent DeWilde (France), Jan Lundgren (Sweden), and Michel LeGrand (France).

A highly respected educator, juggling a busy touring schedule with his duties as Professor of Jazz Drums at the Juilliard School of Music and NYU in New York, Drummond has taught some of the current generation’s best young drummers. “One of the things I love about teaching is having that one student who really gets it and to see

yourself in them,” says Drummond. “I also learn so much about myself from teaching others, not just from a musician standpoint but who I am as a person.”