

Short Bio

Three time Grammy™ Award-Winning Drummer Ulysses Owens Jr., known for being a drummer who (*The New York Times*) has said “take[s] a back seat to no one,” and “a musician who balances excitement gracefully and shines with innovation.”

Performer, producer and educator Ulysses Owens Jr. goes the limit in the jazz world and beyond; claiming eight successful albums of his own. Owens has also gained special attention for his performances on GRAMMY Award-winning albums by Kurt Elling and The Christian McBride Big Band . In addition to five GRAMMY Award Nominated albums with Joey Alexander, Christian McBride Trio, John Beasley’s Monk’estra, and Gregory Porter.

Both Jazziz and Rolling Stone Magazines picked his album “*Songs of Freedom*,” as a Top Ten Album for 2019 and in 2021; his most recent Big Band release, “*Soul Conversations*,” was voted the top album in May 2021 by Jazziz Magazine. “*Soul Conversations*,” received rave reviews and was added to multiple playlists on Apple Music, Spotify, and Sirius XM; and now the band is touring nationally. The Ulysses Owens Jr. Big Band has also been voted “*Rising Star Big Band* ” of 2022 by Downbeat Magazine.

His upcoming eighth album release *A New Beat*, will feature his new “Generation Y” Band on the Cellar Jazz record label. The album was produced by Jeremy Pelt and recorded at the legendary Rudy Van Gelder Studios, in New Jersey.

As an author Ulysses has published two books titled: *Jazz Brushes for the Modern Drummer: An Essential Guide to the Art of Keeping Time*, and “*The Musicians Career Guide: Turning Your Talent into Sustained Success*,” distributed by Simon and Schuster. His third book, *Jazz Big Band for the Modern Drummer: The Essential Guide to the Large Ensemble*, for Hal Leonard Publications will be released in January, 2024. He is also a regular contributing writer for the WJCT Jacksonville Music Experience, Downbeat Magazine, Jazz Times Magazine, Percussive Arts Journal, and an Op- Ed contributor the Florida Times Union Newspaper.

As an educator Ulysses has been part the jazz faculty at The Juilliard School as Small Ensemble Director for over seven years ; served on the EDIB (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging) committee. He has also served on multiple panels, and taught various workshops within the Alan D. Marks Entrepreneurship division. He is also the Artistic Director for his family’s arts non-profit organization in Jacksonville, Florida called “Don’t Miss A Beat,” and the newly appointed Artistic Director for the Friday Musicale Summer Jazz Camp in Jacksonville Florida. He has a three-year appointment as the Educational Artist in Residence for SF Performances in San Francisco, CA. He has also recently been asked to join the Drumeo Online Educational Platform as their

Inaugural Jazz Drum Instructor and is developing the curriculum for his interactive course, *"30 Days to Becoming a Jazz Drummer,"* that will launch in June, 2024.

Ulysses remains consistently in demand for new projects, and consulting opportunities,; remaining one of the most sought-after thought-leaders of his generation. Yet what matters to him consistently is giving back and continuing to be grateful for a new day to make a difference in the lives of others.

Ulysses received his Bachelor Fine Arts from The Juilliard School in 2006 and was the 1st African American Jazz Drummer to be admitted to their Inaugural Jazz Program in 2001. He is currently slated to pursue his Master's Degree in Jazz Performance and Arts Administration at Florida State University in the Fall of 2024.