



ULYSSES OWENS JR., LLC

**Ulysses Owens Jr.**  
**Drummer / Composer / Educator / Producer / Entrepreneur**

Ulysses Owens Jr. is an artist “who takes a backseat to no one” – *The New York Times* – seems to describe his remarkable ascent as one of today’s premier drummers, or perhaps, his evolution as a producer, composer, educator, and entrepreneur.

Owens has established himself as a leader in his generation of jazz artists, admired for his sensitive, fiery and complex playing, vivid display of textural nuance, and gift for propelling a band with charisma and integrity. Both humble in person and imposing behind a kit, he is a graduate of the inaugural Jazz Studies Program at The Juilliard School, a two-time Grammy® Award winner, and he earned his stripes as a member of bassist Christian McBride’s acclaimed trio and the driving force of McBride’s big band.

Ulysses received his first Grammy® in 2010 for his performance on Kurt Elling's "Dedicated To You", and his second Grammy® for the Christian McBride Big Band album "The Good Feeling." In addition to the two Grammy® Awards, he has also received four Grammy® nominations for his work with Christian McBride and Joey Alexander.

Owens is incredibly versatile and has toured and recorded with artists including Christian McBride, Wynton Marsalis, Kurt Elling, Diane Schuur, Renee Fleming, Monty Alexander, Russell Malone, and Mulgrew Miller.

Ulysses has released three albums of his own beginning in 2009 with “It's Time For U”, which featured four original compositions and arrangements. His second album, “Unanimous,” was released on the European jazz label Criss Cross, and “Onward and Upward” was released in 2014 on the D-Clef Record Label. As co-leader of New Century Jazz Quintet, he has released two albums with the Japanese record label Spice Of Life, “Time is Now” and “In Case You Missed Us”.

As a producer, Owens is gaining international prominence, with nearly 30 albums to his credit. *JazzTimes* describes his production on vocalist Olivia Foschi’s debut album, “Perennial Dreamer,” as “fresh, innovative, and refreshingly uplifting.... appealing to a new generation of listeners, while still honoring jazz as a tradition.” His album for vocalist Abiah, “Life As A Ballad,” climbed the Top 20 Billboard Charts in the latter part of 2012, and Soul Train Music Awards voted “On A Turquoise Cloud” – an album he produced for Soprano Candice Hoyes – as one of the Best Albums of 2015.

In 2008, Owens and his family founded the non-for-profit organization, Don’t Miss a Beat, Inc. with the mission of combining music and art with a focus on academic achievement, civic engagement and empowering inner city students to strive for their dreams. Under his leadership a cross-cultural student exchange was created, culminating in an enriching excursion to Paris for 12 students, and the organization has been endorsed by the City of Jacksonville.

At heart, Owens approaches music at a spiritual level, blending his musical lineage with his own eloquent, swinging drum sound. "I am most competitive with myself. It's not so much about my drumming as it is about connecting to everyone else in the band, and helping communicate what they need to say." It's a philosophy that is taking him everywhere he wants to go. Ulysses has been honored with a 2015 Jazz At Lincoln Center Swing Award, 2014 Global Music Award, 2013 ASCAP Plus Award, was designated a 2014 Downbeat Rising Star, and appeared as a TED X Jacksonville performer. He continues touring extensively and remains in demand for new projects.

In 2015, Owens debuted his multi-disciplinary project "Ulysses in 3", as a result of his artist in residence at the Park Avenue Armory in their Under Construction Series. The project, a collaboration with artistic mediums of Music, Dance, Spoken Word and Abstract Art, explored the work of celebrated choreographer Ulysses Dove, "Ulysses" the novel by James Joyce, and his personal compositional work.

In the summer of 2015, he was recommended by Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center to compose a work for the Museum of Modern Art Summergarden Series, and he premiered "Stages Of Us", a seven-movement suite, at their sculpture garden.

As an entrepreneur and curator, Ulysses began his journey producing a concert series at the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, New York. Invited by the church's Minister of Music and Fine Arts, James Davis Jr., he served as Artistic Director for The Abyssinian Baptist Church's Jazz Vesper Series for three seasons, presenting a vast array of artists from Regina Carter to Cyrus Chestnut, and many others. Upon the conclusion of that concert series, Owens was tapped by Restaurateur Alexander Smalls to be the Artistic Music Curator for the fall 2015 music series at the Legendary Minton's Jazz Club in Harlem, programming over 85 shows in 3 months.

Ulysses believes that "Music is a universal language and has the ability to heal the soul". His life and career are embodiments of this vision, bringing music that is inspiring and healing to audiences globally.

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