

Ulysses Owens Jr.

Drummer. Educator. Author. Creative Entrepreneur.

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 nominated albums with Joey Alexander, Christian McBride Trio, John Beasley’s Monk’estra, and Gregory Porter. Both Jaziz 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*,” was released on the the Outside In Music Label and received rave reviews; was added to multiple playlists on Apple Music, Spotify, and Sirius XM, and now the band is touring nationally.

Ulysses is also the creator of multiple online jazz drum video courses: “*Finding Your Beat*,” “*The Art of Swing*” and “*Jazz Drumming 101: Everything you need to know to get the gig*,” for Open Studio. He also created, filmed, and produced his own entrepreneurial course for drummers titled “*Be More Than A Drummer*” which teaches drummers how to expand beyond the instrument and accomplish whatever they dream of entrepreneurially. Ulysses was also host of the highly successful weekly live YouTube series, “*From The Drummer’s Perspective*,” for Open Studio where he has interviewed Lewis Nash, Terri Lynn Carrington, Nate Smith, Peter Erskine, Matt Wilson, Herlin Riley, Chris “Daddy” Dave, Cindy Blackman and many other legendary drummers.

As an author Ulysses has penned multiple articles for multiple publications (Jazz Times, Downbeat, and Percussive Arts Society.) He has released a Hallmark Drum instructional book titled: “*Jazz Brushes for the Modern Drummer: An Essential Guide to the Art of Keeping Time*,” which is published and distributed by Hal Leonard. His second book which is a career narrative and instructional book about Music Business, Entrepreneurship and Career Development for creative students is titled, “*The Musicians Career Guide: Turning Your Talent into Sustained Success*,” was released by Skyhorse Publishers, and Simon and Schuster on June 8th, 2021 and has been in the a top 5 on Amazon in the Music Business, and Arts and Entrepreneurship book categories.

In addition to his work as an author and musician, Ulysses serves on the faculty at The Juilliard School in the role of Small Ensemble Director. He also serves on the EDIB (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging) committee, and teaches several workshops and courses within the Alan D. Marks Entrepreneurship Center annually.

His passion project is his role as the Artistic Director for his family's non-profit organization, "Don't Miss A Beat," in Jacksonville, Florida that utilizes the arts as a bridge to a better life for "At-Hope" students. In 2021, DMAB produced their Inaugural Community Event, "*The Don't Miss A Beat Jazz Festival*," at Woodstock Park in partnership with the City of Jacksonville and over 2000 people were in attendance. Ulysses has also received the "*Difference Maker*" Award from Beacon College, the "*Robert Arleigh White Advocacy Award*" from the Cultural Council of Northeast Florida; and has been multi-year recipient of the *Individual Artist Grant* from the Community Foundation of Northeast Florida.

Ulysses remains consistently in demand for new projects, and consulting opportunities, remaining one of the most sought-after drummers, educators and 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.