

# Peter O'Brien, Drums

[pobdrums@gmail.com](mailto:pobdrums@gmail.com)

---



Peter O'Brien was born in Flushing, Queens, New York. The son of drummer Bill O'Brien, Peter began playing the drums as soon as he could sit up at the set, playing along with recordings of Miles Davis, John Coltrane and all the greats of jazz. Formal studies with his father began at the age of five.

Peter attended St. Andrew Avellino grammar school and at age seven tried out for and was accepted into the school orchestra, which consisted of seventh and eighth graders. He then received a music scholarship from Power Memorial Academy High School. Peter studied privately with Charlie Perry from age 13 through 17. In 1976, at age 16, Peter attended a drum clinic held by Charlie at Hofstra University. The last week of the clinic featured studies with Jack DeJohnette, whose

interest in Peter led to recommendations to John Ambercrombie, Bill Connors and Miroslav Vitous. After graduating high school, Peter decided to forgo college and dove headfirst into the New York City jazz scene garnering the attention of drummers Jo Jones Jr., Al Foster, Jimmy Lovelace, and Michael Carvin (with whom Peter studied in 1978-79).

After a period of sitting in at jam sessions and gigging around the city, Peter went on the road with various showbands touring the US. In 1982, he toured the US with Brother Jack McDuff and, from 1984-1985, performed all over the US and Canada with the Edgar Winter Band. The band featured the legendary singer Jerry LaCroix (original lead singer for White Trash) and is the only band to perform the jazz-inflected fusion material from Edgar's first groundbreaking record "Entrance" (Epic), as well as his rock and blues music. During this time, Peter also performed several dates with Roy Buchanan, including a sold-out show at the Beacon Theatre with Johnny Winter, Buddy Guy and Junior Wells. From 1986-1987, Peter toured Europe with Mark McMillan (songwriter for Chaka Khan).

In early 1988, Peter moved from NYC to Woodstock, New York, and soon began working with John Hall. In 1989, Peter became a member of Hall's band Orleans (*Still The One, Dance With Me*). Peter has appeared on seven CD's (four with Orleans, three with Hall), three tours of Japan (two with Orleans, one with Hall), and countless US tours and dates (including Woodstock '94) and was the subject of a feature article published in *Modern Drummer's Rhythm and News* (Japan). Peter toured and recorded with Orleans through 2004. Peter also freelanced throughout this period and did other major tours with Dr. Lonnie Smith (Spain 1992), Rory Block (US and Europe 1996-7) and Tracy Nelson (US 1998).

Peter joined saxophonist Eric Person's band, Eric Person and Meta-Four in February of 2001. Eric, Peter and band mates John Esposito (piano) and Kenny Davis (bass) performed at the Guimaraes Jazz Festival in Portugal in November 2002, and "Live at Big Sur" was released in 2003 from their 2001 performance at the Big Sur Jazz Festival.. Peter is also a member of the John Esposito Trio with Ira Coleman on bass. Ira and Peter are featured on Esposito's 2003 release "Down Blue Marlin Road" and saxophonist Jeff Marx's 2003 CD "Treading Air, Breathing Fire". During this period Peter also appeared on the 2004 Esposito Quintet record "The Blue People" with Eric Person, trumpeter Greg Glassman, and Kenny Davis.

Peter continued touring and recording with Eric Person and Meta-Four through 2007 with extensive U.S. tours in 05,06 and 07. Along with performances at major clubs and festivals throughout the U.S., the band gave master classes at many of the top colleges and universities in the country. Peter appeared on two additional CD's with Eric; Reflections and Rhythm Edge released in 2005 and 2007 respectively.

Peter has been a member of pianist, composer Peggy Stern's Estrella Trio since 2005 and is on the 2006 release, Estrella Trio. Performances include Club Kitano in NYC, The Deer Head Inn and The Homer Jazz Festival in Homer Alaska as well as yearly appearances at the Wall St. Jazz Festival in Kingston, NY (2005-2010).

Peter's long association with John Esposito continues to date with appearances on John's latest CD releases: Book of Five Rings (2009), Orisha (2010) and on saxophonist Mitch Kessler's two CD's on John's SunJump Records label; Erratica, and Erlkonig. Other CD's on SunJump that feature Peter are Bloom of Creation, Jayna Nelson; and Earthship, Sangeeta Michael Berardi. Peter also will be on the documentary and recording about Sangeeta by filmmaker Burril Crohn and SunJump Records

2014-15 has been a very busy time for Peter as he has returned to touring with Orleans (including dates playing with Paul Barrere and Fred Tachette fro Little Feat) as well as continued work with both John Esposito (quintet recording featuring Greg Glassman, Stacy Dillard, and Ira Coleman) and Christine Spero (Spero plays Nyro project revisiting Laura Nyro's music to much critical acclaim from both live performances at Mountain Jam, The Cutting Room(nyc) & others and new CD) and many others

In addition to his busy performance schedule, Peter teaches at home and at Bard College and freelances as a studio session player. He has played on national jingles for Continental Airlines, AT&T, Macy's and Burger King. He has also worked as a clinician at Bard College, SUNY New Paltz, and Western Connecticut University.

In 2016, Peter joined The Arlen Roth Band featuring the legendary guitarist. Along with regional northeast dates at esteemed venues such as The Iridium, The Cutting Room in NYC, The Falcon (Marlboro,NY), The Colony Cafe, (Woodstock NY), My Father's Place (Roslyn NY), & The Iron Horse Music Hall (North Hampton Mass.) often with special guests such as John Sebastian, Cindy Cashdollar & Duke Robillard, Peter also joined Arlen for a Midwest Tour in April 2019. The tour concluded with an appearance at Jorma Kaukonen's Fur Peace Ranch where the band also back guitar legend G. E. Smith & was joined by Jorma as well. Prior to the tour the band performed on Don O'Dell's Legends TV show. Unfortunately, Arlen's 2020 spring tour of the Southeast was canceled due to the Coronavirus.

Various performances with John Esposito continued at Bard College featuring Esposito's new compositions in various configurations in preparation for new recording sextet pieces featuring arrangements for three horns.

Peter toured with Blues Guitarist Slam Allen in 201-17, notably at the Blues To Bop Festival in Lugano, Switzerland.

Other performances include The Cafe Lena Jazz Series at the world- famous venue in Saratoga, NY. with pianist Chuck Lamb (Brubeck Bros.) that featured separately; Guitarist Mike Moreno, Alto Saxophone Legend Dick Oatts, Guitarist Mike DeMicco (Brubeck Bros.) & Saxophonist Ken Gioffre (Smokey Robinson) spanning 2016-19.

Other dates during this period included Orleans, The John Hall Reunion Band, The Eric Person Quartet plays The Music of Wayne Shorter & John Coltrane, Hal Galper, Cindy Cashdollar's Rhythm Syncopators, Murali Coryell, Jay Collins, Spero plays Nyro & various others.

2016 also saw the beginning a long, fruitful association with International Singing Great Shiri Zorn & guitar master George Muscattelo playing mostly in the Capital region of NY State. New recording & performances to follow soon! stay tuned...

## **Discography:**

### **Year Recorded Artist Title Label -Release Date**

1991 - Orleans *Orleans Live* Pony Canyon

1991 - Peter Tomlinson *Momentum* Compose

1992 - Lloyd Donnelly *Lloyd Donnelly* 7 Records

1992 - James Finn *Talking With Angels* TWIA)

1993 - John Hall *On A Distant Star* Pioneer LDC

1993 - Artie Traum *Letters From Joubee* Shanachie

1993 - Jay Ungar & Molly Mason *Brother's Keeper Soundtrack* London (Nominated For An Academy Award) 1993 - Betty McDonald, *Standard Elegance* MacDee Records

1994 - Various Artists *Vineyard Sounds* Pioneer LDC

1994 - Various Artists *Where Woodstock Lives* Pioneer LDC

1994 - Orleans *Analog Men* Pioneer LDC

1994 - Various Artists *Woodstock Holidays* Pioneer LDC  
1994 - Lunch Meat *Lunch Meat*  
1996 - Sangeeta Michael Berardi *Earthship* Sunjump -2008  
1996 - Sangeeta Michael Berardi *Calling Coltrane* Sunjump - 2012  
1996 - Orleans *Ride* BMG 1997 - John Esposito *A Book Of Five Rings* Sunjump - 2008  
1998 - John Hall *Recovered* Siren Songs  
1999 - John Hall *Love Doesn't Ask* Siren Songs  
1999 - Jayna Nelson *Bloom Of Creation* Sunjump - 2009  
1999 - Gaye Adegbalola *Bitter Sweet Blues* Alligator - 1999  
2000 - Jonell Mosser *So Like Joy* Siren Songs  
2000 - Mike DeMicco *As The Sun Sets*, Blue Forest  
2000 - Joe Piket *Nine Times Framed*  
2001 - Jim Barbaro *Smashville*  
2002 - Orleans *Still The One Live*, Major Records Label  
2003 - John Esposito *Down Blue Marlin Road*, Sunjump - 2006  
2003 - John Esposito *The Blue People*, Sunjump - 2006  
2003 - Eric Person Meta - Four *Live at Big Sur*, Distinction - 2003  
2003 - Jeff Marx *Treading Air..... Breathing Fire*, Soluna - 2004  
2009 - Mitch Kessler *Erratica*, Sunjump - 2009  
2010 - John Esposito *Orisha*, Sunjump - 2010  
2010 - Mitch Kessler *Der Erlkönig*, Sunjump – 2011  
2011 - Sangeeta Michael Berardi *Mr. P Sessions*, Sunjump  
2013 - Dana Marcine *So Unexpected*  
2015- The Christine Spero Group plays the music of Laura Nyro – *Spero Plays Nyro*, Eltone Music  
2016 - Brian Kastan *Roll The Dice On Life*, Kastan Records  
2017 - Brian Kastan *Not So Standard*, Kastan Records  
2018 - Dana Marcine *To The Horizon*  
2018 - John Esposito *Lyra*, Sunjump

**Gigs With:**

Mose Allison  
Hubert Laws  
Warren Bernhardt  
Pete Levin  
Walter Bishop Jr.  
Mike Manieri  
Rory Block  
Brother Jack McDuff  
Nick Brignola  
J. R. Montrose  
Brubeck Brothers  
Jonell Mosser  
Roy Buchanan  
Bobby Messano

Ira Coleman  
Tracy Nelson  
Murali Coryell  
John Sebastian  
Rick Danko  
Garth Hudson  
Robbie Dupree  
David "Fathead" Newman  
Jay Collins  
Orleans  
Kenny Davis  
Eric Person  
Jack DeJohnette  
Lee Shaw  
Kenny Drew Jr.  
Dr. Lonnie Smith  
Duane Eubanks  
Harvey S.  
John Hall  
Bobby Watson  
Bruce Katz  
Edgar Winter Band  
Dave Kikoski  
Pete Yellin  
Ingrid Jensen  
Steve Wilson

**Festivals:**

Guimaraes Jazz Festival, Portugal  
Savannah Jazz Festival, GA  
Newport Jazz Festival, NYC  
Newport/Friehoffer Jazz Festival Saratoga Springs, NY  
Cleveland Jazz Festival, IL  
Savannah Jazz Festival, GA  
Big Sur Jazz Festival, CA  
The Erie Arts Museum Festival, PA  
Woodstock Festival 1994

**Concerts & Clubs:**

Knitting Factory, NYC  
Blue Note, NYC  
Blue Room, Kansas City, MO

Jazz Gallery, NYC  
Bearsville Theater' Woodstock, NY  
Visiones, NYC  
55 Bar, NYC  
Joe's Pub, NYC  
Jazz Factory, Louisville, KY  
Kleinert James Gallery, Woodstock, NY  
Bottom Line, NYC  
Beacon Theater, NYC  
Wolftrap, MA  
Prarie Home companion, NPR

**College Concerts & Workshops:**

Chicago School for Performing Arts, IL  
Edinburgh College, PA  
Bard College, NY  
University of Missouri, Kansas City, MO  
Hutchinson Community College, KS  
Bethel College, KS  
University of Missouri-Columbia, St. Louis, MO  
University of Iowa, IA  
Milliken University, Decatur, IL  
Northeast Illinois University, Dekalb, IL  
Baker University, Baldwin, KS  
SUNY New Paltz  
Western Connecticut University

**National Commercials:**

Continental Airlines  
AT&T  
Macy's  
Burger King.

**Peter O'Brien, Drums**

[pobdrums@gmail.com](mailto:pobdrums@gmail.com)