

Joseph Peck • Teaching, Performing, & Recording Artist

Joseph Peck's first exposure to playing music was at the young age of one when he discovered the sounds of wooden spoons banging on pots and pans. These early kitchen sessions in Cleveland, Ohio evolved into a life dedicated to sharing his love of drums and music. As a high school student in Boca Raton, Florida Joseph played drum set in rock bands. At 18 he left sunny South Florida and landed in Wichita, Kansas to attend Wichita State University and study under the direction of Dr. J.C. Combs. While in Wichita, Joseph developed a love and appreciation for jazz, classical, and world music. It was at WSU where he discovered the steel drum instrument and met Dr. Ellie Mannette, the father of the modern steel drum who would become a mentor and great inspiration.

While working on an undergraduate degree in Music Education, Peck was invited to contribute a chapter in his professor Dr. Tanya Huber-Bowen's book for educators "Teaching in the Diverse Classroom: Learner-Centered Activities that Work".

Throughout the years studying at WSU Joseph was also a musician in the steel drum ensemble Pandora's Box and held the drum chair with the notable big band Tuxedo Junction.

Upon graduating Peck traveled to Trinidad, West Indies, the birthplace of the steel drum, and performed with Potential Symphony (a 120-member steel drum orchestra) for the Panorama National Steel Band Competition. After returning from the Caribbean Joseph spent several years touring before returning to Kansas. Once back in Wichita he taught at Metro-midtown high school, was a teaching artist with Arts Partners, directed the WSU Steel Pan Orchestra and taught world music at Wichita State, founded Panhead Productions & Music Publishing, and was a founding member of Wichita's acclaimed steel band Afinké Machine.

Upon relocating to Southern California in 2002 Joseph began performing, recording, and touring with locals and notables alike. Some of the artists he has worked with are Scott Weiland, Cyndi Lauper, the Survivor House Band (CBS – reality show), Ryan Gosling, Didi Benami (American Idol), Joe Rozum, Keith Jones (Santana), Cipes & The People, and Freddie Ravel. In 2012 Peck released his first solo album titled "Free-Flow Steelpan Meditations, Volume 1", an album that explores the sonic possibilities of the steel drum as a means of promoting relaxation.

As a steelpan percussionist and music educator he focuses on bridging styles of music from the Caribbean, South America, Africa, America, India, and Europe. During his world music classes students were given the ability to explore, learn, and emulate music from around the world in an active, performance based environment where students learn to read, write, practice, play, and perform music.

In addition to performing and recording, Joseph has also been a teaching artist with the The Music Center, the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center K-12 Arts Education Outreach Program, LA Arts Group, Children's Creative Project, and a program facilitator for Drumming For Your Life Institute.

As a teaching artist, Joseph is the creator of the Caribbean Drum Circle and Feel Breathe Move music enrichment programs. The Caribbean Drum Circle residency program has been widely successful at Elementary and middle schools, community events, and libraries. His Feel Breathe Move program uses drumming, rhythm, and relating to assist in getting out of stress and into a state of active relaxation. This program has proven not only to work well with children, but also as a professional development workshop for school administrations, teachers, and corporate executives.

During the Covid lockdowns Joseph developed an online music enrichment program where students not only learned music history, theory, and techniques, but also participated in making their own percussion instruments. Using pre-recorded videos and live virtual instruction Joseph has provided schools an educational and fun musical experience when in-person instruction is not an option.

Most recently, Joseph Peck has returned to Kansas and accepted a Graduate Teaching Assistant position with the School of Music at Wichita State University. This wonderful opportunity allows Joseph to once again share his love and passion for music, drumming, and community with Wichita as he himself continues his learning.

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