

Steve Smith Biography 2020

Steve Smith's drumming, while always decidedly modern, can best be described as a style that embodies the history of U.S. music. Originally drawn to the drums by hearing marching bands in parades as a child in his native Massachusetts, Smith began studying the drums at age nine, in 1963. After high school, Smith studied in Boston at the Berklee College of Music from 1972-76, where he had private lessons with both Gary Chaffee and Alan Dawson. His original love of rudimental parade band drumming is evident in his intricate solos. Likewise, his command of jazz, from New Orleans music, swing, big band, bebop, avant-garde to fusion, plus his rock drumming sensibilities and knowledge of rhythms from India allow him to push the boundaries of all styles to new heights.

In 1976, Smith began his association with jazz-fusion by joining violinist Jean-Luc Ponty's group and recording the 1977 landmark fusion album **Enigmatic Ocean**. It was while touring with rocker Ronnie Montrose a year later that Smith was asked to join the popular rock band Journey which brought his playing to the attention of a rock audience.

With Journey, Smith toured the world and recorded numerous successful albums including the immensely popular **Escape** (which includes the ubiquitous hit song "Don't Stop Believin'") and **Frontiers**, both of which garnered the band many Top 40 hits. Journey's albums have sold in excess of 75 million copies worldwide to date. In 1985 Smith left Journey to pursue his original passion, jazz, and to continue his developing career as a session player, bandleader and educator. Over the past 40 years, Smith has played on hits with such diverse artists as Bryan Adams, Mariah Carey, Andrea Bocelli and Ray Price.

Smith's calendar often includes many drum clinics in which he is able to display his phenomenal techniques and concepts to drumming students around the world. Smith's solos and solid timekeeping served to gain him much acclaim from sources such as Modern Drummer magazine, whose readers voted him the #1 Fusion Drummer of 2012 and 2105. In 2017 Steve topped an unprecedented three categories in the MD poll: #1 Rock Drummer, #1 MVP and #1 Educational Product for his Hudson Music book/DVD **Pathways of Motion**. In 2018 Modern Drummer readers voted Steve #1 Classic Rock Drummer.

Smith's yearly touring commitments have included the all-star jazz group Steps Ahead and jazz-fusion virtuosos Hiromi, Mike Stern, Bill Evans, Randy Brecker and tabla maestro Zakir Hussain. Since 1983 Smith has led his own group Vital Information, which is touring to support their latest BFM Jazz release **Heart Of The City**. Starting in 2019 Smith also tours and records with his newest group, The Groove Blue Organ Trio, featuring Tony Monaco on Hammond B3 and Vinny Valentino on guitar.

In 2016 Smith rejoined Journey and on April 7, 2017 Steve Smith, along with Journey band members Gregg Rolie, Aynsley Dunbar, Neal Schon, Ross Valory, Jonathan Cain and Steve Perry, were inducted into the **Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**. www.vitalinformation.com
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