

## PETE SIERS BIOGRAPHY

Like Clark Kent, jazz percussionist Pete Siers is soft-spoken and unassuming—but put him behind a drum set, and a hard-swinging, intensely physical, dynamically sensitive drummer emerges. When Pete plays, “straight-ahead, readily apparent musical joy” can be expected, according to the Southeastern Michigan Jazz Association. And Paul Pearce of Bass World magazine writes that “Pete absolutely ‘sings’ with his drum kit.”

A consummate professional, Pete has an international reputation for his “restless curiosity, attention to detail, and mastery of many different styles,” according to Mike Stratton, host of the FM 89.7 radio show, “The Vinyl Side of Midnight.” Siers has played with jazz luminaries such as Russell Malone, Mulgrew Miller, Marian McPartland, Lee Konitz, Benny Golson, James Moody, Kenny Werner, David “Fathead” Newman, Eddie Daniels, Frank Morgan, Scott Hamilton, Bob Wilber, and Barry Harris. In addition to his expansive performance career, Siers has played on over 50 recordings, including Russell Malone’s *Black Butterfly* on Columbia Records. He recently played Carnegie Hall, has toured Europe several times, and is a long-time favorite at many jazz parties and festivals across the U.S. Pete continues to perform orchestral pops shows such as trumpeter Marcus Belgrave’s *Louis Armstrong Tribute* and Dave Bennett’s *Salute to Benny Goodman*.

In addition to his performance and recording career, Pete has taught percussion and jazz drumming for over 25 years. He teaches privately as well as having taught at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor School for Performing Arts, Emory University, Purdue University and Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. He was also an artist-in-residence at Interlochen School of the Arts.

Despite being a veteran teacher, Pete recognizes the impact of other musicians on his style such as New York pianist and educator Kenny Warner with his concept of “effortless mastery,” Jeff Hamilton’s dynamic showmanship, New York drummer Bill Stewart’s flawless execution and coordination, and Elvin Jones’ primitive, organic drive. But one of Pete’s greatest lessons was from Detroit saxophonist Larry Nozero back in the ’80s when Nozero told him before their show, “Rehearsals are over—it’s time to play.” “This hit my like a shot,” says Pete. “From this, I began to understand what it is to play music at the highest level. When I play, I want to go up there and disappear, to be the sound.” Siers is an authentic risk-taker who serves the music and surrenders to what it calls for.

Siers’ aspirations are as numerous as his accomplishments. The ultimate goal for his Latin quintet, *Los Gatos*, is to experience first-hand the roots of Afro-Cuban rhythm in its place of origin, Cuba, and to study with the masters. The Pete Siers Quartet, including two tenor saxophones and organ, will release a new CD in 2009. The repertoire is post-bop and high-energy, straight ahead jazz. Pete also has his eyes on a trio project with piano and tenor saxophone. The arrangements are unique yet reminiscent of the Gene Krupa Trio from the early 1950s. This year, Pete will also continue his piano trio settings with the release of ***Organic Roots***.

Says Siers, “Staying inspired is important, whether it’s practicing, teaching, playing, or just being a husband and father. I feel very lucky to be around positive energy.” Pete resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with his wife, Stephanie Hale, and their two children, Charlie and Neva.