



STEPHEN PATTERSON RUCKER

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BACKGROUND AND PROFESSIONAL OVERVIEW

I am a composer, drumset artist, producer, and educator whose professional career spans more than five decades and integrates sustained activity at the highest levels of performance, recording, composition, and higher education. My work as an artist and as an educator has always been mutually reinforcing: professional experiences on stage, in studios, and on international tours directly inform my teaching, while my long-standing commitment to pedagogy has shaped the depth, clarity, and intentionality of my creative work.

I am best known internationally for my work with the Bee Gees, with whom I performed during one of the most visible periods of their late career. As a member of the touring and recording band, I appeared on major international television broadcasts including The Tonight Show, Late Night with David Letterman, The Oprah Winfrey Show, The Rosie O'Donnell Show, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction, and the Royal Variety Performance. I appear on the Bee Gees' One Night Only recording and DVD and am credited as a co-writer on the Bee Gees song "Voice in the Wilderness."

Beyond the Bee Gees, my performance and recording career includes collaborations with a broad spectrum of influential artists across jazz, popular music, and orchestral contexts. These include Michael Jackson, Pat Metheny, Gloria Estefan, Johnny Cash, Ben Vereen, Joe Sample, Paquito D'Rivera, Bob James, Randy Bernsen, Jaco Pastorius, Bo Diddley, and others. These engagements range from major touring productions and broadcast events to studio recordings, jazz festivals, and symphonic performances, including appearances with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

I relocated to Miami in 1976 and quickly became an active part of South Florida's professional music community. During this early period, I was voted "Best Jazz Performer" and "Most Versatile Artist" in regional South Florida music polls. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, I was a member of the Ross-Levine Band, a prominent jazz-fusion ensemble whose recordings (That Summer Something and Humidity!) and performances at venues such as SunFest, Peacock Park, and the Sunrise Musical Theatre contributed to the development of what became known as the Miami jazz-fusion sound.

Since 1979, I have served on the faculty of the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, where I am currently Professor of Practice and Director of Contemporary Drumset Studies. Over the course of my academic career, I have helped shape the drumset and rhythm section curriculum, guided generations of students into professional careers, and developed courses and ensembles that reflect both the historical foundations and the evolving realities of contemporary music-making.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

My approach to teaching is rooted in the belief that drumset performance is both a technical discipline and a musical language shaped by history, culture, and collaborative practice. Throughout my career at the University of Miami, I have sought to design curricula that balance technical mastery, stylistic fluency, historical awareness, and creative independence. My professional experience as a touring and recording artist directly informs my pedagogy, allowing me to bridge the gap between academic study and the practical demands of contemporary musical careers. My teaching emphasizes time, sound, style, and musical interaction—core skills that remain essential across genres and professional contexts.

Course Development

Basic Drumset Styles and Techniques (MMI 139 CDT): A foundational course covering backbeat styles, swing, chart reading, hand–foot coordination, and stylistic interpretation across rock, funk, R&B, jazz, and basic world-influenced grooves. The course integrates listening, transcription, and performance with emphasis on rhythmic feel, balance, and ensemble awareness.

Advanced Improvisation I (Drumset) – MSJ 565: An upper-level course centered on transcription-based study of major drumset innovators (including Max Roach, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, David Garibaldi, Steve Gadd, and Vinnie Colaiuta). Students analyze and apply concepts through performance projects in live rhythm-section contexts.

Advanced Improvisation II (Drumset) – MSJ 566: A continuation focusing on the development of each student’s individual voice through motivic development, dynamics, subdivision, use of space, and soloing over varied song forms. Students also present short clinics to peers, reinforcing pedagogical and professional communication skills. In addition, they are trained in technological skills that are required by today’s musician.

Freshman Skills (MDE 107 / MDE 108): A foundational, performance-centered course in which students develop stylistic fluency, repertoire knowledge, chart writing, and ensemble performance skills across contemporary genres. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the course evolved into a hybrid performance–production laboratory: rhythm section students record tracks; vocalists record independently; and students rotate through producer roles, assembling sessions in their DAWs and creating complete mixes. Instruction includes hands-on guidance in EQ, compression, reverb, and related signal processing, with in-class “DAW dives” for critical listening and peer feedback.

Ensemble Direction

I direct the Frost School of Music's Funk/Fusion Ensemble, which has received the DownBeat Student Music Award every year since 2002.

I also created and direct the RUCK Ensemble, an original hip hop/funk group emphasizing collaborative composition, arranging, recording, and live performance.

CREATIVE ACTIVITY AND RECORDINGS

My creative activity as a performer, recording artist, composer, and producer has remained continuous and highly visible throughout my academic career. Rather than existing separately from my teaching, this work has functioned as an essential extension of it, allowing me to bring current professional practices, real-world standards, and evolving artistic perspectives directly into the classroom.

Major Touring and Broadcast Performances

I am internationally recognized for my work with the Bee Gees during the late 1990s and early 2000s. As a member of the touring and recording band, I appeared on globally broadcast television programs including The Tonight Show, Late Night with David Letterman, The Oprah Winfrey Show, The Rosie O'Donnell Show, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony, and the Royal Variety Performance. I appear on the Bee Gees' One Night Only live album and DVD and am credited as a co-writer on "Voice in the Wilderness."

The One Night Only world tour included stadium-sized audiences, including Wembley Stadium in London and the Olympic Stadium in Sydney, placing me in high-pressure performance environments demanding stylistic versatility, consistency, and professionalism at the highest level.

Recordings and Sideman Work (Selected)

My discography spans studio albums, live recordings, and international sessions across jazz, pop, Latin, orchestral, and fusion contexts.

Notable Live Performances and Artist Collaborations (Selected)

Bee Gees Performances with Steve Rucker (1993–2002):

Date	Event	Venue	City / Country
July 27, 1993	Bee Gees Concert	Sunrise Musical Theater	Sunrise, USA
November 14, 1993	Royal Variety Performance	London (venue TBA)	London, UK
April 1, 1997	The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	NBC Studios	Burbank, USA
May 6, 1997	Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Induction	Cleveland Convention Center	Cleveland, USA

June 13, 1997	The Today Show	Rockefeller Plaza	New York, USA
September 6, 1997	The Oprah Winfrey Show	Harpo Studios	Chicago, USA
September 9, 1997	The Rosie O'Donnell Show	NBC Studios	New York, USA
September 12, 1997	Late Show with David Letterman	Ed Sullivan Theater	New York, USA
November 14, 1997	One Night Only (Las Vegas)	MGM Grand Garden Arena	Las Vegas, USA
April 18, 1998	An Audience with the Bee Gees	The London Studios (ITV)	London, UK
July 29, 1998	One Night Only (Dublin)	RDS Stadium	Dublin, Ireland
September 5, 1998	One Night Only (London)	Wembley Stadium	London, UK
October 17, 1998	One Night Only (Buenos Aires)	La Bombonera Stadium	Buenos Aires, Argentina
October 28, 1998	One Night Only (Pretoria)	Loftus Versfeld Stadium	Pretoria, South Africa
March 20, 1999	One Night Only (Auckland)	Western Springs Stadium	Auckland, New Zealand
March 27, 1999	One Night Only (Sydney)	Stadium Australia (Olympic Park)	Sydney, Australia
December 31, 2000	BG2K, New Year's Eve Concert	National Car Rental Center	Sunrise, USA
2000/2001	Love and Hope Ball	Miami Beach (venue TBA)	Miami Beach, USA
March 17, 2001	Wetten, dass..?	ZDF Studios (Dornbirn)	Germany
March 20, 2001	BBC Radio Theater Concert	BBC Studios	London, UK
March 23, 2001	The Top of the Pops 2 Special	BBC Studios	London, UK
March 24, 2001	Parkinson (BBC One)	BBC Television Centre	London, UK
April 27, 2001	Live by Request (A&E)	Manhattan Center	New York, USA
June 17, 2001	Wango Tango	Dodger Stadium	Los Angeles, USA
June 18, 2001	The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	NBC Studios	Burbank, USA

Ross–Levine Band

- SunFest — West Palm Beach, FL (May 6, 1984).
- Opening act for Dionne Warwick — Sunrise Musical Theatre, FL (February 12–14, 1982).
- Peacock Park — Coconut Grove, Miami, FL (November 23, 1980).

Brandon Fields

- SunFest Jazz Festival — West Palm Beach, FL (May 4, 1990).

Concept (with Bobby Meyer and Mark Colby)

- Jazz fusion ensemble performances — South Florida (late 1970s–early 1980s).

Johnny Cash

- Arthur Smith KDW, Currie Park — West Palm Beach, FL (September 11, 1982).

Mose Allison

- SunFest Jazz Festival — West Palm Beach, FL (1980s). Additional U.S. club and festival engagements during the 1980s.

Ben Vereen

- National touring drummer for Ben Vereen, including orchestral concert performances with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

Jeff Palmer (Jazz Organist)

- Residency at the Village Inn — Coconut Grove, Miami, FL (late 1970s–early 1980s). Weekly performances Tuesday–Saturday, 10:00 PM–3:00 AM.

Joe Sample

- Jonathan’s Jazz Cellar — Charlotte, NC (November 17–19, 1988).

COMPOSITION AND RECENT RELEASE PROJECTS

Composition has become an increasingly central focus of my creative activity in the latter phase of my career. Beginning in 2022, I committed to releasing new compositions consistently across digital platforms, producing dozens of works over a multi-year period. This initiative required full engagement with arranging, recording, mixing, mastering oversight, and digital distribution, and it has become a significant pedagogical resource for students.

My recent compositional output spans a wide range of stylistic influences, reflecting both my professional performance background and my long-standing interest in cross-genre musical language. These works draw from jazz, funk, fusion, rock, power ballad, Latin and Brazilian traditions, as well as ECM-influenced contemporary jazz, orchestral and cinematic textures, avant-garde and musique concrète techniques, and New Age–influenced ambient forms. Several compositions explore Celtic and Irish/Puerto Rican hybrid elements, while others focus on solo piano writing and through-composed narrative forms.

Across these stylistic approaches, the unifying elements of the work are an emphasis on melodic clarity, rhythmic identity, and atmospheric intent, with many pieces conceived both as standalone compositions and as potential vehicles for live performance, ensemble adaptation, and pedagogical use.

Complete Original Composition Releases (Streaming Platforms)

2021

- Mayone — October 25, 2021

2022

- Marlwood — February 25, 2022
- Mariupol — July 2, 2022
- Pinecrest — August 10, 2022
- The Nar — September 26, 2022
- Johnny A — December 2, 2022

2023

- Patterson Mountain — January 5, 2023 (feat. Billy Contreras)
- The Grove — February 8, 2023 (feat. Tom Lippincott)
- Christoffelberg — March 29, 2023
- Rue Dauphine — May 10, 2023
- Teeta — June 28, 2023
- Hiddenite — July 21, 2023 (feat. John Daversa)
- A Knowing — August 14, 2023 (feat. Jon Gilutin)
- River of Grass — September 27, 2023 (feat. Martin Bejerano)
- Oscar — October 30, 2023 (feat. David Fernández)
- Mirror Lake — November 30, 2023
- Precipice — December 28, 2023 (feat. Lindsey Blair)

2024

- The Hidden Glen — January 27, 2024
- The Journey — February 24, 2024
- The 55 — March 30, 2024
- Mallory Square — April 20, 2024 (feat. Randy Bernsen & Mark Egan)
- Little Princess — May 29, 2024
- Mayone (Revisited) — June 29, 2024
- Green Hill — July 30, 2024 (feat. Charlie McCoy & Billy Contreras)
- Musique de Film — August 30, 2024 (feat. David Fernández)
- Travels With Thomas — September 30, 2024 (feat. Tom Lippincott)

- Tail Lights — October 30, 2024
- Marlwood (Revisited) — November 29, 2024
- The Bubble — December 20, 2024

2025

- Black Comedy — January 24, 2025
- Immeasurable — February 28, 2025
- Mango Django — March 28, 2025
- Maurits' World — April 28, 2025
- Hail at Le Regent — May 30, 2025
- Train To Tarragona — June 27, 2025 (feat. Jose Valentino)
- Cannes — July 25, 2025
- Under Emerald Skies — August 30, 2025
- The Augurs' Garden — September 27, 2025
- Better Times — October 10, 2025
- Nineteen Strings — November 22, 2025 (feat. Mark Egan, Tom Lippincott, and Randy Bernsen)
- Hope's Glimmer — December 22, 2025

2026

- City Of A Thousand Suns — January 28, 2026 (feat. Jose Valentino)

Complete Recordings as Performer (All Verified Credits to Date)

Major Touring & Live Recordings

- Bee Gees — One Night Only (Live album & DVD, 1998)

Randy Bernsen / Ocean Sound Band (Recordings)

- Randy Bernsen — Paradise Citizens
- Randy Bernsen — Calling Me Back Home
- Randy Bernsen & Onorino Tiburzi — Blues Hat Dances 'Round Midnight (Italy session, 1992)

Jazz & Fusion Ensembles

- Ross-Levine Band — That Summer Something (1981) (featuring Pat Metheny)
- Ross-Levine Band — Humidity! (1986)
- Active Ingredient — Building Houses (1988). Founder / Producer
- Active Ingredient — Extra Strength (1990). Founder / Producer
- Ron Miller — Peacock Park: The Music of Ron Miller (2010)

- Hal Roland Quartet — Conversions (2013)
- The Regions — A Tribute to Ron Miller (2021)

Pop / Session Work

- Gloria Estefan — Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me (1990)
- Sugarcreek — “Runnin’ Out of Time” (single). Composer & Drummer.

University of Miami Concert Jazz Band (Albums)

- University of Miami Concert Jazz Band — Halcyon Days (1979)
- University of Miami Concert Jazz Band — Jumbo Face (1980)
- University of Miami Concert Jazz Band — Estamos Ahí (1983)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND OUTREACH

Professional service and outreach have been integral components of my career, extending the impact of my work beyond performance and classroom teaching into the broader music, education, and professional communities. The following itemized listings document these activities in a clear and verifiable format.

Clinics, Masterclasses, and Educational Presentations

- PASIC Presentation, University of Miami — Knoxville, TN (November 1983).
- PASIC Clinic, University of South Florida — Tampa, FL (March 27, 2020).
- Sabian Education Network Roundtable (with Dom Famularo and Joe Bergamini): Online Drum Education Techniques (Summer 2015).
- Resurrection Drums Master Class (sponsored by Sabian) with Jonathan Joseph — November 5, 2015.
- Sabian Education Network Masterclass and Panel (with Dafnis Prieto; moderated by Joe Bergamini) — Resurrection Drums (October 18, 2017).
- Sabian Education Network Online Presentation: Prepping Drum Students for College (February 21, 2024).
- Academy of Contemporary Music — Guildford, England (May 5, 2008; May 8, 2009; May 14, 2010; May 14, 2011).
- Musicians Institute — Los Angeles, CA (January 21, 2016).

Professional Documentation and Media Engagement

- NAMM Oral History Program — January 22, 2016.
- Podcast: Atiba’s Half-Geek-Half-Human — January 30, 2024.
- Podcast: Intentionally Overheard with Robert Ginyard — “You’re Not Defined by What You Do: Be Fearless” — February 3, 2021.

I have appeared on multiple broadcasts on WDNA (88.9 FM, Miami), where my original compositions were featured and discussed in depth. These interviews provided an opportunity to contextualize new releases, address compositional process, and reflect on stylistic influences, recording approaches, and collaborative practices. Collectively, these broadcasts function as a form of public-facing scholarship, extending the reach of my creative work beyond academic and performance settings and engaging a broader listening audience through informed musical dialogue.

- May 23, 2024
- May 30, 2024
- May 22, 2025
- May 29, 2025
- January 8, 2026

Program Development and Educational Leadership

- Founder and Director, Rhythm Section Summer Music Camp — South Miami High School (July 1997).
- Founder and Director, Rhythm Section Summer Music Camp — NSU University School (July 1998).
- Co-Founder, NFTy Music — Blockchain-based revenue initiative for independent artists (2021).
NFTy Music was created to explore sustainable, artist-centered revenue models using blockchain technology, with a focus on empowering lesser-known and independent artists through ownership, transparency, and direct audience engagement.

SUMMARY

My career reflects a sustained integration of professional performance, creative production, curriculum development, and educational service. Over more than four decades at the University of Miami, I have remained actively engaged as a performer, composer, producer, and educator, continually adapting my work to reflect changes in musical style, technology, and professional practice. This combination of long-term institutional commitment and ongoing creative activity aligns directly with the mission and expectations of the Professor of Practice role.

Looking forward, I intend to continue expanding my creative output through my ongoing monthly original music release initiative, further developing this body of work as both a compositional archive and a performance repertoire. Plans include presenting this music in live concert settings, collaborating with colleagues and alumni, and integrating new compositions into ensemble and classroom contexts.

I also plan to continue refining and developing curriculum at the Frost School of Music in response to evolving technologies and industry practices. This includes deeper integration of

recording, production, and digital audio workstation workflows into performance-based courses; continued development of project-based learning models; and the expansion of ensemble formats that reflect contemporary musical collaboration.

Finally, I will continue my engagement in professional service and outreach through clinics, masterclasses, media participation, and mentorship. These activities allow me to represent the University of Miami within the broader professional community while maintaining a living connection between academic instruction and real-world artistic practice.