

Al Cross – Drum Teacher

Born in Montreal, 1953, Al has always loved the drums. He played in high school bands, inspired by local heroes The Rabble, and various bands of the day. A life changing moment occurred as a result of a generous invitation from Art Blakey, one of the greatest drummers of all time. He and The Jazz Messengers were just about to start playing an outdoor concert when suddenly it began raining 'cats and dogs'. The crowd went running for cover. Al and a small group of die hard music fans were left standing in the rain, staring up at the stage. Mr. Blakey motioned for this small pack to join him on stage, which was covered and dry. Perched beside the drums, Al was treated to a life changing concert. After high school, equipped with a little Ginger Baker, Mitch Mitchell and a lot of Art Blakey in his heart, Al went on to study percussion with Pierre Beluse at McGill University while working with many of Quebec's top performers such as Dianne Tell.

Moving to Toronto in 1979, Al studied with Jim Blackley, while playing full time in the Toronto area. During the 1980s he worked extensively with Jane Siberry, recording three albums and touring internationally.

Working with Jane led to an ongoing career of live and studio work with many of Canada's top singer songwriters, as well as jingle and soundtrack work. This includes spots for Presidents Choice, Tylenol, VISA, Tim Hortons, Chrysler, Clearnet, Holiday Inn, Zellers and Ontario Tourism, and working for directors Atom Egoyan, Mina Shum, composers John Welsman, Mychael Dana, Andrew Lockington, Leslie Barber and Dave Grey, and drum tracks for all of Sheridan College's Musical Productions over the last 30 years produced by Al Poaps.

In the 1990s Al was a core member of Big Sugar, maintaining a busy schedule of recording and touring.

Al taught at the Toronto Percussion Center in 1988 and has continued to enjoy teaching privately. Receiving a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts in 2002 allowed Al to study in NYC with one of the true masters of the art, Joe Morello, on a regular basis for two years.

Presently Al is busy with a variety of sessions, gigs, and teaching, predominately in Toronto, working a lot with Verve recording artist Jordan John and Prakash John, Lou Moore, Jeanine Mackie, Jerome Godboo, and Paul Mills of The Borealis Recording Company.

"If you've ever listened to music in Canada, you've heard Al Cross. And if it wasn't him playing drums, you've heard the multitude of Canadian drummers he has greatly, greatly influenced through the incredibly measured accuracy of his feel, staggering musicianship, chops, versatility, groove, swing, technique, time, and all other criteria that comprise his effortless, tactical command of an instrument that takes decades of discipline to tame." - Adam Hay, Canadian Drummer/Drum Teacher

Here's a partial list of artists AI has had the pleasure to record with:

Jane Siberry ♦The Speckless Sky *1x Gold* ♦No Borders Here ♦The Walking

Big Sugar ♦Brothers & Sisters Are You Ready *1x Gold* ♦Big Sugar
♦500 Pounds *1x Gold* ♦Heated *Platinum* ♦Dear M.F.
♦The L7 Nightclub

Great Big Sea ♦Up *4x Platinum* ♦Play *3x Platinum* ♦Turn *Platinum*

Ashley MacIsaac ♦Hi How Are You Today *2x Platinum*

Gordie Sampson *2x Grammy Award winner and multiple Juno awards.*
♦Stones

Mychael Danna *Composer. 1x Academy Award winning. 2x Academy Award nominee. 13x Genie Award nominee* ♦The Sweet Hereafter

Molly Johnson *Juno award winner*
♦Molly Johnson ♦Messin' Around

David Wilcox ♦Thirteen Songs *Has received two gold records*

Ian Tyson ♦Lost Herd *Multi award winning Canadian gem*

Lorena McKennitt ♦The Visit *4x Platinum*
♦The Mask and the Mirror *3x Platinum* ♦Parallel Dreams

Ron Hynes *Male Artist of the Year ECMA 2007*
♦Ron Hynes ♦Get back Change *Album of the Year ECMA*
♦Stealing Genius

Sarah Harmer *USA Platinum* ♦You Were Here

Murry McLaughlin *Multi award winning Canadian gem*
♦Songs Of The Street

Lunch At Allen's ♦Catch The Moon ♦Zuzu's Petals
with Murry McLaughlin, Cindy Church, Mark Jordan and Ian Thomas.

Natalie MacMaster ♦In My Hands *1x Gold*

The Good Brothers *8x Country Group of the Year Juno* ♦One True Thing

Raffi ♦Evergreen Everblue

Bob McGrath *of Sesame Street* ♦Bob's Favorite Street Songs

Russell de Carle *of Prairie Oyster. Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame*
♦Under The Big Sky

The Black Crows *Have sold over 30 million albums.* ♦Remix

Windham Hill Records ♦30 Years Of Windham Hill

Willie P. Bennett *Canadian Country Music Hall of Honour* ♦The Lucky Ones

The Barra MacNeils *5 East Coast Music Awards* ♦Racket in the Attic

Holger Petersen ♦Saturday Night Blues

Connie Kaldor *Recipient of three Juno awards* ♦Gentle Of Heart

Colleen Peterson *Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame*

◆Postcards From California

Danny Marks *Awarded the prestigious Maple Blues 'Blues With A Feeling Award' for Lifetime Achievement* ◆A Friend In The Blues

Carlos del Junco *Awarded two gold medals at the Hohner World Harmonica Championship*

◆Up And At 'em ◆Big Boy

Brent Titcomb *A Canadian gem* ◆Beyond Appearance

Rita Chiarelli *Awarded the prestigious Maple Blues 'Blues With A Feeling Award' for Lifetime Achievement* ◆Breakfast at Midnight ◆Road Rockets ◆Just Getting' Started

◆Music From The Big House ◆Sweet Paradise

Rick Fines & Suzie Vinnick *Multiple awards and critical acclaim* ◆Nothing Halfway

Ian Tamblyn *Multiple awards and critical acclaim*

◆Dancing Alone: Songs Of William Hawkins

Diana Braithwaite and Chris Whiteley *9 Maple Blues Awards and 6 Juno nominations*

◆Morning Sun

David Bradstreet *Multiple awards and critical acclaim* ◆Renaissance

James Keelaghan *Juno award winner* ◆Road

Anne Lindsay *Violinist of the Year - National Jazz Awards*

◆Eavesdropping ◆News From Up The Street

Don Ross *The only person to twice win the U.S. National Fingerstyle Guitar Championship*

◆Three Hands ◆Loaded Leather Moonroof ◆This Dragon Won't Sleep

Paul Mills *Award winning producer* ◆The Other Side Of The Glass

Terry Kelly *7x East Coast Music Awards*

◆Olde Tyme Christmas ◆Power Of The Dream

Danny Brooks *Multiple awards* ◆Texassippi Soul Man

John Alcorn *Male vocalist of the Year – Jazz Report Awards* ◆Haunted

Wendell Ferguson *CCMA 7x Guitar Player of the Year* ◆Cranky Christmas

Lawrence Gowan ◆Gowan au Quebec

Melissa McClelland ◆Victoria Day

Bob Snider ◆Words and Pictures

Ken Whiteley ◆A Gospel Celebration ◆Acoustic Electric

Caitlin Hanford ◆Bluer Skies

Marie-Lynn Hammond ◆Hoofbeats ◆Creatures

Grit Laskin ◆A Few Simple Words

Laura Hubert ◆My Girlish Ways

Philip Sayce ◆Philip Sayce

Courage Of Lassie ◆This Side Of Heaven

Scott Cushnie ◆Two Pianos, No Waiting

Rose Cousins ◆The Send Off

Aengus Finnan ♦Fool's Gold
David Woodhead ♦Sweets and Conundrums ♦Confabulation
Tim Harrison ♦Tim Harrison ♦In The Barroom Light ♦The Stars Above
Crabtree & Mills ♦Rise Above ♦Freedom
The Whiteley Brothers ♦Sixteen Shades of Blue ♦Bluesology
John Mays *of Fathead* ♦I Found A Love
Harmonica Shah ♦Live At The Cove ♦If All You Have Is A Hammer
Jimmy Bowskill ♦Soap Bars and Dog Ears ♦Jimmy Bowskill
Jerome Godboo ♦Humdinger ♦Rooting Out My Devils
Katherine Wheatley ♦Straight Line
Ron Negrini ♦Songs from Turtle Island
Bunny Brown ♦In Flames
Beverley Mahood ♦Girl Out Of The Ordinary
Kim DesChamps ♦Take Me Away
Jamie Warren ♦Fallen Angel
Chris Brown and Kate Fenner ♦Other People's Heavens
Terry Wilkins ♦The Signifying Monkey
Jennifer Valentyne ♦Standards
Garnet Rogers ♦Garnet Rogers ♦Night Drive ♦The Outside Track
Joanne MacKell ♦Local Gig in Paradise ♦Wanderlust
Kaya Fraser ♦Open Horizon
Cris Cuddy ♦This Little World ♦Come Along Carmalita
Terez Montcalm ♦Parle Pas Si Fort
Trevor Mills ♦Karaoke Cowboy
Bill Usher ♦Slowdancing
Lou Moore ♦Live at Limericks
Lee Palmer ♦One Take
Connie Saulnier ♦Impressions
Joy Norman ♦Lately
Jeanine Mackie ♦Live At The Drake
Big Rude Jake ♦Blue Pariah
Jay Sewall ♦All Blues
Kevin Hutchings ♦Light To Shine
Jim Parker ♦Far Away
The Bird Sisters ♦She & She & She
Stewed Roots ♦In The Middle Of This
The Arrogant Worms ♦Idiot Road ♦Dirt

MusiGo ♦Going Places
Martin Aucoin ♦So Far
Terry Jones ♦The Hard Lesson
Dave Wall ♦Lozenge
Terry Blersh ♦Terry Blersh
Blake Papsin ♦Serious Boy
Heather McLeod ♦Bones
Joel Kroeker ♦Closer To The Flame
Kirk and Magoo ♦Shirt Pay ♦We Are The Dinosaurs ♦Mars Rocks
Frank Leahy ♦Don Messer's Violin
Rob Young ♦Cowboy Goodbyes ♦Bluebird Motel ♦Constant Hill
Cathy Miller ♦A Quilter's World ♦In the Heart of a Quilt ♦In The Heart Of A Quilt
Paul Chaput ♦Old Lovers
Mac Morin ♦Mac Morin
Chad Mitchell ♦Virgo Moon
Nonie Crete ♦Girl In A Crazy World
Connie Saulnier ♦Impressions
Shawn Kellerman ♦Blues Without A Home
Matty Powell ♦Kiss The City
The Kat Kings ♦The Winning Hand
Eve Goldberg ♦Ever Brightening Day
Stephanie Parker ♦Why Not Now
Lynn Harrison ♦Lynoleum ♦Learning Curve ♦Broadview
Micky Absil ♦Moments In A Lifetime
Jillian Horton ♦Jillian Horton
Heather Dale ♦The Road To Santiago
Anne Walker ♦Labyrinth
Rodney Brown ♦Northland
David Sereda ♦The Blue Guide
Jude Johnson ♦Moontime Howl
Samantha Sobichaud ♦Collected
Sarah Burnell ♦Sarah'ndipity
Bill Houston ♦Bring Back The Music
Vern Cheechoo ♦Touch the Earth and Sky
Sean Hogan ♦Hijacked
Norm Hacking ♦The Ache
Joanne Crabtree ♦All The Good Times

Susan Trump ♦Songs Of Faith And Hope
Shawn Daudlin ♦Running On Empty
Karen Leslie Hall ♦On The Dream Road
Howard Gladstone ♦Candles On The River
Deborah Dunleavy ♦Strike Up The Band
J-Paul ♦J-Paul
Michael Hughes ♦Michael Hughes
Rachel Kane ♦Groundwire
Dirk Beck ♦Insomnia
Sonny Fournier ♦Blues
Eliza ♦Sings Rodgers and Hart
Tony Latimer ♦Salt Over My Shoulder
Kevin Head ♦Folk
Peter Eastmure ♦The Smallest Voice
Max Layton ♦Heartbeat Of Time
Lace ♦Lace
Imaginary Heaven ♦Dressed In Gentle Day