

The Long Story...

Joe Sorbara has developed a reputation as a diverse and musical presence on Toronto's growing creative improvised music scene as a drummer and percussionist, composer, improviser, organizer and educator. His own projects include the septet Other Foot First and the Pickle Juice Orchestra. Joe co-leads a number of ensembles including the Remnants Trio (with Evan Shaw and Ken Aldcroft), PST (with Scott Thomson and Nilan Perera) and a duo with kinetic mime Julie Lassonde. Joe performs on a regular basis with Ronda Rindone's Quorum, Ken Aldcroft's Convergence Ensemble, Nilan Perera's HolyBlueGhost and in the ensembles of Anna Linda Siddall and Saidah Baba Talibah. He also spends a great deal of time making music in ad hoc collaborations with improvising musicians from far and wide.

Joe's playing can be heard on recordings by Aldcroft/ Shaw/ Sorbara [*Remnants* 2006 Oval Window Records], Squash Recipe [*Squash Recipe* 2005 Babel Records], Glen Hall's Trio Muo [*Angles* 2005 Tarsier Records), Ken Aldcroft [*The Great Divide* 2006, *From Our Time* 2003, *Kirby Side Road* 2004 Trio Records) Peter van Huffel [*Mind Over Matter* 2003 Independent]. In addition to the above, he has had the pleasure of performing with such musicians as John Abercrombie, Michael Bates, Tim Brady, Anthony Braxton, Tom Chant, Paul Cram, Wilbert de Joode, Jean Derome, Dave Douglas, Dominic Duval, Hugh Fraser, Lori Freedman, Malcolm Goldstein, Andy Haas, Frank Gratkowski, Stephen Grew, Peggy Lee, Lee Pui Ming, Joe Lovano, Joe McPhee, Nicole Mitchell, Michael Moore, John Oswald, William Parker, Ted Quinlin, Reuben Radding, Dave Restivo, Michael Snow, Jesse Stewart, Ron Samworth, and Dylan van der Schyff. He has performed for audiences all over Canada as well as in the US and the United Kingdom.

Born in Guelph, Ontario in 1977, Joe studied piano and guitar as a child but quickly found his place behind a set of drums at the back of his grade seven music class (after a miserable attempt to learn the clarinet...). He began playing professionally at the age of thirteen under the tutelage of local trumpeter Bruce Maccoll. Meanwhile, he performed with ensembles at his high school, with local punk-rock bands, and with the Waterloo Concert Band.

In 1996, Joe moved to Toronto to further his studies in the music program at York University. At York he was able to study with David Mott, John Gittins, Trichy Sankaran and Glen Halls and to play in ensembles led by Toronto jazzers

Don Thompson, Al Henderson and Frank Falco. The York jazz program also provided him with the opportunity to play with and learn from such other noted musicians as Barry Elmes, Phil Dwyer, and Lorne Lofsky; and to attend masterclasses with the great Oscar Peterson. York University awarded him the Oscar Peterson Scholarship for outstanding achievement in jazz studies in 1999.

In the summer of 1998, Joe began studying with jazz drumming master Jim Blackley. Jim's teaching has played a major role in shaping Joe's musical conception; as have the musicians on his diverse list of early influences: Miles Davis, Anthony Braxton, Paul Motian, Ani Difranco, Jack DeJohnette, Steve Coleman, Sting, John Zorn, Tom Rainey, Tim Berne...

The time Joe has spent at the Banff Centre for the Arts has also been a major influence on his music and outlook. He took part in the International Jazz Workshops in 2001 and 2003 and in a Short-term Residency Program in 2002. The Banff Centre has provided the opportunity to work with such noted musicians as Kenny Werner, Joe Lovano, Dave Douglas, Jim Black, Dylan van der Schyff, Peggy Lee, Reuben Radding, Louis Sclavis, and Jason Moran. Many of the relationships, musical and otherwise, founded at the Banff Centre thrive to this day.

Sorbara has a strong sense of community and has dedicated himself to applying his energies to the organizing and building of the creative music scene in Toronto. In addition to his activities as a performing musician, Sorbara runs Oval Window Records out of his home and serves the local music community as the director and co-curator of the weekly Leftover Daylight Series; now in it's fifth year. He sits on the board of directors of the Canadian New Music Network and is a founding board member of the Association of Improvising Musicians Toronto -- or *AIMToronto* -- which has been a tremendous source of strength, inspiration, and encouragement since it's beginnings in 2004.