

# JESSE TILLMAN PITTS

## CURRICULUM VITAE

706 Aberdeen Circle Tampa, Fl 33617 ♦ (813) 967-7347 ♦

### SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

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Jesse Pitts is a 2x Latin GRAMMY nominated drummer/percussionist, composer, producer and clinician with proven funk, fusion, jazz, Latin, world, pop and rock skills. Demonstrated ability in improvisation and passionate performance. Performer in concerts, master classes and recordings with local and international artists such as Giovanni Hidalgo, Jim Walker, Late Night Brass, Airtó Moreira, Symphony Howlett (American Idol Finalist), Jeremy Rosado (American Idol Finalist), Nicole Yarling, and Jose Valentino. Jesse is a 2x State and International drum competition award winner as well as a 10x Downbeat Award winner.

### BIOGRAPHY

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Jesse Pitts is respected widely throughout the United States as a multi-dimensional musician that captures the hearts of the audience with his drumming. His groovy feel, versatility, and passion for drumming make him one of the most influential young drummers in the country. Jesse began playing drum set at the age of 2. By the age of 7, he began formal training and by the age of 12 he was immersed in the eclectic sounds of jazz, Latin, rock, funk-fusion, folkloric music, and world music.

Many renowned educators and performing artists took an interest in Jesse's unique musicianship, thus, inviting him to study and attend music/drum workshops at the University of South Florida and the University Of Miami Frost School Of Music. Soon after, Jesse was hired to collaborate with local and international artists in recording projects. He performed regularly in the Tampa Bay area with Jose Valentino.

By the time he was 15, Jesse released his solo album, "Genesis", which is a culmination of genres that gave Jesse the platform to express himself whole-heartedly without restraint. Between the years 2012 and 2016, a group of internationally-acclaimed musicians serving on the board of the Downbeat Student Music Awards recognized Jesse's musical maturity and creativity. Thus, they awarded him with ten Downbeat Student Music Awards ranging from Latin Group (multiple), Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist, Blues/Pop/Rock Group (multiple), to Studio Engineering (multiple). In addition, Jesse competed and won the COG International Teen Talent drum competition. In 2015 Jesse was nominated for a Latin GRAMMY Award for his work as drummer in the album, "I Make You Want To Move", by Jose Valentino & The Latin Jazz Ensemble in the category of Best Latin Jazz Album. Jesse was again nominated in 2016 for a Latin GRAMMY Award for his work as drummer and co-producer in the album, "Mosaico", by Bruno Miranda for Best Instrumental Album. In 2015 and 2016 Jesse released two co-albums with 2x Latin GRAMMY nominated Jose Valentino, "A Traveler's Journey" and "Remembering". Also, in 2016 Jesse received from Truth And Mercy Institute For Advanced Ministry Studies, a Scholars Diploma in Musical Arts for: Percussive Performance, Music

Production, and Ethnodoxology. Jesse's endorsements include Bosphorus Cymbals, Anchor Drums, Pig Hog Cables and Beato Drum Bags.

Fueled with passion to further expand his education, Jesse has his eyes set on giving back to the community as a Drummer/Percussionist/Producer. He uses music as a tool for communicating hope, self-efficacy, and intrinsic motivation. His passion for teaching music has been nurtured under the mentorship of the following musicians/instructors: Johnathan Thomas (drummer for Ascend the Hill), Steve Rucker (drummer for the BeeGees), Ian Goodman, Rick Craig (Drum Professor at the University of South Florida) and Jose Valentino Ruiz. Jesse is thankful to God, his parents, and family for the continual support in pursuing his dreams.

## EDUCATION

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- **2005 - 2006** Drum teacher - Sue Majares, Roydon Music
- **2006 - 2009** Drum teacher - Tommy Bell, Roydon Music
- **2009 - 2010** Drum teacher - Steven Lewis, University of South Florida
- **2010 - 2013** Modern Drumming teacher - Jonathan Thomas, touring drummer for international contemporary Christian rock group "Ascend The Hill"
- **2010 - Present** Jazz, Funk, Latin, Theory & Composition Music Teacher - Jose Valentino Ruiz (43x Downbeat Award Recipient, Yamaha Performing Artist)
- **2010 - 2015** Drum, Funk, Fusion, and Theory Teacher - Steve Rucker (Drum Professor, University of Miami, and Drummer for the Bee Gees)
- **2010** Latin Percussion Teacher - Richard Bravo, Recording and Touring Percussion Artist for national and international artist
- **2011 - 2013** Latin and Jazz Drum teacher - Johnathan Hulett (6x Downbeat Award Recipient, Yamaha Performing Artist) University of Miami
- **2013** Advanced music classes - Nicole Yarling, world touring violinist and vocalist
- **2013 - 2015** Drum and theory teacher - Ian Goodman
- **2015 - Present** Attends the University of South Florida
- **2016** Received from Truth And Mercy Institute For Advanced Ministry Studies, a Scholars Diploma in Musical Arts for: Percussive Performance, Music Production, and Ethnodoxology.

## REPRESENTATIVE PERFORMANCES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Nominated for a 2016 Latin GRAMMY Award for the album, "Mosaico", by Bruno Miranda, Tampa, Fl
- Received a Scholars Diploma in Musical Arts for: Percussive Performance, Music Production, and Ethnodoxology from Truth And Mercy Institute For Advanced Ministry Studies, May 2016
- Recorded as drummer, percussionist, and co-produced Bruno Miranda's album, "Mosaico", March 2016
- Downbeat Student Awards winner (x6) - *Blues/Pop/Rock Group* (x2), *Latin Group* (x3), and *Engineered Studio Recording*, 2016
- Recorded as Drummer and co-produced Jim Walker's album, "We Are One", February 2016
- Performed live with Jim Walker, world renowned flutist with over 750 movie soundtrack recordings, January 2016
- Recorded as drummer, released, and co-produced a joint album, "Remembering", with Jose Valentino, January 2016

- Co-Produced Jose Valentino's new albums, "Soul Speaks" and "Expressions: The Jazz Piano Album", January 2016
- Endorsed by Pig Hog Cables, December 2015 - Present
- Performed live on News Channel 10 with Jose Valentino and the Jose Valentino Band, November, 2015
- Performed with Dave Cleveland of McPherson Guitars and Autumn Records, 2015
- Nominated for a 2015 Latin GRAMMY Award for Best Latin Jazz Album, "I Make You Want To Move" by Jose Valentino & The Latin Jazz Ensemble, 2015
- Performed with Jose Valentino at the Low Country Jazz Festival in Charleston, South Carolina
- Endorsed by Anchor Drums (custom drum manufacturer), June 2015 - Present
- Downbeat Student Award winner - *Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist*, 2015
- Performed with Jeremy Rosado, American Idol finalist, on the first stop on his tour, 2015
- Recorded as drummer and released a joint album with Jose Valentino, "A Traveler's Journey", April 2015
- Recorded as drummer for Jose Valentino's album, "I Make You Want To Move", 2015
- Recorded as drummer for Jose Valentino's album, "Jose Valentino and the Crossmatch Vamp"
- Downbeat Student Award winner - *Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist*, 2014
- Performed at a University of South Florida concert with Nicole Yarling, October 2013
- Endorsed by Beato drum bags, October 2013 - Present
- Endorsed by Bosphorus cymbals, August 2013 - Present
- 2013 COG International Teen Talent winner, August 2013
- *Downbeat Student Award winner - Blues/Pop/Rock soloist*, 2013
- 2013 COG State Teen Talent winner, Lakeland, Fl April 2013
- Performed at the 2013 COG Sonfest, Orlando, Fl March 2013
- Performed at the 79<sup>th</sup> American Bandmasters Association National Convention, Tampa, Fl March 2013
- Tours with Late Night Brass, 2013 - Present
- Recorded as drummer for artist Jose Valentino Ruiz's Christmas album, "Christmas Celebration", November 2012
- Recorded and released his solo album "GENESIS", November 2012
- Performed at the International Church of God General Assembly Educators Conference, Orlando, Fl July 2012
- Downbeat Student Award winner - *Engineered Studio Recording*, 2012
- Recorded as drummer for the Riverhills Church of God album, "Heartfelt Praise", April 2012
- Recorded as drummer for American Idol contestant Symphony Howlett's new Pop single "You Make Me Wanna Cry", August 2011
- 2011 State Teen Talent award winner, Lakeland, Fl April 2011
- Orlando Winter Park Art Festival, Orlando, Fl March 2011
- Christina Valerie, February 2010 – November 2011
- Riverhills COG Band, 2010 - Present
- Recorded as percussionist for Romanian Bassist/Composer Florian Visan, August 2010
- Recorded as drummer for artist Christina Valerie's Contemporary Christian album, June 2010
- Recorded as drummer and/or percussion with Jose Valentino for albums "El Concepto" and "Mystery and Wonder", August 2010
- Recorded as percussionist for artists "Jet Pink Girls" for the album "Jet Pink Girls and Friends", August 2010

## SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

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- University of South Florida - Master drum/percussion classes with Airoto Moreira, 2010
- University of South Florida - Master drum classes with Steven Lewis, 2009 - 2010
- University of South Florida - Drum set, Latin percussion, and classical music, 2010
- University of Miami, Frost School of Music - Master drum and Latin percussion classes with Steve Rucker, and Richard Bravo, 2010 - 2012
- University of Miami, Frost School of Music - Master drum classes with Johnathan Hulett, 2011 - 2013
- University of South Florida - Master drum classes with Ian Goodman, 2013 - Present
- University of South Florida - Master music classes with Nicole Yarling, 2013

## VOLUNTEER WORK

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- Plays drums for faculty in Master music classes at the University of South Florida
- Assists in stage planning, construction, and set-up
- Plays drums and assists in the Riverhills Church of God music program in Tampa, Fl
- Gives drum lessons to children and to those who may not be able to afford lessons - Tampa, Fl
- Assists in sound and studio engineering for local bands - Tampa, Fl

## REVIEWS

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**"Jesse Pitts is extremely dedicated in the art of creating music and expressing his heart through it. Whether he is playing drums or percussion, Jesse brings a compositional element to his playing. He's extremely open-minded and is capable of playing a multitude of genres. On top of that he arranges & composes. This is a musician who is going places!"**

By Jose Valentino Ruiz

43x Downbeat Award Winner, Yamaha Performing Artist, and Recording Artist

**"Jesse is an extremely gifted and talented drummer! There is no doubt in my mind that Jesse is a great player and has established a solid place in the musicians world!"**

By Jonathan Thomas

Touring Drummer for "Ascend The Hill", and Recording Artist

**"Jesse is always a pleasure to work with! Whatever the genre he always leaves room to put his own "feel" into his style of drumming. It is refreshing to work with such a humble and talented musician!"**

By Christina Valerie

Contemporary Christian Recording Artist

**"Jesse displays a musical maturity that some musicians never achieve! He switches from driving grooves to legato passages with skill and grace. Jesse is a compliment to any ensemble, he is a true professional!"**

By Florian Visan

Romanian Bassist Performer, Recording Artist and Composer

**"Jesse Pitts is an anomaly. Jesse displays drive, passion, consistency, discipline, and musicality. A true blessing on and off the kit"**

By Johnathan Hulett

6x Downbeat Award Winner, Yamaha Performing Artist, and recording artist  
University of Miami

**"Jesse Pitts displays the confidence and artistry that is difficult to find in most drummers. While possessing some truly fearsome chops, he also plays with taste and finesse that elevate any project in which he is involved, from simmering fusion to explosive gospel. It's exciting to see so much talent being displayed (and displayed well) by such a versatile musician!"**

By Evan Simmons

M.M., University of South Carolina  
Performer, Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra  
Educator/Clinician