



Show Dog Nashville Recording Artist: Tommy Bales

From the very small town of Gaston Indiana, Tommy has been beatin' the skins for 25 years now. His very first and biggest influence was his father, who's been playing for over 50 years himself. He considers himself a simple, passionate, groove driven drummer that slams it out and has a blast doing it.

He spent his teen years bangin' his head in an all original heavy metal band that never really got out of the garage. At 18 he started studying with Dane Clark (Mellancamp). That's about the time he found the blues. "...when I was 19 I went to a blues concert in Indianapolis and saw The Fabulous Thunderbirds, BB, and Buddy Guy.... my eyes and heart were opened. Buddy Guy introduced me to a whole new world of dynamics..." He then went on to play in regional blues bands Johnny Ray and the High Rollers and Smokehouse Dave and the BBQ Kings.

In 2001 he hooked up with brothers Brian and Brent Flynn. "I was a little apprehensive at first because Country music was not where my experience was. However, the Flynn brothers showed me that Country music can have a lot of soul, groove and dynamics.." They quickly gelled and were soon layin' it down in the clubs as Flynnville Train. They started recording with long time friend Richard Young (Kentucky HeadHunters) and put out an independent album that had great regional success. Then, in 2005, their lives were changed forever when they got a phone call from Country music super star Toby Keith. Toby signed the band and took them on tour with him in 2008. They toured the country all the while introducing themselves to country radio. They had two singles hit the top 30 on the R&R charts as well two videos in rotation on CMT and GAC.

Since then, Flynnville Train has been perfecting their craft by writing and recording new music and winning the hearts of America by touring the fairs and festivals. In 2009 Tommy was honored with winning Modern Drummer's Readers Poll for best up and coming drummer. He has also appeared in the ever popular DRUM! magazine.



POP
KEITH CARLOCK

Carlock is top of the Pops for the second year in a row. The MD Fest alum toured heavily with Steely Dan last year, slaying fans with his clever and commanding approach to some of the most sophisticated and beloved songs of the last thirty-five years.
2. Barney Hoskwood **3. Kenny Aronoff**
4. Carter Beauford **5. Vinnie Colaiuta**

FUSION
KEITH CARLOCK

Pop winner... Fusion winner... Is there anything Keith Carlock can't do? For proof of his fused prowess, go no further than Oz Noy's late-'07 album, *Fuzy*.
2. Dave Weckl **3. Steve Smith**
4. Morgan Agnew **5. Vinnie Colaiuta**

ALL-AROUND
KEITH CARLOCK

The space between pop and fusion can accommodate a whole world of musical styles. Seeing as Carlock cinched both those spots in this year's poll, it's no surprise you crowned him top All-Around drummer as well.
2. Vinnie Colaiuta **3. Steve Smith**
4. Dennis Chambers **5. Steve Gadd**

WORLD
HORACIO "EL NEGRO" HERNANDEZ

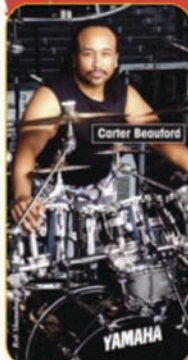
Everyone's favorite world-fusion-jazz-rock drummer, Horacio appears at all points on the globe—seemingly at the same time—playing every kind of groove imaginable with simply remarkable facility and passion. A drummer for all seasons, and a gentleman to boot.
2. Bahia Prieto **3. Trilok Gurta**
4. Alex Acosta **5. Zakir Hussain**

COUNTRY
DAVE McAFEE

Toby Keith simply doesn't put out albums that register less than multi-platinum numbers, and the man charged with bringing all those country hits to the stage is Dave McAfee. He's been out there doing it for over twenty years; this is his first win in the MD Readers Poll.
2. Jim Riley **3. David Hartup**
4. Paul Lain **5. Tracy Brasseur**

STUDIO
VINNIE COLAIUTA

Four straight wins for Vinnie in the Studio category. George Duke, Glen Campbell, Charli Moore, Michael McDonald, and Randy Jackson all called on the drummer to do his thing last year, and that's just the tip of the iceberg. Vinnie's remarkable career shows no signs of slowing.
2. Keith Carlock **3. Josh Freese**
4. Kenny Aronoff **5. Steve Jordan**



JAM BAND
CARTER BEAUFORD

The new Dave Matthews Band album hadn't even appeared when the polls closed. No matter, jam fans far and wide never tire of proclaiming their allegiance to Carter's go-for-ititude.
2. Kris Myers **3. Stanton Moore**
4. Billy Martin **5. Matt Alts/Jeff Sipe (tie)**

PERCUSSIONIST
LUIS CONTE

Conte has one of the longest résumés in the biz, including everyone—and we mean everyone—from Eric Clapton, Madonna, Phil Collins, Christina Aguilera, and Elton John to Beck, Belinda Carlisle, Oz Os, Queen Latifah, and Ozzy Osbourne.
2. Alex Acosta **3. Giovanni Hidalgo**
4. Aaron Draper **5. Sheila E**

UP & COMING
TOMMY BALES
(FLYNNVILLE TRAIN)

Flynnville Train earned a whole mess of fans in the past couple of years opening for country superstar Toby Keith, whose Show Dog Nashville label signed the band in 2006. Bales clearly left an impression on everyone who saw him stem it down.
2. Jason Betts (Chris Carrabba)
3. Pete Wilhoit (Fiction Plane)
4. Blake Brann (Swing Alike)
5. Steven Spence (Black Tide)

CLINICIAN
JIM RILEY

Rascal Flatts is famous for their constant stream of country hits and extravagant arena concerts. Longtime drummer Riley has taken that exposure and parlayed it into a part-time career as a top drum clinician. No doubt next year's crop of country-drumming up-and-comers will be that much better off for having attended one of Jim's popular appearances.
2. David Hartup **3. Todd Sucherman**
4. Steve Smith **5. Jajo Meyer**

METHOD BOOK
DAVID STANOCH: MASTERING THE TABLES OF TIME

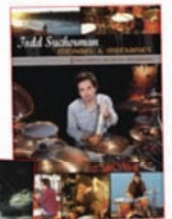
2. Rich Lackowski: *On The Beaten Path: Progressive Rock*
3. Tommy Igoe: *Groove Essentials 2.0*
4. Steve Fyke: *Inside The Big Band Drum Chart*
5. Pete Lockett: *Indian Rhythms For Drumset*

EDUCATIONAL DVD
TODD SUCHERMAN: METHODS AND MECHANICS

2. Tommy Igoe: *Groove Essentials 2.0*
3. Steve Smith: *Drum Legacy: Standing On The Shoulders Of Giants*
4. Jason Betts: *What Drives The Beat*
5. Brian: *Has Made The Worst Drum Instructional DVD Ever*

RECORDED PERFORMANCE
JOEY JORDISON: SLIPKNOT, "ALL HOPE IS GONE"

2. Todd Sucherman: *Slyx: "One With Everything"*
3. Keith Carlock: *Walter Becker: "Circus Money"*
4. Thomas Prögen: *The Mars Volta: "Wax Simulacra"*
5. Tomasz Haake: *Meshuggah: "Bleed"*



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JANUARY 2008

★ CUTTING ★ EDGE COWBOYS

MYRON HOWELL
TOMMY BALES
STEVE SINATRA
& JARRED POPE
PROVE THAT COUNTRY
Ain't What It Used To Be

BY HOLLY GLEASON

Although they were once banned from the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, drummers eventually found their way into that most traditional of venues, and it wasn't long before country music began to include bashing and crashing. When Alabama introduced a true band dynamic – having honed their chops in the salt air clubs of Myrtle Beach, Florida – it seemed the last bastion of etiquette had fallen. Yet country musicians (save for the frenetic propulsion of the Kentucky Headhunters, Hank Williams Jr., and Dwight Yoakam) were always a bit more polite than their rock and roll counterparts.



TOMMY BALES

★ BACKGROUND IN BLUES ★

Flynnville Train's Tommy Bales found his true center as a drummer while punching it out in the clubs around Indiana, playing the gamut of blues, from the originators to the mavericks and from the swamp to the city. So when brothers Brian and Brent Flynn were looking to put some more wallop in their country, they reached out to the time-honed,

bar-tested rhythm section of Bales and bassist Jeremy Patterson.

Though they hadn't intended to "go country," Bales and Patterson immediately recognized the overlap. "A straight shuffle is *very* much stripped down," Bales says. "I started in the blues in the same way – that train shuffle is where it all comes from. It's just where you go from there. I can't say all

music is based on it, but I can say that almost all the music I love is."

Bales considers himself a groove player, and has always been known as a heavy hitter. "Someone who just slams it out there!" he stresses. "When it came to merging the two worlds [of blues and country], what *really* helped me was listening to [Kentucky Headhunters drummer] Fred Young, because he's not a country player at all – but he knows how to drive that kind of music. He *gets* how to make that rocking, blues-based playing work for country."

Flynnville Train has spent the last several months on the road as the support act on Toby Keith's big arena tours, and Bales knows the value of hitting hard in that size venue. "It's balls-out from the downbeat til the end," Bales laughs. "You just feed on it, and it feeds on you. But you want to have some control to it, too, because it hits the crowd harder that way."

"WE DON'T EVEN USE A CLICK TRACK EXCEPT TO SET THE TIMING"

"When we record, especially when we started working with [Kentucky Headhunter] Richard Young, who went in the studio with us before [Flynnville Train signed with Show Dog Records], it was about capturing the performance. We don't even use a click track except to set the timing. We talk a lot about groove, time, and feel, so we know what we're going for. We're all clear about what it is we want, where we think we're going, but then we get out in the studio and we play."

"So, if that's how we do it when we're recording, there's nothing like taking that onto the stage with us. When you use that attack, it makes those hyped-up adrenaline arena shows feel like an intimate club gig."

With a self-titled debut that merges mainstream country hooks with more serious playing, ranging from the frenzied "Last Good Time" to the honky-tonk raver "Truck Stop In The Sky," Bales understands the notion of bringing the backbone to the beer hall – and it's defining the scrappy quintet with the veteran stripes in all its hard-won glory.

BALES' KIT

INFOGRAPHIC BY RICK EBERLY

DRUMS

- 1 26" x 16" Ludwig Bass Drum
- 2 14" x 6.5" Premier Snare
- 3 12" x 8" Slingerland Tom
- 4 16" x 16" Slingerland Floor Tom

CYMBALS

- A 14" Zildjian New Beat Hi-Hats
- B 20" Zildjian K Custom Crash
- C 24" Paiste Ride
- D 20" Zildjian Crash

Tommy Bales also uses DW pedals, Vic Firth sticks, Aquarian heads, and a jingle ring on his hi-hat.

