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# Drumming At The Edge Of Magic: A Journey Into The Spirit Of Percussion



## Synopsis

Mickey Hart, percussionist for the Grateful Dead, tells the compelling tale of his quest to unlock the power, myths, and legends of percussion. Complemented by more than 90 photographs and illustrations. It is a compelling, panoramic adventure into a vibrant living tradition of myth, power, and magic. Black-and-white photographs and illustrations.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The percussionist for the Grateful Dead is so New Age in his persuasions that his book comes with a "tree clause": two trees will be planted for every one used in its manufacture. His spell-binding drumming stories come from his studies and travels and his consultation with anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, and students of mythology, Joseph Campbell among them. His personal commentary on how percussion is "used" both in music and in the wider culture in a variety of world settings seems only to miss female drumming traditions (in Korea, for example). Visually, the book is a knockout, with a vibrant cover, 90 well-chosen illustrations (some in color), and excellent layout. Even the paperback is a permanent book, with good paper and a stiffer-than-usual cover. The annotated bibliography is a plus. Recommended. See below for the collected lyrics of Dead lyricist Robert Hunter.--Ed.- Bonnie Jo Dopp, Dist . of Columbia P.L.Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Mickey Hart's efforts to document ancient and increasingly rare rhythmic traditions include his production for Rykodisc of The World, a series of unique recordings of music from around the world. He also serves on the board of the Smithsonian Institution's Folkway Records. Jay Stevens is the

author of *Storming Heaven: LSD and the American Dream*. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

This book looks at drumming not just from a technical standpoint but also from a philosophical and even a spiritual stance. Mickey Hart starts us with his early steps, covers military drumming and a bit of its place in history. He then moves on to anecdotal information about his days with the Grateful Dead. He discusses the drums themselves, their national origins and histories and the connection between drummers and their instruments. I am not a drummer but I can tell you that if you are called by the beat of the drum, this is a book you should read at least once.

I bought this book years ago and it changed my life. I really loved Mickey Hart talking about Joseph Campbell and I bought the Joseph Campbell Power of Myth video series because of this book. Mickey quotes Joseph Campbell saying to follow your bliss, so I did. This book was interesting and I read the whole thing in just a couple of sittings. I was really into drumming and dancing and getting into the music, thinking about it, makes me want to follow my bliss and the whole life beat.

An oldie but a goodie. Although it seems a bit dated, the genuine love Mickey Hart has for the drum and its rich history still continues to inspire. Mickey is one of the "old guys" now, but the music he helped create in his day has yet to be matched in this era of digital drum beats and (godshelp us) auto tune "singing". Drummers, take a look behind you and see whose shoulders you're standing on. Mickey Hart will be standing large in that group.

I read this excellent tome many years ago and I only bought it this time around to give to a friend whose son is a budding drummer. You would expect this book to be heavy on stories of Mickey Hart's time with the Grateful Dead but it really isn't. Sure there's enough to keep the hardcore DeadHeads happy but there is much more to it than that. It's not so much a life story as a life's journey and it's a journey into rhythm and its meaning. It's a wonderful read. The story about the drum made out of a human skull is worth the price of admission by itself. I know I may be a little bit biased as I'm a dyed in the wool DeadHead and I've even played softball on the high school field where Mickey used to drum in the marching band at football games but in my humble opinion this is a great book.

I am a drummer. My main focus of interest is jazz. I am also an avid academic reader. One thing

that is obvious is the lack of dedicated books on the subject of drums and drumming, particularly drumming as it is practiced today, in my world. Hart's book is a great read, building on a lot of research. At times, it is rather evident that Hart's band was the Grateful Dead. That kind of "fuzzy" logic is the only thing I can hold against this book. And then again, I am not sure I even agree with myself here. Hart's book is a must read for any drummer. It contains Hart's own personal story. But it also contains loads of interesting information on drums and drumming, some of it not easily available anywhere else. The only reason not to get this book is if you cannot find it. Shame on the publishing company for not re-printing it. Pronto. Please...

Awesome!!!

Many years ago I was taking a Masters-level communications class at Wayne State University in Detroit. I don't remember how I found this book, but I incorporated it into a term paper on atypical communication, and got an "A" on the paper. I was astounded at how well-researched yet readable and interesting it was. It, along with "Gods, Graves and Scholars," are the two best non-fiction books I've read, and I read a LOT. I highly recommend it. It is another book that got lost in a move, so I needed to replace it.

This book is a must-read for every drummer, musician or person interested in what moves the spirit and how that impacts life. It was researched and written beautifully, with so much information and history regarding drums; their power, purpose and placement throughout time. I highly recommend this book!

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