

Jeff “Tain” Watts, voted “Best Drummer” in Modern Drummer Magazine (1988 & 1993), has established himself as one of the most original and influential drummers on today’s music scene. Moreover, he holds the distinction of being the only musician to appear on every Grammy Award winning jazz record by both Wynton and Branford Marsalis.

Mr. Watts’ formal training began at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA, where he was classical percussion major, primarily a timpanist. But it at the Berklee College of Music, where he later enrolled, that he began to hone his style which was to change the face of modern jazz drumming--alongside such luminaries as Branford Marsalis, Kevin Eubanks, Greg Osby, and Marvin "Smitty" Smith.

Mr. Watts left the Berklee College of Music to join the Wynton Marsalis Quartet in 1981, with whom he won three Grammy Awards. After leaving Mr. Marsalis in 1988, he began working with jazz stars such as George Benson, Harry Connick, Jr. and McCoy Tyner, subsequently, joining the Branford Marsalis Quartet in 1989.

While a member of the Branford Marsalis Quartet, Mr. Watts had the opportunity to add some high profile television and film credits to his resume, which included a three-year stint performing as a member of the “Tonight Show” band with Jay Leno, and co-starring in the Spike Lee film "Mo Better Blues" as Rhythm Jones--a fictitious drummer who plays in the band of Denzel Washington.

After leaving the “Tonight Show”, Mr. Watts continued to record and tour with Branford Marsalis as well as Danilo Perez, Michael Brecker, Betty Carter, Kenny Kirkland, Courtney Pine, Geri Allen, Alice Coltrane, Greg Osby, Steve Coleman, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, and Ravi Coltrane.

In addition to his many performance credits as a sideman, Mr. Watts has an equally impressive track record as a bandleader, which includes six critically-acclaimed CDs:

- "Watts" (Dark Key Music 2009)
- "Folk's Songs" (Dark Key Music 2007)
- “Detained, Live at the Blue Note" (Half Note 2004)
- "MegaWatts" (Sunnyside 2003)
- "Bar Talk" (Sony 2002)
- "Citizen Tain" (Sony 1999)

A true jazz innovator and creative force, Mr. Watts has never failed to deliver the percussive magic that has been his trademark since his emergence on the contemporary jazz scene in the 1980s. Entertainment Weekly says, “Short of visionary, Tain still possesses heat, nuance, maturity, and a bounty of ideas.”

*Grammy Awards of 1986 - Wynton Marsalis for *Black Codes From the Underground* performed by the Wynton Marsalis Group

*Grammy Awards of 1987 –

Wynton Marsalis for *J Mood* performed by the Wynton Marsalis Group

*Grammy Awards of 1988 – Wynton Marsalis for *Marsalis Standard Time – Vol. I* performed by the Wynton Marsalis Group

*Grammy Awards of 1993 – Branford Marsalis for *I Heard You Twice the First Time* performed by the Branford Marsalis Group

*Grammy Awards of 2001 - Branford Marsalis for *Contemporary Jazz* performed by the Branford Marsalis Quartet