

HEART FIRST

If you can touch a person's heart, all of the doors will be open. Let's say you are playing in a new group or you are trying to get into the group. You also have many ideas of how to add some cooler drum parts and maybe even a drum solo. What is the best way to get them to accept your ideas? You could try being persuasive and a little pushy. Or you could first try to accept how the music is played. Make everyone comfortable by mastering the previous drummer's parts. They will see how great you sound playing the other drummers parts and their music. This will make them naturally curious of what you can do. This will lead them to ask you to play a little more of what you hear.

It is much better to be asked to show what you can do, than to show it and then be asked to just play what is on the cd please. If your ideas or drumming come from a place that wants the music to be better, it will have a much better chance of doing just that. Sometimes we want to play things for purely selfish reasons that don't add anything to the music. For music to sound great, we have to put our egos aside and allow the music to speak. We

have to get out of the way, so to speak. This is how great music is created. Then as I said in an earlier chapter, it's all good. Then you can throw that ego stuff in there. But first come from the heart.

This is how we touch people from the drums. Drums have been bringing emotion out of people for many, many years. Let's look at the drum solo. If you are unfamiliar with people being touched by a drum solo, it is only because most drummers' play fast and hard in drum solos. These are the two things that are the exact opposite of what could reach a person's heart. Experiment in your next solo by adding some Ying in it. You probably are using enough Yang already. Add some water to it. Try setting up some melodic phrases that you can repeat over and over. But, increase the intensity as you go along. Play something soft and quiet. I know this is a big change for any drummer. Believe me, the crowd will notice it too. When you go to playing loud and hard after one or two of these things, you will strike a chord with them.

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Without a doubt, the most important thing you can do to touch a heart from the drums, is to play from the heart! If you do this, people will feel you. I don't care if you are playing "Old Mac Donald Had A farm". You could even be playing your worst night ever. If you are trying your best and playing from your soul – people will feel you! That goes for grooving, soloing, rock & roll, jazz, funk, fusion, metal...

I was on a rock & roll tour. There weren't any drum solos or even a lot of space for a drummer to go for it. You can always take your spots if you want to muscle your way in or at the end of songs at least. I always try to play my best. But this night for some reason, I felt like trying to put my soul into it, without playing more or louder. I don't recall playing anything differently than I normally did for that music, but I was very focused and IN the music. Again, it was rock & roll. I don't even think we played a ballad. Perhaps we played one, in the hour and a half set. After the show I didn't feel any differently, except I felt I really gave of myself in a different way. After boarding the tour bus, some people were getting autographs from the singer, and one person was searching desperately to meet the drummer. Me!

They let him back and he was crying. He freaked me out a little. But I just tried to figure out what was up? He tried to explain to me how my drumming touched him. He couldn't put his finger on it. He wasn't a drummer and he couldn't tell me exactly what I played. All he knew was that I touched him. And it was obvious. I was touched that he was touched. This is why I play the drums. It's not for the money, even though we need it. It is certainly not for the fame. That comes and goes anyway. If I can touch someone's heart, then the years of practicing paradiddles and lugging those drums up stairs and through the snow were worth it.

The only thing he could have felt was my heart. I didn't play a solo or anything drum wise that you would think would have caused this reaction. While he was the only person that I have seen cry, there have been many people after shows that tell me some pretty heavy stories. The one common theme they talk about is how the way I played touched them. And, by touching them, I somehow helped them to deal with this or that issue in their lives. I may have some technique and like to use it like any drummer. But what all of these people felt, was me playing from my heart. To do this doesn't require you to be an incredible drummer. It does

require you to open your heart in a selfless way. Whether you play rock & roll, jazz, country or hip-hop, doesn't matter. Play from your heart and see what happens.

The same can be said of sex & love. If you can touch a persons' heart, other doors will naturally open. It is one approach to pursue someone just for physical sex. But it is a completely different thing to be truly interested in someone. And as you get to know and like them, sex becomes more a part of your feelings. In both cases you can be attracted to their personality and have thoughts of sex. The difference of the two is what importance and urgency there is to have sex.

If you are just beginning to date someone, think of the consequences of having sex right away. If you can see you two possibly having a nice relationship, there is no need to rush it. There will be plenty of time for all of the sex you both can handle, when you are a couple. I say this because we guys can be so obsessed about getting some that we wind up

with nada. That's no sex. No girlfriend. Nada. So that is why I sound so prudish. Besides I can recall a really nice girl that I blew it with using this approach. She was a girl that I could have definitely had a nice relationship with. We got along great. We laughed a lot. We had similar interest. She liked all kinds of music, like I do. But being young & dumb, I totally screwed it up.

In my haste to touch everything but her heart, a relationship never developed. She was a knockout! The kind of girl you walk down the street with and every head turns. I mean EVERY head. Women and men. The expression on the guys' faces were like, DAAAMMM. The ladies with poked out lips were like "who does she think she is?" She had it going on as the old expression goes. She was smart, had good common sense and was level headed. A down to earth beauty... Not just fine but pretty as can be and all natural. She was a part time aerobics instructor. Guys, you know what I was thinking. I can cancel that gym membership because I will be getting all the exer-

cise I can handle right here in my apartment.

She comes from out of town to spend the weekend with me in my apartment. Sounds like a sure bet right? We had a nice weekend planned. She stepped off of the train looking like any mans' fantasy. I thought I heard some kind of theme music causing me to almost do a jig. I just kept thinking, "she's here to stay with me the whole weekend. Crockett you must have done something right." I wanted to high five every man at the train station. She was dressed very simple with jeans, some pink sandals and a pretty blouse. This was definitely a lesson in less is more. The less she wore the more I wanted her. But I kept saying, "be cool man. Just be cool... She is here for the whole weekend, Friday to Sunday".

I tried to make her feel comfortable. I took her to see the town after we dropped her bag off at my place. We had a drink and some good conversation where my charm game was in prime form as was hers. Then I took

her back to the pad to get ready for dinner. She changed into the most delicate summer dress ever made. At least it was the prettiest thing I ever saw. She was working some pumps that had me like a hungry dog seeing a fresh steak. And I wasn't a vegetarian then. She looked so sexy and simple at the same time. When a woman is that fine and pretty, they can wear next to nothing and make you nuts. When she came out of the room to show me, I had the same face as all the guys in the street had — "DAAAMMM". She knew she was working it cause she just giggled. Meanwhile I was thinking, we didn't have any reservations to worry about and I wasn't that hungry. But no man, "be cool", I told myself. She's going to be here for a couple of days. We went to the restaurant and I was getting all the stares, this time. You know how it is when you see an incredible looking woman on a date. After you check her out, you size up the dude. Like what's he got, to get her? It's all pretty funny. We do the same thing when we see a drummer on a good gig, don't

we? We check out his playing to try and figure out why he is on that gig, instead of us.

We get back to my place after a nice romantic dinner, where we really hit it off. Now is the moment of truth. It's time for bed. I didn't say sleep. I threw on my air Jordan shorts and a t-shirt. She broke out with a white lace Victoria Secret, page # 37, 1995 summer classic negligee. She was looking like an angel but it wasn't time for church. I couldn't wait any longer. I threw cool out of the window. I even stubbed my toe trying to get to her fast enough. She got a good laugh out of that. I was way ahead of the beat. All groove was lost. Knowing I was getting a solo on this great stage I tried to just rush through the music. We all know you can't skip the music to get to your solo. But I tried to solo from the first bar.

She wanted to have sex. But she was looking at it as just a part of something more. And it was easy for her to see that I just wanted to get some. She even tried to tell me to be cool and you'll get it. She didn't say it in

those exact words. That is just not a woman's way. That's how we guys talk. Whatever words she used, I didn't understand because I kept trying. Not all bandleaders explain their music before they give it to you. They figure you should know how to read. She was there to give me a solo. This was not an audition. She just wanted me to play the music before the solo section that's all. I know what some of you guys are thinking, don't tell me you didn't taste that fruit. She came over to spend the weekend with you. She is in your bed, wearing the white lace Victoria Secrets page #37, 1995 classic summer negligee. Oh it's on. Why did you even wait that long, Crockett? You don't get more green lights than that.

I know you are right, guys. But just because a bandleader says this is going to be your drum feature, doesn't mean you start to solo from the pick up. Women have a more developed sixth sense. She could feel I was after every part of her body but her heart. And she was class and I knew she didn't just want to get down like that. It would be like

trying to play a 16inch bass drum like it's a 24inch bass drum. It just doesn't want to be played like that. So I turned her off instantly because she felt like a piece of meat. I probably had meat on my eyeballs like a cartoon character. If I had just been cool a little longer. A few more bars of music could have changed this whole story.

But since I wasn't coming from the heart or trying to touch hers, I couldn't put on the brakes. Eventually I had to end the chase and let her sleep. What a long hard night that was. You know what I mean. She left the next morning on the very first train out of Dodge. I never heard from her again. There was still time before she left to try and save things. At least I could have given it the old college try. I could've explained how difficult it was to control myself when she looked so beautiful in that Victoria Secret white lace page #37 ... Maybe she should have wore page #34 the first night to give a guy a chance at being cool. You know. Give me a ballad to play or something, first. I could have also said what a great time I was

having and how I would like to continue it over the weekend.

But the problem is that you don't say or think of things like this when you just want a piece. By not coming from the heart, I possibly blew a great thing. It's the same when you are the type drummer that only thinks of soloing and where you can show case your chops. If the bandleader says take it easy, you don't understand why. And if he fires you, the thought that you overplayed will never cross your mind. Therefore you won't be able to save your gig by offering to groove more. That thought will never come into your mind. Don't feel bad. I have been there.

If you are having the same problems with closing like I did, take it from me. Be cool, slow down. Come from the heart. Play from your heart and soul first. After that it's all good. It may turn out to be the best girl or group you ever play with. This lesson is not exclusive to guys. Women have been known

to also just want to solo, too. They want sex with no emotional ties.

Now no matter what type of music I play, I try to play with all of my heart. If you do this people will feel your openness and generous heart. To reach the higher levels of love and music, which actually touch people, try some of these things and see for yourself what a difference they can make. It is more of an intention than doing anything physically or musically different. By opening your heart you allow people to feel you on a deeper level. This cannot be done with one's ego. It is a kind of surrendering. When you do this you naturally play inside the music. As a result, you and your drumming become one with the music. And everything you play naturally serves the music.

It is the same with sex. If you open up your heart to your partner you allow a deeper and more loving experience to take place. It also comes from a surrendering. There can be no ego present. Even if it is to try and make the other person feel this or that. This is not something you can make someone feel. You can only offer your love from the depths of your soul. Do it with no expectations of reward or praise. This is crucial. Then your intentions are in line with true sur-

