



Press Release

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It is Frank Kissi on drums

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To hear him play the drums is to experience an irresistibly propulsive but delicate approach based on an impressive technique and vast understanding of what rhythm is all about. The man in question is Frank Kissi, who many conversant with the live music scene in this country, would agree is a player in his own class.

His ability to blend jazz and Highlife finesse with rock power, funk groove and reggae feel stands him out as the finest all-round drummer around at the moment. He has played for nearly every artiste that matters in this country and he won the Vodafone Ghana Music Awards Instrumentalist of the Year trophy for 2014. Leader of his own Electric Band, Kissi also features regularly with the Black Lace Band and the Ayisi-Dey Quintet.

Artistes he has played with on stage or in the recording studio include Kojo Antwi, Ofie Kodjoe, Sandra Huson, Daddy Lumba, Efyia, Becca, Jane and Bernice, Kris Bediako, Rex Omar, Raquel, Ofori Amponsah and the late Mac , versatility is the way to progress in the world of contemporary popular music and that is why he takes on jobs that embrace virtually all styles of music.

Though he hails from Obo Kwahu in the Eastern Region, Kissi, who is in his 30s, was born and bred at Korle Wokon in Accra. He started playing in church by the age of nine and has since found sitting behind the drums and playing as the most fruitful venture in his life. He pays tribute to the good drummers that preceded him such as Ghanaba, Sol Amarfio, Smart Aper, Max Hammond and Kweku Small who played with Amazing Six, Amakye Dede and Kojo Antwi before going to live and work in the United States.

“They deserve our respect because without their contribution, there would not be drummers now like myself, Danny Black, Francis Osei, Paa Kow and the other young ones around. “I’m particularly grateful to Kweku Small because I learnt a lot of things from him. He knew how to generate real groove on the drums and I initially learnt how to play simply and effectively from him.”

Some drummers believe playing fast means they are good but Kissi thinks everything is about the groove the drummer is able to generate from his equipment. “Take Sol Amarfio of Osibisa for instance. He is always cool and able to carry Osibisa along on a tight groove.” The late great American jazz drummer, Billy Higgins, once said: “You’re not supposed to rape the drums; you make love to them as far as I’m concerned.” That’s exactly what Frank Kissi does every time he coaxes great sounds from his drums.

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