

## **Jay Umble Biography**

Jay grew up in the Coatesville area of South Eastern Pennsylvania. His musical life began at the age of eight when he began taking guitar lessons at a local music store. He continued lessons through the age of twelve. It was at the age of 13, when he heard an Eric Clapton solo on commercial radio, that he knew he truly wanted to approach the guitar seriously. In his early teens he began his journey through the typical garage band jungle inspired by all of the contemporary rock artists of the day.

Jay's evolution towards jazz and beyond was a gradual process over time. From rock he began to evolve into funk which led to funk-jazz, which led to commercial jazz. From this point, he found his way to jazz-rock fusion and finally arrived and explored the worlds of straight-ahead and bebop jazz. Now his music embraces all of these elements and more. He is a very open-minded artist and appreciates all styles of music. To the purist of any genre, Jay says, "it's just another color on the musical palette".

In his late teens and early twenties he studied from several local jazz players which opened his ears up to more melodic and harmonic possibilities. In his mid-20's he went on the road for four years with a Hammond B3 based group, The Ron Smith Trio. The trio played jazz standards as well as quasi-commercial music. It was during this time period that he developed his appreciation for the classic organ trio group concept. Immediately following this four year stint, he began studying with world-renowned jazz guitarist, Pat Martino in South Philadelphia. Jay says that his time studying with Pat Martino was the most important thing he ever did educationally with the guitar. According to Jay, he basically relearned the entire concept of the guitar. He says that the unification of the guitar neck into one complete entity was the single most important thing he learned from Pat. He sums up his time spent studying with Pat by saying, "what a phenomenal experience it was"!

In the mid-80's Jay formed an organ based trio called "In Transit" which focused on the jazz-blues genre. The group played the arrangements of many of the jazz greats such as Groove Holmes, Jack McDuff, Charles Earland, Jimmy Smith and others. In Transit lasted for ten years and it was during this time period that Jay began exploring his original music which continues to play an important role in his music to this day. His latest book/cd project, "Payin' Your Dues With The Blues" was a direct out-growth of this time spent working with the jazz-blues idiom. He has also authored several other jazz guitar instructional books published through Mel Bay Publications, Inc.

In the early 90's he joined the music faculty of Bucknell University and Susquehanna University where he teaches guitar mechanics, harmony-theory, fretboard integration in addition to general guitar playing.

Currently he continues teaching at both universities and has formed a new group, String Theory with Andy Alonso on bass and Dave Santana on drums.

The band's focus is on original music. Jay's compositional approach brings a strong, modern sensibility to the group while his improvisational concept is highly linear, offering a fusionistic groundwork for the band. Jay says of String Theory, "this is without question the best group I've ever been in".

Jay has just recently completed a new album, "Spirit Crossing" which features international percussionist, Jamey Haddad and vocalist, JD Walter. The album has a consistent world beat flare throughout and has been described as the "ultimate chill album". Spirit Crossing is a highly unique, creative venture with stellar performances throughout.

He also has been working in a very unique guitar duo project for the last ten years with 7-string guitarist, Bill Druck. The duo plays jazz standards with a multi-stylistic approach. According to Jay, "this is a very special project with emphasis placed on harmonic textures and subtleties". An album is currently being planned.

**For more information visit [JayUmble.com](http://JayUmble.com)  
or E-mail: [jay@jayumble.com](mailto:jay@jayumble.com)**

### **Private Study, Clinics and Workshops**

The following topics and more are offered:

Scales, Right Hand Technique, Fretboard Integration, Traditional Chordal System, Modern Chordal Systems, Improvisation, Linear Expansion, Jazz Blues, Composition, Improvisation Techniques, Phrasing, Arpeggios, Harmonic Manipulation, Resolution, Polyrhythms, Inverted Pedal Tones, Linear & Harmonic Set-ups, Targeting, Chromaticism, Random Triad Improvising, Side-Slipping, Harmonic Fields, Linear Fields, Positive and Negative Polarity, Legato Concepts, Chord Substitution and Psychological Performance Concepts.

### **Published Instructional Books**

through Mel Bay Publications, Inc.

Payin' Your Dues With The Blues  
Improvisational Techniques For Jazz Guitar  
Melodic Junction  
The Jazz Guitarist's Thesaurus  
Jazz Guitar Licks In Tablature  
Master Anthology of Blues Guitar Solos, Vol. 1  
Master Anthology of Jazz Guitar Solos, Vol.

## Latest CD Release

Spirit Crossing

Umbolli Music 2008

1. Falling water 4:37
2. Narragansett 7:42
3. Flashback 6:15
4. Just Say the Words 2:25
5. Kim 4:28
6. Sahara 3:58
7. Spirit Crossing 4:56
8. Distant Dog Barking 10:00

Total time 45:00

Jay Umble: All guitars, banjo (6), synth (8), percussion (4)

Jamey Haddad: All percussion (except track 4), drums (3 & 8)

JD Walter: Vocals on (2, 4, 5)

Andy Roberts: Synth (1) and piano solo (3)

Andy Alonso: Bass (2 & 3)

Mike Bitts: Bass (1, 3, 6, 8)

Steve Meashey: Acoustic Bass (5)

Chris Van Scyoc: Drum Loop programming (4)

Theo Kreider Umble: Drum Loop programming (3)

All tracks composed by Jay Umble (Umbolli Music/ASCAP)

Produced by Jay Umble & Chris Van Scyoc

Recorded at Cannery Road Studio, Palmyra, PA and Red Rock Studio,  
Saylorsburg, PA

Engineered by Chris Van Scyoc

**Spirit Crossing available at [JayUmble.com](http://JayUmble.com) or [CDbaby.com](http://CDbaby.com)**

## Reviews of Jay Umble's "Spirit Crossing"

Review by Mish Mash Music-

Jazz guitarist Jay Umble's latest release "Spirit Crossing" finds its muse in simplicity. Umble creates beautiful soundscapes and dreamy atmospheres letting his guitar ride along without overpowering the mood of each song. At times the album is laid back and relaxed and at other times there is an upbeat and warm positivity, yet Umble always keeps his direction in sharp focus. World beats intersect with gentle, driving rhythms giving a variety of musical directions to the disc, never becoming stale or predictable.

Review by Minor 7<sup>th</sup>-

Jay Umble's current release, "Spirit Crossing" is an adult contemporary / world beat collaboration with international percussionist, Jamey Haddad. Throughout the recording Haddad produces dense rhythmic backdrops for the guitarist's delicate, melodic excursions. While Umble's playing is fluid and masterful, he forgoes extended improvisations in order to create lush, rich harmonic soundscapes. The album is a perfect study in elegant understatement where his inspired soloing does not overshadow the inherent beauty of the compositions. Noteworthy contributions are also made by JD Walter on vocals, Andy Alonso, Mike Bitts and Steve Meashey on bass and Andy Roberts on keyboards. This recording is an effortless listen with thoroughly engaging compositions and performances at every juncture. The opening, "Falling Water" fills the room with rich, dramatic imagery reminiscent to the vintage ECM recordings of the seventies. "Kim" is a pleasant duet with nice Brazilian inflections offering subtle echoes of the late Baden Powell. The playful "Flashback" finds Umble in a Pat Metheny mode, melodically "rocking out" to Haddad's backbeat. "Spirit Crossing" is an eclectic array of sonic explorations blending Jazz, Rock, Pop, Folk and World into a cohesive collection of alluring music. This is a recording that has tremendous commercial potential without reverting to cliché-driven predictability. The compositions are particularly captivating with memorable and interesting textures which should please listeners with a wide variety of musical tastes.

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or E-mail: [jay@jayumble.com](mailto:jay@jayumble.com)**