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Brad Conyers, native Onalaska musician returns to Wisconsin after 20 years of performing, touring, recording, and stage production. Drum Instructor at Leithold Music.

Born in Vinton Iowa, my family moved to Baraboo Wisconsin in 1970. My older brother and I used to frequent the Circus World Museum and watch the live musicians under the big top. Fascinated by the synchronous crashes and thumps the live drummer added to each trick, I knew I was to become a drummer. Out came the pots & pans! Wooden spoons for sticks!

In 1974 the family moved to Onalaska where I found an interest in singing in church and operating sound equipment. Onalaska Public Schools have always been a hotbed of teaching talent. From the 2nd grade I was encouraged to read music beginning with vocals, and then the recorder. Mary Passe first taught me guitar. By 5th grade I had graduated from pots & pans to my first practice pad & sticks, which my parents purchased from Leithold Music. My first drum instructor was Jim Welander, Martha Balfany was my trumpet tutor. All the while I was studying piano with Wilma Hoch, the La Crosse St. Joseph Cathedral organist. Cory Groves, Onalaska High School Band Director, would shape my jazz chops through 4 years in the Onalaska High School Jazz Band. Karen Quinn kept our drumline tight. Paul Gulsvig, Onalaska Choir Director, honed my "pit band" chops with The Onalaska Show Choir. In that time I acquired 9 State Solo Ensemble Honors, 3 NAJE Jazz Honors, and the coveted "Louis Armstrong Jazz Award". Dan Risgaard, director of Logan's Class Act gave me my first paying gig, and my confidence grew along with my skills. In 1985, at the age of 15, I auditioned for The UWL Symphony Orchestra directed by Dr. Joseph Cordiero. A great honor in my career was to play percussion for an audience including Leonard Bernstein at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

All this time I was nurturing my first rock bands and scrounging up casual gigs. By the end of high school I had traveled by van & bus, performing in 25 states. Occasionally we all got out to push! I began teaching drums to local middle- schoolers and maintained a loyal student base. I've always enjoyed teaching because it sparks the memory of learning from such dedicated professionals.

After Graduating High School in 1986 The Young Americans hired me to perform in Harbor Springs Michigan. The following year their California chapter offered me a position to perform at their seaside dinner theater. This experience with The Young Americans in California created many opportunities for me to branch out, and I began my professional live sound/recording engineering career along with performing as a session drummer. I must have read & recorded several dozen musicals for colleges and fine arts outfits. Before long I was recording around LA and Orange County. I was also tutoring up to 25 aspiring drummers through a Los Angeles area music store.

Since 1990 I have toured under the stage name Brad Zikken. The Ziggens formed in 1987 and continue to be a Southern California institution for fans of comedic surf- punk. I have been writing, producing, recording, singing, and playing with my buddies for nearly 2

decades. Our 9 albums have reached tens of thousands of fans across the globe. Many of our fans discover us through our history with bands like Sublime and No Doubt. Ziggens songs can be heard in TV soundtracks, commercials, and sports clips the world over. My own surf instrumental, "Surfin' Buena Park", is a selection in the playstation video game "Road Rash 2". We've toured extensively for years, in clubs nationwide.

Since 1994 I have had the pleasure of working with the legendary Glen Campbell as a sound engineer and guitar technician. I will continue to hand a guitar to Mr. Campbell at the top of every show and tell him to "have fun", as long as he needs me, in any country. A highlight to this act is the occasional symphony show, like Glen's recent 2-day engagement at Symphony Hall in Sydney, Australia or Live at The BBC in London, England.

I returned to the Coulee region in 2006 with my California bride, Linda, to enjoy the beautiful surroundings and get away from LA traffic. We return to Los Angeles often to visit family and perform with The Ziggens to 3 generations of fans. I recently accepted the position of Drum Instructor at Leithold Music in downtown LaCrosse. Lessons times are available on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons & evenings. This is a wonderful opportunity for me give back some of the stellar musical education that I received from this giving community. In addition, I maintain a 24 track-recording studio and look forward producing more local bands.

Live Sound & Production for:

Knott's Berry Farm, Organic Valley, Glen Campbell, Tony Bennett, Ray Charles, Brooks and Dunn, Smokey Robinson, Merle Haggard, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carlene Carter, Johnny Cash, Tanya Tucker, Waylon Jennings, Eddie Rabbit, Juice Newton, Oak Ridge Boys, The Shirelles, The Turtles, Gipsy Kings, Pacific Symphony Orchestra, Elvira "Mistress of the Dark", Bell Biv Devoe, Young MC, Petra, Whiteheart, Jo Ann Castle and The Lawrence Welk Stars, Mel Tillis, Mitch Rider, David Lindley and many more.

The Ziggens Live @:

House of Blues (Los Angeles and Orange County)
The Whiskey a Go Go (Hollywood)
The Roxy (Hollywood)
The Hollywood Palladium (Hollywood)
The Troubadour (Hollywood)
The Warped Tour (US Tour)
Slims (San Francisco)
Board in Orange County (Long Beach)

Ziggens Discography:

Wake Up & Smell 1991
Rusty Never Sleeps 1994
Chicken Out! 1995
Ignore Amos 1996
Pomona Lisa 1997
Live: Tickets Still Available 1998
Queezy Rider (Germany) 1999
The Ziggens 2002
Greatest Zits 2004