

MAKE IT WITH TWITTER | LEARN MODERN MOTOWN

BASS PLAYER

MUSIC!
THE BEATLES
'HEY BULLDOG'
PAUL
McARTNEY'S
COMPLETE BASS LINE

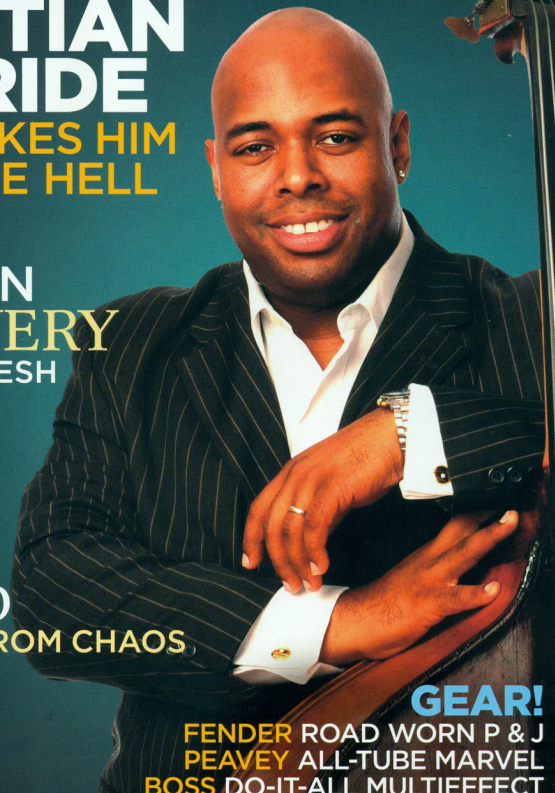
DIG DEEPER

CHRISTIAN McBRIDE

WHAT MAKES HIM
SWING LIKE HELL

JANE'S
ADDICTION
ERIC AVERY
HOW TO REFRESH
OLD LINES

DAVE
MATTHEWS
BAND
STEFAN
LESSARD
CREATIVITY FROM CHAOS



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BASS
20
YEARS

GEAR!
FENDER ROAD WORN P & J
PEAVEY ALL-TUBE MARVEL
BOSS DO-IT-ALL MULTIEFFECT

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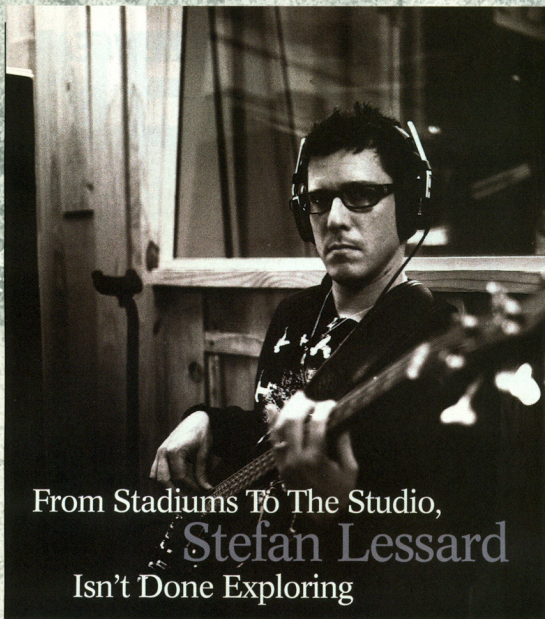
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Quick Takes: Stefan's Shots Of Big Whiskey Tunes

"Lying In The Hands Of God" I love reggae and dub bass, and when I was a teenager I was listening to Bob Marley, Pato Banton, and Steel Pulse. The way our drummer Carter Beauford plays, I can play a lot of triplets, and move a lot. I could be low for a second, and then I could go high, and then I could swim around with Carter. That whole bass line was very spontaneous.

"Shake Me Like a Monkey" Even though the time signature is changing, you don't want to make it feel like it's changing. I was probably trying to channel Tony Levin in there at some point, because I admire and draw a lot from his style of playing. I was just thinking, What would Tony do here?

"Spaceman" For that one, I like to drop out the one. Even though I hit it every once in a while, I like my main line to be off of the one, and that tune seemed to be perfect for it.

"Seven" That's the one tune I worked on for the longest in the studio when I was overdubbing. I think I recorded overdubs for four or five days and did everything pretty quickly. A lot of takes are one or two takes; there wasn't a lot of chopping up. But that tune, when I got to that 5 section, I was like, What do I do here?

From Stadiums To The Studio, Stefan Lessard Isn't Done Exploring

BACKSTAGE AT A HUMMING, SOLD-OUT 40,000-SEAT VANDERBILT STADIUM IN Nashville, Dave Matthews Band bassist Stefan Lessard is quietly pushing towards his own artistic horizons. With a new computer-based preamp in his live rig, film scoring work on the IMAX movie *Grand Canyon Adventure*, and a collection of quirky covers with his band Yukon Kornelius landing tracks on a recent Warren Miller snow-

Still Learning

By Bryan Beller

Photograph By Danny Clinch

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STEFAN LESSARD

Currently Spinning



A.R. Rahman, *Slumdog Millionaire (Soundtrack)* [2008, Interscope]—"My parents were lovers of Hindu music, and so I like the modern take. The whole Bollywood sound is really cool, and I try to incorporate that any way I can."



Tool, *10,000 Days* [2006, Tool Dissectional/Volcano]



Damien Marley, *Welcome to Jamrock* [2005, Tuff Gong]



Lenine, *Na Pressão* [1999, RCA Int'l]



Paul Simon, *Graceland* [1986, Warner Bros.] "I have to mention this one, one of my favorite all time

records. I listened to it nonstop when I first started playing bass. I love every bass line on this record!"

boarding DVD, Lessard is not just sitting back waiting for the next Dave Matthews Band release to express himself.

But after experiencing life-changing events since the last DMB studio release—a 2007 fire in his Virginia home and the death of original saxophonist LeRoi Moore in 2008—Lessard found himself more determined than ever to capture the in-the-moment creative spark on his musical home turf for *Big Whiskey and the GrooGruX King*, the band's musical ode to Moore. "When you're creating and you're in that moment, and all of a sudden it's coming out of you, there's a dance that happens between everyone playing. And sometimes when you start to home in on your parts, you're still dancing, but you're not dancing in a state of discovery." With tracks on over ten platinum albums and counting, Stefan Lessard is still discovering.

What's the single biggest influence on your playing since *Stand Up* came out? And how did that affect what you tracked on *Big Whiskey*?

I've just been listening to a lot of soundtracks, so my mind was thinking of film-music-to-image, really, which I love doing. When you play a live show the audience is an image right in front of you, but when you're in the studio you stick up a picture of something on the wall, or you have to create your own mental images.

I've been listening to a lot of music that's not necessarily pop, or on the radio. Outside of that, I try to dig into some bass players I haven't really heard of, or didn't listen to when I was growing up. My influences are James Jamerson, Charles Mingus, Jaco Pastorius, and Justin Chancellor of Tool.

How about other influences, like the loss of LeRoi, and the fire? Where do they factor in?

Losing LeRoi, and being close to a situation where I could have lost my life, has given me a new appreciation about being in the studio and on stage. Whenever I get a chance to play, I'm playing like it's my last show, and I enjoy every note and every minute. Even when I mess up, it's part of the learning experience.

What's the biggest challenge for you as a bassist?

To be honest? Practicing is my biggest challenge. I'm always going and going, and on a day off sometimes, it's like, Do I really want to practice for three hours? Then I go home, and I have two kids and a family that I need to spend time with. too.

What is the one thing you wish bassists knew about you that they don't already know?

The style that I play in this band is maybe ten percent of the style of bass that I like to play. As a bass player, I strive to play in all sorts of genres. Luckily with the band, I'm able to get little teases and tastes of those different styles. But as a player, I love

Gear

Basses Ken Smith 5-string, Hill Custom HN-4-Elite 4-string, fretless Modulus Quantum 5-string, '67 Fender Precision



Live Rig Dry, Countryman D.I. to front-of-house; Wet, Countryman D.I. to IK Multimedia Stomp I/O to front-of-house (with Mac Mini running IK Stomp), two **Ampeg SVT-4 PRO** heads (used as power amps only) and 2 Ampeg SVT 810E 8x10 cabs
Strings Thomastik-Infeld, Ken Smith (for Smith bass only)

Studio Direct,
Eclair Engineering
Evil Twin Tube D.I.;
Mike, Ampeg
SVT-VR head,

Ampeg SVT 810E cab, Klon Centaur pedal (for overdrive)

taking the bass where normally bass wouldn't go, and I always want to learn and expand my knowledge and playing. That's the biggest thing for me, to be an inspiration to other bass players that not only want to be where I'm at as a musician, but also want to continue learning. You talk to great bass players—Victor Wooten, being one—and you never get the sense that they're done learning. I think that that's the most important thing. **BP**

Read more at
**BASS
PLAYER.COM**
www.bassplayer.com

For much more of Bryan Beller's conversation with Lessard and to share your own thoughts, click over to bassplayer.com.

Lessard could be the highest profile bassist yet to make the switch over to a software preamp in a live rig.

Go to bassplayer.com for an in-depth description of his computer-based setup.

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