

# Questions for Drummer Lori Fithian

*Were you into drumming when you were a girl?*

Kind of -- it was just part of our everyday life - something our family did for fun. I remember playing an old pair of bongos that we had around the house, and some maracas from Puerto Rico. We'd bring those to my Grandma's house and have back-porch jam sessions, where someone would also be tapping on a 7-up bottle while we sang stuff like "You are my Sunshine" or "I've Been Workin' on the Railroad." My brothers and I also had a tradition of what might now be called an "early form" of Beat-boxing... (just making drum sounds with our mouths.)

*What do you most love about drumming?*

Wow, that's always been hard to put into words. It's pretty magical -- drumming sounds good, makes people feel good and want to get up and dance, it's energizing, creative, super fun.... I think maybe what's "most" fun for me is that it's all those things, and it's so inclusive -- everyone can do it, and you can make instant connections with all kinds of people, all ages, through drumming. I remember one teacher saying, "you can't really have a room-full of 127 piano players or guitarists jamming together... but with drummers, in a drum circle, you can always add one more person!"

*Drum circles take people into a kind of shamanic state, sometimes, yes? What do you have to say about that?*

That's a good question, especially for me! I "know" about Shamanic drumming traditions, but I have never experienced it, so I can't say much about it. I've seen people

get a bit "tranced out" in some of our circles - they go inward, deep into the rhythm, and kind of lose connection to the other people in the circle. I know it can be a great way to meditate -- to get into a groove and just stay there. That's always been tough for me, though: I like to mess around and play silly rhythm games with people... but maybe it's my tendency toward being "multi-focused" that keeps me from going there, into that trance state. I know one thing for sure, though, I'm not worrying or thinking about anything else while I'm drumming in a circle!

*What is the book you most treasure about drums and drumming?*

Oh my gosh, I have so many books that I love -- too many! I do have one that I got years ago at Crazy Wisdom, a little white paperback I found on the discount shelf, called "TA KE TI NA: the Forgotten Power of Rhythm" by Reinhard Flatischler, that I return to again and again. He does some really cool stuff with full body rhythm-consciousness, especially poly-rhythms -- playing, speaking and stepping different patterns at the same time. I think it's helped me become a better musician, all around.

I have a favorite kids' book called "And to Think that We Thought We Could Never Be Friends". It's about a family who gets annoyed with a new family of musicians that moves in next door, but joins them in their musical joy and then gets the whole neighborhood and then the whole world playing together in this huge parade. It's a beautiful rhyming story (in the Dr. Seuss tradition) that illustrates the connecting power of music.

*I know you lead drum circles around town, including at Crazy Wisdom. Do you lead other drumming-related rituals, workshops, events and so on?*



Lori Fithian is founder and creator of Drummunity, and has been facilitating drum circles and rhythm workshops since 1988.

## Intuitive Awareness & Psychic Development (continued)

**Foundations in Psychic Development II: Space, Seniority, Neutrality, and Spiritual Fuel with John Friedlander • Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sunday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.** • In this workshop, we will develop a deep understanding of how we use our own aura space to create our reality. We begin with psychic explorations that familiarize us with our space, and how we subdivide it through resistance to others. We can then learn to create our aura space through awareness rather than resistance, enabling us to create our own reality using our own spiritual fuel. \$250 with discount offered. For dates, call 998-0340; rose\_m\_48105@yahoo.com.

**Foundations in Psychic Development III: Seeing Auras with John Friedlander • Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sunday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.** • In this two-day seminar, we will explore the psychic anatomy of clairvoyance (seeing auras), how to activate and empower this perception, and several ways to use this ability in making decisions, in healing oneself and others, and in deepening one's understanding of oneself and others. We will then move to actually doing comprehensive, systematic psychic readings in partnership with fellow students. Participants usually find they can easily increase their ability to perceive genuinely useful aura energies in just this one weekend. \$250 or \$225 in postmarked one months in advance. For dates, call Rose at 998-0340; rose\_m\_48105@yahoo.com.

**Foundations in Psychic Development IV: Channeling with John Friedlander • Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sunday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.** • Learn the clairvoyant mechanics of skillful channeling - how to prepare your space for channeling by running an ever clearer white light vibration while still owning and governing who and what occupies your space. This requires clearing psychic agreements, karma, and thought forms that distort both ordinary awareness and channeling. \$250 or \$225 in postmarked one months in advance. For dates, call Rose at 998-0340; rose\_m\_48105@yahoo.com.

**Foundations in Psychic Development: Level I-II Practice Sessions with John Friedlander • Jan. 13, Feb. 10, Mar. 10, April 14; 7-9 p.m.** • Open to all students who have finished Level I or II. Class begins with a clearing meditation. John Friedlander continues to bring new insights and deepening awareness to the development of the basic skills learned in the foundation classes. Also available by phone. \$10 or \$12.50. Call Rose at 998-0340; rose\_m\_48105@yahoo.com.

**Foundations in Psychic Development: Level III Reading Practice Sessions with Violeta Viviano • Jan. 28, Feb. 25, Mar. 25, April 22; 7-9 p.m.** • Open to all students who have finished Level III. We continue to deepen our perceptive skills and clairvoyance by reading our own aura and that of others, which helps us clear our own space. Class begins with a clearing meditation. We then break into groups monitored by a facilitator. \$10. Call 677-2761; violeta-viviano@ameritech.net.



and had so much fun drumming with each other. The highlight was when members of the high school jazz band showed up for a half hour, on my lunch break between the K-5 programs, and I got them all jamming together and learning about improvisation of a different sort. One game I play is to pass one of the colorful drum mallets and use it as a microphone, and you have to vocalize a rhythmic phrase that fits into a certain space in time. It was so fun to watch these kids coming out of their comfort suits and doing amazing spontaneous creative silly things, getting braver (and better) with each go 'round. This game always leaves your face hurting from smiling and laughing so much!

*Where's the most exotic place you've been part of a drum circle?*

That would have to be on the northern shore of Oahu, Hawaii, where Arthur Hull offers his facilitator training "playshop". It's pretty amazing to be outside (no bugs!) under the night sky, a warm breeze from the ocean just on the other side of the trees, a nice big fire, moonlight, stars and tiki torches for folks to see by, and amazing people from all over the world having fun together, drumming, singing, dancing, laughing.

*Where would you love to travel to, outside of the United States?*

I'm actually not much of a traveler... but whenever I find myself

I wouldn't call them rituals... but yes, I lead lots of different community drum circles. This is how I make my living now - I have a van-load of drums and percussion and I travel all over Michigan, to schools, camps, conferences, faith communities, festivals, parties, etc. to do what I call "in-the-moment" music-making. I call it "Drumcommunity" -- I bring the drums, you are the community! Everyone gets to play, toddlers to teens to office people to elders. I also offer workshops every once in a while, and I teach at a drum camp in Canada each summer.

*Where would you most like to go, in the Ann Arbor area, on the morning after a 10-inch snowfall, if you don't have to go to work?*

Well, I live in Dexter now, out in the country, so I'd probably be snowed in, and just want to tromp through the snow out here, down the quiet country roads. If I lived in Ann Arbor again, I would probably end up going for a hike (or sledding) at the Arb, getting some hot chocolate downtown somewhere, the Co-op or CW, and going to a movie at the Michigan.

*What's the most fun you've had this past fall?*

I had a pretty fun gig up north in mid-November -- 3 full days of drumming programs with schools up in Atlanta, Michigan. The kids were so excited



looking at a world map, I'm always stopping at South America, imagining how it might be to travel along the coast of Brazil, or the eastern coast, which looks so amazing with mountains and shoreline. Maybe someday I'll take a rhythmical tour, of the whole planet. That's one thing that playing the drum has given me, fellow drumming friends all over the world, and a universal language to speak wherever I go!

###

**Advanced Intensive with John Friedlander • April 24-26; Friday 7-9 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.** • John will explore a new topic of advanced technical skill. John never knows exactly what a particular seminar will cover in detail until it is channeled, but this seminar is expected to focus on physical healing using different systems' orientations on the aura. Different systems perceive the aura differently, and each of those perspectives has strengths and limitations. Understanding the subtle difference between systems makes one's use of any particular system more powerful and effective. The underlying purpose of these practices is to cultivate an authentic kindness and generosity, which bring integrity and happiness. \$250. Call 998-0340; rose\_m\_48105@yahoo.com.

**Intuitive Awareness 1: Awareness and Intuitive Self Healing with Ray O. Golden of Center for Intuitive Health • Jan. 17-18, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Learn simple and powerful techniques to begin to perceive, ground and heal your psychic and emotional space, aura and chakras. These tools allow you to do personal healing while developing your intuitive perception. Learn to clear others' energies out of your field, which can be particularly valuable when you are dealing with negative or draining energies in work and personal life. You also learn to communicate with both your own and others' (people and animals) God-of-the-Heart (Higher Self), and to do readings from that level. Also Preparation for Animal Communication. \$189 with early payment and multiple discounts offered. Call 663-9724; www.rayogoldenreiki.com.

**Intuitive Awareness 2: Deepening Awareness and Skills with Ray O. Golden of Center for Intuitive Health • Feb. 21-22, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Continue to develop your intuitive perception, do personal healing, and learn to recognize and heal layers and boundaries of the aura and out of body chakras. Connect with one of your healing guides to communicate and do healings. \$199 with early payment discount offered. Call 663-9724; intuitivehealth@aol.com.

**Intuitive Awareness 3: Putting It All Together with Ray O. Golden of Center for Intuitive Health • Saturday and Sunday to be determined, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.** • Read auras and do professional quality clairvoyant readings. Learn to communicate directly with guides. Prerequisite Intuitive Awareness 1 and 2. \$199 with early payment discount offered. For dates and times, call 663-9724; intuitivehealth@aol.com.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar will be posted online starting January 5, 2009, at crazywisdom.net.