

Testimonials

John Riley:

Timo's new book takes a deep dive into how great drummers support and enhance a range of musical environments. Some of the examples are well known while others are more obscure. They are all interesting and enlightening.

The key to getting the most out of this book is to listen to each track carefully and to try to capture both the moves AND the feeling the drummer creates; it may even help to tune your drums like those on the track you are emulating. Happy listening!



Claus Hessler:

When overtaking, you have to look in the rearview mirror. To better understand the evolution of the drum set, it is also necessary to take a closer look at some groundbreaking compositions and drum arrangements. And to realize

that drummers often had to find their own way to determine what works in music. There were no textbooks or “standard solutions” that we can refer to today. This makes the achievements of these pioneers even more impressive, as their playing still influences us today — whether we are aware of it or not. And even regardless of whether jazz is “your thing” or not. Timo's book provides a wealth of important information to complete the picture of modern drum set playing. Thumbs up from me!

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Chapter 4

An early classic on its journey to modern jazz

Autumn Leaves

Performers: Denzil Best (1955) & Steve Gadd (1974).

The jazz standard

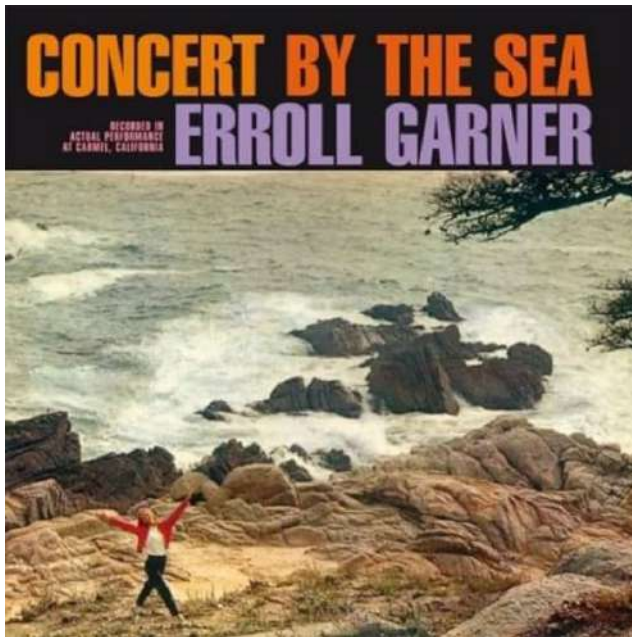
Autumn Leaves is one of the most recognizable and widely performed jazz standards of all time. Originally published in 1945 under the title *Les Feuilles Mortes*, the music was composed by Joseph Kosma with French lyrics by Jacques Prévert. It was Johnny Mercer's English adaptation that ultimately brought the song into the American jazz canon. Since then, countless musicians have interpreted it in a variety of ways.

Structurally, Autumn Leaves follows a classic 32-bar AABC form. The melody is memorable without being predictable, with a subtle melancholy that never feels overly sentimental. Whether played as a ballad, at a medium tempo, or approached more freely, its familiar structure and rich harmonic progression make it an ideal canvas for improvisation.

The transcriptions in this book highlight just how adaptable this tune is, and how different drummers bring their own voice and sensibility to the same piece.



Autumn Leaves
Errol Garner
Original



Autumn Leaves
Chet Baker
Original



Transcription A

Autumn Leaves – Errol Garner – Denzil Best (1955)

Denzil Best's performance on Autumn Leaves, recorded live with Erroll Garner during the Concert by the Sea on September 19, 1955, is a masterclass in musical restraint. The concert wasn't originally intended for commercial release, which makes it even more remarkable that we can experience Best's controlled, deeply nuanced playing that helps shape the entire mood of the piece.

On this version, Best plays with brushes, creating a warm, fluid texture that perfectly complements Garner's lyrical piano phrasing. There are no overstated accents or self-serving fills, just tasteful, deliberate choices made entirely in service of the music. Best never forces his presence. Instead, he shows how carefully calibrated dynamics and time feel can create depth and impact without volume.

This transcription aims to reflect that spirit. With Denzil Best, subtlety is not about absence but about purpose. His approach is agile, expressive, and intentional, showing how a drummer can shape, support, and breathe with the band without stepping into the spotlight.

Musical greatness is not always about complexity or power. Sometimes, it is simply the ability to choose the right sound at the right moment.



Autumn Leaves
Errol Garner
Performance Video



Denzil Best

Autumn Leaves

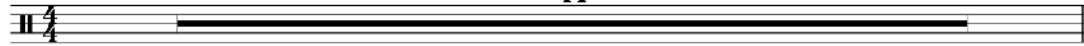
composed by Joseph Kosma

as played by Denzil Best

on the Erroll Garner album "Concert by the Sea", 1955

Piano Intro

44



A played with brushes



A



B



A



The image displays a series of drum set notation staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and triplets, often marked with 'x' for cymbals. The staves are organized into sections labeled 'A' and 'B'. The 'A' section consists of four staves, and the 'B' section consists of two staves. The notation is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The 'Coda' section is marked with a double bar line and a 'Coda' symbol.

Section A:

- Staff 1: Features a series of eighth notes and sixteenth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes at the end.
- Staff 2: Continues the rhythmic pattern, with a triplet of eighth notes at the end.
- Staff 3: Continues the rhythmic pattern, with a triplet of eighth notes at the end.
- Staff 4: Continues the rhythmic pattern, with a triplet of eighth notes at the end.

Section B:

- Staff 5: Features a series of eighth notes and sixteenth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes at the end.
- Staff 6: Continues the rhythmic pattern, with a triplet of eighth notes at the end.

Coda:

- Staff 7: Features a series of eighth notes and sixteenth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes at the end.

The image displays four staves of musical notation, likely for a drum set, arranged vertically. Each staff begins with a double bar line and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

- Staff 1:** Features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a large slur covering the first three measures. The fourth measure contains a half note. The fifth measure contains a half note with a sharp sign (#).
- Staff 2:** Features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a large slur covering the first three measures. The fourth measure contains a half note. The fifth measure contains a half note with a sharp sign (#). The word *rubato* is written below the staff.
- Staff 3:** Features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a large slur covering the first three measures. The fourth measure contains a half note. The fifth measure contains a half note with a sharp sign (#).
- Staff 4:** Features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a large slur covering the first three measures. The fourth measure contains a half note. The fifth measure contains a half note with a sharp sign (#).

Transcription B

Autumn Leaves – Chet Baker – Steve Gadd (1974)

Steve Gadd's interpretation of Autumn Leaves on Chet Baker's album *She Was Too Good to Me* is a compelling example of how modern studio aesthetics and classic jazz sensibilities can come together seamlessly. Recorded at Van Gelder Studio, the track benefits from the rich, full sound that Rudy Van Gelder's engineering is known for.

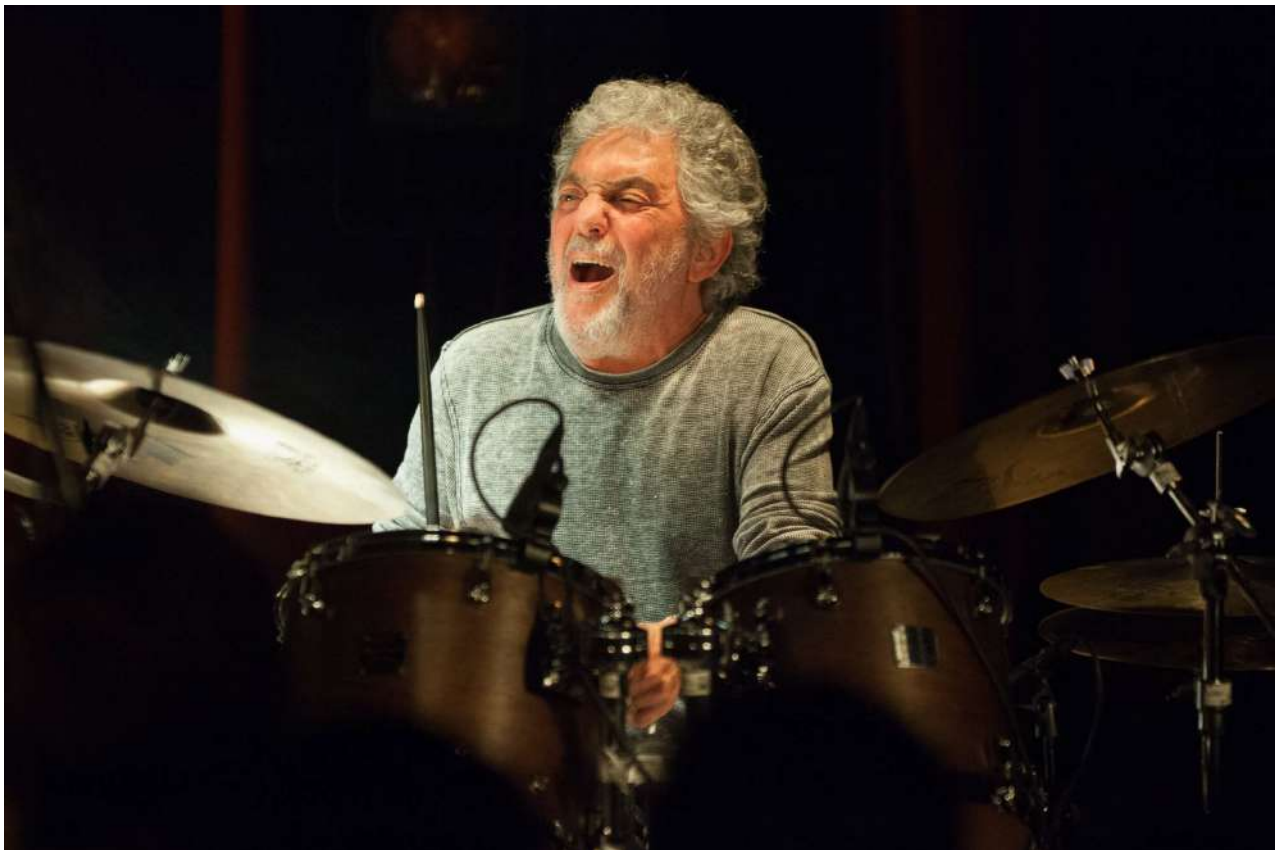
Gadd's drumming reflects his signature groove and deep musical awareness. He brings a sense of phrasing and touch that constantly shifts the feel of the tune, creating subtle changes in color and intensity. His ability to shape dynamics and mood from behind the kit is on full display here.

In this performance, Gadd bridges the world of traditional jazz drumming with the more groove-oriented, studio-informed approach of the 1970s. He is not out to showcase virtuosity, but rather his precision, his interpretive instincts, and his unmistakable presence. Every note serves the song, and every gesture deepens the musical conversation.



Autumn Leaves
Chet Baker

Performance Video



Steve Gadd

Autumn Leaves

composed by Jacques Prévert and Joseph Kosma

as played by Steve Gadd

on the Chet Baker album "She Was Too Good to Me", 1974

♩ = +/- 186

A

Section A consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is in 4/4 time. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with many triplets and sixteenth notes. The notation includes various accidentals and dynamic markings. The section ends with a double bar line.

B

Section B consists of three staves of music. It continues the complex rhythmic pattern of section A, with many triplets and sixteenth notes. The notation includes various accidentals and dynamic markings. The section ends with a double bar line.

Bridge

The bridge consists of one staff of music. It features a different rhythmic pattern, with more eighth and sixteenth notes. The notation includes various accidentals and dynamic markings. The section ends with a double bar line.

33

37

A Trumpet Solo

41

45

stick on rim

49

B Trumpet Solo

53

57

61

63

The image displays a page of drum set notation for jazz standards. It consists of two systems of staves, each with a trumpet solo section. The notation includes various drum patterns, triplets, and specific techniques like 'stick on rim'. The page is numbered 49 at the bottom.