

Famous Drummers

Drummer: Joe Morello

Piece: Take 5

Band: Dave Brubeck Quartet



Joe Morello

Joe Morello was an American jazz drummer born July 17, 1928 and was known for his masterful playing as a member of the Dave Brubeck Quartet. He was a child violin prodigy but Morello switched to drums as a teenager. Morello was best remembered for his performances on such Brubeck classics as "Take Five," "The Duke," and "In Your Own Sweet Way." After Brubeck disbanded his quartet in 1967, Morello, a star in his own right, began teaching and writing instructional books and videos.

Take 5

Jazz is not typically considered music of the masses but Take 5 became a hit single and was the first jazz record to sell over 1 million copies. The piece is in an odd time signature and contains a drum solo, for this kind of music to become a best seller is amazing. Paul Desmond, the group's sax player, wrote the piece, but it was influenced by the rhythmic skill of Joe Morello's 5/4 jazz groove and Brubeck's vamp on the piano.

When it came to soloing, Morello's smooth, flowing technique allowed him to unleash fast single and double strokes with ease. Although the solo he played on "Take Five" was about space and musical development rather than speed or technique. Morello repeats phrases, creates surprises, plays phrases over the bar line, and takes us on a musical journey.

Take a look at Take 5

5/4 = 5 crotchet beats in a bar

The image displays three musical staves in 5/4 time signature, illustrating different rhythmic patterns. The first staff shows a simple 5/4 rhythm with five crotchet notes. The second staff shows a more complex rhythm with two triplets of crotchets. The third staff shows a complex rhythm with four triplets of crotchets, including an accent mark over the third triplet.