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KEYNOTES

WEEKEND WARRIOR

Dave Buehler of Steelin' Dan

DAY GIG Early in my career, I worked in architectural acoustics—designing treatments for recording, performance, and worship spaces. Now I do environmental acoustics—studies to evaluate how sounds from things like highways, wind turbines, mines, and amphitheatres affect people. It's a nice way to incorporate my interest in math, science, and music into a reasonably stable career.

HOW I GOT STARTED I studied classical piano for ten years starting at age eight. When I was 12, my older brother started bringing home jazz albums. I sat at the piano and tried to figure out what was being played, and started to get a sense of what improvisation was all about. I played in my high school jazz band, and bought a Fender Rhodes

my senior year. Later, I joined a rock band, and we played high school dances all around town.

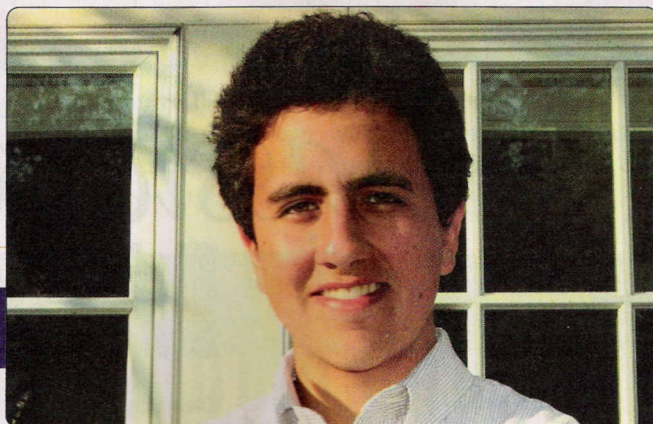
BAND Steelin' Dan is a Steely Dan tribute based in Sacramento, California. We try to be as true to the records as possible. This is some of the most difficult pop music, created by some of the best musicians in the world, so you have to put in serious time and effort to pull it off. The singers, horns, and rhythm section generally rehearse independently, and it all comes together on the gig. We play mostly at outdoor summer concert series, regional theaters, and casinos.

LIVE RIG My Yamaha S90XS covers all the sounds I need for the Steely Dan songbook, with great piano, Rhodes, and Wurly sounds, and it handles the occasional marimba and strings nicely. The onboard phaser and chorus are perfect. We always use a full sound system, so my Roland KC-100 amp is just a monitor. If space permits, I'll bring JBL EONs to monitor in stereo.

INFLUENCES Les McCann was my earliest. Vince Guaraldi's *Peanuts* music left an impression on me as kid, and increased my interest in jazz. I love the way Keith Jarrett makes the piano sing. One of my near-term goals is to study Bruce Hornsby's music in more detail.

WHY I PLAY Sitting at the piano feels like home. If my music makes just one person's day better, I've succeeded.

MORE AT steelindan.com Ed Coury



MAJORminor

Henry Hershey

Henry Hershey is a jazz-loving sophomore at Westfield High in New Jersey, with a penchant for Bruce Hornsby, blues, and improvisation. In addition to piano, Hershey plays tenor sax in the school marching band.

First memory of piano: My grandparents' house in St. Louis, Missouri, with the whole family in the living room. We played a game where you pass something around a circle of people while music plays, and when the music stops, the person holding it is out. My dad provided the music—he'd play boogie-woogie and piano and improvise.

Age lessons began: Around five or six.

Musical influences: My teacher, Joe Kurasz of Rahway, New Jersey. I also admire Bruce Hornsby's harmonizing techniques on his album *Camp Meeting*.

Why piano? I think that piano is the most versatile instrument in the world. One can play practically any genre, from bebop to classical to rock.

Favorite music to play? Jazz and blues, because of the freedom they provide me. I can do whatever I want to the song to make it

sound how I want at a specific moment.

How important is traditional training? It's important to learn the basics and start with a classical music teacher. That way, you learn the importance and discipline of practicing, and how to read music. Later on, one can switch to another genre if one isn't satisfied with classical. That's basically what I did, and it's working out pretty well.

Read music or play by ear? I read fake book-style music for jazz. I read the chords and melody, and the rest, my teacher and I make up. For example, on some songs we'll use a stride bass; in others, straight chords. To pick up a song on my own, I'll sit down with my iPod and learn it by ear.

Goals in life: Someday I hope to be a cardiologist. Maybe my interests will change along the way, but I know one thing for sure: I'll always find time to play piano. Jon Regen

Know a young keyboard wizard in your area? Let us know via email, Facebook, or Twitter, and they might be our next MAJORminor!