



Keeping the Beat

By Kathleen Hay, Cornwall Standard-Freeholder

Cornwall – He’s got the beat. The world beat. For the past 15 years or so, Lorne Lampert has been helping kids get a groove on while providing music education through Mystic Drumz. What began really as a very organic experience, he says, after completing his university studies, has now developed into a worldwide phenomenon.

“I completed my Fine Arts (music performance) degree at York University” says the founder and chief drumming officer. “I continued on to receive my Education Degree, but I had never intended to be a teacher in the traditional sense, but to use it as a stepping stone. The show was and continues to be a vehicle to get music education out.

Lampert drives that vehicle with “The Legend of Marshmallow Island” in Aultsville Theatre on April 9 for the last in this season’s Mad Hatter Productions series. The show is described as an adventure in world music that blends multicultural music themes, and interactive audience participation. It features high-tech screen projections, incredible sound effects, and unique instruments from around the world.

“I like to call it “Edu-Tainment” says Lampert. “People don’t know what to expect, and it’s quite fun to come out to each show that feature instruments from different countries”. “In The Legend of Marshmallow Island they learn about instruments from Africa, South America, India and North America”.

Lampert was first drawn to drums when he saw his older brother doing paradiddles on the kitchen table with a couple of knives. Now his mother probably wasn’t too thrilled about this, however, young Lorne was in awe. He later began studying drums, then it was an evolutionary process that included post-secondary education, drum circles and travel education. “Mystic Drumz really is about three interests of mine – drums, world music and kids,” he explains. “Fifteen years later it’s evolved into a process with many facets to it”.

Mystic Drumz offers performances for school assemblies, children’s workshops, teachers workshops, preschool and after school programming, in addition to its stage shows. In addition to its Toronto headquarters, Mystic Drumz is also located in Ottawa, and offers bilingual shows. No matter where you see them though, says its founder, you’re guaranteed to have fun and learn. “We offer multi-arts integration. We give children different things to do, no matter what they like to clip on to. We have dancing, there’s visual, obviously there’s music. It’s all there”, Lampert said.