



The LORDS of 52nd STREET



LIBERTY DeVITTO

Just pick up one of the 150 million copies of Billy Joel records sold in the last 30 years and you'll hear why Liberty is called "THE songwriter's drummer." Spanning his career, Liberty has played with Paul McCartney, Stevie Nicks, Mick Jagger, Roger Daltrey, Ronnie Specter, Karen Carpenter, Phoebe Snow, Elton John, Meatloaf, and many, many more. In 2013 he was inducted into The Classic Drummer's Hall of Fame. He has been repeatedly featured in articles, documentaries and educational publications for over 40 years, and was most recently featured in the documentary "A Matter of Trust – The Bridge to Russia."

Born to Sicilian immigrants, his mother Josephine Sardisco was raised on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Her mother was a seamstress, and her father a tailor; carrying his sewing machine on his back twice daily, as he walked across the bridge to his factory job in Brooklyn. Liberty's father, Vincent, was raised in East New York, Brooklyn, one of the 11 children born to his immigrant parents from Naples. Liberty's father and his 4 brothers served their country in WWII. Vincent served in the 101st Airborne Division, and was part of the Invasion of Normandy. Although 5 brothers went into the war, only 4 returned. Liberty is named after his Uncle Liberatori who made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. The story of the 5 DeVitto brothers is featured in Tom Brokaw's book, "The Greatest Generation Speaks."

After WWII, Vincent returned to Brooklyn and met Josephine. Liberatori (Liberty) DeVitto was born in Brooklyn, New York, on August 8, 1950, a second generation Italian-American. Life for Liberty began in a one room furnished apartment. Liberty's mother would empty a dresser drawer, line it with a baby blanket, and use that for his bed. His Mother says it was the radio on top of the dresser, which she kept on all the time that gave Liberty his love for music. After Liberty's father became a NYC Police Officer in the 77th Precinct in Brooklyn, he decided to join the migration out to the suburbs and moved his new family to Long Island in 1951.

On February 9, 1964 Liberty's family, like every other family in America, had the TV tuned to "The Ed Sullivan Show." There they were, in black and white, "The Beatles!" At that moment Liberty's life would change, forever. The camera panned the audience and showed girls screaming and crying. Liberty panned the room and saw his sister and her friends screaming and crying. All of a sudden it hit him, "What a great way to meet girls."

In June 1968, Liberty graduated from Seaford High School. By November he was on the road with Detroit rocker Mitch Ryder banging out Mitch's hits, "Jenny Takes a Ride," "Devil with a Blue Dress" and "Sock It To Me Baby." Right after Mitch Ryder, Liberty landed a gig with Long Island alumni, Richie Supa, and had his first recording experience. The album, "Supa's Jamboree" was recorded in Atlanta, 1969-70, and was produced by Buddy Buie of the Classics 4 and Atlanta Rhythm Section Fame. The album was released on Paramount Records and a tour immediately followed. Liberty was driving the band equipment van from Cleveland, Ohio, back home to Long Island when the van hit black ice and flipped off the side of the road, rolling four times. Liberty had sustained serious injuries, and was unable to play the drums for a year. To ease back in, he took a steady gig at a catering hall on Long Island. During those years, the group, "Topper" was formed. A club owner once called Topper, "the worst band to ever play his club." Topper eventually became Billy Joel's band and went to create such legendary songs as, "Scenes from an Italian Restaurant" and "New York State of Mind."

Thirty years with Billy Joel, and countless other projects, Liberty is still going strong. He is proud to have been a part of the 9-11 recovery efforts, visiting Ground Zero and supporting the first responders with Billy Joel a few days after the tragedy and performing to raise money to rebuild his city. He has also played for supporters at "The Tunnel to Towers Run" commemorating Stephen Sills heroic effort to save fellow New Yorkers on 9-11-01.

He can be seen live with his Brooklyn, New York based rock and blues band, "The Slim Kings," who are working on their sophomore album, following their successful first album and single, "Waterloo," which was released on the compilation CD "Songs For Sandy II" along with releases from Paul McCartney and Dave Stewart to benefit the victims of Hurricane Sandy. The band recently supported ZZ Top on their area gigs.

Liberty has drummed with English Invasion icon Billy J. Kramer since 2005. Liberty is an Honorary Board Member of "Little Kids Rock," a non-profit organization that puts instruments and music programs in underserved public schools worldwide. Liberty is the house drummer for the yearly LKR Gala, driving the beat for such performers as Bruce Springsteen, Tom Morello, Elvis Costello, and many others. This year, "Little Kids Rock" has partnered with the NYCDOE and Berklee for an unprecedented music program that will bring \$10 million of resources to 60,000 NYC public school children.

Liberty remains a band member for The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation, lectures globally for "Sticks and Skins," and is a founding member of "The NYC Hit Squad." Liberty is also member of "The Recovery Squad," a band and program dedicated to rock 'n' roll and sober living. Liberty continues to lecture, interview and play all over the world, from Krakow, Poland, to Beijing, China to Santiago, Chile and everywhere in between. In 2014, the original members of the Billy Joel Band were inducted into the Long Island Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.

Liberty currently resides in Brooklyn, New York, and travels frequently with his wife, Anna, to visit his mother's family in Sicily.

He continues to love what he was born to do, DRUM.