

ISABELLE DE·LEON

"March to the tempo of your own beat" is a motto lived by Isabelle De Leon. She started music at the age of 4 with piano lessons, and picked up drumming at the age of 7 after hearing someone say "girls don't play the drums," and has worked to defy that stereotype ever since as a performer, educator, and industry professional. Known for her "ferocity" on the drums with a "startlingly personal sound" (Washington City Paper), she brings high energy and rhythmic steadfastness into every performance.

She grew up in a musical family, playing in church and various Pop and Rock bands, including her family's band, and began songwriting at the age of 13. She wrote and arranged a majority of her family band's repertoire, and with them, would release 3 full-length albums of original music. The most recent of her sisters' groups is Ivy Rose, an all-female Alt-Rock band that quickly rose to popularity in global Filipino communities, and in the college circuit. They've opened for Ben Folds and Weezer, toured internationally, and were semi-finalists on America's Got Talent in 2012.

Isabelle graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Performance and pre-medicine track, and with an Arts Scholar distinction. While in school she studied with renowned jazz drummer and vibraphonist, Chuck Redd, and performed in UMD's premiere jazz ensemble directed by Chris Vadala. In 2011 she was awarded the Stanley Kay Scholarship by the DIVA Jazz Orchestra, and thus attended the New York Summer Music Festival, where she studied with Jeremy Noller, and played in ensembles coached by Justin DiCioccio and Dick Oatts. For 2 consecutive years (2012 & 2013), she was the selected drummer for the Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Jazz Orchestra and worked with composers/arrangers Mike Tomaro and Eric Richards. From 2012-2013 she was a Strathmore Artist-in-Residence, and during this time, began composing and arranging jazz music, which she debuted at her feature performances at Strathmore and the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage.

She is a recipient of the Washington Post Music and Dance Scholarship Award, as well as the Washington Women in Jazz Festival's Young Artist Award.

Currently she plays and writes with on-the-rise Indie Electronic Pop trio Prinze George, tours and freelances with several artists of various genres (including Madame Gandhi, Paperwhite, Lionize, and many others), and leads, writes and drums for her own project, Iza Flo. With Prinze George, she's performed at several major music festivals including Austin City Limits, Firefly, Panorama, Eaux Claires, Sweetlife, Bottlerock and SXSW. They've toured nationally several times and have also supported artists such as Cold War Kids, Walk the Moon, Bleachers, Local Natives, Albert Hammond Jr. and Lewis Del Mar. On 4th of July 2018, Isabelle was one of 11 female percussionists selected for an all-female drumline backing up Lauren Alaina on PBS' A Capitol Fourth TV special. In October 2018 & 2019, she did state department tours in Russia with Elijah Jamal Balbed, where she was featured on both percussion and drum set. From January-March 2020 she had the incredible honor of joining Oprah Winfrey's 2020 Vision Tour as a percussionist with opening act, Daybreaker.

As an educator, she teaches private drum lessons at 7DrumCity, DC's top rated drum lessons and rehearsal studio, and has led clinics in local schools, studios, and at Strathmore Performing Arts. For the last two years, she has been the featured drummer of Strathmore's "Primary Blues," an educational performance presented at Strathmore Hall to over 20,000 Montgomery County 5th graders throughout the week.

When not performing or teaching, Isabelle is active in the DC music scene as an organizer and has been recognized by the Washington Post as a local influencer. For the past two years she was a co-organizer of Girls Drum!, a benefit show for Girls Rock! DC featuring bands with all female drummers. As previous marketing director for 7DrumCity, she organized drum workshops, networking events, and shows, including their grand opening festival that brought over 500 attendees, and helped to establish local media and business partnerships that help put 7DrumCity on the map. In June 2018 she started "Southwest Soul Sessions," a monthly jam session at Pearl Street Warehouse (one of DC's newer venues at the recently developed wharf). Featuring a rotating house band each month, SWSS aims to create a fun and collaborative safe space for musicians of all genres. Musicians that have played at Southwest Soul include members of Chuck Brown band, Prince's band, the Blackbyrds, Black Alley, Jill Scott, Thievery Corporation, and more.

Isabelle has been featured in Washington Life Magazine's "Young & the Guest List" (print), Tom Tom Magazine (print & digital), Interview Magazine (print & digital), OnTap Magazine (print & digital), The Washington Post (digital), Washington City Paper (digital), WPFW's "School of Thought" radio show, The Working Drummer Podcast, and has been a panelist at several career development events. Isabelle is passionate about using her musical platform to inspire and empower others, and strives to create music that heals and unites people all over the world.