



## **THE JUNKMAN® , DONALD KNAACK**

- **World-class virtuoso percussionist**
- **Perfect programs for most all occasions**
- **Unique, inventive and totally inimitable**

Whether its an intimate solo concert in a gallery or 70,000 fans at a festival, *The Junkman®* rocks! He provides exciting, provocative, and edu-taining offerings that excel in any environment.

**SHORT BIOGRAPHY:** *The Junkman®*, percussionist/composer, and environmentalist, Donald Knaack is the **original** recycled materials percussionist. He's the Daddy of Eco-Beat, following in the footsteps of his mentor and collaborator, John Cage, by creating music and cutting-edge environmental awareness that transcends all styles and genres. His celebrated concerts and interactive *Junkjams®* impart timely messages regarding the health of Mother Earth, cultural tolerance, and how our personal behavior affects other people's personal space and rights.

Having adopted Marcel Duchamp's philosophy that "tools that are no good require more skill," *The Junkman®* fuses the avant-garde with head-moving ear-candy and rhythmic muscle to form an irresistible edutainment experience! *The Junkman®*'s past performances have included Llangollen Eisteddfod, The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Sundance Film Festival, Seoul Drum Festival, Escena Contemporanea, Zagreb Biennale, Summer Series Dubai, Basingstoke (B-Love) Festival, the United Nations COP16 Conference on Climate Change, and concerts with Phish, Eminem, The Black Eyed Peas, and Blink 182.

He's composed and toured two critically acclaimed new works for choreographer Twyla Tharp, and works for the American Ballet Theatre,

American Dance Festival, Dance Theatre of Harlem, amongst others. His music has appeared in television commercials for The NBA, ESPN, Electronic Arts, Paddle to Live, Power Dot, and Nike-Paris.

In schools, universities, and museums, his *Help Our Planet (HOP)* Environmental Education Initiative has garnered awards of excellence from the United Nations, The Federal Republic of Mexico, and the Governor of Vermont.

His new music highlighting Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* and featuring the vocal talents of Michael Douglas Jones, was recorded and produced by the rock legend, David Kahne. And a new composition for *Eva Dean Dance* premiered in Brooklyn, NY September 2019.

From 2017 to 2021, The Junkman lived worked in the UK under a Tier One Exceptional Talent Visa. During this time, he completed a seven-month residency of concerts, workshops, and interactive exhibits at Cockington Court, Torquay and presented concert performances at various schools, universities, and museums throughout the country, including a weekend celebration at the birthplace of environmentalist and "Father of the US National Parks" John Muir in Dunbar, Scotland. He participated in festivals such as Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod, Basingstoke B'Love, and Grinigog, and designed, constructed, and jammed upon a series of four sound sculptures for Imagine Watford.

In 2018, The Junkman® was appointed Artistic Education Ambassador for the UNESCO English Riviera Global Geopark, UK. He also hosted his fifth annual Global Junkjam from the English Riviera Global Geopark in Torquay as he was joined by pupils in Global Geoparks in Germany, New Zealand, Romania, Iran, and China - all via Google Hangouts.. This event was featured on the BBC News: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=da5n1w\\_3g3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=da5n1w_3g3s)

In 2020, The Junkman was awarded a grant from the EU which enabled him to work with the Bristol Robotics Laboratory in the development of a robotic percussion orchestra that has subsequently been dubbed "Cubert."  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTYKjPMaJGI>

#### **AWARDS:**

- 2020/21: SABRE Technical Development Project Grant from the European Union Regional Development Fund to design and create a robotic percussion orchestra. This project was realized by Knaack and a team of robotics experts from the Bristol Robotics Laboratory in Bristol, UK.
- 2018: Appointed Ambassador for Arts Education for the UNESCO English Riviera Global Geopark
- 2017: Awarded an Exceptional Talent Visa, endorsed by Arts Council England, to live and work in the United Kingdom
- 2010: Singing for the Planet Award, United Nations and Federal Government of Mexico

- 2008: Vermont Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence
- 2008: Best Artistic Program, First Night International
- 1998: Award for Environmental Excellence from the United Nations
- 1997: Grammy ballot nomination in Best New Classical category

**PRESS KIT:** <https://junkmusic.online/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PressKit2020.pdf>

**AUDIO SAMPLES:** <https://soundcloud.com/junkmanvt/tracks>

**VIDEO SAMPLES:**

United Nation's COP 16 Conference on Climate Change

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAHgNxEN1vg>

Built to Fall Apart at Seoul Drum Festival:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y21mWJ4YFe8>

Closing Night Concert - Sundance Film Festival

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zJCFZcLDV0&t=7s>

Styrofoam Never Dies - Seoul Drum Festival

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpegAgLoFR4>

Rock Music - United Nations COP 16 Conference on Climate Change

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLbZ6\\_AXceA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLbZ6_AXceA)

**JUNKJAM VIDEOS:**

End of Concert Junkjam - Seoul Drum Festival

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJXomCN\\_E8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJXomCN_E8)

Junkjam - Van's Warped Tour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyyCKwVYT8Q>

BBC Coverage of Global Junkjam

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=da5n1w\\_3g3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=da5n1w_3g3s)

**PLAYSTATION CONSTRUCTION PROCESS:**

Playstation Construction - Tucumcari New Mexico

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOOona4xTJI>

**RECENT MUSIC VIDEO:**

Litterbug (3:31):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hjTHgDMUj4>

**PHOTOGRAPHS:**

<http://junkmusic.online/photos/>

**WEBSITE:**

<http://www.junkmusic.online>

## **SOCIAL MEDIA:**

- Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/junkmanvt/tracks>
- Bandcamp: <https://junkmanvt.bandcamp.com/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/junkmanvt/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/junkmusic>
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/junkmusic.online/>
- YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/donaldknaack>

**GENRE:** Something a Little Different, Another world, Noise, Avant Garde, Improvisation, Alternative, Eco-beat, Progressive, Experimental, Industrial, Instrumental, World, Art Music, Percussion

**TECH RIDERS:** <https://junkmusic.online/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/JunkMusic-Tech-Riders.pdf>

## **PRESS AND MEDIA REVIEWS:**

- "...a virtuoso percussionist" *New York Times*
- "He's the Max Roach of the dumpster!" *Washington Post*
- "It's a mind blowing experience!" *Conan O'Brien*
- "... the legendary percussion virtuoso." *Village Voice*
- "Virtuoso playing worth hearing." *Downbeat*
- "Starting with John Cage, there have been quite a few composers who have worked with junk and found objects to create their music. However, no one does it with quite as much finesse as Donald Knaack." *Dirty Linen Magazine*
- Feature article & broadcast in April, 2020 on *NOODS RADIO* (UK and International): <https://medium.com/noods-radio/donald-knaack-producing-the-environment-83b5a1eef765>
- Feature article in May, 2017 issue of *DRUM Magazine*: <https://junkmusic.online/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/drummag.pdf>

Donald Knaack's score to *Surfer at the River Styx* was composed for choreographer Twyla Tharp and commissioned by The Kennedy Center and the American Dance Festival. Here are three review excerpts from the performances at Sadler's Wells in London:

- "The more substantial *Surfer at the River Styx* is set to a dark, swirling score by Donald Knaack." -- *The Independent*
- "Donald Knaack's percussive score drives the dancers almost as hard as Tharp's ferociously imagined choreography.... It is not only the phenomenal performers who earn this moment of release, but also the rest of us, who have been on the edge of our seats throughout this extraordinary work." -- *The Guardian*
- "*Surfer at the River Styx* is a relentless tour de force of sound and movement set to a score of thunderous intensity and exceptional beauty by composer Donald Knaack." —*DanceTabs*

**CONTACT:**

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