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Quality Conversations in Music

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# *aja* A TRIBUTE TO THE MUSIC OF STEELY DAN



Photo Credit: Stuart Forsythe

**Aja, A Tribute to the Music of Steely Dan** burst on the Southwest Ohio scene in 2005 by organizing and hosting an all Steely Dan festival in Cincinnati OH featuring regional acts and a headlining set by the new band Aja with special guest Steely Dan drummer Bernard Purdie. On the heels of that performance, Aja has played many shows and developed a devoted following of Dan fans that love to dance the night away to "Reelin' in the Years" and "My Old School" as much as they love to sit wide eyed and smiling while listening to faithful recreations of "Caves of Altamira" and "Deacon Blues". The band has been consistently selling out Cincinnati's 20th Century Theater, their musical home base, for the past 5 years. The magic of a group like Aja is that they combine an overwhelming collection of musical talent and skill with a tremendous reverence for the material of Steely Dan. This results in an attention to detail regarding the complex and nuanced recordings of the classic Steely Dan arrangements complemented by plenty of freedom to stretch out and bring a personal touch to the material in a live setting. And the fans LOVE it!

The 10-piece Cincinnati/Dayton Ohio based group is comprised of professional musicians from all sides. Laying down the foundation, **Adam Wheeler** (Drums/vocals) and **Bill Jackson** (Bass) form a tight and groovy rhythm section that handles the full spectrum of Steely beats from "Bodhisattva" to "Babylon Sisters" all with swing and precision. **Eric Baumgartner** (Keyboards) lays down the distinct and specific harmonies of Donald Fagan with focused attention on getting the tone just right. **Brad Myers** (Guitar) and **Marcos Sastre** (Guitar) have the obvious pleasure of recreating Steely Dan's iconic guitar parts recorded by a veritable who's

who of guitar legends all while tastefully lending their own voices to the party. **Michael Mavridoglou** (Trumpet) and **Dwayne Irvin** (Saxophone/EWI) are both highly skilled individually and a very cohesive unit that often sounds like much more than meets the eye. **Rick Auhagen** (Vocals) is the vocal heart of Aja and executes Donald Fagan's deceptively difficult vocals with an effortlessness that captures the Fagan spirit without being a mimic. **Aretta Baumgartner** (Vocals) and **Jacklyn Chitwood** (Vocals) are the vocal icing on the Steely Dan cake, the Aja choir, and if you don't "shake it" when they tell you to these "Babylon Sisters" won't do your "Dirty Work" no more.

Pulling from a list of over 30 Steely Dan classics, Aja seeks to make every show a jaw dropping, yet balanced, live musical tribute to one of the most complex, mysterious and musically interesting bands in all of Rock 'n' Roll history...Steely Dan. "Break out the hats and hooters" when Aja comes to town and witness Steely Dan fans of all ages, veterans and neophytes, get up and dance to all the sounds that made Steely Dan the revered American musical treasure that it is.

## **TESTIMONIALS ABOUT AJA: A Tribute to the Music of Steely Dan**

“AJA has it together! If you are a fan of the music of Steely Dan, you gotta check this band out. They are tight, groovin’, on top of the material, and everyone listening (including the band) seems to be having a great time. It was a pleasure to be able to sit in with them. I look forward to the next time.”

— **JEFF COFFIN** Saxophonist (Bela Fleck & The Flecktones, Dave Matthews Band)

“...Wonderful, fantastic...I have played with many of the Steely Dan tribute bands and Aja is certainly the finest. I think they play as well or better than the Steely Dan touring groups I have seen and heard. They have the groove, chops, feel and an obvious love for this music...This is a must see band and you can quote me on that.”

— **BERNARD PURDIE** Legendary Steely Dan Drummer

“(Aja)... is one of the best Steely Dan tribute bands on the planet.”

— Andy Sedlak MusicWriter, Active Dayton

## **AJA ON THE WEB**

Website - [www.ajamusic.net](http://www.ajamusic.net)

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/ajamusicdotnet](http://www.facebook.com/ajamusicdotnet)

Youtube Videos - [www.musicbybrad.com/video\\_gallery\\_\\_\\_aja\\_steely\\_dan\\_tribute/](http://www.musicbybrad.com/video_gallery___aja_steely_dan_tribute/)



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