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# *Drumming with Dead Can Dance & Parallel Adventures*

A MEMOIR BY  
Peter Ulrich

Memoir of Dead Can Dance drummer, solo artist, and collaborator Peter Ulrich.

Ulrich recounts his experiences as drummer/percussionist with Dead Can Dance through the 1980s, contributor to This Mortal Coil, and guest on other 4AD recordings. After leaving DCD for family reasons, he tracks their parallel paths—DCD's demises and rebirths; solo careers of Lisa Gerrard, Brendan Perry, and his own; Gerrard's co-creation of the Gladiator soundtrack; and Ulrich's collaboration with producer Trebor Lloyd and a host of artists from the New York scene. Packed with detail from the formative period of Dead Can Dance, a fan's-eye view of the later years (with the advantage of a backstage pass), and a broad sweep through just about every corner of the wider musical landscape.

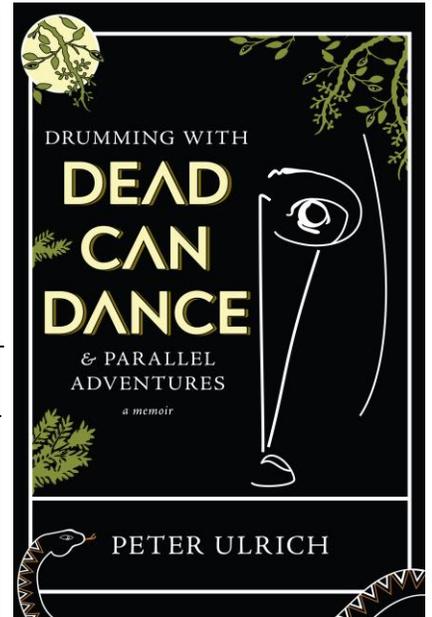
## ADVANCED PRAISE

When I look back at the glazed paragraphs of the past, the stench of stale beer rotting back stage carpets, hunger, and grey London skies, they drift into a dissolving memory from which the poetry of our dreams rose and found unsensed significance, not only in our hearts, but also in the hearts of others.

—**Lisa Gerrard**, award-winning composer, vocalist, and instrumentalist of Dead Can Dance

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Through the 1980s, Ulrich was drummer/percussionist with Dead Can Dance, contributed to This Mortal Coil, and guested on other 4AD recordings. Two solo albums followed, the first with a hefty input from DCD's Brendan Perry. Then, from 2008–2019 he fronted The Peter Ulrich Collaboration, working with producer Trebor Lloyd and a host of artists from the New York scene. Peter Ulrich lives and works in the very centre of Norfolk, UK.



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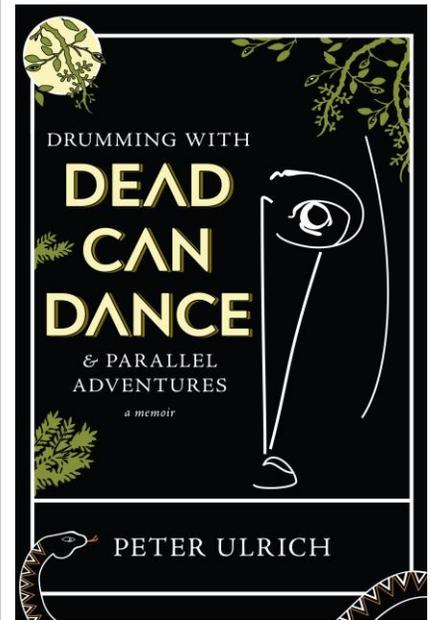


**FROM DRUMMING WITH DEAD CAN DANCE & PARALLEL  
ADVENTURES**

For just the opening show at the Paradiso in Amsterdam there was another band on the bill between us and the Cocteau—The Europeans, whose singer and keyboard player Steve Hogarth would go on to replace Fish as lead singer in Marillion some years down the line. As first band on stage, we were last to soundcheck and were given little time, so as soon as our moment came, we rushed our gear onto the stage and a frenzy of activity ensued. Crisis! None of us had realised that continental Europe uses a different style of electric plug. All our electronic equipment was fitted with UK three-pin plugs, and all available sockets were European two-pin. The promoters arranged a ‘gofer’ to dash out to the nearest hardware store and buy a batch of plugs, and they all had to be changed. Fortunately, this was achieved with only slight disruption to our soundcheck, and we were ready.

We were soon back on stage. The venue wasn’t yet full, but it was getting there, and our opening number was well received. I was settling in, trying not to be distracted by watching our performance, which was being filmed and projected onto screens at the back of the hall. We were about halfway through the third or fourth number—probably something like ‘East of Eden’ in which Brendan was in full flight, singing and pounding into his guitar—when there was a startling bang. Brendan was physically lifted off his feet by several inches and there was a vivid blue flash around him like a fleeting aura. He then started to shake violently. Scott and I shot each other alarmed glances, unsure in that split second whether we should carry on playing (but I’d now been hardwired never to stop). Lisa reacted instantly and rushed to help Brendan. Fortunately, the onstage sound engineer immediately realised that Brendan’s guitar had gone live, and he now had full mains voltage earthing through his body into the floor. He ran onstage, screamed at Lisa to get back, and aimed an incredibly well-judged kung-fu-style kick at Brendan’s guitar that not only prised it from his grasp, but lifted it high enough that the strap flew over Brendan’s head allowing him to throw down the guitar, breaking the circuit. Brendan staggered to the side of the stage, the power was shut down and we rushed to his aid. The audience, who initially thought they were witnessing some groovy new stage pyrotechnics, now also realised there was a problem, and a concerned hush descended.

Thankfully Brendan, though somewhat dazed, was otherwise unharmed, but he was in no state to continue. While we packed up our gear, safety checks by the crew revealed that in the rush to get all the replacement plugs fitted, the plug to Brendan’s guitar amp had been live-neutral wired in reverse. Then Mike blurted out that it was he who had rewired the plug and became traumatised by the realisation that he’d come perilously close to being the cause of his own son’s demise. All because of a stupid oversight over the different plug types.



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