Performance Notes: ‘Vultures’

This song employs a variety of 2 bar patterns. When playing 2 bar patterns you don’t really want to keep referring back to the original pattern. Memorize it and follow the bars. Because there is plenty of repetition in the drum track I have also utilised 2 bar repeats. ‘2 bar repeats’ don’t repeat the previous bar twice. They repeat the previous 2 bars once. Make sense? Here is how the first line of the song appears on the chart. This is the Intro and Chorus groove.

Drum Set

So it plays like this....

Look what happens if we use 2 single bar repeats....

It plays like this....
Steve plays a subtle groove variation in the verses. It still hooks up beautifully with the bass line. It’s not rocket science but it’s effective. This song breathes beautifully.

Style & Analysis:

Drummer Steve Jordan is in groove, pocket heaven on this track. Notice how he barely fills in this song. He doesn’t mark every new section with a crash cymbal. He is playing with Pino Palladino on bass who just so happens to be one of the greatest bass players on Earth. Pino doesn’t need Steve spelling out sections to him. They navigate the tune skillfully and never bash you over the head with their chops. This is as good as a rhythm section gets folks!

Steve has a magical fat sound. He uses huge cymbals. Try crashing on your ride to get this sound. And that snare is tuned low.

Why would such a famous and in demand drummer make these choices? Why wouldn’t he rip it up and blast some crazy fills?

Well... John Mayer could have any drummer in the world so these are questions you should ask yourself.

Steve and his drums aren’t the most important thing on the track. Neither is Pino. Neither is John Mayer.

The song is the most important thing. Play for the song.

Good luck!