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# BASSNOTES

# Tisdale

After breaking his leg in a fall at home in early 2007, doctors discovered bone cancer in Tisdale's knee. This led to his leg being amputated in August 2008. Interviewed in BP one month later, for his final CD, *Rebound*, which dealt with his ongoing recovery, Wayman reflected on his renewed focus: "I know the importance of appealing to a mass crowd. You connect by playing songs."

For Tisdale's friends, the loss of the man with the mega-watt smile and always-upbeat attitude cut deep. Gospel bassist Terrance Palmer laughed, "You could see that smile even when you were talking on the phone with him." Fellow bassist and gospel star Fred Hammond stressed, "Wayman was *just* as talented a musician as he was an athlete. We were on a music cruise once, and one night onstage he just picked up a righty guitar, turned it over, and wailed on it! He had a great feel and touch, and his ears were huge." Marcus Miller remembered Tisdale on his website as someone whose music and positive spirit will live forever, and he encouraged donations to the Wayman Tisdale Foundation ([www.waymantisdale.org](http://www.waymantisdale.org)), which is committed to making a difference in the lives of individuals with cancer as well as amputees. Tisdale is survived by his wife, Regina, and four children.



CARLY SIOUX

stellastar\*

## Mandy Tannen On Managing Freedom

As stellastar\* bassist Mandy Tannen will tell you, total creative freedom is a double-edged sword. After a two-record run with RCA, stellastar\* decided to ditch the majors to go indie, creating its own Bloated Wife Records. With less corporate pressure from above, the band was able to tap a deeper creative vein, but at its own leisurely pace; it's been nearly four years since the band's last record. Taking to New York's Mission Sound studio with producer Tim O'Heir and a fresh batch of tunes, stellastar\* has returned with *Civilized*, a nuanced mash-up of new wave, punk rock, and power pop.

### How has starting your own record label impacted your music?

We no longer have anyone breathing down our necks to get new material out, and that's both a good and a bad thing. It's helped us be more creative, but it's taken us three years to finish a new record.

### How does songwriting work in your band?

It usually starts with a riff, then everyone plays along. Sometimes it starts with a bass line, like with "Graffiti Eyes," and other times it begins with a drum or guitar part. The person who writes the riff usually has ultimate say, but we're very democratic about it.

### What is your musical background, and how does that inform your bass playing?

I first started by played cello, and then moved to upright bass. I bought an electric bass to take with me to college so I could keep up my reading playing classical music. I think because of my background on cello, what I come up with on bass is more melodic than rhythmic.

### How do you feel this album represents your individual personality?

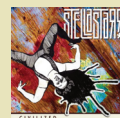
I put a lot of effort into writing catchy, hooky bass lines. With this album I really took a front seat with the songwriting. A lot of these new songs have complicated bass lines that we had to make room for.

—CONTESSA ABONO

### GEAR

**Bass** Fender Deluxe Precision Bass Special, Fender Super Bass strings (medium)

**Rig** Ampeg SVT-4PRO, Ampeg 8x10 cab



### HEAR HER ON

stellastar\*, *Civilized* [Bloated Wife Records, 2009]

