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DRUMMER

July 2003

SUM 41's

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GENE KRUPA

A LOOK BACK AT GREATNESS

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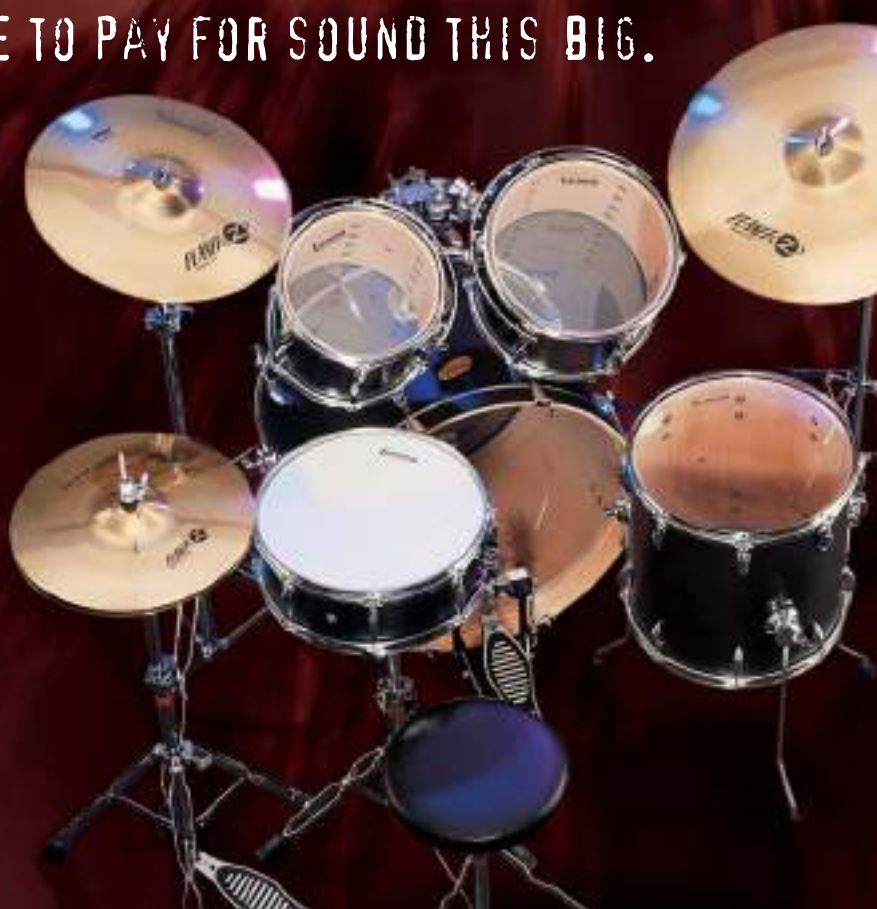
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Sum 41's Steve Jocz

Sum 41 might have nabbed a major-label deal by uniquely packaging their infamously silly antics. But the band's blistering amalgam of punk and metal is no joke. When it comes to burning behind the kit, drummer Steve Jocz is the real deal.

by Ken Micallef

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Gene Krupa

Gene Krupa was the first and greatest drum star—period. Roaring accompanist, matinee idol, hugely successful band-leader, tireless supporter of music education, and the rockin'-est drummer of the swing era, Krupa single-handedly brought the drums to the front of the stage.

by Burt Korall

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The Flaming Lips' Steven Drozd

Besides laying down some of the coolest rock beats of the past decade, Steven Drozd plays most of the other instruments on The Flaming Lips' groundbreaking albums. He even writes a bunch of their music. How'd this guy get so talented, anyway?

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The Dream Is Alive

Part of the philosophy that has always guided us here at *MD* is the concept of "promoting the dream." We know what it means to dream about developing super technique, or playing in an incredible band, or achieving fame and fortune as a drummer. We've had those dreams ourselves, and we want to do everything we can to promote them among our readership. Dreams like those are what keep us going in the face of adversity.

And there's plenty of adversity around these days. The music business has *always* been tough. But with today's tighter economy and the incredible profusion of people *in* the music business, it's even tougher. Competition is keen, time always seems too short, and success might seem elusive, if not downright unattainable.

However, we have tangible evidence that drummers around the world have not given up on their dreams. In this year's January issue we announced our 2003 Undiscovered Drummer contest. We invited drummers to submit a two-minute example of their playing, along with supporting information that would help us to determine the winner in each age category (over and under eighteen years old).

As I sit here, a few days after the March 1 contest deadline, I'm staring at stacks of boxes containing literally *hundreds* of entries. They've come from drummers in the US and a dozen other countries. Of course, this means that the *MD* editors are going to have to burn some midnight oil in order to screen so many submissions. But we don't mind. In fact, we're *thrilled* that so many drummers had enough faith in themselves—and in their dream—to participate in the contest. Ultimately, only two drummers will be chosen. But to our way of thinking, *all* the entrants are already winners!

MODERN DRUMMER®

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BRAD WILK



Congratulations on an outstanding April issue. The coverage on Brad Wilk of Rage and Audioslave was insightful, entertaining, and educational. It did occur to me, however, that your readers might enjoy some more detailed information on the “vintage Gretsch drums” that were used on the Audioslave session. Drum Paradise (LA) has been providing tech service for producer Rick Rubin’s projects since 1999.

The call for Audioslave required a specific Gretsch kit and a selection of snare drums. The final selection included a 1980s 16x22 bass drum, with a Remo coated PowerStroke 3 batter and a coated Ambassador with a 5½” hole on the front. An Evans muffler was held against the batter side by a Remo H-K Muff (for an 18” drum). This allowed the Evans pad to function as a “gate,” coming off the head on impact while muffling overtones and controlling the length of decay.

The toms were a 10x12 rack and a 14x16 floor from the 1990s. Both had Remo coated Ambassadors on top and clear Ambassadors on the bottom, with small loops of gaffer’s tape on top. A 1980s Tama 6½x14 Bell Brass model with die-cast hoops was used on the majority of the tracks. It had a Remo coated CS (black dot) batter, an Ambassador snare-side head, and 42-strand wire snares.

The cymbals were Zildjians, including a 21” Rock ride, a 19” K Dark medium-thin

crash, a 20” brilliant thin crash, and 14” medium hi-hats (1970s A models).

I hope the “gearhead” readers find some useful info here. But remember, room and mic’ selection, engineering skills, and most of all the *drummer* make the magic combo for a great sound.

Lee Smith
Drum Paradise
Los Angeles, CA

AL FOSTER

Thanks for a terrific interview with Al Foster [April ’03 *MD*]. I found the article very insightful and educating. I saw Al, along with Eric Gravatt, back in the 1970s, after which I placed my cymbals “way-up-there” the way they do. They’re still there to this day.



Mr. Foster, if you read this: Thanks for all the years of great music. Now, please come to southwest Florida to perform!

Victor Prince
Cape Coral, FL

MIKE WENGREN

The full-length article on Mike Wengren in your April issue was awesome! I typically read each issue from cover to cover without looking at the table of contents, so when I turned the page and saw Disturbed’s powerhouse drummer I was stoked. I thought I had worn out both of my Disturbed CDs, but after reading the transcription to “Prayer” while listening to it at full volume, I think they’ve come alive again.



Drummers like Mike and Vinnie Paul give metal drumming a good name with their heavy hitting and intricate but solid grooves. Thanks again for the article on Mike. And thanks, Mike, for helping to keep metal drumming alive.

zer0311
via Internet

CRITIQUE COMMENTS

Many thanks to *MD* and to Mr. Ken Micallef for the extremely positive review of my latest recording, *Bobby Sanabria & Quarteto Aché*. It was indeed a pleasant surprise to see when I opened the April issue. But no drummer/leader is anything without the musicians surrounding him or her, who in this case are on a world-class level. So I would like to publicly thank my sidemen—Jay Collins, tenor, soprano, and flutes; John Dimartino, acoustic piano; and Boris Kozlov on acoustic bass—for their incredible contributions to this project. Mucho aché (positive energy)!

Bobby Sanabria
New York, NY

First let me start by saying how happy I am that Tris Imboden’s and my record *The Howland/Imboden Project* was mentioned in two consecutive issues of *Modern Drummer*—first in the February *Update* section and then in the March CD reviews. It would be an honor to be mentioned only once in such a first-rate publication. However, I would like to clear up a couple of things if I may.

First of all, it was stated in the *Update* section that I was at home finishing our record while Tris was on the road with Chicago. Since I’ve been the guitarist with Chicago for the past eight years, I’m not sure how I pulled that off! Also, in the March review, I was referred to as “Bruce” (they call me Bruce) Howland, and in fact my name is Keith.

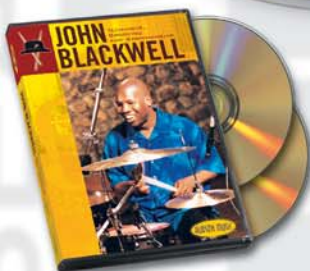
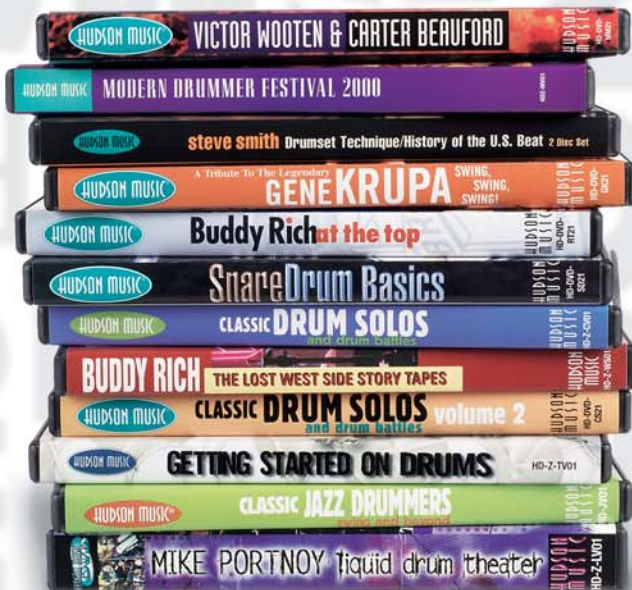
Finally, let me say that Tris is a premier drummer and human being, and that he is refreshingly humble and enthusiastic for someone of his stature. Tris was a joy to work with on the Project, and he’s always a gas on stage with Chicago. Keep up the good work, and thanks again.

Keith Howland
via Internet

KUDOS TO GREGG

I’d like to share a little story with you about Gregg Bissonette. I was attending a drum clinic in Massachusetts recently, and before the clinic started I had a chance to hang with Gregg and talk outside the drumshop. There were two kids there who wanted to attend

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the clinic, but they had no money. So Gregg took the money for both of the kids' admission out of his wallet and paid for them to get in so that they could watch and learn from him. The looks on their faces were priceless! Not only is Gregg a fantastic player, he's an all-around cool guy who doesn't have an inflated ego like some drummers I know. That's the mark of a true professional.

David Latimer
via Internet

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

While *Modern Drummer* contains useful and interesting articles and info every month, there's something I'm noticing in just about every issue that's getting annoying. This would be some reader writing in about how *MD* needs to stop featuring certain drummers and concentrate on others—the "others" being whatever drummers the writer personally likes. I see it from alt/punk/metal drummers complaining about jazz/fusion guys, and I see it from the jazz guys knocking rock, too. What makes these people think *MD* is written for their interest and no one else's?

I applaud *MD* for not limiting themselves to two or three genres of drumming. Although I personally play in a rock band, I find it interesting to read about drumming in jazz, hip-hop, or even drum corps. A drummer stands to learn something by looking out his or her musical window.

MD is for all drummers, not just the ones who like fusion, or punk, or soca, or whatever. Get over it and stop writing to *MD* about how you don't want to see "talentless" drummers. There's room for everyone. Celebrate that, will ya?

Sean Saley

OOPS!

In the April issue *Update News* section, the album cover for Saliva's *Back Into Your System* was inadvertently placed with the news item pertaining to the re-release of Peter Magadini's *Polyrhythm*. Here is the real cover.



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Developing Ideas...And Ears

Q I'm a beginning drummer with about eight months of experience. I started and have maintained the traditional route of teacher and books like *Realistic Rock*, *Stick Control*, and *Advanced Funk Studies*. My teacher suggested that I experiment with playing along to music. However, I've found I have a difficult time making out what is being played on many songs that I like. I wondered what advice you might have for this scenario. My goal is to start playing in a band. My concern is how to assemble pieces other than one rudimental bar here and there to audition for a first project.

Rich Babiarz
Chapel Hill, NC

A We suggest you pick up one or both of the *Turn It Up*, *Lay It Down* volumes. They're play-along CDs of bass tracks in a variety of styles and tempos.



This will get you accustomed to playing time feels and grooves (as opposed to rudimental bar patterns), which will help you to prepare for playing in a band situation.

As to hearing what's being played on full-band recordings, that's a matter of practice. You need to practice *listening* as much as *playing*, so that you can assimilate ideas for appropriate things to do in any given musical situation. You have to learn the vocabulary before you can speak the language.

- rikki rockett
- tommy aldrige
- larry aberman
- luis gary
- robert holden
- steve barney
- peter magadini
- melena
- stephane chamberland
- walfredo reyes jr.
- bart elliot
- steve missal
- gregg gerson
- bobby borg
- rob leytham
- kenwood dennard
- rogerio jardim
- keith jones
- dee potter
- sean o'rouke
- pete lockett
- rich redmond
- rob wade
- garry king
- alphonse mouzan
- gregg potter

"We drummers are born by the stick and we die by the stick! If you lose your grip, ya die! All the killer drums in the world won't save your butt when you go into a fill in front of your audience or in the studio and one of your sticks go... kurplunk! With all of the hot outdoor gigs Poison does during the summer, I need all the help I can get, especially on those really nasty humid nights. H3 Drumstick Wax is the help I need!"

- Rikki Rockett / Poison

the heat of the swware



h3drumscience.com

Zildjian went to the lathed Z Custom format would be extremely helpful and much appreciated.

Andy Kelly
via Internet

Drum-Miking "Packs"

Q A lot of drum-mic' pre-packs come with four mic's: three tom/snare mic's and one bass mic'. Will these mic's pick up cymbals/effects as well as drums?

Mark
via Internet

A While there may be some "bleed" into the drum mic's from cymbals and other effects, it would not be the same as if there were actual overhead mic's above the kit. The drum-mic' "packs" are generally intended for drummers on a budget, who tend to play in smaller venues where the cymbals will carry sufficiently without miking. If this is not the case for your situation, you probably will need to plan on using overhead mic's in addition to the drum mic's.

Original Zildjian Z Series Cymbals

Q I love the original Zildjian Z series cymbals from the 1980s. I started playing them three years ago because of their unlathed design. I was breaking a lot of my A series Rock crashes along the lathing grooves, and I thought it might be more cost-effective to find cymbals without such grooves. The original line has been discontinued for a while now, so any original Zs I obtain are mainly second-hand from eBay.

Could you please tell me what cymbals (sizes, types, and weights) were available for the original Z line...particularly the "Power" types? A complete list of what was available in the Z series before

A Our response comes from Zildjian marketing communications assistant Jason LaChapelle, who says, "The Z Series had four distinctive hammering designs: Closed Hex, Open Penta, Five-Point Star, and Six-Point Star. Each hammering design gave a unique sound to the respective cymbal. The original line consisted of: 16" and 18" Heavy Power Crashes, Open Penta; 16",



18", and 20" Light Power Crashes, Six-Point Star; 20", 22", and 24" Heavy Power Rides, Closed Hex; 20" and 22" Light Power Rides, Open Penta; 18" and 20" Power Smashes, Five-Point Star; 13" and 14" Dyno Beat Hi-Hats, Open Penta top, Closed Hex bottom; and a 12" Splash, Six-Point Star."



Pearl Roundhouse Kit

Q I own a Pearl "Roundhouse" kit ordered from the 1978 catalog. The bass drums, mounted rack toms, and floor tom have fiberglass-lined wood shells. The mounted toms are 12", (2) 13", and 14". Did Pearl ever make a 12x15 fiberglass-lined shell? The 1978 catalog said they didn't offer one—but it also said they didn't offer a 12" tom, and I have one. I'd love to replace one of my 13" toms with a 15". Please let me know if this is possible.

Mike
via Internet

A Pearl product manager Gene Okamoto responds, "They say a picture is worth a thousand words. I've got two pictures to send you, so are they worth two thousand words? The first is a scan of the Roundhouse outfit from the 1978 catalog. As you can see, an 8x12 tom was available.

"The next scan is a copy of the 1978 price list. A 12x15 *concert* tom was available, but not a double-headed rack tom. Please note the list prices for the Roundhouse outfit at the top left hand corner."



Model	List Price	Model	List Price
SHANKYBESS ROCK OUTFIT			
F 42 Fiberglass shell	\$1189.00	8414 12 1/2" 12" x 14" 8-ply shell	
F 43 Fiberglass lined shell	7175.00	2-head 2-ply	
PEARL ROUNDHOUSE KIT			
F 15 Fiberglass shell	\$1489.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
F 17 Fiberglass lined shell	7489.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
CONCERT TOMS			
Special Price			
Toms			
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 14" TT	\$499.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 13" TT	\$499.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 12" TT	\$499.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 11" TT	\$499.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 10" TT	\$499.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 9" TT	\$499.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 8" TT	\$499.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
S Sub 12" x 12" for 12" x 7" TT	\$499.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
HEADS			
H 42 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 43 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
H 44 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 45 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
H 46 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 47 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
H 48 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
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H 62 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 63 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
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H 68 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
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H 75 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
H 76 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 77 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
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H 81 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
H 82 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 83 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
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H 92 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 93 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
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H 96 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 97 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
H 98 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00
H 99 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	4814 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	179.00
H 100 12" x 12" 8-ply	\$49.00	8414 12 1/2" x 14" 8-ply shell	\$189.00

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Simon Phillips (TOTO)

Hall Of Fame

#3 All Around #3 Studio #4 Rock



Tama Drums Congratulates the 2003 Modern Drummer Readers Poll Winners

Lars Ulrich
(Metallica)
#1 Metal



Mike Portnoy
(Dream Theater)
#1 Progressive



Tama Drums would like to thank all those who voted for their favorite drummers in this year's Modern Drummer Readers Poll

A circular photograph of Kenny Aronoff, a bald man in a black t-shirt, smiling and holding a white plate.

Kenny Aronoff
(Independent)
#2 Studio
#3 Pop
#4 All Around

A circular photograph of John Blackwell, a Black man wearing a hat and a dark t-shirt, sitting in a chair.

John Blackwell
(Prince)
#2 Hip-Hop

A circular photograph of Bill Bruford, a man with curly hair in a black shirt, standing in a studio.

Bill Bruford
(Earth Works)
#4 Contemporary Jazz

A circular photograph of John Dolmayan, a man with a beard in a white tank top, sitting in a chair.

John Dolmayan
(System of a Down)
#4 Recorded Performance
"Steal This Album!"

A circular photograph of Joey Jordison, a man with long hair, wearing a dark jacket with a 'D' logo, in a dark setting.

Joey Jordison
(Slipknot)
#2 Metal

A circular photograph of Morgan Rose, a man with long hair, wearing a black t-shirt, with his hands raised in a gesture.

Morgan Rose
(Sevendust)
#4 Metal

A circular photograph of John Tempesta, a man with a beard, playing the drums.

John Tempesta
(Rob Zombie)
#5 Metal

Cymbal Tips From **Dennis Chambers**

Q Not only have your superhuman chops and uncannily inventive solo breaks been infinitely inspirational to me, but so have your refreshingly innovative grooves. I especially enjoy a live recording you did in Tokyo in 1990 (featuring Jim Beard, Mark Egan, Bob Berg, Randy Brecker, and Mike Stern) called *Chroma—Music On The Edge*. Could you tell me what cymbals you used on that recording?

Also, I am playing in small clubs with an electric jazz/funk band. I'm playing a 20" K Zildjian Pre-Aged Dry Light Ride cymbal, along with K Custom crashes. I'm considering a pair of Avedis Zildjian 12" Special Recording Hi-Hats (to be used as my "primary" hi-hats) to better complement the sound of the band. Would you recommend using such a small pair of hats under my playing conditions? Keep up the sensational work, and good luck with Santana!

Nicholas Buckingham
via Internet

A Thanks for your comments. If I remember correctly, the cymbals I used on that recording were (from my left to my right) a 16" K Custom Dark Crash, an 18" K Custom Dark Crash, a 22" K



Alex Salca

Custom Ride, a 17" K Custom Dark Crash, and a 16" or 17" Oriental China Trash. My hi-hats at that time were 13" Quick Beats.

As for the 12" hi-hats, I think they'd be great. I used to use a set of 12" Special Recording Hi-Hats as my main hats over many years for recording and tour work. In fact, I used them up until the second tour of Santana. So yes, I would recommend using a set of 12" hi-hats. But be careful, because they don't all sound the same. When choosing a set of hi-hats, be sure to take your ride cymbal with you for a perfect match.

Hilary Jones' Taste In Music

Q You are a major inspiration for me as a female drummer. I'd like to ask what type of music you prefer to play, what the first drumset was that you owned, and what your favorite recording of all time is.

Maya Morales
Orlando, FL

A Thanks so much, Maya! The kind of music I prefer to play kind of depends on my mood. I'm a rocker at heart, and I love to play that kind of music. But I love other stuff as well. I've played a lot of different styles of music throughout the years, and that variety has kept things exciting and fresh.

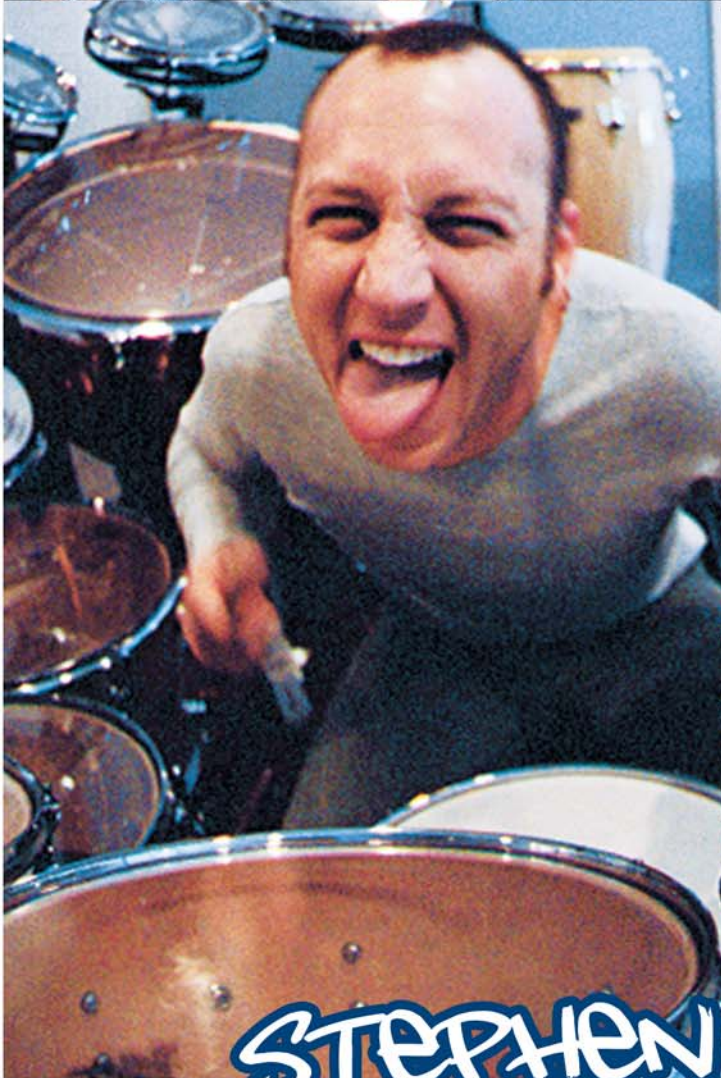
My first drumset was not like entry-level kits of today. Way back then (in the dark ages), entry-level kits were really crappy. But I loved my kit. I mean...it was a *drumset*. Basically, it was a "no-

name" kit, probably made in Japan at the time when that wasn't a good thing. But my dad bought it for me, so it was the coolest thing in the world to me. It was a blue sparkle five-piece with a ride, a crash, and hats. In addition, my dad upgraded the important stuff. So with the kit I had a 5x14 Ludwig Supra-Phonic snare and a Ludwig Speed King pedal! I used that kit until I got my first good kit, which was a Tama Superstar. They were excellent drums.

My favorite recording of all time? Now *that's* a tough one. There are so many. What sticks in my mind at the moment are David Bowie's *The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars*, Led Zeppelin's *Presence*, Jeff Beck's *Wired*, Jeff Buckley's *Grace*, and all of The Pretenders' albums. Thanks, and take care!

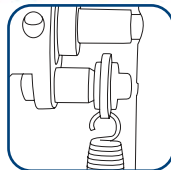
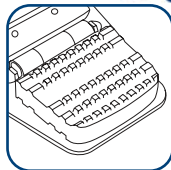
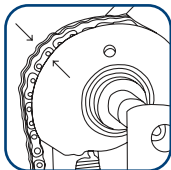


Alex Salca



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John Riley On Stick Shots

Q Your two articles on Philly Joe Jones [December '02 and March '03 *MDs*] are extremely helpful. But I can't understand exactly how to create a stick shot at the end of a fast left-hand double-stroke (or any stroke played at a fast tempo).

As a reference point, I'm working on the first measure on page 106 in the December '02 issue, where the fourth beat is a stick shot following the double-stroke 16th notes of beat 3. It looks as if the second left-hand stroke (the last 16th note of beat

3) has to dig into the head in order to hold the stick in place to be hit by the right stick. I'm having a problem keeping the left stick from trying to rebound, which produces a muddy second stroke of the double stroke as well as a muddy stick shot. Listening to the recording, Philly Joe's strokes are clear and clean, and the stick shot sounds wonderful. Can you offer any suggestions or exercises that would be helpful in developing this technique?

Dennis Gurgul
Newton, MA

A Thanks for your question. I'm glad you're enjoying the columns and listening to the recordings.

The stick shot is a great device, but it can be a little tricky to play as cleanly as Philly Joe does on "Four." You're correct in determining that the last left stroke must stay on the drumhead. Otherwise, that stick will buzz when struck with the right stick. Your characterization of "dig" is exactly the word Joe used to describe his method. The last left—the stroke before the stick shot—is also known as a "dead stroke."

To develop control of the dead stroke, play a series of right-handed five-stroke rolls: RRLLR. Allow the first two rights and the first left to rebound naturally. If you're using traditional grip, the second left—the dead stroke—is played and held onto the head by rotating your left wrist (as you would to look at your watch) while simultaneously closing your index and middle finger around the stick only as firmly as necessary to generate a clean sound. Then strike the left stick with the right.

When using matched grip, the dead stroke is achieved by slightly raising your left wrist, while allowing the left hand to

droop, as you close your fingers. You want to employ the combination of the weight of your forearm and your closing fingers to help hold the stick onto the head. Once you're getting a consistent sound, gradually increase the tempo. Be sure not to alter your form, or your clarity will suffer.

There are a lot of stick-shot sound variables. Experiment with where your right stick strikes the left stick—towards the left tip, or closer to your left hand—and with which part of the right stick strikes the left.

Page 43 of my book *The Art Of Bop Drumming* has two nice stick-shot phrases, and here are two other phrases to work on to practice your dead stroke/stick shot combinations. First, play an orchestration of the paradiddle-diddle—RLRRFF—where the bass drum substitutes for the left diddle (FF = two bass drum beats). The only left is a dead stroke, which is followed by two right stick shots. This phrase can be played as 8th or 16th notes, or as 8th- or 16th-note triplets. Second (I guess you could call this one a "loose buzz" roll), start with your hands on opposite sides of the drum, towards the rim, and buzz both hands simultaneously. As the sticks are playing their unison long buzz, slide the sticks towards the center of the drum. As the sticks are moving towards the center (and are running out of buzz), allow the left stick to slide under the right stick, and then hold it firmly against the head. Play a stick shot with the right onto the left. Practice this at quarter-note = 120. Start the unison buzzes on beat 1, stretch those buzzes all the way up to beat 2, and play the stick shot on beat 2.

Good luck, and have fun incorporating these slick and classic ideas into your playing.

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"I used to go to all the jazz concerts in San Diego just to watch [the drummers'] hi-hat work. I was used to pounding as hard as I could, but I loved the graceful way they all played. I think some of that has come into my drumming."

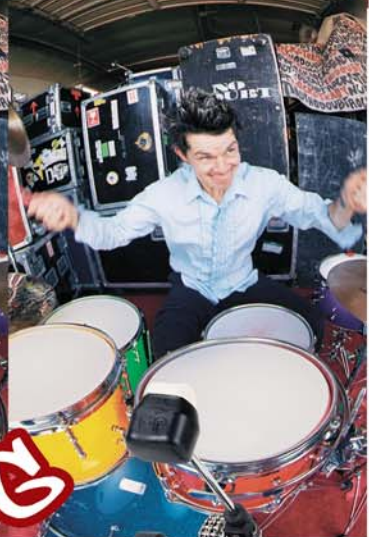
P.O.D.'s **Wuv**, December 2001



Would you like to ask your favorite drummer a question?

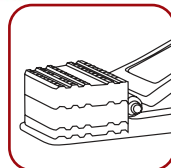
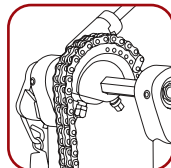
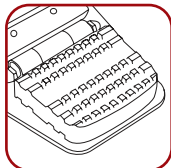
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clean, crisp

10" Splash
bright, punchy

16" Rock Crash
boosted attack

16" Rock Crash
penetrating power

20" Medium Ride
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definition

16" Medium-Thin Crash
fast, bright

14" Rock Hats
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raw, dirty

20" Rock Ride
power-boosted with
solid bell

18" Medium-Thin Crash
fast response, bright
tonality

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THE ATARIS' Chris Knapp

Persistence

Although The Ataris' Chris "Kid" Knapp is a relatively young twenty-something, barely scoring his first major-label release, his musical career already has plenty of age and wisdom to show for itself.

"I would say never give up hope," he says. "I've had many kids come up to me and ask how I got to the point where I am. I always tell them that there were so many times when I thought this would never work out, that there was just no way to ever make it in the music industry. But there was always this thing in the back of my head that would not let me give up."

It was through this persistent attitude that Knapp came to join the Santa Barbara, California-based pop-punk Ataris in 1997 after the band had lost their original drummer. The group needed an immediate replacement for an impending national tour. Knapp's temporary status quickly became permanent, allowing him to build a healthy recording history. This résumé now includes several releases with independent label Kung Fu Records, most of which were recorded with the assistance of Descendants/All drummer and producer Bill Stevenson.

"I never really had any experience in a recording studio prior to The Ataris," Knapp admits, "and I think Bill figured this out quite fast. He showed me how to tune the drums properly for recording, how to use different tape tricks to get rid of unwanted noise, and how to muffle various drums to get the best recording possible. He also turned me on to using bigger cymbals, such as 19" and 20" crashes, which I never used before. But I ended up really liking the consistency of sound they produced."

Knapp was forced to engage his quick learning ability, positive attitude, and acquired drumming prowess for the recording of The Ataris' new major-label disc, *So Long, Astoria*, tracking with producer Lou Giordano (Goo Goo Dolls, Sunny Day Real Estate). Knapp explains that the process was yet another learning experience. "Working with Lou was amazing because he was such a professional," Knapp says. "He knew exactly what to do. If there was a specific sound we needed on the drums,

he knew exactly how to go about getting it. This was also my first opportunity to go into pre-production with a producer. I didn't know what to expect, because with the indie releases I just rehearsed with the band a lot, then went in and threw down the drum tracks as is."

Stevenson and Giordano aren't the only musical mentors in Knapp's career. The drummer has had the good fortune of touring with, and consequently learning from, virtuosos Josh Freese and Brooks Wackerman. "Josh and Brooks used to switch off tours playing for The Vandals," Knapp says, "so I had the pleasure of watching these two guys play on stage every night. What was great was watching one tour with Brooks playing the songs, and then the next tour with Josh playing the same songs and seeing how each guy applied different techniques to the same songs, and how these contrasting drum styles affected the outcome of the songs. It really showed me the importance of how a style of playing could greatly influence a song. This helped me try to grasp my own style for The Ataris."

Waleed Rashidi



Royal Crown Revue's Daniel Glass

Swing Principles

Some time ago, Daniel Glass decided he did not want to be dependent on other people to make a living. That's difficult when you're in a band and/or an independent musician. But he's figured out several ways to keep busy and maintain an income.

Glass currently has three projects available on his Web site (www.danielglass.com). His *Royal Crown Revue Drum Transcription* book explains the roots of his work with RCR, and his instructional video, *Principles Of Swing Time*, takes it to a visual level. They're both great products to help you perfect a swing pulse.

"The video really helps show what the four limbs should be doing in any kind of swinging situation," Glass says. "A lot of drummers come from a place that is kick-and-snare oriented, which is the basics of rock drumming. In swing-oriented drumming, which could be shuffles, blues, jazz, or swing, you have to think differently about what your balance is. This is something very vital and something that can be used in your playing. There's a reason to learn about this genre."

The Daniel Glass Trio's debut CD, *Something Colorful*, is also just available. The unit consists of vibraphone, bass, and drums. And currently Glass is recording with a quartet version of his band featuring vibraphonist Eldad Tarmu.



While Glass is out on the road for six weeks with Michael Andrew's seven-piece swing band, he's going to be working on his *Roots Styles* drumming book, which he hopes will also make swing music more accessible to the student. "Being involved with Royal Crown Revue," Glass says, "I got very into the classic American era of the '20s to the '60s." The book, which he hopes will be completed by summer, will include many interviews with players in their eighties and nineties, who he's been tracking down for the past few years.

"It's been a very challenging couple of years," Glass admits, "because things with Royal Crown have slowed. I've had to reconfigure my life. It takes a lot of self-starting energy to get these kinds of projects going, but they're so rewarding."

Robyn Flans



30 SECONDS TO MARS' Shannon Leto

"Music is a language," says 30 Seconds To Mars drummer Shannon Leto, "and I grew up with that language. I haven't had any schooling whatsoever, but because I grew up with music all around me, I just got it. Our music may sound technical, but it's all done through feeling and emotion."

The emotional playing that pours through on the band's self-titled debut started during pre-production. "We had to feel each song live," Leto says, "so we massaged the songs quite a bit, and it was definitely an important factor. As soon as we went into the recording process, I had the songs down. Then I could add things that would come off the top of my head."

To get Leto's drum tracks to cut through the multiple layers of guitars and sound-design effects,

his kit was tuned very high. "All the guitars were EQ'd really low," Leto says, "so my tracks cut through a lot better with a higher tuning." As for equipment, Leto plays Sonor drums with Remo Pinstripe heads and Sabian cymbals. He used a trio of snares in the studio, including a Ludwig Black Beauty, a Noble & Cooley, and a vintage Ludwig. Leto also plays two 20" bass drums. ("I like the tones of two different drums," he explains.)

One of the things that makes Leto's gig a bit more challenging is the heavy level of sound design in the band's music. The drummer is responsible for triggering samples via a Roland V-Drum. With a laugh, Leto explains how he keeps all of the parts straight. "Lots of Gingko Biloba," he says. "Actually, it takes a lot of time and practice to get it together."

David John Farinella

LA STUDIO CAT Jody Cortez Breathing Life Into Loops

Jody Cortez has recently released a CD of loops under the banner King Cortez. It's called, appropriately enough, *Killer Loops* (Big Fish Audio). "It encompasses performances in Latin, bebop, jazz, reggae, rock, funk, R&B, hip-hop, and straight-ahead rock," Cortez says. (It's available online at www.bigfishaudio.com or at any large music equipment store.) "The



great thing about the disc is that the performances are all live," he says. "So you can put together a killer live-feeling track that is unlike any machine sampled track."

Cortez, who has worked with artists such as David Crosby, Michael McDonald, and Christopher Cross, says he feels that rather than taking work away from drummers, his CD shows the need for natural, real-feeling drums. "The more you like my CD," he says, "the more you're going to

like the feel of a real drummer. I also like to work with loops and play over them, pulling the loops in and out against real drums. My disc can be used as a learning tool for drummers."

Other recent projects for Cortez include work with solo artist Mark Hays, as well as heading his own music production company. You can also hear him on June Kuramoto's *Spirit And Soul*, as well as on a new Sonia Dada project, due out shortly.

Robyn Flans

Neal Smith

Veteran Rocker Stays Creative



In the early 1970s, when rock 'n' roll was an innovative "Wild West" for creative expression, a group called Alice Cooper established a standard for theatrical "shock" rock that influenced bands from KISS to Marilyn Manson. In 1975, after releasing eight albums—including multi platinum-selling classics like *School's Out* and *Billion Dollar Babies*—Alice Cooper officially disbanded. But drummer Neal Smith never strayed far from his kit.

These days Neal has his own hard rock trio: Bouchard, Dunaway & Smith, with former Blue Öyster Cult guitarist Joe Bouchard and ex-Alice Cooper bandmate Dennis Dunaway. Neal says he's shared a close friendship and undeniable chemistry with the bassist for over thirty years. "I've played with a few other bass players," Neal admits. "But I never want to underestimate how important Dennis and I are in influencing each other's style."

At the end of 2002, BD&S played a handful of European club dates to promote the group's latest release, *Back From Hell*. To appease the enthusiastic audiences, the band worked up a two-hour set of originals mixed with a selection of classic Alice Cooper and Blue Öyster Cult songs. "We're not exactly The Traveling Wilburys," Neal laughs. "But we are guys who have been there and done that, and just love playing for the fans. If we can pick up some new fans, that's great." Smith also plays in a non-rock project, Cinematik, which affords him the chance to play hand

drums, shakers, clay drums, and a variety of drums from his collection. "From an experimental standpoint," he says, "it's a lot of fun. I think that's what real music is, something you can actually experiment with."

Coming from rock's old school, Smith believes that experimentation in drumming has become somewhat of a lost art. He recalls, "On 'Ballad Of Dwight Fry' [from Alice Cooper's *Love It To Death*], I dropped a stick on the snare drum and let it bounce naturally. Then, seconds later, I did the same thing again. That's not in any book, but it worked perfectly with the organ part."

Smith feels that the secret to experimentation begins with your technique. "I would like to see drummers getting back to the basic rudiments in drumming," he says, "utilizing them, and coming up with one or two of their own. There's so much to work with on a set of drums, and I hate to hear people limit themselves creatively."

Gail Worley



CHRIS "KID" KNAPP
THE ATARIS

American Hickory, TX5B "The Natural", Nylon-tip



VINNIE FLORELLA
LESS THAN JAKE

American Hickory, TX5B, Wood-tip



CHUCK COMEAU
SIMPLE PLAN

American Hickory, TX5B "The Natural", Nylon-tip



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DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Philly Joe Jones was born on July 15, 1923.

Alan Dawson was born on July 14, 1929.

Eric Carr was born on July 12, 1950.

In July of 1972, **Bill Bruford** quits Yes to join Robert Fripp in a new King Crimson lineup.

On July 5, 1980, KISS introduces their new drummer, **Eric Carr**, at a concert at the Paladium in New York City.

Vanilla Fudge, with **Carmine Appice** on drums, make their New York debut at The Village Theater (soon to be re-named The Fillmore East) on July 22, 1967.

Iron Butterfly, with drummer **Ron Bushy**, release what many regard as the first heavy metal album, *In-A-Gada-Da-Vida*, which enters the US charts at number four in July of 1968.

Happy Birthday!

Louie Bellson (big band legend): July 6, 1924

Joe Morello (jazz great): July 17, 1928

Ringo Starr (The Beatles): July 7, 1940

Dino Danelli (The Rascals): July 23, 1945

Mitch Mitchell (Jimi Hendrix): July 9, 1947

Don Henley (The Eagles): July 22, 1947

Michael Shrieve (Santana): July 6, 1949

Roger Taylor (Queen): July 26, 1949

Simon Kirke (Bad Company): July 28, 1949

Andy Newmark (studio great): July 14, 1950

Tris Imboden (Chicago): July 27, 1951

Stewart Copeland (The Police): July 16, 1952

Chet McCracken (Doobie Brothers): July 17, 1952

Paul Geary (Extreme): July 24, 1961

Evelyn Glennie (master percussionist): July 19, 1965

Chad Gracey (Live): July 23, 1971

NEWS



Charlie Benante is on Anthrax's new studio release (the first in five years), *We've Come For You All*.

Eddie Bayers is on recent projects by Darrell Worley, Alan Jackson, Dan Hill, Clint Black, Kenny Rogers, and Sawyer Brown, as well as a commercial for Allstate Insurance with Sean Lennon singing "When I'm 64."

Tim Seifert is on a two-CD live recording with Dirk Hamilton, as well as a disc with Chuck McCabe called *Bad Gravity Day*.

Drew Hester is heading out on tour to support Lisa Marie Presley's long-awaited debut release.

Todd Sucherman is on the new offering from Styx, *Cyclorama*, as well as *More Than Styx*, his two-CD drum loop library.

Steve Holly is on Dar Williams' *The Beauty Of Rain*.

Randy Guss is back on the road with the reunited Toad The Wet Sprocket.

Ryan Adams and drummer **Brad Pemberton** recently completed a series of opening dates for The Rolling Stones.

Nick Gigler and M.E.S.T. return to The Vans Warped Tour this summer.

Mike Wengren is currently in the middle of Disturbed's *Music As A Weapon* headlining tour.

Shawn Pelton has joined Sheryl Crow's band.

Jonathan Dresel can be seen every night on ABC's late-night talk show, *The Jimmy Kimmel Show*.



Kenny Aronoff recently recorded with Melissa Etheridge, Michelle Branch, Leslie Mills, Pete Yorn, Meatloaf, Robbie Williams, Yankees centerfielder Bernie Williams, Jennifer Love Hewitt, and John Eddie, as well as the soundtrack for the Bruce Willis movie *Tears Of The Sun*. Kenny's also been doing some live shows with Michelle Branch and Melissa Etheridge.

Craig Nunenmacher and Black Label Society will soon be releasing a live DVD to follow their recent CD, *The Blessed Hellride*.

Tom Bona recently won Canada's Maple Blues Award for Drummer Of The Year for the second year running.

Black Sabbath's **Bill Ward** has released a free download on his Web site, www.billward.com. The recording, titled "Straws," was written by the drummer.

Nick D'Virgilio, drummer for Spock's Beard, has become the band's new lead vocalist. He will continue to record all of the drum parts in the studio, but the band will hire a touring drummer for their gigs.

Larry Chancia is on a fifty-date tour to support Ben Taylor's new release. And congratulations to Larry on the birth of his son Jacob.

Ti Dennis has replaced Stewart Copeland in The Doors.



"from Erik's hands to yours..."

classic brilliance
dry undertones
... very funky



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Yamaha Musashi Snare Drums

Look Distinguished, Sound Bold

HITS

excellent workhorse snare drums

wide tuning range

oak shell and deep snare beds
promote fat, biting sound

great value

A little background is in order. Miyamoto Musashi ranks among the most famous of Japanese Samurai warriors. Legend says that he passed undefeated through countless duels and wars. Many words have been written about this noble fighter, but few are more expressive than this text forwarded to me by Yamaha's Prudence Elliott: "He denied himself luxuries, never cut his hair, never married, and never even bathed. Whatever his reasons, Miyamoto Musashi became the archetypal unkempt, invincible ronin...."

When Yamaha designed the Musashi model snare drums specifically for the American market, they had several of the warrior's traits in mind. Aside from looking for a funky sound, denying luxuries was central to the exercise. Yamaha has employed cost-reduction strategies without compromising the quality of the drum. Indeed, my testing revealed the Musashi models to be bold entries into the snare drum market.

The Cloak Of The Samurai

The Musashi snare drums are made in Japan. Both sizes come in a glossy, translucent black. No cost-cutting is evident here; the finish is like a mirror. The shells are seven-ply oak. Oak is less costly than American maple or Japanese birch, but it equals either in attitude, thus promoting a feisty-sounding drum. The shells are cut with 45° bearing edges (as opposed to Yamaha's standard 35° edges) to help promote a drum sound that's "bigger" than their size would indicate.



13" Musashi



12" Musashi

The lugs come from Yamaha's Stage Custom Standard series, so that takes the cost down a bit. The triple-flanged hoops are 1.6 mm, as opposed to Yamaha's thicker 2.3-mm rims, which again saves the consumer dollars. (Many drummers *prefer* thinner counterhoops, for a brighter rimshot.) The strainer is the same simple, smooth unit as that found on the Steve Gadd and Manu Katché models.

Both Musashi drums have deeper-than-normal snare beds. This serves two purposes. One is to promote a snappy attack; the other is to ensure that the snares are nestled deep enough to reduce snare buzz. That last bit is not in the Yamaha literature, but it's something that makes good sense in drums that approximate the size/volume of the first tom. I noticed very little sympathetic snare buzz from the Musashis when I hit the first tom on three different drumsets: a Yamaha, a Rogers, and an old French Asba (10", 12", and 13" first toms, respectively).

The 13" Musashi has 20-strand snares; the 12" drum has 16-strand snares "split" down the center into two tracks. I'm always fiddling with snare strands, often replacing standard fare with custom aftermarket units. I had no reason to do so with the Musashi drums, since the drums seemed perfectly matched with the snare-strand units.

The 13" drum is just big enough to play a decent cross-stick on. The 12" drum isn't. But Yamaha has prepared the drum for that contingency by fitting it with a black Groove Wedge. That's an "outboard" section of wooden hoop that attaches to the drum's rim, allowing you to play a solid, woodblock-like cross-stick click.

A Warrior's Bite

Both of the Musashis delivered fat backbeats that projected well above amplified instruments. To prove it, I took the drums to one of my loudest steady gigs. Even by the third set, when the earplugs go in, I had no problem being heard. Furthermore, neither drum showed significant detuning. I had the feeling that, were I to play a *succession* of loud gigs, I'd go to the 13" drum, simply because it has slightly more volume, as well as eight tension rods per side. (The 12" model has six.) But both drums met my definition of primary, as opposed to auxiliary, snare-drum functionality.

Both drums were loud and infinitely adjustable. When tuned up high, they gave a piercing rimshot, yet they sounded plenty full when hit in the center of the head. At a medium tuning, the drums were fat enough for greasy New Orleans-style playing. When tuned loose and flappy, the drums were something special again.

I liked the fact that the deep snare bed allowed flexibility in "matching" snare response with head tension. I've often found that a shallow snare bed will promote heightened snare sensitivity, but can allow buzzing and rattling when the snares are tuned loosely. Both of the Musashis afforded a range of useful snare-tension points, and the snare wires didn't jangle and buzz until they were loosened significantly.

Maybe it was the oak, the shell dimensions, or that deep snare bed. For whatever reasons, both Musashi drums had tremendous body, even when cranked up. Rimshots never "thinned out"; they always had a solid bit of drum behind them. Country-style cross-sticks on the 13" were adequate if not particularly aggressive, and the drum offered a couple of sweet spots. With the Groove Wedge attached, the 12" drum was up and ready—although, to be honest, this drum would be more suited to hip-hop than to country.

Sound Value

Nothing in the appearance, construction, or performance of the Musashi snares immediately pegs them as "inexpensive" models. The list price is reasonable, and street price would likely be more than a hundred dollars lower. When a drum looks this good, features flawless bearing edges and quality hardware, *and* covers a wide dynamic range, you have to ask yourself: Why spend more?

THE NUMBERS

Musashi 6x12	\$399
(features Groove Wedge and 16-strand split snare)		
Musashi 6½x13	\$399
(features 20-strand snare)		
Both drums feature 7-ply oak shells finished in see-through gloss black, as well as 1.6-mm steel triple-flanged rims.		
(714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrum.com.		



Sabian XS20 Series Cymbals

High Sonic Performance At Low-End Prices

HITS

multilayered tones

good definition

versatile cymbals with reasonable price tags

MISSES

18" Rock crash had a "gongy" sound

by Will Romano

Sabian's new cast-bronze XS20 Series promises to bring a smile to drummers' faces without breaking their banks. The company alleges that cost-effective, high-tech precision casting, along with the specific metals used, allow these cymbals to offer a multilayered response at affordable prices. Let's see if they're right.

Composition

The XS20 line is made from Sabian's premium B20 bronze (80% copper, 20% tin, and trace amounts of silver). The natural-finished cymbals are line-lathed top and bottom to offer responsive performance. The overall series consists of cymbals pitched in the mid ranges, often with nice bright tones.

Hi-Hats

We were sent two sets of hi-hats. They performed well—and nearly identically. I played the 14" Rock hats on several different occasions, and they proved versatile enough to perform respectably (neither wimpy nor overpowering) in every situation. These cymbals pumped out a consistent and even "hiss," and a clear "chick." The combination of medium-heavy top and heavy bottom cymbals helped give definition to my accents and sticking patterns. And I didn't really have to push to get that extra punch. These hats were a pleasure to play.

The 14" Regular hats were very appealing to my ears. The heavy bottom and medium top cymbals could have given the sound an overall heaviness. Instead, the hats were somewhat bright. The "sizzle" factor was high; playing the hats nearly closed produced a manageable "whoosh" that complemented the band.

Rides

In testing the XS20s, I went into a private session where I played the gamut of musical styles: swing, rock, soul, pop, etc. The rides—along with nearly all the models that we tested—performed well in a variety of cases.

What struck me most about the 20" medium ride was how well the bell projected when I hit it with the side—or even the very tip—of a stick. I've heard stronger and louder bells, but I was still impressed at the way this one cut through. It also seemed to have a self-controlling dampening mechanism, as if it had a "soft spot." (That isn't a bad thing.)

The 20" Rock ride was slightly more shimmering and gongy than the medium model. It was certainly made for a rock gig. Still, the rich overtones weren't abrasive, which meant that I could swing on it with impunity.



20" medium ride

20" Rock ride

18" Rock crash

16" Medium-thin crash

18" thin Chinese



Crashes And Splash

Projection is the name of the game for the XS20 crashes. The 16" Rock crash was surprisingly dark. Even in the cymbal's decay, a litany of sad notes streamed by me. From a cymbalmaking point of view, this is quite a technical achievement. However, this dark, somewhat somber quality may not be the optimum fit within the context of a larger rock-oriented musical mix.

I'm not fond of big crash cymbals, but there was no denying the 18" Rock crash. It simply stung my senses when I hit it. Even when I choked this baby, the ringing hurt my ears; it was difficult to effectively silence it. It was so loud, so cutting, and so dark that it was easily the most explosive cymbal of our review batch. However, because the cymbal was so hyper-responsive, it also had an excess "gonginess."

10" splash

The responsive 16" medium-thin crash was anything I wanted it to be. Due to its sensitivity and overall spread, in certain situations it reminded me of a Chinese cymbal. But this cymbal could also be used for sonic jabs. And although it was not designed for the purpose (as far as we know), it could also double as a ride.

The 18" medium-thin crash was brighter. When I played a full-on roll on the top of the cymbal, I could hear waves of tones ebbing and flowing with the movement of my sticks. As I used some muscle to really dig in to the cymbal, the pitches were plentiful.

That brings us to the 10" splash. A good flick of the stick set off a tiny, trashy explosion that quickly faded, leaving me open for the next strike. Even when the splash was played in rapid succession, the sound was well-defined and consistent from stroke to stroke.

China

Like most of the cymbals in this batch, the 18" thin Chinese was a clever composite of contradictions. Though I've never been a big fan of Chinese cymbals, this one impressed me.

Simply stated, it was the softest trash-talking cymbal I've heard in a while. But don't get me wrong—when I wanted to make a bold statement, this cymbal was very capable of delivering it. I used it right side up and upside-down, and in both cases the cymbal had great sustain and spread.

Wrap Up

Sabian has really hit on something with the XS20 Series. Most of my comments above might apply to any professional cast-cymbal line. But the XS20s are priced significantly lower than most "professional" cymbals. You'll have to look hard to find higher quality for the price.

I also believe that this set is greater than the sum of its parts. It seems as if all the models were meant to interact with one another, because of their highly conversational nature. Now *that's* a marketing strategy.

THE NUMBERS

10" Splash	\$ 89
14" Regular or Rock hi-hats	\$209
16" Medium-Thin or Rock crash	\$139
18" Medium-Thin or Rock crash	\$159
18" Chinese	\$159
20" Medium or Rock ride	\$189
Performance Set (Includes 14" hi-hat, 16" crash, 20" ride)	\$509

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Custom showcase



Le Soprano Prima Originale Drumkit

Le Soprano In The Basement...And A Jaguar In The Driveway

HITS

bass drum sound is cavernous

toms are extremely loud, fat, and clear

all drums have wide tuning range and good sustain

snare drum is sensitive enough for orchestra, with a great rimshot for rock

MISSES

Noisy "full release" snare strainer

Le Soprano drumsets are made in Italy by craftsman Marco Gambirasio. His top-line kit, the Prima Originale, is intended for the connoisseur—the drummer who has road-tested the rest and who wants to play (in Marco's opinion) the best.

I've seen many "exclusive" drumsets in my career. None compare to the Prima Originale kit sent to *MD* for review. It was so distinctive in looks, construction, and sound—and, frankly, so expensive—that I was reluctant to take it out to a gig. It felt like bringing crystal wineglasses to a beach picnic.

Sensibly, the North American distributor, Albert "Bernie" Tessier (who also handles Italian-made UFIP cymbals in North America), is not trying to make Le Soprano a household word. Bernie just wants to make sure that the drums can get into the hands of people who will appreciate them. To this end, we will steer you to the exclusive American retailer. But first, let's see if a Le Soprano Prima Originale is your cup of tea.

Artisan Construction

I uncrated the Primas and beheld their luxurious subtle finish, hand rubbed with beeswax to a rich, dark luster. Setup was quick, although it required a slotted drumkey. (I've only ever encountered this on Sonor drumkits.)

Remo Ambassador heads were standard all-round, except for the bass drum. It was fitted with an Emperor clear batter, although I'm told a PowerStroke 3 is the norm. The drum also had handsome logo-engraved brass T-rod. As a special touch, the outer edges of all drumhead counterhoops were sprayed black, enabling them to "camouflage" with the shell and the black suspension mount.

Changing a head was a matter of disengaging the finely threaded tension rods from narrow brass tubes that act as one-piece lugs. These don't touch the shell. Rather, they lock into a multi-ply beech wood ring—a sort of cradle equipped with a gasket cushion on which the shell rests.



Once the heads are off, the stave shell is free to pop out. Our test shells featured segments of Brazilian walnut. Other exotic woods, along with more “standard” woods such as maple, are available. Toms incorporate eighteen staves, bass drums and snares have twenty-four. They are held in round by inner maple reinforcing rings. Nothing is fastened to the shell except a grommet. Le Soprano claims that a vertical-stave shell behaves like a one-piece shell (as opposed to a ply shell). All I can say is that I held the shell on one hand, tapped it with the other, and was rewarded with a nice *hum*.

Black “winged” suspension mounts attach firmly to the long lugs and accommodate the tom holder rods. The bass drum incorporates an additional cast bar encircling the drum, which supports the tom holder base (a multi-ply polished block) and the reversible-tip spurs (which also emerge from a polished wood block). For ease of packing, the spurs are on a spring-loaded hinge. Press a lever and they sit flush with the drum. The bass drum hoops, like all Le Soprano parts, are “one-offs” crafted specifically for these drums.

The center tom holder consists of two rods that are independently height adjustable. These tom stems slide into neoprene balls situated on the black suspension ring. The floor tom “floats” on a wooden cradle into which three substantial brass floor tom legs are attached.

So far, no rain on the picnic. But what’s this? When I disengaged the snare throw-off’s release lever, it (and the strainer front plate) plummeted “south” a full 180°, making a noise that woke up the dog. When I emailed Marco about this, he responded that he and Le Soprano’s endorsers had agreed that there should be a minimum of complicated mechanisms, so they applauded this no-hassle, full-drop snare release. I found this a little odd, given some past experience in an orchestra pit where silence is golden. That said, I got used to muting the strainer by cupping my palm over the faceplate.

The brass rims of the snare drum and toms are of the vintage single-flange (or “metal band” style), but were sufficiently rounded to save on stick wear. My perception was that these hoops gave great stability to the head seating and tuning.

Sound

The bass drum was as close to “concert drum” tonality as any I’ve played. It had an enormous sound that belied its 20” diameter. I changed the clear Emperor head to a self-muffling Evans EMAD, and still that disproportionately huge sound hung with me. It was as if I was playing an exceptional 22” drum!

At a gig, the drum projected (unamplified) over loud guitars. During quiet passages, I found myself lightening up my touch. The drum responded well to muffling of all sorts, as well as to changes in tension and beaters. I was ultimately left with the impression that this was a real *instrument*, not just a “kick drum.”

The snare was another winner. Those single-flange brass hoops fostered a rimshot rich in sustain and harmonics that cut through in a rock context. Yet the drum responded to quiet press rolls like a fine

symphonic instrument. And like other snare drums I’ve come to love, this one yielded a full tone with snares off. (Le Soprano makes their snare wires in house.)

The toms were amazingly full, rich in attack frequencies as well as in the middle to lower-mid ranges. Although the drums gave no good reason to experiment with heads, to satisfy my curiosity I used the 10” tom as a guinea pig, switching between a Remo Diplomat and an Evans G2. Unlike some drums, it had no “boinginess” with the Diplomat, while the G2 simply provided a thicker sound.

I was doing double takes: The 10” tom had me thinking I was playing a 12” tom; the 12” was a monster; and the 14” floor tom was robust, with sustain for days. All of the toms tuned up high without choking, and remained playable even when tuned down to the point of ripples in the head. What appealed to me, each step along the way, was the sensation of *pitch*. I wanted to play melodically with these toms, and I found myself reaching for mallets. Again, I felt that despite the stunning volume that lay waiting, these drums would sit well in a jazz or chamber-group setting.

I want to add that the toms had a unique feel when I played them. They felt...well...a little *softer* under my sticks. I say this because some drums provide enhanced articulation at the expense of a harder feel. These drums projected each note clearly, and still felt comfortable and organic.

For Different Folks

Maybe you’re a metal drummer and you don’t see yourself behind an artisan kit. My thinking is that if you’re a *successful* metal drummer (meaning you’ve got disposable income), you might want a kit that could approximate a Bonham sound with minimal effort, and at any timbre imaginable. You wouldn’t have to change anything on these drums, unless you had allegiance to particular heads or muffling devices. All you’d need would be hard cases and a good insurance policy.

Le Soprano makes other lines of drums that are somewhat less expensive, including the Bionic and New Vintage. Each incorporates some of the Prima Originale hardware features, but utilizes ply shells made in house.

But the Prima Originale drums are Marco Gambirasio’s masterpieces. They have the look of fine furniture or sculpture. Each component works with the others—aesthetically and acoustically—for maximum effect. Given their price tag, one might almost expect the drums to play themselves. That they don’t do. But they do make the experience of playing them distinctly enjoyable.



THE NUMBERS

Configuration: Jazz SW5P, consisting of 9x10 and 10x12 rack toms, a 14x14 floor tom, an 18x20 bass drum, and a 5½x14 snare drum. Includes suspension mounts, tom holder, heavy-duty floor tom legs, and bass drum spurs.

List price: **\$7,852**
The exclusive American retailer is Sergio Bellotti, Adrums, 1018 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215.
www.lesoprano.it



Yamaha Flying Dragon Pedals

These Amazing Creatures Are Definitely Not Imaginary!

HITS

all pedals are buttery smooth

Direct Drive model is exceptionally fast and comfortable

double-chain-drive converts to strap-drive in minutes

MISSES

"one-touch" hoop lever is initially hard to set up

supplied Allen key is too long and cumbersome

by T. Bruce Wittet

With the introduction of the Flying Dragon series of pedals—five singles and four double pedals, plus slave units—Yamaha is clearly going head-to-head with the popular choices already on the market. The new line is manufactured in the same Indonesian factory that turns out Yamaha motorcycles (which is some lineage). The pedals are alleged to be smoother, tougher, and more adjustable than their predecessors.

After trying them out, I believe that the Flying Dragons could shift the balance of power in the pedal world. They retain the light feel I've always appreciated in previous Yamaha pedals, but they add a decided smoothness and increased adjustability. All models incorporate a streamlined version of Yamaha's stress-relieving double-horizontal "goal post" design. Many are collapsible. All footboards are inscribed with the word "professional"—a designation I had no reason to challenge. Let's look at a few of the highlights.

Direct Drive

A courier delivered the review pedals just hours before a gig. On a whim, I threw the Direct Drive model into my trap case. This pedal employs a solid metal linkage (as opposed to a chain or strap) between the yoke and the footboard, in the manner of the classic Ludwig Speed King and the more recent Axis line. It also employs a "one touch" lever that clamps the pedal to the bass drum hoop, as well as an independent footboard/beater throw adjustment.

Before the gig, I would have sworn that the Yamaha metal strap linkage was going to feel stiff. Instead, it felt strangely like my cherished leather-strap Rogers Swiv-O-Matics (not to harp on vintage gear). At any rate, I instantly felt "at one" with this pedal.

Bonham-style triplets were quick and effortless, as were Steve Gadd/Jo Jo Mayer-style alternating heel-to-toe strokes. According to this technique, you snap your heel down and the beater hits; then you go for a toe stroke. The Yamaha Direct Drive was always there "waiting" for me—a characteristic I attributed to the metal linkage. When I played with a more conventional technique, the Yamaha Direct Drive retained its touch and ultra-smooth feel (even when I played heel down, "feathering" the kick during a jazz bass solo).

Breakdown Blues

The jury's out on the Flying Dragon's collapsibility feature. Since the advent of ultra-sophisticated "stand alone" pedals, we've gotten so accustomed to models that *don't* allow detachment of the baseplate that the Flying Dragon seems a little finicky. You've got to line up an Allen screw and washer at the bottom of the pedal (the latter of which stands proud thanks to a feathery spring) with a "figure eight" hole on the floor plate, slide the pedal into the plate, and screw the thing tight. If you



Yamaha FP-7210



Yamaha DFP-9410 Direct Drive

don't align and crank down properly, the action may be a little clumsy. Don't try this first on a gig, as I did; practice it at home! And remember: You don't *have* to collapse the pedal, providing you've got space in your trap case. However, if you do take advantage of the collapsibility feature, you can slide the unit into the supplied black gig bag. Everyone on the bus will think you're a flutist.

My only other criticism is that the supplied drumkey/Allen wrench with which you adjust the one-touch clamp is a little too long. It's great to be able to do fine adjustments on the hoop clamp before engaging the one-touch lever. But unfortunately each time you turn the key, you bang into something. I would have preferred a simple drumkey adjustment. That said, once engaged, the one-touch lever is dead effective.

Beat, Beat, Beat

All Flying Dragons are supplied with simple round felt beaters equipped with a stopper that marks height and prevents loosening. I queried Yamaha marketing director Jerry Andreas on this. "Our endorsers tell us that traditional felt beaters give them a bigger sound with less fidgeting," he responded. "Also, felt beaters eventually 're-shape' and conform to the player's style."

Fair enough. But not everybody loves felt beaters, and there are a lot of nifty models out there. After experimenting with a few, I found the Direct Drive pedal to be hypersensitive to changes in beaters. That's a very cool proposition, analogous to changing drumsticks. For example, a Pearl four-sided beater felt heavy, a Slug beater felt light, a DW felt in-between, and so forth. Point is, they all work fine, so you can select the one that fits your music and your physical playing style.

Double-Chain/Strap-Drive Single Pedal

Some people may find the Direct Drive *too* direct. They may, instead, prefer the extra play inherent in a chain- or strap-drive pedal. The double-chain/strap model offers both in one pedal. In a simple drumkey operation, you can remove the chain and substitute a strap. And that's exactly what I did at the gig.

I got the pedal (with the strap) feeling good in no time. Although footboard height is adjustable independent of beater throw, the factory setting seemed optimum to me. One thing's for certain: Once you adjust the footboard height, it's not going to slip—thanks to teeth that lock firmly on the cam/horizontal yoke.

Although the double chain/strap drive was not my favorite, I predict it will be popular. The synthetic strap feels natural, and there is a noticeable absence of impediment anywhere on the path of the beater to head. I know I'm not alone in having experienced last-minute "hiccups" on certain pedals. This didn't happen on the Flying Dragon. When I switched to the double-chain drive, I achieved a more direct, contemporary feel. This is one smooth, solid pedal.

Single-Chain/Strap-Drive

I tried a single-chain-drive pedal without a bass plate, along with a strap-drive model. These two pedals are less expensive than their larger siblings, but perform exceptionally well. To help keep costs down, Yamaha leaves out a few fine adjustments. But the pedals have the essentials: adjustable beater throw and spurs. I fitted the single-chain model to the bass drum on the Le Soprano kit I was reviewing for this issue, and left it there for a month. The darn thing felt great on an \$8,000 kit!

Double Pedals

To simplify this somewhat, the double pedals Yamaha sent—a Direct Drive and a convertible chain/strap model—felt identical to the single pedals. They came with plates (other models are available without) and all the adjustability of the singles. They were exceptionally smooth and direct. They connected up in moments and didn't slip in the heat of battle. Yamaha also sent a double pedal without baseplates. It felt great in my test room, though I didn't bring it to a gig.

Dragon To The Rescue

There are lots of good pedals out there. You want to train your foot so that it can play on any of them. That said, if you've made the rounds and found certain pedals to be heavy-handed (or heavy-footed, as it were), try the Flying Dragons—especially the Direct Drive. These new pedals are fast and exceptionally smooth. And since they're manufactured in Yamaha's motorcycle factory, we can expect them to take abuse.

THE NUMBERS

Single Pedals

Single-chain-drive, with beater angle adjustment	\$110
Strap-drive, with beater angle adjustment, quick release, and spring lock	\$140
Single-chain drive, with baseplate, quick release, and spring lock	\$175
Double-chain/strap-drive, with baseplate, quick release, spring lock, independent footboard adjustment, and gig bag	\$230
Direct Drive, with all features including gig bag	\$230

Double Pedals

Strap-drive, with quick release and spring lock	\$435
Single-chain-drive, with baseplate, quick release, and spring lock	\$480
Slave unit only	\$325
Double-chain/strap-drive, with all features including gig bag	
Right or left versions	\$550
Slave unit only	\$350
Direct drive, with all features including gig bag	\$550

(714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.



Quick Looks

SoundSeat Break Down Seat

SoundSeat's Break Down Gas Lift Seat is more a portable office chair than it is a traditional drum throne. Instead of a tripod, the Break Down Seat features a five-legged chair base with a 24" diameter. The seat itself measures 19" wide. The optional seat back adjusts 2" forward or backward, varying the seat depth from 14½" to 16½". The back also adjusts 3" vertically, and standard or extra-large backs are available.

The front of the seat can be tilted by the removal and repositioning of bolts and washers underneath the seat. The 5/8" plywood base is covered with high-density foam overlaid with top grain leather. This promises comfort, good posture, and a non-sweaty ride. Nitrogen lift tubes are available in five lengths, so you need to determine your preference before ordering. SoundSeat's J.R. Baker was kind enough to send three different lengths for us to try, along with backs and foot rings.

Assembly takes just a minute. The lift tube connects easily between the chair base and the seat base. A set screw secures the seat to the tube. When you're ready to pack up, you just turn a handle on the base, and a threaded plug pushes the tube straight up out of the base. Very convenient.

My wife, Adrienne, took the taller Break Down Seat on a classical concert gig—and loved it. She appreciated the large back and the fact that the seat went high enough for her to play timpani. I took a shorter version out while playing several shows, and the comfort and support was unparalleled. The spacing of the five spokes of the base gave me places to rest my feet. But you can add an optional foot ring for more comfort if space allows. Rings are available in 18" (standard) or 20" (large) diameters. The footprint of the base may be too large for some players (or venues). On the other hand, the stability that it provides is great.

While the Break Down Seat is lovely to sit on, it's a lot to carry around—especially if you've added the back and foot ring. The dimensions of the available carrying bag are 24"x24"x18". The bag is configured to stand by itself, and contains a removable partition. The foot ring and base go in the middle; the back and the seat go into large pockets on the outside of the bag. Small pockets on the edges of the bag can carry parts. A smaller bag is available for the basic seat without the back and the foot ring.

The fully equipped Break Down Seat (with the back and foot ring) seems best suited for the player who stays in one place for a while, and isn't packing in and out on a nightly basis. Studio drummers, show drummers, or anyone who spends a lot of time sitting in rehearsals while *not* playing will particularly love it. The basic seat is more portable, and might be an excellent consideration even for one-nighters.

SoundSeat's products display an uncompromising dedication to quality. Their components are milled from solid steel, and they make their own parts to maintain quality control. Custom embroidery is available on the sides of the seat or on the back. The basic seat is priced at \$225; with a bag it's \$325. A standard back adds about \$45. Other options are extra.

(704) 636-3560, www.soundseat.com.



Basic



Options

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14" hats 16" crash and 20" ride
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Roland V-Stage Electronic Kit

Plays Like A Pro...Priced To Move

HITS

mesh pads have great playing feel

TD-8 module offers high-quality sounds

icon-based editing is drummer-friendly

MISSES

8" snare pad feels small

by Rick Long

The Roland V-Session kit with the TD-10 module is generally accepted to be the current king of the hill in the electronic drum world. It's also a bit pricey. In an attempt to make mesh-head V-Drum technology more affordable, Roland went to the drawing board and came up the TD-8KV electronic drumkit, commonly known as the V-Stage kit. The V-Stage kit puts the essence of the TD-10 module/mesh head V-Drum combination into a package that won't break the bank.

Getting Started

Assembly went quickly, using the easy-to-read manual. Compactness and ease of setup are the key words here. The same pipe T-connectors and rack clamps from the V-Session and V-Concert kits are used. The main rack bar has a long, curved design. The

tom pads, cymbal stands, and sound module are mounted onto this bar, giving an ergonomic, wraparound feel to the kit. The pads are white and the rack has a gray finish, so the look of the kit shouldn't clash with other stage color schemes. The minimal footprint of this kit makes it ideal for small stages.

Let's Play!

The PD-80 and 80R pads are shipped with their heads slack to avoid pre-purchase stretching. Because the tension rods lie very close to the rubber-coated rim, the Roland straight-barreled drumkey (provided) works best to bring them up to playing tension. Once that's done, these pads offer the best response currently available on an electronic drumpad. The snare has position and velocity sensing that works well. The rim response is flawless, and the cross-stick sound can be facilitated through use of a stick resting on both sides of the rim (rather than with one hand on the head, as with an acoustic snare). Brush response is acceptable, although the pad can't track downward pressure from the brush.

The CY-12R/C V-Cymbal pads are smaller versions of the same V-Cymbal technology found on the V-Session kit. One slight difference is that the TD-8 module doesn't allow three-way ride-cymbal triggering. The cymbal pads have the jacks for this, but you must choose between the bow/bell output for a ride cymbal configuration and the bow/edge output if you want to use the pad as a crash cymbal.

As with the drum pads, the cymbal response is as good as it gets. The sway is much like an acoustic cymbal, and the rubber surface gives a good stick response. The bell, bow, and edge all respond well and don't get in the way of creative expression. The crash cymbal can be choked in the same manner that you choke an acoustic cymbal.

The only caution with these pads is that you shouldn't hit the edge of the cymbal at a 90° angle. The pad won't respond to that type of hit, and in fact may be damaged by it.



This should only be a problem if you place your cymbals high in the air and flat. (Acoustic cymbals don't respond that well to a 90° strike either.)

The KD-80 kick pad also has good response characteristics. It may take a bit of getting used to, though, because you won't believe that deep, full-sounding bass drum tones can be summoned with this little pad. The stand is well designed and sturdy. Creeping is well controlled with sharp points on the ends of the support poles. The design of the pedal attachment area makes connecting double pedals (or any pedal for that matter) quite easy.

The PD-7 hi-hat pad is a standard Roland electronic percussion pad that's been around for many years. It's reliable and responsive. The FD-6 hi-hat control pedal has a smooth action—mechanically and electronically. Good controllers like this one help drummers make a quick transition from acoustic hats to electronic hats without major compromises.

Brain Power

The heart of any electronic kit is its sound module. You can have the most responsive pads available, but if you don't have the sounds, you don't have a drumkit. Though lower in price than the TD-10, the TD-8 has plenty of the crystal-clear, tone-monster sounds for which Roland is famous.

There are 1,024 percussion sounds available in the module, along with 262 backing instruments. These sounds can be arranged into 64 separate drumkits, each of which can be custom-tailored with EQ and ambiance. The module has 64-voice polyphony, meaning that 64 voices or sounds can occur at the same time. This may seem like a lot, but you might find yourself needing this capability if you're playing fast passages with the drums set for long decay times.

Patterns and songs are plentiful within the TD-8, and they sound pristine. Fifty songs and hundreds of patterns covering

every style of music will give you hours of material to practice with before you get bored. Muting the drum track in the songs is a simple one-button, two-push operation.

Goin' Through Them Changes

The TD-8 sound module has its own extensive manual. This is necessary, given the powerful editing features and MIDI capabilities of this unit. As with the TD-10, editing is icon-based, with visual confirmation of the parameter changes as they are applied. For anyone not familiar with Roland V-Drum editing, this is a system that shows you a picture of the drum on a bright, easy-to-read LCD screen. As you make changes in the diameter, depth, head type, and/or muffling, the picture changes to match the settings. For example, if you're changing the muffling, you'll see one or two pieces of tape or a muffling ring appear on the head of the drum, depending on the setting you choose. The sound that is produced by that change matches the sound you would achieve on an acoustic drum if you applied the same tape or muffling ring.

The General MIDI sound set has long been missing from Roland drum modules. It's now included with the TD-8. This makes the module more useful for drummers who are experimenting with MIDI-based studio or live projects. The major differences between the TD-8 and TD-10 are that the TD-8 doesn't have as many outputs, and the fader arrangement is a bit smaller (although the fader capabilities are similar). So the TD-8 is not a stripped-down module by any measure.

Getting Connected

Another nice feature of the V-Stage kit that those who have been using electronic drums for some time will appreciate involves the cabling. Most electronic kits are sold with cables that are all the same length. This makes sorting them easier. But when a cable only has to go from the module to a hi-hat pad two feet away, using a

cable that could easily go all the way around the rack to the second floor tom seems wasteful. It certainly increases the tangle factor when putting together the snake cable. Roland ships the V-Stage with cables in one, two, and three-meter lengths. This makes organizing the snake cable an easier task.

Room For Improvement

If you're considering a V-Stage purchase, there are two areas that you might want to upgrade. The size of the 8" tom pads seemed fine, but the snare pad in that diameter felt cramped. Opting for a larger electronic snare pad would bring a better feel to the kit. (It would also let you use the original 8" snare as a side-snare or spare pad).

My second recommendation is to add a third cymbal. The input is already on the module, and the crash cymbal sounds are programmed in. So this is an anticipated upgrade. The CY-12R/C V-Cymbals list for \$245 and sell "on the street" for around \$195. A stand and rack clamp will also be needed, but since the rack is a standard size, you could use a clamp and stand you already own to save a few bucks.

Bottom Line

Kits like the V-Stage are what keeps Roland at the top of the electronic drum heap. Roland's designs are player-friendly, the kits are reliable, and they have sounds that rival or surpass anything else available. The V-Stage in particular offers professional-level features in a weekender-priced package. Check it out!

THE NUMBERS

Configuration: Complete kit includes the TD-8 electronic drum sound module, one KC-80 V-Kick trigger, one FD-6 hi-hat control pedal, one PD-80R 8" mesh snare pad with rim trigger, three PD-80 8" tom pads (with no rim triggers), two CY-12R/C V-Cymbals, one PD-7 rubber-surfaced hi-hat pad, and all necessary hardware, cabling, and manuals.

List price **\$3,295**

(800) 386-7575, www.rolandus.com.

TDA-700 V-Drums Amplifier

E-Drummers: Stand And Be Heard!

HITS
great tone

versatile control options

outstanding power and volume

by Rick Long

It's a simple fact: Electronic drums require amplification. Without it, the audience can't hear them, the band can't hear them, and *you* can't hear them. In the past, electronic drummers had to rely on amplification equipment intended for other purposes. Those days are gone, because Roland has released the TDA-700 V-Drums Amplifier—the world's first amp designed specifically for electronic drums.

What It Is

The TDA-700 sports a 15" low-frequency driver (woofer) and a horn-type high-frequency driver (tweeter). These speakers are bi-amped, with 240 watts pushing the woofer and 60 watts dedicated to the tweeter. There are three input channels, a three-band EQ section, a master volume control, and a headphone volume control. Channel one has a two-button V-Drums Shape EQ that lets you add "bottom" and/or "punch" to your tone.

There are two sets of line outs, and yet another set of jacks designed specifically to facilitate running two amps in a stereo configuration. All input and output jacks are on the back of the amp, with the logical exception of the headphone out jack. Feed Forward Processing (FFP—more on this later) rounds out this very substantial package.

How It Sounds

Describing the sound of this amplifier has a lot to do with describing what it will do for your electronic drum tone. The low-end on this amp gives your bass drum the same depth found in a rock concert PA system. The snare will be crisp and clean, with plenty of presence. Toms will have a mix of high and low tones that will help them cut through the mix appropriately. The best way to describe what the horn does for cymbal sounds is to say it places them "in your face!"

Let's just say that with this amp you'll hear all the samples with the volume and clarity that they were intended to have when your electronic drumkit was being designed.

But Wait...There's More!

Just about the time you think this amp sounds good, press the V-Drums Shape switches and the tone *really* comes to life. Extra low end and a good midrange boost add presence to the sound of the kit in a way you haven't been able to find in any other amplification for electronic drums.

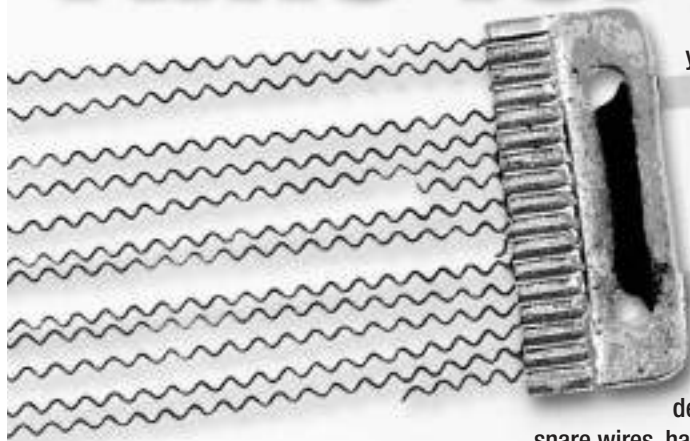
Drummers who play electronic kits often have to run through PA systems that are barely adequate for vocals. Or they have to use an amp intended for some other instrument and hope they can EQ the sound into something useful. Not anymore, my friend. I can't say enough about the superb clarity and tone of this amp.

What It Does

The controls on the TDA-700 were designed to solve problems unique to playing electronic drums in live gig situations. Channel one allows you to connect a single cable from your V-Drums and be ready to play. Simple. But if you



Time for a change?



your wires is perhaps the quickest, easiest and cheapest way to improve your drum. In fact, a good set of wires will optimize just about any drum for well under 50 bucks— way less than the cost of buying a decent snare drum at the local shop. Plus, recent advances in the design and manufacture of snare wires, have provided players with higher quality as well as a wider range of tonal and performance options, like those shown in the following charts.

We're changing the world.

Through extensive research and development, Puresound— the snare wire specialist— has discovered how the alloys, coils, spacing, weight, length, position, quality and consistency of the individual wires determine the performance of the snares. This knowledge has resulted in many of Puresound's innovations, such as:

- **Premium-grade materials and manufacturing methods.** Puresound wires are precision crafted to outlast and outperform standard wires. They're made in the U.S.A. and so durable they come with a limited six month warranty.

- **Specially formulated alloys.** Puresound alloys are more active and require less strands and less tension than conventional wires. They provide superior tone and response in applications from jazz (loose) to rock (medium) to hip-hop (tight) without ever choking the drum.

- **Heavy-gauge, copper end clips.** Every Puresound wire is hand-soldered to a strong, sturdy and stable copper end clip— holding the wires firmly and evenly against the surface of the head and ensuring overall uniformity and consistency.

- **Unplated wires.** The brilliant tone of Puresound wires is enhanced by a light coating of protective sealant.

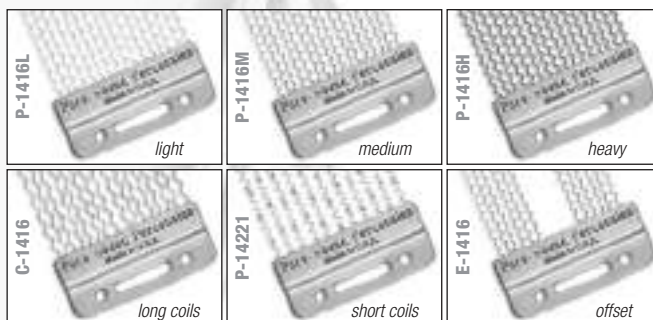
So, strap on a new set of Puresound snare wires and unleash the power of your drums. Check out the full selection of sizes and styles at your favorite dealer today. Hey, isn't it about time for a change?

We've all heard the saying "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". And, while that's true in most cases, there are some things in life that actually need to be replaced before they completely wear out. Stuff like sox, underwear, engine oil, air filters, guitar strings, drumheads and snare wires. Yeah, snare wires. If you think snare wires can't make much of a difference in the sound and performance of your drum, think again.

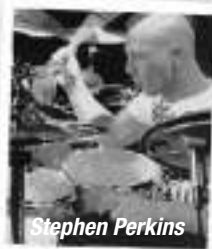
You probably know that snare drums play a vital role in every type of modern music but did you know that the wires affect pretty much everything a snare drum does? Although the quality and condition of the shell, bearing edge, snare bed and heads are certainly essential elements in creating the snare drum's powerful, penetrating sound, the wires have a huge influence over a drum's sensitivity, response, articulation, tone, decay, attack, frequency, projection and character, too.

Change is good.

More importantly, whether you do it for increased performance, a better sound, a different sound or all of the above, changing



weight	light	medium	heavy
tone	dark	medium	bright
frequency	low	mid	high
sensitivity	high	medium	low
strands	16	20	24
activity	relaxed	medium	active
decay	wet	mid	dry
sensitivity	high	medium	low
coil type	long	short	offset
articulation	minimum	maximum	medium
spread	wide	tight	moderate
activity	relaxed	active	medium



Stephen Perkins



Gerald Heyward



Peter Erskine



Carter Beauford



Stanton Moore



Jim Keltner

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Stanton Moore photo by Dwight Marshall • Peter Erskine photo by Karen Miller

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 the snare wire company

want or need to get complicated, the amp is ready for that, too.

The extensive input and output options of this amp offer multiple setup possibilities. For example, V-Drums can run in stereo so that the position of the drum sound is correct across the stereo field (hi-hat to the left, floor toms to the right, and so on). If you have two TDA-700 amps, you simply run one stereo cable from the headphone jack on the sound module to the amp's V-Drums In (stereo) input, then run another cable between the "Stereo Link OUT" on the first amp over to the "Stereo Link IN" on the second amp. Done. No further connections necessary. Set the volume

and tone on the first amp and amp number two will follow along.

Channels two and three allow you to determine the routing of their output. Let's say you need a click track in your headphones, but not in the speakers. Run that click signal to channel two, select the "headphone only" option, plug your headphones into the stereo headphone jack on the front panel, and adjust the separate volume control for the phones. You'll hear drums and the click track in your headphones, while the band and the audience will hear only the drums from the amp's speakers.

Besides the stereo link outputs, the TDA-700 includes two pairs of stereo line out jacks. One pair uses balanced XLR-type connectors; the other uses 1/4" phone connectors. Let's say that your band is number three on the list of five bands performing at a local festival, and you want to use your V-Drums. The sound tech can take a feed right out of the back of your amp. The V-Drum Shape switches, equalizer, and master volume don't affect the line out signal. The sound tech will get a clean, consistent signal to work with, and you'll get the on-stage sound you're used to hearing through the TDA-700 speakers. How's that for quick and easy setup?

You can also use the TDA-700 for moni-



toring other instruments. Suppose you can't hear the guitar leads well enough. You can take a line out from the guitar amp and come into channel two or three on the TDA-700. You'd then select output option A, which feeds the signal to "headphone and speakers" without routing it to the line outs. Now you can dial a bit of guitar sound into your drum amp(s). This can be done with bass or keyboard feeds too.

Whatever setup you can think of, there's a way to do it with the TDA-700. One of these amps is certainly loud enough for most situations, but two running in stereo or mono will help give a balanced sound, and will keep the amp from having to be set up behind or to one side of you. I mention the mono mode here because, since you're playing electronic drums, you could run mono and have the same sound come out of your kit on both sides of the stage. The bandmembers on your right may enjoy hearing the hi-hat for the first time!

It Is An Amplifier, After All

Roland's FFP technology is partially responsible for helping the TDA-700 sound much louder than its stated 300 watts. FFP is a system that watches for transient signals, smoothes them out, and then widens them a bit. Essentially, FFP acts to increase the amp's tone and apparent volume. This

technology has been used in other Roland amplifiers but is particularly well suited for drums since drum sounds are primarily transient in nature.

Many drummers are multi-instrumentalists and may be curious about the amp's performance with other instruments. I tried it with a few other instruments lying around my home studio. Keyboard amp? Yes—a stunning, full-range sound. Bass amp? Yes. The 15" woofer carries the low frequencies well, and the horn is great for slap tones. Electric guitar amp? Maybe. The tone and volume are capable, but there are no effects, so outboard effects would have to be used. On the

other hand, the TDA-700 has absolutely the finest *acoustic* guitar sound I've ever heard—period. It's likely that the worst thing about this amp is that everyone in the band is going to want to borrow it.

All tests were done with the EQ flat and the V-Drums Shape switches first off, then on. The amp performed well with the switches off, but to my ear, turning them on added greatly to the tone of each instrument.

The Verdict

The TDA-700 is everything an electronic drummer could dream of in a dedicated amp—and more. It's not priced out of line with what other instrumentalists would expect to pay for such a worthy amplifier (and the major retail chains will offer it well below the list price, anyway). On the down side, it is big, and it is heavy. But hey, guitarists have been schlepping Marshall stacks around for years. If you wanna be heard—beautifully—you'll have to get with the program.

THE NUMBERS

TDA-700 V-Drums Amplifier\$1,199
(800) 386-7575, www.rolandus.com.



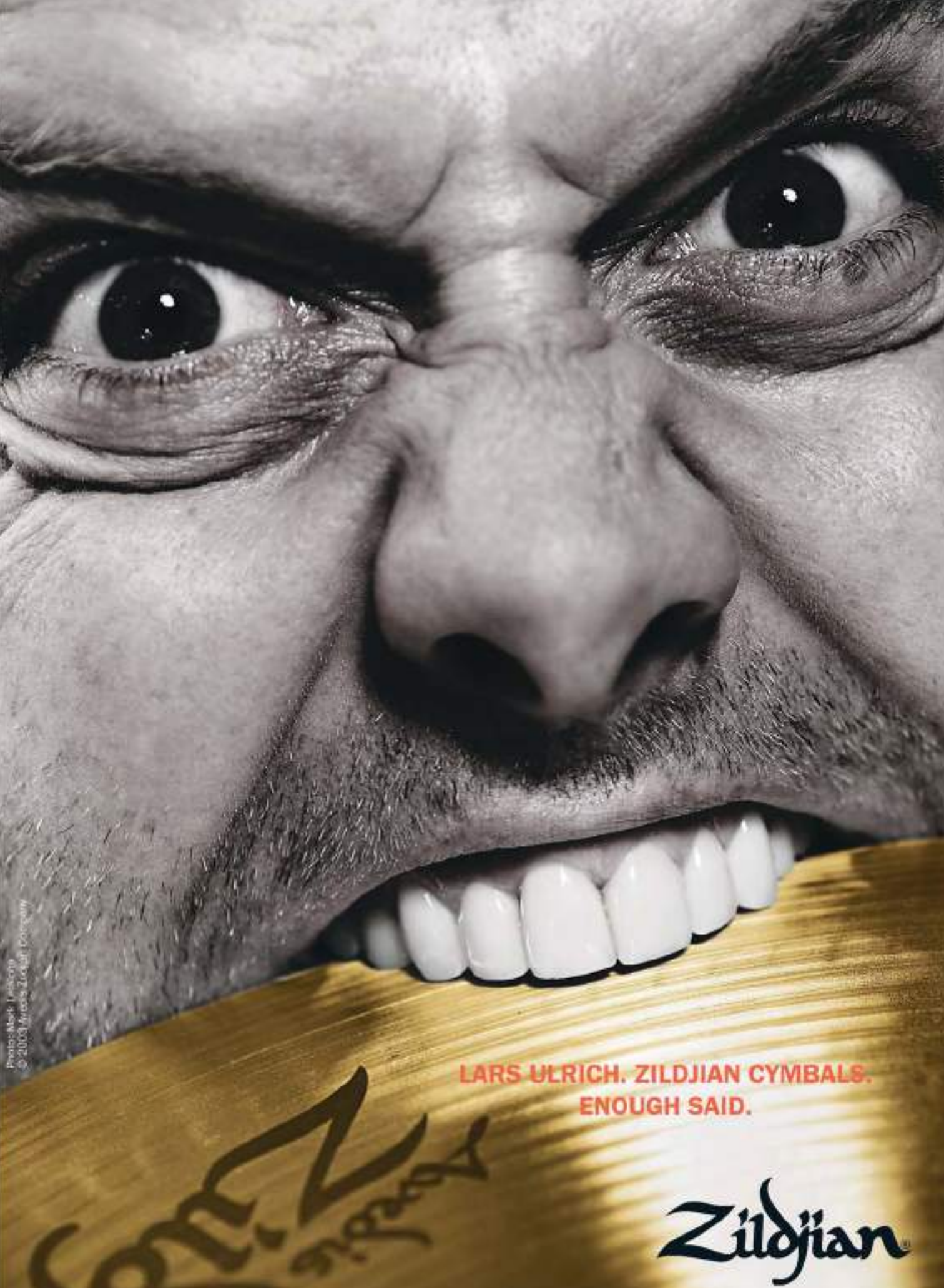


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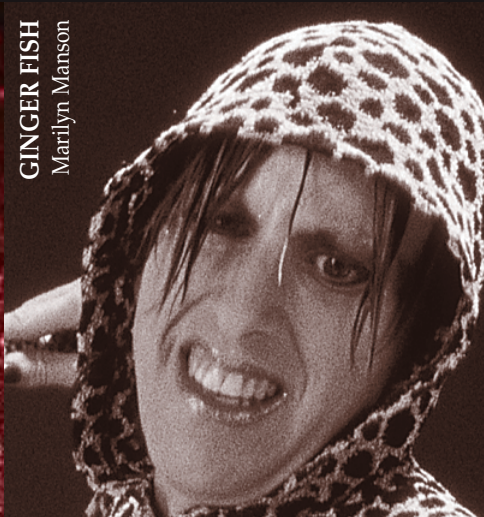
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STEVE WHITE
Paul Weller





sum 41's
steve jo
spe



CZ

ed thrills



Story by Ken Micallef
Photos by Paul La Raia

In the annals of rock music history, nobody has got the goods over Sum 41. Originally a teenage pop-punk outfit from the suburban wasteland of Ajax, Ontario, Canada, Sum 41 have gone on (and grown up) to sell millions of records, tour the world, and become poster boys for bad behavior. Lunatic conduct helped score them a record deal, big talent and crazed fans help secure their success.

Think the Jerky Boys were nuts? Give the jokers of Sum 41 an inch, and you better keep hold of your wallet, secure your keys down your pants, and leave your girlfriend at home. King joker of this unruly foursome is hotshot drummer Steve Jocz, a walking comedian, a man who never heard an old geezer or poor sucker he couldn't imitate, a drummer with burning single strokes and a fixation with Jerry Lewis and Little Richard. Take Jocz on tour, and madness will surely erupt.

At twenty-one years of age and 145 pounds, Jocz is a featherweight with a heavyweight punch. When not imitating

"I don't know how anyone can play fast without practicing. It's all about doing

his kindly Scottish grandmother, Jocz provides blistering, high-speed rhythms with his hands and feet to the evolving music of Sum 41. *All Killer No Filler*, Sum's 2002 major-label debut, featured the mega hits "Fat Lip" and "In Too Deep," two thriller-killers in an album of radio-ready singles. The album showed the band deeply observant of pop music trends, quickly filling the shoes of former MTV titans like Green Day and Blink-182.

But with their latest disc, *Does This Look Infected?*, Sum 41 has outgrown their pimply punk fascinations and dug deep into their heavy metal closet. For a band that still plays Metallica, Guttermouth, and Faith No More at soundchecks, Sum 41 had no problem making heavier music. *Infected* features

Judas Priest sound-alike "The Hell Song," the forehead-slammng rhythms of "No Brain," maniacal rhythm changes in "A.N.I.C.," the Iron Maiden parody of "Mr. Amsterdam," and Jocz's brief solo foray in "All Messed Up."

Friends from high school, Jocz (a.k.a. Stevo32), singer/guitarist Deryck Whilbey, bassist Cone McCaslin, and mega guitarist Dave Baksh are a band who have gotten better and bigger than anyone could have expected. Whilbey's excellent pop songs provide the platform, Jocz and Baksh add the fireworks. Even a brief listen to *All Killer No Filler* or *Infected* reveals a band as at ease pogo-ing as they are getting all ugly with their metal alter egos, Pain For Pleasure. Where they'll go next is anyone's guess, but you can be



sure the ride will be filled with mayhem, girls, and some mighty hardcore music.

MD: Sum 41's songs are fast. Is it hard to begin every set with a fast tempo?

Steve: I just have to be very alert. Deryck and Cone go on stage with a few drinks in them. They get a little nervous without it. But I don't drink when we play. I have to be alert. I did one shot the other night, and it screwed up the entire first song. It was "Mr. Amsterdam," and there are a lot of double kicks in there. But the hardest part of the set is always the first song we do. I go from 8th notes to blazing rolls on the double kicks. It only lasts for a couple bars, but you can't play that drunk.

MD: Alert is a good way to describe your drumming. You and Cone are extremely tight, and Baksh burns guitar over your rhythms. Your technique looks effortless. Can you execute those fast singles without much thought?

Steve: Yeah, with my hands it's easy. When we started out I was fifteen and Deryck and I played nothing but really fast songs. There is one song, "A.N.I.C.," that's only thirty seconds long, but it's *really* fast. All of our songs used to be like that. I've been playing so long at that speed that playing fast is simple, especially single-stroke rolls. The funny thing is, I hardly ever play slow songs. At the end of the new album there is this really slow song, and I had trouble with it because I'm just not used to recording a groove that slow.

MD: Any advice to drummers who would like to get their singles as fast and clean as yours?

Steve: Playing to a click definitely helps. Whenever I practiced my double kick playing I would have a click going, and that really helped my accuracy with my feet. I also put weights on my feet when I practiced. I'd use five-pound weights.

As for your hands, it's all about doing your homework. I don't know how anyone can play fast without practicing. Unfortunately, I don't practice as much now as I should. I'm a bad role model.

MD: How much faster are the songs played live than on the records?

Steve: They're the same, because I start them all with a click. We all hear the click in our in-ear monitors. In fact, I listen to the click the whole time. I think that just because you're playing live doesn't mean

Killer Kit

Drums: Orange County Drum & Percussion in chrome finish

- A.** 7x14 maple snare (10-ply shell with 6-ply reinforcing rings)
- B.** 8x12 tom
- C.** 10x14 floor tom
- D.** 14x16 floor tom
- E.** 20x22 kick

Cymbals: Zildjian (all with brilliant finish)

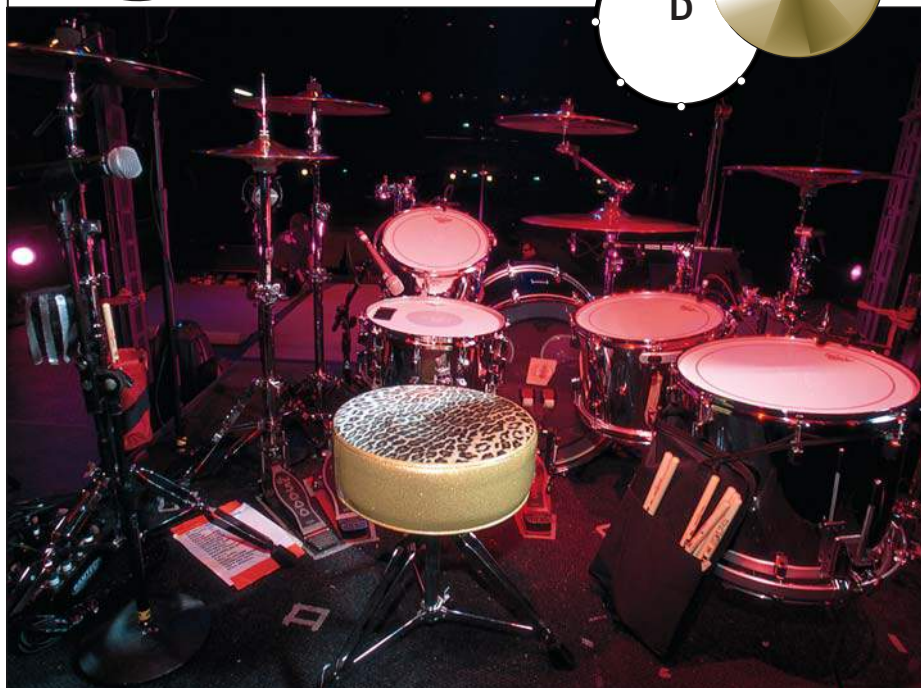
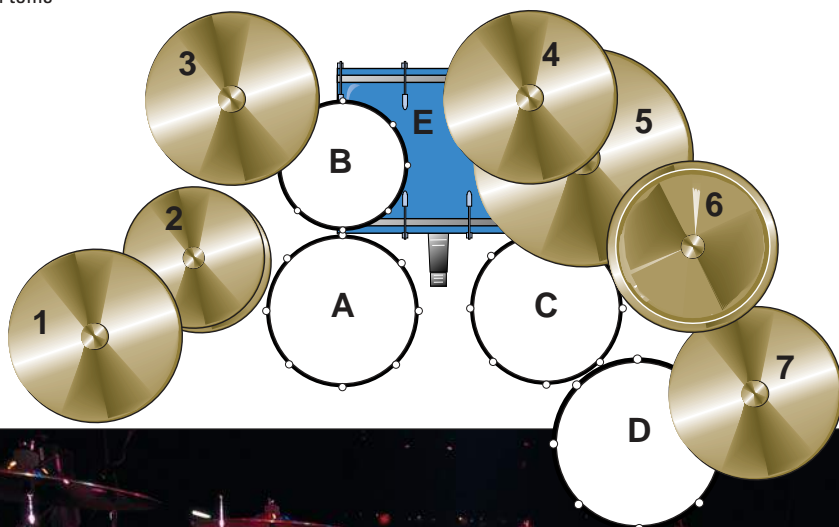
- 1.** 18" A crash
- 2.** 14" A New Beat hi-hats
- 3.** 18" A crash
- 4.** 18" A crash
- 5.** 22" K heavy ride
- 6.** 18" Oriental Trash
- 7.** 18" A crash

Hardware: DW 9000 series stands, plus a 5002TD double pedal and a 5500TD Delta II hi-hat stand (two-legged), Gauger RIMS mounts on toms

Heads: Remo coated CS (reverse dot) on snare batter, Ambassador snare side, coated Pinstripes on tops of toms with clear Ambassadors on bottoms, clear PowerStroke 3 on kick batter, OCPD logo head on front

Sticks: Vic Firth Stevo 32 signature model (similar to 5A, with wood tip)

Tuning: Drum tech Dan Moyses is responsible for maintaining Stevo's drums on the road and in the studio. "In general I tune the bottom heads of the toms a fourth above the top heads," Moyses says. "The bottom head on the snare should be tight enough so that when you play lightly on the snare side it sounds like a marching drum. The batter head is also tuned fairly tight. Stevo plays really fast and needs the higher head tension for rebound. It's for this same reason that the kick drum is tuned tighter than you might expect."



Steve Jocz

that the songs have to speed up. They're written in that tempo because that's where the pocket is. The song sounds best at that tempo.

MD: Who is the final arbiter of a song's tempo?

Steve: When we're in pre-production, we do a lot of takes at different speeds and then sit and listen to them. We bicker and debate over which is better. On the last album, the producer would change the tempo click within the song so it might be a little faster in the chorus.

MD: What sound do you use as a click?

Steve: I like a cowbell sound, but very faint in my ears.

MD: Who controls the click live?

Steve: All the songs are preprogrammed and are in a specific order. That's why the set doesn't change too much—one song always follows another. We use a Roland Dr. Rhythm for the source. My drum tech, Dan Moyses, is right beside me. When we're ready I give him the look. He turns the dial and pushes play.

MD: Getting back to how fast you play, it seems your feet are almost as fast as

your hands.

Steve: I'm relatively new to the double kick pedal. I have to really concentrate when I play it. My hands are second-nature, so I can do what I need to do around the drums. I used to practice singles going up and down the drums using different patterns. Travis Barker from Blink-182 showed me some really cool ways to do that.

Speaking of that, it's fun being in a band where you can tour with drummers you look up to. They give you little drum lessons. I've experienced that with Josh Freese, Tommy Lee, and Travis, which is pretty cool and has helped me improve so much.

MD: What did they show you that helped your playing?

Steve: Tommy Lee showed me how to do all his moves, like this drum pattern where you hit the cymbal and the snare with the right hand and catch the cymbal as quickly as possible. His kit was set up next to mine, and eventually we were doing it at the same time, in sync. It was really cool.

With Josh, we became friends when Sum

toured with The Vandals. I would watch him every day, take every move he did, and incorporate it into my own style. He's got so much stuff. He showed me the "running man."

MD: What's that?

Steve: It looks like you're jogging while you're playing. You move your arms back and forth from the cymbals to the snare within the fill, and it looks like you're running.

And Travis taught me a ton of cool paradiddle drum beats, playing them on the kick, snare, and hi-hats as a funk beat. These guys have shared so much with me.

MD: But you have fast hands and excellent coordination, both of which a lot of punk guys don't have.

Steve: Thanks. My next-door neighbor taught me the basic drum beats when I was eleven. Then about five years ago I discovered that my left hand was really weak. You know how you can grip the sticks with your thumbs up or with more of the top of your hand showing? I went more for the latter, because it gives me a cracking whip motion.

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Joey J. Zephero-Slipknot

Tommy Lee-Solo Artist

Rick Allen-Def Leppard

Phil Rudd-AC/DC

AHEAD

Steve Jocz

My playing just started to grow. You go from having a body of a thirteen-year-old to being a young man. You get stronger. And I was playing every day. At first I concentrated on hitting in the center of the drum and playing as evenly as possible.

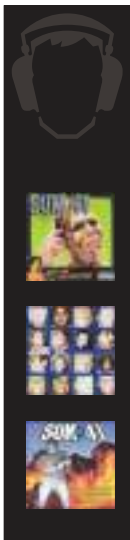
I really don't have very good coordination in everyday life, but for some reason I do with drumming. I'm terrible at sports and video games, but I can play the drums.

MD: Why do you play a double kick pedal instead of double bass drums?

Steve: I own two bass drums, but the size of the big kit gets so annoying. Your legs are too far apart, and the drums are too big and hard to play. If we were playing Mötley Crüe-tempo songs it would be easy, but when we're playing faster it's impossible to get around a large kit.

MD: What patterns did you practice to get your double kick playing in shape?

Steve: I would just listen to Slayer songs and try to copy those parts. I also worked on paradiddles with my feet, playing a straight beat with my hands over the top. And I always use a click, so if my left foot isn't as strong, I'll hear it and be able to



Sum Of Stevo

RECORDINGS

Artist	Album
Sum 41	Does This Look Infected?
Sum 41	All Killer No Filler
Sum 41	Half Hour Of Power (EP)

FAVORITES

Artist	Album	Drummer
The Vandals	Live Fast Diarrhea	Josh Freese
Rancid	And Out Come The Wolves	Bret Reed
Devo	Pioneers That Got Scalped	Jim Mothersbaugh, Alan Myers, David Kendrick
Jerry Lee Lewis	Live At The Starclub	John Hanken
The Cramps	Look Mom No Head!	Jim Sclavunos

correct it.

MD: Which songs on *Infected* have double kick?

Steve: The really fast stuff is on "Mr. Amsterdam." Then there's slower stuff sprinkled throughout.

MD: You play what is almost like trading fours with the band on "All Messed Up."

Steve: But no double kick there!

MD: You get a good sound on the drums.

How do you replicate that live?

Steve: My tech tunes the drums, but I do need a good monitor mix to make it happen live. With in-ear monitors, drums don't sound good unless you can add reverb. If not, they sound really dry and pingy. If you want them to sound like cannons, you need to add reverb. Until now, we haven't been able to do that, so I hated how bad they sounded. The drums sound great through



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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JOSH FREESE (THE WINKLES), BROOKS WACKERMAN (BAD RELIGION), MATT BRANN (AVRIL LAVIGNE), STEVED32 (SUM 41),
ANDY GRANZELLI (THE DISTILLERS), CYRUS BOLOOKI (NEW FOUND GLORY), RAY BLANCO (HOME TOWN HERO), ADAM CARSON (AFK), CHUCK COMEAU (SIMPLE PLAN)

dw

Steve Jocz

the PA, but not to me. So usually in my monitor I just have guitar and a little click.

MD: How does your drum tech achieve that big drum sound heard on *All Killer No Filler*? *Infected* has a more compact drum sound.

Steve: On *All Killer No Filler* we wanted it to sound more like Dave Grohl's drums. My tech really liked the sound of Dave's drums. Then I learned that the Foo Fighters play completely differently from the way we do. To have toms that big and to get around them as quickly as I like to, you can't have them too deep. But Grohl's drums are *so* deep. I couldn't get around drums that big, so on *Infected* we used drums that are shallower.

We used a bunch of different kits on the record: an old Gretsch, a DW, and a couple of Orange County kits, which sound really great. And I have these old Tamas that I used when I was a kid. So we just chose the best of all the drumkits and put them together. We used Pork Pie drums on the first album.

As for tuning, I do ask Dan to keep the kick drum head tighter. There's a certain

way that drums are supposed to be tuned so they sound their best. The bass drum sounds better looser, but I can't do the fast double bass drum stuff if it's loose.

MD: Do you play mostly rimshots on the snare?

Steve: All the time, because I like the sound and the way it cuts through.

MD: Did having a bigger budget help you get better sounds on *Infected*?

Steve: We didn't have a lot of time to record. We figured out all the parts three weeks before we went into the studio. Unlike the last album, when we didn't have enough songs, this was all down. I did all the drums in five days.

MD: Did you punch in any parts?

Steve: A few times, but mostly I would do about three takes and we would take the best from all three to create the best overall vibe. We did that on a lot of stuff using Pro Tools.

MD: How do you generally come up with drum parts?

Steve: Drum parts are pretty obvious to me. I don't over-think them. And the drum fills are always leading in or out of the chorus. But with fills, I like to come up with a few

that aren't so obvious. For the record, I made sure the fills weren't the same in every song or that I wasn't overdoing some stuff.

MD: *Does This Look Infected?* sounds heavier and less pop-punk than *All Killer No Filler*. Why is that?

Steve: That's what we like, and it's more fun to play that way. We used to cover all these metal songs at our gigs, and the kids really liked 'em. On the last album we weren't good enough musicians to play this kind of stuff. But now we decided that it was a good idea. And all these poppier bands got signed at the same time, like New Found Glory and Good Charlotte. We wanted to separate ourselves from them and do something different. We expected to lose some fans, but hopefully get new ones. A lot of male fans didn't like the first album, but they think this one rocks.

MD: Sum 41 play very well as a band. Is the level of musicianship one of the things that sets you apart?

Steve: I think that gets overlooked a lot. It's funny when people come to a show

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How Sum Got Signed

Sum 41 went about acquiring a record deal a bit differently from most bands. "We wanted to do something that the record labels would remember," Steve Jocz says. "So we videotaped ourselves doing stupid pranks around our hometown of Ajax (Ontario, Canada). We were laughing and carrying on. It was the kind of kid's stuff we would do when we were growing up, because there was nothing to do.

"So we edited together this videotape," Jocz continues, "with our music as the soundtrack. Somehow, the combination of the music with

the footage just made it a whole lot of fun. We sent the tape to the labels, and all of a sudden we became a big buzz in the industry.

"A week after we sent out the tapes," Steve says, "five labels called wanting to meet us. At the time we had a weekly gig in Toronto at a punk club, and the labels started flocking to those shows. But by the end of the first day we knew who we were going to sign with, because the guys from Island were like walking credit cards. We also liked them. They'd jump up and down on our stage trampolines with us!"

and say, "Oh my God, you guys can actually play!" People assume that we can't, but that's all changed. Dave, especially, plays *great*. And Deryck has been writing songs since he was thirteen. We've slowly gotten better and better, and the songs are

a lot more interesting and creative. Now this band is something I can really be proud of.

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MD 2003

READERS POLL RESULTS

Hooray for technology! Thanks to available Internet voting, participation in this year's MD Readers Poll was greater than ever before. (We got a fair number of ol' fashioned mail-in ballots, too!) Of course, that means we had to stay up a little later to count all the votes. But it also meant a wider variety of candidates than ever before. Over six hundred separate drummers received votes—some in several categories. Here's the final outcome.



HALL OF FAME

2003: SIMON PHILLIPS

- 2002: Steve Smith
- 2001: Dennis Chambers
- 2000: Dave Weckl
- 1999: Roy Haynes
- 1998: Ringo Starr
- 1997: Terry Bozzio
- 1996: Vinnie Colaiuta
- 1995: Elvin Jones
- 1994: Larrie Londin
- 1993: Jeff Porcaro
- 1992: Max Roach
- 1991: Art Blakey
- 1990: Bill Bruford
- 1989: Carl Palmer
- 1988: Joe Morello
- 1987: Billy Cobham
- 1986: Tony Williams
- 1985: Louie Bellson
- 1984: Steve Gadd
- 1983: Neil Peart
- 1982: Keith Moon
- 1981: John Bonham
- 1980: Buddy Rich
- 1979: Gene Krupa

ALL-AROUND

VINNIE COLAIUTA

2. Steve Smith
3. Simon Phillips
4. Kenny Aronoff
5. Gregg Bissonette

STUDIO

VINNIE COLAIUTA

2. Kenny Aronoff
3. Simon Phillips
4. Steve Gadd
5. Josh Freese





Dyane Leight

MAINSTREAM JAZZ

PETER ERSKINE

- 2. Elvin Jones
- 3. Bill Stewart
- 4. Jack DeJohnette
- 5. Jeff Hamilton

CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

DAVE WECKL

- 2. Steve Smith
- 3. Vinnie Colaiuta
- 4. Bill Bruford
- 5. Billy Martin



Paul La Raia



BIG BAND

LOUIE BELLSON

- 2. Ed Shaughnessy
- 3. Marvin "Smitty" Smith
- 4. John Riley
- 5. Gregg Field

UP & COMING

MIKE COSGROVE (ALIEN ANT FARM)

- 2. Jason Rullo (Symphony X)
- 3. Jon Wysocki (Staind)
- 4. Billy Kilson (ind. jazz)
- 5. Fab Moretti (The Strokes)



Alex Solca



POP

CARTER BEAUFORD

- 2. Adrian Young
- 3. Kenny Aronoff
- 4. Nigel Olsson
- 5. Billy Ashbaugh



ROCK

DANNY CAREY

2. Joey Kramer
3. Jimmy Chamberlin
4. Simon Phillips
5. Scott Phillips

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LARS ULRICH

2. Joey Jordison
3. Vinnie Paul
4. Morgan Rose
5. John Tempesta



PUNK

TRAVIS BARKER

2. Josh Freese
3. Steve Jocz
4. Tré Cool
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PROG

MIKE PORTNOY

2. Virgil Donati
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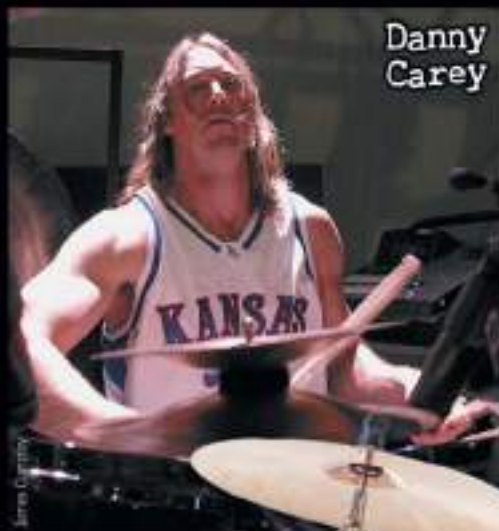
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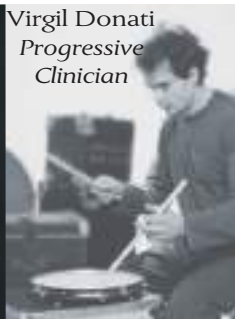
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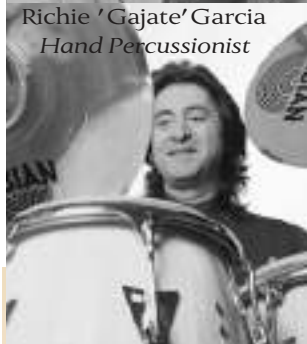
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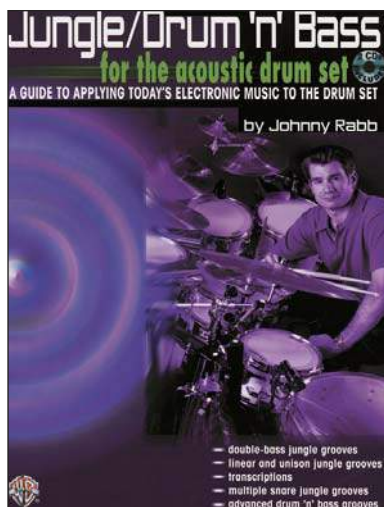
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READERS POLL SUBSCRIPTION GIVEAWAY

In appreciation for the participation of *MD*'s readership in this year's poll, three ballots were drawn at random to determine the winners of a free one-year subscription to *MD*. Those winners are **Robert E. Reardon** of Waukegan, Illinois, **Aaron Seminoff** of Vacaville, California, and **Andrew Holloway** of Harleysville, Pennsylvania. Congratulations from *Modern Drummer!*

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EDITORS' ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is given by the editors of *Modern Drummer* in recognition of outstanding contribution to the drum/percussion community by a performer, author, educator, manufacturer, etc. The persons so honored may be notable figures in drumming history or active participants on today's scene. The criteria for this award is the

value of the contribution(s) made by the honorees, in terms of influence on subsequent musical styles, educational methods, or products. There will be no limit as to the number of honorees that may be designated each year.

For 2003, *MD's* editors are pleased to honor:



Don Lamond

Big Band Innovator

Don Lamond made his name in the 1940s as a member of Woody Herman's First and Second Herds. He brought an original and slightly unconventional style to the band that was perfect for its "modern" approach. Don's drumming was solid and supportive, yet always injected energy and drive that kept the band on the cutting edge.

Don's originality also made him a first-call player for dozens of recording projects with artists from Charlie Parker and Artie Shaw to Bobby Darin and Barbra Streisand. From the 1950s through the '70s, he was one of New York's leading radio and TV drummers, on shows featuring Dean Martin, Perry Como, Garry Moore, Sid Caesar, and many other stars. In 1972 Lamond moved to Orlando, where he anchored the band at the Top Of The World showroom in Disney World's Contemporary Hotel, backing major nightclub artists. He also led his own big band until his retirement only a few years ago. As one musical colleague put it, "Don never went where you expected him to go, but the time was always there. Musicians loved to have him in a band. Don always came to play."

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Robert Zildjian

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In the early 1980s, Robert Zildjian parted with the cymbal company his father had created in America, and took independent ownership of a small "secondary" factory that the company had operated in Canada. He was prohibited by contractual agreement from using his name and from

bringing new products into the US market until 1983. In that year, he launched an upstart cymbal brand, whose name was an anagram of his children's names. Thus SALLY, Billy, and ANdy helped to name their father's new company: Sabian. Over the twenty years since then, Robert Zildjian has tirelessly led his company to become a major player on the cymbal market, repeatedly cited for its innovation and forward-looking approach to product development.

Arthur Taylor

Quiet Jazz Giant



Arthur Taylor got his first drumkit for his eighteenth Christmas, in 1947. He was working two weeks later, and he didn't stop working until his death in 1995. Along the way, he became one of the most recorded drummers in jazz, appearing on over three hundred albums. Drawing on the influences of earlier masters like Philly Joe Jones, Max Roach, Art Blakey, and Kenny Clarke, Taylor developed a style all his own. That style figured prominently on such major jazz milestones as Thelonious Monk's *At Town Hall* and *Five X Five*, Bud Powell's *Glass Enclosure*, John Coltrane's

Giant Steps and *Soultrane*, and Miles Davis's *Miles Ahead*. Art also led his own band, Taylor's Wailers, for many years. Biographer Burt Korall said of Taylor, "Musicians were attracted to him because he motivated them *to play*. He used his instincts to make the music a true thing...a swing thing."



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"tinkering" with ideas that might lead to the realization of new and interesting sounds. Between them, Toomas and Robert established—and expanded—Paiste's reputation as a company totally dedicated to creativity and musicality.



Ralph Angelillo And Serge Gamache

Canadian Drumming Motivators



Ya gotta love two guys who enjoy drumming so much that they create not one, but *two* major projects devoted to it—and then invite an entire country's drummers to share the fun. Ralph Angelillo (left) and Serge Gamache are the producing team behind *Music Etc.*, Canada's premier music magazine (featuring a major sub-magazine known as *Drums Etc.* in each issue). Ralph is the editor; Serge handles the business side. But beyond that, for the past ten years this Canadian tag team has been the driving force behind the Montreal Drum Fest, the world's second-longest-running drumming event. (Only *MD's* own Festival Weekend has a longer history.) Each November, the Montreal Fest draws over 1,500 avid drumming fans from across North America. Montreal may be a bi-lingual city, but Ralph and Serge have managed to unite everyone under one common language: drums!



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Gene Krupa

Drummin' Man

Thirty years after his passing, MD takes a look back at the legendary performer who single-handedly brought the drums to the forefront

by Burt Korall

The name Gene Krupa meant drums to the world during much of the twentieth century. Well-liked, admired, a major innovator, he *owned* the 1930s and remained a dominant influence through the 1940s and '50s, and into the '60s. He personified swing- and depression-era musicality. A great student of music and of his instrument, Krupa handily combined drums and show business.

Joe Vetrano, one of Krupa's most devoted fans and a friend during the drummer's last years, recently approached *Modern Drummer* and suggested the magazine mark the thirtieth anniversary of the drummer's passing, clarify his story, and serve to introduce him to those who don't know as much about him as they should.

Some of you might ask, "Just who was Gene Krupa?" Very simply, he was the most visible and imitated drummer of his time—an honest, serious, disciplined, dedicated, loyal, ritualistic man.



Few musicians are as pleasing personally as they are musically. Krupa was certainly an exception. Those who had been associated with him on any level liked him. Krupa's kindness and ability with people were among his greatest assets.

Trumpeter Chris Griffin, a colleague in the memorable Benny Goodman band of the 1930s, told me, "Gene was a polite, good man.

Fairly private. He wasn't the man you saw onstage. I guess he saved his energy and fund of feelings for when he played."

Krupa studied and practiced constantly after coming to New York from Chicago and getting into what he called a "learning groove." He brought new challenges to drumming, while defining and formalizing a vocabulary for playing the instrument in popular music.

"Things wouldn't be

a child of vaudeville. First thing you have to do is get an audience's attention. Once you've done that, the people might well notice how expressively you play."

The Gene Krupa story started in Chicago, where he was born on January 15, 1909. His being drawn to drums initially had little to do with passion for the instrument. What attracted him was the *price*—a set was the least expensive item in a catalog he came across while working at the Chicago music store Brown Music Company after school.

Gene's religious faith and the encouragement of his mother led to studies during his teen years at St. Joseph's, a prep seminary in Rensselaer, Indiana. But by that time the appeal of music was too strong to be ignored or thrust aside.

Jazz was catching on in a major way in the 1920s. Leading innovators, many from New Orleans, had migrated to Chicago in the hope of doing well in the freer atmosphere of the country's Second City. The music particularly captivated a number of local young white musicians, including Krupa, drummer Dave Tough, tenorist Bud Freeman, trumpeter Jimmy McPartland, reed player Frank Teschmaker, and the extraordinary trumpeter Bix Beiderbecke, a visiting Iowan.



Gene (third from the left), age thirteen, in his hometown of Chicago. To his left is brother Pete.

As a featured member of the Benny Goodman band, Krupa sounded the way most drummers wished they did. A technically advanced player for the time, he helped make drums more musically valid and commercially appealing. He transformed the drum solo from a sometimes chaotic set of comments into a well-structured, interesting improvisation. Krupa was primarily responsible for making the drummer into a respected, *legitimate* musician, deserving of attention.

In essence, Krupa helped transform a maligned craft into an art. The handsome musician combined elegance, technical expertise, and *feeling* in a way that positively affected both lay audiences and discerning listeners. He wasn't without imperfections as an artist. He could be too



Krupa played in a number of big bands before joining Benny Goodman. But according to Gene, few of them were musically exciting. This was taken in 1933 when he was a member of Mal Hallett's band, then appearing at Atlantic City's Steel Pier. Gene is eighth from the left.

loud, sometimes a bit inflexible in a jazz sense, and overly reliant on showmanship. But he certainly knew what he was doing. When he spoke of his methods, he said, "I'm

These young men flocked to the South Side on as many nights as possible to hear black musicians, like trumpeters Joe "King" Oliver and Louis Armstrong, drummers Baby Dodds, Zutty Singleton, and Tubby Hall, clarinetists Johnny Dodds and Jimmy Noone, and pianist Earl Hines, among others. Their interest in jazz took over their lives. It

became a collective passion.

Essentially a self-taught musician, Krupa kept listening and learning and began to develop his own approach to music. He par-

the way they are if he hadn't been around.”—Buddy Rich



At the filming of *Hollywood Hotel* with the legendary 1937 Benny Goodman band. This was the film that introduced the original version of “Sing Sing Sing” to the world.

ticularly admired drummers Dodds, Singleton, and Tough, who showed him how the music should feel and how to achieve an appropriate, provocative percussive foundation for jazz performance.

Apparently Krupa had natural talent for his instrument, convincing musicians that even without formal training he could make a contribution. On December 9, 1927, he made the highly significant recordings “Liza,” “China Boy,” “Sugar,” and “Nobody’s Sweetheart” with the McKenzie & Condon Chicagoans—McPartland, Freeman, pianist Joe Sullivan, bassist Jim Lanigan, and banjoist Eddie Condon. These recordings not only impressed local Chicago players, they also caught hold of a wide range of jazz devotees, particularly in New York. It was the general consensus that Krupa and his associates had modernized New Orleans ideas and moved things “one step ahead.” Unlike the major drummers in New York, who emphasized playing on cymbals, Krupa concentrated on *drums*.

The late John Hammond, the critic and great talent scout, once told me, “Gene was into a new concept of drumming on those McKenzie-Condon Chicagoans records. He was rock solid and swinging. I felt he was the best drummer I had heard up until that time.”

Krupa played with a variety of musicians, first in Chicago and then in New York. Two of his most significant jobs were in the pit bands for two Gershwin Broadway shows, *Strike Up The Band* (1930) and *Girl Crazy* (1931). Here he was a member of a hand-picked unit featuring Glenn Miller and Benny Goodman. Gene couldn’t read music, so Miller helped him with his cues. But the drummer *swung*, enabling the chorus girls to kick “in time.” This fascinated Gershwin.

It became apparent to Krupa that it was not enough to be a talented primitive. He felt he had to become a *complete* musician—develop excellent technique, and learn to read all music easily and to execute and fully understand it. He developed a great need to make drums a completely *musical* instrument. This required long practice periods—up to ten

hours daily—and intense study of all aspects of music.

“Nothing existed for me but music and drums during the years of concentrated study in the 1930s,” Krupa later recalled. “I almost never had drumsticks out of my hands.”

Sanford “Gus” Moeller, who had played with the Metropolitan Opera, became Gene’s teacher. Moeller demanded a great deal. A former Moeller student told me, “Moeller knew as much about the instrument as a surgeon does about surgery.” He emphasized a smooth, connective motion—a blend of three strokes—the tap, the up stroke, and the down stroke.

Krupa said, “My work with Moeller made possible graceful playing, better control, unusual facility, and freedom to be myself. He gave me a highly workable method. But I had to modify it because I play sitting down. Moeller stood up for his work, particularly in marching bands.”



Gene and Benny as a part of The Benny Goodman Quartet, circa 1937. Buddy Rich was fond of saying that there was no such thing as a small group drummer or a big band drummer, citing Gene as an example of a player who perfectly fit in with Goodman’s large and small groups. And who says two rack toms were invented in the rock era?

Gene Krupa

Krupa, who looked so beautiful when he played, moved from band to band in the 1930s—Irving Aaronson’s Commanders, Russ Columbo, Mal Hallett, Buddy Rogers. In 1935 he joined Benny Goodman, a job that initially didn’t look too promising. John Hammond actually had to convince Krupa to leave Buddy Rogers, arguing that the money with Goodman wasn’t too bad, and he would have plenty of time to study and practice. So Krupa decided to make the move.

The band’s appearances on the *Let’s Dance* radio show, broadcast nationally on

Saturday evenings, made a great difference. Young people seemed ready for jazz-inflected dance music in big band form. And Krupa certainly was the right man for the job. He had the technique and understanding for jazz that made the band’s arrangements work.

Krupa smoothed out the pulse to a fluid four, tapped out vigorously on the bass drum. He refined the relationship between the snare and bass drum and introduced fresh techniques for the cymbals. On arrangements by Fletcher Henderson, Dean Kincaide, and Jimmy Mundy, among others, Krupa merged

drum rudiments and jazz syncopation. He struck a balance between academic and more informal techniques. His style was a simplification of what Chick Webb—Krupa’s primary influence—was doing with his bands in Harlem. Krupa added his own theatrical dimension to well-projected performances.

The Goodman band caught on in 1935, mirroring the effect of the *Let’s Dance* broadcasts. From that time on, the band was standing-room everywhere. The swing era was off to a roaring start. Interest in the band’s engagements at New York’s Paramount Theater equaled the buzz of Sinatra’s stands at the venue a few years later.

One thing is for sure: Every drum-crazy kid wanted to be Gene Krupa. He had the right look, the right feel, the right sort of theatricality.

The records with the Goodman band and small groups did much to heat up the country. Krupa’s relationship with Goodman was musically memorable, though they didn’t always get along. Krupa and vibraharpist Lionel Hampton had a great deal in common and learned from one another. A similar relationship existed between pianist Teddy Wilson and Krupa. Pianist Jess Stacy was a fine accompanist and soloist. And when trumpet great Harry James came into the band, the excitement level was raised even further.

Goodman had one of the great bands of all time because of its unity of concept. For proof, listen to its recording of Jimmy Mundy’s chart of “Sing Sing Sing” from the 1938 Carnegie Hall concert (Columbia), a vocal feature for singer Helen Ward that kept expanding and changing. Other records that strongly document that band’s worth include Mundy’s treatment of “I Found A New Baby” (Victor, 1936), Fletcher Henderson’s chart of “Swingtime In The Rockies” (Victor, 1936), and the outstanding small-group performance, highlighting Hampton, Wilson, Krupa, and BG, “I’m A Ding Dong Daddy From Dumas” (Victor, 1937).

Because Krupa was such a favorite, he went out on his own in 1938, debuting his new band at Atlantic City’s Steel Pier, on April 16. Because of his appreciative built-in audience, the Krupa band was an immediate success. The drummer had a solo on almost every number, leading the manager of the Steel Pier to urge Gene to slow down and give some solo time to other people in the

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Gene Krupa

band, which he did.

But there never was any doubt it was a drummer's band. Every player's music stand had a drum mounted on it. The Krupa records, among them "Who," "Blue Rhythm Fantasy," "Wire Brush Stomp," and "Drum Boogie," made it unmistakably clear who and what the leader was.

"wild man" image seemed a logical connection with the drugs story.

That he was ultimately exonerated of any link with this situation didn't seem to make much difference to the people. Nor did the truth about Krupa the musician, Krupa the person— what Krupa had brought to music, to drums, and to people.



Gene became a star with Benny Goodman, and after a while, the public wanted more Gene Krupa drum solos. Goodman, reluctant to share the spotlight with anyone, refused to give in, and Gene became more frustrated. After a blow-up at the Earle Theater in Philadelphia in March, 1938, Krupa left to form his own band. A month later, The Gene Krupa Orchestra opened at the Steel Pier in Atlantic City. Later that year, Gene's movie-star looks helped land him second billing in a Hollywood film starring Bob Hope. This is the original poster and one of the scenes from *Some Like It Hot*, later re-titled *Rhythm Romance*.

Try GK's performance on "Who." He builds to multiple climaxes via potent use of press rolls. The clarity of Krupa's sound, execution of rudimental techniques, and ideas are enviable.

When trumpeter-singer Roy Eldridge became a member of the drummer's band in 1941, he added considerable fire and appeal to Krupa's music. Anita O'Day joined the ensemble at about the same time, bringing to bear still another distinctive sound and viable approach to the music. Such records as "Let Me Off Uptown," "Massachusetts," "After You've Gone," and the formidable Eldridge vehicle "Rocking Chair" put the band over the top.

So-called "big shots" in the music business deserted him. Much of his money went to defend himself. People weren't breaking down his door to give him work. Many "friends" left him behind. Only his former wife Ethel, Benny Goodman, and Tommy Dorsey stuck by him.

GK began his comeback in 1944, first with Goodman, then with Tommy Dorsey. The strong, positive audience reception in theaters and hotels proved that people hadn't completely turned their back on him.

When Krupa was finally declared "not guilty" in his sensational case—it had included eighty-four days in jail—a very bad period of the drummer's life came to a close. He booked New York's Capitol Theater and announced plans to introduce a new ensemble, "The Band That Swings With Strings," at the large Broadway house. "Boy was I a happy kid!" Krupa later told me.

Then, with everything going for Krupa, a story broke about him and drugs in 1943. Most of it was false. The public had bought the dramatic drummer man image that Krupa had so strongly developed since coming to New York in the late 1920s. The only time it didn't work for him was when his theatrical

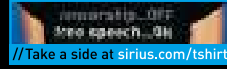
The drummer segued into modernism. The bands—the strings unit and the "con-

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Jeskova26 is a third generation musician. Her grandmother played timbales in cabarets and her mother was a saxophonist. After studying electronic music in college, she continues the family tradition, combining computer programming and keyboards while she DJ's.



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Gene Krupa

temporary” ensemble—including such promising young men as Don Fagerquist and Red Rodney (trumpets), Charlie Kennedy (alto), Buddy Wise (tenor), Gerry Mulligan (saxophone and arrangements), veteran Charlie Ventura (tenor saxophone), and George Williams and Ed Finckel (arrangements).

The late Mel Lewis, a friend of Krupa’s since his childhood in Buffalo, New York, once pointed out to me, “I watched him change in 1945 and ’46 when he was trying to play bebop. His bass drumming became lighter—not a hell of a lot, but a little. He started playing time on ride cymbals and dropping bombs, usually on the beat—but on the right beats of 4 and 3, and not on 1 so much. He’d *listen*. That was the important thing.”

Krupa made some fine records for Columbia, including “Lover,” Mulligan’s “Disc Jockey Jump,” very good ballads for singer Buddy Stewart, and jump tunes for Anita O’Day like “Boogie Blues” and “Opus 1.” Further, he played and recorded George Williams’ charts based on classical themes by Sibelius, Ravel, Stravinsky, and others. Krupa was trying to spread out, use all of his musical knowledge, and continue learning. According to Joe Vetrano, “Gene played excellent piano and was expert when it came to classical repertory. Frederick Delius, the British composer, was one of his favorites.”



This is Gene in a publicity still from about 1940, using one of the largest bass drums in captivity. Note the two stand-mounted lights under Gene’s toms to the right and left. During a drum solo, the lights in the room were turned off and Gene turned the spotlights on himself using a foot switch, creating a shadow effect.



The Krupa band in about 1943, with Roy Eldridge visible on trumpet to Gene’s left. Look at the size of that second floor tom! (Like Buddy Rich in later years, Gene used the second tom to hold music and sticks.)

The musically literate pianist Bobby Scott, who worked with Krupa, said, “He took a little phonograph and records on the road with him so he could become intimate with and

enjoy certain material.”

Krupa sought out and talked to key drum teachers and scholars here and in Europe. He studied and took lessons most of his life, until



The Gene Krupa Jazz Trio with saxophonist Charlie Ventura and pianist Teddy Napoleon. The group was formed in 1945, and their recording of “Dark Eyes” that year became a hit. When Gene broke up the big band in 1951, he went back to the trio format with Charlie and Teddy.

he became too ill to play. Drum star Joe Morello and Jim Chapin, the innovative teacher and Moeller student, taught Krupa in the last years. He improved noticeably as he again got back into the habit of working out and practicing regularly.

His modern big band, my personal favorite, was as adept at harmonizing and



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Gene Krupa

playing ballads and classical themes as performing jazz tunes. The people that the drummer hired were encouraged to be ambitious.

Krupa had a good musical situation with the band until drugs became a factor among his sidemen. He didn't want to be a cop and worry about such things, so he gave up the big band idea in 1951.

The rest of his career was devoted to leading small bands, traveling here and abroad with *Jazz At The Philharmonic*, and always working with excellent musicians and singers. His recording projects inevitably included revivals of earlier successes. Some of his records featured experimental ideas for drums. He made a series of movies that had as their focus big names of swing. And he even was party to a bad biographical movie about himself, starring Sal Mineo, that must have been done only for the quick money.

As the years passed, Gene's life changed radically. There were serious personal and health problems—a divorce from his second wife, Pat, and separation from his adopted



Still the most famous drum album of all time, the "original" drum battle with Buddy Rich, recorded live at Carnegie Hall in 1952. Gene and Buddy would meet a number of times on recordings and television over the years, but this was their first get-together.

children Mary Grace and Gene Jr. His house in Yonkers, New York burned down. And he suffered from emphysema and leukemia. But he survived it all with grace and dignity.

In so-called "retirement,"



Gene made a number of motion pictures through the years, with *The Glenn Miller Story* among the best of them. This scene from that 1954 film has Gene and Cozy Cole battling it out. At the time this photo was shot, the two were preparing to open The Krupa-Cole Drum School in Manhattan.

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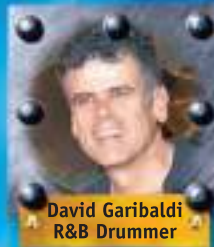
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Gene Krupa

Krupa continued to practice and play an occasional gig, including work with the Benny Goodman quartet. He read a book each day, regularly watched his favorite TV

shows, and even managed a neighborhood baseball team. After so many years on the road, he enjoyed the rituals attached to being at home. He had no interest in being the

Krupa of old, when he was at the top of the musical world. Gene passed away in October of 1973.

To revive, relive, or be introduced to the best of Gene Krupa, I suggest key early records from the 1920s and 1930s, plus his best work with Goodman, his own bands, small groups, and key performances with Jazz At The Philharmonic. They tell you how much he cared, how much he knew, how very important this modest man was—on so many levels.



Buddy Rich sincerely cared for Gene, and the two were quite close personally. Writer John McDonough has told of a trip that Gene and Buddy planned to take—just the two of them—to the Florida Keys when Gene became ill. Though that excursion didn't happen, when Buddy heard of Gene's diagnosis of leukemia, he threw Gene a giant party at his famed Buddy's Place nightclub in New York City. Everyone—from Henry Adler to Jerry Lewis—was there, and Buddy claimed Gene looked better than all of them that night. Here's Gene sitting in on Buddy's drums.



How many jazz drummers have had movies made of their life? While not one of the great film biographies, the music on *The Gene Krupa Story* was superb. Gene (who played on the soundtrack) rarely played better, and Sal Mineo (not a bad drummer himself) did an extraordinary job miming Krupa's recorded drumming.

Photos provided by Dr. Bruce Klauber (except where indicated). He is the author of The World Of Gene Krupa, and the series producer of the Hudson and DCI Jazz Legends videos. Klauber has made available dozens of rare Gene Krupa CDs, books, and videos to interested collectors via his Web site, www.JazzLegends.com.



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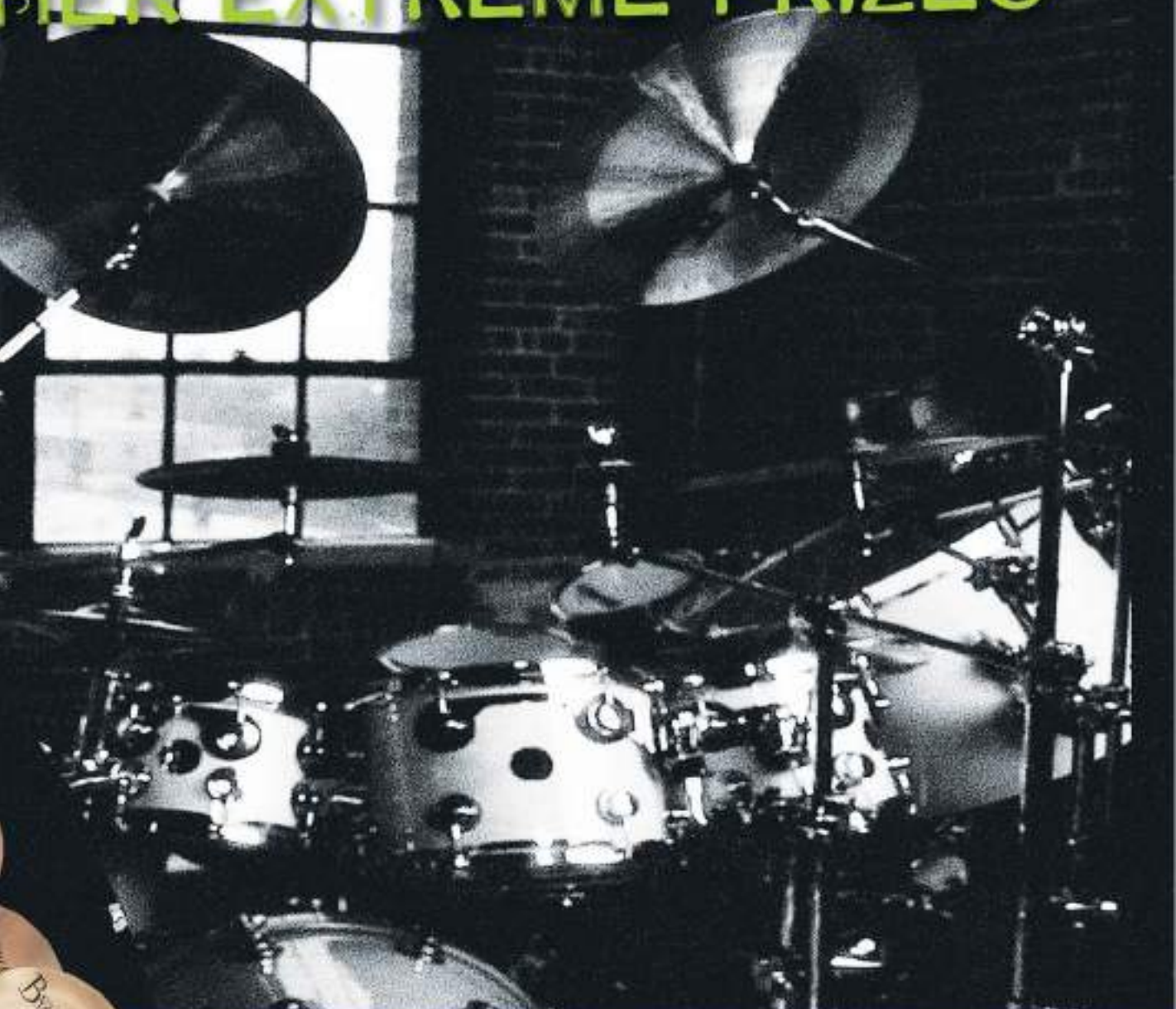
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How'd They Do That?

Part 2: Solving More Licks

by Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY

Open	○	C.C.	R.C.
H.H.	×	×	×
T.T.	●	●	●
S.D.	●	●	●
F.T.	●	●	●
B.D.	●	●	●
H.H.	×	×	×
w/foot	×	Add'l Toms	

Last month we asked, Is there a famous drum sequence that you've always wondered about, one that makes you scratch your head and think, "What the...?" every time you hear it? This month we continue to shed light on classic drumming brainteasers.

"Heart Of The Sunrise," Yes, *Fragile*

Bill Bruford has a long history of mystifying drummers with his quirky concepts and superior technique. The easiest way to get a feel for the intro groove of this Yes classic is to count 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2, 1-2, 1-2, for both the beat and drum fill shown. The key to this pattern, however, is Bruford's paradiddle-diddle sticking in the first measure: RLRRL, RLRRL.

Musical notation for the drum part of "Heart Of The Sunrise" by Yes. It shows a 6/8 time signature with a tempo of 149. The notation includes various drum symbols (circles, crosses, dots) and accents (>) to represent the complex rhythmic pattern described in the text.

"All Along The Watchtower," The Jimi Hendrix Experience, *Electric Ladyland*

Here's another legendary misdirection beginning that's confounded many drummers through the years. Like Bonham's intro for "Rock And Roll" (see last month's article), Mitch Mitchell's timing always seemed baffling at the top of this one. Coincidentally, the same count-off works for both songs. Overdubbed on Mitchell's drum pattern is a heavily reverbed vibraslap-like sound on the third beat of each measure that adds significantly to the overall effect.

Musical notation for the drum part of "All Along The Watchtower" by The Jimi Hendrix Experience. It shows a 4/4 time signature with a tempo of 107. The notation includes various drum symbols and accents to represent the complex rhythmic pattern.

"Spoonman," Soundgarden, *Superunknown*

Matt Cameron emerged as one of the great math-rock drummers in the '90s, creatively navigating Soundgarden through odd time signatures in many of their tunes. This one's in seven, but I've divided it into 4/4 and 3/4 to make it easier to sightread. Cameron's use of low-pitched toms together with his bass drum make this a difficult pattern to get a handle on.

Musical notation for the drum part of "Rain" by The Beatles. It shows a 4/4 time signature with a tempo of 92. The notation includes various drum symbols and accents to represent the complex rhythmic pattern.

"Rain," The Beatles, *Past Masters Volume 1*

Ringo Starr's extended drum fills in this track broke some new ground in the spring of 1966. In this fill near the end of the first verse, Ringo was like the Energizer bunny—he kept on going and going, all the way through a second measure and into a *third*. John, Paul, and George had to wait two extra beats (the bar of 2/4) for Ringo to finish.

Musical notation for the drum part of "Tom Sawyer" by Rush. It shows a 4/4 time signature with a tempo of 112. The notation includes various drum symbols and accents to represent the complex rhythmic pattern.

"Tom Sawyer," Rush, *Moving Pictures*

Let's finish up with perhaps the king of "How'd he do that?" Neil Peart's four-bar solo from this Rush favorite has furrowed drummers' brows for over twenty years. The swiftness and smooth precision of his quads in the second bar is still a jaw-dropper. But it's the solo's well-composed combination of speed and syncopation that makes it so memorable. And in this case, understanding what Peart did is one thing, but actually being able to *play* it the way he did is quite another.

Musical notation for the drum part of "Tom Sawyer" by Rush. It shows a 4/4 time signature with a tempo of 87. The notation includes various drum symbols and accents to represent the complex rhythmic pattern.

If you have suggestions for future "How'd They Do That?" articles, you can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site: www.edbreckenfeld.com.



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Louie Bellson's "Skin Deep"

An All-Time Classic Turns Fifty

Transcribed by Joe Bergamini

MUSIC KEY

Open	○	Cowbell	C.C.
H.H.	●		×
T.T.	●	×	
S.D.	●		
F.T.	●		
B.D.	●		

Rim click 2nd B.D.

It's been fifty years since Louie Bellson composed, arranged, and recorded "Skin Deep" with The Duke Ellington Orchestra. To those already familiar with the piece (a big band arrangement designed to feature Louie's incredible drumming), no introduction or historical description is needed to relay how influential it was—and still is. When it was originally released on the *Ellington Uptown* album (Columbia 474294-2) in 1953—when the drummer was only twenty-nine—"Skin Deep" broke ground in many ways. Its importance cannot be overstated.

The piece contained two superbly performed extended solos. However, it was the second solo (at 3:06 into the arrangement) that had young drummers staying up late at night listening in disbelief. The solo was so ahead of its time that it must have seemed completely out of reach for most drummers who heard it. Let's take a look at some of the things Louie does in this solo.

The first few phrases are a perfect demonstration of the musical taste and maturity representative of Louie Bellson. Precisely executed triplet ideas precede 8th- and 16th-note bursts, leading to a swinging interlude on loose hi-hats (bars 18–23). Louie pays careful attention to dynamics on every part of the kit, playfully throwing double strokes softly around drums and cymbals in measures 36 to 42.

A single-stroke double bass pattern begins at bar 68, with double and single strokes played above it on snare and toms. There's even a short mambo groove on cowbell at bars 76–79. More light-



ening-fast singles follow in measures 80–91, before the double bass returns at bar 92. After bringing the volume down gradually, Louie launches into a startlingly futuristic call-and-response pattern between hands and feet at bars 100–113. Louie then pulls out all the stops with an incredible display of speed, control, and precision,

leading to a rousing climax that features driving double bass and flashy drum and cymbal work over the top (bars 166–206).

"Skin Deep" is a classic piece by one of the true legends of drumming, and certainly one of the most important drum solos ever recorded. *Modern Drummer* salutes Louie Bellson on the fiftieth anniversary of this landmark drumming achievement.

Note: Because the solo is essentially in free time, there are numerous places where the tempo pushes and pulls. Therefore, the notation had to reflect the best way to write a particular pattern, where other ways would have been impossible.

♩ = 180

1 *mf*

5

9

13

17

Loose hats cont.:

21

25

29

f

33

mp

37

R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

41

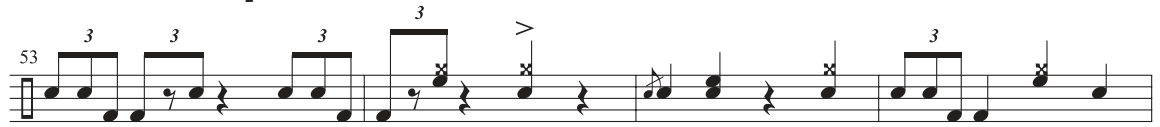
R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R

f

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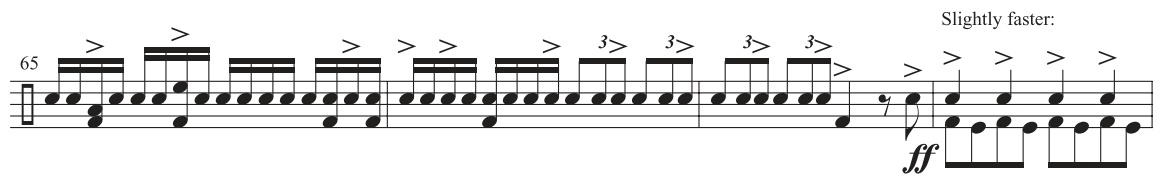
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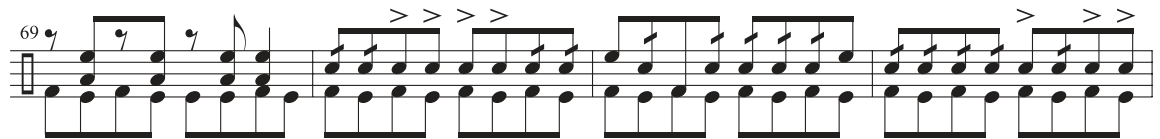
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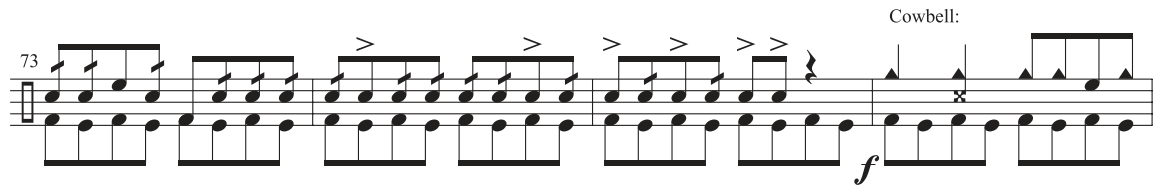
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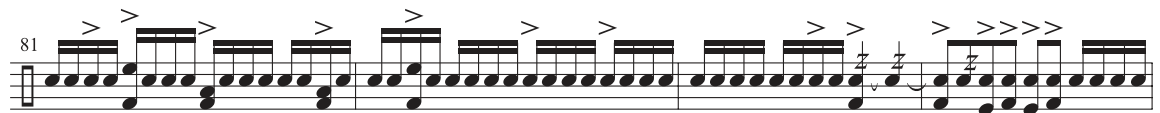
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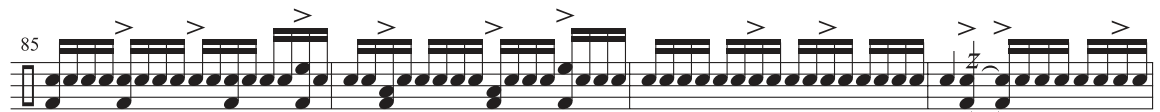
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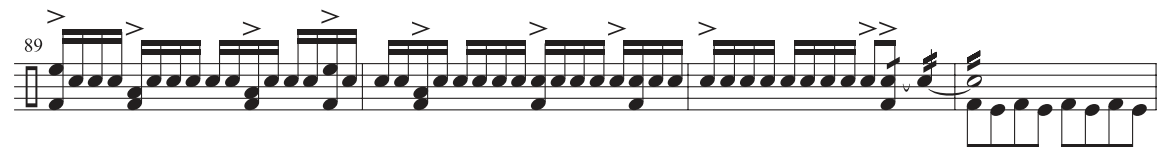
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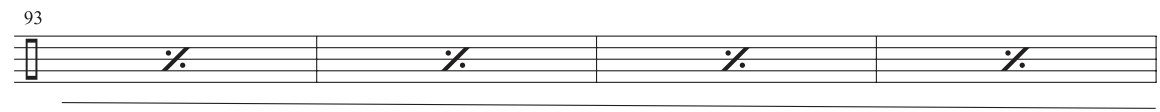
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"Skin Deep"

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Getting Creative With Reed's Syncopation

Part 2: Rock Variations

by "Tiger" Bill Meligari

MUSIC KEY

A diagram showing stickings for various drum parts. R.C. (Ride Cymbal) is marked with an 'X'. S.D. (Snare Drum) is marked with a solid dot. B.D. (Bass Drum) is marked with a solid dot. H.H. (Hi-Hat) is marked with an 'X'. w/foot (with foot) is marked with an 'X'. A '2nd B.D.' (second bass drum) is also indicated.

Last month I gave you some examples of how to modify the exercises in Ted Reed's classic book, *Progressive Steps To Syncopation*, to provide more challenging exercises and build your jazz chops. This month we continue our study by providing examples in the rock vein.

If you have the *Syncopation* book, follow along in it. If you don't, learn the following variations using the examples provided here, and then apply them to any book that contains exercises similar to those in *Syncopation*.

Just to review, *Syncopation* was originally written to be played as follows: Notes written with stems up were to be played using alternating hand-to-hand sticking on the snare drum while notes written with stems down were to be played with your foot on the bass drum.

Musical notation for the original example of Variation #1, showing a 4/4 drum line with stems up and down.

Although I recommend that you practice *Syncopation* (or any book) as originally written the first time around, on subsequent reads you should get creative. The examples that follow will get you started on the path to developing some creative rock variations of your own.

Rock Variations

Variation #1: Refer to the original example below, which is from the first two bars on page 10 of *Syncopation*. For this variation, play the written snare drum line with your right foot on the bass drum and play the written bass drum line with your left foot on the hi-hat (or second bass drum). Add a quarter-note time pattern with your right hand on the ride cymbal, and add your left hand on the snare drum on beats 2 and 4.

Original Example

Musical notation for the original example of Variation #1, showing a 4/4 drum line with stems up and down.

Variation #1

Musical notation for Variation #1, showing a 4/4 drum line with stems up and down, and 'X' marks indicating specific drum parts.

You can practice nearly every page of *Syncopation* using Variation #1, and each group of pages will provide you with exercises in two basic styles of rock drumming. Pages 4 through 11 and 20 through 60 (except pages 45 and 49) will provide straight-ahead rock beats, including some terrific exercises for developing your bass drum chops. Pages 12 through 15, 18, 19, and 49 through 57 will provide rock shuffle beats.

In addition, there are a ton of variations that can be created from Variation #1. For instance, reverse your hands and feet so that you're playing the written snare drum line with your left foot on the hi-hat, the written bass drum line on your main bass drum with your right foot, quarter notes on the ride cymbal with your left hand, and backbeats on the snare drum with your right hand. Then you can change the time beat from quarter notes to straight 8th notes, dotted-quarter/16th-note shuffle rhythms, or straight 16th notes, like so:

Straight 8ths

Musical notation for the Straight 8ths variation, showing a 4/4 drum line with stems up and down, and 'X' marks indicating specific drum parts.

Shuffles

Musical notation for the Shuffles variation, showing a 4/4 drum line with stems up and down, and 'X' marks indicating specific drum parts.

16th-Note Funk

Musical notation for the 16th-Note Funk variation, showing a 4/4 drum line with stems up and down, and 'X' marks indicating specific drum parts.

Variation #2: This variation builds your funk chops. Using the same original example from Variation #1, play the written snare drum line alternating each note between your right foot on the bass drum and your left hand on the snare. Play the written bass drum line with your left foot on the hi-hat, and play 16th notes with your right hand on the ride cymbal.

Variation #2

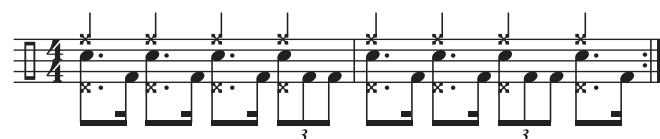
Musical notation for Variation #2, showing a 4/4 drum line with stems up and down, and 'X' marks indicating specific drum parts.

Variation #3: Play any note that falls on the downbeat (that is, on the counts of 1, 2, 3, or 4) with your left hand on the snare drum and play all other notes on that line with your right foot on the bass drum. Play the written bass drum part with your left foot on the hi-hat, and add your right hand on a straight quarter-note time pattern, as shown.

Original Example



Variation #3



Variation #4: Here's a cool variation that will build your fill-in and solo chops. It uses the concept of "answering," which is duplicating on your feet what you play with your hands. Although this is a terrific drill for double bass players, you can also use it with a single bass drum and hi-hat.

Play the first bar of the written snare drum part with both hands on the snare drum (using alternating hand-to-hand sticking). Then play the second bar with your feet (using alternating foot-to-foot single strokes).

Original Example



Variation #4



To keep things interesting, try these different takes on Variation #4: Play *two* bars with the hands and the next two bars with the feet. Then play *four* bars with the hands and the next four bars with the feet. Also, try alternating between the hands and feet on every beat. (That is, play anything written on the first beat with your hands, anything written on the second beat with your feet, anything written on the third beat with your hands, and anything

written on the fourth beat with your feet.) You can take this even further by alternating after each half beat, applying open-roll or paradiddle stickings, and so on.

Variation #5: Here's a variation for building "linear" chops. (Linear simply means to play each limb separately and not allow two or more limbs to strike at the same time.) Try it using the snare drum pattern from Variation #4. Starting with the four 16th notes in the first beat, play the first 16th with your right hand on a ride cymbal, the second 16th with your right foot on the bass drum, the third 16th with your left hand on the snare, and the fourth 16th with your left foot on the hi-hat. Repeat that sequence of right hand, right foot, left hand, and left foot, for the remainder of the exercise.

Variation #5



Variation #6: Here's a variation for building "non-linear," or unison chops. (These are the exact opposite of linear patterns.) Unison playing is where all limbs strike at exactly the same time.

Here's how to apply unison playing to the exercises in *Syncopation*. Disregard the written bass drum part, and play the written snare drum part with all four limbs at the same time, as follows: right hand on the ride cymbal, left hand on the snare, right foot on the bass drum, and left foot on the hi-hat.

It's very important to listen to yourself carefully when practicing this variation. All four sound sources should blend together and sound like one note. There should be no "flamming" between limbs. (I highly recommend that you tape-record yourself practicing in unison and carefully listen to the playback.)

Here are some further variations to increase your unison drumming ability. Play only the left hand and right foot in unison while adding a ride cymbal time pattern with the right hand and 2 and 4 on the hi-hat with your left foot. Or play only the right hand and right foot in unison while adding 2 and 4 on the snare drum (with your left hand) and hi-hat (with your left foot).

I hope these variations help to ignite your creative spark and start you on the road to developing your own ideas using *Syncopation*. Next month we'll apply some Latin variations.

"Tiger" Bill Meligari is a professional drummer, instructor, and clinician, and the Webmaster of www.tigerbill.com. He is also the author of DoubleDrum: A Double Bass Drum Text. Bill is currently working with Vince Martell, original lead guitarist from The Vanilla Fudge.



The Roots' "Questlove" Phrenology

by Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY

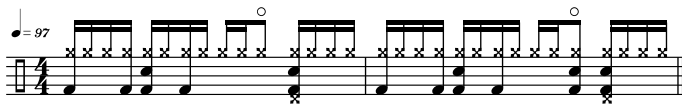
Open	○
H.H.	⊗
S.D.	◐
B.D.	◑
H.H.	⊗
w/foot	⊗
Ghost Note	○

The Roots push twenty-first-century rap music in new directions with *Phrenology*. The latest release by this band from Philadelphia is an ambitious, experimental collage of rap, hip-hop, drum 'n' bass, jazz, and soul, with plenty of guest stars adding to the mix. But it's all held together by the organic, funky drum beats of Questlove, who displays machine-like precision one moment, while adlibbing freestyle the next. Let's check out some examples of Questlove's groove-ology.



“Sacrifice”

With bass drum notes landing on snares, and the tiniest of piccolo sounds, ?uestlove’s drum machine impersonation is perfect. But the groove here is in the oh-so-human subtle swing of his hi-hat pattern.



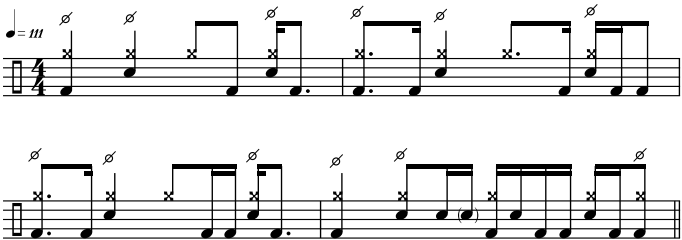
“Rolling With The Heat”

Here’s a great funk beat, with quasi-paradiddle sticking between the snare and hi-hat.

“WAOK (AY) Rollcall”



Under this one-minute roll call of rap’s hall of fame artists, ?uestlove lays down the following four-bar pattern. The spaciousness in the first three measures is answered by a flourish of notes in the last bar.



“Thought @ Work”

This track opens with the big backbeat sound of this syncopated groove.



“Break You Off”

The album’s first single features this repetitive Brazilian baião-style rhythm.

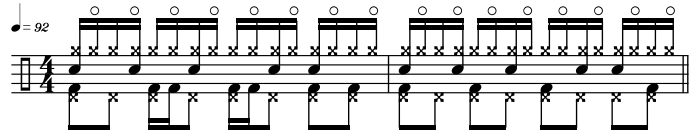


After three and a half minutes of holding the reigns tight, ?uestlove starts to jam with some classic funk snare/bass interplay.



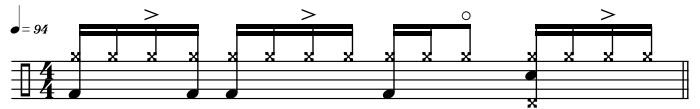
“Water”

For the intense first half of this track, ?uestlove plays this incredible take on the Bo Diddley groove. The open hi-hats add a double-time effect to the overall feel.



“Complexity”

This smooth R&B/hip-hop mix grooves along on the contrast



between bass/snare downbeats and offbeat hi-hat accents. You can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site www.edbreckenfeld.com.



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Achieving Balance

Keeping It Together At Home And On The Road

by Tom Van Schaik

When we begin as drummers, many of us go through the stage where we do nothing but eat, breathe, and sleep drumming. We practice six hours a day, play the gig at night, and then continue to dream about drums and music.

Having been a busy working drummer for almost twenty years, I've learned how important it is to maintain a balance between drumming and non-drumming activities. I've learned that it's okay to have interests outside of drumming and music, and not feel *guilty* about it. Actually, it's very healthy to have outside interests in order to avoid burnout and maintain a fresh perspective towards your music.

The Quick Getaway

The "quick getaway" is how I refer to a short physical or mental break from the everyday routine. This can be anywhere from an hour to a full day in length, and it's great for a quick battery recharge.

On a recent tour, our band had played six consecutive shows with a lot of travel between gigs. Everyone was getting numb. When we pulled into Denver, there was a message at the venue from a player on the Colorado Rockies baseball team inviting us to join the team at batting practice and the game that afternoon. We jumped at the opportunity. Everyone had a great time, and it helped us recharge and escape the routine of arrival at the venue, soundcheck, dinner, the show, and then departure for the next city. Best of all, that night there was a renewed energy from everyone in the band.

Having an hour or so to yourself provides opportunities to check out some historic sights, go golfing, visit a museum, go on a run, meditate in a quiet place, shop for presents for the family at home, or just sit under a tree with a good book.

The Extended Vacation

Many musicians seem to be fearful of taking time off from their instrument because they feel their skills will quickly diminish. But muscle memory and the skills related to it don't deteriorate that fast. Remember the old saying, "It's just like riding a bike." Basically, a well-developed skill never really leaves you after it has been fully learned.

"It's okay to have interests outside of drumming and music, and not feel guilty about it."

Pro golfer Phil Mickelson recently took four months off from the PGA tour. He didn't touch a club the entire time he was off. When asked if he thought he'd be rusty on his return, he stated that he'd been playing golf every day for almost twenty years. He had no fear that his swing or his game would leave him. He returned to the tour with a renewed energy and no loss of skills.

I've often been away from drumming for extended periods. When I resumed playing, everything still felt wonderful and relaxed. I've never noticed any signs of diminished skills as a result of those times off.

Decompression

After I return from an extended tour, I usually take a day or so to decompress. It's necessary to get away from the routine of the road and get my internal clock back on home time.

Usually, your schedule while on the road is the polar opposite of that at home. Your

body clock changes in order to feel a "normalcy" with the anything-but-normal sleeping and eating patterns. Once you arrive home and your schedule changes back again, you're liable to feel a sort of "jet lag" for the first few days. If you take a day or so to let your body clock adjust, the transition will be smoother—and your mood will be a lot better in the long run.

Hobbies And Diversions

One of my favorite diversions is golf. Like drumming, there are many intricacies to the game, and playing eighteen holes helps me get my mind off of the music business and its demands. As with all other diversions, I come off the golf course mentally refreshed and ready for anything, even if I *didn't* play well.

I also enjoy running—up to five miles, four days a week. That time is mine alone. It's just me and the road under my feet. I use the time to think through problems, focus on my breathing, or listen to a great CD. The best part is that I'm in the best shape of my life, and my energy both onstage and off has increased greatly.

Remember: There's nothing wrong with having interests and priorities outside of drumming. Never feel guilty about enjoying these things and the time they might take away from your performing or practice. You may even find that these diversions will help bring a renewed sense of energy to your playing, along with an increased desire to practice and improve.

Tom Van Schaik is a successful touring and session drummer who has played with Robert Earl Keen, The Dixie Chicks, Larry Coryell, Charlie Pride, and Lyle Lovett. He is also an active clinician for Sabian, Pro-Mark, Mapex, and Aquarian.



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In-Ear Monitoring

Part 2: Using The System

by Mark Parsons

Last month we discussed the advantages of in-ear monitoring, in terms of how it could help you play better, how it can protect your hearing, and how it can save you physical effort and money. We also discussed the components that go into an IEM system, using Shure's PSM-400 system as a representative example. Now it's time to discuss the usage of such a system.

Real-World Applications

We started our foray into the realm of in-ear monitoring with an isolation check. With the E1 earphones from the PSM-400 system inserted (and no signal present), we played a wide-open kit in a loud, reflective room. The perceived sound level in this situation was reduced to nearly what you would achieve with a pair of cylindrical foam earplugs. Once the inserts were positioned correctly, the comfort was also similar to wearing foam earplugs. So far, so good.

Then we sent a music mix over the phones, with the P4HW wired bodypack set in "stereo" mode. At this point it was like listening to a stereo CD over Walkman earbuds, except that the isolation was much better. When I attempted to play along with the music, I was unable to hear the unmiked drums over the stereo music mix—due to the good isolation of the E1s. (And this was with the music only at a moderate listening level).

The next step was to get some drums into the earphones. We ended up with some kick, snare, and overhead signal feeding the mixer, in addition to the stereo music mix. At this point I could hear everything: my drums and the music I was playing with. Very cool, but because we were still in stereo mode there was no direct user (drummer) control over the music/drum balance. Changing the balance required someone at the mixer to turn up the drums or the music. This proved a little cumbersome. Besides, sometimes you

want things changed between songs, or even *during* a song. So....

We went into "mix" mode. With this setting, both channels are still fed into the bodypack, but the function of the "balance" control changes. Instead of panning between left and right, it now controls the relative level of each channel and sends the resulting signal to *both* earphones. If you turn the knob one way, you get more music in your phones. Turning it the other way gives you more drums. This is very user-friendly in actual practice. A center detent on the balance knob allows you to quickly find the 50/50 position. By using the balance control in conjunction with the volume control, you can easily get the drums-to-music ratio and overall gain that you want. *Very nice.*

Sound And Comfort

The audio quality of a pair of decent single-driver in-ear phones like the E1s should be more than adequate for pretty much any playing situation that drummers might find themselves in. The sound is relatively flat, without the booming lows and sparkling highs you get from some headphones. You can get more bass from costlier dual-driver phones, but nothing that fits in your ear is going to reproduce the gut-shaking lows you can get from a 2x15 monitor cabinet. (More on this in a moment.) For crisper highs the P4HW has an "EQ" switch that adds a 6dB boost at 10kHz. And, of course, you can always use some board EQ or an outboard equalizer to tailor the response more to your liking. But I found that the E1s gave me all the clarity I needed to hear my drums and the music without any added EQ.

I happened to have a pair of Westone earmolds that had been custom-made for my ears. (These are part of a "musician's earplugs" system that reduces sound levels without adversely affecting the frequency response of the source sound. For

By switching into "mix mode" on Shure's PSM-400 system, you can balance how much drums versus music you hear through your in-ear monitors.



more details, see “Watch Your Ears! Part 2,” in the Dec. ’97 *MD*.) I removed the foam inserts from the E1s and attached the drivers to the earmolds. The comfort factor using such molds is, of course, very good (assuming your earmolds are a good fit to begin with). However, the isolation was no better than with the foam inserts, and neither was the audio quality. The latter was likely due to the fact that the drivers are further from your eardrums when using the earmolds, which slightly reduces the bass response.

Another choice was to use Shure’s “flex sleeves.” These are reusable, cone-shaped, soft plastic sleeves that come in three sizes (small/med/large). They go in quicker and easier than the foam ones, but I preferred the foam for comfort and isolation. Also available from Shure are their optional “triple-flanged sleeves.” These have three cones of soft plastic, and Shure states that they offer improved isolation and comfort over the flex sleeves. I haven’t used them as in-ear monitor sleeves, but I have worn earplugs of identical design, and they are comfortable and they do isolate well.

A final option is available, primarily for those doing studio work. You set up your IEM system just as we’ve discussed, except you substitute isolation headphones for the in-ear phones. We did this using a pair of GK Music’s “UltraPhones,” and the results were very nice. You get the best isolation you’re liable to achieve anywhere (approximately 29dB of outside noise reduction), the sound of the Sony 7506 drivers is first-class, and you still have personal control of your mix balance (and limiter safety) due to the bodypack. Good isolation phones aren’t cheap (the UltraPhones go for \$219) and some drummers may consider them too bulky for onstage use. But for session work—coupled with the features of an IEM bodypack—it’s a hard combo to beat.

But(t)...

There’s still the issue of achieving booty-shaking bottom end with IEMs. To be honest, a few drummers carry a sub-bass speaker, but this defeats some of the main benefits of IEMs in the first place. Okay, maybe you’ve got someone else hauling, setting up, and striking your gear

for you. (And even then, there’s still the issue of sonic pollution onstage.) But for the rest of us, what’s the answer? Get used to having no “kick in your bass,” or no “bass in your kick”?

Hardly. Enter the tactile transducer, or “shaker.” These are a class of low-frequency transducers that generate bass in a way that’s meant to be felt rather than heard. This is achieved through having the sound mechanically coupled to the listener rather than transmitted through the air. In our particular scenario, this means that

the transducer is bolted to the underside of your drum throne. To experience this firsthand we obtained a sample of Guitammer’s transducer, the “ButtKicker 2” (list price \$499). The BK2’s transducer uses a linear magnetic motor (vs. a conventional voice coil type motor) to generate some serious bottom-shaking bottom. The unit is a cylinder approximately 5" high and 5" in diameter.

As was the case with our choice of the Shure PSM-400, the ButtKicker 2 was chosen as a representative unit. There are

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In-Ear Monitoring

several other fine tactile transducers on the market, including Clark Synthesis Tactile Sound Monitors (reviewed in the May '03 *MD*) and Aura Sound DSK-50 Bass Shakers (reviewed in the April '99 *MD*).

The necessary connections to add a transducer to your in-ear system are pretty simple. You need to get a line-level signal to a power amp, which in turn powers the transducer. There are several ways to do this: You could split off your kick-drum mic' signal and send it to a pre-amp and then a power amp. Or you could do the same using a pickup. Or you could use a "direct out" with either of the above and skip the additional mic' pre-amp. However, the easiest and most flexible way is to simply use an aux send from your main mixing board to send whatever you want to the transducer amp. This is what we did, and it worked great.

A couple of things are worth noting here. The ButtKicker 2 has a frequency response of 5–200 Hz. The low upper limit means that sending a higher-frequency signal (a snare drum, for example) isn't going to do much—if anything—for you.

The good news is that this also means you don't need to use a low-pass filter or crossover in front of the ButtKicker 2. If the signal doesn't contain any bass content, the unit simply won't "see" it (and consequently you won't feel it).

Because the other end of the transducer's response goes so low, there's the possibility that it could try to reproduce sub-sonic signals that aren't musically relevant. The manufacturer recommends using a high-pass filter if this happens, but this problem didn't crop up for us.

Guitammer states that minimum amplification power is 400 watts, but recommends between 600 and 1,000 watts, depending on your application. This sounds big and expensive, but Guitammer suggests Carvin's two-space DCM 1000 amp, which puts out 1,000 watts at 4 ohms in "bridged mono" mode and costs only \$369. For our experiments we used a Crown amp that generates 750 watts per side into 4 ohms, and we never even both-



ered to bridge it.

One channel was more than adequate.

In use, the "shaker" concept worked like a charm. We set the PSM 400 system up in mix mode—with the "music mix" on one channel and the "drum mix" on the other—and we adjusted the level and balance until we could hear both clearly. Then we turned up the dial on the aux

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send feeding the kick signal to the transducer amp. Wow. The perceived kick tone went from a tap to a *thud*.

It's amazing how the brain can integrate differing stimuli into a unified experience. The sensation is *not* "I hear my kick in my phones and, oh yeah...something's shaking my throne at the same time." When the system is set up properly, the feeling is fairly seamless—more like playing your stereo quietly and then turning on the sub-woofer. All of a sudden there is simply a perceived depth and weight to the sound that wasn't there before. As with a sub-woofer, you can certainly crank up a transducer until it becomes a blatant "special effect." But even at moderate levels the result is surprisingly realistic. This is because the brain is accustomed to the fact that high levels of bass frequencies are actually perceived more by body vibrations than through the eardrums. (It's that "shake your chest" effect you get when standing in front of a sub-woofer at a concert.) So yes, you really *can* hear with your derriere!

Some drummers may find it desirable to be able to feel the bass guitar in their transducer along with their kick drum. To test this we dialed some of the music mix into the transducer feed. It's difficult to determine the exact pitch of the note through the transducer, but you can certainly feel the weight of the note and, more importantly, the timing of it. (And, of course, the pitch information is available via the IEMs.) Having both kick and bass in the transducer certainly makes it easier to lock to the bass player.

One method of getting the bass into your transducer would be to send some of the bass guitar channel directly to the transducer (as we did with the kick). This might be your best choice if the option is available. But due to the low-pass properties of the transducer, we had virtually no bleed of any "non-bass" instruments when we sent an entire music mix to the transducer. So in actual use, the "shaker" concept proved remarkably flexible.

Who?

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In-Ear Monitoring

hearing *and* improve their monitoring situation by going to an in-ear system. And these aren't just flavor-of-the-month "rock stars" who have endorsements thrown at them. These are "drummer's drummers" who investigate new technology for one reason—because it might help them to better create their art. Among the drummers who are using Shure in-ear monitors, for example, are Dave Weckl, Dennis Chambers, Kenny Aronoff, Rod Morgenstein, Peter Erskine, Will Kennedy, Omar Hakim, Billy Cobham, Danny Gottlieb, Ricky Lawson, and Russ Miller. Not exactly bad company, and these are just for one manufacturer out of several. (See the sidebar for a complete list.)

Are IEMs for everyone? No. Let's say you're in a band that does "casuals," mostly at low-to-moderate volume, and the entire monitor system consists of a couple of wedges up front for the singers. (This is a common situation with local bands.) Assuming you



can hear what's necessary to do the gig, you're probably better off *without* IEMs plugging your ears, since most of your

you could definitely benefit from IEMs. At the very least, you should investigate them thoroughly.

interaction with your bandmates is via bleed from their instruments/amps. Or perhaps you have a steady gig at a decent venue with a nice in-house monitor system (complete with competent sound engineer), and the system is tweaked to perfection. If you're happy with the results *and* you're not schlepping the gear anyway, why change?

But if you're having problems hearing your bandmates clearly in your monitors; if the on-stage volume is starting to get you concerned about hearing loss; if your band is having to arrive earlier and earlier to set up the system; if you'd like to save your back (and your pocketbook); if you'd like to improve the mix that goes to the house; and if you'd like to have some personal control over how your monitor mix is balanced, then

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Drum Mic' Technology 101

Part 1: The Selection Process

by Andy James

The selection and placement of microphones—along with the use of various microphone techniques—has a significant influence on how your sound and your playing is “captured,” either live or in the studio. A microphone of appropriate type and quality is as important as any other piece of equipment you might own—maybe even more. After all, what’s the point of spending \$1,000 on a bass drum, only to record it through a cheap microphone that was not designed for that purpose? “Well, it’s *only* the bass drum” is a comment that has driven me nuts over the years.

Drummers get the short end of the stick quite often in this business, and it’s no different when it comes to microphones.

Let’s face it, drummers get the short end of the stick quite often in this business, and it’s no different when it comes to the microphone arena. When you start playing live, you’ll soon realize that what the sound engineer uses to mike up the kit is usually whatever is left over after he has the other instruments and vocalists taken care of.

Thankfully, things are a bit different in the studio environment. There are numerous

drummers whom you can instantly recognize by their “sound,” quite apart from their playing abilities. For example, the great John Bonham’s sound was carefully maintained and recreated throughout his recording career with Led Zeppelin. Other signature sounds—like Alex Van Halen’s snare drum or Vinnie Paul’s bass drums—are as much the result of miking and engineering as of the drums and their tuning.

Microphones can play an equally huge part in establishing *your* sound. Hopefully, this series of articles will help you navigate the confusing world of microphone design, placement, and technical specs in order to find the perfect microphone setup to capture that sound. We’re going to be using some scientific measurements and some technical terms along the way. Don’t get intimidated; they’re just the vocabulary we need to use in order to give you a better understanding of these important tools.

Choices And Considerations

Some engineers and musicians choose microphones based on the opinions and reviews of their peers. Others compare spec sheets. And others audition different microphones and let their ears choose what sounds best.

Then, of course, there is the price factor. With microphones as with almost anything else in life, it’s usually the case that the more you spend, the better quality you get in return. But that’s not an



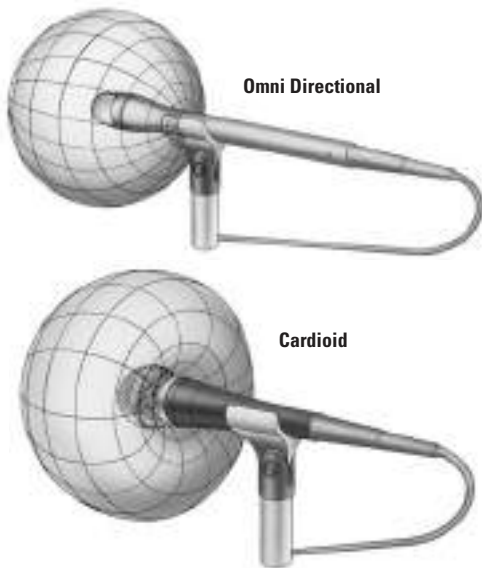
\$5,000 microphones that I wouldn't put anywhere *near* my drumkit in the studio. You need to be aware of the application a microphone was designed for, versus the application you're planning to use it for. But the most fundamental procedure is to listen to the mic' and determine whether it is picking up what you want to hear.

If you've ever looked at the spec sheets on a microphone, you've been confronted with a confusing list of data such as Max SPL, frequency response, impedance, pattern, and sensitivity. And to make it even more confusing, different manufacturers use different methods of measurement, making it almost impossible to compare certain specs from two different manufacturers. So let's start off with the basics.

Pattern

The pattern of a microphone (also known as polar pattern or directionality) basically refers to the microphone's sensitivity to sound in relation to the direction from which the sound source is located. The three main types of patterns are **omni-directional**, **figure 8**, and **Cardioid**. The last is also listed as hyper cardioid or super cardioid by some manufacturers, in reference to a small variation in the pickup pattern.

An omni-directional microphone is of little or no use in live applications. This microphone picks up sound from the front, rear, and sides in equal amounts. Thus it's impossible to "point" an omni microphone at a single sound source, such as a drum.



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Drum Mic' Technology

The figure 8 or bi-directional microphone picks up sound fairly equally from the front and rear, but rejects sound coming into the microphone from the sides. This microphone is often used for live recording where the audience reaction is needed in addition to the event that's taking place on stage.

Cardioid, super cardioid, or hyper cardioid microphones are the most commonly used live microphone pattern. The concept of a cardioid microphone is that it focuses on sound coming from whatever it's pointed at. That's not to say, however, that sounds from the back of the microphone are eliminated entirely. They're just reduced approximately 12–25 dB.

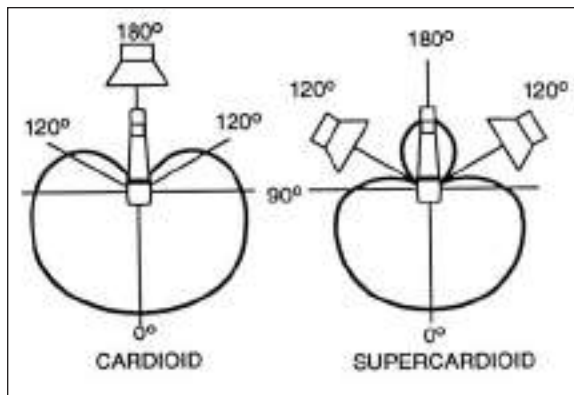
Cardioid Features

All cardioid microphones exhibit a characteristic known as **proximity effect**. This means that the microphone will emphasize the low-frequency components of the sound that are very close to the front of the microphone. Many vocalists and DJ's rely on this effect to give them a "deeper" voice. But for instrument miking, this effect is sometimes

quite undesirable. Several manufacturers include a bass roll-off switch to compensate for this problem, or have designed the physical structure of the microphone to help decrease the proximity effect.

It is possible for manufacturers to exaggerate the directionality of a cardioid microphone—which can make it very useful for drum miking. But there is a trade-off. Making the microphone pattern tighter and more focused from the *front* creates a larger area (what is known as a *lobe*) in the rear, allowing for less signal rejection from behind the microphone. This fact affects mic' selection and placement.

Let's say you have two rack toms very close together, and you want to mike them with two separate microphones. In this example, the immediate goal is to achieve the tightest pattern in *front* of the microphones, so that each drum is somewhat isolated and is primarily being picked up by



the microphone pointed at it. But there are other considerations that must be taken into account.

A cardioid microphone rejects approximately 25 dB from the rear, while having a coverage area in front of the microphone of 131 degrees. A super cardioid microphone rejects approximately 12 dB from the rear while having a coverage area in front of the microphone of 126 degrees. A Hyper Cardioid rejects approximately 6 dB from the rear, while having a coverage area in front of the microphone of 110 degrees. So

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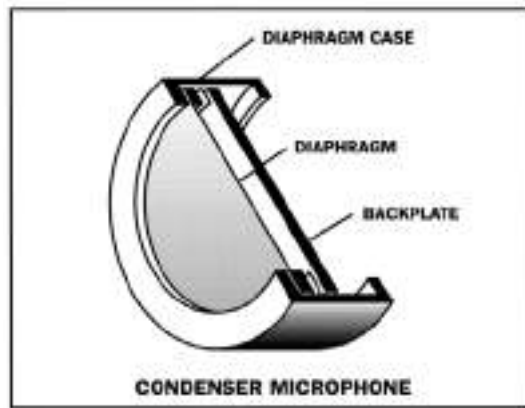
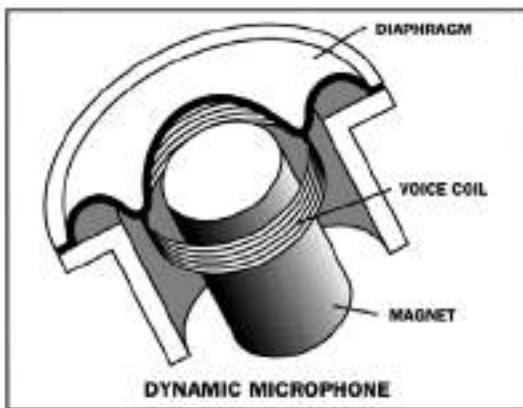
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front of the microphone of 110 degrees. So the tighter the coverage area in front of the microphone, the more signal that microphone will allow to be picked up directly from the rear. This becomes critical in applications involving speaker placement, such as live monitor wedges pointed at the drummer. The pattern of the microphone used dictates how and where the engineer can place the monitors to be most effective with the least amount of feedback.

Capsule Types

The two most common capsule designs for live and studio applications are **dynamic** and **condenser**. Dynamic microphones are the number-one choice for live sound, because they can handle very high volume levels, are virtually unaffected by temperature or humidity changes, and are very durable. A dynamic microphone, also known as a magneto



dynamic, moving coil, or velocity sensitive microphone, relies on the basic principle of a loudspeaker, only in reverse. With a speaker, you put a voltage (signal from the amplifier) on the speaker coil, and it makes the coil move within a magnetic field, moving the speaker cone and reproducing the voltage as sound waves. Dynamic microphones use a diaphragm/voice coil/magnet assembly, which forms a small, sound-driven electric generator. You apply sound waves to

the capsule, which makes the coil move inside a magnetic field, generating a voltage (signal).

Dynamic Features

Most dynamic microphones “color” the sound they’re capturing—meaning that the microphone actually changes what the instrument or voice *really* sounds like. This is one critical aspect of selecting the right microphone for the application. Many manufacturers design microphones to be



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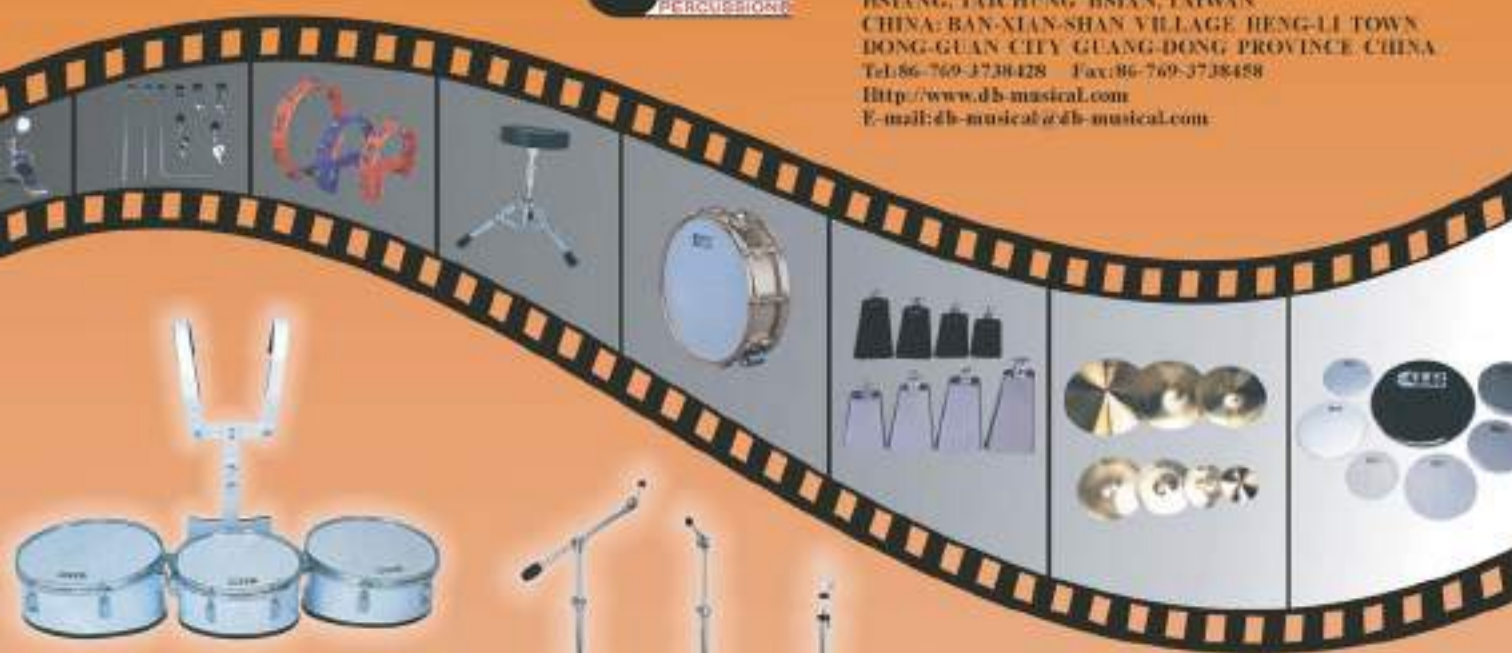


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Condenser Features

Condenser microphones (or capacitor mic's, as they're sometimes called) are based on an electrically charged diaphragm/backplate assembly, which forms a sound-sensitive capacitor. Sound waves vibrate a very thin metal or metal-coated plastic diaphragm. This diaphragm is mounted just in front of a rigid metal or metal-coated ceramic back plate. The spacing between these two elements is approximately 20–30 microns, or about the thickness of a human hair. In electronic terms, this is known as a capacitor, which has the ability to store a charge or voltage. When the element is charged, an electric field is created between the diaphragm and the back plate, which is proportional to the space between the two. It is the variation of this spacing due to the motion of the diaphragm caused by sound pressure waves that produces an electrical voltage (signal) output.

All condenser microphones contain active electronic circuitry (impedance matcher/buffer amplifiers) to allow the electrical voltage created by the sound waves on the diaphragm to be used with typical microphone inputs. So, all condenser microphones, regardless of type, must be powered by what is known as phantom power (from the soundboard) or by an internal battery.

Within the condenser family are several types of condenser designs. A "true" condenser utilizes 48 volts of DC (direct current) to polarize or "charge" the field of the capsule and to power the electronics. An electret condenser has a permanent electrostatic charge maintained by a special conductive coating applied to the diaphragm membrane. Electret condensers still require phantom or battery power for the internal amplifiers, but no external polarization voltage is needed.

The other play on electret designs is called a back electret condenser. Its static charge is on the back plate instead of on the diaphragm, which is now called the counter electrode and is made of an extremely thin foil or plastic. It's made conductive by the application of a very thin

layer of conductive material, such as gold. Back electret condensers are much more accurate than electret microphones, because the diaphragm is usually lighter and can vibrate more responsively.

The high sensitivity of condenser microphones makes them the first choice for picking up signals containing small pressure cycles, such as the high frequencies created by cymbals. This is why you almost always see small condenser mic's used as overhead microphones on drumkits.

Now that we know more about the different types of microphones available, we need to learn how they operate, in terms of power and performance. That's our topic for next month. See you then!

Andy James has toured with Savatage, The Zeros, and David Sweet. Since 1998 he's been a busy session drummer in Southern California, Seattle, and Miami. Andy offers thanks to Shure Microphones for providing the graphics used in this series, and to Neil Citron of The Mothership Studio for personal assistance.



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The Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums

Marching To The Beat Of History

by Cathy Swarmstedt

You hear them coming half a mile away. There's just the sound of a distant beat at first, but that's enough to make heads turn. The crowd assembled on the main thoroughfare of Colonial Williamsburg—Virginia's 18th-century capital—shifts a little, permitting glimpses of scarlet coats as the distant tattoo intensifies.

"Drummers!" someone exclaims, amid the hum of anticipation.

A spirited melody is added to the beat, and the crowd parts—making way for the Virginia State Garrison Regiment of Williamsburg. Composed of thirty-four brilliant young musicians who perpetuate a

tradition begun during the American Revolution, the regiment is known to fans throughout the world as the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums.

A Reason For Being

In the 18th-century military, a fifer and a drummer were attached to each company of soldiers. In camp they sounded various duty calls, while in the field they signaled commands for troop movements. American troops were taught to drill using the *slow* or *Prussian step*, 60 to 70 paces to the minute. The *grand march* increased the tempo to between 70 and 80 paces, *common time*

stretched it to between 80 and 96, and *quick time* kicked it up to 120 paces per minute. The proper cadence had to be supplied for each phase of a particular maneuver.

Normal regimental strength consisted of ten companies, so ten fifers and ten drummers were combined to form a "fife & drum corps." The earliest reference to such a group being assembled in America was made by General George Washington, who on August 23, 1777 was preparing to march his troops through Philadelphia en route to a confrontation with the British at the head of Chesapeake Bay. "The drums and fifes of each brigade," Washington



courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg

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wrote, “are to be collected in the center of it; and a tune for the quick step played—but with such moderation that the men may step to it with ease; and without *dancing* along, or totally disregarding the music, as too often has been the case.”

Marching To The Beat

Today, Colonial Williamsburg fifers and drummers lead gleeful spectators along in their wake, stirring emotions with the same rousing tunes that their revolutionary predecessors knew. They play selections culled from hundreds of authentic marches and melodies with names like “The Dorsetshire March,” “Cuckoo’s Nest,” and “Over The Water To Charley.” Only the sergeant major—the highest-ranking member of the corps—knows the entire repertoire by heart. But his senior corps colleagues must be prepared to play any of the 150 tunes he selects, on any given day.

Says Bill White, executive producer and director for educational program development at Colonial Williamsburg (and himself a walk-on for the Fifes & Drums at the age of twelve), “The music program here started in the late 1950s as a historically

accurate complement to the military demonstrations that were being staged. Eventually somebody said, ‘Gee, it would be nice if we had a drummer or two.’”

The first recruits were local high school students under the direction of George Carroll, who had been a member of the Old Guard Fifes & Drums stationed at Arlington Cemetery near Washington, DC. By the time Bill White joined the group in 1965, the program consisted of a junior corps, a senior corps, and a ranking system that began with “recruits” who were required to master a collection of twelve tunes in order to move up the ladder.

“If you want to be in the senior corps,” White says, “you have to pass the music. It doesn’t matter if you’re twelve or sixteen; you’re competing on your own initiative. It’s an incredibly valuable lesson for kids.”

The waiting list for prospective recruits is long, but a child’s name can be added as soon as he or she turns five years of age. Youngsters become eligible to join the Fifes & Drums in the fall of their fifth-grade year. If there are no slots available at that time, prospects can remain on the list until the fall of their eighth-grade year.

Candidates lucky enough to be admitted to the corps go through a year’s training, during which the instruments and procedures are taught along with the rules and ranking system. If the requisite twelve tunes are mastered, the student graduates to the rank of “private,” signs up as a Colonial Williamsburg employee, collects a uniform, and becomes a performing member of the junior corps.

Each new rank requires that additional, ever-more-complex tunes be memorized. Once accepted into the senior corps, the student goes on to attain the rank of “sergeant,” then “fife” or “drum sergeant.” At this point, several students might qualify for the title of “sergeant major,” but only one will be chosen.

“Working in the ensemble is the hardest part,” Bill White says of the entire learning experience. “You can teach kids to play an instrument, but to get them to work together, to hear the end result, you have to make them realize they’re part of something larger.”

Tim Sutphin, leader of the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums since 1991, adds that simply mastering the rudiments is

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Percussion Today

a tough assignment for youngsters, and that becoming a drummer raises separate issues. "You repeat a pattern over and over slowly, then faster, and your muscles rebel," he points out.

Recruits are in class for one hour on Wednesday afternoons and three hours on Saturday mornings each week. Once they begin performing, an hour is added to the end of each class, in order for the Fifes & Drums to march down Duke Of Gloucester Street from the Capitol building to the Governor's Palace, a distance of about half a mile.

The Instrument Of Choice

Three types of drums were common to the military during the colonial era. The side (or snare) drum and the bass drum were used by infantry units, and historically accurate reproductions of these drums are played in Williamsburg. Kettle drums were generally used by cavalry units.

Although manuals for teaching the fife were available in late 18th-century America, drumming manuals did not appear in England or America until 1812. *The Art Of Beating The Drum* was one such manual, authored by Samuel Potter, drum major of Britain's Coldstream Guards. In America, Charles Stewart Ashworth had written *A New, Useful And Complete System Of Drum-Beating*. By 1820, manuals were using plain English to describe the drum beats that accompanied scored fife music, such as "First Serjeant's Call: one roll and three flams."

Lance Pedigo is one of the few members of the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums to have forged a career as a drummer. By the time he received a bachelor of music degree from James Madison University, he had already reached the pinnacle of sergeant major with the corps. After college, he joined other prestigious organizations as a drummer, including the 1985 Presidential Inaugural Band. He returned to Williamsburg in 1991 as supervisor for the corps.

Like Sutphin and White, Pedigo remembers, from a drummer's perspective, the challenges presented by the music. "The 18th-century practice was to match the fife and drum parts to the same rhythm," he explains. "A particular tune would be played on the fife, and the drum



score would then be created to match it." Today, recruits memorize patterns useful not only for melody accompaniment, but also for the drum solos or open beatings that figure so prominently in the group's performances. "Without a melody to rely on, having so many tunes with so many different patterns to memorize is the difficult part for drummers," Pedigo says.

The Best Of The Best

The recruits who joined the corps in mid-October of 2001 started performing in August of 2002. It took nearly a year, but they mastered their twelve tunes, and many more besides, to become privates. Now they're Colonial Williamsburg employees, and eligible to suit up in stockings and breeches and bright red coats, in the colonial style.

But as they begin their march down Duke Of Gloucester Street, do the centuries seem to shift a bit? Do 21st-century fifers and drummers sometimes feel as though they're marching into an 18th-century time warp? Lance Pedigo's smile becomes reflective. "There have been times when I found myself not remembering how I got down the street. At first you're really self-conscious about putting



courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg

on 18th-century clothing. But, of course, you have the rest of the group for support."

Pedigo also remembers a number of special moments, like playing an impromptu concert in Rockefeller Center back in the days when the corps had fewer performance commitments and were able to travel more widely than they do now.

For Tim Sutphin, the bicentennial of the Battle of Yorktown holds special significance. The picturesque Colonial Parkway was closed to auto traffic on that occasion, and the senior corps of the Fifes & Drums, along with Continental Army reenactors, marched from Williamsburg to Yorktown, a five-hour trek. Then there was the 1983 Economic Summit held in Williamsburg and attended by world leaders including President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. "They closed the town over Memorial Day weekend," Sutphin recalls, "and it seemed that we performed for every major head of state."

A Rewarding Experience

Membership in the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums requires an enormous investment in time. There's

some kind of program going on every day in Williamsburg, many of which carry requests for appearances by the corps. But the dedication pays off. In the lobby of the Fifes & Drums Building, a huge bulletin board displays letters of thanks and messages to the corps from schoolchildren, corporate executives, and even US Army generals. The opposite wall is filled with achievement awards earned by individual corps members.

Today there are twenty-two recruits, thirty junior corps members, and thirty-four senior corps members. Girls were admitted to the program in 1999. Dressed in the same colonial attire as their male counterparts, they perform with the same outstanding skill and precision that has made the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums a world-class musical ensemble.

Asked about his personal thoughts concerning membership in the Fifes & Drums, Bill White leans back in his chair and smiles a bit wistfully. "It's hard to describe the experience," he says. "Most alumni will tell you its one of the most important things they ever did in their lives."



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Paolo Sburlati

Italy's Supercollector

by Jim DeRogatis

Most drum obsessives have a theory about the source of their mania, but Italian supercollector Paolo Sburlati's explanation is especially Freudian. "When I was a kid, there was this variety show on TV, and the drummer was playing this big [Italian-made] Hollywood kit, with a 26" bass drum. That big bass drum and the two big tom-toms up front reminded me of my mom—the belly and the breasts—and I fell in love instantly!"

Sburlati studied keyboards and electronic music, but he eventually wound up behind the drums. Along the way, he

became one of the biggest collectors of vintage Ludwig instruments in the world. In 1999 he decided to document the results of his obsession. Working with the Ludwig company, he published a one-of-a-kind book called *Ludwig: Yesterday & Today, 1909–1999*. It charts not only the history of America's most famous drum company, but also the impressive collection of kits and snare drums that Paolo has amassed over the years. "We collectors are all alike," the forty-three-year-old drummer says conspiratorially. "We do everything for the drums!"

In the '70s, serious Italian musicians had a nickname for Italy's homegrown Hollywood drums: "Horriblewood." Sburlati says, "When I was a kid, I was suffering to see all these Italian drums that were so horrible. They had awful shells and hardware that was always breaking. I was something like twelve or thirteen years old, and in desperate need of finding a good drumkit. At that same time, along came Deep Purple, and for me it was a revelation."

Deep Purple drummer Ian Paice became one of Sburlati's heroes. (Paolo currently plays throughout Europe in a Deep Purple cover band.) "I could really feel the swing and the rock," he says. Paolo worked a series of part-time jobs after school to save up the money to buy his first real drumset—a Rogers Swiv-O-Matic. "Then I discovered that most of the great drummers were using Ludwig," he says. "So I found a secondhand Ludwig kit, but it cost too much. I went back to Torino and found another one in a music shop. I worked as hard as I could washing dishes, and finally bought it."

It All Started...

That was only the first of many Ludwig kits for Paolo. But oddly enough, his collecting mania started with guitars, not drums. "I was

living in Switzerland and playing with a band in the '70s," he says. "I started hearing about vintage guitars. I was earning good money, and I thought, 'I can buy these instruments and make some money with them.' I started importing guitars from the US, and in six or seven years I'd bought something like 130 vintage Fenders



On the cover of his book *Ludwig Yesterday & Today*, Paolo Sburlati sits behind his prized vintage Ludwig kit custom-created for Ian Paice.

Jim DeRogatis

Paolo with some of his many vintage Ludwig drums, stored near his home in Bagnasco, Italy.

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Collectors' Corner

and Gibsons." Paolo never played any of these axes, but he watched as they appreciated in value from \$1,500 or \$2,000 (American) to \$6,000 or more.

One day Sburlati had the opportunity to sit in on a recording session in Milan that featured another of his drumming heroes, Danny Gottlieb. When Paolo saw several old Fenders and Gibsons in the studio, and mentioned that he owned many himself, Danny asked him if he played guitar. "When I said no," Paolo recalls, "Danny told me that if you don't play a guitar, a substance in the wood starts running and collects in spots. It's bad for the guitars. I realized, 'These guitars need to go around making music!' So I sold most

of the guitars, and I reinvested everything into drums. Drums I play; it's my instrument. Besides, I figured that the same thing that happened with the guitars [appreciating in value] would happen with the drums."

And From There...

But it was for love, not money, that Sburlati eventually amassed an astounding collection of some seventy vintage Ludwig kits, most of them purchased long-distance from collectors and friendly drumshop owners in the US. "It was like an addiction," Paolo says. "When you want something for so long, and you finally get it, then you never have enough. You buy one, and then a second one, and then another in a different color. And then it's, 'What about the finishes? The sizes? The different eras?' There are so many choices!"

A Book Is Born

Like any collector, Sburlati wanted to share his passion with the world. He was familiar with key employees of Ludwig from his day job with Aramini, an Italian company that distributes musical equipment. So he approached the drum manufac-



Another one of Sburlati's treasures is this '70s-era kit made for the late Cozy Powell.

turer about a book that would document his collection in photos and stories (drawing heavily from vintage catalogs, interviews with Ludwig reps, and famous drummers) while at the same time offering a unique overview of the company's history.

The Ludwig company gave the green light, and William F. Ludwig II signed on to write the foreword. The resulting tome is enough to make any fellow enthusiast green with envy. Sburlati conducts a guided tour of his lovingly restored kits: the Buddy Rich Super Classic from 1952, several Classic Downbeat sets from the mid-'60s, Classic Big Beats from the mid-'70s in any number of finishes, and of course his special loves, '70s stainless-steel sets and Vistalite kits in nearly every transparent color and striped pattern (plus of course a few with built-in Italian-made Tivoli lighting).

Time To Play

What does the man who owns seventy classic drumsets play the most? "I change sets according to the size of where we are playing," he says. "If it's a big place, I use

the John Bonham amber Vistalites or the stainless steel. For special gigs [with the Deep Purple cover band], I use the hand-painted set on the cover of the book that Ian Paice gave me on permanent loan. If it's a small place, then I'll probably play the green sparkle. There are ten or twelve I use regularly."

Sharing The Joy

Today, all of these drums reside in several rented garages, and it's a telling difference between Italy and America that Sburlati doesn't even feel the need to lock the doors! Once he finished the book, he began reducing the size of his collection ever so slightly. "I began to wonder what I was going to do with all these drums," he says. "So I've sold maybe fifteen or twenty of the kits. I haven't lost money, but I really haven't made much, either. It's enough that they go to drummers who love them."

Paolo pauses and laughs. "But I still keep buying them, too! There is always something I never had before...something new...something I always wanted. I guess it never ends!"





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Randy Caputo

Living The Life Of Gene Krupa

by T. Bruce Wittet



Let others pursue uniqueness. Hopefully their special thing will shine through, and someday they'll get noticed. That's the way Southern California drummer Randy Caputo sees it. He, on the other hand, has cast ego aside and has taken what he considers the higher road. Randy has devoted his life to the study—and re-creation—of Gene Krupa, the legendary swing drummer who brought the drums to the front of the stage.

Randy has spent so many years studying Krupa that he's become a mirror image of the man. When Caputo plays Krupa, everything is correct: the movement of the arms...the distinctive fills on the low-tuned toms...even the facial expressions. Let others chase elusive individuality. Success at replicating Gene Krupa—and reminding people of Gene's pivotal role in the history of our instrument—is reward enough for Randy.

We've Lost Our Way

But does anybody really *need* reminding? After all, there've been books and articles on Krupa, even a Hollywood movie. Isn't Krupa's reputation already secure? "Sure, a lot of people are familiar with *The Gene Krupa Story*," Randy admits. "But that was Hollywood hype. For example, [clarinetist and bandleader] Benny Goodman is barely mentioned. And five or six years back, during the swing revival, with all these drummers saying they had the swing feel and the Gene Krupa persona—it was really almost a rockabilly thing. Today's drummers don't *know* that Baby Dodds influenced Gene, or that Gene opened up his drums and played rimshots that were ringing. He actually got a sound and a tone—not like today's drums, where everything is muted. Drummers today have great chops, but they've lost the fact that Krupa was making *music* on his drums."

Caputo does his frighteningly authentic Krupa recreations as solo performances and in his Krupa tribute band. And lately he's been uniting with his friend Jimmy Ford, who does a musical imitation of Buddy Rich. Their "drum battle" speaks volumes about the difference between the two legends. Says Randy, "Jimmy comes out like a roaring lion, with fills all around his set—and people applaud. I'll do this



simple thing, twirl a stick, and then play a single rimshot—but let it ring. People applaud that, too. If I do a little ‘Sing, Sing, Sing’ on the toms, they’re with me. So it’s either taking the audience by force, like Buddy, or taking them *along* because they love what the drummer’s doing, like Gene. It’s just a different avenue.”

Krupa Came Naturally

Caputo didn’t set out to emulate Krupa. In a way, Krupa came to Caputo—and may even have saved his life. Randy explains: “When I was a child, I was hit by a car. My legs were paralyzed and I was extremely disabled. When I was nine, a teacher suggested that maybe if I played bongos I’d learn to write. Drums became my therapy. My mother kept making references to Gene Krupa. I saw *The Gene Krupa Story*, and [actor] Sal Mineo’s love for Krupa was obvious. In my teens, I liked my toms tuned low. Gene’s were low, too, right up until he died in 1973. Gene was always splashing 4/4 time on the hi-hat—and I do that, too. It took me a lot of years to get to the point I’m at now, but it came naturally. It was basically the only way I knew how to play.”

Swing, Swing, Swing

Carrying the Krupa torch hasn’t always been easy. Randy admits that he’s been fired by countless bands that just didn’t *get* it. He’d play at Disneyland and deliver swing, Krupa style. Unfortunately, bandleaders seemed to be after a Stray Cats approach.

“This rock band hired me to do swing,” recalls Randy. “I had to explain to them the tradition and my open sound. They were used to *doom, doom* [imitates damped acoustic drums or electronics]. I got fired. One of the last times we played at the park, I did the traditional Gene Krupa ‘Sing, Sing, Sing’ with the original cowbell break, and got a standing ovation. I got fired again!”

Bent but not broken, Randy heeded his wife’s advice and formed his own Gene Krupa tribute band. Says Randy, “It’s taken me years to get the right musicians and arrangements. Then I teamed up with Jimmy Ford. We’re not making money at this; we do it for love. We have to be respectful of the Krupa and Rich estates. A lot of times, there’ll be an ‘RC’ monogram on the bass drum instead of ‘GK’. We’re hoping Cathy Rich and others will someday help us to

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Randy Caputo

bring back the tradition into today's music—in a respectful way."

To rehearse, Randy and Jimmy face off with their kits in a garage, where dangling microphones compete for space with trashcans and bikes. "If you want to be a Krupa persona," states Randy, "the best tempo is 104 bpm. It's not fast, but it swings. We start at 104 and do a series of quarter-note patterns, followed by 8ths and 16ths. When I'm drumming, Jimmy's backing me up with a hi-hat, and vice versa. We do stick clicking—hitting sticks together in the air—then we go back to our kits and take things up to 138 on the meter to achieve more of a fury. Then it's brushes all around the cymbals. People eat that up because it's visual. It gets to the point where I'm throwing sticks into the air. Then we have a choreographed ending."

"Drummers today have great chops, but they've lost the fact that Krupa was making *music* on his drums."

Showmanship is fine, but musicality is paramount. "That's my passion," Randy stresses. "I want people to remember Randy Caputo—and I'm just a humble servant—as someone who plays *music*, just as Louie Bellson carries on the tradition. It's a matter of people saying, 'Listen to the music in the drums!'"

Drums That Sing

Caputo's kit is Krupa's to a "T," complete with a massive 20" floor tom and a booming 24" bass drum. Adds Randy, "I use a 1947 Slingerland Radio King snare. If I tune that correctly, it gives a tremendous, full sound. Whereas Buddy kept everything really tight, Krupa had everything loose. That makes it an effort to play with chops, because there's not a lot of rebound. There's not one muffler on my entire kit except for an old Rogers damper on the front of my bass drum. A drum like that forces me to play *under* the band. In a Krupa trio with piano and drums, it forces me to play with even more finesse. I tune my bass drum to an F, and it always seems to blend.

"I've been a Zildjian man all my life," continues Randy. "I use 13" A Custom hi-hats because they give a good splash plus a chick sound. Buddy once told me that he loved Gene's 13"s. It took me eight or nine

years to find the right ride: a K Dark ride. Krupa's cymbals were always dark and low. I have a 15" thin vintage cymbal autographed by Armand Zildjian. And on the right of the kit are an 18" crash and an old pang with rivets. From 1969 to '73, Krupa was really getting into that pang. The splash is an 8" paper-thin."

For heads, it's Aquarian American Vintage all around, except on the bass drum, which gets a Remo FiberSkyn 3 batter and an Emperor front. Explains Randy, "The combination gives some oomph without sounding too open, precisely like the effect of the old calfskin heads."

Randy explains how he acquired his Radio King snare. "A guy saw me on *The Lawrence Welk Show* around 1977," he recalls. "He appreciated my Gene Krupa

ability, so he decided to give me this snare drum instead of selling it. Legend has it that this was one of Gene's drums, and that he used it to record the song 'Leave Us Leap' in 1947."

Similarly, the rest of Randy's kit smacks of royalty. "In '77 I realized I needed a good kit, so I ordered a set of Slingerlands," he recalls. "They came with a 'BR' monogram on the bass drum! A few years later I saw Buddy Rich at Disneyland. He said, 'Are you Caputsky? You've got one of my kits. Hang on to it, kid; it's worth its weight in gold.'"

Caputo sits perched on a 24"-high white marine pearl canister throne, custom-made by Jimmy Ford. "When Gene passed away," notes Randy, "he was sitting at 26'." Their seat height may be two inches different, but their sticks are the same. Says Randy, "They're closer to a 5A than a 7A, with a little extra lacquer to give the stick some meat. Cappella made the sticks for Slingerland, and they were stamped 'Gene Krupa Slingerland U.S.A.' What I use now is a Cappella GK wood tip. I found a stick that works for me, so I stick with it."

Randy smiles, realizing he's made a pun, then repeats it, knowing it carries further meaning in his life: "Yeah, stick with it."





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Transmissions From The Heartbeat

The Flaming Lips' Steven Drozd

Story by Adam Budofsky

Photos by Paul La Raia

Like all the masters of psychedelic pop—XTC, The Kinks, Syd Barrett's Pink Floyd—The Flaming Lips blow your mind with the most ordinary of devices.

Oh sure, they've just earned themselves a Grammy for an instrumental called "Approaching Pavonis Mons By Balloon (Utopia Planitia)."

And yes, their work has expanded beyond that of a typical rock band, into obscure areas like audience-controlled boom-box concerts.

It's also true that they dismembered a perfectly good album, *Zaireeka*, into four separate CDs, each featuring its own unique mix of the album's songs. (The only way to listen to the album "complete" is by simultaneously pressing PLAY on four CD players.)

And you would be correct to point out that they are starring in their own science fiction movie.

Okay, maybe Steven Drozd and The Flaming Lips *are* working with a different box of crayons.



Honestly, these seem-to-be eccentrics are really just a bunch of hard-working regular guys, using modest tools: a three- or four-piece drumkit, lots of good-'ol reverb, songs about giraffes and jelly and life and death...maybe a little digital manipulation for good measure.

What *is* unusual is how fertile their collective imagination is, and how attuned their ears are to killer beats and contagious melodies. After almost twenty years, the mainstream has just about caught up with the band. They're regularly found in critical top-10 lists. The rock press constantly tells stories about this or that famous person being a fan. And recent shows have been rescheduled to larger venues due to ticket demand. Wayne Coyne, Michael Ivins, and Steven Drozd have even out-hipped the relentlessly chic Beck—who The Lips opened for *and* backed on a recent tour. Their latest album, *Yoshimi Battles The Pink Robots*, has continued the torrential flood of accolades that began in the late '80s and crested with 1999's *The Soft Bulletin*.

You'll notice we didn't identify the bandmembers by their axe in the previous paragraph. That's because each player in The Flaming Lips is a multi-instrumentalist—notably Drozd, who plays the bulk of guitar and keyboard parts on their records. He also lays down some of the most awesome drumming in modern rock music on those albums. This is a seriously talented guy we're talking about here.

Steven's the first to note the John Bonham influence on his drumming, and it's definitely a good place to start the discussion. First of all, Drozd's rock beats are deeply funky and wildly dynamic, almost always featuring a slithery hi-hat and a playful bass drum approach. Many of his best grooves are captured with a heavy room-mic' approach, giving them a cavernous thunder. But—and this also applies to Bonzo—Steven's *most* important trait is his decision-making ability. Whether you're talking beats or fills, Steven Drozd simply plays cool parts, at the right times, and with the perfect attitude.



It's soundcheck at Manhattan's Roseland ballroom. Tonight's Rock The Vote concert features Vanessa Carlton, Robbie Williams, Public Enemy, and The Flaming Lips.

Let's see, that's a teenage pop phenom, a legendary rap group, a British pop star...and a freaky rock band who once titled an album *A Collection Of Songs Representing An Enthusiasm For Recording...By Amateurs*. In 24 hours, tonight's "amateurs" will be the only musicians in this room taking home a Grammy.

At the moment, though, The Flaming Lips are less concerned with awards than with making sure their stage effects are all in sync. In a little while, a spectacle of film projections, strobe lights, beach balls, fake blood, confetti, and a dozen or so grownups leaping about in furry animal costumes will convert another unsuspecting crowd to The Lips Way. Before that happens, though, we need to sit Steven Drozd down and get to the root of his gargantuan drumming.



MD: You played drums in your dad's band when you were quite young.

Steven: Yeah, I've been playing drums since I was around eight. When I was growing up, my dad had a Czech polka & waltz band. I started playing with them when I was about ten. My dad still plays in a polka band every Friday and Saturday, at a VFW or Knights of Columbus hall. He's been playing from around the age of thirteen—saxophone,



The Other Drummer

Like His Hero, Lips Touring Drummer Kliph Scurlock Was In The Right Place At The Right Time

History repeats, at least as far as the Flaming Lips' drum chair is concerned.

Ten years ago, Steven Drozd replaced Lips drummer Nathan Roberts just in time to record the band's breakout album, *Transmissions From The Satellite Heart*. The previously unknown Drozd found himself in the dreamlike state of playing in one of his favorite bands. Kliph Scurlock knows the feeling. "I've been a *huge* fan for years," shouts the Lips' touring drummer, as Vanessa Carlton soundchecks for tonight's Rock The Vote concert.

Scurlock had been a roadie for The Lips since March of '99. Last June, as the band was getting ready to tour behind their latest album, *Yoshimi Battles The Pink Robots*, they asked Kliph to come onstage and play a cymbal during a British TV performance of Kylie Minogue's hit "Can't Get You Out Of My Head."

A few months later, Kliph got a chance to audition for Beck, who The Lips were opening for and backing up on an upcoming tour. (Drozd was to play guitar and keyboards.) Kliph must have impressed, because he got the gig. "Then on the night of the first show," the drummer recalls, "about twenty minutes before going on, Wayne said, 'We ought to have you play with us too, on the songs Steven doesn't play.' I said, 'Yeah, I'd love to! So...we practice tomorrow?' 'No, just get up there and do it tonight. You'll be fine.'"

Panic time? "Nah," says Kliph, "I'd listened to their records an insane number of times. I knew the arrangements and the gist of the stuff. Though, that's not to say the first few shows weren't kind of rough," he laughs. Soon Scurlock became the full-time live drummer for the entire Beck/Lips tour, one of last year's hottest tickets.

"Since the first time I saw the Lips, Steven has been my favorite drummer," Kliph states. "He plays such awesome parts, I don't want to change much live. When I started playing with them, Steven would sometimes say, 'It actually goes like this,' and I'd be like, 'Oh, *that's* how you do that, you clever bastard.' [laughs]. For instance, I thought the song 'What Is The Light' had delay on it. But it's actually Steven doing a lot of cool sticking. I was like, 'Well, I'll find a way to fake that.'"

What the future brings in the Flaming Lips' world is, as always, anyone's guess. For now, though, Kliph Scurlock says, "I'm having the time of my life, playing with my favorite band. Onstage I'll sometimes look at the set list and go, 'Oh, I love this song.' Then I'll be



Drozd's Flaming Licks

MUSIC KEY

Open	○	C.C.	⊗
H.H.	⊗		
T.T.	⊗		
S.D.	⊗		
F.T.	⊗		
B.D.	⊗		
	○	Ghost Note	

Listen to any Flaming Lips album from the last ten years, and the band's greatest assets become immediately apparent: the unique and quirky songwriting of singer Wayne Coyne, the playful 3D soundscape of The Lips' production style, and the terrific drumming of Steven Drozd. For a band continuously probing alt-pop's boundaries, the importance of the solid and creative Drozd to tie it all together can't be underestimated. Usually his drums are mixed right out front, adding a crucial earthy element that firmly grounds the band and keeps their

songs from flying off into ethereal obscurity.

Drozd is a master at finding the perfect drum sound to enhance each song, and the parts he comes up with are often as important to a tune as melody or lyrics. His versatility in the drum chair allows The Flaming Lips to move in any musical direction they wish. Marching snare drum patterns, hip-hop beats, sweeping tom flourishes, and John Bonham-influenced heavy grooves are all equally under his control. Let's have a look at a few prime examples of Steven's work.



"She Don't Use Jelly," *Transmissions From The Satellite Heart* (1993)

Drozd's first album with The Flaming Lips contained this unlikely Top-40 radio hit. After laying out in the song's verses, his chorus beat changes along with an infectious groove. All of the non-accented snare drum notes here are ghosted, including the rolls.

"Slow Nerve Action," *Transmissions*

This one features an evil distorted drum sound that sets a perfect mood for the song. Steven plays around with the basic groove throughout, slightly swinging his occasional 16th notes. Notice the accents on the hi-hat between the bass and snare hits, which add a cool feel to this pattern.

"When You Smile," *Clouds Taste Metallic* (1995)

Steven's Bonham-styled beat for this track contains delicate ghost notes to enhance the feel, and a nice space for a breath at the end of each measure. This 16th-note pattern works well with the finger-picked guitar in the song's verses.

"The Spiderbite Song," *The Soft Bulletin* (1999)

Interpreting lyrics in a drum part is an art that few drummers attempt. Steven pulls it off with a dash of humor in this song. In the verse, as Wayne Coyne is singing about the spider bite that almost cost The Lips' drummer his arm, Steven breaks out long, heavily manipulated snare rolls that he obviously needs *both* hands to play!

In the song's chorus, Coyne sings, "I was glad that it didn't destroy you," while Steven plays this happy little two-handed brush pattern as if to say, "So am I!"

"Yoshimi Battles The Pink Robots Pt. 2,"

Yoshimi Battles The Pink Robots (2002)

Here's another example of drumming as imagery, as Steven deftly conjures the title battle with a distorted, bombastic drum track for this instrumental. And be sure to listen for all the clever digital "cut & paste" effects throughout the rhythm track.

Ed Breckenfeld



science or fiction?

there is a popular myth about drumheads.

it goes something like this:

before buying a head, take it out of the box

hold it by the rim and tap it to see if it sounds good

by itself...if it sounds good off the drum,

it's bound to sound good when it's on, right?

well, consider this...

a drumhead's film is much like a guitar string in nature.

they're both stretched over a bridge, nut or bearing edge,

and when struck or plucked, vibrate at a certain frequency

which we perceive as pitch.

most other drumheads have a sharp collar,

heat formed into the film which does two things:

it pre-tunes the surface of the head indiscriminately...

and, it creates a node (or dead spot).

more often than not, this collar is not quite centered,

and worse, it forms the surface of the head at an angle to the rim.

then the counter hoop and head sit on the drum crooked.

when you try to tighten it down evenly,

you pull the node into the playing surface,

and pull the playing surface across the edge.

a head like that will never tune up,

no matter how it sounded off the drum.

think of a guitar string, pre-bent at the bridge and nut.

when it's tuned the bend forms a dead spot.

neither string nor head will vibrate freely.

attack heads have a subtle rounded collar.

this puts no pre-tuned false pitch on the drumhead,

no node or dead spot,

and no crooked surface to prevent proper alignment and tuning.

they marry perfectly to any shape of bearing edge.

would you check a guitar string off a guitar to see if it sounds good?

attack heads are loose and slack out of the box

in order to tune correctly when stretched across a bearing edge.

just like a guitar string!

Photo ©1999, Todd V. Wolfson

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TB
TERRY BOZZIO

Steven Drozd

trumpet, trombone. I'll tell you, I just want to win this Grammy tomorrow so I can send it to him, because he'll freak out. He would love that.

Growing up, I was just drum crazy. And my dad, being a musician, thought that was pretty cool. He'd come home and I'd have cardboard boxes or pots and pans, and sticks that I carved off the tree—that old story. So he bought me a bass drum and a snare and a cymbal, and figured if I took to it he'd get some more drums for me. So over the course of a year I got really into it. Before I knew it, the drummer for his band quit and they needed someone really quick. I was practicing that kind of music anyway; he was trying to get me to learn it so I could join the band.

MD: What do you think you learned from that experience?

Steven: I hated it at the time, but playing that kind of music—where it's no fills, no frills—I think that worked to my advantage later. They drilled that into my head: Just play the beat!

My dad had a country band as well, so I also learned how to play standard four-on-the-floor country swing beats. And then on the side I was really into '70s rock, like KISS and Aerosmith. So it was a nice education learning all those things at the same time.

MD: Who was your earliest drumming influence?

Steven: Oh, I was trying to be John Bonham. And then when I was thirteen or fourteen I went through a prog-rock phase and wanted to be Carl Palmer, Neil Peart, Bill Bruford.... And then I discovered U2, new wave, and all that stuff. That's a whole different style of playing than prog-rock.

MD: Did you practice a lot back then?

Steven: I was obsessive about it. Sometimes even before I would go to the drumkit, I would sit with a drum pad in my bedroom. I had this boom box and I'd put on Rush's *Moving Pictures* or whatever, and play along on the pad and with my feet. I'd get as close

"I love the art of soft drums as much as the art of heavy drums."

to the record as possible, trying to figure out the coordination. Then I would set up the drumset and work it out from there.

Today I'm kind of glad I did that, because it's a good way to learn...I hate to use the term "chops," but all the Neil Peart kind of stuff. If I had to try to play Rush's "YYZ" now, there's no way I could. [laughs] It's been so long since I've played that style of drums, with the eight toms and all the cymbals. But when I was fourteen I could play it note-for-note.

MD: How do you think your drumming has changed over the years?

Steven: I guess I never lost the John Bonham thing. I've always loved that. What people don't realize is a lot of his stuff is so subtle. His fills are technically easy in some ways, but they are so tasteful at the same time. I really got into that. Even after I got into prog rock, then new wave, and then grunge, like Soundgarden, Nirvana, and Sonic Youth—just real stripped down, straightforward kind of stuff—I still always liked the John Bonham, Bill Ward kind of drumming. Just heavy-duty.

MD: It all comes around, right?

Steven: It all comes around, yeah. Yes's *Fragile* and the first King Crimson record—I started getting into prog-rock again back in '95 or so, and that was when no one wanted to listen to that stuff.

MD: Do your listening habits find their way into the Lips records?

Steven: The first record I did with The Lips had heavy drums all the way through. But our last couple of records have drums on them that are really light as well. I like all kinds of stuff. I listen to Roberta Flack, Stevie Wonder, Air Supply. I love the art of soft drums as much as the art of heavy drums.

MD: Sometimes engineers and producers ask drummers to play consistently loud, because that's how they can get "their sound."

Steven: Right. But it really doesn't work that way for us. Producer Dave Fridmann has been working with The Lips since 1989, and with him it's not about you accommodating him, it's about him accommodating you. If we have an idea to make the drums tiny, he's never going to say, "You've got to play harder," because he knows you are trying to create a sound by playing that lightly. So you never even have to play that game with him.

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Steven Drozd

Same thing with over-the-top distorted drums. Dave never asks me to tone it down or anything. I'll be like, "How can we make this heavier? Can you make it more distorted?" He'll put up a couple of mic's and make it sound great. On the other side, if I want to play as light as possible with towels and duct tape over all the drums, he'll make that work.

MD: You've got a great sense of history in your playing. You've obviously listened to a lot of music in your time. What drummer do you think of when someone mentions, say, the '60s?

Steven: Ringo Starr. To me, he's the first real rock drummer. Think about the records they were making in '63, '64. He was the first guy to play the straight four on the floor kind of thing. And the way they recorded was interesting too, because before The Beatles, on late-'50s, early-'60s recordings, you never heard the bass drum. It was always about the ride or hi-hat or snare. That really changed with Ringo.

I also love Charlie Watts during the '68-'72 period. He honed a certain type of rock drumming then. There's also Ginger Baker, who sort of preceded John Bonham in a lot of ways.

MD: How about the '70s?

Steven: For my money it's Bill Ward, on the first four Black Sabbath records. It's heavy, but it's super fast. I love that stuff. And I always loved the way they recorded Joey Kramer's drums on the first four Aerosmith records. It's just straight rock drumming, but songs like "Back In The Saddle," that's great heavy drums. There's Bill Bruford on the first few Yes records too.

Then you've got punk rock. That Sex Pistols album—the rhythm section is stellar. They might be amateurs, but it rocks, it's got energy. Paul Cook was a great drummer. It's funny, because, like I said, I was so into Rush, but when I tried to figure out some of the Sex Pistols stuff, it would throw me off because I would play like a standard bass drum beat, but he'd be playing all these notes, pushing it forward. An extreme example of that kind of drumming is the drummer for The Damned, Rat Scabies. That song "New Rose," I think that's single bass drum too. *Pow! Pow! Pow! Pow!* And Topper Headon from The Clash—still underrated. I think he played most of the instruments on "Rock The Casbah," like the piano part.

MD: Sounds like a man after your heart.

Steven: Yeah, or Phil Collins—although I don't sing too well. I like the first three Genesis records after Peter Gabriel quit. They had a weird thing going, like prog-rock but also like prototype new wave or something. I still think Phil Collins is a great drummer. His drums sound amazing, especially between '78 and '82.

MD: What songs do you hear and think, "Boy, I would love to have played on that song"?

Steven: Well, all the Led Zeppelin stuff, half the Motown stuff.... I don't know who played drums on the Gladys Knight & The Pips records, but it's some of my favorite drumming of all time. You know "Neither One Of Us Wants To Be The First To Say Goodbye," that early '70s R&B/soul stuff? I love all that. And I wish I'd played drums on Stevie Wonder's *Innervisions* record. That's him playing drums on that. I really like that song "Golden Lady." It's those fluid, jazzy sorts of things...I don't know how he does that stuff. You know, Marvin Gaye was originally a drummer too, before he became a lead singer.

MD: Peter Gabriel too.

Steven: I didn't know that. Steven Tyler was originally a drummer too...oh, here's another song I wish I'd played drums on: "Wichita Lineman" by Glen Campbell. That's the best drumming ever. Do you know that one? Check out the brushes. It's so smooth.

MD: Was that Hal Blaine?

Steven: It might have been. He played on thousands of great records. *[At this point Lips touring drummer Kliph Scurlock enters the room.]* Hey, you should ask Kliph that question.

MD: What song would you love to have played drums on?

Kliph: "Me And My Arrow" by Harry Nilsson. That's a classic.

Steven: There you go!

Kliph: Ringo on The Beatles' "Lovely Rita," that's another one.

MD: Steven, what Lips track are you most proud of?

Steven: I would say "Feel Yourself Disintegrate." I really like the drums on that. It's not heavy.

Kliph: No, but it's *tasty*.

Steven: I think we were listening to a lot of Marvin Gaye at the time, like *What's Goin' On*. We were like, How can we re-create that sort of thing?

MD: How about "Slow Nerve Action"?

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Steven Drozd

Kliph: Yeah! That's wicked.

Steven: That's the classic heavy beat.

MD: The combination of the sound and the part you're playing is perfect.

Steven: That's part of the deal. You can have the best drummer in the world, and the coolest drumming, but if he doesn't *sound* cool, you lose the game. And that's what sucks so bad about a lot of recordings of the past ten years. This is a generalization, but it seems like a lot of bands don't really care what their drums sound like. That's where I'm lucky, because Wayne and Michael and Dave Fridmann are as obsessive about the drum sound as I am. So we really work on it together instead of it being like, C'mon guys, give me another couple hours to get it right.

MD: Is there any equipment you just can't do without?

Steven: The great Ludwig chrome snares. Those are just the best I've ever played. But sometimes they're not very durable for the road. For a while I was playing an Ayotte on tour. And I had a Gibraltar free-floating type of snare that's tough. You can beat the crap out of it. For the road, you get whatever is going to last. But for the studio I like the Ludwig snare and old Gretsch drums. I'm

Music From Big Pink

That groovy drumset you see in the photos here is Kliph Scurlock's clear pink acrylic set, made by Bill Cardello of C&C Custom Drums in Kansas City, Kansas. Cardello is an expert vintage drum restorer who once made a custom white marine pearl set for Carl Palmer. The drum builder describes the sound of Kliph's kit, which he designed as a "Bonham-esque" setup, in these terms: "Loud, loud, loud."



In order to control that sound, Bill used 2.3 mm triple-flanged hoops and cut an "experimental" rounded bearing edge from the outside in, so that the edge is on the inside of the (very thick) shells. The set consists of a 26" bass drum, a 14" snare, a 14" rack tom, and 16" and 18" floor toms. (Kliph leaves the 14" and 18" home when he's touring with The Lips.) The cymbals are Paiste 2002s—15" Sound Edge hi-hats and a 22" heavy crash.

not really that particular, though.

MD: You've spoken about making adjustments for certain songs. Are there any elements of your sound that remain fairly consistent?

Steven: Not really. On "Feel Yourself Disintegrate," for instance, I was playing an old Ludwig snare, an old Gretsch bass drum, and a pair of old Zildjian A hi-hats. I put towels on the drums and used the lightest sticks I could find. In a situation like that we'd set up all this baffling and make it totally dead, and then put a bunch of mic's

really close to the drums. Dave is so good at that kind of stuff.

MD: How about tuning?

Steven: Often what we do is, I'll play for five or ten minutes, Dave will record it, then I'll come back in the control room and we'll listen to it. At that point it'll be, Okay, I should tune up the snare drum some more, or whatever. On the heavy stuff, you just crank the drums up and beat the crap out of them—end of story. That stuff is a lot easier than people think it is. It's the light, soft-touch drums that are harder to do.

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MD: I noticed during soundcheck that you keep the beater against the bass drum head.

Steven: I've always done that. It just stays there until I hit it again. Do a lot of people do it the other way?

MD: Some people say that the "proper" way is to let the beater bounce off of the head.

Steven: I've always just done it like that. And that's probably because I grew up playing with the pillow and the towel in the bass drum. If you grow up with nothing in the bass drum, you could see how you would want the beater to come off the head. But with all that padding it doesn't matter.

MD: How about seat height? Do you have trouble with your back at all?

Steven: I think I do now, because for years, just because I thought it looked cool, I wanted to sit as high as possible over the drums. But then that in turn made me sit hunched over. So now I'm paying a price for that.

MD: Do you use ear protection?

Steven: I've never done it, and now I'm regretting it. There was like eight years there where I had two 24" crash/rides, and the other guys had two amps each.... So my ears, especially the right side because of the cymbals, are totally blasted out. I get a weird ring now and again.

MD: How about stage monitors?

Steven: I always have a big floor wedge on the left if I can.

MD: Are you hearing an even mix of everybody's instruments?

Steven: Yeah, pretty much.

MD: What sticks do you use?

Steven: For the heavy stuff I use these Vic Firth Tommy Lee signature sticks, which I think are called Classic Metal now. They're really long and wide, with wood tips. You can really pound with them. But if you aren't hitting hard they don't sound very good. For the light songs I'll use whatever thin sticks are laying around.

MD: And heads?

Steven: I've always been a Remo guy—Ambassadors on the toms, coated Emperor on the snare.

MD: On *Yoshimi*, you further explore electronic manipulation, digital editing, and the like, which you began to get into on *The Soft Bulletin*. Have you found that getting into electronics has affected the way you look at rhythm in general?

Steven: Totally. I'm getting into it even more. I've got this program called Reason, which is all electronic drum

machines and things. I don't plug a keyboard in and play it, I just type the music in manually, which is a completely new way of making music that I just love.

The thing about electronic stuff is you can be really subtle with it, and you can do so many great things. Any time I meet a drummer who's like, "Oh, drum machines and electronics and computers, that's bull," I just can't believe that anyone would say that. Here is this whole new realm of sound. You'd think drummers would embrace it. It's like, how can you be a drummer and not like Aphex Twin? Some of the beats that he creates are just amazing. Then there's The Chemical Brothers, some of that Björk stuff....

MD: Are there specific types of electronic gear that your average drummer should learn more about? Should he or she go out and buy a delay pedal and figure out how that works?

Steven: Well, it depends. Some people are purists, and that's cool. If you just want to play drums, there are plenty of instances where the other players will worry about the other stuff. But I think that every drummer should at least learn how a drum machine works, or plug-ins for these great music programs. I guess I've always wanted to play more than just drums. I learned to play guitar and keyboard to see what's out there to make cool sounds with. I'm just interested in that stuff, so it never seems like I'm "working" to learn it.

MD: "Headphones Theme To Infinity," from the *Flyin' Traps* drummer album, was your first solo recording under your own name. What did you learn from that experience?

Steven: That was cool because there was no

"You can have the best drummer in the world, and the coolest drumming, but if he doesn't sound cool, you lose the game."

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Steven Drozd

one else who was going to say, Well, we should do this and this...and I didn't have to worry about lyrics. It was like, Let's just make this weird sound-scape. I guess it was a reflection of what I was getting into at the time, with strings and orchestrated stuff. More than anything else it was just encouraging to me: "I can do stuff that can be interesting." I think Wayne and Michael heard that and were like, Wow, we should try and go in this direction and see what happens. So that sort of led to that kind of stuff appearing on *The Soft Bulletin*.

MD: How about the first album you played on, *Transmissions From The Satellite Heart*? Was it a steep learning curve?

Steven: I'd been in recording studios a couple times before, but that was the first time where it was like, Wow, we're in a real studio, I'm in my favorite band—let's go make this crazy music! Wayne and I had already been writing songs at that point, and there are a couple songs on the record that I wrote the music for, so it was just great to get in there and see how all that worked.

MD: Which songs did you write?

Steven: "Chewin The Apple Of Your Eye," "Pilot Can At The Queer Of God," "Slow

Nerve Action...."

MD: Didn't you play guitar on that one too?

Steven: Yeah. I was encouraged from the get-go by the rest of the band. A lot of times drummers don't get that luxury. It's like that classic joke: What's the last thing the drummer said before he was kicked out of the band? "Hey guys, I've got a new song!" So it was really encouraging.

MD: The band has worked in mediums outside of music—film, the boom box experiments.... Has any of that informed your music-making?

Steven: Oh, sure it has. When you start making music that's meant to be played on forty boom boxes, it kind of frees you up. "Hey, let's try twenty ambulance sirens mixed with car-crash sounds." The music we're making for this movie we're working on, for instance, is specifically cinematic, sci-fi meets orchestral music. Working on that will somehow affect our next projects.

MD: So what is on the horizon?

Steven: We just did a couple of B-sides, because we've got some singles coming out and Warners needed some extra stuff. So Wayne and I went down to Oklahoma City to Trent Bell's place, which is actually

where I did "Headphones Theme."

I'm also working on a few other things besides The Lips. My favorite of those is with the actor Adam Goldberg. He played the Jewish guy in *Saving Private Ryan* and the geeky guy who gets beat up at the keg party in *Dazed And Confused*. He's a music freak and a big Flaming Lips fan, and he's become a friend of mine over the last year. He's directing a film he wrote the screenplay for called *I Love Your Work*. It's got this great cast—Christina Ricci, Giovanni Ribisi—and the footage I saw looks great. He asked me if I would do some music for it.

Then Kliph and I have another band called The Paris Gun, which we are trying to get off the ground. I'm going to play keyboards and guitar and sing lead, Kliph is going to be the drummer, and Greg Kurstin, who was the keyboard player on the Beck tour with us, is going to do keyboards. And Corey, The Lips' "animal wrangler," is going to be the bass player. We're going to try to record a single for Sub Pop. Imagine Black Sabbath meets Aphex Twin meets Mahler or something. Then with The Lips we'll just be busy for the next couple of years doing our thing.

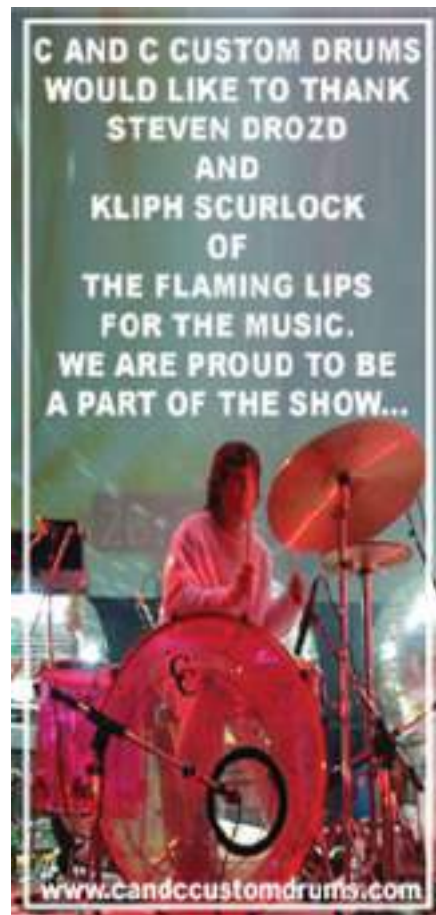


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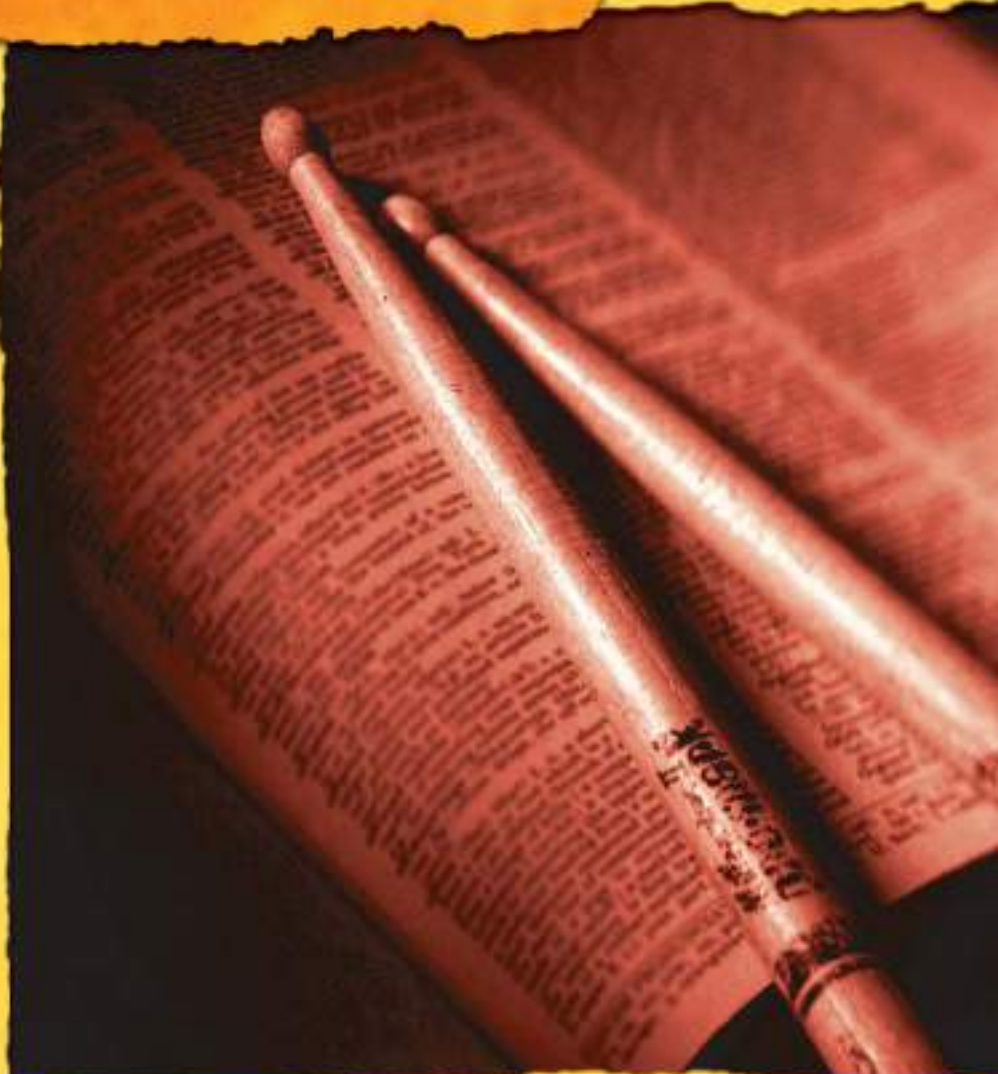


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New Paiste Dimensions Models, Plus Lines, And Cymbal Protector



Paiste has added seven new models to the Dimensions series. The new CuSn8 Bronze models represent the first use of Paiste's new "Sonic Texture Formula" in professional-class hand-made cymbals. According to the company, the patent-pending manual surface treatment "brings out rich, intricate harmonics in a cymbal to create a fuller, more complex sound."

The Medium Raw Crash, Medium Heavy Wild Ride, and Medium Crush Ride are "powerful, cutting cymbals with

advanced character for modern, progressive application in the rock, metal, and punk genres." The Cool Medium Ride, Deep Full Ride, Medium Thin Full Crash, and Medium Heavy Crunch Hats are "musical, complex cymbals with sophisticated character for wide-ranging modern applications and genres." Retail prices range from \$282 for a 16" crash to \$462 for a 22" ride and \$512 for a pair of 15" hi-hats.

Paiste's "Sonic Surface Texture" technique has also been applied to the company's entire value-class program, resulting in the new 802 Plus, 502 Plus, 402 Plus, and 302 Plus series. In a further move to enhance their competitive position in the hotly contested market for lower-priced cymbals, Paiste is lowering the pricing of the value-class program between 10% and 15%.

Finally, as the name implies, Paiste Cymbal Protector guards against oxidization, which over time causes discoloration and tarnishing. Regular application of the product seals the surface of the cymbal with an ultra-thin coating and thus prevents the chemical reaction between metal and oxygen. Cymbal Protector also repels other contaminants, such as fingerprints and sweat. The product has been especially formulated to preclude any adverse effect on the sound of a cymbal. It sells for \$18 per bottle. (800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com.

Class From Clubs To Concert Halls

New Pearl Masters Series Finishes And Concert Snare Drums

Pearl calls its new Masters Series Emerald Fade finish "a subtle green fade covered in high gloss lacquer, one of the deepest paint schemes ever to grace a drumset." Also new is Diamond Burst, described as "a glistening metallic silver with a subtle black fade covered with a lustrous hi-gloss lacquer." Masters Series kits include MMX, MRX, MHX, and the all-new MSX Masters RetroSpec models. The line offers choices in shell construction (maple, birch, or mahogany) and hardware (chrome, satin chrome, black chrome, or gold), MasterCast die-cast hoops, Pearl's OptiMount mounting system, and stainless-steel tension rods.

On the orchestral side, Pearl's Concert Series snare drums combine the look, sound, and innovation of a high-end drum with a price said to be "well within school budget reach." Features include a 7.5-mm 100% maple shell, classic-style tube lugs, 2.3-mm SuperHoop II rims, and Remo Renaissance heads. Coated snare cable and stainless steel snare cable are angle-mounted together on a single SR-017 snare strainer. This reportedly emulates graduated tension and provides excellent volume and extreme sensitivity while maintaining a constant, full-bodied orchestral snare timbre. Drums are available in Natural Maple or Piano Black high-gloss lacquer finishes. The 5½x14 size lists for \$599; the 6½x14 is priced at \$629.

(615) 833-4477, www.pearldrums.com.



Put Your Mic' Where Your Mouth Is

Shure Beta 54 Headworn Vocal Mic'

Shure's new Beta 54 headworn vocal mic' is available in wireless and hardwired configurations. The ultra-lightweight unit has a supercardioid design said to deliver "premium Beta sound, superior ambient rejection, and maximum gain-before-feedback." It also features a smooth response tailored expressly for vocals. The mic' is outfitted with a low-output cartridge enabling it to handle extremely high sound pressure levels (149 dB SPL maximum). It's offered in black or tan, and comes with a snap-fit windscreens, detachable boom mount, and flexible, fully adjustable headband. It lists for \$594.65. (847) 866-2200, www.shure.com.



East Meets West

Vic Firth Akira Jimbo Signature Sticks And Orchestral Series Mallets

Japanese drum star Akira Jimbo is recognized for his unique playing style and intricate technique. His stick is 16" long and .565" in diameter, with a teardrop tip and a tapered butt for optimum cymbal definition. It lists for \$13.50 per pair.



Firth's Orchestral Series offers six mallets designed for xylophone and seven designed for bells. With rattan handles and a wide range of head materials, the mallets are also said to be an outstanding choice for marching band and drum & bugle corps use. Retail prices range from \$31 to \$35 per pair. (781) 326-3455, www.vicfirth.com.

Official Timekeeper LT Lug Lock Tempo Ref

Like its predecessor, the Beat Bug, LT Lug Lock's Tempo Ref serves as a tempo monitor, indicating the tempo being played by a drummer as it is being played. This allows the drummer to achieve consistent tempo without being "locked" to a metronomic click. However, the Ref goes beyond the Beat Bug's capabilities, also providing a data bank of sixty-six programmable pre-set tempos for song count-offs. The unit is completely self-contained and invisible to an audience. Only a 1" square area touches a drumhead. External triggering capability provides additional versatility. With a high-intensity LED digital display and a high-speed microprocessor for extreme accuracy, the unit can also be used as a general-purpose metronome. The Tempo Ref can be ordered direct or through local dealers. It's priced at \$99.95. (800) 981-7842, www.luglock.com.



Lighten Up

Gauger Percussion RIMS Alloy Side Plates

With the addition of new Alloy Side Plates, RIMS Alloy suspension mounts are now made completely of lightweight aluminum. The new plates weigh only 3 oz., a third of the weight of the original steel models. A new high-density gasket allows the user to select only the hole pattern needed to fit his or her drum hardware. No other holes are seen in the side plate once the mounting hardware is in place. The new plates are available in Platinum Luster or Black Anodized finishes; colors are available as special orders. Alloy Side plates are available only on new RIMS Alloy systems, or as retro-fit items (\$19.95) to owners of RIMS Alloy mounts that currently have steel plates. (952) 933-8497, www.gaugerpercussion.com.



Sticking To The Street New Marching Vater Products

New snare drumsticks in the Marching Vater product line include the wood-tipped MV-2, MV-7, MV-10, MV-11, and MV-20 models (\$11.85), as well as the nylon-tipped MV-13 (\$12.30). Also new is the MV-M20 soft marimba mallet with a hard rubber core, birch handles, and 100% blue wool yarn (\$39.90). Finally, the MV-M42 (\$35.90) is a birch-handled xylophone and bell mallet with graduated heads for effortless projection and speed. (781) 767-1877, www.vater.com.

Ever Heard Of Afro-German? Sonor African And Afro-Cuban Drums

Sonor's African Kpanlogo, available in 10" (\$279.95) and 11" (\$304.95) head sizes, draws heavily from traditional Ghanaian designs, with a conga-like wood shell decorated in black and white animal prints. Water buffalo skin heads use a tuning system made of rounded steel, so as to combine tradition with playing comfort. The drums create a sound close to that of a djembe or a conga, and at 68 cm tall (approximately 2' 3") they're accessible for younger players.

For those seeking more traditional Afro-Cuban congas, Sonor offers Cubano fiberglass congas and bongos. The two-colored (red/white or brown/white) congas are available in



11" (\$249.95) and 11³/₄" (\$269.95)

head sizes, with traditional tuning systems and buffalo or optional Remo FiberSkyn heads. The belly of each drum is enlarged for a powerful sound. Bongos (\$189.95) are available in white and come with the same tuning system and choice of heads.

Sonor's Street Congas are based on the design of the Cuban baku, as well as the timbal. Available in 10" (\$169.95) and 11" (\$179.95) head sizes, the drums are similar to the company's Cubano congas in construction and features, but feature a tapered, straight-sided shell. Special sound-holes at the base of the drums help them produce a full sound and tone when played seated, making them appropriate for drum circles, samba groups, and children's use. The drums come with a carrying strap; an adjustable stand is also available.

(804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com, www.sonor.de.



The New Force Field Sonor Force Series Upgrades

Sonor's upgraded Force 2003 set now has a Wax Natural finish and an extended Turbo bass drum depth of 17¹/₂" on all models. The new kits also feature the T.A.R. (Total Acoustic Resonance) mounting system on all toms. The system is affixed to two tuning lugs, thus avoiding any contact directly with the drumshell. The kits are available in three setup configurations (at \$995), and come with 200 Series hardware. The snare drums feature new throw-offs. And to make life easy, Sonor has developed a new Multi Drum Key that accepts square-headed *and* slotted tension rods.

For owners of existing Force 2001 and 3001 kits, Sonor offers the TAR System separately as a retro-fit upgrade "for improved resonance and volume." Three sizes (each priced at \$32.50) are available: 8" to 13" (for 2001 and 3001 kits), 14" (for 2001 kits), and 14" to 16" (for 3001 kits). (804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com, www.sonor.de.



When Mambo Was King

Latin Percussion Giovanni Palladium Series Congas

LP's Giovanni Palladium Series Congas celebrate the 1950s and early '60s, when New York City's Palladium club was the focus of Latin jazz orchestras. The drums are constructed of natural ash "for tone, durability, and elegant looks." The 32"-tall drums come in 9¾" requinto (\$775), 11¾" conga (\$790), 12½" tumba (\$815), and 14" super tumba (\$840) sizes. Four steel bands encircle each drum for a historic look, but also for strength. The drums are fitted with natural rawhide heads, extended-collar Comfort Curve II rims, and Galaxy hardware. They're said to yield "a full palette of tones, from crisp highs to resonant lows, replicating the timbral range of vintage drums but with modern strength and roadworthiness.

(973) 478-6903, www.lpmusic.com.



Pounding The Pavement

Zildjian Stadium Series Mallets



Four new mallet designs have been added to Zildjian's Stadium Series. They feature red stained select hickory shafts and were designed by marching experts Mark Thurston (WGI director), Lamar Burkhalter (Percussion One, The NFL's Houston Texans), and Mike Nevin (Colorado State University).

The line includes five sizes of Projection Bass Drum Mallets designed for volume and clear articulation. They're available in matched pairs and feature wound high-durability synthetic yarn on tapered shafts for durability and feel. Retail prices range from \$36 to \$44 per pair.

The Concert Bass Drum model features a synthetic yarn-wound head on an oversized core, mounted on a handle with a rubber bumper on its end for improved grip. The mallet is also applicable for use on gongs. Retail price: \$40 per pair.

The four models of timpani mallets are mounted on 16"-long shafts. The Soft, Medium, and Hard models feature progressively sized, weather-resistant synthetic felt oval heads for clear tonality indoors and outdoors. The wood-head model features a 1½" round maple head for precise articulation. Retail price for the wood head model is \$30; felt head models list for \$42 per pair.

Tenor Projection mallets have the natural feel of wood with an angled-cut, cartwheel-style head for clear and dynamic tenor drum playing. Retail price is \$30 per pair. (781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.

From The Other Side Of The World

Mastro Drums

Australia's Mastro Drums offers a 7x14 Orchestral Snare model with a 2 mm-thick polished bronze shell, with eight or ten lugs and gold chrome hardware. The snare features a double strainer, a fully adjustable butt, a customized snare bed to accommodate Mastro's own orchestral snare wires, and specially shaped steel hoops to allow the wires to tension properly. Retail price is \$1,850 (Australian).

Mastro's 5x14 Copper Snare Drum has a 3-mm shell, ten lugs, gold chrome hardware including die-cast hoops, and an adjustable strainer and butt. Tom-toms feature a free-floating design, and are available in double- or single-headed versions in sizes from 6x8 to 14x14. Bronze, brass, and copper 2-mm shells are offered, with swirl, brushed, or clear polished finishes.

All components on Mastro drums (hoops, strainer, butt, claws, lugs, rods, snare wires, etc.) are manufactured by the company. Each drum is hand-finished and polished to a deep, mirror-like gloss.

(Australia) www.mastrosnaredrums.com, (US) (808) 323-3315, www.jagsentertainment.com.



And What's More



▶ **PEARL PERCUSSION**'s PPC-120 Practice Conga is a highly mobile instrument designed for the percussion student on the go. It comes complete with a leg strap and an instructional video hosted by master percussionist Glen Caruba. If you're a beginning conga player, the video will school you in many of the instrument's basic rhythms and patterns. Retail price is \$59. (615) 833-4477, www.pearldrums.com.

▶ **MTC DRUMSHOP**'s Cake BQE snare drum (named for the notoriously clogged Brooklyn/Queens Expressway near the Cake factory in Brooklyn) is a 6x13 drum with a four-ply beech shell with "extremely sharp bearing edges for more attack and crispness." Whereas Cake drums used to be available exclusively in yellow, the new model features custom lacquers with an environmentally friendly water-based polyurethane top coat. Retail price is \$299. (718) 963-2777, nycdrums@aol.com.



▶ **SMART PEDALS** has improved its heel-driven bass drum pedal design to include a removable platform that stops the heel at a higher level, as well as a heel bar for better feel and positioning. The pedal is priced at \$350. (905) 545-0992, www.homestead.com/playsmart/pedals.html.

▶ **MIKE BALTER MALLETS** has a new 20-page color catalog, showcasing the company's product line. Included are new products for 2003, including Mushroom Head and Contemporary Marimba models, along with Universal and Shadow series mallets. (847) 541-5777, www.mikebalter.com.



▶ *Primary Handbook For Timpani*, by Garwood Whaley, is a book/CD package from **MEREDITH MUSIC** designed for the beginner at any age. It includes tuning studies, technical exercises, solo studies, and basic timpani information. The play-along CD can be used as a lesson aid or for self-instruction. The package is distributed by Hal Leonard Publications, and sells for \$14.95. (414) 774-3630, www.halleonard.com.

▶ **WESTONE**'s custom-fit in-ear monitors have always been available in a variety of colors and finishes. Now the Westone Custom Art Shop can create a totally customized monitor faceplate. Thirty-five "stock" designs are available at www.westone.com/music/custom_art.html, but virtually any image not protected under copyright and trademark laws can be utilized. There is a slight upcharge for the Custom Art Shop option, which is available on Westone's ES1 and ES2 custom-fit in-ear monitors. Artwork designed from scratch will also incur an additional charge. (800) 525-5071, www.westonelabs.com.



▶ **BIG FISH AUDIO**'s *Tower Of Funk—Classic Funk And R&B Drum Loops* is a two-CD set offering 800 blazing grooves and fills that capture the essence of David Garibaldi's legendary style. Tracks were digitally recorded using a combination of choice microphones and tube analog processors. This is a comprehensive loop and sample library by one of the most influential and most imitated funk drummers in history. The package is available at a list price of \$99. (818) 768-6115, www.bigfishaudio.com.

▶ **AUDIO-TECHNICA**'s AT3060 tube microphone operates on standard 48V phantom power (rather than a separate power supply and cable), making it as easy to set up and use as a standard condenser microphone. The unit's large-diameter diaphragm cardioid condenser element is said to deliver high sensitivity and smooth sound with low overall noise levels. Meanwhile, a precision-machined, nickel-plated brass acoustic baffle provides enhanced element stability and optimizes sensitivity.

The AT3060 includes the AT8458 shock mount for superior isolation, and comes with a protective pouch. Retail price is \$599. (330) 686-2600, www.audio-technica.com.





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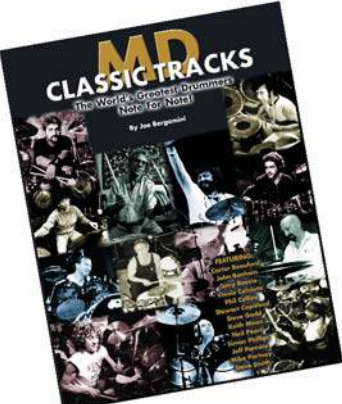
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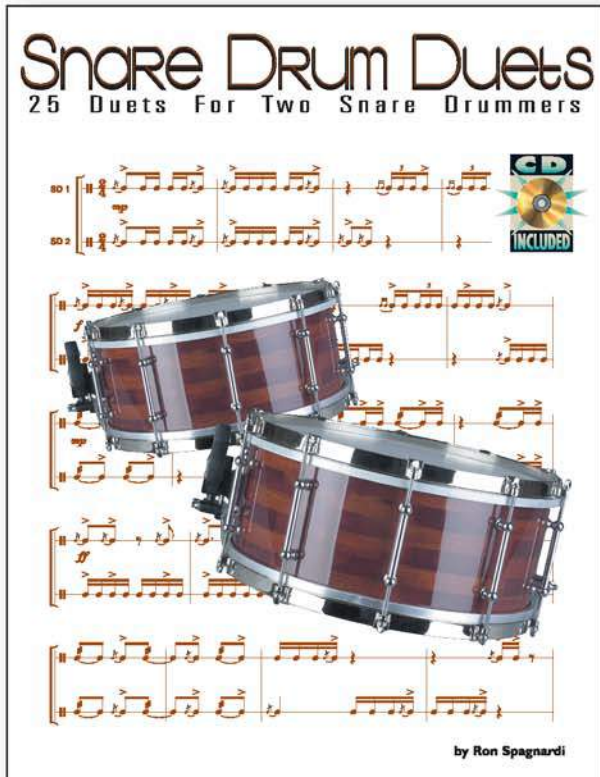
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Willie B. Jones III

Twenty-four-year-old Willie Jones began playing drums at the age of three, and was performing for local church choirs by seven. At ten he was asked to go on tour with The Gospel Keynotes, but missed the gig because his mother thought he was too young to tour. Opening for Maynard Ferguson at the age of fifteen steered Willie toward jazz and big band playing. He ultimately developed a flashy yet always musical playing style that he exhibits to this day. His demo video and CD both give clear indications of the joy and enthusiasm he feels for drumming and for music in general.



Willie's playing style include elements of funk, rock, Latin, reggae, pop, alternative, fusion, Afro-Cuban, country, and Gospel. He cites influences like Dennis Chambers, Art Blakey, Dave Weckl, Steve Gadd, and Buddy Rich. These influences have helped him attain a skill level that earned him a Midwest Regional win in the 2002 Guitar Center Drum-Off. He's working on a solo project (composing, singing, and playing keyboards as well as drums), touring with reggae artist Ashaka, recording with several upcoming artists, and lining up a clinic tour for the balance of 2003.

Mark Sweetman

Mark Sweetman is a Toronto native transplanted to Philadelphia, where he is active in that city's bustling jazz scene. The leader of his own quartet, Mark has two CDs to his credit. The latest, *All Paths Lead To One* (www.markmuse@aol.com), has received acclaim from several major jazz magazines. Mark himself was recently featured in Philadelphia's *All About Jazz* bimonthly jazz newspaper. The group has opened for Patty LaBelle on several occasions (the only jazz group ever to do so), and will be performing with her in Jamaica this year.

Mark's playing style and energetic, always-listening approach conjures up some of the great jazz drummers of the past. He's been described by critics as "an architect of the modal and avant-garde styles." He's taking his skills back into the studio this year to record a John Coltrane "remembrance" CD. Also in the works is a more street/funk-oriented project that involves taking bass and horn parts from past CDs and introducing hip-hop ideas. As Mark puts it, "I'll keep a real jazz feel while introducing a more funky background. Should be real cool!"



Danny Raymond

Danny Raymond is a multi-threat drummer. As a performer, he's worked at Orlando's Disney World for the past twelve years, playing in such acts as Da Jammitors (on trash cans and "utility" percussion items) and The Hollywood Hitmen and Hollywood Brass (on drumset). He also plays with a freelance jazz/fusion group called Surface Tension.

As an educator, Danny was the percussion caption head at Dr. Phillips High School in Orlando the past three years, and has been a consultant for the Boston Crusaders and Syracuse Brigadiers drum corps. As a teacher, he provides weekly private instruction to over twenty students.

Danny is also active as a clinician, parlaying his background as a Drum Corps Associates snare-drumming champion as well as a drumset player into a varied presentation. He's appeared at PAS "days of percussion" and in-store clinics

across the US and in Japan, sponsored by Pro-Mark, Dynasty Percussion, and Grover Pro Percussion. And finally, Danny is an author, with several published snare-drum compositions to his credit (including "The Matrix" in Pro-Mark's rudimental solo book *Ziggadabuzz*.)

Danny lists his goal as being "to succeed in a responsible and challenging opportunity as a clinician/performer, and thereby allow myself to use and demonstrate my knowledge and playing abilities."



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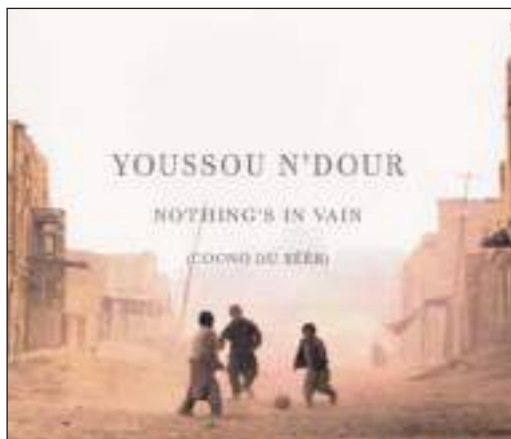


Women Who Rock

9 Youssou N'Dour Nothing's In Vain (Coono Du Reer) (Nonesuch)

Afropop monarch Youssou N'Dour's second Nonesuch release is a masterpiece. Among sprawling acoustic settings with streams of exotic strings, diamond-soled Europop, and crankin' mbalax jams, the djembes, sabars, and tamas crack with authority and immediacy, courtesy of master percussionists **MBAYE DIEYE FAYE**, **ASSANE THIAM**, **JACO LARGENT**, and **DOUDOU N'DIAYE ROSE & Troupe**. On kit, Dakar's top dawgs **ABDOULAYE LO** and **YOUSOU CAMARA** bring it fierce, straight, and sweet, while for his cameo **MANU KATCHÉ** delivers a stingin' pop groove with characteristic grace. And on five tracks, ex-Cirque Du Soleil batteur **ALAIN BERGÉ** proves he's the ideal drummer for N'Dour's international exploits: respectful and knowledgeable enough to color inside the box, crafty—and cheeky—enough to know where and when he can scribble a "Wow," "Golly," or "Holy Crap!"

Seth Cashman

**7** King Crimson

The Power To Believe (Sanctuary Records Group)

Robert Fripp and the gang return to explore their patented head-spinning metal, where interlocking guitar patterns meet flip-flopping backbeats to form the most strictly regimented chaos going. Of course, this being the ever-dynamic KC, there's plenty of hushed elegance to contrast all that distortion. **PAT MASTELOTTO** continues to fuse acoustic and electronic percussion, as he grows more comfortable with his role in the band he grew up idolizing. Pat loves springing surprises like shifting accents within relatively simple beats. It's a



time-tested Crimson trick, but Pat does it with extra force. And his techno workout on the aptly titled "Dangerous Curves" is alone worth the price of admission. **Michael Parillo**

7 We're A Happy Family:

A Tribute To The Ramones (Columbia)

The Ramones were so influential and beloved that this disc easily could have been a massive box set. As is, the album packs a diverse array of intriguing interpretations, as well as some killer drumming. **Rob Zombie** unleashes an industrial-flavored "Blitzkrieg Bop" on which **JOSH FREESE**'s chops crackle and pop beautifully. You can imagine the feverish look on drummer **LARS ULRICH**'s face when **Metallica** ripped through a snarling, booming "53rd & 3rd." Later, the Ramones' New York neighbors **KISS** offer "Do You Remember Rock 'N' Roll Radio" with rousing dual vocals and a hefty rhythm section. And while **Green Day** and **Rancid**'s punk shows a direct Ramones influence, **Marilyn Manson**, **Garbage**, and **Tom Waits** do a terrific job funneling their unusual styles into the fold. Cool liner notes from Stephen King, too.

Jeff Perlah

**7** Spiral Prior Art (independent)

Drummer **BOB GATZEN**, whose left-field sense of design resulted in the Drum Frame, is running nine out of ten until his friends come knocking. His synth patches are intriguing, as are the gaunt timbres he extracts from various sound sculptures.

More important, this is a collection of real songs, graced by Tom Majesty's nimble guitar and interspersed with drum solos. Throughout, Gatzen displays a hip sense of humor. (Check out "Capacity.") Nothing against guests **DENNIS CHAMBERS**, **TONY ROYSTER JR.**, **WILL KENNEDY**, or **BILLY ASHBAUGH**, it's just that they diffuse the focus. Gatzen would have been enough: He's *that* good. (www.creativespecialprojects.com)

T. Bruce Wittet

8 Charlie Hunter Quintet

Right Now Move (Ropeadope)

A quick glance at Charlie Hunter shows a man with a guitar. Then why are you hearing a bass and a Hammond organ? Well, that's just his *thang*—to simultaneously coax a stunning variety of tones and rhythms from his custom eight-string. Hunter's new band, which includes horns and harmonica, specializes in funk and Latin grooves. **DEREK PHILLIPS** plays impeccably, with a deep pocket and a spirited sense of joy. Supportive yet exciting in his own right, he deftly handles whatever's thrown at him: His funk hits the spot, his shuffle percolates, and he whips up a mean song.

Michael Parillo

**8** Kotikoski/Kleutgens Cave Men (J2K)

One begins to wonder if **VINNIE COLAIUTA** ever gets tired of being the fastest gun in the west, being constantly challenged to raise the bar higher than what he has already set many times over. Vinnie is given carte blanche to "take it out" on this electric instrumental fusion release, which also features LA sax great **Steve Tavaglione**. Most tracks are complex compositions with Vinnie never ceasing to amaze with his musical chops. This music could easily become redundant, but Vinnie's creative spirit breathes life into every track. "Time Sensitive" is the fastest swing tune I've ever heard, but Vinnie comes out with guns blazing, puts it to rest, and rides off into the sunset awaiting the next challenger. (www.j2krecords.com)

Mike Haid

9 Keith Jarrett/Gary Peacock/Jack DeJohnette Always Let Me Go (ECM)

Pianist Keith Jarrett, bassist Gary Peacock, and drummer **JACK DEJOHNETTE** have played together for twenty years now. While sometimes referred to as "The Standards Trio" due to their extensive exploration of the classic repertoire, their latest offering is nothing of the sort. Recorded live in Tokyo, this set sees the trio investigating free territory, with inspiring results. The music evolves seamlessly, alternately swinging, contemplative, and energetic. DeJohnette offers dancing ride patterns and explosive eruptions throughout. Wherever the music takes them, these players are equal partners. While this group has released many fine recordings, this is some of their most inspired playing in recent times.

Martin Patmos

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8 Office Of Strategic Influence (InsideOut Music/America)



Members of Dream Theater (past and present), Fates Warning, Gordian Knot, and Porcupine Tree come together in a genre-bending vocal and instrumental collaboration that is really hard to put a musical label on. **Kevin Moore's** musical taste for ambient techno trance samplings dominates the mix, but **MIKE PORTNOY's** heavy drumming and **Jim Matheos's** aggressive guitar work on the more complex pieces push the music in a definite Dream Theater/Fate's Warning prog-metal direction. Portnoy displays the best of his drumming talents with strong, driving grooves and his trademark over-the-top chops. If you dig Porcupine Tree or Kevin Moore's Chroma Key projects, you should enjoy this collection. **Mike Haid**

8 Toto Through The Looking Glass (CMC Capitol)



With this eclectic collection of pop classics, early-'80s Grammy-winning pop/rock group Toto pays tribute to some of the great songwriters of the past thirty years. Legendary drummer **SIMON PHILLIPS** continues to display his studio-perfect drumming as well as his excellent engineering skills. Creative, rocking arrangements of Stevie Wonder's "Living For The City" and the Motown classic "I Can't Get Next To You" showcase the band's vocal and instrumental expertise. Simon lets it rip on Steely Dan's "Bodhisattva" and Cream's "Sunshine Of Your Love," and performs solid reggae grooves on Bob Marley's "Could You Be Loved" and Elvis Costello's "Watching The Detectives." An excellent variety of classic pop from one of the genre's greatest rock bands—and one of drumming's finest players. **Mike Haid**

8 Los Hombres Calientes Vol. 4: Vodou Dance (Basin Street)



Another ambitious multi-cultural canvas led by percussionist **BILL SUMMERS** and trumpeter **Irwin Mayfield**. This time, the duo travels to Trinidad, Haiti, and Cuba, seeking impromptu sessions with local Afro-rooted musicians. These on-location recordings serve as rootsy interludes to slicker home-based studio tracks. Summers' groove is equally at home in the "field" and in the studio. Ace drummers **RICKY SEBASTIAN** and **HORACIO "EL NEGRO" HERNANDEZ** are scorching on the studio cuts, delivering a stew of Latin jazz, Afro-Caribbean, and New Orleans. So sprawling that it often feels like three different records, *Vodou* ultimately ties together through astonishing rhythms and shared festivity. **Jeff Potter**

8 Rob Burger Lost Photograph (Tzadik)



Accordianist/keyboardist Burger creates a seductive, quirkily beautiful original with this release. A skewed "downtown" approach mixes jazz, Jewish traditional themes, tango, and the atmospheric, colored by Burger's eccentric keyboard arsenal, which spans antique reed organs to toy piano. It's inventive, passionate, and often humorous. Featuring solid, big-toned bassist **Greg Cohen** and commanding drummer **KENNY WOLLESON** (Bill Frisell, Sex Mob), the trio unveils a brilliant command of space and focused improvisation. Wolleson's creative drumming is rich with shifting colors, balancing grace and groove. And his take on tango-jazz is irresistible. Full of surprises, the intimate trio seems more like a limitless chamber group. **Jeff Potter**

6 Hot Hot Heat Make Up The Breakdown (Warner Bros./Sub Pop)



Looking back a couple decades, Canada's Hot Hot Heat brings a modern indie rock update to the classic sounds of '80s acts without forcing any kitschy retro agenda down your throat. From the Dexy's Midnight Runners-esque "Get In Or Get Out" to the seemingly Talking Heads-inspired "Oh, Goddamnit," drummer **PAUL HAWLEY's** simplistic, nervously staccato stickwork almost makes it cool to play Ms. Pac Man on your Atari 2600 all over again—just as long as you have it connected to your plasma-screen television. *Breakdown's* refreshing look back at an era when making records wasn't all about samplers, ProTools, and seven-string guitars. **Waleed Rashidi**

6 Rikki Rockett Glitter 4 Your Soul (Slave To The Rhythm Productions)



For his solo record *Glitter 4 Your Soul*, Poison drummer **RIKKI ROCKETT** pays tribute to early '70s glam. Rockett's drumming (he also produced) infuses fresh energy into classics like "Action" by Sweet, "Do You Wanna Touch Me" by Gary Glitter, and "Rock On" and "Life's A Gas" from T. Rex. Among the special guests who appear throughout *Glitter*, Rockett's Poison bandmate **Bret Michaels** adds lead vocals on "Tear It Down" by Starz, and Go-Go's drummer **GINA SCHOCK** sings lead on "Trash" by The New York Dolls. For those of us around in the '70s, *Glitter 4 Your Soul* is a flashback. For the younger drummer hearing these tunes for the first time, it's a brief history lesson on a fun and important

KICKIN' OUT THE NEW

3d5spd / Retisonic / Fiction Plane

From *Fever In The Ice Age's* first 16th-note 2 & 4 snare drags to the last smash of the crash, 3d5spd drummer **SEAN M.** is as solid as solid gets. Sean's kit sounds very sweet in that indie sort of way, and no drum or cymbal is left untouched. Each quirky song gives Sean the room to flail and fly while holding down the beat. (Two Sheds)

The title of Retisonic's new album, *Lean Beat*, is an unusual choice, considering drummer **JOE GORELICK'S** performance here. In fact, Gorelick is

the star of this show. Pushing each song to its emotional pinnacle, he sounds quick, powerful, and "fat." Even though this is only a six-song EP, there are plenty of off-beat fills, tight grooves, and big crashes to listen to. This is drumming made fun! (Silverthree Sound Recordings)

It's great to hear drummers slam hard on the backbeat, and that's exactly what Fiction Plane's **ABE LABORIEL JR.** is all about. Even though he only joined the band to do *Everything Will Never Be Ok*, I'm glad the studio giant took the gig. Every

tune shows off Laboriel's talent for sitting in the pocket while never losing feeling for the song. This is power pop rock, and, as every good drummer knows, the song comes first in this game. Laboriel knows. (MCA) **Fran Azartto**



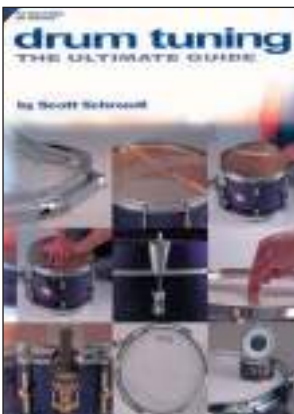
BOOKS

7 **Drum Backbeats Encyclopedia** by John Thomakos (Alfred)
level: intermediate to advanced, \$19.95



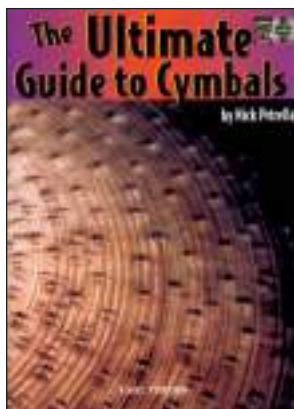
This book's four main parts focus on the right hand, open hi-hat technique, hi-hat foot technique, and ghost notes. Twenty-eight right-hand ostinatos ranging from quarter to 16th notes with various accents start things off. These ostinatos are applied to twenty-two different snare/bass combinations of varying complexity. With everything written out, you can move through the exercises at your own speed. Hi-hat technique is developed next, by shifting open 8th and 16th notes over basic and intricate grooves. Foot chicks/splashes and snare ghost notes are covered with comparable brevity, yet with enough information that the technique is learned. *Drum Backbeats Encyclopedia* is sure to inspire and promote the groove. **Martin Patmos**

8 **Drum Tuning: The Ultimate Guide** by Scott Schroedl (Hal Leonard)
level: all, \$12.95, with CD



Drum Tuning is an incredibly detailed reference book that drummers at all levels should find enlightening. Mr. Schroedl covers the physics of a struck drum, each of a drum's components, and the way drumheads react to the tuning process. There's even a brief history of drum sounds and tunings over the years. Extra time is spent on the process of maintaining snare and bass drums. The companion CD is clearly recorded and displays a variety of sounds via drum sizes and head combinations. You can literally hear Scott tuning a drum, precisely balancing the tension near each lug. Wisely, the author leaves many decisions up to the individual drummer, encouraging tuning to the particular musical situation. (www.musicdspatch.com) **David Licht**

5 **The Ultimate Guide To Cymbals** by Nick Petrella (Carl Fischer)
level: all, \$24.95 (with DVD)



First off, this is *not* the ultimate guide to cymbals. What it *is* is a manual on playing hand and suspended cymbals in an orchestral and marching milieu, with scant mention of drumset. The intro essays omit whole chunks of lore—UFIP and Zildjian, for example. (It's a bit too clear the author is a Sabian artist.) Many necessary techniques, from scraping and muting cymbals to tying those annoying hand cymbal straps, are illustrated. Regrettably, the DVD is yawn city. Unless you count a cameo by Hip Pickles, there are no ensemble performances, just perfunctory demonstrations, dry as dust. Still, students of orchestral drumming will find their technical requirements well laid out here. **T. Bruce Wittet**

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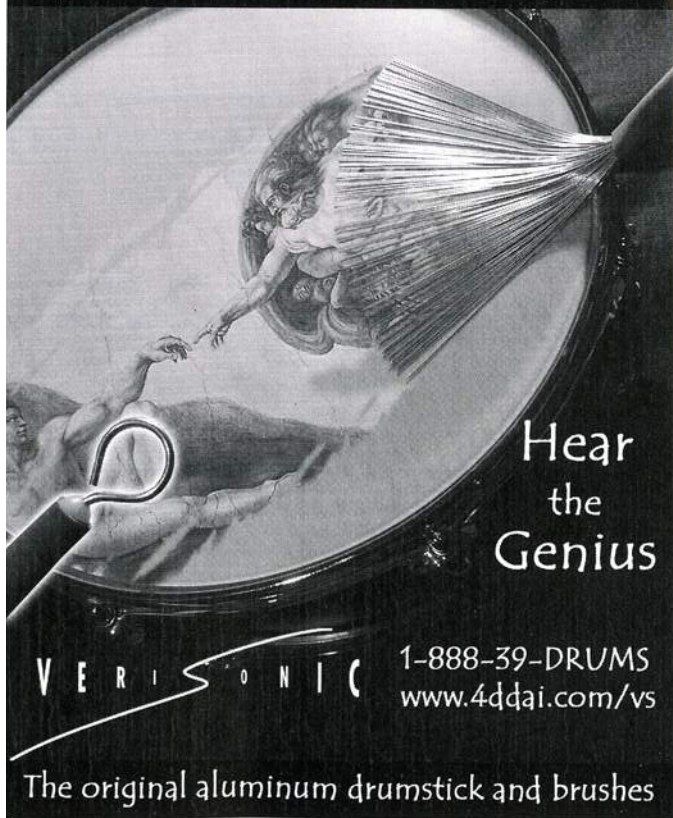
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DVDs

8 John Blackwell

Technique, Grooving, And Showmanship (Hudson Music)

level: all, \$39.95

This four hour–long, two-DVD set offers in-depth coverage of the influences, grooves, showmanship, and advanced technical abilities of Prince’s extraordinary drummer, John Blackwell. Musical highlights include Blackwell’s full performance from Modern Drummer Fest 2002. An interview with *MD*’s Billy Amendola reveals Blackwell’s solo, groove, single-handed roll, and bass drum technique. Affordably priced and full of special features (including classic footage of early Blackwell influences Lionel Hampton, Papa Jo Jones, and Gene Krupa), this package is another interesting and informative look from Hudson Music into today’s best young players. (www.hudsonmusic.com)



Mike Haid

8 Spock’s Beard Don’t Try This At Home: Live In Holland (Radiant)

level: all, \$25



Conviction, touch, and keen musicianship. These words come to mind viewing **NICK D’VIRGILIO** on *Don’t Try This At Home*. Besides his craftsmanship on the kit, Nick adds textural vocals to Beard tunes like “Gibberish” and “June.” Also, there is a humorous cover of the Genesis classic “Squonk,” on which NDV takes the lead vocal like his hero, Phil Collins, while triumphant Spock’s leader Neil Morse provides a good sloshy beat to groove on. Through odd times, fast breaks, flams, and other complications, D’Virgilio beguiles the band and audience alike. With as many special features as financially possible, this two-DVD package is essential to every progger’s collection. If you wish for free and easy music, I would direct you elsewhere.

Sean Enright

7 Pete York’s Super Drumming (imakustik)

level: all, \$19.95

Pete York was the drummer/host of *Super Drumming*, a British TV series from the late 1980s on which an array of drummers was featured with a studio band. The first two specials are now available on this DVD. While there is a bit of ‘80s cheese to navigate, you can’t deny that there’s some powerful drumming on display here. First of all, we’re treated to thunderous playing by **BILLY COBHAM** and **COZY POWELL**. Percussionist **NIPPY NOYA** gives some fascinating performances on congas. And how about a tune featuring **LOUIE BELLSON** and **SIMON PHILLIPS** trading off? While everyone featured is given solo time, it’s fun to see someone like **IAN PAICE** lay things down. The video also serves as a neat time capsule: Check out **BILL BRUFORD** on the Simmons kit. (www.in-akustik.com)



Martin Patmos

AUDIO DVDs

9 Frank Zappa Halloween (DTS Entertainment)

level: all

There are plenty of technological tricks and musical treats on this innovative DVD-audio disc of previously unreleased 1978 Zappa Halloween performances from New York’s Palladium. (Halloween was a special night in Zappa’s universe.) Tricks include 5.1 surround sound, a discography, a pre-concert radio interview, an album libretto, and two video clips including the classic *SNL* performance of “Dancing Fool.” The biggest treat for drummers is that **VINNIE COLAIUTA** was in the drum chair. Many of the guitar solo sections seem designed as conversations between Vinnie and Frank—and what conversations they are! Vinnie’s arena-sized solo on “Zeets” shows how extraordinarily advanced his musical concept was twenty-five years ago. A frighteningly special treat for Zappa/Vinnie fans.



Mike Haid



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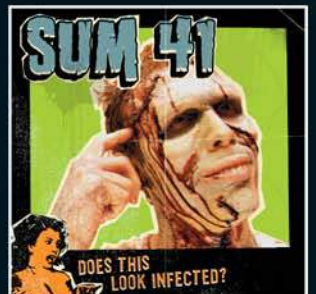
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Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival



Terry Gibbs



Lewis Nash



Sherrie Maricle



Jeff Hamilton



Willie Jones III

The 2003 Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival, held annually at the University of Idaho in Moscow, marked the first time that the festival took place without its namesake. (The legendary drummer/vibist, who introduced the world to the vibes and broke the color barrier with the Benny Goodman Band, died last August.) The four-day festival featured dozens of artists from around the world, along with student competitions for all grade levels. Performers held forth at nightly concerts, and gave workshops during the day.

Artists performing at the evening concerts, held in the ASUI Kibbie Dome, were backed by some of the most recognizable names in the jazz community. This year the festival employed two house bands. The first

included Kenny Barron (piano), Bucky Pizzarelli (guitar), John Clayton (bass), and **Jeff Hamilton** (drums). The second featured Benny Green (piano), Russell Malone (guitar), George Mraz (bass), and **Lewis Nash** (drums). These bands backed such artists as Igor Butman, James Moody, Claudio Roditi, Slide Hampton, Bill Watrous, Evelyn White, Lou Rawls, and Roy Hargrove.

From a drummer's standpoint, the festival was a gold mine. Jeff Hamilton's playing was characteristically tasty. He held back when he needed to, and blew the audience away when it was his turn. Playing the festival between dates with his own trio and with Diana Krall, the master of the brushes did not disappoint. In fact,

Hamilton's brushwork stood out in a festival saturated with great jazz drummers. Playing in a quartet with bassist John Clayton was natural for Hamilton, since the two lead the Clayton/Hamilton Orchestra in California.

Lewis Nash is a more "technical" drummer than Hamilton. His playing with the other house band was busy, but not over the top. Lewis was on top of the beat, always driving forward and hitting every kick. He left little question as to why everyone wanted to play with him.

The Roy Hargrove Quintet proved to be one of the finest of the touring jazz ensembles that appeared. Drummer **Willie Jones III** and the rest of the quintet played faster, louder, and

In Memoriam



Jack Mack (also known as Claude Pepper) died at his Sacramento, California home on February 4, at the age of fifty. He had battled cancer for more than ten years.

Mack was born in New York in 1952. He moved to Los Angeles in the late 1970s, where he became a respected studio and touring musician, playing with The Righteous Brothers, Three

Dog Night, The Hudson Brothers, Mac Davis, and Yvonne Elliman. Somewhere along the way he took the name Claude Pepper.

In 1980, Mack (as Pepper) helped to found an R&B group in Los Angeles. While searching for a name, other bandmembers discovered Mack's given name and decided to use it as the band's namesake. Jack Mack & The Heart Attack are still together twenty-three years later, although Mack himself left the band in 1987 to pursue other interests.

Pepper moved to Sacramento in 1993. A private memorial service was held there on Saturday, February 8. A concert featuring Jack Mack & The Heart Attack and several other artists was held March 15 to benefit Pepper's family. Further details may be obtained at www.jackmack.com.

longer than any other group at the festival. Jones had no problem showing off his chops, much to the delight of the audience. He filled every hole and kicked the band through their screaming, upper-register selections. There was never a dull moment when Willie was on stage.

Sherrie Maricle proved that the drumset is not just a man's tool. A member of the NYU faculty and the leader of the notable all-female big band Diva, Maricle performed at the festival with an all-female quintet called Five Play. Her leadership skills within the group were just as impressive as her playing. Five Play gave one of the most inspiring and informative clinics of the week, impressing more than just the females in the audience.

Wally "Gator" Watson came off the road with Wilson Pickett to play what he calls "Disco Jazz" with the Lionel Hampton Big Band. Wally's no stranger to the festival; he's played it every year for over a decade. His clinics—focusing as much on the dangers of drugs as on playing the drums—are a favorite among attendees.

The only man to lead Hampton's big band from behind the vibes at the jazz festival other than its namesake was **Terry Gibbs**. Gibbs recently released a tribute CD to the late godfather of the vibes, called *From Me To You*. He led the band through several of Hamp's favorite charts. Other members of the percussion community present at the festival included **Curtis Boyd** with the Freddy Cole Quartet, and **Kenny Elliott** (drums) and **Billy Hulting** (percussion) with Lou Rawls.

The Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival takes place the last full weekend of every February. *Modern Drummer* is a regular sponsor. For more information, surf to www.jazz.uidaho.edu.

Chris Korneli

Jim Chapin Birthday Benefit

Musicians from as far away as Canada and Germany gathered at Dom Famularo's home in Long Island, New York last October to celebrate Jim Chapin's eighty-third birthday, and to raise funds to assist the drumming



legend with a series of personal challenges. The event was organized by Famularo, Frank Bellucci, Joe Cavalaro, and Matt Miller.

Each attendee received Vic Firth drumsticks with Jim Chapin's signature, along with the recent reissue of Jim's classic *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer* (Warner Bros.) The book now includes CDs of Jim performing its material.

Jim held court throughout the day, demonstrating hand technique and sharing his historical knowledge in his

unique and humorous fashion.

Prizes were awarded to those in attendance, including drumsticks, CDs, books, RealFeel pads provided by HQ percussion, and a 20" Sabian HH ride autographed by Robert Zildjian. The event raised over \$5,000, and allowed the drumming family an opportunity to pay respect to one of its patriarchs. For more information about Jim, go to www.jimchapin.com. For additional information about assisting Jim, go to www.domfamularo.com.

Dan Britt and Cheech Iero

Indy Quickies

Cheap Trick drummer **Bun E. Carlos** recently appeared in a clinic/benefit for **Clyde Stubblefield** at Drums n' Moore in Monona, Wisconsin. Clyde has recovered from recent surgery, but is facing major medical expenses. Shown here are (from left) Drums n' Moore's Brent King, Brent Peterson, and Ron Hansen, Cheap Trick's Bun E. Carlos, Clyde Stubblefield, and D n' M's Rand Moore.



The **2003 Montreal Drum Fest** will be held November 7-9 in Pierre Mercure Hall, University of Quebec, Montreal, Canada. The roster of artists will be announced shortly. (450) 928-1726, angelillo@videotron.ca.

Site-Seeing

Premier's new Web site, www.premierpercussion.com, provides coverage of Premier products, artists, dealers, distributors, and everything Premier. The launch of the site coincides with Premier's introduction of an unprecedented number of new products and endorser signings.

The new www.hohnerusa.com Web site has gone live. The site includes Sonor instruments and dealer lists. Be sure your computer sound is turned on to appreciate the music on the top page.

The Gary Chester Web site, www.gary-chester.com, is dedicated to the memory of the great studio drummer, teacher, and author. The site includes information on how to get Gary's books *The New Breed* and *The New Breed II*, as well as sample lessons for drummers interested in studying Gary's methods.

QUICK BEATS

DINO DANELLI (RASCALS, FOTOMAKER, LITTLE STEVEN)

What are some of your favorite grooves?

Some of my favorite grooves are actually programmed, like "Get Your Freak On" by Missy Elliot (programmed by Timbaland), "Smack My Bitch Up" by Prodigy, "Bad Girl" by DJ Rap (programmed by DJ Rap and Aidin Love), and "Keep On Moving" by Soul II Soul (programmed by Jazzy B).

As for drummer grooves, I like Mike Bordin on "Epic" (Faith No More) and John "Jabo" Starks on "Sex Machine" (James Brown).

If you could put together an imaginary super band, who would be in it?

Jimi Hendrix on guitar, Sting on bass, Martin L. Gore (Depeche Mode) on



keyboards, with Taylor Hawkins (Foo Fighters) and Carter Beauford (Dave Matthews Band) on drums. On vocals I'd like to have Eddie Vedder (Pearl Jam), Thom Yorke (Radiohead), and Björk.

DRUM KICKS



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The show is being taped by Hudson Music, makers of such award-winning DVDs as Mike Portnoy's *Liquid Drum Theater* and Steve Smith's *Drumset Technique/ History of The U.S. Beat*. Producers Rob Wallis and Paul Siegel—recipients of MD's Editors' Achievement Award for their work in the field of drum videos and DVDs—will create a package featuring highlights of each day's performances.

The DVD is scheduled for a late summer release



Happy Campers

In 2002, KoSA Canada established the **Cayo Coco Jazz Festival** and the **KoSA International Percussion Workshops** in Cayo Coco, Cuba. The event featured concerts by some of Cuba's top international artists, who were in residence to teach classes in Cuban music and rhythms. KoSA brought down instruments, sound systems, tech crews, and all the necessary infrastructure to launch this new venue as an annual international gathering and cultural exchange.

For 2003, the Workshop period has grown to two weeks—June 1–14. It will feature such artists as **Horacio Hernandez, Chucho Valdez**, members of **Irakere, Hernan Lopez-Nussa, Piloto & Klimax**, and **Changuito**. KoSA has also created a program that will allow legal travel for US citizens to come to KoSA Cuba. For more information contact www.kosamusic.com or info@kosamusic.com.

Back in the USA, the eighth **KoSA International Percussion Workshop and Festival** will be held August 4–10 at Castleton State College, in Castleton, Vermont. This year's faculty includes world-class artists in all forms of drums and percussion, including **Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, Will Calhoun, Bobby Sanabria, James Campbell, Aldo Mazza, Glen Velez, Jim Chapin, John Riley, Anders Astrand, Kevan MacKenzie, Dom Famularo, Evaristo Aguilar, Russ Miller, Louis Charbonneau, Marco Lienhard, Sandip Burman, Gordon Gottlieb, Jeff Salisbury, Memo Acevedo, Lou Robinson, Répercussion (Aldo Mazza, Chantal Simard, Robert Lépine, and Luc Langlois), Mario DeCuitiis, Allan Molnar, and MD's Rick Van Horn**.

The KoSA Workshop in Vermont is a hands-on intensive percussion camp that covers a diverse range of drumming styles, along with ethnic and classical percussion, mallet instruments, and other studies. Participants enjoy small daily classes, playing with a rhythm section, participating in masterclasses, and performing in recitals. Each evening features a concert in the KoSA Festival series. The week culminates in a grand-finale faculty concert. To register, contact Adventure Travel at (800) 540-9030, travel@advtravelagency.com, or www.kosamusic.com.

Soundwall Music Camps are designed for rock-oriented musicians age twelve to seventeen who have a minimum of one year of playing and study experience. The camps, which are held at the University of California at Santa Cruz, offer instruction in music fundamentals, instrumental technique, rock history and influences, songwriting, and the music business. Campers work with other players the same age under the guidance of teachers who are also working musicians. Students are grouped into bands according to playing level and style of music. They play and rehearse with staff guidance, and ultimately perform in a professionally produced concert in the University Recital Hall. Campers stay in UCSC dorms and eat in the student union dining room. Fees are \$10 for application, \$750 for tuition, room, and board. (925) 518-8289, info@rockcamp.org, www.rockcamp.org.

Power Chord Academy will host its 2003 summer music camps for teenage musicians at St. Xavier University in Chicago (June 22–28) and Loyola Maramount University in Los Angeles (July 20–26). Campers ages twelve to eighteen play in a band, make a video, record a CD, meet a touring band, play a concert, and develop an understanding of the professional music industry today. For more information, visit www.powerchordacademy.com.

Who's Using What

Tyler Stewart (Barenaked Ladies) is endorsing Pearl hardware, while **Jose Pasillas** (Incubus) is endorsing the ICON rack system. New drum and hardware endorsers include **Rob Ubani** (Slaves On Dope), **Gintas Janusonis** (Angelique Kidjo), **Brad Booker** (Apartment 26), **Daniel Adair** (3 Doors Down), and **Ted Thomas Jr.** (*Emeril Live!*).

JD Blair (Shania Twain) and conga master **Giovanni Hidalgo** are now endorsing Shure microphones. In addition, Shure mic's are now the official microphones of the **Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame** in Cleveland, Ohio.

Poison's **Rikki Rockett** has signed as an endorsing artist for Pork Pie Percussion.

Chris Sharrock (Robbie Williams Band) has signed to play Premier's new Premier Series professional kit.

Trey Gray (Jewel, Faith Hill) is the newest Ahead drumsticks artist.

Now playing Evans drumheads is **Bret Zwier** (Oskar Saville, Jack Straw).

New artists performing on Toca Percussion include **Mike Marsh** (Dashboard Confessional), **Johnny Sepulveda** (N'Sync), **John McDowell** (Rusted Root), **Blaire Sinta** (Alanis Morissette), **Tony Davich** (Sheena Easton), **Scott Messersmith** (The Motet), **Darius Fentress** (Fred Hammond), **Richard Marquez** (Cachao Peru Negro), **Tommy Hetz** (Gargantua Soul), **Gabe Falcon** (Las Vegas's *Storm*), and **Mark Suter** (YoYo Ma's Silk Road, Broadway).

Toss Panos has joined the DW family.



Acid Jazz innovator **Victor Jones** (Michael Wolff) is a Yamaha artist, playing on a Maple Custom Vintage kit.

Chad Wackerman (Frank Zappa, Allan Holdsworth, The Chad Wackerman Group) and **Ramon Yslas** (Christina Aguilera, Backstreet Boys) are new Meinl percussion artists. Meanwhile, English drummer **Stuart Messer** (Candyheads) is playing Meinl cymbals.



Matt Brann (Avril Lavigne) and **Victor Alexander** (Outkast) are playing Pacific drums.



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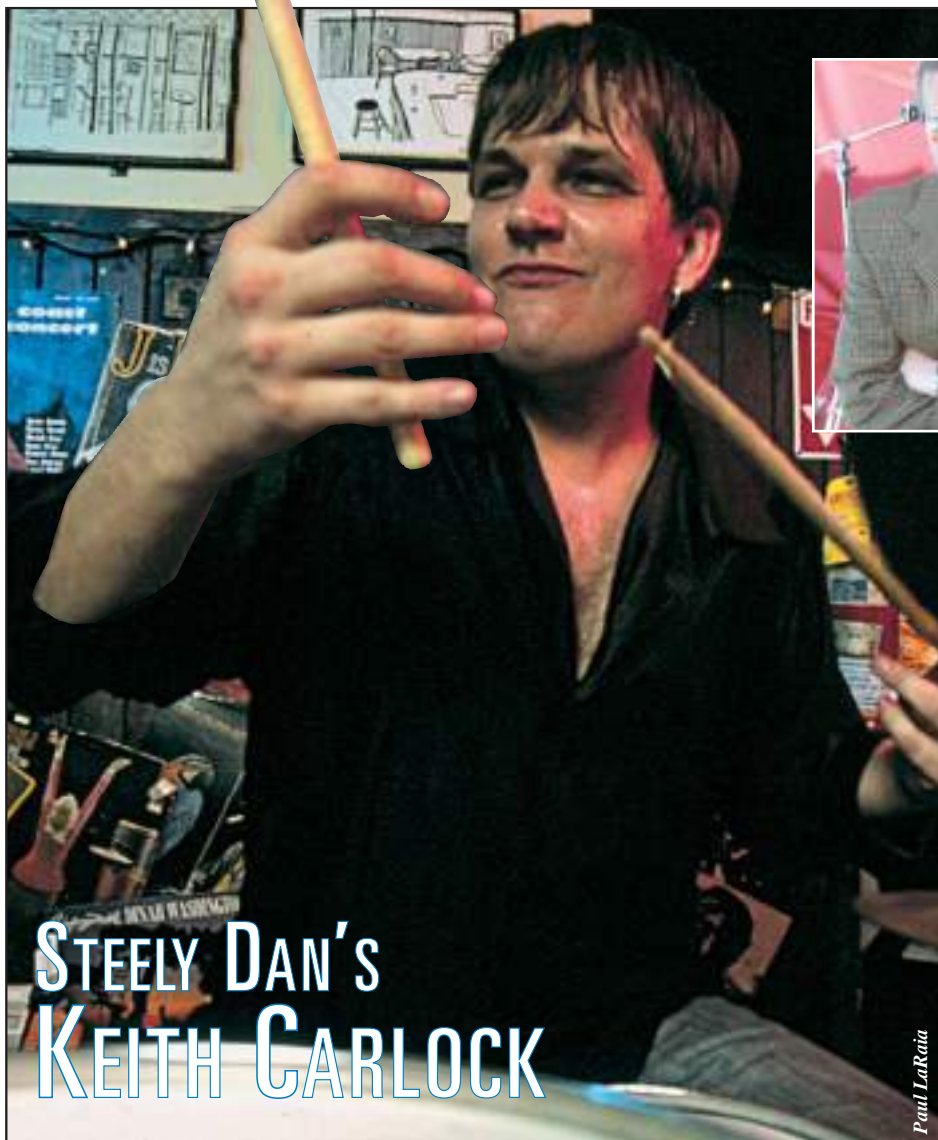
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