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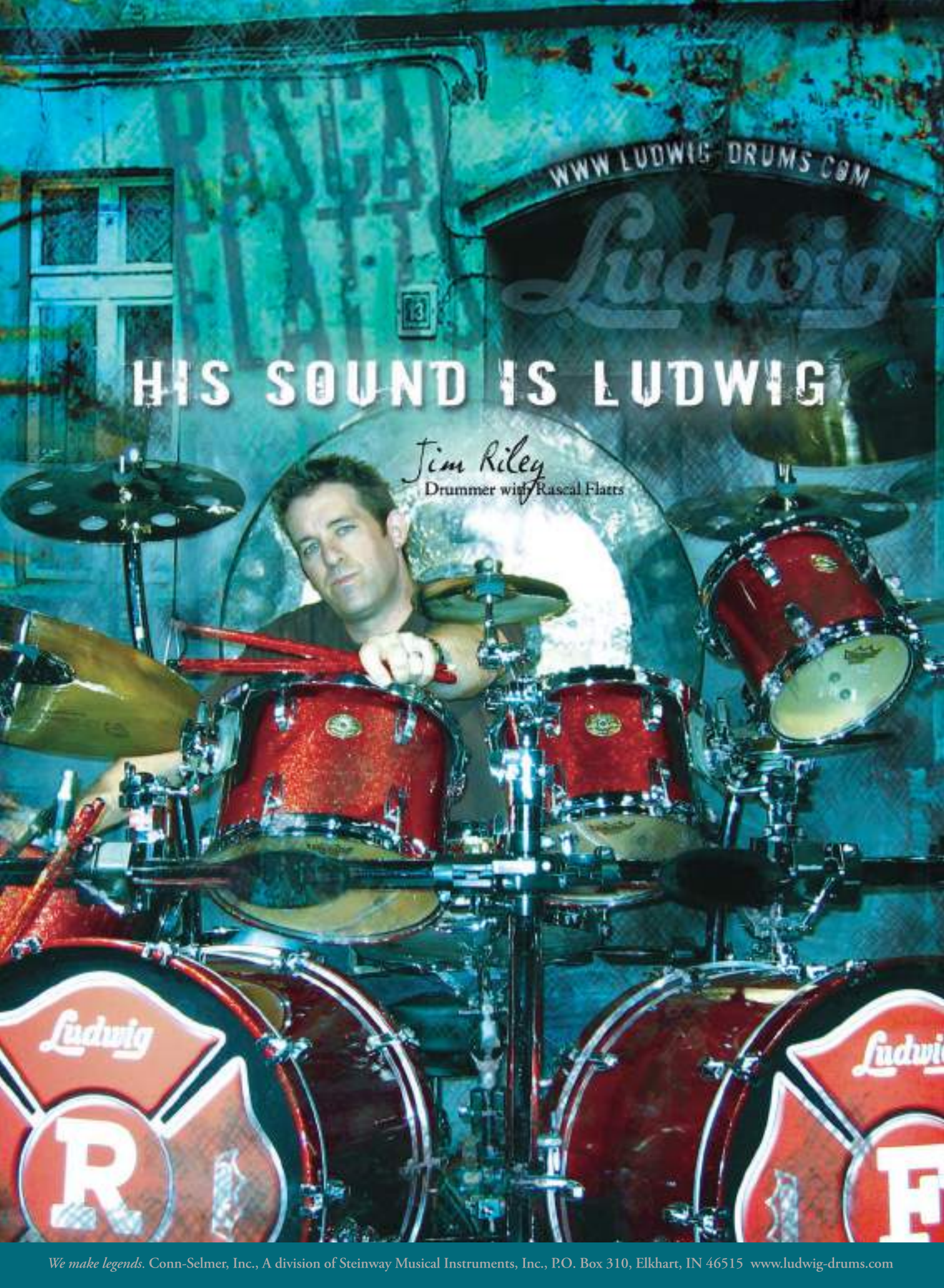


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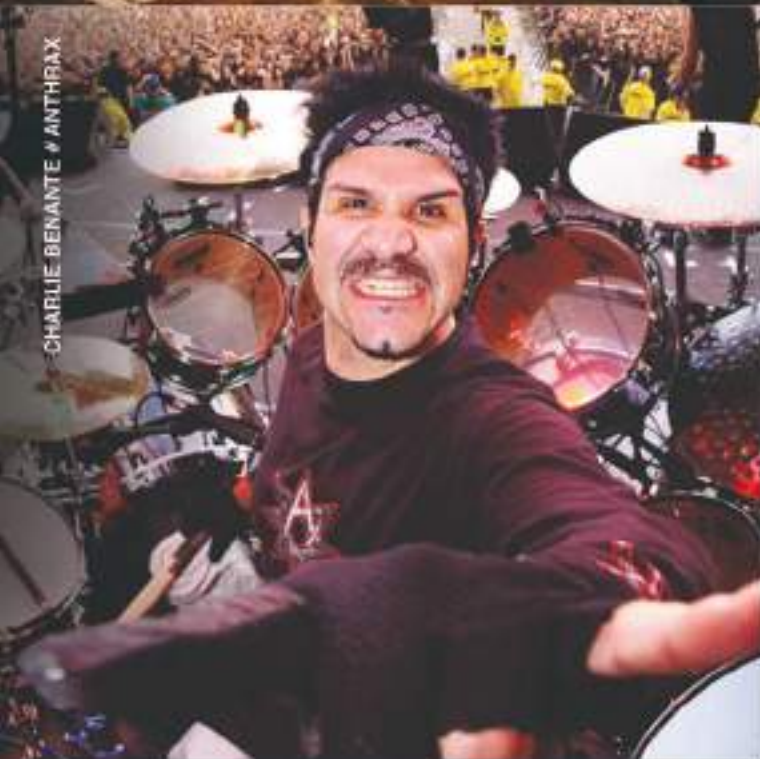
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Contents

Cover photo by Alex Solca

Volume 30, Number 9

48 Slayer's **Dave Lombardo**

The big story in speed-metal drumming for the past few years has been the return of original Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo. Finally—*finally*—a new Slayer album is out, proving how much further Lombardo has taken his art. **by Waleed Rashidi**

72 Cuban Drumset Leader **Ignacio Berroa**

Cuban rhythms have fascinated and challenged drummers for decades. And Ignacio Berroa...well...he basically wrote the play book. **by Ken Micallef**

86 Rascal Flatts' **Jim Riley**

Single-minded and hard-working, Jim Riley is doing it all on the competitive Nashville scene: touring, recording, and selling a ton of records. **by John M. Aldridge**

102 Umphrey's McGee's **Kris Myers**

Kris Myers' adventurous spirit, eclectic taste, and well-honed chops make him the perfect drummer for Umphrey's McGee, one of the most exploratory bands in today's jam world. **by Michael Parillo**

150 Army Of Anyone's **Ray Luzier**

A future household name among drummers—you can bet on that—Ray Luzier leaves a stunned impression whenever he lays stick to head. **by Gail Worley**



72

Mike Jaehles



86

86

114 Woodshed **Virgil Donati**

Condo practicing is no way to live! Rhythm magician Virgil Donati's North Hollywood rehearsal/recording space lets him rip it up 'til the rooster crows. **by Mike Haid**

136 A Different View **Christian McBride**

A jazz drumming chat with Mr. SuperBass. **by Ken Micallef**

20 Update

Motion City Soundtrack's

Tony Thaxton

En Vogue's

Tony Royster Jr.

Shinedown's

Barry Kerch

Gutbucket's

Paul Chuffo

Ex-NIN solo artist

Jerome Dillon

The James Gang's

Jim Fox

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Prizes Worth Over

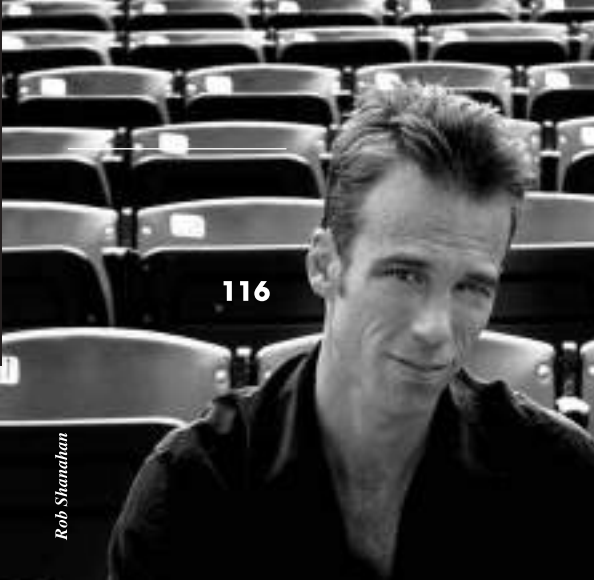
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112





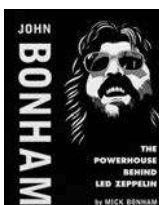
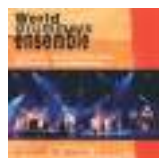
Rob Stannan

116

Education

- 116** OFF THE RECORD
Pearl Jam's Matt Cameron
by Ed Breckenfeld
- 118** ROCK PERSPECTIVES
Double Bass Crash Course, Part 2: Filling The Gaps
by Jason Bittner
- 120** DRIVER'S SEAT
Drumset Boles: Practicing In Your Head
by Ed Shaughnessy
- 122** JAZZ DRUMMERS' WORKSHOP
Hi-Hat Control: Your Left Foot, Part 2
by John Riley
- 124** LATIN SYMPOSIUM
The Samba Feel: From The Bottom Up
by Maria Martinez
- 126** IN THE POCKET
Essential Grooves, Part 4: Jazz
by Tommy Igooe
- 128** CONCEPTS
Defending Ringo: A Fresh Listen To Beatles Beats
by Rich Pagano
- 132** TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
12 Ways To Make Drumming Profitable: Putting All Your Talents To Work
by Douglas Wurst

160



Departments

- 8** AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW
A (Slight) Change In Course
by Michael Dawson
- 10** READERS' PLATFORM
- 12** IT'S QUESTIONABLE
Pros And Cons Of Internal Miking • Neil's R30 Lick • Evening Up Arm Strength • Where To Find Wood Hoops
- 16** ASK A PRO
Shadows Fall's **Jason Bittner** On Using Drum Gloves • Conga Positioning Tips From **Daniel de los Reyes** • **Scott Rockenfield** On Combining Electronics With Acoustic Drums
- 160** CRITIQUE
- 168** SHOWCASE
- 174** DRUM MARKET
Including Vintage Corner
- 176** BACKBEATS
Woodstuck 2006 Sets World Record • Sabian 25th Anniversary • and more
- 184** KIT OF THE MONTH

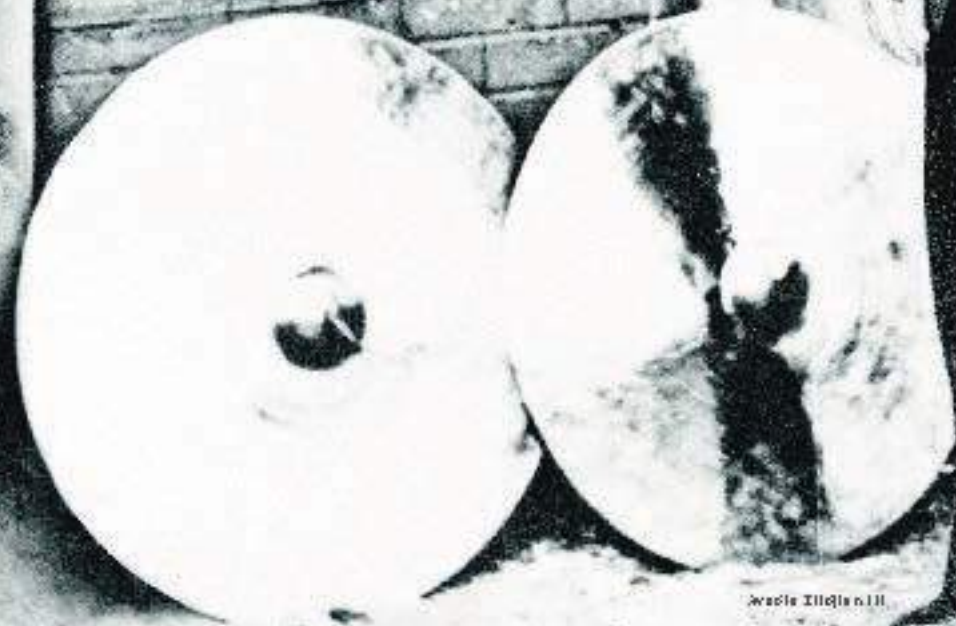

Equipment

- 30** PRODUCT CLOSE-UP
Mapex Pro M Series • Paiste's Redesigned Alpha Cymbals • Schalloch Cajons • Vintage Logos MetallicHeads • Canopus Vintage Series V-60 Kit
- 44** ELECTRONIC REVIEW
The Drumometer Model II
- 142** SPOTLIGHT
Ludwig Drums: The Re-Emergence Of A Legend
by Rick Van Horn
- 164** NEW AND NOTABLE



30

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A (Slight) Change In Course



It's hard to believe that it's been nearly two years since I joined the *Modern Drummer* family. It seems like yesterday that I was sitting on the steps of the Academy Of Music in downtown Philadelphia, brainstorming my next move, when I got a once-in-a-lifetime offer to become a part of the *MD* editorial staff. What a day that was!

Earlier that morning I had a debate with my fiancé regarding our less-than-stable finances. Her teaching contract had recently expired, I had just finished graduate school, and our rent was due. While I was keeping a semi-regular gig schedule, there was no way that we could survive on my drumming alone. And *that* was a heartbreaker.

Until that day, I prided myself on being able to avoid any "real" job by taking every gig that came my way: weddings, musical theater productions, cocktail hours, Top-40 club dates, studio sessions—whatever. Plus, growing up in a small musical community outside of Baltimore, Maryland, it was easy to stand out. So I never had to think about networking, or self-promotion, or (God forbid) working a day gig to pay the bills.

But when I moved to Philly for graduate school, it was a whole new ballgame. No one there knew about my "reputation"—that I could sight-read, could swing a big band, and could rock like Will Calhoun. Besides, there were many other players in town who could do everything that I could do, and some were *much* better. That was when I decided to rethink how I was going to make my mark in the music business.

While I've always fantasized about being a rock star, with all its lavish excesses, deep down I knew that I wasn't really cut out for that lifestyle. I'm much more of a behind-the-scenes kind of guy. So when I was invited to interview for a position at *MD*, I felt like the change that I was looking for had finally arrived.

Don't get me wrong, I still have dreams of becoming the next Vinnie Colaiuta. I don't think I'll ever give that up. But I'm also honored to have the opportunity to contribute to this incredible magazine, which has been a major influence on me since my first subscription in '91. Plus, the thought of inspiring *you* to be the best musician you can be rivals a spot on *MTV* any day.

Mike Dawson

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:
Michael Bettine, Robyn Flans, Burt Korall, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Mark Parsons, Mike Hajd, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel Weiss, T. Bruce Wittet.

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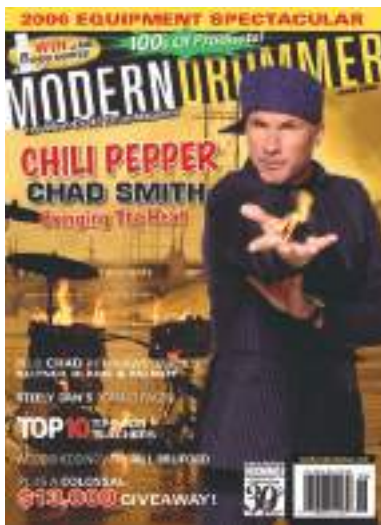
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CHAD SMITH

Adam Budofsky really captured the essence of Chad Smith's personality. It's nice to see a successful "rock star" who also reveres the giants of drum history, genuinely loves to play his drums, and has owned the same car for seventeen years. Chad seems like a guy who'd be fun to hang out with.

Steve Fisher

Sometimes my favorite magazine disappoints me. The cover photograph for the June 2006 Chad Smith interview was in poor taste. Rather than set fire to a drumset to illustrate his wealth, why doesn't Mr. Smith give the unburned kit to a young drummer who needs it? Destroying musical instruments sends the wrong message to youngsters.

J.P. Lee



STUDIO KINGS

I thoroughly enjoyed Chad Smith's interview of "Studio Kings" Hal Blaine, Earl Palmer, and Jim Keltner. Earl and Hal had a tremendous influence on me when I was just starting out—and I didn't even know who they were! It's hard to believe how many radio hits featured one of those two gentlemen on drums.

I want to tip my hat to Jim Keltner as well. He plays *so* fluidly and musically. I saw him live with Little Village, and it was a real drummer's treat.

Paul D'Angelo

GREAT GEAR

As its introduction promised, your "Great Gear" feature in the June issue was more eye-catching than ever before. Super photos in a terrific layout. Now, if I can just win the lottery so that I can afford everything that the feature made me covet, I'll be a happy guy.

Sam Terristi



RUSS MOY

I want to thank *Modern Drummer* for giving props to a passionate human spirit to whom many of us are indebted: Russ Moy.

It was through Russ that the doors of comprehension regarding music and life started to open for me. And it was Russ who introduced me to Freddy Waits, Sam Ulano, metal sticks, the history of jazz drumming, and more.

My lessons with Russ have carried me a long way. He was one of the first people I called back in 1985, when I found out I had gotten a gig with Randy Brecker and Eliane Elias. He was very proud and supportive.

Russ enhanced my life in many ways, and I will always value what he imparted to me.

Theo (Ted) Brown

THE "HI" AND THE MIGHTY

As a rock drummer whose umbilical cord is attached to those two "cymbals on a post," I thank you for recognizing the hi-hat innovation that exists in the rock world. While my Top-10 list may differ from yours, each song you listed is truly an easy-to-find "how-to" on hi-hat playing for rock drummers. But just to make it

an even dozen, I'll add Mark Zonder's work on Fates Warning's "Eleventh Hour," and Steve Smith on Journey's "After The Fall."

Bryan Bedgood

PLAYING WITH LOOPS

Donny Gruendler's "Playing With Loops" column in your May '06 *Rock 'N' Jazz Clinic* was insightful and helpful for those who are trying to stay on the cutting edge in the drumming world. The column and the examples were well written and easy

to follow, even for those—like me—who've had very little chart training. I hope to see more of Donny's work in the future.

Brian Deming

KUDOS TO TRICK

When the throw-off on my 5x13 snare stripped out recently, I did some research on new models. I was leaning toward the Trick GS007, but I wanted some additional information. So I called Trick, hoping to talk with someone in tech support. I was surprised to find myself speaking with Trick owner Mike Dorfman, who happily answered all my questions.

I was blown away by the personal attention that Mike Dorfman and Trick Percussion gave me throughout our transaction. And the quality and craftsmanship they put into their products is like no other. Anyone looking for a company that backs up their products with excellent service should contact Trick. These guys rock!

Dave Ross

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Pros And Cons Of Internal Miking

What are the pros and cons of putting microphones inside drums? And can a mic be used in that way? **Carlos Latorre**

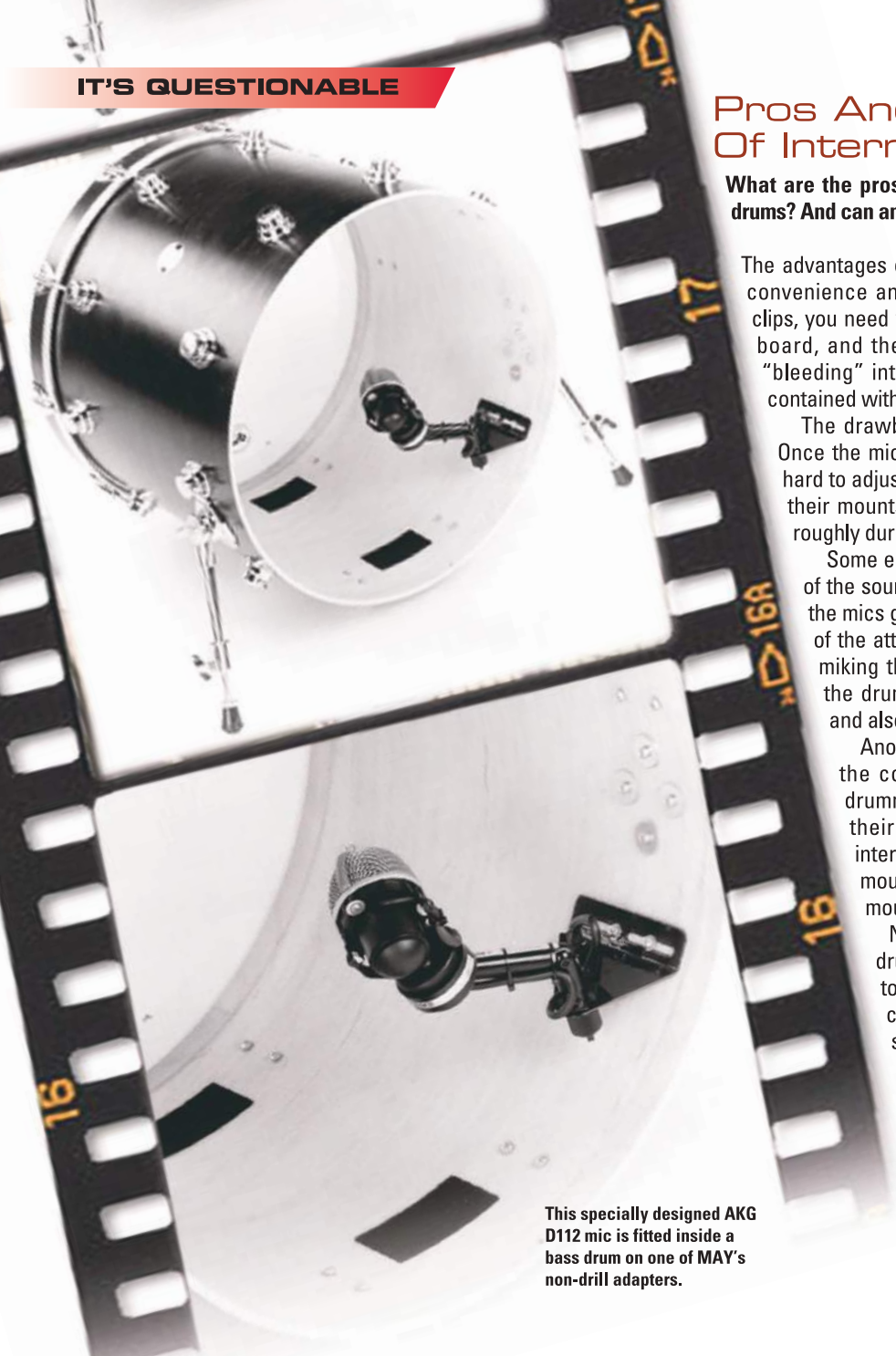
The advantages of internal miking generally have to do with convenience and isolation. You don't need mic stands or clips, you need very little time to connect the kit to a sound board, and the sound of each drum is prevented from "bleeding" into the other mics because those mics are contained within the other drums.

The drawbacks generally have to do with flexibility. Once the mics are positioned in the drums, they can be hard to adjust on the fly. Also, it's possible for the mics or their mounts to be damaged if the drums are handled roughly during transport.

Some engineers are not fond of the acoustic quality of the sound captured inside the drums. They feel that the mics get the "bigness" of the drum, but miss some of the attack from the drumhead. Others believe that miking the drums internally loses the "air" around the drums. This is, of course, a matter of opinion, and also depends on drum tuning.

Another consideration regarding internal mics is the cost of having them installed. Also, some drummers don't like the idea of drilling holes in their drumshells to accommodate permanent internal mic' mounts, though there are non-drill mounts available, which attach via the bolts that mount the tuning lugs.

Not every mic model is suitable for use inside drums. In some cases the mic is too sensitive to take the SPLs that are generated. In other cases it's simply a matter of the size and shape of the mic being impractical for the purpose. Many of the mics that have been developed specifically for internal drum use by Randall May International (the originators of the MAY EA internal miking system) are reduced-size versions of popular standard dynamic mic models.



This specially designed AKG D112 mic is fitted inside a bass drum on one of MAY's non-drill adapters.

Neil's R30 Lick

I have a question about a track from Rush's *R30* thirtieth-anniversary DVD. At 2 minutes and 30 seconds into the "R30 Overture," Neil Peart plays a big slur of what I *think* are double kick and floor tom notes. Can you illustrate how Neil plays that pattern?

Reid Schulz

Basically, Neil is playing quads between his hands and feet that are moving between the snare, rack, and two floor toms. Because the song is in 12/8, giving it a triplet feel, the four-note groupings create a 3:2 polyrhythm. When transcribed, it looks like this:

MUSIC KEY

C.C.	✱	Add1
T.T.	●	T.T.
S.D.	●	
F.T.	●	
B.D.1	●	
	●	B.D.2



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Evening Up Arm Strength

I'm a right-handed drummer, and I've noticed recently that when I'm through practicing, my right arm feels much more "flexed" and used than my left arm, even though I try as much as I can to use both arms equally. Is there anything I can do to prevent this, or to even out the muscle use in my arms?

Ben Huber

Virtually any style of drumming strengthens the "ride" or "lead" hand more than the other hand, simply because ride patterns keep that hand busier than backbeats (in rock) or comping (in jazz) do for the other hand. Fills and solos might involve both hands fairly equally, but they generally don't make up the bulk of a

drummer's playing on any given song.

You might experiment with left-hand lead, playing ride patterns on the hi-hat with your left hand, and backbeats with your right. Many notable drummers, including Carter Beauford, Simon Phillips, Billy Cobham, and Rayford Griffin, play in this style. If this works for you, you might consider moving your ride cymbal to the left side or adding a second ride cymbal so that you can play ride patterns ambidextrously.

Another way to strengthen your left arm is to do exercises with that arm off the kit, as a way to bring it up to the level of your right arm. A regimen of weightlifting might be beneficial.

Where To Find Wood Hoops

Many drummers use wooden hoops on their toms or snare drums. I've looked for a long time and cannot find any music store that sells these special types of drum hoops. Is there any company in particular that makes them?

Justin Wright

Precision Drum Company makes three varieties of wood hoops for toms and snare drums (along with traditional wood bass

drum hoops). Contact them at (888) 512-3786 or go to www.precisiondrum.com.

Universal Percussion offers wood hoops under their Cannon brand. Universal is a wholesaler, so you'll need to have a dealer order the hoops for you. For more information, go to www.universalpercussion.com, or have your local dealer contact the company at (800) 282-0110.

Wood hoops are also available from a

variety of online retailers. A Google search under "wood drum hoops" will reveal several sources you can check out.

Questions For MD's Drum Experts?

Send them to It's Questionable, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, or rvh@moderndrummer.com. Please include your full name with your question.



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He found it with Ddrum. Dominion's select Swamp Ash shells create a furious hybrid of musical tone and ear-splitting volume. Taking it a step further, Travis combined 9 drums, 4 Decaborns, 16 rack pipes, and 400 one-inch metal spikes to create

The Warrior Kit: a set-up that nightmares are made of.

To find out more about this undeniable visual and sonic blitzkrieg, and the double kick assault unleashed by its owner, log on to www.ddrum.com/travis-smith.php.

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Shadows Fall's Jason Bittner On Using Drum Gloves

Q I'm considering using drumming gloves when I play. I'd like to know what you like about the Ahead drum gloves you use. Are there any disadvantages to wearing gloves? Might they reduce hand speed?

Constantinos Nicolaou

A Thanks for your question. I'm always happy to help out a fellow drummer. To answer your first question, I *love* the Ahead drum gloves. They're made out of very pliant, comfortable leather. As a result, I generally only need a few hours of playing in a pair before they're broken in. They

also have little pads on the palms and fingertips that make them even more comfortable and easy on the hands, helping to suppress the formation of blisters and calluses.

I never have to worry about any lack of hand speed when I use the gloves. The only negative feature that I've found with them is that when you first use a new pair, they'll leave your hands black from the dye that's contained in the leather. But don't worry...it washes off.



Andrew Lepley

Conga Positioning Tips From Daniel De Los Reyes

Q I just bought a set of LP conga drums, including a 10" quinto, an 11" conga, and a 12" tumbadora. I'll be playing them in a standing position, with the drums in basket stands.

How should I position these drums? I know that the quinto is the main drum in many styles of music. Should I put it in the middle of the other two?

Daniel Pelletier

A I've been asked this question many times in my career. Although I'm happy to offer my advice, please remember that there are no rules when it comes to setting up. I've seen great players do amazing things with the quinto all the way to the left, and others with it all the way to the right. It all comes down to personal preference.

My main workhorse is the conga drum. It's bigger than a quinto, and therefore it produces a bigger, fuller sound. The conga can also be tuned up or down with more flexibility than a

quinto or a tumba can be. So I position that drum in the center.

Where you place the tumba and the quinto in relation to the conga will depend on whether you are right- or left-handed, or have practiced a specific way that might dictate how you'll be able to do certain patterns away from the conga drum. My father, Walfredo Reyes Sr., always taught my brother (Walfredo Jr.) and me to practice everything going in *both* directions. It's good to get into that habit, not only for independence, but also because you never know when you'll be placed in a situation that will *require* you to go in one direction or the other.

I place the tumba on my right side, because I feel that my right hand is somewhat stronger. So I can go in that direction with more confidence and strength. I use the solo quinto on the left side to add a higher pitch within the bass patterns set up by the right hand between the conga and the tumba.



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Scott Rockenfield

On Combining Electronics
With Acoustic Drums

Todd Rockenfield

Q I play in a progressive/metal band—sort of Dream Theater meets Queensrÿche. I have an eleven-piece Pearl Masters Custom kit on a Pearl Icon rack, with about twenty-three Sabian cymbals and various percussion items. I also have a Roland V-Custom electronic kit.

I used to set my electronics directly behind my acoustic kit (a la Neil Peart), and I sometimes had problems with false triggering due to vibrations from my toms and cymbals. Now, due to stage constraints at a lot of clubs we play, I want to mount some of my electronic pads on my acoustic kit. How do I do this and avoid having the pads accidentally trigger when I don't want them to?

David Charlesworth
Sounds like you have a nice, big drumkit with lots of

A sonic potential. Cool!

My best suggestion is to focus on trying to isolate the pads from any type of vibrations, such as by adding some rubber pieces around the mounts. Also, try to carefully dial in the various parameters on the electronic drums, like the triggering thresholds on the individual pads. The combination of these two things is what has given me the best results.

Good luck!

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Motion City Soundtrack's Tony Thaxton

Mr. Memory

For Motion City Soundtrack's Tony Thaxton, his drumming career has gone full circle—at least in one sense. Growing up in Virginia as a budding drummer, Thaxton would often find himself behind a kit with a pair of headphones, playing along to his favorite records. In fact, he still does that when he's off tour and at home. "I've always liked doing that," Thaxton says. "And now I'll have kids at our shows coming up and telling me that they do that to *our* record, which is a big compliment!"

The album they're likely jamming along with is Motion City Soundtrack's latest, *Commit This To Memory*. Produced by Blink-182 bassist Mark Hoppus, *Commit This To Memory* showcases Thaxton's wide range of capabilities behind the kit.

Before hitting the stage with his Pacific drumset, Thaxton makes sure he's ready for the gig, using exercises he learned from a fellow drummer. "I have a few warm-ups that I like doing that Travis Barker showed me," he says, "like one-handed triplets, flipping the accents after each grouping, and playing

several groupings of triplets in your right hand and then moving to your left hand. That's when you realize how bad your left hand is."

Citing Nirvana's Dave Grohl and Braid's Damon Atkinson as a couple of his favorite drummers, Thaxton also mentions a musician that isn't typically identified as a drummer: Ben Folds. "He plays all the instruments on the *Rockin' The Suburbs* record," Thaxton says. "And the thing is, he's not a piano player who's trying to play the drums. He actually does some really cool drum things. I've sat down and tried to play along to some of that stuff, and I'd wonder, What's happening *here*?"

For Thaxton, who joined MCS in 2002, performing a strong live set really *is* all about committing to memory the songs of *Commit This To Memory*. "If I do think when I'm playing, it usually results in me screwing up," the drummer laughs. "I just totally flub it every time."

Waleed Rashid

En Vogue's Tony Royster Jr.

Playing With Pure Energy

Tony Royster Jr. has been busy. We caught up with him while he was home for a couple of days from globetrotting with En Vogue. "En Vogue needs someone to hold down the pocket while they're singing," the former child phenom says. "I have my spaces where I'm just playing the groove. It's a three-piece band where we mostly play to tracks, but the music is so open that it allows me to do fills. And at the end of the show, they give us time to shine and do our thing."

You'll be seeing a lot more than groove playing on Royster's recently released DVD, *Pure Energy*, produced by DW Drums. The drummer explains his hand and foot tech-

nique, demonstrates some soloing, and talks about his equipment. He has one segment dedicated solely to performance. "Most videos are focused on either education or performing, and I wanted to mix it up and have both. I wanted to create something that would inspire beginners as well as intermediate and advanced players."

On the DVD, Tony played a large DW kit, while with En Vogue, he uses a seven-piece kit with five cymbals. "The music isn't based around me, so that's all I need." During his off time, Tony has been working with his own band, Imagine, as well as with the rock band Lazyeye. (For more info, go to www.tonyroysterjr.com.)

Robyn Flans

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Shinedown's Barry Kerch Dread Locked And Loaded

In 2001, Barry Kerch's audition for Shinedown consisted of going into the studio, laying down tracks, and seeing what stuck. Within the tryout he performed the band's eventual single, "45." Though the record endured many producers and record company scrutiny, the exact version of "45" that Kerch cut in the audition ended up being the band's first hit, untouched.

Kerch *feels* the drums. He loves their nuances and diversity, but he also realizes his role. "I could solo all night long and be a Mike Mangini or a Virgil Donati," he insists. "That's amazing for musicians, but for a rock crowd they just want to feel the 2 and 4 and dance. It all comes down to playing what's required for the song. As a drummer, you have to know your job and your place in the band."

Shinedown has been touring practically nonstop for the past three years, and in a live situation the dynamics always change. "Time, time, time," Kerch says. "When it comes to live, onstage, your guitar player and bass player are going to be pushing and pulling. Your singer is going to be holding that note out a little longer than he did on

the record. It's your job as the drummer to rein it all in. They follow me. I'm the metronome."

Kerch also learned that playing is great, but there's more to being a great drummer than meets the eye. "Josh Freese could sit in on any gig and make it happen," Barry says. "And it's not only because he's a great drummer, but because he has a great personality—and that's what makes a band work. If you get some dude out here that can play his ass off but doesn't get along with the band, then what's the point?"

Kerch's favorite drummers mirror his advice for younger players. "I look for taste in a drummer," he says, "guys like Stewart Copeland, John Bonham, and James Brown's Clyde Stubblefield. You can't listen to a James Brown record without feeling good.

"Learn every style of music you possibly can," Kerch adds. "Take a lesson. You can be a great rock player, but what about country music or South American music? The best thing you can do is keep learning."

Steven Douglas Losey



THE MAKAH BURL CAJON

Gutbucket's Paul Chuffo Heavy, But Keeping It Light



If you're unfamiliar with the Brooklyn instrumental quartet Gutbucket and you glance at the stage before a performance, you might think you're about to hear some jazz. An alto sax, an upright bass, a hollow-body guitar, and a three-piece drumkit with a tiny kick drum do create such an impression. But then the band shows up and launches into its first number, and you're treated to a thrashing, squealing romp, full of shifting time signatures and punk-rock attitude. Suddenly you're not expecting much ding-da-ding after all.

"Through college I played in a bunch of jazz things," says drummer Paul Chuffo, "but I was always out playing at CBGB too." Chuffo and company unify their wide-ranging interests on the new LP *Sludge Test*, which is loud, fast, a little twisted, and yet somehow jazzy in its chords and melodies. And there are lots of tricky Zappa-like unison figures—had Zappa listened to klezmer as well as classical. "We try to write tunes that are incredibly challenging but also have that high-energy kick," Chuffo says.

Gutbucket has a lot of fun while negotiating the brisk fives and sevens. During a

recent set, the band further delighted mesmerized fans by: A) running screaming into the crowd in the middle of a number, B) having a suited crony pass out wafer cookies like communion, and C) releasing dozens of multicolored balloons over the audience. This is no somber prog outfit.

The group was formed in 1999 by former ex-Caminos Chuffo, guitarist Ty Citerman, and saxophonist Ken Thomson, plus Eric Rockwin on bass. Their first two albums were diverse affairs, but Gutbucket streamlined its sound for *Sludge Test*. "We decided to put out a rock record," Chuffo says, "to gather the nastiest stuff we had and make it a cohesive kick to the stomach."

When at home—Gutbucket tours regularly in the States and Europe ("We're jazz over there," says Paul)—the drummer stays sharp by playing on a pad while watching kung fu movies. "I pick a rudiment and go through it. I start throwing in accents and making phrases along with the movie. The fights get bigger, the action gets more tense and crazy, and by the end I'm just free-form, trying to create a soundtrack in my head." **Michael Parillo**



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Jerome Dillon

Former NIN Member Takes Solo Leap

For a solo album produced and composed by a drummer, one would anticipate involved drumming on each track, or at the very least, drums on every song. But in former Nine Inch Nails drummer Jerome Dillon's case, his nearLY project is more about the sum of the song than its individual parts—some of which omit drums all together.

Recently exiting the Nine Inch Nails camp, Dillon completed his longtime solo debut, *Reminder*, which began when he started compiling ideas and four-track demos in 1999. After tracking Nine Inch Nails' *Still* album, Dillon asked frontman Trent Reznor if he could stick around the studio and cut some drums for his nearLY project. Roughly five days later, Dillon had completed a majority of the drum parts for *Reminder*.

Reminder offers a unique array of percussive textures and phrases. There's the expansive ambiance of "Step Into The Light," of which Dillon notes, "We killed all the direct mics on the drums. The only mics that we used are two stereo overheads and one Sennheiser about fifteen feet away from my bass drum."

"Straight To Nowhere" and "All Is Lost" finds Dillon keeping a clear eye on the groove. "A drummer friend of mine got a copy of the record, listened to it, and called to say, 'Dude, do you realize there's like three drum fills on the record?' I didn't, but he's right. I wanted the record to be very hypnotic, something that draws you in, takes you for a small journey, and then lets you go. At times, drum fills can interrupt the emotional flow of the music and also interfere with the lead vocal, which to me is the most important part."

In addition to the vocals, Dillon was mindful of the other instruments layered within his songs. "I took the production on this record very seriously," he says. "I didn't want to think of it like a drummer producing a record for drummers. I wanted to make a record that musically, to me, would be interesting, even after repeated listens."

Dillon intends to get behind the kit with his nearLY project on the road, performing with a full band, including a string section. It's an ambitious undertaking for a startup venture. "You only go around once, man," he rationalizes. "Might as well live it up."
Waleed Rashidi

Jim Fox

Riding Again With The James Gang

As The James Gang's founder and only constant member during their 1966–76 run, you would think their criminally unheralded drummer, Jim Fox, would know if he owned the rights to his band's name. "I just don't know much about the machinations," Fox sheepishly admits. "Show me where the bus is, where the drum riser is—that's all I need."

Point Fox toward the bus, then, because The James Gang's most celebrated lineup—Joe Walsh, Dale Peters, and Fox—has been riding again this summer on a US tour. The lineup responsible for FM gold like "Walk Away" and "Funk #49" has played sporadic gigs in their native Cleveland, but this marks the first time they've saddled up with superstar Walsh in thirty-five years.

"Last summer we did three dates in Cleveland that we never intended to do," explains Fox on what sparked the reunion. "We made plans to hang out and write, not to do any performing. But fifteen minutes into the first rehearsal, Joe asked, 'You suppose we ought to play some shows?' Once we did them,

it cemented things even further."

While Fox is mainly known for the swampy grooves on classic James Gang albums like *James Gang Rides Again* and *Thirds*, he was also an early member of Cleveland pop band The Outsiders ("Time Won't Let Me") and amassed some impressive session credits with Eric Clapton, B.B. King, Stephen Stills, and Chuck Mangione.

Though the haze of time leaves him foggy on what was actually released, he fondly recalls one track he knows made the final cut: "Steady Rollin' Man" from Clapton's classic *461 Ocean Blvd.* "What a pleasure that was, to do a Robert Johnson tune with Clapton," Fox gushes. "We had just a wonderful evening playing."

For the James Gang trek, Fox is playing a DW kit—part of his first endorsement pact since his Slingerland days in the early '70s. "Back then it was, 'Well, do you want the red ones or the blue ones?'" Fox laughs. "Drum technology has come so far that it over-

whelmed me at first. I now have a hard-shell case just for my bass drum pedal. I can't get over that."
Patrick Berkery

Jim with The James Gang circa 1969



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PERCUSSION

Steve Smith is on Soulbop's new CD, *Live*.

Eddie Bayers has been in the studio with George Strait, Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard, Ray Price, Joan Osborne, Martina McBride, George Jones, and Trisha Yearwood.

Kenny Pierce is on the debut album by The Spores, *Imagine The Future*.

Joe Travers is on Mike Keneally's *Guitar Therapy Live* CD and DVD.

Ian Falgout is on the road with Thomas Michael.

Vinnie Colaiuta is on Michael Bolton's *Bolton Swings Sinatra*.

California's Mardo brothers have released their sophomore CD, *The New Gun*, featuring **Robert Mardo** on drums and guitar.

Denny Carmassi is on *Outside Looking In*, the new album by Foreigner bassist Bruce Turgon.

Darryl White is on Chris Thomas King's *Red Mud Sessions*. He's also touring with Tab Benoit in support of his latest CD, *Brother To The Blues*.

Paul Leim is on tour with Faith Hill.

Ilan Rubin is now drumming with Welsh group Lostprophets.

Gartdrum is on the new release by 3, *Wake Pig*.

Matt Walker is on tour with Morrissey.

Warren Benbow is on Odyssey The Band's *Back In Time*, which also features James "Blood" Ulmer and Charles Burnham.

Fred Eltringham (formerly of The Wallflowers) is touring with The Dixie Chicks.

David Lauser is on tour with Sammy Hagar.

Jeremy Furstenfeld is on Blue October's latest, *Foiled*.

Lewis Nash is on *Liftoff* by Mark Elf.

Kaumyar is on Big City Rock's self-titled debut.

Brian Delaney is on the latest by the New York Dolls, *One Day It Will Please Us To Remember Even This*. Jack Douglas produced the CD.

Rich Redmond has been working non-stop with new country rocker Jason Aldean. Rich also recorded Aldean's debut album.

James Culpepper is on the new, self-titled album by Flyleaf.

Peter Kaufmann recently returned from a tour with Ween drummer **Claude Coleman**'s group, Amandla. Meanwhile, Coleman continues to record and play live dates with Ween, including Lollapalooza and a show at Red Rocks with The Flaming Lips.



DRUM DATES This month's important events in drumming history

Buddy Rich was born on 9/30/17,
Elvin Jones on 9/9/27.

Original Average White Band drummer **Robbie McIntosh** passed away on 9/23/74, **Keith Moon** on 9/7/78, **John Bonham** on 9/25/80, **Shelly Manne** on 9/26/84, and **Philly Joe Jones** in September of '85.

On 9/19/29, the **Avedis Zildjian Company** is incorporated in America.



On 9/17/62, **Max Roach**, with Charles Mingus, records Duke Ellington's *Money Jungle*.

On 9/6/65, **Keith Moon** signs his first contract with **Premier Drums**.

On 9/5/87, Debbie Gibson's debut single "Only In My Dreams" (with **MD's Billy Amendola** on drums) hits number-4 on the pop charts and goes on to be the number-1 dance record of the year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Chico Hamilton
(jazz great): 9/21/21

Horace Arnold
(educator, author): 9/25/35

Ron Bushy
(Iron Butterfly): 9/23/45

Greg Errico
(Sly & The Family Stone):
9/1/46

Don Brewer
(Grand Funk Railroad):
9/3/48

Kenney Jones
(The Faces, The Who):
9/16/48

Martin Chambers
(The Pretenders): 9/4/51

Neil Peart
(Rush): 9/12/52

Matt Wilson
(jazz great): 9/28/64

John Tempesta
(Helmet, Rob Zombie):
9/26/64

Zak Starkey
(The Who):
9/13/65

Janet Weiss
(Sleater-Kinney/Quasi):
9/24/65

Ginger Fish
(Marilyn Manson): 9/28/65

Robin Goodridge
(Bush): 9/10/66

Stephen Perkins
(Jane's Addiction, Panic
Channel): 9/13/67

Tyler Stewart
(Barenaked Ladies):
9/21/67

Brad Wilk
(Audioslave):
9/5/68

John Blackwell
(Prince): 9/9/73

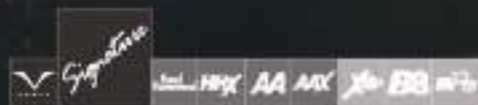


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Flashbacks And Freebies

by Mike Haid

KEY NOTES

- Well-constructed pro kit with many high-end features
- Resonant maple shells
- Excellent value with free bonus drum included
- Minor hardware issues with bass drum-mounted tom holder

The folks at Mapex are some of the hardest-working in the drum industry, in terms of aggressive marketing and consistent improvements to their ever-growing line of quality drumkits. Recent innovations include two new wrap finishes for the Pro M Series: Black Chrome Pearl and Vanilla Cream Pearl. These vintage-style wraps are made exclusively for Mapex by Delmar, one of the leading wrap manufacturers. Mapex has also upgraded the hardware package for these kits, which we'll discuss in detail.

Our review kit is the Pro M model PM6225A (studio configuration) in Vanilla Cream Pearl finish. There are lots of high-end features and a very enticing bonus drum included with this kit, so let's get to it.

Drums At A Glance

If you're looking for a vintage wrap, the Vanilla Cream Pearl finish is a winner. At first glance, it resembles a classic white marine pearl wrap that has aged gracefully over time.





The Studio configuration features 8x10, 9x12, 11x14, and 13x16 toms, with a matching 5½x14 wood snare and an 18x22 bass drum, all with 7-ply North American maple shells. The bass drum shell is 7.2 mm thick; the snare and tom shells are 5.8 mm. The toms and snare are fitted with 2.3 mm Mapex Chrome Power Hoops.

All drums (except the snare) come with Mapex's "single point of contact" lugs, meaning they are attached to the shell by a single screw for increased shell resonance. The snare drum offers larger, two-screw lugs with top and bottom threaded inserts to accommodate the batter-side and snare-side tension rods. The bass drum hoops are maple, with a matching wrap inlay.

The shell construction and finishing work (including bearing edges) on our review kit was outstanding. Some of the Remo UT heads that came on the drums worked well, and some didn't. Let's go deeper.

Bass—Boom!

The bass drum sounded spectacular out of the box. With a clear batter head that resembled a

Remo PowerStroke 4, and a black resonant head with no hole, this bass drum had power, punch, volume, and lots of deep resonance. I placed a small, thin pillow inside the drum to eliminate a bit of the hollowness, and...boom. I got a huge, fat sound with plenty of kick.



The Pro M features toms suspended via Mapex's ITS system.

Versatile Toms

The thin maple shells of the Pro M toms have beautiful resonance and sustain. The Remo UT clear batter heads on the toms were a bit thin and lifeless, so the good folks at Remo were kind enough to send us a variety of heads to help find the best replacement. It didn't take long. The Coated Ambassadors quickly answered the call with a warm tone and a rich, resonant sustain. The toms sounded great on their own, but were a little mismatched in tonality with the fat, punchy bass drum. So, off came the Ambassadors and on went clear Emperors. Oh yeah! The kit now produced a well-balanced tom/bass tone with lots of punch, sustain, and power.

Isolated Tom Suspension (ITS) mounts on all the toms are secured to the shell underneath two lugs (each of which is held in place with a single lug screw) on the batter side. This system is designed to allow the shell to vibrate freely for

A 7x12 Black Panther snare comes free with the Pro M kit.



increased resonance. A nice feature of the mounts is that they are designed to allow for easy head changes, which is always a plus. However, the size of the mounts does make the toms a bit heavy.

Snare(s): Bonus Time!

Once the toms and bass were sonically happening, it was time to get the snare in focus. The Remo UT heads that came with the snare seemed a bit thick and heavy, making the drum sound and feel dull and box-like. Off came the UT heads, and on went a coated Ambassador batter head and an extra-thin snare-side head. The new heads (and a little dampening) gave the snare a bright, singing tone, as well as a very articulate, defined sound and feel. This drum proved to be very versatile when the correct heads are installed.

But wait...there's more! When you buy this kit, you also get a free Black Panther 7x12 maple or cherry snare. Trust me, this is a valuable (MSRP is \$499.99) and worthwhile addition. (Note: only one snare stand comes with the kit.)

We were sent a maple snare, and its natural maple lacquer finish was gorgeous. The drum came outfitted with sixteen "single point of contact" lugs—eight for each head. Snare strainers with tension adjustments were installed on each side of the drum.

To be honest, I preferred the sound and feel of the Black Panther bonus snare drum to that of the 5 1/2x14 Pro M wood snare. The Panther had power and attack, and its 7" depth gave it some beef. The Remo UT heads that came on this snare drum sounded great with the rest of the re-headed kit. This drum killed, right out of the box. And remember, it's free.

Hardware: For Better Or Worse

Overall, the hardware package with the Pro M series is excellent. The P750A double-chain bass drum pedal and the H750A hi-hat stand were easy to assemble and operate. No fancy gadgets, just easy-to-find, user-friendly adjustments. I loved the three-way bass drum beater (felt, wood, and plastic). It was very cool to have all these sound options available from one beater. Both pedals were smooth and solid performers.

The C550A straight cymbal stand, B550A boom stand, and S550A snare stand are very stable, with sturdy, double-braced legs. Cymbal stands are dual-tubed with die-cast memory locks on each tube. The tilters feature Mapex's OS Cymbal Accentuators, which are rubber units that replace traditional felts between the cymbal and the tilter for

enhanced cymbal sustain.

The TS550A Double Tom Stand (for the 14" and 16" toms) was also very stable. Ball-joint arms and U-shaped memory locks provided placement options while keeping the toms securely in place. It would be nice if Mapex could add a multi-purpose clamp attachment to the backside of the tom arm frame to facilitate a cymbal arm.

Although the non-penetrating TH675 double tom holder on the bass drum is an innovative concept for maximum shell resonance and isolation of tom vibration, it provides limited height and angle adjustments. Because the holder is non-penetrating, it limits the ability to lower the vertical shaft of the holder (short of

physically cutting the shaft down with a hacksaw). Because of this, I was unable to position the toms low enough for my needs. The base of the holder is also heavy and bulky, and may require a larger drum case in order to accommodate the protruding base. On a positive note, the TH675 is very stable, and it holds the toms securely in place.

Of course, you can always mount your toms on separate tom stands, or suspend them from a cymbal stand with a multi-clamp/tom arm. However, with the TH675, both of the ball-joint tom arms are built into the same frame. So you'd need to purchase separate tom arms in order to mount the 10" and 12" toms on individual stands.

Conclusion

Despite its minor hardware quirks, the quality and craftsmanship of the Pro M kit is top-notch, allowing it to serve well in any gigging situation. The addition of the free Black Panther snare makes the kit a major bargain. Having two such diverse snare drums opens up a world of tonal possibilities. The Pro M series offers many options in finishes and sizes to fit your specific needs. This is an outstanding, versatile pro kit with an affordable price tag.

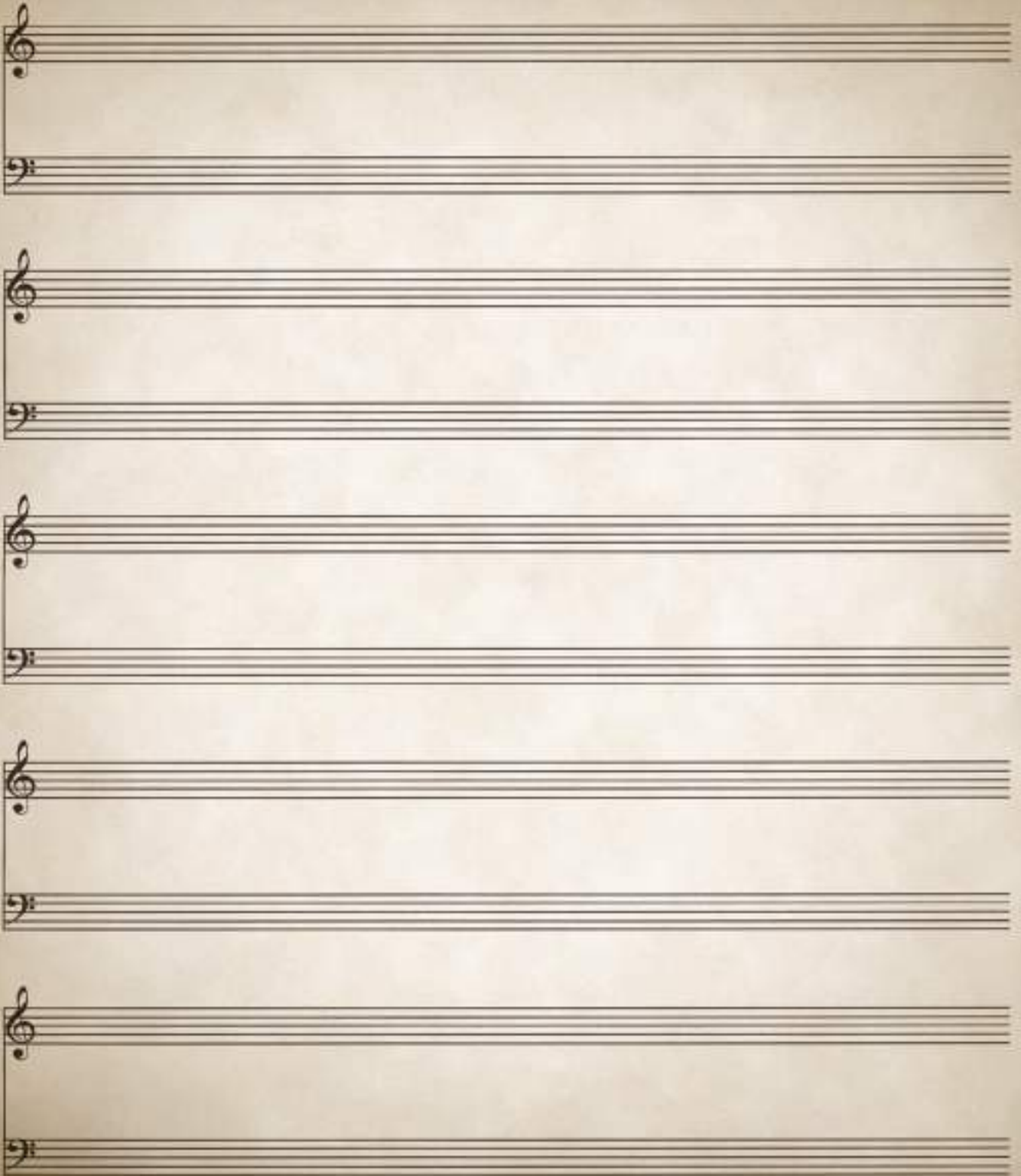
THE NUMBERS

Pro M model PM6225A (Studio Configuration)\$2,139

Includes 8x10, 9x12, 11x14, and 13x16 suspended toms, a 5 1/2x14 wood snare, and an 18x22 bass drum, in Vanilla Cream Pearl wrap. Also includes a free 7x12 Black Panther snare drum in natural maple finish.

Hardware includes 550 series straight cymbal, boom, and double tom stands, as well as a 750 series hi-hat stand and a 750 series bass drum pedal.

(615) 793-2050, www.mapexdrums.com



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AN AMERICA ONLINE®



Paiste's Redesigned Alpha Cymbals

Updated Looks And Sounds

by Martin Patmos

After debuting in 1992, Paiste's Alpha series quickly gained recognition as a line of professional-quality cymbals offered at reasonable prices. Since then, Paiste has developed new techniques and methods in cymbal production. So now, fourteen years later, the company is re-launching the Alpha line—completely redesigned, and geared towards today's music scene. Let's take a closer look.

Physical Characteristics

Alpha cymbals are made in Germany, utilizing hi-tech processes that reproduce the principles of Swiss hand craftsmanship. They

KEY NOTES

- Groove Ride is a great all-around model
- Medium crashes had lots of character
- Sensitive Chinas have a warm yet trashy sound

are then enhanced by traditional hand hammering, leaving medium-sized hammer marks that pepper the surface of the cymbals. Most models feature a medium-loose lathing. Those that are geared toward heavier music have tighter lathing across the top—or none at all. Bottom lathing is tight and even.

Alpha cymbals have nice bronze color. The tops are adorned with a black triangular Alpha logo, as well as the cymbal model designation and a stamped serial number. The Paiste logo is on the bottom of each cymbal. I found the new Alpha logo likable but a bit big and heavy-looking on the larger cymbals. Of course, virtually every cymbal manufacturer has a large logo screened on their cymbals, and some are far less tasteful.

General Sound Characteristics

As a series, the Alphas are bright, with good projection and stick definition. Their sound qualities range from warm to cutting, depending on the model and intended application.



They mix exceptionally well harmonically, allowing any combination of cymbals to blend nicely. And while they proved able to hold up well in an amplified setting, they were also controllable and musical at lower volume levels.

Hi-Hats

Hi-hat sizes range from 10" to 15", in various weights. As a basis for comparison, the 14" medium hi-hats were a great all-around set. They possessed a solid chick, a pleasant splash, and great stick response throughout the open to closed range. The 13" medium hi-hats were equally expressive, though higher in pitch.

The 14" Rock hi-hats had a bright, powerful chick, as well as defined response that radiated authority. And for those needing real muscle in their sound, the 15" Rock hi-hats are incomparable, with an almost crash-like foot splash, a deeper pitch, and power to spare.

Meanwhile, the 14" Sound Edge hi-hats exhibited the distinctive magnified, slightly hollow sound of their design. At the other end of the scale, 12" Rhythm X-Hats and 10" Mini X-Hats offered alternate sound options. Both were tight and crisp when closed, and splashy when open. The 12" in particular produced a sharp chick sound, as well as a nice bark.

Rides

I was impressed with all of the Alpha ride cymbals, even though some stood out more than others. The one thing they all had in common was a large bell that produced great tone. For me, the Groove Ride, offered in 21" and 22" sizes, was a great all-around model that I could really lay into. Both sizes produced a round sound with fairly clean definition and spread, and both were easily controlled.

I liked the 20" Full ride less as an all-around cymbal, because the wash it produced took away from the stick definition. That said, it had an appropriately full harmonic range and a bright, round sound.

The 22" Rock ride was perfect for big quarter notes, with a big spread following the stick attack. The bell on this cymbal bled a little more into the body than did those on the other Alpha rides, but it was still effective. I didn't like the 20" Rock model as much. The tone seemed less warm.

Likewise, the 20" Metal ride's harmonics built to a slightly harsh intensity that was less pleasing than the sound of the 22" version. I really enjoyed playing the larger model, due to its exceptional stick definition, its high pitch, and its bright yet slightly dry tone.

The 22" Metal ride proved outstanding for fast, high-intensity play,



cutting through double bass and everything else in its way. Plus, it had an absolutely killer bell.

The 20" Heavy ride was also impressive. It had more depth and interesting harmonics than the other heavy-weight rides, combined with solid stick definition. The 20" Flat Ride was the real surprise, though, with a controlled, smoky, slightly silvery/sizzly sound that still retained the overall brighter characteristics of the Alpha line. These cymbals are versatile enough to be used in a variety of applications.



Crashes

The range of crash cymbals in the Alpha line ought to please anyone, with thin, medium, and Rock models available in most sizes. Overall, these cymbals were lively, presenting a strong impact explosion and a full swell.

The Rock crashes, which range in size from 16" through 20", were extra bright and immediate. They made their statement and decayed in a relatively quick fashion. The 20" model made a great Van Halen-style crash-ride.

While the Rock cymbals were excellent for their intended application, I did find them to be a little one-dimensional. So for general-purpose playing I preferred to mix them in a setup with other Alpha crashes.

The Thin crashes were lower in pitch and very responsive, producing a vibrant wash with a longer decay than the Rock models. The 14" and 16" thin models spoke quickly, while the 17" and 18" sizes were great for their big swell.

I liked the medium crashes the best of all, because they seemed to have the most character. Whether it was the punchy 14" or the all-purpose 16" and 18" models, the medium crashes were explosive, with a big, round, full-bodied sound.

Splashes

The Alpha splashes were a really fun bunch. The 8" and 10" thin splashes possessed a fairly classic splash sound: fast, bright, and short. Just as attention-grabbing were the 10" and 12" Metal splashes. With their oversized bell—practically a separate playing surface—their sound had more of an airy “whaa” to it. The 12" seemed a little large for a splash, but it nonetheless made an interesting accent cymbal. The 10" was just right, offering an interesting splash sound that went a little beyond the expected. Combining the 10" Metal splash with the two thin Splashes led to some creative accent patterns.

Chinas

I’ve always liked Paiste’s approach to China cymbals, and the new Alpha models are no exception. With a bright “kang” sound, the 14" China was a lot of fun, while the 18" offered a range of sounds from the edge to the interior. The 18" Rock China was similarly effective, though its sound was brighter and harsher than that of the regular 18" model.

On the other hand, the 15" and 17" Sensitive Chinas—with their lower profile and small, round cup—offered an alternate, complementary sound. They emitted a sound that was warmer, softer, and a bit trashier than that of the other Chinas—more of a “tah” than a “kang.” Having one of each type of China in a setup presented great ride and crash accent possibilities.

Conclusion

The redesigned Alpha series is admirable for its diverse offering of sounds. Due to their bright character, the Alphas might be best suited to rock-derived styles. But taken altogether, the series seems to offer something for everyone. The impressive range of ride surfaces and hi-hat options present plenty of choices for finding the right pulse. Likewise, there is a wealth of color and accent choices.

On top of everything else, these professional-level cymbals come at very reasonable prices. The Alphas offer a lot of quality for the money, making them definitely worth checking out.

THE NUMBERS

20" Full, Rock, Metal, Heavy, and Flat rides	...\$276
21" Groove Ride	.....\$314
22" Groove, Rock, and Metal rides	.....\$350
14" Thin and medium crashes	.....\$158
16" Thin, medium, and Rock crashes	.....\$199
17" Thin and Rock crashes	.....\$222
18" Thin, medium, and Rock crashes	.....\$244
20" Rock crash	.....\$276
10" Mini X-Hats	.....\$222
12" Rhythm X-Hats	.....\$238
13" Medium hi-hats	.....\$266
14" Medium and Rock hi-hats	.....\$316
15" Rock hi-hats	.....\$358
14" Sound Edge hi-hats	.....\$375
8" Thin splash	.....\$94
10" Thin and Metal splash	.....\$111
12" Metal splash	.....\$119
14" China	.....\$158
16" China	.....\$199
18" China and Rock China\$244
15" Sensitive China\$179
17" Sensitive China\$222
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Schalloch Cajons

Boxes For Beginners

by Norman Arnold

KEY NOTES

- Good-quality construction
- Affordable price
- Excellent entry-level instruments

A cajon is the sort of instrument that virtually anyone can play on for fun. You sit on it, so you don't need a stand or a separate stool to play it. It's relatively portable, and it doesn't require tons of technique from the player. Of course, professional percussionists can get miraculous sounds out of a cajon. But a beginner can make some great sounds right off the bat as well.

Of course, "beginner appeal" is largely tempered by cost. Even an instrument that's simple to play isn't going to attract many beginners if it's expensive to buy. With that in mind, Schalloch has introduced a selection of affordable, entry-level cajons.

The Natural Cajon

The Natural Cajon is made from Siam oak, and the outside finish looks great. The box is 21" high, 12" wide, and 12" deep. The top, on which you sit to play the instrument, has a non-slip clear coat. The bottom is fitted with four sturdy rubber feet. The edges of the drum are sanded and nicely beveled. The smooth playing surface is $\frac{4}{5}$ "-thick Asian ash, with a rich brown grain.

The Natural cajon had a good sound—sharp, and not overly resonant or boomy. The low bass sound responded well, and I was also able to get a good crack on the edges. The front plate/playing surface can be adjusted easily with a Phillips screwdriver. Adjusting the screws changes the amount of space between the front plate and the body. The greater the space, the more pronounced slap and buzz from the drum.

A set of four snare wires runs vertically along the inside of the drum to provide a snare sound. You can easily adjust the snares with the provided hex wrench to produce a variety of sound options. The snare mechanism isn't as sophisticated or as sensitive as those found on more expensive cajons, but it will certainly serve the needs of entry-level players.

Burlwood Front

This cajon is similar in dimensions, construction, and features to the Natural cajon. The main difference is that the front plate/playing surface is made from exotic makah burlwood, which features a highly figured grain. So the smooth playing surface looks ornate.

The sound of this cajon was slightly higher in pitch and a bit drier than that of the Natural wood. (Almost boxier, if you'll forgive the pun.) It also had a nice dry crack to it. Experimentation with the amount of snare tension and the adjustment of the front plate provided a lot of different sounds. The acoustic differences between this



model and the Natural provides a distinctive choice, allowing you to decide what sound works best for your situation.

The Flaming Cajon

This cajon is created to the same specs as the others, but with more attention to the visual aspect. The front plate—which is made of ash and is very comfortable to play—features a graphic flame pattern.

From a musical standpoint, this cajon is the least resonant of the bunch. In fact, it sounds dry, crisp, and tight. Within those basic parameters, I was still able to get a respectable number of different sounds by experimenting with face-



plate adjustments. This is a good cajon with a cool look.

Boxed In

Schalloch's entry-level cajons are well made and attractively priced. If you're thinking of starting to play a cajon...or of augmenting your drum or percussion setup with one...or of replacing your drum stool with something you can play...this would be a great place to start looking.

Musicians Friend is the exclusive distributor for Schalloch percussion in the US. Their online prices are significantly lower than the list prices quoted here.

THE NUMBERS

Natural Cajon	\$140
Cajon with Burlwood Front	\$169
Cajon with Flames	\$.189.90-\$209.90

www.musiciansfriend.com

Quick Looks

Vintage Logos MetallicHeads



When you hear "vintage logos" in relation to a front bass drum head, you might envision a shield containing a drummer's initials, as was popular during the big band era. And Vintage Logos certainly does offer such designs. But with today's emphasis on graphic imagery in virtually every aspect of life, many drummers are looking for something a little hipper and flashier to put on the fronts of their drums.

Well, Vintage Logos has those drummers covered too. They've recently introduced a line called MetallicHeads, which offers heads designed to be reflective, colorful, and eye-

catching. To make MetallicHeads, Vintage Logos bonds a special finish to the front surface of a single-ply Aquarian head, thus creating a twingly head. I didn't feel as though any bass drum sound was sacrificed in order to gain the visual aspect of the MetallicHead. In fact, it helped deepen the tonality of the drum.

MetallicHeads come in two series. Color Chrome finishes feature a mirror-like surface, and come in a choice of eleven vibrant colors as well as a Diamond Plate finish. Sequin Sparkle finishes are made with thousands of round sequin chips. Seven colors are available, and

each one produces different colored reflections when hit with light from different angles. It's a *very* cool effect.

All MetallicHeads can be customized with your initials, your name, your band's name, your band's logo...or virtually any graphic you desire. Even without such custom touches, MetallicHeads can add a dramatic visual element to your kit. Prices are \$78 for a 20" head, \$81 for a 22" head, and \$84 for a 24" head.

(513) 351-0075, www.vintagelogs.com

Rick Van Horn

Canopus Vintage Series V-60 Kit

Classic Sound Made New

by Chap Ostrander
photos by Ian Travis

KEY NOTES

- Toms and bass drum create authentic '60s drum sound
- Steel snare drum offers excellent sensitivity
- Lightweight hardware is practical and portable

Buying genuine “vintage” drums can be a gamble. You might get the sound that you fondly remember. But you might also get bearing edges that need work, or plies that have separated. The fact is, it’s hard to know exactly *what* you’re getting.

Canopus has employed modern technology to improve this situation. Their V-60 series drums are specifically designed to emulate the sound of drums from the 1960s. They feature '60s-style thin maple shells, with no glue rings. They also feature rounded bearing edges that are like shoulders, rather than the sharp edges found on most drums these days.

Construction

Our review kit was a special-order configuration in jazz sizes: 8x12 rack tom, 14x14 floor tom, and 14x18 bass drum. The toms featured die-cast hoops; the bass drum had wood hoops. The 5x14 chromed steel snare drum came equipped with rolled steel hoops. The drums were fitted with brass-finished lugs, and the toms and bass drum were wrapped in a red sparkle covering.

The kit is designed with no tom mount on the bass drum. The small tom is meant to be mounted separately in a snare-drum stand. It can also be special-ordered with a suspension mount so it can be “flown” from an adjacent stand (or, if a customer absolutely demands it, from an available bass-drum mounting bracket).

All of the drums featured Canopus’s Bolt Tight tension rods. This concept employs nylon washers on either side of a metal washer on the tension rod. It prevents metal-to-metal contact and helps to maintain tuning adjustments.

Sound

The V-60 toms and bass drum did indeed possess the warm, vintage sound of 1960s drums—and then some.

The small tom, for example, covered a fairly wide range of tonalities. It could be bright where needed, but it could also be lowered into a fatter sound if the music called for it.

The floor tom had amazing amounts of resonance. I could (and did) bring it up into “jazz” range quite effectively. But I liked it better tuned down, because the low sound was just so satisfying. The bass drum was the same way. It could be tightened up and bright, or low and punchy.

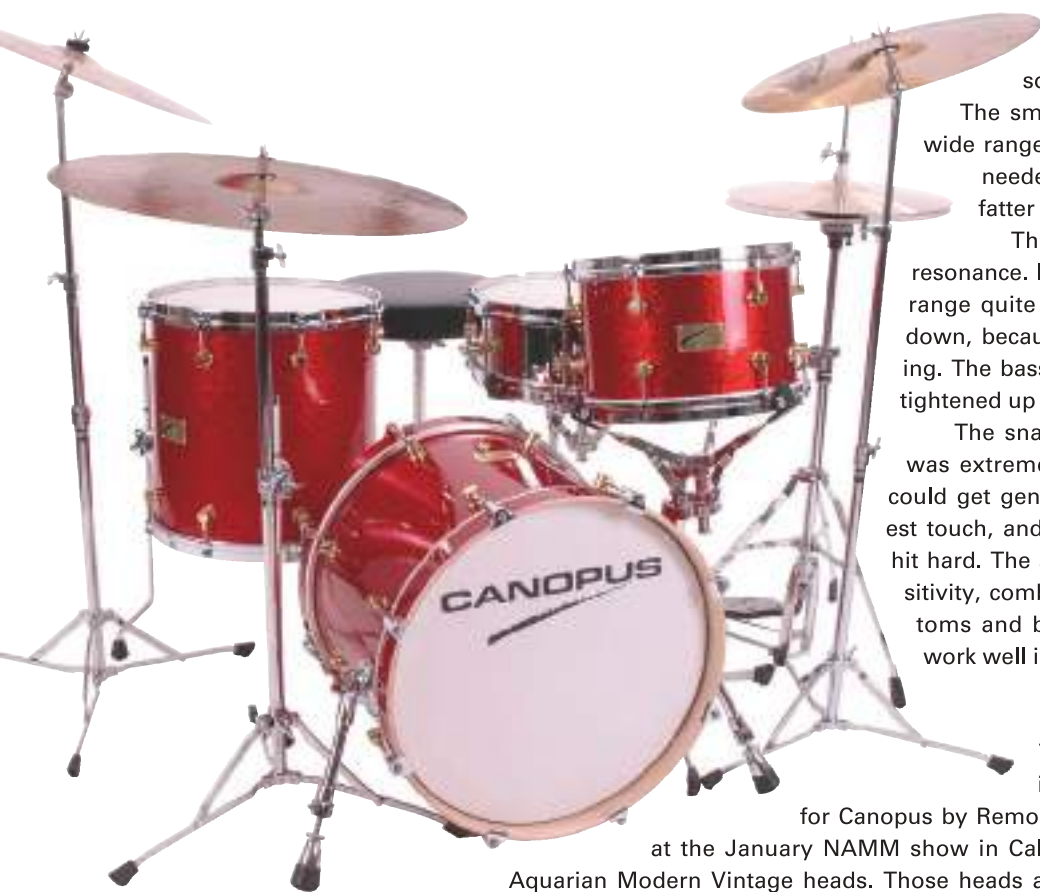
The snare drum—dubbed simply The Steel—was extremely sensitive at all playing volumes. I could get generous snare response from the slightest touch, and yet the drum never choked up when hit hard. The snare drum’s cut, brightness, and sensitivity, combined with the wide tonal range of the toms and bass drum, made for a kit that would work well in most if not all situations.

The kit’s sonic character was noticeably affected by drumhead selection. The drums came with their standard issue of Ambassador-style heads made

for Canopus by Remo. However, this kit had been displayed

at the January NAMM show in California, where it had been fitted with

Aquarian Modern Vintage heads. Those heads are designed to replicate the sound of calf heads. Canopus sent the Aquarian heads along for us to try as well.





With the Aquarian heads, the drums sounded round and full, with a tone and depth that harked back to the days before plastic drumheads became common. This might be construed as a more “authentic” vintage sound than that produced by the Remo heads. On the other hand, I thought the Remo heads made the drums sound more open and lively, though still nice and warm. You’d simply need to decide just how “vintage” you wanted your sound to be, and equip the drums with heads that contribute to that sound.

Lightweight Hardware

The hardware of the 1960s met the needs of drummers in the days prior to bashy rock, but it’d be considered pretty flimsy by today’s standards. Still, it had the advantage of being lightweight and easy to carry—characteristics likely to appeal to the type of drummer who’d choose a compact set like our review model.

With this in mind, Canopus has introduced a line of lightweight hardware designed to be sturdy and functional, but without a lot of fancy features. For example, the hi-hat uses small pipe diameter and single-braced legs to achieve its light weight (just over six pounds). The chain-drive pedal connects to the pull rod via a ball-bearing fitting. A spring adjustment feature helps to provide a smooth and comfortable action. And, in a nod to modern-day playing styles, the legs rotate to accommodate a double pedal setup.

The flush-base cymbal stand has minimal bracing above the legs. The base allows you to position the stand right up against the bass drum, or you can vary the angle of the legs to place stands near each other. There are nylon bushings at all the adjustment points, and the stand folds to a compact size. The small, toothed tilter doesn’t give you an infinite number of choices. But it can go straight up (for a flat cymbal setting) or achieve several useful tilting angles. Personally, I think the lack of hi-tech features on this stand is more than balanced by the savings in cost and weight. The stand weighs just over three pounds.

The snare stand is also a flush-base model, with nylon fittings throughout. A large nut underneath lets you tighten the basket against your snare. As with the cymbal stand, the basket tilter doesn’t provide infinite choices, but I think most players could find a comfortable angle for their snare. This stand only weighs just over five pounds.

Though the Canopus stands are small and light, they still felt solid and well made. As a drummer who moves around to various jobs,

I think this hardware would be a treat. It also seems completely appropriate—in terms of appearance—for use with the compact V-60 kit.

The Hybrid series throne that came with our review kit uses a combination of steel and machined aluminum to minimize weight and maximize performance. The result is a very solid-feeling throne that weighs only 8.8 pounds. I enjoyed having a comfortable throne that I could toss into a hardware bag with the rest of the stands without risking a hernia.

Conclusion

The authentic vintage sound and appearance of the V-60 kit was balanced by excellent contemporary construction. Canopus drums are hand-made in Japan, so they’re not cheap. But their quality rivals that of any high-end drum maker, so you get what you pay for.

The accompanying Canopus hardware was light (yay!), practical, well made, and affordable. If you’re in the market for a compact, portable kit that has a distinctive and totally professional sound, the Canopus V-60 is one to consider.



THE NUMBERS

8x12 tom	.....	\$967.79
14x14 floor tom	.....	\$1,240.94
14x18 bass drum	.....	\$1,954.12
Prices are for a wrapped finish. Drums are available in oil, lacquer, and lacquer burst or fade finishes at additional cost.		
The Steel snare drum	.....	\$557.23
Cymbal stand	.....	\$99.99
Snare stand	.....	\$115.00
Hi-Hat stand	.....	\$168.00
Hybrid throne	price not available at press time
(310) 637-7628, www.canopususa.com		





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The Drumometer Model II

Measuring Speed And Technique

by T. Bruce Wittet

A year ago I would have been the last person on earth to talk to about a machine that clocked your hand or foot speed. Such a contraption, I had concluded, had nothing to do with making music. What's more, I'm not mechanically minded, and I get frustrated with anything that's not plug-and-play.

KEY NOTES

- Fun
- Excellent adjunct to traditional teaching methods
- Measures speed flawlessly, especially with supplied pad
- Encourages practice

I'm happy to report that the Drumometer Model II, a device for clocking hand and foot speed, can also put drummers in the fast lane toward gaining control of their sticks and pedals. I discovered the blunt truth that there is no way to play singles or doubles quickly, accurately, and for more than short spurts, without first attaining a high level of control. The Drumometer can foster such control and lead to more confident, relaxed, and accurate playing on the drumkit.

So Simple That This Drummer Could Assemble It

The Drumometer arrived in a single box that also contained a Drum-O-Pad, a footswitch, an acoustic drum trigger, and cables. The clearly written Drumometer Model II manual didn't assume that I'd spent time with the Drumometer Model I—a correct and welcome assumption.

Two supplied AA batteries power the Drumometer, which is a nice feature, since you can buy such batteries cheaply, and in bulk, anywhere. The Drum-O-Pad, which is fitted with a Remo Ebony head, connects to the Drumometer brain by means of supplied 1/4" cables. A handy floor switch serves to reset the display to the starting point.

If you wish, you can affix the supplied piezo-type acoustic drum trigger to your snare or bass drum, in order to measure your speed on a real drum. However, to make things work, you must muffle the drum considerably. It also helps to have the head tension reasonably high. These modifications will reduce the head flutter that can cause false tracking.



I tried hooking the trigger to my snare drum. While it triggered the brain flawlessly, frankly I didn't experience any enhanced realism. I prefer my snare drums unmuffled and clanky. So I went with the pad and tuned it up to taste. Incidentally, I mounted that pad on a snare drum stand beside my office computer, and played on it during breaks in my workday. I could also have mounted the pad and the Drumometer brain to cymbal stands for even more positioning flexibility. Both come threaded to accept a cymbal tilter rod. If you don't have spare cymbal stands hanging around, no problem. The pad is fitted with a non-slip rubberized bottom that will hug tables, chairs, or your knees.

Although you can reset the brain by means of a switch, the inclusion of a foot pedal lets you do this without any unnecessary reaching. That pedal is as durable as any guitar stomp unit.

When using the Drumometer for bass drum practice, you might want to invest in a bass drum practice pad, to which you could attach the Drumometer piezo trigger. If you go with your own bass drum, I repeat that you'll need to muffle it *extremely* well—like filling it full of laundry—to prevent false triggering.

Negotiating The Readout

There are two key display items on the Drumometer brain. The first is the allotted time, expressed in seconds. A default setting of 60 seconds gets you into the ballgame. The first beat you play on the pad activates the counter, which reads out how many strokes you play. When time's up, an alarm sounds and the counter shuts down.

At that point, you view your dismal results and wonder, "How can I improve them?" You might reset the timer to 30 seconds, or aim for a less lofty score than I did (700) on the first outing. Either way, it becomes evident that trying again and again, with no modification of your technique, is not the answer. You'll need to re-examine your stroke height, velocity, fulcrum, and finger usage in order to better

your sticking score. And to get those pokey feet up to speed, you'll be thinking in terms of heel height from the footplate (if not heel-down completely), as well as beater distance from the pad. If you're one who "buries the beater," you'll probably want to let the beater bounce free every stroke.

The Drumometer includes a metronome, which you can use independently. You can practice to its click through the Drumometer's speaker, or through your Walkman headphones (which defeat the speaker). You can also use the metronome *along with* the counter function, a nice touch for players seeking to clock their accuracy according to traditional metronomic values.

The timer can be set for short spurts (like ten seconds) or for longer durations up to 900 seconds (15 minutes). Let me assure you that for a novice, 60 seconds is an eternity. I've seen noted players fall apart by the 30-second mark. On the other hand, you may want to "cruise" and see how you fare at a modest speed, say, playing single paradiddles at march tempo. The point is that everything, from tempo to timer, is adjustable over a wide range. Furthermore, you don't need to buy anything extra to get up and running. (I've used the unit daily for a month, and have yet to replace the supplied AA batteries.)

What Price Speed?

One of the remarks I've received from drummers is that timing a single-stroke roll for, say, a minute, is not a realistic reflection of what drummers do on stage. They forget about Buddy Rich, whose epic solos

often featured extended single-stroke rolls. That issue aside, the value of the Drumometer goes further. In helping you develop control and endurance, it enables your technique to gain a new clarity and authority. Drumometer owners I've spoken to report that they'll play one-bar single-stroke rolls on stage, and those fills will be crisp and exact.

The Drumometer lets you monitor your technique while accurately measuring your progress. The manual provides several valuable exercises and suggestions for such improvement. A library of drum charts that incorporate Drumometer markings at regular intervals is currently being developed. In addition, the manual is written so that teachers can employ the Drumometer in many circumstances, including testing. The device keeps students honest and offers them tangible goals.

Whether you're talking blistering rolls or just paradiddles at 120 bpm, the Drumometer will let you discover precisely how many beats you've played in a given time span/tempo. It's a metronome, and it's a scorekeeper. It's educational, and it'll help you clean up your strokes. Best of all, it's fun. What's not to like?



THE NUMBERS

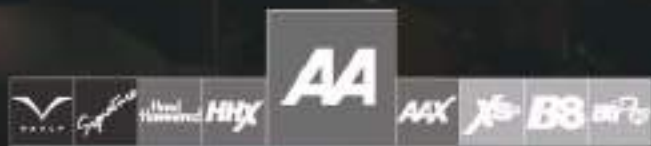
Drumometer Model II complete system \$199.99
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Photo: Aron Estrada





DAVE LOMBARDO

Return Of The King

Five years ago, speed metal's
greatest drummer
returned to the band that
launched his career.

Lombardo's work on
Slayer's new album,
Christ Illusion,
his first with them in
fourteen years,
once again displays his
tremendous talent.

story by Waleed Rashid • photos by Alex Selca

Instead of waxing poetic about what metal drumming living legend Dave Lombardo does behind the kit—you know, those punishing 16th-note kicks at rapid-fire tempos, incredible runs across his half-dozen rack toms, spastic patterns, and awe-inspiring phrases—it might be better to start off telling you what Lombardo *doesn't* do.

First off, he doesn't practice...much. "The only time I practice is when I'm with the band. I should practice more, but I don't," Lombardo slyly admits during our spirited, in-depth conversation at the *Modern Drummer* cover shoot in Los Angeles.

Throughout our discussion, we discover another drumming routine Lombardo doesn't participate in—warming up before a show. "I'll crawl out of my bunk, slam a couple of Red Bulls, stretch a little bit, and I'm on stage," he says. No practice pad, no paradiddles, not even an air drumming session required.

It's hard to believe that one of the most important drummers of the last quarter century doesn't practice or warm up. How can someone play so creatively with so little forethought? And when you think about Lombardo's long list of outstanding recordings—many made before the advent of digital editing—including Slayer's quintessential *Reign In Blood*, there's no denying this man's astonishing talent. More recent killer recordings demonstrating Dave's abilities include Fantomas's *Delirium Cordia* and his collaboration with DJ Spooky, *Drums Of Death*.

Lombardo's success springs from his wildly spontaneous methodology. But also credit his relentless vitality, his glowing enthusiasm for his craft, and his keen ear for a host of styles and fresh ideas. These have all led the forty-one-year-old father of three down a career path that, with the release of *Christ Illusion*, brings him completely full circle.

As the original drummer in Slayer, Lombardo built his reputation via a host of well-orchestrated albums,

including 1983's *Show No Mercy* and 1990's *Seasons In The Abyss*. On those recordings Dave shattered tempo barriers and furthered double bass drum technique. Launching his recording career while still in high school in South Gate, California, Lombardo, together with vocalist/bassist Tom Araya and guitarists Kerry King and Jeff Hanneman, helped build Slayer into a flagship unit of punk-influenced speed metal and thrash.

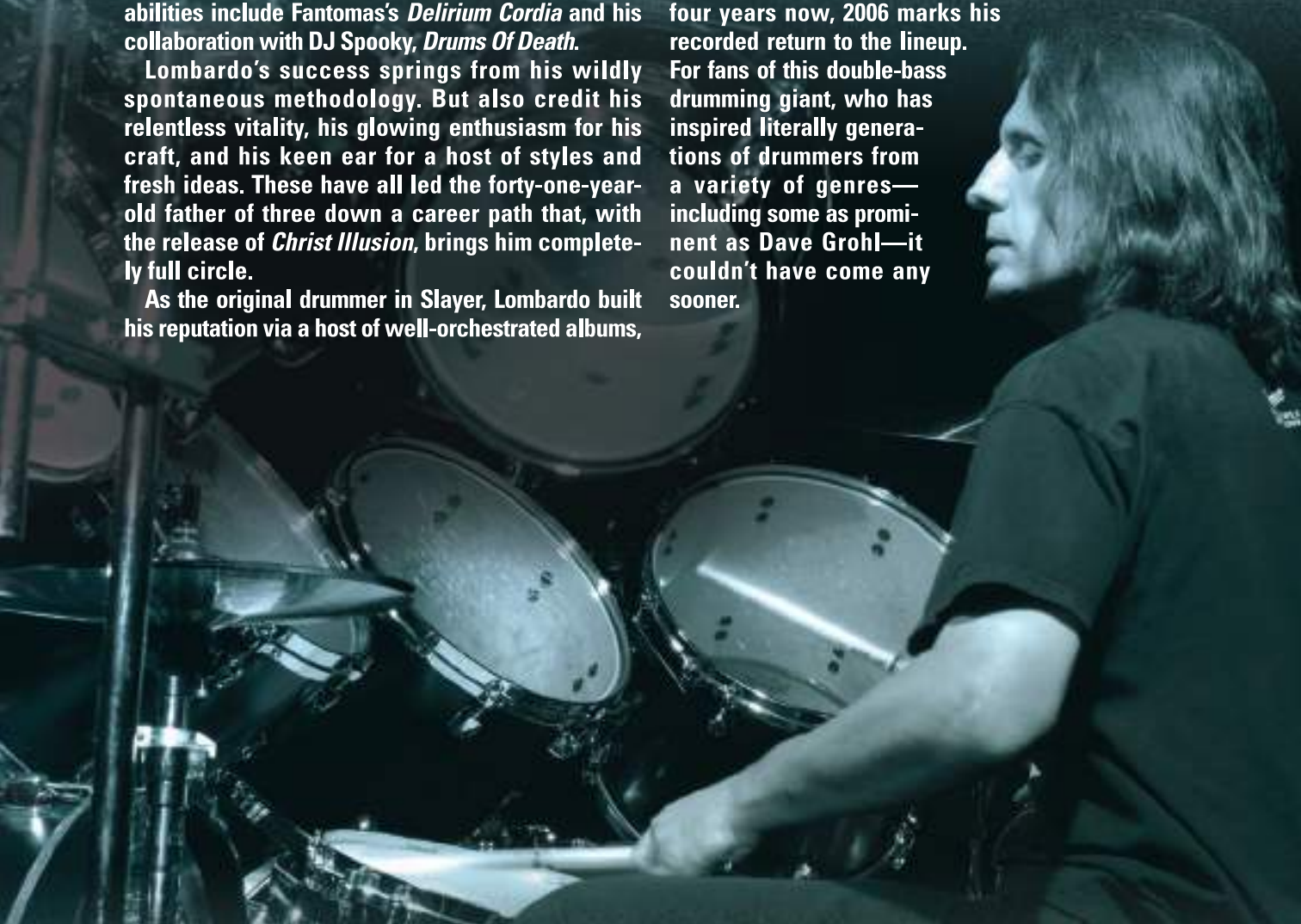
Lombardo's stint with the act ended in 1992, but the drumming great did not remain idle. He performed with Grip Inc. and Philm, and more recently recorded and toured with Fantomas, featuring Faith No More's Mike Patton and members off The Melvins. Then, when Lombardo's replacement in Slayer, Paul Bostaph, vacated the throne in 2001, Dave was asked to temporarily re-join the act.

"It felt like no time was lost," insists Lombardo about his re-entry. "What was odd for me was being on stage and seeing those three guys in front of me. It was like, 'Whoa, this is really weird. Is this some kind of dream?'"

Without a doubt, Slayer devotees were *ecstatic* about Lombardo's return to the band. But would he remain in the band? Well, after that first tour, all parties agreed that Dave should indeed stay.

Though Lombardo's been back in the band for over four years now, 2006 marks his recorded return to the lineup.

For fans of this double-bass drumming giant, who has inspired literally generations of drummers from a variety of genres—including some as prominent as Dave Grohl—it couldn't have come any sooner.



MD: *Christ Illusion* is your first recording with Slayer in fourteen years. Were you totally itching to get this album out?

Dave: Yes. It was frustrating, because Kerry and I were recording demos back in early 2003. So it's been three years of working on this stuff. We made two demos at my house and then we rehearsed the songs forever. The good part was, once we went into the studio, we were ready. I recorded the songs in like three and a half days—bam, slammed 'em out! I was almost disappointed, because I didn't get a chance to enjoy the studio.

MD: From the tracks we've heard, there seems to be more of a thrash beat being worked back into the songs.

Dave: Yeah, it's in there, but it's only at special times. We didn't want to overdo it. You want to add that sort of thing at the right time and in the right place. Slayer was originally a metal band, but we were influenced by punk, too. And that fast beat is the punk influence coming back in.

MD: You've now had a chance to reflect on all the albums you've done with the band. What went through your head this time before you started writing your parts?

Dave: Actually, I wanted to be a little more creative than I was allowed to be. There were certain boundaries I had to stay within. I've learned so much while I was away from the band, and I wanted to

apply some of those concepts. But the guys didn't feel those ideas were really what Slayer is all about. So in a way, I revisited the approach I used with the band years ago.

MD: So you're saying that in a sense that you're picking up from where you left off in '92?

Dave: Yes. But there's one song where I play blast beats—and not the punk beats. I did do that, and that's just a little reminder to other drummers out there that I'm on my toes. I listen to what's out there and I know what they're doing.

MD: "Jihad" finds you incorporating thrash beats around an extended tom intro. Tell me about putting that together.

Dave: That was one of Kerry's songs,



Drums: Tama Starclassic (maple) in flat black finish

- A. 5½x14 hammered bronze snare
- B. 7x8 tom
- C. 8x10 tom
- D. 9x12 tom
- E. 10x13 tom
- F. 11x14 tom
- G. 12x15 tom
- H. 16x18 floor tom
- I. 16x20 floor tom (custom)
- J. 18x24 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste

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- 2. 18" Novo China
- 3. 15" Rude Sound Edge hi-hats (custom)
- 4. 16" Rude crash
- 5. 18" Rude crash
- 6. 20" Rude crash
- 7. 20" Novo China
- 8. 22" Signature Power ride
- 9. 10" Rude Splash (positioned near ride, not in photo)

Hardware: Tama, including Iron Cobra Power Glide bass drum pedals (tight spring tension) with felt beaters

Percussion: Meinl

Heads: Evans Genera HD coated on snare batter with Glass 500 snare-side, clear G2s on tops of toms with Genera Resonants on bottoms, clear EQ3s on bass drum batters with black EQ1s on fronts. (All drums are tuned wide open with no internal or external muffling.)

Sticks: Pro-Mark 2BX signature (hickory with nylon tips)

Microphones: Shure Beta 56 on top of snare, Beta 57A on bottom, SM98 on toms, SM91 on kicks, Beta 87C on hi-hat and ride, KSM32 (4) for overheads

Electronics: Espresso machine



"In my opinion, Dave Lombardo is among the top-five most influential drummers in any genre. He has a perfect balance between feel and technique. A legend of his time and a wonderful personality."

—John Dolmayan, System Of A Down

"It must've been 1989 or 1990 when I was playing drums with Dweezil Zappa, and the Zappas had invited Faith No More over to their house. I was sixteen or seventeen years old. It was the first time I'd met Mike Bordin, and I'll never forget him telling me how I had to check out Dave Lombardo and what he does with Slayer. Mike looked me dead in the eye and said, 'Josh, this guy is an animal. He is a machine!' Needless to say, I got into Slayer and Dave Lombardo shortly after that and quickly recognized him as one of the greats. What he does is astounding. He is the quintessential speed metal/thrash drummer. Mike Bordin was right: Dave is an animal and he is a machine—and when it comes to heavy rock drumming, I can't think of a better way to be described."

—Josh Freese

"Dave Lombardo is the pioneer of blistering-speed double bass drumming. His fast, creative chops and fills behind the kit are amazing. He is the true 'Angel Of Death' himself."

—Mike Wengren, Disturbed

"Dave Lombardo pretty much taught me how to play metal. All I used to do when I was fifteen was transcribe all the parts to my favorite Slayer songs. In my opinion, Dave plays the greatest drum fill of all time right after the guitar solo in the song 'Angel Of Death.' All you metal drummers know what I'm talking about. Lombardo is a sadistic surgeon of demise who wields hickory like the monarch to the kingdom of the damned." [laughs]

—James "The Rev" Sullivan, Avenged Sevenfold

"*Divine Intervention* and *God Hates Us All* are great albums, and Dave Lombardo is an amazing drummer. He took metal drumming to a new level—truly groundbreaking."

—Mark O'Connell, Taking Back Sunday

and he presented it to me raw. He depends on me to come up with whatever beats I want. Jeff is a bit more specific. He'll program it all into a drum machine and then I'll come in and put my feeling over his guidelines.

MD: There seems to be some odd phrasing in "Jihad."

Dave: To me, it doesn't feel like it's in seven or any other odd time signature. It just feels natural. I thought, Okay, "Jihad" is more of a military thing, so at the beginning, I'll make it more Middle Eastern. And then at the end, where it's more military, I'll bring in the double bass. That was a tune where I felt I was being a little more creative.

MD: "Eyes Of The Insane" starts with a pounding tom intro with slower 16th-note kicks, but during the solo section you start kicking with what's going on.

Dave: Again, a lot of that was me trying to make the best Slayer record possible. I brought out all of these Slayer-esque beats. But then again, the band's music makes me play a certain way. Certain musicians will affect you that way too.

MD: "Catatonic" hammers straight 8ths at a slower pace. Is it harder for you to

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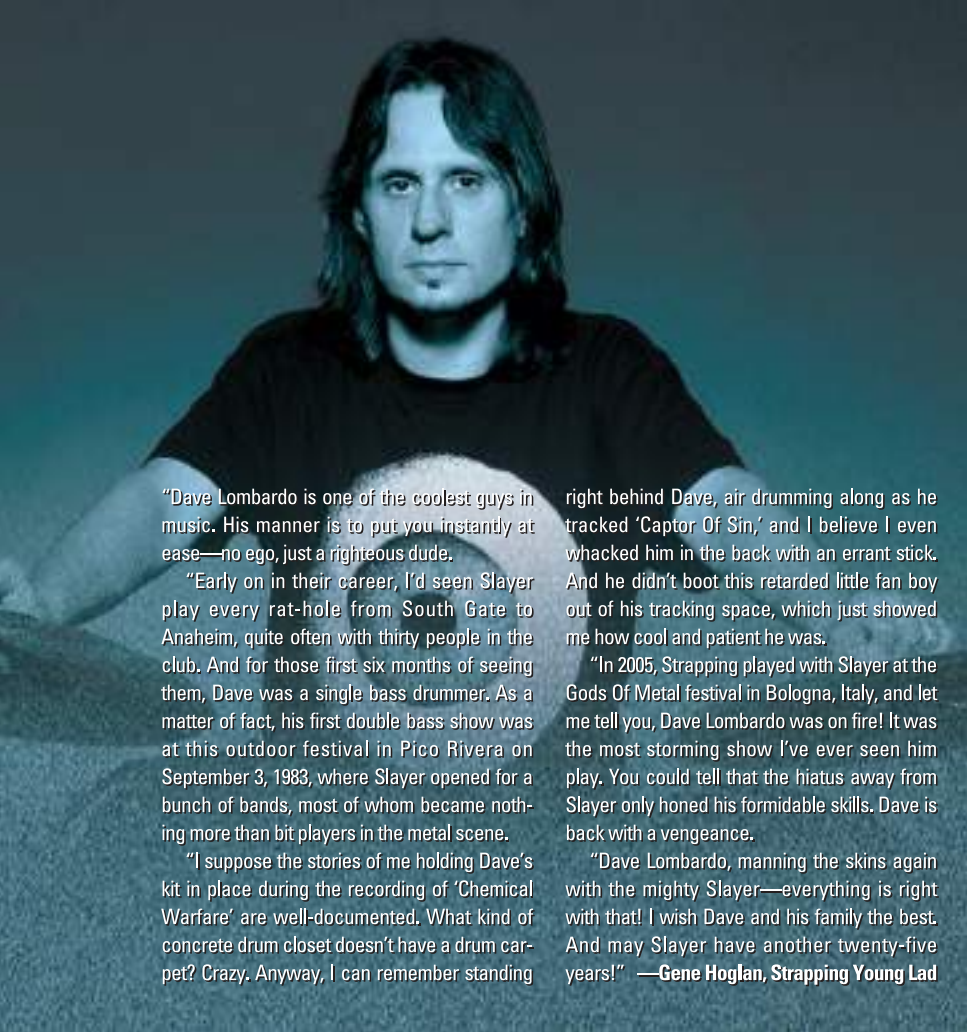


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"Dave Lombardo is one of the coolest guys in music. His manner is to put you instantly at ease—no ego, just a righteous dude.

"Early on in their career, I'd seen Slayer play every rat-hole from South Gate to Anaheim, quite often with thirty people in the club. And for those first six months of seeing them, Dave was a single bass drummer. As a matter of fact, his first double bass show was at this outdoor festival in Pico Rivera on September 3, 1983, where Slayer opened for a bunch of bands, most of whom became nothing more than bit players in the metal scene.

"I suppose the stories of me holding Dave's kit in place during the recording of 'Chemical Warfare' are well-documented. What kind of concrete drum closet doesn't have a drum carpet? Crazy. Anyway, I can remember standing

right behind Dave, air drumming along as he tracked 'Captor Of Sin,' and I believe I even whacked him in the back with an errant stick. And he didn't boot this retarded little fan boy out of his tracking space, which just showed me how cool and patient he was.

"In 2005, Strapping played with Slayer at the Gods Of Metal festival in Bologna, Italy, and let me tell you, Dave Lombardo was on fire! It was the most storming show I've ever seen him play. You could tell that the hiatus away from Slayer only honed his formidable skills. Dave is back with a vengeance.

"Dave Lombardo, manning the skins again with the mighty Slayer—everything is right with that! I wish Dave and his family the best. And may Slayer have another twenty-five years!" —Gene Hoglan, **Strapping Young Lad**

play slow than it is to play fast?

Dave: Yes, absolutely. Slow is always much harder than fast. It takes a certain person, a certain drummer, to play really fast. But if you take that drummer and tell him to play slow, many times he can't do it. I can play fast all day. But with slower tempos, I have to concentrate. That said, "Catatonic" was easy for me.

MD: When you started writing with the band again, was it pretty much the same as it was for previous Slayer recordings?

Dave: Their writing and approach is the same. I don't think they've changed one single bit from back then. But *my* approach has changed—I'm thinking about things a bit differently.

MD: In what way?

Dave: A guitar riff can have many types of drum beats, and at this stage of my playing I have a wide variety to choose from. It's cool, because I can give the guys different options.

MD: Do you think your time away from Slayer was good for you?

Dave: It was the best thing that ever happened to me. I had been a part of the greatest metal band in the world, and then I was able to venture into other styles and work

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Dave Lombardo

with very different musicians. Honestly, if I stayed in Slayer, I would never have had those incredible musical experiences. All of that experience shaped me and kind of “re-formed me” into the drummer I am now. I now feel confident jumping from one thing to another.

MD: Did you find that you had to get back into “Slayer drumming shape”?

Dave: There was no reconditioning—I think it’s just in me.

MD: So what about warming up?

Dave: Absolutely nothing. You can ask any bands that I play with. I’ll stretch a little before I go on, but no yoga or anything. A little bit of coffee wakes me up and gets the initial cobwebs off my face. When I get on stage, I’m fine. I have a little

espresso machine on the side of the stage, so if I’m lagging halfway through, I’ll say to Norm [Costa, Lombardo’s tech], “Make me an espresso.” And bam, I’m ready to go! [laughs]

MD: Practically every drummer who hears you wants to know how you play double bass so fast, powerful, and clean. Let’s dig into your bass drum technique. Do you play heel-up or flat-footed?

Dave: Heel-up, all the way.

MD: And where are your feet positioned on the pedal board?

Dave: They’re in the middle. You know when you hold a drumstick at its pivot point? That’s kind of my approach to the bass pedals. Find the sweet spot, where I barely touch the pedal and it moves.

The Natural

Slayer's Kerry King On Lombardo

Ask Slayer guitarist Kerry King which tracks on the band’s latest are Lombardo’s best performances, and he’s quick to tell you that they’re *all* Lombardo’s finest moments. “I don’t want to do him an injustice by pointing out just one,” he says. “Dave sounds amazing on this record.”

King recalls Lombardo’s re-entry into the Slayer camp in 2001—and the remarkable ease of having him re-join the act after his decade-long absence. “We had him come in, play, and try stuff out, and it was pretty awesome,” King says. “It was like putting on an old pair of shoes, man. They still fit!”

So has King noticed whether Lombardo’s drumming has changed much since his return to the band? “I think he does have more to offer,” the guitarist admits. “But has anything changed? Not that I’ve noticed. He’s still a world-class drummer. That said, I’m sure there are different things that he’s got under his belt that he never imagined years ago.”

King says that Lombardo, in a live environment, doesn’t always adhere to the parts performed on the band’s recordings, and that he’s been known to go off on tangents, largely with great success. “Sometimes he’ll start a drum roll twice as early, or one and a half times as early,” King says. “You’re wondering, Where is this going? Ninety-nine percent of the time, it’s perfect. But it just wakes you up when you’re on stage—you’re like, Whoa!”

Regarding Lombardo’s lack of a pre-gig warm-up, King confirms, “He’ll just come cruising in ten to fifteen minutes before a show, while Jeff [Hanneman] and I have already been in there warming up for a half-hour. Dave just gets on stage and is able to do it—amazing. It’s like that baseball movie, *The Natural*. That’s exactly what Dave is, a natural.”

Waleed Rashidi



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Dave Lombardo

MD: Has your bass drum technique changed much over the years?

Dave: I've locked it in. I was having trouble towards the tail end of my Slayer years. For instance, my playing on *Decade Of Aggression* sucks. I mean, the double bass was really bad, not what it is now.

MD: What happened to your playing?

Dave: I had lost contact with my drums. The techs were building my drumset to their own feel instead of to mine. The drum stool was really high, too high for me. I was bending over to play, and it hurt my back. I couldn't play double bass parts that way.

Now I have my drum stool positioned so that my legs are at a 90° angle, where it's comfortable. I can now play double bass forever. I feel like I've mastered it.

One other odd thing about the way I play is, I'm left-handed, but I play a right-handed kit. I bat right, I write left, I kick left...I'm a little ambidextrous. I always start double bass parts with my left, which is different from most metal drummers.

MD: What are some things drummers should know in order to play fast bass drum patterns?

Dave: Some of it has to do with head and pedal adjustments, that's number one. The heads can't flutter; they have to be tight, because the beater has to bounce back. The spring tension's tight on my pedals, and the beater's "throw" is set way back. Also, the footboard's a little bit raised. I

"What can you say? Seriously, it's Dave Lombardo! Listen to 'War Ensemble' on *Seasons In The Abyss*. At about 2:10 into the song, you'll hear the coolest drum fill ever. Yeah, you could practice it for two weeks and maybe pull it off like he does. But the point is, he isn't copying anyone. Dave Lombardo will always be the original!"

—Ed Uthus, *Zebrahead*

"Dave is one of the fastest drummers ever. We toured with Slayer at Ozzfest, and one of the highlights for me was standing behind him while he was waiting to play during Slayer's intro. It was mega hot that day. He turned around, saw me, and asked if I wanted a bottle of water. That was like a kid's dream come true."

—Ben Dussault, *Throwdown*



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Dave Lombardo

have it about a quarter-inch higher up than most people set their pedals.

I really like Tama's Iron Cobra pedals because you can make all of these adjustments. I use the heavy-duty springs. And I rest my foot right where the Cobra is on the footplate. I sincerely recommend this pedal to anyone.

As far as developing speed, I think a drummer should use a metronome. Start with alternating 16ths at 120 bpm. Once you're comfortable with that, slowly move your way up to 180 bpm. On top of that, play 8th notes on the ride with the snare on 2 and 4, and then move the snare drum to different parts of the pattern—on 3, on the upbeats, etc.

Keep in mind, you always have to start off slowly and then build up to speed. Every hit has to be defined. Sometimes I hear drummers do this "fluttering" thing, where it's fast, but sloppy and uncontrolled. It's like, "Wait, what did you just play there?"

MD: On the new Slayer disc, did you

record your drums with a click track?

Dave: Yes. There was one tune where we wanted to speed up the ending, so we turned off the click at that point. But that was it. You have to be able to play to a click today. I really like using one. I think it's helped me a lot.

MD: Besides what you play, you seem to like adding a visual element to your performance.

Dave: There's nothing wrong with a little showmanship.

MD: Is that something you only do with Slayer, or do you apply it to any group you play with?

Dave: I'll do things with any group. On stage, you have to be a showman. Otherwise it's a bummer if all you see is a drummer playing with a bored look on his face. It's like, "Come on!"

MD: You've had a solo percussion album in the works for a few years now.

Dave: God, it's been forever. I don't know, one of these days I'll get it out. It's close to completion. I need to do a



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"All I can say without turning into a Slayer geek is, *Reign In Blood!* The quintessential speed metal record...end of story."

—Atom Willard, *Angels & Airwaves*

"In a time when I was just starting to hone my drumming skills and in a world where Metallica and Pantera were the definition of metal to me, I was introduced to Slayer—and it changed everything. I had just begun to figure out some of the more complex beats by Metallica, and even Pantera. But then I heard Dave Lombardo and the onslaught of speed and power that is Slayer. Immediately, all these questions came to mind: 'Is this for real? Naw, he can't seriously do that! Wait a second, he couldn't possibly be that fast with just two hands and two feet!' Dave's on a different level all together."

—Cyrus Bolooki, *New Found Glory*

"One of the first metal records I ever owned was Slayer's *Reign In Blood*. I was blown away. Dave Lombardo had a huge impact on my playing. Songs like 'Angel Of Death' and 'Piece By Piece' showed me you could play fast but still have groove. Thank you, Dave!"

—Brandon Barnes, *Rise Against*



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Photo by Paul Jonason

Dave Lombardo

bongo overdub, a timbale overdub, and a drumset overdub. The recording is essentially me in my room with a keyboard, drums, and percussion, layering parts. I'll do one beat, layer something on top, layer something else on top of that, and so on.

I've been working on this record in my free time. The problem is, I don't have a lot of free time! When I'm on tour, I really can't work on it because I don't have everything on hand. I've been doing some editing of the parts, but not any recording. When I'm home, I'm occupied with a hundred and one other things. But the record is sitting there, waiting. When it's ready, it'll be out.

MD: What's on it? Is it metal?

Dave: It's unclassifiable. Some people might describe it as world music. It could be a film soundtrack. It's definitely not metal.

MD: Let's talk about the *Drums Of Death* project with DJ Spooky. You did some funk drumming on there—Dave can

groove!

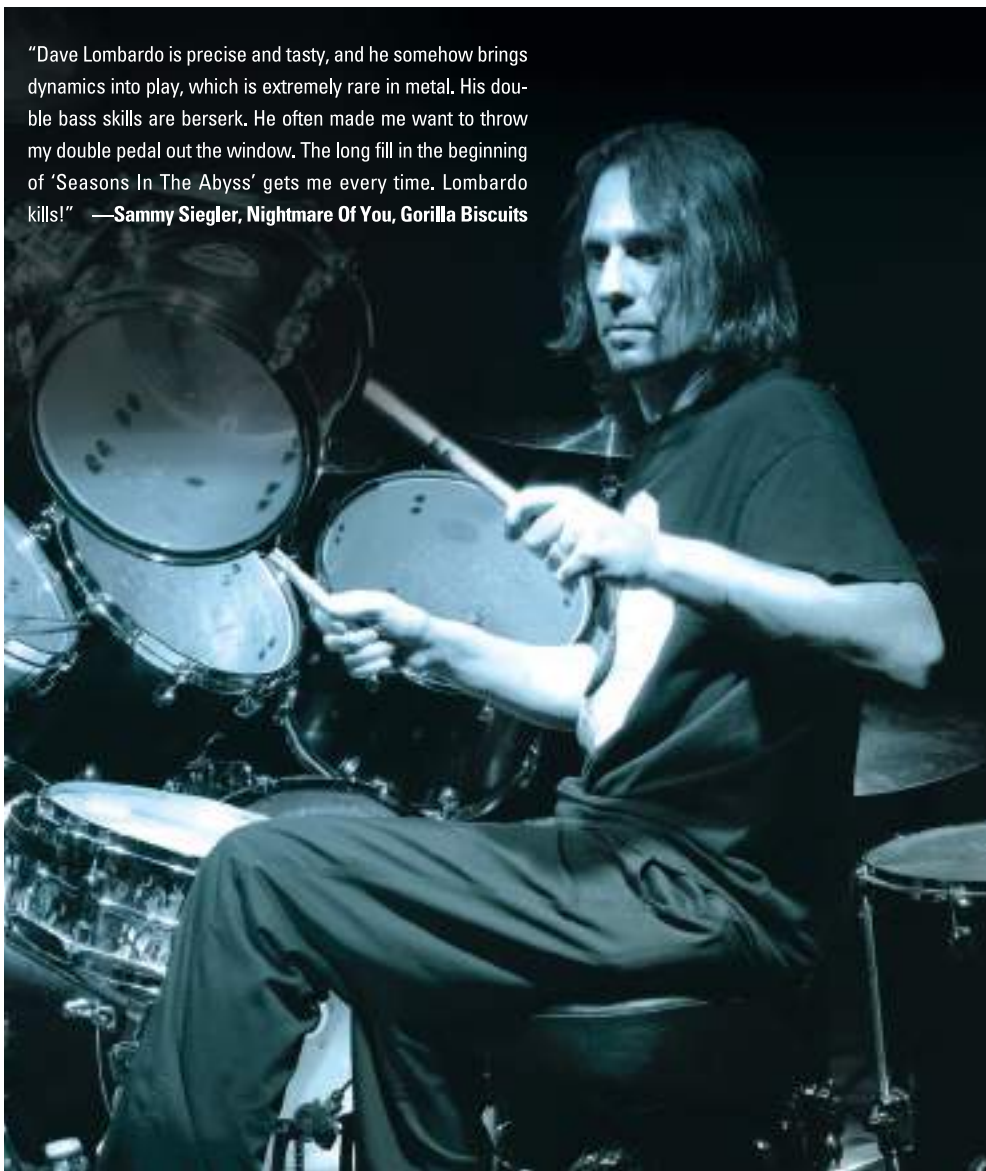
Dave: My whole goal in life is to play things other than what I'm known for. It's what I have to do. I'm always labeled as a metal drummer or the drummer from Slayer. I want to be known as an all-around drummer.

DJ Spooky flew over to my house and we tracked the basic drum tracks there. He played his grooves, with tape rolling, and I played to them. So I kind of mimicked what was on there, but I played it my way. He then took that stuff back to New York, did some editing, got a couple of singers and other musicians, and put it all together. I think the best part of that record is the drum solo/DJ scratching solo, where we're going back and forth.

MD: You've also been working with Fantomas on and off for a few years now. What's it like working with such musical all-stars?

Dave: What can you say about some of the most creative musicians on the planet? I'm

"Dave Lombardo is precise and tasty, and he somehow brings dynamics into play, which is extremely rare in metal. His double bass skills are berserk. He often made me want to throw my double pedal out the window. The long fill in the beginning of 'Seasons In The Abyss' gets me every time. Lombardo kills!" —Sammy Siegler, *Nightmare Of You*, *Gorilla Biscuits*



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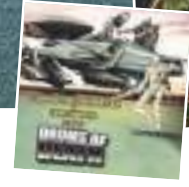


Artist

Slayer
Slayer
Slayer
Slayer
Fantomas
DJ Spooky Vs. Dave Lombardo
Slayer
Fantomas
John Zorn
Slayer

Album

Christ Illusion
Reign In Blood
Show No Mercy
Seasons In The Abyss
Delirium Cordia
Drums Of Death
Still Reigning [DVD]
Suspended Animation
Xu Feng, John Zorn's Game Pieces Vol. 1
South Of Heaven



totally inspired by Mike Patton—by his recordings and everything he does. He's an amazing composer, performer, and conductor. He conducts on stage when we perform. Buzz Osbourne is a legendary guitar player. And Trevor Dunn, the bass player, is so good. They're all phenomenal musicians.

MD: How does the "Fantomas

Lombardo" differ from the "Slayer Lombardo"?

Dave: When I'm in Slayer, I'm on cruise control. Like Jeff says, I'm the out-of-control train that doesn't quite derail, which I take as a compliment because I know exactly what he's talking about. I'm playing and I'll go into this roll that comes out of nowhere and

all of a sudden, *bam*, I'm back on the 1. That's how I am in Slayer.

My role in Fantomas is very different. I'm focused on what's going to come up next. The music is so complex that I have to be on my toes. At any given moment I might be playing an involved

continued on page 66

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Musical notation for 'Neurophobia' showing a 4/4 drum pattern with accents and triplets.

“Neurophobia”

Here’s a famous beat used by speed metal and hardcore drummers alike. Lombardo’s short bursts of 32nd-note fills kick up the energy even higher. (0:05)

Musical notation for 'Neurophobia' showing a 4/4 drum pattern with accents and triplets.

“Raining Blood”

The album’s closer is another thrash metal opus, complete with an eerie-sounding instrumental intro, various changing tempos, and Lombardo’s double bass barrage. This classic groove sets up the song’s first verse. (0:45)

Musical notation for 'Raining Blood' showing a 4/4 drum pattern with accents and double-kick beats.

After a fiery thrash section, the track’s half-time chorus features this punchy double-kick beat. (2:39)

Musical notation for 'Raining Blood' showing a 4/4 drum pattern with accents and double-kick beats.

Finally, the song erupts into howling guitar solos for the album’s most wired sequence. Dave holds it together, while managing to squeeze in short machine-gun fills as the band careens towards a thunderstorm finish. (2:53)

Musical notation for 'Raining Blood' showing a 4/4 drum pattern with accents and double-kick beats.

Reign In Blood is thirty minutes of pure metal mayhem, containing more energy and attitude than most albums twice its length. Through it all, Dave Lombardo is the driving force, never out of control but always pushing the band to new extremes. It’s a masterful performance.

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Dave Lombardo

drum part, then switching to cymbals, bells, shakers, or even a gong. It's very challenging.

MD: Speaking of challenging music, you've also worked with free-jazz great John Zorn.

Dave: That was Xu Feng. Oh my God, that was an experience. Zorn had different cards with words printed on them, like soft, hard, rhythmic, arhythmic, and any other description of music you could think of. In the room were two drummers, two guitar players, and two keyboard players. He'd hold up a card and point to me, and I would have to interpret it. John would then point to a guitarist and hold up another card, and the guitarist would start interpreting what he saw and heard. And then, at a drop of a card, he'd tell some other guy to play the same thing. It was constructed noise.

When you listen to the recording now, you might wonder if the music is composed. It wasn't. Sometimes we would lock into the same beat, but just by coincidence. I really loved that experience. It filled a void in my life musically, and I appreciated it so much.

MD: What are some of the qualities of a good metal drummer—or any drummer, for that matter?

Dave: Uniqueness. Also, the drummer's contribution to the sound of their band. There are thousands of drummers who can go crazy soloing and playing ambidextrous rhythms, but all of that makes no sense to me unless it's in a musical context. Fine, you can solo forever, but can you work with the musicians?

MD: Are there any particular drummers you like whose names might surprise us?

Dave: Well, Dave Grohl is amazing to me. When I first heard his drumming, of course, it was with Nirvana. I was just floored because it was straightforward, but he somehow played in a way that really delivered the message of the music. I'm also blown away that he could leave the drum stool, pick up a guitar, and front a band. That is inspiring to me. I would love to do that. I play a little guitar, but nothing to his extent. I'd also love to work with Dave someday. I think it could be interesting musically.

MD: I interviewed Dave a few years

Help Find Dave's Stolen Drums

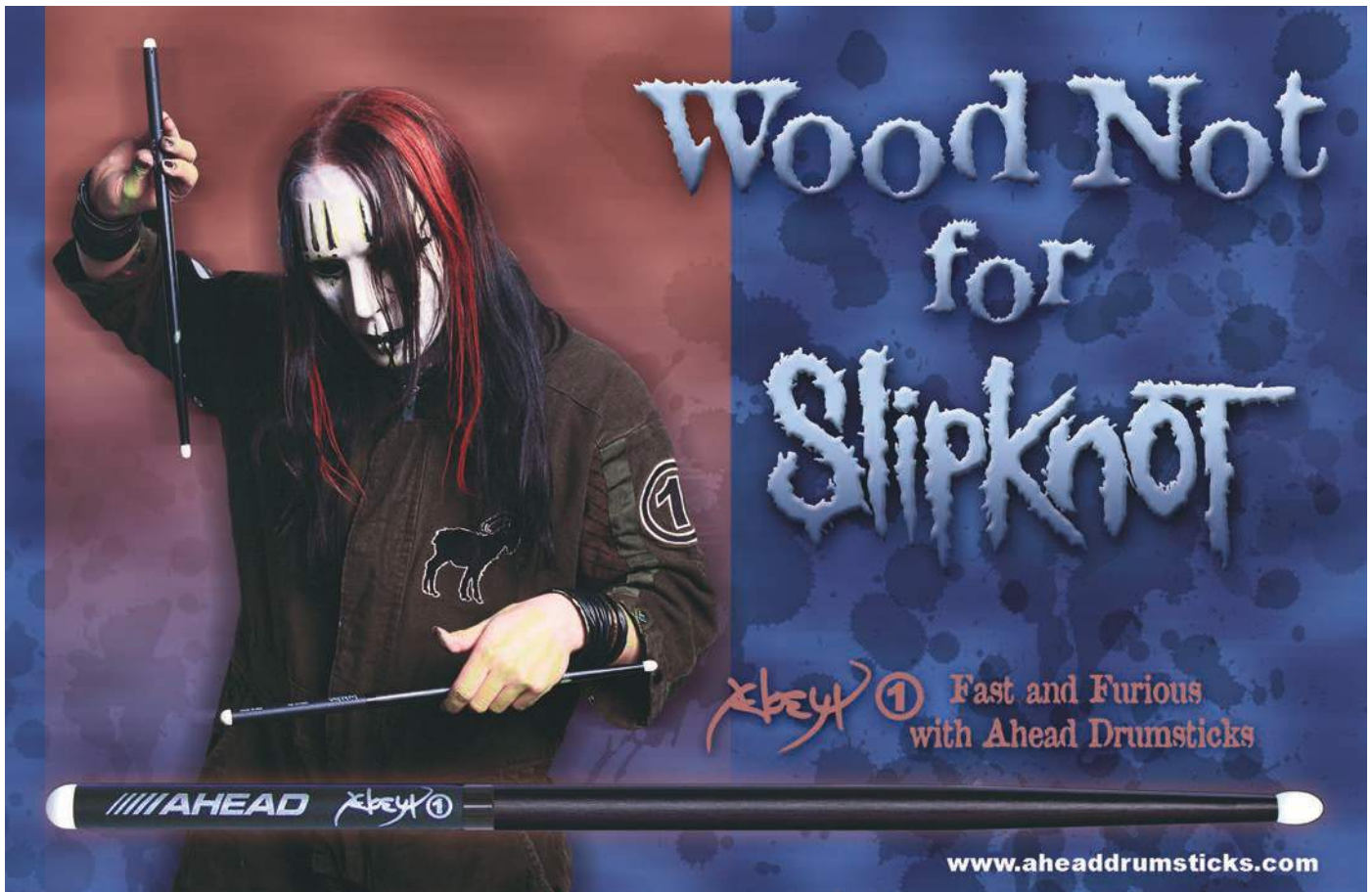
An integral part of Slayer's history vanished on May 7, when bandmembers lost valuable equipment and memorabilia after their rehearsal studio in Riverside, California was burglarized. Lombardo was one of the victims, losing two of his large Tama drum setups, including a kit he had used on the band's recent tours for the *God Hates Us All* album.

The stolen kits include a Tama Starclassic in a cherry black finish. The dimensions of the toms are 8x8, 9x10, 10x12, 11x13, 12x14, 13x15, 16x18, 16x20 (custom floor tom), and there are two 18x24 bass drums. Also stolen was a Tama

Imperialstar kit in a red finish with chrome bass drum hoops.

Anyone who can offer information that leads to the recovery of the stolen gear will receive, as a reward, an autographed copy of the new Slayer album, two tickets to a Slayer show (transportation not included), and the opportunity to meet the band and have their photo taken with Dave.

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Dave Lombardo

ago, and he mentioned that he loves your playing and that he'd been listening to you since 1984's *Haunting The Chapel*.

Dave: Really? I didn't know that.

MD: Are there any other drummers you find inspiring?

Dave: There's a band that has blown me away called The Locust. I get goose bumps when I think of them. I remember them on stage, every night, making their noise—a perfect noise. It's music on another level. And their drummer, Gabe Serbian, is phenomenal.

I also like Dale Crover of The Melvins. That guy hits *hard*. I was on stage with him recently, in The Fantomas/Melvins Big Band. The odd-time stuff that he does confused me at first, and it took me some time to get it down. Speaking of Dave Grohl, Dale Crover, and Gabe Serbian, they all play four-piece drumsets, and I'm impressed to hear how many sounds they can get out of a small kit.

Other drummers I've been enjoying lately are John Dolmayan from System

Of A Down and Joey Jordison of Slipknot. I've toured with these guys and seen them play quite a bit. The musical contributions they make to their bands is huge.

MD: So you've influenced drummers who are now influencing you. What's going on here?

Dave: It's because I'm still listening to music. I listen to *everything*. I'm not in a closet engulfed by myself. I listen to what other people have done or are doing, and that in turn keeps me on my toes.

MD: What are you most proud of on the new Slayer album?

Dave: The thing I'm most proud of is the fact that I'm working again with my "alma mater." As for the record, the fact that I'm back doing all of the double bass stuff and playing the extended fills takes me back to when I was a kid. I was seventeen when I got into this band, barely out of high school. I'm very proud to be recording and performing with these guys again.




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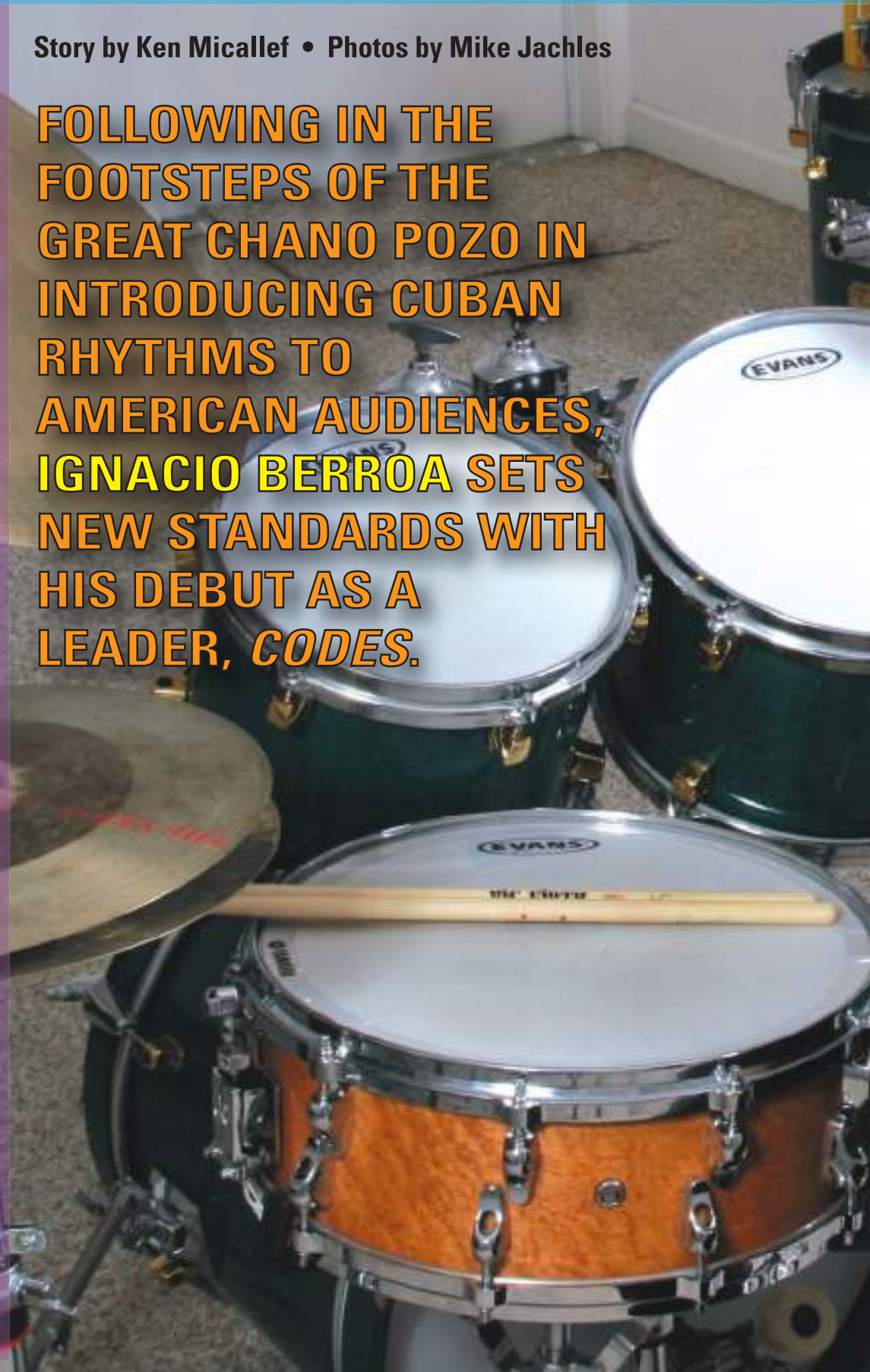
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Story by Ken Micallef • Photos by Mike Jachles

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**"IF I'M PLAYING BEHIND
SOMEONE WHO WANTS ME TO
PLAY CERTAIN THINGS, I STICK
TO THEIR RULES. ON MY ALBUM,
EVERYTHING IS WIDE OPEN
WITHIN THE RHYTHMS."**

Imagine growing up in a country where playing music is illegal, where practicing religion can get you yanked out of your home in the middle of the night, and where the only available drum instructor is some moldy Russian guy with enough ear hair to start a small forest. During the Cuban communist revolution of 1959, citizens of the country that gave us Chano Pozo and the Buena Vista Social Club suffered much, but their spirit and resilient music never faltered.

"We listened to The Beatles and Art Blakey records," says Ignacio Berroa, recalling his teenage years in Havana.

"Those were records that people had in spite of the Cuban revolution. Some of my peers' parents liked jazz and they had those records. But it wasn't easy. My generation had it very, very hard. It was almost prohibited in those years to play jazz due to the political situation between Cuba and the United States. Everything from the US government was deemed a conspiracy against the Cuban ideology."

Like the great conga player Chano Pozo before him, Ignacio Berroa brought the rhythmic traditions of Cuba to bear on American jazz. The drummer, who introduced the *songo* to US musicians, arrived in

New York City from Havana in 1980, joined Dizzy Gillespie's group a year later, and has been a first-call musician ever since.

Unlike most musicians whose bios are typically filled with a history of private study, small-group performances, college gigs, and professional struggle, Ignacio was a star in his native Cuba, but gave it all up to fulfill his dreams of playing US jazz. Even in Cuba, though surrounded by a wealth of indigenous rhythms, Ignacio sought out the jazz and pop music he loved. Trained in rigorous Russian classical methods, he could sight-read anything, but was not allowed to have his own drumset. He could memorize and sing Mozart's "Symphony No. 40" over a steaming 6/8 montuno, but songs by Miles Davis and The Beatles were prohibited.

This unusual dichotomy, coupled with his early years as a violinist, led to a drumming style based in Cuban folkloric tradition but fired by American jazz and pop. Ignacio was among the first of what is now recognized as a new wave of Latin musicians that includes Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Danilo Perez, Paquito D'Rivera, Daniel Ponce, Andy and Jerry Gonzalez, Ed Simon, and many more. Ignacio's work with these musicians as well as McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, Kip Hanrahan, Hilton Ruiz, Dizzy Gillespie, Jamaladeen Tacuma, Giovanni Hidalgo, and Charlie Haden has culminated in his first solo album, *Codes*.

"This work comes with a deeper and more complex musical nuance than what Latin jazz audiences are used to," Ignacio states in the liner notes. "It comes with codes that coexist and converge in harmony, with absolute respect for each other.

"I believe when playing," he continues, "we should pay respect to all musical styles, call it jazz, Afro-Cuban, Latin-jazz, or even so-called Brazilian-jazz. Respect and devotion to the style's true origin and meaning is far more important than playing it just because it might be in vogue."

Like a Cuban Roy Haynes, Ignacio's drumming sizzles, sparks, and pops, easily flowing from difficult *sonos*, *cascaras*, and rumbas to spacious swing. *Codes* mixes styles, locales, and rhythms with a nod to tradition, but with an eye trained on the future. Joined by a mighty band including John Patitucci, Ed Simon, Armando Goia, and Giovanni Hidalgo, Ignacio is positively gleeful slapping a roller coaster 6/8 feel on

Chick Corea's "Matrix," or crisscrossing impossibly dense Afro-Cuban rhythms for Wayne Shorter's "Pinocchio." Like all great Cuban drummers, Ignacio's rhythms kick with an almost animalistic power, but there's also a sense of grace, a lightness to his playing that results in an easy, dance-like pulse.

Dizzy Gillespie once said, "Ignacio Berroa is the only Latin drummer in the world, in the history of American music, who knows both worlds—his native Afro-Cuban as well as jazz." Here is that same Ignacio Berroa, live from his home in Miami, his music detailed, his drumming de-coded.

CONFRONTING CODES

MD: On *Codes*, it seems you blend Brazilian, jazz, songo, son, cascara, Yoruban, and everything else. Chick Corea's "Matrix" is played in 6/8, which is very unusual. The track is very syncopated,

and it really dances.

Ignacio: Regarding my conception for picking the tunes for the album, I wanted to play ones that aren't commonly played in the standard repertoire. And I wanted to pay tribute to the musicians who influenced me. I always loved "Matrix." I thought it would be more interesting to play it in 6/8 than to go into a jazz rhythm.

MD: It sounds like you avoid playing the bass drum on the downbeat of the 6/8 pattern. Does that give it more of a dance feel?

Ignacio: Yeah. For the 6/8, for those people who aren't used to that style of music, the main thing is the clave. [Berroa sings clave rhythm over melody.] We rely on the clave; we don't rely on the downbeat all the time. That's natural for us.

I sent the album to Chick, and he said he didn't realize that I was playing 6/8 until I began the solo. We don't play the downbeat to make it more danceable or not. It's



Ignacio's Setup

Drums: Yamaha Maple Custom

A. 5 1/2x14 wood snare

B. 8x10 tom

C. 10x12 tom

D. 14x14 floor tom

E. 14x18 bass drum

(or 14x20 depending on gig)

Cymbals: Bosphorus

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3. 20" Versa ride

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5. 17" Traditional crash

6. 20" Turk flat ride

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Sticks: Vic Firth 8D (hickory with wood tip), standard brushes

All that
Glitters,
Isn't
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like when people ask me, “Are you thinking clave when you play straight-ahead?” No. When I’m playing straight-ahead, that’s all I’m thinking about. Clave is implied. It’s in my blood, so I don’t think about it.

MD: But it’s always there.

Ignacio: Yes, it’s always in my system. When we were students in Havana, we would take symphonic pieces like Mozart’s “No. 40” or Tchaikovsky’s “Violin Concerto” and start singing them and adding the clave, just for the fun of it. So

rhythms with my left hand on the snare and my right foot on the bass drum. I also cover this in my book, *A New Way Of Grooving*. On one page I write exercises and groove with the clave, then on the next page you see the same groove but with the straight-ahead pattern played with your leading or right hand.

MD: You’re breaking up the rhythms on your separate limbs on “Joao Su Merced”?

Ignacio: Yes. They can all coexist. In a sense, it’s taking what Elvin Jones used to do further. Elvin used to play the straight-

8th notes on the upbeat into the fourth beat. It’s tricky. It’s an Afro-Cuban rhythm, a kind of salsa. We didn’t want to play the straight Brazilian rhythm. We wanted to do it differently.

MD: If you performed these songs without the percussionists that you have on the record, how would your drumming change?

Ignacio: It would certainly change. I would play the role of the percussionists more with my left hand. I would be busier. I would play more bata with my left hand and bass drum. But I wouldn’t be able to replace the shaker patterns.

MD: It’s hard to follow the different lines in “Pinocchio.” It’s like three different ideas all at once, very unlike the “Pinocchio” we heard on Miles Davis’s *Nefertiti*.

Ignacio: When I told the saxophonist I wanted to play “Pinocchio” that way, he thought I was crazy. I started playing an Afro-Cuban rumba rhythm on the drums and singing the melody to “Pinocchio.” It made sense to him then. It’s like applying an Afro-Cuban rhythm to any melody.

MD: That track sounds like the pulse is in 2/4.

Ignacio: That’s another way to hear it. But if you listen for the clave, you’ll understand it better. Also, in the introduction, the band is playing Afro-Cuban while I’m playing straight time, but it’s backwards. I’m inverting the ride cymbal pattern. I just liked doing something different with it.

MD: You’ve been in the US since 1980. Why did you wait so long to do a solo album?

Ignacio: I didn’t want to do just another Latin jazz album. I didn’t want to pick a standard and play it with bongos, congas, and timbale, doing the Latin rhythm with the head, then the soloing, and the usual form. I wanted to do something different. That’s also why I paid special attention to the choice of material.

MD: So *Codes* is more of an authentic blend of jazz and Afro-Cuban?

Ignacio: It’s another way of doing it. Some people don’t realize that we’re in the twenty-first century. Afro-Cuban music has evolved. People think Afro-Cuban music is Buena Vista Social Club and the old way of playing from the ’40s and ’50s. You can do other things with Afro-Cuban music.



doing “Matrix” or any other tune in clave is very natural for me.

MD: In your liner notes you refer to the roots of various musics, be it Brazilian, Afro-Cuban, or swing, as being different “codes.”

Ignacio: Each style of music has its own codes, and what I did on my album was to combine all those codes and show people that those codes can live together. They coexist. They have common ground. They can coexist if you know how to use them.

MD: So you’re saying that you merge these codes in different ways?

Ignacio: Yes, they can live together without clashing; they can coexist. People wonder how I can play swing and have a bata rhythm on top of it. Why not? That can be done. On “Joao Su Merced,” I’m keeping the straight-ahead pulse with my right hand on the cymbal while I’m playing bata

ahead pulse using triplets. That came from an African sensibility. My purpose on *Codes* is to show the different codes and how they can flow together. They can flow to where you don’t hear the mental editing.

MD: Your book explains these concepts?

Ignacio: Yes, the book is based on those ideas. For example, if you take page 40, the exercises have the jazz pulse on your leading hand. The next page shows the same groove playing the rumba clave with your leading hand. When you practice that it will enable you to switch from one rhythm to the other.

MD: You do a similar thing in “Partido Alto,” which I thought was a Brazilian rhythm. Are you mixing Afro-Cuban with Brazilian, and in 4/4?

Ignacio: Yes, it is in 4/4. But it takes a while for that to be obvious, because the tune starts with the bass guitar doing two



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Ignacio Berroa

MD: You incorporate Brazilian music as well as jazz and Cuban on *Codes*. Are there any stylistic lines that can't be crossed?

Ignacio: If I'm playing behind someone who wants me to play certain things, I stick to their rules. On *my* album, everything is wide open within the rhythms. I don't play strict patterns. I do everything I can within the vocabulary.

A HISTORY, PRE-REVOLUTION

MD: You grew up in a musical family. I understand that your father played violin in charanga orchestras, and he played in a band called America 55. What did that band play?

Ignacio: They played the typical charanga music from Cuba. The formation of the charanga is three violins, piano, bass, timbales, conga, flute, guiro, and singers. They played cha-cha rhythms. That was in the late '40s and early '50s.

MD: It must have been wonderful hearing your dad on the radio.

Ignacio: It was great to grow up in that environment. My grandfather was also a musician. He was a flute player who

worked in the '30s. He also played charanga.

When I was born, my father was playing with a famous Cuban flute player. My dad was a star. The members of Buena Vista Social Club were all our friends, but mainly the piano player, Ruben Gonzalez. He played in America 55 with my dad and was one of my dad's closest friends. And I was very close to him. We used to hang out. Our families went out a lot in Havana in a part of town called San Miguel de Padron, which is where I grew up.

BUDDY GOES CUBAN

MD: When did you start playing the drums?

Ignacio: I switched over from violin when I was twelve. I'd wanted to be a drummer after hearing albums by Nat King Cole and Glenn Miller. After I heard those albums, I fell in love with jazz and the drums.

I had studied violin because my family wanted me to, but after a year at the National School of Arts in Havana, things changed. My peers always saw me hanging out with the percussionists and they said,

THE DYNAMICS OF DIZZY

IGNACIO ON HIS TIME WITH THE LEGENDARY JAZZMAN



MD: It's reported that you and Dizzy Gillespie got on well. What did he bring out of you and teach you as a drummer?

Ignacio: Dizzy taught me a lot about American music—how to play straight-ahead, what to play, what not to play, about the tradition, and how to play shuffles, which I love. For me, being with Dizzy was like attending a great school.

In 1987, I was the drum-

mer in his first big band in forty-something years. He was a little bit scared because he wasn't aware that I was a good sightreader. I told him, "Dizzy, I won't let you down." I remember when we did the first rehearsal, he was so surprised and delighted with what I was doing that he kept looking at me and laughing. Sightreading was what I used to do everyday in the studios in Cuba. He was very proud that I didn't let him down.

MD: What did he correct about your jazz playing?
Ignacio: Every artist has his own way of thinking about music. Dizzy taught me how not to overplay. If a guy is playing a phrase, you shouldn't play on top of the guy all the time.

Dizzy also taught me a lot about the concept of question and answer. If I do [sings a bop line with accents], Dizzy would say, you should respond with this or that kind of bass drum accent. I didn't know about that kind of call and response when I was in Cuba.

Dizzy taught me the vocabulary of jazz and also how to play in the way he wanted. He was from the old bebop school. He wanted to hear a literal, straight jazz ride pattern on that famous Chinese cymbal he had all of his drummers use. He didn't care if I varied my pattern behind other soloists, but it had to be straight behind his solos. I learned to play what the music really needs.

“Ignacio, why don’t you tell your dad you want to be a drummer?” I didn’t want to disappoint him, so my friends approached him for me and told him that I really wanted to be a drummer. Thankfully, it was okay with him. He would take me to the recording sessions for the Radio TV Orchestra, and I would always hang out with the rhythm section. My father knew I was in love with rhythm and with drums.

MD: You taught yourself the drums at the National Conservatory by listening to Art Blakey and Miles Davis records. But wasn’t jazz considered to be illegal music then?

Ignacio: Yes, sir. My generation had it very hard. Jazz was the music of the enemy. And it was illegal to practice religion as well. That was in the late ’60s. We didn’t have to close the windows to listen to jazz, but later on, when I was a professional musician, I couldn’t play the music. The situation was too hot. You couldn’t play Beatles records at a party. Music was a way of penetrating the communist ideology. I thought, “If this revolution is so good and solid, why are they afraid of four guys with long hair singing songs?”

MD: How did you teach yourself the drums?

Ignacio: When I went to the National Conservatory, the music was all classical. It was about timpani, mallets, and snare drum. We didn’t even have a snare drum. It was all on a practice pad. My teacher had studied with Henry Adler in the US, so he taught me all of the rudiments and we went through the Henry Adler/Buddy Rich book [*Modern Interpretation Of Snare Drum Rudiments*], Benjamin Podemski [*Podemski’s Standard Snare Method*], and then finally a book by a Russian percussionist, a very hard book for the snare drum.

MD: So you were learning difficult snare drum parts and your reading ability was growing, plus you were learning timpani and vibraphone?

Ignacio: Right. But the drumset was on the side. I learned to play the drums by myself. I had technique, and I listened to the albums. I played in a group with a few friends. We played pop music at parties, with the lyrics in Spanish. That’s where I got to play the drums live.

MD: How did you learn the rumbas and 6/8 rhythms of Cuban music?

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Charlie Haden & Gonzalo Rubalcaba	Nocturne
Charlie Haden	Land Of The Sun
Tito Puente	Golden Latin Jazz All Stars: In Session
Dizzy Gillespie & The United Nations Orchestra	Live At The Royal Festival Hall
McCoy Tyner	La Leyenda De La Hora
Danilo Perez	Journey



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ARTIST	ALBUM	DRUMMER
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Miles Davis	Four & More	Tony Williams
Miles Davis	Miles In Antibes	Tony Williams
Miles Davis	Relaxin' With The Miles Davis Quintet	Philly Joe Jones
John Coltrane	Blue Train	Elvin Jones
John Coltrane Quartet	Ballads	Elvin Jones
Chick Corea	Return To Forever	Airto Moreira
Chick Corea	My Spanish Heart	Steve Gadd
Chick Corea	Now He Sings, Now He Sobs	Roy Haynes
Keith Jarrett	Still Live	Jack DeJohnette

Ignacio: I learned that by osmosis—by listening. That was in my blood from growing up in Cuba. But I didn't have any constant exposure to bata rhythms and things like that. I was more exposed to that kind of music around 1980, when I arrived in the United States.

EGREM'S FASTEST DRUMSLINGER

MD: You began doing studio and TV work in Cuba in 1975. What kind of music did you perform there?

Ignacio: We had to play everything. That was one of the few groups in Cuba that was allowed to play some kind of avant-garde or Western music. We were allowed to play Brazilian, pop, etc. When I became the first-call drummer for the studios in Cuba, we had to play everything. I also worked with Emiliano Salvador in Grupo de Experimentation Sonora del ICAIC [Institute of Cinematography], an important group.

MD: But before then, you weren't already a master of different Cuban rhythms?

Ignacio: No. I was just a drummer who was able to play everything. I learned by listening to albums. Most importantly, since Cuba

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Ignacio Berroa

is so close to the United States, when the weather permitted we were able to pick up all the Miami radio stations. And when we got lucky, we could also pick up Willis Conover from the Voice Of America. That was how we got informed.

MD: So you became the most in-demand drummer in Cuba?

Ignacio: From 1975 until I left in 1980, yes. I was the first-call for all session work in Havana. We played pop, jazz, big band, everything. I had developed my sightreading from early on. Back in those days in Cuba everyone wanted to be a good sightreader.

I remember when we recorded, we had an inside joke about who would be first to make a mistake. We were so into sightreading everything correctly. Arturo Sandoval worked in the studios, and we had a regular orchestra gig at Hotel Nacional, a big band that backed up the show at Cabaret Parisienne. Arturo, a few guys from Irakere, and I all played in that orchestra. And Paquito D'Rivera was also in the studios. The main studio in Cuba was Egrem [which also produced the influential Cuban record label of the same name]. I worked at ICAIC studio as well, recording sound-

tracks for movies.

MD: Were you listening to a lot of American drummers during that period?

Ignacio: All the time. I fell in love with jazz early on. I was also a big fan of pop music. Since the Cuban government prohibited our listening to that music, we listened to it and played it even more. We understood that music has nothing to do with politics. We were rebels against our own culture. When Castro took power in 1959, I was five years old. From the '60s to the late '70s, most of us rejected Cuban music because we wanted to play the music that was prohibited.

MD: But since you grew up with that music, it was still in your blood, so to speak?

Ignacio: Exactly. But I never had my own drumset to practice on. You couldn't go to a music store and buy a drumset or cymbals. The government owned everything. Grupo de Experimentation Sonora del ICAIC had drums where we rehearsed. So I would play drums just at the rehearsals and at the concerts.

MD: How could you develop without a full set to practice on?

Ignacio: I would practice on a practice

pad, or practice during rehearsals. By the time I bought my first set, to play the Cabaret Parisienne gig at the Hotel Nacional in 1978, I was already a professional. It was a French-made ASBA set. I was lucky to buy a set that a guy had from before the revolution. The cymbals were also from before the revolution. And I paid a huge amount of money for a Ludwig Speed King bass drum pedal.

BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN SONGO

MD: You arrived in New York in 1980, but you weren't well known. How did you break into the scene?

Ignacio: Some people assume I was the drummer in Irakere, but that's not true. I never performed with them. They were composed of the best musicians in Cuba at the time. The drummer was Enrique Pla. I played with them once during a rehearsal. [Pianist] Chucho Valdes asked me to play with them while Pla was in the hospital. And that was just an accident. But perhaps some people thought that I was Irakere's drummer when I came to New York.

MD: After a year in New York you joined Dizzy Gillespie.

Ignacio: I ran into Dizzy by accident. He

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Ignacio Berroa

didn't know me from when he went to Cuba in 1977; that's another untrue story. Dizzy only met Irakere; they were the pride of Cuba. I saw Dizzy jamming at the Havana Hilton once. A friend of mine introduced me to him then, but my English was nonexistent, so I just said hello. Later I was reintroduced to Dizzy, and he asked me to join his band.

MD: Before that, you played in a group with percussionist Daniel Ponce and Paquito D'Rivera exploring new Cuban music. Was that the first group to play the songo in New York?

Ignacio: That was The Paquito D'Rivera Havana New York Quintet. And it wasn't the group that first played songo, that was me. Coming from Cuba and being exposed to Los Van Van and Jose Luis "Changuito" Quintana, I knew the songo. I came to New York and started playing that rhythm and everyone asked me about it. Changuito had played it with Los Van Van. He's the one who created the rhythm and took it to another level. I brought the rhythm from Cuba in 1980.

MD: So the first recording of songo was on Paquito's debut US album, *Blowin'*?

Ignacio: No. The first recording of the

songo to come out in America was recorded in Puerto Rico with the band called Batacumbela in 1981. That was when I first met Giovanni Hidalgo. He was seventeen. The first time I played songo on record was for a McCoy Tyner album, *La Leyenda De La Hora (The Legend Of The Hour)*. There's one tune, "La Vida Feliz (The Happy Time)," that has sixteen bars of solo drums playing songo. Originally there was a conga solo by Daniel Ponce over my drums, but for some reason when they mixed the album they didn't want the conga solo. They took that out and left the drums solo. On those sixteen bars you just hear the drums playing songo.

MD: Did you play songos in clubs around New York?

Ignacio: That was amazing. We would jam every Tuesday night in a club on 62nd Street called Soundscape. That place was packed with musicians from everywhere watching us play. It was there that Michel Camilo first heard the songo. Later on, when he had his own trio, he played the songo to Dave Weckl.

MD: Weckl regularly credits you with bringing the songo to the US.

Ignacio: That band at Soundscape was

called The Salsa Refugees. It was piano, bass, drums, conga, and horn. Sometimes we had bata drums, and we would just blow tunes. And it wasn't all Cuban musicians. We had the late Jorge Dalto on piano, also Hilton Ruiz, Mario Rivera, Andy and Gerry Gonzalez, Steve Berrios, and Daniel Ponce.

FRONTING THE NEW WAVE

MD: Where do you see the future regarding jazz and Afro-Cuban music?

Ignacio: My goal is for everyone to stop the stereotyping of musicians: If you're a Latino, you should play Latin music; If you play one style of music, you can't play anything else. All of that is wrong. I want everybody to know that in the same way that we live together on this planet, we should be able to play every style of music and mix it up and see what happens.

In a sense, what I'm doing now is what Dizzy Gillespie used to do many years ago. Many people thought that Dizzy was crazy when he added Chano Pozo to his big band and began blending Afro-Cuban with the jazz tradition. I'm just keeping that alive and taking it to another level. I hope that in the future everybody will absorb *all* music.



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RASCAL FLATTS' JIM RILEY

DRUMMING ON THE EDGE OF COUNTRY

With an impressive drumming background and plenty of experience, Jim Riley is the perfect choice to fuel one of the biggest bands ever to come out of Nashville.

At first glance, Jim Riley may seem like one of the luckiest individuals working in Nashville. Having known him for several years, I can tell you that his success in the drumming world has *nothing* to do with luck.

Since childhood, growing up in the Boston area, Jim has been focused on his life-long goal of being a professional musician. Having received half of his education in school and the other half playing in clubs, Jim boasts a style that's a conglomerate of rock, fusion, country, and swing. He found that he would need every bit of that diversity and a willingness to adapt in order to survive in Nashville's evolving musical landscape.

If you've been following Nashville's country music scene in recent years,

you can tell that there's a bit of an identity crisis going on in Music City. The once readily identifiable "twang" of country music has given way to a sound that in many ways bears more resemblance to Kelly Clarkson than Merle Haggard. This shift has brought in a new, younger audience to country music, and Rascal Flatts is, very simply, leading the way.

Combining elements of country and bluegrass with orchestrated pop and hip-hop drum loops, Rascal Flatts has truly taken the music beyond the Nashville city limits. Their 2005 tour played to over 750,000 fans, making it the eighth largest tour in the world. What did it take to be able to play this new style of country in sold-out arenas every night? I sat down with Jim to find out.

story by John M. Aldridge
photos by Gene Ambro



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92

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MD: When did you know that you wanted to be a drummer?

Jim: As early as I can remember, I knew that I wanted to be a musician. I mean, I would get together with kids from up the street for band practice with our toy instruments. I remember getting so mad because they wouldn't take it seriously. And that was when I was seven years old! But it was when I first saw a TV commercial for a KISS album that something just "clicked" in my head. I saw Peter Criss on a twenty-foot riser surrounded by drums and said to myself, "That's what I want to do."

MD: How old were you when you started playing?

Jim: Well, after pestering my parents for two years, they finally let me take drum lessons when I was twelve. I can remember being in my first lessons feeling like a fish taking his first swim. It felt very natural to me.

MD: What was it like for you growing up

in the Boston area?

Jim: The Boston area was a great place for a young musician to grow up. During my sophomore year in high school I got involved with Boston's Youth Symphony. Some of the people there recommended Arthur Press, percussionist with the BSO, as a private instructor. He was a great teacher, and he definitely got me ready for college. I was also lucky that my high school had a great jazz program.

MD: Being from Massachusetts, I would have imagined Berklee as your first choice after high school. Why did you choose North Texas?

Jim: Well, it was actually my band director at Natick High who turned me on to North Texas. Gerry Ash is a great jazz trombonist, and he went to UNT in the 1960s. So I checked it out and discovered that not only did UNT have a great jazz program, but probably the best all-around percussion

program in the nation as well.

MD: Were you studying legit percussion there or strictly drumset?

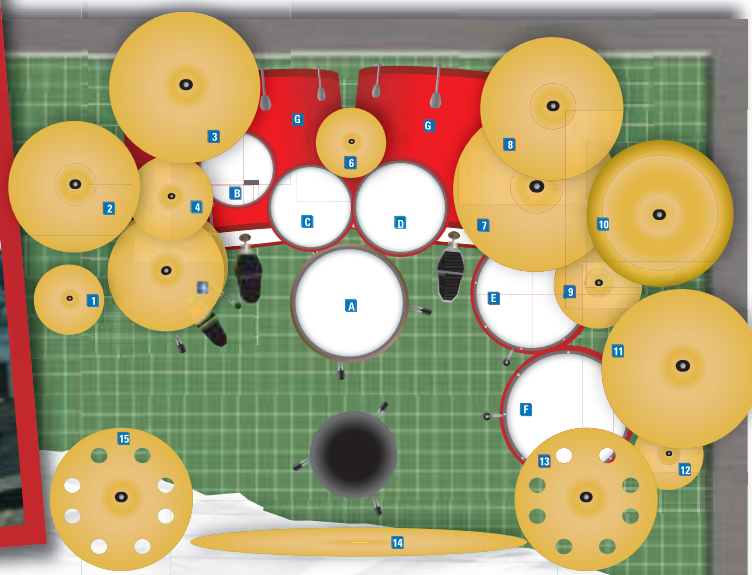
Jim: I studied everything I could! I played in the jazz bands, wind ensemble, percussion ensembles, orchestras, African ensemble...you name it, I signed up for it.

MD: Did you ever get the chance to study with Ed Soph?

Jim: My freshman year was Ed's first year teaching at UNT, and everybody wanted to study with him. At that time there were a hundred fifty percussion music majors, so I had to wait until my sophomore year to study with him.

MD: What was his approach to teaching you?

Jim: It was great. Ed was never impressed with whatever blistering lick you might have worked out. He was basically concerned with two things: musicality and technique. He broke down everything that



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- C. 8x10 tom
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- F. 14x16 tom
- G. 17x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian

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- 2. 17" AAXplosion crash
- 3. 19" AAXplosion crash
- 4. 10" AA splash
- 5. 14" AA Regular hats
- 6. 8" AA splash
- 7. 22" Universal ride (Ed Shaughnessy signature model)
- 8. 18" AAXplosion crash
- 9. 12" AA splash
- 10. 18" AAX China
- 11. 20" AAXplosion crash
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- 14. 40" Chinese gong
- 15. 18" Evolution O-Zone crash

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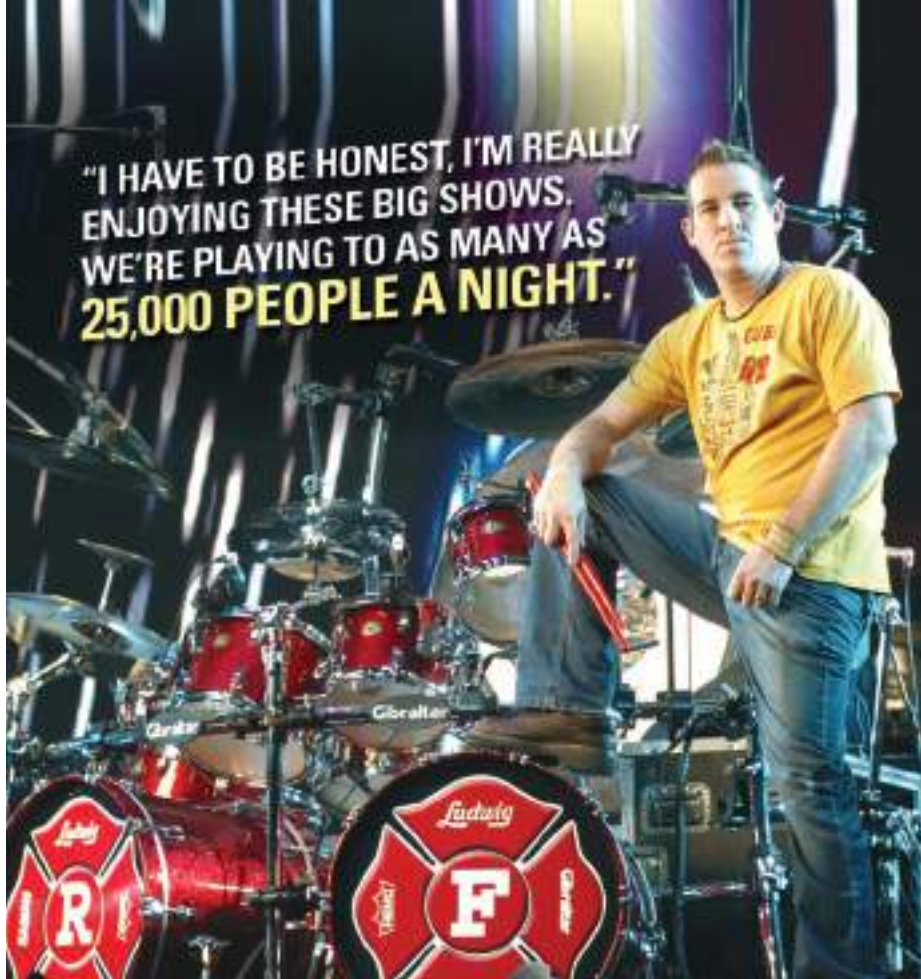
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Sticks: Vater 5B wood tip or Color Wrap, heavy wire brushes, Splashsticks

Electronics (in rack): Roland 1680 (for playback), Roland Dr. Groove drum machine

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you did and made you think about why you played what you played. He also introduced me to the Moeller technique, which helped my playing dramatically.

MD: What did you do after college?

Jim: It was funny, because I had just graduated with a music education degree, but I had no intention of getting a teaching job. I had been playing a lot in Dallas and literally fell into this teaching job in Coppell, Texas. It was a great gig, but I felt it wasn't the right time in my life to teach full time. So after one year I resigned.

MD: Do you think you'll ever teach again?

Jim: When I was getting ready to graduate from college, my student adviser asked me what I thought I'd be doing in ten years. I told him that I'd be playing music professionally. Then he asked me why I was getting my degree in music education. I told him that I didn't want to be the type of teacher who learned it all from a book and then went right to teaching out of a book without first putting what I'd learned to the test in the real world. I definitely think I will get back to teaching in some form or another. Whether it be clinics, private lessons, or at a school, I feel like I'll be a better educator being able to back up my les-

sons with my professional experience.

MD: What did you do after you resigned from your one-year teaching career?

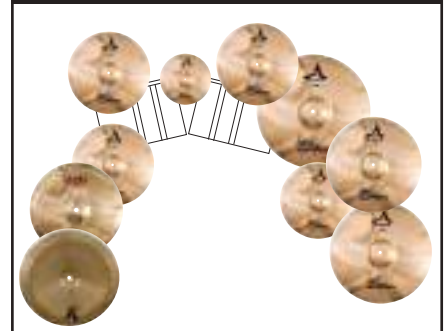
Jim: I went on the road with a Christian band out of Orlando.

MD: Was that your first tour?

Jim: Yep, and man, I was excited. They had a tour bus and dates booked coast to coast. I couldn't wait. So I headed down to Orlando, and right from the start it was a disaster. The singer was hooked on pain pills, the bus was a piece of crap. Half of the dates didn't pay and the other half got cancelled. The whole thing came to a screeching halt when the bus motor exploded in Coos Bay, Oregon. No one had money to fix it, and I was stranded up there for six weeks! But it wasn't a complete loss. On the tour I met a great guitar player named Jeff Scheetz, and he invited me to stay with him in Kansas City and work on some instrumental rock album projects.

MD: What year did you move to K.C.?

Jim: 1995. I certainly had nothing else going on, and Jeff had a studio at his house. We were making some great music, but it wasn't going to pay the bills. So Jeff called K.C. Drumworks and convinced them to hire me. My job there included



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Jim Riley

building and selling their custom drums. Through working there I was able to meet a lot of people in town.

MD: Such as?

Jim: Well, for starters, the shop got a call looking for a drummer to play a country gig on the day I started working there. After all the other guys in the shop turned it down, I said that I would do it. I played the gig for two years and it proved to be my crash course in traditional country music, which would prove to be very helpful later.

The other connection that I made was with a local production company that was headed by a former drummer. He had this

finishing up at college, I was fortunate enough to meet one of Nashville's greatest drummers, Larrie Londin. He was coming to do a clinic at UNT and I remember thinking, "This dude has played with everyone from Elvis to Journey, as well as having played on literally hundreds of hit records. I've got to meet this guy."

So about an hour before the clinic I went to the hall where he was performing and introduced myself. He could not have been any nicer. We talked about drumming, he told me some stories, and then he gave me his phone number. He said, "Call me when you come to town and I'll take you to a recording session." I remember telling him

music with great musicians, and I felt Nashville was the place for me to do that.

MD: Did you know anyone in Nashville?

Jim: Not really. I just loaded up my drums, my clothes, and my dog and headed to Music City. I had a friend of a friend who agreed to let me stay at his house for a few days, but once I got there his wife wanted my dog to stay outside. Even though it was April, it was still really cold at night. So the next morning I went to Boomtown Percussion. They were the mirror image of the last shop I had worked for. They built Razorback drums and were a retail store.

To this day I don't know how I pulled this off, but somehow I convinced the owner to not only give me a job, but to let me and my dog live at the shop until I could find a place! Once I had a job and a place to live, my next order of business was to hit the streets and find some gigs. This is where knowing the country standards is a lifesaver. Those two years in that club in K.C. had prepared me pretty well—that and knowing the Nashville number system.

MD: Where did you learn the number system?

Jim: Well, the system they use in Nashville is very similar to the figured bass that I studied in music theory. So going into these club gigs, I knew the songs, was singing the harmonies, and could call out the changes if they needed them. They were like, "Who's the new guy?"

MD: Sounds like you fit in pretty well.

Jim: I was meeting a lot of people and things were going great, but then the drum shop that I was working at closed down. That would have been fine, except that I was still living

there! So once again I was homeless. I didn't want to leave town because I had gigs, so I just lived in my truck for a while. It really wasn't that bad. A couple weeks later a buddy asked me if I would watch his cat for a week. He gave me the keys to his apartment, and when he came back I gave him half of the rent and told him that I was his new roommate.

MD: What was your first big break?

Jim: It was in '98, and I had been in town for about eleven months. I had been playing some gig on lower Broadway with a great bass player named Steve Ledford. He



idea that he could sell Fortune 500 companies on having a percussion ensemble perform at their corporate meetings. So he enlisted me to do some writing for them, and Sticks Of Thunder percussion ensemble was born. I'm still playing gigs with those guys.

MD: Sounds like you had a lot going on. What made you decide to move to Nashville?

Jim: Once again, I felt like I wasn't doing what I was put here to do. There was something about Nashville that had been calling me for a long time. In 1992, when I was

that I wouldn't be able to see him after his clinic because I had orchestra rehearsal, so we said our goodbyes.

I went up to my seat to watch the clinic, and Larrie was playing his ass off. But somewhere in the middle of the third tune he just fell back off the throne. He went into the coma that eventually took his life, but he went out doing what he loved. Larrie made me feel like Nashville was the type of place where a guy like me could have a career. That's what I wanted. I never saw myself as the one-hit-wonder type. I wanted to spend my life playing great

just called me up one day and said, "I got you a gig." I asked him for what night and he explained to me that he had gotten the gig with Mark Chesnutt and that they also needed a drummer. The bandleader came and met me at a club, listened to me play, and hired me on the spot.

MD: How would you describe Mark's music?

Jim: Mark played a mix of country, Western swing, and Cajun music. My first gig was on the TV show *The View*, and I was thinking, "This is live TV, man, don't screw up." About ten seconds before we were to go on, I realized that my stick bag was nowhere to be found. The only sticks I had were in my hands. I've never held onto a pair of sticks so tightly in all my life! But everything worked out fine and I spent the next two years touring with him. That was a great band.

MD: I remember when you got that gig, and when you left it. With all of the guys who were without work at that time, what made you decide to leave such a solid gig?

Jim: Mark had scored fourteen number-1 hits in the '90s. But I just felt like I was on the tail end of a great run. And as much as I enjoyed the music, I felt like I needed to do something different with my career.

MD: How did you hook up with Rascal Flatts?

Jim: In '99 the opening act on Mark's tour was a girl named Chely Wright. Jay Demarcus and Joe Don Rooney, two of my three current bosses, were sidemen in her band. Jay loves to tell this story about when we first met in a club and that I was a total jerk to him. I remember Jay as a brilliant multi-instrumentalist who would play keyboards and sing harmony on one set, then play bass and sing lead the next. We had great chemistry right out of the chute.

So we would play gigs together during the week and back up our respective artists on the weekend. In the summer of '99 I played a lot of gigs where it was Jay, Gary, Joe Don, and me. It was at that time that they told me that they were trying to get a record deal and that when they did, they wanted me to play with them. Well, sure enough, they did get a record deal, and I left Mark Chesnutt to play with Rascal Flatts.

MD: That was quite a risk leaving an established artist for an unknown act.

Jim: Yeah, a lot of people thought I was crazy, including you!

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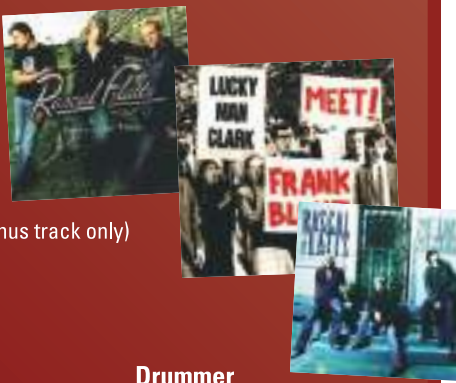
Riley On Record

Artist

Rascal Flatts
Rascal Flatts
Rascal Flatts
Jeff Scheetz
Lucky Man Clark

Album

Live
Me And My Gang
Feels Like Today (bonus track only)
Pawn Shop
Meet Frank Blunt



iPod Faves

Artist

Sting
Living Colour
John McLaughlin Trio
Rage Against The Machine
Red Hot Chili Peppers
John Scofield
Peter Gabriel
Tony Williams
Fishbone
Level 42

Album

Ten Summoner's Tales
Vivid
Live At The Royal Festival Hall
Rage Against The Machine
Blood Sugar Sex Magik
Pick Hits Live
So
Believe It
Truth And Soul
World Machine

Drummer

Vinnie Colaiuta
Will Calhoun
Trilok Gurtu
Brad Wilk
Chad Smith
Dennis Chambers
Manu Katché
Tony Williams
Fish
Phil Gould

MD: I remember wondering just how long it would last. But I also remember going to your first rehearsal at Soundcheck Studios and being blown away by the harmonies and the radically different sound of all those influences combined.

Jim: Right about that time, a song came out called "Murder On Music Row." It was about how pop country acts like Rascal

Flatts were killing traditional country music. There was a great debate as to which brand of country music would survive in the new millennium. It turns out that both styles are still alive and well.

MD: What was the first Rascal Flatts tour like?

Jim: It was fun. Back then we were all on one bus, playing a lot of clubs and opening

for anybody who would have us. It was a great time.

MD: What's the biggest difference between that and the current tour?

Jim: I almost don't know where to begin. Now we've got six busses and ten semi-trucks full of audio, video, and lighting gear. All I can say is we have an amazing crew. I don't know how they get all that gear set up on time. It's quite a production.

MD: Are you running any tracks along with the show?

Jim: Yeah, some. The Flatts music has always used drum loops and percussion tracks. My click track is also on there, as well as some string parts and stuff like that. Syncing up with video elements on screen requires the use of a click track. I will say this: We never use any vocal tracks. All the singing that you hear on the show is 100% live.

MD: Is the entire show tied to a click or backing tracks?

Jim: No, there are four or five songs that we don't even use a click track on. That allows us to make some quick transitions.

MD: What is the difference between playing with tracks and playing with a click?

Jim: For me, there's a big difference.

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Jim Riley

When you're playing with a click track that no one in the audience hears, you can lay back verses, push choruses, and basically play around the click. However, when you're playing with pre-recorded elements on a track, you can't pull them around with you, particularly drum loops. Sometimes if you don't bury them, meaning playing precisely with the click, the drums and loops will flam in the PA, and that sucks.

MD: You've gone from playing small clubs to huge arenas with Rascal Flatts. Do you ever miss the intimacy of the smaller venues?

Jim: I have to be honest, I'm really enjoying these big shows. We're at a point where we're playing to as many as 25,000 people a night on these summer shows, and I love it. It's what I've always dreamed of.

MD: How long do you typically stay out on the road?

Jim: We keep a very family-friendly schedule. Many rock and pop acts stay out for weeks or even months at a time. We don't do that. We basically play weekends. I mean, those are the best days to see a concert anyway, right? We typically leave Wednesday night, play Thursday through

Saturday, and get home Sunday morning. Once you get used to that schedule, it's pretty normal. I get off the bus just in time to take out the trash and mow the lawn.

MD: What do you do about your East and West Coast dates?

Jim: About twice a year we do a West Coast run. Sitting in the bus from Nashville to the West Coast takes about two days, so I always fly into the first gig. We usually stay out there for about ten days, so if you don't choose to fly out it turns the trip into two weeks. For me, that's just too long. On the other hand, the Northeast is more like twenty-four hours, and it seems like we're always either starting or finishing our East Coast swing in Boston. That works out great for me because I get to see all my family and friends up there.

MD: How do you approach the music? Are you required to play everything like the record, or do you have some freedom in what you play?

Jim: I have plenty of freedom to make the parts my own. A lot of drummers in Nashville don't have that luxury. The key is to make the parts your own without negatively impacting the integrity of the musical arrangement. Translation: If the band gives you some rope, try not to hang yourself with it.

With us, the creative process does not stop in the studio. That's where it starts. When we take the music on the road, it's still evolving. Fans don't want to hear you regurgitate the album. They want a unique musical experience that's still familiar enough for them to sing along, and we try to give them that.

MD: I hear you've got some double drumming in the show. How did that come about?

Jim: Jay's first instrument was drums, and he told me that he wanted to do some drumming with me in the show. So I came to him with some ideas from my ensemble and drum corps experience, and we just took it from there. It's a blast. We play a two-minute drum battle and then do some double drumming on the next tune in the show. It's been going over pretty well.

MD: How does it work being the band-leader when half of the band is your boss?

Jim: The great thing is that these guys are such fantastic musicians that it really sets the tone for the rest of the band. Let me give you an example: When it came time to hire an additional guitar player, I had to

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consider that Joe Don is a pretty great guitar player himself. So whoever else we hired had to be pretty darned good as well as complementary in style. Chemistry is always a huge factor when hiring musicians, both musically and personally. The bottom line is, if you surround yourself with great musicians who are also great people, it makes your job as leader a whole lot easier.

MD: What's with the huge drumset? I thought this was a country band.

Jim: Yeah, my current setup is a little over the top. However, if you look at my snare, 12" tom, 14" tom, kick drum, and ride cymbal, you'll see a perfectly formed four-piece drumset. Everything else is set up around that. Having said that, we're putting on a huge production, and my kit definitely fits into that. It's also fun to play.

MD: What's your take on equipment endorsements?

Jim: The main thing I can say is, play the gear you love. Drum and cymbal companies hate nothing more than a gear whore. Endorsements are all about relationships. The gear is not free. To them it's advertising dollars, and they want to see a return on their investment. In return you provide exposure for their product.

MD: What would you tell a young drummer who's itching to get an endorsement?

Jim: Be patient! Make great music, and the endorsements and other stuff will fall into place when the time is right.

MD: What other advice would you have for a drummer wanting to pursue a professional career?

Jim: Meet bass players. Now don't get me wrong, there is no other group of musicians that have more of a brotherhood than drummers. But in my experience, it's been the bass players that have been the key to getting the gig. Also, get comfortable playing with a click. Almost every session and most major live gig demands that you play with one.

Finally, be as diverse as you can be. If you want to work, you've got to be able to play all styles. I've played jazz gigs, rock gigs, metal gigs, swing gigs. You name it. I've had to pull from my experiences with all of those genres to make what I do with Rascal Flatts happen.

If you'd like to see more about Jim Riley, check out his Web site: www.jimrileymusic.com.



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KRIS MYERS

DROPPING ANCHOR WITH UMPHREY'S MCGEE

MYERS DRIVES ONE OF TODAY'S LEADING JAMBANDS WITH WICKED CHOPS, A METALHEAD'S PUNCH, AND THE FINESSE OF A '70S STUDIO ACE.

It must have been a tough decision.

As 2002 drew to a close, Umphrey's McGee, formed in 1997 in South Bend, Indiana, was beginning to see its tireless efforts pay off. Original members Brendan Bayliss (guitar/vocals), Joel Cummins(keyboards/vocals), Ryan Stasik (bass), and Mike Mirro (drums) had added Andy Farag on percussion and Jake Cinninger on guitar and vocals, and had released the progressive yet lighthearted studio LP *Local Band Does O.K.* Relocating to Chicago and touring steadily, Umphrey's was seeing bigger and better venues and starting to enjoy the spoils of regular road work.

Then Mirro, after much soul searching, announced he was leaving the band in order to attend medical school. His mates let their jaws drop to the floor, and they did some soul searching of their own. There were many reasons to continue, including the ecstatic crowd reception the previous summer at the first Bonnaroo festival

in Manchester, Tennessee (an event the band has now played four times), not to mention the unsavory prospect of getting real jobs. But there was also the thorny issue of finding a drummer who could handle the group's tricky time shifts and all-over-the-place stylistic range, while fitting smoothly into the family-oriented Umphrey's clan.

Enter Kris Myers. A fellow Midwesterner from Palatine, Illinois, Myers was neither a friend nor a fan of Umphrey's McGee. But like his soon-to-be bandmates, he was up for a good musical challenge. He'd studied music at Elmhurst College and earned a master's in jazz studies from DePaul University, and was more than ready to handle everything Umphrey's could throw at him, including the occasional can of Budweiser. His was one of the first packages the band received when considering new drummers, and he never left the top of their list. Kris exited the Chicago fusion band Kick The Cat and joined Umphrey's full-time in January 2003.



Mirro had an infectious groove and a good head for time changes, but Myers can do it all, and he's helped elevate Umphrey's to a new level of sophistication. His jazz studies have given him a vast set of tools and made him a fearless improviser, which is important in a band that plays off-the-cuff pieces at every show and tries not to repeat a given song for a week when on tour. ("You never know what you'll get—it's like a box of chocolates," Kris jokes.) When things get heavy—and they've gotten heavier since he joined—Myers can bang out the crashes and double-bass blasts with the best of them. He also brings to the table a confident touch, a deep pocket, a gorgeous tone, and intricate hi-hat work worthy of one of his idols, Stewart Copeland.

All of this is amply evident on *Safety In Numbers*, Myers' second studio LP with Umphrey's. (His first was 2004's *Anchor Drops*.) *Safety* tackles serious issues like relationships and mortality, and marks a new song-based focus for a band that was previously unable to resist

stacking complex sections on top of each other and soaring off on instrumental flights of fancy. Of course, this is still Umphrey's McGee, and *Safety* has no shortage of impressive playing and compositional flourishes. But those looking to experience the manic energy and muscular jamming of live Umph can check out *Wrapped Around Chicago*, a full-show DVD recorded on New Year's Eve 2004–2005. You'll get to watch Myers and his percussion partner Farag in action, and you'll even see the nattily dressed drummer come out and sing one, Sinatra style, while Cinninger holds things down capably at the kit.

MD talked to Kris the day after a packed show at New York City's Nokia Theatre. Myers and company—a great bunch of guys right down the line—even honored our request to hear their cover of King Crimson's "Red." They'd performed it at a recent show, so it wasn't about to make the set that night at central New Jersey's Starland Ballroom, but they were more than happy to let it rip during soundcheck. And rip, it did.



MD: How did you get started playing drums?

Kris: I started when I was eight. My uncle gave me a Ludwig blue sparkle '60s kit. He was into hair bands and hard rock, from AC/DC and Judas Priest to Ozzy and Sabbath. I was exposed to that stuff, and I was also exposed to The Police and Zeppelin. Those two bands were my biggest influences. I started taking lessons at age eleven because I figured I should learn how to read what I'm playing. So I learned to play and to read notes.

At around twelve my friends and I started a band called Iron Triangle. We did all the local battles of the bands. In high school, I got into some harder stuff for a while—crazy industrial and electronic music. I was influenced by the precision of that. Soundgarden and Matt Cameron also influenced me a lot. Then ska came in the picture, and then punk. Finally, when I was eighteen, I had no other way of getting a college scholarship except music.

College was when things changed for me, from being an amateur to a professional. I started learning about jazz, and it changed my world. The Elmhurst band director, Doug Beach, who's a great big band composer/arranger as well, started a program where he would just put the kids to work. The Elmhurst College big band would go around and play weddings

every weekend. You put your tux on, and you learned all the standards. I never thought I'd play professional society gigs, but that made me have more of a work ethic toward everything I do.

At one point I just decided to sink or swim. And sure enough, a lot of the people on the faculty gave me gigs. I met people in Chicago and started doing recording sessions for other big bands and jazz groups, and then rock groups, and that's when I joined Kick The Cat. The guitarist, Chris Siebold, is one of the most brilliant musicians out there. He's still up and coming and has yet to be heard on a grand scale. He was the first person to expose me to Zappa.

MD: Did big band help you get a sense of arrangement that you could apply to Umphrey's?

Kris: Absolutely—to any situation, really. Big band is the hot seat for a drummer. You have to play the groove, play the time, and hold the fort together, and you also have to understand the soloists and how to react and not react. You've got to know how to set up all the big figures and accents, and set them up clearly. All that busyness you used to do, you can't do anymore, because now it's about the *song*, the full band. And these horn players, they want you to set up that stuff like granite. That was

a tough time for me; I wasn't confident for a while. But once I got into it, it really lit a fire under my tush.

MD: So you didn't know Umphrey's when you heard their drum chair had opened up?

Kris: Never heard of 'em, man! I checked out some tracks on their Web site. They had this tune called "Andy's Last Beer." The intro is very Crimson-esque, very repetitive, kind of minimalist. I was like, I can dig this.

MD: Was it hard to fit into a tight-knit group of friends? I imagine your personality was probably as important as your playing.

Kris: And my ego, yes. Also important was my mystique, my whole look.... [laughs] Yeah, it was a family vibe, and I had to learn the depth of that. I respect it so much now. As far as just hanging out, we got along great. We had a lot in common. Maybe it was our Catholic upbringing—punk Catholic kids growing up in the suburbs in a good family environment.

MD: Also the band was growing. But it's not like the future was secure when you signed on, right?

Kris: Honestly, it was kind of a gamble on my part. I don't mean that in any way toward the band, but for me it was new territory, and I just went for it. I mean, I'd spent years networking, playing freelance gigs.

Was I going to keep putting on my tux every weekend to play bar mitzvahs and weddings, or was I going to join a band? I felt this could very well be a great new direction for me, so I dropped everything and figured as long as I could be as financially solid as I was before, that would be pretty cool. So here we are [laughs, then knocks on table].

MD: What did studying jazz bring to your rock playing?

Kris: A sense of improvisation. A lot of rock bands tend to have drummers who play the same fills and the same structures over and over again, like Neil Peart for example. The song is treated as a composition. I respect that, but it's not my preference. I learned from jazz how to figure out what's possible with a rhythm and how to turn it inside out, mess with it a little, on stage and in the moment.

I keep coming back to Crimson as a big influence going into this group, because

with Bill Bruford and Pat Mastelotto, some things are composed, but some things are totally improvised. For instance, the way they play all the offbeats and create that rub against time. It's this demonic, unending spiral of intriguing grooves.

Also, jazz taught me to jump into each song with a clean slate every night, to not always play the same way every time. You have to know your limitations, and I've learned that too. [laughs] But that's the beauty of it. If it doesn't work out, at least you went for it. Luckily, our fans accept it, and we get some flexibility there.

MD: Does the band consciously try to go to new places stylistically?

Kris: Yeah. I'm trying to work on applying authentic world music rhythms to the percussion section. It's been difficult, because that's a serious study that you have to make time for. But I think it would work great with Umphrey's. So I'm working with African, Cuban, and Brazilian rhythms, just starting from there.

MD: I hear some Afro-Cuban rhythms in what you and Andy are doing.

Kris: Thanks for noticing that. I feel kind

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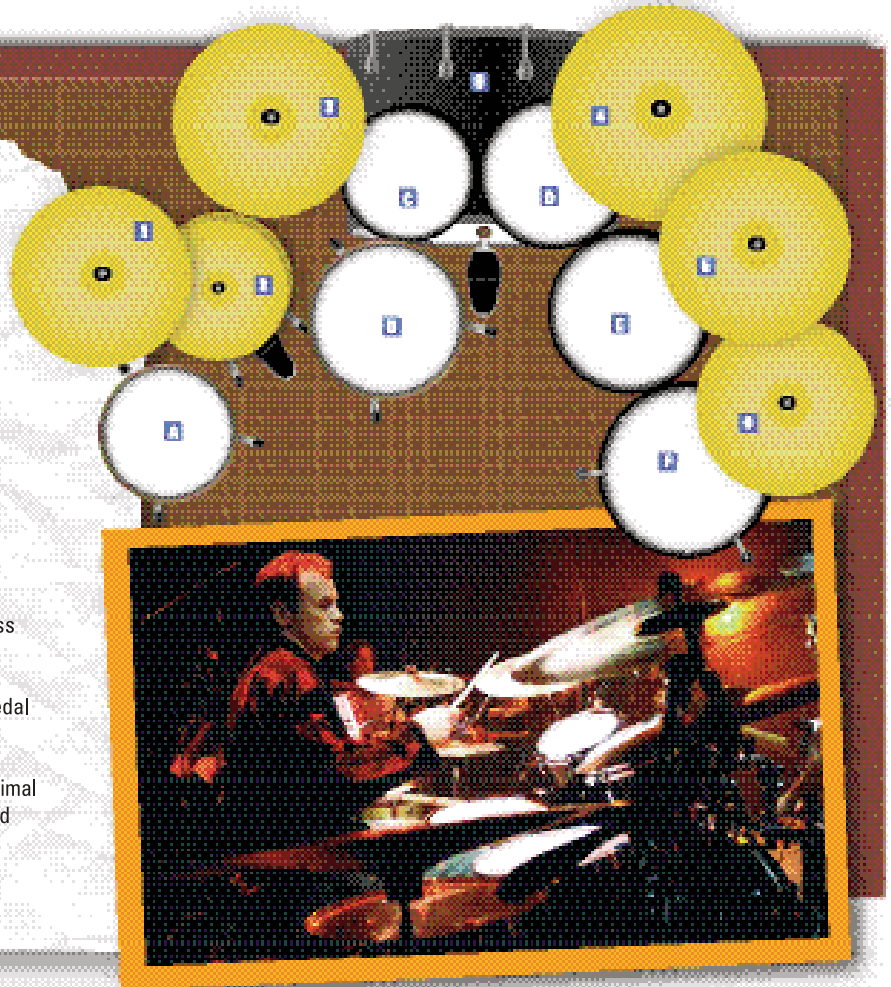
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TECHNIQUE TALK

KRIS ON WARMING UP AND HIS GRIP

I like to warm up before I go on, but only a little bit. I used to sit all day and practice for hours. But the guys in Umphrey's keep me warmed up at soundcheck, because we go through segues and concepts to make the show different every night. And then I simply exercise and stay healthy. I grew up not realizing all of the things I was putting in my body. Now I realize the importance of drinking water, working out, and stretching.

I also changed my grip recently to make things easier on myself. I

was experiencing a little tension in my forearm, and it was becoming a concern. I talked to Stanton Moore. He's a great teacher, and he learned from Johnny Vidacovich and a lot of players—even Bonham did this—that the fulcrum is not necessarily the thumb and forefinger. The pinkie, the ring finger, and the middle finger are actually doing more of the work. It opens up the stick to be looser and bounce higher.

Watch Bonham in all those DVDs. He gets that huge sound not from how hard he's hitting but how he's using this grip and letting that stick bounce. ●



of embarrassed, because after being exposed to that community, you realize how much people respect the code of ethics of how to play those rhythms. A lot of those communities are very closed in—they don't want you to go out there and play some jive shit. If you do, it's an insult. I feel a little uncomfortable thinking, I'm gonna play a song over this. That song might be a bland version of the real thing.

MD: Had you played with a percussionist before you started working with Andy?

Kris: A couple gigs here and there. Andy and I are very much a unit. He's my brother on the side. He's a great player, and a great guy. He makes me think about what I do and what he does, and how we work together.

It's important to know what to play and what not to play, and not to step on each other's toes, which is very common. I always hear from drummers back home when they play with percussionists: "Man, I can't open up or do anything because he just fills it up with all his percussion stuff, which doesn't even work with the songs." [laughs] But maybe the drummer needs to respect their role too.

MD: Andy seems happy to lay back and just come forward every now and then. It seems that you occupy the forefront for the most part.

Kris: Yeah, I think that's accurate. He's pretty shy. I'm trying to encourage him to come out of his shell a little more. But he and I approach the music in terms of what

the *song* needs. Some bands on our scene tend to create this calliope of endless merry-go-round-esque jams. We don't want to do that. We want to have a purpose, an intent.

MD: Have you held your own percussion rehearsals?

Kris: Yeah. We work on getting patterns and rhythms together before soundcheck. We do that more and more. We want to start taking lessons together, go back to square one.

MD: *Safety In Numbers* seems like a new mastery of the studio for the band, and your drums sound beautiful.

Kris: Thanks, man. I'm really pleased. It was done at Gravity in Chicago, which is an awesome room. It's a real quaint studio, with an engineer by the name of Manny



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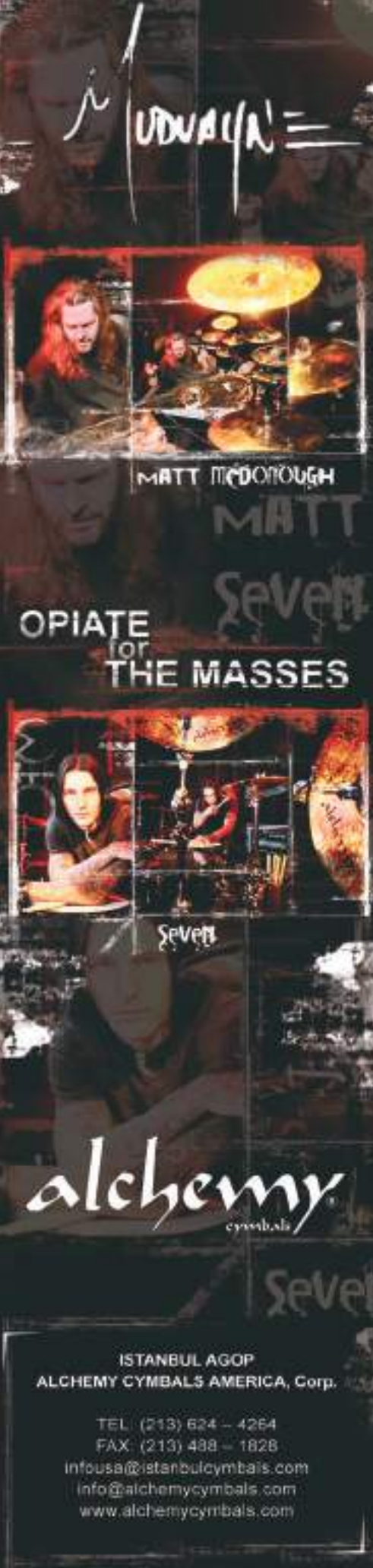
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Kris Myers

Sanchez who has a great producer's ear. He just knows a certain sound to get. I was happy to experiment with an ambient room sound. That was the key to *Safety In Numbers*. It's taking me out of the fusion world and into the world of lo-fi miking techniques, putting one room mic way in the corner and one real close.

MD: I'd say the tunes are less outright funky than some earlier material and more about the song and overall orchestration.

Kris: I was going for more of a studio groove, a more condensed sound with fewer fills. I played more straight-ahead because the songs dictated that. Like "Intentions Clear," that's kind of an upbeat Porcaro shuffle. I didn't want to play fusion-y on it, but I also didn't want to play the typical drum loop stuff that you hear today. I wanted to bring back something from the past. Jeff Porcaro was a huge influence on the way I played some of the things on this album. Hopefully I did it justice.

MD: That makes sense, because he was such a song-oriented player and this is your most song-oriented album.

Kris: Thank you for saying that. You start to realize how little all your fills and all your goofing around have to do with the

song. This fill I just played—why did I play it? That didn't make *any* sense.

MD: But that's a tough one with this band, because you guys play *a lot* all the time.

Kris: Well, that's very true. It's a constant process.

MD: It's amazing that the six of you can manage to stay out of each other's way while playing so many notes.

Kris: It's trial and error. And a lot of it is listening back to recordings. In the old van-and-trailer days, we'd listen to our shows and talk about it. It helped us iron out the wrinkles. We try not to step on each other, because it's overkill.

MD: Your drumming style is very precise. Has that been a conscious intention? It certainly works well with Umphrey's.

Kris: Yeah. Stanton Moore, for example, has this super greasy, New Orleans funk thing in Galactic. I love that. But with Umphrey's I feel it's good to have that more precise, more defined thing. Listening to guys like Stewart Copeland and the drummers of Zappa, who are very much that way, taught me to understand where every rhythm is and why.

MD: Did playing fast come naturally from the beginning?

MYERS' MUSIC

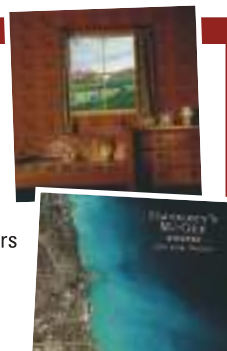
RECORDINGS

Artist

Umphrey's McGee
Umphrey's McGee
Kick The Cat
Kick The Cat
DePaul Jazz Ensemble featuring Jim McNeally

Album

Safety In Numbers
Anchor Drops
Scramble
Weirdo
Jump Start



FAVORITES

Artist

Bill Stewart
Mike Keneally

Album

Telepathy
Boil That Dust Speck

Drummer

Bill Stewart
Mike Keneally, Toss Panos,
Joe Travers, Tom Freeman,
Alan Silvestri
Martin France, Jonas Johansen
Stewart Copeland
John Bonham
Vinnie Colaiuta
Keith Carlock
Bill Stewart
Bill Bruford,
Pat Mastelotto
Elvin Jones
Tony Williams
Danny Carey
?uestlove

Django Bates
The Police
Led Zeppelin
Vinnie Colaiuta
Wayne Krantz
Joe Lovano
King Crimson
Like Life
all
Houses Of The Holy
self-titled solo album
Greenwich Mean
all
Thrack

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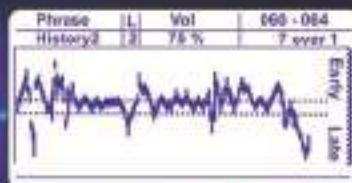
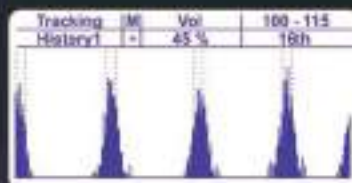
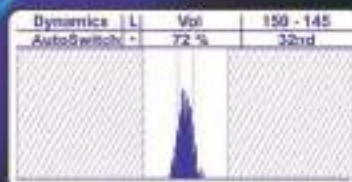
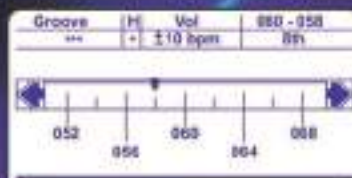
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Kris Myers

Kris: I think it was a forte for me. It had to be smoothed out, and I learned a lot of speed and stamina just studying and playing out of books. I studied with Ed Soph for a while, so I got my ass kicked a little bit. He's the drill sergeant of jazz drummers, the best jazz drummer/educator out there. Well, Joe Morello is also a legend in that sense.

MD: Let's talk about double bass. What do you use it to do?

Kris: [British accent] It's the extra edge of the cliff. It's what gets me girls at the end of the show in the dressing room. [laughs]

MD: It's what gets you *guys*, maybe!

Kris: Isn't that ironic? It's like, I'm gonna be all cool and add to the testosterone level a little bit here. And instead of getting all the girls, you get a bunch of guys in the back going, "DUDE!" [laughs]

Double bass is a delicate thing. When I was seventeen or eighteen I was into some pretty aggressive stuff, as extreme as Slayer. But I don't feel hard music like I used to. I just use double bass to add a little bit of potency, to kick it up a notch. It seems to work, and Jake is really into that. When he throws the aggression in there, I react.

I very much respect guys like Mike Portnoy and Nick D'Virgilio. The prog-metal thing is not really my cup of tea, but I think adding a bit of that seems to work with Umphrey's, and double bass helps. I just don't want to go off too much, because I don't really want to be "double bass guy."

MD: But you kind of are. It's definitely a part of what you do.

Kris: Yeah. It's a fury that comes out in the moment. A lot of kids come up to me and say, "Man—double bass!" But I really don't consider myself a double-bass player. I really don't.

MD: In the show, you were integrating it creatively at interesting times. You weren't just running on your pedals.

Kris: Yeah, when you hear that drummer at a rock show, it becomes like a comedy skit, like Animal from the Muppets. As long as it's musical, that's all that matters to me.

MD: On the New Year's DVD and at last night's show, the first tune required you to kill it right away. Is that difficult for you?

Kris: Honestly, I like it. I like any challenge. Coming out of the gate that way, you can make a memorable introduction. I feel physically stiff sometimes, absolutely. But I've had to learn how to loosen up. You

never know what will be thrown at you. And again I've learned from reading about all the discipline those Zappa guys had. They were like commandos.

MD: I wanted to ask about your band's structured live improvs. You call them "Jimmy Stewarts."

Kris: Right. The Jimmy Stewart Ballroom was where the guys invented the concept of starting improvisations with a chord progression and improvising over that form.

MD: Does it start from scratch on stage?

Kris: No, that wouldn't be a Jimmy Stewart—that would be a "Jazz Odyssey." There are a lot of Spinal Tap references in this band. [laughs] The Jazz Odyssey is the on-a-whim improvisation where someone thinks of something on the spot. The Jimmy Stewart is within a given structure that was written out before, maybe an eight-bar chord progression.

MD: Are there rules and parameters for what you do within that?

Kris: No rules, just some formulas and hand signals. For example, if the guitar players take a step forward, that means everyone modulates one full step up on the turnaround. And taking one step back is the same, only going lower. They do hand signals for an A, B, C chord, like "Go to that chord." There's a signal to speed up the tempo, and to slow down the tempo. I had to start paying attention to all that. There are signals for double time, half time, and to go to the next song.

MD: Who do you keep your eyes on during the jam?

Kris: I watch Jake and Brendan, the two guitar players. Brendan is a conductor of sorts.

MD: So now you'll do some touring behind *Safety*. Is the band already planning the next phase?

Kris: Well, we write new material constantly. We take ideas from our improvs when we listen back, and we start writing songs from that. Our jam fans are super fans—they're so hungry for new music, and they're hardcore about keeping it different for every show. So we'll introduce a song that may or may not be on the next record or even two records from now. It's a constant process—it's never like a Justin Timberlake tour, where you ask him what he's going to do this year. "Oh, we're gonna play this set from this album from 2003 to 2004." That's not us.



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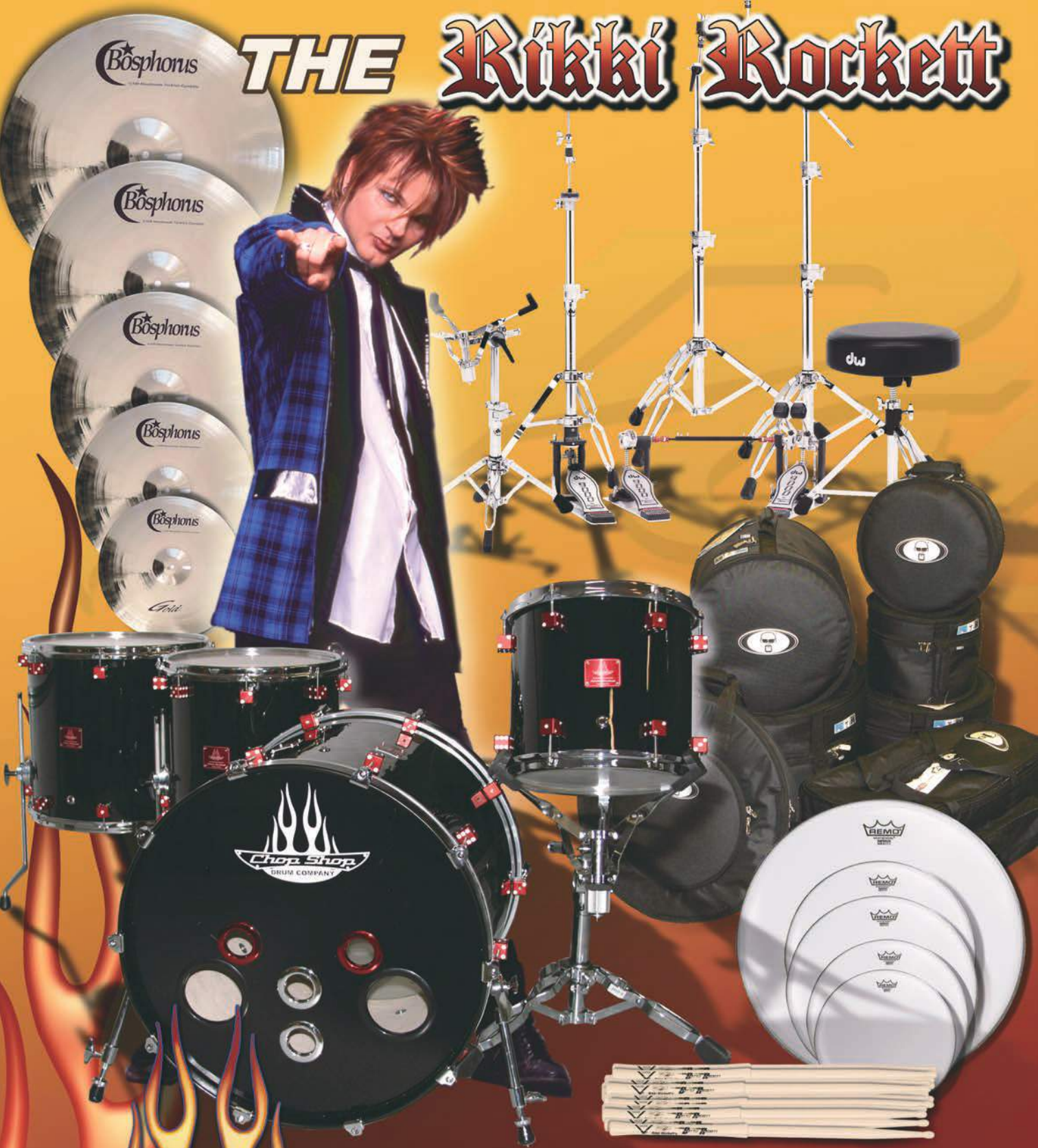
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Virgil Donati

Minimal Space—Maximum Chops

Story by Mike Haid

Photos by Alex Solca

Australian drumming master Virgil Donati has in fact been on American soil for ten years now, residing in Los Angeles. Donati continues to push the envelope of modern drumset techniques, and remains an in-demand worldwide clinician and recording artist. He's also recently released an *Ultimate Play-Along* book/CD package (Alfred) featuring off-the-hook charts from his bands Planet X and On The Virg.

Donati still maintains a rigorous practice schedule, but because he lives in a condo, he spends most of his practice, rehearsal, and recording time in a rented lock-out rehearsal facility in the artsy area of Los Angeles known as North Hollywood—or NoHo, as the locals refer to it. "The studio is located in an area that is clustered with rehearsal and recording studios," Virgil explains. "That's proven to be an advantage for easy access to my

gear when I've been in pre-production for tours, or in recording situations. It's amazing how often I, or my techs, have had to make a run to my room for a pick-up. And Drum Paradise, one of the largest drum cartage companies in LA, is just a few doors up. They take care of my gear for most studio situations."

Virgil shares the building with several well-known drumming luminaries. Will Kennedy,





Thomas Lang, Abe Laboriel Jr., and John Tempesta, for instance, are recent tenants. Virgil's cozy 9½x20 air-conditioned studio has just enough room to fit his keyboard rig and large Pearl drumkit. He does, however, have overhead storage along three of the four carpet-lined walls, containing his collection of snare drums, Sabian cymbals, Remo heads, and Vater sticks. Virgil has several Pearl kits, but he'll use the same one for several months in the studio, until he feels it's time for an acoustic change. His current studio kit is an eight-piece Pearl BRX birch, with 6-ply shells and sea-foam green finish. The setup is rack-mounted and

includes a spectrum of Sabian cymbals, including Virgil's Signature Series Saturation crashes.

Across the hall, Virgil shares another room with vocalist Mark Boals (ex-Yngwie Malmsteen, Ring Of Fire). This acts as a recording control room, with a computer, a console, monitoring equipment, and the like. When Virgil has a recording project, his practice room becomes his recording room. He simply sets up mics, runs a snake across the hall to the control room, and records his drum tracks.

Donati says he's recorded several projects this way, including Bunny Brunel's *LA Zoo Revisited* and the upcoming Planet X album. This situation works well for Virgil as well as the artist he's recording for, as it saves on cartage fees and outside studio-time expenses, and provides a comfort zone for Virgil to create freely within his own private space. Does external noise from other clients in the busy rehearsal building ever make recording difficult? "Generally it's not a problem," Donati insists. "The isolation is quite good, and most bands don't come in until the evening hours, so I lean towards an early start if I'm recording in my room."

A famous practice monster, Virgil still spends the better part of each day on the drumkit. "I try to get in four to five hours a day of practice time," he reports. "It's amazing how quickly that time passes when you use it intelligently and creatively. I need to spend quality time practicing to learn things properly and thoroughly. My hat goes off to those drummers who say that they never practice but can play amazing things. I don't know how they do it."

During the four to six months of the year that Virgil spends on the road, the only time he finds to practice is backstage or at soundcheck before gigs. "The road is a good place for me to catch up on my hand technique,

since I don't get much time to practice behind a kit," he shares. "When I'm home, I mostly work on four-way independence, new drumkit techniques, or writing and recording music. I'm usually in this room seven days a week, for a few hours each day."

Virgil has about twenty snare drums that he keeps in his room, including his Pearl Signature Series. The majority of his collection consists of various sizes and models of Pearl metal and wood snares. He also owns a couple of Brady snare drums, a handmade Vibration Society solid brass snare drum made by a good friend of his in Australia, and a unique Italian custom snare drum made by Le Soprano. "It's always good to have a selection of quality snare drums when recording," states Virgil. "A snare drum that sounds great on one song may sound horrible on the next, so you need to have a variety of voices to choose from."

Virgil's keyboard rig is mainly used during rehearsals with his band, but he also uses it as a writing tool when he's practicing on the drums. "Many times I'll come up with a new rhythmic idea on the drums," he explains, "and then I'll go to the keyboard to create a melodic line that I can use to help develop my rhythmic idea on the drumkit. On occasion this type of practice will lead to a larger idea that becomes the foundation for a new song."

Still, Donati does most of his composing at his condo, located where West Hollywood borders Beverly Hills. There he records tracks onto a Mac dual-processor G4 running Digital Performer software, with an M-Audio Keystation Pro 88 used as his controller keyboard. He also has a variety of keyboard modules and soft synths, and employs the Finale software program for writing charts.

Virgil explains why he chose the West Hollywood area to live: "This is a vibrant area, with good access to the best of everything in LA, including many studios. The drive to my rehearsal studio is reasonable, and I seldom encounter the kind of traffic that LA is renowned for. Plus, I have a great neighborhood to run through for my morning jog."



Pearl Jam's Matt Cameron

by Ed Breckenfeld



Rob Shanahan

MUSIC KEY		
open	○	R.C. Bell
H.H.	●	C.C.
T.T.	✱	
S.D.	✱	
F.T.	✱	
B.D.	✱	
H.H.	✱	
w/ foot	✱	
	○	Ghost note
	✱	Rim-click

Pearl Jam's powerful and politically charged new album is a return to form for the quintet from Seattle. Part of the credit goes to Matt Cameron, the ex-Soundgarden slammer who's on his third studio release as Pearl Jam's drummer. Matt's muscular yet tasteful grooves energize the band, driving them to rock harder than they have in a decade. And occasional odd-time sections certainly bear the Cameron stamp. Let's take a peek at what this popular player is up to in 2006.

"Life Wasted"

The album's opening track displays Matt's well-known skill for making odd time signatures seem downright normal. In the song's pre-chorus, a potentially disorienting thirteen-beat sequence (divided into 7/4 and 6/4) is smoothed over by the flow of this syncopated groove. (0:31)

1
♩ = 142

"Comatose"

This two-minute speed burner features a cool Cameron beat during the bridge, with a twisting rhythm that propels the section's 16th-note guitar part. Matt's kick drum keeps things moving under an interesting sticking pattern. (1:23)

2
♩ = 194

"Severed Hand"

Here's a good example of how a judicious use of kick and hi-hat can elevate a normal drum fill into something special. Try playing Matt's fill (measure 2) without his kick and hi-hat notes, and then add them in to feel how much of an impact they make. (1:48)

3
♩ = 122

Near the end of the track, Cameron employs extra snare notes, loose hi-hats, and cymbal crashes to intensify the groove under the song's climactic lead guitar solo. (3:49)

4

"Marker In The Sand"

One of Cameron's greatest strengths is his ability to temper his percussive energy with sensitivity towards the band's lyrical message. The ebb and flow of this song's beat works well with Eddie Vedder's vocal phrasing in the chorus. (1:37)

5
♩ = 85

“Unemployable”

Matt throws in some slick bell work during the intro of this tune. The 16th-note figure at the end of the second measure stands out because nothing else is happening in that brief spot. (0:07)

6

$\text{♩} = 126$

“Big Wave”

This song’s fade-out section has Cameron’s influence written all over it. As the groove switches from 4/4 to 5/4, Matt drops in offbeat crashes, open hi-hat accents, and explosive fills at will. (2:38)

7

$\text{♩} = 155$

“Gone”

In the second verse of this track, Cameron combines a couple of familiar hi-hat and rimclick patterns to create a compelling beat. (1:52)

8

$\text{♩} = 105$

“Army Reserve”

There are two smooth grooves in this song. The first one is a relaxed semi-funk beat for the verse. (0:09)

9

$\text{♩} = 90$

The second groove occurs during the rolling 12/8 chorus. Matt changes from hi-hat to ride cymbal and uses a busier pattern to punch up the intensity of this section. (0:55)

10

$\text{♩} = 176$

You can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site at www.edbreckenfeld.com.



To hear some of these tracks, go to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.



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Double Bass Crash Course

Part 2: Filling The Gaps

by Jason Bittner



MUSIC KEY

R.C. *
S.D. ●
B.D.1 ●
B.D.2 ●

In Part 1 of this series (August MD), we looked at 16th-note endurance patterns and triplet grooves. This month, we're going to

explore 16th-note patterns that use the second and fourth partials of each beat (the "e" and "a"), and then conclude with some challenging 32nd-note ideas.

E's And A's

Our first group of exercises incorporates offbeat 16ths within a straight 8th-note groove. To play these patterns consistently, you need to develop control and stamina. One of the things that helped me build my endurance was to play 8th notes on my right kick (Example 1), while filling in the offbeats with the left. This process is similar to the single-stroke system that double bass pioneer Joe Franco discusses in his classic book, *Double Bass Drumming*. If you're not familiar with that book, I recommend that you check it out.

Here's our starter exercise.

1

Now we'll begin to fill in the gaps. Here's an exercise adding the "a" on beat 4.

2

In Example 3, we're adding the "a" on beat 3. You should also practice it on beat 2, and then on beat 1.

3

Now we'll add the "a" on two beats per measure. Example 4 has the "a" on beats 2 and 4.

4

For Example 5, the "a" is on beats 1 and 3. Try other combinations as well, like on beats 1 and 2; 2 and 3; 3 and 4; and 1 and 4.

5

Once you're comfortable with two fill-ins per measure, start adding three. Here's a pattern with the "a" on beats 2, 3, and 4. Other combinations include beats 1, 2, 3; 1, 2, 4; and 1, 3, 4.

6

Finally, here's a groove with the "a" on all four beats.

7

Now we're going to focus on the second 16th note of each beat, the "e." Example 8 has the "e" on beat 4.

8

Here's the pattern with the "e" on beat 3. After you have this one under control, move the "e" to beat 2, and then to beat 1.

9

Now try different two-beat patterns. Example 10 has the “e” on beats 1 and 3.

10

Here’s one with the “e” on beats 2 and 4.

11

Moving on to three-beat patterns, here’s a pattern with the “e” on beats 1, 2, and 3. You should also work on all of the other three-beat combinations.

12

Here’s a groove with the “e” on all four beats.

13

After you’ve mastered Examples 1–13, go back and practice them with the following variations:

1. Play the snare on beats 1 and 3.
2. Play the snare on beat 3.
3. Play quarter notes on the ride.
4. Play the ride on the offbeats (“&s”).
5. Play 16th notes on the ride.
6. Reverse the foot patterns. Play the constant 8th notes with the left foot, and fill in with the right.
7. Use alternating footings (RLRL or LRLR) within each example.

Combination Patterns

Once you’ve played through the previous examples and variations, try combining patterns. Here are a few examples.

14

15

16

17

32nd Notes

The final six examples in this month’s article incorporate 32nd notes. Take your time with these exercises and keep your strokes even. You should try different ride/snare variations with these as well.

18

19

20

21

22

23

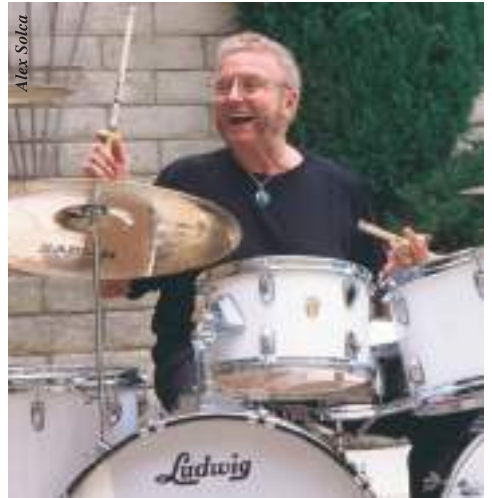
Jason Bittner is the award-winning drummer with Shadows Fall.







Drumset Boles

Practicing In Your Head

by Ed Shaughnessy



MUSIC KEY

T.T. 
 S.D. 
 F.T. 
 B.D. 
 Add 1
 T.T.

About ten years ago, I began teaching a system that uses vocal syllables to represent the different sounds of the drumset. These syllables codify our rhythmic language and provide a means to develop your drumming in creative and melodic ways.

This concept of vocalized drum sounds is inspired by my tabla studies with the great Indian tabla master Allarakah. Allarakah often told me, "Practice in your head." What he meant was to take advantage of time away from the instrument to come up with vocal ideas that would later be put onto the drums. From personal experience, I can assure you that it *really* works.

Another advantage of using a codified system of vocal syllables is that drummers can speak to one another in a fairly accurate language. If I tell a student to play, "Da Di Do Bm," he or she knows to play the following figure between the snare, small tom, floor tom, and bass drum.



Here are the boles (syllables) that I use for a standard five-piece drumset:

Snare—Da (pronounced "dah")

Left rack tom—Di (pronounced "dee")

Right rack tom—Dn (pronounced "din")

Floor tom—Do

Bass drum—Bm

Here are the boles that I use for cymbals:

Closed hi-hat—Ch

Crash cymbal—Cha

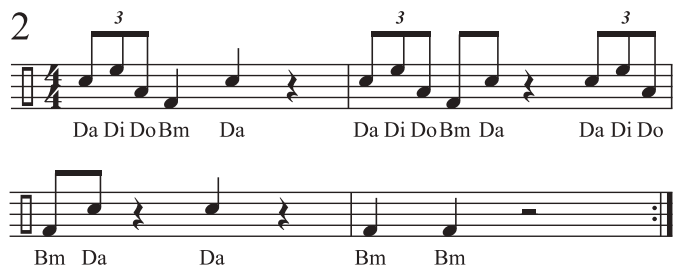
Ride cymbal—Ding

If you wanted to play the entire set in descending melodic order using double strokes, you'd say, "Da Da/Di Di/Dn Dn/Do Do/Bm Bm." In single strokes, the phrase would be, "Da/Di/Dn/Do/Bm."

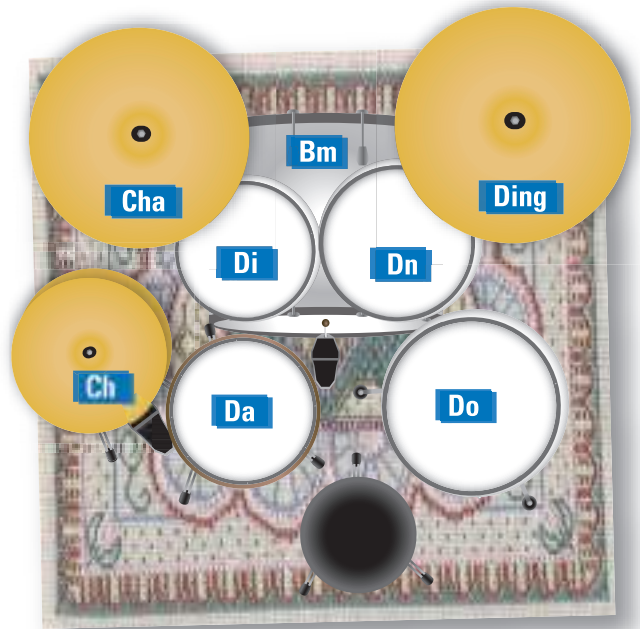
Essentially, any combination of syllables can be translated to the drums. Here are the drumset boles for the first four bars of bebop master Max Roach's classic drum melody "For Big Sid."

Da Di Do Bm/Da/Da Di Do Bm Da/Da Di Do Bm Da/Da/Bm Bm

Sound familiar? Here's what it looks like in standard notation.



Have fun experimenting with these boles, and remember: There's always time to practice when you practice in your head.



Ed Shaughnessy was the long-time drummer with the Tonight Show band.



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—Chester Thompson

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Hi-Hat Control

Your Left Foot, Part 2

by John Riley

MUSIC KEY

- R.C. 
- S.D. 
- B.D. 
- H.H. 
- w/ foot 

Last month we began the process of strengthening the left foot by having it play a series of exercises paired with one of your other limbs. If you've practiced those ideas you're ready to develop more independent left foot control. We will once again start with page five of the *Stick Control* book.

While playing the swing ride cymbal pattern, have your left foot play the "Rs" and your left hand play the "Ls." Be sure to swing the 8th notes.

Now, while your bass drum plays the Rs and your left hand plays the Ls, play upbeats with your hi-hat.



More dense and challenging phrases are created when we take the *Stick Control* RL patterns and think of them in 8th-note triplets. The hi-hat plays the written Rs while the left hand plays the Ls.

Exercises from my book, *The Art Of Bop Drumming*, can also be adapted to enhance left-foot control. Look at Comp 1 on page eighteen. While playing the swing pattern on the ride cymbal, play the written phrases with your hi-hat. Fill in the spaces with 8th notes on the snare drum. Swing the 8ths.



Play Comp 3, on page 26, substituting the hi-hat for the bass drum.




Three-voice ideas can be developed by playing Comp 3 like this: Hi-hat reads the snare drum part, bass drum plays its part, snare drum fills in all the spaces.



Finally, solo ideas incorporating the hi-hat can be developed by playing Comp 1 with the hi-hat while filling in the 8th notes hand to hand. Be sure to maintain the RL sticking flow—think of playing continuous hand-to-hand 8ths, with each hi-hat note replacing the hand that would have played.



Next time we'll look at some hip ostinatos incorporating the hi-hat.



John Riley's career has included work with such artists as John Scofield, Mike Stern, Woody Herman, and Stan Getz. He has also written the critically acclaimed books *The Art Of Bop Drumming* and *Beyond Bop Drumming*, published by Manhattan Music. His latest book, *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*, was recently released by Modern Drummer Publications.



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The Samba Feel

From The Bottom Up

by Maria Martinez

MUSIC KEY

- R.C. — x
- S.D. — ●
- F.T. — ●
- B.D. — ●
- H.H. — x
- w/ foot

The samba grooves we often play on drumset are derived from the rhythms of various percussion instruments in the Brazilian Escola de Samba (samba school). In order to achieve a correct samba feel, it's helpful to familiarize yourself with these percussion parts.

When playing a drumset samba, the bass drum emulates the surdo part. The surdo is a large drum that maintains the pulse in the bateria (percussion) section of the Escola de Samba. The bass drum pattern should accentuate beat 2 (in cut time), but should not be exaggerated.

To understand the correct feel of the bass drum part, use your floor tom to learn the basic surdo pattern. The right hand holds a stick or mallet and alternates between the head and rim of the drum. The palm of the left hand will mute the drumhead, and the left-hand fingers will play ghost notes.

To begin, lay the palm and fingers of your left hand on the floor tom head. Then play the following quarter-note pattern with the right hand, alternating between the head (regular noteheads) and the rim ("x" noteheads). The "+" sign indicates that the notes are muffled by the palm of the left hand.

1

While keeping the left palm on the head, play the following pattern with the left-hand fingertips. This will add a ghost-note effect to your samba.

2

If you combine Examples 1 and 2, you have the following rhythm.

3

The final step is to lift the left hand on beat 2, so that the right-hand stroke makes an open sound. This open sound is indicated by an "o" below the note. Example 4 shows the complete pattern.

4

Once you're comfortable playing the surdo part on the floor tom, play the bass drum in unison with the muted and open notes while mirroring the rim notes with the hi-hat. Try to match the feel of the two parts, making sure there are no flams between the notes.

Now you're ready to play samba with the correct bass drum feel. Begin with the following ostinato for bass drum, hi-hat, and ride cymbal.

5

After you're comfortable with the ostinato, add the following two-bar phrase on the snare drum. (The snare drum part can also be played as rimclicks.)

6

This time, lightly accent the ride cymbal in unison with the snare drum phrase.

7

Try the following snare drum patterns with the samba ostinato, accenting the cymbal in unison with the rhythms.

8

9

10

11

Eventually, you want to be able to improvise freely on the snare drum while maintaining the samba ostinato with the other three limbs. One way to develop the ability to improvise is to “answer” each of the two-bar phrases in this article with a phrase of your own.

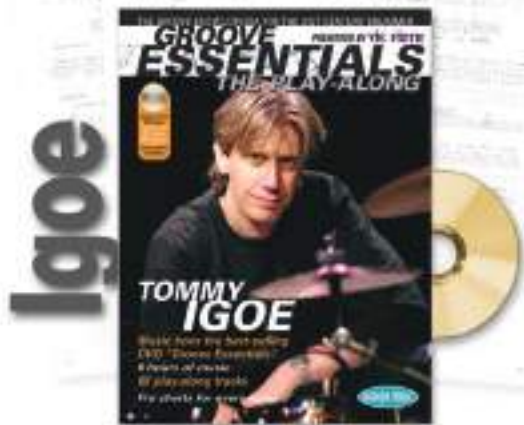
It’s also extremely important to listen to Brazilian music when learning to play these grooves. By paying attention to the interaction of all the instruments, you’ll gain a better perspective on the overall feel of the music.

Maria Martinez’s career includes work with such artists as Barry White, Angela Bofill, El Chicano, and Rita Coolidge, among others. She is also the author of several books and videos, all published by Hal Leonard (www.halleonard.com).



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Essential Grooves

Part 4: Jazz

by Tommy Igoe

MUSIC KEY

R.C. 

S.D. 

B.D. 

H.H.
w/ foot 

In the previous three articles, we made stops in rock, funk, and R&B/hip-hop. Now it's time to explore the fourth groove family: jazz. For this style, we're going to drastically change our approach and get away from the backbeat.

Before we dive in, you may have noticed that the grooves and songs in this series of articles have been getting progressively more challenging. Of the four grooves we've explored so far, this month's is the most musically sophisticated. But jazz, like any other genre, has certain rules and guidelines that, if observed, will help you sound authentic. So let's dig in.

Now, if we wanted to be predictable (what fun is *that?*), we could start with a basic 4/4 swing pattern. However, I don't think I could possibly add to the avalanche of information that's already available on that topic. So we're going to go a different route, and discuss the jazz waltz. Here's our main groove.

The first thing you should notice is the 3/4 time signature. A waltz is a centuries-old dance that has three beats to the bar. There are many different types of waltzes. And the variation we're discussing was developed by the masters of jazz, hence the term "jazz waltz." The jazz waltz that I've included as the main groove has a ride pattern that outlines the 3/4 time, while the bass drum plays on the downbeats to give it a "one" feel. The snare rhythm is phrased around the downbeat to add to the "oneness" of the waltz.

MAIN GROOVE



Remember, this is simply a pattern to get you going. Jazz waltzes, like all other forms of jazz, are improvisational, which means you create it as you go. The patterns that I'm showing you are simply a starting point. A true jazz player would never play a static two-bar pattern, but would constantly add or subtract to the swing feel by playing complementary (comping) figures in the various limbs. However, for those of you who are just learning how to play jazz, playing a simple two-bar pattern is a great way to get into the game. Here's our first variation.

Variation A seems quite different from the main groove. But if you look at it closely, only a few things have changed. Now the snare plays a syncopated over-the-barline riff, while the bass drum stays close to the downbeat. By simply changing the snare comping, we've created an entirely new flavor.

VARIATION A



If you are new to reading jazz notation, you may have noticed that there are three different subdivisions in this example: 8th notes, dotted 8ths/16ths, and triplets. Don't get hung up on how jazz is written on paper. All of the figures should be phrased with a triplet feel to make them swing. 8th notes and dotted 8ths/16ths are played the same way as triplets.

I'm presenting this confusing topic here because you'll see these different notation styles all the time in professional situations. You have to interpret what you see on paper. In a jazz setting, you don't want to be too literal with mixed rhythms. Nine times out of ten, you'll be swinging them no matter how they look.

Now let's take a look at Variation B.

VARIATION B



Variation B implies a two-against-three feel. To help you feel this groove, don't look at the snare and bass drum parts as separate lines. Instead, look at how they work together to form a counter rhythm to the ride cymbal part. While this pattern has more activity, you can see that it still clearly outlines the "one" feel, which is important to retain.

Now take a look at the chart for this month's song on the next page. It's a tribute to the great pianist McCoy Tyner, who made legendary recordings with John Coltrane, Elvin Jones, and many others. It's based on a twenty-four-bar blues. The chart also contains a new element: "D.C. al Coda." D.C. al Coda means you'll head back to the top of the piece—D.C. literally stands for Da Capo, which means "to the top"—and then the last time through, you'll jump from the coda sign in the middle of the fourth line to the other coda sign at the beginning of the fifth line. From there, you'll finish out the piece to the end.

You may be wondering why I didn't just use multiple repeat endings to notate this chart. In real-life situations, you never know how a composer or arranger is going to write something. So, in the spirit of diversity, I chose to include a D.C. al Coda for you to navigate.

Another interesting element appears during the second half of the next-to-last line. The bizarre-looking thing with the "4" over it is telling you repeat the previous four bars. Many times, drum charts are not friendly on the eyes. So be ready for anything.

BRIGHT JAZZ WALTZ IN "3"

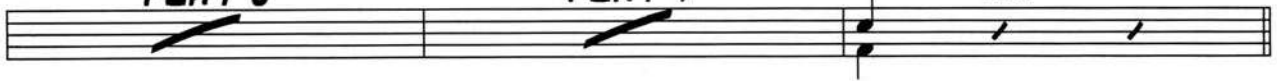
4 X (BASS ALONE 320 X)



PLAY 8

PLAY 7

FILL



A

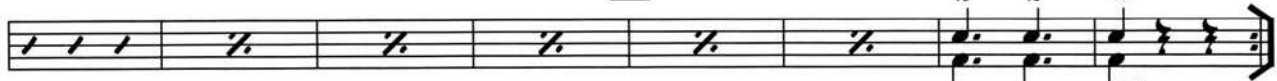
PLAY 6

PLAY 8



(4X) ⊕

FILL



D.C. AL ⊕ (LAST TIME)

⊕



FINE



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The last thing to discuss is the different accent markings. In jazz charts, the *type* of accent you see is more important than the length of the actual written note. Regular accents (>) usually denote that the length of the note is observed and given an

accent. Marcato accents (^) are telling you that the note, no matter how it's written, will be played loud and short. You'll hear these differences in the piano and bass parts when you download the song. You must observe these different accent types so that your phrasing matches the ensemble.



Tommy Igoe is the creator of the "Groove Essentials" series of products published by Hudson Music. He is currently serving as the drummer and assistant conductor of the Broadway musical *The Lion King*. This article is excerpted from Tommy's book *Groove Essentials: The Play-Along*, which is available through Hal Leonard. Used with permission.

This chart isn't about chops or flying around the drums at warp speed. It's about finding the perfect 3/4 swing feel and laying it in just the right place. Next month, we'll look at a groove from the "world" family: medium-tempo samba.



Defending Ringo

A Fresh Listen To Beatles Beats

by Rich Pagano

Right now is an especially good time for Ringo Starr. The Beatles *Anthologies* (DVDs and book) showed that, of the bandmembers, he has the best memory, is the most candid, and is the most entertaining to listen to in regards to his side of the Beatles story. Ringo's last couple of solo releases received good reviews, and his groove on the last All Starr tour was better than ever. When Sheila E was out front soloing on timbales, Ringo's pocket was as deep as the Mersey.



Even so, whenever The Fab Faux performs the music that made The Beatles famous, somebody always comes backstage after the show and says, "Yeah...but Ringo.... Is he *really* a good drummer?"

There was a time in the 1970s when I, too, wondered if Ringo was at the same level as his peers. It was really just me going through a phase, discovering drummers who had more technical facility. I abandoned that phase immediately after encountering Elvis Costello and *his* drummer, Pete Thomas. That experience brought me back to an appreciation of pop drumming with style—which is exactly what Ringo epitomized.

Back in the '80s, I had a friend who had an extensive collection of Beatles bootlegs on cassette. My intention, when studying these tapes, was to listen for outtake arrangement changes, alternate versions, and in-studio banter. But even

more informative were the virgin reels of the basic songs, and the clarity they revealed within the drum tracks. These days, with the bootleg collection on CD and the three Beatles *Anthology* compilations, it's obvious that some of Ringo's so-called "drumming issues" were, in fact, cases of multi-track reductions (with the blurring that that process creates), tape edits, the other Beatles embellishing Ringo's basic tracks with bastard drumming technique, and overzealous percussion playing.

Let's take a look at some of those "drumming issues," and answer a few of the most common questions raised by folks with Ringo beefs. And let me say at this point that although I'm about to pull apart these stereo-version tracks, I still love and appreciate the final charm that was achieved within the limitations of the time. I wouldn't change a single thing.

Questions And Answers

Q. What about the drumming on "Back In The USSR"? Sloppy, draggy groove by Ringo on that one.

A. First of all, it's not Ringo. He had a row with Paul and quit for a week or so. The other three Beatles—primarily Paul—all played drumming bits on this song. To me, the song works mainly because of the piano that's pulsing louder than the kit. Possibly having been recorded last, it has better fidelity.

Incidentally, while Ringo was away, Paul played drums on "Dear Prudence," which in my opinion is some of the best bastard drumming on record. Check out how he locks with himself on the second kit in the last chorus. Brilliant.

Q. Ringo turns the beat around on "It's All Too Much." What's up with that?



Drummer/vocalist Rich Pagano is a founding member of Beatles tribute band The Fab Faux. Boasting high-visibility TV musicians Will Lee (*The Late Show With David Letterman*) and Jimmy Vivino (*Late Night With Conan O'Brien*), as well as a commitment to the accurate reproduction of The Beatles' reper-

toire, The Fab Faux demonstrate what it might have been like if The Beatles had toured behind their later albums.

Since their formation in 1998, the Fab Faux have created a buzz among Beatles fans in the New York City area. Their shows regularly draw audiences of fellow musicians, celebrities, and fans. The group was profiled on CNN, participated in a CD of original material by Beatles tribute bands recorded at Abbey Road Studios, and perform regularly at Liverpool, England's annual Beatle Week festivities.



Remixes on the *Yellow Submarine* Songtrack and virgin basic tracks on the Anthology CDs answer many questions about Ringo's drumming.

A. When I was about twelve years old, I'd listen to "It's All Too Much" on the original *Yellow Submarine* LP. At the outro of the song, the drums would suddenly turn around, placing the snare on 1 and 3 instead of 2 and 4. This disappointed me, because I was deep into drum lessons and feeling good about my playing. I figured that if I were on that session, it never would have happened.

I received a revelation when the *Yellow Submarine Songtrack* was released in 1999, with its remixes of the movie songs. The outro arrives, and the drums turn around. But this time, because of the virgin basic tapes having been used, a tape edit is heard right at the top of the turnaround. Either it was a case of the artists taking liberties and reversing the groove, or the fact that they were extremely stoned and mistakenly placed the recording tape in backwards. Who knows? But it's *not* Ringo losing the downbeat.

Q. What, if anything, did Bernard Purdie have to do with Beatles songs?

A. Bernard's drumming—with Aretha Franklin and others—is arguably as influential as Ringo's within pop drumming. I hang in a circle of musicians who currently play with Bernard, and it's become somewhat of a joke to ask him about which Beatles tracks he says he played on. He always gives the same answer: "You'll just have to wait for the book."

So many of the bootlegs have Ringo's voice either counting or speaking between takes that I'm not sure where Bernard *could* have been involved. I was recently told that Paul McCartney vaguely remembers Bernard hanging around the studio during sessions for *The White*

Album, and that he may have played the fire bell on "Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey." Common theory: Bernard re-tracked the drums on the very early Tony Sheridan sessions—which had Pete Best on drums, not Ringo.

Personal Observations

"Magical Mystery Tour" and "Fixing A Hole" are two songs that have drum-track issues. Frankly, I think "Magical Mystery Tour" could benefit from a remix. Yes, I said earlier that I wouldn't change a thing about original Beatles mixes. This is just hypothetical criticism. But heck, in 1980, John Lennon himself complained about the original mix of "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds," saying that the balance was never right. Whoever remixed *that* track on the 1999 *Yellow Submarine Songtrack* put in a great deal of time and care without losing the mood of the original. So it can be done.

When I had to learn "Magical Mystery Tour" for The Fab Faux, I heard at least two kits, with cowbells and shakers poking in and out and filling up all of the room that Ringo created in the initial drum track. It's all very spirited, but the drums are lost within the haphazard garnishes and Auto Double Tracking. (ADT was an early flanging technique created with a second tape machine bussed into a track and delayed ever so slightly, creating a swirling, psychedelic effect). So thus I say: Remix, please.

In the verses of "Fixing A Hole," a second kit is heard not always locking with the original drum track, making Ringo sound a bit unsure. (This song also sports a second bass track that's just as

loose.) The difference here, in my opinion, is that the messy quality adds perfectly to the imagery/hallucinatory mood.

Adding a second kit and grooving to a track where the drums might be at the bottom of the reduction food chain could never have been easy for Ringo. I also feel that this was a period when loads of non-drummer ideas were being thrown at him from every direction.

In 1967, the Beatles were experimentally vital—and heavily seduced by the studio. However, pushing their tools to the limit meant living with the sonic end results. By 1968 and into '69, the music became more stripped down. Eight-track machines replaced four-tracks, allowing for far fewer track reductions. The microphones were brought in closer to the drumheads, with tea towels over those heads to dampen the decay. This gave the drums more presence and pointedness.

Personal Revelations

Here are a few personal revelations that I had upon the release of the *Anthologies* and illegal bootlegs. To begin with, listen to the drum intro to the "Sergeant Pepper" reprise. On the original record, the drums are washy from being reduced along with other instruments. The shaker—which was possibly recorded later and thus had better fidelity—was played on top of the groove, which compromised the overall feel slightly. Upon listening to the virgin take of the pre-percussion basic track on *Anthology 2*, I discovered a Ringo backbeat that is sexy and seated, with the kick drum deeply pocketed and relaxed—like a baseball hitting a catcher's mitt. The feel and sound of the drums have a bright sensitivity that reminds me of an AI

Jackson Jr. track. I always knew it was a great groove; I just never knew it was *this* good.

"I Am The Walrus," on *Anthology 2*, reveals similar results. Who knew that the drums were so groovy and lazily steady? With four-track recording, the drums initially had their own track, while electric piano, guitar, and tambourine made up the other three. When transferred to a second deck, all of these parts would end up on the same track, with each losing some fidelity. Add bass, a snare drum overdub, a mix that goes to mono half-way through with heavy ADT, and a full orchestra having a tendency to play on top, and who's going to get blamed for a swerving and dragging groove? Yup, the drummer—with the reduced drums that had since lost their point. Isn't it great that some tape-op shelved all of the basics reels, and that The Beatles had a tape budget that allowed them to never have to re-record over the initial tape?

Another great listen is the unused basic tracks of "Sexie Sadie" on a great bootleg called *The White Sessions*. It's slower than the more familiar version, with a beautifully lazy swing. Ringo had a gift for mirroring the vocal mood and staying out of its way. Had they finished this take, it would have been as good as the final on *The White Album*. My first thought after hearing the *Anthology* versions was that Ringo taught us all (especially Elton John's great drummer, Nigel Olsson) how to play like this.

RICH'S FAB FAVES

Here's a quick list of some of my favorite Ringo tracks, with brief explanatory comments.

"I Dig A Pony" *Let It Be*

Laying way back and creating space.

"What Goes On" *Rubber Soul*

Playing this groove at this tempo is a feat.

"I Feel Fine" *Past Masters Vol. 1*

This is Ringo's session-cat track. He never really sounded like this again in style or drum sound.

"She Came In Through The Bathroom Window" *Abbey Road*

I love everything about this period, including Ringo's pulse and sense of approaching fills, his new Ludwig five-piece drumkit, and the sound of his calfskin toms.

"Tell Me Why" *A Hard Day's Night*

The fill as a riff.

"Long, Long, Long" *The Beatles (The White Album)*

I always felt that these drum fills rival the fills in "A Day In The Life."

"All Things Must Pass" *George Harrison: All Things Must Pass*

Ringo plays on most of this masterpiece. He's in mid-tempo heaven, and he loves playing that dotted hi-hat smash fill (also evident on "Isn't It A Pity").

"I Found Out" *John Lennon: Plastic Ono Band*

This drum track is full of attitude, and is way up in the mix.

"Pisces Apple Lady" *Leon Russell: Leon Russell*

Beatle-y, but with more muscle.

Rumors To The End

At Fab Faux shows, there's always a drummer who comes backstage to compliment me on my performance of the drum solo on "The End" from *Abbey Road*, only to follow it with, "Rumor has it that Paul played that solo." Those of us who can pick Ringo out of a track believe that it's him. If it's not, I don't ever want to know.

I'd like to finish with a quote from Jimmy Vivino, *Late Night With Conan O'Brien* guitarist/arranger, Fab Faux member, and Ringo fan. When someone questions Ringo, Jimmy says simply, "Just watch the Washington DC show. That's all!"



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12 Ways To Make Drumming Profitable

Putting All Your Talents To Work

by Douglas Wurst

Are you making any real money as a drummer? If you are...congratulations! If you aren't, don't feel bad, because you have lots of company. The fact is, many drummers must take on outside jobs in order to support their percussive passion. They'd love to make more money drumming, but they feel as though they're up against a wall. If you're all too familiar with that wall, take heart. There is hope.

The secret is to diversify. You can make more money by finding different ways to use your drumming expertise. For example, if you're currently in a low-paying band, you could be earning \$30 per hour or more giving drum lessons. And that's just one of a dozen drumming-related jobs that could help you improve your bottom line. Here's a look at all of them.

Private Drum Instructor

Giving private lessons is an excellent way to supplement the pay you receive from performing in a band. You don't have to get up early, because the lessons can be given in the afternoon or evenings. If you have your own studio or teaching space, great. If you don't, music stores often rent teaching space for a reasonable fee. They can also provide you with a list of prospective students.

If you're currently in a low-paying band, you could be earning \$30 per hour or more giving drum lessons.

Drum Salesperson

Consider becoming a salesperson that specializes in drum equipment. Many music retailers suffer from a lack of knowledgeable help in this area. If you don't think you could handle a full-time sales job, think in terms of part-time. For example, music stores often need more help on weekends, when the walk-in trade is busiest.

You might also find work as a sales rep for a musical-instrument manufacturer. Such reps are



Illustration by Joe King

often assigned geographic territories, and you might be able to cover the area in which you live.

Drum Repair Technician

You've probably had experience at repairing your own drum equipment. Put that experience to use by becoming a repair technician at a music store. This rarely needs to be a full-time job, so it's likely that you'll be able to arrange a flexible schedule that will fit with your performing calendar.

Drummer In Another Band

This article assumes that you're the drummer in a band. What I'm suggesting is that you could be the drummer in one or more *other* bands. And think of "band" in as broad a definition as possible. Your preference might be for hard rock, but impressive paychecks can come from playing in wedding or corporate bands that stress musical variety, or in specialty bands that focus on specific styles. Can you play Latin jazz...big band...country...polkas? There are gigs to be had and money to be made in all of these areas.

Of course, in order to make this multiple-band situation work, you have to be careful to avoid scheduling conflicts. Be sure to put all rehearsal and performance dates on a calendar, and carry that calendar with you at all times.

Freelance/Studio Drummer

The most important element of making money as a freelance drummer is getting the calls for gigs. In some areas, the best way to get these calls is to join the local musicians union, and have your name put on their referral list of drummers interested in freelance gigs. In other areas, you may have more success by networking with all the

musicians playing local clubs and other public places. In addition, watch the “want ads” in local music papers, and call about any item involving a need for a drummer. Get your name in the heads of as many potential employers or bandmates as possible. Job offers may come in slowly at first, but as you play a few successful gigs, your name and reputation will become better known, and the calls will increase.

If you’re interested in studio work, contact the studios directly. Provide a letter of intent, as well as a short résumé package that includes references, a description of your drumming experience, and a recording of you performing in a group and solo. If you don’t hear anything in a couple of weeks, call them to see if they received your package, and ask whether they’re interested in meeting with you. You might consider offering to do some demos or other basic studio tracking for free, as an audition.

School Band Director Or Assistant

You’ll need a college degree and possibly a teaching credential in order to be a school band director. There are, however, positions that don’t require such credentials. Consider being an assistant director in charge of the marching percussion section, or of the percussion ensemble within the stage or concert band. Most band directors are not drummers, and many don’t even know how to *talk* to drummers. Your help could prove extremely valuable.

Drumline Instructor

Admittedly, the possibility of your becoming a drumline instructor for one of the major drum corps is pretty slim (unless you’re a former member of that corps). However, there are lots of lower-echelon corps with aspirations to greatness. You could find a position with one of them, and possibly help them achieve their goal.

One approach might be to volunteer your services at first. The volunteering you do may demonstrate your value to the corps, and thus lead to a paid position.

Percussion Judge

Consider becoming a judge (or “adjudicator”) for school-music competitions. These could include marching-band and drum-corps festivals, orchestral competi-

tions, jazz band contests, and solo & ensemble competitions. Contact the music educators’ association in your state to see whether they have a training program for adjudicators. After you’ve completed that program, your name can be placed on a list of prospective judges that is then sent to music-competition organizers in your area.

Clinician

You might not be a superstar player who can draw big crowds to a drum clinic. But you very well could develop workshops

for elementary and middle school general-music classes, focusing on ethnic and cultural percussion instruments. You could also develop workshops for percussionists in middle or high school bands.

Some local colleges and city education departments offer continuing education (“adult school”) programs that you might be able to do workshops for. And recreation departments that put on summer programs are always looking for something new to interest kids.

And don’t forget about the other end of

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the spectrum: retirement facilities. This population enjoys playing hand-held percussion instruments. A one-time workshop could evolve into a weekly program.

Percussion Instrument Maker

Maybe you're a mallet percussionist who wraps your own mallets. Wrap a few extras and see whether a local music store would sell them on consignment (or simply buy them from you to sell as regular merchandise). If your mallets are well received, try

selling them direct on eBay.

If you're handy with tools, try making some Blue Man Group-type percussion instruments from PVC pipe. These are a big hit with young students, so your market could range from preschools to elementary and middle school music department.

If you have the expertise and the equipment, you could get into full-scale drum building. "Boutique" drum builders abound, but there seems to be no end to the demand for custom-crafted drums. If you become known as the top drum builder in

your area, you could have customers coming to you for their dream drum.

Percussion Music Writer

Write music for percussion instruments. These can be exercises, solo pieces, or works for ensembles. The music you write could be sold to traditional music publishers, or you could promote it yourself on the Internet. Also, consider offering transcriptions done to order.

Freelance Author

If you know your way around the English language and aren't afraid of a word processor, you could write articles about drumming for magazines, just as I wrote this one for *Modern Drummer*. Share something interesting that you've learned about drumming, give advice on how to improve a specific technique, write a story about a particular drummer, or cover a drum show.

It's a good idea to contact your target magazine first, to get a go-ahead for your idea. The magazine can also provide you with their guidelines, to help you prepare your article.

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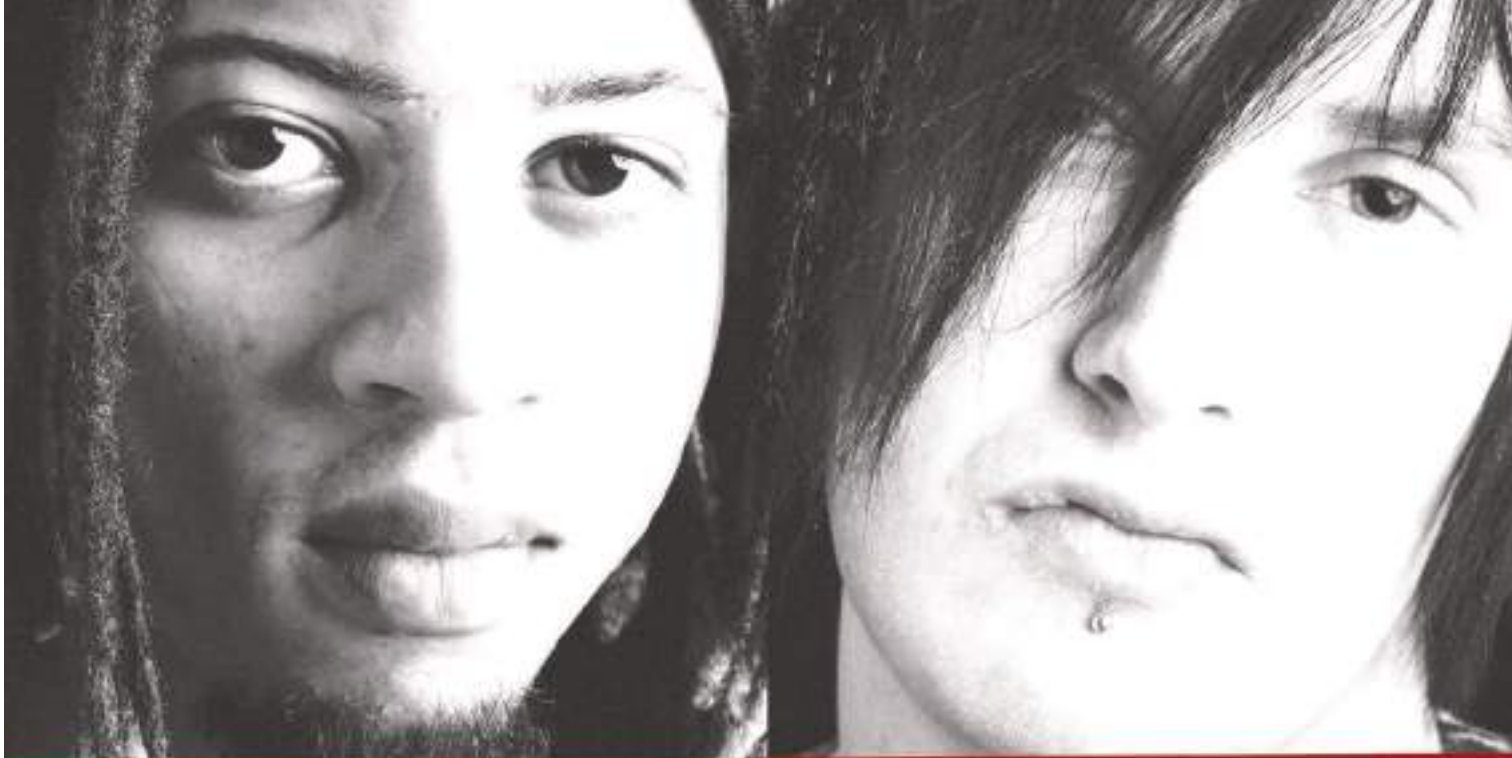
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None of the suggestions offered here need interfere with your primary activity as a performing drummer. But if that activity isn't meeting your financial needs, these suggestions can help you meet those needs without having to abandon the drumming field altogether. And wouldn't you rather give drum lessons, sell drum equipment, or write about drumming than pump gas, sell shoes, or deliver pizza?





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Christian McBride

A Jazz Drumming Chat With Mr. SuperBass

by Ken Micallef

It's no exaggeration to say that Christian McBride is the most revered acoustic bassist working in jazz today. Originally a mighty gut string puller in the tradition of Ray Brown and Paul Chambers, McBride has become a man of a thousand faces playing not only jazz, but audacious acoustic improv, Weather Report–modeled fusion, and with his own band, a brilliant amalgam of the three with an accent on taking chances and upending expectations.

McBride's résumé exemplifies his forward-thinking approach. He's recorded and performed with the most elite drummers in the world, including Jack DeJohnette, Roy Haynes, Gregory Hutchinson, Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Lewis Nash, and Kenny Washington, among many others. The list of leaders McBride has played with is no less notable, with giants like Joshua Redman, Pat Metheny, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, John Scofield, McCoy Tyner,

and Sting demanding his services on a regular basis.

But if you really want to hear McBride cut the rug, catch him on his latest three-CD set, *Live At Tonic*. This is not your father's fusion, but a well-versed band blistering the earth clean with heated tempos, precision arrangements, soulful solos, intense electronics, and plenty of old-fashioned sweat. Featuring long-time McBride drummer

Terreon Gully, *Live At Tonic* is a must-have for its hotheaded improvisations and rhythm section muscle.

"Jazz has developed and gone through many different stages throughout the last century," McBride says regarding his approach. "It's all related. I was never taught that jazz's definitive era was one particular period or album. Jazz is many things, and it's all part of the same tree. There's one big tree of black music that includes blues, Gospel, R&B,

jazz, and rock 'n' roll. I look at the whole tree as opposed to one branch.

"As for this new CD, my focus was on capturing the energy of the band more than actually what it is that we do. Whether that's swing, fusion, rock, or experimental stuff, I just wanted to capture the energy. This set travels through enough peaks and valleys that, whatever era of jazz you like, it will satisfy that need."

Christian McBride recently sat down with *MD* to describe some of the unique characteristics of the top drummers he's worked with.

Jack DeJohnette

Jack comes from an era that was about bending the rules, and even breaking them sometimes. He's one of the only drummers I've played with who was able to take the abstract ideas of Elvin Jones, Ed Blackwell, Tony Williams, and Milford Graves and continue that true jazz perspective. His sound is unmistakable. He plays fusion, funk, and straight-ahead, and in his hands it's all so personal. That is the



“Most drummers have a tendency to play time like you’re looking through a camera that’s out of focus. That can work, but only if the bass player is in focus. It gives you a 3D swing feeling.”

most important thing: You want to have your own identifiable sound.

Jack has no filter. He plays what he feels and hears, and it’s always going to feel good and sound slick. That’s the other side of the coin from a lot of younger drummers who only think in four- and eight-bar phrases. Or they think in five- or seven-bar phrases. But Jack doesn’t think in phrases at all. Whatever he feels at the moment is what the phrase is.

I can remember when Jack played on my second CD [*Number Two Express*]. I got the crazy idea that we would trade twelves. On the initial takes, Jack would do his twelve and it would be far out. I consistently kept screwing up my entrance. I told Jack, “I keep stepping on your toes.” But he was like, “Man, don’t count twelve. I might play ten or thirteen. Just go with the phrase and don’t worry about counting. Just feel it.”

I had never met a musician who could say that and really do it. Most drummers who say that tell you that because they really can’t play twelve. But Jack DeJohnette is so musical that he can do that and it means something and it feels good. He taught me to not worry about the book, as long as the pulse is happening. Then everything else will fall into place.

Terreon Gully

Terreon came to my band on a recommendation from Jeff “Tain” Watts. Jeff knew I wanted this hybrid sound, not straight-ahead, not really fusion, funk, or jazz. Our sound is all-inclusive. Coming from Tain, I hired Terreon sight unseen. Six years later, Tain was obviously correct. Terreon is the guy. He’s one of the few musicians I’ve played with who can cross a lot of different genre lines without losing

his sound.

Terreon’s sound fits everything and seems to be pretty authentic no matter what it is. If we’re playing straight-ahead, he plays all of the proper straight-ahead language. He knows Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Philly Joe Jones, and Kenny Clarke. When we play fusion, he knows how to play Eric Gravatt, Lenny White, Peter Erskine, and Dennis Chambers, but he doesn’t lose his sound. Most studio or fusion drummers don’t play straight-ahead very well, and most jazz guys don’t handle funk or fusion very well. But Terreon can bridge the gap, and the fact that he does it all with the same drumkit impresses me.

Roy Haynes

We as human beings all want to be like Roy Haynes. Here’s a man who just turned eighty-one and who is still kicking major ass. Look at any surviving jazz

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Christian McBride

musician who is in his seventies or eighties, and you think, “He has a lot of energy for a guy that age.” But you can’t say that about Roy. He is sharp, period. He’s still playing *great*. If Roy was thirty-five years old, he would be one of the top drummers on the scene. Roy Haynes is a freak of nature.

We played on an album with Chick Corea, *Remembering Bud Powell*, and on one part of “Tempus Fugit,” in Chick’s

solo break, Roy and I both got turned around to where we were starting Chick’s solo on beat 4 instead of 1. Within two beats—and this is the difference between Roy Haynes and most other older cats—we knew we were turned around, but within a beat we flipped it back over to 2 and 4. Roy said afterwards, “Man, that was slick how we turned that back around.” Roy is so tuned in and always listening. And, of course, he *is* slick.

Billy Higgins

Billy Higgins and Connie Kay had a similar feeling to where it was almost straight. Instead of a triplet feel, it was like a straight-8th thing. The first two 8th notes would be a little straight—some weird hybrid feel—but very hip.

Billy was such a spirit, another one of those guys who, if you couldn’t follow him, something was wrong with *you*. His personality was all about the joy and the passion and the fun. He never over-thought anything. “Let’s just play and feel it out.” Everything about Billy was pure joy.

Gregory Hutchinson

For my money, Greg is the greatest. He is my generation’s Jeff Watts. For what Tain means to Kenny Kirkland, Branford, and Wynton, Greg means to us in the ’90s. If you put Lewis Nash and Tain on opposite ends of the scale, Greg would be right in the middle.

Lewis Nash

I would say that Lewis Nash is less like Kenny Washington, who you reference, than any drummer I can possibly think of. People think that about Lewis because of the kind of gigs that he plays and the sessions he plays on. But for one, Kenny Washington is opposed to performing any kind of non-jazz music. He’s made a decision that his goal in life is to play straight-ahead jazz and teach youngsters about traditional jazz. Lewis Nash, on the other hand, has a worldly view of music and jazz in general. It just so happens that he swings so hard that all of the older cats like working with him. He plays that kind of music to cater to the musicians that call him.

Lewis is able to accentuate the triplet feel—the jazz feel—better than most drummers. Most drummers have a tendency to play time like you’re looking through a camera that is out of focus. That can work, but only if the bass player is in focus. It gives you a 3D swing feeling. But Lewis’s camera is always in focus and his beat is extremely pronounced. He leaves you asking no questions. He’s coming out of the hardcore jazz tradition.

All that said, I have heard Lewis play more experimental gigs, like with Branford Marsalis’s band or with George Adams and



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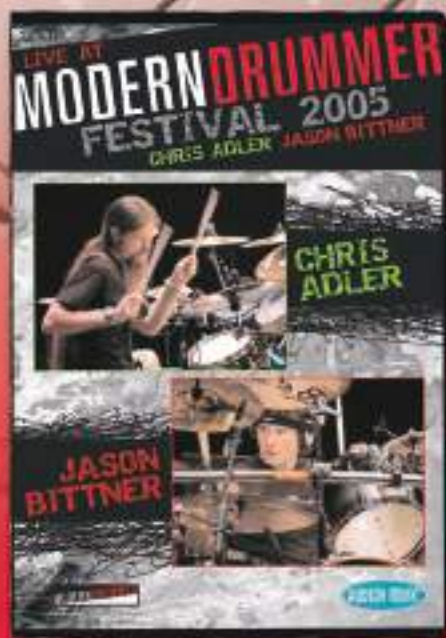
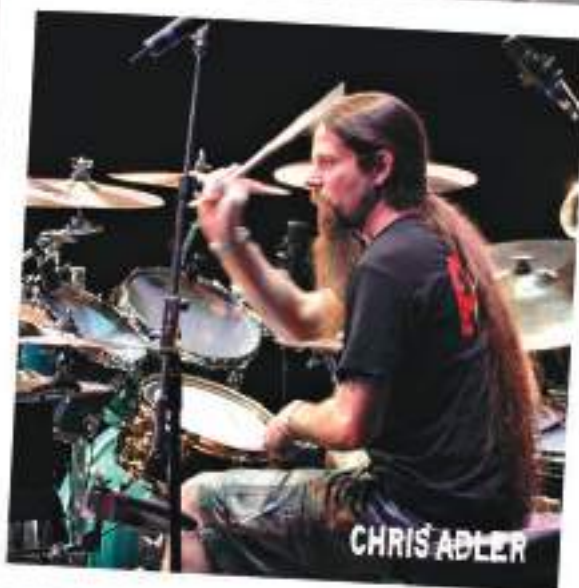
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Christian McBride

Don Pullen. But those are often the kind of gigs that don't get documented. The point is, I've seen Lewis play outside of the straight-ahead genre and do it well.

Lewis and I have played on close to sixty albums together. I think we're one of the most recorded bass and drum duos since Chuck Rainey and Bernard Purdie or Will Lee and Steve Gadd. It's not surprising that Lewis is called to do so many records. Lewis is the "cleanest" drummer I've ever worked with. He never drops a beat, his

sticks never click, he never rushes or drags, he can get around the drums, and he swings so damn hard.

Bernard Purdie

When I played with Bernard, I felt like I had jumped inside an Aretha Franklin album. I just remember thinking, "This man cannot possibly be this funky." You hear him on records and think, is he like this in real life? Well, he is. I had never heard or felt anything that powerful and

funky. We first played together on Jimmy Smith's *Damn!* Then we played live with DJ Logic and Charlie Hunter in 2000. It was so rock solid. I had never felt anything like that.

Antonio Sanchez

Antonio is an awesome drummer. And he's getting more experience playing straight-ahead jazz gigs. He told me that when he was going to Berklee, he was considered the Latin guy. It wasn't until he got to New York that he started playing straight-ahead gigs.

At first, when Antonio would play straight-ahead, he would play the same fills and the same comps with his left hand. It was safe and it felt good. But he's in a place now where he is very comfortable taking things much further while still making everything feel good.

Marvin "Smitty" Smith

Before he went to LA, Smitty was one of the most omnipresent guys in New York City. I only played with him a few times. Smitty, Lewis, Kenny, Tain, and Ralph Peterson are all contemporaries. One thing that is a testament to Smitty's greatness is that all of those guys, like Kenny Washington, who doesn't give it up easily, always said, "Marvin 'Smitty' Smith is the guy."

Smitty and I did a gig in LA five years ago, just calling tunes, and he hasn't lost one thing. He has that warm, easy bounce. If you can't hook up with him, then something is wrong. Smitty's got a big beat. His pulse is right in the middle. I love those kind of guys. Tain, Lewis, Smitty, Brian Blade, and Carl Allen can count off the tempo and it's going to be right there.

Jeff "Tain" Watts

I haven't played with Jeff nearly as much as I would like. But he is a real scholar of the music. And if you're going to play this music, you really need to know what came before you. Jeff is one of those guys that can not only demonstrate how Max Roach or Roy Haynes played time, for instance, but he can play Billy Cobham with Horace Silver circa 1968 or Billy Cobham on GRP's *Picture This* circa 1987. He is a true scholar of the music and is as well-studied a musician as one can be.

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Ludwig Drums

The Re-Emergence Of A Legend

by Rick Van Horn

As per its long-standing trade slogan, Ludwig may be “the most famous name on drums.” But that fame hasn’t prevented the venerable company from experiencing its share of significant ups and downs over its long history. It was founded in 1911 as Ludwig & Ludwig, sold to C.G. Conn in 1929, re-established as WFL when William F. Ludwig Sr. wanted to re-enter the drum business, and reinstated as the Ludwig Drum Company in 1955 when the Ludwig family bought half of the Conn drum division.

In the mid-1960s, Ludwig was the beneficiary of a musical phenomenon: Ringo Starr playing on the Ed Sullivan show with The Beatles, using a Ludwig kit. The “Beatle Invasion” helped launch the ’60s garage-band boom, and Ludwig drums were at the heart of it. So much so, in fact, that the company became the largest manufacturer of percussion instruments on the planet.

After years of unrivaled success, Ludwig began to be challenged by offshore competition in the late 1970s. Facing retirement age, Bill Ludwig II (then at the helm of the company his father and uncle had founded) sold Ludwig to Selmer—a band instrument company.

Between ever-growing Asian competition and ever-diminishing attention from Selmer, Ludwig fell on harder times in the 1980s. By the early ’90s, rumors of the company’s demise

were frequently heard. “From 1981 until about four years ago, we had some good years and some poor years,” admits Ludwig marketing director Jim Catalano. “But we didn’t go out of business, which many people predicted was going to happen. In fact, we grew, quietly becoming a profitable division of Selmer.”

In 2002, Selmer merged with Conn to form a new musical corporation known as Conn-Selmer. Changes were implemented within Ludwig’s production and marketing strategies. As a result, over the past four years, Ludwig’s fortunes have improved. Their products are a buzz in the marketplace. New endorsers grace ads in this magazine. And drummers around the world are excited about Ludwig again.

It Starts At The Top

In November 2002, John Stoner became president of Conn-Selmer. John’s daughter had participated in band all through school, and he himself is a guitarist. So he brought with him a positive outlook towards music and the arts—and a familiarity with the Ludwig name. “When it came to the brands involved in the Conn-Selmer merge,” says John, “I knew Ludwig better than I knew any of the other names. It’s definitely one of the last remaining great US drum companies, and one of our major assets.

“When a great brand has declined in sales over the years,”

Ludwig is celebrating a resurgence in the marketplace with a nod to its own history. New limited-edition products include stainless-steel Bonham kits like the one shown here.



Lots O' Ludwig

Here's a quick look at the Ludwig product line.

L8225M Classic Maple outfit



Classic Maple

These kits are said to produce "the legendary sound of Ludwig." They're constructed from 9-ply cross-laminated maple shells, in natural, wrapped, exotic wood, and Psychedelic Red retro finishes. Newly introduced finishes include Arctic Glitter and Ruby Glitter finishes. Five outfit configurations are offered, along with individual component drums.

Vistalite Zep Set



Vistalite

"Be Seen, Be Heard" is the mantra of these plexiglass-shell drums popularized by Led Zeppelin's John Bonham in the 1970s. Outfits include Zep Set or Big Beat configurations; component drums are also available. Drums are offered in amber, clear, blue, and yellow.

Birch Big Beat outfit



Classic Birch

Ludwig birch drums are constructed from 7-ply cross-laminated birch and Italian poplar. Six outfit configurations are offered, along with component drums. Natural satin finishes include Midnight Black, Hunter Green, Natural, Sea Blue, and Satin Wine. Shadow finishes include Ebony, Cobalt Blue, Ivory, Scarlet, and Mahogany laminants. Also available are Brushed Silver and Brushed Gold, as well as sparkle finishes in silver, red, black, blue, gold, green, and purple.

Accent Custom Power outfit



Accent Custom

Accent Custom kits feature Philippine mahogany and basswood shells and 16"-deep bass drums for a classic low-end sound. Finishes include Natural Black, Blue, Wine Red, and Amber. Kits are offered in Power, Fusion, and Jazz outfit configurations; component drums are also available.

Accent CS Custom Elite Power outfit



Accent CS Custom Elite

Accent CS Custom Elite drums feature 100% birch shells. Rack toms come fitted with Ludwig's Vibra-Bands suspension mounts. Power and Fusion models feature 18"-deep bass drums for an exceptionally fat low-end sound. High-gloss finishes include Black, Blue, Wine Red, and Amber. Kits are offered in Power, Fusion, and Jazz configurations; component drums are also available.

Accent CS Custom Power outfit



Accent CS Custom

Accent CS Custom drums are identical to CS Custom Elite, but are offered in Satin Oil finishes including Black, Blue, Wine Red, Amber, and new Wine Sunburst.

Accent Power outfit



Accent

Accent kits feature Philippine mahogany and basswood shells and 16"-deep bass drums for a classic low-end sound. Wrapped finishes include Black, Blue, and Wine Red. Kits are available in Power, Fusion, Jazz, and Jr. configurations; component drums are also available.



Accent CS Fusion outfit

Accent CS

Accent CS kits feature 100% birch shells and rack toms fitted with Vibra-Bands. Kits are available in Power, Fusion, Jazz, and Jr. configurations; component drums are also available. Power and Fusion models feature 18"-deep bass drums. Wrapped finishes include Black, Blue, Wine Red, and Silver.

Accent Combo Power outfit



Accent Combo

Accent Combo kits feature Philippine mahogany and basswood shells, as well as 16"-deep bass drums. One Power configuration is available, along with component drums. Wrapped finishes include Black, Blue, and Wine Red.



Accent CS Combo Jazz outfit

Accent CS Combo

Accent CS Combo kits feature 100% birch shells, rack toms fitted with Vibra-Bands, and 16"-deep bass drums. Power and Jazz outfits are offered, as well as component drums. Wrapped finishes include Black, Blue, Wine Red, and Silver.



Exotic Snare Drums

Ludwig's Exotic snare drums feature exclusive Steinway & Sons veneers from every corner of the world. Offerings include Bird's-Eye Maple, Black Cherry, Black Walnut, South American Mahogany, Macassar Ebony, Makore (African Cherry), Pearwood, Sapale Pomele, East Indian Rosewood, Santos Rosewood, and Waterfall Bubinga. The veneers are wrapped around 100% Classic Maple shells, and all hardware options from the Classic Maple series are available.

The Chief Titanium Snare



Engraved Black Beauty

Snare Drums

Ludwig offers a variety of wood and metal snare drums, including the famous Black Beauty (with smooth or hammered shells, and a choice of brass or nickel hardware). Other shell options include bronze, chrome-plated aluminum, Acrolite, maple, birch, chrome steel, brass, Philippine mahogany/basswood, and a new titanium model.

Hardware & Stands

Ludwig offers a full line of hardware designed to meet the performance demands of professional drummers as well as the budget needs of advancing drummers.



Pro double pedal



Ludwig WeatherMaster drumheads

Percussion Accessories

Ludwig's accessory line includes drumheads, sticks, brushes, mallets, and host of other essential items.

John continues, “the question is: What’s causing that decline? To be honest, I think that if Ludwig had remained a stand-alone company—or even had been owned by somebody in the combo market—it probably never would have experienced the downturn that it did. But Selmer was a band instrument company, and Ludwig was sort of treated as the ‘ugly cousin’ in terms of investment and development.

“But now we’ve given Ludwig its own identity,” John concludes, “with a separate sales and marketing organization, and a new dedication to product development. I think there’s a lot of growth opportunity for Ludwig. We’ll make it bigger and more viable, and just let it rock ‘n’ roll.”

Old And New Staff

The senior member of the Ludwig team that John Stoner mentioned above is Jim Catalano. Jim came on board in 1983 and has been instrumental in sustaining the Ludwig operation through good times and bad. A skilled percussionist, Jim currently heads up marketing efforts for the Ludwig division.

Jim’s counterpart in sales is Bob Berheide. Also a drummer himself, Bob had been a district manager for Selmer.

Sales coordinator Gary Devore is another integral part of the new Ludwig team. “Gary’s been our customer service guy for the past five years,” says Bob Berheide. “He’s a drummer, and he knows the business. He also does a lot of computer-related things. For example, Gary is putting together a program that’s going to help dealers and consumers learn about and select from all of our product options.”

“When I was in customer service,” says Gary Devore, “I learned that people had no idea about all the options we offered. I’d get calls from consumers, saying, ‘I used to have a set that had a chrome wrap on it. I wish I could get that.’ Or, ‘I’d love to add a drum to my set, but I’ve got Modular hardware.’ Well, drummers can still get those things. We kind of have a General Motors attitude towards parts. When you buy a Ludwig drum, you can pretty well rest assured that parts are going to be around for quite a long time.”

Accent On Success

A large part of Ludwig’s recent resurgence is the success of its Accent entry-

level to mid-priced kits. While high-end drums are made in Ludwig’s Monroe, North Carolina factory, Accent drums are made overseas.



Top: Conn-Selmer president John Stoner. Bottom (clockwise from left): sales coordinator Gary Devore, national sales manager Bob Berheide, and national marketing manager Jim Catalano.



Accent kits made in Taiwan were introduced in the late ’90s, and by 2002 they had proven extremely successful. But industry-wide manufacturing trends were moving low-end production to Mainland China. “That was a scary proposition for us,” says Jim Catalano, “because of the instability in the country, and because of the unknowns about the factories over there. Still, we knew that if we didn’t get there quickly, our competitors would take up the capacity of those factories.”

In January of 2003, Ludwig contracted with a Chinese factory to make entry-level drumkits. But now they had a new problem. “We were developing new products from a new supplier,” says Jim Catalano. “We couldn’t just shift production from Taiwan to China and instantly build similar products at lower prices. So we continued making some kits in Taiwan, and started making

others in China.”

Ludwig now offers the Accent, Accent Combo, Accent Custom, and Accent CS series. “Accent—referring to our original Taiwanese product—was a strong, successful name,” says Jim. “We thought, ‘Why offer a Chinese product under another name? Let’s use Accent CS—for China Series—and capitalize on the momentum we’ve already built.’”

Bob Berheide adds, “Accent is now a drum line with seven price points, each of which offers specific features. As you work through the seven price points, you cross back and forth between the Taiwanese and Chinese products. Drummers generally don’t care what comes from where. They’re looking at the features and the value.”

Ludwig’s efforts to maximize the value of Accent kits have led to some interesting strategic alliances. For example, Taiwanese-made Accent outfits come fitted with Evans heads. The Chinese-made drums are shipped with Remo heads.

A similar program exists with cymbals. “We could have put the Ludwig brand on a no-name cymbal from China,” says Bob Berheide. “Or we could have asked one of the major cymbal companies to make one for us. But a Ludwig cymbal doesn’t mean anything, whereas a Zildjian cymbal does. So we teamed with Zildjian, and now you can buy any Ludwig Accent or Accent CS outfit as a package with Planet Z cymbal packs. Now you’re looking at a Ludwig drum outfit fitted with Evans or Remo heads and Planet Z cymbals. That’s a strong package.”

Quality Control

A “strong package” is, indeed, appealing—but only if its inherent quality is equally strong. How does Ludwig exercise quality control on products being brought in by the container load from overseas?

“We’ve been working with our Taiwanese supplier since 1983 on hardware, and since 1989 on complete drum outfits,” replies Jim Catalano. “They enjoy a good reputation for continuous product improvement. When we went to China, we found the best drum manufacturer there, partnered with them, and made a significant investment in the tooling and training needed to build our



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Ludwig

specific product. We also have a full-time QC person: Scott Gervais. He came from the auto industry, so his sense of quality and process is at a pretty high level.

"Every container load that comes in from Taiwan or China is inspected," adds Jim. "Out of the hundred seventy-five drum outfits in a forty-foot container, we may pick four at random to inspect. If all four of those kits have some sort of a problem, it's a pretty good bet that the other ones are going to have a problem, too. If that happens, it becomes a matter of taking care of that problem, and then documenting it. I take pictures of things constantly, and we send those pictures back to the supplier. We hold our manufacturing facilities in Taiwan and China responsible. If the product is no good, they get it back."

Everything Old Is New Again

Has the success of the Accent kits helped to generate sales of Ludwig's high-end American-made drumkits? "It has definitely impacted on high-end sales," says Bob Berheide. "But another thing that helped us in the past couple of years is that things that were retro became hip and cool again.

Well, Ludwig was retro, so we were hip and cool again."

Jim Catalano adds, "Also, one of the better-kept secrets in the drum industry is that our professional Classic Maple line offers high-quality drums, finishes, and hardware, at a price somewhat under that of the top-line stuff from our competitors. We've also benefited from a renewed interest in Vistalite drums, which took off in 2004 when we introduced our Amber Vistalite outfit. Though we never stated that the outfit duplicated the one popularized by John Bonham, it was similar, and drummers jumped on it."

Bob Berheide adds, "We went into that project thinking we might sell a hundred kits. But we sold *many* hundreds, and we continue to sell them today. This prompted us to bring back retro-style things in the Classic Maple line, such as Psychedelic Red and Mod Orange finishes from the '70s. In addition, the success of the Amber Vistalite outfit created a demand for additional configurations and colors in that series."

"We went back to the Big Beat outfit that was part of the original Vistalite series in the early '70s," says Jim Catalano. "It originally had a 14x22 bass drum, but we gave it a

16x22, with 8x12 and 9x13 toms, a 16x16 floor, and a 5x14 snare. When it came to colors, we checked the records from the earlier eras. Amber, blue, clear, and yellow sold great. Red and green didn't sell, because they weren't as see-through as the other colors. So we introduced four colors for the Big Beat outfit series. We also made individual component drums available."

At the recent Frankfurt Musikmesse, Ludwig introduced yet another retro item: a stainless-steel kit, in "Bonham" sizes. The company announced that only one hundred kits would be made. "The fact that we won't make a lot of them is part of the allure of that product," comments Jim.

It's Not ALL Retro

Conn-Selmer's parent company is Steinway Musical Instruments, and the Steinway piano factory uses a lot of exotic woods. From those woods, Ludwig recently introduced a line of exotic snare drums. "We're talking about an exotic veneer over a maple shell," Jim Catalano stresses. "That's why the retail price of a Ludwig exotic wood snare drum is only \$100 more than that of a regular Classic Maple snare drum, with any of the options available in that series."

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The 2006 Frankfurt Musikmesse also saw the debut of Ludwig Supraphonic snare drums crafted in titanium. Featuring the likeness of Bill Ludwig II, this limited-edition model has been dubbed The Chief.

The manufacturing of Ludwig's professional drums at their factory in Monroe, North Carolina has also seen some recent changes. Says Gary Devore, "We now buy our wood as three-ply panels that are glued into cross-laminated plies of 100% maple. Each panel has to be a slightly different length, because when it's curved to go into the shell it all has to form a perfectly seamed butt. There's a lot of math involved in proper cutting. So we have new computerized cutting machines.

"Also," Gary continues, "over the past few years we've upgraded our molds. All our bass drum molds are new, as are our 12", 14", and 16" tom molds. But they're designed with the same specs as our traditional die-electric molds. We've tried other molds, but we don't get the same shell consistency, which affects the sound of the drum. So we re-created molds that we've used in the past. But we made them deeper,

so that we can make 18" bass drums and deeper toms."

New Names On Ludwig Drums


Drum companies are largely defined—at least in the eyes of drum consumers—by the artists associated with those companies. For years, Ludwig drum ads featured respected veteran drummers. Lately, though, some hot new artists have been highlighted.

"More and more artists have been calling us," comments Bob Berheide. They say, "I started off with Ludwig. Then I made it big with my band and I went with another company. But I still have my original Ludwigs, and I'd love to play and endorse your product." Our artist relations manager, Todd Trent, has strong ties to many of today's touring artists, which is helping us to gain exposure in new areas. We now have Tré Cool of Green Day, Ronnie Vannucci of The Killers, Patrick Wilson of Weezer, and Jim Riley of Rascal Flatts. Of course, we still value artists who've been with us through the years, like Ringo Starr, who's played Ludwig from 1963 on. Then there are other

rock drummers, like Alex Van Halen and Alan White. On the jazz side, there's Ed Shaughnessy, Butch Miles, and Clayton Cameron. But we realized that we had to hit another demographic, and that's where Todd has done a hell of a job."

Ludwig On Sale

Ludwig drums have been a staple of small "mom & pop" music stores for generations, and they still are today. But Ludwig's visibility on sales floors has increased over the past few years, as Bob Berheide explains. "Virtually all of the Five Star drum shops are Ludwig dealers," says Bob. "They're very much in tune with what's happening in the drum market. Ludwig drums are also sold by large retail operations like Sam Ash, Musicians Friend, American Music Supply, Woodwind & Brasswind, and Cascio Interstate. And in April of this year, Ludwig products became available for the first time at Guitar Center stores."

"The bottom line," Jim Catalano concludes, "is that we want to make it easy for drummers to join the Ludwig family." 

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RAY LUZIER

The Ultimate Sideman Joins A Band

Not many drummers who grow up on a farm go on to tour the world and record with one of the most notorious front men in rock 'n' roll. But Ray Luzier, best known for his tenure as the energetic, hard-hitting showman behind the drumkit of The David Lee Roth Band, always knew he would live his dream, and live it big. Luzier is equally at home rocking out for an arena crowd of 30,000 as he is improvising at a small club with his instrumental trio, Hideous Sun Demons. His versatility and professionalism stem from a commitment to further his career through a ceaseless education in drumming. Just two months after his high school graduation, Ray drove with a musician friend from rural Pennsylvania to Los Angeles to attend the Percussion Institute of Technology (PIT), the drum division of Hollywood's prestigious Musicians Institute. "I knew I'd be playing drums for life," Ray explains, "and I wanted to be as educated as possible. But I also used MI as an excuse to move to LA, because there were opportunities here that I couldn't find anywhere else."

GIGS

Army Of Anyone
David Lee Roth Band
Hideous Sun Demons

story by Gail Worley • photos by Alex Solca



In an “intense” environment that involved playing drums for eight hours a day, Ray’s PIT instructors included seasoned drum professionals like Casey Scheuerell, Ralph Humphrey, and Joe Porcaro. These players also inducted the self-proclaimed “rock head” into mastering a variety of drumming styles including Latin, funk, and jazz. Two years after graduating from PIT, Ray was asked to write and teach the school’s first rock curriculum.

Coming up in the LA hard rock scene while also teaching at PIT, a connection from MI led to Ray’s landing a steady gig recording with the well-respected, guitarist-showcase label Shrapnel Records. Ray was ecstatic. “Lots of great drummers like Deen Castronovo, Gregg Bissonette, and Steve Smith were recording for Shrapnel,” Ray offers. “So it had really been a dream of mine to record for that label.”

Citing the experience as “an excellent career stepping stone,” Luzier went on to contribute his drumming talents to over a dozen CDs for various Shrapnel artists. Coincidentally, it was also a guitar student from Musicians Institute who introduced Ray to guitarist Steve Vai—and Vai who *then* hooked Ray up with David Lee Roth. Ray joined The DLR Band in 1997 and toured the world with Roth for eight years, during which time he recorded the CDs *DLR Band* (1998) and *Diamond Dave* (2003).

When Roth left music in 2005 to become a radio talk show host, it was the perfect opportunity for the drummer

to step out and realize his next career goal: finding a new band he could be a member of from the ground up. Ray had no idea he was only months away from a meeting that would prove to be pure kismet.

At 2005’s NAMM show, Ray met brothers Robert and Dean DeLeo, bassist and guitarist, respectively, from Stone Temple Pilots. The two were in the early stages of forming the band Army Of Anyone with ex-Filter vocalist Richard Patrick. All they needed was a great drummer to complete the group.

Robert DeLeo remembers, “Dean and I were playing a gig with Steve Ferrone, and Ray was playing a set with Billy Sheehan at the same event. He was soundchecking before us, so Dean and I sat there listening to him. Ray’s playing was really heavy, but he had amazing grace and finesse behind the kit. By the time he stopped playing, we knew he was definitely the guy we had to audition. Later on, we had a conversation with Ray and discovered that he’s not only a great player but also a really great person. That’s what Dean, Richard, and I were looking for.”

The first day that the four musicians jammed together, DeLeo knew Ray was the perfect fit for AOA. “That day, we must have played for ten hours,” he remembers. “It was what I’d call an ‘around the world jam’: We played reggae, disco, and everything in between. Finding Ray, someone who could actually understand that and play with that kind of versatility was amazing.”



"IF YOU'RE IN THIS BUSINESS TO BE RICH OR TO GET WOMEN, GO GET ANOTHER JOB. YOU MUST HAVE A PASSION FOR DRUMMING BURNING INSIDE OF YOU AT ALL TIMES."

MD: Your time spent studying at PIT played a significant role in kick-starting your career. What was the best advice you ever received from a teacher?

Ray: It's what I still teach my students, which is to think professionally at all times, no matter what situation you're in. Nobody—not the engineer, producer, or the band you're in—cares about whether you had a good night's sleep or if you had time to learn the material. Going in as a top-notch professional means showing up on time, being prepared, and having your gear together. It's also a good idea to play with lots of different musicians so that you're ready for any situation.

I've been to many auditions where I'm

one of fifty drummers, and I think, "What do I have that these other forty-nine guys don't?" That's why my advice for auditioning drummers is to *always* learn more material than you're asked. If it's a name artist, it's a good idea to know as much of their work as possible.

When I auditioned for Jake E. Lee, who played guitar for Ozzy Osbourne, I'd also been a huge fan of his band Badlands. That day, I was the last guy to audition, and I could see on Jake's face that he just wanted to get it over with. I took a risk and suggested we play some Badlands stuff, and he perked up right away. The fact that I was so well-prepared, I think, put the spark back in him. At the end of that audi-

tion, I got the gig. That was my first pro-tour experience, which was back in 1994.

MD: What did you study at PIT?

Ray: There were a few books I used, such as Ted Reed's *Stick Control* and Ralph Humphrey's *Even In The Odds*. But the majority of the curriculum came from the PIT staff, who were all great drummers *and* teachers. Chuck Flores taught a jazz class, which was cool because he played with some amazing veteran players from the '60s and '70s. Ralph Humphrey, who has played with so many artists including Frank Zappa, taught the odd-time class. Joe Porcaro taught swing and technique classes.

I was really naive when I got there, and to put it politely, I got my butt kicked! I was into rock and metal and thought I knew so much from playing along to records. The instructors at PIT really showed me that you have to learn other styles, listen to the rest of the band, and think as musically as possible.

Basically, I was told to put my left kick drum away for the year, to really concentrate on getting my technique down, and to work on my timing. Back then, I didn't realize the importance of being a great timekeeper and how you have to develop your internal clock. I thought you could listen to a metronome or a drum machine and your timing just improves. What I learned is that it takes time to build time. After I graduated, a couple of my teachers told me, "If you want to get hired in this business, your timing has *got* to be immaculate." I was like, "Yeah, but look at the licks I can play!" [laughs] I got my priorities straight pretty quickly after that.

MD: After graduating from PIT, you became an instructor there for nine years. What classes did you teach and how was that experience for you?

Ray: When I was a student, I always complained, "Where are the rock classes?" My instructors said, "Rock is cool, but you also need to learn the basics of jazz, Latin, funk, reggae, ska, and everything in between." Two years later, a great vocalist friend of mine who taught at MIT asked me to come down and audition for a heavy metal Live Playing Workshop class he had started. The LPW's are great, because some drummers have only ever played in their bedrooms or garages. They've never played on stage with a miked drumkit, or



with lights and loud guitars all around them.

I tested with Ralph Humphrey and it went well, so I got the gig teaching a few hours a week. I was hired to teach an LPW and what they call an Open Counseling Session, where drummers gather to ask questions, discuss technique, and jam. Soon Ralph asked me to write the curriculum for and start teaching the double bass and rock classes. PIT has so many great teachers covering all the different styles, so I became the specialist in rock, double bass, and progressive styles.

The experience was great, because I learned how to effectively communicate with people. That helps me with the drum clinics I do today. In my experience, I taught everyone from a kid right off the farm, who didn't have much experience, to a French student who graduated from a seven-year music academy and was an *unbelievable* drummer. Sometimes I'd think, "What am I going to teach this kid that he doesn't already know?" But it's always a challenge to teach, because everyone is on a different level, and it's fun because *you're* learning at the same time.

When you think you've mastered everything as a drummer, you need to move on and do something else in your life, because the cycle of learning is never-ending. It's one thing to get out in front of people and rock out, but it's also very rewarding to help someone better their playing and push them to the next level.

MD: Let's talk about your recently released instructional DVD.

Ray: This DVD was fun to make, and I'm so excited that it's finally available. For years people have asked me why I don't have a book or a video. I don't know how many videos I've watched where I'd think, "This guy can play really fast and twirl his sticks, but I didn't learn too much." I wanted to make sure I could offer something unique and cool with really informative lessons.

The breadth of material on this DVD—from warm-ups and motion exercises to double bass technique, four-way independence exercises and drum fill ideas—reflects my nine years of teaching at PIT. Billy Sheehan [bassist] and Toshi Hiketa [guitarist] play on the DVD with me, and they are *amazing* players. Billy is, of course, a bass legend, and Toshi has played with me in Hideous Sun Demons, and The DLR Band.



Main Kit: Orange County Drum & Percussion in custom smokey chrome bubbles, with red gator lugs. (Ray also has an acrylic kit that he's been using with AOA, which includes two Octobans in place of the 7x8 tom listed below.)

- A. 7x8 tom
- B. 14x14 floor tom
- C. 6x14 Modern Classic snare
- D. 9x10 tom
- E. 10x12 tom
- F. 16x16 floor tom
- G. 22x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 18" AAXplosion crash
- 2. 10" AAX splash
- 3. 18" AA medium crash

- 4. 14" AA Regular or HHX Groove Hats
- 5. 18" AA Chinese
- 6. 18" Vault crash
- 7. 21" AA Rock ride
- 8. 18" Evolution Ozone crash
- 9. 18" HH medium crash
- 10. 12" Radia

Percussion: LP Ridge Rider cowbell, Factory Metal Percussion 10" Celtic Bell and 12" Cross Crasherz

Hardware: Drum Workshop, including a 5000 hi-hat stand and 9000 Accelerator double pedal (tight spring tension, hard plastic side of beaters)

Heads: Remo coated Emperor X on snare batter, Ambassador snare-side, clear Emperors on tom batters, clear Ambassadors on bottoms, clear PowerStroke III on bass drum batters with Ebony OCPD logo on fronts

Sticks: Pro-Mark 5B (hickory with wood tip)

Electronics: Roland V-Drum Session Pro kit (for use at home)

Microphones: Shure

It was important to me to break everything down and go through it slowly so that my point is effectively conveyed. You can see exactly what I'm doing and what it looks like from various camera angles. I've also included a booklet so you can sight-read what I'm playing. I get the most compliments on how thoroughly I explain things and the variety of material there is to choose from.

I want to emphasize to drummers that

getting into a habit of proper warm-ups before playing can make it *much* easier to start your show or rehearsal. There are specific warm-up exercises demonstrating how to balance everything and make your playing more consistent and dynamic. Some videos are only about one specific thing, like all double bass. My DVD has a mixture of techniques that all tie in with each other. There's something for every level of player.

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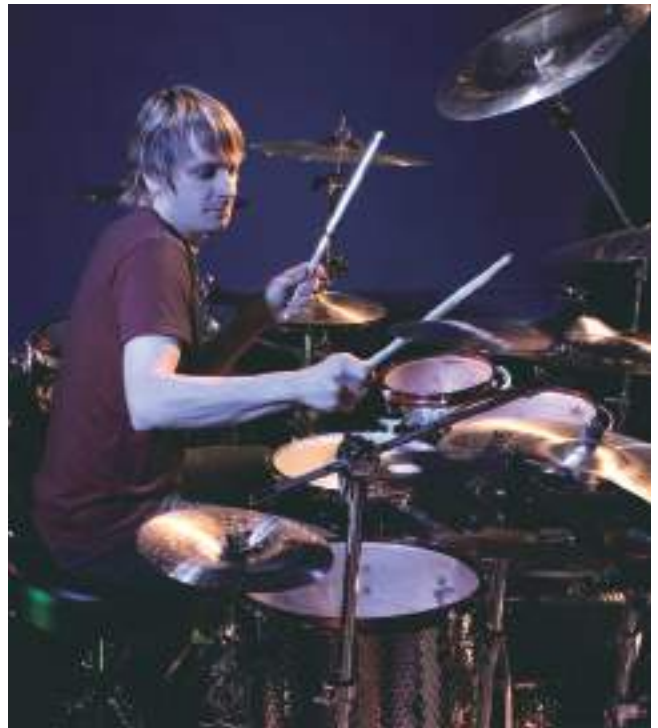
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Ray Luzier

MD: Your playing is very precise, particularly your double pedal work. Does your DVD offer playing tips to help a drummer get his double bass playing that accurate?

Ray: I do go into that on the DVD, but as far as my double bass work goes, I've never *just* practiced double kick. I know a lot of drummers specifically work for hours on strengthening a weak area, which is fine, but that drives me nuts! I play many different things, balance everything out, and try to play very musically. My emphasis is on making



everything you play sound as clean as possible. Whether you're playing double bass, double-stroke rolls, or drum fills, you have to *listen* to the sound. I suggest recording yourself often, and then listening back to hear what sounds sloppy and could be improved. I'm constantly finding ways of playing better and cleaning up my fills or phrasing them differently.

On my DVD I emphasize, "Start it slow. Speed is not important." That's true with my double bass playing as well. You don't have to be the fastest drummer, just be yourself. The audience will know if you're not confident in your playing. Dial in and find what kind of drummer you are and what you're good at, and then perfect the skills that *you* have. It's okay to have influences and try to imitate them sometimes, but you shouldn't want to *be* them.

Eventually you want to mold yourself into the drummer that you are.

MD: Along those lines, what players have most influenced you?

Ray: There are so many, but Terry Bozzio and Deen Castronovo are two of my biggest influences. Deen, who was on a lot of early Shrapnel records and now plays for Journey, is very underrated. I remember seeing him play, watching his energy and fire, and thinking he was just insane. If you see me play live, I'm not a tapper. [laughs] I hit very hard and I'm very energetic. Deen's powerful playing and clean fills have really influenced me. Years ago I saw him play two shows back-to-back with Bad English at a small club in LA, and his energy was unreal.

As far as Terry Bozzio, I love everything about him. I loved him with UK and

Ray Luzier DVD
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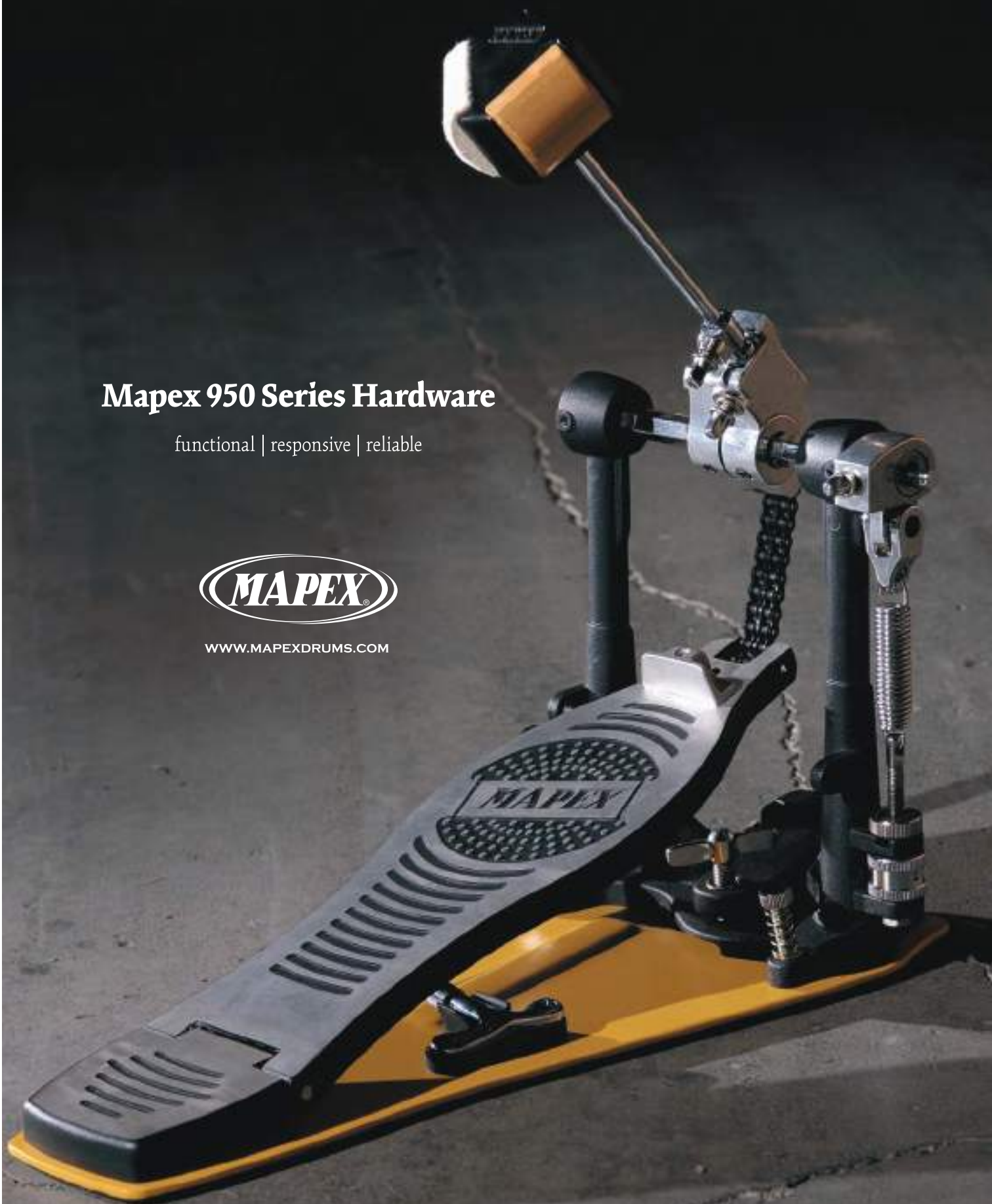
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Ray Luzier

Zappa, and I was a huge Missing Persons fan. He's taken drumming so far, especially with his orchestral drumming. To spend so much time on your craft after playing for so many years, and still do it with so much love, passion, and drive, is such a big inspiration. Whenever I get down about my playing, I always look at people like him.

MD: After almost eight years playing with David Lee Roth, what are some of the most important lessons you took away from that gig?

Ray: I've had this conversation with Steve Vai, Billy Sheehan, and Gregg Bissonette, that you haven't played for *anyone* until you've played for David Lee Roth. [laughs] It's a whole other ballgame. But Dave taught me to think of the big picture, all the time. And when I first got the gig, he really complimented my passion for music.

Sometimes he'd come up to me right before a song and say, "Cut that song and put this one in there." There was no time for mistakes.

MD: I remember you saying once, "I can miss a tom or cymbal hit, but God forbid I miss a vocal cue."

Ray: [laughs] Dave was very strict about that; I had to sing every chorus. Eight years with him really strengthened my voice and helped my independence a lot. During all those tours, we opened every night with "Hot For Teacher." That song starts with a quick double bass shuffle and then it's off to the races. I learned new techniques to be able to breathe, because drumming is four-way independence and now I had *another* thing to concentrate on. I had to hold down a note vocally and all four limbs were doing something different. I think there was only one song in the set that I didn't sing.

wanted me to come up with an interesting, creative groove and part to make the song shine.

Instead of thinking, "What drum part is going to sound good with this?" I'd ask myself, "What's my hook right here?" Usually, the bass player wants the drummer to lock so the bass drum is right with the bass line. But Robert would say, "Play around me and find what works for you." There were also places where they suggested I emulate some of the demo programming, but for the most part they wanted to hear *me*.

Sometimes I'd ask the engineer to pull the drum samples and just give me a click track with the music so I could think of my own ideas. What we'd end up with were four different parts going on with guitar, bass, drums, and vocals, but it all seemed to work and sound great.

These guys are very into "free forming" the timing. That means the time might fall back or push a little, because of the mood of the song. There are no real rules. You just go for however you're feeling, whether it's aggressive or laid back, because there are so many moods and emotions in this music that just take you on a journey. It's a really great feeling to love every song that we play and to have great chemistry with the other musicians in the band.

MD: What type of creative freedom did you have in the studio?

Ray: Sometimes Robert or Dean would suggest an idea that I wouldn't have otherwise thought of, or they'd ask that I do a busier—or less busy—fill, and I could elaborate on what they'd given me. That happened a few times on the record. But they encouraged me to do my thing too, and I play some cool grooves and fills on this disc.

I was also able to experiment with many different drums while recording. I primarily used my Orange County drums with a few different bass drums. But Mike Fasano was my tech, and he brought in twenty-five snare drums from *his* arsenal. We recorded at the Village Studios in West LA—which is a very prestigious place to record—and we were in Room D, which is huge. We had three different drumkits set up at all times: maybe a small kit, a big kit with a 28" kick, a bunch of cymbals, maybe a cocktail kit....

Ray Under The Microphone

Producer Bob Ezrin Speaks About Luzier

Legendary studio producer Bob Ezrin has worked with some of the giants of the music industry, including Pink Floyd, Lou Reed, Peter Dinklage, and KISS. Ezrin recently produced Army Of Anyone's self-titled debut album. After working with Ray Luzier, he has high praise for the drummer.

"Ray is a great performer in the studio," says Ezrin.

"He's a two- or three-take guy, which is only true of the very best drummers. He hears the whole song and everyone's parts, not just his own. That's rare for musicians who create and play complex parts, because they tend to



focus so much on what *they're* doing that they're not really playing with each other.

"In AOA, the players knew each other's parts and worked to serve the whole song—and *everyone* had an opinion on what the drums should be doing," the producer asserts. "Ray was patient, and respectful, and he worked through all the

suggestions. Then he did what *he* wanted to do—which was always exactly what the song needed. And Ray is steady as a rock, so we didn't even think about quantizing his tracks. He just laid it down like concrete."

Once you get to know Dave, who's eccentric but also a very intelligent person, you realize he knows exactly what's going on at all times. When you watch the way he takes command of the stage, you can't just sit back and play drums. I had to be hyper-alert and constantly watching him, because he could throw the dynamics down to almost nothing at the drop of a hat, and then bring them back up.

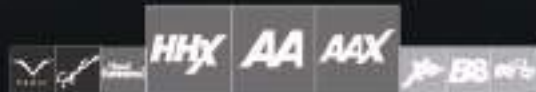
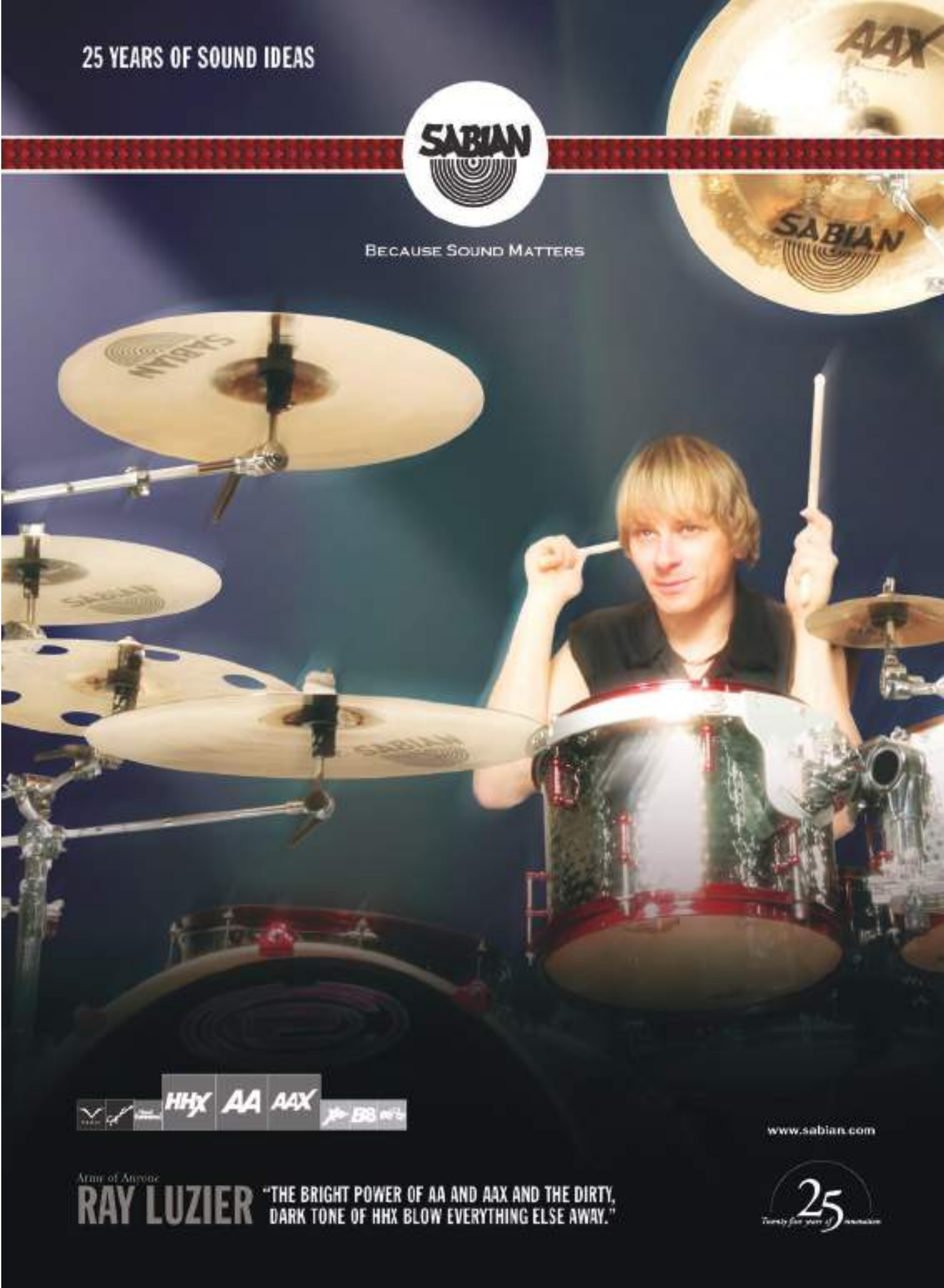
MD: Let's talk about the new CD. Describe how you approached your drumming style on the Army Of Anyone album.

Ray: When I joined this band, there were twenty-six songs already written to a drum machine. Listening to the demos, I could hear the direction they were going for groove-wise. The guys showed me how, beyond the vocal melody, to think of everyone's part as a *hook*. They really

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Arm of Anyone

RAY LUZIER

"THE BRIGHT POWER OF AA AND AAX AND THE DIRTY, DARK TONE OF HHX BLOW EVERYTHING ELSE AWAY."



Ray Luzier

Being in the studio with Bob Ezrin was a great experience as well. One of the reasons I started playing drums was because of *Destroyer*, the KISS album that Bob produced. His track record speaks for itself, and I was curious to see what he'd bring to the table. Sometimes Bob would say, "Why don't you go to the other kit and see what that sounds like, or switch up the cymbals a bit?" I'm used to doing ten songs in two days, with no time to do anything over. But with this we could take our time and get the tracks that we wanted. Dean might say, "Play one of those crazy things you do right at the end." I'd play it and they'd all just smile and say, "That's it." I even have a solo vamp at the end of the song "Goodbye."

MD: How did that come about?

Ray: We were working on parts in pre-production and the guys suggested I play more in the final chorus. There was an alternating 16th-note ride/hi-hat pattern that I'd played in a song that didn't make the record, and when we were working on "Goodbye" Robert suggested I do the chorus beat from that song. So I tried it, and it worked. As we kept going, I started playing more fills at the end. He said, "Why don't you just go off right there?" Now, one thing I'm really good at is improvisation. I love playing with people like Billy Sheehan and Toshi because often we'll just go off on these tangents and play for twenty minutes without any idea where we're going. That's what I did on "Goodbye." I didn't plan the fills, I didn't think ahead of time. I just went for it, and the first take I

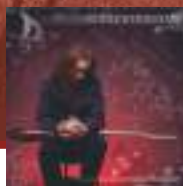
Ray's Best On Record

Artist

Army Of Anyone
Billy Sheehan
Hideous Sun Demons
David Lee Roth
David Lee Roth
Tracy G. Group

Album

Army Of Anyone
Cosmic Troubadour
Hideous Sun Demons
Diamond Dave
DLR Band
Erector Pili



did make it to the CD.

MD: You've had a consistent, steadily building career. What tips could you offer other drummers for building their own careers?

Ray: I always tell people, if you're in this business to be rich or to get women, go get another job. It definitely has perks, but you must have a deep love for music and a passion for drumming burning inside of you at all times. You really have to home in on what you want to do, and stay committed.

I know drummers in LA who just want to be session guys, because they have families and they want to stay in town. If that's your thing, you better have your reading skills in order and your timing had better be great. My plan was to do a little bit of

everything. I wanted to play on other people's records, to be a live entertainer, to be an educator, *and* I wanted to be a band-member. I wanted to do it all, so I worked on everything and got a taste of many different styles of music. You have to get out and get your networking skills together as well, because this business isn't just about how well you play the drums.

Whether you're going to do sessions, play Vegas, or be a touring guy, your timing has to be great. It took me years to learn that. If I could speed up the process for any young players out there, I'd say don't be naive. Get a click track and play to it—even in your live band—but don't let it become a crutch. I've heard guys who play to a click so much that they can't play without it. Of course, working on your time is a never-ending process.

In the past I've envied friends who were in bands that would make several records with the same lineup. I always wanted to have that. I've had a great career being more or less a hired gun—which is better than it sounds, because Dave made me feel like a true bandmember. But now, when we're doing artwork, photos, or whatever with AOA, it's great that they ask for my opinion. [laughs] That's pretty amazing. But I've worked hard to get to this point. It's extremely gratifying to be in the situation I'm in now.

For more on Ray, check out his Web sites: www.rayluzier.com and www.armyofanyone.com.



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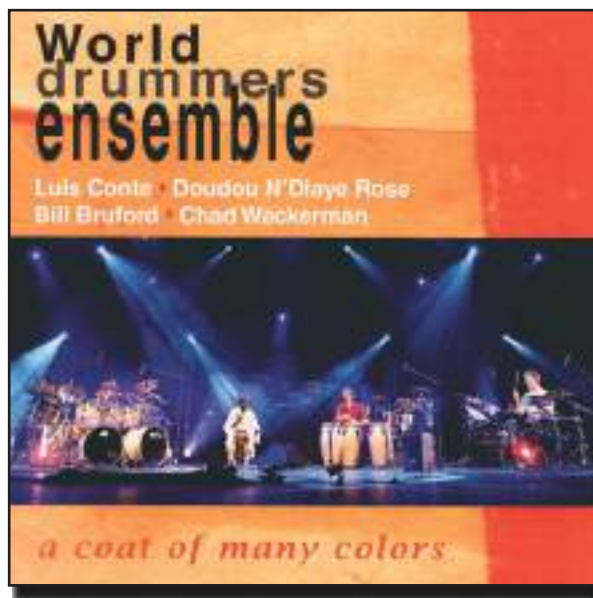
RECORDINGS

Ratings Scale



WORLD DRUMMERS ENSEMBLE A COAT OF MANY COLORS

What happens when two set players of exceptional and distinct skill join with a top percussionist and a famous master drummer and griot from Senegal? A lot, as **BILL BRUFORD**, **CHAD WACKERMAN**, **LUIS CONTE**, and **DOUDOU N'DIAYE ROSE** prove. Collectively known as The World Drummers Ensemble, their concert recording demonstrates the diversity and community of drumming through intelligent arrangements and exhilarating improvisation. With music ranging from transparent to dense, the ideas never cease to flow as they draw on a wealth of rhythmic ideas. Consistently inspiring and exciting through solo breaks, as they play against each other, and collectively set up patterns, this multi-drummer project ranks among the best of its kind. As a bonus, the dual disc CD includes some video of the concert and extended DVD audio. The video is especially valuable, showing the extraordinary interplay between these master musicians. (Summerfold) **Martin Patmos**



REBEL MEETS REBEL REBEL MEETS REBEL



VINNIE PAUL and his guitar-ace brother, **Dimebag Darrell**, join forces with their spiritual godfather, country outlaw **David Allan Coe**, for an album completed after Darrell's tragic 2004 demise. With whiskey-soaked swagger, Coe and The Cowboys From Hell (as Paul, Darrell, and Pantera bassist **Rex Brown** call themselves) make a hoot of an album that's dead serious musically. Vinnie plays the catchy mix of '70s-style

Southern rock and '80s-style hard rock with the perfect feel-good approach. He keeps the double bass minimal and lets a powerful, uncluttered groove drive the wickedly funny vocals and furious, amped-up riffage. Somewhere, somehow, Dimebag is smiling, proud of another job well done. (Big Vin) **Michael Parillo**

BOSTON T PARTY BOSTON T PARTY



The Boston T Party, led by former Dixie Dregs keyboardist **T Lavitz**, features the all-star line up of **Dave Fiuczynski** (guitar), **Jeff Berlin** (bass), and **DENNIS CHAMBERS** playing a brand of original retro-fusion. The diverse instrumental collection at times has jam-band leanings, and at others sounds like a watered-

down Tribal Tech concoction. There's an obvious Dregs feel to several tracks as well. Chambers, as always, grooves hard and unleashes his powerhouse chops when the music summons him. ("Deff 184" is his standout track.) Given the exceptional talents of the players, though, the compositions feel a bit restraining. This party is definitely more fun and reminiscent than furious and forward-looking. (Tone Center) **Mike Haid**

COOL MUSIC OUT NOW!

POP

SOUL ASYLUM THE SILVER LINING Ex Prince drummer Michael Bland powers the pop. (Legacy) /// **ADRIAN BELEW SIDE THREE** Danny Carey on two tracks! (Sanctuary) /// **THE NEW CARS IT'S ALIVE** "Newcomer" Prairie Prince joins Todd Rundgren in an odd but effective musical twist. (10th St. Ent.)

PROG

EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER THE BIRTH OF A BAND Historic live coming-out of art rock's most outrageous trio, featuring Carl Palmer—on both CD and DVD (Eagle Vision) /// **ANTHONY CURTIS BOOK OF THE KEY** Dense neo-prog featuring Tony Levin, Mike Keneally, and drummer Lewis Pragasam (Jester)

JAZZ

JOE LOVANO STREAMS OF EXPRESSION Neo-bopper Lewis Nash lets loose on this *Birth Of The Cool*-meets-*Ascension* release. (Blue Note) /// **GRISMORE/SCEA GROUP WELL BEHAVED FISH** Funky free-improv with a melodic twist, anchored by the nimble groove of Midwest drummer Marc Gratama. (Accurate)



TOOL 10,000 DAYS

★★★★★



There are some drummers who just make you want to practice. **DANNY CAREY**'s performance on Tool's fourth full-length album is filled with the twists, turns, unexpected grooves, powerful tom beats, and unique approach to the set that the drummer is known for. This album builds off the group's previous work in new ways, with darkly meditative passages contrasting with angsty moments. Along the way, seemingly effortless performances belie the intricacies that make up their tightly crafted songs. And while "Vicarious" displays some classic Carey chops, the long, slow build of the title track is not to be missed. (Volcano) **Martin Patmos**

STEVE WALSH SHADOWMAN

★★★★☆



Kansas keyboardist/vocalist Walsh goes solo with a collection of heavy prog rock originals bearing a deep spiritual message. Rock drumming great **JOE FRANCO** provides creative, solid single and double bass grooves and fitting musical fills throughout this powerful collection. The music is definitely heavier than typical Kansas material, more guitar-oriented and sprinkled with odd meters, metal passages, and artistically designed electronics. Franco shows impressive versatility on this diverse, hard-rocking material. Kansas fans should dig it. (Muse-Wrapped) **Mike Haid**

NEBULA APOLLO

★★★★☆



With *Apollo*, Nebula has managed to create a rock album that comes across loud, no matter how low your stereo's volume control is set. Drummer **RUBEN ROMANO** serves up a plate of busy patterns, fills, and snare strokes, particularly on "Future Days" and "The Alchemist." Romano's overall kit sound seems a bit squashed by the walls of hard-panned distorted guitars. But for fans of edgier, riff-based underground rock acts like Queens Of The Stone Age and The White Stripes, an album like *Apollo*—with its unique aesthetic and approach—should feel right at home in their CD players. (Liquor And Poker) **Waleed Rashidi**

THE EXIT HOME FOR AN ISLAND

★★★★☆



This tight band combines Jeff Buckley—bohemian chic, world beats, digital effects, hook-laden hard rock, and Police-like reggae/rock, for a surprisingly fresh-sounding package. The communication between bassist **Jeff DaRosa** and drummer **GUNNAR** supplies the perfect bottom end to complement singer/guitarist **Ben Brewer**'s knack for sweet melodies. Gunnar's instinct might be toward aggression, but his patience, good ears, and ability to balance heaviness with cathartic tension & release ensure that the mix is never muddy. (Some/Wind-Up) **Will Romano**

JOHN MCNEIL EAST COAST COOL

★★★★☆



The Gerry Mulligan—Chet Baker Quartet pioneered an economical musical style known as "cool jazz" that became associated with the west coast, in the 1950s. Trumpeter/composer John McNeil uses the same instrumentation, with **Allan Chase** on baritone sax, **John Hebert** on bass, and **MATT WILSON** on drums. The band puts a modern, darker, "east coast" spin on the classic Mulligan/Baker sound, and Wilson plays into the concept perfectly. Some tunes are harmonically free but not tempo-free, others are free of tempo but centered within a key. In the end there's nothing that fazes Wilson; his touch, propulsion, and invention are continually superb. (Omni Tone) **Robin Tolleson**

HELLOWEEN KEEPER OF THE SEVEN KEYS: THE LEGACY

★★★★☆



Helloween has combined all the right ingredients for a classic old-school metal release: a chilling, mysterious story line, strong melodic vocals, catchy, harmonic guitar lines, and solid, driving double bass drumming, courtesy of **DANI LOEBLE**. Loebel's drumming is clean, precise, and energized, and he's got speed to spare. And his chops accentuate the guitar lines throughout, with powerful hand/foot combination grooves and fills. In the tradition of Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, and Queensrÿche, this is an epic, flowing collection with no filler. (SPV USA) **Mike Haid**

MY LATEST OBSESSION



LESS THAN JAKE'S VINNIE: WHAT HE'S DIGGIN', WHERE AND WHEN

>THE JAM GREATEST HITS

I have a tape player in my car, and this tape got stuck inside, so I listen to these songs every time I'm in my car. Paul Weller is a great songwriter, and the blend of ska, reggae, punk, and pop is amazing to drive around aimlessly to at 4:00 in the morning.

>SLAYER HAUNTING THE CHAPEL

When I'm doing email late at night, Slayer rules. Double bass, songs about the devil and chemical warfare, and cuts that make you feel like you drank a pot of coffee are hard to come by these days. I like my metal like that—not with tight pants and pink eye shadow.

>MOTION CITY SOUNDTRACK COMMIT THIS TO MEMORY

Early morning over coffee or walking around on tour, this record is the equivalent to reading emails from your best friend. Buzzing, catchy, and friendly. Great band. Great record.

>PUNCHLINE 37 EVERYWHERE

Pop-punk that zigs and zags up and down the spectrum of modern music. Good when hanging out on the porch of my house or making food.

>BILLY BRAGG RE-ISSUES

Best when I'm unwinding, late at night on my iPod or in my CD player. The top of the acoustic political heap, melody with a purpose. It makes me relax and takes the edge off of a hectic day.

>ANATHALLO FLOATING WORLDS

When I need a break from modern music, this levels the playing field. If the Royal Tenenbaums were a band, this would be their music.

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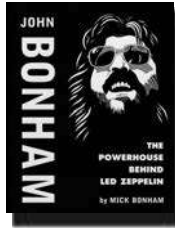
>LAWRENCE ARMS OH! CALCUTTA

I listen to all three of these records to get up for shows, recharging me and firing me up to get on the drums. Each makes me feel like I've got a train moving in my chest and helps me get on stage with my blood already at a slight boil.

MULTI-MEDIA

JOHN BONHAM: THE POWERHOUSE BEHIND LED ZEPPELIN BY MICK BONHAM

BOOK LEVEL: ALL \$12.99



John Bonham: The Powerhouse Behind Led Zeppelin was written by the drummer's younger brother, Mick, in acknowledgement of the twenty-fifth anniversary of John's 1980 passing. Mick, who unfortunately died soon after its completion, revealed a side of John that we've never read about before. Filled with previously unpublished photos from the family's private collection, as well as a complete Zeppelin chronological history from 1966 to 1982, *Powerhouse* follows John's life from childhood, to his becoming the greatest rock drummer *ever*, to his premature death and the effect it had on his family. Sometimes we forget that larger-than-life icons like John Bonham were also someone's husband, father, son, and brother. Thanks, Mick, for reminding us. (www.southbankpublishing.com) **Billy Amendola**

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE LIFE ON THE MURDER SCENE

DVD/CD LEVEL: ALL \$24.98



Scream-o bands certainly don't lack passion, though they could sometimes use more imagination. Their musical lexicon generally features two tempos (fast, faster), and two guitar sounds (crunchy, crunchier). My Chemical Romance makes do with these self-imposed shackles by injecting addictive hooks into the bluster of songs like "I'm Not Okay (I Promise)." And it helps that drummer **BOB BRYAR** carries more weapons in his arsenal than a frantic 2/4. On this DVD/CD collection of performances, interviews, and videos, Bryar shows he can indeed bring the frantic. But when the need arises, he can display more versatility in one song (the march-thrash-backbeat showpiece "Cemetery Drive," for instance) than some scream-o drummers manage over an entire concert. (Reprise) **Patrick Berkery**

TAKING THE REINS

CHARLES LLOYD, ZAKIR HUSSAIN, ERIC HARLAND SANGAM ★★★★★



Here's a tightrope format: reeds, tabla, and drumset in a live, improvisatory set. Yet these masters could mesmerize for hours. Mixing jazz and Eastern elements, Lloyd's inspired sax and flute excursions wrap the evening in a meditative, mystical cloak. The sublime **ZAKIR HUSSAIN** delivers thrilling pulse streams and shifting textures with his multi-drum tabla setup, while **ERIC HARLAND** weaves through the rhythms, coaxing brilliant drumset colors and dramatic dynamics. Percussion discussion is taken to breathtaking heights with their ample duet and solo segments. In an experiment that risks distancing, these artists instead draw the ear closer, ever closer. (ECM) **Jeff Potter**

BILL RANSOM GENERATIONS ★★★★★



Cleveland-based drummer Bill Ransom's solo debut is a lesson in dynamics and the weight of each stroke. As comfortable piloting a brisk rumba as he is channeling Elvin on some six over four, Ransom displays a touch that puts him in the company of select jazz players, with crisp cymbal work, prodding, punctuating toms, and a snare played feathery or fat. The drummer anchors Pat Metheny's "John McKee" firmly, lets Jaco's "Three Views Of A Secret" breathe, and tries his hand at the lovely lobe of Tony Williams' "Sister Cheryl." Pianist **Phill Miller** contributes the rousing "Stickology" alongside other compositions by Miles Davis, Chick Corea, and Leonard Bernstein. (Bongo Time) **Robin Tolleson**

JOE CHAMBERS THE OUTLAW (Savant) • **DAFNIS PRIETO** ABSOLUTE Quintet (Zoho) • **ROBERT JOSPE** INNER RHYTHM (robertjospe.com) • **CECIL BROOKS III** DOUBLE EXPOSURE (Savant) • **KEEFE MARZELL AND VINTAGE** DRAWN WINDOWS (vintagerecordlabel.com) • **REUBEN HOCH AND TIME** OF RECENT TIME (Naim) • **HOSSAM RAMZY & JOSE LUIS MONTÓN** FLAMENCO ARABE 2 (Arc Music) • **MARKY RAMONE** START OF THE CENTURY (Fuel 2000) • **FRANCISCO MELA** MELAO (Ayva Music)

BAD RELIGION LIVE AT THE PALLADIUM

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$19.98



Sporting over two dozen songs, this professionally shot and edited DVD finds drummer **BROOKS WACKERMAN** taking some (largely successful) liberties with his stage playing—especially during songs he originally tracked. Wackerman spices things up on older tunes as well; check out the funkier bridge and breakdown of "Infected" for a tasteful example. Unfortunately, the footage is cut so tightly, Wackerman is rarely on camera for more than a few seconds at a time. And that means sometimes having to miss out on the visuals of that fantastic drum fill. (Epitaph) **Waleed Rashidi**

QUEEN THE MAKING OF A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$14.98



"We loved the studio," says guitarist Brian May, recalling the heady days of cutting what is widely regarded as Queen's most important album. "It's an open canvas." Indeed, May, Freddie Mercury, John Deacon, and **ROGER TAYLOR**, blessed with glorious inspiration and incredible patience, took the art of multi-track recording to a new level on 1975's *A Night At The Opera*. This riveting DVD illuminates Queen's creative process, providing archival footage (Freddie's leotards!), musical examples direct from the master tapes, and wonderful new interviews with May and Taylor. (Out of the past, Mercury himself has a few choice lines.) Early on, we see Taylor onstage in Queen's heyday, playing his big, broad tom fills and singing "I'm In Love With My Car." And in the excellent extras section, he shows us around his current kit with great charm, calling his RotoToms "these things from the '70s." (Eagle Vision) **Michael Parillo**



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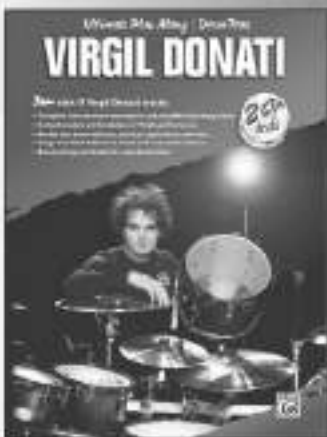
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Ddrum's Dominion Ash series capitalizes on the acoustic properties that make ash popular for guitar construction. The Pocket Kit configuration features a 20x20 bass drum for a tight feel without sacrificing low end, and a 7x13 snare for crack and depth. Shallow 8x12 rack and 12x14 and 12x16 floor toms create a musical tone down the scale. Kits are available in Blueburst, Anaheim Orange, Purple Fade, and Lime Green finishes. Hardware and die-cast hoops are plated in black-nickel chrome. List price is \$1,874.99.

(813) 600-3920, www.ddrum.com

ALESIS DMS THIS ELECTRONIC KIT TAKES A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH

The Alesis DM5 electronic drumkit is designed for aspiring and professional drummers alike. Its single rack-space sound module contains a broad assortment of sampled acoustic instruments and innovative electronic sounds, recorded in true stereo at 48 kHz with ambient effects. It also includes an ultra-fast trigger-to-MIDI conversion system, twelve trigger inputs, and five programmable parameters for each trigger.

The DM5 kit includes pads for snare, two toms, kick drum, and hi-hat. The hi-hat is controlled with a foot pedal that attaches via the sound module and facilitates switching between open and closed sounds. The kit also includes two natural-motion cymbal pads. A tubular rack system supports the sound module and all pads. The DM5 kit is shipped with a kick pedal and all necessary interconnect cables, at a list price of \$699.

(401) 658-3131, www.alesis.com



SABIAN 21" AA RAW BELL RIDE TRADITIONAL SOUND, AND THEN SOME

Sabian's 21" AA Raw Bell Dry ride taps into the classic sound of Sabian's traditional AA series. This medium-heavy model is designed to deliver strong, dry stick articulation at all volumes. The unlathed bell is said to produce a bright, solid note, while strokes across the bow area are consistently strong and cutting. The cymbal is available in natural and brilliant finish at a list price of \$275.

(506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com



PAISTE NEW RIDES FOR THOSE WHO AREN'T AFRAID OF THE DARK

Paiste's New Signature category now includes a 21" Dark Dry Ride Mark I and a 21" Light Dark Ride Mark I. Both rides are light in weight. They're said to be extremely musical and controllable, with dark, complex harmonics. List price is \$652 for either model.

Meanwhile, Paiste's 20" 2002 Dry Ride features an integrated, throaty bell and a balance between a dry, meaty ping and a sandy, controllable wash. It's said to be especially well suited for funk, Latin, blues, and R&B applications. It lists for \$396.

(800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com



TAYE WOOD HOOP SNARES CLASSIC LOOKS, MODERN FEATURES, AND SPECIAL SHELLS SET THESE SNARES APART

Taye's Solid Maple Shell snare drums are lathed in one piece from North American sugar maple logs, with no seams, no staves, and no plies. Wood Hoop models are fitted with 14-ply sugar maple hoops, hand-finished in 100% tung nut oil. Articulated hoop claws with resonance control spacers allow quick head changes. Estimated street price for the 4x14, 5x14, 6x14, and 7x14 sizes is \$1,500.

Those seeking a more traditional maple snare drum might try Taye's 10-ply Sugar Maple model. A molding process that combines high pressure and controlled heat results in a rigid 7.5 mm-thick shell. The tone is said to be pure, with fat bottom and definitive attack. Wood Hoop models are fitted with 14-ply sugar maple hoops and articulated hoop claws. Estimated street price for the 5x14, 6x14, and 7x14 sizes is \$800.

Finally, Taye's Aluminum Alloy snare drum features a 6x14 shell that's cold-hammered into its final form. The 6 mm-thick shell has precision machined bearing edges. The drum is fitted with 14-ply sugar maple hoops and articulated hoop claws, at an estimated street price of \$800.

(909) 628-9589, www.taye.com

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10-Ply Maple

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Meinl's Mb20 series was designed to combine musicality with maximum projection. So the cymbals were pretty heavy. When the company received feedback asking for slightly thinner crashes and rides, they responded with new medium-heavy models. The new cymbals include 16" (\$378) and 18" (\$452) crashes, a 20" ride (\$525), and a 20" Rock China (\$525), all of which feature brilliant finishes.

(615) 227-5090, www.meinlcymbals.com



The Reference Shelf

The Conga Drummer's Guidebook (Book)

by Michael Spiro (Sher Music Co.)



Michael Spiro has recorded with Giovanni Hidalgo, Talking Drums (with David Garibaldi), Changuito, Ignacio Berroa, John Santos, Andy Narell, Mark Levine, Ray Obiedo, Grace Slick, and many others. His method book is specifically designed for intermediate to advanced conga drummers. It includes complete chapters on stamina exercises, agility exercises, heel-toe technique, correct phrasing concepts, revoicing ideas, concepts for soloing, 12/8 coordination exercises, and more. Spiro goes behind the superficial licks and demonstrates how to approach any Afro-Latin rhythm with the right feel and correct technique. List price is \$28.

www.shermusic.com

Praise & Worship Drumming (Book/CD)

by Cary Nasatir (Hal Leonard)



This book/CD package is a guide for the beginning to intermediate drummer, and also a must-have for the non-drumming worship leader, music director, or minister of music. It covers a wide variety of styles, including lessons on rhythmic fundamentals, drumset anatomy, techniques, and more. The CD contains many

of the examples in the book for demonstration and play-along. List price is \$9.95.

(800) 637-2852, www.musicdispatch.com

Incubus Drum Collection

transcribed by Scott Schroedl (Hal Leonard)



This collection offers transcriptions of Jose Pasillas's drum parts on thirteen Incubus songs, including "Are You In," "Drive," "Pardon Me," "Talk Shows On Mute," and "Wish You Were Here." Lyrics are included to help drummers who

are not strong readers relate the drum charts to the arrangements. List price is \$17.95.

(800) 637-2852, www.musicdispatch.com

Modern Congas (DVD)

by Roberto Quintero (Hal Leonard)



In this DVD, top New York Latin percussionist Roberto Quintero offers his approach to playing congas in modern Latin music. Physical techniques, as well as musical concepts and ethnic styles, are discussed and demonstrated. In addition, full-band demos feature some of the hottest players on the Latin music

scene. List price is \$24.95.
(800) 637-2852, www.musicdispatch.com

Global Beats For Drumset & Percussion (DVD)

by Walfredo Reyes Jr. (Hal Leonard)



Walfredo Reyes Jr. and an all-star musical support group combine rock drumming techniques with a wide range of African, Caribbean, and South American percussion sounds to create an integrated global drumming style. Through inspirational live performances and detailed, step-by-step

analysis, Walfredo demonstrates how to develop a "split brain" style combining right-hand rock beats with left-hand global percussion. He also helps viewers understand and play a variety of intricate global beats, and to integrate the drumset with percussion instruments. Walfredo offers easy-to-understand explanations and methodical demonstrations of each rhythm, and the accompanying booklet includes notated versions for added clarity. List price is \$24.95.

(800) 637-2852, www.musicdispatch.com

The Singing Drummer (Book)

by Kevin Ronkko (Windstorm Creative)



This book features a concise method for singing while playing the drums. Drummer/singer Kevin Ronkko draws on his performance experience to address the practical issues faced by singing drummers, such as singing while seated, breathing techniques, musicianship, and expression.

List price is \$11.95.

www.windstormcreative.com

Songs That Made Lep Zepplin Famous (CD)

(Power Rock Enterprises)



This unique play-along CD puts the drummer in John Bonham's seat. It features eight of Led Zep's hits, painstakingly re-created, minus the drum tracks. Legendary drummer

and Bonham colleague Carmine Appice was executive producer of the project, and he states that the tracks are so true to the originals that it is nearly impossible to detect that they are re-creations.

Drummers can play the drum parts from the original songs, or create their own. List price is \$14.

www.powerrock.com

Hot Drum Grooves (Book)

by James Morton (Mel Bay)

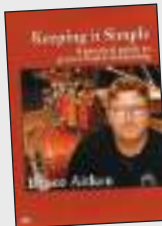


This pocket-sized book provides 140 one-bar examples of drum grooves in 4/4 time. The grooves range from simple to complex, and can be used to create complete drum patterns for songs, or as exercises for stylistic development. List price is \$4.95.

(636) 257-3970, www.melbay.com

Keeping It Simple: A Practical Guide To Groove-Based Drumming

by Bruce Aitken



Bruce Aitken is an award-winning blues and R&B drummer in Canada, as well as a noted teacher, and the founder and producer of the Cape Breton Drum Festival. In this DVD, Bruce introduces the viewer to a world of groove and style "where common sense prevails."

Targeted at students, but with information valuable to any performing drummer, Bruce examines the rudiments and techniques required to become a master of the groove. List price not available at press time.

www.bruceaitken.com

www.DreamMusician.Com

(Dream Musician Inc.)



This Web site provides musicians with the experience of playing in their favorite bands. The available songs are not re-creations; they are the master tracks performed by the original artists.

Through a licensing arrangement with Universal Music Group (and sponsorship from Yamaha and Roland), musicians can download songs that exclude the instrumental track of their choice for play-along purposes. They can also isolate their instrument of choice from all others in the song, allowing them to hear exactly how that instrumental track was originally performed. Dream Musician has licensed an extensive library of song titles in several genres of music. The songs are downloadable in Windows Media format at \$2 per individual title.

Extreme Metal Loops: Hellacious Double Bass

by Jeremy Spencer (Drums From Hell)



This data CD (created by drummer Jeremy Spencer) was designed as a loop-based writing tool. But it can also be useful as a practice tool and source of inspiration for drummers. It contains

.wav files that offer over 800 extreme metal grooves and fills, with various double bass patterns ranging from 90 bpm to 190 bpm. No sampling or editing is required. The drum patterns can immediately be accessed via Acid, Pro Tools, Cakewalk, Sonar, or other recording software. List price is \$29.

www.drumsfromhell.com



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Staccato drums are in production again. The distinctively shaped drums were produced in the 1970s and '80s, and were played by some of the world's greatest drummers. Limited-edition kits are produced in carbon-fiber, with either a clear or colored gel coat. Standard drums are offered with fiberglass shells in several color combinations. Small toms fit inside larger ones to make transportation easier. Thicker bearing edges promote easier tuning. Staccato can also produce '70s-vintage shells for owners who want to extend their existing kits.

www.staccato-art.co.uk

AND WHAT'S MORE

VIC FIRTH has added two new models to its Multi-Application Mallet series. Both feature 100% synthetic materials for maximum durability and weather resistance. They are great for drum corps, marching band, indoor marching, concert, and solo playing. The M184 (\$40) is a hard yarn marimba mallet with medium weight, rubber cores, and 17" birch shafts. The M189 (\$52) is a very hard cord vibrate mallet designed to provide the utmost in articulation. It has weighted rubber cores and 16" rattan shafts. (617) 364-6869, www.vicfirth.com

Vancore PSM-2001 4.3-octave marimbas from **GROVER PRO PERCUSSION** have been upgraded with a Floating Bar Suspension System for increased bar resonance and tonal



production. Laser-cut support rails are angled to ensure that each bar is supported exactly at the nodal point. Each support rail is coated with a unique insulating material to prevent any metal-to-wood contact, and

to isolate the mounting rail from unwanted "secondary impact" sound.

(781) 935-6200, www.groverpro.com

The **DYNAFLEX** gyro line offers a unique approach to isometric strength and coordination training for all instrumentalists. DynaFlex gyros fit in the palm of the hand and utilize centrifugal force instead of fighting the force of gravity.

This provides even resistance, so muscles develop in a safe, controlled way throughout the entire range of motion. The entry-level DynaFlex Pro lists for \$24.95. The Pro Plus (\$26.95) features a computer-balanced rotor, as well as higher power-generating capability. The Powerball

lineup (Amber, \$39.95, and Blue, \$42.95) has additional features.

www.DynaFlexPro.com



Uglytips, from **B. RAD PERCUSSION**, are slip-on practice pad tips for drumsticks. The lightweight tips fit sticks with bead diameters between 11/32" and 11/16", and can be played on any hard surface (thus eliminating the need for a practice pad). They can also turn drumsticks into mallets for use on cymbals and percussion instruments. List price is \$3.39 per pair.



(540) 789-7369, www.b-radpercussion.com

PRO-MARK has introduced a new Autograph Series model designed with rock drummer Jimmy DeGrasso. Jimmy's bio includes work with Suicidal Tendencies, Alice Cooper, and Megadeth. His model (stock number TX409W) is made of premium American Hickory. It is 16 1/2" (419 mm) long, and .617" (15.6 mm) in diameter, with a modified acorn-shaped wood tip. List price is \$12.95.



Pro-Mark has also expanded its Naturals line of unlaquered sticks to include 7A hickory models. Wood-tip sticks list for \$12.50 per pair; nylon-tip sticks are priced at \$12.95 per pair.

(877) 776-6265, www.promark.com





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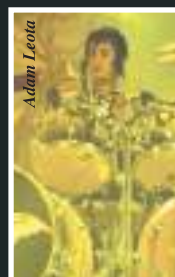
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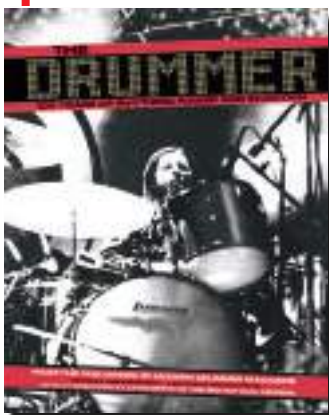


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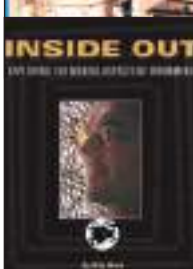
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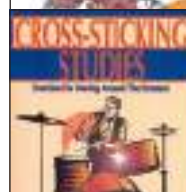
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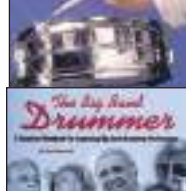
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Woodstick 2006



Chris Kornelis



Chris Kornelis

Aspiring drum star Alex Ecker was one of the 533 record-setting drummers at Woodstick 2006.



Celebrations From The Heart Productions

Celebrity participants included Bernard Purdie

Alex Ecker wasn't one of the celebrity drummers at Seattle's Woodstick 2006, but he sure had the face for it. Hidden behind dark shades, the eight-year-old drummer was light on conversation but serious about drumming, as attested by his bass drum head, which read: "I Love Drums!"

Alex was among the hundreds of drummers assembled this past Saturday, May 13 for the fourth annual Woodstick. Held at the Qwest Field Event Center in downtown Seattle, the event is coordinated by Donn Bennett, owner of Donn Bennett Drum Studios in nearby Bellevue, Washington.

Woodstick raises money for charity by attempting to break the Guinness record for the largest number of full-kit drummers playing the same beat simultaneously. The 2004 edition of Woodstick set the record at 502. They narrowly missed the mark in 2005. This year, to much excitement, it was announced that the 533 drummers present had broken the record. In addition, pledges, entry fees, and a raffle that featured a drum-head signed by Ringo Starr raised more than \$20,000 for local school music programs and for Network Services, which aids homeless families.

As usual, this year's Woodstick featured several celebrity participants. The roster included **Bernard Purdie** (studio great), **Jason McGerr** (Death Cab For Cutie), **Alan White** (Yes), **Scott Rockenfield** (Queensrÿche), **Chris Pennie** (Dillinger Escape Plan), **John Blackwell** (Prince), **Robby Ameen** (Paul Simon), **Jeff Kathan** (Paul Rogers), and **Michael Derosier** (ex-Heart).

Young Alex Ecker, who said he'd someday like to play with The Beatles, got about as close as he'll ever come when Alan White, who drummed on John Lennon's "Imagine," led the assembled drummers through the track. It was one of several times when the group had a chance to play along with the celebrity drummers. During downtime, the drummers played freely, and backbeats of all varieties could be heard through the rafters of the building.

Sponsors for Woodstick 2006 included Evans, Etymotic Research, Mapex, Protection Racket, Sabian, Vic Firth, and *Modern Drummer*. Donn Bennett is already planning next year's event, but he's looking for some competition. He doesn't want the Seattle group to keep breaking its own record, so he hopes that the Woodstick concept will spread to other cities. Interested parties can get information at www.bennettdrums.com. **Chris Kornelis**



Chris Kornelis

Alan White led the assembly in a rendition of "Imagine."



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Sabian 25th Anniversary Celebration



Sabian's staff hosted over thirty of the company's international distributors and business partners at the company's headquarters in Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada.

This past June 2 and 3, Sabian celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with a variety of events in Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada (the tiny village it has called home since the inception of the firm in late 1981), and in the nearby city of Fredericton.

Friday, June 2 saw a gathering of Sabian friends and business partners from around the world. They came to the Meductic factory to participate in presentations, tours of the cymbalmaking process, and an intimate and candid "face to face" session with Robert Zildjian, his wife Willi, daughter Sally, and son (and new Sabian president) Andy.

With a large Sabian balloon flying overhead and banners hung from lampposts lining Meductic's Main Street, the Zildjian family and their many guests gathered for a tree-planting ceremony to mark the event. The ceremony also featured a proclamation announcing Sabian Day in Meductic, read by town mayor James "Nort" Hargrove.

On Saturday, June 3, Sabian hosted a dinner for its international distributors, its factory employees, and several notable former company figures. Included was recently retired former president Dan Barker, who was presented with a Sabian Lifetime Achievement award in recognition of his more than twenty-five years with the company. In turn, founder Robert Zildjian, along with wife Willi, daughter Sally, and sons Andy and Billy, were honored by the nation of Canada, the province of New Brunswick, many of the company's international distributors, and the entire Sabian staff. The celebration concluded with a high-energy performance by Sabian artist Joey Heredia and his band, who kicked things into dance mode and took the party into the wee hours.



Clockwise from top: Andy, Willi, Robert, and Sally Zildjian held a question and answer session. // Mayor (and Sabian VP) James "Nort" Hargrove proclaimed June 2 as Sabian Day. // Retired Sabian president Dan Barker received a Sabian Lifetime Achievement Award. // Joey Heredia and his band provided the evening's entertainment. // Sabian founder Robert Zildjian planted Canadian maple trees to commemorate the event.

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Last year West Coast Drum Center in cooperation with Zildjian raised \$6,500 for the music arts. NAAM matched this money for a grand total donation of \$13,000. Participants included celebrities such as Adrian Young, Stewart Copeland, Mitch Marine, Brian Phelps from the Mark and Brian radio show, Ronn Dunnnett, John "JR" Robinson, John Tempesta, Danny Seraphine, and Denny Seiwell. Fundraising activities included not only the golf, but also contests, raffles, and a silent auction for which West Coast Drum Center raised money from some fantastic prizes including a signed Travis Barker cymbal, a signed Stewart Copeland snare, and a full set of Taylor Made golf clubs.

This year is going to be even bigger and better!

Special Thanks to John Fitzgerald at Connell Chevrolet in Costa Mesa, CA for providing the FREE car for the Hole-In-One contest 714-546-1200



Band Together NYC 5 Supports Little Kids Rock



On this past May 11th, the Knitting Factory in New York City hosted Band Together NYC 5. The Band Together organization raises money and donates instruments to public schools impacted by the events of 9/11. For the third year in a row, Little Kids Rock was the event's beneficiary. LKR restores music to the academic lives of public-school children by providing instruction, free instruments, and trained mentors.

A highlight of the event was rock drumming great Carmine Appice's performance with a Little Kids Rock band made up of third through fifth graders from The Bronx. Thanks to corporate support, ticket sales, and individual donations at the Band Together event, Little Kids Rock received \$23,000 to grow their program. Percussion industry sponsors included D'Addario, Pro-Mark, Sabian, and Sonor. More information can be found at www.littlekidsrock.org.

Indy Quickies

Sabian has partnered with the Vans Warped Tour for artist and promotional support. In addition to the sixteen scheduled bands featuring Sabian



drummers, the company will participate in a sweepstakes in which consumers can win a \$10,000 credit towards drum gear at participating Sabian retailers. Sabian will also provide on-site promotion at select stops on the tour, which runs from June 15 through

August 13. For more information, go to www.sabian.com and www.warpedtour.com.

Yamaha has donated gear—including a Maple Custom drumkit—to The Refugee All Stars, a group of Sierra Leonean musicians who formed a band while living as refugees in the West African nation of Guinea. Forced from their homes by a decade-long civil war, the band is the subject of an award-winning documentary, also titled *The Refugee All Stars*. The film follows the band over three years of performances in refugee camps, as well as their eventual return to war-ravaged Freetown, Sierra Leone. For more information, go to www.refugeeallstars.org.

Meinl Percussion has named **Mario Schmitt** as product and international artist relations manager.



Mapex provided over thirty Pro M and M Birch drumsets for the 33rd Annual Sacramento Jazz Jubilee, held this past May 26-29. Over 100,000 people heard the kits during performances by more than a hundred bands at the California capital's annual celebration of jazz, blues, Gospel, swing, and zydeco. For more information, go to www.sacjazz.com.

Who's Playing What



Nationally known percussion teacher, author, clinician, and adjudicator **Dennis DeLucia** has joined the Pro-Mark family of artist endorsers.

Paiste's endorser roster now includes **George Donoso** (The Dears), **Ben Dussault** (Throwdown), **Joel Ekman** (Stone Sour), **Pete Korpela** (*The Lion King*), **Ernesto Martinez** (Reik), **Leonardo Munoz** (Juanes), **Jose David Perez** (Circo), **David Victor** (Minnesota Orchestra), and **Denny Weston Jr.** (The Vacation).

Alec Lancaster (Minority) is a new Orange County Drum & Percussion artist.

New Meinl international cymbal artists include Finland's **Kai Hahto** (Wintersun),

South Africa's **Marlon Green** (Karen Zoid), France's **Guillaume Nouaux** (independent), England's **Ross McFarlane** (Multi Purpose Chemical), and Italy's **Raphael Saini** (Chaoswave). Now playing Meinl Percussion is tour and theater percussionist **Ellen Mayer**.



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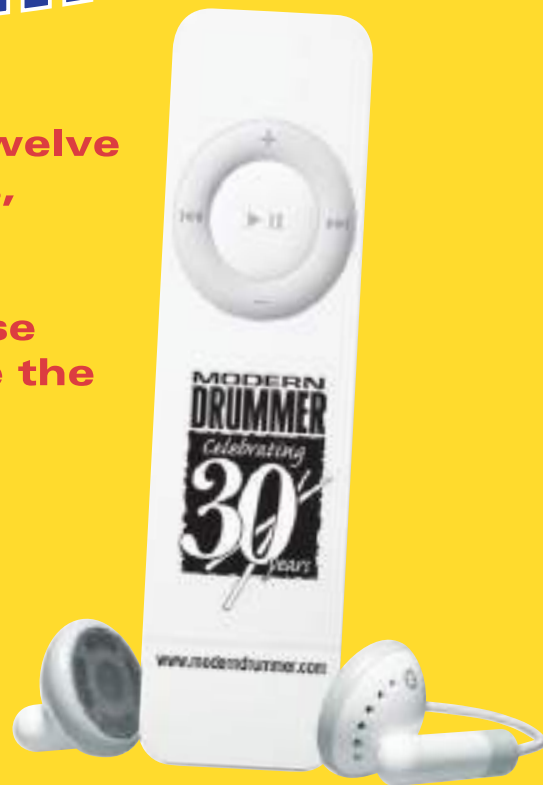
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Fernando uses the hybrid kit depicted here for concerts and festivals. It includes a Ludwig 16x22 bass drum, Slingerland 13" and 16" toms, and a 5 1/2x14 metal Slingerland snare,

all vintage, as well as a 4x12 Yamaha Peter Erskine signature snare, 19x14 and 21x16 Remo Mickey Hart series bombos (adapted for mounting on a Yamaha tom stand), a Gope 10" timba, a variety of Chinese gongs, a selection of esoteric and vintage Zildjian and Paiste cymbals, and extensive hand percussion items from LP, Gope, Rhythm Tech, Remo, and Ludwig. Some authentic handmade Bolivian instruments round out the set.

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