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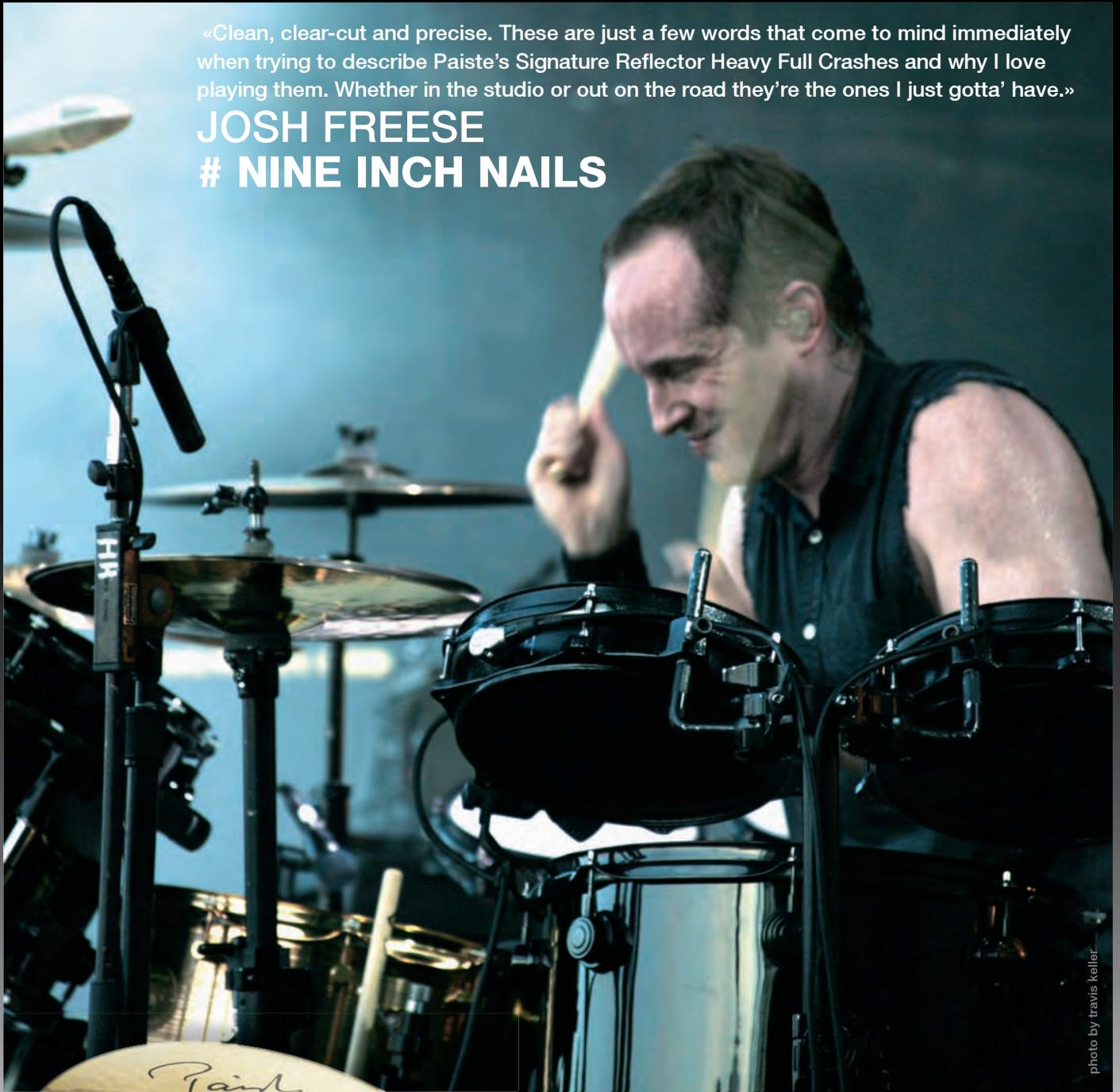


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**FEATURES**

**46 Porcupine Tree/King Crimson's Gavin Harrison**

Every master drummer understands that it's *all* about the details. And few players have examined the minute points of our instrument as intriguingly—and effectively—as neo-progressive firebrand Gavin Harrison.

**62 Gene Krupa**

Gene Krupa's style and substance—and the timing of his arrival on the scene—forever guarantee his status as history's first and greatest drum star. On the hundredth anniversary of his birth, *MD* pays tribute to the man who elevated the term "drummer" to its rightful place of respect.

**82 Underoath's Aaron Gillespie**

Calling him a "physical" player doesn't begin to describe the passion and energy Aaron Gillespie pours into every performance. And odd times and singing don't throw him, either. A modern wonder, this guy.

**96 Sheryl Crow's Jeremy Stacey**

Before becoming known as one of today's great groove players, Jeremy Stacey immersed himself in all things jazz. With beats this heavy, though, who's to argue his path, or his methods?



**120 A Different View George Duke**

George Duke has had uniquely intense connections with some of the greatest drummers of our time, from Billy Cobham, to Dennis Chambers, to Ronald Bruner Jr. Bring it on, George!

**20 Update**

Weezer's **Pat Wilson**  
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 The Dead Kennedys' **D.H. Peligro**  
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From Screen To Studio



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## EQUIPMENT

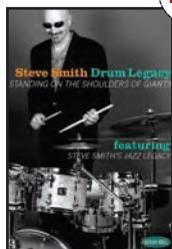
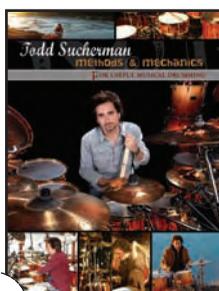
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### 40 New And Notable



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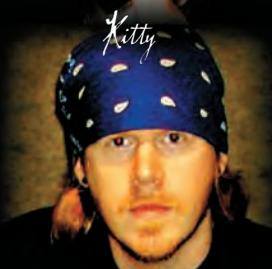
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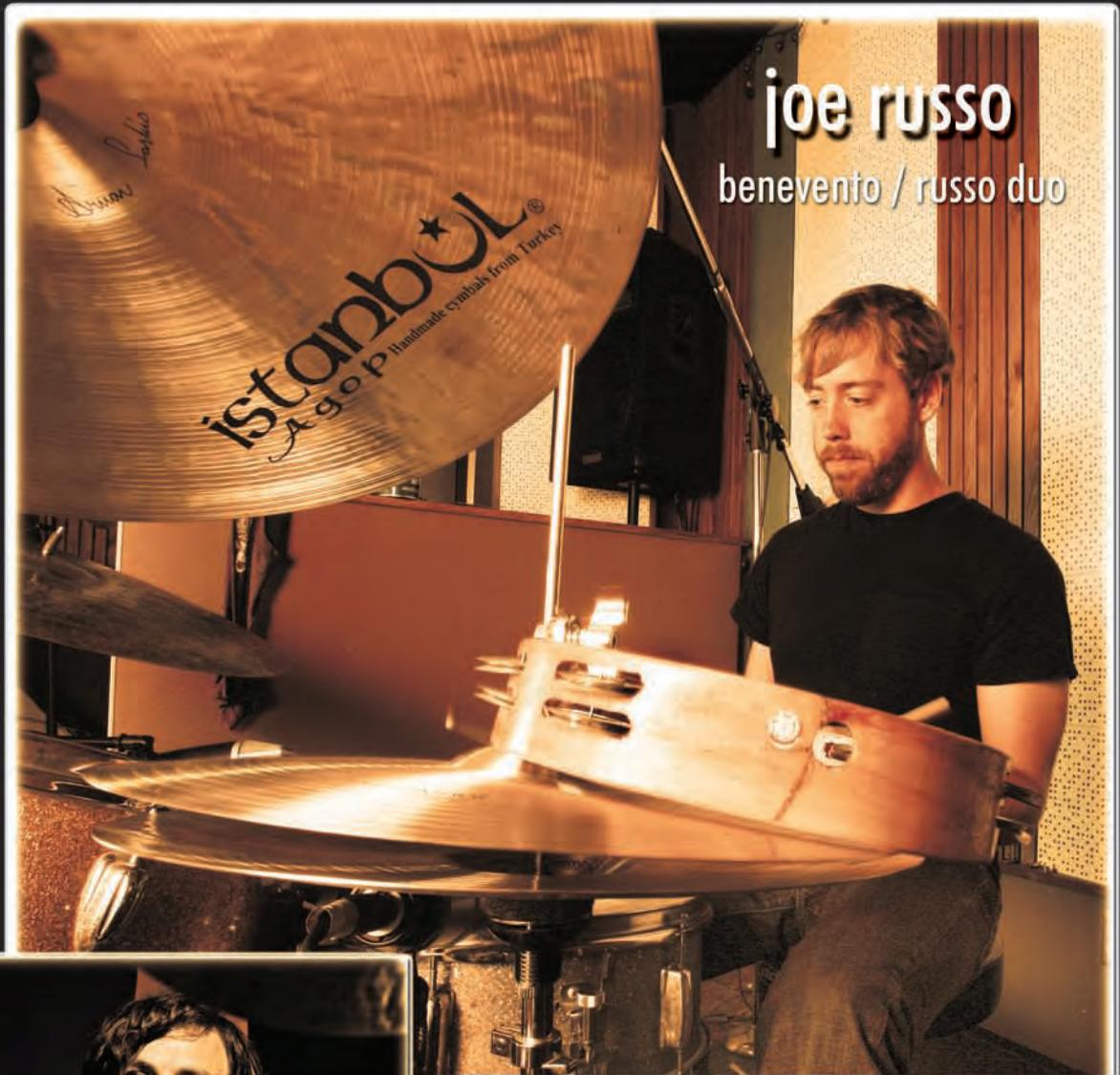
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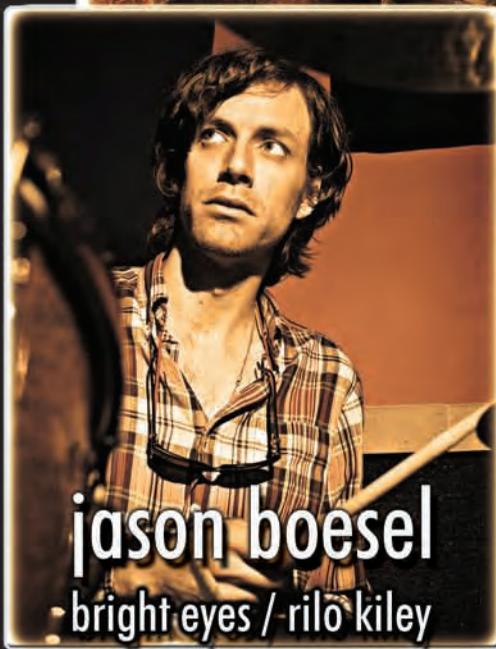


*Avril Lavigne*

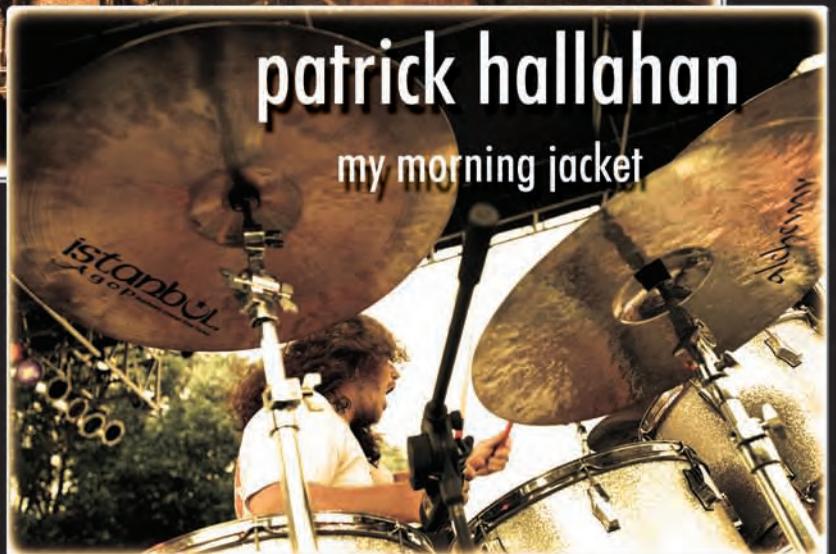




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## Todd Sucherman

Your recent cover story on Todd Sucherman was the best I've read in recent months. As a full-time pro slugging it out in the trenches, I found Todd's real-world advice to be just as valuable as his educational tips. Ken Micallef's interview really captured Todd's love of the drums and his dedication to the craft. Todd is amazingly humble and approachable for someone of his talent, and this was clearly evident after reading the article. Thanks for such a great interview!

**Rob Ferrell**

You made a great choice to profile Todd Sucherman in the October issue. Todd is one of those drummers who has flown under the radar, but not any more! I just purchased his new DVD, *Methods And Mechanics*. Watch it and you'll understand why Todd Sucherman can hide no longer!

**Dr. Fred Metzger**

## Bill Ludwig II Remembered

Shortly after signing on as a Ludwig endorser in 1984, I went to Chicago for the Class Act 75th-anniversary poster photo shoot. I stayed an extra day to get a tour of the old Ludwig factory in Chicago with Scott Rockenfield, John Shearer, and a fourth drummer I can't recall. With such a small group, I expected a quick tour. Kay, the secretary for Bill II and III, gathered us in the office area and said, "Let me see if I can get someone to take you through." From inside the nearest office we heard a voice say, "I'll take them through," and out stepped Bill Ludwig II.



For the rest of the day we went from the basement to the top floor, getting a full explanation and history of every step in the drum-making process from the master himself. It was one of the greatest experiences of a lifetime. Bless the Chief; he will be missed.

**Phil Rowland**

## Ches And Paul

I was very happy to see two of my top students, Paul Delong and Ches Smith, featured in the October issue of *MD*. They are both tremendous musicians who have worked very diligently and have stayed focused on where they want to go with their careers.

**Peter Magadini**



## Ian Froman

Thanks to T. Bruce Wittet for a great article on Ian Froman. I met Ian for the first time more than twenty-five years ago, as we were both studying with Chuck Burrows in Ottawa, Canada. I had the opportunity to go over to Ian's house one evening to hear him play. Although he was still in high school, I had never seen anyone play with so much power

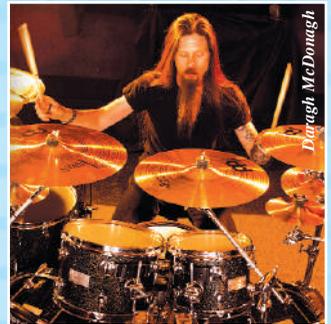


and authority. And his keen sense of time was breathtaking. Since then, I've heard Ian play a number of times. I'll never forget his performance with Brad Turner and John Geggie in Ottawa last year. He is truly a world-class musician and has worked hard to get where he is.

**Rick Pearlman**

## Chris Adler

One of the reasons I enjoy reading *MD* is for the thoughtful and insightful advice given by the pros. An excellent example is the response that Chris Adler wrote in the October issue to a young drummer, Mr. Joshua Riddle, who wanted his parents to give him a double pedal. Chris responded with a letter to Mr. and Mrs.



Riddle encouraging them to help their son earn some money for the pedal, noting that, "Anything that you work for is twice as sweet as anything handed to you." Although I don't know much about Chris's drumming (something I will remedy soon), it's clear that he was an excellent choice to write a column for *MD*. Thanks for giving space in your magazine for this kind of connection with the drum community.

**Beau Brinkerhoff**

## DROPPED BEATS

The photo credit of Lars Ulrich on the Next Month page of the November issue was credited incorrectly. It was taken by Alex Solca.

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# WHAT'S YOUR SOUND?

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## Medeski Martin & Wood's **Billy Martin**

### Loose Grooves And Open Expression



Heinz Kronberger

I've been a huge fan of your drumming since I first heard you with MMW on the 1996 album *Shack-man*. The grooves on that disc—as well as on many others—are super funky, yet loose and organic. I also love some of the more avant-garde things you've done on your own solo records and with MMW. Do you have any suggestions on how I could tighten up my groove without losing an earthy feel? And what are some ways to practice playing free-form?

**Todd Scott**

Thanks for the nice words, Todd. You can "tighten up" your groove by putting more energy into the phrasing of what you're grooving on. If you have some really deep rhythmic phrases happening, the time feel follows. I believe that it's not a metronome that dictates a tempo but a "clave" or a "key" rhythm. And, you can change your tempo (i.e., slow down or speed up) right in the middle of your groove and still keep those heads nodding along.

The "earthy" feel is influenced by the sound. What kind of sounds are you using, and how do you get the sound out of your instruments? You have to put your own sound and style into the music. For me, it's the strange buzzes, dark tones, and unusual "found" objects. I also like older instruments that have personality. Sometimes I just loosen my snares to an extreme so that the wires are barely audible. Then when I hit the drum, it sounds dark, mysterious, and open.

How you record or amplify your instrument is also a big factor. If you have good sounds, the engineer doesn't really need to change levels or EQ settings. He or she just needs to use some nice mics that have that natural sound you like.

When you play free, it's also about the phrasing or the musical ideas. You have to make sure not to "practice" playing free—just "play" free. Every time you sit down on your instrument, take five or ten minutes to play a new piece of music. You are the composer. Some analogies I like to use when composing on the spot are:

- 1)** Think of the wind in the trees and play *that*. There are infinite ways that the wind blows through a tree, and there are infinite trees to use as an example. Or play what it sounds like in a busy city.
- 2)** Look at a photograph or a painting and play *that*. The picture has a form, color arrangement, and a feeling. You just need to react to it and see what your first impression sounds like.
- 3)** Watch a movie, turn off the sound, and play along to it. React to it, follow it, influence it.... Just play whatever comes to mind. If you put your heart into these ideas, it will inform your free playing.

My last suggestion is to not think ahead of yourself. Be in the moment, follow what comes out, and try to ride it like a surfer rides the waves.

I hope this gives you some idea of where I'm coming from. I wish you all the success in the world!

For more on Billy, including supplementary audio for his book *Riddim: Claves Of African Origin*, and information on how to order his solo percussion DVD, Billy Martin In Concert, go to [www.billymartin.net](http://www.billymartin.net).

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# Rise Against's Brandon Barnes

## Floor Tom Tips And Warm-Up Hints



I've enjoyed your drumming in Rise Against for several years, and I have a couple questions. First, I love beats that have a lot of floor tom riding, but I've never been happy with the sound I've been able to get out of any 16" floor tom. Your drums always sound great, and I was wondering if you could give me any tuning tips, specifically for a lot of heavy, fast tom work. Also, what kind of warming up do you do before you play a show? Thanks.

**Andy Venture**

Hello Andy, thanks for listening. When playing drumbeats in Rise Against that utilize riding the floor tom, I usually play 8th notes with a quarter-note feel. This gives it feel and groove. As for tuning a floor tom, I always try to find the lowest possible tension at which the drum will produce a nice tone. The lower the better. It gives your beats a fat foundation.

Begin by making sure the head is seated properly on the drum and has been stretched to get rid of slack. Do this by tightening up the tuning rods three or four full turns and putting pressure in the center using your palm. Detune the head back down until the tuning rods are finger tight. Next, tune the floor tom to the desired pitch using the cross-tuning method, always tightening the tuning rod farthest away from the one you just tightened. When you have reached your desired pitch, press down in the middle of the head with your finger and look around the edges of the head. If you see

wrinkles, tighten the tuning rods closest to the wrinkle until they're gone. Each time you do this, go around the drum again and make sure your tuning rods are the same pitch. I do this for top and bottom heads, and I tune both to the same pitch. I repeat this process until the floor tom is as low as it will go and still sounds fat and huge.

To warm up for a show I start out with three basic rudiments. First I do single-stroke rolls, slow to fast as I warm up and get loose, making every hit even and the same volume. Next I do double-stroke rolls. I use this rudiment to warm up wrists and fingers so they can work together during the show. I start by using only my wrists to get the doubles, again making sure every hit is even and of the same volume. Then I go to just fingers, doing the same thing. I end my warm-up with the good ol' paradiddle. I again go slow to fast, using wrists and fingers, until I am warm and comfortable. Hope this helps.

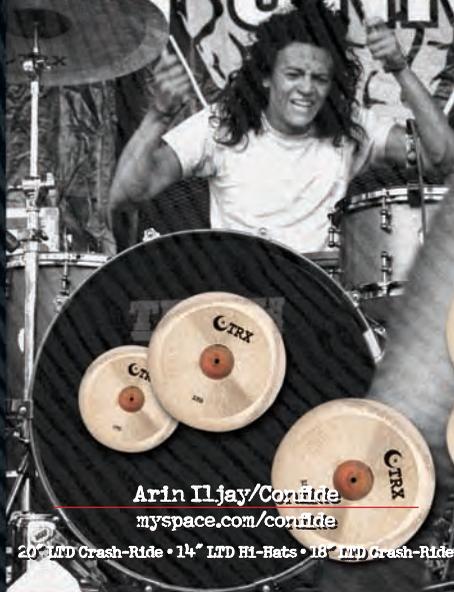
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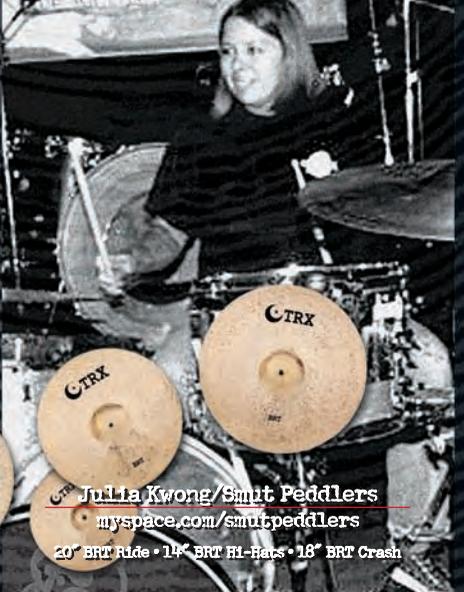
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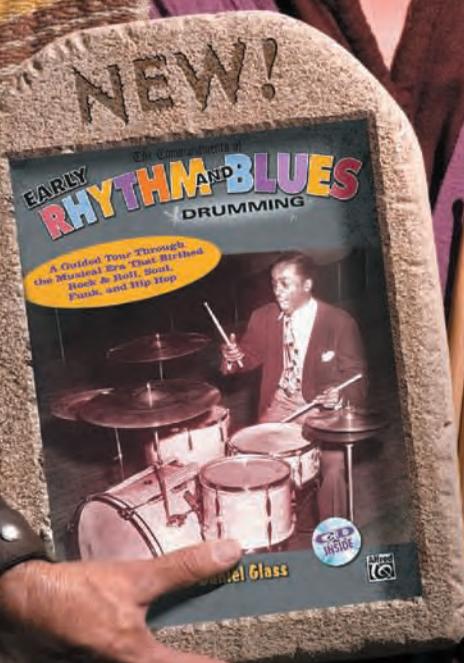
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## Weezer's Pat WILSON Hearing Red

**W**hen Weezer entered the studio to track their sixth album, the band was committed to finding a fresh approach to their recording experience. "Recording *The Red Album* was a struggle in some ways," admits drummer Pat Wilson. "The songs on the last record were good, and the single, 'Beverly Hills,' was very successful. But the process had become stale. We felt like we had to 'grow the band' and somewhat retool how we approach music. From my perspective, that had to do with how the drums are captured. I don't like the idea of a mix drastically changing what happens in the studio. If it sounds good to *my ears* while I'm playing the drums, then that's what I want to *hear* on the finished recording."

*The Red Album* features many new twists for Weezer, including each member contributing to songwriting and lead vocals, and switching up instruments. "In the process, that made *all* the difference," confesses Pat, who plays synthesizer and lead guitar on several tracks.

The drummer also wrote and sings lead on "Automatic," on which he plays an un-muffled Ludwig Vistalite kit, a nod to his favorite drummer, John Bonham. "I love the atmosphere of Bonham's drums—how he thought of the kit as *one instrument*—and how he's so laid back in the cut. My feel, naturally, is to be behind the beat. And I just happen to enjoy what drums actually sound like in a room when you put up a couple of mics. To me, nothing sounds better than that."

Wilson is especially proud of his playing on "The Greatest Man That Ever Lived," an epic composition featuring ten different styles of music. "That song is a theme with variations," he explains. "Each section was modeled on a different artist, and I just played the drums in the way I felt was appropriate musically. The chorale section,

**"I don't like the idea of a mix drastically changing what happens in the studio."**

where we're all singing over the marching snare, was going to be edited out at the last minute, but I said, 'No, you've *got to* have that part!' I remember sitting in the mastering room actually inserting my snare drum *back* into the master," he laughs. "Of everyone, my parts on that song changed the least. I felt like I had to be the thread that tied it all together."

**Gail Worley**

## Indie Rock Legend/ Heavy Metal Drummer

### J. MASCIS A Double Life



There's J. Mascis, singer, speaker-shredding guitarist, and chief architect of Dinosaur Jr.'s very loud and deceptively tuneful sound. Then there's J. Mascis, balls-to-the-wall hard rock drummer for Witch, and hoarder of 28" kick drums.

"My first was a marching drum I ordered from Ludwig," Mascis says of his love for drumming's equivalent to the Marshall stack. "Then I ordered a whole kit from DW in the '90s with a 28" kick. Later I found a Ludwig Vistalite kit on eBay with two 28s. That was a pretty wild find."

A 28" kick from another DW kit Mascis owns can be heard on Witch's most recent album, *Paralyzed*. Said drum provides a mammoth heartbeat that, with the help of four strategically placed microphones (two in front, one inside, one behind the throne), cuts through the haze and sludge of songs like "Sweet Sue" and the aptly titled "Psychotic Rock."

All signs—from the atmospheric sound of J.'s kit to his slow-to-uncoil fills—point to Black Sabbath's Bill Ward as a main inspiration. Right era, wrong drummer, or *drummers*, actually. "My big three were Ian Paice, John Bonham, and Charlie Watts," Mascis says of his drumming influences. "I was trying to somehow get my style to be in between those three. Sabbath was a sound to me; no one player stood out, really. With Zeppelin, I would totally focus on the drums."

Mascis says that drumming for Witch, a band on a small indie label that doesn't rehearse and doesn't really tour, is a different animal compared to his days drumming on Dinosaur Jr.'s Warner Bros. releases in the '90s, when label executives would question tempo surges on singles like "Feel The Pain."

"I would hear from some record company guys, 'If it's not on a click, the tempo variations disturb people.' I'd be like, 'What are you talking about?' I don't know how that became the standard. I've never been into the click thing. I don't understand what's so great about having songs be the same speed all the way through."

"A lot of Indian music always speeds up," J. adds convincingly. "That's how you know you're at the end, when they kick into the fast part."

**Patrick Berkery**

## D.H. PELIGRO

### The Undead Kennedy

Though legendary hardcore punks The Dead Kennedys are still officially together (minus frontman Jello Biafra), they're currently enjoying a self-imposed hiatus. Drummer D.H. Peligro is keeping himself occupied with his solo band, dubbed Peligro. But with the Dead Kennedys, things never go truly quietly. "We just took some time out to work on our own projects," D.H. says. "We recently got a gold record in America after all these years, and one in the UK too. That was for the compilation album *Give Me Convenience Or Give Me Death*."

The talismanic tub-thumper insists he still enjoys getting behind the kit to play those old songs. "I know the songs," he says, "so it's kind of like putting new energy into them. Back in the day, I had really shitty drums and made do with what I had, except for when we went on tour and we'd rent a kit. After all these years, I have top-of-the-line stuff, and it makes things easier. And I don't play those songs the same as I used to—I switch it up. I now have a double kick pedal, plus I add cymbals and stuff. When we were getting paid on tour, you never knew when that money was going to stop. As a result, I rarely changed the heads on my drums."

Though he fronts Peligro, whose album *The Sum Of Our Surroundings* recently won the Rock Album of the Year award from the American

DK 2008: D.H. Peligro, Klaus Flouride, Skip, East Bay Ray



Independent Music Awards, D.H. finds it tough to give total control of the drumming over to someone else. "I'm the guitarist and frontman in my band," he says. The drummer is a guy named Steve Wilson. It's hard to give control of the drums over to anyone else, which is why I have to make sure I have a really good drummer. I try not to pay attention, but always in the back of my mind I'm hearing what the drummer is playing. If I don't have complete confidence in a drummer, it drives me out of my mind."

**Brett Callwood**



Matt DeLiron

## Blacklist Union's **Sean DAVIDSON** Switching Things Around

**A**t a time when rapid-fire double kick and Pro Tooled precision are practically the boilerplate for modern metal drumming, Blacklist Union's Sean Davidson takes a different approach: concentrating on simplified, groove-based playing while adding an aspect of old-fashioned rock showmanship to his band's explosive performances.

"Many of my drumming influences—from John Bonham to Tommy Lee and Morgan Rose—are also amazing showmen," says Davidson. "That's what I go for live. I love doing spins and adding big arm swings rather than *just* sitting back there and keeping the beat."

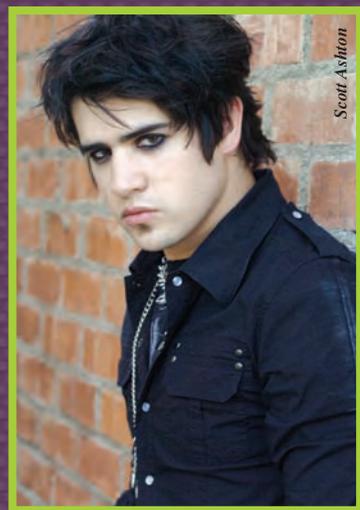
Despite enjoying the flash aspects of rock drumming, Sean describes himself as a song-oriented player who's conscious of not stepping on the vocals.

"Tony, our singer, has a very unique voice and writes great lyrics," the drummer explains. "As far as the drum parts on our new CD, *Breakin' Bread With The Devil*, I tried to just lock in a solid groove and let him tell a story over it, putting in beats that would get people dancing."

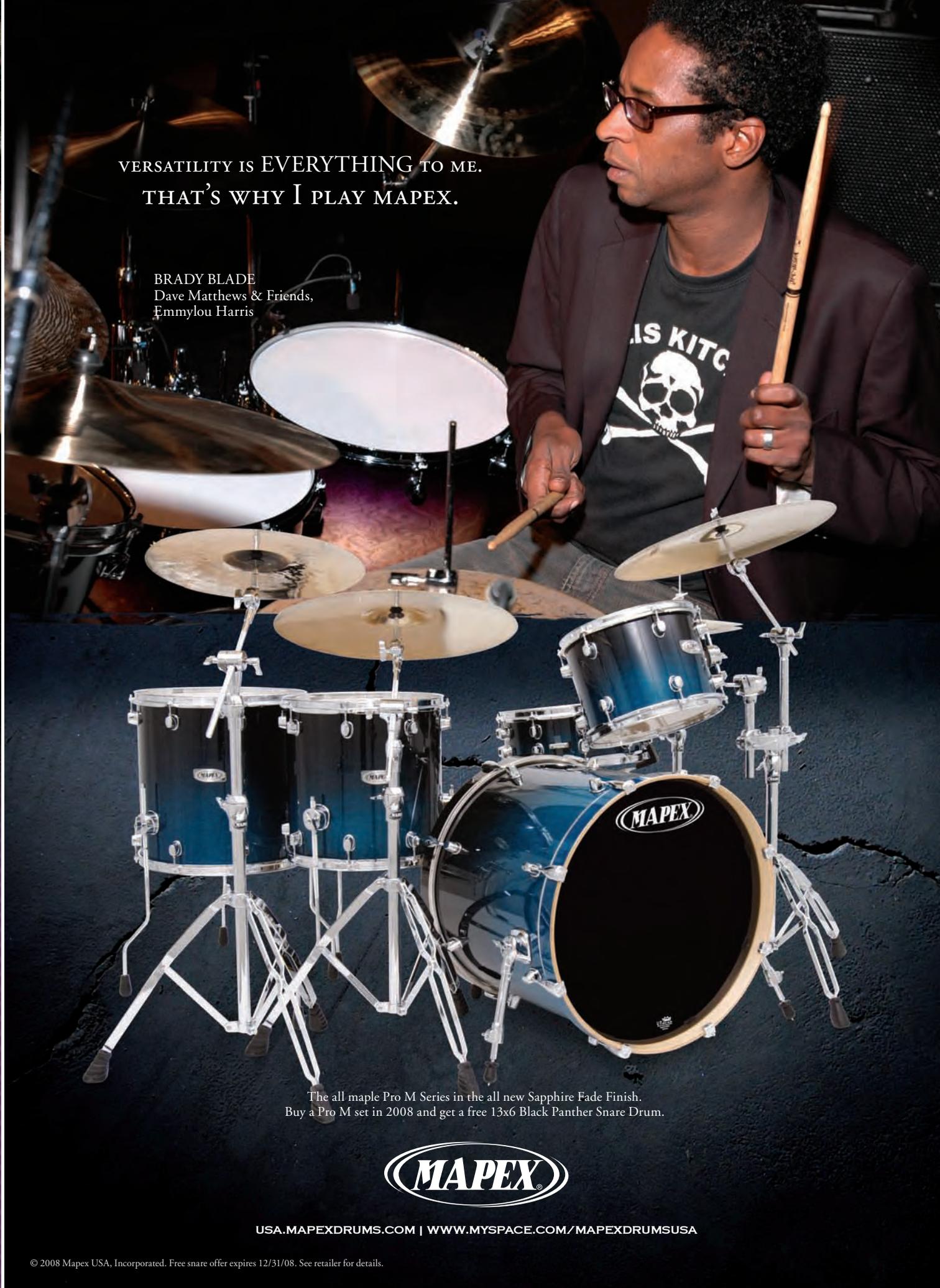
Sean explains that avoiding some of the common metal drumming techniques better serves his approach to the kit. "Being a solid blast beat crazy 16th-note drummer never appealed to me. I like double bass as much as the next guy, but my style came more from listening to White Zombie and Nine Inch Nails—heavy stuff with a lot of rock 'n' roll guitars over it. It's heavy but there's a lot of groove to it."

Sean plays a DW kit with small toms—a 10" rack and 12" and 14" floor toms, the positioning of which he's recently rearranged. "When I'd be doing a four-on-the-floor type of pattern," Davidson offers, "where I'd usually have my 12" tom, I thought, 'Why don't I put my 14" there?' because I was playing that one more anyway. Now I play 10", 14", *then* 12" coming down, and I like the setup a lot better that way. On the song 'Come Inside,' what might normally be a pretty basic fill sounds just a bit different because I've switched the toms without having to do any awkward sticking across them."

**Gail Worley**



Scott Ashton

A man with glasses, wearing a dark blazer over a black t-shirt with a skull and 'IS KITC' text, is playing a blue Mapex drum set. The drum set includes a bass drum, snare drum, and two toms, all in a 'Sapphire Fade Finish'. The man is holding drumsticks and looking towards the left. The background is dark with some stage lighting.

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# UPDATE NEWS

Multi-instrumentalist **Ryan Wilson** is playing drums and everything else on The Love Willows' debut, *Hey! Hey!*.

**David Northrup** can be heard on new releases from several Canadian country artists, including Chris Henderson's *Follow The Signs*, Jamie Warren's *Right Here Right Now*, and Sean Hogan's *Conspiracy Radio*. Northrup also co-produced and played on Carolyn West's *Here I Am* and he can be heard on April Taylor's new single, "When You Come From Nothing."

**Keith McCray** is touring with Ryan Shaw.

**Bobby Cochran, Paul Revelli, Chris Sandoval, Don Baldwin, Harold Jones, Jeff Simon,** and **Taya Perry** are all on Elvin Bishop's latest, *The Blues Rolls On*. The disc also features guests B.B. King, Derek Trucks, and Warren Haynes, among others.

R&B great **Gerry Brown** spent the summer playing dates with Diana Ross.

**Jim Keltner** is on B.B. King's latest, *One Kind Favor*.

**Johnny Barbata** is on Rhino Records' re-mastered *Songs For Beginners*, Graham Nash's first solo album from 1971.

**Julien Blais** is on The Stills' new one, *Oceans Will Rise*. Former drummer Dave Hamelin is now on guitar.

**Oy Fisherman** is on The Mommyheads' *You're Not A Dream*.

**Gorden Campbell** has been touring with Jessica Simpson.

**Alex Acuña** is on Boz Scaggs' latest CD of standards and ballads, *Speak Low*.

**Patrick Johansson** is on Yngwie Malmsteen's latest, *Perpetual Flame*.

The Sway Machinery's debut EP features **Brian Chase** of The Yeah Yeah Yeahs on drums.

**Martin Parker** is on the road with Patti Loveless.

**Victor Lewis** is on *The Scene*, the new one by The Stryker/Slagle Band.

**Peter Erskine** can be heard on Vince Mendoza's *Blauklang*.



Rick Markin

**Dennis Leeftang** is on Guns N' Roses guitarist Bumblefoot's new CD, *Abnormal*.

**Steve Johns** is on Bill Moring & Way Out West's *Spaces In Time*.

**Bobby Rondinelli** is on The Lizards' new DVD, *4.2.11*, and CD, *Archeology*.

**Vin Scialla** has been touring with Alessandra Belloni, Mission On Mars, Indian master mandolinist Snehashish Mozumder, and Diet Kong. Vin's educational drum DVD/book *Drumteacher.com* is now available through totalvid.com.

**Steve Williams** plays on saxophonist Bob Mover's new one, *It Amazes Me...*

**David Rogers-Berry** is on *Broken Hymns, Limbs, And Skin* by O'Death.

**Aaron Scott** appears on Billy Harper's *Blueprints Of Jazz, Vol. 2*.

**Kevin Figueiredo** is on the new one from Extreme, *Saudades De Rock*.

**Clarence Penn** is on Marshall Gilkes' *Lost Words*.

**Damon Che** and Don Caballero have a new CD out, *Punkgasm*.

**Montez Coleman** is on *Axiom* by Bill Cantrall.

**Alberto De Grandis** appears on Italian prog band D.F.A.'s *4th*.

**Matt Wilson** is on Bruno Råberg's *Lifelines*.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

**Jimmy Cobb** (Miles Davis): 1/20/29  
**Ed Shaughnessy** (*The Tonight Show*): 1/29/29  
**Grady Tate** (soul/jazz great): 1/14/32  
**Nick Mason** (Pink Floyd): 1/27/45  
**Aynsley Dunbar** (rock legend): 1/10/46  
**Bob Moses** (out-jazz great): 1/28/48  
**Corky Laing** (Mountain): 1/28/48  
**George "Funky" Brown** (Kool & The Gang): 1/15/49  
**Eddie Bayers** (Nashville studio great): 1/28/49  
**Phil Collins** (Genesis/solo): 1/31/51  
**Paul Wertico** (ex-Pat Metheny): 1/5/53  
**Fred White** (ex-Earth Wind & Fire): 1/13/55  
**Dave Weckl** (solo artist): 1/8/60  
**Jeff "Tain" Watts** (jazz great): 1/20/60  
**Curt Bisquera** (sessions): 1/3/64  
**Steven Adler** (ex-Guns N' Roses): 1/22/65  
**Dave Grohl** (Foo Fighters): 1/14/69  
**Jason Bittner** (Shadows Fall): 1/11/70  
**Jon Wysocki** (Staind): 1/17/71  
**Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson** (The Roots): 1/20/71

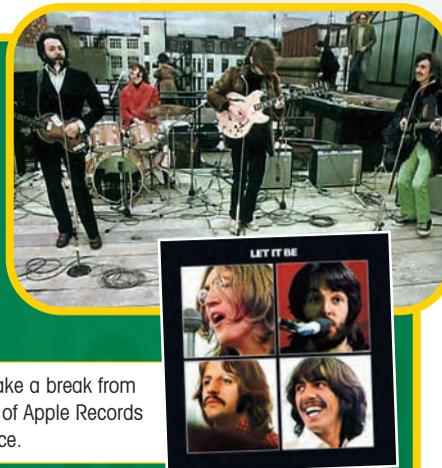
## DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

**Gene Krupa** was born on 1/15/09;  
**Max Roach** was born on 1/10/24.  
**Cozy Cole** passed away on 1/29/81,  
**John Guerin** on 1/5/04, Jefferson  
Airplane's **Spencer Dryden** on 1/10/05,  
and Traffic's **Jim Capaldi** on 1/28/05.

**1/30/69:** The Beatles (with **Ringo Starr**) take a break from recording *Let It Be* and head up to the roof of Apple Records in London to give their final live performance.

**1/12/95:** Led Zeppelin is inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame at the annual induction dinner. Steven Tyler and Joe Perry of Aerosmith and Neil Young join the founding members along with **Jason Bonham** and Page/Plant drummer **Michael Lee** on the Zep classic "When The Levee Breaks."





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ddrum USA kit pictured in *Black Parisian* Maple Finish. Hardware not included.

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## Practice Away From The Kit

I'm a medic deployed to Iraq for one year. I've been playing the drums for seven years, but now I'm having difficulty practicing. What advice can you provide to help keep me motivated to practice?

SFC(P) Alan Cotton

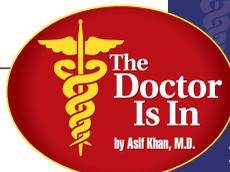
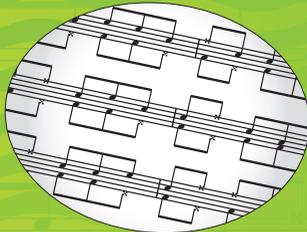
Very few of us are lucky enough to be able to maintain a steady practice regimen. Work, school, parenthood, and in your case military service are all life factors that demand a lot of time and energy from our daily lives. But just because you can't spend eight hours a day behind your drumset working through the advanced systems in *The New Breed* doesn't mean that you can't continue to develop as a musician and as a drummer. You just need to be creative and come up with ways to work on drum-related skills as you're doing other things throughout the day. Here are a few suggestions:

**1)** If you have a lot of downtime in your day—like when you're traveling on a bus or train, or waiting to board an airplane—try Jojo Mayer's clapping routine (which is explained in detail in his amazing DVD *Secret Weapons For The Modern Drummer*). To do this, hold your palms together in an upright "prayer" position. Then flex your wrists back so that your hands are making a "V" shape. From there, begin clapping your hands together in a repeating, relaxed manner. Doing this for several minutes each day will give you the same chops-building results as playing on a practice pad with sticks.

**2)** If your day involves a lot of walking, focus on the rhythm of your steps. Use that steady tempo as a metronome and snap, sing, or visualize many types of rhythms over top. This type of practice is a great way to work on polyrhythms (like three against two, or five against four), since walking is a naturally steady motion that won't be easily thrown off tempo while you figure out different rhythms with your hands, fingers, or voice.

**3)** Visualize yourself behind your drumset playing with your favorite band. Antigone Rising drummer Dena Tauriello wrote a great article on this type of mental practice. (You can check out some of her suggestions on page 128 of this issue.)

**4)** Listen attentively to as much new music as possible, and revisit your favorite albums with a more detailed, critical ear. Every time you listen to something, pick out at least one thing that you really like about the drum performance, be it a crazy fill, a creative beat, or the drummer's unique sense of time and feel. Then try to figure out how the drummer did that thing. Air drum or sing along with the music, or just listen to it over and over until it becomes a part of your own vocabulary. The key is to internalize the idea so that it can come out naturally in your playing when you get back to your drumset.



## Alleviating Foot Pain

Hi, I seem to have developed a callus on the ball of my bass drum foot, which is giving me a lot of pain. An article in the July 1981 issue of *Modern Drummer* explained that this has to do with the metatarsal bones and repetitive movement. I don't play loud or hard, and my technique is good. Could it just be my footwear? Is there anything I can do to fix or alleviate this problem before it gets worse?

D Jones

The answer seems easy enough, but this symptom, called metatarsalgia, can be complicated. One of the most common causes is overuse of the joint. This leads to an alteration in normal biomechanics causing an abnormal weight distribution among the first three metatarsal heads, or the ball of your foot. There are, however, many causes of this symptom. These can include prominent metatarsal heads, tight toe extensor tendons, weak toe flexor tendons, hammertoe deformity, a tight Achilles tendon, excessive pronation (rolling) of your foot inwards, equinus deformity (similar to clubfoot), and a high arch. Some individuals have a short first metatarsal bone, called a Morton toe, which abnormally shifts weight to the second metatarsal, causing pain. With prolonged pressure from the shift in weight, thick, painful calluses can be formed and may be worsened if you're wearing poorly fitted shoes. Please remember, there are many other causes for metatarsal pain, including arthritis, gout, and stress fractures.



With all of these possible causes, how do you find out what is the root of your discomfort? After a complete physical exam, imaging studies like an x-ray, an MRI, or ultrasound may help identify the cause. In your case, an F-Scan may be useful. This is an objective measurement system used to assess plantar pressures of the foot, identify the location of peak pressures, and help with the molding and placement of orthotic devices such as metatarsal pads or arch supports.

After being fitted with metatarsal pads, you must refrain from any strenuous activity, including drumming, until you are pain free. (No cheating!) Physical rehabilitation, new shoes, and ibuprofen are helpful. Swimming is an excellent exercise for maintaining physical conditioning while the patient is in a restricted weight-bearing phase of healing. Once activity resumes, stretching and a proper warm-up routine are paramount, with optimal periods of rest during and between shows/rehearsals. If none of these methods work, surgery or nerve blocks may be required.



**Dr. Asif Khan** is a board-certified internist, specializing in allergy and immunology, with a private practice in northeast Ohio. He also directs the nonprofit organization Passion And Profession ([www.passionandprofession.com](http://www.passionandprofession.com)), which focuses on career counseling and education. Dr. Khan has been an avid drummer for twenty years and is currently performing with Johnny Hi-Fi ([www.johnnyhi-fi.com](http://www.johnnyhi-fi.com)).

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# PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

## DNA Fusion Drums



I must admit that I was very curious about the quality of the Peace DNA drumkit when I was assigned this review. I have frequently seen ads for it and unfairly glanced over them with a less-than-curious eye. So as I awaited the kit, I did a little research, visiting drum chat rooms and scoping out the gossip.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that the feedback on these drums was mostly positive. I eventually ended up on the Peace Web site, where I discovered that Peace Musical has been manufacturing drums and percussion—as well as supplying many of the major drum companies with parts and accessories—for over thirty years.

The sprayed Atomic Sparkle lacquer finishes on the DNA kits

are an impressive high-end feature. The review kit finish was in Atomic Gunmetal, an attractive silver/gray metal-flake lacquer, which is nicely complemented by black powder-coated hardware and a matching black non-ported resonant bass drum head to create a dark, rich overall aesthetic.

The shells of the DNA kit are made of nine plies of North American maple. The plies are extra thin (.8 mm), which Peace refers to as “micro-plyes.” The inner ply of each shell is finely sanded, and the edges are cut with a dual 45° bearing edge. I found several of the bearing edges to be a bit rough. But it didn’t seem to affect the tone or tunability, as the drums were super-resonant and easy to dial in to precise pitches. All of the drums



**THE INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL DNA (DYNAMIC-NEURO-AUDIOLOGY) FUSION DRUMKIT** that was sent for review consists of an 18x20 bass drum, 8x10, 9x12, and 12x14 toms, and a 5½x14 snare drum. The kit also includes a complete hardware package featuring a snare stand, a bass drum pedal, a hi-hat stand, a straight cymbal stand, and a boom stand.



**AFTER TESTING THE DNA TOMS WITH THE SUPPLIED CLEAR SINGLE-PLY HEADS,** We tried them with single-ply coated heads to hear the variation in tonality. The coated heads added a bit of warmth and focus to the tone.

are fitted with low-mass Duo-Tune lugs. The toms and snare drum come mounted with standard triple-flange hoops.

The DNA badge looks a bit sci-fi, and the name “Dynamic-Neuro-Audiology” implies a somewhat technically advanced design. So, let’s step into the lab and dissect the components of this interesting drumkit.

### Well-Rounded Bass Drum

The 18x20 bass drum produced a tight, focused tone. The thin, non-ported front head and the 2-ply Powerstroke-style clear batter head created a full-bodied punch with just enough open tone to avoid having to use any internal muffling. This drum can be tuned tightly for an excellent open jazzy sound, or loosened for an effectively deep, punchy kick. The bass drum spurs had a bit of an “inexpensive” feel to them, but in the amount of time I had to work with them they performed well.

### Punchy And Articulate Toms

All of the toms on the DNA Fusion kit are mounted on Gauger-style suspension rims. This mounting system allows for more shell resonance than traditional through-the-shell mounts. But when compared to several of today’s more advanced suspension mounting designs, it doesn’t offer the same ease of use when changing heads.

The rack toms are mounted from the bass drum via ball & socket-style arms. I was impressed with the stability and functionality of the arms—I was able to position the toms exactly where I wanted them—but I did notice a bit of play in the L-shaped arm where it connects into the ball joint. This might turn into a bigger problem down the road, as the hardware takes on more wear and tear.

The single-ply clear heads used on top and bottom of these drums allow the shells to really ring. I found all three toms easy to tune in both high and low ranges. They sounded bright, punchy, and articulate, and they sang out as well as any high-end maple-shelled drums I’ve tested.

### Bright And Cutting Snare

The 5½x14 maple snare drum has a versatile tuning range, and the single-ply coated batter head produced clean articulation. The somewhat low-mass throw-off operated smoothly, allowing me to dial in just the right amount of snare tension with minimal effort. The overall character of this drum is bright and cutting when tuned tightly. Lower tunings don’t provide the beefy and fat tone I was hoping for, but the overall tuning range was sufficient enough for most applications.

### Familiar And Functional Hardware

The hardware package that came with the DNA Fusion kit is heavy-duty and durable. The straight and boom cymbal stands, hi-hat, and snare stands offer double-braced legs that I found to be similar in design to the hardware that Remo has offered in the past with their drumkits. The hi-hat stand and bass drum pedal took a bit of adjusting to achieve a comfortable feel. Beginner and intermediate-level players might not notice the subtleties that keep this hardware from reaching pro status, but a seasoned pro will more than likely want to upgrade the pedals in this package.

### Summary

The high-end lacquer finish, powder-coated hardware, and pro-level suspended tom mounting system add up to an impressive overall visual package. But at the core of what makes the DNA kit most attractive are the highly resonant and beautiful-sounding maple shells. The smaller shell sizes keep this kit from having the power for hard rock or heavy metal, but it’s an excellent setup for almost any other style of music, especially jazz, funk, and hip-hop. The pedals might be the only weak link in the DNA chain. So if you’re in the market for an intermediate- to pro-level kit, give Peace a chance and check out these fine-sounding drums.

### THE NUMBERS

Peace Five-Piece DNA Fusion Drumset  
(Including hardware): \$2,599  
[www.peacemusical.com](http://www.peacemusical.com)



## K Custom Dry Complex Ride II

Everything has a shelf life. That's one of the reasons Zildjian quietly removed the original K Custom Dry Complex ride from their catalog. Designed by jazz giant Bill Stewart and Zildjian's Paul Francis, the original 22" KCDC ride was an ornery, shrill, some say *cantankerous* cymbal. For Bill Stewart fans, it was a real godsend—audacious and bold.

The gig was not up, however. Turns out that jazz great Adam Nussbaum paid Paul Francis a visit, toting an old Turkish K. The hap-hazard manufacturing process of yesteryear, consisting of sledge hammering a stack of flat bronze plates against an upturned iron die, had left this one (probably near the top of the pile) with a plateau bell, rather than a peak. Adam implored Paul to recreate this bell to see if it might introduce mystic overtones into modern Zildjian Ks.

Bill Stewart got wind of all this and, long story short, a year later Zildjian introduced the K Custom Dry Complex II. And whereas the original KCDC was available in 22" diameter only, Zildjian now introduced a 20" and a 24" to the line. Can an "imperfect" bell give birth to a perfect ride? Let's see.

### Similar But Different

The KCDC II cymbals share identifying features found in the first series: a high profile, intensive hybrid hammering on the tops ("hybrid" referring to varying crater sizes and asymmetrical patterns), and fine, shallow lathe grooves. Furthermore, the undersides of the 22" and 24" feature the same unlathed edge portion. The interruption of lathing lines at the point of maximum vibration is intended as a calming feature—almost as if someone had placed adhesive tape lightly over the area. To achieve a similar effect, the bottom of the 20" has no such unlathed band but is given a quick "scratch pass" on the lathe to remove encrusted metal.

I played the cymbals in my basement testing room and on ten or twelve gigs. I couldn't get over the authentic "old K" feel and tones all three cymbals exhibited.

Some drummers disagreed when they tried these cymbals. They found the 24" ride obtrusive, a little disproportionate in balance, and excessive in low frequencies. They did enjoy the organic feel and interesting tonalities, and agreed that the new cymbals were warmer than the first KCDC series.

### Flirting With A Monster

For its maiden voyage, I took the 24" to a jazz gig in a nineteenth-century cathedral. My first impression was that I was playing an old, aged-in cymbal. The feel was soft, and the edges wobbled a little. Even in this cavernous house of worship, certainly not optimized acoustically, I had no trouble with the large-diameter cymbal. In fact, it was one of few new cymbals I've encountered that I haven't muted with duct tape. The only thing I did was tighten the wing nut a few extra turns, thus clamping the cymbal tighter on the stand.



### THE NUMBERS

K Custom Dry Complex Ride II:  
\$559 for 20"  
\$663 for 22"  
\$769 for 24"  
[www.zildjian.com](http://www.zildjian.com)

This may sound odd, but the 24" played like a 22". I attribute this to a high profile, which "sucks in" some of the surface area (think of collapsing an umbrella). That higher profile resulted in a higher fundamental pitch than is ordinarily found in 24" cymbals, resulting in good projection. In addition, it offered many sweet spots for tip work or shank accents across the bow (not the edge). The shank tone was so addictive that I overused the effect at first, while the high profile seemed to foster stick articulation, even at fast tempos. The blend of lows and highs constituted a pleasant textural backdrop on several gigs: acoustic jazz, folk, and rockabilly.

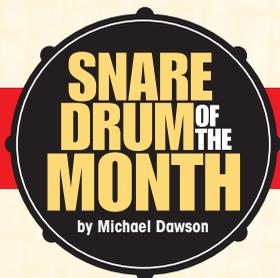
In an electric guitar/drums duo, the 24" and the 20" (as main and auxiliary rides) required minimal mics (two Neuman U87 overheads and an AKG D12 or an ATM 25 facing the kick). The cymbal sat perfectly in the mix without fiddling with levels. The low wash was something I'd sought but had never captured to this extent. I own several fifty-year-old Turkish cymbals but never resorted to them while the 24" KCDC II was at hand.

### Barks But Doesn't Bite...As Much

The 22" was dry and trashy, which is in keeping with the original series (I played it side-by-side with the original medium-thin and thin models), while the squashed bell provided a warming influence. Shoulder/shank accents were easy to come by, and the bell was eccentric and "Art Blakey-ish." I preferred the 24" as a primary ride, but many drummers will prefer the 22" in the go-to spot, with the larger cymbal as an auxiliary timekeeper.

The 20" ride had a student vowing to return for it in the dead of night. It's lighter and washier than the others, and it's great fun to play, in terms of coaxing out the plentiful dark, hollow undertones. The shank "caw" is a little harder to achieve on this one, so I used it as left-side ride/crash. I asked permission from Zildjian and riveted the 20". With two or three rivets, it sizzled for days!

These are the most outrageous and adventuresome K Zildjians ever to leave the Quincy factory. They speak the language of contemporary jazz and have sufficient articulation to work in many styles. But they probably wouldn't be your best choice for your light cocktail trio or gentle wedding quartet. Should you attack the 24" mercilessly during "Tie A Yellow Ribbon," your employer will likely terminate your employment faster than you can say "flat ride."



## GRETSCH USA 6x13 CHROME OVER BRASS

### HOW'S IT SOUND?

The deeper but smaller-diameter shell of 6x13 snares seem to open up their range. This generally makes it possible to dial in crisp, high-pitched tones that avoid the dreaded tin can "ping," as well as lower-tuned sounds that have a lot of spread and "thump," without losing a sense of clarity and articulation. Of all the 6x13 metal snares I've played (and there have been quite a few coming through our offices recently), Gretsch USA's G-4000 Series chrome over brass version could be the most versatile of the bunch. Out of the box, the batter head was tuned very tight, to the point where the drum sounded like a timbale when the snares were off. Even though I usually tune my snares way below that, I didn't feel the need to loosen the lugs, mainly because of its strong, open, and focused Chad Smith-like "pop."

### WHAT'S IT COST? \$845

Of course, in the interest of being thorough, I also experimented by loosening tension rods to see what else this drum could do. Every little tweak with a drum key brought new and exciting sounds. When I loosened the rods about 1/2 of a turn, I found a cool overtone-heavy "honk," sort of like what you hear on a lot of modern country records. Then just below that, the tone really thickened up, producing a rounder and punchier Black Beauty-type "crack," which is a sound I'm always struggling to find in the studio with many of my larger metal drums. And, surprisingly, at super low tunings it sounded as fat as an 8x14. I didn't expect that from this little guy. [www.gretschdrums.com](http://www.gretschdrums.com)



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## Giovanni Hidalgo 30th-Anniversary Palladium Congas



### THE NUMBERS

Quinto: \$599  
Conga: \$979  
Tumba: \$999  
Super Tumba: \$1,019  
[www.lpmusic.com](http://www.lpmusic.com)

LP clearly spared no expense when they created the Palladium Congas to celebrate Master conguero Giovanni Hidalgo's thirtieth year as an LP artist. Giovanni is arguably the best there is, and ever will be, when it comes to conga playing. And these instruments fully reflect that.

### Bold, Big, And Beautiful

Palladium congas are some of the nicest drums I've ever laid eyes on. They are, quite simply, beautiful. They're what I like to call "furniture quality" pieces of art. Lucky for us drummers, they sound as good as they look.

For review LP sent the entire set of Palladiums, which includes a quinto, a conga, a tumba, and a super tumba. It's important to note that these congas are taller than most others on the market, and they're heavy—very heavy. This gives the drums a very sturdy, well-constructed vibe that makes you feel like you're playing the most luxurious congas available. The downside to this heft is how it affects the drums' portability, but more on that later.

For his original signature Galaxy drums, which came out in the '90s, Giovanni and LP developed the idea of the "requinto" drum. A requinto is smaller than a quinto, the smallest drum in a traditional set of congas. In addition to possessing a freakishly strong bass tone, this drum gives players freedom to explore higher-pitched tones. It's the equivalent of a drumset player adding an 8" tom to his setup.

For his 30th Anniversary drums, Giovanni and LP went the *other* way and came up with the "super tumba." This thing is *gigantic*. And its sound is huge.

The day that the four drums arrived at my apartment, I had to figure out how to transport them to my practice space. My building in Brooklyn, New York isn't huge, but it's also not tiny. In fact, the hallways are quite roomy by some New Yorkers' standards. But when UPS left these drums stacked outside my apartment, the hallway was almost completely blocked. Before the fire marshal came, I had to figure out a way to get these drums to the front of the building so that my car service could get us to my practice studio. In my neighborhood, you can request an SUV when you call in for a ride, and luckily they sent the largest in their fleet.

Once we got to my building and I unloaded these beasts into my studio, I excitedly opened the boxes. Inside were four beautiful congas that were completely assembled and ready to play. LP and Giovanni chose an eight-color striped pattern for these instruments, with colors that represent purity, tranquility, spirituality, prayer, love, fire, sunset, and respect. This vivid pattern can be seen from far away, which would let anyone who might be watching your gig know that you're playing on a set of "Giovanni's." The

drums have hand-picked natural rawhide heads, which are undoubtedly the best skins I've ever seen come "out of the box" with commercially made congas. In fact, the drums didn't even need to be tuned, as they sounded great right away.

### The Sweetest Sound

I played these congas for several days in my studio before I even took a wrench to them. The range of these drums was fairly low—especially right out of the box—but they had such a sweet tone that I was mesmerized by the sound at that tuning.

About a week later, I had to tighten up the heads so I could practice a specific part for a show I was playing, and the drums tuned as easily as you could imagine. All of the hardware, which comes in a nickel finish, worked smoothly, and the drums had such a resonant and warm tone that you could very easily fine-tune the drums to specific pitches. A word about the hardware: Included on each of these drums is an LP Mic Lug that allows for easy close-miking. This is an accessory that LP sells, but it comes as standard equipment on the Palladiums.

The tone of these congas is very resonant, so much so that if you don't have them tuned as a set, so that the pitch intervals

between the drums is pleasing to your ear, one drum's tone can bleed over into the others' in ways you wouldn't expect. In my opinion, this is a good thing (as long as you tune to consonant intervals) because it means that the drums are truly singing as an ensemble. Some may say that this is not a "traditional" conga sound, but I think it's safe to say that these drums, while being traditional instruments, strive to take conga technology to the next level. And this exceptional resonance is an aspect of that. The drums speak so easily that it's really up to the player to control the tone. And in the hands of a skilled player, these drums sound like butter.

### Only The Best

LP and Giovanni Hidalgo have created the conga for the next century—the prototype. These drums are expensive, no doubt, but they're also some of the most visually striking and beautiful-sounding congas out there. These drums are designed for professionals, or for instrument collectors, or for anyone who appreciates beauty and quality craftsmanship. They are the "luxury car" of congas.

## QUICK LOOKS

# Power Wrist Builders

## Metal Practice Sticks

by Mike Ramsey

**P**ower Wrist Builder drumsticks come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and weights, and are made from either aluminum or brass. These products are meant to do exactly what their name says: build a player's wrist strength, as well as that of the fingers and arms (and, in the case of the largest brass pair, your whole body if you choose to squat them Olympic weightlifter-style).

Having played with them for a few weeks, I can say that these sticks *will* give you a serious workout, and that, if used judiciously over the course of a long period of time (such as several years), they will improve your muscular strength and endurance. But the key word here is "judicious." These sticks are not toys, and they *can* be dangerous. So if you decide to practice with them, you must be careful and read the accompanying directions. (The guys at Power Wrist Builders have created a helpful booklet of practice suggestions and exercises to follow.)

When I picked up the Power Wrist Builders from *MD*, I was surprised at the sheer weight of the box they were in. When you put all of the models into one box, you get a feel for just how heavy some of these sticks really are. But aside from being very massive, these tools are meticulously machined down to the smallest detail. The aluminum sticks are color-coded, and the brass sticks are natural brass-colored. As mentioned above, the sticks come in various weights and sizes, as well as shapes. Some models have a hexagonal shaft towards the bottom  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the stick, which creates a ridged gripping surface. The taper and tips of these hex-shaped sticks are rounded.

The first night I had these sticks, I got out my practice pad and started playing around with each pair—including the huge and heavy brass sticks—just to see what they were like. Just this initial test really gave me a workout, and I was amazed how pumped my forearms felt, like I had been lifting weights. When I put down the big brass Wrist Builders and switched back to my regular wooden marching snare sticks, it felt like I was playing my pad with toothpicks! I went to bed thinking that I had just had a great workout, and that my chops were going to be blazing the next day.

When I woke up, however, my forearms and wrists were tight and *extremely* sore, so much so that I had to stop all non-essential playing for



a couple days to recover. I played a couple Afro-Brazilian dance classes, but the rest of the time I laid off of drumming to let my wrists recover.

So what did I do wrong? I didn't read the directions! As I said before, these are serious strength-building tools and must be treated as such. If you read the directions and follow them, they will work for you. If you just grab a pair and aimlessly "chop out" for an hour while watching TV, you could do some serious damage to yourself.

Needless to say, I was more careful the next time I practiced using the Wrist Builders. I began to play with the Wrist Builders just a little each day, so as not to re-injure myself. For pad work, the sticks are great because they allow you to get a harder workout in less time than with regular wood sticks.

In addition to practice tools, these sticks can be used for interesting sound possibilities. Several drumset and percussion players that I know use metal sticks for funky sounds on timbales and other drums. Snare soloist Naoki Ishikawa, from the show *Blas!*, uses a custom-made pair of metal sticks in sections of his solo snare pieces. As a percussionist, you could use the small brass or aluminum sticks as strikers for glockenspiel or crotales, as well as for drums, cymbals, or other metallic instruments.

These sticks are a unique product. For technique development, they are clearly beneficial to have, if not a little dangerous without proper guidance. But if used correctly, over time, they will *definitely* help build your chops. Retail prices range from \$69.95 for  $\frac{3}{8}$ " blue aluminum sticks to \$89.95 for the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " polished brass model.

[www.musicianswarehouse.com](http://www.musicianswarehouse.com)

## Vintage, Custom, Custom Brilliant, And Extreme Series Cymbals

For centuries, Turkish cymbalmakers have been creating some of the finest handmade cymbals in the world. Since their introduction in 2005, Soultone have made a name for themselves as an emerging company with an interesting and diverse lineup of cymbals that some drummers have compared to their favorite sounds from the '50s and '60s. All Soultone cymbals are handmade in Turkey, using old-world traditions.

Reviewed here is a selection from four series in Soultone's catalog, each of which has its own character with sometimes-subtle complexities. These series include Vintage, Custom, Custom Brilliant, and Extreme.

### Vintage Series

Our sampling from the Vintage line included a 20" ride, a 17" crash, and 14" hi-hats. This series features slightly thinner than average weights, with deep lathing, average-sized bells, and extra hand hammering for a dark, rich, and more traditional tone. I found these cymbals to be best suited for jazz and soft rock. To my ear, they're reminiscent—but not carbon copies—of older, collectible cymbals that many people shell out exorbitant amounts of money for.

The 20" ride has a beautiful, dark fundamental tone with an even wash of complex harmonics that sustain for just the right amount of time. The stick sound also has a nice, subtle "click" to it, rather than a "ping." This evenly pitched ride is ideal for use with a small jazz kit or a slightly larger "fusion" setup. I'm not sure that I'd recommend using this cymbal with a large rock drumset where you need a lot of volume, however, as higher velocities caused the tone to wash out. It's much more of a "romantic-sounding" cymbal designed for subtlety, not power.

The 17" crash is a nice match to the ride. When crashed, it gives off a fast burst of energy with an even, warm decay. The sound is an interesting blend of dark complexity and glassy shimmer. It's sort of like the controlled, fast crash sound jazz giant Jeff "Tain" Watts often used with the Branford Marsalis Quartet.

The 14" hi-hats have a balanced, even sound when played closed, open, or with the foot. They lean toward a warmer "old school" aesthetic, without sacrificing clarity and articulation. The foot chick is moderately dark and dense, while stick work elicits a lot of "sizzle," which makes them great for big band-style hi-hat techniques.

### Custom Series

From the Custom series, we tested a 22" ride, a 17" crash, and 14" hats. The tonal grooves on these cymbals are tighter than those on

the Vintages, and they're evenly spaced from the bell to the edge. This series offers a more progressive, modern sound, while still sitting within the "all-around" category. The ride is fairly heavy, and its sound features a thick metallic stick "ping" and a slightly "pangy" wash. If you lay into this cymbal, it really cuts through the mix. The bell has a strong, chime-like quality, supported by a bed of complex overtones.

The 17" crash also teeters on the edge of what would be considered "bright-sounding," because of its strong initial attack. But the complexity in the body of the tone gives the cymbal a much richer characteristic. The sustain is significant, with a long decay that doesn't kick in until after the entire cymbal has had a chance to vibrate. (It's more like the surging sound of waves crashing than the explosive jolt of shattering glass.)

The 14" hi-hats are heavier than most "all-purpose" cymbals, which provides a powerful, cutting attack. These cymbals are most at home in louder environments, but they're not one-dimensional.



There's a lot of tonal variety hiding behind the initial chunky attack of the stick.

### Custom Brilliant Series

The review set of Custom Brilliant series cymbals included a 20" ride, a 17" crash, and 14" hi-hats. These plates are slightly more polished than the Customs, which led them to sounding just a hair mellower with slightly longer decay. All of their bells feature a tight, polished lathing that opens up evenly out to the edge.

The 20" ride is on the heavier side of things, so when you play it you hear a strong high-pitched "ping," followed by a series of overtones that carry through to the next stroke. When played on the bell, this cymbal has a lot of outward projection without sounding abrasive or "clangy," which allows it to cut and blend in louder rock and funk gigs.

The 17" Custom Brilliant crash is bright and explosive, and it has a flow of wash that dies out quickly. The 14" hi-hats are higher-pitched than the Customs, without feeling heavier. These cymbals have great carrying power when played partially opened. They speak with authority.

### Extreme Series

Representing the Extreme Series are a 20" ride, a 16" crash, and 14" hi-hats. Cymbals in this series are completely unlathed at the bell and on the outer 1 1/2"-2". The inner portion is lathed in a traditional manner. This unconventional lathing pattern contributes to the rather complex sound of the series.

The 20" ride's bell, which is unlathed and not polished, has a dry, almost muted voice. Playing the outside 2" section (which is also unlathed) gives similar results, with the addition of a fast-decaying dark and dense wash. When played in the lathed area, there's a beautiful deep tone with a nice blend of overtones that remain balanced beneath the stick attack. The 16" crash bursts with a tight focused attack and a quick decay.

The 14" hats are heavy. However, despite their robust weight, the overall pitch of these cymbals isn't as high as I'd expected. This might be due to the unlathed center and outer portions. In use, these have a solid "chick" when played closed or with the foot. When played partially open, these hats have strong projection with a dense but focused wash.

### Wrap-Up

Soultone's four basic lines (there's a fifth in the works) add some new sounds to the cymbal market without falling into the trap of being too specialized or trendy. Rather, the Vintage, Custom, Custom Brilliant, and Extreme series can be thought of more like slight to moderate variations on time-honored "old world" traditions. So if your musical tastes lean towards the classic flavor of Turkish-made cymbals from forty or fifty years ago, but you need something that can hold its own in today's more extreme playing situations (and you don't want to pay inflated collector's prices), these familiar but modern sounds might be able to satisfy all your needs.

### THE NUMBERS

Prices were unavailable at press time. More info can be found at [www.soultonecymbals.com](http://www.soultonecymbals.com).



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## Hipster And Clubster Cocktail Kits

**W**alk past Metropolitan Drum Company's booth at a drum expo or convention, and Matthew Belyea, owner of the company, just might beckon, "May I mix you up a cocktail...kit?" Belyea, who's based in Arlington, Massachusetts, has been making cocktail drums—and only cocktail drums—since 1998.

For review, Metropolitan supplied us with two setups out of their five models, the Hipster and the Clubster. Let's start with the Hipster.

### Visual Once-Over

The Hipster kit boasts a 5x10 chromed steel snare, a 6x8 rack tom constructed from a Keller 6-ply maple shell, and a 24x14 combination floor tom/bass drum, which has a Keller 10-ply maple

shell. A drum-mounted boom and a closed hi-hat holder, along with a reversed DW 5000 pedal, were also supplied. (Boom and hi-hat holder are sold as optional hardware.) The Hipster's finish was a fire engine-red glass glitter. The lugs are round, in the Camco/DW style. Rims are 2.3-mm Super Hoops. The side snare and tom are securely held in place via deeply crosshatched S-arms that fit into brackets mounted on the floor tom/bass drum.

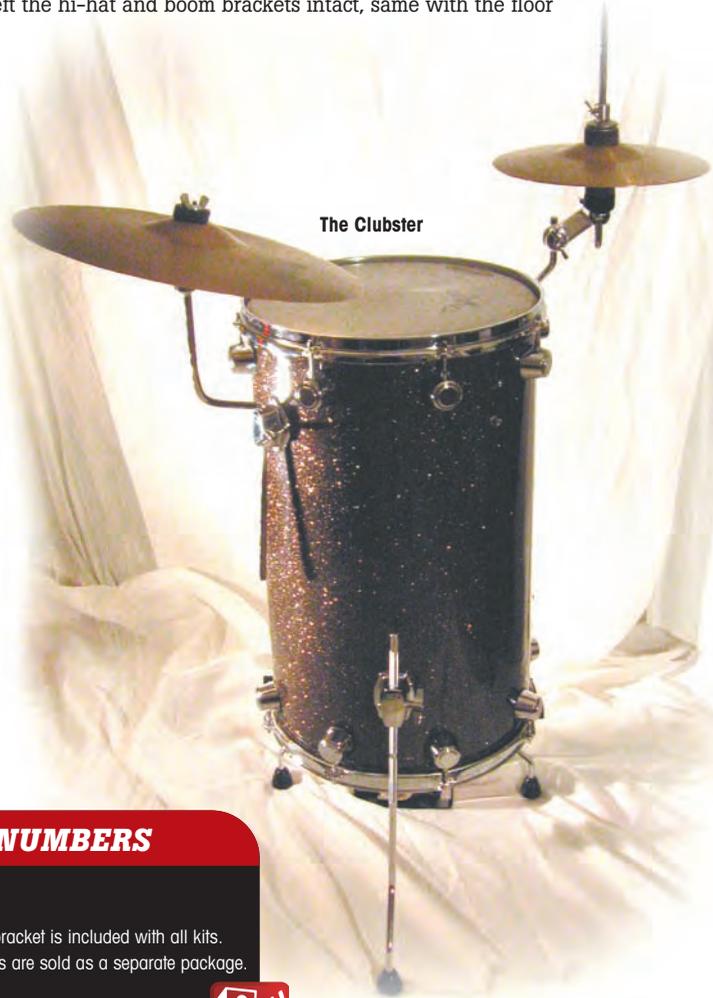
The Hipster kit is solidly built. Surprisingly, adding on the side snare, tom, and cymbals actually *increases* the stabilization of the main drum. The bass pedal can either be attached to a U-shaped bracket bolted to the legs on the main drum, or placed on carpeting under the kit.

It took me about ten minutes to set up this kit. As I stood behind the Hipster, I found all of its components to be within easy reach and at heights and angles that were comfortable. The Hipster—as well as the Clubster—takes up very little floor space, essentially a 2x2 footprint.

There's minimal teardown required to transport the Hipster kit. I left the hi-hat and boom brackets intact, same with the floor



The Hipster



The Clubster

### THE NUMBERS

Hipster (MAP): \$999

Clubster (MAP): \$699

Bass drum pedal and bracket is included with all kits.

Boom and hi-hat stands are sold as a separate package.

[www.metrodrum.com](http://www.metrodrum.com)



tom/bass drums legs. Then I packed the side snare and tom into a djembe bag and loaded everything (easily) into the back of my PT Cruiser. I then headed to the studio to record some sound files for the *Modern Drummer* Web site. If you need portability, this thing's supreme!

In the studio, the audio engineer and I took our time getting each drum to speak in its very best voice. The snare, mounted tom, and floor tom complied quickly. But the kick drum put up a bit of a struggle. After experimenting with muffling material (not used), we found that the supplied hydraulic head, if loosened almost to the point of wrinkling, yielded the best sound. We just had to dance around the fine line between flappy and thumpy.

That night, I used the Hipster in a small club with low ceilings. The drumset performed admirably. It should be noted that the little kit drew quite a few stares from several patrons who couldn't figure out how I was playing full drumset grooves without having a bass drum on the floor.

### The Clubster

In the tradition of some of the early cocktail kits, the Clubster consists of just one 24x14 drum. A snare mechanism is affixed to the underside of the top head, and the bottom head is used for the kick. Like the Hipster, this drum has a 10-ply Keller maple shell. This model came in a charcoal glass-glitter finish, with a closed hi-hat holder, a bass drum pedal bracket, and a reversed Ludwig pedal.

Even though it's just one drum, the Clubster felt heavier than the Hipster, and there was a sense that the entire drum was tighter.

Belyea explained that this drum is heavier due to an internal isolation baffle (among other improvements—patents pending) that eliminates snare buzz that often occurs when you strike the bass drum of a one-drum cocktail kit.

There's a lever on the side of the drum to adjust the snares. It's not a throw-off strainer, per se, but in the "up" position the snares engage tightly, creating an almost marching drum voice. With the lever "down," the snare sound is loud and more open.

Out of the box, both heads on the Clubster were tuned much tighter than they were on the Hipster. When struck, the bass head bottom emitted a muted but punchy sound. And there was zero snare buzz. No adjustments to either head were needed in the studio, or later, when the drum was played at a live gig. For a truly minimalist approach, the Clubster is a great choice: One drum with two sounds—snare and kick.

### Conclusion

If you're looking to "pour yourself some groove," I can't think of a better cocktail kit than those made by Metropolitan. I was able to get most of the sound of a traditional four-piece drumset out of the Hipster without the bulk, weight, and space requirements of a full-size kit. Granted, don't expect the combo floor tom/bass drum to sound like a 28" kick. But I found both kits to be well made with great tone—and they're reasonably priced. And if you're like me, you'll get a kick out of the look people will give you when they can't figure out where you're hiding the kick drum.

To hear some of this month's gear, log on to the Multi-Media page at [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com).



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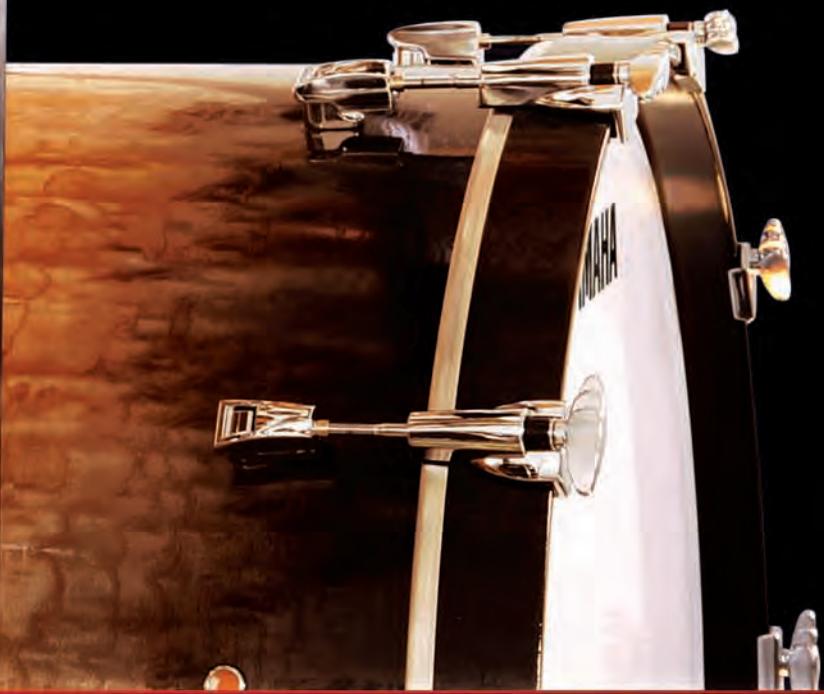
dave weckl

**FOR THOSE SERIOUS ABOUT THEIR MUSIC**



# PHX Series

Consider the bar raised



*shown in Textured Black Sunburst*

for a closer look at the PHX Series, visit [yamahadrums.com](http://yamahadrums.com)

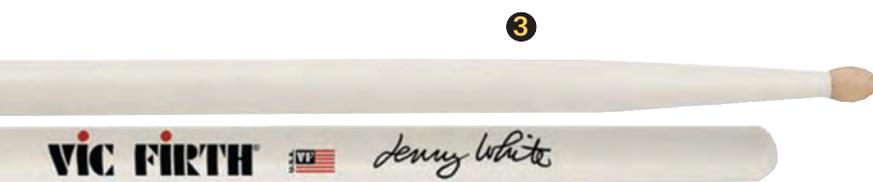
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**NEW AND** **NOTABLE**

# JUST INTRODUCED!

More black cymbals, gold-plated snares, and a multi-faced cajon are just some of the most interesting products announced this month.





5



6



7



8

**1) JOYFUL NOISE's** spun seamless bronze-shelled Majestic Elite snare is electroplated with 24-carat gold from top to bottom and is hand-engraved by John Aldridge. This drum has sharp, bell-flanged bearing edges, vintage-inspired crimped snare beds, solid brass 2.5-mm hoops, and the company's One Touch strainer system, cast in bronze. This high-end snare is said to possess explosive power while delivering a warm and full-bodied tone. (\$7,000)

[joyfulnoisedrumcompany.com](http://joyfulnoisedrumcompany.com)

**2) MAPEX's** birch/walnut hybrid-shell Saturn Series set will be sold as a five-piece shell pack (8x10, 9x12, 12x14, and 14x16 toms, and a 20x22 kick) in two new sparkle lacquer finishes (Galaxy Fade and Supernova Burst). The 5.8mm tom shells are composed of four interior walnut plies and two exterior plies of birch. The 7.2-mm bass drum is constructed with two walnut plies on the interior of the drum, surrounded by four birch plies. The birch is said to give extra attack, while the walnut rounds out the overall sound of the drum. [mapexdrums.com](http://mapexdrums.com)

**3) VIC FIRTH's** Lenny White signature stick is a great choice for drummers looking for something between a 5A and 5B. It measures 16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" with a thickness of .580". The hickory stick comes with a white finish and an oval-shaped tip. (\$15) [vicfirth.com](http://vicfirth.com)

**4) In response to a demand for cymbals that look as distinctive as they sound, authentic WUHAN China cymbals are now being offered with an eye-catching black finish.** [universalpercussion.com](http://universalpercussion.com)

**5) Six ReZo crashes have been added to ZILDJIAN's** popular A Custom cymbal series. These cymbals are available in 15"-20" sizes, and feature medium-thin weights, a new bell size, and a brilliant/traditional finish combination, which creates aggressive and bright overtones with an instantaneous response. The new bell design was created for extra projection. [zildjian.com](http://zildjian.com)

**6) AQUARIAN's** coated 2-ply Hi-Velocity snare drumhead is designed as an all-around head for working drummers in any style of music. Featuring a reverse Power-Thin dot for extra strength, this head boasts durability and a full sound, with no additional muffling required. [aquariandrumheads.com](http://aquariandrumheads.com)

**7) MEINL's** Trejon cajon features three separate frontplates to create distinct tonal effects, similar to the kick/snare/tom sounds of a drumset. (\$500)

**8) The experimental and unconventional Generation X line has expanded to include 15", 17", and 19" China-crashes.** The large holes in these cymbals (which are made from B12 bronze) help deliver an extremely trashy white-noise sound with an aggressive bite. The combination of crash and China-like characteristics gives them a full-bodied sound with an oriental touch. (\$350-\$496) [meinl.com](http://meinl.com)





**9) PAISTE's** Black Alpha cymbals were created in collaboration with Slipknot drummer Joey Jordison. The initial launch of this series—dubbed the “Slipknot Edition”—consists of Joey’s personal selection of Alpha models. The cymbal set consists of a 20” Metal ride, 17”, 18”, and 19” Rock crashes, an 18” Rock China, 14” Sound Edge hi-hats, and a 10” Metal splash. The Slipknot Edition models are bright, aggressive, and focused. [paiste.com](http://paiste.com)

**10) UNIVERSAL PERCUSSION** has expanded their catalog to include RCI acrylic drums. [universalpercussion.com](http://universalpercussion.com)

**11) VATER's** Legends Of Jazz Series sticks now include signature models for master drummers Jimmy Cobb, Chico Hamilton, and Charli Persip. Chico’s stick combines a 5A grip with a gradual taper for a very responsive and quick feel. The teardrop-style tip delivers warm cymbal sounds. Charli Persip’s design is a shorter stick whose grip is just a bit bigger than that of a conventional 5A. The barrel-style tip gives a defined ride cymbal sound without being too “pingy.” Jimmy Cobb’s model measures between a 5A and a 5B in the grip and features a long taper to a medium-sized teardrop tip for warm and defined cymbal tones with a quick feel jazz. (\$14.99) [vater.com](http://vater.com)

**12) SONOR's** Birch-shelled SSE Rock kits are available in three new finishes (Black Galaxy Sparkle, Silver Galaxy Sparkle, and Blue Purple) with black powder-coated fittings. The SSE Rock 20 B1 (20x20 kick, 6x14 wood-shell snare, 8x12 tom, 12x14 and 14x16 floor toms, and complete hardware package) and the SSE Rock 22 B1 (same configuration with a 20x22 kick and a 7x13 snare) have a MAP price of \$799.99. [sonor.com](http://sonor.com)

**13) PEARL's** Masters MCX four-piece shell packs are now available in five new configurations. These kits feature Masters Bridge Lugs, MasterCast die-cast hoops on the toms, OptiMount tom holders, and Remo drumheads. Finish choices include four high-gloss lacquers and two Delmar glass glitter coverings. Matching snares in 5½x14 and 6½x14 sizes are sold separately. (\$2,499) [pearldrums.com](http://pearldrums.com)

**14) TRICK's** Dominator pedal offers similar performance features as the company’s Pro 1-V in a more affordable package. The pedal is made of AL13 aerospace alloy and is designed as a modular single pedal that can be combined with a second pedal to create a double version, using a stainless-steel drive shaft with Trick’s zero-backlash free-floating universal joints. All Dominator pedals come with a black anodized finish. (Double pedal: \$1,100) [trickdrums.com](http://trickdrums.com)

**15) FORD DRUMS' Drumvee** soft cases are made from military-spec digital Camo 600 denier polyester and offer 100% waterproof stability. All webbing is tear-resistant to 500 lbs., and all seams are double-stitched with ballistic polyester thread. Other features include beefy ergonomic molded rubber handles, padded shoulder straps, and a proprietary shape that accommodates mounts, suspension systems, and throw-offs. In addition, every tom case comes with padded inserts that can be used selectively to fit drums of multiple depths. (\$110–\$240) The Drumvee line also includes a large 24” cymbal bag with sewn-in dividers (\$195), and two soft hardware cases (\$195 for a 32” bag and \$240 for a 36” version; both are available as a set for \$400). [forddrums.com](http://forddrums.com)





"Starclassic Bubinga drums respond to every dynamic level with ease, tone and precision. Simply the best sounding and feeling drums I've ever played!"

JASON RULLO

*Symphony*



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There's nothing like the deep, powerful resonance of a Tama Starclassic Bubinga kit. Rich, dark and aggressive with a commanding full tone. Massive, fat lows. With more than 50 different shell sizes and 14 different finishes, Starclassic Bubinga kits offer drummers unprecedented choice and creativity. Plus, a new streamlined Star-Cast Mounting System makes it easier than ever to position toms closer together for greater ease and comfort.

Pictured: Bubinga (NCD) Natural Cordia

For more information on *Starclassic* Bubinga and Bubinga/Birch, visit [tama.com](http://tama.com)

Wingo photo by Marcus Parker



"I can say without reservation that these are the best-sounding drums I have ever played. The volume and rich tone of Bubinga combined with the hard dry punch of Birch really makes for the best of both worlds. Bubinga and Birch together = the perfect storm."

TRIVETT WINGO

THE SWORD

"I had no idea what to expect from Bubinga/Birch shells. They're amazing. My Antique White Sparkle finish is flawless. I get compliments on the look and sound of these drums all the time."

JAMES CULPEPPER  
FLYLEAF

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The pairing of Birch and Bubinga has borne a new sound. The sharp, focused attack of Birch, complemented by the enhanced lows of Bubinga, gives Tama Starclassic B/B kits a "best of both worlds" sweeter/deeper hybrid tone. Starclassic Performer B/B's completely redesigned tom-holder expands setting flexibility by allowing you to adjust the proximity of the tom toms. Be heard AND seen! Four great finishes.

Pictured: B/B (ABD) Astral Black Diamond

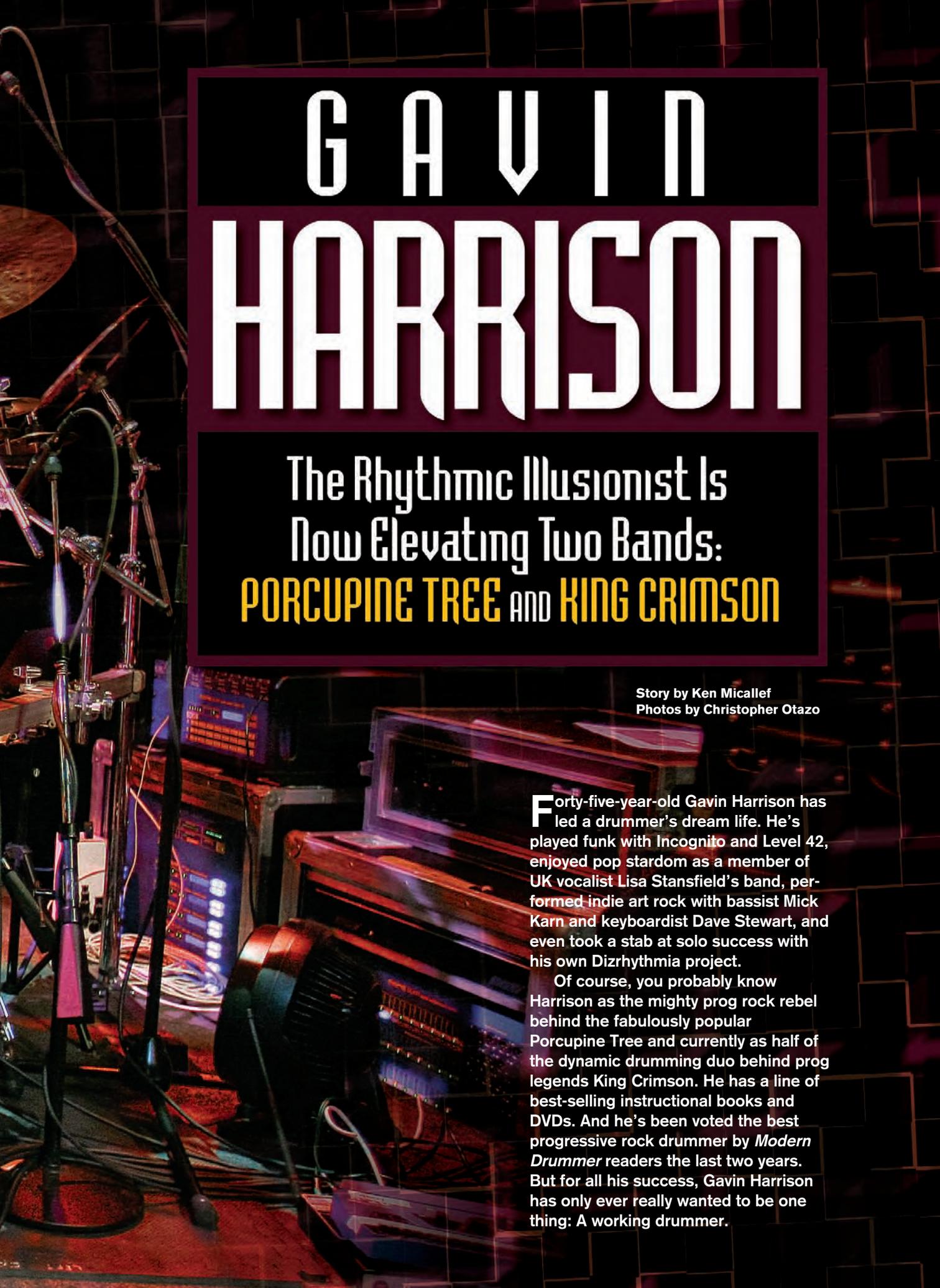
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DRUM SYSTEM





# GAVIN HARRISON

The Rhythmic Illusionist Is  
Now Elevating Two Bands:  
**PORCUPINE TREE** AND **KING CRIMSON**

Story by Ken Micallef  
Photos by Christopher Otazo

**F**orty-five-year-old Gavin Harrison has led a drummer's dream life. He's played funk with Incognito and Level 42, enjoyed pop stardom as a member of UK vocalist Lisa Stansfield's band, performed indie art rock with bassist Mick Karn and keyboardist Dave Stewart, and even took a stab at solo success with his own Dizrhythmia project.

Of course, you probably know Harrison as the mighty prog rock rebel behind the fabulously popular Porcupine Tree and currently as half of the dynamic drumming duo behind prog legends King Crimson. He has a line of best-selling instructional books and DVDs. And he's been voted the best progressive rock drummer by *Modern Drummer* readers the last two years. But for all his success, Gavin Harrison has only ever really wanted to be one thing: A working drummer.

“It’s a miracle to make a living out of playing music these days,” Harrison says from his home in Bushey, near London. “I have the utmost respect for any drummer out there, be it in a wedding band, a theater, or on a ship, because I’ve done all those things and I was really happy to be doing them. As a kid I didn’t want to be the greatest drummer in the world. I just wanted to be playing the drums, making a living, surviving, paying the rent—it’s a miracle that we can do that, doing something that we really love.”

At a recent blistering performance with King Crimson at New York’s Nokia Theater, Harrison plied his dual talents as profound technician and mighty groove monster, revealing a true love for his life’s work. As attendees at this year’s Modern Drummer Festival heard, Harrison is that rare drummer who places groove, feel, and timing on par with technique—and combines it all, effortlessly, and progressively. Harrison’s groove is so seamless, concentrated, and focused that you’d almost swear it’s a machine, not a man.

King Crimson brought out *almost* the best in Harrison, whether duplicating Bill Bruford’s signature parts, trading orchestral flurries with elder Crimson drummer Pat Mastelotto, or wailing some fiendishly incomprehensible tom/cymbal pattern via his increasingly elaborate setup. His double pedal work was also inspiring and clear within the KC chaos.

But even if you’ve heard Harrison blasting bullets with Porcupine Tree or King Crimson (still on tour as of this writing; a live Porcupine Tree DVD is in the works),

those gigs won’t prepare you for the rhythmic impossibilities Harrison delivers in his collaboration with guitarist/drummer O5Ric on their debut recording, *Drop* (available at BurningShed.com). Harrison’s popular books *Rhythmic Illusions* and *Rhythmic Perspectives* and his DVDs *Rhythmic Visions* and *Rhythmic Horizons* explain his concepts in mind-blowing detail, but *Drop* is the soul of the drummer, plain and not so simple.

With every drummer of note, you can point to a record where he truly *arrived*. Where he *owns* it. It might not be that drummer’s most popular recording, but it’s the one where he innovated techniques that literally put him on the map. Steve Gadd = Steely Dan’s *Aja*. Tony Williams = Miles Davis’s *Four And More*. Dave Weckl = Bill Connors’ *Step It*. Vinnie Colaiuta = Frank Zappa’s *Joe’s Garage*. Philly Joe Jones = Miles Davis’s *Milestones*. *Drop* is the record where Gavin Harrison’s well-earned technical skills and good-foot grooves become one, as he dances through polyrhythmic madness, odd-metered overkill, and illusions realized with both mind and body.

With Harrison’s first cover slot in *Modern Drummer*, expect dazzling and thorough explanations, for sure. But more surprising is his palatable joy at playing the drums. This guy would be happy playing drums for a weekend warrior bar band, only be sure to let him rethink the approach for every tune—for the better. Even when drumming on the top of a bus—his first gig, dressed up as a loaf of bread—Gavin Harrison sees drumming as life, and life as music.

**“I’M A GREAT COLLECTOR OF RHYTHMIC IDEAS. MY HARD DRIVES ARE FULL OF IDEAS I’VE RECORDED.”**



## In The Court Of Robert Fripp

**MD:** The King Crimson gig at the Nokia Theater in New York was the result of how many days of rehearsal?

**Gavin:** About twenty-two days just before the start of the tour. And, of course, I did weeks of study at home, listening to and writing out the material, playing along to the music, trying to think about what I could do with it.

**MD:** How did you get the gig with King Crimson?

**Gavin:** Robert Fripp did guitar soundscapes as a support slot for Porcupine Tree in 2005, and again last year. He would often stay and watch our gigs. He got to see me play a lot, and I asked him to play on the record I did with OSRIC. So he got to hear some different types of playing that I do. And then, out of the blue, he called me up and said he'd like me to join the band. Robert was keen to find a good time slot to put it in, as he wasn't asking me to leave Porcupine Tree.

**MD:** Fripp is an enigma to most of us. How did he ask you to join the band?

**Gavin:** He just called up and said he'd had an idea that Crimson should get back together to celebrate their fortieth anniversary. He felt the double drumming thing was still something he wanted to explore, as they had with Bill Bruford and Jamie Muir and then later with Bill and Pat Mastelotto. Robert said he thought I was the right guy to do it. He did say, "You'll probably live to regret it," but I haven't so far, I've enjoyed it.

**MD:** We've heard much about Fripp from Bruford in the past; is Fripp demanding on drummers?

**Gavin:** Not in my experience. He said, "I want you to play whatever you've always wanted to play in a rock band but were never allowed." He played me some tracks, including one called "Level Five," where there are a lot of drum tracks and loops going around and Pat playing over the top. I said, "What can you imagine me playing along to this?" It sounded really full to me. He thought for a while, and said, "More." That was the only piece of advice he gave me. Oh, and he once asked me, "When playing a drum fill, where should it end?" "Uh..." I said. "Anywhere but 1," he replied, and walked away.

At one point I did ask him, "Shall I learn Bill's parts?" He said, "Don't learn the drum parts. Just learn the structures of the songs and do whatever you want." Not demanding at all, really.

## Learning King Crimson:

### Track By Track, Frame By Frame

**MD:** At the Nokia you replicated Bill Bruford's original part in "Frame By Frame." Why?

# GAVIN'S CRIMSON DRUMS

**Drums:** Sonor SQ2 (with vintage-style shells) in Golden Madrone finish

- A. 5x12 snare
- B. 7x8 tom
- C. 8x10 tom
- D. 9x12 tom
- E. 14x14 floor tom
- F. 16x16 floor tom
- G. 17x22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

- 1. 16" Oriental China Trash
- 2. 5 mini custom bells (4"-7")
- 3. 13" K Zildjian hi-hats
- 4. 18" Oriental Crash Of Doom
- 5. 7" Custom splash (upside down)
- 6. 8" Custom splash (upside down)
- 7. 9" Custom splash (upside down)

- 8. 20" K ride
- 9. 18" K Custom Dark crash
- 10. 12" Oriental China Trash
- 11. 18" Z China
- 12. Hammerax BoomyWang (large, not in photo)

**Hardware:** Pearl Icon rack, Sonor hi-hat stand, Axis A Longboard bass drum double pedal with Axis beaters (medium spring tension), custom bell holder

**Sticks:** Vic Firth Rock model (hickory with wood tip)

**Heads:** Remo CS coated (or Ambassador) on snare batter with Ambassador snare-side, coated Emperors on tom batters with clear Ambassadors underneath, clear Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter with Sonor logo head on front (with small hole, several pads inside drum for muffling)



## THE WIRE TEST

It turns out that Harrison is very particular about his drum sounds, even down to the individual snare wires he uses on his snare drums. According to the drummer, "I test different snare wires by recording them within a groove. I try four or five different snare wires. Then I edit four bars out of each example, put them together, and listen to them back to back. That really tells me which snare wires sound the best. I do the same thing with drum heads and mic positions."

**Gavin:** Within Robert's statement of "play whatever you like," that includes playing what was already there before, because it was the perfect part for the song. It's hard to think of a completely new rhythm to a song that has already been well established. In some cases I felt I wouldn't be doing the song justice if I didn't play the perfect part for the song, which in most cases were parts that

were already written.

**MD:** Did you write out charts to learn the songs?

**Gavin:** Absolutely. Some of them I was trying to keep a little bit loose. I would write out a four-bar intro, eight-bar verse, eight-bar middle, etc., and the different time signatures, and the different stops without duly getting into the specifics of the beat. Robert didn't





# HARRISON SELECT

## ARTIST

Porcupine Tree  
Porcupine Tree  
Porcupine Tree  
Porcupine Tree  
Mick Karn  
Gavin Harrison & 05RiC  
Gavin Harrison  
Yasuaki Shimizu  
Jakko M. Jakszyk  
Ed Poole

## ALBUM

In Absentia  
Deadwing  
Fear Of A Blank Planet  
Nil Recurring  
The Tooth Mother  
Drop  
Sanity & Gravity  
Aduna  
Bruised Romantic Glee Club  
ED4



## RECORDS OF INFLUENCE

### ARTIST

Pat Williams  
Art Farmer & Jim Hall  
Art Farmer  
Gino Vannelli  
Randy Crawford  
Allan Holdsworth  
Chef Baker  
Chick Corea  
Frank Zappa  
Jeff Beck  
Rickie Lee Jones  
Steve Khan  
Yellowjackets

### ALBUM

Threshold  
Big Blues  
Crawl Space  
Brother To Brother  
Secret Combination  
Secrets  
She Was Too Good To Me  
Mad Hatter  
Joe's Garage  
There And Back  
The Magazine  
Eyewitness  
The Spin

### DRUMMER

John Guerin  
Steve Gadd  
Steve Gadd  
Mark Craney  
Jeff Porcaro  
Vinnie Colaiuta  
Steve Gadd/Billy Cobham  
Steve Gadd  
Vinnie Colaiuta  
Simon Phillips  
Steve Gadd/Jeff Porcaro  
Steve Jordan  
Will Kennedy

For more on Gavin, including info about his many books and DVDs, check out his Web site: [www.drumsetdemon.co.uk](http://www.drumsetdemon.co.uk).

otherwise.

**MD:** "Unsettled" from *Drop* opens with a flurry of circular-sounding tom rhythms.

**Gavin:** That's all 4/4, in groups of nine. I'm thinking of it as four bars of 4/4. The intro part is three groups of nine, then a group of five, where the toms are playing like a marimba part. There's a kind of shape that my arms follow across the five toms that make the groups of nine very simple to understand. Then I

truncate the last bar to turn it all into what would be thirty-two beats, or four bars of 4/4. When the groove gets going, it's in seven and five, which is really the same as 3/4.

A bar of 7/16 and a bar of 5/16 equal one of 12/16, which you could think of as 3/4. When you understand the numbers, you can split it into different sections and make it feel like it's not 3/4. I do make it feel like 3/4 in the chorus, then back to the verse where I

play seven and five, it sounds like odd time signatures bubbling along.

**MD:** Even when playing odd meters, your groove is luxurious.

**Gavin:** That's what I'm going for. When I listened to guys playing odd times when I was young, I never liked it because it sounded so spiky and horrible. It wasn't until I heard Steve Gadd play a rhythm in seven, I think on a Lee Ritenour album, and it just grooved like he's playing in 4/4. Just because something's in an odd meter doesn't mean it can't groove. It also doesn't need to have 2 and 4 on the snare drum to make a great groove.

If you're presented with bars of 11/8, there are so many places you can place the snare drum [accent] to give a different impression. But it's usually when you place the snare drum in the same place throughout all the bars of 11/8 that people feel a repetitive pattern and they associate that with a groove. The simpler the design, the more successful it is.

**MD:** After watching your latest DVD, *Rhythmic Horizons*, I better understand your approach, which includes combining splash melodies within a tom melody. Are you thinking melodically when playing those types of patterns and incorporating the small cymbals with toms?

**Gavin:** Absolutely. I like playing the drums from any other perspective than playing the drums. If I can think like a piano player or a trumpet player, that's a nice place to start. I really like playing the toms in a melodic way. I'm nearly always thinking of making little melodies, even though they're not specifically pitched. I quite often jam things on the drums and don't know what time signature I'm play-

# FAMILY VALUE



ing in. If it works, I keep playing it and I don't want to stop. I often try to record it, and then figure out the time signature later. It's good not to know the meter at that point because it's more instinctive that way. Later I might actually write it down or work it out. I very rarely set out to play something in an odd meter. It's more of a riff that will inspire me.

**MD:** So what are you hearing when you add the three splashes and the five smaller splashes, which almost resemble finger cymbals, to the mix?

**Gavin:** I see the ride and hi-hat cymbals as something to sustain an ostinato. And I see the crashes as aggressive sounds. The five bells over the hi-hat make a tiny, delicate sound. I can play quite a lot of them without getting in the way. The mini crash bells that I have in front of the kit, they're semi aggressive, almost like a stepping stone between the bells and the crashes. Depending on how much aggression I want to relay, I might go for the little crash bells. If I need a lot of aggression, I play the Chinas. It's more a matter of dynamic colors than pitches. The toms have more pitch than the cymbals, though I do sometimes run up and down the little bells and the crash bells in order to try to create a melody.

**MD:** There's a double time solo section in "Okay" [from *Drop*] that sounds like it's entirely comprised of 32nd notes.

**Gavin:** I go absolutely ballistic there; I almost died playing that part. I did drop that part in with Pro Tools, but I played the whole section

in one pass. Then I went to bed for a week. Ric had taken a piece of my drumming and sped it up like drum 'n' bass on the demo. He said, "Do something along those lines." So this part came to me. It's got all kinds of bells and Chinas. It was physically about as hard as I could go. I never played that one live. [laughs]

The rest of the tune is quite laid-back. The groove is in 5/8, and I was really trying to lay it back in the pocket. That solo section comes

out of nowhere, that really fast double-time 32nd-note thing, arms flying all over the place. I've never even figured out how to notate it.

#### Thinking Or Thrashing?

**MD:** With King Crimson, O5Ric, or Porcupine Tree, how much of what you play is improvised vs. rehearsed figures?

**Gavin:** I try not to regurgitate all my same old



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**gavin harrison**  
and his favorite cymbal

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## GAVIN HARRISON

licks, mainly because I hate them. I don't want to hear them anymore. Under pressure you're more likely to rely on your licks that you've worked out and that you know will sound good. But an audience can tell when you're playing something that you've already worked out. There's a certain rehearsed-ness to it. I try to just take a bit of courage. I've never really set off on a drum fill that has gone off on such a nosedive that I just lost it and didn't know where I was. I always think, "Okay, if I just throw the sticks at the drums and see what happens, my experience and skill will pull me out of any kind of hellhole I may fall into in."

**MD:** It's hard to tell, because you seem to be in total control at all times.

**Gavin:** It's just being very comfortable on

I've played the drums for so long. It's very nice to have that much control over the instrument where you feel you can react to something emotionally without having to worry about whether it's 32nd notes or what time signature it's in.

**MD:** Let's talk about your double pedal work, another impressive part of your drumming. You play a lot of "falling rock" bass drum patterns, which add a lot of excitement to your fills. You also play a lot of short bursts, almost like 32nd-note drags, where you lead back into the beat. With something like that, do you lead with your left foot?

**Gavin:** No. My whole bass drum technique is based on singles, leading with the right foot. I could never see the point of playing doubles on the bass drum [with double pedals],



the kit and knowing where everything is. I've played this kind of five-tom setup for the last thirty years. I could easily play in pitch black, I know where all the drums and cymbals are. I want to get to the point where I'm just thinking about the emotion of the music and where I'm trying to take it. I'm not worried about technique, because

they don't come out half as well as playing singles. When there are two notes, I'm usually playing that with one foot. Also, I never do more than five notes with the bass drum at any given time. I never play the booga-booga-booga 16th-note ostinato on the bass drum.

**MD:** You can play with complexity, but



GAVIN HARRISON  
PORCUPINE TREE,  
KING CRIMSON

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## GAVIN HARRISON

you're also a groove master. Have you focused on groove vs. complexity?

**Gavin:** No matter how complex it is, I want to play it in time with feel and groove. Even when I'm playing fast, I'm still trying to lay the time in a comfortable way. The realization for me was when I heard Jeff Porcaro and Steve Gadd play. They seemed to be laying the time way back and it felt great. There were years when I spent as much time as possible trying to lay back. Even with 05Ric, there are a million things on there, but I'm trying to play it all with that laid-back, luxurious feeling.

### Illusions, Horizons, And Beyond

**MD:** What was your goal for *Rhythmic Horizons*, in contrast to your previous books and DVDs?

**Gavin:** This is my second DVD. The first, *Rhythmic Visions*, was extrapolating on the concept from the *Rhythmic Illusions* book. It outlined the basic techniques of how to manipulate the downbeat and subdivisions to make people think you're playing in a different tempo. When I got to do a second DVD, I thought maybe I should just follow the second book, *Rhythmic Perspectives*. But I wanted to highlight the idea of overriding, where you can make odd times sound like

they are not odd.

An example would be when you play quarter notes through 7/4. In the first bar you have beats [snare and bass drum accents] that are on the beat, and in the second bar the beats [snare and bass drum accents] are off the beat. You're playing seven quarter notes over two bars of 7/8. We use that quite a bit in Porcupine Tree as a technique to smooth out some odd sections so the audience doesn't realize that we're playing in seven, five, or nine.

**MD:** You often play your *Rhythmic Illusions* ideas within complex music. How much of what you do is mental, and how much is physical?

**Gavin:** To a large degree, it's all mental. I'm not concentrating on the physical aspect of the drumming. But I very rarely think of the mathematics involved. You're always trying to get in the zone. It's always mental; it's a state of mind.

The frame of mind is much more important than having the chops. You can have all the chops in the world, but without the ideas—the mental chops—you'll just be regurgitating rudimental stuff around the kit.

At one point I stopped focusing on the muscles in my arms and started focusing on the big fat muscle in my head. That's where the good stuff comes from. I could have played anything I play now thirty years ago, I just couldn't have *thought of* it thirty years ago. I'm always trying to steer the emotional part of what I'm playing. I'm trying to find a bit of magic deep within, a bit of soul searching.

**MD:** What do you practice now?

**Gavin:** I warm up before shows. I play singles and doubles on a practice pad to get the muscles moving. There's nothing so fast in King Crimson that requires a heavy warm-up. Porcupine Tree is a much heavier gig; I need to warm up for that.

When I practice, I work on my timing to a click. And I record to a click. I listen very closely to how I line things up. I record, then slow it down and listen to the hi-hat and bass drum to see if I'm rushing any of the notes. I'll also check to see if the ghost notes are lining up with the 16ths on the hi-hat. It's real detail work that I feel is very important. Of course, I work on coordination things too.

I once played a Jeff Porcaro groove for a young kid, and he said, "I can play that. It's got zero difficulty." I said, "I bet you couldn't play it *like* that." That's an entire life's work

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GAVIN HARRISON

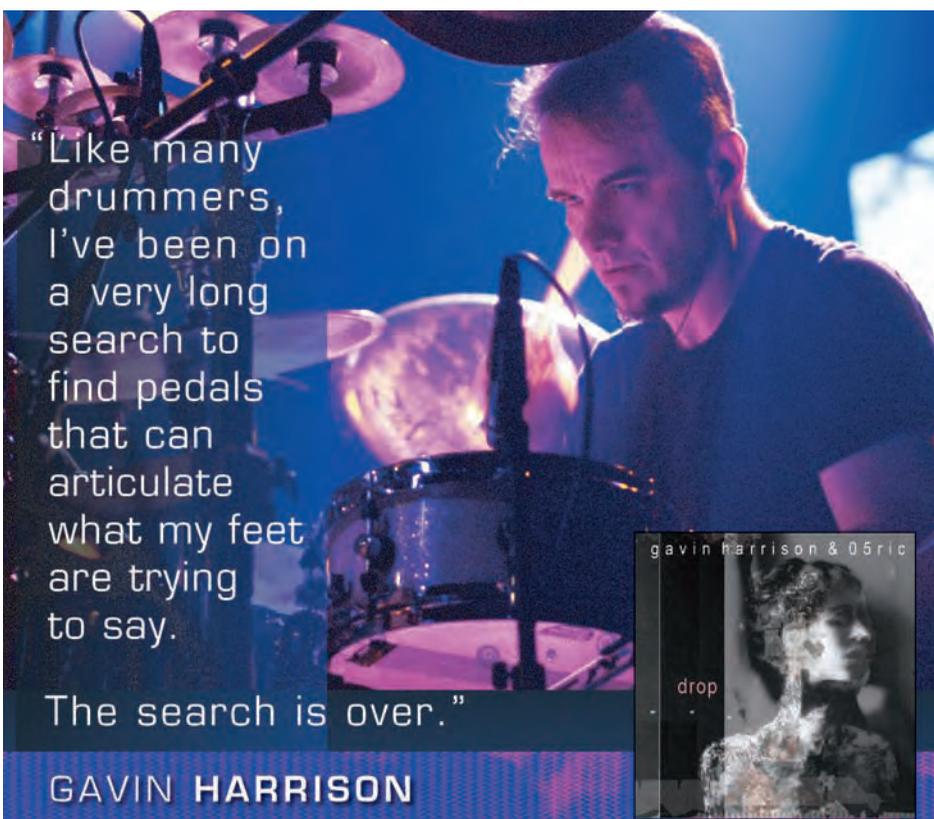
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## GAVIN HARRISON

to make it feel like that.

**MD:** Was there one thing, be it a routine, chops-builder, or exercise, that made the biggest difference in your formative years?

**Gavin:** I would record myself playing. I would put on my Walkman and play along to Jeff Porcaro or Steve Gadd, then record my drums on another recorder. Then I would listen to my drums alone. They never sounded as good alone as when I played with Porcaro and Gadd. Surprise, surprise. That gave me the chance to really hear what I was playing like. I would even go outside my rehearsal room to hear the

drums played back over speakers and imagine it was another drummer. I could always judge it much easier that way. I would go back and play to the track again and focus on the problems.

I recorded on a Tascam Portastudio so I could play along and then listen to myself an octave down at half speed. So if there was a slight flam between sources, it would sound enormous. I would record a bass drum on track one, then overdub a snare on track two, then a hi-hat on track three, to see if I could make it feel good, but it usually felt terrible. I did the same with the click:

record it to one track, then record my drums to the other three, then play it back with the tape speed slowed down to hear where I was going. It made me more sensitive.

Playing along with Steve Gadd is fun, but it wasn't the truth. The truth is what I sounded like on the tape recorder. The truth is usually pretty painful. But that's how you improve. The most progress I made was from my own imagination, finding different ways to challenge myself.

**MD:** Most everything on your kit produces a short staccato sound. What is it about that tone that works for you?

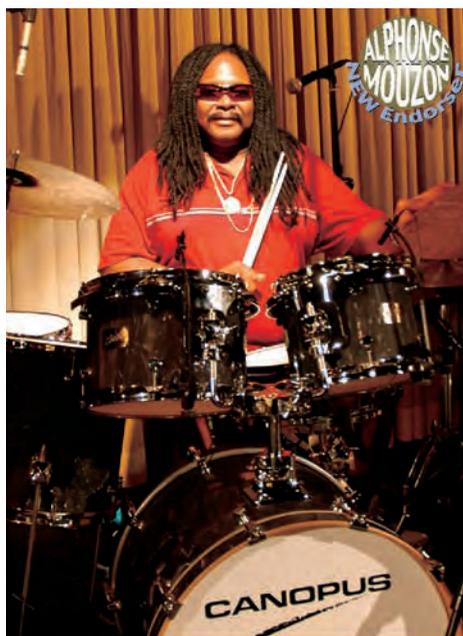
**Gavin:** I've got a short staccato bass drum sound for sure. I use a big pillow in it. It's an old-fashioned '80s Porcaro sound. And our soundman puts a lot of "click" on it as well, which I like. If I want to play something very articulate, I want all the notes to come out. I hate snare drums with loose snares—it's too baggy. Then all the little ghost notes and strokes that you're doing within groupings of more than two or three are lost in a blur of snare drum. I have tight snares. I want every single note to come out as I played it. I want everything I play to be clear and articulate.

**MD:** You sit pretty low. How does seat height affect groove and double pedal ability?

**Gavin:** I don't like the feeling of sitting on top of the drums, where all the weight is down on your feet. My whole center of balance is out when I do that. Initially, it was about playing heel-up on the pedals. It gave me the chance to lean back slightly. I can easily hold the weight off my feet so they're floating and tapping. When you sit high, you've got to put the weight on your feet to keep from falling over. But it works for me to sit low. And I don't leave the beaters touching the skin. If you sit up high you naturally press the beater into the head.

**MD:** What are your long-term goals?

**Gavin:** I just want to stay a professional drummer. It's a miracle to make a living out of playing music these days. Anyone who is doing it now playing drums deserves a medal. I didn't want to be the greatest drummer in the world. I just wanted to play the drums, make a living, and pay the rent doing something I really love. That's enough of a reward.



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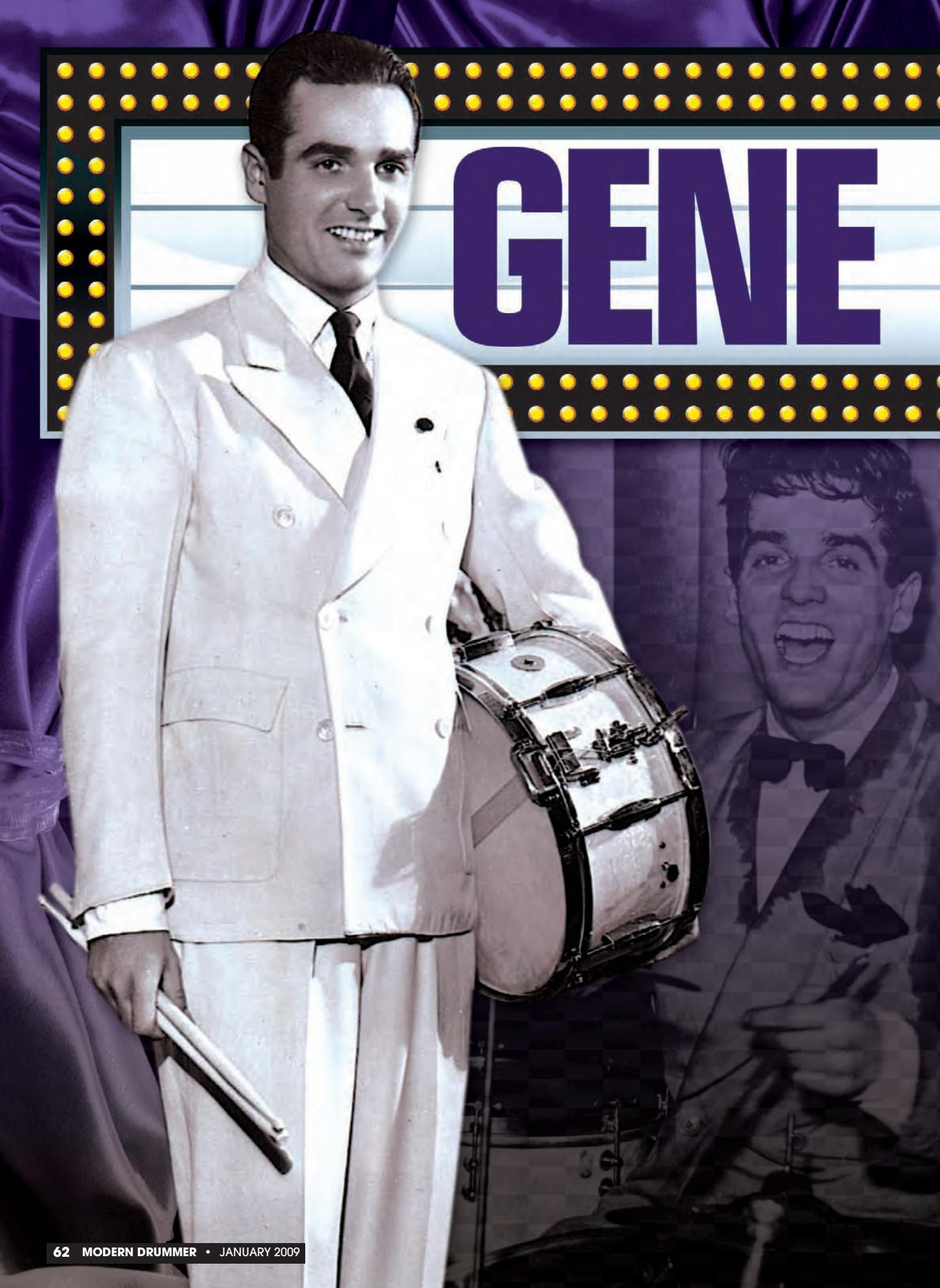
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A full-page photograph of Gene Krupa. He is wearing a white tuxedo jacket and matching trousers, a white shirt, and a dark tie. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. He is holding a snare drum in his left arm and drumsticks in his right hand. The background is a purple curtain. A decorative border of yellow lights runs across the top and right sides of the image. The name 'GENE' is printed in large, bold, purple letters in the upper right quadrant.

# GENE

# KRUPA

## Modern Drummer Pays Tribute To The Ultimate Drummin' Man On The 100th Anniversary Of His Birth

**G**ene Krupa's contributions to modern drumming and American culture will never be forgotten. Musically, Krupa's sense of syncopation advanced the vocabulary of jazz. The excitement and entertainment that Krupa created from the drumset opened the door for every future modern drummer and drum soloist. When Krupa played, he had a recognizable sound and approach on the drums. His voice on the instrument is always instantly identifiable—and when you get down to it, isn't *that* what it's all about?

Culturally, Gene Krupa was an icon. He appeared as a guest on all types of TV shows, feature films, and hit records, and occupied the drum chair in the world's biggest band. His life was even the subject of a feature film. On a personal level, Krupa was known by everyone who encountered him as a true gentleman. *Everyone* loved Gene. Gene was also well aware of the vast drumming traditions that he was a part of. He cared about the art of drumming, and he was eternally dedicated to improving himself and his craft.

Gene Krupa is primarily responsible for making the drummer into a respected and legitimate musician. In fact, he envisioned what the drummer and drumming *could* become. This month, January 2009, as we celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, we are all fulfilling his highest expectations.

by Mark Griffith

## Drumming Moves Up The Mississippi

The evolution of the drumset began in 1890, and for its first fifty years, the drums (and drummers) sat in the back of the bandstand and marked time. However, in 1938 the world of drumming changed. Gene Krupa's raucous playing on Benny Goodman's "Sing Sing Sing" brought the drums to the

jazz drumming—Louis Cottrell Sr., Dee Dee Chandler, Jack "Papa" Laine, Tony Sbarbaro, Zutty Singleton, Paul Barbarin, and Baby Dodds—laid the groundwork for the tradition. These important drummers utilized various rolls, assembled the instruments, and organized the sounds that we use today. They were the first drummers to play the American drumset.

## Gene Krupa was one of the first drummers to play the drumset as an entire instrument.

forefront of the American public's consciousness. Yet we shouldn't forget that Krupa was following in the footsteps of many groundbreaking drummers that had paved the way for his success.

Between 1890 and 1927, America was introduced to many of the components that today define modern drumming. The New Orleans forefathers of

The evolution of jazz drumming moved up the Mississippi River to Kansas City, where greats like A.G. Godley, Leroy Maxey, Alvin Bourroughs, Jesse Price, and Papa Jo Jones further defined the concept of swing, focusing the attention on the hi-hat and ride cymbal. The tradition moved through Memphis, home of the famed Jimmy Lunceford band that fea-



Goodman and  
Krupa, circa 1937



tured the feel-good timekeeping of Jimmy Crawford, before finally arriving in Chicago.

Chicago became the home of a drastic stylistic shift in jazz drumming. The New Orleans style kept time primarily on the snare drum (or the rims and wood blocks), whereas the Chicago style introduced the tom-tom as an important voice, and would soon further emphasize the ride cymbal. There were many important drummers who originally combined the well-traveled New Orleans style and the Chicago approach, including Baby Dodds, George Wettling, Ray Bauduc, and Tubby Hall.

The jazz drumming tradition also proceeded east to New York, where the cymbals were further emphasized. There we heard the monumentally important Chick Webb, Walter Johnson, Sonny Greer, Jack Roth, and George Stafford. Meanwhile, in Los Angeles we heard Stan King. All of these great drummers influenced and helped pave the way for the first drum star, Gene Krupa.

Krupa would have been the first person to direct us to his influences and the many drumming greats that built the tradition of modern drumming. Throughout his career, Gene often mentioned assimilating Cuba Austin's syncopated style, Johnny Wells' and Chick Webb's over-the-top soloing style, and the musicality of Baby Dodds. Gene appreciated and combined all of these groundbreaking approaches, and pushed the tradition of jazz drumming to the forefront of the listening public.

### Building A Drumming Career

Eugene Bertram "Gene" Krupa Born on the South Side of Chicago on January 15, 1909. As a youngster he worked at the Brown Music Company and played saxophone in a "junior" band called The Frivolians. His mother, a devout Catholic, encouraged him to go into the priesthood; but in Chicago, music was *everywhere*. Gene heard Dave Tough with The Austin High Gang and Ben Pollack with The New Orleans Rhythm Kings, and became obsessed with going to the South Side of Chicago to see the popular black jazz musicians. And when Gene took Tough, who he'd befriended, to see the legendary Baby Dodds playing with "King" Oliver, *everything* changed. Krupa's enthusiasm led him to begin playing drums at jam sessions throughout Chicago, and his musical path began establishing itself. Throughout his life, his youthful exuberance for the drums never waned. Gene's musical path led him to study drums with many teachers, including Ed Straight, Sanford "Gus" Moeller, Al Silverman, and Roy Knapp.

However, without the context of music, the drums do not constitute entertainment for the masses, or even a career. To become a successful drummer you need a gig, and Gene Krupa had

## Krupa's Equipment

Gene Krupa's drumset didn't change drastically over the years, especially when compared to those of today's players. But we can observe specific alterations over time. One interesting way to see this is by examining the kits Gene used on his signature tune, "Sing Sing Sing," which he made famous with Benny Goodman.



### DRUMS

Gene got his first Slingerland set in 1935, and kept a close relationship with the company for his entire life. Early photos of Gene with the Goodman band on *The Big Broadcast Of 1937* (filmed in July of 1936) show Gene using a 28" bass drum, a 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " snare, a 16x16 floor tom, and a Chinese mounted tom with tacked-on heads. We can be pretty certain that this is what Gene used on the original 1935 recording of "Sing Sing Sing."

On the version of the song from the 1937 film *Hollywood Hotel*, Krupa's bass drum appears to be a 26" rather than the earlier 28". At the time, Gene had been requesting that Slingerland make a mounted tom (and bass drum) with separate tension tuning lugs. In 1937, he finally saw this request filled, and the tom was a 9x13. The snare and floor tom sizes remained the same. On the *Benny Goodman Live At Carnegie Hall* recording, which features the most famous version of "Sing, Sing, Sing," Krupa's bass drum featured this same modern-day lug design.

When Gene left Benny Goodman in March of 1938, he kept using the 26" bass drum, but also occasionally returned to using a 28". He continued using the 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " snare, but began occasionally using a 5" or 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". By 1941 or '42, he'd permanently switched over to the shallower models.

### CYMBALS

Krupa used Zildjian cymbals throughout his career, and his models of choice included 11" hi-hats and 14" and 8" cymbals mounted on his bass drum. (In the 1930s and '40s, Zildjian had not yet begun using terms like "ride," "crash," and "splash" to differentiate their various cymbal models.) On Gene's right (in the ride position), he had a 16", and on his left (crash position), a 13".

This setup varied a bit, perhaps only for purposes of photography. There is evidence that he occasionally used a 16" on the bass drum and a 14" or 15" on his left, in place of his favorite "bent" cymbal, which can be seen in a number of pictures taken throughout his life. It also must be noted that the cymbal filter that we all use today was not invented until significantly later, so all of Krupa's cymbals were mounted without a filter.

Later in his career, Gene made some rather interesting cymbal setup changes. Between 1953 and 1961 he began using a 24" heavy ride that had a very distinctive sound. He then switched to a 20" medium, which he used for the rest of his life.

*Special thanks to Krupa historian Dr. Bruce Klauber for helping out with the details of Gene's equipment.*

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## Krupa On Record, On Film, And In Print

Gene Krupa appeared on hundreds of recordings by musicians such as Tommy Dorsey, Teddy Wilson, Roy Eldridge, Charlie Ventura, Mezz Mezzrow, and Charlie Christian. He also appeared in many feature films and "soundies." The following list provides an excellent place to continue your research. For even more on the man who brought the drums out of the shadows, be sure to visit [JazzLegends.com](http://JazzLegends.com).



### KEY RECORDINGS

#### ARTIST

Benny Goodman And Jack Teagarden  
Red Nichols  
Red Nichols  
Eddie Condon  
Benny Goodman  
Benny Goodman  
Benny Goodman  
Gene Krupa  
Gene Krupa  
Gene Krupa  
Gene Krupa  
Gene Krupa  
Gene Krupa And Buddy Rich  
Gene Krupa And Buddy Rich  
Gene Krupa And Buddy Rich  
Gene Krupa And Louie Bellson

#### ALBUM

B.G. And Big Tea In NYC  
Strike Up The Band  
Rhythm Of The Day  
Windy City Jazz  
Live At Carnegie Hall  
Trio And Quartet 1935/38  
Carnegie Hall Concert  
Together Again  
Uptown  
Gene Krupa Plays Gerry Mulligan Arrangements  
The Gene Krupa Story  
Drummin' Man  
The Drum Battle  
Krupa And Rich  
Burnin' Beat  
The Mighty Two

### MOVIES

The Glenn Miller Story, The Benny Goodman Story, Drum Crazy: The Gene Krupa Story, Hollywood Hotel, The Big Broadcast Of 1937, Ball Of Fire, Some Like It Hot

### DVD/VIDEO

Gene Krupa: Swing, Swing, Swing! (Hudson DVD)  
Gene Krupa: Jazz Legend (DCI Music Video)

### BOOKS

The World Of Gene Krupa by Bruce Klauber  
The Pictorial Life Of Gene Krupa by Bruce Klauber  
The Gene Krupa Drum Method by Gene Krupa  
Jazz Discographies Unlimited: Gene Krupa And His Orchestra by George Hall And Steven Kramer  
Drummin' Men by Burt Korall

many of them. Early on, Krupa worked with commercial bands throughout Chicago like Leo Shukin, The Benson Orchestra, Thelma Terry & Her Playboys, and Joe Kayser.

Before 1926, drummers had to be careful to not make the needles on the transcription machines jump. They did this by playing very softly. They also had to be careful not to use louder sounds that would temporarily obscure

the rest of the band. These early deficiencies in the recording process unfortunately created an environment where the drumset wasn't being represented accurately on most of the early jazz studio recordings.

Thankfully, in 1926, new electrical recording techniques were being introduced that were not as sensitive to the dynamic levels of the drums. This enabled drummers to play much more

Ginger Baker - Cream

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Ilan Rubin - Lostprophets

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## GENE KRUPA

naturally on recordings. The new recording techniques enabled drummers to be heard better, and to perform in a similar manner that they would play at a live engagement. The converging of all of these circumstances make 1926 the beginning of accurately recorded jazz drumming history. Because of these technological advancements, Krupa made many recorded "firsts," and his career was indeed beginning at the perfect time.

Gene's first recordings were in 1927 with Red McKenzie and Eddie Condon, and these are the first known jazz studio recordings with a prominent "four-four beat" on the bass drum. In 1928, Krupa participated in one of the first recordings that featured a saxophonist accompanied by a rhythm section, with Frank Teschmacher, Eddie Condon, and Joe Sullivan. Krupa continued to appear on many popular jazz recordings. When he moved to New York in 1929, he recorded "She Me Shaw Wabble" with Red Nichols and Miff Mole. In New York, he played in the pit orchestras for George Gershwin's *Strike Up The Band* and Hoagy Carmichael's *Girl Crazy*. Krupa also replaced the popular



Krupa leading his band, 1943.

Vic Berton in Nichols' band, with whom he stayed until 1931. In 1935, Gene made the first piano trio recording (with drums) with pianist Jess Stacy and bassist Israel Crosby for the Parlophone label. All of these gigs and recordings afforded Gene the opportunity to finely hone his craft, including his sometimes underappreciated timekeeper's skill. Many of these early recordings can be found on Benny Goodman and Jack

Teagarden's *B.G. And Big Tea In NYC* and Red Nichols' *Strike Up The Band*.

These early recordings reveal Krupa as being skilled in the collective improvisation of the New Orleans approach to drumming. But Gene was emphasizing his creative ability to play within the rhythmic restrictions of the (Dixieland influenced) ensemble. This combination of creativity and taste is what made Krupa's early drumming different from that of his peers. Chicago was becoming known for adding an individual solo approach to the New Orleans jazz tradition, and Krupa brought this concept to the drums. Gene's reputation for having a superb technical ability and a deft sense of showmanship was spreading. But most importantly, it was Krupa's sense of syncopation and his "Chicago swing" that was essential and key to his enormous success. Gene (and many of his peers of the time) had a unique knack for putting the time directly in the center of the beat, while creating a percolating and swinging time feel. It was this approach that earned him the most important gig of his life.

### The Big Gig

In 1934, Gene Krupa got the call to join Benny Goodman, who was already known as The King Of Swing. The band's performances on the national radio show *Let's Dance* became very popular. Gene played the clarinetist's charts with his famed exuberance. But it became obvious that it was Goodman's music that was framing Krupa's drumming perfectly. This was not lost on Goodman. The band's popularity began in

An advertisement for Sleishman Twin Pedal drum pedals. The background is a bright blue sky. In the foreground, a smiling man with dreadlocks, Will Calhoun, is shown from the chest up, wearing a brown jacket. He is holding a pair of black and silver drum pedals. The pedals have "SLEISHMAN" and "TWIN PEDAL" written on them. The word "PATENTED" is also visible. The text "SLEISHMAN TWIN PEDAL" is at the top in a stylized font. Below it, "Will's Choice!" is written in large, bold letters. Underneath that, "Will Calhoun - Living Colour" is written in a smaller font. At the bottom, the website "www.sleishman.com" is displayed. The bottom of the ad features two distribution lines: "US/ Big Bang Distribution - www.bigbangdist.com" and "UK/ BR Distribution - www.BRDistribution.co.uk".

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## GENE KRUPA

1935, and Gene's keen sense of showmanship was catapulting him to the fame that we all recognize today.

Goodman had been prepared for Krupa's extroverted approach through performing

with drummers such as Ben Pollack and Bob Counselman. In fact, it was Counselman who was one of the first drummers to play rimshots on the snare, which is a sound that became synonymous with Krupa. Listen to

### "Big Noise From Winnetka" by Terry Branam

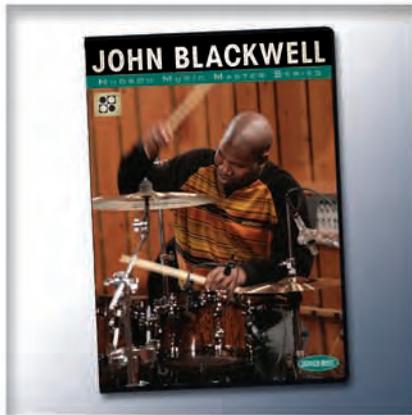
**MUSIC KEY**

The following Gene Krupa solo is from a 1967 televised performance of "Big Noise From Winnetka." Gene's playing is in top form, complete with signature singing rimshots, melodic tom-toms, and percolating cowbell accents. His left-hand drags provide great connectivity to the phrases, and he uses inventive sticking patterns to articulate his ideas. The drummer also displays his taste for showmanship with flashy hi-hat fanning and slick left-hand-on-bass-drum hits. You can see the solo on YouTube by searching for "Gene Krupa Big Noise From Winnetka."

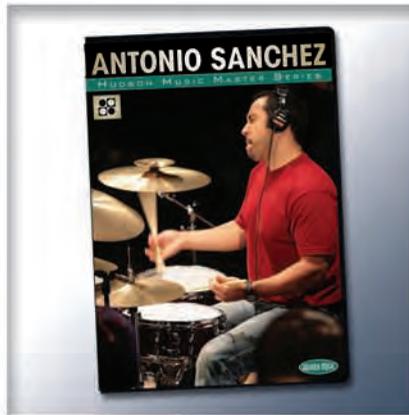
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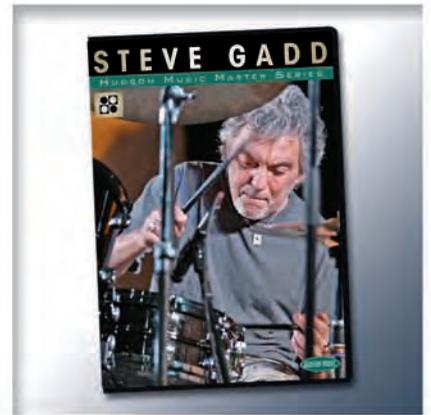
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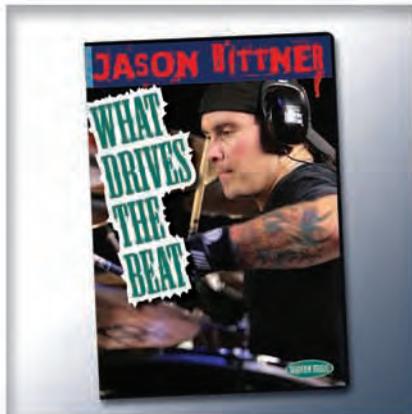
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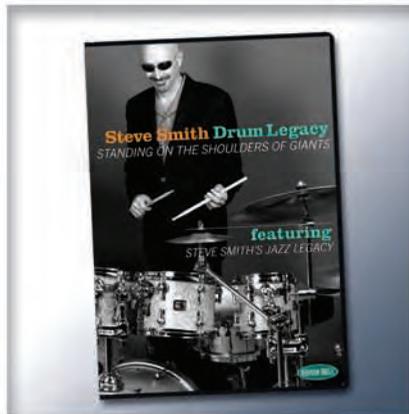
**Antonio Sanchez**  
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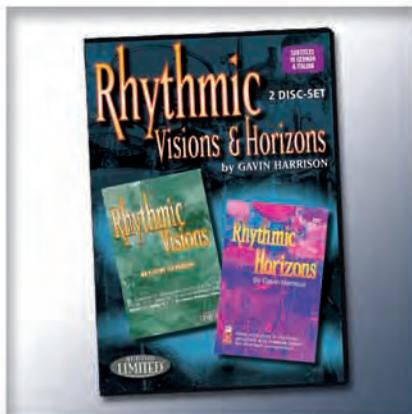
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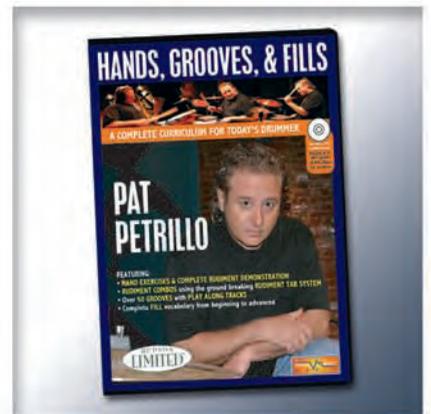
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## GENE KRUPA

Bob Counselman's drumming on Goodman's popular "Clarinetitis" for a good example of how Goodman's band sounded before acquiring Krupa.

When Krupa signed on with Benny, Gene brought the drums, and himself, to world-wide recognition. With his unique combination of musical and personal charisma, Krupa was fast becoming a huge star. Gene's popularity continued to rise in the Goodman trio and quartet, which further emphasized the wild, young, handsome, and very animated drummer.

I must emphasize that none of this is

intended to disparage Krupa as a musician. His success was based upon a cultural phenomena called swing *as well as* his irreplaceable musical talents. To understand Krupa's place in American popular culture during the 1930s and '40s, it must be known that Gene Krupa's look and style were as much a part of the 1930s as "big hair" was of the 1980s, and tattoos and piercings are of the 2000s.

### Authority And Entertainment

Gene Krupa's drumming could be summed up in one word: authority. When

he played time on the snare drum with his right hand and added 2 and 4 by playing left-hand drags, there was never a question as to where the time was. And when he added syncopated rhythms around the set, his sense of rhythmic authority didn't waver. This was an era of drumming that preceded playing "on top," "laying back," or any of the phrases that we use today to describe a certain feel. But that is not to say that Krupa's drumming lacked feeling.

Whether it was with brushes or sticks, Krupa's timekeeping demanded your attention. To quote drum historian Burt Korall, "Krupa struck a balance between instinct, the roots of jazz, and a scientific approach to drumming. The language came directly from Chick Webb, but Krupa formalized, simplified, and clarified it."

Gene Krupa is often remembered for his showmanship behind the drums. Regarding this, Krupa said it best when he later told Korall, "I'm a child of vaudeville. The first thing you have to do is get their attention." Korall goes on to say, "Expressiveness was his primary concern; the showmanship was merely a means of holding the audience until his musicality became apparent to those who came to see and hear him play."

Gene was one of the first drummers to play the drumset as a cohesive instrument, spreading the time out over the entire kit. Certainly, as the musical environment changed, different instruments within the drumset became the focus for the role of timekeeping. While Gene rolled with the times, he was always following in the tradition set by Baby Dodds. Krupa would often change the primary sound that stated the time for the different soloists within the ensemble, and for different parts of the arrangement. Sometimes he'd state the time on the snare drum, the ride cymbal, the hi-hat, and the toms all within the same tune. And, of course, it was his timekeeping on the toms that changed the landscape for drummers—which brings us back to where this article began.

### A Turning Point In Drumming

The famous 1938 Benny Goodman concert immortalized on his *Live At Carnegie Hall* album was a turning point for jazz in American culture, and a coming-out party for the drums (even if the album wouldn't be released for another twelve years). For drummers, Krupa's penultimate tom contributions on Louis Prima's composition "Sing

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## GENE KRUPA

"Sing Sing" became a performance of sheer legend. This performance cast such a huge shadow that Goodman's original version of "Sing Sing Sing" (recorded years earlier) is often forgotten. The energy of Krupa's era-defining drumming (which was actually more timekeeping than soloing) completed the drummer's journey towards (and into) the spotlight, much to Goodman's chagrin.

The circumstances surrounding the actual recording (and the release) of this concert are the subject of another article. But thankfully, in 1950 the Carnegie Hall concert was finally available on record. This allowed drummers to forever marvel at Krupa's mag-

ical drumming contributions. The overwhelming popularity of this concert is further understood when you learn that in 1954, Sid Caesar went so far as to hire the Goodman band to re-create this entire performance (complete with swooning teens and screaming fans) for his popular television show. This, and many other stellar Krupa performances (including some very up tempos), can be found on the essential Hudson DVD *Gene Krupa: Swing, Swing, Swing!* compiled and produced by Krupa historian Dr. Bruce Klauber ([jazzlegends.com](http://jazzlegends.com)).

Krupa's rollicking floor tom madness has inspired drum performances throughout the

years. Everyone from Elvin Jones to Carmine Appice has been influenced by Krupa's exuberant drum performance on Goodman's "Sing Sing Sing." Tunes like Cozy Cole's "Topsy Part 2" and Sandy Nelson's "Let There Be Drums" even used a similar formula to reach the top of the charts.

But "Sing Sing Sing" wasn't the first drum "solo" of note that Krupa had recorded with Goodman. In 1936, he recorded the first thirty-two-bar (extended) drum solo on Benny Goodman's "Who." This milestone solo was performed with brushes and began a long-standing relationship between Krupa and his wire "tools." Krupa's mastery of the brushes was so important that he would later feature the tune "Wire Brush Stomp" with his own band. After Zutty Singleton, Krupa was the first major drummer to fully embrace the brushes. He used them often, and in many contexts.

The album *Benny Goodman Trio And Quartet 1935/38* is a notable collection of the leader's small-group recordings with Krupa. The *Benny Goodman Quartet Together Again* documents their reunion in 1962. It should also be noted that a new recording of the Carnegie Hall concert has been issued by Jasmine Records, where the sound quality is improved greatly, and all of the musical edits that appeared on previous issues have been restored.

### Krupa Goes Solo

In March of 1938 Krupa and Goodman had a well-publicized blow-up after a gig in Philadelphia. This convinced Gene to finally start his own band. The Gene Krupa Orchestra made its recording debut on April 14, 1938 and their public debut at the Marine Ballroom on Atlantic City's Steel Pier two days later. There was never a doubt that this was a drummer's band. Krupa featured quality compositions and arrangements by Jimmy Mundy, Benny Carter, and Chappie Willett, and many drum solos. And they played in an *electrifying* swing-era approach. The tunes "Grandfather's Clock," "Rhythm Jam," "Nagasaki," "Drummin' Man," "Boog It," and "Apurksody" became fan and drumming favorites.

Krupa hired stellar soloists like Vido Musso, Roy Eldridge, Anita O'Day, Sam Musiker, and Leo Watson. (The drummer was very proud that he kept a highly integrated band throughout his career.) From this era, a tune deserving special mention is "No Name Jive," which featured Gene's

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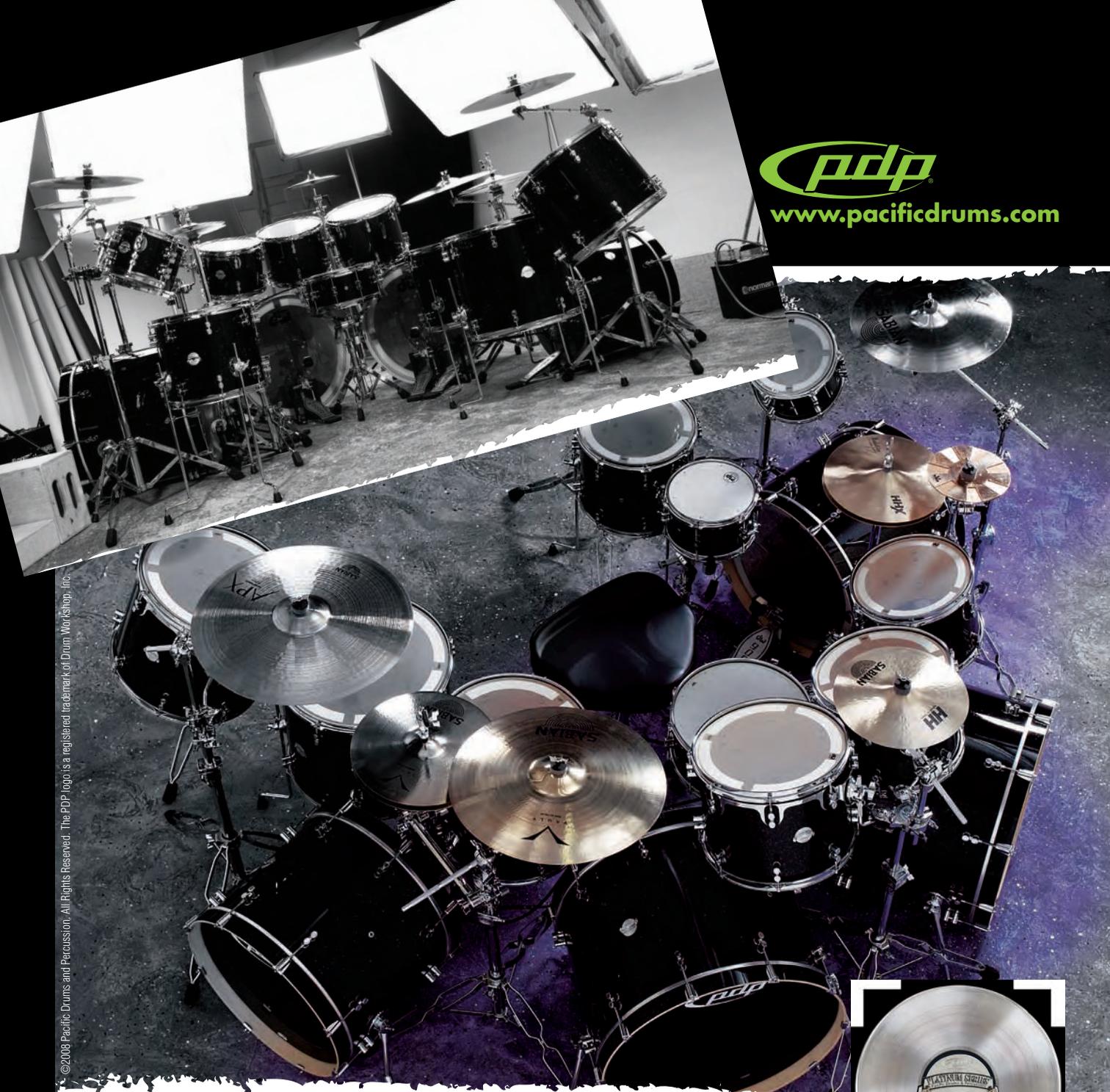
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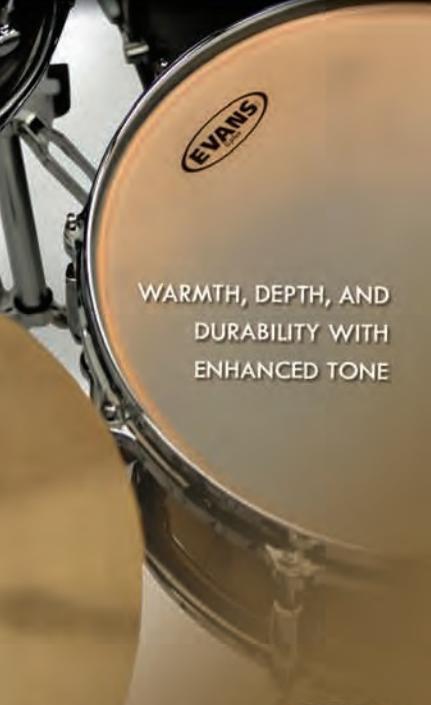


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## GENE KRUPA

accompaniment of a slowly building five-chorus-long press roll, a creative approach that paid tribute to his rolling New Orleans percussive predecessors such as Zutty Singleton. Krupa's band worked a lot, and it joined the ranks of The Casa Loma Orchestra, The Mills Blue Rhythm Band, and Cab Calloway in its high quality and

rhythm section. Yet after several recordings, major tours, and movie appearances, Krupa disbanded this edition of his band due to the overhead required to keep such a large band together. However, some good recordings exist. "Leave Us Leap" was one of Krupa's most popular recordings, and "What's This" is one of the earliest exam-



An early 1970s reunion of the original Benny Goodman Quartet: BG, Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton, and Krupa.

swinging popularity. Krupa's popularity and drumming skills were growing, and the sky was the limit.

But in 1943, Gene was the subject of a highly questionable drug arrest. Even more questionable was the media's hysterical coverage that prematurely branded the drummer as a "criminal." The charges were eventually dropped, but Gene's reputation was greatly affected. Krupa even considered retirement. Thankfully, Benny Goodman's support of his one-time colleague, and a gig with Tommy Dorsey, convinced Krupa otherwise.

After a brief stint with a Dorsey band that featured a full string section, Krupa debuted his own "band that swings with strings" in 1944. Another inspiration for this particular band might have been Gene's deep appreciation for classical music. Krupa often talked about his fondness for music written by Delius, Ravel, Milhaud, Stravinsky, and Debussy.

### Experimentation And Excitement

This ambitious (and experimental) band consisted of seven brass, five saxes, nine string players, six singers, and a six-man

plum of bebop-styled vocalese.

Krupa's musical experiments weren't confined to strings and vocals. His fondness for classical music might have also inspired him to expand his percussive palette. Like Vic Berton years before, Gene occasionally played timpani in front of his bands. (Check out the inventive use of timpani on "Boogie Blues," recorded in 1945.) Krupa even sometimes employed other drummers to play while he conducted or played timpani. "Supporting drummers" Louis Zito and Joe Dale are often forgotten in the retelling of the Krupa story.

In 1945, Krupa streamlined his band into the best combo of his band-leading career, featuring bop-oriented musicians such as Red Rodney and Gerry Mulligan. Following in the steps of Benny Goodman, in concert Krupa would often feature a trio of himself, pianist Teddy Napoleon, and saxophonist Charlie Ventura. This brings us to an often misunderstood characteristic of Gene Krupa's drumming.

There were many instances throughout Krupa's career when he recorded without a bassist. As odd as this may seem today, in the 1930s and '40s this instrumentation

# generation K



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## GENE KRUPA

was a part of the musical landscape. The famed Benny Goodman Trio and Quartet never had a bassist. Pianist Teddy Wilson was always featured playing stride-influenced left-hand bass. Similarly, many of Krupa's own small groups used this same "bass-less" instrumentation. However, when Krupa was involved, you never missed the bass accompaniment. This was because of Gene's tasteful use of his bass drum.

Many drummers often call Gene's heavier bass drum playing into question, without considering the fact that in small groups there was usually no bassist to mask the bass drum's presence. Krupa's right foot provided a nice attack to the time feel and added low end to the ensemble's sound. This is an important characteristic of "the Krupa sound," and was drastically different from the lighter bebop tradition of feathering the bass drum.

By 1945, Gene Krupa had begun to adopt many bebop-oriented drum techniques, such as dropping bombs between his snare and bass drum. His drumming support of the soloists became more interactive as well. In addition, many of his band's charts became more tinged with bebop orchestration. Anita O'Day re-joined the band in 1945, and soloists Charlie Ventura, Red Rodney, and Charlie Kennedy were standouts. "Disc Jockey Jump" became hugely popular, as did "Gene's Boogie" and "Starburst." By 1949 Krupa had himself an absolutely modern band, best represented on the later 1958 recording *Gene Krupa Plays Gerry Mulligan Arrangements*. Legendary drummer Mel Lewis once recalled this phase of Krupa's drumming, saying, "He reached a midpoint between swing and bop and made what he did work."

There are many recordings and collections spanning Krupa's career. An excellent overview is the four-CD box set *The Gene Krupa Story* on Proper Records. Columbia's

*Drummin' Man* focused on Krupa's small-group playing and is also outstanding.

### Trios, Movies, Battles, And Books

In the late '40s, economic constraints caused many of the popular big bands to disband, and smaller groups became a necessity. Gene fought the good fight and kept a big band working until 1950. In 1952, though, Gene began leading a trio.

Throughout his career, Krupa's good looks and reputation helped him become a bona fide teen idol, and he appeared in over twenty feature films. In *The Glenn Miller Story*, Krupa is seen playing a duet with drumming great Cozy Cole. Gene steals the show once again in *The Benny Goodman Story*, featuring a finale of "Sing Sing Sing."

Krupa's popularity peaked with actor Sal Mineo's depiction of him in *Drum Crazy: The Gene Krupa Story*, cementing Krupa's legacy as a legitimate star. While the film wasn't a huge success, it did feature Gene's actual drumming, and included a young Shelly Manne playing the role of Davey Tough.

It was around this time that Gene joined Norman Granz's Jazz At The Philharmonic. These highly promoted tours featured well-known jazz musicians such as Dizzy Gillespie, Oscar Peterson, and Ella Fitzgerald. The entertaining concerts often featured musical battles and staged jam sessions that excited audiences. One of the most popular battles would often be the staged drum duels between Gene and Buddy Rich.

The 1952 live album *The Drum Battle* captures the Krupa small group in one of its best-recorded offerings, and features Gene and Buddy going at it on one track. The later recording *Krupa And Rich* catches both men at their absolute best. However, only "Bernie's Tune" from this record is a true battle. On 1962's *Burnin' Beat* the two appeared "together" on a recording that (as it turns out)

rarely found Buddy and Gene in the studio at the same time. The result is slightly disappointing, but entertaining nonetheless.

The drum battle between Gene Krupa and Louie Bellson on the album *The Mighty Two* is considered by many jazz fans to be the greatest on record. This recording features the two drummers building tunes around, and merging the rudiments with, a sense of jazz syncopation on tunes such as "The Paradiddle Song," "More Flams," and "Swingin The Rudiments." Louie Bellson remembers Krupa fondly, and simply, as "The guy who brought the drums to the forefront."

Krupa was an eternal student of drumming. In 1938 he published his own book, *The Gene Krupa Drum Method*. In 1941 he started his own annual drum contest, which introduced many to famed drummers such as Louie Bellson and Dave Black. In 1951, Gene began studying the timpani with the New York Philharmonic's Saul Goodman. And in March of 1954 Krupa joined forces with another eternal student of drumming, the great Cozy Cole, to open the Krupa-Cole Drum School in New York City.

By the late '50s, health problems forced Krupa to slow down. But Gene kept studying, including lessons with Jim Chapin and Joe Morello. A heart attack in 1960 prompted a brief retirement, but he soon reappeared to join a reunited Benny Goodman Quartet. This group toured and recorded until 1967, when Krupa retired again from performing. During this hiatus, he coached his own baseball team.

In 1969 Gene conducted a series of anti-drug lectures and clinics for Slingerland Drums, with whom he shared a long-standing relationship. He officially came out of retirement yet again in the spring of 1970, re-forming his Quartet, which worked sporadically. Gene's last commercial recording was in November of 1972, and his final public performance was a reunion of the old Goodman Quartet on August 18, 1973. Gene died of a heart attack on October 16, 1973 while also suffering from leukemia and emphysema.

Buddy Rich called Gene "the beginning and the end of all jazz drummers." In a 1962 interview with Burt Korall for *Downbeat*, Krupa summed up his drumming approach by saying, "My job remains the same: to keep time, and to extract appropriate and supporting 'sounds' from the instrument. To be a musician."



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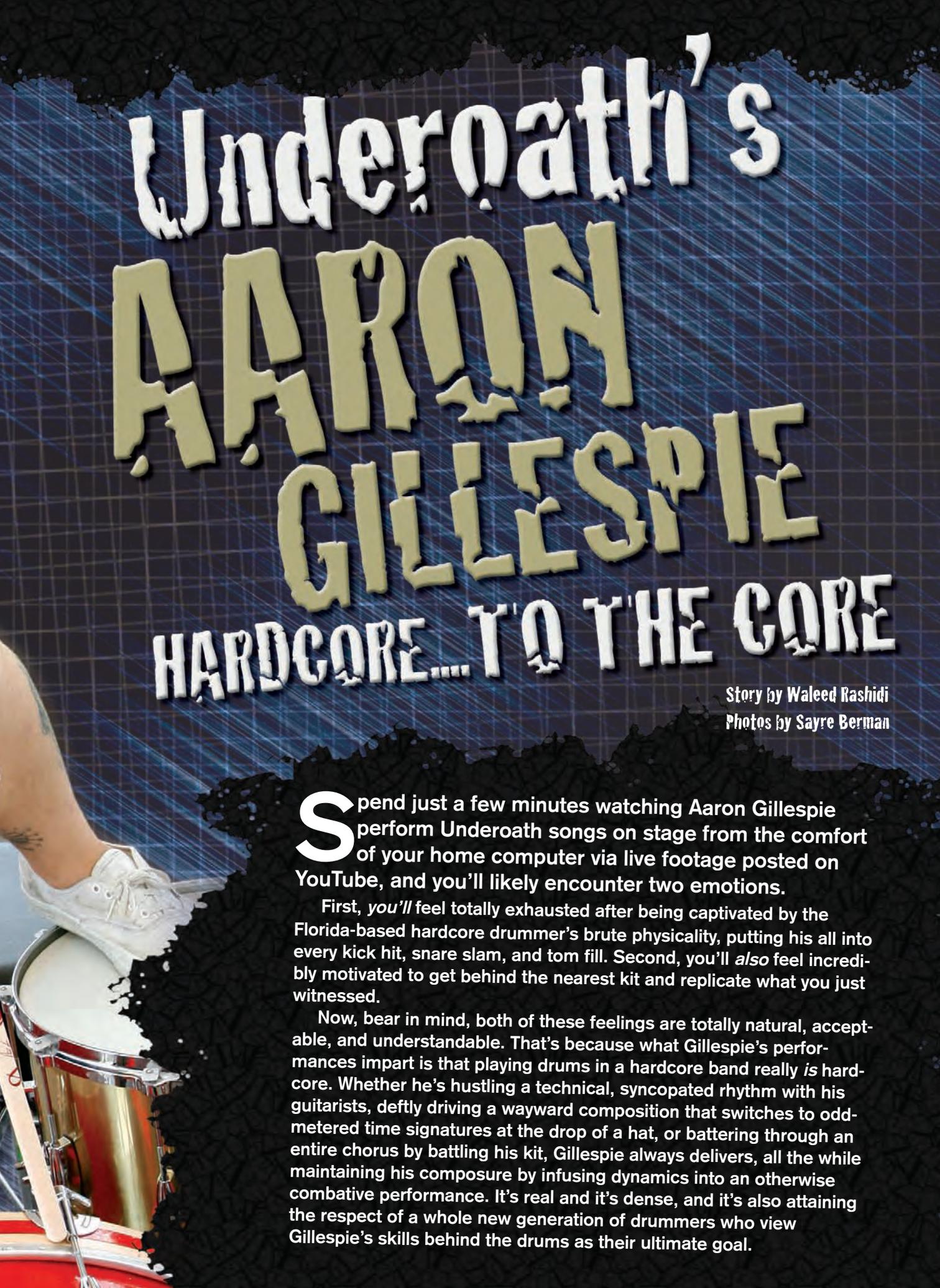
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# Underoath's AARON GILLESPIE HARDCORE... TO THE CORE

Story by Waleed Rashidi

Photos by Sayre Berman

**S**pend just a few minutes watching Aaron Gillespie perform Underoath songs on stage from the comfort of your home computer via live footage posted on YouTube, and you'll likely encounter two emotions.

First, *you'll* feel totally exhausted after being captivated by the Florida-based hardcore drummer's brute physicality, putting his all into every kick hit, snare slam, and tom fill. Second, *you'll also* feel incredibly motivated to get behind the nearest kit and replicate what you just witnessed.

Now, bear in mind, both of these feelings are totally natural, acceptable, and understandable. That's because what Gillespie's performances impart is that playing drums in a hardcore band really *is* hardcore. Whether he's hustling a technical, syncopated rhythm with his guitarists, deftly driving a wayward composition that switches to odd-metered time signatures at the drop of a hat, or battering through an entire chorus by battling his kit, Gillespie always delivers, all the while maintaining his composure by infusing dynamics into an otherwise combative performance. It's real and it's dense, and it's also attaining the respect of a whole new generation of drummers who view Gillespie's skills behind the drums as their ultimate goal.

**W**hat complicates this already complex situation is the fact that not only is Gillespie an absurdly heavy drummer with a penchant for playing for the song, he's also contributing a healthy portion of the sextet's vocals—a tall order made that much taller. He's a multi-instrumentalist who also performs under the guise of The Almost, his decidedly more straightforward and mellow melodic rock solo act (which also finds him behind the kit during the recording sessions).

Gillespie got his start playing drums in church at age seven, but by the time he was fifteen, he'd joined Underoath. "We'd just started playing on weekends,

messing around town," he recalls. That was ten years ago.

Fast forward to today: Gold record awards, MTV video rotations, millions of albums sold worldwide, *Billboard*-charting releases, and even a signature drum-set model from Truth Custom Drums. Yes, Gillespie has helped take the casual garage band that was Underoath and made it the popular phenomenon it has since become, first in the underground music circuit, and now as a hallmark hardcore rock act. And nowhere is this more evident than with the release of the band's fourth full-length, *Lost In The Sound Of Separation*, which places Gillespie on his highest pedestal yet.



**MD:** How did you work your way into Underoath?

**Aaron:** When I was fifteen I was playing in a church in Clearwater, Florida, where I'm from, and the founding member's father saw me playing there. He said, "You should call this kid." To make a long story short, we just played around town together and made some EPs locally. And then when we were nineteen years old, we started touring full-time.

**MD:** So you went straight into drumming as a full-time venture?

**Aaron:** I bussed tables at a pizza place, worked at a home furnishings store,

mowed grass—lots of terrible stuff. It's only been during the past five years that we've been a band that can pay our bills and travel around the world and stuff.

**MD:** Tell me about developing your vocals while drumming with such intensity.

**Aaron:** Developing that never ends. It's not something you get comfortable with. You don't ever want to skimp on either instrument, so you want to make sure you do all your drum tracks to your hundred ten percent ability, and then you want to make sure you do all of your vocals to your hundred ten percent ability. When you're in the studio, you don't do them both at the same

time. The dilemma I always run into happens afterwards, in pre-production for a tour—"Oh, now I have to do these things together."

I always have three learning curves in the Underoath world: I have to write the drum parts. I have to write the vocal parts. And I have to learn how to play them both together, which is kind of a pain in the butt.

I started singing and playing guitar in a worship band at church when I was sixteen. When the time came that we wanted to have some melody and clean vocals in Underoath, I was the guy who volunteered to do it, so I just had to learn. And it's

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**Heads:** Evans Genera Dry on snare batter with Hazy 300 snare-side (medium tuning, Moon Gel or gaffer's tape for muffling), coated G2s on tops of toms with G1s underneath (loose tension, Moon Gel or gaffer's tape for muffling), EMAD on bass drum batter with G1 on front (medium tension, EMAD muffling system)

**Sticks:** Pro-Mark Natural 2B

**Electronics:** Roland sampler and single pad



worked out okay.

We just completed a new album, so now I'm trying to figure out how to duplicate what I did in the studio. I'm real excited, though; the new record is kind of daunting in terms of doing both at the same time, but we've been out on tour, so we're figuring it out.

**MD:** So I take it you don't write your drum parts around your vocals.

**Aaron:** Yeah, that's the problem. If you're singing a lot of choruses of songs, it kind of works out when you're playing a straight 4/4 or 3/4. It's simpler to stay on the down-beat of the song when you're singing, instead of trying to sing over some kind of syncopated 7/8 drumbeat or some heinous double bass part. If you're trying to do that, which I am during a few parts, it's a definite pain in the butt.

It's really interesting about singing and drumming, because even little subtleties in the syllables of words can screw you up. When you're playing drums, you don't realize it. On the single "Desperate Times Desperate Measures," I have the hardest time on the second verse because everything drops out except a lo-fi guitar track and this strange, syncopated drum thing

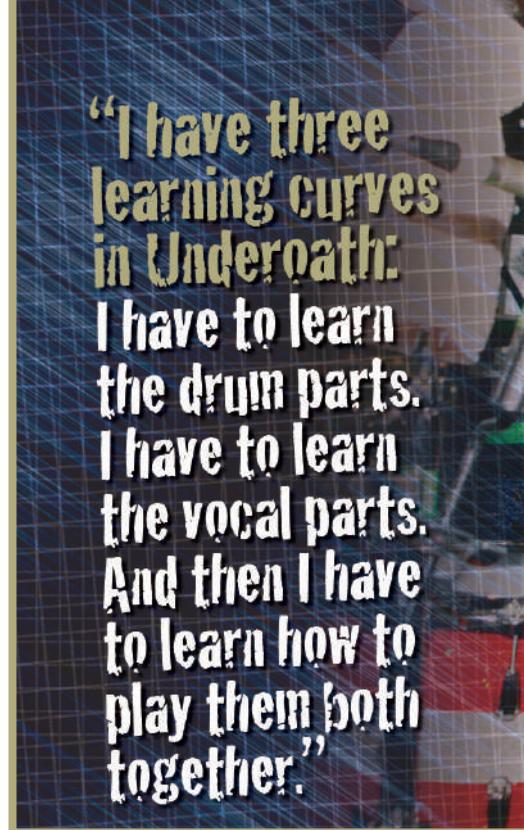
with a vocal line, where I say the word "terrible," but it's phrased oddly against the drums. That's been the hardest thing for me to figure out, just because of the way it's phrased.

I've found that the biggest thing that's helped me with the singing/drumming thing is that I play to a click live all the time. And that's super important. I mean, if you have that, it's kind of like a safety net. We started using a click originally because we had a Pro Tools rig on stage—a Reason rig—so we had to have it.

**MD:** Tell me about getting comfortable with playing to a click live.

**Aaron:** I started playing with it when I was like nineteen, so it's been a good five or six years now. We used it at all times—in rehearsal, in the studio, and live. Actually, the other day, we were at an outdoor festival and the click cut out completely. We all have a self-contained, in-ear rig that everyone runs off of, and it was the weirdest thing for me when it shut off because I'm not used to the feeling of it not being there. It's like a car seatbelt: If I don't have it, I know I don't have it and I feel kind of naked and exposed. So I love using a click.

**MD:** You've done quite a few recordings



with Underoath. Did you have specific goals while recording *Lost In The Sound Of Separation*?

**Aaron:** Rhythmically, this time, I really wanted to take it back in time a bit. I feel like every two or three years, new trends





that real classic rock drum thing happening.

**MD:** Was your production team [Adam Dutkiewicz and Matt Goldman] open to your ideas?

**Aaron:** Yeah, we recorded the drums in an 8,000-square-foot room. It was the oldest existing studio in Atlanta. It was really cool, this crazy wooden room with these old, burlap baffles set up. It had this old-ish vibe to it. Matt loves that drum sound, so he really got into it with me. It was really fun to make.

**MD:** What else did you use in the studio?

**Aaron:** I'm a Meinl guy, so I usually use a 24" medium ride or a 22" medium ride as my main banger. But this time Meinl sent me boxes full of different stuff to try. We got about two songs in, and my tech put up this cymbal called a Spectrum Ride, and I ended up using that on the entire record. It had this nice wash to it, but it was still kind of "bell-y," which was interesting. It worked great in the studio. I also used a 21"

Byzance medium ride on the left side and a 22" medium crash, which is this new thing they came out with; it's kind of dirty and sounds like it's been buried for a couple of years. I also used 14" dark hi-hats with the bottom cymbal on top.

happen in drumming, like certain fills that you hear. And for this record I kind of wanted to throw it back to an older rock drumming approach.

For instance, I did a bunch of stereo tracks on some songs, like right and left

mono tracks, and used really big drums on everything—16" and 18" floor toms, a 24" kick drum. I even tracked one song with a 28" kick drum. I just wanted to take it back to 1976 a little bit, and have that big drum tone, and in the face of modern music, have

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AARON GILLESPIE  
Underoath

## AARON GILLESPIE

My drum tech had the idea to have Truth make me a vintage kit, so they got mahogany shells with maple reinforcement rings and big-ol' round-over edges, like old Slingerland drums. I've been using that kit live and I used it on this last record. We had two kits made; there was a prototype kit that didn't even have badges. It's really cool, there's so much contact between the head and the bearing edges—it's the most resonant thing, that woody, kind of dead-ish tone. It's freakin' awesome.

I feel like everyone's using those big cannon kick drums, those deep ones, and I've had some, too, like a 20". But I went back to a 16" depth for the record, and it's the best. Back in the day, all of the big old Gretsch and Ludwig drums were 14x26. I love that sound.

**MD:** Tell me about working with the rebound on those large cymbals. How do you get comfortable with that?



**Aaron:** Frankly, I like that feeling. I like a big but thinner cymbal. For a long time I was using real heavy cymbals because I'd crack stuff so much. But I finally put two and two together and realized that a larger-diameter

medium or light ride cymbal is going to be better for me to bang on than a heavy ride cymbal. It's going to be less "bell-y." The last time I had a 16", 17", or 18" crash, I destroyed them. It's been about six or seven

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*Aaron Gillespie  
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# AARON GILLESPIE

years since I've touched a cymbal that small.

**MD:** Looking at your kit, everything seems a little spread out and distant. Your rack tom is mounted far over to the left. How did that setup become comfortable for you?

**Aaron:** I remember as a kid looking at Stewart Copeland's setup and thinking it was the coolest setup ever, and his was a bizarre, sprawling setup. I've been playing my current setup for about three or four years now. And last year I took my rack tom and moved it over to the left like that because it just felt natural. If I put everything too close, I feel like I get there too early. So I feel like I'm laying back and in the pocket a little more if I have to work to get to it. I know that it looks bizarre when the drumkit is more than six feet wide, but for some reason, that's just the way I've been doing it.

**MD:** Now you're one of the few drummers who actually has a signature kit.

**Aaron:** Orange is my favorite color, too, so right away we knew we wanted it to be orange. I'm not going to lie and tell you that this kit is made out of some special sugar maple, 'cause it's not. It's made overseas and it's a maple/poplar mix. But one of the biggest reasons why we did this kit is because there are so many kids that want to get into playing drums, especially on the scene. But to get a great drumkit, they've got to spend \$4,500. The list price for these things that all of us out here use is like five grand, and that's ridiculous. When I was fifteen years old, do you think I had \$4,500? I mean, did you?

**MD:** No, not at all.

**Aaron:** I grew up in a home that was poor, and so the biggest inspiration behind this kit was to make it so kids could get big drums—24", 13", 16" drums—that they see their friends and people on

## AARON On Record

<b>RECORDINGS</b>	
<b>ARTIST</b>	<b>ALBUM</b>
Underoath	Lost In The Sound Of Separation
Underoath	Define The Great Line
The Almost	Southern Weather
Underoath	They're Only Chasing Safety
Underoath	The Changing Of The Times
Underoath	Cries Of The Past
Underoath	Act Of Depression
<b>HIS FAVORITES</b>	
<b>ARTIST</b>	<b>ALBUM</b>
Foo Fighters	The Colour And The Shape
Led Zeppelin	Led Zeppelin
Blink-182	Take Off Your Pants And Jacket
The Police	Synchronicity
Blink-182	Blink-182









<b>DRUMMER</b>
Dave Grohl
John Bonham
Travis Barker
Stewart Copeland
Travis Barker



**M** DOMINIC HOWARD  
MUSE



**XL** AARON GILLESPIE  
Underoath



**L** CHRIS RAINES  
Norma Jean



**L** TODD SUCHERMAN  
STYX



**M** MARCO MINNEMANN  
Independent



**L** BENNY GREB  
Independent



**L** SANTA DAVIS  
Ziggy Marley



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## AARON GILLESPIE

stage playing, and they can get 'em for a thousand dollars. A big 8x14 snare, 18x24 kick drum, 7x13 rack tom, and 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms with great hardware on them for \$1,100—that's what I wanted to be involved in. Our biggest thing was making it to where it was aesthetically pleasing and that it was priced correctly.

**MD:** Let's switch gears and talk about the songs on your new album. One of them, "We Are The Involuntary," has an odd passage, a 5/4 phrase, with some other tricky meters in it, too. How did you get comfortable playing odd time signatures?

**Aaron:** It's interesting, on this record there's a lot of 5/4, because when he began to write, our guitar player wanted everything to be different. So we started working in 5/4, which is fine. But after a while, it just messes with your head. The important thing about any odd meter, like 7/8 or 5/4, is you should play it until you're comfortable with it, not just in your brain but in your soul.

**MD:** Another song that has a lot of interesting parts is "Coming Down."

**Aaron:** We always seem to play through something four or eight times and decide, "That's too many, let's change it. I don't know why that is, but that's the way the

Underoath machine works. It's natural for us to play something for eight bars and then change the tempo or the meter.

**MD:** But then you've got "The Only Survivor," where you're smashing straight through.

**Aaron:** Like I said before about taking a more classic approach, I don't want the drums to be tedious. I love when you put on certain records where the drums are so obviously simple but they're so in your face. They're heavy and fast, but they're not technically tedious.

**MD:** Because you put on such a physically demanding live show, do you put a lot of thought into the set list and how it affects your drumming?

**Aaron:** I wish we thought about that. We like to just jam the whole thing out, meaning that we don't stop much, which is kind of not cool. But I don't know, we'll typically place a couple of songs in the middle where I can take a breather. We build the set list first and then kind of look at it and go, "Oh, no." But it works out okay.

**MD:** Have you ever injured yourself from the way you play?

**Aaron:** Oh, I'm always taped up. My right hand is taped up today. When I play my

adrenaline is up, so I don't even notice if I hit my knuckles on rims, the hi-hat, or a cymbal. Sometimes after gigs there's blood everywhere.

**MD:** You've got some intense double kick maneuvers. How did you condition your feet to where they are today?

**Aaron:** It all started with me getting into trouble in high school. I would sit at the desk and pound the floor all day long. I then played a Guitar Center Drum Off! when I was fifteen, and I didn't do so well. I was kind of bummed. I realized that all the drummers there were doing this riveting double bass work, and I was just a basic rock drummer. I felt defeated that those guys could play 16th notes with their feet and win the competition. So I learned how to play double bass on the floor at school.

Now, I don't really play a lot of straight double bass passages, because that's not really my thing. But that's how I learned.

**MD:** What's the biggest drumming challenge in Underoath?

**Aaron:** I'd say the hardest thing is the physicality of it. But I love it, and I don't play drums any other way—it's just what I do. It's fun. I always try to make it physical, and I think people can tell.



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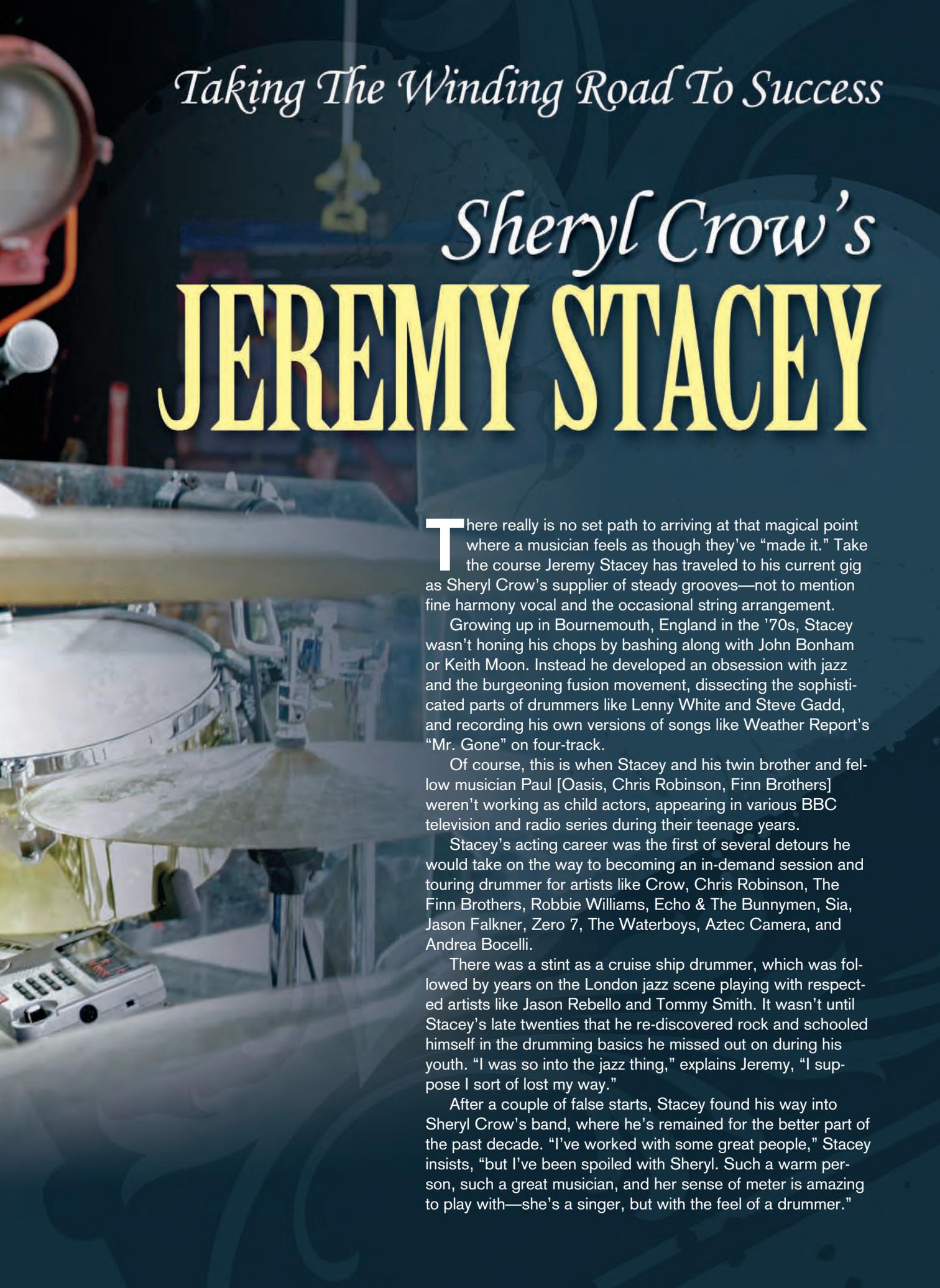
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*Sheryl Crow's*  
**JEREMY STACEY**

**T**here really is no set path to arriving at that magical point where a musician feels as though they've "made it." Take the course Jeremy Stacey has traveled to his current gig as Sheryl Crow's supplier of steady grooves—not to mention fine harmony vocal and the occasional string arrangement.

Growing up in Bournemouth, England in the '70s, Stacey wasn't honing his chops by bashing along with John Bonham or Keith Moon. Instead he developed an obsession with jazz and the burgeoning fusion movement, dissecting the sophisticated parts of drummers like Lenny White and Steve Gadd, and recording his own versions of songs like Weather Report's "Mr. Gone" on four-track.

Of course, this is when Stacey and his twin brother and fellow musician Paul [Oasis, Chris Robinson, Finn Brothers] weren't working as child actors, appearing in various BBC television and radio series during their teenage years.

Stacey's acting career was the first of several detours he would take on the way to becoming an in-demand session and touring drummer for artists like Crow, Chris Robinson, The Finn Brothers, Robbie Williams, Echo & The Bunnymen, Sia, Jason Falkner, Zero 7, The Waterboys, Aztec Camera, and Andrea Bocelli.

There was a stint as a cruise ship drummer, which was followed by years on the London jazz scene playing with respected artists like Jason Rebello and Tommy Smith. It wasn't until Stacey's late twenties that he re-discovered rock and schooled himself in the drumming basics he missed out on during his youth. "I was so into the jazz thing," explains Jeremy, "I suppose I sort of lost my way."

After a couple of false starts, Stacey found his way into Sheryl Crow's band, where he's remained for the better part of the past decade. "I've worked with some great people," Stacey insists, "but I've been spoiled with Sheryl. Such a warm person, such a great musician, and her sense of meter is amazing to play with—she's a singer, but with the feel of a drummer."

**MD:** Did you and your brother start playing together at an early age?

**Jeremy:** Yeah. I started taking piano lessons at five and had a go at guitar, but my brother was immediately better. When I was around twelve my dad bought us a proper kit—an Olympic, made by Premier. But it was falling apart. My dad realized I was seriously into the drums, so he then bought me another Olympic kit that *wasn't* falling apart.

**MD:** Were you taking lessons?

**Jeremy:** I had done some snare playing at school, but I'm pretty much self-taught. In England back then, music education at school was non-existent. There was no jazz training whatsoever, though I started getting into jazz at a young age.

**MD:** How did your taste for jazz develop?

**Jeremy:** A drummer named Andy Liesk, who played in the pit orchestra of a show that was playing in Bournemouth, stayed with us one summer and gave me lessons. He had a bunch of records and had me listen to all these different things, like a Bob James record with Steve Gadd and Andy Newmark. He also brought a couple of George Benson records with Harvey Mason, and some records with Billy Cobham and Tony Williams on them. All these drummers were immediately interesting to me. Then he brought out Steely Dan's *Aja*, which is still one of my absolute favorite records. When I first heard Steve Gadd on *Aja*, I just didn't have a clue as to what he was doing, coming from what I'd been listening to—glam rock and early punk. I suddenly was like, "This is it."

**MD:** That's pretty complex stuff for a beginning drummer to gravitate towards.

**Jeremy:** I was completely transfixed by that stuff. I really threw myself into jazz and fusion, especially Return



Chris Hudson

## SHERYL on STACEY

"Jeremy has an in-depth understanding and ability as a great jazz drummer," says rock superstar Sheryl Crow. "However, he can seriously *rock*. I love that combo, because of what he can bring to the rock set. He's also very creative in the studio, incorporating loops as well as production ideas. Not to mention, Jeremy has great taste, which I think is half the game.

My comfort level with Jeremy was initially realized when he came on board while I was still playing bass in the band," Sheryl continues. "You can tell a lot about a drummer when you're playing bass. I never had to think about where the groove was falling while I was playing bass and singing. Playing with Jeremy is simply effortless."



To Forever and Weather Report. I'd gotten a heavy rock band together with my brother

Norwegian Caribbean cruise ship out of Miami. I did one five-month stint, playing

us and liked my playing. Jim was doing a regular jazz and funk gig, a great gig to get.

*“When I’m called to do a session, the last thing I’m interested in is getting my drumming on a track. All I want to hear is the song sound better as a whole.”*

when we were fourteen. The rock thing was simpler, but I don't think we got to the essence of playing that music then.

**MD:** At what point did you dive headlong into playing jazz?

**Jeremy:** Not until my early twenties, really. I had worked in hotels doing horrible Top-40 gigs when I was seventeen. Then when I was twenty-one I played on the

for all the acts. Meanwhile, my brother got into this very prestigious acting school in London. So when I returned from the cruise gig, I auditioned and I got in, too.

Suddenly I was in London on a very tight budget. It was now time to start looking for work. I'd played a jazz gig somewhere with my brother, and Jim Mullen [guitarist for Average White Band and Brian Auger] saw

He told me his drummer was unavailable, and asked me if I wanted to do it. So I did the gig and it went pretty well, and the guys in the band said I should come down to the 606 Club, this great place in the King's Road in Chelsea, the center of the jazz world in London. I met a whole bunch of people, many of whom I played with and learned from. I was just doing hundreds of gigs, like jazz pianist Jason Rebello [Sting], who I've been playing on and off with for twenty years.

**MD:** At what point did you decide to pursue music over acting?

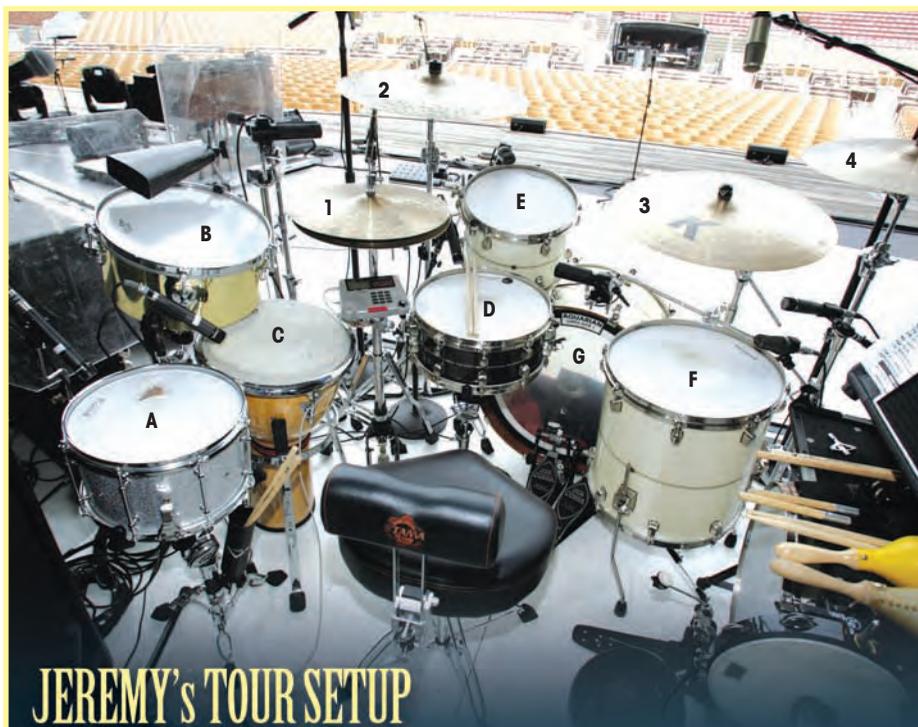
**Jeremy:** I found myself having questions about acting as a career. I was going to this acting school and doing these jazz gigs pretty much every night. Lots of people wanted me to play music. If I'd been offered some big acting role, I would've taken it. But I just didn't find myself gravitating towards it.

**MD:** Were you able to carve out a living playing jazz?

**Jeremy:** It was tough. Living in London was not cheap in the late '80s. And I don't know how a jazz musician could do it now. I'd just be going off and doing pub gigs, mostly. Jason's gigs were a bit more high-profile. We did the Montreux Jazz Festival a few times. And I played with the sax player Tommy Smith. His gigs were a bit bigger because he had a deal with Blue Note.

**MD:** What drew you back into the rock world?

**Jeremy:** Up to the age of twenty-seven, it was pretty much all jazz. But then I joined the band Gavin Rossdale had before Bush, and I was in another band, The Conspiracy. The big turnaround for me was when The Conspiracy was in Amsterdam, opening for World Party when they had *Goodbye Jumbo* out. I didn't know anything about them, and our tour manager suggested I check them out. So I saw them, and that sparked an amazing turnaround for me. Here was a band playing *songs*, and Chris Sharrock [The La's, Oasis] was such a fantastic drummer. There was something about the band that really turned my head around. Chris's playing was so musical and natural, I just thought, "I've got to re-think the whole thing."



## JEREMY'S TOUR SETUP

**Drums:** Tama Starclassic bubinga in white pearl finish with diamond inlay

- A.** 7x12 Joe Montineri 10-ply snare
- B.** 6x14 Gon Bops Alex Acuña brass timbale
- C.** LP Standard Djembe
- D.** 6x14 Tama Starclassic G Series 10-ply maple snare
- E.** 9x13 tom
- F.** 16x16 floor tom
- G.** 16x24 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

- 1.** 16" hi-hats (K Constantinople crash top, A Medium crash bottom)
- 2.** 20" Prototype Dry ride (used as crash)
- 3.** 24" K Custom Light ride
- 4.** 18" Prototype Armand series medium crash

**Percussion:** Gon Bops calfskin maracas, large and small plastic maracas, LP One Shot shaker, mounted tambourine, Jingle Stick, large mounted cowbell, tambourine

**Hardware:** Tama Road Pro, including Iron Cobra Power Glide bass drum pedal (standard spring tension, felt beater), LP percussion table, Vater

Slick Nuts, three fans for air conditioning

**Heads:** Aquarian coated Focus X (with underside power dot) on snare batter with Classic Clear snare-side; Texture Coated (with underside power dot) on tops of toms with Classic Clears underneath; clear Super-Kick II on bass drum batter with coated Tama single-ply logo head on front (towels for muffling)

**Sticks:** Vater 8A and New Orleans Jazz models (maple, with wood tips), Whip Sticks, Retractable Wire Brushes, T5 timpani mallets, Vater stick bag, Multi-Pair stick holder

**Electronics:** EMU E5000 sampler, DrumKat trigger interface, Pintech small tube triggers, Yamaha Clickstation metronome, Ampeg B15 bass amp, Sensonics custom-molded right ear monitor for metronome, Littlelite table light

**Microphones:** Heil PR40 on kick, Shure SM57 on snare top with Beta 56A underneath, Audio-Technica AE3000 on toms, AKG 460 on hi-hat, Heil PR30 for overheads, SM57 on timbale, side snare, djembe, and hand percussion, Shure SM58 for vocals

*Special thanks to Jeremy's tech, Tim "Soya" Solyan.*

After that, I found myself going headlong into The Beatles, The Beach Boys, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, a load of things I hadn't touched on properly—this is at twenty-seven years old, which is quite late when you think about it. But I realized I'd found something in music that I'd lost.

**MD:** You took a major detour on the way to being a rock drummer.

**Jeremy:** The jazz thing was such a huge detour, but I don't regret it at all. It opened up other things. All the drummers I was hanging out with, everyone had their Dave Weckl craze, with good reason. But I suddenly found myself going, "I just want to be Ringo!" Everyone thought I'd completely lost the plot.

we were eventually dropped. But during this period, we toured with Jellyfish, who I really loved. And one of the guys in Jellyfish, Tim Smith, has been Sheryl's bassist for twelve years. I hit it off totally with him, but never thought anything of it.

**MD:** Did the lack of success give you pause about going the rock route?

**Jeremy:** A little, although I was still playing jazz regularly. At that point I was about thirty-one. I really hadn't made any money, hadn't had any success. So I auditioned for Aztec Camera and got the gig. It was the first time I'd earned proper money doing a studio session, and after that everything sort of fell into place. It was literally from that point on that I didn't stop working. One

who Sheryl Crow is?" I'd heard a couple tracks on the radio and I liked them. He told me he was auditioning for her and asked if I wanted to come and play. So they bought me a ticket, and I left on Tuesday to audition on Wednesday. Of course, I had no time to prepare. I hadn't received any music. Tim played me the songs we were going to do after I arrived. I had a quick listen, and was like, "Um, okay." [laughs]

It's weird, in England my experience has been you turn up to rehearsals and start learning the stuff. In America, you turn up absolutely prepared. It's just different. But I probably didn't take it as seriously as I should have.

**MD:** Which maybe explains why you didn't



**MD:** One of your early gigs as a rock drummer found you reunited with your brother.

**Jeremy:** Yes. Weirdly, six months after that World Party gig, I got a call from their keyboardist, Guy Chambers. He was forming his own band and said a friend told him about me, and he wanted to know if I fancied getting together and having a play. So we formed this band called The Lemon Trees with my brother on guitar. We did that for a couple years in the early '90s, though our records never came out in the States and

thing would happen, then another; it just kept going. I don't know why. Maybe I was too much of a jazz player in my twenties and I needed to get the Ringo, Mitch Mitchell, and John Bonham influence into my playing.

**MD:** How did you hook up with Sheryl Crow?

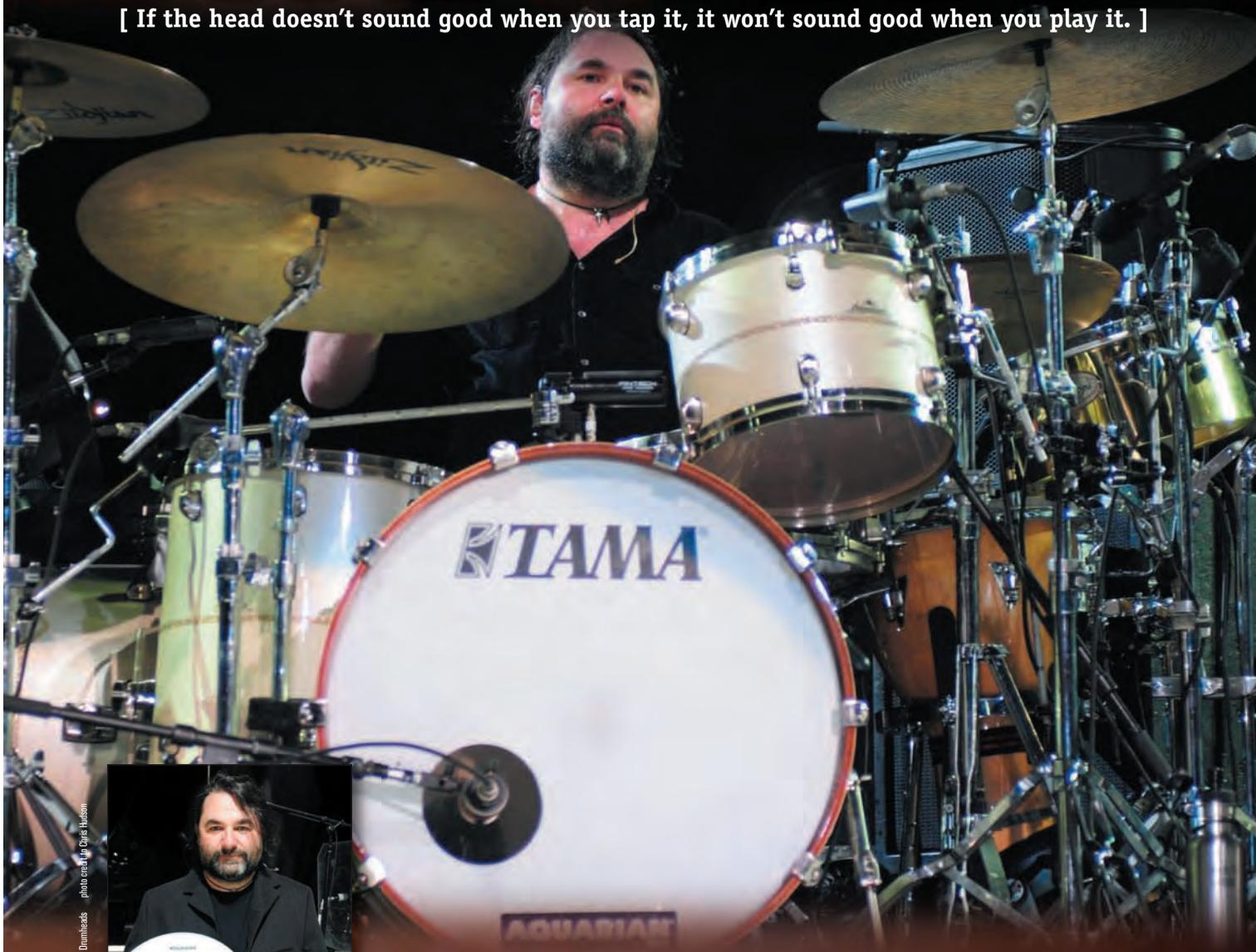
**Jeremy:** I auditioned in 1996. Tim Smith was auditioning to be her bassist, and he put my name forward for the drummer's gig. I got a call from Tim, going, "Do you know

get the gig then....

**Jeremy:** To a degree, yes. Jim Bogios came in after me. And he's a great singer. He'd learned the drum parts and gotten all the backing vocals together. He'd done his homework, and he got the gig. He absolutely deserved it. I flew back that night knowing I hadn't gotten the gig, and suddenly it was like, "Oh, no, I really liked the whole vibe of this." Tim was a friend of mine, and Sheryl seemed really nice—a really warm situation.

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## JEREMY STACEY

**MD:** Have you done an audition you felt didn't go so well, but you ended up getting the gig?

**Jeremy:** I got a last-minute call to audition for a Finn Brothers tour in 2004. I went to Mitchell Froom's studio, and just had a jam with Mitchell, Tim, and Neil Finn. And like the Sheryl audition, I wasn't playing anything that had been prepared. I was just playing like a toy drumkit and a shaker—not even a proper kit. I just grooved along and did what I could. And they didn't give me an idea at all about how it'd gone. I was like, "Oh, no." But then a week later I got the call saying they wanted me to do it.

**MD:** How did you eventually re-connect with Sheryl?

**Jeremy:** Sheryl came to England to do a couple of TV shows in 1998, all miming. So they ended up deciding that just her and Tim would come over, and they'd use a couple of English guys. They called me and Mike Rowe, who's now her keyboard player. So we did these shows, and when we were hanging out it felt very natural, just a very nice vibe. Sheryl said we should all just get in a room and do some playing. Tim turned 'round to me and said, "You're going to learn the tunes this time." I said, "You're



damn right." [laughs] So we played, and the atmosphere was good. But that was that, because it was Jim's gig.

Then about a year later, Sheryl's guitarist, Jeff Trott, came to London. He knew I had a studio, and he suggested getting together to do some recording. We did, and we just had a blast. He then went back to America to write with Sheryl for the *C'mon, C'mon*

album. She was seeking some different players to record with, some people with production ideas, and Jeff suggested me. So I got the call from Sheryl inviting me to come and record, and I went to her home studio in LA. I was playing whatever was needed—percussion, looping parts, and doing some programming. We were just experimenting. And it all went really well.

Sheryl came to London for a bit; we did some more programming and messing around with ideas. I even did a string treatment for "Safe And Sound." Then we worked at a studio in New York and started doing little club gigs every couple of weeks to break up the monotony, which was great. Just playing all these covers, celebrities turning up, people sitting in with the band. I loved it. But I still felt like it was Jim's gig, and Sheryl did, too. So Jim returned. I departed before the record was finished.

**MD:** And not long after parting company with Sheryl, you and your brother signed on with Chris Robinson and New Earth Mud. I saw you on that first tour and was blown away at the range of material. You were covering songs like "Sugaree," old country stuff like "T For Texas," and getting into some heavy jams.

**Jeremy:** Yeah, Chris had come to one of these club shows we did in New York and he picked up on me. That gig was great fun. Chris has the widest musical tastes. It was just going off into a different world. He's so much more talented a guy than you get to see with The Black Crowes—even though he's amazing with The Black

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## JEREMY STACEY

Crowes. There's so much more to Chris musically. And that made for great freedom, both in what I was doing and how the band was playing.

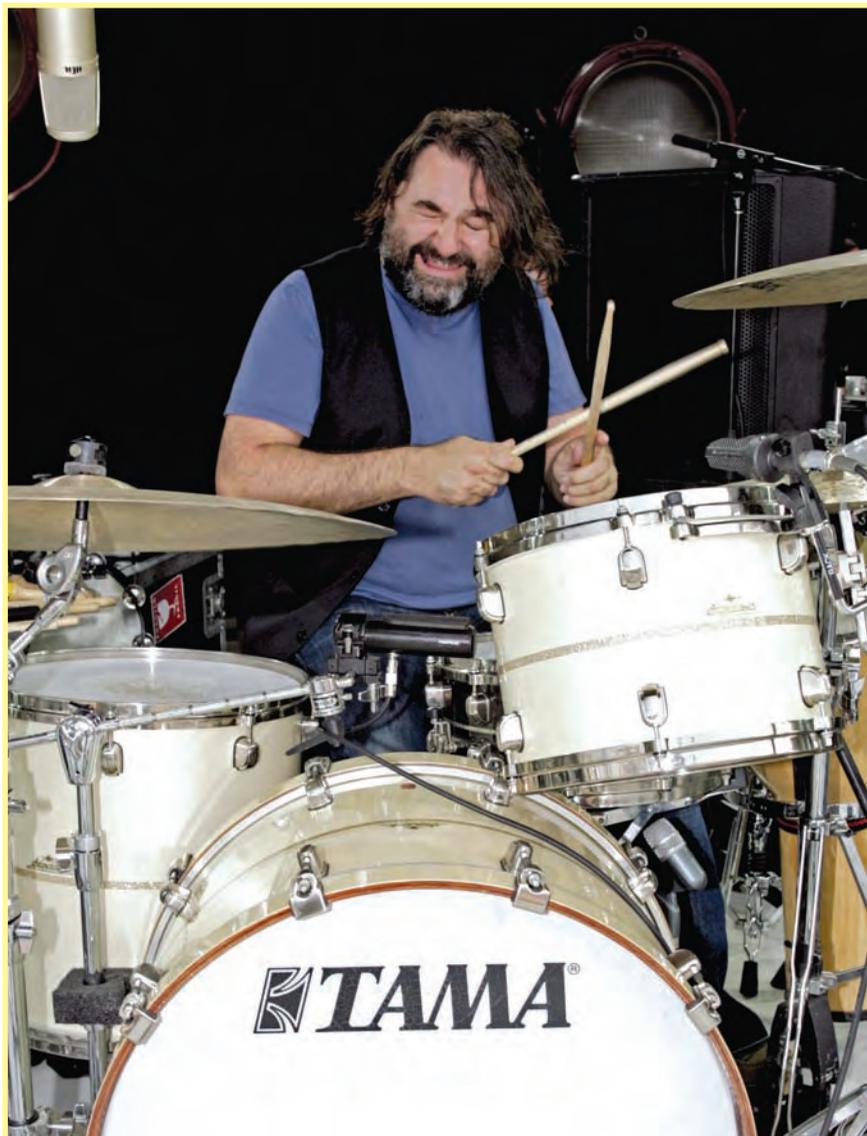
**MD:** And then after the Chris Robinson gig ended, you were back with Sheryl. What were the circumstances behind the reunion?

**Jeremy:** Sheryl and the whole band came to see me play with Chris, and it was great to see everyone again. I had worked with them for a year, and when it finished, I was gutted. But I just had the feeling that it wasn't over with Sheryl. By this time Jim Bogios joined Counting Crowes, and then the great Shawn Pelton came in and did it for a while. But he had his commitment with *Saturday Night Live* and it became difficult for him to do the two things. So I was asked to do a European tour. That was December 2003. I really didn't expect to still be doing it this long.

**MD:** You've played drums on three of Sheryl's records now. Does she have a pretty good idea in mind for a drum track, or do you arrive at something collaboratively?

**Jeremy:** It varies. *C'mon, C'mon* was a struggle. She was searching for something different, and there was a bit more pressure. Still, there are some absolutely great things on it. And then sometimes there's a change in personnel, which certainly affects ideas. I was involved in the beginning of the *Wildflower* sessions, and then it ended up going off in other directions, with different producers.

When *Detours* started, the band went into the studio and we did some messing around, some experimenting, and then Sheryl decided to have a go at working with [producer/engineer] Bill Bottrell again. Brian MacLeod came in and did some drumming, but eventually I ended up getting a call to come in and continue working on the



record. And that was just an amazing experience working with Sheryl and Bill, the most fun I've had.

**MD:** There's a nice variety of stuff on *Detours*, but there's an emphasis on really funky old-school rock, like "Gasoline."

**Jeremy:** Yeah, I played on "Gasoline."

You're right, very old-school, just cutting loose. We were trying all sorts of things, sometimes staying up really late and having a couple of drinks, then doing really slow versions of things, almost like a Grateful Dead-ish attempt at a song, just to see if it would work. There wasn't the same sort of pressure as with *C'mon, C'mon*. It was just the feeling of, "Let's make a great record." A lot of that had to do with Bill. He's a great producer and engineer, and an inspiring guy.

**MD:** With Sheryl, it seems common that different players are brought in during recording sessions. What's it like investing your time and energy into being someone's drummer—on tour and in the studio—and then being replaced on a record?

**Jeremy:** That's the way it goes with sessions. Sheryl will re-cut things until she's totally happy with them. And I certainly

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## JEREMY STACEY

don't take it personally. I remember during the *C'mon, C'mon* recording, she decided she wanted to redo a song she'd already cut. She played me the song; I think Jerry Marotta—who I love—was playing on it. And what he played was great, but she just wanted something different. So we kept the bass and guitar and I replaced the drums. But then in the end, I think Steve Jordan ended up re-cutting over *my* track! [laughs]

That's the thing I've learned when I produce a session—you can't be too loyal to your musician friends. Someone could've just played a great track, but you listen back and you think, "I just don't hear that for *this*

song." You have to go with what's right for each song.

When I'm called to do a session, the last thing I'm interested in is getting my drumming on a track. All I want to hear is the song sound better as a whole. If that means just tapping a brush or playing a backbeat, great.

**MD:** Sheryl's original drummer, Wally Ingram, is now playing percussion in the band. Do you guys work out anything in advance?

**Jeremy:** Never. [laughs] Wally's an old hand, and he played all the old stuff on drums. He just fits in with it. We'll listen to

the record and it's basically, "Well, I'm going to play the drum part, you're going to play the percussion part."

It really is very easy playing with Wally. He's coming from that attitude of playing for the song. Doesn't matter if he's just playing a tambourine on the backbeat.

**MD:** Because of the Sheryl Crow and Chris Robinson gigs, people associate you with a '70s-rock style of playing. But you've worked with mellower, electronic-based artists like Sia, Zero 7, and Charlotte Gainsbourg. You push things in the right spots on those records, but with a soft touch that never gets in the way.

**Jeremy:** I find that in the studio, unless I'm trying to create something very energetic, I don't play anywhere near as loudly as I do on stage. It never sounds as good. On the Zero 7 stuff, for instance, one of the things they talked about when I turned up for the session was, "Think Harvey Mason." And he's incredibly delicate as a player. So I played quietly on purpose. And some of that stuff is surprisingly off-the-cuff. The three tracks I play on the first Zero 7 record we got in three hours.

**MD:** Even though you essentially make your living as a rock drummer, are you still finding ways to keep your jazz and fusion chops sharp?

**Jeremy:** I've been very inspired again recently by a number of drummers, particularly Ari Hoenig, Ronald Bruner Jr., and Keith Carlock. They're all amazing and stylistically different. They've made me want to play. And I do this little band with Jason Rebello, my brother on guitar, and Pino Palladino on bass. We play these old tunes like Herbie Hancock's "Actual Proof" and "Black Market" by Weather Report. We just did a little gig at the 606 Club. Great fun.

**MD:** That has to be a nice outlet to have when you're home from a tour. Instead of just sitting around the house, you can go and play with some friends.

**Jeremy:** That's exactly what it is, just playing with some friends. And these gigs are great. Ideally, I'd like to keep things mixed as much as possible, because improvising is something you kind of need to do all the time. I'm lucky to be in this position of having played with all these people. Sheryl, Chris Robinson, The Finn Brothers, Jason—I've been spoiled.

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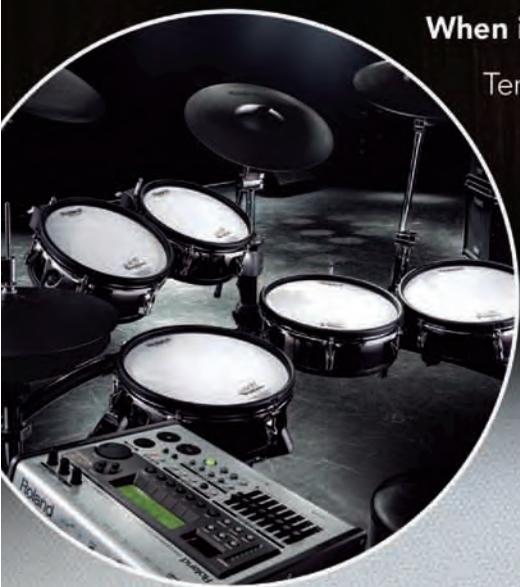


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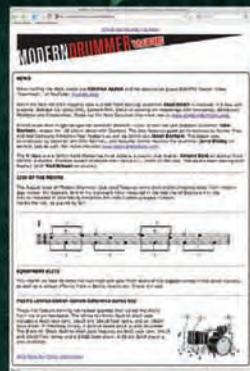
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# Billy Higgins

## Smile, Style, And Grace

by Bill Carbone

**W**hen speaking with *Modern Drummer* in 1992, jazz great Billy Higgins expressed his philosophy of music in a few concise sentences. "I've always looked at music as just being music," said Higgins. "Whatever sound a person had in his heart, it was supposed to happen. So I didn't say 'This cat can play' or 'This cat can't.'" Though it may read a bit idealistic on paper, Higgins, whose five hundred or so albums make him one of the most recorded drummers in history, always put his philosophy into action.



MUSIC KEY	
open	○ R.C.
H.H.	●
T.T.	●
S.D.	●
F.T.	●
B.D.	●
H.H. w/foot	● Add'l T.T.

### Everybody's Favorite Drummer

Few drummers can claim a body of work as diverse as Higgins'. As a young man in Los Angeles, Billy worked in the thriving R&B scene of the early 1950s, backing stars such as Bo

Diddley and Amos Millburn. However, jazz was Higgins' true love, and he spent most of the late 1950s as a sideman to prominent West Coast musicians such as James Clay and Teddy Edwards. In 1960, Higgins was thrust into the national spotlight during The Ornette Coleman Quartet's engagement at the Five Spot in New York City, often referred to as one of the most controversial moments in jazz history. Soon after, Higgins became the house drummer for Blue Note Records and recorded with almost every prominent jazz musician, including saxophonists Dexter Gordon, John Coltrane, Hank Mobley, Jackie McLean, and Sonny Rollins, pianists Thelonious Monk and Herbie Hancock, trumpeter Lee Morgan, and guitarist Grant Green.

Higgins maintained a hectic touring and recording schedule throughout the '70s and '80s, working as a leader and in groups with pianist Cedar Walton, saxophonist Clifford Jordan, and experimental bandleader Sun Ra, among many others.

Higgins' performing career ground to a halt in the early '90s, as he awaited a liver transplant. Though a successful operation in 1996 allowed the drummer to begin performing again, Higgins passed five years later, on May 3, 2001, at the age of 64.

### The Universal, Intangible Beat

Billy Higgins' musical success and positive attitude are inseparable facets of his life story. He was an undeniably great drummer, but not in the explosive manner of Art Blakey, Buddy Rich, or even Max Roach. Higgins' signatures were his understatement, his melodicism, and most of all his ability to propel a group with a light, simmering, and interactive groove.

Higgins also possessed intangibles. Whenever he drummed, he grinned, laughed, grunted, and sang. Judging by the mountain of inspired recordings he left behind, his exuberance was infectious. In many ways, Higgins' drumming was like his personality: Mr. Higgins was all about making other musicians sound good.

As an elder statesman of jazz in the 1990s, Higgins, who had moved back to Los Angeles in the late '70s, turned his attention to mentoring aspiring musicians in his community. In 1992 he and poet Kamau Daaoood founded the World Stage, a cultural center and performance space in South Central Los Angeles. Billy appeared frequently at the World Stage's weekly jam sessions; he also convinced his friends in jazz—Elvin Jones among them—to show up and host free clinics for local musicians. Joao Vargas, a frequent member of the World Stage jazz jams in the late '90s, wrote a touching account of Higgins' post-surgery homecoming performance in 1997:

"He was extremely thin and talked and walked with difficulty. His smile was the same, as was his affection toward all of us gathered to celebrate him. He played from about 11:00 P.M. to 2:00 A.M., and he made it a point to let all the musicians—about twenty of us—come on stage and perform at least a couple of songs with him. His playing at the drumset was as crisp, fast, and melodic as ever."

There was something universal about Higgins' drumming. His Ornette Coleman recordings still sound radical, and the sides he cut with Donald Byrd and Lee Morgan stand as some of the funkier jazz ever played. (And they get sampled all the time.) Unlike many "modern" approaches to drumming, Higgins' playing was timeless—it will *never* sound out of style.

### A Few Higgins Gems

In the late '50s, long before James Brown ever uttered the word, jazz musicians were talking about "funk." It was usually

used in reference to what ultimately became known as “hard bop,” a form of jazz pioneered by artists such as pianist Horace Silver, saxophonist Lou Donaldson, and drummer Art Blakey. Hard bop made use of the harmonic advancements of the bebop of the 1940s, but placed emphasis on a strong and “funky” rhythmic underpinning. In hard bop, the funkiness was usually a bit lighter and less insistent than the 2-and-4 backbeat variety that emerged later.

In the transcriptions that follow, all culled from recording sessions that took place between 1962 and 1965, we focus on Higgins’ taste for creating strong, melodic grooves that still allowed him to engage in interplay with the rhythm section. (Note: Like many jazz drummers, Higgins generated forward motion by playing extremely quiet “feathered” notes on his bass drum on either beats 1 and 3 or on all four beats. The bass drum parts notated here are the ones that were played slightly louder and were intended to be audible parts of the rhythmic phrase. The feathered strokes are assumed to be played on all other beats.)

### “The Sidewinder”

Apparently a filler song hastily composed and recorded for Lee Morgan’s December 1963 Blue Note session, “The Sidewinder” was a surprise success as it slithered up to the top of the R&B charts, selling faster than the label could press copies.

Higgins’ slinky, over-the-bar groove, one that he used in one form or another on many sessions, was no doubt part of the recording’s success. With his ride cymbal phrased halfway between straight and swing, Higgins synchs his feet lightly with Bob Crenshaw’s almost hoe-down-ish, two-beat bassline. Billy’s funky bossa nova-type snare pattern is two bars long and locks in with Barry Harris’s piano comping in the first measure, while playing against it in the second. The tune is played at a cool 160 bpm.



### “Watermelon Man”

Herbie Hancock’s “Watermelon Man,” one of the most covered tunes in jazz history, was first recorded during a May 1962 Blue Note session for the pianist’s *Takin’ Off* album.

Again inhabiting that netherworld between straight and swing, Higgins plays a groove similar to what he played on “The Sidewinder.” On this track, however, the drummer allows the natural three-over-two snare pattern to continue over the bar line, which creates a circular figure in the left hand that’s rooted by a solid 4/4 feel with his other limbs. Higgins’ ability to perform patterns that felt funky but weren’t overly repetitive was a hallmark of his style. Billy’s capacity for obscuring bar lines likely emanated from his experiences playing free jazz with artists like Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor. This transcription begins two bars before the second melody of the song. The tempo is about 132 bpm. (0:41)



Chorus 2



### “Freedom Jazz Dance”

Armed with a one-chord vamp and Higgins’ dancing beat, saxophonist Eddie Harris’s “Freedom Jazz Dance” is a bona fide classic. Rather than lock in his left hand with Cedar Walton’s staccato piano vamp, Higgins plays around it, using rhythms from Harris’s saxophone melody to construct a funky drum part that doesn’t repeat. Though he’s not playing along to a walking bass line, Higgins leans slightly more towards a traditional swing ride cymbal pattern here. The snares are switched off. This transcription is from the first pass of the song’s melody. If you listen using headphones, you can hear Higgins singing along with his groove. This tune is about 172 bpm. (0:33)



### “Blackjack”

Trumpeter Donald Byrd recorded a wealth of hard bop albums in the ‘60s and ‘70s that, though criminally underappreciated by the jazz media, have been used repeatedly by hip-hop DJs to create new music. *Blackjack* is one of his finest.

On the title track, Higgins again splits his limbs between the bass pattern, here played by Walter Booker, and a piano vamp from Cedar Walton. Billy plays off this song’s two-bar motif throughout, switching the sound sources (a floor tom for a high tom, a snare for a side stick, etc.) to generate energy and motion. The drummer’s cymbal pattern suggests both a classic jazz swing groove and traditional Latin patterns. As he did often, Higgins teases with both styles throughout, while never wholly committing to either one. The song is approximately 172 bpm.



Bill Carbone is an active drummer and percussionist who performs throughout the Northeast. Bill can be reached at [myspace.com/billcarbone](http://myspace.com/billcarbone).



# Norma Jean's Chris Raines

## Norma Jean Vs. The Anti Mother

by Ed Breckenfeld



**MUSIC KEY**

open	O	R.C.	C.C.
H.H.	H	Bell	B
T.T.	T		
S.D.	S		
F.T.	F		
B.D.1	B		
H.H.	H		
w/foot		B.D.2	Add'l T.T.

Atlanta's Norma Jean serves up a major dose of metalcore on their new release, *Vs. The Anti Mother*. Prompted by the quintet's successful run on the Warped Tour, modern-rock radio has picked up on the new album's melodic tracks.

A key lineup change in the group is new drummer Chris Raines, who honed his chops with Virginia-based metal band Spitfire. Raines twists rhythms in interesting ways throughout the disc, flashing speedy stick work and inserting double kicks where they're most effective. Let's take a look at some of his best moments on *The Anti Mother*.

### "Vipers, Snakes, And Actors"

The 5/4 time verse of the album's opening track features Raines' continuous 8th-note groove. Unusual in its equal proportion of snare and bass drum notes, this pattern stands out sonically while effectively supporting the section's guitar riff. (0:23)

1

$\text{♩} = 142$

As the verse progresses, Chris pulls out a few quick 16th note-triplet fills to build the intensity. (0:32)

2

When the song reaches its lyrical climax, the band slows the tempo and switches to 4/4 time. Raines uses short bursts of

double kick in an otherwise sparse groove to underscore the song's message. (1:50)

3

$\text{♩} = 120$

### "Self Employed Chemist"

The thrash opening of this song is a chance for Chris to showcase his speed. This extended fill launches the band into the album's fastest track. (0:03)

4

$\text{♩} = 191$

### "Birth Of The Anti Mother"

A great guitar riff/drumbeat combination sparks the verse of this track as it alternates between 6/8 and 4/4 time. Notice the additional double bass notes added the third time through the riff and the cool polyrhythm in measure 4. (If your metronome doesn't reach 266 bpm, set it to 133 for a quarter-note pulse.) (0:04)

5

$\text{♩} = 266$

### "Robots 3 Humans 0"

The album's first single opens with this energetic 16th-note groove. Raines moves his single strokes back and forth between the hi-hat and snare, creating a memorable drum intro for this radio hit. (0:00)

6

$\text{♩} = 131$

Chris's verse pattern turns the excitement level up another notch. A marvel of syncopation for an up-tempo tune, this beat slams the verse forward while continuing the 16th-note theme of the intro. (0:23)

7

Raines changes direction for the song's second verse with this double bass-driven half-time groove. His extra snare accents add a nice variation to the beat. (1:28)

8

$\text{♩} = 66$

### "Opposite Of Left And Wrong"

Here's another 16th-note snare/bass pattern under 8th-note crash cymbals. The quad at the end of the bar is an effective way to cycle the beat back to its beginning. (1:21)

9

$\text{♩} = 83$

### "And There Will Be A Swarm Of Hornets"

*The Anti Mother* finishes with this slow and heavy track, in which Chris delivers another of his signature syncopated grooves. (9:16)

10

$\text{♩} = 70$



You can contact **Ed Breckenfeld** through his Web site, [www.edbreckenfeld.com](http://www.edbreckenfeld.com).



# Flams Forever

## Building Chops With Flam Taps, Swiss Triplets, And Flammed Mills

by Ricky Sebastian



**E**ver since I heard jazz legend Tony Williams use Swiss triplets around the drumset, I've been a huge fan of any rudiment containing flams. This article contains a few exercises I developed over the years that utilize Swiss triplets, flam taps, flammed mills, and inverted flam taps. These rudiments are great for building your chops, and they sound wonderful when orchestrated around the drumset.

### The Basic Stickings

Here are the basic flam rudiments and a couple of variations that you'll need to master before you can play them around the drums.

#### 1 Flam Tap

IR R rL L IR R rL L rL L IR R rL L IR R

#### Inverted Flam Tap

R rL L IR R rL L IR L IR R rL L IR R rL

#### Swiss Triplet (right lead)

#### Swiss Triplet (left lead)

IRRLIRRLIRRLIRRL rLLRrLLRrLLRrLLR

#### Windmill

#### Inverted Windmill #1

IR R L R I L L R L R rL L R L I R R L

#### Inverted Windmill #2

#### Inverted Windmill #3

R L I R R L R rL L R L R rL L R L I R

### The Workout

Examples 2-4 are intended to build up your flam taps, inverted flam taps, Swiss triplets, and flammed mills by changing the leading hand, by shifting the rudiment to different parts of the beat, and by combining them in one phrase.



2

IR R rL L IR R rL L IR R rL L IR R rL L

R rL L IR R rL L IR R rL L IR R rL L R

rL L IR R rL L IR R rL L IR R rL L IR R

L IR R rL L IR R rL L IR R rL L IR R rL

3

IR R L R rL L R L IR R L R rL L R L

R rL L R L IR R L R rL L R L IR R L

R L IR R L R rL L R L IR R L R rL L

R L R rL L R L IR R L R rL L R L L



4

IR R L IR R L R rL L R rL L R L IR R

L IR R L IR R L R rL L R L IR R L R

rL L R rL L R L IR R L IR R L R rL L

R rL L R L IR R L IR R L R rL L R L

In my next article, I'll show you some different ways to orchestrate these patterns around the drumset. Until then, enjoy!



**Ricky Sebastian** welcomes email correspondence at [rickys@rickysebastian.com](mailto:rickys@rickysebastian.com). For more information on Ricky's impressive career, go to [www.rickysebastian.com](http://www.rickysebastian.com).



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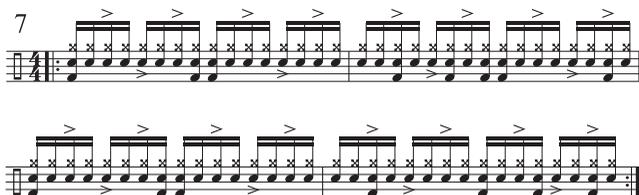
Now add the bass drum part from the original groove.

6



For a finishing touch, add a couple of off-beat accents in the hi-hat part with the right hand. This makes for a dynamic groove with a lot of forward motion.

7



To develop the down-up motion further, try playing rhythms from Ted Reed's *Syncopation* (or any other reading book) on the bass drum while playing the hi-hat and snare parts from Example 5. Remember to start slowly and be aware of your volume levels.

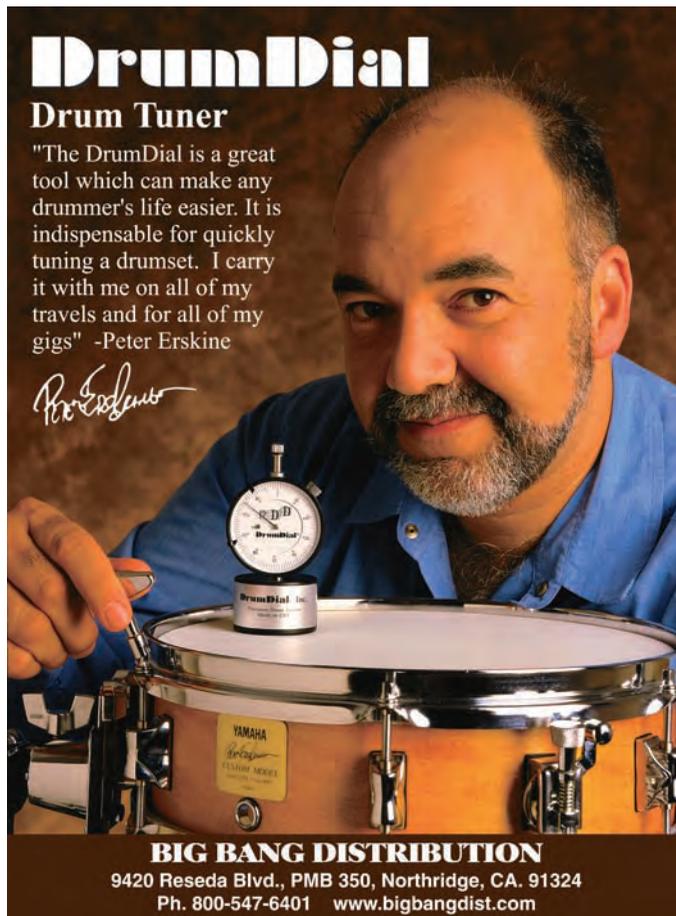
In order to play successive notes quickly and smoothly, you must be relaxed and loose. With practice, you'll be able to play successive notes quicker and with more control, and you'll be on your way to groovin' like Jeff Porcaro.



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# Burning On Double Bass

## Kick-Ass Exercises For Your Feet

by Todd Vinciguerra



**MUSIC KEY**

open	○
H.H.	●
T.T.	●
S.D.	●
P.T.	●
B.D.1	●
H.H.	●
w/foot	●

B.D.2

**T**here are no shortcuts in gaining speed, control, and accuracy with your snare drum playing. The same applies to double bass. Whether you're using two bass drums or a double pedal, only focused practice and repetition will allow you to gain control over the art of double bass drumming.

The following exercises should be included in your daily drumming work out. With consistent practice, these will help you begin to burn on double bass. When practicing these exercises, be sure to use a click track or metronome. Keep track of your starting tempo. This will help you establish the speed at which you can currently play the exercises. Make sure you're playing the notes as precisely as possible, especially on slower tempos. This focus on control at slower tempos will be especially helpful when the speed increases. Your metronome will also provide you with a tempo/speed goal that you want to work towards.

Here's our starting point.

1

Example 2 is a variation on a snare drum exercise that I've been playing for years. It's a four-bar repeating phrase. Begin the exercise with your right foot playing constant 8th notes and then alternating 16th notes. Then switch to leading with your left foot.

2

Examples 3-5 incorporate doubles and paradiddles.

3

4

5

Now try changing the rate of the double bass patterns from 8ths, to triplets, to 16ths.

6

7



8

Finally, here are a couple of fun double bass grooves using three-stroke ruffs.

9



10



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# George Duke

## Bring On The Drummers

by Ken Micallef

**"F**irst of all, they have to be decent people," George Duke says when asked what qualities are needed to join his band. "If I'm on the road or working in the studio with somebody, we become a family. Personality is really important to me. That's half the job. Being able to play is the other part."



"I like drummers who are flexible," the keyboard legend continues. "And it helps if a drummer can read. I don't have time to explain it all. And odd time—signature capability is important—I like to pull out other things than just playing *Reach For It* or 'Dukey Stick.' Sometimes I play progressive music, so I need someone who can lay down a pocket and who can also come with it when necessary and play more than just 2 and 4. And you've got to have good time."

After auspiciously entering the worlds of funk, rock, and beyond when he joined Frank Zappa's band in the early 1970s, jazz pianist George Duke went on to become a major pop and instrumental force, as renowned for his mad falsetto vocals as his stellar keyboard wizardry. Duke graced such Frank Zappa albums as *Chunga's Revenge*, *Inca Roads*, *Over-Nite Sensation*, and *Roxy & Elsewhere*, and soon became a solo artist whose recordings defied expectations, yet always included a heavy dose of greasy funk.

Thirty-five records and counting (!), Duke has run the gamut from the freak funk of *The Aura Will Prevail* and *Feel* (with Leon "Ndugu" Chancler on drums) and the pop/funk of *Reach For It* (more Ndugu), to classic fusion with Billy Cobham (*Live In Europe*) and the silken sambas of *A Brazilian Love Affair* (with Robertinho Silva).

Duke's latest album, *Dukey Treats*, comes full circle. A full-on funk assault, the recording features the drumming of Ronald Bruner Jr., Vinnie Colaiuta, Leon "Ndugu" Chancler, Teddy Campbell, and Lil' John Roberts.

According to Duke, "I sell CDs at shows, and people always ask, 'Why don't you do an album of old-style funk?' *Dukey Treats* started out to be a total funk record. But then I backed off and did a tribute to old-school in general as seen through my vision—

### DUKE'S MEN

Here's a partial list of drummers that George Duke has worked with during his thirty-plus-year career:

Aynsley Dunbar	Steve Ferrone
Chester Thompson	Rayford Griffin
Ralph Humphrey	Robertinho Silva
Leon "Ndugu" Chancler	Dennis Chambers
Airto	Lil' John Roberts
Billy Cobham	Teddy Campbell
Sheila E	Terri Lyne Carrington
Ricky Lawson	Ronald Bruner Jr.
Narada Michael Walden	

all of the old-school sensibilities but with new-school properties. I love to make each album different."

Here are Duke's thoughts on a few of the drummers he's worked with.

#### Billy Cobham (Live In Europe)

I've worked with Billy Cobham for many years, and he's a very special and innovative drummer. When I was young, we toured together a lot but only made one album. I also have a lot of board tapes that I'd like to release one of these days, when Billy sees fit to do it.

I met Billy when I was playing with Frank Zappa. The Mahavishnu Orchestra opened for Frank on a couple of tours. I went to see them every night. And Billy would be backstage watching us. He and I agreed to put a band together someday.

At the time, fusion had become too serious for me. I was with Zappa, and he taught me how to laugh and not take myself too seriously. I wanted to bring that fun element into fusion. There

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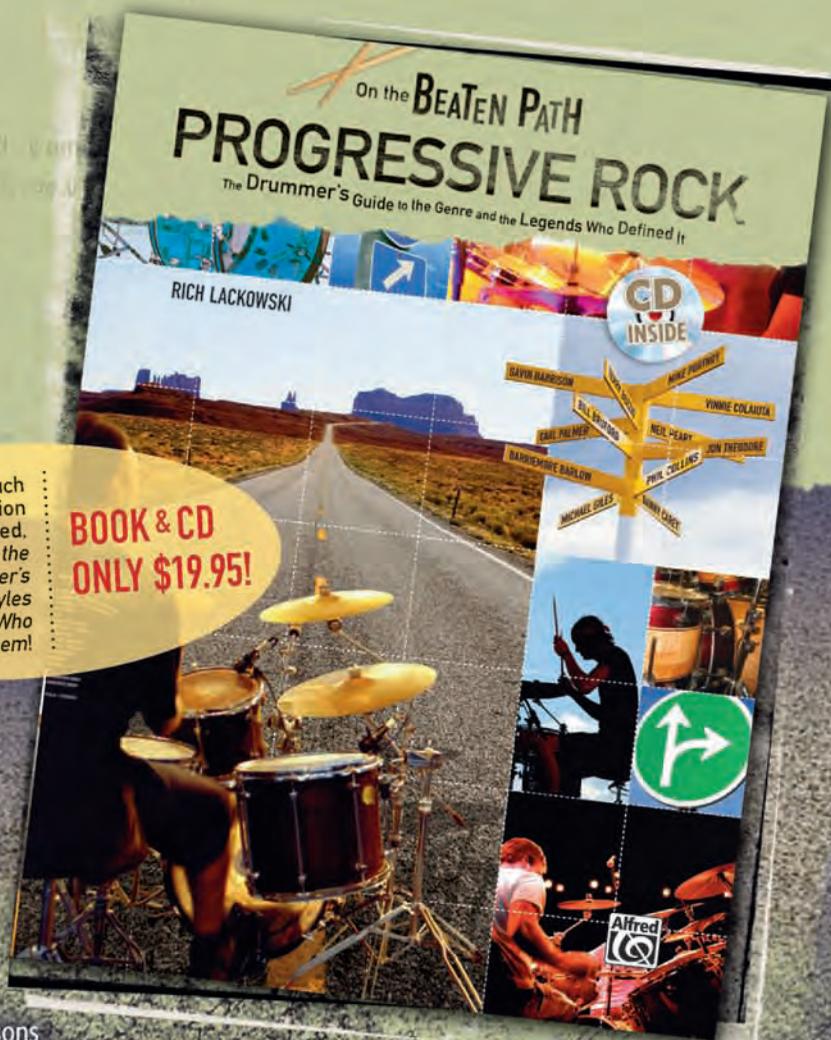
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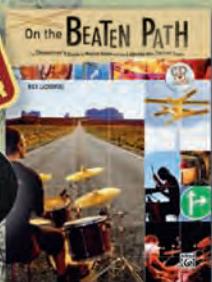
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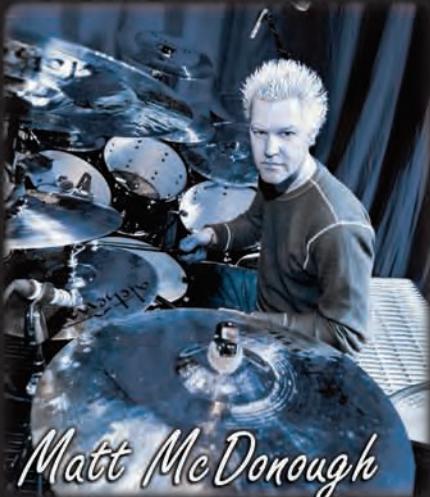
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## GEORGE DUKE

were so many copycat fusion players who were just playing a lot of notes. They didn't have substance, and there weren't any vocals. I also wanted to bring an urban element into fusion with more of a pocket, and I thought Billy and I could build an audience by doing that. And that's what happened.

That *Live In Europe* album became like the Bible of fusion music. Even so, I really don't like it that much. It wasn't that great. But it apparently changed some lives. It wasn't a typical Return To Forever or Mahavishnu kind of fusion record. People hadn't heard that kind of pocket before. And I wanted to have something funny on there, to lighten up all the heaviness.

Besides video footage, I have audio footage of the tour we did for that record. I've transferred it to digital and edited a few things. I have enough for two albums, but Billy doesn't want me to release it. He wants to do a new album. But I said, "Yeah, but we got *this*." It's funny, but so much footage of that band has now come out on the Internet that Billy is starting to change his mind.

**"Billy [Cobham] can play all that stuff. But when it's time to lay down the law and play a groove, he can play it like nobody's business. It's having that balance that counts."**

Billy had so much facility—he still does. He can play all that stuff. But when it's time to lay down the law and play a groove, Billy can play the groove like nobody's business. It's having that balance that counts.

### Ronald Bruner Jr. (Dukey Treats)

Ronald Bruner is the closest player I've worked with who plays like Billy Cobham. His rolls remind me of Billy, and also the sound he gets when he plays those rolls is the closest to Billy that I've heard.

Billy was a bull. And Ronald is the same kind of player. He's strong. What he gives me that a lot of other young drummers don't is he can play straight-ahead jazz, funk, fusion, and Latin. And he's technically proficient. Ronald has it all. So therefore the world is at his feet. He can do whatever



he wants to if he has the mind to do it. Plus he's a good cat; I really like him as a person. He's brash on a certain level, but Tony Williams was brash, too. And when you get to know Ronald, he's a really good cat.

Ronald doesn't want to do it like everybody else is doing it. I like players who want to push the envelope. Too many guys are satisfied playing 2 and 4, and they can't go beyond that. I like a drummer who can drive me, and Ronald and I drive each other.

### Teddy Campbell (Dukey Treats)

I've got a plethora of drummers on this new album! Teddy is a great young drummer who has the pocket feel of life. He's one of the first guys I've ever worked with who can play to a click or drum machine and make it feel right. In fact, he can play



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## GEORGE DUKE

along with a drum machine so well that you just can't tell who is playing what.

A lot of these young guys have an ability to play with a click very well without it pulling. Jazz drummers didn't like to be dictated to like that, so they had difficulty playing with a drum machine. But Teddy can do that, no problem—and I love his pocket.

### Terri Lyne Carrington (In A Mellow Tone)

Terri and I just recorded another track for Teena Marie. Terri is a very sensitive drummer. She's unlike Ndugu in style, but like him in that she is very sensitive. I think she's played with a lot of pianists, including Herbie Hancock. Terri has sensitivity, so she doesn't overplay or play too loudly. She adjusts for the situation. And Terri is *funky*. She's young enough to understand the pocket that's happening now *and* she can swing her butt off. She's also unorthodox, like Ronald Bruner, but in a different way.

### Leon "Ndugu" Chancler

(Feel, The Aura Will Prevail,  
After Hours, Cool, Dukey Treats)

Besides being a great drummer, Ndugu is a total nut—an extrovert behind those drums. He's doing a lot of the narrations on the *Dukey Treats* album. But he has a completely unique way of playing. He's probably the most sensitive drummer I've ever worked with.

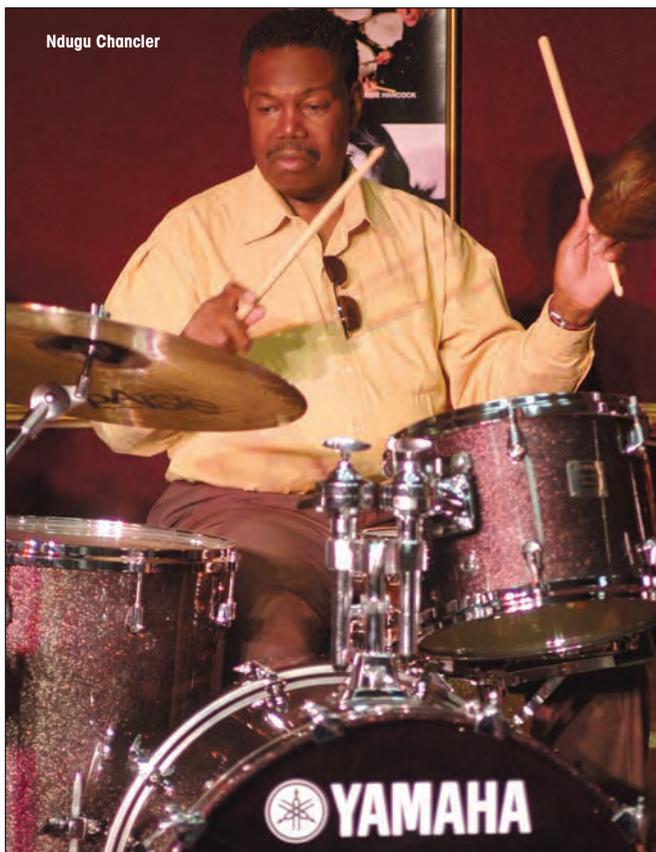
Ndugu and I have a thing called the "elastic groove." It's unique to us. I haven't

been able to accomplish it with anybody else. It's like when I was with Zappa, where we would pull the time back when he would give us certain hand signals. Well, Ndugu and I do it a little differently. We can change the groove or tempo at any time—it can stop or slow down or speed up—but we still know where we are. Now *that's* an interesting thing.

I used to work with many Brazilian drummers, and when they got to the end of a phrase, before they hit the next downbeat, the meter would slightly slow down. We'd be going along, and it would slow down, and everybody played it! I liked that. Why can't we do that in American music, really accent the 1 by just slowing down the phrase?

I love Ndugu's playing. He can play any music you present to him. We didn't do that elastic beat on the new record like we did on some of my earlier ones, though we sort of came close on the "Dukey Treats" track.

Ndugu Chancler



### Vinnie Colaiuta (Dukey Treats)

Vinnie blows on "Somebody Laid It On Us," and he did it along to a machine! It's flawless. It's hard to tell where the machine begins and where Vinnie ends. He's carrying the drum machine.

Vinnie and I work together a lot in the studio, but not very much live. He's on "Listen Baby," too, which I wrote for [R&B star] Chante Moore. She didn't use it, so I did.

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## GEORGE DUKE



### Aynsley Dunbar

(Frank Zappa's *Chunga's Revenge*)

I remember when Aynsley came into Frank's band from being in The Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation. He was great. Back in those days, Aynsley was a lover boy, a star. But he could *really* play. He looked the part, and he was great for Frank. Aynsley could play the blues, and he was funky. We called it being "soulful" back then. And he had a strong sound—he really bashed. That hair flowing all over the place, a typical kind of English rock drummer. Frank loved it.

### Sheila E

(Don't Let Go, *Dukey Stick*,  
Follow The Rainbow,  
Master Of The Game)

I met Sheila through Billy Cobham when she was about seventeen. She joined my band when she was eighteen. I had to ask her father, Pete Escovedo. I told him I would take care of her and keep the hounds away. He gave me the once over and eventually said yes.

Sheila joined the band in 1978 and was with me for three years, playing percussion and drums. She told me the other day that the first time she actually played traps was in my band. Ndugu wanted to come to the stage a couple of times during the set so he could play his RotoToms. So she played the drums.

Sheila is one of the most intuitive players I've ever worked with. I can play just a few notes of a new song and she'll have it. That's a special gift. She is very progressive, and she looks good too!

All of these drummers we're talking about have a unique feel, which is great compared to these days, when most everyone sounds alike.

### Robertinho Silva

(A Brazilian Love Affair)

Robertinho is one of the guys who can pull the groove back at the end of the phrase. I really like that. He had a feel that was unlike that of any drummer I'd ever played with. I would try to get drummers in the US to play like him.

Robertinho is an incredible player and a great spirit. He smiles all the time. I love playing with him because his time feel is just incredible. As for that album, it has stood the test of time.

### Chester Thompson/Ralph Humphrey

(Frank Zappa's *Roxy & Elsewhere*)

Chester and Ralph were very different drummers with Zappa. When Chester first joined the band, I remember thinking, "He'll never make it because he never smiles." It never happened. He just looked grumpy. We used to rib him about that.

When I first joined Frank, it was Aynsley Dunbar on drums, who was coming from the rock world. But in '73, Frank wanted more of a jazz thing, though he would never admit it. He played a lot of jazz. He brought in Ralph Humphrey, who was a great technician. I had worked with Ralph in Don Ellis's band. Ralph could play all of the advanced big band charts—a great player—but he wasn't necessarily funky. Frank wanted another element, so he put Ralph and Chester together, and I thought it would never work, but it *did*. It gave Frank another color in his palette, and those two guys each had their own thing and they worked out what they were going to do. They were totally different, but it worked.



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## Practicing Through Your Mind's Eye

**I**n today's super fast-paced world, you need to occasionally get creative with time management. Sometimes there are simply not enough hours in your day, week, or month to be productive with learning new material or practicing new techniques. Also, there are times when you're thrown into new environments—playing in a really large venue, in front of industry folks, or on TV, or performing material that's not completely prepared—which could trigger some anxiety. If you find yourself in one of these stressful situations, using mental imagery could prove helpful.

Mental imagery is the ability to call to mind the sensations of sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and touches from past experiences. In other words, it's seeing with "the mind's eye." This technique has been used in sports for many years, as research has shown that the physical body actually responds, meaning the muscles feel what the mind sees. So by using mental imagery, you can help train your body—by "seeing" yourself do something—without physically moving.

When I was at Penn State University on a softball scholarship, I used mental imagery to help with hitting. I was always a good hitter, but entering my junior and senior seasons, we faced some of the best pitching in the country. That proved to be a challenge, and I was eager to gain any advantage possible. I used imagery in my down time—mornings before classes, on bus rides, before practices or games...any chance I could grab. I would also use imagery in the on-deck circle as a way to relax



and give me a little extra confidence before stepping in to hit. I would take a deep breath (in through the nose, out through the mouth), visualize the pitcher throwing me her best pitch, and me hitting it up the middle or in a gap.

Here are a few highlights from my softball career: I was voted to several All-Tournament teams, our team went three out of four against the University of Arizona (who were the third best team in the nation), and we earned regional All-American status. Were

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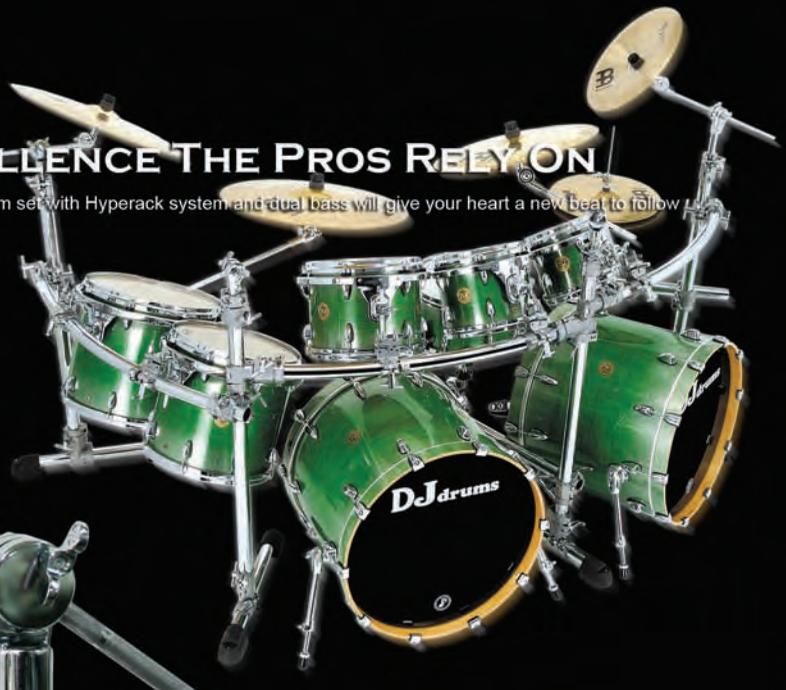
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## MENTAL IMAGERY

these successes a direct result of mental imagery, or just coincidence? I can't say for sure, but I do know that imagery helped me become a more confident and focused player.

"So how on earth does this help with my drumming?" you ask. Proper repetition is the key to learning and mastering any new skill. As a supplement to your practice routine, you can incorporate mental imagery to give your body more repetitions. Simply find a quiet space, get relaxed, and "see" yourself doing whatever fill or exercise you've been working on. If you're looking to overcome nerves or anxiety, you can use the same technique. Start with a deep breath to clear yourself, relax, and focus. Then visualize yourself confidently delivering all the tunes in your set in the venue you'll be playing—with a packed house, of course! It's helpful to integrate as many details as possible: the smell of the bar, the colors and heat of the stage lighting, the roar of the arena—whatever applies. Make yourself feel like you're there, and see yourself there.

There are two types of visualization: internal (looking through your own eyes) and external (watching yourself perform from someone else's perspective). Both are effective, so use whichever feels more comfortable or beneficial.

I began using mental imagery with my drumming while I was on tour with my band Antigone Rising. Many times, my singer would announce over morning coffee her plans to toss an old song on our set list for that night. With no chance to run the song prior to the show, I would lie in my bunk on the bus with my iPod and listen to the additional song. With eyes closed, I would take a deep breath, and see myself in my mind's eye behind my drums on stage playing the tune all the way through. I incorporated as many details as possible, and repeated the process several times. Although this wouldn't be enough repetitions for muscle memory to fully take hold, my body had a clue as to what to do, which gave me a boost of confidence knowing that I had already "played" the song. That was all I needed to nail it at the show.

I've also used mental imagery for some nerve-racking situations. I don't get rattled very often, but there were a few tricky moments while my band was touring our first release, *From The Ground Up*. We were fortunate enough to land some TV spots (*Tonight Show*, *Today Show*, *Emeril Live*), as well as some arena shows opening for The Rolling Stones, all of which were fairly foreign to me. Compound that with our record

label and management pummeling us with the importance of our need to knock these out of the park, and the nerves kicked in a bit. With hours to kill in the dressing room before each show, I had some time to run through the tunes in my head, seeing myself on stage with cameras in my face, etc., which helped make the stress of the actual performances much less traumatizing.

Remember that nothing is better than actual practice and repetition. But when your practice time is limited, mental imagery can be a great supplement to a truncated daily practice regimen. It can also help you make the best of a grueling touring schedule and the random stressors that come your way. Why not give yourself every opportunity to nail the gig while enjoying every minute of it? After all, that's the fun part!



For the past ten years, **Dena Tauriello** has toured, recorded, and appeared on national TV with New York City-based band Antigone Rising. Dena currently plays with Antigone Rising (members of Antigone Rising), does freelance session work, and teaches at her home studio in New Jersey. For more info, visit [www.myspace.com/denatauriello](http://www.myspace.com/denatauriello).



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## St. Louis's Tim Callihan

### A Working Drummer's Guide To Maximizing Income

by Matt North

**H**ow many drummers enjoyed two paid gigs a week over the last decade with bookings extending a year in advance? How many of us earned enough from local gigs alone that, if we chose to, we could comfortably leave our day jobs to play full-time? And how many achieved this without getting on a bus or sleeping in a hotel?



I know several drummers who want more compensation for this hard-earned skill, but I know fewer who know where to begin after leaving the practice room. This knowledge—an ability to bridge great ideas into realistic experiences—is what sets St. Louis drummer/bandleader Tim Callihan apart.

In 1991, Tim began turning a local career into a thriving business that's as dynamic and lucrative as those of players we admire on the national scene. What's intriguing is not that Tim has been the backbeat behind Chuck Berry's Johnnie Johnson and former Ikette Jackie Staton, or that bassist Tom Kennedy worked regularly for his band between tours with Dave Weckl. Rather, Tim pursues his other passion by day as an aeronautical engineer for Boeing Aircraft. In other words, this guy knows how to put things together that fly.

Perhaps the type of mind that can put all that metal up into the air is the perfect one to lead Spectrum, one of St. Louis's busiest live bands that comes in the form of a nine-piece, a sextet, a quartet, or a trio, depending on the needs of Tim's vast clientele. As they say, it's not show, it's show *business*, and few individuals successfully navigate both worlds. In the following

the way I always play. I didn't want to be forced into a mold and then be unhappy if I ended up joining. They called me back for nine subbing jobs before making an offer. I was getting a little annoyed, so when they did finally offer the job, I said, "Let me think about it a while." [laughs]

A few years later, the co-leaders retired and the band asked me to step in because I seemed to have ideas for improvement. Initially, I changed the name so we could get away from the agency making thirty to fifty percent commissions. We were a quintet and evolved into a nine-piece with horns, so we could play any style. It was lean, but we soon had a decent schedule that inspired us to continue. Extra income was re-invested in advertising and upgrading gear. Once we got on our feet, I raised the pay for every bandmember.

#### Keeping The Band Happy

**MD:** Raising the pay must have helped, but is there anything else you do as a leader to maintain relationships?

**Tim:** For every hour enjoyed on stage, there's easily another ten hours taking care of business so musicians can *get* to the stage. I

## The worst thing bands do is start with expectations that are too low, and without each member clear on the goals.

interview, Tim reveals how he built his business, how he sustains it, and how *MD* readers can create similar opportunities in their own communities.

#### The Expert In Anything Was Once A Beginner

**MD:** How did you go from drummer to drummer/bandleader?

**Tim:** I joined a band in '95 that was booked by a local agency and did private events. Their drummer left to pursue a recording career, and a friend recommended me. I saw that first gig as an audition for a possible long-term situation, so I made sure to play

do the work behind the scenes so that all the bandmembers need to do is show up. I even provide full disclosure of payments so there's no mistaken sense of an imbalance for compensation. For example, players earn extra for creating song lists, moving equipment, acting as emcee, etc. The big thing is to keep everyone musically challenged and let them contribute their ideas for songs, arrangements...most anything. There has to be a rotation of material so the band doesn't go numb. You can't please an audience if the musicians on stage aren't having fun.

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# MAXIMIZING INCOME

## To Make Money, One Must Spend Money

**MD:** Do you remember any specific numbers for start-up costs?

**Tim:** I bought the PA and lights from the original bandleader, then added more equipment totaling about \$10,000. The first year, we hit hard with ads in local trades to play private events, so that was about \$8,000. But now we're established, so I only spend \$3,000 per year. I hire arrangers for charts at \$30 to \$100 each, depending on complexity. My next big investment is hiring a full-time sound company for PA, lighting, and cartage to transport and set up equipment. An advantage is that I won't pay for new equipment or repairs. It's around \$500 per job, and another great example of what keeps a band happy. The band will basically show up before the first song, and we'll be in our cars going home within ten minutes after the last song. It's definitely a luxury that can only come when the income justifies the cost.

**MD:** How would you advise upstart drummer/bandleaders who don't have \$10,000–\$20,000 to get off the ground?

**Tim:** You can do it without those amounts, but you do need to invest if you want a return. Start small. Form a trio or a quartet. Observe your community for two things: locations you could realistically work, and people with the budgets to hire you. Who are they? Where are they? How can you best reach them? It's like the "Deep Throat" line in *All The President's Men*: "Follow the money." Maybe the worst thing bands do is start with expectations that are too low, and without each member clear on the goals. My band isn't trying

to get a record deal with original songs, and I'm certainly not Steve Gadd. But that's not needed for success in the market I target. I think a lot of amazing bands out there are in limbo because they don't aim at their unique targets.

## First Impressions

**MD:** What happens between when a client calls and the day of the gig?

**Tim:** I send back a full list of costs so they can decide if we're in their budget. Keep in mind, I'm not pursuing forty-dollar gigs. My targets are high-end music lovers who want the best players they can get for a great event. Those circles are where we direct our energy. Everything a client needs to know is on our Web site [[www.spectrumband.net](http://www.spectrumband.net)] except our rates, and I do that as incentive for them to call so we can begin a dialog. It's a people business—no one hires a band for higher amounts of money until trust is earned. If they want to hire us, I send a contract that requires a \$500 deposit. After experiencing cancellations that were too last-minute to replace with other work, I've realized that deposits are important.

An initial worry was that contracts and deposits would scare clients off, but the opposite happened. Clients value us more and feel *more* secure, since both parties get a legal commitment. It also attracts the right clients; those who balk at deposits will probably balk at the cost of nine musicians for four hours. It's a good filter.

## Embrace Competitors (Even If They Don't Embrace You)

**Tim:** I've lost several jobs to lower-priced DJs, but my attitude is that those jobs weren't right for us anyway—especially not at the cost of cutting our price in half. I don't have prices that vary for clients' budgets. I charge everyone the same. Bands that drastically cut prices hurt the entire market, especially themselves. It's up to bandleaders to set reasonable rates, and standing firm on that is essential to keeping your place in any local hierarchy.

**MD:** You transitioned your engineering talents into building quite an impressive home recording studio in your basement. Tell me about that and how it's even attracted competing bands.

**Tim:** It's called Chesterfield Sound. It has an analog 24-channel board, a drum booth, too many microphones to list, and a tracking room with headphone stations for up to eight musicians. It's our rehearsal space too, so the band just walks in and plugs in. We're constantly tracking new demos without studio fees—not that it was built for free, but you know what I mean. I don't advertise, I just keep it as my little hidden gem. Word of mouth grew and other bands started hiring me to engineer their demos.

**MD:** So other local bands book your studio to record demos that are ultimately used to *compete* with your band for work?

**Tim:** I never thought of it that way, but yes. I have no problem with that. St. Louis has a strong support system among musicians. If I can't take a gig, I'm fine referring it to a "competitor" for lack of a better word. Others have certainly done that for us, and we always reciprocate if we can. If there is any competition among bands here, it's the good kind that increases quality for the whole market.



**Matt North** records and performs with Rob Kendt, Jesse DeNatale, and Maria McKee. He also teaches privately in Los Angeles. Visit [www.GoodDrummer.com](http://www.GoodDrummer.com) for more info.



### THE TOP-10 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

TIM CALLIHAN OFFERS HIS SUGGESTIONS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR BUSINESS

- 1) Survey the local scene to see what bands are making money.
- 2) Build your band with the absolute best musicians available.
- 3) Talk to any bandleaders you know for advice.
- 4) Invest in equipment and buy the best you can afford.
- 5) Invest in reliable transportation.
- 6) Provide subcontractor forms for signatures so musicians are not "employees" and responsible for their taxes. You'll need to give 1099-MISC forms at the end of the year, so keep accurate records.
- 7) Define the "vision" that you want to build, and share that vision with the other musicians.
- 8) Set a realistic goal for the band's evolution, and do something to achieve it every day. When you achieve it, set another one.
- 9) Start small, then grow as jobs materialize. You can offer additional musicians for extra cost, but this way your initial price doesn't scare away potential clients.
- 10) Take risks. Progress always involves risk. A college professor once told me, "You can't steal second with your foot on first base."



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## Tips For A Flexible Feel

**“I like my playing to be just on top, slightly ahead of the beat.” Have you ever read a quote like this and thought, Am I missing something here? If you’re playing ahead of the beat, aren’t you rushing? When a bandleader tells you to “lay back and play slightly behind,” what exactly does he or she want—for you to slow down?**

Ask twenty musicians about playing ahead of or behind the beat, and you’ll hear a range of explanations. You might get into a complex conversation about how to subdivide the beat into tiny increments. Or you might get a response such as, “It ain’t rocket science, just nudge your playing forward or back a bit.”



### What’s The Truth?

The best way to figure out how to play around the beat (what I call “targeting the beat”) is by using a metronome as a guide. To begin, set a metronome to 60 bpm, and play one note per beat, trying to make each note land exactly on each click. When your stroke is a direct hit, you won’t hear the metronome. This is often referred to as “burying the click.” Every time you bury the click with a direct hit, you’re playing on the beat—congratulations! If you can hear the click, your stroke is sounding either before or after it.

If your stroke is a “near miss”—close enough to create a flam between your stroke and the click—you’re still playing within the beat. It’s like archery: You don’t have to hit a dead-center bull’s-eye for it to count. You just have to hit inside the borders of the bull’s-eye. Similarly, each time your note is close enough to the click to create a flam sound, it’s within the “borders” of the beat. If you play outside those borders (meaning, the flam sounds more like two separate notes), then you’ve moved over to the next beat (or subdivision of the beat). You don’t want that.

To play ahead of or behind the beat, you have to learn how to control two flam sounds—stroke-click and click-stroke. Get used to the flam sound of your stroke landing slightly before the click, and aim for that. That sound means you’re playing slightly *ahead* of the beat. The flam sound of the click landing just



before your stroke means that you’re playing *behind* the beat. Practice aiming for that one, too.

Over time, you’ll sharpen your ears to recognize where your notes are landing in relation to the click. Record your practice sessions, and keep track of how many times you can bury the click in a row. Set goals for yourself. You can also keep track of

what your tendency is when you stray from the click. Do you more often play ahead or behind?

### Targeting On The Drums

Once you're comfortable playing quarter notes around the click, move over to your drumset. (You'll need good headphones in order to hear the click for these exercises.) Play a simple rock beat. Focus on the 2 and 4 on the snare, and listen to where it lands with your metronome. As before, practice making direct hits or near misses in either direction.

As you're working on your backbeat control, listen closely to the time on your ride cymbal or hi-hat. Make sure that it remains steady no matter where you place your snare hits. You can do the same thing with a jazz ride pattern. Focus on the 1 and 3 of your cymbal beat or the 2 and 4 of your left-foot hi-hat.

### The Inner Target

How do you determine if a drummer is ahead of or behind the beat when there's no metronome or click to use as a reference? Try recording one of your live performances for a tempo analysis. Use your metronome to figure out if/when your tempo shifts. If you start the song with a count-off at 100 bpm, then you hold that tempo for eight measures, then speed up to 102 bpm for the chorus, then settle back in for the verse, etc., are you playing ahead of the beat on the choruses, or did you create a new, faster beat? Well, technically you created a new beat. To truly play ahead of the beat would mean that after the count-off of 100 bpm, you consistently played just on the verge of 101 bpm—but staying within the border of 100 bpm. As soon as the playing moves ahead, even if it's to 101 bpm, you've sped up to a new tempo. Any fluctuation like this is a new tempo, even if it only lasts for one measure.

Live performances that don't involve programmed loops or sequences don't require *perfectly* solid tempos. If your groove fluctuates one or two bpm in a song, you're still giving a solid perfor-

mance. We're human, so the time can "breathe" a bit. But before you can start pushing and pulling the beat on the gig, your time has to be metronome-solid.

To develop your time without a metronome, adapt the previous exercises to your body. You have to *become* the metronome by using your body, head, or feet. If you click your sticks to count off a tune, use some part of your body to move to that tempo throughout the song. In his excellent DVD *Big Time*, Billy Ward describes this as using "mechanisms." Let's say you're rocking your body back and forth slightly to your quarter-note count-off. That steady motion is your key to maintaining the tempo. Concentrate on your timekeeping hand. If you want to create that rounder "fatback" beat, don't match your snare hand with your cymbal hand exactly. Flam the snare just behind the cymbal beat without interrupting it. Again, if you're not sure if your timekeeping hand is maintaining a steady beat, focus on the "mechanism" that's clicking to the tempo. For a slight push, have your left hand flam just before your ride plays 2 and 4.

There will be times when you just have to throw all of this out the window and actually play faster when a bandleader tells you to push it. He or she might not be looking for a subtle nudge of the beat, but an actual increase in tempo. You'll have to gauge your approach for each situation.

Sometimes I've gotten a more favorable response by simply shifting my attitude, rather than the tempo. Next time you're told to lay back on a ballad, instead of actually playing slower, feel the lyrics—think sexier. A little attitude and feel change goes a long way and often translates more effectively than a technical adjustment. It's often going to be up to you to find that place between technique and attitude to discover the "true" definition of where the beat lies.

*Note: I am indebted to drummer/educator Kenwood Dennard, for it was under his instruction that I learned about targeting the beat.*



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SCARS ON BROADWAY SCARS ON BROADWAY

★★★★★

With a decade of System Of A Down recordings already under his belt, drummer **JOHN DOLMAYAN** takes up residence with a more adventurous and expansive project, *Scars On Broadway*, backing the eclectic compositions of front man Daron Malakian (also of System fame). Dolmayan takes a slight tangent with this playful repertoire—especially with the hyper hi-hats of "Exploding/Reloading" and the discoesque grooves on "Babylon" and "Chemicals." (Interscope) **Waleed Rashidi**

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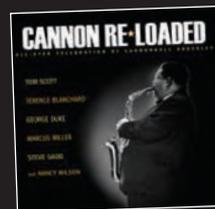
SUPAGROUP FIRE FOR HIRE

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Supagroup is a band that resurrects the vibe of the '70s and runs with it. Hailing from New Orleans, the foursome conjures up images of Bon Scott—era AC/DC while tongue-in-cheeking themselves into the space of The Darkness. Rude riffs, snotty vocals, and a bevy of straight-forward kick-ass drumbeats drive the record, and drummer **MICHAEL BRUEGGEN** plays Phil Rudd to a T. Brueggen's sound is more organic and less produced than even early AC/DC, but the spunk and attitude remain the same. (FoodChain) **Steven Douglas Losey**

Tributes 'n Swing

by Ilya Stemkovsky



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*Cannon Reloaded* is a well-played if slightly pedestrian session of jazz greats led by saxophonist **Tom Scott**. **STEVE GADD**, with his unmistakable time-feel, injects some life into Adderley's funky soul and swing numbers, chugging through "Jive Samba" with the brushes and dropping those famous sidestick doubles on an infectious "Work Song." (Concord Music)  
Duke Ellington's music was nothing if not swinging, and thankfully special attention is paid to just that by the Duke Ellington Legacy on *Thank You Uncle Edward*. The disc showcases drummer **PAUL WELLS**, who swings serviceably at various tempos, sets up soloists and singers, and doesn't overplay on well-known classics like "Perdido" and "Cottontail." ([www.renmarecordings.com](http://www.renmarecordings.com))

ENCORE

by Michael Parillo

DIGA RHYTHM BAND DIGA



The 1976 release *Diga*, with **MICKEY HART** and **ZAKIR HUSSAIN** guiding an international fleet of rhythm devils (many of them Zakir's students), was at the forefront of the nascent idea of world music. And let's not forget that an album comprised mostly of percussion instruments was another rarity in those days. This new reissue reveals a rhythmic feast for the ears, a well-rounded blend of drumset, hand drums, and mallet percussion, all captured in deliciously clear fidelity. With so much delightful drumming—often at brisk tempos with ferociously demanding changes—it's a wonder the album is also so strong melodically. (Shout! Factory)

MICKEY HART ON DIGA

Was *Diga* the first time you left rock behind and focused on more percussion-heavy grooves?

It was a turning point. It was mass tuned percussion, a 20th-century gamelan attempt. We had to devise new techniques to record these instruments because you had the loudest drum—the traps—and one of the quietest—the tabla. So how can these dynamic worlds interact and have a conversation?

How did you handle the challenges?

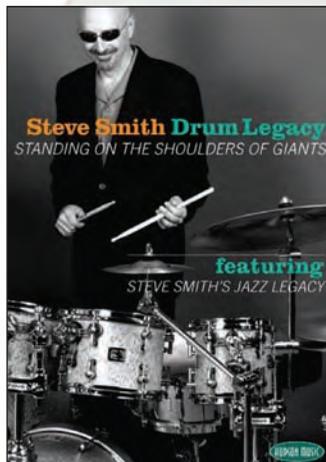
To have audio and visual contact in a big room, we had to build clear baffles so folks who sit on the ground could see all the others' hands moving. And it all had to be synched at intense speed levels. Maybe Zakir could do it, but twelve people? Twelve Zakirs? I don't think so. I was isolated in a room off

to the side, which took the trap drums out of the mix. But then there were congas, marimbas, kanjiras, doumbeks.... And none of these kids had really used earphones before. So there was a giant learning curve on how to be relaxed and play dynamically in these extraordinary time signatures and rates. It was coming very, very fast. It took almost three months to get it so we could actually play it, since we played it live, mostly. It was totally consuming, night and day.

You had worked with Zakir earlier, but it seems you deepened your connection here.

Yes, we really got to learn each other's sensibilities. We have a great relationship. We're exploring—new rhythms for a new day. *Diga* was a moment in time, never to be repeated. I don't think either Zakir or myself could play those things accurately right now. We would have to brush up.

# MULTI-MEDIA



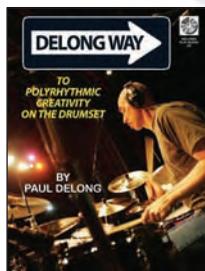
## STEVE SMITH DRUM LEGACY STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

★★★★★

**DVD LEVEL:** ALL \$39.95

Since his days with Journey, Steve Smith has emerged as a genuine educator and champion of the art of jazz drumming. Smith's 2006 Modern Drummer Festival performance is at the core of this set, comprising two DVDs and a CD—but that's just the beginning here. Famed jazz drum educator John Riley then interviews Steve as the pair analyzes each performance. And Riley and Smith's enlightening conversations about Max, Elvin, and Tony are alone

worth the admission price. Rounding out the package are a Smith master class, live footage, an e-book in PDF form, and a live CD of Smith's band. A highly recommended, instructive package. (Hudson Music) **Martin Patmos**



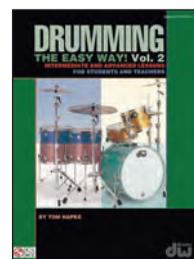
## DELONG WAY TO POLYRHYTHMIC CREATIVITY ON THE DRUMSET BY PAUL DELONG

★★★★★

**BOOK/CD LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$29.95

When you really dig into it, the variety of polyrhythms is endless—but how many are practical and musically applicable? In this excellent book, Paul DeLong takes a look at the three most common and useful

polyrhythms: six against four, three against four, and four against three. Not content to merely demonstrate how these interlock, DeLong examines each thoroughly, exploring their use over the spectrum of the kit and in different styles. Often this is done by analyzing the playing of masters such as Tony Williams or Bill Stewart, an important element to understanding polyrhythms in a musical context. Well written and thought-out, this book is sure to challenge and inspire. (www.myspace.com/pauldelong) **Martin Patmos**



## DRUMMING THE EASY WAY! VOL. 2 BY TOM HAPKE

**BOOK/CD LEVEL:** ALL \$17.95

★★★★★

Learning advanced fills and beats can be frustrating for any drummer, no matter how long you've been playing. Tom Hapke's *Drumming The Easy Way! Vol. 2* will help alleviate the frustration. The clearly written 86 pages have only two bars per line and include some stickings as well as brief text about the following lesson. This

makes it easy to work through while sitting behind the kit. The book starts out with simple crash cymbal, ride, kick, and snare exercises, then quickly moves on to 16th-note triplet fills and dotted 8th-note beats—and that's just in the first ten pages. Hapke includes everything from stick independence solos to nine stroke-roll fills, as well as some really hip grooves. And let's not forget the ever-helpful included CD. (Cherry Lane) **Fran Azzarto**



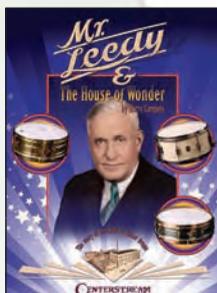
## THE BEAT: A GUIDE TO LEARNING FEATURING ALEXANDRA

**DVD LEVEL:** ALL \$12

★★★★★

Veteran traps drummer and educator Alexandra, hailing from Mexico City and LA, has put together a powerful DVD.

Alexandra presents straight-ahead warm-ups and notation instruction, reading charts as she blazes through mambo, salsa, songo, samba, and bossa nova rhythms. A gifted left-handed drummer, Alexandra demonstrates coordination and polyrhythms with ease, and is a real inspiration. (www.SolstarRecords.com) **David Licht**



## MR. LEEDY & THE HOUSE OF WONDER BY HARRY CANGANY

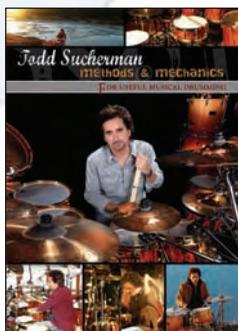
★★★★★

**BOOK LEVEL:** ALL \$24.95

The Leedy drum company was at the forefront of drum manufacturing and design during much of the early 20th century. In his new book, *MD* drum historian Harry Cangany takes us on tour of Mr. Leedy's world, showing the business and the people who were involved. Although the firsthand commentary is a bit romanticized, it's nonetheless a simple and engaging presentation suitable for stu-

dents and adults alike. The wealth of photographs from the factory is particularly illuminating. Vintage drum fans and history buffs will find much of this fascinating. (Centerstream)

**Martin Patmos**



## TODD SUCHERMAN METHODS & MECHANICS

★★★★★

**DVD (2) LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$29.95

Styx drumming great Todd Sucherman earns the rank of master drummer with this creative, entertaining, and artistically produced instructional package. The well-planned format begins with Sucherman's advanced rudimental practice routine, covering a variety of traditional and hybrid rudimental exercises, which he later applies creatively to the drumset. Sucherman performs

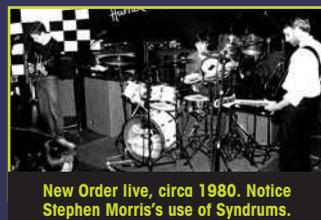
impressive solos in jazz, rock, and Latin styles, and plays along to tracks by Styx, Taylor Mills, and fusion violinist Jerry Goodman, dissecting and explaining his techniques and concepts from each performance. Lots of real-world advice for the aspiring pro, and artistically creative performance footage, are strategically placed in this lengthy package to keep things interesting. (www.altitudedigital.com) **Mike Haid**

# ELECTRO-DRUMMING

by Zach Danziger

## NEW ORDER LIVE IN GLASGOW

This double DVD captures the essence of the hugely influential Manchester-based electro/post-punk band New Order. The first disc is a concert from 2006, but it's the second volume here, featur-



New Order live, circa 1980. Notice Stephen Morris's use of Syndrums.

ing cool, rare footage dating back to the early '80s, that truly inspires.

**STEPHEN MORRIS** was always into combining live drums with electronic kits ranging from Simmons pads and modules to Roland V-Drums, often layering them on top of sequences. It might sound like a contradiction, but there always seems to be a "sloppy precision" to his playing, more so in the early days of the group, which I really liked. Morris's insistent, machine-like grooves on tracks like "The Him" reveal a drum programmer's sensibility, and provide evidence of his place as one of the pioneering drummers attempting to sound like a machine. In fact, it would be easy to see some of Morris's driving patterns as precursors to the programmed hardstep drum 'n' bass beats of UK masterminds like Ed Rush, Ray Keith, and Dillinja. This is a very cool compilation. (Rhino)

*Zach Danziger is a sought-after drummer/composer steeped in the marriage of acoustic and electronic drumming. He's played with Wayne Krantz, Mariah Carey, Primal Scream, and Michel Camilo, among many others, as well as at the Modern Drummer Festival, and has worked on a number of high-profile soundtracks such as Oceans 11, Iron Man and Sex And The City.*



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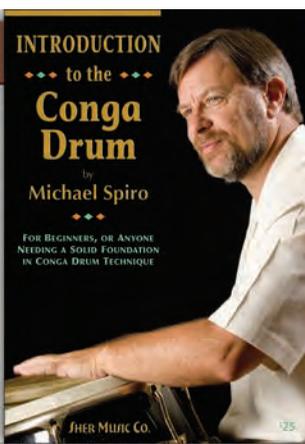
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## NEXT MONTH

### ✘ Nickelback's Monster Drummer **DANIEL ADAIR**



Ash Newell

### ✘ THE FUSION/FUNK BRILLIANCE OF **DERICO WATSON**



Marco Soccolt

### ✘ GARAJ MAHAL'S JAM & GROOVE MASTER **ALAN HERTZ**



Jay Blakesberg

### ✘ IMPRESSIONS WITH JAZZ GREAT **KENNY WASHINGTON**

### ✘ RISING LATIN STAR **ANDRES PATRICK FORERO**

### ✘ **DAVE DOUGLAS** A DIFFERENT VIEW WITH JAZZ TRUMPETER/LEADER

### PLUS REMEMBERING **BUDDY HARMAN** COUNTRY GIANT

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# Groznjan 2008 International Percussion Camp

The Second Annual East Meets West Groznjan 2008 International Percussion Camp was held August 9–16 in the ancient, artistic village of Groznjan, Croatia as a part of the Jeunesses Musicales summer music program. The sold-out camp featured a world-class lineup of guest instructors that included **Petar Curic** (artistic director/Croatia), **Kim Plainfield** (United States), **Nippy Noya** (Holland/Indonesia), **Mike Haid** (United States), **Marco Minnemann** (Germany/United States) and headliner **Jojo Mayer** (Switzerland/United States).

The intensive weeklong camp offered a well-balanced curriculum in which each instructor conducted several days of classes, clinics, roundtable discussions, and one-on-one instruction with students. Campers of all ages came from nearby regions, displaying a high level of talent and enthusiasm for learning. The camp began with Petar Curic reinforcing the basics of drumming. Drummers Collective/Berklee instructor Kim Plainfield brought his vast knowledge of Afro-Cuban drumset concepts, while European percussion master Nippy Noya inspired everyone with his youthful spirit and organic musicality. Marco Minnemann dazzled the students with his over-the-top chops and instructed a select group through Frank Zappa's classic "Black Page." Mike Haid played along to a variety of musical styles, discussed the business of music, and shared stories from ten years of music journalism with *Modern Drummer*. Jojo Mayer schooled the campers with his heavy musical approach to drumming and spent quality time discussing and teaching his amazing sticking techniques.

The camp culminated with an outdoor performance for the villagers, which featured a spectacular revolving five-drumset ensemble jam session. Sponsors included Megamuzika, *Modern Drummer*, Shure, Sabian, Zildjian, Paiste, Remo, Evans, DW/PDP, Pro-Mark, Sonor, Pearl, and Vic Firth. For more info, visit [www.myspace.com/groznjanpercussion](http://www.myspace.com/groznjanpercussion).

Story and photos by Mike Haid



Captions from Top: Campers assemble with instructors on the main street in Groznjan. Marco Minnemann dazzles students with his four-way interdependence. Indonesian percussionist Nippy Noya instructs students on the art of playing with musicality. Jojo Mayer performs burning drum 'n' bass grooves in his masterclass.

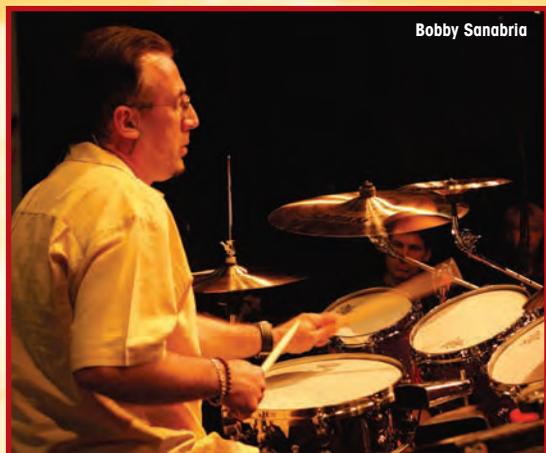
## Who's Playing What

Following on the heels of **John Blackwell** (Prince, Justin Timberlake) and **Chris Layton** (Double Trouble, Arc Angels, Kenny Wayne Sheppard) switching to Zildjian, other new artists added to the family include **Eric Kretz** (Stone Temple Pilots), **Gary Mallaber** (LA session ace), **Ronald Bruner Jr.** (Stanley Clarke), **Taku Hirano** (Bette Midler, Fleetwood Mac), **Peter Michael Escovedo**, **Juan Escovedo**, **Gil Moore** (Triumph) **Marcus Williams** (Independent), **Rian Dawson** (All Time Low), **Matt McGinley** (Gym Class Heroes), **Ryan O'Connor** (The Audition), **Paul Mazurkiewicz** (Cannibal Corpse),



Rob Muzella

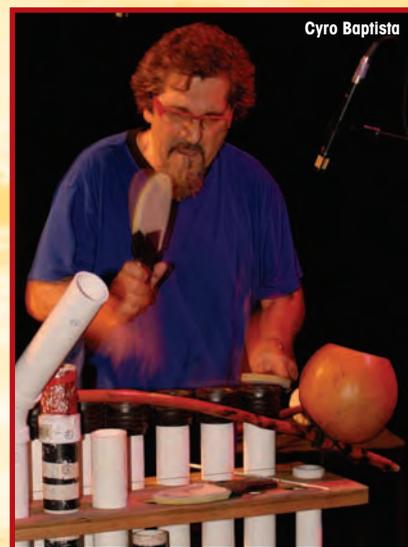
# KoSA 13 Shakes Up The Vermont Green Mountains



Bobby Sanabria



Chester Thompson



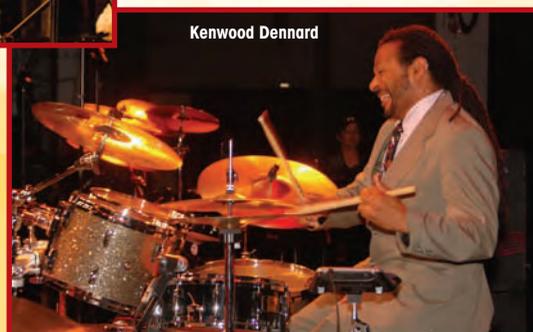
Cyro Baptista



Ignacio Berroa



Glen Velez



Kenwood Dennard

For the thirteenth year, the serene countryside of Vermont roared to life with the thunderous sounds of drums and percussion in the little village of Castleton. KoSA International Percussion Workshops and Festival held its annual drum camp this past July 30 to August 3 at Castleton State College. Established by Montreal percussionist Aldo Mazza, KoSA's theme this year encouraged all who attended to "change their world" by furthering their knowledge of drums and percussion.

This year's participants, coming from as far away as Turkey and ranging in age from eight to seventy-four, experienced a thrilling week of intense, hands-on percussion training with some of the finest artists in the world. Attendees could experience a range of classes, including intimate small-group masterclasses in Japanese Taiko, workshops with world-renowned hand drummers, and a fusion lesson with legendary artist Chester Thompson.

Participants and faculty at KoSA lived and ate together while exchanging ideas about drumming virtually all day and night.

Besides the hands-on daily classes conducted by their idols, attendees had the opportunity to play with the rhythm section in residence, participate in masterclasses and various ensembles, and perform in nightly jam sessions and at a formal recital.

Other notable artists on this year's faculty included Memo Acevedo (Tito Puente), Cyro Baptista (Paul Simon), Ignacio Berroa (Dizzy Gillespie), Mario DeCutiis (KAT electronic percussion), Kenwood Dennard (Maceo Parker), Dom Famularo (drumming ambassador), Arnie Lang (New York Philharmonic), Russ Lawton (Trey Anastasio), Marco Lienhard (Japanese Taiko master), Allan Molnar (Nelly Furtado), Mario Monaco (Al Di Meola), Emil Richards (LA studio legend), Bobby Sanabria (Arturo Sandoval), Rajna Swaminathan (South Indian artist), Chester Thompson (Phil Collins, Genesis), Glen Velez (master frame drummer), and Michael Wimberly (West African drumming expert).

For more information on the KoSA International Percussion Workshops and Festival, visit [www.kosamusic.com](http://www.kosamusic.com).

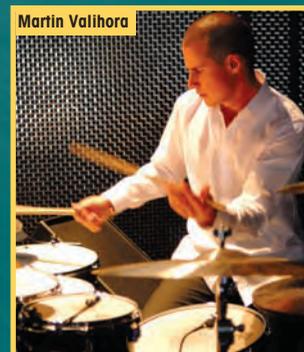
**Dr. Jolan Kovacs**



Keith McCray

**Martin Valihora** (Hiromi), **James Wormworth** (Conan O'Brien Show—sub for Max Weinberg), **Morgan Doctor** (The Cliks), and **Calvin Weston** (Free Form Funky Freqs).

New artists signed to ddrum include **Carmine Appice**, **Mark Castillo** (Bury Your Dead), **JC Dwyer** (Pro-Pain), **Antwan "Amadeus" Thompson** (Trey Songz), **TJ Wilder** (Josh Turner), **Keith McCray** (Ryan Shaw), **Chris Boyd** (Nelly), **Jeff Martin** (Dokken), **Phillip Lowman** (Leona Lewis) and **Ian Alexander** (Ashanti). New ddrum electronic artists include **Mike Mangini**, **Brian Frasier-Moore** (Madonna), **Joey Dandeneau** (Theory of A Dead Man), and **Andy Herrick** (Chimaira).



Martin Valihora

Alex Salca

# MD Online's Second Series Of "Conversations" With Liberty DeVitto And Carmine Appice



**M**odern Drummer magazine has begun filming a series of live conversations at The Cutting Room in New York City. After an overwhelming response from our first installment with Liberty and Dino Danelli, we're happy to announce the next, with Liberty and Carmine Appice. Check it out now at [www.modrndrummer.com](http://www.modrndrummer.com).



## CLIPS OF THE MONTH

by John E. Citrone

### "Charlie Watts—If It Ain't Got That Swing"

For anyone who believes that The Rolling Stones' Charlie Watts is just a simple four-on-the-floor rock drummer, this nine-minute clip should shed some light on the "other" Charlie. Though he waxes eloquent about his love of rock and dance music, Charlie also draws parallels between his role in the Stones and his love of combo drumming. Throughout, we snatch glimpses of he and fellow jazzers putting together a swinging version of the Stones hit "Miss You."

### "Rod Morgenstein, Dixie Dregs, Leprechaun Promenade"

Bearded and ever smiling, Rod Morgenstein effortlessly navigates the winding composition "Leprechaun Promenade" in this classic 1978 performance. Morgenstein is one of the original masters of fusion, and his playing helped define the art form.

### "Rowan Atkinson—Invisible Drum Kit"

In this concert video, the diminutive Atkinson (best know for his goofy character Mr. Bean) mimes his way through a very funny air-drum routine, playing with convincing precision over a percussion track. His fills are dead-on, and he even exhibits command of coordinated independence. Watch for the invisible cat near the end of the clip.



Taye drums is proud to announce the addition of **Dan Bailey** (Phil Wickman), **Gerald French** (Charmaine Neville), **Mike Justian** (Trap Them) and **Pete Maloney** (Dancing With The Stars/Edgar Winter) to their roster.

Craviotto Drums has added session great **Chad Cromwell** and legendary jazz drummer **Charli Persip** to its list of artist endorsees.

Peace welcomes **Homero Chavez** as an endorsee.





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# In Memoriam

## Henry Adler

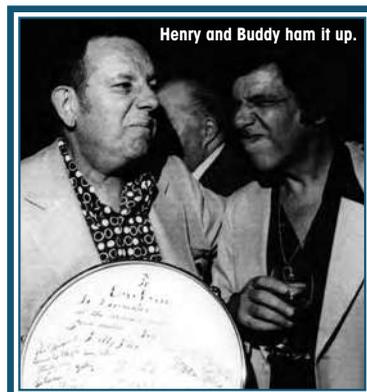
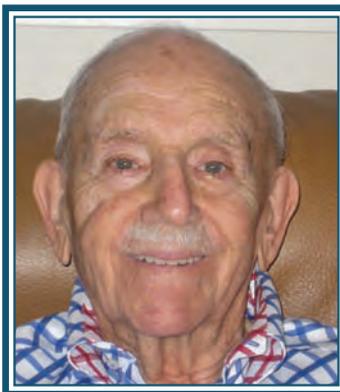
**D**rummying pioneer, music retailer, author, and teacher Henry Adler died this past September 30. He was ninety-three years old.

Adler was born in New York on June 28, 1915. Just before the great stock market crash of 1928, he'd purchased a snare drum and sticks from money he earned doing odd jobs around his neighborhood. During his NAMM Oral History interview, which took place on October 19, 2007, he recalled never having had formal music lessons and wondering what he had missed out on as a result. The concept never left him, and he developed the dream of operating his own drum studio to teach others. That dream was realized years later and resulted in one of the most influential percussive teaching methods in modern history.

Adler's first professional playing job took place when he was fifteen years old, at the Belmar Hotel in New Jersey. Henry's reputation as a solid and reliable orchestra drummer soon spread, and he soon worked in several pit orchestras in theaters, as well as for traveling big bands. Henry performed with many legendary jazz musicians, including Louis Prima, Georgie Auld, Red Norvo, Joe Marsala, and Wingy Manone. The in-demand drummer also made several recordings with The Larry Clinton Orchestra, including *Larry Clinton & His Orchestra 1937-38* on the Hindsight label. Adler was known for constantly arranging sessions with other drummers and teachers to improve his own skills. What developed, in addition to his techniques as a drummer, were his techniques as a teacher.

Among the drummers Henry taught over the years were Dave Tough, Roy Burns, Alvin Stoller, Louie Bellson, and Sandy Feldstein. Some reports also state that Henry taught the great Buddy Rich, but Adler often downplayed his influence over the legendary drummer. As Henry stated, "Sure [Buddy] studied with me, but he didn't come to me to learn how to hold the sticks. He'd take six lessons, go on the road for six weeks, and come back. He didn't have time to practice." What Henry *did* do with Buddy was co-write the instructional book *Buddy Rich's Modern Interpretation Of Snare Drum Rudiments*. The book was first published in 1942, and today is regarded as one of the most important snare-drum rudimental books written. The success of the book led to an expansion of Adler's teaching studios and the opening of Henry Adler's Drum Shop, in the heart of Time Square in New York City.

While running the teaching studio and the drum shop, and doing gigs himself, Henry set out to develop his own teaching style. Known as "The Adler Technique," Henry's rigorous system emphasizes com-



Henry and Buddy ham it up.



Cozy Cole, Henry Adler, and Alfred Friese

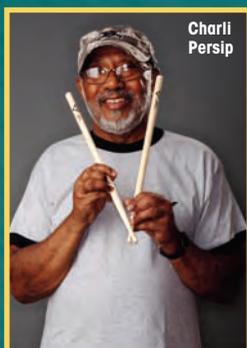
plete ambidexterity, mind-body coordination, elimination of all unnecessary arm or wrist motions, fulcrum muscle development, sight-reading, syncopation, and mastery of varied musical styles.

Henry used the teaching method to write a series of popular instruction books, including *Henry Adler: Hand Development Techniques*, *4-Way Coordination: A Method Book For The Development Of Complete Independence On The Drum Set*, and *How To Play Latin American Rhythm Instruments*, which he co-authored with Humberto Morales, F. Henri Klickmann, and Ernesto Barbosa.

Mr. Adler's career also included establishing and running his own music publishing company. The Henry Adler Music Publishing Company (also called Henry Adler Inc.) produced a steady stream of inventive method books and music, including titles by Adler and others. Among them were *Elementary Drum Methods* by Roy Burns (1962) and *Odd Time Reading Text* by Louis Bellson (1963).

In 1985 Adler tried his hand at acting and appeared as the Magic Club drummer in *Desperately Seeking Susan*. In 1998 he was inducted into the Percussive Arts Society's Hall Of Fame.

**Dan Del Fiorentino, NAMM**



Charli Persip

New Vic Firth artists include **Alphonse Mouzon**, **De'Mar Hamilton** (Plain White T's), **Josh Day** (Sara Bareilles), **Kyle Burns** (Forever The Sickest Kids), and **Fernando Ricciardi** (Los Fabulosos Cadillacs).

**Dropped Beat:** A photo of Raymond Pounds in our August '08 issue was mislabeled with **Charli Persip's** name under it. Both Charlie and Raymond are recently signed Vater endorsers.



De'Mar Hamilton





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## From Screen To Studio

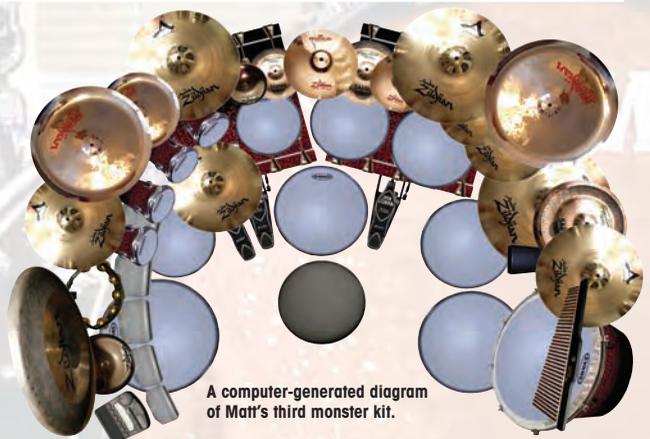
**"I** really enjoy building drumkits!" exclaims this month's Kit Of The Month owner, Matt Flacche of Marlton, New Jersey. "Modern Drummer featured my Decade Kit back in September 2003, and my Homage To Neil And Mike in July 2007."

Never one to settle, Flacche decided to build a third monster kit, this time relying on the power of his computer to create his ultimate setup. "In mid-2007, I decided to build a kit with very few constraints. So I created a super-kit with custom-configured drums, a totally custom rack, and a plethora of cymbals and percussion, using a plan I designed on my computer screen.

"I've been using the 'floor plan' concept for designing setups for years. However, I take it to the extreme by using actual photos of the drums, cymbals, and percussion pieces to create a collage on my computer. This life-like design system allows me to plan my dream setup as if I have the pieces in front of me."

Matt's computer-generated kit is now fully realized in the physical realm, and includes fifteen Tama drums in a custom red sparkle fade finish, Zildjian and Sabian cymbals, a custom rack made of Gibraltar and Tama hardware, LP Granite Blocks, Evans drumheads, and a slew of microphones plugged into a Behringer mixer with dual digital processors and an Alesis compressor.

You can hear this kit by logging on to the Multi-Media page at [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com).



A computer-generated diagram of Matt's third monster kit.



**Photo Submission:** Digital photos on disk as well as print photos may be sent to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Hi-res digital photos and descriptive text can also be emailed to [miked@moderndrummer.com](mailto:miked@moderndrummer.com). Show "Kit Of The Month" in the subject line of the message. Photos cannot be returned.



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