

LAMB OF GOD • FRANZ FERDINAND • CHRIS CUTLER

WIN

A Zildjian/Tré Cool
GREEN DAY Prize Package

Valued
At Over **\$6,600!**

MODERN DRUMMER

JULY 2009

The World's #1 Drum Magazine

12

REASONS TO LOVE
U2's LARRY MULLEN JR.

YEAH YEAH YEAHS'
BRIAN CHASE

JOHN RILEY
DRUM ENLIGHTENMENT

MD READERS POLL RESULTS

THE FANTASTIC FOUR

GERALD HEYWARD, NISAN STEWART, CORA COLEMAN-DUNHAM, AARON SPEARS
FROM THE CHURCH TO THE SHED

PRETENDERS' MARTIN CHAMBERS
NADA SURF'S IRA ELLIOT
SUPERCHUNK'S JON WURSTER
VORTEX TRIBE'S MINGO LEWIS
.....
REMO • ISTANBUL MEHMET •
SABIAN • CANOPUS ON REVIEW

MODERNDRUMMER.COM

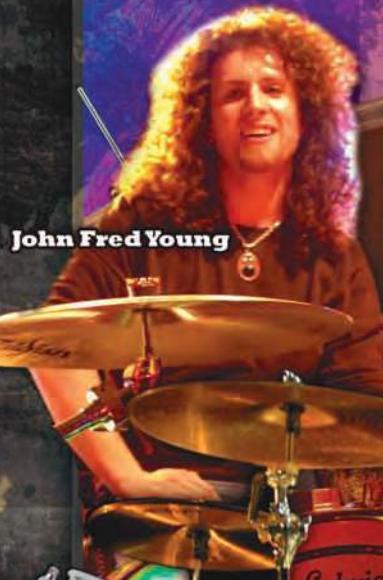
\$5.99US \$5.99CAN



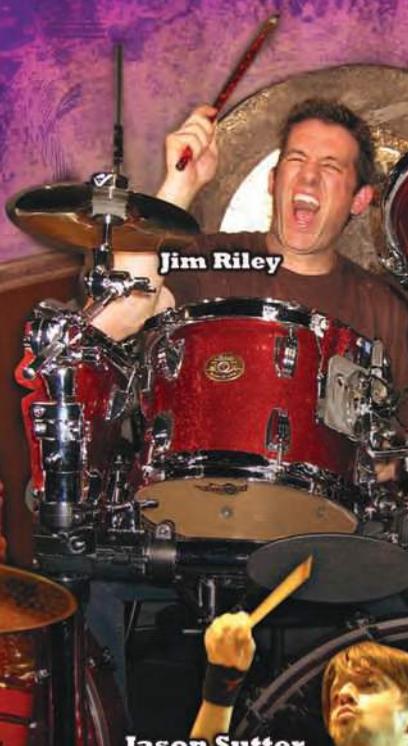
0 71486 01203 0



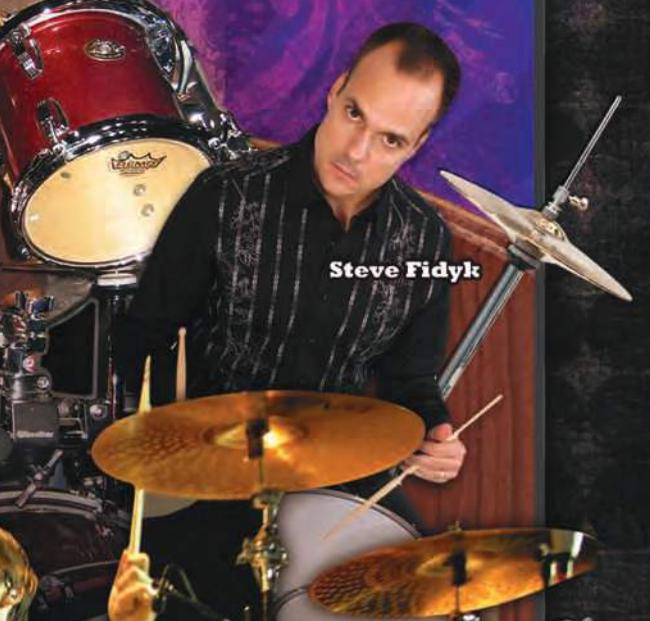
Ludwig LEGENDS.
We Salute You



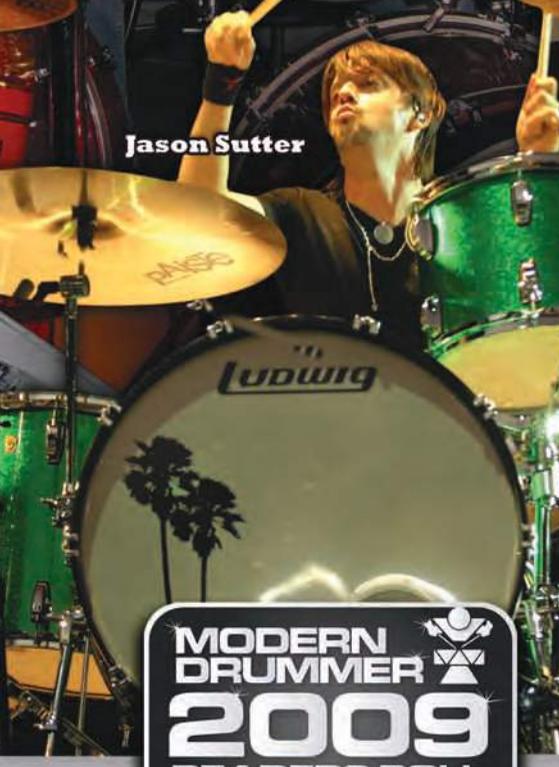
John Fred Young



Jim Riley



Steve Fidyk



Jason Sutter

MODERN DRUMMER
2009
READERS POLL WINNER

Jim Riley, Rascal Flatts
WINNER: Clinician
Runner Up: Country
Gear of Choice: Legacy Classic

Jason Sutter, Chris Cornell
Runner Up: Up & Coming
Gear of Choice: Epic X-Over

Steve Fidyk, Educator
Runner Up: Educational Book
Gear of Choice: Classic Maple

John Fred Young, Black Stone Cherry
WINNER: Ludwig Legacy Award*
Gear of Choice: Classic Maple

* This award has nothing to do with the Reader's Poll but John Fred rocks and we decided to put him in anyway

K Custom

hybridability

mick fleetwood



Hybridability (hībrīdabil'atē), n., pl. -s. 1. The ability to produce multiple tonalities and sounds depending on what part of the cymbal is struck 2. The ability to excel musically in different music settings (See Mick Fleetwood - Fleetwood Mac) 3. What you will feel by trying the new 21" K Custom Hybrid Ride, 15" Trash Crash and 13" Trash Splash.



zildjian.com/newhybrids

©2008 Zildjian Corporation

Congratulations From Aquarian!



Brian Blade - Contemporary Jazz



Dave McAfee - Country



Tommy Bales - Up & Coming



Tommy Clufetos
Metal



Chris Adler
Metal



Jack DeJohnette
Traditional Jazz
Contemporary Jazz



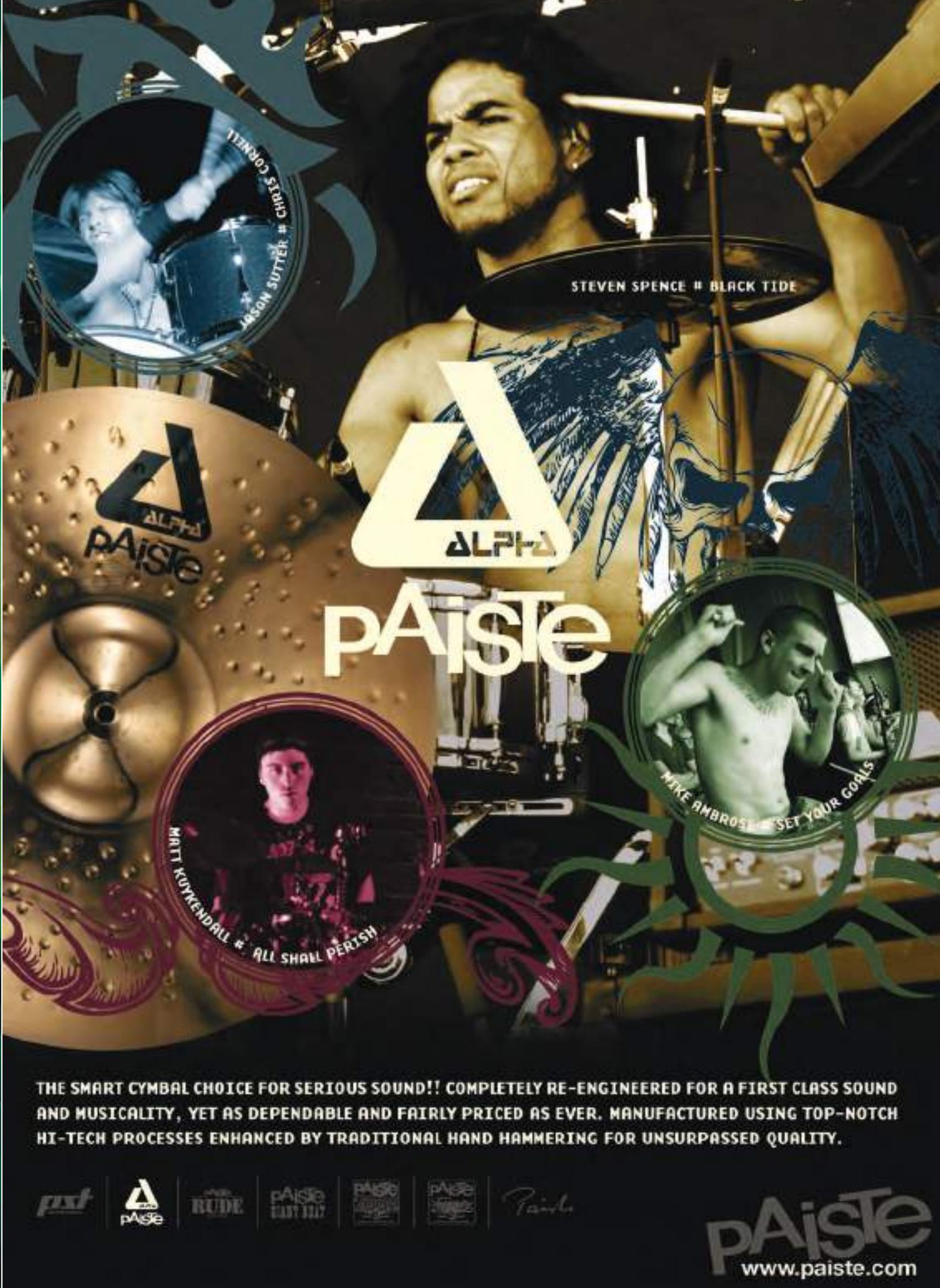
Tracy Broussard
Country

[Readers Poll 2009 - Winners]

AQUARIAN[®]
DRUMHEADS

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

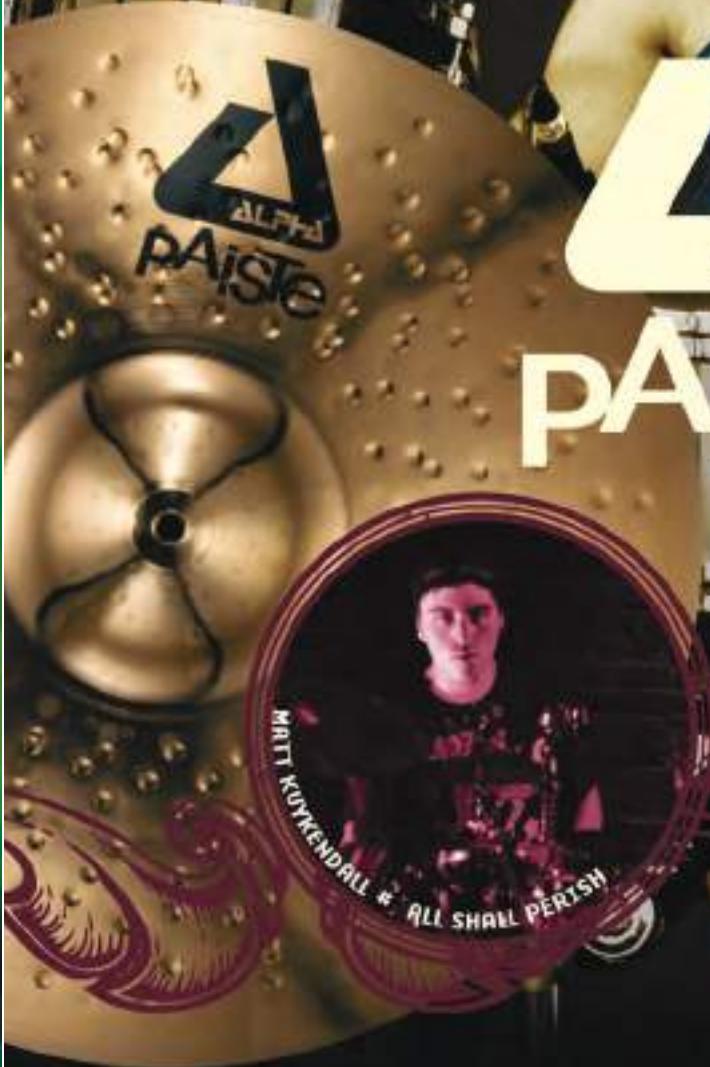
TO LEARN MORE → WWW.AQUARIANDRUMHEADS.COM → 714.632.0230



STEVEN SPENCE # BLACK TIDE



PAiSTE



THE SMART CYMBAL CHOICE FOR SERIOUS SOUND!! COMPLETELY RE-ENGINEERED FOR A FIRST CLASS SOUND AND MUSICALITY, YET AS DEPENDABLE AND FAIRLY PRICED AS EVER. MANUFACTURED USING TOP-NOTCH HI-TECH PROCESSES ENHANCED BY TRADITIONAL HAND HAMMERING FOR UNSURPASSED QUALITY.

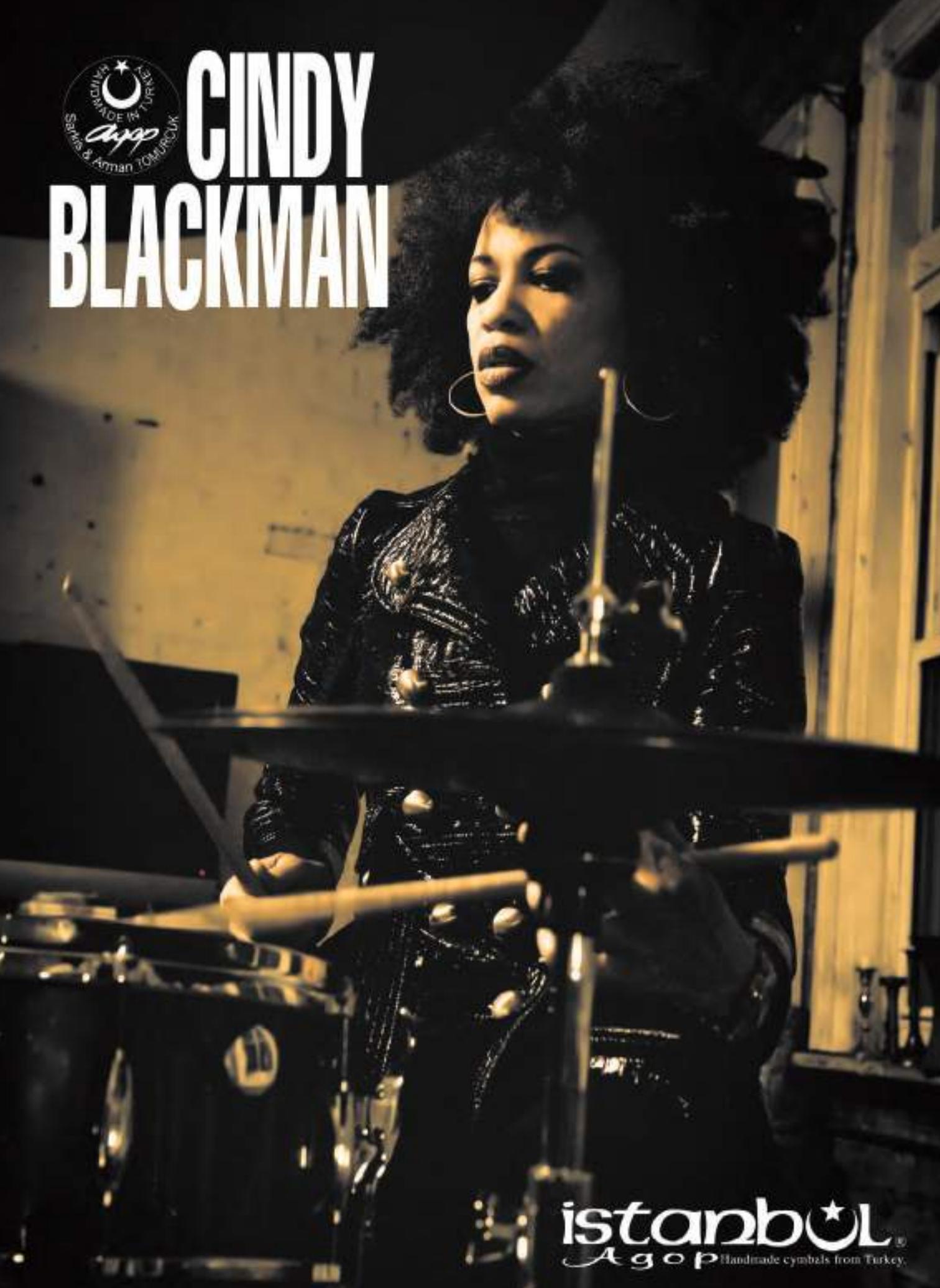


PAiSTE

www.paiste.com



CINDY BLACKMAN



istanbÜL[®]
Agop Handmade cymbals from Turkey.

THE FASTEST,
SMOOTHEST,
MOST VERSATILE
PEDAL IN THE WORLD.



ELIMINATOR
DEMON
DRIVE

IN STORES
NOW!



Pearl



FEATURES

28

MODERN DRUMMER'S 2009 READERS POLL RESULTS

Who's hot today to the most knowledgeable drum fans in the world? Some familiar faces—and quite a few first-timers as well.

48

THE YEAH YEAH YEAHS' BRIAN CHASE

The new YYs album, *It's Blitz!*, represents a considerable musical shift for the band. Brian Chase risks losing his drumming voice, and comes out ahead.

64

THE FANTASTIC FOUR

From the church to the shed to the arena: Aaron Spears, Cora Coleman-Dunham, Gerald Heyward, and Nisan Stewart can nail the ultimate studio take one minute and blow your mind the next.

104

JOHN RILEY

He's that rare drummer who can explain our art as well as he can play it. And John Riley can *seriously* play it.

104

48

16 UPDATE

THE PRETENDERS' **MARTIN CHAMBERS**
VORTEX TRIBE'S **MINGO LEWIS**
ALTERED'S **STEVE HOLMES**

18 GIMME 10! JON WURSTER

The road and recording vet with Superchunk, Robert Pollard, and Bob Mould has seen it all.

20 PORTRAITS

FRANZ FERDINAND'S **PAUL THOMSON**

Disco jams meet indie pop: Franz Ferdinand's drummer explains the process.

44 WOODSHED

DOWN ON THE FARM

Hanging with the Kentucky HeadHunters' **Fred Young** and Black Stone Cherry's **John Fred Young**.

82 12 REASONS TO LOVE

U2'S **LARRY MULLEN JR.**

Ever since his martial intro to "Sunday Bloody Sunday" became a must-learn for rock drummers, Larry Mullen Jr. has had our ear. This, the first installment of *MD*'s newest column, reveals twelve of Larry's coolest recorded moments.

100 WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...?

CHRIS CUTLER

Chris Cutler might fly below most people's radar, but his work with notorious out-rock ensembles like Henry Cow and Pere Ubu has left an indelible mark nonetheless.

WIN A Zildjian/Tré Cool Green Day Prize Package Valued At Over **\$6,600!** PAGE 98

EDUCATION

- 42 ELECTRONIC INSIGHTS**
BUILDING A SMALL STAGE-MONITORING SYSTEM
PART 2: MIXERS AND MONITORS by John Emrich
- 84 ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC**
NOUVEAU RETRO PART 1: GETTING THAT "VINTAGE" SOUND by Daniel Glass
- 88 STRICTLY TECHNIQUE**
TOP 10 RUDIMENTS PART 4: THE PARADIDDLE by Bill Bachman
- 90 LATIN SYMPOSIUM**
LINEAR LATIN 22 SYNCOPATED GROOVES
by Powell Randolph
- 92 OFF THE RECORD**
LAMB OF GOD'S CHRIS ADLER WRATH by Ed Breckenfeld
- 96 ROCK PERSPECTIVES**
POLYRHYTHMS PART 1: FOUR AGAINST THREE by Rod Morgenstein

DEPARTMENTS

- 10 AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW**
POWER UP! by Adam Budofsky
- 12 READERS' PLATFORM**
- 14 ASK A PRO**
NADA SURF'S IRA ELLIOT
- 24 IT'S QUESTIONABLE**
DEATH CAB'S JASON MCGERR ON GETTING A BIG, PUNCHY KICK TONE • RIDING ON THE SNARE • DUMPS AND DIVES
- 112 SHOWCASE**
- 115 DRUM MARKET**
INCLUDING VINTAGE CORNER
- 116 CRITIQUE**
- 118 BACKBEATS**
KICK SNARE HAT EVENT • IN MEMORIAM
- 120 KIT OF THE MONTH**
A SEA OF PERCUSSION

EQUIPMENT

- 34 NEW AND NOTABLE**
JUST INTRODUCED
- 36 PRODUCT CLOSE-UP**
- CANOPUS NEO-VINTAGE NV60-M2 KIT
 - SABIAN ARTISAN VAULT ADDITIONS AND RADIA NANO HI-HATS
 - REMO VINTAGE EMPEROR HEADS
 - ISTANBUL MEHMET MIKAEL Z AND MEHMET TAMDEGER TRIBUTE RIDES



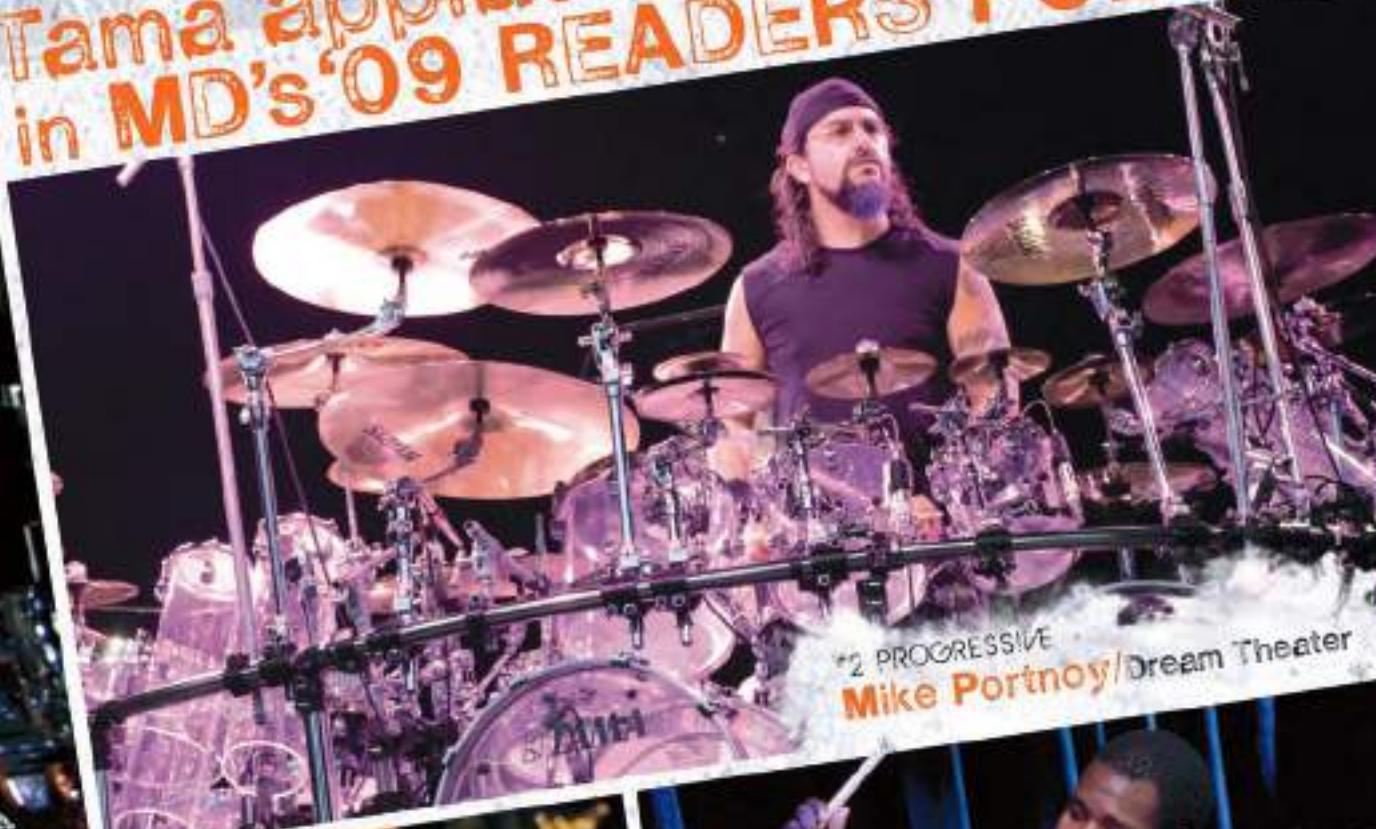
#1 METAL

Lars Ulrich/Metallica



Tama would like to congratulate Metallica on their recent induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. See Lars and his new Tama Starclassic Maple Nit in LU Magnetic Orange finish on tour this fall. For more info visit metallica.com. Check out Metallica's latest release, *Death Magnetic*, and look out for the NEW Guitar Hero® Metallica® release by Activision®.

Tama applauds the winners in MD's '09 READERS POLL



#2 PROGRESSIVE
Mike Portnoy/Dream Theater



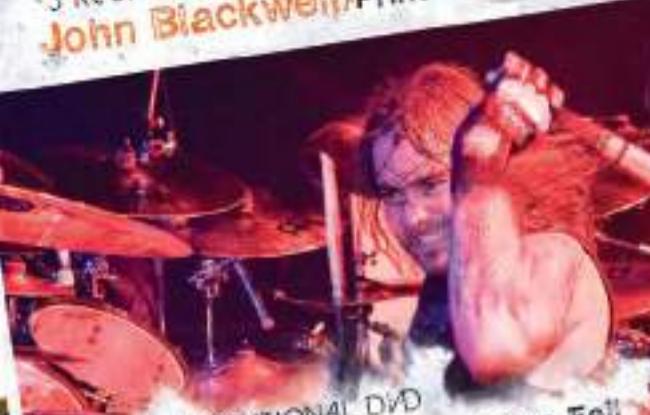
#3 R&B/HIP-HOP, #5 TRADITIONAL R&B/FUNK
John Blackwell/Prince



#3 POP, #4 STUDIO
Kenny Aronoff/John Fogerty/Sessions



#3 UP & COMING
Pete Wilhoit/Fiction Plane



#4 EDUCATIONAL DVD
Jason Bittner/Shadows Fall

TAMA.com

POWER UP!

There are two things I probably haven't gone without in thirty years: drums and magazines. I plan on having a drumkit set up in my house until I'm too feeble to pick up the sticks. Likewise, I think I'll be a magazine fanatic forever, despite what some people say about the rise of the Internet signaling the demise of the printed word. That's just crazy talk, I say. The popularity of one format doesn't necessarily mean the extinction of another. I mean, I love the world of possibilities an electronic drumkit can provide, but I'm not exactly tossing my 1964 Slingerlands out the window, if you get my drift.

But I'm no troglodyte, people. I've got TiVo, Pro Tools, a seventy-five-song-a-month eMusic habit.... Despite my love of the old skool, I'm all about new technology when it fits in with my lifestyle or my artistic demands. If what many of you readers have told me over the years is true, you're probably like that too. That's why I have no qualms telling you that you need to sign up for **Modern Drummer Digital** today.

MDD is exactly how it sounds: a digital version of *Modern Drummer* magazine that you can access anywhere on the planet and read from your computer. If you ask me, that alone makes it pretty sweet. But what's really cool is that each month we hook up MD Digital with features that are possible only in the digital realm, such as sound samples of much of the gear reviewed in the current issue, select musical examples from that month's educational columns, and direct links to manufacturers' Web sites. Sweeter still, if you're a current *Modern Drummer* subscriber, MD Digital is free. Simply go to **moderndrummer.com**, click on Subscriber Services on the menu bar, go under Print/Digital Edition, click on the Digital Activation link, fill in the short form, and voilà—you're signed up.

Now, if you're not a subscriber but you'd still like to receive MD Digital, you can do so under the Subscriber Services tab as well. Simply scroll onto Digital Edition and click on New Subscription. Again, a quick form to fill in, and you're home free; soon you'll be getting an email with your personal link to your monthly copy of MD Digital.

And while you're at moderndrummer.com, please sign up to receive our monthly e-newsletter, **The Wire**—also free, and also packed with content that you won't find anywhere else online or in print. In addition, you might want to click on the **Modern Drummer MySpace** link and see what our 35,000+ friends are up to. And don't leave moderndrummer.com without checking out the exclusive content available there, such as Drummer Blogs and Caught In The Web features.

So you see, just because you dig *Modern Drummer* magazine, that doesn't mean you can't take advantage of all the exciting new-media features we bring you every month. They say great drummers have one foot in history and the other in the future. Hang with us—we have you covered on both counts.



MODERN DRUMMER

Volume 33, Number 7

FOUNDER
RONALD SPAGNARDI
1943–2003

PUBLISHER/CEO
ISABEL SPAGNARDI

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
LORI SPAGNARDI

VICE PRESIDENT
KEVIN W. KEARNS

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
TRACY A. KEARNS

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
ADAM J. BUDOFSKY

MANAGING EDITOR
MICHAEL DAWSON

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
BILLY AMENDOLA

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
MICHAEL PARILLO

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
SUZANNE HURRING

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR
SCOTT G. BIENSTOCK

ART DIRECTOR
GERALD VITALE

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
BOB BERENSON

ADVERTISING ASSISTANT
LASHANDA GIBSON

E-MEDIA SALES
LISA JENKINS

OFFICE ASSISTANT
DENISE HAHER

MODERN DRUMMER ADVISORY BOARD:

Kenny Aronoff, Eddie Bayers, Bill Bruford, Harry Cangany, Jim Chapin, Dennis DeLucia, Les DeMerle, Len DiMuzio, Peter Erskine, Vic Firth, Bob Gatzen, Danny Gottlieb, Sonny Igoe, Jim Keltner, Paul Leim, Peter Magadini, George Marsh, Joe Morello, Rod Morgenstein, Andy Newmark, Neil Peart, Ed Shaughnessy, Steve Smith, Ed Thigpen, Billy Ward, Dave Weckl, Paul Wertico.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Michael Bettine, John Emrich, Robyn Flans, Dr. Asif Khan, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Mark Parsons, Mike Haid, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel Weiss, T. Bruce Wittet.

MODERN DRUMMER magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2009 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: MODERN DRUMMER Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: (973) 239-4140. Fax: (973) 239-7139. Email: mdinfo@moderndrummer.com.

MODERN DRUMMER welcomes manuscripts and photographic material, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Such items must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: US and Canada \$34.97 per year; \$56.97, two years. Other international \$59.97 per year. Single copies \$5.99.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Modern Drummer, PO Box 274, Oregon, IL 61061-9920. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Call (800) 551-3786 or (815) 732-9004.

MUSIC DEALERS: Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer Retail Vision, 2 Maple Street, Suite 6, Middlebury, VT 05753, (800) 381-1288.

INTERNATIONAL LICENSING REPRESENTATIVE: Robert Abramson & Associates, Inc., Libby Abramson, President, PO Box 740346, Boynton Beach, FL 33474-0346, abramson@prodigy.net.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modern Drummer, PO Box 274, Oregon, IL 61061-9920.

Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 41480017 Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: PO Box 875, Stn A, Windsor ON N9A 6P2

MEMBER: National Association Of Music Merchants, American Music Conference, Percussive Arts Society, Music Educators National Conference, Percussion Marketing Council, Music Magazine Publishers Association

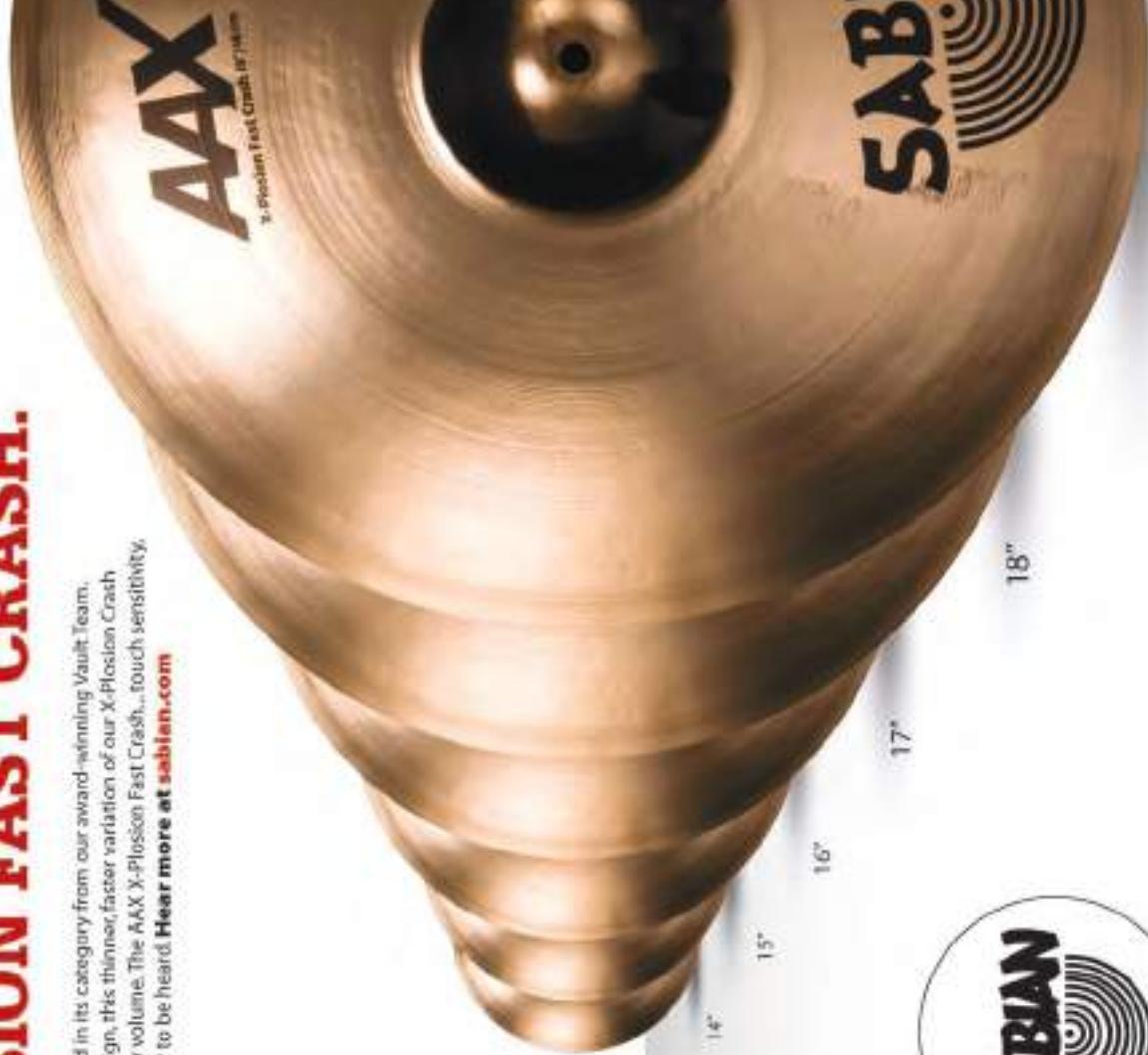
MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE: www.moderndrummer.com

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES

INTRODUCING

THE AAX X-PLOSION FAST CRASH.

AAX is Modern Bright. The latest sound in its category from our award-winning Vault Team. With its innovative AAX 'Dynamic Focus' design, this thinner, faster variation of our X-Plosion Crash concept delivers bright, cutting accents at every volume. The AAX X-Plosion Fast Crash... touch sensitivity, shimmering sounds, and the power to be heard. **Hear more at sabian.com**



14"

15"

16"

17"

18"

19"



TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA • TOMMY SYSTEMS, JR. • COLEMAN COLLEMAN, DUNHAM • AMBLETY
Bye Brian Wilson • www.sabian.com • Page 2

BECAUSE SOUND MATTERS

XAVIER MURIEL

I've been a reader of *Modern Drummer* for years, and I always enjoy your cover interviews. I loved the story Billy Amendola did on Xavier Muriel in the November '08 issue. Most people did not know X's name—they just knew him as the drummer from Buckcherry—and that article has brought him well-deserved attention. Thank you!

Kendra Helms

J.J. JOHNSON

I found April's interview with J.J. Johnson extremely insightful—perhaps because I'm a big fan. I especially enjoyed reading about how John Mayer's band differentiates itself from a typical pop group. I learned a lot from the article and can't wait for next month's issue.

Arianna Fanning

MITCH MITCHELL

Great tribute to Mitch Mitchell in the April issue. Mitch is one of my favorites—maybe even my all-time favorite rock drummer. He had a profound influence on my playing. But when author Mark Griffith says that Mitch "had a mean shuffle, as heard on 'Burning Of The Midnight Lamp' and 'Still Raining, Still Dreaming,'" two things are wrong there. "Burning Of The Midnight Lamp" is *not* a shuffle, it's a half-time rock groove. And Mitch didn't

play on "Still Raining, Still Dreaming," which is a shuffle; that was Buddy Miles, another major ass kicker from the late sixties. I don't mean to split hairs—just wanted to get that straight. Mitch was so important and still is!

Richie Morales (Spyro Gyra/Mike Stern)

I just received the April issue and really enjoyed the Mitch Mitchell tribute. Nice story by Mark Griffith. I had the pleasure of meeting Mitch here in Nashville a few years back. We were sharing duties on a Junior Brown record, and Mitch was one of the most humble guys I've ever met. At the time he had been away from playing for a while and had an almost childlike enthusiasm for getting back into it. What a sweetheart. He was such an amazing player at the height of his time with the Experience. We've lost another giant.

I also liked Billy Amendola's piece on Shannon Forrest. Well done, man! Shannon's a great young cat who's carving out his own brand of drumming in Nashville. I'm pleased to see another guy here with a language of his own behind the kit. Those players are few and far between. It'll be interesting to watch his career.

Chad Cromwell

(Peter Frampton/Neil Young/sessions)

Here's to my personal drumming hero. More than anyone else—more



than Ringo, Bonham, Charlie Watts, Moon—Mitch Mitchell was the drummer who said it all for me, the one who taught me everything I ever wanted to know in the world of drums. He's the drummer I've always wished I could sound like. Rest in peace, old friend. I'll miss you.

Thomas Given

DROPPED BEAT: In the April review of Meinl's Soundcaster Fusion cymbals, the wrong Web address was listed. The correct one is meinlcymbals.com.

HOW TO REACH US

billya@moderndrummer.com



DJ drums
The Drum Professionals

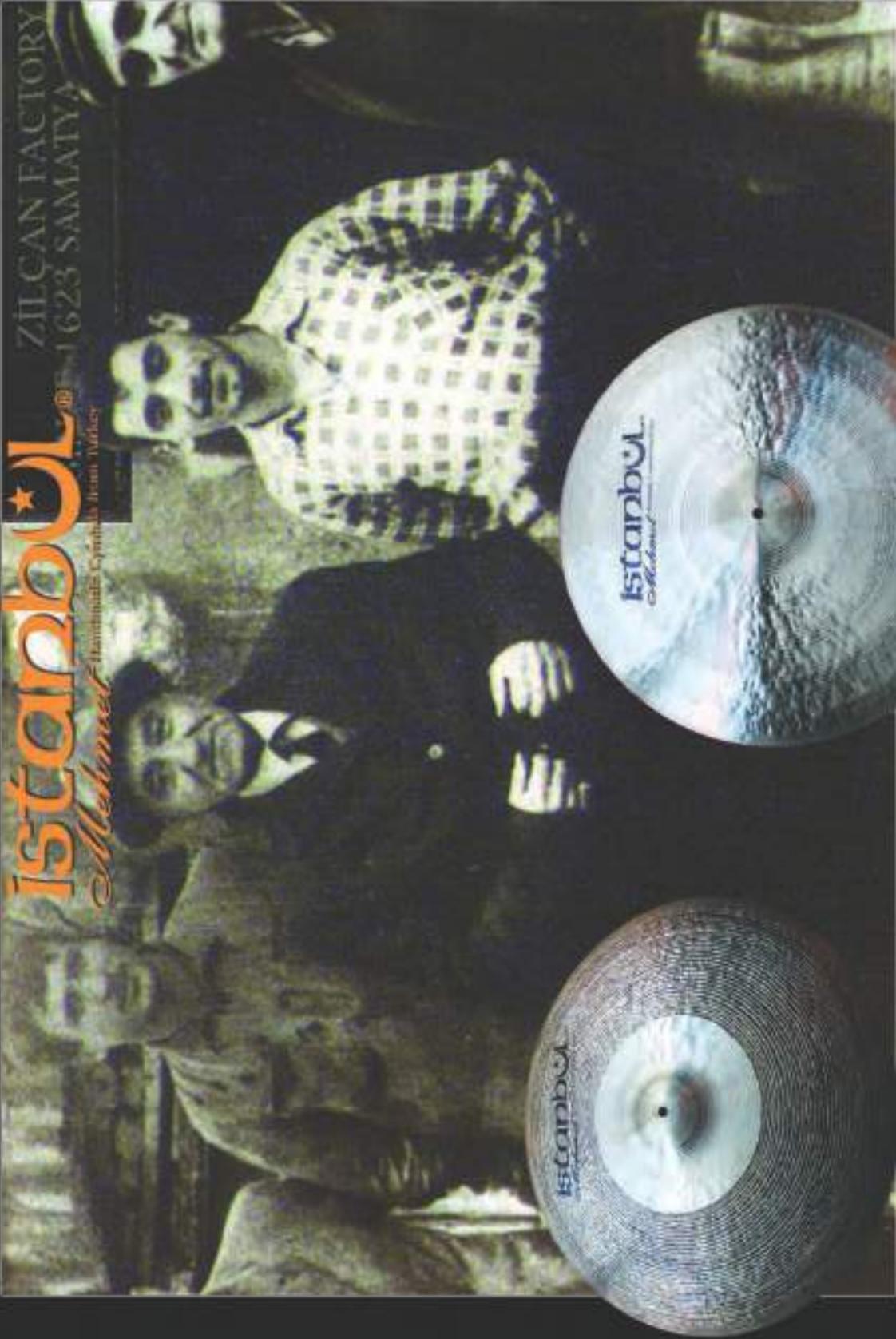
THE EXCELLENCE THE PROS RELY ON



Please come to see more products at
wangpercussion.com

DJdrums Sapele Custom Series

TWO NEW LEGENDARY RIDE CYMBALS FROM İSTANBUL MEHMET



Kırkor Küçükyan

Mikael Zilçan
Tribute Ride

Mehmet Tamdeğer
60th Anniversary Ride

www.istanbulmehmet.com

IRA ELLIOT

WHY WOULD A MODERN ROCK BAND LIKE NADA SURF REISSUE ITS ENTIRE CATALOG ON VINYL? A PEEK AT IRA ELLIOT'S LP COLLECTION REVEALS A DRUMMER PROFOUNDLY INSPIRED BY THE SOUNDS AND STYLES OF ROCK'S GOLDEN AGE.

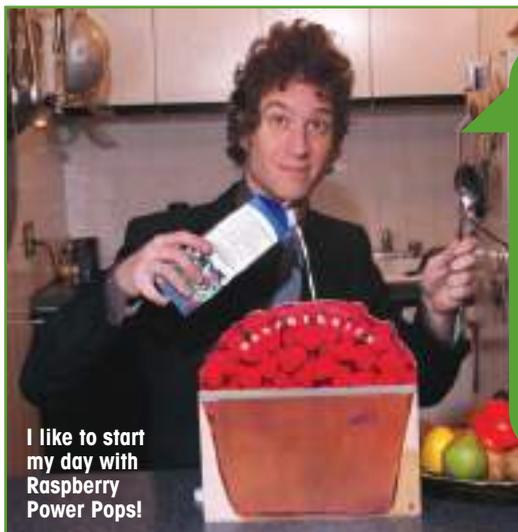
Story by Denise Hafer • Photos by Andrew Bicknell

Meeting Ira Elliot at the front door of his Williamsburg, Brooklyn, home, I'm immediately struck by his mod-ish threads: vest, necktie, white golf shoes...clearly this is a musician who thinks about his personal style. And as Ira leads me into his studio, a museum-like room with framed album covers on the walls and shelves filled with '60s and '70s music memorabilia, it becomes clear that he's someone who enjoys being transported through rock history—and who likes taking others along for the ride.

Soon Ira is spinning some of his favorite records. Sitting there with him, *The White Album* blasting through the speakers, I experience the Beatles like I never have before—the crackling sounds of John, Paul, and George's harmonies spark emotions in both of us. And though the guitars hanging above the couch suggest he's a multi-instrumentalist, Ira, ever the drummer, makes sure to point out, "The Beatles only *became* the Beatles because of Ringo."

Growing up in New York and attending the School Of The Performing Arts seems to have had its perks for a young music fanatic like Elliot. "Kids would bring in their records and take turns playing DJ during lunchtime," he recalls. "There was an explosion of new bands in the area—kind of a post-punk new wave sound going on. It was a very exciting time for music."

As Ira details each album's history, explaining the techniques of drummers from John Bonham to Phil Collins and getting animated about his favorite album art (like the cutout sleeve of the Raspberries' 1973 album, *Side 3*), I realize I don't really need to ask him, "Why vinyl?" The experience of speaking to such a devoted collector is enough. Though Ira admits that not all of his records have worn well over the years, others remain timeless. "You'll always go back to the music you listened to when you were between the ages of fifteen and nineteen," he says. "There's something about that time, when all these personal things are happening in your life. When I hear music from that period, it hits me like an arrow."



I like to start my day with Raspberry Power Pops!

THE RASPBERRIES *SIDE 3* (1973)

This was one I discovered in my sister's collection. (I went into my big power-pop obsession around 1978.) The album features the single "Tonight," which in my book is about the most perfect power-pop song ever put to tape. Three minutes and thirty-nine seconds of thunderous drums, raunchy guitars, and three-part harmony. The Who, the Stones, the Beach Boys, and the Beatles all rolled into one. And it's all about underage sex. What more do you want in a song? Featuring the great Jim Bonfanti on drums—big *Ludwig* drums.

They need to make a drumkit that fits on a scooter.



THE WHO *QUADROPHENIA* (1973)

It's tough for me to choose one Who album, and certainly *Who's Next* was very important. But *Quadrophenia* is an album you may not know as well, and you should. The Who were at the top of their game in 1973, and here they absolutely nail it. Moon is in outstanding form, playing some of his most identifiable fills (the opening salvos of "I've Had Enough" and "Bell Boy") and his trademark lightning-fast 16th-note triplets ("I'm One"). "5:15" is still one of my favorite play-alongs. Dear boy, you know they didn't call him the Patent British Exploding Drummer for nothing.



Ira Elliot, *Lust For Ludwig*.

IGGY POP *LUST FOR LIFE* (1977)

With the powerful Hunt Sales behind the kit and David Bowie behind the desk (years later Bowie hired Hunt and his bassist brother, Tony, for the band Tin Machine), this album is loaded with great pulsing beats. You've probably heard the title track a few too many times, but that's only because it's so damn good. And let's not forget "Some Weird Sin," "Sixteen," and "The Passenger."



Now in stock: Vic Firth Rock Chopstick, Ira Elliot signature model.

STEELY DAN AJA (1977)

Seven sweet tracks, six great drummers. Steve Gadd's playing on the title song is the showstopper here, though "I Got The News" with Ed Greene on drums was my favorite (easiest) to play along with. This record was pretty jazzy for my taste (and ability), but it was fun trying to emulate Bernard Purdie's super-laid-back half-time shuffle on "Home At Last" and Rick Marotta's tight, funky fills on "Peg." Special mention to Jim Keltner ("Josie"), one of my all-time favorite drummers. I wanna be just like him when I grow up, except maybe without the black aviator sunglasses 24/7.



Just another iPhone poseur.

JOE JACKSON LOOK SHARP! (1979)

It's funny, when I think about it now, for me this album was an introduction to Elvis and the Attractions, whose style *Look Sharp!* borrows from heavily. But the formidable rhythm section of David Houghton on drums and Graham Maby on bass certainly stands on its own. Records like this taught me a ton about how to arrange drum parts in a song: clean, tight, dynamic, fun—well structured but maintaining a sense of urgency and spontaneity. And never forget to simply kick ass.

My mom always said, "Wear good shoes and no one will even notice your hair."



ELVIS COSTELLO THIS YEAR'S MODEL (1978)

I would certainly recommend his debut album, *My Aim Is True*, but this, Elvis's second release, was the first record to feature the world's greatest backup band, the Attractions. These guys could play any style convincingly, with taste and flash. There's never been anything quite like them...well, except Joe Jackson's band. Maybe. Nevertheless, this is one of those records that really make you step up your game. Pete Thomas plays like his pointy boots are on fire.

The best way to keep that "new album" sparkle.



THE KNACK GET THE KNACK (1979)

In 2006 we lost the great Bruce Gary, who gave these tracks an intense energy and a studio slickness that were challenging to imitate. His drumming is loose and fiery, with everything in its proper place but never fussy. The drum sound is spectacular as well, like the cracking snare on "My Sharona" and the fantastic tom sound on "(She's So) Selfish." I spent a lot of time mastering the funky cowbell offbeat in "Siamese Twins (The Monkey And Me)." Good times.

GENESIS ABACAB (1981)

Phil Collins perfected his trademark punchy, compressed drum sound on *Abacab* and its excellent predecessor, *Duke*. Here he consistently lays out hammering, stripped-down (and spectacularly recorded) beats accented with some very cool Roland CR-78 drum machine parts. If nothing else, this album makes a great case for taking the bottom heads off your toms.

Come, sit with me and get totally progged.

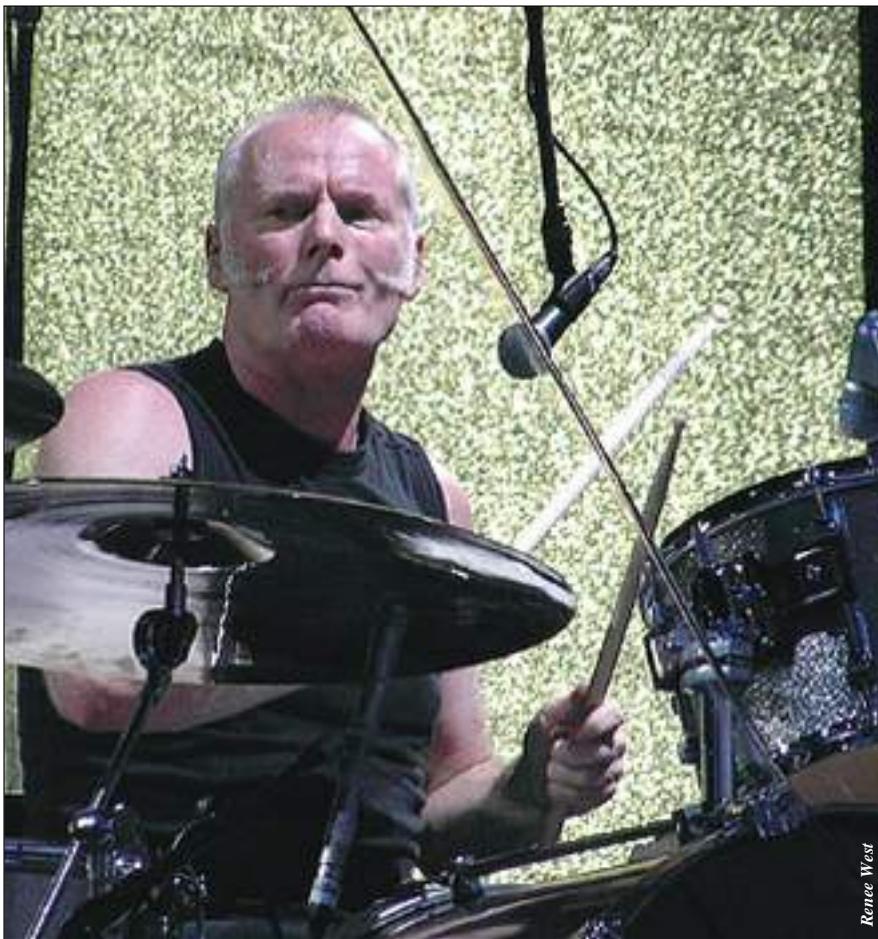


Like the Count on Sesame Street: "Five! Ah-ah! Five Nada Surf records! Ah-ah-ah!"

NADA SURF HIGH/LOW (1996), THE PROXIMITY EFFECT (1998), LET GO (2002), THE WEIGHT IS A GIFT (2005), LUCKY (2008)

Our fantastic record label, Barsuk, released a limited edition box set earlier this year containing our first five studio albums, the band's first vinyl 45, and a full-color twenty-four-page booklet, plus some other cool stuff. Rumor has it that it's out of print already. But fear not, our last three records were made available individually this past April. You can get details at barsuk.com, where you'll also learn about the very excellent artists with whom we share a home. And office supplies.





Renee West

THE PRETENDERS' MARTIN CHAMBERS

NEW CHALLENGES, NEW ENERGY

When the Pretenders' raw and rootsy album *Break Up The Concrete* appeared last fall, fans were disappointed to find that Martin Chambers—the man Chrissie Hynde introduces in concert as “one of the all-time great rock drummers”—was not behind the kit.

Granted, the guy manning the drums on *Concrete*, Jim Keltner, is no slouch. And Keltner's familiar kitchen-sink approach suited the album's ramshackle sound. Still, the faithful weren't quite sure what to make of a new Pretenders album without Chambers, the only remaining original member of the band besides Hynde.

When the Pretenders hit the road to support the album, however, Chambers was there, feeling energized by new band members James Walbourne (lead guitar) and Eric Heywood (lap steel), and by playing *Concrete* songs each night in styles that were admittedly not his forte.

“It's nice to be forced, if you like, into doing something that's not particularly your bag,” Chambers says of learning Keltner's parts. “It pushes you to do things you wouldn't do, and

that's definitely the way forward. Playing with a maraca on ‘Rosalee,’ or ‘The Nothing Maker,’ where I had a cabasa going in my right hand—it's not something I'd have done, but I enjoyed it.” With a laugh, he adds, “Thank you, Jim.”

Those new songs shared space in the set with Pretenders classics Chambers has indeed put his stamp on, tracks the band hadn't played live in years, like the supercharged rave-up “Tattooed Love Boys” and the lurching “Up The Neck.” As Chambers points out, “Those songs were played at their original tempos, not too speedy. It reminded me of how good it used to be, and how good it's become now. It's pretty miraculous that we're still able to do this, and it's as good as ever.”

While there's no talk yet of another Pretenders album, Chambers will be keeping busy in October playing with Mott The Hoople for their fortieth anniversary shows in London. He'll share the stage with original Mott drummer Dale Griffin, “just helping out an old friend. He lent me his drumkit in 1967. I love him; he's fantastic.”

Patrick Berkery

UPDATE NEWS

Milo Venter is on Carlon's first full-length CD, *Johari Window*. Check out Milo's blog at moderndrummer.com.

Jeremiah Edmond is on Manchester Orchestra's *Mean Everything To Nothing*.

Arejay Hale is on Halestorm's self-titled Atlantic debut.

Brian Delaney is on the new album by the New York Dolls, *Cause I Sez So*. Like the band's famous debut album, this one was produced by Todd Rundgren.

Balance is back after two decades, with the anticipated new album *Equilibrium*. On drums are **Jesse Castro**, Aerosmith's **Joey Kramer**, and **Brett Chassen**, who also coproduced the record.

Kris Myers is on Umphrey's McGee's latest, *Mantis*.

Gary Husband has a new group, Drive. Check out their debut CD, *Hotwired*.

Poogie Bell has released his second solo CD, *Get On The Kit*.

Cheap Trick's **Bun E. Carlos** is on the self-titled debut by Tinted Windows, which also features former Smashing Pumpkins guitarist James Iha, Fountains Of Wayne bassist Adam Schlesinger, and Hanson's Taylor Hanson on vocals.

Chad Cromwell is touring and recording with Neil Young. Chad recently did sessions with Miranda Lambert, Lady Antebellum, and James Otto.

Jeff “Tain” Watts is on the Branford Marsalis Quartet's new studio album, *Metamorphosen*.

DRUM DATES

THIS MONTH'S IMPORTANT EVENTS IN DRUMMING HISTORY

On July 2, 1941, **Gene Krupa's** band, featuring trumpeter Roy Eldridge and singer Anita O'Day, recorded the big hit “Rockin' Chair.”



On July 2, 1969, drummer **Mitch Mitchell** and bass player Noel Redding announced that they were permanently leaving the Jimi Hendrix Experience. A week later, Mitch was back performing with the guitarist, along with new bass player Billy Cox, at the Newport Jazz Festival.

On July 19, 1980, Billy Joel, with **Liberty DeVitto** on drums, hit number one on the *Billboard* pop chart with the single “It's Still Rock & Roll To Me.”

Philly Joe Jones, Eric Carr, Louie Bellson, Joe Morello, Ringo Starr, Dino Danelli, and Mitch Mitchell were all born in July.

VORTEX TRIBE'S MINGO LEWIS KEEPING IT FRESH

Three decades ago, San Francisco Bay Area-based drummer/percussionist James "Mingo" Lewis was light-years ahead of the curve when he applied rudiments to congas in performances with Santana, Al Di Meola, Return To Forever, Billy Joel, and the Tubes. "I've always applied the rhythmic patterns I've learned over the years to whatever instrument I'm playing," Lewis says. "The funk stuff I apply to congas, the Latin stuff to the drumset. It's all just rhythm to me."



Thirty years later, Lewis is again ahead of the competition, this time with his latest band project, Vortex Tribe. Mingo dubs the group, which he formed with classically trained flautist Deborah Yates, crossover fusion. On their new CD, *Hall Of Souls*, Vortex Tribe seamlessly weaves together reggae, Arabic grooves, Afro-Cuban songo rhythms, and phat old-school funk while maintaining musical continuity. "You never know where the song will end up," Lewis says. "I want this stuff to remain fresh."

The seeds of Lewis's eclecticism sprang from a fertile musical upbringing. As a kid, Mingo, who's the son of blues/jazz guitarist Jimmy "Baby Face" Lewis, participated in late-night jam sessions at his parents'

New York City apartment, where such legendary jazz artists as Miles Davis, Art Blakey, and Thelonious Monk were frequent visitors. By his late teens, Lewis had crossed genre lines with impunity, having performed with the likes of James Brown, Santana, and Eddie Palmieri. Since then, he's toured the world, and he recently returned to the Bay Area to channel his vast rhythmic knowledge into Vortex Tribe.

"Players should have their own identity," Lewis says. "That's why I want to create a signature sound for the band, to the point where people hear us and say, 'Oh, yeah. That's Vortex Tribe.'"

Will Romano

ALTERED'S STEVE HOLMES

ANGULAR HOUSE OF DRUMMING

Los Angeles-based drummer Steve Holmes started the Vinnie Colaiuta/Dave Weckl fan site HouseOfDrumming.com several years ago because, as he puts it, "They've shown me what it sounds like to obtain freedom on the instrument."

As an associate producer at a major video-gaming company, Holmes possessed skills that allowed him to publicize his own playing as well. "I was lucky to be able to tap into Internet video before the YouTube revolution," he explains, "producing drum lessons and performance/documentary movies of my bands. This helped me gain exposure to my drumming while strengthening the content of HouseOfDrumming.com."

Consequently, Holmes has earned an honorable reputation in the drumming community, hosting a popular drum forum that's frequented by major players from all musical genres. "It's true that drummers are, in large part, unselfish and eager to share," he says. "I've learned a great deal by staying involved in HOD. I'd like to see it grow while maintaining a high level of intelligent and open-minded conversation. I also want to finally get around to selling HOD T-shirts!"

An in-demand educator, Holmes is known for dissecting advanced concepts, as illustrated by his popular instructional DVD, *Shed Some Light*. "The video features useful hand exercises that helped me early on," he says. "It also addresses the application of technique to overall groove and musicality, including



some soloing ideas."

Holmes suggests practicing specific exercises until they're second nature. "This way," he insists, "the brain can focus on big-picture concepts like solid time, dynamics, pocket, and fitting in musically. Freedom is achieved by practicing the right stuff enough."

The drummer, who has worked with Lee Ritenour and Celine Dion, frequently plays the famed Baked Potato nightclub with his fusion trio, Altered. The band recently released a new CD, *Angular*. "Altered pushes me outside my comfort zone, teaches me when to speak up and when to get out of the way, and gives me a chance to construct solos over forms and vamps," Holmes says. "Creating drum parts while making them feel good is my biggest challenge. I'm pleased with *Angular* in that regard. Chops are binary, but a good-feeling groove is always the coveted goal."

Mike Haid



MUSIC IN YOUR D-N-A

DRUMS FOR THE EARS, EYES, MIND, SOUL AND BUDGET FEATURING:

- ★ 9-PLY SELECT NORTH AMERICAN MAPLE SHELLS
- ★ HAND-RUBBED SPARKLE LACQUER FINISHES
- ★ RIMS-MOUNT POWER-TOMS
- ★ LOW MASS/LOW PROFILE LUGS
- ★ MAPLE BASSDRUM HOOPS
- ★ HEAVY-DUTY HARDWARE INCLUDED
- ★ 45° PRECISION V BEARING EDGES

PEACE DNA SERIES

Joccy Scott (Lizzy Borden)



peace

Peace Drums & Percussion | www.peacedrums.com

USA: info@peacedrums.com | 526-481-4570

International: peace@arranged.net | tel: 0043-20276519

GIMME 10!

PRACTICAL ADVICE FROM
PROS WHO KNOW

JON WURSTER

Sorry showcases, stone-faced audiences...he's seen it all. But the road and recording vet has the last laugh, answering the call of indie rock icons like Superchunk, Robert Pollard, and Bob Mould.

by Patrick Berkery

Pierre-Yves Arnoix



One way of measuring success as an indie rock musician: The cash flow from your musical endeavors keeps you from having to go back to working at the bar or record store when you're off the road.

Another way: Other musicians continually ask you to record and/or tour with them. Well-respected musicians, at that.

Though Jon Wurster does work on the side as a comedy writer/actor and a collaborator of Tom Scharpling's on the cult radio program *The Best Show On WFMU* (not to mention his occasional contributions to *MD*), music is his primary gig. So consider him an indie success on both fronts.

Since his main band, Superchunk, slowed its workload earlier this decade, Wurster has become a go-to drummer for artists like Robert Pollard, the Mountain Goats, Marah, and the New Pornographers.

Jon's thunder-ball drumming can currently be heard on new releases from Bob Mould (*Life And Times*) and New Pornographers singer-guitarist A.C. Newman (*Get Guilty*). Here, the veteran timekeeper shares wisdom acquired over his nearly twenty-five-year career as a working drummer.

1 LEARN FROM LETDOWNS. In February '86, when I was nineteen, I moved to North Carolina to join this band called the Right Profile, which sounded like a cross between the Band and mid-period Rolling Stones. We got signed to Arista two months later; it was the most insane experience. Then immediately it all went downhill. The songs were never good enough, we tried producer after producer, we lost momentum, and we weren't a priority with our label or management. That ended, but around 1990 we changed our name to the Carneys and did a five-song demo at the Power Station with Steve Jordan. That was the best, most formative drumming experience of my life. Steve was just amazing, the greatest teacher I ever had. I don't think he ever said, "Try playing this." It was more like we had telepathy between us. His whole thing rubbed off on me in the hugest way.

2 TURN OFF YOUR MIND, RELAX, AND STRETCH YOUR BODY. I started yoga and meditation independently of drumming, but I felt pretty immediate results in terms of playing and just feeling better on tour. I do yoga for about twenty minutes each morning. I meditate less frequently than I should, but I've found it really helps a lot, even more than yoga in some ways—just clearing your mind, going to some sort of "zero" state. On the last Mountain Goats tour, I found myself overthinking things during shows. My mind was in the way of my performance. I'm not quite sure why; I knew the songs, I had them in my muscle memory. But one night I made a conscious decision: "I'm turning off my mind." And that really helped.

3 KNOW WHEN THE BAND IS OVER. I was in this band out of high school called Psychotic Norman, sort of a post-punk Minutemen/Fall kind of thing. One day one of the guys didn't show up for rehearsal—at his house! That's a hint that it's over.

4 THERE'S ALWAYS AN UPSIDE. In 1991 the Carneys tried to play our way out to L.A. to get signed. And it was a death march. We pull into Lubbock, Texas, and we're supposed to play some outdoor patio. The promoter goes, "Guys, I'm sorry, it's gonna rain; the show's

canceled. But don't worry, I can get you all into the Dread Zeppelin show I'm promoting down the street!" We opened twice for a metal cover band, played two humiliating industry showcases in L.A.—the worst. But the day I got back, my brother tells me Mac from Superchunk was asking about me playing drums with them. I was like, "Yes, thank you!"

5 BE A GOOD GUY. Agreeability and personality can be just as important as drumming ability. People will think, *Is this someone I can travel with for months?* I like to think I'm easy to play and travel with.

6 BEING IN ONE BAND ISN'T EVERYTHING. Being in a band for ten years full time, like Superchunk...I don't know if I want to do that again. I consider myself a member of Bob Mould's band and the Mountain Goats, but there's so much downtime with those gigs that I feel I can do other things. When you're in a band full time, there are so many things you can't do, because your whole year is pretty much planned out. So playing in something that's only a month or two—I like that. It gives me time to do other things.

7 STAY POSITIVE. I think you have to be in the mindset that *things will happen*. I've gone through a couple of depressing times where projects have been canceled; I'd planned my schedule around those gigs, and I got bummed about it. But at some point I had to say, "Things are going to get better. I'm going to get gigs." I believe in the law of attraction. I think it works.

8 MAKE THAT CONNECTION. It's definitely who you know. I wasn't a very network-y guy early on. But on some level, you have to be. You have to make some connections. For instance, I'd gotten to know Neko Case from seeing her play. Neko had recommended me for the New Pornographers gig, which led to playing with A.C. Newman. Jason Narducy played bass with me in Robert Pollard's band, and he invited me to join Bob Mould's band.

9 ENORMODOMES AREN'T ALL THEY'RE CRACKED UP TO BE. I was playing in the band Whiskeytown, and we were opening for John Fogerty on a shed tour. When we were going on, it was still daylight. And you're playing to 1,000 people that are trying to find their seats in a place that holds 12,000. Later, Superchunk opened for the Get Up Kids in fairly large halls, and I'll never forget the stone faces on the people that were there to see them. We just had to make our own fun out of it. I remember walking back to the Electric Factory in Philadelphia on that tour after getting something to eat. The show was over, and these kids were driving by. One of them rolls the window down, and you could tell she recognized us. You think she's going to say, "Good show!" But she drives by and yells, "More like Supersucks!"

10 DOGS RULE. I used to worry about my dogs so much when I was on the road. There was a tour where Superchunk played Brazil, and one of the dogs I had with my girlfriend had really hurt its back the day before I left. The entire time I was worrying about this sixteen-year-old, seventeen-pound Shih Tzu. I'm able to worry less about them now. Still, we were in Japan once, and a dog I'd found on the street, which we'd had for a year, died in the middle of the tour. You're so far away from home and you just can't do anything, and that's dreadful.





FRANZ FERDINAND'S

PAUL THOMSON

by Billy Amendola

Who would've thought the pithy pop tunes on the Scottish sensations' new record were culled from long jams in the studio? Today's hottest "disco" drummer explains.

The 2004 single "Take Me Out," from Franz Ferdinand's self-titled debut CD, marked the band's rise to the top in both the U.K. and the U.S. One of the forces behind the song's success was Paul Thomson's driving disco beat—which easily could have been mistaken for a loop or a drum machine.

From the time the group was formed in Glasgow in 2002, Thomson's rock-solid four-on-the-floor groove has been a staple of the Franz Ferdinand sound. The drummer really hits his stride on *Tonight*, FF's third and latest album, letting it rip live in the studio but also mixing in all sorts of synthesized percussion. Meanwhile, fans have flocked in droves to the quartet; rapper/producer Kanye West lists Ferdinand among his favorite U.K. pop bands.

Thomson, currently on tour with bandmates Bob Hardy, Nick McCarthy, and Alex Kapranos, checked in with *MD* from the road to discuss the recording of *Tonight*.

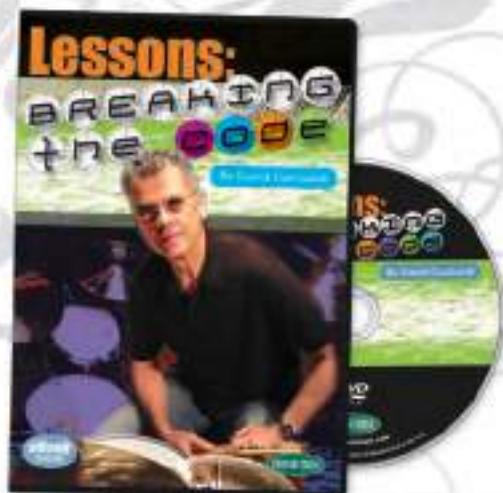
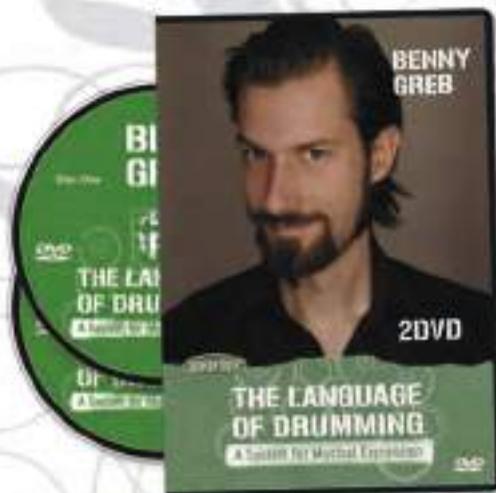
MD: Fill us in on how you created your drum tracks for the new album.

Paul: The whole band tends to record in the room together with baffles between the amps and around the drums, and it's crucial that all four of us are within eye contact of each other. On *Tonight*, we recorded each song over the course of a forty-five- to sixty-minute jam, playing each part of the song for ten minutes or more—long enough for each of us to

zone out and just play, completely unhindered by any feelings of self-awareness. Then we'd edit, putting together a full song using the definitive four- or eight-bar sections. Usually I play to a pattern I program on an MPC or Linn drum machine, or sometimes even a drum loop from Ableton, some of which we'll use in the final mix.

MD: Most of the drum tracks sound live. Do you grid them at all after jamming to

THE ART OF COMMUNICATION.



The Language Of Drumming

Benny Greb

This groundbreaking two-disc DVD presents Benny Greb's new system for developing greater freedom of expression.

- An advanced method for improving timing, technique, dynamic control and speed of hands and feet
- Sections on constructing patterns, fills and solos
- 51-page eBook with transcriptions, exercises and extras
- Recommended for all drumming levels and styles

Lessons: Breaking The Code

David Garibaldi

Go one-on-one with master-drummer David Garibaldi and learn both the fundamentals and secrets of funk drumming.

- In-depth analysis of classic Tower Of Power grooves, including loops and play-alongs from The Code Of Funk
- Hybrid rudiments, permutations and displaced patterns
- 47-page eBook with transcriptions, exercises and extras
- Recommended for all drumming levels and styles

Learn more at hudsonmusic.com!

Log on for free sample lessons, video clips, excerpts and news on upcoming projects and sign up for the News Reel, Hudson Music's electronic newsletter.

Hudson Music DVDs and Book-Audio packages are available at leading drumshops, distributed by the Hal Leonard Corp.



PAUL THOMSON

make it sound machinelike?

Paul: We don't grid anything because we're all completely anti-quantization and try not to correct anything.

MD: Did you ever practice to a click growing up?

Paul: I've never played to a click! I've always found it cold and mechanical. If we want steady bpm throughout a track, I'll program a beat on the MPC and try to inject a little swing into it, to give it a bit of humanity. Sometimes when we're jamming, even recording, we naturally speed up, which we think is cool—it's only remixers who complain once they receive the tracks and have to painstakingly snap each beat to a grid.

MD: I've heard about the "guitar amp drumkit" approach you used on *Tonight*. How did that work?

Paul: That was producer Dan Carey's idea. On the Linn there's a separate output for each drum, so we'd take the signal from the kick, put it through a big speaker cabinet, and mike it up as if

it were an acoustic kick drum. Then we'd position another speaker as if it were a snare drum and mike that up, and so on. That way you get the sound of the air around the speakers as if it were an actual drumkit—but more powerful. We'd play huddled together really tight with the speakers among us.

MD: What gear are you using?

Paul: At the moment it's a combo of a clear Fibes and Slingerland kit I bought off a friend of mine last year. I tried to buy it from him before, but he refused to sell it. It's the best-sounding kit I've ever played. Reggae drummer and producer Sly Dunbar swears by them, and that's good enough for me! At the moment I'm not using any triggers, but we're currently trying to get the song "Lucid Dreams" together, which ends with a four-minute-plus electronic jam session. So that'll involve the MPC. I imagine playing a top hi-hat cymbal on top of my snare drum—just playing the bell. When you do that, you get a great industrial sheet-metal sound.

MD: Are you involved in the songwriting process?

Paul: Not in the songwriting—apart from the odd lyric brainstorming session. But I am involved in the arrangements.

MD: What are your favorite songs from *Tonight* to perform live?

Paul: Although "Turn It On" is probably the weakest tune on the album, it's a pure blinder live. And we all enjoy playing "Send Him Away," as there's a bit of unpredictability in there, lots of improvisation.

MD: What drew you to playing the drums?

Paul: When I started drumming I was a huge fan of a band called Jacob's Mouse. They had a singing drummer flanked by twins on guitar and bass. I think it was the symmetry that turned me on to them, and the novelty of a singing drummer. I used to mimic him with my hands on the arm of the sofa.



Web USA: www.myspace.com/turkishcymbals

New Turkish Logo

Web international: www.turkishcymbals.com

Turkish

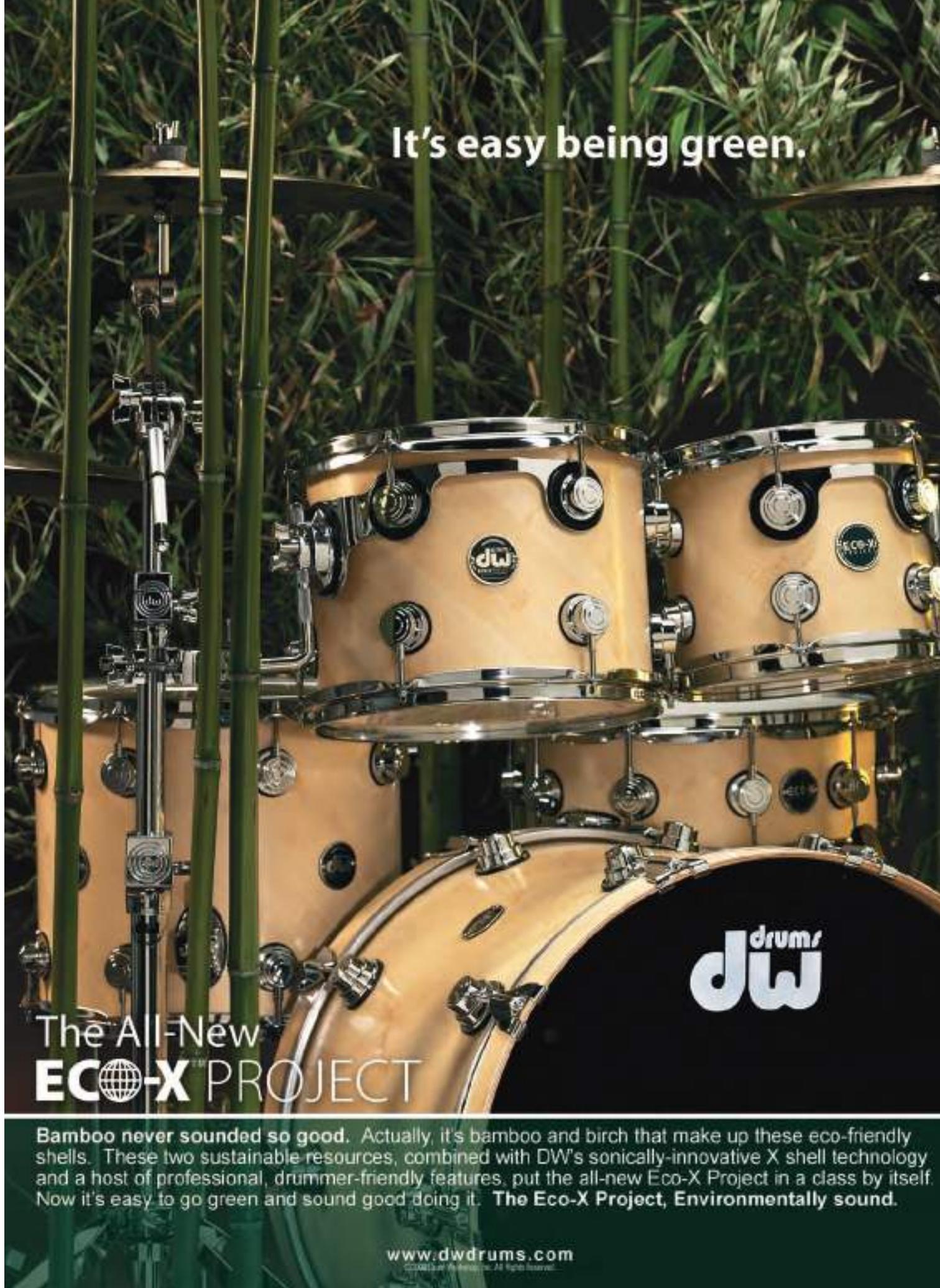
handmade cymbals from Turkey



ROCKBEAT RAW



HEAVIER WEIGHTS WITH EXTENSIVE HAND HAMMERING & A HIGHLY POLISHED SURFACE. DRY & POWERFUL



It's easy being green.

The All-New
ECO-X™ PROJECT

drums
dw

Bamboo never sounded so good. Actually, it's bamboo and birch that make up these eco-friendly shells. These two sustainable resources, combined with DW's sonically-innovative X shell technology and a host of professional, drummer-friendly features, put the all-new Eco-X Project in a class by itself. Now it's easy to go green and sound good doing it. **The Eco-X Project, Environmentally sound.**

www.dwdrums.com

©2012 DW Drums, Inc. All rights reserved.



DEATH CAB'S JASON MCGERR ON GETTING A BIG, PUNCHY KICK TONE

I have a 24" bass drum, but I can't get a good sound from it. What should I do to make the kick sound more punchy?

Matty C.

For an expert opinion on bass drum tones, we sent your question to Death Cab For Cutie drummer Jason McGerr. Jason owns the Seattle studio Two Sticks Audio and has spent a lot of time tweaking drums of all different sizes. He even recorded the drums for Death Cab's latest release, *Narrow Stairs*, at Two Sticks. Here's what the drummer/producer/engineer has to say about working with bass drums.

"I've used several bass drum sizes at different times throughout my career, including a 26". In the last year, though, I've been touring with a 14x24, and it's taken a fair amount of experimenting to get it to feel right. One theory I've had for a while is that with 20" and 22" bass drums the beater hits just above center, whereas with a 26" the beater strikes just below center. All of those sizes feel really great to me, but the 24" drum is tricky. Think about how it feels to play big drums, like timpani, with a stick or mallet in the middle of the head. It's usually pretty dead and dry, or even choked, thus affecting the sound. You get the same effect with a 24" bass drum if you set your beater at the most common height, since it ends up striking the

head dead center.

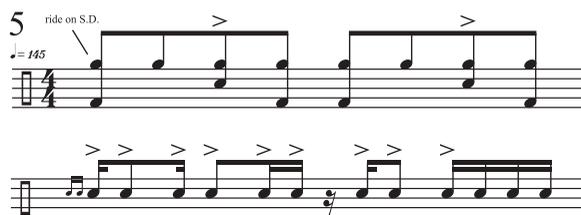
"I've tried several different drum-heads and kick mics, and I've gotten various tuning suggestions from front-of-house and recording engineers. I've also experimented with spring tension, beater angle, and even different densities of felt beaters. All my ideas were tested to the point of exhaustion, until I tried moving the beater height to an off-center striking zone (slightly above center works best for me). The head combination I finally settled on is a clear Remo Powerstroke 3 on the batter and a coated Ambassador on the resonant side. The resonant side is muffled with a 2" felt strip, and it has a 4" off-center hole. I also place a small towel inside the drum, on top of which I lay a Shure SM91 microphone. In addition to the SM91, I add a second mic pointed in the hole. This is usually a Beyer M 88 for live shows or an older AKG D12E when I'm in the studio.

"Ultimately you have to spend time with your drum, both from the drummer's perspective and in front of the kit while somebody else plays. It's also important to keep in mind that environmental acoustics are different on every stage and in every room, so don't expect a golden egg every time you crack it."

To check out Jason's studio, which houses an awesome collection of vintage and modern drums, visit twosticksaudio.com.

RIDING ON THE SNARE DRUM

I don't know what "riding on the snare drum" means. This phrase is used in the Style & Analysis section of the March cover story on Earl Palmer. At first I thought it meant striking the snare drum softly. But in the "Lucille" beat (page 61), the riding on the snare takes place simultaneously with hitting accents on the backbeats. Clay Shannon



The term *riding* simply refers to keeping time with a steady, repetitive pattern with one hand. When you play a basic rock beat, you're most often riding 8th notes on the hi-hats with the right hand (if you're right-handed) while accenting the backbeats with the left. In straight-ahead jazz, the time feel is propelled by riding on a cymbal with a dotted-8th/16th "spang, spang-a-lang" pattern. You can also ride on the floor tom (Marky Ramone does this to great effect on the intro to the Ramones song "Rock 'N' Roll High School"), or you can ride on the snare drum like Earl Palmer does on "Lucille." To execute that beat, play steady 8th notes with your strong hand while accenting beats 2 and 4 with your weaker hand.

continued on page 26

Great Audio begins with Audix.

Ask anyone who owns one.



Drum Essentials
AUDIX
MICROPHONES

For a dealer near you call Toll Free 800-966-8261

Ph 503-682-6933 Fax 503-682-7114

Also check out www.MySpace.com/AudixMicrophones

www.audixusa.com

A New Generation.

Mike Peters
Cancer Bats

Mapex introduces Meridian.



Mapex Meridian combines revolutionary styling with classic Mapex sonic performance. Available in maple or birch shells, Meridian comes in a variety of five and six-piece configurations.

Meridian drums feature newly designed appointments that not only look outstanding but deliver better-than-ever tone and resonance.

The Meridian Series comes in a wide range of beautiful lacquer and covered finishes and all include the all-new Mapex 700 Hardware Series.

Learn more at usa.mapexdrums.com or visit your nearest Mapex Retailer.



PERFORMANCE IS EVERYTHING™



MODERN DRUMMER'S 2009 READERS POLL RESULTS

HALL OF FAME MITCH MITCHELL

It's been a tough year for drum fans, with the loss of studio legend Earl Palmer, swing maestro Louie Bellson, and Jimi Hendrix Experience drummer Mitch Mitchell. Mitch has had an enormous influence on every drummer who's been weaned on classic rock, and the Experience continues to be the benchmark for adventurous heavy rock bands. So in many ways Mitchell's accomplishments are as pertinent now as they were forty years ago, when Hendrix tracks like "Manic Depression" and "Crosstown Traffic" helped usher in a new era of intense and sophisticated rock music.

ROCK TODD SUCHERMAN

A killer educational DVD, a triumphant performance at the 2008 MD Fest, a live Styx DVD, the cover of *MD*'s October '08 issue...yeah, it's no surprise you're all giving it up for Styx's super-shredder.

- 2. Neil Peart 3. Xavier Muriel
4. Daniel Adair 5. Chad Smith**

METAL LARS ULRICH

Metallica's *Death Magnetic* album marked a serious return to Lars and the group's thrash roots, and drummers absolutely noticed.

- 2. Tommy Clufetos 3. Chris Adler
4. Tomas Haake 5. Joey Jordison**

PUNK TRAVIS BARKER

There's no denying that surviving a horrific plane crash last year kept Travis in all drummers' hearts and minds. But word of the Blink-182 reunion got everyone thinking positively about the seven-time MD Poll winner's future, and his return to the world stage.

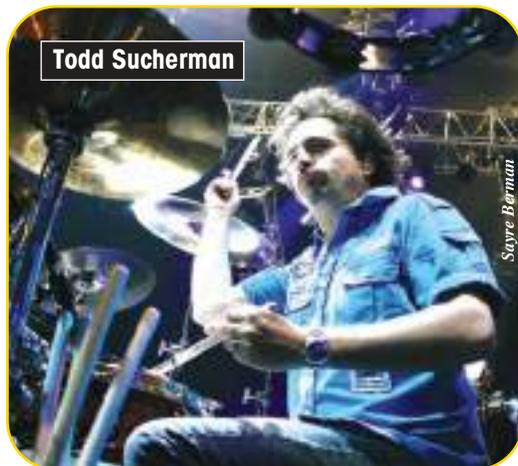
- 2. Tré Cool
3. Josh Freese
4. Pat Thetic
5. Brooks Wackerman**

Mitch Mitchell



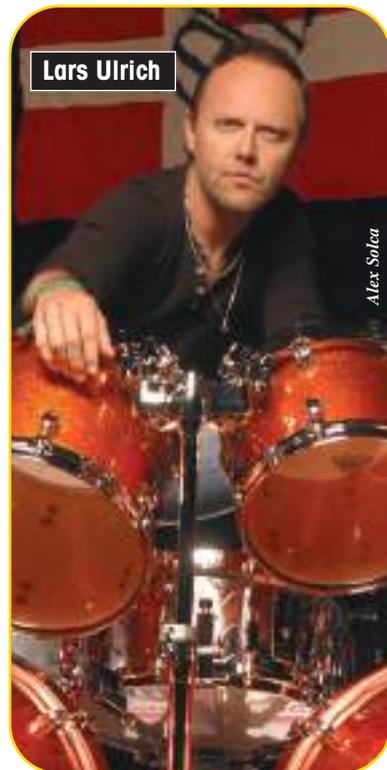
Rob Shanahan

Todd Sucherman



Sayre Berman

Lars Ulrich



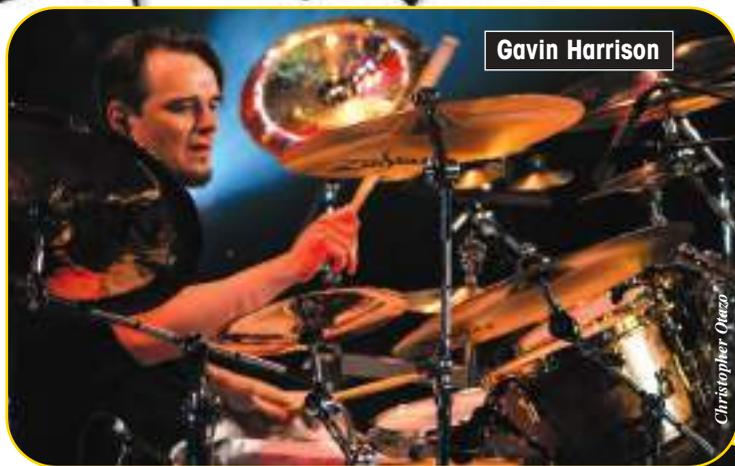
Alex Solter

Travis Barker



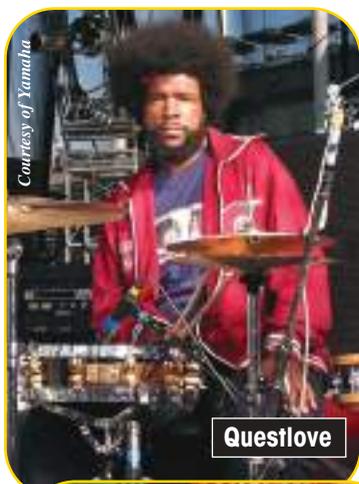
Robert Downs

We *MD* editors are never short on opinions about our favorite drummers. The *MD* Readers Poll represents *your* turn at the mic, though, and as usual, a whole lot of you jumped at the chance to wave the flag for your current faves. A big thanks to those who voted. Here are the results!



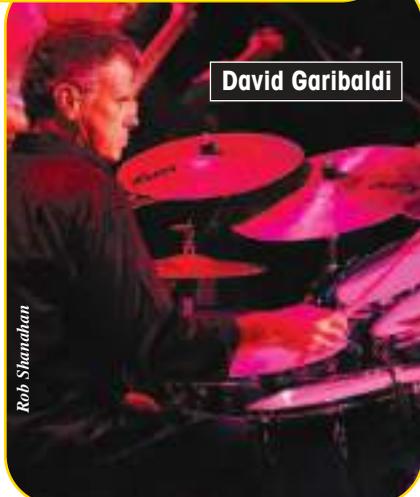
Gavin Harrison

Christopher Okazu



Courtesy of Yamaha

Questlove



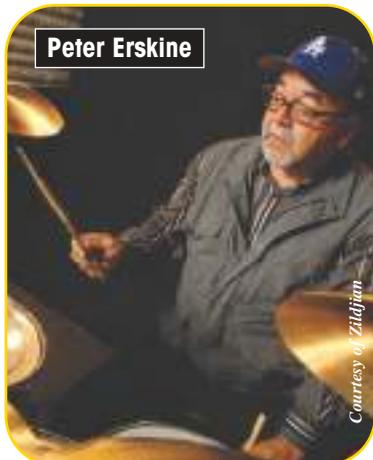
David Garibaldi

Rob Shanhahn



Brian Blade

Paul La Rosa



Peter Erskine

Courtesy of Zildjian

PROG

GAVIN HARRISON

This makes three years running for Harrison's appearance at the top of the Prog category. Like this year's Rock winner, Todd Sucherman, Gavin appeared on the cover of *MD* and at our Festival in 2008. He also joined King Crimson for a tour, all the while remaining a member of new-prog giants Porcupine Tree.

- 2. Mike Portnoy 3. Neil Peart**
4. Danny Carey 5. Thomas Pridgen

R&B/HIP-HOP

AHMIR "QUESTLOVE" THOMPSON

It's lucky seven for Quest, who's long been the R&B drummer *MD* readers love to love. With the Roots' house-band gig on *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon*, Questlove's enormous popularity is only likely to keep growing.

- 2. Aaron Spears 3. John Blackwell**
4. Teddy Campbell 5. Tony Royster Jr.

TRADITIONAL R&B/FUNK

DAVID GARIBALDI

Tower Of Power's Garibaldi is a certified genius of funk drumming, and as his *MD* articles prove, a hugely popular scholar on all things syncopated. Tower's back this year with a new album, though honestly, David is never off *MD* readers' radar.

- 2. Steve Jordan 3. Stanton Moore**
4. Terence Higgins 5. John Blackwell

TRADITIONAL JAZZ

PETER ERSKINE

Peter returns to the top of the Trad Jazz list this year, no doubt reflecting his continually sensitive and swinging approach with the Norrbotten Big Band, Diana Krall, and the Alan Pasqua, Dave Carpenter & Peter Erskine Trio, among others.

- 2. Jeff Hamilton 3. Bill Stewart**
4. Roy Haynes 5. Jack DeJohnette

CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

BRIAN BLADE

Blade is high on the rarefied list of jazz drummers who continuously push the art into the future without losing sight of the giants of the past. Check out last year's Readers Poll Results issue (July '08) for our cover story with Brian; it goes far to explain his enormous impact on today's players.

- 2. Jack DeJohnette 3. Antonio Sanchez**
4. Billy Hart 5. Jeff "Tain" Watts

POP

KEITH CARLOCK

Carlock is top of the Pops for the second year in a row. The MD Fest alum toured heavily with Steely Dan last year, slaying fans with his clever and commanding approach to some of the most sophisticated and beloved songs of the last thirty-five years.

- 2. Rodney Howard 3. Kenny Aronoff**
4. Carter Beauford 5. Vinnie Colaiuta

FUSION

KEITH CARLOCK

Pop winner...Fusion winner... Is there anything Keith Carlock *can't* do? For proof of his fuzoid prowess, go no further than Oz Noy's late-'07 album, *Fuzzy*.

- 2. Dave Weckl 3. Steve Smith**
4. Morgan Ågren 5. Vinnie Colaiuta

ALL-AROUND

KEITH CARLOCK

The space between pop and fusion can accommodate a whole world of musical styles. Seeing as Carlock cinched both those spots in this year's poll, it's no surprise you crowned him top All-Around drummer as well.

- 2. Vinnie Colaiuta 3. Steve Smith**
4. Dennis Chambers 5. Steve Gadd

WORLD

HORACIO "EL NEGRO" HERNANDEZ

Everyone's favorite world-fusion-jazz-rock drummer, Horacio appears at all points on the globe—seemingly at the same time—playing every kind of groove imaginable with simply remarkable facility and passion. A drummer for all seasons, and a gentleman to boot.

- 2. Dafnis Prieto 3. Trilok Gurtu**
4. Alex Acuña 5. Zakir Hussain

COUNTRY

DAVE McAFEE

Toby Keith simply doesn't put out albums that register less than multiplatinum numbers, and the man charged with bringing all those country hits to the stage is Dave McAfee. He's been out there doin' it for over twenty years; this is his first win in the MD Readers Poll.

- 2. Jim Riley 3. David Northrup**
4. Paul Leim 5. Tracy Broussard

STUDIO

VINNIE COLAIUTA

Four straight wins for Vinnie in the Studio category. George Duke, Glen Campbell, Chanté Moore, Michael McDonald, and Randy Jackson all called on the drummer to do his thing last year, and that's just the tip of the iceberg. Vinnie's remarkable career shows no signs of slowing.

- 2. Keith Carlock 3. Josh Freese**
4. Kenny Aronoff 5. Steve Jordan



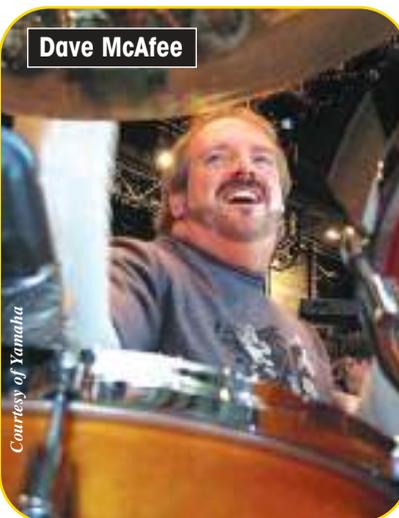
Keith Carlock

Rob Shanahan



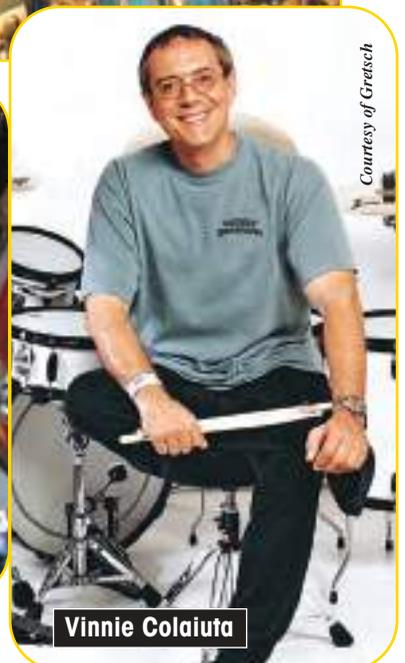
Horacio Hernandez

Paul La Reita



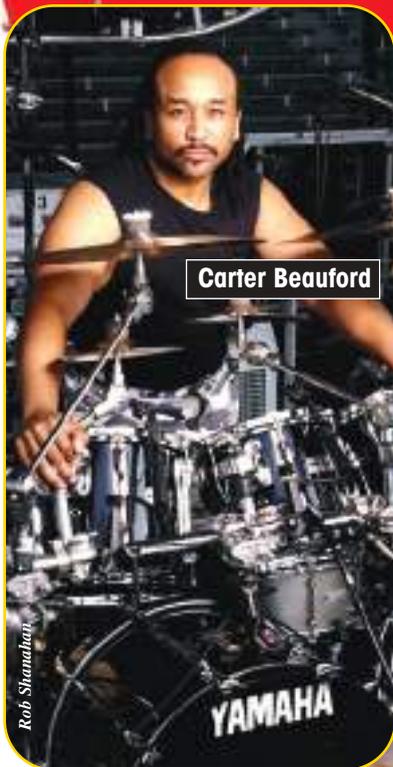
Dave McAfee

Courtesy of Yamaha



Vinnie Colaiuta

Courtesy of Gretsch



Carter Beauford

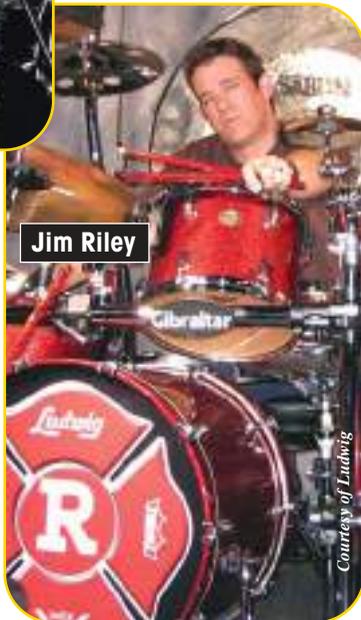


Rob Shanahan

Luis Conte



Tommy Bales



Jim Riley

Courtesy of Ludwig

JAM BAND

CARTER BEAUFORD

The new Dave Matthews Band album hadn't even appeared when the polls closed. No matter, jam fans far and wide never tire of proclaiming their allegiance to Carter's go-for-ittude.

- 2. Kris Myers
- 3. Stanton Moore
- 4. Billy Martin
- 5. Matt Abts/Jeff Sipe (tie)

PERCUSSIONIST

LUIS CONTE

Conte has one of the longest résumés in the biz, including everyone—and we mean *everyone*—from Eric Clapton, Madonna, Phil Collins, Christina Aguilera, and Elton John to Beck, Belinda Carlisle, OK Go, Queen Latifah, and Ozzy Osbourne.

- 2. Alex Acuña
- 3. Giovanni Hidalgo
- 4. Aaron Draper
- 5. Sheila E

UP & COMING

TOMMY BALES (FLYNNVILLE TRAIN)

Flynnville Train earned a whole mess of fans in the past couple of years opening for country superstar Toby Keith, whose Show Dog Nashville label signed the band in 2006. Bales clearly left an impression on everyone who saw him slam it down.

- 2. Jason Sutter (Chris Cornell)
- 3. Pete Wilhoit (Fiction Plane)
- 4. Blake Dixon (Saving Abel)
- 5. Steven Spence (Black Tide)

CLINICIAN

JIM RILEY

Rascal Flatts is famous for their constant stream of country hits and extravagant arena concerts. Longtime drummer Riley has taken that exposure and parlayed it into a part-time career as a top drum clinician. No doubt next year's crop of country-drumming up-and-comers will be that much better off for having attended one of Jim's popular appearances.

- 2. David Northrup
- 3. Todd Sucherman
- 4. Steve Smith
- 5. Jojo Mayer

METHOD BOOK

DAVID STANOCH: MASTERING THE TABLES OF TIME

- 2. Rich Lackowski: On The Beaten Path: Progressive Rock
- 3. Tommy Igoe: Groove Essentials 2.0
- 4. Steve Fidyk: Inside The Big Band Drum Chart
- 5. Pete Lockett: Indian Rhythms For Drumset

EDUCATIONAL DVD

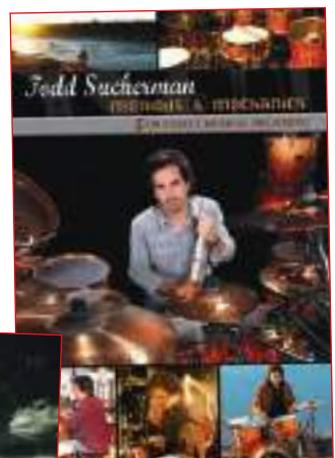
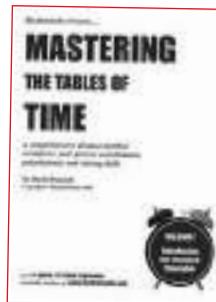
TODD SUCHERMAN: METHODS AND MECHANICS

- 2. Tommy Igoe: Groove Essentials 2.0
- 3. Steve Smith: Drum Legacy: Standing On The Shoulders Of Giants
- 4. Jason Bittner: What Drives The Beat
- 5. Brain: Has Made The Worst Drum Instructional DVD Ever

RECORDED PERFORMANCE

JOEY JORDISON: SLIPKNOT, "ALL HOPE IS GONE"

- 2. Todd Sucherman: Styx, "One With Everything"
- 3. Keith Carlock: Walter Becker, "Circus Money"
- 4. Thomas Pridgen: The Mars Volta, "Wax Simulacra"
- 5. Tomas Haake: Meshuggah, "Bleed"





mitch mitchell jimmi hendrix experience
HALL OF FAME

ZILDJIAN ARTISTS MADE **A LOT OF NO** IN THIS YEAR'S MD READERS

brian blade
the fellowship band
**#1 CONTEMPORARY
JAZZ**

?uestlovetheroots
**#1 R&B/
HIP-HOP**

keith carlocksteely dan
**#1 ALL AROUND
#1 FUSION
#1 POP**

travis barkerblink-182
#1 PUNK

caster beauford
#1 JAM BAND

peter erskinerecording artist
**#1 TRADITIONAL
JAZZ**

luis contejames taylor
#1 PERCUSSIONIST

lars ulrichmetallica
#1 METAL

vinnie colaiutarecording artist
#1 STUDIO

gavin harrisonporcupine tree
#1 PROG

horacio "el negro" hernandezindependent
**#1 WORLD
MUSIC**

**ISE
POLL**

Zildjian

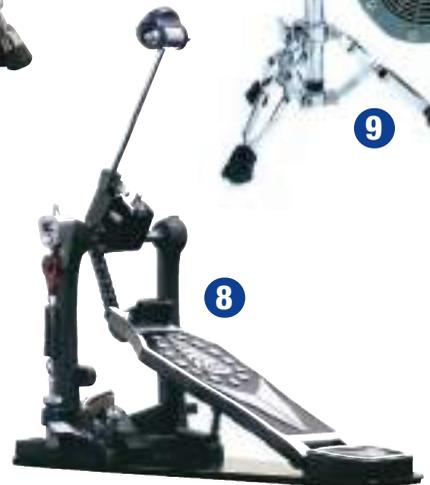
SINCE • 1623

zildjian.com

©2009 Zildjian Company

NEW AND NOTABLE

Specialty snares, flashy congas, and a vibrating metronome are just a sampling of **this month's most interesting product releases.**





10

1. MAPEX's 5 1/2x14 Black Panther special edition elm snare drum features a 6.1 mm maple shell with an exterior ply of hand-selected elm that's finished in a high-gloss clear lacquer. The drum also has a 3.4 mm walnut sound ring at the top and bottom edge of the shell. These rings are claimed to add roundness and darkness to the drum's tone. (\$744.99)

The 5 1/2x14 special edition Black Panther Mayan-themed snare drum has a steel shell embossed with eagle/human mask art. The shell's bearing edge is rounded on the batter side for greater head-to-shell contact. (\$623.99)
mapexdrums.com



11

2. SKB's Cymbal Safe is designed to provide extra protection for cymbals stored in gig bags. This highly durable case is rotationally molded from Linear Low Density Polyethylene (LLDPE), and it has a D-shaped design with molded-in feet so it can stand upright. The Cymbal Safe also includes a padded interior for added protection.
skbcases.com

3. HAMILTON STANDS' low-mass, lightweight KB225 and KB245 cymbal stands are endorsed by jazz masters Jeff Hamilton and Lewis Nash. These stands, which weigh about 20 percent less than traditional stands of similar size, feature internally dampened tubes to eliminate rattling. The small, flat-base KB225 sells for \$65; the KB245, which has a large A-shaped base, goes for \$85.
hamiltonstands.com

4. GROOVE JUICE Stick Grip is an aerosol spray that creates a tacky feel on drumsticks. Once the invisible formula dries on the stick, it doesn't come off on the hands. One four-ounce can is good for seventy-five to eighty applications. (\$13.95)
groove@myexcel.com

5. PEARL has released a limited run of thirty four-piece mahogany shell packs. These high-end drums feature 4-ply African mahogany shells with maple reinforcement rings. This combination of woods was chosen to create the warm, dark, vintage-sounding tone that many drummers are after. Sizes include an 18x22 bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12 toms, and a 16x16 floor tom. (\$3,399)
pearldrums.com

6. BRADY's Kosaka bamboo block snare drum has been created to honor the memory of Tat Kosaka, longtime president of Pro-Mark Japan and a friend of Chris Brady of Brady Drums. The drum is available in 4 1/2x14, 5 1/2x14, and 6 1/2x14 versions and is said to have a loud and cutting sound without being too abrasive.
bradydrums.com.au

7. The BODYBEAT metronome produces a pulsing vibration to delineate the chosen tempo. (\$129)
bodybeat.net

8. TAYE's affordable PSK701C single pedal (\$159) and PSK702C double pedal (\$349) have texture-coated frames, a sleek new spring assembly, an adjustable stabilizer plate, and adjustable connecting rods.
tayedrums.com

9. MOON MICS makes a large-diaphragm microphone for bass drums. This microphone specializes in capturing low frequencies that many other mics can't pick up. Drummers will appreciate the extra "boom" the mic adds to a bass drum sound when placed close to the resonant head. Each mic is available with a Pearl stand. (\$630)
moonmics.com

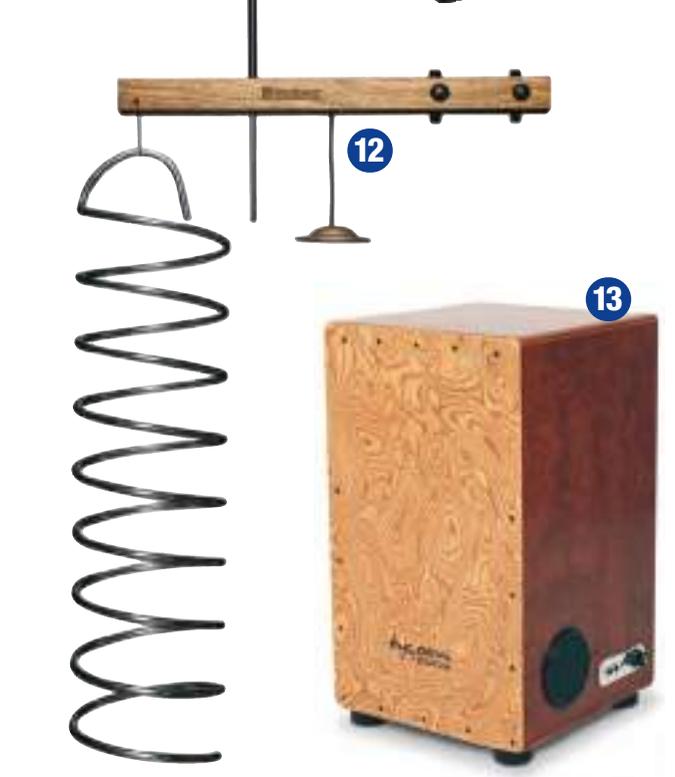
10. In response to drummers' requests for larger cymbals, TRX has added a 21" crash/ride to the LTD series. Models in this line feature a multi-finish surface consisting of a natural bell, a lathed and hammered bow, and a polished edge. (\$474)
trxcymbals.com

11. MEINL's Marathon Designer series congas make a huge visual impact. These drums are constructed from rubberwood and come in striking appliqué finishes, including "island sunset," "calypso night," "mega star," and "vintage racer." (Quinto, \$460; conga, \$480; tumba, \$500)
meinlpercussion.com

12. The TREWORKS SpringTree is created by spinning an eleven-foot 1/4" solid aluminum/titanium alloy rod into a 19" round spring. This design allows the SpringTree to be played with a triangle beater using long vertical sweeps, direct strikes, or muted strikes (much like muting a triangle with your hand). The included TRE53 mount allows the SpringTree to be clamped to any cymbal stand. Each SpringTree also comes with a stainless steel triangle beater and sand-cast bronze finger cymbal. (\$116)
treworkschimes.com

13. TYCOON has created a modern cajon design called the e-Cajon, which comes with a built-in pickup, amplifier, and speaker. Two models are available: Siam oak and makah burl with bubinga.
tycoonpercussion.com

14. The DRUMMERSLEASH is a drumstick grip that slips around a finger and a drumstick, allowing drummers to spin sticks without the risk of dropping one. (\$24.95)
drummersleash.com



12

13



14



CANOPUS

NEO-VINTAGE NV60-M2 KIT by David Ciauro

Through hand-me-downs and happenstance, I've been married to one brand of drumset for my twenty-eight years of playing. But I must confess that over the past few months I've been cheating on that brand with numerous exotic others...and loving every minute of it.

My latest affair has been with a four-piece white marine pearl Canopus Neo-Vintage NV60-M2 kit. Canopus drums are high-end custom pieces produced in Tokyo, and they're designed to replicate (naturally) different drum sounds that are captured in the recording studio. NV60-M2 kits are made to emulate the rock drum sounds first made famous in the '60s. They're meant to be played in their natural state, with no added studio magic, front-of-house wizardry, or even muffling.

THE BEARING EDGE OF REASON

The shells of the M2 kit are made of 3-ply mahogany and poplar with maple reinforcements and 1.6 mm pressed hoops, which help to home in on the vintage vibe. Canopus theorizes that overtones are controlled naturally within the shell when bearing edges are shaped precisely, thus eliminating the need for external muffling on the drumhead,

"true" drum sound. The same can be said of the toms. Both had a wide tuning spectrum that unleashed a variety of darker tonal colors with a vicious bite.

Depending on personal taste, some external muffling for the toms and internal muffling for the kick might best suit your sound. But to me, dampening would take away from these drums' natural characteristics, which I think makes the kit quite special. Too much muffling would certainly defeat the purpose of the intended use and design of these drums. Even wide open, their responsiveness made me feel very much in control of their vast tonal and dynamic possibilities.

The snare drum was crisp and sensitive and embodied vintage tonal qualities. Although it had a wood shell, the drum possessed some characteristics of a metal Ludwig Supra-Phonic. Even with the snares fairly loose, stick response was excellent, making for fat backbeats without sacrificing tone. When tightened up, the drum clearly articulated even the subtlest ghost notes.

ON THE JOB

I used the M2 kit on two gigs. Despite the fact that most sound engineers don't like to mike bass drums without ports,

I wanted to replicate the conditions of the past, so I kept the front head solid. I did roll up a towel and place it against the inside batter head to take away a touch of the boom, not out of necessity, but more to fit the material I was playing both nights. I left the toms and snare wide open.

The first gig was at a club with a large open room that housed a massive PA system. The second gig was in a bar, but the band was still miked up through a PA with subwoofers. In

VINTAGE VIBE, MODERN DESIGN

Vintage drums are very much in fashion right now and are coveted as much for their aesthetics as their sound. But these sometimes-quirky old models can have many drawbacks, due to a lack of design technology in the past. Vintage kits can be a chore to tune and often have a limited tuning range. Canopus, though, has succeeded in developing new drums that capture a vintage rock sound while also expanding the sweet-spot tuning zone by meticulously shaping the shells' bearing edges.

which ultimately sacrifices tone by reducing the amount of natural vibration.

Our review drumset comprised a 14x22 bass drum (\$2,140), a 9x13 tom (\$1,111), a 16x16 floor tom (\$1,592), and a 5x14 snare (\$1,100), all equipped with coated single-ply batter and resonant heads. Hearing the kit in its natural form was impressive. Each drum was sensitive and multi-textural and provided full resonant tones with excellent attack and a pleasing amount of sustain. The individual drums complemented one another perfectly.

RINGING TRUE

To best test Canopus's claims that precise shell construction produces naturally "dialed in" tones, I turned my attention to the bass drum, which had neither a port nor internal muffling. The drum was incredibly sensitive at all dynamic ranges. Even the softest of beater strokes was articulated clearly, and laying into the head provided a fat foundation that any groovesmith would appreciate.

The sound of bass drums has become synonymous with terms such as *punch* and *click*, but in this case *presence* and *tone* are much more fitting. This kick merged attack and resonance into a fully developed tone with powerful definition and no annoying overtones—what I refer to as a

both settings, the kit drove the band but never overpowered the stage volume. The snare was crystal clear, the toms cut through, and the kick had a great balance of tone and distinguishable boom.

OVERALL APPEAL

The name of this kit, Neo-Vintage, says it all: new technology meets vintage sound. The drums don't require any muffling and are very easy to tune in a variety of ways, all of which sound great individually and as a whole. My only complaint is with the hardware. The chrome-plated solid-brass tube lugs are said to improve "vibration transmissibility," but I felt the lugs and hardware were of lesser quality than the shells. When tuned to a medium-loose tension, the drums detuned (perhaps the result of the lugs' vibration transmissibility), which I didn't expect from high-end models; it seemed to contradict the amount of thought and effort placed on the shell technology. Regardless of my thoughts on the hardware, though, these are great-sounding professional drums that are ideal for anyone looking for a modern kit that captures that classic vibe of the glory days of rock 'n' roll.

canopusdrums.com





SABIAN

ARTISAN VAULT ADDITIONS AND RADIA NANO HI-HATS

by Anthony Riscica



When you pull Vault Artisan cymbals out of their individual velvet-lined bags, it's clear they're all about craftsmanship.

The top surface of each cymbal has been meticulously hand hammered and shows dozens of small dimple marks. Sabian calls this "traditional high-density hand hammering." The top and bottom surfaces are also hammered with bigger, nickel-size dimples. The entire cymbal is hand lathed, then

quantity is made each year. We received all the latest models—16" and 18" crashes and 13", 14", and 15" hi-hats. (The rides debuted a couple years ago.) Here's how they stacked up.

ARTISAN CRASHES

The 16" and 18" crashes played and sounded exactly as described on Sabian's Web site. They were warm and complex and opened up sonically with the lightest of taps, making them extremely expressive. The low end was very rich, and there was a definite drop-off of higher frequencies as the cymbal sustained. Due to the minimal high end and relatively thin body of the cymbals, they may not be good at cutting through at

extremely high volumes. But they weren't made to be smacked on stage at a punk show (although, of course, there are no rules).

As is usually the case with cymbals that open up easily, Artisan crashes got out of the way quickly too. While the initial crash sound was wide and full, it dissipated rapidly, leaving a dark, somewhat trashy fundamental tone for most of the sustain.

Both sizes performed beautifully when I used them to supplement my two rides on jazz trio gigs. You don't need to hit these crashes hard to coax out their sound, which makes

them excellent for this type of performance. I also used them for a funk session, and they fit the bill there as well. Their controlled volume and complex sound opened up for just the right amount of time before hiding away until the next hit.

ARTISAN HI-HATS

Even when you jump from the 13" to the 15" models, the Artisan hi-hats feel consistent, while the sound difference is what you would expect going from smaller to larger hi-hats. I used the 13", 14", and 15" pairs on the same jazz gig and found them all appropriate, depending on the sound I was going for. The 13" set was tight, but without too much "chick." When played loosely, they had a nice dark, shimmering (not shimmering) wash that was easy to control. I found the pair to be surprisingly warm for their smaller size, even though the medium/heavy weight might lead you to think they'd sound brighter. I also used these hats on a funk session, and they were ideal. Their volume was easy to control, and the stick sound was dark and articulate. The open-to-closed "bark" sound was sharp, helping to make everything else I played sound even tighter and more groovy.

The 14" and 15" pairs had qualities similar to the 13" models, but with a wider range of sounds. The 14" set was great all around and was definitely the most versatile. They fit best in a jazz situation, with a nice foot "chick," a smooth stick sound, and a nonabrasive wash.

The 15" hats were the most rockin'. Even

AT FIRST GLANCE

Sabian describes the Vault line as a "collection" of cymbals and sounds, not a series. This means Vault contains a wide variety of designs, looks, price points, and tones. The Vault Artisan and Vault Radia models in this review are prime examples of just how different the elements of the collection really are.

numbered and signed on the inside of the bell by the specialist who approved the cymbal after it was aged in the Sabian vault. You can tell each one of these beauties was somebody's pet project, which makes the playing experience that much more personal.

The cymbals are made by Sabian's top artisans, hence the name. These craftsmen combine traditional techniques (hand hammering) and modern design innovations (jumbo dimpling) to produce one-of-a-kind cymbals that sound warm, dark, and tonally complex. Each Artisan model is numbered, and only a limited

the smallest amount of looseness between the cymbals created a huge, and highly palatable, washy sound. These beautiful-sounding cymbals were just as warm and responsive as the other sizes but with more volume and deeper, darker frequencies.

RADIA NANO HI-HATS

Designed for prog/fusion legend Terry Bozzio, Vault Radia Nano hats are small (7" or 9") and possess the same rustic qualities as the rest of the distinctive Radia line. The finish is unlathed, with a raw metal bell and edge and brushed metal on most of the bow of the cymbal. The top cymbal in each pair is the normal shape, while the bottom is flat. These tiny hi-hats are surprisingly heavy for their size, and they produced clear, precise bell tones when hit individually, especially the flat bottom cymbals.

When I arranged the 7" hats on my hi-hat stand, they wouldn't quite close all the way. Because of the hats' small size and flat bottom, the clutch hit the bottom cymbal before the pair was completely closed. I didn't have this problem with the 9" Nano hats, however. But if you plan to set the 7" pair on a standard hi-hat stand, you should test them before you

make the purchase. In my case, I had to get a new clutch with a slimmer design.

Because they wouldn't close on my hi-hat stand, I tried the 7" set in a fixed position on a cymbal stand, which worked fine. With this setup, I was able to loosen or tighten the tension between the cymbals using the stand's wing nut. The tiny plates had a cool sound. When held together tightly, they produced a sharp, defined attack with absolutely no sustain. I preferred loosening the wing nut tension a little so I could get some sizzle out of the cymbals. But even then they still had very little sustain. I could imagine using this sound in electronic music, where special-effects hi-hat sounds are appropriate.

In my opinion, the 9" Nano hats were more useful. They had a similar overall sound to the 7" pair, but with more depth. I can see using these in a fixed position on the ride cymbal side of my kit for some gigs. They were fun to



play on a hi-hat stand too—the foot “chick” was nicely pronounced—but they were limited in what they could do. Again, I preferred the “swoosh” sound they produced when held together loosely.

Obviously, these tiny hi-hat cymbals are in the “specialty” category, and they aren't very versatile. But they do have a particular sound that could be useful when the music calls for a little something different.

sabian.com



Stanton Moore

“Traditional R&B / Funk”, “Jam Band”



Vinnie Colaluta

“Pop”, “Fusion”, “All Around”, “Studio”



Bill Stewart

“Traditional Jazz”



David Northrup

“Country”, “Clinician”



REMO

VINTAGE EMPEROR HEADS

by Michael Dawson

To help drummers get closer to the coveted rock sounds of the late '60s and early '70s, Remo has recently reintroduced its original coated Emperor design, now known as the Vintage Emperor. The difference between these new heads and the standard version is that Vintage Emperors are made with two plies of 7.5 mil polyester film. Regular Emperors are slightly thinner, using two 7 mil plies. In addition to offering extra durability, the added thickness of the Vintage Emperors is claimed to create a more focused sound with pronounced mid and low frequencies. We tested these heads on the batter side of 10", 12", 14", and 16" Premier Signia maple toms, which have slightly rounded edges and reinforcing rings, as well as on a modern-designed 7x14 bubinga snare featuring sharp 45° bearing edges and die-cast hoops. Here's how they sounded.

TIGHT BUT ROUND FUSION SOUND

Rather than trying out the Vintage Emperor heads with all four toms tuned relative to one another, we decided to set up the drums in two different kits to test the heads' versatility. The 10" and 14" toms were used in a compact "fusion" kit with a 20" bass drum, while the 12" and 16" toms were used with an old 24" Ludwig kick to create a classic rock/studio setup.

For the fusion set, we went for as much pitch spread between the toms as possible. The 10" was tuned just below the point of choking, while the 14" was tensioned just above the point of wrinkling. Even when spread out this far, the toms sounded cohesive. The 10" was articulate yet full, and the 14" floor tom had a lot of punch



tom didn't produce those sharp, biting overtones that higher tunings sometimes create with single-ply heads.

NO MUFFLING REQUIRED

My goal on the larger rock/studio setup was to create warm, round tom sounds similar to those of studio great Matt Chamberlain. When using other heads on these toms—including single-ply coated Ambassadors and regular clear Emperors—I've had to use tape or muffling rings to get a vintage-style vibe. But the Vintage

attack was wide and punchy, the resonance was round and complex (but not too pitchy), and the decay was short but smooth and even. With the Vintage Emperor heads, the toms sounded perfect for singer-songwriter sessions or for Raconteurs-type garage rock.

CRANK IT UP

I have a 7x14 bubinga snare with die-cast hoops, which has a great popping sound when tuned tightly. With almost every head I've tried, however, there's a definite threshold—usually below where I want it to be—where the drum loses body and starts to sound thin and harsh. When I threw a Vintage Emperor on this drum, I felt I'd finally found a head that could be tightened way up while retaining a sense of fullness. As with the toms, I didn't need any muffling in order to bring out those meaty low frequencies.

OVERALL IMPACT

Although they're designed to replicate classic rock drum sounds, the Vintage Emperor heads are much more all-purpose than that. Jazz drummers will appreciate the heads' ability to be tuned tightly without sounding choked and thin, R&B/fusion drummers will love their articulate yet round tone (especially on smaller toms), and studio/rock drummers will really appreciate the punch and pronounced low end that the heads produce naturally. Even though I've never been a big fan of 2-ply heads (coated single-ply heads have been my go-to models for years), the Vintage Emperors have made a lasting impression on me. And they'll probably do the same for you.

remo.com

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE HEADS

When drummers, producers, and engineers talk about getting "vintage" drum sounds, they often reference decades-old Gretsch, Rogers, Ludwig, or Slingerland drums and crusty K Zildjian cymbals. But one of the most crucial components to any drum sound—the drumheads—is often overlooked. Even if you have a great Gretsch kit from the '50s, you're never going to be able to replicate warm and open Blue Note-style jazz tones using thick plastic drumheads covered in tissues and duct tape. Those sounds were produced using calfskin heads. Likewise, if you're trying to achieve the huge, thumping sound of rock gods John Bonham and Carmine Appice or the fat, punchy vibe Don Brewer got with Grand Funk Railroad, clear single-ply heads aren't going to cut it. Those legendary tones were often produced using Remo's original 2-ply coated Emperors. The Vintage Emperor series is a throwback to that classic head design.

while maintaining a pure tone, both of which reminded me of Jojo Mayer's tom sound. With the Vintage Emperor heads tuned this way, I could shift from melodic bebop-style solos to jabbing single-stroke fills, and the drums responded appropriately. I especially liked how the tight 10"

Emperors gave me that sound right away, proving that their name is much more than marketing hype.

When tuned low to medium-low, these heads took on an "aged" quality that made the ten-year-old Premier toms sound much older. The



ISTANBUL MEHMET

MIKAEL Z AND MEHMET TAMDEGER TRIBUTE RIDES

by Anthony Riscica

Istanbul Mehmet's two new rides are tributes to men who helped shape the Turkish cymbal-making tradition, and the rides were created using the same classic techniques that these men helped to keep alive. We received four of each cymbal, in 20" and 22" sizes, both with and without rivets.

MIKAEL Z RIDES

The first cymbal I put on the stand was the 20" Mikael Z tribute without rivets. At first strike I knew I was in for something special. The cymbal

sound we all love. I can honestly say that quality is the only thing this cymbal lacked. But you can hear the classic sound simmering under the surface, waiting to be aged to perfection.

The feel of the Mikael Z cymbal was what I like in a jazz ride: soft enough to absorb some of the impact from the stick, but alive enough to throw the stick back when playing more up-tempo material. This response was a little different on the 22", however. The bigger size softened up the feel and produced more wash and overtones. To be honest, it was a little overwhelming, to the

bow, while the bell and underside are completely lathed. The thinner weight gives this cymbal a softer feel, a slightly darker sound, and more wash than the Mikael Zs. I used these cymbals more as crash/rides. I did use them as a standard ride on slower or softer tunes where the sound had a chance to disperse after each hit. As crashes, the cymbals worked great for accents; they offered a dark and complex sound when hit with the shoulder of the stick. Again, the un-riveted 20" is the cymbal I would choose from this line. The larger diameter of the 22" exaggerated the thinness of the cymbal, making it hard to use in some situations.

A HISTORY-RICH TRIBUTE

The tale behind the two men that Istanbul Mehmet is paying tribute to with these new rides is directly connected to the most prolific cymbal legacy in the world. Mikael Zilcan, also spelled Zildjian, is the grandson of Kerope Zilcan, who inspired the legendary K Zildjian series name. Mikael was trained by his grandfather in the art of cymbal making and continued to teach the techniques that have been used in Turkey for over 800 years. At the K Zildjian factory in Turkey, Mikael had an apprentice named Mehmet Tamdeger. Mehmet, along with Agop Tomurcuk, eventually established the Istanbul cymbal company. When Agop passed away in 1997, Istanbul split into the two companies we have today, Istanbul Mehmet and Istanbul Agop.

released a virtual rainbow of sound produced by cascading overtones. While some cymbals can have too many overtones for the ear to handle, Istanbul Mehmet has done a fine job of meshing all the colors into a beautiful sound. I imagine my experience was similar to what it was like playing a new K Zildjian for the first time in the '70s. I later learned that this was exactly what the company had in mind when making the cymbal.

The only problem you might have with this ride is that it's *new*. Most classic K models have that great sound because they've been around for at least twenty years. When a cymbal ages, the metal alloy releases tension, which changes the timbre. That, combined with the grit that accumulates on a cymbal's surface, creates the aged

point where the articulation of the cymbal was getting covered up by the sustain. This was even more of a problem when I played the riveted 22" model. The sizzle of the rivets combined with the wash of the cymbal was so great that I had to use a lighter stroke so the attack could be heard. You could counter the wash with some dampening on the cymbal, such as a strategically placed Moongel or a piece of duct tape. The 20" ride with rivets was more bearable than the riveted 22", but I still preferred both cymbals sans rivets.

MEHMET TAMDEGER RIDES

The Mehmet Tamdeger tribute ride is a slightly different cymbal. The overall weight is a little bit lighter. The top of the cymbal sports a raw/lathed

RING THEM BELLS?

The bell sound on both tribute rides was decent. The bells themselves were a bit small and soft, especially on the 22" versions, which made their sound less articulate than you'd get with a larger bell. I tried using the 22" bells for some 6/8 Afro-Cuban grooves, and they didn't cut the way I wanted, even on a jazz gig. The bell of the 20" cymbals was more proportioned to the size, so they sounded better in my opinion.

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Even given their minor weaknesses—which I found mainly with the 22" models—these new tribute rides are high-quality cymbals with a unique yet classic sound. Are they old Ks? No. Are they some of the closest replications I've ever heard? Yes. As with all handmade cymbals, you'll have to hear them to know if they're for you or not. Of the eight I tested, three or four could easily work their way into my bag. Overall, I think Istanbul Mehmet has done a great job—as the company usually does—in providing us with another option in the world of jazz rides, while also paying special tribute to two master cymbal makers.

istanbulmehmet.com

To hear a selection of the products reviewed this month, go to the Multimedia page at modern drummer.com.



Building A Small Stage-Monitoring System

PART 2: MIXERS AND MONITORS

by John Emrich

Last month we discussed basic starting points for reinforcing your live drum sound by adding microphones to your setup. Now let's look at the rest of the tools you'll need to sound your best at your next gig.

BACK TO THE MIXER

Once you've found the appropriate microphones and placed them properly around your kit, you'll plug the XLR mic cables into the channels of your mixer. A common configuration for four mics is to put the bass drum in channel 1, the snare in channel 2, the left overhead in channel 3, and the right overhead in channel 4. If your setup includes electronic instruments (a drum machine or sampler, for instance), plug them into the mixer's stereo inputs.

Once everything is connected, it's time to set your signal levels. Many

mixers have a pre-fader listen switch, commonly referred to as a PFL. When you engage this switch, the input signal goes directly to the output of the mixer. This allows you to look at the meters on the mixer to set the proper gain adjustment for each channel. You'll adjust the level of a given signal by turning the input gain knob (not the channel's fader) at the top of the mixer channel that you're working with. The ideal level will change depending on the mixer you're using, but in most cases you should aim for the zero mark, or just below.

Most mixers have lights that go from green (at the lower levels) to red. If a red light comes on, your signal is clipping (distorting), or getting close. To avoid this, make sure your loudest hits don't overdrive the channel. If, say, rimshots on the snare produce a red

signal, then back off the trim a bit. Once you've found a good level, bring down the trim a little more; quite often we get caught up in the emotion and excitement of the music and play louder than we did while testing levels. After all of the mics and instruments are set, you can start mixing the levels to taste using the individual channel faders, and you can add any EQ or effects that you feel will enhance your sound.

If possible, try using a mixer with four busses. (A buss is basically a path in which you can route one or more audio signals to a particular destination.) Four-buss mixers allow you to control the mix of your mics and instruments while also monitoring signals from the rest of your band, without sending the monitor signals back to your main sound system. To do this, select all four busses for the channels that have your drums and electronics. Most mixers have switches for 1&2 and 3&4; enabling both buttons sends your signals to all four busses. Next, assign to buss 3&4 the channels you're using for your monitor mix. To make sure that your drums and electronics alone—and not the monitor mix—get sent to the sound system, connect cables only to the outputs for buss 1&2. For your own monitoring, you'll want to listen to buss



This portable rig, which packs into an SKB roll-away case about the size of a snare drum, includes a four-buss Mackie Onyx 1220 mixer (1), a Shure Beta 52 bass drum mic (2), a Tefunken M80 snare mic (3), a pair of NevaTon MC49 overhead mics (4), a Shure P4 wired in-ear monitor pack (5), and a pair of Sensaphonics earbuds (6).



Mackie's 1604-VLZ3 mixer has sixteen individual channels, plus four busses for routing your mix to your monitors and the house PA.

3&4, which includes a combination of your signals and the monitor mix you got from your main sound system.

To summarize: With a four-buss mixer, buss 1&2 should contain only your signals, while buss 3&4 should include a combination of your signals and the monitor signals you get from your main sound system. Buss 1&2 goes out to the PA; buss 3&4 is for your monitors.

HEARING THE RESULTS

To get the best sound you can, it's important to keep your stage volume at the lowest level possible. If the main sound system has to compete with the sounds coming from the stage, it's almost impossible to create a good mix for the audience.

One way to keep stage volume under control is to use in-ear monitoring systems, which can involve a simple set of headphones or molded earbuds that are customized to fit in your ears. Companies like Shure and Sennheiser make a wide variety of pre-sized buds that will fit comfortably in most people's ears. For drummers, dual-zone earbuds that have separate drivers for low and high frequencies, like the Shure E5, will provide the best results. For more high-end options, look into companies such as Westone and Sensaphonics, which build custom-molded earpieces. They're considerably more expensive, but the isolation and sound quality are top notch.

One common complaint about in-ears is that they can make you feel somewhat isolated from the rest of your band, mainly because the earbuds cut off most of the live stage sounds you're used to hearing when you play without monitors. To add a little of that live ambience to your monitor mix, try placing a single mic in front of your drumset, pointed at the front of the stage. This mic should be routed to buss 3&4 so that you're the only one hearing it.

If you must add an open-air stage monitor like a floor wedge speaker, there are a few things to keep in mind. If you're using it just as a personal monitor, keep it from pointing forward so that your audience doesn't hear what's coming out of it. And keep the speaker from pointing back into your drum mics so it

doesn't bleed into your mix.

All speaker manufacturers offer cabinets that are designed for stage monitoring. Mackie, JBL, and EV have great options at reasonable prices. Self-powered versions are ideal because they negate the need for an additional power amplifier. But the most important thing to look out for is the size of the low-frequency driver. Most monitors that are 12" or smaller won't be able to produce enough low end. Instead, go with a 15" two-way speaker, which will offer the low-end response that's necessary for a good drum sound.

Some drummers even choose to use subwoofers for monitors. But the problem there is that subwoofer cabinets aren't directional; they radiate low frequencies throughout the room in all directions. Because low frequencies are the hardest to control, having a subwoofer monitor on stage can lead to a muddy overall sound with a lot of low-end rumble. A 15" loudspeaker will provide the low frequencies you need, but in a package that's much easier to control.

WRAPPING UP

Much of today's music requires that drummers use a wide variety of acoustic and electronic instruments on stage. The challenge when combining such a diverse range of sounds—maple drums, bronze cymbals, goatskin congas, digital drum machines, and so on—is that the audience needs to hear everything as one cohesive sound. But by creating your own mixing and monitoring setup, you're putting yourself in control of what you and your bandmates hear on stage, as well as what your sound engineer has to work with when pumping your drums through the PA. After all, only *you* know exactly how things should be heard. So now's the time to take ownership of your sound.



John Emrich is a professional drummer/producer based in the Washington, D.C., area. As a sound engineer, he has produced several expansion packs for FXpansion's software packs for module BFD2. He can be reached at johnemrich.com.



CONGRATS TO OUR FAMILY OF ARTISTS

DANIEL
ADAIR
#4 ROCK

TOMMY
CLUFETOS
#2 METAL

BILLY
MARTIN
#4 JAMBAND

JEFF
HAMILTON
#2 TRADITIONAL
JAZZ

KEITH
CARLOCK
#1 POP
#1 FUSION
#1 ALL AROUND
#2 STUDIO
#3 RECORDED
PERFORMANCE

REGAL TIP

PLAY WITH THE BEST!

Go to
www.regaltip.com
for artist info,
stick models and specs

THE PRACTICE HOUSE

DOWN ON THE FARM WITH **THE KENTUCKY HEADHUNTERS** AND **BLACK STONE CHERRY**



You don't want to try to find this place on your own. You could get very lost on the back roads that snake their way through the forests and farmland, the hills and "hollers" of central Kentucky. Here and there you might pass a general store/restaurant that could well have been the setting for the Kentucky HeadHunters' hit "Dumas Walker." If you get deep enough into the woods, you might start wondering if that really was a shadow you saw or if it was the Rain Wizard of Kentucky folklore, immortalized in a Black Stone Cherry tune.

No, for your first visit to the "practice house" shared by the HeadHunters and BSC, you're better off meeting someone on the main road and then being led down a series of winding, often gravel, paths. Eventually you pull up in front of a run-down farmhouse with a rusting tin roof and wood siding that could use a coat of paint—and maybe a few nails. A dilapidated privy can be seen off to the side, and several cows from the

adjoining field may regard you silently, as though checking to see if you're anyone they know.

Step inside and you're transported to a very different world. The walls are covered with pictures, posters, album sleeves, and other mementos of classic rock and blues artists. Depending on who is or isn't on the road, there might be two full drumsets or just a makeshift kit of mismatched vintage drums. Against the back wall lie stacks of various amplifier heads and cabinets. It's everything a rock or blues musician would hope that heaven will be like, and you can't help but think that if you start playing an instrument in this room, something soulful will come out, just by osmosis.

It's been the practice house for over four decades. Kentucky HeadHunters drummer Fred Young, his guitarist brother Richard, and their guitar-playing cousin

Greg Martin started playing there in 1967. "This was a tenant house on our farm," Fred says. "It was vacant, so we moved our equipment in and kind of squatted here, you might say. We've been here ever since. When we were in high school, we were up here all the time. That kept us out of trouble because we were always playing music instead of runnin' the roads and stuff. On weekends, the other kids would come up after ballgames, and this became the local hangout. But we always took care of business first. This is where we've done all our rehearsing and writing."

Fred's nephew (and Richard's son) John Fred Young started hanging around

the practice house from the time he could walk. "I bought John Fred one of those little Remo PTS kits when he was two," Fred remembers. "I sat him down and showed him what he had to do to keep time. Pretty soon, I had to start watching my own time because John Fred's was so good. We'd get together and I'd show him what I know, and then as he got older he started showing me stuff too."

While in high school, John Fred started playing at the practice house with a couple of friends from school, which resulted in the formation of Black Stone Cherry. By then, the HeadHunters were on the road so much that BSC had almost unlimited use of the house, and like the HeadHunters, they've done all their writing and rehearsing there.

"Last winter they were up here every day writing their second album [*Folklore And Superstition*], and it was so cold they were all huddled together like a covey of birds," Fred recalls. "But that's where they wanted to write."

"If you need inspiration, all you have to do is look at the walls," John Fred says. "It's like being in a rock 'n' roll museum."

For years, the house was heated with just a wood-burning stove. "We would tear wood off the side of old barns and burn it to keep warm while we practiced," Fred says. These days, a more modern kerosene heater provides warmth. There's a single light bulb, in the ceiling of the main room, and a couple of outlets for the amps. There's no running water or indoor plumbing.

"When the bands are playing in here, you won't find a spider or a rodent anywhere in the place," John Fred says. "But we had a raccoon living in the ceiling for a while. And once when both bands were on the road for three months, we came back and vines had grown up through the floor and wrapped themselves around the drums."

Fred admits the house could use some structural work. "But we've never fixed it up because we don't want the sound to change," he says.

Aside from both bands rehearsing there, Fred and John Fred spend hours playing together in the practice house.

"John Fred will call me up at eleven at night and tell me to meet him up here, and we'll sometimes sit up until four in the morning working out stuff," Fred says. And there's never a shortage of gear. One of the rooms upstairs is filled with vintage drums Fred has collected through the years. Ludwigs predominate, but there are also classic Gretsch, Slingerland, Sonor, and Rogers models scattered around.

The house has been such a key part of the Youngs' music making that John Fred credits the place for much of the HeadHunters' and Black Stone

Cherry's success. "The isolation has kept us from sounding like every other band," he says. "We're just country boys, and our music reflects our lifestyle and our roots."

Fred agrees. "It's been great to have this place, and also the surrounding land. If we were in town with houses next to us, the cops would always be shutting us down because of the hours we keep. But we've never had to deal with that. So that's a luxury we've had—the space and being left alone."



Brian Blade

MODERN DRUMMER 2009 REALSHO POLLS WINNER

Drums: NEO Storage shell (WW) M

Hardware: Light Weight Hi-hat (CST) in the World, C2000, Snare Drum (CST) in the World, C2010, Lyric (CST) in the World, C2010B, Drum Throne

"The ZELKOVA snare drum has a beautiful tone and a clear responsiveness that speaks in all dynamic ranges. It is the perfect instrument for any musical situation."

Zelkova Snare Drum
MS-1430 (55x14)
MS-1430B (55x14)
One piece 100% Wood Shell

Try Out - CANOPUS Drums!

<p>SAN FRANCISCO Bentley's Drum Shop 559-222-5011 www.bentleysdrum.com</p>	<p>NEW YORK Drummers World 212-965-1057 www.drummersworld.com</p>
<p>SULLYVILLE, CA The Pro Drum Shop 323-465-6365 www.theprodrumshop.com</p>	<p>BRANDYVILLE, OH Allied Music 619-381-0300</p>
<p>SAN JOSE Steve Maxwell Vintage and Custom Drums 415-447-8481 www.stevemaxwelldrums.com</p>	<p>WILMINGTON, DE Fork's Drum Closet 302-436-4543 www.forksdrumcloset.com</p>

CANOPUS

www.canopusdrums.com

THE MODERN DRUMMER FESTIVAL™ 2008 DVD

WITH 12 HOURS OF SPECTACULAR ONSTAGE PERFORMANCES AND INSPIRING BACKSTAGE INTERVIEWS WITH 11 OF TODAY'S GREATEST DRUMMERS, THE MODERN DRUMMER FESTIVAL™ 2008 DVD IS ALMOST LIKE BEING THERE.



The Modern Drummer Festival™ 2008 DVD is a deluxe 4-disc set featuring:

- Solo, group, and track-accompanied performances
- Instructional content, including exclusive drummer-to-drummer interviews
- A wide variety of drummers, equipment, and musical styles
- Transcribed educational examples and exercises in a printable eBook

Free video clips and podcasts at hudsonmusic.com and moderndrummer.com.
Produced and directed by Hudson Music. • Distributed by The Hal Leonard Corp.
Available at drum shops and music stores or directly from Modern Drummer at:

moderndrummer.com • 973-239-4140



MODERN DRUMMER HUDSON MUSIC

The 2008 Modern Drummer Festival™ was made possible by the support of these leading companies:



And on the 8th day...

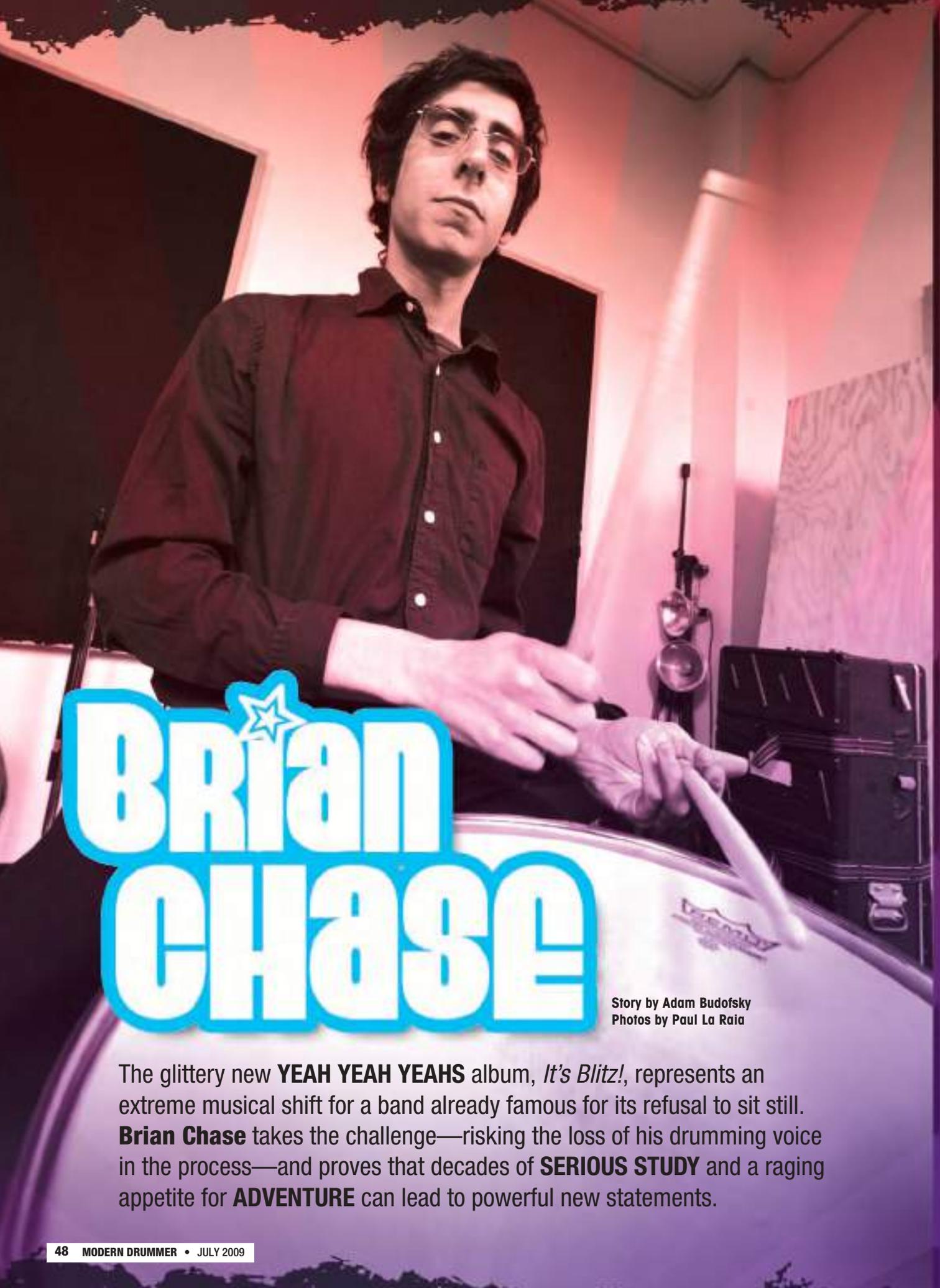


STUDIOMAPLE

TAYE StudioMaple series will track your every move and mirror your touch. Crafted from specially selected North American Sugar Maple, the StudioMaple is a drum that will erupt in an optimum blend of highs, lows, and mids.

www.tayedrums.com





BRIAN CHASE

Story by Adam Budofsky
Photos by Paul La Raia

The glittery new **YEAH YEAH YEAHS** album, *It's Blitz!*, represents an extreme musical shift for a band already famous for its refusal to sit still. **Brian Chase** takes the challenge—risking the loss of his drumming voice in the process—and proves that decades of **SERIOUS STUDY** and a raging appetite for **ADVENTURE** can lead to powerful new statements.

A tiny inscription adorns the cover of the self-titled debut album by New York City's Velvet Underground, the twentieth century's first and most mercurial art-rock band: "Peel Slowly And See." That come-hither suggestion would be just as appropriate in the cover art of this century's great NYC art-rock group, the Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

A typical description of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs makes mention of guitarist Nick Zinner's epochal guitar riffs, drummer Brian Chase's thunderous garage rock beats, and (especially) singer Karen O's in-yo-face vocals, lyrics, and stage persona. But as with the Velvets, if the YYYs' most incendiary traits were all there was to talk about, people's attention would surely have waned by now. As the buzz surrounding their new album, *It's Blitz!*, has proven, clearly it hasn't.

Fact is, in the eight years since the YYYs' early EPs convinced the world that a contemporary band could eagerly reference rock's gritty past, aggressively look to its future, and still be *utterly* about The Way Things Are Today, musical subtlety has been a hallmark of their every twist and turn. Slap on a pair of headphones, watch live footage of the band—or check out Chase's beat transcriptions later in this piece—and you'll soon realize that their music and Brian's drumming are coming from a deeper place than initially meets the ear.

A dedicated student of the drums since he was a wee lad, Chase approaches everything he plays with a nod to the advancements of our drumming forefathers. Are you surprised when we tell you that Brian's strongest influence is Count Basie's legendary drummer "Papa" Jo Jones, whose first significant sides were recorded in the 1930s? Well, then you might want to check out Chase's playful hi-hat approach on "Date With The Night" from the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' 2003 debut long-player, *Fever To Tell*... or his tender, detailed commentary on the band's gorgeous cover of Sonic Youth's "Diamond Sea" from their iTunes *Live Session EP*... or the loosey-goosey shimmy he applies to "Bang," the leadoff track from the band's first, self-titled EP... or the graceful, classic hand-foot combinations on "Runaway" from *It's Blitz!* Each of these examples is proof positive that when you got it, there ain't no need to flaunt it; a great drummer's abilities, like those of a master in any artistic realm, are apparent in even his simplest, subtlest gestures.

All of this isn't to suggest that Chase doesn't get a chance to blow the roof off the sucka with the YYYs. Listen to "Man," from *Fever*, and dig how those ballsy fills crank up the track's intensity; later in the record, focus on the brash and unexpected last twenty seconds of "Pin"; on the 2007 *Is Is EP*, go to the track "Kiss, Kiss" and

focus on, well, his entire inflammatory approach; or go back to the debut EP and lose your mind to his hyper-fast thrash take on "Art Star." Chase might most closely identify with Jo Jones' sophisticated swing, but he damn well knows how to peel the paint in a punk club too.

Brian Chase grew up on Long Island, New York. He attended summer music programs at Hartwick College in upstate New York and the Manhattan School Of Music while he was in high school, and he earned a bachelor of music degree from the renowned Oberlin Conservatory Of Music in Ohio. It's no coincidence that members of some of indie rock's most revered groups found their musical selves at Oberlin; the school is famous for its liberal attitudes *and* its rigorous training. This academic agenda goes far to explain Brian's deep understanding of and respect for the giants of music history on the one hand, and, on the other, his desire to push the boundaries of their accomplishments. Chase's aesthetic is not only apparent with the YYYs, but also with acts like the wonderfully angular NYC band the Seconds, his improv-based duo with saxophonist Seth Misterka, and the Afrobeat-klezmer-blues band the Sway Machinery. And Brian's artfully experimental Drums & Drones project is dedicated to electronically exploring the hidden tonal potential of drums, a subject he's been intrigued by since working as percussion manager at the famous NYC instrumental house Carroll Music.

At first listen, Chase's heady interests seem a world away from the retro-disco calls to boogie that set *It's Blitz!* apart from the rest of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' releases. This is when you should begin peeling, though, and fetch those headphones we were talking about earlier. Try to catch the innumerable variations the drummer slyly slips into his beats on the opening single, "Zero," and the very next cut, "Heads Will Roll." Notice how his slightly swung stick clicks sit beautifully next to the regimented snare and tom accents in "Skeletons" (and don't miss how those tiny tom notes *ascend* into the big floor tom booms rather than conforming to the typical high-to-low directive). And dig his approach to "Shame And Fortune," surely the coolest, most skewed second-line feel you're likely to hear anytime soon.

MD meets Brian at Dante's, a Greenwich Village cafe where we're initially taken aback by the waitress's polite but stern suggestion that we put away our laptop. We're happy to oblige, though; it seems a small concession to an honorable attempt at preserving the humanity of earlier times in the heart of this relentlessly modern city. It's a notion our bebop-loving, forward-thinking tablemate could surely relate to....



MD: All of your projects, including the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, share the fact that they can't be easily defined. Is it important to you not to be labeled as this or that kind of drummer? How do you avoid being pigeonholed?

Brian: It's very much related to staying in touch with contemporary music and music of my culture and what's happening around me. It's always easy to look into the past and sift styles into genres with names. But I like what's always unfolding in the present, music that is less easily categorizable and

to go back into history and uncover what exists. That knowledge is incredibly useful in terms of applying it to whatever contemporary sounds I'm going for. Being able to understand the history and have a familiarity with the jazz language...to have a sense of Duke Ellington's personality, for example, and how his bands evolved from the '20s, and know the different personalities of the musicians in his band. Or being familiar with Wayne Shorter and these other unique personalities. It's the same thing with classical music. I

high school, it was very much about working with private teachers, going through coordination exercises and method books like *Syncopation*, and really familiarizing myself with the music. And then when I was at the conservatory I really started getting into transcriptions. That was a huge asset in terms of learning the vocabulary and getting inside the music. Max Roach in particular was a big influence during that time.

MD: What attracted you to him?

Brian: He was the first drummer I latched onto in terms of exploring the melodic possibilities of the drums. His recordings with Clifford Brown stood out. He would primarily use a four-piece drumkit. I really got it that it didn't take much more than that. It's more about abstract suggestions, implying ups and downs rather than actually playing them. There's a difference between that approach and that of somebody like Terry Bozzio, where he'll actually set up his drums like a keyboard and play literal melodies. Whereas Max Roach would take four drums and imply the same melodic shape.

MD: This concept might come easier to jazz drummers, where it's about constantly having a conversation. Are there ways for rock players to get that into their drumming?

Brian: I guess the key is sensitivity, and having ears that are open to those possibilities. From playing in jazz ensembles since my early days, it became a natural instinct to play with open ears and almost be hyper-reactive, which is a quality I don't necessarily find in people with a rock background.

MD: In the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, you play with no lack of consistency or power, but you find your spots and ways to accentuate certain things.

Brian: My use of subtle dynamics within the consistency of the groove definitely comes from feeding strongly off Karen's vocals. I'm very reactive and sensitive to shifts in her vocal line and her melody, and I'm listening to her carefully. When she sings in the upper registers of her voice, it has a different quality from when she's in the lower registers. And that can influence where I'm moving, especially with cymbal work—how I'm hitting the cymbal, and



BLITZ! KITS

Studio drums: GMS Grand Master series in tobacco stain

- A. 5 1/2x14 snare
- B. 9x12 tom
- C. 14x14 floor tom
- D. 18x20 bass drum

Live drums: GMS Special Edition series in silver sparkle (not shown in photo)

- A. 5 1/2x14 snare
- B. 9x13 tom
- C. 16x16 floor tom
- D. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" K/Z hi-hats
- 2. 20" K crash/ride
- 3. 22" K Custom medium ride
- 4. 18" A thin crash

Hardware: Primarily Yamaha with a single-chain bass drum pedal

Heads: Remo. General head selection for YYs in studio and on stage is clear Emperor for batter and resonant head of kick drum (full front head), clear

Emperor for tops of toms and clear Ambassador for bottoms, and coated Ambassador for top of snare and snare-side Ambassador on bottom.

Muffling: Kick drum muffling is external. For the batter side, a T-shirt is placed between the pedal and the head. For the resonant side, a T-shirt is placed against the head and held there with tape stretched across the drum. Snare drum muffling is done by placing an NYC Metrocard on the head; the card is then taped to the rim of the drum and not to the head.

Tuning: With YYs, the bass drum is tuned to an E, the floor tom is usually tuned to a B, and the rack tom is usually tuned to an E. Both the batter and resonant head are tuned to the same pitch. For the snare, the batter head is ideally kept at an A, with the snare side ideally kept at an E.

Sticks: Vater. 5B with wood tip, sugar maple Cymbal Stick with oval tip, sugar maple Blazer with wood tip, various mallets and brushes.

doesn't have a particular name. In this day and age, information is all jumbled together. I like musicians who have wide tastes and take joy in mashing them together.

MD: At music conservatory you must have analyzed certain styles.

Brian: That was a real treat, to be able

feel that all the many different strains are kind of leading toward this one destination, which is the moment where I am right now.

MD: Did you spend time in the practice room tearing apart different drummers' individual styles?

Brian: When I was in junior high and

IT'S LISTS

RECORDINGS

Yeah Yeah Yeahs It's Blitz!, Is Is, Show Your Bones, Fever To Tell, Yeah Yeah Yeahs // **The Seconds** Kratitude, Y // **Brian Chase & Seth Misterka Duo** // **The Sway Machinery** Hidden Melodies Revealed, The Sway Machinery

FAVORITES

Derek Bailey & Susie Ibarra Daedal (Susie Ibarra) // **"Papa" Jo Jones** Jo Jones Trio (Jo Jones) // **Miles Davis** Milestones ("Philly" Joe Jones), Miles Smiles (Tony Williams) // **Wayne Shorter** Juju (Elvin Jones) // **Joe Lovano** Trio Fascination (Elvin Jones) // **Shelly Manne** The Three (Shelly Manne) // **The Stooges** Fun House (Scott Asheton) // **New York Dolls** New York Dolls (Jerry Nolan) // **The Velvet Underground** The Velvet Underground & Nico (Maureen Tucker) // **The Rolling Stones** Beggars Banquet, Some Girls (Charlie Watts) // **PJ Harvey** Rid Of Me (Rob Ellis) // **DNA** DNA On DNA (Ikue Mori) // **Ikue Mori** One Hundred Aspects Of The Moon (Ikue Mori) // **James Brown** Sex Machine: Recorded Live At Home In Augusta, Georgia With His Bad Self (John Starks, Clyde Stubblefield, Melvin Parker) // **The Notorious B.I.G.** Ready To Die (loops) // **Mary Halvorson Trio** Dragon's Head (Ches Smith) // **Oneida** Secret Wars (Kid Millions) // **Zakir Hussain** Drums Of India (Zakir Hussain) // **La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela** Dream House (continuous sound installation in TriBeCa, NYC)

picking times when I want to let up and allow it to breathe. And sometimes she'll say a line with more authority than at other times, so at those moments you kind of want to goose it a little. It's almost like responding to a horn player during a solo.

MD: Is she fairly consistent from night to night in that regard? Or do you have to really stay on your toes?

Brian: She's a bit like James Brown in that way. You've got to have one eye on the audience and one eye on her. You can't lose sight, because she'll drop to her knees in an expressive gesture and you've got to be right there to bring it down, or when she puts her hand in the air you've got to be right there to catch it. Each night the songs are essentially the same, but within that framework it can be anything.

MD: Another aspect of your playing that jumps out is the use of theme and variation, especially with your beats. Again, that's something you'll hear talked about in a jazz context, but what about in rock drumming?

Brian: One way to bring that to rock is to layer rhythms, to maybe start with the bass drum pattern and then stack different patterns on top. For instance, the hi-hat pattern could maybe work in a more indirect way with the other elements of the music, based on the accents.

MD: Are there particular songs where you apply that idea?

Brian: In the second verse of "Maps" there's a left-foot hi-hat pattern that's just playing 8th notes for half a measure. I consider it another theme, like the entrance of another voice in an orchestra. It could be something simple like that.

MD: Do you have any tips for working on controlling the dynamic relationship between the limbs, like in that bass drum/hi-hat example you just gave?

Brian: I would do the exercises on page 37 in *Syncopation*—though I think it's a different page now; it could be 39. Anyway, I would add my own accents, and then play the exercises with only my right foot. Or I would work on dynamic shading with my right foot. The bass drum is something that too often gets a monotone approach.

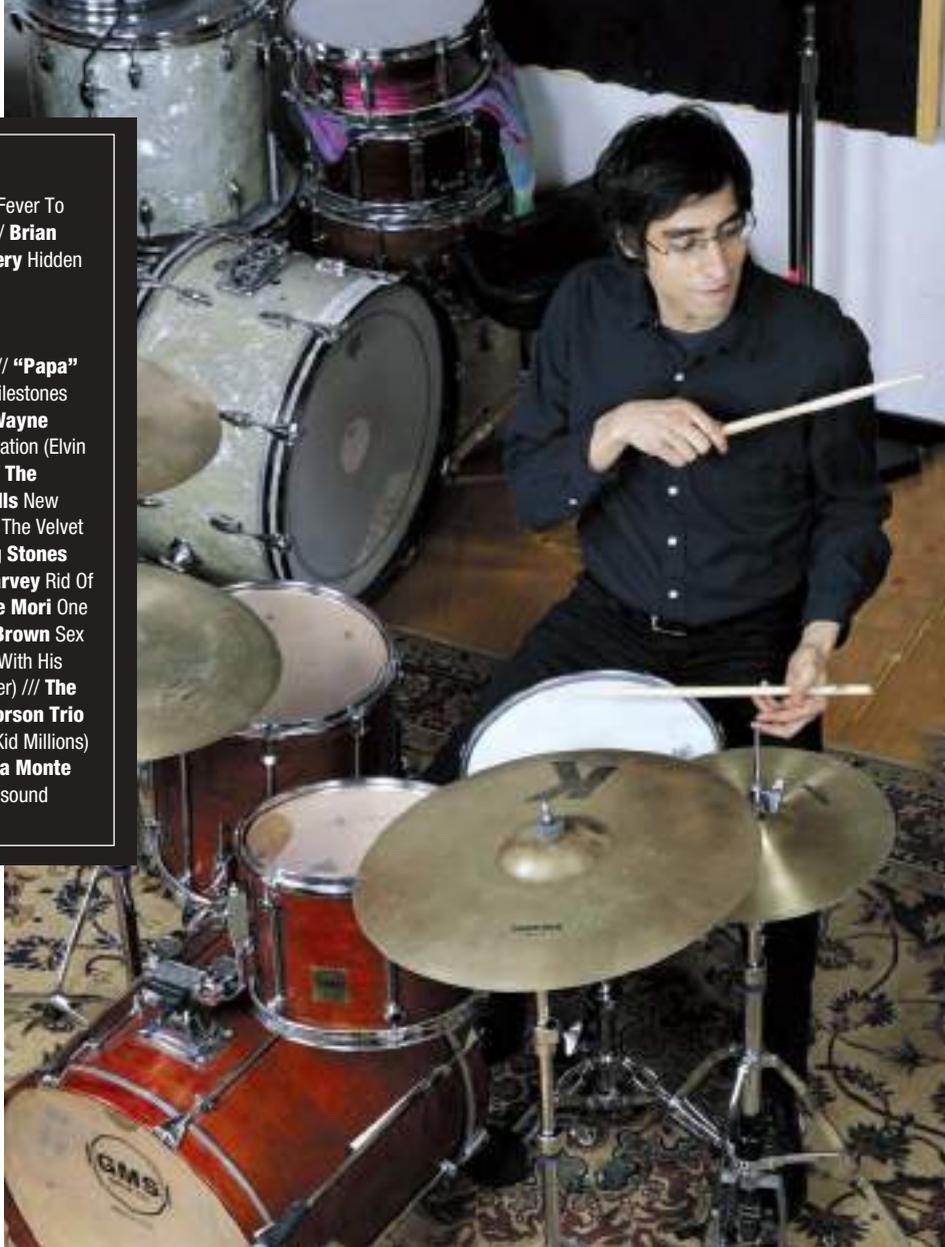
MD: Subtleties like that sometimes get

lost in the mix by producers or engineers who want a more consistent performance. Has that ever been an issue in the studio?

Brian: Yeah, that happened on this new record. In "Dull Life" there's a bass drum part in the middle of the break leading up to the last verse. When I went in to hear the mix, the engineer had made all my bass drum hits the same dynamic level. He was like, "It was all choppy before, so I needed to make it smoother." He didn't like it my way, and I didn't like it his way. So we found a compromise and split the difference.

MD: This album almost seems to be an homage to disco, with a lot of heavy keyboard sounds and such. Your drum sounds are drier too; clearly you're trying to achieve a specific thing.

Brian: The drum sounds are very much about going for a certain aesthetic that fit the mood, which was cool and



BRIAN CHASE

detached. Whereas the earlier records had more of an open tuning, a big boomy sound, these sounds are much more contained.

MD: Was that something you were all going for from the start?

Brian: We spent a few months recording these songs several times, trying out different parts and experimenting. It was fun trying all these ideas and using the technology, but then it became about finding the essence and what suited the music the best. Especially with the heavy synthesizer presence on the record, having a drum approach

that was modeled more after the temperament of disco and hip-hop beats seemed the most suitable.

MD: How did you feel about getting those types of sounds?

Brian: It was difficult. Coming from a jazz background, I've always been a purist about tone—as little muffling as possible, open tuning, always put a front head on the bass drum.... But this time around it was wallets on the snare drum and blankets on the kick drum. That was a big shift. It took a lot of trying to let go of who I thought I was in order to do this.

MD: As drummers, we all like to define ourselves a certain way. Was it hard to make that shift? Did it keep you up at night, or did you just resign yourself to it, like, "I guess I'm not that guy anymore"?

Brian: Yeah, as a drummer I'd defined myself as having specific strengths, with elements in my style that made me stand apart from other drummers. And I had to forfeit those aspects of my playing for this new record.

MD: For the good of the whole, that sort of thing?

Brian: Yeah, pretty much. I figured, I'll enjoy it as it happens, mostly because it seemed clear that I had no other choice. The music had specific requirements that were almost beyond me, which I recognized, and it was my responsibility to meet those requirements.

MD: How are you planning to approach it live?

Brian: I'm still working it out. I might add a second snare drum off to my left that's tuned and set up to have a drier, thuddier sound. My main snare will pop more and be more open. I might put a trigger on that second snare drum as well.

It's been comforting in these early rehearsals to find that we have an attitude of finding a compromise between what's on the record and what makes the best live show. We feel we're very much an organic live band, and we want to keep in touch with that. We want to keep the human flow.

MD: One of the most "human" elements of your playing is your approach to the hi-hats. It's unusual in a rock context to hear such playfulness and variety.

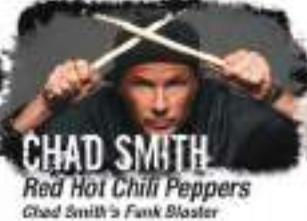
Brian: Fundamentally, the Yeah Yeahs are a rock band, and that's kick and snare. That stays in place pretty much. You can play around with it a little bit, but getting the bass drum going on 1 and 3 and the snare on 2 and 4, that's solid. That leaves the hi-hat free to fill in the spaces, and to add a whole other layer of shading and syncopation.

MD: What about the concept of being able to do that and not break the flow? You get away with a lot in that regard.

Do you think rock drummers can be more creative with their hi-hat parts?

Brian: All the rhythms I play, I can almost hear them in my head as parts I could sing. If other drummers aren't playing it, maybe they aren't hearing it.

CONGRATS TO OUR ARTISTS THAT PLACED IN THE MODERN DRUMMER READERS POLL



**LATHE
TURNED**
for consistency



**HAND
ROLLED**
for strength



**COMPUTER
PAIRED**
for weight and pitch

279 CENTRE STREET
4010006 MA 02243 USA
781.767.1877
VATER.COM

ROCK

Todd Sucherman
Neil Peart
Xavier Muriel
Daniel Adair
Chad Smith

METAL

Lars Ulrich
Joey Jordison

PUNK

Travis Barker
Tré Cool
Josh Freese

PROG

Mike Portnoy
Neil Peart

R&B/HIP HOP

Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson
Aaron Spears
John Blackwell
Teddy Campbell

TRADITIONAL R&B / FUNK

David Garibaldi
Steve Jordan
Stanton Moore
John Blackwell

POP

Keith Carlock
Kenny Aronoff
Carter Beauford
Vinnie Colaiuta

JAM BAND

Carter Beauford
Stanton Moore

TRADITIONAL JAZZ

Jeff Hamilton
Roy Haynes

CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

Jeff "Tain" Watts

FUSION

Keith Carlock
Dave Weckl
Steve Smith
Vinnie Colaiuta

STUDIO

Vinnie Colaiuta
Keith Carlock
Josh Freese
Kenny Aronoff
Steve Jordan

COUNTRY

Jim Riley
Paul Leim

WORLD MUSIC

Trilok Gurtu

PERCUSSIONIST

Luis Conte
Sheila E

ALL AROUND

Keith Carlock
Vinnie Colaiuta
Steve Smith
Steve Gadd

CLINICIAN

Jim Riley
Todd Sucherman
Steve Smith
Jojo Mayer

EDUCATIONAL BOOK

Pete Lockett: Indian Rhythms
for Drumset

EDUCATIONAL DVD

**Todd Sucherman: Methods
and Mechanics**
Steve Smith: Drum Legacy-
Standing On The Shoulders
of Giants
Jason Bittner: What Drives
The Beat
Brain: Has made the Worst
Drum Instructional DVD Ever

RECORDED PERFORMANCE

**Joey Jordison-Slipknot: All
Hope is Gone**
Todd Sucherman-Styx: One
With Everything
Keith Carlock-Walter Becker:
Circus Money

Remo congratulates our 2009
Reader's Poll Winners

14 Category Winners. 59 Winners Overall.



remo.com

BRIAN CHASE

Maybe all they're hearing is the train of steady 8th notes rolling by, which is cool too.

MD: Is singing parts something you would recommend to drummers, in terms of deciding how you're going to accent things or how you'll accompany the rest of the music?

Brian: Very much so. I've always had a tricky relationship with singing and oral skills, especially going through the oral skills training at Oberlin. But I've come to really appreciate the value of singing

and using my voice as a musical instrument. Even if you aren't necessarily singing pitches, just the idea of vocalizing rhythms and musical ideas has a unifying element. Your limbs are on the outside of your body, but your voice is directly in the middle. I think of it as my limbs coming together in the middle of my body, which I can express as a whole, through my voice. It's like when you hear Elvin Jones in the background going, "Grrrrr," I feel like that's what he's doing. All that rhythm in his limbs

is being channeled through his voice. Another advantage of vocalizing while you're playing is that it can keep you from losing concentration. It keeps you engaged.

MD: You've created some cool and unusual beats for Yeah Yeah Yeahs songs. Any tips on coming up with unexpected parts?

Brian: I've always found inspiration from hearing people who aren't drummers play drums. I have memories of Nick and Karen getting behind my drumkit during soundcheck and just kind of banging out rhythms. And it's always very enlightening because they have great instincts, and they're hearing patterns and sounds and ideas. I always take note of certain things that they play, and I can often apply those to songs—even if it's something like just dropping out beat four in a verse. All of a sudden the music is completely different. That's a good tool—leaving space, taking away instead of adding more.

MD: Are there any drummers who've caught your attention in that regard?

Brian: Maureen Tucker of the Velvet Underground is the ideal of the less-is-more approach. Her beats seem so elusive. As soon as you try to pin it down, you realize it doesn't want to be acknowledged.

MD: "Serious" drummers don't generally give her props. Is that because they're so obsessed with displays of technique that they miss the beauty of what she's doing?

Brian: The technique thing is definitely a big part of it. Her playing on those early Velvet Underground recordings represents the negation of technique, and I think that's its virtue in that context. So if we're attaching ourselves to that aspect of drumming, then we'll be disappointed when listening to those records. It feels like it functions in a much more primitive and communal way, as opposed to the idea of the drummer as a superman, as somebody who can do it all by him or herself in a supremely individualistic kind of way. I think somebody like Moe Tucker kind of sacrifices that notion of ego for something more communal and primitive.

It was very courageous too. It's almost more extreme than extreme drumming. It's like, how far are you

Toca Generation

CONGRATULATIONS TOCA GENERATION
You voted and said they're the best and we couldn't agree more.

JACK DEJOHNETTE
Contemporary Jazz, Traditional Jazz

SHEILA E.
Percussionist

XAVIER MURIEL
Rock

AARON SPEARS
R&B / Hip-Hop

TODD SUCHERMAN
Rock, Clinician, Educational DVD & Recorded Performance

The Toca Generation – a force of as many as 100 world-class percussionists and drummers. This first wave has been taking on the world with Toca for 15 years and now they are taking their place in percussion history.

For the love of the beat.
For the love of percussion.
Their motto is "No Limits"
Because this generation just wants to play.

TOCA PERCUSSION

For more information on these and other artists in our family, please visit our new website:
http://www.tocapercussion.com
©2009 Toca Percussion

BRIAN CHASE

willing to go in that negation of yourself? How much can you detach? I feel she can outlast anybody because her will is that strong. It's exemplary in its aestheticism.

MD: Today some drummers have the same attitude about Meg White of the White Stripes.

Brian: Her drumming is similar to Moe Tucker's playing in many ways. If drummers are looking for something and not finding it in her playing, then they're just imposing their own expectations and their own wills on an entity that is

completely different. So in a sense it's not fair to say that she's not meeting certain expectations or certain requirements, because she's not interested. And people are going to be continuously disappointed if they're just going to absorb themselves in whatever they prioritize. If they can let go of their own personal expectations and just open up their ears, they can really hear the magic in Meg's drumming and how it fits so perfectly with Jack White's playing and their style. And to her credit, she is a slamming drummer. I've seen her in concert

many times, and her backbeat is placed right in the pocket. I think that's overlooked. She gets it right in that spot where it kicks Jack's guitar and lifts the whole sound.

MD: Let's talk about tuning. You've told me that on the Yeah Yeah Yeahs song "Fancy," you were going for particular tones.

Brian: For studio situations I'll tune specifically for the song because I want the drums to resonate harmoniously with the rest of the music. I've been lucky in the sense that our songs tend to be in certain keys. A lot are in E, A, or B, and sometimes G. So I keep my kick drum and my rack tom at E and my floor tom at B. On our new record I think the song "Runaway" is in G minor, so I changed my B to B flat and my E to E flat. There are a bunch of tom fills at the end of the song, and it seems to blend in a nice way.

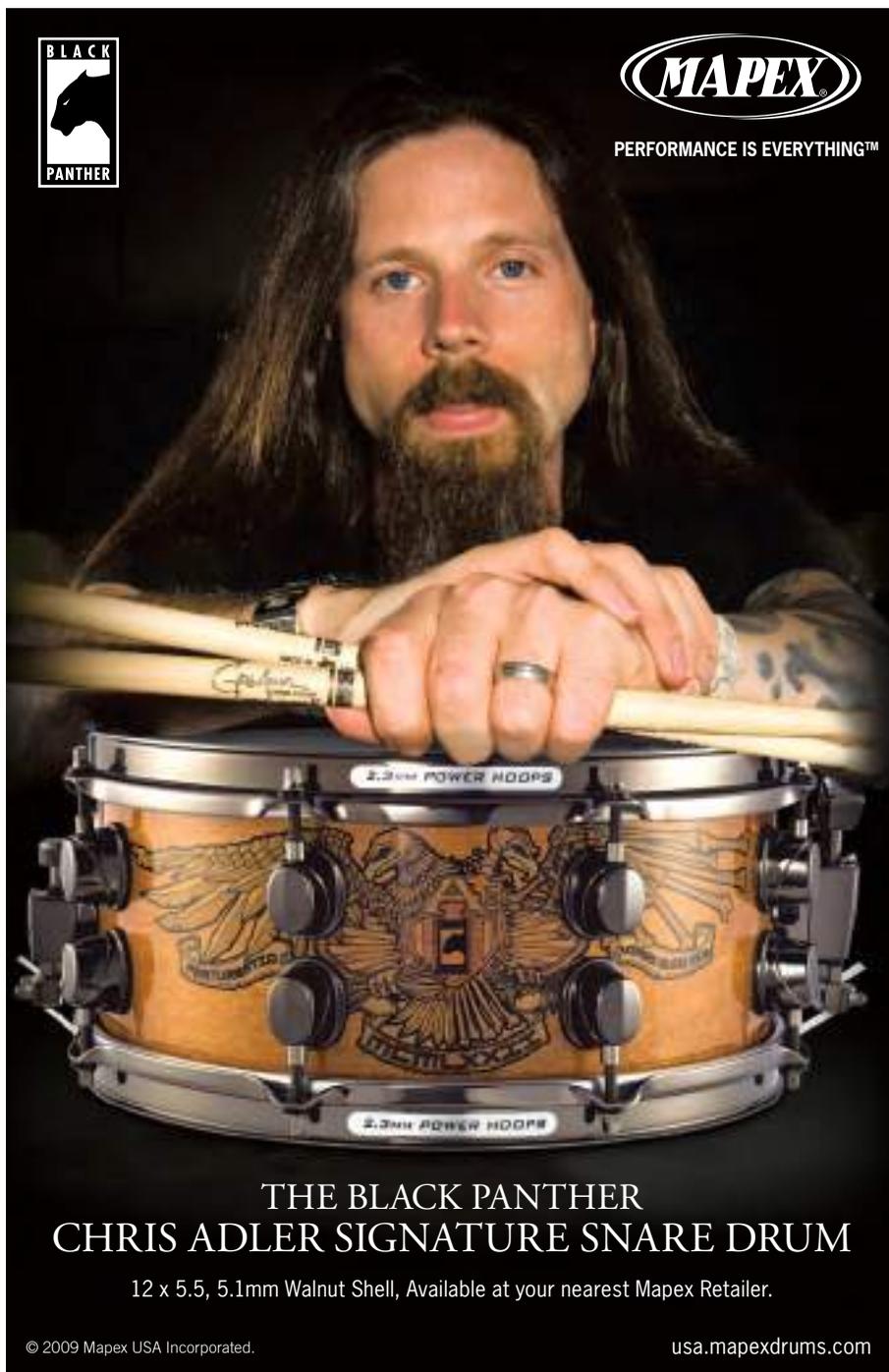
MD: Can you talk about your ideas about cymbals and some of the techniques you've developed?

Brian: The first thing that comes to mind is listening and practicing with open ears, really hearing the sounds that are coming out of our cymbals. It's easy to strike a cymbal and not care what happens after that. But we have to be responsible for the sound from the moment we strike the cymbal to the end of its duration. And there are so many subtleties that can come with cymbal playing. From small changes in the way you hit a cymbal, you can get a whole new set of overtones. Where you play on the cymbal—toward the bell, in the middle, toward the edge—you get a completely new set of sounds. All those sounds are significant and are at our disposal in terms of how we influence the music.

MD: What do you look for in a cymbal?

Brian: From a ride cymbal I like a wide frequency spectrum, with good highs and lows. Other drummers prefer darker, drier sounds specifically. In a lot of ways that can free up a drummer because you can lay into a cymbal more without having to worry about building up too much wash. But there's so much out there to choose from.

MD: On "Skeletons" from the new record, what's that clicking sound that comes in after about two minutes?



BLACK PANTHER

MAPEX

PERFORMANCE IS EVERYTHING™

**THE BLACK PANTHER
CHRIS ADLER SIGNATURE SNARE DRUM**

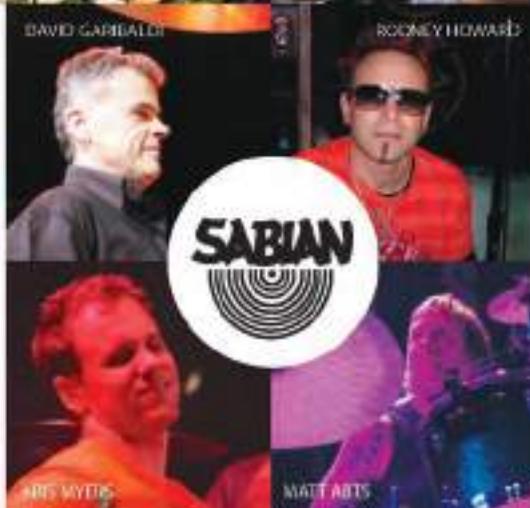
12 x 5.5, 5.1mm Walnut Shell, Available at your nearest Mapex Retailer.

© 2009 Mapex USA Incorporated. usa.mapexdrums.com



EVERYONE'S A WINNER.

Congratulations Modern Drummer Poll Winners.
And thank you readers for voting for these great players.



ROCK
#1 Todd Sucherman
Neil Peart
Xavier Malin
Daniel Adair
Chad Smith

METAL
Tommy Clufetos
Tomas Haake

PROG
Mike Portnoy
Neil Peart

R&B/HIP-HOP
Tony Royster Jr.

TRADITIONAL R&B/FUNK
#1 David Garibaldi

POP
Rodney Howard

JAM BAND
Kris Myers
Matt Abts

TRADITIONAL JAZZ
Jack DeJohnette

CONTEMPORARY JAZZ
Jack DeJohnette
Jeff 'Tain' Watts

FUSION
Dave Weckl
Morgan Agren

COUNTRY
Jim Riley

WORLD MUSIC
Dennis Prieto

UP & COMING
Pete Wilhoit
Blake Dixon

CLINICIAN
#1 Jim Riley
Todd Sucherman
Jojo Mayer

EDUCATIONAL DVD
#1 Todd Sucherman - *Methods and Mechanics*

RECORDED PERFORMANCE
Todd Sucherman - *Styx One With Everything*
Tomas Haake - *Mesuggahh Blood*

Hear more at sabian.com

BRIAN CHASE

Brian: That idea came from Dave Sitek, one of the producers on the record. That was me holding two sets of drumsticks in my hands as if I was going to do a four-mallet marimba part, but crossing the sticks and clicking them together.

MD: You get a really nice, slightly swung kind of thing going. Later on, snare drum and tom parts come in. How will you do that live?

Brian: That's been a tricky one. We'll definitely have to scale it back a little. I'm thinking of playing that clicky-clacky part on the rim of a tom with one hand, but pretty much just straight 16ths. And then I'll try to work in the tom accents as they come.

MD: What's the general method of recording drum parts with the Yeah Yeah Yeahs? Do you play along to guide guitar parts? Do you use clicks?

Brian: This record was all over the place, but in general we try to play as a band, with Nick doing a guitar part and Karen doing scratch vocals. It's almost always with a click, and sometimes with another prerecorded element.

MD: Do you prefer it that way, or do you

do it because it makes things faster and easier?

Brian: It depends on the song. There are a few songs we did without a click. If we know we're going to keep layering parts or do some editing, it's much easier to have a click. I think being able to play comfortably with the click is essential. I didn't really figure that out until I started playing with the Yeah Yeahs. The earlier you can learn to play with clicks, the better.

MD: Can you talk a little about your stick technique?

Brian: It wasn't until I was a junior in college and had an opportunity to study with Michael Rosen that I really opened up to the notion of technique. He impressed on me that technique is really the beauty of form, rather than the idea of playing fast or anything like that. It's important when practicing to always feel a sense of pleasure and satisfaction, or it just becomes tedious exercises, and there's no fun in that. So it's important when practicing technique to appreciate the beauty of when the stick functions on its own and we use effortless flow. I think learning to

appreciate that satisfaction is essential when learning technique.

MD: Can you be more specific about the motion?

Brian: Proper technique is about having the whole arm—from the shoulder to the elbow to the wrist to the fingers—function for the purpose of letting the stick bounce on its own, with no resistance from any structural imposition of the body. Learning technique in that way is almost essential to do with a teacher. There are numerous videos covering the subject, but proper technique can be about restructuring and breaking bad habits that people don't even know they have. And it can be difficult to break bad habits by yourself. So I would encourage students to find a classical teacher in their area, or somebody to at least get them on the path to studying technique.

MD: Can you recall what some of your bad habits were?

Brian: Posture was one thing. I worked on not slouching, having my shoulders back and my spine relatively straight. That affects the shoulders, and if there's

do a 180°...make the switch!

YOU'LL SEE WHY LARS NEVER WENT BACK.

MODERN DRUMMER 2009 READERS POLL WINNER

Lars Ulrich

AHEAD DRUMSTICKS

www.AheadDrumSticks.com

800-547-6401

US / BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION
UK / BR DISTRIBUTION
www.BRDistribution.co.uk

Photo credit: HOSK TALENT/INNOVATIVE

OUR STICKS GIVE YOU HALF THE SHOCK and WAY MORE REBOUND than WOOD!

TRANSLATION? YOU CAN DRUM LONGER, LOUDER, and BETTER than YOU EVER HAVE BEFORE!

get AHEAD!

CONGRATULATIONS TODD!



STYX



WE'VE BEEN TELLING THE WORLD THAT

YOU ROCK

FOR A LONG TIME.

THE WORLD AGREES.

FROM ALL OF YOUR STYX BANDMATES & EXTENDED STYX FAMILY.

Photography: Jerome Moriss / www.jeromemorris.com

Live and Telen by Lisa Vannucci / www.lisavannucci.com

Killer Cases

getting you there since 1994

Protection Racket

Ronnie Vannucci
The Killers

www.protectionracket.com
www.bigbangdist.com

Big Bang Distribution (800) 547-6401

BRIAN CHASE

tension in the shoulders, that's going to create tension in the back of the neck and translate to your wrists and elbows. If drummers are starting to feel pain over a prolonged period of time from playing, I think a simple adjustment they can make is just to be aware of their posture.

MD: How about stick grip? You almost always play traditional grip. Is that because it's the way you were taught and therefore it feels the most comfortable?

Brian: Exactly. There are no real advantages to one style or the other.

MD: Do you have a practice routine these days?

Brian: When I'm not on tour or in severe band mode, I try to maintain a specific practice schedule of six days a week—three days doing pad work and three days on drumset. For the pad work I always start with *Stick Control*. That book, *Accents And Rebounds*, and *Master Studies* are the top three that I use. And then I'll do reading exercises; the [Charles] Wilcoxon books are good for the fundamentals.

MD: Let's talk about Drums & Drones. What's the method?

Brian: The main principle is to explore the harmonic complexities that are inherent within a drum sound. Drums are complex fixed instruments, and there are so many frequencies and melodies that are dormant within them that aren't necessarily being explored. I want to give the drum its moment to shine in that regard.

What I do is tune a drumhead to a specific frequency. Once I have the head at that pitch, I know exactly where all the overtones apply. I then run the drum through a series of digital EQs, at which point I can play with harmonics and overtones. A lot of times I'll use a Line 6 delay pedal that has a loop function, so I'll loop twenty seconds or so and just have that running.

I normally tune the drumhead to $B = 240$ Hz or 120 Hz, which I got from La Monte Young. He tunes his frequencies to the hum of electricity, so the sound is harmonious with all the other electronic sounds in the room. You can determine harmonics based on math, so if I have my drum at 120 Hz, I know my third overtone is at 360. It's like thinking of notes and pitches in terms of numbers instead of actual note names.

MD: Are you working toward releasing an

"My Dreams sound like ocean waves crashing on a perfect day, and the Bliss 19" Crash/Ride is heaven on earth."

- Kevin Lamar,
Asher Roth/Independent

Dream
Cymbals and Drums

www.dreamcymbals.com

The Sound of Independence has its rewards.



TOMMY CLUFETOS {rob zombie}
metal

tommy rocks out on SQ² drums



TOMAS HAAKE {meshuggah}
metal, recorded performance

tomas bashes his SQ² drums



GAVIN HARRISON {porcupine tree}
prog

gavin chose SQ² drums



DANNY CAREY {tool}
prog

danny's tools are designer drums



JACK DEJOHNETTE {independent}
jazz

jack loves his delite drums



STEVE SMITH {vital information}
fusion, all around, clinician, educational dvd

steve's sound lies in his 30th anniversary kit



JOJO MAYER {nerve}
clinician

jojo grooves on a classic



JEFF "TAIN" WATTS {independent}
contemporary jazz

tain's voice is designer drums

*Congratulations to ALL
2009 MODERN DRUMMER READERS POLL WINNERS
And a very special Thank you to all Modern Drummer Readers!*

BRIAN CHASE

entire album of Drums & Drones?

Brian: Once I compile enough tracks. They're like etudes, because they explore different aspects of a concept.

MD: Part of what's so appealing about the music is that it's cool from a mechanical standpoint but also from a purely sonic standpoint. It sounds so unfamiliar. Is there a certain appeal in creating a sound that didn't exist before?

Brian: Part of the excitement is doing that with drums. I haven't heard drums treated this way before. For young drummers it could be interesting to start

exploring the idea of EQ, even playing with the EQ on their stereo in terms of understanding the difference between bass frequencies and treble frequencies. And then you realize that all those components are inherent within drums—and even cymbals.

If you hit a cymbal and put your ear close to the edge, you can hear a really low bass tone. Imagine if you were to take that bass tone, boost it, and then cut off all of the higher frequencies in that cymbal. All of a sudden you'd have a cymbal that just sounds like a really

low bass tone, almost like an upright bass being bowed. Or you can go the other way and cut off all the lower frequencies and just have a high shimmer. So from one sound source you can create a whole new sonic realm.

MD: Do you have preferred equipment for this?

Brian: I've done a lot on a GMS 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 ash snare, which I particularly like because it has such a nice range; the higher overtones ring out in such a nice way. It's quite complex. There are so many high overtones competing for dominance. That drum has given me a lot of material.

MD: How long have you been exploring this area, and what tipped you off to the possibilities?

Brian: A lot of it started when I was at Oberlin. There was such a community to work with—composers, electronic musicians, classical people, jazz musicians, punk rock players.... That environment really nurtured the spirit in me to try anything.

MD: Did you know early in life that you wanted to be a professional drummer?

Brian: I knew playing music would give me a joy that I couldn't deny. The more I played and the older I got, the more consuming that feeling became.

MD: Growing up, were you a super drum geek?

Brian: Yeah, pretty much every day I'd get home from school and play drums until dinnertime. I saw my parents yesterday, and my dad reminded me that we would go to the Modern Drummer Festivals. He was like, "Say that we still have the T-shirts." [laughs] It was great quality time I spent with my dad.

MD: Did you plan to be a professional jazz drummer?

Brian: When I graduated from Oberlin and moved to New York I was hoping to become active on the downtown experimental music scene. I wanted to apply my jazz training to a very contemporary aesthetic and to different styles. But as far as imagining myself where I am here, where I am now in terms of playing with the Yeah Yeahs and the worldwide foundation we've created...I could never have imagined that.

DREAM IT YOURSELF.

Be your own custom shop with Gibraltar. If you can dream it, you can build it.
www.gibraltarhardware.com

DIY Gibraltar

Gibraltar Hardware, 31 Old Winsor Road, Berlinfield, CT 06007

For more with Brian Chase,
go to moderndrummer.com.



travis barker blink-182
#1 PUNK

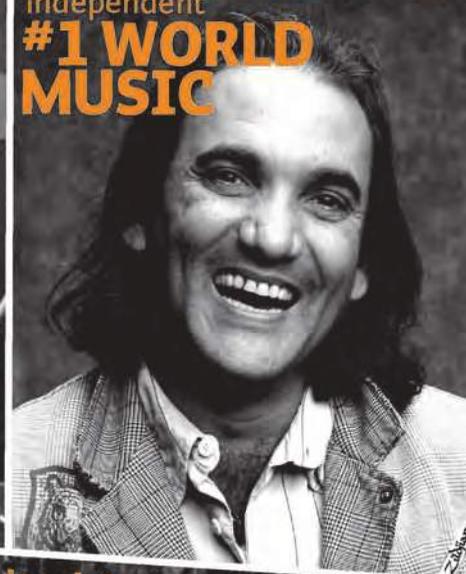


brian blade
the fellowship band
**#1 CONTEMPORARY
JAZZ**

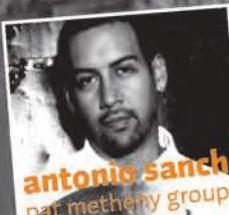
Photographer: Adam Vollick



horacio "el negro" hernandez
independent
**#1 WORLD
MUSIC**



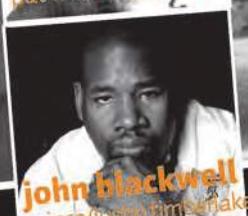
antonio sanchez
pat metheny group



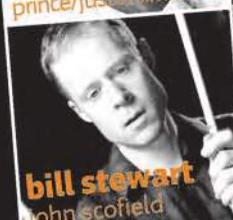
luis conte james taylor
#1 PERCUSSIONIST



john blackwell
prince/justin timberlake



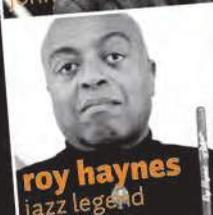
bill stewart
john scotland



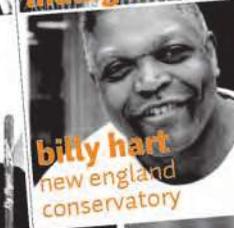
giovanni
nidalgo



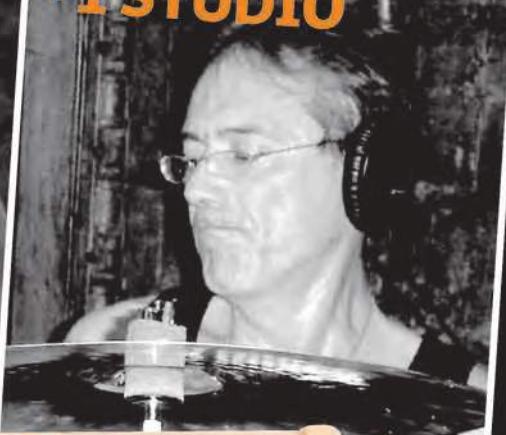
roy haynes
jazz legend



billy hart
new england
conservatory



vinnie colaiuta recording artist
#1 STUDIO



©2009 Avedis Zildjian Company

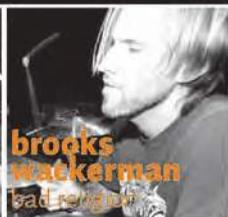
ZILDJIAN DRUMSTICK ARTISTS MADE

A LOT OF NOISE

IN THIS YEARS MD READERS POLL



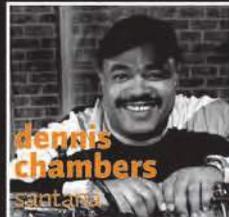
tre cool
green day



brooks
wackerman
bad religion



zildjian.com



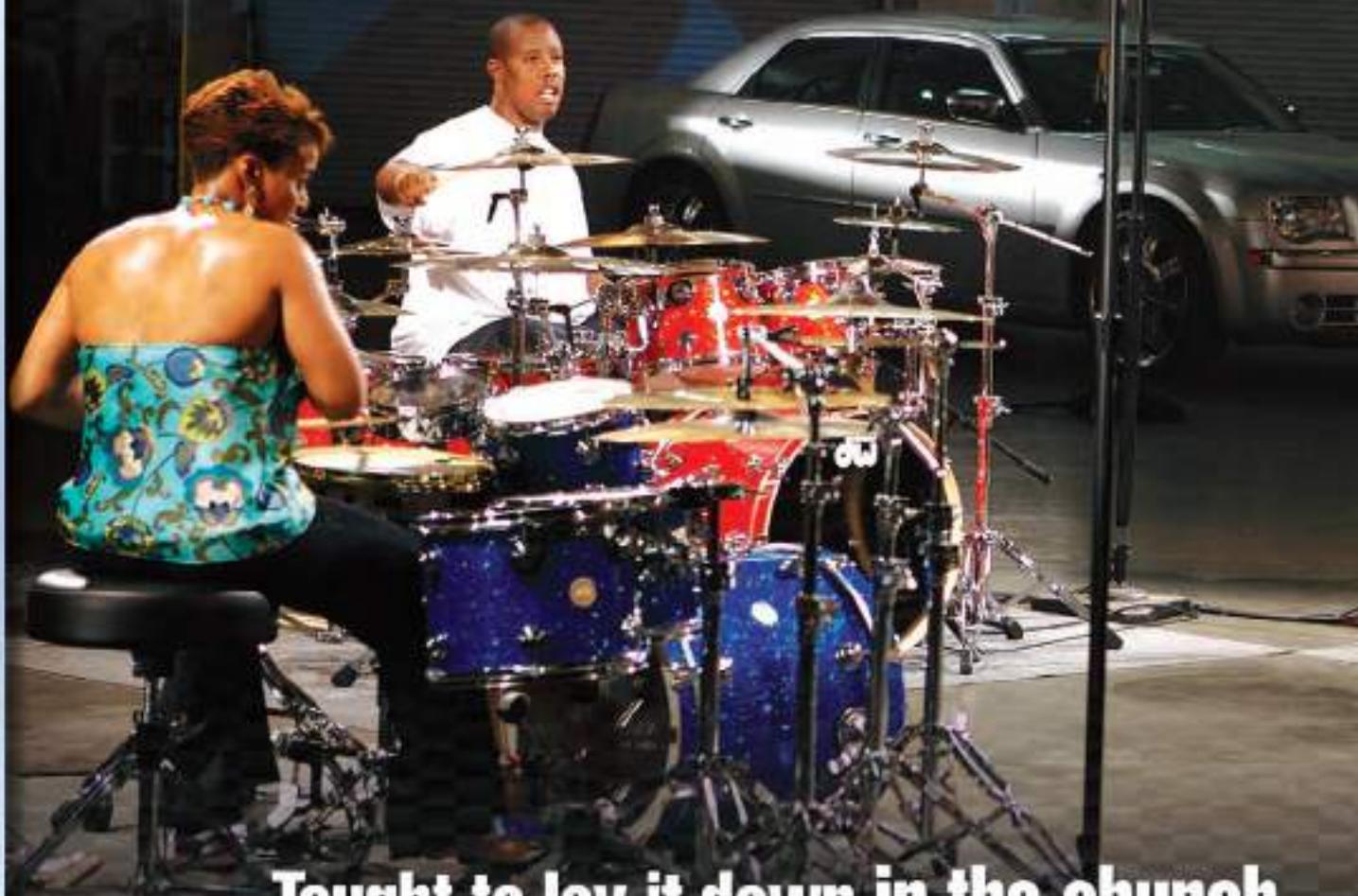
dennis
chambers
santana



trilok gurtu
independent

THE FANTAST

CORA COLEMAN-DUNHAM • NISAN STEWART



**Taught to lay it down in the church,
Today's reigning pop and hip-hop drummers
then blow your mind with**

IC FOUR

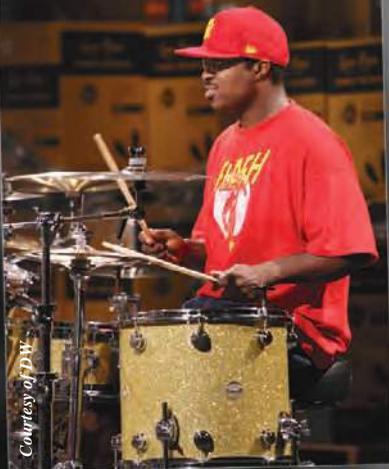
AARON SPEARS • GERALD HEYWARD



Courtesy of DW

**encouraged to let it fly in the shed.
can nail the ultimate studio take one minute,
out-of-this-world chops the next.**

by Billy Amendola



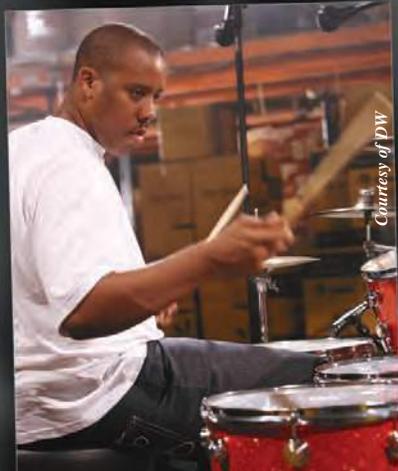
Courtesy of DW



Courtesy of DW



Courtesy of DW



Courtesy of DW

Gerald Heyward, Aaron Spears, Cora Coleman-Dunham, and Nisan Stewart are four of the most in-demand and influential drummers on the planet. Supporting the cream of the crop of the gospel, R&B, hip-hop, and pop scenes, they represent dozens upon dozens of hit records, miles upon miles of arena tours, and hours upon days upon *weeks* in the woodshed, working out the most insane licks and grooves humans are capable of creating.

This powerhouse quartet is featured on Drum Workshop's recently released *Kick Snare Hat* DVD. The unique performance/documentary set—which in part inspired this story—was shot on location in the drummers' hometowns and churches. Besides getting interviews with each player about his or her personal history and technique, we're treated to conversations with important figures in the drummers' lives, providing us with rare insight into their extraordinary playing—and allowing us the opportunity to really get a sense of them as people. This unusual approach (for a drum DVD, at least) was brought to life by Brian French and Mickey Cevallos, who directed the film in association with Scott Donnell and DW. (Check out this issue's Backbeats for a recap of the DVD's premiere, held at the Grammy Museum this past February.)

All four drummers started playing at a young age in their place of worship, and all attended the now-famous drummer sheds—a healthy, homegrown, and highly competitive scene that's still popular today. The events, which feature four or more drummers, have given players a chance to get together with their peers, play off each other, share ideas, and push themselves to awesome levels of greatness. Some of these musicians, like our four cover artists, have gone on to become household names in the drumming community.

Gerald, Aaron, Cora, and Nisan feel strongly that they are truly blessed by God to be playing drums for a living. This writer has known each of them personally for some time; I have tremendous respect for them as warm, affectionate people, and I can vouch that even with all of their success, they've never forgotten where they come from. To this day they all remain humble, focused... and at the top of their game.



Alex Sotoca

The kits shown here were made especially for the *Kick Snare Hat* DVD. The specs for each drummer's personal rig are listed in this feature.

OLD SCHOOL, NU SKOOL.



For over 44 years, Vic Firth sticks and mallets have been in the hands of the greatest players in the world. Whether it be for a timeless classic, an arena show or a church groove, every product is made with the uncompromising quality and innovation you've come to expect from Vic Firth. So rest assured that whatever your situation demands, you can go ahead and play. We've got your back.

WHEN IT MATTERS, ASK FOR VIC
VIC FIRTH.COM

VIC FIRTH®

©2009 VIC FIRTH, INC.

GERALD HEYWARD

Gerald Heyward is one of the most respected drummers in the R&B world. He has played with just about everyone on the scene, including Janet Jackson, Brandy, Blackstreet, Guy, Teddy Riley, Rodney Jerkins, Keith Sweat, Stacie Orrico, Coolio, Hezekiah Walker, P. Diddy, Missy Elliott, Michael Jackson, Chris Brown, Beyoncé, and Mary J. Blige—for whom he not only played drums but served as musical director. Gerald's also responsible for bringing his signature gospel drumming style into the pop/rock mainstream, thanks to his work on Matchbox Twenty singer Rob Thomas's solo CD, *Something To Be*.

Heyward was born in Brooklyn, New York, and began playing congas at an early age. Upon noticing the absence of a drummer at his church services, he promptly moved over to the kit—and proceeded to become a certifiable monster. Credited as being the “godfather” and trendsetter of the renowned sheds, Gerald is looked up to by the other drummers featured in this article, who mention him as a main influence. After getting to know him, it's immediately understandable why.

MD: Congrats on the DVD. It really came out great.

Gerald: Thank you! It's about showing people where you came from, and what drives you. A lot of your drumming style has to do with your surroundings. It's just like this whole shedding thing that's going on around the world right now. Everybody does it differently.

MD: That's the value of the sheds: You learn from the other players, and they learn from you.

Gerald: Exactly. When I met Aaron and I went to what he called “the basement” in D.C., those guys down there were on to a whole other thing. It was the same in Chicago and all the different places—everyone does it differently.

MD: You were actually one of the first to get it going, right?

Gerald: Yes, in my hometown of Brooklyn. It's grown to be a common thing now, even when you're on tour and you visit other drummers' states. It's not like, “Let's go out to eat,” it's like, “Let's go shed!” [laughs]

MD: It's like a friendly showdown.

Gerald: Yeah, it shows your skill. You know if someone can really play or not as soon as they start playing. And

Gerald: Yes, and I believe it was a gift from God. Actually, I started out playing the congas. There were two conga



players in my church, Xavier Napper and Ricky Cooper, and they were amaz-

coming, I noticed there were no drums. Little by little I started playing drumset, which came naturally to me after having played congas.

MD: Who was the first drummer that you noticed or made you want to play?

Gerald: The first drummer that impressed me was Jeff Davis. He was a good friend of my uncle's, and he taught me about Steve Gadd and started me listening to jazz records and drummers like Dave Weckl, Jeff Porcaro, and Carlos Vega. People don't know a lot about Carlos, but he was a fantastic drummer. Another drummer who influenced me was my godbrother, Eddie White. He used to buy so many records. Every week he'd come home with a new one—Steely Dan's *Aja*, all the Al Jarreau records.... I remember the first time I heard Dave Weckl solo, I thought it was incredible; it was like Steve Gadd on steroids.

At that time I didn't know anything about rudiments. I would just try to copy what I was hearing on all these

records. I didn't have anybody to tell me, “This is what you need to be learn-

“If the whole band is talking at a whisper, you can't be yelling.”

maybe you can help that person—or they can help you.

MD: Are you completely self-taught?

ing. The drummer at our church was good, but I didn't have any interest in playing kit. Then when he stopped

ing: left, right, right, left.... So I was learning licks, but I didn't know the basis of the lick or the correct sticking.

Once VHS came out, I was on it like it was records—Billy Cobham, everything.

Another person who played a big part in my playing was Liberty DeVitto. My first concert ever was Billy Joel. The first drumset I bought was a Tama kit, because Liberty had one. And that's where I got my showmanship from. Then my second concert was Chicago with Danny Seraphine. The third was Kiss with Peter Criss.

MD: That's a long way from church.

Gerald: When I came back from the Kiss concert and told my grandmother and uncle what I went to see, they blasted me. They were calling them demons. [laughs] I used to listen to a lot of Stewart Copeland too. I thought he was great.

MD: How has drumming changed since you started playing?

Gerald: The direction that it's going now is about feel and how to make the song feel good, not about the biggest chops you can play. And you learn that by being a seasoned player—how to pick the subtle things that make it feel good. And it's about playing chops during transitions, not just to fill space. If the whole

GERALD'S KIT

Drums: DW Collector's series in "rich red fade." 18x22 or 18x20 bass drum; 7x8, 8x10, and 9x12 fast toms; 12x14, 14x16, and 16x18 floor toms (with legs); 7x13 Edge snare; 5x12 and 5x14 maple Collector's series auxiliary snares.

Cymbals: Zildjian. 20" Earth ride; 13" hi-hats (K top/Z bottom); 6", 8", and 10" Hybrid splashes; 16", 17", and 18" Hybrid crashes; 16" K China low; 16" A Custom EFX.

Hardware: DW 9000 series cymbal stands, hi-hat stand, and single pedal

Electronics: Roland SPD-S pads

Heads: Remo. Clear Emperor on tops of toms, Diplomat on bottoms; coated Ambassador on tops of snares; Powerstroke 3 on bass drum.

Sticks: Vic Firth Gerald Heyward signature

Mics: Audio-Technica

Accessories:
PureSound snare wires and beaters

Percussion: Rhythm Tech

band is talking at a whisper, you can't be yelling.

MD: What advice can you offer our younger readers?

Gerald: Get the whole package—learn to read, learn the rudiments, and listen to the music, because all those components are going to help you. And learn all styles of music. Find out about the business part of it too. Even the greatest athletes say to their agent at some point, "Look, I want these sneakers, I want this money." You've got to know all that.

MD: Speaking of that, you always have the coolest sneakers on.

Gerald: [laughs]

MD: More important, tell us how you developed such an amazingly fast foot.

Gerald: Another one of my godbrothers, Monte Grier, had this incredibly fast foot. Mind you, I was still playing congas then. But he was the only cat I knew that was doubling up on the bass drum. He didn't play triplets, but his doubles were so fast, it amazed everyone. He would only use a kick, snare, two toms, a cowbell, two cymbals, and a hi-hat, but it sounded like it was ten

Open Your Ears!

TRX Custom-Crafted, Genuine Turkish Cymbals

Close your eyes and listen to the incredible sound of our BRT, ALT, LTD, MDM and DRK Series cymbals. We promise it'll be a real ear opening experience.

Exclusive North American distributor: Direct Music Supply
sales@directmusicsupply.com • 800.828.1601
trxcymbals.com • myspace.com/trxcymbals

 **TRX**[™]
Young Turks.

GERALD HEYWARD

people playing because he was so fast with his foot. So that's what made me get into the whole foot thing.

MD: Do you do it all with a single pedal?

Gerald: Yes. I'd seen double pedals, but we didn't have that stuff in church; we couldn't afford it, it wasn't an option. So I started working on floor tom/bass drum technique to make it sound like two people, and once I started doing that, it was just about working up fast doubles.

I used to tap on the floor a lot. My grandmother would always yell at me, "Stop tapping on the floor!" I didn't realize it at the time, but that was just helping me play faster and faster, and I was able to capitalize on it. And because I didn't know the correct stickings of the rudiments, I was using my foot as a third hand. Every drummer has something that they kind of have over another drummer, and for me it's been my foot.

Before I got the gig with Guy [featuring Teddy Riley], Teddy would say, "This has to be two drummers." And when I sat down and played, he was mortified that I could play those

programmed beats—and Teddy was the one bringing the machines into the mainstream.

MD: What about your pedal tension?

Gerald: It doesn't matter if it's hard or soft. I started out back in the day with the Speed King and the Ghost Pedal—that felt like another shoe was under your foot. [laughs] And then when the Camco pedal came out with the chain, my foot was flying then. And I used a wood beater. If you notice in the DVD, I pull my foot back a lot when I want to go faster.

MD: Do you ever play heel down?

Gerald: No.

MD: How do you feel about some people saying that this type of drumming has practically become a competition?

Gerald: Well, there aren't too many things that you can play that nobody else has heard. And there's always another person who can do something that you can't. So I don't look at it like a competition, I just look at it as having a conversation. I'm talking about something, you're talking about something, and the object is for us to be talking about the same thing. Our main goal is

to be better drummers. The competition thing is kind of wack, because if somebody is not as good as you and walks away feeling like, *I'm terrible and I'm never going to be good at this*, that's not the point. You never want to discourage people. You want to encourage them. And to all the young cats, please stay humble.

After I auditioned for Janet Jackson, she told me, "I knew you could play from the audition. But I wanted to sit down and talk to you so I could see if I could be around you six months from now." And for her that was more important than what I could play. That let me know that there are a lot of people who could be great drummers, but if their attitude sucks you're not going to want them around.

Everyone needs to stay focused and not get too bigheaded, because there's always someone who can play just as well as you, and there's always someone who's going to have a better attitude, and that attitude might win over the playing. So that's my thing, and hopefully the readers and viewers will get the right message.

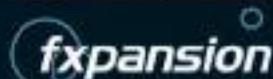
BFD2

The perfect complement to any electronic drum kit!

BFD2.1 New Features

- Overloud Breverb 'BFD2 Edition': Hall, Plate, Room & inverse algorithms integrated into BFD2 mixer
- PSP Vintage Warmer 'BFD2 Edition' integrated into BFD2 mixer
- New engine supports more mics and articulations
- Switch kits & presets with MIDI program change
- In-place preview for kit-pieces
- Load-on-demand RAM optimization
- Preset MIDI maps for all major Edrum modules
- Extensive BFD2 compatible expansion pack range

www.fxpan.com/bfd2



Distributed in North America
by FXpansion USA, Inc.
www.fxpan.com



dw

We Believe that behind every great drummer, you'll find great drumming products.

The 9000 pedal, a high-tech design that's quickly become a worldwide industry standard. A robust combination of steel, zinc and aluminum, that's built to withstand the rigors of the road and provide drummers with unmatched durability. A refined feat of engineering that offers a patented floating drive system, infinite adjustable cam, Delta ball bearing hinge and that unmistakable DW feel. If you haven't played a 9000 pedal, we believe it's time you did.



9000 Artists (L to R) Rexsell Hardy Jr. (Mary J. Blige), JJ Johnson (John Mayer) and Jason Bittner (Shadows Fall)
Product (Clockwise) 9502LB Remote Hi-Hat, 9500BD Hi-Hat, 9000 Single Pedal, 9002 Double Pedal
The complete line of **9000** Series pedals and hi-hats, see them at

www.dwdrums.com

©2008 Drum Workshop, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

AARON SPEARS

If you were lucky enough to catch Aaron Spears' performance at the 2006 Modern Drummer Festival or see him on the DVD of the event, then you already know that he's one of the most energetic, innovative drummers around today. For those who haven't yet witnessed Aaron's powerful, fast, and precise drumming, you need to check him out.

Spears grew up in Washington, D.C., and from the age of six played in church, where he says he realized early on that God gave him a natural ability on the drums. He's also been blessed with a heart of gold and an infectious laugh.

Among those who guided the young drummer were Gerald Heyward, American Idol house drummer Teddy Campbell, and R&B superstar Usher's musical director, Valdez Brantley. Aaron joined the Gideon Band at age twenty-seven, has been "flipping triplets" on the American Idols Live tour for the past five years (he'll explain), and has hit the road with the Backstreet Boys and Usher—whose 2005 Grammy Awards performance with James Brown resulted in the MD office phones ringing off the hook the next day. Everyone wanted to know, "Who was that drummer?"

MD: How old were you when you started playing drums?

Aaron: My mom says I was playing when I was three, just hitting on anything I could. I can remember the first time I played at church. I was sitting on my dad's lap because I couldn't reach the pedal. I was six years old the first time I was able to actually play a song by myself. The longest song without the choir singing was an instrumental jam session during the offering, and I remember playing that. It was crazy!

MD: What attracted you to drums?

Aaron: I always loved to be able to express myself making noise. [laughs] I enjoyed all the other instruments growing up, but there was just something about the drums that really drew me. And then as I got older the drums were something that I used for everything. If I was happy, I played to express my happiness. If I was upset, I would go down and play until I felt better.

MD: Who was the first drummer that you noticed?

Aaron: My father, Kenny, played bongos and congas, but he also played drums. He was really dope. He had opportunities to play with big artists, but he wanted to make sure he had a job and could provide for us, so he didn't take them. Now he's living through me and he's like, "Wow, that's awesome!"

MD: Did you take formal lessons when you were younger?

Aaron: I played in the jazz concert band in high school, and that was my intro-

duction to reading. From there I went to L.A. Harbor College in San Pedro, California, for a few years, where I played in the jazz band.

MD: Have you found that learning to read has come in handy?

Aaron: Absolutely. It started coming in

handy during the American Idols Live tour. Now I'm into this book called the *Encyclopedia Of Reading Rhythms* by Gary Hess. It was given to me by Jason McGerr from Death Cab For Cutie.

Besides being a great player, Jason is a great educator.
MD: What should the average drummer practice?
Aaron: Right now we're in a time when people are too focused on what they're able to do as far as chops and licks. Don't get me wrong, I love to be creative and try to play crazy stuff if I can, but that has such a small place when it comes to the music. So I think it's important for people to focus on playing the music. Work on the feel of what it is you're playing as opposed to what you can do over the top of the music. I feel it's changing, though, because I see a lot of guys playing music again as

"If I was happy, I played to express my happiness. If I was upset, I would go down and play until I felt better."



handy during the American Idols Live tour. Now I'm into this book called the *Encyclopedia Of Reading Rhythms* by Gary Hess. It was given to me by Jason McGerr from Death Cab For Cutie.

Besides being a great player, Jason is a great educator.
MD: What should the average drummer practice?
Aaron: Right now we're in a time when people are too focused on what they're able to do as far as chops and licks. Don't get me wrong, I love to be creative and try to play crazy stuff if I can, but that has such a small place when it comes to the music. So I think it's important for people to focus on playing the music. Work on the feel of what it is you're playing as opposed to what you can do over the top of the music. I feel it's changing, though, because I see a lot of guys playing music again as

handy during the American Idols Live tour. Now I'm into this book called the *Encyclopedia Of Reading Rhythms* by Gary Hess. It was given to me by Jason McGerr from Death Cab For Cutie.

Besides being a great player, Jason is a great educator.

triplets." Can you explain what you mean by that?

Aaron: A lot of times drummers will play left-right-kick, left-right-kick, left-



right-kick, which is cool. But you can flip it different ways. It can be left-kick-right, or right-kick-left, or left-right-kick, right-left-kick. You can also

AARON'S KIT

Drums: DW Collector's series in flat black with silver stars or natural wood with black racing stripes. 20x24 bass drum; 7x10, 8x12, and 14x16 toms; 7x14 Edge snare.

Hardware: 9000 series hardware and single pedal

Heads: Remo. Powersonic on bass drum; clear Emperor on tops of toms, clear Ambassador on bottoms; black Emperor X on snare.

Cymbals: Zildjian. 14" K Custom Session dry hi-hats, 18" K Custom fast crash, 18" K Custom dark crash, 16" A Custom EFX crash with 12" K Custom splash stacked on top, 11" Hybrid splash, 22" dark medium ride.

Sticks: Vic Firth Aaron Spears signature

Accessories: PureSound twisted snare wires and Speedball beater, Toca percussion

put it different places on the drums and cymbals, which results in some really interesting sounds.

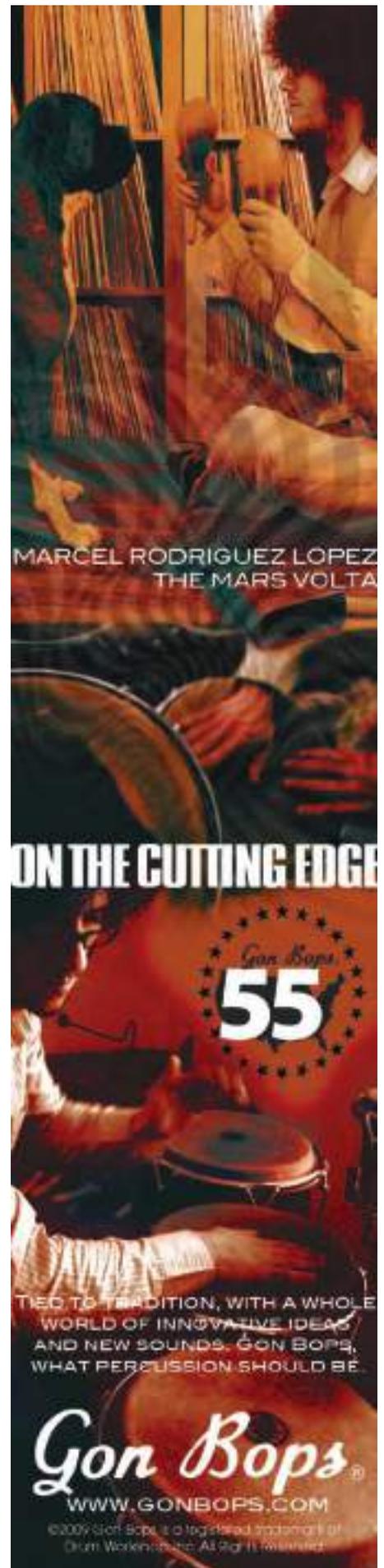
MD: Any particular drummers you've been digging these days?

Aaron: There are so many, it never ends. I'm very impressed with Tony Royster Jr., Thomas Pridgen, Ronald Bruner—the stuff they're able to do on a

kit is incredible. Another cat is Chris Coleman; he's amazing to me because he's such a solid player and he has amazing vocabulary on the kit. And Stanley Randolph with Stevie Wonder is *blazing*. He has a great feel and amazing chops, but it's where he puts it that makes it sweet. Another of my inspirations who keeps me on my toes is my twenty-one-year-old adopted brother, Jamal Moore. He's playing with the Backstreet Boys right now. When we sit down and practice, it always starts off so nice and light, but then it goes into fifth gear in a matter of seconds. [laughs] It's so great to have someone that pushes me like that.

MD: So what's next for you?

Aaron: I have the American Idols Live tour in the summer, and then when I'm done with that it looks like I'll be going into rehearsals with Usher. He's in the studio now working on a record, so hopefully we'll be gearing up to head out on tour. And I'm very excited about a DVD that I'm doing for Hudson Music. It's a huge deal for me because they're the same company that did all the DVDs I watched as a kid, with all the drummers that I really look up to and respect. So for them to be talking to me about my own project...it's another blessing!



CORA COLEMAN-DUNHAM

She may have started playing a bit later than some of her peers, but it didn't take long for Cora Coleman-Dunham to catch up with the boys. Cora was born in Houston, Texas, and attended Kashmere High School, where she was valedictorian. After graduation she moved to Washington, D.C., to attend Howard University. "That was when my formal training really began," she says.

In 2002, after receiving a bachelor of music degree from Howard, the dynamic drummer moved to California, where she soon beat out more than 5,000 other drummers at Guitar Center's prestigious Drum-Off contest. She hasn't looked back since.

Dubbed a "basement all-star" by Aaron Spears, whom she met at one of his sheds (she'd previously met Gerald Heyward at the Drum-Off), Coleman-Dunham was soon performing with Najee, Ricky Fanté, Lalah Hathaway, India Arie, Norman Brown, Mandrill, and Pink. For the past three years, Cora and her husband, bassist Joshua Dunham, have been the rhythm section in Prince's band.

MD: Let's start with the shed and your first experience of being "in the basement." I like the way Aaron describes it; he says everyone was saying, "You going to let that girl play?"

Cora: [laughs] It's funny, I used to hear that all the time, even at marching

Bobby McFerrin was the first rhythmic person that really grabbed my attention, just the stuff he was doing with his mouth.

MD: Drum-wise, who did you notice?

Cora: Marvin McQuitty. And Sheila E was definitely somebody who stood

Stratus was something I remember listening to. I didn't actually get drums until I went to college. In high school I would play in the band room with a metronome. And when I got to eleventh grade I started playing at church. But when I was home I wasn't really serious. I didn't have a practice regimen until I went to college.

MD: What were some of the things you would practice?

Cora: I worked on a lot of rudimental stuff, Ted Reed's *Syncoption* book, and some independence stuff with the ride swing pattern. I played with brushes, just sitting and going through different movements. I studied with Grady Tate for about three years at Howard, and he really got me into sitting with the snare drum and the metronome. He was real smooth with it and made it look so easy, like he wasn't even playing.

MD: When did you start concentrating on groove playing?

Cora: In college and at church in D.C.,

"Our personalities are what set us apart from each other. It would be boring if we all sounded the same."

band in high school. The boys were like, "For real?" But it kind of gives you an edge. For some people it's intimidating, but for me it was like, "Let me definitely show them that I can play!" And I don't mean I'd be arrogant—just confident: "Hey, I can keep up!" [laughs] And at the shed, we were playing just about everything.

MD: How old were you when you began playing?

Cora: I was around fourteen when I started beating on buckets. Then in ninth grade, the training started.

MD: What were you studying?

Cora: I started learning how to read. In marching band I learned how to play all the instruments. My reading kept getting better, so I ended up being leader of the drum section.

MD: Was there anyone who inspired you?

Cora: Even though he's not a drummer,

out. Billy Cobham was another; my dad had a bunch of vinyl, and the album

where it was way more urban gospel and groove oriented.



Alex Solca

**STYLE, CONSISTENCY, RELIABILITY.
THAT'S WHAT THESE ARTISTS DELIVER.
THAT'S WHAT VATER DELIVERS.**



CORA COLEMAN-DUNHAM

*Prince
Sweet Ride / Slick Nut*



NISAN STEWART

*Independent
Gospel Series 5B*



FELIX "D-KAT" POLLARD

*Independent
Session*



GORDEN CAMPBELL

*Jessica Simpson
Gospel Series 5B*



CHRIS JOHNSON

*Stevie Wonder/
Anastacia
3A Wood*



DAVE "DAE DAE" HADDON

*Rihanna
Power 5A Wood*



AARON DRAPER

*Bilal / LL Cool J
Assorted Tintable Shells*



GEORGE "SPANKY" MCCURDY

*K'Naan
Sweet Ride*



BRIAN FRASIER-MOORE

*Madonna /
Christina Aguilera
Brian Frasier-Moore Model*



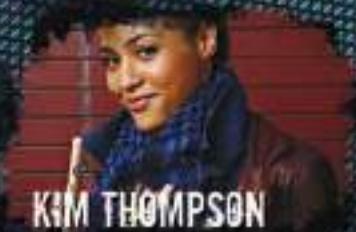
LIL' JOHN ROBERTS

*Janet Jackson
Lil' John Roberts' Philly Style*



NIKKI GLASPIE

*Beyoncé
Phat Ride*



KIM THOMPSON

*Beyoncé
7A Wood*



CHARLES HAYNES

*Kanye West
8A*



BENNIE RODGERS

*Mariah Carey
Fusion Wood*



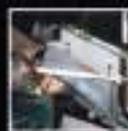
LAWRENCE BREAU

*Robin Thicke
Power 5A Wood*



MANNY DOMINICK

*Kenna / Amerie
Recording*



**LATHE
TURNED**
for consistency



**HAND
ROLLED**
for straightness



**COMPUTER
PAIRED**
for weight and pitch

270 CENTRE STREET
HOLBROOK MA 02343 USA
781.767.1877

VATER.COM

CORA COLEMAN-DUNHAM

MD: Did you use charts on your gigs around then?

Cora: Maybe 40 percent of the time. In college there were certain gigs that I got because I could read. We did a trib-

develop that?

Cora: Thank you, and yes, marching band definitely helped. Something else that was good for my hands was George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*



ute to Etta James at the Kennedy Center in D.C. I was in the pit, and it was only charts. I also played mallet percussion, timpani, and stuff like that in college.

MD: You have such great hand technique. Did marching band help you

book, which I worked out of a lot during junior year.

MD: How would you use the book?

Cora: I highlighted all the left-hand-lead stuff, and I'd just go through lines. I'll still sit with it at the practice pad

sometimes. I had a lesson with Terri Lyne Carrington once, and I'll play patterns she showed me along with the *Stick Control* exercises and just keep the kick and hi-hat pattern going. Or if it's right-left-right-left, I might just do it with my feet on the kick and hi-hat, or I'll try to play the pattern just with my right hand and my left foot.

MD: What have you learned from Prince that's made you a better drummer?

Cora: How to voice fills and beats in different ways. He might sit down on the drums and say, "I want the fill to be like this on the break," and it will be, like, a hit on the bell of the ride, a splashed hi-hat, and then a soft kick and a hard kick. And he can play it. Or he might sound it out or sing the pattern. And I've definitely learned about groove, just making a simple beat go on forever and feel good. Another thing I've had to learn is triggering different samples in the middle of grooves; that was something new for me.

MD: Besides marrying a phenomenal bass player, what tips can you offer a drummer for playing with a bassist?

If you're a modern drummer, you're on DC LIVE every Thursday night!

DC LIVE

video & chat with NEIL PEART

Thursday, June 18th at 6pm PST
on www.drumchannel.com

Neil Peart will be joined by special guests Doane Perry and Terry Bozzio to answer your questions.

See Neil on the 2008 Buddy Rich Memorial Concert DVD set
AVAILABLE NOW

 DRUM CHANNEL.COM

CORA'S KIT

Drums: DW Collector's series maple burl in "tobacco fade" lacquer with gold hardware. 16x20 bass drum; 5x8, 5x10, 9x13, and 10x14 toms; 6x13 Edge snare; 5x13 metal snare.

Hardware: DW. 9700 boom stands, 9900 tom mount, 9300 snare stand, 9500 hi-hat stand, and 9002 bass drum pedal with SM105 and Vater Bomber beater.

Cymbals: Sabian HHX. 20" O-Zone crash, 18" X-Treme crash, 18" X-Plosion fast crash, 13" (sometimes 14") Evolution hi-hats, 10" splash, 18" Chinese, 20" Paragon Diamondback ride, 20" Evolution ride, 21" Vault ride.

Electronics: Roland SPD-S pads, Boss Dr. Beat DB90

Heads: Remo. Powerstroke 4 on bass drum batter, coated Ambassador on front head (with a thick pillow inside); Powerstroke 3 on tops of toms, clear Ambassador on bottoms; coated Ambassador on top of snare.

Sticks: Vater. Sweet Ride and Manhattan sticks, retractable wire brush and Monster brushes.

Percussion: LP Salsa timbale cowbell

Accessories: DW 9120M throne with GK thumper

Cora: [laughs] I would definitely say to make sure the kick pattern complements what the bass player is playing so that it

sounds like the same song. And *really* listen to each other. For example, Josh pulls out these "inner beats" with the way he plucks. He creates a little pattern. So just make sure you're listening to each other and you're locking in to what's going on.

Something else I've learned recording with Prince—live as well, in fact—is to make sure the sound of your kit balances with the bass guitar tone so it sounds like one movement of air. That really makes a difference.

It's all about communication, whatever the instrument is. You can't have a conversation with somebody if you're always doing the talking or they're always doing the talking, or they're talking and you aren't listening. That's what music is: It's communicating. And be sensitive to whatever the music is. You can't

have a conversation in Spanish if you don't know the language, and you can't have a conversation in blues if you don't

know *that* language. You'll sound like a jazz drummer playing blues, or a blues player playing funk. At the same time, I think our playing personalities are what set us apart from each other. It would be boring if we all sounded the same.

MD: What other advice would you give to the younger players that are coming up?

Cora: Be humble—and not fake humility. Just be who you are. And even though your ability is to play drums, or to write, or whatever is an extension of you, don't let it define who you are. The reality is, we are all gifted, because God has gifted us. When you start thinking that you're phenomenal because you made yourself that way, that's when things get kind of messed up.

Also, learn to read, play at different volumes, and play as many styles as you can; it just opens more opportunities for you. And go on as many gigs as you can, and meet as many people as you can—but not just for the sake of connecting. Enjoy having relationships with people. And very importantly, have a mentor, and *be* a mentor!

drummers®



collective

"Along with a life changing experience, Drummers Collective gave me the tools to conquer ANY musical situation life could possibly throw at me; Thanks again, family"

Chris Coleman - Class of 1999

The Worlds #1 Drum School for over 30 years!

541 Avenue of the Americas New York, New York 10011 T - (212) 741 - 0091
email: info@thecollectivenyc.com Fax: (212) 604 - 0760

www.drummerscollective.com

An Accredited Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music



NISAN STEWART

Nisan Stewart was born in Englewood, California, and raised in a musical family. Since instigating drumming sheds in his dad's church, he has become an in-demand drummer and musical director and a hit-making programmer, producer, and songwriter. Stewart recently traveled to the U.K. to play sold-out 60,000-seat arenas with 50 Cent, after which he headed straight out with actor/singer Jamie Foxx. Like the other drummers in this story, Nisan's talents aren't relegated to R&B music; *MD* caught up with the busy drummer between his shows with pop star Jesse McCartney.

World-renowned producer/programmer Timbaland discovered Stewart ten years ago, and Nisan has been playing and recording with the hip-hop superstar ever since. He's performed with or produced a staggering range of pop, hip-hop, gospel, and R&B acts, including Madonna, Beyoncé, Missy Elliott, New Edition, Angie Stone, Mary Mary, Aaliyah, Fantasia, Beverly Crawford, Tweet, Kim Stratton, Kim Burrell, Karen Clark Sheard, and P. Diddy. He also wrote and produced Nelly Furtado's hit single "No Hay Igual." In 2002 Stewart signed a worldwide publishing deal with Universal Music. "Being versatile is the key," he insists. "My taste in music is very broad, and I'll try to play it all. Even if I'm not the greatest at it, I'll still attempt it."

MD: You were born and raised on the West Coast. Would you say there's a big difference between the East Coast and West Coast style and sound?

Nisan: There's definitely a difference. The East Coast players are more

aggressive—and that's true for the producers and songwriters as well. It was more so years ago, though; now everybody is crossing their styles up a bit more.

MD: Like Gerald was responsible for

"Timbaland's programming opened up a new style of playing for us. Drummers really wanted to play those beats because they give the drummer a time to shine."



Alex Solca

starting the sheds back east, you started the sheds out west.

Nisan: That's correct. When my parents would go to sleep I would sneak down to my dad's church, and different guys would bring their drumsets over. It was kind of like back in the day when they used to have illegal street drag racing late at night. [laughs] That's the way it was with drums. Players would come from different places, we'd set up four or five drumsets, and I'd videotape it. Some of the greatest drummers would meet up and practice at my church whenever they were in town. We had some great times, and we learned a lot. I know I certainly learned a lot. Some of the players were so advanced, I used to host it just so I could sit there and watch.

MD: What made you want to play the drums?

Nisan: Seeing the drums in my church. Whoever would come and play, it was the most exciting thing happening for me in church. When you're young you don't really understand what's going on [in the ceremonies], but you understand the music. Then as I got older I started listening to records by the Hawkins Family with Joe Smith. That was probably the beginning of my realizing, *Man, this drummer is really good!* And that turned me on to listening to the Clark Sisters and some of the other gospel groups and drummers. I branched out after I heard Vinnie Colaiuta. He's been my favorite drummer ever since. Then, when I first found out about Buddy Rich...that was amazing. I had to get all of his videos and CDs from the '50s and '60s. I began to believe that the drums are the most entertaining instrument.

MD: How old were you when you started playing?

Nisan: My first opportunity to play in church was when I was eight or nine years old, even though I had already been playing at home. While my dad was working and studying at the church and my mother was doing her thing, I'd get on the drums. And when you play the drums in church when no one is in there, it sounds amazing acoustically. So to me, it was the best

KICK SNARE HAT

The Superstar Drummers of Hip Hop and R&B

THE TRUE
HEARTBEAT
OF HIP HOP
AND R&B



DW DVD Presents
**KICK
SNARE
HAT**

The Superstar Drummers of Hip Hop and R&B

FROM PHILIPINE, AKA THE DRUMMER OF THE YEAR - THE SUPERSTAR DRUMMER OF HIP HOP AND R&B
AND GERALD HEYWARD, AKA THE DRUMMER OF THE YEAR - THE SUPERSTAR DRUMMER OF HIP HOP AND R&B
AND NISSAN STEWART, AKA THE DRUMMER OF THE YEAR - THE SUPERSTAR DRUMMER OF HIP HOP AND R&B
AND CORA COLMAN-DUNHAM, AKA THE DRUMMER OF THE YEAR - THE SUPERSTAR DRUMMER OF HIP HOP AND R&B

Available only at www.alfred.com

dw (77-8DVDKKS) **DVD**
2 DVDs, \$29.95

Shot in HD, this 2 DVD set includes:

- Exclusive interviews
- Behind the scenes footage
- Bonus features
- Thrilling performances, and more!

**FOUR DRUMMERS.
FOUR STORIES.
ONE VISION.**

The heartbeat of hip-hop and R&B comes from the streets. It's a dream that never dies and a lifestyle that only a few drummers will get to live. From the inner cities to the churches, and from the woodsheds to the arena stages, the drummers that play this music all have a story to tell—and it's as real as it gets.

Join Cora Colman-Dunham, Aaron Spears, Nissan Stewart, and Gerald Heyward as they take you on the ride of a lifetime. Learn what inspires them, drives them, and takes them to the top of their game.

SEE THE TRAILER AND BUY IT TODAY at alfred.com/dw



Alfred Music Publishing
LEARN • TEACH • PLAY

NISAN STEWART

place to practice.

MD: What was your practice routine like during that period?

Nisan: I would practice listening to gospel records. And I had tapes and a little boom box. Before then I was listening to gospel music so much that I would know the songs by heart, singing them in my head. As a freshman in high school I joined band, and that's when it started going to another level. I was only in the band for one year, though, because I wanted to play football. But during that first year in the band I gained a different kind of

respect for the snare drum players and the other band players. They may not have been able to play the set, but they were incredibly good when it came to all the rudiments.

MD: Did you then apply those snare drum rudiments to the drumkit?

Nisan: Yes! I regret that I didn't do it enough, though. I got a hold of a video that Frank Briggs did years ago, and he was playing all that at another level. That really showed me the importance of bringing the rudiments to the drums.

MD: Let's jump ahead and talk about Timbaland. He's obviously an amazing

programmer and producer; does he play the kit?

Nisan: He plays a little bit, but it's not like he would do a gig. However, his knowledge as a programmer...he opened up a new style of playing for us. And that's where it kind of opened up for me—being able to emulate those

Nobody Makes a Better Drumstick.



To truly appreciate and understand our drumstick, you need to look below the surface. The U.S. patent protected processes that we have developed to produce our *Hi-Def Color* finishes require a very high quality drumstick—*straight, smooth, consistent*.

The Stick.

First we begin with the finest hand-selected American Hickory to provide outstanding durability, feel, response and appearance. Our engineers have designed and built the equipment needed to produce the straightest, most consistent, and most durable wood stick on the market.

The Finish.

Ah, the Hot Sticks *Hi-Def Color* finishes.

Rub them. Hit them. Pound them. SLAM them!

These finishes are not coming off until the sticks wear out.

Not only do these finishes look great but the *non-slip finishes* are easy to grip — and, unlike conventional painted or stained drumsticks, Hot Sticks' *Macrolus* and *Artistics* series finishes *won't leave marks on drums or cymbals*.

We at Hot Sticks are very proud of our drumsticks and can say with confidence that

Nobody Makes a Better Drumstick!

Hot Sticks.
HotSticksDrumsticks.com

ROCKIN'
in *Hi-Def Color*

NISAN'S KIT

Drums: DW Collector's series in yellow to red to candy black to solid black over camphor wood fade. 18x23 kick, 8x10 and 9x12 toms, 14x16 and 15x18 floor toms, 6x14 Edge snare.

Cymbals: Zildjian. 17" K Hybrid crash, 18" A Custom crash, 19" K Hybrid crash, 18" A Custom EFX crash, 12" K Hybrid splash, 13" K Hybrid hi-hats, 20" K Hybrid ride.

Electronics: Roland SPD-S pads

Heads: Remo. Clear Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter; clear Ambassador on tops of toms, clear Emperor on bottoms; coated Powerstroke 3 with dot on snare batter.

Sticks: Vater Gospel series 5B and Classic 5B

Accessories: DW hydraulic throne

Hardware: DW. Satin chrome 9700 boom cymbal stands, 8300 snare stand, 9000 single bass drum pedal, 9500 hi-hat stand

beats. Drummers really wanted to play those beats because they give the drummer a time to shine.

MD: As a songwriter and producer yourself, do you write songs around the drums?

Nisan: Yes. I'll tell you how I got into producing. When I started playing for Timbaland, one day we were in the studio working and he said to me, "You should start producing and doing beats. I'm going to show you how to do it!" I learned so much just by watching him.

MD: When you were playing with him at first, were you replacing the beats live, playing with the machine, or doing a combination of both?

Nisan: It was a combination—which became another tricky thing, because some drummers don't know how to play with drum loops. The machine and the live drums mixed together create a distinct sound that enhances the song.

So everybody started doing that and taking it to that next level. What's interesting about it was that sometimes a drummer would produce a song and it would have a swagger that may not be quantized, but the feeling would be so good. So then the challenge for the drummer is to be able to play that same thing. It's one thing to imitate it when there's no loop, but when the loop is there and you're not playing it right, you can be exposed. Some guys can't get it.

MD: Can you offer any tips on getting comfortable with it?

Nisan: When the Notorious B.I.G.'s album came out, I listened to it over and over. I didn't really care about or even know what he was saying, but I loved the music, the beats, and the way it sounded. So I would put that on and practice to those beats. I would work on making the hi-hat sing like the hi-hat on the record and make everything line up. I suggest taping yourself playing along with the music and listening to hear if you're doing it right.

MD: Any studio tips you can offer?

Nisan: There are two reasons they call you: because they know that you bring life to the record, or because the producer knows you can play exactly what they want. Don't focus on making yourself shine, focus on making that record great. I always say I want to hear the records that I played on twenty, thirty years from now. And always be expressive—but for the purpose of making the record come to life. Some drummers just try to make themselves sound sweet, and that doesn't really work.

Also, show up on time, be attentive, and don't be too sensitive. If someone says, "I don't like what you're playing," don't get pissed and wear your feelings on your sleeve—especially when you're working on somebody else's record. Attitude is everything.

Now I'm at the point in my career where if I feel I can't do a good job and I know that somebody like Teddy could come in and do it better, I'll call them in. I don't want to get on the record just for the money. I'll sacrifice because I know there's going to be other records. It's your attitude that's important, and really being into the song. Get into the lyrics, get into the chorus structure—

how it makes you feel—and accompany all of it. And then even if all that stuff is laid out before you even get there, you're still going to be the foundation. It's all about us drummers holding down the foundation. We've got to lay it down so everything else can sit nicely on top.

MD: So what's next for you?

Nisan: I have so many things going on in my life. A lot of people don't know that I'm an ordained minister. Next year I plan on being the pastor at my father's church when he retires. I'm still going to be playing, but I won't be touring as much as I do now. I keep telling myself

that it's a blessing to be playing drums as a job that takes care of my family. A lot of people take it for granted—they just care about the glamour and the shine. But it's *such* a blessing to be able to play the drums. The drums change people's lives. I'm just honored to be playing and doing things like this interview with *Modern Drummer*. Thank you for the opportunity.

Go to moderndrummer.com for much more with Gerald, Aaron, Cora, and Nisan.



EMAD
ONYX™

JET BLACK & ROCK SOLID

ONE PLY OF 10-MIL BLACK FILM WITH A MICRO-CLEAR MATTE COATING AND AN EMAD SYSTEM DELIVER THE DARK TONE OF ONYX WITH PUNCH AND CONTROL OF THE EMAD

EVANS

Drumheads & Company, Inc. | Ferrisburgh, NY 11735 USA | www.evansdrumheads.com
Evans, Onyx, and Onyx are registered trademarks or trademarks of Drumheads & Company, Inc. or its affiliates
in the United States and/or other countries. © 2009. All Rights Reserved.

12 REASONS TO LOVE



LARRY MULLEN JR.

U2's gradual progression from an unpolished pack of Irish teenagers schooled on classic rock and post-punk to shape-shifting superstars is due in large part to the skills of the band's drummer, Larry Mullen Jr.

Pick any phase from U2's thirty-year (and counting) career, and you'll hear Mullen pacing things with some sort of twist. It could be the martial drubbing of a timbale, a metronome-like pulse, a loose and funky groove, a ceding of his turf to loops and drum machines, or an explosive garage rock wallop.

Such a versatile arsenal is the mark of a player capable of hanging with wholesale change, which Mullen is. He's never been a look-at-me-play-my-drumkit virtuoso, just the absolute perfect timekeeper for the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame band. From the brash urgency of 1980's *Boy* through the eclectic yet accessible sounds of U2's latest set, *No Line On The Horizon*, Mullen has laid down many memorable performances on record. Here, we celebrate twelve of them.

"BULLET THE BLUE SKY," 1987

Mullen opens this howling song from *The Joshua Tree* with a lurching beat. His kick drum is cinched up tightly with Adam Clayton's bass line, and his 16th-note hi-hat pattern plays a hypnotic foil to the slide guitar smeared throughout the song by the Edge. Aside from a rattling snare fill at the breakdown, Mullen never deviates much from his intro part, a Bonham-like groove you recognize instantly.

"SUNDAY BLOODY SUNDAY," 1983

There wasn't a young drummer anywhere in the mid-'80s who didn't mimic Mullen's "rat-a-tat-tat, tat" intro to "Sunday Bloody Sunday." It's one of the most recognizable drum figures in rock history. And it sets the stage for a song where Mullen's roots as a marching band drummer are put to good use.

"WHERE THE STREETS HAVE NO NAME," 1987

On the rare occasions when you heard real drums on Top 40 radio circa 1987, they were gated and triggered beyond

recognition. Depressing. "Where The Streets Have No Name" is an anomaly. In the anthem's verses, Mullen plays a tribal pattern on the snare with the snares thrown off. Then, in the soaring chorus, he drops in huge cymbal crashes, with the snare accenting 2 and 4. It's primal timekeeping—the complete opposite of what was being heard on the radio back then. Thank goodness.

"DESIRE," 1988

The fascination with American roots music U2 hinted at on *The Joshua Tree* was in full bloom on the studio tracks tacked on to the live album *Rattle And Hum*. The Bo Diddley beat Mullen plays on "Desire" was completely out of character yet so totally spot on it could've passed for a lost single from the Chess Records archives.

ACHTUNG BABY, 1991

When U2 released *Achtung Baby*, they sounded like a totally new band—one with a fairly raw and distorted sound, plus a looseness in the bottom end you never figured they were capable of.

While the songwriting on the album is some of U2's most enduring, *Achtung Baby* is really brought to life by the way tracks like "Mysterious Ways," "Ultra Violet (Light My Way)," and "The Fly," to name a few, absolutely swing. Mullen and Clayton are the true stars of this album.

"GLORIA," 1981

A young Mullen put on his own little variety show in "Gloria." From the Beatles-y "Ticket To Ride"-like beat he plays as the song fades in to the double-time parts to the way he keeps the verses surging with a clatter of 16th notes on the hi-hat, he proved early on that he was capable of handling many different feels—often within the same tune.

"[PRIDE] IN THE NAME OF LOVE," 1984

All the trademarks of Mullen's sound in the '80s are represented on this uplifting single: a 16th-note hi-hat pattern, measure-long snare rolls with alternating accents, and Larry's patented tom hit (usually a floor tom, to the left of the snare) on the "e" of 4. Like he did on many tracks during U2's first phase, Mullen weaves these parts together seamlessly, proving himself to be an unobtrusive player with a style all his own.

"VERTIGO," 2004

This track hits you like a ton of bricks, mostly because of Mullen's simple-as-it-should-be kit work. There's really not much else to do on a song as straightforward as "Vertigo" but to keep the beat and accent when you need to, then repeat as necessary. It's that streamlined approach that makes this one of Mullen's finest recorded performances. And it's the little things too: the stick clicks to open the song, the double snare hits to accent Bono's melody in the verses, and the spot in the choruses where Mullen beats the crash cymbal like it owes him money.

"WITH OR WITHOUT YOU," 1987

"With Or Without You" rises from a whisper to a scream to a full-throated roar and then settles back down

again, all on the strength of Mullen's performance. His part is a layered arrangement of drums and percussion, with the close-miked and roomier sounds of his kit mixed in and out to great dynamic effect. It's not so much studio sleight of hand as it is capturing a great drummer at work from several different angles and fusing the results together. And Mullen always captures the dynamics of the track live. See the *Rattle And Hum* movie, or YouTube, for proof.

"ELEVATION," 2000

When U2 has consciously tried to make dance music, like on the loop-heavy *Pop* album, the results have been too rigid and synchronized—nothing at all you'd want to shake it to. Tracks like "Elevation" prove the band needs Mullen and Clayton working together to make things swing. This song from *All That You Can't Leave Behind* marked a hip-swiveling return to *Achtung Baby's* funky form. A classic example of U2 making fantastic dance music without trying too hard.

"GET ON YOUR BOOTS," 2009

With its trippy mash-up of alt-rock and dance-floor styles, the first single from *No Line On The Horizon* harkens back to the era of *Pop* and *Zooropa*. Mullen's live kit work—like the rattling Ringo-style fill that opens the song and repeats several times—alternates with loops, giving the dark yet infectious track a man-versus-machine feel. And even though Mullen plays nice with technology, the drummer is going to win that matchup every single time.

"I WILL FOLLOW," 1980

Everyone thinks of the iconic guitar riff when "I Will Follow" comes to mind. But it's Mullen's steady beat and simple fills that keep the song chugging along. This is the beat a million songwriters have programmed on their demos in hopes their drummer gets the hint: Don't get in the way of the riff.

THE ONLY THING BETTER THAN 3DRUMSTICKS IS DRUMSTICKS AND A FREE CYMBAL STAND.



For a limited time at participating 3Drumsticks dealers, buy a brick* of sticks and get a PDP 800 Series Colorware™ cymbal stand absolutely FREE.

To see the full line of professional quality, all-hickory 3Drumsticks visit: www.3drumsticks.com

*A brick is comprised of 4 sets of sticks ©2009 Drum Workshop, Inc.

The 3 logo is a trademark of Drum Workshop, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Nouveau Retro

PART 1: GETTING THAT "VINTAGE" SOUND

by Daniel Glass

For the past fifteen years, I've been the drummer with Royal Crown Revue, a band that specializes in writing and performing various types of classic American music. Our repertoire includes everything from swing and bebop numbers to rhythm and blues, rockabilly, and early rock 'n' roll.

Through my work with RCR, I became interested in the drummers who created these musical styles, and I began researching their playing techniques, as well as the gear they used. What I've concluded is that developing an understanding of these classic styles will not only help you expand your knowledge base but will also help you take your career to the next level—regardless of the type of music you play.

Not sure what I'm talking about? Well, suppose you have a gig this weekend with a wedding, casual, or club band that plays swing standards like "Take The 'A' Train." That particular song was first recorded in 1941. Do you know how the drummers played in that era, or what their kits sounded like? Or say you're auditioning for a blues band that does Muddy Waters covers. What kind of cymbals should you bring along to help you sound as good as you can? Or perhaps your rock band is about to do its first recording and you want your drums to sound like John Bonham's. What can you do to get that sound?

In attempting to address questions like that, I've designed this series of articles to help you make important connections with the history of our craft. The knowledge of past styles gives you

depth as a musician, and it's smart business to boot. You'll have increased confidence when approaching new situations. And your ability to conjure up an authentic playing style and sound could be the deciding factor as to whether you get the call for that big gig or recording session.

The first installment of this series addresses how to give your drums a "vintage" type of sound. Subsequent articles will offer tips on how to approach classic styles like swing, rhythm and blues, and early rock 'n' roll.

THE VINTAGE SOUND

It's no secret that many of today's top producers and studio players record with vintage drums or strive to create a vintage vibe. Why? Because a drum honed by time and age has its own unique tone, a distinct personality that can't be matched by a drum that was mass-produced last month. The vintage sound can also recall a particular time period or put the listener in a certain mood. Not everyone has the space or budget to buy a vintage kit, but there are many ways in which you can achieve that effect on whatever kit you already own.



Various bass drum batter head muffling techniques. Clockwise from top left: felt strip, rolled-up towel taped to inside of head, felt beater with moleskin, external muffer.



John Bonham never muffled his bass drum, and he never cut a hole in the front head.



J.M. Van Eaton recording at Sun Studio in Memphis in the mid-1950s. Notice the lack of separation between the players, as well as the minimal miking on the drums. Interestingly, J.M. is using a 45 rpm record as a snare drum muffle. Now that's improvisation!

D.J. Fontana in the studio with Elvis, circa 1956. Notice the calfskin head on the front of the bass drum and the minimal number of mics on the kit.



DO SOME RESEARCH

It's helpful to start by figuring out exactly what vintage drums are supposed to sound like, so I recommend you do a little old-fashioned research. Begin by checking out some setups from the past. John Cohan's *Star Sets: Drum Kits Of The Great Drummers* is a terrific pictorial history that will guide you through seven decades of legendary setups. The photos are a great visual addendum to the suggestions I make in this article.

Another way to learn about vintage drum sounds is to listen to recordings from the eras we're discussing. For a list of quintessential artists and albums, check the recommendations on the Drum History section of my Web site. YouTube is also a fantastic reference tool.

Now let's take a closer look at some key elements of the kit.

Heads: Probably the cheapest and easiest way to give your kit a vintage

twist is to modify the heads. It's important to remember that the synthetic drumheads we use today were not invented until the late 1950s. Before that, every drummer played on heads made from animal hide (usually calfskin). Whereas modern heads have a sharp attack that is tonally precise, calf heads offer a darker, warmer, and broader sonic palette. The rough surface of a calf head also makes it ideal for brush playing. Countless iconic drum tracks—from the thundering tom-toms of Gene Krupa to the classic snare work of Art Blakey to the rock 'n' roll backbeats of Earl Palmer—were created on calfskin heads.

A variety of companies still tuck calf heads today. Earthtone and Rebeats are two of the best. Calf heads don't cost a whole lot more than regular heads, and they can provide a cool sonic canvas on which to experiment. I strongly recommend that you give the real thing a try.

Be forewarned, however, that calf heads are *very* sensitive to changes in the weather, so I don't recommend them if you travel constantly, or if you play a lot of outdoor gigs.

To that end, there are a variety of synthetic calf reproductions that are more durable and come pretty close to matching the authentic sound and feel of the original. Aquarian's Modern Vintage line is my personal favorite; I use them on my bass drum and toms. The Remo Fiberskyn series is also very popular.

Bass drum: The sound of the bass drum underwent a radical transformation sometime in the early 1970s, when close-miking the kit became standard practice in studios and on stage. Audio engineers, whose job had once been to merely capture the sound of the drum, now had the power to *control* the sound. Preferring a nice clean signal to all those pesky overtones, engineers began

CONGRATULATIONS
2009 READERS POLL WINNERS



ALEX ACUÑA
MORGAN AGREN
KENNY ARONOFF
TOMMY BALES
BRAIN

DANNY CAREY
JACK DEJOHNETTE
PETER ERSKINE
STEVE GADD
DAVID GARIBALDI

TOMAS HAAKE
GAVIN HARRISON
RODNEY HOWARD
TOMMY IGOE
STEVE JORDAN

requesting that drummers severely deaden bass drums and record them through a hole cut into the front head. It's a practice that we follow rigidly to this day.

Unfortunately, it seems everyone has forgotten that before the '70s, all drummers used an "open" bass drum, regardless of the style they played. In reality, foot control and tuning—not just muffling—had a lot to do with how one style differed from another. If you were playing swing music, a low tone from the bass drum was necessary to create the "walking" pulse that was so crucial to driving the band. If you played bebop, your bass drum had a higher pitch but still needed to be open so you could play melodically and "drop bombs" for effect. Even the great rock drummer John Bonham, whose epic sound remains so widely imitated to this day, always played his 26" bass drum without a hole and free of internal muffling. I get a lot of raised eyebrows from engineers when I show up on a gig or a session with a bass drum that "has no hole in it." But once they hear how good the sound is, they lose their bias pretty quickly.

There are many different muffling techniques you can use to tame the boom of a bass drum without completely killing its tone. One of the most common is to stretch a 2"-3" strip of felt across the inside of one or both heads, sliding it under the hoop at either end. Or you can buy a head that's pre-fitted

with felt or another muffling material. If you want greater control, you can purchase an adjustable external muffle that can be attached directly to the hoop. And some drummers fill the bottom of the bass drum with crumpled newspaper (no joke) or tape a rolled-up towel along the inside bottom of each head (a personal favorite of mine). In a pinch, I'll simply lay an empty stick bag or cymbal bag against the front head, which usually does the trick.

One final note on bass drums: If you want a more mellow attack, try using a round all-felt beater, and paste a piece of moleskin at the point of contact on your batter head.

Cymbals: As with drums, cymbals have evolved a great deal over the years. Large ride cymbals with a diameter of 20" or more did not exist in the swing era of the 1930s. So if you're playing swing standards like "In The Mood," focus your groove on the hi-hats. For a more authentic sound, try using a pair of 12" splashes as hi-hats, rather than standard 14" models. With smaller (and thinner) hi-hats, you'll find it easier to capture the smooth pulse that's the trademark of the era.

When ride cymbals made their appearance in the early '40s, they were generally thinner and had a smaller bell than what we use today. So if you play styles like bebop, soul, or early rock 'n' roll, you should have at least one ride in your arsenal that fits these specs.

Recording and miking techniques:

This topic could be the subject of its own article, so let me just say this: If you want your drums to sound vintage, then mike them in a traditional fashion. Again, check out pictures of classic setups to see how drums were miked back in the day. See if you can mimic how the mics and drums were arranged within the room itself. If you favor a multi-mic setup, use more of the overheads in your mix while backing down the mics that are on the individual pieces of your kit. Finally, compare your recordings with classic ones to hear how closely your sound matches the ones you're trying to emulate.

Next month we'll cover playing in an authentic early rhythm and blues style.



Since 1994, **Daniel Glass** has played drums with the pioneering "retro swing" group Royal Crown Revue. He has also recorded and performed with Bette Midler, Gene Simmons, Mike Ness, Freddy Cole, and many others. Daniel's writings on drum history have appeared in *The Encyclopedia of Percussion*, *MusicHound Swing: The Essential Album Guide*, and numerous other music and drumming publications. His latest book is *The Commandments Of Early Rhythm And Blues Drumming* (cowritten with Zoro). You can learn more about Daniel's obsession with classic American music at danielglass.com.



20 CATEGORIES, 32 ARTISTS 1 STICK COMPANY

PAUL LEIM
JOJO MAYER
DAVE MCAFEE
MITCH MITCHELL
STANTON MOORE
KRIS MYERS

DAFNIS PRIETO
JIM RILEY
TONY ROYSTER, JR.
JEFF SIPE
STEVE SMITH
AARON SPEARS

DAVID STANOCH
JASON SUTTER
AHMIR "QUESTLOVE"
THOMPSON
JEFF "TAIN" WATTS
DAVE WECKL

VIC FIRTH®

Top 10 Rudiments

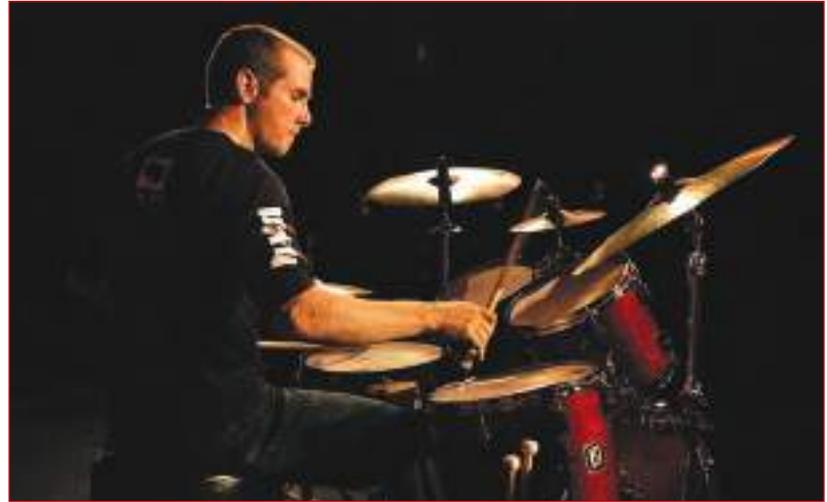
PART 4: THE PARADIDDLE

by Bill Bachman

The paradiddle is one of the most frequently used rudiments, yet many players haven't tapped into its natural ability to develop accent and tap control. If you play paradiddles without a clear accent on the first beat, the rudiment can sound monotonous. But building your paradiddle chops using clear accents—made possible through downstroke/upstroke control—will allow you to play paradiddles and other compound stickings with more dynamic expression.

To begin, let's look at the downstroke and upstroke techniques that are needed to play accented paradiddles. The downstroke starts high (roughly 90°) but stops low after the stroke (around 1" from the head). The upstroke starts low and is lifted back to the "up" position after striking the drum. The key to proper downstrokes is to hit the drum in the same way you would with a full stroke (aka a free or legato stroke)—but immediately after the stick strikes the head, squeeze the fingers just enough to keep the stick tip close to the drum.

The technique you'll use to play paradiddles slowly is dramatically different from the one you'll use to play



them fast. Here are technical guidelines for playing paradiddles at various tempos.

Slow: Stop the stick after the accent by squeezing the back of the stick against the palm. Use mainly wrist strokes for all notes.

Medium: Restrict the accent's rebound with the fingers, but allow some of the stick's energy to propel the unaccented notes. Use a combination of wrist and fingers for the inner beats.

Fast: Play accents using a slight whipping motion, often called the Moeller technique. Don't restrict the

rebound after accents. Play unaccented inner beats with the fingers. (At very fast tempos, paradiddles must be executed almost exclusively with the forearms and fingers.)

In addition to playing the exercises in this article, be sure to practice paradiddles going evenly from slow to fast to slow over one minute. Gradually adjust your technique as the tempo goes up and down. Try to practice these exercises for at least five minutes each day. Good luck!

1

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

2

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

15

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

16

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

These three variations contain hits on the ride cymbal bell.

17

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

18

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

19

This example uses a double-stroke sweep from the ride to the floor tom.

20

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

For an additional challenge, try playing the right-hand hi-hat parts with the left foot.

21

Now layer a ride pattern on top. Once you have this down, go back and experiment with other ways to voice the rumba clave within linear funk grooves. Have fun!

22



GET YOUR FREAK ON.
 ANYTHING you want on a bass drum head!
 877.DRUM.ART

DrumART.com Use Your Head!
 Custom Bass Drum Heads

MOONGEL[®]
 WORKOUT PAD[®]

“I can honestly say, after 6 months and well over a hundred hours of hard-hitting use, the product looks like I bought it yesterday. There isn't a mark on it anywhere. The pad works like new, and looks better than my newer RealFeel practice pad.”

– www.rockdrummingsystem.com

RTOM[®] Distribution: bigbangdist.com

LAMB OF GOD'S Chris Adler WRATH

by Ed Breckenfeld

Lamb Of God's third studio album for Epic Records is a testament to both the creative mind and the physical powers of drummer Chris Adler. Known for his imaginative ways of slicing and dicing metal patterns, Adler ups the ante on *Wrath* with a new batch of attention-grabbing double kick beats and fiery fills. Speed and complexity rule, yet everything works perfectly to support the dark intensity of the music. Here are a few samples.

"IN YOUR WORDS"

After a short instrumental opening, *Wrath* explodes into this menacing track. Adler blasts out of his slow-motion half-time feel with a 32nd-note fill that combines single strokes and quads. The space in the first three measures of the groove helps maximize the impact of the speedy fill. (0:08)

Musical notation for the 'In Your Words' drum sequence. It consists of four staves of music in 4/4 time with a tempo of 114. The notation includes various drum symbols: open H.H. (marked with *), H.H. (marked with x), S.D. (marked with x), F.F. (marked with x), B.D. (marked with x), H.H. (marked with x), and w/foot (marked with x). The sequence starts with a slow-motion half-time feel and features a 32nd-note fill. The notation includes accents (>) and a 'choke' mark.

"SET TO FAIL"

This intro drum sequence is an all-out rhythmic assault. Adler shows his quickness with the incredible opening pattern, which he then alternates with a classic blast beat. The crack of Chris's snare rivals the force of his double bass work.

Musical notation for the 'Set to Fail' drum sequence. It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time with a tempo of 115. The notation includes various drum symbols: open H.H. (marked with *), H.H. (marked with x), S.D. (marked with x), F.F. (marked with x), B.D. (marked with x), H.H. (marked with x), and w/foot (marked with x). The sequence starts with a double-time pattern and alternates with a classic blast beat.



MUSIC KEY		R.C.	China	Splash
open	H.H.	*	*	*
H.H.	H.H.	*	*	*
S.D.	S.D.	*	*	*
F.F.	F.F.	*	*	*
B.D.	B.D.	*	*	*
H.H.	H.H.	*	*	*
w/foot	w/foot	*	*	*



Neil Lim Sang

Musical notation for the main guitar riff. It consists of one staff of music in 4/4 time. The notation includes various drum symbols: open H.H. (marked with *), H.H. (marked with x), S.D. (marked with x), F.F. (marked with x), B.D. (marked with x), H.H. (marked with x), and w/foot (marked with x). The sequence features a combination of 16th and 32nd notes on the kicks.

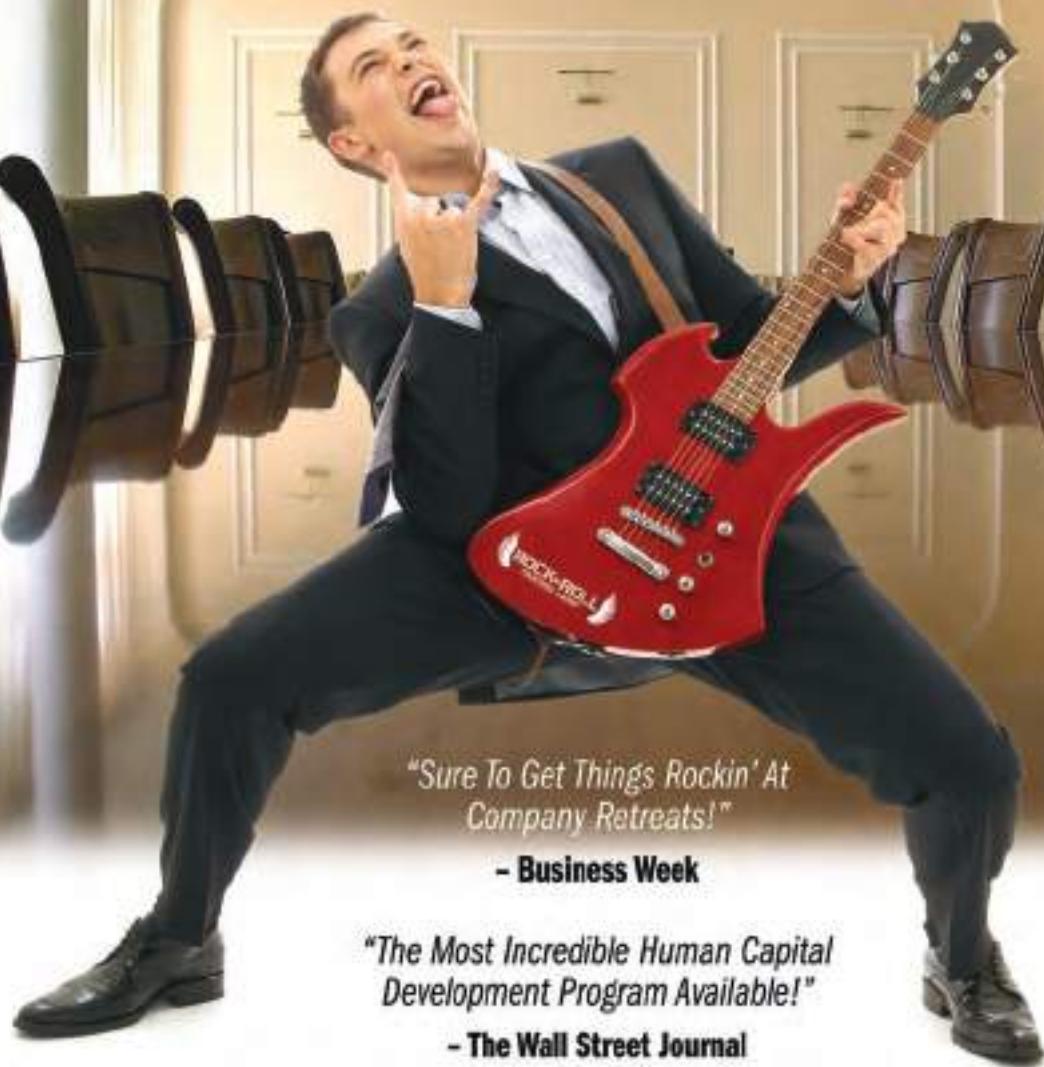
Later, the song moves into its main guitar riff, which Adler matches with a combination of 16th and 32nd notes on his kicks. (0:16)

Musical notation for the 'Contractor' drum sequence. It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time with a tempo of 112. The notation includes various drum symbols: open H.H. (marked with *), H.H. (marked with x), S.D. (marked with x), F.F. (marked with x), B.D. (marked with x), H.H. (marked with x), and w/foot (marked with x). The sequence starts with a double-time pattern and features a double-time pattern.

"CONTRACTOR"

This track opens with a double-time pattern (Example 4). Notice how the bass drum part in each measure builds from beginning to end, giving the sequence more of a sense of forward motion than if Chris had played straight 16th notes on the kicks throughout.

CORPORATE
ROCK 'N' ROLL
FANTASY CAMP



*"Sure To Get Things Rockin' At
Company Retreats!"*

- Business Week

*"The Most Incredible Human Capital
Development Program Available!"*

- The Wall Street Journal

Step out of the boardroom and into the spotlight!

Corporate Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp is an amazing, unforgettable experience that's ideal for your company's next corporate retreat, training seminar, core training program, convention or sales meeting. Our vision is for the Corporate Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp to be the global leader in corporate entertainment, motivation, team building and training. To offer life changing experiences to our clients and build better employees through the power of Rock 'n' Roll.

For more information about Corporate Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp call David Fishof at
(888)762-BAND or visit www.rockcamp.com

pro-mark

Epiphone

PREMIER Guitar

dw

POUSTAR

CLASSIC

MODERN DRUMMER

CHRIS ADLER

4

♩ = 179

“FAKE MESSIAH”

In this 12/8 tune, Adler ends the verse with a groove featuring an offbeat hi-hat pattern (measures 1 and 2) that stands out nicely against the slow guitar riff. A pair of quick quads sets up the chorus, where Chris responds to the faster guitar line by switching to a busy kick pattern and straight 8th notes on the hi-hat. (0:37)

5

♩ = 77

The bridge on “Fake Messiah” is more open and is accentuated by Adler’s offbeat splash pattern. Sporadic bass drum figures and a few extra snare hits provide additional rhythmic tension against those offbeat splashes. (2:07)

6

♩ = 77

“GRACE”

Adler decorates this track’s guitar solo with a cool ride bell part over a quarter-note snare/16th-note bass pattern. (2:57)

7

♩ = 127

“BROKEN HANDS”

Example 8 is a great polyrhythmic groove from the “Broken Hands” pre-chorus. Adler’s repeating three-note snare-kick-kick grouping matches up against an 8th-note China part. Adding an extra bass drum note to the last beat of the measure allows Chris to align his snare with a sequence-ending crash. (0:51)



8

$\text{♩} = 80$

“EVERYTHING TO NOTHING”

Adler plays off a percussive guitar riff here, dropping 32nd notes into his 16th-note double kick pattern with surgical precision. (1:55)

9

$\text{♩} = 104$

“CHOKe SERMON”

Here’s a good example of an up-tempo double bass shuffle. The bass drum part delivers energy while maintaining the swing feel of the track. (0:07)

10

$\text{♩} = 172$

“RECLAMATION”

Wrath ends with this heavy half-time tune. Adler once again leaves some space in his groove to offset his double kick flourishes. (4:00)

11

$\text{♩} = 71$

Ed Breckenfeld’s book *Off The Record: Inside The Playing Of Today’s Top Drummers* was recently released by Modern Drummer Publications. You can contact Ed through his Web site, edbreckenfeld.com.



DEREK RODDY - SERPENTS RISE
MEINL DRUM FESTIVAL™ - GERMANY

Derek plays Soundcaster Fusion, Byzance, Soundcaster Custom, Mb20 and Generation X series. Meinl Professional Cymbals are only available at authorized stocking dealers.

Find your dealer at meinlcymbals.com/dealers

Polyrhythms

PART 1: FOUR AGAINST THREE

by Rod Morgenstein

Polyrhythms—the simultaneous combination of contrasting rhythms, or the superimposition of one feel over an existing feel—can add an incredible amount of excitement to a piece of music. One of the most common polyrhythms is four against three. Many rock drummers use this layered rhythm, even if they aren't aware of how it's created. The true beauty of polyrhythms comes into play when they continue over the barline, creating musical tension (the good kind!) that may momentarily confuse the listener until it resolves, most often on beat 1 of the subsequent measure.

The clearest way to develop an understanding of the four-against-three polyrhythm is to accent patterns within constant alternating 16th notes in 3/4 time. Use a metronome throughout this process, as it will let you know where the quarter-note count falls. In Example 1, the quarter-note pulse is accented.

To create four against three, accent every third 16th note while playing quarter notes with the bass drum. The four accented snare notes are evenly spaced and occur in the same length of time as the three quarter notes played with the foot, hence four against three. Try playing this exercise while counting the quarter notes out loud. Then count the four accented snare notes out loud while keeping the bass drum quarter notes consistent. Just remember that the time signature is 3/4, so the snare accents are creating a superimposed rhythm and not a new tempo.

Once you understand this polyrhythm, you can begin to get creative and plug in any three-note orchestration using 16th notes. Examples 3–9 are some commonly used three-note phrases. Try to play quarter notes or 8th notes with the hi-hat foot in Examples 4–7 (8th notes are written in the examples, as they are easier to play). Do your best to count out loud, "One, two, three." In Example 8, the quarter-note ride pattern defines the 3/4 time signature.

MUSIC KEY

H.H.	R.C.	C.C.
T.T.		
S.D.		
F.T.		
B.D.		
H.H.		
w/ foot		

Examples 10 and 11 are in 4/4. These figures are common rock drumming licks that incorporate the four-against-three polyrhythm in the first three beats of the measure.

Examples 12 and 13 extend the four-against-three polyrhythm across the barline, which adds a lot of tension to the phrasing. Make sure to count out loud, "One, two, three, four," when practicing these exercises.

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

12 > > > >

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

13 > > > >

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

Next time we'll explore more ways to play over the barline with the four-against-three polyrhythm.



Rod Morgenstein is a founding member of the groundbreaking fusion band Dixie Dregs. He was also a member of the progressive Steve Morse Band, as well as the pop/metal band Winger. In addition, Rod has performed with the Rudess/Morgenstein Project, Jazz Is Dead, Platypus, and the Jelly Jam. Rod is currently a professor of percussion at Berklee College Of Music.



DrumDial

Drum Tuner

"The DrumDial is a great tool which can make any drummer's life easier. It is indispensable for quickly tuning a drumset. I carry it with me on all of my travels and for all of my gigs" -Peter Erskine

Peter Erskine

BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION
 9420 Reseda Blvd., PMB 350, Northridge, CA. 91324
 Ph. 800-547-5401 www.bigbangdist.com

EDUCATION THAT ROCKS!

Your Music Career Starts Here

Percussion Institute of Technology at MI

"PIT gives you the education and industry connections you need to make your dream of being a professional drummer a reality. There's no other school like it!"

Marco Minnemann
 Independent Artist, Visiting Faculty

www.mi.edu
 Call 1.800.255.7529

to join our next open house and experience MI's world-renowned hands-on education for yourself.

Zildjian® / Tré Cool Contest

Zildjian and MD are trying to help Tré clean up the studio after the sessions for Green Day's new CD, *21st Century Breakdown*. As part of the "green" effort, Tré would like to get some lucky readers to recycle some of his gear.





(1) Grand Prize

A full replica of Tré's cymbal setup:

- 14" K/Z Special Hi-Hats
- 20" K Crash Ride
- 20" Oriental China Trash
- 18" A Medium Crash
- 18" K Dark Crash, Medium Thin
- 22" A Ping Ride used during the recording of the new album and signed by Tré
- 6 pairs of Tré Cool signature drumsticks and a pair used on the album
- 1 Tré Cool stick bag

(2) First Prizes

- One 18" K Dark Crash or 18" A Medium Crash used on the album and signed by Tré
- 6 pairs of Tré Cool signature drumsticks and a pair used on the album
- 1 Tré Cool stick bag

(15) Second Prizes

- 6 pairs of Tré Cool signature drumsticks and a pair used on the album
- 1 Tré Cool stick bag



Consumer Disclosure

1. To enter online, visit www.moderndrummer.com between the dates below and look for the Zildjian/Tré Cool Contest button (one entry per email address). 2. ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 3. CONTEST BEGINS JUNE 1, 2009, AND ENDS JULY 31, 2009. 4. Grand Prize Drawing: Winner will be selected by random drawing on August 17, 2009. Winner will be notified by phone or email on or about August 20, 2009. 5. Employees, and their immediate families, of Modern Drummer and Avedis Zildjian Company and their affiliates are ineligible. 6. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. 7. Open to residents of the U.S. and Canada, 18 years of age or older. Void in Quebec, Florida, and where prohibited by law. 8. One prize awarded per household per contest. 9. Prizes: **Grand Prize:** One (1) winner will receive a replica set of Tré Cool's Zildjian six-piece set of cymbals, including one used on the album and signed by Tré; six (6) pairs of Tré Cool signature drumsticks and one (1) pair used on the album; and one (1) Tré Cool stick bag. Approximate retail value of Grand Prize: \$3,210. **First Prize:** Two (2) winners will each receive one (1) Zildjian cymbal used on the album and signed by Tré, either an 18" K Dark Crash or 18" A Medium Crash; six (6) pairs of Tré Cool signature drumsticks and one (1) pair used on the album; and a Tré Cool stick bag. Approximate retail value of each First Prize: \$640. **Second Prize:** Fifteen (15) winners will each receive six (6) pairs of Tré Cool signature drumsticks and a pair used on the album, and one (1) Tré Cool stick bag. Approximate retail value of each second prize: \$145. Approximate retail value of contest: \$6,660. 10. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. 11. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or the winner's name, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/Zildjian/Official Rules/Winners List, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

WHAT
DO YOU
KNOW
ABOUT...?



Peter Gannushkin/downtowndrummusic.net

CHRIS CUTLER

by Ken Micallef

He's flown below the radar for decades. But his work with **Henry Cow**, **the Residents**, **Pere Ubu**, and any number of out-rock ensembles has left an indelible mark on those who've experienced it.

Drummer, sonic adventurer, record label owner, ethnomusicologist, and electronics innovator Chris Cutler is the kind of musician who could scare the daylights out of any number of prog rock drumming gurus.

Cutler was born in Washington, D.C., in 1947, but, like the drummers in the most famous prog bands, he grew up in post-WWII England. And like Carl Palmer of ELP, Phil Collins of Genesis, and Bill Bruford of Yes and King Crimson, he expressed an interest in a wide sphere of music and eventually drummed for some of the U.K.'s most innovative groups. (In fact, Bruford and Cutler both played for the renowned

progressive-world-jazz-psych band Gong at one time.) Cutler continues to push his art close to—if not off—the edge with such artists as Fred Frith, the Art Bears Songbook, the Peter Blegvad Trio, the Bad Boys, Thomas Dimuzio, and Brainville (with Daavid Allen and Hugh Hopper). Meanwhile, meaningful projects involving many of his drumming contemporaries are much fewer and farther between.

Cutler comes from a similar strain of U.K. progressiveness as his early peers, but he's taken his art to a much further, less commercial extreme. His seminal work with Henry Cow (1971–78), Art Bears (1978–81), and David Thomas

(1982–89), as well as with the Thomas-led Pere Ubu, the Science Group, P53, the (EC) Nudes, Cassiber, Jon Rose, Aksak Maboul, Zeena Parkins, and the Residents, shows a deep allegiance to and understanding of avant-garde music. His talent for meshing electronic effects units with the acoustic drumset was not only prescient but visionary.

In his playing, Cutler combines loose-limbed funk, flowing Afrobeat, maddening freeform, and indecipherable art house, depending on the decade, the country, and the other musicians involved. Perhaps most profound, he has pushed his drumming beyond standard timekeeping to free improvisation, influencing drummers like Jim Black and Joey Baron in the process.

"For different projects, I have always slipped between improvisation and composition, abstract and experimental forms, straightforward songs and rock," Cutler says from his home in Surrey, England. "I approach music like an actor, adopting whatever role seems called for by the play rather than trying to find or define a single character that is somehow me. At the same time I recognize that there is a unified intelligence that underwrites all the roles, and specific levels of technique that inevitably emerge. I wouldn't be happy to specialize; I prefer to dodge about."

Cutler deems standard progressive rock boring. He more closely allies his early musical experiences in Henry Cow



Cutler with Henry Cow, 1973.
From left: Geoff Leigh, Tim
Hodgkinson, Fred Frith, Cutler,
John Greaves.

and Art Bears with those of Soft Machine, the Mothers of Invention, Magma, Faust, Samla Mamma Manna, Etron Fou Leloublan, and Univers Zero. "Not that we were musically similar to any of them," he says. "But we felt we shared a certain attitude, maybe a kind of extremism, along with a marked late-twentieth-century genre-mixing approach to rock."



In the mid-'60s, inspired by British free jazz performers such as Paul Lytton, twentieth-century classical composers like John Cage, and some of the more adventurous pop productions of the day, Cutler began to expand the tonal parameters of the drums by employing found sounds like metal trays, unusual striking implements, and electronic manipulation such as contact mics, mixers, and delay units. Avoiding the common approach of exploiting samples, Cutler prefers the hyper-control his complex electrified system provides. "I wanted [to create] an instrument," he explains at his Web site, ccutler.com, "that would respond to the minutia of performative variations, interact with itself, and retain all the qualities of an acoustic instrument while extending itself completely into the electronic realm." To that end, today he employs devices like "Space" and "Whammy" pedals, pitch shifters, and a 16-channel mixer that allows for individual control over each input.

Even a brief listen to Cutler's extremely varied discography will realign your senses to the possibilities of the drumset within improvised music. Like only a handful of drummers can, Cutler expresses an entire universe of emotion, intellect, and responsiveness through his 1960s Gretsch/'70s Asba/Noble & Cooley-based set, which is frequently adorned with contact mics, guitar pedals, and effects processing.

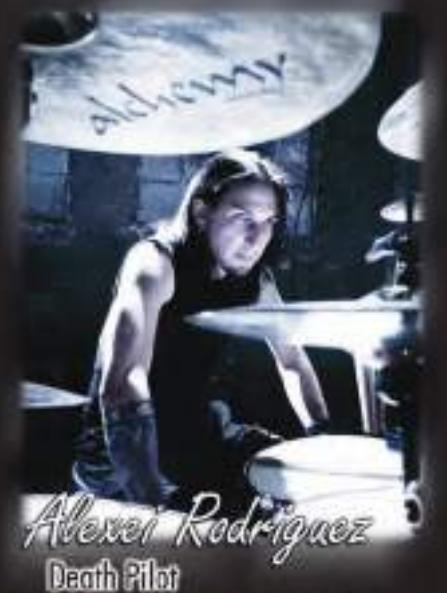
Kick off your Cutler discovery with the Henry Cow releases *Leg End* ('73), *Unrest* ('74), and *Western Culture* ('79), or the recently issued 40th Anniversary Henry Cow Box Set (available from Cutler's ReR Megacorp site, rermegacorp.com). In the most conventional examples of his drumming, Cutler plays what can be described as Michael Giles-meets-Bill Bruford-type figures but with a looser, left-leaning feel. Henry Cow's animated, often humorous material features unusual arrangements and music that was perhaps too sophisticated for 1970s American rock kids enamored of King Crimson; nevertheless, it has inspired countless others across various musical divides.

On the seismic-shifting "Ruins," for example, keyboards and wind instruments screech in unison while Cutler scrambles against the meter like a thief on the run. At times the band sounds like it's creating music for an absurdist play, or performing a soundtrack for a silent movie about the industrial revolution. The melodies are decidedly British and almost agrarian in nature, but

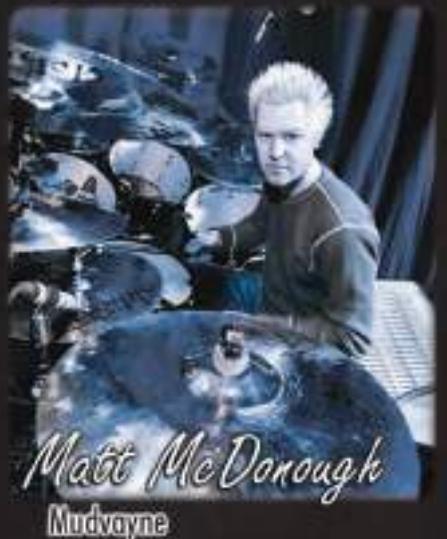
alchemy
cymbals



Brian Vodiken
10 Years



Alexei Rodriguez
Death Pilot



Matt McDonough
Mudvayne

Istanbul Agop & Alchemy Cymbals America, Corp.
21610 Lassen Street Unit 7 Chatsworth, CA 91311
Phone: 818 882 3673 Fax: 818 882 3676
info@istanbulcymbalsusa.com www.istanbulcymbals.com

CHRIS CUTLER

Cutler's tactile, tensile drumming keeps the music grounded somewhere between jazz and avant-garde, as in the Zappa-esque "Nirvana For Mice." How did Cutler develop such boldness?

"By doing it," he replies. "By being with other people who are better than I am and learning from them. By being in ensembles whose members challenged and supported one another. Most importantly, by accepting the idea of failure. Play it safe, and you can always turn in a reliable performance—at whatever your default level is. Take risks, and although sometimes you will crash and burn, other times you can reach the ineffable and unrepeatable. The hard part is to throw away the safety net and accept that sometimes you will wind up looking like an amateur, or an idiot."

Jump to the '80s, when Cutler began working with Cassiber, an extremely challenging group whose music is not for the faint of heart. Later, he performed hand-in-glove rhythms with Les 4 Guitaristes De L'Apocalypse-Bar, began researching the free-drumming/electronic treatments that would appear on his albums *Quake* (with Dimuzio, 1999) and *Solo* (2002), and recorded found sounds for the sonic collagist epics *Twice Around The Earth* (2005) and *There And Back Again* (2007).

In total, Cutler has appeared on more than 150 albums. In 1995 he recorded the (EC) Nudes' *Vanishing Point*, a trio outing that ripped through free-jazz jigs, slaughterhouse blues, Scottish Highland marches, and full-on punk rock assaults in odd meters. The 1996 self-titled release by P53 explored pastoral melodies performed on acoustic instruments and sand-blasted clean by Cutler's furtive, highly changeable rhythms. P53's weird electronic treatments, found sounds, and inscrutable arrangements were all grist for Cutler's mill.

Fast-forward to the present day, and Cutler is still at it, running his

label, Recommended Recordings, and writing essays like "Thoughts On Music And The Avant-Garde."

Upcoming releases include a new Vril CD (with Bob Drake, Lucas Simonis, and Pierre Omer), Heiner Goebbels' *The Italian Concerts*, and recordings with Frith and Dimuzio.

Cutler's most recent collaboration with Frith, *The Stone: Issue Two*, is an hour-long concert laced with noise and plenty of unidentifiable flotsam. Cutler uses the drumset as sonic battering ram, experimental tablet, percussion plaything, and electronic abettor. But no matter how far out he and Frith take it, from the guitarist's flagellating contortions to Cutler's glancing snare blows and electro caterwauls, the music never fails to command attention. It's cacophony as calming antidote, progressive experiment as impressionist music of the spheres. This level of improvisation and interaction makes you reevaluate what the drums are capable of, and where—or whether—you can fit into that new-world scenario.

"I have described my own state of mind when improvising as a kind of forgetful attentiveness," Cutler says. "I'm certainly not listening minutely to what anyone else is doing. I don't routinely make decisions about my own interventions, and I never express myself. As far as possible I try to keep out of the way, and I neither really listen to what the others are doing nor to myself; rather, I try somehow to be aware at some level of the whole sound and make adjustments to that. When things go well, my hands make the adjustments, and if I feel obliged to make a decision, I am either in trouble or applying a tweak to get back to being a distracted observer. I know that sensitivity in improvisers is praised and appreciated, but I'm afraid sensitivity all too easily descends into good manners—and fear. So, for me, improvising is a matter of checking that the instrument is working and then trying not to think about the concert until it's over."



2009's best new shakers: LP Vari-Tone, LP Dyclote and the LP Wah Shaker

LP Micro Snare the best new drumkit add-on



Two new additions to our Brazilian line: LP Rio Tambourim and LP Pardiers



LP Prestige Timbales: a whole new line with awesome improvements



Play the best.

Latin Percussion has been creating the world's best and most innovative hand percussion instruments since 1964.



TEST DRIVE LP'S NEW 2009 PRODUCTS AT THESE FIVE-STAR LOCATIONS:

BENTLEY'S DRUM SHOP

Fresno, CA
559-222-5011
bentleysdrumshop.com
gobentleys@sbcglobal.net

EXPLORER'S PERCUSSION

Kansas City, MO
816-361-1195
explorersdrums.com
info@explorersdrums.com

FORK'S DRUM CLOSET

Nashville, TN
615-383-8343
forksdrumcloset.com

FORK'S DRUM CLOSET

Knoxville, TN
865-691-0020

JEFF RYDER DRUM SHOP

San Antonio, TX
210-599-3143
jeffryderdrumshop.com

JEFF RYDER DRUM SHOP

Austin, TX
512-371-1550

RESURRECTION DRUMS

Hollywood, FL
954-926-0204
rezdrums.com

RHYTHM TRADERS

Portland, OR
503-288-6950
rhythmtraders.com
info@rhythmtraders.com

RUPP'S DRUMS

Denver, CO
888-756-5777
ruppsdrums.com
rupp@ruppsdrums.com

THE DRUM SHOP

Portland, ME
207-874-6630
drumsforless.com
thedrums@maine.rr.com

THE ORIGINAL LONG ISLAND DRUM CENTER

Plainview, NY
800-240-9326
lidrum.com
sales@lidrum.com

COLUMBUS PRO PERCUSSION

Columbus, OH
614-885-7372
columbuspercussion.com
mail@columbuspercussion.com

MEMPHIS DRUM SHOP

Memphis, TN
888-276-2331
www.memphisdrumshop.com
sales@memphisdrumshop.com



Play the best.

JOHN RILEY

teacher. player. enlightener.

He's that **rare drummer** who can **explain our art** as well as he can **play it**. And as his work with some of the **greatest ensembles** on the planet continuously proves, **John Riley can seriously play it.**

Story by Rick Mattingly
Photos by Paul La Raia

Spend time with John Riley and you quickly realize that he has a passion for drumming. The subject infatuates him. His life is devoted to playing, learning about, and teaching drums. He is a consummate performer whose discography—packed with albums by the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Bob Mintzer, Woody Herman, John Scofield, Vince Mendoza, the WDR Big Band, George Gruntz, and numerous others—attests to his in-demand status on the jazz scene. He is a student of drum history and can speak at length about the great drummers who have come before him (including all the legendary funny stories). And he loves sharing his knowledge with others, through working with students, through articles in *Modern Drummer* and other publications, through his instructional books—*The Art Of Bop Drumming*, *Beyond Bop Drumming*, and *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*—and most recently through a DVD titled *The Master Drummer*.

But as is obvious when you see him play or watch the DVD, there is nothing uncontrolled about Riley's passion for drumming. Indeed, his low-key demeanor seems at odds with the very idea of passion, which often implies a triumph of feeling over intellect—something we have no control over. With John, as with many great musicians, the passion is very disciplined, informed by countless hours of practice and study and fed by an insatiable hunger to know as much about drumming as he can possibly learn and to play his instrument at every opportunity. This is the kind of passion that fuels a career that lasts a lifetime.

MD: At the beginning of your new DVD you point out that the drumset evolved along with jazz, and all the early rock drummers had jazz backgrounds. People often talk about what rock drummers can learn from jazz; what can a jazz drummer learn from rock?

John: Often, less experienced jazz drummers play too much complicated material in a way that doesn't make it easy for their bandmates to relax and groove. Perhaps checking out somebody like Ringo Starr, Bernard Purdie, Jeff Porcaro, or Steve Gadd will remind the jazz drummer that the function of a drummer, regardless of style, is to unify the band. And that just because you *can* do something complicated doesn't mean you *should*. So the clarity, simplicity, and commitment to playing within a rhythm section is something jazz drummers can gain from listening to the best rock drummers.

Many years ago I was playing a gig with a band, and we were the opening act for Benny Goodman's small group. Mel Lewis was playing with Benny at that time. I didn't know Mel

then, but after our set he said, "Man, you sound really good, but if you were playing in a rock band, would you ever consider not playing the bass drum?" I said, "Well, no, I would definitely play the bass drum." And he said, "Jazz is the same way. The heartbeat is the bass drum." He was trying to convey that the time is really coming from your feet, and, in his opinion, you should play four on the floor on the bass drum. This is a topic of much discussion, but it relates to your question about what a jazz drummer can learn from rock.

MD: Rock drummers tend to have a specific beat for each song. When I first started playing jazz, I played a lot of generic time, even on the heads of tunes. But then I tried to approach jazz more like rock—not thinking of each song as having a "beat" exactly, but realizing that my drumming on each tune should relate more to that tune.

John: Absolutely you have to play the song, and you have to be aware of how the arrangement is built and where the high points are. People say, "Jazz is free expression; I'm improvising." Well, to a degree, but we have a

specific function in the ensemble, and it's very apparent when drummers are relishing that responsibility and when they're more interested in exploring their own egocentric adventures on the bandstand.

The point you bring up about having specific beats for specific songs relates to the reason I did this DVD. There's a lot of great material out there on learning different techniques, beats, and styles. But when I listen to truly great musicians, I'm not struck by their technique, or what beats they're playing, or even what style they're playing. There's something beyond all that that's worth aspiring to. When I listen to Miles Davis, the first thing I notice is the incredibly melancholy emotion he's conveying in his music, not the fact that he's a trumpet player. When you listen to Keith Jarrett, it's the state of rapture he achieves. These are higher aspirations that, of course, require technique, beats, and awareness of style. But there is something beyond all those things that gets to the magic in the music.

So in the DVD I tried to present building blocks to give people the possibility of achieving that. Learning a beat or a style is not the end of the road. The important thing is, what kind of flowing, organic creation do you come up with collectively with your bandmates?

MD: The DVD is built around jazz, as are your books. But do you work on other styles with your students?

John: Absolutely; we work on everything. The institutions I teach at, Manhattan School Of Music and SUNY [State University Of New York] Purchase, are primarily jazz programs, and most of the ensembles are jazz oriented. So the other teachers are looking for drummers to fulfill the needs of their ensembles, and I absolutely want my students to excel in those settings. But the world of drumming is vaster than the needs of those ensembles, and the interests of my students are more diverse than the needs of those ensembles. I'm curious about everything, so we explore Antonio Sanchez, Chris Dave, Trilok

Gurtu, Mark Guiliana, Dennis Chambers, Tito Puente, and every other exceptional player regardless of style, because each type of music challenges one's ears, coordination, and mind in a different, enriching way.

There are more things in common among these different categories than there are differences. In every situation you have to play in time, you have to know the songs, you have to play in a way that unifies and inspires your bandmates, and you have to get a good sound. It doesn't matter if you're playing

Gilmore. Another student brought in his laptop and was showing me this thing on YouTube from Gospel Chops, and we were checking out how that rhythm section was functioning.

I'm inspired by all of this stuff. I have the opportunity to work with some great students, and my role is to help take some of the twists out of the path of becoming a complete musician. But they inspire me too. They are continually bringing in things that I haven't heard. Through our discussions of these things, we both gain a deeper understanding.

easy and natural to play. Once you've sensed that ease, you want it to infect every aspect of your playing.

So you have to make choices and follow your emotions. What are you most curious about? That's an important question because that's the thing you're going to commit the most energy to practicing. My teachers would give me assignments, and sometimes I would only do the minimum to convince them to give me the next thing. My level of dedication to the refinement of the things I was most curious about was

"I've had students who are household names in the drumming community. Early on I could see that EACH OF THEM was on a MISSION."



with Dolly Parton, John Scofield, Megadeth, or the Boston Pops—those are essentials of musicianship. How you present the time and the way you adjust your energy inside the ensemble may be specific to different styles or different collections of players, but the big-picture items are exactly the same.

Last week I was looking at some David Garibaldi stuff with one student, and with another student we were transcribing a Mel Lewis solo. One fellow brought in his transcription of Tony Williams' playing on *ESP*, and one brought in a recent recording of Marcus

That being said, there are times when you have to make a choice. It's like having a box of assorted chocolates—if you take one little bite out of each piece, in the end you don't taste anything. At some point, I had to say, "In order to play the music that's closest to me in this moment, I can't be practicing such-and-such; I have to put that on the back burner." It's much more beneficial to have 100 percent mastery and ownership of one thing than to be 80 percent there with five things. When you own something, you realize a kind of flow that makes the thing you've mastered so

much greater than my level of commitment to some of the assignments my teachers gave me, and I know many of my students are the same way. So I try to help them cultivate the things they're most passionate about. Then I show them something just one or two steps away from that, which will help them become more complete players.

MD: Let's say a student's main thing is funk. He's listening to Garibaldi, Zigaboo Modeliste, Gadd, and whoever else. What elements of funk could some jazz study help illuminate?

John: Many young funk drummers are focused on playing their slick patterns and aren't as engaged in relating their phrases to the melody of the song. Jazz drummers are always thinking of the melody and relating their comping to the song. So being able to have different processes going in your brain—one that keeps the beat stable and the coordination consistent, and one that helps you hear how that relates to the song—would be beneficial to a funk drummer. On the other hand, having control of the kind of linear approach that a funk drummer has would open up different possibilities for jazz drummers. So there are benefits both ways.

David Garibaldi's grooves are very specific to the songs he plays. They fit perfectly within the combination of the broken-up melodic line and the bass part in those songs. It's difficult to play his grooves in other contexts because they are so specific to a particular song.

JOHN'S SETUP



Drums: Yamaha Maple Custom Absolute

A. 4x14 prototype snare drum

B. 8x12 tom

C. 14x14 floor tom

D. 14x18 bass drum

Sticks: Zildjian John Riley model, Jazz brushes, John Riley stick/mallet combo

Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 14" K Constantinople hi-hats

2. 20" Dry Complex 2 prototype or 18" Pre-Aged ride

3. 22" K Constantinople medium-thin high ride

4. 22" Swish Knocker (once owned by Mel Lewis) or 20" K flat top

Heads: Remo. Snare and toms: WeatherKing Vintage A on top, clear Ambassador on bottom; bass drum: clear Pinstripe on batter side, Fiberskyn3 Powerstroke on front.

Percussion: LP Salsa Claro bell

MD: I've become especially aware of his dynamic range. If you play, for instance, all the snare drum notes from one of Garibaldi's grooves at the same volume, it will not have anywhere near the same feel he gets.

John: In between the quarter notes, there's a snakelike undulation that generates a really compelling, percolating momentum that is intimately associated with the parts everyone else is playing. That concept is a little foreign to jazz because we're not playing as repetitively as in funk. The momentum in the music is different, so it requires a different kind of spin. But the same "lack of

feel" happens if you play all the inside stuff in an Elvin Jones phrase at one dynamic level. Having the control to achieve the kind of consistency of a Garibaldi-type funk groove is really helpful to any kind of playing.

MD: In similar terms I think of Mel Lewis's

ride cymbal playing, which had a lot of nuances, shadings, and colors.

John: Because of the full sound Mel got, people are not aware of how softly he played in general. He found all kinds of gradations of volume within this subdued range he dealt with. The result was as compelling, in a different realm, as what Garibaldi does with Tower Of Power or what Questlove generates with the Roots.

This isn't about beats, it's about musicianship. There is something beyond technique that is critical if you want to play at the highest level. Obviously, technique is a contributing factor, but simply playing as fast as Buddy Rich doesn't mean you're going to have a career. It's much more involved than that, and I break down and build up the main components in the DVD.

MD: There are very few opportunities these days to play in a big band outside of a college environment, so for a drummer coming up who has no expectations of ever playing a professional big-band gig, is there any benefit to getting big-band experience?

John: Playing experience is playing experience. What you gain in a large ensemble is a sense of how to hold that group together, which can carry over into how to hold a duo together. We're accompanists, but we're also initiators. In the accompanying role, we want to be as engaging and motivating as possible, but we also need to have a sensitivity to whether all the other musicians can fol-

RILEY ON RECORD

Luis Bonilla | Talking Now /// **The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** Monday Night Live, Up From The Skies ///

Todd Coolman Perfect Strangers /// **George Gruntz**

Concert Jazz Band Pourquoi Pas? Why Not? ///

Randy Sandke Unconventional Wisdom, The

Subway Ballet /// **Bob Mintzer Big Band** Swing Out

/// **WDR Big Band** The World Of Duke Ellington, Vol.

3 /// **Bob Mintzer Quartet** In the Moment



JOHN RILEY

low what's going on. The kind of sensitivity and telepathy you have to develop to unify a large ensemble only enhances your ability in a smaller ensemble.

MD: Let's talk about groove. Does "groove" relate only to tunes that are above a certain tempo, or does every tune have groove?

John: There is a subtle distinction between groove and pulse. Almost every tune has pulse, and that means you can feel the events unfolding in a logical fashion. It might not be precisely metronomic, but there's some kind of breath-like flow. Groove is a more precise function; it involves a metronomic component, which has several dimensions. First is the fine tuning of the little events between each beat, the subdivisions of the beat, and making sure they are consistent. The second is the bigger idea of how consistent the tempo is from the beginning of the song to the end.

The point is to play in a way that is consistent enough to engage your bandmates and the listener, so that the listener can anticipate where the pulse or beat is. I think people go to concerts and buy CDs because grooving music is captivating and, in a way, hypnotizing. When that gentle hypnosis occurs, there is a sense of suspension of real time. People become so engaged in the music that their daily concerns evaporate. The kind of relaxed freedom that listeners sense when the troubles of the day are no longer on their mind is a very pleasant sensation. The groove is the component of music that people become most engaged with.

MD: You talk on the DVD about "gifted drummers." I found that especially interesting because I read Malcolm Gladwell's recent book, *Outliers*, in which he makes a case against talent. He talks about the opportunities that various successful people had and how many hours of preparation they put in, saying that greatness requires 10,000 hours. He used the Beatles as one example, citing that before they were famous, they often played eight hours a night, seven days a week in Hamburg clubs. But putting in the hours is only part of the story.

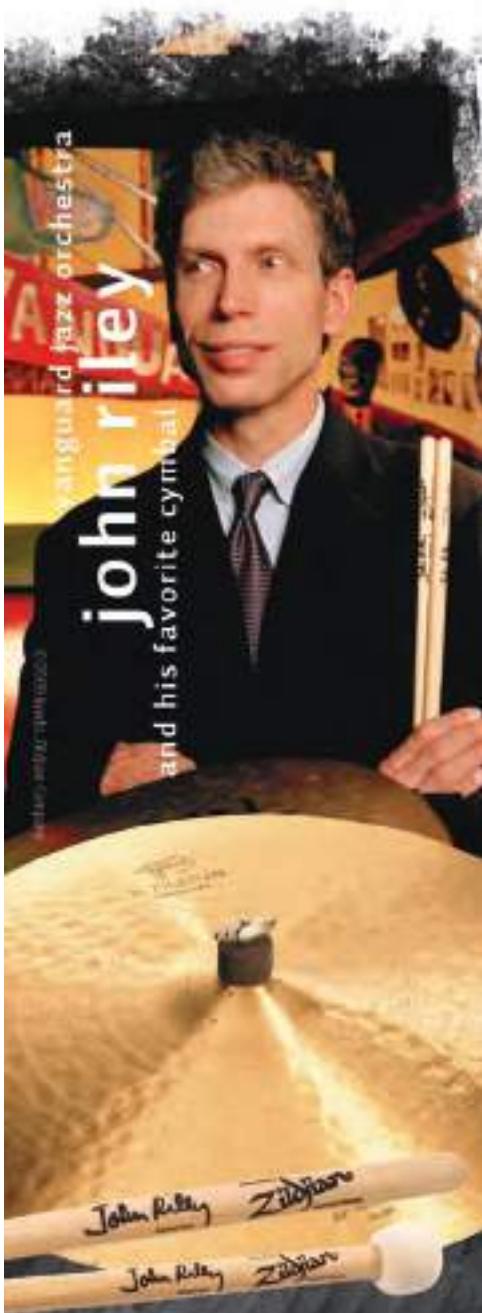
Gladwell never says a word about the passion that people like the Beatles had for what they were doing.

John: It's not realistic to expect anyone to put in that kind of time without the passion. People like Bill Gates and Michael Jordan and the Beatles and Tiger Woods and Vinnie Colaiuta were exposed to something, they became curious about how that thing worked, and then they became committed to getting to the bottom of how it worked. That grew into a passion for understanding and mastering that particular topic. The combination of exposure, curiosity, dedication, passion, and commitment is what's required to master anything.

When I was studying with Joe Morello, he would give me enough inspiration and challenging material to keep me captivated for four or five hours every day until the next lesson. During the summers when I studied with him, I practiced eight hours a day on that stuff. So becoming a master of something is a significant process. You have to be passionate about something or you simply won't stick with it.

I remember an interview with Tony Williams where he said, "I can let my mailman sit at my drums, and he can play a beat. If that's all there is to it, why am I working so hard?" It's not hard to be mediocre. It's hard to run a four-and-a-half-minute mile, but thousands of people have done it. To run a four-minute mile is infinitely harder. But there are people who are spending hours on the track because there is nothing they would rather do. Wishing to be great is easy, but passionate dedication is what separates the great from the merely competent. I've had some very successful students who are household names in the drumming community. Early on I knew these particular people would have a shot at a successful career because I could see from their passionate commitment that each of them was on a drumming mission.

When you see Vinnie Colaiuta play, it's obvious that he's spent years of dedicated, passionate time working on refining things that nobody else could even detect; Vinnie is absolutely on a mission. So Gladwell's idea of 10,000



22" K Constantinople Medium-Thin Ride, High and John Riley Artist Series Drumsticks and Doubles

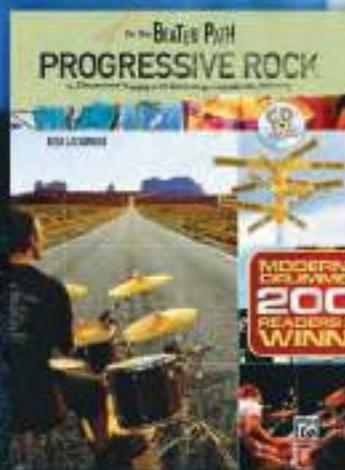
"My favorite cymbal is a 22" K Constantinople Medium-Thin Ride, High cymbal. It has the perfect blend of stick definition and warm, embracing, wash to work at all volumes and in any playing situation."

Zildjian

SINCE • 1623

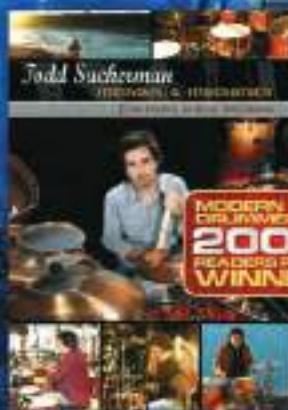
zildjian.com/johnriley

LEARN FROM THE BEST!



EDUCATIONAL BOOK

**ON THE BEATEN PATH:
PROGRESSIVE ROCK**
By Rich Lackowski
(00-31503) BOOK/CD, \$19.95



EDUCATIONAL DVDs

METHODS AND MECHANICS
By Todd Sucherman
(90-AD108) 2 DVDs, \$29.95



**BRAIN HAS MADE
THE WORST DRUM
INSTRUCTIONAL DVD EVER**
Brian "Brain" Mantia
(77-80V0BRWI) DVD, \$29.95

Check out Alfred's Huge Selection of Books & DVDs Featuring these 2009 Readers Poll Winners

Rhythmic Illusions
By Gavin Harrison
(00-EL9655CD) Book/CD, \$25.95

Tower of Groove: Complete
By David Garibaldi
(00-25442) DVD, \$29.95

Under the Table and Drumming
By Carter Beauford
(00-902971) DVD, \$39.95

**The Erskine Method
for Drumset**
By Peter Erskine
(00-22700) Book/DVD, \$39.95

Conversations in Clave
By Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez
(00-907096) DVD, \$29.95

The Studio Percussionist, Vol. 1
By Luis Conte
(30-LPV1400) DVD, \$19.95

A Work in Progress
By Neil Peart
(00-902839) DVD, \$39.95

Red Hot Rhythm Method
By Chad Smith
(00-904914) DVD, \$39.95

**Behind the Player: Tommy
Clufetos**
By Tommy Clufetos
(89-31346) DVD, \$24.95

**Ultimate Drum Play-Along:
Green Day**
By Tré Cool
(00-25322) Book/CD, \$16.95

Kick Snare Hat
By Aaron Spears, Gerald
Heyward, Nissan Stewart,
Cora Colman-Dunham
(77-80VDNKSJ) DVD, \$29.95

Pure Energy
By Tony Royster, Jr.
(77-SPDVD) DVD, \$29.95

**Laying It Down: Basics of Rock
Drumming**
By Kenny Aronoff
(00-24591) DVD, \$29.95

Riddim: Claves of African Origin
By Billy Martin
(83-MIM005) Book/CD, \$24.95

Steve Smith, Part One
By Steve Smith
(00-904907) DVD, \$29.95

The Rhythm Collector
By Alex Acuña
(77-60VDAARC) DVD, \$29.95

In the Tradition
By Giovanni Hidalgo
(00-906292) DVD, \$29.95

Serious Moves
By Dennis Chambers
(00-908082) DVD, \$39.95

Up Close
By Steve Gadd
(00-904821) DVD, \$29.95

Congratulations To All The Winners!

BUY THEM TODAY at alfred.com/drums



Alfred Music Publishing
LEARN • TEACH • PLAY

Derek Roddy
Serpents Rise
Traumedy



"I don't just hang out at Five-Star drum shops, I used to work at one!"

Atlanta Pro Percussion
Atlanta, GA

Backbeats Drum Shop
Salt Lake City, UT

Bentley's Drum Shop
Fresno, CA

Birmingham Percussion Center
Birmingham, AL

Buffalo Drum Outlet
Buffalo, NY

Colony Drums
Rochester, NY

Colorado Drum & Percussion
Fort Collins, CO

Columbus Percussion
Columbus, OH

Dale's Drum Shop
Harrisburg, PA

DiCenzo's Drum Shop
Weymouth, MA

Don Bennett Drum Studio
Bellevue, WA

Drum Center of Lexington
Lexington, KY

Drum Circuit
San Luis Obispo, CA

Drum Headquarters
St. Louis, MO

Drum Shop
Portland, ME

Drum World
Pittsburgh, PA

Drum World
Tulsa, OK

Dynasty Percussion
Manchester, CT

Ellis Drum Shop
St. Paul & Richfield, MN

Explorers Percussion
Kansas City, MO

Fork's Drum Closet
Nashville & Knoxville, TN

Jeff Ryder's Drum Shop
San Antonio & Austin, TX

Just Drums
Toronto, ON

Levanna Percussion
San Jose, CA

Long Island Drum Center
Myack, NY

Memphis Drum Shop
Memphis, TN

Midwest Percussion
Mokena, IL

Original Long Island Drum Center
Flamenv, NY

Percussion Center
Houston, TX

Roy Franzen's Drum Center
Kenner, LA

Resurrection Drums
Hollywood, FL

Rhythm Traders
Portland, OR

Rupp's Drums
Denver, CO

Skins 'n' Tins Drum Shop
Champaign, IL

Stebel Drums
Wilowick, OH

West Coast Drum Center
Santa Ana, CA

Want a serious selection and killer prices?
Go to a Five-Star Drum Shop. We only care about drums (...not a guitar in sight).

www.FiveStarDrumShops.com



JOHN RILEY

hours just gives a perspective on the years of dedication it takes to become a master of something. You have to be selfish to get good at something. It's a solitary endeavor, but that's the only way to achieve the results. A friend of mine, Eddie Tuduri, besides being a drummer is also a barber, and he used to cut Vinnie's hair. Eddie told me that whenever he was cutting Vinnie's hair, Vinnie was practicing nonstop on a pad.

I have a Remo Putty Pad stuck to my dashboard, and sometimes I play along with the radio while I'm stuck in traffic, just to keep the reflexes sharp. That's a maintenance kind of thing. It's not really moving forward, but it has a purpose and it's beneficial for me.

MD: I'm guessing that you mostly do it because it's fun.

John: Absolutely it's fun! Yeah, that's where the passion comes from—this sense of fun. That's why I started playing in the first place. I saw the Beatles on TV, but I wasn't necessarily drawn to the music. I was a kid and I wanted to have fun, and those guys looked like they were having more fun than anybody else, so I wanted to do what they were doing. And it continues to this day. When some people hear an amazing band or amazing drummer, they get frustrated and say, "Oh man, I'm never going to be able to do that." I'm just the opposite. I can't wait to get to the drums and explore those things. That's what I love doing, and that's why I'm still eagerly practicing and trying to improve.

About fifteen years ago I had a conversation with Jack DeJohnette, and I said, "You know, Jack, I feel like I'm finally getting a grip on how to play." And he said, "You know what, man? I feel the same way!" I felt like such a fool, but that was exactly what I needed to hear. The reason he plays so well is that his passion, his fire, his desire at just arriving is still there. It's not like, "Okay, I can just go to this gig and do my thing." It's so far beyond that. And I think the reason it's beyond that is because the magical moments in music are so powerful. When a band discovers something telepathically that they've never explored before, the sensation is so strong that it's like a drug, and we're yearning for the repetition of that feeling. It may only last eight measures. But

it's so powerful that you'll play another two months to get one more magical eight measures.

Some time ago I was playing in Gary Peacock's band, and at one point he went to California to do some gigs with Peter Erskine. When he came back, I asked him how the gigs with Peter had been. He got so excited and said, "Man, at one point Peter played these three quarter notes on a cowbell, and magic happened!" Tony Williams' mailman could play three quarter notes on a cowbell, but the sensation you feel when the stars align and everybody realizes something new together is so powerful that we keep going for it, and that's what helps maintain that passion.

Maybe it takes 10,000 hours to be able to find that magic once or twice a month. That's a lot of labor for that momentary explosion of positive emotion. But it must be pretty compelling because we all keep working at it, and that's what keeps us searching and practicing.



Drum Doctors

Exceptionally
High Quality Drums

Since 1981

- Expert Tuning
- Unparalleled Drum Rentals
- Drumsets New and Vintage
- Ethnic & Symphonic Percussion
- 1st Class Repairs & Restorations
- High Caliber Edges
- Distinctive Custom Drums
- Premium Cartage & Storage



818 • 244 • 8123
www.drumdoctors.com



Made for drums[®]



**ARTISTS INCL.: CHAD SMITH,
MARK SCHULMAN, BILLY COBHAM,
KENNY ARONOFF, MARK RICHARDSON**

**WWW.
DRUMPLATES.
COM**



**THE #1
POSITIONING
SYSTEM FOR
ALL DRUMS!**



SEE WEBSITE FOR DEALERS & DISTRIBUTORS



ALL MAJOR BRANDS • DISCOUNT PRICING
BRAND NEW WEBSITE!

1-800-335-3445

Visit Us At
DrumWorld.com

Direct Sound

EXTREME ISOLATION.

Headphones

314-645-7667
extremelyexplains.com

Model EX-29



Perfect headphones for serious musicians and studio engineers with 29 dB passive isolation.

Model EX-25



Excellent choice for project studios, personal audio, and travel.

Model HP-25



Outstanding affordable protection for eliminating unwanted noise from immediate surroundings.

GET CONTROL!



NEW

MegaPac Isolation Package

7-feet of Headroom and Even More Isolation!

Portable and Free-Standing

CLEARSONIC PANEL

Drum Shields

SORBER

Absorption Baffles



1.800.888.6360
clearsonic.com

SILVERFOX

HIT HARDER. LASTS LONGER.

Make the switch.

TREVOR LAWRENCE JR. AND HIS NEW SIGNATURE STICK.



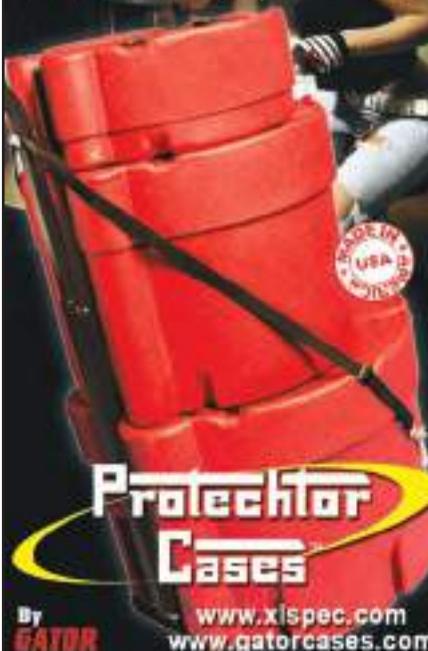
TREVOR LAWRENCE JR.
DR. DRUM, EMINEM

I chose SilverFox because the quality speaks for itself. The finish is amazing! I've played every stick but I've finally found what I had been looking for. SilverFox rocks, pops and hip-hops ... just like me.

BESTSTICK.COM

You Rock We'll Roll

- Cases To Fit Every Drum
- Nearly Indestructible
- Custom Cuts & Colors
- Limited Lifetime Warranty



Protector Cases

By **GATOR**

www.xispec.com
www.gatorcases.com



TAYE
DRUMS

GREAT SOUNDING DRUMS

WWW.TAYEDRUMS.COM



Modern Crafted Drums with a Classic Sound™

Offering Traditional Thin Ply Bass Drums and Snare Drums

www.sfdrumco.com

Dealer inquiries welcomed



Monitor Your Decibels for a Lifetime of Sound

Sound Partners™
A hearing conservation program from

 House Ear Institute
Advancing Hearing Science
...Bringing You Choices that Make Sound Sense
www.hei.org

"Dream Cymbal Tasting"

The "Dream Cymbal Tasting" is a series of dealer hosted events that offer a rare opportunity to sample more than 100 handmade cymbals and gongs, and to really find the cymbals of your dreams. *July's hosts are:*

Summer NAMM 7/17-7/19
Nashville, TN-2009

Cadence Music 7/1-7/8
Rochester, NY - (585) 247-8690

KOSA 7/29-8/2
International Percussion Workshop,
Camp & Festiva
Montreal, Canada - www.kosamusic.com
Cymbals and Gongs

The Drum Shop 7/8-7/15
Boulder, CO - (303) 402-0122

www.dreamcymbals.com

Sic-Skinz™ 

Custom Drum Wraps • Drumheads • Beater Pads
Wrapped Full Kits Available • Easy/Fast Online Ordering
Authorized Pearl & Ddrum Dealer!

1.800.768.4518 www.SicSkinz.com
info@SicSkinz.com

Cascio
interstatemusic.com
Where the Nation's Drummers Shop

...as a recording and live performing drummer,
I count on **Cascio Interstate**
to fulfil my needs, both in-store
and on the road."

Dave Schoepke
Willy Porter Band

Signup for our
drum e-newsletter
at interstatemusic.com/drum

FREE! 2009 Drums & Percussion
catalog
order online or through the call center

40,000
musical items
Great Value & Selection, Everyday!

Cascio.interstatemusic.com
www.interstatemusic.com
Call Center • 1-800-462-2263

NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION



FAMOUS

- The Two By Four Snare Drum™
- Bonzo head!
- Does not choke
- 1/2" thick lathed black shell
- Made from real 2x4s
- Industrial Throw Off

www.famousdrums.com

WHO IS THE WORLD'S FASTEST DRUMMER?
WorldsFastestDrummer.com

- Latest News In Extreme Sport Drumming
- WFD Contests World-Wide
- WFD Videos
- Highest Scores
- Online Store: DVDs, Shirts, Wrist Straps, & Practice Tools

You The Fastest? THEN PROVE IT!

OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER FOR WFD!
DRUMOMETER™ MODEL II

"The Most Effective Technology On The Market For Developing Technique & Speed For Drummers Of Any Age, Style and Skill Level"

THE ULTIMATE PRACTICE TOOL

 **ORDER TODAY!**
888.891.7352
919.783.4181

Learn more Online
Drumometer.com

Since 1981



Custom Drums

Wrap
Repairs
Hardware
Keller Shells



Precision Drum Company, Inc.
2012 Route 44, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569
Toll free 1-888-512-DRUM (3786)
www.PrecisionDrum.com

PRO RISER

THE ULTRA PORTABLE
AFFORDABLE DRUM RISER
WWW.PRORISER.COM
443-955-2731

WINDUP

Drums ON SALE.com

GIGANTIC SAVINGS

11375 Robinwood Drive
(College Plaza)
Hagerstown, MD 21742
www.drumsonsale.com
1-301-733-DRUM (3786)

Serving Orange County Drummers for Over 40 Years



New Serving the World

WEST COAST DRUM CENTER

3586 S. Bristol St.
Santa Ana, CA 92704
Call Toll Free 1-877-WCDRUMS
www.westcoastdrumcenter.com

For Over 11 Years People Have Been Asking Me...

WHAT IS THAT DRUM?

-Vinnie Colaiuta



570.788.5820 Longodrums.com

the KickPort

Buzz of NAMM 2009



www.fpedrums.com

MODERNDRUMMER

DIGITAL

Visit moderndrummer.com For Your Free Test Drive

AMDRUMPARTS.COM

CUSTOM BUILDER • DISTINGUISHED PARTS



MAPLE SHELLS
CUSTOM LOGS
PARTS CATALOG

FREE EDGES & HOLES w/ COMPLETE DRUM!

CATALOG ONLINE!
(541) 695-5563



ALWAYS THE BEST PRICES ON:

RUPPS DRUMS

WWW.RUPPSDRUMS.COM

Denver's only PRO DRUM SHOP. (888)756-5773

the drum pad

Chicagoland's Pro Drum Shop
48 W. Palatine Road
Palatine, IL 60067
888-523-1158 • www.thedrumpad.com

paiste




www.paiste.com



WWW.CRAVIOTTODRUMS.COM

Do-It-Yourself Road Cases

do-it-yourselfroadcases.com

You Build Your Own! We Show You How!

RockenWraps™

Caskee Drum Wraps, Caskee Drum Heads and supplies

www.RockenWraps.com



Ellis Drum Shop
Weir Cycle is available at Ellis Drum Shop
21 Paul Ave 02118-0204 - Boston, MA 02127-8130
ellisdumshop.com

JamminSam.com

Drum Wrap Hardware

Free Samples & Catalog 602-279-4041

THE WORLD'S ULTIMATE PRACTICE STICKS

POWER Wrist Builders™
SOLID aluminum or SOLID brass drum sticks. 2 to 28 ounces.



powerwristbuilders.com
800-645-6673

FOR THE BEST PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR PRACTICE, VISIT MY STORES: ebay.com/power-wrist-builders

www.danmarpercussion.com
SINCE 1970

DANMAR

PERCUSSION PRODUCTS

Orange County, CA, U.S.A.

STOPS DEFENDING - DISABLER TO WORK

TIGHT SCREW



www.tightscrew.com 877.615.5282

Witt PERCUSSION

SOLID SHELL SNARES & KITS



• Stock and Custom Construction •
330-962-3732
www.wittpercussion.com
DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOME

GET BENT!
STEAM BENT!

VATER PERCUSSION

VATER.COM

Drum Doctors

World Class Drum Builders Since 1981
Expert Tuning • Repairs • New and Vintage Sales
813-414-9123
www.drumdoctors.com

Advertise in Drum Market

and reach over a quarter million drummers worldwide.

RATES

Minimum frequency: 3 months
Minimum ad charge: \$10

3x: \$1.75 per word, per month

6x: \$1.60 per word, per month

12x: \$1.45 per word, per month

Boldface words: add 75¢ per word, per month.

Address: add \$5 per address, per month.

PAYMENT

Ads must be prepaid prior to closing date of the issue.

Acceptable forms of payment: personal check, money order, Visa, and MasterCard.

TERMS

Publisher reserves the right to edit all classified ads.

Ad positioning is solely determined by the publisher.

CORRESPONDENCE

LaShanda Gibson
Modern Drummer Magazine
12 Old Bridge Road
Cedar Grove, NJ 07009
Tel: (973) 239-4140
Fax: (973) 239-7139
Email: lashandag@moderndrummer.com

Modern Drummer CLASSIFIED ADVERTISERS

If you find yourself missing deadlines, or not sure of when your ad will run, please refer to the calendar below.

ISSUE DATE	CLOSING DATE	ON SALE DATE
JAN	Sept 15	Nov 30
FEB	Oct 15	Dec 30
MAR	Nov 15	Jan 30
APR	Dec 15	Feb 28
MAY	Jan 15	Mar 30
JUN	Feb 15	Apr 30
JUL	Mar 15	May 30
AUG	Apr 15	Jun 30
SEPT	May 15	Jul 30
OCT	Jun 15	Aug 30
NOV	July 15	Sept 30
DEC	Aug 15	Oct 30

FOR SALE

Drum Bum: T-shirts, hats, decals, keychains, and 500 free lessons! www.drumbum.com.

Drummersleash: Spin & never drop a stick! Carmine digs it! www.drummersleash.com.

Quality Custom Snare Drums Made Affordable! www.cazdrums.com.

Guaranteed lowest prices on Tama and Starclassic drums, 6 months no-interest financing available! Matt's Music Center, Weymouth, MA. (800) 723-5892. www.mattsmusic.com.

Eames hand-crafted North American birch drum shells in Finetone, Naturaltone, and Mastertone series, finished or unfinished. Eames Drum Co., 229 Hamilton St., Saugus, MA 01906. Tel: (781) 233-1404. www.eamesdrumshells.com.

Mom's Music. For all your drum needs. DW, ddrum, Tama, Yamaha, Paiste, Zildjian, Remo, Sabian, Aquarian, LP, Gretsch, Ludwig, and more. Tel: (800) 467-MOMS, ask for Ryan. www.momsmusic.com.

www.dominoretroplate.com. Upgrade your snare drum the easy way!

STUDY MATERIALS

Fast Hands For Drummers. To order, send \$12 to: John Bock, 9 Hillview Place, Elmsford, NY 10523.

Beat the competition! www.percxpress.com.

www.drumsettranscriptions.net. Custom transcription service.

Need charts? Lowest prices! www.classic-rock-drum-charts.com.

Drum-Set Systems: Improve fills, solos, reading, and approach to playing. 39-track CD. www.mattpatuto.com.

Sight Reading Complete For Drummers. 3 volumes, 175 total pages, MP3 files available. www.play-drums.com.

www.do-it-yourselfroadcases.com—Build your own cases, we show you how!

INSTRUCTION

NYC Drummers: Study with **John Sarracco**, one of the most knowledgeable pros in the NY area. Accepting only the serious-minded for drum instruction **the professional way**. Staten Island studio locations. (718) 351-4031.

Discover the **FLAWS IN YOUR DRUMMING** that are Holding you Back! www.thestickexpert.com.

NYC—Westchester. Learn the art of playing the drums. Students include platinum artists. All welcome. "It's about time." www.edbettinelli.com. Tel: (914) 591-3383, (914) 674-4549.

NYC—Tabla. Learn Indian classical drumming with Misha Masud. All levels. Study in Indian rhythmic theory also offered for composers, jazz/fusion musicians. Tel: (212) 724-7223.

Baltimore-Washington: Grant Menefee's studio of drumming. B.M. Berklee College of Music. All styles and levels. Tel: (410) 747-STIX.

Frustrated with your feet? In L.A., get sick scary double pedal chops! Rick, (310) 392-7499.

MISCELLANEOUS

N.A.R.D. is Back! The National Association of Rudimental Drummers. Approved by Ludwig. www.nard.us.com.

Vintage Corner

FOR SALE

The Ludwig Book! by Rob Cook. Business history and dating guide, 300 pages (64 color), Wm. F. Ludwig II autobiography, books on Rogers, Leedy, Slingerland, calfskin heads, gut snares, and more. Contact Rebeats, tel: (989) 463-4757, Rob@rebeats.com, Web site: www.rebeats.com.

Vintage: Snares, sets, singles, cymbals, hardware, logos, and trades. Look/see, www.drumatix.com.

RECORDINGS



★★★★★

ARI HOENIG BERT'S PLAYGROUND

★★★★★

JAZZHEADS AVANT WOT NOT

Right from the charging 7/8 assault of "Moment's Notice" from NYC-based drummer **ARI HOENIG's** *Bert's Playground* (disquesdreyfus.com), it's obvious you're in for some serious jazz. Hoenig's playing is a revelation here: delicate brushwork, supreme swing, and interesting solos that keep your attention (such as the mallet reading of "Round Midnight").

Glancing back to 1998, it's clear that Hoenig had a well-developed all-around approach, even when just starting out. This rerelease of Jazzheads' *Avant Wot Not* (1krecordings.com) is all grooving jazz-funk, drum 'n' bass, and attitude. Hoenig's pocket is deep, and his syncopated kick work keeps the head bobbing. Both of these discs expose a huge talent. **Ilya Stemkovsky**

★★★★★

RETURN TO FOREVER RETURNS



It's been thirty years since Return To Forever recorded the seminal *Hymn Of The Seventh Galaxy* and *Romantic Warrior* LPs. The quartet—Chick Corea, **LENNY WHITE**, Al Di Meola, and Stanley Clarke—played a sold-out reunion tour last year; this resulting double-disc set proves that age is no impediment to improvisational fire. Though occasionally loose at the seams, the band plays with great dexterity and immaculate attention to detail. Throughout, White puts a refined point on his classic drumming, which was always equal parts cosmic funk flow and futuristic jazz technique. His solo vehicle, "Lineage," is pure history lesson, covering brushwork, metric modulation, swing, funk, polyrhythms, and dynamic tension. (Eagle) **Ken Micallef**

★★★★★

MATTHEW SHIPP TRIO HARMONIC DISORDER



Following 2007's *Piano Vortex*, pianist Matthew Shipp continues exploring the trio format with bassist Joe Morris and drummer **WHIT DICKEY**. Shipp's vast command of both harmony and rhythm makes the role of the rhythm section unexpectedly challenging. Yet there's deeper communication among the three here, reflecting development gained only from playing together. Dickey responds with fluttering clutter on a couple of free tunes, swelling the energy under Shipp. Perhaps more interesting is the title track, where sweeping and fluttering brushes underpin haunting piano phrases. But ultimately the most fascinating selections involve Dickey's slightly off-kilter swing, against which Shipp creates some wonderfully exciting moments. (Thirsty Ear) **Martin Patmos**

★★★★★

STEVE SMITH'S JAZZ LEGACY LIVE ON TOUR, VOLS. 1 & 2



It's refreshing to hear a group of highly skilled musicians pay homage to their jazz forefathers and still go for it. Who better than **STEVE SMITH** to tackle "Moanin'" and "Two Bass Hit" while also burning on some originals and infusing the music with modern chops? On these two CDs, recorded live in 2006, Smith and Co. swing with power and purpose and are definitely *not* afraid of fast tempos. Ever the musical chameleon, Smith pulls out all the stops for "A Night In Tunisia"—head-scratching advanced polyrhythms, double bass havoc, and foot/hand call and response. Blakey would be proud. (Drum Legacy) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

ENCORE

by Patrick Berkery

PEARL JAM TEN

On the surface, a reissue of Pearl Jam's debut seems a little unnecessary. The album that helped kill one genre (hair metal) while ushering another one (alt-grunge) into the mainstream is hardly a lost or forgotten treasure. But this is a worthwhile release, and not just for the hefty bonuses found in the deluxe package (a sonically sharp Brendan O'Brien remix of the album, bonus tracks, and a live DVD among them). *Ten* is one of those classic albums that have become so ubiquitous that people take them for granted. And time has also obscured the fact that while the band has had subsequent drummers with perhaps a more technical touch, none has really fit into the unit like original drummer **DAVE KRUSEN**, who parted ways with his mates prior to *Ten's* release in order to deal with personal issues. Krusen's role was more supportive than Dave Abbruzzese's or Matt Cameron's, but his touch perfectly suited songs both tender ("Release") and taut ("Once"). Explosive when the moment called for it, Krusen's classic grooves helped put the Wingers and White Lions out of business and helped *Ten* become an album for the ages.



Dave Krusen on Ten

Was *Ten* your first time recording in the big leagues, so to speak?

Yeah. I'd been in that studio [London Bridge] twice before, but not for a major label. I remember being really excited by it. I was telling my friends it was really great stuff. I'd worked with some great musicians before, but I just thought the songs and playing with the guys was amazing.

"Oceans" is you just playing timpani and shakers?

Yeah. We had tracked drums on the song, and then I put timpani on top. At one point someone said, "Hey, it sounds pretty cool with just the timpani." And everybody pretty much agreed. We didn't have any other songs without drums on them. I'm really glad we did that. It made the song stick out.

Impressions of the remixes?

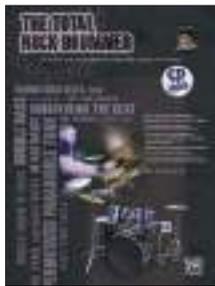
I like them a lot. It's very cool, more straightforward. It sounds a lot more like it sounded when we were tracking it. Hearing the stuff again recently, like the remix of "Brother," it

just came out so good. I was still pretty green back then. I had a hard time tracking "Even Flow" for some reason. I would love to go back and be the drummer that I am now playing on that. At the same time, I look back and there's some stuff where I can't believe I did that.

I played a show at a club in L.A. recently, and two guys asked me to sign vinyl copies of the record. The keyboard player for the band I'm in now [the Kings Royal] said, "You're going to be signing those for the rest of your life."

The majority of the people focus on what I missed out on: "You missed out on being famous and wealthy...." That would've been great and all, but the fact that I got to play on a record like *Ten*, that's more important to me. I also learned a lot of lessons. If I didn't go through that, a lot of people say I would've been dead, because I used to party a lot. And the whole experience made me a better drummer. *And* it's afforded me the opportunity to play with people. There's a lot of negative stuff I could focus on, I just choose not to do that.

MULTIMEDIA



★★★★★

THE TOTAL ROCK DRUMMER

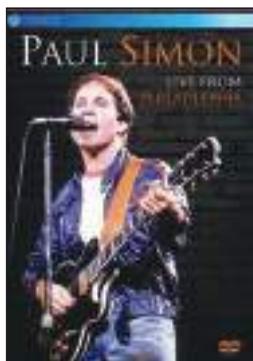
BY MIKE MICHALKOW

BOOK/CD LEVEL: BEGINNER TO ADVANCED \$19.95

A lot of drumset books may claim to cover all the elements of being a rocker on the kit, but *The Total Rock Drummer* by Mike Michalkow really does it—and with fun as the driving force. Each lesson is easy to read and contains bpm, sticking, and author's instructions, and some even have dynamic markings. The book starts

with how to hold the sticks and quickly moves on to the basics of the snare, kick, and hi-hat, and the student never has a moment to rest. Michalkow touches on everything from 8th-note beat/fill combinations, 32nd-note beats, and rudiments to odd time signatures and funk, reggae, and jungle patterns. At the end you get some famous rock grooves by greats like Copeland, Bonham, and more. This is "totally" about becoming a rock drummer. (Alfred)

Fran Azzarto



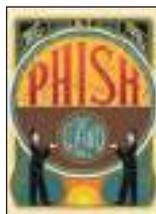
★★★★★

PAUL SIMON LIVE FROM PHILADELPHIA

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$13.99

Despite this DVD's less-than-hi-def videotape visuals, the audio mix is excellent and captures one of Simon's finest stripped-down rhythm sections. Filmed in 1980, in support of Paul's underrated *One Trick Pony* album, this notable concert documents the dream team of **STEVE GADD**, Tony Levin, Richard Tee, and Eric Gale. In every measure, the band grooves deeply and effortlessly. Catch Gadd, who gets ample camera time, delivering such signature beats as "50

Ways To Leave Your Lover" and "Late In The Evening." Cheapo packaging and slim running time (53 minutes), but the grooves within are classic. (Eagle Rock Entertainment) **Jeff Potter**



★★★★★

PHISH THE CLIFFORD BALL

DVD (7) LEVEL: ALL \$79

You could practically spend an entire weekend engulfed in the seven-disc, nine-hour *Clifford Ball* DVD. Phish, always mindful of the fans, offers enough treats—in both the concerts and the DVD set—to keep the experience varied and interesting. You might begin by watch-

ing a set from the two-day, six-set 1996 festival, which was the first of many for the band. You'll find Phish in fine, ever-loosening form. The begoggled **JON FISHMAN**, playing with grace and fire and wearing his favorite dress, leads the charge through material ranging from short, light tunes such as "Sparkle" to expansive "happenings" like a winding, fireworks-boosted "Harry Hood." The event was shot beautifully, and the sweeping camera work helps provide insight into Fishman's smooth, fluid style. For a breather between sets, slip in the extras disc to check out a well-done documentary and band interviews where Jon conveys some deep thoughts on improvising. And when it's time to crash, let Phish's ambient 4 A.M. flatbed-truck jam usher you into neverland. Then get up the next day and do it all again! (drygoods.phish.com) **Michael Parillo**



★★★★★

TURN IT UP & LAY IT DOWN, VOL. 6: MESSIN' WID DA BULL

BY JEFF SALEM

BOOK/CD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED

\$24.95

What happens when you go messin' wid da bull? You get da horns! Drummer/instructor Jeff Salem's book concentrates on funky, horn-driven material (a la Chicago) and how best to apply drum parts to lead and support. The heart of the book involves breaking down a dozen tunes, with fully transcribed charts. Easy, intermediate, and advanced approaches are notated, and drummers are given an assortment of tips, such as "catch ensemble shots in the last bar." Readers choose their own level based on how comfortable they feel and how involved they want to get. A drum-less CD is included. (Hudson)

Ilya Stemkovsky



NEXT MONTH

GREEN DAY'S Tré Cool



Alex Sotlar

AARON HARRIS Of Isis

MOTOWN AT 50 **URIEL JONES'** LAST INTERVIEW
& **KEEPER OF THE FLAME** **BENJAMIN CORBETT**

STEPHEN PERKINS Jane's Addiction Reunion!

JOHN MOEN Of The Decemberists

SCOTT JOHNSON Of The Concord Blue Devils Drum Corps

10 Tips From **TRIVETT WINGO** Of The Sword

JOJO MAYER Playlist

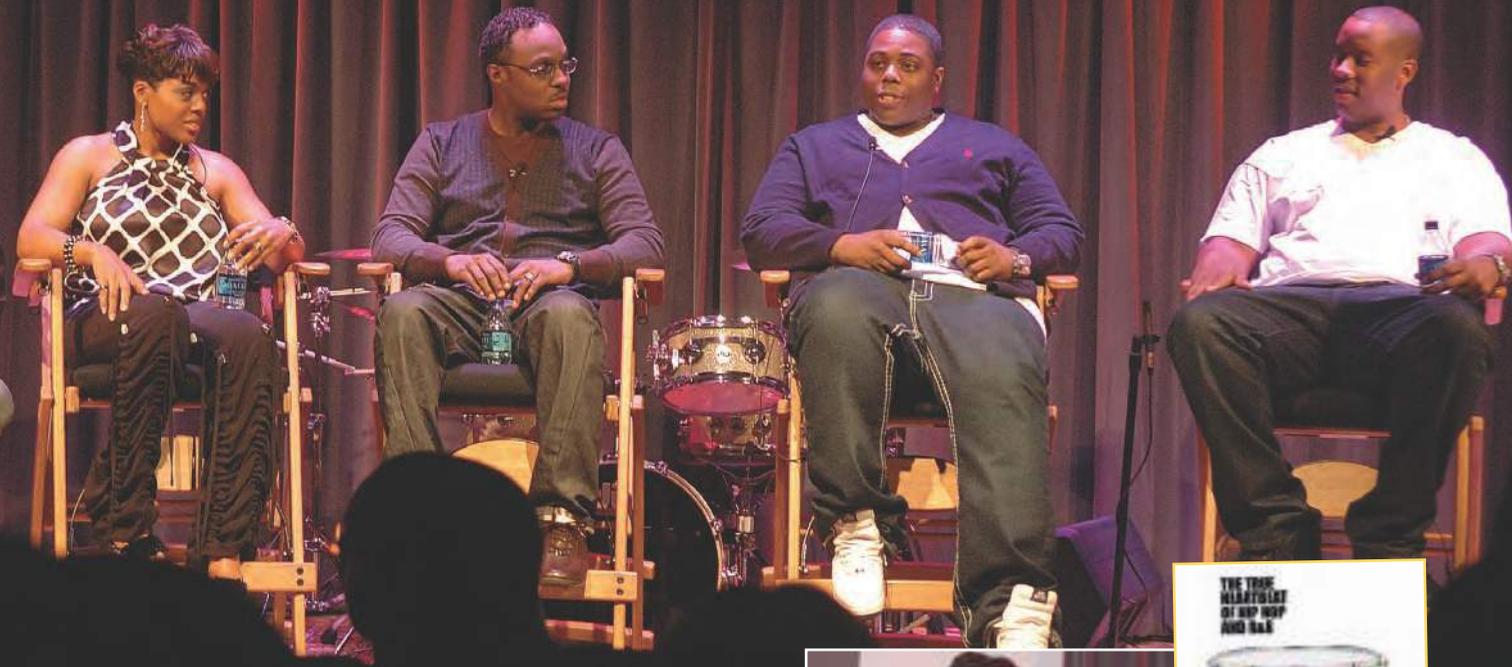
LARRY HERWEG Of Pelican

CHRIS VATALARO Of Antibalas

PLUS MUCH MORE!

KICK SNARE HAT PREMIERE

DW AND THE GRAMMY MUSEUM INTRODUCE AN INNOVATIVE NEW DVD.



On February 19 and 20, DW and the Grammy Museum joined forces to premiere DW's DVD *Kick Snare Hat: The Superstar Drummers Of Hip-Hop And R&B*. The event was held at the brand-new Grammy Museum in Los Angeles. The impressive 30,000-square-foot space features four floors of permanent and traveling displays, state-of-the-art interactive exhibits, and some of the rarest musical artifacts in the world.

The two-night event was the brainchild of DW DVD producer/marketing director Scott Donnell and Grammy Museum corporate sponsorship manager Steve Riskin. Considering the museum's quest to connect with companies that focus on education, the location was the perfect choice for the premiere of the insightful film. The stars of the DVD—Cora Coleman-Dunham (Prince), Gerald Heyward (Mary J. Blige), Aaron Spears (Usher), and Nisan Stewart (Missy Elliott)—were present at the event. In addition to performing, the drummers shared their heartwarming stories with the audience.

The premiere began with artist interviews conducted by Terry Bozzio and Stephen Perkins, which streamed live on DrumChannel.com. Celebrity drummers in attendance included Curt Bisquera (who also plays the chauffeur in the film), Taku Hirano, Yael Benzaken, and *American Idol*'s Teddy Campbell. Prior to the screening, the museum's curator introduced the *Kick Snare Hat* stars. Afterward, the four drummers and filmmakers Mickey Cevallos and Brian French participated in a spirited and often hilarious conversation about life, a collective love of music, and dodging police while attempting to get *the shot*!

The artists discussed their common background in gospel drumming and mastering the discipline of church music, which was both revealing and enlightening. "It's a work-out," Heyward said. "You're the only dude on stage that's working out the *whole* time." The connections and mutual respect among the drummers was inspiring, and is also a key element in the film. "Build your confidence and surround yourself with others who are loving and supportive," Spears advised. "They become your circle of trust."

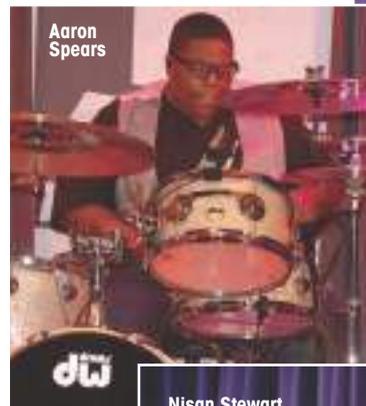
The drummers' incredible talent, along with the filmmakers' creative vision and often edgy edits, makes *Kick Snare Hat* a very fun and exciting look inside the world of the R&B drummer. "When I was a kid," Stewart said, "I never thought I'd make a living playing drums." Outnumbered but accustomed to it, Coleman-Dunham spoke from experience: "Usually when you think of girl drummers, you think, *Okay, that's cute*. But I say dig in. Whatever your passion is, just dig in."

The climax of the film features all four players in an incredible all-out jam, showing their brilliant musicality and, of course, their ridiculous chops. This amazing premiere was a fitting tribute to the fantastic new DVD.

Story by Rich Mangicaro • Photos by Alex Solca



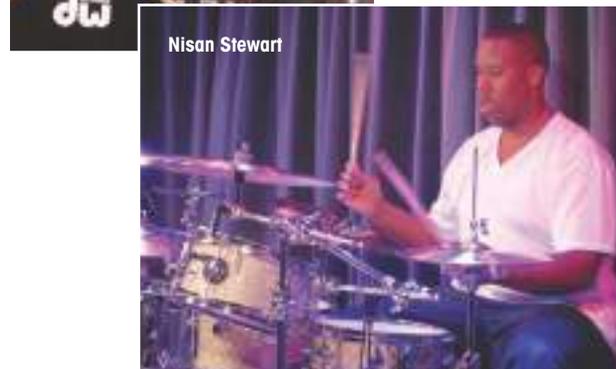
Cora Coleman-Dunham



Aaron Spears



Gerald Heyward



Nisan Stewart

URIEL JONES

During Motown's heyday, few outside the label's Hitsville U.S.A. compound likely knew the name Uriel Jones. But because Jones was a drummer in Motown's house band,



the Funk Brothers, his muscular grooves were—and still are—instantly familiar to millions.

Jones's drumming provided the heartbeat to some of the label's most iconic hits, including Marvin Gaye's "I Heard It Through The Grapevine," the Temptations' "Ain't Too Proud To Beg," the Miracles' "The Tracks Of My Tears," Jimmy Ruffin's "What Becomes Of The Brokenhearted," and Gaye and Tammi Terrell's "Ain't No Mountain High Enough."

Thanks to the 2002 documentary *Standing In The Shadows Of Motown*, Jones, along with the rest of the Funk Brothers, finally got the recognition he deserved. Sadly, Jones's life ended on March 24, due to complications from a heart attack he suffered in February. He was seventy-four.

Allan Slutsky, who produced *Shadows* and managed the Funk Brothers during subsequent tours, remembers Jones as "one of the great R&B drummers. Of the Funk

Brothers drummers, Uriel was the hardest rocking. Benny Benjamin and Pistol Allen were more finesse jazz players. Uriel was a beast—that's why he and [Motown keyboardist] Earl Van Dyke were such a pair. He would hit really hard."

Jones began playing drums while attending Detroit's Moore School For Boys. He was Marvin Gaye's touring drummer in the early '60s and began playing on sessions for Motown in 1964, just as the label was gaining national crossover success. Though Benjamin was initially the Funk Brothers' main drummer, he struggled with drug addiction, which led to Allen and Jones gradually taking over the drumming duties at Motown.

Jones remained in Detroit after Motown left for Los Angeles in 1972, and he continued to play locally with other Funk Brothers alumni, including Van Dyke.

Surviving Jones are his wife, June Jones; three children, Lynnaire Barnett, Gary Jones, and Brooke Gardner; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

MD interviewed Jones shortly before his passing for a Motown feature that will appear in the August issue.

DEWEY MARTIN

Buffalo Springfield drummer Dewey Martin died on January 31 of unknown causes. He was sixty-eight.

Best known for his work with the pioneering country rock group, which included Neil Young, Stephen Stills, and Richie Furay, Martin first established himself as a Nashville session drummer in the early '60s, recording with Roy Orbison, Patsy Cline,



and the Everly Brothers.

Following Buffalo Springfield's 1968 breakup, he released an album under the name Dewey Martin & Medicine Ball and played in a succession of bands before becoming an auto mechanic in the late '70s.

Martin was a member of reconstituted versions of Buffalo Springfield in the mid '80s and early '90s and was enshrined in the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame with the original lineup in 1997.

In his biography *Shakey*, Young praised Martin by saying, "You get harder, he hits harder. You pull back, he hits back. He can feel the music—you don't have to tell him."

ARTHUR JENKINS

Arthur Jenkins, a percussionist, keyboardist, and arranger who worked with an impressive list of artists, passed away on January 28 at the age of seventy-two.

Jenkins cut his musical teeth playing jazz at clubs in his native South Bronx.

He would eventually work with some of the biggest names in popular music, including John Lennon, Bob Marley, Ralph MacDonald, and Harry Belafonte.

Jenkins played with vocalist Johnny Nash for nine years and is credited with arranging the hit "I Can See Clearly Now." As a percussionist, Arthur can be heard on classic recordings like Van McCoy's "The Hustle" and Lennon's solo albums *Walls And Bridges* and *Double Fantasy*.



Drum Fantasy Camp is Back!

Care to spend a few days in classes, concerts, and open jams with these great drummers?
Attend drumFantasy.09, August 15-19, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Cleveland!



Dave Weckl



Steve Smith



Peter Erskine



Dafnis Prieto

drumFantasycamp™
Education and inspiration from the world's greatest drummers.

Register NOW: www.DrumFantasyCamp.com



A SEA OF PERCUSSION

There are two things that make Reed Olson of Bozeman, Montana, very happy: drumming and Hawaii. The twenty-three-year-old drummer, who's been playing for ten years, fell in love with the islands when he visited them as a teenager, and he's dreamed of going back ever since. "Hawaii is another world," he says. "I love the weather, the people, the laid-back atmosphere—everything! Where else can you wake up, walk down to the beach, and see giant sea turtles lounging with tourists?"

When it came time to create his fantasy drumset, Olson had a clear vision. "I wanted something that would really stand out and express my personality too," he says. His seven-piece kit was built from maple Keller shells and then hand-painted and airbrushed by a Florida artist. The design includes a dolphin, a killer whale, a tranquil beach scene, and, on the bass drum head, a

shark snarling to life. "It was a long process," Reed says, "but I couldn't be happier with the result." The snowy peaks of Big Sky Country just got a little closer to a tropical paradise.



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 billya@moderndrummer.com. Show "Kit Of The Month" in the subject line of the message. Photos cannot be returned.



THAT GREAT GRETSCHE SOUND... SINCE 1883

original alluring passionate



USA Custom Nickel Finish
Sky Blue Pearl

INSPIRING



www.GretschDrums.com
Gretsch Drums
P.O. Box 507, Bloomfield, CT 06002



new a custom rezos...
ride the wave!

With the first wave of ReZo cymbals came the thundering cry of drummers for more. Now comes the full set. We started with HiHats that feel super smooth to both the hand and foot. We added a 21" Ride, a big gun with a large bell to handle any situation and two Splashes that really sparkle. We then went old school with two radical Ping models. It's sort of a cross between a China and an explosive crash. The series is complete. With their shimmering overtones and boyish good looks, ReZos rip with any type of music.

Zildjian

SINCE • 1623

zildjian.com/newrezos