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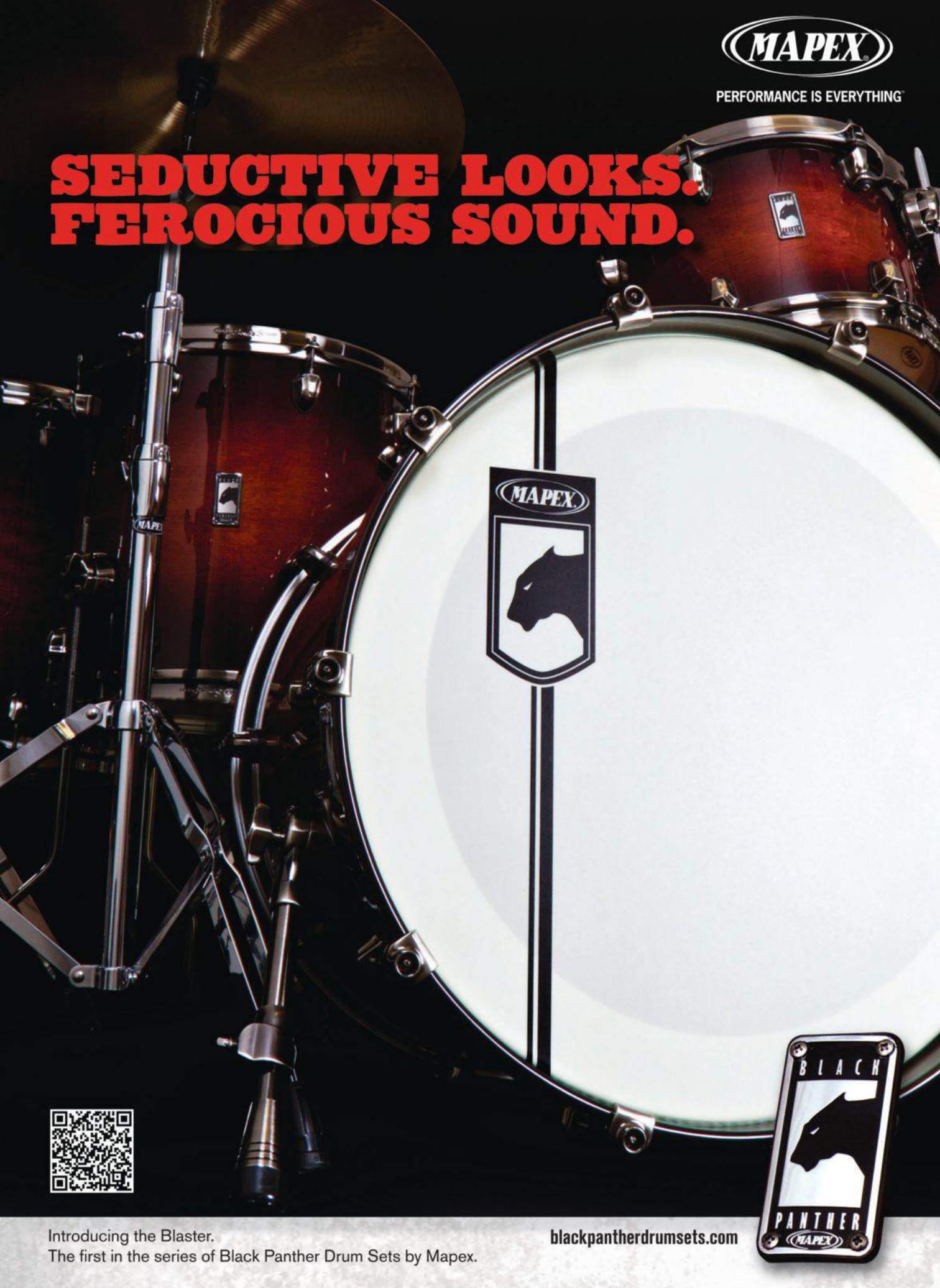
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Alex Solca

29 ROGER HUMPHRIES

In 1967 he left a plum gig with Horace Silver to follow his heart—back home. More than forty years later, his reputation as one of the most stylish players and most effective teachers around has only grown.

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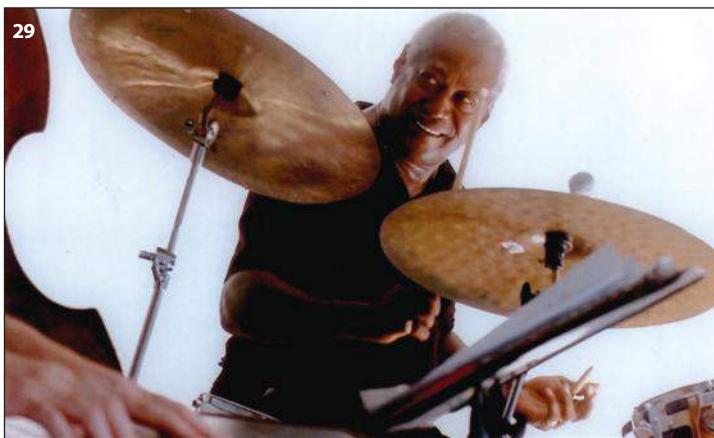
Combining jazz, electronic, free, and Brazilian styles, the New York avant-*everything* drummer proves there are always new worlds to conquer—in his playing, and in his clinics, classes, and drum-centric getaways. Only the fearless need apply.

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The Melvins' thunder king has been summoning the wrath of the heavens for more than twenty-five years. His reign continues uncontested—yet he's invited another storm-bringer to rattle the earth beside him. *MD* speaks with Crover and his percussive partner, Coady Willis.

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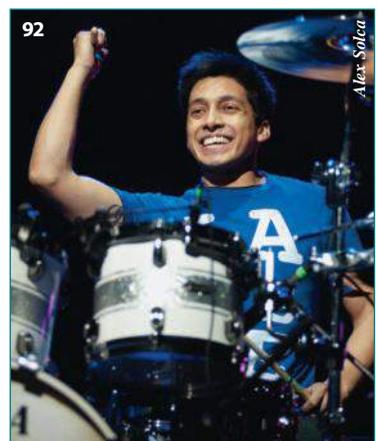
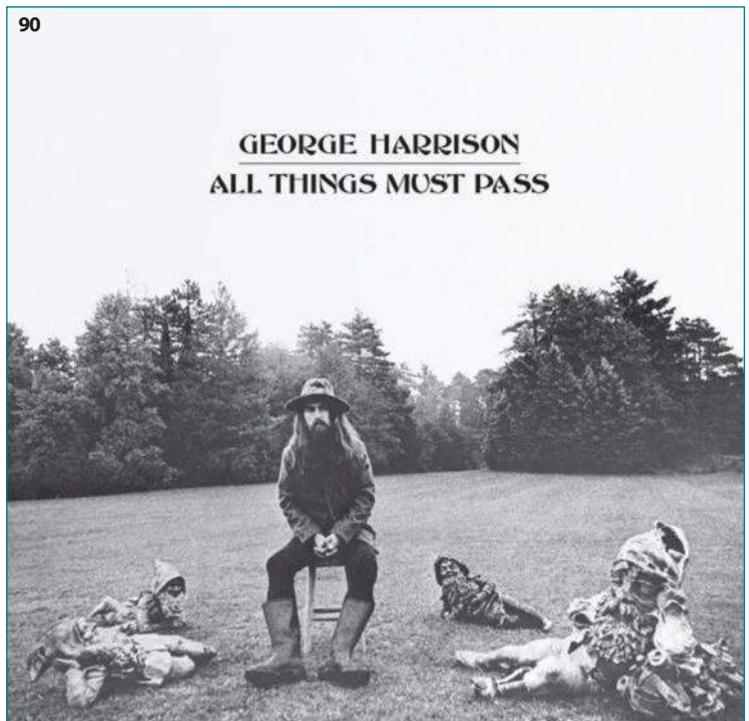
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Jazz Drumming Legends

Modern Drummer recently teamed up with the famed jazz label Blue Note Records to produce a very special digital compilation, *Jazz Drumming Legends*, which is available now for download at all major online service providers. The inspiration behind this collection was to shine a spotlight on some of the greatest jazz drummers of the past and present. Whether you're a casual or obsessive jazz fan, there's enough incredible drumming within these fifteen tracks to keep you inspired for years to come. If you're a newbie to the art of swing, there's nearly a century's worth of jazz history to become acquainted with. Big band, burning bebop, boogaloo shuffle, modern-jazz fusion... it's all there. (My personal favorite track is the aptly named drum solo piece "Nothing But The Soul," performed by hard-bop pioneer Art Blakey.)



The fifteen drummers featured on *Jazz Drumming Legends* were chosen not only because of their outstanding musicianship, but also because each of them has played a vital role in the evolution of jazz drumming. Gene Krupa brought mainstream attention to the drumset for the first time; Buddy Rich and Joe Morello extended the instrument's technical limits; Max Roach made the kit sing with unprecedented sophistication; Art Blakey taught us how to swing with the power of an African master drummer; Philly Joe Jones redefined the rudiments; and Roy Haynes, Billy Higgins, Tony Williams, and Elvin Jones broke new ground for rhythmic freedom and expression. Then there are the current heavyweights Jack DeJohnette, Lewis Nash, Bill Stewart, Ignacio Berroa, and Chris Dave, who are exploring new directions that will help shape the art form in the future.

Of course, the list of artists we chose to feature on *Jazz Drumming Legends* is nowhere near a complete summation of the greatest jazz drummers of all time. There are dozens—if not hundreds—of others who are deserving of being included in such a compilation. But there's no doubt that each of the artists in the collection has made a significant contribution to drumming. The next time you're online, log on to iTunes, Amazon.com, or whichever digital retailer you prefer, and have a listen. We think you'll dig it.

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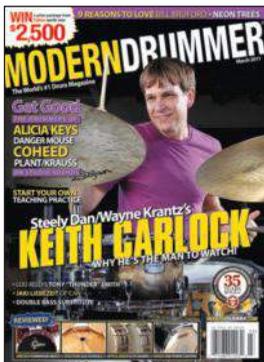
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KEITH CARLOCK

Your March 2011 article on Keith Carlock couldn't have come at a better time! My friend Jeff and I received our digital copies on our phones while on a train ride from North Carolina to NYC, specifically to see Keith play at the Blue Note with Toxic Monkey—the super-group that includes Bill Evans, Steve Lukather, Steve Weingart, and Will Lee. Having seen Keith play in a variety of musical settings over the last few years, I find that his drumming *never* ceases to amaze me. Whether it's with John Mayer, Rudder, or Toxic Monkey, Keith adapts to each situation and makes it his own. As you stated in the article, his DVD doesn't focus so much on technique as it does on musical application, which is what makes him so in demand. He made our jaws drop that night at the Blue Note by playing the Simon Phillips/Los Lobotomys composition "Party In Simon's Pants" on a five-piece kit (single bass, mind you). He killed it! Thanks for such an insightful piece.

Bill Fleming



DAVID GARIBALDI'S PRECISION TEST

"The Precision Test" by David Garibaldi in the November 2010 issue was great. The article inspired this fifty-eight-year-old drummer to work harder and never give up. I buy your magazine every month, but my daughter's Christmas gift to me was a subscription to *Modern Drummer*, and I want to say that life is good!

Larry Murphy

A TIP FOR TAMING OVERTONES

Drummers have different ways of dealing with drum overtones. Commercial products generally fall into two categories. One type is simply a ring of Kevlar or drumhead material that rests on the outer edge of the batter head. The other type is self-adhesive gel, which sticks on the batter head. But there is no perfect solution for overtones. Both of these types of products have disadvantages that are certainly relevant to a working drummer. The ring-type dampers tend to fall off during setup or takedown and may get stuck on brushes and become dislodged, and these dampers are not made for all drum sizes. The gel products are small and can fall off or get lost easily with regular gigging and travel.

A nice solution to the problem of drum overtones is the Sticky Hands that often come in gumball machines. They can be up to a couple of inches in diameter. They stick on drumheads well and can be washed if they get dirty. They also give a fun, funky look to the drums. They're inexpensive—a dozen cost only around \$3—and can be found easily online.

Colin White

ELECTRONICS THEME ISSUE

I really enjoyed the February 2011 issue focusing on electronics. I forgot about Jimmy Bralower (Gimme 10!) and how many different people he's worked with over the years. And that Bralower "Time Machines" piece for Kit Of The Month was terrific!

Jim Doyle

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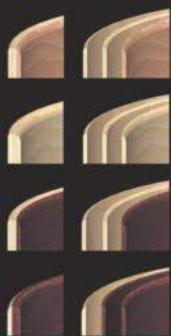


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BOBBY BLOTZER

Ratt's longtime drummer isn't about to let the dark side of the rock life keep him down.

The past three decades have been one big roller-coaster ride for Bobby "the Blotz" Blotzer, as revealed in his tell-all autobiography, *Tales Of A Ratt: Things You Shouldn't Know*. The veteran drummer holds nothing back, depicting what it was like to be on top of the world with one of the most successful '80s rock bands and then to have to take odd jobs to support his family when grunge temporarily pushed metal off the radar in the early '90s. "It was very upsetting," Blotzer says in the book, "a very distraught time in life for not only me, but the rest of the bands of the '80s era."

During the challenging years following Ratt's 1992 breakup, Blotzer kept himself busy running a carpet steam-cleaning business and a music studio, closing loans for a mortgage company—even buying a flower shop to supplement his income. Bobby, who is proud of his hardworking, blue-collar Pittsburgh upbringing, insisted he was just doing what he had to do. "When we broke up, I still had to take care of my family," he says. "If I had to mow lawns to do it, I would have."

As fate would have it, in 2010 a re-formed Ratt released a new



album, *Infestation*, which reached number thirty on the *Billboard* Top 200 chart. And though the future of the band seems as nebulous as ever—Ratt's career is filled with legal and personal complications, and the group is technically on hiatus at the moment—the Blotz is keeping himself busy working on an interactive book, recording his own album, and trying to launch a new reality show. **"Pistol" Pete Kaufmann**



MARK HEANEY

Punk? Funk? Old junk? It's all good when you enter the drum room of this chameleon, who's been lighting up stages with the legendary post-punk group **Gang Of Four**.

"Mechanical, unwavering," says British drummer Mark Heaney of his rhythmic approach with the British new wave institution Gang Of Four. "The playing needs a certain urgency, aggression, and outlook to make it work. And there's nothing like the injustices of life to make you hit harder."

Inspired as much by the sociopolitical lyrics as by the music, Heaney has been laying down simple but creative tribal beats for the band since 2005, continuing the assault on the Gang's latest release, *Content*. And what about playing the group's classic songs live? "I do embellish things to add excitement," the drummer says, "but I make sure I pay respect

to those early recordings. To play too busy would not be authentic."

Heaney's multifaceted talents are also displayed on his own newest album, *Drum Room*, a grooving, funky, trippy collection of pasted-together beats and soundscapes featuring burning chops and wild soloing over vamps. "I wanted to make it dirty sounding and not super-slick," Heaney says. Not your typical drummer-led fusion affair, *Drum Room* also contains loops, hard-panned left/right overdubs, and filters masking the natural sound of the kit. On deck? Mark's guitar/bass/drums improv trio, which, he says, is "a real chance to let loose and push forward." **Ilya Stemkovsky**

On Tour

Dave Agoglia with Rev Theory /// **Steven Kopacz** with Go Radio /// **Steve Asheim** with Deicide /// **Malcolm Holmes** with OMD /// **James Ulrich** with Runner Runner /// **Morgan Rose** with Sevendust /// **Karl Brazil** with James Blunt /// **Doug "Cosmo" Clifford** with Creedence Clearwater Revisited

Also On The Shelves

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OUT NOW ON CD

PAT MASTELOTTO On Mr. Mister's *Pull*

It's a classic case of art versus commerce. Mr. Mister had risen to the top of the pop charts in the '80s with the mega-hits "Kyrle" and "Broken Wings." But the ambitions of expanding the artistic palette of a commercially successful pop band in that era, coupled with a record label buyout and a shuffling of industry execs, put the group's final recording on the shelf. Sadly, the talented session aces went their separate ways. Fast-forward twenty years, and just in time for '80s retro-mania, this long-put-off Mr. Mister album, *Pull*, has finally been released.

Well worth the wait, *Pull* resurrects the masterful, polished pop drumming of a pre-King Crimson Pat Mastelotto. Abandoning the electronic-drum-driven tracks of early Mr. Mister for a variety of organic acoustic sounds, Mastelotto, along with engineer Paul DeVilliers, explores a vast sonic landscape through various kits, miking techniques, and studios to give each song a unique rhythmic flavor. L.A. percussion guru Luis Conte also adds a tasty world-music spice to several tracks. "We listened to XTC, Talk Talk, PiL, Peter Gabriel, and the Beatles' *Magical Mystery Tour* and white albums, both for inspiration and sonic references," Mastelotto says.

"We cut drums for *Pull* in several studios," Pat continues, "but mostly just for a day. I'd cut three or four takes of each song. Then Paul DeVilliers and I made roughs to take home and picked the performances and sounds we liked best. We started with about twelve songs, but we weren't completely invested and wanted to write more. We probably cut about twenty or twenty-five songs and 'pulled' the best for the record."

Mike Haid

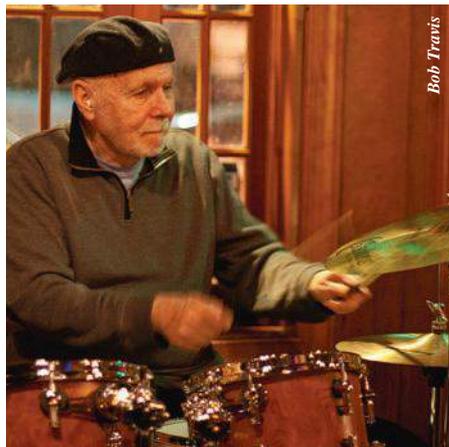


RON FREE

Although proper recognition has eluded him, **the Mose Allison/Lee Konitz vet** is a drummer that all jazz fans should know.

Ron Free's career began as a hard-road tale of talent that burned bright too quick. Arriving in New York City from South Carolina in 1955, the gifted eighteen-year-old was quickly hired by luminaries such as Woody Herman, Lennie Tristano, Lee Konitz, Zoot Sims, Marian McPartland, Lena Horne, and Mose Allison. "I went there to study at the feet of the masters, and the next thing you know, I was in over my head," Free says. The up-and-comer also became the resident drummer at a celebrated jazz loft where he couch-crashed and jammed around the clock with jazz royalty.

Young and impressionable and hanging with his heroes, Free became ensnared by drugs. He fell hard and was eventually hospitalized, and then he fled home to regroup. Though his ascendancy was cut short, "It saved my life," he says. "It's all a part of paying dues, and I paid 'em." After a twelve-year hiatus, the drummer reemerged strong on the San Diego jazz scene.



Bob Travis

Fortunately, the loft jams had been exhaustively taped and photographed by famed lensman W. Eugene Smith. In 2009, the unearthed archives became the subject of an NPR radio series and book, *The Jazz Loft Project*, which feature Free's drumming and interviews extensively, vindicating Ron's vital role in these historic happenings and confirming the high praise that heavies had lavished upon him.

Today Free plays jazz gigs and sessions and is a staff drummer at the Homestead resort in Virginia. "I think I'm playing better than ever now because I don't have the anxiety," he says. "It's a miracle that I'm alive. When I think about all I've been through—and here I am at seventy-four, going strong—I swear I never thought I'd make it half this far."

For more on Ron Free, go to wnyc.org and search for "Jazz Loft Project."

Jeff Potter



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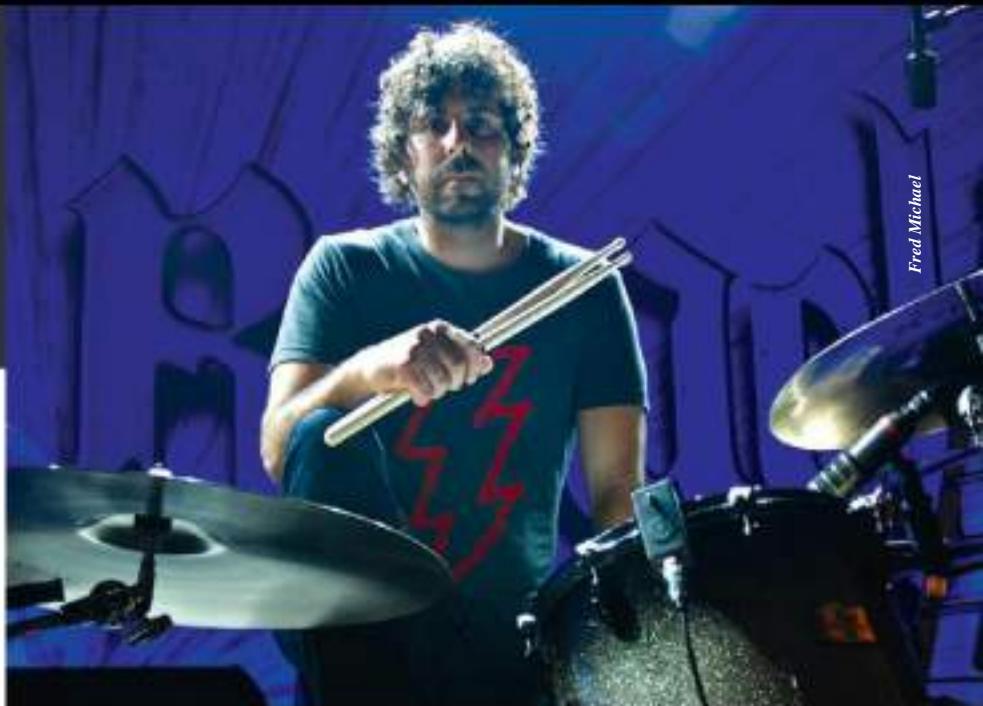
Papa Roach is one of the biggest rock bands on the planet. But it wasn't so long ago that the group's drummer was paying his dues and picking up valuable lessons. Listen and learn.

1 BE READY BEFORE DIVING IN. You've gotta get tight with yourself before you start going out and talking it up. Do a lot of woodshedding—which, if you're really into it, you'll be doing anyway. Then hit the clubs and network your ass off. Meet as many people as you can. And then eventually start playing, asking to jam with people. If you see a band and one individual is really standing out, talk to them first. Some guys are secretly looking to do other stuff, and you wouldn't know it unless you asked them. It could result in you and the guitar player forming a band.

2 PLAY IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS. I never allowed myself to play with only one band when I was younger, even if it was just jamming with friends. The more experience you have playing with different people, the better you'll get at playing in different situations in terms of what's asked of you, what you can comprehend, and what you actually bring to the table.

3 LISTEN TO OTHERS TO DEVELOP YOUR OWN STYLE. When I started out, it was all about listening to the music first and foremost, trying to grasp what the drummer was playing and copying it on the kit. After years of doing that, you start to develop your own style, fills that you like—it just starts becoming *you*. It's about sitting down and going through everything with a fine-tooth comb.

4 KNOW YOUR BUSINESS. Learn how to write songs. I'm not really a big lyric guy; I'm more focused on the music. But try to make sure you're part of the initial writing process, so the band will acknowledge what you've put into it. And hold your ground as far as getting a cut from any publishing. The stronger a player



you are, the more opportunities you'll make for yourself—people are going to feel more comfortable with you and will be willing to compensate you for that.

5 STAGE EXPERIENCE IS CRUCIAL. Anybody who's been on stage knows that it's way different from rehearsal. If you sit in the studio, you get comfortable seeing the same walls every day. You don't realize until you get on stage that it's a completely different world. It sounds different. And you could be up there in front of 20,000 people and forget how the next song starts, even though you've played it 150 times in the last month. That happened to me—my mind just went blank. It happens!

6 LEARN THE TECHNOLOGY. If you have a Mac, get to know GarageBand. I write lots of things on there—beats, melodies, bass lines, whatever. A lot of bands are using Pro Tools now, so if you can learn that at home and get a head start, there are plenty of gigs where they're looking for a drummer who knows that stuff and can program different things with it.

7 MIX UP YOUR MUSIC. Listen to different styles. If you're in a rock band, listen to some hip-hop. I listen to

classical. Find an interest in other things, because that can get you out of stagnation. It even sparks your mind to hear things differently, and you could possibly apply that to what you're doing.

8 TUNE YOUR KIT FOR THE GIG. I used smaller drums, such as a 12" rack tom, for the punk stuff, versus what I use now, which is 14". But a lot of guys can't really afford to switch it up, especially if you're just starting out. That's where you have to learn to tune the drums differently, to make them sound like what you'll need for that particular gig.

9 GET COMFY WITH THE CLICK. The way things are in the studio these days, that's all you play to. They'll throw you up on a grid, and if you're not lining up, you'll want to get as close as you can. Even if you're just on a pad doing rudiments or single strokes, set the bpm and work your way up.

10 STAY COOL. On a people level, when you're out networking, be as cool as you can be. You're going to come across some idiots, but try not to be one yourself. Everything cycles, and you've got to be a decent people person. That also helps when you're living with your band on tour.

Fred Michael

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JEFF DAVIS

Since the early '90s, the *MD Pro Panelist* has been logging long hours in the studio with some of the greatest gospel artists of our time, including Richard Smallwood, Kirk Franklin, and Vickie Winans. **Here, Davis tells us how he approaches recording sessions these days.**

What musicians most influenced your approach? When recording, do you refer to their ideas, or do you create your own?

Steve Gadd was a huge influence, though I heard Bill Maxwell first. Then there's Joel Smith, Derrick Schofield, Edgar Meeks, Joe Corroero, Harvey Mason, Joe Morello.... I think these guys are all inside of me now, so at any time my playing might have an inflection or nuance that I got from them, but it comes from *me*, how I create what I'm hearing. I've made it my own—at least I think I have!

Should drummers use studio-owned drums, or should they always bring their own?

As a rule I believe you should always have your own gear. Some top studios, however, have incredible drum setups, and they pride themselves on their sound, so they prefer you use their kit.

How about mics?

If you've created a sound with your own microphones and you know what you're doing, then by all means make that a part of your setup. But please do your homework: Learn your frequencies, miking patterns....

If you're in miking situations regularly live or in the studio, you should pay attention to where the microphones go and why. First of all, it's how you're heard, and if you're not being heard properly, it could be a reason for dismissal; the soundman might just throw you under the bus. [laughs] More than that, your interest in how you're miked—what mics and miking



patterns are used—speaks to the engineer in a more sensitive way, like, "I'm used to a certain sound. Can we work together to obtain that?"

Should a drummer try to have his or her own sound?

It's difficult, but if you do, it puts you in a unique position. It means that upon hearing a track, people can identify *you*. It means that you have carved out an identity.

Should drummers tune their own drums on a session?

I do. All drummers should know how to tune their drums and maintain their kits. That means changing heads, tightening screws and lugs, having proper tension, and checking your bearing edges as well. [For more on bearing edges, see our Shop Talk article on page 64 of this issue.]

Would you use the studio's cymbals or even rentals?

No, unless I didn't have a choice. Because I have a desired sound, I bring my own set of recording cymbals. You develop a tonal palette that you're used to, and a lot of

your preconceived arrangements and cymbal ideas might be influenced by those tones. My palette began with one or two favorite crashes that I played on every recording, and it's grown to an arsenal of crashes, effects cymbals, and rides. I went from using one ride on everything to having the choice of five or six!

Is the click track necessary?

For most situations, I'd say yes, mainly because it sends the timing/meter accountability to *all* the musicians, instead of the drummer being the fall guy for all tempo mistakes. [laughs] But we have to be on point and be able to handle that responsibility as well.

A click track can be the drummer's best friend, once the player understands all the good it can provide, and once he or she develops a relationship with it and is not afraid to caress it, manipulate it, play in front or in back of it—even on the side of it. You've got to spend considerable time with clicks, loops, sequences, or drum machines to get acquainted with the relationship between the two rhythm worlds. The click is exact—it doesn't waver—but our internal human rhythm is dictated, affected, and distracted by many things. So you have to practice until your internal human rhythm and the click are the best of friends—united to move together, or not at all.

How many takes are usually necessary to make a great recording?

[laughs] Answering this one is like trying to answer the Tootsie Pop question: How many licks to the middle...?

Do you choose the best take, or does someone else?

Usually it's the producer's choice, but it could be the artist's. Maybe that's been agreed upon before you start. Oh, and the executive producer has dibs too!

Your engineer or producer can be your best friend, the one who makes sure your mix is right and ensures that you achieve your best take as quickly as possible—otherwise ghost/wack tracks may haunt you forever. [laughs] Seriously, though, listen to yourself and be honest about your playing. And don't be afraid to ask for what you need to help you perform your best. Though you should be as prepared as possible, don't be shy to ask for a few minutes to work out a part, or to request that your monitor volume be louder or softer or the vocals be lowered or raised in your mix—even down to dimming the lights and lighting candles....





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What Happened To Corder?

I bought my Corder five-piece drumkit in 1991, based on a review in *MD*. The kit still sounds and looks great, and I've been wanting to add to it for several years. Through research I've traced the sale of Corder from Darwin and then to Fibes. I've attempted to call Fibes, but I keep getting a message that the plant is under construction and not operational. I would greatly appreciate any information about the status of Fibes drums and, if applicable, about which manufacturer has carried on the Corder drum design.

Brendan M. Mahoney

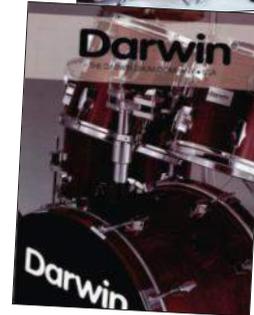
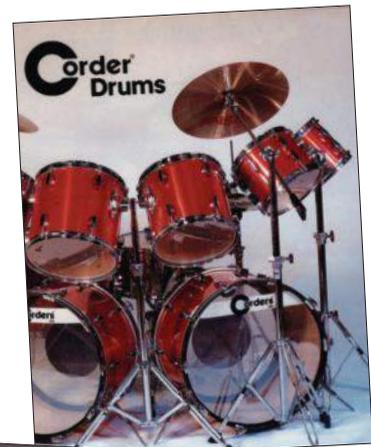
"The original Fibes company started in the '60s as an experiment on shell material," says drum historian Harry Cangany. "Fiberglass was the choice, since it was uniform and moisture-proof, it had no sound-absorbing properties, and it could be made quickly and at a reasonable cost. The two men who started Fibes also made acrylic-shell drums. They sold the company to C.F. Martin & Co., which is famous for its acoustic guitars.

"Martin sold the company to Jim

Corder, who kept the design of Fibes but decided to focus on wood-shell drums. He bought shells from the former Jasper Manufacturing Company, which also supplied shells to Gretsch and Camco. Jasper shells were a mix of maple and gumwood.

"Corder was sold to the Darwin Drum Company of Alabama, and for a brief time the Fibes/Corder look continued with the Darwin logo. Darwin also made a tube-lug composite-shell series called the Rebel. Darwin was short lived, and, once again, the company was sold, this time to Tommy Robertson, who owned a drum shop in Austin, Texas. For this reincarnation, the badge changed, but the old name—Fibes—came back. Under Robertson's stewardship, there was a real push to make this revered brand a contender once again. Fibes made Jasper-shell wood drums and acrylic drums until Jasper went out of business. Then Robertson had a proprietary shell made that was built to the old Jasper specs.

Around 2005, Fibes quietly stopped making drums, and I'm not sure the public was ever given a straight answer on whether the company was gone or just on hiatus.



Let's hope the good name of Fibes comes back again. In the meantime, the Austin-made drums are well sought after in the used marketplace."

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THE DOCTOR IS IN

by Asif Khan, M.D.



Relieving Tennis Elbow

I'm fifty-one years old and have been drumming (right-handed) for forty years. Last year I started to get ten-donitis in my left elbow. When I play, I have immense pain in my elbow that extends down to my left forearm. Even when I'm not drumming, my elbow feels as if it's on fire and my forearm aches. I'm losing strength and muscle tone in my left arm, and I'm just starting to feel the initial pangs of pain in my right elbow as well. I had a corti-sone shot in my left shoulder and elbow a year ago; it helped for about two months. I've tried acupuncture, massage, prescription medication, heat liniment, and ice, but nothing works except stopping drumming altogether. But that cannot be an option for me. How do I get rid of this pain without having to stop playing?
Brent Deakin

The elbow is a commonly affected joint in drummers. By your description, this resembles a case of either medial or lateral epicondylitis, better known as golfer's and tennis elbow, respectively.

Here are some movements to try to help you diagnose the type of condition. Start with your arms outstretched as much as you can bear, with your palms pointing up. With your good arm, press on your affected arm's elbow. Is the pain on the inside (medial) or on the outside (lateral) of the elbow? To determine whether you have lateral epicondylitis, a presumptive diagnosis requires pain aggravated by wrist extension. (With outstretched arms, turn the palms up and stretch your hands down toward the ground.) For medial epicondylitis, which is much less common than lateral epicondylitis, pain is aggravated by resisted wrist flexion. (With outstretched arms, turn the palms up and stretch your hands toward you at the wrist.)

Both medial and lateral epicondylitis will have the following symptoms:

1. Local tenderness directly over the respective epicondyle (bony outgrowth at elbow)
2. Pain aggravated by radial deviation (turning your wrists)

3. Pain aggravated by strong gripping (or having a decreased grip strength)

4. Normal range of motion in the elbow

Here are some reasonable treatment options.

Stretching. Try stretching your wrists and forearms at 15- to 30-second intervals for 10 to 15 minutes, then rest for 10 minutes and repeat. Slowly increase your stretching time to 75 to 90 minutes before playing, until your pain is resolved.

Activity modification. Reduce your drumming time.

Biomechanical modification. Adjust your drumset positioning and seat height to put your body in a more natural, ergonomic state when drumming.

Eccentric- and heavy-load exercises.

This may be the best option for your injury, since you want to keep playing. Eccentric exercise is the application of a load (muscular exertion) to a lengthening muscle. To do that, pre-stretch your injured arm by holding a weight in your hand, dangling the arm down as much as possible, and moving your arms in a slow, controlled circular manner for 6 to 10 seconds at a time. This appears to stimulate tissue remodeling and the normalization of tendon structure. Such exercise is often uncomfortable, but when done properly it shouldn't cause severe pain or result in any worsening of symptoms. You shouldn't experience increased pain or joint swelling the next day; if you do, hold off on these exercises until you can bear it.

Alternating applications of ice and heat is a mainstay in many other injuries, but for your condition research has shown that neither ice nor heat will help after the acute phase of injury, which usually lasts two weeks. I would also avoid further steroid injections. They will reduce pain initially but will ultimately lead to worse long-term outcomes. Anti-inflammatory medications, including Motrin and Tylenol, can help somewhat, but you should limit the use of them to a maximum of two weeks. Surgical consultation is reasonable if there is no improvement after six months of physical therapy using a well-designed program in combination with medical treatments.

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LATIN PERCUSSION

TOP-TUNING CLASSIC CONGAS AND ASPIRE SLIDE-MOUNT STAND by Fran Azzarto



Latin Percussion has designed a huge variety of hand percussion instruments since the mid-'60s. One of the company's most recent innovations is the Top-Tuning Classic Congas we have for review this month. This new design allows percussionists to tune their congas from the top of the rim, rather than by tightening the lug nut from the bottom. The result is a much easier tuning experience.

The new congas come with rawhide

heads and a modified version of LP's Comfort Curve II steel rims that allows for the lug screws to be inserted from the top of the rim into a lowered V-shaped receptacle. These receptacles are welded to the rim, just low enough that the hand doesn't come into contact with them when playing. This new lug design also pulls the head straight down, which helps keep the conga more evenly in tune, and the lug screws fit into threaded self-aligning

inserts to make the tuning process smooth and easy. The inserts are attached to heavy-duty side plates that can withstand high-tension tunings.

Each lug assembly is covered with a rubber shell protector to prevent the metal from damaging the finish on other drums. Also included with each

drum is a small black cotton bag that contains LP's Lug Lube, which keeps the tuning lugs moving freely; a set of black rubber screw covers for the bottom of the lug screws; and an LP $\frac{7}{16}$ " hex-head socket wrench, which fits all of the lugs and interior nuts.

Playing these drums was a dream, as the low placement of the tuning mechanism combined with the Comfort Curve II rims made for effortless slaps and quick movement from one drum to the others. Their ease of tuning, however, is where these new instruments truly shined. I play congas in a twelve-piece ska band where I have to really crank the heads in order to be heard. It took me only a few minutes to get all three Top-Tuning Congas up to pitch. At the end of the session I pulled out the LP wrench and detuned the drums in a matter of seconds—quick and easy. List prices: \$649 (quinto), \$669 (conga), and \$699 (tumba).

lpmusic.com

ASPIRE SLIDE-MOUNT DOUBLE CONGA STAND

Also new from LP is an innovative double conga stand that replaces traditional wing-nut mounting plates with a slide-mount option that allows you to move drums onto and off the stand without having to adjust the hardware. The stand's upper post comes with rubberized metal shell grips that adjust easily to match the size of your drums. The top post also includes a memory lock, which makes for quick and consistent setup. The slide mounts can be retrofitted for any Aspire congas. Although this stand is extremely lightweight, it didn't budge at all, even when I was slamming the drums. List price: \$156.

CANOPUS

JAPANESE SWORD YAIBA ROCK KIT

by David Ciauro

Until recently, Canopus has focused mainly on turning out high-end kits. Japanese Sword models are the company's first attempt at a mid-level price range. Colloquially called Yaiba kits (the Japanese word for *sword*), there are two versions in this series: Bop and Rock. In August 2010, we gave the Bop kit a very favorable review. This month we're checking out the four-piece Rock version, which comprises an 18x22 bass drum, 7x10 and 8x12 rack toms (with mounts), and a 13x14 floor tom. This setup lists for \$3,769.49, which means the market price is somewhere around \$2,300. Let's see if the Yaiba Rock kit stays true to Canopus's highbrow reputation while slashing the cost in the process.

SPECS

The charcoal oil finish used on this kit gives the drums a professional-grade appearance and, according to Canopus, promotes an exceptionally natural tone. The rationale is that the unique properties of different finishes, such as oils, lacquers, and plastic wraps, will alter a drum shell's tonal character. (Check out the color chart at canopusdrums.com for more on this topic.) I can attest that the tones in this particular shell pack were in fact very natural, warm, and wonderfully resonant.

The die-cast Yaiba lugs are of stellar quality and are a key design element. For starters, their bladelike shape helped give the line its name. Second, they are less expensive and less labor intensive to manufacture than the solid brass lugs used on Canopus's high-end kits. Even though they are cheaper to produce, these die-cast lugs held their tuning splendidly.

Yaiba shells are 7-ply, 100 percent American maple without reinforcement rings. The suspension-style tom mounts and Bolt Tight leather washers on Canopus's high-end models are standard on Yaiba kits as well. Remo Coated Ambassador heads are used on the top and bottom of the toms and on the front



of the bass drum. A Coated Powerstroke 3 is outfitted on the kick's batter side.

THE SOUND AND THE FURY

While assembling the kit, I noticed that the resonant bass drum head didn't have a port. For convenience's sake, I centered a small, square 16" pillow inside the bass drum so that it rested just shy of touching either head. I normally refrain from using any internal muffling at first, but being that this is a rock kit, I went with my gut instinct and inserted the pillow. I cranked the resonant head high for maximum punch, and I tuned the Powerstroke 3 batter head to a medium-loose tension, hoping to hear a growling low-end attack. I was not disappointed! The pillow tamed some of the resonance of the shell without dampening the drum's big, boomy tone. I loved the attack, the robust

warmth of the tone, and the way the kick had a jabbing feel in response to the tight resonant head.

I kept the Yaiba rack and floor toms wide open to get a feel for what they could do. I was impressed with

how big they sounded, considering their small dimensions by common rock standards. Each drum had the bravado of a toy dog breed—barking, snarling, and acting like full-size Doberman pinschers. The attack spoke with authority and then quickly smoothed out into warm, balanced, resonant tones. The three toms were altogether harmonious and a cinch to tune, and the heads sat perfectly on pristinely shaped bearing edges.

FINAL THOUGHTS

When I play a kit that isn't meshing well with my drumming style, I feel as though two monologues are going on at once—it's my musical voice competing against the sound of the drums. Playing this Canopus Yaiba Rock kit, however, was like having a good conversation. There was a rhythmic balance between how I hit the drums and how they responded, which kept me playing for hours. Too often, I find that the excitement of sitting behind a new kit stems from the visual perspective, like a child playing with a shiny new toy. The rarity of finding inspiration in the way a kit plays, instead of how it looks, is not lost on me.

canopusdrums.com

TONS OF TONES

What proved most impressive about the Yaiba Rock setup was the tuning range and diversity of each drum.

From high to low, the resonance was always vibrant. The 10" tom was the first to reach a choking threshold, but there were still plenty of useful sounds along the way. From classic rock to '70s funk, pop, modern rock, metal, and even gospel, these soulful shells adapted to each environment with ease.

VATER

PLAYER'S DESIGN AND SPLASHSTICK ADDITIONS

by David Ciauro



This month we'll look at a diverse batch of models designed by some of Vater's most in-demand artists and educators, as well as two new specialty sticks.

Player's Design is the name of Vater's artist-signature line. When reviewing a signature model, it's often difficult to offer a truly objective opinion because the stick is designed to meet the specific needs of one particular drummer. The best we can do is try to be as descriptive as possible with hopes of guiding you toward the right choice for you. All Player's Design sticks list for \$16.49 a pair.

MIKE JOHNSTON 2451

Mike Johnston's model manages to break the customized mold, in that the renowned educator was considering his students' needs as well as his own when designing his signature stick. The 2451 is available in both maple and hickory. The maple version is lighter and airier than its hickory counterpart, making it a better choice for practicing or for softer playing situations, whereas the firmer hickory model aptly lends itself to heavier hitting. The wood type is the only difference between the two versions, so if you want to swap out the lighter maple for the more durable hickory during a live set, rest assured that the basic feel will remain consistent.

The 2451's .580" diameter splits the dif-

ference between Vater's standard 5A and 5B grips. The half-barrel wood tips are designed to decrease head pitting and to offer a quick response on drums and cymbals. I found the 16" length with a gradual taper to very balanced and comfortable.

CHRIS PENNIE FIGHT MANNEQUINS

MD Fest 2010 alumnus Chris Pennie's stick of choice is designed to keep up with the barrage of polyrhythmic fury that Pennie unleashes behind the kit. At 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ " with a .610"-diameter grip, this model is modestly bigger than a 5B and has a slight double taper, making the shaft the beefiest part of the stick. The taper from the butt end to the shoulder is gradual, but the taper from the shoulder to the tip is quick. This makes for a powerful stroke and a top-heavy feel for reinforced rimshots. The undersize acorn wood tip provides a dense attack on cymbals. These sticks didn't have a ton of flex and were more stubborn with regard to control, but they'd be well suited to heavier hitters who rely on power to cut through a loud stage mix.

"BIG" MIKE CLEMONS

"Big" Mike Clemons prefers an unlacquered stick (Vater's Nude finish), which helps reduce slippage when his hands start to sweat. With a .595" diameter, this 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " hickory model has a slimmer grip than a 5B, but the extra $\frac{1}{2}$ " in length allows Clemons to sweep around the kit with added confidence. A teardrop wood tip makes for a pronounced attack and meaningful cymbal articulation. The combination of additional length and a quick taper required me to choke up about a third of the way on the stick to find a comfort-

able balance point. The more I let my grip slide toward the butt end, the more powerful my backbeats became, so I varied my grip quite a bit when using these sticks, depending on which musical style I was playing.

CHRIS McHUGH

Nashville great Chris McHugh's stick is essentially a personalized 2B with a .635" diameter and a 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ " length. A quick taper leads to a full acorn tip, providing clear cymbal articulation and a full sound. Although there's some good weight to this beefed-up hickory stick, it felt comfortable, well balanced, and sturdy.

CORA COLEMAN-DUNHAM

Playing drums for Prince requires a rare form of versatility behind the kit. Cora Coleman-Dunham possesses this well-roundedness and thus requires a stick that can be a stylistic chameleon. Her 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " hickory model has a .530" diameter and a small teardrop wood tip. The stick response off cymbals and drums was quick, springy, and responsive.

SWING

The result of a collaboration with Army Blues drummer/educator Steve Fidyk, the Swing model (\$14.49) falls just shy of Vater's Manhattan 7A. This 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ " model has a .535"-diameter grip with a double taper, so the stick starts thin at the grip, gets thicker at the center of the shaft, and then quickly thins to a narrow taper at the tip. I felt the thinner grip required greater control, as playing with a loose hold allowed these sticks to get away from me quite easily. Swing sticks, which are available with wood or nylon oval tips, provided a nice rebound off the ever-so-important ride cymbal for quick, delicate swing patterns.

vater.com

BAMBOO SPLASHSTICK AND SPLASHSTICK SLIM

Bamboo Splashsticks are new arrivals in Vater's already diverse specialty stick lineup. The eco-friendly bamboo dowels present players with a more durable Splashstick option and a slightly heavier feel without a heavier touch. Bamboo Splashsticks list for \$29.99. The Splashstick Slim bamboo model, which lists for \$27.99, has only seven dowels. Its diameter is slimmer than that of a standard 7A drumstick. These make for the quietest option a drummer can have in the stick bag—just a step above the mute button.





AMEDIA

CLASSIC, THRACE, AND AHMET LEGEND SERIES CYMBALS

by Fran Azzarto

Founded in 2005, Amedia is a small family business based in Istanbul, Turkey, with a U.S. division in New Jersey. Brothers Ahmet, Saban, and Hamdusana Baykusak co-own the company, working as part of a four-man team of master cymbalsmiths that also includes Eremya Arzat. All Amedia cymbals are handmade by these four guys and their staff. For review this month, we were sent a ride, a crash, and a pair of hi-hats from three of Amedia's twenty-four lines.

CLASSIC SERIES

According to Amedia, the Classic line "embodies the classic, late-period Turkish cymbal sound." Everything from rock rides to sizzle cymbals to splashes and Chinas can be found within this series. All Classic cymbals are extensively hammered and have ultrafine lathing on the bell and multi-pass lathing on the bow.

The Classic ride we received was a 20" Jazz model. The overall sound of this fairly lightweight cymbal was bright and shimmering; the ride didn't have a lot of warm, low overtones. The bell sound was pro-

nounced and cutting, which might be a bit too much for soft, jazzy situations. At fast tempos, sticking on this cymbal was clear, never getting lost in the wash.

The 18" medium-thin Classic crash had a bright and cutting tone with a fairly quick "whoosh" sound. This model offered a lot of attack and not a lot of warmth. The 14" Classic Regular hi-hats include a medium-weight top and a heavy bottom cymbal. This pair was also bright sounding and fairly loud. When I rode on the hats in a half-open position, their roaring tone was fairly even. These guys are sure to cut through most power-pop guitars.

THRACE SERIES

Amedia's Thrace series includes brightly finished cymbals. They have the same lathed/hammered look as models in the Classic line, but they're considerably heavier in weight. The 20" ride has a large unhammered bell, which produced a medium pitch that wasn't as loud as I expected, given its size. When struck on the edge, this cymbal produced a big crash that worked well when I was slamming away during one of my band's heavier rock tunes. On quicker songs, fast 16ths played on the bow rang clear. The 18" Thrace crash was higher pitched than my usual 18" crash, and it had minimal low

overtones in the decay, making it best suited for quick, loud accents. The 14" Thrace hi-hats are some seriously heavy pieces of metal. These cymbals were all about the low end, with tons of "chomp" when I closed them with the pedal. Riding on the hats when held slightly open produced a dark, crunchy sound.

AHMET LEGEND SERIES

This line, the flagship for Amedia, is more traditional sounding and includes some of the company's best offerings. Named after founder Ahmet Baykusak, Ahmet Legends have a soft appearance, with small, light lathed grooves and fairly extensive hammering marks. The 21" ride sang with a lower pitch than the Thrace, while the stick sound was clear and tight with some warm overtones. When I really laid into this cymbal, the attack got a little lost in the wash but could be used for a cool crash/ride effect. The bell sound was clear and loud, and this bell proved to be the most useful among the three series we reviewed. This cymbal is designed more for jazz situations, but it would fit nicely in certain indie rock settings.

CONCLUSION

We tried out only three series from Amedia, but remember that the company offers twenty-four lines. Within that extensive range, almost any type of cymbal can be found. For a small, family-owned company, Amedia has a lot of big ideas that are definitely worth checking out. amediacymbals-usa.com

DARK, WARM AHMET LEGEND HI-HATS AND CRASH

The 18" Ahmet Legend crash was the warmest-sounding model in our review group, and it produced a good dark sound with a mellow decay. The hi-hats were pitched much lower than my usual cymbals, and they had a chubby stick sound. I really dug the deep, growling tone these hats produced when held a bit open.



AUDIO-TECHNICA

ASSORTED MICROPHONES by Butch Jones

Initially known for its state-of-the-art phono-graph cartridges, which were launched in 1962, Audio-Technica now builds high-performance microphones, headphones, wireless systems, mixers, and other electronic products for home and professional use. For review this month we have a selection of recently released mics that are particularly useful for drummers, especially those who have minimal mic-setup experience.

AE2500 DUAL-CAPSULE KICK MIC

The AE2500 (\$769) is a bass drum microphone that has separate dynamic and condenser elements housed within the same capsule. It has a 10 dB pad switch, an 80 Hz high-pass filter, and a five-pin male XLR output connector. Also included is a five-pin female XLR to dual three-pin male XLR cable. Even though it has two elements housed in the same case, this mic is still small enough to easily fit through a standard-size hole in a bass drum head. The supplied XLR breakout cable sends the individual output of each element to its own channel, so the outputs can be processed and blended in infinite ways to form whatever kick drum sounds you've been hearing in your head.

After I tried the mic in various spots inside a drum, I found the hot spot to be about $\frac{1}{2}$ " outside the hole. The condenser element did a great job of capturing the attack from the beater and the round tonal quality of the shell, while the dynamic element captured a tight bottom-end punch.

After I experimented with EQ and compression on the two channels, I found that the AE2500 could emulate the sound of several other microphones that I often use to record bass drums. I also tried this model on a low-tuned snare as well as on toms, and the extra beef it brought to the table was fun to work with. I have a feeling you'll be hearing a lot more about this microphone once more people have the chance to try it out.

AT4050ST STEREO CONDENSER

The AT4050ST (\$1,625) is a side-address stereo condenser with a dual-diaphragm capsule that maintains precise polar-pattern definition across a full frequency range. It has transformer-free circuitry, a 10 dB pad, an 80 Hz high-pass filter, and a three-position polar-pattern switch (90 degrees, 127 degrees, and Mid-Side). The mic also comes with a shock mount for superior isolation.

Of all the models in this review, the AT4050ST simply stole the show. It contains two discrete capsules (one cardioid, one figure-eight), and it



AE2500



AT4050ST



ATM450



AT4081



ATM650

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offers a few options for stereo recording. I favored the standard left/right mode at a 127-degree spread. With the mic placed about 3' above the cymbals and centered directly over the bass drum pedal, the 127-degree setting captured a beautiful and natural stereo image of the entire kit, plus crystal-clear high-end attack from the right- and left-side crashes.

Audio-Technica supplies a special stereo cable with this mic that splits from a five-pin connector on the microphone end into two standard three-pin XLR connections for the left and right channels. For a professional-sounding, no-fuss overhead option, this mic was a standout.

ATM450 SIDE-ADDRESS CONDENSER

The ATM450 (\$449) is a side-address, small-diaphragm condenser microphone with a 10 dB pad, an 80 Hz high-pass filter, and a high SPL tolerance. We tested this mic on the hi-hat with the 80 Hz filter and 10 dB pad engaged. It took a few tries to find its sweet spot, but when I moved the ATM450 1" away from the cymbal edge and 3" up, aimed down at the bell at about a 45-degree angle, it provided tons of stick definition and crisp high end.

The mic's small diaphragm also helped keep the imaging focused on the hi-hat while shutting out much of the rest of the

kit. The side-address arrangement of the capsule and the included AT8471 clip give you many options for placing the ATM450 in tighter spaces than what's possible with a traditional front-address hi-hat mic.

AT4081 BIDIRECTIONAL ACTIVE RIBBON MIC

The AT4081 (\$895) is a bidirectional ribbon microphone with an innovative ribbon transducer, phantom-powered active electronics, and a high SPL capability.

I tried a pair of AT4081s as room mics placed several feet in front of the kit, and I also used a pair as overheads. If you're looking for that classic ribbon-mic warmth but you don't want to pay typically high ribbon-mic prices, this model is a nice alternative. It has a midrange bump in the frequency response curve that helps tighten the stereo image, which would work really well with a smaller jazz-style kit. The AT4081 might be a little too dark sounding for everyday use as overheads (I would choose this microphone over the AT4050ST only when looking to capture warmer vintage-style tones), but it also proved to be an excellent mic for recording instruments other than drums. It sounded absolutely killer, for example, when used in conjunction with the ATM650 on an electric guitar amp.

ATM650 HYPERCARDIOID DYNAMIC

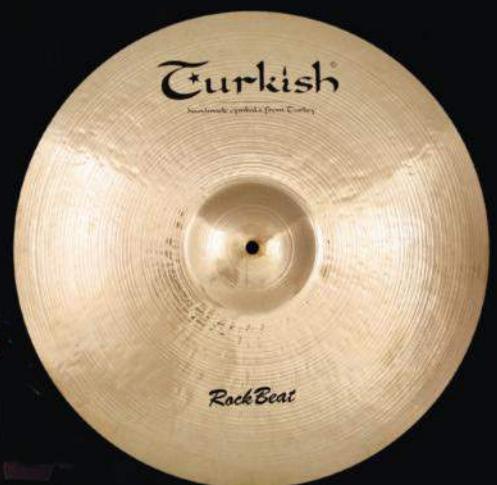
The ATM650 (\$169) is a hypercardioid dynamic mic with very high off-axis rejection capabilities and a wide frequency response. After years of blind devotion to the industry-standard Shure SM57, I think I've found a new mic for recording snare drums. With the ATM650 placed about 1" above and away from the rim and aimed at the center of the drumhead, I was able to capture a bright, full-bodied snare. There seemed to be some slight top-end boost near 5 kHz, which gave the sound a nice pop. This mic also picked up a good amount of snare rattle from the bottom of the drum, which would make it ideal in situations where you don't have enough inputs to use a second mic on the bottom of the snare.

Because of its high off-axis rejection capabilities, there was minimal leakage into the ATM650 from the surrounding drums and cymbals. This allowed me to raise the overall level of the snare without bringing up unwanted leakage from the hi-hat or toms. This model also sounded surprisingly good on toms, as again its off-axis rejection and tight hypercardioid pattern minimized bleed from other sources.

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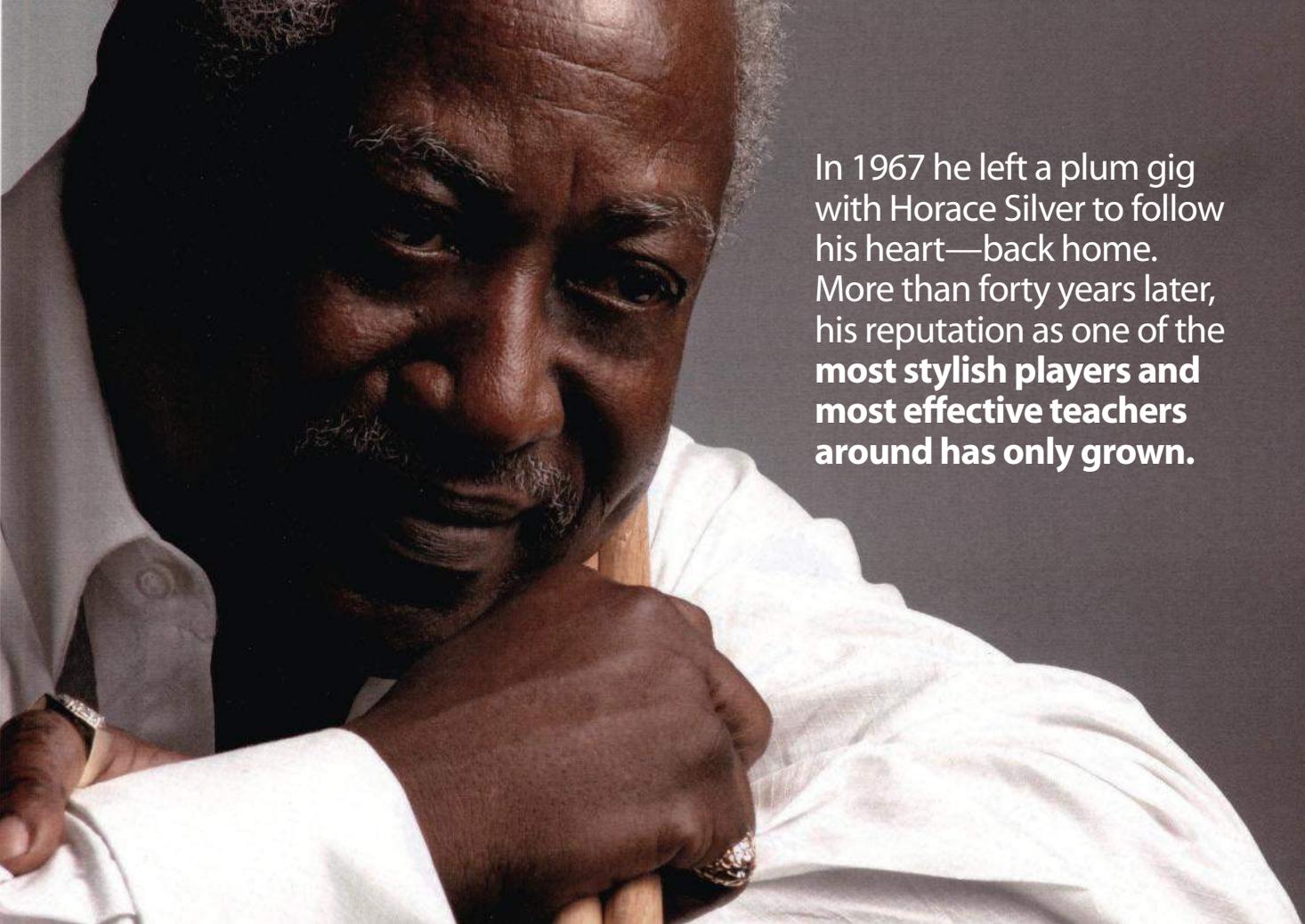
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In 1967 he left a plum gig with Horace Silver to follow his heart—back home. More than forty years later, his reputation as one of the **most stylish players and most effective teachers** around has only grown.

Roger Humphries

by Paul Wells

During its history, the vibrant city of Pittsburgh has transformed itself from an industrial town to a technological and medical center. Through the years, sports and the arts have been the glue that's bonded the residents together. Jazz in particular has always been strong in Pittsburgh, bearing a staggering number of legends. Art Blakey, Kenny Clarke, Billy Eckstine, Ray Brown, Ahmad Jamal, Billy Strayhorn, George

Benson, and Jeff "Tain" Watts are just a few of the important musicians who grew up in the city.

A somewhat lesser known but equally important artist is the jazz drummer Roger Humphries. Best known for his seminal work in the mid-1960s with the hard-bop pioneer Horace Silver, most notably on the crossover hit "Song For My Father," Humphries has also spent time with Shirley Scott and Stanley Turrentine, Richard "Groove" Holmes,

and Ray Charles. Since 1980, however, the drummer has been off the road, choosing to stay in Pittsburgh to raise his large family. He comes from a close-knit clan and simply couldn't imagine being absent from his children's and grandchildren's lives.

Humphries is one of the finest drummers in the bebop and post-bop tradition. *Any* drummer within driving distance of Pittsburgh would be well served to make the pilgrimage to see, hear, and meet him. Roger's playing is solidly rooted to the greasy swing of '50s jazz, but with a firm grip on the innovations of the '60s, '70s, and beyond. His groove is unstoppable,

MD contributor **Paul Wells** has worked with Deborah Harry, Joe Williams, the Duke Ellington Legacy, Randy Brecker, Rufus Reid, Glen Burtnik, and Spiraling, among others. He began playing drums at the age of ten in his hometown of Pittsburgh; besides Roger Humphries, he has studied with John Riley, Kenny Washington, and Bill Stewart. Wells is currently based in New York City.



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ROGER HUMPHRIES



and his soloing is fiery and energized. Most important, every note he plays on the drums is *music*.

More than just being a magnificent player, Humphries has had great influence as an educator, and this is how I first got to know him. I was lucky enough to attend the Pittsburgh High School For The Creative And Performing Arts (CAPA), where Roger taught from 1980 until his retirement in 2009. I fondly remember the time I spent with him, working through method books, listening to music together, and learning about the business. I also had many of my first experiences playing with professional jazz musicians when I would sit in at Roger's various weekly jam sessions at Pittsburgh jazz clubs. I recently took advantage of an opportunity to find out more about this quiet legend of jazz, beginning...at the beginning.

Roger: I was born in Pittsburgh in 1944, on the North Side—225 East Jefferson Street. I come from a family of ten children, and I'm the youngest. My family was very close, and I had a wonderful life growing up. My dad's brother lived next door, and he had eight children, so it was like I grew up in a family with eighteen children.

There were a lot of musicians in my family. My cousin Theodore played piano. My father had two brothers, Frank and Hildred Humphries, and they were musicians who worked on the road. They grew up with Roy Eldridge and knew Art Blakey. And there were many other musicians in the neighborhood. So my family's background has always been in music.

MD: It sounds as if you weren't limited by growing up in Pittsburgh, as opposed to New York City.

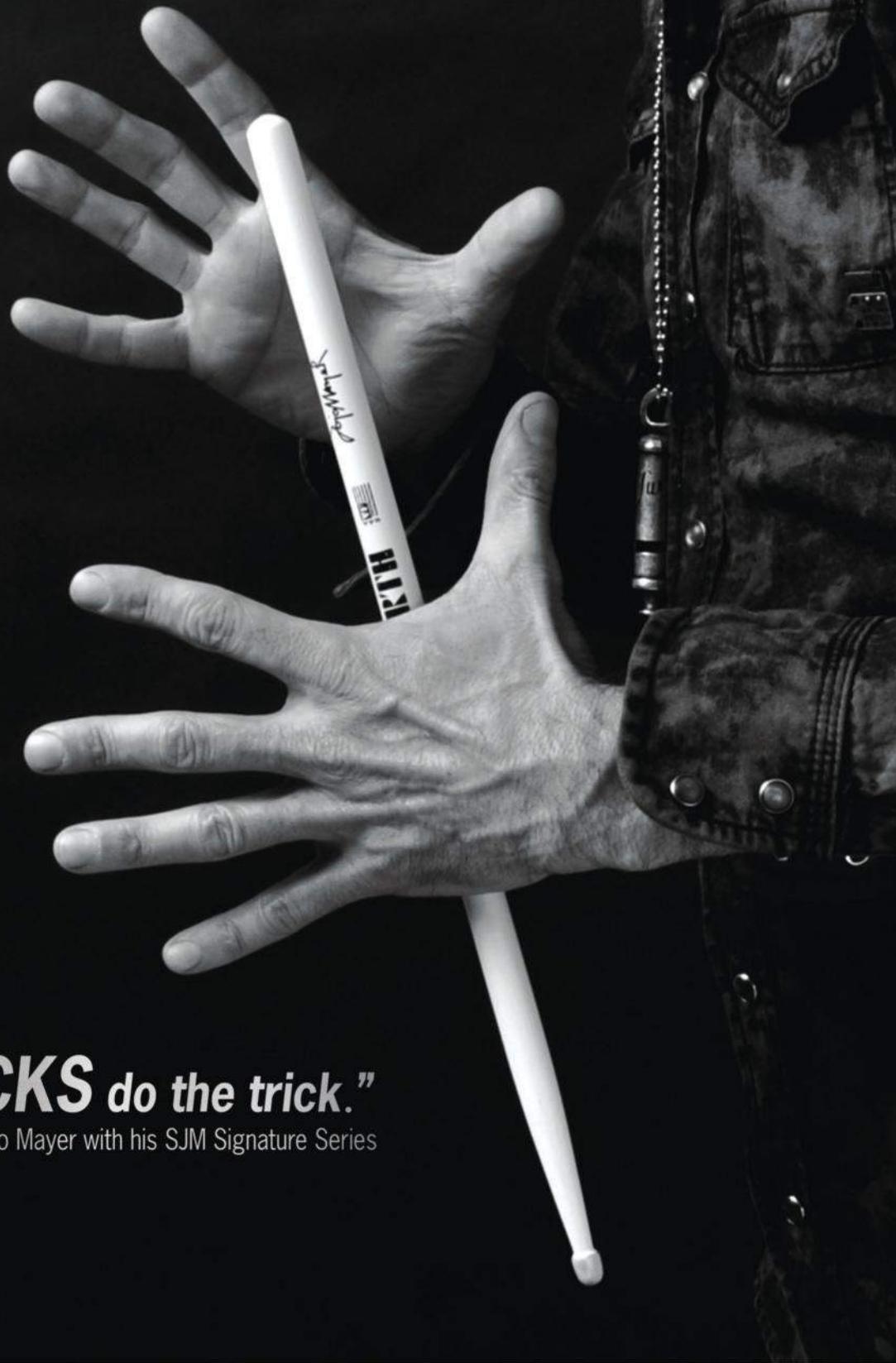
Roger: No, and my grandmother moved to New York. Every summer we would go there and visit.

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

Roger: They say I was about three and a half or four years old.

MD: Did you take any formal lessons at that point?

Roger: One of my older brothers, Norman, played drums. I started being able to imitate him. I could ride the cymbal and play independent figures with the left hand. There was always music on the radio and on the record player. All of my brothers loved jazz—they would buy records with Max Roach and Dizzy Gillespie. I came up hearing jazz all the time, and I started to learn the songs.



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ROGER HUMPHRIES

I grew up with this stuff. Kids today don't grow up hearing jazz in their homes. If they grow up hearing hip-hop and R&B on the radio or TV, they're not even hearing real instruments. My kids and now my grandkids all hear jazz. When they ride in my car, that's all I play, so they've grown up with it.

MD: When did you start playing with other musicians?

Roger: My brother would take me to his grade school, and I would play with the band there. I was four and a half, not quite old enough yet for kindergarten.

MD: Tell us about seeing legendary jazz drummers like Max Roach and Art Blakey.

Roger: In those days, every neighborhood had bars and clubs with live bands. My brothers would take me to the Saturday matinees. I remember how nervous I was to see Max Roach! This was the band with Booker Little, right before Abbey Lincoln started singing with him. I saw him the first time at the Midway Lounge on Penn

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Humphries plays a DW kit in natural satin oil finish, including a 4x14 snare, 8x10 and 9x12 toms, a 14x14 floor tom, and a 16x20 bass drum. His Bosphorus cymbals include 14" Traditional Crisp hi-hats, a 16" Traditional Paper Thin crash, a 20" Master ride, and a 19" Traditional Medium ride with six rivets.

Avenue, and he let me sit in. I had listened to everything he did on records, so I knew all the tunes. At that time I had a nervous stomach. I was okay as long as I was playing. But when I came home, my stomach would hurt so badly that I would have to just lie down on the couch all night. The doctor told my mother that I would eventually grow out of that.

MD: What was it like meeting your idols?

Roger: They were just normal guys and were always kind to me.

MD: What was the first touring gig that took you out of Pittsburgh?

Roger: Stanley Turrentine and Shirley Scott in 1962. I got out of high school in June, and we went out west in July. I was eighteen, and it was exciting to be on the road. They taught me a lot

RECORDINGS

Horace Silver Song For My Father, The Cape Verdean Blues, The Jody Grind /// **Carmell Jones** Jay Hawk Talk /// **Roger Humphries And RH Factor** This N That /// **Jimmy Ponder** Something To Ponder /// **Dwayne Dolphin** Portrait Of Adrian /// **Roger Humphries Big Band** Don't Give Up

about dynamics and how to make the music exciting.

MD: How did you get that gig?

Roger: I knew Stanley because he was from Pittsburgh. When I visited my relatives in New York, Stanley asked me to join the band because Otis "Candy" Finch was leaving. We rehearsed for a couple of weeks and then came back to Pittsburgh. I kissed my wife-to-be, Regina, goodbye, and I was off. I was excited as I don't know what! I was making my dream come true, playing the drums. It was wild.

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MD: How did you come to join Horace Silver?

Roger: Roy Brooks was leaving the band. The way I heard the story was that Horace put out word that he needed a drummer, and Max Roach and Art Blakey told him there was a young drummer in Pittsburgh. I got a call from Horace to come up to New York to stay at his crib and audition. He would play me recordings of different drummers and styles and explain what he liked and didn't like.

What was so wild about the situation was the other musicians auditioning at that same time: drummers Al Foster and Edgar Bateman Jr. were there, and [tenor saxophonist] Joe Henderson, [trumpeter] Carmell Jones, and [bassist] Teddy Smith. There were all outside the rehearsal room, just sitting on a bench. Imagine, all these guys just sitting out there waiting. And Edgar Bateman Jr. was scary—he played so much stuff, man! That was a heck of a day.

MD: So why did Horace pick you? What did he hear that was special in your playing?

Roger: It's not that I outplayed anyone or anything like that. It was just the fact that I fit with what he heard and complemented what he did. Plus I was young and he could help train me. Al Foster was young too, but he was already out on the scene in New York.

Horace wanted something new. You'd see Horace and other bandleaders do this in those days. They would disband every few years and start all over again. That would keep things fresh. It wasn't because of having a problem with anyone or anything like that. It was just a part of the business.

MD: What are some of your best memories of the gigs you did with Horace?

Roger: One of my greatest memories was our first time playing Birdland. I'd been there to see other people, but can you imagine playing there? One of the first gigs was a double bill with Stan Getz and Astrud Gilberto. The next time we played there was a double bill with John Coltrane's quartet, with Elvin.

MD: Tell us about the *Song For My*

Father recording session. Had you been playing those songs live before recording them?

Roger: Yeah, we had played them live, and then we went into the studio. To me that's the best way to record, because you already have a feel for the songs.

When you record these days, everyone is separated in booths. Back then, at Rudy Van Gelder's studio, we all set up and played together in the room. I was right next to the bassist, and the horns were set up in front of us. It's so much more personal when you're just using your ears and eyes to hear and feel the other musicians. The technology is great now, though. Musicians just adapt.

MD: The title tune on *Song For My Father* was a big hit on the radio and on jukeboxes.

Roger: It was everywhere.

MD: How did that change things?

Roger: It kept us working. I remember going to the French Riviera, playing the Antibes Jazz Festival. We were treated really well. The culture in Europe is

really different; they treat you with respect over there.

MD: They don't have the same prejudices?

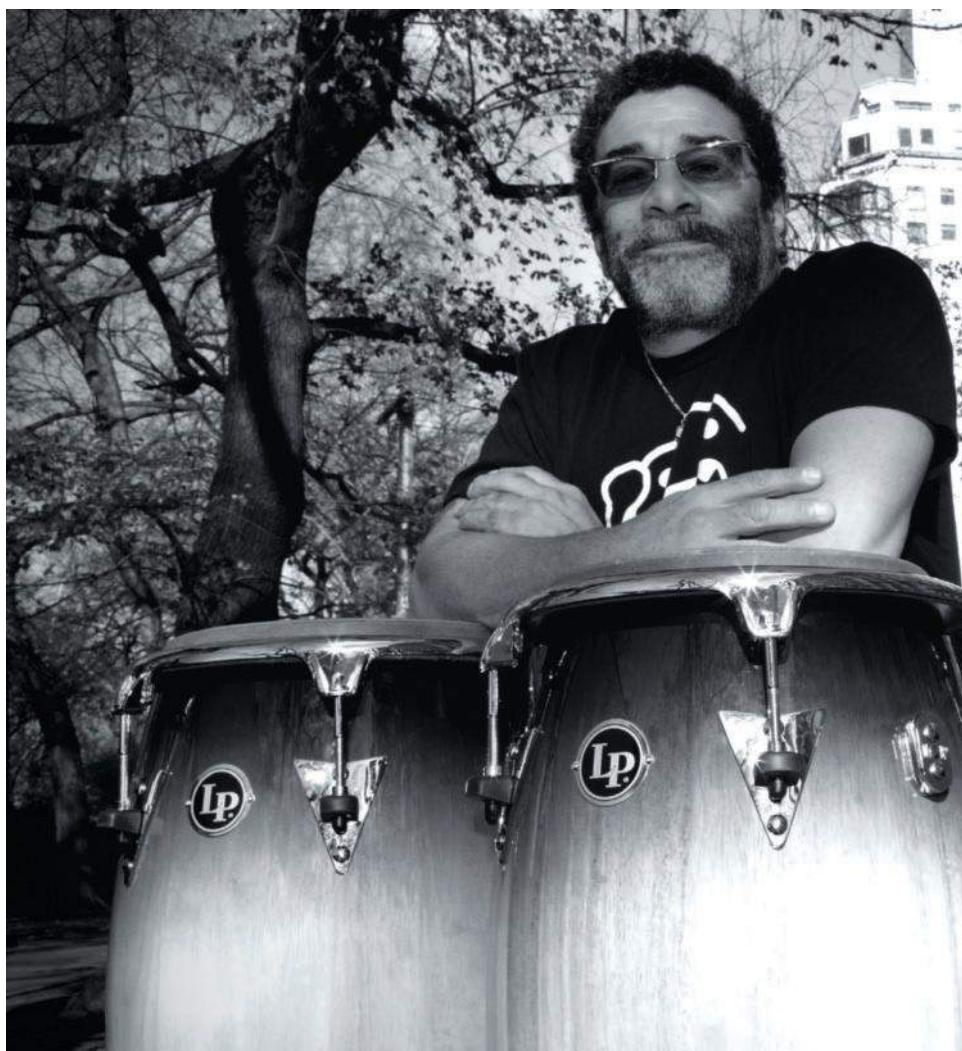
Roger: Exactly. That was a wonderful trip—France, Switzerland, Stockholm. I met so many wonderful people who would invite us to their homes and cook for us.

MD: How did you travel in those days?

Roger: We traveled by plane and a bit by train. I brought my own drums over at that time, in hard cases.

MD: Tell me about the second record you made with Silver, *The Cape Verdean Blues*.

Roger: Like with *Song For My Father*, we had been playing those tunes already. Carmell Jones had left the band, and Woody Shaw came in. He was a hell of a player. That was his first big gig. He was a beautiful person too. We had a great relationship. Joe Henderson was cool as well—like an older brother to me, but always very quiet. We used to call him the Fastest Gun In Town—the moment the last



note hit at the end of a gig, he would already have his saxophone packed up, and he was on his way out the door! [laughs]

MD: How did your playing change over the four years you were with Silver?

Roger: Hmm...that's a good question. I think it made me stronger and more confident. I think I made progress, even with such heavy competition.

MD: What made you leave the band?

Roger: Carmell was the first to leave, then Joe Henderson. I think as young guys change and figure out what they want to do, they need freedom. Horace was like a father, but he knew his guys were changing, away from what he wanted to do. It was time for us to start doing our own thing. It was nothing personal. After I left I realized he was teaching me to be a bandleader. Not everybody wants to be a bandleader, but I'd rather draw my own pictures the way I want to see them. I have a story to tell, and the way for me to do that is on my own.

After I left Horace, I went back to

Pittsburgh and started working with people who came through town. Then I got a call from Ray Charles to audition. Edgar Willis was his bass player; he's from Pittsburgh and recommended me. At the time I didn't read music, but I used my ears. Two weeks later I got a phone call from the office to join the band in Chicago.

MD: How long were you with Ray?

Roger: About a year. After that time I realized I wanted to come home and raise my family. I remember talking to older guys in the band who had kids that didn't even know them because they were gone all the time. I come from a tighter bond with my family. I realized then that I could have my cake and eat it too—I could live in Pittsburgh and play music and be with my kids too. I started my band RH Factor in 1972.

MD: How did you get involved in teaching?

Roger: The trumpeter Harry Clark was starting CAPA, and he asked me to come down and teach. I said, "Man, I

can't teach—I have no background with it." But he said, "Just teach them what you know. Share your life with them." I taught there for thirty years. I was there every day from 12 until 3:30. It gave me the financial stability to help take care of my family.

James Johnson III, Richie Goods, Paul Thompson, Tom Wendt, and yourself all went through that school and are all professionals. I'm so glad we got to share that time together.

MD: As long as I've known you, you've always had a steady weekly gig somewhere, usually a jam session. I remember that on Saturday afternoons you played at the Too Sweet Lounge in Homewood. Later you played Sundays at Club Cafe and then Tuesdays at James Street Tavern.

Roger: It's so important to be able to build an audience. When people know you're playing somewhere consistently, they'll go to see you. They'll have something to look forward to. When it's a jam session I can invite my friends and students to play. That's how you learn to play—sitting in with more experienced people.

I've always said that my best teachers were piano players, bass players, and trumpet players. Just beating the drums has nothing to do with music. But once you start to listen to what the other players are doing, you learn how to have a conversation musically.

MD: How do you adjust to different types of bands? Do you change your playing from a trio to an organ group to a big band?

Roger: I have to be honest—I don't think about it. It's just a natural thing. It's like wearing different hats. Maybe the dynamics change, softer or louder from group to group, but I just listen and adjust. With a big band it takes longer to get comfortable with the charts.

MD: Who are your favorite big band drummers?

Roger: Sonny Payne, Louie Bellson, and Frankie Dunlop. There are others that I can't think of right now, but growing up it was mostly all about Duke Ellington's band, Count Basie's band, and Woody Herman's band.

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ROGER HUMPHRIES

MD: Do you think about adjusting your time feel for a big band?

Roger: I think I'm getting better at it! Sometimes you have your mind made up and you want to put the beat right where *you* want it. But the beat does have space in it, and you have to play as a group. If you don't play as a group, it won't work. So you monitor and adjust. I don't try to fight anything, but I try to stand my ground. You don't want to play like a metronome, but the time still has to feel like this [snaps fin-

gers on 2 and 4]. As long as I know it isn't dragging!

I'll tell you something—I watch the people in the audience. Some people in the audience have damn good time. [laughs] They move their bodies, and they're solid as a rock.

MD: So many jazz drummers use an 18" bass drum, but as long as I've known you, you've used bigger bass drums—usually a 20".

Roger: One of my practice kits at home has an 18", but I just like the sound of a

bigger bass drum. I like to be able to have one drum that I can use with a big band or a small band.

MD: Do you use different cymbals for different situations?

Roger: I'm with Bosphorus now, and it's nice to have a variety of cymbals for different occasions. But the setup I use most of the time is my favorite. I may carry an extra one with me, but when you start to carry more cymbals you're also carrying more weight.

MD: Have you always used nylon-tip sticks?

Roger: Yeah, I hate when wood tips start to wear and get dull.

MD: One of your most recent undertakings was a large-scale tribute concert to your former employer Ray Charles. What inspired you to pay tribute in this way?

Roger: A while ago I played at a Horace Silver tribute concert in Los Angeles, and it got me thinking. I started thinking about Ray after he passed away. I was on my deck, listening to an album of his, and I thought, *I'm going to do a tribute to Ray Charles*, so I could let everybody hear how I thought about him. This man was a real genius—music was all through his body. Then I met a young singer named Dwayne Chandler who could sing those parts so well, and it just seemed like it was meant to be.

MD: Did you get to know Ray well?

Roger: We would all travel together on planes. I played chess with him a few times. Fred Robinson and I were the only guys in the band who played chess. I used to think about how much I wanted to beat Ray, but I didn't realize the history of Ray playing chess. He used to beat me every time!

I had a nice relationship with Ray. He treated me well, and I learned a lot from him. He had a big building in California where his band rehearsed, and I learned to be smart about business and to own real estate. I don't want to have to count on anyone else but myself. If I own property and have some revenue, I can take care of my bills. Then I can play the music I want to play. That independence is the greatest gift that I have.

Photography: Jerome Marcus www.jeromemarcus.com

Live shot taken by Lisa Vannucci www.lisavannucci.com

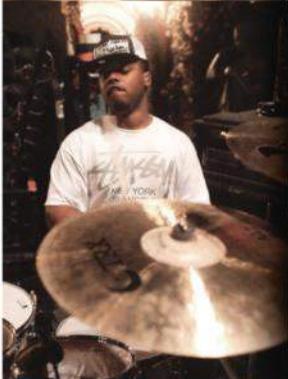
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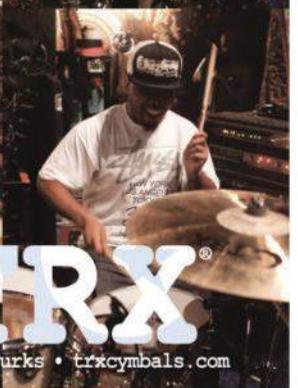
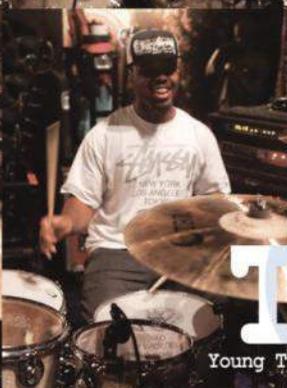
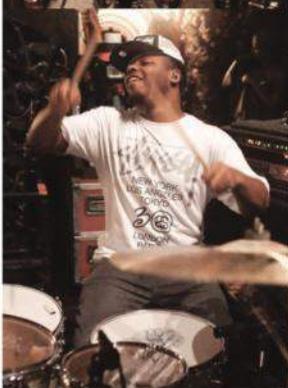
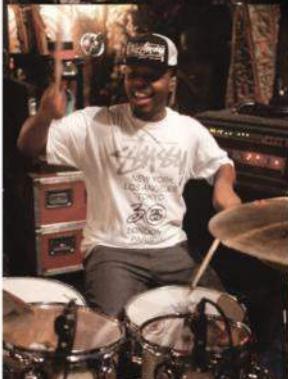
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AMIR ZIV

Combining jazz, electronic, free, and Brazilian styles, the intriguing New York avant-*everything* drummer proves there are always new worlds to conquer—in his playing, and in his clinics, classes, and drum-centric getaways. **Only the fearless need apply.** Story by Ken Micallef • Photos by Paul La Raia

Israeli-born Amir Ziv's first gig was backing up a belly dancer. Not your typical dues-payer—but it taught Ziv many lessons that would serve him well throughout his continuously impressive career.

"I was playing doumbek," Amir recalls from his downtown Manhattan loft. "Playing with a belly dancer is like playing with a conductor. But instead of a baton, they shake their butt. The big gestures come from the belly and the butt, but the hands play a big part; you have to learn to cue off the finger cymbals, the rhythms, the nuances of what she's about to do, timing. We'd play very specific rhythms, and she would signal tempo changes, energy changes, rhythmic changes. I learned a lot about the momentum of a show. The audience is coming to see the dancer, not you."

From that first belly forward, Ziv would never approach drumming from a traditional angle. To his many projects he brings an organic, textural, and original approach to the table, whether it's the drum 'n' bass of Droid, the freeform noise of Kotkot, the Brazilian hothouse rhythms employed with percussionist Cyro Baptista, or the recent trio explorations with groundbreaking alto saxophonist Ornette Coleman.

But even when Ziv is "out," he knows how to go back in. Since 1988, Amir has conducted classes such as Drum Lab, Percussion Ensemble, Live Electronica Orchestra, and Sight-

Reading at New York's New School For Jazz And Contemporary Music (where he also earned his BFA). When summer arrives, the drummer heads upstate to Kerhonkson, New York, to conduct a two-week intensive course, the Living Arts Apprenticeship Program, which is an extension of his record label and company, Sound Chemistry Records. There, with two additional instructors, Ziv combines multiple disciplines, including advanced drumming instruction, the Japanese martial art aikido, and music composition, all in the wilds and under the stars.

MD: In all the varied music you play, your time feel is very elastic. The time is constantly morphing, as are your patterns. What are some of your basic patterns when playing creative improvised music?

Amir: I sometimes use stickings based off, for example, five-stroke rolls: two fives, then another six notes, applied orchestrally on the set, though the song might be in 4/4.

MD: Even playing drum 'n' bass with Droid, your rhythms are elastic, where many drum 'n' bass guys want to sound like a machine.

Amir: It was never intentional to *not* play like a machine. It's just how I heard the music, and it happened to be different from my New York colleagues [Nerve, Boomish] during the 1990s. The compositional element of drum 'n' bass and its sound aesthetics

appealed to me. I fused those elements together with more of a jazz improvisatory approach, from ghost notes to hard hitting and everything in between.

MD: What jazz artists influenced your approach with Droid?

Amir: Tony Williams, Baby Dodds, Cozy Cole, Papa Jo Jones. Studying orchestral percussion and playing in those ensembles for years also influenced my elasticity. You're playing with a conductor, and they're going to feel the time where they feel it. The hand gestures will reflect their time feel. Orchestral music is strict in one way, but in another sense it is not metronomic time.

MD: How did you develop the complex stickings you play with Droid?

Amir: I have always been interested in loops and polyrhythms in relation to recurring melodies on the drums—melodies that come out through accents and patterns—and orchestrating them. These days it's all harmonic, sounds happening together, combinations of sounds. But I went through a heavy linear phase of orchestrating linear melodies around the drums.

MD: So you're sometimes playing melodies on the kit?

Amir: Absolutely. I also think of shapes on the drums—for example, a shape that will move my arms into opposing circles. Then playing the same pattern, but moving in a continuous shape. That's something I prac-



tice so that when I'm improvising I know how to achieve particular melodic sounds. If I'm going to play figure eights in opposite directions, for example, I will get particular results. I know where my sound sources are, and that becomes part of my vocabulary.

MD: How does that approach apply with Cyro Baptista, whose music is improvisational but not as hyper as

Droid's drum 'n' bass?

Amir: Cyro is Mr. Hyper! But he's Brazilian, so he knows how to lay back. I have immersed myself in a handful of different musical cultures. I was born in Israel, so I have the whole Middle Eastern thing in my DNA. That is one feel. I was also influenced by the old jazz cats and classic rock—more time feels. Orchestral music is another time feel. And with

Cyro, the whole Brazilian world of time has its own unique laws.

Playing with Cyro has really influenced my understanding of percussion and the orchestration of a groove and the functions of the different elements in a groove. There are a million melodies in the most simple drumset groove. You just have to be able to hear them. If you take a flam accent, for example, you can hear the melody

of the main accents, or the melody of one hand, or of the other hand on a different source; these are all independent melodies inside a simple rudiment. If you start orchestrating that, you will come up with infinite melodies.

MD: How do creative improvisational musicians survive today when there aren't as many places to play as during the '80s and '90s?

Amir: You have to pray! And work your ass off. You have to do a ton of stuff, be it teaching, running a business, recording, touring.... The audience is still there. Our events are packed.

MD: Ornette Coleman to Droid to Kotkot to Cyro Baptista. What changes occur in your drumming between these gigs?

Amir: In Droid we've been very conscious of recurring A/B sections within improvisation. In Kotkot, with [guitarist] Marc Ribot and Cyro, we've played so much together that it's like letting go and having a conversation. It's totally free. We establish themes based on a sonic palette, and we sometimes use clocks. We'll pre-compose a timeline of events that will happen within a fifty-minute set. We will literally write out a timeline—a chart—expressed

in minutes, with themes such as "Tone Row," "Grainy Hardcore," "ABA Form," "On Cue Hits," "Up Groove," "Vamp," sometimes with my patterns written out for the separate themes. Within each theme you can do what you want.

MD: How long do you play within each group?

Amir: We measure the time for each theme with synchronized clocks. When you hit minute twenty-two, for example, you're into "On Cue Hits." That's similar to something John Cage might have done.

MD: So it doesn't matter if it's a downbeat when you land on minute twenty-three?

Amir: If we want it to matter, we will make a notation to do that. But it works well, and we've done it enough to be in the groove with it. Each segment of the timeline is a piece or an event.

MD: And you sometimes notate your rhythm within a particular event?

Amir: Yes, I also do time-related pieces with Kotkot and Ornette Coleman.

MD: You use three snare drums with Ornette.

Amir: And elsewhere. I strive to use the same setup on all my gigs.

MD: Why do you use metal items as

AMIR'S SETUP

Drums: Various, including a 6½x14 Ludwig Supra-Phonic snare, a 7x14 Contemporânea caixa, a 16x17 Cooperman rope-tension field snare with calfskin heads, an 8x12 Gretsch tom, a 16x16 Gretsch floor tom, a 22x25 Brazilian surdo with calfskin heads, and a 16x26 maple bass drum (made by Ziv)

Cymbals: Paiste, including 15" hi-hats (Traditionals top, 2002 Sound Edge bottom), a 19" RUDE Thin crash, a 20" Traditionals ride (with jingles), a 22" Traditionals Light ride, a 14" Traditionals Medium Light hi-hat top over a 19" 2002 Wild China (on X-hat), a 9" Rotosounds disc, and a seven-piece set of 2002 Cup Chimes

Assorted metal instruments: 11x17 stainless steel tom, 30" white-noise disc (made from a subway mirror), 36" stainless steel industrial pot lid, 5" Balinese bronze chimes (used for white-noise effects on X-hats), Jackson Krall Elephant Bells (various sizes), Pete Engelhart Agogo Bells

Heads: Remo Coated Ambassador snare and tom batters and Clear Diplomat bottoms, and Coated Ambassador bass drum batter and front head (no hole and no muffling)



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RECORDINGS

Droid Orange/White/Blue (DVD), NYC D'N'B /// **Out To Bang** Only In Your Dreams /// **Kotkot** Alive At Tonic /// **Cyro Baptista** Beat The Donkey, Love The Donkey /// **Steve Honoshowsky** Speak Softly And Carry A Big Stick Vols. I & II

INFLUENCES

György Ligeti all (no drumset) /// **Baby Dodds** Talking And Drum Solos (Baby Dodds) /// **Led Zeppelin** all (John Bonham) /// **Cozy Cole** Topsy (Cozy Cole) /// **Plug** Drum 'N' Bass For Papa (programmed) /// **Queen** all (Roger Taylor) /// **Stax Records** all (Al Jackson Jr.) /// **Miles Davis** (all with Tony Williams) /// **Papa Jo Jones** The Drums (Papa Jo Jones) /// **The Doors** all (John Densmore)

drums on some projects?

Amir: I love metal. I like it for emulating electronic sounds on the acoustic kit live. Snare drum is easy—try using something metal that has some resonance, and put a mic on it. For drum 'n' bass, I use a Brazilian caixa, with the snares on top, cranked really high. And I have a stainless steel trash can that I use as a tom. I apply radical EQs when recording, to boost the lows for bass sounds.

MD: How do you compose or structure music with Ornette?

Amir: With our music with Ornette, my playing has been different in that we discuss the music extensively. We'll talk for twenty minutes to two hours. We discuss the idea and how to bring it across. We talk about life and death, because that is also very much on Ornette's mind these days, and how that relates to the music. We discuss the mood and the texture and the intention, where the music is coming from—like envisioning a godly figure. Then we dive into it.

MD: How do you approach performing with Ornette?

Amir: Regardless of the aesthetic, we may say, "We'll play very soft—we're going to whisper," or, "We're going to roar." There's no getting up to speed with Ornette. He will ask, "So, Amir, what do you think came first, life or time?" Let me get back to you, Ornette! [laughs]

MD: What are some of your other current projects?

Amir: There are two Droid records we're working on with bassists Tim Lefebvre and Yossi Fine, with Adam Holzman on synths and Jordan McLean on trumpet and electronics. There's a new Kotkot record, *Live At Abrons Arts Center*, with Marc Ribot, Cyro Baptista, Shahzad Ismaili, and Adam Holzman. Then there's the percussion ensemble Out

To Bang, doing original compositions as well as orchestrations of Gary Chaffee and Robert Starer etudes; that's developing through the Living Arts Apprenticeship Program with my business partner Jordan McLean. We just signed our first artist for Sound Chemistry, a seven-year-old girl who writes and sings all her own material, and she's been gigging for the past two years. Hardcore punk. Her band is called Butterfly Starpower.

MD: What do you cover in the Living Arts Apprenticeship Program?

Amir: LAAP is a cross-disciplinary program in which the students get to live together with their teachers and work from sunrise to sunset for a period of ten days. Currently the three disciplines we combine are drumming, aikido, and music composition. We work on core fundamentals that these disciplines share, in order to gain a new perspective and propel the art forms forward.

The drumming component is divided into three elements: technique, coordination, and polyrhythmic ensemble. With technique, for instance, we work on natural body motion as it relates to rebound and the drumstick. You're learning how to access energy from different parts of your body and get it into the stick, into the instrument, and finally out of the instrument with the sound and feeling you intended.

In aikido, the students work with four-foot sticks called Jo, on the same concepts of manipulating the stick, but on the macro level. They'll go back and forth from the macro to the micro, which makes the body learn at an incredible rate. Another powerful cross-disciplinary effect occurs when the drummers work with the Jo in aikido and begin to realize that if you're not totally focused and

committed you'll be struck down and get hurt. This then translates on the drumset to a much higher level of seriousness and attitude. You can see how everyone's body language starts to change over the course of the program.

MD: What advice can you give to young drummers who want to come to New York and pursue the open-ended styles you have?

Amir: New York used to be an easier place to come to. You could be a young artist without much money here and create your own scene or become part of an existing scene. But that's not the case anymore. Now you have to be insanely over the top about what you're doing. Radically willing to sacrifice everything. And if that's not first on the list, then good luck!

MD: Every drummer is shaped by his or her mentors. Could you name some of your own?

Amir: The more you appreciate what each mentor gives you, the better you know your own story. My first serious teacher, Rich Hargrove, insisted I study the lives and playing styles of all the jazz greats from the '20s to the '60s, which has had a big impact on me to this day. Toss Panos illustrated the power of touch and how elastic time and groove can be. Ralph Humphrey demystified meter and barlines. Joe Porcaro exemplified the humility of a real studio legend. Jim Preiss guided me into the world of orchestral percussion.

The teachings of other mentors were more abstract, maybe, but also more central to who I've become. Doron Rephaeli gave me the tools to strike out on my own. Efrain Toro always emphasized that an original artist must have a point of view. Kenwood Dennard gave me a firsthand glimpse of what true artistry and virtuosity actually look like in practice. Cyro Baptista showed me how to break all the rules and make the impossible possible. The greater the mentor, the simpler their teaching can be, as with Ornette Coleman. The most important gift he's given me is just reminding me to be myself.





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DALE

The Melvins' thunder king has been summoning the wrath of the heavens for more than twenty-five years. His reign continues uncontested—yet he's invited another storm-bringer to rattle the earth beside him.

CROVER

Story by Michael Parillo
Photos by Alex Solca

Dale Crover seems to have burst onto the drumming scene fully formed. On the Melvins' 1987 debut full-length album, *Gluey Porch Treatments*, Crover, just eighteen at the time of tracking, attacks the drums with absolute conviction. In fact, he reveals many of the hallmarks that he would continue to hone over a well-traveled career with the Washington-formed and now L.A.-based band: a thick drum tone, a facility around the kit that's flashy without being show-offy, a crafty imagination, a knack for odd time signatures, a weighty deliberateness at slow tempos, and a slice-and-dice, punky energy at quicker tempos (which seem even faster next to the more plodding stuff). Crover, with his distinctive feel and often shockingly strange fills, only ups the ante on the band's next release, the 1989 stunner *Ozma*, and he hasn't stopped since.

"Dale Crover has something that other drummers don't have," says Melvins founder, guitarist, and primary

singer and songwriter Buzz Osborne. "It's not something you can write down on a piece of paper; it's not something you can learn out of a book. It's animal magnetism. It's primal energy. It's from the heart, not the head."

Crover, who's been listed time and again in *MD* as having influenced his fellow drummers, hits ferociously hard. He's heavy like an anvil. Yet every sloop of the hi-hats is precisely calibrated. If Dale wants a longer sound, he'll let a crash or a ride bell ring out; if not, he'll catch the cymbal, or he'll hit a white-noise piece of metal percussion. He will crack you up with his drumming in the metal-yet-weirder-than-metal Melvins, by doing something so thunderously over the top that you can't help but laugh, or simply by displaying one of his greatest qualities, a flair for the unexpected.

Indeed, of the band's many gifts, the most vital of all is the ability to surprise. A certain fearlessness has guided the hardworking Osborne and Crover for nearly thirty years, keeping

things fresh and making the Melvins, who are not millionaires, artistically successful on a level that most musicians can only dream of. The element of surprise infuses every aspect of the band—its songwriting, its performances, its playing and production approach, its look, its artwork (largely overseen by Osborne's wife, Mackie), and, another crucial component, its sense of humor.

One of the Melvins' biggest surprises to date was taking a powerhouse like Dale Crover and augmenting his sheer force with...another drummer. Coady Willis, also a rocking road dog from Washington state, was folded into the Melvins' lineup in 2006, along with bassist Jared Warren, Willis's partner in Big Business, which began as a duo and is now a four-piece.

In the colorful video for "Electric Flower," from the Melvins' latest studio album, *The Bride Screamed Murder*, the band is depicted as orange troll-like creatures performing on a TV-cabinet stage before a trembling audience of toys, with Crover



and Willis as Siamese twins. (Dale's the blond one.) This is not so far from the real deal. On stage, the lefty Willis and righty Crover share what looks like a single beast of a kit, with each alternately reinforcing and complementing the other's savage rhythms. The sound is enormous, live and on the band's three recent quartet records, 2006's *(A) Senile Animal*, 2008's *Nude With Boots*, and 2010's *The Bride Screamed Murder*. On the latter, Crover and Willis reach new heights of double-drum composition and interplay, from the martial snare cadences of "The Water Glass" to the back-and-forth drum breaks of "Evil New War God" to the cacophony of bells on "Pig House" and "Hospital Up" to the echoing, pass-the-baton fills of "I'll Finish You Off."

This lava-hot recent version of the band has been documented on stage as well, for the upcoming album *Sugar Daddy Live*, which was recorded in California in 2009. And in case Crover finds some breathing room amid all the Melvins activity, he also plays drums in Shrinebuilder and the Warlock Pinchers and leads the occasional side project Altamont on guitar and vocals.

Discussing the Melvins' spirit of adventure, which includes unlimited sounds and styles, collaborations with everyone from Lustmord to Leif Garrett, and, of course, the addition of a second drummer, Crover, true to form, takes a dazzling journey and boils it down to its simple essence. "We always wanted to have a band," he says, "that we would like if we were fans."

MD: While we're chatting for this story, you're doing a residency at the Spaceland club in L.A. where you're playing whole Melvins albums.

Dale: There's a festival in England called All Tomorrow's Parties. They have one in New York as well. They had a series called Don't Look Back where they had bands doing what they considered classic records. So we did the *Houdini* record, and that gave us the idea to do more of that kind of thing. It's a good way to make money. [laughs]

We were just glad they didn't ask us to do our first record, because that one's like eighteen songs where we don't have any clue how they go. [laughs] Back then the songs were much more complicated. We had so much time and no record label that we



just made them insanely hard.

MD: I would call some stuff on the latest record pretty difficult.

Dale: The songs were a lot shorter. We were really influenced by the Minutemen, who had songs that were short and to the point and didn't have a lot of repeats. Early Melvins songs didn't have any guitar solos and were pretty much a couple minutes long.

MD: What spurred the transition to slower, longer stuff?

Dale: Those guys always had slow stuff, before I was in the band. I say "those guys," like I'm not really in the band. [laughs] It's been twenty-six years or whatever....

One record that really changed things as far as going from super-fast to super-slow was *My War* by Black Flag.

Drumming-wise, and certainly band-wise, that was an influence. Side two is super-slow, and most of their fans absolutely hated it. They liked the fast stuff where they could slam dance—jump around like a bunch of idiots. Bill Stevenson of Black Flag is a pretty awesome drummer and definitely an influence for me and the band.

MD: When you were seeing the Melvins before you joined, did you think it was the kind of thing you'd like to be involved in?

Dale: Definitely, because they were playing original music. The first time I saw them I was probably sixteen. I was playing with a cover band that played high school dances and stuff like that. Somehow we got this gig at the Elks lodge in Aberdeen. It was a live radio broadcast for this sta-



Dale's Influences

KISS *Alive!* (Peter Criss)

This is where I learned how to play rock drums. I still think this is a great record.

PiL *Flowers Of Romance*

(Martin Atkins, John Lydon, Keith Levene)
This is a drummer's record. Very tribal. Drum loops, percussion, and vocals. A big influence on Melvins drumming.

JUDAS PRIEST

Unleashed In The East (Les Binks)
My drumming is based in heavy metal, and this is the best heavy metal record ever!

GANG OF FOUR

Solid Gold (Hugo Burnham)
This record influenced my drumming on songs like "Kicking Machine" and "Tipping The Lion."

BLACK FLAG

Slip It In (Bill Stevenson)
I once saw Bill play in his underwear. I "borrowed" that idea when I forgot my clothes to play in. I also "borrowed" the idea of having large drums, which seemed to be a requirement in Black Flag.

BLONDIE

Eat To The Beat (Clem Burke)
Clem Burke is a longtime favorite. We recently recorded a Kinks song with Clem. Three drummers at once! Coady and I got a Clem Burke drum lesson that day.

THE WHO

Live At Leeds (Keith Moon)
Certain famous drummer friends of mine don't see the worth of Keith Moon. They are wrong, wrong, WRONG!

ALICE COOPER *Killer* (Neal Smith)

We're longtime Cooper fans and have covered many of their songs. The drums on "Halo Of Flies" are so great!

JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE

Axis: Bold As Love (Mitch Mitchell)
I always loved this style of jazz-to-rock drumming. It's a shame that it's pretty much nonexistent nowadays.

THE STOOGES

Fun House (Scott Asheton)
There's something to be said about knuckle-dragging, Neanderthal-style drumming. The music snobs don't get it, but I do!

tion called KXRO. We go down there, and the Melvins are playing. We had no idea who they were. They were from Montesano, which was about ten miles away. I was like, "Wow, these guys are

kinda cool."

I knew about Motörhead, and I knew about the Ramones, and that's the only bands I could relate to those guys. They were still kind of fast, and there were no

breaks between songs, kind of like the Ramones. They'd finish a song, and a guy would go to talk on the radio: "Wow, that was really—" and they'd interrupt him: "One-two-three-four!"

Then the band I played with goes on, and what we didn't realize was that the Melvins had seen there was no PA system, so they went home and got their practice PA so they could have vocals. The guy singing for us had to sing right into the broadcast mic and couldn't hear himself at all. We got cut off. It sounded *so* bad, him bellowing into the mic, out of tune.

MD: That was 1984?

Dale: That would've probably been December of '83. And then six months later I was in the band!

MD: Were you able to handle odd time signatures at that point?

Dale: I think one of the reasons why the Melvins wanted to get a different drummer is because, though the original drummer, Mike Dillard, is good, he was somewhat limited as far as doing odd-time stuff. I think Buzz was just starting to write that kind of stuff. Who knows where it comes from—the space between his ears, somehow. He's not the kind of guy who listens to a lot of prog, though I'm sure he appreciates some of it. I guess I was hip to it because I was listening to things like Rush or whatever. For me it was great.

Just the way Buzz writes is different from anyone else. I have to sometimes figure out where his first beat is—and it's not where you think it is. I've gotten pretty good at figuring it out, but sometimes he'll write a real stumper. "Where are you counting that? *How* are you counting that? Where's your 1!"

MD: Do you tend to count odd times, or do you feel your way through?

Dale: It's mostly feel, but there are certainly some songs where if I don't count 'em, I'm screwed. I can't really think of an example right now, but there are songs where...you have to think. [laughs]

MD: Buzz sometimes gives you a drum part, and sometimes not?

Dale: It depends. He's definitely open. Nothing is written in stone for him, and the same goes for me. Buzz really helps with suggestions like, "Why don't you put a roll right here and do something



DALE'S KIT

Drums: Tama Starclassic Bubinga in "Egyptian night mist" finish

- A. 8x14 snare
- B. 12x15 tom
- C. 16x18 floor tom
- D. 17x24 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste

- 1. 15" Alpha Rock Hats
- 2. 21" Wild China
- 3. 22" Alpha Rock ride (used as crash) with inverted 10" Alpha Metal splash on top
- 4. 13" Mega Cup Chime
- 5. 19" Alpha Rock crash
- 6. 24" Alpha Rock ride
- 7. 16" Alpha China with 14" Alpha Thin crash on top
- 8. 12" Flanger Bell

Heads: Aquarian Hi-Velocity Black snare batter and Hi-Performance bottom, Response 2 Texture Coated Black tom batters and Classic Clear bottoms, and Force 1 bass drum batter and Black Ported front head

Hardware: Tama Road Pro snare and cymbal stands, Iron Cobra hi-hat stand and double bass drum pedal, and 1st Chair Ergo-Rider throne; LP Claws for percussion

Percussion: Pete Engelhart Metal Percussion, including Reco Reco, Lens Drum, Crasher, and Blossom Bells; Meinl steel hi-hat tambourine; LP Jam Block

Sticks: Regal Tip Quantum 3000 with nylon tips

Vocal microphone: Shure WH20XLR headset mic

COADY'S KIT

Drums: Tama Starclassic Bubinga in "Egyptian night mist" finish

- E. 8x14 Gretsch hammered brass snare
- F. 12x14 tom
- G. 16x18 floor tom
- H. 16x24 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste

- 9. 15" Alpha Rock Hats
- 10. 21" Alpha Groove ride (used as crash) with inverted 7" 2002 Cup Chime on top
- 11. 13" Mega Cup Chime
- 12. 6" 2002 Bell Chime
- 13. 8" Alpha Thin splash
- 14. 24" 2002 ride

Heads: Remo Emperor X snare batter and Clear Ambassador bottom, Coated Emperor tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, and Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter and Ebony Powerstroke 3 front head

Hardware: Tama Iron Cobra hi-hat stand, Road Pro snare and cymbal stands, and 1st Chair Ergo-Rider throne; DW 5000 double bass drum pedal (left-footed), DogBone clamp, and cymbal stackers; LP Claws for percussion

Percussion: Pete Engelhart Metal Percussion, including Agogo Bell, Crasher, and Blossom Bells; Meinl steel hi-hat tambourine; LP Jam Block

Sticks: Regal Tip Quantum 3000 with nylon tips

Vocal microphone: Shure WH20XLR headset mic

kind of strange and backwards?” He comes up with great ideas, which is good because it’ll force me to think about things a lot more and do something completely different from what I’d normally do. It makes it way more challenging and way more fun.

On the newest record, there’s stuff like that on “Evil New War God.” There are these rolls in weird places, and that’s

definitely Buzz going, “Start it here, end it here.” I think he’s underrated as far as a songwriter, guitar player, and singer. He’s definitely one of the best. He never had any music lessons at all, so he thinks about things way differently from someone who’s musically trained. And I think that makes a really big difference in our band.

MD: Do you usually attack his riffs

through trial and error?

Dale: Sure, lots of that. We do a lot of editing of ourselves. Back to that first record, some of those songs are so complicated because we trimmed the fat. And we still do a lot of that. I know before Buzz even comes in with a song that he’ll have changed it a billion times. And he throws away a lot of stuff—probably stuff where I would go, “No, that’s great!”

COADY WILLIS

MD chats with Crover’s fellow “orangutan gladiator,” a killer drummer in his own right.

MD: Were you a Melvins fan before joining the band, and was Dale an influence?

Coady: Yeah, big time. When I was in high school I was really into the *Bleach* album from Nirvana, and I came to find out later that all my favorite songs, the ones I liked the drums on the most, were songs Dale played on.



I saw the Melvins open for Nirvana on the *In Utero* tour when I was sixteen, and it was kind of a life-changing thing. Dale opened my mind to aspects of drumming I hadn’t really thought about before, like using space, and just how hard he hit. And the gigantic drums... I saw Dave Grohl play before that, and I was like, “He’s a great drummer.” But after seeing Dale it was like, “Ooh—that’s where that came from.”

So it’s been really fun to sit next to Dale and watch how he comes up with ideas. More often than not it’s way different from what I would have done. But it’s really great. I feel like I’m ten times the drummer I was when I joined the band. Being inside his head while he’s doing this stuff, it’s a totally different perspective on music and how drums work in the music.

MD: How did the opportunity to play with the Melvins come about?

Coady: Jared and I knew those guys. A previous band I was in, Dead Low Tide, had opened for the Melvins for a weeklong tour. And when Big Business would tour we’d always end up staying at Dale’s house when we came through L.A.

Jared and I were both bartending in Seattle. I was working one night, and Jared came in and sat at the bar. He had this weird look on his face, and he was like, “The Melvins had to fire Kevin [Rutmanis], their last bass player. They want me to play bass.” My heart both sank and exploded at the same time. [laughs] The next words out of his mouth were, “And they want you to play drums too.” *What?*

They sent us a CD of songs ranging from the early stuff to their more recent albums. We learned it and flew down to L.A. to jam and see if it would work. From the first thirty seconds of playing together, it was like, “This will totally work.” The thing I was most apprehensive about was being able to play in sync, but we were able to do it right away. We knew we could figure everything else out with a little time and some practice.

Jared and I thought maybe it was going to be a temporary thing, like we’d do it as a project for a while. But after two days of rehearsal, we were driving around L.A. and Buzz called. He said, “I don’t need any



more convincing,” and he asked us to be in the band. But it was on the condition that we wouldn’t quit Big Business.

MD: Have you been able to keep the two groups separate?

Coady: Yeah, we have. The Melvins is kind of a full-time thing, so we have to choose our battles. But we’ve kept releasing records, and right now we’re working on new stuff.

MD: The Melvins have a fierce work ethic. Is this a new level of hard work for you?

Coady: No, Jared and I have been doing this since we were kids. I used to be in a band called the Murder City Devils, and from the time I was twenty, twenty-one, we were on tour six or seven months out of the year. Touring and playing shows is the only thing that’s ever worked for us in terms of promoting our band or actually seeing results—especially in this day and age of the record industry collapsing. You go on tour and play a bunch of shows and have a really good time. Next time you come around, there are more people there. You connect with people face to face, and it furthers itself.

MD: On *The Bride Screamed Murder*, it’s clear that you and Dale really hammered your parts into shape.

Coady: We practice every day. [laughs] But Dale and Buzz, as far as writing stuff, they work really fast. They’ve been playing together for so long that they kind of have their own language. It’s fun to watch them. Dale is really good at taking direction and guessing what Buzz wants to happen. Buzz knows what to expect from Dale, and without Buzz explaining it too much, Dale understands what he’s going for.

As soon as we get a part down, we move right on to the next thing. At first for me it was a little...I don’t know if frustrating is the word, but we had just figured out and learned a part, and I was like, “Cool, I want to play that now.” And it’s like, “Nope, we have it.” It pushes you to retain all this stuff and keeps it interesting. It’s not like you’re sitting there pounding out one part until it has no life left.

One of the great things about playing with these guys is that your ability is never in doubt—that was already decided the second that Jared and I were in the band. It’s given me a lot of self-confidence knowing that those guys are supremely confident in our ability to get the job done. It’s a motivation to do a really good job. Anything we could dream up, we could do.



DRUM SHOP DEALS



THE SIMMONS SD9K OFFERS THE MOST KIT FOR THE MONEY IN THE INDUSTRY

One of the best-selling electronic kits we've ever seen. The Simmons SD9K packs all the great sounds and features that have made Simmons a popular choice in today's electronic drum market, all at an amazingly low price.

- Includes six sensitive, responsive and durable pads, including a dual-zone snare drum pad, plus three dual-zone chokeable cymbals and hi-hats
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- IPHONE, HEADPHONES, TRAY, STICKS, THRONE, AMP AND KICK PEDAL SOLD SEPARATELY*



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\$899⁹⁹

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THE SIMMONS SD7PK — NOW AVAILABLE AT A NEW LOWER PRICE

Simmons electronic drum kits are known for delivering professional features and performance at an incredible price. The Simmons SD7PK takes that even further with softer pads for a more comfortable feel, redesigned clamps for improved playing ergonomics, and a drum module with 300 of the best acoustic, electric and percussion sounds you'll find. Plus, the kit's super-low crosstalk means more accurate and dynamic triggering of sounds as you play them with your band.

- Kick pad, 3 tom pads, 2 cymbal pads, 1 hi-hat pad, snare pad with rim detection, hit-hat control pedal
- Over 300 acoustic, electric and percussion sounds; 20 factory kits, 30 user kits
- Upgraded 4-leg preset rack system for ease of setup



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- Includes two 9" pads, stand and two DDRUM Red Shot acoustic drum triggers with cables
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- USB connectivity allows you to expand and adjust your sounds on your computer

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If you're in the market for a tight, punchy sound and yearn for the unrelenting barrage of double kick drum cannons, Pacific's 8-piece Double Drive double bass kit is the light at the end of the tunnel. Play it only at Guitar Center.

- 8-Piece kit with poplar shells, F.A.S.T. tom sizes
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HARDWARE, CYMBALS AND ACCESSORIES SOLD SEPARATELY

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Designed to get noticed for its beautiful looks and stunning sound, DW's Performance Series features top-quality HVX shells precision cut with 45° bearing edges for a sound unlike anything you've heard before.

- HVX (Horizontal/Vertical/Diagonal X Grain Technology) North American hard rock maple shell
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- True Pitch tuning system
- STM (suspension tom mounts)
- DW heads by Remo USA
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COLORS AND CONFIGURATIONS VARY BY LOCATION*

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A COMPLETE DW HARDWARE SET AT A WORKING MUSICIAN'S PRICE

This DW 3000 Series hardware pack gives you everything you need to get set up and playing. Known for providing the world's best drummers with durable gear they can trust, DW offers the 3000 Series as an affordable way to get top-notch features without breaking the bank.

- Pack includes: DW 3000 bass drum pedal, DW 3300 snare stand, DW 3500 hi-hat stand and DW 3700 straight-boom stand

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Everywhere we go, suddenly we're seeing percussionists with cajons. They're perfect if you're looking for a stronger rhythmic foundation for unplugged gigs and small acoustic groups. This Meinl Headliner is a great place to start. It features durable rubberwood construction, adjustable top corners to customize the amount of 'snap' available and an adjustable sizzle effect. Get one today at Guitar Center.

MODELS VARY BY LOCATION

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(HCAJ1-NT) LIST: \$196.00

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GREAT LOOKS, SOUND AND FEEL FROM MEINL'S HEADLINER AND MARATHON SERIES BONGOS

Offering high-quality tone at a low price, Meinl's Headliner and Marathon Series bongos are ideal for students and hobbyists of all ages. Featuring wood and fiberglass shells, black-powder-coated hardware and hand-selected buffalo skin heads, these bongos offer the looks, feel and sound of drums costing much more.

MODELS VARY BY LOCATION

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\$64⁹⁹ SAVE \$43
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HEADLINER FIBERGLASS BONGOS

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(HFB100BK) LIST: \$134.00

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Meinl makes a wide variety of exotic shakers to fit your needs as an artist and performer. This special line was designed to meet the exacting standards of percussionist and perfectionist Luis Conte. From the increased power, volume and penetration of the Conte Stadium Shaker, to the warm, "smooth as silk" tone of the Studio Shaker, Meinl Luis Conte shakers give you great tools you've got to get your hands on.

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(SH4BK) (SH5R) (SH45GR)
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MEINL'S HI-HAT TAMBOURINE EFFECT GIVES YOUR KIT A FRESH SOUND

Add a new sound to your drum set. Its easy-access wing nut allows quick setup, adjustment, and removal. Compatible with all standard-size hi-hat rods.

HI-HAT STAND AND CYMBAL NOT INCLUDED

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\$21⁹⁹ SAVE \$9
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(HTHH1BK) LIST: \$31.50



FREE RACK TOM WITH THIS ALL NEW GRETSCH CATALINA MAPLE KIT

If you're looking for a versatile set with top-quality sound and features, you need to check out this Gretsch Catalina Maple set. Its maple shells project a warm, round, classic tone you'll fall in love with. The beautiful deep cherry burst UV gloss finish is sure to capture attention. The Catalina Maple includes a 6x14" snare, 18x22" bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12" rack toms, 14x14 and 16x16" floor toms. Plus, you get a free 7x8" rack tom.

- 18x22" Bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12" rack toms, 14x14 and 16x16" floor toms and a 6x14" snare
- Also includes free 7x8" rack tom with clamp
- 100% All-maple shells
- GTS tom mounting system
- Die-cast claw hooks, mini Gretsch lugs
- Deep cherry burst finish

HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY

NEW!

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICE

\$899⁹⁹ SAVE \$485 OFF LIST

(CMTE826P-DCB) LIST: \$1385.00



\$200 INSTANT REBATE

FREE 8" RACK TOM AND \$200 INSTANT REBATE WITH THIS RENOWN MAPLE KIT

There's something about a Gretsch kit that makes the playing experience uniquely exhilarating, and many would argue that it all comes back to tone. Featuring that classic Gretsch sound with a contemporary punch, this Renown kit's compact configuration takes advantage of the power and warmth of all-maple shells. Get behind this kit and more at your local Guitar Center Drum Shop today.

- Includes 18x22" bass drum, 8x10, 9x12 and 14x14" toms and a free 7x8" tom
- 6-Ply maple shells for a bright, focused attack
- GTS suspension mounts increase resonance
- Die-cast hoops for greater sustain
- 30° Bearing edges increase articulation

HARDWARE, CYMBALS, SNARE, ACCESSORIES AND PERCUSSION SOLD SEPARATELY
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VINTAGE LOOKS AND GREAT SOUND WITH A SMALL FOOTPRINT

If you're looking for a versatile set with top-quality sound and features, you need to check out this Gretsch Catalina Jazz 4-piece set. Its mahogany shells featuring 30° bearing edges project a warm, round, classic tone you'll fall in love with. The kit offers traditional Bebop sizes with a 14x18" bass drum, making it an excellent gigging Jazz kit. It's also a suitable kit for drummers in any genre looking to craft a signature sound or those who need to lay into a kit in a smaller live venue. Its distinctive retro looks are sure to capture attention and evoke that unmistakable Jazz vibe and spirit.

- Includes a 5x14" snare, 8x12" rack tom, 14x14" floor tom and 14x18" kick drum
- Mahogany shells
- 30° Bearing edges for warmer tone
- GTS suspension system

HARDWARE, CYMBALS AND PERCUSSION SOLD SEPARATELY

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\$649⁹⁹ SAVE \$350 OFF LIST

(CCJ484-COS) LIST: \$999.99





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Rotational molding and functional design combine to create the quintessential line of drum and percussion accessory transport. SKB drum cases feature secure stackability, padded interiors and indestructible hardware. They're formed in the traditional D-shape so they can stand up without rolling, and interlocking moldings on the top and bottom for worry-free stacking. Stop by your local Guitar Center Drum Shop and check out SKB molded drum cases for yourself.

- Traditional D-shape
- Molded in feet for protection and upright positioning
- Fabric covered foam inserts



10 X 9" DRUM CASE STARTING AT

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The hardshell SKB X-1 Trap Case is top-loaded with removable lid and tray for storing bass pedal, sticks, drum hardware and throne. The tray mounts on top for playing and serves as a monitor stand during the gig.

- Military-spec, ultrahigh molecular weight polyethylene shell
- Top-loader with removable lid and removable tray
- Built-in industrial 4" wheels and rear glides
- Lifetime manufacturer's warranty



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SKB'S CYMBAL VAULT OFFERS THE BEST PROTECTION FOR YOUR BRONZE

Roto molded of rugged Polyethylene with a welded center post, the CV24W Rolling Cymbal Vault holds as many as seven cymbals, including the latest 24" ride cymbals. With a molded-in ergonomic carrying handle, in-line skate style wheels and an extra strong pull out handle, this is the ideal transport for your cymbals.

- Holds up to seven cymbals
- Fits cymbals up to 24" in diameter
- In-line skate style wheels and an extra strong pull out handle
- Molded X-pattern easily stacks with SKB's Roto-X drum case

CYMBALS NOT INCLUDED



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Coated Controlled Sound drumheads have medium and heavy-duty drumhead characteristics. The outer area of the head's playing surface offers mid-range tone and sensitivity, while its laminated center "dot" adds durability and tonal focus. Coated Controlled Sound heads are one of Remo's most preferred snare drum heads.

NEW!



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NEW REMO POWERSTROKE PRO KICK HEAD - MAXIMUM VOLUME AND PROJECTION

Constructed with 10-mil film, the Powerstroke Pro features a new pressure dampening profile and permanently mounted acoustic foam that provides maximum volume and projection while producing controlled highs, accentuated mid and maximum low range frequencies. Choose from clear, coated or ebony and sizes 18, 20, 22 and 24". Get it at Guitar Center today.

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Customize and port your resonant bass drumhead with Remo's new Chrome Graphic DynamO cutting templates. Choose from 3 unique designs each with adhesive backing. Choose from Flames, Sawblade and Biohazard.

- Package includes: 5" or 3" DynamO ring, cutting template
- Increases bass drum volume and projection

BASS DRUM HEAD NOT INCLUDED

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FLAMES

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SAWBLADE

YOUR CHOICE

\$12⁹⁹ SAVE \$5 OFF LIST

(DMBH03-10) (DMSW05-10) (DMFL05-10) LIST: \$18.00

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Festival Series djembes give you more portability than ever, with the same durability and quality of the professional Remo World Percussion Collection.

The Acousticon shell is manufactured from recycled hardwood fibers and is unaffected by climatic changes. The FiberSkyn 3 drum head provides an outstanding authentic ethnic drum sound.

- 8" Diameter, 14" depth
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EXCLUSIVE!



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Based on traditional designs that originated in Turkey and the Middle East, the Remo doumbek combines authentic tone with modern enhancements. The doumbek is perfect for adding old-world sounds to almost any style of music. Check one out at Guitar Center today.

- Pretuned 10" Fiberskyn head for warm, natural sound; Acousticon shell provides low-pitched fundamental tone & excellent projection
- Unique "Gold Warrior" design
- Lends a unique traditional sound to any type of music



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(DK0410-03) LIST: \$144.50



TAMA'S SILVERSTAR BIRCH SERIES OFFERS SUPREME STYLE AND SOUND

New from Tama, the Silverstar series delivers premium quality and sound at a working musician's price. Using tried and true methods and materials, Tama has produced the highest quality instrument possible: 100% birch shells, stained interiors for that classic look, triple flanged hoops, a streamlined "Star-Mount" system, and a slideable tom holder make this the kit of choice for the creative musician. And with a wide variety of drum sizes, you have an open ended sonic palette to create the new sound of your dreams.

*COLORS AND CONFIGURATIONS VARY BY LOCATION
HARDWARE, CYMBALS, ACCESSORIES AND ELECTRONICS SOLD SEPARATELY
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\$529⁹⁹

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KIT SHOWN IS \$699.99 (VL52KSTRB) LIST: \$1137.49

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Bubinga brings deeper, darker tones, more powerful resonance and a more aggressive attack. Birch brings focus and control. Combine the two to bring out the best characteristics of both and these shells mean that Tama's Starclassic Performer Bubinga is the next phase in the evolution of the Performer series. Plus, it includes all the features that have made Starclassic kits a player's favorite, including die-cast hoops, chrome hardware and the Star-Cast suspension mounting system.

- Blend of birch and bubinga shells
- Star-Cast mounting system
- Evans heads
- Die-cast hoops
- Sliding tom holder

*HARDWARE, CYMBALS, PERCUSSION
AND ELECTRONICS SOLD SEPARATELY
COLORS AND CONFIGURATIONS VARY BY LOCATION
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DOUBLE PEDAL WITH THE PURCHASE OF STARCLASSIC PERFORMER BUBINGA KIT - A \$174.99 VALUE! (HP300TW) REDEEMABLE BY MAIL

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICE

\$1499⁹⁹ SAVE \$807 OFF LIST

(PL42S-CBBB) LIST: \$2307.00



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EXCLUSIVE FINISH

TAMA'S IRON COBRA DELIVERS EFFORTLESS KICK PEDAL POWER

This special Tama Power Glide Iron Cobra kick pedal comes equipped with the "Cobra Coil", TAMA's innovation that accelerates the return of the pedal footboard to its original position. The result is an unbelievably effortless action that sets the already smooth Power Glide apart from all other pedals. Includes a free specially designed protective carrying case.

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST



IRON COBRA SINGLE PEDAL

\$127⁴⁹ SAVE \$127 OFF LIST

(HP900PS) LIST: \$254.99

IRON COBRA DOUBLE PEDAL

\$289⁹⁹ SAVE \$290 OFF LIST

(HP900PSW) LIST: \$579.99

LIGHTNING FAST ACTION AND PLAYER-FRIENDLY ADJUSTMENT

The perfect complement to the Iron Cobra bass pedal, the smooth and responsive HH905 Iron Cobra Lever-Glide hi-hat stand from Tama features incomparable sensitivity, lightning fast action and player-friendly adjustment. Standing on two double-braced legs and an advanced Lever-Glide system, it's one of the most durable and reliable hi-hat stands available. Plus, the Iron Cobra Lever-Glide hi-hat stand is absolutely noiseless, making it an outstanding choice for recording.

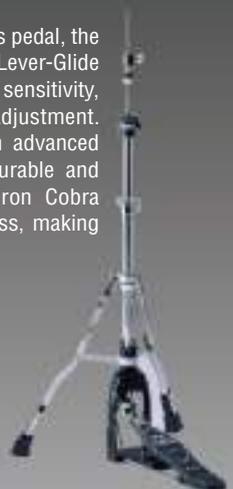
- Footboard angle adjustment
- Tilt system

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\$149⁹⁹ SAVE \$150 OFF LIST

(HH905) LIST: \$299.99





Zildjian



SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR ROCK CYMBALS IN THE WORLD

Zildjian has been making world-class cymbals for centuries, using ancient metallurgical techniques pioneered by the Turkish masters. This cast cymbal A Custom prepack gives you that legendary sound in a complete setup.

- Includes 20" ride, 16" crash and 14" hi-hats, plus a free padded cymbal bag and 18" fast crash
- Brilliant finish for a crisp, sweet, sophisticated A Zildjian sound

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\$649⁹⁹ SAVE \$650
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(A20579-9) LIST: \$1299.99



ZILDJIAN'S Z3 PACK — THREE LOUD, RESPONSIVE CYMBALS

The Z3 crash cymbal pack includes a 17" Z3 medium crash cymbal, 19" Z3 medium crash cymbal, and free 12" Z3 Splash.

- A Guitar Center exclusive package

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EXCLUSIVE

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(Z31719) LIST: \$716.00



7 CYMBALS FOR THE PRICE OF 5 — THE ZILDJIAN SUPER ZBT SET

Step up to the sweet sound of Zildjian cymbals with this four-pack of ZBT Pro cymbals at an incredible price. Revolutionary manufacturing techniques developed by the Zildjian Sound Lab give the ZBT alloy a fast, bright, high-volume sound that sounds great on stage and in the studio.

- Includes a 16" and 18" crash, 20" ride, 14" hi-hats, a free 18" crash, and free 10" splash

GUITAR CENTER
EXCLUSIVE

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICE

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OFF LIST

(ZBTC4P-SP) LIST: \$579.00



TWO MUST-HAVE ZILDJIAN ZBT CYMBALS FOR ONE LOW PRICE — ONLY AT GUITAR CENTER

Made with the high-power ZBT alloy, this four-pack of rock cymbals will give you a fast, bright, high-volume sound.

- 10" Splash and 16" china
- Zildjian's high-power ZBT alloy
- Brilliant finish

GUITAR CENTER
EXCLUSIVE

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\$99⁹⁹ SAVE \$116
OFF LIST

(ZBT1016PK) LIST: \$216.00



ZILDJIAN'S BLUE STICKS — 4 PAIRS FOR THE PRICE OF 3

Add some flash to your drumming with Zildjian's new blue 5A drum sticks. They're manufactured to the same high standards as Zildjian cymbals and are guaranteed to be straight. Pick up four pairs for the price of three this month only at your local Guitar Center Drum Shop.

- USA select hickory sticks
- Deep blue finish

4
PAIRS

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICE

\$25⁴⁹ SAVE \$36
OFF LIST

(SDSP189) LIST: \$62.00



SAVE BIG ON 4 PAIRS OF ZILDJIAN BLACK 7AN, 5A OR 5B DIP STICKS

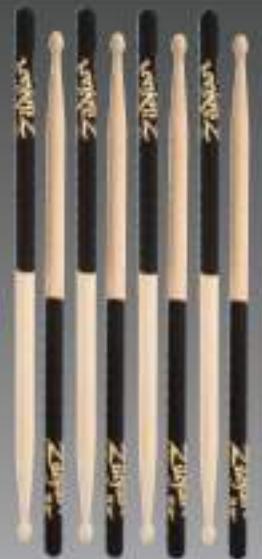
Zildjian makes their sticks with the same high standards and exacting care as their cymbals. They simply feel great and are 100% guaranteed straight. This month, Guitar Center is offering huge savings with this 4 for 3 deal. Stock up now!

4
PAIRS

YOUR CHOICE

\$28⁴⁹ SAVE UP TO
58% OFF LIST

(SDSP179) (SDSP184) LIST: \$51.75
(SDSP181) LIST: \$69.00





TEDDY CAMPBELL



Teddy Campbell
Delivering The Message On TV

Story by Billy Aronson • Photos by Alex Sotnik

Out of all the reality TV shows on the air, *American Idol* has risen above and beyond to become a cultural phenomenon. In the few years the show has been on TV, it's practically taken over the entire music business, with the promise of making the winning contestants superstars. The live house band, directed by leader Rickey Minor and featuring drummer extraordinaire Teddy Campbell, plays a pivotal role in making the show one of the most entertaining and watched programs in TV history.



"Growing up as a gospel musician in Chicago I was intrigued by where drumming came from. By reading *Modern Drummer* I learned about the giants of drumming, like Elvin Jones, Max Roach, Art Blakey, and Tony Williams. Thanks, *Modern Drummer*, for telling us the stories of these legends."

—Teddy Campbell (*The Tonight Show*)

MODERN DRUMMER

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MD: When you say you do a lot of editing, is that through recording yourselves and listening back?

Dale: Mostly it's just playing and jamming and realizing we don't need a part—it doesn't make sense.

MD: Can you offer advice on how to hold things together when you're playing slow? You're an authority on this topic.

Dale: I think it's actually harder to play slow than it is to play fast, at least to keep it steady. I've listened back to old recordings, and the time is so screwy. You gotta practice, for sure. A lot. And count, I guess. So yeah, that's the only way to really keep it together: Practice, and don't mess up. [laughs]

MD: You mean practice as a full band, right?

Dale: Oh, yeah. Make sure everybody's on the same page.

MD: Have you ever had physical issues as a result of playing so hard?

Dale: Well, I've been wearing gloves for a long time, and that's because I was just ripping the heck out of my hands.

This goes back to when I was like eighteen. We went on our first tour, and I was using whatever drumsticks I could get at the time. If it was a thin stick I'd just use the butt end. I really tore up my hands, to where I had to go to the doctor. He actually named what I had "drummer's hand." He's like, "Man, you're gonna go right down to the bone if you keep doing what you're doing. It'll eventually get infected, and... we'll have to cut your hand off." [laughs] No, I don't think he said that, but... That's how I started using gloves.

Back then there really weren't that many choices as far as drummer's gloves go. They were expensive, and the dye made your hands black. I saw this band called Pussy Galore, and the drummer was wearing White Ox work gloves. Buzz said, "Hey, you could just use some work gloves like that." I ended up finding a pair of ladies' gardening gloves that I liked a lot. They had these dots on them, for grip. But the brand I used, they started making them cheaper

and cheaper, so I was going through one pair a show, and then two pairs a show. And then a few years ago I tried Ahead drumming gloves. They're great.

The only other injury I've really had was eight or nine years ago, when I did some weird movement and ended up pinching a nerve in my left shoulder. I had to do a lot of physical therapy—it took a long time for that to heal.

MD: For *The Bride Screamed Murder*, was everything rehearsed and ready to go when you hit the studio?

Dale: Not all of it. But we had a pretty good idea of what we wanted to do. Buzz will usually come in with a song that's about 80 percent finished, and we'll just flesh it out. Certainly since we've had Coady in the band we've worked a lot on drums. Especially on the new record. The first song, "The Water Glass," that's all about the drums, pretty much. We wanted something that started out as a rock song and quickly dissolved into something else. It goes from that into a marching-band-style drum solo into a

BUZZ OSBORNE

The Melvins founder and the man who's been known to say that "Anything worth doing is worth overdoing" on his buddy Dale Crover

MD: Dale says Melvins drum parts can come from anywhere. He's always up for a challenge.

Buzz: He's basically an ego-less player, which is certainly odd for a musician. Most of the bands I know, you couldn't tell a drummer, or a guitar player, "I don't like the way you're doing this; could you do that?" You come up against a massive wall.

But that's not how we view it. All we're worrying about is making a really good song. I have lots of wacky ideas for drum fills and those kinds of things. I'm always interested in making it odder than normal, but so that it remains musical—most of which blows by everybody and nobody realizes. [laughs] It's a lot of fine little details that you don't find in most major-chord-progression rock music. Which we are certainly not.

The drummers in our band, Dale and Coady, they have their hands full. There's no way around that. It's constant, and it's very worried over.

The thing with Crover is that he's got a really good ability to shift between styles and feels. I can say something to him like, "I was kinda thinking if you crossed the drummer from the Gang Of Four with John Bonham, and then halfway through it's gonna change to more of the feel of the guy in the Knack." And he'll go, "Okay." [laughs]

He's really good at dealing with me saying, "How would you do this if you couldn't use your cymbals?" "How would you do this if you couldn't use your snare drum?" And he never tells me, "That's wrong."

MD: *Wrong* doesn't seem to be in the Melvins' vocabulary.

Buzz: No. Everything's right. This is right, even though it sounds wrong!

MD: You play complicated music, but Dale manages to transcend that and maintain a flowing feel.

Buzz: Yes. I've never understood how it is that some *huge* band doesn't want him playing with them. It just shows you how stupid

people are. There's no type of music he couldn't do. This is a guy with more ability and who understands what's going on better than anybody I've ever seen.

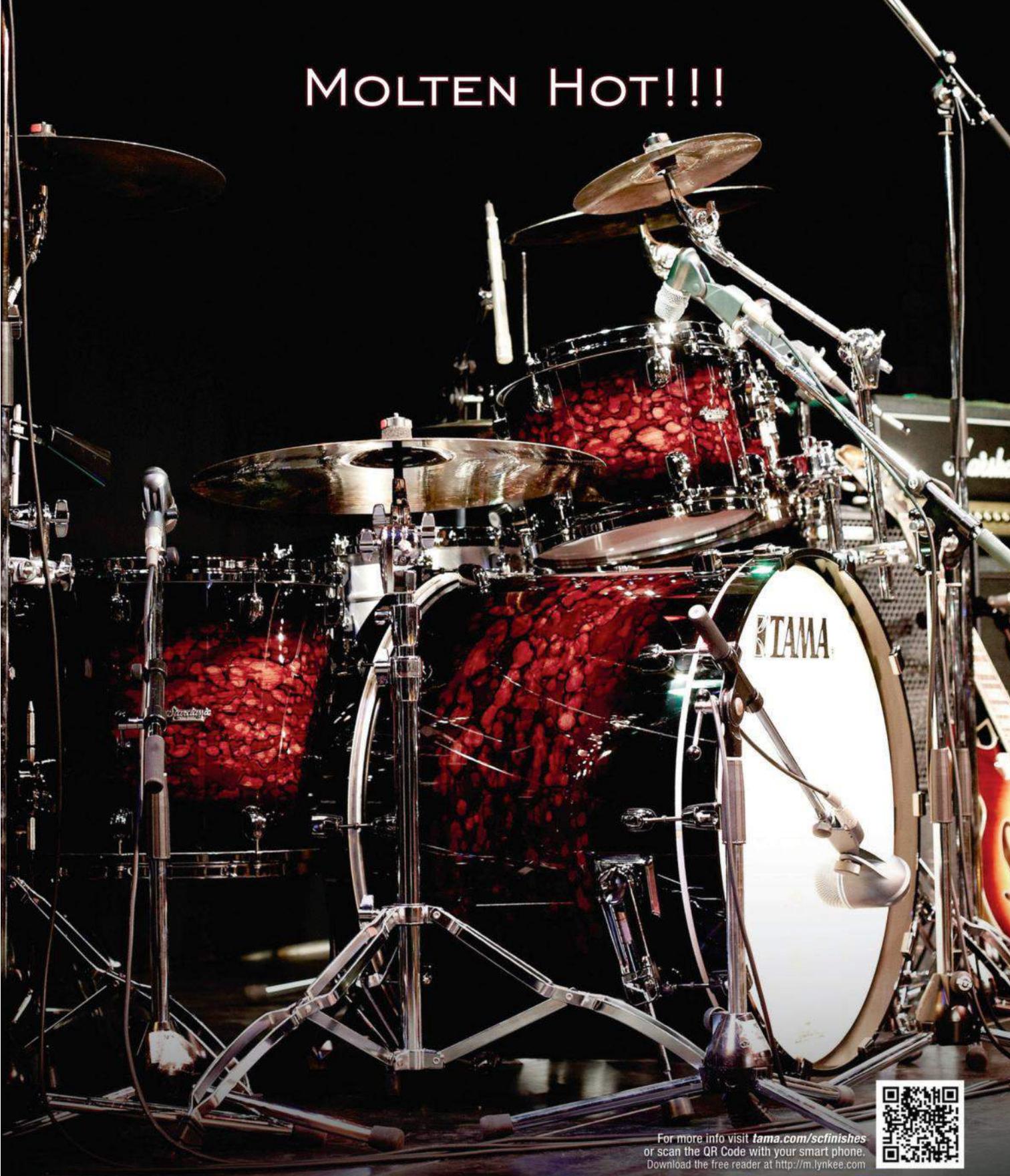
We've had a long career playing really weird rock music. We've carved out a spot for ourselves, and he's a monstrously huge part of that. I couldn't have done it like this without him. As a songwriter it's a giant weight off my shoulders to have somebody that always delivers, no matter how wacky I can make it. I'm far better for the fact that I've been able to have Crover complement everything I've ever done.

And when we got the second drummer, we didn't do that because we needed another drummer. We did it because we wanted to do something new. We'd played with Big Business, so we knew Coady would be able to do it. And Crover, there once again, it shows you the lack of ego: "Yeah, let's get another drummer."

Coady said that sitting down and playing alongside Crover, it's not a joke. We play challenging music—it's not bright and breezy pop tunes—and the fact that Coady can do it is a testament to how well *he* plays. Playing with those two guys is a treat. It's like standing in front of a freight train.



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DALE CROVER

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MD: On a tune like that or “I’ll Finish You Off,” is it a matter of you and Coady sitting down and working everything out precisely?

Dale: Yeah. We’ll do stuff after the other guys leave, as far as fine-tuning. Pretty much we’ll work out parts with the full band, and the little things we’ll do afterwards.

“I’ll Finish You Off” is the one song Jared wrote on the record. That one we worked on pretty hard, because we wanted to do this kind of echoing drum piece, especially at the end, with the fills where one person echoes the other and then it all meets up together.

MD: Is Jared the lead vocalist on that?

Dale: It’s Jared and me. He’s got the higher-pitched voice, and I’m doing the lower harmony. Having these guys in the band has made us think a lot

of fills but only on the rims, like at the end of “Blood Witch” on *(A) Senile Animal*?

Dale: Well, it’s both, really. We’re accidentalists. We’ll stumble on things and it’ll be like, “Wait a minute! What’d you just do?” There’s a lot of that. Sometimes things that we think of come out a lot differently from the original idea.

MD: There’s a development on this album of the double-drummer interplay.

Dale: I think we just have it down a lot better. On the first record we did with those guys, we had never played a live gig. Now we’ve got a couple hundred gigs under our belt, so it’s definitely smoother and easier.

When we first started, Coady and I played a lot of things together, kind of like doubling a guitar part. But now we



more about vocals. We have two lead singers now. The three records we’ve done with these guys, we’ve definitely explored the harmony thing. We’re into the Beach Boys. [laughs]

MD: Have you found yourself singing a bit less with Jared around?

Dale: No, I think more. I always sang live, along with Buzz. Even if I didn’t sing on the record we always tried to double up the vocals to make it stronger live. But now all of us sing a lot. I don’t think Coady sang much in previous bands, but he’s getting into it a lot more. I even convinced him to use the Sammy Hagar headset mic that I’ve been using. [laughs] One thing about those is I can sing a lot more without having to lean over and sing into a microphone.

MD: Do you and Coady discuss conceptual ideas such as, Let’s do a series

can play off each other more and have two separate parts. We feel we’ve just touched on things and there’s so much more that we can do. It’s exciting.

A lot of people were like, “Why did you get another drummer?” Well, because we don’t need to! The Melvins have never been a band that follows along with everybody else. We don’t need to—therefore we should.

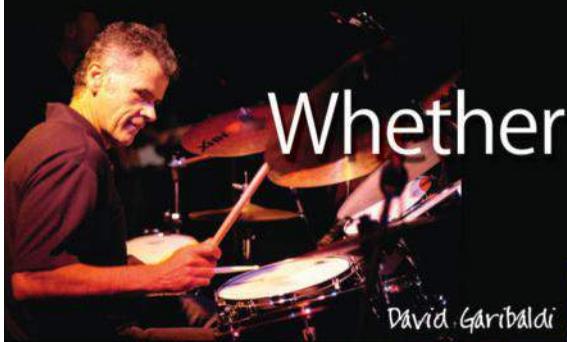
MD: You could have that response to a lot of questions about your music.

Dale: Yeah, I guess so. We’ve never been afraid to try new stuff. To do something like that has really renewed the band. We never get bored.

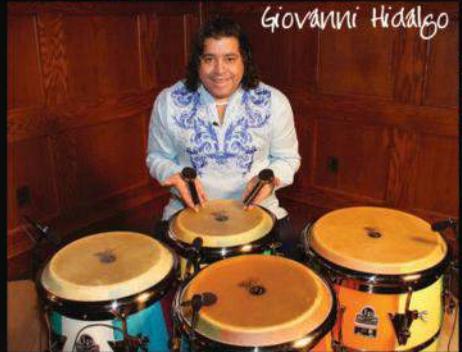
MD: It can be difficult for two drummers to just sit down and play. How did you two learn to mesh so well?

Dale: Well, I had done it before. We had the Fantômas/Melvins Big Band where I played with Dave Lombardo.

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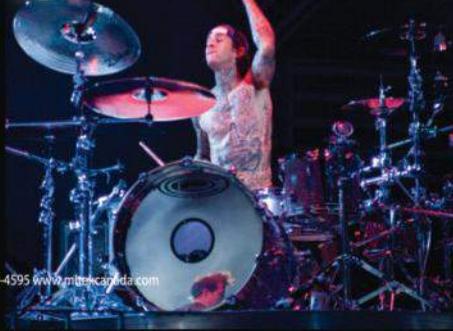
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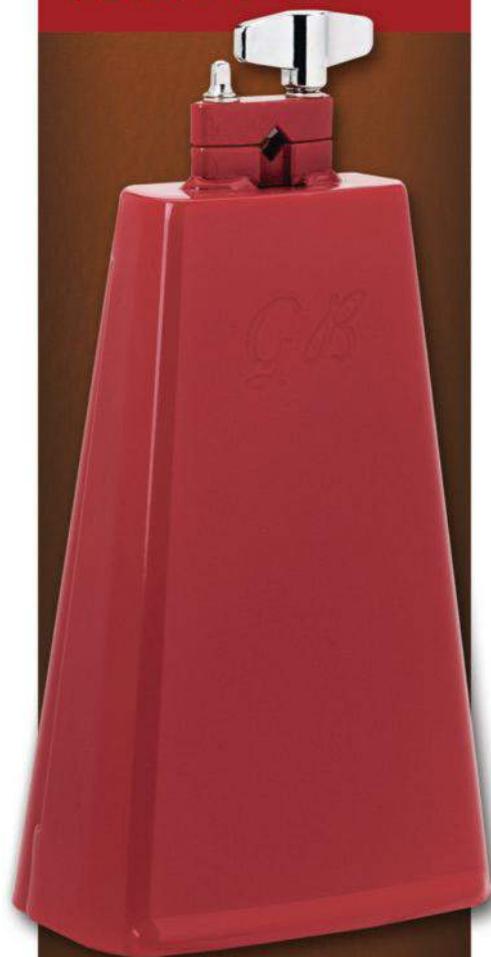
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DALE CROVER

So we knew it could be done.

Right away, playing with Coady, I knew it would work, no problem. Those guys were also fans of our band, and it was easy to communicate musically with both of them. From there we just do a lot of rehearsing. Certainly you have to be careful of things getting too messy or whatever. But we're conscious of that.

The other thing that was really exciting about the whole thing is I realized Coady is left-handed. How cool would that be—we could set up our kits close together and make one massive kit, with the whole mirror image.

Also, as I listen to old records, like "I Can See For Miles" by the Who, there's two drum parts on there. There's two drum parts on a lot of stuff—a lot of Beatles stuff, a lot of Who stuff.... You just don't realize it until you listen closely.

MD: Do you and Coady ever hit the crash cymbal between you at the same time and destroy it?

Dale: That one gets a lot of abuse, so it's the one we end up replacing the most. But it's not real thick, so it does have some flex. And usually we're good about not hitting it at the same time. We haven't had a problem where we've hit each other either.

MD: Have you had any concerns about getting in the same spot tonally with your gear?

Dale: The way he tunes his drums is a lot different from the way I tune my drums. I tune a lot higher. And of course we want to have two different sounds. The engineer we work with, Toshi Kasai, is very aware of that, and he'll try to use different miking techniques with our drums. He seems to think Coady has a more modern sound where mine is more a '70s rock type of sound, which makes sense because that's the background I come from—the drummers I listened to and the kinds of sounds I like.

MD: So you wanted to preserve your sonic differences?

Dale: Absolutely. Anybody that's ever played in our band—bass players, whatever—we've never tried to tell them what to do or how to sound. I really like the way Coady plays. It's better that he doesn't play exactly the way I do or sound the same. That's great for me too, because when we're writing songs, like I

mentioned before with Buzz coming up with drum parts, he'll come up with something that I wouldn't think of, and I can play off that.

MD: Is the drumset panning consistent throughout the latest record?

Dale: I think I'm on the right channel and he's on the left. We may have mixed it up a little bit, but that's normally the way it is.

MD: Both of you use unique and strange-sounding metal percussion.

Dale: What I've been using for a long time and am a really big fan of is the Pete Engelhart stuff. I've always been into the industrial type of drum sound. Not necessarily industrial music, but kind of like what Tom Waits does—the junkyard sound. Buzz is really into it too, and we've always tried to incorporate that stuff into our songs.

For this record Pete made these things we found at the Hollywood Pro Drum Shop. They have instructions to call us whenever they get new Pete Engelhart stuff. [laughs] "Hey, we got this weird thing...you'll want to come down and check it out." We bought Blossom Bells, tuned bells that look kind of like weird exhaust pipes. Both of us got a set, and since they're handmade they're really different from each other.

MD: Now that you're between studio albums, is there any new material in the works?

Dale: Well, we always have songs. We want to record and get something going before we can't really put records out anymore. Everything's changing, and as far as having a full-length LP, I don't know how long bands are going to be able to do that. It's mostly just singles, which is good and bad.

MD: The art of the album is something you guys really throw yourselves into.

Dale: Definitely. Even with the new record, and people have said this too, it's kind of like a movie soundtrack in a way—you go on a little adventure.

With the whole Internet thing, there's not going to be the LP like there has been. It just means we'll have to figure out another way to do things, which we're fully ready to embrace.

For more with Dale Crover, go to modern drummer.com.



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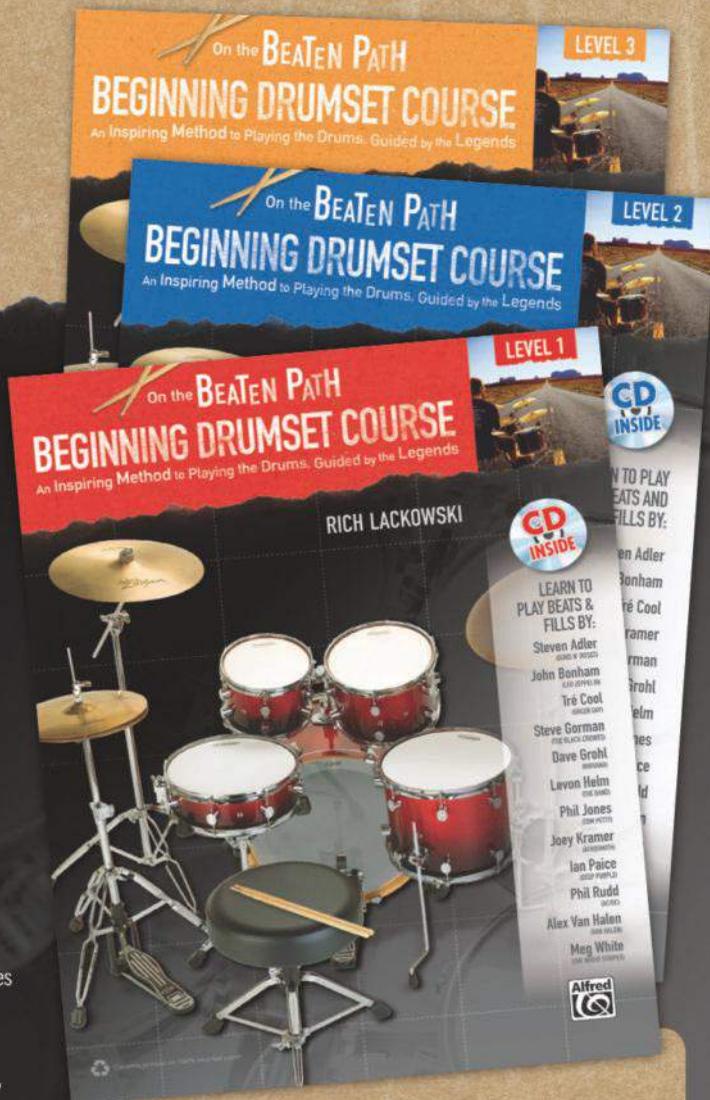
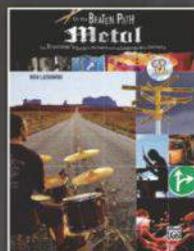
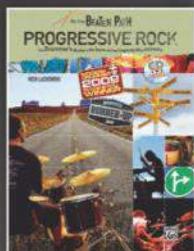
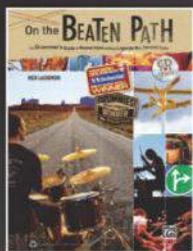
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Your Teaching Studio

Essential Steps To Building A Successful Business

by Jeff Salem

I've owned and operated a music school for the past six years. Prior to that I taught percussion lessons at a local store for twelve years. When I decided to start my own teaching practice, my first thought was, *If I were just starting to learn drums, where would I want to go for lessons?* This article outlines the steps I took to address that question while establishing my private-lesson business.

Location, Location, Location

The first thing I had to do was find a suitable place for my teaching studio that potential students wouldn't have difficulty finding—perhaps in an area close to a highway exit. I then had to consider my options of renting a commercial space versus purchasing my own property. My top priority was to make sure that my studio was a comfortable place for my students, so I decided to purchase a larger home that had a sizeable basement that could be used for my teaching business. I needed a separate entrance so students wouldn't have to walk through the main house, and I needed ample parking for students and their parents. It was very important that the studio didn't interfere with my personal living quarters.

Your Mission Statement

Once I settled on where to house my teaching practice, I created a name—Jeff Salem's Music Studio—and wrote a mission statement for my business: "Teaching the art of music to all ages in an inspirational and motivating setting and style." The purpose of this mission statement is to send the message that students who study at my studio will enjoy their private lessons as much as they enjoy any other hobby. Students should *want* to take

lessons, rather than being told by their parents that they *have* to take lessons.

To achieve that level of enthusiasm and excitement for learning, students need to feel good about coming to my studio and studying music. Along those lines, the first thing I did was make space for a comfortable lounge area for parents and students to wait in while I finished up other lessons. The area includes a television and video games. The sofas are soft, and I painted the walls with soothing colors. I also hung artwork that helped create a cozy feel. The decor is important because I don't want my students to feel as if they're in a boring, sterile waiting room at a doctor's office.

Full-Service Studios

For my lesson rooms, I felt it was important to have plenty of space, and I wanted to soundproof the walls with top-of-the-line materials—no egg crates or old mattresses. My rooms contain two drumsets (for the teacher and student), a full PA system for listening and playing along to CDs and iPods, Internet access, and a resource of books. I also have the ability to film and record lessons so that students can take home a DVD to review for the next week.

Finding Students

After I completed the design and setup of my teaching studio, my energies shifted toward seeking out students. As a freelance drumset clinician, I had developed a rapport with music teachers at various high schools near my home in Toronto. I had also facilitated drum circle programs at local day-care centers, corporate events, and private parties. Through these interactive programs, I was able to connect with a large number of potential students. To

entice them to study with me privately, I offered a free introductory lesson at Jeff Salem's Music Studio. This proved to be so successful right off the bat that I actually had to find additional teachers to help me cover all of the free lessons. The incentive I used with these freelance instructors was that if a student decided to enroll for a month of study, they would be paid for that initial trial lesson.

Structured Course Of Study

It was important for me to develop a structured program of study so that parents and students could see progress each week. I also wanted to give them a clear outline of the levels of study that needed to be implemented in order to achieve the greatest results. To do that, I created a multi-stage format that's similar to the colored-belt system used in martial arts. In my program, each skill level has a corresponding method book that students must master before moving to the next level. Beginning students start with the introductory white-belt book, and then they work through seven other colors until they reach the black level.

Within each level there's plenty of room for students to branch out, mainly by learning songs and styles that excite them and match their current playing ability. This is essential in keeping students interested in continuing onward. Before they can progress to the next color level, I videotape them playing to songs. If they exhibit mastery of the techniques and skills needed to play the material correctly, they graduate to the next book.

At the end of each completed level, a student gets two DVDs. One disc contains the lessons I taught at that level, and the other features that person's

performances of the required songs. The DVDs provide a great way for students to share what they have accomplished with friends and family.

Branching Out

Within the first year of opening Jeff Salem's Music Studio, I had more than forty students signed up to study with me and another instructor. Over time, more and more parents began asking if I offered lessons for other instruments, such as guitar and piano. I hadn't considered offering anything other than drum lessons, so I initially referred the parents to other schools. But I found that they weren't signing up elsewhere. Instead, they often said something like, "We'll just wait until you expand, because we'd like to do all of our family's lessons in one place."

I eventually decided to enlarge my business to accommodate the parents and students who wanted to study other instruments. The first step I took was asking parents and students to sign a request list, to give me an idea of how many people wanted to take lessons on other instruments. I discovered that I

had at least ten potential students who were interested in guitar lessons, so I sought out a professional, experienced, and reliable guitar instructor. Once the guitar program was implemented, an interest in piano and vocal lessons soon emerged, so I looked for qualified teachers in those areas as well.

Spreading The Word

After following many different avenues to increase enrollment—newspaper and Yellow Pages advertising, flyers, and so on—I found that the most effective ways to get more students were to conduct regular clinics and performances at local schools, to have an informative website, and to request referrals from schoolteachers, other students, and parents of current students.

Your website is very important. It doesn't have to be flashy, but it must include lesson policies and rates; photos of you, your teachers, and your studios; bios of all your instructors; your email address and phone number; and any other pertinent information about your business.

Progress Reports

Toward the end of each spring, I offer a recital for all students who wish to participate. This allows students, parents, and teachers to build a solid community. I choose a professional venue near my studio, and I hire a backing band of local pros to play with my students. These events are great opportunities for students to showcase all of their hard work.

I also provide students with a biannual report card. This type of evaluation informs them of their strengths as well as areas that need improvement.

You Can Do It!

I'm currently in my seventh year of operating Jeff Salem's Music Studio, and the business has grown to include six teachers and more than 150 students taking weekly private lessons. I'm very thankful to my teachers and students—after all, there's nothing more rewarding than seeing students progress while enjoying the process of making music. I wish you the best of luck!

For more on Jeff Salem's Music Studio, visit jsmusicstudio.com.



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Double Bass Substitute

Part 2: 32nd Notes by Mike Johnston

MUSIC KEY	
H.H.	X
S.D.	●
F.T.	○
B.D.	■

Welcome back for round two of our “Double Bass Substitute” series. The first thing I need to do is further explain the purpose of this technique. The basic idea of these articles, which involve replicating the sound of double bass by playing patterns between the floor tom and kick drum, isn’t designed to replace actual double bass or double pedal technique. There are certain styles of music, like extreme heavy metal, where true double bass drumming is crucial. The technique that we’re working on is for drummers who won’t be playing blistering double bass chops for an entire gig but who may want to throw in a little low-end spice every now and again. These patterns also help build coordination between your hands and feet. And, as I mentioned in the first article, the technique gives you the ability to play complicated double-bass-sounding grooves while also using the left foot to open and close the hi-hat.

We will explore the topic of opening and closing the hi-hat in part three. For now let’s get used to playing a basic rock beat on closed hi-hats while throwing in double bass patterns between the floor tom and kick drum. Make sure you follow the stickings, as we are now incorporating double strokes. We’ll start with 32nd-note patterns, and then we’ll begin to break up the double bass part by adding 16th notes. These grooves have a great double bass feel.

32nd Notes

Pay close attention to the stickings. When the right hand is on the floor tom, the left hand will be on the hi-hat.

When the floor tom and the snare are played at the same time, the hi-hat will be omitted.

You can choose to finish the following grooves with your right or left hand on the hi-hat.



Combining 16th And 32nd Notes

Now let’s add 16th notes to break things up a bit. The 16ths will be played as singles between the floor tom and bass drum, and the 32nd notes will be played as doubles. Have fun!

7

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10

Mike Johnston teaches out of the mikeslessons.com facility in Sacramento, California, where he offers live online drum lessons and international drum camps.



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Rudimental Jazz Revisited

Part 1: Mix And Match by Steve Fidyk



Rudiments are structured sticking patterns that, when mastered, help expand a player's technique, control, and sound. I was fortunate to spend many hours in lessons with the legendary jazz drummer Joe Morello. At each meeting, he assigned me different rudimental sticking patterns from classic books such as George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*, Charley Wilcoxon's *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos*, and Joe's own *Rudimental Jazz*, which has recently been rereleased.

In 1967, when *Rudimental Jazz* came out, Morello silenced critics who believed that rudiments weren't "hip" or couldn't swing. In a recent conversation with me, Joe mentioned that the premise behind the book was to help students gain an appreciation for applying the basic rudiments around the drumset. In our lessons, he would encourage me to think beyond each written example and come up with new, creative patterns without compromising the integrity of the rudiment itself, so that's what we're going to explore in this series of articles. Before you dive into the variations, however, be certain that you have control of each exercise as originally written. As Joe would always stress in lessons, you should never sacrifice control for speed.

We'll begin by exploring the section of *Rudimental Jazz* that focuses on the two rudiments that Joe and I spent the most time on: singles and doubles. As Joe explained, these rudiments—along with the flam—form the basis for all additional rudimental variations. Here's an example from page 6 that's based on the single-stroke roll. This orchestration will help you develop a sense of flow as you move the triplets around the kit.

1

RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRL
 LRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRL

One way to vary Morello's example is to rearrange the measures. Here are three options. Once you have these under control, apply this rearranging approach to additional exercises from *Rudimental Jazz*.

Measure sequence: 2-3-4-1

2

RLRLRLRLRL LRLRLRLRLRL

RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL

Measure sequence: 3-4-1-2

3

LRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL
 RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL

Measure sequence: 4-1-2-3

4

RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL
 RLRLRLRLRLRL LRLRLRLRLRL

Now let's merge two different examples from Joe's book. We'll use the same single-stroke exercise from before, plus we'll grab one of the double-stroke ideas from page 10. Here's our second example.

5

RRLRLRLRLRLRL etc.
 RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL

Once you have control of Examples 1 and 5 independently, try combining the first two measures of the single-stroke variation with the last two measures of the double-stroke idea.

6

RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL
 RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL

DIY Drum Restoration

Part 3: Bearing-Edge Basics by J.R. Frondelli

You might question why a column dealing with drum restoration would set out to discuss the ins and outs of bearing edges. After all, haven't we read about this topic ad nauseam? True, an abundance of information on bearing edges is available to us today, mainly on the Internet. But what we find is often fractional and sometimes even fictional. My aim here is to dispel many of the myths, uncover the mysteries, and bring the important facts together in one place.

In the restoration of vintage drums, recutting and/or optimizing bearing edges is often the most vital step toward achieving a great-sounding finished product. Though the word *restoration* implies bringing back cosmetic and structural integrity, properly (or improperly) cut bearing edges are largely responsible for determining a drum's final sound, tunability, and playability. The more you understand how bearing edges and other factors—including the shell, heads, and hoops—interact with the drum as a whole, the better off you'll be when it comes time to bring an old drum back to life.

To help you fully understand what makes a drum sound its best, here are a few facts you should know about drum construction.

Bearing edges can make or break a drum sound.

Uneven bearing edges can seriously affect tunability. A peak in the edge will create higher tension at that spot on the drumhead, and, conversely, a valley will create lower tension. The net result will be a varying degree of difficulty when you're trying to establish an even pitch at all tension rods. The problem is exacerbated at lower tunings, where wrinkles in the head at the edges can become apparent, resulting in nasty overtones.

I'm often asked why bearing edges are so critical nowadays, given that many vintage drums had edges that were less than perfect. The answer: plastic drumheads. Back when drummers used calfskin heads exclusively, imprecise bearing edges weren't an issue because the pliable natural skin would conform to just about anything. High spots, low spots—calfskin heads don't care. As a result, drum makers weren't too concerned with how evenly they cut their bearing edges. Nor were they very careful about the accuracy of shell diameters. (Most were oversize.) That's why some vintage drums are difficult to outfit with modern plastic heads.

Plastic drumheads are made from a polyester film called PET (polyethylene terephthalate). Most people are familiar with the DuPont brand name Mylar, which is the trade name for a type of PET film that's also referred to as polyester nylon. Regardless of the manufacturer, all PET drumheads exhibit similar characteristics. For starters, the film is supplied in a flat state, so it doesn't readily conform to radical curvatures such as those created by the bearing edge of a drum. In order to form a collar, the circular head blank punched from the flat film is placed in a press that heats and softens the collar area and then applies pressure to create the collar. (This process is called thermoforming.) As the film cools, it retains its collar shape, and the area becomes stiffer because of molecular changes in the film.

When you mount a plastic drumhead on a drum with imperfect edges, imagine how this somewhat stiff and unforgiving synthetic material is going to conform to uneven areas. It won't. Instead, it rides over the low spots, which creates wrinkles when the head is tuned at lower tensions.

Thinner films have an easier time conforming to uneven areas. A typical medium 10 mil, 1-ply head (.010") will tend to ride over low spots, while a thinner 7 or 7.5 mil head (.007" or .0075") can negotiate the bearing-edge roller coaster a bit better. But the trade-off is that thinner heads are less durable, and they have a brighter and more open tone.

Films thinner than 7 mil are relegated to snare-side heads. Even with these much thinner films (snare-side heads are typically 2, 3, or 5 mil), drummers who own vintage snare drums with deep snare beds have witnessed wrinkles at the snare bed edges, regardless of how tightly the head is tuned.

All drum shells are not created equal.

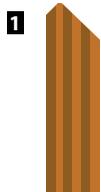
Let's examine another problem area: an oversize shell. In order to accommodate synthetic heads, drum shells really need to be undersize by about .25" so that the collar area of the head seats on the bearing edge and doesn't enter the playing area. If the bearing edge is too far outward, the preformed collar of the head will sit inside the playing area, creating a full-diameter wrinkle. Ideally you want the collar to sit directly on the bearing edge, but some edge profiles can hamper this critical contact area. (More on this later.)

Modern drum shells often have undersize diameters. Ply shells are created inside circular molds and are built from the outside in, so that they maintain a consistent diameter. Solid shells are steam bent and lathed to the correct diameter. Vintage drum shells were created *around* circular molds and then clamped with full-circle ring clamps until the adhesive cured. In a perfect world, this wouldn't be an issue, but the thin wood veneers used to create shells aren't always of the

exact same thickness. So sometimes shells would end up being thicker than usual, creating a larger outer diameter. With old steam-bent shells, where each end of the shell panel is beveled to create an overlap area for the scarf joint, the joinery was sometimes inaccurate and was often eyeballed into place. All of this can spell disaster when you try to use plastic drumheads on slightly larger drums.

Properly cut bearing edges can alleviate most issues.

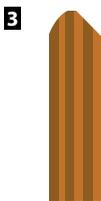
Look at the illustrations below. These are the most common bearing-edge profiles seen on modern drums.



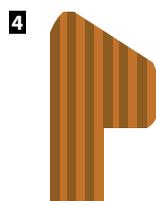
1
Standard
(45° with slight 45° counter-cut)



2
Double 45



3
45 with roundover



4
Vintage roundover
(with reinforcement rings only)

Most vintage drums will sport either standard (illustration 1) or vintage roundover edges (illustration 4). The standard edge has variations. It's sometimes used on shells with reinforcement rings, and it's sometimes seen with a rounded outer counter-cut instead of a true bevel (also referred to as a chamfer). You'll find the latter variation on vintage Rogers drums.

Likewise, the vintage roundover, as seen on 3-ply Ludwig and Slingerland drums, might employ a 45-degree inner bevel instead of the more common 30-degree edge. (I've seen both 30- and 45-degree bevels on factory Ludwig drums.) While the inner bevel is important, it's not nearly as crucial as the outer counter-cut or roundover, or the placement of the peak formed by the intersection of the inner and outer cuts. While standard and vintage roundover edges might work just fine on properly undersize shells, they can often cause tuning issues on vintage drums that have oversize shells.

If you own troublesome vintage drums with oversize shells, you can make them better handle plastic drumheads by having the outer edge recut to a double 45-degree edge

(illustration 2) or a 45-degree edge with a roundover (illustration 3). Those deeper cuts will move the apex of the edge inward, which will move the collar of the head outside the playing area and increase the tunability.

The decision of whether or not to modify your drums is ultimately up to you. Ask yourself if you want to play the drums or just keep them as collector's items. Then determine whether you want to use synthetic or calfskin heads. To me, drums are meant to be played. But to play them, you must be able to tune them, which could require the edges to be recut first.

In our next installment we'll dig deeper into bearing-edge profiles and their advantages and disadvantages, and then we'll shed light on the often misunderstood topic of snare beds. See you then!



J.R. Frondelli is the owner of Frondelli USA Drums, which specializes in repairing, reworking, and restoring vintage drums, as well as building new vintage-style drums. For more info, visit frondelli.com.



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Andy Tennille

BRAD MORGAN

by Patrick Berkery

Whether he's driving home the modern roots music of **Drive-By Truckers** or helping classic soul artists like **Booker T. Jones** and **Bettye LaVette** stay current, the drummer says it all comes down to serving the singer, the writer, and the song.

The Drive-By Truckers' Brad Morgan has come a long way from the days when he was lugging a ragtag kick, snare, and floor tom setup from bar gig to bar gig around Athens, Georgia. These days you'll find Morgan rocking a sweet Ludwig kit, complete with a mammoth 40" kick drum. The gigs have gotten a lot nicer too. Though they haven't strayed far from their roots as a turn-the-dump-over, go-home-with-the-waitress bar band, the Truckers have graduated from the gin-joint circuit, typically headlining 1,500- to 2,000-seat venues. They topped that last summer, playing the massive Lollapalooza festival in Chicago after capping a three-week stint opening for Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, an experience Morgan compared with going to school.

"As soon as you walk in, you're learning, watching that band night after night,"

Morgan says of the Petty trek. "They don't soundcheck, so we got to soundcheck every night on their PA system, which is like one of five in the world. It was real nice to hear my kit coming through that, especially that 40" bass drum. To be able to hit that in a big old coliseum...man, it sounded like thunder."

If opening for the Heartbreakers was like going to school, then Morgan's tenure with the Truckers since officially joining the band for its 2001 double album, *Southern Rock Opera*, has been a continuing education. Initially the curriculum

featured a whole lot of roadwork. The band was averaging 200 shows a year for a while, which helped Morgan hone his chops. Poring over the Truckers' catalog, you can hear the subtle evolution in

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Morgan plays a Ludwig Classic Maple kit in gold glass glitter, including an 8x14 snare, a 10x13 tom, 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms, a 14x26 bass drum, and an 18x40 concert bass drum mounted behind him and played with a mallet. His Meinl Byzance series cymbals include 15" Traditional Medium hi-hats, an 18" Traditional Medium Thin crash, a 20" Vintage Sand ride with rivets, a 20" Brilliant Medium crash, and a 23" Traditional Medium ride. His heads include a Remo Powerstroke 3 on the bass drums and Remo coated Emperors on the snare and toms. His hardware includes a Ludwig Speed King bass drum pedal and Modular 900 series stands, and he uses Los Cabos 5B wood-tip sticks, Los Cabos brushes, and Ludwig marching bass drum mallets.



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BRAD MORGAN

Brad's playing, a tried-and-true, song-first style in the tradition of Jim Keltner, Charlie Watts, and Crazy Horse's Ralph Molina.

On 2004's *The Dirty South*, Morgan frequently exercises restraint. He keeps steady time with taste, whether brushing along on the snare to accent singer Patterson Hood's war-hero tale "The Sands Of Iwo Jima" or tapping out the reverential mountain-funk groove to "Danko/Manuel."

But on 2010's *The Big To-Do* (which was recorded concurrently with the recently released *Go-Go Boots* album, a more stripped-down affair), Morgan really lets loose. The deep-pocket wallop he lays down on "Drag The Lake Charlie" helps lend a comically sinister jolt of amplified Americana to Hood's Southern gothic yarn about a missing and presumed dead two-timing husband. Some of Morgan's most creative timekeeping can be heard on the delicate ballad "The Flying Wallendas," where he fills the song's wide-open spaces with buzz rolls and soft cymbal crashes.

"I'm accenting things that Patterson says, playing to the story," Morgan explains of his part on "Wallendas." "Sometimes I don't even hear drums on a song initially, and that was one of those times. I just started using buzz rolls, playing traditional grip and barely tapping the snare in a ride pattern. That's an instance when I'm playing for the story as well as the song. Patterson's a storyteller, and an incredible writer too. I'm just trying to get in there with him—not doing anything crazy, just being mindful if there's something that needs accenting. Bringing something down, or bringing it up. I'm listening just like the listener is."

Morgan's work with the Truckers has also included plum recording gigs where the band was handpicked to back the R&B legends Bettye LaVette and Booker T. Jones. Purists might have scoffed at the soul siren and the Hammond B-3 master joining forces with a band that no one would confuse with the MGs, but the unlikely hook-ups worked.

Playing behind LaVette on her 2007 album, *The Scene Of The Crime*, and with Booker T. on 2009's *Potato Hole*, the Truckers weren't trying to impersonate the Muscle Shoals or Stax rhythm section; they were being their raw, raucous selves—the very qualities that

got them both gigs. With Morgan anchoring tracks like LaVette's cover of Eddie Hinton's "I Still Want To Be Your Baby (Take Me Like I Am)" and Booker T.'s version of Outkast's "Hey Ya," the Truckers made both artists sound like they were moving forward, not looking back. And Morgan and the group learned a thing or two about new—and old—ways of working in the studio.

"The way we do things and the way Bettye's used to doing things differed," Morgan says of the LaVette sessions, which found him playing with Muscle Shoals rhythm section bassist David Hood (father of Patterson Hood). "She's in her sixties and has been doing this all her life. We can read charts and all that, but we do things quick; we don't put too much thought into it. She was different in that regard.

"For me it was very easy to do the session. I had her vocals cranked up, and I played around the way she sang. As long as we got a basic groove and everything was locked in, it was fine.

"With the Booker stuff, there were no vocals, so that was a whole different side of us interacting with someone else we'd never played with. Plus we only had like four days between tours to record. The first day we might've gotten one song. The second day we didn't get anything. The third day we nailed like two or three, and the last day we nailed six. It was getting to know each other, and then—boom—we were cranking songs out.

"What helped me was the way we were set up. I could actually see Booker's hands hitting the keys, so I had a cheat sheet. I knew when he was going to change. He had the songs all charted out. We were just filling in around him."

The Bettye LaVette sessions also afforded Morgan the time for a little hero worship—and the chance to get some positive feedback from said hero. "We were doing the Bettye record at Fame Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, and [Muscle Shoals house drummer] Roger Hawkins came in," Brad recalls. "I'm a huge fan—it was like Elvis walking into the room. He asked someone, 'Is he playing to a click track?' They said no. He said, 'All right! Great.' That made my day, right there."



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- 3. 17" K Medium Thin Dark crash
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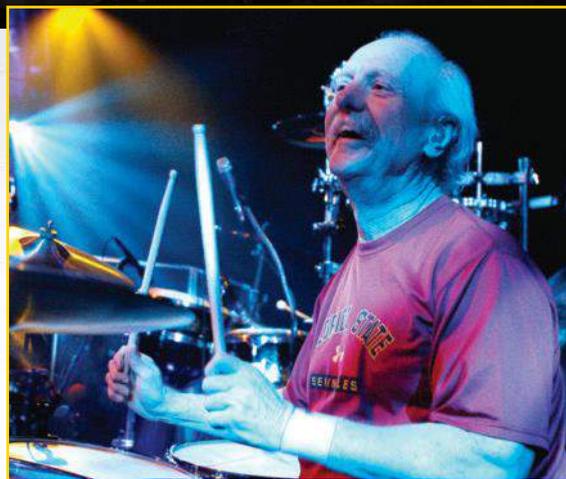
"I've pretty much been playing the same cymbal setup forever. I'm not out there playing around with new stuff all the time. I have a style that I've worked on for forty years. I've gone beyond the point of experimentation. I'm just having the time of my life blending with my bandmates!"

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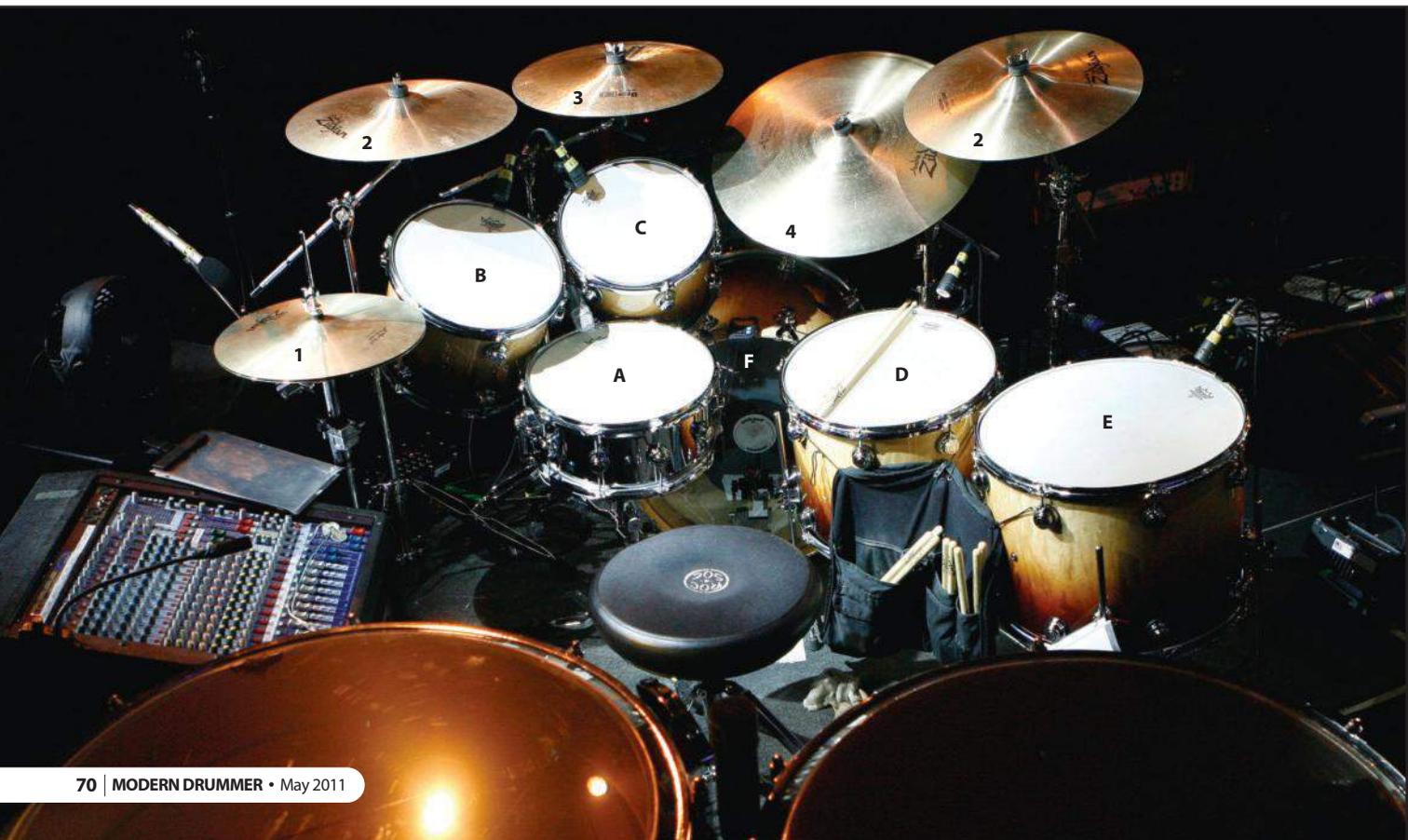
Sticks: Zildjian Butch Trucks Artist model

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Suede Ambassador tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Remo Clear CS black dot bass drum batter (with Aquarian impact patch) and DW ported black front head with custom mushroom logo, and Remo Clear Ambassador timpani heads

Electronics: Future Sonics in-ear monitors, Midas Venice series monitor rack



MARC QUIÑONES

Drums: Pearl Elite series 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " conga and 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " tumba in diamond burst finish, 14" Elite series black fiberglass djembe, Elite series bongos in diamond burst finish, and Marc Quiñones Signature timbales



Hardware: Pearl custom ICON rack

Percussion: Pearl mountable brass- and silver-jingle tambourines; Low Clave Blocks; Horacio Hernandez signature HH-2 Clabell, HH-3 Chabella, and HH-5 Marybell cowbells; BCM5 Bala Fusion bell; mounted agogo bells; wood and plastic handheld tambourines; long and short Hex Ganza shakers; and 10" Primero Rock cowbell

Cymbals: Zildjian 14" A Custom crash, 19" K Custom Hybrid China, 17" El Sonido Multi crash/ride, and 30" gong



JAI JOHANNY "JAIMOE" JOHANSON

Drums: Pearl Reference series in granite sparkle finish

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- B. 9x12 tom
- C. 8x10 tom
- D. 14x14 floor tom
- E. 16x16 floor tom
- F. 18x18 bass drum

"These Pearl drums have great projection," Jaimoe says. "Projection is something that a lot of musicians don't pay enough attention to. Here's my recommendation: Get somebody else to play your drums with your band as you walk out into the house and listen to what they sound like. That is the real test."

Cymbals: Zildjian

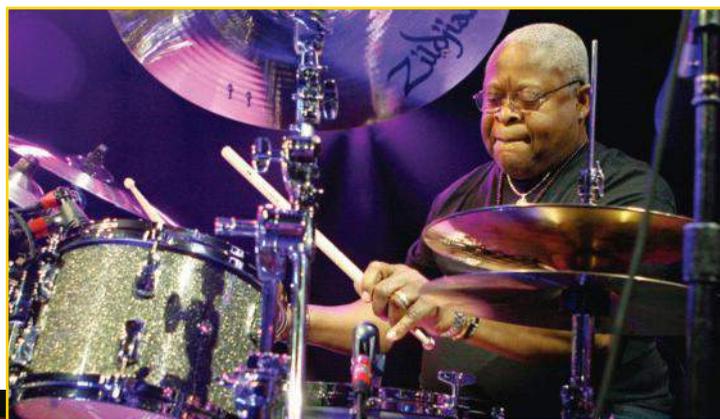
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- 2. 18" A Custom Projection crash with six rivets
- 3. 22" A Ping ride
- 4. 18" K Custom Hybrid crash

Hardware: Pearl Demon Drive bass drum pedal, Roc-N-Soc throne with backrest

Heads: Remo Renaissance Emperor snare batter and Ambassador Snare Side bottom, Remo Suede Ambassador tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, and Evans EMAD bass drum batter and EQ1 front head with custom mushroom logo

Sticks: Vic Firth Jaimoe signature sticks, Ralph Hardimon marching sticks, assorted mallets

Accessories: Midas Venice series monitor rack, ClearSonic isolation panels





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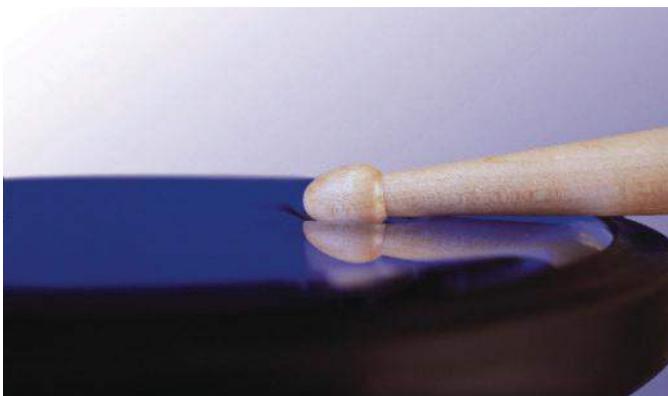


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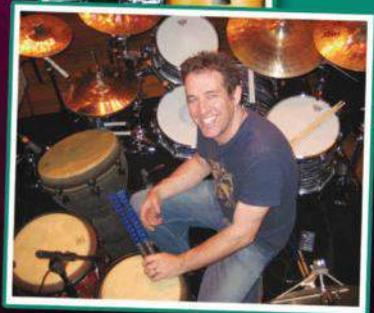
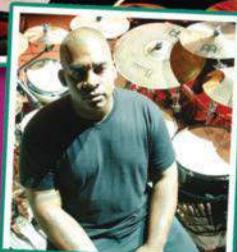
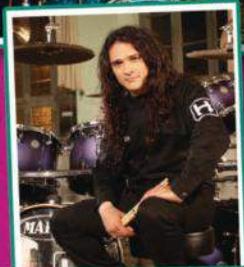
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TULSA TIME

Jimmy Karstein, Chuck Blackwell, David Teegarden,
And The Unique Scene That Fueled Classic Rock by Cleve Warren

New Orleans. Chicago. New York. Detroit. Boston. Philadelphia. When you think of hotbeds of American drumming over the years, those cities would likely be the first to come to mind. But for longtime fans of classic rock and roots music, Tulsa, Oklahoma, would hold its own against many a larger, more famous metropolis.

Classic exponents of the “Tulsa feel” are often cited for their unique shuffle grooves, their mastery of medium and slow tempos, and their laid-back, low-pitched snare drum sound. Words like *heart* and *soul* are also commonly dropped, and the importance of these intangible elements is certainly borne

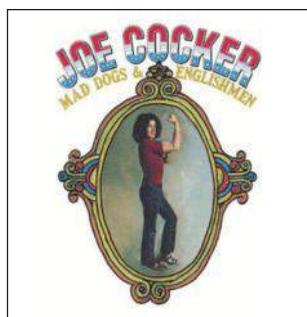
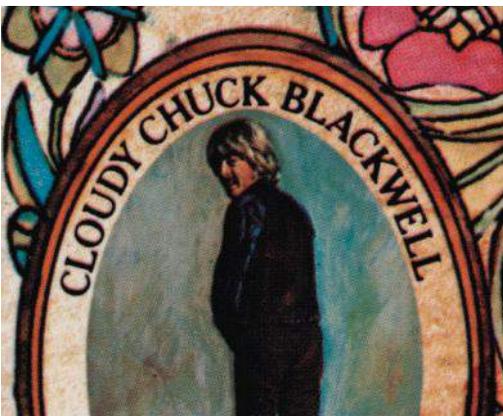
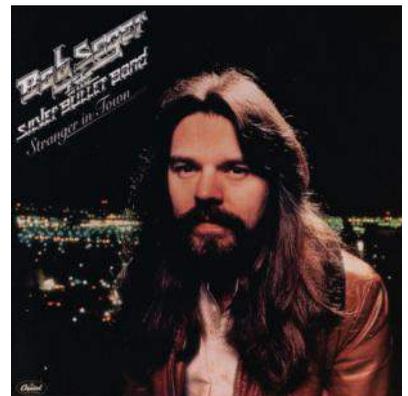
out by the number of classic rock legends—including Eric Clapton, Joe Cocker, George Harrison, and Bob Seger—who sought out the city’s greatest musicians to help bring a distinctive depth of feeling to their music.

Tulsa in the late ’50s and early ’60s was an unusual place. Though the city could boast Cain’s Ballroom and the radio station KVOO, both home to Bob Wills, the “King Of Western Swing,” Tulsa wasn’t a media center and didn’t house many well-known recording studios. But the musicians there developed an idiosyncratic sound of their own, inspired by the city’s diverse musical environment, which featured western

swing, rhythm and blues, gospel, jazz, and early rock ’n’ roll. This, coupled with the spirit of the land runs, the wild weather, the Native American culture, the rough-and-tumble oil business, and the rugged Oklahoma spirit, resulted in an addictive musical personality that infused a staggering number of important recordings for decades.

The list of great players who hail from Tulsa includes Jim Keltner (John Lennon, George Harrison, Ry Cooder), Jamie Oldaker (Eric Clapton, Peter Frampton, the Tractors), Scott Musick (the Call), Rick “Moon” Calhoun (Rufus & Chaka Khan), John Hoff (Stevie Ray Vaughan, Freddie King),

David Teegarden, second from left, with Bob Seger’s Silver Bullet Band. Seger’s 1978 breakout album, *Stranger In Town*, features the hits “Hollywood Nights,” “Feel Like A Number,” “Old Time Rock & Roll,” “Still The Same,” and “We’ve Got Tonight.”



Chuck Blackwell was among the stellar cast on Joe Cocker’s seminal 1970 album, *Mad Dogs & Englishmen*. Previously he was a member of the *Shindig* house band, the Shindogs.





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Russ McKinnon (Tower Of Power, Barry Manilow), Ron McCrory (Asleep At The Wheel, Rick Danko), and Phil Seymour (Dwight Twilley). Three men in particular, though—Chuck Blackwell, Jimmy Karstein, and David Teegarden—are widely regarded as the most influential and historically significant drummers in Tulsa’s musical history. More than any other players, this triumvirate helped export the city’s sound and feel to the rock ‘n’ roll world.

All three started playing drums in their school bands in the ‘50s, and there are two main influences that link them: Leon Russell and Levon Helm. Starting in the ‘50s, Ronnie Hawkins & the Hawks, with Helm on drums and



Jimmy Karstein, Chuck Blackwell, and David Teegarden today

vocals, played a circuit of teen hops and “knife and gun” nightclubs in Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas in the spring and fall of every year. Rock ‘n’ roll was still relatively new, and there weren’t many touring bands. The Hawks were an exception, making them an important thread in many regional musicians’ careers.

The band’s performances were must-see events. Jimmy Karstein and David Teegarden agreed that Helm was the most important rock drummer they had seen. Levon’s simple, direct style and dead-on timing made a huge impression on all of the young Tulsa drum-

mers, especially Karstein. “I can remember the way he set up his kit,” Jimmy says, “at an angle rather than in line or behind the band, so he could better hear and see the rest of the group. They were tight, with simple but powerful arrangements and a tremendous amount of energy.”

CHUCK BLACKWELL

Chuck Blackwell is the undisputed godfather of Tulsa rock ‘n’ roll drummers. He would be quick to tell you he was not the first rock drummer in Tulsa—but ask anyone with a connection to the city’s music scene, and they’ll agree that he’s the most important. Blackwell’s parents bought him a snare drum and a foot

pedal attached to a cardboard box. With this Chuck tried to play along with the radio. Popular music prior to 1956 held little interest for the young drummer. As Blackwell tells it, “When the Big Bang—Elvis—happened in 1956, all hell broke loose, and I wanted to be part of it.” Blackwell eventually found

some like-minded teenagers in Tulsa, and they started playing.

Among this group was a young pianist named Claude Russell Bridges—now known to the world as Leon Russell—as well as singer-songwriter J.J. Cale. After exhausting the teen hop and club scene, the band was looking to take the next step. To Blackwell and his cohorts, *American Bandstand* in Philadelphia was the center of the rock ‘n’ roll universe. Somehow they managed to cram into the back of a 1950 Ford, along with their equipment, and drive to Philly. A month later they came to the conclusion that Philadelphia was not for them. So it

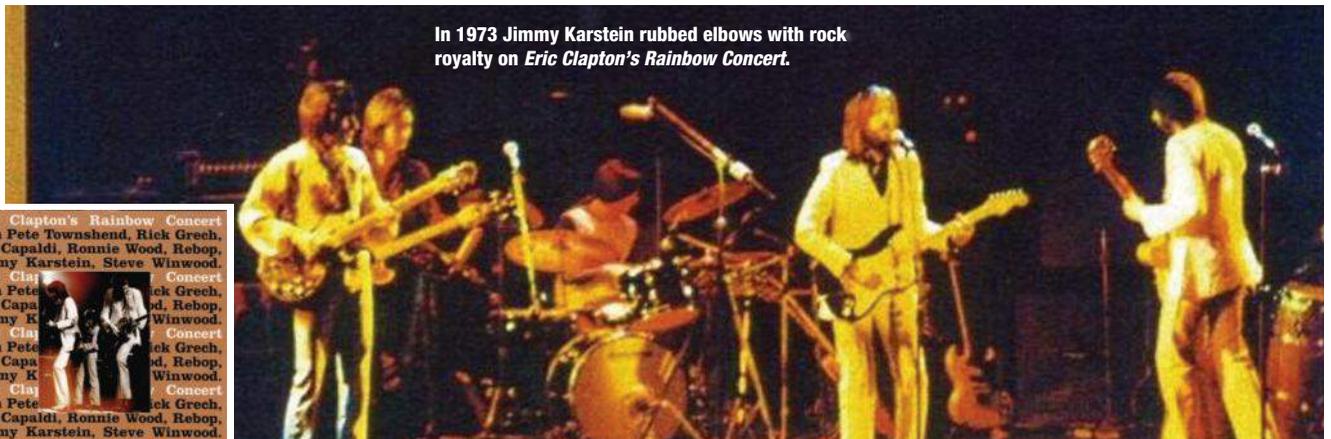
was back to Tulsa—flat broke.

It didn’t take long for an opportunity to present itself, in the form of Jerry Lee Lewis, who needed a band to tour out west. Blackwell and his friends were more than eager to hit the road. Their last gig in Kansas ended in a near riot when Lewis didn’t show. Once they made it to California, they couldn’t play where alcohol was served because they were under twenty-one and subject to arrest. Fake IDs were the remedy, and the group was soon working in bowling alleys and clubs. Russell, the piano player, was discovered by someone who needed a keyboardist for a demo session, and soon he was doing major session work all over L.A. Through Russell’s recommendations, Blackwell found a gig with the hugely popular Everly Brothers. His simple but powerful style soon had him playing with a host of great bands around town.

One group of particular note was the Wednesday-night band at the famed Palomino Club in North Hollywood. This ensemble contained the legendary musicians James Burton (Ricky Nelson, Elvis) on guitar, Delaney Bramlett (mentor to Eric Clapton, founder of Delaney & Bonnie & Friends) on bass, Joey Cooper (vocalist on dozens of albums) on rhythm guitar, and Blackwell on drums.

Through Russell, the band was discovered by the television producer Jack Good of *Shindig*, who wanted a group to cover hits by acts that he couldn’t book on the weekly show. This unit had the ability to play just about anything, and the members soon found themselves in American teenagers’ living rooms every Wednesday night for two years. Blackwell and the guys also had a

In 1973 Jimmy Karstein rubbed elbows with rock royalty on Eric Clapton’s Rainbow Concert.



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necessary quality for TV: They looked great. The band became almost as famous as the headlining stars on the show each week. After *Shindig* went off the air, Blackwell started playing with the Sunset Strip favorite Taj Mahal. Chuck's three albums with the venerable bluesman are classics.

During this time, Russell's influence on the L.A. rock scene was becoming powerful. The keyboardist assembled a legendary band for Delaney Bramlett, with Jim Keltner on drums, which served as the opening act for the ill-

fated supergroup Blind Faith. Joe Cocker soon brought Russell on board and took the Bramlett band en masse, along with Blackwell, Keltner, and session great Jim Gordon as drummers. Mad Dogs & Englishmen was rock 'n' roll's first traveling road show, and we're left with a great legacy of music and video from that tour; go to YouTube to see Blackwell and Keltner playing on Cocker's hit "The Letter."

Blackwell spent the next few years doing sessions for various artists signed to Russell's Shelter Records. His

playing on Freddie King's *Getting Ready* album is an example of blues drumming at its finest. Although he retired from music for a few years to concentrate on his family and his Tulsa-based stained-glass business, Blackwell is back playing around town with some of the best musicians on the scene. He favors a straightforward style, where the snare always seems to hit just a little behind the beat. Hearing Chuck play today, you can hear the embodiment of that unmistakable Tulsa feel.

JIMMY KARSTEIN

Jimmy Karstein was next to follow Blackwell to Los Angeles. He literally lived in Leon Russell's closet until he started to play in and around Hollywood. "When I got to L.A.," Jimmy recalls, "I saw all these giants of drumming—Shelly Manne, Art Blakey, Louie Bellson.... I knew this drumming business was hard, so I'd better learn to play music instead."

Karstein's solid Tulsa groove and close relationships with Russell and Blackwell helped him land the gig with the Everly Brothers. Later Karstein replaced Jim Keltner with Gary Lewis & the Playboys, once again thanks to an endorsement from Russell.

There are a couple of little-known facts about Karstein's credits. First, he played on two tracks of the final Buffalo Springfield album, *Last Time Around*. Second, he was the only white drummer to play with the legendary bluesman Bobby "Blue" Bland. Karstein also worked with Joe Cocker, Taj Mahal, Billy Lee Riley, the Tractors, and Eric Clapton's Rainbow Concert band, which featured Pete Townshend, Steve Winwood, Ron Wood, and Jim Capaldi.

Karstein toured with J.J. Cale for nearly thirty-five years (see Eric Clapton's 2004 *Crossroads Guitar Festival* DVD) and with the regional "Red Dirt" music pioneers, the Red Dirt Rangers. The Rangers play all over the Southwest, and Karstein is still actively playing in Tulsa as well. When he's not with the Rangers, he can usually be found with the Bluehemians. To this day Karstein possesses a kindness and humility

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DAVID TEEGARDEN

The youngest member of Tulsa's "Holy Trinity" is David Teegarden, who worked in L.A. with Leon Russell and J.J. Cale, among other artists. Teegarden later became part of Detroit's burgeoning rock scene, which included Bob Seger, with whom David and organist Skip Knappe would often perform. In 1970, under the name of Teegarden & Van Winkle, the duo scored a Top 40 hit with "God, Love, And Rock & Roll."

In 1972 Teegarden and Knappe recorded a seminal Seger album, *Smokin' O.P.'s*, but Teegarden's official tenure with Seger started in April 1977, after Silver Bullet Band drummer Charlie Martin was seriously injured in a car accident. Teegarden's work on Seger's *Stranger In Town* album yielded several of the singer's biggest hits, including "Still The Same" and "Hollywood Nights." Teegarden

BEFORE AND AFTER THE BIG THREE

Though session and touring legend Jim Keltner left Tulsa while in junior high school, his roots run deep. Keltner's uncle Smokey Mendoza, bassist for Bob Wills and his brother Johnnie Lee Wills, died with instructions to have his ashes scattered under the stage at Cain's Ballroom. Keltner didn't meet Chuck Blackwell, Jimmy Karstein, or David Teegarden until those drummers moved to California, but when they all became friendly, their Oklahoma roots helped them form an instant bond.

Jamie Oldaker followed closely behind Blackwell, Karstein, and Teegarden in the Tulsa-drumming timeline, showing great skill and taste with Eric Clapton, Bob Seger, Steven Stills, Peter Frampton, and the Tractors. Oldaker, about whom you can find extensive information in previous issues of *Modern Drummer*, would be the first to tell you that he owes a great debt to his Tulsa forefathers.

recorded 1980's *Against The Wind* and the following year's live *Nine Tonight* before splitting with Seger in 1982.

Since his Silver Bullet Band days, Teegarden has been an active studio musician in Tulsa as well as a recording studio owner and producer, keeping busy at his Natura Digital Studios. For many years he has played in the top blues band in Tulsa, the Bill Davis Group, which has featured guitarist Tommy Tripplehorn (Gary Lewis & the Playboys) and bassist Gary Gilmore (Taj Mahal). Today, along with his drumming son, Dave Jr., Teegarden

is inspiring and educating a new generation of the city's musicians.

Chuck Blackwell, Jimmy Karstein, and David Teegarden, who have more than 150 years of playing experience between them, represent great examples of how passion and talent can produce remarkably long musical careers. Their drumming today is as vital and relevant as ever, and all three of them continue to contribute to Tulsa's historic and colorful music scene.



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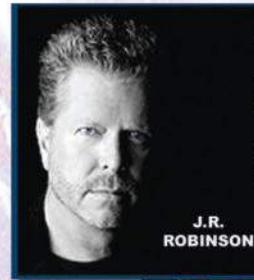
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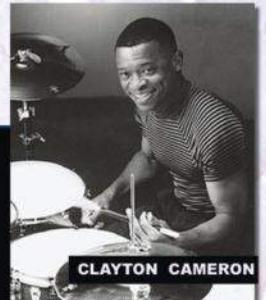


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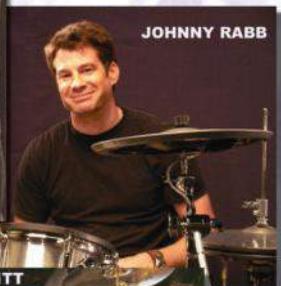
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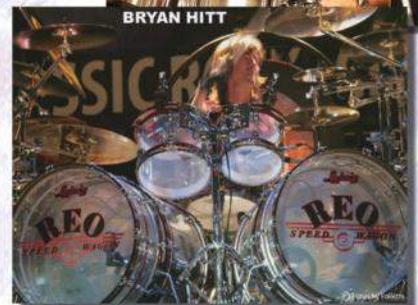
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Classical Roots, Part 1

EDGARD VARÈSE

The composer seems to be forever tagged as the guy Frank Zappa called long-distance on his fifteenth birthday. But, much more important, Varèse changed for good the way modern percussionists think about rhythm and sound.

by Elizabeth Walsh

Edgard Varèse (1883–1965) was a composer who changed not only the way we make music but also the way we listen to it. His “Ionisation” was the first piece of Western classical music written for a percussion ensemble. Varèse was also a technological innovator, working with new instruments like the theremin and the ondes Martenot and including the spatial control of sound in his work. His tape piece “Poème Électronique” was played through 400 loudspeakers in the Philips Pavilion at the 1958 World’s Fair in Brussels. Varèse was, in fact, one of the first composers to work with magnetic tape, along with artists like Pierre Schaeffer, Olivier Messiaen, and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

But Varèse didn’t just use unusual instruments and new technology in his work. He also found ways to get fresh sounds out of traditional instruments, and, like many post-nineteenth-century composers, he created his own method for allowing a piece to develop.

One aspect of twentieth- and twenty-first-century music that can make it hard to listen to is structure. For nearly 300 years, classical composers worked with very strictly defined templates, ones that usually involved melodic and rhythmic repetition. Theorist Heinrich Schenker wrote about repetition, “It creates musical form, just as the association of ideas from a pattern in nature creates the other forms of art.” Starting with Beethoven, though, composers began to alter these templates. By the twentieth century, composers were exploring entirely new ways of allowing a piece of music to develop. Compare the Mona Lisa with Picasso’s *Head Of A Woman*, and you get the idea.

Although these changes can disorient the casual listener, many musicians have found them to be liberating. *Modern Drummer* Advisory Board member George Marsh, who’s played with everyone from Chuck Berry to

Pauline Oliveros, says, “I believe the most important influence of twentieth- and twenty-first-century composers is to free up the musician from the confines of particular styles of performance. I love playing jazz, funk, ‘dawg music,’ etc. One of the reasons I love these styles so much is because there is another way of playing and improvising that frees me from the requirements of these styles.”

“Ionisation,” composed in 1931, is truly a reflection of these new ideas, and of the budding atomic age. In physics, ionization has to do with converting a molecule into an ion by moving electrons. In Varèse’s piece, rhythmic cells evolve and expand, as electrons do during the ionization process. Scientific ideas would influence other pieces by Varèse, most notably “Density 21.5,” for solo flute. (The title refers to the density of platinum, and a platinum flute was used in the premiere.)

Varèse also took sound itself to a whole new level in “Ionisation.” He was able to make a percussion ensemble sound like nothing else that had been heard in the 1930s.

“Ionisation” is composed for thirteen musicians playing more than three dozen instruments. Along with a variety of drums, cymbals, and gongs, the piece calls for claves, triangles, a whip, miniature bells, Chinese blocks, and a “lion’s roar” friction drum. For its 1933 premiere in Manhattan, two hand-cranked sirens were also used, courtesy of the New York Fire Department.

According to 2011 *MD Pro* Panelist Peter Erskine, who’s played with such notables as Stan Kenton, Weather Report, and Steely Dan, “Ionisation” was one of the percussion pieces

that first made an impact on him: “It’ll grab you from the first listen,” he says, “and you can listen to it again and again.” Erskine’s students at the University Of Southern California also study the piece. “Their minds are blown [by the] intricacies, the stark beauty, the power. Their eyes open really wide—like, Wow!”

Which brings us to Frank Zappa. According to an article he wrote for *Stereo Review* in 1971, Zappa first heard of Varèse at the age of thirteen, after reading about him in *Look* magazine. According to Zappa, Varèse’s music was described as “a weird jumble of drums and other unpleasant sounds.” The young Frank immediately set out to track down an album of Varèse’s work, no mean feat in 1950s California. (Varèse wasn’t home when Zappa later telephoned him, but the two did eventually communicate.)

Zappa would go on to study many other twentieth-century composers, including Stockhausen and Boulez, as well as twelve-



tone composition. But he didn’t forget Varèse; in 1983 Zappa conducted a concert dedicated to Varèse and German composer Anton Webern that included “Ionisation.”

At first listen to Zappa’s music, it might not sound as if the creator of songs such as “Dirty Love” was influenced by Varèse. But consider some of Varèse’s innovations—embracing new technologies, using old instruments in new ways—and compare them with Zappa’s works. From his use of the Synclavier to his music for didgeridoo that requires the instrument to be dipped in a half-filled coffee pot while playing, Zappa often reflects the expansive thinking and constant searching for new ways to create music that also characterized the work of Varèse.

EDGARD OR EDGAR?

Both. Varèse was born Edgard, but after he moved to the U.S. he changed his first name to Edgar. Starting in the 1940s, he began using Edgard again.





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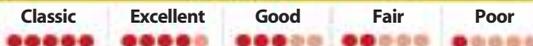
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GEORGE HARRISON *ALL THINGS MUST PASS*

by Michael Parillo

This past November, to mark the fortieth anniversary of George Harrison's 1970 debut solo album, *All Things Must Pass*, the collection was reissued as a three-LP vinyl set and as high-res digital downloads. *MD* jumped at the chance to chat with Alan White about the original recording, for which he shared a rotating drum chair with Jim Gordon and Ringo Starr. Beyond that, as you'll see, the details get a bit hazy....



ALAN WHITE ON ALL THINGS MUST PASS

It's maddening to verify who played on which tracks. No one seems to remember.

[laughs] Well, it was very sketchy back then. Everybody keeps asking me, and I'm scratching my head. But some tracks were just a piece of music, and you performed it. Everybody turned up every day and a piece of music would come up, and they delegated who would play that piece. So it was a mixed bag of tricks really. I know that I played on at least half and possibly two-thirds of the album. "My Sweet Lord" and "Wah-Wah" and "Isn't It A Pity" were definitely things that I played on.

All kinds of things went down. Ringo was there one day. I think it was "My Sweet Lord," and I said, "Ringo can do this. I'll play tambourine or something." George said, "No, I want you to play the drums, and Ringo can play tambourine." [laughs] It made me feel a little bit awkward because that was the Beatles' drummer. But Ringo was fine. It all worked out, and it sounds great.

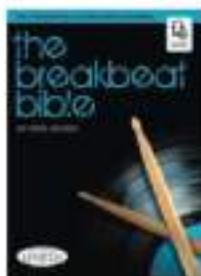
How did you hook up with George?

I met George when I was doing the Lennon stuff, the *Imagine* stuff. He came to John's house a few times when we were recording. We'd all sit round a big table and eat at night. What a great character—George was such a cool guy. He looked like he'd never hurt a fly. He had that nature that was very, very peaceful. And it shows in some of the music he wrote. He was very thoughtful about what he was putting into his music, as was John.

Then it wasn't terribly long before you joined Yes. Did you have a more progressive side to your playing already?

Yes. I had my own band, Griffin, at the same time. We were interested in jazz and fusion and odd rhythm counts, which kind of set me up for Yes. So even though the stuff I did with John and George was relatively 2-and-4 stuff, I was also looking for something different. But what I really learned from John and George was that it's no good unless you can play with meaning and a lot of soul. That's what drove me to try to create a style whereby you can play odd time signatures but make it very listenable to the average person. It sounds like you could actually tap your foot to it, where with some things you have no idea where the 1 is.

MULTIMEDIA



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THE BREAKBEAT BIBLE
 BY MIKE ADAMO
 BOOK/MP3 CD

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$19.99

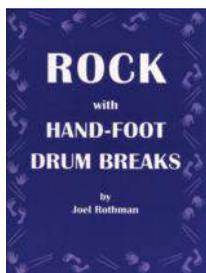
Part encyclopedia and part progressive practice manual, this soon-to-be-classic 180-page book dissects the foundation of hip-hop—the breakbeat—into thirteen essential drumming elements (offbeat 16ths, open hi-hat, syncopation, buzz strokes, etc.), while offering essential historical information, short bios on the architects of the genre, transcriptions of some of the most important breakbeats of all time, and exercises for developing the technical and musical skills required to play modern hip-hop grooves. The included CD contains 203 MP3s of example demos, play-along tracks, and individual drum and cymbal samples that can be used with an MPC or software sampler for programming original beats. *The Breakbeat Bible* is an indispensable resource for all students of hip-hop and contemporary funk drumming. (Hudson Limited) **Michael Dawson**



●●●●●
SONG CHARTING MADE EASY
 BY JIM RILEY
 BOOK/MP3 CD

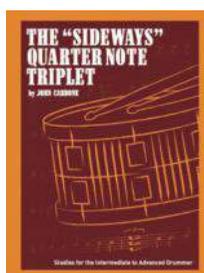
LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$19.99

Although this book/CD package by Rascal Flatts drummer and *MD* contributor Jim Riley centers on describing the unique number-based nomenclature used in Nashville studios to map out songs, the underlying musical content that's discussed and demonstrated in each chapter goes far deeper than simply explaining a way to keep your place while playing an unfamiliar tune. At its core, *Song Charting Made Easy* is an easy-to-follow, progressive music harmony workbook designed to train readers (drummers and non-drummers alike) to hear and identify the most common chord progressions in contemporary pop and rock styles, starting with the most basic major chords (1, 4, 5) and then gradually adding more complex elements (such as minor chords, inversions, accidentals, and key changes). Also covered are a variety of shorthand symbols used to indicate rhythmic hits, like offbeat accents, whole notes, and stops. The CD contains ninety-two professionally produced MP3 demos and full-band play-along tracks, including versions without drums, guitar, keyboards, and bass. This is an essential study for all drummers looking to develop a deeper understanding of popular song structure. (Hal Leonard) **Michael Dawson**



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ROCK WITH HAND-FOOT DRUM BREAKS BY JOEL ROTHMAN
BOOK LEVEL: ADVANCED \$14.95
 This is a no-nonsense, precisely detailed collection of exercises for advanced drummers looking to expand the scope of their rhythmic approach between the snare and bass drum. The sheer breadth of fills presented, covering everything from 16th-

note triplets to open drags to four-stroke ruffs, will challenge any player trying to unlock the mysteries of the slick often-sampled breaks on old-school funk records and modern schizoid drum 'n' bass tracks. Master just a few of these hip patterns, and get ready for raised eyebrows from your bandmates when you whip them out. (joel-rothman.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



●●●●●
THE "SIDEWAYS" QUARTER NOTE TRIPLET BY JOHN CARBONE
BOOK LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$19.95

John Carbone uses the term *sideways* conceptually, in reference to the phrasing of quarter-note triplets in groups that overlap barlines to create a displaced effect. Set largely in a jazz context, this book finds the student applying exhaustive permutations of the triplets, alternating between limbs, as applied against a ride pattern. Although it may be too idiosyncratic for some, the material can help players better internalize triplets and find creative ways to build overlapping polyrhythmic phrases. (thesidewaysquarternotetriplet.com) **Jeff Potter**



●●●●●
MEL BAY'S MODERN DRUM METHOD GRADE 2 BY STEVE FIDYK
BOOK LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE \$14.99
 Picking up where *Grade 1* left off, the second volume

in *MD* contributor Steve Fidyk's series continues to illustrate standard drumset concepts, with an emphasis on dotted notes and rests, multiple beat variations, and fills. In-depth examples include "Swing Beats With Double Tom Backbeat On 4" and "16th Note Beats With Snare On 2 And The A Of 3." A handy drumset history is covered, along with lists of famous tracks in the styles of the exercises presented, from Miles Davis to Rush. A forty-six-track MP3 CD rounds out a useful, satisfying package to help your reading and overall performance. (Mel Bay) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



●●●●●
HOW TO PLAY DRUMS IN A BIG BAND BY RICH THOMPSON
BOOK/CD LEVEL: BEGINNER TO ADVANCED \$25
 Digging for pay dirt, Rich Thompson surpasses the typical "play this groove, then

hit this hit" approach to big band chart instruction. Offering insightful commentary on the arrangements, Thompson stresses an awareness of the big picture that ultimately gives musical shape to a piece. "Don't forget to read charts as much with your ears as your eyes," he reminds us. Seven full-length jazz arrangements serve as the book's centerpiece, expertly executed by Thompson's eighteen-piece band on the listening/play-along CD. As both a drummer who's performed with major jazz artists and an associate professor at the Eastman School Of Music, Thompson offers authoritative guidance. But it's his real-world wisdom that most enlightens the material. (advancemusic.com) **Jeff Potter**

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Smith and Hamilton



GUITAR CENTER'S 2010 DRUM-OFF FINALS

Text by Chuck Parker

Photos by Alex Solca

This past January 8, the drumming community gathered at the Music Box theater in Hollywood to witness the crowning of Guitar Center's latest Drum-Off champion, twenty-six-year-old Isaias Gil of Houston. Stephen Perkins was back for a fourth time as the event MC, and the panel of judges comprised Kenny Aronoff, Dave Elitch, Keith Harris, Taylor Hawkins, Rick Latham, Trevor Lawrence Jr., Tony Royster Jr., Jason Sutter, John Tempesta, and Atom Willard.

Kicking off the evening was a performance by two previous Drum-Off winners, Cora Coleman-Dunham (Prince) and Tony Royster Jr. (Jay-Z), alongside hip-hop/R&B drummers Nisan Stewart (50 Cent) and Trevor Lawrence Jr. (Dr. Dre, Herbie Hancock). Coleman-Dunham started on vibes and then moved to timpani before getting behind the kit. Then, one at a time, the others joined in until the four drummers were playing as a unit. Their finale was a spirited take on the AC/DC classic "Back In Black," with Jubu on guitar and Josh Dunham on bass.

Next up, Gavin Harrison (Porcupine Tree) and Simon Phillips (Toto) played a beautifully synchronized drum duet. "We wanted to do something as musical as possible," Harrison tells *MD*. "I tried out some double drum ideas in my studio at home and sent them to Simon, and they became the starting point." Soon it was time for the main event, solos by the five finalists: Luis Burgos Jr., nineteen, of Brooklyn, New York; Anthony Burns, twenty-four, of Bridgeport, Michigan; Clyde Frazier, twenty-six, of Orangeburg, South Carolina; Dawud Aasiya-Bey, twenty-two, of Los Angeles; and Isaias Gil. Each contestant displayed great chops and showmanship but made sure to throw in some groove playing as well.

While the judges tallied their votes, Slayer's Dave Lombardo performed a set with his project Philm, with Gerry Nestler (Civil Defiance) on guitar and vocals, Pancho Tomaselli (War) on bass, and Oscar Santiago (Puya, Ankla) and Dan Tai Lopez on percussion. Special guest guitarist Kerry King joined in for a rousing version of Slayer's "Reign In Blood." The excitement level was high, as the time to announce the winner had arrived. Each finalist had his own style and substance, but Gil, with his fun and dramatic solo, emerged as the champion.

Steve Smith and a few of his comrades closed out the festivities. Smith demonstrated some marvelous brushwork before Jeff Hamilton joined him for a brush duet that included Dizzy Gillespie and Kenny Clarke's "Salt Peanuts." Then guitarist Fared Haque, percussionist Pete Lockett, vocalist Mahesh Vinayakram, bassist Kai Eckhardt, and saxophonist George Brooks came on stage for an Indian-flavored set that featured a guest appearance by Jojo Mayer. Smith and Mayer meshed seamlessly, with Smith using Konnakol to vocalize rhythmic patterns while playing.



The Runners-Up

Burns



Aasiya-Bey



Frazier



Burgos



Guitar Center 2010 Drum-Off Champ ISAIAS GIL

Out of 4,000,
he took home
the gold.



After not making it past the early-elimination rounds on previous attempts, Isaias “Dr.” Gil put it all together this year to take home the crown in Guitar Center’s 2010 Drum-Off. The long road to the championship started with more than 4,000 drummers at more than 200 Guitar Center locations across the country. Four months later, the field was narrowed to the five finalists.

The twenty-six-year-old Gil hails from Acapulco, Mexico, and grew up in Houston. When asked about his musical background, he tells a surprising story. “I really didn’t have any,” Isaias says. “I grew up with my grandparents, and there wasn’t a lot of music at the house.”

Still, Gil was drawn to the drums. “I have a picture taken when I was two years old,” he says. “There’s a drum hanging on me, and I’m hitting it. All the little kids I knew liked to hit things, and from the get-go, that was me. I wanted to make noise and be loud. It was that attraction to the power—and the controlled chaos—that the drums can have. That’s what sparked my desire to drum.

“I wasn’t a ‘prodigy’ kid, and I didn’t have natural talent,” Gil continues. “I started drumming about ten years ago, at church. I could not play to save my life! The worship director didn’t want me to play. One time he stopped the service the second song into our set and had the congregation clap. He says into the mic, ‘Can you hear that? *That’s* your tempo!’ And I had to keep the song going. A lot of people might have been discouraged by that. The experience stung, but I wasn’t up to par with the musicians who were there. I took it as motivation and started going into the garage to practice.”

Isaias tells us about some of his musical influences during this time. “I was listening to records with Carter Beauford and Simon Phillips,” he explains. “My uncle was into Alejandro Sanz, and Vinnie Colaiuta played drums on one of his records [*No Es Lo Mismo*]. I had no idea who Vinnie or Alejandro was, but that’s something I started listening to. It was your traditional pop, but it wasn’t boring. I started playing along to that, and at one point I was able to play the 2 and 4 right along with the record. Not any of the fills—just that. But I was hooked. I would spend hours in the garage just going to town.

“I took my first formal lesson a couple of years ago with a drummer and percussionist in Houston named James Metcalf. I started playing with a Latin cover band, and he came in as a percussionist. I thought I was pretty fluent in playing drums, especially Latin music, but James totally changed it for me. He was like, ‘No, no, no—I’m playing percussion. You don’t need to do *that*—you need to do *this*.’ He taught me the parts and really took me under his wing and showed me musicality through drums, as opposed to just beats. He opened my eyes to being creative on the drumset.” Although he wasn’t involved in band or marching percussion in school, Gil says he picked up some of his showmanship by watching people like DCI snare drum champion Jeff Queen.

Isaias has clearly come a long way from those early drumming days in church. Indeed, his chops, creativity, and stage presence were confirmed by the judges’ votes and the audience’s cheers, as “Dr.” Gil was crowned Guitar Center’s new Drum-Off champ.



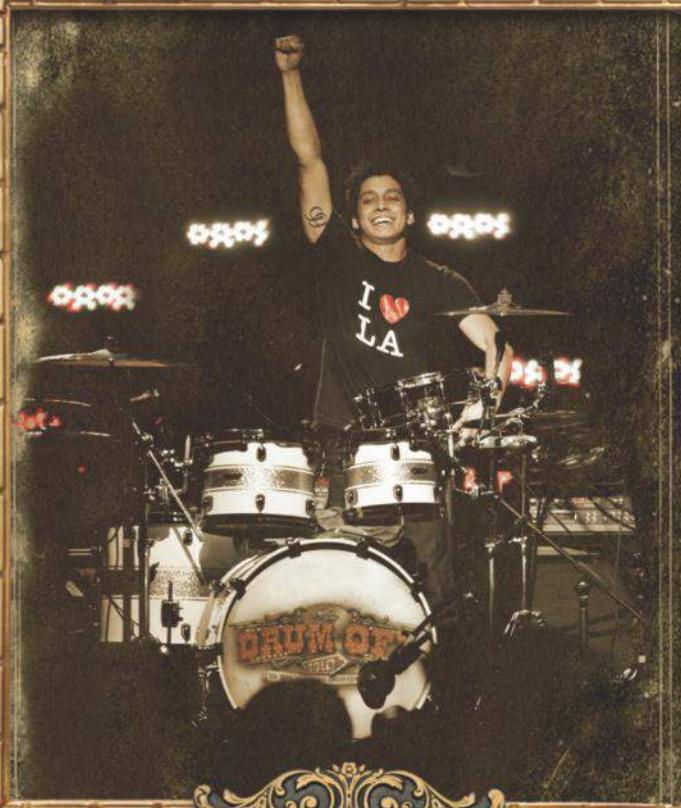
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2010 DRUM-OFF CHAMPION



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A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

The Greatest Drum Show on Earth!

On January 8, at The Music Box Theatre in Hollywood, CA, 26-year-old Isaias Gil of Houston, TX was crowned Guitar Center's Drum-Off Champion. Beating out four other highly skilled Drum-Off finalists from across the country, Isaias won a prize package worth more than \$40,000 including gear from top drum manufacturers and \$25,000 in cash.

Isaias was chosen by a panel of judges that featured some of today's most respected and distinguished drummers, including John Tempesta, Kenny Aronoff, Trevor Lawrence, Jr., Tony Royster, Jr., Atom Willard, Taylor Hawkins, Dave Elitch, Keith Harris, Rick Latham, and Jason Sutter.

Hosted by Stephen Perkins, the show featured exclusive performances by many of today's drumming elite. The evening began with an exclusive collaboration by hip hop and R&B icons Nisar Stewart, Trevor Lawrence, Jr., Cora-Coleman Dunham and Tony Royster, Jr., followed with a duet by prog-rock master Gavin Harrison and Simon Phillips. After the Drum-Off finals was legendary metal drummer Dave Lombardo, with surprise guest guitarist Kerry King performing with him on "Reign in Blood". Lombardo then switched kits and performed with PHILM, the Los Angeles-based experimental post-hardcore triumvirate. The evening culminated in an eclectic jazz

and world music performance by drum legend Steve Smith accompanied by a who's who of guests that included Jojo Mayer, Pete Lockett, Jeff Hamilton, Mahesh Vinayakram, Kai Eckhardt, Fareed Haque, and George Brooks.



For more on Guitar Center's Drum-Off and to see Isaias Gil's winning performance visit: guitarcenter.com/drumoff



KIT OF THE MONTH

SLINGERLAND STYLE



Dan Richter, from Minot, North Dakota, is the owner of this vintage Slingerland Radio King kit, which he acquired from the widow of a drummer who played in local dance bands when Richter was a young man. Dan says he's pretty sure most of the mismatched set is from the 1940s.

"I dismantled the kit completely for cleaning as the first step in the restoration process," he explains, "because it had been stored in a garage for a number of years. But the finish was in surprisingly good condition. I have most of the original drums and stands, but I've modernized the kit with updated hardware and a different 9x13 Radio King tom, which I got from eBay and recovered. The lugs were very pitted and were replaced with reissue beavertail lugs.

The color is not a complete match with the bass drum, snare, and floor tom due to aging. I do have the original rack tom (shown at right), which has a matching finish but wooden lugs.

"The bass drum is a 14x26 original," Richter continues. "It's very light, and note the different style of lug. The rims are narrow and have been repainted. The snare is a 7x14 original except for the replacement of one lug with a reissue beavertail lug and the snares replaced with a PureSound model.

"The cymbals are Zildjians from the '60s and '70s. The 12" hi-hats came with the kit and are stamped 'U.S.' in addition to the Zildjian trademark." Richter added Gibraltar stands, including a Stealth rack piece, and a suspension tom mount, and his Aquarian

American Vintage heads add to the kit's classic sound and appearance.

Richter concludes by saying this gorgeous yet delicate old set "is very warm and mellow—and for home use only."

Photo Submission: Hi-res digital photos, along with descriptive text, may be emailed to billya@moderndrummer.com. Show "Kit Of The Month" in the subject line of the message.



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