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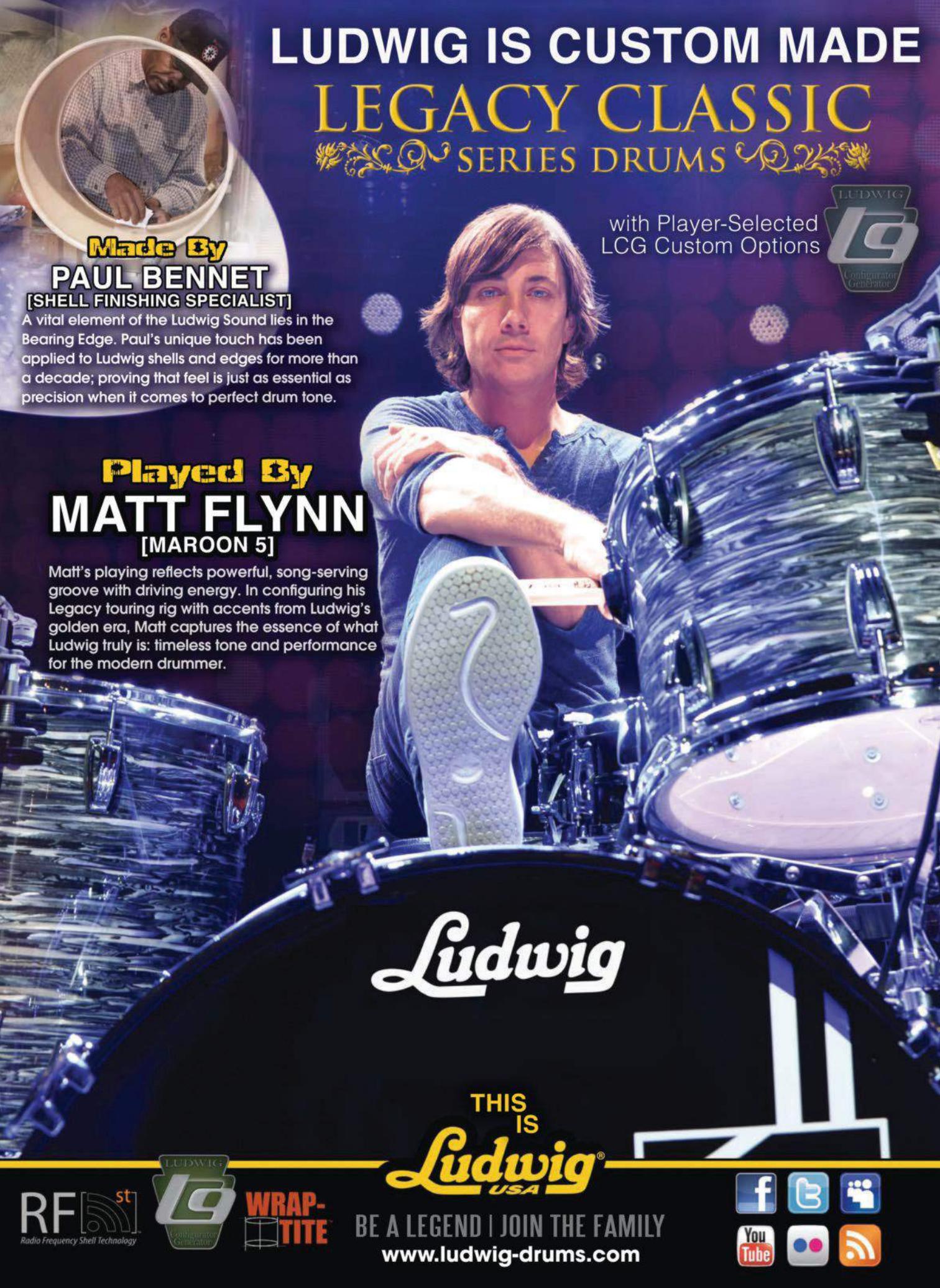
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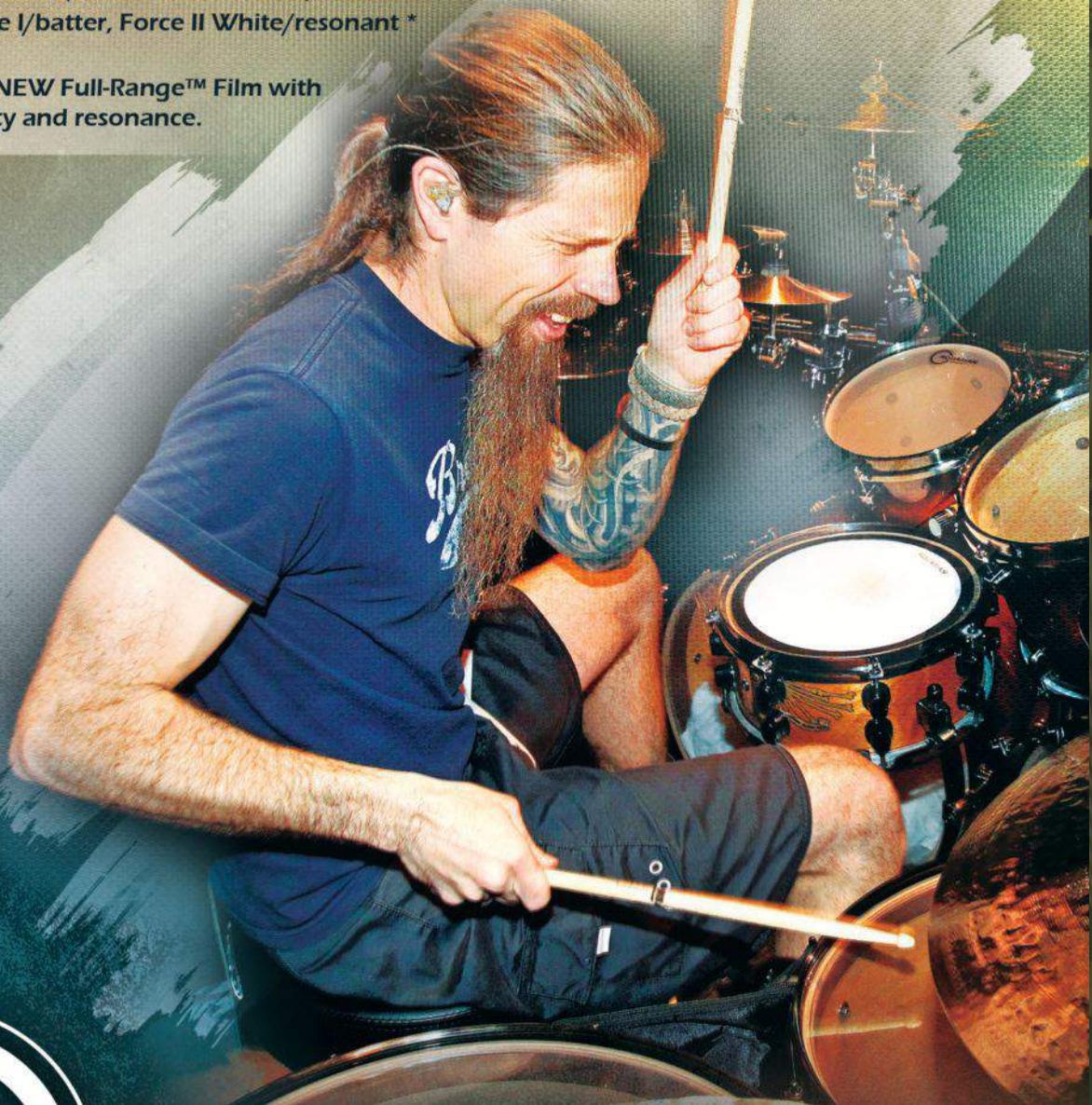


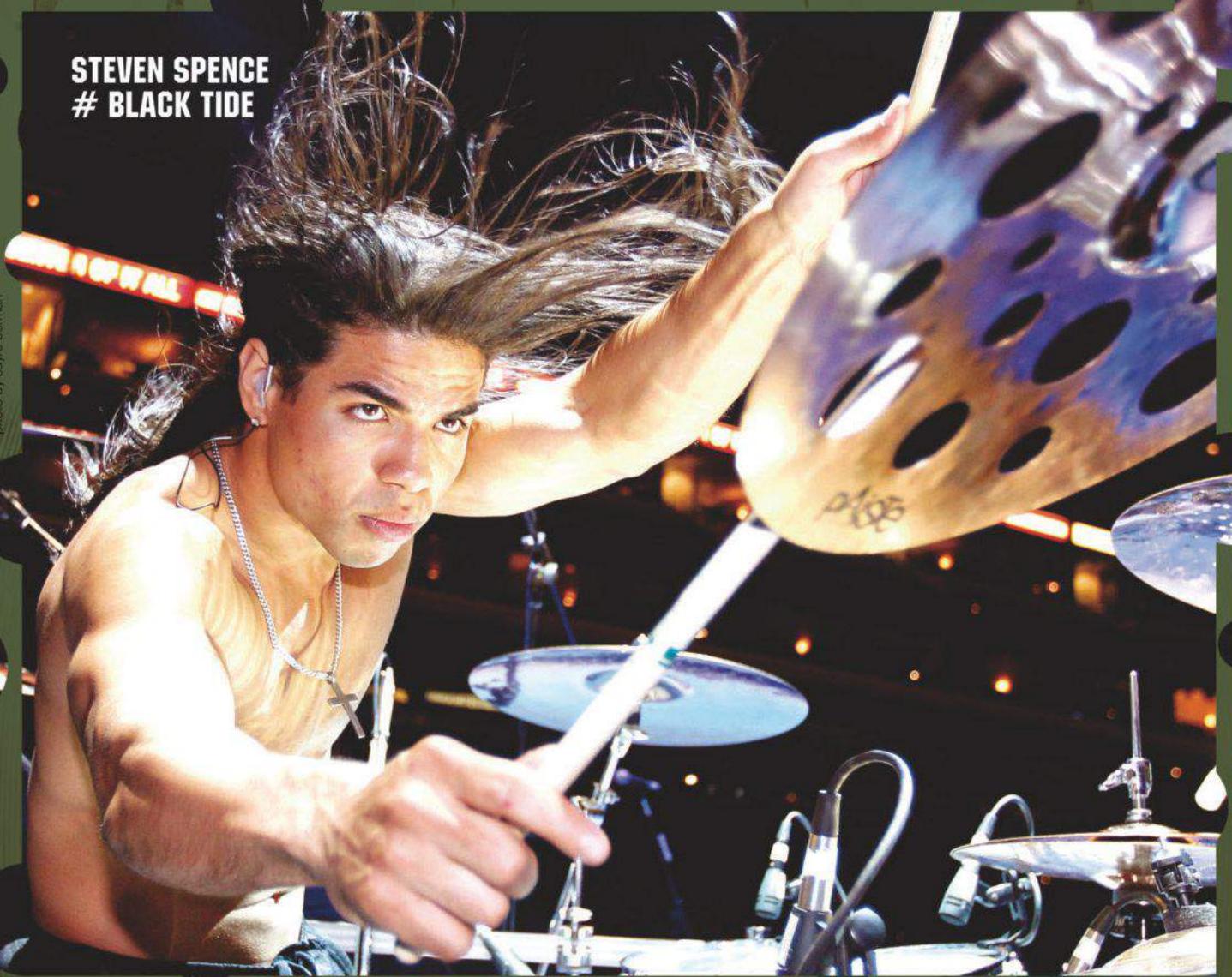
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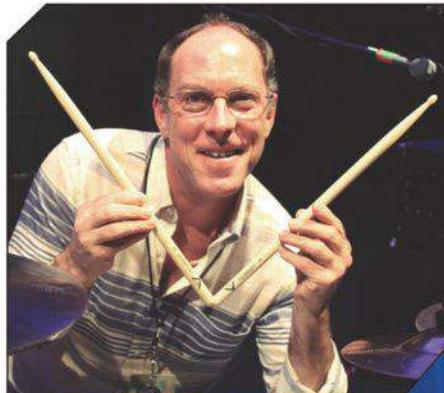


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C O N T E N T S



42

TAYLOR HAWKINS

Sure, he's got a famous boss—and one who's a terror on the drumkit himself. But the Foo Fighters drummer says his real allegiance is to rocking honestly and with style. And there's no better proof of his aesthetic than the Fooks' latest and greatest blockbuster of an album, *Wasting Light*.

36

ADAM CRUZ

The Danilo Pérez/Chick Corea collaborator—and now a leader as well—has a genetic predisposition to mix things up. Throw in a ton of blood, sweat, and imagination, and you've got one of the more intriguing drummers working today.

12 UPDATE

- Studio Legend **STEVE GADD**
- Humble Pie's **JERRY SHIRLEY**
- Styx's **TODD SUCHERMAN**
- ELP/Asia's **CARL PALMER**
- Slipknot's **SHAWN "CLOWN" CRAHAN**



18 GIMME 10! Leader/Sideman **ANTONIO SANCHEZ**

34 IN THE STUDIO **GIL SHARONE** on Otep's *Atavist*

68 A DIFFERENT VIEW **DANNY KORTCHMAR** Rock Royalty's Right-Hand Man

82 PORTRAITS Dredg's **DINO CAMPANELLA**

96 WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...? **SAM ULANO**



58

GET GOOD: DOUBLE BASS

Few things in our trade equate with power as much as the bombast provided by a two-footed aural assault. Tips and insights from the Cult's John Tempesta, Stork's Thomas Lang, and Shadows Fall's Jason Bittner.



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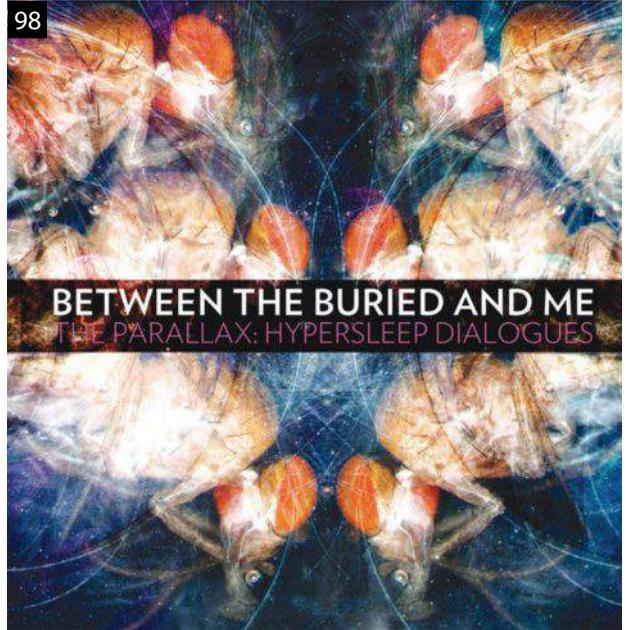
- 64 **HEALTH & SCIENCE**
9 Exercises to Ease Muscle Tension
Self-Myofascial Release Techniques by Shirazette Tinnin
-
- 72 **STRICTLY TECHNIQUE**
The Spivack/Wilson Approach to Technique
Part 1: Levers and Wrist Turns
by Richard Martinez and Kevin Crabb
-
- 76 **ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC**
Open-Handed Playing Part 1: Unlocking the Hidden Potential
by Claus Hessler
-
- 78 **IN THE POCKET**
Advanced Blues Syncopated and Polyrhythmic Feels
by Jim Payne
-
- 80 **DRUM SOLOIST**
Ostinato Studies Part 1: The Building Blocks by Jason Gianni

Departments

- 8 **AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW**
You Lead the Way by Adam Budofsky
-
- 10 **READERS' PLATFORM**
-
- 16 **ASK A PRO**
2011 MD Pro Panelist **Peter Erskine**
-
- 20 **IT'S QUESTIONABLE**
Removing Bass Drum Inlays •
Lug Locks and Other Detuning Remedies
-
- 92 **DRUM MARKET**
-
- 94 **SHOWCASE**
-
- 98 **CRITIQUE**
-
- 102 **BACKBEATS**
MD Drum Hang at Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp in Hollywood
-
- 104 **KIT OF THE MONTH**
Sparkles and Stripes Forever

Equipment

- 24 **PRODUCT CLOSE-UP**
 - MAPEX Black Panther Blaster Drumset
 - MEINL Frame Drums, Tambourines, and Shakers
 - UFIP Bionic, Class, and Natural Series Cymbals
 - DUALLIST Gig Grips
 - BILLDIDIT Coady Combo
-
- 32 **ELECTRONIC REVIEW**
SHURE Beta Series Additions
-
- 86 **GEARING UP**
Korn's **Ray Luzier**
-
- 88 **NEW AND NOTABLE**



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You Lead the Way

If you can forgive my mixing of metaphors, it seems that the first step toward being a good leader is admitting that you have a problem.

These days drummers are more interested than ever in taking command of their careers, often to the extent of leading their own bands. This drummer/leader combination makes sense for a number of reasons, not the least of which is musical.

"We're the bus drivers for just about every musical journey that includes a rhythm section," Peter Erskine suggests in Ask a Pro this month. "In a sense we're all bandleaders by definition of what we do."

"Drummers have a unique perspective compositionally," Adam Cruz adds in his feature story. "We're sensitive to rhythm and form and structure."

Of course, with power comes responsibility. And with the responsibility of leading a group or recording session comes extra work, new frustrations, and the challenge of fostering other individuals' enthusiasm and creativity while taking care of your *own* day-to-day business. Problems, problems, problems. Good problems, perhaps—but problems just the same.

As any parent will attest, guiding another person's behavior can be among the most fulfilling *and* maddening gigs around—though no more testing than having to examine and possibly change your own ways. As a drummer, I've been lucky to work almost exclusively in very collaborative situations, neither having to lead a band, *per se*, nor take orders from a bandleader. Now, I don't cover the rent by playing music; I get paid to do...this. But since becoming *MD's* editorial director a couple years ago, I've definitely had to look in the mirror and ponder what it means to be a leader. It's not always a pretty sight, but in the end it's a necessary and valuable experience, the kind, I imagine, that most drummer/leaders find themselves struggling through.

Like leaving home for college or having your first child, nothing quite prepares you for the emotional and organizational demands of leading a group of people in a creative endeavor. It gets especially dicey when you've already developed relationships with the individuals. Even if you get along perfectly well with your bandmates or work mates, the imposition of some sort of hierarchy on your relationship can mess with everyone's head and put big demands on your skills as a communicator, facilitator, and delegator.

The kinds of challenges I've tried to overcome range from the mundane (answering emails quickly, being on time...still working on that one!) to the profound (getting past a desire to be thought of as "the good guy," learning to say *no*, having a strong creative vision while being able to react quickly to outside forces). These are similar to the kinds of things any drummer/leader has to deal with if he or she is to survive a tour or album session without making enemies—or developing a raging drinking problem! But the sense of accomplishment—and, let's not mince words here, the financial and career benefits—can be significant. And like the other big life changes we all go through at some point, deciding to lead your own band can help you grow as a player, but, perhaps more important, as a person, in innumerable and unpredictable ways.

The world needs more drummer/leaders, because we have a unique angle on the music, and because we're just as capable as the next instrumentalist to set a style, a mood, and an agenda—and to follow through on it. As you go through this issue, take special heed of the words of drummer/leaders Erskine, Cruz, Taylor Hawkins, and Antonio Sanchez, and think about what unique gifts you have to offer the world—and whether you're up to the task of bringing them to the people. I personally hope you are, and I wish you the best in your endeavors.



Adam Budofsky

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READERS' PLATFORM

RON FREE

Thank you for the Ron Free Update in the May 2011 issue. I first saw Ron around 1957, at a college concert in Ohio with the star-studded Woody Herman band, and shortly thereafter in New York City with Lennie Tristano, Warne Marsh, and Lee Konitz. I always wondered who he was, where he came from, how he got such good gigs, and what happened to him. Now I know. I recognized him immediately from the picture in *MD* and followed up with an Internet search as you suggested. Thanks again for helping me find my mystery drummer.

Bill Barrett

THE DOCTOR IS IN

I read "Relieving Tennis Elbow" in the May 2011 *It's Questionable*. I've had some elbow tendonitis and have found great relief using a forearm band called Band-It. You can check it out at elbowpain.com, under Elbow Braces.

Brad Elles

DRUMMING AND BEYOND

Billy Amendola's Editor's Overview in the June issue, "Drumming and Beyond," was absolutely on point. Spending time developing knowledge on another instrument is a proven key to being a better drummer—and let's not forget developing vocal chops as well.

David J. Moore

The editorial in the June issue was one of the best I've read in a long time. Billy hit it all perfectly, from the fame-and-fortune part to becoming a musician instead of just a drummer. While I'm at it, I'd like to offer a favorable comment on the From the Past article on Edgard Varèse in the May issue. We need more stories like that so the kids can learn about the history of music and the drums. Great work, *MD*!

Mat Marucci

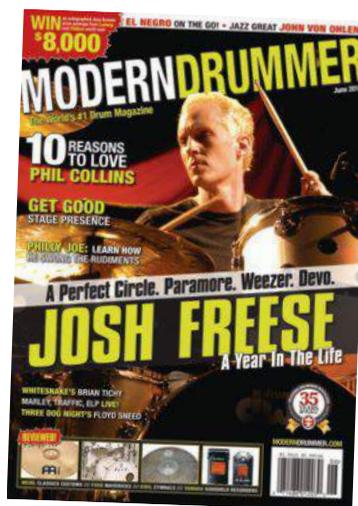
June 2011 was one of my favorite all-around issues of late. A nonstop read! The article on "Baron" John Von Ohlen really hit home with me. I loved his drumming in the Kenton band.

Randy Charles

THE GROOVE REMAINS THE SAME

After reading your feature on Brian Tichy (June 2011) and his Groove Remains the Same event, I'd like to add my experience regarding my favorite drummer, John Henry Bonham. I saw Led Zeppelin in the mid-'70s, and I wish I'd seen them more. I met Jason Bonham in 2005, when he was touring with Foreigner in my hometown of Pittsburgh. My wife and I waited behind the stage for him, and I brought a 14" drumhead for him to sign, which he so graciously did, while talking to us for about fifteen minutes. I got to tell him how much his father meant to me—it was kind of spiritual. I even teased him about the scene in the movie *The Song Remains the Same* where his dad is with him at the junior drumkit, and he chuckled. I'll cherish that moment for a long time to come—and if this happens to find its way to Jason's eyes (I'm sure he reads *MD*), I'd like to tell him: Thank you so much for being a drummer, a gentleman, and my favorite drummer's son!

Mick McDermott



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Bill Zales

STEVE GADD

By its very name, a new project with Edie Brickell emphasizes the master's peerless stature.

Steve Gadd and bassist Pino Palladino recording the Gaddabouts' self-titled album at New York City's Avatar Studios in April 2011

“You know, I like to work...I *have* to work. I love the music.” You would think that, forty years into his career, having performed and recorded with hundreds of the greatest musicians of our time—and having become an undisputed drum icon in the process—Steve Gadd would like to kick back a little. Not even close. Two thousand eleven, just like any year for Gadd, is chock full of recording projects, with the likes of Mika Yoshida, Steve Gadd & Friends, and L’Image, plus a recent collaboration with former New Bohemian Edie Brickell that has resulted in a new album and an SRO debut at Carnegie Hall.

“The project with Edie started around ten years back,” Gadd says. “She and I went into the studio and recorded just drums and vocals. Then I got Andy Fairweather Low

and Pino Palladino involved. We both went on to other projects and then came back to this about a year and a half ago to cut more tracks. Although it’s all Edie’s music, it was her idea to call the project the Gaddabouts.”

The group’s self-titled CD features an earthy, organic feel and powerful but restrained performances, allowing Brickell’s uniquely hypnotic vocals to shine. Gadd indicates that wearing the producer’s hat allowed him to have some control over the music. “We cut the original vocal and rhythm tracks with the idea to keep the sensitivity intact,” he explains. “Her music lends itself to creative ideas, and her voice is so beautiful that I was very careful not to let anything get in the way of it.”

The arrangements—the airiness of “Never So Far Away,” the honky-tonk vibe

of “Remind Me,” the funk/jazz feel of “My Heart,” the back-porch looseness of “Mad Dog”—create the impression that each song is its own adventure. Across the board, Gadd, who plays brushes on nine of the eleven tracks, delivers the goods with rhythmic brilliance, pushing and prodding the music to just below the boiling point.

So what does the future hold for this unique collaboration? “Edie and I are going back into the studio to work on new material,” says the drummer, who’s also been busy recording and touring with Eric Clapton. “Depending on how it’s received, we’d like to take it out live. Time and schedules are tight, so we’d have to tie a bunch of things together.”

Bob Girouard

JERRY SHIRLEY

As a teenager, **Humble Pie’s drummer jumped on one of the craziest rock-and-rollercoasters of the ‘70s.** He serves up the details in a new autobiography.

In *Best Seat in the House: Drumming in the ‘70s With Marriott, Frampton and Humble Pie*, Jerry Shirley reveals that his prime influences include Gene Krupa, Sonny Payne, Keith Moon, Kenney Jones, Charlie Watts, Bernard Purdie, and Al Jackson. Shirley has influenced quite a few drummers himself, as a member of the heroic hard-rock outfit Humble Pie, whose ranks included ex-Small Faces frontman Steve Marriott and future solo star Peter Frampton. Shirley still works regularly, including recording the 2008 album *Duchess* by John Bonham’s younger sister, Deborah Bonham, whom Jerry describes as “a female version of Steve Marriott.”

For the past three years Shirley has been concentrating on putting down his considerable experiences for posterity. “Originally I started writing the book just to see if I *could*,” he says. “I wanted to write the real story with conviction, which would have interest for music fans who wanted to know the story of Humble Pie from start to finish—especially my relationship with Steve Marriott.”

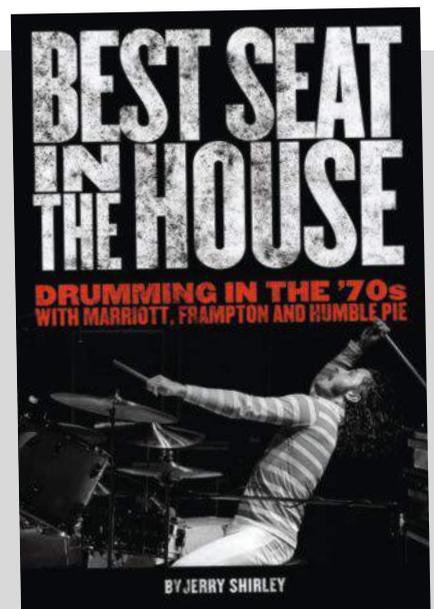
The charismatic frontman discovered Jerry when he was fourteen years old, offering the drummer the job in Humble Pie a few years later. “I was barely seventeen,” Shirley says, “and what happened

over the next seven years, from early 1969 to the middle of 1975, is what the book is all about. Those were the greatest seven years of my young life.”

Among Shirley’s memories: recording what some fans consider the greatest live rock album ever made, Humble Pie’s *Performance: Rockin’ the Fillmore*. “Among the clearest memories I have is how incredible the sound was on stage,” Jerry says, “especially the drum sound. It was sensational—huge and warm at the same time.”

For more on Jerry Shirley, and to read excerpts from his book, go to moderndrummer.com.

Billy Amendola



TODD SUCHERMAN

Styx's master blaster releases *Methods and Mechanics II*, the follow-up to his award-winning debut instructional DVD.

Subtitled *Life on the Road: Songs, Solos, Stories and Lessons*, the new *Methods and Mechanics II* DVD by Styx's Todd Sucherman focuses on navigating a career in music and imparts the drummer's philosophy for being a working musician on tour. "I spend more time in airports and hotels than I do sitting behind a drumset," Sucherman says. "On the DVD I discuss how to keep your sanity while dealing with airports, airlines, hotels, and staying healthy. I also focus on approaching the music from an honest place."

Sucherman describes the project as "a mammoth undertaking, a colossal labor of love, time, and capital." But, he insists, "My vision of the new material is much clearer. I still receive emails from drummers all over the world regarding the first DVD. Winning the 2009 *MD* Readers Poll for best educational DVD was very humbling and gratifying, and it made me want to work that much harder on the new one.

"I think drummers will find the new DVD as unique as the first," Todd continues, "but from a totally different perspective. It's very much a companion piece to the

first video. There are a lot of drumming techniques presented in the first video that are utilized more in depth in this one. In the twenty-first century, if you want to take your career to particular heights, you have to take your music to the people. Once upon a time, a hundred bands sold a million records. Now a million bands sell a hundred records. If you expect to make a living with music, you're going to be out on the road. This DVD will show you how to do it properly."

Sucherman feels a duty to pass along what he's learned to the next generation of players. "Drummers have always been unique in that regard," he says. "I've kept myself employed in music for thirty-six of



my forty-two years on this planet. Styx is in our twelfth consecutive year of playing a hundred-plus shows a year. I want to arm drummers with knowledge that will help them be employable." **Mike Haid**

CARL PALMER

ELP and Asia's famed speed demon cuts to the chase with a new DVD highlighting his extraordinary soloing powers.

"No one needs a DVD from me that says, 'This is how I hold my sticks, this is how high I sit,'" insists legendary prog rock innovator Carl Palmer regarding his new video, *Carl Palmer Drum Solos*. "That's been done a thousand and one times before. I didn't want to do a traditional instructional DVD. All I've ever wanted is to see the drummer play. The only thing I could never do is slow the stuff down."

Enter drummer Eric Fischer of Michigan, who has devised a method that uses MIDI to slow down drum solos in order to better analyze them. (*MD* covered Fischer's Buddy Rich solo videos in the April 2010 *Slightly Offbeat* column.) Fischer and Palmer applied this process to three of Carl's solo spots: a 1974 ELP television performance from the California Jam concert, and 2008 and 2009 performances with Asia, the supergroup that recently toured North, Central, and South America and Europe.

Drum Solos allows viewers to slow down Palmer's performances to half or three-quarters of the actual speed and therefore to analyze the drumming in a more accurate manner than physically attempting to play the parts much slower than intended. "When a drummer slows down parts intentionally,"



Palmer explains, "it's never quite the same. Something is lost in the slower demonstration." Note-for-note transcriptions are included as well, so viewers can follow along with the sheet music while watching the solos.

Another aspect of Palmer's educational activities involves working with deaf children using Remo hand drums. "Some of the kids take their shoes off and put the drums

between their legs, and they can feel the vibrations," Carl says. "They can also feel the pain in their hands—and see how to properly strike the drum." Palmer says he plans to work with blind children as well.

For more with Carl Palmer, who has just released an iPhone and iPad app, go to modern drummer.com.

"Pistol" Pete Kaufmann



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NEWS



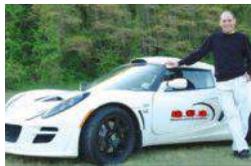
Filling the Mangini void.

Into Eternity drummer Steve Bolognese has been officially named Mike Mangini's replacement at the Berklee College of Music. Mangini, who once taught Bolognese, left his post at Berklee to focus on his new role as the drummer in Dream Theater.

Paiste and Musicians Institute team up for student scholarship.



Paiste has announced the creation of a \$1,000 scholarship in conjunction with Musicians Institute. The scholarship will be awarded in the fall of 2011 to a student (U.S. or non-U.S. citizen) enrolling in MI's associate of arts in performance (drums) program who demonstrates a mature musical approach, with particular emphasis on expressive cymbal technique.



DADmobile hits the road.

The nonprofit organization Drums and Disabilities has launched a mobile PR campaign with its DADmobile, a rare 2010 Lotus donated by an anonymous car enthusiast. For more on the unique vehicle, check out the links in Pat Gesualdo's blogs at moderndrummer.com.

NEWS

OUT NOW

ON TOUR

Slipknot percussionist **SHAWN "CLOWN" CRAHAN** on the Black Dots of Death's *Ever Since We Were Children*

Shawn "Clown" Crahan is best known as a percussionist in the metal megalith that is Slipknot. But Crahan carries a rich drumming background into his new project, the Black Dots of Death. "I consider it a bit insulting when people refer to me as a percussionist," Crahan says. "I know all about percussionists—playing Latin and Afro-Cuban—and those guys are amazing. But I've been playing drums since I was eight, and I'm more like the pagan warrior psyching up the movement to go over the mountain and fight a war. I'm not embarrassed to say that I'm a 4/4 drummer. I play for the song, but I hit harder than *anyone*, and I play for the kill. I let the demons out, and it's like an out-of-body experience. When they see me drum live, people think, *Is this guy gonna die?*"



Alexandria Crahan

Crahan brings intensity as well as introspection to the Black Dots' debut album, *Ever Since We Were Children*. Inspired by losses that hit close to home in recent years—including both of his parents and Slipknot bassist Paul Gray—the Black Dots represent a rebirth for the drummer. "I've really had to look at where I've been and understand what I am," Crahan says. "Death is absolute, and that is the greatest motivation. This band is about looking at death and putting the importance back into the gift of birth: We all won the lotto just to *get* here on Earth. Now it's about going out there and doing something with that gift." **Billy Brennan**

Also on the Shelves

Black Stone Cherry Between the Devil & the Deep Blue Sea (John Fred Young) /// **Emphatic Damage** (Dylan Wood) /// **All Time Low** Dirty Work (Rian Dawson) /// **The Headhunters** Platinum (Mike Clark) /// **Kate Bush** Director's Cut (Steve Gadd) /// **k.d. lang** Sing It Loud (Fred Eltringham) /// **Morbid Angel** Illud Divinum Insanus (Tim Yeung) /// **Bryan Beller** Wednesday Night Live (Joe Travers) /// **Peter Dinklage** Legalize It (Carlton Barrett, Santa Davis) and Equal Rights (Sly Dunbar, Carlton Barrett) reissues /// **Kirk Ross** Break My Silence (Abe Laboriel Jr., Steven Wolf) /// **Dead Rider** The Raw Dents (Matt Espy, Theo Katsaounis, Todd Rittman) /// **The Melvins** Sugar Daddy Live (Dale Crover, Coady Willis)

NEWS

ON TOUR

ON TOUR

John Longstreth with Origin /// **Carl Canedy** with the Rods /// **Jason McGerr** with Death Cab for Cutie /// **Alan White** with Yes /// **Jason Sutter** with the New York Dolls /// **Tommy Lee** with Mötley Crüe /// **Rikki Rockett** with Poison /// **Bud Gaugh** with Sublime With Rome /// **Ian O'Neill** with Gavin DeGraw /// **Marty Beller** with They Might Be Giants



PETER ERSKINE

The famed drummer/composer/instigator answers the question many players have on their minds these days: **What makes a good bandleader?**

The drummer as sideman is commonplace. Drummer/bandleaders are comparatively rare, although there are notable standouts. Art Blakey and Buddy Rich were the epitome of leaders, regardless of their chosen instrument. Other drummer/leader names that come to mind include, in no particular order: Max Roach, Elvin Jones, Gene Krupa, Louie Bellson, Roy Haynes, Chico Hamilton, Shelly Manne, Jack DeJohnette, Billy Cobham, Bill Bruford, Steve Smith, Dave Weckl, Steve Gadd, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Ari Hoenig, Art Taylor, Paul Motian, Mel Lewis, Jeff Hamilton, John Von Ohlen, Kenny Clarke, Philly Joe Jones, John Hollenbeck, Terri Lyne Carrington, Sheila E, and me.

Setting aside tired jokes like "Three musicians and a drummer" or "What's the fastest way to break up a band? For the

drummer to say 'Hey, fellas, I wrote a tune,'" aspiring leader/drummers do not have as many role models as our fellow instrumentalists and singers. (We have plenty of "roll models," however.) In any event, there's enough inspiration to be had by looking at and listening to some of the pioneering drummers listed above.

We can break that list into two subcategories: the drummer/leader who composes, arranges, and functions as the band's primary musical director, and the drummer/personality who fronts a band that showcases his or her playing abilities but depends on others for the arrangements and compositions. Of the latter, we could

safely include Blakey, Rich, Krupa, Mel, Philly Joe, et al, while the former category can boast Bellson, Elvin, Roy, Shelly, DeJohnette, Cobham, Tain, Weckl, and, most notably in my opinion, John Hollenbeck. John is a serious composer, arranger, and musical organizer. You owe it to yourself to check out his music.

Fronting a band is a big responsibility.



Travis Shinn



promark.com



The first trick, quite honestly, might well be to have a good reason for *being* the leader of the band. It's a natural enough trait for a drummer to assume. After all, we're the bus drivers for just about every musical journey that includes a rhythm section, and no matter how powerful or sensitive the drumming might be, we need to play as if we own the music. So in a sense we're all bandleaders by definition of what we do: We lead the band to water (or to the promised land). Think of Elvin, think of Buddy, think of Gadd, Mel, Jack, Tain, or Krupa: hallelujah! But there's an additional element of stepping forward that defines a bandleader. I would say that this element is vision, imagining what's possible with the music and guiding the other players by inspiration or direction.

When I started touring with "my" ECM trio, a configuration that included the incredibly talented British pianist and composer John Taylor and the Swedish bass genius Palle Danielsson, the group was sometimes referred to as the John Taylor Trio, in great part because: 1) Most piano trios are led by the pianist and not the drummer, and 2) the majority of the compositions were written by John.

So what was my name doing on the marquee? Well, to be fair, the trio could very well have been called John's, except

that I undertook all of the legwork to get the band booked on tours, and for whatever reasons of notoriety, my name was opening more doors at the time. But this would be too scant a reason to travel under my own name. What I *did* have for the band was a specific vision of how I wanted us to play and how I wanted the music to sound.

The typical jazz construct of the band playing the melody and then everyone taking their turn to play a solo, with each solo reaching a peak, and then the next, with the drums trading fours or eights or choruses, blah, blah, blah...boring. I was tired of this, and so my mission for the band was to explore the possibilities of the musical *non-event*, to *not* crowd every minute of a tune with playing and notes, but rather to *trust* the music and ourselves to the point of space and rests defining as much of the music as any other element.

My inspiration? Well, as much as I model my drumming style on the vocabulary of Elvin and Mel, the intent of this particular direction came from Paul Motian. As one of my USC students pointed out to me during a stylistic analysis session, "Paul Motian allows the music to do all of the work." Brilliant! And so I gave "notes" every night to the band, urging the guys to treat the music visually and to cast away the usual jazz-playing paradigm.

How did they take it? Both ways, I suspect, and the band finally fell apart. "Hey, fellas, I've written some tunes...." But I was playing less and learning to trust the music.

This reductive concept swung pretty far in the minimalist direction, and then my pendulum swung in the other direction as I tried to combine a lifetime of my own drumming vocabulary into an aesthetic that I liked to experience. I might have found the perfect balance now. I've waited for the right time to form a group with my talented nephew, Damian, and, as one of my students told me recently, "No offense, professor...you're, like, famous and all, but the Erskine that's got all of my friends excited is that bass player one up in Portland...."

This trio, which also includes the strongest musical breeze to blow my way in many a year, pianist Vardan Ovsepien from Boston, combines the strength of experience with the vitality of youth. It's an exuberant band. And while I still mentor the group to avoid the urge to fill up space with notes, I find myself playing more on our new CD, *Joy Luck*, than on any other album I've led in a long time.

So, I can say that my inspiration, aside from the songs themselves, can be found in that list of drummer/leaders in paragraph one. Thank you, one and all.



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ANTONIO SANCHEZ

Interview by
Ken Micallef

The renowned jazz drummer has been a **linchpin of the bands of Pat Metheny, Chick Corea, and Michael Brecker**. He also heads the Antonio Sanchez Migration Band, a role that's schooled him on the many complex issues of being a modern bandleader. Let's peek inside Antonio's little black book of career do's and don'ts.

1 BE A BANDEADER, BUT ESTABLISH YOURSELF FIRST.

I've played thousands of gigs as a sideman, so club owners know me from all the bands I've played with. Build a career as a sideman first. It's hard to get a gig if you're unknown to the club. That's when having a good recording helps. A finished CD will help club owners take you seriously. And don't call—go directly to the club and meet the booking agent, the manager, the owner. Don't get discouraged.

2 NETWORK.

One of the best ways to get people to remember your name is to hang out. When I moved to New York I was touring, but I wanted to work locally. So every time I wanted to gig

I'd go to the Zinc Bar and show my face. There were always musicians hanging out, and they'd hire me on the spot. The more you do it, the more people you eventually know and the greater your chances of getting hired. Nowadays you need a good website, Facebook page, and MySpace page highlighting different styles of your playing. Versatility goes a long way.

3 GO TO JAM SESSIONS—OR ORGANIZE ONE.

Jam sessions are a good place to meet people, even when you don't play. It's actually better to organize your own jam session, because then you get to know the musicians personally and musically.

4 LEARN HOW TO NEGOTIATE A RATE.

You have to be aware of the current scene and the global economy. What is your stock price? It depends on your level of exposure. Your band personnel can also affect the price. Sometimes you play a club because you want to rehearse or try some new music, not for the money. But if you want a good price, you have to know what other people are getting for a similar gig, and how your name compares to theirs.

5 BE COOL AND PROFESSIONAL WITH PROMOTERS AND OTHER INDUSTRY PEOPLE.

On my level of gigs, usually people are very professional. They expect a professional show, and you

“As a bandleader I make sure musicians are taken care of, but I don’t hire musicians who have problem personalities, no matter how good they are.”

can expect to deal with professional promoters. And it’s very important to be approachable. The cooler you are with the people who work the other side of the business, the better experience you’ll have overall.

6 KEEP THE BAND HAPPY, AND GET A BAND THAT KEEPS YOU HAPPY. I used to complain a lot as a sideman because I hate getting up early to travel. So, if possible, you want to book travel time so everyone is rested at the gig. Sometimes it’s impossible, though; if you fly earlier it’s often much cheaper.

As a bandleader I make sure musicians are taken care of—food, lodging, etc.—but, on the other hand, I don’t hire musicians who have problem personalities, no matter how good they are. I always try to surround myself with cool and reliable people, musicianship aside.

7 CONTROL YOUR OWN REHEARSALS/GIGS/RECORDINGS. I usually write down

important musical stuff for the other musicians, to save time. I try to keep neat and organized charts with clear instructions for structure, form, order of solos, arrangement, etc. Time flies in the rehearsal space or studio—especially if you’re paying for it!

8 BE PUNCTUAL—AND UNDERSTANDING. If you keep your musicians waiting—like at hotel checkout at 5 A.M.—that’s really bad. People will start vibing each other, fast. Be professional.

And remember, when you’re playing every night and you’re tired, you have good nights and bad nights. You hope the musicians won’t have a bad show, but be understanding when they don’t play their best every night.

9 WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT, HIRE A MANAGER. I have a manager and a booking agent for my bandleader stuff, because I prefer devoting my time to music rather than to business matters. The booking agent deals with promoters and negotiating fees and deposits. The

manager communicates that info to me, organizes the itinerary, and contacts the musicians in the band. Without a manager, you have to take care of all that yourself, and managing my own sideman career takes up enough of my time already. Coordinating dates, projects, and recording sessions requires a lot of hours on the phone or on the computer, but I like to control that side of my life.

10 TREAT EVERY SITUATION AS YOUR DREAM GIG. Give 100 percent, no matter if you’re in a crappy club or the biggest stadium in the world. Treat music with respect, because if you think you’re too good for a specific gig, chances are you’re not. If you approach every situation like it’s your dream gig and treat your bandmates like they’re the best musicians in the world, great things will always happen to you.



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REMOVING BASS DRUM INLAYS

I have a Tama Swingstar kit. I want to send out the bass drum hoops for new chrome plating, but there's an inlay in each one. Is there a way to remove the inlays without damaging them? Also, what products do you recommend for removing superficial scratches in the wrap?

Luís Desirat

According to *MD* drum restoration expert J.R. Frondelli, "Usually the plastic on those hoops is just pulled around and bonded at the seam. Sometimes you can use a thin-blade knife to lift an edge and peel it off easily. If not, try adding a little heat from a blow-dryer to release the adhesive. Just go easy and don't get too close, or else you might start to melt the plastic.

"For minor scratch removal, any good rubbing compound or scratch-remover polish made for auto finishes will work well on your drums. Use 3M or Meguiar's, if they're available in your area. If the scratches are deep, you can only minimize them."



LUG LOCKS AND OTHER DETUNING REMEDIES

In your April 2010 issue, there's a picture of Aaron Spears' drumkit in the *Gearing Up* column. What are the small white pieces of plastic on the outside of the snare rim? I suppose they prevent the tension screws from loosening, which is a problem I have on hard-hitting gigs.

Peter Dohy

You are correct: Those white pieces on Spears's snare are called Lug Locks, and they're designed to prevent detuning. You simply press them over the top of the square head of the tension rods so that one of the flat sides of the plastic makes contact with the hoop. There are other similar products designed to prevent detuning, including Lockerz by Gauger Percussion. We also recommend TightScrew tension rods, which have nylon inserts milled within the rods themselves, and the locking ball-bearing system used in Rhythm Tech's Index Tension Tuners.

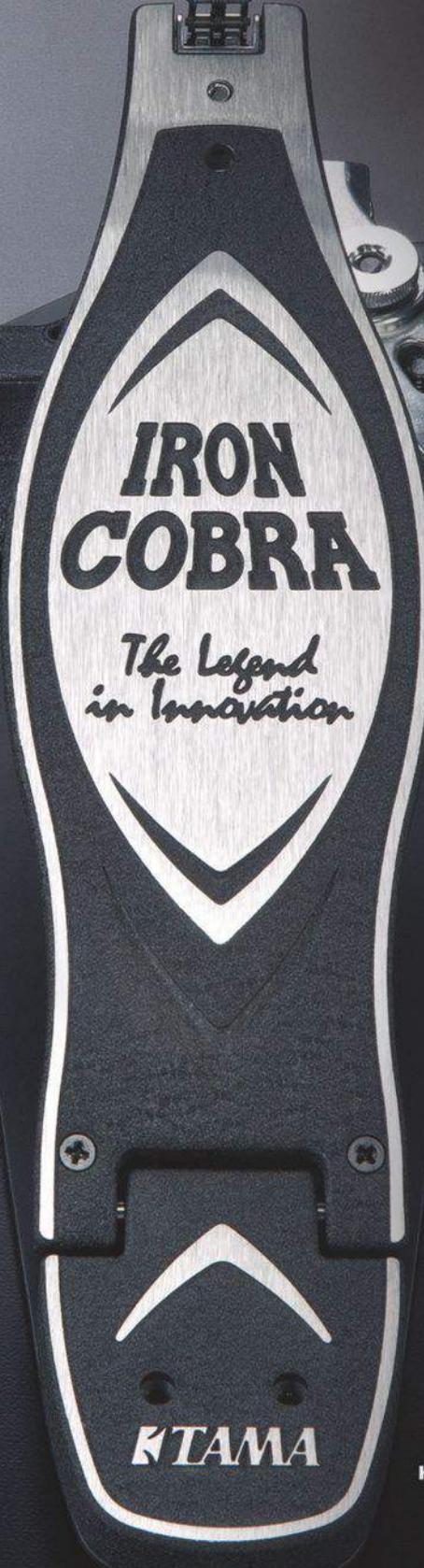


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Black Panther Blaster Drumset

by John Emrich

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A few months ago I had the opportunity to go into Sound Kitchen Studios, just outside of Nashville. The gig was a recording session for two new drumsets being offered by Mapex, one of which is the Black Panther Blaster kit being reviewed here. The drummer on the session was fusion great Derico Watson. Hearing Watson play these drums in such a stellar facility gave me an excellent vantage point on exactly how the kit measured up with other drums I've recorded in the past. An audio example from this session is available at moderndrummer.com, as well as in the *Modern Drummer* Digital Edition.

GETTING SET UP

Blaster sets are made in a limited run, in two configurations. Our review kit is a four-piece shell pack that includes an 18x22 bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12 toms, and a 16x16 floor tom. The second configuration adds a 14x14 floor tom. There is no mounting hardware included with these kits, aside from floor tom legs. But I didn't feel this was a big deal, because most people purchase hardware separately to suit their individual needs.

The transparent walnut burst finish on the drums is amazing. The hardware is finished in brushed dark chrome. The tom shells are 5.1 mm American maple with an additional 3.4 mm walnut sound-shaping ring. The drums don't need the rings for reinforcement; they're added for their contribution to the overall tone. The bass drum is slightly thicker, with a 7.2 mm American maple shell and a 3.4 mm walnut sound-shaping ring. The bearing edges on the drums feature rounded cuts that are said to allow for an even, controlled head response. The drums feature a new version of Mapex's ITS suspension mount, and the rest of the hardware is shell mounted, including the bass drum spurs and floor tom leg mounts.

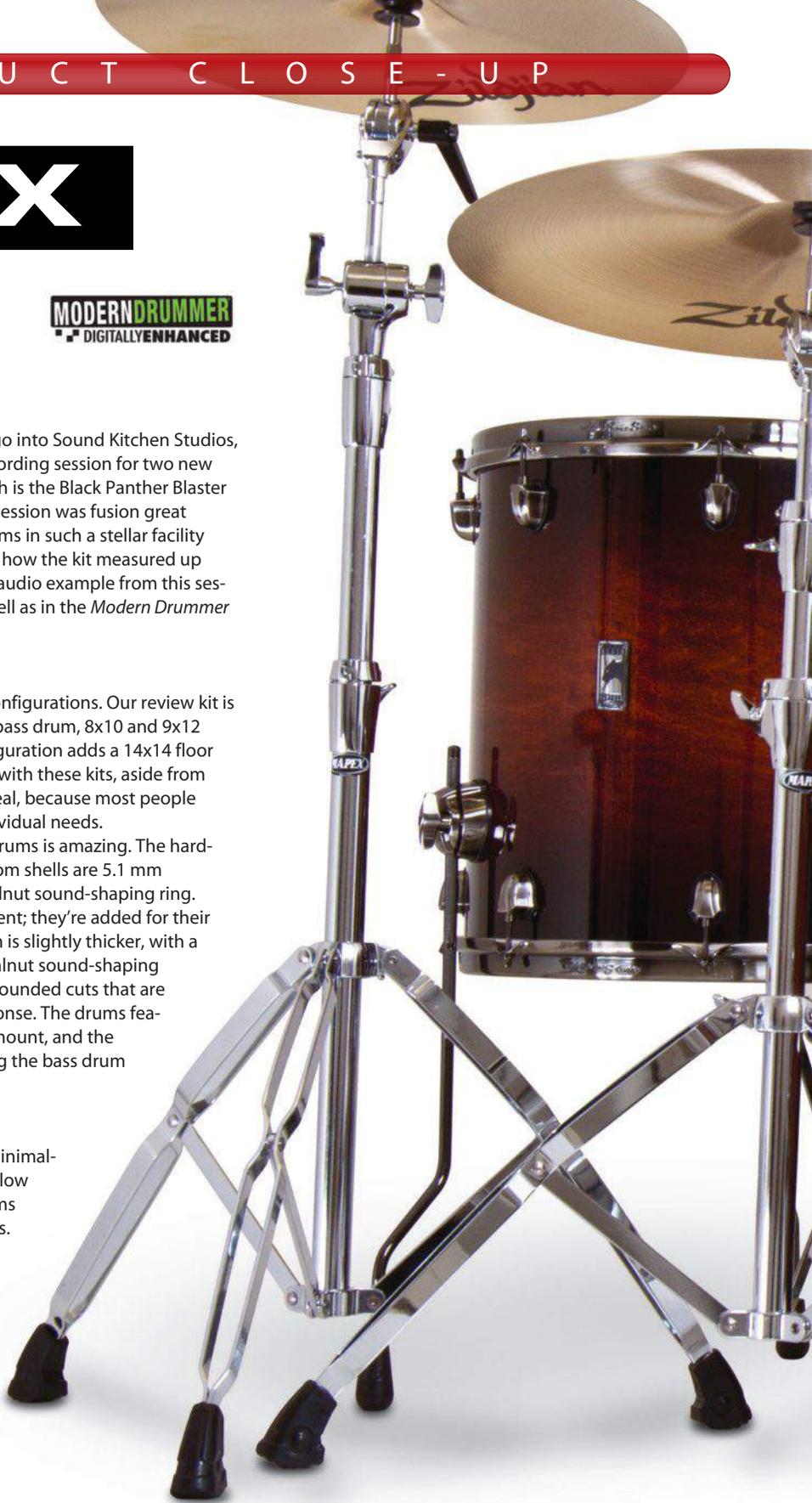
SOUND

For this recording session I decided to take a minimalist approach to miking up the kit. This would allow the listener to hear the exact sound of the drums without any coloration from close microphones. All we used were stereo overheads, a snare mic (turned on only when recording brushwork), and a kick mic placed about three feet in front of the drumset at bass drum height. In the room I placed a set of Royer 121 ribbon microphones in a stereo configuration, to pick up the wonderful sound of the "Big Boy" studio at Sound Kitchen. We did our best to capture the true sound of the drums as they were played in the room.

I found the Blaster kit to be very punchy, with plenty of articulation. The bass drum produced a powerful, articulate tone, even with nothing inside the drum and no hole in the front head. The toms produced a wonderful round tone with plenty of sustain that didn't get in the way of fast articulations. As Watson played, I was struck by the fact that the drums' tone didn't change as he shifted dynamics. Many drums have a limited sweet spot in their dynamic range, but the Blaster set excelled across the board

and never sounded choked. As Watson switched to mallets, the tone stayed consistent, and I could still hear every nuance.

The kit comes with Remo Suede Ambassador heads on the toms and a Suede Powerstroke 3





on the bass drum. Tuning them to a higher pitch brought out a few additional high-frequency overtones, but the drums still sounded very warm, with a definitive fundamental note.
blackpantherdrumsets.com

WRAP-UP

Mapex's Black Panther Blaster drumset is one of the nicest-looking kits I've seen in a long time, and its sound is also top notch. This would be a wonderful choice for anyone interested in upgrading to a high-end professional set. Just act fast, because they're on a limited production run. The reviewed four-piece shell pack lists for \$3,659. The five-piece, with the added 14" floor tom, lists for \$4,169.

MEINL

Frame Drums, Tambourines, and Shakers

by Michael Dawson



Meinl is known for diversity, innovation, and practicality when it comes to introducing new cymbal designs. Its approach with percussion is no different, as the company's designers are constantly coming up with creative ways to tweak centuries-old instruments like congas, cajons, shakers, and other traditional hand drums, to make them better suited to the ever-evolving needs of modern percussionists. We were sent a selection of Meinl's latest frame drums, tambourines, and shakers for review, all of which proved to be solidly made and musically distinct.

FRAME DRUMS

Technically, a frame drum is any instrument that involves a skin (drumhead) pulled over a shallow hoop. Meinl's frame drum selection includes Brazilian tambourines (pandeiros), Irish bodhrans, and several North African and Middle Eastern instruments, like the kanjira, tar, bendir, and daf. Our review drums include 16"

(\$185), 20" (\$215), and 22" (\$230) tars with Meinl's synthetic coated True Feel heads; 18" (\$200) and 20" (\$215) tars with traditional goatskin heads; a 4x18 deep-shell tar with a True Feel head (\$215); two 16" bendirs (\$190)—one with a True Feel head and one with goatskin—with thin nylon snares strung beneath the head for buzzing effects; and a 20" True Feel daf (\$150), which features metal rings around the entire inner circumference of the frame for rattle effects. Each of the drums came in a high-quality padded bag (\$65–\$82).

The tars and bendirs feature 2½"-deep two-piece rubber-wood frames in African

brown finish, with recessed Allen-wrench-adjustable tuning lugs built into the wood. They also come with a scalloped thumb notch for easy holding, and there's an Allen-wrench tuning key connected to each frame via fabric hook-and-loop fasteners. The four nylon snares on the bendirs are strung through the bearing edge of the frame and come with enough slack to allow for snare tension adjustments to be made, if needed. For our purposes, the snares were perfectly tensioned right out of the box, so no adjustments were required.

The 4x18 deep-shell tar also has built-in tuning lugs. Instead of a scalloped thumb

HOW TO HOLD 'EM

Tars, bendirs, and dafs are all played using the same basic hand position.

The left hand cradles the drum at the six o'clock position with the drumhead facing away from you, and the ring finger strikes the head. The right hand braces the frame with the thumb at three o'clock, and the hand swivels down to strike the head with the ring finger, either at the edge or about a third of the way toward the center.

notch, this drum sports a traditional thumbhole to allow for a more comfortable playing position, and the frame comes in a beautiful brown burl finish. The Persian daf has a 2 1/2x20 rubberwood frame (no tuning mechanism) in African brown finish.

Of the three types of tars we reviewed, the deep-shell version with the True Feel head had the fullest sound, with deeper off-center bass tones (called "dom") and richer high-sounding edge strikes ("tak"). Despite its larger size, this tar was surprisingly lightweight and comfortable to hold. The standard-depth tars with True Feel heads were the most resonant of the bunch, with prominent drone-like undertones connecting dom and tak strikes. The goatskin tars produced warmer and darker tones with a more focused attack. If you're looking for a true, authentic frame drum sound, goatskin is the way to go. But if you're worried about the drumhead tension being affected by weather conditions, or if you want a brighter and livelier vibe, check out the models with True Feel heads.

My personal favorite drums from this review group were the bendirs. As with the tars, striking the head of the bendir toward the center produced deep, rich bass tones, while edge strikes were snappy and sonorous. The nylon snares added an extra layer of complexity and grittiness to the sound that I found very inspiring.

The daf was fun to play, but it required much more controlled and choreographed motions in order to get the metal rings to keep from rattling uncontrollably. For more visual applications, like supporting a dancer, this drum would be ideal. Just be prepared for a slightly steeper learning curve. I also prefer the tuning flexibility of the tars and bendirs to the pretuned setup of the daf.

TAMBOURINES

Meinl's selection of tambourines ranges from the slightly modified 10" natural-finish wood version with two rows of dual-alloy jingles (steel and brass) to the more extreme Super Dry models, which feature triangular brass or stainless steel jingles on black-finish wood frames for darker and trashier sounds. The dual-alloy wood tambourine (\$46.40) produced a great all-around sound—perfect for most applications, live or in the studio. The steel jingles offer a high-pitched yet drier sound, complementing the livelier timbre of

the brass jingles.

The 8" Super Dry tambourine with two rows of steel jingles (\$69) produced a quiet, dark sound with very little extraneous rattle. This instrument is best suited for studio or live applications where it's close-miked. In louder, unamplified scenarios, it wouldn't have enough volume to cut through. The 8" Super Dry model with two rows of brass jingles (\$76) had a denser and louder sound, but it was still very easy to control for quick 16th-note patterns. Because of that quality, plus the fact that it's very lightweight, this tambourine could be a great choice for playing shaking patterns with one hand while laying down kick/snare grooves with the other limbs.

The 10" Super Dry tambourine with a single row of steel jingles (\$54) and the 10" Super Dry with two rows of brass jingles (\$85) are the big brothers to the 8" versions. Both had enough volume and presence to cut in a live setting but remained easily controllable for clear rhythmic patterns. If traditional tambourines are typically too happy sounding for your tastes, these Super Dry models could have the complexity you're looking for.

SHAKERS

Artist Series Double Shakers were designed with the help of famed percussionist Luis Conte. The black Live version produced a medium-volume sound with a clear high-pitched attack. The red Studio version was very subdued and proved to be applicable only in very soft playing situations outside of a recording environment. The gray Stadium version was super-loud and was my top choice for a fairly aggressive but unamplified club gig where I was blending percussion with standard drumkit beats. All three Double Shakers are lightweight and very easy to manipulate for most common shaker patterns. Each version lists for \$21.50.

The Rawhide Shaker (\$38.50) features a black plastic body and goatskin heads. This design allows you to produce a wide variety of tones, depending on whether you manipulate the interior beads to strike the head or body of the shaker or whether or not you apply pressure to the goatskin surfaces. It's an experimental shaker sound that won't work in every application. But it's good to see that there are unique options available for those times when a simple egg shaker just won't do.

meinlpercussion.com



Despite being highly respected, the Italian cymbal makers at UFIP have managed to remain somewhat of a mystery in the North American marketplace. UFIP is the only company in the world that uses a technique called rotocasting to make cymbals, and the process is said to produce not only the strongest bronze models but also the purest. With only four master cymbal smiths responsible for making every "earcreated" UFIP cymbal, there are inherent limitations to the number of pieces that can be produced. Churning out roughly 2,500 cymbals per month has yet to meet the demand in Europe.

Nevertheless, UFIP wants to tap into the North American marketplace, not to compete with the larger cymbal companies but to offer a unique brand of high-quality cymbals to a wider audience of drummers that have an ear for boutique or specialty products. What's interesting, though, is that UFIP is not expanding its productivity in order to do so. Jamie Gale, the company's stateside distributor, says, "They are actually taking 10 percent of their sales away from Europe and putting them in North America."

ROTOCASTING

Rotocasting is unique to the cymbal industry, but the process was not invented by UFIP. In the metallurgical field, liquid metals are poured into centrifugal casting molds that spin anywhere from 300

to 3,000 rpm. Centrifugal force pushes impurities to the edge, while also eliminating excess air bubbles. The edges are then lathed off, leaving behind the strongest and purest metals.

In 1970, UFIP applied the centrifugal casting process to cymbal making and developed molds specifically designed for casting liquid B20 bronze, which rotate at roughly 1,000 rpm. Once the process is complete and the edges containing the impurities have been lathed off, the hammering and lathing begin. Since the cymbals are spun and not rolled, the rotocasting process naturally creates a thicker bell. Even UFIP's splash cymbals have a defined bell tone.

BIONIC SERIES

The Bionic series is the first UFIP line that caters toward rock and metal drummers. The models have deep, wide hammering patterns and are hand polished. I found these relatively heavy cymbals to be more responsive and flexible than comparable models from other brands. The 18" (\$635) and 20" (\$722) crashes cut and projected more than similar cymbals in the other two series we reviewed, but they didn't sound brash or overpowering. They had good midrange frequencies in the overtones, instead of piercing and brassy highs.

The 15" Bionic hi-hats (\$918) sounded very crisp, with clear stick definition. The cymbals have a nice density to them, making them solid rock hi-hats with a pronounced bite and shimmering sizzle. The 20" Bionic ride (\$722) had a crystal-clear bell and weighty definition on the body. Its wash had enough presence that the sound wasn't too dry, but this cymbal isn't meant for crashing.

The 19" Bionic China (\$769) served up a typical noisy trash effect, certainly well suited to rock or metal applications. The 11" splash (\$315) was far from terrible, but it had a somewhat tinny sound.

CLASS SERIES

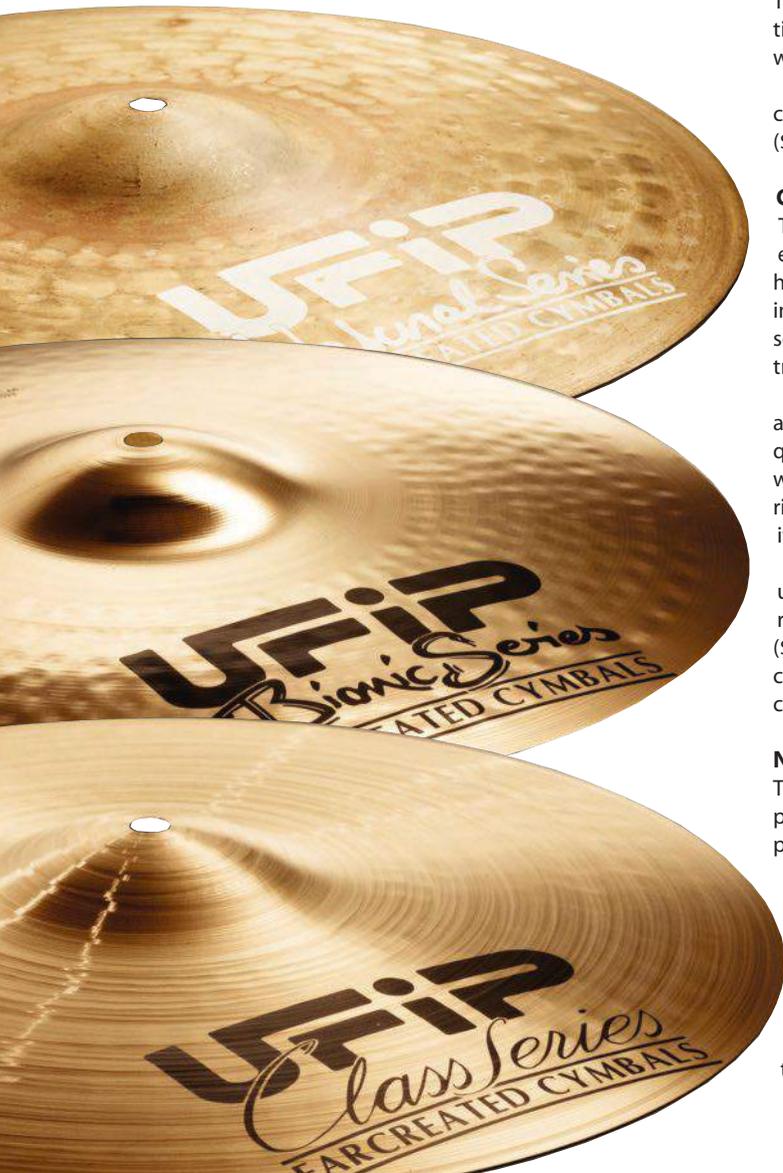
The Class series is UFIP's most diverse line and includes three different weights that categorize the cymbals' tones: low, medium, and high. Every model in the Class series was distinctive and immediately impressive. These plates offered as close to an archetypal cymbal sound as I've heard from any line—classic tones with warmth, control, and delicate yet clearly defined stick articulation.

The 19" (\$616) and 20" (\$663) Class crashes had a lovely shimmer and fullness. Their attack was very rich, with a bursting, spread-out quality. Paradoxically, the wonderfully crisp 14" Class hi-hats (\$780) were vintage- and modern-sounding at the same time. The 22" Class ride (\$720) had a loose wash and gentle definition, and crashing on it added a nice accent without losing composure.

The 20" Class Fast China (\$765) was nice and trashy but not unfeeling. The shallow-edged slope of this cymbal makes it cool to ride on for fast Colaiuta-esque solo ideas. The 10" Class splash (\$285) added a colorful spurt of airy trashiness that acted as a solid complement to the rest of the line. To many drummers' ears, this cymbal's sound could easily offer the definitive splash voice.

NATURAL SERIES

The Natural series caters to jazz and acoustic applications, with a pre-aged look and sound that are achieved through a "hardening" process said to reduce surface tension. I didn't find these cymbals to be as dark or thin as other jazz cymbals, but I would describe them as refined and soft-spoken. This became evident when I had a mix of the three UFIP lines in my setup. The Natural series just didn't have enough presence to compete with the Bionic or Class line. When I set up all the Natural cymbals together, however, their voices spoke eloquently. They're akin to the shy student in the back of the class who chooses not to compete with the louder kids in order to make a point, but who is loquacious



among friends.

The incredibly dense 22" Natural ride (\$720) had a dry sound with great stick definition and an opaque bell tone. The washy looseness of the 20" Natural ride (\$662) offered a nice contrast, and the cymbal can be crashed for extra substance. The 18" Natural crash (\$579) had a subtle attack, which is appreciated since the rest of the line is low-key. The 12" Natural splash (\$305) was fast with some good bite, trash, and body, yet it remained consistent in the Natural series by also being somewhat inhibited.

The 14" Natural hi-hats (\$780) had a great old-school Motown vibe with a uniquely confident tonal color. Despite the two vent holes in the bottom hat, the cymbals clung to each other when chicked with the foot, creating a gasping sound on the release. This actually worked as an advantage when I played the standard jazz rhythm on the hi-hat, because the over-pronounced separation added a dramatic weight to the pulse.

FOUR CENTURIES

UFIP began 400 years ago as an independent union of instrument makers commissioned to make church organs for prominent European composers. As symphonic music expanded, so did the need for musical instruments, and thus began a foray into cymbal making. Some of the same surnames and family ties are still present at UFIP many generations later, and this small company's emphasis on pursuing excellence remains steadfast.

EARCREATED WITH PRIDE

The UFIP tradition and "earcreated" mantra mean that the person who starts production on a cymbal sees things through to the end. This sense of ownership of the finished product gives UFIP cymbals their unique character. Although we didn't receive two of any particular model in order to compare the consistency within the product lines, subtle inconsistencies can be expected. Again, this reinforces UFIP's niche in the marketplace, and it's why the company's models will be found only in specialty drum shops in the U.S. going forward.

ufip.it

DUALLIST

Gig Grips

by Don Sopranzi

Letting a drumstick fly during a performance might be a drummer's worst nightmare. Many accessory items, ranging from gloves to tape to wax, have been employed to counter the effects of sweaty hands and an overly relaxed grip. Gloves, however, can eliminate the intimate connection between drummer and drumstick. Tape products tend to get sticky with continued use, and waxes leave a residue on sticks and on anything else the waxed portion of the stick touches, such as rims.

Having had mixed results with all those methods, I was eager to try something new. Gig Grips, which were developed by Duallist specialty pedal designer Kevin Mackie, are the essence of simplicity. Let's check them out.

DESIGN AND APPLICATION

Gig Grips consist of a pair of thin, flexible bands constructed from a high-tech rubber compound. Each band is approximately 1/2" wide and 3 1/2" long. The bands are off-white in color and have a small hole at each rounded, slightly flared end. The instructions provided with the product direct the user to slide each holed end over the butt of a drumstick to form a loop. This loop is positioned as desired along the shaft to accommodate your preferred gripping point on the stick.

Matched-grip players should experiment with loop placement around their index or middle finger to determine which is more comfortable. For traditional grip, the loop goes around the thumb.

The theory behind Gig Grips is that securing the sticks to your hands by means of the looped bands allows you to play with a looser, more relaxed grip, which helps reduce fatigue, stress, and strain. Eliminating excessive vibration and the need for over-gripping can help drummers avoid wrist and arm problems such as repetitive stress injury and carpal tunnel syndrome. Gig Grips are also said to extend the life of drumsticks—by rotating the loops, you can alter the point of impact, effectively distributing the wear and tear evenly around the shaft.

TRIAL BY PLAYING

Sitting down behind the kit in my rehearsal room, I unwrapped a brand-new pair of my favorite sticks, which I felt would be ideal for this trial due to their slick and somewhat slippery finish. I play traditional grip, so I placed the finger loop around my left thumb. I then placed the loop of the other stick around the middle finger of my right hand.

If there was any improvement in the



action of the sticks off the drumhead with the Gig Grips, it was subtle at best. A more obvious benefit of the bands was not having the sticks slide forward while I played—the finger loops kept my grip right on the sweet spot of the stick.

Over several days of testing, I never dropped a drumstick. While the bands have a smooth surface and caused no skin irritation, they seemed to sit better with matched versus traditional grip. As continued use produced the usual denting and splintering of the stick, I shifted the bands' placement to allow for more even wear.

VERDICT

I'm quite impressed with Gig Grips' elegant, straightforward design. The bands employ a high-tech material to produce a surprisingly low-tech solution to a problem that many drummers contend with. Allowing drummers to play with a relaxed grip, with the freedom to focus on musicality instead of technique, is no small feat. Other benefits, like elongating the life of your drumsticks, are icing on the cake. If you find that you have difficulty hanging on to your sticks as your hands start to sweat or get a bit fatigued, Gig Grips should prove to be a valuable aid. List price: \$12.99 for one pair, \$23.50 for two pairs. giggrips.com

STRANGE AT FIRST

The Gig Grips bands felt foreign at first, and I had to adjust the finger loops several times to find the proper fit. I purposely played with a very loose grip to determine whether Gig Grips would keep the drumsticks securely tethered to my hands. As my practice session continued, I found myself being increasingly less aware of the looped bands.

BILLDIDIT

Coady Combo

by Billy Brennan

At the core of Billdidit Inc. is the inventive mind of Bill Coady. "Our objective is to provide more freedom of expression to drummers," Coady says, and with that in mind he delivered his first patented product, the Coady Clutch, an alternative to the hi-hat drop clutch that's designed for quick and easy disengagement and reengagement before and after switching to a double bass pedal or second bass drum. That item has been followed up with the other accessories that round out the Coady Combo: the Coady Wash Control and the Coady Trip Arm. All of these products were sent to us for review.

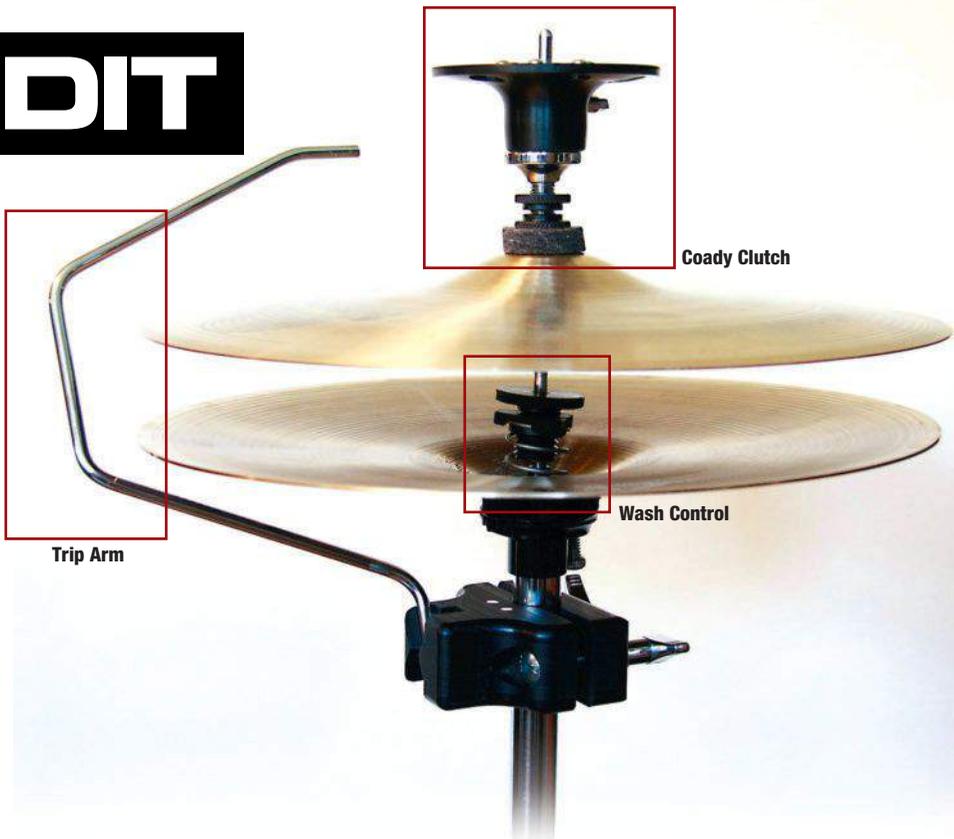
COADY CLUTCH

The ever-increasing popularity of double bass drumming continues to raise the issue of how the hi-hat can function alongside another pedal. Many drummers disengage their hi-hat during songs that require double bass, but that turns the hats into a stationary one-trick pony. Others have simply added a second set of permanently disengaged hats, but that can be an unwieldy and expensive solution. This is where the Coady Clutch comes in.

Once I got acclimated to the presence of the product and the muscle-memory coordination needed to reliably disengage it, I found that the Coady Clutch certainly lived up to its straightforward goals. Its setup and operation were hassle free: one strike to the disc, and the magnets slid out of alignment to release the top cymbal. Need to reengage? Just step on the pedal, and the magnets lock back into place. My only caveat is that the clutch makes an audible sound when it's reengaged, so be aware of that in any close-miked situation.

COADY WASH CONTROL

The Coady Wash Control is another example of Billdidit's streamlined simplicity. This spring-coil, twist-adjust plastic struc-



ture allows you to fine-tune the amount of space between your hi-hats when the clutch is disengaged. If you want a crisp, controlled response, keep the Wash Control screwed up tight. If you're after an open and washy sound, the unfurled Wash Control allows your cymbals to maintain the desired level of separation. Cymbal weight does play a part, however—my typical heavier hi-hats demanded a more open position for the Wash Control just to secure the minimum separation, which led to a narrower range of sounds as compared with the results when I used lighter cymbals.

COADY TRIP ARM

The Coady Trip Arm completes the Coady Combo. This device works in conjunction with the Coady Clutch to make the clutch reliant solely on your hi-hat foot. You set the clamp so that when the clutch is engaged and your foot is off the hi-hat pedal, the arm reaches just below the top disc. Then you swivel the arm away and reposition it when you close the hats. That way, all that's needed to disengage the clutch is lifting your foot off the pedal. The Trip Arm can accommodate right- and left-

handed setups and can be moved out of position if you prefer not to utilize the hands-free option.

The Trip Arm is the one part of the Coady Combo that I was not really satisfied with, and I preferred to play without it for several reasons. First of all, in order for the system to function properly, I had to raise the cymbals to the point of being outside my comfort zone. At a lower position, the arm couldn't properly interact with the clutch. The Trip Arm also didn't work consistently. As often as not, when I removed my foot from the pedal, the hats would lift enough for the clutch's top to tilt but not slide completely out of alignment and release the cymbal. Also, with a wide distance between the top and bottom cymbals, the clutch was at risk of disengaging during normal open/closed patterns.

CONCLUSION

The Coady Combo will prove to be a nice accessory package if you're looking for increased flexibility when switching between double and single bass. Just keep in mind that the components aren't one-size-fits-all. If you play heavier cymbals or like to position your hi-hat down low near the snare, you may want to forgo the Trip Arm and Wash Control and just try the Coady Clutch. The Coady Clutch lists for \$49.98, the Wash Control for \$12.98, the Trip Arm for \$34.98, and the full combo for \$89.98.

billdidit.ca

MAGNETIC PRINCIPLES

The Coady Clutch attaches just like any ordinary hi-hat clutch and is built around a simple and functional ball-and-magnet design. The top of the clutch consists of a wide black disc that contains the magnets. The product promises to allow the top cymbal to fall merely by striking anywhere on the disc with your stick, with no unwanted looseness or accidental disengagement.



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SHURE

Beta Series Additions

by Butch Jones

Shure has recently expanded its Beta series with some new and unique condenser microphones designed especially for drums. We'll be reviewing the Beta 91A, a half-cardioid boundary mic for interior bass drum placement; the Beta 181, a side-address condenser; and the Beta 98AMP, a miniature cardioid tom mic with a gooseneck and an updated mounting clip.

BETA 91A INTERIOR BASS DRUM MIC

The flat Beta 91A (\$239) half-cardioid condenser microphone has exceptional low-frequency reproduction, high SPL handling, and a high output level, which makes it ideal for capturing the kick drum, as well as other low-frequency sound sources. Its flat, low-profile design, integrated preamp (phantom power required), and XLR connector allow for quick and secure setup. The mic has a two-position contour switch that lets you choose between a flat response and a low-mid scooped response for a punchier sound right out of the box. The scoop is listed as -7 dB of attenuation centered at 400 Hz. When I activated it during our testing, I found that it made the sound a little less round.

Shure recommends placing the Beta 91A inside the drum, a few inches from the batter head, but I felt the sound was heavier when I placed the mic closer to the resonant head—still aimed at the beater impact point—and on a somewhat rigid surface, like a small pillow or folded blanket. There's no mounting hardware for the Beta 91A, but it does come with two screw cutouts for mounting on a flat surface if necessary. The bottom of the mic is covered with rubber, so you can even use this model inside a bass drum with no internal muffling.

BETA 181 CONDENSER

The Beta 181 (\$499) is a small-diaphragm side-address condenser microphone with interchangeable cardioid, supercardioid, omnidirectional, and bidirectional capsules. The mic ships with one polar-pattern capsule, a built-in XLR preamp (phantom power required), a stand

adapter, a windscreen, and a zippered carrying case.

We were sent two Beta 181s, each with the cardioid capsule, so we could test them as stereo overheads. The mics were centered above the kick drum in an ORTF pattern, about 3' above the cymbals. One mic was facing the left-side crash cymbal in a direct line, and the other was facing the right-side crash. The side-address setup of these mics allowed me to keep them parallel, totally eliminating any possible phase issues between them. The captured stereo image was true, with really nice top-end sheen. The capsules are listed as having a slight frequency boost at 10 KHz, which helped give the cymbals a little extra sizzle.

I also tried one of the Beta 181s on the hi-hat, and I was not surprised by its crisp, transparent sound in that application. We found that the supplied cardioid capsules were completely satisfying to our ears, but you can purchase capsules with other polarity patterns for \$249 apiece. The mic is also available with one of the other capsules preinstalled.

BETA 98AMP TOM MIC

The Beta 98AMP (\$269) is a miniature cardioid condenser featuring an integrated XLR preamplifier with a flexible gooseneck and a new A75M universal mount



for easy placement in any configuration of toms, snares, or percussion. This mic has an extremely uniform cardioid polar pattern, which provides excellent off-axis rejection of unwanted noise. The mic can also handle high SPLs and has exceptional low-frequency reproduction, even though it's coming from a smaller capsule.

We placed Beta 98AMPs on two rack toms and one floor tom. The flexible gooseneck made it very easy to search for hot spots and to angle the capsules for better isolation from adjacent drums. The ideal placement on the toms ended up being approximately 2" to 3" above the rim and pointed toward the center of the head. Height adjustments were a breeze with the A75M mount, which allows you to turn the mic from side to side and also slide it up and down in the holder. The mount can be attached to many different surfaces, including counterhoops and drum and cymbal stands. Last, but certainly not least, we found that absolutely no vibration transmitted to the capsule through the mount when recording. Nice!

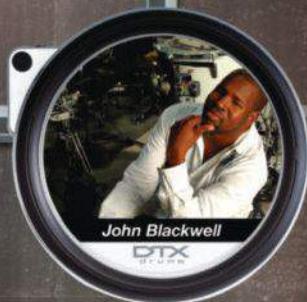
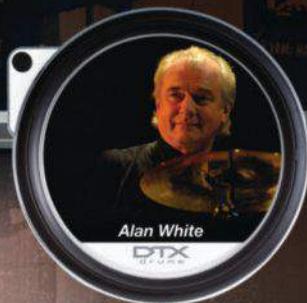
A three-pack of Beta 98AMPs and A75M clips is available for \$699, and individual A75Ms can be purchased for \$99 apiece.
shure.com

THE PERFECT BLEND

Having the Beta 91A on the inside of the bass drum added a nice, heavy attack from the beater with very little leakage from other drums. Using the interior Beta 91A in conjunction with a Shure Beta 52 placed just outside the hole in the front head yielded a great overall kick sound with a good blend of snappy attack and low-end punch.



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rate with me on the drum parts so we could take the album someplace different,” Sharone says. “He gave me reference tracks to listen to with basic sequenced drums, and then we created magic in the studio. He wanted us to just have fun and throw around a bunch of ideas. We were creating on the spot and keeping things fresh, which is what I live for.”

The drumkit Sharone brought for these sessions was one he handpicked from DW’s Oxnard, California, showroom. “My custom kit was still in the works,” Gil explains, “so I went down to their facility and picked out some drums. They’re all maple. The sizes were 8”, 10”, and 12” rack toms, 16” and 18” floor toms, a 23” bass drum, and a 20” gong drum. I used a matching 5 1/2 x 14 snare on some tracks, but most of the time I used a DW steel in their new vintage brass finish.

“My cymbals were all Zildjian. I used 14” Mastersound K/Z combo hi-hats on the left and 14” A Mastersounds on the right. My crashes included an 18” A Custom and an 18” and 19” K Dark Thin. I used 20” K Custom and 22” A prototype rides, plus 12” K and 9” Oriental Trash splashes and a 19” K China.”

Here’s a handful of drumming highlights from *Atavist*.

“Atom to Adam”

“This song had a reference drum track that I loved,” Sharone says. “I wanted to keep it but elaborate on it a bit. My hands are moving between the snare and the crashes. I’m not just playing caveman quarter-note crashes; there’s more finesse in how I’m playing the part. The sticking is a huge element of how it sounds.” (0:15)



“Blood of Saints”

“This song has a couple of looping double bass/snare/tom patterns. It was not only challenging to have to come up with cool things on the spot, but then there’s the physical part of having to execute the ideas. Everything had to be

precise because the notes are so close together. But I also wanted to maintain a sense of feel and space, even when there’s so much going on at that fast tempo.” (0:59, 3:08)



“Remember to Forget”

“This song is super-groovy. Otep can go from an intense scream into a flowing part where I feel like I’m backing a rapper.” Here’s an excerpt from one of the song’s funkier sections. (0:39)



“Skin of the Master”

“All of the songs are riff heavy. I hear the riffs as the lead voice, so I structured my parts around that, whether it was locking in directly or just catching key spots. On this song there are hits within a rhythmic progression. It was obvious that I had to accent those, but I threw in my own ideas around them.” (1:12)



“I Stand Alone”

“This track alternates between a heavy half-time reggae-type groove and an up-tempo thrash beat. I think of myself as a groove player, whether or not chops are involved. I always try to let the parts breathe. As far as not over-hitting or overexerting yourself, it’s important to be aware of your comfort zone. Sometimes when you’re recording, the adrenaline gets pumping and you have that extra bit of energy to hit harder. But just because it’s heavy music doesn’t mean I need to hit three times harder than I normally would. As long as I bring the intensity and maintain the technique that I trust, I’m able to express without hurting myself. The power comes out without being forced.” (0:17)



ADAM CRUZ

The **Danilo Pérez/Chick Corea collaborator**—and now a leader as well—has a genetic predisposition to mix things up. Throw in a ton of blood, sweat, and imagination, and you've got one of the more intriguing drummers working today.

Story by Robin Tolleason • Photos by Rahav

Adam Cruz's debut album as a bandleader, *Milestone*, is seventy minutes of instrumental world jazz, a Latin-bop concoction fed by splashes of swing, funk, and salsa that seamlessly connect the forty-year-old drummer's many musical worlds. "That's part of my karma," Cruz says with a smile. "My dad is Puerto Rican, and my mom is half Italian, half Jewish Hungarian. I'm influenced by Latin music but also jazz and funk and all these things. Rather than feeling like they're competing, I'm trying to pursue a path and learn. It's not 'either/or,' it's 'both/and.'"

Cruz composed all of the music on *Milestone*, and to perform it he drew from a stable of heavy bandmates from the last

twenty years—bassist Ben Street; saxophonists Miguel Zenón, Steve Wilson, and Chris Potter; guitarist Steve Cardenas; and pianist Edward Simon. "I felt like I could trust the compositions in their hands," the drummer says. "Having a sense of history, a feeling of community, and their support is very meaningful."

The process of composition was a huge learning experience for Cruz. "On one hand, drummers have a unique perspective compositionally," he says. "We're sensitive to rhythm and form and structure. But at the same time I felt the need to invest in my command of harmony and melody. I've done it mostly through studying classical music, learning standards, and transcribing some of my favorite composers, like Wayne Shorter or

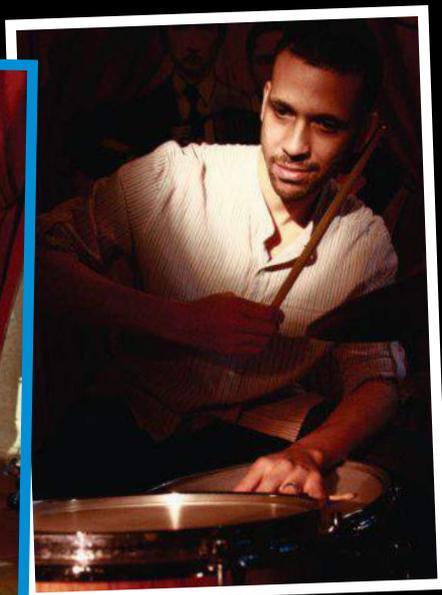


Thelonious Monk." You can hear the results of this melting-pot approach all over *Milestone*, as Cruz mixes triple and duple worlds on "Secret Life," gives "The Gadfly" a Latin swing, and sets up licks like a big band drummer on "Outer Reaches," on which he rips a hot solo alongside Steve Wilson on sax.

While touring and recording with pianist Danilo Pérez over the last decade and cutting a half dozen albums with saxman David Sanchez, Cruz spent as much time as he could at the piano, developing a compositional voice. "I would work on my ear training as practice," he says, "and then improvise and record myself at home. Eventually I started hearing things that felt somehow true. I would try to focus on those particular

germs of ideas, like, *Okay, this is worth developing*. Then I would think about the instrumentation, another section or a bridge, or what kind of groove it wanted."

If Cruz got stuck on any part for too long, he might seek direction from the drums. "I'd go to the drums, hearing in my head harmonically where I just was at the piano, and I'd see if there was something that came from that direction, in terms of a groove or some motion that could help what was going on at the piano. I did this back and forth with the composing, these things feeding each other. It's helpful to leave the piano and go to the drums for fresh inspiration in the middle of a tune."



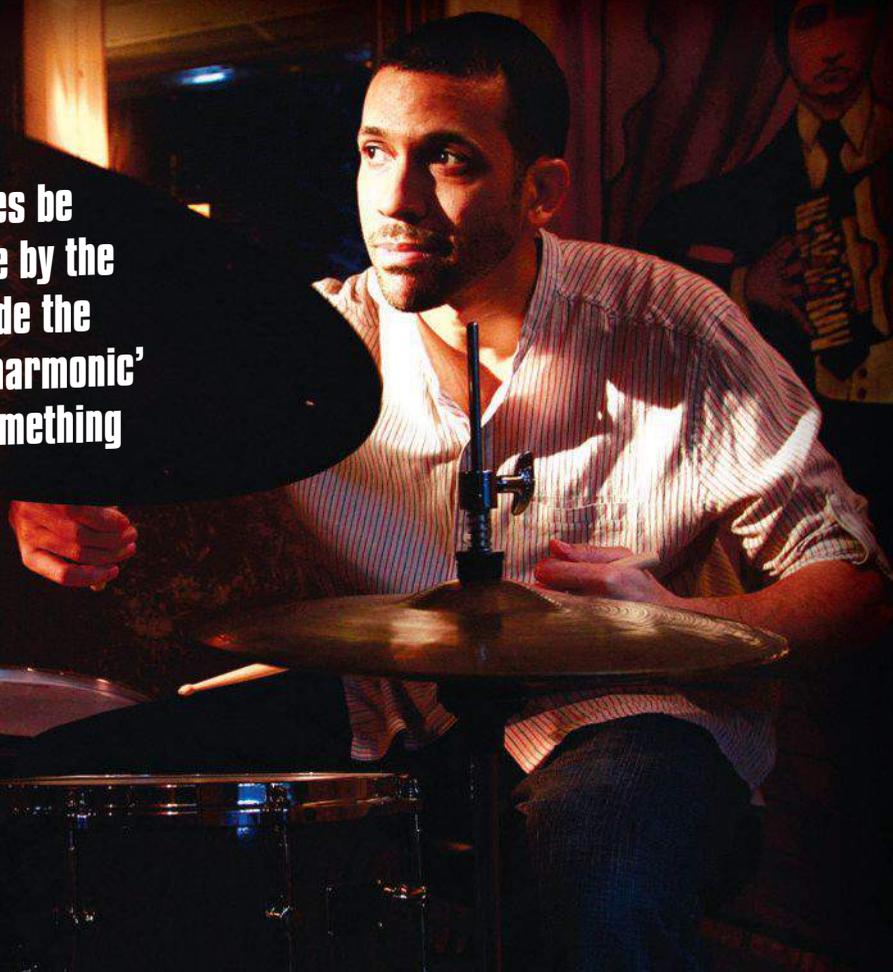
Cruz was born in New York City, and he had an early connection to the drums through his father, timbalero Ray Cruz, who played with Mongo Santamaria and with the Richie Ray & Bobby Cruz salsa band. “It’s almost a family inheritance, like an apprenticeship,” Adam says. “I’ve been playing as long as I can remember.”

Ray Cruz taught his son his first rudiments and the basic independence demanded by rock and swing beats. “That stuff I don’t even remember learning—I just remember doing it,” Adam says. “It was just there.” Cruz’s father moved out of the house, but he left a drumset behind and

took Adam to a music school where he worked, for lessons with Frank Malabe. “Whatever emotional stuff I was going through with my parents’ split, somehow having those drums, representing my father’s world in a certain way, held some meaning for me,” Cruz says.

“My friends would come over after school, and before we’d go bike riding they’d say, ‘Come on, Adam, go off on the drums.’ I’d sit down and solo for five minutes, and then we’d go. In those years my dad was taking me around to hear music. I remember being really struck by seeing Buddy Rich—and also by seeing my dad play. He had a swinging

“Letting my drumming choices be informed to a greater degree by the harmony that’s going on inside the music—really becoming a ‘harmonic’ drummer in that way—is something I continue to try to develop.”



salsa band, Cruz Control. At home my dad was playing a lot of Miles Davis records, particularly the band with Philly Joe [Jones], and a lot of Art Blakey records too. He was studying the big band drummers, learning to read music, wanting to transition to playing more drumset.”

As he entered his teens, Cruz was also getting into Stewart Copeland’s drumming with the Police and Jeff Porcaro’s playing in Toto. “Around fourteen or fifteen I became a big devotee of Steve Gadd, Harvey Mason, and Billy Cobham,” Adam recalls. “My dad would always tell me, ‘You should check out who *they* checked out.’ Like, you’ve also got to deal with Tony Williams, Philly Joe, Art Blakey, and Roy Haynes.

“As soon as I got to college I caught the bug for jazz study, got a smaller bass drum, and became more passionate about cats like Philly Joe and Roy, Billy Higgins, Tony.... I had a big shift at around eighteen.”

Upon arriving at Rutgers University, Cruz met the tenor player David Sanchez, who was already gaining notoriety in New York City. They became good friends, and Sanchez started recommending Cruz to people in his scene. “That started my career, really,” Cruz says. A gig with Charlie Sepulveda led to ones with Paquito D’Rivera, Willie Colón, and Hilton Ruiz.

Cruz transferred to the New School in New York, where he studied with Kenny Washington, Joe Chambers, Lewis Nash, and Steve Berrios and tried to focus his musical approach. “Playing with people like Danilo and going in a direction that had more to do with jazz was somehow more me,” Adam says. “I made that choice, and from then on things started to blossom more in that direction.” Gigs ensued with the Mingus Big Band, Eddie Palmieri, Tom Harrell, Chris Potter, and Charlie Hunter, plus tours and recordings with Chick Corea’s Origin.

“I learned a lot from Chick,” Cruz says. “I learned the most by feeling the power of his playing. Chick used this example of responding to what’s going on around you, being ready to shift to wherever you need to go to change a color or texture, but always honoring



ADAM'S SETUP

“It’s kind of a transitional moment for me gear-wise,” Cruz says, “because officially I just signed on with Canopus Drums, but I’m not playing their full kit yet. These days I’m still playing my old Sonor rosewoods, with an 18” bass drum, a 12” rack tom, and a 14” floor tom. I’m also playing the Canopus Zerkova snare drum. I’ll probably have a Canopus kit within the next few months. My cymbals also tend to be in flux, but at the moment I’m playing a 20” Zildjian K from the ‘50s on my left, a 22” Spizzichino on my right, and old 13” Zildjian K hats.”





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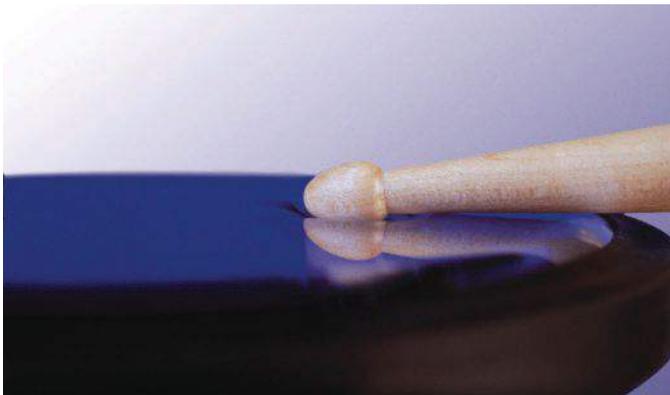
the forward motion of the rhythm. When he played with Mongo Santamaria, Mongo would say, 'No matter what you do, no matter how much you're stretching, honor that the solid continuum of the drum is always there, and you'll never get out of touch with that flow.' It's balancing these two streams of music, the creative and the harmonic, and then the grounding of the drum. That's a theme that has stayed with me with Danilo these last years."

Cruz's decade-long stint with Pérez and bassist Ben Street yielded the pianist's stunning 2010 album, *Providencia*. "Expanding my own sensitivity to harmony—the way I react and shape according to what's going on harmonically—is something I've become more aware of while playing with great pianists like Chick or Danilo or Ed Simon," Cruz explains. "As drummers we have a lot of power. We can overpower a band, or we can open things up, or we can close them off from a certain kind of groove.

Drums have so much power in the music. So letting those choices be informed to a greater degree by the harmony that's going on inside the music—really becoming a 'harmonic' drummer in that way—has been something I continue to try to develop.

"With a lot of my favorite drummers you can hear that relationship with the harmony going on, especially Roy Haynes or Tony Williams, or Brian Blade or Jeff Ballard. That's the tradition I want to continue."

Reaching those goals involves being judicious with your technique and chops, according to Cruz. "It's the choices we make, or the density we get into, or the volume we get into," he says. "You want to keep that connection to the other musicians—choices informed by the harmonic area, what the piano's doing or a melodic shape that's coming from a horn. And in that way you're painting with the other musicians and not just plugging in a rhythm or something.



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There's a lot of depth to be achieved from that approach.

"I remember Danilo taking the trio in a certain direction and saying, 'Man, don't think of it like my solo, like you're accompanying my solo. We're both up here playing. Solo along with me.' He was looking for that kind of energy, that kind of creativity to spar with. That's become a way I often think of it: You're not accompanying and you're not soloing—it's somewhere in between. You're trying to dance together with the soloist and bring more energy in that way, rather than simply providing support."

Cruz says he learned from Corea and Pérez to weave more of himself into the music. "It was more in terms of emotional investment and authority," Adam explains. "I think Chick sensed in me that I had more to give, and he encouraged me to bring it out. I've learned that even though you may not be the bandleader, leaders like Chick and Danilo are looking for a certain kind of authority from the drums and for you to lead *them* at times. Part of this lesson is clearly that there is something beyond simply playing your instrument. It's about bringing your love of life, your engagement with life, into the music."

Living in New York City, Cruz treasures seeing some of the greatest living jazzmen on stage, including Albert "Tootie" Heath, Billy Hart, and Paul Motian. "I believe in feeling the dance coming out of the cymbal beat or just the feeling in general," Cruz says. "Even if Motian is playing really free or open, his right hand, his cymbal, is always dancing. No matter what style it is, there's always that swing and flow."

Cruz sees dynamics as the most valuable tool that drummers have to shape the music. "When you're able to play really gently and soft as a drummer," Adam says, "the other instruments around you are able to speak in a different way. A space gets created sonically for the piano and the horns or guitar. So really just having a love and curiosity for hearing those guys is what makes me want to create that

kind of space for a while. I guess from the drums it's kind of a compositional or arranging choice, like: This has been going on for a while, and maybe [the music could use] some power now, some density, to go into another zone. And as drummers one of the biggest ways we can do that is with dynamics."

To work on this kind of control, Cruz often practices rudimental and independence exercises at three drastically different dynamic levels. "And doing challenging material or some-

thing that's fast and super-soft can definitely offer some challenges," he adds, "because it engages the muscles in a certain way."

"Tony Williams said, 'I don't just play loud. I want to play the drums as soft as a violin can play at its softest and as loud as the brass section.' That's what the drums are *meant* to do. It's all there. So I really try to use the biggest dynamic range that I can. That's inspiring to me."



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Sure, he's got a famous boss—and one who's a terror on the drumkit himself. But the Foo Fighters drummer says his real allegiance is to rocking honestly and with style. And there's no better proof of his aesthetic than the Foes' latest and greatest blockbuster of an album, *Wasting Light*.

TAYLOR HAWKINS

Story by Ken Micallef • Photos by Rahav

In 1979, when Taylor Hawkins was eight years old, two of the biggest albums on the charts were the Police's *Reggatta de Blanc* and Pink Floyd's *The Wall*. Hawkins took notes. When not surfing at Laguna Beach or riding his banana bike, young Taylor was fascinated by the AM-dial fare he'd hear on his mom's car radio. Soon the Eagles' "Hotel California," Queen's "Fat Bottomed Girls," and Kansas's "Carry On Wayward Son" awakened his nascent rhythmic sensibilities. Later, when he got his first turntable, he wore out the grooves of Captain Beyond's *Dawn Explosion*.

Fast-forward some thirty years, and Taylor Hawkins plays drums for one of the biggest rock bands in the world, enjoys a freewheeling side project that enables his love of all things 1970s, and, by his own account, is getting paid more than adequately for his efforts.

A consistently humble and self-effacing musician, Hawkins also has the unusual honor of playing drums behind Dave Grohl, one of the greatest rock drummers of his generation. But as a sincere and hardworking player and all-around good guy, Hawkins sees opportunity where some might see trouble. His optimism, talent, and self-awareness make him not only an essential ingredient to the Foo Fighters' success but also a great role model for any drummer intent on understanding the meaning of the term *team player*.

On such Foo Fighters albums as *There Is Nothing Left to Lose*, *Skin and Bones*, and *One by One*, Hawkins plays burly rhythms in lockstep with Grohl's guitar. The drummer's own project, Taylor Hawkins & the Coattail Riders, finds the

quintessential Californian singing, writing, and playing guitar, bass, and drums on diverse material that recalls everything from Queen and the Eagles to Mahavishnu Orchestra and Rush. Can't escape the '70s!

The Foo Fighters' latest album, *Wasting Light*, which also includes Pat Smear and Chris Shiflett on guitar and Nate Mendel on bass, blasts a return to the past even more emphatically, taking shape in an all-analog process that required Hawkins to perform nearly perfect drum tracks live to tape. Grohl and producer Butch Vig didn't let the band within fifty miles of a computer, so Taylor had to bring his "A" game. And that's just the way he likes it. His drumming on such fantastic Foo flammers as "Rope," "Dear Rosemary," and "A Matter of Time" reveals his tight working relationship with Grohl, as well as his own remarkable consistency, signature time feel, and searing hand and foot patterns.

Taylor Hawkins is nothing if not physical. He's a visual beast of a showman, as any Foo Fighters video attests. Long-limbed and rangy, like a rubber-band man with a blond mane, Hawkins attacks the kit with speed and power, but also with grace and textural nuance. Some listeners may not be able to tell the difference between Grohl's elephantine pummel and Hawkins' lithely propulsive groove and speed-demon fills, but much of the Foes' magic lies in the duo's twin yet separate identities. Best friends enamored of each other's skills, Grohl and Hawkins lay the foundation for every Foo Fighters song. Hawkins, though, is not (as some claim) "the second-best drummer in the Foo Fighters," he's simply the only drummer for the job.



MD: There's a marked '70s influence in your playing. You use three concert toms. The name of the '70s cult band Captain Beyond was stamped on one of your old bass drum heads. Your drum tech, Yeti Ward, says you chose a natural wood finish because Don Henley used it in the '70s. Are you just a child of the era?

Taylor: Remember *Closet Classics* on MTV? They used to run videos for the Eagles' "I Can't Tell You

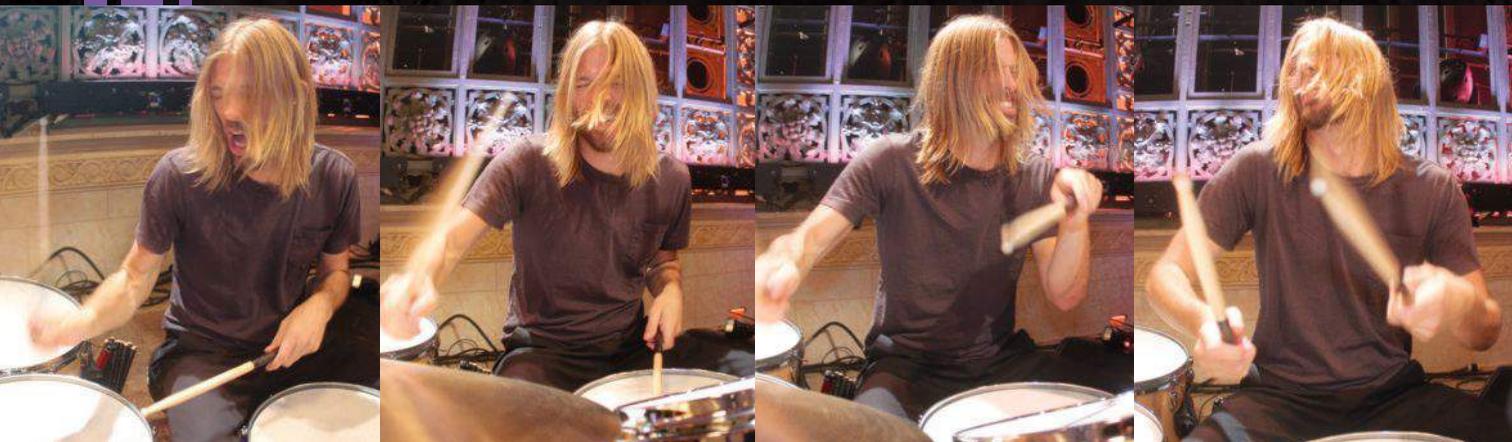
"Dave and I love to push ourselves musically and impress each other—and impress ourselves.

There's a drummer's spirit to this band, no question."

Why" and "Heartache Tonight." They're in the studio and Henley has these light wood-finish Ludwig drums. I always thought they were

cool looking. And Phil Collins had some natural drums for a while too.

MD: Your harmony vocals on the





Coattail Riders' "Not Bad Luck" sound exactly like Queen. "James Gang" is another Coattail Riders song.

Taylor: So what the hell is this thing! [laughs] I don't know. That was my first love, '70s music... a lot of AM radio that I listened to in the back of my mom's car. Also, the harder rock my brother would listen to before he got into Kansas and Led Zeppelin—all those '70s FM rock staples.

MD: You wear the '70s like a badge at times.

Taylor: It's just part of my aesthetic. It's what I love. We have a TV room in our house, and I have it decorated my way: It's got one of those round egg chairs with the internal speakers, and a leopard-print shag carpet. The room's painted red, with old rock photos everywhere. That room looks like me.

If pressed to analyze it, I'd say the '70s is my comfort zone. This is the music that makes me comfortable. At the same time, I don't see the Foo Fighters that way at all. We all grew up on rock 'n' roll. But my influences don't stop there. In the '90s I loved Jane's Addiction; that was super-duper important, as was Soundgarden. But in the '70s drummers had their own personalities. The way music was recorded then, there was no chance to get rid of that personality, unless it was all session musicians. The rough edges of each musician are what gives them personality—Charlie Watts lifting his stick up every



TAYLOR'S SETUP

Drums: Gretsch USA Custom in natural satin finish

- A.** 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 brass snare
- B.** 6x6 concert tom
- C.** 6x8 concert tom
- D.** 7x10 concert tom
- E.** 8x13 tom
- F.** 16x16 floor tom
- G.** 16x18 floor tom
- H.** 18x22 bass drum

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Cymbals: Zildjian

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time he hits a backbeat on the snare, Roger Taylor cracking open his hi-hat every time he hits the snare, Bonham having a real laid-back feel, or Stewart Copeland being on top....

MD: Or Don Henley's feel, though he is

recording *Wasting Light* to tape was about taking the power back. The last couple records we made, people were taking files home to manipulate. How can producers not do that if they have the ability? All they want to do is

might as well hit each drum and each cymbal and say, "There's my samples, now make it what you want." Our engineer sometimes records new bands at [the Foo Fighters' L.A. studio] 606, and he says the drummers *want* you to grid

"It's not a thought process, like, *I have to hit harder. I wish I didn't sometimes! I would probably have more control if I was more controlled.*"

underrated as a drummer.

Taylor: He's a *great* drummer. I was bummed when I heard their last record, because they used the dude that plays drums for them live—who is probably technically a better drummer. But Don Henley has a sound, that '70s bar-band groove.

Taylor's Roadside Records

MD: Dave Grohl said in *Electronic Musician* that he hates what producers have done to drummers since the '90s.

Taylor: I agree. Part of our reason for

make a perfect record. That's become the norm. But it's to the detriment of what I consider to be honest, real rock 'n' roll.

If it's a Nine Inch Nails record, great. One of my favorite songs is "I Feel Love" by Donna Summer, and that's an early drum machine—totally weird sounding and awesome. But don't record a drummer and then turn him into a drum machine and grid him and make every hit perfect. Just use a drum machine—be honest. If I make a record and the producer wants to do that, I

their drums. They think that's the way it should be.

MD: I heard that even Butch Vig was taken aback at the idea of recording *Wasting Light* without a grid or Pro Tools.

Taylor: Sure, Butch is a perfectionist, and he's been making records that way for fifteen years. If you want to be a perfectionist when we're recording to tape, fine, bust my balls all day long. I'll work all day—let's get it as perfect as I can get it. But the process didn't change much this time, even though



INFLUENCES

Queen Live Killers (Roger Taylor) /// **The Police** Zenyattà Mondatta (Stewart Copeland) /// **Rush** Exit Stage Left (Neil Peart) /// **Van Halen** Van Halen II (Alex Van Halen) /// **Jane's Addiction** Nothing's Shocking (Stephen Perkins) /// **Dio** Holy Diver (Winny Appice) /// **U2** The Unforgettable Fire (Larry Mullen Jr.) /// **Yes** The Yes Album (Bill Bruford) /// **Soundgarden** Louder Than Love (Matt Cameron) /// **Genesis** A Trick of the Tail (Phil Collins)

RECORDINGS

Foo Fighters "Aurora" from *There Is Nothing Left to Lose*, "Low" from *One by One*, "No Way Back" from *In Your Honor*, "Come Alive" from *Echoes, Silence, Patience & Grace*, and "Rope" and "Dear Rosemary" from *Wasting Light* /// **Taylor Hawkins & the Coattail Riders** "Louise" and "Get Up I Want to Get Down" from *Coattail Riders* and "Not Bad Luck" and "It's Over" from *Red Light Fever*



we went all analog. What changes is the process after I'm done—there *is* no process after I'm done! The drums are what they are.

Before, especially the record we did with Gil Norton [*Echoes, Silence, Patience & Grace*], I finished recording drums, and I don't know what happened after that. They might say, "Oh, we barely touched them." Do I believe that? There's a lot of trickery going on. **MD:** On "I Should Have Known" from *Wasting Light*, you can really tell that the volume is peaking the meters. It's dramatic.

Taylor: That comes down to the mix as well. It was mixed by hand, no automation, no flying faders. Dave was in charge of my drums when they mixed. He'd come in after every mix, saying, "Dude, the meters are pinned!" I loved it. I'll never make another record with computers. I want to do it analog forever.

Sure, you have to play tight, but that's relative. How tight were the White Stripes? Meg is not a perfect drummer. I *like* that her drumming is loose. It's good for people's ears. Everyone was so programmed into thinking every recording has to be perfect. Then Jack White comes along and says, "No, everything doesn't need to be perfect." So what if she speeds up and slows down and screws up a fill here and there? Heaven forbid! Listen to Stones records, man.

MD: Recording all analog is great for those who can afford it.

Taylor: And saying all that, you can make a record that sounds great in Pro Tools. We made the last Coattail Riders with Pro Tools, but we didn't utilize any of its functions. No grid-ding; we just used it as a recorder. If you like the way Pro Tools sounds, great. I'm not saying it's bad, just that it's not for me. If some kid hands me a record, within five bars I can tell if he's done it entirely on Pro Tools. If it's supposed to be a rock 'n' roll record with guitars, bass, and drums and it's been Tooled to death, I toss it. You just got signed to Roadside Records, baby! [laughs] I'm not interested.

MD: But *Wasting Light* was recorded to a click?

Taylor: Yes, and we did a little bit of tempo mapping, by hand. Butch would sit there with an Alesis drum machine and tap it, bump it up a few notches here and there. My time is not perfect in the studio. For us to be able to edit between takes, it was a lot easier if we cut the drums to a click track. But at first I was the one who said the whole tape process was taking too long. We did a lot of actual razor editing of tape on the first few songs, and I said, "Why don't we just punch in?" *Nothing Left to Lose* was all punching. Big deal.

Let's Get Physical

MD: How do you play with such physicality yet maintain control?

Taylor: I don't know, it's just how I taught myself to play. I always played

too hard as a kid. Band teachers would tell me, "You're playing too hard." They threw me out of jazz band in high school. Again, "You're too loud, too fast." It's not a thought process, like, *I have to hit harder*. I wish I didn't sometimes! I would probably have more control if I was more *controlled*. I do work on it. A friend of mine is a jazz pocket drummer, then he joined a rock band. He asked me, "How do I play harder?" I couldn't answer that—it's just how I play.

MD: But how do you play high off the kit, and with speed? How did you build your speed?

Taylor: I have no rudimental training. My rudimental training was Rush's *Exit Stage Left* and the Police's *Zenyattà Mondatta*. I emulated my heroes. I played along with those records. That's how I learned. *Ghost in the Machine* and *Zenyattà*, those were my two Police bibles. Copeland is definitely one of my major heroes.

Queen's *Live Killers* was another major influence, though I don't play anything like Roger Taylor, who's a really melodic, musical drummer. He's got a great voice, and he's a great songwriter. I always looked at him as being more than a drummer. He was always a presence behind the drums. He was never a crazy hard hitter with long extended solos. But he always had a lot of personality behind the drums. Whether he was choking a cymbal or doing flourishes on his Rototoms, he played the right thing for the song. He

did almost all of Queen's background vocals. He had the highest voice. A drummer with great feeling—a super-big rock feel and great time.

MD: And you're a fan of Don Henley for similar reasons?

Taylor: Yes. They are similar drummers in a way. Very much for the song, great singers, their sound was very important. Roger Taylor had personality. There's a version of "Spread Your Wings" on *Live Killers* that's one of my all-time favorite drum tracks. It's so pocket and so perfect. Great long fills around the world. Another album I played along to as a kid was Genesis's *Seconds Out*. I still don't have those kinds of chops—though I can fake it!

MD: Fake it? Your drumming on "Louise," from *Taylor Hawkins & the Coattail Riders*, is no faking.

Taylor: That is a total lift from Phil Collins: "Wot Gorilla?" off Genesis's *Wind & Wuthering*. It's a different time signature—the Genesis song is in 4/4 and "Louise" is in 6/4—but it's the same feel. At the time of the first Coattail Riders record I was really into Phil Collins.

MD: You're a natural player.

Taylor: Drums were easy for me from the start. A friend showed me the basic rock beat, and I could play it right away. As far as playing with passion or physicality, I can't really give any tips. I wouldn't know how to explain it. Dave can't explain the way he plays drums. He had a lot of influences—he liked Cameo, that funk drumming. The beginning fill of "Smells Like Teen Spirit," that's kind of a Cameo thing. Those are just little things you pick up along the way that naturally appeal to you, but you don't know why.

MD: Your drum fills in "Rope" are almost quintessential '70s.

Taylor: We tried a bunch of different things. I had other things in mind that weren't working out. I worked on that section for an hour and a half. That's too much time for Dave! [laughs]

MD: What about the fill at the beginning of "Dear Rosemary"?

Taylor: Originally when we did the demo I played something else. The fill was half as long as it ended up being. But one of Butch's favorite rock drummers is Ian Paice. Once Butch discov-

ered that I could do buzz rolls into rock fills, which Ian Paice is famous for on Deep Purple songs like "Burn" and "Highway Star" and "Space Truckin'," he wanted me to do buzz rolls all over the place. I do them in "Rope" after the choruses. That opening fill in "Rosemary" is also like Phil Collins on "Paperlate." That has buzz rolls with toms interspersed. It's all Motown.

Hawkins-Grohl Mind Meld

MD: The Foo Fighters' recording approach begins with you and Dave laying down the basic rhythm track, right?

Taylor: Yes. I think the reason Dave and I tend to start the tracks together is because we're both drummers. As well as being an amazing rhythm guitar player and pop/rock songwriter, Dave identifies as much with drums as anything, if not more than anything. He can get his ideas down holding a guitar and communicating with me as the drummer, and that creates the foundation of the song. Dave can say anything. He'll say, "Play a Motown beat," for example, and we can communicate really well that way. It helps him to be able to work out the arrangement in his head. It's almost like I'm his drum machine.

MD: Are you aiming to lock in with his guitar?

Taylor: Yes, Dave is very into the rhythm of the riffs being locked with the drums. That isn't always the case with rock music. Often the drummer will be playing something simple. Coattail Riders is much more free, with more over-the-bar moments. But with the Foos, Dave likes the drums and the guitar riff to be very locked.

MD: How does the creative process start?

Taylor: Dave will come in with an idea for a guitar riff. He'll have a chord sequence or a melody, and he'll sing me the chorus or an idea for the verses. I'll try different rhythms or ideas with his ideas. Straight time? Half time? Then we'll work out the arrangement and the feel of the song that way. And then we'll record a rough demo—all done very quickly, maybe half an hour. Dave is so quick at laying down a bass track and a couple rhythm guitars. They're very





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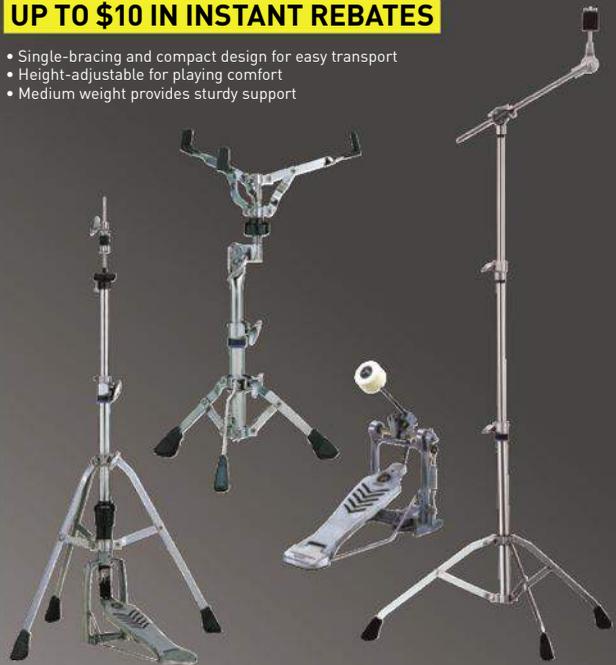
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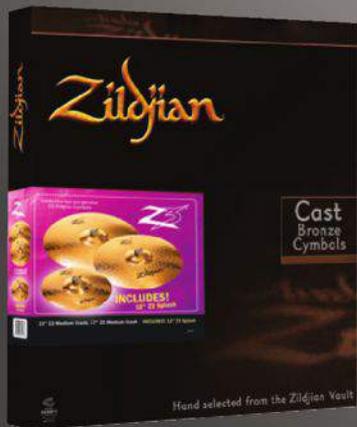
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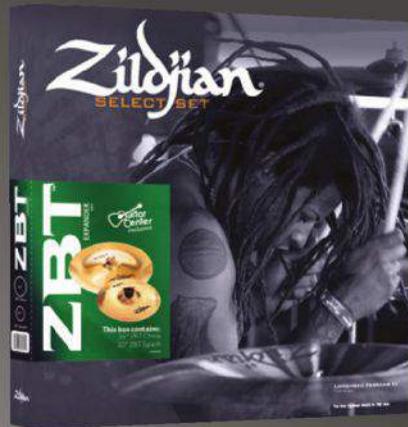


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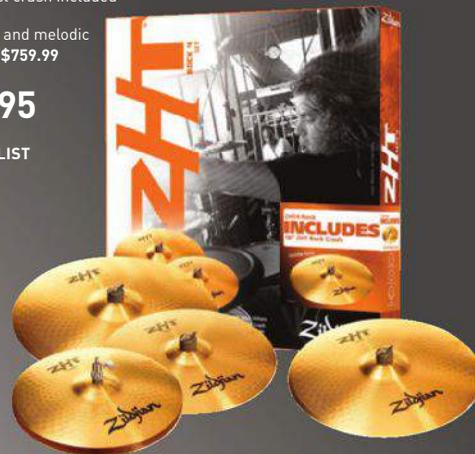


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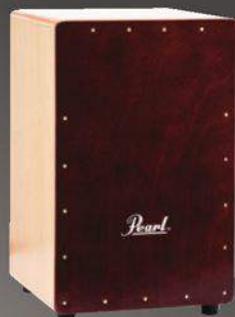
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TAYLOR HAWKINS

raw and simple demos, but they give him a blueprint for how a song should sound. Then he takes those files or tapes home and works out the melody and what the arrangement should be. Then we work on arrangements together.

MD: The two of you do all that before the rest of the band comes in?

Taylor: We do the groundwork, then the other guys come in and throw in little bits and bobs. Nate floats around like [the Who's] John Entwistle—he's very melodic—where Dave's rhythm guitar is almost more of a bass track. Again, like a Who thing almost. The sound of the Foo Fighters is almost the sound of me and Dave locking in, then Nate playing over the top of it.

Whip It Good

MD: You're a long-limbed, wiry guy, so perhaps people don't realize how hard you hit. Do you think of your arms as whips?

Taylor: I don't think about these things—but I gotta think about it for *Modern Drummer*! [laughs] It's just my own weird self-taught way of playing drums. A big influence on me was Steve Perkins. I remember watching him with Jane's Addiction...his big Afro. He was like an animal behind the drums. Not as hard-hitting as I thought he was—he's got a lighter touch than I do. He reminds me of Gene Krupa. He's got a bouncy feel. He's really creative.

I am so lucky—just after high school I had Steve Perkins, Matt Cameron, Dave Grohl, and Jimmy Chamberlin. These amazing stylistic drummers who had their own thing and were so awesome and so creative and had so much feel. Nowadays with the advent of Pro Tools, you don't get as much of that. There's a couple guys I like. Ronnie Vannucci from the Killers is one of my favorites. He's like Bun E. Carlos. And I like Fab Moretti from the Strokes. Those are my two favorite drummers right now.

MD: You play so loose and fast. Is your grip similar to the Moeller technique or more of a tight fulcrum?

Taylor: I hold the sticks more loosely. I try to take advantage of rebound. In the past I did more of a downward stroke, but overall I think you get a better sound

if you use more of the rebound. I watch Kenny Aronoff, who uses a lot of rebound, and he can do whatever he wants.

MD: Like Aronoff, you have a readily identifiable snare drum crack. Where do you hit the snare?

Taylor: Right in the middle. I get a rimshot pretty much every time. I kind of turn my snare drum up toward the set a little bit, like a jazz guy. I aim it in a little bit so that I can make sure to get a

good rimshot. I don't like the snare too low. I sit at about medium height. The snare is a little high. I think I get a whip-like motion on the snare drum. My drum tech, Yeti, says I play hard. He is way bigger than me, but he says, "I don't have that whip like you do." They always tell him to play harder when he's soundchecking my drums, to simulate my playing. But I don't know where that whip came from. It's just natural. I am so natural! [laughs]



Wally Reyes, Jr.
Lindsey Buckingham



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Solo Sticking

MD: Can you break down what you're playing in the YouTube video titled "Taylor Hawkins Drum Solo"? You incorporate the concert toms and play a lot of interesting patterns around the kit over a straight-four bass drum.

Taylor: [Watching video] Okay, this is from a Foo Fighters gig. The first part of that solo is directly ripped off from "Dance on a Volcano" from Genesis's *A Trick of the Tail*. And then there are

some little high tom things...then the floor-tom-to-Rototom part that's directly from the drum solo on Queen's "Keep Yourself Alive" from *Live Killers*. Roger's playing five over four there. It's all my version, completely different, but my interpretation. Then I stop and do a section from Rush's *Exit Stage Left* "YYZ" drum solo. Neil Peart calls it the "schizophrenic" section. He stops and hits weird things. Then I start playing triplets

and crossover triplets between the snare and the floor tom. Not sure where that came from. Maybe a Buddy Rich idea. All of those things are directly ripped off from my three favorite solos as a kid.

MD: On "It's Over" from *Red Light Fever*, the intro drumming sounds like a faster version of John Bonham on "Good Times Bad Times." You play great unison drum fills with the guitar, then the outro is almost like a prog rock arrangement.

Taylor: I wrote that on the piano almost as a Bee Gees/Beatles melodic thing. Very light and pretty. When I write music, it tends to be pretty simple. But I like to mess songs up. One of the guys who helps me make these records is my friend [and Foo Fighters percussionist] Drew Hester. He always gets frustrated with me because he thinks my songs could be hits if I didn't mess with them so much! Projects like Coattail Riders are my outlet for everything I want to do outside of what I normally do in the Foo Fighters. The little prog intro in that song and all the weird stabs and the Mahavishnu outro, it's the book-ends to this really simple, Beatles-ish pop song. I was having fun with arrangement.

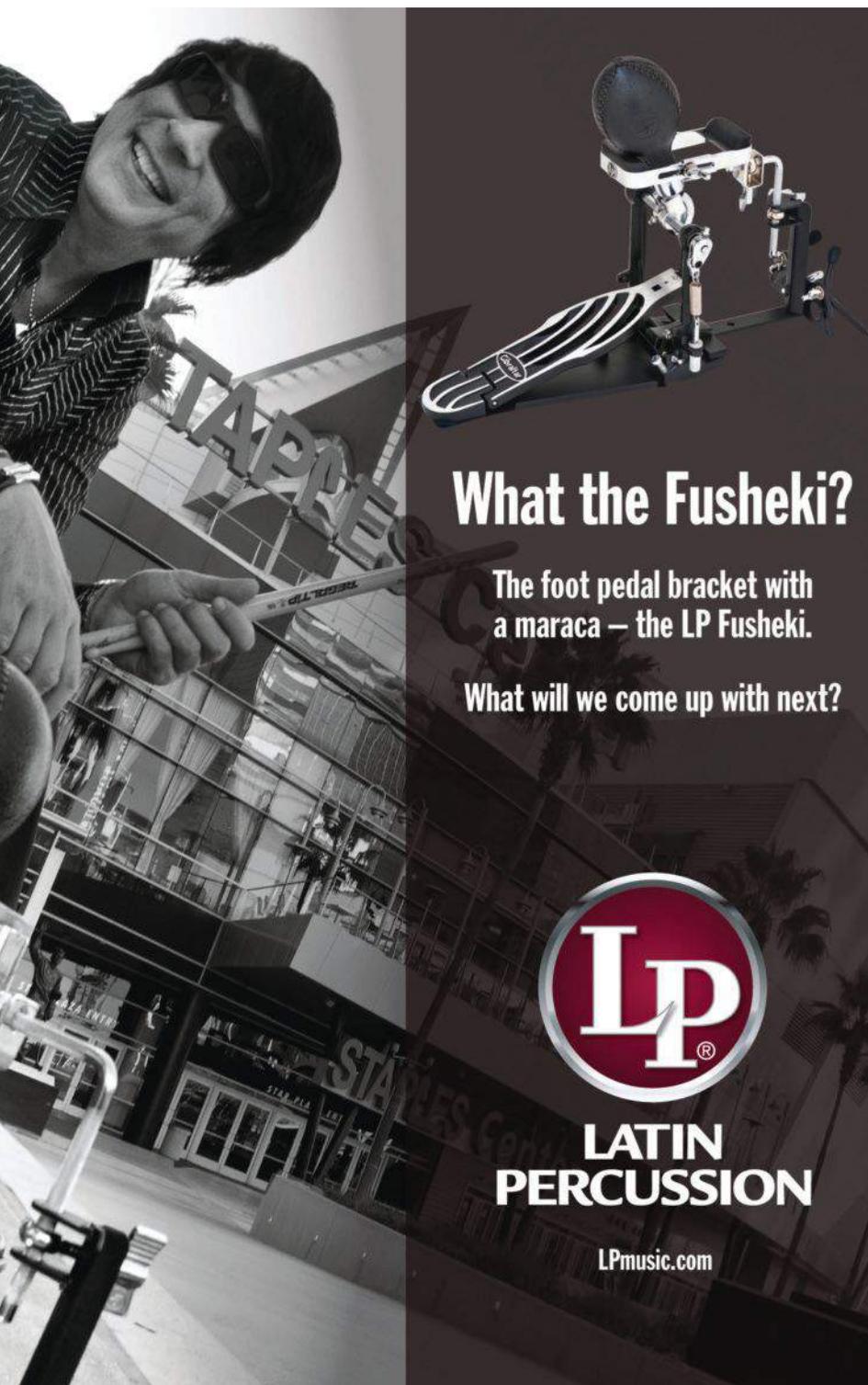
MD: "A Matter of Time" from *Wasting Light* also has a rhythmic turnaround of sorts.

Taylor: In the middle, that's where the rhythm sort of falls over the bar. Dave came up with that. Again, it's Dave bucking what would normally be just a driving rock song. Just due to the fact that Dave is a drummer, a lot of what he writes is rhythmically interesting. The melodies are always there, and there's always a strong chorus. Dave is such a great chorus writer. So it's great to shove all this other weird shit around it. When Dave and I get together, we're just musos. We love to push ourselves musically and impress each other—and impress ourselves. There's a drummer's spirit to this band, no question.

Practicing Here and Now

MD: What do you practice these days?

Taylor: Practicing is usually done with



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TAYLOR HAWKINS

the band; that's how I like to practice. Many drummers will say, "Oh, no wonder you suck," but I don't really find it that pleasing to just sit around and play drums. But if I do, I'll sit with a click track and see how long I can play time, both fast and slow. I practice really slow 2 and 4. I wish I'd had a good drum teacher when I was ten, who would have told me that just learning "YYZ" all day is not going to be enough, that I should play time with a click. If my younger self had had the foresight to play simple open time at 80 bpm for an hour every day, that would have been very helpful. So when I sit down to practice now, that's one of the things I like to do.

I find that I don't really need to be any faster. As far as chops are concerned, I feel you get all your chops within the first five or ten years of learning how to play drums. That's where the sharpest learning curve happens. Your muscle memory is just coming into shape, and then after that it's all about refining things. If I hear a lick from Mahavishnu Orchestra and I want to be able to play it, I will try to master that lick for an hour. Of course, I never *will* master it.

If there's anything I'd like to refine, it's my sense of time. At the end of the day, that's the most important thing. For young drummers, sure, spend a couple hours learning your crazy jazzy licks, but also practice playing straight time, preferably slowly. Because the more space between the notes, the harder it is to keep really good time. Playing slow is a lot harder than playing fast. Doing it well and making it feel good, that's the challenge. That's why Jeff Porcaro was so great. And Charlie Watts and Ringo and Alan White. That drumming is so great because of the space between the notes. That's harder than anything. Some guys are just better at it than others.

MD: How do you warm up before a show?

Taylor: I just have a pair of drumsticks in my hands for a half hour before we get on stage. On whatever couch or pillow is available, I do single-stroke rolls, maybe paradiddles. Nothing strict. The chorus beat in "Rope" is a paradiddle, directly lifted from Neil Peart. It's "The Spirit of Radio" all the way. When we were doing the demo for "Rope," everyone thought it was my idea. But I have to say to Neil Peart in *Modern Drummer*: I'm sorry I stole that from you, Neil, but it was Dave's idea to do that, not mine! [laughs]

Second Best?

MD: How does it feel to play drums in a band led by one of the most famous drummers in the world? Some people still think Dave Grohl is playing the drums on Foo Fighters records.

Taylor: If you've got ears you can hear that Dave and I are totally different drummers. And the fact that we're both drummers is a big part of the chemistry of the band. It's me and Dave communicating on stage and in the studio as drummers. I am honored to be the drummer for one of the greatest rock 'n' roll drummers of all time. But at the same time, it's been important to find my own space within this band and be my own drummer. Dave is super-sensitive to that. He may know rhythmically what he wants to hear, he may want a specific beat, but it's like that with any songwriter, even if you're not a drummer. And I'm down with that—I want what Dave is hearing in his head to come to fruition. And if I can influence it in a good way,



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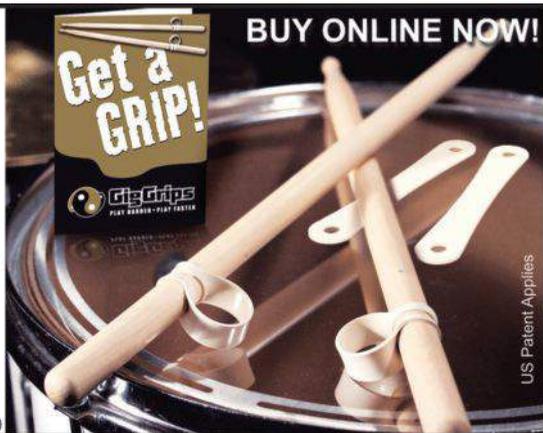
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TAYLOR HAWKINS

make a change that makes the song better, that's great.

Yeah, I'm always going to be considered the second-best drummer in the Foo Fighters. That's something I've gotten comfortable with, because I have to be comfortable with it. But I have the best job in the world. And the truth is, Dave is my best friend. So we're okay. It's everybody else who says, "Oh, you're not as good as Dave."

Some people say we're just two different kinds of drummers but we're similar enough to work together well. That really is the case. I can do what Dave wants for his music. You can't compete with Dave Grohl on any level. He's a supernova, a great musician. He's a tsunami in everything. He's a great frontman, and he's the nicest guy. If there's a rule book on the best way to be a popular rock musician—I hate the term *rock star*—it's Dave. He does it right. He doesn't have a huge ego, though he's got confidence for days. He doesn't take himself seriously, but he takes the music seriously. From the moment I was in his band I thought, *Be like this guy*.

I've also learned everything I know about recording drums from Dave. So basically I have one of the greatest teachers in the world. As musicians, we're all searching to be the best we can be. I have the best role model in the world, who I see every day. We're not competitive.

The outside view? Whatever. It is what it is. Sometimes I've had to develop a thick skin about it. But I am so blessed and so lucky. I'm in this huge rock band. I make way more money than I ever should make doing what I do. And I get to be in a band with my best friend. It's all good.



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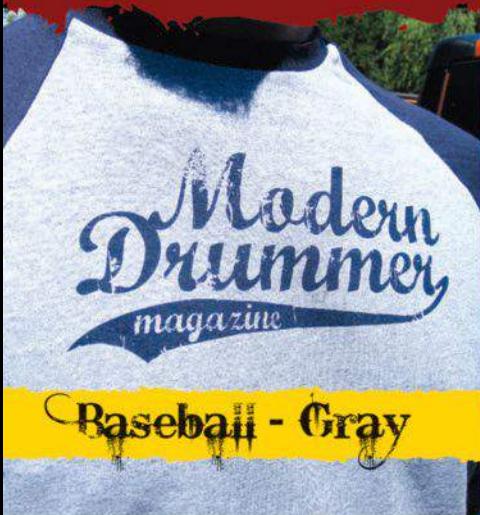
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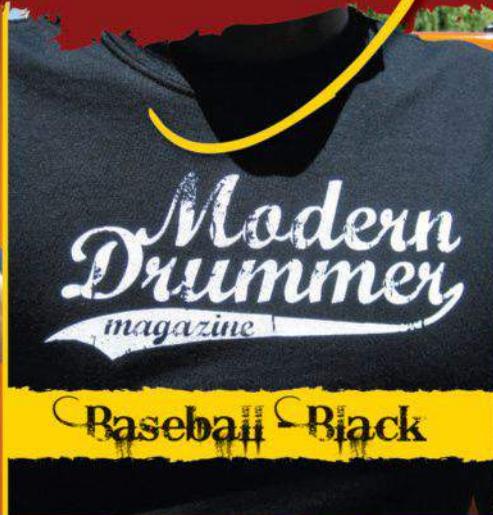
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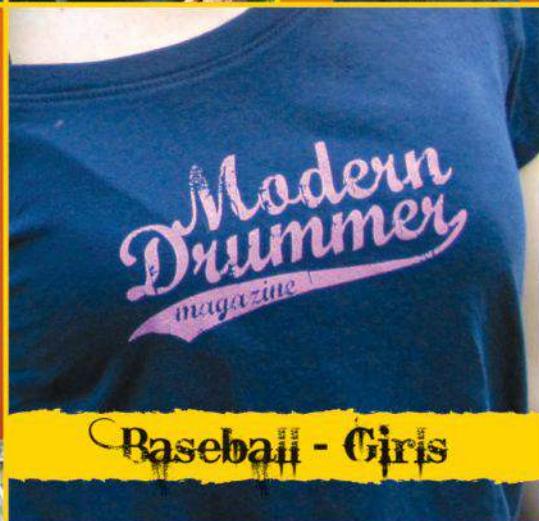
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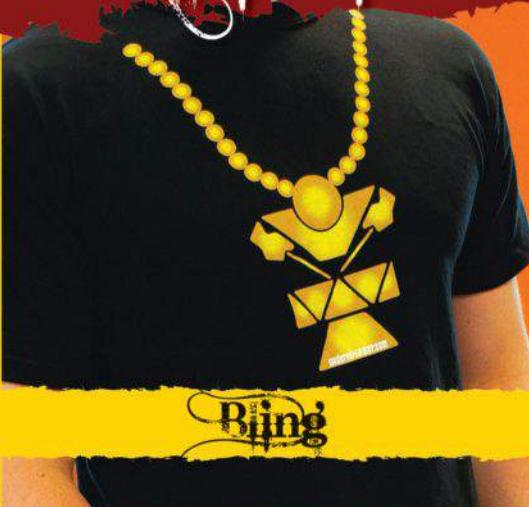


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GET GOOD: DOUBLE BASS

by Billy Brennan

Double bass drumming is most associated with the numerous subgenres of metal music. And rightfully so, since few things in our trade equate with power as much as the bombast provided by a two-footed aural assault.

But the technique can be used to improve the independence of drummers of any style and serve to create new angles in a range of musical situations. We asked the Cult's John Tempesta, Stork's Thomas Lang, and *MD* Pro Panelist/Shadows Fall drummer Jason Bittner to share some of their insights on the double bass experience in order to help you improve your own bi-pedal chops.

JASON BITTNER Shadows Fall

MD: Who was your first double bass influence?

Jason: The first person that made me think about getting another bass drum was Neil Peart, but really my first inspiration—the first drummer I was into that I can remember played double bass—was Keith Moon. Then, being a kid getting into Judas Priest and Iron Maiden and thrash, it basically became all those bands—Slayer, Anthrax, Metallica....

MD: How'd you go about starting to learn double bass?

Jason: I just played along to records. There were no learning tools in 1986 for double bass. It was just getting on the kit and playing—taking whatever you played on the hi-hat and moving your left foot and trying to do it on the bass drum pedal instead. Or just trying to play *dugga-dugga-dugga-dugga-dugga* as fast and as long as I could possibly do it. Once Joe Franco's book *Double Bass Drumming* came out, that was a great tool for me, because it expanded my playing tenfold.

Students and kids nowadays have it *way* easier than we did back in the day. [laughs] The reason I say that is because there's *so* much material available to people these days. I mean, I'm currently in the process of writing another book, and I'm like, *Where do I go with this?* There's so much that's already been done.

MD: In your March 2011 Ask a Pro piece you tackled the topic of



EJ DeCoste

efficient practicing. So how do you practice and improve your double bass now?

Jason: I've realized that I've never technically led with my right foot—I always come in on the "and," which is strange. I'm really leading with my left, and I'm trying to get into the aspect of either truly leading with my left or hitting the downbeat on the 1 with my right. This is causing me to change a lot of my foot patterns, even on songs that I've been playing for years—which is actually a welcome challenge.

A lot of my stuff is definitely *not* sitting there and trying to play as fast as I can. I have the speed, so now it's working on different patterns and using double strokes in the middle of constant 16th notes—using double strokes, period, to get more dexterity. I also work a lot with multi-pedal patterns. But I need to keep up on double bass because I'm not the type of person that can walk away from that and come back a month later and have it be no problem.

MD: As a teacher, clinician, and author, what is your advice to drummers looking to learn double bass?

Jason: Don't try to run before you can walk. If you can play everything fast, that's great. But go back and be able to play it slowly too.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Jason Bittner is the longtime drummer for Shadows Fall and a member of *MD*'s inaugural Pro Panel class. He has won *MD* Readers Polls in the Up & Coming, Metal, Recorded Performance, and Educational Book categories. In addition to Shadows Fall, Bittner drums for the bands Burning Human and Sludge Factory and is an in-demand teacher/clinician.



Thomas Lang's 250-plus credits range from John Wetton to Geri Halliwell and include several solo albums. Lang's DVD releases, *Creative Control* and *Creative Coordination & Advanced Foot Technique*, are among the best-selling instructional videos in history. The drummer has also worked with companies such as Remo, Sonor, and Meinl on gear design, including the latter's Generation X cymbal series. He currently balances consistent session and clinic work with playing in the prog band Stork.



John Tempesta's résumé includes work with Exodus, Testament, White Zombie, Rob Zombie, Helmet, and the Cult. Aside from his recording and touring schedule over the past twenty-odd years, Tempesta has spanned the globe conducting clinics, and he also collaborated with Tama on his signature snare drum model.

MD: In your May 2007 *MD* interview you said you took a step back and listened more to the song to determine your drum parts. How does that mentality affect your use of double bass?

Jason: You can generally tell by the riff if it's suitable for double bass. Also, someone could come in and say, "I'm already feeling double bass here." Lately I've been taking home preproduction demos and recording myself playing over the guitar tracks on my electronic drums, just to see how various parts that we're *not* trying in practice might work—or not work.

There's a time and a place for everything. Not every song needs chugging double bass from start to finish. You also need to keep in mind that you have to go out and play these songs live every single night, eight months in a row, so don't put something down on tape if you can't replicate it live.

MD: Where do you stand on the debate of two kick drums versus a double pedal?

Jason: My thought has always been that if you can play double bass, you can play double bass. If I have a choice, I like two bass drums. If not, can I do it on a double pedal? Yep.

THOMAS LANG Stork

MD: What inspired you to learn double bass drumming?

Thomas: I started playing double bass when the first double pedal was released, because I really wanted to use both feet to play the biggest drum I had in my kit. I wasn't all that inspired by other drummers to start playing double kick. I just realized there was potential, and I wanted to have the option to incorporate it into my playing.

MD: How did you learn double bass?

Thomas: I started using my hi-hat pedal as a substitute for a second kick at a very early stage. I had a Remo practice kit, and on that the kick pad sound and the closing sound of my hi-hat without cymbals mounted on it were very similar. I quickly realized I could play cool little patterns with both feet that sounded like they were played on one drum. I started practicing sticking

Just playing long strings of notes would be boring and totally ridiculous. Imagine doing that with your hands the whole time. You would *never* just play steady streams of notes with your hands: You play backbeats, fills, patterns, different toms, cymbals, and sounds, and every once in a while you don't play anything at all because you're twirling a stick! I look at the feet the same way. I can't play steady streams of notes, because it sounds just as flat and uninspired as when I'm doing it with my hands.

I think there are certain styles of music, like metal, where fast, long, and steady double kick singles have become somewhat of a musical cliché, and that's a pity. I get the concept of drummers wanting to show strength and a degree of learned skill by doing that, but I find it very one-dimensional and boring after a while. I need to be able to play flams, three-, four-, five-, seven-, and nine-stroke rolls, etc., dynamically and with different orchestrations.

MD: You're able to blend double bass into unexpected situations—such as the electro/jazz of "Pinball" from your solo album *Something Along Those Lines*—as well as keep the technique fresh and interesting in styles where it's more of the norm.

Thomas: I'm trying to incorporate the double kick in a way that is natural and nonchalant. I want the bass drum to be part of the whole picture. The kick is just one of my "foot instruments," and often I play syncopated patterns with my left foot on the hi-hat, or on a foot snare, without them standing out so much. I enjoy the feeling of playing with all four limbs, and I enjoy the activity, complexity, and different sounds I can produce. I think those musical choices make my use of the double kick sound more natural, as well as fresh and surprising.

MD: What's your best advice on double bass drumming?

Thomas: Think of the kick drum as another snare drum. The kick defines your time, your feel, and who you are sound-wise, just like the snare. It is also the instrument that can really show what your skill level is. Anybody can play a paradiddle at 200

"Look at your bass drums as very large and low snare drums, and your approach will change—so get out a snare drum book and play everything in it with your feet until they match your hands." —Thomas Lang

exercises from my snare drum books to improve my technique, and I enjoyed that sensation of playing the kit with all four limbs equally involved.

I still play rudiments out of snare drum books. I also play challenging sticking patterns under basic hand beats and long stretches of single strokes and double strokes to build up control, endurance, and power. I always practice in time or along to music, and I always play with my hands as well when I do foot exercises.

MD: Could you discuss your dedication to "pattern playing"?

Thomas: To me the feet are just another pair of hands playing various instruments that are mounted vertically and placed on the floor—not just kicks. The feet are basically doing the same thing as the hands, and I *need* them to be able to do the same things in order to execute my musical ideas.

bpm on the snare, but few can do that on the kick. Look at it as a very large and low snare, and your approach will change—so get a snare drum book out and play everything in it with your feet until they match your hands.

MD: Do you have an opinion on the debate of double pedal versus two bass drums?

Thomas: Just like I want a four-wheel-drive Jeep for terrain and a streamlined V12 for the autobahn, I like either one, depending on the situation. If I'm playing music that's heavy on the double kick stuff, then I will play two kick drums. There's something about that feel and look that is just awesome. It's like having two cannons at your disposal. The downside: the schlepping of the second kick.

When I'm playing music that is not constantly demanding double bass patterns, then I bring just one drum with a double

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pedal. It also seems to surprise people more when you suddenly bust out the blast beats and 32nds on a single kick—it has that “secret weapon” quality to it. And just having one kick allows me to set up more pedal-operated foot drums more conveniently.

JOHN TEMPESTA *The Cult*

MD: How’d you get into playing double bass?

John: What really turned me on to double bass was Cozy Powell—when I heard Rainbow’s *Rising* and the song “Stargazer,” I was like, “This guy’s an animal. He’s got a drumkit like John Bonham, but double!”

I also got into Jethro Tull with Barriemore Barlow. I actually studied with a guy in the Bronx by the name of Pat Nestor, who was a big Tull fan. He was the first teacher I took lessons from, and one of the first double bass beats I learned was “Minstrel in the Gallery.”

DOUBLE BASS BUILDING BLOCKS

The following basic double bass grooves are taken from part one of Jason Bittner’s article series “Double Bass Crash Course,” which originally appeared in the August 2006 issue of *Modern Drummer*. The exercises aren’t overly challenging, but the idea is to play them for extended periods of time and at various tempos. Start out slowly, and play with a metronome. Once you’ve mastered the patterns as written, try them with different ride/hi-hat rhythms.



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9 Exercises to Ease Muscle Tension

Self-Myofascial Release Techniques by Shirazette Tinnin

Preventive health and safety measures are common in the corporate workplace. But what about in the work environment of a professional drummer? Before reading any further, take a few minutes and evaluate your overall treatment of your body during daily drumming. Now ask yourself: Do I take the appropriate amount of time to warm up before sitting down to play high-intensity music? Am I taking in the proper amounts of minerals, vitamins, water, and food to perform at my best? Do I include a stretching, cardio, and resistance workout routine that improves my performance? If you hesitated for a second, then read on.

The focus of this article is to educate you about a not-so-commonly practiced technique called self-myofascial release (SMR), also known as foam rolling. According to the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM), SMR is a technique that uses a foam roller, a tennis ball, a medicine ball, or even a golf ball over a specific area of muscle. Applying pressure to a muscle in this way will inhibit the range of motion, causing the muscle to lengthen and function with more precision over time. The suggested amount of time to do SMR will depend on your pain tolerance. As a guideline, twenty seconds is the minimum and ninety seconds is the maximum.

The NASM says SMR can be used for two primary reasons: to alleviate the side effects of active or latent trigger points, and to influence the autonomic nervous system. For a drummer, that means issues caused by repetition, such as tightness in the joints and ligaments, will be relieved by reducing excess tension. This allows the autonomic nervous system to respond in a snappier fashion. So if you suffer from a knot in the area of your back closest to your ride cymbal, that spot can be alleviated of pain, tightness, and discomfort through SMR.

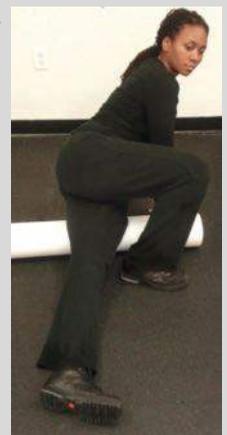
How many of you have awakened to a tingling sensation in some or all of your limbs, particularly in your hands? In that case, your nerve endings are possibly being affected by an overactive or underactive muscle. Taking a few minutes each day to apply SMR can help. The following photos illustrate how to use SMR in a few problem areas that are common among active drummers.

BASS DRUM LEG

I consider the leg that plays the bass drum to be my power leg, and I refer to my hi-hat leg as my speed leg. After a vigorous hour and a half of practicing, performing, or exercising, the bass drum leg may begin to experience cramping, knotting, or severe tightness. What should you do? Your first thought is probably to stretch. You should actually apply SMR and *then* stretch.

As in the photos, you lie on your hip or side and use your upper body and core to roll over the leg muscle. Once you've found the tender spots on the side of your leg, called the IT band, pause for twenty to thirty seconds and then release. Repeat and then switch to the opposite leg.

Having the right leg over the left will open up the hip area for more of a stretch. If that position is too uncomfortable, you can place the right leg on top of the left in a closed position. Inflammation of the IT band can cause many issues, with a main one being chronic knee pain, so don't take this SMR technique lightly.

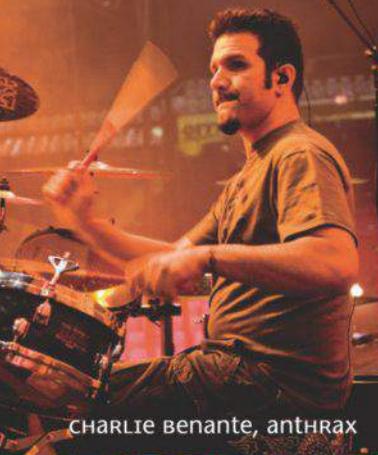


CALF MUSCLE

In this photo I'm applying additional weight by having my left leg rest on my right shin. The foot appears to be lying directly on the knee, but it's actually placed a few inches above. Not everyone feels pressure in the same areas, so it's important to roll around with the foam roller to find your unique problem areas. Once you've found your sensitive spot, rest on that area for thirty seconds, release, and then repeat the process two more times. The sensitive spots should feel like a knot,

accompanied by slight discomfort. The applied pressure will begin to alleviate the tension and create better movement.





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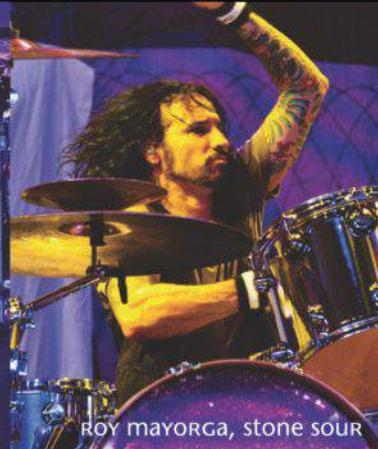
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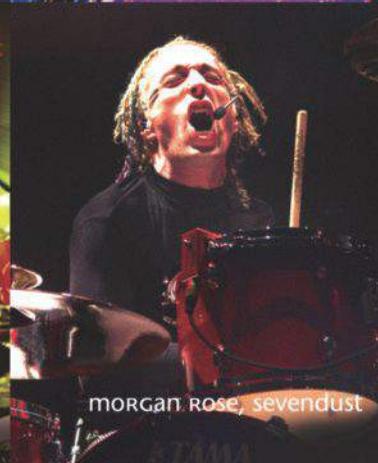
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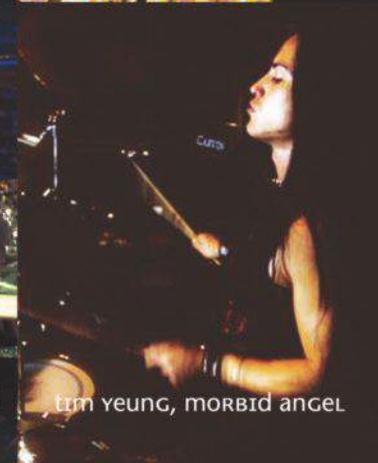
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HAMSTRINGS

When you apply SMR to your hamstrings, keep your legs straight, with support coming from your upper body and core. Roll your body back and forth until you find the tight spots, and hold on that area for twenty to thirty seconds.



QUADRICEPS

Get into a push-up position, with the roller under your quadriceps. You can keep the opposite leg in an upward and bent position (as pictured) or down and straight. Roll your leg up and down until you find a tender spot. Make sure you do the exercise with each leg.



LATISSIMUS DORSI

This position will hit those tight spots on the back. I prefer to hold drumsticks in the playing position to simulate what it feels like when you're about to strike a drum or cymbal. While lying on the foam roller, move your arms as if you're playing, in order to feel which muscles are moving against the roller. This will help you find and isolate the problem areas. Repeat the technique on each side at least three times.

The latissimus dorsi muscle connects to the pelvic area, so be sure to roll all the way down past the lower back and into the gluteus maximus. A lot of drummers suffer from lower back pain, and this technique can help to eliminate some of that.

Shirazette Tinnin is a professional drummer and ISSA-certified personal trainer based in New York City. She can be reached at shirazettetinnin@gmail.com.

BICEPS

To get to your biceps, lie on your stomach, using your opposite arm and core for support. Roll your body on the foam until you find the spot, hold for twenty to thirty seconds, and release. Repeat the cycle two more times, and then switch arms.



PECTORALIS MAJOR AND MINOR

For these muscles, lie face down with your chest on the roller. I recommend rotating your left hip inward to foam roll the obliques. Do the same for each side.



FOREARMS

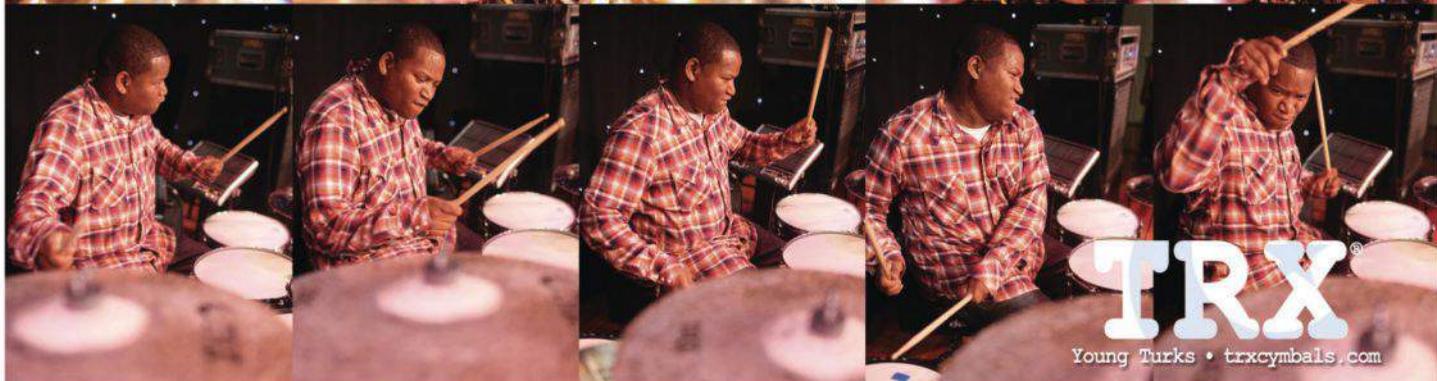
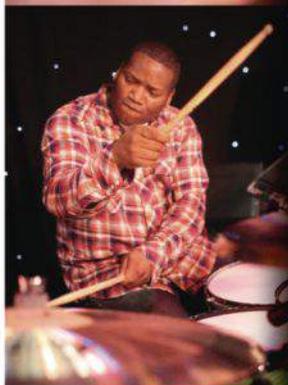
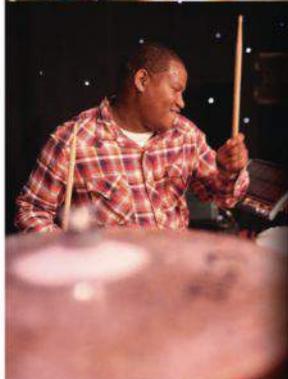
To reach the forearms, sit in a bent position with your knees together, and allow your weight to glide your arms across the foam roller. Sometimes the forearms require a firmer surface than a foam roller, so you might want to try this technique using a tennis ball or medicine ball. Find the spot, hold for twenty to thirty seconds, release, and then repeat two more times on each side.



THE END RESULT

These self-myofascial release exercises should take about fifteen minutes to do. Try them each day, and consider finding an educated health specialist, such as a personal trainer, to help you. I recommend working with someone who is knowledgeable in the area of music performance, especially drumming.







The world-renowned session guitarist, solo artist, producer, and songwriter has been an invaluable asset to the careers of **James Taylor, Jackson Browne, Linda Ronstadt, Crosby & Nash, and Carole King.** And he's been playing drums since the start.

DANNY KORTCHMAR

by Billy Amendola

While coming up on the early-'60s singer-songwriter scene, Danny Kortchmar formed a friendship with an unknown musician named James Taylor. The two became close musical partners, and they've been in each other's pockets ever since. Following a move from New York to L.A. in 1968, Kootch, as he's known to fans and friends, started another long-running working relationship, with singer-songwriter Carole King. In time Kortchmar would participate in the creation of many of the most iconic California pop albums of the '70s, helping to establish a sophisticated yet introspective approach that can still be heard in the music of today's singer-songwriters.

In 1973 Kortchmar released his first solo record, *Kootch*, on which he played most of the instruments, including the drums. Soon after, he formed the band Attitudes with bassist Paul Stallworth, keyboardist David Foster, and drummer Jim Keltner. The group signed to George Harrison's Dark Horse Records, releasing the albums *Attitudes* and *Good News* and acting as the core band on Harrison's *Extra Texture* album.

In the '70s Kortchmar continued to play guitar on albums by Taylor and King, as well as ones by Crosby & Nash, Jackson Browne, Linda Ronstadt, Harry Nilsson, Warren Zevon, Bob Dylan, and many others. In 1981 he joined Don Henley's band and became a cowriter and coproducer for much of the Eagles drummer's solo output. And his ongoing work with Browne resulted in a number of hit



cowriting credits, including "Tender Is the Night," as well as "Somebody's Baby" from the soundtrack of *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*.

Kootch's hitting streak continued in the '90s, with production work for Neil Young, Jon Bon Jovi, Hall & Oates, Billy Joel, Joe Cocker, Spin Doctors, and Hanson. In the early 2000s, Danny became close with Steve Jordan, contributing to the drummer's DVD *The Groove Is Here* and later playing on two albums and a Japanese tour by

Jordan's band the Verbs.

For much of 2010 Kortchmar toured with James Taylor and Carole King, with his longtime associates Russ Kunkel on drums and Lee Sklar on bass. Currently Danny is recording some originals as well as his own versions of hits that he wrote for other artists. After seeing a *killer* recent Kortchmar show, with *SNL*'s Shawn Pelton on drums, *MD* sat down with one of the grooviest guitarists on the planet to talk about his passion for drums and drummers.



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DANNY KORTCHMAR

MD: What kinds of qualities do you look for in a drummer?

Danny: Time, sound, and taste. All the cats I work with have different ways of playing. Steve Jordan, when he plays he always makes everybody else sound better. Kenny Aronoff tunes his kit so you have to hit it real hard, because he plays hard to get his sound—although it doesn't sound like he's bashing. He's a finesse player, but that's how he does his thing. Jim Keltner, his kit is like a piano. Every surface is musical, and he's a total finesse player, though he can sound very loud when playing with a rock band—but using his own technique to do it. Russ Kunkel has terrific taste, and he can find a way to swing at a very low volume but with power and energy, again with great finesse.

These cats have diverse ways of approaching these things, and that's what makes their playing different. I think drummers have the most unusual personalities of all instrumentalists, and personality is definitely a big part of these drummers' playing.

MD: Some people may not know that you play drums. How did you get into drumming?

Danny: When I was a kid I was always interested in drums—I loved them. I bought a snare drum, a hi-hat, and a cymbal from a friend for \$15 when I was twelve years old. I stayed home and bashed away and played along with all my Prestige and Blue Note records. At one point my mother bought me a cheap but really good kit. Even though I was already taking guitar lessons at the time, I never really saw myself as a guitarist. I just loved playing the drums. I got to the point where I could keep a good rhythm going on the cymbal and could do a pretty good imitation of Philly Joe Jones for a couple of bars at a time. [laughs] When I began to work with other drummers as a producer, I learned a lot about what the drums could and should do, and about how to talk to drummers.

MD: You play the guitar very rhythmically. Would you say that playing the drums made this more of a conscious decision?

Danny: Yes. My guitar style is based on playing in the ensemble, and drummers love me because I don't expect *them* to keep the groove. I'm not somebody that plays over the groove. I'm in there with the bass player and the drummer and everyone else, trying to make something happen. I don't think it's just the drummer's job to groove. It's everyone's job.

MD: Who were some of your drumming influences?

Danny: When I was coming up I loved Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones, cats like that. As I started hearing different kinds of music I started to dig Jabo Starks from James Brown's band, Benny Benjamin

at Motown, Al Jackson Jr.—one of my absolute favorites—Zigaboo Modeliste, and all those funksters who were carving it up in the mid-'60s. I got to see Blakey and the Jazz Messengers at the original Birdland when I was a kid, and he was tremendously impressive to me.

MD: How did you feel about drum machines when they first came out?

Danny: I loved them because now I could sit at home and have something to play to. I'd turn that thing on, get a simple beat going, and look up, and it would be two hours later.

MD: Have some of the songs you've written started from just the beat?

Danny: Absolutely! Unfortunately MIDI didn't work very well in its early stages, so there was a lot of compensation. When I listen back now to some of the records we did then, I wish there had been real drums on them. The thing is, singers loved drum machines because they liked singing against something that was exactly in time.

MD: What might a drummer do in the studio that would turn you off immediately as a producer?

Danny: There are several things. First, if they can't get the right sound—like if the snare drum sounds like a cardboard box. If a drummer doesn't know how to tune his drums, I have to hire someone to come in and tune them. Also, guys who just don't have the confidence or the stroke going. This is usually with younger bands rather than the session guys.

I got terribly spoiled playing with the greatest cats in the world. When I'd go to work with bands, I'd suggest things to the drummer, and that would just make it worse. So I learned to let the kid play what he wanted to play, what was comfortable for him, because trying to get him to play what I heard would mean we'd be there for the rest of our lives. And he'd never sound comfortable doing it anyway. One of the things I learned is that you've got to play to the strengths of the people you're producing.

MD: You've worked with so many great drummers. Are there any you would like to work with that you haven't gotten the chance to yet?

Danny: That's hard...there are a lot of great drummers playing now. I wish I'd gotten to play with Greg Errico. Those first three or four Sly & the Family Stone albums were unbelievable. I wish I could have gotten to play with Billy Cobham...there are so many cats!

For more with Danny Kortchmar on the top drummers he's worked with, go to modern drummer.com.

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The Spivack/Wilson Approach to Technique

Part 1: Levers and Wrist Turns

by Richard Martinez and Kevin Crabb

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in the teachings of the legendary Los Angeles drum instructors Murray Spivack and Richard Wilson. Although both gurus have passed away, their ideas live on in such noted students as Chad Wackerman, Vinnie Colaiuta, David Garibaldi, Walfredo Reyes Sr., and Jimmy Paxson, among others. In this series of articles we will explain the educational concepts that Spivack and Wilson used.

Brief Bios

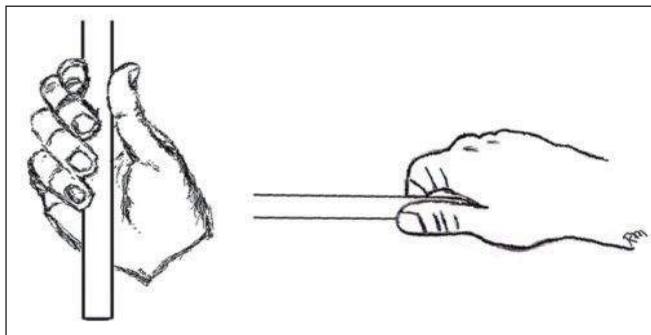
Murray Spivack (1903–1994) studied with timpanist Karl Glassman, snare drummer David Gusikoff, and mallet player George Hamilton Green, and he was an in-demand drummer and teacher in his own right in New York City. After moving to Los Angeles, Spivack took up a career in film as a sound designer and eventually won an Academy Award for his work on the soundtrack to *Hello, Dolly!* Wanting to keep a hand in drumming, Spivack continued accepting students. His teaching reputation soon attracted top percussionists like Walt Goodman, William Kraft, Louie Bellson, Remo Belli, and Richard Wilson.

Richard Wilson (1929–2003) was a child prodigy who had his Carnegie Hall debut at nine years old as a violinist performing the Brahms Violin Concerto. But it was the drums that drew most of Wilson's attention. The artists that Wilson would go on to play drums with include Sarah Vaughan, Duke Ellington, Gary Peacock, Chet Baker, Zoot Sims, and Don Ellis.

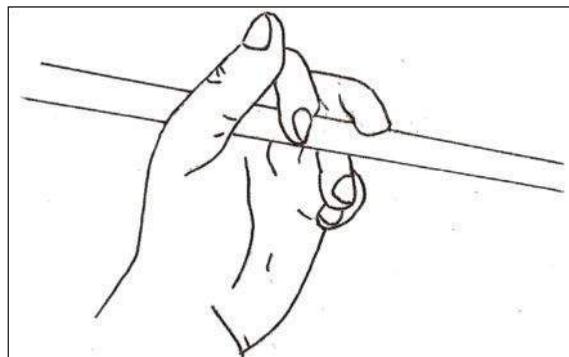
How to Hold the Sticks

According to Spivack's approach, matched grip can be seen as a simple three-finger grasp between the thumb, index finger, and middle finger. The other two fingers—the ring finger and pinkie—don't really have anything to do with it, so they can just relax. The idea behind the three-finger grip is to create a very narrow fulcrum. (More on fulcrums in a bit.)

For matched grip, hold your hands in a playing position, with your upper arms hanging by your sides, your forearms parallel to the floor, and your palms pointed down. Now make a cradle with the first joint of the middle finger, and place the stick in it so that the butt end rests against your palm. Now bring the thumb and the first knuckle of the index finger toward the stick, and hold the stick between the ball of the thumb and the side of the first joint of the index finger. Don't hold on too tightly.



If you play traditional grip, hold your left wrist in the playing position, with your upper arm hanging by your side, your forearm parallel to the floor, and your palm pointed toward you. Now place the stick between the thumb (which remains straight), index finger, and middle finger, allowing it to rest on top of the ring finger, between the first and second joint. The middle finger doesn't really have anything to do with the grip, so just let it relax.



The Fulcrum/Lever System

A fulcrum is part of a lever system, whose parts consist of:

Resistance, or the weight of the object being moved (the drumstick, your arm, wrist, etc.).

Force, or the energy used to move the resistance. The force can be muscles, gravity, or even the rebound energy from a struck drumhead or cymbal.

Lever arm, such as the sticks, your arms, or your wrists. A lever arm can be divided into two parts: a resistance arm and a force arm. The resistance arm is the distance from the fulcrum to the object being moved (resistance). The force arm is the distance from the fulcrum to where the force is generated.

Fulcrum, or point of support (axis) over which the lever



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Open-Handed Playing

Part 1: Unlocking the Hidden Potential

by Claus Hessler



MUSIC KEY

H.H.	X
S.D.	●
B.D.	●

One of the biggest advantages to playing open-handed is that you no longer have to deal with the obstructed movement of crossing your hands to play the hi-hat and snare. Of course, there are ways to arrange your playing in order to avoid these negative effects, but there's no doubt that crossing the hands limits the ability to execute certain combinations of movements. In this article we're going to take a look at some of the advantages of the open-handed position when playing a basic groove.

Basic Unisons

One very important skill for every drummer is the ability to play certain instruments of the kit at exactly the same time, so we'll begin there, focusing on unison rhythms between the snare and bass drum. When playing with the hands crossed, it's much more difficult to get the kick and snare to land together precisely, since you have to align rhythms between opposite sides of the body (left hand on the snare, right foot on the bass drum). In an open-handed position, the right hand (on the snare) and the right foot play together, which will usually feel a lot easier. Check out the following exercise.

Example 1 is a simple 8th-note ostinato (repeated pattern) played on the hi-hat with the left hand. Example 2 is a rhythm to be played on the kick and snare—no flams!

Melding both patterns into one phrase will look like this:

Although it's a simple pattern, if you were to play it using crossed hands, you would run into some serious challenges, because there's not enough room for both hands to move together comfortably, especially in the second half of the

measure. The open-handed position removes that obstacle. Here are three more snare/kick patterns to try against the 8th-note hi-hat ostinato.

Now play the following eight bars in the same manner, with the snare and bass drum phrasing the rhythms exactly together against the hi-hat ostinato.

As you're practicing these examples, start slowly, make sure to accent the quarter-note pulse on the hi-hat, and pay close attention to the quality of the sound on each instrument. The goals are to avoid flams and to achieve a consistent volume level for all kick and snare notes.

Once you've mastered the examples as notated, try moving the snare part to the toms or other sound sources. You can also practice the figures with shuffled 8th notes, and you can replace the hi-hat ostinato with any repeated pattern. Use different reading texts or improvise new snare and kick parts against whichever hi-hat pattern you use.

Separating the Kick and Snare

Now let's look at some variations of the preliminary exercises in which the bass drum is played one 16th note after the snare. The basic rhythms above the staff are the same as before, but the interpretation changes.



Combining our basic 8th-note hi-hat pattern with Example 8 results in the following. Do the same thing with the remaining examples.



You can also practice Examples 8–11 using shuffled 16th notes, and you can switch the position of the bass drum and snare so that the snare plays the second 16th note. After you've mastered those variations, try moving the snare notes to toms, cowbells, or any other sounds on your kit. This will create nice fills and interactive-sounding grooves, all of which will be much more comfortable to play in an open-handed position than with the hands crossed.

One last suggestion: Playing open-handed is usually more comfortable when you lower your hi-hat to be almost level with your snare. This helps you avoid strange positions of the arms and shoulders. You want your arms, shoulders, and elbows to be as relaxed as possible.

I've created a play-along track for you to practice with in order to apply some of these open-handed ideas in a musical situation. You can check out the chart and an MP3 on the Education page at moderndrummer.com or in the *Modern Drummer* Digital Edition. Have fun, and enjoy the journey!



Claus Hessler, who is based in Germany, is an in-demand drummer in Europe. His book, *Open-Handed Playing Vol. 1*, is available through Alfred Publishing. For more info, visit claushessler.de.





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Open Handed Playing - Using the Hidden Potential

BE WHAT YOU ARE

This song started as a straight R&B tune with the working title "Are & Be," but gradually developed different stylistic shadings, from a more funk-oriented sound and feel in letter A, to an Afro-Cuban concept using left-foot clave in letter B. The chart shows a basic idea that you can use as a starting point for that Passage; it is not an authentic example of song, but it is definitely within that stylistic scope. Because the whole song then was no longer a straight R&B style, we just decided to let things go and changed the title to "Be What You Are." Especially in the A section and the solo spots of guitar and keyboard there should be plenty of room to explore the ideas on open-handed playing given in the workshop in the MD magazine. The form is quite simple: The intro features a unision phrase that leads into the A section (but without the melody). After that we go into the AAB form of the song, with guitar playing the melody. The first two bars of the intro take us into the solo with keyboard and then guitar solo. On the guitar solo, the first five bars of letter B follow more of a samba feel, as opposed to the Afro-Cuban feel this section usually has. After the interlude, follow the D.S. (with repeats) and then go to the Coda.

Intro

Fill

2 2

A Melody enters ...

B "Songo-like" ad lib.

PLAY 6

Solos on A-A-B: 1st solo keyboards
2nd solo guitar, then to interlude ...

Intro

Fill **A**

Advanced Blues

Syncopated and Polyrhythmic Feels

by Jim Payne



MUSIC KEY

H.H.	X	B.C.	X
S.D.	X		
B.D.	X		
H.H.C.	X		
W/DR.			

Everybody loves the blues. That's actually how I started as a drummer: I had my sticks and practice pad, and I played along to the blues. (The side of the pad was used as the cymbal, and the center was the snare.)

I worked this way for several years, and soon I was experimenting with more advanced ideas for playing the blues. In this article we'll go through a few of those concepts, namely syncopation and polyrhythms.

First let's touch on the basics of blues drumming. Count using an 8th-note-triplet subdivision ("1-trip-let, 2-trip-let, 3-trip-let, 4-trip-let"). One basic blues beat involves the right hand on the closed hi-hat and the left hand on 2 and 4 on the snare, with the bass drum playing a variety of patterns.

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Now let's add some ghost notes. Play a double stroke with the left hand on the second note of the triplet.

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

In Example 4, notice how the bass drum creates a polyrhythm that establishes a new pulse but then lands right back on beat 1. The basic triplet pulse is grouped in twos to create this effect. Instead of counting "3-trip-let, 4-trip-let" on the last two beats of the measure, you could count the same pulse as "1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2," and then you're back to 1. (More on this later.)

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Now let's alter the right-hand pattern by adding some 16ths. Play two notes for one count of the triplet. In this case, play two 16th notes on the second part of the triplet.

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Of course, you don't have to play the 16ths every time.

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

The same right-hand pattern can be played on the ride cymbal. Normally we would play 2 and 4 with the hi-hat foot, but instead let's add a polyrhythm underneath. It's best to start with a simple 8th-note-triplet pattern with the right hand until you get this concept. Then add the 16th-note triplets.

You could count the triplet pulse of the hi-hat foot pattern as "1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2." This pattern really helps spice up a groove and add some excitement. Just be careful to use it only when it's appropriate, like when a song is building to a climax.

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Dragging or buzzing the left hand into beats 1 and 3 scoots the rhythm along.

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Now let's have both feet play this polyrhythm. The right-hand pattern is basic 8th-note triplets. The left hand plays backbeats on the snare. The feet are grouping the 8th-note-triplet pulse in twos. This sets up the polyrhythm.

1 trip let 2 trip let 3 trip let 4 trip let

Once you have that down, add some ghost notes with the left hand. Just be sure to keep the backbeats solid—that's what everybody keys into.



So far we've been dealing with one-measure phrases using triplet subdivisions. Now let's apply the rhythms from the previous examples to a three-over-four feel, by turning the triplet subdivisions into quarter notes. In Example 11, the backbeat now falls on beat 4 in the first measure and on beat 2 in the third measure. The groove sounds similar to what's in Example 8, but the framework is different. This polyrhythmic approach is one way to add some sophisticated jazzy concepts to the blues.



Example 12 applies the same concept over a backward jazz ride pattern.



Here's a variation using the standard jazz ride in the right hand with a different bass drum pattern.



This last groove has the regular jazz ride pattern on top and some tricky left-hand/right-foot independence underneath. The result is a denser-sounding polyrhythmic blues groove.



At modern drummer.com and in the *Modern Drummer* Digital Edition, you'll find videos of me playing all of the examples in this article, plus two additional clips where I play various rhythms like these over a twelve-bar blues form, so you can get an idea of how to apply these concepts in a real-world situation. There are a lot of ways to play the blues. Go ahead and invent some more!



Jim Payne has played with Maceo Parker and the J.B. Horns and has produced records for Medeski Martin & Wood. He teaches in New York City and online, and his book/DVD *Advanced Funk Drumming* is available through Modern Drummer Publications. For more info, check out funkydrummer.com.

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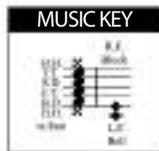
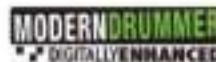
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Ostinato Studies

Part 1: The Building Blocks

by Jason Gianni



From the groundbreaking work of jazz giant Max Roach—notably his 1966 gem “The Drum Also Waltzes”—to Terry Bozzio’s jaw-dropping video series *Melodic Drumming and the Ostinato* and the forward-thinking ideas of many other contemporary drummers, including Grant Collins, Mike Mangini, Steve Smith, Thomas Lang, Benny Greb, and Marco Minnemann, the drumset has gradually emerged out of the background as a support instrument and into the spotlight as a viable solo voice. This series of articles focuses on some modern multi-pedal techniques that can be used to great effect.

To begin, it’s important to understand that drumming over an ostinato (a repeated pattern) can be divided into two categories: stylistic uses, like Afro-Cuban left-foot clave and right-foot tumbao, and soloing ideas built from any rhythmic combination played by various limbs. The examples in this article can be applied to either approach, but we’ll focus on the latter category.

For more creative and technical accent patterns, try taking the same approach with the rhythm melodies found in Gary Chester’s legendary book *The New Breed*. The following accents are taken from measure 1 on page 16.

A few months ago I produced a five-part video titled “Polyrhythm & Ostinato” that has gotten a lot of exposure on YouTube and at paiste.com and vicfirth.com. I’ve since received a lot of questions regarding how the video was put together and where I came up with my ideas. Here, I’m going to break down one of the topics—constructing hand solo ideas over a consistent foot ostinato. You can view the segment of the video that we’re discussing on the Education page at modern drummer.com.

Soloing Over a Multi-Pedal Foot Ostinato

The following foot ostinato is a simple pattern that involves two pedals (hi-hat and bass drum). We will eventually move this pattern to four pedals.



The most logical way to begin soloing with the hands on top of the foot pattern is to play a consistent stream of 16th notes. Start with no accents, and make sure your hands and feet land together accurately.



Now begin to add accents. The following accents are taken from measure 1 on page 38 of Ted Reed’s classic book *Syncopation*. Once you have this phrase down, move through the rest of the page, one measure at a time. Here’s the accent pattern.



This is what the accent pattern looks like when played within consistent 16th notes over the foot ostinato.



When they’re played within consistent 16th notes in the hands, the accents (mixed with the foot ostinato) will look like the following. Practice this example, and then move through the rest of the page in *The New Breed* measure by measure.



Now change the unaccented notes to double strokes.



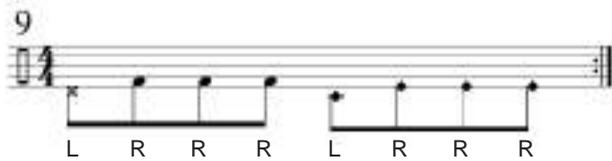
From here you can begin to orchestrate your accents on different surfaces. For starters, try playing right-hand accents on the floor tom and left-hand accents on the high tom. (Reverse that if you’re left-handed.) The double strokes will remain on the snare.



The following accents are taken from measure 1 on page 16.



Finally, you can start expanding the surfaces you're using to play the foot ostinato. When you place alternate pedals to the right of your bass drum pedal and to the left of your hi-hat, you can play the ostinato as a four-pedal pattern.



Now go back and repeat all of the previous examples using a multi-pedal ostinato. Here's what Example 7 looks when played this way.



In the next part of this series I'll show you how to create metric modulations and polymetric phrases on top of a continuous ostinato. Stay tuned, and practice up!



Jason Gianni is a full-time faculty member at Drummers Collective in New York City and a coauthor of the acclaimed instructional book *The Drummer's Bible*. For more information, visit jasongianni.com.



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DINO CAMPANELLA

by Robin Tolleson

He takes multitasking to new levels with the veteran alternative rock band **Dredg**. On the group's new album, he's broadened his palette even further, strategically weaving big beats within cleverly programmed rhythms.

Witnessing the power and drama that Dino Campanella brings to the drumset with Dredg, you'd never guess that he received most of his musical training on piano, starting with lessons at age four. "My mom is an amazing accordion player," Campanella says. "She was adamant about my practicing every day for an hour. It almost seemed insane at times, but looking back it's the best thing that could have happened to me."

When Campanella was fourteen, his family moved from Santa Barbara, California, up the coast to Los Gatos. Dino's musical tastes were changing around that time, and he became friends with three boys who shared interests: Mark Engles, Gavin Hayes, and Drew Roulette.

"At that age," the drummer recalls, "it was like, 'I want to be in a rock band.' This was when Nirvana, Jane's Addiction, the Chili Peppers, Pearl Jam, Tool, all this stuff was breaking through. It was an inspirational time in alternative rock."

Campanella asked for, and received, a drumset for his 8th-grade graduation and began teaching himself to play. "I had all that rhythmic training in piano," he says. "I had the coordination down to do two things at once, left hand and right hand. Obviously I had to incorporate the feet, but it wasn't a

foreign thing to me. I just loved it, so I picked it up fast." When he started jamming with Engles, Hayes, and Roulette, who would become his Dredg bandmates, he made even quicker progress.

Iggor Cavalera of Sepultura, John Stanier of Helmet, and Abe Cunningham of Deftones were big influences on

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Campanella plays Sonor SQ2 X-Ray clear acrylic drums, including a 14x26 bass drum, a 10x14 tom, and 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms. His snare is a 6 1/2 x 14 custom brass/maple hybrid model. He plays Zildjian cymbals, including a 24" Medium ride, a 20" A Custom crash, a 20" Medium crash, and 15" New Beat hi-hats. Dino uses Sonor hardware, Vic Firth 5B wood-tip sticks, and Evans G2 coated snare and tom heads and EQ3 clear bass drum heads. He plays a Yamaha S90 keyboard.



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Campanella in terms of taking his playing to the next level. "I couldn't get enough of those drummers—their sounds and their grooves," Dino says. "I always loved the power behind Chad Smith's playing. I appreciate groove and feel, stuff that just hits you in the soul."

Campanella and his friends were listening to Pantera, Primus, Slayer, Faith No More, White Zombie, and underground bands like Sick of It All. "I started analyzing the music, trying to figure out in my mind how these recordings sound the way they do, and how the drummers played what they did."

The electronica of the 1990s impacted

the drummer's beats as strongly as Carter Beauford's hi-hat work did. "DJ Shadow was a huge influence," Campanella recalls. "For a while I wanted to play drums like his loops were written, kind of old-school sounding, like kick-back kind of swing beats. I liked to play drums like I heard in hip-hop music—DJ Premier/Gang Starr stuff, Wu-Tang Clan, and Gravediggaz."

Dredg is the only band that Campanella has ever been in. "I got lucky," he says. "These guys are good people. We've each gone through huge changes and been there to support each other. We've maintained this friendship, changing so much but having a common bond of loving to

play music together."

In 1998 the group recorded the album *Leitmotif*, which caught the ear of Interscope Records. "It was just our passion for playing music together that made that thing," Campanella says. "The Internet started to happen, so our name spread in California. It felt like we were making it."

Campanella began adding his keyboard skills to the mix when Dredg was working on its 2005 *Catch Without Arms* album. "I'd bring an electric piano to practice when we were writing," he recalls. "I would offer suggestions about chord changes and stuff. I'd play the beat in my right hand and chords or a melody in my left." The songs "Catch Without Arms" and "Bug Eyes" feature Dino doubling on piano.

Dredg's 2009 album, *The Pariah, the Parrot, the Delusion*, rose to number seventy-three on the album charts. The group's 2011 release, *Chuckles and Mr. Squeazy*, is a collaboration with producer Dan the Automator (Gorillaz, Kasabian) that's a serious bid to take Dredg's dark-pop/dubstep sound further.

Campanella says that making *Chuckles* was an education in itself. "We'd record drums on every song," he explains, "and then do what Dan calls a 'hat pass'—hi-hat and ride cymbal, a couple takes of each. He would start programming beats as well, and then he would use a combination of the live drums and the beats. It's fun to do drums with Dan. He made me feel really comfortable, like, 'You don't need to overthink this—it's all going to sound great. You're a good drummer. We're going to go in there and bang it out, and we'll use what's right for each song.'"

The amount of live drums on the record varies from track to track. "On the verses and choruses of 'Down Without a Fight,' it's just my hi-hat and cymbals," Campanella says. "Then Dan used the whole live kit for the middle section. It's a different way of doing things. It's exciting. For a band that's been playing together for eighteen years it's refreshing to try something like this, with someone who comes from a different perspective."

The challenge for Campanella on the slower tune "The Tent" was keeping the heavy groove in the pocket and giving it a pulse. "You have to maintain that soul and passion no matter what the speed or complexity," Dino says. "I remember soaking into that one as much as I could. That energy translates onto recordings. The passion does somehow grab our ears."

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GEARING UP Drumkit Details, On Stage and Up Close

Korn's RAY LUZIER

Interview by Dave Previ
Photos by Paul La Raia

Drums: Pearl Reference series in granite sparkle finish

- A. 16x18 gong drum
- B. 6½x12 custom snare
- C. 16x16 floor tom
- D. 8x12 tom
- E. 5½x14 steel snare
- F. 9x13 tom
- G. 16x18 floor tom
- H. 6x9 and 6x10 tube toms
- I. 18x24 bass drum

"With Korn, I switched to bigger drums," Luzier says. "They sound thicker and a bit fatter, and it takes a little bit more energy to get the full sound out of them."

Hardware: DW, including 9000 series double pedal, hi-hat stand, and custom rack system

"I told Nissim Aharon, who built this rack system, that it had to be curved and weird. I didn't want anything square or straight on it. I also told him that I wanted it to be built around my center China with nothing else in front of me."

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 21" Holy China
- 2. 19" AAX X-Treme Chinese
- 3. 18" AAX X-Plosion crash
- 4. 10" AA splash
- 5. 14" AA Rock hi-hats
- 6. 8" Vault Radia bell
- 7. 19" AAX X-Plosion crash
- 8. 10" Glennie's Garbage splash
- 9. 21" AA Rock ride
- 10. 18" APX O-Zone crash
- 11. 20" X-Plosion crash
- 12. 16" Radia China under 16" AA hi-hat bottom
- 13. 20" Vault V-Crash with inverted 12" Ice Bell on top
- 14. Vault Max Stax Low
- 15. Vault Max Stax Mid
- 16. Vault Max Stax High

"My cymbals are angled almost toward the audience. I love coming down with the shoulder of the stick and connecting with the top of a cymbal, especially with a heavy band like this. Cymbal companies will tell you it's an improper way to hit a cymbal, but I get the sound I like that way, and it feels great."

Heads: Remo Emperor X snare batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Clear Emperor rack tom batters and Clear Diplomat bottoms, Clear Ambassador floor tom batters and Clear Diplomat bottoms, and Clear Powerstroke 3 bass drum batters (with



Falam Slam pads) and DrumStatic custom front heads

Mics: Shure Beta 57A on top of snares and Beta 56A on bottom, Beta 56A on tube toms, Beta 98A on rack toms, Beta 52A on floor toms and bass drums, SM81 on hi-hat, KSM137 on center China, and KSM32 as overheads

Electronics: Yamaha DTX-MULTI 12 pad with extra XP pad

"This pad is really solid. I use it for a few patches, rimclicks, and a lot of electronic 808 sounds. I hit hard, and I needed something that didn't pick up the vibrations of the drums and cymbals close to it. When I got these pads, that problem was gone."

Sticks: Pro-Mark Ray Luzier 757 model

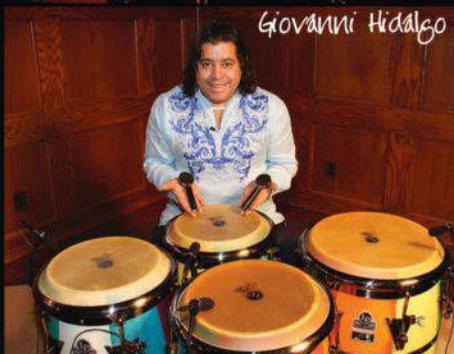
"It's a little longer than a 5B and a little fatter on top, which gives the stick a bit more velocity and power than a regular 5B."



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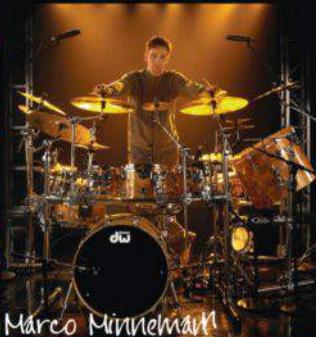
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vicfirth.com



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Dixon's new Custom Cherry Collection features drums made of a combination of cherry and mahogany. The lacquered shells are 9-ply (7.3 mm) with 45-degree bearing edges, black hardware, and 1.6 mm hoops. Kits are available in four- and five-piece configurations, in light brown and brown burst finishes. List prices are \$1,069 for the four-piece setup and \$1,159 for the five-piece.

The new high-gloss Outlaw kit finish "matrix green" has a cascade of green sparkles streaked through black lacquer. The kit features 7-ply maple shells (7 mm bass/snare shells, 6 mm toms) with 45-degree bearing edges and 2.3 mm power hoops. Evans G2 batter heads and G1 resonants are included.

dixondrums.net

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The Walkabout series is the personal project of Brady Drums founder Chris Brady, who travels deep into the remote deserts and forests of Australia to hand-select small amounts of rare, indigenous timbers, which are then handcrafted into limited editions, rarities, and one-of-a-kind snare drums. So far in 2011, Brady has released five goldfields gimlet (*eucalyptus salubris*) block snare drums, one sugar gum (*eucalyptus cladocalyx*) block snare, one wandoo (*eucalyptus wandoo*) ply snare, and one spotted gum (*eucalyptus maculata*) block drum.

bradydrums.com.au





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Porter & Davies' updated BumChum bass drum monitor, the BC2, includes a voltage selector switch for use in different countries, plus phantom power, an XLR socket, NL4 sockets and connector leads, and a smaller flight case. The BC2 uses bone conduction to deliver powerful and precise—but silent—bass drum reproduction.

porteranddavis.co.uk



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Toontrack's latest MIDI collection, Blues MIDI, includes breaks, fills, and twelve-bar groove variations in various tempos, feels, and time signatures. The library works with the company's drum software EZdrummer and Superior Drummer 2.0.

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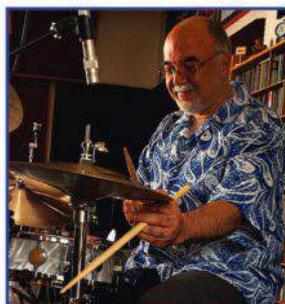
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bosphoruscymbals.com





BRENDAN BUCKLEY

photo: Rene Leguy



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—Brendan Buckley (Shakira)

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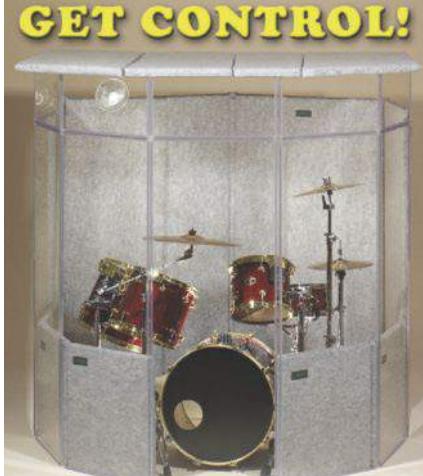
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SAM ULANO

The notorious, still-active ninety-year-old drummer has been a **guru to generations of players** with his no-nonsense, even controversial approach. by Ken Micallef

Sam Ulano is the Energizer Bunny of the drumming world. Ninety years old and still maintaining a busy teaching, practicing, and performing schedule, Ulano has enjoyed accomplishments that are unparalleled. He has published enumerable instructional books and pamphlets called “Foldys” (more than 2,500 by his count). He’s performed or recorded with everyone from Moondog to Johnny Lydon’s PiL. He had the first—and perhaps last—cable TV show dedicated to drumming, which ran from 1975 to 1981. He once held the Guinness record for the longest drum solo (sixty-seven hours). His New York City drumming school, founded in the early 1950s, hosted such greats as Art Blakey, Max Roach, and Papa Jo Jones. He’s produced countless CDs, tapes, and videocassettes. And a documentary, *Sam Ulano’s Drumming Life: I Love What I Do*, was produced recently by his son, Mark, an Academy Award-winning sound engineer. A

man of singular vision, Sam is sure of what makes a great drummer—and what doesn’t.

“The twenty-six rudiments are cancer to a drummer,” the legendary educator asserts, more than a little provocatively, from his New York City apartment. “The first thirteen were created for parade drumming in 1812. They had nothing to do with [kit] drumming, because there was no drumset then. Now it’s 2011, and the twenty-six rudiments are the reason drummers can’t play the instrument and usually end up quitting and getting a day job. I use weights and metal drumsticks to build up my hands. I’ve been doing that for sixty-five years. My hands are as strong as they can be. Rudiments won’t make your hands strong.

“Listen to this, and if I am wrong I will eat it without ketchup or salt on it,” Ulano continues. “Rudiments don’t show up on any big band chart, or on a Broadway theater chart, or in

the classics by Beethoven, Bach, or Brahms, or in TV or film music. Rudiments have nothing to do with playing the instrument.”

Ulano, who counts among his former students Tony “Thunder” Smith, Allan Schwartzberg, Marvin “Smitty” Smith, Dion Parsons, and Art Taylor, focuses on reading as a means to success. A drummer who can read music and is well versed in many styles—another Ulano focus—is more likely to work than one who performs the cleanest rudiment or has the fastest Drumometer speed.

“I give a drummer a listening test when he first comes to me,” Ulano explains. “Music is math, so how’s your math? Do you know why an 8th note is an 8th note? Most musicians don’t know why. It’s an 8th note because it has a line across the top of it, and that line came from mathematics.”

Ulano began playing the drums at age thirteen and opened his first stu-

dio four years later. In high school he won the gold medal for music. He attended the Manhattan School of Music before entering the army, where he trained a hundred-piece drum corps. After World War II, Ulano opened a popular Times Square-area drum school, and while performing nightly at such NYC hot spots as the Gaslight Club, he also appeared on television, with Steve Allen on *The Tonight Show*, as well as with Garry Moore (*What's My Line?*), Ernie Kovacs, and Joe Franklin. All the while writing, teaching, and practicing, Ulano built a loyal following of students and admirers.

Sam's most popular instructional-book titles include *Bass Bops* (one of the first drumming methods to deal with bebop), *You Gotta Have a System*, and *Insanity Four Drummers*. Ulano recommends his *Drum Reader* series for beginning players.

"The first three *Drum Reader* books are elementary," he says. "They're not about how to hold the sticks and all that garbage. These are books that break down the basics of reading. Books eight, nine, and ten are advanced and would blow anybody's mind. But they are an organized system of study. You can buy all these on my website [samulano.com]."

Ulano also stresses the importance of understanding rhythms beyond the confines of rock. "Can you play a paso doble? Can you play a hora? Can you play Greek rhythms? Can you play in any musical situation? If you can't read, you can't learn those situations. My books deal with that."

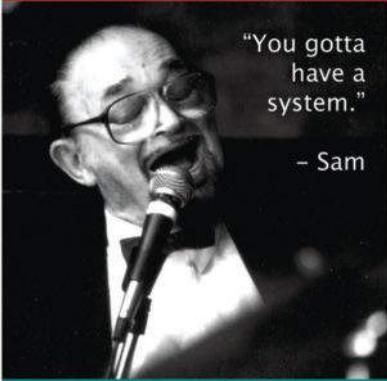
Sam's physical regimen is impressive for a man of any age. He lifts weights daily (fifty reps of ten-pound weights), performs stretches, and maintains his high school weight of 154 pounds.

"I believe in a system," Ulano says. "Every day I read [music], and I write books in a series. I created my own counting system. Tony 'Thunder' Smith has talked about my system. Drummers speed up and slow down because they've been trained to do that. They play the mommy-daddy, mommy-daddy roll from slow to fast, then they get in a band and subconsciously speed up. If they know how to count, they won't do that."

Beyond drum lessons, Ulano stresses life lessons. He believes his method helps drummers make a living and continue to play long into their adult life. "The big crime today," Sam says, "is that young people spend time in the studio rehearsing original music, then release a CD that never stands a chance, and they're not learning the business. They don't study, they don't find a teacher to instruct them in this business, and the next thing you know they have to get a day job. You have to support yourself. You can't do that by playing a five-stroke roll or a paradiddle. Unless they get rid of that garbage, they will never play the instrument on a professional level."

Ulano's latest books offer advice on aging and swinging well into the golden years. *I Love What I Do! (A Drummer's Philosophy of Life at Eighty)* and *Keep Swinging! (Approach Your Senior Years Without Skipping a Beat)* gather Sam's sage wisdom into easily readable, inspi-

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"You gotta have a system."
 - Sam

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ration volumes. So, what is the author's key to longevity? "I lift weights every morning. I do leg stretches. I don't eat after six o'clock. I don't get in debt—no credit cards. And I practice with metal drumsticks. That is very controversial. I go out with friends and listen to music. I'm a half-ass singer, so I sing a few tunes. I keep my brain clean. I don't worry. There's nothing that bothers me. You've got to have a purpose, and you have to organize yourself. I live by a system. You gotta get a system!"



Ulano performing at New York City's Gaslight Club in the '70s



During WWII, Ulano played in a band performing in USO shows with Bob Hope, Danny Kaye, and others.



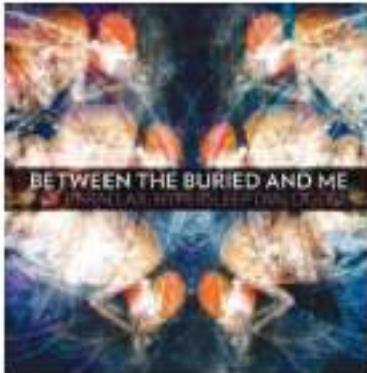
Sam in his Bronx studio. Every Monday night he had open clinics with well-known guests sharing what they knew.





LED BOOTS: A HEAVY ROUNDUP

This month we hip you to some of the **cooler hard-rock albums** released so far this year, as well as some multimedia titles that'll kick your own drumming efforts in the pants.



BETWEEN THE BURIED AND ME

THE PARALLAX: HYPERSLEEP DIALOGUES

Between the Buried and Me is well known in metal circles for epic-length, operatic songs. It's not something that's pulled off easily by bands not named Mastodon, but BTBAM continues to carve a comfortable niche with the *Parallax* EP. Each of the three tracks clocks in at more than eight minutes and can run the gamut from searing death metal to stuff that sounds like the musical lovechild of Bavarian and Spanish folk tunes and Salvador Dalí's art; just check out the transition at 6:20 in "Augment of Rebirth." Meanwhile, opening track "Specular Reflection" sounds more Schoenberg than Slipknot at first, before erupting in metal mayhem. Nearly twelve minutes later, it's hard to believe it was all one song. Throughout the myriad of stylistic shifts, drummer **BLAKE RICHARDSON** holds everything together—sometimes with mind-boggling speed and dexterity, and sometimes with open grooves and rimclicks. (Metal Blade) **Billy Brennan**



MASTODON

LIVE AT THE ARAGON

Live at the Aragon (also available on DVD) finds the Atlanta progressive metal group running its latest album, *Crack the Sky*, with added vigor in the concert setting. **BRANN DAILOR** sticks to his parts, executing busy but appropriate fills with precision and even singing lead on "Oblivion." Check out "The Czar,"

where Dailor throws down 32nd-note triplet figures across his toms, and "The Last Baron," a crushing thirteen-minute onslaught of pummeling snare. An assortment of older, even heavier tracks closes out the disc, cementing Dailor's place as one of the most inventive and hardest-working metal drummers today. (Reprise) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

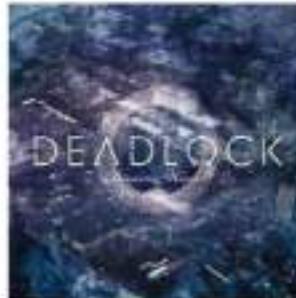


RIVAL SONS

PRESSURE AND TIME

This one's easy to love. As enjoyable as Jack White's recent foray into funky, riff-tastic garage rock with the Dead Weather has been, Rival Sons seem to inhabit that world even more comfortably. Bathed in a hugely enjoyable analog haze (or at least a fine approximation of it), the songs on this L.A. band's second full-length album call to mind

Humble Pie, the Black Crowes, and yes, Led Zeppelin, but more convincingly than work by the vast majority of bands that have walked a similar path. Like his bandmates (especially singer Jay Buchanan), drummer **MICHAEL MILEY** sounds like an old soul, grooving like mad, getting his chops in at the right moments, and leading the highly dynamic proceedings with intensity and style. Very well done. (Earache) **Adam Budofsky**



DEADLOCK

BIZARRO WORLD

Deadlock's sound has always been based around conflicting elements—fast riffs and metal beats versus dance grooves and synth sounds; the throaty, aggressive vocals of Johannes Prem versus the melodic singing of Sabine Scherer.... *Bizarro*

World seeks to play out this concept even further. The formula isn't exactly new, but the band pulls it off exceptionally well. Drummer **TOBIAS GRAF** displays his range and sense of what's appropriate, showcasing double bass chops and the right levels of complexity under the metal sections, while laying down toe-tapping grooves when the songs open up under Scherer's anthemic vocals. (Lifeforce) **Billy Brennan**



CRADLE OF FILTH

DARKLY, DARKLY, VENUS AVERSA

Goth metallers, rejoice! The ninth studio effort by Cradle of Filth is a relentless onslaught of horror-inspired soundscapes that could wake the most damned of souls.

The songs are riff heavy, with theatrical keyboards, chops-laden drumming by **MARTIN SKAROUPKA**, and frontman Dani Filth's signature multiple-personality vocals. The drum sounds may be overproduced, but they work within the context of the music and help capture Skaroupka's creative flourishes around the kit. Cradle of Filth certainly knows how to ride the razor's edge between devilry and conceptual whimsy. (AbraCadaver/Peaceville) **David Ciauro**

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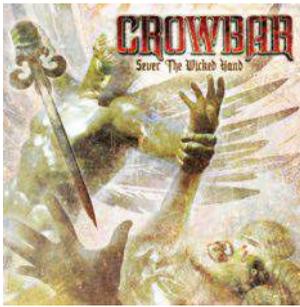
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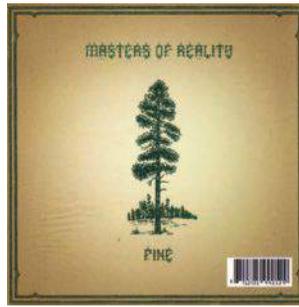


CROWBAR

SEVER THE WICKED HAND

The legendary New Orleans sludge-metal band Crowbar returns with *Sever the Wicked Hand*, its first release in six years. As we all know, sometimes playing slowly while keeping up a solid groove is the hardest thing of all on the kit, but **TOMMY BUCKLEY** makes it sound dead simple. In fact,

Buckley's mastery of a wide range of tempos is apparent on the first three tracks alone. Opener "Isolation (Desperation)" features a perfectly suited mid-tempo groove and tasteful tom rolls. The title track follows with punk-like intensity and syncopated double bass work. Then "Liquid Sky and Cold Black Earth" offers a thick, atmospheric riff that requires Buckley to draw out his groove and tempo control to a tense sluggishness—particularly impressive considering that the aggression of heavier music almost inherently tempts drummers to speed up. (E1) **Billy Brennan**



MASTERS OF REALITY

PINE/CROSS DOVER

Knowing about the hermitlike Masters of Reality is like being part of a secret society that understands what rock 'n' roll is meant to sound like. The band's two halves, Chris Goss (vocals, guitars, bass, keyboards) and **JOHN LEAMY** (drums, keyboards, guitars), have been periodically pumping out their unique genre-bending musical stylings for almost two decades. Leamy's drum arrangements are the pinnacle of purposeful and showcase a talent for enhancing songs without vying for the spotlight. *Pine/Cross Dover* is filled with special guests and displays MOR's groundbreaking song structures, which will give fans of Queens of the Stone Age, Eagles of Death Metal, and Foo Fighters insight into the musicians that influenced some of today's most revered rock icons. (Cool Green Recordings)

David Ciauro



THURSDAY

NO DEVOLUCIÓN

It's been interesting to witness the influence of shoegazing bands like My Bloody Valentine and Ride on heavy indie acts like ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead and True Widow and new-metal groups like Om and Harvestman. With Thursday's sixth and latest album, *No Devolución*, the band

has taken the appropriation of chiming, washy guitars, gauzy vocals, and trancelike rhythms to a natural and highly pleasing place. Drummer **TUCKER RULE** sounds fantastic here, often constructing hooky beats that make for unusual song foundations ("No Answers," "Past and Future Ruins") yet finding ample room to add waves of drama within the structures. (Epitaph) **Adam Budofsky**



CAVALERA CONSPIRACY

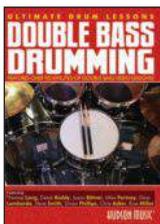
BLUNT FORCE TRAUMA

Drummer **IGGOR CAVALERA** and his brother, vocalist/guitarist Max, reunite for Cavalera Conspiracy's sophomore effort. The album's title is certainly fitting, as the band unleashes eleven tracks of unremitting heaviness. On "Torture," Iggor appropriately supports the two minutes of all-out aggression

with brutal punk/thrash beats, while "Genghis Khan" sees the drummer stretching out a bit with more open rock beats, nice hi-hat work, and a sparse and sludgy groove supporting the breakdown. "Burn Waco" features both approaches, with Cavalera laying down an infectiously simple beat that the guitar riff builds on before bursting into faster thrash sections and then coming full circle with catchy guitar/drum interplay in the choruses. (Roadrunner) **Billy Brennan**

HELPING YOU WITH YOUR HEAVY

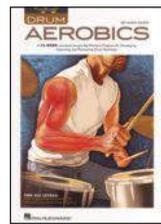
A couple of new educational materials focus on skills that will improve your ability to bring the thunder.



ULTIMATE DRUM LESSONS: DOUBLE BASS DRUMMING

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$14.99

The opening performance from the originator of double bass drumming, Louie Bellson, sets the pace for this well-rounded glimpse at the evolution of the enduring and constantly evolving technique behind playing two kicks. Tour guide Dom Famularo enthusiastically leads us down a chronological path of notable innovators, including Carmine Appice, Simon Phillips, Steve Smith, Dave Lombardo, and contemporary metal masters Mike Portnoy, Thomas Lang, Jason Bittner, Chris Adler, and Derek Roddy. The material is compiled from previously released Hudson Music videos and includes live and studio footage, play-along performances, solos, and instructional clips. From basic to bewildering, this reasonably priced DVD covers the full spectrum of double bass drumming. (Hudson Music) **Mike Haid**



DRUM AEROBICS BY ANDY ZIKER

BOOK/CD LEVEL: ALL \$19.99

With *Drum Aerobics*, author Andy Ziker looks at drumming from a physical perspective—a concept that all heavy players can understand and benefit from. The package doesn't focus on metal, thrash, and punk at the exclusion of other styles, however. Rather, the 120-page book features a fifty-two-week series of assorted genre-specific daily practice routines designed to develop coordination, grooves, solos and fills, and "drumnastics" (big ending licks). It opens with a series of drummer-specific, yoga-style stretching exercises, which leads into daily drumming workouts. Each workout includes a description, a transcription, and tips for optimum results, along with a track listing for the brief audio examples (including play-along grooves) found on the accompanying CDs. Wisely, the user-friendly, real-world exercises gradually increase in difficulty, making them easy to approach for beginners. (Hal Leonard) **Mike Haid**



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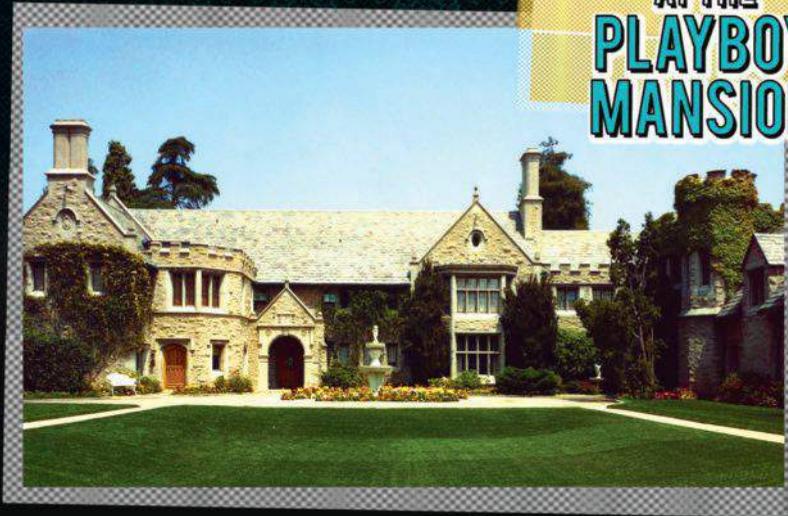
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JR Robinson

Modern Drummer Hosts a Drum Hang at **ROCK 'N' ROLL FANTASY CAMP** in Hollywood

On May 13, 2011, *MD* associate editor Billy Amendola hosted a *Modern Drummer* Drum Hang at the Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp in Hollywood, California. Two days before the big night, Billy stopped by L.A.'s AMP Studios to surprise the campers with Buckcherry's **Xavier Muriel** and Prince's **John Blackwell**, who sat in on an afternoon master class by camp counselor **Fred Coury** (Cinderella).

MD's April 2011 cover artist, **John "JR" Robinson**, kicked off the Friday-night Drum Hang by playing along with two of his many famous tracks—by Rufus and Eric Clapton—before he was joined on stage by a few of L.A.'s top drummers, all taking turns and trading licks. Sitting in were R&B great **James Gadson**, Michael Jackson's **Jonathan Moffett**, master percussionist **Daniel de los Reyes** (Sheryl Crow, Don Henley, EWF), camp counselor **Matt Sorum** (Guns n' Roses, Velvet Revolver), longtime camp counselor and cohost of the night **Sandy Gennaro**, Quiet Riot's **Frankie Banali**, **Athena** and **Miles Lee** (sister and nephew of Tommy Lee and great drummers in their own right), Little Richard's **Charles Connor**, the Doors of the 21st Century's **Ty Dennis**, percussionists **Roland Garcia** (*American Idol*) and **Richie Garcia** (Diana Ross), teen sensation **Cole Marcus**, Ringo Starr and Dave Stewart's **Randy Cooke**, L.A. session drummer **Ryan Brown**, Steve Lukather's **Eric Valentine**, Filter's **Mika Fineo**, Purple Melon's **Jason Ganberg**, Low Millions' **Erik Eldenius**, and CTA/Chicago's **Danny Seraphine**.

"It was a phenomenal experience, an awesome night that I will never forget," camper Saverio Maglio says. "And the drummers were all so friendly—it really felt like a family get-together."



James Gadson



Frankie Banali



Sandy Gennaro

Ed Nijjer, drummer in counselor Rudy Sarzo's Fantasy Camp band, says, "The master class with Blackwell and Xavier was a wonderful afternoon of great stories. It was immense to hear where they came from and where they are today. The MD Drum Hang was absolutely amazing. I could not believe some of the things JR was playing. And for me personally, meeting Frankie Banali was fantastic. Watching the interaction between all the different drummers made it a very special night. To be in a room with that much talent was electric!"

Camper Frank Ginocchio, who also attended the Philly camp last year, says, "It was a living history museum with some of the greatest and most influential drummers of many eras. Seeing and hearing these legends jamming together was stunning to say the least, and there was not one ego in the room. Without a doubt, it was every drummer's dream come true."

Longtime camp counselor and former Quiet Riot, Whitesnake, and Ozzy Osbourne bassist Rudy Sarzo sums it up by saying, "For a veteran bass player like myself to be on stage jamming with such legendary drummers as John 'JR' Robinson, Jonathan Moffett, Charles Connor, and Danny Seraphine was truly a dream come true. These are the drummers whose rhythm sections have inspired me to take my musical contributions to the next level. Thank you, *Modern Drummer*, for making my rock 'n' roll fantasy come true. It was an amazing night of percussive genius!" For more photographs, go to moderndrummer.com.

Photos by Alex Solca



Fred Coury, Fantasy Camp founder David Fishof, Billy Amendola, Xavier Muriel, and John Blackwell



Daniel de los Reyes, Roland Garcia, and Richie Garcia



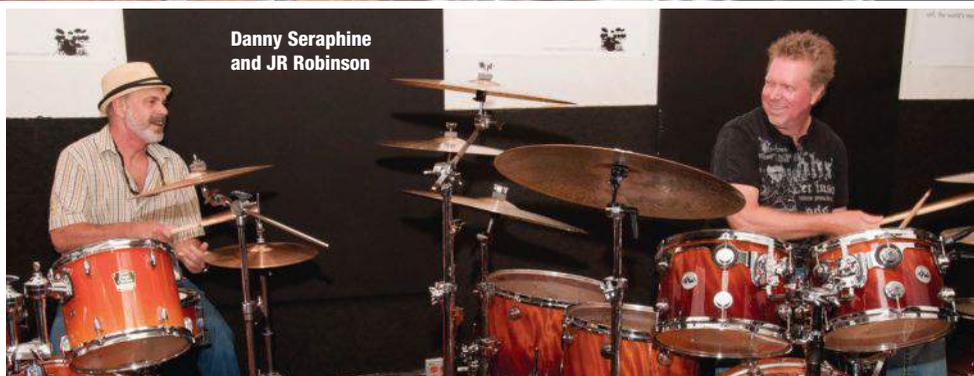
Matt Sorum and Jonathan Moffett



Rudy Sarzo



Cole Marcus



Danny Seraphine and JR Robinson





SPARKLES AND STRIPES FOREVER

This month's kit comes from Starcraft Drumz owner Steven Abercrombie, who was born in Oklahoma and currently lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. He tells us he wanted the set back in the '70s but was "a young lad who struggled to buy drumsticks." Thirty years later, in 2006, the rig finally became his. "I'm obsessed with drums," Abercrombie says. "I buy, sell, trade, repair, barter, and refurbish." Indeed, Abercrombie drove 350 miles to bring the kit down from the attic of its former owner. "She bought it for her son, who lost interest, and she stored it for many years," Steven says. "It was so dusty that I could hardly see the sparkle, but at the same time the dust preserved the chrome and wrap. It took a week to clean it up, but it was well worth it."

"The kit was made in the bicentennial year of 1976," Abercrombie explains. It features all original Ludwig parts and badges, and the insides of the shells are magnificent wood grain. The shells are perfectly round, with even chrome that has not pitted. The previous owner told me the kit was used for USO shows for the armed forces."

So, does Abercrombie gig with his prized possession, now that it's been rescued from the attic? "I've only used it a few times out," Steven says, "because I don't want to do any damage to it. I have recorded with it sparingly at a home studio, and it gives me that perfect old-school sound of the '70s!"



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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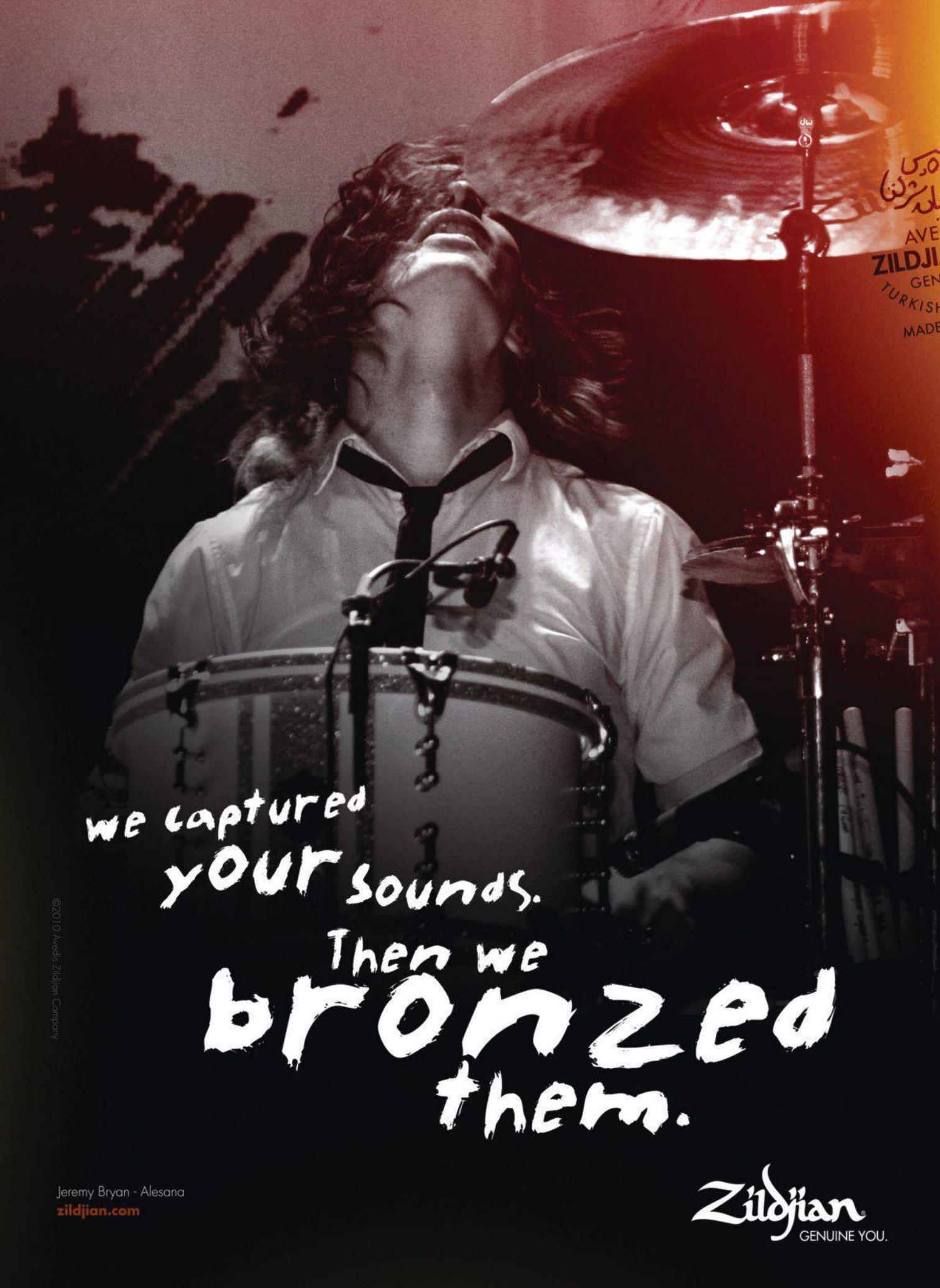
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