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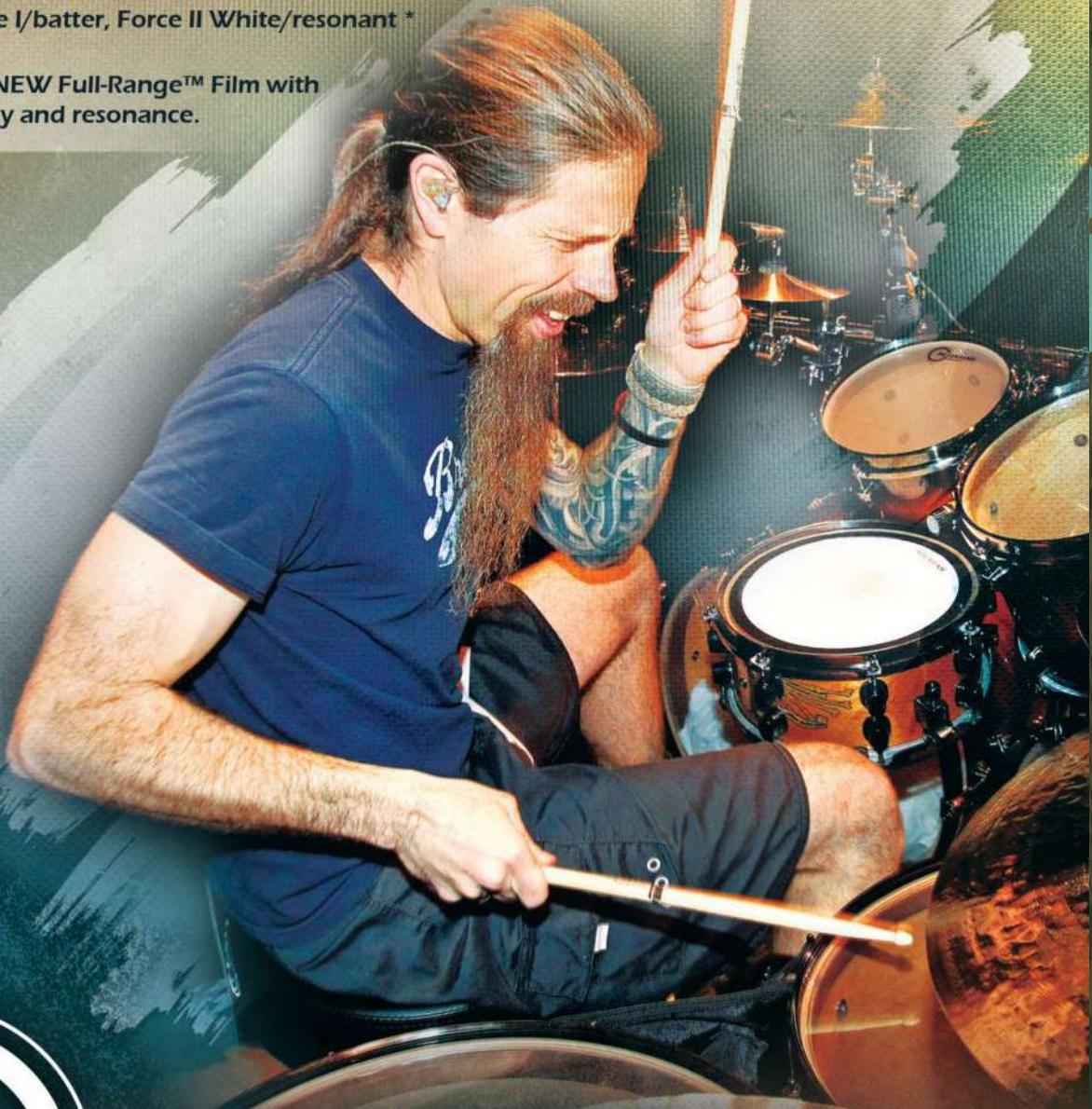
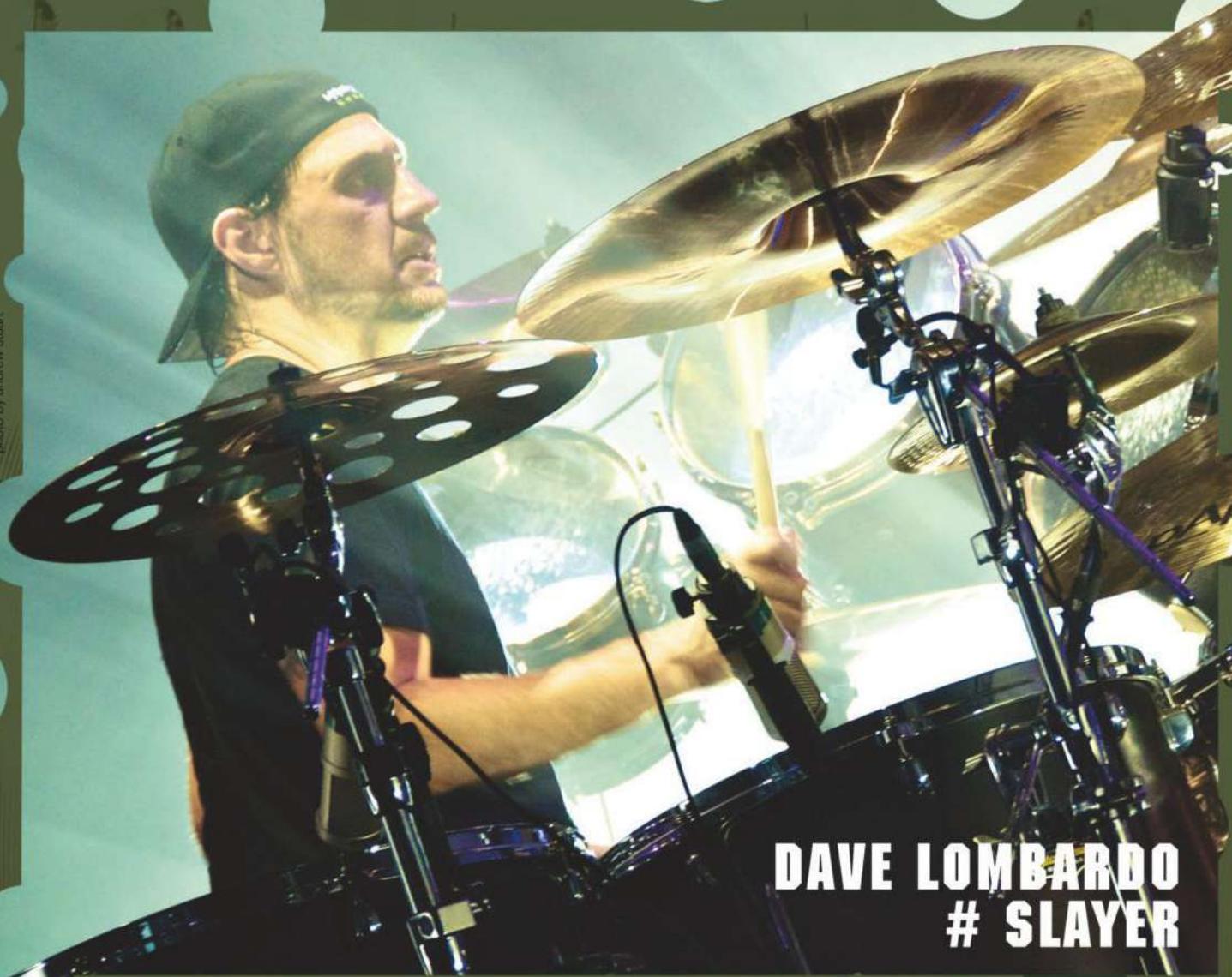


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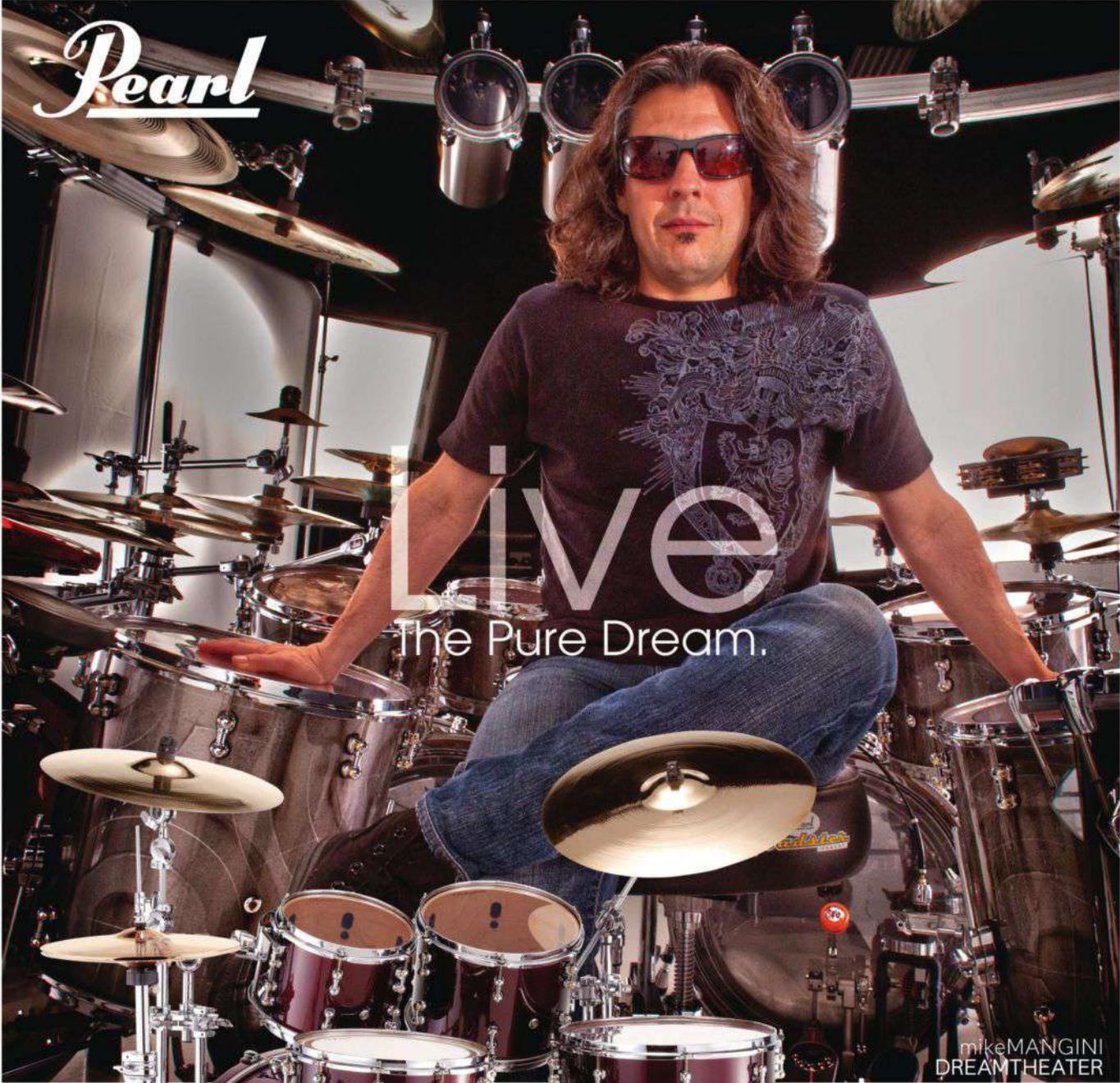
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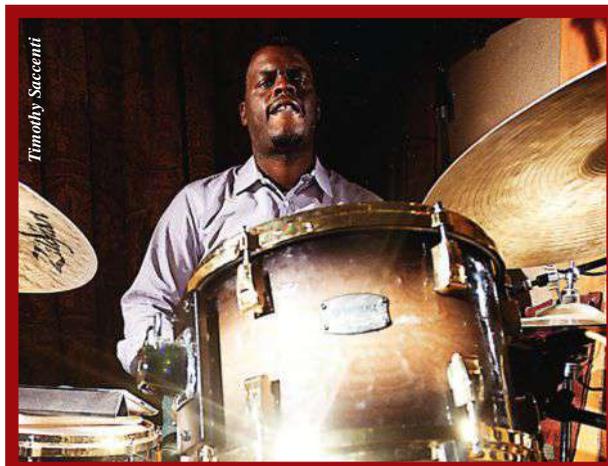
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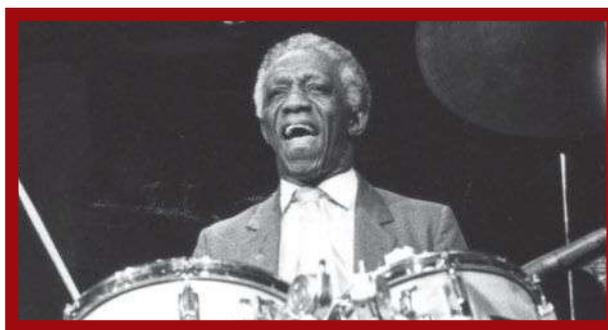
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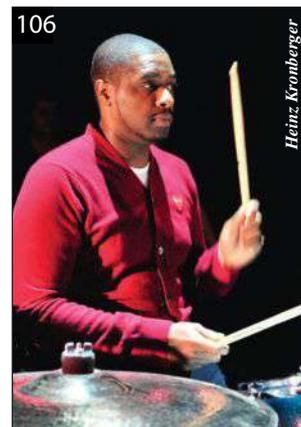
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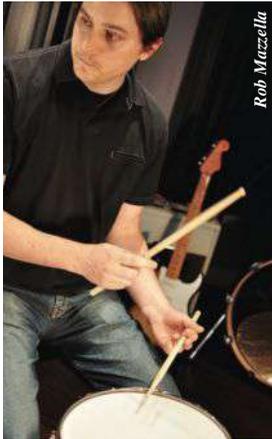
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The MD Education Team

From the very first issue in January 1977, *Modern Drummer's* main focus has been on bringing drummers together to share ideas and, as founder Ron Spagnardi stated, to be a "significant force in the field of drum education," whether that's in the clinic format at the Modern Drummer Festival Weekend, through formal studies in our catalog of method books, or through the interviews, reviews, and educational columns that are included in the magazine each month.

Even though our efforts remain primarily focused on providing the deepest, most informative articles in print on drums, drummers, and drumming, we've also upped the ante in the digital world. On our website, moderndrummer.com, we've posted tons of exclusive feature content, lesson excerpts, and videos, as well as audio supplements for much of the gear we review in Product Close-Up. We're also very proud to have more than 50,000 of you as part of our network of social media outlets (Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter), where we share up-to-the-minute industry news, along with the occasional



YouTube gem for your entertainment. Our monthly e-newsletter, *The Wire*, is yet another outlet to help keep you abreast of the latest goings on in drumming. It's free to subscribe, and you can sign up right from our home page.

To bring even more emphasis to drumming education, we've created a special section of moderndrummer.com dedicated to a selection of top-notch teachers who've contributed lessons to the pages of *Modern Drummer* magazine over the years. Here, you'll find information on the members of our "education team," excerpts from their columns, and new exclusive content that you won't find anywhere else. We'll be updating this section regularly, so while you're waiting for the next issue of the magazine to arrive, we invite you to head over to the site and poke around. There's still a lot to be learned, right?

Mike Dawson

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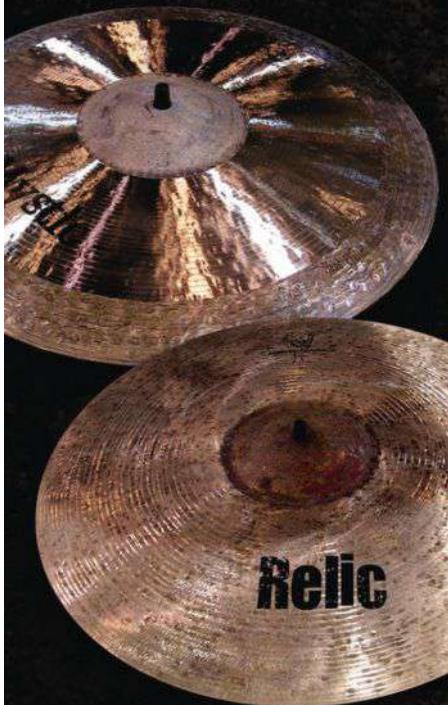
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NEIL PEART

Thank you for doing such a great job on the Neil Peart article in the December 2011 issue of



Photo by MacNaughtan

MD. I am a younger drummer and a huge Rush fan. Neil Peart is one of my favorite drummers on the planet, and it's amazing to read an article that great about him. I actually wrote a research paper about Neil, so it was great to have a cool article to read about him. Thanks again, and keep up the awesome interviews.

Luciano Lawrence

The December 2011 interview with Mr. Peart was thoroughly enjoyed. Good job, *MD*!

Tim McCurdy, via Facebook

BACK IN THE SADDLE

Like many of my contemporaries who put their sticks down years ago, I returned to drumming, thirty-five years after quitting. Our kids are out on their own starting their own families, and I had awesome encouragement from my incredible wife to pick up the sticks now that time is available. Bought a set of V-Drums, hired a teacher—a darned good one at that—and threw myself into it. I just bought a beautiful set of Ludwig Classic Maples to complete my return. Today I am part of a blues band made up of three great guys ranging in age from forty-five to sixty, and we're having the time of our lives. We play fairly regularly at a terrific blues joint in Linden, New Jersey. I recently sat in with the band at my daughter's wedding, to the surprise of everyone I know. I feel complete.

Thank you, *Modern Drummer*, for helping to reignite a long-lost passion. Your magazine informs me, your Festivals inspire me, and I hope this letter helps to inspire anyone out there who might think it's too late. Now is the time! Don't wait any longer—just pick up your sticks and enjoy yourself. I love being part of this community and will never leave it again. I feel a debt of gratitude to *MD*.

Barry Hausman

I started playing drums at an early age but never took lessons, and I did gigs with the knowledge I picked up along the way. I put the sticks down when I got married and had kids, and now, since my kids are older, I picked the sticks up again and started taking drum lessons at Settlement Music School in Philly. I have learned so much from *MD*. I just wanted to say thanks and tell

you that you're the best! You help me still keep up, at age fifty-six.

Alan Mathis

25 TIMELESS DRUM BOOKS

I loved the article about getting a book published and your list of the "25 Timeless Drum Books." Thanks for including me in the story. It was a thrill to be mentioned by Neil Peart in his cover story and have my opinions on the book publishing world included in the same issue. It is always an honor to be mentioned in *MD*.

Of course, everyone has their own favorites, but as someone who is totally absorbed with and familiar with the world of drum books, I need to point out a glaring omission from your list. *Groove Essentials 1.0* by Tommy Igoe is one of the best-selling and most widely used drum books of all time, not to mention one of the absolute best. I am relatively certain that it outsells and is in greater use than many, if not most, of the books on your list. It is truly a modern educational drumset classic. I was frankly quite surprised to see it missing from the list. I'm just adding my two cents, but hopefully an informed two cents. Keep up the great work!

Joe Bergamini, Hudson Music

MIKE JOHNSTON

I'm on my way back home following an intense seven-day drum camp at educator/*MD* columnist Mike Johnston's facility in California, and I'm feeling compelled to comment on this little piece of drumming heaven on earth. A standing ovation to this outstanding musician, clinician, educator, and person for what he has accomplished in building a globally linked family of drummers, expanding daily, via his creative online delivery of instruction. Canada, England, Australia, Latvia, and the U.S. were all represented during our camp, and words can't describe the friendship and support that evolved over the week, inspiring each individual to achieve new levels of growth. This experience is proof that there is no other community in the music world quite like our community of drummers, and I'm blessed to share this passion.

Andy Williamson

As we went to press, we learned of the passing of jazz great Paul Motian. We'll be publishing a full memorial in the upcoming May issue of Modern Drummer magazine. Go to moderndrummer.com to read MD's last feature interview with Motian, from April 2005.

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PAUL COOK

The former Pistol preaches diversity with Manraze.



Chuck Parker

In the late '70s, drummer Paul Cook's gritty groove with the Sex Pistols helped define a new level of nastiness in rock music. Cut to 2012, and Cook's work with Def Leppard guitarist Phil Collen on the sophomore album by Manraze tells a different story. *PunkFunkRootsRock* finds the drummer navigating through several styles, including radio-ready modern rock. "It's a case of all my influences coming out, and doing what I felt," Paul says. "With all the album's vibes, I was able to push the envelope a bit with various styles and grooves."

Cuts like "Edge of the World" and "Get Action" veer from alternative to pop without a hitch. "You can get one-dimensional playing rock music all the time," Cook says. "Early on I was stuck in my ways, but I got out of my comfort zone and embraced the fact that the drums are a learning process. Playing with people like Edwyn Collins opened up my horizons and helped me become a better drummer."

Cook remains grateful for all the musical experiences he's had, and even though there's a lot of drumming left in him, he's at peace with his place in the universe. "The Pistols were a seminal band," he says, "and we broke a lot of boundaries. I definitely had my own style, and hopefully that influenced a generation of drummers to carry on the message." **Steven Douglas Losey**

JOEL TAYLOR

The versatile jazz-fusion veteran is always at the ready.

Los Angeles-based sticksman Joel Taylor is used to getting "the call"—you know, the one where a legendary artist such as Al Di Meola needs a drummer for a tour that begins in two days, and the material is really complex...and, oh yeah, there'll be no rehearsal. *That call.*

No sweat for the Berklee-trained Taylor. His résumé boasts recordings and tours with guitarists Allan Holdsworth ("He gave me total artistic freedom—I'd almost solo underneath his solo") and Frank Gambale ("I'm still blowing, but I put more of a solid foundation down") and with his own hard-rock band, Rain Dogs. Taylor's been a go-to guy for producers like David Foster as well, and his marching snare accents appear on the soundtrack for Clint Eastwood's *Gran Torino*.

Joel has also faced the daunting task of mimicking the vintage kit sounds and performances of master drummers in his home studio for the video games *Guitar Hero II* and *Rock Band*. "The original bands wouldn't give up their masters," he says, "so the game makers would send me a track a day for about three months. I'd transcribe 'Baba O'Riley'—Keith Moon's stuff was like a solo throughout. Plus I'd really try to get individual pitches of toms exactly. For Vinny Appice's Dio stuff, I'd call up Remo and ask for silver-dot heads, which they don't make anymore, so they'd send black dots and I'd get close. It was a real challenge." **Ilya Stemkovsky**



CONRAD CHOUCROUN

An NRBQ acolyte helps keep the legendary roots-rock band's groove alive.

After Banana Blender Surprise opened for NRBQ one night in Houston in 1994, "Q" drummer Tom Ardolino approached the support group's drummer, Conrad Choucroun. "When I'm too old to play with NRBQ," Ardolino told Choucroun, "you're going to play the drums—and send me the money!"

Choucroun was elated. "I was very deep into NRBQ's music," he recalls, "and I was playing a lot like Tommy. It blew my mind when I got a call from [NRBQ founder] Terry Adams fourteen years later."

When Adams called Choucroun, the singer/keyboardist was putting together a new group,

the Terry Adams Rock & Roll Quartet, which toured for a couple of years and released a CD called *Crazy 8's*. When the other members of NRBQ decided to retire from the group, Adams gave his new band the NRBQ name.

"Musically, it hasn't changed," Choucroun says. "We play songs off the latest record [*Keep This Love Goin'*] regularly, but beyond that you never know what songs Terry might call or how they might be approached. The shows have little to do with what we play at soundcheck or what we've recently gone over. If you come in with too set an idea, you'll be lost."

Rick Mattingly



Jane Mattingly

HANK WILLIAMS III

The progeny of the king of country music is playing it exactly how he wants to.

Courtesy of Hank3 Records



Hank Williams III has always been a rebel.

Recently the multi-talented grandson of legendary country artist Hank Williams (and the son of contemporary country star Hank Williams Jr.) released three

ambitious and musically distinct albums on the same day on his own Hank3 Records. *Ghost to a Ghost/Guttertown* is a warped yet sincere country/Cajun double album, *Attention Deficit Domination* is doom rock, and *Cattle Callin* mixes speed metal with actual cattle auctioneering.

Williams learned to play drums from a variety of sources. "When I was eight years old," he says, "I would put on my headphones and play along to Kiss's *Double Platinum* and then a Walt Disney record." The discovery of Queen led Hank to heavier music. "I love the energy of rock 'n' roll. I've always been a heavy hitter and groove oriented, taking after people like Dave Lombardo and Gene Hoglan."

In the studio Williams drummed on every track, which sometimes demanded that he shift from country to speed metal at the drop of a cowboy hat. "When I play guitar I'm basically strumming it like I'm hitting a drum," he says. "It's great being a guitar player as well, because I naturally hear the rhythm that's supposed to fit into my songs. I've never understood theory, so I play by feel. It's easy to lay down a guitar track,

because I hear the drums behind it."

On the road, Williams leans heavily on Shawn McWilliams to lay down the country, hellbilly, and doom metal. "I've been through fifty drummers over the years," Hank says, "and the amount of energy he puts out is very unnatural. He's a different kind of athlete. When we're done riding 800 miles in a van, he's still able to keep the balance and the energy up for our three-hour shows."

Even if Williams is up front on tour, singing and playing guitar, his heart never strays far from the kit. "I have a do-it-yourself mentality," he says, "and I bring a good work ethic to the table. And in the end I'm a drummer—my first instrument is the drums, and it'll be my last." **Steven Douglas Losey**

NEWS



The Bay Area thrash band Forbidden, whose drum chair has been occupied in the past by Gene Hoglan and Paul Bostaph, among others, has announced the addition of **Sasha Horn** to its lineup. Previous drummer Mark Hernandez had to leave the band due to family obligations.

Veronica Bellino, whom *Modern Drummer* readers will remember from Carmine Appice's SLAMM appearance at the 2008 MD Fest, is now the official touring and recording drummer for Jeff Beck.

DrumChannel.com has introduced a new section called **DC Feedback**, in which viewers submit a playing video and have it reviewed with comments and suggestions for improvement. Confirmed artists who will offer their opinions on the clips are **Jim Keltner**, **Thomas Lang**, and **Josh Freese**.

Ralph MacDonald passed away on December 18, 2011. Look for an In Memoriam piece on the world-renowned percussionist in the May issue of *MD*.

This past November 10, drummer **Steve Moore** appeared in episode 807 of *The Office*, "Pam's Replacement." Readers who were watching the sitcom might have noticed something familiar in the very physical performance of the actor who played the drummer friend of Dunder Mifflin CEO Robert California (James Spader). Yup, Moore is in fact "the drummer at the wrong gig" whose viral YouTube video took the Internet by storm in 2010. To read Steve's blog about his *Office* experience, and for all the latest drum news, go to moderndrummer.com.

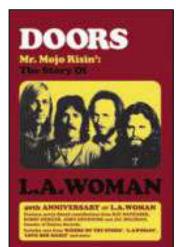


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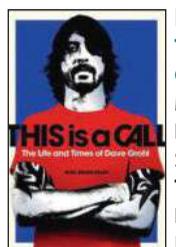
CDS

Jeff Lorber Fusion *Galaxy* (Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, Lenny Castro) /// **Chick Corea/Eddie Gomez/Paul Motian** *Further Explorations* (Paul Motian) /// **Nada Surf** *The Stars Are Indifferent to Astronomy* (Ira Elliot) /// **moe.** *What Happened to the La Las* (Vinnie Amico, Jim Loughlin) /// **Emerson, Lake & Palmer** *Live at the Mar y Sol Festival '72* (Carl Palmer) /// **Wishbone Ash** *Elegant Stealth* (Joe Crabtree) /// **Chris Shinn** *Chris Shinn* (Billy Ward) /// **Chevelle** *Hats Off to the Bull* (Sam Loeffler) /// **PonyKiller** *The Wilderness* (Tim Nolan) /// **Ozric Tentacles** *Paper Monkeys* (Oliver Seagle) /// **Dana Leong Quintet** *Leaving New York* (Tony Escapa)



DVDS

The Doors *Mr. Mojo Risin': The Story of L.A. Woman* (John Densmore) /// **Deep Purple** *With Orchestra: Live at Montreux* (Ian Paice) /// **Ringo Starr and the Roundheads** *Live* (Gregg Bissonette) /// **The Rolling Stones** *Some Girls: Live in Texas '78* (Charlie Watts) /// **Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers** *Live* (Steve Ferrone)



BOOKS

This Is a Call: The Life and Times of Dave Grohl by Paul Brannigan (Da Capo) /// **Methods & Mechanics for Useful Musical Drumming** by Todd Sucherman and Brad Schlueter (Hudson) /// **Stick Technique: The Essential Guide for the Modern Drummer** by Bill Bachman (Modern Drummer Publications) /// **Big Band Drumming at First Sight** by Steve Fidyk (Alfred) /// **The Drum: A History** by Matt Dean (Scarecrow Press)

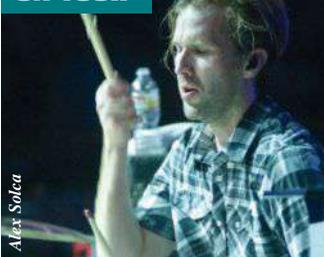
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WHO'S PLAYING WHAT



Natal Drums has signed **Russell Gilbrook** (Uriah Heap, the Gods), **Brian Downey** (Thin Lizzy), and **Brian Tichy** (Whitesnake) to its roster.

Paiste endorsers include **Francis Arnaud** (Charles Aznavour), **Nasser Salameh** (EastMania), **Maarten Rischen** (Shaking Godspeed), **Reuben Bradley** (independent), **Axel Sjöberg** (Graveyard), **John Sherman** (Red Fang), and **Joel Richman** (independent).

Endorsers of Ahead's Armor Cases include **Thomas Pridgen** (the Memorials), **Eric Singer** (Kiss), **Ronald Bruner Jr.** (Stanley Clarke Band), **Daniel Glass** (Royal Crown Revue), **Richie "Gajate" Garcia** (Diana Ross), **Mike Johnston** (educator/clinician), **Eric Moore** (Suicidal Tendencies), **Tiki Pasillas** (Marc Anthony), **Danny Seraphine** (CTA), and **Street Drum Corps**.

Jon "Bermuda" Schwartz (Weird Al Yankovic) is now a TAYE MetalWorks pedal endorser.



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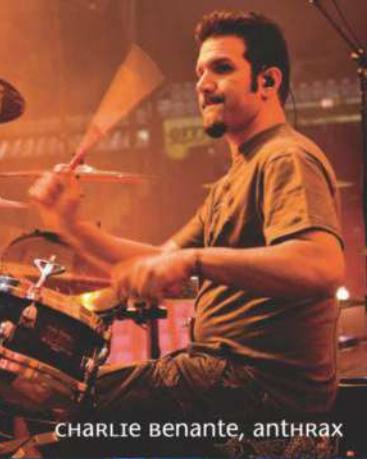
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GIMME 10! JACK IRONS

The well-traveled vet with Eleven, Pearl Jam, the Chili Peppers, and now Arthur Channel is entering a new phase of creativity and redefinition. We ask the drummer: How does a modern artist make it all work in the age of change?



1 TRUST YOUR GUT. Intuition is a big deal. Music comes from the heart, and doing something is a lot easier when you're really feeling it.

2 DON'T BE AFRAID TO PULL OFF THE ROAD. At a certain point I had to stop and take the time to learn how to live differently in order to have longevity. It cost me in some ways, but hey, life's a journey. I know I did the right thing—I've grown a lot since then, and I'm in very good form now. When your life is together, the art can come from a good place, not necessarily from a tortured place. When you're young, you have a lot more energy to be tortured. [laughs]

3 NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION—LISTEN TO YOUR MOTHER! When I came off the road, I knew I wanted to remain active and creative. So I decided: I'm going to build a studio, and I'm going to go to work.

4 REACH OUT FOR HELP. Most of my studio setup was through my friend Doug, who works at a company called

Tour Supply. He's an engineer and knows a lot, and we connected.

5 BE PATIENT. Setting up a studio is an unfolding process. I definitely experimented with a lot of gear. It was about a year and a half between the day I started ripping apart the room that I was going to put the studio in and when it was completed.

6 LISTEN TO THE ROOM. You need a space where what you're hearing in the room is as close as possible to what you want people to hear on the album. Good gear has the potential to give you better sounds, but it will also completely reveal the limitations in your room and your abilities. Hearing correctly is the most important thing, and that's a deep thing to learn how to do.

7 ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONSTRAINTS OF WORKING FROM HOME. There are all sorts of disruptions when you work from home that you'd never have to deal with otherwise. At home you're a husband and a dad, and

that doesn't change just because you have some work to do.

8 KNOW WHEN TO LET IT GO AND MOVE ON TO THE NEXT PROJECT. Learn when to say, "This is the best I can do right now."

9 IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT BEING "SUCCESSFUL." The balance of passion and success is what keeps things good and fresh in your life. Achievements are nice, but it should be about how you live and love and how you are as a person and how you are with the ones you love the most.

10 ACCEPT THE UNKNOWN. A lot of things remain to be seen as far as what works out for you. No one knows. There are circumstances that intervene that you have no control over. But you still work toward something.

For more with Irons, go to moderndrummer.com.

In the September 2005 issue of *MD*, we asked **Teddy Campbell** what in his background enabled him to cover the remarkable range of music he had to perform on *American Idol*.

I grew up in church, playing strictly gospel music. I think that's the best school ever, because not only does your pocket get strong in that setting, your awareness of what's going on *around* you improves, because you have to pay attention to so many things in church. You've got to watch the director. You've got to listen to the music, support the band and singers, and watch the preacher. It's not just showing up and playing. You have to be very attentive. And spiritually too, you've got to be in tune with what's happening. If the spirit is trying to move to a worship mode or to more praise and aggressive music, you've got to be able to switch over.

Also, growing up, I only played gospel music, but I was a fan of music, period. I *always* listened to a lot of music. From the time I was fourteen years old, I started getting into other types of music, and that's when I first heard players like Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, Will Kennedy, and Steve Gadd. Up until then, I

only knew church music. Of course, I knew there was a whole other world of music out there, but I never needed it. When I got old enough to understand and be interested in other music, that's when I started finding out about different cats. From then on, I always listened to a lot of different music.

I listened to jazz and R&B. I was a '70s guru—I wanted to play everything from the '70s. I wish I had been around for that era. Oh, man. The Marvin Gaye stuff was so funky, the Parliament stuff, Earth, Wind & Fire, all the Motown stuff—which was a little earlier than the '70s. But all that stuff was so funky.

I always had music in my head. And when I was living in a house, as soon as I got home from school, I didn't even do my homework. [laughs] I just got on the drums and played until my mom came home from work. I had about three hours a day to practice, blazing away to Dave Weckl, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Will Kennedy with the Yellowjackets.

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Leedy Snare

This Leedy snare drum belonged to my late father. His band played on a morning show back in the '30s. I know that this drum is at least eighty years old. On the logo, "Leedy" is enclosed in a circle, and beneath the circle it says "Indianapolis, Ind." Both rims are etched. My father said the finish was mother-of-pearl. There are six little black blemishes on the finish, similar to paint splashes. Any info you can provide on this drum, including how to remove the blemishes and how to brighten up the rims, would be greatly appreciated.

Peter

"Now *there's* a historical beauty," says *MD* Collector's Corner columnist Harry Cangany. "It's safe to say it's from 1928 or 1929, since it has the Speedway throw-off (extension lever model) and is covered in white marine pearl. (Mother-of-pearl was an alternative moniker for that finish.) Leedy was the first company to use plastic wrap, and white marine pearl was the first finish used. The solid mahogany shell has eight four-screw lugs. These lugs are considered the first attempt at self-alignment, although alignment is limited. The next Leedy lug, the beavertail, came out in 1930 and was truly self-aligning.

"Back at the Indianapolis factory, the metal on this drum was

buffed to a shine, and then a thin coat of gold-tinted lacquer was applied. This lacquer application was referred to as Nobby Gold. The hoops are engraved, which was normal for this model, officially known as the White Marine Pearl. It's very similar to the Leedy Floating Head snare, which has nickel metalwork on a naturally finished solid walnut shell. 'Floating Head' refers to the double-flange hoops that allowed the rods to pass through them. That was brand-new back then. (The Floating Head model was also known as the Professional.)

"It looks like a few screws are missing, and there may be a nicotine/cigarette mark near the snare strainer jaws. To remove the black paint on the shell, apply a citrus-based cleaner—I use Goo Gone—and use your fingernail to scrape the paint away after the cleaner softens it. You might try this on the nicotine mark as well. Just don't use anything harsh, because there's a clear coat on the plastic that can come off. The best thing to do for the rims, which are also lacquered, is to wipe them with 3-in-One oil and a clean, soft cloth. Leedy recommended this for cleaning lacquered metal shells, so it should be fine on the rims. Test the method on the back of one of the hoops first.

"The right restorer could make this drum look like it came straight from the showroom, since it's already in great shape. I would say the drum, as it is, is worth about \$1,500."

MIND MATTERS

by Bernie Schallehn

I'm Being Bullied

The bullying of kids is all over the media, but I'm an adult in my thirties and getting bullied by the lead singer in my band. If I make a mistake at practice, he gets in my face and screams at me. The other members of the band just giggle nervously and look away. Nobody helps me out. If I goof up on a gig, the singer will scowl and shake his head, which only draws the audience's attention to my error.

I'm always nervous at practices and gigs, and I feel ashamed because I'm

too chicken to respond. I wasn't a wimp in school, and it's not like he's some big, muscular guy. Can you help me out?

J.P.

Maybe you weren't a wimp in high school, but you're acting like one now. You *have* to take responsibility for making this nonsense stop. If you allow it to continue, it will eat away at your self-esteem and keep you in a constant state of fear, anxiety, and shame. These nega-

tive feelings will leak into your drumming, your relationships, your day job, and your everyday life.

In his book *A Yank in Bomber Command*, author Robert Raymond talks about an incident in childhood where a bully chased him all the way to his front door, intent on giving him a beating. Raymond could see his father standing just inside the door, watching. If he could just make it to the door before the bully caught him, he thought, he'd be saved from a pummeling. His dad would pro-

tect him. But as he reached the door, his father locked it and walked away. The bully caught young Raymond and bloodied his nose and split his lip right there on his own front lawn.

This may have been a harsh way to learn a lesson, but from that point on Raymond never ran from a bully again. He may not have won every future fight, but he always stood his ground and defended himself—on his own. Until it happened that first time, he had been afraid of getting punched.

Is that your primary fear? That this member of your band will hit you if you try to make him stop?

Many times in life the pain we imagine is a thousand times worse than the actual pain once we encounter it. Let's pretend you have a bad toothache. The dentist's office tells you there's an open appointment tomorrow or three weeks from tomorrow. You voluntarily agree to suffer



Bernie Schallehn has been a drummer and percussionist for over forty-five years. He holds a master's degree in counseling psychology and, while in private practice, held the credentials of a certified clinical mental health counselor and a certified alcohol and substance abuse counselor.

for three weeks, because you imagine the procedure will cause outrageous pain, even with a shot of novocaine. Almost a month later, your appointment day arrives, you get the dental work done, and the pain of the procedure turns out to be next to nothing. Yet you chose to exist in a state of high anxiety for three weeks. Stupid, isn't it? Sadly, some of us live that way all the time.

In your life, there isn't an assistant principal, social worker, hall monitor, Mommy, or Daddy to come to your aid. There's a lot written about bullying in the workplace (advocates for anti-bullying laws claim that up to 59 percent of employees directly experience workplace bullying). But most bands tend to be informal outfits, so there's no human resources department you can go to.

So, what are you going to do? Here's a solid strategy that I believe has the potential to work for you. It's called hitting with your eyes.

This was a technique that the martial arts master Bruce Lee taught his students. A white-hot, piercing glare from you immediately when your singer starts up at rehearsal has the potential of breaking the pattern of intimidation. Put down your

sticks and stand up before you hit him with your eyes. Then catch his gaze, and in a loud, no-nonsense voice, say, "Look, I didn't come here to waste my time. All this monkey business has to end today." If the bully continues harassing you, start packing up your gear.

This is when other members of the band might say something to the bully rather than giggling nervously and looking away. Group dynamics could work in your favor—because the band fears losing its drummer! Put on a stone face and don't say a word. Just break down your gear and pack it in your car. Ignore any requests to return from the other band members.

As you leave, speak only to the band-leader/manager/spokesperson, and tell him, "Call me if you should decide to get serious about this band." If the strategy works correctly, you've made the bully the bad guy because he broke up the band. Any anger from the group will then be directed at him.

Note: Should at any point the bully strike you, you have a choice. You can hit back, or you can file an assault charge.

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TAMA**Silverstar Drumsets**

by J.R. Frondelli

We drummers are living in good times when it comes to instrument choices. When I was growing up in the early '70s, we had the "big four"—Ludwig, Slingerland, Rogers, and Gretsch—and the rest was pretty much junk, including splintery Asian firewood drumkits with bad heads, flimsy hardware, and no tone. Though these "stencil" kits are riding a wave of resurgence, and in some cases even command high prices, it's primarily based on nostalgia.

Most of these drums weren't great tools back then, and they still aren't today. With some of them, however, especially a little-known brand called

Star from the Japanese corporation Hoshino Gakki, you could see the buds of greatness in the designs and ideas. In 1974, Hoshino decided to kick it up a couple of notches and offer a new series of professional drums called the Tama Imperialstar. These models were well built and consistent, and they sounded so wonderful that many major players began using them. In addition, recording studios often adopted Imperialstars as house kits because they had the sound du jour: fat and punchy with a relatively short decay—a super combination for recording.

Two years later, in 1976, Hoshino

upped the ante again, by introducing the first drums with all-birch shells, the original Superstar series, which now garners premium prices on the vintage drum market. While the Imperialstar construction was cross-grained lauan ply with epoxy-coated ("Zolacoat") interiors and wrapped finishes, the all-birch Superstars sported furniture-grade inner and outer plies in a matched finish. As if the drums weren't enough, Tama offered sturdy and innovative hardware to match, which is also a tradition that continues.

SILVERSTAR SETUPS

We were sent two Silverstar outfits for



A BRIEF HISTORY

Where did the Tama name originate, and why do the company's drums sport the "star" suffix? The family name Hoshino translates to "star field" in English, hence the original brand name, Star. When Hoshino introduced a higher-grade kit, the owner used his wife's first name, Tama, which means "jewel." The "star" suffix is a holdover from his last name and has become the common theme across the Tama lines. The Hoshino family still owns the company.

review: a Jazz kit (VK48JS) in sky blue sparkle (14x18 bass drum, 8x12 and 14x14 toms, 5x14 snare) and an Accel-Driver kit (VL52KS) in transparent cherry burst (18x22 bass drum; 8x10, 9x12, and 14x16 toms; 5x14 snare). Silverstar is a very affordable line featuring all-birch shells that are nice and smooth—inside and out—and have clean, accurate bearing edges.

Both Silverstar kits come standard with the new MTH905N tom holder. This item is innovative in that the top L-arm section slides back and forth so that you can control the distance between the toms and the snare drum independent of the bass drum position. The mounted toms are fitted with the Star-Mount suspension system, and all of the drums feature a beautiful new low-mass lug design. Also included was the optional HR5W hardware pack.

ACCEL-DRIVER KIT

If the four-piece Jazz kit is the sport coupe, the five-piece Accel-Driver is the midsize luxury car. First off, the finish is beautiful. (It amazes me how good the finish quality is on midline kits these days.) And then you have the heft and girth of the 18x22 kick drum.

The toms were easily tunable for the perfect pitch spread (descending fourths for me), and the 14x16 floor tom never lost control, as some deeper toms sometimes do. The more I play shallower floor toms, the more I'm convinced that the abbreviated vertical dimension provides the ideal balance of a quicker attack and full resonance. Moreover, the three toms fit together sonically as a group.

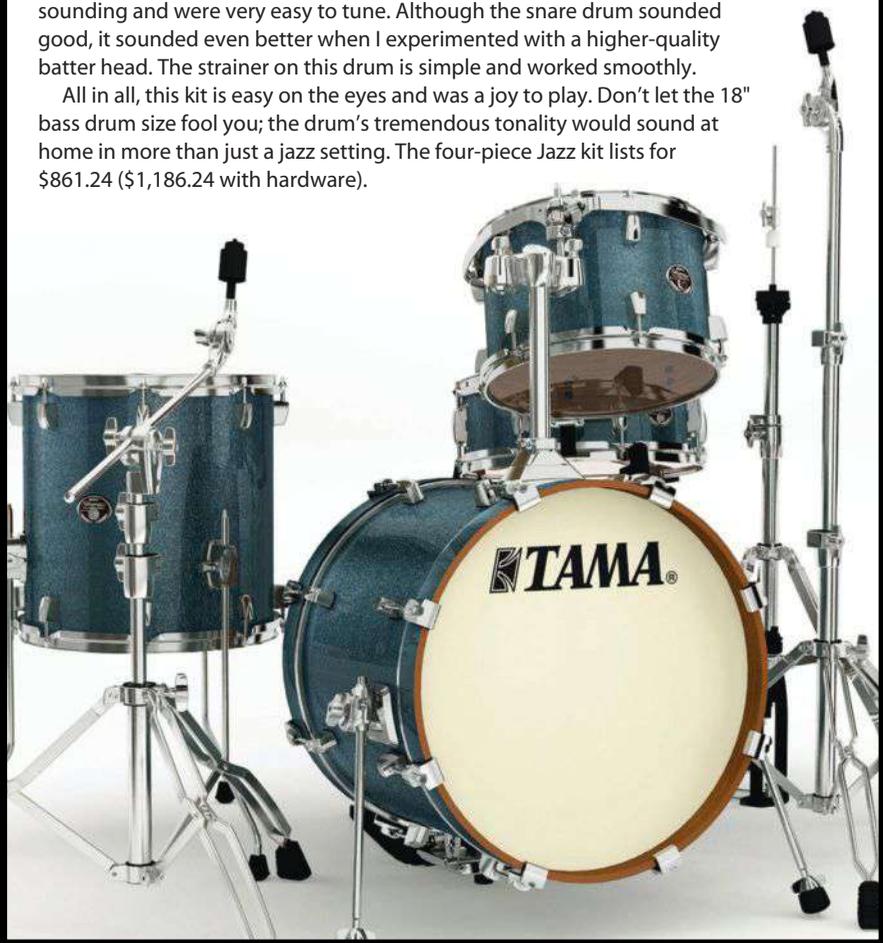
The snare drum is identical to the one in the Jazz kit, save for the finish, and I found that having two of the same drum that sound exactly alike is a testament to Tama's consistency. The five-piece

JAZZ KIT

One of the most striking things about this set is the color, a classy, icy blue sparkle wrap. The bass drum hoops are wrapped to match, and all of the seams were tight. The bass drum features a folding kick lifter, which positions the height of the beater so that you can extract maximum low end with a dead-center impact. This is a nice touch for the gigging drummer and is much better than having to deal with a separate and sometimes finicky piece of hardware.

Even with the factory heads, this kit put out in a big way. The 18" kick sounded more like a 20" with the batter head tuned medium-low and the front head tight. The toms had a perfect pitch spread, a fourth apart, when tuned to their sweet spots. They sounded big and round with good sustain and the classic EQ'ed birch sound, which means slightly exaggerated lows and highs. There was great attack on these drums too, but they were never brash sounding and were very easy to tune. Although the snare drum sounded good, it sounded even better when I experimented with a higher-quality batter head. The strainer on this drum is simple and worked smoothly.

All in all, this kit is easy on the eyes and was a joy to play. Don't let the 18" bass drum size fool you; the drum's tremendous tonality would sound at home in more than just a jazz setting. The four-piece Jazz kit lists for \$861.24 (\$1,186.24 with hardware).



Accel-Drive setup lists for \$1,137.49 (\$1,462.49 with hardware).

HARDWARE PACK

The HR5W hardware pack features double-braced yet very manageable Road Pro stands with features such as Quick-Set infinite tilters, Quick-Set Cymbal Mates (on/off wing-nut substitutes), and the HP3000 Iron Cobra Jr. bass drum pedal. The pack comes with a straight cymbal stand (HS72WN), a convertible straight/boom cymbal stand (HS73BWN), a snare stand (HS70WN), and a swivel-base hi-hat stand (HS75WN). Try as I

might, I couldn't find one thing wrong with the design, execution, or workmanship of this hardware, right down to the plating. On a personal note, I have Tama hardware from the '80s and '90s that still works flawlessly, showing only a few battle scars from a road-weary drummer tossing them into a case at 4 A.M. The HR5W hardware pack lists for \$325.

No doubt about it: Tama has the knowledge to create well-made, affordable tools. All you need to do is supply the talent for a perfect combination.

tama.com



REMO

Powerstroke Pro Bass Drum Heads

by David Ciauro

With the continued success of the Powerstroke line, it was hard to imagine that Remo would be able to once again take it to the next level. Yet here we are with the new pre-muffled Powerstroke Pro coated and clear bass drum heads for review. Before diving into the results, let's first run through the specs.

CONTROLLED SOUND

Powerstroke Pro heads have a permanently mounted muffling ring, which is "ultrasonically welded" to the drumhead. This patent-pending technique uses high-frequency vibrations to make a pressure weld. In other words, two solid pieces adhere to one another under the pressure of high-frequency vibrations. The weld points are small circular indentations evenly spaced around the perimeter, about 1½" from the edge. This is also where the main head meets the "Pressure Dampening Profile" that encases the muffling foam, which is made from the same 10 mil film as the primary head.

Beyond merely housing the muffling foam, the Pressure Dampening Profile has special ridges that put pressure on the foam, which Remo claims helps to push some of the midrange frequencies into the low end. Although I couldn't test that statement scientifically, the sonic results

certainly proved to reveal a pronounced low end. Finally, slits in the muffling foam serve to improve resonance.

BREAKING IT DOWN

So how is this information relevant to drummers who don't have an advanced degree in science? Quite simply, the ultrasonic welding means that no adhesives come into contact with the drumhead. Adhesives, or any material used on the head itself, are inadvertent additional dampeners that would interfere with the process that goes into pre-muffled drumheads. Thus Powerstroke Pro heads employ a technology that allows the intentional muffling to be the *only* muffling present.

THE RESULTS

Compared with a Coated Emperor and Coated Ambassador, there was noticeably less tone coming off the Coated Powerstroke Pro when I tapped the head with my finger; it was more of a papery rumble. Once the head was seated and tuned up just enough to get the wrinkles out, however, the low-end thud was far more direct and focused than on the unmuffled Emperor and Ambassador. I didn't find that the Powerstroke Pro offered much in the way of warmth, but it had a stark presence in the attack, with

enough resonance that the kick didn't sound thin.

In contrast to the coated version, the Clear Powerstroke Pro had a distinct low, punchy tone when I tapped it with my finger. Once the head was seated, its deep fundamental tone had a gut-thumping punch with a fantastic controlled resonance.

CONCLUSION

Both Powerstroke Pro heads boasted deep fundamental tones with a pronounced attack. The downside, though, is that the sweet spot lies in the low to very low range, so there's not much tuning flexibility. If you like the feel of a tighter kick batter and more of a midrange tone, the Powerstroke Pro might not be quite right. The practical upside, however, is that tightening the tuning rods about a third of a turn above wrinkling puts the head right in the sweet-spot zone, making it painfully easy to get a good kick sound with little effort. I was never displeased with the sound at this tuning, and most sound engineers will appreciate the heads' controlled tone and focused low end.

Powerstroke Pro heads are currently available in 18" to 26" sizes, in clear, coated, and ebony styles.

remo.com

LUDWIG

Atlas Pro Hardware

by Michael Dawson



It's a bit ironic that Ludwig, the company that defined modern design with the first mass-produced bass drum pedal in 1909, has slowly fallen out of favor with many drummers when it comes to hardware, as other manufacturers have stormed ahead with more innovative, high-functioning stands, pedals, and accessories. Yet longtime Ludwig players and collectors still swear by the classic Speed King pedal and the original Atlas series flat-base cymbal and hi-hat stands, which were first released in 1963. The Atlas series got a facelift a few years later when Ludwig rereleased the line as Hercules, which featured tube legs instead of flat steel. But it wasn't until four years ago that the company decided to get back in the hardware game and began researching and developing fresh ideas that could revive the series and meet the stated goals of "high-function, durability, and a distinctly Ludwig vision."

The new Atlas hardware series consists of three lines: Pro, which includes the heaviest and most durable models for the touring professional; Classic, which is reminiscent of the original series and fea-

tures lightweight, compact designs for city-based players; and Standard, which includes medium-weight stands for gigging professionals with budgetary concerns. We were sent a complete set of Atlas Pro hardware for review.

LAP37BCS STRAIGHT/BOOM AND LAP27CS STRAIGHT CYMBAL STANDS

All Atlas Pro hardware features heavy-duty, double-braced legs, new high-tension tube joints with integrated memory locks that Ludwig claims to offer "twice the amount of tension with half the stress to the support tubing," and a distinct art deco-inspired look, complete with keystone-imprinted thumbscrews and pressed Ludwig logos within the chrome finish.

The two Atlas Pro cymbal stands, one straight (\$219) and one with a collapsible boom arm (\$245), are very solid, sturdy, and hefty. The Aerodyne dual-axis, gearless tilters allow for very easy positioning. These are top-notch cymbal stands for players who demand extra strength and stability.

LAP23SSL PILLAR CLUTCH AND LAP22SS STANDARD SNARE STANDS

There are two snare stands in the Atlas Pro series, one with a standard snare basket and low-contact basket grips (\$225) and one with Ludwig's patent-pending Pillar Clutch (\$249), which has sliding basket grips that are designed to fit snugly around the drum's hoop without squeezing it. This stand can accommodate 10" to 16" drums.

The Pillar Clutch has a gearless, dual-axis tilter system that allows for infinite angle positioning. Two of the basket arms are on hinges, so they can fold up easily, and the entire basket is removable for more compact storage. The hinged design was a little disconcerting, because there's no way to lock the arms in place, so they



Pillar Clutch

had the tendency to swing open and closed when I carried the stand without a drum attached. (Ludwig informed us that production models will have tighter fittings.) The Pillar Clutch model also doesn't collapse onto itself like a traditional snare stand; you have to invert the basket—if you choose not to remove it—in order to fit it in a hardware case.

Where the Pillar Clutch snare stand excels is in its positioning flexibility, its ability to hold small and large drums, and the way it allows the drum to resonate much more freely than with a traditional basket that squeezes the bottom hoop. Drummers who prefer to mount their rack toms in a snare stand will be amazed by the difference the Atlas Pillar Clutch makes. We tested this stand holding 10" and 13" rack toms, 15" and 16" floor toms, and several 14" snare drums, and then put the same drums in a standard snare stand. The difference was like night and day. The Atlas Pillar Clutch didn't inhibit the resonance in any noticeable way.

The LAP22SS standard basket stand also allows for a noticeably more open tone, thanks to its Low-Contact grippers. Both stands are heavy-duty and very sturdy.

LAP3T1 AND LAP3T6 AERODYNE TILTER CLAMPS AND THRONES

The LAP3T1 (\$69) and LAP3T6 (\$79) Tilter Clamps allow you to mount additional cymbals and accessory instruments on the boom arm of the LAP37BCS straight/boom cymbal stand or on any other hardware that uses 12 mm tubing. Both feature dual-axis, gearless tilters. The LAP3T1 offers about 6" of horizontal reach, while the LAP3T6 extends about 10".

The new Atlas thrones have a red and black vinyl exterior, designed after the

LAP16HH HI-HAT STAND

The Atlas Pro hi-hat stand (\$425) is a double-braced two-leg model designed for "rock-solid reliance," as Ludwig states. This is achieved with the company's new patent-pending Centroid 3-Point stability system, which elevates the rear portion of the solid footboard to create a tripod-like feel. The results? I've played a few different two-leg hi-hats before, and they all have a tendency to rock a little when stomped repeatedly. Not the Atlas Pro. This sucker never budged, even with the legs rotated about 35 degrees.



The pedal itself has a quick, smooth, soft feel, thanks to the new Progressive Action Linkage (see photo). The spring tension has six settings, and the unique Aerodisc bottom cymbal tilter consists of a rotating system that moves through infinite angles rather than employing the traditional method of pushing a thumbscrew up into the bottom washer.

The initial setup of the Atlas Pro hi-hat takes a minute to figure out; you have to work the footboard back and underneath the linkage to get it to lock into place, and I was able to get only about 1 1/2" of separation between the cymbals before the footboard snapped into the baseplate. But this pedal felt really comfortable under the foot, and multi-pedal players won't find a more stable two-leg model.

classic Atlas logo. The spindle-style base is big, sturdy, and heavy, and the seat connects to the spindle via a large metal plate. Both thrones are stuffed with high-density foam and are quite firm. The round-top version (\$249) is a little softer than the bicycle seat (\$269). I personally preferred the latter, but both feel solid and are built to last.

LAP12FPR DOUBLE PEDAL

The aesthetics of the Atlas Pro double pedal (\$775)—brushed-aluminum finish and racecar-style footboard—are modeled after the classic Speed King. The performance of the Atlas Pro, however, is completely different. Where the Speed King is lightweight and notoriously noisy, the Atlas Pro is sturdy and squeak-proof. It has a Monarch dual-chain-drive cam for smooth, fluid action with little horizontal movement and extra power. The spring connects to the pedal post with a Bearing-Pivotal adjustment that allows

the spring to rotate slightly with each stroke, to minimize resistance.

Ludwig's new Precision Universal linkage system has no give at the joints, so there's no lag from the time you press the pedal to when the beater moves toward the head. As a result, both pedals perform very fluidly and provide a powerful stroke. The offset cams add extra acceleration as the beater gets close to the head, which creates a quicker feel. Ludwig completes the nouveau-retro vibe of this pedal with medium-hard felt beaters with a slightly recessed red stripe around the center. I've been using a vintage Ludwig felt beater for years, because I prefer its meaty, punchy sound, and these new versions produced very similar results. Like the rest of the Atlas Pro line, this is a no-fuss, play-it-straight-out-of-the-box double pedal that looks cool and is built for high performance and night-after-night reliability.

ludwig-drums.com

RIMSHOT-LOC

Tension Rod Locking System

by Michael Dawson

Hard-hitting drummers are forever plagued by detuning tension rods, especially on the snare drum. Several manufacturers have attempted to remedy this problem, with some offering plastic stoppers that snap onto the top of the tension rods, and others redesigning the rods and washers themselves to be less prone to slipping. Rimshot-Loc is a new product that installs on your existing hardware, beneath the hoop, to keep the rod securely in place. The theory is that the friction created among the rod, hoop, and Rimshot-Loc will prevent the drum from losing tension due to the gradual backing out of the rods.

SETTING UP

Rimshot-Locs are simple in design and easy to install. They're made from stainless steel and have a threaded hex-head tip on a smooth cylindrical base (of varying lengths, to match the size of different tension rods). The company also offers extenders for use on drums with extra-long lugs, such as bass drums and marching snares.

To install Rimshot-Locs, all you have to do is remove the tension rod from the lug casing but keep it in the hoop. Then you thread the Loc onto the rod with the hex head facing down, leaving a bit of space between the



hoop and the Loc. Next, you retune the drum to your preferred tension and then tighten the Loc against the hoop with the included wrench. It's important that the Loc be tightly torqued for optimal results, and you should hold the tension rod steady with a drum key when wrenching the Locs into position.

SOUND RESULTS

We tested the Rimshot-Locs on an old 8-lug aluminum student snare with a worn single-ply batter head that often detunes.

Once secured in place, the Locs were quite effective in preventing the rods themselves from loosening after repeated rimshots. The drumhead did stretch a bit after about an hour of play, so we had to retune the drum to bring it back up to pitch, but the rods themselves had barely lost any tension. (For comparison, the rods closest to the rimshot spot on this drum used to back out to the point of rattling.)

In order to retune the drum with the Locs in place, you have to loosen the Loc from the hoop so that the tension rod can move

freely, and then you retighten the Loc after tuning. I thought this process would be a bit awkward or time-consuming, but it proved to be simple, quick, and easy.

An added benefit is that Rimshot-Locs make replacing drumheads less of a hassle, since they keep the tension rods from falling out of the hoop when removed from the lug casings.

Prices range from \$17.99 for a six-pack to \$31.99 for ten of the longer RSL-2 models.

rimshot-loc.com



MATT NOLAN CUSTOM

Bronze Sound Sculpture Cymbals

by Michael Dawson



The U.K. company Matt Nolan Custom is a one-man operation, which was based in the builder's kitchen for three years before expanding to a separate manufacturing studio in 2008. Nolan is dedicated to creating sound sculptures, gongs, and cymbals—all of which he hammers entirely by hand—using various bronze alloys, stainless steel, and titanium.

These aren't your run-of-the-mill stamped pies, and no two pieces sound or look exactly alike, although, Nolan says, "I've developed a number of cymbal styles that I can reproduce pretty well each time." We were sent a sample of the company's more all-purpose bronze designs—14" hi-hats (\$525), 16" and 18" crashes (\$300, \$390), 20" Medium ride (\$480), and 22" Medium Dark ride (\$575)—which have a sound that, according to their maker, "leans slightly more towards dark, dry, defined, sweet, and smoky."

FROM START TO FINISH

All Matt Nolan Custom bronze cymbals, like those we have for review, begin as rectangular sheets of B5, B7, B8, B10, B15, or B20 alloy. Nolan cuts the sheets to shape, tempers the metal, hammers each piece by hand, and finishes up with an annealing process. "I use a large propane torch and sometimes a large open fire," Matt says. "I have a number of hammers and a few different anvils. There are no molds or presses. Everything—even each cymbal cup—is hand hammered. Shape is judged by eye and by feel. Hi-hats are checked for trueness against a granite slab."

Our review models feature heavy hammer markings, unique-looking bands of scratched grooves and traditional lathing, and a heavily anodized finish, all of which adds up to some of the most distinctive-looking and unconventional-sounding cymbals we've ever come across. As Nolan

explains, "The hammering is entirely sonically driven. I need to get a certain shape and tension into the cymbal to produce a certain sound. Surface grinding is more of a visual aesthetic, though it does affect the sound in a subtle way. Lathing is mostly a sonic thing. And almost all of my coloring work is down to the annealing heating. Oxides form naturally on the surface of the bronze, so with a bit of practice you can control the torch to produce what you want."

AVANT-GARDE AND ALL-PURPOSE

Who are these unique instruments meant for? "I make cymbals for the drummer who has a particular ear," Nolan says. "The drummer looking for a sound that is perhaps away from the mainstream. A leader, not a follower. With this particular set, we're talking pop, light to medium rock, funk, folk, and modern jazz."

FROM MICROCHIPS TO DRUMSET DISCS

Matt Nolan had a successful career as a silicon microchip designer, holding a master's degree in electronic engineering along with several patents, but he changed gears and began exploring sound sculpture after playing a low-volume gig where he was asked to bring only a snare and a cymbal. "I was like, 'Just one cymbal? Which one?'" Nolan recalls. "I started buying and selling cymbals on eBay, and then I bought a ride cymbal made by [fellow sound sculptor] Steve Hubbard." Nolan eventually began experimenting with his own designs. "First I was just cutting shapes from cracked cymbals," he says. "Then I got a hammer, made an anvil, and got a torch."

The 14" hi-hats consist of a heavy, raw, unlathed bottom cymbal and a medium-weight, striated, Saturn-looking top. They had a chunky, wide voice with a deep, pitchy decay and a touch of the trashy sustain you'd find in a stacker or ribbon crasher. They offered a bit of the thick sound you can get by using two heavy bottom cymbals or crashes as hi-hats, but

with more sensitivity and control.

The 16" crash features traditional lathing on the outer edge, with a smoothly ground, anodized surface closer to the bell and scratched rings on the bell. This cymbal sounded bright, clean, and clear, with a laser-like focus. The 18" crash looks similar to the top hi-hat and had a darker and more complex crash sound that, despite the cym-

bal's otherworldly appearance, was more traditional and would integrate seamlessly into a setup of classic Turkish-style models.

The 20" Medium ride has a mostly raw surface with scratched lathing and varying layers of hammer markings. The 22" Medium Dark ride has a completely raw surface with large hammer marks covering the entire surface. Both cymbals had a strong stick "ping," making them very articulate. The sustain was dark and shimmering but not overly washy, and the bells were strong and sonorous. Again, despite their unconventional look, these rides sounded "all purpose" for use in a variety of situations, as the company intended. If you're looking for more off-the-wall voices, of course, you can check out some of Nolan's trashier-sounding steel and titanium creations.

mattnolancustom.com

NOBLE & COOLEY

MODERNDRUMMER
DIGITALLY ENHANCED

CoolMount Tom Mount

by Miguel Monroy

When most drummers begin the life of a gigging musician, they're excited just for the opportunity to play out. As time goes on, however, and they've been playing in bars three nights a week for several months straight, the excitement begins to wear off. It's at this point that most of us begin looking for ways to make our setup and teardown time faster and easier.

It was this desire for efficiency and speed that had me excited to check out the latest product from Noble & Cooley, the CoolMount. According to the company, after the initial install this item "eliminates the need for drum keys, wing nuts, and memory locks, and reduces the time it takes to set up and tear down your kit." The package also states that the CoolMount fits most suspension systems and any L-arm-style tom stand.

DESIGN

The CoolMount boasts a solid aluminum construction that's both lightweight and durable. We have no doubt that this product would survive countless tours and years of rigorous gigging. The mount is currently offered in two colors: chrome and black chrome. The included mounting bolts with either option are shiny chrome, which could present an aesthetic dilemma for those who prefer the look of black chrome.

The CoolMount comprises two parts. The first is the male bracket, which attaches



to your existing suspension system. The second is the female bracket that mounts to your L-arm-style tom holder.

FUNCTION

The first thing I discovered as I was setting up the CoolMount is that it doesn't work with my Tama Star-Cast mounting system. This definitely came as a surprise. The package for the CoolMount indicates that I could visit the Noble & Cooley website to find a suspender band or sizing adapter to make the mount work with the Star-Cast.

After switching to a different universal suspension system, I was finally set up and ready to test out the CoolMount. The initial install was quick and easy to complete. After getting the tom mounted in my desired position, I was then able to remove and replace the drum as fast as I could pick it up and set it down. The tom fit securely into the mounting bracket and showed no



indication whatsoever of rattling or moving while being played.

VERDICT

The CoolMount offers a simple and efficient way to deal with placing and removing toms. It's aesthetically pleasing and durable as well. Compared with the time it takes to set up my kit using my existing tom suspension system, I saved about eight seconds per drum, as I didn't have to tighten wing nuts or memory locks. Because the mount is not completely universal, though, some players will need to order additional suspender bands or sizing adapters to make the CoolMount work. But overall the product is a nice alternative to other mounting systems, especially for those who want to streamline the setup process. List price: \$39.95.

noblecooley.com



"THE KIT IS ABSOLUTELY
BANGIN!!!
HUGE SOUND
-TOMS ARE MENTAL!!!
KICK - SUPER PUNCHY,
SNARE - AMAZING OVERTONES.
LOVE THE KIT,
IT RECORDED
FLAWLESSLY."

- Kevin "KJ" Sawka

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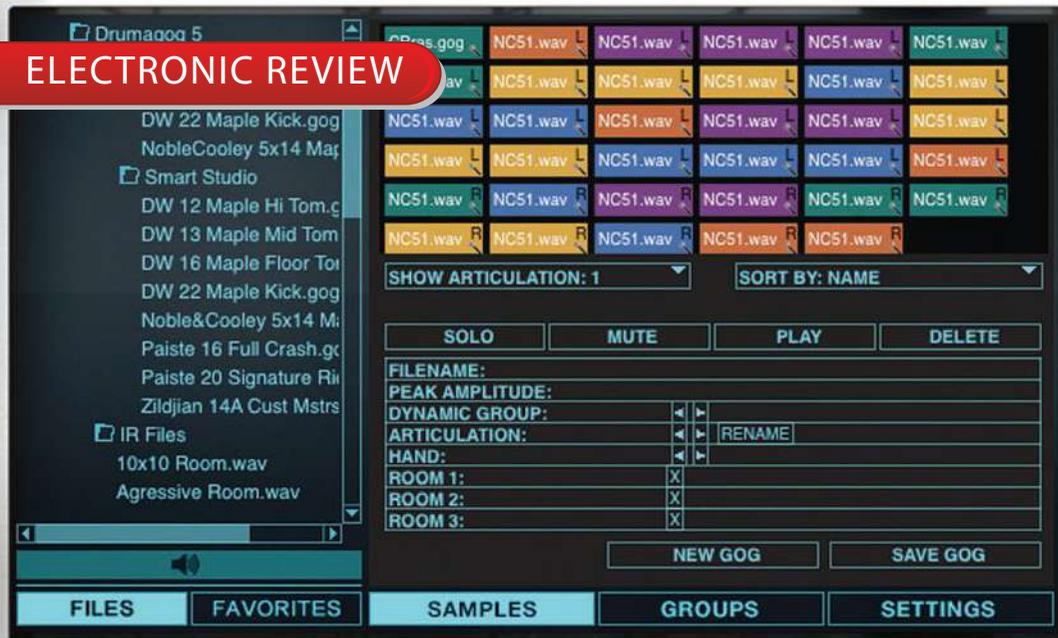


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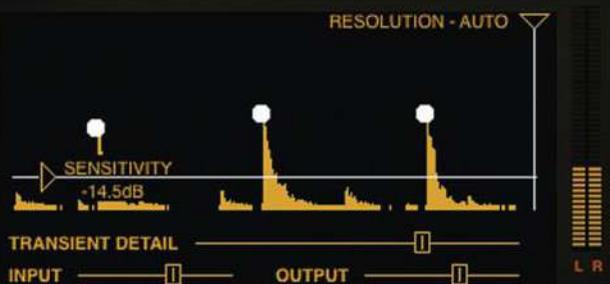


ELECTRONIC REVIEW



- DYNAMIC MULTISAMPLES
- RANDOM MULTISAMPLES
- ARTICULATIONS
- USE LEFT /RIGHT HAND
- DYNAMIC TRACKING
- STEALTH MODE
- AUTO ALIGN 2.0
- AUTO HI-HAT TRACKING

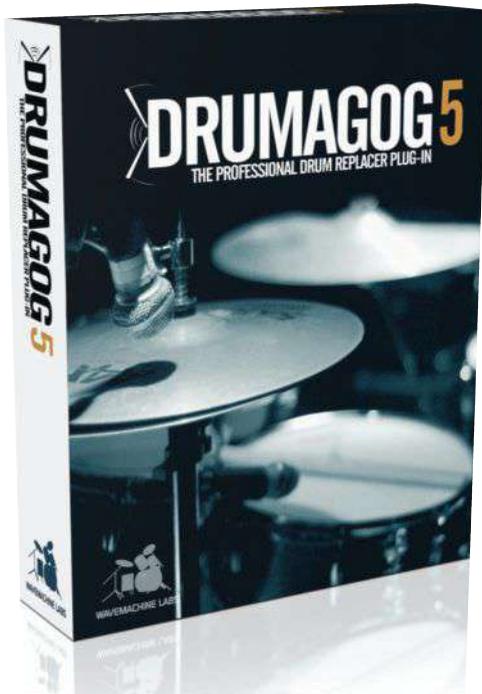
DRUMAGOG



WAVEMACHINE LABS

Drumagog 5 Drum Replacement Software

by Butch Jones



Throughout my career as a recording engineer, I've always been amazed by the way drummers are able to control so many different elements of their kit to achieve such a dynamically balanced sound. It's this admiration and respect, along with having a controlling seat in the studio, that has led me to try to preserve the drummer's voice, even long after he or she has left the building. When WaveMachine Labs released Drumagog a few years back, I knew I had found a tool that could help keep this quest alive. (For a review of the original version of Drumagog, see the Electronic Review in the December 2006 issue of *Modern Drummer*.) The program's fifth incarnation, Drumagog 5, is a complete overhaul and includes an improved interface plus a few other choice upgrades, which makes the drum-sound sweetening/replacing process even more seamless.

Since its inception, Drumagog has been one of the top choices for drum repair

work because of its ability to accurately detect hits and then trigger samples from an internal library or from VST drum software like FXpansion's BFD2. The samples can be played at dynamics that mirror the recorded track, or you can have them trigger at a set level. Drumagog can also be used for sending and receiving MIDI notes to and from outboard equipment and virtual plug-in instruments. Inserting Drumagog on a track, choosing a drum sample, and dialing in your trigger settings is all it takes to start tweaking your sound.

Drumagog 5 comes in three forms, Basic (\$149), Pro (\$269), and Platinum (\$359). We checked out Platinum (Version 5.11), which can be installed on Windows XP, Vista, or 7 and Mac OS X 10.4.11 or higher. The plug-in can be run on 32- or 64-bit systems and requires 6 GB of available hard-drive space for installing the included samples. The installation process is painless, and if you have Drumagog 4 already on your system it



RAY LUZIER IS

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Ray Luzier is Obsessed with being the perfect dad. With finding the perfect gourmet dessert. With creating the perfect mix in his home studio. And he's Obsessed with his **21" SABIAN AA Rock Ride**. Why? Because in Ray's words, "I don't hit light – but I can crash on it and it cuts and slices music in half. It's perfect!"

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See the video at Sabian.com/rayluzier ■■

A SOUND
OBSESSION



will not be overwritten, leaving you the option to access that version's samples in Drumagog 5.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK

The updated Drumagog manual is laid out clearly, and after checking out the New User Tutorial, I was up and running in a flash. Drumagog 5's updated GUI (graphic user interface) has made it easier to navigate through all of the software's functions within a single window, which is partitioned into five sections with easily accessible controls. The dial-style pots in earlier versions have been replaced with slider controls, making it simpler to adjust the various settings when needed.

FILE BROWSER

The included Gog samples are easily accessible using this new window. Double-clicking a sample will send it to the samples window, or you can drag and drop audio samples directly into the sample window for triggering. Adding your often-used samples to the favorites folder will cut down on future search times.

SAMPLES/GROUPS/SETTINGS

The samples window shows every sample used for the selected Gog file, along with descriptive info such as name, volume, dynamic group, and articulation settings, plus which room samples are attached to the direct-sound sample. You can audition or edit these samples, and you can create and save new Gog sample files.

The Groups tab shows your dynamic-group settings (photo 1). By manually adjusting the break points of each group, you can control which samples are triggered for different dynamics.

The Settings tab opens the redesigned settings window, which houses controls from version four (auto-ducking, MIDI, dynamic tracking, and stealth mode) but is more user-friendly, due to control faders that make smaller adjustments much easier to execute (photo 2).

There are two triggering engines: Advanced, which is listed as being the best choice for mixing work, and Live Mode, which is for lower-latency use for real-time triggering.

OPTIONS PANEL

The on/off toggles for dynamic multi-samples, random multi-samples, articulations, left/right hand, dynamic tracking, stealth mode, auto-align 2.0, and auto hi-hat tracking are now housed in a single window. This makes it much easier to experiment with the different settings.

VISUAL TRIGGERING

Here you'll find the large drag bars that are used to set resolution, sensitivity,

transient detail, and input/output levels. The large display window allows you to capture precise trigger points, shown as large white dots, in no time. Turning the new Auto-Align 2.0 feature on and off allows you to choose between the full-wave alignment of samples (to minimize phasing issues) and the traditional transient alignment, which locks the triggered sound with the exact start time of the original drum hit.

MAIN/SYNTH/EFFECTS/PLUG-INS

The Main section, which has blend, pitch, and articulation faders, also includes new Room sample faders for mixing multi-sampled Gog files. The Position knob from version four (used for switching between open and closed sounds on hi-hats and center hits, rimshots, and rimclicks on the snare) has been replaced by an Articulations slider. There's also a trigger filter that can be used to dial in specific frequencies to help isolate the trigger source.

The upgraded Synth window houses various waveforms that can be used to enhance the sample sound. This will be helpful when you need a little extra low end or white noise that wasn't captured in the recording. The Effects window houses convolution reverb and a special-effects synth called MorphEngine. Each of these has its own mix controls.

The Plug-Ins window allows you to insert other VST instruments, such as BFD2, directly into Drumagog, so you can trigger sounds from an external library without having to route MIDI data to a separate track. Along with MIDI controls for channel and note number, there's a slider for controlling the balance between Drumagog and the plug-in.

HANDS ON

Drumagog 5 gives you the capability to replace drum sounds quickly, with samples in the included library or external plug-ins, but it can also be used to help repair sounds without sacrificing the original source. Here's how I use it to preserve the initial recorded sound.

First, I audition the tracks to see what needs to be fixed. In our test session, the kick drum mic had a lot of leakage, the snare drum mic picked up a lot of hi-hat, and the tom mics picked up a lot of cymbals. While going through this listening process, I'm also looking for isolated hits that I can export and drop into Drumagog for later use. By sampling these original sounds, I will be able to replace the noisy tracks with a clean version of the same drum.

I also sent the samples through my control-room speakers and recorded



them at two different distances for use as ambiance files in Drumagog. After creating the room samples, I dropped them into the Gog folder, on top of the new clean direct sample I created, so I could blend the two during the mix.

If you're looking to replace drum sounds with something entirely different, go with the included sample library or interface Drumagog 5 with your favorite drum VST sample instrument. But the method of creating your own Gog files from the original recordings is a great way to preserve the drummer's sound while also making your final drum track cleaner. We've posted before-and-after files of our Drumagog test session at modern drummer.com.

drumagog.com





MIKE PORTNOY IS

OBSESSED



Mike Portnoy is easily Obsessed. It's scary. Case in point: his meticulously organized collection of films (he loves Stanley Kubrick) and magazines (he's got every Modern Drummer ever printed). If you touch any one of them, he'll know! But his biggest Obsession is drums. Like his signature **SABIAN Max Stax**. The perfect combination of a China and a percussive effect cymbal, they always cut through.

Learn more about what makes Mike Obsessed.

See the video at Sabian.com/mikeportnoy 



A SOUND OBSESSION



CREATE A STABLE MULTI-PEDAL SETUP

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

by Jordan Hill

Anyone who's used multiple foot pedals to play percussion instruments at the drumset knows how frustrating it can be to have a pedal shift position during a performance. One solution is to make a custom pedal baseplate. This article takes you through that process so you can create a stable and consistent multi-pedal setup that suits your personal needs.

STEP 1: OUTLINE YOUR CONFIGURATION

The setup we're using here features a two-pedal arrangement for the right foot, with a single pedal and the slave side of a double pedal. This will allow the right foot to play the bass drum and an auxiliary percussion piece.

Once you have your setup organized, find a large piece of cardboard and place the pedals on the cardboard in the desired positions. Trace around the baseplate of each pedal.



STEP 2: CREATE A TEMPLATE



Remove the pedals from the cardboard and cut along the outlines, leaving a small border on the edges. This is the template for the new baseplate.

STEP 3: CUT THE PLATE

Next, choose a material for the baseplate. We used $\frac{1}{8}$ "-thick steel because steel is very sturdy and cost effective. Aluminum or wood can also be used. Aluminum is lighter than steel but more expensive. Thin plywood is the least expensive option, but it's also the weakest. Use your template to determine the size of your sheet of metal or wood.



Using the template, trace the outline on the metal or wood plate. A jigsaw can be used to cut wood, but you'll need professional help to cut metal. Any local welder or machine shop will have the tools required to cut out the baseplate, for a reasonable charge. (I bribed a friend at my local muffler repair shop with a pizza and a two-liter bottle of soda.)



STEP 4: DISASSEMBLE YOUR PEDALS



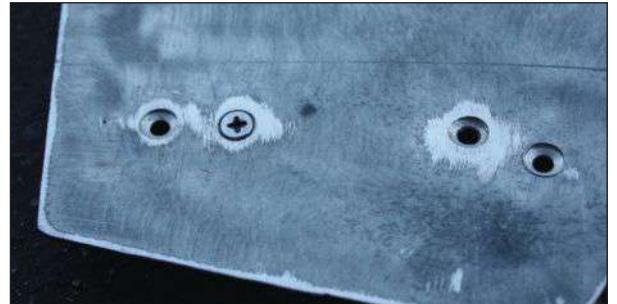
Set aside the new baseplate for a moment, and begin to disassemble your pedals. Most models have several screws that secure the frame and footboard to the baseplate. Once the pedals are disassembled, determine which holes in the baseplate will be used as mounting holes. In the photo, the holes marked red are for mounting the pedal. The yellow holes are for the hoop-mounting clamp. Some pedals have holes for retractable anchor screws as well.

STEP 5: CLAMP AND DRILL

After you disassemble the pedals, use clamps to attach the old pedal baseplates to the new baseplate. Using the original plate as a guide, mark where the mounting holes need to be drilled. Remove the clamps and plates, and drill the mounting holes in the new baseplate with a $\frac{3}{16}$ " drill bit.



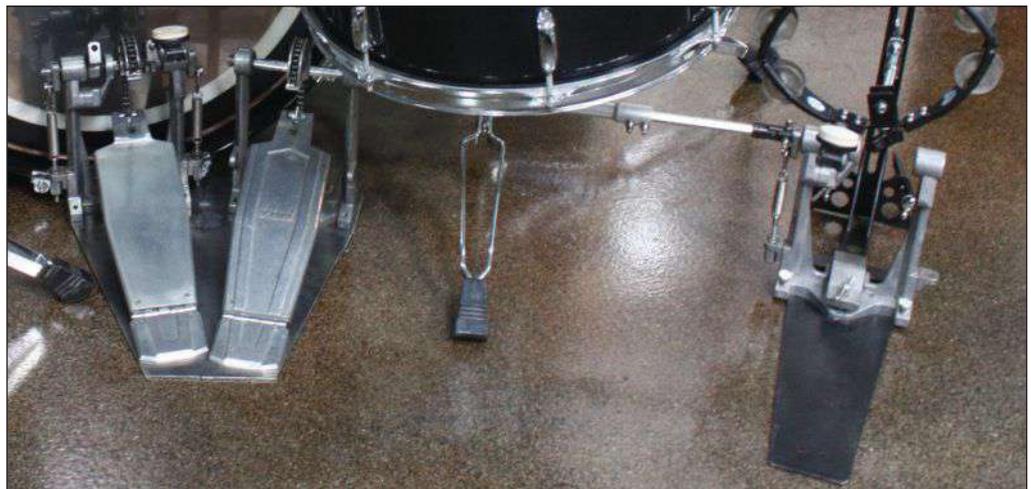
STEP 6: CHAMFER THE HOLES



Clean off any rough edges left over from drilling. Then turn over the new baseplate so the side that will be on the floor is facing up. Using a larger drill bit (approximately $\frac{5}{16}$ "), chamfer the holes so the mounting screws will be flush once they're tightened.

STEP 7: FINAL ASSEMBLY

The last step is to secure the pedals to the new baseplate. Install the screws by hand first, and then tighten them with a screwdriver, being careful to avoid over-tightening. (Most pedals are made of aluminum, and the threads can be damaged easily.) Once everything is secure, you're all set and ready to jam.



Jordan Hill is a coauthor, along with Kofi Baker, of *The Forgotten Foot*, which is available through Hal Leonard.



GEARING UP

Drumkit Details, On Stage and Up Close

This Month

Filter's

MIKA FINED

Interview by John Martinez • Photos by Alex Solca



Drums: Gretsch Renown in satin black finish

- A. 6x12 New Classic snare
 - B. 6 1/2x14 custom flat-black-finish brass snare (powder coated inside and out) with tube lugs
 - C. 8x10 tom
 - D. 8x12 tom
 - E. 14x14 floor tom
 - F. 16x16 floor tom
 - G. 20x22 bass drum
 - H. 5x14 Hammered brass snare (spare)
- Not shown:** 16x18 floor tom
- "My setup is versatile," Fineo says. "I wouldn't call it a rock, R&B, or jazz kit. I like to stay right in the center. I come from a jazz, R&B, and gospel upbringing. My dad was a touring funk/R&B keyboardist, so my style kind of started out that way. Then I found my way into the rock world and wanted to bring that influence into rock and do something a little different, as far as sound choice and fills.
- "My kit is set up so I can quickly jump into something, like an R&B groove. I can tighten it up with my auxiliary snare, and if I want to open up with a big Zeppelin-ish kind of sound, I can get on my 20" Legacy ride/crash and 6 1/2x14 main snare. In Filter, a lot of the stuff is all over the grid. The previous drummer had a jazz/gospel style; he played on the *Amalgamut* record. The new record, *The Trouble With Angels*, has a more classic-rock approach, so I wanted to make sure that I covered both those bases with the band while still being me."

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 14" HHX Evolution hi-hats
 - 2. 18" HHX O-Zone crash
 - 3. 19" AA Rock crash
 - 4. 10" HH Duo splash
 - 5. 14" AAX Thin crash with 12" Radia China on top
 - 6. 22" Paragon ride
 - 7. 20" Legacy ride (used as a crash)
 - 8. 19" Holy China
- "My cymbals tend to change. Generally I like to play bigger, washier crashes. In the studio I'll usually use a 22" Artisan Medium ride, a 22" Artisan Light ride, and a 21" Legacy ride as crashes. With hi-hats I'll use a very thin combination of 15" all the way up to 17" cymbals to get a slushy, washy sound.
- "With Filter I'm using heavier crashes. I'm fighting to pierce through a lot of Marshall stacks and bass cabinets, but with cymbals that are musical as well. I have a balance of washy and traditional rock-sounding cymbals."



Heads: Evans ST Coated main-snare batter and Hazy 300 bottom, EC Reverse Dot auxiliary-snare batter and Hazy 300 bottom (snare is sometimes muffled with Evans E-Rings and Moon Gel dampers), EC2 Clear tom batters and G1 bottoms, and EMAD Clear bass drum batter (with AF patch) and Inked by Evans EQ3 front head with custom Filter logo and 4" port

"I prefer solid heads on both sides of the kick; I believe you get the most low end that way. If you're going to use a port, I'd go as small as possible. The 4" port is enough to get a Beta 91 inside without choking the sound, and you'll get enough resonance.

"I'm also using PureSound 16-strand wires, which let my snares breathe a little bit. I don't like an overly snare-y sound, so that seems to help."

Hardware: Gibraltar, including a rack with each component marked with a durable plastic label, using numbers for cymbal arms and letters for floor tom legs. Among the items mounted

on the rack are snare baskets, a no-leg hi-hat stand with a cut-down pull rod, left and right overhead mic stands, and a bass drum microphone holder.

"I'm also using a Gibraltar Intruder double pedal that I customized with DW Delta hinges because I felt they were very sturdy."

Microphones: Shure SM57 on snares, Beta 56 on toms, Beta 52 on front of bass drum with Beta 91 inside, and KSM32 overheads

Sticks: Vater West Side and Fusion models, various brushes

In-Ear Monitors: Ultimate Ears UE11

"I like to have control over my mix, and I like to hear the toms and kick cut through. The kick drum is my platform; I can't really build on anything if I don't hear that."





TONY MASON

A revered New York cat quietly plies his trade and builds a résumé to die for.

by Rick Moe

New York native Tony Mason, one of NYC's most in-demand drummers, has a reputation built on his fierce backbeat, soulful timing, and undeniable groove. You can hear it on any of his recent work, including Norah Jones' number-one album *Not Too Late* (on the hit single "Thinking About You"), Jim Campilongo's *Orange*, *Gravity Happens* by Kate Voegelé (of the TV show *One Tree Hill*), the Brooklyn Boogaloo Blowout's *Who Burnt the Bacon?*, and the Dred Scott Trio's *Going Nowhere*. Mason has also logged miles with the Soup Dragons, Holly Palmer, Joan Osborne, Martha Wainwright, Paula Cole, the Bloomdaddies, Bo Diddley, Leo Nocentelli, and Charlie Hunter.

Listening to Mason's playing, you can clearly detect influences including Lloyd Knibb, Russ Kunkel, Steve Gadd, Elvin Jones, and Zigaboo Modeliste (who by chance is Tony's brother-in-law). So solid is Mason's feel that guitarist Charlie Hunter has said, "He happens to be, in my opinion, the best pure pocket drummer I've ever heard. Science. In terms of groove and time, it's his world—we live in it and act accordingly."

Modern Drummer met with Tony one Saturday afternoon at Junior's in Brooklyn for some coffee and conversation.

MD: How did you get your start in New York City?

Tony: At first I kind of studied by just hanging out at a lot of the clubs—you know, learning by osmosis, which is what a lot of guys back in the early days did. There weren't a lot of jazz schools in the '40s and '50s, so you'd just go and watch people play. Then I started going to jam sessions. I used to play on the street, in Central Park, drag my drums to the subways. I think I knew I wasn't going to have a career as a jazz drummer, but I knew it was something that I wanted to learn and I wanted to play. Just learning how to swing on a ride cymbal can make your rock 'n' roll and funk sound better.

Then for the next ten years I played simple groove/backbeat gigs. That led to singer-songwriter gigs, which led to my first tour with the Soup Dragons, in 1994. With them I learned a lot about playing big shows and hitting it from beat one. I was playing to loops and to a click live, which was a good learning experience. It exposed some holes in my playing, which any big gig has the

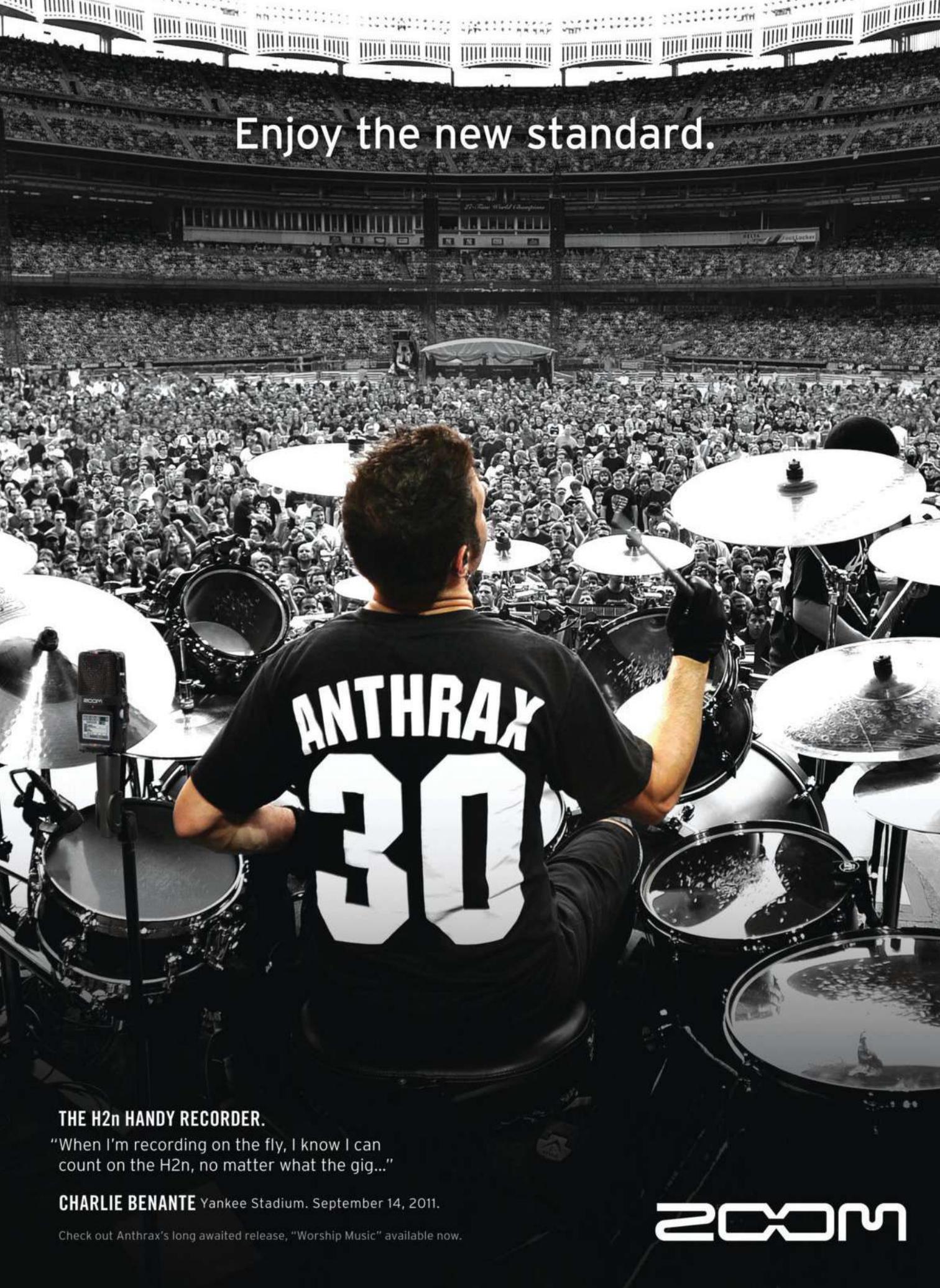
potential of doing.

MD: What was it like working with drummer Anton Fier [Pere Ubu, the Feelies, Lounge Lizards, Golden Palominos] as the producer on Jim Campilongo's *Orange*?

Tony: Anton didn't dictate a lot of things drum-wise or parts-wise in general, but he was very straight up and would let you know, "That's not what I hear on Monday nights at the Living Room." If he felt like I was playing the same fill on every take, he would help us get out of the box a little and play things that

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

For New York City gigs, Mason generally plays whatever the venue provides or, as many drummers in the city often do, uses a "mutt" kit comprising drums and cymbals of assorted makes and models. When on tour, he employs one of his vintage 1960s Slingerland, Gretsch, or Ludwig kits. On Charlie Hunter tours, for example, he played his '60s blue marine pearl Ludwigs: 22" bass drum, 12" rack tom, and 14" and 16" floor toms, with a 5 1/2 x 14 metal Ludwig snare. Tony also uses Craviotto snare drums for select gigs and sessions. He endorses Bosphorus cymbals and plays a 22" Masters Vintage ride with three rivets or a 22" Traditional ride, an 18" Masters crash, and 14" Masters hi-hats. On occasion he'll also use a selection of vintage Zildjian A and K crash cymbals.



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zoom

“Learn multiple styles, but try to become ‘the guy’ for a couple things. When I zeroed in on the pocket/R&B stuff, I instantly started working more.”

might not be so safe. He’s a drummer that I admire a lot, so that was motivating for me.

MD: You have a degree in classical percussion from the Manhattan School of Music. Have you ever had to seek out subsequent instruction?

Tony: Recently I was reading this old interview with Jack DeJohnette, and he was talking about how you want to feel as relaxed as if you were in the fourth row of the audience watching yourself play. That’s something I’ve been working on. I can tense up when things get more

intense or if I have to play something fast, and that’s when you should actually get looser. A few years after getting out of school, I realized: *Man, I’ve got a really good feel and I can groove, but my hands hurt!* So I studied some hand technique with Henry Adler, Joe Morello, and Dom Famularo. My first lesson with Dom Famularo was me holding the stick and him saying, “Put your wrist on your lap. Notice how straight it is? Well, when you put the stick in your hand, nothing should change.”

MD: What advice would you give to up-and-coming drummers who are interested in professional playing?

Tony: One of the best compliments I’ve gotten is when someone says something like, “Man, it feels so comfortable to play with you.” I just love supporting and making my bandmates feel good. Beyond that, show up on time, make sure you know the music, make sure you know the tempos, make sure your instrument sounds good, leave your ego at the door, and play for the song. Whatever type of music it is, always put it before your own playing.

Be a person who someone wants to work with and is easy to get along with. Make sure to research and really know where the music you’re playing is coming from. If you’re playing R&B, check out someone like Bernard Purdie. If you can make people feel good and be a supportive player, people will respond to that. You’ll get work and get asked back.

I would also say that it’s good to learn multiple styles, because they can help each other out. At the same time, it’s very important to focus on a couple of things and become “the guy” for that type of thing. When I zeroed in on the pocket/R&B stuff, I instantly started working more.

MD: Would you elaborate a little on the idea of playing for the song?

Tony: I really try to pay attention to the tune and the overall volume and dynamics of the band. A drummer friend of mine paid me a really great compliment once by saying, “I notice that when you play, you have a way of cutting through the band, but you don’t wreck the band.” A lot of it comes with experience and confidence. Get as comfortable within your groove and your sound as you can, and if you’re paying attention to the song, I think everything else falls into place.

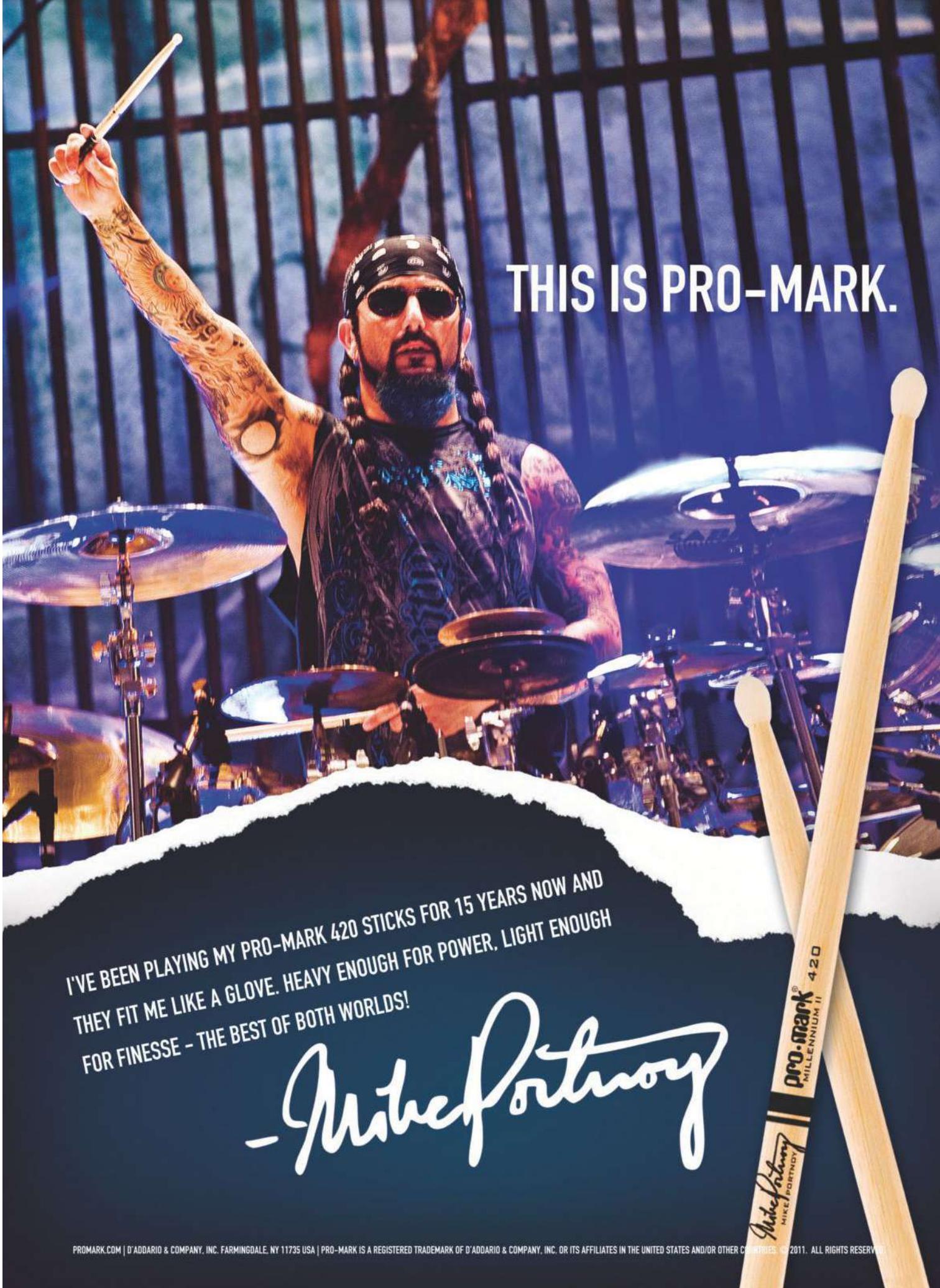
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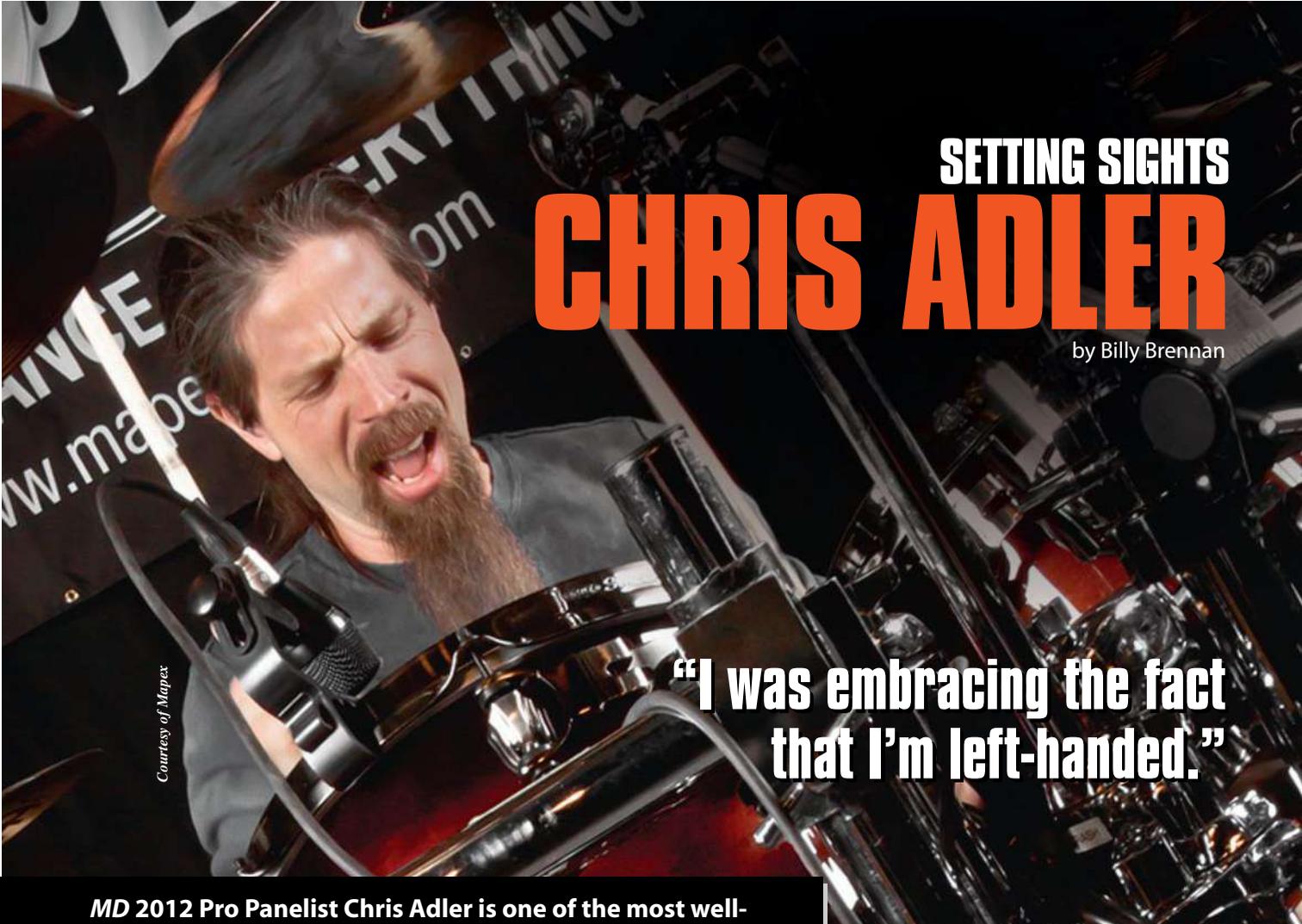


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SETTING SIGHTS CHRIS ADLER

by Billy Brennan

“I was embracing the fact that I’m left-handed.”

MD 2012 Pro Panelist Chris Adler is one of the most well-respected and identifiable drummers in any genre. Add to that a tireless work ethic, a shark-like determination to keep moving forward—as an individual and as a member of Lamb of God—and an openness and warmth that endear him to fans new and old, and you start to get a picture of what makes Adler so special in the drumming community.

Shortly after he helped mix Lamb of God’s eagerly awaited new album, *Resolution*, and before he took off to tour the globe with the band once again, Chris chatted with us about the specific areas of drumming he’s working to improve on these days.

MD: When we last spoke, at the Mayhem Festival, one of the things you mentioned was that between records you like to shed certain aspects of your playing. What were you working on during this last writing cycle?

Chris: I felt like I was constantly pulling from the same bag of tricks, and that got me into some tab exercises, which resulted in my writing tab books like *The Making of New American Gospel* and *The Making of As the Palaces Burn*. I started to try to understand more about what I do so that I could pick it apart and *change* it—and learn from other people and try other paths. I’ve always been really insecure about jam-

ming with other drummers, because I never felt like I knew what I was doing. I knew I could do what I do well, but I didn’t feel like I had the chops to really sit down and work with someone that had gone to school for drumming.

So I wanted to work on that, to learn...well...not *everything*, but enough to get outside my box and get some new tools in the belt. The primary way I did that was to reach out to guys that I think are going to change the way things are done in metal in the future. The number-one guy, for me, is a dude named Matt Halpern. Matt plays in Periphery, and he’s up in Baltimore, only a couple hours away

from me. So I would drive up to Baltimore and he and I would sit down. He comes from such a different background. He’s been schooled since he was like three years old, and he’s kind of this fusion cat that came into metal drumming. The guys that really make a mark in metal are the ones who are bringing in other things.

I would sit down with Matt and learn about different kinds of fusion beats—how there’s these ghost notes and you lead with the snare and all that stuff. Growing up in the suburbs as a Mötley Crüe fan, that’s like rocket science to me! [laughs] It’s like a totally different instrument, so I was interested in bringing some of that into my playing. And it wasn’t so much that I wanted faster hands or feet, I just wanted to change things up and try to bring something different to the writing process.

Specifically what I was doing was embracing the fact that I’m left-handed. Instead of constantly running down the toms and having to throw in a triplet to land on my right hand, why not roll *up* the toms? I can do that, being left-handed, and I’ve ignored that forever, but it shows up all over the new record.

I was just trying to sit back and understand what my strengths and weaknesses

My

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are and trying to build on the weaknesses. And instead of defining them as weaknesses, I tried to turn them into strengths. That was my goal, and the evolution between the last record and this one is far more audible than it's been between any of the others.

I also started changing things up on my kit, like putting a tom on the left-hand side of my hi-hat. That immediately created different avenues.

MD: As a lefty playing a righty kit, are you trying to bring in open-handed drumming at all?

Chris: Yeah. It's funny, a friend of mine is left-handed as well, and I set up a left-handed kit for him, letting him borrow it so he and his kids could play on it. He can play fairly well left-handed, but I feel like I'm walking on the moon—like I have *no* idea what I'm doing. [laughs] But I immediately realized that I should be able to make it work. There's no reason that I should be having trouble playing this drumkit. So I've been spending the past couple of weeks trying to get comfortable playing open-handed.

You know, muscle memory is really hard to defeat, and you have to spend time doing it. One hand's stronger than the

other, one foot's stronger than the other... But over time it evens out, and I'm kind of in the middle of that process right now.

MD: You're on the *MD Pro Panel* this year.

think, *Wow, that guy's pretty good.* And the players who can do that are obviously very skilled. But it loses its effect when that's all there is. If you start to think of your kick drum as more of a snare drum, though,

"I would sit down with Matt Halpern of Periphery and learn about different kinds of fusion beats. Growing up in the suburbs as a Mötley Crüe fan, that's like rocket science to me!"

What topics are you interested in exploring?

Chris: One thing I want to address is this kind of "race for double bass." When someone says *double bass*, you immediately think of this competition of guys with hummingbird feet going for a record. I'm fairly fast, and I've got the endurance to do a lot of stuff. But going forward, one of the things I'm interested in is *not* doing three-minute runs of 200 bpm double bass. It's how you delicately use that power and ability—dropping in and out, accenting things, bringing the lead-in triplets or quads—that can really make things snap.

I think when a fan or another drummer hears those super-long runs, it's easy to

you can kind of pepper a song with different variations—and you build a better appreciation of it.

Guys like Shannon Larkin, from back in the old Wrathchild America days—that's a blueprint for me on how to play double bass. Shannon wasn't the fastest or the craziest double bass guy, but it was the way he used it, the way he came in and out of songs. It's the age-old argument that you want to leave people wanting more, not less. And I think right now the race has led me to want less, to find that balance where I'm really contributing to a song, not just punching people in the face the whole time.

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Gregory HUTCHINSON

Hutch might just be *the jazz drummer's jazz drummer*—historically astute and futuristically minded, with the kind of technique, soul, and sophistication that today's most important artists treasure.

Story by Ken Micallef • Photos by Timothy Saccenti

H*ands On With Hutch* is Gregory Hutchinson's DVD treatise on everything required to make a good jazz drummer a *great* jazz drummer. On his first-ever instructional video, the forty-one-year-old Brooklyn native covers such important principles as drawing tone out of the drums, feathering the bass drum, metronomic and non-metronomic drumming, playing the ride cymbal, and understanding the function of each piece in the conceptual drum orchestra.

"I also stress not worrying about getting around the drums as fast as you can," Hutchinson says by phone while on vacation in

Joe Henderson, Roy Hargrove, and John Scofield, Hutchinson extends the tradition of the greats of the '50s and '60s, with remarkable clarity, hard-charging swing, and a massive brush sound. And he has an energy level so high that he can drive a big band, a trio, and a simmering ballads-only ensemble to equal, storm-swelling heights.

On any given night with any given set of musicians, Hutchinson performs solos with multiple layers, as if he's telling more than one story at a time. And he has a deep understanding of tradition, drilled into him by the jazz masters Ray Brown and Betty Carter and also by his drumset teachers, Kenny

"The ride cymbal is your canvas. If that's a weak point, everything will be weak, no matter how well you play the drums."

Virginia. "That's really irrelevant. I'd rather take someone who can't get around as fast but who gets a good sound and who has a really good beat and a good groove. I'm not really into chops. If you go back in drumming history, all the baddest cats had great chops, but their feel was incredible too."

A veteran of bands led by Ray Brown, Betty Carter, Eric Reed, Dianne Reeves, Joshua Redman,

Washington, Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Justin DiCioccio, and Wade Barnes. Substantial energy reserves aid and abet his extreme articulation on the drums, but Hutch also plays with subtlety, finesse, and sensitivity as needed. (Working with female jazz vocalists is one of his specialties.) Gregory Hutchinson is a superbly hands-on musician, and his generous spirit matches his God-given talents.



HUTCH'S SETUP

Drums: Yamaha PHX in textured black sunburst with gold hardware

- A. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 snare
- B. 8x12 tom
- C. 14x14 floor tom (16x16 alternate)
- D. 14x18 bass drum (16x22 alternate)

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" old Constantinople hi-hats
- 2. 21" prototype ride based on the Bounce model
- 3. 21" prototype rivet ride based on the Bounce model
- 4. 22" old A rivet ride

Gregory, who also uses a flat ride, thanks Paul Francis at Zildjian for help with the special models.

Sticks: Vic Firth sticks and brushes

Heads: Remo Coated Vintage Ambassador snare batter and Clear Ambassador bottom, and Coated Vintage Ambassador or Coated Vintage Emperor on both sides of toms and bass drum



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MD: *Hands On With Hutch* covers swinging, articulation, feel, and tuning, among other topics. Can you talk further about how to bring the sound out of the drum?

Gregory: Wrist snaps. Do them in the air, then practice them on the drums. That's how you get the sound out of the drum. A lot of guys pound into the drum. But the actual stroke should be...as you're going down you're coming up. As opposed to pounding into the drum, as soon as you initiate that downstroke, you're thinking about the upstroke. Practicing wrist snaps will allow you to play that way when you're not simply practicing. That gives you a bigger sound, a fatter sound, a clearer sound that has more center to it. If you take the stick and just hit into the drum, you're dampening the sound. But when you lift it off the head, you're letting the sound vibrate and come out. It's like, if you put a towel over the tom and hit it, it sounds one way; remove the towel and the tom will ring. Same concept.

MD: Awareness of the motion helps achieve the upstroke?

Gregory: Yes. Playing the drums involves muscle memory. We practice rudiments and we train our muscles. So once your muscles are trained that way and they understand what to do, it becomes second nature.

MD: Do you suggest doing wrist snaps primarily on the pad or snare drum? Will that translate to the other drums?

Gregory: It's the drums, period. You can do foot snaps on the bass drum too. You have to know how to bring the sound out of the bass drum. Most guys play into the bass drum. That's why companies make bridges to lift the drum off the floor so it will project more. If you play the bass drum [correctly] you can get that same sound without using a bridge. As you're applying the stroke downward on the bass drum, don't think about laying into the drum. It's like bouncing your hand off the bass drum instead of slapping into it—that's the same motion you want to use with the foot. As you're going into the head, think about coming off the head and letting the sound ring out.

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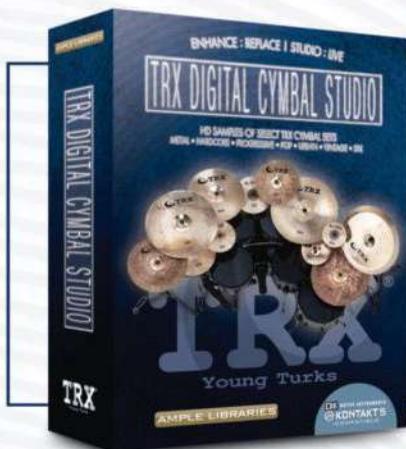
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GREGORY HUTCHINSON

MD: That must be part of feathering the bass drum.

Gregory: When music sounds good, the first thing you do is tap your foot, right? Feathering is essentially the same thing. You can do that away from the bass drum. Just practice lightly on the floor, four to the bar. Get used to that motion so that when you play the bass drum pedal, it's not a drastic change. I always feather, though you don't always hear it. It helps the bass player; it helps keep the bottom end in the music; it helps make your sound fuller. At all tempos. It's felt more than heard.

MD: What's the distance between the beater and the head when you're feathering?

Gregory: Not too far. Perhaps a finger width between the bass drum head and the beater. Practice feathering at faster tempos without a metronome. Metronomes give you metronomic playing. I always played with records. For jazz, you have to be able to bend and go with the music; you have to be flexible. If you're playing with a metronome, you're thinking that [on-the-beat] way. For rudiments, yes, you practice with a metronome. But for actually playing I transcribe solos from records or play time. But it's all done by ear. Then you can play

RECORDINGS

Ray Brown Live at Scullers /// **Joe Henderson** Lush Life: The Music of Billy Strayhorn /// **Joshua Redman** Compass, Passage of Time /// **3 Cohens** Family /// **Dr. Lonnie Smith** Too Damn Hot! /// **Ron Blake** Lest We Forget /// **Eric Reed** Musicale /// **Roy Hargrove** Approaching Standards

INFLUENCES

Sonny Rollins East Broadway Run Down (Elvin Jones) /// **Jo Jones Trio** self-titled on Everest Records (Jo Jones) /// **Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers** The Big Beat (Art Blakey) /// **Max Roach** Deeds, Not Words (Max Roach) /// **Miles Davis** The Complete Live at the Plugged Nickel 1965 (Tony Williams), In Person Friday and Saturday Nights at the Blackhawk (Jimmy Cobb), Circle in the Round (Philly Joe Jones, Jimmy Cobb, Billy Cobham, Jack DeJohnette, Airtio Moreira, Tony Williams) /// **Roy Haynes Quartet** Out of the Afternoon (Roy Haynes) /// **John Coltrane** The Mastery of John Coltrane Vol. II: To the Beat of a Different Drum (Roy Haynes) /// **Jon Gordon** The Things We Need (Kenny Washington, Eddie Locke) /// **Tony Williams Lifetime** Ego (Tony Williams) /// **Lewis Nash** Rhythm Is My Business (Lewis Nash) /// plus anything with Elvin Jones, Sid Catlett, or Philly Joe Jones

good human time.

I like Miles Davis's "Blues No. 2" from *Circle in the Round*, with Philly Joe Jones. They're trading fours, and they really set each other up. I also played along with Tony Williams on Sam Rivers' *Fuchsia Swing Song*, Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*, Max Roach's *Deeds, Not Words*, and any Art Blakey record.

MD: How do you tune your drums?

Gregory: Each drum has a specific zone it likes. So if you're dealing with smaller drums, they like to be tuned higher.

Middle drums like to be tuned mid to lower, and floor toms like to be tuned lower. You can tune a floor tom up higher, as I do a lot of times. You just have to know the range you're dealing with. Some people tune to specific notes. I tune each drum for the best way it will sound. I've gotten it to a point where it's generally in the higher-pitched range; the bass drum is medium to lower.

MD: Do you keep a similar tension on each tom head?

Gregory: For toms I tune the bottom a

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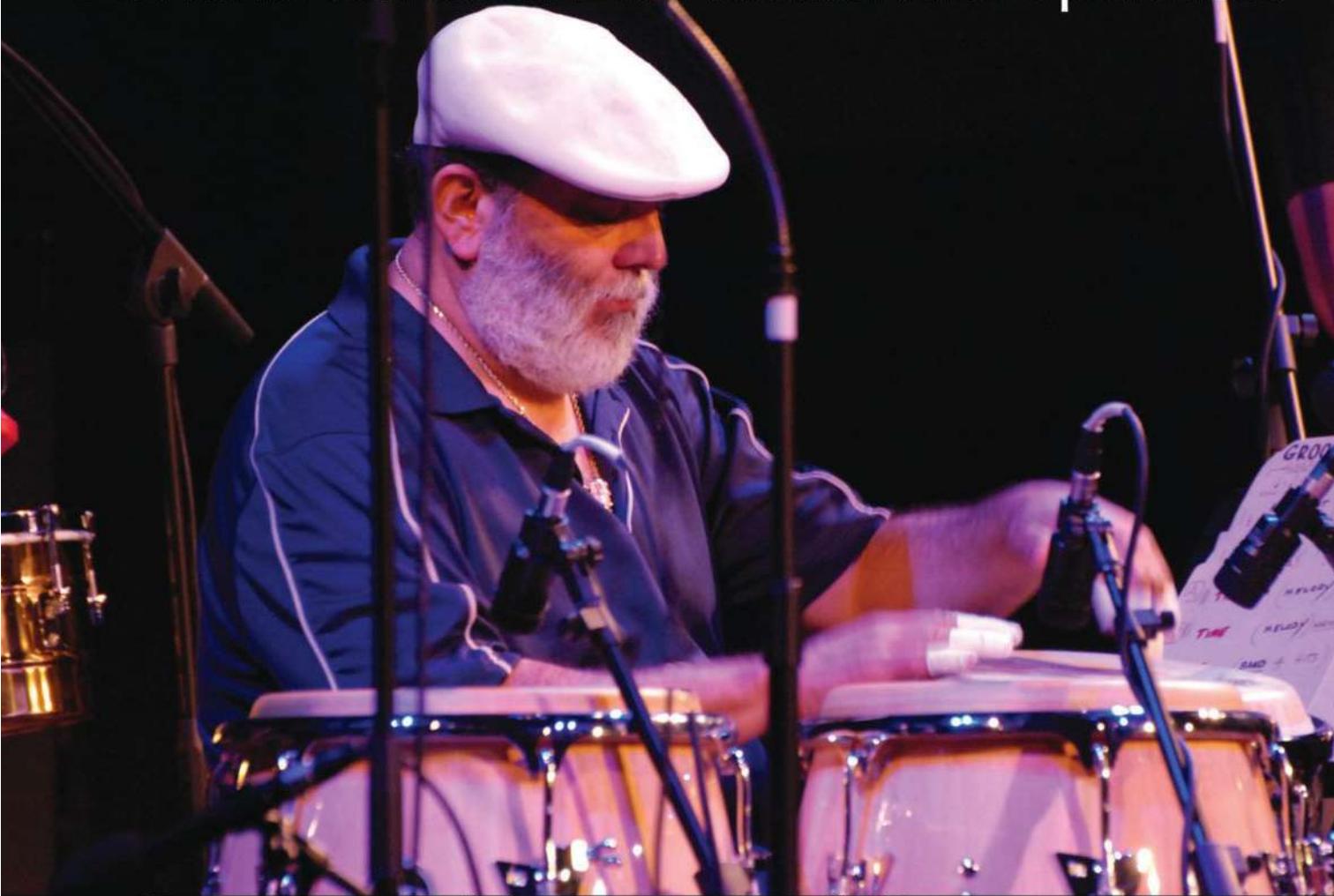
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GREGORY HUTCHINSON

little tighter, but not super-tight. I'm tuning for tone, and to do that I tune the bottom head first and then adjust the top for tone and feel. I do each drum that way. Sometimes, depending on the type of drum or the type of music, I'll tune the bottom head a little looser. When you tune the bottom head too tight, it can choke the sound. If the sound is choked, you know the bottom head is too tight. Then you have to adjust the top head to make up the difference.

If you can tune the drums and get a sound, the kind of heads you use is irrelevant. I tune the bass drum wide open, with nothing on the inside. You should control that sound, then deal with damping the bass drum.

MD: You play with so much clarity and energy on your ride cymbal. Energy might be your trademark.

Gregory: Three simple words: walk the dog. You say it and you play it on the ride cymbal. Play and sing that at all tempos, and you'll have the same ride cymbal beat that I have. The ride cymbal is the key to it all. If that ain't happening, it doesn't matter what you're doing—it's not going to swing. The ride cymbal is your canvas. If that's a weak point, everything will be weak, no matter how well you play the drums. Don't be just another chops cat. There are very few people who can really play the ride cymbal.

MD: Did you purposely set out to find your own voice?

Gregory: When I joined Betty Carter's band in 1990, I was at rehearsal playing all this Philly Joe and Max stuff. She said, "I played with those guys, and I don't want to hear that from you. What do you have to offer?" She was absolutely right. So I did the work. I have my influ-



ences, but you can't say I sound exactly like some other drummer. I did the work to develop my own sound, and I'm still developing. Roy Haynes is still playing and still evolving. If he's still evolving, I have a long way to go.

MD: Betty Carter often opened a performance with a song at a break-neck tempo. How did you prepare for that?

Gregory: I had already played with Red Rodney and "C" Sharpe; the first tempo of the night with Sharpe was so fast, I thought he was counting 16ths when he was really counting quarter notes. At first I could only hang for a chorus, but eventually it got better and better. Then it was no problem at all. I don't move left to right on the cymbal, and I don't bounce. I stick everything.

MD: You don't use the rebound?

Gregory: Tony Williams would tell you to stick every stroke. That's why you can hear every stroke of his. Every note is clean. Bounce muddles your sound, especially if you're going that fast and you're bouncing off the ride cymbal the whole time. Do the work to build up to a fast tempo. You don't want that drag effect on the ride cymbal.

MD: What did Ray Brown have to say regarding swing and groove and the old master drummers?

Gregory: He said that Art Blakey had the best hi-hat foot of anybody. You could hear that foot across the room, and that's how he drove a big band. Ray was all about the groove. His beat was so strong, you had to learn to play with him. Ray played really on top, and he wanted the music to move. Keep it moving and it will sound good. I talked to Jeff Hamilton and Lewis Nash to get different tips on playing with Ray. Once I got my strategy together, I knew how to pull it back or make it

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GREGORY HUTCHINSON

go forward. Ray practiced every day, up until the day he died. That inspired me to practice.

MD: How did Ray verbalize the drummer/bassist swing relationship?

Gregory: He didn't. He expected you to know. I had played with all these people, so I was fine-tuning my playing to fit Ray's playing. He would exhort you while playing, but he never directed what to play. Swing, to him, was making sure it felt good. His thing was that people should be dancing. Even if we played a fast tempo, it still felt good. Back in the day the drummers made the music swing. Now we've been conditioned to music that's programmed. It has four bars and that's it—everybody sounds the same.

MD: You play great brushes. You recall Kenny Washington.

Gregory: Kenny was my teacher, and he taught me how to get a big sound. Before, I was going clockwise; now I go counter-clockwise with the left hand from 11 o'clock to 5 o'clock, then back up using the space to make a semicircle. And I watched the Jo Jones videos. For brushes, check out Jo Jones, Vernel Fournier, Specs Wright, Sid Catlett. Then get the mechanics together. You want to be articulate with the brushes. It's like a conga drum.

[sings pattern] Listen to the Jo Jones Trio record where he plays "Sweet Georgia Brown," and you'll learn how to play the brushes. That's everything in one.

MD: Your drumming also has a lot of forward motion.

Gregory: You play your environment. You can't play that way if you've been living in the country and practicing in your room all your life. I grew up in New York City, in Brooklyn. The city has a pace of its own. That naturally gets into your playing. The other side of it is that my family comes from Trinidad. Your upbringing influences you and what you listen to. The first jazz record I heard was Sonny Rollins' *East Broadway Run Down* with Elvin Jones. To get that forward motion, you have to listen to the right things and have an inner drive. I can't teach students to have an inner drive. They either have it or they don't. I can teach them, but some drummers will always have this playing-on-the-back-end-of-the-beat thing.

MD: How do you create layers or themes within a solo?

Gregory: Knowing the melody is essential. You can't really solo if you don't know the melody. And phrasing, and developing motifs and ideas. You don't have to rush into things and play everything you

know at once. As drummers we tend to do that because we usually end up soloing last. By the time we've heard everyone else's solo, our energy level is so high. As soon as we get that first lick in, we start playing fast and loud. But you have to develop patience. And you have to know form. Then you have to know the ideas that you're trying to develop. Before I solo I listen as everyone plays their solo, and those solos stick in my head. So when I solo I can conjure up anyone's solo and develop my ideas from that. You have to listen and retain everything that happens in the song while you're playing. Then you can develop themes for your solo from what everyone else played. Take your time.

MD: What do you practice to maintain your technique?

Gregory: Rudiments. Before you sit down to play, run through five rudiments. Then work on your books, whether that's *Stick Control* or Ted Reed's *Syncopation*. Then apply those rudiments to what you're playing that you've learned from listening to the greats. Then run the next five rudiments. So every day you're doing ten rudiments. In a week you'll cycle through all the rudiments. After a month you should become a super-badass dude!



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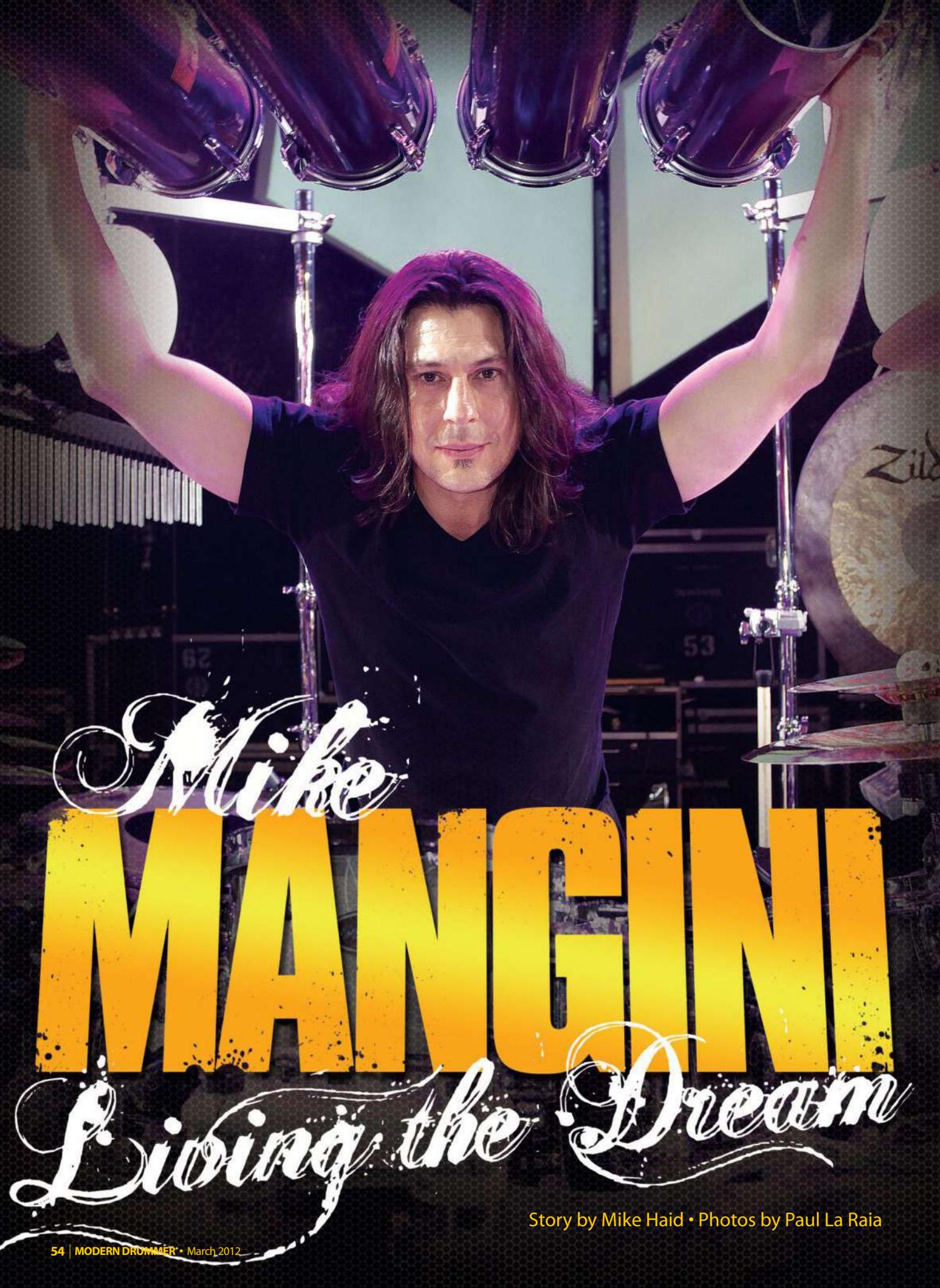
"Natal make great drums with solid tone and fantastic quality. Everything you would expect from a top of the line kit. I love playing them out on the road with Lizzy and have been getting many compliments for the sound and the look of the kit. Thanks Natal!"

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"Whoa! Look out for Natal, they've got it right! They have paid attention to detail and have gone that extra mile to build drums, hardware and pedals that look great, sound awesome and are totally roadworthy."



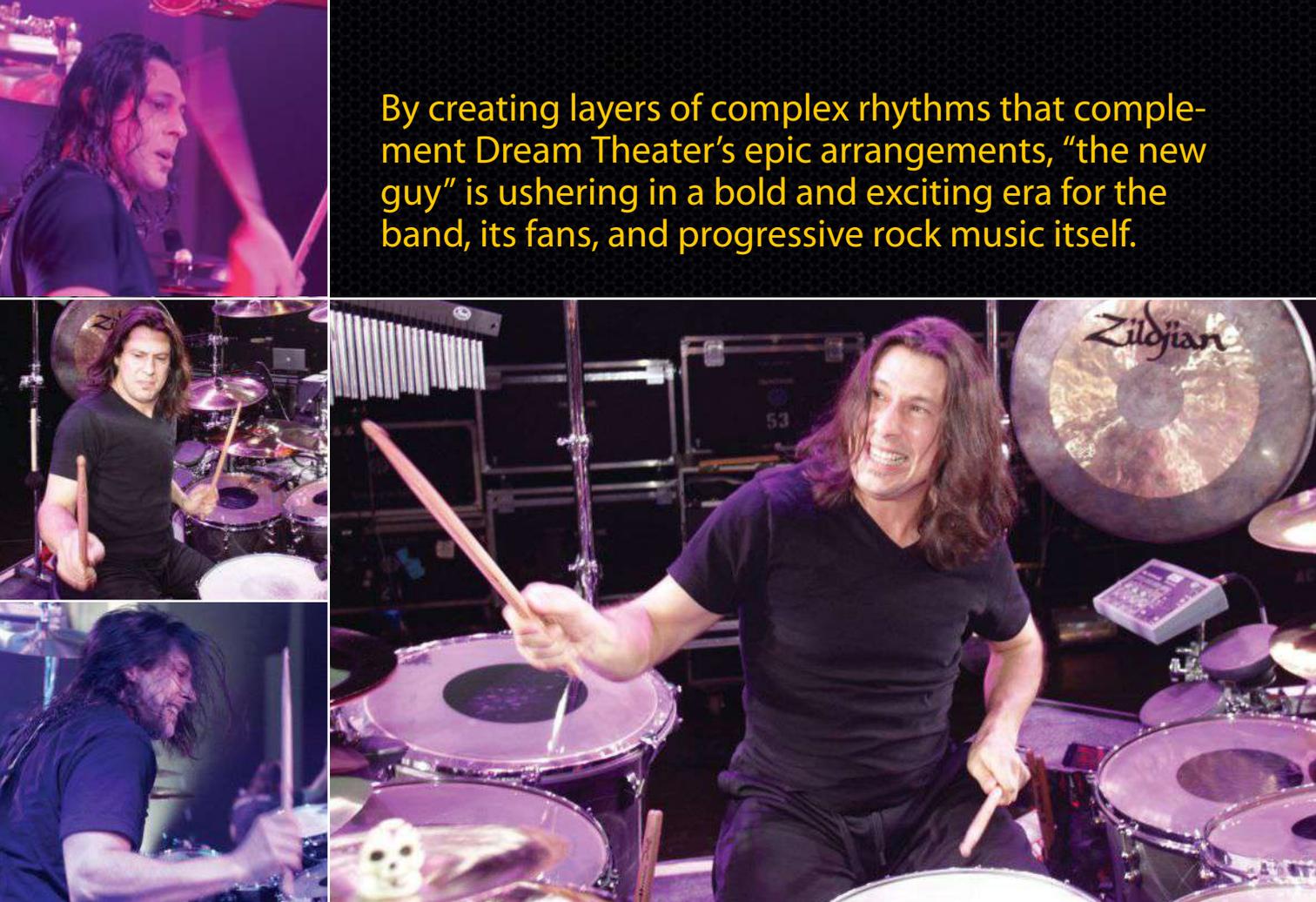


Mike

MANGINI

Living the Dream

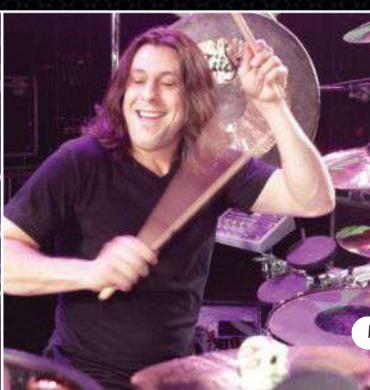
Story by Mike Haid • Photos by Paul La Raia



By creating layers of complex rhythms that complement Dream Theater's epic arrangements, "the new guy" is ushering in a bold and exciting era for the band, its fans, and progressive rock music itself.

When the shocking news broke that Dream Theater cofounding member Mike Portnoy was no longer the drummer with the band, the progressive metal community went on high alert, as rumors spread of auditions and chat rooms went ablaze with gossip about the group's future. At first the Dream Theater camp went into media lockdown. Behind closed doors, however, privately held auditions were being filmed for a three-part, reality-TV-style documentary called *The Spirit Carries On*, which would tell the tale of the seven world-class drummers chosen to audition over the course of three days at SIR studios in New York City. The release of the video was timed to coincide with the introduction of the band's new drummer and the announcement of the appropriately titled new recording, *A Dramatic Turn of Events*.

The handpicked list of progressive and metal drumming elite chosen to audition included Mike Mangini, Marco Minnemann, Virgil Donati, Thomas Lang, Derek Roddy, Aquiles Priester, and Peter Wildoer. It was obvious from the videos that many of these monster players could cover the gig. The deciding factor was who would be the best fit, both musically and personally. After careful deliberation and intense dissection of the video performances, it was a unanimous Dream Theater decision that the right person to fill this prestigious, much-scrutinized role was former Steve Vai drummer and Berklee instructor Mike Mangini. It was clear from Mangini's reaction to the news that this was the greatest moment of his rollercoaster career.

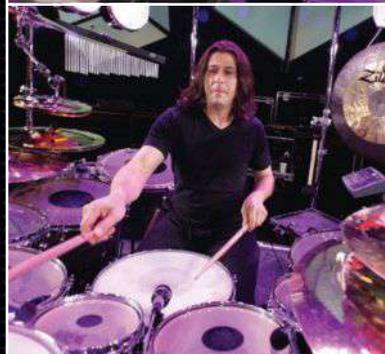




Eleven years after leaving the Vai gig and a posh lifestyle in Los Angeles in order to move back to Boston to begin a teaching career and start a family, Mangini is finally enjoying the fruits of his labor. Mike has effectively had the golden torch of prog metal drumming passed directly to him, and on the new DT release he takes full artistic advantage, injecting the highly evolved technique of the new breed of super-drummers into the complex odd-meter structures that the progressive genre is noted for. By employing his own Rhythm Knowledge method and advanced four-way independence, he has been able to orchestrate rhythmically dense drum parts in a musical context, elevating an already adventurous band approach further than most observers imagined possible.

In Hungary, after personally witnessing the final concert of the group's first European tour with Mangini at the helm, this observer could clearly feel that the fans were ecstatic about Dream Theater's decision on the keeper of the throne. Mangini's solo was focused, dense, powerful, and unnoticeably played to a click (to keep within time constraints). Despite the wickedly demanding material, Mike's completely in-sync contributions to the song arrangements were nothing short of commanding—and the drummer put on a real show visually to boot, stabbing ambidextrously at his sky-high Chinas and egging on his mates with metal grimaces and sly grins.

His playful stage manner aside, Mangini is taking his new role in DT extremely seriously, and he's clearly aware that he's filling some big shoes, replacing *Modern Drummer* Hall of Famer Mike Portnoy. There had been much speculation about how—and if—Dream Theater would carry on without Portnoy. But all of these questions seem to have been answered convincingly by the fans' positive reaction to the new music and to Mangini's riveting performances on tour. For Mike and for Dream Theater alike, it has truly been a dramatic turn of events.



"My whole joy with this band has to do with a completion in my life—to finally work with a band that appreciates what I do and why I do it."

MD: How does it feel to be back on the road after eleven years, touring in a high-profile band?

Mike: For many reasons, it's much sweeter this time around. I truly appreciate every little thing. It feels amazing because my eyes are a little more open this time and I'm smelling all the roses.

MD: Your decision to leave Steve Vai and move back to Boston was a bold move. You stepped out of a high-profile gig with the possibility of never returning as a big-stage performer.

Mike: It was all about faith and economics. Including Dream Theater, I have had forty-five auditions or competitions in my career, and I've won all of them. I believe this has happened because I have a system that works and because I pick things that I really want to do. I've always had a strong belief in doing what feels right at the time.

My drive to start a family was primary when I left Steve Vai. Once I had made that decision, the economics stepped in when I discovered that I could double my income by teaching and doing clinics. This was wonderful for several

"It's unfair for people who don't understand this type of drumming to say negative things about what guys like me or Marco Minnemann or Virgil Donati do, because they really don't understand the whole concept.

The thing that makes this type of drumming limitless is the musicality of what you can create."

years. I had my family, my house, and a great job, but I was starting to feel the urge to be in a band again. My wife even noticed and encouraged me to look for a band to start working with.

MD: Has your time teaching at Berklee helped sharpen your skills for touring and recording with Dream Theater?

Mike: Absolutely. It was as much the students as it was the environment and my fellow faculty. I was always inspired when I would listen to other faculty members perform. And the students—who I had an incredible bond with—helped me to grow as a player by sharing new ideas and turning me on to a lot of drummers that I would have otherwise never heard of.

Teaching has always made me a better player because I'm forced to keep on the cutting edge of what's happening in

the drumming world. But working at the school as a full-time faculty member was starting to consume way more time than I was comfortable with. And my old sports injuries were not helping matters.

MD: What types of injuries?

Mike: My right knee was destroyed from three decades of sports injuries. I finally found out why my upper leg was dying. I literally could not hold my leg up and began to have trouble walking. That's when I went to see a doctor and had surgery on my knee. I'm fully recovered now, and my leg is stronger than ever.

MD: Let's talk about how the new Dream Theater album was recorded. Did they send you a finished demo and ask you to emulate the drum tracks?

Mike: First off, after they informed me

JOHN PETRUCCI on Mike Mangini

Dream Theater's guitarist gives Mangini high points for preparedness and professionalism.



MD: What was it about Mike Mangini's audition that convinced you that he was the right drummer for the band?

John: Mike's audition could be used as a model for what any musician should do when they audition for a band.

He did everything right. We already knew Mike was an amazing drummer based on his track record with Steve Vai and our previous experiences with him. He came into the audition very personable, friendly, and calm, and totally prepared.

The first thing we did was run through three of our songs—and he played them perfectly. We didn't warm up or practice, we just jumped right into the music. We could have easily played a gig that night with him. He learned our music the way it was recorded, which was really comforting to us because we had never played with another drummer. We liked the fact that this wasn't just another gig to him, that it was something he would really be proud to be a part of, and that he would handle the catalog respectfully, for Mike Portnoy and for our fans.

Mike really felt like one of us from the beginning. I feel that if he had grown up in my neighborhood, we would have been good friends. He's an East Coast guy, a Berklee guy, and married with kids, and he's all about practicing and perfecting his craft.

MD: What was it like working with Mike for the first time in the studio?

John: After the audition, we were confident that we had made the right choice, and we were basing the upcoming studio experience

off the amazing stories that James [LaBrie, singer] told us about working with Mike in the studio on his solo recording. Mike totally proved that to be true. He had all the songs charted out. He played through them from beginning to end, which I wasn't expecting at all. He was very open to direction and ideas. But he also had multiple ideas of his own, ready to try as alternatives to the demo versions, and they were all amazing.

But the most impressive thing that he did was catch all the nuances of the other instruments, which made for a more interesting drum performance and a more interesting recording. He came in and played to our demo tracks, and then we went back in and rerecorded our tracks to his drum parts. He hit really hard too, which made the drums sound really full and punchy on the recording.

Like me, Mike is a perfectionist, so we see eye to eye on getting all the notes to be as "on" as humanly possible. He nailed it!

MD: What does Mike Mangini bring to Dream Theater that differs from what Mike Portnoy brought to the band?

John: To be fair to Mike Mangini, it's too early to make comparisons. I've been playing and writing music with Mike Portnoy forever. It was very comfortable for us to be creative, and we've always shared a wonderful chemistry. My experiences with Mike Mangini are so new that there hasn't been time to really develop that type of relationship. But I believe that in time we'll be able to answer those questions.

I predict that it's going to be wonderful. I know that Mike's hungry to dive into new territory with the band, since the new music was essentially written without him. I know that he writes and he's got a creative mind. When we jam, he picks things up immediately, and he has great ideas. So I have the feeling that the creative juices will flow easily between us.

that I had the gig, nothing happened for several months. We just talked and really got to know each other. I still had my full-time job at Berklee and outside work, and I was busy keeping up with that. [Guitarist] John Petrucci sent me a demo that wasn't supposed to be on the new record. I listened to his drum machine part and learned it

first, and then I began to alter it the way I wanted to. And that's actually how he ended up sending all the rest of the new material. But I didn't have time to really dig into all the tunes. The songs were complex and epic. So I spent most of my time transcribing the tunes away from the kit, and with the time I had left I practiced the material

on the kit. Once I began learning the new material on the kit, I was able to orchestrate a combination of his drum machine parts and ideas that I wanted to play.

In the middle of all this, because I couldn't tell anyone about the gig, I had to move the equivalent of three full drumkits up and down three

THE BIG RIG: MIKE'S SETUP

MD: There's been plenty of talk about your massive Dream Theater drumkit. Have you made any changes based on the outcome of the first tour?

Mike: The most recent additions to my kit are the Pearl Tru-Trac electronic pads to trigger percussion sounds. This keeps me from having to carry a load of percussion to cover all the parts from the previous DT catalog. I'm also changing my tom batter heads. I'm getting away from the Remo Pinstripe and changing to Remo clear black-dot heads.

With all the mics on the live kit, it's hard to EQ the Pinstripe the way I intend for them to sound. The black-dot heads naturally remove the 400–500 Hz frequencies that I want eliminated and increase the frequency and attack I want to hear. I'm also changing to clear black dots on my 26" and 18" bass drums. And I'm going back to Remo Clear Powerstroke 3s on my 22" bass drums.

MD: So the drum and cymbal choices that you originally made when designing the kit have worked well so far?

Mike: Yes, amazingly well. I worked very hard at designing what I was going to hit, and where I was going to hit it, based on learning all of Mike Portnoy's drum parts, along with creating my parts for the new record. I've designed the perfect kit to get the best from both worlds.

Drums: Pearl Reference Pure series

- A. 5 1/2x14 snare
- B. 6x10 mini snare
- C. 10" ePro electronic bass drum
- D. 16x26 bass drum
- E. 18x22 bass drum
- F. 16x18 bass drum
- G. 16x16 floor tom
- H. 9x12 tom
- I. 7x8 tom
- J. 7x6 tom
- K. 8x10 tom
- L. 9x14 tom
- M. 16x18 floor tom
- N. 16x20 gong drum
- O. 10" ePro pad mounted on 10" Rhythm Traveler shell
- P. 12x6 aluminum Cannon tom
- Q. 15x6 aluminum Cannon tom
- R. 18x6 aluminum Cannon tom
- S. 21x6 aluminum Cannon tom

Computer: Macintosh



Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 19" Rezo crash
2. 20" A Custom China
3. 17" K Thin Dark crash
4. 17" K Custom Fast crash
5. 16" K EFX crash
6. 19" Z3 China
7. 18" A Custom Medium crash
8. 18" Oriental China Trash on top of 14" Trashformer
9. 20" Earth ride (discontinued, now 20" A Custom)
10. 14" A Custom hi-hats (remote)
11. 13" ZBT hi-hats (X-hat)
12. 8" K splash
13. 10" Oriental Trash splash
14. 13" Oriental China Trash on top of 10" Trashformer
15. 8" ZHT China splash
16. 12" Oriental China Trash on top of 10" Trashformer
17. 6" Zil-Bel on top of tambourine
18. 13" K/Z hi-hats (remote)
19. 13" New Beat hi-hats (X-hat)
20. 20" A Custom ride (now 20" Z3 Rock ride)
21. 14" Oriental China Trash on top of 14" Trashformer
22. 20" Oriental China Trash on top of 20" Crash of Doom
23. 26" gong

Sticks: Zildjian Mike Mangini Signature model (63 grams)

Heads: Remo, including Coated Controlled Sound bottom dot on snares, clear black dot tom and gong drum batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Clear Powerstroke 3 on 22" bass drums, and clear black dot on 18" and 26" bass drums

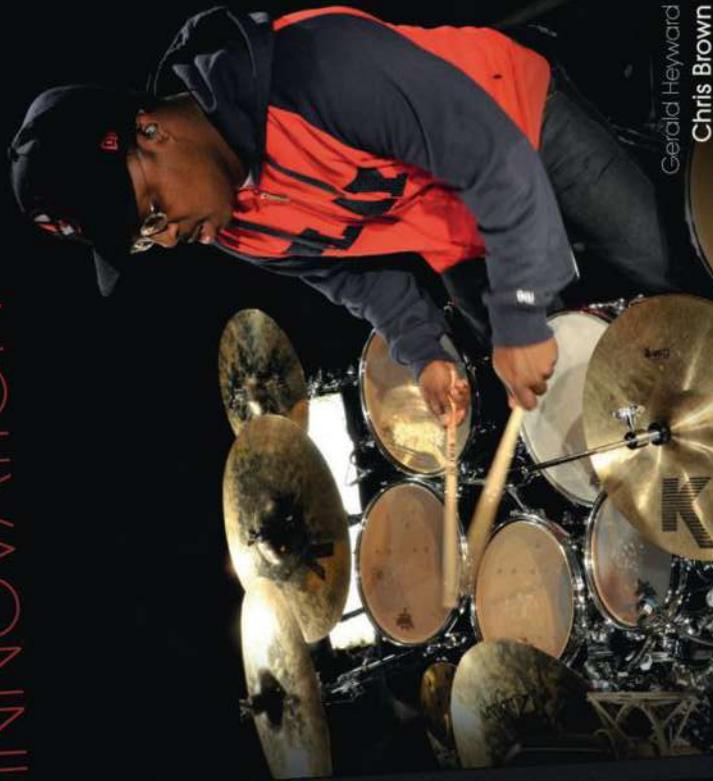
Hardware: Pearl, including custom ICON rack, single Demon Drive pedal on 22" bass drums, righty Eliminator belt-drive pedal for 18" bass drum and ePro pad, lefty Eliminator belt-drive pedal for 26" bass drum and ePro pad, and two RH-2000 cable hi-hats

Percussion: Pearl tambourine, wind chimes, and ePro Tru-Trac pads with percussion sounds triggered from the r.e.d.box; Vater black and glow-in-the-dark skull-shaped Slick Nut cymbal fasteners

Mics: Shure, including Beta 98A on rack toms, Beta 27 on floor toms, SM57 on main snare, Beta 52A on bass drums, KSM137 on cymbals, and KSM32 overheads

Note: Identifying letters and numbers were intentionally left off Mangini's setup photo to allow for a clearer view of the kit. Specific questions about Mike's gear can be addressed to MD's It's Questionable department by clicking on the Contact link at modern drummer.com.

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MIKE MANGINI

flights of stairs by myself. And when I opened the boxes of drums, which have thick copper staples, I dislocated a bone in my wrist. I couldn't play for eight days after that. So I listened to the music and worked with my feet the best I could.

MD: How did you approach learning older DT material for the first tour?

Mike: By watching the band's DVDs and learning the material from the videos. By playing along with the DVDs I got a great feel for how to best approach the catalog, and then I

altered my kit to accommodate the material. What that did was allow me time to change my setup so that when I came out of the studio to go on tour, I didn't have to readjust my touring rig.

MD: What was the recording experience like when you finally got to the studio?

Mike: When I got to the studio, John said, "Just go ahead and play, and let's see what happens." The first song we recorded was "On the Backs of Angels," and he liked what I played but asked me to try some different things in a

couple of sections. We would reference the demo for certain parts, which was very helpful. So between his demo drums and my ideas, we were able to agree on parts that we were both happy with. I worked strictly with John to produce all the tracks.

MD: With such complex and lengthy compositions, what is your process for learning and memorizing the drum parts?

Mike: First I outline it on paper. Then I sectionalize things. Once I have the arrangement sectionalized, I can get more microscopic with understanding what I need to learn. I also listen for specific parts. What would have been evident if you'd seen my entire audition was that I clearly knew everyone's parts. When I outline a song, it's with everyone's parts in mind.

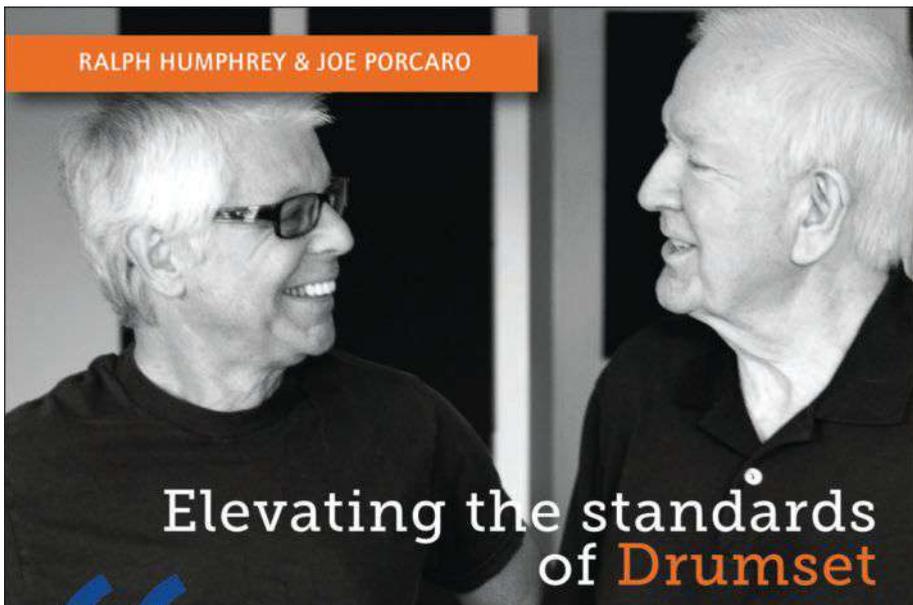
For example, in the opening section of "On the Backs of Angels," I'm playing the syncopated string-instrument parts with my feet while I'm playing Jordan Rudess's keyboard part with one hand on the little stack and keeping the snare on the backbeat. And that was not just five minutes of practice. That took some time and was microscopic. I don't get to that point until I look at the whole song and start to jot down ideas based on what I'm hearing. Then I start to attack the hardest thing first.

MD: Can you go into more depth about how you outline each track?

Mike: I taught a course on this at Berklee, and I call this type of outline a block form. This helps convert lengthy notated charts to the language of a physical shape and reduce it to half a page. And it's got to be half a page so you can tape it to the rim of a drum or to a cymbal stand.

It's basically a picture of the song in blocks. There's a left column with numbers in order, starting with 1. Next to the first number would be the first phrase of the song with a specific number of bars, time signature changes, etc. Then you would go to number 2 and chart it out the same way, so you can start to see the similarities within each section and memorize the song in blocks, or sections. I can see arrangements of some of the new songs in my mind while I'm speaking right now,

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MIKE MANGINI

because I wrote them in block form and then added the music notation. And then I can get microscopic from there and expand the format by writing detailed musical notation of a very specific and complex part. Then I'll go back to the block form to memorize the entire arrangement. It helps me to actually see the structure of the song in my head.

MD: What was the most challenging aspect of this new recording?

Mike: It was maintaining the velocity of my playing with my legs and feet. I had not fully recovered from my knee surgery, and every bass drum hit was maximum velocity, with the beater buried into the head. I'd never played that way in the studio, and I was just doing it to test the drums. Then John said, "You've got to hit it like that when we record." Even though the song tempos are not extremely fast, it was very difficult to maintain that intensity for every song throughout the entire recording.

MD: How do you develop your odd-meter grooves and make them musical

within such complex arrangements?

Mike: My thought process is totally about picking the main frequencies that best fit the music and then catching the key phrase points while keeping a consistent meter. My favorite drum machine parts from the demos were the ones that hit the key phrase points in the music. Most of my embellishments to the demo drums were to catch more of these key points.

For example, on the track "Outcry," my snare is hitting every seventh beat, while I'm playing in two different time signatures with my hands and feet. Frequency-wise, the cymbals are following Jordan's keys, while the bass drum is following the bass and guitar and the snare drum is dividing the beat. Within all this, something has to keep a consistent meter, and it has to be frequency-based. That's why I have so many drums and cymbals, so I can choose the correct frequency to match the pitch and timbre of the other instruments.

MD: How and when did you decide that this type of advanced drumming

would be your calling card?

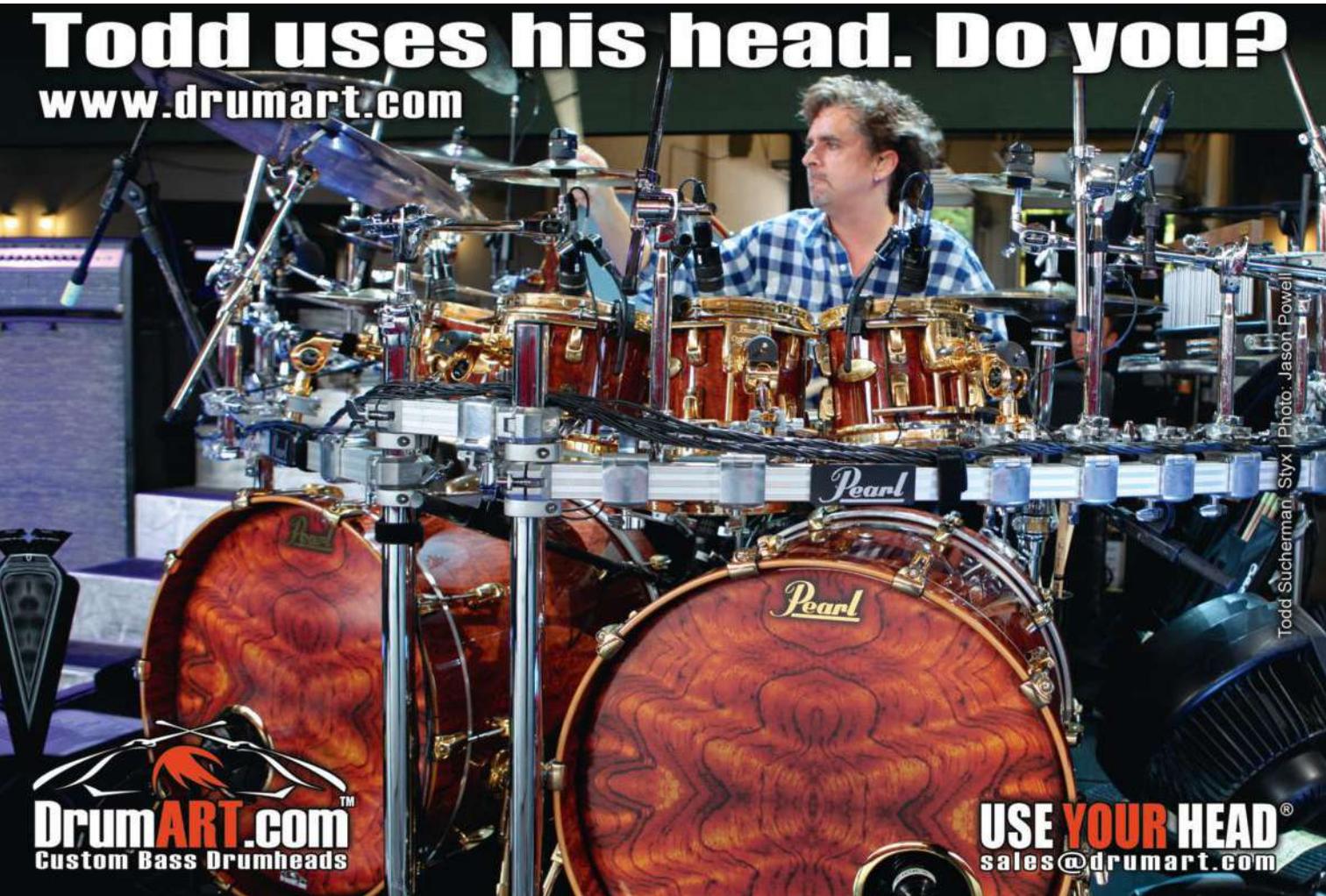
Mike: I believe that our musicality is a gift. We showed up on earth, and we were each given a gift. The other side is developing the skill, which leaves it open for anybody to make the decision to sacrifice and learn how to do this, if they have the calling. Not everyone has the calling to do what I do. It's unfair for people who don't understand this type of drumming to say negative things about what guys like me or Marco Minnemann or Virgil Donati do, because they really don't understand the whole concept. The thing that makes this type of drumming limitless is the musicality of what you can create.

I was trained as an orchestral drummer, so I'm going to play Dream Theater songs differently from someone who has a totally different musical background. I think that every musician should follow their calling and be the best at whatever that calling may be.

MD: How do you feel about your playing with Dream Theater so far?

Todd uses his head. Do you?

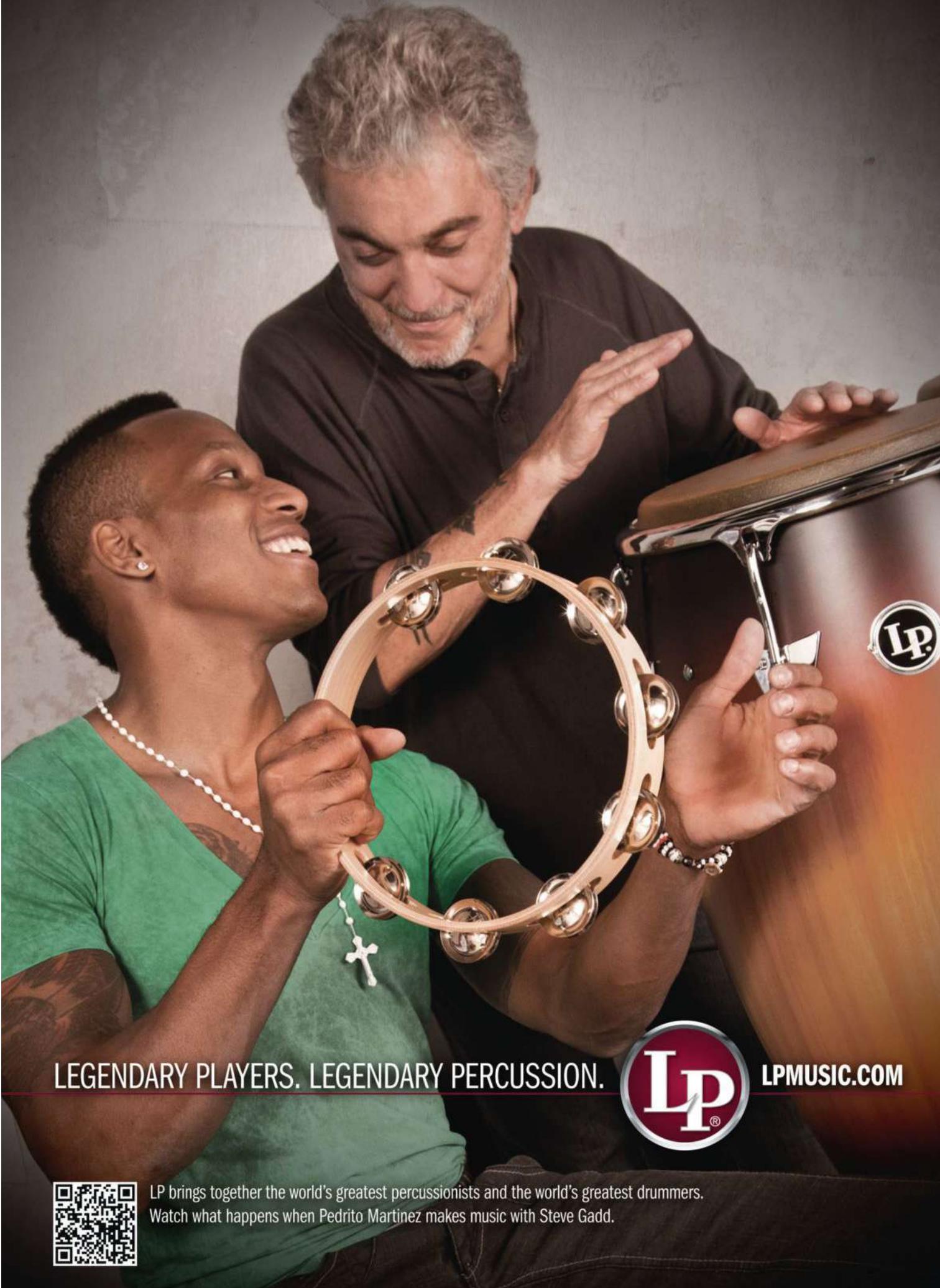
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Mike: I feel so much better than I imagined I would feel. My whole joy with this band has to do with a completion in my life—to finally work with a band that appreciates what I do and why I do it. The fans that have come to the shows so far have accepted me so graciously and have made me feel like I've been in the Dream Theater family for years. I really needed that.

One of the most important things that the audition documentary did for the fans was to let them see that I really did want to be in this band and

that I took the Dream Theater music very seriously. Every show gets better because I'm now focusing on the microscopic. We only had one full run-through of the entire two-hour set before we played our first show. All the rest of our time was spent working on the new gear for the tour. But it really is a whole different world for the band with me on stage. I'm not a showman. My job is to support the music and shift the focus from the drummer to the rest of the band. I am as enamored with their playing as the fans are, so

I'm enjoying watching them and giving them the support they need to shine on stage.

MD: A big difference in the new music is that the band sounds more refined. It's quite an accomplishment for you to fit right in after having stepped into a band that has such a long and strong history. That says a lot about your musicianship and professionalism.

Mike: I believe that when you make a decision for the right reasons, usually the right things happen. We all have to decide if we're going after a gig for all the right reasons. Do I really want the gig because I love the music, or do I want it because there might be more money to be made? I wanted to be in Dream Theater because I love the music and I love the players in the band.

RHYTHM KNOWLEDGE

MD: You have some of the fastest hands in the business. How did you develop your technique?

Mike: I developed my speed and strength by practicing patterns such as paradiddles and odd single-stroke groupings between the two farthest instruments on the drumkit, from left to right. This develops the muscle groups of the entire body. Developing accuracy and power with such distance makes it easier—and strengthens the accuracy and power—from short distances, which is where we do the majority of our playing on the kit.

The bulk of my speed comes from the wrist and the top and bottom of the forearm, which is also an extension of my back and shoulder muscles. The source of the power comes from the flexing of the larger muscle groups. It's the same technique as the Bruce Lee punch. If you study the Bruce Lee punch, you'll see his entire body flex before he throws a punch. This produces the extra strength and velocity to knock someone over from an inch away.

MD: How do the fingers come into play in your hand technique?

Mike: My finger control comes mainly from the thumb muscle. The fingers are mainly used to simply hold the stick in place. I may use them occasionally for more subtle, jazzy-type

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MIKE MANGINI

playing. But most of my stick technique, power, and speed are derived from the larger muscle groups.

MD: You developed a system years ago for counting and learning endless patterns with any limb, called Rhythm Knowledge. Explain how this system has helped you in learning and creating your drum parts for Dream Theater.

Mike: My Rhythm Knowledge system consists of techniques in behavioral change. It's a mechanical approach based on how we function as human beings. I've broken down the behav-

ioral change into a few simple categories: pattern recognition, body management, and mind management.

Pattern recognition, using the binary system, breaks down every possible rhythm into either an odd or an even pattern. The human brain is not hard-wired to understand polyrhythms. That's why progressive music is not very popular. You have to earn the privilege of understanding and appreciating odd rhythms, if you're interested. The human brain does not immediately understand odd rhythms, which

makes people uncomfortable. How can anyone enjoy or appreciate odd-meter music when they don't understand what it is? Rhythm Knowledge targets the odd patterns because they are the most difficult to learn and understand.

I target the prime numbers because after two, all prime numbers are odd. My system develops pattern recognition between one and nineteen. My "not quite doubled" system explains how to easily understand these patterns. If people can recognize the prime-number patterns, then their brain can digest what they're listening to, and they'll have a better chance of enjoying it and playing it. What bothers me about this subject is that the bulk of the world, which doesn't understand this music or drumming style, considers this type of playing unmusical. Again, the main reason for that is simply because people have not developed their listening skills to understand and enjoy music based on odd rhythms. It's an advanced art form that one has to really study to appreciate.

MD: Can you give some playing examples from the new DT recording that exemplify how the Rhythm Knowledge system has helped you create more interesting drum parts?

Mike: In the second half of the instrumental section of the song "Outcry," I use both left- and right-handed combinations within different time signatures, simultaneously. These ideas are all based on making the rhythm as musical as possible; it's not so much about the technique involved. In this particular section, there are multiple time changes. There are forty-nine 8th notes in the section, which are repeated four times and can be interpreted in many ways. The band is subdividing most of them into groups of two and three. On the first and third passages, I play all the two- and three-note groupings and also change ride sources so the listener can follow the groupings. On the second and fourth passages, one ride source plays all the time changes while my other three limbs play in a different time signature. During the second section, my feet are filling the gaps and designating a



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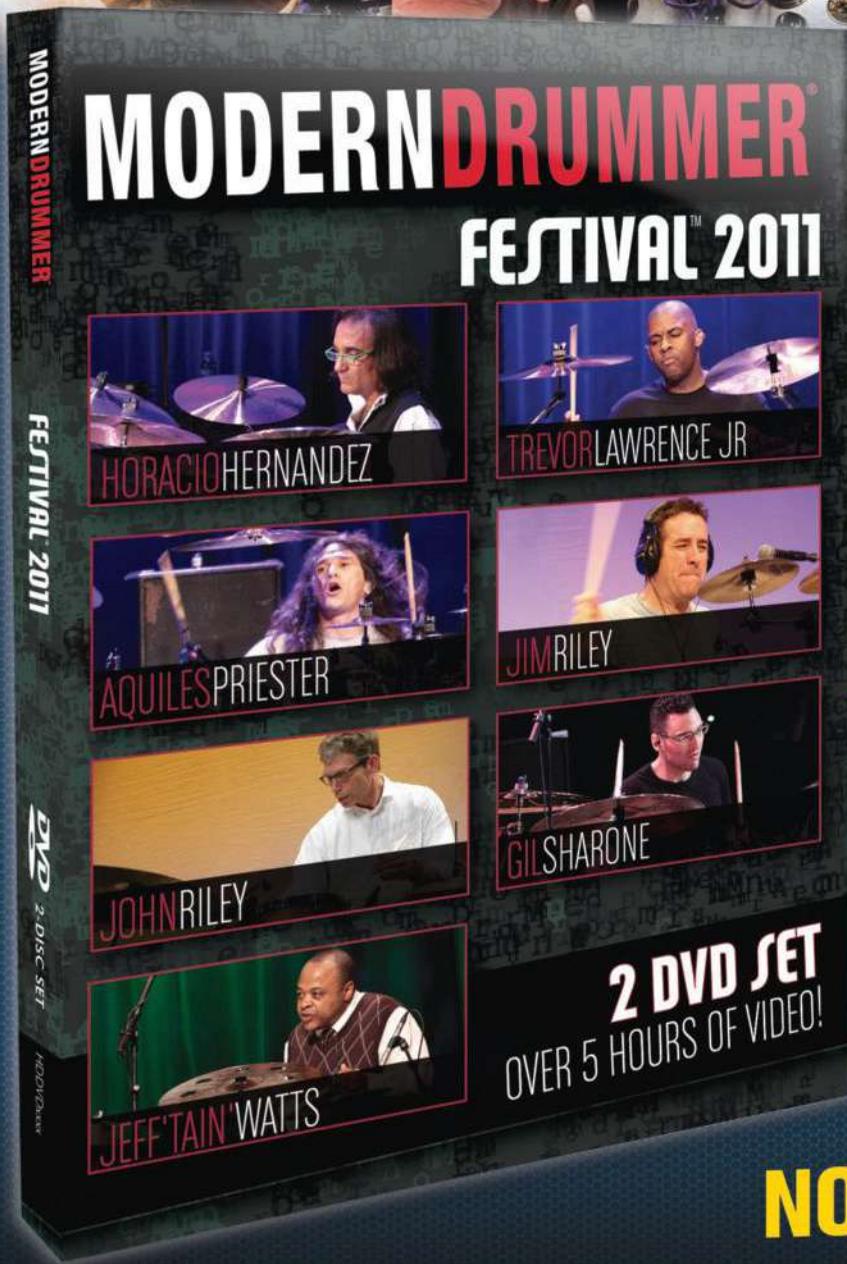
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MIKE MANGINI

larger time signature to create a groove. The very last time, I'm hitting the snare every seventh 8th note, because there are forty-nine notes in the pattern and seven divides evenly into forty-nine.

We also move into a 7/8 section following this passage. So by setting up the final section by accenting every seventh note, I'm preparing the listener for the upcoming 7/8 section. The musical purpose is to create interesting grooves and let people experience how these time changes sound within a totally different rhythmic feel. This makes it fun for the listener who understands the rhythmic concepts that are created through these advanced subdivisions.

Technically, it's my Rhythm Knowledge approach that allows me to easily find various combinations that work in a musical context. It's executing these complex lefty-righty combinations that's difficult. But if it can enhance the musical experience, it's

worth the pain to create it. Rhythm Knowledge has helped me every step of the way in my experience with Dream Theater—the audition, learning the songs, the recording sessions, our live performances, and every aspect of my behavior within the band.

Because Rhythm Knowledge is based on developing the senses and understanding how your mind and body work, I was able to use my eyes to pick up on the hand and body motion of the band members during my audition, which helped me learn where they were feeling the beat when we jammed. My ears also picked up on the patterns they played, and I was able to subdivide the groupings in my head based on pattern recognition. On the gigs, I hear my voice in my head, along with a click, whether it's physical or internal. I hear the patterns in layers in my mind and base my timing off them. That's how I stay accurate with my time, whether I'm listening from an external source or in

my head. These are the greatest assets that I've developed from my Rhythm Knowledge method of learning.

SHARING THE GIFT

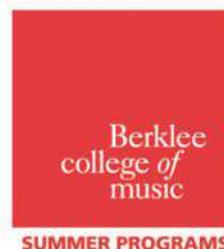
MD: How would you explain how you were able to reach this career pinnacle now, at age forty-eight?

Mike: I have chosen a belief system that has helped me understand what I'll leave behind once I'm gone from this planet. What my belief system dictates is that I will be answering for the choices I've made in my life. I want to know that I tried to do something special with the gifts and opportunities I was given. There's a direct correlation between the gift of being chosen to carry the rhythmic torch for progressive music with Dream Theater and my desire to share the gifts that I've been given to create new rhythmic concepts and express my art to the best of my abilities. At forty-eight years old, this sums up my entire career and my musical purpose in life.



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ART BLAKEY: The Mentor

We all know those iconic black-and-white images: Blakey at the kit, sweat beads on his forehead, a flash in the eyes, and that mouth agape—sometimes with the tongue flat out—in pure elation. And that’s also how he sounded.

Sure, there’s the dancing independence, the chops, the gravity-force time feel. But what’s buried in our collective unconscious is the big, meaty, in-the-guts drive and growling drum sound, broadcasting a life-affirming exuberance.

Throughout a long career, Art Blakey’s drumming remained rooted in tradition. Blakey’s earthy, soulful swing, which influenced multiple generations, will never go out of style. The drummer also reigns as one of the great musical mentors, through his decades-long leadership of the Jazz Messengers.

Blakey was born in 1919 and earned his stripes on the Pittsburgh jazz scene, first on piano and later on drums. After accompanying pianist Mary Lou Williams at home and in New York, the young drummer stepped up to a steady gig touring with the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra between 1943 and 1944. Advancing quickly, Blakey nabbed the prestigious drum seat in vocal star Billy Eckstine’s big band (1944-47), a known incubator for future jazz notables. In this fertile setting, under the influence of bandmates such as Miles Davis, Dexter Gordon, and especially a mentoring Dizzy Gillespie, Blakey emerged with a newly authoritative strength.

Following the big band’s breakup, Blakey journeyed to Africa, initially as a spiritual pursuit. Raised in a strict Seventh Day Adventist family, the traveler sought new inspirations. Embracing Islam, he returned to New York with an adapted name, Abdullah Ibn Buhaina. Fellow musicians affectionately called him “Bu.” West African influences emerged in his drumming, as implied in his surging, reactionary polyrhythms. More specific applications were heard in multi-drummer experiments, most notably on *Drum Suite* (1957) and also on *Orgy in Rhythm Volumes 1 and 2* (1957) and the lesser-known *The African Beat* (1962).

In the late ‘40s and early ‘50s, Blakey had been active with the iconoclastic bebop inner circle, performing with like-minded explorers such as Miles Davis, Bud Powell, and Charlie Parker. Along with Kenny Clarke and Max Roach, Blakey contributed to the evolving bop drum style that helped transform jazz from a dance-oriented genre into an untethered instrumental art. In 1947 Blakey broke historic ground, playing on Thelonious Monk’s visionary debut sides for Blue Note Records, later compiled on the 1951 LP *Genius of Modern Music*

Volume 1.

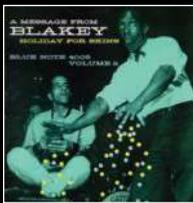
Blakey’s evolving harder-charging style of the ‘50s is well documented on the superb 1954 live recording *A Night at Birdland*, which includes pianist Horace Silver, a frequent collaborator. This unit laid the groundwork for Blakey’s greatest calling: the formation of the Jazz Messengers. The group, initially co-led with Silver, eventually evolved into the drummer’s own band, which he molded into a legendary jazz institution. Configurations changed and sidemen came and went, yet the core sound stayed intact for thirty-five years, due to Blakey’s steadfast vision. Known for its discoveries and nurturing of future jazz leaders, the band boasted an impressive alumni roster. Noted graduates include Donald Byrd, Woody Shaw, Lee Morgan, Jackie McLean, Freddie Hubbard, Wayne Shorter, Keith Jarrett, Terence Blanchard, and Wynton Marsalis.

Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers represented the definitive voice of the rising “hard bop” sound and its ultimate embodiment on the drums. Extending beyond the clipped machine-gun scatterings of bebop, Blakey slathered on the thicker stuff, embracing a raw and bluesy, hard-swinging, dirt-under-the-fingernails feel. He played with a controlled raucousness—bold and loud, with a darker spreading wash. Even as complex syncopations darted about, an undercurrent of backbeat was suggested. Clomping down a hard 2 and 4

duced new jazz standards that became Blakey signature pieces, including the title track and the insistent “Blues March.” And the seven-minute-plus cut “The Drum Thunder Suite” says it all, driven by a volcanic barrage of toms. Other classic-era Messengers highlights include *The Jazz Messengers* (1956), *The Big Beat* (1960), *Buhaina’s Delight* (1962), and *Caravan* (1962).

Outside of the Messengers, Blakey amassed an extensive discography as a sideman that alone could have guaranteed him greatness. Art lent his fiery edge to records by the big ones, including Miles Davis, Clifford Brown, Jimmy Smith, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Cannonball Adderley, Lee Morgan, Dexter Gordon, Milt Jackson, Johnny Griffin, Clark Terry, Illinois Jacquet, Wayne Shorter, Lou Donaldson, Fats Navarro, Randy Weston, Kenny Burrell, and many more. In 1971 and ‘72, the tireless drummer also squeezed in a hiatus to tour the world with the Giants of Jazz, an all-star group featuring Gillespie, Kai Winding, Sonny Stitt, Thelonious Monk, and Al McKibbin.

As the late ‘60s saw experimentation with “freer” drum styles, Blakey stayed the course, dedicated to the beauty of hard pulse and solid harmonies. Yet he did welcome edgier excursions, especially in the Messengers edition featuring Wayne Shorter and Freddie Hubbard, as heard on *Free for All* (1964). The many fruitful incarnations of the group continued to record and tour the world right up until three months before Blakey’s 1990 death at age seventy-one. In 2005, Art was honored



“Art Blakey has such a distinctive style, like bombs going off with the grace of a ballet performance,” says 2012 *MD Pro* Panelist Brian Reitzell. “The three great drum sessions he did—*Orgy in Rhythm Volumes 1 and 2*, *Holiday for Skins Volumes 1 and 2*, and *The African Beat*—are seminal and feature some of the best-sounding drums and cymbals ever recorded. The solos on ‘Swingin’ Kilts’ from *Holiday for Skins Volume 2* are blazing and beautiful—Art Taylor, Philly Joe Jones, and Blakey trading off with a wicked Latin percussion section. That album was recorded in a ballroom in Spanish Harlem with probably only two microphones. Unbelievable sounds engineered by Rudy Van Gelder. I spent many hours in Tokyo while on tour digging through record shops hunting down these records back in the ‘90s; now they’re quite easy to find.”

on his hi-hats, the drummer thundered across his toms and often used a rimclick on beat 4 to nail down shuffle feels. He swooped up the band into transition sections with a signature crescendo press roll that sounded (and felt) like a turbine at takeoff. There was no doubt as to who was in charge.

Heavy (but not heavy handed) blues and gospel influences are displayed on the 1958 album *Moanin’*. This classic LP intro-

posthumously with the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

Today, the great mentor’s discs sound as spontaneous and vital as on the day they were tracked. Art Blakey’s statement was straight-ahead: Mean every pulse passionately—and with that, the primal and spiritual become the same. He carried it around the world. Thank you, Bu. Message received.

Jeff Potter





The CRASH Course to Success

Part 1: Commitment

by Rich Redmond

What does it take to succeed as a working drummer? Commitment. Commitment is the word for the first letter in an acronym I created, CRASH, to illustrate concepts people can use to attract success to their lives. (The remaining concepts, which we'll explore in the next few articles, are relationships, attitude, skill, and hunger.)

Commitment can be defined as a pledge or undertaking, or being dedicated to something. Any musician who's had staying power will tell you that the music business is tough as nails, and it requires a massive amount of dedication to be successful. This dedication can be applied to both your drumming skills and to the business associated with cultivating a fulfilling career.

GIVE IT YOUR ALL

In my travels, I get to see performances by drummers of all ages and all ability levels. One thing I've noticed is that many drummers lack commitment in their musical approach. How many times have you seen drummers play with a lifeless style? Their playing lacks energy, drive, and that special "it" factor. It's as if they're staring at their watch and waiting for the gig to be over, so they can rush home to warm up some ramen noodles and settle in with *Three's Company* reruns. From the clicking of the sticks for the first count-off to the very last downbeat, there needs to be *commitment*.

Commitment means giving yourself over to the music-making process. You want to be *inside* the music. But don't confuse a drummer who displays a lack of commitment with a committed drummer playing softly. Loud drum-

ming can also lack energy and be missing that committed quality, and you can achieve incredible intensity and intention when playing quietly. Commit to playing loud, soft, fast, slow, and everything in between with conviction. Make intentional choices to drive and lift the music. More than anything, a performance starts in the mind. Are you focused on the music, or are you thinking about the stresses of life (bills, domestic issues, schedules)? Let the music take you away to a special place. When you make that commitment, your performance will become more rewarding and meaningful.

ALWAYS IMPROVE

I'm constantly thinking in the following terms: Am I balancing the dynamics among my limbs? Am I using proper tone and articulation? Am I playing great time and making things groove and feel great? Is my time even and relaxed? Am I using all of the colors available on the drumset? Am I listening to all of the musicians, especially the lead vocal? Am I playing in a way that makes it easy for the whole band to play together? These are very important questions to ask.

Also, I highly recommend making audio and video recordings of your gigs. A handheld digital recorder is an excellent investment for self-improvement. You'll be able to see and hear your level of commitment instantly.

SEIZE THE DAY

When *Late Show* host David Letterman asked the late singer-songwriter Warren Zevon if he had any advice for viewers as he was approaching his final days, Zevon said, "Enjoy every sand-

wich." Those words resonated with me. We have only so much time on earth, and our life experience can be taken away at any moment. Combine that with the thought that if you're playing music professionally or semiprofessionally, you're in rare company. I told myself very early on in my career that I would always play at a hundred percent. I would always serve the music, listen, lift up the other players, and make it a fun experience for everyone. In short, I was going to always "play my ass off." I feel very strongly that if you subscribe to this positive and committed approach, the phone will keep ringing.

Being committed to your craft also means being prepared for any opportunity that comes your way. After college, I was determined to make a name for myself in the music business. I reached out to everyone I knew, to find out about auditions in major markets. A friend turned me on to a gatekeeper for a major artist. I got my audition tape to them, and they liked what they heard. I was then invited to a cattle-call audition, but I had to cover the costs of my flight, transportation, lodging, and food. I knew I'd be taking a pricey risk, but I was committed, and I wanted the gig. I was asked to learn five songs. I did that, plus I charted out the remaining fifty in the artist's catalog. That way, if any other songs were called, I would be prepared and could set myself apart from the rest of the pack.

I didn't get that gig, but some of the people I met that day ended up turning me on to *other* auditions. I didn't get those jobs either, but I learned something very valuable—that all of the winning drummers lived in Nashville. This

was a light-bulb moment, and I knew I had to make the move. I reminded myself of my commitment, so I gave my band two weeks' notice, packed up what little I owned, and moved to Nashville. I knew very few people, and I had no gigs booked and very little money saved. I was armed only with my abilities, my confidence, and my commitment to reach my goal.

SET GOALS

You need to have goals. A life without goals will leave you wandering aimlessly with no direction. When I arrived in Nashville, my goal was to become a top-call touring and session drummer. Fifteen years later I'm still working on that goal, and it's never-ending. I've survived hard times when I had to supplement my drumming by waiting tables, doing construction, and working as a substitute teacher. I could've packed up my bags and moved back home many times, but I didn't. Doors were slammed in my face over and over again, but I always had two things: a dream and a commitment to see it through.

When I made the decision to move to Nashville, the first thing I did was press up 500 copies of my demo tape, *Rich Redmond: Drums and Percussion*. It contained excerpts that highlighted

my musicianship in a variety of settings: big band, small group, fusion, Latin, metal, pop, Motown, classical, and so on. Every musician, songwriter, club owner, and waitress in Nashville was handed one of these tapes. I crashed parties, shook hands, and let people know I existed. I realized that I needed to be persistent. No one was going to hand me my dream on a silver platter; I was going to have to earn it.

Did I take every single gig that came along, from weddings to bar mitzvahs, corporate parties to dance halls, strip clubs, and supermarket grand openings? The answer is yes. I even kicked jokes for magicians. At the end of each of those gigs, I would ask my bandmates how things were feeling and see if they had any suggestions for how I could improve my playing. Constructive feedback is great fuel for your commitment.

STICK TO IT

Commitment to drumming as a career requires you to believe that failure is not an option. Thoughts of failure can never enter your mind. And most likely you're going to have to seriously consider moving to a place like Nashville, New York City, or Los Angeles to even get the opportunity to find a major gig. The chances of landing a gig and *then*

relocating are slim to none. You have to be where the gigs are. Period. This is a chance that ninety-nine percent of people are unwilling to take. It's great to want to do something, but if you *have* to do it, then you'll make that commitment and follow through. In navigating my career for the last twenty years, I've never stopped moving forward. Never stop! I've always understood the importance of practicing constantly, taking lessons, recording myself, listening to tons of music, and improving consistently.

Playing drums and making music defines me as a human being. It's truly how I express myself. Knowing that I'm fortunate to play drums every day is what gets me out of bed with a huge smile on my face. Most successful people will offer the same advice. Make a commitment; fuel it with conviction, passion, and persistence; and watch your dreams become a reality. Conceive, believe, and receive.

Rich Redmond is a Nashville-based touring/recording drummer with the multiplatinum country rocker Jason Aldean. He has also worked with Kelly Clarkson, Bryan Adams, Jewel, Ludacris, Lit, Joe Perry, Miranda Lambert, Steel Magnolia, Thompson Square, Rushlow, and others. For more info, visit richredmond.com.



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Own It!

Part 1: Exploring Subdivisions

by Mike Johnston



MUSIC KEY

C.C. *
 S.D. ●
 B.D. ●

Being a full-time drum instructor, it's my job to make sure my students explore the material that we're working on in a given lesson as thoroughly as possible. I don't want them to just play what's on the page. I want them to see past the notes and explore all of the permutations and variations that a grouping of notes could contain.

I have a saying with my students: "I will give you the blueprint, but you have to build the house." It's important for all drummers to understand the difference between just playing something and "owning it," where you can play a figure or pattern at any speed, at any volume, and in any subdivision. In this article, we're going to explore the third requirement: subdivisions.

When you look at a sticking or a grouping of notes, it's easy to assign a natural subdivision in your head. When we see "right, left, kick" we naturally think triplets. But why does it have to stop there? There are a lot of chops hiding inside every grouping of notes, which can be revealed by simply changing the subdivision. It's an incredible adventure, and one that will grow your drumming vocabulary faster than you ever imagined.

Below are two three-note groupings, one linear and one non-linear. Since these groupings are three notes long, the natural subdivision would be 8th-note triplets, but we'll also take each grouping through 8th notes, 16th notes, sextuplets, and 32nd notes. I recommend practicing these subdivisions along with a metronome so that you can hear how they create different polyrhythms against the quarter-note pulse.

1 R L R L R L R L

6 R L L R L L R L L R L L

2 R L R L

7 R L L R L L

3 R L R L R L R L

8 R L L R L L R L L R L L

4 R L R L R L R L R L

9 R L L R L L R L L R L L

5 R L R L R L R L R L

10 R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L

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



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Indian Rhythms for Drumset

Part 1: Triplet Modulation and Gear Shifts

by Pete Lockett



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When stripped away from the phonetics and traditional instruments, classical Indian rhythmic approaches sound contemporary and very appropriate for modern-day drumset styles. There's a vast array of rhythmic formulas, modulations, frameworks, and cadences to draw from to develop new approaches in any idiom.

One such approach that's common in Indian music is to take rhythmic phrases through modulated time shifts. For example, here's a short quarter-note phrase that switches to triplets.



Things start to get really interesting when you expand this concept into longer phrases. Here's a slightly longer phrase that modulates to half-note triplets.



In the world of traditional Indian music, players take much longer phrases and switch them through different levels of modulation. For example, in the North Indian tabla composition quaida, the normal rendering involves playing the theme at the original speed, then modulating to one-and-a-half-time speed and finally double speed. The double-speed version is then followed with a set of double-speed variations based on the theme. These themes can be very long, sometimes four to eight bars in length.

Let's look at the basic syllables for one variety of quaida composition.



Now we'll play the theme on the snare with the following sticking, which loosely follows the contours of the original tabla composition.



Finally, we'll modulate the theme through the three time levels. The A section in the notation below is repeated verbatim in triplets (B) and at double speed (C). Play a straight quarter-note pattern with the feet, and practice along with a metronome.





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C

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

R L I R R L R L I R R L R L I R R L R

At this point you could begin to orchestrate the composition around the kit to come up with melodic-sounding voicings. This practice is a great way to develop a feel for modulating rhythms and expand your rhythmic repertoire. Of course, the same process can be used with other rhythmic phrases as well.

There's lots more info on applying Indian concepts in my book *Indian Rhythms for Drumset*, which is available through Hudson Music.

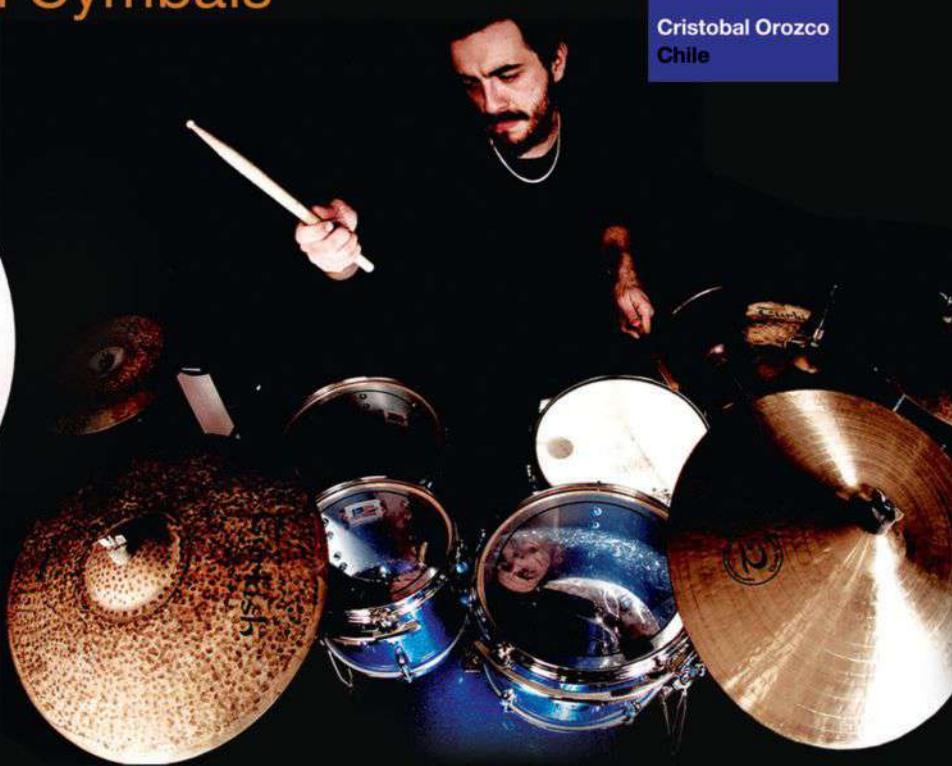
Award-winning percussionist **Pete Lockett** has worked with Björk, Peter Gabriel, Robert Plant, Dido, Bill Bruford, Jeff Beck, the Verve, Primal Scream, and many other artists. He's also arranged and recorded ethnic percussion for five James Bond films and other Hollywood blockbusters. For more info, log on to petelockett.com.



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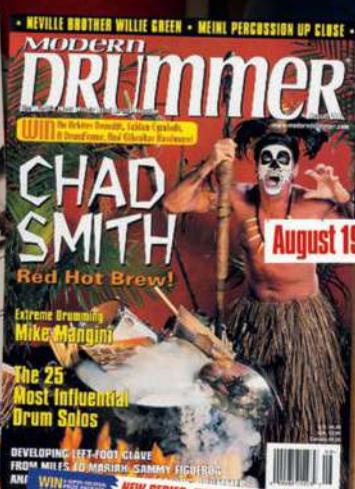
“While Chad Smith’s punch-in-the-gut grooves might still be the first thing people think of when his name is mentioned, at least two other equally important aspects of his playing have emerged: his ace studio-cat qualifications, and his bona fide shredding abilities.” —*Modern Drummer*, Oct. 2011

Chad Smith’s drumming with the Red Hot Chili Peppers has influenced an entire generation of drummers. Now, with two hit albums by the supergroup Chickenfoot, a pair of slam-fests with his own Bombastic Meatbats, and a growing list of studio credits including the Dixie Chicks, John Fogerty, and Kid Rock, Chad has built the kind of résumé most drummers can only dream of. And through it all, MD has been there.

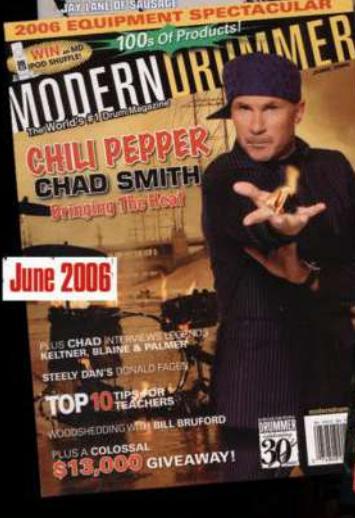
Ash Newell



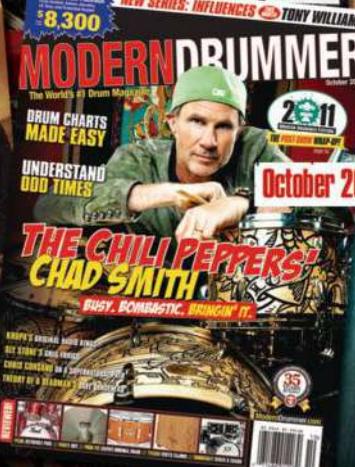
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Focus on the Hi-Hat

The Classic Swing Sound

by Steve Fidyk

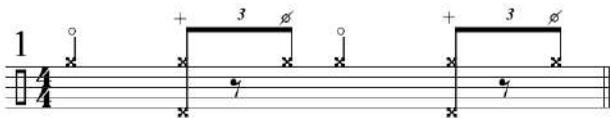


Before small groups reigned supreme and the ride cymbal became king, the beacon in jazz timekeeping was the hi-hat. Jo Jones with Count Basie and Ray McKinley with Glenn Miller were masters of the hi-hat. Both players could swing an entire arrangement simply by manipulating the open and closed sounds of the cymbals. Here, we pay tribute to greats such as Jones and McKinley by exploring ways to get more out of this unique instrument.

THE SOUND

A key to creating a complete, swinging hi-hat sound is for the top and bottom cymbals to remain touching. Try resting your foot on the pedal and lifting your toes slightly. This creates a small opening between the cymbals, which is enough to make an open sound. If you lift your toes a little more, the sound will be louder.

In the traditional swing hi-hat pattern, beats 1 and 3 are open—but the cymbals are still touching—and beats 2 and 4 are played with the cymbals closed. The closed sound can be achieved with your left foot or by using your left hand to mute the cymbals. The “let” of 2 and 4 are played with the cymbals held between open and closed. The complete swing pattern leads to the strong beats of 1 and 3.



The following examples are the three most common ways of phrasing the hi-hat swing beat. In the first one, the phrasing is a dotted-8th/16th-note grouping, which produces a tighter feel. The second example is based on an 8th-note-triplet subdivision and is the preferred phrasing for a looser feel. The third variation illustrates the phrasing for fast tempos at 300-plus beats per minute.



Like your ride cymbal, your hi-hats should be versatile and full sounding when played with sticks or with the foot. Thick, heavy hi-hat cymbals tend to have a strong chick sound but don't blend well with the ensemble when played with sticks. On the other hand, if the hi-hat cymbals are too thin, they won't provide a sizable chick sound when played with the foot.

PAPA JO JONES: MR. HI-HAT

Jo Jones defined the swing feel of the Count Basie band in the 1930s and '40s with his deft hi-hat work. At that time, the standard hi-hat cymbal sizes were 10", 11", and 12", but Jones used larger 13" cymbals, which helped him create a deeper sound. Thanks to Jones, jazz drummers began keeping time on cymbals, as opposed to the snare, the



Low boy



Sock cymbal



Nonadjustable hi-hat

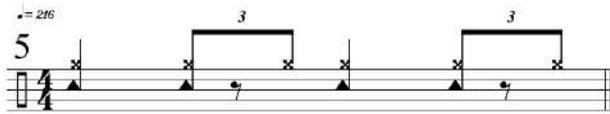
HI-HAT HISTORY

The roaring '20s saw the invention of the low boy. As its name implies, this device stood approximately 12" high. When pressed down with the foot, the mechanism closed, bringing the two cymbals together. Early low-boy players include Warren “Baby” Dodds, Paul Barbarin, Ben Pollack, and Stan King.

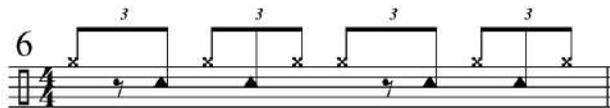
The low boy was elevated twice during its development. It eventually grew to 20", where it was known as the sock cymbal, before becoming the full-size but nonadjustable hi-hat that allowed swing drummers like Chick Webb, Gene Krupa, Ray McKinley, and Jo Jones to play time on the cymbals with their sticks.

toms, or effects sounds like cowbells and woodblocks.

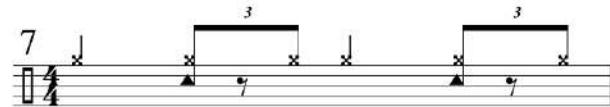
During the first chorus of Basie's piano solo on "Honeysuckle Rose," from the *Complete Original American Decca Recordings*, Jones plays on the closed hi-hat and on the stand. In those days, hi-hat stands were made of nickel, and striking the stand produced a bell-like sound.



On the bridge section of the tune, Jones plays the following idea on the stand and closed hi-hat.

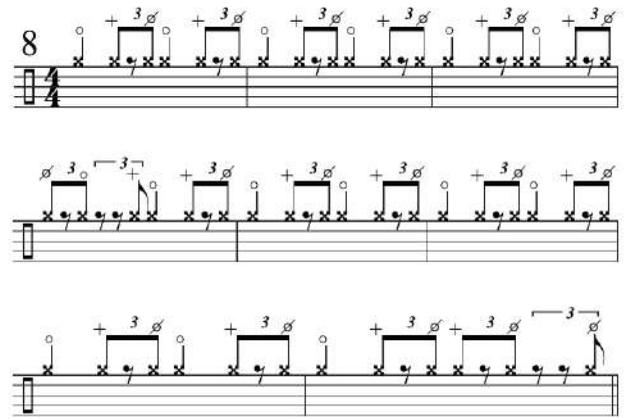


On the last A section, he plays the traditional hi-hat pattern on closed cymbals while striking beats 2 and 4 with his left stick on the stand.



For an example of hi-hat phrasing, check out the work of Ray McKinley on his recording *The Class of '49*. On the track

"Lullaby in Rhythm," his light touch and phrasing beneath the piano solo make for the perfect accompaniment.



While you practice playing the hi-hat, listen to the sound you're producing as you coordinate your foot, toes, and hands. Try working on these techniques with just a hi-hat and a metronome, away from the full drumset, so you can focus your attention more intently on this rich, colorful instrument.

Steve Fidyk co-leads the Taylor/Fidyk Big Band (with arranger Mark Taylor), freelances with vocalist Maureen McGovern, and is a member of the jazz studies faculty at Temple University in Philadelphia. Fidyk is the author of several instructional books. His latest, *Big Band Drumming at First Sight*, is available through Alfred Publishing.



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The Spivack/Wilson Approach to Technique

Part 3: Continuity and Chronological Order

by Richard Martinez and Kevin Crabb

To better understand what's presented in this third installment on the teaching methods of the legendary educators Murray Spivack and Richard Wilson, please reread the first and second articles (September 2011 and November 2011). In our last installment we discussed the importance that Spivack placed on understanding how the seven basic strokes are used to construct the rudiments and other strokes. In this article we'll demonstrate how strokes can be learned sequentially, in what Spivack called continuity (a continuous or connected whole) and what Wilson referred to as chronological order (from earliest to latest). This will help you see how strokes are put together or built upon one another.

To review, the seven basic strokes are the single stroke, double stroke (wrist-turn doubles), flam, wrist stroke (wrist turn), rebound, upstroke, and downstroke.

THROWING FOR REBOUNDS

To help students loosen up, Spivack and Wilson had them practice throwing for rebounds. A rebound is where you allow the stick to bounce one or more times. We previously discussed rebounds as wrist-turn doubles, which is where you turn your wrist once and allow the stick to bounce once.

While playing wrist-turn rebounds you'll note that when you turn your wrist (from parallel to the surface) your hand will open slightly when the stick strikes the surface. To get the best result, you'll need to allow the hand to remain open at the surface for as long as necessary to achieve the rebounds. Allowing the hand to remain open will also help the stick rock over the fulcrum evenly.

When throwing for rebounds, instead of turning the wrist we're going to use an "up" motion (the first half of the single stroke but without playing a note) and a throw. A throw is similar to the downward half of the single stroke, but rather than playing one note when we strike the surface we're going to allow the stick to bounce one or more times.

As you practice the following exercises, remember that when you arrive at the surface, it's important that you don't throw your fingers open but instead *allow* them to open as you would when turning the wrist for doubles.

rebounds

The following are examples of rudiments and strokes as played using one or more of the seven basic strokes. In some of these rudiments, smaller, uncomplicated strokes are joined together to form longer and more complicated ones.

FLAMADIDDLE

The flamadiddle is a good example of a pattern that consists of small, uncomplicated strokes joined together to create a longer and more complicated stroke. The flamadiddle can be thought of as a feint and flam plus two strokes, or as a flam, two wrist strokes, and a single stroke.

To demonstrate continuity, first let's play a feint and flam.

Now, add two strokes (wrist turns) after the flam and before the upstroke.

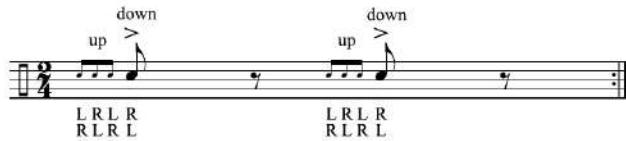
RUFFS (DRAGS)

Like flams, the ruff is played with a grace note and single strokes (up and down). The difference is that instead of playing one grace note before the accent, we play two notes (rebounds).

rebounds/double

FOUR-STROKE RUFFS

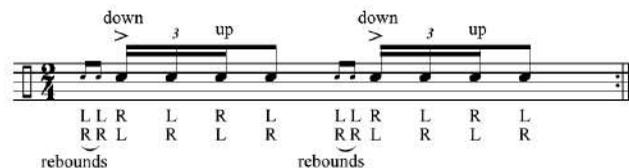
A four-stroke ruff has a rebound double in one hand, while the other hand plays an upstroke into a downstroke (single stroke). The four-stroke ruff is interesting because you're actually splitting double strokes between the hands. After the first note of the first double is played, you play the "up" of a single stroke with the other hand. This is followed by the second double of the first hand and then the "down" of the single stroke with the other hand.



rebounds/split doubles

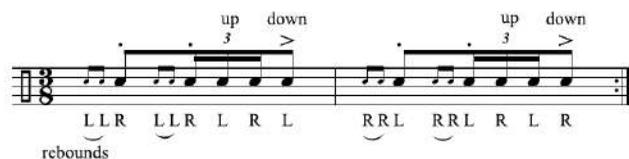
SINGLE RATAMACUE

The single ratamacue is created by playing a drag (two rebounds), then a single wrist turn, then the "up" portion of a single stroke, then another single wrist turn, and finally the "down" portion of the single stroke.



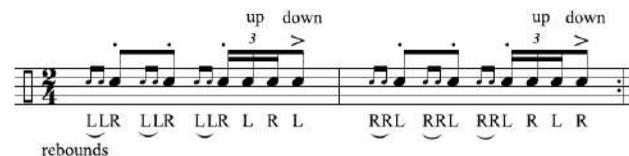
DOUBLE RATAMACUE

The double ratamacue consists of two drags followed by a single wrist turn, the "up" of a single stroke, another single wrist turn, and the "down" of a single stroke.



TRIPLE RATAMACUE

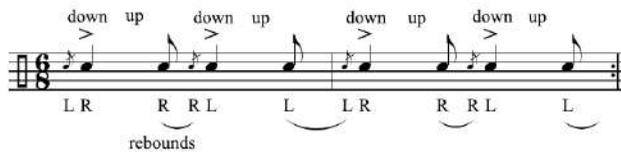
The triple ratamacue consists of three drags followed by a single wrist turn, the "up" of a single stroke, another single wrist turn, and the "down" of a single stroke.



FLAM ACCENT #2

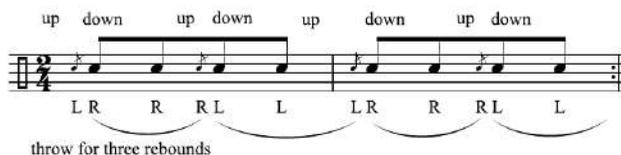
If you increase the speed of the ruff but slow down the rebound in the hand playing the grace notes, and you time the downstroke played by the other hand so that it lands earlier with the second beat of the rebound, you'll have what Spivack described as "ta tlum." If you play "ta tlum"

from hand to hand, you'll notice that you're still playing an upstroke and a downstroke. Release (loosen) on the way up, and squeeze (tighten) on the way down.



FLAM TAP

This stroke consists of a grace note followed by throwing for three notes (rebounds) and another flam. The cycle repeats from hand to hand. In the flam tap, the third note of the three rebounds is a grace note.



SWISS TRIPLET

If you allow the hand playing the downstroke in flam accent #2 to rebound once, you'll be playing a Swiss triplet.



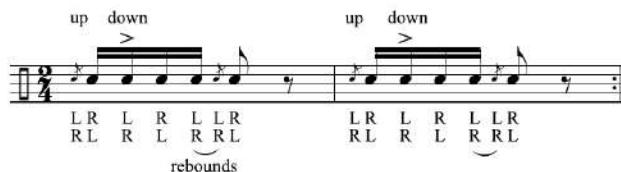
FLAM ACCENT #1

For flam accent #1, play a flam accent #2 and then play an upstroke in the opposite hand so that you play "ta tlum-up." Now you're in position to play the same thing starting with the opposite hand.



FLAMACUE

The flamacue begins with a flam where the grace note is also the "up" portion of a single stroke, followed by a wrist turn and a set of doubles in which the second note is the grace note of the final flam.



SINGLE DRAG

The single drag begins with a downstroke, followed by a ruff whose second note becomes the “up” of a single stroke.



DOUBLE DRAG

The double drag begins with a drag, followed by a ruff whose second note becomes the “up” of a single stroke.

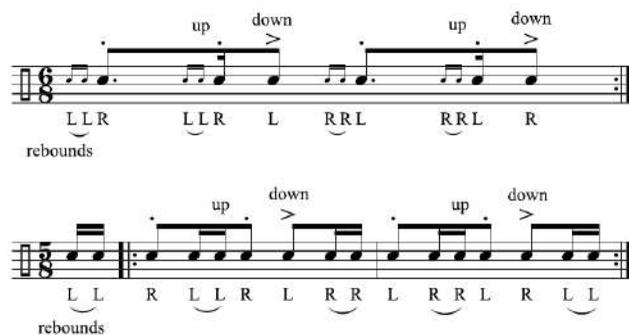


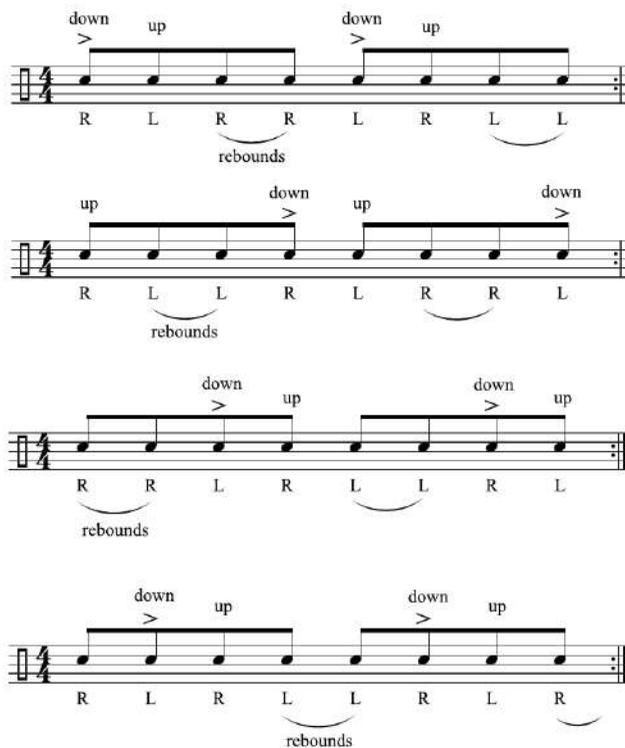
Photo: Melanie Bass

PARADIDDLE

Simply put, the paradiddle is composed of single strokes and a rebound double. In more detail, the paradiddle is a downstroke followed by the opposite hand playing the “up” of a single stroke and two rebounds in the other hand.

Wilson often stressed the importance of the “squeeze” on the downstroke or accent and the “release” on the rebound double. The squeeze and release is not something you actually do deliberately but is something you should simply notice happening. It’s a natural consequence of wrist turns.

The following examples involve paradiddle inversions that start at different places relative to the metronome. The motions used to play the strokes remain the same.



SUMMARY

As you can see, it’s possible to derive many complex strokes from simpler ones when you keep continuity in mind. As Spivack explained, “It makes the whole thing much simpler because one stroke leads you into the next, so they don’t get anywhere near as complicated as you would imagine. And it’s a much simpler way to understand what’s going on.”

Richard Martinez has recorded with Julian Lennon, Dan Hill, John Jones, and Rick Nowels. He is also general manager of the Music Is Hope Foundation, which produces music for children’s nonprofit organizations. **Kevin Crabb** is a drummer/composer who has performed with Alphonso Johnson, John Beasley, David Garfield, and many others. His recent album *Waltz for Dylan* is available at kevincrabb.com.



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Todd Sucherman

by Brad Schlueter

Ash Newell

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U.M.	Hi		X
T.S.	Sn		X
B.D.			X
F.T.			X
R.D.			X
H.H.	B.D.2	Addl.	Rim-
W/NoF	T.T.	clock	

You may know Todd Sucherman from his breathtaking performance at the 2008 Modern Drummer Festival, his award-winning *Methods and Mechanics* DVDs, or his tear-up-the-stage playing with Styx. Although an advanced musicality and stellar chops have raised his stature seemingly quite quickly, the Chicago-born drummer actually got an early start as a professional musician while still a child.

Sucherman is a fun drummer to watch and is something of a musical chameleon, capable of blending unobtrusively into his surroundings or standing out in a blazing display of technical ability. Let's take a peek at both sides of this drumming phenom.

The Falling Wallendas, "Hanging," *The Falling Wallendas*

Back in the '90s Sucherman gigged around the Chicago area with an interesting pop band called the Falling Wallendas. He played tasteful parts that suited the songs, yet he often managed to put in a little something extra that would grab your ear. Here's a funky little hi-hat break that has a light swing in the feel. Todd makes good use of tap rolls and bass drum accents to create this funky musical interlude.

♩ = 97
Slightly Swung

Splash

Styx, "Come Sail Away," *Regeneration Volume I*

On this revisited Styx staple, Sucherman stretches out during the last set of fills and gives us a brief taste of his double bass abilities without overdoing it. He honors the essence of John Panozzo's original drum parts while modernizing them to reflect his personal skill set. The first break uses triplets around the kit, and the last is a very fast quad lick that outlines keyboard and guitar accents with snare hits.

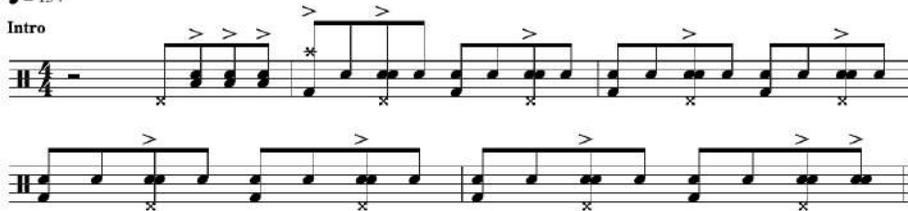
♩ = 144

Brian Wilson, "I Got Rhythm," *Reimagines Gershwin*

Brian Wilson recently released a collection of interpretations of classic songs by George and Ira Gershwin. Sucherman's background as a Chicago jingle and session drummer comes into play for the surf-beat approach he takes on this track. Todd breaks from what many drummers would do and chooses to ride on the snare rather than on the hi-hat.

♩ = 134

Intro



Brian Wilson, "S Wonderful," *Reimagines Gershwin*

The second example from this release shows Sucherman playing a Latin groove in 6/4. It implies a cross between an Afro-Cuban bembé and a Brazilian bossa nova pattern. Sucherman's left hand plays the main rimclick accents, while his right hand plays light 8th notes on top of his left stick. His left foot alternately splashes and closes the hi-hat.

♩ = 128

Intro



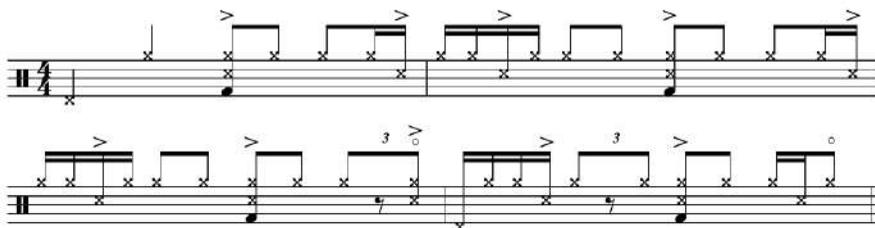
"Carnival Samba Solo," *Methods and Mechanics* companion book/CD

Here's a challenging pattern that transports to the drumset the vibe of a Brazilian samba school parading down the street. You can add a hint of swing to give the groove a bit more swagger.



Reggae excerpt, *Methods and Mechanics* DVD

Here's an excerpt from the *Methods and Mechanics* double DVD where Todd discusses numerous ways to play the hi-hat. This one-drop reggae groove and fill vary in feel from fairly straight to very swung. Check out the nice little bit leading into the last bar.



"Soloing on a Motif," *Methods and Mechanics* companion book/CD

This solo uses three snare drums to establish the motif. Early on, Sucherman plays the following sextuplet groove that uses hi-hat closures and bass drum notes to maintain a constant flow. The groove is incredibly funky and is reminiscent of two of Todd's influences—Vinnie Colaiuta and Steve Gadd.



Grooving excerpt, *Methods and Mechanics* DVD

In this passage, notice how Sucherman plays light ghost notes under his hi-hat to create an interesting texture and then offers a simple fill using five-stroke rolls phrased in groups of three 8th notes.

♩ = 115



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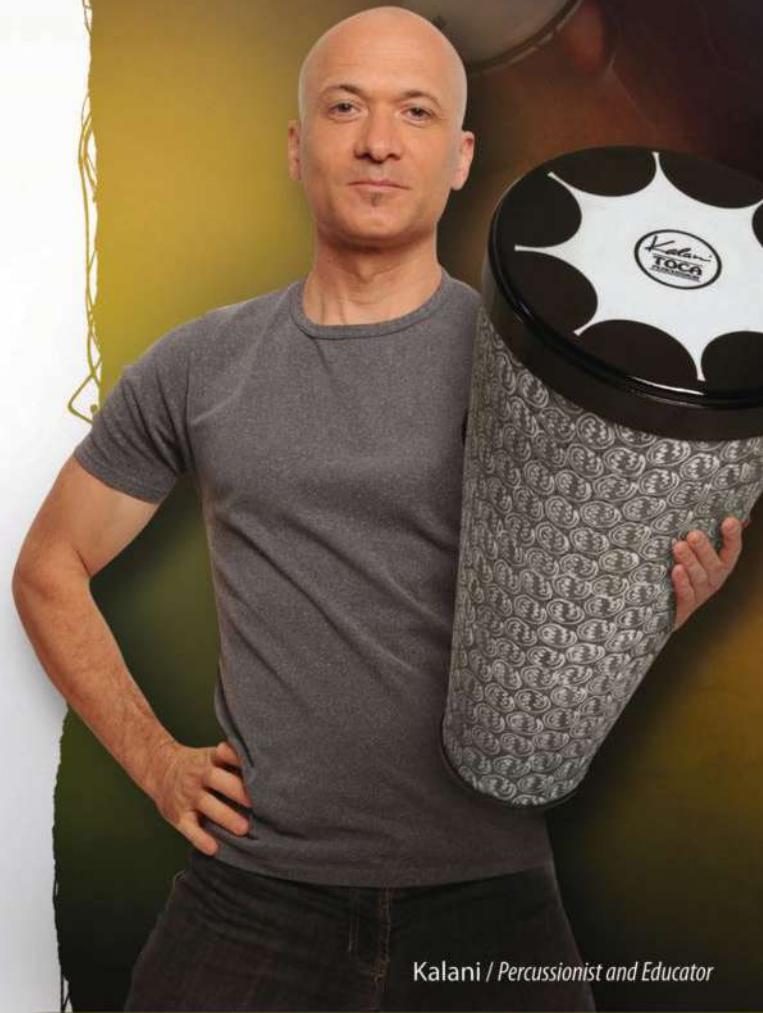
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New Meinl fiberglass digeridoos feature a flared bell for enhanced sound projection. They're 57" long and come in two different finishes featuring a hand-painted design. Each instrument is tuned to a specific note.

The two new Thomas Lang practice pads have a distinctive look featuring Lang's own tribal ring design along with the drummer's autograph. The 6" pad's round shape and small size make it easy to store and carry, even in a stick bag. The pad is mountable on a normal cymbal stand, and the bottom is covered with foam to prevent sliding. The 12" model, which also features a no-slip bottom, is made for quiet practicing on a snare drum and can mount in a standard snare stand. Both pads provide a realistic playing feel with natural rebound. meinlpercussion.com



POLECAT PERCUSSION Tripod Replacement System

The PoleCat is a permanent percussion stand holder that eliminates the need for traditional tripod legs, offering exact placement of your kit every time while minimizing your playing area. Made of lightweight polyurethane and fiberglass, the PoleCat system attaches to a typical stage platform. Custom orders are welcome. polecatps.com



LP Travis Barker Cowbell

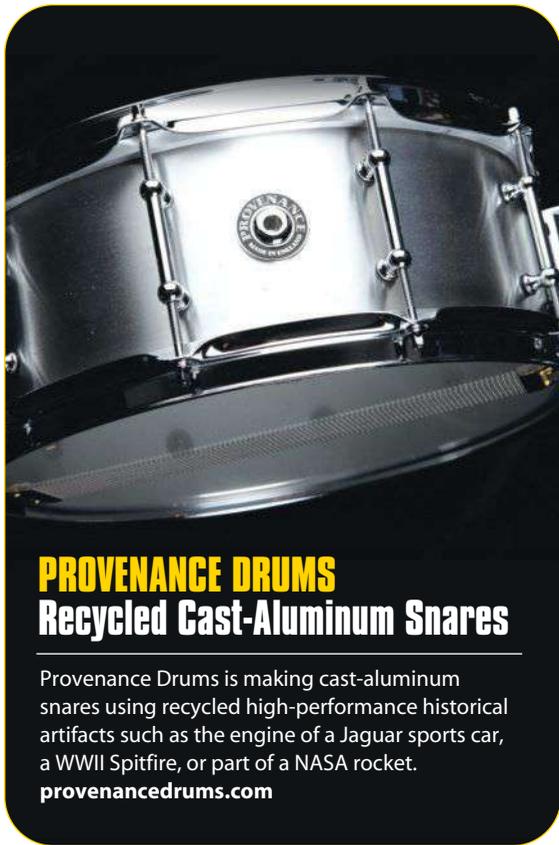
The Latin Percussion Travis Barker Ridge Rider cowbell is an 8" mountable bell featuring artwork originally designed by Brian "Pushead" Schroeder for the cover of Barker's most recent album, *Give the Drummer Some*. The bell is based on LP's Salsa Sergio model, which has been Barker's cowbell of choice for years. The pitch is slightly lower than that of the LP Rock Ridge Rider cowbell, and the Barker model features a yellow Jenigor bar to dampen the sound and resist denting. List price: \$77.99.

lpmusic.com



CRESCENDO DM Music Earplugs

The DM line offers four color-coded models, each with a different level of strength for protecting the ear against damage from high-decibel music. Options include black (25dB), white (20dB), blue (15dB), and green (10dB). The DM plugs incorporate DEC filter technology that offers flat attenuation. As a result, music is brought down to a comfortable volume level while maintaining an even frequency range. crescendo-hearingprotection.com



PROVENANCE DRUMS Recycled Cast-Aluminum Snares

Provenance Drums is making cast-aluminum snares using recycled high-performance historical artifacts such as the engine of a Jaguar sports car, a WWII Spitfire, or part of a NASA rocket.
provenancedrums.com



AHEAD Armor Drum Mat and World Percussion Cases

The Armor Drum Mat features a durable, high-quality carpet with a unique non-skid gel backing. It incorporates reinforced edges and an exclusive fabric-hinged center that allows the carpet to fold and roll into a compact 32x8x8 bundle. The list price for a standard-size 78x62 mat is \$141.50. A larger 107x62 version sells for \$188.50.

New to the Ahead Armor line is a wide range of cases for Latin and world percussion instruments and accessories, including congas, bongos, and djembes, as well as multipurpose bags for small percussion instruments such as shakers, bells, and blocks. Ahead Armor also offers a choice of cases for cajon, including a convenient Dyna-Zip bag and a unique backpack-style model.
bigbangdist.com



KORG Wavedrum Mini

The Wavedrum Mini borrows technology from the popular Wavedrum series and provides a playable pad, speaker, sounds, effects, patterns, and a loop recorder, as well as a sensor clip to transform any object into a second sound source. The instrument offers a hundred ready-to-play sounds, from acoustic-emulating drum and percussion voices to synth tones. Additional sounds can be accessed by attaching the sensor clip to a tabletop, cup, or any object, transforming that item into a percussion instrument. Ten multi-effects are available, including spatial-type effects (delay, chorus, and reverb), modern effects (filters and pitch shifters), and distortion.

The Wavedrum Mini also contains a hundred rhythm patterns covering a range of styles. The Looper function will record and play back any Wavedrum Mini performance, and an unlimited number of overdubs can be added, creating complex, multi-sound patterns. (The total record length is twenty-five seconds.) List price: \$430.
korg.com



NATAL Ash, Birch, Bubinga, and Maple Drumsets

Natal Drums was established in London in 1965 and focused primarily on congas and bongos. Around the same time, Jim Marshall, a drummer and also the founder of Marshall Amplification, owned a drum shop where he sold Natal percussion. In 2011, Marshall purchased Natal and began manufacturing a range of drums and drumsets in addition to percussion. Kits are currently available in ash, birch, bubinga, and maple, with matching snares, as well as in a variety of metal options.
nataldrumsusa.com

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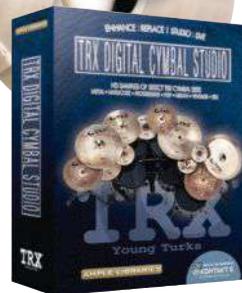
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TRX Digital Cymbal Studio and NRG Series



The TRX Digital Cymbal Studio (DCS) is a collection of studio-quality samples of dozens of handcrafted TRX cymbals. Produced by Ample Libraries using state-of-the-art recording equipment and proprietary production techniques, DCS is an expansion pack for Native Instruments' popular sample-playing software Kontakt 4 and 5 and is intended for use in a variety of studio and live situations. The TRX DCS includes a diverse yet complete collection of nearly a hundred sounds from the company's popular Original and Icon lines.

The NRG series consists of handcrafted cymbals developed to meet the needs of today's hardcore and metal drummers. Featuring extreme weights, tapers, and profiles, along with special lathing and hammering that enable better upper-frequency projection, NRG cymbals have an energetic, extra-bright, very powerful sound. Available models include 20", 21", and 22" rides; 16", 17", 18", 19", 20", and 21" crashes; 12", 14", and 16" hi-hats; 10", 11", and 12" splashes; and 15", 17", 19", and 21" Chinas. trxcymbals.com

CYMBAL DOCTOR Duo and Trio Mini Kits



The Trio

The Duo cymbal-cleaning kit is made for the drummer who likes to work by hand. It includes the Cymbal Doctor proprietary cleaner and sealer, plus gloves, an applicator pad, and a microfiber towel. List price: \$39.95.

The Trio is a mini kit designed for the drummer who has a reciprocal machine with the proper rpm and adapter. The European proprietary hook-and-loop pad installs in seconds. The kit

includes the Cymbal Doctor proprietary cleaner, polish, and sealer, plus a buffing pad, gloves, an applicator, and a microfiber towel. List price: \$69.95.

cymbaldr.com



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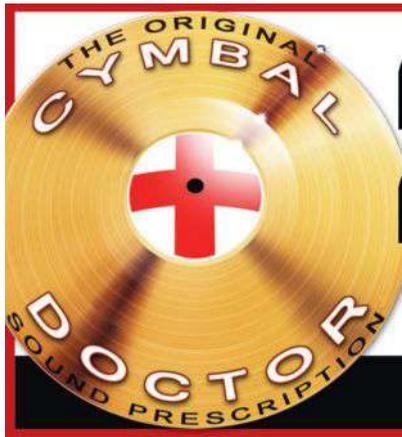
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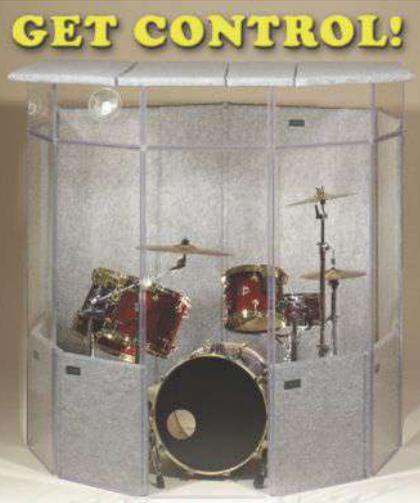
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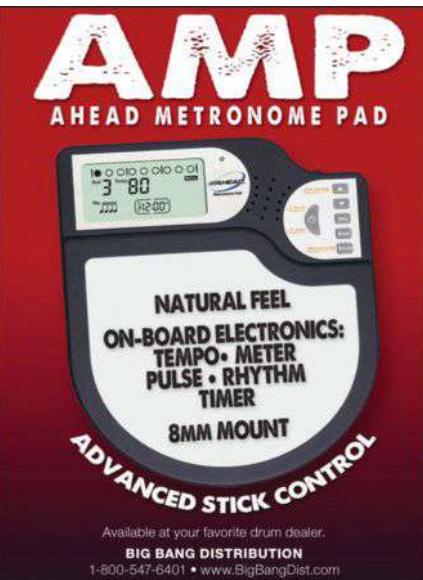


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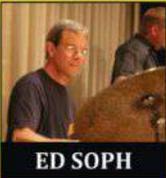
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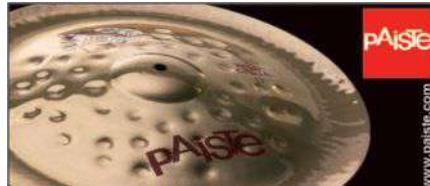
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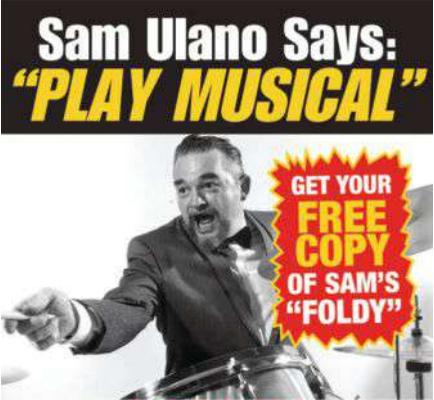
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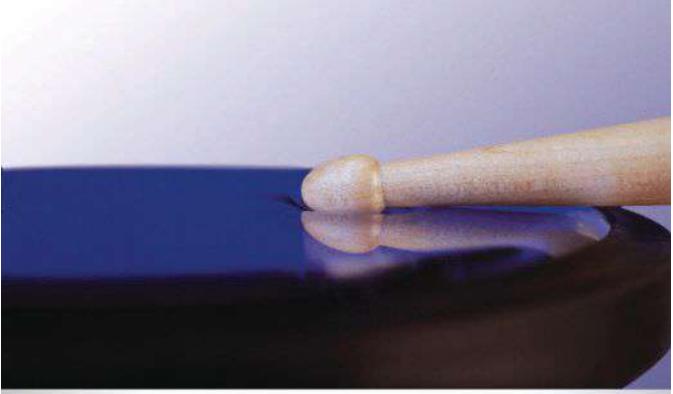
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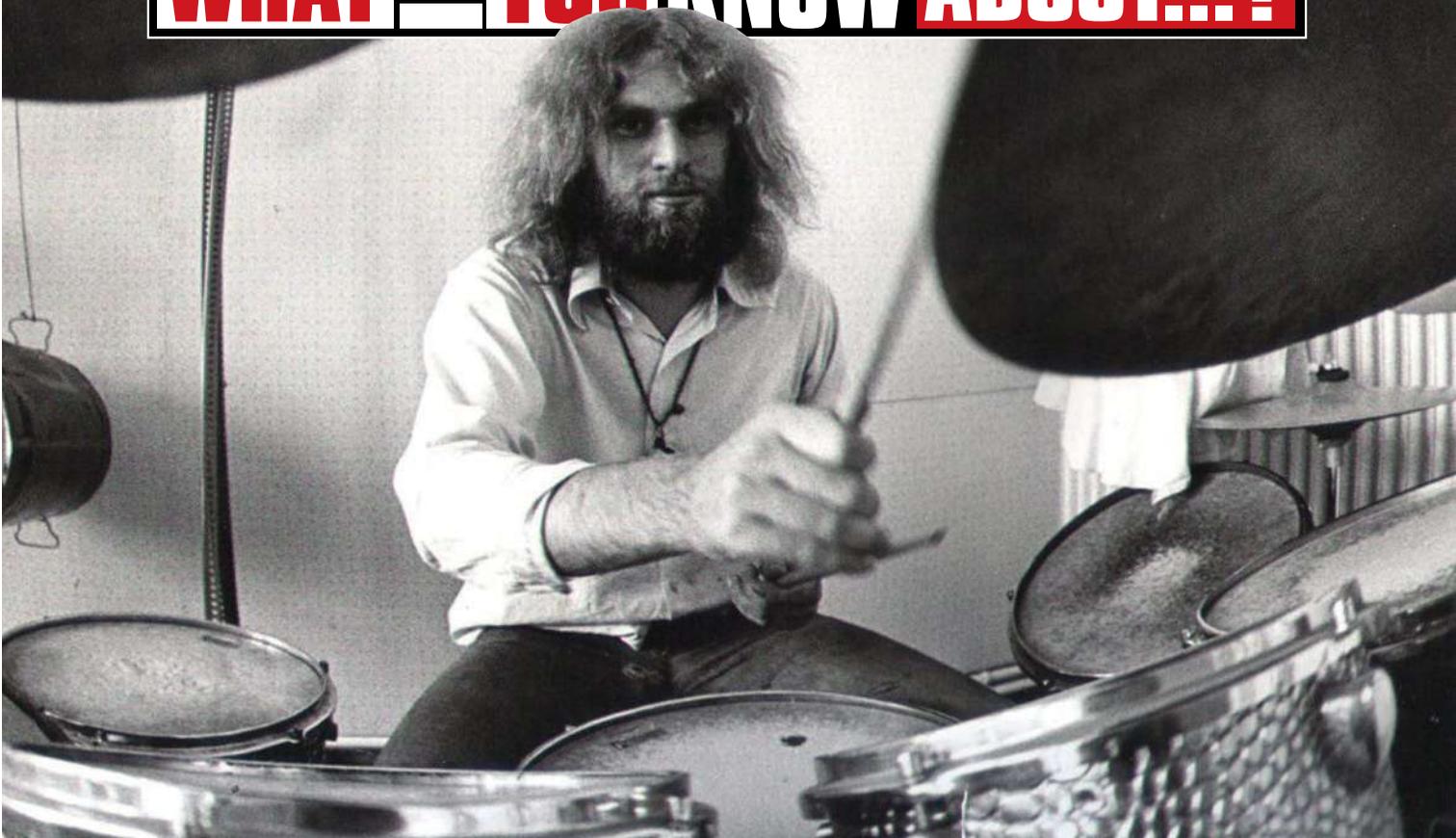


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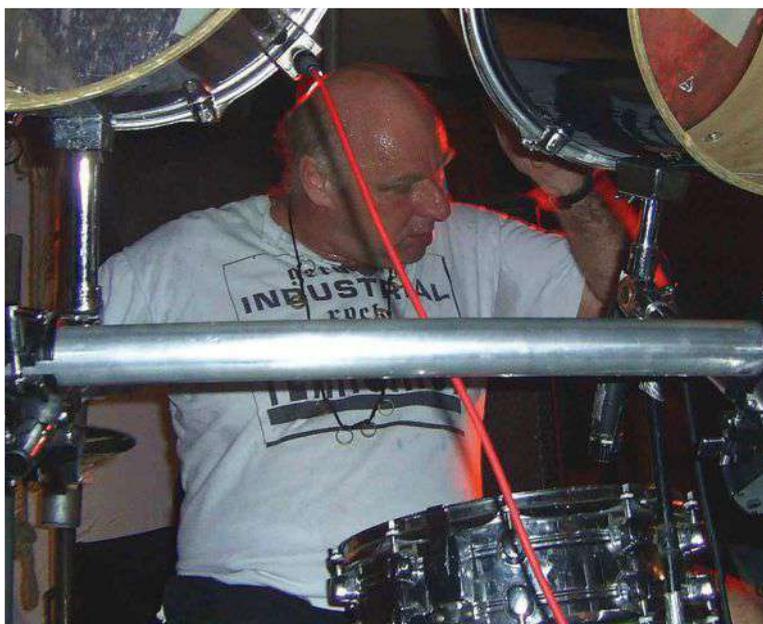
Werner "Zappi" Diermaier

Unorthodox? Absolutely. Challenging? Totally. Musical? Incredibly. The drummer with the quintessential German experimental band **Faust** finds beauty where you'd least expect it.

by Ken Micallef

As a member of the experimental German troupe Faust, Werner "Zappi" Diermaier has earned a reputation as one of the most daring and creative drummer/percussionists. Forming Faust in the starkness of 1970s post-war Germany, Zappi, keyboardist Hans Joachim Irmler, percussionist Arnulf Meifert, bass player Jean-Hervé Péron, guitarist Rudolf Sosna, and saxophonist Gunter Wüsthoff were determined to break all ties with Western norms, often creating their music from the detritus of the industrial landscape. Sometimes recalling a circus on stage, Faust emits strange pulsating sounds and spoken-word shout-outs, to which Zappi creates rhythm on random metal parts, old drums, and a madly whirring chainsaw.

Regarding Faust's early years, Zappi told the English magazine *The Wire* in 2003, "I used a lot of metal plates and tools, and I play two toms alongside them. I also use a huge oil drum... that sounds amazing. I play it with a big hammer, and it doesn't even dent it. We call the instrument Ocean because it sounds like being submerged in waves."



Faust has also incorporated into its performances cement mixers, sanders, sheets of metal, pinball machines triggering sounds, and live television broadcasts. But far from sounding like pure noise, such albums as *Faust So Far*, *Faust IV*, *Faust Concerts Vol. 1*, and *Rien* show a new language developing from new rules.

Lumped in with the then nascent Krautrock movement, which included Cluster, Neu!, Harmonia, Amon Düül II, Can, and Kraftwerk, Faust was the least conventional and definitely the most anarchic. But within its incendiary music the group exhibited a calm at its center, and an indefinable sense of purpose permeates its forty-year reign.

Faust's 2011 release, *Something Dirty*, shows the band refusing to settle comfortably into old age and continuing to create waves that others can only attempt to ride.

MD: How did you begin playing the drums?

Zappi: When I was six years old, I often accompanied my father, who played in the police band, to his practice room in the police barracks. While he was practicing, I used to freak out on the drumkit. My father was often annoyed because I didn't even try to play along with him. He was also a martial musician in the marching band and played a marching drum. I marched in front of the band and carried a sign with the name of the band on it. As a child, it wasn't easy to keep the pace with them. So I often had to change my step. This gave me a sense for rhythmic changes, which I still like to use. To this day I am strongly influenced by martial music, especially as I was also constantly confronted with it on the radio.

MD: When did you get your first drumset?

Zappi: I bought my first cheap set of drums at fourteen. I wasn't allowed to play at home, so I dragged them over to the disused barracks across from our house and tried to imitate Charlie Watts. After being fired from a beat group in Linz for not knowing what a triplet was, at seventeen I moved to Hamburg and joined the avant-garde group Campylognathus Zitelli. I collected old drums and put natural skins on them. Among them was a kick drum. From then on, I was fascinated by playing with two bass drums. The hi-hat only got in my way. I only played it with sticks and put a thin cloth over it to dampen it.

MD: How did Faust form?

Zappi: Later I met Jean-Hervé Péron, who played in another band. Out of these two bands came the group Faust. Our demo consisted partly of tape recordings of city noise, including a steam pile driver at a construction site. I wanted to use that sound on the drums. The natural skins had numerous dents in them from wear, which produced a certain buzzing sound. Each drum in my set had its own character, which changed over

time. I looked for other old toms to expand the set. It was annoying whenever a skin broke, because then I had to put a new one on, which wasn't dented. That dented sound can be heard clearly on "It's a Rainy Day, Sunshine Girl" [from *Faust So Far*]. I've always tended to take on the more melodic part.

MD: What did you practice originally?

Zappi: Practicing has always been a nightmare for me. Practice consisted of playing melodies that I heard in my head, just spontaneously invented stories. It went so far that our sound engineer, Kurt Graupner, had difficulties recording me because I used to hum along to the melodies that I heard in my head—which had little in common with the other instruments. It was usually

bass lines or organ sounds that were different from what the other musicians were playing. That way, I played other instruments virtually, along with the drums.

That's also why I never adopted a rock style. Sometimes drum sounds were too boring for me, so I would look for alternatives. During a [German avant-pop group] Slapp Happy recording I assembled several cardboard boxes of various thicknesses and sizes, as well as plastic buckets. And I replaced the drums' natural skins with plastic heads. That resulted in a harder approach.

MD: Tell us about "the jackhammer incident."

Zappi: Before a concert in Birmingham in the early '70s, I went for a walk around the

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A large saw blade is among the unusual items that are permanent fixtures on Zappi's kit.



block with our roadie. We happened upon a construction site, where I noticed a worker with a jackhammer. So the idea was to use the sound of this tool spontaneously. We asked the worker whether he would play with us using his equipment. After some hesitation, he agreed to do so. A huge stone was set up on the stage, which, for safety reasons, was covered with a tarpaulin. The worker was standing there

with his menacing instrument before this mysterious something. I meant to give him a sign at the beginning and at the end of the performance. He noticed the beginning, but not the end. He demolished the entire stone through the tarp until the concert was finished.

For me, the clatter of the hammer was an alternative to drums. Later we rented tools and played them ourselves. Building materials such as steel plates and pipes were a good substitute for drums because the vibrations could be captured by attaching pickups to them, so the sounds could be manipulated. These days I only use one cymbal, because metal plates are much better suited. And it's great to play with steel pipes, because they are easy to replace.

MD: What is your current setup?

Zappi: When Faust reunited [in the '90s], Jean-Hervé Péron and I built a 2-meter-high and 2-meter-square scaffold. At the front are two kick drums. Three large toms are hung on a crossbar. The largest one is a floor tom. Above them is a sheet of aluminum, about 140 by 80 centimeters. In the middle is an old snare. To the right, there is a closed hi-hat and a floor tom. On my left is a table with effects units and a mixer.

Hanging on the right side of the frame is a 150-by-150-centimeter steel plate, and next to it is a round piece of wood, from which six steel pipes of different lengths and thicknesses are hung. Between the pipes, there is a steel plate, which is used to hit them. Hanging behind me is a large saw blade, which has a very long decay. It generates a screaming sound and also sprays sparks for visual effect. I use triggers with effects by Yamaha on two toms and the left kick drum. The metal plates are modulated with pickups and multi-effects units. That is still my setup today.

THERE'S BEAUTY IN THE BREAKDOWN ZAPPI ON RECORD



Since the very beginning, Werner "Zappi" Diermaier has explored unconventional approaches to the drumset, finding remarkably expressive and complementary rhythms and sounds in surprising places.

"It's a Rainy Day, Sunshine Girl," from Faust's 1972 sophomore album, *Faust So Far*, represents drumming minimalism at its most audacious, with Zappi pounding out seven-plus minutes of unaltered 8th notes (with the "&" before beat 1 played on a high tom and the remaining seven notes on a low tom).

"Mamie Is Blue," also from *Faust So Far*, employs fluctuating amounts of electronic treatments to Zappi's ultra-simple, hypnotic two-note tom rhythm, which without warning changes to straight 8th notes for several bars, then to swung 8ths, then 8th-note triplets, before disintegrating into the ether of fuzzed-out guitar and throbbing keyboard low notes. Evil, without excess.

Before you get the idea that Zappi is capable of working only the simplest of rhythmic devices, check out the oddly funky groove he comes up with on "Flashback Caruso," from 1973's *The Faust Tapes*. Following a becalming acoustic guitar intro, Zappi accompanies the introduction of an acoustic piano with a strange triplet figure consisting of two bass drum notes and a half-open hi-hat strike. After a broken-up tom/snare fill, he falls into a stuttering beat that takes off from his initial triplet idea.

Another classic Zappi beat appears on "Jennifer," from *Faust IV* (also 1973). As a vibrato-soaked bass guitar figure bubbles underneath, the drummer breaks up his own bottom-heavy beat with an irregularly occurring tom fill that ends on an upbeat snare/crash cymbal punctuation. Could most of us figure out how to play this part? Probably. Would any of us have thought it up in the first place? Not likely.

Some of Zappi's most fun beats appear on the compilation album *71 Minutes*, including the pulsating opener "Munic, Yesterday"; "Don't Take Roots," which resembles a game of hot potato put to music; the slow, lulling waves of "Das Meer"; the four-on-the-floor grinder "Knochentanz"; and the groovy double-bass-driven "J'ai Mal Aux Dents."

After a long period of inactivity, Faust returned in the '90s with a number of strong releases, including 1997's *You Know Faust*, 1999's *Ravvivando*, and last year's *Something Dirty*, which shows no discernable dip in the band's ability to surprise, shock, and entertain.

Adam Budofsky

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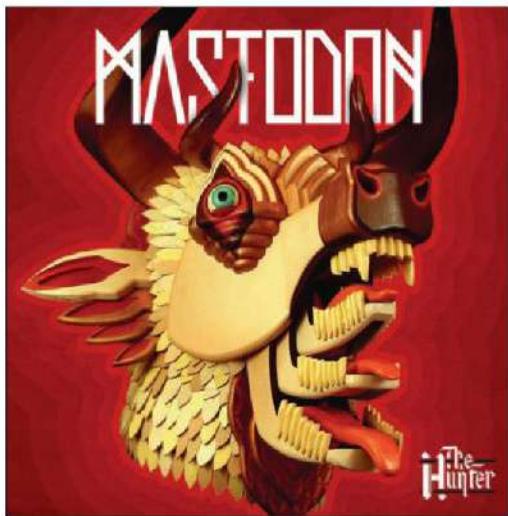
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MASTODON *THE HUNTER*

On their fifth full-length, Brann Dailor and his mates continue to evolve—and amaze. *The Hunter* highlights Mastodon's ability to craft more straightforward material with fewer instrumental passages and with vocal melodies that often carry the songs. Still, there's an ample supply of the band's signature frenzied musicianship. Drummer **BRANN DAILOR** has the unique gift of interpreting rhythms in a manner that's refreshingly complex. He's got a locomotive feel, propelled by subliminal streams of ghost notes and constant flurries of tom rolls—a Mastodon hallmark. In any other context, Dailor's approach could be seen as overplaying. But the interplay within his grooves, and how his patterns snake through the guitar parts while still locking in with Troy Sanders' bass lines, is why Mastodon stands out from the metal herd.

Dailor's drums sound amazing on *The Hunter* too, with toms reminiscent of those on an Iron Maiden or even a Phil Collins album and a natural kick sound that's not abrasively clicky or pushed unnaturally to the front of the mix. The album's opening two tracks, "Black Tongue" and "Curl of the Burl," highlight both Dailor's crushing tone and his ability to make more straightforward riff-oriented tunes groove in atypical ways, while songs like "Blasteroid" and "Octopus Has No Friends" showcase the band's skill at blending the melodic with the chaotic. (Warner Brothers) **David Ciauro**



LEVIN TORN WHITE *LEVIN TORN WHITE*

A prog-drumming vet gets edgy with some heavy friends.

Fans of **ALAN WHITE**'s more adventurous early-'70s drumming in Yes will have something to cheer about on this collaboration of progressive rock luminaries. For the all-instrumental pieces, White, guitarist David Torn, and bassist Tony Levin approximate the latter-day King Crimson—a bottom-heavy, combustible concoction of changing meters and moods. White's drums sound huge, and he incorporates interesting syncopated cymbal and snare jabs on "Cheese It, the Corpse," while his driving, two-handed hi-hat workout on "Ultra Mullett" is all muscle. White hasn't leaned in like this in years, and listeners can only hope for more soon. (lazybones.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



RAOUL BJÖRKENHEIM, BILL LASWELL, AND MORGAN ÄGREN *BLIXT*

An aggressive, heavily improvised fusion summit proves the power trio is far from dead.

Subtlety is not exactly the name of the game on *Blixt*, featuring guitarist Raoul Björkenheim, bassist Bill Laswell, and Swedish kit scientist **MORGAN ÄGREN**. The pieces start at "10" and increase in intensity to "11" and beyond, from the swirling chaos of "Black Whole" to the odd-time Morse code of "Moon Tune." Ägren is constantly active, and he employs multiple snares to great effect when he executes tsunami-like rolls. Check out the kick doubles that begin "4-4-4-4-2-2-2-5-2" for a taste of the drummer's Bozzio-inspired madness. (Cuneiform) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



ARI HOENIG *LINES OF OPPRESSION*

A brilliant new release firmly cements the avant-jazz drummer as a player to check out.

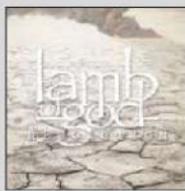
ARI HOENIG won't be accused of taking the safe route on his latest offering of progressive punk-bop. Blink, and you'll miss a wealth of advanced rhythmic information, from the stutter-step, odd-time maneuvering on "Arrows and Loops" to the twisting and turning solo on the title track. The pitch-changing mallet work on the head of "Moanin'" is remarkable, and Hoenig swings and rocks hard with equal measure throughout the album. A group of stellar young sidemen and a marvelous kit recording necessitate repeated listening. (arihoenig.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



WICKED KNEE *WICKED KNEE*

A side project from MMW's drummer packs a creative punch.

On this brief horns-heavy release, drummer **BILLY MARTIN** of Medeski Martin & Wood juxtaposes traditional and more modern beats, taking the listener on a whirlwind rhythmic journey. On "Remington 411," old-school funk grooves containing traces of hip-hop glide alongside DJ Olive's space-age sonic effects and sidle up next to the brass section's call-and-response phrases. The free-jazz-style tom fills scurrying around the Martin-penned "Cry" are the flip side to the African-flavored syncopated rhythms of "Congo March" and second-line patterns of "El Ritmo." It may run only twenty-five minutes, but short on musical ideas this record isn't. (Amulet) **Will Romano**



LAMB OF GOD *RESOLUTION*

Once again, Chris Adler finds that the road less traveled is the preferred route.

Resolution is Lamb of God's seventh studio release, and opening cut "Straight for the Sun" has a stuck-in-the-mud sludge that serves as a fitting preface to the thirteen tracks that follow. *Resolution* celebrates the core of the band's well-trodden heartland metal roots, yet each song is enhanced by the band members' chemistry and prowess on their respective instruments. The album's closer, "King Me," is a doomy atmospheric epilogue that showcases Lamb of God's ability to exceed expectations.

CHRIS ADLER's double kick pepperings roll and stutter accordingly, with or against the guitars, and there's no shortage of the drummer's signature thought-out yet atypical fills. Some listeners might be distracted by the kick and tom sounds, which can seem synthetic against the gnarly true-grit guitar tones. But *Resolution* elicits the visceral reaction that metal fans crave, and it serves as a quintessential chest-pounding, cathartic release—which takes precedence over any intellectual analysis. (Epic) **David Ciauro**



●●●●● **PEDAL CONTROL** BY DOM FAMILARO AND JOE BERGAMINI WITH STEPHANE CHAMBERLAND

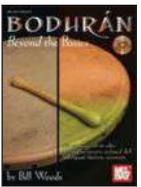
BOOK/CD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$16.99

This book will kill your feet. The extensive opening discussion of technique is superb, analyzing foot and leg motion in relation to the pedal.

This information alone is quite valuable, as such issues aren't addressed enough in method books. We then move to some powerful exercises that isolate the feet, employ hand/foot unisons, and then apply ruffs and flams to the pedals. Later, the talents of drum legends like Simon Phillips and Billy Cobham are explored.

There's some challenging, inspiring, and rewarding material here. It should be noted, however, that the exercises seem to focus primarily on double bass playing. And the inclusion on the final page of a solo written for double hi-hat pedals seems odd, because hi-hat pedal technique is not fully addressed elsewhere in the book and differs enough from bass drum technique that a focus on it would have made *Pedal Control* stronger for single bass players. Still, the exercises are easily adaptable, making this a worthwhile study for any intermediate to advanced player. (Wizdom Media/Alfred)

Martin Patmos



●●●●● **BODHRÁN: BEYOND THE BASICS** BY BILL WOODS

BOOK/CD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$19.99

This package is aimed at musicians interested in advancing their playing of the traditional Irish bodhrán, a staple of pub music for centuries.

A sequel to author Bill Woods' *Bodhrán: The Basics*, this sixty-three-page volume is meant to help the user expand on the basic playing concepts, rhythms, and time signatures addressed in the first book. Included are useful but not overblown descriptions of everything required to correctly read and interpret the 600-plus featured exercises and solos. The ability to read traditional musical notation is required to make full use of this book, though basic descriptions of time signatures and counting schemes are included. The accompanying audio CD and easy-to-read track notation make the package a great deal for the price. (Mel Bay) **Ben Meyer**



●●●●● **BEYOND THE METRONOME** BY MALCOLM "MAC" SANTIAGO

BOOK/CD LEVEL: ALL \$29.95

The subtitle of this book, "Becoming an *Inchronous* Musician," refers to the

ability to play in time. Most of us have sat with a metronome while working on exercises and have been concerned about having a good feel against a click—but how many musicians focus specifically on developing their own internal sense of time? Santiago's book sets out to help us get there.

Beyond the Metronome begins with a self-test and then walks through a process of diminishing note values, where the player's time becomes subdivided from whole-note (or longer) clicks. Moving past that are sections on tempo memory, time feel, and phrasing. A CD with reference clicks is included to aid with the lessons.

Written around compelling ideas with exercises for development, the book should be worked through at one's own pace. Musicians of all levels can benefit from the ideas here, as can teachers looking to guide their students in developing a solid, accurate sense of time. Refining that ability helps make a musician more confident—and that's something everyone benefits from. (inchronicity.com)

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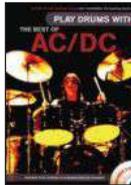
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A Journey-themed episode of the phenomenally successful musical dramedy *Glee* introduced Generation Z to the Bay Area band's music and recast the arena-rock act as essential listening. Primitime programming hype aside, the detailed drum transcriptions and sound-alike instrumental recordings presented here speak for themselves and challenge Glee's everywhere to further analyze the classic drum performances by **AYNSLEY DUNBAR** and **STEVE SMITH**. Whether it's covering slightly swung ride beats ("Open Arms"), the liberal use of flams and triplets ("Separate Ways"), stealthy ballad accompaniment ("Faithfully"), independence and solid timekeeping ("Send Her My Love"), or deceptively tricky syncopated patterns ("Don't Stop Believin'"), the book accurately reflects the rhythmic finesse—and flash—of Journey's most popular period. (Alfred) **Will Romano**



AC/DC PLAY DRUMS WITH THE BEST OF...
BOOK/CD(2) LEVEL: ALL \$24.99

For decades, the legendary Aussie rockers AC/DC have so unapologetically celebrated their lack of creative evolution that it seems pointless to study drum charts for the band's greatest songs. Before the *MD* offices get flooded with irate emails taking issue with that last statement, let's get one thing straight: This book uncovers unexpected subtleties of timeless drum performances, thirteen of which are presented here in musical notation and sound-alike audio forms. It seems that coping longtime AC/DC drummer **PHIL RUDD**'s parts on "You Shook Me All Night Long" or **CHRIS SLADE**'s playing on "Thunderstruck" requires nearly as much forethought as brute force. Although the pileup of printed lyrics and tiered guitar/drum tabs can at times cause reader confusion, the text reinforces one major point: AC/DC's relentless rock 'n' roll *ain't* mindless noise pollution. (Wise Publications/Hal Leonard) **Will Romano**



DRUM ATLAS SERIES: AFRICA
BY JOHN MARSHALL
BOOK/CD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE
\$16.99

Africa: a continent with extremely diverse cultures and music that spans from traditional forms (Ituri singing, the drumming of Burundi) to more contemporary ones (Afrobeat, highlife). To attempt to cover the music of an entire continent may seem absurd. Yet the newest volume in the excellent *Drum Atlas* series proves to be an intriguing introduction. Author John Marshall recognizes the limitations yet overcomes them by offering ideas drawn from African traditions that the reader can then run with. Beginning with traditional instruments, he shows how ensemble rhythms can be mapped onto the drumset. He then moves through the major geographic regions—West, North, East/Central, South Africa—providing a drumset framework for each area's representative rhythms. Though a CD of recorded examples helps the user grasp the rhythms, the point here is not to master a specific tradition but rather to use the ideas as inspiration. On this point the book is a true success. Players curious about adapting traditional African drumming to the set, or simply those looking to infuse their playing with new inspiration, would do well to check this out. (Alfred) **Martin Patmos**





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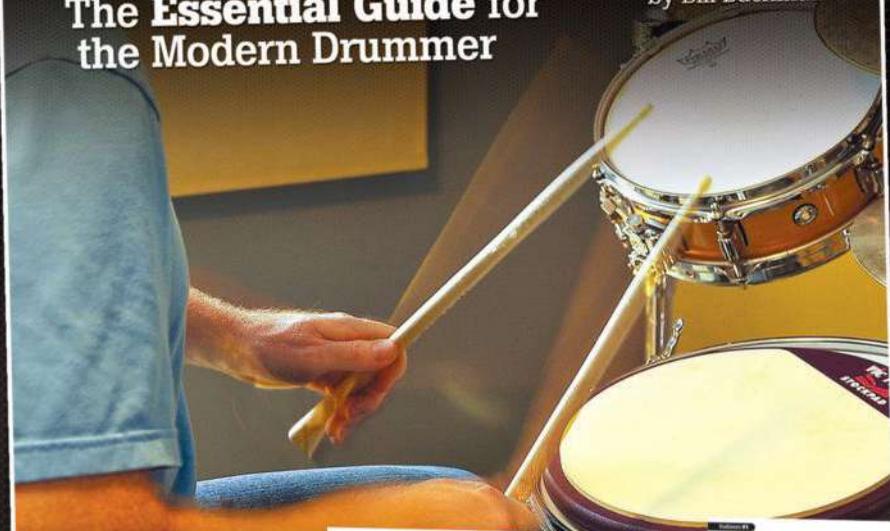
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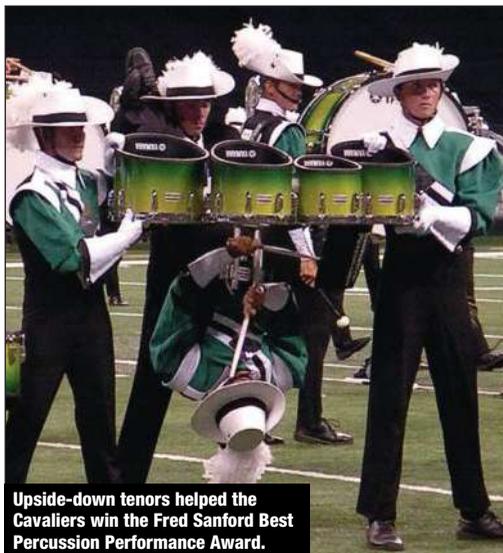
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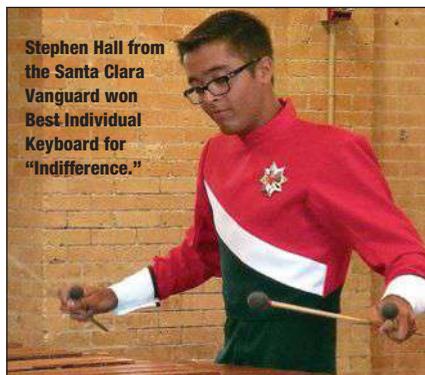
Upside-down tenors helped the Cavaliers win the Fred Sanford Best Percussion Performance Award.



The Cadets pitted “angels” against “demons” to win their tenth championship.



The Santa Clara Vanguard Cymbal Ensemble (Armeen Ghafourpour, Drew Kleinbach, Dan Russie, and Jeff Ramos) played the winning original piece “Third Time’s the Charm.”



Stephen Hall from the Santa Clara Vanguard won Best Individual Keyboard for “Indifference.”

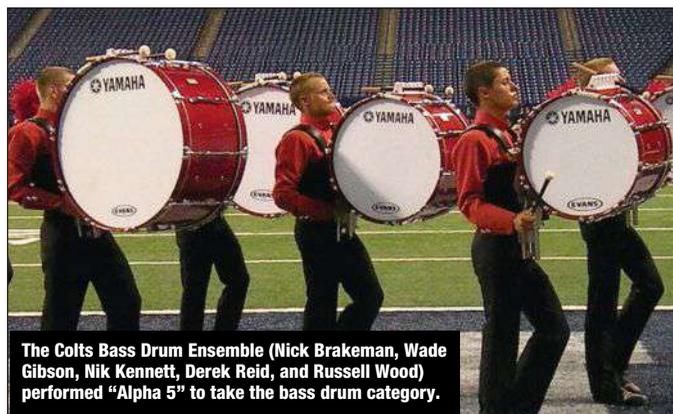
2011 DCI WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

This past August, for the third year in a row, the Drum Corps International World Championship Finals was held at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. The **Cadets**, from Allentown, Pennsylvania, won their tenth championship with the program “Between Angels and Demons,” featuring the music of Frank Ticheli and Hans Zimmer. “At times we were segmented—angel drum line versus demon drum line,” explains **Colin McNutt**, the Cadets’ arranger and director of percussion, “so there were a lot of antiphonal effects that were fun to rehearse and play.”

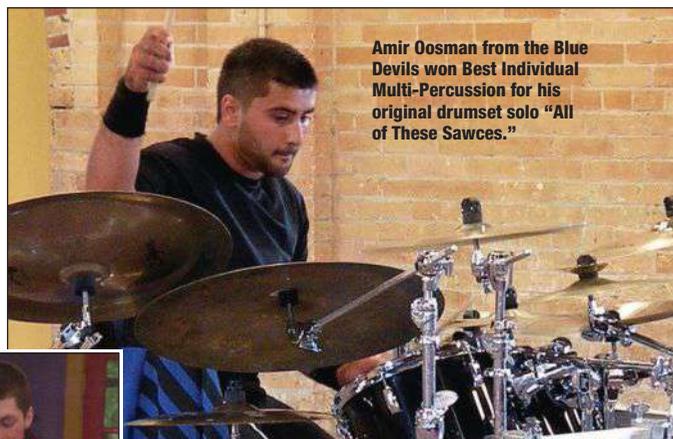
The **Blue Devils**, from Concord, California, who’d captured the title the last two years, won the silver medal for “The Beat My Heart Skipped,” based on the music of Burt Bacharach. The **Cavaliers**, from Rosemont, Illinois, earned the bronze medal for “XtraordinaryY” and also won the Fred Sanford Best Percussion Performance Award. “My favorite part of the show was the last thirty seconds,” says Cavaliers caption head **Brian Tinkel**. “It was some of the most ridiculous stuff we’ve ever played...and it was at 200 beats a minute!” Georgia’s **Spirit of Atlanta** reclaimed a spot in the “Top 12” with a twelfth-place finish.

Three of the five World Class Individual Awards were taken by members of the Blue Devils, each playing an original composition: **Keelan Tobia** (Best Individual Snare) performed “Dangerous Games,” **Amir Oosman** (Multi-Percussion) played drumset on “All of These Sawces,” and **Aaron Spevak** (Timpani) won for “Six.” The other two solo awards went to members of the Santa Clara Vanguard, from Santa Clara, California: **Matthew Penland** (Best Individual Multi-Tenor) performed his own “Deviation,” and **Stephen Hall** (Keyboard) played marimba on Eric Sammut’s arrangement of Colombo’s “Indifference.”

The **Blue Devils** won Best Percussion Ensemble for a snare/tenor duet by **Matt Keown** and **Nick Arce**. The **Colts**, from Dubuque, Iowa, claimed Best Bass Drum Ensemble. And for the fourth time in six years, the **Santa Clara Vanguard** won Best Cymbal Ensemble. **Text and photos by Lauren Vogel Weiss**



The Colts Bass Drum Ensemble (Nick Brakeman, Wade Gibson, Nik Kennett, Derek Reid, and Russell Wood) performed “Alpha 5” to take the bass drum category.



Amir Oosman from the Blue Devils won Best Individual Multi-Percussion for his original drumset solo “All of These Sawces.”



A duet by the Blue Devils’ Matt Keown (snare) and Nick Arce (tenor) earned Best Percussion Ensemble.



Best Individual Multi-Tenor went to Matthew Penland from the Santa Clara Vanguard for his original solo “Deviation.”



Campbell

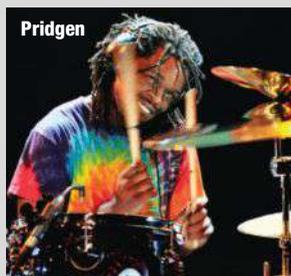
MONTREAL DRUM FEST 2011

This past October 22-23, the Montréal Drum Fest took place at the Salle Pierre-Mercure concert hall. Day one began with the Roland V-Drums finals, followed by a performance by Drums United with **Lucas van Merwijk**. Next up were **Billy Rymer, Ignacio Berroa, Samuel Torres and Ray Yslas, Chris Coleman**, and Yamaha Groove Hour with **Teddy Campbell, Adrian Bent, and Larnell Lewis**.

The second day kicked off with the Yamaha Rising Star Showcase, followed by performances by **Scott Pellegrom, Aquiles Priester and Oli Beaudoin, Tobias Ralph, Danny Seraphine, Moritz Mueller, and Thomas Pridgen**.

The Montréal Drum Fest celebrates its twentieth anniversary in 2012. For more info, go to montrealdrumfest.com.

Text and photos by Heinz Kronberger



Pridgen



Pellegrom



Seraphine



Ralph

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THE GREEN MONSTER

This twelve-piece beast comes from Derrick Plansker, who ordered the DW Collector's series kit in 2006 from Guitar Center in Scottsdale, Arizona. "They sound as beautiful as they look," Plansker says of the pearlescent white drums with lime-green hot-rod flames. The cymbals are a mix of Sabian, Zildjian, and Paiste.

Plansker uses a Yamaha EMX5014C powered mixer with Yamaha monitors to blast play-along tunes from the '80s and more modern times. He even built a soundproof room so he can bash at his convenience without bothering the neighbors. Derrick concludes, "I just want to say thank you to DW and *Modern Drummer* for being my inspiration."

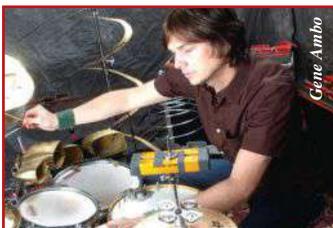


Photo Submission: Hi-res digital photos, along with descriptive text, may be emailed to billya@moderndrummer.com. Show "Kit of the Month" in the subject line of the message.



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