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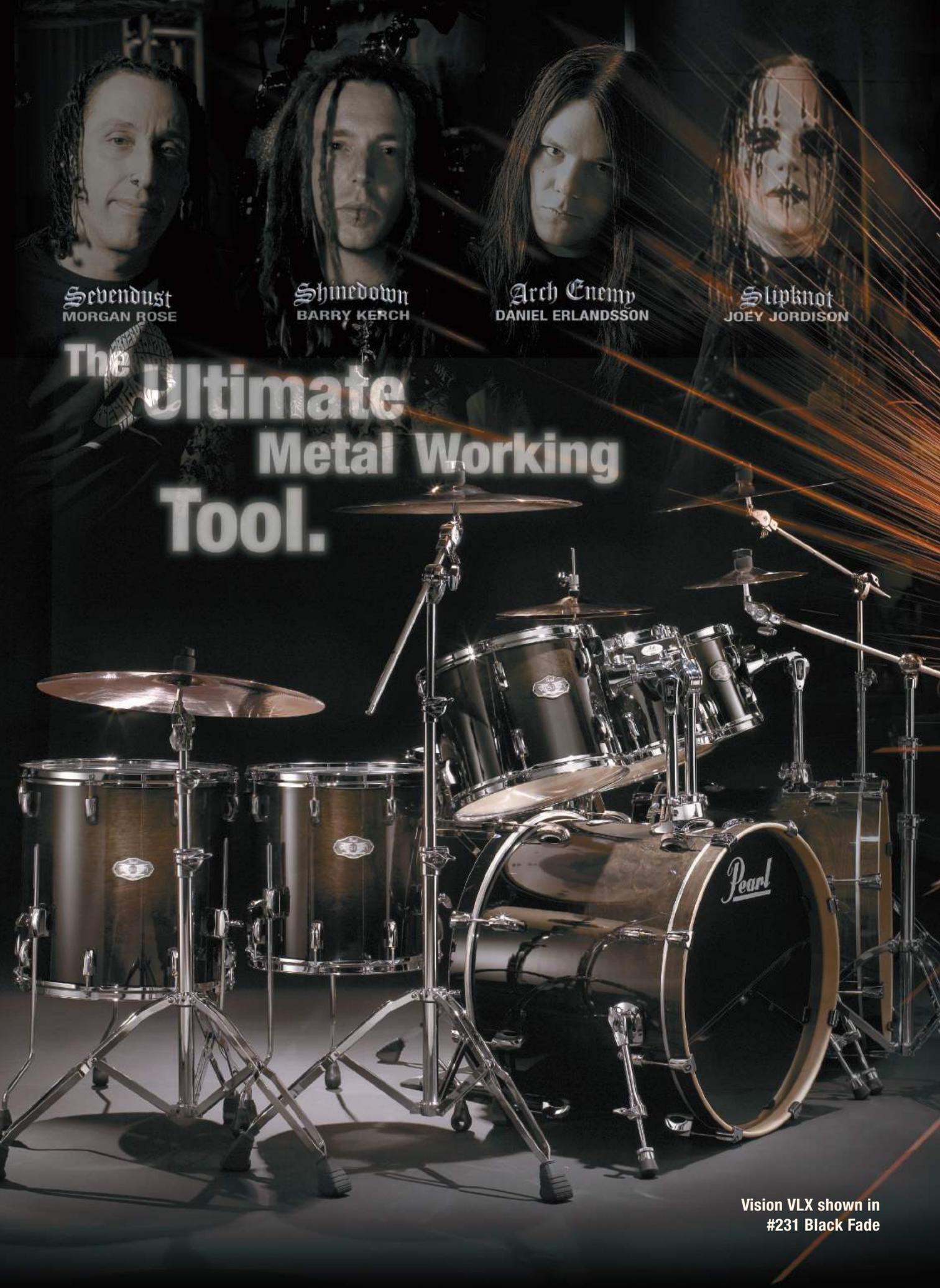
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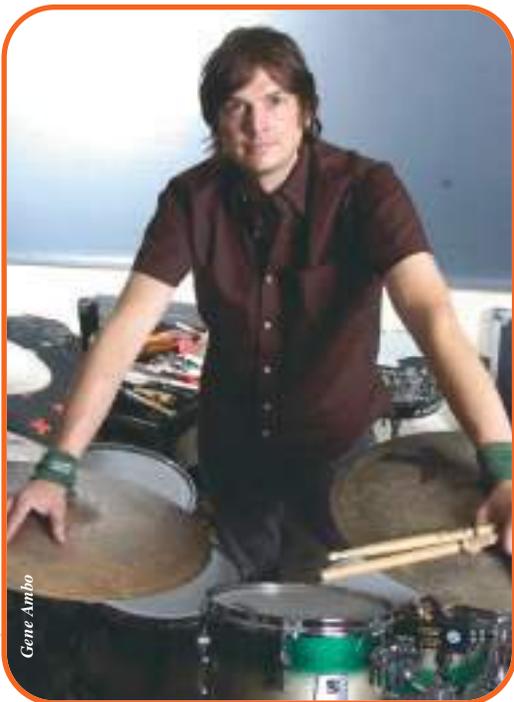
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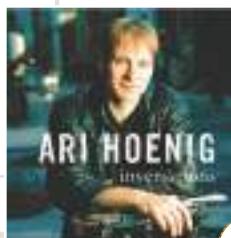
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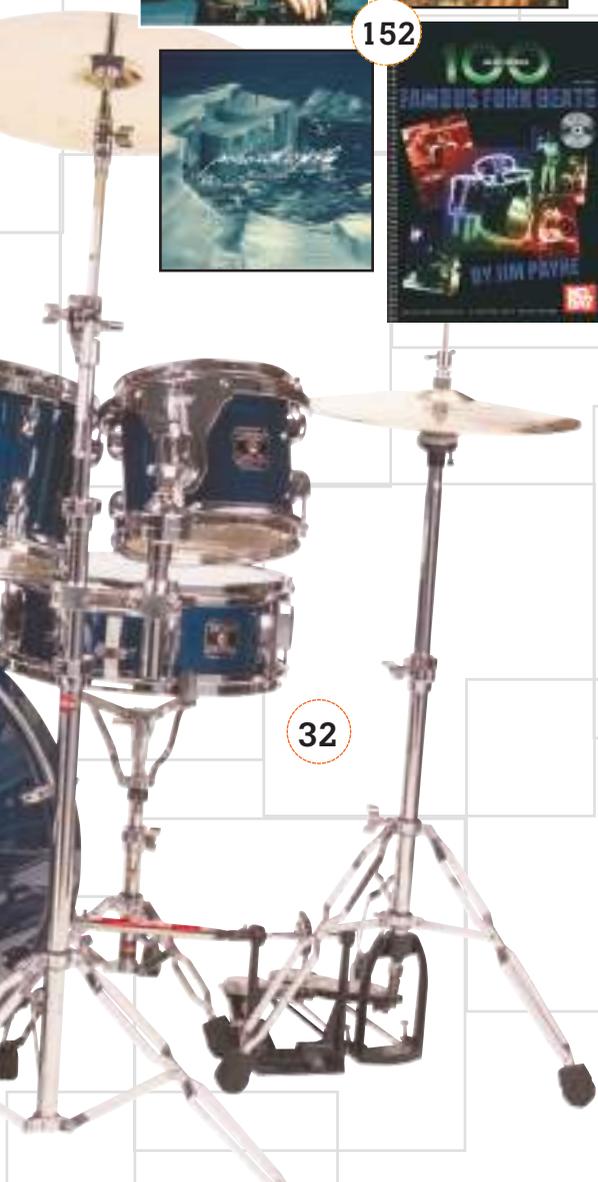
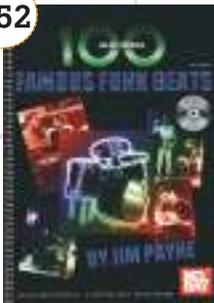
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# A Triggered Response

I still remember the first time I saw someone playing electronic drums. It was 1989, I had just gotten my first drumset, and I was obsessed with MTV. Every day after I walked home from school—with my Ludwig Acrolite snare in tow—I would immediately turn on the television in hopes of catching the new Van Halen, R.E.M., or Living Colour video.

While I was waiting to steal my next lick from Alex, Bill, or Will, I'd also have to sit through some videos that I wasn't too crazy about, like "Walking Away" by synth-pop band Information Society or "Baby, Don't Forget My Number" by Milli Vanilli. In both of those videos, the drummers played bizarre-looking electronic drumkits. Even though I didn't really understand what was going on, I knew I never wanted to play those things. To me, they sounded and looked like a cheap imitation of what "real" drumming was all about.

Fast-forward eighteen years, and here I am loading into a small Irish bar in downtown D.C. with not only my standard four-piece kit, but enough wires, drum pads, and triggers to open a Radio Shack.

So what changed? I guess I could trace my electronic evolution back to my junior year of college, when I had to pick up a drum machine in order to duplicate some of the programmed percussion in a Yellowjackets tune that my fusion band wanted to play. But the big shift happened two years ago, when I moved into an apartment and had to buy an electronic set so that I could play without disturbing the business downstairs.

At first, I only used the kit for practice. But after experimenting with it for a while, I soon discovered some ways that it could really help expand my sonic palette. Now I incorporate some form of electronics into just about everything I do. Even at straight-ahead rock/pop shows and studio sessions, I often run triggers on my kick and snare so that I can dial up different sounds (from either my e-drum sound module or my laptop) to best match the vibe of the song. I've also been having a lot of fun creating drum/percussion loops on my laptop for a friend's hip-hop project.

While all of this experimentation has been very inspiring and rewarding on a personal level, it has also made me realize how ridiculous it is to think about the "right" or "wrong" ways to make music. It really doesn't matter if you're laying down a backbeat on a vintage Radio King or shaking a shoebox full of marbles. As long as you're honest and play from the heart...that's all there is.

*Mike Dawson*

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**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:**  
Michael Bettine, Robyn Flans, Burt Korall, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Mark Parsons, Mike Haid, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel Weiss, T. Bruce Wittet.

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## Jason Bittner

For a guy who has rapidly become one of the leading figures within his musical genre, Jason Bittner is refreshingly humble and appreciative of his success. He also has a great attitude toward learning, and he seems to have his head on straight about pursuing a career in a businesslike fashion. It's nice to see a rock drummer who's worthy of being a role model to younger players.

**Alan Worthington**

I loved Jason's comment about how he's never put anything on record that he couldn't play live. Considering the complexity of his parts on the Shadows Fall records I've heard, that's saying something. I haven't seen Jason play live, but I'm really looking forward to the opportunity. Thanks for the great story on him.

**Francisco Peña**

Being on the cover of your esteemed magazine fills me with pride and happiness. Thank you for making my childhood dreams come true.

**Jason Bittner**



## Russ Miller



At a drum clinic in Miami several years ago, an audience member asked Russ Miller why he had made it big when others hadn't. Russ's answer? You gotta have balls. Russ went on to explain how he packed up and moved to LA in search of better opportunities, took any job, and often worked for free. A chance meeting with a movie producer while playing at an amusement park ultimately led Russ to success.

Beyond the drumming tips that he provided in his May MD interview, Russ also taught us how to be a successful musician: play any gig, take a chance, follow your dream, study hard, don't assume you know what's wanted of the drummer at your gigs—ask, don't overplay, and don't give up. With all of that, Russ has renewed my passion to play. Thank you, Modern Drummer, for featuring one of today's best. John Vaught

I found myself cheering wildly every time Russ Miller made his point about drummers with great chops who overplay. Drummers with astounding technique are a dime a dozen in LA. But drummers like Russ, who care more about the music? Those dudes

are worth their weight in gold.

**Ben Beckley**

## Rebuttal Re: Thompson & Glaspie Cover

In response to Fred Devlin's letter in the May Readers' Platform: You're probably right, Fred. Kim Thompson and Nikki Glaspie undoubtedly made the cover of Modern Drummer "just" because they were on tour with Beyoncé. However, the reason they scored that gig in the first place is because they are both very talented musicians.



A high-profile artist like Beyoncé wouldn't risk the integrity of her live show for a "gimmick." Do you truly believe that an all-girl band can't be of world-class quality? Is your all-male band a collection of truly talented players? If so, why aren't you on the cover of Modern Drummer?

**Dave Fox**

## The Rhythm Section

I would like to submit a correction to Ed Breckenfeld's transcription of Rick Marotta's right-hand hi-hat groove on Steely Dan's "Peg," as it appears in Ed's May In The Pocket article. Although at the time quoted (0:17) the written pattern does seem to apply, in the all-around groove Rick

will often hit the open hat on the "&" of "1" by itself, closing the hat on "2" with his left foot. He will also carry the last "(4) & a" back onto the "1" beat with a closed hat, as in "(4) & a 1," with the "4" being on the snare and the "& a 1" being on the closed hat.

Just for the record.

**Jerry Mammoser**

### Dropped Beat

Our report on the World's Fastest Drummer competition in the May '07 Backbeats included two photos on which the captions were reversed. Here are the photos with the correct captions.



**Fastest Feet Winners, from left: Tyson Jupin, Mike Mallais, and Scott DeMartini**



**Fastest Hands winners, from left: Merlini Riccardo, Jeff Guthery, and Ikaika Pekelo**

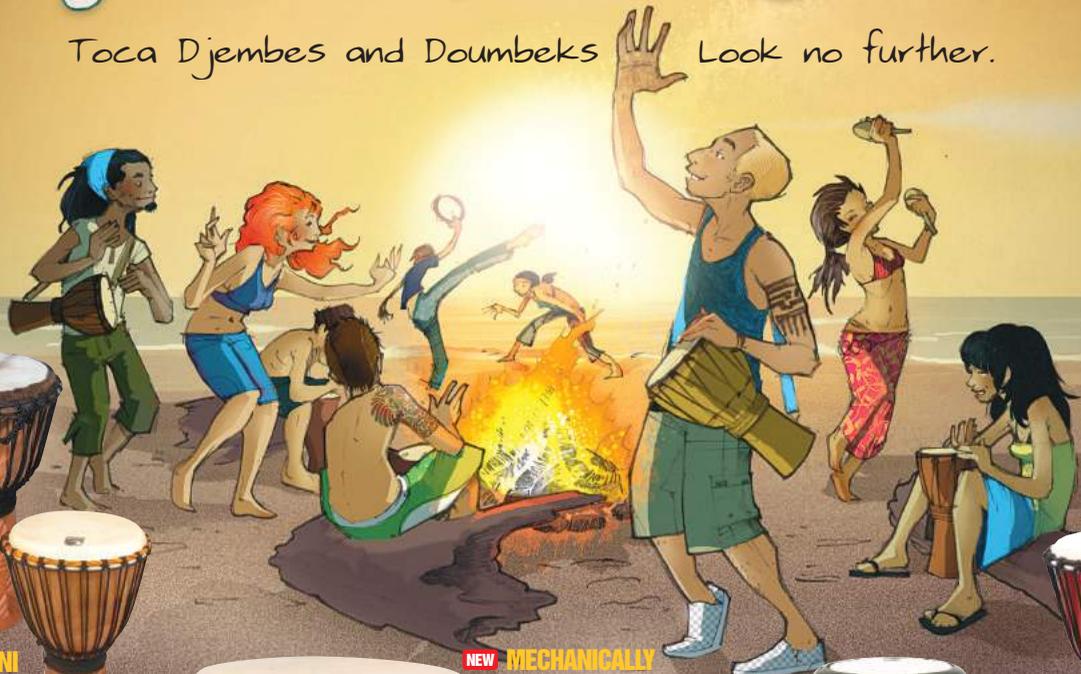
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## Porcupine Tree's Gavin Harrison On Creating Grooves

When you're coming up with new grooves for Porcupine Tree projects, do you have any interaction with [bassist] Colin Edwin, or do you present your ideas to [leader/guitarist] Steven Wilson from a drummer's perspective only? Is Steven a drummer? Does he incorporate your amazing displaced grooves in his writing process, or do you add/subtract at will as you record?

Tim Davis

Thanks for the questions, Tim. Apart from "Is Steven a drummer?" (to which the answer is no), all of the above happens, since we write in many different ways. Sometimes we compose as a band, jamming and figuring out rhythmic ideas. Sometimes I present the band with demos that are rhythm-based concepts, with a rough idea of what the instruments might do against that rhythm. Sometimes I come up with drum parts to other members' ideas. The process may be different, but the goal is always to achieve the strongest possible end result. You can judge our success for yourself by listening to our newest release, *Fear Of A Blank Planet*.



Diana Nischke

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# Jazz Tuning Tips From Jeff Hamilton

I've been playing drums for many years, performing mainly R&B, funk, and reggae. But at the moment, I'm playing jazz. I have a Mapex Pro M kit in traditional jazz sizes, including an 18" kick, a 12" tom, and a 14" floor tom. I'm currently using Remo coated Ambassador batters and clear resonant heads.

My problem is that I can't get a good, even jazz sound on my toms. I'm going after a somewhat bright/dry sound, with a little sustain. But the toms are ringing too much. I don't want to put any muffling on the toms, because of the sensitivity needed for brushes. So I'd be grateful for your drumhead and/or tuning tips.

**William SanMarco**

Hi, William, and welcome to the jazz world! I'm sure all your playing experiences have helped you to determine the exact sound you're looking for in each of the genres you mentioned. Well, the "jazz" sound you describe is similar to *my* sound, so I can tell you what I prefer.

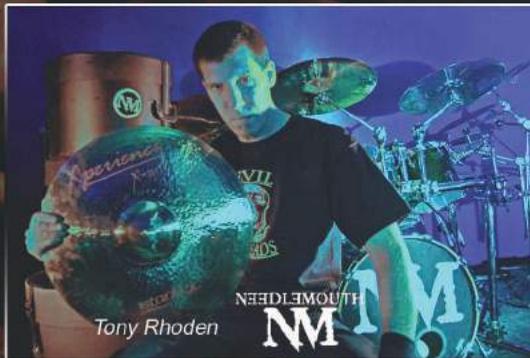
Tuning problems can sometimes be caused by out-of-round shells and uneven bearing edges. But Mapex makes good drums, so I doubt that this is the problem in your case. I tune the tom batter heads about a half step lower in pitch than the bottom heads.

In terms of head selection, Remo FiberSkyn3 (FD3 thin models) have warm overtones, without the ringing you described. I've used them on the tops and bottoms of my toms, as well as on the bass drum. But you can start with the FD3s on the batter side only, leaving your clear Ambassadors on the bottom. If there's still too much ring, try a Remo Renaissance on the bottom. This will dry it out more.

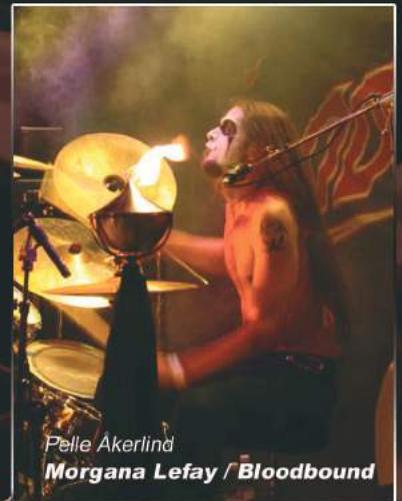
Slap 'em on and keep swingin' !



Joe Butterworth  
**interlock**



Tony Rhoden



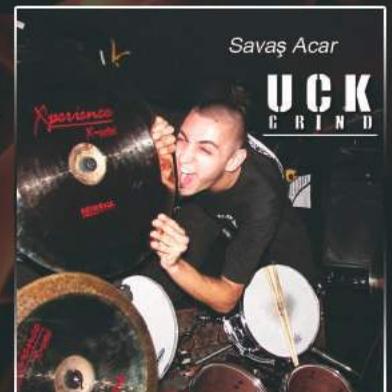
Pelle Akerlind  
**Morgana Lefay / Bloodbound**



Torab Majlesi  
**KRONIK**

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Savaş Acar

**UCK GRIND**

## Quick Beats

# Galactic' s Stanton Moore

text and photo by Joe Perry

**Place of birth:** New Orleans, Louisiana

**Influences:** Zigaboo Modeliste, John Bonham, Elvin Jones, Johnny Vidacovich

**Hobbies/interests:** Skateboarding, snowboarding

**How I relax:** Watch movies, take a bath

**Favorite food:** Italian

**Favorite junk food:** French fries

**Favorite fast food:** In And Out Burger

**Favorite drink:** Vodka tonic

**Favorite TV shows:** Law & Order, The Sopranos, CSI

**Favorite movies:** The Godfather, The Big Lebowski

**Favorite album:** Led Zeppelin's Physical Graffiti

**Vehicle I drive:** Infiniti QX4

**Other instruments I play:** Piano

**If I wasn't a drummer, I'd be:** A snowboard bum

**Place I'd like to visit:** Italy

**I wish I'd played drums on:** "Kashmir" by Led Zeppelin

**Musician I'd like to work with:** Prince

**Next up & coming drummers:** Adam Deitch, Joe Russo, Kevin O'Dea

**Most prized possession:** My daughter

**Person I would like to talk to:** Mahatma Gandhi

**Person I admire:** Evel Knievel

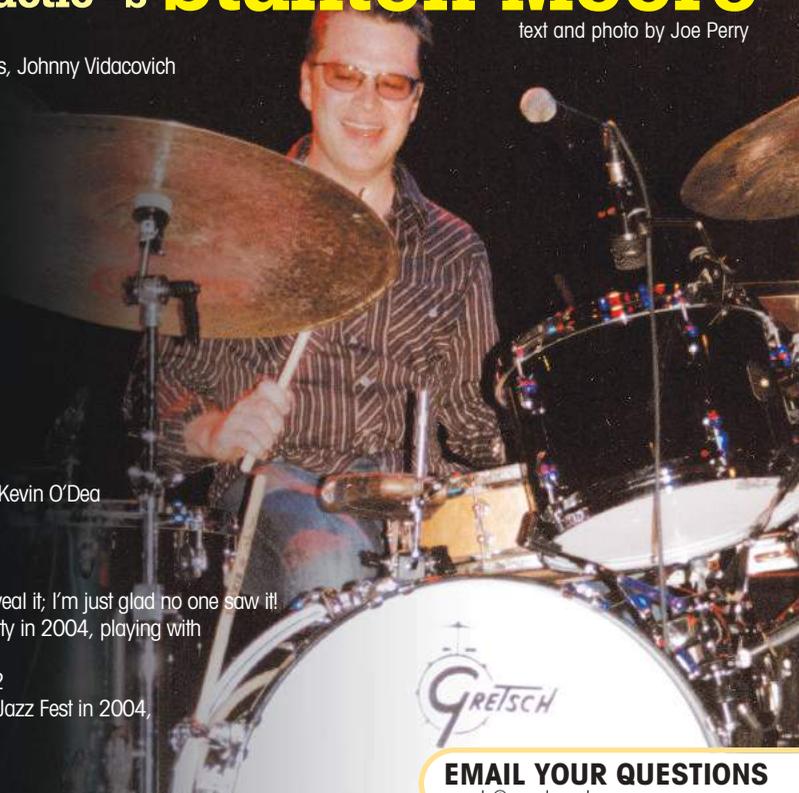
**Most embarrassing moment on stage:** I don't want to reveal it; I'm just glad no one saw it!

**Most memorable performance:** Tipitina's anniversary party in 2004, playing with George Porter and The Dirty Dozen Horns.

**Most unusual venue played:** A bachelorette party in 2002

**Biggest venue played:** The big stage at the New Orleans Jazz Fest in 2004, for 40,000 people

**Most unusual item autographed:** An iPod



**EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS**  
rvh@modern drummer.com



## Art & Soul

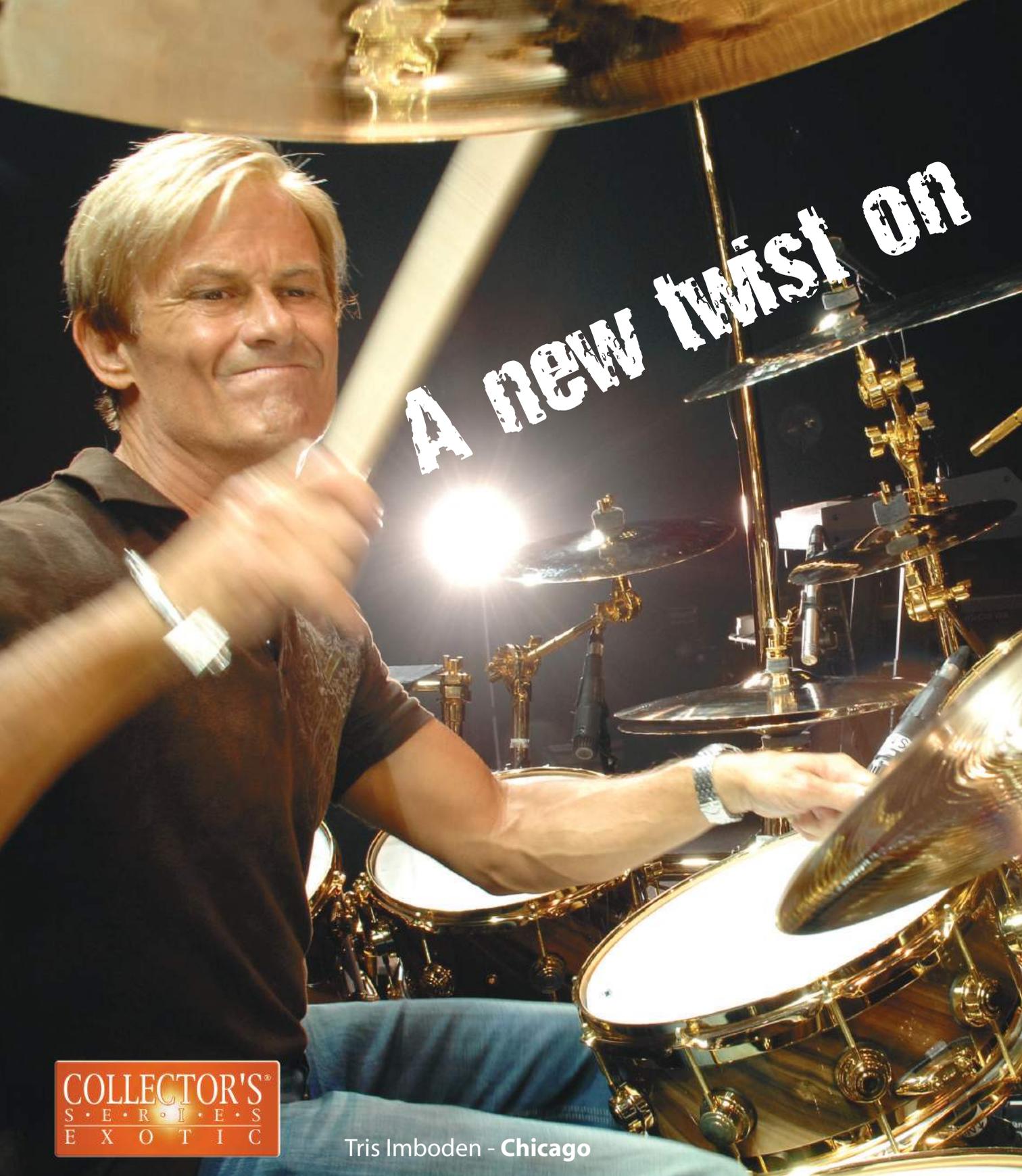


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# DW Collector's Series Exotics

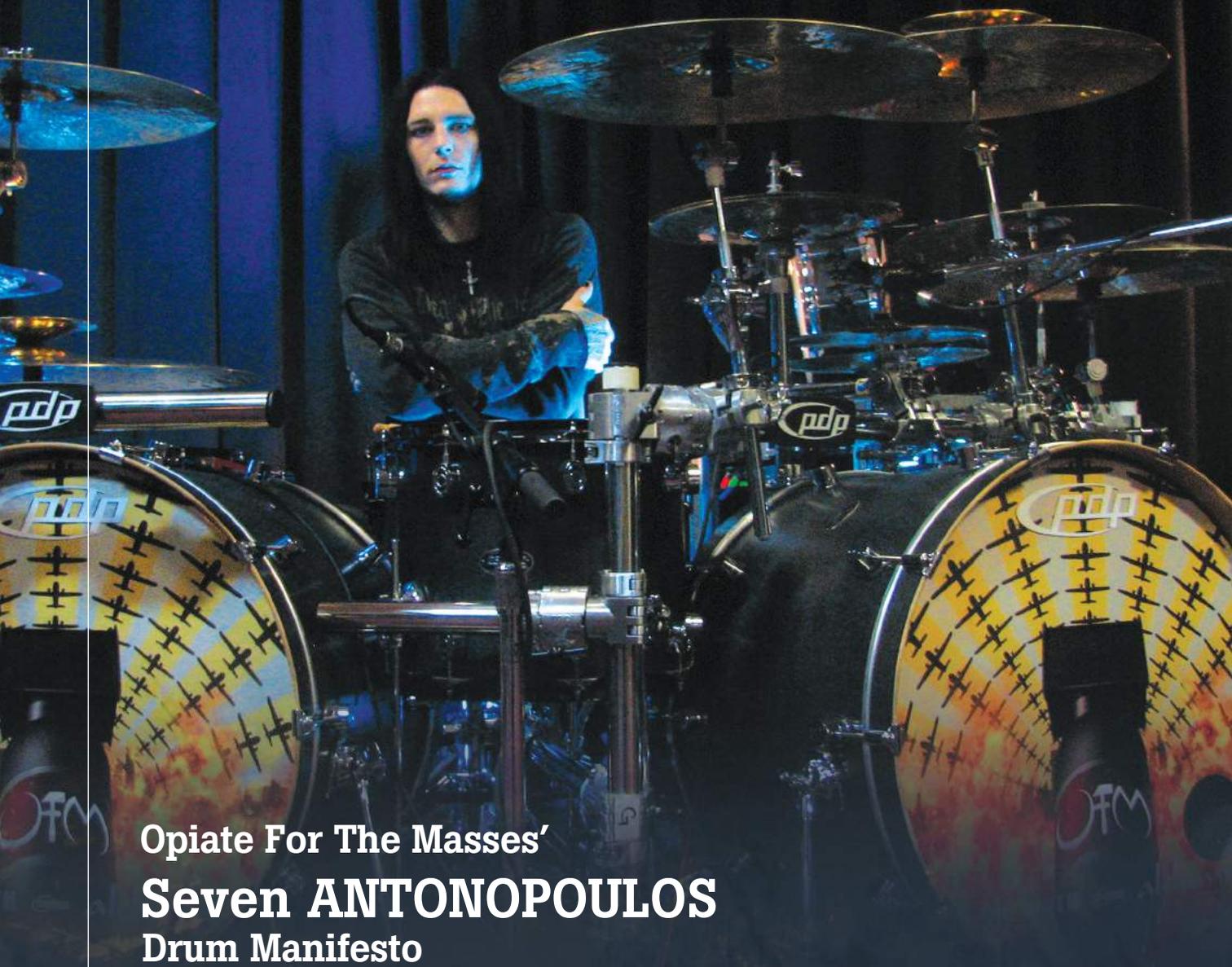
Vinnie Appice - Heaven and Hell



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

Click on Artists, then Tour Schedule for complete up-to-date listings.





## Opiate For The Masses' Seven ANTONOPOULOS Drum Manifesto

**T**he programming-heavy hard rock of L.A.'s Opiate For The Masses often draws aural comparisons to industrial stalwarts like KMFDM and Nine Inch Nails. But drummer Seven Antonopoulos resists pigeonholing his band as "industrial metal." "Those kinds of bands often lack songwriting skills and melody-driven vocals," Seven offers. "What we're trying to do is meld the Ministry/Skinny Puppy vibe with amazing songs. Ideally, I think about taking the drum sounds from Depeche Mode and applying them to heavy music."

Before joining Opiate in 2004, Antonopoulos was Vanilla Ice's touring drummer for three years, during which time he played hip-hop and metal styles. The drummer states, "Playing solid break-beats wasn't very challenging, but I'd throw in double kick stuff when it was tasty. That also opened up room to go over the top with stick throwing and being very visual in the style of drummers I admire, like Morgan Rose and Shannon Larkin. When I was in my early twenties, that was kind of my vibe, because I hadn't found the middle ground of when to groove and when to show off."

Opiate's latest release, *Manifesto*, features plenty of Seven's immaculate 16th- and 32nd-note kick drum grooves. But he admits that he also "really went out there on this record" to show a different side to his playing. "For the song 'Dead Underground,' we came up with the beat quickly," he says. "But I was playing the hi-hat very straight, and Jimmy [Kaufman, guitarist/programmer] suggested that the song needed something extra. I decided to take a different approach and give it a more layered, almost jazz-fusion vibe."

"I do listen to The Mahavishnu Orchestra and Terry Bozzio's playing with The Brecker Brothers," Seven continues, "so we all got really excited about going in that direction. I put in a jazz-influenced hi-hat pattern, and by the time I was done programming it, I was thinking, 'How am I going to play this?'[laughs]. It's in five, then switches to four, and then goes to seven. I listened back after tracking it, and I impressed myself that I could make it work."

**Gail Worley**

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

**Ginger Baker** (Cream): 8/19/39

**Airto Moreira** (percussion giant): 8/5/41

**Jack DeJohnette** (jazz giant): 8/9/42

**Danny Seraphine** (CTA): 8/28/48

**Sib Hashian** (ex-Boston): 8/17/49

**Dennis Elliott** (ex-Foreigner): 8/18/50

**Tommy Aldridge** (rock great): 8/15/50

**Anton Fig** (CBS Orchestra): 8/8/52

**Billy Ward** (sessions): 8/24/52

**Steve Smith** (Vital Information): 8/21/54

**Gina Schock** (The Go-Go's): 8/31/57

**Rikki Rockett** (Poison): 8/8/59

**Jon Farriss** (INXS): 8/10/61

**Rich Pagano** (Fab Faux/sessions): 8/31/62

**Steve Gorman** (Black Crowes): 8/17/65

**Brian Tichy** (Billy Idol): 8/18/68

**Adrian Young** (No Doubt): 8/26/69

**Paul Doucette** (Matchbox Twenty): 8/22/72

Alex Solca

## Robin DIAZ Rising Studio Star

**R**obin Diaz stays very busy these days, sometimes on the road, but mostly in the studios. After spending the summer of '06 on tour with Ashley Parker Angel, he worked on record projects for Three Doors Down, Trapt, and Hinder, including the latter's huge hit, "Lips Of An Angel." "I heard that song acoustically first and then went in and tracked it," Diaz recalls. "In fact, I heard the acoustic versions of all the songs before doing the sessions, then I made charts of them, which I always do."

For the past four years, Diaz has also been working with Chad Kroger from Nickelback, and he's done the last two records with Theory Of A Deadman, as well as having recorded with Closure, I-Nine, and Hedley. Diaz explains that many of his projects have been with hot producer Brian Howes. "When you get in with a producer," Diaz shares, "they become comfortable with you, and you get used to working together. So it's really wonderful."

Recently Howes brought Diaz in to work with Avril Lavigne. "Brian was asked to co-write some demos with Avril for her upcoming album," the drummer explains, "so he asked me to lay down the drum tracks. Since Brian and I have a good working relationship, it was quick. I charted the song, went through a few passes, and that was it. Avril was there, and she is the coolest person and a great songwriter. It was an amazing experience."

Diaz says he feels very fortunate to be working so steadily in the studios. "You've got to keep hustling," he insists. "Then when you get into the studio, you have to be prepared and get in and get out. The drums are the foundation of the record, but they're the instrument they want to spend the least amount of time on."

**Robyn Flans**

## Chevelle's Sam LOEFFLER Change For The Better

**W**hen bassist Joe Loeffler left Chevelle in 2005, brothers Pete (guitar, vocals) and Sam (drums) kept the group's family vibe by inviting their brother-in-law Dean Bernardini to join them. According to Sam, the change in lineup made a world of difference when Chevelle went into the studio to record its latest CD, *Vena Sera*. Not only have the Loefflers and Bernardini been close friends since high school, but their new bassist is also a seasoned drummer. In fact, Sam cites him as his primary drumming inspiration.

"Dean has influenced every aspect of my drumming," Sam confesses. "He has so many chops, and he's a natural—on top of the fact that he's worked hard to be amazing. I tell people that every good thing I've learned about drums, I learned from him." Besides having Dean in the band to inspire and challenge him, Sam admits that the great relationship shared by the three musicians is "probably the biggest difference in the band. We hang out all the time, even when we're not playing. To ask your best friend to play in your band and have it work out really well is a dream come true."

With Chevelle on the road so much, Loeffler makes up for his dwindling practice time by studying rudiments with his drum tech, Mark Messina, while on tour. "Mark and I worked out a schedule of rudiments, and Dean also offered his input," Sam explains. "I've really focused on those rudiments lately, and I was able to incorporate some of them—as well as different double bass drum patterns—on this record."

The drummer also actively seeks creative ways to approach the straightforward, four-on-the-floor beat that songwriter Pete most often requests of him. "The song 'Saturdays' is a good example of Pete wanting a straight beat that I had to change up a bit just to keep it interesting," Sam says. "It's almost as if I'm playing within a box he's built, so I have to work with that. But I *love* to play drums, so I want to figure out different ways to play parts. That's probably my main inspiration."

**Gail Worley**

Daragh McDonough

# Shawn GLYDE

## Monster Chops And Alternate Rhythms

**S**hawn Glyde's *Alternate Rhythm* CD combines complex arrangements, rhythmic displacement, and technical expertise to create a brilliant, time-tumbling debut. Glyde initially wrote songs as basic drum tracks, then emailed the files to Yellowjackets bassist Jimmy Haslip, who added low end and enlisted his son Jason to create keyboard melodies. Similar to Dave Weckl's early solo work, but with a streamlined sense of flow, listening to *Alternate Rhythm* is like flying over white water rapids in a velvet glove.

"I began by coming up with different ideas and grooves on the drums, just things I hadn't played before," the thirty-nine-year-old Glyde recalls. "Then I began constructing songs based on those ideas and concepts. Some of them were simple little grooves or licks, but others were big song concepts. I then began weaving it all together and making it flow with intros, verses, solos, and choruses."

Besides putting forth challenging drum parts and intense song structures, Glyde achieved an exceptional drum sound on

*Alternate Rhythm*. Surprisingly, all recording occurred at his Clovis, California home studio recording, direct to hard disc, using Shure SM57 overhead mic's. One ingredient of the music's silken groove is a deep bass drum tone, created by the use of two mics (Audix D6, Shure Beta 52) aimed at the front bass drum head of his TAYE kit.

As for the Weckl-inspired music, Glyde is straight up. "I took the sound that Dave created when he first hit. I'm an offshoot of that version of Weckl, although I haven't listened to that much in the years since. I've been refining my own thing."

When not playing gigs around northern California, Glyde writes and arranges music for drum corps nationwide, collaborating via email with wind players who score brass parts. More recently, he's been working on *Alternate Rhythm 2*. "It'll be the next logical step," he says, "but not the same thing. I don't want to create videogame music. I want to get far away from that and develop my own signature style."

**Ken Micallef**



# Orange County Choppers' Christian WELTER Music & Motorcycles

**C**hristian Welter is living his dream: playing music and working on motorcycles. Welter is one of the mechanics on the popular *Orange County Choppers* TV show. He's also their band's drummer.

Welter has been drumming since he was twelve, playing music with his family and taking private lessons for seven years while growing up in Oakhurst, New Jersey. At an even earlier age, he was fascinated by motorcycles, fixing discarded dirt bikes. "I'd learn from breaking them and then fixing them up," says Welter, who worked at motorcycle dealerships after high school.

"Sometimes it would work out and other times it wouldn't." Later he attended the American Motorcycle Institute in Florida, where his roommate Nick Hansford turned him on to OCC.

"That all fell into place for me," explains Welter. "The general manager, Steve Moreau, who plays guitar, heard I played drums. So we decided to get together and start playing downstairs in the boiler room, which is where we still practice." That practice began just over two years ago.

Welter says the OCC band needs him to be

the backbone, "To keep everything in time and keep up with whatever we're creating. We're always trying to get a different sound. Mostly we're doing rock 'n' roll and blues, but we're always evolving. They need me to be consistent and to practice my butt off."

The band has a self-titled, ten-song album, which Welter describes as "a blues-rock type thing. It's nothing complicated or extravagant, and it was kind of put out in a hurry, so it's not what I would consider representative of our full talent. But it has some good music on it. There's definitely more to come."

The band recently toured in Australia, where the OCC did a live bike build on stage while the mechanic/musicians provided the music. The band will also be out in the summer doing concerts and events. "Motorcycles and rock 'n' roll go together," Welter says enthusiastically. "And I get to do my two favorite things in the world—all in one place."

For more on Christian Welter and *Orange County Choppers*, check out [www.myspace.com/occtheband](http://www.myspace.com/occtheband).

**Robyn Flans**





# Congratulations to the 2007 WGI World Champions



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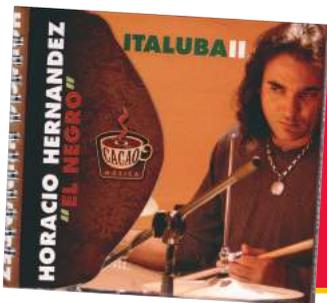
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# UPDATE NEWS

**Poncho Sanchez** has a new album out called *Raise Your Hand*.

**Matt Chamberlain** is on Brandi Carlile's *The Story* and on Martin McBride's *Waking Up Laughing*.



**Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez** appears on the latest release from French piano sensation Meddy Gerville. He can also be heard with his own group, Italuba, on their recent release, *Italuba II*.

**Willie Jones III** is on Kurt Elling's *Nightmoves*.

**Marco Minnemann** is on tour with Necrophagist in support of their new CD.

**Richard Christy** of *The Howard Stern Show* was recently cast in the upcoming comedy *Harold & Kumar 2*. Richard was the drummer for Iced Earth before pursuing a career in comedy.

**Torry Castellano** can be heard on the new Donnas album. To hear the band's new single, "Don't Wait Up For Me," go to [www.myspace.com/thedonnas](http://www.myspace.com/thedonnas).

**Matt McDonough** is in the studio with Mudvayne, wrapping up their fourth album.

**Keith Hall** is currently in Europe, touring with singer Curtis Stigers in support of his new CD, *Real Emotional*, which Keith plays on. Hall also has two new CDs out with his own bands, Tri-Fi and Paster, Ryan & Hall, available at [www.keithhallmusic.com](http://www.keithhallmusic.com).

**Virgil Donati** can be heard on the new live release from power trio Gambale/Donati/Fierabracci, *Made In Australia*.

**David Rokeach** has taken over the drum chair for the San Francisco production of *Jersey Boys*.

**Nir Z** is on Chris Cornell's solo CD, *Carry On*. **Jason Sutter** is doing the tour.

**Ryan Pope** (Get Up Kids) and **Christian Jankowski** are on *Keeper Of Youth* by The Only Children. (See Christian's blog entry at [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com).)



Former *As The World Turns* soap opera star **Craig Lawlor** is on tour with his band, Ashes Are Nutritious, and can be heard on their debut CD, *Frustration +*. (Go to [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com) to read Craig's recent blog entry.)

Former Wings drummer **Steve Holly** is on Ian Hunter's latest CD, *Shrunkn Heads*.

**Bill Berry** reunited with the original R.E.M. lineup when the Athens, Georgia band was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame this past March 12 in New York City. The quartet also recently recorded for the first time in years, covering "#9 Dream" for a John Lennon charity-tribute CD, *Instant Karma: The Campaign To Save Darfur*. For more info visit [www.instantkarma.org](http://www.instantkarma.org).

**Paul Allen** is busy working with his band project Kings Allen. He's also been touring and recording with Joe Firstman, Tyler Hilton, and Josh Kelley, as well as sitting in as the house drummer for Carson Daly's late-night TV show, *Last Call*.

## DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Big band great **Don Lamond** was born on 8/18/21, **Jim Capaldi** on 8/2/44, and **Keith Moon** on 8/23/47.

**Gary Chester** passed away on 8/17/87, **Jeff Porcaro** on 8/5/92, **Lionel Hampton** on 8/31/02, and The Knack's **Bruce Gary** on 8/22/06.

8/2/54: **Max Roach** and trumpeter Clifford Brown record *Parisian Thoroughfare*. A few years later, on 8/1/61, Max records *Percussion Bitter Sweet*.



8/24/56: **Buddy Rich** records *This One's For Basie*.

8/12/65: **Tony Williams** records *Spring* with tenor saxophonists Sam Rivers and Wayne Shorter.

8/23/68: "People Got To Be Free" by The Rascals (with **Dino Danelli** on drums) is awarded a gold record.

**Steve Hass** is on new releases by K.J. Denhart, Lisa Richards, Open Book, Lynn Clarke, Marie Dela Cruz, Dodd Ellsworth, and Jeff Roberson. Recently he's been in the studio with Janis Siegel, Yaron Gershovsky, jazz vocalist Judy Wexler, and pianist Alan Pasqua. And you can catch Steve on tour this summer with The Manhattan Transfer.



To hear some of the artists mentioned in this month's *Update*, go to MD Radio at [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).



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## 19" Paiste 602 Ride

**I have a chance to purchase a 19" Paiste 602 ride cymbal, and I'm curious about the size. Would there be any major disadvantages to using a 19" ride cymbal for most music forms?**  
Travis Jones

The only disadvantage inherent in a 19" ride strictly due to its size might be a limit to its power and projection. A Paiste 602 19" is likely to date back to the '60s or even late '50s, when jazz and other lower-volume styles were more prevalent. However, the line later included heavy cymbals, some of which were used by early rock players. How well your 19" ride would work in various musical applications would depend largely on its particular weight and sonority.

## Ludwig Pioneer Snare

**I bought the 5 1/2 x 14 snare drum shown here many years ago, and I've pretty much kept it in a case ever since. The shell is mahogany with maple reinforcing rings, and the hardware is nickel-plated. The top head is the original calfskin, and I think the snare wires are original as well. (I installed the Remo Renaissance bottom snare head.) A stamp on the inside of the shell reads "Jul 31, 1958," and the initials "A.R." are written in what appears to be grease pencil.**

**There are some small dings on the shell, but otherwise I'd rate the drum's condition as very good to excellent, with no rust and no modifications. I'm ready to put the drum on the market, and I'd like to know as much as possible about it, including its estimated market value.**

**Doug Byrd**

MD drum historian Harry Cangany replies, "Your drum is the WFL Pioneer, which Ludwig considered a student snare. The badge was changed in 1959 to use only the Ludwig name, but WFL-branded parts continued to be used until the supplies were exhausted in the mid-'60s. I started on the same drum myself in 1964. Mine is a 1959, and I still have it.

"The shell is African mahogany with a center ply of poplar, and the reinforcing hoops are rock maple. The drum was only offered with nickel hardware, but it came with a choice of natural mahogany

finish, lacquer paint, or pearl covering. The hoops are brass, and the strainer is the P83 all-metal strainer that was later replaced by the P85 that's still used today.

"A six-lug Ludwig snare is probably worth about \$200. Yours appears to be in exceptional shape, so it may bring as much as \$250. Eight-lug snares bring more for their look and tuning range."



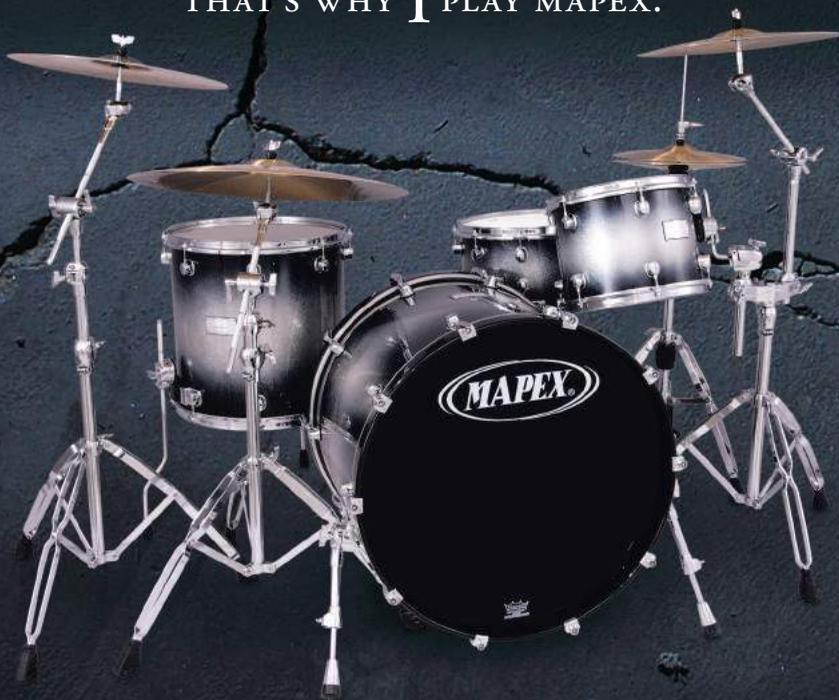


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# Putting A Rack Tom On The Floor

I'm thinking of turning a rack tom into a floor tom, but I haven't attempted this before. What do I need to know in terms of mounting the brackets for the legs?  
Chris D.

There isn't really much to the process. You can study the leg brackets on any traditional floor tom to see how you could install similar brackets on your rack tom. Ordering brackets and legs is easy; most major drum manufacturers offer them, as do aftermarket suppliers like Gibraltar and Cannon. Legs come in different

lengths; you'll probably want the longest you can obtain.

The main question will be whether your rack tom is deep enough—and you can mount the leg brackets low enough on the shell—to put the drum at a playable height when the legs are installed. You should make this determination before you start drilling the shell to attach the leg brackets.

Installing the brackets is a matter of measuring carefully to see that they're spaced evenly around the circumference of the shell, and that they're each placed at the same distance from the bottom edge.



## Tama Rockstar Pro Construction

I have a Tama Rockstar Pro drumset that I bought new in 1994. Can you tell me what type of wood it's made of?

Stefano Ashbridge

Paul Specht of Tama tells us that your drums feature shells of Philippine mahogany, with inner and outer plies of basswood.

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**"When I first started using RT-10 triggers, I had no idea that I could actually assign them to my acoustic drum and they would sound like any instrument I wanted them to."**

**-Travis Barker**

**"These RT-10 Series drum triggers are extremely reliable and lightweight which makes a big difference."**

**-Thomas Lang**





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**Brian Dauler**  
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- Mike Malinin (goo goo dolls) · Harvey Mason (fourplay) · Nick Oshiro (static x) · Simon Phillips (toto)
- Jeremy Stacey (sheryl crow) · John Tempesta (the cult) · Pete Wilhoit (fiction plane)



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# Paiste Giant Beat And Twenty Series Cymbals

>> **What' s Old Is New...Times Two**

by Rick Van Horn



The massive 24" Giant Beat ride has unique tonal qualities, as well as a terrific bell.

The unlathed bell on the 10" Twenty splash is fairly large, and it creates a good percussive effect in its own right.

## KEY NOTES

- Giant Beats have a sweet, breathy sound throughout the line
- Twenty hi-hats sound crisp and shimmering
- Twenty Chinas are particularly bright and cutting

The subtitle of this review alludes to the fact that Paiste' s Giant Beat series, which was originally introduced in 1967, is currently enjoying a resurgence of popularity. (For instance, Jason McGerr of Death Cab For Cutie played a set at the 2006 Modern Drummer Festival.) Meanwhile, the brand-new Twenty series incorporates centuries-old Turkish manufacturing processes in the creation of its models.

## Giant Beats

Giant Beat cymbals were Paiste' s first models to be made from B8 bronze alloy. They were intro-

duced in 1967 to offer rock drummers an alternative to the jazz-oriented cymbals that dominated the market at the time. Later, as rock drumming got even louder, Paiste developed their 2002 series, which eclipsed the Giant Beat series in model range, power, and popularity. As a result, Giant Beats were discontinued for many



The 16" Twenty crash is thinner and more versatile than its 18" counterpart.

Twenty series China cymbals are "clangy" and penetrating, rather than "trashy."

years. They were re-introduced in 2005 to meet the demands of drummers seeking new and different cymbal tonalities.

There's a certain irony to a cymbal line that was created in 1967 offering something "new and different." But there's no denying the uniqueness of the Giant Beat series. To begin with, it's very limited, offering 14" and 15" hi-hats, 18" and 20" multi-purpose cymbals, and a 24" ride—period. Paiste rates all of the cymbals medium-thin, but they seemed to us to be quite thin by contemporary standards.

Then there's the cymbals' appearance. Compared to most contemporary cymbals, the Giant Beats look extremely smooth—almost as if they weren't lathed at all. And their coloration varies dramatically from cymbal to cymbal. In our test group, for example, the 15" hi-hats, 20" multi, and 24" ride had a greenish cast, the 18" multi had more of a brownish cast, and the 14" hi-hats had a vibrant copper color. Some might interpret this unusual appearance as an indication that the cymbals aren't made to contemporary standards. Well, looks can be deceiving.

## The Sweetest Sounds

All it takes to fall in love with the Giant Beats is to play them. The MD editors each described their sound as "sweet." We appreciated the cymbals' breathy, sibilant wash, which was especially apparent on the 15" hi-hats and the 18" and 20" multi-purpose models. We also liked the bright—but never harsh—stick attack that was apparent on both sets of hi-hats and on the 24" ride. This same feature was present on the 20", which allowed it to function well as a moderate-volume ride cymbal. (Along with its 18" sibling, it was also a dynamic large crash.)

The massive 24" ride takes a little practice to get under control, and if overplayed it can get to roaring pretty good. But it doesn't need to be overplayed to project its distinctive bright attack/dark undertone sound. And it has a great bell, to boot.

## Full Disclosure

If the Giant Beats have a limitation, it's in the area of body and projection.

Remember, these are relatively thin cymbals that were designed for the volume levels of 1967. In addition, B8 alloy tends to favor mid to high frequencies, without a lot of support beneath.

So if you're looking for high-powered, full-bodied cymbals that will cut through loud music all on their own, the Giant Beats might not be the best choice.

However, if you're going to be miking the cymbals for live or studio work, or if you're going to be playing in a low- to moderate-volume acoustic setting, the unique tonalities of the Giant Beats may be just what the doctor ordered. There's simply nothing else out there that combines their warmth, breathy response, and sweet, glistening tonality.

## Twenty Series

This new series gets its name from the fact that it's made from blanks of B20 bronze alloy. Those blanks are made in Turkey by a veteran Turkish cymbal smith in accordance with centuries-old hand-crafting techniques. The blanks are then shipped to Paiste's factory in Switzerland, where the company applies its modern technology to create the finished cymbals.

The introductory series is relatively small, although additional models are already being planned. Current models include a 10" splash, 13" and 14" hi-hats, 16" and 18" crashes, 16" and 18" Chinas, and 20" and 22" rides. All of the cymbals are of medium weight, and they're intended for quiet to fairly loud playing. The hi-hats, crashes, and Chinas are fully lathed; the splash and the rides feature unlathed bells.

## Neither Fish Nor Fowl

Turkish cymbals sound the way they do largely because of the way they're made, from start to finish. Familiar Paiste models sound

the way they do largely because of the way they're made, from start to finish. Frankly, we didn't think that the Twentys—with their half-Turkish/half-Swiss pedigree—sounded like either one. But that's not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, it gives the Twentys a claim to uniqueness.

The Twentys' B20 alloy definitely gives them the full-bodied tonality that one expects from Turkish-style cymbals. But the hammering and lathing techniques applied in Switzerland seem to take them away from the darkness and warmth of Turkish models and more toward the bright, penetrating sounds of European-style models. In this regard, they sounded fuller and louder, cymbal-for-cymbal, than their Giant Beat cousins.

### Sound Specifics

Standouts in the Twenty test group included the 13" and 14" hi-hats, which had a nice crispness without sounding brittle, and a very satisfying hissy "bark" when opened and closed quickly. The two Chinas were also impressive, with loud, panga qualities and a quick explosion that would make for excellent punctuation.

The 16" crash, though rated medium, seemed substantially thinner than the 18", and as such was more responsive and sibilant. The 18" had more pure power and sustain, and felt more like a "rock" cymbal model than any of the other Twentys.

Paiste describes the 10" splash as "full, fiery, silvery, and explosive, with a fairly wide range and complex mix [of frequencies]." They also refer to it as "responsive and quite sturdy." As such it seems that they're rethinking in terms of a rock splash as opposed to a more traditional thin model, and in that context it worked fine. But it

would be a little clangy for low-volume work. The unlathed and fairly oversized bell gave the cymbal substantial sustain. That bell could also be struck to create a separate percussion effect of its own.

Our test group included only a 20" ride. With its lathed surface and unlathed bell, it produced a clean stick attack and a very controlled wash. The bell was fairly small, but it still produced a penetrating "clang" when struck. Perhaps the strongest attribute of the ride was its full frequency range. There was a nice, full-bodied quality to it, which would lend itself to many different styles of playing. It had good response when played delicately, and it could definitely provide powerful cut when called for.

### A New Choice

If you've ever said, "I generally like Paiste cymbals, but I wish they had a little more body in the lower frequencies," or "I like Turkish-style cymbals, but I'd like to hear some with a little brighter top end," you owe it to yourself to check out the Paiste Twentys. They won't be all things to all people, but they may be just the thing for you.

### THE NUMBERS

#### Giant Beat Cymbals

14" Hi-Hats	.....	\$512
15" Hi-Hats	.....	\$556
18" Multi-Functional	.....	\$372
20" Multi-Functional	.....	\$428
24" Ride	.....	\$582

#### Twenty Cymbals

10" Splash	.....	\$204
13" Hi-hats	.....	\$492
14" Hi-hats	.....	\$542
16" Crash	.....	\$322
18" Crash	.....	\$390
16" China	.....	\$332
18" China	.....	\$390
20" Ride	.....	\$452
22" Ride	.....	\$528

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## Quick Looks

### PRO-MARK PROGRIP STICKS by Rick Van Horn



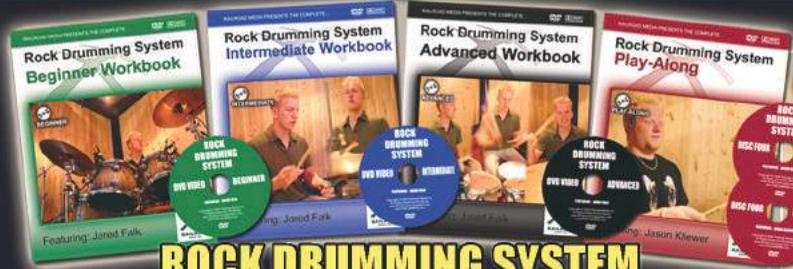
**P**ro-Mark's new ProGrip sticks aren't the first to feature a pre-applied grip-enhancing material, and they aren't the only ones currently on the market. But they do seem to be the only ones to take a "just enough" approach. That is, the coating material is just thick enough and just tacky enough to genuinely improve grip security, without feeling rough or rubbery (which can cause blisters), and without affecting the balance and playability of the stick.

The coating is just slightly darker than the natural color of the wood, so it doesn't add or subtract anything from a cosmetic point of view. And because it isn't thick or rubbery, there's nothing to rub or peel off the stick.

All of the *MD* editors who tried the ProGrips liked the feel provided by the coating. The consensus was—not surprisingly—that it gave "just enough" added texture. However, the editors also agreed that what *wasn't* enough was the length of the coated area: 6" up from the butt of the stick. For the benefit of drummers with larger hands or who simply like to "choke up" a bit on the stick, we'd suggest that Pro-Mark extend the coating an inch further on the shaft.

The ProGrip coating is available on 2B, 5A, 5B, and 747 hickory wood-tip (\$17.50) and nylon-tip (\$17.95) models. Grab a pair and hang on!

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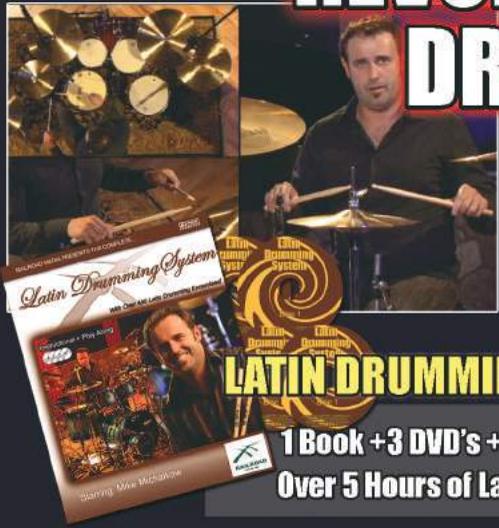


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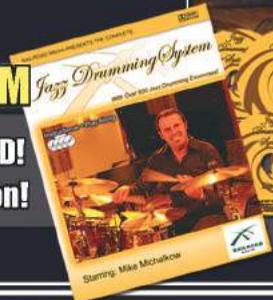
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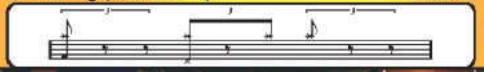
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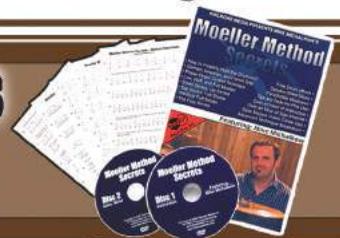
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Our review set came with a free 7x8 tom (an offer that's good through the end of this year). A mount and clamp is included for attaching it to a cymbal stand.



## Gretsch Catalina Ash Kit

>> **Less Is (Gonna Get You) More**

by Chap Ostrander

### KEY NOTES

- Grain shows beautifully through the stain finish
- Drums sound warm and round, with good attack
- Snare strainer features clean design

**C**atalina Ash drums are the latest offering from Gretsch. Ash has been used in the manufacture of guitars for years, and as such has proven itself for its sonic qualities. The question is, can it work as well for drums? Let's see.

### Construction Quality

When I unpacked and assembled the kit I immediately noticed that the drums displayed high construction standards. The 6-ply toms, 7-ply bass drum, and 9-ply snare were all light and easy to move. The shell pack we were shipped included floor tom legs and the GTS double tom holder with ball-style mounts for the rack toms. The tom holder mounts onto the bass drum shell, and it has memory locks for height and tom adjustments.

While these drums don't have the familiar Gretsch die-cast hoops (owing to price considerations), they are provided with 2.5-mm triple-flanged hoops. These are thicker than standard "super hoops" and have characteristics that are closer to die-cast. They helped to make tuning easy and precise.

The tom-mounting system and the floor tom legs did their jobs well in terms of support, as well as helping the drums to produce a pronounced tone when struck. The PC-T01 snare strainer is similar to Gretsch's Lightning throw-off, but with an arm on the side to engage the snares. This allows full access to the adjustment knob. I liked its clean design.

The mini Gretsch chrome lugs are mounted to the shells with two screws, which I appreciate for the reduction of torque on the shell. The badges are bolted to the shells. There are two vents on the rack toms, and one each on the other drums.

### The Sound Of Ash

The two words that came to my mind while playing these drums were "bright" and "warm." Now, to some, these may sound contradictory. But that's the nature of the ash shell sound. The attack is pronounced, but at the same time the drums sound warm and round.

The voice of each tom was very clear and distinct. There was lots of tonal space between them. The bass drum was full and rich, with loads of bottom end befitting its 18" depth. The snare was, quite simply, a monster: responsive, powerful, and biting. It performed at all volume levels without choking, and it produced lightning rimshots. This could easily be a first-call snare drum that you'd bring to most gigs and rely on for your sound.

### If Looks Could Kill

The box containing our Catalina Ash test kit identified the finish only as "Deep Red." I took the drums out of the box in a room that was slightly dark, and my first impression was, indeed, that they had a pretty standard glossy deep red finish. But as soon as some light struck the shells, the grain inherent in the ash wood displayed waves of contrasting black through the red stain. This stunning effect would make the drums look amazing under stage lighting. The bass drum hoops match the shell, and the great look is protected by a clear UV lacquer gloss finish. Kits are also available in Cobalt Blue.



The ash shells give the Catalina kit a distinctive combination of warmth and brightness.

### Easy On The Budget, Too

Okay, I've talked about the professional-level construction, sound, and finish of the Catalina Ash kit. Now there's more good news: It comes at a bargain price. This would be an absolutely outstanding kit for beginners (it might be the only set they'd ever need), as well as a great backup set for professionals. No matter what category you fall into, you'd certainly never feel like you were playing "lesser" drums. No doubt about it, the Catalina Ash kit is a winner.

### THE NUMBERS

**Catalina Ash AC-E825PT shell pack** ..... **\$925**  
Includes 18x22 bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12 rack toms (with mount), a 14x14 floor tom (with legs), and a 5x14 snare drum. For 2007, a free add-on 7x8 tom (with clamp and mount) is included.  
**(860) 509-8888, www.gretschdrums.com**



With the Bass Pedal Cajon's front plate removed, the pedal mechanism that operates the snares is clearly visible.

# Meinl Bass Pedal Cajon

>>Thinking Outside The Box

by Norman Arnold

## KEY NOTES

- Exceptional low to high tonal range
- Easy to change the snare sound
- Great for live gigs

Cajons have become very popular lately, and Meinl is a leader in their development. The German manufacturer has at least twenty-five variations on this traditional South American instrument—which is, at its essence, simply a wooden box. The Bass Pedal cajon is Meinl's latest introduction, and it's geared towards the player seeking tonal variety without having to interrupt the flow of playing.

A few things before we start: The name of Meinl's new cajon refers to "bass" as in "a low-pitched, deep tone." Yes, there is a pedal attached, but it isn't a pedal that you step on to strike the cajon (as with a bass drum pedal). Instead, you move the pedal with your foot to control the amount of internal snares that are

applied to the front playing surface. I wanted to clear that up right at the outset so we all get off on the same...um...foot.

### A Big Box

The 13 x 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 19<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> resonating body of the Bass Pedal cajon is made of rubberwood, with a rubber padded sitting surface on top and solid rubber feet on the bottom. The front plate—which is the main playing surface—is made of dark ebony with an attractive grain structure. The hard ebony is a great choice of wood. It's easy on the hands, and it's very smooth and articulate when played softly with the fingertips.

The top corners of the cajon are adjustable by means of a Phillips screwdriver. The looser the screws, the more space between the front plate and the resonating body. This allows for more buzz and snap when the front plate is struck.

Hitting the center of the front plate with the heel of the hand produces a bottom-y tone with lots of projection and volume. When combined with the sharp attack from the edges, this depth gives the drum a great melodic range.

### Pedal To The...Snares

Most cajons that include snares have a small tuning knob or handle to adjust how much or how little of the snares touch the playing surface. With Meinl's pedal device, the player accomplishes this same adjustment by manipulating the pedal. Push the lever down towards the front, and the snares are off the surface. Push it down towards the back, and the snares are on. Everything from a light buzz to a snappy snare sound can be achieved on the fly.

There's a spring on the inside of the cajon that helps to operate the snare-release system, and the mechanism can be a bit loud when you step on it to release the snares. This could be a distraction in a recording session if you don't use finesse when making the change. It takes a bit of practice to get used to the exact amount of pressure required to operate the pedal.

In a live situation, the pedal system is a great way to instantly change the musical vibe, say, from the verse to the chorus of a song. Depending on the nature of your gig, there are endless possibilities.

### Conclusion

The Bass Pedal Cajon features an innovative design and a professional sound. And remember, you don't have to be strictly a percussionist to use a cajon. A lot of drummers have been substituting cajons for the throne on their kits, bringing a new tonal color into their playing. And who better than a drumset player to quickly master a pedal-operated instrument?

### THE NUMBERS

Bass Pedal Cajon	.....\$415
Deluxe padded carrying bag	.....\$134
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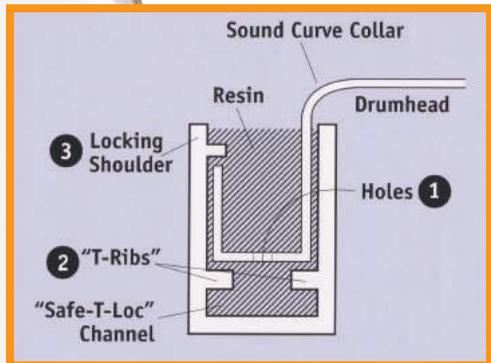


# Aquarian Super-2 Heads

>>Living Up To The Hype

by Rick Van Horn

Aquarian makes some pretty lofty claims for their new Super-2 heads. Are the heads ready to back them up?



Super-2 heads feature Aquarian's Safe-T-Loc Hoop (designed to prevent pull-out) and Sound Curve Collar (said to provide "responsive tuning").

**KEY NOTES**

- Outstanding tunability
- Wide frequency range
- Studio-X Rings add focus and warmth

Aquarian bills their new Super-2 series as "a new kind of 2-ply head." The heads are designed to "sound louder, fuller, and more powerful than conventional 2-ply models, with great attack, rich mid-range, and powerful low end and depth." That's quite a claim.

I asked Aquarian's Roy Burns what it was, exactly, that made Super-2 heads different. He told me that while most 2-ply heads (including Aquarian's own Response 2 series) use two plies of matching thickness, Super-2 heads have a top ply that's 5 mils thick and a bottom ply that's 7 mils thick. Roy also explained that a high-tech molding process recently established in Aquarian's new Mexican factory produces heads that are level and even, with a consistent collar.

Super-2 heads also feature Aquarian's Safe-T-Loc hoops, which are designed to prevent the heads from pulling out, as well as their Sound Curve collar design. That collar contributes to what Aquarian calls "responsive tuning." With this feature, one small turn of the drumkey supposedly causes the heads to react, making them easier to tune than regular 2-ply heads. That's another ambitious claim.

The Super-2 series includes 6" through 18" sizes, in Clear, Texture Coated, Clear With Studio-X Ring, and Clear With Power Dot versions. We were sent a selection of Clear and Studio-X tom heads, as well as 13" and 14" Texture Coated models. (We were also sent Classic Clear single-ply heads and snare-side heads to use on the bottoms of our test drums.) Now let's see if Aquarian's claims bear out.

## Easy Tuning

To begin with, the heads did, in fact, tune up quickly. It was easy to get them "in tune with themselves," after which only slight adjustments with a drumkey were required to fine-tune the pitch of each drum. Further, once the heads were tuned, they held that tuning well under some serious impact.

## Clear With Studio-X Rings

Contrary to what their name might imply, Studio-X rings are not heavy muffling devices. They're made of thin vinyl, and (according to Roy Burns) they're intended to just take the edge off the high end, resulting in a

more focused sound that still has plenty of attack and resonance.

Roy pegged it right. The Super-2 Clear With Studio-X Ring batters gave the drums a warm, punchy, and comparatively mellow sound. But they also had a clear, penetrating attack and lots of sustain. (The floor tom rang for days.) The Studio-X rings definitely do not take the life out of the heads. In fact, I found myself adding muffling when it came time to mike the drums for a local show.

### Clear Models

When we switched to the Clear batter models, the heads dropped the mellowness that had been provided by the Studio-X rings, and instead opened up with an even clearer, more powerful attack. (The sensitivity of the thinner top ply may have something to do with this.) But this didn't come at the expense of low-end response. There was plenty of that, along with even more sustain—and more overtones—than with the Studio-X versions. The tom sound was big and deep.

### Texture Coated Models

Texture Coated heads are available in all sizes. But our selection of heads included only 13" and 14" models, which we tested as snare batters.

Two-ply snare batters are generally used in situations that call for durability. In exchange for that durability, they'll often sacrifice some sensitivity. But the Super-2 heads seemed to strike a nice compromise between the two. They weren't as sensitive at low volumes as a single-ply head would be, but their thinner top ply helped to provide more sensitivity than a standard 2-ply head would offer. The textured surface also worked well for brush playing.

Once we laid into the drums, the heads answered with a powerful

attack sound, and with good snare response. Their tuning range let them work well from a medium-tension "fatback" tonality right up into bleeding-ear territory.

### Conclusion

Every so often, a manufacturer's promotional claims for a new product prove to be right on the money, and that's certainly the case with Super-2 heads. They're made well, they tune up in an instant, and they blend the fullness and depth of two-ply heads with the clarity and attack of single-ply models. It's a great combination.

### THE NUMBERS

6" Clear	\$18.36
6" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$19.98
8" Clear	\$19.44
8" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$21.06
10" Clear	\$21.06
10" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$23.22
12" Clear	\$23.76
12" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$26.46
13" Clear	\$25.38
13" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$28.08
14" Clear	\$26.46
14" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$29.70
15" Clear	\$28.08
15" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$30.78
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16" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$37.26
18" Clear	\$36.72
18" Texture Coated, Studio-X Ring, and Power Dot	\$41.58

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# Gibraltar Ultra-Adjust Hi-Hat Stand

>>Positioning Possibilities Aplenty

by Russ Barbone



The top and bottom sections of the stand are connected by a 5" tube, with a ball joint that permits unlimited adjustments.



Gibraltar's Ultra-Adjust hi-hat stand provides the solution to a multitude of positioning problems.



## KEY NOTES

- Outstanding positioning flexibility
- Solid construction
- Cable action could feel strange to some

Gibraltar is well known for their professional-quality yet price-conscious hardware designs. Now they've come up with an intriguing answer to a problem that some of us have fought with for years. That problem occurs when we want to use a second bass drum or a double pedal, but we're not comfortable with where the hi-hat cymbals wind up when we do.

Gibraltar's 9607 Ultra Adjust hi-hat stand features a unique design that allows the upper section of the stand to move up, down, and from side to side (in relation to the lower section). This makes it possible to put the footboard where it needs to be alongside a slave or second bass drum pedal, while keeping the hi-hat cymbals in their original playing position.

## How It's Made

The Ultra-Adjust system utilizes two gearless split-ball positioning points, which can be locked down using a supplied combination Allen key / hex bolt tool. The top and bottom sections of the stand are connected by a 5" tube. The pull rod is connected to the footboard by a flexible cable, much like that of a remote hi-hat setup.



A legless version is available for double bass or drum rack setups.

The height range from the floor to the bottom hi-hat cymbal can be varied from 31" to 41", and the cymbals can be moved from side to side up to 8" off center. The stand is offered with a conventional double-braced tripod that swivels to accommodate multi-pedal setups. There's also a legless version that's easy to attach to bass drum hoops or drum racks. Standard features include a non-slip footboard, a bottom hat tilter, a functional clutch, and large non-slip rubber feet (on the legged model). Both versions of the stand felt solid and stable when played.

One item of note is the connection between the footboard and the pull rod system, which is a pretty complex construction of metal components. Three separate pivot points are involved in opening and closing the hats in order to achieve a vertical-pull action. Frankly, it seems a little over-engineered and massive.

### How It Plays

The spring tension of the pull rod can be adjusted over a five-step range by means of a large knurled knob on the bottom section of the stand. Though the tension isn't infinitely variable, the five increments are more than adequate to achieve a comfortable feel with cymbals of different weights.



The pull rod is connected to the footboard by a flexible cable, similar to that of a remote hi-hat setup.

As I mentioned earlier, the ability to move the cymbals off center and still play the hi-hat is facilitated by a flexible cable. Because of that cable, you might sense a slight drag in the action (versus that of a direct-pull linkage), especially if you're not accustomed to using remote hi-hat devices. The complex footboard-to-pull-rod mechanism may also be a factor here. This effect will vary depending on how heavy your hi-hats are. In most cases, it would be a minor factor that you could easily get used to.

### More Than Meets The Eye

The Ultra-Adjust hi-hat isn't a one-trick pony. In fact, it can solve problems that have nothing to do with double bass setups. For example, you might want to put an auxiliary snare drum where your hi-hat cymbals would normally go, and move those cymbals further to the left. With the Ultra-Adjust stand you can do that, while keeping your hi-hat foot where it would normally be.

Or suppose you're not perfectly proportioned in terms of your arms-to-legs length ratio. In the past, you might have had to put the hi-hat pedal closer than you wanted it in order to comfortably reach the cymbals, or vice versa. Not anymore! I don't know if Gibraltar had this aggravating problem in mind when designing the Ultra-Adjust stand, but the stand is certainly a cure for it.

### Ultra-Cool

No doubt about it, the Ultra-Adjust hi-hat can make those "I just can't get it right" set-up problems disappear. Between the cymbal positioning options and the swiveling tripod, it was very easy to combine the Ultra-Adjust stand with a double pedal system. The legless version would be even easier, assuming you had something to secure it to. Overall, I think Gibraltar has a winner on its hands.

### THE NUMBERS

9607ML-UA tripod Ultra-Adjust hi-hat stand .....\$324.99

9607NL-UA legless Ultra-Adjust hi-hat stand .....\$274.99

Each hi-hat stand features a five-year warranty.

(860) 509-8888, [www.gibraltarhardware.com](http://www.gibraltarhardware.com)



# Complete 7-piece kits in **blazing** sparkle lacquer finishes.

# X7

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Sparkle Burst



Trevor Lawrence  
-Snoop Dogg



Regal to Royal  
Sparkle Fade



Gold to Black  
Sparkle Fade

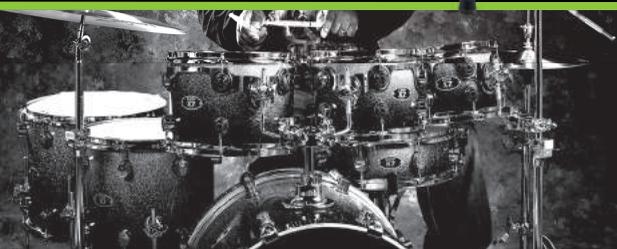
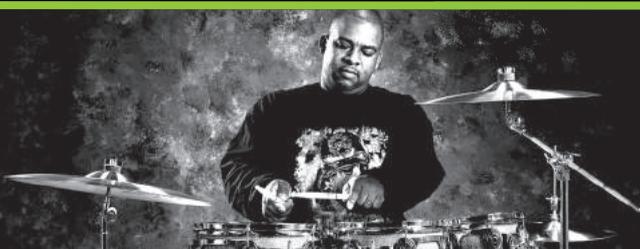
Silver to Black  
Sparkle Fade



Orange Sparkle



Metallic White





White on White



Angel  
-Dope

Yael  
- Chris Caffery

Black on Black  
(Blackout)

Seven Antonopolous  
-Opiate for the Masses



Blue with Orange  
Hardware



Black with Red  
Hardware

 To see more on these PDP Artists and their new X7 and 805 Series kits check out [www.pacificdrums.com](http://www.pacificdrums.com)

805  
Serious rock set-ups  
in **tricked-out** custom colors.

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## NOTABLE

## &gt;&gt; MEINL GENERATION X TRASH HAT AND JINGLE FILTER CHINAS

The Generation X Trash Hat—designed in collaboration with drummer Benny Greb—pairs a 12" top cymbal with a 14" wave-edge bottom cymbal to create a rattling, sizzling sound. Both cymbals have holes to eliminate airlock. List price is \$324.

Thomas Lang's original Filter China design is now available with three tambourine-style jingles attached, adding a jingling sound to the quick, trashy character of the Filter China. Models are available in 10" (\$110), 12" (\$136), and 14" (\$170) sizes.

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

Generation X Trash Hats can be used in closed "aux hat" fashion or on a regular hi-hat stand.



## &gt;&gt; UPGRADED YAMAHA FLYING DRAGON PEDALS

Yamaha's Flying Dragon pedal series has been upgraded. Four single- and four double-pedal models feature a variety of drive types. Additional features include felt beaters, a spring lock system, new footboard and heel designs, and the ability to adjust footboard and beater angles. The new models also offer reinforced footboard hoop clamps and horizontal frame stabilizers, and a reinforced hinge for a smoother feel.

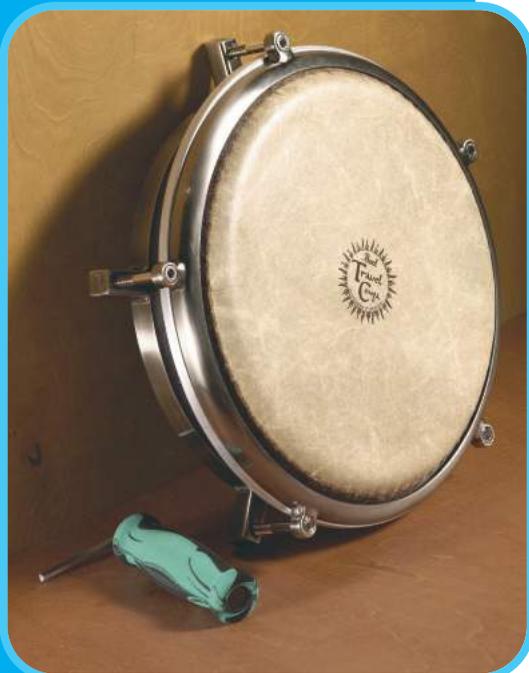
[www.yamahadrums.com](http://www.yamahadrums.com)



## &gt;&gt; PEARL TRAVEL CONGA

The Travel Conga is designed to deliver real conga sound from a compact 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " drum that can be carried in a backpack. The wood shell and stave construction is identical to that of Pearl's full-size congas, and a Remo FiberSkyn 3 synthetic head provides tone while resisting changes in temperature or humidity. List price is \$265, and a carrying case is available.

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



## >> TOCA MECHANICALLY TUNED FREESTYLE DJEMBE

Toca's Mechanically Tuned Freestyle djembe has a new bowl shape for strong bass tones and penetrating highs. The drums feature lightweight synthetic shells, easy-tune goatskin heads, a protective rubber bottom, and rubber-tipped low-mass tuning lugs. Finishes include Bali Red, Snake, Fiesta, and Abstract Red. List prices range from \$99 for the 9" djembe to \$249 for the 14" model (which comes with a free bag).

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



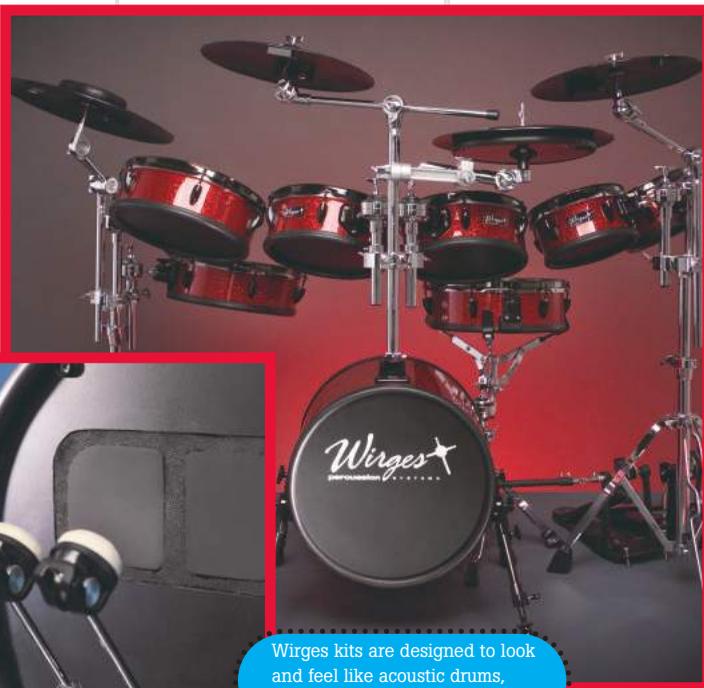
## >> WIRGES ELECTRONIC PAD KITS

Wirges Percussion electronic kits feature 8-ply maple snare and tom shells and kick drums made of a durable composite material. Available finishes range from stained wood to glass glitter to iridescent ripple.

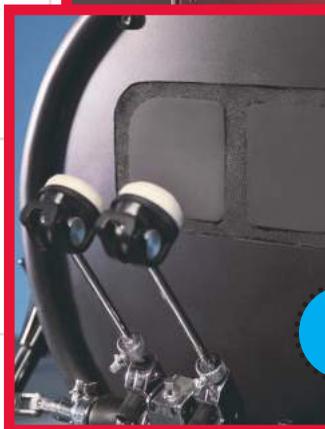
The Quad-Snare pad features a "snare throw-off" lever that routes the head and rim triggers to two additional outputs—thus providing the player with four sounds from which to choose. The Dual-Trigger Kick can be set up to provide ultra-fast double bass patterns, or to trigger different sounds for the left and right pedals (as for left-foot clave). Pads come with Aquarian drumheads as standard, but they can be ordered with any brand, as well as with silent mesh heads. A rubber pad version is also available.

The included cymbals are a tough ABS material with rubber padding to dampen "stick click." The Wirges Percussion system is compatible with most modules, including Yamaha, Roland, and ddrum. Standard five-piece kits with Quad-Snare, Dual-Trigger Kick, hardware, and cymbals start at \$2,500.

[www.percussion-systems.com](http://www.percussion-systems.com)



Wirges kits are designed to look and feel like acoustic drums, but they're all electronic.



## >> ALESIS CONTROL PAD USB/MIDI PERCUSSION CONTROLLER

The Alesis Control Pad features eight velocity-sensitive rubber pads, a variety of additional inputs, and the ability to access programmed setups via MIDI Program Change commands.

MIDI input/output connectors permit interfacing with sound modules, samplers, or hardware-based sequencers. The Controller comes with BFD Lite software containing acoustic and electric drum modules, and is compatible with software like Propellerhead's Reason for additional sound options. List price is \$399.

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



# Featured At Frankfurt

story and photos by Dennis Boxem

The annual Musikmesse in Frankfurt, Germany is by far the busiest music trade show in the world. But since it's held in March, so close after the January NAMM show in California, the Frankfurt show is always a bit of a mixed bag. Many of the big-name brands introduce their new products at NAMM, so the Frankfurt show is a chance for some of the smaller brands from around the world to shine. Here's a look at some drum and percussion items of special interest from this year's Messe.

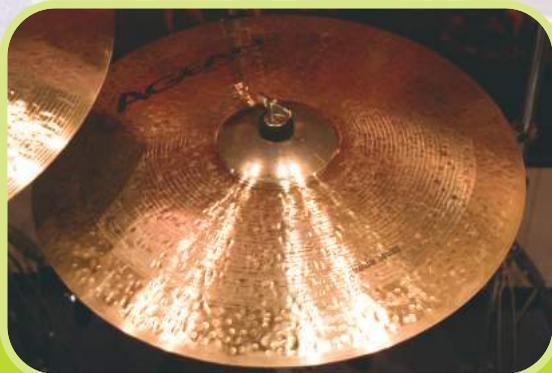


By changing the lathing on a set of medium thin crashes and rides, **BOSPHORUS** has produced a series of very wobbly cymbals make for some interesting sound effects. The Frankfurt prototypes sold in a heartbeat, so expect to see these cymbals in production soon. [www.bosphoruscymbals.com](http://www.bosphoruscymbals.com)

**PEARL** has added four new Racing Stripe finishes to their Masterworks series. Choices include red and gold glitter on a white or black background, combined with either black or gold hardware. A fifth available finish is black glitter on a white background, with black hardware. [www.pearldrum.com](http://www.pearldrum.com)



**DRUM LIMOUSINE** is Denmark's only custom drum brand. The Danes displayed some fine-looking snare drums, with shells of spun or cast metal as well as a variety of wood types. The maple drumkit at their booth featured custom artwork by Danish graphic design artist Lars Viberg. [www.drumlimosine.com](http://www.drumlimosine.com)



The new Karia series from Turkish cymbal brand **AGEAN** brings a more mainstream and modern sound to the company's mostly jazz-oriented cymbal lineup.



**AGEAN** also now offers a line of cast aluminum drums, with shells in different colors and with or without reinforcement rings. Hardware is still under development. [www.ageancymbal.com](http://www.ageancymbal.com)



German drum builders **KIRCHHOFF** have added twelve new colors to their acrylic drum series. They've also expanded their line with two series of wooden drums in birch and bubinga.  
[www.kirchoff-schlagwerk.de](http://www.kirchoff-schlagwerk.de)



**MAPEX's** Black Panther snare drum series features two new models. The 5 1/2x14 seamless steel snare features a cast and milled steel shell finished off with black hardware. The 5 1/2x14 Deep Forest Walnut drum features an 8.5 mm-thick walnut shell with a Brown Sugar Burst finish.  
[www.blackpanthersnares.com](http://www.blackpanthersnares.com)



**ROLAND's** new HD-1 V-drums Lite electronic kit is specifically targeted at drummers on a budget or who live in small apartments. It has ten built-in drumkits, and it features an integrated beaterless bass drum pedal. The snare drum pad is equipped with a mesh head to provide greater playing comfort. A DVD featuring Johnny Rabb guides the user through the set-up process and the first steps toward playing drums.  
[www.rolandus.com](http://www.rolandus.com)



**PREMIER** has expanded its high-end Premier Series with two different finish and shell options. The Premier Series Classic (shown here) features old-fashioned P badges and an extra-small Iso-Mount. The Premier Series Elite features shell sizes that are undersized by 3 mm, allowing drumheads to seat more easily for increased tuning range.  
[www.premier-percussion.com](http://www.premier-percussion.com)

**PAISTE** has added more models to the already extensive 2002 series. Wild Chinas are available in 15", 17", 19", and 21" sizes. Power Crashes are now available in 17" and 19" sizes. A 10" Wild Splash is also available.  
[www.paiste.com](http://www.paiste.com)



**STAGG's** new high-impact plastic rolling cymbal case features separate mounts for splashes and percussion items. Also new from Stagg is a more affordable line of drum cases.  
[www.staggmusic.com](http://www.staggmusic.com)



# The Reference Shelf



## The Collective Contemporary Style Series

(Carl Fischer)

This series includes *Afro-Caribbean & Brazilian Rhythms* (by Memo Acevedo, Frank Katz, Chris Lacinak, Kim Plainfield, Adrian Santos, and Maciek Schjibal, \$24.95), *Fusion: A Study In Contemporary Music* (by Kim Plainfield, \$17.95), and *Contemporary Rock Styles* (by Sandy Gennaro, \$17.95). The material is authored by faculty members at New York's renowned school The Collective. Each book contains demonstration and play-along CDs, historical references, information and explanations about the styles, notated musical examples of the genres demonstrated, performance tips, and extensive discographies and bibliographies.

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



## Red Hot Chili Peppers Stadium Arcadium: Drum Recorded Versions

by Scott Schroedl (Hal Leonard)

This book features complete transcriptions of the songs from The Chili Peppers' 2006 hit album. The transcriptions contain chord indications, the melody line and lyrics, and the drum part to each song. List price is \$19.95.

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



## Mike Clark: Funk, Blues & Straight-Ahead Jazz (DVD) by Mike Clark

(Hal Leonard)  
In this DVD, Clark explains and demonstrates the blues, funk, and jazz roots behind his unique and highly influential approach. Included are examinations of shuffles, swing, and the Oakland ghost-note style. Bonus live performances with Clark's trio are included. List price is \$24.95.

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



## Hal Leonard Drum Play-Along Series: Jimi Hendrix Experience Smash Hits (Book/CD) (Hal Leonard)

This installment of Hal Leonard's Play-Along Series offers twelve monster Hendrix hits, including "Purple Haze," "Fire," "Manic Depression," and "All Along The Watchtower." The CD includes tracks with and without drums, and the transcriptions include lyrics for reference. The CD is playable on any CD player.

In addition, when the CD is used on a PC or Mac computer, the tracks can be adjusted to any tempo without changing pitch. List price is \$14.95.

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



## Stickings & Orchestrations For Drumset (Book/CD) by Casey Scheuerell

(Berklee Press)  
Master drummer and Berklee professor Scheuerell shows how basic stickings translate into drumset inventions and orchestrations. Technical explanations and extensive exercises to be played with the accompanying CD will help the student create more vibrant fills and more exciting solos. List price is \$19.95.

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

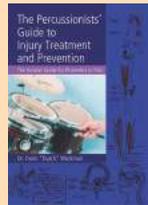


## Mel Bay's Rudimental Drum Method For The Intermediate Drummer (Book/CD) by Joe Maroni

(Mel Bay)  
The purpose of this text is to teach students the twenty-six original drum rudiments, focusing on the development of proper sticking, stick motion, stick height, and rhythm patterns. The exercises are designed to develop each rudiment, which is then

utilized in a musical context in progressively written rudimental solos. Eight solos suitable for concerts, auditions, and ensemble work are also included. List price is \$17.95.

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



## The Percussionists' Guide To Injury Treatment And Prevention

by Dr. Darin "Dutch" Workman (Taylor & Francis)

This book is a comprehensive yet easy-to-understand examination of the physical problems related to drumming, as well as ways to deal with them. Darin Workman has degrees as a doctor of chiropractic and a bachelor of human biology, and is also a certified chiropractic sports practitioner who has

treated professional and amateur performers worldwide for over sixteen years. As a drummer, Workman has been a performer and teacher for over thirty years. List price in paperback is \$35; in hardback it's \$100.

[www.routledge-ny.com](http://www.routledge-ny.com)



## The Making Of Burning For Buddy (DVD)

(Alfred Publishing)

This is the DVD version of the best-selling drum video, which highlights the process of making the famous tribute to Bernard "Buddy" Rich. Neil Peart invited eighteen of the world's most respected drummers to record that album along with The Buddy Rich Big Band. This video series was shot during those sessions. It contains preparations for the recording, final takes, interviews with the drummers about Buddy, and candid footage of the control room during playback, all tied together by Neil Peart's personal commentary. List price is \$39.95.

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



## Ludwig Free Set-Up & Play Drum Video On Web

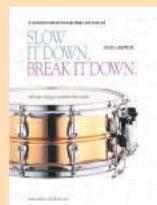
Ludwig's Web site, [www.ludwig-drums.com](http://www.ludwig-drums.com), offers a free video tutorial to help drummers learn how to set up and play their drums. The twenty-minute video (produced by Mel Bay Publications) features Ludwig artist Steve Fidyk and his son Tony, as they open

boxes and assemble a new Ludwig outfit. The free online video is part of an 80-minute Mel Bay DVD by Fidyk that includes additional instructions on drumming fundamentals and tuning. The longer version may be purchased for online viewing or as the DVD.



## Night School: An Evening With Stanley Clarke & Friends (DVD)

(Heads Up International)  
This DVD highlights an October 2002 concert to benefit the Stanley Clarke Scholarship Fund at LA's Musicians Institute. In addition to Clarke and a roster of other stellar musicians, the concert features the drum and percussion talents of Gerry Brown, Ndugu Chancler, Stewart Copeland, Sheila E, Rayford Griffin, and Lenny White. The DVD can be purchased for \$15 at [www.headsup.com](http://www.headsup.com).



## Slow It Down, Break It Down

by Rick Lawton

This book is a beginning- to intermediate-level text for snare drum and drumset. It provides different ways to practice one set of studies, as opposed to the "old-school" method of playing one pattern fifty times. The goal is to keep students motivated to pursue their studies by keeping them interested in the possible practice variations provided by the exercises.

The book can be purchased for \$23.99 at [www.sticks-and-skins.com](http://www.sticks-and-skins.com).

## << AND WHAT'S MORE >>



The **ZILDJIAN** Tommy Lee Artist Collection cymbal bag accommodates cymbals up to 22" in diameter, and features Tommy's signature camouflage pattern and "TL" logo. Additional features include an adjustable shoulder strap, a heavy-duty handle, backpack straps, a keychain holder sporting a bottle opener, a large pocket on the outside, a small pocket on the inside, and a rubberized skid plate on the bottom. List price is \$89.95.

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



### ALTERNATE MODE'S

PanKat consists of thirty playing pads in a standard C pan format. MIDI implementation offers control over pitch configurations, gate, velocity, layering, and loop control. Included are 128 factory kits and 128 user kits, with additional inputs for bass drum and hi-hat.

List price (with a padded bag) is \$1,799; list price with sounds and the bag is \$1,999. A stand is available at \$159.

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



The **KELLY SHU** is a suspended microphone mounting system for kick drums. High-strength rubber support cords provide an integrated shock mount said to reduce mechanical noise while saving stage space. Set-up and tear-down times are reduced, since the

mic can stay with the drum during transport. The Kelly SHU can be installed within the drum shell, or can be suspended on the front of the drum with the same system. The unit requires no drilling for installation, and it accepts all standard microphones and clips. Street price is approximately \$154.

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

In response to escalating drumstick prices, **AQUARIAN** says their Power-Sleeve drumsticks meet the need for "a well-designed rehearsal and practice stick." The nylon sleeve covering the

rimshot area of the Power-Sleeve stick resists being "chewed up" like conventional wooden sticks. The nylon tips are molded on



and will not come off. Sticks are available in 16" and 16<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" ("Long") versions of 5A, 5B, 2B, and Rock models.

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

**PROTECTION RACKET**'s electronic kit bags feature an adjustable internal dividing system that attaches to the inside of the bag via hook-and-loop fasteners to create up to ten pad/cymbal compart-



ments. A separate hardware case is recommended for the kit's stands or rack. Three sizes are available to accommodate virtually all Roland and Yamaha electronic kit models.

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

The **KIK BRIK** bass drum damper is said to absorb unwanted overtones across a broad frequency range. Uniquely shaped ends dampen one or both heads for optimum sound. The Kik Brik's core is formed from high-density multi-layered cotton, which has linear sound absorption and is said to be more effective than acoustic foam. This material "treats" the inside of the drum like an acoustician would treat a recording studio to eliminate unwanted reflections and resonances. Sizes are available for 14", 16", and 18" drum depths, at a list price of \$49.

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



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# WILCO'S GLENN KOTCHE PAINTING THE SKY BLUESKY

**T**his past winter, the duality of rock drummer / experimental percussionist Glenn Kotche's eclectic career reached an all-time high as he juggled writing/recording sessions for Grammy award-winning rock band Wilco's latest release, *Sky Blue Sky*, and composing "Anomaly," a seven-movement commission for world-renowned string ensemble The Kronos Quartet. "There were times when I would spend five hours writing in the morning, track *Sky Blue Sky* with Wilco for eight hours, and then write for another hour," Kotche recalls with a tinge of disbelief. "It was very intense."

But this is nothing new for the Chicago-based rhythmic explorer. In fact, much of Glenn's career has revolved around this cross-pollination between the mainstream and the avant-garde. "I've always balanced the academic and the rock-drummer sides of my playing, since when I first started taking lessons in fourth grade," Kotche explains. "I was active in school concert and marching bands, and I formed my first rock band at the same time."

When Kotche went off to study music at the University Of Kentucky, he received further affirmation from professor James Campbell that his multi-dimensional approach to percussion would ultimately open doors to a wide range of possibilities. "Jim stressed to me the idea of thinking about the drumset as a multiple percussion instrument," says Kotche. "He believed that idea was going to make a big impact on the development of our instrument."

After graduation, Glenn returned to Chicago and began to absorb the adventurous spirit of many of the city's most prominent percussionists. "When I moved back to Chicago, I saw how guys like Michael Zarang, Hamid Drake, and John Herndon and John McIntire of Tortoise were incorporating a lot of percussion into their music," Kotche recalls. "And then after I met Jim O'Rourke and Darin Gray, they started playing me recordings of various European improvising percussionists. That *really* helped open my mind."

With this growing interest in a multi-percussion approach to drumset, Glenn began to expand his kit to include a variety of non-traditional instruments, like vibes, crotales, and assorted found percussion. And then he made a bold decision to drop most of his weekly gigs to focus on more creative musical situations. "After college, I was playing with a lot of singer/songwriters, and I was teaching in several high schools," says Glenn. "But it wasn't satisfying anymore. So I quit everything except for playing with Jim O'Rourke."

"That's when I started my experimental duo On Fillmore with Darin Gray," Kotche continues, "and I made an improvised percussion record with Tim Barnes called *Domo Domo*. This was also around the time that I decided to make my first solo record."

But how did these left-of-center rhythmic explorations ultimately lead to his current gig with Wilco? "It all comes back to Jim O'Rourke," says Glenn. "I was doing a gig with Edith Frost in Chicago, where I was playing a metal sculpture and a cocktail

kit. Jim produced her first record, so he came down to the show. He liked that I was open to new things, so he got my number and called me to work on his album *Eureka*."

"Then when Jim collaborated with Jeff Tweedy for the Noise Pop Festival in Chicago," Kotche continues, "he brought me in. That became the band Loose Fur. We wrote a set's worth of music, played one show, and then went into the studio to make the first record."

"After that, Jeff invited me to go to New York with him to work on the soundtrack to the movie *Chelsea Walls*. We hit it off really well, so he asked me to play percussion on some of the Wilco tracks that they were working on. Then they wanted to hear me play drums on a tune, which was 'I Am Trying To Break Your Heart,' and it just went from there."

Since joining Wilco in 2001, Glenn has appeared on the band's highly controversial album *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*, the Grammy award-winning *A Ghost Is Born*, a live double-disc *Kicking Television*, and their brand-new release, *Sky Blue Sky*.

In the past year, Glenn also managed to squeeze in several solo percussion tours in support of his latest record, *Mobile* (which included a stop at the Modern Drummer Festival). And he appeared on Loose Fur's second album, *Born Again In The USA*.

We caught up with Glenn during a rare week off to discuss the concepts behind his latest projects.

story by Michael Dawson  
photos by Gene Ambo



**MD:** Sky Blue Sky is a pretty straightforward, groove-based drumming record. Was that a conscious decision going into it?

**Glenn:** I don't think it was so much a conscious decision going in as it was a reflection of the way the album was written and recorded. We basically went to our loft in Chicago, set up in a tight circle with everyone facing each other, and came up with ideas. Jeff Tweedy brought in a few complete tunes, like "Be Patient With Me" and "Sky Blue Sky." But a lot of the other ones started with someone throwing out a riff and then developing it from there.

But it's fair to say that this is the least experimental of the Wilco studio records I'm

on, which is perfect for me at this point because my solo stuff and my other projects—Loose Fur and On Fillmore—are pretty experimental. So it's nice to be able to just concentrate on the groove.

**MD:** Did the additional bandmembers in Wilco also influence you to play more groove-based?

**Glenn:** Yeah. When Wilco was a four-piece, there was a lot more room for overdubs and different layers of percussion. But now that we're a six-piece, there are enough hands on deck to cover whatever parts were needed to make the songs come across. So I don't have to fill in ideas on vibes or crotales.

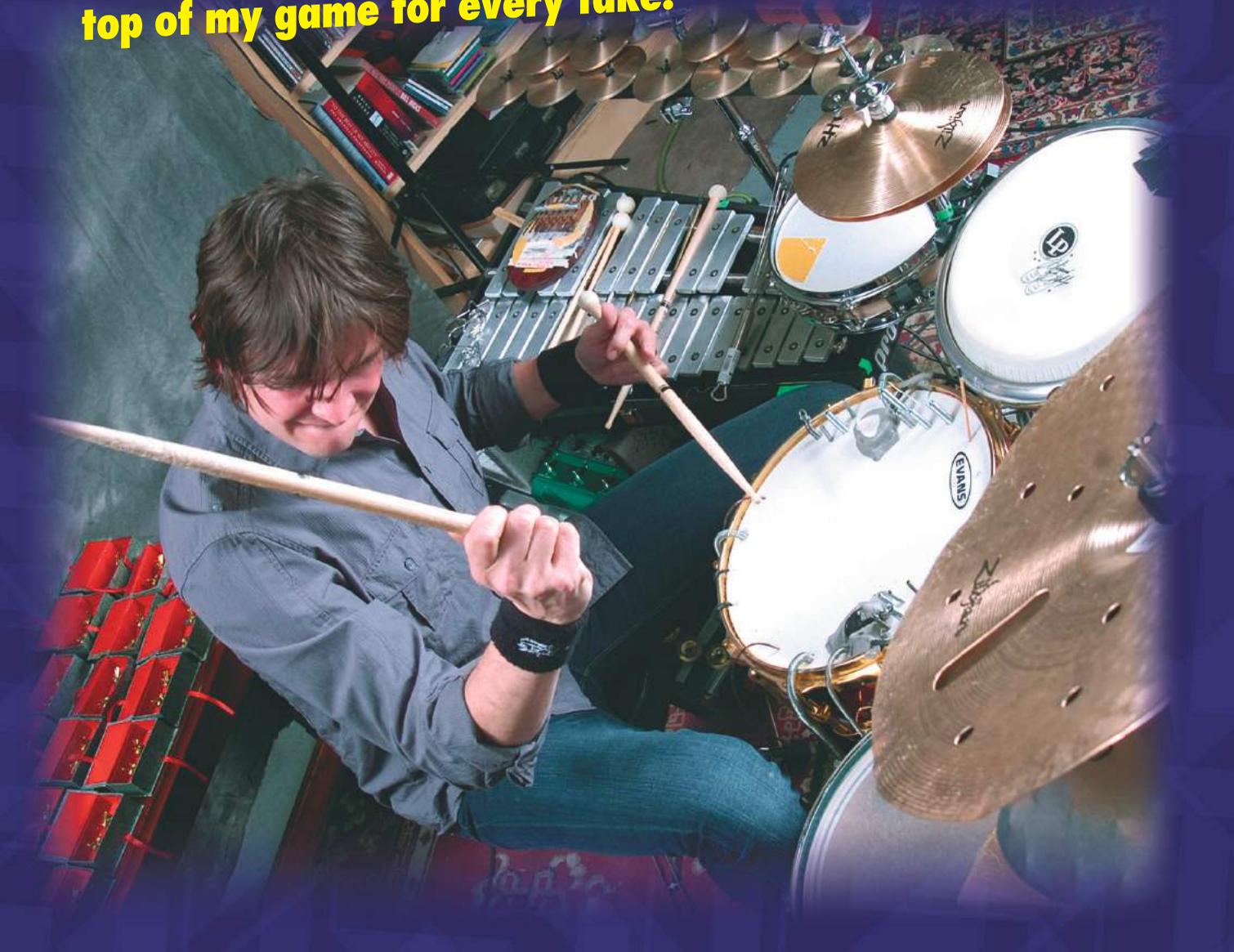
**MD:** A lot of the grooves have an old-school swagger to them.

**Glenn:** That's something that I love listening to in other drummers. Guys like Levon Helm and John Bonham are perfect examples. And a lot of the old Motown and Stax guys had that swing. Those guys were jazz drummers. So when they straightened their grooves out, there was still this inherent swing in their playing. That gave the music incredible buoyancy. I wanted to explore that type of vibe on Sky Blue Sky.

**MD:** What did you listen to for inspiration?

**Glenn:** The first tune on the album, "Either Way," draws a lot from Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine," with James Gadson. I also saw Jim Keltner with T-Bone Burnett while we were making the record. And that made a big

**"It's easy to get lazy when you're just going for a basic take, because you can go back and fix individual notes in Pro Tools. That wasn't an option here. I had to be at the top of my game for every take."**



impact on how I approached the feel of these tunes.

**MD:** When you recorded the songs, did you keep the setup the same, with everyone facing each other in a circle?

**Glenn:** Yes. Everything was recorded at once, so you get the sound of a band playing together. My drums are bleeding into all the other instrument mics, and vice versa. For most of the tracks, I didn't even use headphones. And only half of one song, "Impossible Germany," used a click track. We [avoided the click] so we wouldn't feel locked into one specific tempo.

**MD:** Since you tracked the record with everyone in a tight circle, did you have to play softer than you normally would?

**Glenn:** Yeah. There are some more aggressive moments. But when the drums are bleeding into everybody's mics, balance is really important. So we were very careful about how our parts blended within the whole.

**MD:** How did you build your drum patterns?

**Glenn:** I build drum parts a lot of different ways, depending on what kind of song it is and how I feel the drums should fit into it. Sometimes the drum parts have to help in the evolution of the song, sometimes they provide contrast, and sometimes they're there to illustrate the lyrics.

Lyrical, this is a very direct, honest, and raw record. So I felt that providing a great groove would be the best way to help the songs come across. "Either Way" has really hopeful lyrics, so that's why I played 16ths on the hi-hat—to provide an upbeat, driving element to it.

On "You Are My Face," I played cross-stick to set up a simple, out-of-the-way groove. That way, when the middle section comes in there's a big contrast.

**MD:** What made you decide to play all of the fills in the middle part of that song?

**Glenn:** That was actually the band's idea, to use the drums as a transition to get back into the more meditative part. The fills are there to keep it rolling and flowing. It wasn't a place



to just throw in licks. It was more about trying to play musical fills that would set up the next section.

**MD:** In "Impossible Germany," there are almost no fills until the end. Did you decide during the writing process that this was going to be a slowly evolving song?

**Glenn:** That tune is a showcase for the guitars, and Nels Cline is playing some beautiful commentary throughout. To me, those are the fills. So the best way for the drums to serve that song was to supply a bouncy feel and keep it moving forward.

**MD:** On "Shake It Off," there's a middle section where you play a big, heavy-sounding groove that doesn't use the hi-hat. What made you decide to do that?

**Glenn:** I was thinking about Kenny Buttrey's playing on the Neil Young album *Harvest*. On that record, there are parts where he's not hitting the hi-hat. Then when he does play it, the groove kicks up a notch. I wanted the same thing to happen in "Shake It Off."

**MD:** Did you do anything special to keep the groove going when you weren't playing the ride pattern?

**Glenn:** I pulsed my hand on my thigh. And I also always bounce on the ball of my left foot to keep time, whether I'm actually opening the hi-hat or not.

**MD:** "Hate It Here" starts with an Al Jackson-type soul feel, and then moves to a busier part with a lot of fills. There's quite a contrast between the two sections.

**Glenn:** I played those fills because that's when the character in the story lets out his angst. He's complaining the whole time, and then he erupts at the chorus. The fills are the frustration coming out.

**MD:** Do you often think narratively when putting drum patterns together?

**Glenn:** Sometimes it can help to think that way to get a certain point across. But if you do it too much it can be disruptive and a little cheesy.

**MD:** "Walken" has a greasy roots-rock feel with a lot of swing to it. And there's a lot of push and pull going on, especially in the ending vamp where the piano is really on the edge.

**Glenn:** Yeah, I was actually surprised to hear that so much in the mix. [laughs] But this was

## KOTCHE'S KITS

### The Solo Set

one of the harder songs for us to capture. We'd been playing it live for so long that it was becoming too polished. When we originally demoed it we were still learning the parts, so it sounded exciting. The later takes didn't have that. So we had to forget about playing our parts perfectly to make it feel fresh again.

**MD:** How many takes do you guys normally do for each song?

**Glenn:** There were a lot of takes on this record because it wasn't a matter of just getting a good drum take. I might have my best take early on, but maybe the guitar was a little out of tune or something. So we ended up doing more takes because we were going for a full-band performance, and we weren't fixing things in Pro Tools.

**MD:** Did you feel pressured to be going for a "keeper" take on every pass?

**Glenn:** Yeah. It's easy to get lazy when you're using clicks and when you're just going for a basic take, because you can go back and fix individual notes in Pro Tools. That wasn't an option here. I had to be at the top of my game for every take.

But at the same time, I couldn't get too attached to the idea of having a flawless drum record. You end up making bad decisions whenever you start thinking that way. We wanted this to be a great band record with great music.

**MD:** This album has a very consistent drum sound throughout. Were you using the same kit on everything?

**Glenn:** Yeah. It was mix-matched from pieces that I had at the loft, because my road gear wasn't accessible. I ended up using an old 16" Sonor floor tom with an Evans EC2 coated head, an old WFL bass drum with an Evans EQ3 batter, a 13" WFL rack tom, and a 14" power tom from a Tama kit that I got in eighth grade. The 13" and 14" drums had calf heads on them. The snare was a Sonor acrylic with an Evans Reverse Dot head on it.

**MD:** The snare sound is very dry and fat. And it sounds like it's tuned pretty loose.

**Glenn:** I tune it loose because I want it to have a blending sound. Because Sky Blue Sky is more of a soulful low-key record, there was no need for a high-pitched, cutting sound. And I tape my wedding hanky on it for muffling.

**MD:** Have you always gone for a really dry sound?

**Glenn:** When I first joined Wilco, I wanted the drums to be super dead, like that '70s sound when everyone was using single-headed concert toms with Evans Hydraulic heads. I've opened them up a little more as time has gone on. But I use coated G1s on the bottom and coat-

#### Drums:

Sonor Designer Series 10" Jungle snare (with triangle of sand paper glued to head), 14" prepared snare (vintage maple shells) in red sparkle finish with gold hardware, 8x10 rack tom and 14x14 floor tom (vintage maple shells) in sparkle green with brilliant champagne band

#### Cymbals / Metal Percussion:

various Zildjian crotales (two octaves), Musser orchestra bells, Zildjian 10" ZHT mini hi-hats with Factory Metal Percussion hi-hat jingler and LP One Shot shakers mounted on pull rod, Zildjian 6" Zil-Bel inverted and mounted on top of a 9.5" Zil-Bel, 7" LP Ice Bell inverted and mounted on top of an 8 1/2" LP Ice Bell, Zildjian 18" ZHT EFX inverted and mounted on top of a Zildjian 16" A EFX with jingles (both mounted on top of an 18" Factory Metal Percussion Cross Benderz), A# and G# small (octave 2), and G, G#, D large (octave 1) almglocken, 8" Factory Metal Percussion Celtic Bell mounted on top of 14" Zildjian ZXT Trashformer, large Turkish sheep bell (found at a market in Istanbul), spiral fruit basket, 12" Factory Metal Percussion Cross Crasherz inverted and mounted on top of a Zildjian FX Spiral Trash, Factory Metal Percussion 10" Hat Crasherz and 6" Celtic Bell, 6" A Zildjian splash (with hand strap)

**Hardware:** Sonor 600 series, Giant Step bass drum pedal (inverted, with soft felt beater)

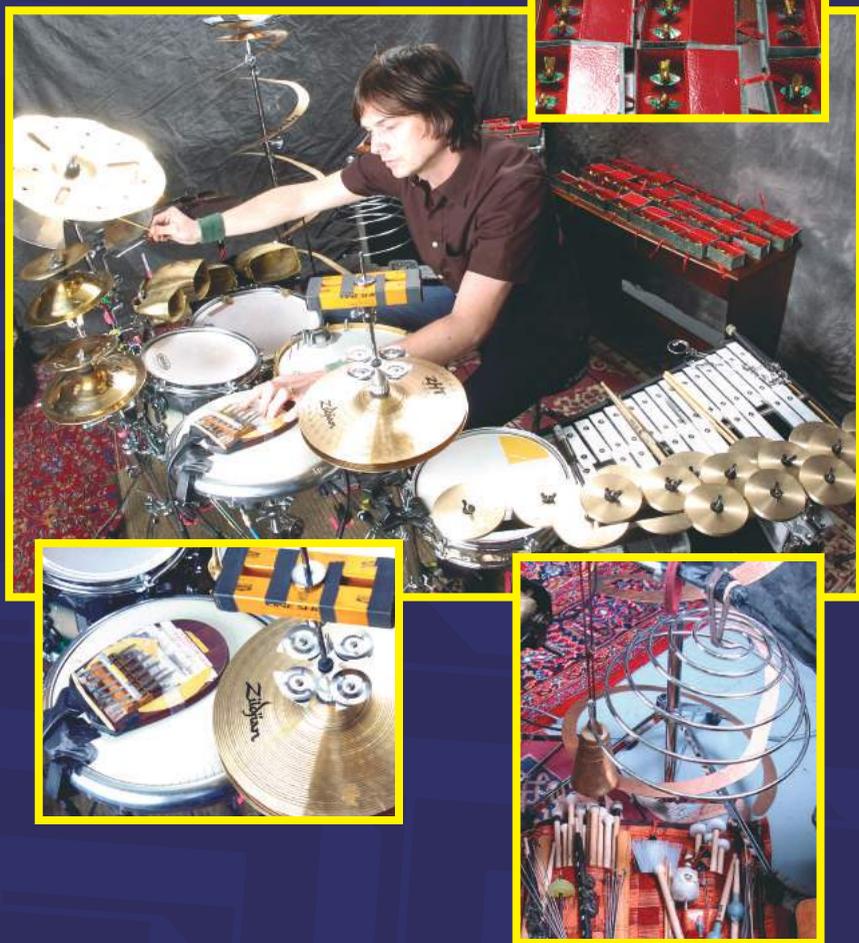
#### Percussion:

Latin Percussion 10" Compact conga (with Catania board piano or LP Hugh Tracy Kalimba on top), Deluxe Vibraslap II, assorted cricket boxes  
Also uses LP Compact Bongos, LP Vibraslap II Metal Chamber, and LP Crickets.

**Heads:** Evans coated EC2 on rack tom and floor tom batters, coated G1 on bottom of rack tom, Hydraulic on bottom of floor tom with EQ patch, HD Dry or ST Dry on snare top (with preparations) and Hazy 300 on bottom, G2 coated on top and Hazy 300 on bottom of Jungle snare

**Sticks:** Pro-mark SD7 and SD5 multi-sticks, bell and crotales mallets, Webs, and Jingle Strip sticks, homemade threaded-rod mallets and Superball mallets, kitchen wicks, wands, bows, and wood dowels

**Electronics:** Line 6 delay pedal, Electro-Harmonix Q-Tron envelope filter, Mackie mixing board, mini-disc player, volume pedal (to control volume of loops and effects), contact mics (on all drums, several stands and percussion instruments), Shure microphones



## With Wilco

**Drums:** Sonor Designer series (vintage maple shells) in green sparkle finish with brilliant champagne band. 6x14 snare, 9x12 tom, 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms, 17x22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

14" K Custom Special Dry hi-hats, 18" K Custom Special Dry crash, 21" K Custom Special Dry ride, 20" K Custom Dry Complex ride (medium thin), 18" K Constantinople crash, Crotales (two octaves), Gong Sheet, Burma Bell, Earth Plates.

Other cymbals used on *Sky Blue Sky* include 20" and 22" K Constantinople Light rides, 20" and 22" K Constantinople flat rides, 14" A hi-hats (old), an 18" Crash Of Doom, and a 20" A Pang.

**Percussion:** Latin Percussion

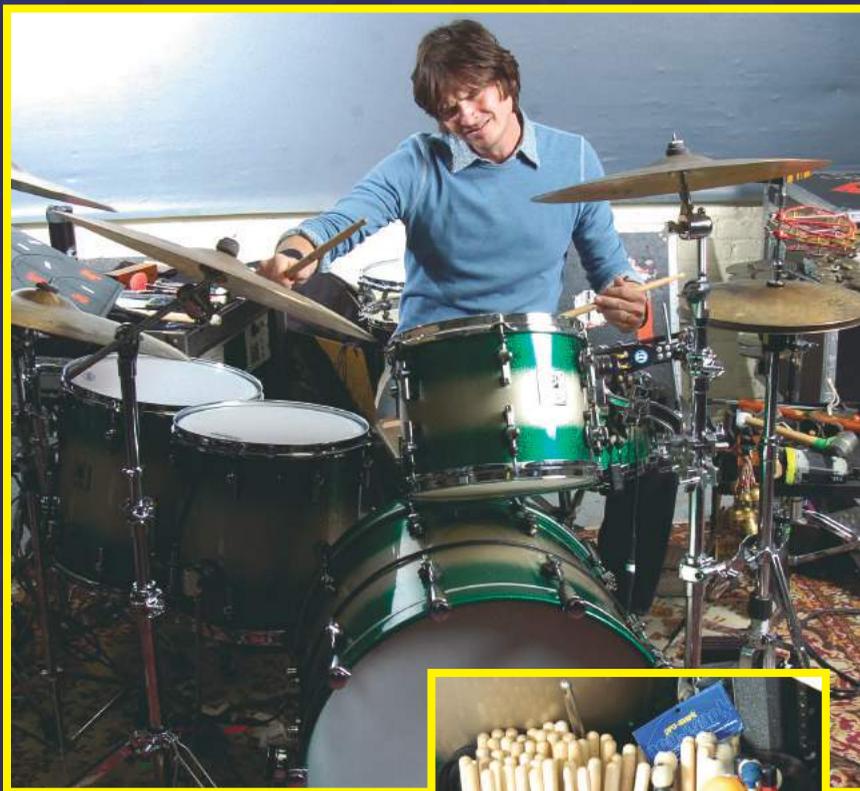
Cyclops tambourine, One Shot shakers, Prestige cowbell, and various LP shakers, maracas, and sound effects

**Electronics:** drumKAT, Shure microphones, an Akai S5000 sampler, Electro-Harmonix mixer, Boss Super Driver pedal, Hughes & Kettner Rotosphere pedal, and homemade contact mics (attached to all drum shells and controlled with a volume pedal)

**Hardware:** Sonor 600 series stands, Giant Step bass drum pedal with hard felt beater (medium tight tension)

**Heads:** Evans PC Reverse Dot on snare batter (medium tension with folded wedding hanky on 1/3 of head) with Hazy 300 on bottom, EC2 Coated on top of toms (medium tension with Moon Gel or Pro-Mark Drum Gum for muffling), coated G1s on bottom of toms, coated EQ3 batter and frosted EQ3 Resonant on bass drum (Evans patch on head and a folded towel for muffling)

**Sticks:** Pro-Mark 747B Super Rock (Japanese oak or American hickory) with wood tips, SD5 and SD7 (hickory with wood tip, hard felt beater on butt end), Rods, brushes, crotales mallets, and Brooms



ed EC2s on top to keep them sounding warm.

**MD:** What's your general tuning approach?

**Glenn:** For this record, I just got the drums to a point where they were ringing and had a nice, warm tone. But live I go for a major triad from the second floor tom up to the snare.

**MD:** Did you use the same cymbals throughout, too?

**Glenn:** The hi-hats are the same on all the tracks; they're a pair of old 14" Zildjian As. But I switched the rides out on every track. I used a lot of K Constantinoples, including a couple of flat rides.

The only crash I used was an 18" K Custom Special Dry. Since we were so close together in the studio, if I'd used a cymbal with a lot of sustain, it would've wiped out many of the frequencies that were being filled by the other guys in the band.

### Goin' It Alone

**MD:** What made you decide to make your first solo record?

**Glenn:** There were some rhythmic questions that I wanted answered, but they were personal enough that I wasn't going to be able to explore them in the context of a group. So I started recording ideas for my own purposes. Those recordings eventually became *Introducing*.

**MD:** What ideas were you exploring?

**Glenn:** The idea was coincidental rhythm, which is a fancy way of saying unintentional polyrhythms. I came across the term after reading the John Cage book *Silence*. But before I knew what it was called, I would always notice how rhythms in everyday life interacted in unusual ways, like how my turn signal interacts with the turn signal of the car in front of me, or how the rhythm of the wipers compares to what's playing on the radio. They're not typical polyrhythms, like seven-against-four or five-against-three. It's a much longer cycle. I wanted to explore that idea, so I started recording ideas and then collaged them together so that they would flow in and out of each other at different rates.

**MD:** What was the concept behind your second record, *Next*?

**Glenn:** I wanted that one to be completely improvised, using what I call accidental rhythm. I wanted to explore the idea of truly improvising. I wanted to take all of my training out of the equation. So I built various mallets—like these threaded rods with springs and ball bearings on the ends—that didn't allow me to play anything traditional. That way even if I



## KOTCHE ON DRUMS & SOUNDS

### I POSITION THE DRUMS...

... close enough to me so that I don't have to reach too far for anything. With the Wilco setup, the tom is towards the center of the kick because I have a tambourine on the left. And I want to have an even flow between the toms.

The setup for the solo kit is determined by whether I need to play something with the right or left hand. If I need to loop something, I'll play it with my right hand because my left hand will be setting up the loops.

### MY IDEAL DRUM SOUND...

...depends on the music. With On Fillmore, I like open, trashy drum sounds. So I'll tape a snare strand to the top head or put a chain on the drum to create funky, bizarre, rattle-y sounds.

For Wilco, I like a deep, warm sound without a lot of overtones. But the heads are tight enough so that they react to the sticks nicely.

That dry approach translates to the solo kit, too. But if I want to open them up, I throw on the effects and they turn into these huge beasts.

unintentionally played paradiddle-diddles, they wouldn't sound like it.

I also put a lot of preparations on the drums. I had chains lying across the drumheads, the cymbals were resting on the drums and each other, and I put beads and rice on the heads so that everything was interacting from the sympathetic vibrations.

**MD:** How did you divide the improvisations into tracks?

**Glenn:** It was all done live to two-track. I just improvised snippets using a different installation for each one. So I'd play for a while with one set of mallets, then I'd play with branches or I'd blow randomly into the tubes in my floor tom.

**MD:** Your latest solo record, *Mobile*, covers a variety of rhythmic concepts. What were you exploring in the opening track, "Clapping Music Variations"?

**Glenn:** That track is about negative rhythm. I discovered the idea as I was experimenting with the Steve Reich piece "Clapping Music." I love how that piece progresses, with two unison rhythms slowly going out of phase with each other. I wanted to learn it as a duet, but I didn't have the score. So I just wrote it out with the second part shifting back an 8th note each time.

After I wrote it out, I noticed that there were a lot more notes than rests. So I thought, Let me play the right-hand part as is and then play the other part's rests with the left hand. Then I tried things like playing one of the rhythms in reverse or in half time.

Then I started assigning the parts to differ-

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ent instruments and to a series of pitches. Then I added the 3/4 and 4/4 pulses to keep it ambiguous and cyclical, like African music.

**MD:** Some of the sounds in this track are very unusual. What were you using to play the variations?

**Glenn:** I used drums, vibes, crotales, and Pro-Mark Webs. At the beginning, I played the piece with the Webs on my legs. There's also a variation where I'm only hitting the shaft of the Webs on my legs. So you're hearing them flex and react in the air, which creates another form of negative rhythm.

**MD:** Your writing process reminds me of some of the compositional approaches in serial music.

**Glenn:** It's a process-driven record. Having a specific process helped to give me direction since there are so many concepts behind each piece.

**MD:** How did you put together "Mobile Parts 1, 2, and 3"?

**Glenn:** When Wilco was recording A Ghost Is Born in New York, I had a thumb piano with me to mess around with in my hotel room. I ended up writing a melody

## GLENN ON RECORD

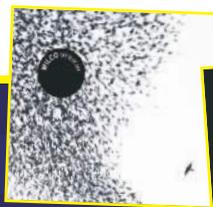
### Artist

Glenn Kotche  
Wilco

On Fillmore  
Loose Fur  
Jim O'Rourke  
Minus 5  
Paul K And The Weathermen

### Album

Mobile, Introducing, Next Sky Blue Sky, Kicking Television, Yankee Hotel Foxtrot, A Ghost Is Born, The Wilco Book (companion CD)  
Sleeps With Fishes (on vibraphone), On Fillmore Born Again In The USA, Loose Fur Insignificance (double drumming with Tim Barnes)  
Down With Wilco  
Love Is A Gas



## FAVORITES

### Artist

various

Paul Lytton  
Miles Davis  
Chris Corsano  
Deerhoof  
Captain Beefheart  
Can  
Califone

Masahiko Togashi  
Miles Davis  
Keith Jarrett  
Public Image Limited  
Neil Young  
Jim O'Rourke & Akira Sakata  
Alex Cline

### Album

Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration

The Inclined Stick  
Filles De Kilimanjaro  
The Young Cricketer  
Reveille  
Clear Spot  
Togo Mago  
Roots And Crowns

The Face Of Percussion  
Live At The Fillmore East 1970  
Belonging  
The Flowers Of Romance  
Harvest  
Tetrodotoxin  
Not Alone

### Drummer

Al Jackson Jr.,  
Willie Hall, Roger Hawkins  
Paul Lytton  
Tony Williams  
Chris Corsano  
Greg Saunier  
Ed Marimba  
Jaki Liebezeit  
Joe Adamik and  
Ben Masserella  
Masahiko Togashi  
Jack DeJohnette, Airo Moriera  
Jon Christensen  
Martin Atkins  
Kenny Buttrey  
Chris Corsano  
Alex Cline

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# GLENN KOTCHE

## MOBILE INSPIRATIONS

Here's a list of various works that directly influenced the making of Glenn's latest solo album.

### Music

Steve Reich: Early Works  
Nonesuch Explorer Series: Golden Rain and Shona Mbira Music  
Library Of Congress Endangered Music Project: Music For The Gods  
Paul Lytton & Paul Lovens Percussion Duo: Was It Me, Moinho De Asneira, and The Fetch  
Tony Allen: Jealousy-Progress and No Accommodations For Lagos  
Dewey Redman: Tarik  
Arnold Dreyblatt: The Adding Machine  
Brise Glace: When In Vanitas  
Jim O'Rourke: I'm Happy And Singing And 1, 2, 3, 4  
Autechre: Chiasitic Slide

### Art

The mobile sculpture of Alexander Calder  
The paintings of Gerhard Richter

### Words

Max Neuhaus: Sound Works Vol. I-III  
John Cage: Silence  
The Ramayana



plates, but they're always moving. So it's constantly becoming a new sculpture. I liked that idea—of different pieces being in a constant state of flux with one other. So that's how I wanted to approach these three basic thumb piano parts.

In the first part, I incorporated negative rhythm by gradually replacing the rests in the melodies with a drone of the same note. Then in "Part 2," I played the original three rhythms on drums, using different variations of stick dampening by pressing one stick into the head.

For the third part, I transferred the rhythms to cymbals, two hi-hats, two snare drums, and different distorted sounds. Then I played the "Monkey Chant" melody over the top on crotales, which introduced the idea of having a mobile theme that reoccurs throughout the record.

**MD:** What's going on in "Projections Of (What) Might...?"

**Glenn:** For that track, I had two sources: Afro-beat pioneer Tony Allen and jazz drummer Ed Blackwell. I wrote down some patterns that they played and then expanded them. Tony does a lot of doubles between the snare and bass. I made it my own by moving the doubles around the kit. Then I took some of the rhythms of the guitar parts from his records and put them on a set of Swiss cowbells called *almglocken*. I ended up with a bunch of

variations, so I decided to make a tune out of them.

**MD:** What process did you use to put the tune together?

**Glenn:** I used one of my Tony Allen modifications as the basic form of the piece. Then I assigned a different Tony Allen / Ed Blackwell variation to each of the seven voices in the original pattern. So whenever the snare drum was hit in the master groove, I might play groove number one four times. Then whenever the bass drum played a note, I'd play groove number two. And whenever two voices played at the same time, I stacked the two grooves on top of each other. [See sidebar: The Beats Behind.]

I also enhanced the drum sounds with electronics to give the track a different flavor. I did that by combining or replacing the drums with sounds from an Access Virus keyboard. Then at the end of the track, I slowly mixed in the acoustic drums.

**MD:** How did you transform the theatrical narrative of the monkey chant into solo drum music?

**Glenn:** Around the time I started to develop the "Monkey Chant," I was listening to a lot of improvised percussion records, specifically ones by Paul Lytton and Paul Lovens. Those records helped me get away from thinking of the drums as only a timekeeper, but also as a source of color and texture.



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you

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## GLENN KOTCHE

That's what inspired me to incorporate different kinds of instruments, like crotales or a gong sheet, into the drumset. And that's when I came up with the idea for the prepared snare. I wanted to replicate some of the lion's-roar sounds on those Lytton and Lovens records, so I strung fishing line and some electrical wire through the vent holes in an Evans SD Dry drumhead. After I discovered how great that sounded, I attached friction sticks, different sized springs, and all these sounds that utilize the drum as a resonator.

As I was experimenting with the prepared snare, I heard the monkey chant for the first time and was knocked out by the power of all these men chanting in rhythm. So one day when I was sitting behind the drums, I discovered that I could imitate one of the sounds from it—that constant chugga-chugga-chugga-chugga rhythm—with the right hand and foot on the cocktail floor tom. Then I figured out how to imitate some of the higher tones using the alm-glocken, and I could duplicate the reoccurring rhythmic statement that happens at the beginning of each section. So it progressed from there.

But there was a point when I felt that something was still missing. So I went back and read the portion of the Ramayana that the monkey chant is based on. From that, I realized that there are basically five or six principle characters in the story. So I assigned the sounds on the prepared snare to the characters and mapped out a way to approximate the essential events and interactions in the story.

**MD:** In addition to the prepared snare, aren't you also incorporating electronics into the piece?

**Glenn:** Yes. I use a Line 6 delay pedal to loop various characters—like the introduction of the large springs—so they'll carry through when I go into the next part. That way, I can interact with it using other sounds.

I also use the delay to create a drone when I hit the metal fruit basket. I fade that out with the volume pedal as I play the melody on crotales and thumb piano.

**MD:** How did you discover that the fruit basket would work in your percussion setup?

**Glenn:** I incessantly tap on everything to try to find some useful sounds. The fruit basket was a wedding gift, but it didn't sound good when I first tapped it. But when I added a contact mic, it had a deep tone. So I cranked the bass on my mixer to make it sound like a gong.

**MD:** How are you adapting these pieces to be performed live?

**Glenn:** "The Monkey Chant" and "Fantasy On A Shona Theme" are performed completely live. But for "Mobile Parts 1, 2 & 3," I play half the parts live and the rest is on tape. And I turned "Projections" into a trio, so I'm playing a live part over the two parts that appear on the record.

### The Kronos Commission

**MD:** How did you get commissioned to compose a piece for The Kronos Quartet?

**Glenn:** David Harrington, the leader of Kronos, liked Mobile, so he asked me to write a piece for them. I'd never done something like this before. But I was a fan of theirs, and thought it would be a great challenge. So I decided to go for it.

**MD:** How did you approach writing the piece?

**Glenn:** After I saw them perform in New York, I began thinking about how the four players in a string quartet relate to a drummer's four limbs, and how cool it would be if your left foot could play a cello part or if your left hand could be the violinist. So that became the basic concept behind the piece.

The first movement is textural; it introduces different sounds and establishes some of the themes. The second and third movements were written on drumset, and then orchestrated for the strings.

**MD:** How did you do that?

**Glenn:** I came up with some rhythmic ideas as I was sitting behind the kit. Then I broke those down into the rhythms that are played on each drum and assigned them to pitches.

**MD:** What are some of those rhythmic ideas?

**Glenn:** One section is an unraveling of a broken-triplet idea between two toms and the kick drum. Other movements are based on different polyrhythms. And the seventh movement is based on orchestrating rudimental figures—like flam accents—in different ways across the quartet.

**MD:** Did you write "Anomaly" entirely from the kit?

**Glenn:** I originally started at the vibes. But I got stumped with only one main theme and some other basic ideas. So I moved over to the drums, and the first three movements came to me within a day. From there, I went back to the vibes to put the rest of it together.

**MD:** How is your active solo career impacting what you do with Wilco and your other drumming projects?

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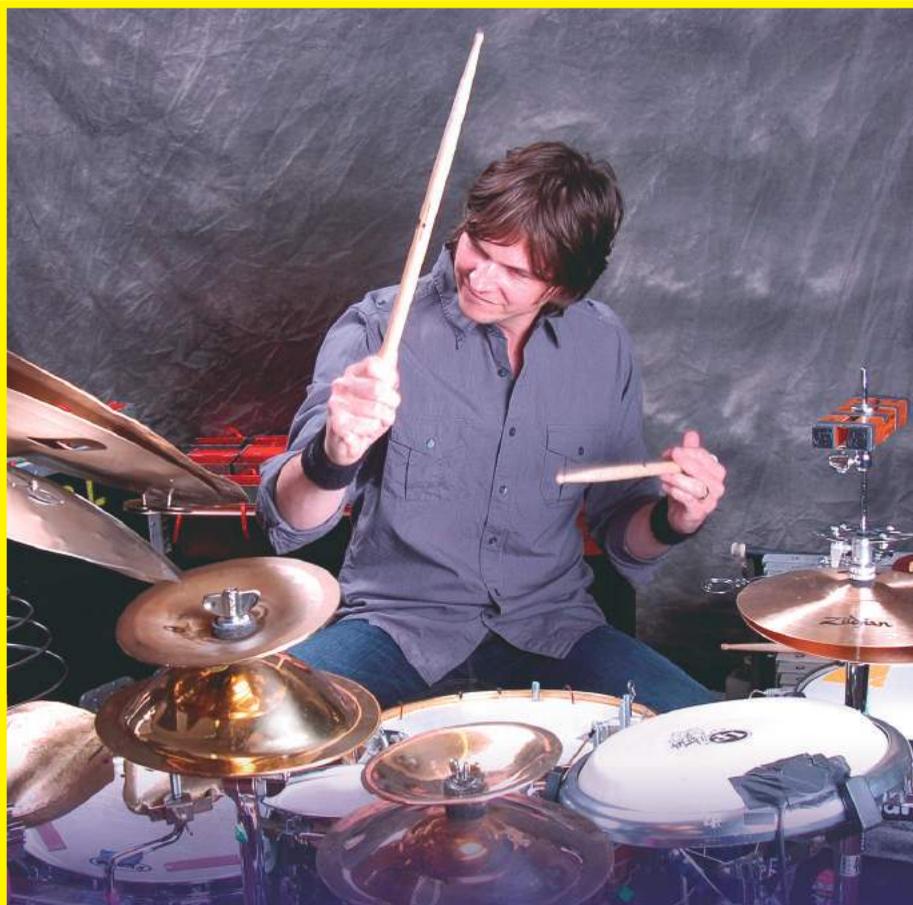


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## GLENN KOTCHE



### GLENN'S PARTING WORDS OF WISDOM

#### I TOOK A FEW LESSONS...

...with Paul Wertico when I was in college. One of the parting things he said to me was, "Always play the truth." At the time I thought it was just some lofty New Age idealism. But years later I realized what he meant: Be behind every note. Be present and put all of your heart and soul behind everything you play. Don't ever go through the motions.

That concept has also translated into how I make musical and professional decisions. When I was developing some of the ideas on *Mobile*, I never thought for a second that peo-

ple would actually enjoy listening to it or that it would end up on a record. If I had thought about it in those terms, it wouldn't have worked out. I only thought about it in terms of what it meant to me and how it would musically enrich my playing.

This philosophy also came into play when Wilco made *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*. When the label wanted us to change the record, we all said, "No. This is what feels right, and we don't want to change it." We had to be honest with ourselves, so we held our ground. And we've been rewarded for it in the long run.

**Glenn:** They all inform each other. When I was developing "Monkey Chant," I was thinking about the drumset as an ensemble: What role is my floor tom playing here, what role is this spring or thumb piano playing here? Or how do these parts relate to the evolution of the piece as a whole? These are the kinds of things that I learned from making records with Wilco.

My solo projects also make me appreciate my situation in Wilco. When I'm in the context of Wilco, I can concentrate of being part

of the ensemble and supporting Jeff Tweedy's lyrics. And because I have my solo thing to explore these loftier rhythmic concepts, I'm a lot more in-tune with that idea. I'm not playing all over the place just to get my licks in. So having both outlets helps keep me balanced.



To hear some of Glenn's tracks, go to MD Radio at [www.modrndrummer.com](http://www.modrndrummer.com).



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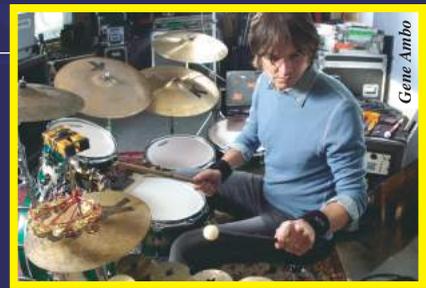
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# The Beats Behind "Projections Of (What) Might..."

by Michael Dawson



Glenn Kotche

MUSIC KEY

As we were discussing the rhythmic concepts behind his third solo album, *Mobile* I found it incredibly inspiring (and somewhat humbling) to dig into Glenn Kotche's unique writing processes. The method behind one track in particular, "Projections Of (What) Might..." really had my head spinning.

Glenn came up with a very creative way to organize the structure of the piece. The track uses one of his Tony Allen / Ed Blackwell groove variations to determine when and where certain beats (or combinations of beats) would occur. To begin, Glenn recorded eight different grooves separately. (All almglocken notes are played with the right hand.)

1 L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R

2 R L R R R R L R R R R L R R R L R R R

3

4

5

6

7 R L R L R L L R L R L R R L R L

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

Then he used his favorite variation (Example 3) to figure out when those beats would appear in the track. To do this, he assigned each of the eight voices in Example 3 to one of his groove variations. Here's how he broke it down:

- High almglocken = Groove 1
- Rack tom = Groove 2
- Snare drum = Groove 3
- Bass drum = Groove 4
- Left-foot hi-hat = Groove 5
- Middle almglocken = Groove 6
- Low almglocken = Groove 7
- Floor tom = Groove 8

Then Glenn pieced the track together in Pro Tools by copy & pasting his eight grooves in the order that they appear in Example 3. For instance, the first notes in his master groove are a bass drum / left-foot hi-hat unison. So Glenn starts the track by layering Groove 4 and 5 on top of one another and repeating them several times. (Variations in 4/4 were repeated six times and variations in 6/4 were repeated four times so they would equal a total of twenty-four counts.) The next note in the master groove is the low almglocken. So Glenn follows the Groove 4 and 5 combination with six repeats of Groove 7. The track continues to progress in this manner, with each new section corresponding to what's occurring linearly in the master groove. (Got it?)

To help clarify how the master groove determines the form of the tune, here's Example 3 with the designated groove variations placed below the staff.

Score

As you're following along, you'll notice that there is only one variation designated on beat 2. Glenn purposely left out Groove 5 to keep it from sounding cluttered when layered over Groove 6. Also, he inserted his favorite combination (1/2) in the two places where none of the voices are played (the "e" of beats 2 and 6).

To see Glenn play this piece live, check out his performance on the 2006 Modern Drummer Festival DVD. There, he plays a third part on top of the original recording.



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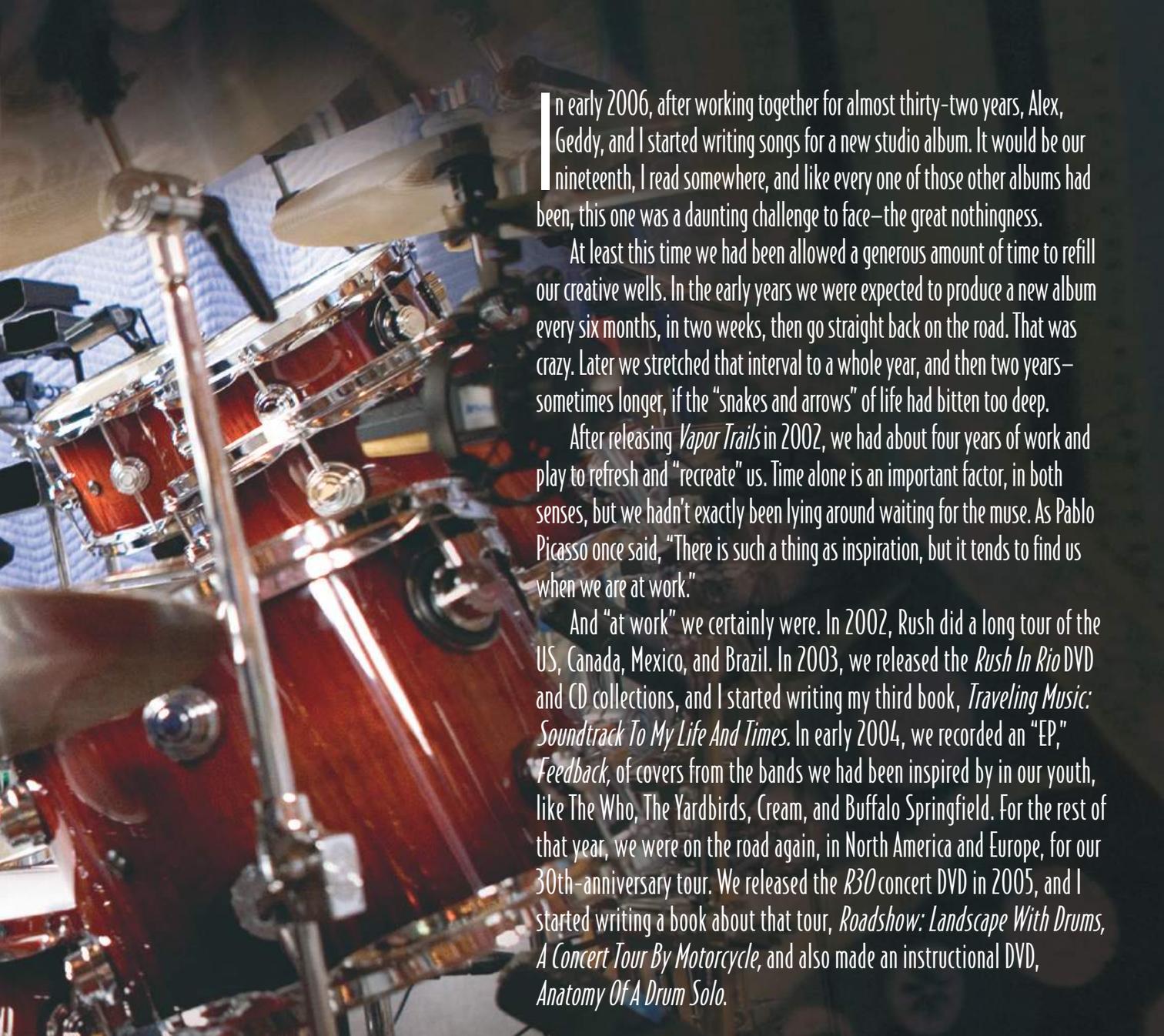


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In early 2006, after working together for almost thirty-two years, Alex, Geddy, and I started writing songs for a new studio album. It would be our nineteenth, I read somewhere, and like every one of those other albums had been, this one was a daunting challenge to face—the great nothingness.

At least this time we had been allowed a generous amount of time to refill our creative wells. In the early years we were expected to produce a new album every six months, in two weeks, then go straight back on the road. That was crazy. Later we stretched that interval to a whole year, and then two years—sometimes longer, if the “snakes and arrows” of life had bitten too deep.

After releasing *Vapor Trails* in 2002, we had about four years of work and play to refresh and “recreate” us. Time alone is an important factor, in both senses, but we hadn’t exactly been lying around waiting for the muse. As Pablo Picasso once said, “There is such a thing as inspiration, but it tends to find us when we are at work.”

And “at work” we certainly were. In 2002, Rush did a long tour of the US, Canada, Mexico, and Brazil. In 2003, we released the *Rush In Rio* DVD and CD collections, and I started writing my third book, *Traveling Music: Soundtrack To My Life And Times*. In early 2004, we recorded an “EP,” *Feedback*, of covers from the bands we had been inspired by in our youth, like The Who, The Yardbirds, Cream, and Buffalo Springfield. For the rest of that year, we were on the road again, in North America and Europe, for our 30th-anniversary tour. We released the *R30* concert DVD in 2005, and I started writing a book about that tour, *Roadshow: Landscape With Drums, A Concert Tour By Motorcycle*, and also made an instructional DVD, *Anatomy Of A Drum Solo*.

THE DRUMS OF

# SNAKES AND ARROWS

WHAT WENT INTO WHAT CAME OUT

by Neil Peart

PHOTOS BY ANDREW MacNAUGHTAN

**S**o, during those four years, our musical muscles had been buffed by the rigors of two long tours—by what I can only describe as the ultimate practice. Performing night after night is like working out at the gym of musical fitness, worshiping at its temple, and messing around in its laboratory, all at the same time. If creating new music is the highest aspiration, then performing for an audience remains the greatest test (well over a hundred tests, on those two tours). All of that performance “working out” was offset by the low-pressure fun of recording Feedback (Geddy remarked during those sessions how nice it was not to have to worry about the actual song—just play it, like a sideman), and by the three of us stepping away to other interests, too.

My prose writing, for example, so often feeds into my lyric writing. And all the richness of everyday experience—of work, personal and family travels, and the enduring novelty of sustained domestic life (for musicians, at least)—all had an effect on these songs. When we embarked on this project, I was feeling creatively refreshed, and in the right “spirit” for lyric writing and drumming. Inspiration may come with work, but a break doesn’t hurt either.

I had been inspired by a lot of other music around then, too, especially drumming. On the day I made the six-hour drive from Quebec to Toronto to start work, I was listening to some of my longtime favorites, like Buddy Rich, Steve Smith, and Dave Weckl, and some new

threshold of new success with the CJ3 in his beloved style of jazz, he was struck down by stupid cancer. That’s the kind of fate that just makes me mad. Ian is missed as both a lovely man and a fine musician.)

I had also listened to Terry Bozzio’s remarkable, incredibly virtuosic Chamber Works, and the word for my admiration of Terry and his art is “delighted”—with the unique sophistication of the work itself, and by the fact that he’s able to get such work made. In these dark days of soulless multinational suits trying to market increasingly formulaic music (and unthinking, or uncaring, consumers content to steal it), the odd little beam of hope and inspiration, like Terry, shines through. I remember a relevant quote (though I can’t find its source—probably some drummer), “Art is that which cannot be suppressed.”

During a visit to the DW factory last year (to check out the drums I would play on this album), I saw one of Terry’s massively intricate drumsets under construction. When I sat behind it, with all those chromatically tuned drums, the fantastic array of unique cymbals, and multiple pedals (eleven, I think), I looked around and up and down at that dizzyingly complex instrument and thought, “This is the guy’s mind I’m looking at.” When Terry and I finally met during a recent DW visit, I expanded that description of his kit: “This is your brain on drums!”

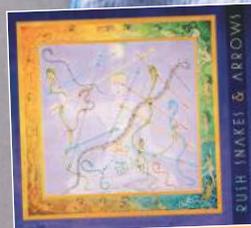
I spent an enjoyable day with another virtuoso drummer, Gregg Bissonette, playing “drum duets” on the two drumsets he has facing each other in his home studio. Gregg has enormous

“Certainly my favorite part of the job is getting together with Alex and Geddy in some little studio to exchange new ideas. And that exciting first day, walking around my drums and thinking, ‘Hmm...what can I change?’”

favorites, like Gavin Harrison of Porcupine Tree and Ian Wallace with The Crimson Jazz Trio. (Both Gavin and Ian became friends of mine, too, but alas, we lost Ian early this year. Just when he had reached the peak of his musicianship, playing so beautifully and poised on the

talent, technique, and knowledge of the instrument, and while I banged away, I would hear and see him play something wonderful and think, “I want to learn that.” Later, Gregg and I pattered around a little lake in his pontoon boat, eating take-out subs and talking about life





## TRACK BY TRACK

Neil Peart's drumming on Rush's new CD, *Snakes And Arrows*, is some of his most inspired playing in years. What follows is his description of each track.

### "Far Cry"

Right off the bat, the staccato, syncopated intro presents several concepts worth considering. For one, I have stated before that when I set out to learn a part in "uncommon time," I don't try to count it. Instead, I play along with the piece until I can *sing* it—until it becomes a rhythmic melody. In this case, in my initial, exploratory ramblings through "Far Cry," while I tried various approaches to the verses, bridges, and choruses, I learned that staccato section and tried a couple of different ways of playing it, with snare and floor tom, and with bass drum and crash cymbals.

Our co-producer, Nick, was listening to those early demos with me, and when we got to the final statement of that part at the end of the song, he turned to me and said, "Do you think you could *solo* over that part?"

I could only laugh. Well, of *course* I could solo over that part; I'd *love* to solo over that part—but I would never suggest such a thing myself! This is a good example of why it's valuable for us to have a co-producer: to push us beyond our "safety zone," in our playing, our arrangements, and, perhaps, our personalities, too. For me, my natural exuberance is sometimes restrained by my equally characteristic reserve, and Nick liked to break that down.

On the other hand, I confess that it was me who suggested the dropped beat in the middle of the "riff" section. If you'd like to count it, the section is three bars of 4/4, one of 3/4, and then four bars of 4/4, which repeats. What's particularly tricky about this is all of the upbeat accents, which makes it sound "odder" than it actually is.

I have to tell the story of how Nick got his, um, "nick" name, as I think drummers will appreciate it. While we were listening to those demos in the control room, Nick would illustrate his ideas for drum parts to me with flailing arms and vocalizations like, "Bloppida-bloppida-batu-batu-whirrrrr-blop—*booujze*."

"Booujze" represented the bass drum and cymbal crash at the end of that incredible air-drumming fill (of course), and it soon became his nickname. (Though deciding on the proper spelling required considerable discussion.)

So, it was Booujze who suggested I solo over that end section, and it was Booujze who suggested I use my "typical" syncopated bell pattern for the choruses. He knew I was determined to make my playing as fresh as possible, with as many new approaches and different fills as I could come up with, but he felt nothing could beat that rhythm for those parts. Well, fine—why avoid what works best just because you've used it a few times before? As Oscar Wilde said, "Self-plagiarism is *style*."

Elsewhere in "Far Cry," the riff sections cried out for your basic John Bonham sloshy hi-hat and heavy, syncopated snare and bass drum (a style Andy Parker from UFO used to call "baseball bats and diving boots"). As Count Basie remarked after hearing a playback of an Ellington-Sinatra collaboration (with Sam Woodyard's elegant drumming), "Always glad to hear about that kind of carryin' on!" The verses balance propulsion and accompaniment with a 16th-note hi-hat pattern and cymbal/bass drum punches—with an odd-numbered one at the end, to keep me alert.

My bandmates have a habit of adding or dropping beats in ways that seem sensible to them ("it felt a bit too long," or "it felt a bit too short"), or just for variety. I suppose it's a vote of confidence that they take for granted I'll be able to "handle" those anomalies. As Booujze often said to me when he suggested something, "Hey, I wouldn't ask if I didn't know you could *do* it!" Again, like the intro, I never count out those little "surprises," but just learn them as part of the song.

In the bridge, or pre-chorus, sections, I'm playing on the ride with the "x-hat" on the upbeats (the Billy Cobham revelation from the '70s, which he told me he first heard played by a guy in some bar), interspersed with rising double-bass-pedal triplets (thank you Tommy Aldridge) and China accents (that new "rattler") with the snare.

The fills in the middle of the choruses follow a sequence from an initial experiment of starting with a quick burst on the 13" tom and pulling back onto the snare. The one in the second chorus, two flurries on 12" and 13" toms, is a little "mini-tribute" to the late Mark

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# NEIL PEART

and work. Doane Perry and I often get together like that, too—for Indian food, and to talk about drumming some-

times, but mostly about everything else in our lives. My teacher, Freddie Gruber, remains a close friend and

lifelong mentor, and a “lesson” can occur any time I’m at his house; all it takes is an old song on the radio, and

## TRACK BY TRACK *continued*

Craney—the kind of intricate, dynamic tom fills he played. In fact, there are a few such tributes to other drummers, living and not, sprinkled here and there. Hearing those references gives me a “private smile,” but musically, they also allowed me to briefly express different “characters” in my playing.

### “Armor And Sword”

And speaking of tributes, this opening rhythm derives from Buddy Rich’s “Mercy, Mercy, Mercy,” via Dave Weckl’s version on our tribute, *Burning For Buddy*, and my own previous use of it in “Test For Echo.” I added some additional spices, with China cymbals and double-bass-pedal figures, and found that a pattern like that could be so *rigorous*. The time sense has to be absolutely right—*nailed* would be the word—and once you’re committed to hacking out quarter notes on that loud, harsh China cymbal, you dare not get off it, even for a single crash, or the momentum is lost.

This song is full of that “elasticity of time” kind of action, pushing and pulling at the click deliberately. The choruses were particularly demanding, laying back after the intro or the driving chordal bridge sections (Bonham-like, again, but with one new figure that pleased me to run across—a jagged pair of double-bass triplet phrasings, separated by a one-beat rest, after “the solace we seek”). Making that transition, “jumping that fence” between bridge and chorus, required a careful setup before it, and a delicate hand on the reins to pull the feel back smoothly.

The sequence of fills I used to make that transition each time have a story, too. A brief crescendo of crash cymbals does the job the first time, and the next one is also a simple swell on the crashes, a rising 8th-note wash across four cymbals in increasing sizes, from 16” to 20”. The third time, I accelerate to triplet feel, and add a double-bass roll under the crashes. The fourth one is longer, and begins with a quick triplet-feel roundhouse from snare to toms, straight into the bass drum pedals and crashes.

That’s the kind of stuff I find exciting to play and to listen to, and this series came out of another example of a producer’s influence. When I was recording with Matt Scannell, he steered me in that direction on one of his songs by asking me to give him a fill like the one I played near the end of our old song “Vital Signs,” on double bass drums and cymbals. He described it to me, and I gave it a new twist for him by coming off a triplet-feel snare roll to the bass pedals and cymbals in that feel.

In the “Armor And Sword” choruses, I use several variations of fills that launch from the 15” floor tom on my left. I got that idea from Dave Weckl many years ago, and I still keep finding new ways to build fills and rhythms that way, as in these choruses, and the rolling tom sections in the middle. The other mid-chorus fills use variations on a typical Keith Moon phrase, leading with an accent on the upbeat (three *and*) that implies a hesitation, then following with a

roll to the downbeat of the next bar. In the final chorus, I break it down, first loosening the time with snare accents and the ride bell on the upbeats, then falling into the tom section from the middle instrumental passage, transposed to a different, less urgent feel.

The verses are in 3/4, which became a kind of thematic time signature throughout this album. So many of these songs, and even Alex’s solo guitar piece, “Hope,” find us rocking away in waltz time.

I have written and spoken many times before about my endless experiments in 3/4 time, carried out in my practicing and in my solo. I used to say that I considered those more as mental and technical exercises, and that I didn’t expect to find a *musical* use for solving those puzzles. But as an English doctor once said to me (worryingly), “I have been wrong before.”

After all those hours—hundreds of hours—of playing variations on Max Roach’s “The Drum Also Waltzes,” I used that knowledge all over the place on this album, song after song. And when I needed a rudimental snare passage, a delicate ride pattern over a bass drum and hi-hat ostinato, or a rolling tom rhythm that could flow over that 3/4 time, it was wonderful to feel so comfortable with it.

More than anything, it’s gratifying to see how all that work paid off in unexpected ways. I don’t mind saying, “I have been wrong before,” when it’s such a nice way to be wrong!

### “Workin’ Them Angels”

This song, for example, shifts between 3/4 and 4/4 several times. Early on in the arranging, it was my suggestion to change the choruses to 4/4, to take the “lilt” out of the song for a minute. However, once we did that, I found it surprisingly difficult to feel the transition sometimes.

The point where Alex and Geddy chose to make the shift from four to three, for example, sometimes made sense *structurally*, but could be a real head-breaker for me. Still, it forced me to come up with some creative ways to bridge that change, jump that fence—like at the end of the instrumental passage, after the one-handed snare figure with tom flams on the triplets (inspired by a fill Matt Johnson played in “Last Goodbye,” from Jeff Buckley’s enduringly brilliant *Grace*). I resorted to calling a “time out” by throwing in a pair of rumbling quadruplets with double bass and floor toms, rising to a snare flam to kick into the last verse. When Geddy heard me pulling off stuff like that, he would shake his head and say, “Now *that’s* comedy!”

And all this time, Boouje was always encouraging both Geddy and me to “get crazy,” until we decided we were “the world’s funniest rhythm section.” We began to think this album ought to be called *Don’t Try This At Home*.

Otherwise, this song is all about *feel*—the right looseness for the verses and a relentless drive for the choruses, then a gentler groove for the instrumental passage (with 16th-note interjections inspired by the guitar strumming). The deep, rolling tom patterns in the bridges channel

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TRACK BY TRACK *continued*

Gene Krupa and "Sing, Sing, Sing," of course, and I used flamadiddles to make the sticking work for the voices I wanted to hear in the cyclical, 3/4 rhythm. (And how *deep* those VLT toms are!)

Another little device I've been working on for a while appears in the last chorus, then again, in a different phrasing, in the rideout. The jagged, angular approach comes out of Tony Williams via Billy Cobham and Steve Gadd, I suppose, in a kind of triplet, or open flam and bass drum/cymbal crash, stabbing across the time.

That's another idea I first worked out for one of Matt Scannell's songs, then was able to develop further in this one, and try another variation later, in "Good News First."

**"The Larger Bowl"**

This one is a veritable feast for the drummer—or perhaps a selection of tasty hors d'oeuvres delivered on a series of silver platters (or, better yet, ever-larger bowls). Nearly every section of the song is different, from laying out completely, to simple accompaniment in a '60s mode (cue Hal Blaine), to wildly syncopated fills. I had a rare opportunity to play tambourine, both sampled and real, and the "Diamondback" Paragon, with its tambourine jingles, can be heard clearly here during the long, gradual build-up section under the fifth verse. (Our longtime co-producer, Peter Collins, always called that sort of pumping, 8th-note build a "flying brick." This variation, gradually rising through the whole verse, was Booujze's excellent idea.) That serpentine cymbal also appears as an accent in a couple of choruses and the guitar solo.

The instrumental bridges offered tempting little gaps for drum fills, naturally, and once again, Booujze encouraged me to go crazy. So I did. (A little Manu Katché and Joey Heredia in there, I think. And a little of my own more passive-aggressive approach.)

From the beginning, I tried to convince Booujze I was more of a compositional drummer than an improviser, but he kept trying to push me "into the wilderness" in parts like that. Once we had recorded a good, solid take, he would ask me to go out and try it once more, and "go crazy." Gamely, I would try to lose my sanity, while still keeping time. Once in a while, I would pull off something special (even if only just), and Booujze would give a devilish smile

(while air-drumming along with the playback), and add that moment to the master drum take, rimshots and all.

In the early years, I was fussy about wanting to record a single performance, or—in the days of analog tape and razor blades—use minimal editing, without changing or fixing anything artificially. However, there was certainly nothing artificial about those events—they were, after all, insane—and I couldn't deny the excitement in those one-off moments, something edgy, daring, and dangerous. I think the listener must sense that the poor guy has never played that figure before, and just barely pulled it off and got back to "1." That might give a little thrill to the listener—as it certainly does to the drummer.

These days I know I am capable of playing the entire song in one pass, and maybe even getting it reasonably "right." However, to whatever degree, that goal requires a safe, conservative approach. Like playing in front of an audience, you don't take ridiculous chances (unless you're a gifted improviser, of course—apparently some guys are!). For me, once I've captured that "accurate" take, there's nothing wrong with trying to capture a few moments of...if not "sublime inspiration," at least "sublime desperation."

**"Spindrift"**

Once again, lots of "feel" work in this song. Beginning with the punches and rolling hi-hat, it steps through several different movements, and the parts are deceptively simple. Detail is the god here. The first verse, for example, uses only 8th-note bass-drum accents, while the second one introduces 16th notes, to kick it up a little.

The whole song is a "muscular" performance, and I had to concentrate hard on laying it down, and on locking in with the vocals. That is sometimes an underrated part of drumming, and of being an accompanist, but if you're playing a song, with words and music, the singing is often considered...oh, let's say, "important." For that reason, and perhaps because I write the lyrics, I give a lot of attention to the vocals, trying to frame them effectively and unobtrusively, while punching them up rhythmically when I can.

Years ago I saw a documentary on the making of *Who's Next*, and Roger Daltrey was talking about how much Keith Moon, for all the apparent wildness of his drumming, was actually very sensitive to the vocals. Daltrey

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## NEIL PEART

the handy pair of sticks and practice pad on his coffee table.

During the previous few years I had attended some brilliant live performances too, appreciating a couple of younger drummers, Joey Heredia and Keith Carlock; two in my time of life, Steve Smith and Danny Gottlieb with Jeff Berlin; and a much older drummer, Roy Haynes. I attended Roy's performance with Freddie Gruber, Jim Keltner, Ian Wallace, and Joey Heredia, and between sets we all met with Roy and Ndugu Chanler backstage—quite a “drum summit!” But seeing Roy play with such joy and musicality at the age of eighty

was plenty inspiring, especially to someone almost thirty years younger than him—a mere beginner!

It will be understood, I hope, that the idea of being inspired by other drummers like that isn't to “get ideas.” It's more about listening to great players and thinking to yourself, “That's how good I want to be.” You get fired up to try to raise your game, and that's the spirit in which I showed up at the studio to start working on what would become Rush's nineteenth studio album, *Snakes And Arrows*.

I also showed up equipped with the finest tools of my trade. Early in 2006, DW had built

## TRACK BY TRACK *continued*

demonstrated that quality by playing a bit of the multi-track tape of “Behind Blue Eyes,” soloing the drums and then adding the vocals. Keith was clearly doing what I describe—framing the vocals, punching them up with accents—even though in his case it might have been his natural, instinctive musicality rather than my studied approach. (And even that might well be a subtle, enduring influence from my youthful enthusiasm for Keith Moon's drumming.)

Between vocal lines in the choruses, I was able to come up with more of those fills launching from the left floor tom (even deliberately *repeating* one—to Booujze's shock—but hey, sometimes repetition can be *effective*). Toward the end of the song I round those off with a descending fill of alternating 16ths and 8ths across the bar line, like early Michael Giles—another affectionate tribute.

It was Booujze's idea to reprise the intro after a false ending, and once again he urged me to go crazy in it. So I did. We rarely use fadeouts these days, but this one seemed inevitable, and I was pleased to find that Booujze was amused, as I have always been, by the notion of putting a “comedic” fill right at the bottom of a fade.

### “The Main Monkey Business”

Where to begin with this one? A long, complicated instrumental, this was a tour-de-force to write, arrange, and perform, requiring far more time in each of those capacities than any of the other songs (or several of them put together). Drumwise, it took me about three days just to *learn* it, and countless times through to compose and refine the drum part.

The verses are an intricate, African-style pattern of toms (plenty more “flamaddles”), China cymbal, x-hat, and snares-off snare, augmented with a tambourine sample played with a foot trigger on my left, and a deep tom sample on the “1.” I also added occasional samples of sleigh bells, guiro, and one new sonic discovery, a slowed-down whistle that appears only once, in the third verse. I felt it had a “haunting” effect, and it's interesting how familiar noises like that can be transformed by detuning them—I've used the same trick before with clave samples.

I had intended to play this entire piece of music with the snares turned off—just for fun, really, a thematic challenge, but also because I thought that darker sound would suit its atmosphere. Booujze had agreed at first, but while we were recording the song, he suggested trying the piccolo snare for the guitar solo. That little side drum lives on my far left, and I was riding on the Paragon “Sidewinder” on the far right, so it was quite a stretch from all the way over *there* to all the way over *there*—oh, and play bass drum and foot-triggered tambourine as well!

That improvised juggling act was also a tribute to Gump and Rich, in a way, because all at once I started playing that piccolo snare for the first time—*ever!* However, Gump had the drum up there, tuned and ready; Rich turned on the mic and I whacked the drum a couple of times for him; then we continued recording. Just like that, without any “technical delays.” Wonderful.

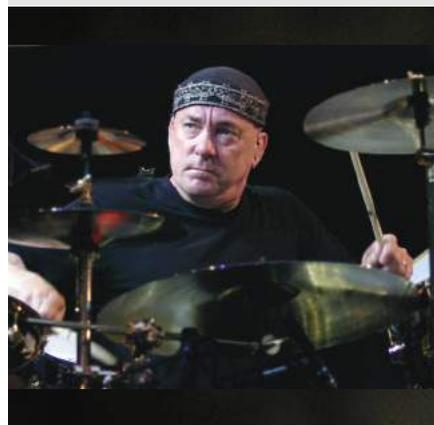
A couple of weeks after recording “Monkey Biz,” Booujze decided he wanted to hear snares in the choruses, so he tried adding that sound artificially, by using a sample from my under-snare mic in another song. (On that subject, Rich's professional pride would demand the assurance that this was the *only* time we ever used a sample with real drums, reflecting his contempt—and mine—for the modern habit of replacing real snares and bass drums with “punchier” samples, as a matter of course.)

In this case, the added sound of the snares was no problem for me, if Booujze thought it worked better—I could easily have played it that way, after all. (Though we all know it's not always that easy to “choreograph” flicking the snares on and off in mid-song.) Most fascinating to me is hearing how the *placement* of those snare beats in the choruses remains slightly different—lazier, less urgent—because I played the drum with the snares off. I heard it differently, and thus played it differently, with a more laid-back feel.

In those choruses, once again I dared to actually repeat a couple of fills—the “flying brick” bits with Geddy, as a deliberate percussive motif for us to pound on, and the long, triplet-feel, snare and floor tom fills in chorus two and three (they sound like



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## NEIL PEART

me a "West Coast kit," intended for some recording work with my friend Matt Scannell, in California. Designed as a pure musical

instrument, not so much for "show," the finish was tastefully subdued in tobacco sunburst with chrome hardware. When I used

that kit to record three songs with Matt in June of that year, I knew it wasn't just the West Coast kit anymore—it was my kit. The

## TRACK BY TRACK *continued*

"falling down the stairs," I think), mainly because I finally figured out how to do those without getting "wrong-handed" at the end!

The solo drum fills over the end section were entirely improvised (Booujze sending me out to go crazy again). Similar to the chorus fills mentioned above, I had been working on angular, across-the-time triplet-feel figures (Latin in derivation, I would say), so that ambition shows up here. I was also pleased to get in a quick, open single-stroke snare roll—in the style of Buddy, Mel Lewis, or Joe Morello (all that in 1.5 seconds and about twelve notes). That mental and technical collage (let's call it) *definitely* only happened once, and not all at the same time, so I'm kind of hoping we won't play this song live—so I don't have to learn that section!

But we'll probably have to play it. It might be a beast, but it's also a feast.

A drums-only mix of "The Main Monkey Business" can be heard on [www.neilpeart.net](http://www.neilpeart.net).

### "The Way The Wind Blows"

Simply put, this is my favorite track on the album—as drummer and listener. It's just got everything. The opening montage of rolling tom echoes and rudimental snare (in three again) dives into the "electric blues" section (a collective channeling of our earliest influences), then the jagged, syncopated drive of the verses. That drum pattern was Booujze's idea, at the last possible minute. While I was out in the studio recording the song, he called me into the control room to discuss the verses. I had been playing them with combinations of 16th-note hi-hat patterns and bass drum and snare accents, but Booujze wanted them to be more "active." Typically, he air-drummed something like "bada-da-bop, da-bada-da-bop, da-bada-da-bop, da-bada-bop, badala-badala, booujze."

So... I had to come up with four new verses, just like that. However, once again that gives those parts a nice seat-of-the-pants quality. The bridges and choruses called for more 3/4 tom patterns and ride cymbal articulations, and I was happy to answer that call! Booujze's suggestion that I might try playing real timpani in the choruses instead inspired a timpani approach to the tom fills. (A couple of Nick Mason-type jobs toward the end, too, I would say. I have always liked his fluid, laid-back approach to timekeeping and fills, but never really played that way myself before.) In the second blues section, Booujze suggested I put in a fast buzz roll, so I whipped off a floating single-stroke burst that remains one of my favorite moments—again, to listen to and to play.

### "Hope"

The most perfect drum track I have ever recorded. (Ha ha!)

### "Faithless"

This is another arrangement tour-de-force, combining lots more 3/4 and 4/4 combinations, but in quite a slow tempo for us. Early in the songwriting, Geddy had half-jokingly lamented, "Why do all our songs have to be so *fast*?" Despite the obvious association with our name (and our natures—we come by it honestly), we decided to try something a little less frantic. This song achieves a stately majesty as a result, especially in the choruses. (In fact, the choruses are slowed down even more, by two beats-per-minute—the first time we've tried that device. It is hardly noticeable to a listener, or even to me while I played it, but gives the arrival more *weight*.) A slower tempo also gave me a different framework for fill construction and placement, allowing me to explore some fresh directions in that area.

A couple of the little hi-hat figures before the bridge vocals were particularly fun to try, and I guess those bridges (in three again, or six, as you

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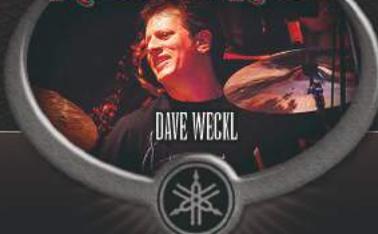
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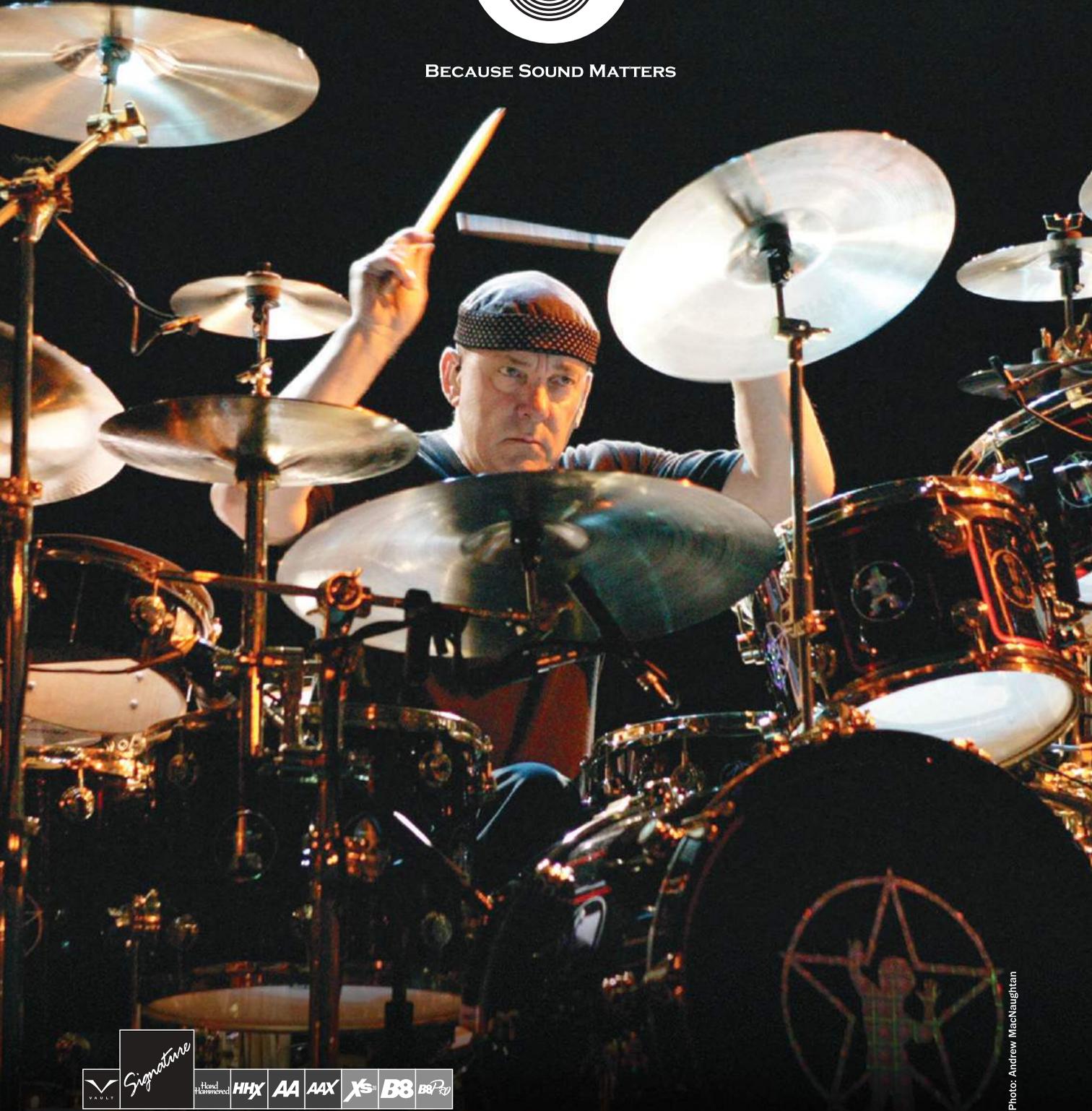


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## NEIL PEART

individual drums sounded so great, and married so perfectly as a set (a tribute to the hands and ears of the "Wood Whisperer," John Good, at DW), that I had them shipped to Toronto for the preproduction work in September and October.

Those drums represented some of John Good's experiments with VLT (Vertical Low Timbre), where one or more of the wood laminates would be laid vertically to the shell, rather than around the circumference. John had demonstrated the principle to me by holding up two 13" shells of bare, unfinished wood, and tapping them with the side of his hand. The VLT shell was a full tone deeper.

John and I have always agreed that a drum shell has a fundamental note (one of the insights that attracted me to working with John and DW—that and sitting in a recording studio beside Joe Morello while he made his DW drums sing). Consequently, these VLT shells, even fitted with hardware and heads, are able

### TRACK BY TRACK *continued*

wish) stylistically kind of reference early Bill Bruford and Phil Collins. A little Nick Mason returns in the verses and choruses—though maybe there's some "me" in there, too, being passive-aggressive again. And one more great drummer to mention: I recently heard "Purple Haze" on the radio, and was immediately reminded of the influence Mitch Mitchell has been on my drumming. I think you can clearly hear his inspiration on a few of the fills I played near the end of this song.

I liked Booujze's idea for the delicate military snare roll trailing off at the end. We drummers call that an "existential metaphor." (Don't we?)

#### "Bravest Face"

Like "The Larger Bowl," this one is another drummer's feast. Dynamics range from... well, *nothing*... to delicate double-stroke snare work, subtle timekeeping and vocal-framing, staccato punches, all the way out (and "way out" it is) to semi-chaotic, machine-gun fills. (For once, those were not Booujze-inspired—but fairly tightly composed.) The drums follow the vocals pretty closely once again, both framing and accenting, and in fact, in the last chorus where Geddy sings "there's no magical place," Booujze suggested that lyrical change from "magic" because the extra syllable would kick with the drums better. So sometimes it goes both ways.

Generally, I stayed away from the splash cymbals on this record, because—much as I like them—it seems to me they are a little too "common" lately, not to say overused (Booujze agreed). However, there's one little whim I've long wanted to find a place for—a staccato, choked splash figure like Gene and Buddy used to do. I put one in at the beginning of the second verse, and it makes me smile every time I hear it.

#### "Good News First"

When Alex and Geddy first start putting a song together, sitting in the studio with guitar,

*continued on page 93*



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## NEIL PEART

“My bandmates have a habit of adding or dropping beats in ways that seem sensible to them. I suppose it’s a vote of confidence that they take for granted I’ll be able to ‘handle’ those anomalies.”

to resonate more fully at a lower pitch, and that is great for the bass drum, the floor toms, and—unexpectedly—the snare drum.

In past years, I’ve tended to bring quite an arsenal of snare drums into the studio. Certain songs might require, say, the depth and pres-

ence of the DW Edge, or the bright crack of a bamboo shell. My drum tech, Lorne “Gump” Wheaton, would often consult with me on that, listening from the control room and suggesting alternatives.

This time we had that same arsenal to choose from, but once I started playing these songs with that VLT snare drum, I never touched another. For one thing, it was wonderful to play, that subjective quality of responsiveness to delicate rudiments or full-out “woodchopper’s ball” backbeats, and objectively, it was wonderful to listen back to. Whatever song I happened to be working on, the snare sound was always simply right. Neither Gump nor I ever thought, “maybe something brighter,” or “maybe something darker”—the VLT was the perfect drum for the job on every song, and that is something of a miracle (a drummer’s version, anyway).

On Day One of working on a new project, I tend to walk around my drums and look at the setup, wondering if I can change anything—move some toms around; change the cymbal array, whatever—just to shake things up. After more than forty years, I have pretty much evolved a layout for the instrument that works best for me (a drumset is like a personal “orrery”—one of those models of the solar system with the planets in their correct orbits), but that doesn’t mean it shouldn’t be reexamined at a time like that, when the slate is clean.

This time I didn’t come up with any big changes, but a few of the songs made me start imagining some different cymbal textures I might be able to use. When I was a teenager, just starting to play drums, I bought a length of chain from the hardware store to hang on my ride cymbal, to emulate the sound of the riveted cymbals I couldn’t afford. I shared that memory with Mark Love at Sabian, and told him I was thinking about reintroducing a riveted cymbal, maybe a China-type. Mark sent me a few prototypes like that, and also some more “adventurous” variations, with holes in them, or—the most successful one—a China cymbal with a gentle attack and soft swell, and tambourine jingles alternating with the rivets. That proved to be a magic combination, and I used it a lot.

(When Sabian introduces that model as part of our Paragon line, I want them to call it the Diamondback, or the Sidewinder. Because it “rattles,” of course. There are snakes in the album title, too, now that I think of it. I wonder if Sabian would go for bad jokes as product

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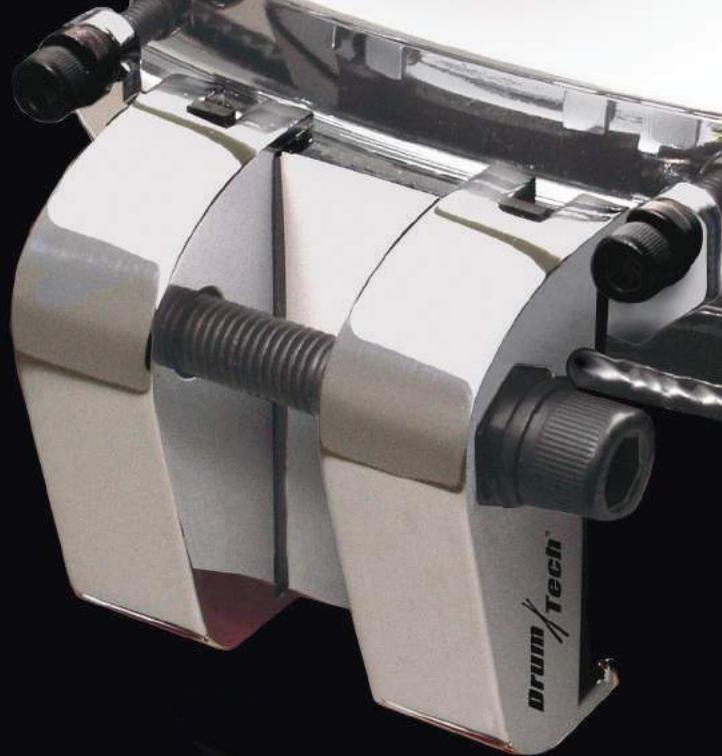
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names. Like this other idea I have for a new line of cymbals based on drummer jokes: There would be a thick, dull crash called the Slackjaw; one with long, dangling rivets called the Drooler; a Daliesque iron plate crudely

hammered with stones, called the Troglodyte...)

Anyway, back on Planet Drum—the heads were another DW invention, or at least variation, called “Coated Clear.” (Okay: names

again. I complained to John Good about that unimaginative title for such an innovative musical accessory, but he just smiled. I couldn't help noticing that he didn't ask me for suggestions. But really, what about something



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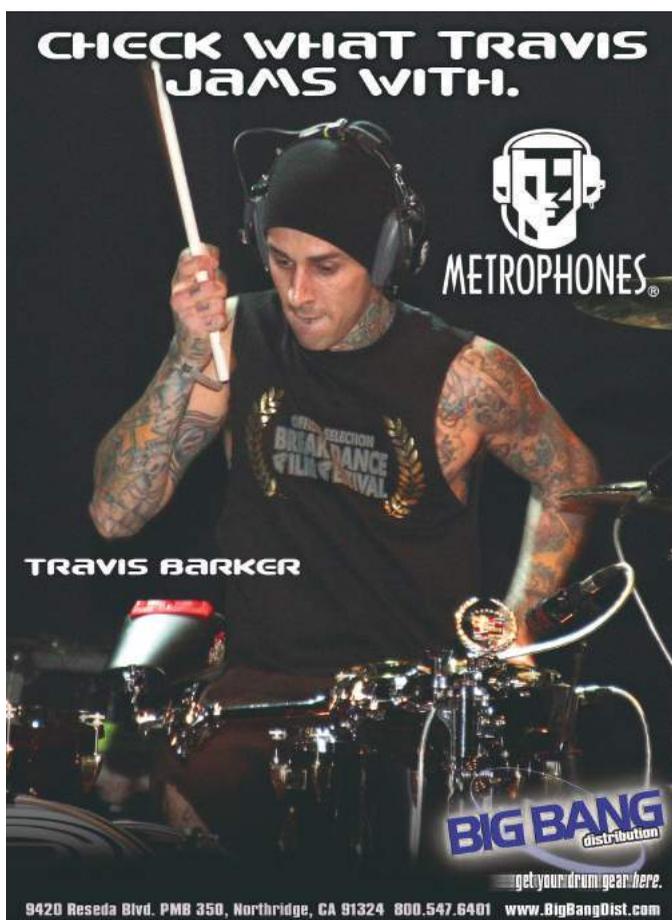
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## NEIL PEART

to complement that cymbal line, but the opposite—like the new Mensa line of heads? [Mensa “heads”—come on! That’s genius!] And just think of the endorser quotes: “The new Einstein heads are brilliant!” “My Michelangelos totally rock!” “Man, these Aristotles are, like, the Golden Mean!”) Sorry,

cracking myself up again.

For now, alas, those heads are humbly known as Coated Clear. They consist of a clear plastic surface circled by a thin white ring, but with brief “interruptions” at three, six, nine, and twelve o’ clock. Apart from helping us drummers learn to tell time—as earlier batter

heads with numbers at each lug helped us learn to count—they offer a perfect combination of resonance and warmth.

While I rehearsed and recorded, a drift of sawdust and kindling gathered around my feet, the remains of what had once been Pro-Mark “signature” 747 sticks. (Like my drums and cymbals, I love them—so I have to kill them.)

The songwriting sessions are always a great time to try out new gear, and I experimented with the new-generation Roland V-Drums, the TD-20. I asked Gump to surprise me with a different preset every day, so when I put on the headphones and sat down to play them, I wouldn’t know what was going to come out—symphonic percussion, tablas, or techno noises. That kept things interesting, and for the first time in many years I used a few electronic pads and triggers while recording—sampled tambourine and ethnic percussion in “The Main Monkey Business,” and a sheet-metal sample I’ve had since the ’80s, called



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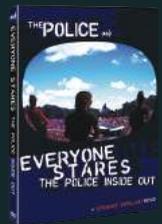
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## NEIL PEART

"Metasmack" (used on "Time Stand Still" and "Mission," for example), in "Armor And Sword."

Our recording engineer, Rich Chycki, had worked with Alex on the mixes for our R30 DVD, and we'd been impressed by his translation of our live sound. Rich also recorded us once in a Toronto studio for a Tsunami Benefit version of "Closer To The Heart," with Ed Robertson from Barenaked Ladies and "Bubbles" from the Trailer Park Boys. I was really impressed with Rich that day, because once Gump had assisted him with the mic check ("bang-bang-bang, boom-boom-boom,

ting-ting-ting"), I just sat down and played. No messing around, no soul-destroying repetitive hits on each drum (I always make Gump do that, so I don't get worn down before I even start playing); I just had to play my drums with the band, while Rich recorded them exactly as they sounded.

That sounds so simple. Of course, recording a drumset is a massively complex challenge, especially one like mine, with so many drums and cymbals. Given Gump's expert setup, care, and ear for the tuning I like, plus Rich's meticulous mic placing and knob twiddling, all I had to worry about was playing well (and

that's plenty). In my opinion, the combination of that wonderful room at Allaire, those great-sounding DW drums and Paragon cymbals, and Rich's discriminating ears, gave me the best drum sound I've ever had. The day we finished my drum tracks, I said to Rich and our co-producer, Nick Raskulinecz, "I have never enjoyed the recording process so much, nor been so satisfied with the results."

After these many years, and these many recordings, that is saying a lot.

As for our method of recording, here's how I described it in a story written to accompany the release of Snakes And Arrows. "After more than thirty years of recording together, the three of us felt we achieved our best results by concentrating on one performance at a time. Even if we were playing alone to a recorded guide track, it was still us, and we 'meshed' automatically. Still, we remained open to other methods, and at Nick's direction, sometimes I recorded the drum track to the guide by myself; sometimes Geddy and I played together; and sometimes Nick wanted all three of us out there. Once he was satisfied that we were getting the most from each part of every song, we concentrated on getting the best drum performances. Then Geddy could take a similarly focused approach to rerecording his bass parts to them."

The guide track is recorded on computer, and driven by a click track, but I no longer consider that a limitation—more another kind of "guide." In my first instructional DVD, A Work In Progress, I talked about the "elasticity" of time, how with experience and understanding I've learned to work within metronomic time and make it seem to pull back, or push forward, or even pause for a millisecond, while still remaining in sync with the click.

When I'm rehearsing for live performance, I like to have a blinking-light type of metronome nearby, so I can glance over once in a while to "check in." That wouldn't work so well in recording, when the constant click is needed to facilitate overdubs and such. But in the studio, I mix the click track with the other instruments and vocals in my headphones, and I play to them all.

As another drummer once remarked about recording to a click, "If you can't hear it, you know you're in." Your accurate beats will mask that sound, and the apparent "absence" can be comfortable and reassuring. In fact, you might say, "absence makes the part grow stronger."

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bass, and vocal mic, they use a drum machine for tempo and accompaniment. Alex does the programming, sometimes coming up with highly unusual parts that can inspire me with a non-drummer's vision—especially a great non-drummer like Alex! The “Neanderthal” verses in this song came about that way. (And naturally I used my Troglodyte cymbals and Einstein heads.)

The hi-hat chokes that alternate in the intro, and again later, are the kind of funky stuff guys like Vinnie Colaiuta seem to pull off effortlessly. For me, they're the result of much work and experimentation, and in this case, playing them with my left hand proved to be the trick. (I used that again in the next song, too—because it was new to me.)

Similarly, I found an effective combination of sticking in the fill in the second chorus. Beginning with a quick snare triplet, my left hand moved up to the 13" tom while the right stayed on the snare, then at the end the left jumps to the cymbal for the 16th-note push with the bass drum. Another variation of that, without the push, appears in the middle eight—which was one of my favorite parts on the album to play. Simple, but it feels so good—classic tension and release, I guess. That part concludes with a brief “hang,” or hesitation, before I tumble down the toms, with snare flams, in an attempted Latin-flavored time sense.

My loose approach to playing behind the guitar solo, and the bridge out of it, channels the spirit of '60s Toronto “blue-eyed soul,” with a bit of Keith Moon—a style known as “Wholiganism.” Those stabbing, triplet figures I mentioned in “Workin’ Them Angels” return going into the last chorus, and these are all results from the Tao of Booujze: “Just go crazy!”

## “Malignant Narcissism”

Near the end of the sessions, with the drum tracks long recorded, I was watching Geddy and Booujze work on vocals. Between takes, while Geddy rested his voice for a minute, he was messing with a fretless bass, just riffing away on it. Booujze started recording some of those riffs over the vocal mic, and he thought it would be cool to put a few of them together to make a short, snappy instrumental to be our (lucky) thirteenth track.

I had been away from the studio for a couple of weeks, but I'd asked Gump to leave up a few pieces of the drumkit for Booujze to mess around on, four drums and four cymbals. Before I knew it, there were microphones around that little setup, and Geddy and I were working out an arrangement. By the end of that day, we had recorded “Malignant Narcissism” (apt title for a bizarre instrumental with show-off bass and drum breaks, it comes from *Team America: World Police*). Soon shortened to “Mal Nar” for everyday working purposes (said with robot voice, “We are from the planet Malnar”), it was intentionally rough and ready, cheap and cheerful, down and dirty, all that kind of thing. Booujze heard me counting off the tempo on my snare rim, and wanted me to start the song like that. My drum breaks represent more “tributes,” the first a variation on one of Buddy's, the second incorporating some mélange of Tony Williams, Terry Bozzio, Steve Gadd, and me.

And yes, it was fun to record it on that basic little kit.

## “We Hold On”

These verses begin very simply, the later ones punctuated with sharp “tattoos” on the high toms. The first jagged one-hander is another Mark Craney dedication, while the others offer nods to several reggae drummers and Latin timbale players, plus Stewart Copeland, Nick Mason, Kevin Ellman (the first guy I ever heard using “concert toms,” with Todd Rundgren's Utopia), and—hey—*me* again! It's always great to find a place for a fill that goes *up* the toms, too, like the last one.

The choruses were influenced by Booujze's ideas (like the little snare “skip”), while the double-bass-pedal fills that repeat (though each time different) between sections were developed in live performance—in my solo, the usual crucible for new developments, but also in one of our oldest songs, “Working Man.” During the past couple of tours, introducing a new style of fills into an old song helped keep it interesting for me. Other variations of that device appear as a repeating motif in “Far Cry,” too.

I can also trace the development of that approach back through the past couple of Rush albums, in double-pedal rhythmic patterns I used in the songs “Test For Echo” and “One Little Victory.” Starting from that foundation, I opened up those patterns and moved them around the kit, finding new variations all the time.

It is also fitting, and fun, that this final song concludes with the kind of “rock flourish” we might use to end a song onstage. Taking note of that, and some of these other observations, I can't escape a gnawing realization; apparently playing live is good for my drumming.

Well, yeah, I know—“Elementary, my dear Einstein.”

And yes, the high-intensity “elevation” that only comes from live performance is partly why I'm about to start rehearsing for another tour. Anyone who knows anything about me knows I do not love touring—but I can say I love *preparing* for a tour. Building up to performance condition, playing through all the songs again and again until I get them smooth and strong, and facing the challenge of putting the sets together, composing a new solo and rehearsing it, all of that, for weeks and months before the first show. It's a worthy achievement, and feels good to accomplish...the first time. After we get through the first show or two in front of an audience, the Sisyphian repetition starts to weigh on me.

Not drumming, though, or songwriting and recording. Certainly my favorite part of the job is getting together with Alex and Geddy in some little studio to exchange new ideas for words and music. And that exciting first day, walking around my drums and thinking, “Hmm...what can I change?”

Or playing through a new song the first few times, stopping to listen back and make adjustments as I go, but not feeling I'm really “getting” it. After a few hours of that, I'm ready to quit. Then I come in the next morning and listen, and suddenly the flaws seem less apparent, somehow.

“Hey, that's not so bad!”

“Maybe I won't quit after all.”

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From Memphis, With Groove...



# THE TOP-25 STAX DRUM TRACKS

by Patrick Berkery

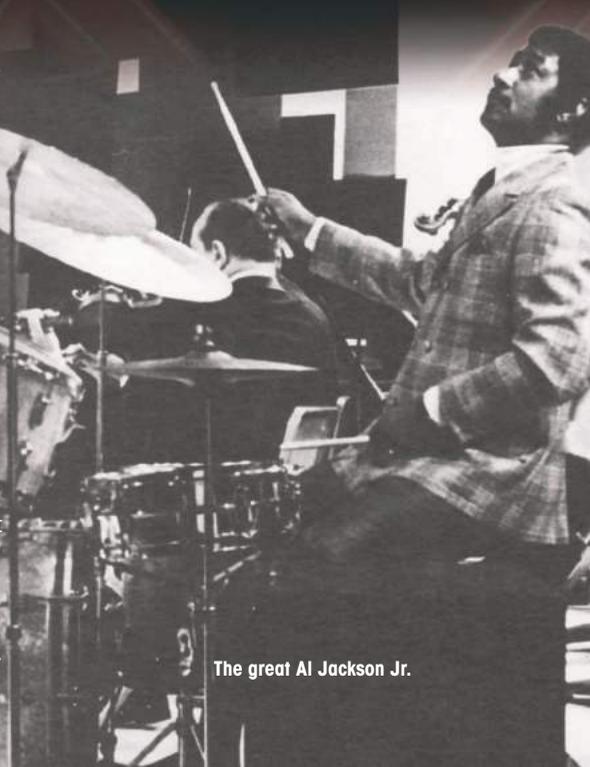
**A**rguing about the superiority of the two definitive American R&B labels—Stax and Motown—makes for one of the all-time great musical debates. You can defend the sweetness of Motown’s arrangements in contrast to the raw, southern soul of the Stax recordings. Or what about comparing Motown staff composers like Holland-Dozier-Holland to the Stax in-house songwriters Isaac Hayes and David Porter? And if you *really* want to start some static, pit Motown house band The Funk Brothers against Stax’s Memphis-bred wrecking crew, Booker T. & The MG’s.

Man, the latter argument has ruined friendships and torn families apart. It’s a tough one, as both units made some of the most important American music ever crafted. Just as important, both were racially mixed bands of musical brothers plying their trade at volatile times, in volatile regions.

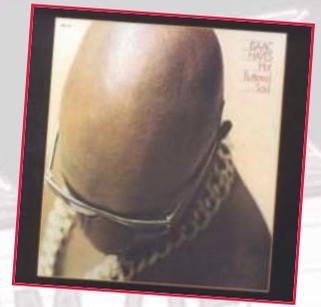
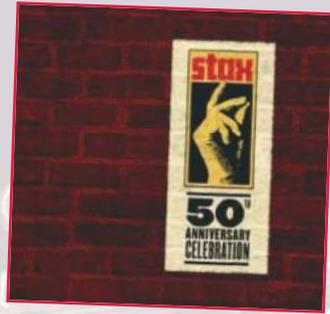
Let’s call it a draw for now and focus on Stax, for this year is the storied Memphis label’s fiftieth anniversary. They’re commemorating this occasion with a slate of reissues (like the new two-CD *Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration*) and a full-scale revival of the label.

Specifically, let’s focus on the drummers of Stax. Headed by the legendary Al Jackson Jr., with solid, tasteful players like Willie Hall and Carl Cunningham answering the bell when called upon for a session or live date, they gave the label’s recordings an often-imitated, impossible-to-replicate sense of groove and grit. They laid down beats that fit snugly in the pocket of a Duck Dunn bass line, and delivered smart fills that punctuated classic hooks in songs by Sam & Dave, Otis Redding, and The Bar-Kays.

The sound was lean, live, and fevered, the byproduct of a few mics, little separation, and another session usually just around the bend. The Stax drummers provided the heartbeat for “Soulsville, U.S.A.,” with classic performances like the Top 25 examined here.



The great Al Jackson Jr.



**25) "Burnt Biscuits" (1961), Howard Grimes  
The Triumphs (The Complete Stax Singles  
1959-1968 box set)**

Of all the one-and-done artists throughout Stax's history, The Triumphs stand out for this snappy instrumental that's more Chicago blues than southern soul. Howard Grimes uses the rim and muted snare taps in true Chess Records style, creating a chugging rhythm that keeps perfect time under wailing harmonica and fleet-fingered organ solos.

**24) "When You Move You Lose" (1965) Al Jackson Jr.  
Rufus & Carla (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)**

Few could make a martial snare figure sound funky like Al Jackson Jr. Stax's go-to timekeeper drags across the snare like he's in no particular hurry on this steamy call-and-response track from Rufus and Carla Thomas. Listen for the sharp accents Jackson throws in toward the climax, implying a build-up just as the song is fading.

**23) "You Don't Miss Your Water" (1961), Howard Grimes  
William Bell (Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration)**

Many R&B junkies consider this 12/8 ballad to be the first great country-soul hybrid. Grimes' sizzle ride floats in the air like juke joint cigarette smoke, as he plays with a slow and easy touch. That hypnotic sizzle of the cymbal doesn't just glue this gorgeous, understated love song together. It also underscores the narrative.

**22) "Young Man" (1964), Al Jackson Jr.  
The Drapels (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)**

It's what Al Jackson doesn't play on this sassy song that makes it swing. With the drums hot in the mix, Jackson smacks out a strutting groove in the opening chorus, before breaking it down to quarter notes on the hi-hat and kick for the verses. He weaves from chorus-to-verse with a series of syncopated accents, snare rolls, and stuttering kick figures. It's a hidden Al Jackson gem.

**21) "Soul Finger" (1967), Carl Cunningham  
The Bar-Kays (Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration)**

Before a plane crash claimed the lives of Otis Redding and all but two of the original Bar-Kays (Redding's backing band at the time), the act groomed to play understudy to Booker T. & The MG's made a handful of instrumental soul classics. The stomping "Soul Finger" is their most recognizable, punctuated by blaring horns and the late Carl Cunningham's measure-long snare rolls. At some points it feels like he just won't stop rolling. That four-on-the-floor groove he laid down could only come from someone who possessed soul fingers.

**20) "Blue Groove" (1965), Edward Skinner  
Sir Isaac & The Doo-Dads (The Complete Stax  
Singles 1959-1968)**

This is a lazy, jazzy instrumental with co-writer/trumpeter George Hudson blowing some serious raunchiness into the tune. The other co-writer was drummer Edward Skinner, who lays back deep in the pocket, delivering a slow groove that sits perfectly behind the beat. This Stax obscurity is a great example of less-is-more playing.

**19) "Copy Cat" (1972), Willie Hall  
The Bar-Kays (The Best Of The Bar-Kays)**

There's nothing fancy about this party jam, just lots of hootin' and hollerin' and measure-long rolls from Willie Hall that sound like an homage to original Bar-Kays drummer Carl Cunningham. The horns and the female chanting might provide the hooks, but Hall's simple kick-snare-ride groove is what makes you want to shake a tail feather.

**18) "Cold Feet" (1967), Al Jackson Jr.  
Albert King (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)**

Laying it down with a heavy hand and a spring in his step, Al Jackson takes this throwaway Albert King blues back and forth from a mid-tempo grind to a swinging shuffle. These sorts of jarring tempo shifts weren't heard much on Stax recordings, but Jackson and The MG's handle the changes with ease and typical great feel.

**17) "Down Ta My House" (1967), Al Jackson Jr.  
Rufus Thomas (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)**

This punchy dose of R&B has a very poppy hook. And Al Jackson feeds off that undeniable sense of melody, laying down a beat that's snappy but economical. Throughout, he drops in kicks and fills in all the right spots like a great pop drummer should. A track like this shows Jackson could handle any genre.

**16) "Knucklehead" (1967), Carl Cunningham  
The Bar-Kays (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)**

This sweaty workout is a great showcase for all of The Bar-Kays—dig the wheezing harmonica and gritty guitar—but drummer Cunningham owns it. He uses a four-bar solo to turn the groove around, accenting it with hits and kicks in choice spots. It's a mighty funky reminder that Al Jackson had some serious competition in the Stax camp.

**15) "Walk On By" (1969), Willie Hall  
Isaac Hayes (Hot Buttered Soul; Stax 50th  
Anniversary Celebration)**

Isaac Hayes might've poured the heat and the butter into his classic



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Hot Buttered Soul LP, but Willie Hall's bedrock grooves most certainly provided the soul. Hall gave this steamy re-working of the Burt Bacharach-penned classic a sexy thump that lives on through multiple hip-hop samples. His off-the-cuff solo at the end is a bit of spontaneous brilliance.

### 14) "Hold On I'm Comin'" (1966), Al Jackson Jr. Sam & Dave (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

As evergreen a Stax classic as there is, "Hold On I'm Comin'" is pulsed by one of Al Jackson's great in-the-pocket grooves—right hand dancing on the hi-hats, left slamming the snare with authority, right foot mimicking the cymbal pattern to give the song its funky heartbeat. The slightest drag in tempo after the lead vocal enters gives the take even more character.

### 13) "Crosscut Saw" (1966), Al Jackson Jr. Albert King (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

"Crosscut Saw" is the sound of Stax getting dirtier, funkier, and edgier. Al Jackson taps out a jittery pattern on the snare and rack tom that falls somewhere between a Chicago blues groove and a samba. Today Jackson's part still sounds tricky, but it's the perfect foil for blues legend Albert King's slow-talking guitar and sweet vocals.

### 12) "Booker Loo" (1966), Al Jackson Jr. Booker T. & The MG's (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

Lots of moving parts at work in what seems like a pretty simple beat. In this mellow instrumental, Al Jackson accents the 1 and 2 with the rim, then the "&" of 3 and the 4 on the tom-tom. He fills in the blanks with kick beats on the "&s" of 4, 1, and 2. It takes a few seconds to find the 1 at the top. By the time you feel it, you're hooked by Jackson's oddly solid pattern.

### 11) "Said I Wasn't Gonna Tell Nobody" (1966), Al Jackson Jr. Sam & Dave (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

Everyone on this 1966 Sam & Dave chestnut seems under the sway of the burgeoning British blues movement—perhaps none more than Al Jackson, who sweats out a heavy-handed backbeat and lays into the hi-hats with something extra in the chorus. The slightly detuned snare sound hints at the signature deep tone Jackson favored during his Hi Records years.

### 10) "Knock On Wood" (1966), Al Jackson Jr. Eddie Floyd (Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration)

One of the biggest hits of the Stax era features a simple, behind-the-beat groove from Jackson. It feels like he's waiting until the last possible millisecond to hit the downbeat. And that bap-bap-bap-bap snare break that answers Floyd's "I better knock" lyric was Jackson's suggestion, of course. Hooky as the part is, Al got no song-writing credit.

### 9) "Boot-Leg" (1965), Al Jackson Jr. Booker T. & The MG's (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

"Boot-Leg" is a southern-fried, funky strut that probably got many a dance party swingin' during the mid-'60s. And all these years later, this little rave-up could still get a party started, with its sharp horn stabs and Al Jackson's backbone-slipping backbeat. It's one of those classic grooves from Jackson and The MG's where they hit it and quit it in just over two minutes.

### 8) "A Hard Days Night" (1968), Carl Cunningham The Bar-Kays (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

Plenty of R&B artists in the '60s and '70s covered The Beatles. Few spun a Fab song into something as wiggled-out as The Bar-Kays version of "A Hard Days Night." Carl Cunningham registers an amazing drum track. From his slamming groove in the verses, his laid-back feel



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in the bridges, and his tasty fills throughout, it's still more proof that Cunningham wasn't second fiddle to Al Jackson.

## 7) "Wrap It Up" (1968), Al Jackson Jr. Sam & Dave (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

It's all about the right hand and right foot of Al Jackson on this one. He hits the hi-hats hard, making for a sloshy sound that's a nice contrast to the tightness of the rhythm section's groove. And you can't help but think that Jackson's spastic kick pedal work—during the intro, and where he breaks down with Duck Dunn's bass-inspired John Bonham's stuttering kick exploits.

## 6) "I Thank You" (1968), Al Jackson Jr. Sam & Dave (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

Jackson governs the dynamic of this hip-shaking classic with parts that aren't as straightforward as they appear. He pulses the tightly coiled verses with an 8th-note pattern on the snare, twisting the straight feel by accenting every third note. A rumbling roll introduces Jackson's funky chorus groove, which he halts with a crash on the 4 of the last measure. Al doesn't bring the snare back in until the 2 of the verse, giving Sam Moore's vocal room to breathe.

## 5) "Soul Man" (1967), Al Jackson Jr. Sam & Dave (Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration)

"Soul Man" finds The MG's at the top of their powers as an ensemble. Notice how Al Jackson locks right into Duck Dunn's busy bass part in the verse. Then he pushes the groove while leaving room for the vocal hook and Steve Cropper's stinging guitar lead. Jackson delivers tasty parts throughout, especially that fill into the bridge.

## 4) "Theme From Shaft" (1971), Willie Hall Isaac Hayes (Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration)

Hall's chicka-chicka-chicka-chicka might be the most famous 16th-note hi-hat part of all time. Not only does it give Hayes' blaxploitation anthem its signature pulse, the part is pretty much ground zero for

disco. (And that's not faint praise.) There's a lot more to "Shaft" than the hi-hats too. From the odd accents, to the snare fill after the "Can you dig it?" line, this drum track is one bad mutha.

## 3) "Son Of Shaft" (1972), Willie Hall The Bar-Kays (Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration)

Here's that hi-hat part again. The difference is that this time Hall throws in some extra kick drum accents, and he locks in with an even nastier wah-wah than before. The copycat intro gives way to an all-out hard funk assault in the verse, which segues into some rat-a-tat syncopation from the entire band.

## 2) "Hyperbolicysyllabicesquedalymistic" (1969), Willie Hall Isaac Hayes (Hot Buttered Soul)

The title? It's a mouthful and a little nonsensical. The groove? That's a whole different story, as The Bar-Kays kick out the jams and lay down some dirty funk during the song's extended vamp. In a brief flash before the chorus, Hall turns the groove around with his offbeat kick pattern, before falling right back into the tight pocket that defines this bit of psychedelic soul.

## 1) "Try A Little Tenderness" (1966), Al Jackson Jr. Otis Redding (The Complete Stax Singles 1959-1968)

The arc of this Otis Redding classic hinges upon Al Jackson's performance, which, for all its relative simplicity, is a prime example of time-keeping as an art form. At the top he plays in a waltz-like time; then out of nowhere the drummer establishes the 4/4 feel with a simple click of the rim. Jackson then taps softly behind Redding's impassioned vocal before driving the song home with a full-on groove. Today they'd piece something like this together with Pro Tools. Back then? Live to tape, baby.



To hear some of these Stax tracks, go to MD Radio at [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).



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TEEEEEENAGE  
RIOTNIGHT



# DEERHOOF'S GREG SAUNIER

## MINIMAL GEAR, MAXIMUM IDEAS

STORY BY MICHAEL PARILLO \* PHOTOS BY PAUL LA RAIA

DEERHOOF MAY BE FLIRTING MORE THAN EVER WITH MAIN-STREAM SUCCESS, BUT ITS LOOSE-LIMBED TIMEKEEPER ISN'T ABOUT TO START PLANNING THINGS NOW.

**“W**hen I’m playing, I feel like I’m speaking,” says Deerhoof drummer Greg Saunier. “I want to play things intensely and make it very clear, as if I’m trying to get a point across—and of course there is no point. It’s just music.”

Yes, it’s just music, but it’s not just any music. Deerhoof, which Saunier formed in San Francisco in 1994 with now-departed guitarist Rob Fisk, creates a uniquely heady mix of the guttural and the intellectual, the cuddly and the confrontational. More specific description can be tricky, because the band, which once swelled to four pieces but is currently a trio (rounded out by Saunier’s wife, Satomi Matsuzaki, on

vocals and guitars and John Dieterich on guitars), transforms its sound on each album.

There are some constants. Drawing from an array of influences—“The three of us couldn’t be more different in terms of our background,” Saunier says—Deerhoof dips liberally into melodic pop, thrashing punk-influenced indie rock, and even syncopated funk. Saunier has listened to lots of classical music, and he earned college and grad-school degrees in musical composition. As a result, the band’s output bears certain hallmarks of avant-garde and orchestral work: whisper-to-roar dynamics, odd meters, turn-on-a-dime feel shifts, and a free-flowing sense of time.

**O**nstage, armed with little more than a kick, snare, and some sort of cymbal—lately it's been a remote hi-hat, but that could change—Saunier sits low and unleashes a torrent of frenetic energy on the modest setup around him. On record, he's more of a mad scientist, capturing a flow of ideas in Deerhoof's digital laboratory and then tinkering with parts, often for months, until the noble gases of imagination have solidified into finished pieces of music.

Friend Opportunity, released in January, again finds Deerhoof walking its beloved line between the accessible and the far out, with some tunes covering so much ground that they seem much longer than their compact running length. Matsuzaki's playful melodies and words—often just syllables—help keep things light and airy on top, while down below Dieterich stabs at rich, dark chords and Saunier whips up dense percussion parts, some animated by cowbell and woodblock sounds, others seeming electronic in timbre.

We spoke to Greg just before he left San Francisco for an Australian and European tour. He mused expansively on Deerhoof's "accidental" aesthetic and the virtues of using a small kit, and he described a way to practice that just might save you a few bucks on a rehearsal space.



**MD:** When did you start drumming?

**Greg:** I joined the school band on snare drum in third grade. And I played drums a lot just with my teeth. You'd get different sounds—or really just vibrations, privately, for yourself. You could use the molars to get the bass drum and the front teeth to get higher sounds. [laughs] I can't really remember when I started playing drumset, but I was in a rock band with some friends in middle school, where just having a repertoire of more than one song seemed like the most exciting thing in the world.

**MD:** Did Deerhoof have musical goals in the beginning?

**Greg:** No. It's amazing how that's stayed the same. It's a bunch of accidents piling up. If we think we've gotten a good formula for how to write a song, or how to play, or just how to be in the band, that formula ends up getting destroyed the next day. It can't be applied twice.

**MD:** When Satomi joined in 1995, she had zero musical experience. What made you want to play with her?

**Greg:** Well, how Deerhoof started was Rob [Fisk] and I played bass and drums in a grunge band in the early '90s. The rest of the band suddenly quit and moved away—no warning whatsoever. We had shows booked, and either we could do free improvisation or play the bass line and drumbeat from our songs. We ended up doing a combination. As you can imagine, our parts were uninteresting on their own. And we decided to take over the singing, but we weren't sounding too good. [laughs] We were flailing around and sounding wobbly and shaky. We needed a singer.

Satomi had just moved to San Francisco from Tokyo and was staying with a mutual friend. He played her our first single, which we had done as a duo. He said, "Do you want to join this band?" To her it just sounded like noise. And she was like, "Okay!" [laughs] He sent her over, and within seconds I knew it was perfect. She could follow what we were singing to a T. We were playing in this hyper, ridiculously exaggerated style, and she would sing the melodies in the exact opposite way—totally pure, without decoration or expressive signals. There was a tension between her being not expressive enough and us being way too expressive that made the music work well.

**MD:** Now she plays either bass or guitar onstage?

**Greg:** Yeah. She's playing bass now. But we've never settled on anything. Everybody can play a bit of everything, so we've done lots of switching around.

When it comes to the recordings, you never know who might be playing what. It's whoever happened to have an idea and happened to be near the record button. Both John and Satomi play drums too. Our recent CD is layered with percussion, which we hadn't tried much before. I played most of it, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's my part. Even for my own songs, the drums always seem to be the last thing to get fig-

ured out, and I always ask John and Satomi what I should play. I trust them more than I trust myself with what the drum part should be. I don't know why that is.

**MD:** Are your parts tightly composed?

**Greg:** No. The composed version of the part is very simple, which makes it that much more possible to go any direction with it. There's a part for each song, but I never really play it flat out. It's different every time.

I grew up listening to The Rolling Stones so much that I have a deeply ingrained idea of composition versus improvisation—everybody recognizes the songs, yet it's ragged and loose. There's that sense that they're still finding new ways of playing "Satisfaction" or "Jumping Jack Flash," and Keith Richards still has this huge smile as if he's finally found the right way of playing it, after how many thousands of times.

**MD:** Cowbells and woodblocks are all over Friend Opportunity and figure prominently on "The Perfect Me."

**Greg:** That's all Satomi's idea. She just thought they sounded cool.

**MD:** Are you using two main pieces?

**Greg:** I hate to tell the truth, but a lot of that stuff was electronic. I played it, but on triggers. We could play it back using different sounds and make choices after the fact.

**MD:** Did you add to your setup to reproduce those choices live?

**Greg:** No. [pauses] Actually, I did. I have a cowbell now. [laughs]

**MD:** Just one?

**Greg:** I had one of those plastic blocks too, but it cracked pretty quickly. [laughs] I was also having a hard time getting them to stay up on the little stand [mounted on the bass drum]. At the beginning of the show I had one piece facing left and one facing right, but invariably they'd end up on top of each other. Now I just stick to one.

We actually had a band argument after the album was recorded, about whether or not I should buy a cowbell. [laughs] I felt like I didn't have to make it sound like the album. I'm always trying to strip everything down to the bare essentials, and I didn't want to get hung up on a tone. You could do "The Perfect Me" on guitar or piano, or with a string orchestra, and it would still be the song. Anyway, I ended up losing that battle, so I got the cowbell. [laughs] And it's fun.

**MD:** Have you been paring down your setup over time?

**Greg:** Kind of, yeah. In about '96 Satomi and I went to see The Roots. At the time, ?uest-

## GREG'S DRUMS

**Drums:** various

- A. 5x12 Contemporanea snare
- B. 6x20 Pearl Rhythm Traveller bass drum (not in photo)

**Cymbals:** various

- 1. 20"/18" hi-hats (Paiste 20" Traditional light ride over 18" Zildjian K
- 2. 20" crash-ride (rarely used)

**Hardware:** DW remote hi-hat (occasionally used), any brand bass drum pedal (felt beater, tight spring tension)

**Heads:** Remo coated Ambassador on snare batter, coated Emperor on bass drum batter with Falam Slam Patch, Ambassador on front (no hole)

**Sticks:** Vic Firth Peter Erskine Ride model



### Greg on drum thrones

"I sit very low. Often a pro drum throne won't go low enough. So what I'll do is find a regular folding chair at each venue we play and use it."

## ON THE HOOF

Here are some of Greg Saunier's best recordings with Deerhoof:

Artist	Album
Deerhoof	Friend Opportunity
Deerhoof	The Runners Four
Deerhoof	Green Cosmos EP
Deerhoof	Apple O'
Deerhoof	Reveille

### On DVD

Deerhoof live videos—  
<http://deerhoof.killrockstars.com/videos.html>

And here are some of his favorites:

Artist	Album	Drummer
Wayne Shorter	Beyond The Sound Barrier	Brian Blade
Samul Nori	Drums And Voices Of Korea	Samul Nori
The Dramatics	\$100,000	Martha Colburn
Keith Richards	Main Offender	Steve Jordan
Numbers	We're Anima	Isindra Dunis
Wings	Wings Over America	Joe English
The Roots	Game Theory	?uestlove



love was playing a very small drumset. The band completely blew my mind, and he seemed to be the star of the show. It's not because he has a huge drumset or does anything flashy. It's the quality with which he plays, the way he tunes the drums, and the

precision of his feel.

From that point on I've gravitated toward playing just three sounds: bass drum, snare drum, and either hi-hat or cymbal. But I always switch stuff around. It hasn't been just a subtraction year by year.

# GREG SAUNIER



Abstractly, I love the idea of having just the low and the high—the bass drum and the snare drum. You hear that concept in percussion from all over the world, like a djembe or a doumbek. It can make a low sound, and it can make a sharp cracking sound. I love that dialog between the two poles. Also, in percussion around the world there'll often be some sort of metallic or faster sound, something that's more constant—chattering that happens between the low and the sharp sound.

If you use fewer pieces, you realize that any of them makes an infinite range of sounds, even by itself. I'd get confused if I had more—I'm already overwhelmed just reaching for something interesting to play. If I had a large setup and the music was getting stale, I could spice things up by hitting something else. But as soon as I took those sounds away, it forced me to think of interesting ideas rather than just cool sounds. It forced me to be more creative.

**MD:** Are there practical concerns when using just hi-hats and no open cymbals?

**Greg:** [laughs] It's stupid to admit it, but that's the kind of stuff that keeps me awake at night.

**MD:** Well, it's the only metal in your setup!

**Greg:** Exactly. I've tried many solutions, like using bigger hi-hats, so when they're open it does sound like a ride cymbal. And I don't mind crossing my arms, but if I only have a hi-hat, then I have to keep my arms crossed the entire concert, which can get on my nerves.

For a while I put the hi-hats on the right side, but I couldn't open and close them. If I hit hard they would ring a little longer, and if I hit quietly they would make a shorter sound. Sometimes I'd cop out and have a hi-hat and a cymbal. [laughs] I finally bought a remote hi-hat, which I used on our most recent tour. I can use the cymbals I have as ride cymbals or crashes, and now I can use them as hi-hats. I have multipurpose sounds, an "any cymbal." [laughs]

**MD:** You don't travel with a throne because they don't go low enough?

**Greg:** I don't even own one. I used to sit on a milk crate, which was like a foot off the ground. There was something about being really low and hitting the bass drum that felt more powerful than hitting it from way above.

In the early '90s I was really into The Melvins. I love their drummer, Dale Crover,

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## GREG SAUNIER

so much. He had a basic drumset, but everything was enormously oversized. He'd spread his arms out and bash down on it. I had really small drums, and I figured the only way I could get the same sort of appearance was to sit almost on the floor. I'd have to stretch my arms way out to be able to hit things. [laughs]

I thought I was so punk for not even using a throne, but then whenever we traveled to Europe or Japan, I realized I wasn't able to play unless I was sitting on a milk crate. The promoters would run around panicking, and I realized I'd turned into more of a prima donna because of the crate, so I learned to sit on

whatever, at any height. Now it's different every night, and I don't think about it anymore.

**MD:** Are you using electronics much on Friend Opportunity?

**Greg:** Very little—less than it sounds like. A lot of it is me playing, but on electronic sounds. In a couple cases I wasn't near any acoustic or electronic drums but a rhythm came into my mind and I just tapped it out on the desk and recorded it with the computer's built-in microphone. Then I went back and pasted in samples on each of the hits so that the rhythm would be exactly what I'd played. It's a

tedious process, but often the drums don't sound the way I want them to until I go through and, one by one, paste in this bass drum sample from a record every time I hit the bass drum.

**MD:** With so many feel shifts, does it matter to you to be steady tempo-wise?

**Greg:** No, it matters to me to not be steady. It's very important not to feel trapped in a grid. Rubato, the sense of the tempo being fluid and flexible, is such a normal thing in classical music. In a romantic piano solo, they'll slow down at the end of phrases or hold a note, not accenting it by making it louder but accenting it by making it longer.

And sometimes I'll accent things by playing them late. Speaking of Dale Crover, that's another thing that adds intensity to his playing—if you're playing every single note as hard as a human being can possibly hit, what else can you do to create an accent? A lot of times it was playing something late. I think maybe that came from Bill Ward, but Ward was more subtle.

I've been lucky because I've never been in a band that required me to stay at exactly the same bpm from the beginning to the end of the song. At the same time, Satomi does sometimes give me a dirty look because I have a tendency to get too fast. [laughs]

**MD:** Do you ever practice?

**Greg:** I still do the "teeth" practicing sometimes. But most of my practice is mental. I think about ideas, little sentences to say on the drums. It goes in waves—sometimes I'll feel stifled by my own technical limitations and want to figure out how to do new things. But I feel like if I play in my mind or I play in reality, the practice aspect is almost identical, because the mental part is more important to me—coming up with something that has some extra intensity or feeling.

Also, drums are such a loud instrument that I'll often get distracted by the sound. And sometimes my arms and legs start to do things on their own by force of habit, so I like practicing in my mind because it's unattached to any physical thing. Even though it takes arms and legs to play, and I love the physical exertion of playing the drums, I want it to be emotional rather than physical. The point is to play some idea that came from the imagination rather than from the arms or fingers.

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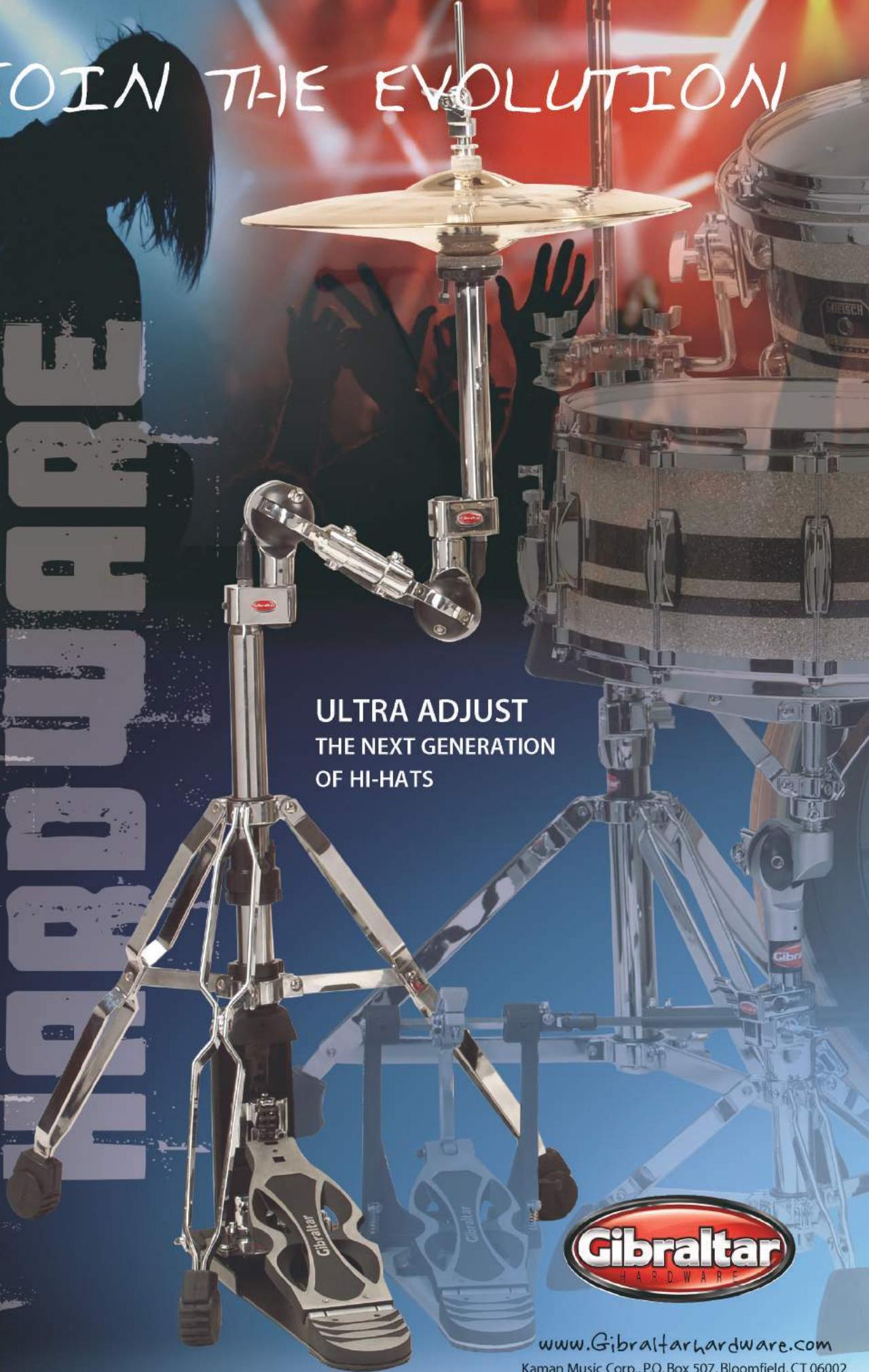
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Studio Great

# Jim Keltner

## Style & Analysis

by Eric Novod

MUSIC KEY		
open	O	C.C.
H.H.	X	X
T.J.	X	X
S.D.		
F.J.		
B.D.		
H.H.	X	
w/foot		

Jim Keltner is often referred to as a “drummer’s drummer.” But his story is a bit more complex than that. Many of us older fans remember Jim as the first-call drummer for most of The Beatles’ solo projects. But younger drummers often fail to make instant connections to Keltner like they do to Steve Gadd, Vinnie Colaiuta, or Josh Freese.



Maybe this disconnect is because Keltner doesn’t have one legendary groove that drummers have to know, like Gadd’s military-style linear beat to Paul Simon’s “50 Ways To Leave Your Lover.” However, Keltner has played on hundreds (if not thousands) of records that are veritable masterclasses in creative, musical timekeeping. So maybe instead of calling him a “drummer’s drummer,” we should think of Jim Keltner as the ultimate “musician’s drummer,” based on his selfless—yet instantly recognizable—style that has graced many of the greatest songs of the past forty-plus years.

### Keltner’s Style

There are two critical elements of Keltner’s drumming style that distinguish him from his contemporaries: his unique sense of time and his seemingly simple but creative grooves.



It’s a given that a successful studio drummer has to have a superior sense of time. But the ability to play consistently and musically with a click track is what separates average players from the greats. For example, a good drummer might be able to keep time to a click, but his or her backbeats might be inconsistent, or the hi-hat pattern may fluctuate from measure to measure. Great studio drummers—like Keltner—have the ability to create musical parts while also having perfect control over the time.

When you listen to Keltner lay down a basic rock groove, it’s an education unto itself. A lot of times his hi-hat patterns stay with the click, while his bass drum or snare shifts either ahead of the beat, behind the beat, or dead on, in order to achieve a certain feel within the song.

Many of Jim’s ideas are simple but deceptively difficult to execute, demonstrating his advanced level of four-way coordination. He often shifts between linear and syncopated grooves, so his drum parts can evolve as a verse or chorus progresses. And he’s incredibly skilled at shifting the dynamics from groove to groove, from section to section, or even from limb to limb.

### Auxiliary Sounds

Keltner often uses more than one snare drum in his setup. This allows him to move to a different sound for different sections of songs without having to change his basic beat. Sometimes he’ll even switch snares mid-groove—playing one drum on beat 2 and a different one on beat 4—in order to add a creative spark to a simple, solid groove.

Keltner also incorporates his hi-hat foot into his ideas. For example, instead of adding a bass drum hit on the “ah” of beat 3 to lead to a backbeat on the snare, Keltner often plays a ghosted hi-hat note (with his foot) for a more subtle sound.

The following transcriptions are specific examples of some of Keltner’s unique ideas, providing insight into one of the most in-demand studio drummers in the history of our instrument.

### “We Can’t Agree,” B.B. King, Live In London (1971)

There’s a lot of rhythmic information packed into this song’s ten-measure introduction. Note how Keltner’s hi-hat foot sub-

stitutes for the bass drum in measure 1. Also check out the barely audible yet essential ghost notes throughout the intro.

In this section, Keltner plays very linearly, choosing his hi-hat spots quite carefully. As the intro progresses, he adds more hi-hat notes until he's developed a completely syncopated groove (measure 7). The accented two-beat snare fill in measure 10 is another common "Keltner-ism." (0:07)

1

**"Married Man's A Fool," Ry Cooder, Paradise And Punch (1974)**

One of Keltner's longest-running collaborations has been with guitarist Ry Cooder. When he's playing with Cooder, Jim stretches out and experiments more than on many other sessions. The following example is an eight-measure break in which the drummer stresses the "e's" of the beats. Jim also incorporates offbeat accents, left-foot ideas, and short, tight rolls in unexpected places. (0:57)

2

**"Josie," Steely Dan, Aja (1977)**

Keltner doesn't disappoint on his contribution to one of the most important drum records of the 1970s. His upbeat hi-hat work and snare drum ghost notes make this track incredibly groovy. The linear fill in measure 4 of Example 3 is a prime example of what many have described as Keltner's "slinky" style. (1:20)

3

**"Five Long Years," Eric Clapton, From The Cradle (1994)**

This example shows how Keltner is always aware of how his drum part connects to the bass line. Notice how he puts a stronger accent on the pick-up to beat 3 than on the accent that follows (measure 1). Similarly, he accents the pick-up to beat 1 of measure 2 stronger than the downbeat. This simple dynamic choice connects wonderfully with the bass player's feel and note choices. (0:00)

4

**"Bama Lama Bama Loo," Elvis Costello, Kojak Variety (1995)**

This Elvis Costello album of R&B covers features some of Keltner's most intense playing. "Bama Lama Bama Loo"'s thunderous opening fill is an example of how the drummer uses creative accents over a measure of 16ths. (0:00)

5

Later in the track, Jim maintains a sense of dynamics, even when playing fills at a fortissimo level. (0:50)

6

**"The Door," Keb' Mo', The Door (1998)**

This groove is a straightforward yet highly creative beat, in which Jim plays a shaker with his right hand instead of the hi-hat. (Sometimes he'll play with a stick and a shaker or maraca.) Also notice how he leads into beat 4 with a left-foot hi-hat on the "&" of beat 3. The laid-back snare roll on the "&" of beat 4 ties the groove together. (1:22)

7

# JIM KELTNER

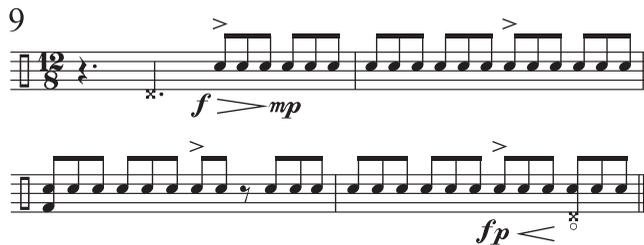
## "It Hurts Me Too," Keb' Mo, The Door (1998)

"It Hurts Me Too" features a snare drum groove with Keltner's usual wide dynamic range. Note the crescendo on the "&" of beat 1 that leads to a rimshot on beat 2. Jim also overdubbed a second hi-hat track that increases in intensity throughout the tune. (0:38)

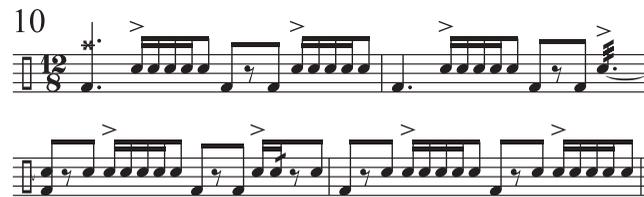


## "Cadillac 1959," Bill Frisell, Good Dog, Happy Man (1999)

This example showcases Keltner's simple groove, dynamic control, and interesting use of the left foot. (1:30)

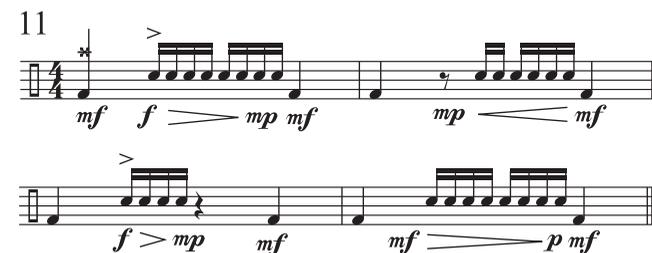


Later in the tune, Keltner is really laying back on beats 2 and 4 in an amazingly consistent way. Note the slight variations between the snare and bass drum rhythms from measure to measure, as well as the development of the rolls on beat 4. (2:17)



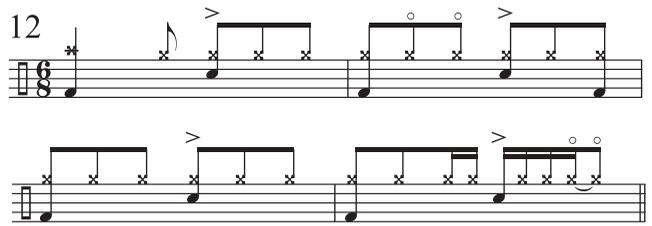
## "Are You Down," Lucinda Williams, Essence (2001)

This example showcases Keltner's wide dynamic contrast and his signature "delay" groove. While Jim usually decrescendos (gets softer) when he plays this type of pattern, here he also adds a crescendo in measure 2. (0:13)

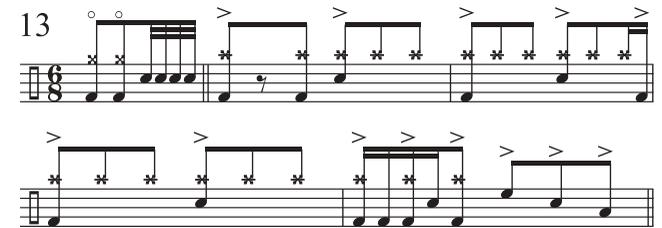


## "America," Simon And Garfunkel, Old Friends: Live On Stage (2004)

Keltner spends most of his time in the studio, but he took a break to go on the road with Simon and Garfunkel for their reunion tour in 2004. In the following example, note Jim's interesting and tasteful decisions on where to open the hi-hat. (1:10)



During the first guitar solo, Keltner digs in more intensely. His bass drum playing is more impressive for its perfect placement and musicality than for its speed. (3:28)



## 20 KELTNER ESSENTIALS

Joe Cocker, *Mad Dogs And Englishmen* (1970)

John Lennon, *Imagine* (1971) and *Rock 'n' Roll* (1975)

George Harrison, *Concert For Bangladesh* (1971)

B.B. King, *Live In London* (1971)

Bonnie Raitt, *Takin' My Time* (1974)

Ry Cooder, *Paradise And Lunch* (1974)

James Taylor, *In The Pocket* (1976)

Randy Newman, *Little Criminals* (1977)

Bob Dylan, *Saved* (1980)

Jim Keltner / Ron Tutt, *The Sheffield Drum Record* (1982)

John Hiatt, *Bring The Family* (1987)

The Traveling Wilburys, self-titled (1988)

Eric Clapton, *From The Cradle* (1994)

Elvis Costello, *Kojak Variety* (1995)

Bill Frisell, *Gone, Just Like A Train* (1997)

Boz Scaggs, *Come On Home* (1997)

Charlie Watts / Jim Keltner Project (2000)

Lucinda Williams, *Essence* (2001)

Simon And Garfunkel, *Old Friends: Live On Stage* (2004)



Keltner has also recorded tracks for: Steely Dan, Albert King, Barbra Streisand, The Rolling Stones, Joe Walsh, J.J. Cale, Leon Russell, Carly Simon, Steve Miller, Jackson Browne, The Bee Gees, Harry Nilsson, Dolly Parton, Harry Chapin, Little Feat, Brad Mehldau, Don Henley, Tom Petty, Pink Floyd, Warren Zevon, Roy Orbison, and many others.

Eric Novod can be reached at [jerseydrum@aol.com](mailto:jerseydrum@aol.com).



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Stone Sour's  
**Roy Mayorga**

Come What(ever) May by Ed Breckenfeld

Ash Newell

**MUSIC KEY**

open	O	R.C.	C.C.
H.H.	•	Bell	•
T.T.	•		
S.D.	•		
F.T.	•		
B.D.1	•		
H.H. w/foot	•	B.D.2	Add 1
			T.T.

**S**tone Sour is Slipknot vocalist Corey Taylor and guitarist James Root's "other" band. The group allows Root and Taylor to explore a more melodic and mainstream sound—and judging by

the success of hit singles "Through Glass" and

"Sillyworld," their vision is paying off. Supplying the rhythmic backbone for the band's second release is Roy Mayorga, an agile rock drummer who moves comfortably between metal pyrotechnics and straightforward alt-rock support. Here are some of his highlight performances.

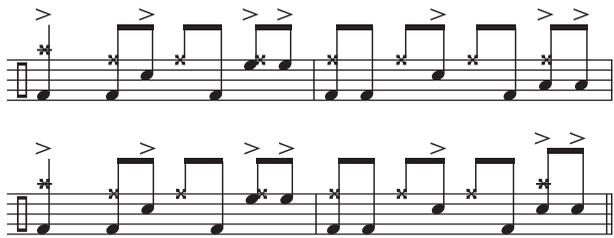
**"30/30-150"**

The album's powerful opening track features Mayorga brandishing some strong double bass chops. This verse groove delivers plenty of energy without getting in the way of Taylor's vocals. (0:25)

The song's half-time bridge gives Roy an opportunity to shine (See Example 2.) His adventurous playing during this section shows off a wide range of techniques, from double-kick bursts to 16th-note, triplet, and 32nd-note single-stroke flourishes.

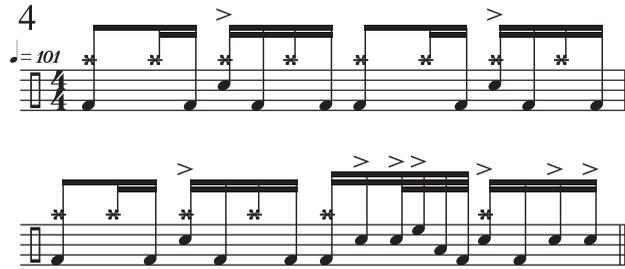
**"Hell & Consequences"**

The contrast between this track's double bass-driven intro and the more open, syncopated verse beat creates a striking effect. (0:11)



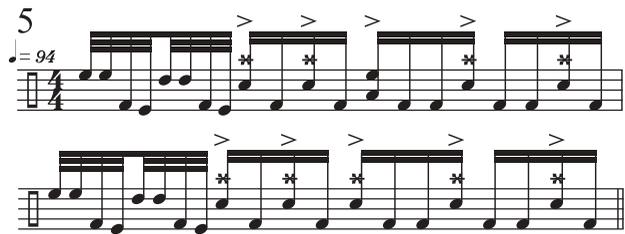
**"Made Of Scars"**

Mayorga's tight groove for the intro guitar riff in this tune contains a short, flashy lick that sets up the verse perfectly. (0:47)



**"Reborn"**

Roy uses tom/kick quads to start each phrase of this song's intro, while the remainder of his pattern matches James Root's guitar riff. (0:00)

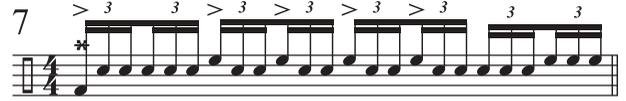


**"Through Glass"**

The album's first hit single starts with an introspective acoustic approach and slowly builds in intensity. Mayorga enters on the third chorus with a funk-infused groove. The fill in the second measure helps punctuate the midpoint of the chorus. (2:04)



Near the end of the tune's climax, Roy lays into this speedy triplet lick. (4:04)



**"1st Person"**

This song is made up of two single-measure grooves built on a driving quarter-note kick drum. The first one propels the verse with a dark, tom-heavy pattern. (0:01)

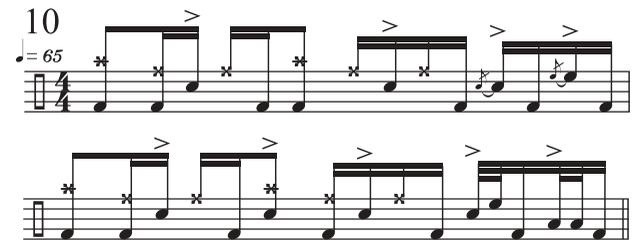


To contrast the verse, Roy brings in the backbeat for the chorus, which also sounds brighter due to the syncopated bell pattern. (0:38)



**"Zzyzx Rd."**

This moody track features the album's slowest tempo, which Mayorga punches with some strong, heavy grooves. Here's his chorus beat, with a few classic fills thrown in. (1:29)



Ed Breckenfeld can be reached through his Web site, [www.edbreckenfeld.com](http://www.edbreckenfeld.com).



Ash Newell



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

4

5

9

17

25



# Playing Bossa Nova With Brushes

## The Funny 2 Pattern

by Henrique De Almeida

One of the most prominent characteristics of bossa nova is its sensual, smooth, and relaxed sound. A key component of that sound is the famous bossa nova clave, which drummers often play as rimclicks. There are, however, occasions where slower and more delicate rhythms are required.

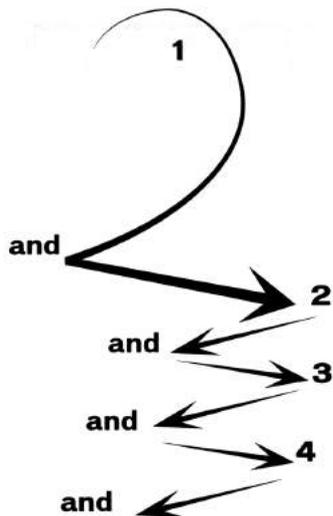
In such cases, it's more suitable to play with brushes than with sticks. One challenge in playing the bossa nova with brushes is maintaining the bossa nova feel. To solve that problem, I developed a brush pattern that stems from what I learned from Brazilian drummers Dom Um Romao and Mauricio Chiappeta and from brush masters Ed Thigpen and Clayton Cameron. The basic concept is to be able to execute rhythmic accents (such as the bossa clave) as legato as possible.

I call the pattern the "Funny 2." It's a nice way to play a delicate bossa nova on the set. Below is a diagram of the right-hand movement, which is in the shape of the number "2." If you want a more staccato sound, try the shape of the letter "Z."

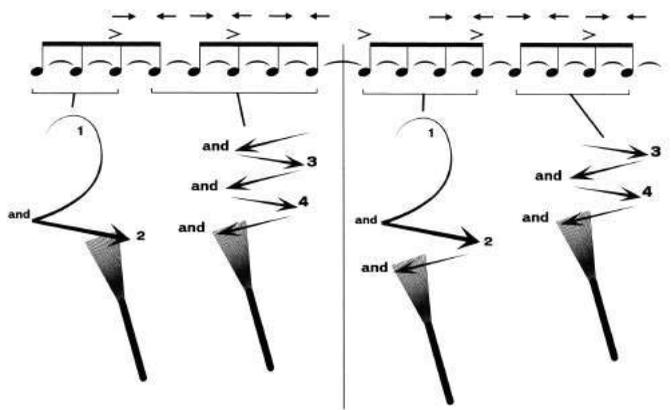
Here are the moves:

- 1) Begin from the top of the number 2, and move clockwise on counts "1 &," sliding to the right with a horizontal sidestroke.
- 2) Move to the bottom of the 2 on count two.
- 3) End with five sliding side-to-side strokes (left-right-left-right-left) on counts "& 3 & 4 &."

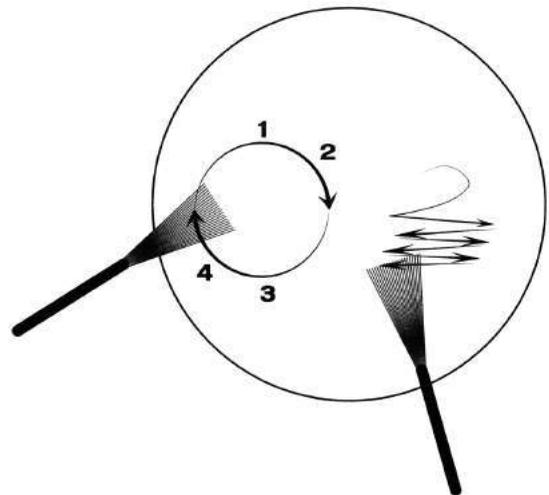
The motion of the right hand on the head should look like this:



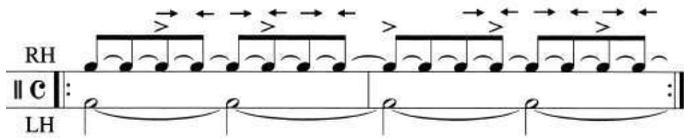
Here's how the Funny 2 pattern looks with traditional notation.



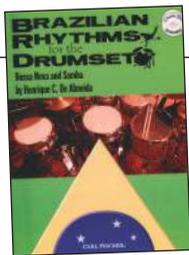
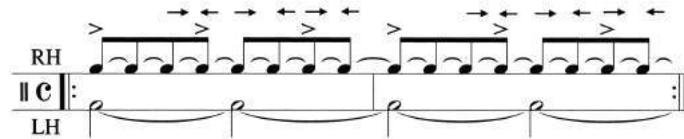
The next two examples use the Funny 2 pattern in the right hand, along with half-note legato sweeps in the left hand. Here's what it looks like:



Now try playing the Funny 2 pattern while accenting the 2/3 clave with side-to-side swish strokes. The left hand continues to sweep half notes.



For our last example, accent the three side of the clave with the right hand, while circling the left hand in half notes.



The examples in this article are excerpted from Henrique de Almeida's book *Brazilian Rhythms For The Drumset*, published by Carl Fischer. Used with permission.



## Which Style Do YOU Need to Work On?

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**Funk:** *Advanced Funk Studies* DVD by Rick Latham – DVD18

**Rock:** *Drummers Collective: Contemporary Rock Styles for the Drums* by Sandy Gennaro – CO5 Book w/CD

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## Chris Pennie's Personal Escape Pad

by Michael Dawson



Paul La Roca

**A** typical practice day for Chris Pennie gets started right around the time that the majority of working-class America is clocking out. "I usually get here around six o'clock," Pennie states. "This place is open from 6:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m., so sometimes I'm here until four or five in the morning."

The "here" that Chris is referring to is a 16x16 practice space at Backroom Rehearsal Studios in Rockaway, New Jersey. The corner room is inconspicuously located on the basement level of a business building that also houses a machine shop and a water company overhead (hence the "off peak" hours of operation).

Once he makes the five-minute drive from his home to Backroom, Pennie quickly gets down to business, whether it's teaching lessons, working on new material, or shedding some polyrhythm ideas. Pennie also uses his space to lay down tracks on a simple home studio setup. "The first thing I'll do is put down any songs that I need to record," says Chris. "I dump everything onto my computer, which has a Pro Tools Digi 001 system and Nuendo on it.

"All of the mics are feeding into the interface," Chris goes on. "I use the two XLR inputs, which have Focusrite preamps, for the room mic—because it needs phantom power—and for the kick. The pre gives the kick a rounder low end. But all the other mics go into the direct ins on the back of the 001. I make those tracks sound better with plug-ins.

"The computer is a five-year-old Sony VAIO. I upgraded the RAM to a gig, but the processor is pretty slow: It's a 1.6 GHz Pentium IV. After I

record my tracks, I dump them onto an external hard drive. Then I can open the session files on a more powerful computer that I have at home. That's where I do any mixing—like adding EQ, compression, and other plug-ins—to the drum tracks that I recorded here. I just use this machine to get down the ideas."

When he's ready to lay down a track, Chris's kit is always miked up and ready to roll. "I use Sennheiser E604s on the toms and snare," says Pennie. "For the money, they sound pretty good. And since they clip onto the drums, I don't need to use stands, which keeps things from getting cluttered. If I had a better mic selection, I'd use a Shure SM57 on the snare. But the 604 is fine. Once I blend it with the condenser—which I use for the room—I can get a decent mix."

Chris's condenser of choice is an affordable Audio-Technica AT3525. "I put it about five feet from the kit," the drummer explains. "I take the signal from it, copy it twice in my computer, and then pan two of them hard-left and hard-right to give me a pseudo stereo sound. Then I take the third one and squash it with a lot of compression to give edge and bite to the drums. This mic makes a *big* difference. If I didn't have it, I don't think I'd be able to get a decent tone. Everything else is blended around it."

In keeping with the basic DIY aesthetic of the space, Pennie captures a massive kick sound by simply tossing an Audix D6 or AKG D112 inside the drum, resting on a pillowcase that he uses for muffling. "The mic is just placed inside the kick. I don't have a lot of stands, but I don't really need them," Chris affirms. "With the right amount of compression



and plug-in effects, the kick sounds pretty huge. Plus, this drum has a lot of natural punch, so there's not a lot that I need to do to it."

So what exactly is he recording during those initial couple of hours? "This is basically a demo studio for whatever projects I'm working on," Chris explains. "I usually record live to get ideas down. Then later on, I'll go back and redo the tracks."

Once he's finished recording, Pennie launches into serious practice mode, often spending the rest of the night (and sometimes a big chunk of the morning) working through various technique books or coming up with his own polyrhythmic brain-teasers. "The main stuff that I'm working on now comes from this interdependence book by Marco Minnemann," says Chris as he files through a stack of practice materials next to his kit. "It's taken me a few years to get into it. Now I've started applying these con-

cepts, like splitting fives between the double pedal and hi-hat."

With such an intense practice regimen, Chris always has manuscript paper and a notebook within arm's reach to keep a record of his progress. "I use the manuscript to notate my own ideas, like

different ostinato patterns or polyrhythmic figures. I also chart out my practice routine, so I know what I need to work on each day."

MP3



To hear a track that Chris recorded in his Woodshed, log on to the Multimedia page at [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).

## Gearing Up

Mapex Pro M kit: 20x22 kick, 9x12 mounted tom, 16x16 floor tom, 7x14 snare. Evans EC2 batters and G1s on the bottom of the toms (no muffling). EMAD batter head on the kick.

Sabian cymbals: HHX Groove Hats, 18" Stage crash, 18 1/2" Explosion crash, 19" Paragon China, HH 21" Raw-bell Dry ride.

In addition to his drums, Chris keeps a guitar and a synthesizer in his studio, just in case he gets inspired to throw down something melodic. "I use a Line 6 Pod for any guitar riffs I want to record," Pennie explains. "And I have a Roland synth that I use with Reason or one of Native Instruments' plug-ins, like Battery or Kontakt."



Paul La Raia

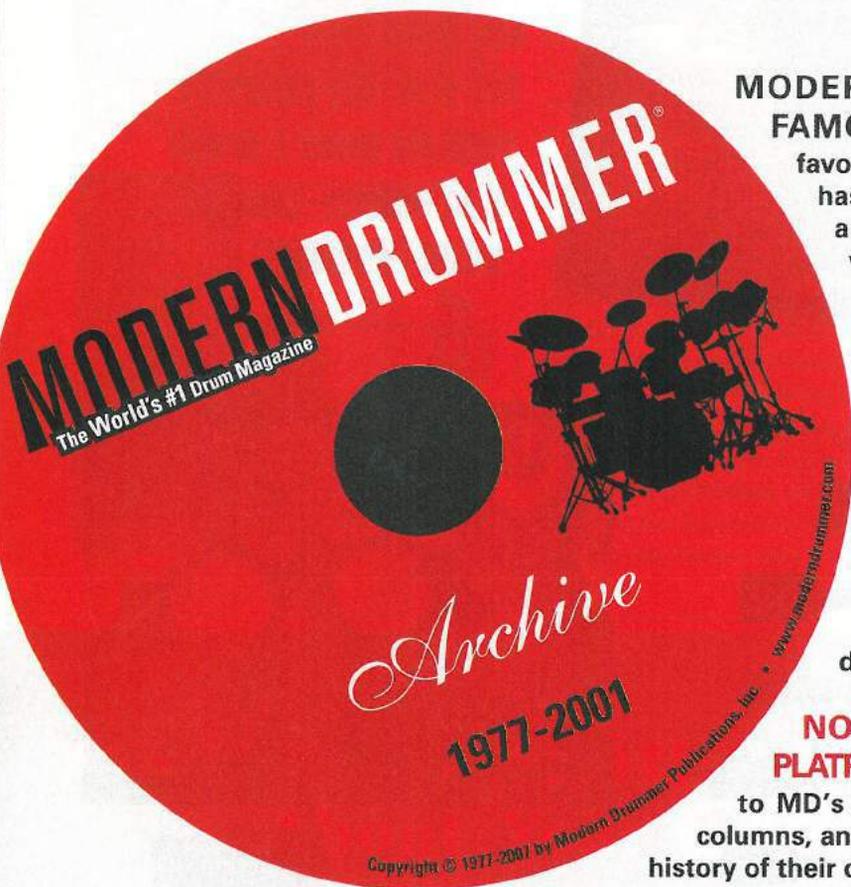


Paul La Raia



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# Getting "The Deal"

## The Music Industry's Endorsement Game

by Rich Mangicaro

**M**ore than ever before, today's musicians—professional and amateur alike—view getting an endorsement deal somewhat like getting a record deal. It's a mark of success—a statement regarding one's career. Many believe that when a company signs them, it verifies that they are talented and influential enough to deal directly with the manufacturer. These points are true.

Many musicians also believe that an endorsement means free products, money, feature spots in advertising, and basically a way to increase their fame. This is not quite the true picture.

### A Sporting Approach

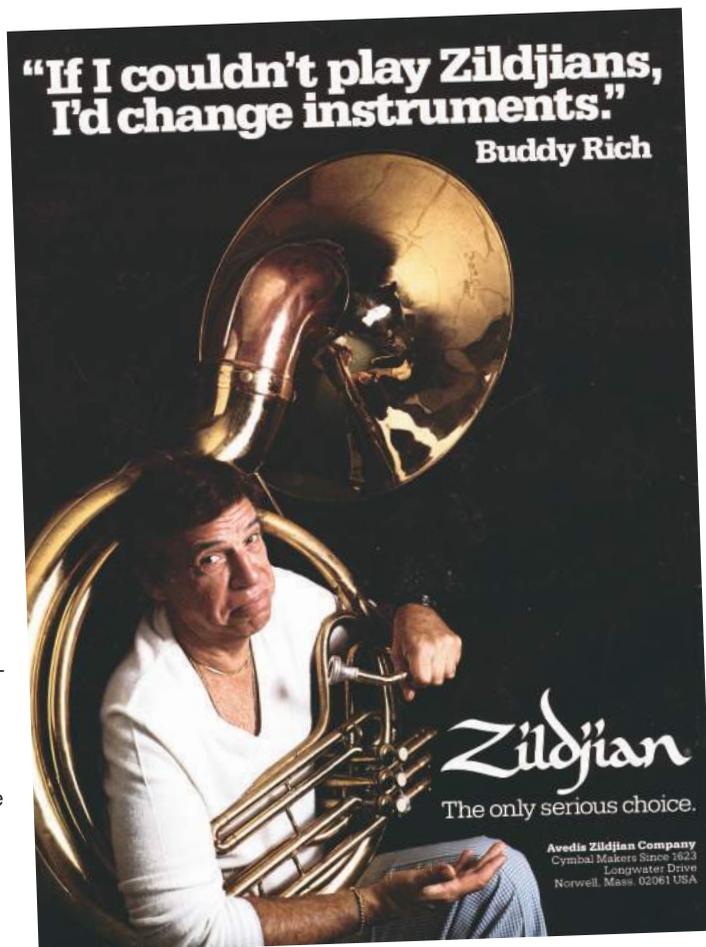
A good example of how endorsements work comes from the sports industry. Nike did not sign Michael Jordan to a multi-million-dollar contract in order to help him become famous. It was because he was already famous that Nike sought an endorsement relationship with him. They knew that his name would ultimately increase sales for them. So they invested in that relationship, offering Michael royalties in return for the use of his name and likeness.

The main difference between a music-industry endorsement with an artist and a sports-industry endorsement with someone like Michael Jordan is that the music industry is much smaller than the sports industry. There are simply more people buying sports equipment than musical instruments. As a result, sales revenues generated for Nike by someone like Jordan are substantially higher than those generated for a drum or cymbal company by a high-profile drummer. Because of this difference, the sports world can support much larger marketing campaigns than those that are generally seen in our industry.

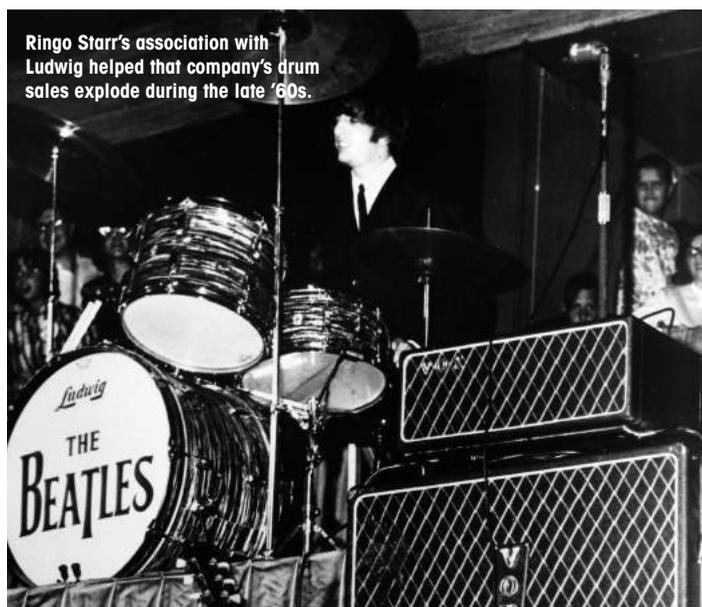
### What Is An Endorsement?

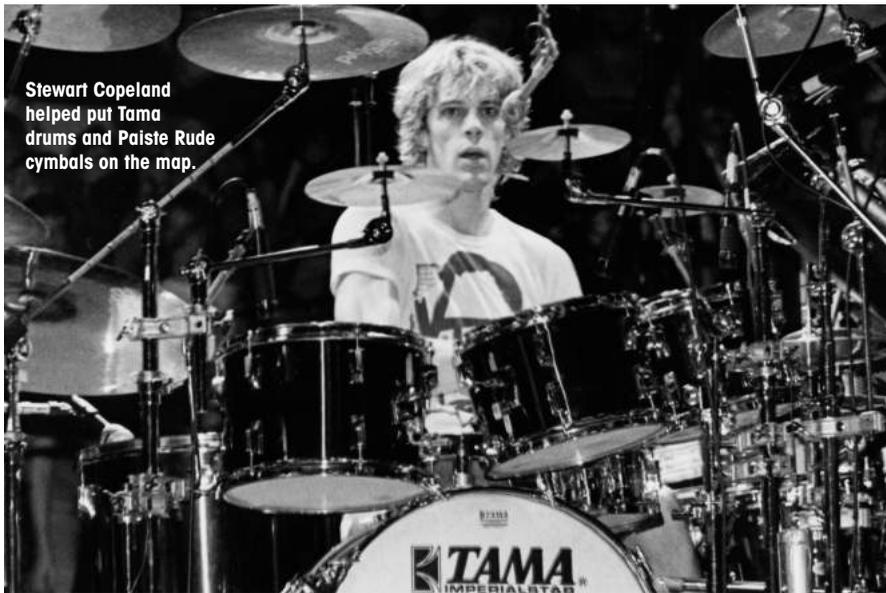
An endorsement is an official relationship between a manufacturer and an influential artist. This relationship is based on the manufacturer's hopes of increasing overall sales by utilizing the artist's name and likeness through association, advertising, and promotions.

Perhaps the most famous example in the drum world is Ludwig's long-standing association with Ringo Starr. This relationship catapulted Ludwig into industry leadership when The Beatles hit big in the '60s, and has been part of what has kept Ludwig's notoriety and drum sales consistent over the ensuing forty years. In exchange for the use of his name and likeness, an artist such as Ringo receives unlimited free products, involvement in advertising and promotions, and a personal relationship with a company.



Major artist endorsers often appear in advertisements—such as this humorous mid-'80s Zildjian ad featuring Buddy Rich.





Stewart Copeland helped put Tama drums and Paiste Rude cymbals on the map.

Generally speaking, in the music instrument industry no money is exchanged between the artist and manufacturer for the artist's endorsement. The exception is when the manufacturer pays the artist for participating in an event such as an educational seminar or clinic, an autograph session, or a personal appearance representing the company.

The issue of payment is probably the main misconception among young players when they think of endorsements. If you're looking

to obtain a salary from an endorsement deal, you'll probably be better off practicing your foul shot than your drumming.

#### Ya Gotta Believe

Most of the artists I've had the honor to work with made their decision to pursue an endorsement primarily because they truly believed in an instrument and wanted a relationship with its manufacturer. Many of those influential artists have become indelibly asso-

ciated with that manufacturer's products, and have ultimately helped to shape the company's image and sound.

One of the first drummers I met when I began my career in artist relations was Stewart Copeland. Stewart was a huge inspiration to me in my younger days. He was also the reason I was originally drawn to Paiste cymbals. I grew up in Upstate New York, and we didn't have as much exposure to the Swiss-made cymbals as we did to those of other brands. Along with his incredible skills and ingenious blending of styles, Stewart's cymbal choices were always unique and complementary to what he was playing. He was the first drummer I heard playing Paiste Rude cymbals, which were so different and aggressive, matching his awesome, energetic live output. I'll never forget the first time I saw Stewart play—to say nothing of the honor of subsequently working with him for so many years.

Other amazing artists have influenced our choice of instruments, because when we think of them, we're reminded of what they play. Just a few examples of successful endorsements and their obvious influences on us all: Buddy Rich (Zildjian), John Bonham (Paiste and Ludwig), Tony Williams (Zildjian), and Jeff Porcaro (Paiste and Pearl).

# Experience

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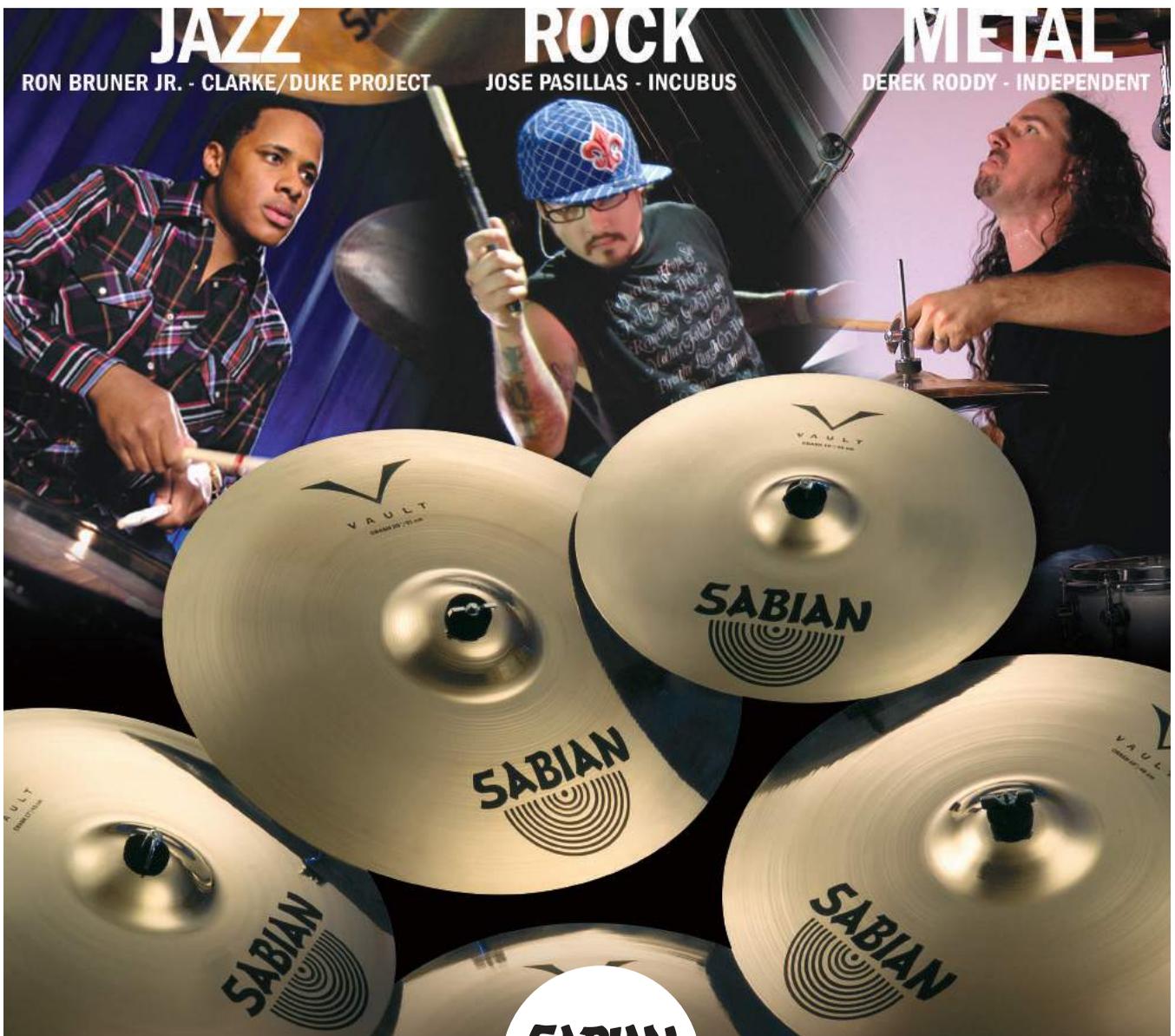
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## ENDORSEMENTS

### Why Seek An Endorsement?

The main reason to seek an endorsement should be to establish a personal relationship with the company that makes the instrument you like best, and that you truly believe makes you sound better. If you sound better, you're more likely to gain the attention you desire, thereby increasing your visibility and that of the instrument you're playing. This is good for the endorsing manufacturer. In exchange, you can reap the benefits of equipment support, discounted or possibly even free products, and involvement in advertising.

Just keep in mind that it only makes sense for a manufacturer to include you in their advertising campaigns when your name and likeness helps them increase their sales. More

often than not, this is the primary consideration for their decision to take you on as an endorser.

### The Main Factor In Your Decision

As drummers and percussionists, we have many choices when it comes to which tools we use to pursue our craft. Our tools ultimately reflect how we play, how we sound, and how we are viewed professionally. You should always choose the instruments you like best and that resonate with you.

I had the pleasure to work for many years with Ndugu Chancler, who is one of our industry's best examples of a true endorser. Ndugu has been with the same companies for over thirty years, and in that time he's been a key

## 9 Tips For Success As An Endorsing Artist

by John Wittman

1. Develop a clear vision of yourself. Know who you are, determine your own sound, and devote yourself to music: the songs, the group, the sound, your students, and your career. Once you're making a living playing music and have something to offer others, then move on to tip number two.
2. Ask yourself why you're seeking an endorsement. What do you bring to the table that would matter? What attributes do you have as a person and an artist that would make you valuable to a company?
3. Do you have an established career in music? (Be realistic.) How long have you been in your current band? How many thousands of recordings were sold last year with your name listed? Are you currently on a major tour? If you're still in school, stay focused on your music and forget about endorsements.
4. A great *player* is not necessarily a great clinician. It's important to manufacturers that those who call themselves clinicians are indeed artful and effective at this pursuit. Before you ask for clinic support, have 100 clinics under your belt—and make sure that belt is a black belt in the art of teaching.
5. If you want to be an endorsing representative of a company, you must know and respect who you'd be representing before you even approach them. Become an expert on the company whose instrument you play. Know its history, philosophy, current artist roster, and position in the marketplace. Study the roster of artists on the company's Web site. Do you fit in with that roster?
6. Establish a rapport. Introduce yourself to the company's staff at trade shows—*without* presenting a package or even *mentioning* the word "endorsement." We assume, if you're talking to us, that you can play. In an endorsement context, you need to establish yourself as a businessperson. We want to know what it would be like to work with you.
7. Prepare a well-crafted promo package. It should include a short cover letter, a bio, a recording, a photo, and the URL to your Web site. Take time crafting this package; it creates your first impression. Do some background work to be sure you're sending the package to the correct person, and that you have that person's correct title and the correct spelling of his or her name.
8. Don't expect free instruments or to be paid money in return for playing a company's instrument. Artist discounts will be discussed after your package has generated interest. And remember that companies expect endorsing artists to play their instruments exclusively, to mention their companies at educational events, to thank the company for their support, and (when possible) to include the company's name on recordings.
9. Keep focused on the music while paying attention to your sound and to your business skills. Music manufacturers are, above all, interested in being represented by good, professional musicians who truly love the tools of their trade.

**John Wittman** is manager of artist relations and education for Yamaha's Band & Orchestral Division.

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BECAUSE SOUND MATTERS

## ENDORSEMENTS



An enthusiasm for drumming, great playing technique, and skill as an educator make Gregg Bissonette an outstanding clinician/endorser.

figure in those companies' overall image, development, and sales. Ndugu states, "By the time you've arrived at an endorsement level, you should be able to determine what your needs and requirements are. If you have a strong enough name, you can play whatever equipment you want. I don't think most of us would play equipment that's below our sound and quality standards. Equipment is a direct

reflection of an artist's integrity, sound, and image."

Any manufacturer will view you as a more desirable endorser if your decision comes from a musical place. They know you're on board for the right reason.

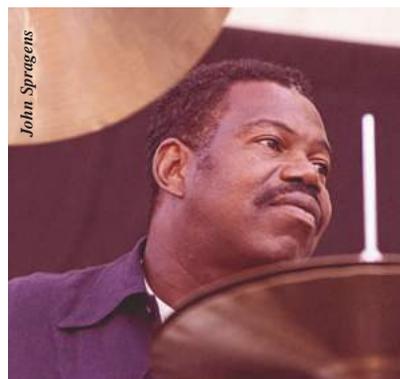
### Stay Put

Once you sign on the dotted line, you should look at it as a long-term commitment. Build a relationship with your company, and it will ultimately serve you well. You may not receive instruments for free at the outset. But if you work hard and stay true to your craft, as your visibility increases you will eventually enjoy the same rewards that your favorite artists enjoy.

Remember, too, that your company is not there to make you famous. Still, if you are hard-working, honest, and a team player, you will thrive. Be patient, and communicate continually with your company. Artist relations representatives have many artists to support, so the better you communicate, the more willing and able they will be to assist you.

### Business And Social Chops

Your business and social chops may be just as important as your playing chops—if not



With more than thirty years of association with the same companies, Ndugu Chancler embodies the qualities that manufacturers look for in an endorser.

more so. Music is a social business, and how we relate to and respect each other, both on and off stage, is crucial. Keeping your ego healthy—but in check—requires daily practice. Likewise, keeping perspective amidst our insecurities (and we all have them) is something we can learn from the masters.

Being confident and prepared while also being empathetic and considerate to others requires balance and a sense of community. As musicians, our work only prospers when we support each other. When this topic comes up, I always use Gregg Bissonette as a shining example. Gregg possesses this balance. Along with being one of the world's

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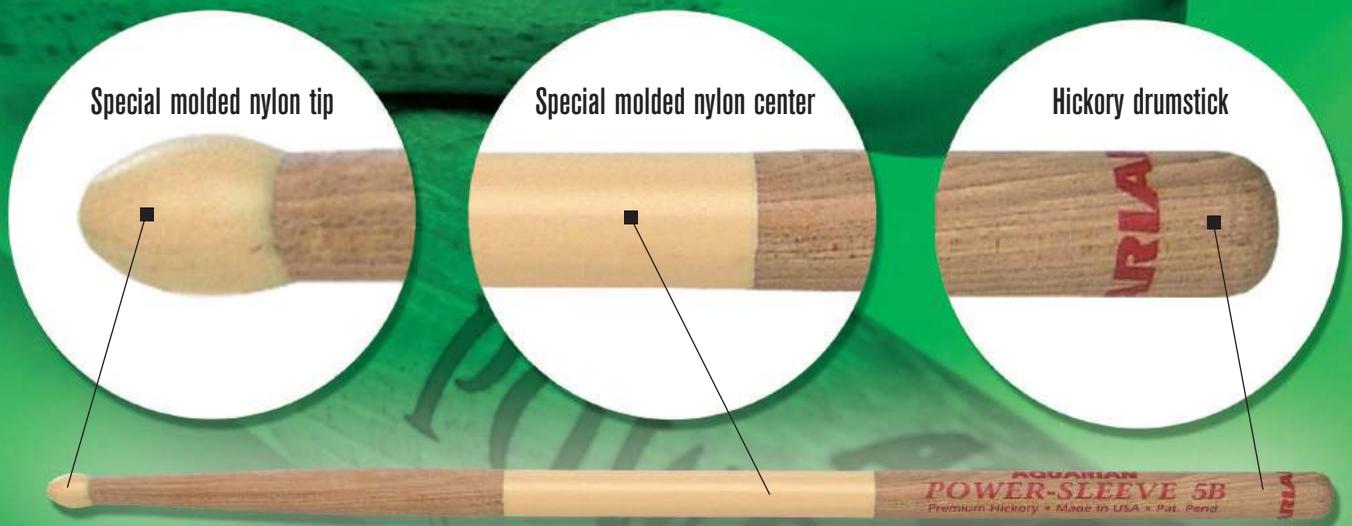
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## ENDORSEMENTS

greatest drummers, Gregg is truly one of the nicest guys I've ever met.

Professionalism is an important element of an endorsement relationship, too. For example, even though this point seems obvious, always be on time. Again, from Ndugu: "To be early is to be on time. To just be on time is to be late." These words are the mantra of the successful studio musician, and I was fortunate to see it first-hand over my long association with Ndugu.

Another terrific example is the late, great Jeff Porcaro. Even though Jeff had his drum tech and cartage company at his sessions, he was always the first one there—and, most times, the last one to leave. Jeff was an inspiration to me in this way, demonstrating how much he cared about each project by his attention to detail, his professionalism, and his amazing musicality. Jeff truly cared about what a song called for, and about how to make it really groove and feel good. And if he honestly didn't feel he was the right drummer for that job, he would immediately suggest another drummer he thought was a better choice. He cared that much about making sure that the artist got the best possible end result. Now, that's an example of a healthy ego.

### Wrapping Up

We drummers are lucky. Our job is to make people dance. How cool is that! If you keep that—as well as everything else we've discussed here—in mind, you'll make the right decision about an endorsement. Base your decisions on musicality rather than on "getting the best deal," and you'll ultimately enjoy a long-standing relationship that will benefit everyone involved. Remember, we're all in this together.



**Rich Mangicaro** is the percussionist/vocalist for Glenn Frey and Joe Walsh of The Eagles. He's also a consultant for Paiste Cymbals and Gon Bops Percussion. For nineteen years he was the director of artist relations/music education for Paiste America, bringing to Paiste's artist roster such drum stars as

Danny Carey (Tool), Abe Laboriel Jr. (Paul McCartney), and Josh Freese (Nine Inch Nails). Rich was also instrumental in the design, development, and launching of Paiste's most innovative cymbal lines. For more information, go to [www.insidetheplayersstudio.com](http://www.insidetheplayersstudio.com).

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## Tao Teh Drums

### Bruce Lee's Lessons In Drumming

by Tim LaFredo

**All techniques are stripped to their essential purpose and the utmost is now expressed and performed with the minimum of movements and energy. There is no ornamentation or waste..."**

These could be the words of a great drummer, but they're not. They're the words of Bruce Lee, from his classic treatise *The Tao Of Gung Fu*. Lee may have never learned a nine-stroke roll, but as a martial artist he knew all about the things that drummers work hard to develop.

To the uninitiated, both drumming and martial arts are simply about hitting things. But to those pursuing mastery of one or both of these disciplines, there's a lot more involved. Both arts require knowledge of self, as well as exacting technique. Both call for fluidity and centeredness. Because drumming and martial arts share a lot of common ground, it would serve us well to take a drum lesson from Bruce Lee.

#### Know Thyself

Lee emphasized the importance of self-knowledge, saying, "While we are still alive, we have to discover ourselves, understand ourselves, and express ourselves." In drumming, as in martial arts, we are improving our kinesthetic intelligence: the skilled control of the body. We develop timing and precision, endurance and strength, balance and fine-motor control. Socially, we learn to work in groups, and, in turn, we understand ourselves more clearly as individuals. We encounter our limitations—and, most importantly, we learn to overcome them.

#### A Rudimental Approach

According to Lee, "The highest skill operates on an almost unconscious level." Many martial artists devote significant time to the perfection of katas, which are set routines comprised of fixed movements. These are the martial artist's rudiments. So, kata after kata, paradiddle after flam tap, we condition ourselves.

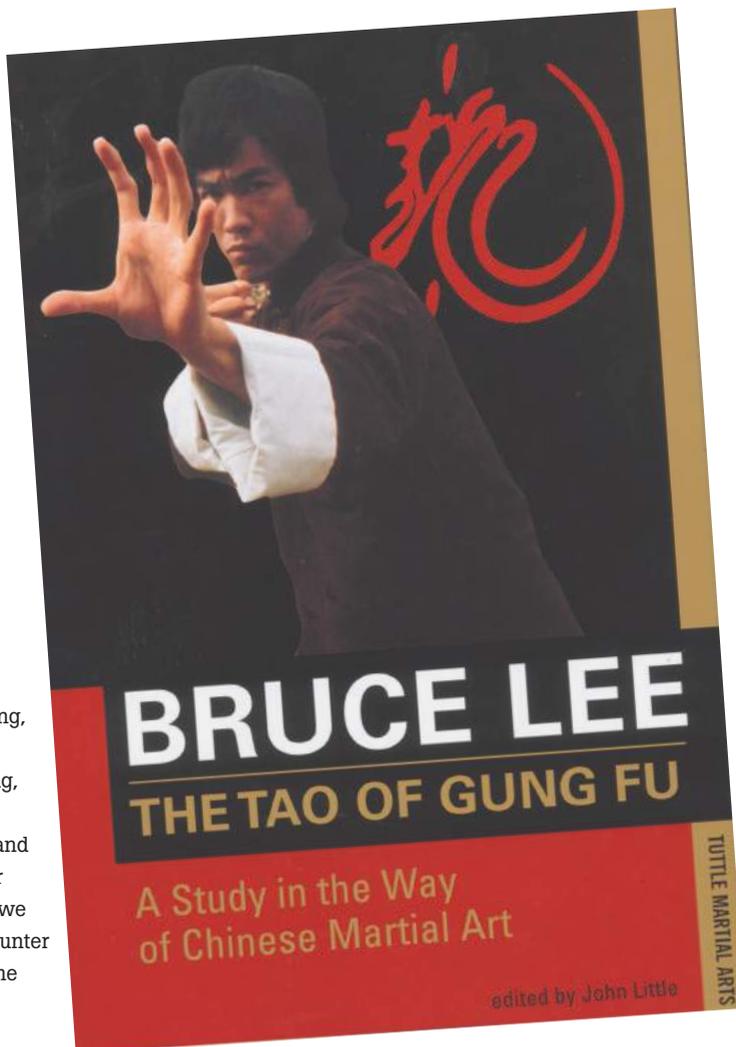
As novices, we strive to go faster and hit harder. As we gain more experience, however, we understand that that sort of striving only slows us down. We learn to play a patient game that rewards perseverance. We break down our movements in order to analyze form. As form improves, technique becomes more efficient. In time, even the smallest nuances are engrained in our muscle memory.

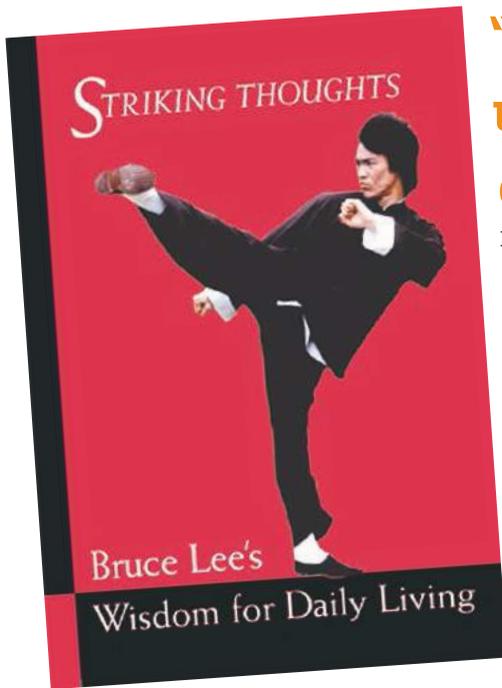
"The sacred journey is taken alone," said Lee. "Each man must seek out realization himself." Pursuit of mastery requires

hours of isolation. Sometimes inspiration carries us through practice, but when inspiration lags, we endure the tedium. Why do we spend all that time practicing while the rest of the world is watching TV? Because we believe in the benefits of practice. We're developing tools now so we won't have to think about them when we need them. They'll just be there.

#### Being There

Bruce Lee taught that the greatest artists transcend dogma, stating, "The perfection of art is to conceal art." Those great artists' mastery of form is such that they are "formless," which is to say that they execute without serving any particular school of thought. They have no need to convince others of the difficulty of playing an ostinato, or of maintaining a fighting stance. They simply embody it.





## “ We have to discover ourselves, understand ourselves, and express ourselves.” —Bruce Lee

be a state of mind, but it is evident in the way a person holds him or herself. Centered movements convey stillness. Yes, the body is in motion, but it is “ still” because the only motions are the essential ones. When form matches function, we are most efficient.

### Practically Speaking

Here’ s how the concept works on a practical level. Think of the playing of an excitable beginner. He’ s so anxious to show off those blazing 32nd notes that he dives headfirst into a fill. By the time he gets to the floor tom, he’ s thrown himself to one side of the kit. Since much of his weight is now on his strong foot, he can’ t pull the beater off of the bass drum head. He’ s stuck. He has to re-center before he can do anything else. Because of this, his time will drag.

This is the drummer’ s equivalent of a martial artist throwing a wild haymaker, a sidearm punch that hurls his weight to one side, leaving him off balance and vulnerable. He, too, has to re-center. He also loses valuable time.

“ Fluidity leads to interchangeability,” said Lee. “ Self-knowledge leads to awareness. Totality leads to ultimate freedom.” There is an idea in martial arts that, in the long run, all

disciplines are means to the same end. If we learn anything well enough, we will have learned everything. After all, we’ re not really working to perfect a fighting takedown—or a ratamacue. We’ re working to perfect ourselves. Strikes and strokes, kicks and kick drums...they all begin to blend.

### Summing Up

“ Thus, observe, deduce, and apply,” Bruce Lee concluded. When carefully considered, Lee’ s wisdom would benefit any drummer. The study of martial arts brings a new understanding of form and flow, and will change the ways in which we approach the instrument. And, as if that weren’ t enough, it’ s always nice to know a little something when loading out of a seedy roadhouse at three in the morning.

Great drummers embody a state of wu-wei, which is Chinese for “ not doing.” That is, they are balanced and aware, present but not impassioned. They don’ t “ do” a movement; the movement is simply expressed through them. They eliminate their egos and become conduits for their art. Motion expressed in this state is often compared to the movement of water. It is natural, fluid, and unencumbered. As Lee put it, “ The principle of wu-wei is entirely an action of creative intuition, which opens the wellsprings within man.”

But Lee also said, “ Be still while you work, and keep full control over all.” Wu-wei may

In addition to being a veteran drummer, **Tim LaFredo** holds a black belt in a martial arts style called tang soo do.

Quotations from *Bruce Lee: The Tao Of Gung Fu* and *Striking Thoughts: Bruce Lee’s Wisdom For Daily Living* are reprinted with the express permission of Tuttle Publishing, [www.tuttlepublishing.com](http://www.tuttlepublishing.com).



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# VST Drumming

Using A Computer As A Sound Module

by John Emrich

**W**hen electronic drums were first introduced in the early '80s, most of the drumming community believed they were a trend that would pass in time. In actual fact, electronic drumming (in one form or another) is becoming increasingly more common in all genres of music, finding applications both on stage and in the studio.

In recent years, there's been a growing trend in the electronic industry that allows musicians to use their computers as musical instruments. This technology—commonly referred to as VST (Virtual Studio Technology)—provides an alternative to stand-alone sound modules, giving the user greater flexibility to the types of sounds they can use and in the ways in which the sounds can be manipulated. No longer are electronic musicians restricted by what's included in a specific manufacturer's piece of gear. Now you can build your own sounds or choose from a wide variety of high-quality sample libraries, which allows the music-making process to become much more personal. For that reason, many consider the use of virtual instruments to be the future of electronic drumming.

## Virtual What?

A virtual instrument is basically a digital recreation of an instrument that resides in a computer. These can be plug-ins or stand-alone instruments. Plug-ins require a host program (like Cubase or Pro Tools) in order to function, while a stand-alone will work on its own. The best part of this technology is that you can decide what direction you want to take your music. This approach also allows you—not the manufacturer—to decide on how and when you want to upgrade.

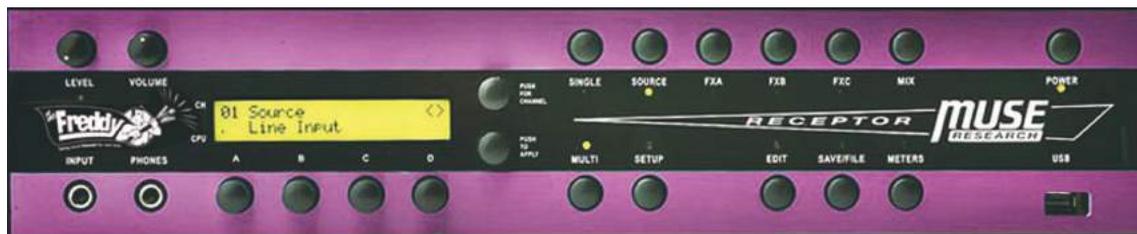
Keyboard players have been using computers with virtual studio technology for years. And it's almost impossible to produce a major recording session or touring show without it. It's the direction that electronic musical instruments are heading, so we drummers need to embrace it.

## Dream Drums Are Just A Click Away

For drummers, there's a wide variety of software that can be used to enhance live performances or recordings. Programs like Expansion's BFD, Toontrack's DFH Superior and EZdrummer, and Native Instruments' Battery 3 allow you to trigger high-fidelity drum and percussion samples as your drum sounds. There



From top: Expansion's BFD, Toontrack's EZdrummer, and Native Instruments' Battery 3 are three examples of drum-specific VST instruments.



The BFD Turbo Receptor comes with a 400 GB hard drive and is pre-loaded with BFD's Jazz & Funk and Percussion expansion packs.

are quite a few other companies offering excellent software instruments at different price points, which make virtual instruments accessible to drummers with limited (or unlimited) budgets.

You also have a huge selection of triggering devices to choose from. Manufacturers like Alesis, Alternate Mode, Hart, Pintech, Roland, X-Drum, Yamaha, and Zendrum offer several types of electronic drum pads in various configurations. So it's up to you whether you want to simply augment your acoustic drums with a multi-pad that triggers sounds in a laptop or if you want to incorporate a full-blown electronic drum system (like ones from Yamaha and Roland). But regardless of what devices you choose, VST instruments allow you to record, alter, and play any sounds you want.

### It's All About The Sound

The best part about using virtual instruments is in their sound quality and flexibility. Until recently, touring drummers often spent a few weeks with a recording engineer, pulling sounds from the artist's record

### GET THE SPECS

- PC System Requirements: at least a 1 GHz Pentium III or Athlon processor
- Mac Requirements: PowerMac G4 using OSX 10.2.8 with a 733 MHz processor (a G4 with a 1.2 GHz processor is recommended)
- Memory: 512 MB or more of RAM (1–2 GB recommended)
- DVD drive (for installation)
- 7,200 rpm external hard drive (for sample storage)

and dumping them into rack-mounted samplers. Now you don't have to do that. If you have the same software on your computer that was used to make the recording, all you need to do is transfer the sound files to your system and hit the road.

### Know Before You Go

There are a few things that you need to understand in order to take full advantage of virtual studio technology. First, look carefully at the computer specifications for the programs you want to use. Most of these programs are very large and require a lot from your computer. (For a primer on computer-based recording systems,

refer to last month's Electronic Insights article "Going Mobile: Creating A Laptop-Based Studio For Drummers.")

There are also modifications that you will want to do to your computer to optimize performance. Each product requires a specific setup, but thankfully most software instrument companies have an online forum. It's a good idea to check out those and post questions before you make any purchases.

You also need to factor in how your audio interface affects the latency of your computer. Think of latency as a timing issue. The higher the latency, the more delay you'll notice between when you hit the pad and when the note sounds. MUSE Research offers a solution called the Receptor. This device serves as a host for virtual instruments and has built-in audio and MIDI interfaces, which significantly decreases latency issues. Regardless of which gear you choose, make sure it's sturdy and can handle the rigors of the road.

You also have to be aware of how much storage space you'll need for your virtual instruments. It's a good idea to keep all of your audio samples on a separate drive that's running at 7,200 rpm or more.

### Going With The Tide

We all have our own individual style and voice, and the use of virtual instruments allows each of us to sound unique and develop our own approach. Each year, more and more custom electronic drum manufac-

turers are making strides towards incorporating virtual instruments. Several companies are even making high-quality trigger-to-MIDI interfaces that allow you to build a

### GO ONLINE

Don't be afraid to ask questions before you buy a new piece of equipment. For VST drumming-related info, check out the forums on sites like [www.vdrums.com](http://www.vdrums.com), [www.edrumming.com](http://www.edrumming.com), and [www.zendrum.com](http://www.zendrum.com).

system out of whichever types of pads or controllers you choose. One such device is the USB/MIDI compatible Trigger iO from Alesis. This interface allows you to connect up to ten drum pads, one hi-hat controller, and a footswitch. Hart Dynamics has also introduced a full-blown software system that includes everything from the drums on. And new companies like The-Freddy and Alternate Mode are making turnkey solutions based on the MUSE Receptor, which makes it even easier for drummers to get up and running in the world of VST.

### Conclusion

As you can see, virtual studio technology is a valuable tool that's accessible to all of us. No longer do we need to fear the day that machines leave us searching for gigs. Being well-versed in VST drumming and other new musical technology is sure to expand your creativity, as well as your marketability.



**John Emrich** is a professional drummer/producer based in the Washington, DC area. As a sound engineer, he has produced two expansion packs for Expansion's software drum module BFD. He can be reached at [www.johnemrich.com](http://www.johnemrich.com).



## Pro-Mark Drumsticks

### Looking Forward At Fifty

by Rick Van Horn



As they mark their fiftieth year in business, Pro-Mark is close to outgrowing their current Houston headquarters.

**E**njoying half a century of success in the fickle music-products industry is a noteworthy accomplishment. The folks at Pro-Mark have done just that, and along the way they've established a number of "firsts" when it comes to the manufacture of drumsticks.

But rather than rest on their laurels, Pro-Mark is celebrating their fiftieth anniversary this year with yet another new introduction. This time, it's a whole new approach to selling drumsticks. We'll get to that new approach in a bit. But first let's take a brief look at Pro-Mark's history, from the company's beginning to its status today.

#### A Surprise Business

Pro-Mark founder Herb Brochstein didn't plan to become a drumstick manufacturer. "I was just a player and a teacher," says Herb, "trying to get some better-quality sticks for my students and a few of my drumming buddies." Herb found those sticks via a trade rep from Japan, and he began importing hand-made Japanese oak sticks in 1957.

By the mid-'70s Pro-Mark had orders in excess of a million pairs of sticks, but they were only getting about 80,000 pairs a month from Japan. To help meet demand, the company started selling sticks made of American hickory. At first those sticks were outsourced, but in 1981 Pro-Mark began manufacturing their own sticks in a 14,300 square-foot facility in Houston. Twenty-six years and three factories later, Pro-Mark is headquartered in a 30,000 square-foot building that sits on acreage large enough to accommodate future expansion.

#### The Learning Curve

"There definitely was a learning curve for the manufacturing process," says current Pro-Mark president (and Herb's son) Maury Brochstein. "You don't just plug in a lathe and produce high-quality sticks. When we started manufacturing in 1981 we initially had more second-quality sticks than first. So we brought in a wood expert to show us the proper way of drying,

in order to ensure the consistency of the material. We spent four years developing a finishing process that sealed the stick as soon as it was manufactured, in order to keep the moisture content stable."

"We also changed our packaging over the years," adds Herb Brochstein. "At one time, stick companies packaged their sticks in sealed bags, which dealers wouldn't let their customers open. But I thought drummers should be able to feel and roll the sticks, in order to be satisfied with what they were buying. So we started a campaign called 'The Unseal Of Approval,' selling our sticks in unsealed bags. Within two or three years, all of our competitors started unsealing their bags as well. That was a major benefit for drummers around the world."

Another step that Pro-Mark took early on was an association with major performing artists. The first was the great Broadway pit drummer Billy Gladstone, in 1958. It didn't take long before models were being made specifically for noted drummers. "Ed Shaughnessy is celebrating forty years with Pro-Mark this year," says Herb proudly. "And his name has been on his stick model all during that time. So I think it's accurate to say that



Pro-Mark president Maury Brochstein (left), with his father, company founder Herb Brochstein. Each is holding a limited-edition snare drum created in celebration of Pro-Mark's 50th anniversary.

# A PRO-MARK POTPOURRI



## AMERICAN HICKORY DRUMSTICKS

Pro-Mark currently offers 127 wood- and nylon-tip stick models in this resilient hardwood, known for its shock-absorbing properties and durability. The stick shown here features Pro-Mark's Pro Round tip/taper design. Five hickory models are available in Natural (unlacquered) versions. Four models are available with the Pro-Grip factory-applied enhanced gripping surface.



## SHIRA KASHI OAK DRUMSTICKS

After fifty years of manufacture, Pro-Mark is the only drumstick company offering oak sticks. Shira Kashi oak sticks are said to offer unsurpassed strength and durability, and to generally outlast sticks made of any other wood type. The line includes thirty-nine wood- and nylon-tip models. The five models shown above feature the Natural (unlacquered) finish.



## MAPLE DRUMSTICKS

Maple is a relatively light wood, making it popular for studio, jazz, concert, or symphonic applications. Pro-Mark offers thirteen models in maple. The sticks shown above are the Jazz Café series.



## AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION DRUMSTICKS

Pro-Mark's Autograph collection includes more than forty drumstick models played by some of the world's top drumset artists, including Neil Peart, Bill Bruford, Carter Beauford, Chris Adler, Jason Bittner, Steve Ferrone, Marco Minnemann, Dave Lombardo, Joe Morello, Mike Portnoy, and Ringo Starr. Models vary in wood and tip type, dimension, and feel, depending on the preference of the artist.



## ORCHESTRAL STICKS

Seventeen models of drumsticks are specifically designed for orchestral/concert use. These include Autograph models for Tim Adams, Evelyn Glennie, Arnold Riedhammer, and Dennis DeLucia, as well as three Expressive Series models that feature a uniform diameter but vary in the taper and tip for different sound requirements.



## WORLD PERCUSSION

This collection includes specialty sticks and beaters for use on African drums and percussion, timbale sticks, and a complete line of steel pan mallets.



## BRUSHES, RODS, AND SPECIALTY TOOLS

Pro-Mark introduced the first Rods (bundled dowel "sticks") nearly two decades ago, thereby establishing the concept of using alternative tools to create new drum and cymbal sounds. Their specialty line includes traditional brushes, Tubz (plastic cylinders), Broomsticks (oversized "brushes" made of broom corn), and combination stick/mallets.



## MARCHING COLLECTION

Pro-Mark's marching collection offers twelve snare drum sticks, fifteen tenor sticks and mallets, seventeen bass drum sticks and mallets, and a variety of accessories.

## EDUCATION COLLECTION

This collection includes seventeen models of keyboard mallets designed by educator Dan Fyffe, Future Pro drumsticks and mallets designed for the smaller hands of young students, and Discovery series Orff mallets.



## AUTOGRAPH/PERFORMER Mallet COLLECTIONS

Autograph mallet collections include a wide variety of keyboard and timpani mallets designed by such artists as Tim Adams, Tom Freer, Catherine Float, Evelyn Glennie, Jonathan Haas, and Bill Molenhof. Performer collections are professional-level mallets suited for all purposes.



## ACCESSORIES

Pro-Mark's extensive line of accessories includes wind chimes, cymbal and drumstick bags, XPad practice pads, bass drum pedal beaters, Stick Wrapp and Mallet Wrapp, Stick Depot stick holders, X-Mute drum and cymbal mutes, drum gloves, Drum Gum dampening material, Grip Peddler footboard pads, and Rattler and Sizzler cymbal effects devices.

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY SNARE DRUMS

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## PRO-MARK



Ten fully automated lathes provide a production capacity of 50,000 sticks per day.

the artist models made by Pro-Mark were the forerunners of today's signature sticks."

### Building A Team

Ownership of Pro-Mark passed from Herb to Maury Brochstein on January 9, 1997. Maury is quick to credit the Pro-Mark staff for the company's present status. "We all wear quite a few hats between us," he says, "but specialization of various positions has increased. Kevin Radomski was a gigging drummer when he came to us, and he now handles drumset artist relations. Staci Stokes had just finished school and was teaching drum corps, and she now handles our educational artists and products. Don Click was an educational product developer at Pearl, and now he's our product manager. He, too, has a background in drum corps. Mark Petrocelli spent nine years in the Guitar Center system, so he oversees the retail portion of our business. And he's also a drummer.

"We put this team together in order to provide effective customer service within all musical styles," adds Maury. "When it came to working with drumset artists, educational artists, and drum corps artists, we wanted people who could focus on each of those areas and speak the language."

### Creating New Products

The development of new Pro-Mark products falls under the jurisdiction of product manager Don Click. What's the process for turning a new idea into a finished product? "If it's a drumstick," replies Don, "the person suggesting the idea usually will already be playing a given model, and they can refer to it, saying, 'I like this, but I wish it felt like....' We try to determine what we can do to get that feel, based on what we know about stick dimensions, tip shapes, tapers, balance, and so forth.

"When we're pitched with ideas for totally new and different products—and we get those pitches constantly—I screen out



Pro-Mark maintains an eight-week supply of most popular models. Along with stocking other products, this has their warehouse bursting at the seams.

the ones that I know are simply not going to work. Then I'll ask the other members of the staff whether they think an idea is viable—and marketable. We are, after all, a business, and to keep everybody in their jobs we do need to make a profit.

"Product development is a lengthy process," Don concludes. "But that process has generated some pretty successful items for Pro-Mark over the years."

Maury Brochstein puts things in perspec-

distributors that purchased that model, so that they can tap any remaining stock."

What about custom runs for individual customers? "We're not set up to do that today," says general manager Steve Beck. "But it is something that we have as a vision for the future. In the meantime, if we get enough requests asking us to reinstate or change a product, we will definitely respond. For example, fifteen years ago Pro-Mark was the first company to offer sticks without a lacquer finish on them—but only on hickory sticks. Today, after repeated requests through our Web site, we offer an entire line of Natural oak sticks. The point is that we don't just sit here trying to figure out what drummers want. We're consumer-driven. We listen."

Speaking of listening, Pro-Mark was the first drumstick company to establish a toll-free consumer hotline. While that hotline still exists, consumer input these days is 98% Web-based. Much of that comes via a questionnaire on Pro-Mark's site. Says Maury Brochstein, "We ask questions like, How old are you...how long have you been playing...what style of music do you like to play...what model do you use...and are there any products you'd like to see Pro-Mark make? We get a tremendous amount of feedback on that."

### Simplifying Selection

Some of that consumer feedback has addressed the frustration involved in finding a comfortable stick amid the daunting number of available brands and models on the market. With that in mind, Pro-Mark has come up with a new sales approach to make the selection process easier.

Says Pro-Mark sales & marketing director Pat Brown, "You can talk about different types of wood, and about the sounds you get from the sticks. But at the end of the day, for drummers it's all about feel, which is essentially defined by diameter and weight. So we're now grouping drumsticks into size categories based on their diameter. Small sticks start at 12 mm in diameter, Mediums at 14 mm, Large at 15 mm, Extra Large at 16 mm, and Double Extra Large at 17 mm. Small sticks, by definition, are going to feel like jazz sticks, Medium sticks are more general-purpose, Large sticks begin to feel heavier, Extra Large will be rock sticks, and Double Extra Large are for marching. Our stick packaging is color coded, with a different color for each size range."

**pro-mark**

**THE ANATOMY OF FEEL**

Choosing the right drumstick to suit your feel—a stick's diameter, length, weight, type of wood, taper, tip and finish all determine the way it feels in your hand. There is a stick for every player and every style of music. To give you the best choice, the sticks that have the feel you're looking for are listed here. You can also contact us with other questions.

**DIAMETER + LENGTH + WEIGHT**

The weight of a stick in your hand is a key factor in its feel. Our color-coded charts show a range of diameters and lengths to help you find the stick that's right for you. Longer and heavier sticks contain greater inertia and allow you to play longer without tiring.

S	M	L	XL	XXL
<b>Small</b> 12mm diameter 16" length 15g weight	<b>Medium</b> 14mm diameter 16" length 20g weight	<b>Large</b> 15mm diameter 16" length 25g weight	<b>Extra Large</b> 16mm diameter 16" length 30g weight	<b>Double Extra Large</b> 17mm diameter 16" length 35g weight

**WOOD**

Wood, density, texture, resonance and flexibility all vary from one type of wood to another. For the best playing experience possible, choose sticks made from wood that feels right in your hands and projects the sound you want.

**TAPER**

The shape of the taper, and diameter when it meets the tip, determines how quickly the stick naturally returns to normal. This can affect how long the stick feels.

**TIP**

The point of the tip's point of contact with the instrument determines tone and articulation. The differences are so very subtle. Wood tips generally produce a warmer sound, and nylon tips often produce a brighter, more articulate sound and are more durable. Experiment and let your feel be your guide.

**FINISH**

The outer sheath of a stick's finish will affect its feel.

**TESTING A STICK**

Pro-Mark tests each stick to be sure it meets our manufacturing process so that you can be sure that you get the right feel and quality. We also test each stick to ensure quality and consistency. When you buy Pro-Mark drumsticks, you buy with confidence. All Pro-Mark products are covered by our best-in-class lifetime warranty.

tive, saying, "When my father started the business, he had a one-page flyer showing sixteen models of oak sticks. Our 2007 catalog is over a hundred pages long, with 300-plus products."

In order to make room for new models in that catalog, Pro-Mark had to retire quite a few products in 2007—drawing inevitable complaints. Says Maury Brochstein, "We'll get phone calls from people saying, 'How could you discontinue this? It's my favorite model!' We'll often direct them to the last



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## PRO-MARK

Posters supporting the new sales program expand on "the anatomy of feel," which involves five different elements: wood type, finish (natural or lacquered), taper (long, medium, or short), tip shape, and stick diameter. "Even though there may be dozens of models to consider," comments Pat, "those five basic characteristics define the anatomy of feel for all of them."

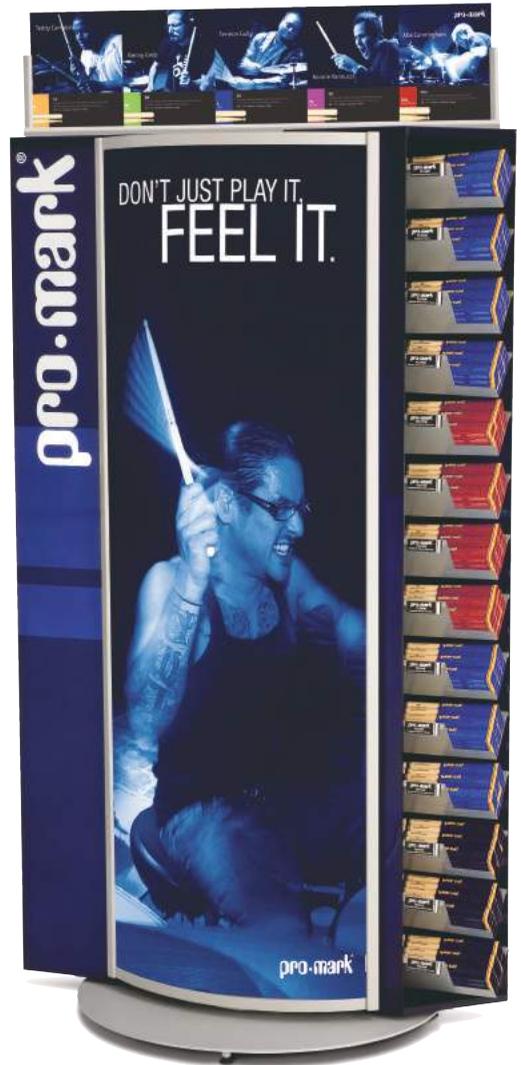
Pro-Mark's various lines, including regular drumset sticks, Autograph sticks, marching sticks, and concert/symphonic sticks, are now termed "collections." Each collection is packaged in a color-coded box. The size coding remains the same for all the collections, with colored labels that wrap around the boxes. "We're taking the same tack for our mallets," says Pat, "except that while in drumsticks it's about feel, in mallets it's about tone—which is the slogan we're using there. So mallets are categorized from soft to hard."

"Our fundamental goal is to give people a common starting point," Pat concludes. "When you walk into a major shop that has dozens of bins full of sticks with their tips facing forward, where do you start? Our display unit and color-coded sizing provides navigation guidance that very quickly helps drummers find what they're looking for."

### Beyond Drumsticks

For most of Pro-Mark's early years, drumsticks were almost exclusively the focus. But more recently, the company has expanded into an extensive range of accessory products. Why?

"It boils down to our listening to what consumers tell us," says Maury Brochstein, "and the fact that drummers around the world trust our brand. They know that quality is our number-one priority, and that we have a performance guarantee. When they buy a Pro-Mark drumstick bag, a practice pad, or even just a package of Drum Gum, if they're not completely satisfied



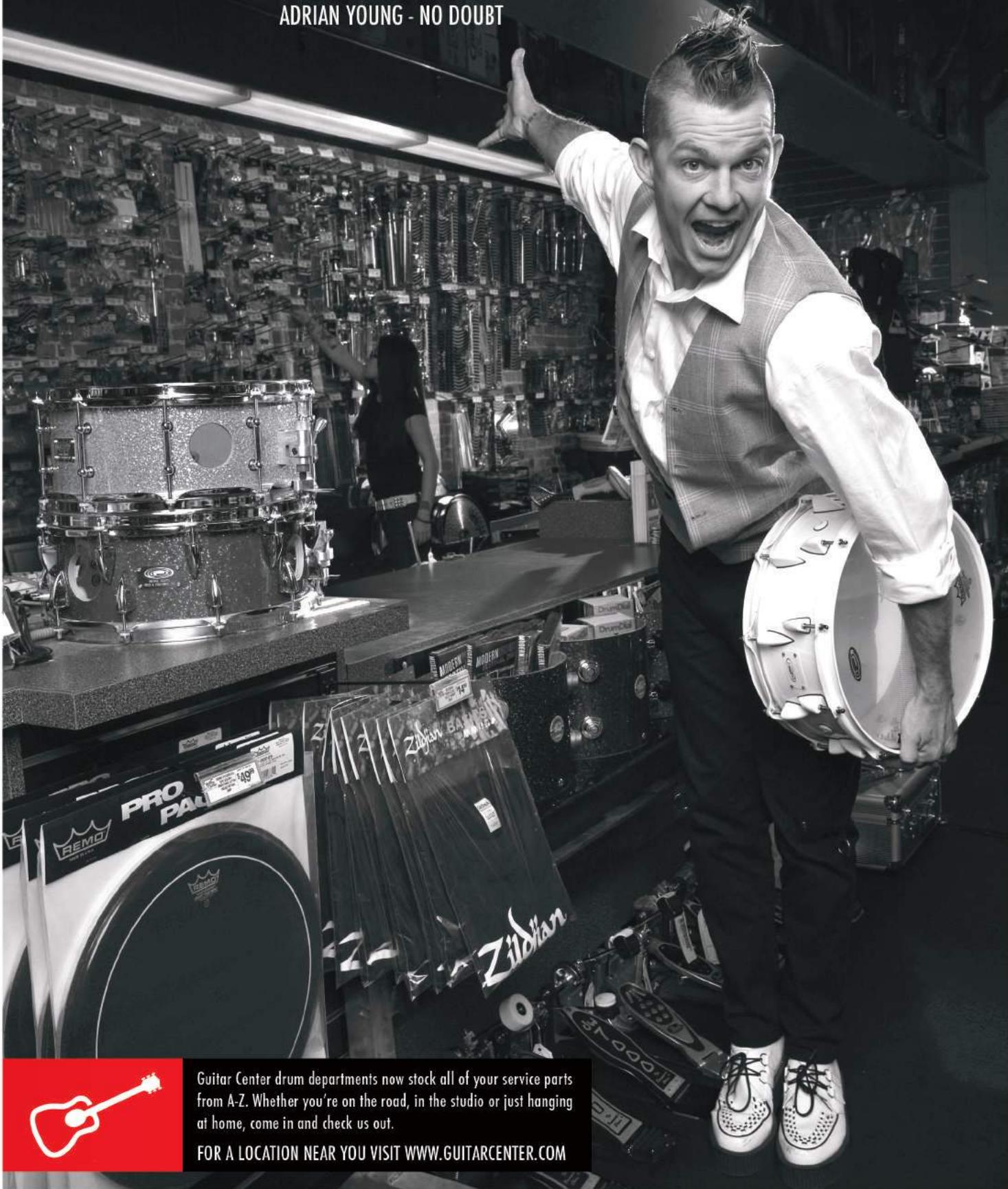
with it, we'll make sure that they become satisfied."

Expanding on the subject of customer service, Maury says, "I'd challenge almost any other company in the world to match our response to customer problems. When an email or phone call comes in, we respond within twenty-four hours. If consumers can't locate a product, we'll help them find it. If they have a problem with a product, we will connect them with somebody to solve that problem, be it a dealer or a distributor. And we tell the consumer that if they haven't heard from that dealer or distributor within five working days, contact us again. We don't consider any problem solved until it has been solved to our satisfaction. The success of our company today boils down to a genuine concern for our customers. It's just that simple."



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# Serious Cymbal Support

## A Look At Mega Boom Stands

by Mike Haid

**S**ome drummers' cymbal-mounting needs can easily be met by light- to medium-duty stands. However, popular musical trends have been calling for larger and heavier cymbals, with the result that many drummers need stands that can handle these heavy metal plates. Whether you're going for the "China cymbal suspended six feet in the air" look, or you're putting a 26" ride cymbal over your bass drum, you need a stable and durable boom cymbal stand to handle the weight and the beating.

The good news is that there's more to today's heavy-duty boom stands than pure strength. Available models offer features that vary from simple to extravagant. In order to compare these features, MD gathered a selection of mega boom stands from ten of the top hardware manufacturers. All of the stands feature heavy-duty, double-braced tripod bases with large rubber feet.

### The Test

We tested each boom cymbal stand by mounting a 20" China cymbal weighing 3.5 lbs. at the stand's fullest (safely) extended height. The cymbal was then viciously pounded from various angles. Not a single stand tipped, broke, or collapsed from the severe beating.

Features to look for in a boom stand include memory locks, insulated tube construction (to eliminate metal-on-metal rattling), boom arm length, tilter strength, and tilter adjustability. A counterweight is important if you're extending your cymbals a great distance or at an extreme angle.

Of course, you must always take into consideration the adjustments required for proper balance of your boom cymbal stand. Typically, you want the boom arm to line up directly with one of the legs of the tripod base. And you want to spread the tripod legs out far enough to support the weight of the stand and cymbal(s) without the risk of tipping. This should be easily achieved with a little experimentation. Use common sense, be cautious, and don't expect miracles.

With the above in mind, here are the specs for our survey's mega-converters. Check 'em out to see which stand fits your needs and your budget.



### Drum Workshop DW 9702

**Height (range of extension):** 98"

**Weight:** 17.6 lbs

**Dual Ratchet Boom Arm Length:** Knurled upper arm—17"; knurled lower boom arm base—17"

**Memory Locks:** Hinged locks on the center and upper tubes, and on the upper and lower sections of the boom arms

**Features:** Center and upper tube, two knurled boom arms, separate boom arm height and angle adjustments on top of upper tube and at top of lower knurled boom arm, quick-release ratchet (to remove cymbal arms without moving memory locks), toothless tilter with position reset handle, lower knurled boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion

**Accessories:** SM2032 Puppy Bone adjustable auxiliary toothless cymbal tilter, memory labels (to identify parts when multiple stands are separated for transport). Additional Puppy Bones, percussion arms, and the DW SM2030 counterweight can be added as aftermarket accessories.

**Comments:** Outstanding features include the Puppy Bone auxiliary tilter, and the fact that both boom arms have a knurled finish, allowing additional filters to be placed anywhere on either arm.

**List price:** \$291.99  
www.dwdrums.com



## Gibraltar 9609BT

**Height (range of extension):** 80"

**Weight:** 11.9 lbs

**Boom Arm Length:** 18"

**Memory Locks:** Hinged locks on the center and upper tubes and the boom arm

**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, knurled boom arm, separate boom arm height and angle adjustments, boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion. Lock screw and wing bolt angle adjustments on toothless filter.

**Accessories:** None

**Comments:** This is a solid overall boom stand in the middle-heavyweight division, with a toothless filter that includes a locking screw and wing bolt angle adjustment. Large memory locks provide solid support.

**List price:** \$159.99

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



## Ludwig LM931BCS

**Height (range of extension):** 83"

**Weight:** 12.6 lbs

**Boom Arm Length:**

Telescoping arm can extend 38"

**Memory Locks:** No

**Features:** Single upper tube section, separate boom arm height and angle adjustments, built-in non-removable counterweight

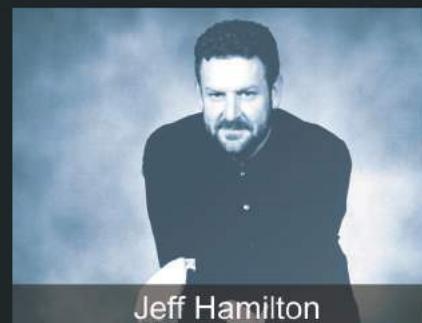
**Accessories:** None

**Comments:** The large-diameter tubing on the base and boom arms make this a bulky, yet fairly lightweight stand. The telescoping boom arm has extra-long reach and a solid counterweight for stability.

**List price:** \$151

[www.ludwig-drums.com](http://www.ludwig-drums.com)

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## MEGA BOOMS



### Mapex B950A

**Height (range of extension):** 67"

**Weight:** 11.2 lbs

**Boom Arm Length:** 13"

**Memory Locks:** On the center and upper tubes

**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, separate boom arm height and angle adjustments, knurled boom arm, boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion, nylon inner sleeves with recessed memory locks, universal ball-in-socket cymbal filter, OS cymbal accentuators (rubber cymbal holders) for added cymbal resonance and sustain

**Accessories:** None

**Comments:** Lots of innovative features make this middleweight contender a solid purchase for mid to heavy-duty applications. The large contoured memory locks and the ball-in-socket cymbal filter are excellent features.

**List price:** \$187

www.mapexdrums.com



### Peace CBSS-810

**Height (range of extension):** 81"

**Weight:** 10.6 lbs.

**Boom Arm Length:** 18"

**Memory Locks:** No

**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, nylon inner sleeves, knurled boom arm, single boom arm height and angle adjustment, boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion

**Accessories:** None

**Comments:** This lightweight contender held its own under our test playing. With no memory locks, the biggest advantage this stand offers is that it's the lightest and least expensive of the bunch. It's well constructed, but not recommended for especially heavy or awkward loads.

**List price:** \$149

www.peacedrum.com



## Pearl BC-2000

**Height (range of extension):** 87"

**Weight:** 16.1 lbs (includes detachable counterweight)

**Two-Way Boom Arm Length:** knurled arm—17"; boom arm base—17" (35" total reach with counterweight attached)

**Memory Locks:** On the tripod base, the center and upper tubes, and the upper and lower sections of two-way boom arm

**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, telescoping boom arm, knurled cymbal/percussion post, detachable Gyro-Lock Tilter for free angle adjustment with Wing-Loc nut, reversible seat cup, Boom Gear with Stop Lock, detachable rubber-clad counterweight, plastic plugs inside upper and center tubes, single boom arm height and angle adjustments on base of two-way boom arm and at top of base of two-way arm (this holds the second knurled boom arm), die-cast pipe joint fitting with a nylon bushing to prevent metal-to-metal contact, parallel double-braced struts to prevent lateral wobble

**Accessories:** TL2000 filters are available separately and can be added to allow multiple cymbals and percussion to be mounted to the same stand.

**Comments:** The Gyro-Lock Tilter and Wing-Loc nut are some of the most innovative and user-friendly features on the market. And the option of additional Gyro-Lock Tilters makes this an ultra-versatile boom arm for multi-cymbal/percussion configurations.

**List price:** \$269

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



## Premier 6116

**Height (range of extension):** 76"

**Weight:** 11.2 lbs

**Boom Arm Length:** 18"

**Memory Locks:** On the center and upper tubes and boom arm

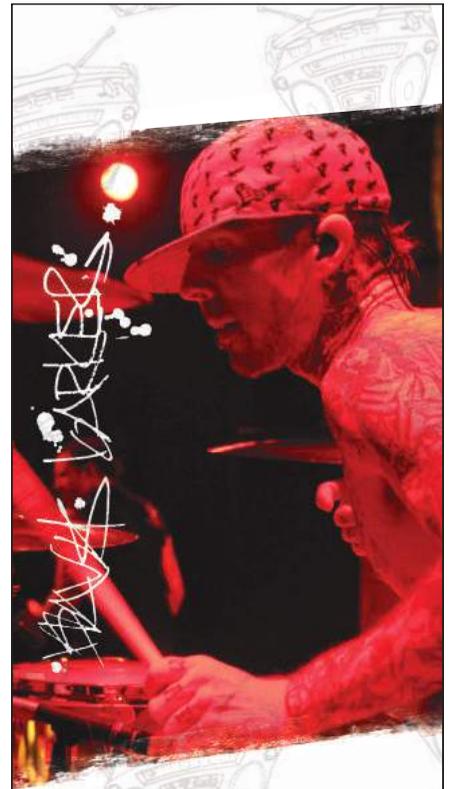
**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, knurled boom arm, separate boom arm height and angle adjustments, boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion, flush base leg system, infinite position filter, plastic tube insulators to prevent metal-to-metal contact.

**Accessories:** None

**Comments:** Large contoured memory locks and an innovative filter design make this a strong middle-heavyweight contender. It's well designed and well constructed.

**List price:** \$148

[www.premier-percussion.com](http://www.premier-percussion.com)



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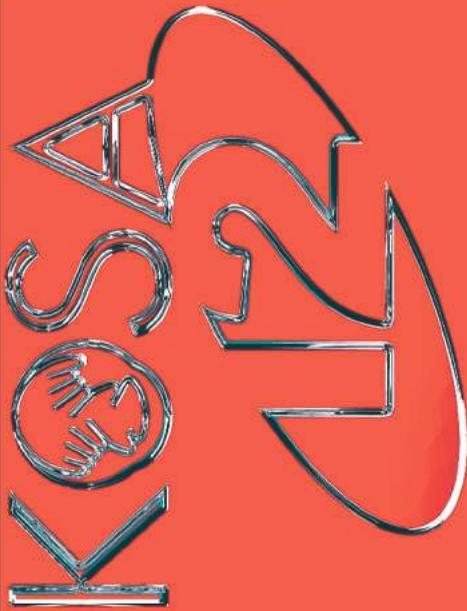
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## MEGA BOOMS



### Sonor MB S673

**Height (range of extension):** 69"

**Weight:** 11.2 lbs

**Boom Arm Length:** 19"

**Memory Locks:** On the center and upper tubes

**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, knurled boom arm, removable tilter can be positioned anywhere on the boom arm, threaded washer and wing bolt to adjust cymbal tension on tilter head, single boom arm height and angle adjustment, boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion, one leg swivels for more convenient stand placement

**Accessories:** 11" knurled boom arm, drumkey for memory locks. Additional aftermarket filters can be added to boom arm for multi-cymbal/percussion setups.

**Comments:** A bit pricey, but the swiveling tripod leg might just be worth the cost for the advantage it offers when it comes to crowded setup situations. With its removable tilter and additional shorter boom arm, this stand could easily win the lightweight title for overall construction and functionality.

**List price:** \$308.95

www.sonor.com



### Tama HC74BWN

**Height (range of extension):** 83" (straight up, without counterweight)

**Weight:** 13.4 lbs (including counterweight)

**Boom Arm Length:** 24"

**Memory Locks:** No

**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, knurled boom arm, separate boom arm height and angle adjustment, boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion, toothless Quick-Set tilter, reversible cymbal sleeve, die-cast joints, noiseless tube design, Cymbal Mate nylon cap

**Accessories:** Removable counterweight

**Comments:** Aside from its lack of memory locks, this sleek, well-designed model has many attractive features, including an extra-long boom arm and an affordable price.

**List price:** \$149.99

www.tama.com



## Yamaha CS945

**Height (range of extension):** 75"

**Weight:** 11 lbs.

**Boom Arm Length:** 18"

**Memory Locks:** On boom arm only

**Features:** Center and upper tube sections, separate boom arm height and angle adjustment, boom arm slides inside top tube for straight stand conversion

**Accessories:** None

**Comments:** Within the category of "mega-stands," this is one of the lightest and most simple models on the market. The smooth (non-knurled) arm is not ideal for heavy-weight applications, but is highly recommended for light to middleweight boom arm applications.

**List price:** \$160

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



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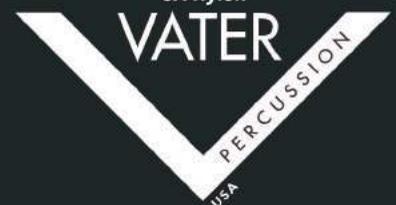
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# Yogi Horton

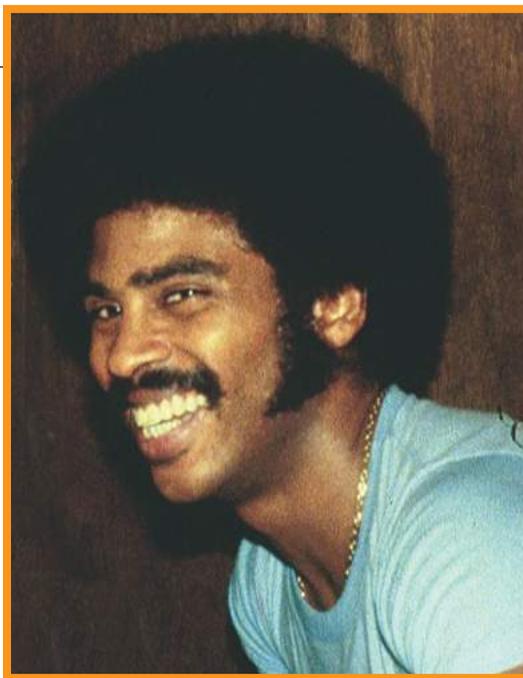
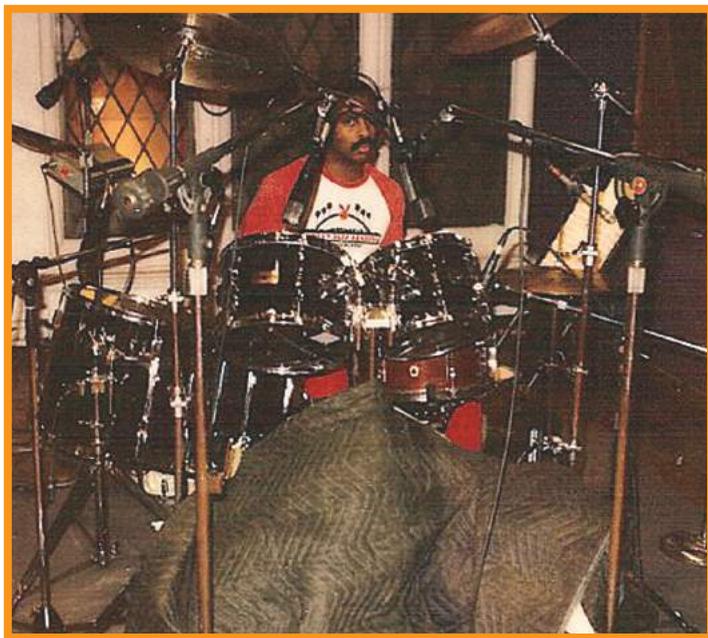
## A Studio Great Remembered

by Billy Amendola

**Y**ou might not be familiar with R&B drummer Yogi Horton by name, but you've definitely heard his playing. In the 1980s Yogi was the go-to guy for hundreds of TV commercials, as well as recordings by Diana Ross, Stephanie Mills, Gladys Knight, Cheryl Lynn, Aretha Franklin, Dionne Warwick, Grover Washington Jr., The Alessi Brothers, Ashford & Simpson, and the late Luther Vandross. But Yogi's versatile playing skills went beyond R&B. He also did sessions with John Lennon, Yoko Ono, Bill Laswell, Hall & Oates, The B-52's, and David Byrne. J. Geils frontman Peter Wolf, who in 1984 hired Yogi to play on his first solo CD, *Lights Out*, says of the drummer, "Yogi was a great professional, and he kicked ass!"

Legendary songwriters Nick Ashford and Valerie Simpson, who hired Yogi for recordings and live tours, sent this statement to MD: "Yogi brought so much energy and color with his playing. He personified precision and passion, and the music never got stale to him. He played each show like it was the first time, and his licks would bring out something fresh in us. And whenever we needed a lift on stage, all we had to do was look at his face. Nobody had a smile that lit up quite like Yogi's."

Given Ashford & Simpson's description of his playing and his personality, it's all the more tragic that the drumming world lost Yogi on June 8, 1987, when he committed suicide in New York City.



### Personal Recollections

In 1979, Yogi Horton and bassist Tinker Barfield had become the up & coming rhythm section that everyone wanted on their records. That year I was recording part of my band Mantus's first album at Blank Tapes Studios in New York City. Yogi was recording in the next room as part of the house band, which also included two talented session singers who ultimately became major R&B stars: Luther Vandross and Jocelyn Brown. Jocelyn was singing on the Mantus record, and she introduced me to Yogi between sessions.

Yogi was one of those people who made you feel right at home, with no airs about him. He would pop into our sessions, and I would sneak into his, and we became friends. He'd show me his hi-hat technique and offer other tips, and I'd soak up as much as I could. We would even play softball together at the studio's annual picnic.

Eventually, I left for a tour, as did Yogi, and we saw less of each other. One of the last times I saw him, he was playing with Billy and Bobby Alessi in their touring band. Today Bobby recalls, "Yogi was one of the most powerful drummers we ever played with. He had an amazing pocket, and he never tried to show off at the cost of an arrangement. He was consistent and meticulous about the details of his part." Billy Alessi adds, "Yogi was a gifted artist. It's a shame the music world had to lose him so early."

As the '80s progressed, Yogi started getting more calls for session and touring work. As a drummer, he was powerful, and he would lay down a groove with perfect time, every time. As a bandmember, he always knew how to have fun. When I look at photos of him smiling, I can still hear his laugh in my head.

Unfortunately, I can also still remember hearing about his tragic death on the radio that awful day twenty years ago. I hadn't seen him in a few years, but it didn't sound like the Yogi I remembered. The

**As a drummer,** Yogi was powerful, and he would lay down a groove with perfect time, every time.

**As a bandmember,** he always knew how to have fun.

big question was, why would someone who seemed to be doing exactly what he wanted to do in life jump from a seventeenth-story window, a few hours before he was scheduled to play at Madison Square Garden?

No one has ever been able to answer that question. But many of Yogi's musical associates were eager to offer their recollections of the great drummer for this tribute.

#### From Musical Friends

Ashford & Simpson keyboardist Pete Cannarozzi shares his thoughts on Yogi, saying, "Has it really been twenty years? It seems like yesterday, and I still miss him terribly. Yogi and I were roommates for the Ashford & Simpson tour of 1983-84. Yogi was the finest pocket player I ever worked with. And hard-hitting! He broke so many snares and heads that he had his drum tech make him a "gorilla-proof" snare so he could make it through a show. He will forever be in my Hall Of Fame."

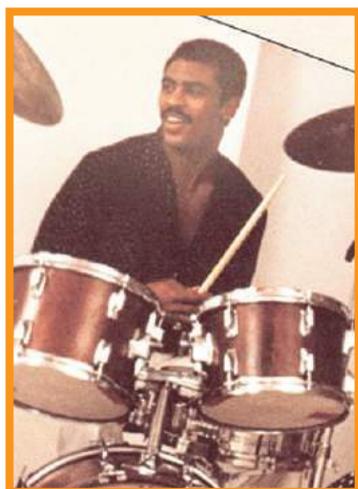
Drummer Chris Parker remembers sharing the drum seat with Yogi in 1981 on the Ashford & Simpson-produced recording by singer Ullanda McCullough. "Yogi kept everyone smiling," says Chris. "He had a fierce groove and plenty of power behind the notes. He also had a musically wicked sense of humor, and he took delight in playing things that would trick your ears—

like accent displacement, 'one drop' reggae fills that incredibly led to the downbeat, or a big crash where you'd least expect it."

Blank Tapes studio manager and drum tech Jimmy Dougherty recalls his time spent with Yogi in the studio. "When Yogi was going to be the drummer on a session, I knew two things: One was that I would

laugh till my jaw muscles hurt because of his wonderful personality. The other was that by the time the session was over I'd be looking foolish with my mouth agape, amazed at what I was hearing.

"We met Yogi for the first time when we were booking an in-house project," Jimmy continues. "The drummer we wanted—Steve



An inset photo from the cover of Ray Chew's album *See The Light*.

An advertisement for the Audio Technica ATM650 microphone. The top half features a close-up of the microphone's head and grille, positioned over a snare drum. The background is dark, highlighting the metallic texture of the mic. Below this, the headline "BUILT TO TAKE A BEATING." is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Underneath the headline, there is a paragraph of text describing the microphone's features: "Introducing the ATM650 hypercardioid dynamic instrument mic. This all-metal mic is rugged to the core, engineered to perform flawlessly despite the inevitable bumps and bruises of life on the road." A second paragraph follows: "We created the ATM650 to bring clear sound, rock-solid durability and aesthetic design to every stage where artists and audiences connect ... from corner bars to Carnegie Hall." Below the text, there is a small image of the microphone and its stand. At the bottom right, the Audio Technica logo is displayed, along with the slogan "always listening." and the website address "www.audio-technica.com" at the bottom left.

**BUILT TO TAKE A BEATING.**

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## THE BEST OF YOGI

Here's a list of ten albums that showcase the time, taste, versatility, and sheer groove of Yogi Horton.



### Artist

The Alessi Brothers  
Hall & Oates  
David Byrne  
Diana Ross  
Luther Vandross  
Aretha Franklin  
The B-52's  
Peter Wolf  
Ashford & Simpson  
John Lennon & Yoko Ono

### Album

Words & Music  
X-Static  
The Catherine Wheel  
Why Do Fools Fall In Love?  
Forever, For Always, For Love  
Jump To It  
Mesopotamia  
Lights Out  
Gospel According To Ashford & Simpson  
Milk & Honey

Gadd—wasn't available. So bass player Anthony Jackson recommended Yogi. That was the start of our long friendship at the studio, and of many years of his wonderful drumming. After setting up the drums for his sessions, I'd plug in a set of headphones and stand in the back of the drum booth, watching as well as listening to what he

foundation for all types of music. That's why we were asked to be part of the house band at Blank Tapes Studios. That experience prepared us for our work together with Luther Vandross. We knew each other's hits and accents so well that we knew when to stay out of each other's way and how to embellish each other's licks."

was playing. If I wasn't seeing and hearing it for myself, I would have sworn that either there were two drummers, or Yogi had overdubbed the hi-hat or the toms."

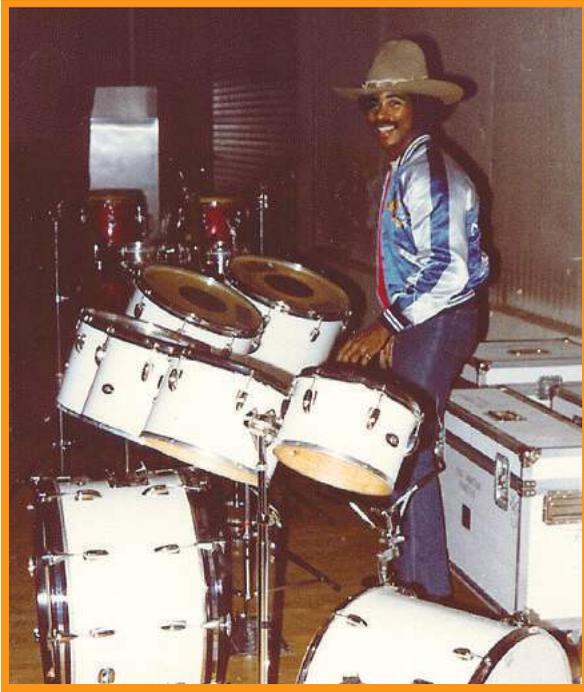
Bassist Tinker Barfield adds, "Yogi's timing, articulation, musicality, and groove were unmatched. These are qualities a bass player looks for in a drummer. Yogi and I had a lock that provided a very solid

Percussionist Steven Kroon reflects, "Yogi and I had gigged around with some small groups for a time. But when he joined Luther's band, we worked together solidly for five years. I've played with some of the best drummers in the industry, but Yogi was one of my favorites. One of his gifts was his perfect timing. He also had a great sense of how to lay down the groove, whether in the studio or on the bandstand. Those of us who knew him and knew of his great talent will always remember him as one of the very best."

Justin Timberlake/Prince drummer John Blackwell Jr. grew up with Yogi, who was a close friend of John's dad. "Yogi is and will always be a big influence on my playing," says Blackwell. "He would give my family tickets to see him perform with Luther Vandross. I'd be watching Luther sing, and then all of sudden Yogi would do something amazing and tasteful, and I'd have to take my eyes off of Luther and watch Yogi." John Blackwell Sr. adds, "The power that John Jr. plays with today came from watching Yogi."

Live At The Apollo bandleader Ray Chew worked with Yogi on sessions for artists like Diana Ross, Ashford & Simpson, Odyssey,





and rhythmic creativity, while giving those who depended on the drummer a great foundation."

Blank Tapes house engineer Butch Jones worked on countless sessions with Yogi. "In the '80s," says Jones, "our studio seemed to be a home base for Yogi. He loved the atmosphere there, and he'd grown up with one of the owners and the studio manager. It was also a place where he could walk in just before the session downbeat, sit behind the drums, and tell me to hit 'record.' I had the opportunity and honor to record Yogi well over a hundred times, and each time was an incredible experience

and Grover Washington Jr. "We recorded many hit records together," says Chew, "and we spent a lot of years on the road with Ashford & Simpson. The outstanding thing about Yogi's playing was his rock-solid time. He had a great sense of accuracy

because you were always treated to something unique."

R&B vocal great Jocelyn Brown recalls, "Yogi was the first drummer that I ever worked with in a band. He was one of the most intense and blessed drummers in the

business. Our relationship was like brother and sister, and he was and will always be a wonderful part of my life."

Guitarist Doc Powell states, "They say a band is only as good as its drummer. When Yogi was behind the kit, you knew the music was going to be all that you imagined, and more. He set the tone for what I still expect from my drummers today. He was also a brother to me, and I miss him dearly."

### In Closing

In the time Yogi Horton spent on earth, he became one of the best drummers in the business. At the same time, he brought joy to a lot of people. It's a shame that he never had the opportunity to reap the rewards of his success and to make peace with himself. But one thing that comforts those of us who knew Yogi personally is the belief that wherever he is, there's definitely a soulful groove going on.

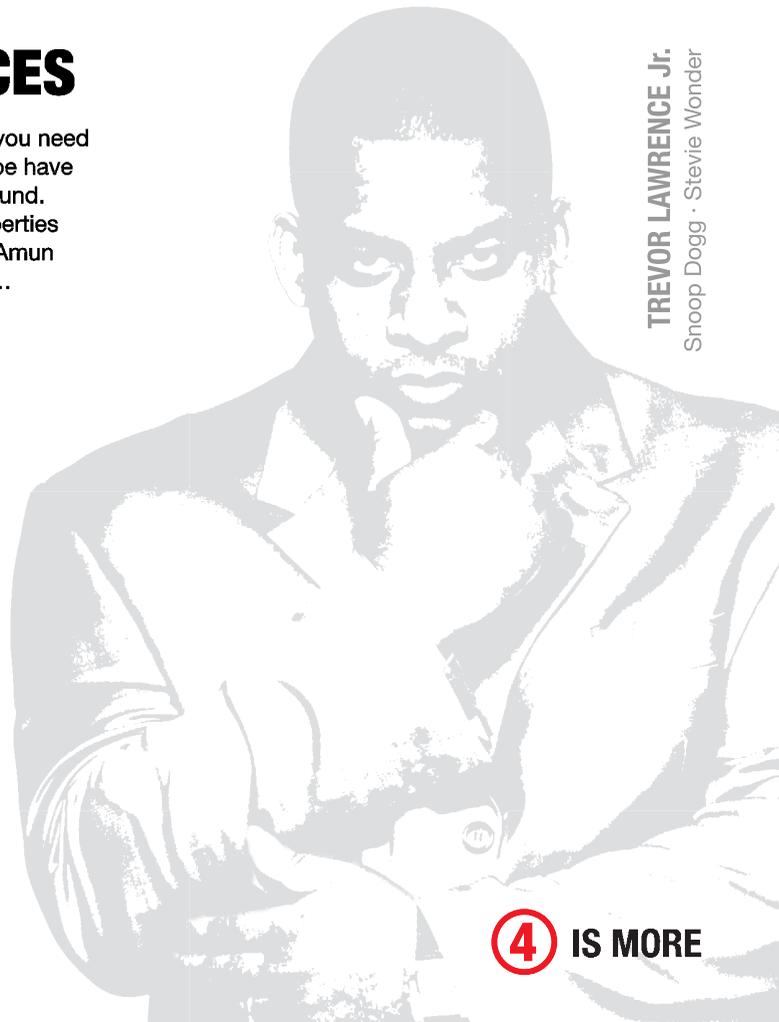
For more of Modern Drummer's tribute to Yogi Horton, visit [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com).



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## RECORDINGS

### Ratings Scale

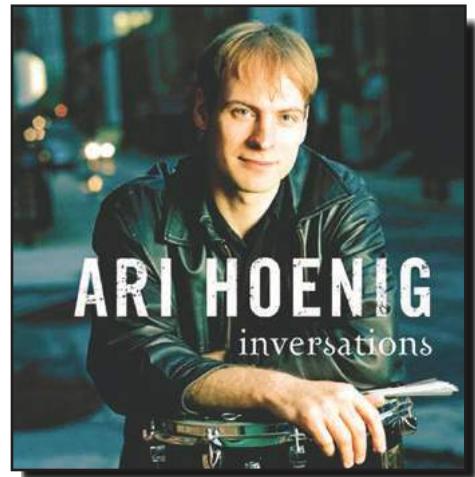
- ★★★★★ Classic
- ★★★★☆ Excellent
- ★★★☆☆ Good
- ★★☆☆☆ Fair
- ★☆☆☆☆ Poor

### ARI HOENIG INVERSATIONS

★★★★★

Ari Hoenig's latest recording as a leader really showcases his abilities as a jazz drummer. Each member of this piano/bass/drums trio (and guest tenor sax on two tracks) plays with energy and integrity on interesting compositions featuring effective arrangements. Hoenig's approach to color and time are clearly on display here. Check out how he plays the melody for "Anthropology" by bending pitches on his toms before pushing and pulling the time as he moves the trio along towards a killer solo. On "Falling In Love With Love" his soft brushes build colorful rhythms until he switches to sticks for an up-tempo finish. A great jazz recording by any standard, with lots of top-notch, creative drumming by a young master.

Martin Patmos



### CLUTCH BEALE STREET OBLIVION

★★★★★



Although Clutch first set foot in the funk-metal music arena several years ago, these venerable veterans have retained their position as groove masters of the grunge with another classic collection, dubbed *Beale Street Oblivion*. **JEAN-PAUL GASTER** again provides unwavering foundation for the thick, swaggering guitar riffs, from his sharp shuffle that railroads through "Electric Worry" to his take on the straight-laced Queens Of The Stone Age-esque "When Vegans Attack." Gaster tosses in a couple drum delights, like the crisp snare rudiments on "Black Umbrella" and the tasteful solos capping off album opener "Can't Stop Progress." With Gaster, progress really *can't* be stopped. (DRT) **Waleed Rashidi**

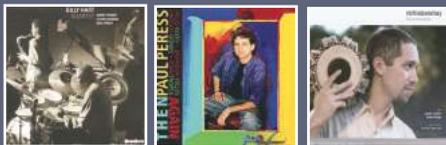
### KELLER WILLIAMS

★★★★★



Though he's known for his ability as a looping one-man band, guitarist Keller Williams plays nicely with others on *Dream*, creating one track with **Modereko** and with **String Cheese Incident**, exploring psychedelic rock with **Jeff Covert**, and bringing in kit man **DERREK PHILLIPS** and guitarist **Charlie Hunter** for the funk-flavored "Kiwi And The Apricot." Drummer **JOHN MOLO** and guitarist **Steve Kimock** join Williams for "Twinkle," a cohesive jam in 7/4 that sees Molo getting great tone out of shells, rims, and every inch of drumhead. Elsewhere, **JEFF SIPE** plays on one track with **Victor Wooten** and **Bela Fleck**, and another with **John Scofield**, playing with color, dynamics, and precision. (SCI Fidelity) **Robin Tolleason**

## TAKING THE REINS



### BILLY HART QUARTET

Erupting on his cymbals and smacking tom combinations with pent-up fury, veteran master Billy Hart says more in the first minute of this CD than many drummers say in an hour. Hart's rhythmic ideas are consistently original, his time conception the true meat of modern jazz. Get this man a boxing coach! (High Note) **Ken Micallef**

### PAUL PERESS THEN AGAIN

There's a nice chemistry working between the trio of pianist **Helio Alves**, bassist **Lincoln Goines**, and drummer Paul Peress on the Latin-heavy *Then Again*. The 32nd-note triplets in the solo of "Nothing Personal" are especially impressive. (www.paulperess.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

### RICHIE BARSHAY HOMEWORK

Performing American jazz within the syllabic counting system of Indian classical music, Richie Barshay (currently with Herbie Hancock) creates fresh sounds on *Homework*. Playing a hybrid kit incorporating hand drums, percussion, and trap set, Barshay swings his butt off, simultaneously creating a jazz/Indian world like Tony Williams setting fire to the Ganges. **Ken Micallef**

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## MY LATEST OBSESSION DRUMMERS ON...

interview by Steven Douglas Losey



ARMY OF ANYONE'S **RAY LUZIER**  
ON **SLIPKNOT** AND **SEAL**



**What have you been listening to?** I've been listening to the Slipknot *Iowa* record. That stuff

gets me off—and I'm not that angry a person. Something about that record just makes me wanna say YES! The thing is, right after that, I put on the new Seal record. That equally gets me off because of the emotion and the content and the way he sings it.



**Anything retro?** King's X. I'm a big fan of heavy music with beautiful melodies and harmonies. I just listened to the *Dogman* record again. Jerry Gaskill is one of my all-time favorites.

**What about when you were a kid?** To tell you the truth, it was my first concert in 1983, the KISS *Lick It Up* tour. Eric Carr had the two bass drums connected. That blew my mind. *Destroyer* was what made me want to play drums.

**Ray Luzier can be heard on Army Of Anyone's self-titled debut.**

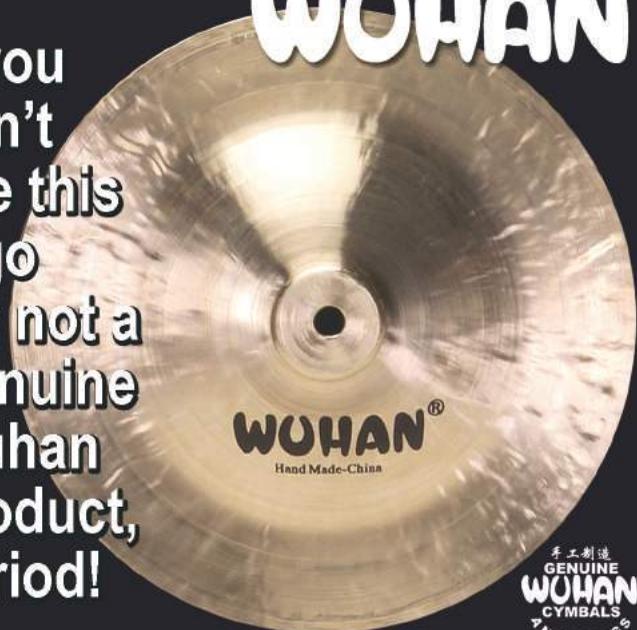
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# GOING UNDERGROUND

by Adam Budofsky

## !!!, The High Strung, Aa, The Outside



!!! (pronounced "chk chk chk") are a large dance-rock conglomerate who pound out edgy, rhythmically layered workouts reminiscent of mid-period Talking Heads, Shriekback, Pigbag, and other '80s slaves to the rhythm. *Myth Takes*, their latest, finds percussionists **DAN GROMAN** and **JERRY FUCHS** and drummer **JOHN PUGH** selflessly surrendering to the 4/4 musical manifesto: Dance! (Warp)

Drummer **DEREK BERK** is one lucky dude. Boasting an easy and natural assimilation of Kinks-like poetry *and* hooks, his group The High Strung is a pop powerhouse, with varied and clever melodies and arrangements waiting around every corner. Berk takes full advantage, smacking warm-sounding tubs like he's been transported back to Swinging London to record a long-lost Small Faces album. (Park The Van)

Aa—Big A Little A, if you prefer—features three drummers, a jones for '70s German/prog-ish experimentation, and, seemingly, a warehouse full of musical effects and devices. Their new album, *gAame*, is all about timbre and rhythm, and the musicians here embrace the search for new sonic vistas with lots of passion and invention. Aa will give you plenty of ideas—maybe a few nightmares as well. (giganticmusic.com)

Brooklyn's Outside might remind you of early Smashing Pumpkins, but they have their own thing going on as well. Singer Tree is one powerhouse of a performer, delivering her swooping anthemic lyrics across an avalanche of tumbling toms, hand/foot combos, and crash-riding courtesy of drummer **DAMIEN**. *Something Urgent* was self-produced by the band, and though an outside hand probably would have tightened up a couple sections, the band's rock grandeur is undeniable and highly appealing. (www.the-outside.com)

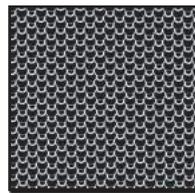
## POISON THE WELL VERSIONS



Deftly straddling the ever-blurring lines of metal, hardcore, and punk, Poison The Well have a tough task in ensuring that *Versions* appeals to all sides. But drummer **CHRIS HORNBOOK** does a fine job of doing just that. There's a beautiful rolling tom pattern on "Breathing's For The Birds," with seesawing dynamics that yield to washy crashes. But brawn defeats beauty on other tracks, including the punishing "Prematurio El Baby" and the rubber burnin' "The Notches That Create Your Headboard." At either end of the tempo spectrum, Hornbook is mindful of breathing room—a problem area for many in this genre—proving that's he's one pace ahead of a very competitive pack. (Ferret)

Waleed Rashidi

## DUNGEN TIO BITAR



Unless you've got umlauts over your name, you haven't a clue as to what Dungen mastermind **REINE FISKE** is on about. He sings entirely in his native tongue, Swedish, but the lysergic melodies and musicianship this one-man band creates translates flawlessly. The sound is beautifully brawny—think Zeppelin-meets-The Zombies' *Odessey & Oracle*—the drumming thunderous and fluid. Fiske pushes "Du Ska Inte Tro Att Det Ordnar Sig" with a slightly rushed thump, then tickles the drums and cymbals with a feathery touch on "Familj." Tasteful as Fiske's playing is, he's completely unafraid of bashing and racing like a psych-punk caveman. See the nine-minute freakout "Mon Amour." Then check your hearing when it's done.

(Kemado) **Patrick Berkery**

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## BORIS WITH MICHIO KURIHARA RAINBOW

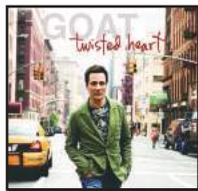
★★★★★



On its 2006 album *Pink*, the Japanese trio Boris was all about punky bombast; *Rainbow* deals more in chiaroscuro. Textures range from downright mellow to loud and nasty, but there's nary a trace of two-beat punk. Guest guitarist **Michio Kurihara** (Ghost) adds squealing fuzz-tone solos, often sounding like Neil Young with even *more* overdrive (and a quicker picking hand), while drummer **ATSUO** plays straight man. On the quietly unsettling title track, for example, Atsuo sticks with unadorned timekeeping. "Sweet No. 1" finds him doing some tribal pounding, but he's mixed low to let Kurihara's shredding leads prowl the foreground. (Drag City) **Michael Parillo**

## GOAT TWISTED HEART

★★★★★



Goat's *Twisted Heart* is a studio session that feels like a live date, with good songs made better by the great funk-rock drumming of **LEROY CLOUDEN**. Clouden makes nothing but good beats, like the cross-stick on "Love And Pain," or the super-filling ghost notes on "All Aboard." "Rome" has a cool stutter step, "Churchbells" kicks straight on like a Springsteen track, and "Monsters" boasts a slick brush and stick groove. The radio-ready opener, "Two Sides To Love," just a little rawer than Harry Connick's New Orleans brew, is vintage Clouden—snappy funk with a classic off-beat tamborine and a heaved-up chorus, highlighting the composition perfectly. The man just lays it down. (www.GoatRocks.com) **Robin Tolleson**



## And Furthermore...

### THE MAHAVISHNU PROJECT

#### RETURN TO THE EMERALD BEYOND

Led by drummer **GREG BENDIAN**, The Mahavishnu Project plays note-perfect but never slavish arrangements of the fabled band's canon. The twelve-piece TMP possess the skills to play gingerly or with acetylene power as needed, though an ethereal approach imbues the music with a subtle elasticity. (Cuneiform) **Ken Micallef**

### SHADOWS FALL THREADS OF LIFE

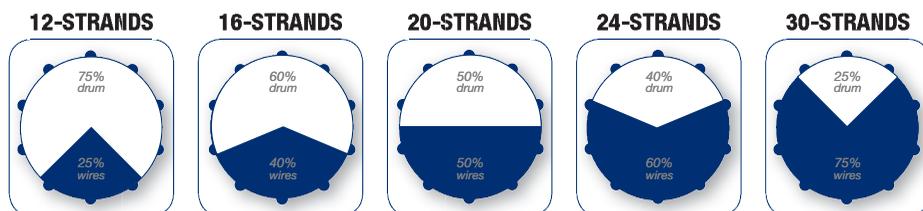
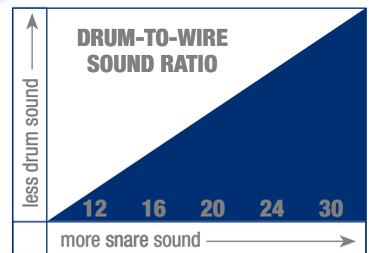
**JASON BITTNER** is not your average metal drummer—far from it. Equally mixing influences Stewart Copeland, Mike Portnoy, and Charlie Benante, his drumming on Shadows Fall's ninth album displays his trademark precision, power, and bombast, but never has Bittner sounded so controlled and minimal. Maturity, anyone? (Atlantic) **Ken Micallef**

### CHRIS WEST JAZZMATIC

Drummer **DERICO WATSON** (Victor Wooten Band) is grooving his proverbial behind off on this funky and melodic collection of mostly instrumentals from Nashville-based sax player Chris West. Propelling the band forward with all sorts of beats, Watson still finds the space to throw in monster fills. (www.jazzmatic.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

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Produced by the San Francisco Bay Area's School Of The Blues, these two books not only provide a practical and eye-opening look at blues drumming, but offer an excellent set of exercises, grooves, and concepts for drummers, regardless of what genre they play in. The authors shift accents around in an 8th-note pattern; they also advocate shifting patterns around inside of the measure, making them fall at odd points and against the beat—great independence training for mind and limb that will allow a drummer to really “play.” Not only do these books handle the genre-specific, de-mystifying stuff like “the backward shuffle with brushes” and “bass drum patterns for blues rumba and calypso,” they also explore the rhythmic evolution of blues drumming into early rock, surf beats, and New Orleans grooves. (Mel Bay)

Robin Tolleson

## 100 FAMOUS FUNK BEATS BY JIM PAYNE

BOOK/CD LEVEL: ALL \$17.95



## THE GREAT DRUMMERS OF R&B, FUNK & SOUL BY JIM PAYNE

BOOK LEVEL: ALL \$19.95



Most of the written material in these two books appeared in Payne's now-out-of-print 1996 work, *Give The Drummers Some*. With a CD added, plus additional notes and historical data, *100 Famous Funk Beats* puts a spotlight on James Brown drummers Clyde Stubblefield on “Since You Been Gone,” Jabo on “Hot Pants Road,” and Jimmy Madison on “My Thang.” Elsewhere Payne celebrates the genius of Andy Newmark's hi-hat on Sly Stone's “Fresh” and the sustained crash cymbal on Parliament's “Up For The Down Stroke.” He also analyzes the outrageous, ground-shaking work by Mike Clark on Herbie Hancock's “Actual Proof” from 1974, and shows how that groove evolved into 1991's amazing “Slinky.” This book is a joy.

*The Great Drummers Of R&B, Funk, & Soul* gives proper due to legends like Earl Palmer, Al Jackson, and the many drummers of James Brown, as well as unsung heroes like Quinton Joseph, James “Diamond” Williams, and Ray Torres. It's musical history with an inside view—raw, uncut, and highly entertaining. (Mel Bay) **Robin Tolleson**

## BOTCH 061502

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$18.98



To figure out how 2007's post-hardcore, screamo, and math-rock acts developed their sound, you've got to turn back several years to some of the decade's earlier trailblazers, like At The Drive-In, Dillinger Escape Plan, and Botch. *061502* is the DVD release of Botch's final show, and drummer **TIM LATONA** tackles a mean kit throughout the fourteen-song set. While this 2002 Seattle performance sports superb audio, the video isn't stellar for those trying to check out Latona's fantastic, frenetic playing. Dimly lit stages coupled with shaky cameras rarely aimed at the drum riser don't lend to many clear Latona sightings, and that's too bad; playing like that deserves a far better on-screen send-off. (Hydra Head)

Waleed Rashidi

## BRUFORD ROCK GOES TO COLLEGE

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$23.99



Has Bill Bruford been sitting on this footage, or baffling the BBC for the rights to it since it was filmed in 1979? Either way, this DVD is long overdue and offers a rare glimpse of Bruford's über-talented, short-lived, schizophrenic rock-jazz band featuring guitarist **Allan Holdsworth**, keyboardist **Dave Stewart**, bassist **Jeff Berlin**, and sometimes vocalist **Annette Peacock**. These pieces are like living, breathing organisms (“Beelzebub” pulsates in and out of 9/8), and Bruford is the rhythmic grand pump, circulating lifeblood through signature rimshots, pitched and precise RotoTom runs, legato sizzle-ride patterns, and one-handed 16th-note beats. This is an incredible document and a must for Bru-heads. (Winterfold Records, [www.billbruford.com](http://www.billbruford.com))

Will Romano

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Story by Ken Micallef  
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# PLAINFIELD

## GROOVES FOR NIGHT AND DAY

**K**im Plainfield, who teaches drumming at Berklee College Of Music in Boston and The Collective in New York City, is a wellspring of insight into the intricacies of drum technique. But far from a tech-geek guru with little stage experience, Plainfield is a twenty-year fusion master with an airy, engrossing style grounded in the funk/R&B of his native Bay Area—and a résumé that includes fusion greats like Bill O’Connell, Didier Lockwood, and Bill Connors.





**P**lainfield's influential instruction manual *Advanced Concepts* is a perennial bestseller. The new follow-up, *A Study In Contemporary Music For The Drums* (with accompanying CD), goes into greater depth, offering practical approaches to song, inverted paradiddle funk, 6/8 and 3/4 grooves, and more. Plainfield's latest CD, *Night And Day* (with co-leader/ bassist Lincoln Goines), showcases his groove, which is both lush and aggressive, steeped

in serious fusion complexity and fat-bottomed beats.

Maintaining a busy schedule between Berklee (teaching Fusion Repertoire Development/Application and Advanced Fusion Lab) and his role as Faculty Chairman at The Collective, Plainfield has somehow found time to develop what he calls "The Positive Performance Seminar," which delves into areas that many drummers fear to tread. For Kim Plainfield, courage is a prerequisite.

**MD:** How does your new book differ from *Advanced Concepts*?

**Kim:** My first book was very theoretical, with attention given to funk, Brazilian, Afro-Cuban, and swing styles. I wanted this to be more practical, more music- and song-oriented. I use music that would serve as platforms for various concepts. I call one concept a "fusion conglomerate." In the song "Monte Cristo," 3/4 and 6/8 funk are iconic grooves of the fusion era. Uptempo funk is another concept, as is the exploration of the song.

**MD:** What's the hardest thing for students to grasp from the book?

**Kim:** Overall, the grooves. Students have more of an inherent interest in fills, combi-

nations, subdivisions, polyrhythms, and soloing than beats and grooves. Unfortunately, it's a sign of the times. Sometimes if I present a student with a certain beat, often when they play it the note placement lacks accuracy, finesse, and contrast. But there's a lot of energy spent on odd groupings and the like.

**MD:** That won't help you get a gig.

**Kim:** So I'll play them music where the groove is undeniable, like Earth, Wind & Fire or James Brown's "Sex Machine." That drumming is unbelievable, and a good example of what can happen when a drummer is really laying it down.

**MD:** How do you reply to those who say fusion drumming is no longer relevant in a

world dominated by metal and hip-hop?

**Kim:** That's a ridiculous statement. Even Webster's defines fusion music as a resulting blend of musical styles or elements from more than one tradition, for example jazz and rock.

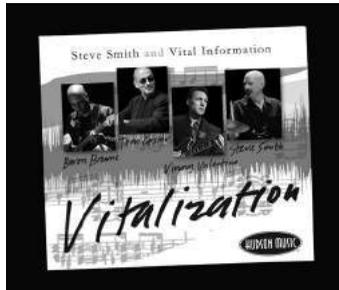
If you're a player, you're limiting your possibilities if you only want to play rap music, for example. How many rap gigs are there, when it's created mostly by machines? Fusion music is a concept; it's a blending of different styles in various proportions. When you consider fusion concepts, what you're talking about is music where the majority of the best musicians play; that's what they want to do the most. Besides, these are the best players in the

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world.

**MD:** What is the essence of what you teach at Berklee?

**Kim:** The labs deal with becoming agile within the different styles: funk, Afro-Cuban,

Brazilian, odd times. In the Advanced Lab, it's about developing rhythmic vocabulary and solo capability. At The Collective, I direct the Advanced Performance Program and the Elective Intensive class, Fusion

Contemporary Afro-Cuban.

**MD:** Regarding Bill Connors' recordings Return, Assembler, and Double-Up, as well as your record, Night And Day, your drumming is very graceful, but deeply funky. Many fusion

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## KIM PLAINFIELD



drummers are either on the beat or pushing it. How do you gauge that?

**Kim:** For me, the manner in which a drummer plays cannot be thought of as ahead of or behind the beat. I can think of something being sharper sounding or rounder sounding, more aggressive or more laid-back sounding. That is more tangible.

**MD:** On "Mind Over Matter," from Return, you

navigate the song's different grooves and styles effortlessly. How do you teach that fluidity?

**Kim:** Sometimes you want to obscure transitions; sometimes you really want to mark a transition. Sometimes you want a sharp contrast, other times you want to melt the sections together. Think of it like reading a story.

Ernest Hemingway had an amazing way of

going from narration to dialog completely seamlessly. Other times it could be more punctuated and shocking. It depends on the transition. If you want it smoother, you can have a pre-introduction of the next feel. Then when you're in the new feel, have remnants of the old feel still present.

**MD:** No matter the gig, from Tania Maria to Didier Lockwood to Bill Connors, your groove is

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funky, yet embellished with unique touches.

**Kim:** Thanks. On a track like "Nobody Yet To" from Return, that type of playing I label "funk jazz." When I first heard that type of playing back in the '70s, it was from guys like Lenny White, Alex Acuña, Eric Gravatt, and Billy Cobham. Dennis Chambers really galvanized that on Tom Coster's Let's Set The Record Straight. "Nobody Yet To" was the first time I was really able to explore that style.

**MD:** Your drumming is very seamless between sections, a constant flow. Any tips for achieving that at a fast tempo?

**Kim:** First of all, don't play it loud. Physically and sonically, it becomes burdensome if you're playing something complicated and loud. You have to play this music in clubs. Also, you have to remain relaxed. That's the only way it will work.

**MD:** What are the different rhythms you address on the CD, Night And Day?

**Kim:** Funk, rock-funk, 6/8, Afro-Cuban, 4/4, swing, 3/4 funk. And by the way, we didn't use a click.

**MD:** What's the rhythm in "Bright Boy"? Latin-funk song?

**Kim:** That is based off partido alto, the Brazilian rhythm. I call it a funk-samba.

**MD:** Then it changes to double time.

**Kim:** It's not really double time—the pulse stays the same—but the 2 and 4 backbeat is implied. I first heard that groove in Weather Report's "Nubian Sundance." That's commonly referred to as half-time/double-time funk. The backbeat is in half time, but the bass drum and ride is placed so it feels like double time.

**MD:** In your Positive Performance Thought seminar, which you've presented at Berklee, you cover lots of interesting mental material that isn't often discussed.

**Kim:** I wanted to address the psychological health of the performing artist. The seminar deals with performance anxiety, lack of confidence, fear, paranoia—all these different dynamics that creep into the life of the musician. Every musician has to deal with it, and I've seen the worst. I think this can help young musicians and set them on a positive path.

**MD:** Explain this theme: "Focusing excessively on one's self can result in a layering of self consciousness."

**Kim:** Suppose you lock yourself away, where you can't experience the outside world—it's all in your mind. If you do that in music, you may become so worried that anything in your playing that has a flaw will seem overly dramatic, when in reality it's not. You want to get outside your sphere and experience the

world. That way your own thing won't be such a big deal.

**MD:** So don't spend all of your time in the practice room.

**Kim:** When you're playing music, you have to listen. If you're only thinking about what you're doing, you're going to run into a brick wall.

**MD:** What's the biggest problem drummers have in getting outside of themselves to play music?

**Kim:** For so many, it's developing the capacity where they can listen and play music simultaneously. If what you're doing requires too much energy to execute and you can't pay attention to the music, you'll have difficulty playing in a band.

One fundamental is in the practice room: Become more familiar with what you play so you can listen and react. Another aspect is developing agility. Fusion is a thorough study of many styles and developing agility in those styles. The fact remains that the drummer has more control over the development of the music than anyone else. Therefore you have to assume that responsibility as the drummer.

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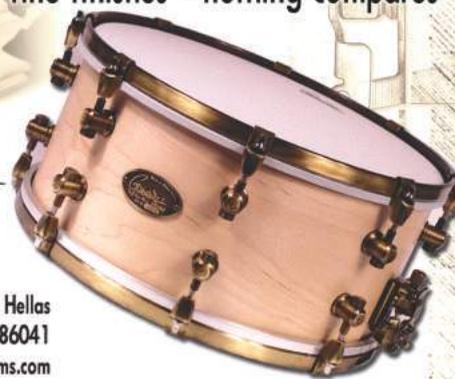
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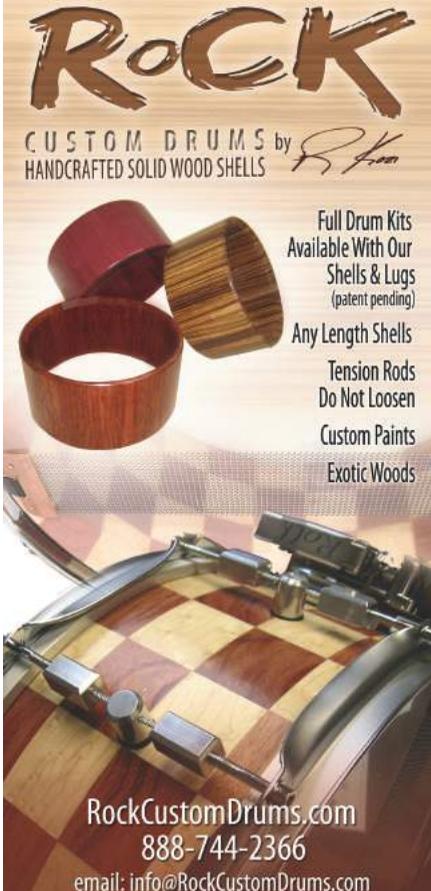
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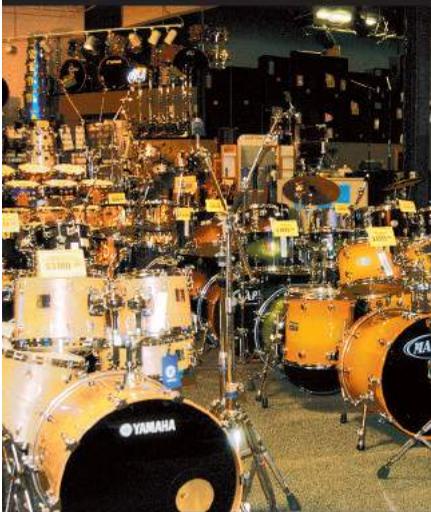
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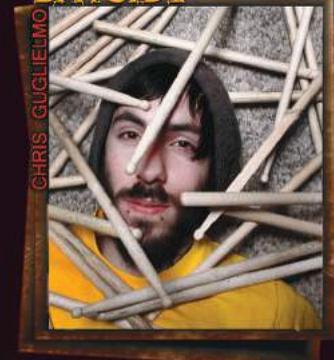
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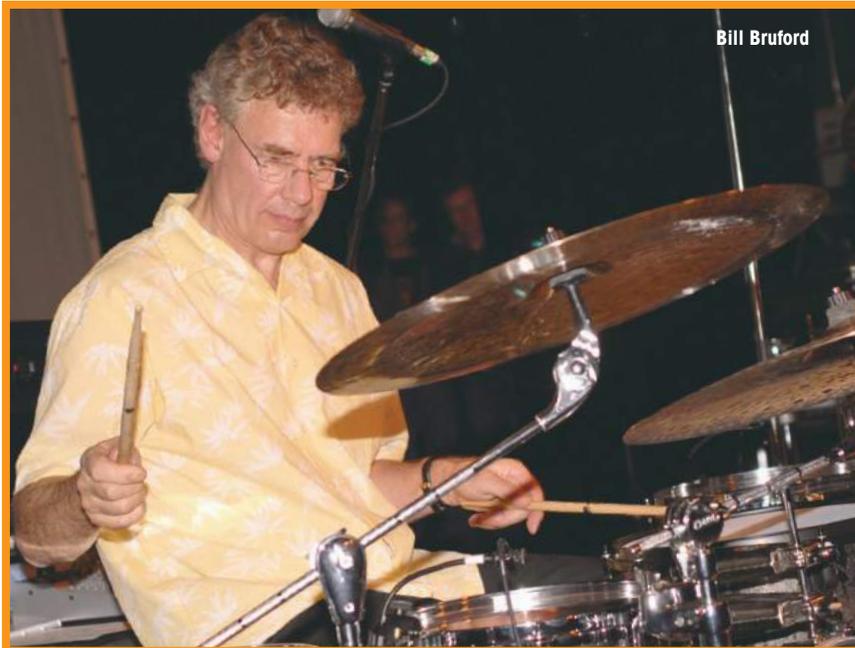
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# 2007 Cape Breton International Drum Festival

story and photos by Jim Cornall



Bill Bruford

The 2007 Cape Breton International Drum Festival was held this past April 28 and 29 at the Savoy Theatre, in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. The seventh annual event was produced and hosted by Bruce and Gloria Jean Aitken.

Saturday kicked off with a native drumming display from the 3D Membertou Drum Circle. They were followed by jazz/fusion/studio artist John Favicchia, who played to three jazz tracks before discussing his background in the business. The Otarion Showcase then highlighted regional drummers Derek King, Chris Kavanaugh, Ben Duinker, and Dylan Mombourquette. Up next was Phil Maturano, who played to tracks, explained the basics of Argentine rhythms, and closed with a blistering solo.



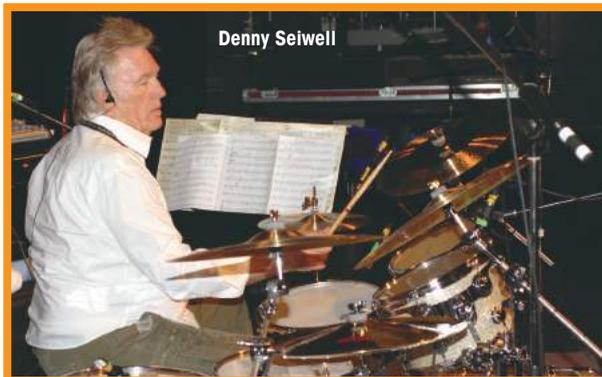
Flo Mounier

Yes drummer Alan White appeared following a short film of his musical history. He spoke about his drumming philosophy, told stories of his career with Yes, and described how he came to play with John Lennon (on the Live Peace gig in Toronto and the Imagine sessions) and George Harrison (on All Things Must Pass). White finished by teaming with local musicians for a medley of Yes and Lennon tunes. He was followed by multi-percussionist Pete Lockett, who offered a breathtaking performance of world rhythms that included a tabla solo and a Ghanaian piece.

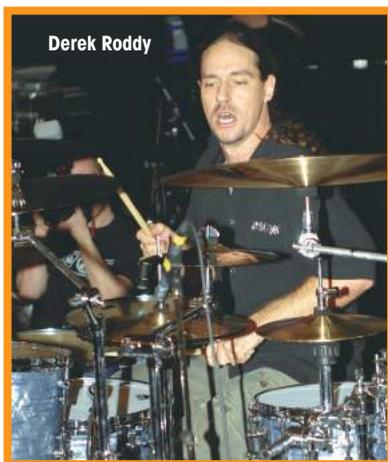
Former King Crimson and Yes legend Bill Bruford next performed several works from his own bands Bruford and Earthworks. Bill then spoke about technique, commenting that many students don't have enough dynamic range. His educational and witty delivery was well received by the audience. Bill finished with a spectacular version of King Crimson's "Indiscipline."

Cryptopsy's Flo Mounier closed Saturday's show on the biggest drumset of the weekend. Young drummers in attendance were enthralled by Flo's double bass skills and lightning speed. Flo answered questions thoughtfully and with humor, and also gave tips on avoiding pains and strains through practice and stretching techniques.

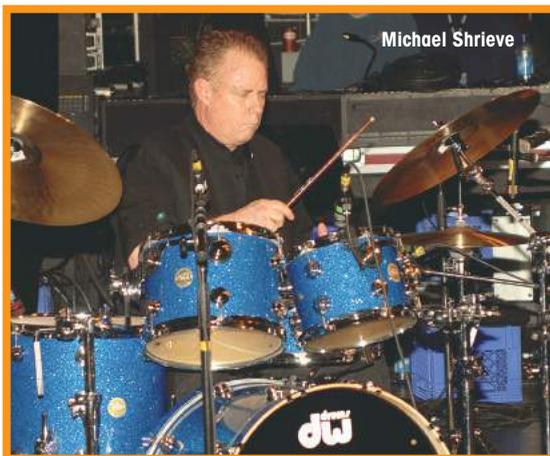
Native Canadian singer/drummers Asani opened the Sunday show. The Otarion Showcase then featured all-girl drum band Heartbeats, along with Katie Patterson and Steve Wilton. Session drummer and former Wing Denny Seiwell performed next, before receiving one of the two Legends awards handed out at



Denny Seiwell



Derek Roddy



Michael Shrieve



Pete Lockett

the festival. (The other was to Steve Gadd, who couldn't attend but sent a personal greeting.)

Studio/touring great Curt Bisquera and percussionist Rich Mangiaro then played an energetic set before offering tips on how to create parts to fit whatever the music calls for. Next, former Frank Zappa percussionist Ed Mann mesmerized the audience with sublime improvisations (with Lockett, Mangiaro, and Maturano helping out on percussion), hilarious stories of his experiences with Zappa, and one complex Zappa composition.

Speed metal star Derek Roddy powered through some great solos and blazing double bass work. He then performed to several tracks, including a solid Latin tune that demonstrated his versatility. Roddy was followed by original Santana drummer Michael Shrieve. Shrieve

gave some tips about dealing with nerves, as well as the importance of correct breathing. He also responded to questions with answers that often took fascinating detours. Referring to his landmark performance at Woodstock, Shrieve commented, "We were like a street gang, and the weapon was music."

Perennial CB Drum Fest closer Dom Famularo performed his trademark speed-of-light solo, then placed a cellphone call to eighty-eight-year-old Jim Chapin (who played over the phone on a practice pad to the delight of the crowd). Famularo then led all of the performers in the traditional group encore, which attempted once more to raise the roof. (One of these years, they're going to do it.) More information is available at [www.cbdrumfest.ca](http://www.cbdrumfest.ca).

## Indy Quickies

**VIC FIRTH DRUMSTICKS** recently provided the sticks for the music4kids program at the Musikmesse in Frankfurt, Germany. The six-day program underlines Messe Frankfurt's commitment to encouraging young children to make music. The photo at right shows Vic (center) surrounded by young drum enthusiasts at the Musikmesse.

**THE COLLECTIVE SCHOOL OF MUSIC** (including Drummers Collective) has received formal accreditation from the National Association Of Schools of Music (NASM) in the category of non-degree conferring institutions. This accreditation will make it easier for students to transfer credits earned at The Collective toward degree programs at other institutions. Visit [www.thecoll.com](http://www.thecoll.com) for more information.

Bon Jovi drummer **TICO TORRES** (right) recently accepted a \$50,000 check from Hard Rock International manager of acquisitions/artist relations Don Bernstein (far left) on behalf of The Arc of Palm Beach County, Florida. Tico hopes to raise \$750,000 for the charity, whose mission is "to improve the lives of children who have developmental and mental disabilities, as well as those of their families, through services, advocacy, and education."

**YAMAHA** has revamped its Web site with a sleek, modern look. YamahaDrums.com serves as a platform for contests, as well as a portal to access multimedia information about Yamaha drum products and artists.



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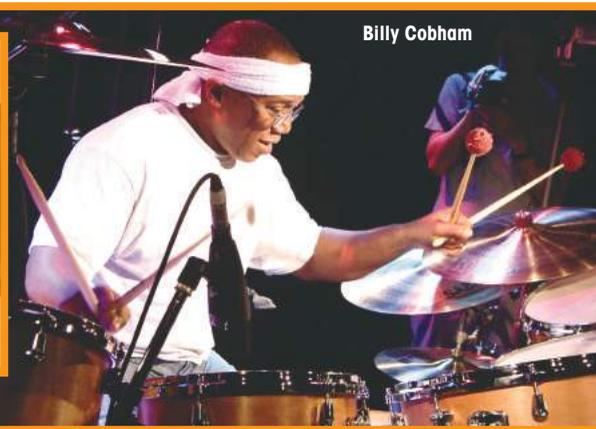
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## Upcoming Drum Events

The UK-based International Drum Foundation is committed to bringing drum education to as many drummers as possible via live clinics and educational camps. Events in 2007 began with



Jojo Mayer



Billy Cobham

a Chad Wackerman clinic held this past May 6. Additional events scheduled for this year include the Billy Cobham Drum Academy (at Bath Spa University's Newton Park campus, July 30–August 3), which will also feature percussion workshops with musicians from Brazil, Cuba, the USA, Columbia, and Zimbabwe. Also scheduled is the Bath Rhythm Course (August 4–11 at Bath Spa's Newton St Loe Campus), with a faculty featuring Cobham, Jojo Mayer, Adrian Erlandsson, Dan Foord, Simon Edgoose, Pete Riley, Colin Woolway, and James Hester. Topics range from basic reading to advanced incorporation of electronics, with plenty of playing opportunities. Visit [www.internationaldrumfoundation.org.uk](http://www.internationaldrumfoundation.org.uk) for more information.

The 2007 KoSA International Percussion Workshops will be held August 6–12 at Johnson State College in Johnson, Vermont. Drumset faculty includes Carmine Appice, Gregg Bissonette, John Riley, Dafnis Prieto, Dom Famularo, Mike Clark, Jim Chapin, Joe Bergamini, Jeff Salisbury, and MD's Rick Van Horn. World percussion faculty includes Aldo Mazza, Memo Acevedo, Glen Velez, Rajna Swaminathan, Michael Spiro, Kalani, Marco Lienhard, and Michael Wimberly. Mallet and classical percussion faculty includes Mike Manieri, She-e Wu, Arnie Lang, and Rich Holly. Additional faculty includes Allan Molnar (music & technology), Jim Royle (steel drum ensemble), Mario DeCiutiis (electronic percussion), and Lou Robinson (didgeridoo). Visit [www.kosamusic.com](http://www.kosamusic.com) for more information.



Dafnis Prieto

Heinz Kronberger



Dave Weckl

Alex Solca

DrumFantasy.07 will take place August 17–21 at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. Participants will attend small instructional classes and concerts featuring Steve Smith, Dave Weckl, Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, and a fourth major drummer to be added shortly. Faculty and participants will be staying in the same dorm facilities for a truly interactive experience.

Concerts during the camp will feature each instructor playing with a band. One band is expected to be Steve Smith's noted fusion group, Vital Information. Participants who stay for the Monday and Tuesday sessions will have the opportunity to perform with a band in front of the camp. More information is available at [www.drumfantasycamp.com](http://www.drumfantasycamp.com).

TigerBill's DrumBeat DrumFest 2007 will be held Saturday, October 20 from 1:00 to 6:00 P.M. at the Darress Theater in Boonton, New Jersey. Scheduled performers include Tiger Bill Meligari, Hip Pickles, Chip Ritter, and mallet artist James Walker, with more to be added. Tickets are \$50, with a limited number of Early Bird discount tickets available online for \$40. Net proceeds from ticket sales and a drum gear auction will go to the Michael J. Fox Foundation to benefit Parkinson's disease research. Visit [www.tigerbill.com](http://www.tigerbill.com) for more information.

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The Spaun Drum Company has been chosen to supply the backline drums for the Jagermeister Mobile Stage. A custom Jagermeister-themed drumset has been created for the purpose. The self-contained drivable stage will be the featured second stage at Ozzfest and will also be utilized at numerous sporting events throughout the year.



Mel Gaynor (Simple Minds) is now playing Taye drums and Anatolian cymbals.

2007 WFD Champion Mike "The Machine" Mallais is a Los Cabos drumstick artist.



**Eric Velez**

Eric Velez (Marc Anthony, Jennifer Lopez) is a new Toca percussion artist.

Mapex has added Rocky Covington to its roster. Rocky is the drummer for (and twin brother of) 2006 American Idol finalist Bucky Covington, whose self-titled album

dropped April 17.

Percussion/dance extravaganza DrumJungle (featuring Daniel de los Reyes) is now using Gon Bops percussion and Remo drumheads.



**Daniel de los Reyes**

Stella Mozgawa of MINK is a new Pearl drumset artist.

Leonard Haze (a founding member of the band Y & T) is now playing Peace drums.

David Butler (Lee "Scratch" Perry) is playing Istanbul Agop cymbals.

# MD Sweeps Winners

The Grand Prize winner of the Carmine Appice Rock History Prize Package (offered in the March MD) is Ohio drummer Doug Edwards. Doug will receive a Carmine Appice Signature Slingerland drumkit with autographed Sabian Signature prototype cymbals, Aquarian heads, S-hoops, two DW single pedals, and Canopus snare wires, along with thirty pairs of Vic Firth sticks, a set of Protecstor cases, an Anvil Wafer, and an Alfred instruction pack.

Second-prize winner Pat le Donne of New Jersey and third-prize winner Saul Grayson of New York will also receive valuable prize packages. Congratulations to the winners from all the contest sponsors and Modern Drummer.



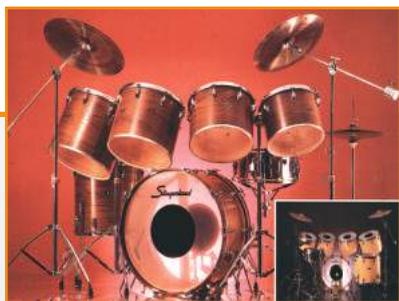
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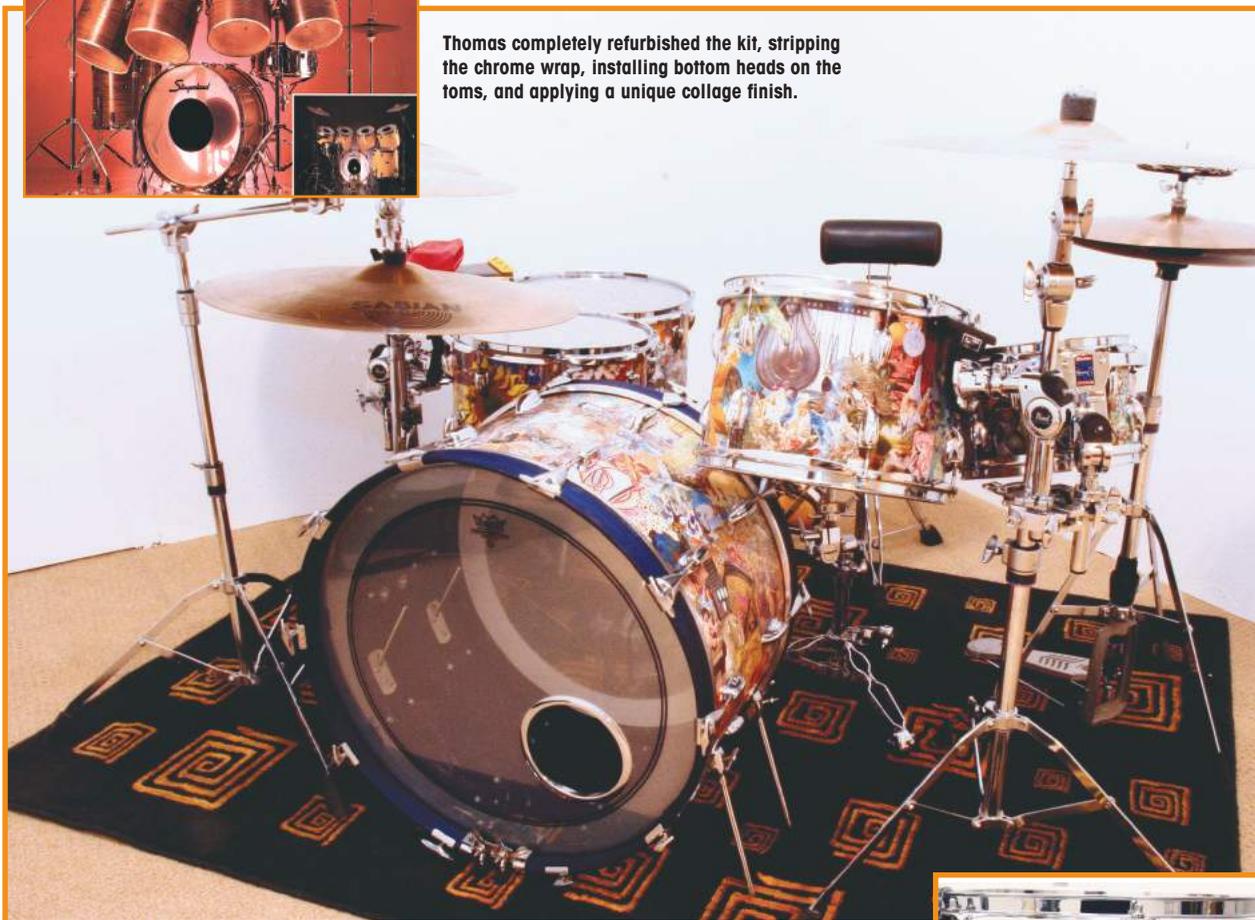
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Thomas Given's '70s-era Slingerland kit originally looked something like this one...

Thomas completely refurbished the kit, stripping the chrome wrap, installing bottom heads on the toms, and applying a unique collage finish.



## Canadian Collage Kit

Ottawa, Canada drummer Thomas Given purchased a used '70s-era Slingerland kit a little over two years ago. At the time, it consisted of 10", 12", 13", and 14" concert toms, a 14x24 bass drum, and a chrome Tama snare (which was later sold). The concert toms were mounted on two stands, and there was no floor tom. The wood shells were wrapped in sheet steel with a shiny chrome finish.

Today the kit has been augmented to include a 16x16 floor tom and a '70s-era 6 1/2x14 chrome snare. And all of the drums (except the snare) sport a unique collage finish that Thomas created and applied by hand. Thomas' s description of his restoration project is humorous and informative, but it' s far too involved and lengthy to relate here. So you can find that description, along with detailed photos, at [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).



PHOTO REQUIREMENTS  
 1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. High-resolution (300 dpi) digital photos are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit.  
 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit.  
 Send photo(s) to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.



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