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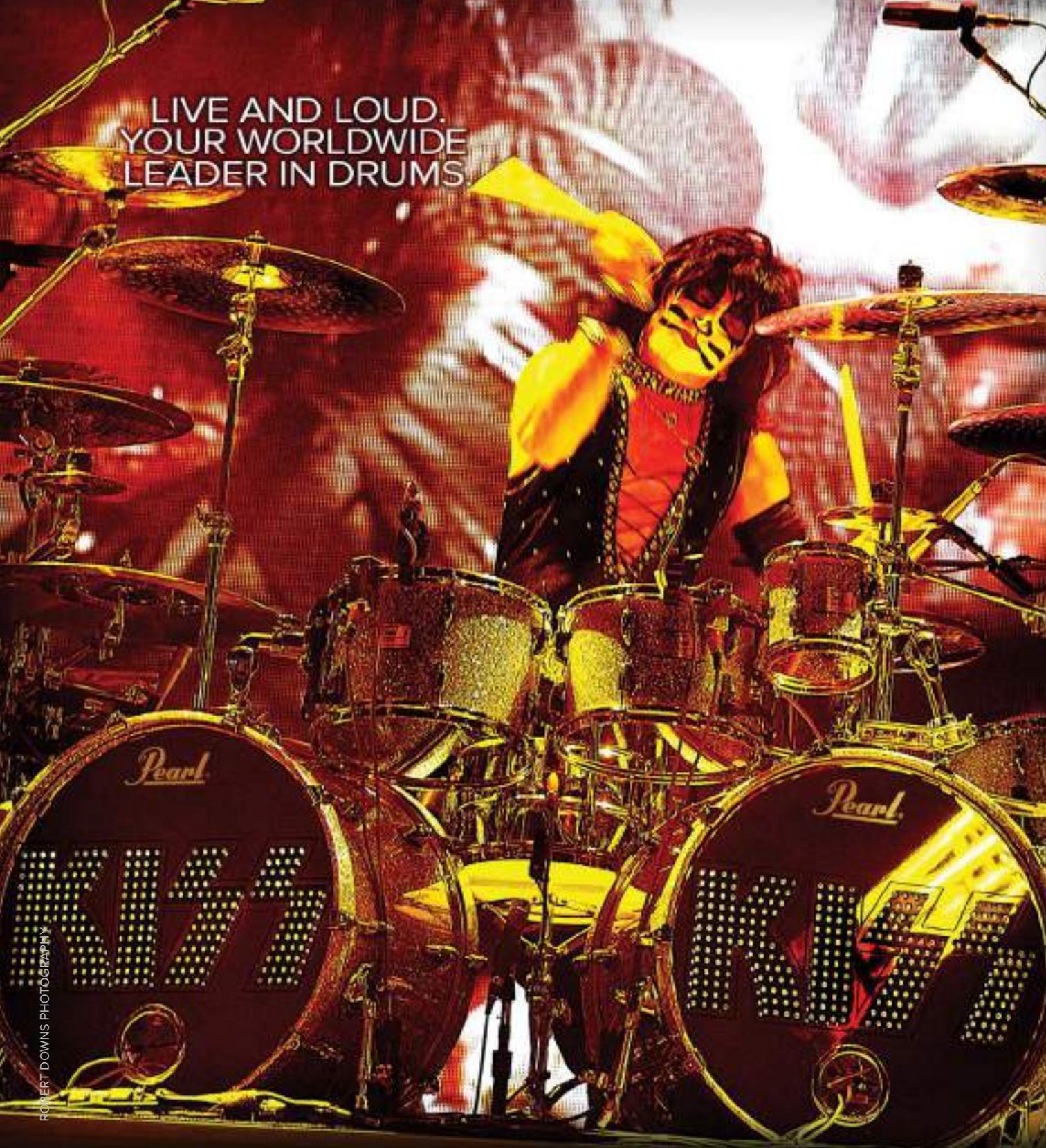


WHAT IS MIPA AWARD?

Journalists of more than 100 dedicated special interest magazines from all over the world (56 magazines from 24 countries) were called upon to nominate and vote for the best musical instruments and audio equipment of 2014/2015 in the 37 categories of the prestigious mipa/ ppa Musikmesse/Prolight + Sound International Press Award.

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N LONGSTRETH SLIGHTLY STOOPID RYAN... Y GRILLO PISTOL DAY PARADE JASON HARTL
... MY VALENTIN MOOSE ARCH ENEMY... YELLOWJACKETS WILL KENNEDY JOHN BUTLER

Pearl

30 On the Cover

Adam Deitch

by Robin Tolleson

“There’s a constant search for finding out what your sound is and what you’re able to express in the moment, when it counts. It just keeps everybody humble and willing to learn and get better.”

With that quote, Lettuce’s ridiculously grooving drummer was referring to what it’s like playing in funk/fusion giant John Scofield’s band—but he could easily apply it to any situation he finds himself in.

Cover and contents photos by Rahav Segev



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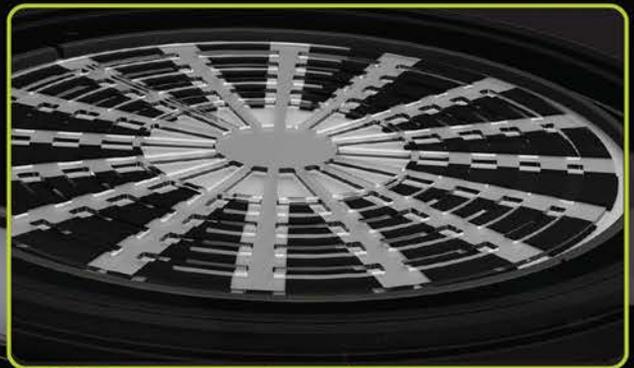


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For a Limited Time Only

Welcome to the second installment of our twelve-month celebration of *Modern Drummer's* fortieth year of publication. You'll notice that we've kept the throwback theme going with the classic MD logo on the cover, and we'll continue to do so until the urge strikes us to make another change. Longtime readers may recall several logo modifications over the years. Some included the drummer boy graphic, some included a drumstick, and some had the word "drummer" sized larger than "modern." (Trivia question: Do you recall the first issue to feature the version of the MD logo that we've revived? Hint: The giveaway that month was a badass five-piece Yamaha Power Recording Custom kit. Log onto our Facebook page to find out.)



Wendy Paschnick

Another cool thing that we're excited to announce for our fortieth year is the release of a limited run of handmade solid-shell and 3-ply snares built

to our specifications by master craftsman Bruce Hagwood of RBH Drums. There are three models to choose from, and each was designed to convey a particular sound while also being versatile enough to handle just about any musical situation you'd encounter that calls for a wood-shell snare. Think of them as the foundation of a great snare collection that covers all the bases while leaving plenty of room to be expanded upon with other offerings from your favorite drum companies.

For gigs/sessions requiring a super-sensitive, warm, and powerful tone, we have a 5.5x14 single-ply maple with slightly rounded 45-degree bearing edges. This snare will work in just about any genre, from bebop to hard rock. For a darker vintage-type timbre, we've created a 6.5x14 3-ply mahogany/poplar/walnut model with fully rounded bearing edges. This would

be your go-to for rootsy rock, Stax-style R&B, mellower singer-songwriter sessions, and other gigs requiring an earthier vibe. The third drum is a 6x13 single-ply cherry adorned with a gorgeous curly maple inlay. It delivers a more focused "pop" that's tailor-made for funk, fusion, contemporary R&B, modern rock, electronica, and so on. It also works great as a tight auxiliary sound when combined with the warmer and more open tones of the 3-ply and maple models.

All of the wood for these 40th-anniversary snares is hand-selected, molded, cut, and finished by Hagwood at his custom shop in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Each drum features 2.3mm triple-flange steel hoops, custom U.S.-made chrome-over-brass tube lugs, Puresound wires, an Evans G1 Coated batter head and 300 Clear bottom, a laser-etched chrome Trick G007 three-point throw-off, and a *Modern Drummer* round badge.

For more information on our 40th-anniversary snare drum collection, including how to order, email mdinfo@moderndrummer.com or give us a ring at 973-239-4140. We're only making them available for a limited time (\$999 each), so get yours while you can. Enjoy the issue!

Mike Dawson

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	R.C.	C.C.	China	Splash	Cowbell	
open	○	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
H.H.	⊗	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
T.T.	⊗	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
S.D.	⊗	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
F.T.	⊗	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
B.D.	⊗	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
H.H.	⊗	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
w/foot	⊗	×	⊗	⊕	▲	
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READERS' PLATFORM

Ilan Rubin

As a longtime subscriber to *MD*, I've almost always known who the cover artists were and was always interested to see who their influences were, see what kind of gear they played, and gain some insight into the songs they recorded. When the October 2015 issue arrived, I had no idea who Ilan Rubin was (or so I thought) until I started reading his article. When he said he recorded with Paramore, it immediately brought a smile to my face because now I could recognize the drummer who recorded their hit song, "Ain't It Fun." If you're not familiar with it, I highly recommend checking it out.

Billy Amendola's article with the legendary Joe Vitale was great as well, especially Joe's insight into some classic tunes he recorded over the years with Joe Walsh, CSN, and the late John Entwistle. It was refreshing to hear Joe, being the veteran he is, be so humble and appreciative of the business.

I still look forward to every issue like the kid I was in '83, when I first started as a subscriber.
John Rogers



Neil Peart Poll

When our Facebook followers were asked to choose one Neil Peart track to recommend to a drummer who's unfamiliar with his playing, fans of "The Professor" weren't shy about weighing in. "La Villa Strangiato," "YYZ," and "Subdivisions" snagged the top three spots, with "La Villa" earning more votes than the other two combined. Here are some thoughts from Peart devotees:



"La Villa Strangiato" probably displays him at his best; a clinic of many differing styles all woven within one song. That said, "Subdivisions" is my favorite drumming song by Rush.
Jody Thomas

"Anthem" from, I believe, *All the World's a Stage*. While his studio work is great, to indulge the uninitiated you have to show them what he is capable of live, which for a drummer is where you really get to know who's kickin' tubs.
Eric Yacula

Not getting into the crazy stuff (*Hemispheres*), "La Villa Strangiato" is probably one of the most intense tracks since it has so many different feels to it. "Natural Science" is a close second!
Ben Barletta

It may be the obvious answer, but "Tom Sawyer" has to be the choice. It best represents his overall talent, drum writing ability, and diversity of styles. It shows the complexity and depth of his overall ability, and as he's said, it's just hard and even *he* feels good when he gets it right.
Gregory Weiss

Want your voice heard? Follow us on Facebook and look out for next month's question.

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NEWS

Out Now

Fleetwood Mac

Tusk: Deluxe Edition

The deluxe edition of Fleetwood Mac's 1979 double album, *Tusk*, comprises five CDs including the remastered original LP and an alternate version of the complete album made up of session outtakes, as well as singles, demos, remixes, and two discs' worth of unreleased live performances. Also included is a 5.1 surround mix of *Tusk* on DVD audio and a vinyl version of the album. "Tusk turned out to be one of the most important albums we ever made," drummer Mick Fleetwood told *Modern Drummer* in 2003. "As a percussionist, the thought of hitting a Kleenex box in a bathroom and miking it...to me, if something sounds good, go with it. And I would draw from my own experiences. I was blessed to be at quite a few of the Beatles sessions...like 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer.' They literally had an anvil in the studio. I thought that was the greatest thing since sliced bread." (Warner Bros.)



The Lizards

Reptilicus Maximus

Former Blue Öyster Cult, Rainbow, Quiet Riot, and Black Sabbath drummer **Bobby Rondinelli** recently wrapped up the seventh album by the Lizards, which showcases his muscular but finesse-fueled approach. From the sizzling fill that introduces opening cut "Ton on the One," straight through the rest of *Reptilicus Maximus*, Rondinelli exudes the sound, spirit, and swagger of John Bonham, Ian Paice, and Buddy Rich like few others playing today, but maintains his own unique signature on tracks like "Evil Eyes," "Crash," "Turnin' Me Under," and closer "Miracle Man." "The album was recorded [almost completely] live," Rondinelli tells *Modern Drummer*, "except for an occasional fill I redid. To their credit, nobody ever said I had to hold back." At press time, Rondinelli was unsure whether the Lizards would be touring behind the album, but the drummer has plenty of activities filling his calendar, including work with the popular German metal guitarist Axel Rudi Pell. (lizardswebsite.com) **Bob Girouard**

Speed the Plough

Now

The first album in four years by Speed the Plough features the kit work of **John Demeski**, son of onetime STP drummer and longtime Feelies member Stanley Demeski. "My father's influence comes up in a few different ways stylistically," Demeski the younger tells *MD*. "I would say the most noticeable way is just in how I try to not overburden a song with overplaying. Rather, I'm trying to provide a solid rhythm with the occasional flair or lead part every so often, and playing fast and loud when required." Speed the Plough is at its best when riding the dynamic tension that's part and parcel of the group's compositions. "That's a huge talking point in our practices," Demeski says. "We always want the songs to have life, with ebbs and flows and such. There's good communication between all of us because we're family—literally!" (Coyote Records)



Speed the Plough, from left: John Baumgartner (keyboards, vocals), Toni Baumgartner (woodwinds, vocals), Cindi Merkle (bass, vocals), Ed Seifert (guitar, vocals), John Demeski (drums), and Michael Baumgartner (guitar, vocals)

For more with Bobby Rondinelli and John Demeski, go to moderndrummer.com.

Other New Releases

Cage the Elephant Tell Me I'm Pretty (Jared Champion) /// **Neil Finn and Paul Kelly** Goin' Your Way (Elroy Finn) /// **Tom Jones** Long Lost Suitcase (Jeremy Stacey) /// **Nigel Hall** Ladies & Gentlemen... (Questlove, Adam Deitch)

On Tour

Matthew Nicholls has been out with Bring Me the Horizon, including appearances at Aftershock and Knotfest in California last October, European and Russian dates in November and December, and Australian Soundwave Festival dates in January. **John Fred Young** (below) is spending early 2016 in Europe with Black Stone Cherry.



Also on the Road

Carey Harmon with Railroad Earth /// **Myles Deck** with Cauldron /// **Jano Rix** with the Wood Brothers /// **Liam Hurley** with Josh Ritter /// **Dominic Howard** with Muse /// **John Kimock** with Mike Gordon /// **Scott Rockenfield** with Queensrÿche /// **Steve Kilroy** with Freaks Like Me

The photos on this page were taken by Glenn Hirsch at the Louder Than Life festival in Louisville this past October.



Who's Playing What



Morrison



Blake



Andres Patrick Forero is playing Sonor drums, using the ProLite series for the Broadway show *Hamilton* and the SQ2 series for his studio work.

Jotan Afanador has joined the Gon Bops family of artists.



New Natal signings include **Colin Jones** (Circa Waves), **Louise Bartle** (Bloc Party), **Mathew Priest** (Icicle Works, Dodgy), **Jamiel Blake** (Sam Smith), **Julian Chambers** (Lemar, Raleigh Ritchie), **Jamie Morrison** (Stereophonics), **Chris "Woody" Wood** (Bastille), and **Jeremy Clemons** (Burning Spear).

Industry Happenings



KMC Music is now the exclusive United States distributor of Rhythm Tech percussion products and accessories, which KMC's parent company, JAM Industries, recently acquired.

"For more than thirty-five years this great company has helped to set the standard for hand percussion, mounted percussion, drums, and accessory products that are the choice of leading players like Carmine Appice, Carter Beauford,

Gregg Bissonette, and Dennis Chambers," KMC Music president Mark Terry says. "This tradition of innovation is guaranteed to continue, because Richard Taninbaum, the visionary founder and president of Rhythm Tech, will continue to consult on future Rhythm Tech product development and design." Rhythm Tech joins a KMC lineup that already includes Paiste, Gibraltar, Latin Percussion, Remo, Toca, Vater, and Vic Firth.

Innovative Percussion held its fourth annual Nashville Drumset Artist Hang last September 29 at Jed's Sports Bar, with two dozen locally based recording and touring drummers gathering for an evening of refreshments and camaraderie.

The players who made it out included JonMichael Brady, Chris McHugh, Shannon Forrest, Nir Z, Lalo Davila, Mark Beckett, Benjamin Jackson, Scot Corey, J.D. Blair, Tony Graci, Cody Leppo, Edward Freytag, Trey Cordle, Dann Sherrill, Todd London, Rick Wilkerson, George Lawrence, Brian Kilian, Natalie Wilson, Phil Wilson, Beth Gottlieb, Julie Davila, and Joshua Zeigler.

Among the Innovative Percussion staffers in attendance were Nick Phillips, Erik Johnson, George Barrett, Carol Carpenter, Betsy Johnson, Rich Mangicaro, Corey Boise, Chris Long, and Henry Go.



Rick Malten



New GrooveScribe App

Mike Johnston (mikeslessons.com) and Lou Montulli (Netscape, Mozilla, Shutterstock) have released a new drum-oriented app called GrooveScribe, which allows musicians to quickly create beat and fill ideas in a drum-machine-style interface and have them instantly transcribed into proper drum notation.

"I'm hoping this will help connect the dots for all of the drummers out there that have great ideas in their heads but can't properly notate them due to a lack of music theory knowledge," Johnston tells *MD*. Once an idea has been created, the user can hear it, slow it down, speed it up, swing it, play it straight, add a metronome, add and subtract notes, change the subdivision, and make other changes. The app is free, and users don't need to sign in or sign up—they simply create and share. To learn more, go to mikeslessons.com.



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Fourplay's Harvey Mason

The musical chameleon has used every color in his palette during his decorated career. Right now, it's all about silver.

While most players go through peaks and valleys in their career, for more than forty years Harvey Mason has maintained a remarkably steady presence in the studio and on stage. Already a first-call session man by the time he recorded the watershed 1973 *Head Hunters* album with jazz-crossover great Herbie Hancock, Mason proceeded to become a household name among funk and fusion followers due to his subsequent work with Grover Washington Jr., Donald Byrd, George Benson, Bill Withers, the Brothers Johnson, and dozens of other top acts, plus his own solo albums.

Mason continued to thrive, adding Grammy-winning artists like Seal ("Kiss From a Rose") and John Legend ("Save Room") to his impossibly long résumé and scoring films such as *Only the Strong* and *Deadly Outbreak*. And the career highlights keep coming. Last May, Harvey was awarded a doctorate of music from Berklee, and his work with the popular smooth-jazz group Fourplay has garnered numerous Grammy nominations. The band is currently celebrating twenty-five years together with the release of its fourteenth album, *Silver*.

"In 1990, we'd just come off doing a record with Bob James called *Grand Piano Canyon*," Mason says, recalling Fourplay's birth. "We played so well together that we decided to form a band. We got signed to Warner Bros., and our self-titled first album went platinum."

A quarter century later, Fourplay is still a leading force on the contemporary instrumental jazz scene, with *Silver* providing yet another glimpse of Mason's many charms. His beautifully syncopated kick drum and rimclicks drive "Silverado"; his highly controlled dynamics and rhythmic range make "Aniversário" an instrumental journey worth taking multiple times; and "Sterling" highlights his expressive left hand as it smacks accents and dribbles ghost notes on a soprano snare, which has become a signature part of his sound. "I started using a 10" Brady snare on occasional

Harvey Mason has appeared on *Modern Drummer's* cover on four occasions, most recently in October 1998. "Back then I was doing a lot of studio work," Mason recalls, "and of course my solo career was taking off. Now I do more traveling. For example, in 2015 I went to Japan three times. Asia is a wonderful market for Fourplay. Audiences are respectful and enthusiastic, and they love good music. Live, I get to *play*... it's freer, while people recognize my style."



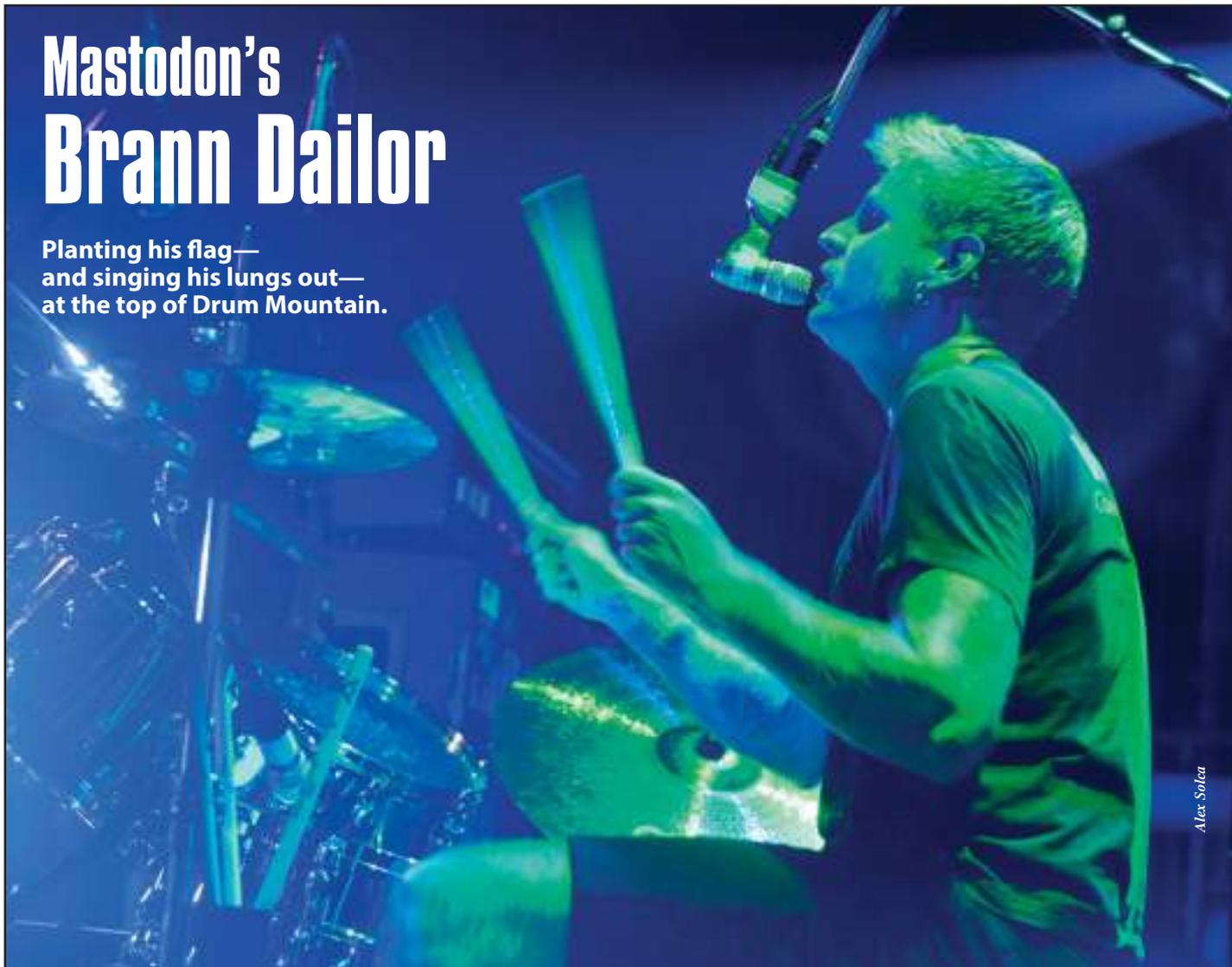
Photo: J. J. Mason

projects," Mason says. "I loved the sound so much that I incorporated it with Fourplay for contrast. Now I'm using a 15x14 snare by Canopus that's like a field drum; it's low and dry, reminiscent of [what you would hear on] an AI Green record."

Last year the drummer recorded his critically acclaimed eleventh solo album, *Chameleon*, which features a mix of originals and covers that go back as far as thirty years. Pondering how times have changed since he first played the earliest of those tracks, Mason avoids a negative tone as he ticks off the technological and social forces that have impacted working drummers. "Radio is not as much a factor in selling records," he explains. "Studio work has expanded beyond major cities and into private homes. Drum scores are being recorded all around the world now. And live music is still healthy. Also, drummers are getting better younger, as they take advantage of video instruction and live footage. They're pushing the envelope, and that's good—very good." **Bob Girouard**

Mastodon's Brann Dailor

Planting his flag—
and singing his lungs out—
at the top of Drum Mountain.



Alex Salca

Practice may lead to improvement, but exercise off the kit keeps the body conditioned to handle the physical exertion. For Brann Dailor, it's a responsibility that comes with his job.

While not on tour, Dailor's Monday-through-Friday exercise and practice routine consists of kettle-bell training, pull-ups, cardio, and two hours at the kit. "I switch it up," Brann says. "One day I'll work on my left foot or my ride hand, or I'll get lost for a couple hours creating new beats. On other days I'll go through about two hours of Mastodon material that we don't usually play live, just to keep it in my wheelhouse.

"I can't take a month off of playing Mastodon stuff," Dailor adds. "Life gets 'lifelike' sometimes, and I've had to be away from my drums for several weeks due to some tragedy in my family or something. Then it's a week before tour starts, and I have to cram. I call that starting from the bottom of

Drum Mountain."

Mastodon drum parts have always ranged from challenging to ludicrous, particularly on the group's early recordings. "Sometimes forty-year-old Brann wants to go back in time and slap twenty-year-old Brann and say, 'Dude, what are you doing?'" Dailor quips. "But I'm grateful for twenty-something Brann for playing all those intense parts, because maintaining that level keeps me in shape."

It's not as if things have lightened up, though. Even though Dailor has learned to make an equally intense impact with fewer notes, in recent years he's taken on an added responsibility: singing. Mastodon's melodies have evolved tremendously over time, and Dailor began contributing lead and backing vocals on 2009's *Crack the Skye* album. "It did *not* come naturally," he admits. "It's a sacred contract you make with the audience that you'll be able to pull it off live, and it's a work in progress. It's a new

source of anxiety for me, but I love that aspect of it. I'll go to the grave working on it, but I'm getting closer to where I want to be. I'm actively trying to pursue perfection on all levels of drumming and singing."

Before wrapping up another successful touring cycle in support of its critically acclaimed sixth studio album, *Once More 'Round the Sun*, Mastodon hit the road this fall with metal godfathers Judas Priest for an eleven-date co-headlining tour. "It's a real deep-rooted childhood thing," Dailor says of his relationship with the elder group's music. "My mom was a huge fan—we had a Priest bumper sticker on the dash of our station wagon. So the band, for me, is marrow deep."

Right now Mastodon is taking some time off before reconvening to start working on new material. "When everyone's rested and has put out whatever side projects they're working on and wants to be fruitful again," Dailor says, "we'll do it." **David Ciauro**



IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Leedy or Leedy & Ludwig?

Can you help me identify the manufacturer and approximate age of this 24" drum? I don't think it's a Leedy & Ludwig, even though that's what the stamp on the head says.

Billy

According to Collector's Corner columnist Harry Cangany, "It's not a Leedy & Ludwig, as



Vintage Snare Wire Premium quality snare wires. Chosen by the best

"They give me a nice crisp sound. When you hit the drum, it's not too much of spread. It's a snare drum. I can really hear snares."

Joe Porcaro

"The Canopus snare wires bring out the clarity and dynamic range of my grace notes and back beats! Check them out!"

Keith Carlock
(Steely Dan, TOTO, John Mayer)

Photo by Rob Shannahan



Photo by Jesse Heider

Jason Sutter (Marilyn Manson, Smash Mouth)
Matt Starr (M.R.BIG)
Curt Bisquera (LA Studio Drummer, Drummer with Galacticbootyco)
Brian Blade (The Fellowship Band)
Louis Cato (The Late Show with Stephen Colbert)
Billy Martin (Madeski Martin & Wood)
Brian Tichy (Bonzo Bash Founder)
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the calf head stamp says. From the wooden grommet, odds are it's an Indianapolis Leedy tango bass drum made sometime around 1919. It's a single-tension drum. (Leedy and George B. Stone both used wooden grommets, but the thumb rods on this drum are Leedy.) The most valuable pieces of this drum are the calfskin heads. Single-tension drums are museum pieces. They don't tune well, due to the fact that both heads tension at the same time, and they will always sound boxy. Single-tension drums went out of favor with the advent of tube lugs in the early 1920s."

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DO YOU PLAY IN AN 80s COVER BAND? (If so, stop reading now.)



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Dark Ride.*

This is the Byzance 22" Big Apple Dark Ride. You don't have to be a jazz snob to appreciate it, but it helps. We took the original Big Apple Ride, known for its sweet stick articulation and left it un-lathed to give it the low-pitched wash of the Byzance Dark cymbals. It's thin enough to crash on and has a musical bell. Just like all of our Byzance cymbals, it's expensive and worth every penny.

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Liberty

Jazz Series Drumset

Top-quality modern design with tasty vintage flare.

Liberty Drums is a UK-based manufacturer that builds its own shells from nearly limitless timbers and veneers into a wide range of handcrafted drumsets and snares. In addition to allowing drummers to design custom kits online at libertydrums.com, the company also offers preconfigured setups in several series, such as Cast Acrylic, Rock, Fusion, Avant, and Jazz, which is what we have for review this month.

Jazz series drums are designed to be high-quality, modern instruments with vintage tone and appeal. They feature the company's Opex bearing edges, which have a slightly rounded outer cut for more head-to-shell contact, and a 45-degree inner cut. The shells are cross-laminated from Finnish birch (9-ply/6mm toms, 12-ply/8mm bass drums, and 15-ply snares), and the drums come with die-cast Liberty Beetle lugs, 2.3mm triple-flange rims, wood bass drum hoops, a Dunnett SC-GW845 George Way-style snare throw-off, and Evans drumheads (EQ4 Frosted kick batter, EQ3 Smooth White resonant, J1 Etched tom batters, G1 Clear tom bottoms, Strata Staccato snare batter, and Hazy 300 snare bottom).

The finish of our four-piece Jazz series kit is the new Electric Blue Flame wrap, which Liberty says is fully bonded to the shell to maximize resonance. Drum sizes on this kit include a 14x18 bass drum, an 8x12 rack tom, a 14x14 floor tom, and a matching 5.5x14 snare. (List price is \$2,491).

Given that the name of the series is Jazz, it makes sense to assume that this kit's ideal application would be in low-volume straight-ahead swing situations with the heads tensioned super-tight for maximum rebound and dynamic response. While they did sound fantastic and had clean, strong presence when cranked high for a 1964-era Tony Williams sound, I found that they were most at home at medium and medium-low tunings.

The birch shells have a more contained sustain, focused pitch, and punchier attack than a standard maple shell, while the rounded bearing edges enhance the low-end depth. The warmer, darker models of Evans drumheads on the drums also helped emphasize lower frequencies and minimize overtones without added muffling.

During our testing period I was also working on a Rolling Stones-inspired track, and this Jazz series kit was perfect for that jazzy blues-rock Charlie Watts sound. Tuned medium or

medium-low, the bass drum sounded nice and punchy with just enough boom to keep it natural and earthy, the snare had clean and snappy response and a gorgeous open tone that didn't ring for too long, and the toms threw out warm, rich, and fat tones with short but even decay.

These Jazz series drums sounded amazing acoustically, and microphones loved them too—I didn't need to overdo the EQ or compression to make them cut and be present in a mix. The retro Electric Blue Flame wrap is one of the coolest I've seen, and the contrast between the blue and purple flames varied considerably depending on the type of lighting being used. You certainly won't go unnoticed, visually or sonically, if you were to bring one of these kits to your next gig or session.

Michael Dawson

TECH SPECS

Shells: Finnish birch

Sizes: 8x12, 14x14, 14x18, and 5.5x14

Finish: Electric Blue Flame wrap

Drumheads: Evans

Price: \$2,491





For a video demo of this kit, visit moderndrummer.com.



TRX

New DRK Series Cymbals

Warm, dark, classic sounds with pre-drilled holes for rivets.

TRX has released several new options in the past year or so, including the Blends series, which was reviewed in our July 2015 issue. The company's latest offering, the New DRK series, balances out its overall lineup nicely by offering some warm, dark, classic sounds with pre-drilled holes for rivets.

The original DRK line used an ultra-thin cast b20-plus bronze formula, along with an unlathed, natural finish, to provide dark, earthy tones. The focus of the New DRK series is to capitalize on the warmth and darkness of the original line, while providing more power and projection by offering a little more brightness and clarity.

The New DRK cymbals are still made from ultra-thin cast bronze, but now they feature a natural finish with deep lathing and heavy machine hammering. The result is subtle, dark overtones with enough brightness to cut through a mix and project in a live setting.

The set of cymbals that we received for review consisted of 14" hi-hats (\$625); 18", 20", and 22" crash-rides (\$425, \$550, and

\$600); a vented 20" Thunder crash (\$550); and an 18" China (\$500). Each crash-ride and China is drilled with nine holes to accommodate the use of TRX's removable rivets (\$25 for a pack of nine).

Hi-Hats

The 14" hi-hats were one of my favorite options from the New DRK lineup, although they offered the least amount of projection. They displayed a slightly darker tone than the other cymbals, leaning more towards the earthier overtones of the original unlathed version than its deeply lathed counterparts in this series. These hi-hats gave a deep "chunk" that resonated ever so slightly when the cymbals were hit on the edge. Furthermore, they were thin enough that I could control the pitch of the closed sound by changing the amount of pressure applied with the foot.

Although these hi-hats weren't as loud as the other cymbals we received, they still had enough brilliance to project in a live setting without sacrificing the dark overtones that make them unique. They

TECH SPECS

Alloy: b20-plus bronze

Sizes: 13" to 23"

Weight: thin

Finish: natural with deep lathing and heavy hammering

Features: 9 rivet holes in crash-rides and Chinas

Prices: \$425–\$625

helped to create an atmosphere where I felt free to explore subtlety and intricacy with my cymbal work without the fear of the sound getting lost on stage.

Crash-Rides

The New DRK crash-rides provided more of a classic/vintage vibe and allowed me to play fast, syncopated rhythms as well as bigger accents. The 18" and 20" options provided nice stick definition, while a subtle wash began to grow as I played longer phrases or with more force. The 22" felt like a ride cymbal in terms of its responsiveness. As I began to play harder accents and hits it maintained clean and articulate projection. As advertised by TRX, the full line of crash-rides felt right at home in both a jazz setting and more contemporary and harder-hitting situations. I especially loved the ability to easily add rivets for certain gigs and then remove them for others.

China

The 18" China sounded best when we put a few rivets in the pre-drilled holes and used

Stone Thrones Drum Seat Covers

Customizable, durable, and super-easy to install.



it for accents that left a lingering sizzle. Compared to the other cymbals in the series, the New DRK China projected a much harsher overtone when used for ride patterns, which is something that may be less evident in the larger options. The harsher overtones became more apparent as I moved closer to the center of the cymbal. However, if I played ride patterns on the lip of the China, it provided a much better balance between stick definition and sustain.

Thunder Crash

This was my favorite cymbal of the bunch. The 20" vented Thunder crash is very dark and trashy, and felt perfect for accents and hits that needed to get out of the way fast while still leaving a subtle wall of overtones in the background. I even found that using this cymbal for ride patterns was a great option when I needed less articulation but still wanted to push the music with an array of warm, dark nuances.

Miguel Monroy

Chris Stone, founder of Stone Thrones, has founded a custom shop that offers something very useful and clever: high-quality and durable drum seat covers. I recently ordered a set of covers for my twenty-year-old Roc-n-Soc throne with a backrest. I asked Chris to make them in a solid-black fabric so it would work in a variety of setups.

Both covers fit my throne like a glove. The main seat cover wraps over the top of the cushion with a drawstring and cord lock, which is tucked away under the cover to conceal it from sight and to keep it out of the way. The backrest cover slid right into place perfectly and held tight with industrial-strength hook-and-loop fasteners sewn tightly into the fabric. A sharp-looking company logo is embroidered on a patch and sewn onto each cover.

I had a busy summer gig season lined up, complete with several outdoor dates, so I was able to give these covers a real test run. Through all the rain, humidity, and sweat, the Stone Thrones covers remained in "like new" condition. Like most working drummers, I don't have a practical casing solution for transporting my seat, so it ends up just being thrown into the back of my truck along with my drum cases. The Stone Thrones cover adds additional protection to the seat cushion. After a couple of months of testing, I was able to quickly remove the covers from the throne and backrest and then throw them in the washer and dryer for a cleaning. Afterwards, they slid easily back in place and still looked brand-new.

Available for most drum seats, Stone Thrones covers come in a variety of styles, colors, prints, and fabrics to custom-fit almost any request.

Brian Hill

TECH SPECS

Finishes: solid colors, animal prints, camouflag , tie-dye, and custom embroidery

Sizes: fits small (12" or 13") or la ge (15" or 16") round seat tops

Features: held in place via drawstring and cord lock, machine-washable

Prices: \$34–\$39



Beier

15" Steel Snare Drums

Vibrant and versatile with supreme clarity and a full range of tones.

There's been a bit of buzz building around the snares coming from Jim Beier's shop in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. Blue Öyster Cult's Jules Radino, Olivia Newton-John's Mark Beckett, and Charlie Daniels' Pat McDonald have been using them live, and Nashville session ace Tommy Harden has been singing Beier's praises in the studio. (I first became aware of Beier's handiwork from following Harden's posts on Instagram.)

The premise behind Beier drums, according to Jim, is to provide "a traditional, classic-looking line of drums that are a go-to workhorse for players." The focus is on the sound first, and Beier goes to great lengths to ensure that every drum in a particular size sounds identical. Jim manually rolls and welds the shells, and he cuts the snare beds himself. The final finishing process is outsourced, but everything else is done in-house, including the engraving on the company's bridge-style lugs. "I'm a one-man show, and I even haul my own steel," says Jim. "I wanted to do this old-school with a bunch of hand tools, and it's the only way I'll ever do it."

While Beier offers snares in several different sizes, it's the 15" versions that are capturing the most inquiries and praise. Jim started making 15" snares in 2010, based on his infatuation with vintage American-made drums of that size. "The

15" was always a standout for me," he says. We were sent two 15" Beier drums to review, one that's 4" deep and one that's 5.5". Let's check them out!



4x15

The 4x15 Beier snare was conceptualized by touring/session drummer Mark Beckett. The drum features a 1.5mm rolled-steel shell, eight tube lugs, a gloss-white finish, and a Gibraltar piccolo throw-off. There's something pretty magical about this drum. It sounds fatter and fuller than a typical 4x14 piccolo, yet it retains the immediate response and sensitivity you'd expect from such a shallow shell. The overtones are plentiful but musical, and they're easily controlled via tuning or applying minor amounts of muffling.

Medium tuning produced an incredible singing tone that worked great for an all-purpose sound, especially in the recording studio. Tighter tunings brought out more snap without choking the body of the tone. Lower tunings sounded extra-fat and fluffy, but the drum remained crisp and articulate throughout. No wonder this model is showing up in Nashville studios; it's a true workhorse.

TECH SPECS

Shells: 1.5mm steel
Sizes: 4x15 and 5.5x15
Lugs: tube and etched bridge-style
Hoops: 2.3mm triple-flange steel
Wires: 20-strand snappy
Finishes: gloss white and textured black
Drumheads: Remo Coated CS batters and Hazy Ambassador bottoms
Prices: \$535 (4x15) and \$495 (5.5x15)

5.5x15

The 5.5x15 Beier is also rolled from 1.5mm steel, but it features a textured black finish, hand-engraved bridge-style lugs, and a Dunnet R7 three-point throw-off. From a strictly sonic perspective, this version was my favorite of the two. The extra depth made it sound a bit fatter, and it had a bigger and more powerful tone that I could feel throughout my body as I hit it.

The overtones are a bit brighter and more prominent on the 5.5x15 version, especially at higher tunings, which is advantageous when trying to cut through loud but unmiked gigs. A touch of muffling might be required when using this drum with close mics in

the studio. But the overtones it produced were very pure, and they didn't ring out for too long. If you're careful with the tuning you could take advantage of the overtones to make the snare sit perfectly within the mix.

I loved how balanced and full this snare sounded when tuned to a medium tension. That would be my starting point for any backbeat-oriented gig. It also excelled at low tunings for smacking classic-rock sounds, and its super-low voice is so fat it's ridiculous.

It's a good thing these snares are reasonably priced; you're probably going to want them both.

Michael Dawson

[Check out a video demo of these snares at moderndrummer.com.](http://moderndrummer.com)

Remo

Dorado Cajon

Deep, resonant tones and removable snares for greater sonic options.

Remo's new Dorado cajon is a traditional fixed-faceplate instrument that's handcrafted in California using birch plywood and high-quality compression springs with over 400 coils. The cajon has deep resonance and a lot of versatility. The increased low-end resonance is a result of its construction. Rather than having a faceplate that's screwed into place, the front is completely sealed to the rest of the drum. This allows the low-end frequencies to resonate naturally as you play. The Dorado cajon is available in two different finishes, natural and amber.

In addition to the beautiful low-end resonance, the Dorado features Remo's new Quick Wedge snare system, which lets you easily remove and reattach the internal snares. This allows you to achieve the wide-open resonance of Peruvian-style cajons (no wires), as well as the crisp attack of flamenco-style cajons (with wires).

To remove the wires from the cajon, you just slide off each block of wood holding the springs and then remove the three hook-and-loop fastener strips that press the compression springs against the front plate. To reinstall the wires, simply wedge the blocks back in place and reattach the strips.

As I played the Dorado cajon, I noticed that the fixed faceplate provided a great tonal range from high to low, and I could easily change the pitch by sliding my foot across the front. The drum favored deeper and darker tones. And though high-pitch slaps and strikes close to the edge carried quite a bit of weight and depth to them, if you're looking for a bright-sounding cajon, this may not be the best option for you. But if you're looking for a deeper and more resonant cajon that boasts the versatility of

converting easily from Peruvian to flamenco styles, the Dorado is a great option.

Miguel Monroy

TECH SPECS

Size: 11.375x11.625x18.875

Faceplate: birch

Snares: removable coil springs

Price: \$169.95



For a video demo of this cajon, visit moderndrummer.com.



Thinking of Going Double Bass?

4 Killer Double Pedals for Under \$250

by Nate Bauman

There are products in the drumming world that can be classified as a fad. Trash stacks, piccolo snares, concert toms, racks, and 20"-deep kick drums come to mind. Double bass drum pedals also top the list of things some drummers are apprehensive about purchasing. This month we've gathered excellent double pedals that are extremely affordable, to help sway your opinions toward picking one up, even if you end up using it only in the practice room or for the occasional accent or flurry on the gig.

Over the past decade, some of the top hardware manufacturers have put out awesomely affordable pedals without compromising integrity or functionality. Here we take a look at four specific models, the Pearl P-932 Demonator, the DW 2002 series, the PDP 502, and the Tama Iron Cobra 600. All are high-quality, sturdy pedals with nice features, and they're readily available for under \$250. Check out a video demo of each at modern drummer.com, and then hop over to your local drum shop to give them a go for yourself.



Pearl P-932 Demonator

This is an incredibly affordable double pedal (street price: \$189) that feels great, has a unique look, and was built to perform like a much more expensive model. It's a bit complicated to set up initially but can be adjusted to fit your personal playing style. It doesn't have heel plates, as it comes with elongated footboards. With an Allen wrench or a hex key, you can remove two screws on the bottom to adjust the footboard by almost .5". You can also adjust the beater angle on either pedal with a drum key.

With Pearl's Click-Lock spring-tension keeper, adjusting the pedal's tightness is super-easy. Simply lift the lock, tweak the spring to your liking, and clamp the lock back down to hold the tension in place. Control Core beaters come standard with reversible felt and plastic sides. You'll also see that the P-932 comes with the same Perfect Circle single-chain cam found on Pearl's higher-end Eliminator series pedals, which can be adjusted by adding or removing an orange "progressive" cam.

DW 2002 Series

Though considered the entry-level double bass pedal in the DW family, the 2002 series model is used by professionals, students, and gigging drummers alike and sells for \$199.99. Its most notable feature is its steel base plate, which offers a ton of stability. Add to that the adjustable spikes and hook-and-loop fasteners on the bottom surface, and it's guaranteed that you won't have to deal with the pedals slipping.

The slave has a single post, which makes it very easy to move your foot between the pedal and the hi-hat. The single post also makes it easier to play the hi-hat and kick drum simultaneously. As with the Pearl model, the DW 2002 has a single-chain cam and sprocket, plus a fast response. DW outfits these pedals with double-sided 107 Flyweight beaters that feature a red felt side and a hard plastic side.





PDP 502 Series

Although it costs just \$119.99, the PDP 502 double pedal features a dual-chain drive and is equipped with offset cams, auxiliary-side base plates, a side-adjustable clamp, and two-way beaters, all of which are adjusted via a standard drum key. This is a very nice pedal that marries punch and precision at a friendly price. Smooth action and reliability make this one of the best beginner double pedals out there.

Tama Iron Cobra HP600DTW Series

The 600 series double pedal is the newest addition to Tama's popular Iron Cobra family and has many of the same features that can be found in its high-end 900 line. The first thing to note is the durable double-chain drive, which feels particularly sturdy and provides smooth action. A unique feature on the 600 is the reversible Duo Glide Cam, which allows you to easily change between the round Rolling Glide and offset Power Glide sprockets for two entirely different responses—a linear feel or one with increased acceleration.

A newly designed hinge uses a brass sleeve to prevent pin damage and eliminate pressure. But my favorite part of the Iron Cobra pedal is the rotating hoop clamp, which ensures the pedal remains flat on any surface. Although it's the most expensive of this particular group of budget-conscious models (\$249.99), the Iron Cobra 600 has the quality to match and is worth every penny.



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ADAM DEITCH

With his producer's ear for playing exactly the right thing at exactly the right time, the Lettuce/Break Science drummer has claimed his place among contemporary funk's great musical voices. **Robin Tolleson** digs deep to find the roots of his earthy, impossibly good-feeling grooves.

Ask him, and Adam Deitch will tell you that he's got it pretty much exactly the way he wants it now—unless what you're talking about is sleep.

On the festival circuit with the funk crusaders Lettuce and the electronic/acoustic dance hybrid Break Science, Deitch often finds himself playing two different ninety-minute sets in a night. Lettuce, riding peaks of popularity with a new album, *Crush*, might hit around midnight, before Deitch joins DJ/keyboardist Borahm Lee for a late, *late* set with Break Science. "They put us anywhere, three in the morning sometimes," the drummer says with a smile. "The late-night dance crowds. It's a workout."

Lettuce is a story in itself. The members met while attending a summer program for incoming Berklee freshmen, and twenty-two years later they're an overnight success story. Head nodding up and down and then side to side with the changing rhythmic current, eyes barely visible under the brim of his cap,

Deitch is all allegiance to the groove. His wicked fills only embellish and kick up the flow.

A studio rat since childhood, Deitch has been building an impressive client list of late as a producer: Ledisi, Pretty Lights, 50 Cent... "It's all about putting a great melody with a great groove that feels good," Adam says. "And for me to feel happy about it, every song has to have something rhythmically inventive."

Deitch has been producing his own tracks as well, with release eminent on his own Golden Wolf Records. "I have a new organ trio, a solo record, and I'm doing three different versions of electronic-based records, all with live drums," he tells us. "There's a slew of projects on the way."

Looks like Deitch isn't the only one who'll be staying up late with his music in the near future—we're *all* going to be spending some long nights diggin' on this man's beats.

MD: One of the great things about Lettuce is the rhythm guitar work. How does that feed what you do?

Adam: Yeah, we have two of the greatest guitar players in the world, and they can both play lead and rhythm.

Our rhythmic anchor is Adam Smirnoff, who is the first Lettuce member I met at Berklee. He counts off the tunes, and, you know, he probably could have been a drummer, because he's got this insane drummer-like time and sense of tempo and pace. So he puts all of that rhythm into his guitar, and it's just...it's my percussion, it's

my congas, it's my shekere—it's everything. That unbreakable, amazing rhythmic guitar feel has been anchoring me and making me a better drummer since we met when I was sixteen, so I owe a lot to Mr. Smirnoff. And Eric Krasno, of course, is the other guitar player—not bad.

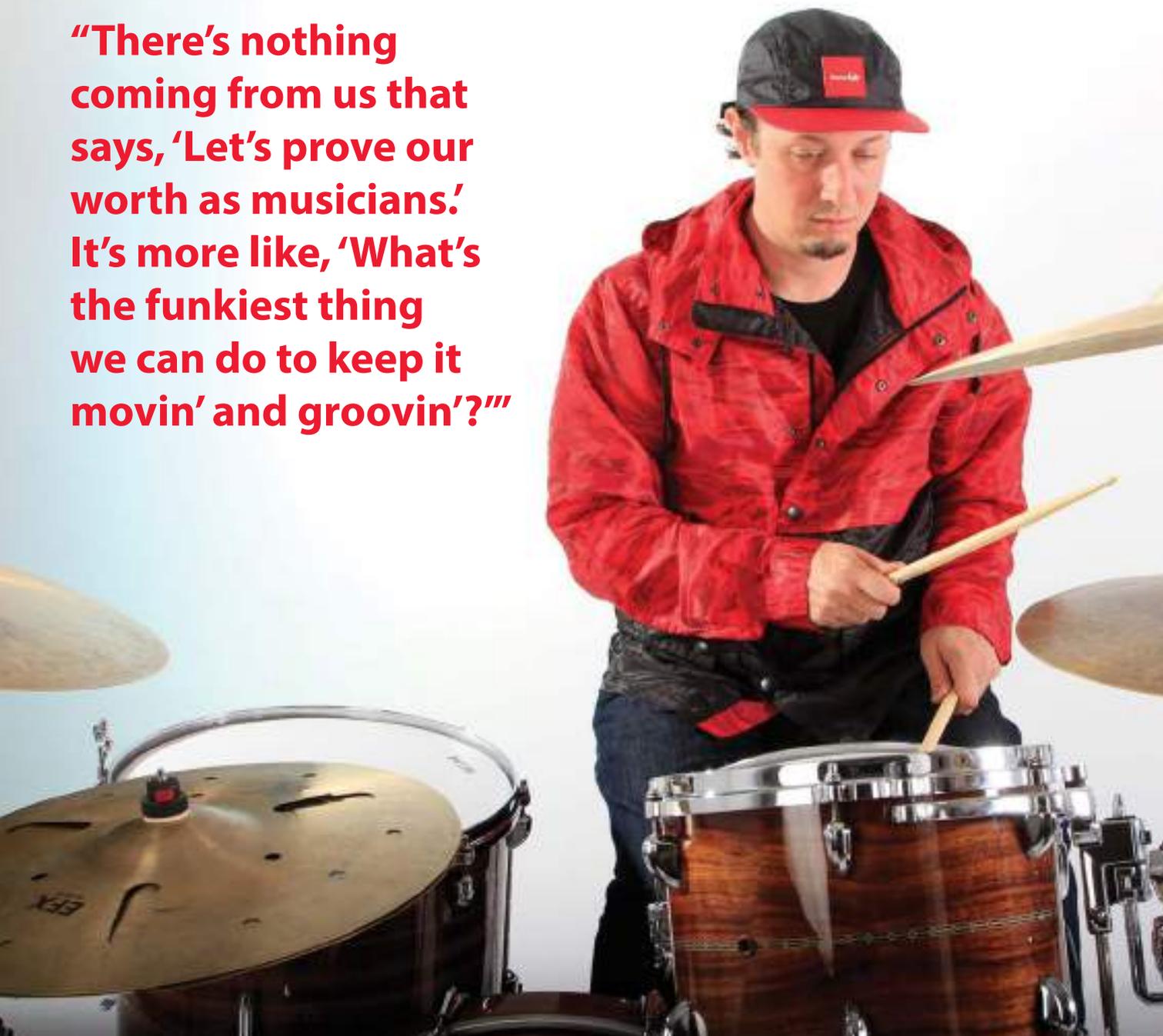
MD: You played with another band that many associate with great rhythm guitar, the Average White Band.

Adam: Oh, yeah, Onnie McIntyre. I was with them for three years. I guess that was my first professional gig, touring on a bus with a band that is definitely one of the funk

stalwarts of all time. The two original members that were still in the band, Onnie and Alan Gorrie, they imparted a lot of knowledge to me. They were wonderful people who brought this twenty-three-year-old kid who was totally into hip-hop into their scene with a bunch of fifty-something-year-old men, and really taught me a lot about life, about rhythm and blues, about the beauty of a good song and all those things.

We also got to meet and perform with bands like Tower of Power, the Ohio Players, Chaka Khan, and Earth, Wind & Fire—artists

“There’s nothing coming from us that says, ‘Let’s prove our worth as musicians!’ It’s more like, ‘What’s the funkier thing we can do to keep it movin’ and groovin’?”



that we were backstage with, rubbing elbows with. All these superheroes that I worshipped from my parents' record collection. That definitely helped me establish myself and prove that I could actually be a touring drummer. I didn't know if it was even possible before that. It was definitely a big one for me.

MD: It must have been fun locking in with Onnie on those rhythms.

Adam: Oh, yeah, that's what they're about. It was all about that lock, and Onnie and I had a great relationship, on and off stage. It was kind of like a crash course in Scottish

culture as well as funk and soul music. We would hang out and sip on quality scotch and talk about the old Atlantic Records days when they first met Aretha, when they came over to America, and the whole scene over at Atlantic.

MD: And they had a hit record with an instrumental, "Pick Up the Pieces."

Adam: Yes! That was a big influence on Lettuce, on me taking Lettuce seriously. Knowing that a funk instrumental like that had [been a hit]—plus "Chameleon" by Herbie Hancock, obviously. Those great instrumental funk hits were the inspiration for keeping Lettuce primarily an instrumental funk band with simple, singable melodies, and not sort of coming from the jazz side or trying to come up with some super-hip line that's hard to sing. We try to make all our melodies somewhat hummable when you're just walking down the street, and concentrate on the Maceo Parker school of horn arranging.

MD: Was that always the mindset with you guys?

Adam: Yeah, it was always instrumental funk with singable melodies. There's definitely been a heavy James Brown influence, from all his eras, but especially '73, '74, '75—pre-disco James, you know. We were obsessed with that style and everything surrounding it. We just concentrated on that and added a little of the modern hip-hop grooves to that vibe, meaning the big, swinging East Coast go-go-esque hip-hop beats, and also the down-south sort of trap-bounce kinds of beats with funk. So we like to mess with the modern rhythmic template right now but still keep it as true to the funk as we can.

MD: What's kept Lettuce together for over

twenty years?

Adam: It's the love of the music, the joy of playing with each other, and the ability to improvise as a group in the way that we do. Smirnoff may come up with a completely different riff for a solo section that he just made up, and he'll smile at the other guys and at me, and I'll come up with a beat that fits that as best as possible. And our bass player, Erick Coomes, will listen and most times just sort of copy the guitar riff with low notes and make it really pump, and the horns come up with...you know, it's that improvisational factor, mixed with the tightness and all the other things, that really keeps us motivated and excited to play every night, ready to grind, ready to make it happen. This is our passion.

MD: When you guys lock in, it's powerful.

Adam: Yeah, the funk has a thing, you know, when it has that mean, nasty feeling but it's still beautiful at the same time. It has the ability to make the hairs on your neck stand up and give a chill when you get in that groove and it starts feeling so good. We're all searching for that high that you get when the groove just settles in that right spot and the crowd is in the right place. It's a beautiful thing.

MD: The opening track on *Crush*, "The Force," has those singable melodies you were talking about.

Adam: Smirnoff had the main groove, and then I just started singing the melody. It developed from that place. We always help each other, finish each other's thoughts, so to speak.

MD: It's great the way you open the hats on that groove. It's like creating hooks on the drums with real simple stuff.

Adam: I'm all about that simple stuff. Yeah,

INFLUENCES

Earth, Wind & Fire Gratitude, Last Days and Time, Open Our Eyes, Raise! (Fred White, Maurice White, Ralph Johnson) /// **Tower of Power** East Bay Grease (David Garibaldi) /// **Average White Band** Person to Person, Cut the Cake (Steve Ferrone) /// **Maceo and All the King's Men** Doing Their Own Thing (Melvin Parker) /// **Maceo Parker** Life on Planet Groove (Kenwood Dennard) /// **James Brown** all (Clyde Stubblefield, Jabo Starks, Melvin Parker, others) /// **Parliament** Live: P Funk Earth Tour (Jerome Brailey) /// **P-Funk All-Stars** Live at the Beverly Theatre in Hollywood (Dennis Chambers) /// **the Meters** Funkify Your Life: The Meters Anthology, Uptown Rulers: Live on the Queen Mary (Zigaboo Modeliste) /// **Tony Allen** Black Voices (Tony Allen) /// **KRS-One** Return of the Boom Bap (samples) /// **Kool and the Gang** Live at P.J.'s, The Best of Kool and the Gang 1969–1976 (George Brown) /// **Cold Blood** First Taste of Sin, Sisyphus (Sandy McKee), Thriller! (Gaylord Birch) /// **Gang Starr** Hard to Earn, Daily Operation (samples by DJ Premier) /// **Grant Green** Alive! (Idris Muhammad) /// **Brecker Bros.** Collection Vol. 1 (Terry Bozzio, Steve Gadd, Steve Jordan, Harvey Mason, Richie Morales, Chris Parker, Allan Schwartzberg), Collection Vol. 2 (Terry Bozzio, Steve Jordan, Harvey Mason, Richie Morales), Back to Back (Steve Gadd, Chris Parker) /// **Squarepusher** Feed Me Weird Things (samples) /// **Keith Jarrett Standards Trio** all (Jack DeJohnette) /// **Herbie Hancock** Flood (Mike Clark), Man-Child (Mike Clark, James Gadson, Harvey Mason), Secrets (James Levi, James Gadson), Head Hunters (Harvey Mason), Sunlight (Ndugu Chancler, James Levi, Harvey Mason, Tony Williams) /// **Mint Condition** Definition of a Band (Stokley Williams, Chris Dave) /// **David Axelrod** Song of Innocence, Songs of Experience (Earl Palmer)

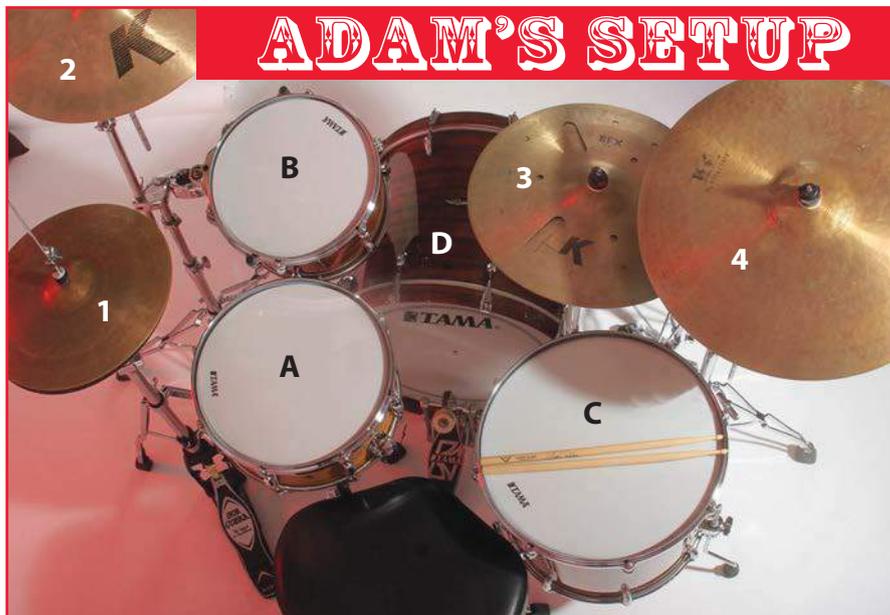
it was a great experience also playing with Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings. Homer Steinweiss is their drummer, and he's very dedicated to soul and funk drumming from the '60s. I wasn't that familiar with the style-specific kinds of grooves and fills, and it was good to learn that from him. There's nothing coming from us that says, "Let's prove our worth as musicians." It's more like, "What's the funkier thing we can do to keep it movin' and groovin'?" That's the focus.

MD: On "Get Greasy," there's just one accent, but it makes the tune.

Adam: I'm out playing a lot of electronic music as well these days, with DJ Pretty Lights and with this guy Gramatik, who's also a great live producer. And I've learned what works as far as how the hip-hop aesthetic connects to Lettuce and what grooves work. I wrote "Get Greasy" with a simple funk guitar groove and that hip-hop swing feeling, mid-tempo, to get people head-bobbing and moving. It's in the pocket, and there's nothing about the song that's mind-blowingly difficult. The difficulty comes in the ability to repeat the groove bar after bar and keep it feeling as good as it felt in the first four bars.

MD: Sometimes you grab attention with the things that you leave out or simplify, not necessarily some chops thing.

Adam: Yeah, the chops thing is tricky these days. I feel like it's developed to the point where most drummers I see, these cats got their chops together. People really got into what Dennis [Chambers] was doing with John Scofield in the '80s, and also Vinnie Colaiuta's influence and Dave Weckl's



ADAM'S SETUP

Drums: Tama Star Bubinga in natural Indian laurel finish

- A. Star solid zebrawood snare*
- B. 9x12 tom
- C. 16x16 floor tom
- D. 18x22 bass drum

*Deitch uses a variety of Tama snare drums, depending on the gig, including a 6x14 Starphonic Aluminum and various S.L.P. models.

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" Kerope hi-hats
- 2. 18" K Custom Dark crash
- 3. 18" K EFX/Constantinople stack
- 4. 20" Kerope ride

Sticks: Vater Fusion acorn-tip

Heads: Evans

Hardware: Tama, including Iron Cobra bass drum pedal and hi-hat stand; Star and Roadpro cymbal, tom, and snare stands; and 1st Chair Ergo-Rider throne

A FAMILY AFFAIR

For this story Adam insisted that we talk with his folks, Bobby and Denise Deitch. Bobby plays in a Ray Charles tribute band, Forever Ray; in a funk band with Berklee guitar instructor Richie Hart; and in a rock cover band called the New York Hitmen. He also teaches at Ramapo College in New Jersey and at Rockland Community College in New York State. Denise retired two years ago after twenty-five years in the public school system but still teaches drums and beginning piano privately. "They're cool, funny people," Adam says, "and their knowledge of drums is endless."

"Adam always says that he got his pocket from his mom," Bobby notes.

"Mom doesn't have the greatest chops, but I do have the pocket," Denise confirms with a grin.

Truth is, both parents were heavy influences on Adam's playing from early on. "One thing I tried to impress on him," Bobby explains, "was that you could have all the technique in the world, but if you can't groove, then it doesn't really mean much. I stressed from day one how important it is to make it feel good."

Bobby and Denise met at Berklee College of Music. Both were drummers, pianists, writers, and educators, and the home they made was full of music. "There was a lot of rehearsing going on and musicians walking through the house all the time," Denise recalls. "And Adam was always listening to everybody. And [the way] he played at an early age was kind of scary—he was playing a beat on the drums at two years old. And he and Bobby used to record songs in the little studio in our apartment, so that's how he got into producing."

"We were always trying to make each take a little bit better, so that probably helped him with his production skills later on," Bobby says. "Those influences all come together to make him who he is."

The studio provided an inadvertent parenting aid to the elder Deitches as well. "If Adam didn't do his homework or come home on time," Bobby says, "we'd have to lock the studio—kick him out!"

"Believe me, that got him where it hurts," Denise adds.

All kidding aside, seeing Adam's musical accomplishments makes his parents extremely proud. "Proud isn't even the word for it," says Bobby.

"I miss him," Denise says. "I never see him—he's always touring."

influence. Aaron Spears is huge. And yeah, I enjoy it, and it's something that I'll always work on in the shed. But as far as Lettuce, I feel like the focus on groove is what's going to set us apart, and if there's going to be chops, it'll be during a drum solo. That's when it's appropriate. The old mid-song chop doesn't really appeal to me anymore.

MD: The interludes on *Crush* sound like they could be looped samples of your playing.

Adam: No, there were no samples on the record. I found a big thunder drum at the studio and put it on top of the snare drum on a couple of those, and hit the thunder drum as opposed to the snare. It created this weird hybrid sample-y snare drum sound. That's basically where all the interludes came from: everyone coming up with different parts that fit these hip-hop-esque grooves I was messing around with.

MD: The band gets into some ambient and dub vibes.



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Adam Deitch

Adam: Our sax player, Ryan Zoidis, is a dub aficionado, and it's pretty special. On those four-hour van rides that we've been doing for years, dub has been the music of choice, because it keeps everybody calm, has a nice groove, and keeps everybody in this positive mental state. I really like what dub does for us. I recommend all bands to put on some good dub on their long rides.

And the sounds—the use of cheap echoes, tape delays, old-school-sounding reverbs, and natural reverbs. Not just a reverb box, but a reverb chamber that you send the snare drum to. Our engineer Joel Hamilton knew how to record a modern band like us and give us that vintage feel and sound. He was able to help bring our dub influence, old-school soul influence, funk stuff, and hip-hop stuff together sonically, and for it to all make sense and seem like one thing. Just copying the greats, one particular style, is not what we're about. We love Sly and the Family Stone, AWB, and James Brown and Maceo, but to re-create that exactly wasn't ever the goal. It was always to mix it with a dub aesthetic and with a hip-hop feeling.

Our bass player, Erick Coomes, works with Dr. Dre, Talib Kweli, Eminem—all the hip-hop guys that are putting out big records. He's the bass player and guitar player on a lot of those tracks. He's always been my main supporter of keeping it simple, playing the groove, and keeping it hip-hop, which to him keeps it current and not just a throwback funk band. He's always pushed me to play the beat *hard*—you know, don't move, stay on the hi-hat as long as you can until you have to play the ride. He's been my number-one [supporter], giving me pep talks when I was down, giving me the green light to just zone out and play the groove and not feel like I have to do anything else. And what I realize is that when I do that, he shines, and all the rest of the guys shine. It just makes sense with everyone's concept if I lock it down. Then all those little accents that they're doing make sense, and it allows the grooves to breathe.

MD: Sometimes it's cool to play the breaks

and accents that everybody's playing, and sometimes it's cooler not to.

Adam: Right, exactly. That's my biggest decision sometimes, like, do you let this one go? Do you let this accent fly by without any sort of big band fill leading up to it and a crash cymbal? Or is the accent important enough to really showcase it? And I find that every song I play, no matter what style, that decision keeps coming up. The decision becomes based on the musical need at the moment.

MD: I've been in situations where guys look at me, like, *Why don't you play that?* And then you have to explain.

Adam: Right. Well, you're like, *I have good taste.* I mean, it depends. If it's a cover song and the original version had a big accent, okay, I understand that. That's the way cats are hearing it. But for original music that you create, it's your choice. And sometimes it makes sense and sometimes it doesn't to do a big fill prior and a crash every time a certain accent comes by.

MD: David Garibaldi let a few go by.

Adam: Yeah, and he also hit a lot of them, so... But Dave has great taste. I had a lesson with him when I was twelve years old. My teacher at the time, Frank Marino, a brilliant teacher who opened my mind to a whole slew of concepts to deal with in drumming and life and music, was keyed in to a lot of things, and I'm sure he had something to do with Garibaldi coming to the drum shop in my town. And I was lucky to have a dad that realized how important that was. I was already a Tower of Power fan, which makes me just a weirdo kid at ten years old. [laughs] But it was really enjoyable, and Dave was wonderful. He explained his ghost-note concept, the three levels of snare drum height—tiny accents, mid accents, and rimshots—his incorporation of paradiddles and paradiddle combinations with grooves, and moving the snare drum accents around to other beats besides 2 and 4.

Garibaldi is a genius with that stuff. When you hear him explain his concepts, you notice how important clave is to him and the three-two and two-three concepts that

RECORDINGS

John Scofield *Up All Night, Überjam 1 and 2* /// **Average White Band** *Tonight: In Concert (DVD)* /// **DJ Quik** *Greatest Hits: Live at the House of Blues* /// **Ledisi** "Say No" and "Knockin'" from *Turn Me Loose* /// **Lettuce** all /// **Break Science** all (live drums mixed with samples, loops, and glitches) /// **Chaka Khan** "Shining Star" from *Interpretations: Celebrating the Music of Earth, Wind & Fire* /// **Drkwav** *The Purge* /// **Sam Kininger** "No War for Oil" from *Sam Kininger* /// **Talib Kweli** "So Low" from *Gutter Rainbows*



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Adam Deitch

he uses. He also played all of his Tower of Power grooves for me, and I recorded them. I said, "Would you mind playing this particular song really slow?" So he helped me out immensely, and I had that cassette tape for years. I got to really dig in, and it was like I got to hang out with Dave every day for a couple years.

MD: "Pocket Change" reminds me of Tower.

Adam: "Pocket Change" is a tune by Adam Smirnoff that's coming from a "Cold Sweat" vibe. Besides Clyde Stubblefield and Jabo Starks, the obvious [influential James Brown

drummers], one of Dave's biggest influences was Maceo's brother Melvin Parker. I think that Dave had seen Melvin play in the '70s, and Melvin's thing was kind of like the "Oakland Stroke" but a little more swingy and slowed down. It was pumpin', but 2-and-4 was never his calling card. It was like his hi-hat was playing quarter notes, his kick drum was playing on beat 1, and there was a slew of ghost notes and accents happening on the snare.

MD: It sounds like you're playing drums with a producer's ears sometimes, shaping

the music as you go.

Adam: Yeah, that's definitely the goal, especially as a composer. You want to make sure that everything is in its musical place and makes sense, which is what I think playing as a producer means. It's being micro by making sure all the parts are correct, but the macro part is noticing every little thing and how it fits as one organism. That's always on my mind when I'm playing, how to make the whole band cook in a certain way, just looking at the entire picture.

I always looked at producing as something extremely fun, something that goes hand in hand with drumming. Quincy Jones has been an idol of mine forever, and Maurice White is one of my favorite producers. The music of Earth, Wind & Fire had a profound effect on me as a kid. I saw them at Radio City Music Hall when I was eleven and was blown away. To this day it reminds me of how powerful music can be, and it can override any bad mood that you're in. Everyone's familiar with "Shining Star" and "September," but when you start digging into their catalog from the early '70s, it's quite a ride they can take you on, and it's definitely my go-to thing for feeling good. And of course Stevie Wonder's records sound so amazing, as well as Prince.

MD: How did you develop the ear for producing so young?

Adam: Well, both my parents went to Berklee College of Music, and they've both played drums their entire life, keyboards as well. They were a club-date band, and in between every gig my dad was in the basement, where his Teac reel-to-reel tape deck was, recording songs, producing himself, playing drums, playing bass, playing keyboards. So I got to see how it was done. He was a huge influence on me in terms of the science of producing and what it meant to bring a song to life.

MD: Is there something to drummers being good producers, having the right vantage point for that?

Adam: Absolutely. We're playing a combination of instruments. The hi-hat is its own instrument. The snare drum is its own instrument. The kick drum... So we're naturally arranging—that's part of it. And then the more background you have on other instruments, the better you're going to be able to come up with parts yourself and do what's right for the music.

MD: Some of the drum breaks on "Phyllis" almost sound like programmed beats. Has that sound just become a part of drummers' playing today?

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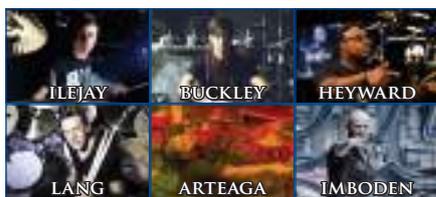


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Adam Deitch

Adam: Right. My crew, we're very influenced by James Yancey, aka J Dilla. He was an amazing producer who had a distinct feel when it came to drums, and I related to it in a huge way. Because I grew up thinking that the concepts of swung and straight [notes], where you have a 16th-note triplet versus a straight 16th note, I thought that the song called for either one or the other. But Scofield hipped me to a lot of New Orleans music, and also Bill Stewart and Billy Higgins' ability to play with the 8th note, which translates to funk as a 16th note, in an in-between way, meaning that it's not quite swung and not quite straight. So a lot of times during the three years I spent with Scofield, those two records [*Up All Night* and *Überjam*], when we weren't playing an electronic vibe, my focus was to kind of understand that sort of New Orleans in-between swing and straight thing.

And Dilla really championed that feel with his very earthy, live sort of style, and that's basically where the groove from "Phyllis" came from. The hi-hat is kind of in between, and you pull the hi-hat back and keep the snare and kick relatively spot on, but then the hi-hat becomes a slight flam. So you take 16th notes that are kind of in between straight and swung, and you shift them slightly later than the snare and kick. You're moving it a 64th note to the right, if you will. It becomes something else, and it feels like it's cutting off and starting again on 1.

That's something that comes from when you're a hip-hop producer and you sample something. Prior to recently, you weren't able to fix it and put it perfectly in the grid. Now with Ableton Live, there's less and less of that, unless you do it on purpose, but back then they would piece these loops together, and if the hi-hat loop was a little late, or the shaker loop was a little late, that's how you left it. And it had this sort of round feel, which feels more natural, feels more like a Brazilian samba-school groove or a New Orleans second-line groove than like a machine.

So I enjoy going into that place. It's sort of a new world, and everyone does it differently. Chris Dave does his take on it. He adds a really heavy 8th-note-triplet vibe over a 16th-note kind of hip-hop groove. Then you have Karriem Riggins, who really understands the feel of J Dilla, and Daru Jones, who has his take on it because he's from around Detroit, where J Dilla is from. And Billy Martin from Medeski Martin and Wood has a beautiful in-between swing and straight thing he does that's unique.

You find your place where your 16th notes lie, as far as whether they're moving toward swing or moving toward straight.

MD: "Trillology" has kind of a broken beat too.

Adam: Yeah, totally. It's like a West Coast hip-hop thing, which melds the slightly swung 8th notes of the hi-hat with a pretty solid kick and snare. It just puts everything in a weird sort of place and gets everybody feeling loose and feeling good. As long as the downbeats, the actual quarter notes, are there, the upbeats in between those quarter notes is where the fun happens.

There are three styles of hip-hop in that piece. One is West Coast/Dr. Dre-inspired, with a sort of Dilla hi-hat approach. Then we have the Dirty South type of trap or krump thing that is basically a machine-based art form, which I love playing on an acoustic kit. Think of the hi-hats as 16th notes with 32nds, little flurries here and there, plus a half-time snare and a kick drum pattern that's basically like a go-go pattern. And the third one has a whole different thing—definitely based off a Dilla vibe and kind of messing with the hi-hat 16th-note pattern, moving it around. So we're paying tribute to three of our favorite rhythmic places where hip-hop is at right now.

MD: In Break Science you're programming, producing, and playing.

Adam: I've been doing electronic production for about seven years, and I've learned a lot from my friend and partner in Break Science, Borahm Lee, who is just a phenomenal producer and jazz pianist. We've always wanted more elements of live music in it. We were concerned that the beauty of electronic music would be overlooked, so we wanted to make sure that it had live elements to make it viable to those that enjoy instruments being played.

We're trying to find this place between it being a live band and a producer's art form. I spent time making sure the electronic elements of the drums and all kinds of otherworldly sounds from percussion were exactly where I wanted them sonically. Then, when I play over the top, I let the acoustic drums have a place that doesn't overpower the electronic stuff but still allows people to have an organic musical experience while hearing all these futuristic production techniques. It's all about the song, knowing when and where to incorporate live drums and other instruments.

MD: Break Science, as in drum breaks—have you studied them like a science?

Adam: Yeah, the name goes back to those records from the late '60s, early '70s where the band would build to a certain place in the song, have a big hit on the 1, and allow the drums to play for four or eight bars by themselves, without taking a solo, just holding the groove where it was. That's the break. DJs like Grandmaster Flash zeroed in on these parts of the records. A lot of this was happening in go-go music in D.C. in the late '70s, with Chuck Brown and Rare Essence and bands like that. Hip-hop borrowed a lot of those grooves, along with a lot of James Brown and lesser-known bands that incorporated the drum break into their music.

So my number-one focus in the band was how to future-ize the idea of the drum breaks, to incorporate the science aspect of technology, creating synth textures and all kinds of lush melodies. Borahm is very intuitive about creating these things. So yeah, that's the concept of Break Science—the science of breaks.

MD: How does your work with John Scofield fit into the picture?

Adam: Sco continually inspires me and keeps me grounded. The musicians that he's been involved with in his career are a who's who of jazz, funk, and fusion, from Dennis Chambers to Bill Stewart. He's played with Elvin, he's played with Roy Haynes—he's played with *everybody*. Because of his respect for the history of the music, it makes you feel like you just have to keep studying and keep getting better. And there's the constant search for finding out what your sound is and what you're able to express in the moment, when it counts. It just keeps everybody humble and willing to learn and get better.

MD: Given how busy you are, do you have to be selective about who you go on the road with?

Adam: Well, I spent my twenties and early thirties playing with as many people as I could. I was touring with Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings for a while, and I was out with Meshell Ndegeocello, and with Wyclef, and I did some stuff with Slick Rick and Wu-Tang Clan. And of course there's the Scofield stuff. So I had kind of quenched the thirst for what it's like to tour with a band. You don't necessarily know the artist that well, but you go out and you do a good job, and you enjoy the road as a sideman. I enjoyed that process, and what it did was make me obsessed with writing and creating my own music, and it lit the fire for me in my mid-thirties to get real serious about Break Science and having Lettuce be

my main thing.

So I've turned down a few things since I made that decision. I still have some time to do outside stuff, but mostly it's a focused effort. Now when I sit down to write, I know that I'm writing for a band that's going to play the song this weekend, try it out in front of a thousand people. So it's a life change, but it's worth it.

MD: Drummers have to learn to say no sometimes.

Adam: Definitely. It's important to know

what gigs to choose. If you have a great band, you may not make money, but you [hopefully] make it on your other gigs for a little while. That's the risk, and that's why a lot of great musicians don't do the band thing—they do the hired-gun thing. Because it's not immediate money. It takes a while to build, to get it popping. It requires management and a good agent, and a very focused band. But once it starts going, it's like a freight train. It goes by itself.



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McClenty Hunter

by Jeff Otter

McClenty Hunter's current tenures with guitarist Dave Stryker's band (five years) and tenor sax star Kenny Garrett's quintet (three years) are putting the drummer in the spotlight he's long deserved. Whether driving straight-ahead jazz, serving up a bluesy shuffle, or navigating a complex, multilayered excursion, the swinging Hunter delivers urgent propulsion defined by a deep-centered pocket born from his church roots. From downbeat to final bar, his much-sought-after, soulful feel shines through.

But initially, that prized virtue was news to Hunter. "I always intrinsically had the feel," he explains. "But I didn't realize I had it until I got to Juilliard and everyone said, 'Oh, man! You've got such a great feel!' I always just thought it was a natural thing—not something that I worked on, but something I just picked up from gospel music."

Hunter was born in Detroit and grew up in Columbia, Maryland, where he began drumming at his local church at age twelve. The church's music director, composer/conductor Darin Atwater, took note of the talented youngster and became his mentor. Later, when Atwater formed the celebrated Soulful Symphony, Hunter frequently manned the kit.

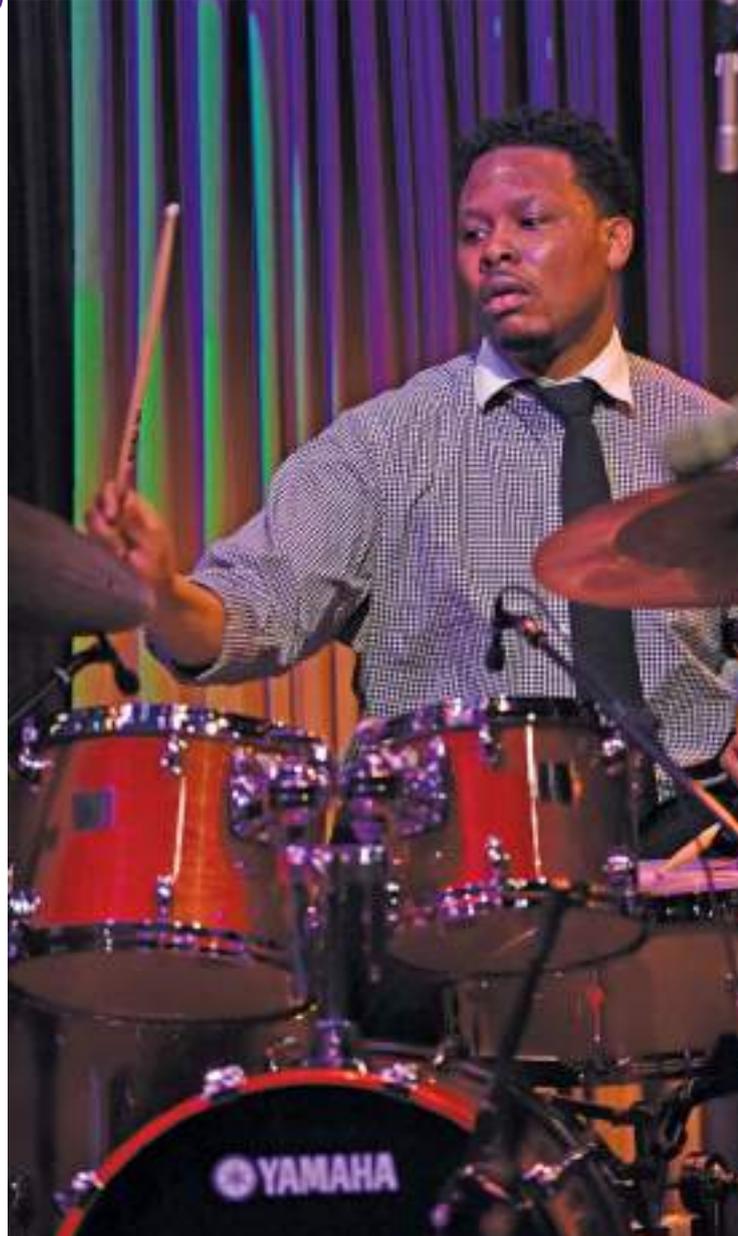
The first jazz concert the fledgling drummer attended turned out to be an auspicious event. "I was about fifteen," Hunter recalls. "It was at Blues Alley in D.C.—seeing Kenny Garrett! So it's been full circle."

Following studies at Howard University, Hunter earned his master's degree in 2007 at Juilliard, where teacher Carl Allen expanded his jazz horizons. The Big Apple jazz scene swiftly came knocking, and Hunter joined pianist Eric Reed's trio while still a student. Years later, the trio's Grammy-nominated 2011 album, *The Dancing Monk*, would further bolster Hunter's career status.

The vibrant drummer has also worked with jazz notables including Lou Donaldson, Curtis Fuller, Cedar Walton, Buster Williams, Les McCann, Wycliff Gordon, Peter Bernstein, Eric Alexander, Javon Jackson, Aaron Goldberg, and Jim Snidero. In addition, he's performed with the gospel artists Donnie McClurkin, Jeff Majors, and Richard Smallwood, as well as the Motown artist Donnie.

Despite his busy touring schedule with Stryker and Garrett, plus ongoing hits with Reed and Jackson, the thirty-three-year-old drummer still manages to maintain his other passion, serving as music director at the noted KIPP Academy charter grade school in the Bronx. He's conducted the school's large student orchestra with numerous star guests, including Roger Waters, John Mayer, John Legend, and Mary J. Blige.

Whereas Hunter's first disc with Garrett, 2013's Grammy-nominated *Pushing the World Away*, showcases his fearless polyrhythmic explorations, his latest recording with Stryker, last year's *Messin' With Mister T*, highlights another facet. A tribute to the late tenor giant



Stanley Turrentine, the hit disc is a crowning showcase for Hunter's irresistible sense of swing, tucked into a deep, bluesy pocket. Grounded by an organ-trio rhythm section, each track features a guest appearance by one of ten top tenor saxophonists. Hunter is smack in the sweet spot on every cut.

"I'm really now starting to fully realize how much jazz, gospel, and basically all black music is intertwined," McClenty says. "In the beginning my connection with gospel was with the spirit of the music—the music, the feel, it's all about selflessness. And that connects with jazz."

“I’m always working on getting that true snare drum approach—the language of Philly Joe, Max Roach—and applying it to a gospel background.”



Ferrando Loderio

MD: Your drumming arrived at jazz via gospel.

McClenty: Once I figured out the sense of the jazz groove, that’s what I related to the most: “Okay, the backbeat’s not on the snare drum. Now it’s on the hi-hat.” But you’re still pushing the band in a *different* way. That was one of the things that helped me understand the pure connection in the feel. Once I understood that groove, everything took off. It took me a while to understand how to push the band from that ride cymbal.

MD: The organ trio is an ideal format for expressing that, as heard on *Messin’ With Mister T*.

McClenty: It’s the perfect connection. In addition to Dave, we’ve got an amazing musician on organ, Jared Gold, and he played in the church too. So we get together and talk about old gospel tunes.

MD: Kenny Garrett’s band is a different animal. How do you change it up, drum-wise or mentally?

McClenty: I try not to consciously change my approach too much. That’s one of the things I picked up from Kenny: Swing is swing. But don’t get me wrong—Kenny doesn’t like it to sound dated. He wants you to put in a modern twist.

Dave and Kenny never really tell me what to play. I’m fortunate that they trust my instinct. My thing is more about the understanding of a particular style. Obviously, if I’m playing in a piano trio, I’ll use a different cymbal or setup than I’d use with Kenny. But there’s still going to be the relative intensity. The question is *how* you’re pushing the beat.

MD: How is that applied differently with the two groups?

McClenty: Playing with the organ trio, the ride cymbal and hi-hat are very important—which is the same combination Kenny wants. But because of the timbre of the organ, you need the hi-hat to really cut through. And the ride cymbal beat has to be very wide because of the bass pulse that the organist is playing with his foot. The sound quality that’s coming out of his instrument is totally different from what comes out of an acoustic bass. So I have to make sure my ride is wide enough that it will cover that quarter note—not as tight or small—which is something you need to provide anyway to allow the band to have a wider sense of time. It’s more laid back playing with the organ.

Kenny likes things a little more on top of the beat, which I have to be really conscious of—making sure that the hi-hat is on the upper half of the quarter note. With the organ, I’m more thinking of the middle or backside of the quarter note.

Tools of the Trade

Hunter plays Yamaha Absolute Maple Custom drums. His Sabian cymbals include a 16" HHX Legacy, a 19" HHX Omni, a 20" O-Zone ride, and a 22" prototype. His hi-hats are '60s-era 15" A Zildjians. He plays Vic Firth AJ2 and 8DN model sticks.

MD: With Garrett you sometimes establish an intense drive that’s almost a balance between swung and straight 8th notes. It’s also heard in some power soloing.

McClenty: Yeah, I think that’s my gospel influence. I never wanted to shy away from that. Also I’m always working on getting that true snare drum approach—the language of Philly Joe, Max Roach—and applying it to a gospel background.

MD: Even when the music and drumming get very complex with Garrett, you still maintain that centered feel and forward motion.

McClenty: That’s something bassist Corcoran Holt and I try to navigate: not pushing the beat to the point where it starts rushing. There are times I’d listen back and say, “Whoa! What just happened there?” The intensity gets so high—we’re riding on his coattails and he’s taking us to Mars. So it’s about learning to play with that same forward motion but making sure the tempo stays.

MD: For Stryker’s disc you played behind ten guest tenor-sax soloists spanning from elder statesman Jimmy Heath to younger stars such as Chris Potter. It was a dream tenor lab. Did you discover different ways to approach cuts, depending on the soloist?

McClenty: Yeah, that’s where studying with Carl Allen really helped me. Because, to be honest, when I got to Juilliard, I wasn’t necessarily engulfed in jazz history. Carl would say, “You’ve got to check out Big Sid!” and I’d say, “Who?”

So I took in the history. It came in handy on the record, playing with Jimmy Heath, Houston Person.... For instance, Person was definitely more of a blues player, so I thought, *I’ve got to make sure I’m not playing all this syncopation. It’s more about groove and making it feel good.*

Also, everybody had a different sense of phrasing. I had to make sure I wasn’t just marking the form but really listening to where the soloists were climaxing or trying to push the melody over the harmony. It was a really big listening session for me, because I was feeding off of what was given to me and making sure that what I gave back to them was pushing the music along.

MD: You’re entering your ninth year teaching at the KIPP Academy.

McClenty: I’d always wanted to teach, but I didn’t know I’d be teaching this early in my career. But it’s something that I’ve really fallen in love with. At KIPP, the beauty is that every kid must take music, which is unheard of.

MD: Do the kids really understand and appreciate the level of the artist who’s teaching them?

McClenty: Well, they do and they don’t. One year Eric Reed texted me to let me know our album was number one on the jazz charts. I stopped class and said, “Hey, kids, I’m playing on the number-one record in the country!” And I heard some kid whisper to his friend, “Yeah, on a jazz record.” [laughs]



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...?

Dave Mattacks



When you've had a career like his, even the biggest session can seem like another day at the office. But *what* a day...

by Patrick Berkery

Discovering a shared love of the veteran rock and folk drummer Dave Mattacks is the kind of thing that bonds hardcore music fans. Strangers who meet while pawing through Fairport Convention vinyl in a record shop turn into fast friends; musicians who geek out over Mattacks' work on XTC's *Nonsuch* are prompted to form a band. When you encounter someone who's familiar with Mattacks' credits, you've met someone who knows his or her drummers.

Over the course of his forty-six-year-and-counting career, Mattacks has compiled an impressive résumé (available for your perusal at dmattacks.co.uk). He's worked with legends such as Paul McCartney,

George Harrison, Jimmy Page, Elton John, and Roger Daltrey. And he's played with artists of great influence, like the aforementioned English folk-rock institution Fairport Convention and pop perfectionists XTC, along with the mythical folkie Nick Drake, musical visionary Brian Eno, and prog-rock progenitors Jethro Tull.

There have also been more obscure labors of love, like *Feast of Fiddles*, a twelve-piece band featuring six electric violins that's an ongoing project for Mattacks. And living in singer-songwriter-rich New England (the London native relocated to the Boston area in 2000) keeps Mattacks busy backing many regional artists that call upon his ace

song-supporting skills. The suburban-Boston home base has also helped Mattacks expand his role as an educator, as he teaches a regular summer course at Berklee in addition to giving private lessons.

Mattacks says his profile isn't something he's ever gotten too caught up in pondering; instead he simply considers everything he does part of a continuing and fulfilling body of work. "When you're in the vacuum of working, you're not necessarily stopping to reflect, 'Oh, this is good' or 'This is important,'" he says. "Because tomorrow there's a jingle, and next week there's this other thing. You're a working drummer. You're not really sitting back as it's

happening and taking stock. The back of your hand isn't against your forehead, going, 'I'm not sure whether this is sufficiently artistic or high merit enough for me to be involved,' or any bullshit like that. You just get on with it and make the best music you can. It's what I've always done."

As a teen, prior to becoming a professional drummer, Mattacks worked in the London store Drum City. Under the influence of jazz drummers like Buddy Rich and Kenny Clare, and rockers like Ringo Starr and Levon Helm, Mattacks learned to lap calfskin heads on the job, while having his mind blown whenever stars like Ringo, Mitch Mitchell, Ginger Baker, or Keith Moon would visit the shop. His on-the-kit training was enhanced by the store's manager, Johnnie Richardson, whom Mattacks recalls as "a great mentor."

"I sat in with his jazz quintet once," Mattacks recalls. "I'd bugged him—'Let me sit in!' This is me in my teens. I was looking at him at the end of the gig for some kind of approval. And he said something along the lines of, 'Dave, you play really well, but stop trying to play everybody else's instrument.' That's a phrase that really resonated with me. What he was saying was, just because you can hear what the bass player is doing or the line the singer has sung in a certain rhythmic way, you don't have to play it back at them. And that took a couple of years to sink in. When I listen to some of the early things I did, like [Fairport Convention's] *Liege & Lief*, there are parts where I can hear that it hasn't dawned on me yet."

Maybe it represents work in progress to his ears, but Mattacks plays like a seasoned pro on his 1969 Fairport debut. Having taken over for the band's original drummer, Martin Lamble, who died in a tour bus crash, Mattacks carefully picks his spots to emphasize the rock in the band's folk-rock alchemy. The swinging shuffle he puts to "Come All Ye" whips unbridled joy into the album-opening call to arms. And his work on the traditional "Matty Groves" is a powerful showcase; Mattacks drives the song in the first half, and in the second plays off Richard Thompson's guitar fireworks as the time toggles between 4/4, 6/4, and 3/4.

Liege and Lief simultaneously established Fairport as the defining group of the British folk-rock movement and Mattacks as an in-demand drummer on the scene. As the group splintered during the early '70s, Dave worked with bassist Ashley Hutchings' subsequent band, Steeleye Span, played on several solo albums from lead vocalist

The Mattacks Mix

Unfamiliar with Dave Mattacks' playing? Start here.

Nick Drake, "Hazy Jane I"

Mattacks employs just the right touch with mallets on this track from Drake's 1971 album, *Bryter Layter*, weaving around the string swells and the singer's fragile voice with accented tom rolls and light cymbal strikes. "I was just trying to paint some colors," the drummer says. "You didn't need to state the time. Nick's time [on guitar] was so good."

XTC, "My Bird Performs"

This textbook XTC pop gem features a rhythmic variety show on the bottom as Mattacks anchors it with a four-on-the-floor kick while shuffling around the toms, dropping in four-stroke ruffs and sweet ghost strokes on the snare. "This was my idea," Dave says. "On other things [on *Nonsuch*], Andy Partridge or Colin Moulding would make suggestions that I'd copy verbatim or put my own spin on."

George Harrison, "Blood From a Clone"

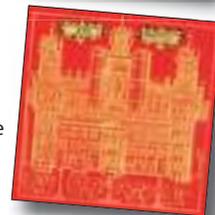
Mattacks drops snares left, right, and center on Harrison's satirical take on the record biz, flipping the beat partially in the verses while completely turning it on its ear in the solo. It's choppy, but it's still a great groove. "I think I was trying to do Jim Keltner," Mattacks explains. "But if I'm honest, I think the execution is a little sloppy."

Steeleye Span, "The Blacksmith"

The 1 is open to interpretation on this cut from Steeleye Span's 1970 debut album, *Hark! The Village Wait*, as Mattacks alternates where he places the snare hits from measure to measure. The topsy-turvy feel doesn't disrupt the song's beautiful melody, though. "I was really being conscious of the melody line—not just plowing through it, but playing something around it."

Jimmy Page, "City Sirens"

Mattacks holds the distinction of being the first drummer to record with Jimmy Page following the death of John Bonham. This track from the *Death Wish II* soundtrack finds Mattacks holding it down and nailing the funky breaks like his old friend Bonzo. "Zep would come see Fairport gigs," he says, "and we'd go see Zep gigs. Had some great times with John."



Sandy Denny, and began a longstanding association with Thompson, recording and touring with the guitar legend into the 2000s. His work on Thompson's classic 1982 album with the guitarist's soon-to-be-ex-wife, Linda, *Shoot Out the Lights*, features some of the drummer's most powerful playing, though sonically the LP doesn't sit particularly well with Mattacks. "I think that's a great, great record, but it just sounds too '80s to me," he shares. "I can hear the gates working on the drums. But that's something that as a musician for hire you learn to step away from, because it's something that's not really important. 'Big deal, the drummer isn't crazy about the drum sounds—get over it.' [laughs]"

In the early '70s Mattacks also worked with two of the most influential artists to emerge from that folk-rock scene, Nick Drake and John Martyn. You don't

necessarily think "drums" at the mention of those acoustic-based musicians, but the spare rhythmic touches and full-fledged kit playing Mattacks adds to Drake's delicate *Bryter Layter* album and Martyn's esoteric *Solid Air* fit perfectly. Years later, both records remain excellent examples of Mattacks' taste and creativity.

"The thing that was so illuminating about that era," Mattacks explains, "was working with people like John Martyn and Nick Drake. They weren't dyed-in-the-wool folkies like many of the other people I'd been working with at the time. I remember thinking, *Oh, yeah, they're pretty good*. And you look back now, and those people were so ahead of the game. At the time you'd do a session and it was just a gig. But five or ten years removed from that period, I could step back from it and realize, *Wow, these people were really something*."

Dave Mattacks

Growing restless with the folk scene as the '70s progressed, Mattacks looked to branch out. He cites the sessions for Brian Eno's 1977 album *Before and After Science*, which also features drums from Phil Collins of Genesis, Jaki Liebeck of Can, and Soft Machine's Robert Wyatt, as a welcome change of pace. "He had a different way of dealing with things and what he wanted," Mattacks says of Eno. "His suggestions were the antithesis of, 'That's not the most appropriate place to put that microphone on the snare,' or 'Play that fill.' He just liked to get you out of your comfort zone."

By the beginning of the '80s Mattacks had gone from being the guy known as the go-to folk drummer to the guy known for playing with two of the Beatles: Paul McCartney and George Harrison. Both high-profile gigs came up in a very casual way, Mattacks says. Percussionist Ray Cooper, a friend, was co-producing Harrison's 1981 album, *Somewhere in England*, and brought Mattacks in on the session—which fatefully began the day after John Lennon was murdered.

"The morning we were due to work, Ray

called me up and said, 'Have you heard the news? John Lennon was shot last night.' Like everyone else, I was taken aback. Then Ray called back and said the best thing George felt he could do [that day], rather than sitting around thinking about it, would be to try to make some music, so we did. At one point we were having a meal and discussing the gravity of what had happened, and George said so sincerely, 'All I ever wanted was to be in a band.' He was so unassuming, just an absolute sweetheart."

The other Fab Four association began when Mattacks bumped into McCartney at a London music store and Beatle Paul casually asked if the drummer might be interested in doing some recording. Mattacks, who appears on McCartney's albums *Tug of War*, *Pipes of Peace*, *Flowers in the Dirt*, and *Run Devil Run*, says that tracking with such a legend wasn't all that different from much of the work he'd been doing.

"He hardly ever told me anything," Dave says. "It was, 'Here's the song. Let's have a go.' Working with him was not dissimilar to working with someone like Richard

Thompson. You sit down and they play you the song. They either go, 'Yup, that's cool,' or 'Actually, it's a bit more like...' Most of it was two or three takes. I don't remember agonizing over anything."

Though he's extremely humble when asked to analyze his impressive body of work ("If I have a strength, it's accompanying people and playing songs" is as boastful as the drummer gets), there's no escaping the fact that Mattacks has enjoyed a pretty heady career. He acknowledges that it's beyond anything he could have imagined, but is quick to point out that it's certainly not something he could have planned.

"There was never a master plan: 'Yes, I'm going to work with Paul McCartney.' I'm always suspicious of these folks: 'I'm going to go to Berklee, and then I'm going to go play with Madonna and Chick Corea by the time I'm thirty.' I don't know how you plan this stuff out. A career plan is for the banking world. The only thing I knew I wanted to do was to make music to the best of my ability and learn about it. It's as simple as that."



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Refused's David Sandström

After a wildly successful string of reunion shows in 2012, Sweden's seminal hardcore act has released its first album in seventeen years. *Freedom* appears to have dialed in the "liberation frequency" spoken of on the 1998 masterpiece *The Shape of Punk to Come*—a title that, after so much time away, somehow still applies to the group's sound. The eminently patient **David Ciauro** finally gets a chance to explore the methods and motivations of the band's uniquely raging rhythm attacker.

If you're unfamiliar with Refused and its drummer, David Sandström, there's a good reason. Although the band members were confident that their third album, *The Shape of Punk to Come*, was a profound musical and political statement, they didn't expect to implode before the world would catch on.

In 1998, at a basement hardcore gig in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Refused began its final show, only to be shut down by the police a few songs into its set. It was the last time the band would play until reuniting in 2012. At the time of its original dissolution, Refused was performing for crowds of fifty or so people in the States. When it returned nearly two decades later, it sold out a two-night stand at New York City's Terminal 5.

In this exclusive interview, the media-shy Sandström answers questions that fans from back in the day have long pondered—and that hordes of newcomers no doubt hunger for as well.





MD: You've been on my bucket list of interviews since I first heard *The Shape of Punk to Come*. Despite my searching, I was never able to find any interviews with you talking about drumming, and there's not much up-close video content of your playing from before Refused disbanded in 1998. As a result, I—like many others, no doubt—was forced to create theories based on the inklings I had about your approach to drumming.

David: I actually think our music is the most exciting aspect about us. It's so compact, brutal, and manipulative. When I meet people, I wonder if it's disappointing, because I'm not a very cool guy—then the next time they listen to one of our records, maybe they'll no longer find the music as exciting.

MD: The drum sounds on *The Shape of Punk to Come* are aggressive yet full. There's a poor-quality video on YouTube of "The Deadly Rhythm" from a show in the late '90s, and you're playing a piccolo snare with a clear pinstripe head with wrinkles in it, and yet there's *that* sound. You have this ability to transmit your energy into the drums regardless of what you're playing.

David: Thank you! That's a huge compliment. I actually believe what you are saying, that the most important thing for me is in the playing—*how* you play. I don't have any specific interest in drumsets. I can't really even tune a drum. Back then, we had a friend who was our sound technician, driver, and tour manager, and he was also a drummer, so he made sure I had [gear] to play. I was very happy that he took care of it, because I wasn't interested in it. These days I have a drum tech that I trust, so he decides.

MD: How involved were you in the production aspect of *Shape of Punk*? Was the band aware of what you all were making at the time?

“I stopped playing drums for good in 2000 or 2001. I was playing music the whole time—guitar, composing, touring, and putting out records and stuff in Sweden. But I wasn’t playing the drums. And I didn’t think I would start again.”



Paul La Roca

David: *Shape of Punk* wasn’t an accident. We didn’t have an overall idea of the sound of the record, but we knew exactly how we wanted each song to sound. Honestly, for the liner notes of the album to be correct, it should really say that Kris [Steen, guitarist] and I produced the record. We didn’t know the [correct] lingo; we would just shout things at Eskil [Löfström] and Pelle [Henricsson], who ran the studio, like, “The bass drum needs to be more violent,” and they would work themselves sweaty so we would stop shouting things. They were very active technicians, but we really pushed them to get the sounds.

MD: Do you remember anything about the kit you used or how the drums were recorded and processed?

David: I know we recorded a pretty fat rock drum sound, but then we messed with it a lot on almost every song. There was an element of that Steve Albini thinking as well—there was always a room mic to pick up stuff bouncing off the walls. I think we mainly recorded on a DW drumset that Pelle owned.

MD: *Freedom* is produced brilliantly as well. This time around, were you equally involved in the recording process?

David: Funnily enough, I really didn’t get involved. I just let [producer] Nick Launay and [assistant producer/engineer] Adam Greenspan decide. I almost didn’t have an opinion. But that’s just sort of the way I think about it now. If I trust a producer, I look at

him as an artist.

MD: When did you first start playing drums?

David: My family mythology is that I started when I was like three years old, but take that with a grain of “mom salt.” You know how moms can be, romanticizing things, like, “You never cried when you were a baby!” Apparently I used to play on the back of cookie jars, putting them in front of the stereo and playing along to Creedence, the Beach Boys, or Janis Joplin. I do know that I received my first play drumset from my granddad when I was five; there’s photographic evidence of that.

MD: You have a unique approach to the drums, and I always imagined that you were self-taught. Did you ever take lessons or play in school bands?

David: I played in the school orchestra for a while and played a little jazz as well, but I’m very much self-taught. In Sweden we have had a very brilliant system. In a city’s jurisdiction, there were music schools [you could attend] through the school that you went to.

MD: Was it free?

David: There was some tuition, but it was very low. We were a low-income household, so it wasn’t a thing that people couldn’t afford. You took lessons like every other week, and I started doing that in the fourth grade. Kris was one of the percussionists as well, so we met and were in the same percussion ensemble when we were like ten or eleven. *Refused’s* music is very percussive,

and I think there’s a connection there with us being drummers at such an early age.

MD: Did you practice a lot on your own?

David: I never, ever practiced. I just played. I got lucky with the school lessons that I took. The teacher I had was this free-spirited idealist, communist, really radical ‘70s dude who was a Zappa freak. He’d ask me if I practiced at home, and I’d say no. I just played along to records or played drum solos, so he said, “All right, we’ll just jam.” So basically at every lesson he would get behind a Rhodes piano and just play along with whatever I felt like doing. That was basically my music school experience.

A lot of technique trickled down from that guy allowing me to just play. I actually did learn a lot, but he didn’t *make* me learn; he let me be my own musician the whole time. It was pretty exciting. He was an amazing dude.

MD: I know you’re a big fan of Slayer and especially drummer Dave Lombardo. How did you get into metal?

David: I’m obsessed with Dave Lombardo’s playing. I was a death metal drummer when I first started playing. My first real band was a death metal band; we played covers of songs from the first *Decide* record, and I would sing and play drums. That was when I was about fourteen or fifteen.

MD: After *Refused* disbanded in 1998, you stepped away from the drums for the most part. Prior to the first run of reunion shows in 2012, when was the last time that you played

Sandström's Setup

Drums: SJC Custom in dark gray finish

- A. 5.5x14 wood snare
- B. 9x13 tom
- C. 16x16 floor tom
- D. 18x22 bass drum

Cymbals

- 1. 14" Sabian HHX Stage hi-hats
- 2. 19" Sabian HHX X-Plosion crash
- 3. 20" Istanbul Agop 30th Anniversary ride
- 4. 20" Sabian AAX Stadium ride

Heads: Remo, including Emperor X snare batter and Hazy Ambassador resonant, Coated Ambassador tom batters and Clear Ambassador resonants, and Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter

Hardware: DW, including 5000 and 9000 series cymbal stands and 9000 series tom holder, snare stand, and double pedal

Sticks: Promark hickory 7A with wood tip

Electronics: Roland SPD-SX



any of the old songs?

David: Our final show. After Refused split up I played a little drums in this other band with friends, just for fun, but I basically stopped playing for good in 2000 or 2001. I was playing music the whole time—guitar, composing, touring, and putting out records and stuff in Sweden. But I wasn't playing the drums. And I didn't think I would start again.

MD: How come?

David: When I wasn't playing with Kris, I realized I didn't enjoy playing the drums just to play them. So I didn't play, because it reminded me of how great it was and how much I loved it.

MD: Was it a problem getting the chops back to play songs like "New Noise"?

David: Oh, it was a problem. It was a huge problem! [laughs] I had to actually start going to a gym just for cardio, and I sat and hit a practice pad really fast for hours a day until I had the speed up. When we did the reunion in 2012, we rehearsed five days a week for like three months. But I think that not playing for ten years actually improved [how I approached the drums].

The hi-hat thing in "New Noise" was [influenced by] Alex Van Halen. He often doubled the hi-hat to play 16ths with one hand, to create this intensity that wouldn't be there by playing 8ths. Kris suggested the "New Noise" verse needed some excitement, so we doubled the hi-hat and some tension arose from that...it was very much a drummer's-drummer decision.

MD: You mention the influence of Alex Van Halen and Dave Lombardo. What is it about a

certain drummer's playing that grabs your attention?

David: Being a drummer, you're always more attentive to the more percussive aspects of music. I enjoy how programmed drums and sampled drums have seeped into people's playing. I saw the Roots in 1999, when they came to Stockholm, and I became obsessed with Questlove. I was heading that way in my playing when we did *Shape of Punk*, where I wanted the drums on certain tracks to sound almost mechanical. We'd been listening to a lot of British jungle and big-beat music back then. But Questlove, he could do that strange thing where the hi-hat was real steady on the beat and the snare would be late. I love messing around trying to duplicate his playing when we're rehearsing, but it just can't be done.

MD: At your recent Bowery Ballroom show that I saw, in the middle of "The Deadly

Rhythm," the band paid homage to Slayer by playing the intro to "Raining Blood." It sounded like you were playing double bass, but I wasn't aware that you use a double pedal.

David: There are a few songs on the new record that I used the double pedal for, but they're just not fast double bass parts. For example, "Old Friends/New War" has this half-time feel in the verse, with a hip-hop-type beat. There is bass drum on every hit, so my left foot mirrors my left hand for that part. We're actually not playing any of those songs live yet, so the double pedal is currently just for the Slayer part.

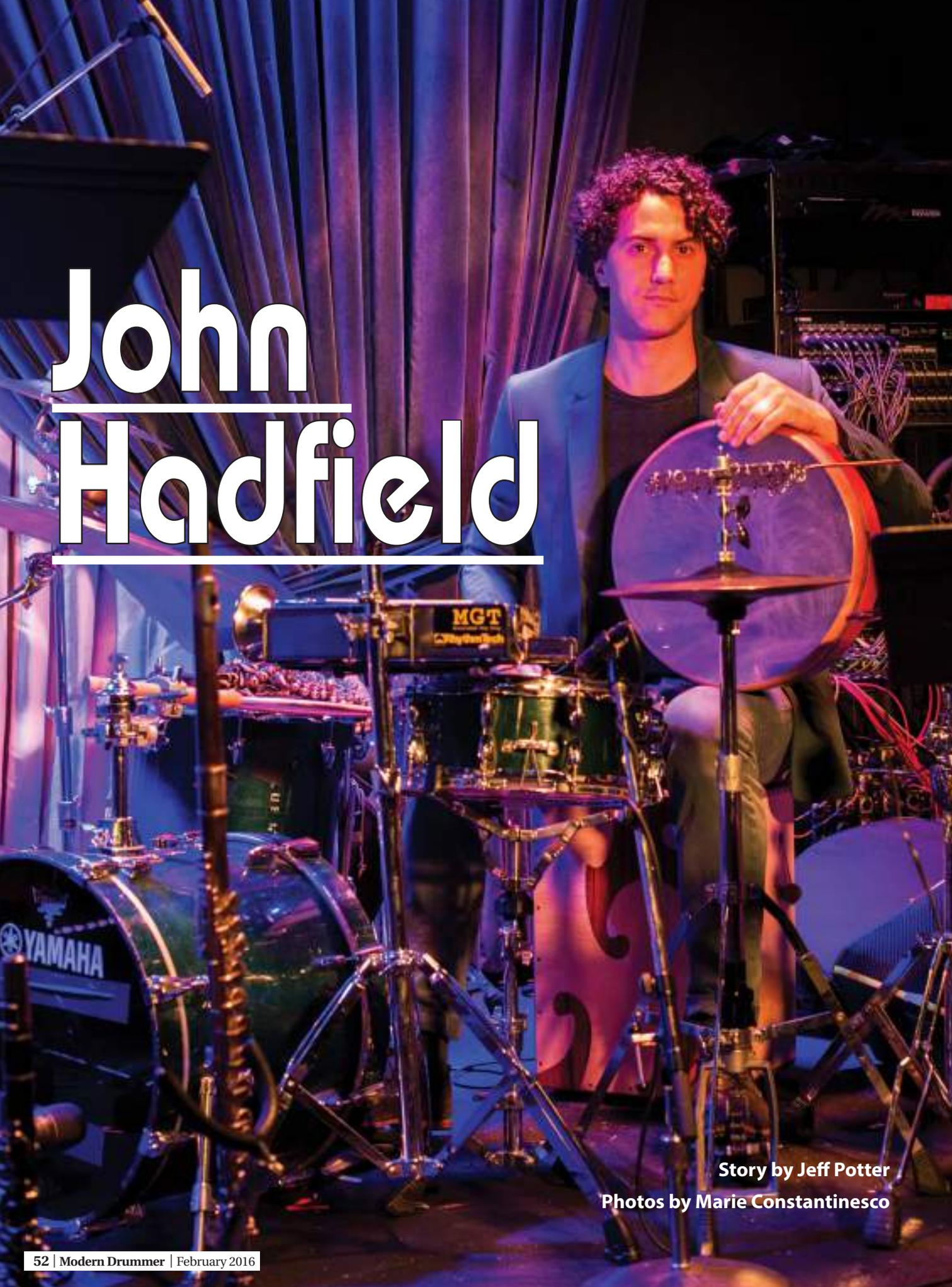
MD: With the stellar reception that *Freedom* has received, what does the future hold for Refused?

David: We're trying to take it semi-easy. We'll be working this record long-term. We want every show to be special, and it's impossible to deliver that when you do twenty shows in a row. That [pace] takes something out of you.

MD: I was at one of the Terminal 5 shows in 2012, as well as the Bowery show I mentioned, and on both occasions you did practically full sets at Saint Vitus in Brooklyn afterward. In the videos of those second sets in smaller venues, you were equally intense.

David: We just get so excited from playing. Coming from punk and hardcore, there are always people we know at shows telling us about a club we could just show up at and play. Things are so unpretentious in that world that we can do it on very short notice, just get in the van and do a second show. It reminds us of our roots and playing just for fun. There'll be more of those.





John Hadfield

Story by Jeff Potter

Photos by Marie Constantinesco

The drummer/ percussionist with cellist Yo-Yo Ma, bassist and composer Petros Klampanis, and other big thinkers simultaneously plays traditional drumset and traditional ethnic percussion, in the service of some decidedly *un-traditional* musical statements.

As John Hadfield increasingly found himself performing with ensembles exploring blends of jazz and world music, his quest for dynamic and timbral sensitivity became key. Meeting the challenges, Hadfield created hybrid drumkit/percussion setups that ingeniously served the music in a less snare/bass-centric approach.

There is perhaps no better forum for Hadfield's deft, coloristic grooving than his hybrid-kit drumming with Petros Klampanis's ensembles. As heard on the 2015 album *Minor Dispute*, Hadfield delivers a fluid groove, strong yet never intrusive, punctuated by adroitly chosen accents. His skillful sound-weaving choices create the illusion of a seamless multi-percussion section. This commanding rhythmic stream unifies and orchestrates Klampanis's riveting and brilliantly arranged chamber mix of percussion, bass, guitar (played by Gilad Hekselman), and piano (Jean-Michel Pilc), supplemented by four string players, in a blend of jazz, classical, world music, and folkloric leanings from the bassist's Greek roots.

Sitting astride a cajon, Hadfield will switch between hand drums and stick-struck instruments. Frequently he plays them simultaneously, often cradling a frame drum on his knee and playing it with his left hand while riding a cymbal with his right. Or he may groove the cajon with one hand while his other plies the kit. All four limbs are nimbly independent, navigating percussive layers that artfully support the music's constantly shifting palette.

"The use of frame drum [in particular] really conjures the vibe and attitude of certain regions, such as Greece or Africa," Hadfield says. "I love that aspect. There's often an authenticity to that. When playing



Hadfield's Hybrid

Drums: Pearl Reference series

- A.** 6.5x14 wood snare
- B.** 14x14 floor tom
- C.** 16x20 bass drum

Cymbals

- 1.** Sabian 12" Chopper (mounted upside-down)
- 2.** Sabian 13" Fierce hi-hats
- 3.** Sabian 22" Monarch ride
- 4.** 8" Tibetan bell mounted on top of ride
- 5.** Sabian 16" O-Zone crash
- 6.** Sabian 6" splash (unknown model)

Sticks: Vic Firth Bolero, Heritage brush, SD12 Swizzle G, and Rute 606

Percussion

- aa.** reco-reco
 - bb.** Japanese fan drum
 - cc.** Sela cajon
 - dd.** Ksink Ksink hi-hat attachment
 - ee.** South Indian ankle bells
 - ff.** caxixi
 - gg.** Cooperman Slapback (ocean drum)
- Not shown:** Emin darbuka

Heads: Evans, including Genera Dry snare batter, G2 Level 360 floor tom batter, and EMAD Coated bass drum batter



John Hadfield

Petros's music, it brings a vibe to it that just playing a regular drumset would not."

Given the unusual instrumentation of his setup—and of the ensembles he plays in—Hadfield has found certain textural issues that he must remain sensitive to. "With strings," he says as an example, "you have to be respectful and not play the cymbals too loudly. I could whale on the drums, cajon, and other percussion and it still could blend well, but you have to be aware that it's the cymbals that can wash strings away."

Besides offering endless textural variety, Hadfield's rig solves a more mundane concern. "From a practical point," John explains, "one of the advantages of playing percussion in New York City is that you can throw it in a bag over your shoulder, get on the subway, and go. Schleppling in New York is brutal!"

Following percussion studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Hadfield earned his master's degree at the University



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of Missouri, Kansas City. Immediately after graduation, he took a spontaneous left turn. "I went to Bali for six weeks," he says. "I was curious about gamelan music, so I just went there, holding one person's phone number. I studied and did a bit of playing, and it inspired a new way of looking at music."

Hadfield then moved to New York City in pursuit of his jazz ambitions. "I was always into Elvin, Jack DeJohnette, and also classic rock like Bonham and Ginger Baker. But then Jamey Haddad at the New School became a huge influence on me."

Hadfield attended the New School for two years, albeit under unusual circumstances. "I never enrolled," he says with a chuckle. "I just got permission from professors to attend classes by people I wanted to study and hang with. At the time I was playing dance classes and club dates—whatever—to make money. And during the day I went to the New School and played in some of the ensembles."

Haddad's globe-spanning, multi-percussion artistry inspired Hadfield to develop his hybrid setups. "I wanted to get his whole approach," Hadfield says. "For instance, with the kanjira—that's a South Indian instrument that's basically a tambourine made from monitor-lizard skin with one jingle. One kanjira player in particular, Ganesh Kumar, was a big influence on me. Jamey was teaching lessons on kanjira, frame drums, and also the South Indian syllable system, which was a vehicle for getting into, 'I'm playing in seven, my foot's in three, and I'm speaking in four.'" [laughs]

Since putting down roots in New York, Hadfield has continued to ply his trade within highly diverse ensembles, including Combo Nuvo, a funky jazz/world ensemble featuring sax star Lenny Pickett, and pianist Kenny Werner's Chant quintet. John is also a member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, and he contributed to the cello master's 2008 Grammy-winning release, *Yo-Yo Ma & Friends: Songs of Joy & Peace*. In addition, he's subbed with the *Saturday Night Live* band and also holds the seat for the acclaimed Broadway show *Fun Home*, which won the 2015 Tony Award for Best Musical. His own compositions are featured on his releases, *The Eye of Gordon* (2008) and *Displaced* (2010).

This past fall Hadfield performed with Klampanis in Greece, followed by a European tour with clarinetist David Krakauer in a project dubbed the Big Picture, which features the band playing in sync with projections. He then embarked on a Canadian tour with Syrian clarinet star Kinan Azmeh. Hadfield previously toured with Azmeh in the Middle East—including a concert at the Royal Opera House Muscat in Oman—and cites the

music's mix of jazz and Arabic influences as being highly influential on him.

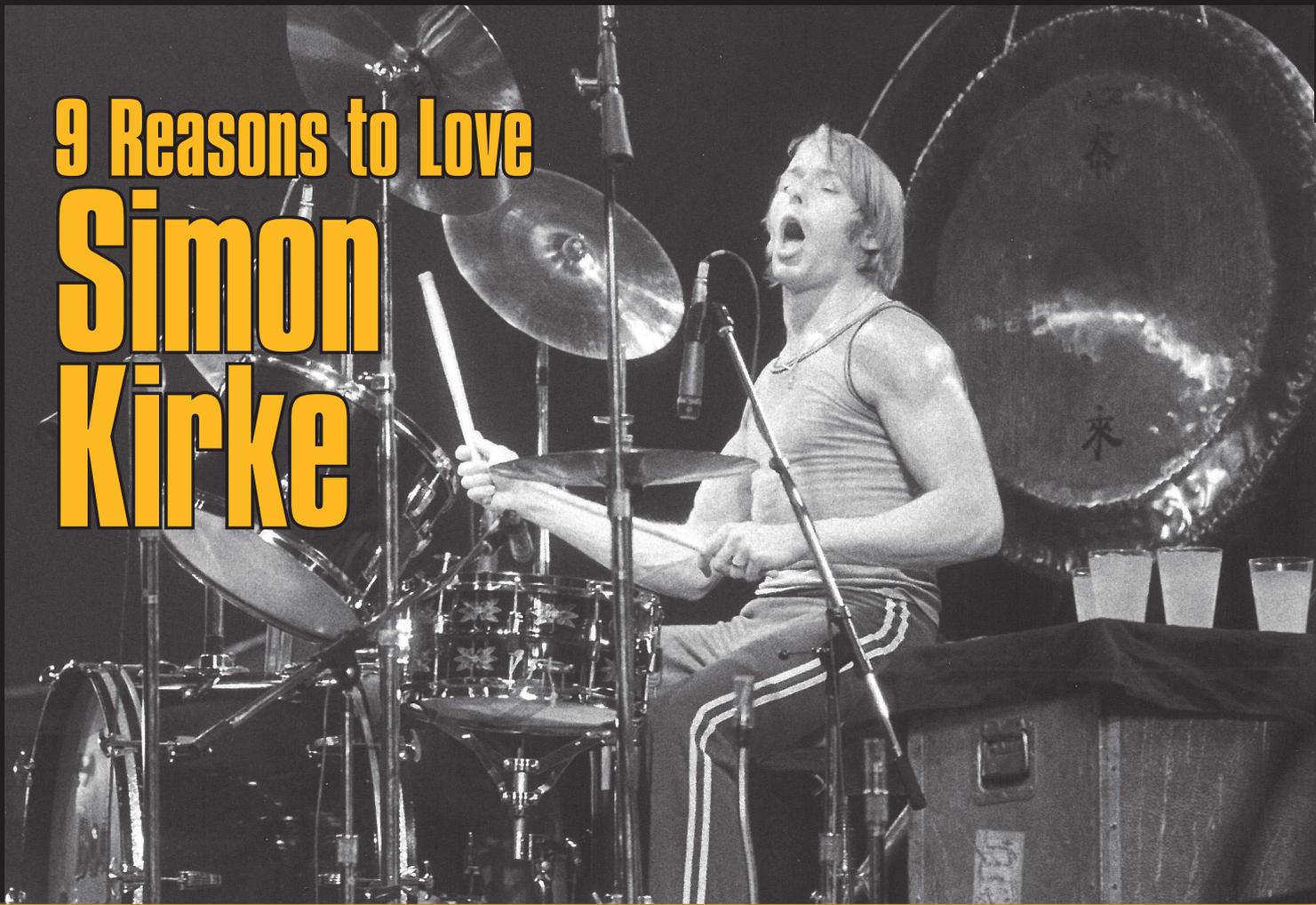
Hadfield also finds time to pass the torch as a faculty member at New York University, where he teaches drumset and directs the school's World Percussion Ensemble. The faculty position afforded him the opportunity to secure an educational grant allowing him to embark to Chennai, India, for percussion studies.

The diverse drummer is excited about his future endeavors with Klampanis, including their upcoming disc, *Chroma*. Slated for summer 2016, the release will include video

content. "In addition to the Greek influence, what's also unique about Petros's music is the interplay between the musicians," Hadfield says. "Some of it is very complex. There's the tune 'Ferry Frenzy,' which is in eleven. The first time I heard that, I thought, *Is this some kind of screwed-up 6/8?* But that approach to eleven is very unique to Petros. The beauty of playing with him, ultimately, is that we definitely feel the beat in the same place. The first time we played in my living room, it was instantly great. You know how that is—sometimes you just immediately click with people."



9 Reasons to Love Simon Kirke



by Patrick Berkery

It's a short list of rock drummers who've made their mark as a member of two successful bands, as Simon Kirke did with Free and then Bad Company. Kirke's love of American soul and R&B, particularly the sounds coming out of Memphis in the '60s on the Stax label, informed the economical approach and solid style he employed with both groups. Classic-rock radio staples like Free's "All Right Now" and Bad Company's "Can't Get Enough," "Feel Like Makin' Love," and "Rock Steady" don't feature anything fancy from Kirke, but everything he does on these songs and so many others has purpose and power. He laid the perfect foundation for the lean, R&B-influenced sound both bands favored, as well as for that soul-powered howl of Paul Rodgers.

Bad Company, whose self-titled debut and second album, *Straight Shooter*, were recently reissued as deluxe editions, enjoyed more success than Free did, so its catalog is more familiar to the masses. But if all you know of Free is "All Right Now," you're strongly urged to go down the rabbit hole at your earliest convenience. That band was a force, and the drumming, while admittedly a work in progress on the earliest recordings, is tasteful and sharp beyond Kirke's tender age at the time. Here, Simon discusses nine of his most memorable tracks.

"All Right Now" (Free, 1970)

Aside from the crazy jam in the middle, which Kirke paces with a relatively busy 16th-note snare pattern and wraps up with a quick buzz roll, much of Free's signature tune finds Kirke doing what he does best: holding everything together with a big, fat beat. His groove in the verses sounds particularly heavy, as there's no bass guitar taking up space on the low end. This enables the meaty tone of his kick—tuned a little higher than normal—to voice particularly well. "I read somewhere that Al Jackson tuned his bass drum pretty high, and I was such a fan that I tried it," Kirke shares. "That really helped create that tone." And let's put a word out there for those 8th-note claves pulsing throughout the tune, played by Rodgers. If *SNL* ever needs another "More cowbell!"-type sketch for the next time Christopher Walken hosts, one built around "All Right Now" would kill.

"Fire and Water" (Free, 1970)

It's no surprise to learn that the drum solo at the end of this slow-grind groover, which Kirke introduces by pumping steady 8th notes on the kick, is a tip of the hat to Ringo's solo spot on the Beatles' "The End." Kirke's starring-role performance on "Fire and Water," featuring plenty of sweet extended tom fills and a driving double-time climb in the chorus, was also influenced by another, somewhat surprising track. "During the session for 'Fire and Water' I heard 'Fire and Rain' by James Taylor, with Russ Kunkel on drums," Kirke recalls. "And I heard those wonderful tom-tom fills. There was just something about the simplicity of his drumming and fills. It turned a light on inside of me."



"My Brother Jake" (Free, 1971)

"My Brother Jake" finds Free taking a break from the hard stuff and laying down a jaunty little shuffle rooted in New Orleans R&B. Kirke approaches the piano-based tune with a light touch, at times accenting the 1 on the kick and floor tom, with snares on 2, 3, and 4. He alternates this pattern with snares four across the bar in some spots and a straight 2/4 shuffle with tasty buzz rolls interspersed to set up the transitions. "It wasn't a shuffle where the right hand bounces," Kirke says. "It was almost like a precursor to the beat on 'Can't Get Enough.' And I took it from Al Jackson on 'Soothe Me' by Sam & Dave. I think that's subconsciously where that groove came from. I was really happy with my drumming on that, because it was a departure from what I'd normally done. I felt it was one of my most musical drumming tracks."



"The Hunter" (Free, 1971)

You can feel the raw power of Free's live show in this balls-to-the-wall version of Albert King's "The Hunter," taken from 1971's *Free Live!* Kirke drives the band with slamming force, linking his quarter-note hi-hat pattern with Paul Kossoff's guitar part (he opens the hats in certain spots to accent Kossoff) and keeping his right foot in lockstep with Andy Fraser's bass. Everyone's letting it fly, while Kirke controls the chaos. "We usually played it as an encore, by which time the gig was complete mayhem," Kirke says. "How you hear me playing it is the combination of ninety minutes of sheer hysteria. I was slamming it. Very simple groove, but so powerful. Well pleased with that."



"Can't Get Enough" (Bad Company, 1974)

The first thing you hear on "Can't Get Enough" is Kirke counting the band in. "We were spread all over Headley Grange [studio]," Simon remembers. "I had to bring them all to attention, and we decided to leave [the count-in] on." The last thing you hear is Kirke bringing the song to a close with a little floor tom crescendo—the calm after the storm of an extended jam.

In between, the drummer is the song's anchor, pumping bluesy blood into Bad Co.'s debut single with a simple shuffle that features quarter notes on the hat and double kicks on 1 and 3. Occasional embellishments, like the hi-hat grabs in the second chorus, are perfectly placed, and the rolls around the kit are classic.



"Rock Steady" (Bad Company, 1974)

The secret to "Rock Steady" is the simplicity of the groove. Oh, Kirke gets his licks in. But it's what he *doesn't* play—namely how he resists the urge to accent the offbeats of Mick Ralphs' guitar riff and just powers through the groove—that gives the song such a

nasty feel. During preproduction, Kirke discovered that stripping back his hi-hat pattern in the verses really allowed him to dig in. "At first I started playing 8ths on the hi-hat, and the feel was a little strained," he explains. "So I started playing just quarters. At that time Ziggy Modeliste of the Meters was a big influence on me. He said somewhere that by playing 8ths it kind of froze his right arm, but by playing quarters it gave him a way of creating a more relaxed groove. I applied that to 'Rock Steady,' and it became so much easier to play. And by being easier to play, I could apply more power."

"Ready for Love" (Bad Company, 1974)

Before rock ballads turned into arena-ready exercises in soullessness in the '80s, bands like Bad Company executed them with subtlety, dynamics, and conviction. Kirke's best ballad work can be found in the soulful and spare "Ready for Love." His 8th notes on the hi-hats fill just enough space in the verses, and his signature double-time climb in the pre-choruses and choruses provide the perfect lift. When he's not grooving, he's controlling the dynamics and delivering tasty snare licks, like the buzz rolls between sections and the triplet fill after the last chorus. "I didn't want to have a drum part that was too intrusive," he says. "My drumming on that is meant to be like a soft-feathered mattress in the verse. And when it came to the chorus, I gave it a little kick in the ass."

"Feel Like Makin' Love" (Bad Company, 1975)

Were it not for Kirke's suggestion to fuse a balsy Paul Rodgers riff and "a simple little country song" that Mick Ralphs was working on, the world might never have known this slow jam, which is soundtracking make-out sessions to this day. Kirke can take credit for more than just suggesting that the singer and guitarist Frankenstein the track together.



His sensibilities as a song-first groover are firmly intact by this point, and he shows them off with the snare-to-tom fill that ushers in the first verse, and with the rock-solid support he provides as the mellow verses give way to the crunchy choruses. "It was no great mystery what a lot of our songs needed from me," Kirke says. "I'm just supporting the song. When I start laying into the fills at the end, we're building, and I'm reacting to Mick's great guitar playing."

"Burnin' Sky" (Bad Company, 1977)

This is Bad Company at its funkier. At bassist Boz Burrell's suggestion, Kirke plays off the keyboard and bass line in the verse, with the snare hits on the "&" of 1 and on 4, giving the tune a tightly wound feel. When Kirke transitions to snares on 2 and 4 in the choruses, the song starts to swing hard. "That little hiccup [in the verses] was hard to do, quite honestly," the drummer says. "It started as a straight 2 and 4, and it got a little ho-hum. By doing that little hiccup, when you got to the chorus it was kind of like a release. It really gave the tune a rhythmic identity."



GEARING UP ON STAGE AND UP CLOSE

Interview by John Martinez
Photos by Alex Solca

Sepultura's Eloy Casagrande

Drums:

- A.** 6.5x14 S.L.P. black brass snare
- B.** 16x18 floor tom
- C.** 8x10 rack tom
- D.** 12x14 floor tom (on stand)
- E.** 14x16 floor tom
- F.** 18x22 bass drum

Drumheads:

Evans Genera HD or HD Dry on top of snare and Clear 300 on bottom, G2 Clear tom batters and G1 Clear bottoms, EMAD2 Clear bass drum batters and logo front heads

Sticks:

Promark 747 Eloy Casagrande signature model

Cymbals:

- 1.** 14" Signature Sound Edge hi-hats
- 2.** 18" Rude Novo China
- 3.** 10" Rude splash
- 4.** 12" Rude Shred Bell
- 5.** 20" Rude Basher crash
- 6.** 14" PST X Swiss Flanger Stack
- 7.** 19" Rude Wild crash
- 8.** 20" Rude Power ride
- 9.** 10" 2002 Mega Bell
- 10.** 20" Rude Ride/Crash

Hardware:

Tama, including Iron Cobra Power Glide double pedal and Lever Glide hi-hat stand and Roadpro stands

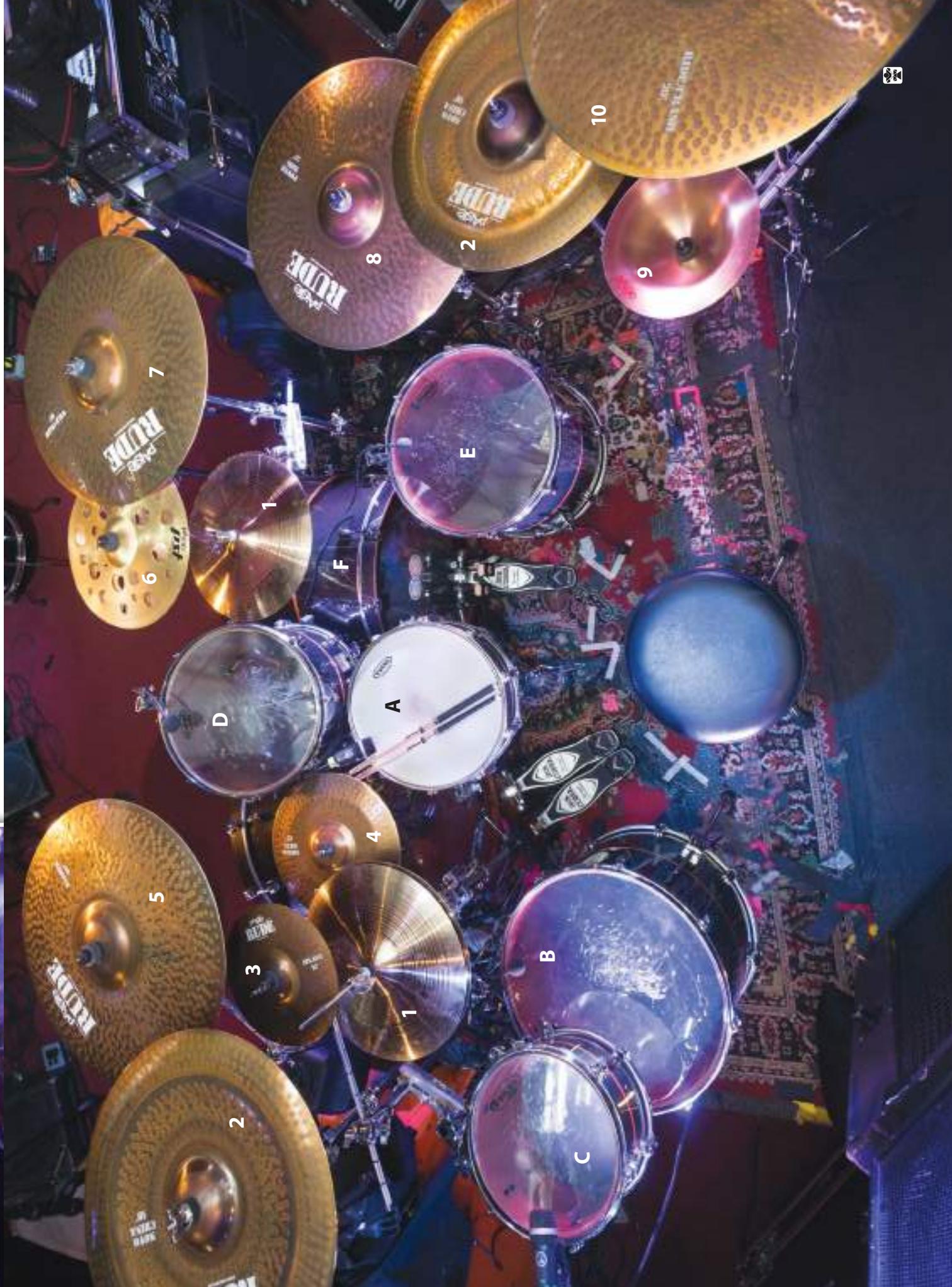
MD recently caught up with Eloy Casagrande to get the scoop on his current rig. "I use one bass drum with a double pedal," he says. "[The other is] a fake bass drum. I think most metal drummers are doing that. It's faster for sound check and festivals. You can get a much better sound with one bass drum when you don't have too much time to work on them."

In regard to tuning, Casagrande says, "With Sepultura, I tune the snare drum a little bit higher than I normally like because I have to cut through the guitars. If it were a medium or low tuning, you wouldn't hear the snare drum. On the big toms, I like normal tuning with no muffling. With the 10" tom, both heads are super-high-pitched to approximate a timbale or tamborim sound. I use that to play Brazilian patterns like samba and maracatu. It would be better to use an 8" tom, but that's too small. I need a bigger target."

"I used to use a huge kit with three rack toms, two floor toms, and a hundred cymbals, but I wanted to play different music and started reducing my kit. I was [down to] just a rack and floor tom, but when I joined Sepultura I had to add more pieces. I put a floor tom on my left side so I could do the heavy accents with the music. I'm not ambidextrous, but I like to work my left side a lot. I put that 10" tom there so I have balance: lowest one and highest one."

"I have the second hi-hat on my right for when I have to play fast thrash grooves and keep the hi-hat on 16th notes. If I play in the crossed-arms position, I lose power on the snare drum. I like to play open so I can raise my left arm and hit the snare properly. Sometimes I use the Power ride as a crash. It doesn't sound beautiful when you hit it, but it's super-loud and I like it."





10

2

8

9

7

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1

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A

4

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2

C

More Cowbell!

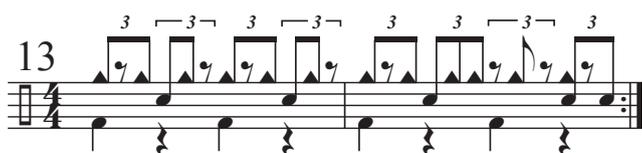
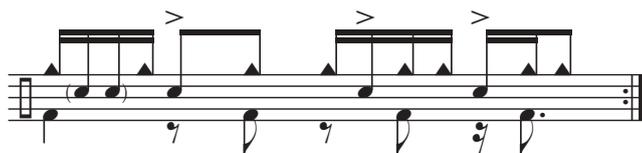
Embellishing Grooves With a Different View

by Rich Redmond

The phrase “more cowbell” has seeped into the public consciousness with good reason—cowbell rocks! Classic rock songs like “Mississippi Queen,” “Honky Tonk Women,” and “We’re Not Gonna Take It” inspired this month’s lesson.

The first three exercises focus on practical rock grooves with syncopated bass drum figures. I’ve included a series of two-bar patterns, starting with Exercise 4, that hints at a half-time inflection or a syncopated over-the-bar feel. Not to worry—the quarter-note cowbell glues them together. Be sure to subdivide so you can clearly mark the phrases with solid time.

Beginning with Exercise 10, the cowbell takes on a linear, melodic quality. Exercise 13 is a triplet-based rock ‘n’ roll escapade that begs for more variations. Be sure to apply all of the hi-hat foot ostinatos that we included in a previous issue (December 2015) to these exercises. Shedding those coordination exercises allows you to express yourself freely when you hit the bandstand or the recording studio. More cowbell, please!



Rich Redmond drums for country star Jason Aldean, is an award-winning clinician, and is an active session drummer in Nashville and Los Angeles. His recent book/DVD, *FUNDamentals of Drumming for Kids* (coauthored with Michael Aubrecht), is available through Modern Drummer Publications.

For a video demo of these examples, visit moderndrummer.com.



Hidden Rhythms

Part 1: Cookin' With 16ths

by Mike Johnston

The concept of discovering hidden rhythms within common subdivisions reminds me of the first time I removed the back of my boom box when I was about twelve years old. I knew that this simple device must have something fascinating inside it to reproduce radio waves and play cassette tapes, but it wasn't until I popped off the back that I discovered the wealth of technology hiding in there.

In this article we are going to explore a single measure of unaltered 16th notes. On the surface, it looks mundane. But a plethora of patterns—from world rhythms to odd groupings—is waiting to be found inside those notes.

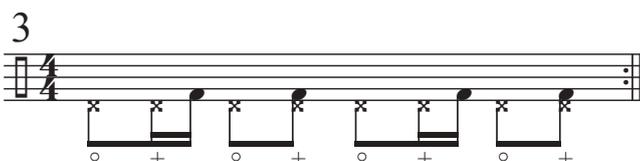


Now let's explore. Imagine that the 16th notes are broth for a soup. We'll play them on the snare at mezzo piano (moderately soft) and add a few vegetables (accents). The soup also needs some protein, so we'll add some chicken (odd groupings like threes, fives, and sevens). The soup is still bland, so we'll spice it up with flams, buzz strokes, and diddles. Although we started with a dull broth of flat 16ths, it was the perfect base for us to build upon.

This lesson focuses on seven common Cuban and Brazilian rhythms. The exercises use alternating single strokes, but I encourage you to try different sticking patterns after you've mastered them as written.



Once the exercises are comfortable on a practice pad or a snare drum, add some four-way independence. Try playing each hand pattern over samba, baião, and tumbão foot ostinatos.



For a demo video of these exercises, visit modern drummer.com.

Mike Johnston runs the educational website mikeslessons.com, where he offers prerecorded videos as well as real-time online lessons. He also hosts weeklong drum camps at the mikeslessons.com facility each year.



Diddling the Baiaó

Gary Novak on Chick Corea's "Discovery"

by Daniel Bédard



Over the years, Chick Corea's bands have featured a lot of great drumming talent. Steve Gadd, Dave Weckl, Roy Haynes, Jeff Ballard—all of these players brought exciting rhythms to the drumming world. We're going to focus on a song from Corea's *Time Warp* record featuring Gary Novak on drums. More precisely, we'll take a look at the groove he played on the song "Discovery."

The Baiaó

Novak's groove is based on the Brazilian baiaó rhythm, which can be described as a cousin to the samba. Baiaó is mostly defined by its ostinato foot pattern, which differs from samba. Here is the main foot pattern.

1

At 0:51, Novak plays alternating 16th notes on the snare, doubling the second 16th with his left hand. This pattern reminds me of a percussionist playing the tamborim, a small tambourine-shaped instrument from Brazil. Try playing the notes softly to create a nice flow.

2

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

The Variations

While working on this groove, I came up with some variations based on diddles. These helped me get comfortable and creative with the original pattern.

3

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

4

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

5

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

Now we'll play two consecutive diddles, which creates a six-stroke roll.

6

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

7

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

8

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

9

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

Diddling with 3s, 5s, and 7s

I then used the same concept and started playing diddles in groups of three, five, and seven. This created quite a coordination challenge, as it takes longer for the pattern to resolve. Here are two-bar examples of each grouping.

Groups of Three

10

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

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

Groups of Five

11

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

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

Groups of Seven

12

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

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

Bass Drum Variation

Gary also plays some bass drum variations throughout the track. Here's one you can use while playing the patterns we just discussed.

13

I strongly recommend that you pick up a copy of *Time Warp*, as there are a lot of other amazing tracks with Novak's fiery drumming. He's one of the best drummers out there. Have fun with these exercises, and happy practicing!

For more on Canadian drummer/educator **Daniel Bédard**, visit danielbedarddrums.com.



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Triplet Fill Concepts

Part 3: Three-Over-Four Fills With Rudiments

by John Xepoleas



Welcome to the third and final lesson in our series on jazz-style triplet fills. This lesson continues with the three-over-four triplet concept and incorporates buzz rolls, double strokes, and paradiddles. In our first example, we'll play the accents using the bass drum and ride cymbal while using buzz rolls on the snare drum.

1

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

Let's play one bar of a swing-time feel into one bar of the fill.

2

Using Double Strokes

Now we'll double the unaccented snare notes. Let's begin by getting a good feel for the sticking pattern. Start slowly and practice with a metronome.

3

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

Next add the bass drum to the pattern. This helps give you a deeper understanding of how the accents land with the pulse.

4

Now we'll play the accents using the ride cymbal and bass drum.

5

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

Let's play three bars of a swing-time feel into one bar of this version of the fill.

6

Next we'll move the right-hand double strokes to the rack tom.

7

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

Now we'll play three bars of a swing-time feel into one bar of the fill.

8

Using a Paradiddle Sticking

Next we'll apply a paradiddle sticking to the accented triplet pattern. Start slowly and practice with a metronome.

9

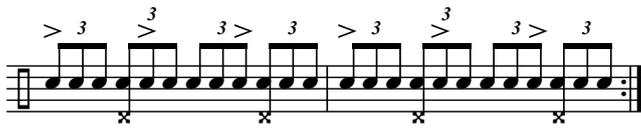
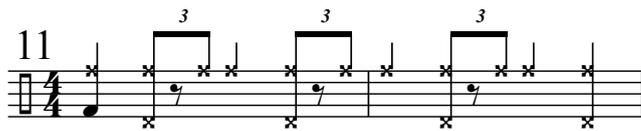
R L R R L L L R L R R L R L L R L L

Once again, we'll add the bass drum to our pattern.

10

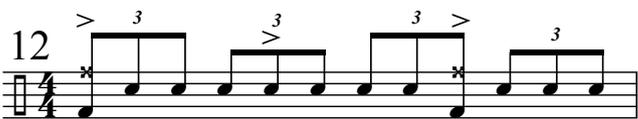
R L R R L L L R L R R L R L L R L L

Let's play this paradiddle version of the fill from two bars of a swing-time feel.

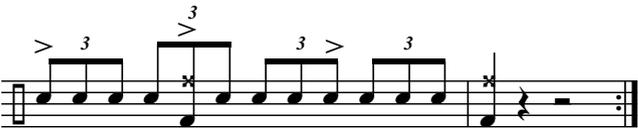


R L R R L L L R L R R L R L L R R L L L

Now we'll play the right-hand accented notes with the ride cymbal and bass drum.

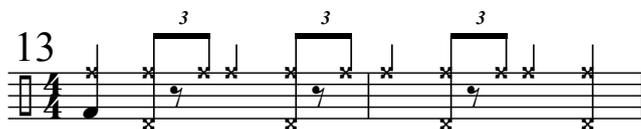


R L R R L R L L R L R R



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

Let's play this version of the fill from two bars of a swing-time feel.

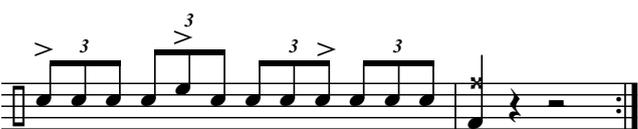


R L R R L L L R L R R L R L L R R L L L

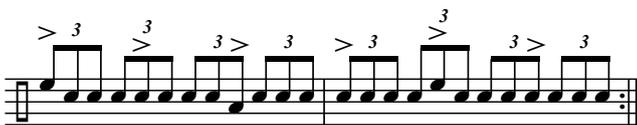
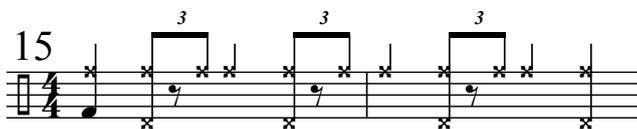
Next we'll play right-hand accents on the toms. Learn the pattern and then play it from two bars of a swing-time feel.



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



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



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

John Xepoleas has written two drum books, *Style Studies for the Creative Drummer* and *Essential Drum Lessons With the Greats*. He is also an active online educator. For more info, visit johnxdrums.com.

For a video demo of these exercises, visit moderndrummer.com.



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Progressive Drumming Essentials

Part 7: Beat Displacement

by Aaron Edgar

Has a song ever caught your ear in just the right kind of wrong way, leaving the music feeling twisted? You knew the musicians were playing together correctly, and you might have even been familiar with the song, but what you felt as beat 1 was somehow wrong.

We can create this effect using beat displacement. It's primarily used as a rhythmic illusion that shifts the pulse against the rest of the music. We can also use it as a tool for writing new, interesting patterns.

Let's take an ordinary drum groove and push the beat forward by an 8th note. Our right hand will continue playing straight 8th notes on the ride cymbal, so we're only shifting the kick and snare notes forward. What was originally on beat 1 will now be on the "&" of 1.

Optional H.H.

When you're working through a new displacement, it helps if you think of it as a completely new groove. You don't want to trick yourself into thinking that beat 1 is in the wrong place. To ensure we perceive this rhythm correctly, use your metronome, count out loud, and play quarter notes with your hi-hat foot.

Once you can play the two rhythms separately, try playing them for four bars each, back and forth. Play quarter notes with your hi-hat foot through both rhythms. To make the second rhythm sound convincing, you'll need to displace your dynamics as well. Try your best to stay in the pocket.

Now let's pull the beat backward by an 8th note. As with the previous examples, make sure your accents are dynamically consistent.

If we start on beat 1 of Exercise 3, we lose the bass drum from the beginning of the pattern. Let's see what happens if we start it on the "&" of beat 4 instead. This can be tricky to feel properly. Be sure to count out loud and play quarter notes with your hi-hat foot. Exercise 4 transitions between Exercises 1 and 3.

Experiment with the five other 8th-note starting points with Exercise 4. Once you've mastered each of them, you can challenge yourself to play through them sequentially until you've displaced yourself back to the start.

If this is the first time you've used beat displacements, spend some more time exploring the concept with your own 4/4 patterns. I find it fun to displace grooves from my favorite songs.

We can get some really interesting results when we apply displacements to less ordinary grooves. To demonstrate this, we're going to take our first rhythm, embellish it a little, and cut it into 7/8. The more out there your initial pattern is, the more your displaced beats will sound like their own unique grooves—sometimes becoming almost indiscernible from the original. This is why displacement is such a powerful writing tool, as it can yield results you wouldn't have found any other way.

Here's a more advanced groove in its basic form.

Let's try pulling beat 1 back by three 8th notes.

This is a perfect example of the displaced beat resulting in what sounds like a new groove. It's convincing enough on its own and is difficult to hear as a displacement of the original. Try playing Exercise 5 on the hi-hats for eight bars, then play Exercise 6 on the ride for eight bars. This makes a great contrast that could work beautifully as neighboring sections of a song.

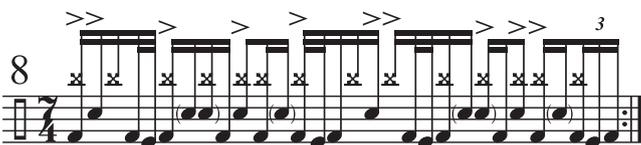
Let's see how it sounds if we push the previous example forward by a quarter note. This gets especially interesting since there's no bass drum on beat 1.



Lastly, let's talk about transitions. One of my favorite ways to transition with a displaced beat is by embellishing the groove. That way it doesn't always have to abruptly cut from one pattern to the other. Here's an example of a four-bar phrase using Exercises 1 and 3 with a brief implied shuffle for each transition.



Example 7 is an interesting bar of 7/8, although it may be difficult to find a place for it musically. Let's modify it into something a bit more useful. We'll add a bass drum on beat 1 and embellish the kick and snare while accenting quarter notes on a cymbal stack. The result is a really heavy, progressive groove in 7/4 with a snare drum that plays a four-over-seven polyrhythm.



If you want to play displacements with a band, try to get everyone to listen to the click. If your bandmates are reluctant to work with a metronome, play quarter notes with your hi-hat foot so that everyone can stay rooted to the correct pulse.

If you're looking for an additional challenge, try displacing patterns that don't have a straight 8th-note hi-hat pattern. This concept can also be applied to fills if you're looking to spice up your drumset orchestrations.

Aaron Edgar plays with the Canadian prog-metal band Third Ion and is a session drummer, clinician, and author. You can find his book, *Boom!!*, as well as information on how to sign up for weekly live lessons, at aaronedgardrum.com.

For a video demo of these examples, visit modern drummer.com.



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Your Library

Creating and Maintaining a Thorough Music Collection

by Russ Miller

American author and clergyman Harry Emerson Fosdick makes a very important point about the acquisition of knowledge in any field. We must look back, stay current, and use inspirations to build our future. For us drummers, spending time gaining knowledge about the language of rhythm and music is crucial. This leads me to this month's discussion on building, organizing, and utilizing a music library.

I was booked to play on some TV shows,

library similar to what I would have if I were a lawyer or doctor. Recorded media is our knowledge reference.

It would've been impossible for me to create this weekly course without a thorough and organized reference library. I was constantly pulling out pertinent albums and grabbing tracks to add to my lecture to drive home certain points. Let's break down the process for creating your own reference library.

In the *Commandments* book, Zoro and I included what we found to be the top songs for each era of R&B. Focus on one song or album at a time. It's taken me years to put together my library, so don't get overwhelmed. It can be an expensive and time-consuming process, but it's well worth the effort.

Get Organized

Most CD collections consist of a stack of discs in the corner of a room by a stereo. Some more organized people may have them in a CD holder. In order to be able to reference your collection, you have to organize it. This has to be done in a way that makes sense and makes it easy to find something when you need it. Put your library in alphabetical order, and use header cards. Within each letter bin, keep titles together for each prominent artist. For instance, inside the R section, group all fifteen Rush albums with a separate header card. Do the same for each significant artist who has several titles.

Without having my library organized, every time I needed to get an album for my lecture I would've had to search through 1,100 CDs. The same goes for learning a specific style, groove, or song for a gig. Do yourself a favor and take the time to get your music organized.

One of the great things about a digital

"Life is a library owned by an author. It has a few books which he wrote himself, but most of them were written for him."

—Harry Emerson Fosdick

movie soundtracks, and album projects this past summer. Usually I'm on the road during that season, as it's the busiest time for touring. However, this particular summer I was going to be home for fifteen weeks straight. My friend and drummer great Ralph Humphrey called and asked if I would be interested in teaching a few courses and directing an ensemble at the Los Angeles College of Music (LACM). Since I wasn't going on the road, I agreed.

One of the classes I was asked to do was a music history lecture. This particular course was based around the lineage of R&B music. It came together fairly easily for me since I had spent a great deal of time interviewing, researching, and assembling content on the subject for a book that I did with Zoro, called *The Commandments of R&B Drumming*. Each week of the semester I needed to write a one-hour lecture about specific eras of R&B music. That comprised basically four or five pages of text with audio references, facts, and observations about a given time period. While creating these lectures, I was constantly referring to the library of music in my studio.

I've always been obsessed with acquiring music. I love to get CDs and add to my reference shelf. Even though I have a digital library as well, having the CD gives me all of the liner notes, credits, and artwork, which adds up to a better understanding of the entire piece of art. I think of my collection as a reference

Assemble the Content

People don't generally buy records they don't like or haven't heard before. But as musicians we need to study the language of music. Some players try to learn to play styles of music without immersing themselves in the music, instead relying solely on patterns and exercises in books. This approach is like trying to learn to speak Italian by only reading it. You have to hear the language to get the flow of the speech. And you hear the accent. It's exactly the same with music. Each musical style has a specific dialect.

When someone says, "I need to get better at my swing playing," the first thing I ask is, "How much swing music did you listen to this week?" The answer is usually none. You can't learn to play jazz by reading about it in a book. Recordings are where the history of music is documented. I encourage you to research the top songs and albums in different styles of music and eras. Acquire copies of the most popular recordings in each style, and spend time listening to them.

You can find lists of top songs in various styles all over the Internet. I included fifty top jazz standards in my online classroom, and the fifty top brush tracks are posted on my website.



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Styles playlists

library is the ability to have the same song included in multiple playlists. Do the same with your iTunes library as you did with your CDs. You can have it organized by artist, style, and grooves. I have playlists organized alphabetically (each folder contains subfolders as well) and style, and there's a research playlist that includes tracks organized by the kind of groove (6/8, 7/8, guaguancó, etc.) and by player (Colaiuta, Rich, Gadd, Roach, etc.).

In the music style folder, I created playlists for specific styles. This can help you greatly when you need to work on something for a gig. For instance, let's say I have to play a piece in 7/8 on an upcoming gig that includes a drum solo. Having a library of materials in 7/8 can help you

Russ Miller has recorded and/or performed with Ray Charles, Cher, Nelly Furtado, and the Psychedelic Furs and has played on soundtracks for *The Boondock Saints*, *Rugrats Go Wild*, and *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*, among others. For more info, visit russtmiller.com.



immerse yourself in that time signature. And you can play along to different tunes in 7/8 leading up to the gig. To the left is an example of my music style playlists.

Utilize Your Library

One of the great things about owning vinyl records is that you have to take some deliberate action to listen to them. It takes effort to get out the album, put it on the turntable, and drop the needle. That commitment to listening to music enhances the ability to soak up content. Now everyone has a thousand songs on their iPods, and they jump around often, rarely listening to an entire album in one sitting. This mentality of instant gratification often causes music to become background noise while we do other activities. But as serious musicians, music can't just be a soundtrack for making your bed. You have to focus on listening very intently. So get a set of high-quality speakers, headphones, or in-ear monitors. Take time to listen to music without doing anything else. Focus on the sound of the instruments, the feel, the overall mix, and the interplay between the musicians. I love picking up on things like when session great Jim Keltner goes from playing in the center of the snare during the verse to cracking a rimshot in the chorus. These are the types of subtleties that help to lift the tune without changing the pattern itself, and these are things that are missed without focused listening.

As musicians, recorded music represents something deeper for us than for the rest of the world. Recordings are documentations of our language, to be used for study, reference, and inspiration. If you're not already, become a devoted music enthusiast. Set up a high-end listening environment, and work on building an organized and thorough music library. I guarantee you will see the fruits of your labor in all areas of your musicianship. Happy listening!



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Thrift Shop Gold

The Frank Biggs 1923 Conn Snare

by Jason Batchko

As a drummer with a mild obsession for hunting down vintage drums, cymbals, and other antique musical gear, I occasionally wander into garage sales, thrift stores, and antique shops, just in case an old K ride or Black Beauty snare is sitting in a corner gathering dust. One day I walked into a thrift shop in my neighborhood in Chicago and walked out with, unknowingly at the time, a one-of-a-kind treasure steeped in the lore of the city's storied South Side jazz scene of the 1920s.

Sitting on a shelf in the store among randomly placed ceramic figures, old shoes, and vintage ties was what appeared to be a beat-up old brass toy drum. Looking closer, I saw that it was a Conn snare with ornate engravings. I first thought, *too bad it's not an old Ludwig*. It had ripped calfskin heads, and there was a layer of black soot on the inside. What grabbed my attention, though, was another engraving on the shell that read "Frank Biggs 1923." The idea of possibly figuring out who Frank Biggs was seemed like a good enough reason for me to bring the drum home.

After looking up Biggs on the Internet that day, I began piecing together the story of the fascinating but short life of a long-forgotten African-American jazz drummer who was once a popular fixture in Chicago's early jazz scene. The first thing that popped up was that Frank Biggs was the songwriter credited on "That's When I'll Come Back to You," which was recorded by Louis Armstrong and His Hot Seven in 1927 on Okeh Records. I was shocked. I had found a connection to Armstrong and some of the most important seminal jazz recordings. I kept looking for more on Biggs, but not much else could be found online. A friend and I decided to hit the library to dig through the archives of the *Chicago Defender*, the city's historic African-American newspaper. That's when the story further unfolded.

We found a Conn Music Company ad from 1922 that featured a photo of the Clarence Jones Wonder Orchestra with Biggs at his drums. I gathered more articles and announcements of shows with Biggs and the Clarence Jones Orchestra playing at many of the hot South Side and downtown jazz clubs of the 1920s, most of which are places of legend these days: the Avenue Theater, the Owl, Bert Kelly's Stables, the Moulin Rouge Cafe (which was destroyed by a gangster-related bombing), and the fabled Vendome, where Armstrong and many others played. Some of the greatest artists of early jazz and blues performed or mingled at these clubs, such as Bessie Smith, Fats Waller, Earl Hines, Johnny and Baby Dodds, and Alberta Hunter. If this little Conn drum could talk....

Clarence Jones, once known as the Sultan of Syncopation, was a popular piano player, orchestra leader, teacher, classical pianist, and writer of many piano rolls. Jones was also a regular on a popular radio show on long-gone WBCN in the '20s. I found that Jones and his orchestra with Biggs were the first black dance band to be broadcast on Chicago radio, in 1922.

So was Biggs preserved on recording? Indeed he was! He's credited on four sides with Jones on the legendary Okeh and Paramount labels. Biggs even sings and does some shouting on



two of the tunes. Luckily, all of these recordings have been reissued.

The Armstrong connection came full circle when I more recently found an ad for Johnny Dodds' combo (Johnny was Armstrong's clarinetist and the brother of the great drummer Baby Dodds) at Bert Kelly's Stables in 1927. Bert Kelly's Stables was a very popular downtown club in its day and is now a steakhouse. In his autobiography, Baby Dodds talks about having to replace his brother's drummer, "Frank Bates," at Bert Kelly's Stables in 1928 because Bates worked a full-time job running a poolroom and would come to the gigs too tired to play. After talking with some experts on the subject, we concluded that Bates is actually Frank Biggs, and either Dodds had forgotten Frank's last name or there was an error in the transcription of the interview.

So, what became of Frank Biggs? The articles stopped around 1932, and more history hunting revealed that he sadly succumbed to emphysema in December of 1940 at age forty-one. He was buried in Louisville Cemetery in an unmarked grave, as many forgotten blues and jazz artists unfortunately were.

Of course, the other half of the story is the drum itself. I initially contacted drum maker Adrian Kirschler, historian and *MD* columnist Harry Cangany, and vintage drum expert Jim Messina to get their thoughts on what I had and how to go about restoring it. Noted snare collector Mike Curotto and the author and curator of the Chicago Vintage Drum Show, Rob Cook, also got in on the conversation. They all said I had discovered a rare and valuable gem.

The Biggs drum is a fully gold-plated and custom engraved Victor Model Conn snare. There's a professional-quality Ludwig strainer, also gold-plated, that replaced the cheaper utility strainer that normally came with these drums. Most likely the original one broke, but Biggs could have ordered the drum with a more durable Ludwig strainer.

One of the ripped calfskin heads has Frank Biggs' inked signature written backwards on the inside so that it would illuminate when the bulb from the internal heating apparatus was turned on. (The heating bulb was used to keep the calfskin heads tight.)

I'm in disbelief that this drum survived and mysteriously made its way to a thrift store shelf. Keep your eyes open—you never know what you might find!



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RECORDINGS

Electronic Evolutionaries

Harmonia *Complete Works*

Tortoise *The Catastrophist*

New Order *Music Complete*

Bernard Sumner *Chapter and Verse*

Three new audio releases and an autobiography offer a multigenerational view of the world where rhythm, electricity, and art meet.

Musicians interested in tracing the history of electronic rhythms eventually find themselves exploring sounds generated in the early '70s by a loosely knit group of German bands that married '60s ideals of aesthetic freedom with the technological advances of modern industry. Though they worked in relative obscurity—at least by the stadium-size standards set by British institutions like the Who, Led Zeppelin, and the Rolling Stones—brainy, proto-computer-friendly ensembles like Neu!, Can, and Cluster are arguably more influential on today's cutting-edge artists than the blues-based, stage-strutting, theatrical acts that dominated the airwaves during classic rock's heyday.

One of the more fascinating chapters of this mad-science scene was written by the members of Harmonia: guitarist Michael Rother of Neu! and Cluster's electronic experimenters Dieter Moebius (who sadly passed away last July) and Hans-Joachim Roedelius. The trio put out two studio records before officially disbanding in 1976, though later that year they recorded material in collaboration with the ambient pioneer/superstar producer Brian Eno that went unreleased until 1997. Those three albums have now been collected in the vinyl box set *Complete Works* (Grönland), which also includes the 2007 title *Live 1974*, plus *Documents 1975*, featuring previously unissued live and studio tracks. A thirty-six-page booklet, a reprint of an original poster, pop-up artwork, and a download code for digital files of the included songs round out the package nicely.

Harmonia's sound was keyboard dominated but quite rhythmic. The group didn't have a conventional drummer in its ranks—though **Mani Neumeier** of Guru Guru did contribute to several tracks from the sophomore album, *Deluxe*, and is the live drummer on the *Documents 1975* tracks. Instead, for most of its rhythmic beds the band relied on early beat generators sent through various effects. Since specific gear models are not included in the liner notes to *Complete Works*, MD reached out to the record label and got this response from Michael Rother: "As far as I remember, Cluster played an ELKA rhythm machine. I had, and still have, from 1972 onwards a Farfisa 'Mini Pops' Rhythmus Machine." Sure enough, you can spy

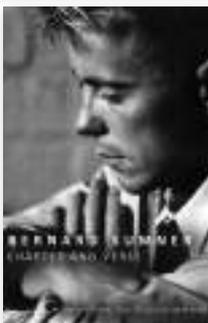


both of these in the included photography. Musically, the effect of manipulating the dance rhythms that were by and large holdovers from the onboard beats included in early home organs—foxtrot, waltz, and so on—is at once ancient sounding and futuristic.

For evidence of the ongoing appeal of Harmonia's approach to electro rhythms, check out the brand-new album by "post rock" heroes Tortoise, *The Catastrophist* (Thrill Jockey), the group's first in seven years. Tracks like "Ox Duke" and "Gopher Island" cannot be fully appreciated without at least a cursory listen to what

Harmonia was putting down in the early to mid '70s, though, as usual, the Chicago collective, which features drummer/percussionists **John Herndon**, **Dan Bitney**, and **John McEntire**, is more freed by its influences than confined by them. Look no further than its cover of the supremely weird 1973 David Essex hit "Rock On," which the group reimagines as a stomping, ballsy rocker that might not seem too out of place on Pink Floyd's *The Wall*.

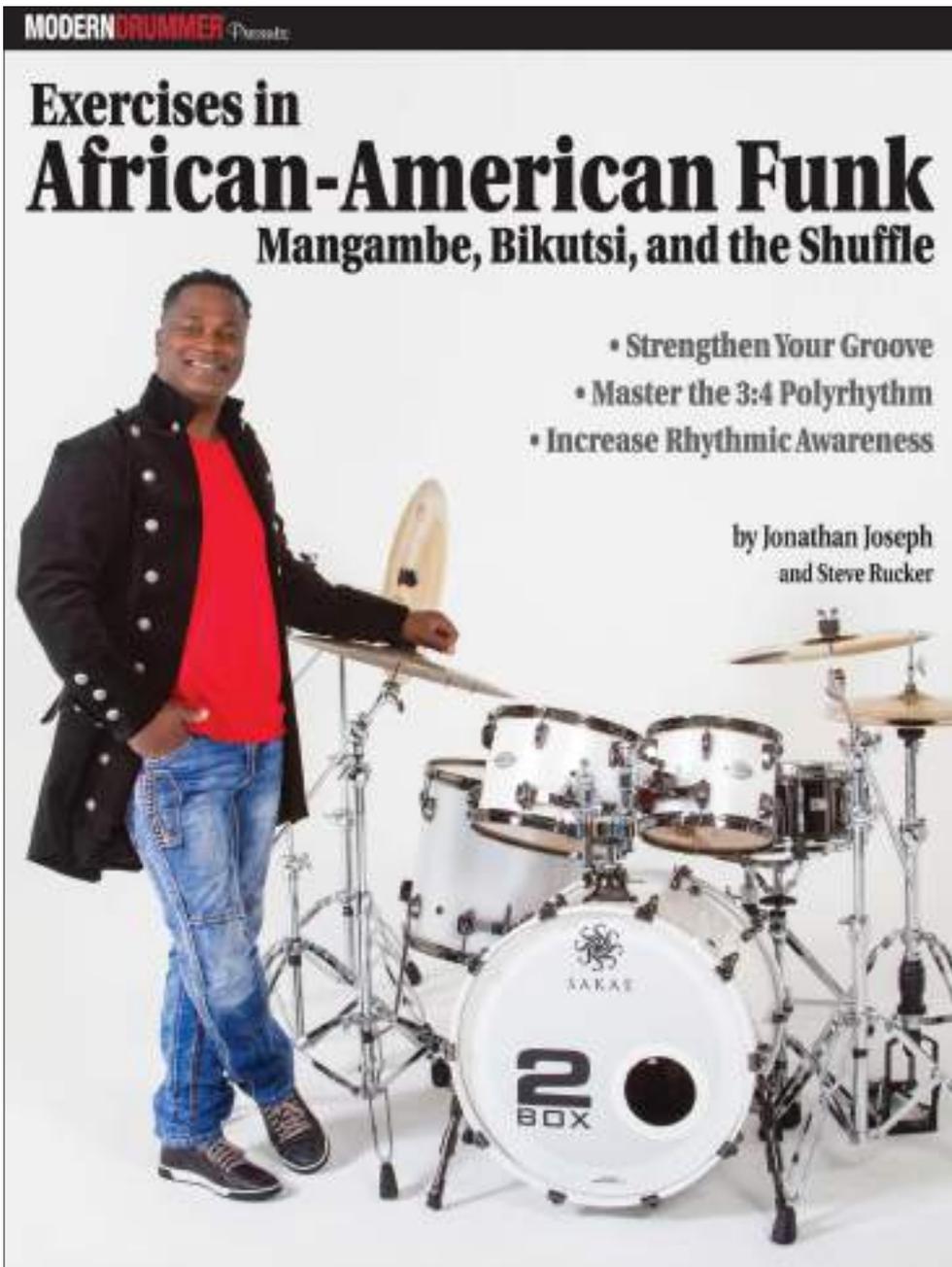
Of course, the decades since Harmonia's initial run (Rother, Roedelius, and Moebius re-formed in 2007 for a series of heralded performances) have witnessed many other bands betraying the group's influence and that of the other early electro-rock pioneers. The British band New Order, which last September released its first album in ten years, *Music Complete* (Mute), is one of the most successful of these. Singer/guitarist Bernard Sumner has just come out with an autobiography, *Chapter and Verse* (St. Martin's Press), and in it gives a fascinating glimpse of the group's early experiments with electronic rhythms, including drummer **Stephen Morris**'s initial hesitance and eventual embrace of the concept. Morris shines on *Music Complete*, offering his deft ability to weave idiosyncratic and driving beats through the group's more dance-oriented elements. It's an approach that he perfected more than thirty years ago on New Order's seminal sophomore album, *Power, Corruption, and Lies*, and it still sounds fresh today. **Adam Budofsky**



New from MODERN DRUMMER®

Written by renowned drummer Jonathan Joseph (Jeff Beck, Joss Stone, Richard Bona) and University of Miami director of drumset studies Steve Rucker, *Exercises in African-American Funk* is designed to introduce musicians who've studied jazz, R&B, rock, soul, and blues to a concept that applies West African rhythms to various genres.

The series of exercises contained in the book guide you through a fusion of African and American elements. On the American side, we have shuffle and shuffle-funk. On the African side, we have the rhythms from Cameroon known as mangambe and bikutsi. Mastering these exercises will strengthen your groove, provide you with an understanding of the three-against-four polyrhythm, give you an awareness of the second partial of the triplet, and introduce you to a fresh new way to hear and feel music.



Chapter 4: Half-Time Shuffle-Funk

In this chapter, we move the backbone of the shuffle groove over to beat 3. What this does is transform the shuffle into a half-time, organ-based funk groove, which we'll call "shuffle-funk." The Poodle shuffle, made famous by the legendary R&B drummer Bernard Ponce, is one version of this type of groove.

The first hand pattern contains one ghost note. The grooves become more and more dense as we add ghost notes. As in the previous exercises, the ghost notes should be played extremely soft. The primary focus of the groove is on the bass drum and the hi-hat.

As mentioned before, it's very helpful in your practice to alternate between a simple groove and the more difficult exercise. For instance, you can switch between each line of the exercises and this traditional mangambe groove.



Although these exercises are written with the same triplets for consistency, you might also consider trying them as 16th-note triplets. That interpretation would put the bass drum on beats 2 and 4 of a bar of 4/4. So Hand Pattern 1 would look like the following.



As before, we'll start with a simple hand pattern and gradually add ghost notes. Practice the exercises between 70 and 130 bpm.



Here are some exercises that use Hand Pattern 1 with different bass drum variations.



Chapter 6: Bikutsi

In this chapter, we introduce the African rhythm known as bikutsi. Bikutsi is a musical genre from Cameroon that features the 3:4 polyrhythm. It has roots in the traditional music of the Baka people, who live around the city of Yaoundé, along with various elements of the pop-rock idiom.

The characteristic rhythm of the bikutsi is a grouping of triplets in a four-note pattern. Elements of this chapter are directly related to Chapters 1 and 2. If you aren't clear on the 3:4 polyrhythm, please review those chapters.



Here's an example of a bikutsi-pop drumset rhythm.



By moving the snare across to beat 3, we can create a simple bikutsi shuffle-funk pattern.



Here's a shuffle-funk variation with the bass drum on the first beat only.



We can also open the hi-hat where the accents occur.



Here's the same variation with the bass drum on the first beat only.



Check out a video of concepts and exercises included in the book at modern drummer.com, and order a copy today—for only \$14.95.

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Pantera *The Complete Studio Albums 1990–2000*
The 2015 holiday season has brought a new box set by the influential metal band. Rock—hard.

At the heart of Pantera is singular timekeeper **Vinnie Paul** (née Vincent Paul Abbott), older brother of guitarist “Dimebag” Darrell Abbott, with whom he formed the band in 1981. The four independent releases that predate this set, which is available as both a five-CD box and a limited-edition five-LP set on colored vinyl, were marked by Kiss and Van Halen influences and saw Paul marrying his hero Peter Criss’s simplistic approach with some very muscular, Tommy Aldridge–inspired double kick work. By the time of 1990’s *Cowboys From Hell*, the West Coast thrash of Slayer and Metallica had heavily influenced the band’s sound. While the material gets decidedly more aggressive over the course of the five LPs included here, Paul’s approach always puts the groove first, whether in a hardcore workout like “Strength Beyond Strength” or the mixed-meter mosh-pit march of “I’m Broken,” both from *Far Beyond Driven*.

Not only is Paul’s playing a blueprint for much of metal drumming from 1990 onward, but the pummeling bass and snare sounds he achieved as a coproducer have been widely imitated as well. His audio expertise can be attributed to spending many hours watching his father, Jerry Abbott, produce country music, and his studio knowledge ensures that listeners will feel every bit of both of his 24x24 kick drums. This set is a great chance to grab all of Pantera’s major-label releases on vinyl if you missed the Record Store Day rereleases, and for any drummer to get a master class in grooving, really damn hard, with two bass drums. **Stephen Bidwell**



More Vinnie

Purposeful Porpoise *The Water Games*

Brian Eisenberg Jazz Orchestra *Sense of Gratitude*

Can't get enough Vinnie? Here are two recent releases where the inspired Mr. C is certainly not shy.

What's not to love when you get to hear **Vinnie Colaiuta** stretch out on twenty-minute prog epics across a double-disc set? Not since his formative Zappa days has Colaiuta appeared on something so unabashedly involved in terms of the parts. The music on *The Water Games* is less fusion oriented than much of the drummer's earlier excursions, though there are plenty of odd times, solos, and insane fills. Check out, for instance, “The Air Pirate,” an up-tempo shuffle featuring an unhinged Colaiuta letting loose a dazzling array of rhythmic invention. On the vocal-oriented second disc, Vinnie picks his spots, but there's no shortage of fireworks here either. (purposefulporpoise.com)



Composer Brian Eisenberg's writing on *Sense of Gratitude* mines similar complex terrain with a contemporary big band, challenging world-class session players with material they can sink their teeth into without letting things get too cumbersome. The wide-open,

easy swing of “Normal Heights Blues” is an invitation for Colaiuta to delve into his bottomless bag o’ syncopation, and “Arab Spring Part 3: Triumph” features beautiful brushwork and an extended, unaccompanied solo coda highlighting independence and smooth dynamics. Lovely, detailed kit recordings on both discs help you hear the master as intended. (brianeisenbergmusic.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

Denny Zeitlin and George Marsh *Riding the Moment*
Two jazz explorers reunite to travel into outer space and beyond.

Keyboardist Denny Zeitlin and drummer **George Marsh** have a history that goes back forty years, when they first created synthesizer-based jazz in a trio setting. They return after a lifetime apart for progressive improv showcasing their individual strengths, in a conversation that never really ended. Zeitlin’s liner notes explain that the two musicians could not see each other in the studio, so it’s remarkable how they lock into a drums-and-synth-bass pattern on “Marching to a Different Drummer” and then start swinging as if they’re reading the next part from sheet music. The proceedings are free but not abrasive. Marsh uses all the colors available to him and even kicks a funky, ghost-laden pattern to start “Wheels & Tracks,” before things veer off into some otherworldly pointillist ride-pattern territory. Bored of the same old spang-a-lang jazz? Then all aboard! (Sunnyside) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



examines a different feel that’s native to the genre. The material is organized well—techniques that are discussed often are explained early and expounded upon as the book progresses.

The topics explored in *Jazz Drumming* include walking and two feels, bass vamps, waltzes, and broken-three feels, along with mambos and Afro-Cuban 6/8. Photographs demonstrate concepts unique to jazz, such as “shouldering” a ride cymbal or patting your head to cue a melody. Three of the book’s fifteen chapters are devoted to brush technique; basic patterns and strokes are discussed with coherent circular diagrams, and one chapter is dedicated to comping with brushes. Solos played by Philly Joe Jones, Max Roach, and Art Blakey are broken down and analyzed with transcriptions. Audio examples of comping patterns, solo excerpts, ensemble demos, and play-along tracks can be unlocked online using a code included with purchase.

The book isn’t quite flawless. Concepts commonly used by jazz drummers, such as crashing on the “&” of beat 4 instead of beat 1, are oddly labeled in the text as clichés—a term generally used derisively. QR codes found at the beginning of each chapter are said to direct devices to a drummer’s biography—on inspection, they disappointingly lead to that drummer’s *Wikipedia* page. And the charts, while clear, aren’t necessarily representative of what a jazz drummer might encounter outside a high school band room. A rock or pop drummer, however, should have no problem understanding them.

In the end, these issues don’t diminish Gruendler’s attempt to introduce jazz to drummers unfamiliar with the topic, and that’s definitely a worthy goal. Rock, pop, and R&B players seeking to delve into a new genre should start here. (\$19.99, Hal Leonard) **Willie Rose**



MULTIMEDIA

Jazz Drumming by Donny Gruendler
The latest offering from the well-known educator and author aims to help experienced rock, pop, and R&B drummers learn jazz, and despite a couple of unusual choices, it should succeed in its goal.

In his latest book, Musicians Institute’s vice president of academic affairs, Donny Gruendler, explains the forms, rudiments, solo concepts, and general vernacular of jazz, building on them as each chapter

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Jethro Tull

Aqualung

It's completely feasible that if Jethro Tull's founding drummer hadn't retired from the road in the early '70s, just as the band was becoming an international phenomenon, his name would come up as often—and as reverently—as Messrs. Bonham, Moon, and Mitchell. And all the support you'll need for that theory can be found in the grooves of this classic-rock masterpiece.

The legendary rock drummers of the '60s and '70s all had their trademarks: John Bonham's bombardier assault, Mitch Mitchell's rolling-triplet rock, Levon Helm's rustic finery, Zigaboo Modeliste's

splintered New Orleans beat.... But Jethro Tull's Clive Bunker is harder to nail down, his drumming impossible to condense in a string of simple descriptors.

On Tull's first albums—*This Was*, *Stand Up*, *Benefit*—Bunker parlays strong rudimental skills and a devotion to Cream's Ginger Baker into lithe, jazz-influenced rock drumming that's malleable enough to propel blues, psychedelia, and the band's nascent prog rock. But he's largely an enigma on these early releases. Captured on primitive eight-track tape machines, Bunker's drumming certainly gets its point across, but without the sonic minutiae common to today's Pro Tools-enabled, digitally perfect recordings. So we listen closely, bending our ears into the sonic wind to decipher every note of this potent, dark-hued, and still mysterious style.

Aqualung, from 1971, confirmed Jethro Tull's achievement as one of the most popular bands on earth. The album birthed the "FM Alternative" radio hits "Locomotive Breath," "Cross-Eyed Mary," and the title track, and eventually sold 7 million copies—incredible for a work featuring a filthy, deranged beggar (Mr. Aqualung) on the cover, along with lyrical themes of greed, religion, death, and fate.

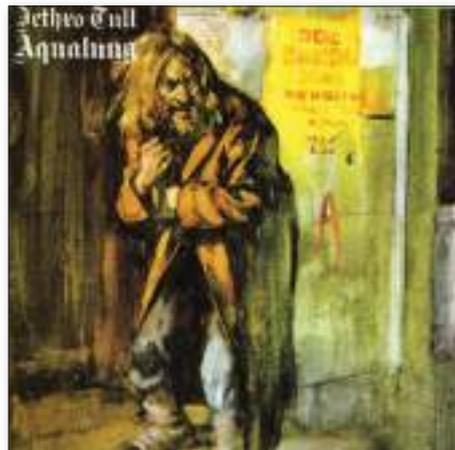
From Bunker's bold flam-triplet entrance and the ringing tom-smacking groove of "Aqualung" to the grand 2 and 4 of closer "Wind-Up," *Aqualung* reveals an inspired performance informed by searing press rolls, surging tom patterns, and agile groove syncopation within artistically bent drum conceptions. Bunker's beats spread the songs gracefully, all spacious propulsion, beautiful cymbal shimmer, and supple snare/bass combinations that are more Jack DeJohnette than Kenny Aronoff. The title track's finale remains stunning: Bunker alternating between raging 8th-note-triplet fills, crush rolls, and tension-filled tom stabs as guitarist Martin Barre dive-bombs a final explosive note.

Hot Stuff

"Cross-Eyed Mary" It's fun to cherry-pick Bunker's heroic *Aqualung* drumming bar by bar, inseparable as it is from the album's prog-meets-pastoral music. Gene Krupa-ish floor tom rolls introduce "Cross-Eyed Mary," flowing into measured cowbell funk verses and a finale of face-hammering tom fills, staccato full-set tattoos, and sizzling press rolls that merge into open single-stroke rolls and a smack-down final note that recalls a dismembered head bloodily plopping into a waiting basket.

"Aqualung" After an ominous opening guitar riff and flam-tumbling intro, an 8th-note unison tom march leads to the main groove, with Bunker striking two toms on the downbeat in what sounds like a too-widely-spaced flam, creating an off-kilter, dislocated stride that adds to the slightly queasy pulse. Bunker pumps bass drum 8th notes in the verses while crashing on 3 of each bar, the sum effect like an unwelcome warrior entering castle gates to his own preening gallantry. Spacious, Hal Blaine-worthy fills rejoin the music after a brief acoustic guitar interlude, within a relaxed funk beat. Then it's off to the races, as Bunker's rhythm gallops through a winding Martin Barre guitar solo. Ian Anderson's imagery of *Aqualung*—"snot is running down his nose, greasy fingers smearing shabby clothes"—leads to the finale of epic whole-note guitar chords, Bunker storming the air with flying rolls in a crescendo of manic rhythm beauty.

"Locomotive Breath" Recalling a court jester slapping hand drums and ringing finger cymbals, Bunker's playing here is all pert tom punctuations and a bass-drum-driven four-to-the-bar groove accompanied by tom fills. The fills roll merrily along, driving unison accents with the guitar and bass, bringing to mind a drunken king's court of dancing girls, jesters, and shriveled monks.



Aqualung (1971)

Aqualung • Cross-Eyed Mary • Cheap Day Return • Mother Goose • Wond'ring Aloud • Up to Me • My God • Hymn 43 • Slipstream • Locomotive Breath • Wind-Up

Ian Anderson: vocals, acoustic guitar, flute

Clive Bunker: drums

Martin Barre: electric guitar

John Evan: keyboards

Jeffrey Hammond, Glenn Cornick: bass

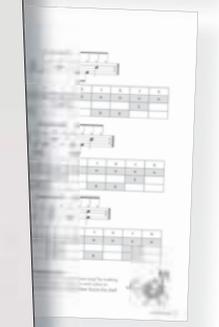
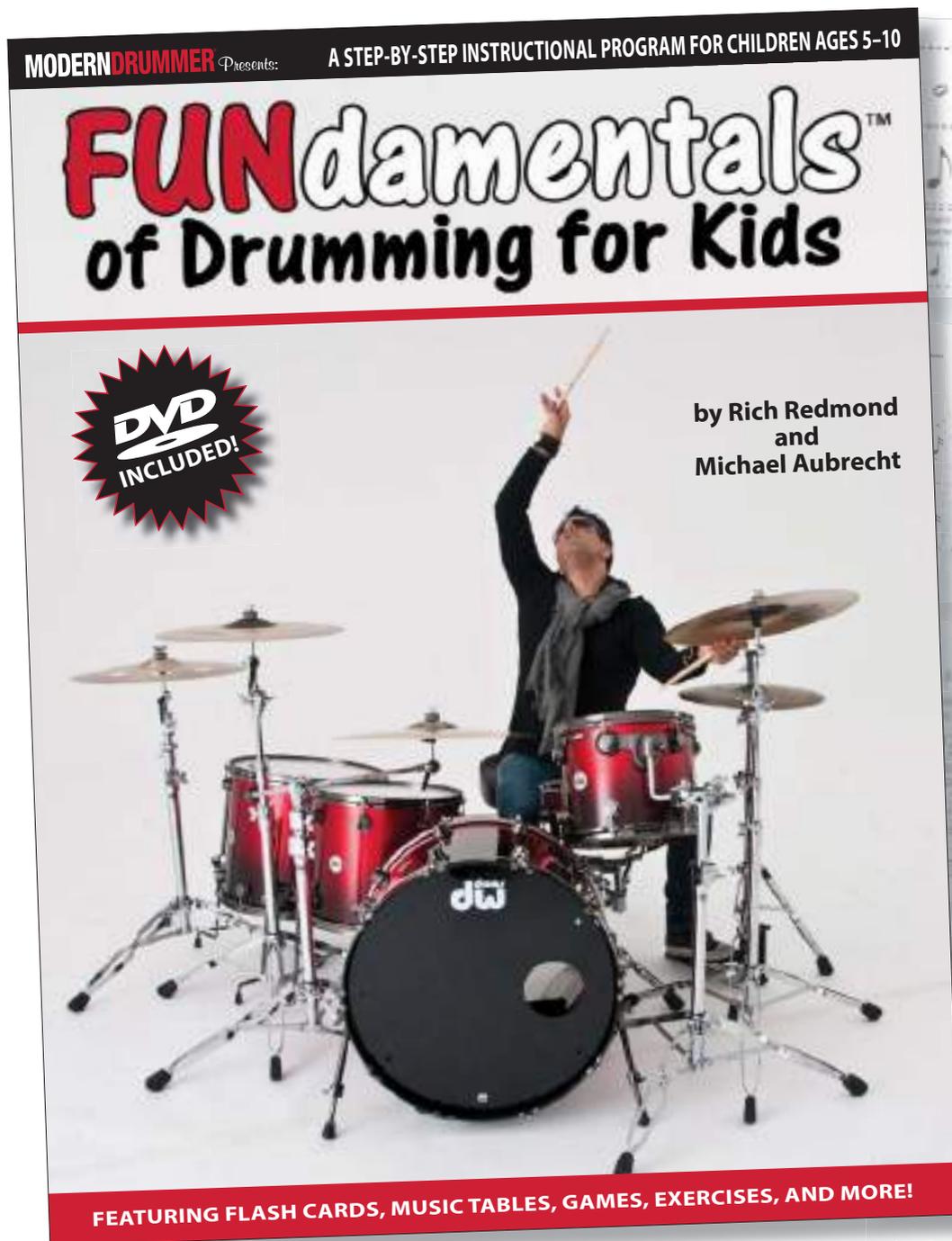
Produced by Ian Anderson and Terry Ellis

Bunker's drum sound is equally unique on *Aqualung*, tuned somewhere between ringing jazz tonality, resonant folk (to match leader Ian Anderson's pastoral flute leanings), and the flat, muffled studio sound popular with '70s recording engineers and producers. The album features one of the greatest drum performances of the early '70s, on par with *Led Zeppelin II*, Mahavishnu Orchestra's *Birds of Fire*, Billy Cobham's *Spectrum*, and Simon Kirke's booming blues drumming on Free's equally under-considered *Fire and Water*. That Bunker remains largely unheralded for his compositional drumming is a crime.

Bunker departed Jethro Tull after *Aqualung*, tired of the road and intent on raising a family. As opposed to what some fans assume, though, he remained relatively active, appearing live and on record with acts including Blodwyn Pig, Steve Hillage, and Manfred Mann's Earth Band, and releasing solo albums as recently as 2005. But it's his performances on *Aqualung* and the other early Jethro Tull albums that have guaranteed his place in the annals of rock history and that remain endlessly inspiring to fans of the most classic of classic-rock drumming. **Ken Micallef**



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PASIC 2015

The World's Largest Percussion Convention Takes Over San Antonio

This past November 11–14, the Percussive Arts Society held its annual international convention in San Antonio, Texas. This milestone event marked the fortieth anniversary of PASIC and the first year that live-streaming passes were offered. Within the convention, attendees had access to an expo hall filled with the latest gear from the percussion industry's top manufacturers, as well as clinics and master classes from some of the world's most respected players. The drumset clinics spanned two stages and included sessions from modern jazz greats Mark Guiliana and Mark Colenburg, studio masters Nir Z and Chris McHugh, rock powerhouse David Elitch, fusion legend Chad Wackerman, Rascal Flatts' Jim Riley, Animals as Leaders' Matt Gartska, German rising star Anika Nilles, Jill Scott/John Legend's Rashid Williams, R&B/pop master Ndugu Chancler, Snarky Puppy's Larnell Lewis, and more.

One of many highlights from the convention was the first ever U.S. performance by Nilles. The YouTube sensation performed several original tracks from her upcoming solo album and held an open discussion with the audience about her songwriting process, technique, and practice methods. Other highly anticipated performers included Mark Guiliana, who opened up his clinic with an inspiring improvised drum solo and then walked the audience through some of his personal philosophies and practice methods for developing improvisational skills, and Rascal Flatts' drummer, Jim Riley, who debuted his new book, *Survival Guide for the Modern Drummer*, and played along with some of the original music that he wrote for the book.

The convention offered twenty drumset clinics over the course of three days. Each session provided a great experience for the attendees to interact with these world-class drummers as they performed, explained how they've grown as drummers, and fielded questions.

PASIC 2016 will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana, November 9–12. For more info, visit PAS.org. For exclusive video interviews from the artists who performed at PASIC 2015, visit moderndrummer.com.

Text by Miguel Monroy

Photos by Jessica Alexander



Mark Guiliana



Anika Nilles

Jim Riley



Larnell Lewis



Matt Garstka



Dave Elitch



Nir Z



Rashid Williams



Chad Wackerman



Mark Colenberg





The Drum Genie



"Of all musicians, I feel us drummers have a uniquely difficult job," says Mark Schiano, the designer of this unique acrylic drumkit. "The logistics of transferring drums to and from shows, setting them up, and breaking them down consumes a lot of time and energy, especially when getting up early in the morning for work."

To save time, Schiano built a collapsible drumset, dubbed the Drum Genie, in his West Nyack, New York, studio. "The Drum Genie is a drumkit that sets up and breaks down in under a minute," he says. "It has top and bottom heads and can match the sound quality of any decent kit, but with its own distinctiveness. It was designed

with the drums fixed in a universal position to accommodate any drummer, offering slight angle adjustments.

"It has clear acrylic shells that expand and collapse, and the entire kit folds into one piece," Schiano continues. "It consists of an 18" bass drum, a 12" snare, a 10" rack tom, and a 12" floor tom. What's also unique about the Drum Genie is that it has a much bigger sound than other drumsets of its size. The acrylic body of the unit works in tandem with the drums, producing more volume, punch, and resonance."

You can check out the kit in action online by searching for the Mark Graham Band.

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



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Rick Malkin

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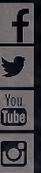


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