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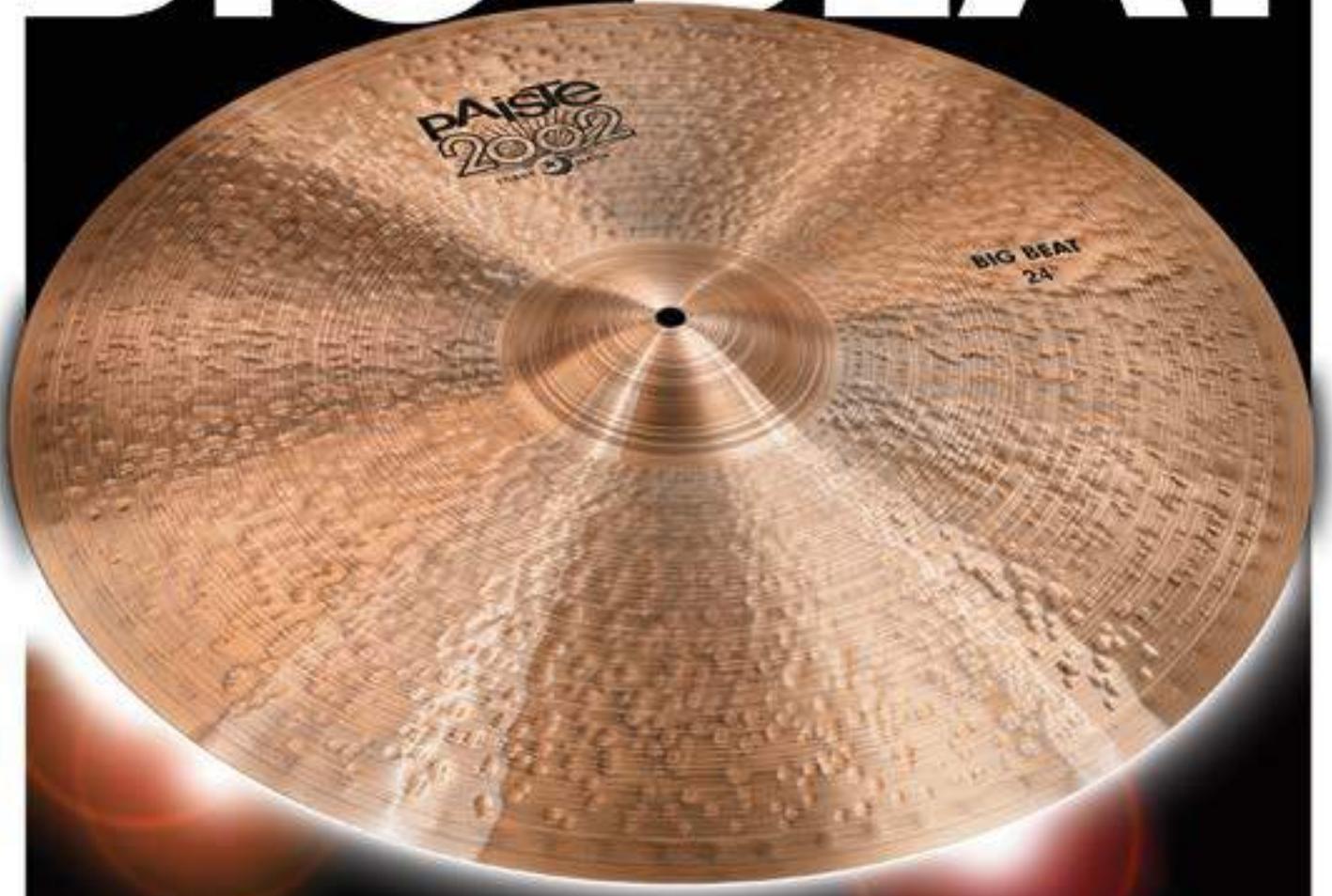
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Slipknot's Jay Weinberg

by Patrick Berkery

"They didn't want a copycat, so I needed to play it in my own way. I can't play it any other way."

Taking the place of a certified rock icon is tough enough. It's a whole other thing when that musician is someone you've modeled yourself after since the day you picked up a drumstick.

Cover and contents photos by Alex Solca



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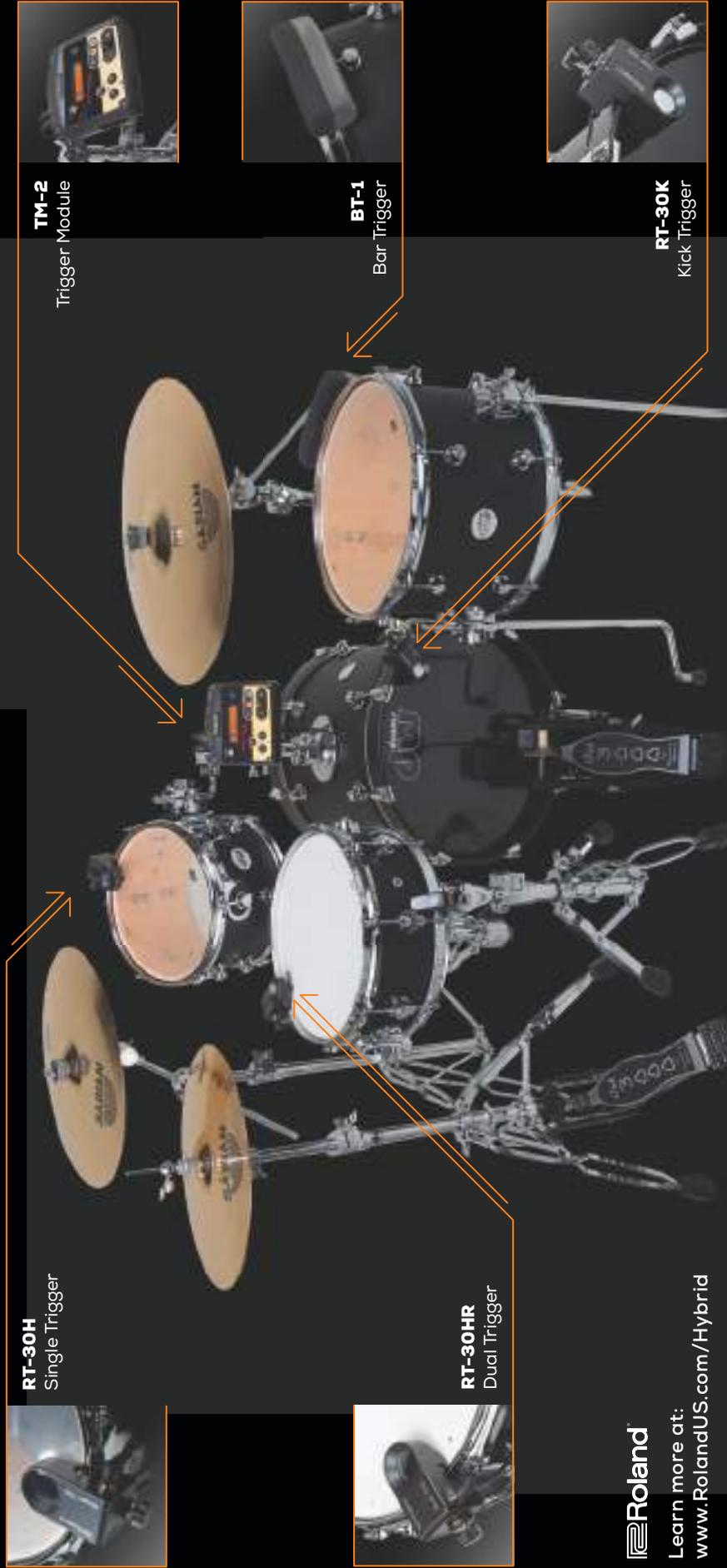
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Worth Fighting For

A couple of months ago my kids and I went to a board of education meeting to join a group of parents and students who were supporting a local elementary school string teacher. The teacher, it had come to light, was not going to be rehired next September. The story is an old one: The student population was declining—consequently, so were tax revenues—and spending needed to be slashed.

Cutting salaries is usually the fastest way to balance the books, and since this teacher hadn't yet gotten tenure, she was an easy target. But this was no ordinary teacher. Despite her young age, she'd impressed parents and colleagues alike with her mature disposition, strong work ethic, and ability to instill enthusiasm in all of her kids, including our three. There was a general knowledge of her awesomeness throughout town.

When my budding Paganinis and I arrived at the meeting, dozens of students and as many adults had already filled the seats, lined the walls, and spilled out into the lobby. The kids wiggled their way into a row where their friends squeezed tightly together, doubling up on each folding chair. I wormed my way to the center aisle, where I claimed a shoulder-wide spot. Judging from the body language of the board members, this was fixing to be an unusually vibrant meeting. Seems that word spread among the community that this wonderful teacher's position was in jeopardy, and the townsfolk leaped to action.

As far as I could tell, no one arrived with a lit torch. But person after person—including many teenagers—politely yet passionately let the board know exactly how they felt about the teacher, and about the situation. When my turn to speak came, I related how well our kids were doing on their instruments. I reminded the board that this teacher had significantly grown the school's music program and how this was a very real advantage that our town now had over the surrounding burghs, which we compete with for fresh taxpayers. And I pointed out the countless times professional drummers in this very magazine have stated how a strong music education makes a person smarter, healthier, more organized, and more likely to succeed in all of life's endeavors.

The evening was inspiring, especially due to the eloquence of the students, and I was extremely happy that my kids got to participate in an important civic event. But I was not optimistic. I've just seen this drama end badly too many times. I praised the kids for their activism but warned them not to get their hopes up.

In the following weeks, an online petition to spare the string teacher's job was circulated and signed by hundreds of people. More weeks passed, with no news coming through the grapevine.

Then word came: The string teacher's job was saved! Apparently another instructor decided to retire, freeing up enough funds to fill the gap. Would she still have been let go if there hadn't been such an outcry? It's hard to know. But I like to think that our activism did contribute to things working out the way they did.

Chances are, your community is struggling with these very same issues. I know, it can be tough to keep up with town politics or drag yourself out to a board meeting after a long day at work or school. But actions matter. And as a musician, you're in a unique position to "school" board members and other influential people on the under-recognized powers of music education, which, as surprising as it may seem, they might be quite unaware of.

If the cause is right, it's worth the fight.



Jim E. Spósito

Adam Budofsky

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MODERN DRUMMER magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 271 Route 46 West, Suite H-212, Fairfield, NJ 07004. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Fairfield, NJ 07004 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2016 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: **MODERN DRUMMER Publications**, 271 Route 46 West, Suite H-212, Fairfield, NJ 07004. Tel: 973-239-4140. Fax: 973-239-7139. Email: mdinfo@moderndrummer.com.

MODERN DRUMMER welcomes manuscripts and photographic material but cannot assume responsibility for them.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: U.S. \$29.95, Canada \$33.95, other international \$44.95 per year. For two- and three-year subscription prices go to www.moderndrummer.com. Single copies \$5.99.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Modern Drummer, PO Box 274, Oregon, IL 61061-9920. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Call 800-551-3786 or 815-732-5283. Phone hours, 8AM–4:30PM Monday–Friday CST, or visit Subscriber Services at www.moderndrummer.com.

MUSIC DEALERS: Modern Drummer is distributed by Hal Leonard Corp., 800-554-0626, sales@halleonard.com, www.halleonard.com/dealers

INTERNATIONAL LICENSING REPRESENTATIVE: Robert J. Abramson & Associates, Inc., Libby Abramson, President, 7915 Via Grande, Boyton Beach, FL 33437, abramson@prodigy.net.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modern Drummer, PO Box 274, Oregon, IL 61061-9920.

Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 41480017 Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: PO Box 875, Stn A, Windsor ON N9A 6P2

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MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE: www.moderndrummer.com

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Remo Belli Tributes

As news of Remo Belli's passing spread this past April, thoughts on the influential drumhead and percussion innovator from music-industry professionals and the drumming community at large poured in to the MD offices via email and Facebook. The September issue of MD will feature quotes from many of Remo's friends and colleagues; we share some early reactions here.

So sad—a big chapter of history has closed. He was ahead of his time and helped all drummers with his innovations. Thank you, and RIP.

Yvan Tomac Mercier

Thank you, Mr. Belli, for supporting your fellow drummers with your knowledge and expertise and providing us with an awesome product for many years to enjoy. RIP, sir.

Guy Limasa

Thank you, Remo, for giving me my voice.

Brian O'Toole

I was at the Professional Drum Shop in Hollywood in the late '60s. Remo and Louie Bellson were both there and loaded me up with sticks and drumheads. They were two amazing men. Rest in peace, both of them.

Doug Altman

This man was a legend in the drum community—so sad. He left an indelible mark on music.

Ted Labash

Rest in peace, sir. Your name and legacy will live on.

Vinnie Veneziano

Rest in peace, and thank you for all you've done for the drumming community. You'll be missed dearly.

Odie de la Fuente

I've been using his drumheads for thirty years. He did a lot for the drumming community. May he rest in peace.

Paul Mahone

I'm getting ready to buy a few bottom snare heads, looking at the Remo site, and thinking about Mr. Belli. I've been using Remo almost exclusively since the early '60s.

Randy Saunders

I, along with a multitude of drummers, appreciate what Remo has done by delivering us from the world of calfskin. God bless you, Remo.

Ron Tutt

Mr. Belli, thank you for those thundering drumheads you've given us. Rest in peace, sir.

Jacques Nikolai Border

RIP, Remo. Thank you for all that you've done for the drumming world, from a lifelong Remo user.

Jeff Wetmore

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Belli. He was very nice and very passionate about his products.

John Key

Drum on, Mr. Belli. Make a racket up there. God bless you and thank you for all you've given the drum community. Peace to the Belli family.

John Gigante



By stacking different combinations of cymbals, drummers can expand their sonic pallet with larger, sloshy options or smaller, cutting choices. With so many possibilities currently available, we wanted to see how our Facebook and Instagram followers get their trashy sounds. Here are some of their favorites.

18" Paiste Signature Reflector full crash, 16" Sabian B8 Pro China, 14" Paiste 2002 top medium hi-hat, and a 10" Sabian Evolution splash. If you're precise enough with your hits, you can get four different sounds, depending on which cymbal you hit.

Phil Kurut

12" Wuhan and a 14" no-brand cymbal. It's nice and tight, but not too tight.

Daniel Sullivan

Right now I'm stacking a Zildjian K 18" brilliant jazz ride and a Paiste Signature 18" mellow crash. It's pretty dynamite.

Gordon Nunn

A Zildjian 9.5" K Hybrid splash over a Sabian 10" Will Calhoun Alien Disc.

Joseph Nemcik

I've always used a 12" Wuhan China under a 12" Wuhan splash to replicate Mike Portnoy's Max Stax.

Krischan Heitz

I love stacks! I use a Sabian 15" HHX Groove hat bottom—with twenty-seven aero holes—over a 17" AA Holy China, and it sounds totally amazing. I'd have to say it's my favorite.

Aaron Edgar

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

The Tap Nine

After reading the March 2016 issue of *Modern Drummer*, I came to realize that in Rich Redmond's article "The Tap Nine," these are tap sevens, not tap nines. If the sticking was provided, we would decipher right away that these are tap sevens instead of tap nines. Without the sticking, we're left scratching our heads.

Jerome Tyus

Rich Redmond replies: "This is my own title and creation for a rhythmic phrase built on the same skeleton rhythm of a nine-stroke roll. I simply replaced the first diddle with an accented stroke. It's in no way intended to replace the true definition. However, it's a massively practical device for making music in a wide variety of styles."

BASICS
The Tap Nine
 Embellishing Backbeats With a Modified 9-Stroke Roll
 by Rich Redmond

The traditional nine-stroke roll consists of four descending eighth notes followed by a single stroke. It can be played open (lightly unaccented or closed [heavy]). This is a popular rudiment in marching and concert percussion classes, and I've found a practical way to apply it to the drumset.

The word *diddle*, *ting*, and *chop* along to music largely because of the drummer's backbeat. By beginning and ending the nine-stroke roll with a single stroke, you can embellish your backbeats. Call this modification "tap nine."

Put the tap nine after the backbeat or add it right in the groove or after phrases together. You can also apply it to the hi-hat so you can think that work used to look, snare, toms, cymbals, or rock. Adding the tap nine to accent patterns on the snare with consistent four-beat patterns creates phrases that resemble the line between traditional marches and New Orleans funk. Crafty drummers can apply these to single accented or occasional snare situations. I use the figure often to set up a *Minors* phrase on the hi-hat to a double rock fill (see box).

Practice the exercises below to help incorporate the tap nine into your playing in a musical way.

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PINCH OF THE DAMNED

"I always thought the first rule of punk was that there *were* no rules, so it was tough getting criticized for playing outside of the box." The drummer with the Damned—the British rock institution that's enjoying an uptick in recognition due in part to a new documentary—was among the first in England to fuse metal and punk drumming, with the bands English Dogs and Janus Stark.



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JAMES MUSCHLER

Inside the double-sax-and-drums trio Moon Hooch's new album, *Red Sky*.

FUNDAMENTAL FILLS

Donny Gruendler shows how to achieve solid and effective 16th-note fills.

DAN PAWLOVICH

On tour with Panic! at the Disco.

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In part 4 of his Groove Construction series, Jost Nickel has us embellishing patterns by doubling select single strokes and by incorporating the hi-hat foot.

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Out Now

The Damned

Don't You Wish That We Were Dead

There's a moment during *Don't You Wish That We Were Dead*, the Wes Orshoski-directed documentary about the seminal British punk band the Damned that's now available on home video, when original drummer **Rat Scabies** is describing the point at which he knew he had to leave the pioneering group. The incendiary and influential Scabies visibly fights back tears as he describes one fateful band rehearsal. "We picked up our instruments, I sat behind the kit, and nobody knew what to play. We had everything we ever dreamed of, but the one thing we didn't have was the will to play." It's an uncharacteristic show of emotion from a member of a group that, as the Clash's Mick Jones recounts with great understatement, "had a bit of a reputation for having a good time."

Indeed, the Damned's hijinks are the stuff of rock legend. But the band members' well-earned reputation and occasional bouts of self-destruction didn't always help people understand their true value. "They were better musicians than the other bands," offers the Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde, who was a fleeting member of a pre-Damned lineup. "*Musicianship* was not a dirty word to them." Indeed, **Andrew "Pinch" Pinching**, the former walloper for the leading metal/punk practitioners English Dogs and Janus Stark, who has long occupied the Damned's drum stool, reckons that the group's founding members Dave Vanian (vocals) and Captain Sensible (guitar) are "the Lennon and McCartney of punk."

While the public at large has remained ignorant to the Damned's true status—*Rolling Stone* magazine recently failed to include the group in a survey of top punk albums—the new documentary should go far to rectify the public perception of the first British punk band to release a single, put out a full-length album, and tour the States. Numerous live events throughout this year and into next, including the group's first-ever show at the Royal Albert Hall, should support the message. "Ultimately," Pinch says, "the Damned know what they achieved. Perhaps the most important legacy has been to influence the influencers."

Adam Budofsky

Andrew "Pinch" Pinching



Wes Orshoski



More New Releases

Dave Douglas Dark Territory (Shigeto, Mark Guiliana) /// **Anderson/Stolt** Invention of Knowledge (Felix Lehmman) /// **Saliva** Love, Lies, & Therapy (Paul Crosby) /// **The Avett Brothers** True Sadness (Mike Marsh) /// **Volbeat** Seal the Deal & Let's Boogie (Jon Larsen) /// **Swans** The Glowing Man (Phil Puleo, Thor Harris, Bill Rieflin) /// **Branford Marsalis Quartet** Upward Spiral (Justin Faulkner) /// **Steve Porcaro** Someday/Somehow (Jeff Porcaro, Shannon Forrest, Lenny Castro) /// **Fitz and the Tantrums** Fitz and the Tantrums (John Wicks)

Moon Hooch

Red Sky

With *Red Sky*, jazz-meets-house trio Moon Hooch expands its danceable sonic palette while maintaining a spirit of improvisation. The group, which is composed of saxophonists Wenzl McGowen and Mike Wilbur and drummer **James Muschler**, cultivated its unique sound—and cult following—in the New York City subways. "There was no preconceived concept for the instrumentation," Muschler says, "because Moon Hooch was an accidental project. We were just playing down in the subway with our instruments so we could pay rent. After doing this for a while, we built up a repertoire and fans. However, there was an initial concept behind the music, which was based around house-music drumming, with a bass line played by a saxophone and melody or harmony played by another saxophone. We performed for years in subways with this concept and instrumentation. The saxophone has a lot of overtones, so two saxophones together can cover a large sonic spectrum. The drums produce sounds that are very low to very high, and because the sound of the subway is so reverberant, this stripped-down setup of two saxophones and a drumset was quite massive."

"Once we moved to performing in venues," Muschler continues, "we



Kenneth K. Ka



were playing in a totally different acoustic setting with no natural reverb and with big sound systems. So exploring the possibilities for this new setting became important. We've steadily been adding a lot of instruments, including the clarinet, contrabass clarinet, bass saxophone, soprano saxophone, flute, electric wind instrument, bass synthesizer, tabla, and vocals. So there's a lot of freedom with this setup.

The group utilizes mic processing to replicate its recorded sound live. "We play the entire show to a metronome," Muschler explains, "because every microphone on stage is processed by Ableton, and automations have been designed to occur at specific times. The dynamics need to be

consistent, because mics have been mixed according to the way the set has been recorded. So it's a rigid structure. However, within that rigid structure, there is much spontaneity. At a live show, there's an energy feedback loop happening between the three of us and the audience, which results in a more integrated experience and thus the potential for a more powerful and profound one." **Willie Rose**

For more with Andrew Pinching and James Muschler, visit moderndrummer.com.



Photo by K. Now

Dan Pawlovich with Panic! at the Disco

Dan Pawlovich is currently touring with Panic! at the Disco in support of the band's most recent release, *Death of a Bachelor*. In preparation for the run, the drummer combined frontman and principal writer Brendon Urie's sampled and acoustic drum parts into a playable set. "Some parts are sampled, like the intro to 'Hallelujah,'" Pawlovich explains. "Brendon likes to twist things up, so it can make for a really cool result, and I enjoy the challenge of figuring it out. For instance, I was told that the drum fill that starts 'Hallelujah' was chopped in half. So while it may have been a more recognizable fill before, it now became difficult to figure out how to make it flow. I ended up finding two ways to play the pattern—one uses

rudiments and the other uses crossovers with the hands—the latter of which I stuck with. It can still trip me up from time to time, but I love that.

"It's the same with a lot of the music that's 'built' today," Pawlovich continues. "Sometimes a beat is constructed that sounds amazing but would require a player with more than four limbs to play. So the challenge becomes, how can I play it in a way that honors what makes it cool with what I have to work with? I really embrace all of it."

Live, Pawlovich finds ways to weave his own voice into the parts. "I'll first insist on playing what's recorded," he says. "So even with the new record, if I've nailed 95 percent of the song after a few run-throughs,

Brendon might say, 'You can do whatever with the fills,' and I always appreciate that. But I'll still hone them until I feel like I'm in control of what's there.

"Once I know I can do it a hundred times over, I naturally let my flow take over, and that's when new things happen that might end up sticking. I know I've hit something good when Brendon flashes a smile during a performance, or the next night he air-drums the fill. It's my favorite. From there, some things may just become an expected part of the show—we'll never need to have dialogue about it."

Willie Rose



Photo by M. S. C.

Stephen Perkins with Jane's Addiction

Stephen Perkins is gearing up for a Jane's Addiction tour commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the watershed alt-rock album *Ritual de lo Habitual*. The music stands up for fans old and new and still allows Perkins to express himself. "It's great to have old songs that leave room to interpret the moment," Perkins explains, "because Perry [Farrell] doesn't really like to stick to any arrangement. If something happens and he reacts, the arrangement also has to react."

Perkins is using a new cherry-shell DW kit for the upcoming run, but there's an interesting bit of trivia behind his first DW drumset. "Making *Ritual* was the first time I had my DW kit," the drummer says. "After we finished, the kit stayed set up [in the studio], and producer Dave Jerden used it for Alice in Chains' *Facelift* and Social Distortion's self-titled album, all within two months." You can hear Perkins' fresh take on *Ritual* at a handful of U.S. dates with Living Colour and Dinosaur Jr. **Stephen Bidwell**

Also on the Road Brian Lane with Brand New /// Jeremiah Green, Davey Brozowski, and Ben Massarella with Modest Mouse /// Jon Fishman with Phish /// B.B. Borden with the Marshall Tucker Band /// Ray Luzier with Korn /// Ginger Fish with Rob Zombie /// Keith Carlock with Steely Dan /// Josh Freese with Sublime With Rome /// Griffin Goldsmith with Dawes /// Greg Saunier with Deerhoof /// Josh Manuel with Issues /// Jeremiah Fraites with the Lumineers /// Marc Cazorla with the Record Company

For more with Dan Pawlovich and Stephen Perkins, go to moderndrummer.com.

Industry Happenings

Stewart Copeland Performs With the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

This past February, the acclaimed drummer for the Police, Stewart Copeland, along with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, performed Copeland's concerto and drumset feature "Tyrant's Crush." Commissioned by the PSO to feature its percussion section—Andrew Reamer, Jeremy Branson, Christopher Allen, and Edward Stephan—the piece requires the stage to be packed with dozens of percussion instruments, from snare drums to tambourines and triangles, with Copeland's drumset prominently featured downstage.

The drummer contrasts the experience with his work on other projects. "With a band," Copeland says, "it's just endurance. Playing at a lower dynamic level with an orchestra takes a lot more finesse and technique. Everything, including the drums, sounds better! Plus I get to use all the cool stuff—like rudiments—that I was trained in."

Upcoming performances of "Tyrant's Crush" include dates with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in late October and the San Antonio Symphony in early November.

Text and photo by Lauren Vogel Weiss

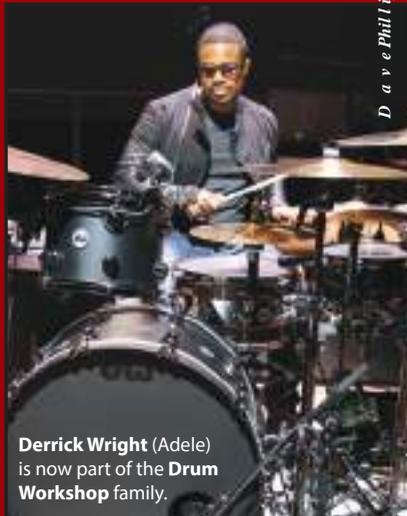


From left: La Barbera, Darek Oles, and John Campbell

Drummer Joe La Barbera Celebrates Bill Evans

This past April, composer and jazz drummer Joe La Barbera, along with pianist John Campbell and bassist Darek Oles, held a tribute concert in honor of the late, great jazz pianist and composer Bill Evans at UCLA's Lenart Auditorium. The live set was complemented by a presentation that included audio and video footage of Evans discussing his life and music.

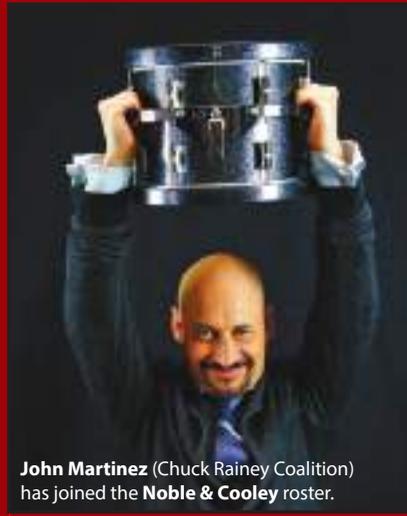
Who's Playing What



Derrick Wright (Adele) is now part of the **Drum Workshop** family.



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Carl Allen

The jazz great has spent the year in constant motion, spearheading multiple ensembles, including one holding special interest for drummers.

The Art of Elvin is Carl Allen's tribute to his mentors Art Blakey and Elvin Jones. Allen created the band following a fateful day. "I remember the exact date," he says. "It was May 18, 2004."

That day, Allen was in his home rehearsal studio, composing a song for Jones. Routinely, he observed a strict rule to keep phones out of that space. But by chance, his cell phone was inside. It rang, Allen answered, and the caller informed him that Elvin Jones had died.

"I started to weep," Allen recalls. "But I couldn't stop writing; I had to get it out while it was there." Allen promptly changed the song's title from "Presenting Mr. Jones" to "Jonesing for Elvin." He subsequently formed the Art of Elvin.

The band's latest lineup features pianist Donald Vega, saxophonist Keith Loftis, trumpeter Freddie Hendrix, and

bassist Yasushi Nakamura. At a recent engagement at Smoke on Manhattan's Upper West Side, Allen took the stage in a sharp-creased suit topped with a perfectly folded pocket square. The man was ready to entertain. Counting off, he landed a killer shuffle, flashed a never-flagging smile, and proceeded to set up the band through every hard-swinging chorus with his precision chops and locked-in locomotive pocket.

"When you hit the bandstand," Allen says, "you want to be on and poppin' from the first note. The music starts *before* you get on the bandstand, and even before you touch your instrument."

By the time the intense—and seriously fun—set escalated to its climax with "Afro-Blue," Allen was mystically channeling the spirits of his mentors. It wasn't just the thrilling polyrhythms; Allen had

summoned an awe-inspiring *sound*.

"I've always been very conscious of sound," the drummer says. "I had a conversation with Elvin about sound and getting around the instrument. I asked, 'What do you practice with your feet?' Elvin said, [growling voice] 'Same thing I do with my hands!' But he was really talking about the importance of having a balanced sound.

"I had a life-changing moment when I was playing in Paris with Freddie [Hubbard]. On the same bill were Art and Billy Higgins. Art always used to take his own drums. But at that time, in the mid-'80s, the European airlines were notorious for losing stuff. So we all had to play the same drums, and they were horrible.

"Art played magnificently. Higgins played and it was magical. I played and it was pathetic. [laughs] I was about twenty-



Paolo Soriani

two, and I had this problem: If I was upset, I thought everybody *else* should be upset. I'm backstage kicking chairs, throwing boxes. Art comes to me and says, 'What's the matter?' I said, 'My rider says 18" bass drum, four cymbal stands, blah-blah-blah.' He's *laughing*. He says, 'Let me ask you something: Do you play the drums, or do the drums play you? If you could *really* play, it wouldn't matter.' And he just walked away laughing!

"I sat there stunned, frozen. What could I say? That got me started on working on touch. The great Harold Mabern once said something so profound: 'Your touch produces your sound, not the other way around.'" For more with Carl Allen, go to moderndrummer.com. **Jeff Potter**

The year preceding his 1983

graduation from William Paterson University, nineteen-year-old Carl Allen landed the lofty throne in Freddie Hubbard's band, earning him huge jazz cred. Since his eight-year tenure with the iconic trumpeter, Allen has worked with an extensive roster of jazz royalty and graced more than 200 recordings. When he appeared on *MD's* September 1995 cover, he was recording for Atlantic Records and had established himself as a leader, educator, and record producer.

Allen's passionate involvement in education includes frequent college residencies and clinics. In 2001, Carl joined the faculty at Juilliard, and from 2008 until 2013 he served as artistic director of jazz studies. Recently he's led the Carl Allen Quartet and the Art of Elvin ensemble, and he's toured with the all-star Mack Avenue SuperBand. Allen also continues his collaboration with bassist Rodney Whitaker as well as gigging with tenor great Benny Golson and with bassist Christian McBride's unit Inside Straight.



Jimmie Fadden

Fifty years ago he and guitarist Jeff Hanna founded a jug band to avoid the straight life. Today the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's beautifully twisted tale continues unabated.

Rick Maik in

Nineteen sixty-six was an important year in the history of country-rock. Early progenitors like L.A.'s the Byrds and NYC's Lovin' Spoonful were on the charts ("Eight Miles High" and "Mr. Spaceman" coming from out west and "Nashville Cats" and "You Didn't Have to Be So Nice" from back east). Meanwhile, a peculiar bunch of Californians called the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, who'd come together during impromptu jams at a local music shop, were making a name for themselves on the southern California scene with a unique blend of American roots music. Thirty-three albums, three number-one singles, and a couple of Grammys later, drummer/vocalist/harmonica player Jimmie Fadden is anything but complacent.

"I've been very lucky," Fadden says. "In the beginning it was all about having fun and keeping the music going. Over the years it's morphed into maintaining the connection with our audiences, and they're the reason we're [still] here."

Often credited as the founding fathers of the Americana genre, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band is a long-runner in a short-run business. Its hits include "Some of Shelly's Blues," "Long Hard Road," "Modern Day Romance," "Fishin' in the Dark," and its signature tune, Jerry Jeff Walker's "Mr. Bojangles," which was released in 1970 and spent several months on the charts. "Mr. Bojangles' is my friend," Fadden says. "I've never grown tired of it, and I can't think of any time where I've told myself I've played it too much. It has such a wonderful dynamic; it's a reward to play it as often as I have."

In 1972 the band released the seminal album *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*, which invited country icons like Maybelle Carter, Doc Watson, and Merle Travis to the party, resulting in a watershed moment in the fusion of country, bluegrass, and old-time mountain music. Were Fadden and his "long-haired" crew intimidated in the presence of the older-generation country stars? "It wasn't something we even considered," the drummer says. "It's hard to find folks anywhere who weren't influenced by the American originals on that album."

With Levon Helm's passing in 2012, Fadden remains one of the few roots-oriented singing drummers on the national scene. "At the beginning I was a mandolin player," Jimmie recalls. "When I was twelve I was introduced to the guitar and thought, *Now THIS is cool*. For me, [performing on an instrument] was a way to connect with people—whether it was autoharp, bongos, mandolin, or harmonica, it was fun."

And the drumset? "The drums are very satisfying for me," Fadden says. "I enjoy the feel of the instrument. There's just something about it that's right, and singing is always interesting from the drummer's seat. Both your phrasing and lyrics are affected—it's an intriguing conversation between your limbs and your brain."

In the end, though, Fadden explains, "Music is all about the art of entertaining. You just need to find the pulse and connect with your audience. They need to feel your joy and your sorrow. You're sharing yourself, so play it from the heart." **Bob Girouard**



Internal Miking and Solid Front Heads

I would like to mount a microphone permanently inside my bass drum and leave the front head solid, but I'm not sure what to do with the mic cable. I don't want to drill a hole in the shell. Do you have any other suggestions on how to get the cable out of the drum? I would like to use the Kelly Concepts SHU internal miking system.

Mike

We sent your question to Jeffery Kelly, owner of Kelly Concepts, to get his input on this topic. Here's his response: "Since drilling the shell is out, your first option is to route the cable through the air vent. You don't want to block the vent completely, so you'll need to use a smaller-gauge audio cable. You'll also have to remove the female XLR jack on the end of the cable and reattach it



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once the cable is passed through the vent. The external portion of the cable can be secured to a tension rod or one of the spurs using a cable tie.

"DW's resonant heads have perforations around the outside edge that will also work for cable access, but again, you'll need to remove the female XLR connector so you can pass the cable through one of the holes. Another option is to cut a small 1" hole in the head to allow the XLR cable to pass through to the inside. Holz and Bass Drum O's make 2" hole protectors that aren't too intrusive. I position the port near the bottom edge of the drum so that whatever dampening device you use covers the hole, thus leaving the majority of the drumhead intact.

Finally, you can use the Randall May AVC-2 non-drill audio vent adapter with our SHU mounting systems."

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ddrum

Reflex Rally Sport Drumset

A great gigging kit with a tricked-out aesthetic.

One of the sister companies to Tampa-based ddrum is Dean guitars, and one of the woods that Dean uses for electric guitar bodies is alder. Alder is considered a semi-hard wood and ranks just above pine and poplar. It's known for having a warm, focused tone with prominent midrange and low-range frequencies and attenuated attack. When used to build drums, alder provides a very satisfying sound that's big and punchy with a short, focused sustain. Reflex is ddrum's series that features all-alder shells. The kit we have for review here is a new addition to that series, called Reflex Rally Sport (aka 2RS). It's designed to be the "ultimate gig kit" for drummers playing in smaller venues and on tight stages. Let's see how it fares.

Components

The Rally Sport kit is available in one four-piece configuration. It comes with an 8-ply 14x22 bass drum, a 6-ply 8x12 rack tom, a 6-ply 14x16 floor tom, and an 8-ply 5.5x14 snare.

The drums feature ddrum's Face Off turret lugs and 2.3 mm triple-flange hoops coated in satin nickel finish. The rack tom comes with ddrum's minimal Fixt Pitch suspension mount, which connects to two of the top lugs to allow for optimal sustain. The bass drum comes with vintage-style gull-wing spurs that attach to the side of the shell rather than poke through it. The bottom of the bass drum features a few Resolift isolator pads, which help improve tone by keeping the shell from making direct contact with the ground.

The 2RS is offered in two finishes, either flat black or green with crème racing stripes. The bearing edges are cut to forty-five degrees. Drumheads include coated 2-ply batters and coated single-ply resonants on the toms, a coated single-ply snare batter, and single-ply bass drum heads with built-in muffling rings.

In Action

We tested the 2RS kit at three different tensions (high, medium, and low), which were calculated using the Tune-bot digital tuner and the Tune-bot iOS app settings for maximum sustain. The snare was pitched a major third higher than the rack tom, and the bass drum was pitched an octave below the floor tom.

At the high tuning, the kit sounded very vintage-like, with a blunt attack, pure pitch, and short decay. The kick drum sounded big but not boomy. In fact, I had to double-check that there wasn't any muffling inside the drum; it was that punchy and focused. The snare had a lot of throaty, thick tone, a cracking attack, and minimal overtones, and the snare sensitivity was very clean and responsive. I had a lot of fun doing my best Mitch Mitchell impression on the 2RS at a higher tuning. It records incredibly as well.

The alder shells used in the Reflex series really shine at lower tunings. Tuned medium, the snare had a more open voice with more prominent overtones, but it still died down quickly. The toms sounded bigger and had more low-end

and a clearer pitch. The decay was fast but smooth, almost as if I had engaged a gate in my recording software with a slow release. (I hadn't.) The kick remained super-punchy and focused.

A low tuning brought out more depth and low end from the toms and kick while retaining pitch clarity and clean articulation. Microphones loved this kit tuned this way, whether for recording or live performances. You won't have to worry about the toms rumbling through the PA or causing feedback, and the softer attack and fatter tone give this kit a very pleasing acoustic voice that's also incredibly easy to mix. List price for the four-piece 2RS is \$799, which is a downright bargain.

Michael Dawson





Check out a video demo of these drums at moderndrummer.com.

Sabian

HH Vanguard Series Cymbals

A more expressive expansion pack for the original hand-hammered line.

Canadian cymbal maker Sabian has spent the past couple years revisiting its roots in an effort to bring back some of the classic handcrafted approaches the company employed in its early days in the 1980s. First was the raw and funky Big and Ugly line. Then the HH (“hand hammered”) series got remastered. (We reviewed those in March 2016.)

Sabian recently introduced the first expansion of the HH series, the Vanguard, which is based on a design from the acquired Crescent brand. The HH Vanguard lineup comprises 14" hi-hats, 16" and 18" crashes, and 20", 21", and 22" crash/rides. (None of the cymbals are labeled as a crash or ride, so it's up to the player to determine the application.) The cymbals have smaller bells than the regular HH models, and they feature pinpoint lathing. Both features help provide a more controlled attack. Let's check them out!

16" and 18" Crashes

In our review of the remastered HH line, we were very impressed with how expressive and all-purpose the cymbals sounded, especially the crashes. The 16" and 18" Vanguard crashes are also major standouts. They are a bit thinner than the HH Thin crashes, but they have similar warm, clean, and expressive tones. The pitches of the Vanguard crashes are lower, and they open up a bit faster and easier. While they might not have enough cutting power or durability to withstand extra-hard-hitting environments, for most general applications, including delicate cocktail jazz, multi-track recording sessions, and full-volume club dates, the HH Vanguards earn very high marks.

20", 21", and 22" Crash/Rides

I reviewed Crescent's Vanguard rides a few years back, and I remember them having a silky sustain, breathy wash, and a sparkling attack. Sabian's Vanguards aren't as complex sounding as the originals, and they have a cleaner and slightly brighter tone. All three crash/rides open up nicely for big, full crashes, yet they don't wash out when you play fast ride patterns. The bells sound rich and integrated. The 22" had my favorite crash sound; it was the most complex, but it also was the washiest when ridden. The 21" had my favorite ride voice for a classic jazz sound, and the 20" had the most shimmer. None of the Vanguard crash/rides are heavy enough to serve as a main ride for rock or other aggressive genres, but they would make excellent large crashes. And they offer an expressive, balanced sound for all types of lighter playing.

14" Hi-Hats

The Vanguard hi-hats are designed differently from the rest of the series. They're unlathed on the bottom, and they're lathed on the edge of the top, to thin it out. Sabian defines the top as being light and the bottom as medium, but they are more controlled and dry than those weights would suggest due to the unlathed bottoms. I recall the Crescent Vanguard hi-hats as having a dry yet breathy tone, which made them great for classic swing-style playing. The Sabian Vanguard hi-hats offer a chunkier stick sound, a stronger foot chick, and a drier sustain. If you use a hi-hat primarily for foot playing, then you will appreciate the extra power and clarity of these new Vanguards. These aren't the hi-hats you'd want if you're looking for a papery, vintage-style sound, but they are a great choice for all-purpose applications requiring a touch of classic complexity within a more modern context.

Michael Dawson

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

HH
Vanguard
22"/55cm

HH
Vanguard

Love Custom Drums

7x14 Indian Rosewood Snare

A beautifully crafted and sonically superb drum built to withstand the rigors of the road.

Love Custom Drums founder Buddy "Love" McRoy spent years modifying his own instruments, whether that involved cutting new bearing edges or applying new finishes. But he didn't start building drums from scratch until after being frustrated with the inability to order a custom kit from another company to his own specifications. The pet project soon transitioned into a full-fledged company when friends and fellow drummers started offering money to buy McRoy's unique creations.

The Love Custom snare we have for review is one of McRoy's personal favorites: a 7x14 stave-shell made out of .625"-thick Indian rosewood. The top bearing edge is cut to forty-five degrees and then rounded, and the bottom edge is what Buddy calls a "dull forty-five" and has slightly deeper than normal snare beds. All of the hardware is aged brass, including the ten tube lugs, single-flanged hoops, and family crest badge.

Indian rosewood is a popular tone wood for high-end acoustic and classical guitars. It's harder than oak and is said to have brighter

treble tones and a fuller low end. The snare came with a Remo Coated Ambassador batter and Ambassador Snare bottom and features a smooth Trick throw-off and Puresound wires. Its snare response is spectacular all the way to the edge, yet it doesn't buzz uncontrollably, thanks no doubt to the expertly cut deep snare beds.

Sonically, this 7x14 rosewood drum is super-versatile. It has many sweet spots across its wide tuning range, producing big, dense, focused sounds with a ton of power at any tension. You can feel the energy emitting from the shell with every rimshot, and its volume ceiling is virtually limitless. Hit it soft, and it whispers. Hit it hard, and it cracks like lightning. I was particularly impressed with how full and thick this snare sounded when cranked up and how focused it remained when detuned for a deep, punchy thud. This is the real deal.

Michael Dawson



Check out a video demo of this drum at moderndrummer.com.



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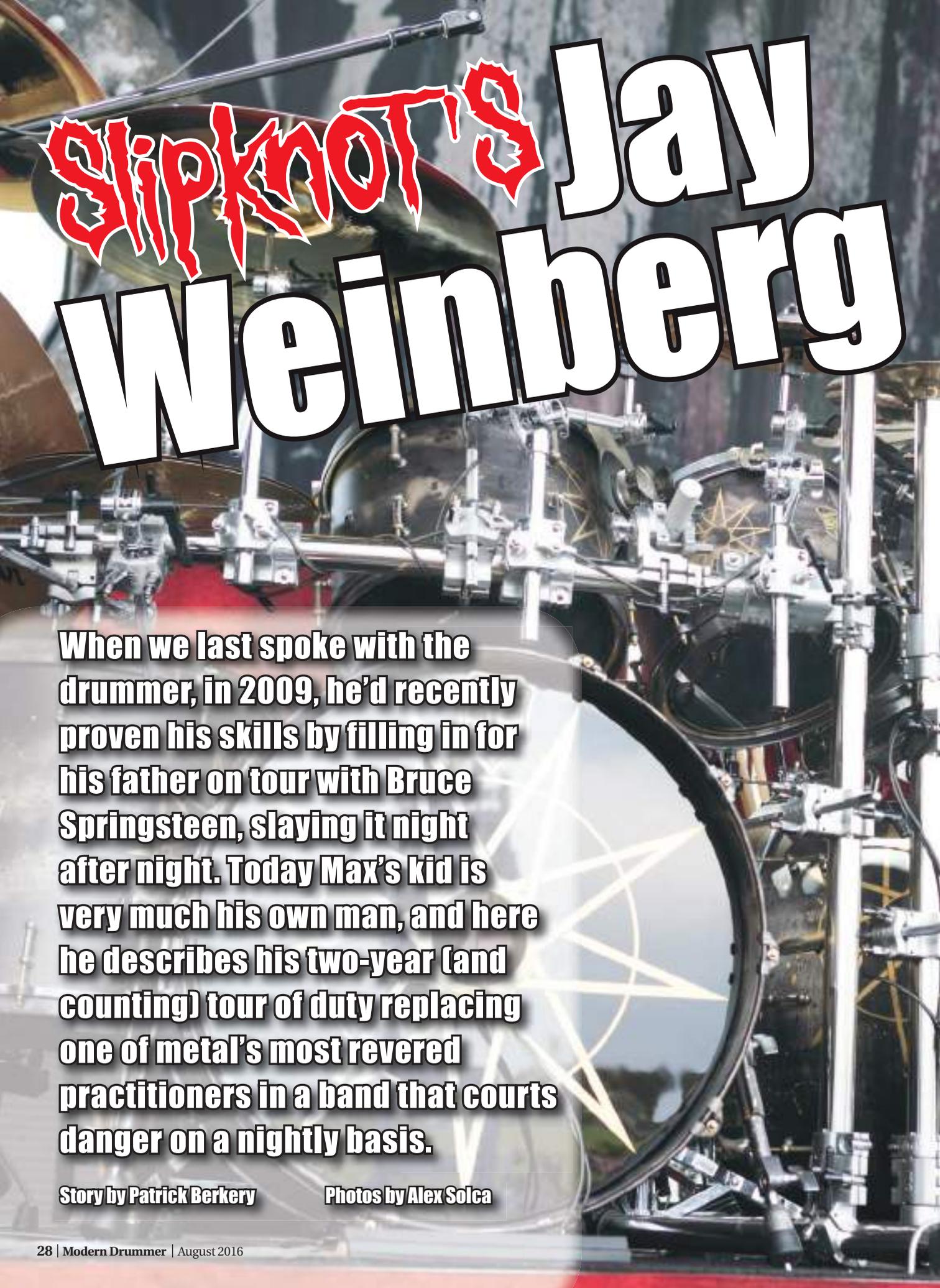
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Slipknot's Jay Weinberg

When we last spoke with the drummer, in 2009, he'd recently proven his skills by filling in for his father on tour with Bruce Springsteen, slaying it night after night. Today Max's kid is very much his own man, and here he describes his two-year (and counting) tour of duty replacing one of metal's most revered practitioners in a band that courts danger on a nightly basis.

Story by Patrick Berkery

Photos by Alex Solca



Ten-year-old Jay Weinberg would have his head explode if he knew his future self would grace the cover of *MD* billed as “Slipknot’s Jay Weinberg.” Weinberg grew up an obsessed superfan of the band he now plays with, characterizing himself as “one of those little dudes up against the barrier in the front at shows, posters on the wall, chomping at the bit for the new album, hoping it would leak early—all that stuff.” And he’s got the pictures on his iPhone to prove it: as a preteen dressed in full Slipknot gear for Halloween, plus a few shots backstage wearing the Slipknot mask while posing with the group he cites as his gateway to music.

“They were the band that made me fall in love with music,” Weinberg says. “Not even just heavy metal, but music, *period*. I was all about hockey as a kid. My parents raised me on the Who, Dylan, the Stones, the Band, and my dad’s stuff, obviously. But it was when my dad brought me to see Slipknot when I was ten years old that I was just hook, line, and sinker: *This is going to be my life.*”

Jay’s dad, of course, is Max Weinberg, longtime drummer with Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band and the former bandleader for Conan O’Brien on the comedian’s long-running *Late Night* program and short-lived stint as host of *The Tonight Show*. The first time I sat down face to face with Jay, in an Asbury Park, New Jersey, coffee shop in the summer of 2009, the then-eighteen-year-old college freshman had just wrapped a pummeling set with his hardcore band, the Reveling, and was discussing the particulars of his current temp job: subbing for his dad in the E Street Band on its spring and summer tour. “A lot of it is homing in on what Bruce wants,” Jay said that day. “He’s very emotive, and he really brings out what he wants from you. He knows what he wants, so *you* know what he wants. And you’ve got to have a pretty large palette of drum styles. You’ve got to play like Keith Moon here, Bernard Purdie there.”

Watching Weinberg pound the daylights out of his four-piece kit that afternoon, it was clear he had the chops and feel to handle a gig of such magnitude. He was a swarm of rhythm—punctuating flashy fills with halting breaks and powering the noisy band with a sense of groove not unlike his old man's. Just as important, in conversation I sensed a level-headedness and work ethic that would serve him well in a field where things don't always work out. (For evidence, see his post-Bruce tenures with the New York City hardcore vets Madball and the alt-punk group Against Me!)

Now it's 2016 and we're meeting up again, this time in a four-star Italian restaurant in Philadelphia, to discuss Jay's gig with Slipknot and all the challenges the demanding job entails. And I do mean *all*. Like playing drums to some of the most aggressive music imaginable while wearing a mask made of burlap, latex, and rubber. Weinberg has brought the mask with him from his current home in Nashville, and he pulls it from his travel bag just after a waitress takes our drink order. "This is my guy that I have to deal with every day," he says with equal parts pride and dread, as he passes it under the table. "It's sterile, but it's hardly ever been cleaned."

As I take the mask I realize that Weinberg's not kidding about the "hardly ever been cleaned" part. Wow. Imagine the inside of a long-distance runner's shorts after a 5K on a ninety-degree day, and you've got a pretty good idea of the olfactory situation Weinberg is contending with when he's shredding his way through "Eyeless" or "Duality," not to mention the other obstacles the mask presents, like a complete lack of peripheral vision and its not-insignificant weightiness.

"It's a total pain in the ass," Weinberg admits. "It's totally restrictive. You can't breathe. You can hardly see. You've got hot breath coming back at you. But once you have it on, you just get into that mode that makes you lose all your inhibitions. It's like this inner person takes over and you just totally lose yourself in it."

Though he's not officially "in" the band or a "member" of Slipknot yet (more on that nebulous designation later), this formality hasn't prevented Weinberg from making a palpable difference in the band's sound since signing on in late 2013 after the departure of founding member Joey Jordison. The metal veterans sound reinvigorated by the more pocket-focused approach Jay brings to the bottom end on *.5: The Gray Chapter*, their first album since 2008's *All Hope Is Gone*. Where Jordison tended to go off the rails to explore the spaces outside the pocket—with consistently scorched-earth results—Weinberg keeps a vice grip on the nine-piece band's sonic assault. Trademark Slipknot chaos still reigns on songs like "Custer" and "The Negative One," but there's a newfound sense of tension and tightness in the music. If you've seen the band live with Weinberg (or watched his GoPro drum-cam videos on the band's app or YouTube), you know he's bringing the same approach to the older material as well.

"They didn't want a copycat, so I needed to play it in my own way; I can't play it any other way," Weinberg stresses. "I had to apply my thing—playing in the pocket—and my taste to the band. I want us all to be able to head-bang all the way through a song and know where the 1 is. And knowing that, we can pull off some really crazy music."

Notice that Weinberg says "us" and "we" in regard to himself and Slipknot. Did ten-year-old Jay ever dare to dream such a day would come? "I think, like every kid that grows up with musical heroes does, I probably played the scenario of putting on a mask and playing on stage with Slipknot over in my head millions of times," he explains. "But never in even the wildest of those dreams did I think it would become a reality. I mean, really, it's a 'no times in a lifetime' opportunity; this sort of thing just doesn't happen."

Except that it did. And that opportunity came at a time in Jay's life when he wasn't really sure what he wanted to do. And that's where our conversation begins.





MD: What were you up to when you got the call to audition for Slipknot?

Jay: I was just about to graduate college. [Weinberg has a degree in business from Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey.] Musically, I had all these little projects I was working on, but nothing I was really sinking my teeth into or touring much with. I was actively looking for a job. I tried to get one at a local record store where I was living in Hoboken and couldn't—they hired someone who knew nothing about music! I was even talking to a family friend who runs a business incubator about the possibility of doing that. I have a huge passion for design and marketing.

But I was at my desk one day studying

for finals when I got a phone call from Slipknot's manager, Cory Brennan, who had managed Against Me! for the last two weeks I was in the band. He's like, "Can you get out to L.A. on Monday?" This was Thursday. He says, "I can't tell you what it's for. But I have something happening that I think you'd be good for, and I think you'd enjoy this. Can you just trust me and get out here for something on Monday?" Coincidentally, I already had some shows set up in southern California later that next week with one of the hardcore bands I play with, Hesitation Wounds, so I said, "Um, okay."

MD: Did you have any inkling what it might be for?

Jay: None. I'm running scenarios in my

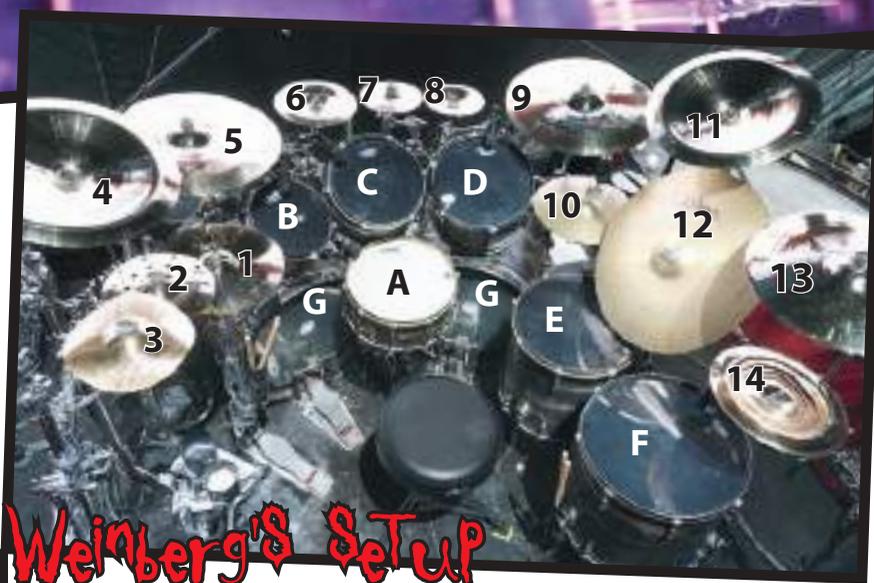
head: *Okay, what band could this possibly be? Maybe it's for another manager friend of his? There's no way in hell it's Slipknot....* I figured the best thing would be to not overthink it. They weren't expecting me to prepare anything, so I should just go in with an open mind. But I called him the next day and said, "Look, I know you can't tell me who it's for, but is there anything you could tell me that would help me prepare?" I wanted to come in and blow the doors off and be the guy they want. He says, "All right," and he gets very quiet. I think he went in another room. He says, "You know I manage a band, and there's changes happening with the band with the guy that's been playing drums with them. When I asked the guys about



a possible replacement, I brought up your name and they thought it was a really cool idea. I talked to five of the guys and they'd like to meet with you. They all think it would be really cool to at least talk to you and play with you. That's all I can give you." I said, "All right, I can get with that."

MD: What were your emotions as all this was taking place? Were you psyched for the opportunity but conflicted because it was coming at the expense of Joey?

Jay: Really, my mind was blown. Like, *What is happening?* I had no clue there were any problems with Joey. But when I showed up to jam with the guys, I immediately had to tell myself, *You're here to do this. You're here because they're interested in you. So don't worry about anything else.* I think it was Mick [Thomson, guitar], Jim [Root, guitar], Corey [Taylor, vocals], and Clown [Shawn Crahan, percussion] there. I'd just set up the drums. And Clown came up to me—he's known me since I was a ten-year-old kid coming to the shows, and we've always had a great rapport—and he was very frank with me. He said, "This is one of the worst days of my life. We're going through some shit. But you're here, and you're family. We're going to start this long process and we'd like to give you a shot. So, do you know any songs?" So we played "Duality," then "Before I Forget." And



Weinberg's Setup

Drums: SJC Custom with bubinga shells

A. 6x14, 48-ply maple snare (with two 2" vents)

B. 8x10 tom

C. 8x12 tom

D. 9x13 tom

E. 16x16 floor tom

F. 16x18 floor tom

G. 18x22 bass drums

Hardware: DW throne and 9000 series single bass drum pedals, hi-hat, and rack

Heads: Evans, including Heavyweight snare batter and 300 bottom, Black Chrome tom batters and EC bottoms, and EMAD Heavyweight bass drum batters

Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 14" A Custom hi-hats

2. 10" A Custom EFX

3. 10" Trashformer

4. 18" A Custom China

5. 20" A Custom crash

6. 10" FX Oriental China Trash

7. 8" Project 391 splash

8. 8" Project 391 bell

9. 20" A Custom crash

10. 14" Project 391 hi-hats

11. 18" A Custom China

12. 21" Project 391 ride

13. 19" A Custom crash

14. 14" FX Oriental China Trash with 10" Spiral Stacker on top

Sticks: Vater Jay Weinberg XD-Punisher model

"I've always been pretty utilitarian," Weinberg says. "Everything I have in my setup gets used the whole show. For my Slipknot kit I knew that I wanted three toms up front, two floor toms, two kick drums, and whatever I needed for cymbals. SJC is a small company, but I believe in them. They're my brothers. I love what they do. This is the company that lets me come to their warehouse and paint drums because I'm bored and in the area. The guy who owns the company and I are close to the same age. I see what he does, and it's so inspiring."

the vibe in the room, which was solemn at first, immediately turned around.

MD: These aren't songs a drummer can just sit down behind a kit, cold, and dominate. Were your double-kick chops at least up to snuff?

Jay: Yeah, whenever I'm practicing, I'm

playing and sweating, like it's a show. Then they say, "What else do you want to play?" And I said, "Get This," which is a B-side from the first record. And as soon as I said that, Clown went into hyperdrive: "This dude's calling out B-sides—he gets it." We played twenty-something songs. It would have been rough, but we could've played a show

trying to be as professional as I can and do the best job I can.

Jim had programmed some drums to these rough-sketch demos. No vocals. He said, "Go in that room, learn these, and come out and go...." That is for real just the Slipknot way. I learned them in about thirty minutes. One became "Sarcastrophe" off the record. The other song we worked on



always doing crazy double-kick stuff. I was literally drawing on muscle memory from when I was fourteen years old. I was giving myself a pep talk internally: *All right, they gave you no time to prepare, so they're not expecting this to be note-for-note perfect.* But if I show the attitude of Slipknot—which I know, having grown up in that community and having loved that band so intensely over the years—I can somehow manage to jam my pinkie into the door and get called back as they audition a whole bunch of other guys.

So we play these couple songs and they're like, "Do you know anything else?" And I'm like, "Yeah, how about 'Heretic'? How about 'Disasterpiece'? How about 'Wait and Bleed'?" And we're going—really

that night.

MD: How long was it until they asked you back?

Jay: Not long at all. They went in another room to talk among themselves. And I can hear them talking. I'm hearing, "Travis Barker... Travis Barker." And I'm like, *Whoa, they're auditioning some heavy hitters!* But it turns out that they just wanted to see about getting into his studio; he's got a place in the Valley.

Then they ask me how long I'm in town for and if I want to go to a little studio to work on some new material. So the next day we're at Travis's studio. And I'm dorking out, having been a fan of Travis for years, and I'm listening to Slipknot demos. But I'm just

became "The Burden," which was a B-side.

So we jam on this stuff and everybody's head-banging in the control room, telling me, "Go crazy, do crazy fills." I was playing to Jim's guitars, to a click. So we're listening back and we're all sitting in the courtyard of Travis's studio, and that's when the announcement went live that Slipknot was going to be parting ways with Joey Jordison.

It was a really heavy moment to be there when that went out into the world. Now it's public. The air in the room was very heavy but also really optimistic. Because this is a cool platform for what could become a new record, a new vibe. We noticed pretty

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Jay Weinberg

quickly that my style and Joey's style are very different. But with the direction the band was going, they knew I could get the Slipknot vibe on drums and bring my own experience. It was simultaneously this moment of them parting with a brother they'd built something so incredible with, but also you've got this twenty-three-year-old kid who's here and dying to prove something.

MD: You're suddenly immersed in the Slipknot world, but you've got these Hesitation Wounds gigs looming.

Jay: We just kept playing. We spent two or three days honing these demos at Travis's, then I left to go do the first gig with Hesitation Wounds, in Anaheim. And the first day I jammed with the Slipknot guys, I had to sign a nondisclosure agreement, so I couldn't tell those dudes about any of this. I had to tell the Slipknot guys, "I want to be here, but I have this obligation." And I think they respected that, that I didn't blow off my band. And I barely just made the show. I said, "I'll tell you in a year—this will all make sense." As I was walking out the door at Travis's, Clown pulled me aside and said, "If you want this gig, if you're willing to show us how far you're willing to go for this, we're not going to talk to anybody else. You're the guy. Go play the shows, go back home, enjoy the holidays. And in the new year, we're going to make a record."

MD: Once you got on with recording the album in earnest, what was your mindset? Was there an urge not to rock the boat as the new guy and just give them what you thought they wanted? Or were you consciously trying to bring them new drumming concepts and push the band forward? And is the superfan in your subconscious saying *You'd better bring the heat*?

Jay: It's all those things. I had to tell myself a lot that they picked me for a reason, that they like the way I play, and whatever needed work, they'll guide me. They're helping me with the twenty years they've been a band. They'd make suggestions: "Funk this whole thing up, bring this kind of vibe to this...but do it the way you want to do it." We'd do ten takes in a row, nonstop, and I'd do different fills every time.

Toward the end on some songs it was desperation, to where I couldn't breathe, but that's when you come up with some of the most creative stuff. You leave your intuition—the things you're comfortable doing—and you just go for it. That's the end of "Killpop." It needed to be carried home with a really out-of-the-ordinary drum thing. Out of that desperation factor,

I just started flailing around like an octopus, hitting everything I could. And they'd go, "Check out that crazy thing you did—chase *that* vibe." That was basically how we approached the record. They would let me do my thing. They know I'm going to circle around something.

MD: Playing something like "The Negative One" ten times in a row would push most people to their physical and mental limits. That is such an insane track. It has to be hard to keep perspective on what's working, what's a good take, when you reach that point of exhaustion.

Jay: Clown has a good ear for hearing a particular vibe and helping me home in on it. Working on that song was the first time I was part of a collaboration with them. That was a big early test for me: Can I get into a room with these guys and walk out with a Slipknot song? And once we started tracking drums, those guys were pushing me to my limits, fourteen hours a day, six days a week. But it worked. And that was the first Slipknot song out in the world without Joey and [late bassist] Paul Gray. I'm really psyched it was that song. That was me earning my stripes.

MD: And as if being the new drummer in Slipknot wasn't challenging enough, this was also the first time you were in a band with other people playing percussion. What was the learning curve on that?

Jay: It was really interesting. It was explained to me by Clown that it's up to me to make it impossible for him and [percussionist] Chris [Fehn] to find their way, but they eventually will. I'm not sure how it worked before. Clown told me, "You come up with the craziest stuff, and Chris and I will find our place." It's the same approach live.

MD: Was there a moment, either during the recording or once you started touring, where you realized it was all clicking and you started to feel comfortable?

Jay: *Comfortable* is a word I would never use to describe Slipknot. [laughs] I became more *confident* in us playing together, that we were starting to gel. I felt like our first show together [Knotfest 2014] was badass, like we did kick in the door. But the natural progression involves hitting the stage every night as hard as you can and learning everything about each other, about each other's playing, where you fit into the mix—there's a lot that goes into it. We've found a good stride. We know how to do interesting things. We know how to communicate musically. We just know how to rock together. At the end of the day, the shows are painful and it hurts, but it also brings an immense sense of satisfaction and joy to us

and the fans—there's total communication that I've never experienced anywhere else. There's such a passion with this fan base, and that translates to how seriously we take it within the band.

MD: Throughout playing with Bruce, Madball, and Against Me!, you'd been juggling those gigs with side bands and college. But Slipknot is clearly the kind of gig where you're either all in or you're not in at all. There doesn't seem to be room for diversions.

Jay: Slipknot takes over everything in your life. Even the people in the road crew probably feel that way. There's joy in it, and I'm learning to balance everything. I never want to get comfortable or complacent with what I'm doing with the band, so I'm kind of always on edge. I'm learning to really enjoy what we're doing and where we're at and not just be freaking out all the time. Back when we were making the record and doing the first couple of tours I was freaking out. I was the new guy in the band, wanting to do well—like anybody would. I wanted the band to know and the fans to know that the right choice was made. Now I feel like it's really starting to translate well and it's starting to take on a life of its own.

But before every show I still get total nerves, almost sick to my stomach. I like that. Honestly, I think everybody in Slipknot feels that way. You're under such a microscope; you have these people that are such die-hard fans. It's hard to think of any other group of people that are more passionate than Bruce Springsteen fans and Slipknot fans.

MD: It's clear you're not a sideman or a hired gun, yet there's this vague thing where you're not really an official member of Slipknot. They were trying to keep your identity a secret for a while.

Jay: It's not just handed to you. And I respect that process of proving yourself and paying dues—to the band, to the fans, to the community of Slipknot. I love that. I love scrapping. It's all handled with respect for the history of the band, the work that they've put in. So I understand that. But we get in a room and collaboratively create a song together. A session drummer doesn't do that. The question of am I in the band, am I not in the band.... I'm doing the same work. So it really doesn't make a difference to me. We have conversations like, "Yeah, we want you in the band." So we're looking to the future. It's like the end of this audition period. We'll see what happens after this touring cycle. We'll see if there will be another Slipknot record—you really never know with this band. We hope so.

MD: It's not really a secret that your gigs with Madball and Against Me! didn't end well. *[Upon his exit, Madball released a statement questioning whether Weinberg was cut out for the touring lifestyle, while Laura Jane Grace of Against Me! disparaged Jay on social media after he left.]* Obviously, Slipknot's a different animal, but were you a little gun-shy about signing on with another established band after the way things went down with those bands?

Jay: After I left Against Me! I was literally like, "Screw joining another established band." But this clearly was different. Some of the bands I played with didn't work out, but I wouldn't change a single thing. Madball just wasn't a good fit. We're from different worlds. I'm not from Queens or the Lower East Side in the '80s. I'm from Middletown, New Jersey, in the early 2000s! I was actively doing college when I was in Madball. We're in Europe with thirty-one people on an animal-house bus, and I'm in the front lounge trying to do my chemistry homework. [laughs]

I really loved Against Me!, and we were doing really good stuff until our relationship just became completely strained. A lot of that had to do with the fact that we were self-managed for so long. We just couldn't work through our bullshit. We were breaking up every day for seven months. The tours became increasingly difficult—no communication at all. Laura made the public think that she was blindsided and didn't know I was leaving the band until she saw it on Twitter. I'd sent the band a message telling them I was leaving. We had a whole thing before I said it publicly. But then she'll have her story and I'll have mine. It got ugly and it didn't need to.

MD: You've had to prepare to play with two of the most respected live acts of all time in Bruce Springsteen and Slipknot. They have markedly different styles, but are there any parallels between the two gigs in your approach?

Jay: They're very, very different experiences. With Bruce, you're just following one person, which helps in a lot of ways. In this, it's an absolute mess. It's so crazy. Nine people vying for their spot, and to be heard. I've got to cut through all that, and it for real feels like you're jumping out of an airplane every time you hit the stage. You don't know what's happening. Then you sort of land and feel the show out. Bruce could be kind of unpredictable, but in Slipknot you might get a baseball bat thrown at your head! We never soundcheck, so I practice anywhere from ninety minutes to two and a half hours before every show. I have a little Roland

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Jay Weinberg



It was here, then it was here, and you're chasing it. That reflected the emotional state of the band at that time. Now I feel like I come into the band at a good time, when they want to feel solid and tight and know where the beats are going to be. People can prefer me, they can prefer Joey, but that's one thing I feel I bring to the band that they didn't have in recent years.

MD: You've accomplished a fair amount already and you're still just twenty-five. What are you looking forward to doing in the future?

Jay: There are some things on my bucket list. It's all about finding the right balance. I moved to Nashville to find the right people to start projects with. It's great down there; I already have three projects in the works. I write a lot on guitar. So I'm starting bands where I'm probably not going to play drums. I'll play guitar. I want to paint more, and maybe I'll do something down the road in marketing or design. I want to have all these experiences.

I love Slipknot, I love the guys. But

Slipknot is totally their baby. I'm totally passionate about it, but it's their mission statement in life. It's part of mine but not like it is for them. I love the work we've done so far. But it's a goal of mine that whenever Slipknot packs it in or we choose to go our separate ways, I'll build something from the ground up and use the knowledge I've gained in this experience to apply to that.



V-Drums kit set up, just to get my blood going so I'm not hitting the stage cold. And I've never done that with any band before.

MD: As different as they are, Slipknot relies on you the same way Bruce did, to hold this giant band together.

Jay: I'm coming from a background that's rooted in being in the pocket, supporting the song, supporting the structure, supporting the other instruments, keeping everybody locked in tight. Clown, before we had even played a show, said that's what we're going for—tight. That's one of the strengths that I bring to this band. I've learned it playing with Bruce, where you've got to be tight. Playing with Against Me!, where you've got to be tight. With Madball you've got to be tight and have this invisible swing that New York hardcore has. There's got to be a wild element to any band that I'm with, but I want it to be all totally controlled.

Whereas, as a fan listening to Slipknot, I felt the band would often sound kind of disjointed, because they'd be all over the place. They'd start at one tempo and be completely different at the end. And that's a vibe. But when I started playing with the band, my intent was to play those songs tight. And the band has said that they've had to adjust to playing to me because of my meter. It's as punk rock as it gets for a band of that size to not use a click at all live. Mick can lose himself in the rhythm of the song, knowing I'm going to keep it right where it needs to be.

Part of the charm of Joey's playing was that it was this wild rabbit.



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JAY WEINBERG | SLIPKNOT

Steven Wilson's Craig Blundell



During his rise to the top of today's prog scene, the ever-adaptable electroacoustic drummer handily dealt with every physical and technological challenge thrown at him. The only real roadblock, it turns out, came from within.

Story by Will Romano • Photos by Carl Glover

It's your big break. The announcer calls your name and you're expected on stage. You're paged and an impromptu search party tries to locate you, but you're nowhere to be found. Turns out you're partly hiding, partly struggling to answer the call, because you're nearly suffocating inside, psychologically paralyzed and nursing your frayed nerves.

Sounds like a nightmarish scenario, doesn't it? For the British drummer Craig Blundell, a well-traveled recording artist, educator, and clinician, it's reality. Or, rather, it used to be.

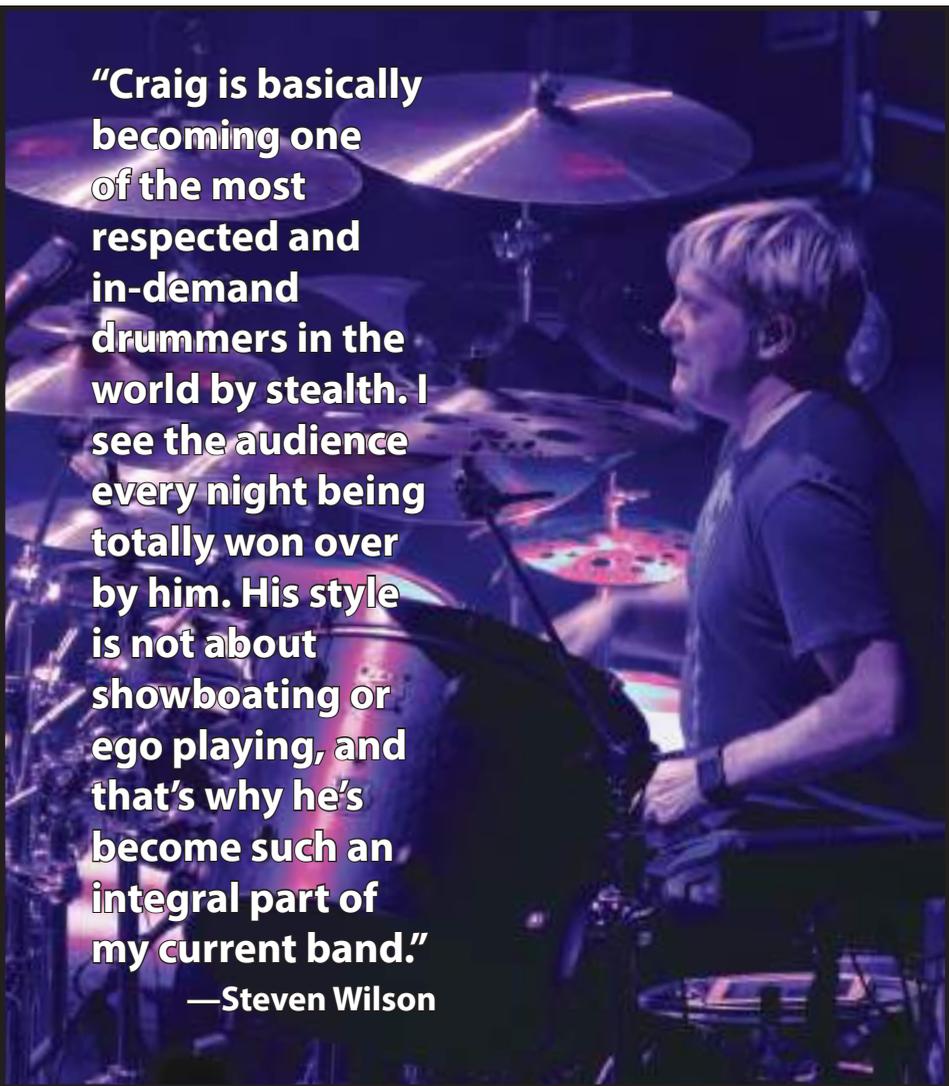
Blundell suffered from debilitating nerves—not uncommon among live performers—but through tough mental discipline, professional insight, and the power of positive thinking, he has overcome his personal obstacles. More to the point: Blundell hasn't so much steeled himself as learned to improvise and view each live setting as an opportunity. A concert gig not only allows for a free exchange of ideas among the musicians on stage, but offers a chance for the audience to be entertained and, dare we say, inspired and educated. "I have no problem going on record if it will help readers," Blundell says. "There's no problem getting nerves. If you have it under control, you can deal with it. Don't be afraid to seek help."

Today Blundell has jettisoned most of his fears, and has experienced banner years in 2015 and 2016. Last year he assumed the coveted drum chair in Steven Wilson's highly touted progressive

rock/fusion solo band, a seat formerly held by the well-regarded Marco Minnemann, and he appeared on Wilson's 4 1/2 EP, released earlier this year. But Wilson's not the only one who has kept the drummer's phone ringing. Blundell has recorded and/or toured with Frost*, the progressive rock supergroup led by the British hitmaker and producer Jem Godfrey, as well as the neo-proggers Pendragon, guitar goddess Jennifer Batten, and Lonely Robot, the project spearheaded by musician and producer John Mitchell (It Bites, Frost*).

Beyond his abundant technique, Blundell has fully embraced technology. His blending of acoustic and electronic drums has put him at the forefront of a movement that undeniably represents the future of mainstream drumming. A regular Roland clinician, Blundell has done much to raise the game of amateur and pro drummers the world over. Meanwhile, on stage and in the studio, his creativity and industriousness have allowed him to provide endless sonic and rhythmic textures and sound-design options for top artists and producers.

Ironically, despite this immersive technology backdrop, MD's originally scheduled interview with Blundell was plagued and ultimately postponed due to technical glitches. When we eventually connected, we discussed a range of topics, some digital, some very much analog.



"Craig is basically becoming one of the most respected and in-demand drummers in the world by stealth. I see the audience every night being totally won over by him. His style is not about showboating or ego playing, and that's why he's become such an integral part of my current band."

—Steven Wilson

MD: Can you talk specifically about how you approached covering Marco Minnemann's parts in Steven Wilson's band? Did you chart them?

Craig: To be honest, the audition was one of the most embarrassing I've ever had. I set up my gear and played through "Hand Cannot Erase." I'd charted Marco's parts and learned them verbatim. After I finished, Steven came into the studio and said, "Now, tell me, is that you playing or is that Marco playing?" I said, "That's me playing the parts I'd heard." He said, "Right. Scrap all that. I don't want you to play that. Marco is Marco. Give me what *you* would do." I was like, *Oh, man*. I felt like I was thrown into the deep end, massively. I suffered with nerves anyway, but I played through it. Then Steven said, "Do you want to go to lunch?" I thought I'd blown it, but he said, "Right, okay, do you want the gig?" I canceled all my work for the next two months.

MD: How long did it take you to get up to speed on the Wilson gig?

Craig: I'd given myself three weeks to learn the material. Then I got a phone call to cover for Chad Wackerman on the Jennifer Batten tour, which finished the day before the Steven Wilson rehearsals, so I had about a day or so of playing the material beforehand. Then we did the rehearsals for two days, flew to Chile, and did the first show.

Steven records every show, and he'll go back to the hotel or bunk [in the tour bus] and listen to the recordings and speak with you the next day. He'll say, "You know, Craig, there's a few things here I want to speak with you about..." It was like, *Ah, man*. You feel like the naughty schoolboy who's been sent down to the office.



Gradually those chats became less and less frequent, and at the end of the tour he invited me to stay on for festival season, and now I'm his guy. Marco Minnemann is really busy doing Joe Satriani and Aristocrats, and Steven wanted somebody on a bit more of a permanent basis.

MD: How has the gig changed your playing?

Craig: My timekeeping changed irreversibly, because the whole gig is on a click. After we did the Royal Albert Hall for two nights [in September 2015], we had to learn about five hours of material. Steven was going through some old Storm Corrosion and Porcupine Tree songs, which are fairly brutal under the hands anyway, but on a click you can't waver. I've never practiced so much or hit so hard in my life.

Steven likes a certain vibe on stage, and Marco and Gavin [Harrison, Wilson's longtime bandmate in Porcupine Tree] are fairly heavy hitters. I'm really not. I'm predominately a jazz-fusion player, and I play with these little 7A sticks. But I've found

myself hitting from over the shoulders, and that has changed my timekeeping. Because I'm playing harder, I found myself rushing. I've had to learn to rest behind the click. With adrenaline you're on [the click]. It's taken a while—every day is a learning day—but my timekeeping has improved massively.

MD: How much practice do you get on the road, and when and where do you do it?

Craig: Whether it was in the hotel or on the tour bus, I made a point on tour to take an hour a day to go through sections of the songs and work out alternate sticking patterns. There's a lot in there that can be changed, but I don't want to improvise on the spot, where it could go wrong. I don't want to let anybody down.

MD: You've recently worked with a couple of monster bassists in Nick Beggs from Steven's band and Nathan King from Frost*.

Craig: I'm very lucky to be working with Nathan. He plays bass in Level 42 and is amazing. And Nick has been like a big

brother, on and off the stage. When I had any insecurities, he would sit down and talk to me. Nick's the king of rational thinking. He'd say, "You played this great. Stop overanalyzing and forget about it." He'd even record the bass parts with a click and offer commentary to go along with it. He would go that extra mile to make sure his buddy wasn't lost in the deep end. He's just an absolute mountain of wisdom. He's gigging every day of the year and is at the top of his game.

MD: What was it like recording the latest Frost* album, *Falling Satellites*?

Craig: The first time I played through any of the Frost* album was the day before I went into the studio. I was finishing the Steven tour, got into the studio, listened to the material, and thought, *What have I done? I should have given it more ears.* But having spent ten months or so with Steven, I felt a better musician. We did the drum tracks in two sessions in the studio. We got it all down. Best thing I've ever recorded, by far.

MD: How about the Lonely Robot album, *Please Come Home*?

Craig: I love John Mitchell—he's a dear friend—but everything is last minute. I actually kind of thrive on that now. But I got to the studio one Saturday morning, and I hadn't heard any of the songs. We wrote out all these time signatures on paper as well as words like *loud* and *quiet* and *softer*. John would hold up these pieces of paper as I was playing, cuing me every time something changed. We did the whole album in four hours. [laughs]

I just recorded a second album with them, and it was done the same way. I've had so many things in the last year that have been last minute that I'm kind of used to it now. The Wilson gig has helped; I'm fairly confident that I can go in and blast through it.

MD: You do a good amount of layering digital and acoustic drums. Can you talk about this?

Craig: I was really inspired by Bill Bruford and Earthworks in the mid-1980s, which sparked my fascination with electronics. I started my relationship with Roland in 2003, doing a few demonstrations. I'd been involved with launching the TD-30 V-Drums sound module as well. I love acoustic drums, and I'm an avid collector of them. But when John played me the Lonely Robot stuff, I told him that I had some great kits on the TD-30 that we could fire via MIDI to give the drum tracks more intensity. I could also layer some acoustic sounds and samples. John gave me carte blanche. Same with Frost*. Actually, same with Steven.

MD: What's your method for layering acoustics and electronics?

Craig: I've put triggers on all the drums, and I record the audio and MIDI [information] from the TD-30 brain, so if producers want to, in postproduction they can find a different kit to layer under the acoustic sound. They have the MIDI notes, so they can assign a tom [hit], for instance, to a slightly deeper drum. If used correctly, it's a game changer.

MD: You've suffered from pretty debilitating nerves in the past.

Craig: I've been playing for thirty-eight years. I've always been comfortable playing for family and friends. But in 2004 I was invited to play DrumFest in England. It was a great bill. Will Calhoun and Billy Cobham were on it. I remember when I was being introduced I was still sick with nerves. I knew something wasn't right from that day. I was the last one to set up, and David Garibaldi sat right in front of me. My hands had morphed into claws, because I couldn't play in front of one of my heroes. I actually don't remember the gig.

Then the phone started ringing and I got some gigs, which was good. But then I got this feeling of being sick again. I still get nervous. When most people get

Blundell's Setup

Drums: Mapex Saturn V kit in black satin burl
• Black Panther Velvetone and Cherry Bomb snares
• 8x8, 8x10, and 9x12 toms
• 12x14 and 14x16 floor toms
• 16x18 gong drum
• 20x22 bass drum

Heads: Aquarian Hi-Velocity snare batters, Force Ten coated tom batters and Classic Clear bottoms, and Super-Kick 2 bass drum batter

Electronics: Roland SPD-SX sampling pad and RT-30 triggers

Sticks: Vater Craig Blundell signature series

Cymbals: Paiste

- 14" Signature Reflector Heavy Full hi-hats
- 22" Twenty Custom Collection Metal ride
- 19" 2002 Wild China
- 18", 19", 20", and 22" 2002 crashes
- 14" PSTX Flanger Stack
- 10" PSTX Swiss Hats
- 18" or 20" PSTX Medium Swiss crash
- 10" 602 Modern Essentials splash
- 10" Signature splash
- Prototype stack: 8" Rude splash on top of an 8" Rude Mini China
- 12" Signature Flanger Bell

Accessories: Protection Racket AAA cases, SlapKlatz drum dampeners

nervous it's from a fear of failing, which is down to preparation. My issue was how the audience perceives me. Will they all sit there with clipboards, thinking they can play something I played faster? The right answer is that the audience has come to this show to be inspired.

MD: So you went to a psychologist?

Craig: Absolutely. I was dreading taking the stage. I nearly gave up the Steven gig in the early days due to all the trolling. I had to get help. So I sat down with a guy for about six sessions and talked through all my fears.

They were unjustified, which I'm thrilled about. He said that when I walk onto a clinic stage, I should do it with a smile on my face, because people are there to learn from me. I'm there to learn from them as well.

Now I no longer say to myself that people have come to see me fail, or that I'm Marco's replacement. I just think, *As long as the boss is happy, and I'm happy, and my family is happy...* I'm paying the bills and keeping a roof over our heads. And I'm still enjoying the work. And that's all that matters. It's all bigger-picture now.



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Twenty One Pilots' Josh Dun

Phoning in on a day off between dates in Japan, the drummer opens up about his journey to success, what it takes to stay there, and the pressures of holding down the throne in one of the most popular acts of the day.

by Willie Rose

Reel Beauty Media

Josh Dun is seemingly everywhere. Currently his genre-smashing grooves are tearing their way through audiences across the world on Twenty One Pilots' tour supporting their 2015 release, *Blurryface*. A cursory glance at the duo's YouTube videos reveals staggering numbers of views. Television networks broadcast *full sets* of their performances. And singles such as "Stressed Out" leave burn marks on radio charts on their way to the top.

Besides Dun and vocalist/multi-instrumentalist Tyler Joseph's potent hooks and unique sound, which carves an

edgy pop sensibility into styles ranging from hip-hop to reggae to electronica, a specific strategy conceived early in the duo's career helped them rise out of their humble beginnings in Columbus, Ohio. Recalls Dun, "A lot of bands would think, *We have these songs that we've written and recorded, so the next logical step is to buy a van and start traveling around playing. We looked at it a bit differently. So, we have some songs written. Instead of going into a studio and spending money, let's figure out how to record them on our own in Tyler's space. And let's not buy a van and travel around, because then we're going to go*

into instant debt and spend money on gas and hotel rooms, which these shows aren't going to pay for. So we decided we'd work jobs during the week and on the weekends play in or around Ohio, and use the SUV that we already had.

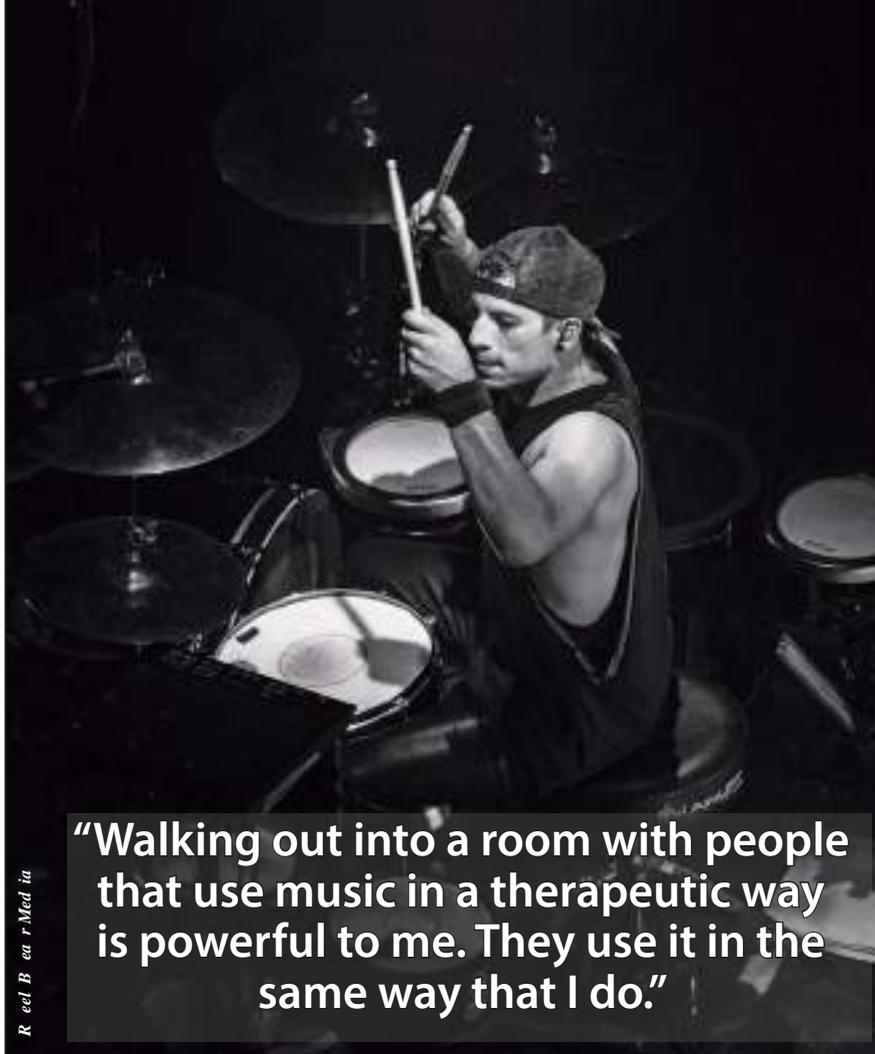
"A lot of the time," Dun goes on, "bands would travel and then post about it on Facebook or tweet about it. We looked at that a bit differently too. Let's say we have fifty fans in Columbus. Why would it make sense for us to travel to Kentucky and announce that we're playing there? All that's doing is letting those fifty people in Columbus know that we're playing three

hours away from them. Let's just play these shows and make fans—we don't need to let other people know that we're playing them. So that's what we did for a long time. And then eventually, after about a year, we'd developed these pockets of fans around Ohio and a couple surrounding states. And then we finally sent a blast out that said, 'Hey, we're doing a headlining show in Columbus, Ohio.' It was our first time ever announcing a show. We ended up selling out. That's the one that I think really started this whole thing."

Given the band's energetic performances, it's surprising to hear Dun say that its live setup, which finds him downstage, next to Joseph, is a source of anxiety for him. "I think we've both been sort of insecure since the beginning," he explains. "Being [that there's only] two of us, we both feel a bit more vulnerable. And as a drummer, I feel more exposed, because a lot of the time the drummer can be buried in the back. Honestly, when I was in high school, my biggest fear was being in front of people or having attention put on me. I'd get almost crippling anxiety, to the point where I'd have to tell my teachers that I couldn't give a presentation because I'd have a panic attack and collapse on the floor. And that's what led me to playing drums. I thought, *I don't have to stand in front of people and talk or sing, or really have too much attention brought on myself.* Being downstage now, it's been a constant learning process for me—and for Tyler, who pushes me to overcome that fear, to where I can feel comfortable being in front of people and expressing myself.

"It's interesting—the drums have always been therapeutic for me," Dun says. "I'd come home from school and play and feel a million times better. But at the same time, when I play in front of people, there's that feeling of vulnerability. But it's actually become this cool thing. A lot of people that come to shows deal with that same stuff—*anxiety, depression, whatever crazy mental stuff life throws at you.* So walking out into a room with people that use music in a therapeutic way is powerful to me. They use it in the same way that I do."

Early in the band's career, Dun and Joseph wore masks on stage—not to hide behind, but rather to stand out from other Columbus acts. In Twenty One Pilots' current live show, Dun continues to push himself to entertain crowds, playing drums, for instance, *on top of the audience*, as fans hold up his drumset. "We're always thinking, *What haven't we seen before at a live show that would be cool or different? How can we*



R eel B ea r Media

"Walking out into a room with people that use music in a therapeutic way is powerful to me. They use it in the same way that I do."

stand out? A lot of these ideas, like the mask thing, stemmed from that. How do we get people to look away from sports [on the TV] at a bar and watch what we're doing? I also think it's possible, after doing a lot of shows, to become comfortable with your set, to begin to go through the motions. Doing a backflip, or putting the drums on the crowd—I can't just go through the motions, because I'm relying on people to literally hold me up. Those are the parts of the set where I feel like: *This could go wrong.* You have to be prepared for anything, and that's the kind of thing that keeps us alert. Luckily nothing disastrous has happened yet, and I think that's a testament [to our fans] too. I think people enjoy being a part of the show, and at that moment they feel a sense of responsibility as well—it's almost up to them to make sure that we can pull this off. That's their moment."

Even between such stunts, Dun continuously excites, practically jumping from his throne while playing, and augmenting his powerful Travis Barker-influenced style with wild arm movements and expressions that he says were partly inspired by Kim Schifino of the indie dance duo Matt and Kim. "I saw them live in Columbus," Dun recalls, "and it was

the happiest I've ever been watching a drummer play. Kim bounces around a bunch and is always smiling. She's one of the most animated drummers I've ever seen. She stands up on top of her drums and plays standing up. Watching her was one of the first times I thought you don't need to be tied down to your throne the entire time; you can get creative in terms of positioning and what you do."

As Twenty One Pilots prepares to finish up in Japan and get ready to head to South America, Dun is reflective. "On the one hand I feel very humbled and blessed to be in this place in our career. I'll think, *Wow, I can't believe this is all happening.* On the other hand, Tyler and I got pretty open with each other early on, in terms of what our dreams and visions were. We both believed that this could happen, and I don't think there's anything wrong with that. As an artist—whatever you do—you *should* have big dreams, and you should believe that you can do it. There's an importance to that. So there's a balance of both of those feelings. Right now, I'm so content with where I'm at, if this ended tomorrow, then I'm okay with that. I'm super-happy with everything that we've gotten to do. Yeah, I feel *really* good about where things have gone."



The History of the Drummer Boy

Musicians have played an important role on the battlefield for centuries. Fifes, bagpipes, and trumpets have been used to instruct friends and intimidate foes. And since at least as long ago as the days of ancient Babylon, the beating of animal skins has rallied the troops on the field, sent signals between the masses, and scared enemies half to death. Sometimes the drummers given these monumental responsibilities were mere lads.

by Michael Aubrecht

During the Revolutionary War, drummers in the Continental and English ranks marched bravely into the fight with no more protection than their drums and sticks. Some of these musicians were young children, resulting in the cultural portrayal of “the little drummer boy.” Like many iconic images, the drummer boy’s popularity is the result of a certain amount of oversimplification and hearsay—but it’s also rooted in real events.

In “The Music of the Army: An Abbreviated Study of the Ages of Musicians in the Continental Army,” originally published in *The Brigade Dispatch* Vol. XXIV, No. 4, Autumn 1993, John U. Rees writes, “Boy musicians, while they did exist, were the exception rather than the rule. [Yet even] though it seems the idea of a multitude of early teenage or pre-teenage musicians in the Continental Army is a false one, the legend has some basis in fact. There were young musicians who served with the army. Fifer John Piatt of the First New Jersey Regiment was ten years old at the time of his first service in 1776, while Lamb’s Artillery Regiment drummer Benjamin Peck was ten years old at the time of his 1780 enlistment. There were also a number of musicians who were twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years old when they first served...with the army.”

Sixteen years of age, although young by today’s standards, was considered mature in the days of the American Revolution. It was also the average age of many fifers and drummers who volunteered to march in the ranks of General George Washington’s Continental Army. For example, the Eleventh Pennsylvania Regiment boasted the following drummers in its musician’s roll in 1780: Thomas Cunningham, eighteen years old; Benjamin Jeffries, fifteen; Thomas Harrington, fourteen; Samuel Nightlinger, sixteen; and David Williams, seventeen. All had in fact enlisted three years earlier, in 1777.

Despite the drummers’ noncombatant

role, many of these musicians’ war stories are as compelling as those of the fighting men around them. For instance, in a deposition given in 1845, the son-in-law of Charles Hulett, a drummer in the First New Jersey Regiment during the Revolutionary War, described Hulett as having been engaged in the battle of Monmouth, wounded in the leg, taken prisoner by the enemy, and put into captivity to the West Indies. Hulett “relieved himself from the horrors of his imprisonment” by joining the British Army as a musician, and was sent to the United States. Upon his return he deserted from the British ranks and again joined the U.S. Army under General Greene. He was present at the siege of York, and after the surrender of Cornwallis he was one of the

corps that escorted prisoners sent to be held in Winchester, Virginia. He remained in service until the end of the war, at which point he was believed to have held the rank of drum major.

It’s rare to have access to a detailed service record of a military musician, since they were primarily noncombatants. One exception is the case of John George, who served the Continental Army’s supreme commander as his personal percussionist. George’s descendants have done an exceptional job of keeping his legacy alive through public commemorations. Arville L. Funk’s study *A Sketchbook of Indiana History* includes a profile of the first “famous” American drummer. Here’s an excerpt:

In a little-known grave in southwestern Marion County, Indiana, lie the remains of an old soldier traditionally acclaimed as “George Washington’s drummer boy.” This is the grave of Sergeant John George, a Revolutionary War veteran of the First Battalion of the New Jersey Continental Line. Through extensive and alert research by Chester Swift of Indianapolis into Revolutionary War records, muster rolls, field reports, pension records, etc., there is evidence that Sergeant George might have been the personal drummer boy of Washington’s Headquarters Guard during a large portion of the Revolutionary War.... On September 8 of that year, Private George, who was listed on the company’s rolls as a drummer, fought in his first battle, a short engagement at Clay Creek, which was a prelude to the important Battle of Brandywine. Later, Ogden’s battalion was to participate in the battles of Germantown and Monmouth, serving as a part of the famous Maxwell Brigade. The Maxwell Brigade served during the entire war under the personal command of General Washington and was considered to be one of the elite units of the American army. According to John George’s service records, he served his first three-year enlistment as a private and a drummer with the brigade at a salary of \$7.30 a month. When his three-year enlistment expired, George reenlisted as a sergeant in Captain Aaron Ogden’s company of the First Battalion [Maxwell’s Brigade] for the duration of the war.

Drummer boys during the American Civil

War were younger than their predecessors but more advanced in their playing. Each drummer was required to play variations of the twenty-six rudiments. The rudiment that meant attack, for instance, was a long roll, while the rudiments for assembly and the drummer’s call were composed of series of seven-stroke rolls and flams. Additional requirements included double-stroke rolls, paradiddles, flamaddles, flam accents,

flamacues, ruffs, single and double drags, ratamacues, and sextuplets.

Many drummers learned how to play by attending the Schools of Practice at Governor’s Island, in New York Harbor, and at Newport Barracks, Kentucky, although the vast majority learned in the field. Some were aided by texts, the most popular of which was Bruce and Emmett’s *The Drummers’ and Fifers’ Guide*.

According to historian Ron Engleman, the word *rudiments* first appeared in 1812, in Charles Stewart Ashworth’s *A New Useful and Complete System of Drum Beating*. On page 3, under the heading “Rudiments for Drum Beating in General,” Ashworth describes twenty-six patterns required of drummers by contemporary British and American armies and militias. The word *rudiment*, Engleman goes on, wasn’t used again in U.S. drum manuals until 1862, in *The Drummers’ and*

Thomas Hubler was reportedly the first to enlist in his father’s company, which was assigned to the Army of the Potomac regiment throughout its campaigns in Maryland and Virginia. He was nine and a half years old.

Fifers’ Guide. And in 1869, Gardiner A. Strube’s *Drum and Fife Instructor* included a section titled “The Rudimental Principles of Drum-Beating,” comprising twenty-five individual lessons, beginning with “The Long Roll,” “The Five-Stroke Roll,” “The Seven-Stroke Roll,” and so on.

Prior to the Civil War, military drums were usually about 18" deep. Eventually they were made between 12" and 14" deep (and 16" in diameter) in order to accommodate younger drummers. Ropes were joined all around the drum and were manually tightened to create tension that stiffened the drumhead, making it playable. The drums were hung low from leather straps, necessitating the use of traditional grip. Regulation drumsticks were usually made from rosewood and were 16"

to 17" in length. Ornamental paintings were very common on Civil War drums, which often displayed pictures of Union eagles and Confederate shields.

The younger the drummer, the more difficulty he would have lugging around these cumbersome instruments. However, that aspect didn't deter boys from taking up drumming, and they sometimes ran away from home to do so, as the life of a military drummer seemed glamorous. This impression was encouraged by nineteenth-century artists and poets, who idealized the image of the boy drummer.

Twelve-year-old Union drummer William Black was the youngest person on record to be wounded in battle during the American Civil War (1861–65), and it's believed that the youngest soldier killed during the American Civil War was a thirteen-year-old drummer named Charles King, who'd enlisted in the Forty-Ninth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry with the reluctant permission of his father. On September 17, 1862, at the Battle of Antietam, King was mortally wounded in the area of the East Woods. He was carried from the battlefield to a nearby field hospital, where he died three days later.

One of the most famous drummers was John Clem, who'd unofficially joined a Union Army regiment at age nine as a drummer and mascot. Young Johnny became famous as the "the Drummer Boy of Chickamauga," where he is said to have shot a Confederate officer who'd demanded his surrender.

Among the young musicians in the Union Army were those who marched with the U.S. Colored Troops. Unlike their counterparts in the South, African-Americans, both free men and former slaves, were looked upon as soldiers and not as camp servants. Grateful for their newfound freedom, many Southern slaves savored the opportunity to line up in the Union ranks and raise their muskets toward their former oppressors. Free men from the North took the opportunity to serve as their brothers' keepers. Throughout the war their drummer boys provided essential camp and field communications.

One African-American drummer boy of particularly noteworthy service was Alexander H. Johnson. At the age of sixteen, Johnson—who was adopted by William Henry Johnson, the second black lawyer in the United States and a close associate of abolitionist Frederick Douglass—was the first African-American musician to enlist in the U.S. military, joining the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Volunteers under Colonel Robert Gould Shaw in 1863. He was with the unit when it left Boston for James Island,



Young boys would sometimes run away from home to enlist. The life of a military drummer seemed glamorous.

South Carolina, where it fought its first battle. The skirmish, along the coast near Charleston, occurred on July 16, 1863. Two days later the Fifty-Fourth unsuccessfully stormed Confederate-held Fort Wagner on Morris Island while sustaining massive casualties, including its commanding officer.

Johnson remained in the Fifty-Fourth until the end of the war. In the summer of 1865 he returned to Massachusetts, bringing the drum he'd carried at Fort Wagner. Four years later he married, settled in Worcester, Massachusetts, and organized Johnson's Drum Corps. He led the band as drum major and styled himself "the Major." In 1897 a memorial to the Fifty-Fourth sculpted by artist Augustus Saint-Gaudens was unveiled in Boston. The bronze relief [shown behind the pull quote on this page] depicts Colonel Shaw and his men leaving Boston for the South with a young drummer in the lead. In 1904, Johnson visited the monument during an event hosted by the Grand Army of the Republic, the influential association of Union veterans. Many of those in attendance pointed out the resemblance of the young lead drummer, and it's said that Johnson felt a great sense of pride for his participation in the war. Today the statue remains as a timeless tribute both to Johnson and the men he served.

On the Southern side of the Civil War, an eleven-year-old drummer in the Confederate Kentucky Orphan Brigade known only as "Little Oirish" was credited with rallying troops at the Battle of Shiloh by taking up the regimental colors at a critical moment and signaling the reassembly of the line of battle.

Another noted drummer boy was Louis Edward Rafield of the Twenty-First Alabama Infantry, Co. K, which was known as the Mobile Cadets. Rafield enlisted at the age of eleven, and at age twelve, at the Battle of Shiloh, he somehow lost his drum. Rafield managed to commandeer another drum

from the opposing troops and kept on going, thus earning the title of "the Drummer Boy of Shiloh."

According to an article in the Indiana, Pennsylvania, *Democrat* from November 15, 1883, there was a drummer boy whose youth eclipsed them all. Thomas Hubler, according to the story, was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on October 9, 1851, and two years later moved with his family to Warsaw, Indiana. When war broke out, his father, a former German soldier, raised a company of men in response to President Lincoln's first call for 75,000 troops. On April 19, 1861, at the age of nine years and six months, "Little Tommy" was reportedly the first to enlist in his father's company, which was assigned to the Army of the Potomac regiment throughout its campaigns in Maryland and Virginia. When his term of service expired in August 1862, Little Tommy reenlisted and served until the end of the war. He was said to have been present in twenty-six battles and to have beaten the first long roll of the Civil War.

As the years passed, the drum was eventually replaced on the battlefield with the bugle, although it often returned during veteran reunions. Many of the Civil War's drummers had gone on to become drum majors or drum instructors themselves.

No one can dispute the service of the drummer boys who left the safety of their homes and firesides to serve their respective cause in a man's war. It's unfortunate that their contributions are so often overlooked. Their legacy lives on, however. Today America's armed forces boast some of the most talented musicians in the country, with many of them still playing traditional instruments and cadences.

Michael Aubrecht is a drum and Civil War historian whose books include *The Civil War in Spotsylvania* and *FUNDamentals of Drumming for Kids*, the latter cowritten with Rich Redmond.





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When it comes to personal and material safety, a working musician can never be too careful. While trusting your instincts is rule number one, following these common-sense tips can help you have a worry-free tour experience.

by Kim Kicks

On the Road

Whether you're at the service station pumping gas, grabbing that energy drink to keep you going on your ten-hour drive to the next show, or loading gear into and out of venues and rehearsal studios, always lock the doors to your car or van. I know of far too many musicians who've had gear stolen while running it between vehicle and venue. Even if someone is waiting at the trunk and tag-teaming it into the club, lock the car doors each time, because people are quick and shifty—or, as we say in Australia, "dodgy."

On the road we often have to leave our gear in the van overnight. If this is the case for you, cover everything with a dark sheet and pack it as flat as possible. Never leave anything in sight on or under the seats. Reverse your vehicle into parking spots whenever possible, and take the most difficult-to-replace items, such as guitars and cymbals, inside with you. Every now and then my brother, Pete, even takes

the extra step of sleeping with his Gibson Explorer (though I think that *might* be overkill).

When stopping somewhere to eat, day or night, aim to have your vehicle in sight at all times. I also recommend taking out insurance on your equipment. Hopefully you'll never have to use it, but you know how these things work: The time you don't have it is inevitably when things go missing. [See the sidebar for more on insurance.]

Always have a combination lock on your bag or suitcase. This might not keep it from being stolen, but if you're staying at someone's house and they have a party or random guests over, a lock will deter people from nabbing items within it. And always lock your wallet and any valuables in your bag. Combination locks are better because there's no key to lose, which is good for people like me who tend to misplace pretty much everything.

If you're paid in cash on the road, be discreet and lock it away in a bag that's

within sight or on you at all times. Get to a bank to deposit the cash as soon as possible; besides preventing theft, this also acts as a deterrent from fellow band members spending it on booze!

Behind the Wheel

Exhibiting complete attention on the road is so important. Always choose a designated driver who will limit alcohol consumption to one or two drinks throughout the evening.

Touring means there's often going to be a long drive in the middle of the night to the next destination. I can't stress enough that you should pull over when you're feeling even slightly tired. The saying "drowsy drivers die" was unfortunately coined because it *happens*. You'll get where you're going eventually, and better late than not at all.

That said, I have found ways to lessen the effect of drowsiness, including the use of essential oils, playing upbeat music, and

getting fresh air. Stop and stretch every two hours, even if just for a few minutes. Rotate drivers every couple of hours as well if you can. Even if you believe you can keep driving, these methods actually make traveling more efficient, because you lessen the number of long breaks you'll eventually need to take. Also, never allow yourself to get extremely hungry—which leads to “hangry”—and always stay hydrated. Be sure to have nutritious snacks, water, and chewing gum or mints on hand in the car.

I've also found peppermint oil to be effective. It freshens up the smell of the van, plus it acts as a stress reliever for your muscles, has a calming effect on your mood, and awakens the senses when breathed in. I put a couple of drops in my palms and rub it into my shoulders before driving. Just be careful not to get it in your eyes. You can also dilute it with a bit of moisturizer. I've discovered that it helps soothe the pain from sleeping on floors and couches, from throwing my head and body around on stage, and from being cramped in a van for hours. Most important, it helps keep me alert when driving.

Another idea is to mix some peppermint, lemon, and eucalyptus oils (those koalas know what they're doing) in a little spray bottle and spritz it every now and then in the van to keep the space smelling a little better.

I'm a strong believer in not smoking weed before driving, regardless of the local marijuana laws. Most people who smoke swear that it makes them a better driver, but the fact of the matter is, it slows down your reaction time. When driving, not only are you taking your own life into your hands, but you're potentially affecting the lives of your fellow travelers *and* everyone else sharing the road with you.

Learn how to change a tire and to check the oil, coolant, and other fluid levels in your car's engine. And in addition to your personal-item coverage, get roadside insurance. Again, you may never need it, but when a blowout leaves you stranded on the freeway somewhere in the middle of Texas on a Sunday night, you'll be grateful to have it. And, yes, that happened to us, but I'll save the details of *that* story for another time.

Finally, be aware of the downside to all the technology that's otherwise made touring easier. Phone calls, texts, satellite radio, and GPS screens can be a huge distraction while you're in transit, especially during long hauls. All it takes is a split-second lapse in concentration and it could all be over. I personally know people who

The Importance of Insurance

If you're someone who performs in public, it's a good idea to carry some type of liability insurance. Pricing starts as low as \$200 a year.

I use a policy that covers both me and the band that I run, Into the Spin. This type of insurance protects us against things such as accidental property damage. For example, if we're doing a soundcheck and an electrical fire occurs, we're covered. If our bassist puts a big dent in the wall while setting up his cabinet, we're covered. Liability insurance is also useful if patrons or employees are accidentally injured while you're carrying equipment into and out of the venue. Suppose someone falls if I bump into them while carrying my bass drum case—I'm protected.

Speaking of injuries, if music is your livelihood, I highly recommend having accidental insurance for yourself. I learned this the hard way. A few years ago I had a weightlifting injury and it messed up my rotator cuff. Performing and teaching is my income, not to mention my life's passion. I could do neither. Even though I had health insurance, there were deductibles for X-rays, the MRI, and physical-therapy sessions. There was a big out-of-pocket expense for me.

I later decided to pick up supplemental accident insurance with Aflac. It's only \$50 per month and a complete no-brainer. Suppose your doctor recommends twelve physical-therapy sessions, which your regular health insurance will cover. You could also submit the doctor's treatment plan to Aflac and be paid for those twelve sessions at \$35 apiece. This is now cash in your pocket to put toward other bills. If you're injured, the last thing you need is financial stress. Supplemental insurance like this can provide peace of mind.

Of course, even if you do carry health insurance, it makes sense to try your best to avoid injury in the first place. Many rooms that musicians perform in have very dim lighting. Whether you're getting on and off the stage or moving equipment, be aware of steps, ramps, and the like. Accidents can happen when we exit the stage after an exciting set. Our adrenaline is pumped and we feel invincible. I've jarred my back several times when not being aware that the terrain outside was lower than the club.

And be mindful of your movements. As drummers, we're constantly lifting and transporting gear. Oftentimes we're doing so in a hurry. I find it helpful to remind myself to be smart when using my body. For example, when lifting cases from a vehicle, try to use your entire arm and allow the bigger muscles to work together. Injuries can occur when you lift only from the shoulder joint, so remember to flex your knees when bending down and coming back up. Doing the little things will help you avoid big headaches! **Jeremy Hummel**

Jeremy was a founding member of Breaking Benjamin and is currently with the jazz trio Electric Volcano Experiment and the eight-piece horn band Into the Spin.

have permanent disabilities—or who are no longer with us—as a result of reckless driving. We've had some very close calls ourselves due to someone driving while tired or looking at their phone. So if it's you at the wheel, ask someone else in the car to pass you water or a snack, change the music, or whatever, and do the same for them when you're a passenger. And, of course, always wear a seat belt.

On the Street

As a girl, although I may be tough on my drums and experienced in martial arts, street safety is always in the back of my mind. You learn to trust your gut instinct, which is one of the most important senses other than common sense to follow.

I walk in Hollywood at night to our rehearsal studio, and at times I feel a bit unsafe. At moments like these, particularly if someone is walking behind me at just the right pace to seem suspicious, I always keep my keys between my fingers, ready to poke their eye out if it should ever come to that. I also usually have my phone ready to dial my brother or someone else I can talk to loudly while walking, before starting into a quick jog.

When walking, always try to make

eye contact with drivers before crossing the road. People these days seem to be trapped in their own bubble, without much awareness of their surroundings. This is especially dangerous where cars and pedestrians share the same space.

We all wind up in unplanned places every now and then on the road, so it's important to let your crew know where you are at all times. Don't end up having a fact-based horror movie written about you. In whatever town my band is playing, when heading out to party after a show, I always get the address and contact info of wherever I'm going and give it to our tour manager or my brother. I also send a text later on, just to let them know I'm okay.

In the Club

Most of us like to socialize after a show. Make sure that you or someone you trust is always near your equipment. Things can be snatched very quickly, whether on purpose by a thief or mistakenly by other bands or their crew.

It's a bit hard to chase down snare drums and cymbal bags once they've been packed by another band—you might not notice until the group has left town. We once had to do that with a band who mistakenly

Staying Safe On Tour

left with one of our guitars; thankfully they were only half an hour away and offered to turn back around to return it. One time in Europe we had a video camera swiped from right under our noses. Attempting to file a police report in a foreign country where the officers didn't speak English was definitely an interesting experience.

Make it more difficult for potential thieves in the club by never leaving your gear in plain view. When loading off stage, try to keep everything in one spot, preferably in a corner of the room that's away from any entrances to the venue. Put smaller or more important items, such as kick-pedal bags, snare cases, and guitars, close to the wall behind trap cases and larger drums. Be aware of all your equipment and your surroundings at all times.

At merch tables, if you keep a tip jar set up, as soon as someone puts anything larger than a five-dollar bill inside, whoever is manning the table should take it out and put it somewhere safe.

Before leaving a venue, always do a dummy check. Once the van is loaded, have two people—band members or crew—head back in to check the stage and surrounding areas for any cables, sticks, or other pieces of equipment that were somehow missed

Love Your Body and Mind, and They'll Love You Back!

On the road, just like everywhere else in life, our physical and mental health is super-important. Without it, we can't function effectively.

As an indie band on tour, we sleep on many floors, couches, and uncomfortable beds. It's all part of the fun, but it can become strenuous on the body and mind.

Doing even a few minutes of stretching in the morning, during the road trip, and before and after the show, eating as healthily as possible, and trying to sleep as much as you can will all help relieve stress in your mind and body, not to mention make you a better person to be around for your bandmates and crew. It will also help you avoid unnecessary injuries.

If you're anything like me, you put your whole body into your drumming—I nearly give myself whiplash at every gig. Without stretching, deep breathing, and (mostly) eating healthily, I believe I would be a lot more messed up and sore than I am. When drinking alcohol after a show, it's always smart to have a glass of water between each drink. (I know, so much easier said than done!)

I also carry a heat bag, which can double as an ice pack, and painkillers. Icing your neck and shoulders before going to bed is a great pain reliever, as is applying a heat bag to your shoulders, lower back, or belly. It acts as an awesome heater and helps induce sleep for a better night's rest.

When sitting for extended periods as a passenger in the car or van, roll your wrists and ankles around, and stretch your neck and shoulders. Also, massage is the best—made even better if someone else gives you one! Bottom line, give yourself a bit of love, and life on the road will be that much less painful.

during teardown. More often than you'd imagine, something gets left on or near the stage, like drumsticks...or a stray band member attempting to chat up the bartender!

At the Bar

Keeping cool in the face of personal confrontations is one of the more important safety tips I have to offer. It's also one of the most difficult to follow, especially when

you're faced with unprofessional, stubborn, or drunk people.

We've had our fair share of having to deal with unsavory bookers, venue managers, bartenders, and the like. When you're on the road, it's harder to maintain composure while confronting stressful situations, but it's the most important time to do so. Making it especially difficult is the likelihood that your emotions are heightened due to lack of food or sleep, long hours on the road, or any number of physical and mental stresses.

People can switch from being charming one minute to completely irrational the next. This is often due to drug or alcohol use, but sometimes it's just that the person is on an ego trip. As much as your inner animal wants to tangle with them, the best solution is to stay calm while succinctly making your point—less is more during an argument. Still, people hear and believe what they want. Fights can break out pretty easily, and obviously that's best avoided. More times than I care to admit, we've encountered situations on the road where I *didn't* stay calm, and in retrospect I put myself and my friends in danger of getting physically harmed, or worse. Often the wisest decision is to calmly walk away from a confrontation rather than trying to make things right.

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Kim Kicks and her brother, Pete, make up the indie-rock duo Satellite Sky, whose most recent release is the *Magnetize EP*.





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WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...?

Joe Butler

The Lovin' Spoonful burned brighter than most bands in the '60s—perhaps too bright for its own good. But the singing drummer who made a habit of beating the odds, in an era when studio cats regularly ghost-drummed on major productions, continues to keep the candle lit.



by Bob Girouard

For a few years in the mid-'60s, the Lovin' Spoonful regularly appeared at the top of the pop charts with a brand of "good-time music," as the band called it, that blended jug band, folk, country, rock, and a bit of psychedelia. The hits, including "Do You Believe in Magic," "You Didn't Have to Be So Nice,"

"Daydream," "Did You Ever Have to Make Up Your Mind," and the sizzling "Summer in the City," were distinct from one another—and from much of the other pop singles on the charts at the time, which were inevitably recorded by groups of professional studio musicians such as the famed Wrecking Crew. The

Spoonful was proudly self-contained, and Joe Butler's open-ended drumming was a big part of its sound. A self-taught "feel" player, Butler had a natural ability to effortlessly blend styles and create patterns that were essential to the success of the Spoonful's songs.

"I got into music by osmosis," says

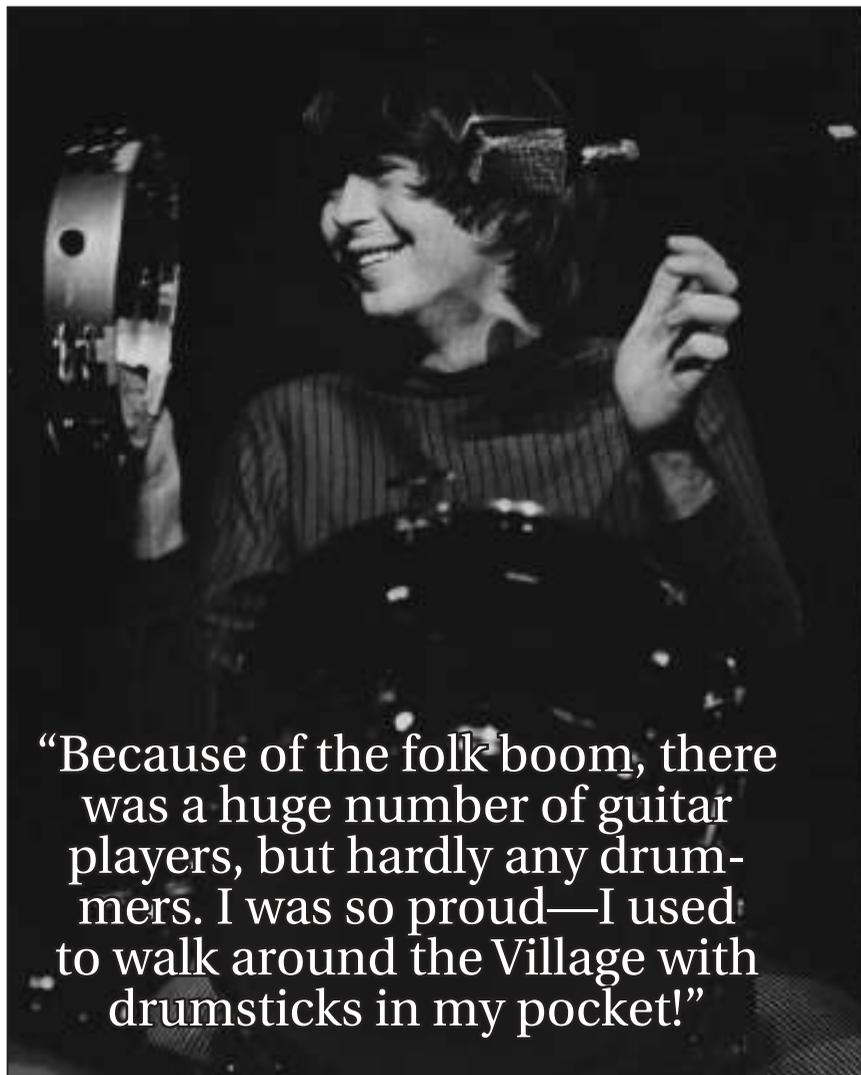


Butler, who was raised in Great Neck, Long Island. “My father played spoons, and my mother always sang. Her claim to fame was that she once lost a singing contest to Frank Sinatra. Coming from Irish heritage, I was no stranger to performing songs like ‘Danny Boy’ at family get-togethers. I was fourteen

when I began to play drums and sing in local bands, mostly rockabilly things like early Elvis and Johnny Cash. But I also did stuff like ‘Lady of Spain,’ so our accordionist could make his bellows shake!”

Butler regularly ventured into New York City to catch jazz greats like Gene

the group was Skip Boone, brother of future Spoonful bassist Steve Boone. “In 1964 I decided that we’d better get to Greenwich Village or we’d miss out on what was happening musically,” Butler recalls, “so we changed our name to the Sellouts. Two guys that would frequent our gigs were John Sebastian and



“Because of the folk boom, there was a huge number of guitar players, but hardly any drummers. I was so proud—I used to walk around the Village with drumsticks in my pocket!”

Krupa, Buddy Rich, Art Blakey, and Louie Bellson. “After seeing all of them,” the drummer recalls, “I realized I could never be that good. It was something beyond just training, like a divine gift. But who really did it for me was timbale master Tito Puente. I used to go to the Palladium, and I learned all those Latin dances.”

On Long Island Butler was in a band called the Kingsmen—no relation to the group of “Louie Louie” fame—which played what Joe describes as “a mix of everything from folk music to the Beatles to polkas.” The bassist in

[guitarist] Zal Yanovsky. Because of the folk boom, there was a huge number of guitar players, but hardly any drummers. I was so proud—I used to walk around the Village with drumsticks in my pocket!”

Butler, Sebastian, Yanovsky, and Steve Boone eventually joined forces, set up shop at the Albert Hotel, and began rehearsing. After cutting five demos with producer Erik Jacobsen for Elektra Records, they eventually landed with Kama Sutra Records. The rhythm section of Butler and Boone became tight, intuitive, and stage tested; the pair

CUSTOM DRUMSTICKS



by **RichSticks**
g o d e s i g n y o u r c

Joe Butler

instinctively played off one another and provided nuanced support to Sebastian and Yanovsky's hooks and melodies. Vocal chops allowed Butler to occasionally take the mic on album tracks—and served him especially well when Sebastian left the band in 1968. “My drum seat was set very high because I was always singing,” Butler says. “What I felt I brought to the Spoonful was the fact that I was a singing drummer who knew how to support the vocalists, meaning I had an innate feel for dynamics.”

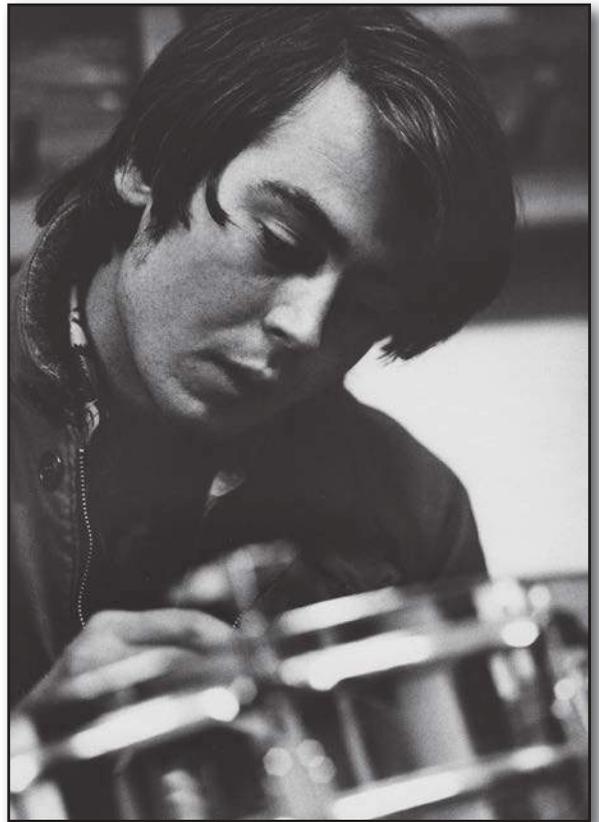
Despite the Spoonful's success in the '60s, the group was done by the start of the new decade—victims, like so many other pop musicians over the decades, of a combination of bad luck and worse business deals. “We never got a penny for any of our recordings until 1991,” Butler explains, “when we finally renegotiated with Sony, resulting in a more modern accounting of our catalog. You get kind of beat down by it. It's like Stockholm syndrome, where you start to like your jailer. Don't forget, these people were brilliant manipulators. They robbed from you because they believed in you.”

The group members weren't helping their own situation, either. “Zally and John were having their differences,” Butler recalls. “John was rather self-immersed at the time—dealing with the draft, divorce, and racking up his credit card mercilessly. And Zally was unhappy and made no bones about it. He was on all of us, and quite frankly was just miserable to be around. We replaced him with Jerry Yester, who remained with us for exactly one hundred days. Our last show was in Richmond, Virginia—I remember that Tiny Tim opened for us—and we regrettably folded the tent in 1969.”

Post-Spoonful, Butler focused much of his energy in the theater, initially

by playing the lead role of Claude in the Broadway production of *Hair*. He became a founding member of the Circle Theatre Company, with which he acted, wrote, and directed a number of projects. Butler still makes his home in Greenwich Village, and he even passed on his passion for drama to his daughter, the successful actress Yancy Butler.

But the music never left, and Butler wouldn't allow a failed attempt in the '90s to reconvene with Sebastian and Yanovsky to dictate the end of the Spoonful. Moving to the front of the stage as lead singer, acoustic guitar player, and autoharpist, Butler, alongside Steve Boone and Jerry Yester, once



again took the group's joyous music to the masses. Today the band is rounded out by Phil Smith on second guitar and twenty-year vet Mike Arturi on drums.

In 2000 the Lovin' Spoonful was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and the four original members performed “Did You Ever Have to Make Up Your Mind” and “Do You Believe in Magic.” The latter was an especially appropriate choice, epitomizing the ideal of hopefulness that continues to draw fans young and old to the group's unique music to this day.





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Raphael Mura

When the leader of the lauded French post-punk trio Underground Railroad joined the rising neo-psych band Purson, he honed his drumming approach by leaning on indie-rock influences and investigating prog pioneers.

by Ken Micallef

A veteran of the indie and punk scenes in France and the U.K., thirty-two-year-old Raphael Mura plays the psychedelic cosmology of the London rockers Purson like Ringo Starr channeling Black Flag's Bill Stevenson. Mura's nimble groove and resonant, rousing fills can also be heard in his band Underground Railroad, as well as with the London-based rhythm warriors Gum Takes Tooth and the duo John & Jehn (featuring Jehnny Beth of the English post-punk quartet Savages).

Purson's *Desire's Magic Theatre* is a truncheon-wielding journey, forged on one end by bandleader/vocalist/demonology devotee Rosalie "Rosie" Cunningham and on the other by the good-natured Mura. The band has won dozens of U.K. awards; the U.S. will soon heed its call and behold the crunching psychedelia that flows freely from Mura's lashing rhythms.

MD: What is the essence of Purson's sound?

Raphael: The band is very much influenced by the 1970s psychedelic and progressive rock scenes, like King Crimson, Black Sabbath, Caravan—very underground music from back in the day. I love bands like Can and Faust too.

MD: Were the drummers from the Canterbury scene an influence on your drumming?

Raphael: No, I'm very much into my own era. I contribute a lot to the band by having external influences. We all really enjoy that. When I was ten my brothers played me the records of the Cure, Nirvana, and punk rock. I love Sonic Youth's Steve Shelley, Fugazi's Brendan Canty, and Black Flag's Bill Stevenson. They were my main influences, and, of course, Mr. Dave Grohl. I would drum to Nirvana's *Nevermind* constantly,

blasting the records really loud. Playing fast and furiously was my thing, and I still have a lot of energy. Rosie and the guys got me into more progressive music like Caravan. Jazz drumming was interesting too.

MD: Your drumming with Purson is very Ringo Starr-like.

Raphael: Exactly. I am a bit like Ringo; my drumming has that swing. Rosie loves that. And we're all Beatles fans. When they first started talking about the Beatles and Ringo, I was charmed. Ringo was great, and Keith Moon too. That's the kind of style I seem to be able to naturally produce.

MD: Punk-rock drummers play ahead of the beat, but Ringo was often behind the beat, if only slightly.

Raphael: With Purson it's very loose, and Rosie likes that. I'm playing behind the beat. There's often no click with Purson. Rosie doesn't want the band to

sound modern in the recording studio. No processing. I was used to playing with the click track in my own projects and as a session drummer. But Rosie wants me to do my own thing, and it naturally happened that I always had this swing and groove in me. It opened an amazing door that's been really magical. We play with a lot of feel. I hear the music and let myself go and don't think about rhythms. There are some odd-metered bars in Purson's music too.

MD: Did you record live takes on *Desire's Magic Theatre*, or are the drums overdubbed and assembled in Pro Tools?

Raphael: They're full live band takes recorded to tape. I'm playing a 1960s Premier set that was in the studio; I also endorse Premier. My cymbals are vintage 1960s Zyns. They were made by Premier back in the day.

MD: What did you practice as a student of drumming?

Raphael: I still play along with John Bonham, absolutely. I worked on his half-time shuffle from "Fool in the Rain" a lot. And Bernard Purdie; I follow his online videos where he teaches the Purdie shuffle. For me it's about practicing what improves your technique and what makes you happy. I've also taught myself by playing in bands. [Playing along to Nirvana's] *Nevermind* and *In Utero* really helped me a lot. I practiced to Black Sabbath's *Paranoid*. Bill Ward is an amazing musician. Those were the most important records to me.

MD: Did you write for Underground Railroad?

Raphael: Yes, Underground Railroad was my band. We recorded three albums: *Twisted Trees, Sticks and Stones*, and *White Night Stand*. We were together for nearly ten years; we moved from Paris to London in 2005. We were very much a post-punk band influenced by the Velvet Underground, Television, and Suicide. I played drums and sang lead vocals. We created songs by jamming in the studio.

MD: How did you learn to sing and play drums simultaneously?

Raphael: It came very naturally to me. I had the melody and lyric in mind, so I just went for it. I sing harmonies in Purson as well.

Tools of the Trade

Mura plays a Premier Elite Maple kit with a 5.5x14 snare, a 12x14 tom, 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms, and a 14x22 bass drum. His cymbals include an 18" Sabian XS20 medium-thin crash, 14" 1960s-era 5 Star Super Zyn hi-hats, and a 20" '60s-era 5 Star Super Zyn ride. He uses Promark Forward 5B .550" hickory teardrop wood-tip sticks and Meinl MPM1 Big Felt Heads medium-hard mallets.

MD: Purson is a great live band. Do you perform the album from start to finish, like a suite?

Raphael: Exactly. Rosie's concept is to present the album like a performance. It takes you on a journey.

MD: What's been key to your success?

Raphael: I believe in playing with as many bands as possible. Technique is not my main focus. It's about being creative and playing for the songs. Feel comes naturally, and being in a great project will help you be more creative. I also have a side project

writing and performing Krautrock-style music where I sing and play the drums.

MD: You have a great drum sound. You really let the drums breathe.

Raphael: I used to smash my drums, absolutely. But I got bored with that. I'm not twenty anymore, and I enjoy playing with more precision now. The energy is still there. But some songs need a bit more dynamics to help the band perform and to mix better on stage. I can play heavy—no problem. But it's also important to be musical.



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Interview by John DeChristopher

The Rolling Stones' Charlie Watts

Drums:

- A. 6x14 DW maple snare
- B. 8x12 rack tom
- C. 16x16 floor tom
- D. 14x22 bass drum

Cymbals:

- 1. 14" Zildjian New Beat hi-hats ('60s)
- 2. 20" Zildjian Oriental Crash of Doom
- 3. 18" UFIP Natural series China
- 4. 18" flat ride ('60s, unknown manufacturer)
- 5. 16" A Zildjian & Cie Vintage series crash
- 6. 18" UFIP Experience series China with twelve brass rivets

Hardware: vintage Rogers and Gretsch cymbal stands, Ludwig Speed King bass drum pedal, vintage Ludwig throne, and DW 7300 snare stand

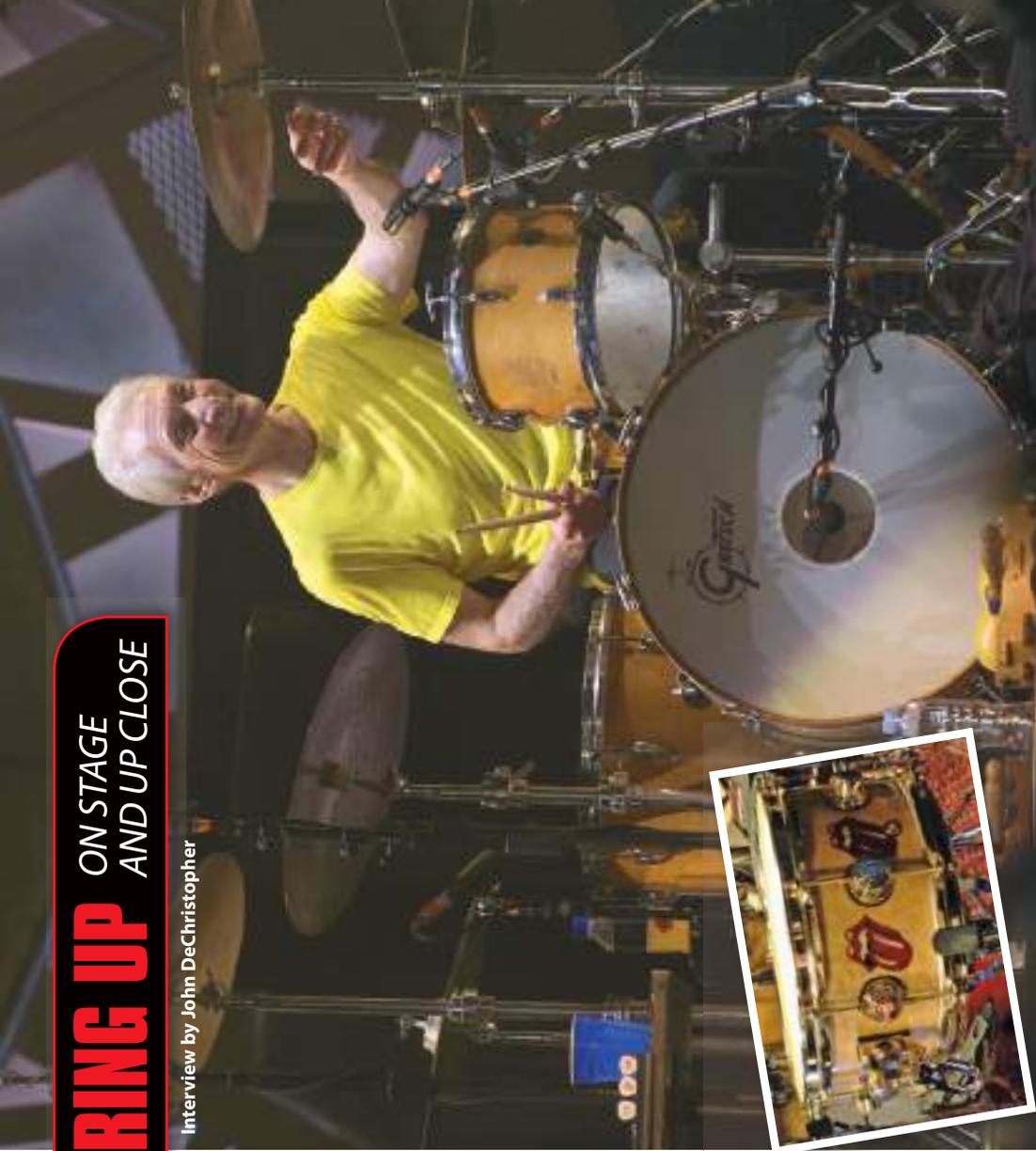
Sticks: Vic Firth Charlie Watts signature model, Jazz brushes, and American Custom T6 mallets; Promark rods; Calato Blasticks

Charlie Watts played Ludwig drums during the Rolling Stones' early years, but in 1968 he began playing Gretsch. It wasn't until 1978, however, that he acquired this '57 maple kit. Watts rented it from SIR that year to track a solo record for Stones guitarist Ronnie Wood, and he fell in love with it. He began using the kit live during the *Some Girls* tour, and it's been his mainstay ever since. Says Watts, "They're very comfortable for me to play."

The bass drum has eight lugs, original Gretsch spurs, a Ludwig tom mount, and a Ludwig anchor from the '60s. The toms have Gretsch's standard die-cast hoops, and their original tone controls have been removed. The bass drum has a Jimmy Pratt Tone Control felt mute and an Evans EQ Pad for additional muffling. The kit was refinished at some point, and it's not known what the original wrap was.

In regards to Watts' DW hard-maple snare, company vice president John Good says, "It's a 10-plus-6-ply ten-lug drum with a bird's-eye-maple outer veneer. The tongue inlays are lasered from red poplar, black basswood, and sycamore. The drum has gold hardware, a Mag throw-off and three-position butt plate, True Hoops, True-Pitch tension rods, and True-Tone wires. The bearing edges are cut to sixty degrees with an 1/8" round-over from the outside. The shell is polyurethaned inside and out."

Charlie uses a Rogers Swiv-O-Matic Swan Leg hi-hat stand with a hinged heel from the early '70s, a Ludwig Speed King pedal from the '60s, and Gretsch Tech-Ware straight cymbal stands from the '80s.



His rack tom is mounted on a DW snare basket in a Gretsch Tech-Ware base. The kit sits on a custom rug with cutouts for the bass drum and hi-hat.

"Charlie's drums have taken a lot of wear and tear from touring," says Watts' tech, Don McAulay, "so keeping them in top shape is essential. The drums are constructed of maple/gum shells, which visibly show the two-tone wood colors that Gretsch would have typically wrapped. Also, his choice of cymbals is unique."

Charlie's 18" flat ride is believed to be a UFIP, but there's no name on it. The drummer bought it second-hand in Paris in the 1970s and has used it with the Stones since the band's 1989 *Steel Wheels* tour. "The flat ride is a one-off," Charlie adds. "I've never heard another one like it."



5

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Fundamental Fills

Part 1: Solid 16th Notes

by Donny Gruendler

The abundant amount of educational material on the market can overwhelm many students and aspiring professional drummers. Due to limited practice schedules or performance opportunities, some drummers fail to see how to implement new or practical material into their daily routines. Worse, others neglect practical information altogether in hopes of becoming the next superhuman, speed-obsessed drummer or soloist.

This five-part series will help you develop modest, effective, and solid fills, and they're built using single strokes, right-hand-lead phrases, and more complex patterns, such as six-stroke rolls. Let's get started!

Solid Singles: 16th Notes

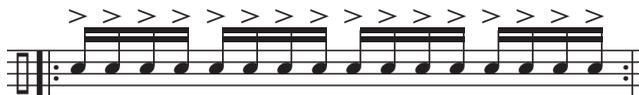
Many of today's drummers are trained in metronomic timing, reading, and stylistic diversity. However, some of these individuals overlook an important drumming concept: playing solid, assertive, and effective fills. Drummers with solid time and technique can enhance their groove by leading a band through an arrangement alongside simple and unyielding fills. Conversely, when drummers' transitions are weak or erratic, they undermine the music.

To begin, let's work through a series of 16th-note single-stroke exercises. Here's our main pattern, or ostinato, followed by some fill fragments.

Main Pattern



One-Measure Fill Fragments



Fill Creation

Here's a demonstration of how to work through each one-measure fill fragment alongside the main pattern. First pick one bar from Exercise 2. In this case, we'll use measure 2.



Using a metronome set to 80 bpm with an 8th-note subdivision, play the main pattern during the first three beats of the slash notation and play snare rimshots on the accented 16th notes on beat 4. Put together, the exercise looks like this.



Once the previous steps are comfortable, move the accented 16th notes on beat 4 around the drums. Here's an example.



Follow this same procedure alongside another fill fragment. In this instance we'll use measure 5 from Exercise 2.



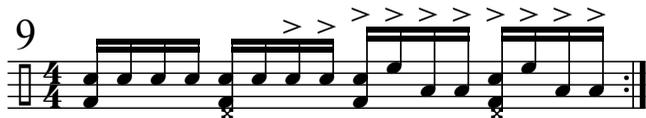
Again, using a metronome set to 80 bpm with an 8th-note subdivision, play the main pattern on beat 1 and on the first 8th note of beat 2. Starting on the "&" of beat 2, play snare rimshots for the remaining accented 16th notes to finish out the measure. Here's the full exercise.



Once the previous steps are comfortable, freely move the fill around the drums.



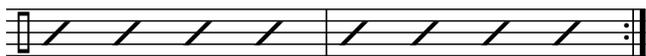
Here's another voicing idea.



Repeat this process for each fill fragment.

Fill Practice

Now pick any groove within your repertoire and practice fills using the following method. To begin, play three bars of time and then a fill in measure 4.



Fill —

The following example demonstrates this method using the fifth fill fragment from Exercise 2.



Once comfortable, orchestrate the exercise around the drums. Here's an option. Repeat this process for each fill fragment.



The amount of orchestrations and variations you can come up with using these fragments is unending. But remember that we're striving to develop commanding, confident, and simple fills rather than intricate or syncopated patterns. See you next month!

Donny Gruendler is a Los Angeles-based drummer and president of Musicians Institute in Hollywood. He can be reached at donny@donnygruendler.com.



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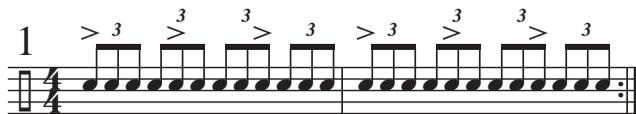
Part 2: Getting Creative Around the Kit

by Steve Fidyk

In this lesson, we'll focus on variations of the converted triplet phrases from Part 1 [May 2016]. When practicing new material, I find it beneficial to explore as many different combinations as possible. By doing so, I'm more apt to apply this information in the real world outside of the practice room.

In the following variations, we'll build off of the first exercise in Part 1. Once you have control of each variation, I encourage you to apply them to the additional two-measure phrases that we previously covered.

When we converted Example 1 from Part 1 to triplets, we ended up with a two-measure phrase with accents that outline a half-note triplet.



This variation for movement around the drums places the accents on the toms and the unaccented 8th-note triplets on the snare.

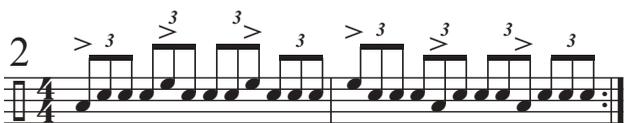


Photo: Melanie Ross

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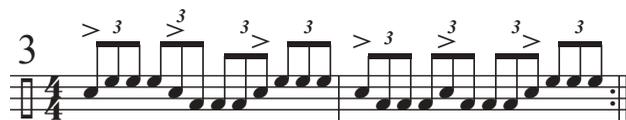
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Once that is under control, try placing the accents on the snare and the unaccented 8th-note triplets on the toms.

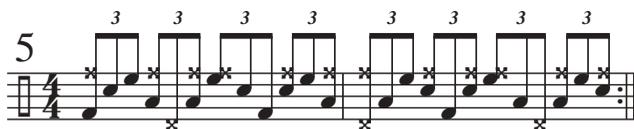


Now try using a double-stroke-roll sticking. This helps alter the phrasing and feel without changing the rhythmic content.



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

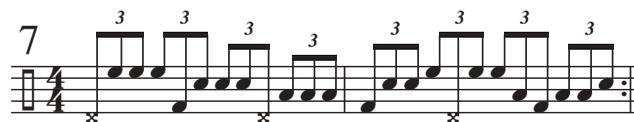
For coordination practice, alternate the accented 8th notes between the hi-hat and bass drum as you voice your left hand around the drumset.



For other variations, you can use bass drum substitutions. Try moving each accent to the bass drum as you move the unaccented 8th notes around the kit.



Next, try playing the hi-hat in tandem with the bass drum.



As you did with the material from Part 1, try applying these ideas to other accented-8th-note reading material. I also encourage you to write your own two-measure patterns, convert them to triplets, and get creative moving them around the drumset. Next time we'll use the half-note triplet as a device to superimpose a new tempo over the existing pulse.

Steve Fidyk has performed with Terell Stafford, Tim Warfield, Dick Oatts, Doc Severinsen, Wayne Bergeron, Phil Wilson, and Maureen McGovern, and he's a member of the jazz studies faculty at Temple University in Philadelphia. For more info, including how to sign up for lessons via Skype, visit stevefidyk.com.



Groove Construction

Part 4: Linear Variations

by Jost Nickel

We'll continue working with linear grooves by embellishing them using two separate concepts. First we'll double select single strokes using the hi-hat, snare, and bass drum. Then we'll incorporate the hi-hat foot into the groove. Remember that linear grooves never have more than one voice played at a time.

All of the exercises in this lesson are based on the first groove from last month's introduction to linear phrases. This pattern is notated in Exercise 1.

1

First let's play diddles on a few of the single strokes with the right hand. Doubled notes are marked with a slash. When you see a slash through the stem of a 16th note, it's played as two 32nd notes. The strokes on the "e" of beats 1 and 2 are doubled.

2

Exercise 3 demonstrates the same pattern written with 32nd notes instead of slashes.

3

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

In Exercise 4 we'll double the "&" of beat 2 and the "a" of beat 4 with the left hand.

4

Next we'll incorporate double strokes with both hands.

5

Let's try playing diddles with the bass drum. On the "a" of beat 1, we'll play two 32nd notes instead of one 16th.

6



Now we'll bring it all together. In Exercise 7 we'll play double strokes with the hi-hat, snare, and bass drum.

7

For our second linear groove variation we'll incorporate the hi-hat foot and use it to replace select bass drum strokes. In Exercise 8 the hi-hat replaces three bass drum notes from our original groove.

8

Exercises 9–12 show variations of this idea. In these examples the hi-hat foot replaces select bass drum notes.

9

10

11

12

Be sure to experiment with these ideas in other linear grooves as well. Applying doubled strokes can also work well in other contexts, such as non-linear grooves.

If you're interested in these concepts and want more groove ideas, check out my book, *Jost Nickel's Groove Book*.

Jost Nickel is a top session and touring drummer in Germany, and he endorses Sonor, Meinl, Aquarian, Vic Firth, and Beyerdynamic.

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



Organize Your Gear

Part 3: Travel Manifest, Snare Collection, and Drumhead Inventory

by Russ Miller

In this final installment of my three-part series on organizing your gear, we'll cover creating an equipment manifest, building and controlling your snare drum collection, and organizing your drumhead inventory.

When you travel abroad to perform and intend to ship equipment out of the country, you need to create an equipment manifest. This is a list of everything that's being shipped, including the total number of cases, their individual weights and values, and a description of their contents. The manifest helps the equipment get easily into the other country, and it ensures that everything comes back home.

"Only those who have the patience to do simple things perfectly ever acquire the skills to do difficult things easily."
—James "Gentleman Jim" Corbett
(former world heavyweight boxing champion)

Shown here is a copy of the first page of one of my gear manifests. This particular document is for my European cartage rig that resides in Germany. I access this pallet of gear when I'm working in central Europe and England.

There are several categories that you need to have filled in on your manifest: case number, contents, dimensions, weight, serial numbers (if applicable), and total value. The process of creating the manifest is easier if you make sure to stencil your cases accurately. (See my article in the June 2016 issue for more info on how to label road cases.)

Be sure to list everything in the hardware trunk in detail. Don't just write "tom stand." Be more specific, like "double tom stand with two tom arms." If you run into a tough shipping officer, he or she can hold up your gear at entry and force an inspection before release. I've had this happen many times. Being as specific as possible can help avoid hold-ups.

You should also only list replacement values. You might love your old K ride cymbal, but listing its value at \$20,000 will cause red flags to go up at customs. And the production company has to insure your shipments, so they will be wasting money on bloated values.

Your Snare Stock

I love to stockpile snares because I feel like my drums are my ammunition for the gig. To organize my snare inventory, I created a spreadsheet that has twenty rows, with each row representing a different sound. You can insert several drums for each row, but one should suffice. Arranging your drums with this type of system allows you to assemble a very thorough palette of tones, so you're never caught off guard by not having a specific sound at your disposal.

The spreadsheet is divided into five categories: usage, brand, size, material, and notes. Fill in the sheet with information on drums you currently own, and use the empty rows to provide a direction for acquiring additional

Case #	Contents	Dimensions (LxWxH)	Weight	Value	Serial#	Case Value Total (excl. taxes)
01 (22)	16 X 22 Saturn IV Birch Bass Drum Stave Beta 32 Mo w/My Mount Custom Graphic Rosewood Head	24 X 27 X 27	39 lbs.	\$301.00 \$205.00 \$88.00	MB061043 NA NA	\$ 594.00
00A	Russ Miller BP 40/2 X 14 Snare Dr. Russ Miller Sig. H402H	9 X 18 X 18	10 lbs.	\$105.00 \$ 38.00	LH010273 NA	\$ 143.00
00B	Black BP 41/2 X 14 Snare Dr. Russ Miller Sig. R402H	9 X 18 X 18	11 lbs.	\$105.00 \$28.00	KE004583 NA	\$ 133.00
00C	Slinger BP 41/2 X 14 Snare Dr. Russ Miller Sig. R402H	8 X 17 X 17	8 lbs.	\$98.00 \$28.00	LKD12402 NA	\$ 126.00
00	Russ Miller Sig. Rosewood Subkick	7 X 16 X16	10 lbs.	\$398.00	H10223	\$ 398.00
04 (10)	7 X 10 Saturn IV Birch Tom	12 X 14 X 14	8 lbs.	\$88.00	MB061043	\$ 128.00
05 (12)	7 1/2 X 12 Saturn IV Birch Tom	12 X 16 X 16	11 lbs.	\$80.00	MB061043	\$ 132.00
06B (12)	8 X 12 Saturn IV Birch Tom	13 X 17 X 17	12 lbs.	\$108.00	MB061038	\$ 144.00
06 (14)	10 X 14 Saturn IV Birch Floor Tom	18 X 19 X 19	13 lbs.	\$148.00	MB061048	\$ 148.00
07 (16)	16 X 16 Saturn IV Birch Floor Tom Russ Miller Sig. R402H	20 X 22 X 22	18 lbs.	\$168.00 \$28.00	MB061051 NA	\$ 196.00
08	Hardware Trunk	17 X 18 X 42	38 lbs.	NA	NA	\$ 1088.00
	(1) In Case 40/2B Aux. Kick Pedal			\$208.00	(5) Saturn IV Floor Tom Legs	\$ 184.00
	(1) Subkick Stand			\$28.00	(7) Russ Miller Sig. Metal Bell R400B	\$28.00
	(1) Metal Gravel Pedal Tray			\$28.00	(8) Russ Miller Sig. SML Vio Fish Snare	\$88.00
	(1) Russ Miller Sig. R402H Vio Fish Drums			\$15.00	(10) Vio Fish "Flair" Cymbals	\$ 9.00
	(1) 3' X 3' Spiked Custom Drum Rug			\$30.00	(7) Spare-German Wire Snare	\$12.00
	(1) D-pad Batteries			\$15.00	(7) Battery Operated Fan	\$28.00
	Small Tool Box w/ Various parts tools			\$175.00	(12) Professional CD/DVD's	\$120.00
09	Cymbal Bag (31) (3) Cymb. Set	23 X 23 X 5	18 lbs.			\$ 1,233.00
	13" H-Hat Set	13" K-H-Hat Top / 13" A-New Best Top (Bottom)			AC99082018 / AC99082178	\$304.80
	14" H-Hat Set	14" K-Constantinople Top / 14" H-Constantinople Bottom			AB5-10-11887 / AB5-10-99366	\$108.00
	18" Trashformer				RME 10TH1	\$ 21.00
	17" A Thin Crash				AB55054652	\$111.80
	18" A Medium Thin Crash				AB554301568	\$133.80
	18" A Thin Crash w/2 Rivets				AB554301570	\$133.80
	20" K Constantinople H-Bell Med. Thin Low Ride				AB4611775	\$37.80
	20" K Constantinople Sound Lab Crash Ride w/4 Rivets				JH0643527	\$37.80
	22" K Constantinople "Bouncer" Ride				AB50231042	\$128.80





Jimmy Chamberlin

The Alt-Rocker, Jazz Artist, and Tech CEO on Finding His Sound on Sakae Drums

by Nate Bauman

Philip C. Soares

Although it may seem that Jimmy Chamberlin was relatively quiet for the few years prior to rejoining Smashing Pumpkins last summer, in reality he was busier than ever. We caught up with Chamberlin at a recent Pumpkins show to discuss his recent move to Sakae drums.

MD: You started using a new kit for the End of Times tour with Smashing Pumpkins last year. How did you end up at Sakae?

Jimmy: Sakae was the builder of Yamaha's custom line of kits. All of my kits throughout the '90s were made by Sakae. When Yamaha decided to stop using the company in 2008, Sakae let a bunch of key personnel go and for a short time got out of the drum manufacturing business.

MD: Was that what prompted the move over to DW?

Jimmy: Yes, that's why I was playing DW during that period of time. I've had a great relationship with [DW founder] Don Lombardi. But when I saw Sakae was making their own drums, it made sense for me to take a look and see what they were doing.

MD: How did you go about getting your hands on a set for the first time?

Jimmy: When I went out to LA to do the new Jimmy Chamberlin Complex record, my friend Charlie Paxson told me he'd been playing Sakae and that I should check them out. He talked to [Sakae president] Eizo, and Eizo arranged for me to borrow a kit from a guy from LA that had bought a set but hadn't taken it out of the boxes yet. We took it out of boxes and prepared for what we thought was going to be a long day of getting drum sounds. It was an Almighty Maple series kit, and right out of the box the drums sounded ridiculous. Within an hour we were already recording.

That started the ball rolling. I told Eizo that such a large part of my sound was rooted in the Yamaha maple and birch family of drums, so from a sonic standpoint it made sense to go back to that. They

built me the kit that I played on the Pumpkins tour, which was an Almighty Birch configuration. I actually had them make me two sets. One is a bop kit with a 14x18 bass drum, 8" and 10" rack toms, and a 14" floor tom. The other is a regular kit with shallower toms. It has a 14x22 bass drum, 6x8, 7x10, and 8x13 rack toms, and 10x14 and 14x16 floor toms.

These drums are tonally accurate and pitch-perfect. When drums are in tune to the point where you can hear the melodic and harmonic relationship to the music you're playing, it forces you to think differently about where you place them.

MD: How did the End of Times tour with Smashing Pumpkins come to you?

Jimmy: [Pumpkins leader] Billy [Corgan] reached out to me and said he'd lined up a drummer but for whatever reason it wasn't going to work out. He asked if there was any way I could come and do the tour. At that point I was still running my tech company, LiveOne. I've since disconnected from that and started a new venture in consulting. But at that time I was extremely busy running LiveOne, so it wasn't like I could just stop and go do the tour. There were a lot of things that I had to put in motion or on the backburner for me to go out.

There were only four days of rehearsal, so there wasn't much ramp-up time. But everything fell in place, and during the second day of rehearsals Corgan turned to me and said, "That's the best-sounding drumset I've ever heard in my life." He's heard all of my kits over the years. Even for a birch kit that has its own characteristics, there are so many usable frequencies in the drums. On stage, I didn't need any monitors other than my in-ears. I didn't use wedges or supplemental bass monitors. I kept the in-ears at a very low volume and just listened to the drums as they were. This was one of the most relaxed tours I've ever done.



COLLECTOR'S CORNER



The Drumset That Launched an Invasion Ringo Starr's Original Ludwig Beatles Kit



by Harry Cangany

Legend has it that Liverpool-born Ringo Starr saw these drums sitting in the London shop Drum City in 1963. Although England had a few drum brands of its own (Ajax, Beverley, John Grey, and Premier), Starr wanted this American-made Ludwig kit to use with the Beatles. It came in a classic translucent wrap that would be eventually referred to as “Ringo’s color”: oyster black pearl.

The 3-ply mahogany/poplar toms and bass drum are from the Downbeat setup (14x20 kick, 8x12 rack tom, and 14x14 floor tom). At that time, Downbeat kits came with a matching 4x14 snare. Ringo opted for the more popular Jazz Festival, which he still owns. The rest of the set, including the hardware and throne, was sold at auction in December 2015 to Jim Irsay, owner of the Indianapolis Colts, for an incredible price of \$2,110,000.

This is the first of Ringo’s five Ludwig

kits. (The history of all of his sets is discussed in detail by New York-based collector Gary Astridge on his website ringosbeatlekits.com.) The set was purchased in May of 1963 and it replaced the drummer’s older Premier set, which featured a 20” bass drum, 12” rack tom, and 16” floor tom in mahogany plastic wrap finish. These Ludwig drums carry the pre-serial-number Keystone badges. Ringo’s hardware included a Speed King bass drum pedal, an Olympic flat-base cymbal stand, a Premier rubber-cushioned stool, a Walberg and Auge nickel-plated bass drum anchor, and flat-base Ludwig hi-hat, snare, and cymbal stands.

The batter hoop of the bass drum has all the normal wear and tear of regular use, plus bite marks from the Speed King’s clamp. The tom mount is the venerable rail consolette. There’s a shell-mount cymbal holder, which Ringo

didn’t use, and the folding spurs are in place. The front hoop, claw, and T-rod are replacements. The 8x12 and 14x14 toms feature the stock P4067 baseball muffler. All of the mounts have the original P1672 die-cast brackets with script logo and thumbscrews.

The auction also included cymbals that Ringo used at some point: Zildjian A series 14” hi-hats and 18” crash-ride, and a 20” Ajax cymbal, which has a lower, flatter bell than normal.

Ringo used this kit on early Beatles hits, including “I Want to Hold Your Hand” and “She Loves You.” They were also played during more than two hundred live performances, including the band’s legendary appearance on the *Ed Sullivan Show* on February 9, 1964. In May of that year, Starr received another oyster black pearl kit, a Ludwig Super Classic with a 22” bass drum and 13” and 16” toms.



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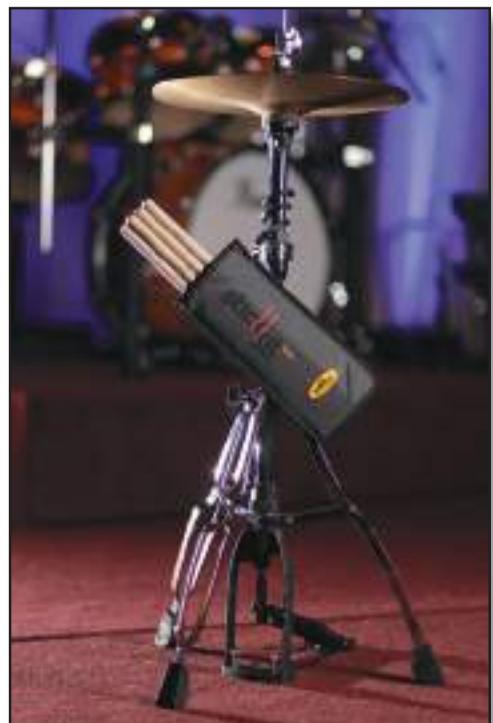


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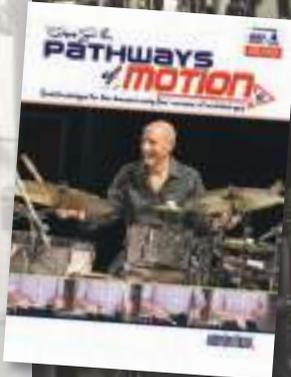
CRITIQUE

MULTIMEDIA

Pathways of Motion: Hand Technique for the Drumset Using Four Versions of Matched Grip by Steve Smith

The technique guru takes a deep look at grip variations.

Detailing four different styles of matched-grip technique, Steve Smith delivers another thoroughly researched instructional package that should keep you in the shed for a while. There's a lot of subtlety here, and each of the assorted grips has its own look and feel, so the application to drumset playing offers tons of varied sonic possibilities. Smith gets into stick rebound, paradiddles, and accented upstrokes, but it's like learning these concepts all over again, since, for instance, you're suddenly holding the sticks with Grip 4, the "Tony Williams" method, using mainly the little finger and ring finger. Close-up photos and a two-hour DVD allow students to see Smith at work, and the book's notations and paragraph entries are clear and relatively easy to follow. And though he's been a lifetime devotee of traditional grip, Smith is still looking forward, teaching himself and others, proving that you *can* learn new tricks. (\$29.99, Hudson Music) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



Imagine Dragons Smoke + Mirrors Live

A concert from the rare Top 40 act that features lots of (real) drums.

Imagine Dragons has climbed up the charts thanks to big hooks and an exciting live show, captured here at the Toronto stop during the group's 2015 world tour. Drummer **Daniel Platzman** plays with restraint when needed and rocks out at the right times (while singing!). And though the group is playing an arena, it still feels sort of like a bar band, just with tons of production and slickness. Platzman brings an outsized, open beat on "Polaroid" that fills the room, and a snare-heavy pattern to "Trouble" that's hip but doesn't distract from the vocal. His free-form solo beginning "On Top of the World" is full of quick singles, and "I Bet My Life" has a fun groove with his left hand playing offbeats on the hats while his right works the toms. The band's megahit "Radioactive" is treated with multiple percussion, and everyone gets to head-bang and bring the show to a climax. The audio is mixed well, and the video, while a tad underlit, is clear. (\$19.98, Interscope) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



The Jazz Drum Book by Leonard Patterson

Transcriptions and historical details from the swinging forefathers.

Where was this book back when you spent countless hours figuring out that Max Roach solo for your term paper? Essentially an encyclopedic *Real Book* of drum transcriptions from early heavyweights including Baby Dodds, Zutty Singleton, Papa Jo Jones, Chick Webb, and Gene Krupa, *The Jazz Drum Book* also includes a stylistic analysis and historical background for each player. Although it's educational to transcribe drum performances yourself, author Patterson has done the work for you, highlighting each featured drummer's time playing or solos and extracting a thirty-six-bar section from a classic swing-era track—Kenny Clarke's solo from a Dexter Gordon reading of "Scrapple From the Apple," for instance—and explaining the ideas behind the comping and the gear used. Laid out chronologically, the book eventually deals with the mid-century giants, including Roy Haynes, Art Blakey, and Philly Joe Jones, so if you're going to learn the language of jazz drums and how it developed, start at the beginning and have fun. (Canadian orders: \$20 plus shipping, email leonardjpatterson@gmail.com; orders outside Canada: \$25 via lulu.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

RECORDINGS Taking the Reins

The Claudia Quintet *Super Petite*

Drummer/composer John Hollenbeck's eighth outing with his iconoclastic drums/reeds/vibraphone/bass/accordion chamber group is another adventure into experimental and often mischievous terrain.

John Hollenbeck has rightfully earned his "uncategorizable music" merit badge. The focus here is on short, tightly notated ensemble pieces with pockets of improv, plumbing jazz, contemporary classical, and world music. Hollenbeck ingeniously explores complex rhythms, imaginative counterpoint, and surprising sonic textures. The set's also an ideal forum for his impressive drumming. Playing daunting, ever-shifting yet funky odd meters, Hollenbeck shapes the tunes with a composer's flair. In a looser vein, "Philly" allows him to unleash his driving jazz chops. "Rose-Colored Path" is a boggling workout with Hollenbeck launching solo fill/set-ups between an extended flurry of jagged ensemble punches. And the zany speeder "Pure Poem" suggests a stream of minimalist licks blown through a lottery-ball machine. Am I mistaken, or is Hollenbeck performing this wrist-buster on a practice pad? (Cuneiform) **Jeff Potter**



L. uca s B. eck

Matt Chamberlain *Comet B*

A consummate studio pro and groove king strikes out on his own again and delivers the goods.

Matt Chamberlain has built his career around a booty-shaking pocket and assorted loops applied to everything from pop radio fare to the most esoteric jazz. But it's his infrequent but brilliantly crafted solo endeavors where he shows his compositional breadth and penchant for the unexpected. Sure, his Jedi backbeat is all over this instrumental "fusion" record, like on the crushing but funky "Oscillating Eagle" and "Grounded," and his signature toms work their way into the pattern on "Gravitational Waves." But there are all kinds of other instruments to make all the big beats sound even bigger. Check, for instance, the huge synths on "Until Sundown," which float atop Chamberlain's killer, Bonham-esque behemoth of a groove. The production and mix are also sublime, making *Comet B* a study in finer detail—definitely something to add to your "must listen on headphones" pile. (mattchamberlain.bandcamp.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



into his jazz compositions and found his calling. Chinchano explores tight, ever-evolving forms, propelled by fascinating overlapping rhythms within a unique feel. Pastor drives the band brilliantly with his hybrid drumkit/percussion setup. Sitting astride a cajon, surrounded by his kit and a percussion array including hand drums, he alternates sticks with hands to create fluid, irresistible "percussion section" grooves. Chinchano boasts two outstanding composers in Pastor and pianist Stu Mindeman. Supported by bassist Patrick Mulcahy, trumpeter Marquis Hill, and alto saxophonist Rich Moore, Chinchano's sound is lyrical and full of heart. (chinchano.bandcamp.com) **Jeff Potter**

Rob Garcia *Finding Love in an Oligarchy on a Dying Planet*

There's way more than spang-a-lang on this New York jazz drummer's latest disc.



The involved compositions of *Finding Love* are bursting with Rob Garcia's imaginative drumming, as well as with the work of some excellent sidemen who make everything gel. This is swinging stuff, and Garcia knows how to work a ride cymbal, as he does on "Greenland Is Turning Green," and his solo on the up-tempo "Terror, Fear and Media" creates tension while still maintaining a pulse. One of two solo drum interludes, "Act Local #1," is all left-foot hi-hat ostinatos and rolling toms. It lasts a little over a minute but concludes as a complete statement. Tenor saxophonist Noah Preminger and pianist Gary Versace converse on "Guns Make Killing Easy," while Garcia adds some chattering rimclicking. The socially aware album title and song names show the leader is interested in more than a blowing date, and the music benefits much from it. (Brooklyn Jazz Underground)

Ilya Stemkovsky

Chinchano *Un Cambio*

Drummer/composer Juan Pastor straddles two traditions, and births something singular.

With this exhilarating sophomore release, Juan Pastor's Chinchano quintet has surpassed its outstanding debut (May 2015 Critique). The drummer/composer/leader arrived in the U.S. from his native Peru with the initial intention of studying jazz in the straight-ahead sense. But as his irrepressible roots emerged, he fused Peruvian folkloric rhythms





The Bo-Keys
Heartaches by the Number

The new millennium has seen a growing number of worthy soul-revivalist bands. But here you'll recognize something extra-authentic.

The secret ingredient you're hearing—and feeling—on *Heartaches by the Number* is **Howard Grimes**. This drummer is no "revivalist." He's just always been there. A former member of the legendary Hi Records rhythm section (also chaired by Al Jackson Jr.), Grimes grooved on numerous premium '70s Memphis soul/R&B cuts, including classic Al Green tracks. Echoes of the Green groove can be heard in Grimes' fat, relaxed, socked-in backbeat on "Learned My Lesson in Love." On the Bo-Keys' third release (recorded to analog tape, naturally), the tight yet satisfyingly swampy band delivers soul takes on country classics, including an absolutely killer slow-shuffle cover of Ray Price's title track. A twang 'n' funk jukebox joy, this disc is loaded with grit and grins. (Omnivore)

Jeff Potter



Ja cob B i t i c k e n s t a f f



Micha Schellhaas *Double Take*

A nice collection of rootsy blues drumming delivered by a jazz-rock legend.

It's cool to hear **Chad Wackerman** do the hired-gun thing and lay down an assortment of tasty beats on this modern instrumental blues record from guitarist Micha Schellhaas. Not the choppy fusion date you'd normally associate with the drummer, here Wackerman is all tight and funky on a driving blues ("Ford F-150") and doing a hip half-time shuffle with some second-line thrown in ("Your Turn"). Wackerman brings a smoothness to the odd-time swing of "False Fork" and ends the tune with an inventive solo where he superimposes duple fills over the triplet feel. The drums sound great, and the band includes Jim Cox, who takes a few killer organ breaks, so *Double Take* is an overall enjoyable listening experience. Want to hear what a renowned fusion drummer does when asked to play simpler songs? Check out Wackerman's sideman stuff here. (michamusic.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



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Jim Riley's

Survival Guide for the Modern Drummer

by Willie Rose

“When you decide to become a professional musician,” says Jim Riley, author, educator, and drummer for the multi-platinum group Rascal Flatts, “you have to understand that you’ll get called to play in some situations that are less than optimal. Sometimes the musicians aren’t great, or the material isn’t your favorite. If you want to make a living, you need to learn to appreciate and play all types of music. If you consider yourself a specialist or purist in a certain genre, you may be happy artistically, but chances are you’ll not be as prosperous as a working musician. *Survival Guide for the Modern Drummer* is my attempt to convey to aspiring and future pros what I’ve learned along the way.”

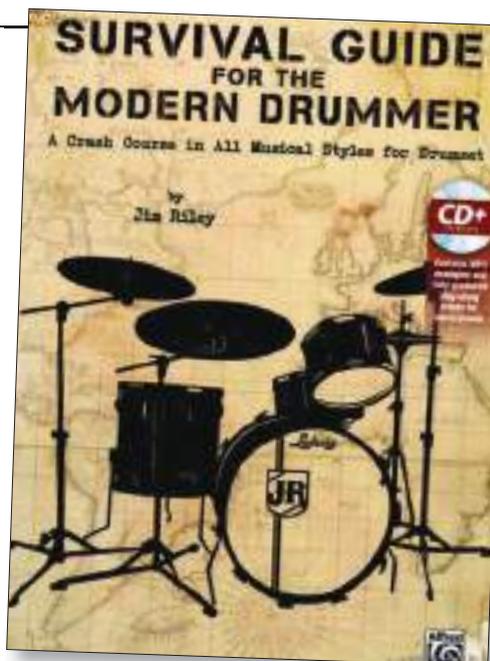
Riley’s latest educational book is a virtually all-encompassing stylistic groove encyclopedia and play-along, and it aims to provide a one-stop resource for drummers looking for practical, real-world rhythms.

Comparisons can be made between it and other popular multi-genre groove compendiums on the market, but Riley’s half-decade-long effort separates itself by the sheer breadth of styles covered and the impressive volume and authenticity of the accompanying play-along tracks.

Riley covers pop, rock, blues, jazz, country, Motown, electronic, odd time, metal, and world music patterns, among others, throughout the book’s ten chapters. Two accompanying CDs provide recorded examples of all 318 grooves, software to slow them down, and 124 play-along tracks.

Riley says that some of the patterns evolved from historical versions into what he found could be used in actual playing situations. “I feel like I was told, ‘This is how you play a certain style,’ but I would get to the real world and some of it just didn’t translate,” he explains. “So I would modify the grooves slightly to make them more effective in real performance situations. I’m not as concerned with the ‘style police’ as I am with sharing knowledge with drummers who want to be able to work.

“I do my best to offer historically accurate versions, as well as what I’d consider practical modern variations,” Riley continues. “But I’m also aware that you can’t please everyone with what you present. My goal with this book was to inspire players to expand their style vocabulary to help make them more marketable. If in



that process they stumble upon a genre they want to dig deeper into, then I’ve done my job.”

An album’s worth of play-along material accompanies each chapter, and Riley went to extra lengths to recruit separate musicians for every style. “It was important to me that each genre had a high level of authenticity in order to be inspiring to the drummer,” he says. “I didn’t feel like that was an attainable goal using one set of musicians for every genre. Usually when that happens, some music turns out great but most styles suffer. Over my career I’ve worked with world-class musicians in many genres of music, and it was fun to be able to call them to play the style they’re known for.

“For the jazz tracks, I knew they needed to be amazing, so I called drummer Jim White, my University of

North Texas classmate who is a jazz professor at the University of Northern Colorado. He recommended some amazing Nashville players to me, which made that section of the book as great as I felt it needed to be. When I recorded the Latin tracks I enlisted the help of another fellow UNT alumnus, Lalo Davila from Middle Tennessee State University. He has a working salsa band and helped me create some amazing Latin tracks.

“As a teacher using the book myself,” Riley adds, “I find that it lends itself well to studying multiple styles at the same time. I’m using it with beginners as well as college students. I feel like it’s a book a player can grow with. Styles are not something you can just check off and say, ‘Okay, I learned that one,’ and move on. More experience gives you new perspective on your progress in every style. I’m always trying to improve, and I can use the music in this book to help me do that.”

Riley set up an online space for drummers to share videos of themselves playing along to the book’s music. “People ask me all the time if it’s okay to record themselves playing with the tracks,” he says, “and I tell them that’s why I wrote the tunes! Have at it. Many of the tracks are great material for college auditions, and there’s a whole online community of musicians creating their own videos that you can see at survivalguidevideos.com.”

Study Suggestions

“I recommend that everyone, regardless of their ability level or experience, start with Chapter 1,” Riley says of *Survival Guide*. “There are certain valuable concepts that continue throughout the book that are

explained in that chapter. Also, I think many drummers tend to measure their progress as players by the difficulty of the material they’re studying. I try to remind players who are studying this book that the

mastery of the simplest concepts—like the pop grooves and fills in the first chapter—will instantly make them more marketable musicians on every level.



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Eric Dolphy

Out to Lunch!

It codified an approach to jazz that in 1964 seemed almost whimsical, yet in hindsight was thoroughly majestic. Half a century later, the album and **Tony Williams'** contributions to it retain a sense of otherworldliness.

Tony Williams had already recorded a handful of jazz masterpieces by the time he joined alto saxophonist/flutist/bass clarinetist Eric Dolphy for 1964's *Out to Lunch!* Miles Davis's *Seven Steps to Heaven*, Kenny Dorham's *Una Mas*, and Herbie Hancock's *My Point of View* established his equally explosive and flowing time feel, exhilarating technique, and innovative style. Presaging the avant-garde sounds heard on Tony's debut as a leader, *Life Time*, and in keeping with his subsequent directive to Miles Davis that he

thought the trumpeter's quintet should play "anti-music," Williams helped make *Out to Lunch!* an entirely different animal.

Eighteen years old at the time of *Out to Lunch!*, Williams was already rewriting the rules of the drumset. Technically, he fragmented patterns where others remained static; conceptually, he charged forward to a place others were unable to enter. And in doing so he created a language that contemporary drummers from Ronald Bruner to Travis Orbin to Antonio Sanchez draw on today.

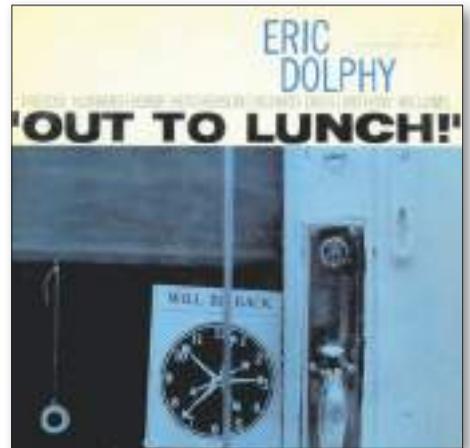
Hot Stuff

"Hat and Beard." As Eric Dolphy plows over the elastic feel, Tony Williams cavorts and comments like a brazen stand-up comedian. He stabs offbeat 8th-note accents with sticks, bass drum, and brushes. He drives his ride cymbal against the time in kernel-size groove capsules. His hi-hat does much of the talking, stopping time with small splashes and unison bass drum staggers. He's obviously having a blast.

"Straight Up and Down." Reportedly inspired by the image of a wobbling drunk trying to stay upright, this tune recalls the misguided laughter that greeted alcoholics of the early 1960s. The dancing lurch of the popping groove is omnipresent, and Williams' staggered ride cymbal beat lazily joins the upright bass. As the track moves forward, the improvisations become more intense; the bass plods as Williams dissects the rhythm with a two-handed snare-and-ride pattern and hi-hat swoops.

"Gazzelloni." The music glides over what sounds like a stock straight-ahead pulse, but as Dolphy and trumpeter Freddie Hubbard ascend, Williams and bassist Richard Davis go for their throats. Tony works the hi-hat with both hands to create an odd splashing/swerving sound. He plays alternating 8th notes between hi-hat and snare to create a piston effect, unleashes a string of snare drags, creates a circular hi-hat splash/bass drum stab/cymbal simmer, and generally sounds like a pummeling pogo stick as Davis gooses the groove from below.

"Out to Lunch." Williams opens the title track with a regal, Ed Blackwell-worthy snare drum march as the horns paint an eerie siren call and Bobby Hutcherson's vibraphone plays a sparse, pungent pattern. Then it's off to Dolphy's solo, which winds and zaps as Williams prances like a clown over Davis's bulbous enunciations. Williams drops the pulse (again), his bass drum and snare briefly soloing and pushing the beat forward like drunken twins. Williams and Davis speak halting sentences, then dissect their phrases, turning them in and out, back and forth. They unite on a dancing march beat—then explode it. Davis plays an ascending scale, Hutcherson tumbles, Williams buzzes a tight roll. Through it all the music is totally free yet totally grooving. The group pushes the edge until there *is* no edge, then suddenly meets on 1 and destroys it. The collective improvisation is a thing of beauty.



Out to Lunch! (1964)

Hat and Beard • Something Sweet, Something Tender • Gazzelloni • Out to Lunch • Straight Up and Down

Eric Dolphy: alto sax, flute, bass clarinet

Freddie Hubbard: trumpet

Richard Davis: bass

Tony Williams: drums

Bobby Hutcherson: vibraphone

Produced by Alfred Lion

Williams found his time-deranging match in the rhythm section on *Out to Lunch!* Bassist Richard Davis is as probing as Williams at every turn: dropping the pulse, unexpectedly walking the rhythm, playing a different supporting line for each soloist. Vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson hammers pointed accents, denies any formal sense of time, and sinks his teeth into this free foray like a shark biting its prey. As the music is built from "motivic cells," not from the usual melody, harmony, and rhythm, the pulse is allowed to float freely, and the rhythm section takes direction cues almost on a whim. Williams, Davis, and Hutcherson are not timekeepers, they're equal partners in this absurdist journey.

Once he'd completed the album, Dolphy headed to Berlin. Though he had great promise, he would never get a chance to reach his potential—four months after recording *Out To Lunch!* he died of complications from undiagnosed diabetes, barely thirty-six years old.

Ken Micallef



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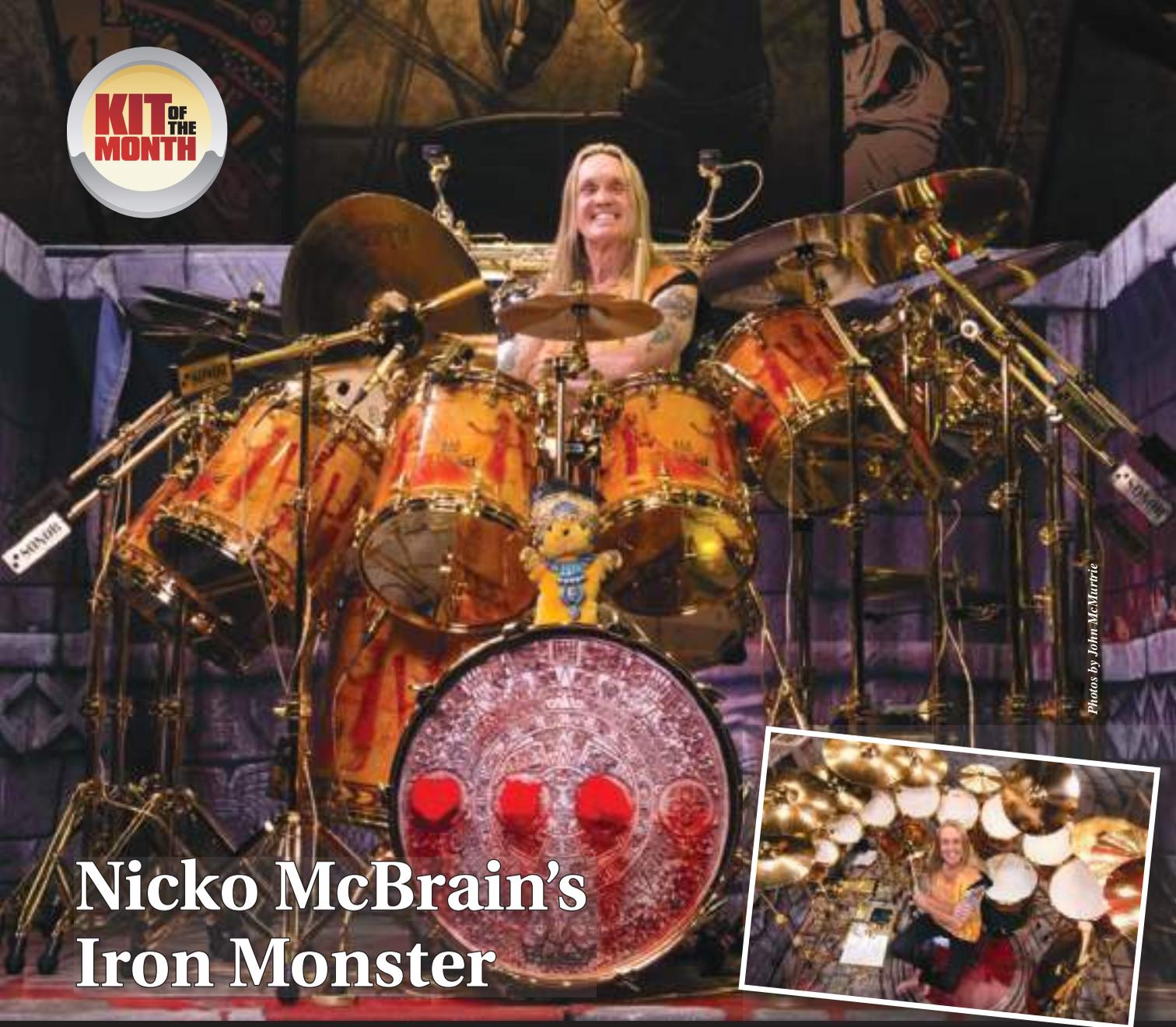
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Photos by John McMarrie

Nicko McBrain's Iron Monster

Sonor welcomed Iron Maiden drummer Nicko McBrain back to its artist roster this past January, just before the time-honored heavy metal band embarked on a world tour behind its recent *Book of Souls* album, which runs through early August. The drummer's newest kit is a custom SQ2 series made from German beech in a medium-ply construction, a configuration the company says offers a mellow tone and high volume.

The kit includes 8x6, 8x8, 10x10, 12x12, 13x13, 14x14, 15x15, and 16x16 toms, an 18x18 floor tom, an 18x24 bass drum, and a 5x14 snare drum with a birch shell. Sonor customized McBrain's kit with

twenty-four-karat gold-plated hardware.

The aesthetics of the kit follow the band's stage design and *The Book of Souls*' theme. Iron Maiden's designers covered the shells with artwork featuring the band's longtime mascot, Eddie the Head, Mayan symbols adorn the bass drum, and the snare bears a *Book of Souls* inscription.

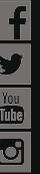
In a letter to Sonor, McBrain called the kit an "amazing, wonderful, imaginative, and, most of all, beautiful drumset. This kit sounds as good as it looks, and it looks like a million dollars."

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



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