

SPECIAL ISSUE!

MODERN DRUMMER®

THE WORLD'S #1 DRUM MAGAZINE

WIN A ROLAND PRIZE PACKAGE WORTH MORE THAN \$2,300!

ALIVE AND KICKING! ON STAGE WITH THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ACTS



Featuring

BRUNO MARS'

ERIC HERNANDEZ

Plus



KENDRICK LAMAR'S

TONY NICHOLS



BON JOVI'S

TICO TORRES



DAMIAN MARLEY'S

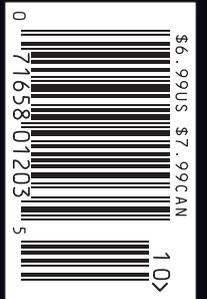
COURTNEY DIEDRICK



LAMB OF GOD'S

CHRIS ADLER

OCTOBER 2018



+ BREATHING LIFE INTO A RECORDING | PHOTOS FROM SLAYER'S FINAL WORLD TOUR

DON'T HOLD BACK

*"It doesn't matter how hard you play, these cymbals are never too much for the mics onstage or the crowd in the room."
- Gregory Smith (Drummer)*

FRX

FREQUENCY REDUCED CYMBALS

SEE THE WHOLE STORY AT [SABIAN.COM/FRX](https://www.sabian.com/frx)

BECOME A BETTER DRUMMER, FASTER

When you're serious about drumming, you need a kit to match your ambition. The V-Drums TD-17 series lets your technique shine through, backed up with training tools to push you further. Combining a TD-50-class sound engine with newly developed pads results in an affordable electronic drum kit that's authentically close to playing acoustic drums – accurately mirroring the physical movement, stick coordination and hand/foot control that every drummer needs. Meanwhile, an array of built-in coaching functions will track your technique, measure your progress and increase your motivation. Becoming a better drummer is still hard work, but the TD-17 can help you get there.

TD-17 Series V-Drums



 Roland®



PROMARK
ACTIVEGRIP™



HANDLE IT.

ACTIVEGRIP. NOW AVAILABLE IN STEALTH MODE.

Introducing ActiveGrip Clear, a drumstick that looks like every other, but with an extraordinary feature. With Promark's heat-activated technology, ActiveGrip Clear works under the radar, getting tackier the more you heat up. So no matter the mounting pressure, you always know you can handle it.

BLACK PANTHER
designLAB

BUILT FROM THE SOUND UP



**A BREAKTHROUGH IN RESONANCE CONTROL
COMING FALL 2018**



WWW.MAPEXDESIGNLAB.COM
#BUILTFROMTHESOUNDUP

ONE AND DONE:

Audix packs are the all-in-one drum miking solution

The Audix DP5A and DP7 professional drum and percussion microphone packs are expertly curated collections that are perfect for stage or studio. Featuring exclusive Audix VLM™ capsule technology, they offer fast transient response and accurate sound reproduction in very high SPL applications.

DP5A

The 5 microphones you need to mic a standard drum kit.

DP7

The DP7 adds 2 ADX51 overhead mics for extra audio dimension. Shown below.



D2



D2



D4



D6



i5



ADX-51



ADX-51

Plus



To learn more, contact your local Audix dealer or visit AudixUSA.com.

AUDIX
A SOUND DECISION

FREE ADX-51

With the purchase of a DP5A or DP7. The ADX51 is a professional pre-polarized condenser microphone that can be used for close miking or as an overhead, adding an extra dimension to your performance. Offer valid Sept. 1st through Oct. 31st 2018.

TERENCE HIGGINS

Pearl Artist 19 yrs

Ani DiFranco, Warren Haynes
Swamp Grease, John Scofield

DON'T LET YOUR
GREASE
GET LOST IN THE
SAUCE!

SESSION Studio Select

Vintage vibe is alive and well with Session Studio Select. This retro cool kit breathes warm resonant tone with all the nuance and response that only a thin shell design can offer.

African Mahogany combined with premium Birch create a rich and complex sound to add color and depth to anything you play.

Available in premium covered or glistening lacquer finishes.

And for a limited time, buy any Session kit and get a free floor tom.

FOR A LIMITED TIME

GET A
FREE
FLOOR TOM

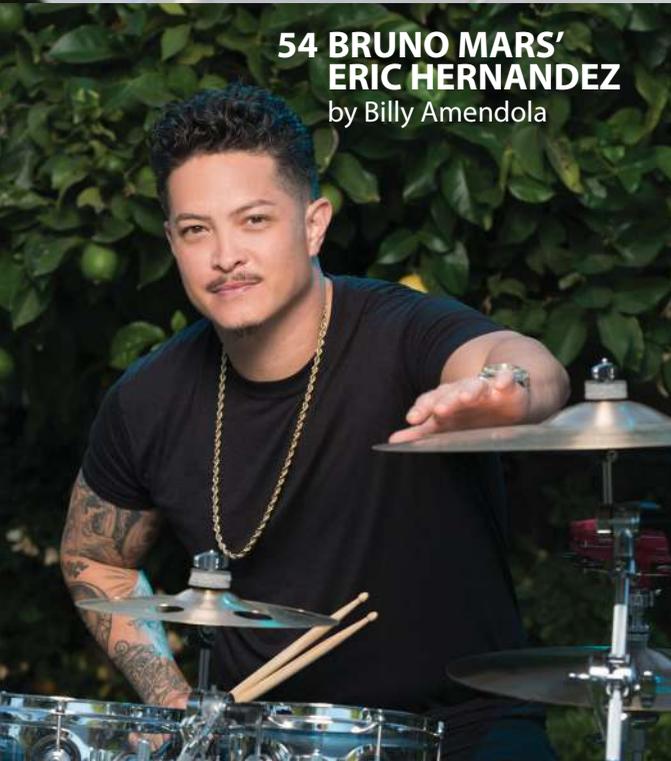
Hear It Here - pearldrum.com

Pearl®

BUY IT ONCE, PLAY IT FOR LIFE. SESSION STUDIO SELECT IS COVERED BY PEARL'S EXCLUSIVE LIFETIME WARRANTY.

ON THE COVER

SPECIAL ISSUE: ALIVE AND KICKING! FEATURING...



54 BRUNO MARS' ERIC HERNANDEZ
by Billy Amendola

28 BON JOVI'S TICO TORRES
by Billy Amendola

36 KENDRICK LAMAR'S TONY NICHOLS
by Ken Micallef

42 LAMB OF GOD'S CHRIS ADLER
by Ben Meyer

44 PHOTOS FROM SLAYER'S FINAL WORLD TOUR
by Alex Solca

48 DAMIAN MARLEY'S COURTNEY DIEDRICK
by Robin Tolleson

64 FROM THE TRACK TO THE STAGE
by Kristen Gleeson-Prata

Cover and Contents photos of Eric Hernandez, Tony Nichols, and Chris Adler by Alex Solca; Courtney Diedrick by Jan Salzman; Tico Torres by David Bergman / www.DavidBergman.net

LESSONS

- 68 BASICS**
Essential Sight-Reading Playing Charts at First Glance by Joel Rothman
- 70 ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC**
Kicked-Up Bell Patterns A Unique Approach to Double Bass Phrases by Chris Dovas
- 72 JAZZ DRUMMER'S WORKSHOP**
Al Foster on "Ev'rything I Love" Analyzing the Jazz Great's Eights by Jordan Young
- 74 ROCK PERSPECTIVES**
Tooling With Perspectives Shifting Feel in Real-World Settings by Aaron Edgar
- 76 HEALTH & SCIENCE**
Drumset Ergonomics Part 4: Snare and Floor Tom Positioning by Brandon Green

EQUIPMENT

- 16 PRODUCT CLOSE-UP**
Sugar Percussion Stave Mahogany Bop Kit
Paiste Masters Dry and Extra Dry Rides
Yamaha EAD10 Electronic Acoustic Drum Module
Canopus Hybrid Series Hardware

24 GEARING UP
Train's Drew Shoals

78 NEW AND NOTABLE



WIN!
A Roland prize package worth more than \$2,300! **Page 85**

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW**
Pre-Gig Calibration by Michael Dawson
- 10 READERS' PLATFORM**
Pat Torpey and Roy Burns, Learning to Read, and more
- 12 OUT NOW**
Joe Magistro on the Magpie Salute's *High Water I*
- 13 ON TOUR**
Conrad Choucroun with White Denim
- 14 MUST-HAVE GEAR**
Perfect Beings' Sean Reinert
- 26 ON TOPIC**
Bernard Purdie
- 86 CRITIQUE**
- 90 ENCORE**
Jethro Tull's *Stand Up*
- 92 IN MEMORIAM**
John "Jabo" Starks
- 94 BACKBEATS**
Industry Happenings, Who's Playing What, and more
- 96 KIT OF THE MONTH**
The "Bam Bam" Kit

DEFY THE ORDINARY

The inspiration behind S.L.P drum kits is to explore different build methods and shell materials beyond the scope of what is typically offered on most kits. Embodying this philosophy, the S.L.P Fat Spruce kit is made using all Spruce shells, a tone wood not commonly associated with drums. The sound is fat, rich, mid-range forward, providing a fresh voice that gives the drummer a new and distinctive tonal option. **Alter Perceptions, Defy the Ordinary.**



AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

Pre-Gig Calibration

Being an employable drummer in 2018 carries more demands than it did in 1918, especially when it comes to melding live performances with the variety of A/V technology being used by most pop, rock, and R&B artists these days. And that applies not just to full-time touring professionals, like this month's featured players Eric Hernandez (Bruno Mars), Rico Nichols (Kendrick Lamar), and Courtney Diedrick (Damian Marley), but also to those of us gigging on a more local/regional level with Top-40 wedding bands, electronic-inspired indie projects, club acts, or theater productions.

The majority of my gigs over the past few years, aside from a few loose jam sessions and acoustic jazz shows, have required me to either play with a click to sync with backing tracks, start or stop loops, hit one-shot samples from a multipad, or layer triggered kicks and snares on top of my acoustic kit. While I enjoy the added challenges introduced by technology, I've found that this new norm requires much keener focus to keep everything running smoothly while also delivering an organic, exciting live performance. As a result, my preshow warm-up has become much more codified so that I know going into each gig that I'm as physically loose and mentally sharp as possible.

The first thing I do is run through a bunch of triplet grid-based exercises, using all the possible variations of accents, doubles, flams, and 32nd notes, while having the metronome click on the second triplet partial. These exercises serve two purposes: to loosen my hands and to make sure my mind is focused intensely on controlling the time and subdivisions. I start at a comfortable tempo (120 bpm), and then increase the speed, in increments of ten clicks, until I reach my max speed (150 bpm).

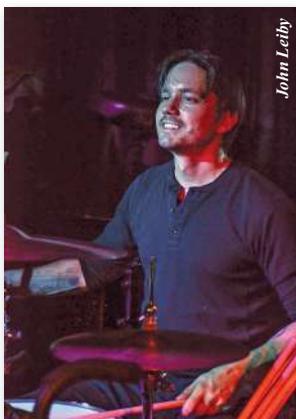
Once I've completed the grid exercises, I take a few minutes to stretch my hands, wrists, fingers, and forearms. The next phase of my routine involves a challenging single-stroke endurance exercise that I memorized from technique guru Bill Bachman's book *Stick Technique*. The basic premise is to play an entire measure of 16ths with each hand. Then on each repeat, replace the last 16th note with two 32nd notes (starting with the opposite hand). The 32nd notes keep piling on until you arrive at two complete measures of uninterrupted 32nd notes. I start at a comfortable tempo (90 bpm), with the metronome on the offbeat ("&"), and increase the tempo by four clicks each time until I reach my max tempo, which ranges from 106 bpm to 114 bpm depending on how fluid my hands feel that day. I take a break to stretch between each repetition.

While it may seem overly obsessive, I've found that sticking to such a strict regimen every day has not only made my chops sharper than ever before, but it has also provided me with a heightened sense of preparedness and confidence going into each gig. I know that if I can hit my marks consistently on the practice pad, I'm armed and ready for whatever challenges may come at me once I hit the stage.

Enjoy the issue!

Mike Dawson

Michael Dawson
Managing Editor



John Leiby

MODERN DRUMMER

Founder
Ronald Spagnardi
1943–2003

Publisher/CEO **Isabel Spagnardi**

Senior Vice President **Lori Spagnardi**

Vice President **Kevin W. Kearns**

Associate Publisher **Tracy A. Kearns**

Advertising Director **Bob Berenson**

Advertising Assistant **LaShanda Gibson**

Senior Art Director **Scott G. Bienstock**

Contributing Designer **Richard Leeds**

Editorial Director **Adam J. Budofsky**

Managing Editor **Michael Dawson**

Associate Editor **Willie Rose**

Editor at Large **Billy Amendola**

Business and Content Development **Miguel Monroy**

The MD Pro Panel: Chris Adler, Gregg Bissonette, Jason Bittner, Will Calhoun, Terri Lyne Carrington, Matt Chamberlain, Jeff Davis, Peter Erskine, Bob Gatzen, Daniel Glass, Benny Greb, Matt Halpern, Horacio Hernandez, Gerald Heyward, Taku Hirano, Susie Ibarra, Jim Keltner, Pat Mastelotto, Allison Miller, Rod Morgenstein, Chris Pennie, Stephen Perkins, Dafnis Prieto, Rich Redmond, Brian Reitzell, Jim Riley, Antonio Sanchez, Gil Sharone, Chad Smith, Steve Smith, Todd Sucherman, Billy Ward, Kenny Washington, Paul Wertico

MODERN DRUMMER ADVISORY BOARD:

Kenny Aronoff, Eddie Bayers, Bill Bruford, Harry Cangany, Dennis DeLucia, Les DeMerle, Peter Erskine, Bob Gatzen, Danny Gottlieb, Jim Keltner, Paul Leim, Peter Magadini, George Marsh, Rod Morgenstein, Andy Newmark, Neil Peart, Steve Smith, Billy Ward, Dave Weckl, Paul Wertico.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Patrick Berkery, Stephen Bidwell, David Ciauro, Bob Girouard, Mike Haid, John Martinez, Rick Mattingly, Ben Meyer, Ken Micallef, Jeff Potter, Will Romano, Bernie Schallehn, Ilya Stelmovsky, Robin Tolleason, Lauren Vogel Weiss, Paul Wells.

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 2018 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.

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

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

MEMBER: National Association of Music Merchants, Percussive Arts Society

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

MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE: www.moderndrummer.com

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES

Music Key						
	R.C. bell	C.C.	China	Splash	Cowbell	
open	○					
H.H.	●	✱	●	✱	▲	
T.T.	✱					
S.D.	●	✱	●			
F.T.	●					
B.D.	●					
H.H.	●					
w/foot		●				
	Ghost note	Rim click	Add'l T.T.	Add'l F.T.	B.D. 2	

[facebook.com/moderndrummer](https://www.facebook.com/moderndrummer)

@modern_drummer
 @modern_drummer

+moderndrummer

“Best service I’ve received from ANY store!”

Robby, Vista, CA



TAMA Superstar Hyper-Drive Duo 5-piece Shell Pack, Meinl Cymbals Byzance Cymbals

Sweetwater[®]

Music Instruments & Pro Audio

THE SWEETWATER
DIFFERENCE



FREE
SHIPPING**



FREE TECH
SUPPORT



FREE 2-YEAR
WARRANTY

(800) 222-4700

Sweetwater.com

0% INTEREST for 24 MONTHS* on purchases of select manufacturers' products made with your Sweetwater Credit Card between now and October 31, 2018 – 24 equal monthly payments required.

*Offer applies only to single-receipt qualifying purchases. No interest will be charged on promo purchase, and equal monthly payments are required equal to initial promo purchase amount divided equally by the number of months in promo period until promo is paid in full. The equal monthly payment will be rounded to the next highest whole dollar and may be higher than the minimum payment that would be required if the purchase was a non-promotional purchase. Regular account terms apply to non-promotional purchases. For new accounts: Purchase APR is 29.99%; Minimum Interest Charge is \$2. Existing cardholders should see their credit card agreement for their applicable terms. Subject to credit approval. **Sweetwater.com/about/free-shipping

Remembering Pat Torpey

Thank you for your article on the Nashville Drummers Jam tribute to the late Pat Torpey [July 2018 *Modern Drummer*]. For the longest time I felt like I was the only drummer who considered Pat to be a huge influence. When I first read about this show, I thought Pat very much deserved it. And as I read your article, I realized that I wasn't alone. In the early and mid '90s, I learned a lot from his playing, as he would play some great fills and unique parts. But I honestly felt like I came to know and love [Pat's contributions through] the grooves that he would bring to the songs of Mr. Big. I was saddened when I read the news of Torpey's passing. Perhaps many more drummers will now discover his drumming to see what a great player he was. He's truly missed.

Dave Ferris
Las Cruces, NM



Learning to Read Music

I must disagree with the premise as presented in the May 2018 issue that learning to read is a question to debate. I'm a working drummer and instructor in the Long Island, New York, area who insists that all my students learn to read.

Not all drummers will back shows or perform in situations that require reading, as I do. However, all drummers will benefit from reading, for a multitude of reasons. The proliferation of great drum and method books as a source for the development of technique and rhythmic concepts is invaluable to drummers of all levels. The pad work for stamina and dexterity [presented in] rudimental books such as *America's N.A.R.D. [Drum] Solos* and many others is priceless. Learning the new rhythms, styles, and exercises presented in every issue of *Modern Drummer* is an asset to all, regardless of level or style.

Peter Greco

1978 Issue

I always enjoy reading *Modern Drummer*, but I thoroughly enjoyed reading the June 2018 issue [1978: A Year in Transition] because it took me back to my youth when I was twelve years old and really starting to take drumming seriously. Stewart Copeland came on the scene during the late '70s with some of the most memorable and influential drumming [of the time, which] still stands today. His mix of punk, reggae, ska, and world rhythms wasn't that popular on mainstream radio and left many drummers shaking



their heads, trying to figure out exactly what he was playing. I can't wait to grab a copy of the new Gizmodrome record to hear him today.

There was so much great music during the '70s, as shown in the articles on Russ Kunkel, Dennis Elliott, Peter Criss, Rick Marotta, Michael Derosier, and Bill Bruford. I also never knew that Rick Marotta played drums on the Jacksons' "Blame It on the Boogie" or that Russ Kunkel played on Bill Withers' "Lovely Day." I always thought it was James Gadson on Withers' tune.

And speaking of Gadson, Jim Riley's Must-Know Grooves article on disco drumming was spot on. Every drummer should know how to play this groove. If it was good enough for Steve Gadd, James Gadson, and all the other drummers of that era, then it's good enough for the rest of us. Kudos, MD!

John Rogers

Roy Burns

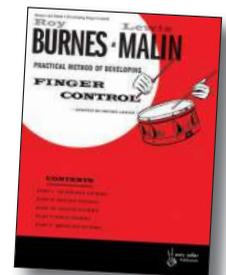
I studied with Roy Burns in the early '60s at Henry Adler's Drum Shop in New York City. Roy was an amazing teacher, and at that time he was also a featured drummer in several prominent jazz clubs around the city. I saw him often at Manhattan's Metropole Cafe and had the opportunity to hear him play with more than a few hard-blowing groups, including Si Zentner's big band. Roy was a major-league drummer, no question.

We all know how important Roy's contributions are to the drum industry. But his book *Practical Method of Developing Finger Control* [coauthored with Lewis Malin], is one of the most unbelievable hand methods that you can imagine. It explains a couple of different concepts, including the Moeller technique, and eventually combines them until they become one complete picture. However, unless you had Roy as a teacher or studied with someone who did, you'd need to pay close attention to the written instructions.

My drum instructor in Arizona, Don Bothwell, prepared me well for studying with Burns in New York. For a kid who lucked out with two great teachers early on in his career, I can only credit that to some divine intervention. One day I hope to publish explanations of Roy's method, because there's never been anything like it, then or now.

Roy Burns—a noted teacher, musician, businessman, big-time drummer, and exceptional individual!

Peter Magadini



Dropped Beats

The photos in Nate Smith's cover story in the September issue show Remo drumheads on his kit. The heads he uses and endorses are in fact the Evans models listed in his gear sidebar.

August's Inside Methods piece, "Home Studio Drum Recording with Blair Sinta," was written by Ilya Stemkovsky, not Patrick Berkery.

In July's Kit of the Month feature, the dimensions of the set should have been identified as 48x48, not four square feet.

HOW TO REACH US letters@moderndrummer.com



HEAR THE ENTIRE TRUE-SONIC™ SNARE COLLECTION PLAYED BY STANLEY RANDOLPH AT DWDRUMS.COM.

WHY SO SENSITIVE?

Because all-new **Collector's Series® True-Sonic™** wood snare drums employ a pre-tensioned **SnareBridge™** system with a complementary snare bed to provide dry, sensitive articulation. Only from DW, **The Drummer's Choice®**.

drums
dw





Joe Magistro on the Magpie Salute's *High Water I*

Long-running relationships, veteran perspectives, and killer tones power the first studio release from a collective of seasoned pros.

On August 10 the Magpie Salute, a rock band formed by former Black Crowes guitarist and founding member Rich Robinson in 2016, released the studio album *High Water I*. Drumming on Magpie's first proper studio album (following last year's self-titled live-in-the-studio release) is Joe Magistro, who's been playing with Robinson for more than ten years.

Throughout the effort, which was recorded at Nashville's Dark Horse Recording studio, Magistro's drum tones shine. On "High Water," his set swims smooth and steady beneath a driving acoustic guitar and Robinson's cutting yet soothing melodies. "I actually had the snares off on that song," Magistro explains. "But that drum's strainer was on the fritz, so when I laid into it, there was still a little rattling contact. And we had two mics set up in a loft about fifteen feet above the drum room, which provided a nice roomy sound when there was space in the song for it." Magistro adds that he played a 3-ply mahogany/poplar/mahogany set throughout the session, which featured a 14x22 bass drum, a 9x13 rack tom, and a 16x16 floor tom, along with a mixture of Brady and Ludwig snares and mostly Zildjian cymbals.

On the opening groove of the 12/8 meditation "Sister Moon," Magistro coaxes a mix of soft ghost notes, cutting backbeats, and delicate buzzes from his snare, with a wide dynamic contrast between each stroke. In the studio, the drummer dove right into



this track cold. "That [take] was actually the first run-through of the song after John [Hogg, vocals], Rich, and I talked through the form," he says. "It was just pure instinct, with no thought involved. The drums have snap but aren't bludgeoned. So all of that inside stuff comes from the fingers and wrists. You can't have a death grip on the sticks."

During "You Found Me," Magistro draws a gorgeous brush groove out of a 5x15 1920s Ludwig nickel-over-brass snare that the drummer says is outfitted with Black Beauty-style edges. "That's my go-to drum for that kind of thing, full-stop," he says. "We also used a killer '50s Gefell small-diaphragm tube condenser mic as an overhead. I only get to play brushes about twenty minutes a year, but I always carry them, just in case."

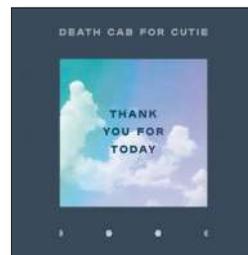
Magistro has maintained a strong musical relationship with Robinson since the songwriter's 2004 solo debut, *Paper*. "Rich and I hit it off right away musically," the drummer explains. "We have a lot of the same musical references. I'm told that when we're in the studio together, we speak in a lot of half sentences. I'm not sure if that's true or not, but apparently it can annoy the shit out of some people. [laughs] But a good tip to maintaining relationships—in addition to having talent and being the right fit—is to try not to be a complete asshole. Seems obvious." **Willie Rose**

Joe Magistro plays C&C drums and uses Promark sticks and Evans drumheads.

More New Releases



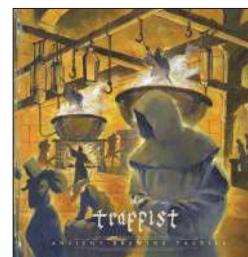
Neil & Liam Finn
Lightsleeper (Mick Fleetwood and Elroy Finn)



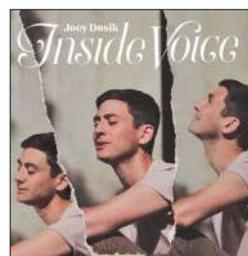
Death Cab for Cutie
Thank You for Today (Jason McGerr)



Interpol
Marauder (Sam Fogarino)



Trappist
Ancient Brewing Tactics (Ryan Harkins)



Joey Dosik
Inside Voice (Jamire Williams, Mocky, Julian Allen, and Abe Rounds)

ON TOUR

Conrad Choucroun with White Denim

The longtime Austin drumming workhorse backs the stylistically diverse rock band on the road.



Since 2006 the Austin-based, genre-blurring indie rock band White Denim has been honing a unique blend of Southern blues, punk, and psychedelic vibes into crafty, hook-driven tunes. Following the August 24 release of *Performance*, the group's eighth full-length album, White Denim has embarked on an international tour that lasts through mid November. For the trek, the band is bringing along Conrad Choucroun, a veteran Austin sticksman who formerly played for the legendary group NRBQ.

Choucroun tells *MD* that he first started working with White Denim after Steven Terebecki [vocals, bass] phoned him while he was in Mexico with his family. "I've been friends with Steve for a few years now," says Choucroun, "and a couple of summers ago he called me up to play some shows. We all locked in really well and recorded an album over the course of a few months. I'm so happy to be playing music with these guys."

Choucroun says that he felt right at home while transitioning into the new setting. "Fortunately we all speak the same musical language," he says. "We also laugh a lot, so dynamically it's easy to get along with these guys." Still, the drummer did his homework to fit the group's style. "First I listened to their back catalog over and over, to get inside the songs and the spirit of the band. Then when we [started] playing together, I stepped back and let it be my own thing. All of the drumming in White Denim's catalog is great and super musical, so that's been inspiring."

Throughout *Performance*—Choucroun's first studio appearance with the group—the drummer's dry, warm tones match each song's distinctive feeling. Check out the round, brooding toms and slapping

snare on "Performance," or the cracking snare and shimmering cymbals on the album's first single, "Magazin." Although the drummer is quick to credit producer Jim Vollentine for the record's kit sounds, a few of Choucroun's studio tricks helped bring out some special vibes. "On 'Performance' I recorded with the smallest timbale sticks I could find," he says. "It has an interesting effect in the studio and brings out different qualities of the drums and cymbals. You get less wash from the cymbals hitting the compressors through the room mics and overheads, and you get more of the drums themselves."

Live, the drummer makes some subtle changes to his kit to replicate those recorded sounds onstage. "I can't do the timbale stick thing live, but I always travel with some binder clips and bandanas and put them partially on the outer edge of the toms. Then I can move them around depending on the sonic situation. Our live sound engineer, Daniel McNeil, also uses a front-of-kit mic and incorporates that into a standard drum mic setup."

Choucroun, who got to explore a healthy amount of musical freedom in NRBQ, finds that he can take similar liberties onstage with White Denim. "Sometimes," he says, "Steve or James [Petralli, vocals and guitar] will subtly throw out a new rhythmic or melodic idea within a song, and I'll react to it—or vice versa. During solos, we'll go a little farther out. The improvisation is always in the context of a song-oriented approach, though in rehearsals we usually start playing something totally improvised and see where that takes us." **Willie Rose**

Conrad Choucroun plays C&C drums, Istanbul Agop cymbals, and a brass snare made by A&F Drum Co.

Also on the Road

John Sherman with Red Fang /// **Matt Thomas** with the Joy Formidable /// **Chris Bear** with Grizzly Bear /// **Johnny Radelat** with Gary Clark Jr. /// **Ian Paice** with Deep Purple /// **Scott Travis** with Judas Priest /// **Mac McNeilly** with the Jesus Lizard /// **Brendan Canty** with MC5 /// **Scott Hammond** with Jethro Tull /// **Terry Bozzio** on the *Reality* solo tour



Perfect Beings' Sean Reinert

Sean Reinert made his name drumming up a storm with experimental death metal bands Death and Cynic—playing with fire, precision, and a serious level of technical facility. Last year Sean joined forces with progressive rock/pop group Perfect Beings, after they recorded the tracks for their latest album, *Vier*, with drummer Ben Levin. Now Reinert gets to indulge in *all* the things that interest him, interpreting involved parts with skill and throwing in chops and musicality as he sees fit. “When I heard the record, it couldn’t have been a sweeter moment,” says Reinert, “because this was exactly the kind of stuff I was looking for. First, I’m a composer, and half of this stuff is orchestrated. And second, everything is all over the place musically and dynamically, in a good way. It’s an amalgam of all the styles that I love.”

You’d think this was the opportunity to take a big kit on the road, with all the bells and whistles to bring the material to life. But Reinert is actually scaling down. “This was me coming into a new situation with everything kind of done, as opposed to Cynic or Death, where I was involved in writing the music from scratch,” says Sean. “And because the music is way more dynamic, as far as what’s going on texturally, I’ve stripped down my kit a little bit. I’m going with a traditional five-piece—one up, one tom to the right, and one tom to the left, and then kick and snare.

“I’m in the ‘less-is-more’ thing for like the tenth time in my life,” Sean chuckles. “I’m from the *New Breed* school [referring to Gary Chester’s famously advanced drum method book], so I feel naked without anything to my left. And I have a weird way of setting up my double pedal, with my hi-hat on the inside. I hate having my hi-hat super high or far away from me, where I’m crossing my hands ridiculously if I’m not playing open handed. This allows me to have the hi-hat in a comfortable location.”

As far as his actual equipment, Reinert is sticking to what has worked well for him over the years, but with a few new snare and head choices. “I use Tama Starclassic Maples in the studio, and live I use a Starclassic Birch/Bubinga kit,” explains Reinert. “On top, it’s a 6.5x10, then a 12x14 to my right, and then I jump to a 16” on the floor to my left. For my snare I’ve been using my Starclassic 14”, but lately I’ve been really grooving on a Tama 7x13 S.L.P. G-Maple, which is amazing. You can detune it, you can tune it high, it rings, it sings...I’m blown away. The kick is an 18x20, and I also use a 20x22.

For heads, my normal go-to for toms would be an Evans G2 on top and a Genera resonant on bottom, but lately I’ve been using UV1 batters and I’ve been loving it. Evans just keeps raising the bar in that area.”

In the cymbal world, Reinert suddenly finds himself with options to change it up in the midst of the same show or even the same song. “With this band, I get to do what I used to admire when seeing jazz shows back in the day,” says Reinert, “where



Thomas Snyder/fantomphoto

guy would swap out ride cymbals in between tunes. And I’m doing that with Perfect Beings *during* the songs. I’m only using two crashes and two rides—a washy crash/ride to my left, and my main utility ride, which is usually my 21” Sabian HHX Legacy ride, because it has that perfect amount of stick definition and wash, and it has a nice bell. I also use a Sabian 20” AAX Memphis ride, which is in between being a flat ride and not being a flat ride. It’s really dry but not super dry. I also have a Sabian 21” Vault Custom, which is in between that Memphis ride and the Legacy ride. And the final ride is the Ed Thigpen Flat Signature Crystal ride. For crashes I’m usually a Legacy guy, 17” or 18”.

Reinert also uses Regal Tip 5AX sticks, Ultimate Ears UE 11 in-ear monitors, and the old-school Roland SPD-S sampling pad to trigger percussion, vocal parts, and “all the stuff that can’t be recreated live.” Other road must-haves include his “tackle box survival kit,” which holds felts, earplugs, Moongels, lugs, and first aid items like Band-Aids and antibiotic ointments.

“Nutrition is a big thing,” says Reinert. “I always bring Emergen-C, and even if I’m not sick, I’m doubling down on my multivitamins. Something I don’t put in my bag but is very important is sleep—getting rest on the road, and not partying. You’re a drummer, you’re an athlete. You can’t be polluting your body and staying up all night and then expect to crank out a perfect set on two hours of sleep. And also, a smoke-free environment. I get sick very easily. And I don’t do anything that will jeopardize my moving parts. No more skateboarding, no more trying to dunk the basketball. I can go swimming or hit the stationary bike.”

The Perfect Beings gig is a challenge physically and mentally, so Reinert is constantly aware of keeping his mind limber, but also knowing when to take a break. “Some people like to completely immerse themselves in the music situation, and some guys like to disconnect,” he says. “It depends on the time of year. If it’s winter, I’m not going hiking. Books are easy to keep on your phone. I also like to bring my iPad with music sequencing and writing programs.”

Ilya Stemkovsky

Indispensables

- Starclassic Birch/Bubinga tour kit
- Tama 7x13 S.L.P. G-Maple snare
- Evans UV1 tom heads
- Sabian HHX Legacy, AAX Memphis, Vault Custom, and Ed Thigpen Flat Signature Crystal rides
- Regal Tip 5AX sticks
- Ultimate Ears UE 11 in-ear monitors
- Roland SPD-S sampling pad
- tackle box survival kit
- Emergen-C supplement, multivitamins
- ample sleep/smoke-free environment
- digital books
- iPad with music programs



Make Your Drums Do More



EAD

Electronic Acoustic Drums



See how the EAD10 can make your drums do more
at www.yamaha.com/ead

@YamahaMusicUSA



PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

Sugar Percussion

Stave Mahogany Bop Kit

A gorgeous handcrafted instrument with supreme sonics to match its flawless appearance.

“There is no ‘ugly’ side,” says Sugar Percussion master craftsman Jefferson Schallenberger on the company’s website, in reference to the keen attention to detail he maintains with every square inch of the drums he produces. “When you swap heads, you should be just as impressed with the inside as with the outside. Everywhere should feel equally tended to, and as such, the drum will perform and appear as well as it absolutely can.”

We’ve tested a bunch of Sugar Percussion snares in the past few years (July 2015 and March 2018) and can attest to the fact that Schallenberger doesn’t trade in hype; those drums were simply flawless both visually and sonically. So we were super excited to get our hands on a full Sugar Percussion drumset to review, a bebop-sized setup made with stave shells crafted from a single tree of premium-grade mahogany.

The Juicy Details

Our review kit included a shallow 13x18 bass drum and similarly short toms (7x12 and 13x14). The snare was 6x14. All four drums were constructed from the same mahogany tree. The shells, which were made with vertical staves of wood, were graduated in thickness from 3/8" on the rack tom to 1/2" on the kick. These thicknesses were a bit thinner than what Sugar Percussion typically uses, with the purpose of increasing resonance. Additionally, the hand-sanded bearing edges were shaped to a slightly sharper-than-usual apex to enhance sustain. The shells had a hand-applied polyurethane finish that protected the mahogany without obscuring its naturally elegant appearance.

The snare and toms were outfitted with Remo Ambassador Coated batter heads, Ambassador Clear resonants, and triple-flanged steel hoops. The bass drum had a Powerstroke 3 Clear batter and a PS3 Fiberskyn front head. The snare featured a Sugar Percussion-branded Trick GS007 three-point throw-off, Puresound wires, and the company’s sleek, single-point round lugs. The bass drum and toms had separate lugs for top and bottom heads, and the bass drum featured built-in mounting hardware bolted directly to the hoop. Having the mounting hardware permanently affixed to the bass drum wood hoops not only enhances the minimalist look of the kit by removing the need for large metal claws, but it also makes head changes much quicker and easier and ensures that the tension rods align perfectly with the lugs during tuning.



Lost in Sound

Out of the boxes, the toms and snare were tensioned medium high while the bass drum was set medium low. The front kick head and resonant tom heads were tuned about a half step higher than the batters. Without any fine-tuning, the kit sounded musical, full, and cohesive from the snare down to the bass drum. All of the drums had a crisp, woody attack, a big, deep tone, and a quick but perfectly smooth decay. None of the drums required any muffling; there were no squirrely overtones or excessive ringing to rein in, yet the drums sang with an open, warm, and rich voice. Thinking back on my thirty-plus years of drumming, I don't think I've come across another drumset that produced this much tone while having such a controlled decay. When working on the demo recording of this kit, I used considerably less EQ—almost none, in fact—and the kick and toms had very little sympathetic hum, which often requires editing

or gating to keep from muddying up the mix.

This kit could be tuned super tight for a very melodic and dynamic hard bop sound, à la jazz great Tony Williams circa 1965. It could also be tuned very low to produce deep, fat, punchy sounds that retain a full, open, and musical note. Despite its diminutive size, this is a very versatile drumset capable of satisfying drummers and engineers alike, and it was incredibly inspiring to play. Each time I sat down at it, I found myself exploring ideas I'd never tried before. And no matter what I went for, be it a dense solo comprising a million notes or a single rimshot fill, the drums delivered above and beyond my expectations.

A four-piece, single-tree drumkit like the one we reviewed costs \$6,000 and can be ordered directly at sugarpercussion.com/ purchase.

Michael Dawson



Paiste

Masters Dry and Extra Dry Rides

Ultimate articulation and control without sacrificing tone and expressivity.

Swiss cymbal maker Paiste debuted the Masters series in 2011 with a collection of twelve unique, artist-inspired ride cymbals, all of which are handcrafted from premium CuSn20 (aka B20) bronze. The series was expanded in 2014 with low-pitched, complex-sounding Dark models and then again in 2017 with super-fast and smooth Thin hi-hats, crash/rides, and a swish. This year the company added ultra-articulate Dry and Extra Dry rides in 20", 21", and 22" sizes. Let's see how well they live up to their names.

Dry Rides

The 20", 21", and 22" Masters Dry rides are medium thin and are designed for low to medium-loud applications. Paiste describes their sound as "dark, dry, and deep" with a "fairly soft feel" and a "pronounced warm ping over dry, deep wash." They have a gray matte finish that's widely lathed to create concentric circles that radiate from the hole to the edge. The stick sound on all three sizes was super clean but low pitched, and the sustain was very controlled and even. The bells emitted a nice, clear chime that poked through the breathy wash without being jarring.



The 20" Dry ride had the brightest tone of the three and the most silvery, focused wash. The 21" had a deeper stick attack and more complex sustain. The 21" Dry was the most versatile of the six we reviewed, especially for players desiring a deep, rich ride sound with crisp, woody attack and dark but contained tone. The 22" Dry ride had the longest sustain, deepest voice, and broadest attack. This was the most "jazzy" of the bunch, sounding like a classic Turkish-style ride that's been muted with a bit of gaffer's tape.

Extra Dry Rides

Also available in 20", 21", and 22" sizes, the Masters Extra Dry rides have almost no sustain, making them extremely articulate and controlled. They produce a clear point to every stroke, and no matter how aggressively you hit them the wash remains tightly confined to a quick, restricted "puff."

The 20" Extra Dry had the most noticeable sustain. The 21" and 22" models had a gated-sounding decay that emphasized the dry, woody attack further. All three Extra Dry cymbals had limited volume, not unlike a flat ride, allowing me to play with fuller strokes at lower dynamic levels.

While I had a lot of fun playing fast, fusion-style patterns on the Extra Dry rides, they'll likely have more limited applications, primarily for note-dense playing styles. The Dry models will appeal to a wider range of players desiring a dark, dry sound with earthy stick attack and a smooth, balanced wash that's very controlled but not overly muted.

Michael Dawson



Yamaha

EAD10 Electronic Acoustic Drum Module

A simple, powerful all-in-one solution for stereo recording, sample triggering, and creative audio effects processing.

More and more drummers are searching for simple yet reliable ways to document their practice sessions and performances on their mobile devices with high-quality audio, and Yamaha recently developed a near-perfect solution: the EAD10 electronic acoustic drum module (list price: \$629). The EAD10 also has some hidden values for studio and touring drummers, so let's check it out.

What Is It?

The EAD10 consists of two parts. First, there's a sensor unit that clamps to the batter-side bass drum hoop and houses an X-Y-configured stereo mic and a trigger sensor that's activated each time the bass drum is struck. The second component is a compact sound module that contains a plethora of drum and percussion samples that can be played by the trigger sensor or by external piezos or pads. (Three additional inputs are provided, including one dual-mono jack that's ideal for Yamaha's DT50S two-zone snare trigger and two jacks for additional triggers or pads.)

The main unit also contains a handful of DSP (digital signal processing) effects, including distortion, delay, wah, phaser, flanger, reverb, and compression, that can be applied to the sounds captured by the stereo mic.

The back of the EAD10 module has a USB port for a flash drive (not included) that can be used for recording longer performances, and there's a second USB port for connecting the module to a computer, smartphone, or tablet. There are two quarter-inch mono outputs, and there's a 3.5 mm stereo input that can be used to send audio into the EAD10. The front of the main unit has a standard quarter-inch headphone jack.

The interface of the EAD10 is intuitive and easy to navigate.

There are separate knobs for controlling the level of the master output, auxiliary input/metronome, reverb, DSP effects, and triggered samples. There's also a large knob for switching between preset and custom sound sets (called scenes). Additional push-button controls provide access to metronome settings, sensor unit adjustments, the internal recorder, and other functions.

The EAD10 comes with an AC adaptor, a pair of connector cables, three hook-and-loop fastener bands (for securing the cables for a tidy setup), two adhesive cushions to help the sensor unit mount flush on crimped-metal bass drum hoops, and an angle-adjustable module holder that can be mounted to a multiclamp attached to a hi-hat or cymbal stand.

How Does It Work?

The EAD10 system is very easy to set up and requires almost no technical know-how to use. Simply connect the sensor unit to the top of the batter-side bass drum hoop, making sure that it doesn't rub against the snare, toms, or other hardware, and then run the two cables from the sensor to A/B jacks on the main unit. Plug in some headphones, fire up the module, select a scene, and jam away.

The default trigger and mic gain settings provided a nicely balanced drumset sound with strong kick and snare tones, natural toms, and cymbals that sounded clean but sat comfortably lower in the mix. The stereo spread between the hi-hat and far-right crash felt accurately spaced. (As is the case with most condenser microphones, darker-sounding cymbals and deeper-tuned toms yielded the most pleasant and equalized tones.) The default scene, Arena, employed some large, ambient reverb and a resonant, smacking kick sample, which instantly put





me in a classic rock headspace.

The trigger sensor performed flawlessly right out of the box, responding accurately to my playing dynamics. The reverb level could be adjusted from subtle to absurd, and turning up the effect knob added some super-punchy compression. By turning up the trigger knob, I could adjust the balance of the triggered and acoustic kick sounds from being completely acoustic to nearly all sample.

While I had no issues with the levels of the microphones and sensitivity of the trigger in the default setup, you can reconfigure the module by simply pressing the sensor unit button, selecting auto, and then striking each piece of your kit for ten seconds. The sensor will then be automatically calibrated to optimal levels for your playing style and setup. If you want to tweak the trigger and mic levels further, you can do so manually via the menu screen.

Applications

The first and most basic benefit of having the EAD10 is that it'll likely inspire you to spend more time on your kit while you explore all the fun, exciting, interesting, and unusual sounds within the fifty presets and whatever custom scenes you create on your own. I lost track of several hours while I dug deeper into the more abstract scenes, like Cyclone, WowWow, and Whistler. And the funky, lo-fi vibes of the Dirty, BreakBeats, and Vinyl Loop scenes had me honing my Clyde Stubblefield beats for extended periods of time. The scenes featuring delay effects allowed me to select an exact tempo of the delay, making timing practicing more fun than with a metronome.

When practicing with the internal metronome, you can adjust the tempo, time signature, subdivision levels, and sounds. To record your practice, simply press the recorder button to enter the record menu, and press record. The internal memory allows for about 1.5 minutes of record time, but you can expand on that by connecting a USB flash drive to the back of the module. You can also record yourself playing along to backing tracks or other music by connecting an audio player to the aux in jack. If you would prefer to

use the EAD10 as an audio interface with your computer, connect the module via USB, and select it as your audio input device in your preferred DAW.

If you would like to use the audio from the EAD10 when you record videos on your smartphone or tablet, you'll need to pick up a USB cable with the proper connectivity for your device. Yamaha created a very powerful, intuitive recording app, called Rec'n'Share, which worked flawlessly with the EAD10 for recording audio and video simultaneously. The app can grab any audio file stored on your device, analyze the tempo, add a click track, and process the audio so that the tempo can be sped up or slowed down. The app also syncs with your social media pages, so once you've recorded a performance you're happy with, you can share it with just a few screen taps.

While the EAD10 is a game changer for practicing and creating quick-and-easy online content, it also has potential to be a valuable tool in studio and live drumming applications. If you record the L/R outputs of the EAD10 (with varying degrees of effects) onto separate tracks in your DAW, you can blend them within your mix of close and room microphones to create an interesting layer of parallel processing. Or you can mute the stereo mic to use the EAD10 to record a separate track of triggered samples.

In live situations, the EAD10 could be used similarly, as a simple sample-triggering device, by muting the mic sensor and cranking the trigger output. This is a great option if you want to layer in samples when your acoustic kit is fully miked. For gigs in smaller rooms or in situations with less production, you could run the audio from the EAD10 to the PA and use it as a basic stereo drum mix. Or if you want a quick-and-easy in-ear monitor system, just run a mix of your band from the board to the aux in on the EAD10. As long as the audio being sent into the EAD10 is balanced, you should be good to go, and you'll have the flexibility to tweak the level of your drums in your in-ears from your drum throne. Pretty cool, huh?

Michael Dawson

Canopus

Hybrid Series Hardware

This new line provides strength and stability with significantly less heft.

When I'm choosing new hardware, my main concern is the balance between weight and sturdiness. Stands need to be light enough to not break my back during setup but sturdy enough to keep my drums and cymbals firmly in place. Canopus satisfies both concerns with its new Hybrid series, which comprises heavy-duty, double-braced designs made with lightweight aluminum components. The line includes a throne, a snare stand, a straight/boom cymbal stand, and a hi-hat.

Throne

The throne is the most straightforward item in the series. It features a sturdy tripod base, a round seat top covered in breathable sisal-hemp fabric, and a corkscrew-style height adjustment that ranges between 20.5" and 28.3". The seat is firm yet comfortable, and the base is sturdy. The one downside is that the seat top is almost as heavy as the base, due to the thick steel plate on the underside of the cushion. The base is impressively light at 7.3 pounds, so to see it paired with a heavy seat top weighing 6.2 pounds is somewhat disappointing.

Snare Stand

The snare stand is compact but seemingly indestructible. It features all-metal components and sturdy rubber feet where the basket meets the drum and the legs meet the floor. The wing nut-operated angle adjustment has a gearless tilter that allows for smooth motion in any direction. The base has a low center of gravity and feels stable enough to keep even very heavy drums in place with ease. The basket can accommodate drums as large as 15" in diameter and has a height range of 17.3" to 22.4". Though heavy-duty, this stand weighs a mere 7.5 pounds.

Straight/Boom Stand

The cymbal stand features double-braced legs and a low center of gravity, which provide increased stability when needed, such as when holding a heavy cymbal with the boom fully extended. The convertible boom mechanism is easy to adjust and includes memory locks for quick setup. The arm is made of a hollow steel rod that's lighter than a typical boom arm but just as sturdy. As on the snare stand, the cymbal stand's tilter is gearless. Once tightened, the tilter holds its place, even with large, heavy cymbals. Though all of the Hybrid series stands include aluminum and steel parts, this combination is most notable with the cymbal stand. Compared to a traditional double-braced boom stand, the Canopus Hybrid stand is about thirty percent lighter, weighing just 6.8 pounds.

Hi-Hat

The most unusual item in the Hybrid hardware series is the hi-hat, which uses a unique double-chain-and-lever mechanism. The pull system is quite fast, and the pedal response is strong. I found that I had to lighten my foot and move farther back on the footboard in order to not overplay





my paper-thin hi-hats. When using a set of medium-weight Zildjian New Beats, I felt like there was nothing attached to the clutch, and the cymbals moved perfectly parallel with my foot. To test how the stand performed under more extreme stress, I swapped the New Beats for a couple of 20" rides. I had to increase the spring tension a bit, but the stand still handled the oversized, heavy hi-hats as if they were a normal set.

The Hybrid hi-hat stand also features a memory lock for height, a locking clutch nut, swiveling legs, and a solid floor plate lined with hook-and-loop fasteners for extra stability. The solid base plate folds up nicely and is secured in place via drum key-operated bolts on either side. The only thing about this stand I didn't love was the rubber grommet used to cradle the bottom cymbal—I found that it dampened the sound a bit too much. Swapping the rubber piece

with a traditional felt solved that issue. The stand (without cymbals) weighs 9.9 pounds.

The Verdict

Even though they're impressively lightweight, Hybrid series stands are still relatively heavy. For instance, they weigh more than the ultra-light, single-braced hardware I use with my regular gigging kit. However, if you're in the market for the most sturdy and reliable stands you can buy, these are an excellent choice and are substantially lighter than most offerings of comparable design. And even if you're not looking for ultra-sturdy hardware, the quick response and effortless action of the Hybrid hi-hat stand make it something you should try out for yourself.

Kyle Andrews



Train's

Drew Shoals

Train's Drew Shoals played two different kits this past summer to highlight Ludwig's 45th Anniversary Vistalite series. Both the Green Sparkle set he used at the start of the tour and the Tri-Band Black one shown here were ideal for the variety of genres the band plays. "Vistalites are such a classic, iconic kit," says Shoals, "and after forty-five years they still sound great in modern settings."

When choosing his setup, Drew considered drum and cymbal combinations that would help him effectively navigate through Train's diverse styles. "Some of our earlier songs have an arena-rock feel to them," he says. "But when you move through the catalog, our recent songs have more of a pop vibe."

Shoals maintains an assortment of Ludwig snares so he can achieve the best sound for every setting. "My Black Beauty is my go-to snare, as it has a great crack to it," he says. "But I love Supraphonics when you want a lighter and more airy Motown sound. The Copper Phonics are somewhere in between, with an additional nuance from the softer metal. And people love Acrolites in the studio because they're super focused and dry. It's cool to have that variety." Although on this tour Shoals primarily uses his Classic Maple auxiliary snare to trigger samples, he tunes it so that it produces a fairly dry, controlled pop, when that sound is needed.

Shoals uses a combination of bright and dark cymbals to achieve a classic, diverse mix of tones. "The bright and cutting A Custom crash is a go-to," he says, "and the K Custom Medium ride has a great bell and a distinctive ping, but is a little darker and doesn't get too washy." He adds that the K Dark crash and Constantinople Medium-Thin Low ride add musical color to louder rock songs, and that

the Avedis hi-hats, a reissue of Zildjian's A cymbals from the '50s and '60s, are favorites of his as well. "They have a crisp attack without being too tinny," he says, "and they feel great to play. They're super musical, and they sit perfectly in the mix in any situation."

Shoals chose to alternate between Clear Emperor and Red Colortone heads for the toms for both visual and audible effects. "They sound great and look amazing, especially with the Vista kits," he says. The Coated Emperor on the snare produces an old-school sound that works well with the band's original songs and classic-rock covers.

Shoals' toms are tuned low and open. "We want a beefy rock sound that hits people in the gut," he explains. "We use a little bit of Moongel, maybe one on each tom. For the Black Beauty, I tune just a little above a medium tension. I want it to cut in the mix and have a nice crack to it, but it's not super cranked. If I want a lower tone, like when we play 'Marry Me' or 'Angel in Blue Jeans,' I'll throw on a Big Fat Snare Drum Donut to drop the pitch a bit."

Shoals says he utilizes triggers on about forty percent of the songs. "You'll see contemporary-pop drummers using pads and samples," he says. "They're part of the set of tools you need to successfully play a modern-pop gig. I embrace the challenge. It's a lot of fun to recreate the sounds from the record in an organic, live setting."

Drew prefers to use 5A sticks for studio work or when he wants a little more control. But in a live setting 5Bs and X5Bs provide the extra power needed when playing to an exuberant crowd. "The extreme version is a little longer," he says. "And it's nice to have some extra heft to work with."



Drums: Ludwig 45th Anniversary Tri-Band Black Vistalite

- A.** 6x13 Classic Maple snare in Charcoal Shadow finish
- B.** 6.5x14 Black Beauty snare
- C.** 9x13 tom
- D.** 16x16 floor tom
- E.** 16x18 floor tom
- F.** 14x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1.** 15" Avedis hi-hats
- 2.** 19" K Dark Thin crash
- 3.** 20" A Custom crash
- 4.** 22" K Custom Medium ride
- 5.** 21" Avedis cymbal
- 6.** 22" K Constantinople Medium-Thin Low ride

Interview by Brandy Laurel McKenzie

Heads: Remo Coated Emperor on main snare, Coated Controlled Sound Black Dot on auxiliary snare, Clear Emperor tom batters (Drew also uses Red Colortone Emperors), Clear Powerstroke P3 on both sides of bass drum

Hardware: Ludwig Pro Atlas stands, Porter & Davies BC 2 throne

Sticks: Vic Firth 5A, 5B, and X5B

Electronics: Roland SPD-SX sampling pad with RT series triggers on bass drum and auxiliary snare, Westone ES60 in-ear monitors

Accessories: 14" Big Fat Snare Drum Donut and RTOM Moongel dampeners

Photos by Brady Hartman



6

5

4

D

E

F

B

C

3

1

A

2

BC2
powered by
Passes 8



Bernard Purdie

On every track of his new album, *Cool Down*, the iconic R&B drummer burns like a house on fire in a live-in-the-studio setting. “And would you believe,” the pretty one adds, “with no overdubs at all!”

On the ground covered: funk, soul, fat-back New Orleans grooves—even smooth jazz.

The guys that supported me have played different genres in the various bands they’ve been in. Each one of them is proficient at hip-hop, crossover, funk, soul, etc. They’ve done a lot of the songs with other artists, but not with me. I liked the idea of emphasizing the crossover aspect, but I needed it to be very soulful, funky, and with melodies.

On being considered the originator of the famous Purdie shuffle.

I absolutely love it! I’ve worked on it for so many years. Not to make light of it, but I still want everybody to know that I still carry all of the feels and attitudes of the genres I play.

On what he considers the greatest era of popular music.

I think the best era turned out to be the ’70s, because it gave everybody the opportunity to play funk, soul, R&B, pop, rock...all of it. In the early ’80s they spread out: Disco came in, and near the end of the ’80s you had rap—and what did they do? They took from the ’70s.

On his favorite recording studios.

In the past I liked A&R Studios and the Record Plant. Currently I love Steve Jankowski’s Jankland studio in New Jersey. He’s not only an engineer but a trumpet player, arranger, writer, and producer. And, naturally, Vibromonk Studios in Brooklyn, where we recorded *Cool Down*.

On how his roles as Aretha Franklin’s musical director (1970–75) and the drummer in the 2009 revival of Broadway’s *Hair* came about.

Aretha came about via my affiliation with [Franklin’s bandleader] King Curtis. And I was the original drummer in *Hair*. Two years before it hit Broadway it was my band that did the demos, which I gave to [famed Atlantic Records producer] Arif Mardin. The 2009 *Hair* revival was fine, and I’ve done three of those since.

On what one artist he would drop everything for.

At one time it would have been Aretha Franklin, hands down. For at least twenty years the various producers I worked for gave me the benefit of the doubt; in other words, when she called I could go and at the same time still keep my recording jobs. Because it was specifically her, they were glad to let me do it.

On three songs that define him as a drummer.

Aretha Franklin’s “Until You Come Back to Me,” Steely Dan’s “Home at Last,” and Tim Rose’s “Hey Joe,” with a special mention of Aretha’s “Rock Steady.”

On whether the stories are true that he’d bring a large sign to recording sessions that read, “You’ve done hired the hit maker, Bernard ‘Pretty’ Purdie!”

Absolutely! [laughs] Guilty as charged. I actually had three signs, two of which would be put up at every session I was on. I even used to alternate them!

On thinking back on all the historic recordings he’s made in his career.

It took me twenty-five years to learn what I was doing—and another twenty-five to start enjoying it! I was just doing my job, and that’s why I feel very good about what I’m still doing, and I do appreciate that my work will live on. It’s a good feeling.

Bernard Purdie uses DW drums and Remo heads.

Interview by Bob Girouard



Photo courtesy Bernard Purdie

ALIVE AND KICKING!

ON STAGE WITH THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ACTS

Bon Jovi's Tico Torres

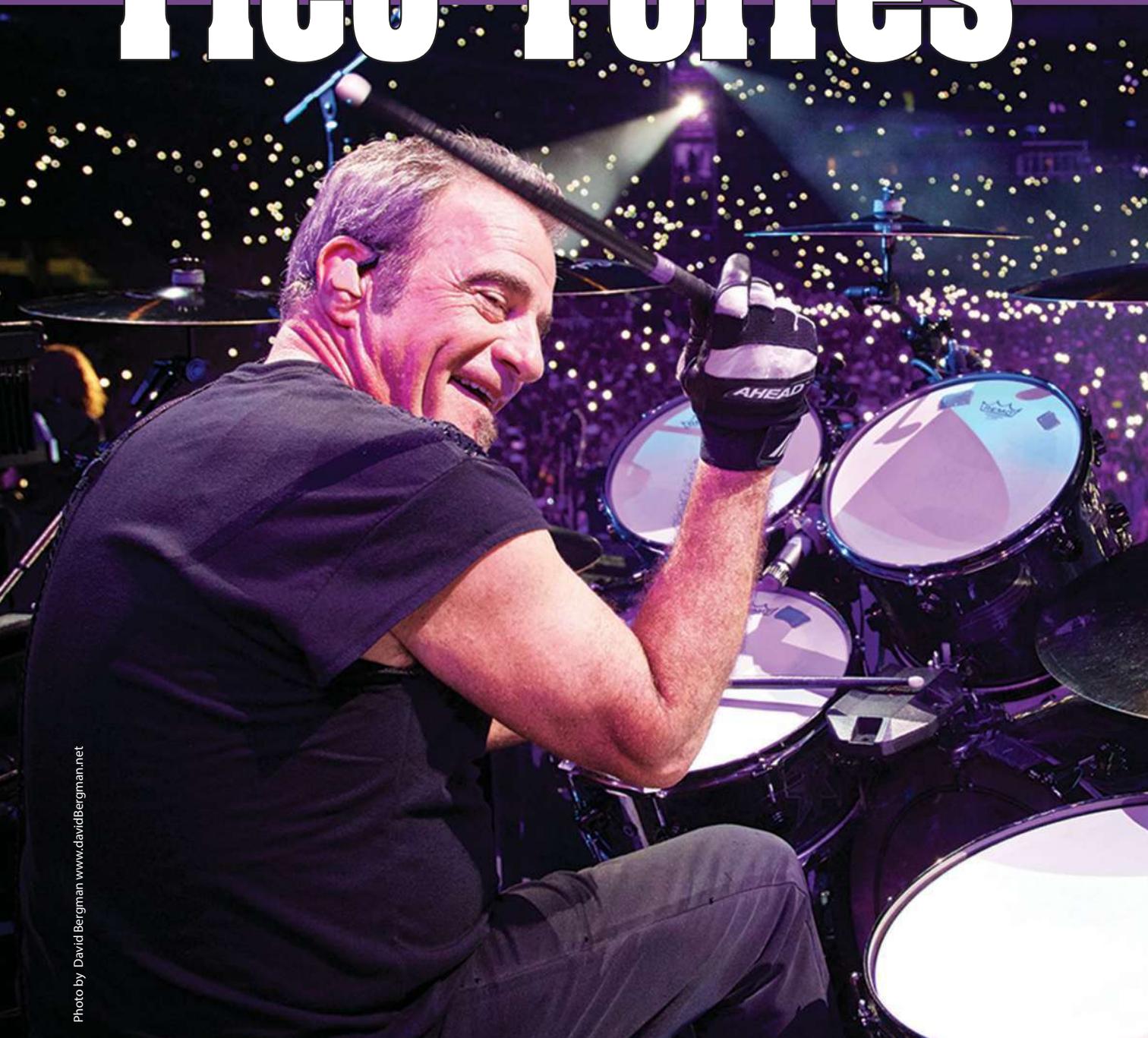


Photo by David Bergman www.davidBergman.net

When singer Jon Bon Jovi quit his cover band to front the New Jersey originals group the Rest, most who witnessed his passion and drive knew it wouldn't take long for the charismatic frontman to put his own band together and set out to rule the music world.

Bon Jovi already had on board keyboardist David Bryan and bassist Alec John Such, veterans of the fertile New Jersey music scene. When Such told him that he knew "the baddest-ass drummer in the land," it didn't take long for Jon to convince the

rock-solid drummer Tico Torres to give up his established career with the Jersey group Franke and the Knockouts—who had a top-ten hit in '81 with "Sweetheart"—to join him in his new venture. Guitarist Richie Sambora joined shortly after, and the rest is history.

When Jon Bon Jovi told the band's origin story during his Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction speech this year, he said, "Tico took a shot, and I've been his singer ever since." Sambora, for his part, had introduced the sticksman to the Hall of Fame audience by calling him "the best drummer in the world."

by Billy Amendola



Tico Torres was born on October 7, 1953, and began playing drums at a very young age. He had the full support of his mother, Emma, and his stepfather, Lenny, a jazz drummer who worked in the '30s and '40s, and who lent the budding musician his 1938 Slingerland drumkit, kick-starting his career. When Tico took that chance with Jon Bon Jovi in 1983, he went back to roughing it on the road—at least until 1986 with the explosion of Bon Jovi's third album, *Slippery When Wet*, which featured the breakout hits "You Give Love a Bad Name," "Livin' on a Prayer," and "Wanted Dead or Alive." *Slippery When Wet* spent eight weeks at the top of the *Billboard* album chart and was the top-selling release of 1987. Since then it's sold more than 12 million copies, making it one of the best-selling albums of all time in the United States. In the ensuing years, Tico and the band have released ten consecutive top-ten studio albums, toured the world, and headlined sold-out shows in fifty-plus countries, playing to more than thirty-four million fans.

"Tico is the heart and the soul of this band," Jon Bon Jovi tells *Modern Drummer*. "He once said to me, 'You know I love you—I've had to stare at your ass for thirty-five years!' [laughs] Seriously, though, Tico does more than provide a backbeat on stage. He gives the band its swing. He's translating what my movements are trying to convey to our audience. I marvel at his talents."

Bon Jovi's current lineup consists of the singer/bandleader, Torres, founding keyboardist David Bryan, bassist Hugh McDonald (an early associate of the band who eventually replaced Such in 1994), and guitarist Phil X (who took Sambora's place in 2013). Rounding out the live lineup are producer/guitarist John Shanks and percussionist Everett Bradley. "As a percussionist and singer," Bradley tells *MD*, "I've played with a lot of great drummers behind various artists, but no one swings as hard as Tico. I'm not talking in an obvious way, but in a way where you really feel his Cuban roots. You feel the spice, the grease, and his sense of family, which is truly unique, especially in a rock band.

"Besides being a great drummer," Everett continues, "Tico's an awesome percussionist. The shaker, tambourine, and conga parts on the Bon Jovi records are all his. It's been wonderful learning them first hand from the master, instead of trying to decipher them [from recordings]. These parts are not only based on instinct, but on the lyrics and the feelings he wants to convey. I generally have Tico's hi-hat and kick drum turned up in my in-ear monitors; these two instruments give me all I need to lock in my percussion and vocal parts, and at the same time give me the freedom for nuance and improvisation—and the security to shake my ass!"

Hugh McDonald adds his own words of praise about Tico. "I can think of three words that cover it all," he says. "First word: effortless. We've had simpatico musically and personally since we first played together in 1985. We've never had to plan anything out, like, 'You play this, I'll play that.' It just works. Second word: grease. Being of Cuban/New York decent—he just has it. Third word: swing. Whatever the feel and whatever the song, his groove *always* swings."

While he's capable of playing complex techniques, Torres decided a long time ago to do only what a given song requires. "I just want to make our fans smile and be uplifted, and to feel good," he insists. *MD* caught up with Tico as the band was wrapping up the first leg of their 2018 tour before heading out again in the fall.

a cymbal for every style.



MEET MR. NOSTALGIA.

What's he nostalgic for? Why, simpler times before the accessories of wealth were appropriated by hipsters & anthropomorphic peanuts. Nowadays, a rich, smooth, jazzy gent like he can't even saunter about the metropolis twisting his meticulously-waxed 'stache without being mistaken for a common barista! Oh, you poor coal baron. We feel your pain, good sir!

istanbul
Mehmet

Handmade Cymbals from Turkey

istanbulmehmet.com

f i t /istanbulmehmet

Tico Torres

MD: What's your typical day on the road like?

Tico: We usually fly after the show to the next city. Most days I go to the gym to run and stretch to keep my muscles in shape. For indoor shows we go to the venue at 5 P.M. to do soundcheck, and then we have dinner. And then we do a session with our sports guy to stretch and get our heads on track. The set changes every day, so it keeps it moving and fresh. I keep a small pad in my road case, and I run through patterns to warm up my arms and hands before the show.

MD: What kind of warm-ups do you do?

Tico: First I use a portable massager called the Thumper; it loosens up the fascia [connective muscular tissue] from the night before. Then, on a practice pad, I start out with very slow and deliberate motions to stretch the wrists and forearms, the slower the better, until I feel I have full motion and I'm warmed up enough to do singles, paradiddles, triplets, press rolls, etc. If there's no pad, I like to use a cushion to do slow single-stroke rolls—again, very calculated.

MD: How about before heading out on tour—what's your prep routine?

Tico: I have a drum room at my house, and I'll put in ear buds and play along with songs we've done live—as they always change from album to live show. It's a refresher course for the most part. I do that

Tico's 2018 Bon Jovi Tour Kit

Drums: DW Collector's series drums with maple shells, custom finish, and black nickel hardware

- 6.5x14 snare
- 9x12 and 10x13 toms
- 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms
- 18x22 bass drums

Cymbals: Paiste in custom translucent black finish

- 14" Signature hi-hats
- 16" (2), 18" (2), and 20" Signature crashes
- 10" Signature splash
- 22" Signature Power ride
- 20" 2002 China

Hardware: DW, including 9000 series pedals; all stands in custom translucent black finish

Percussion: LP bar chimes in custom black finish, jam blocks (2), and mounted brass tambourines (2)

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

Sticks: Ahead Tico Torres signature model

Accessories: Ahead drum gloves, JH Audio Layla in-ear monitors, Clair Global Cohesion CP-118 subwoofer, Clark Synthesis Platinum Transducer mounted to throne

Mics: Shure BETA 91 and Sennheiser e 602-II on Kelly SHU mounts in bass drums, Sennheiser e 904 on snare top, Beyerdynamic M 201 under snare, Audix D4 on toms, AKG C451 on hi-hat and ride, Milab 96 overheads

for about two weeks prior to a tour. Mentally it's about getting in the mindset of playing for an audience.

The show set changes from night to night;

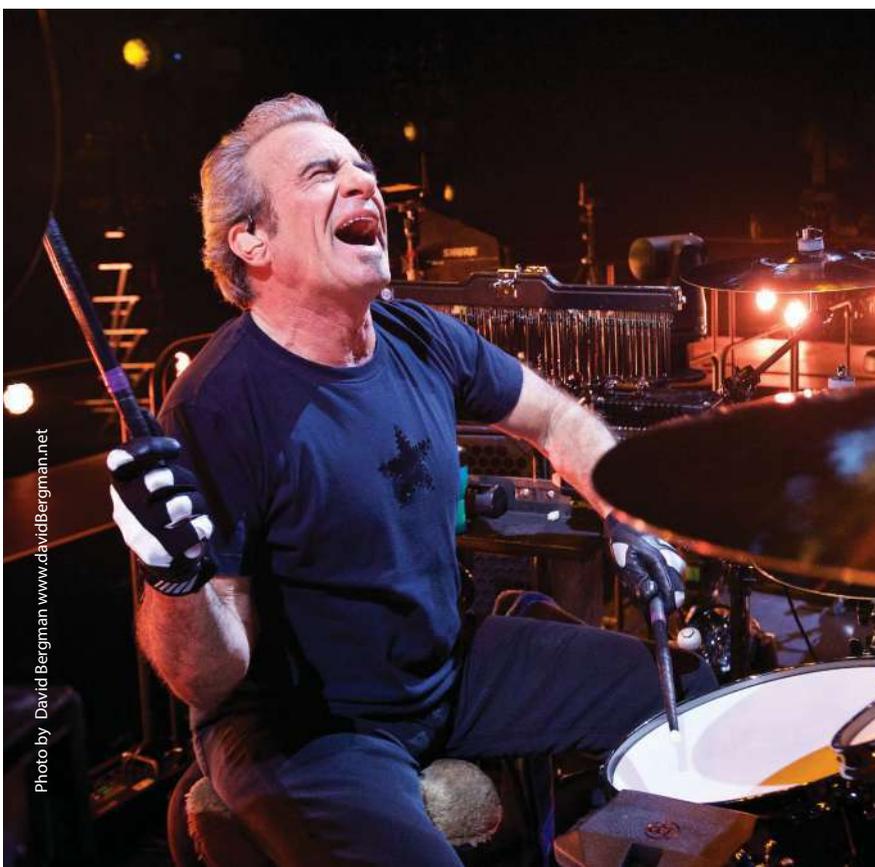


Photo by David Bergman www.davidbergman.net

Dios

THE NEW GOLD

ddrum.[®] STANDARD



Bass drum claw w/rubber inserts:
A small but crucial detail. Keeps the claws from marring the hoop, and also allows vertical positioning of the drum for storage or head changes...all without scratching the front of the hoops.



FixPitch Mount:
ddrum's proprietary suspension mount. It provides a stable hold on the drum while maximizing resonance. Hailed by Modern Drummer as "one of the best in the business."



20" deep bass drums & ResoLifts:
An original ddrum feature, popular for its "bass drum tunnel" effect on the sound. Further augmented by our ResoLifts for maximum tone.



Bullet tube lugs:
All Dios drums feature chrome plated hardware, including our original bullet tube lug. Toms feature sturdy 2.3mm triple flanged hoops.



Zildjian

VIC FIRTH®

ZILDJIAN K SWEET CYMBALS

STARTING AT
\$269⁹⁹

(K0702) (K0724) (K0725)
(K0704) (K0705) (K0712)
(K0731)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



ZILDJIAN 24" PREMIUM BACKPACK CYMBAL BAG

\$149⁹⁹

(ZCB24GIG)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



NEW

VIC FIRTH HICKORY STICK 4-PACK WITH PUREGRIT AND DOUBLEGLAZE

YOUR CHOICE
\$28⁹⁹

(P5B25BPG15BDG1)
(P5A25APG15ADG1)



\$60 OFF

ZILDJIAN L80 LOW VOLUME SERIES CYMBAL SET

PRICE TOO LOW
TO PRINT

(LV468)
OFFER VALID IN
SELECT STORES ONLY



For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.



FIND YOUR SOUND®

On sale Aug. 1 thru Sept. 30

SABIAN
AAX FREQ PACK WITH FREE 18" CRASH

\$729⁹⁹

(AAX FREQ PACK-GC)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



SABIAN
HHX EVOLUTION 19" CRASH OR 21" RIDE

STARTING AT
\$349⁹⁹

(11906XEB)
(12112XEB)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



SABIAN
QUIET TONE 14/16/20 PRACTICE
CYMBAL SET

\$289⁹⁹

(QTPC503)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



SABIAN
XSR SERIES 22"
MONARCH CYMBAL

\$229⁹⁹

(XSR2280M)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



Bring this coupon in and
GET AN EXTRA

\$20 OFF* OR **\$50 OFF**
your purchase of \$99 or more your purchase of \$199 or more



dclmae459c

*Not to be used in conjunction with other coupons, promotions or offers. Excludes discounted and clearance items, price matches, used gear, tax/shipping charges, scratch and dent, vintage equipment, Gift Cards, String Club and Stick Club memberships, and musician services (Pro Coverage, Guitar Center Repairs, Guitar Center Rentals and Guitar Center Lessons). No cash value. Coupon is redeemable in-store, online or at 866 543-0741, only with valid coupon code. Participating brands: KHS, Mapex, Sonor, Remo, Orange County Drum, SPL, Simmons, Proline, Zildjian, Sabian, Yamaha, D'Addario, Meinl, Evans, Promark, PureSound, Majestic, Nfuzd and Control Acoustics. Offer valid 8/1/2018 thru 9/30/2018.

For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.

SONOR®



NEW

MAPEX SATURN V EXOTIC EDITION 5-PIECE STUDIOEASE SHELL PACK

YOUR CHOICE
\$2149⁹⁹

(SV628XUBMSL)
(SV628XUBKLE)
(SV628XUBKFB)
(SV628XUBMXN)
HARDWARE, CYMBALS AND
SNARE SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



Also available in these colors



NEW

SONOR SQ1 3-PIECE SHELL PACK

STARTING AT
\$2599⁹⁹

(SQ1 SERIES)
HARDWARE, CYMBALS AND
SNARE SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



MAPEX ARMORY SERIES EXOTIC 6-PIECE STUDIOEASE SHELL PACK WITH SNARE

\$899⁹⁹

(AR628SFUUM)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS
SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES AND
GUITARCENTER.COM



MAPEX FOUR-LEGGED DOUBLE-BRACED THRONE WITH ADJUSTABLE BACK REST

\$159⁹⁹

(T775)



MAPEX 14x6.5" BLACK PANTHER SLEDGEHAMMER SNARE DRUM

\$439⁹⁹

(BPBR465HZN)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



MAPEX ARMORY SERIES HARDWARE

STARTING AT
\$74⁹⁹

(B800EB)
(H800EB)
(S800EB)
(P800)



For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.

EVANS™ DRUMHEADS

PROMARK™ BY D'ADDARIO

EVANS UVI COATED DRUM HEADS

STARTING AT
\$15⁹⁹

(B10UV1) (B12UV1)
(B13UV1) (B14UV1)
(B16UV1)



EVANS EMAD 2 CLEAR BASS DRUM HEADS

STARTING AT
\$45⁹⁹

(BD22EMAD2)
(BD24EMAD2)



PROMARK HOT ROD STICKS

\$20⁹⁹

(HRODS6)



PROMARK JAPANESE WHITE OAK DRUM STICKS

YOUR CHOICE
\$11⁹⁹

(PW7AW)
(PW5AW)
(PW5BW)
(PW747N)
(PW5BN)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



PROMARK TDSB TRANSPORT DELUXE STICK BAG

\$36⁹⁹

(TDSB)



For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.



NEW

REMO
EMPEROR COLORTONE
DRUM HEADS

YOUR CHOICE
\$19⁹⁹

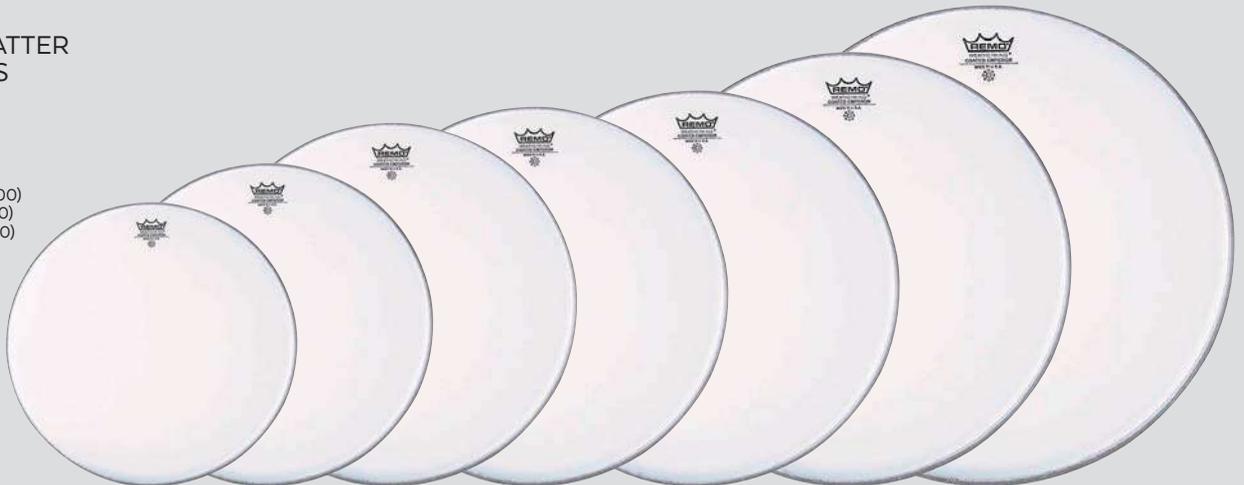
(BE0314CTYE) (BE0314CTS)
(BE0314CTRD) (BE0314CTGN)
(BE0314CTBU) (BE0314CTOG)
GUITARCENTER.COM ONLY



REMO
EMPEROR BATTER
DRUM HEADS

STARTING AT
\$14⁹⁹

(BE010800) (BE011000)
(BE011200) (BE011300)
(BE011400) (BE011600)
(BE011800)



REMO
14" CONTROLLED SOUND REVERSE
DOT COATED SNARE HEAD

\$19⁹⁹

(CS011410)



REMO
13" FLAREOUT
DJEMBE DRUM

\$269⁹⁹

(DJ711362)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



REMO
12x22" APEX
DJEMBE

\$185⁹⁹

(DJ601270)



For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.

SIMMONS®

\$200 OFF

SIMMONS
SD2000 MESH-HEAD ELECTRONIC KIT

REG. \$999.99
\$799⁹⁹

(SD2000 KIT)



\$50 OFF

SIMMONS
SD550 ELECTRONIC
DRUM SET WITH
MESH PADS

REG. \$549.99
\$499⁹⁹

(SD550)
BASS DRUM
PEDAL INCLUDED



\$100 OFF

SIMMONS
SD350 ELECTRONIC
DRUM SET WITH
MESH PADS

REG. \$399.99
\$299⁹⁹

(SD350)
BASS DRUM
PEDAL INCLUDED



SIMMONS
SINGLE PIEZO DRUM TRIGGER

\$19⁹⁹

(ST1)



SIMMONS
DA200S ELECTRONIC
DRUM SET MONITOR

\$349⁹⁹

(DA200S)



For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.



\$75 OFF

YAMAHA
STAGE CUSTOM BIRCH 5-PIECE SHELL PACK
WITH 20 OR 22" BASS DRUM

PRICE TOO LOW
TO PRINT

(SBP2F50RB)
(SBPOF50NW)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECTION VARIES BY LOCATION
OFFER VALID IN-STORE ONLY

Also available
in this color



NEW

YAMAHA
DTX432K SERIES
ELECTRONIC DRUM SET

\$599⁹⁹

(DTX432K)



NEW

YAMAHA
HW-3 ADVANCED
LIGHTWEIGHT
HARDWARE PACK

\$399⁹⁹

(HW3)
GUITARCENTER.COM ONLY



YAMAHA
EAD10 ELECTRONIC ACOUSTIC DRUM
MODULE AND MIC/TRIGGER

\$499⁹⁹

(EAD10)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM





Gibraltar®

GRETSCH
CATALINA CLUB 4-PIECE SHELL PACK

\$699⁹⁹

(CT1J484GAB)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS
SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



GRETSCH
14x6.5" BLACK NICKEL OVER STEEL SNARE DRUM

\$199⁹⁹

(S16514BNS)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



GRETSCH
12x5.5" BLACKHAWK SNARE WITH 12.7 MM MOUNT

\$89⁹⁹

(BH5512BK)



GIBRALTAR
CELL PHONE BASS
DRUM MOUNT

\$34⁹⁹

(SCBDSPM)
GUITARCENTER.COM ONLY



Pearl®

PEARL
SESSION STUDIO SELECT
SERIES 5-PIECE SHELL PACK
WITH FREE 14" FLOOR TOM

\$1499⁹⁹

(STS925XSPC314)
HARDWARE, CYMBALS AND
SNARE SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



PEARL
14x5.5" LIMITED-EDITION
VPX SNARE DRUM

YOUR CHOICE
\$109⁹⁹

(VPX1455S/B31) (VPX1455SC436)



PEARL
ELIMINATOR REDLINE CHAIN-DRIVE PEDALS

STARTING AT
\$189⁹⁹

(P2050C)
(P2052C)



\$25 OFF

PEARL
BELL OR SNARE KIT
WITH ROLLING CASE

REG. \$169.99-\$199.99
STARTING AT
\$144⁹⁹

(SK910C) (PK910C)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



PEARL
MIMIC PRO PERCUSSION SOUND SOURCE

\$2199⁹⁹

(MIMP24B)
SELECT STORES AND
GUITARCENTER.COM



For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.

ALESIS

ALESIS STRIKE PRO ELECTRONIC DRUM SET

\$2299⁹⁹

(STRIKE PRO)
HI-HAT STAND AND KICK PEDAL
SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



ALESIS SAMPLEPAD PRO PERCUSSION PAD WITH ONBOARD SOUND STORAGE

\$299⁹⁹

(SAMPLEPADPRO)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



NEW

ALESIS NITRO MESH ELECTRONIC DRUM SET

\$349⁹⁹

(NITRO MESH)



ALESIS CRIMSON II ELECTRONIC DRUM SET WITH MESH HEADS

\$1099⁹⁹

(CRIMSON II KIT)



ALESIS SAMPLEPAD 4 PERCUSSION AND SAMPLE-TRIGGERING INSTRUMENT

\$179⁹⁹

(SAMPLEPAD4)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



For more great Drum Shop deals or to find a store near you, visit guitarcenter.com.

Tico Torres

it's a common question on how to get it up night after night. I try to live in the present and get into the crowd and play off them. Fifteen years ago I started doing cold laser therapy, which aligns your left and right brain for time and focus. It does wonders, especially when you're under the weather and tired. And it reduces pain. It's the best investment I've ever made.

MD: Are there any songs that you find particularly challenging to play live?

Tico: The most challenging aspect isn't the songs themselves, but that we bundle three, four, and sometimes five songs end to end. That taxes me physically more now, at sixty-four years old. [laughs] I have a bottle of oxygen with a purge valve to push air into my lungs when I need it.

MD: Do you have favorite songs to play live?

Tico: "Wanted Dead or Alive" is fun. That song was recorded in one take after three failed attempts [at the Little Mountain Sound Studios] in Vancouver. We left the song, went for dinner and drinks, and when we all returned to studio around midnight, we banged it out in one take. And the song "[Keep the] Faith" is so rhythmic and fun to play—plus everyone solos on it live. And "Livin' on a Prayer" is such a wonderful anthem for everyone. It's magic!

MD: What goes on at soundcheck?

Tico: We go in and run down about five songs. Sometimes we pull out a song or two from the past and work it up—especially if we're doing multiple days at one place.

MD: Why do you wear Ahead drum gloves when you play?

Tico: They help me grip the stick better. I'll use them on heavy songs, but when I'm

recording softer, more acoustic songs, I'll use wood sticks without gloves, mainly for the ease and the sound of the wood tip on the cymbals. Live I never use wood sticks.

MD: Do you play differently when you're playing live compared to when you're recording? Do you hit harder?

Tico: I play much harder live, with constant pressure. It helps the band rock better. Recording is about sound and feel; there's more room to play with dynamics in the studio.

MD: Do you play close to what's on the record? Do you change up the fills for live?

Tico: When I record, I have no idea what I've laid to tape until after I hear the playback. It's all completely in the moment and improvisational. When it's time to get on the road and perform, especially the new songs, I have to learn what I played on the record. For the most part [I stick] pretty closely to the recording, but as time goes by and we've played the song so many times, I do change it up just about every day. That keeps it fresh for me.

MD: Do you use speakers or in-ear monitors?

Tico: In-ears are by far the best innovation for performing on stage. They'll save your hearing. They're much better than regular floor monitors. My ears no longer ring after a show. I even use them in the studio when recording. It completely seals your ears.

Live, my tech, John "JD" Douglas, makes my life so much easier by embellishing my personal monitor mix. In the past, to enhance the feel on a couple of songs, I've put all the percussion tracks from the recording on a loop. It's much better now and more fun having Everett Bradley on percussion.

MD: What's in your mix?

Tico: A nice stereo mix of drums, bass, guitars, keys, and lead and backing vocals. I have a 34-channel mixing board just for me, and JD will make certain moves to bring in solos and key vocal cues. It's pretty much like playing to a great studio mix.

MD: Why do you prefer two bass drums as opposed to a double pedal?

Tico: I've used two bass drums live since 1969; they didn't make double pedals at that time. In the studio and at home, though, I like using a double pedal. I find it easier to use, and you only need to mike up one bass drum. As far as warm-ups for my feet, I'll do some stretching and some calf and foot rotations and exercises.

MD: Do you use any triggers on your kit for live shows?

Tico: No triggers! I tried them in the late '80s, but I found that they were unresponsive to fast rolls and had no feel and dynamics.

MD: Who did you see live and learn from back when you were coming up?

Tico: Elvin Jones was my mentor. I would hang right next to him whenever he played the Vanguard in New York City. I would go and see all the drummers playing in New York—Tony Williams, Norman Connors, Lenny White, Art Blakey, Jon Hiseman, Cozy Powell, Billy Cobham.... I loved Mitch Mitchell and his feel. The list is endless. There really isn't one drummer I've seen or heard live that I didn't learn *something* from. But a long time ago I got away from being a drummer's drummer. Instead, I would try to play what the song needed. No matter how simple the figure is, sometimes *that's* what makes a song jump.



A NEW ALLIANCE

BROOKS WACKERMAN
AVENGED SEVENFOLD

Innovative Percussion A7X *Bolton* USA

WOOD: HICKORY
LENGTH: 16.5 INCHES; REVERSED TAPER .626 TO .630
TIP: BARREL SHAPED BEAD

Innovative Percussion Inc.



NOTHING BUT OPTIONS

If you can imagine it
Gibraltar offers you more
than one way to make it happen.

Customize your drum or percussion setup to work
for you, and to reflect who you are as a player -
from the most basic rig... to the most elaborate.



Gibraltar

Gibraltar is Hardware - pure and simple.

f   GibraltarHardware.com

ALIVE AND KICKING!
ON STAGE WITH THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ACTS



Kendrick Lamar's **Tony "Rico" Nichols**



For most musicians, the idea of playing with Pulitzer- and Grammy Award-winning superstar Kendrick Lamar would be a lesson in surviving the hot seat: an endless tour of stadium concerts and television shows, and globe-trotting, sleep-deprived, eye-of-the-hurricane schedules. Talk about pressure! But twenty-five-year-old Tony “Rico” Nichols lets it all roll off his back like seawater off a seal.

Perpetually relaxed, and seemingly never breaking a sweat, Rico Nichols plays a once-in-a-lifetime mega gig with a broad pocket, enviable self-composure, and a nimble touch that can alternately be described as creamy, mellow, and deep. Born and raised in Chicago, where church gigs and basement jams led to his high-profile L.A. status, Rico is one of a growing cadre of drummers for whom a big pocket is a natural result of a childhood R&B focus. But unlike gospel-chops drummers who emphasize technique over musicality, Rico’s influences reveal his heart’s direction. Sure, he loves Chris Dave and today’s contemporary R&B stick-slingers, but his tastes go back, way back, in the lexicon of drumming legends.

Before mastering such rhythmically difficult Lamar songs as “For Free,” “Lovely,” and “Lust,” Rico manned the drum throne for Brandy and Mary Mary. His teen years were spent in high school marching band and his father’s basement, grooving with older musicians and honing his craft. Today he can claim having guested with U2 and Stevie Wonder, and performing at the Brit Awards and the Grammys. With production roles and other projects on his horizon, Rico is just beginning to unleash his flow.

MD: When you play with Kendrick, you look incredibly relaxed, like you’re taking a walk in the park. Even your facial expression is totally chilled. What’s the source of that level of control and relaxation on one of the biggest gigs in the world?

Rico: Honestly, I just think about having fun. I’m up there with my brothers; we’re doing what we love to do. All the hard work in the rehearsals has paid off—though even in the rehearsals we’re having fun. When it’s showtime, even though it’s serious business, I just learn how to enjoy it. I try not to make it too serious. I try to have fun with what I’m doing.

MD: What kind of work goes on in the rehearsals? What are the challenges?

Rico: My only challenges are taking sounds, like what sounds I may want to use. I use a lot of triggers on the gig. So [it involves] going back and forth in terms of which trigger I want to use with what song, or how I want to play the song—whether I want to play live drums or use triggers. That’s really the hard part, picking and choosing

what I’m going to play, because playing triggers can put you in a box. Without playing triggers I’m free to play a little bit more and get more musical in certain areas. So, I try to figure out how to still be musical while playing triggers so I won’t sound like a robot just [replicating] the record.

MD: You’re like the anti-robot; even when playing with other drummers in YouTube videos, your tone and style come across, which comes from having a solid touch.

Rico: Thank you. Touch came from my dad drilling me as a kid. My stepfather, James Wright, and my biological dad helped me out. My biological dad started me on the drums. He was an organist and keyboard player. And my stepdad is a drummer. He took me to the next level, to the next place I needed to be as a drummer. I’d be in the basement every day, playing drums. He’d drill me. He’d say, “The chops are cool, but it’s all about the feel!”

MD: How did he stress the feel?

Rico: He’d say, “You always want to make sure people are dancing.” Back home in Chicago I used



the MD. He brought you on the gig, correct?

Rico: Yes. We're both from Chicago. He knows my parents, both of my fathers. They all know each other from home and from church. We met in Los Angeles; he came and said, "You don't know me, but I know you." He knew my parents when he was a little kid. He's like my big brother; he took a chance on me.

MD: What was the challenge when you joined Kendrick's band?

Rico: I didn't know how to use triggers, and no one in the band knew! I faked it like I knew what I was doing. [laughs] I figured it out. I didn't want to risk losing the gig.

MD: How do you fake playing with triggers?

Rico: I would ask Dion Friley, one of our techs. He used to play drums on the gig. So he would give me whatever sounds I needed. He knew how to trigger, so I would ask him questions. But then I would try acting like I knew what I was doing, talk with him like I was up to speed. I had to fake it. And luckily nothing went wrong.

MD: Did you know Kendrick's music before you joined the band?

Rico: I was familiar with his music. I'd been listening to him since his mixtape music. Around 2012, when he took off, it was crazy to come on board and play with him. When I got there, he was coming out with the song "i." No one had heard it yet. The rehearsal for that song was pretty much my

to go to corporate gigs with my stepdad, big wedding-band gigs, etc., and I always noticed that the people were always enjoying themselves by dancing, not by hearing him take a drum solo. He played a groove that made them want to move their feet. They had no choice but to move. He taught me, "You want to be mindful about the kind of fills you play; don't make it about yourself."

MD: Who were the drummers that your stepdad suggested you listen to for groove?
Rico: Teddy Campbell, for sure. He's my idol. Then Steve Gadd. A lot of Gadd. A lot of Vinnie Colaiuta.

MD: Teddy Campbell I can understand, but the other two are unusual choices for a twenty-five-year-old R&B drummer.

Rico: I didn't start watching Chris Dave until later on, and he's one of my favorites as well. But Gadd and Vinnie are the types of guys my dad had me study every single day. "Make sure you're watching that video," or "Did you see this video?" YouTube was just coming out then. I'd be there all day. But before YouTube I had my dad and his friends, guys around Chicago, who would come over and show me grooves and different techniques on the drums.

MD: When did you start playing drums?

Rico: At one year old. Mom said I used to tear her kitchen up. I'd beat on everything.

MD: Kendrick Lamar's gig is one of the biggest in the world right now. Do you ever

get nervous before a show?

Rico: I used to get nervous when I first started touring, back in 2013. But now it's who I am. I don't let it go to my head. When we hit the stage, it's go time. I don't have time to get nervous.

MD: The band's bassist, Tony Russell, is also

Nichols' Setup

Drums: Tama Birch Bubinga

- A. 5.5x14 main snare
- B. 8x15 aux snare
- C. 5.5x12 aux snare
- D. 6.5x10 tom
- E. 7x12 tom
- F. 14x16 floor tom
- G. 16x18 floor tom
- H. 14x20 gong drum
- I. 16x24 bass drum
- J. 5.5x14 snare (cocktail side kit)
- K. 6x8 tom (cocktail side kit)
- L. 18x22 bass drum (cocktail side kit)

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 15" A New Beat hi-hats
- 2. 11" FX Oriental Trash splash
- 3. 20" A Custom Projection crash
- 4. 20" K Sweet crash
- 5. 9" FX Oriental Trash splash
- 6. 15" FX Oriental China Trash with a 10" A Custom EFX splash underneath

- 7. 10" FX Oriental Trash splash with a 10" FX Oriental China Trash on top
- 8. 20" K Custom Dark ride
- 9. 20" K Sweet crash (above the ride)
- 10. 17" K Custom Hybrid China
- 11. 20" A Custom EFX Crash (cocktail side kit)
- 12. 13" A Zildjian Pocket hi-hats (cocktail side kit)

Heads: Remo Powerstroke P77 batter on 5.5x14 main snare and 5.5x14 cocktail kit snare with Ambassador Hazy Snare Sides; Emperor batters and Ambassador Hazy Snare Sides on 8x15 and 5.5x12 aux snares; Emperor batters and Ambassador Clear resonants on all toms; 22" Powerstroke P3 batter on 14x20 Gong Drum; Powerstroke P3 batter and logo front heads on bass drums.

Hardware: Gibraltar chrome rack with all custom Gibraltar stands and clamps; Tama HP900PN Iron Cobra Powerglide single pedals; Gibraltar Hydraulix drum throne

Sticks: Vic Firth X55B

Accessories: Vic Firth standard stick bag; Gibraltar GMAT 12x16 percussion table; Drumdots Clear Dampening Gels; 8'x10' drum carpet; Lasko Blower Fan (black)

Electronics: Roland SPD-SX sample pad (2), RT-30HR dual zone triggers (3), RT-30K Kick Drum Triggers (2), BT-1 Bar Trigger Pad; Boss FS-5U Foot Switch Pedals (4)

Mics: Sennheiser, Shure, Audix

audition. I had to learn the parts and make it feel good, of course. I already had the gig, played his set a couple times. Then Kendrick came in while we were playing “i,” and he said, “Dope, you sound good. We’re good.”

MD: Were there charts?

Rico: No, it was all feel, all ear training. And getting the sounds.

MD: Is a click running in Kendrick’s rehearsals?

Rico: Everything is straight Ableton Live. Every single thing gets stemmed out from the record. While Dion is running the playback with Ableton, we’re simultaneously playing with the playback. I’m running my triggers to make sure we don’t miss any sounds. He may have the snare drum from the record muted, and I’m playing the actual snare from the record, or the kick drum. It’s only snare and bass drum sounds that are triggered. I make the decision to play what’s comfortable for me, and [stage manager/backline and drum tech] Marco Zambrano and I figure out what sounds to take from the record. That’s part of the rehearsal process. I choose not use to use the toms from the record because it takes away the live sound just a little bit.

MD: What’s the triggering process?

Rico: We’ll get all the sounds on an SD [card]. Dump the sounds into a laptop. Hook the laptop up to a pad. Then we assign sounds and make adjustments. I once



Tony Nichols

played the wrong sound in a song, and the band noticed. But it wasn't bad.

MD: Are you playing rimshots?

Rico: I play straight on to the head, no rimshots.

MD: In one online interview, you're shown using three snare drums.

Rico: It's actually four snare drums now. I have the main snare drum, which I sometimes use for triggering, then an 8x15 snare that I trigger as well—that's good for '80s-type sounds. Then I have a 12" snare

that I trigger as well if I need a smaller sound or an 808 sound. The fourth snare, which is on my cocktail kit, I don't trigger; it's always straight live.

MD: How do you place the snare drums?

Rico: I have the main drum, then a 15" to my left, a 12" above that, and on my cocktail kit to my right I play another main snare drum, a 5x13.

MD: Are some songs more demanding than others?

Rico: Yeah, some songs I play the main role

in the song. Honestly, everyone in the band has their song where they're highlighted, and everyone else gets to chill. For me, when I first began the gig, that song was "Lust." "Lovely" is another; I play straight pad [on that one].

MD: "For Free" must be hard to pull off.

Rico: Now that record, bro, that record we were locked up in rehearsal a *long* time to get that going. That's the most complicated song we play. That's crazy. I play that song live. I have them mute all the drums from the record. Actually, we're all live on "For Free"—they mute the drum, bass, keys, piano, everything.

MD: What's hard about playing "Lovely" and "Lust"?

Rico: I don't play any live drums on "Lovely," just pads. I have to picture myself as Logic or Ableton or Pro Tools. I have to *be* Pro Tools at that point.

MD: Are there specific things Kendrick wants to hear from the drums?

Rico: Every now and again he and I have a section where he raps and I drum over the lyrics. I accent his lyrics with the drums. I'll follow his cadence, or he'll feed off my cadence. It's all vibe; we don't always work it out beforehand. It's all feel.

MD: Back to your upbringing, did your fathers have you play along with Teddy Campbell and Steve Gadd on records?

Rico: I wish. My dad and Teddy are good friends. Both of them are from Chicago. When I moved to L.A., Teddy started calling me to sub for him on gigs. He'd seen me on YouTube. It's a big deal that he calls me for gigs now.

MD: Did you study drums with a teacher?

Rico: No, but I was in marching band in high school, Thornton Fractional North [in Calumet City, Illinois]. My music teacher, Mr. Joe Malik, and my drum major drilled me on my left hand, which was weak. Mr. Malik made me start everything with my left hand. That forced my hands to become even. Mr. Malik also showed me the rudiments.

MD: And how did you develop your funk pocket?

Rico: That's from playing at Prayer and Faith church, and being with my dad. He'd have jam sessions at home in the basement with musicians that were out touring the world. I'd sit in with the band and learn to lock in with the bass player. Dad would drill me on that.

MD: What did you focus on when practicing alone?

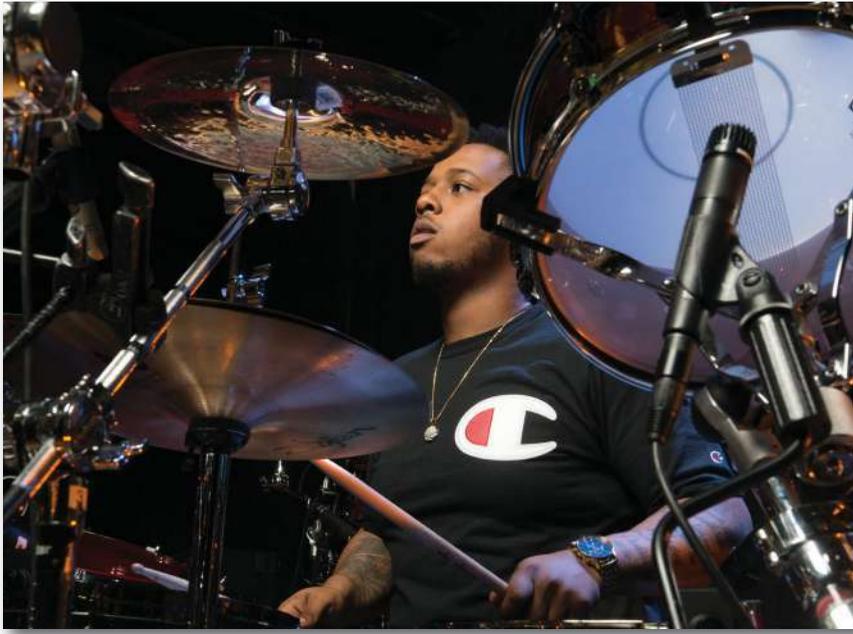
Rico: I'd watch the Gadd or Vinnie videos for

"AHEAD Armor Cases make the best soft cases on the planet. I use them for all my gear and even as suitcases on all my tours." – THOMAS LANG



WWW.AHEADARMORCASES.COM | 818.727.1127

(C&P)PHOTO BY F.DESMAELE



of my peers, an up-and-coming drummer named Clemons Poindexter [Khalid], we used to critique each other's drumming. I started playing more aggressively at church. My pastor wouldn't *allow* me to play drums soft; he wanted it aggressive—he wanted to feel the drums.

MD: Before Kendrick, you played with Mary Mary and with Brandy. How did you adapt playing in clubs to playing massive arenas?

Rico: Man, I looked at it like it was all training. Church, my dad, high school, Mary Mary: it all prepared me for the next step. Brandy took me to Kendrick Lamar. Who knows where it will go next.

MD: What do you practice now?

Rico: I haven't practiced in a long time. I do try to work on my hands. But we're so busy. And I'm working on other things now, like production. I'm focusing on building my own sound. I want to create my music and collaborate with different artists.

MD: What's next?

Rico: I'm re-evaluating things in my life. Thinking about my journey, where I want to be next. I'll never stop playing drums. But I want to do something different that hasn't been done before.



their drum solos. Focus on how they'd have their conversation, how they'd build their solo. Real musical stuff. Or I'd watch how Teddy would play a song, like how he'd hit a splash on a particular part as opposed to the crash. That would make a big difference dynamically and musically. I'd study those

small details. I'd listen for what's best to play in a particular setting—like if I was playing a rock gig, I would study a rock drummer. I listen to all types of music. I want to have a universal sound.

MD: How did you work on tone and touch?

Rico: I used to hit the drums very softly. One

Support Your Local Drummer.

Cascio Music is dedicated to supporting drummers, no matter where you may be. We do this the best way we know how - by providing the **right products** at the **best possible prices**.

➤ Shop online at CascioMusic.com

CASCIO
MUSIC
MUSIC IS GOOD.

ALIVE AND KICKING!
ON STAGE WITH THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ACTS

Lamb of God's Chris Adler

On the touring front, the modern metal titan and his bandmates are spanning the globe on Slayer's final world tour. Meanwhile, on the new *Legion: XX* album, released under their original moniker, Burn the Priest, Adler and company have rekindled the songs that made them want to rock in the first place.

Legion: XX (pronounced "legion twenty") commemorates the twentieth anniversary of Lamb of God's first album release. As most metal fans are aware, that original album was actually the self-titled debut of Burn the Priest; drummer Chris Adler, bassist John Campbell, and guitarists Abe Spear and Mark Morton changed their name to Lamb of God soon after its release to reflect the change in their lineup, which now featured vocalist Randy Blythe.

Legion: XX contains lovingly wrought covers of ten of the band members' favorite songs from their musical upbringing in the '80s and '90s. Standout tracks include thrashing album opener "Inherit the Earth," originally

recorded by the Accüsed, as well as reverent retellings of the Melvins' "Honey Bucket" and "Dine Alone" by post-hardcore standouts Quicksand.

Adler certainly lends his drumming voice to the material on *Legion: XX*, but in a respectful manner, primarily adding signature double kick parts and hand/foot combo fills, along with his trademark sounds. "It's a little hard to get away from our sound," says Chris, "with my splash cymbals and high-pitched snare—and Randy Blythe's vocals!"

Modern Drummer spoke with Adler after soundcheck at a headlining LoG show in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, during a off day from Slayer's farewell world tour.

Story by Ben Meyer

Photos By Alex Solca



MD: How did you approach personalizing the drum parts to the material on *Legion: XX*? And how much were you interested in honoring the original parts versus putting your own spin on them?
Chris: That was a tough balance. Everybody in the band picked two songs to cover for this project. For the other eight songs, the parts were influenced by whoever pitched in those songs. Some of them, in particular "Kerosene" by Big Black, were pretty much like the original except for the extended verse.

No one was dictating what to do. On the Quicksand and Melvins songs, I really felt like it was important for me to stay true to what was already there, unless I could pick it up a little bit. These are well-known and well-respected guys, and I didn't want to take away from what they'd already done. We just had fun with it, changing tempos here and there. I don't think there was ever really a moment when someone said, "No, I don't think we should do that." Everyone had grown up with these songs, and we all had the same idea of keeping them pretty true to the original, just making them sound a little more like us as a band.

MD: You're out with Slayer now.

Chris: Yes, we are, along with



Turn the page to see more photos of Chris Adler, as well as the other drummers performing on the first leg of Slayer's Farewell tour.

Anthrax, Behemoth, and Testament.

MD: But you're not performing as Burn the Priest.

Chris: We're not. We thought about doing that but decided not to. We've been thinking of doing a covers record for fifteen years, but we could never agree on what songs to include. Finally we got smart enough to come up with the idea of everybody throwing in two songs and just seeing what happens. It was a lot of fun to do it, but that's not really where we want to take the band. If we were performing as Burn the Priest, we'd have to play the whole record, and we didn't want to do that.

MD: Are you performing any of the material from *Legion: XX* live currently?

Chris: We've been doing "Inherit the Earth" by the Accüsed, and with Anthrax being on the tour, we're kind of back and forth about doing "Kill Yourself" [by Anthrax side project S.O.D.] as well and having Scott Ian and Charlie Benante [Anthrax/S.O.D. guitarist and drummer, respectively] come out and play with the guys.

MD: That would be awesome! So on the Slayer tour, it's mostly Lamb of God material?

Chris: Yes, in fact, we dropped "Inherit the Earth" the past couple of nights because it's a brand-new record and there are 10,000

people there who might not have heard it yet. We also only have fifty minutes, so if people [come] to hear Lamb of God, that's what we want to give them. We may do two or three songs from the new record tonight, though, since we're playing a headlining show with Behemoth.

MD: How's it been to be out with Slayer again?

Chris: It's great. We've known the guys for a long time. They took us out for the first time in 2003, then again in 2007. I think we spent three years on the road, and then Metallica picked us up for two years. Going out with Slayer again, it looks like it's going to be an eighteen-month journey. In the end, we'll probably have spent six years of our lives with these guys.

MD: On your current tour, are you playing an abundance of material from any one record in particular, or is it a blend of material from across your career?

Chris: We try [to] split it [up] as much as we can. We're not doing a record in full or an "evening with" kind of thing, but it is getting difficult to choose. Tonight, on a headline set, if we're doing ninety minutes, we can dig in to each record a little bit more, but on the Slayer tour we have less than an hour.

With the number of records we have, even one song from each would probably go over. There are crowd favorites that might not be the most exciting songs for us to play for the ten thousandth time, but when the energy picks up, it's kind of undeniable. There are some "must-play" songs. We don't want anyone walking out disappointed, and we just try to switch it up here and there.

It's been a pretty dynamic set so far. Every night has changed a little, which is the first time we've ever done that. Normally we settle into a set, and that's the way it goes for the tour. This time we're trying to keep things fresh.

MD: Do you play throughout the day before shows?

Chris: Normally, about two hours prior to the show, I'll get into the headspace. And because the set's been dynamic on this tour, for a good chunk of the day I'll be working on putting a playlist together to help remember those tunes if we haven't done them in a bit. I'm listening throughout the day, but my actual warm-up on my little warm-up kit happens around two hours before showtime.

Chris Adler endorses Mapex drums, Meinl cymbals, Promark sticks, Gibraltar hardware, Evans heads, and Roland electronics.



ALIVE AND KICKING!
ON STAGE WITH THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ACTS

Slayer's Final World Tour

FivePoint Amphitheater, Irvine, California, May 11, 2018

Photos by Alex Solca



Testament's
Gene Hoglan



Lamb of God's
Chris Adler



**Charlie Benante
of Anthrax**





**Behemoth's
Inferno**



**Slayer's
Paul Bostaph**





ALIVE AND KICKING!
ON STAGE WITH THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ACTS

Damian Marley's Courtney "Bam" Diedrick

By Robin Tolleson

It might have been a chance encounter that led to his working with one of reggae's biggest stars. But his skills are no accident—a highly developed musical sensitivity and copious practice time made him the drummer he is today.

Courtney "Bam" Diedrick grew up in Brown's Town, St. Ann, Jamaica, only a few miles from the birthplace of Bob Marley, the leader of the Wailers, reggae's most iconic band. Diedrick couldn't have imagined that he'd one day be propelling the music of Marley's youngest son, Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley.

Then again, maybe he could have. Courtney's father encouraged all his children to play music, and—with echoes of the Wailers' famous rhythm-section mates, brothers Aston and Carlton Barrett—Diedrick's first bandmates were his brothers John, Ryan, and Sean. Courtney learned well enough at home to earn an invitation to study at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts in Jamaica. After graduation, he taught music at Brown's Town High School and also connected with local bands, stoking his love for performing. Diedrick developed a hard-driving style that incorporated elements from the playing of reggae masters, from the legendary Sly Dunbar to modern marvel Squidly Cole, as well as funk and fusion players like Aaron Spears and Tony Royster Jr.

Courtney describes his introduction to the Marley family as mystical. His older brother, John, was playing piano at an airport hotel lounge in Kingston, and Damian Marley stopped in after a cancelled flight. A conversation between the two led to auditions for Courtney as well as for brother Sean; eight years later, they're both still with Marley.

Courtney's recording work with Damian includes *Distant Relatives*, his collaboration with rapper Nas, as well as the self-titled album by SuperHeavy, his supergroup with the Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger, soul singer Joss Stone, guitarist and producer Dave Stewart, and Indian composer, singer, and songwriter A.R. Rahman. The drummer joined the Playing for Change organization, recording *PFC 2: Songs Around the World* in 2011, and the next year joined Marley for a collaboration with Eric Clapton on the single "Every Little Thing." Last year Diedrick worked on *Stony Hill*, Marley's first solo album since 2005's *Welcome to Jamrock* (both albums took top honors in the Grammy Awards' Reggae Album category). The tour behind *Stony Hill* is taking the Marley crew around the world in 2018. *MD* spoke to the drummer in the midst of it.



Francesco Sciolti



MD: When you're recording an album, do you ever get the feeling that it will be remembered at Grammy time?

Courtney: Well, I do from time to time, but that's not the main reason we're working on it. It's more about the message, like the impact it will have on the world on a whole. So the awards would come after the message. We want to get that out first and foremost. But yes, we do think about the Grammys, as a standard. Each song we play, we've got to put our all into it, our best, because you know, we have some great upcoming artists from Jamaica as well as from across the world that are doing reggae. Reggae is big, so we have to have that in the back of our minds—why we're making it.

MD: I really like the four tracks you play on *Stony Hill*. These days, with an artist of Damian's stature, it seems like it's hard for drummers to get on many tracks.

Courtney: That's so true.

MD: Do you try to get involved in tracks that you're not playing on, perhaps on the programming side?

Courtney: Yes, I try to get involved as much as possible, at least get my input in. If you're going to program drums, I'm going to do my part from a live drummer's perspective. Certain ideas I might hear, like the feel of it or the sound, even if it's programmed. We all have a say, all of the band members, because we're a unit. And not just [in terms of] the drums. So if any one of us doesn't like the sound or the feel

of the bass, we get to make a suggestion. And vice-versa, any of the other guys can suggest some other pattern, feel, or sound [to me]. But also I try to worm my way into the tracks. You know, modern-day tracks are kind of overshadowing the drums, so we as the live drummers have to find a way to get our stuff in it as much as possible, even with the sound replacement. For example, "Living It Up" has live drums but also sound replacement.

MD: What do you mean by sound replacement?

Courtney: For example, if I'm playing live, for some songs the bass drum would have the sub kick instead of the live bass drum sound, or the snare would have an 808 sample, but I play it live.

MD: You take a hip-hop approach on "Living It Up," the way you drop out on the 4 sometimes. Then on other songs you have to translate the programmed parts into the live realm.

Courtney: Exactly—to make it so you get the best of both worlds, the live and programmed feel.

MD: Do they take actual sounds from the album and send them to you to trigger?

Courtney: My brother Sean produced a few tracks on *Stony Hill*, so he triggers sounds, but for now we're not using the drum machine or drum pad onstage. Instead we use the Pork Pie snare drum. I mean, Rastas don't use pork, so we don't really like to talk about the name of the

The Official Drums of Paul Bostaph

Yamaha artist since 2009, Paul Bostaph has been a key member of legendary bands Slayer, Testament, and Exodus. Paul's precision and athleticism behind the drum set continue to solidify him as a coveted powerhouse in the metal scene.

Get to know Paul here:

4wrdr.it/Bostaph

Diedrick's Pre-Tour Checklist

1. In-depth listening to any Bob Marley live show to keep my mind in context with our genre. Also, I keep the album we are touring on repeat so as to have the groove and feel embedded.
2. I try to keep my head clear of all negativity so my playing isn't affected.
3. Chill a lot with my bass player, Shiah Coore, as it's imperative that drum and bass gel. It helps lock in the rhythm section.
4. Stock up on vitamins to keep up on the road against the long traveling and lack of proper rest.
5. Playing pool—my favorite hobby—spending time with my family, and exercising.
6. Stock up on drumsticks and extra skins.
7. Say a prayer for protection on the road.



@YamahaMusicUSA



www.yamahadrums.com

Courtney Diedrick

drum, but after every show someone comes to me and asks, "Yo, what is that snare? Where did you get it?" It doesn't even sound like a real snare. It's deep and has the 808 sound, but it's live at the same time, so it just blows everybody's mind. Do you know Damian Marley's version of [Dennis Brown's] "Promised Land" ["Land of Promise" from *Distant Relatives*]? Yeah, that snare, that's the sound it has. No one would imagine that's a live snare. So we're doing live drums. And personally, I prefer to use all live sounds. I'd prefer to have a million real instruments in front of me than to be hitting rubber. Not that it's not cool, but that's what I prefer. I prefer getting the oxygen out of the instruments, you know—it's more...live.

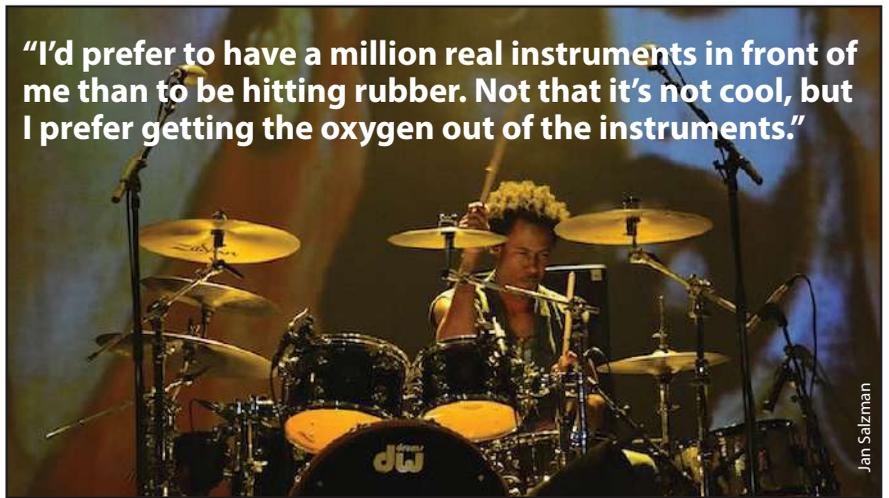
MD: Describe how your mindset changes between recording and the live show.

Courtney: Well, live we have a lot of mixing, a lot more excitement. You know, in Jamaica you have dancehall music. There's a lot of that *boom, boom...boom, boom, boom*, that kind of bounce. Usually on the album we don't have much of that, but once you're going live you've got to mix it that way. When we're in the studio it's more laid-back. It's cleaner and more focused on the concept of the music and the lyrics. But in terms of fills and all, they're pretty much the same.

MD: So you could go into the dancehall groove at any time?

Courtney: Yeah, we have to pay special attention to Damian. We could be doing a track that we've already rehearsed with a certain arrangement, but depending on what Damian feels at the moment, he could just give this look back up at me,

"I'd prefer to have a million real instruments in front of me than to be hitting rubber. Not that it's not cool, but I prefer getting the oxygen out of the instruments."



and instantly I know he needs this kind of a beat. He's got different types of looks, and sometimes he doesn't even have to look around, so we communicate without even saying a word. We automatically start mixing because of what we feel at the moment. If we hear the crowd kind of cheering on, depending on the song, we start mixing. If the crowd gets excited earlier and they really love it, we have to start mixing earlier. We have to change the arrangement because that's like a moment that we can't allow to pass. We're working with the crowd, bringing them along with us.

MD: You play some of those kinds of beats on "Caution" [from *Stony Hill*].

Courtney: Yeah, "Caution" has both...well, it's Sly Dunbar on the original track by Black Uhuru, "World Is Africa." So, it's that along with the overdub from the live drums. I'm doing the live overdubs, the fills. So there

you go with a perfect track, with both programmed and live [drums].

MD: That track made me think about the discipline that's necessary in playing reggae music. I'm not sure if a lot of people really understand that.

Courtney: I agree. The simplicity of the music is what matters. The less you play, the more you give out, the more you get the message across. Reggae expresses the hurt, the struggles of our culture, also the good times, so doing that music is emotional. A lot of discipline it takes. Even listening to Bob Marley's songs, you can hear a lot of discipline. Some people probably look at it like reggae is so simple, and they treat it like there's no respect in playing reggae music. But it's not that easy. It's heartfelt.

MD: On "Caution," some of those beats show a rudimental background, some military-style drumming. Is that something you studied early on at Edna Manley?



PACK LIGHT | PLAY BIG



TYCOON STARGLASS DJEMBEs


Tycoon

 HAL • LEONARD




www.tycoonpercussion.com

Courtney: Yeah, I did. Even before I went to Edna Manley I started studying the rudiments with Deleon White [Dubtonic Kru]. Going to Edna Manley was after that, so I was a bit ahead with the rudiments. That was the icing on the cake. So each time I talk about rudiments or the fundamentals of my career, I still have to talk about Deleon White, my first instructor.

MD: How did you find Deleon?

Courtney: Well, all of my brothers are musicians. My big brother, John, was working the hotels, and Deleon was the drummer. And when I started learning drums, he was the one my brother recommended. So that's where I started all of the rudiments. [At first] I was like, "I don't want to learn these rudiments. I want to learn to play the drums." And so it was a discipline from then. He would usually give me stuff from Dave Weckl, Virgil Donati, all those guys. Billy Cobham. I'm listening to all this stuff like, "I don't understand what's going on, all these double strokes and all that. How can this help me?" But long after, I really feel that it did the job. So that's where everything started, and I recommend it for all drummers. A lot of people don't pay attention to rudiments, but it's like reading—you want to talk English, you have to learn to read, learn your alphabet.

MD: The track "Looks Are Deceiving" on *Stony Hill* has a raw, beautifully played drum part.

Courtney: Respect, respect, Robin. That's a very spiritual track right there. I think that's my favorite track on the album. Not because I'm the one that played it, but there's just a certain feel about that track. Listening to the words, they're powerful. Having to pay attention to the words, and having the opportunity to play that song, means a lot to me, so I took that into consideration while recording it.

MD: So the words affect how you play it.

Courtney: Oh, definitely. Because if it was something happy I would be playing happy grooves, happy fills, but the words are so spiritual, you have to think that way. I don't know how to break down "spiritual groove" for you or "spiritual fills," but listening to the track, those are spiritual fills, spiritual grooves. And depending on the words, or the language he's using at that particular time, I use certain fills for that. And I can't overdo it, because you have to complement what he's saying, the words and the notes.

MD: The drum part has to be, would you say, respectful?

Courtney: Yep, yep. Even the drum fill [coming out of the] intro to the track. It's a simple roll, but the sound of the snare, and the simplicity of the roll, is very effective, to me at least, to introduce that song. If someone else were to play that song, they might play a different kind of roll, not paying attention to the type of song they're playing, but I pay attention to all of that. I listen to other people, all people.

MD: The track "Everybody Wants to Be Somebody" is great—strong and nuanced, with little touches that enhance it and make it human.

Courtney: There's that Sly Dunbar influence. For that I have to be thinking, *Okay, I'm playing, but it's really Sly. Sly is talking through this track.*

MD: What was it about Sly's playing that grabbed you?

Courtney: Well, that deep snare, and those simple fills at times. Then he would get real technical, [as if to say] *Okay, I'm simple, but if you really want to try me, this is also what I have in my pocket.* So that's Sly—you don't want to mess with him.

MD: I've heard you mention Squidly Cole [Stephen Marley]. What strikes you about his playing?

Bam on His Influences and Recordings

Bob Marley and the Wailers *Babylon by Bus*. It's about the sound and mix of that particular live show and how Carlton Barrett's fills are on point with and in the context of the feel of each song.

Black Uhuru *Liberation: The Island Anthology*. Sly and Robby's prolific rhythm section plus Sly's deep-sounding snares and intricate patterns.

Damian Marley *Halfway Tree*. This album to me is the perfect blend of reggae/dancehall and hip-hop, plus it made me push the envelope playing these songs live.

Dave Weckl *Master Plan* That was my first time hearing other drummers outside Jamaica. Most melodic drummer.

Damian Marley *Stony Hill*. My most anticipated album. I was able to be a part of such great talents, all on one platform.

Usher *Live*. I grew up listening to this album. My friends and I tried swatting all of Aaron Spears' drum fills.

John P. Kee *Not Guilty*. This album is all about the drummer. Calvin Rodgers went in on this; I call it the drum dictionary for gospel.

Playing for Change *Songs Around the World*. This album has every kind of musician from all over the world, including street musicians. Goes to show that music is its own language. Unity through musical expressions.

VATER

PERCUSSION
USA



Frank Ferrer
GUNS N' ROSES



Matt McGuire
THE CHAINSMOKERS



Paul Bostaph
SLAYER



#SWITCHTOVATER

VATER.COM

Photo: Danilo Lewis

Courtney Diedrick

Courtney: All his fills are really on point. A normal drummer would do the same fills, but it wouldn't sound the same. Because you're doing the fills, but you're just not doing the fills with [the same] intention, from the heart. That's the difference.

MD: You've put in a bunch of miles on the road. Could you share a couple stories about adversity that you might have overcome on the road?

Courtney: Wow, I've got a couple; let me try to choose the best one. We were playing the song "Move!" That [incorporates a sample of] Bob Marley's "Exodus." I play with in-ear monitors, so when I'm playing those tracks, I have to really be hearing. This one time the batteries went, and I was lost. And trust me, that is the worst nightmare onstage for any drummer. You don't want to have that. So it's very important to check your batteries. Don't ever start a show with half battery life. So it went, and I'm talking to the engineer, trying to get him to come and fix it. They didn't realize what happened. They were trying to turn up stuff. Before they found out, I had to cue them to put the track that I was listening to in the monitor.

When the song is already playing, it's hard for them to understand what I'm saying, so in the middle of that I'm getting upset. They're trying to figure stuff out, Damian is wondering what's going on, [and] the other band members are looking at me like, "Yo, you're messing up, what's going on?"

MD: Because they're hearing it in their own monitors?

Courtney: Yeah, so some of them will instantly know if I'm off. So in that situation, I had to defer to one of the guys. For example, my brother would be to my left, so he knows a lot of times when I'm not hearing. We have this kind of thing when we're playing, that if there's anything that may be off, we would just quickly look at each other, and he would play while tapping on the keyboard, like maybe at the side of the keyboard, or maybe tap his foot, so I could just watch and keep the time. And amazingly, it works. Trust me, you can't pay for that. Yeah, man, when I'm done I feel like buying him a drink, or, yo, if he wants a vacation I'll pay for it. Yeah, you don't want to get in that situation, ever. Even if I start with a full battery pack, I'm checking it

halfway through a show.

MD: Do you run into problems with weather?

Courtney: Yeah, yeah, the weather changes the sound of the drum sometimes. My main snare is a 14" Pearl Virgil Donati Signature model. I tune it to a high pitch, and if I'm in a cold area, even if you leave it on the stage for five minutes, you start to hear the sound deteriorating. And once you start playing all those reggae tracks, you're gonna have a headache, because it no longer sounds like a reggae snare drum. And if you tune it tight, with the cold, after two songs that skin is going to crack. So what I usually do, just as I'm ready to start a show, I'll bring the snare on the stage. I don't have it sitting there before the show. Even while playing, like after a track stops and Damian is talking to the crowd, I'll probably have a chamois, a cloth, and rub it around to keep the head warm.

MD: Heads are still that sensitive?

Courtney: Yeah, and especially the wood. Sometimes I have to take the snare drum to my room, take off the skin, and use a blow dryer to get the wood warm. I call it catching a flu. You know, Damian would ask, "Yo, what's up with the snare?" And I go, "It has the flu." So you have to give it some heat.

MD: Then you get the sound back?

Courtney: Yeah, yeah. Just like you would put the conga drums in the sun—that's the same thing. I tighten and tighten it when I'm losing the sound. But you're actually stretching out the skin until it can't take any pressure, and when you hit it, that's it, a tear. It mainly happens with the high-pitched snare.

MD: Are you still learning as a drummer?

Courtney: Yes. It never stops, and I hope I'll never feel as if I'm "there." I'm always developing a sound. I think I have my sound, but I still need work. I always feel the need to add to the sound that I have. People like to hear improvement. With music nowadays you have to be current. Even though your thing is discipline and you might be old school, you still want to keep current.

MD: How do you continue growing?

Courtney: Well, watching other drummers, they inspire me to really pick up my sticks. Listen to a lot of drummers. Because drummers that are not even as technical as you, they might have some simple stuff that makes them stand out. Pay attention to drummers in the genre of music that you like, and other genres too, because different genres also influence my playing.

ENHANCE YOUR PLAYING EXPERIENCE

MOONGEL® DAMPER PADS

black hole PRACTICE SYSTEM

MOONGEL® WORKOUT PAD

www.RTOM.com

Distributed by: Big Bang Distribution



ALESIS® **STRIKE PRO KIT**

Ultimate Response. No Limitations.

Adjustable Multi-Sensor Technology*

Multiple Sensors

Accurate and fast response across the entire drum head.

Multiple Contact Points

Even sensitivity across the entire drum head with no hot spots.



Dynamic Mesh Heads

Optimized playability and acoustic feel with adjustable tension.



Sensitivity Knob

Adjust the sensitivity at the source, right on the drum!

ALIVE AND KICKING!
ON STAGE WITH THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ACTS

BRUNO MARS' ERIC "E-PANDA" HERNANDEZ LIVING THE DREAM

When we decided to put together a special issue focusing on live playing, one of the first drummers we thought of who embodies the dedication, endurance, and craft needed to perform at the highest levels was Eric Hernandez. "I've toured with Eric for nearly eight years now," says Jamareo Artis, bassist with superstar Bruno Mars' backing band, the Hooligans, "and I've only got two words to describe him: hard worker. Eric's a very solid player, and he leaves room for the band to play. As a bass player, that's all you could ever wish for."

The Hooligans, who also feature keyboardist John Fossitt, multi-instrumentalist Phredley Brown, backup singer Philip Lawrence, trombonist Kameron Whalum, saxophonist Dwayne Dugger, and trumpeter James King, have been touring nonstop with Bruno Mars since 2010, and are more popular today than ever. When tickets went on sale for their current 24k Magic World Tour, which began in March of 2017 and continues throughout 2018, more than one million were sold in the first twenty-four

hours. It doesn't get any bigger than that—and the responsibility for driving a tour at that level doesn't get any more intense.

By now most fans know that Eric Hernandez is not only Bruno Mars' drummer, he's also his brother. A pretty good player himself, Bruno tells *MD*, "I wouldn't consider myself a drummer; my brother has always been a better one than me. We've been playing music since we were kids, and when I would venture off into other things, he'd keep on practicing his instrument. He'll always have that over me—but in all honesty, I wouldn't want anyone else playing for me."

"E-Panda," as family and friends know Eric, was born in 1976 in Brooklyn, New York. He began drumming at an early age, performing with his percussionist dad, Pete, who was fronting his own band in Hawaii with a then-five-year-old Bruno impersonating Elvis Presley. After serving in the Los Angeles Police Department from 2002 to 2007, Eric revived his drumming career and rejoined his brother. *Modern Drummer* first featured him in the October 2013 issue; this is his first *MD* cover.

BY BILLY AMENDOLA



Alex Solca

MD: What's a typical day like when you're on tour?

Eric: It's wake up on the bus, grab your toiletries and clothes for the day, and enter the venue for that evening's show. During this time the venue is chaotic, with crew and stagehands running around all over the place, setting up. We follow the signs and look for the Hooligans' dressing room. Next stop is catering for a healthy breakfast, usually egg whites and some turkey sausages or oatmeal. Once I've eaten and digested, I look for the workout room, where I'll usually work out to the "Insanity" videos, unless the venue has a full gym—then I'll switch it up by running on a treadmill and lifting some weights. After working out, I'll drink a protein shake, shower, and get ready for the day. After lunch I'll check in with my family via FaceTime to see how they're doing.

**“I WAS PUT ON
THIS EARTH TO
PLAY DRUMS
AND ENTERTAIN.
THERE’S A SWITCH
THAT TURNS ON
NIGHTLY WHEN
THE SHOW
STARTS.”**





Eric Hernandez

Harald Peter



Drums: DW Maple Collector's Series
A. 3.5x13 PDP E-Panda Signature snare
B. 6x10 popcorn snare
C. 8x8 tom
D. 8x10 tom
E. 8x12 tom
F. 14x16 floor tom
G. 7x14 snare
H. 5x20 gong drum
I. 14x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian
1. 14" HHX Evolution hi-hats
2. 18" HHX Evolution crash
3. 17" HHX Legacy crash
4. 6" AAX splash
5. 8" AAX Aero splash
6. 10" AAX Aero splash
7. 16" XSR Fast Stax
8. 22" HHX Legacy heavy ride
9. 17" AA Holy China
10. 19" AA thin crash

Hardware: DW 9000 series, gold plated

Sticks: Vic Firth X8D

Electronics: Roland TD-50 V-Drums, PD-108-BC V-Pads, PDX-6 V-Pads, BT-1 Bar Trigger Pad

Heads: Remo Emperor Clear, Ambassador Clear, Emperor Vintage Coated, Powerstroke P4 Clear

Accessories: Porter & Davies throne/monitor system, KickPro bass drum pillows, Knockout Beaters custom "E-Panda" bass drum beater

DESIGNED FOR CONTROL FREAKS

Our proprietary formula controls unwanted over-ring to bring out your drum's True Tones.



Leaves no oily residue • 4 standard and 6 micro Dampers per container

TRUTONES
PREMIUM DRUM DAMPERS

DISTRIBUTED BY: BIGBANGDIST.COM

MD: What goes on from soundcheck up to show time?

Eric: Usually by 4 P.M. we hit the stage ready to go. Bruno likes to soundcheck almost every show to get the blood going, maybe try some new ideas for the show. Or we start jamming, which gets recorded and sometimes turns into new song ideas. This is how "Uptown Funk" was born.

After soundcheck I'll usually head to catering for dinner. Most times I take my time eating sensibly and mainly hanging out, talking to our crew and bandmates, trying to stay sane from all this touring we do day in and day out. After dinner it's time to FaceTime home again, since now my kids are home from school. We talk for a while and share each other's days. Once I hang up, I'll head to our practice room, where I have a four-piece kit set up with three cymbals. I'll generally play for about forty-five minutes. I'll usually play grooves for a while, and then I'll start to play fills around the kit while grooving, and some linear fills. Then I may noodle around the kit as if I'm soloing, which consists of singles, doubles, paradiddles, etc.

If another Hooligan is in the room, I like to jam with them. On a good day, everyone is in the practice room at the same time, and we try to create new ideas for a future Hooligans project. By now I'm definitely warmed up, and I'll head back to the dressing room and start changing into my show wardrobe. After a last-minute stretch with drumsticks and a preshow shot of whiskey, it's show time! Sometimes right before show time I'll do warm-ups on a pad, such as singles, doubles, paradiddles, etc. The show is a full ninety-minute set. Afterwards I get off stage, decompress, shower, change, and get on the bus to travel to the next city. I go to sleep, wake up, and do it all over again.

MD: How do you prepare mentally before heading out for the tour?

Eric: Mentally preparing for tours can be tough, given how long our typical runs are. It's especially hard for me, being a family man. It's hard on me *and* on my family, especially after being home during a little bit of downtime and being able to participate in school activities or my son's sports. They get used to me being there day in and day out. When I tell them I have to leave them for months at a time, with only small breaks in between, for the next two years, it's not easy. During this last tour cycle, management also inserted a TV show, *24k Magic Live at the Apollo*, and the Grammys were during our break between legs. So not only do we sacrifice, so do

our families. But, hey, you have to work when the work is there, and at the end of the day, even while looking at a long, rigorous calendar, I'm still living the dream. Physically, I keep things pretty much the same. I keep a sensible diet and maintain a workout routine.

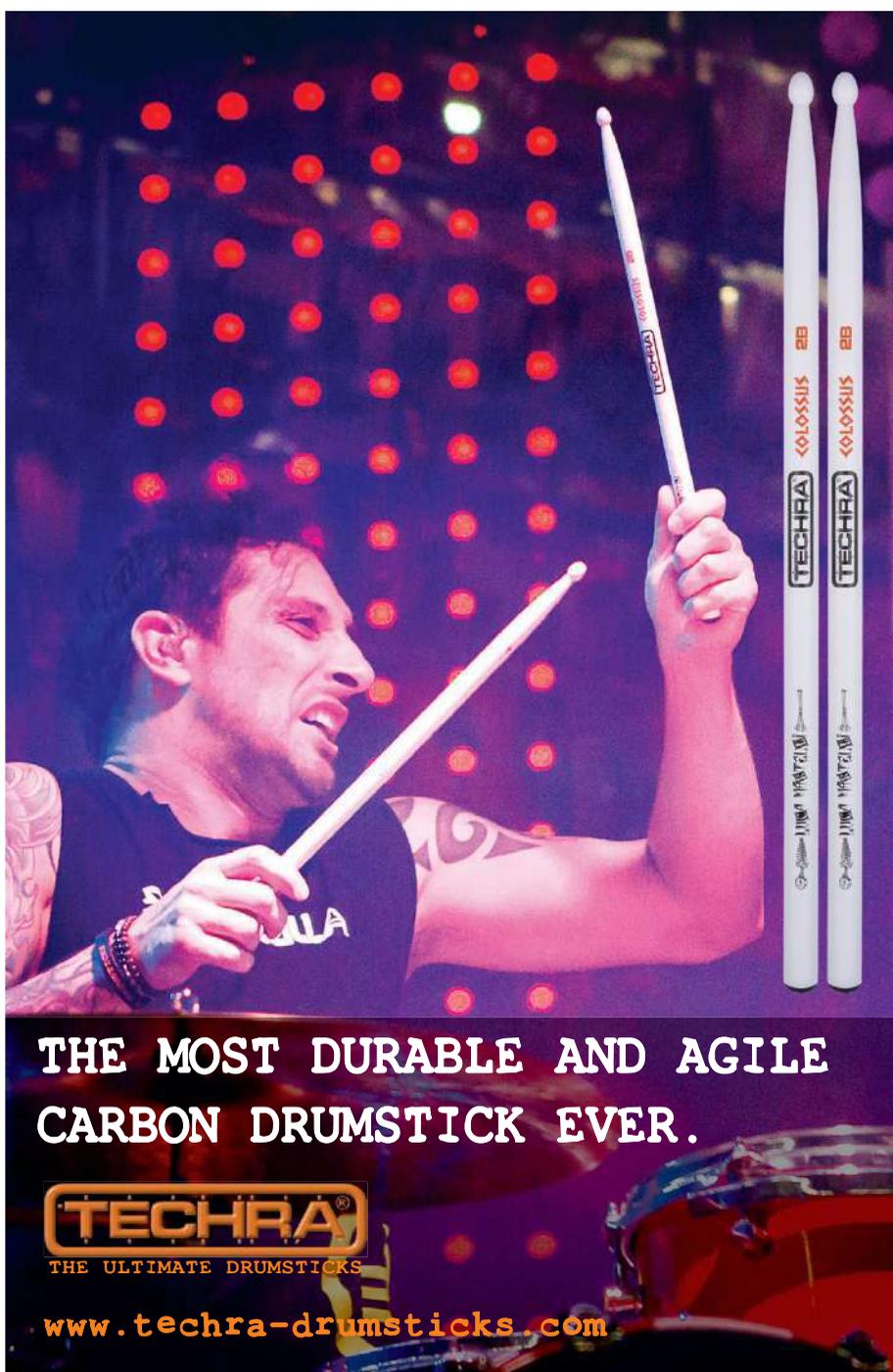
MD: What about gear? You guys put on an amazing live show, and you always have a different kit.

Eric: As far as preparing gear for the tour, I think about the sounds and instruments on the recordings, which are used to paint the picture and direction of the album. In

this case, there's an homage to '90s R&B and the new jack swing sound. So I also listened to what drummers were playing in the '90s and looked at their setups. I mimicked that with my setup in terms of drum shells, sizes, head combinations, and cymbal choices and sizes, but also kept the theme of the tour and the stage set in mind.

MD: Is it difficult to keep the energy and momentum going without getting tired of playing the same show night after night?

Eric: I was put on this earth to play drums and entertain. There's a switch that turns on nightly when the show starts. Even though



**THE MOST DURABLE AND AGILE
CARBON DRUMSTICK EVER.**

TECHRA
THE ULTIMATE DRUMSTICKS

www.techra-drumsticks.com

Eric Hernandez

we've played these songs over a hundred fifty times—some of them for years—that all goes out the window when you hear the roar of the audience and feel their love when they hear the live interpretation of their favorite songs for the first time. That makes playing these songs fun and rewarding, and you don't care about playing them over and over.

MD: Are there any songs in the set that challenge you more than the others?

Eric: There's no one particular song that challenges me. I think the only thing to be careful of is, when you've played the show for so long, you could almost phone it in and go on autopilot. This can be dangerous, for me anyway, because I have to make sure my mind doesn't drift and I [don't] lose track of where I am. That doesn't happen often, but it can. The challenge is not letting yourself get bored. You have to play the show like it's the first time you've ever played it. We give the audience our best and hopefully the ultimate live experience.

Another challenge is to not overplay the songs, to serve the songs properly. Sometimes you may get bored of playing the same fill, but that fill is part of the show



now, and it might even be part of a lighting or pyro cue, or a cue that Bruno and the

band reacts to.

MD: What's one of your favorite songs to

COLORTONE™

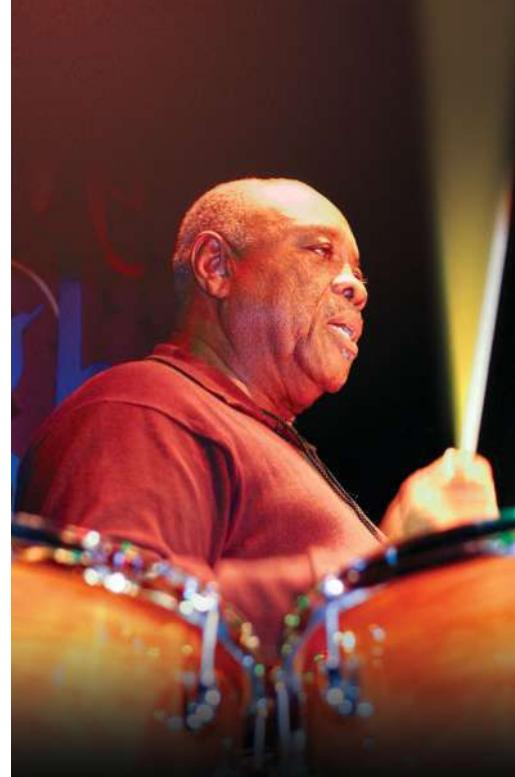
YOUR SOUND IN COLOR



STUNNING VISUAL APPEAL WITH POWERFUL PROJECTION, TONE AND DURABILITY FEATURING REMO'S SKYNDDEEP® IMAGING TECHNOLOGY. AVAILABLE IN SIX COLORS FOR EMPEROR® TOM SIZES 8-18, POWERSTROKE® 77 SNARE SIZES 13, 14 AND POWERSTROKE® P3 BASS BATTER AND RESONANT SIZES 18-26.



Harald Peter



play, and why?

Eric: I enjoy playing “Finesse” because it’s really an ode to the new jack swing sound I mentioned earlier. When played in the pocket, it’s really grooving. Actually, all the songs off the *24k Magic* album are fun to play, because it’s about that feel—the R&B ‘90s pocket that gets you dancing and really bobbing your head. I love watching the crowd move to the music. That’s the fuel that keeps *me* running.

MD: What’s the mix in your in-ear monitors?

Eric: I like keeping a “CD-like” mix in my ears. I have all the instruments in, but I keep the bass a little louder, as well as Bruno’s vocal, as he calls many audible signals. I actually have the drums slightly softer than everything else in my mix. And I have a click track running in my mix for any of our songs that use tracks or running time code for production.

MD: Growing up, did you learn from any particular drummers how to present yourself in a live setting?

Eric: As a young drummer, my dad made sure I saw footage of Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa. He wanted me to appreciate their musicality and command over their bands while they kept the pulse. But he emphasized their showmanship. My father really liked Krupa’s showmanship, and as I started working for him in his bands he wanted me to possess that quality during live performances. Then later on I started watching videos of Gregg Bissonette,

Dave Weckl, Vinnie Colaiuta, Dennis Chambers, and Steve Gadd. I was so into those drummers and their speed, phrasing, soloing abilities, and feel.

When it comes to live performance in a funk, pop, or R&B setting, I love watching Ricky Lawson and Jonathan Moffett with Michael Jackson and the Jackson 5. They would play the records and give it just the right amount of umph for the live versions, never missing a beat, and keeping the crowd on their feet and dancing the whole time. I also like David Garibaldi and Russ McKinnon, who both played with Tower of Power, and Maurice White, Sonny Emory, and John Paris with Earth, Wind and Fire. All these drummers were—and some still are—laying down fat and funky grooves, and never overplaying.

Of course you can’t forget Clyde Stubblefield and John “Jabo” Starks with James Brown—in fact, any drummer that played with James Brown. Then there’s John Blackwell Jr. and Michael Bland with Prince. Obviously these drummers remind me of my situation, working with a musical multi-instrumentalist who is looking for a solid foundation to keep the band and audience moving while staying funky. There’s also Brian Frasier-Moore, whose performance on Usher’s *Live* album blew me away—his approach to the songs, his setups into song sections. He plays the right amount of tasty licks, and the drum tone is perfect. He’s still a major influence on me. And there are so

In Memory of John “Jabo” Starks

Drummer. Legend. Family.



@YamahaMusicUSA



www.yamahadrums.com

Eric Hernandez

many other drummers...the list is too long.

MD: You've studied with Dave Elitch, correct?

Eric: Yes. I still take lessons with him. We're working on refining my hand technique and proper grip. I'm self taught and definitely not as fluid and fast as I'd like to be. I play matched grip, and I'm not as smooth as I want to be. I've realized while working with Dave that it's hard to relearn simple things, such as grip, since I've been playing a certain way for so long. Sometimes it *is* hard to teach an old dog a new trick. [laughs]

MD: Back to the topic of live performance, what was it like playing the Super Bowl halftime show in 2014 at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey? Records show that that halftime show attracted the largest TV audience in the history of the Super Bowl, close to 120 million people.

Eric: I remember when we first started playing big shows and TV shows. I used to feel that, for a musician, playing the Grammys was like playing the Super Bowl of music. I never thought about the actual Super Bowl until the opportunity came to us. Then it was like, *Wait, I'm about to play the Super Bowl!*

That experience was so amazing, and



Alex Solca

one I'll never forget. When we rehearsed in 15-degree weather on the field leading up to the Sunday show, I remember not being able to hold a drumstick in my hand and thinking, *How am I going to do this?* But we had heated gloves and hand warmers ready between each run-through, and we pushed through. We ended up being blessed with

great weather that day, and it was a dream performance that will live with me forever. Actually, I was fortunate to do the Super Bowl a second time, when Coldplay asked us to be their guests. I'm truly blessed to have had these incredible opportunities to play some of the biggest shows ever.



"Powerful & consistent, proudly playing with AHEAD Drumsticks for 15 years!"

FRANK ZUMMO - SUM 41, KREWELLA & STREET DRUM CORPS

GET MORE POWER, PRECISION AND PERFORMANCE





GB

FIESTA

WHICH ONE IS

YOU?

Our new Fiesta Cajons offer internal snare wires for lively tone, square rubber feet for superior isolation, seat pad for long-playing comfort, and unmatched sound and quality at their price point.

All you need to decide is which one is you.

Gon Bops[™]

GonBops.com

From the Track to the Stage

Breathing Life into a Recording

by Kristen Gleeson-Prata



On tour with the indie/alternative/pop act Børns, Kristen Gleeson-Prata translates heavily produced and electronics-infused recorded drum parts onto the live stage. Here the drummer explains her approach and invites a few drumming colleagues to weigh in with their own perspectives on the process.

Music creation has changed greatly since the days when musicians mostly tracked live in a studio. Because modern technology allows for a self-contained process of making music, it's common for songs to be created in a home studio using very few instruments—or, sometimes, only a computer. A single producer can create an entire song, which is often then handed over to a band to bring it to life onstage.

The difference between the recorded and live versions of a song can be easily heard and felt at a show. This is why people see bands play! Live music has energy, growth, and that human touch that technology alone just can't emulate. However, if you go to your favorite band's show, chances are you want to hear their songs played the way you know and love them. Due to the nature of our instrument, a lot of the responsibility for making music sound "human" falls on us drummers, so we have to carefully strike a balance between shaping the performance and staying true to the essence of the original song.

This process doesn't have a formula, because every song and situation is different. But from my experience, the approach can be summarized in a few general steps. Keep in mind that the less live drumming was used in the original track, the more the following steps apply. If the producer who created the music thought like a drummer and used real drums or realistic drum sounds, you may not have to change much when playing live.

The following steps aren't the only ways to create energy and growth in a live setting, and part of the beauty of creating any form of art is finding your own way. At the end of this article I've included examples of how a few different drummers have used these steps—in addition to their own creativity—when performing live versions of songs you may recognize.

1. Lay Down the Foundation

In the world of popular music, the track you start with will often have a rhythmic way of representing the downbeat (beat 1) and the backbeat (in 4/4, most commonly on beats 2 and 4). The downbeat and backbeats will likely be represented by a bass drum and snare, respectively, but alternatively can be played by voices such as an 808 kick sample and handclaps. To preserve the essence of the song, play these parts exactly like the record or as close to it as you can get.

2. Switch Things Up to Create Energy and Growth

As I mentioned earlier, a live performance of a song often calls for something more than what was played on the recorded version. As you probably already do instinctively as a musician, use your judgment to tastefully add shape to the foundation. There are two key ways to accomplish this. First, you can add *subdivision* by incorporating a hi-hat or cymbal part or by playing ghost notes. In addition, you can change *timbre* and *intensity* by playing backbeats with a flam or snare/floor tom combination, incorporating toms into the basic groove, or switching from the hi-hat to the ride or crash as the song progresses.



3. Let Technology Help You

Thanks to technology, modern drummers can employ a hybrid approach, which means using a combination of acoustic and electronic instruments. If you have a sample pad, triggers, or backing tracks at your disposal, use them to include any important sounds from the recorded version of the song. This could be a specific kick or snare sound, or other voices such as claps, snaps, or tambourine hits.

If you want a sample to be played alone, you can play it on a sample pad or an external trigger pad. If you want a sample to be played at the same time as one of your drums, use a trigger on that drum. If there's a part that cannot physically be played live on stage, such as a continuous shaker part that you can't play because you're already using both hands, you can load that loop into your sample pad or let it live in the backing tracks. The more you alone can physically cover, though, the better, which leads me to my last point.

4. Remember to Think Outside the Box

Let's say you're already grooving with both your hands and feet, but you also want to play a clap sample on a trigger on beat 4. Before resorting to putting the clap on a backing track, experiment with stickings to see if you can possibly cover it all. Maybe if you leave out one hi-hat note or play a double stroke with one hand,

the other hand can sneak over and hit those claps. Pulling off tricky moves definitely requires some practice, but it becomes second nature with repetition.

This process is fun and can be a surprising opportunity for creativity in a world where we're often asked to simply "play the part." Although the goal is to do exactly that—play the part—in these situations we're helping to recreate that part. Remember, though, that at the end of the day, our job is to support. Don't play too much, and stay true to the essence of the song.

The Tracks

"Electric Love," from Børns' 2015 debut album, *Dopamine*, was one of the first songs I had to adapt to a live performance setting. After analyzing the track, I concluded that from a drumming perspective, the recording contained kick, snare, finger snaps, and a few tom fills. The kick and snare made up the foundation, and the snaps were a characteristic sound that I wanted to include if I could get my hands on the sample. I knew I was going to stick to the foundation, but I also knew that I needed to fill in some of the space.

I wanted to support the infectious swinging, locomotive, almost tribal feeling that the guitar and bass created on this song. I noticed that there were no cymbals used throughout this track, so I decided to mimic that swinging feeling using the toms: I added subdivision by using triplet rhythms on the toms in between the snare backbeats on 2 and 4, while playing the tom fills that were already in the track. For the verse groove I stuck to the floor tom, and to change up the timbre in the pre-chorus groove I added the rack tom. And at the top of most sections I added some crashes, as I felt those spots demanded some extra intensity. The producer sent me the snap sample, which I loaded into my Roland SPD-SX pad and played in the pre-choruses. That was the cherry on top!

Here's the verse to "Electric Love."



And here's my embellished approach to the song's chorus.



On "Faded Heart," from Børns' latest album, *Blue Madonna*, the producer made my job easy by creating a very realistic drum part, which he pieced together from samples of his own kit. Because he can think like a drummer, his parts were easy to adapt to a live set. When we play this song on stage, I copy his part pretty closely but use my judgment to occasionally play an open hi-hat, ghost note, or fill. To tie in the sound of the record, I loaded the snare sample into my SPD-SX and assigned it to my snare drum trigger so that it fires every time I hit that drum.

Though the process for "Faded Heart" was pretty straightforward, I had an opportunity to think outside the box. Upon my first listen I noticed the groovy 8th- and 16th-note tambourine part and decided that I wanted to play that live at some point in the song. It happens throughout each chorus and the bridge, but because I needed to cover the ride cymbal in the choruses, the bridge was the only section in which I could physically pick up the tambourine. Therefore, the tambourine part in the choruses lives in the backing tracks, but it's muted in the

From the Track to the Stage

bridge so that I can cover it myself. It took a ton of practice to switch from stick to tambourine and back to stick in time to play the fill leading into the last chorus, but now that I have it down, it's super fun to play!

Mike Robinson, who plays drums for the indie band Bay Ledges, does a great job of building the energy live in the group's song "Tween Love." "I start with just the snare sample on my SPD-SX and the kick sample on my Roland KT-10," Robinson says. The drummer stays true to the song by also playing the occasional hi-hat sample and reverse cymbal sample. After the whole band breaks and re-enters after the bridge, he brings the energy up a notch by switching to an acoustic kick that has that same bass drum sample triggered.



He then utilizes subdivision on the ride to build dynamically into the outro of the song. "In the fifth bar of this section," Robinson says, "I start playing half notes on my ride, then quarter notes, and then 8ths." After this gradual build, he hits a reverse cymbal sample into a unison snare/floor tom backbeat before playing the outro full-throttle on the acoustic kit with the added snare and kick triggers. At the very end, he comes full circle by playing only the snare and kick samples on the SPD-SX—exactly how the song began.

Scott Quintana, the drummer for the country singer and songwriter Kacey Musgraves, had to really think outside the box when translating Musgraves' version of "Feliz Navidad" to a live performance, as the song was recorded for her album *A Very Kacey Christmas* using only congas and percussion. "We didn't want to drag out even more gear for just one song,"



Quintana says, "so I had to adapt it to an acoustic drumset. There are group handclaps on the record, which the rest of the live band could help with at the top of the song. But after the intro, their hands are full because they're playing their own parts." It's during this section of the song that Quintana starts playing the handclaps on a trigger pad mounted on his kick drum rim. He replicates the congas by playing a rimclick on a snare with the wires turned off, as well as normal strokes on a rack tom, which is fitted with a ring made from an old head to soften its tone.

If you listen closely to the recorded version of Musgraves' "Feliz Navidad," you'll also hear a woodblock playing mostly quarter notes throughout the majority of the song. Quintana covers this with his left foot on an auxiliary pedal. To cover the jingles in the chorus, he had to get creative: "I have a set of trashy-sounding jingle bells that I was able to hang on my hi-hat. When the chorus hits, I have to angle my left foot so that I can stomp on the block pedal and hi-hat pedal at the same time."

With the rock singer-songwriter Grace Potter, drummer **Matt Musty** increasingly finds himself in a double-drumming situation with second drummer **Daiki Hirano**. The pair work together to break down the production of Potter's most recent pop record, *Midnight*,

and they assign dual drumset parts note by note to achieve both the bigger tones and the tighter, quieter sounds of Potter's own set. "Generally we try to be pretty true to the recorded material," Musty says. "It's been an awesome challenge to get into it and break it up in that way."



I had the pleasure of touring with the alternative pop singer Halsey and her drummer, **Nate Lotz**, and I got to witness Nate's hybrid

drumming up close. He explained to me that he starts the process of bringing each song to the stage with a recording and a folder containing all the drum samples from the record.



"I listen several times while making notes of what can go where on the sample pad and what can be recreated with an acoustic kit," he says. "Then I experiment with the playability of each section in the song to see what I can cover and what should be left in the percussion stem [of the backing track]." In the song "Colors," Nate plays the verses using a combination of his Roland sample pad and external kick trigger, and then he brings the energy up in the choruses by moving to the acoustic kit.

Despite all the prior rehearsal for a pop gig such as Halsey's, not everything that happens on stage is planned. "One great thing about the show is that there are moments of live experimentation," Lotz says. "The end of 'Colors' was one of those moments. This is one of those things that happens organically on tour with Ashley [Frangipane, aka Halsey]. One day we broke into a half-time feel out of nowhere. It felt so good, and it stuck. Now it's part of the show."

With the indie band Father John Misty, drummer **Dan Bailey** explains that the real challenge is finding gear and ways to play that can cover ten or more genres in an eighteen-song set. "Father John

Misty has a hard-and-fast 'no tracks' rule," Bailey says. "So as much as I'd love to phrase-sample some things, we have to figure out ways to do it all by hand, and I have to compile parts into drumset orchestrations." There are some songs that don't have any real drums on their recorded versions, so Bailey uses his SPD-SX, triggers, and pads to provide roughly the same vibe as what's on the record. Bailey also had to take a track that contained only congas and percussion, Misty's "Chateau Lobby #4 (In C for Two Virgins)," and come up with something that gave the same feeling using the drumset.



Bailey sums up the process of bringing a produced track to the live setting this way: "Obviously different gigs have different approaches," he says. "A pop gig likely requires you to stay as true to the track as possible. But I'm lucky to get a little more leeway, and usually as long as the track *feels* right, I get away with whatever makes the finished product the strongest."





THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO DRUM

The new Simmons **SD2000** offers unprecedented creative control far beyond what traditional acoustic and electric kits can offer. Explore the massive Signature Sound Library featuring sought-after kits, world percussion, industrial samples and more. The SimHex[®] tension-able mesh pads allow for nuanced performance, while the unique Spherical Isolation Mounting System[™] creates expansive pad position options and virtually eliminates cross-talk. Test drive the **SD2000** today and experience the shape of things to drum.



"Engineered as a sound design tool for today's modern drummer."

— Dave Simmons

SIMMONS[®]

Essential Sight-Reading

Playing Charts at First Glance

by Joel Rothman

Many drummers who aren't exceptional readers can still sight-read arrangements with a fair amount of ease and authority. Their secret—if there is one—could be that they recognize their own limitations and understand which ensemble figures may be omitted without impacting the overall sound of the band or arrangement. Inexperienced drummers often try to play everything that's notated, regardless of their reading ability. This can lead to disaster for a band.

Plenty of drum charts are written by arrangers whose primary instrument isn't percussion. As such, the arrangers may not be aware of logistical challenges inherent in playing drums, and they might write figures that are awkward to execute. In addition, some parts that were originally written for a big band may have to be played with as few as three or four musicians. Many of the rhythmic figures that appear on these big band arrangements could sound out of place if there were no brass instruments to play the same phrases. And it's not unusual for an arrangement to be played at a tempo that's different from the original one, making certain figures inappropriate for the speed of the performance.

One of our main jobs is to keep time. The rhythmic figures that appear on drum charts are usually meant to reinforce a horn section's parts. If a drummer merely maintains time instead of playing some of the rhythmic figures on the chart while sight-reading, most of the time the result won't be tragic. The brass might not pack the same wallop, but the overall sound

of the band won't be affected. But when drummers attempt to play figures that are unclear or awkward, they risk losing their place, playing a phrase incorrectly, dropping a beat, or changing the tempo. These outcomes are far worse than whatever would be lost if they simply maintained time through the passage.

Here's a good rule of thumb to follow when you're sight-reading: when in doubt, leave it out. This in no way means that all written figures on a chart should be omitted. However, it does suggest that if a drummer omits some of the written figures on a chart, the band can still sound good.

The four things that every drummer must catch on a drum part when sight-reading are dynamics, tempo changes, time signature changes, and any musical pauses or cutoffs. All other figures, while notable, could be considered secondary to those basics. If you're fortunate enough to play a certain arrangement more than once, your ear and familiarity with the music will aid you in playing more of what's notated on the chart.

The following example demonstrates a simplified arrangement, which we will analyze with the goal of giving you concrete examples of what you should concentrate on when sight-reading. Each rhythmic figure, tempo, time signature change, and musical cutoff throughout the arrangement is bracketed and marked as either "primary" or "secondary." When sight-reading, secondary phrases are less of a concern and don't necessarily need to be played. Primary phrases must be played so that the band sounds tight.

In measure 3, the rhythmic figure most likely reinforces the horn section, and playing it will give the phrase more punch. But omitting it and simply playing time on your first read-through might not affect the sound of the band to a great degree. On the other hand, the quarter-note cutoff in measure 4 is very important. If weak readers falter on the phrase in bar 3, they might miss the break in the next bar—a serious mistake that affects the entire performance.

In bar 7 we see another offbeat rhythmic figure. If it weren't played, it wouldn't greatly alter the band's sound. The same holds true for the labeled phrase in measure 11. But in bar 12, the time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4. The drummer must be aware of this shift for the band to sound tight. If you try to play the rhythmic figure in bar 11 and fail, you might lose the count and have difficulty playing the time change. If sight-reading isn't your strength, it would be wiser to omit the rhythmic figure in bar 11 and play time to make a strong and smooth transition to 3/4.

Bar 15 contains a simple figure that could be considered secondary. What is important, however, is the cutoff in measure 19. Once again, in attempting to play the figure in bar 15, weak readers might lose their place in the music and miss the important cutoff at bar 19.

Measures 22 and 25 contain secondary rhythmic figures. If you doubt your ability to play these phrases on the first attempt, simply omit them and substitute straight time in order to avoid rushing or dragging the tempo, dropping a beat, or losing your place. If you get lost, chances are that the important change from 3/4 to cut time could be missed in measure 28. By the same token, the rhythmic figures in bars 34 and 35 are relatively unimportant compared to the major cutoff for four bars at measure 41 and the transition back to 4/4 in measure 45.

In bar 47, the rhythmic figure is of relatively minor importance compared to the final cutoff in measure 48. The offbeat figures in bar 47 might prove difficult for a weak reader, especially if the tempo is fast. It would be logical to play time through bar 47 and catch the cutoff on the second beat in the final bar so that the band ends together.

This lesson isn't meant to suggest that you should avoid playing ensemble figures when sight-reading. My suggestions simply point out which figures are of primary or secondary importance when reading. Ultimately what's *most* important is that you become as good a reader as possible, so that when you're called to read a drum chart on short notice, you're prepared.



Kicked-Up Bell Patterns

A Unique Approach to Double Bass Phrases

by Chris Dovas

By combining different stickings, rudiments, and accent patterns between the bell or bow of the ride cymbal and the snare drum, we can create unique musical effects. In this lesson we'll explore what I refer to as "kicked-up bell patterns." These ride and snare combinations sit well at tempos between 135 and 200 bpm, and they add a nice, warm texture to double bass grooves. The examples in this lesson incorporate straight 16th-note or 8th-note-triplet subdivisions, but you can experiment with other note rates.

Before playing them on the kit, practice these sticking and accent patterns on the snare or a practice pad to get comfortable with the phrases. Start on the snare, then move the pattern to the snare and ride, and then finally add the double bass pattern. Go slowly, and use a metronome to help you build up speed and control. Take note of how different these exercises feel at fast tempos versus medium or slow ones.

In Exercise 1 we'll alternate between a paradiddle and an inverted paradiddle on the ride, with snare backbeats on beats 2 and 4. The right-hand ride strokes are played on the bell.

1

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

Exercise 2 utilizes the same sticking as the previous example, except the left hand plays ghost notes on the snare.

2

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

The cymbal pattern in Exercise 3 gives the illusion that you're playing straight 16th notes on the bell with the right hand.

3

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

Exercise 4 combines a mix of paradiddles and inverted paradiddles.

4

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

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

This next example demonstrates a more melodic approach to ride bell patterns.

5

In Exercise 6, a dotted-8th-note bell pattern gives the groove a polyrhythmic feel that cycles back to beat 1 after three measures.

6

R L L R L L R L L R L B R

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

L R B R L L R L L R L L

Now let's shift the dotted-8th-note bell pattern by starting it on the "e" of beat 1.

7

R R L R B R R L R R B R L R

R L R R L R R L R R L R B R R

L R R B R L R R L R R L

In Exercises 8–10 we'll incorporate triplets.

R R R B R R R R R B R R

8

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

9

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

10

In Exercise 11, half-note-triplet accents create a polyrhythmic feel while the snare backbeat remains solid on beats 2 and 4.

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

11

Next we'll shift the snare backbeat to line up with the half-note-triplet pulse. This pattern creates a rhythmic modulation, and listeners might hear this pattern as a straight 16th-note double bass groove.

12

Exercise 13 employs the same sticking as Exercise 11, except the half-note-triplet accent pattern starts on the third triplet partial of beat 1.

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

13

In Exercise 14, the backbeat alternates between a straight 4/4 pulse and the modulated, half-note-triplet feel that was introduced in Exercise 12.

R R R B R R R R R B R R R R B R R R R B R R R R B R R R R

14

I hope you enjoy these phrases as much as I do. Once you learn these examples, write out your own variations. The possibilities are endless. Have fun!



Chris Dovas is a Boston-based studio and touring musician who's currently studying at the Berklee College of Music. He plays with the metal groups Seven Spires and Unflesh, the latter of which recently released their debut album, *Savior*.



the MD Deluxe Stick Bag

Now you can carry up to two dozen pairs of sticks, mallets, and brushes in style with the new MD Deluxe Stick Bag. It's made from durable Cordura fabric and features six deep padded pockets, two tom-hanger cords, a loop handle, a shoulder strap, and a zippered outer pocket for all of your odds and ends, including the latest issue of *Modern Drummer*. The bag is 18" long, 10" wide when closed, and 21" wide when open, and a heavy-duty zipper keeps everything secure in transport.

So whether you're taking your sticks to practice, heading out to a gig, or keeping everything all in one place in your studio, you'll be thrilled to have the attractive MD Deluxe Stick Bag with you.

(Sticks, brushes, and mallets are not included.)

**Order today
for only
\$29.99!**

moderndrummer.com

Al Foster on "Ev'rything I Love"

Analyzing the Jazz Great's Eights

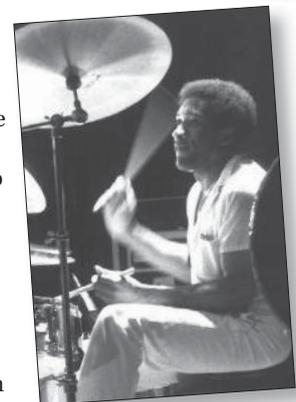
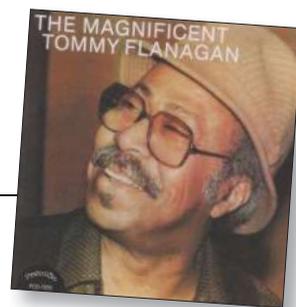
by Jordan Young

Al Foster has an infectious groove that's propelled by his signature ride sound, which he's drawn from a 22" Paiste Sound Creation Dark ride with rivets throughout much of his recorded career. Foster's comping is musical and creative; it's as if he's a one-man orchestra, with each limb creating different voices around the kit. He also shades and colors music with various textures and rhythmic motifs, and he never gets in the way of a tune while continually rumbling beneath the ground. Sometimes, when the time is right, he'll burst up from below the surface and react to and encourage soloists' phrasing. Propelling his bandmates' ideas with clear intention and intensity, Foster is a true conversationalist and interpreter of jazz.

A great example of Foster's playing can be found on the 1981 album *The Magnificent Tommy Flanagan*. The examples in this lesson were transcribed from a Cole Porter tune off that record called "Ev'rything I Love." I transcribed the eights Foster trades with pianist Flanagan, including the comping and solo sections. Listen to the recording while checking out these transcriptions to fully absorb the material.

Let's check out the first example (3:34). Foster's playing is incredibly complementary to the shape of Flanagan's lines. One of the key elements of jazz soloing is tension-and-release. Musicians play an idea, build it up to a climax, and then release the tension. In measure 3 of the comping section, Foster plays a relatively dense idea between the bass drum and snare right at the point of tension in Flanagan's line before it resolves.

Foster's solo phrases are usually inspired by what the other musicians previously played, but also sometimes by a fresh motif that he develops. Particularly interesting here is how he fills in the little holes with his bass drum, such as in the transition from the third to fourth measures of the solo section.



Comping:

1

Solo:

In the comping section at 3:48, Foster plays a repeated three-note phrase primarily on the snare within 4/4 to create a polyrhythmic feel. In this example the three-beat idea starts in the second measure and lasts until the fifth bar. Foster maintains a consistent 4/4 jazz ride pattern throughout. In the solo he states a simple, flowing melodic concept and sees it through while utilizing repetition as a device.

Comping:

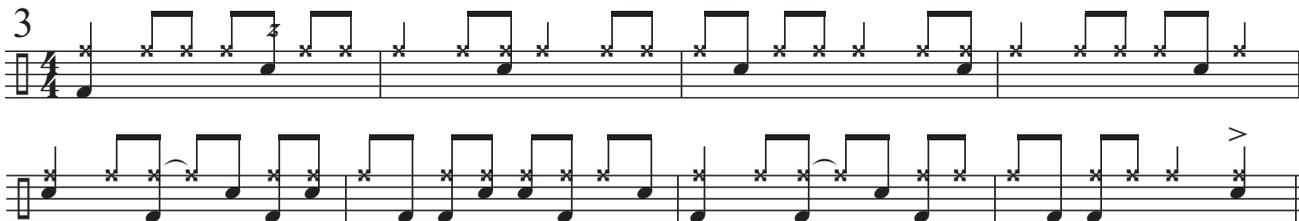
2

Solo:

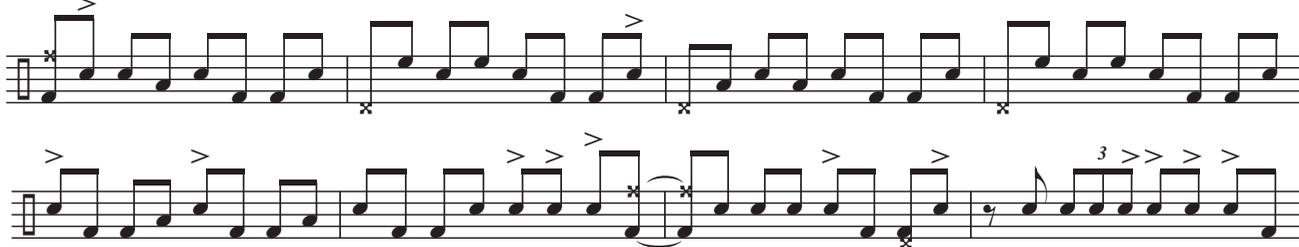


This next excerpt (4:03) also has some smooth three-over-four comping with the snare in the first four bars. Measures 5 through 8 have some interesting combinations between the snare and bass drum that help build up the intensity of the piano solo. Foster's strong soloing also utilizes an element of repetition to build the phrase. The bass drum intersperses among the snare drum, rack tom, and floor tom, helping to displace the ideas melodically. In this example Foster takes a simple idea and orchestrates it to create a melodic statement.

Comping:

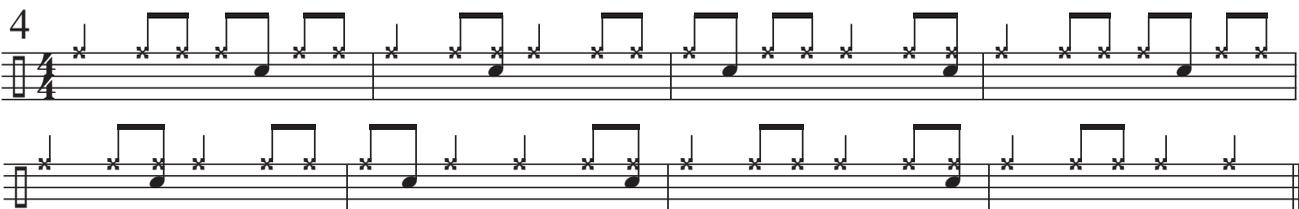


Solo:



The solo in this next section features an interesting, almost displaced feeling, especially leading into the third measure. This also provides a great example of how Foster makes every idea clearly fit. Each limb flows effortlessly with the others within the phrase—an example of the drummer's able coordination (4:17).

Comping:



Solo:



Essential Al Foster

Cal Tjader *Mambo With Tjader*
Tito Puente and his Orchestra *Dance Mania (Legacy Edition)*
Pérez Prado Orchestra *Big Hits by Prado*
Dizzy Gillespie *Afro*
Mongo Santamaria *Watermelon Man!*

Go to *Modern Drummer's* Spotify page to listen.



Jordan Young has played with Wynton Marsalis, Peter Bernstein, and Jerry Vivino, among others. He's a member of organist Brian Charette's group, *Kürrent*, and leads the Jordan Young Group and the Soul-Juice Organ Trio. Young maintains an active private teaching studio in Brooklyn, New York. He endorses Canopus drums.



Tooling with *Perspectives*

Shifting Feel in Real-World Settings

by Aaron Edgar



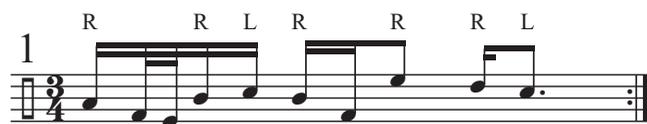
I'll never forget the musical journey I pursued after checking out Gavin Harrison's method book *Rhythmic Perspectives*. In one section, Harrison presents an in-depth study on multilayered polyrhythms and discusses hearing the groupings from each rhythm's individual perspective. This particular chapter inspired me to explore four-layer polyrhythms—such as groupings of three, four, five, and seven played simultaneously—while trying to hear the pulse from each of the separate groupings' perspectives.

For instance, in the previous example, we can hear the layered polyrhythm in 8th-note triplets, where every fourth, fifth, and seventh note orbits around the three-note triplet groupings. Then while playing the exact same rhythm, we can concentrate on the layer of four by hearing that grouping as 16th notes. In this perspective, every third, fifth, and seventh note revolves around the four-note pulse. Likewise, we can continue with the five-note grouping by concentrating on quintuplets, and then the seven-note grouping by concentrating on septuplets. I can only imagine what it was like for my poor mom when I was first exploring this material, as she had to listen to me shed the same multi-polyrhythmic patterns over and over again.

But these complicated ideas don't need to stay confined to the practice room. We can apply these principles in musical settings to create phrases that work well in multiple rhythmic perspectives. A perfect example of a real-world application of this concept can be found in the Tool song "Enima." It should come as no surprise that Danny Carey and Tool, who have pushed rhythmic and musical boundaries throughout their career, would write something that employs this concept.

Depending on how you perceive Carey's pattern, it can be felt in either 4/4 with a triplet feel (four pulses per bar) or in 3/4 with a 16th-note feel (three pulses per bar). Each perspective is twelve notes long; however, the difference between the two lies in how we feel the pulse. As a result, the rhythms and melodies syncopate differently depending on how we hear it.

Let's take a look at the drums' entrance at the 0:14 mark. First we'll feel it as 16th notes in 3/4. If you're listening to vocalist Maynard James Keenan's breathing during the top of the song, this perspective will feel the most natural.



Now let's try the same beat with an 8th-note-triplet perspective in 4/4. It would be wise to count out loud and to keep in mind that this pattern isn't identical to Exercise 1. Your brain might fight to feel this as 16th notes after playing the previous example.



You might notice that Exercise 2 feels natural yet very different from the first example. In Exercise 1, the snare plays on the "a" of beat 1 and "e" of beat 3, whereas in Exercise 2 the snare plays beats 2 and 4.

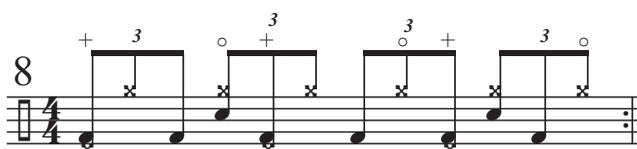
The next two examples demonstrate Carey's addition of the hi-hat foot at 0:38. In 3/4, the hi-hat supports the straight-16th feel by playing each 8th note. However, in 4/4 it outlines a three-over-two polyrhythm. You can perceive either side of this polyrhythm throughout the song.



At 1:17, the track's rhythmic focus shifts from favoring a 3/4 perspective to a 4/4 feel with the snare on beats 2 and 4. It's a subtle difference, but keep in mind that the part works equally well in either perspective, even if the band collectively leans toward a triplet phrasing.



When the open hi-hat enters, it adds an interesting element that oddly feels more at home in 4/4 as triplets with a polyrhythmic phrasing. From a 3/4 perspective, the hi-hat opens on the "a" of each beat.



Near the end of the track, at the 4:09 mark, there's another feel change that can still be felt in the previous perspectives. Let's first look at it in 3/4 with a 16th-note-triplet subdivision.

9

B R L R B R L R

Carey hints at the 4/4 feel with a slightly swung triplet phrasing. To me this section doesn't feel like it has three pulses per bar; rather it feels like there are two. It might be better to notate and feel this rhythm in 6/8.

10

Out of curiosity, let's see what happens when we try to feel this particular phrase in 4/4. Remember that this example fits in the same timeframe as the previous examples, so it *should* work.

11

Representing and trying to feel this rhythm in 4/4 is awkward, and the groupings are certainly difficult to read. But it's interesting to see how we can still represent the previous pattern in 4/4.

Go back and listen to "Ænima" while alternating between different perspectives of the pulse. The song takes on a different character when you shift to feels that are separate from how you naturally hear the music.

Now let's explore a new polyrhythm to create our own multi-perspective groove. Starting from an isolated polyrhythm is a great way to design each side of a groove. For the next few examples we'll utilize a five-over-three or three-over-five grouping.

Exercise 12 demonstrates the three-over-five grouping (three equally spaced notes played over a measure of 5/4), and Exercise 13 demonstrates five-over-three (five equally spaced notes played over a bar of 3/4). We'll play the five-note layer on the ride or cymbal stack and the three-note layer on the bass drum.

12

13

To make these groupings work in musical settings, we'll subtly play and embellish each side of the rhythm so that no one side of the pattern represents a favored perspective. The

bass drum will play every first and fourth partial of a five-note grouping. Although we're mostly playing quarter notes on the ride in 5/4, or every third quintuplet partial on the ride in 3/4, we'll add a slight embellishment toward the end of the cymbal's phrase. And on the snare we'll play two beats; the first aligns with the bass drum, while the second lines up with the ride.

14

15

Now try writing your own multi-perspective patterns. Add some hidden feels within the rhythms of your next song, and keep it weird!

Aaron Edgar plays with the Canadian prog-metal band Third Ion and is a session drummer, clinician, and author. His latest book, *Progressive Drumming Essentials*, is available through Modern Drummer Publications. For more information, visit moderndrummer.com.



DrumDial

"DrumDial is an amazing tool to get in tune with the right pitch you're looking for. It's accurately on point to help you get that precise classic and modern drum sound. I recommend DrumDial if you want to get drums tuned right the 1st time."

Emanuel Harrold
Drummer, Producer,
Composer, Educator



watch
the video



BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION

9420 Reseda Blvd. PMB 350, Northridge, CA 91324
Ph. 800-547-6401 | www.bigbangdist.com

Drumset Ergonomics

Part 4: Snare and Floor Tom Positioning

by Brandon Green

If you've been applying the concepts we've discussed so far in this series, you should now be seated comfortably at your kit, with the throne and pedals placed so that your hips and back are in the safest possible positions. Now it's time to start exploring wrist, hand, and elbow placements and how they relate to the heights and angles of the snare and floor toms.

Given that each person's body has unique range-of-motion limitations, where you place the snare and other floor instruments can dramatically influence the forces that the body experiences. Of the joint systems in the body that are impacted by drumming, the wrist is among the smallest and most fragile. In this article you'll learn how high you should position the snare and floor toms in order to maintain healthy wrists while accommodating your unique playing style.

Eliminate the Dogma

The most commonly repeated "rule" related to snare drum placement has to do with maintaining a 90-degree angle at the elbow. But what do you do with your floor toms? Where they go will be determined by the range of motion of your spine and hips from a seated position.

External Variables

The shape and size of your primary snare will determine how it will be positioned between your legs. The height of the rim can also influence the angle of the drum. Many drumming-related injuries are caused by the snare being placed at an angle that forces the joints into positions with little to no range of motion available. (We'll discuss proper snare angle in greater detail in the next section.)

As with the snare drum, the placement of instruments to the right and left sides of the kit will influence the forces exerted on the joints. The biggest factor is how far away from the body the instruments are placed. If you have three floor toms in descending order on the right side of your kit, how do your wrist mechanisms change when you're reaching for the farthest tom? And is that motion safe for your wrists?

Internal Variables

There are multiple joint systems working together to create the aggregate motion required to move a drumstick. One is

composed of the elbow and radioulnar joint, which has a top (proximal) and bottom (distal) component. The radioulnar system is interesting: the radius bone turns around the ulna in order to position the palm up or down. Another joint system involves the wrist and hand. The wrist is composed of a sack of carpal bones that are attached to the radius bone.

There are the three key points to keep in mind regarding the way you use your wrists and hands in drumming. First, wrist and hand motion completely depends on the placement of the arm joints above them. There's something in anatomy called "active insufficiency," which refers to a muscle's inability to generate force when it reaches a fully lengthened or fully

shortened position. In the context of drumming, this means that the palm position you choose—facing inward or downward—will influence the amount of motion (extension and flexion) available from your wrist. So the type of grip you use—French, German, or American—will greatly influence the likelihood of wrist injury. The possibility of injury is further compounded by the height and angle of the snare.

The second thing to keep in mind is that structurally the wrist and hand have some of the weakest joint systems involved with playing drums. They have few stabilizing structures and low amounts of surface area, and they consist of tiny bones that are more likely to become injured. Because of this fragility, as well as the amount of impact the hands and wrists take when applying force to the drumstick, it's important to position the snare and other instruments so that they allow for a maximum range of motion.

The third point is that everyone's hand size and range of wrist motion are unique. In a future article, we'll discuss how to choose drumsticks that are appropriate for your hand size and wrist flexibility. For now, keep in mind that the active range of motion of your wrist and hand will be a major factor when determining the best possible height and angle for your snare.

Assessment

Let's go through the process of determining where to position your snare. Refer to the steps outlined in parts 2 and 3 of this series to ensure that you've established the correct throne height and pedal placement for your anatomy. This creates a



strong foundation.

Now place your snare so that the rim sits just above the thighs, ensuring that your legs aren't obstructing the path of motion of your arms and wrists. With both stick tips placed at the center of the snare, check the range of motion of your hands with your preferred grip by slowly rotating the sticks up with just the wrists. (See photos.) Repeat this motion slowly several times while remaining as true as possible to your normal playing technique. If you do this exercise too quickly, the inertia of the stick can push your wrist farther back than it would naturally go, thereby incorrectly determining your range of motion. Repeatedly extending joints beyond their range can lead to injury. Once you've identified the range of motion of your wrists, you can use that to adjust the height of the snare.

One of Newton's laws of physics states that every force has an equal and opposing reactive force. In other words, when you hit the drum, the drum will produce the exact same amount of force back into the drumstick. (Of course, the tension of the drumhead will have an influence on this.) When determining the angle of the snare, make sure that the rebound of the drumstick aligns with the natural movements of the muscles

and joints in your arms and hands.

If you use a flat snare angle and like to play a lot of rimshots, it will be helpful to ensure that your wrist is in a relatively neutral position.

Angling the snare towards you can cause force to push the drumstick to the end of your range of motion quickly, giving your joints less time to absorb that force. If you play rimshots at this snare angle, there's a much higher risk of wrist damage. Alternatively, a snare angled away from you forces your hands to work around the snare drum more. While there's more time to absorb the force of the rebounding stick, the wrist joint has a decreased surface area, increasing the risk of injury.

If you have any questions about these ideas, feel free to reach out to me at mdinfo@modern drummer.com.



Muscle and exercise specialist **Brandon Green** is the founder of Strata Internal Performance Center, and is the owner of the drummer-centric biomechanics and fitness website drum-mechanics.com.



ROCK 'N' ROLL FANTASY CAMP

888.762.2263 | ROCKCAMP.COM
SPACE IS LIMITED - BOOK NOW!

PRODUCED BY
DAVID FISHOF

NON-
COMPETITIVE
ENVIRONMENT!

UPCOMING CAMPS
JAM, RECORD, & PERFORM WITH
TODAY'S TOP TOURING
MUSICIANS!

NOVEMBER 8 - 11, 2018
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

FEATURING
JOE PERRY
OF AEROSMITH

JASON BONHAM
OF JASON BONHAM'S
LED ZEPPELIN EVENING

PLUS ROCK STAR COUNSELORS:

VINNY APPICE (DIO)

TEDDY ANDREADIS (GUNS N' ROSES)

MONTE PITTMAN (MADONNA)

RICKY BYRD (JOAN JETT AND THE BLACKHEARTS)

KIRK MCKIM (PAT TRAVERS BAND)

GRETCHEN MENN (ZEPPEARELLA)

OCTOBER 4 - 7, 2018
LAS VEGAS, NV

FEATURING
PAUL STANLEY
OF KISS

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS:

TOMMY THAYER
KISS

JOHN 5
ROB ZOMBIE, MARILYN MANSON

TOMMY ALDRIDGE
WHITESNAKE

RUDY SARZO
QUIET RIOT

PERFORM LIVE WITH
PAUL STANLEY AT THE
HOUSE OF BLUES
IN LAS VEGAS

PERFORM LIVE WITH CAMP HEADLINERS
AND ROCK STAR COUNSELORS AT EACH CAMP!

CELEBRATING ROCK CAMP'S 22ND ANNIVERSARY

NEW *and* NOTABLE

Roland TD-17 V-Drums

These electronic kits feature newly developed pads, coaching functions, and built-in Bluetooth connectivity. The head tension of the PDX-12 snare pad can be adjusted for natural rebound, while the height of the snare hoop is ideal for hitting rimshots from a natural angle. The VH-10 hi-hat mounts on an acoustic stand and offers advanced triggering with continuous open/close detection and bow/edge sounds. A new sound module with advanced Prismatic sound modeling is said to reproduce the character and tone of acoustic drums, with fast response time, wide dynamic range, and natural tonal changes.

roland.com



Mattoon Drums and Percussion Composite Wood and Cast-Aluminum Snares

Mattoon now offers rosewood/maple composite shells and seamless, cast-aluminum snares in addition to the brand's standard 8-ply and single-ply maple drums. Mattoon snares feature hand-turned solid-brass lugs and are custom built. List prices start at \$599.

chrismattoon.com



Promark Select Balance Rebound Maple Drumsticks

New maple Rebound 7A, 5A, 55A, and 5B models feature a 3" taper for optimized finesse and agility and a round tip for a bright, full tone that's articulate on drums and cymbals. List price is \$17.50 per pair.

promark.com

HEART AND SOUL

The right gear to help you find your sound | On sale Sept. 1 thru Sept. 30

\$100 OFF

GRETSCH ENERGY 5-PIECE DRUM SET WITH ZILDJIAN CYMBALS

REG. \$749.99
YOUR CHOICE
\$649⁹⁹

(GE4E825ZVG) (GE4E825ZVBS)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



Also available
in this color



ALESIS NITRO MESH ELECTRONIC DRUM SET

\$349⁹⁹

(NITRO MESH)

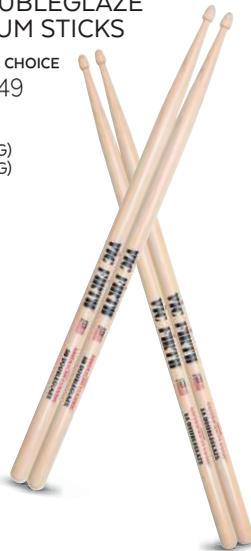


NEW

VIC FIRTH AMERICAN CLASSIC DOUBLEGLAZE DRUM STICKS

YOUR CHOICE
\$9.49

(SADG)
(SBDG)



\$50 OFF

SIMMONS DA200S ELECTRONIC DRUM SET MONITOR

REG. \$349.99
\$299⁹⁹

(DA200S)



\$25 OFF

PEARL BELL OR SNARE KIT WITH ROLLING CASE

REG. \$169.99-\$199.99
STARTING AT
\$144⁹⁹

(SK910C) (PK910C)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM





Pearl Roadshow Jr. Drumset

This drumset package is scaled down to be more comfortable for smaller drummers. The five-piece kit features white poplar shells and includes a 4x12 snare drum, 5x8 and 5.5x10 toms, an 8x13 floor tom, and a 10x16 bass drum. A 13" crash, 10" hi-hats, and a full set of hardware round out the set, which is available in Jet Black and Grindstone Sparkle finishes. List price is \$499. pearldrums.com

Zildjian City Pack Cymbal Set

This four-cymbal set is designed for smaller drumkits and percussion setups. The 18" Uptown ride is said to deliver a controlled, dry sound with pronounced stick definition and minimal overtones and sustain. The 12" New Beat hi-hats are an all-purpose combination of clean stick attack and crisp foot "chick." The thin 14" Fast crash provides a bright, full attack followed by a quick and smooth decay. The set lists for \$389.95. zildjian.com



Melodics Drum App

The Melodics drum app provides step-by-step lessons, from simple patterns to more complex structures, with instant visual feedback on timing and accuracy. The app includes sixty free lessons and works with any electronic drumkit that sends MIDI information over USB. A subscription service offers more than 100 hours of lessons made by international artists, with new tracks added every week. melodics.com



Gretsch G3 and G5 Series Hardware

Available as individual pieces or in a pack, the G3 hardware series comprises straight and boom cymbal stands, a hi-hat, a snare stand, and a single-chain bass drum pedal. Features include 3 mm tube joints with smooth-action brass inserts, isolating rubber feet, T-rod thumbscrews and wing nuts, rubber cymbal tilters, and white felts.

G5 hardware features a double-chain bass drum pedal, 4 mm double-braced legs, a ball-and-socket angle adjuster on the snare stand, and an optional double tom stand.

gretschdrums.com





DRUMFEST

PASIC 18
PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

ARTISTS INCLUDE

CINDY BLACKMAN SANTANA

TODD SUCHERMAN

GREGG BISSONETTE

AARON SPEARS

ALEX ACUÑA

JEFF HAMILTON

GLEN SOBEL

NATE WOOD

PAUL WERTICO

MIKE DAWSON

HENRIQUE DE ALMEIDA

EMMANUELLE CAPLETTE

AND MORE...

REGISTER
NOW!

PASIC.ORG/REGISTER

#PASIC18

NOVEMBER 14-17 | INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

SHOWCASE

AHEAD
CUSTOM
MOLDED
EARPLUGS

SCAN THE QR CODE TO CHECK OUT A HOW-TO VIDEO

DISTRIBUTED BY BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION 800.547.6401 WWW.AHEADDRUMSTICKS.COM

MAXI MULTI
CruzTOOLS
GrooveTech®
Drum Multi-Tool

888-909-8665 www.cruztools.com

ONE-ON-ONE
SESSIONS WITH **ZORO**

Study with Zoro, The Master of Groove
Via Skype or In Person in Los Angeles

For more info visit: zorothedrummer.com

To book time with Zoro:
zorosessions@gmail.com

[f](https://www.facebook.com/zorothedrummer) zorothedrummer [@](https://www.instagram.com/zorothedrummer) zorothedrummer

DRUM LESSONS | CAREER CONSULTATION | LIFE COACHING

KASZA
CYMBALS

HANDMADE
QUALITY
TRADITION

- Handmade from pure B20 cast bronze.
- Each cymbal tested for sound quality and performance.
- No two cymbals are alike.
- Rock & Fusion Series perfected to ensure the best quality and sound.

HEAR THE KASZA CYMBALS IN ACTION

BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION
Ph. 800-547-6401 | www.bigbangdist.com

peace
DRUMS & PERCUSSION

THE NEW INCREDIBLES
X4 SERIES
JUST MADE OUR STAGE

peace-drums.com

GET CONTROL!

IsoPac B

Portable & Free-Standing IsoPacs
For Drums, Amps, Vocals, & More

ClearSonic Panel
Acrylic Shields

SORBER
Sound Absorption Baffles

CLEARSONIC
manufacturing inc.

AmpPac 33

www.clearsonic.com

AHEAD
SPINAL GLIDE
THE ULTIMATE IN
COMFORT AND
SUPPORT

NEW! AHEAD SADDLE SPINAL-G DRUM THRONE WITH BACK REST

- Patented "Ergokinetic" split seat supports the body in motion.
- Reduces fatigue and discomfort, improves mobility and flexibility.
- Memory Foam motorcycle-style seat
- Heavy-Duty, three legged base with threaded height adjustment.
- Removable back support with self-adjusting pivot.

AHEAD
BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION
WWW.AHEADDRUMSTICKS.COM
1 800 547 6401

**CHECK US OUT
ON THE WEB
MODERNDRUMMER.COM**

Billy Blast Drums



Here at Billy Blast Drums
We're dedicated to selling High-
quality custom drum sets,
drum hardware and accessories.
Our custom drums are hand-made
with 100% Keller Shells and the very
best hardware and accessories.

www.billyblastdrums.com
billyblast@att.net

MAGNAKEY
Magnetic Drum Tuning Key



www.KJMusicInc.com

drum STRONG
drumming to BEAT cancer!

... raising awareness and funds in
support of cancer survivorship,
education and research Globally
through Rhythm ...



come out & play --
share your heart & talent!
the power is in your hands

www.drumstrong.org

DrumsForCures, Inc.
PRODUCED BY DrumsForCures, Inc.

MODERN DRUMMER endorsed

rb
DRUMS

RBHdrumsUSA.com



DRUM CLIP
EXTERNAL DRUM RING CONTROL
ACCESSORY ADAPTOR

www.KJMusicInc.com

Since 1961

PRECISION DRUM CO.

Custom Drums

Wrap
Repairs
Hardware
Keller Shells



Precision Drum Company, Inc.
2012 Route 44, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569
Toll free 1-888-512- DRUM (3786)
www.PrecisionDrum.com

"For Over 14 Years People
Have Been Asking Me,
**WHAT IS
THAT DRUM!?"**
-Vinnie Colaiuta



570.788.5820 Longodrums.com

Cymbal Crown
CYMBAL HOLDER

FAST SET-UP



- Built-in soft rubber cushion
- Sleeve protection
- No screws to remove
- Better cymbal sound
- No metal to metal
- Slick professional appearance
- Fits all stands
(choose between 6mm & 8mm)

Big Bang Distribution • 9429 Reseda Blvd. PMB 350
Northridge, CA 91324 • Ph. 800.547.6401 • www.bigbangdist.com

DRUM MARKET

INSTRUCTION

NYC Drummers: Study with **John Sarracco**, one of the most knowledgeable pros in the NY area. Accepting only the serious-minded for drum instruction **the professional way**. Staten Island studio locations. 718-351-4031.

Baltimore-Washington: Grant Menefee's studio of drumming. B.M. Berklee College of Music. All styles and levels. Tel: 410-747-STIX.

Peter Greco Drum Studio "A Serious Studio for the Serious Student"
PeterGreco.com (516) 241-9260 Long Island, NY.

Jeff Indyke now seeking ambitious students. Visit youtube.com/
JeffIndykeDrums or jeffindyke.com. 516-263-9782. Drumline
516-781-TAPS.

MISCELLANEOUS

N.A.R.D. Is Back! The National Association of Rudimental Drummers.
Approved by Ludwig. www.nard.us.com.

KATAMACUE. Unique drum poster/note card.
www.katamacue.etsy.com.

FOR SALE

Matt Bettis: Independent CymbalSmith.

VINTAGE SHOWCASE

Ludwig, Rogers, Slingerland, Leedy & Gretsch books by Rob Cook,
producer of the Chicago Drum Show & publisher of drummer
biographies. Rebeats 989-463-4757. rob@rebeats.com,
www.rebeats.com.

www.drumatix.com, home of the reproduction super "clamshell"
snare strainer handle, and drumsets, snares, singles, and cymbals.

For information on how to advertise in Drum Market,
please contact LaShanda Gibson at 973-239-4140 x102 or
lashandag@moderndrummer.com.



drummers. gear. lessons.

This is what we do.

For over 40 years, *Modern Drummer* has been introducing you to the world's **most talented artists**, reviewing the **most innovative products**, and teaching you how to **become a better player**.

We keep you locked in to all aspects of the drumming industry, so you're always in tune with what's happening. With a subscription to *MD*, you stay completely connected to all that you love about playing the drums!



Don't Miss Out!

Subscribe Now and Save 60% Off the Newsstand Price!

By subscribing, you'll receive all the benefits of *Modern Drummer*, both print & digital, at a fraction of the cover price. There's never been a better time to sign up with *MD*!

Act Now and Save at moderndrummer.com

Win This Incredible Prize Package From Roland and Modern Drummer!

One lucky winner will get all of this great gear from Roland!

TD-17 KL V-Drums Kit. The latest addition to the acclaimed V-Drums lineup.

Heavy-duty kick drum pedal with Roland Noise Eater technology



SPD::ONE Kick – 22 realistic percussion sounds, including kick drums, stomp box, shakers, cowbells, and more



SPD::ONE Electro – 22 iconic percussion sounds, including fat snares, crisp handclaps, electronic cowbells, and more



SPD::ONE Percussion – 22 realistic percussion sounds, including snares, hi-hats, cymbals, shakers, tambourines, and more



SPD::ONE WAV – Importing audio files is as simple as connecting this pad to a computer.



Enter today at moderndrummer.com



Saddle drum throne with hydraulic adjustment



Heavy-duty hi-hat pedal with Roland Noise Eater technology

Suggested retail value: \$2,320.

Consumer Disclosure: 1. To enter, visit www.moderndrummer.com between the dates below and look for the Roland Contest button (one entry per email address). 2. ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 3. CONTEST BEGINS SEPTEMBER 1, 2018, AND ENDS NOVEMBER 30, 2018. 4. Prize Drawing: Winners will be selected by random drawing on December 5, 2018. Winners will be notified by phone or email on or about December 6, 2018. 5. Employees, and their immediate families, of Modern Drummer, Roland Corp., and their affiliates are ineligible. 6. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. 7. Open to residents of the U.S. and Canada, 18 years of age or older. Void in Quebec, Canada; Florida; New York; and where prohibited by law. 8. One prize awarded per household per contest. 9. Prizes: Grand Prize: One (1) winner will receive one (1) of each: TD-17 KL V-Drum kit; RDT-SH drum throne; RDH-100 kick drum pedal; RDH-120 hi-hat stand; SPD::ONE Kick, SPD::ONE Electro; SPD::ONE Percussion; and SPD::ONE WAV. Approximate retail value of contest is \$2,320. 10. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 271 Route 46 W, H-212, Fairfield, NJ 07004, 973-239-4140. 11. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or the winners' names, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/Roland/Official Rules/Winners List, 271 Route 46 W, H-212, Fairfield, NJ 07004.

CRITIQUE

RECORDINGS Taking the Reins

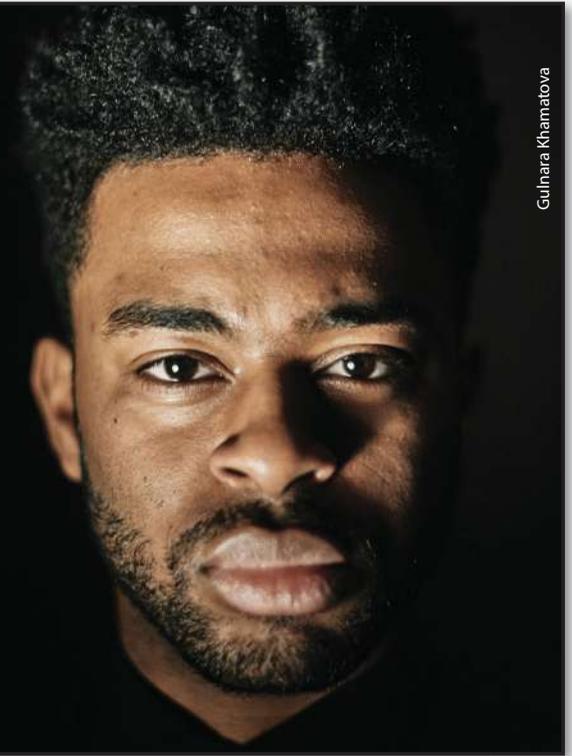
Jonathan Barber *Vision Ahead*

The debut recording from the top Up & Coming drummer in this year's Readers Poll isn't your typical young-gun-goes-for-the-jugular release.

Jonathan Barber's feel is light and propulsive. You can hear it right from the start of "Statement of Vision," the opening track of *Vision Ahead*, his debut as a leader. Barber's burning stick flurries and glittering full-set deliveries evoke the feeling of being in the driver's seat of a Formula One racer. The album is put together in suite-like fashion, which gives the music breadth, shape, and reach. Performed by Barber's well-oiled and intimate group, the cuts glide from the funky title track and contemplative mid section ("Doubt," "The Covenant," "Think on These Things") to the sun-streaked flotation device of "Airport" and the forward-moving, Michael Brecker-like swing of "Crown."

Later Barber solos on the kinetically swinging "Mr. JB" and lays down a fat funk groove on "Time Will Tell." Finally, "Believing in the Reunion" rotates from a brief introductory solo to a spacious, melodic statement, with Barber serving time-stretching figures and combustible sticking throughout. (jonathanbarbermusic.com)

Ken Micallef



Gulnara Khamatova

Kobie Watkins Grouptet *Movement*

A fiery sophomore release from a swinging force.

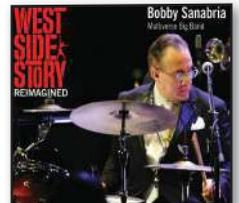
Here's some heavy jazz cred: on his last tour (2012), tenor giant Sonny Rollins chose **Kobie Watkins** for the prestigious drum seat. That says it all, but in addition, the native Chicagoan drummer and educator also gigged with the likes of Kurt Elling, Branford Marsalis, Joe Lovano, and Arturo Sandoval. Growing up in the Windy City, Watkins played in the jazz, Latin, and gospel scenes, and his drumming/composing style organically mixes those elements. On his second disc, Watkins leads his "Grouptet," an excellent piano/trumpet/sax/bass/drums unit. Styles shift quickly within numbers, guided by Watkins' boiling, dead-on drumming. From his hard-hitting 6/8 thunder on "Falling Upward" to his sensitive orchestrations on "Six Moods," Watkins dictates the kinetic energy. He delivers plenty of knockout drum features, sometimes soloing over the final head, as he does to dramatic effect on "The City." This formidable drum leader truly takes charge. (Origin) **Jeff Potter**



Bobby Sanabria Multiverse Big Band *West Side Story Reimagined*

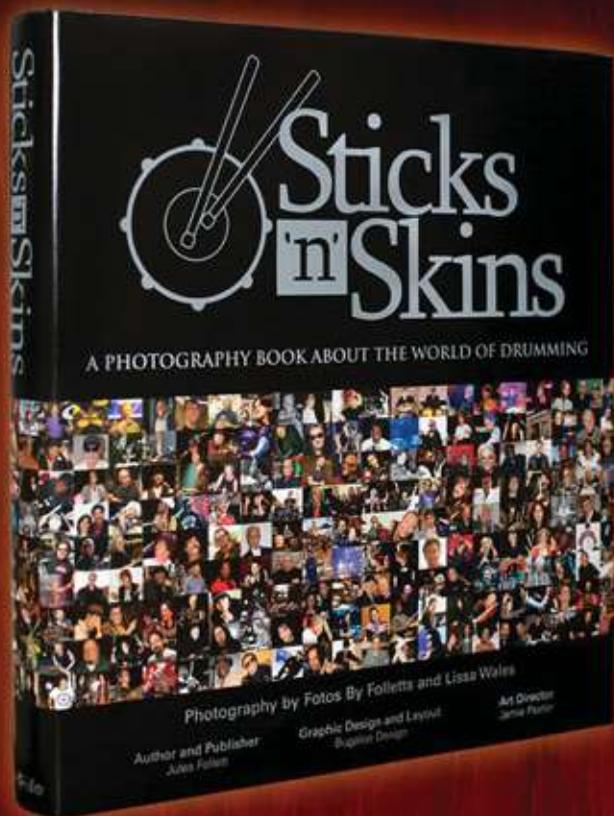
Sanabria's modern expression of a classic theater score.

First comes the haunting, iconic three-note whistles and finger snaps. Then, something new—a naked clave rhythm. The message is clear: bandleader/drummer Bobby Sanabria will put his own stamp on this pinnacle score of American musical theater. Leading his twenty-one-piece ensemble, Sanabria hits another peak in a noble career, creating a thrilling, impassioned take on Bernstein's masterwork. *West Side Story* dealt with the struggles of Puerto Ricans finding their rightful place in 1950s America. In a brilliant stroke, Sanabria musically acknowledges today's ongoing story of striving newcomers by incorporating rhythms from all across Latin America and Africa as well. The live recording captures superlative musicianship and imaginative canvases from multiple arrangers, including Sanabria. His precise, cracking drumming drives the band with dazzling command of swing and world grooves. And when he locks in with percussionists **Oreste Abrantes**, **Matthew González**, and **Takao Heisho**, it's blistering. The struggle continues; proceeds will go to Puerto Rico hurricane relief. Sanabria's art speaks volumes. (Jazzheads) **Jeff Potter**



Other Drummer-Leds to Check Out

Airto Moreira Aluã /// **Ratatet (Alan Hall)** Heroes, Saints and Clowns /// **Chris Beck** The Journey /// **Cliff Brucker** Full Circle Vol. 2 /// **Tim Solook** Jacksonville Rd /// **Hal Howland** Every Time It's You /// **Phil Stewart** Melodious Drum /// **Maciek Schejbal** Afro Polka



THE PERFECT GIFT FOR THE MUSICIAN IN YOUR LIFE!

Discover the heartbeat of music in this 554 page coffee table book illuminating the eclectic world of drumming over the past 70 years.

FEATURING OVER 500 DRUMMERS, INCLUDING:

Ray Luzier • Joey Jordison • Nigel Olsson • Steve Gadd • Tico Torres • Louie Bellson • Rich Redmond • Roy Haynes • Josh Freese • Jim Keltner • Steve Jordan • Poncho Sanchez • The Porcaro Family • Stefanie Eulinberg • Ian Paice • Zoro • Kim Thompson • Nikki Glaspie • Marcie Chapa • Simon Phillips • The Reyes Family • Derek Roddy • Luis Conte • Alan White • Hal Blaine • The Escovedo Family • Ndugu Chancler • Bernard Purdie • Uriel Jones • Liberty DeVitto • Dom Famularo • J.R. Robinson • The Wackerman Family • and many, many more!

"This book should be in every musician's library"

Hal Blaine

"Thank you for doing this book"

Steve Gadd

"Simply irresistible"

Dom Famularo

"One-of-a-kind. A must have"

Liberty DeVitto

"I love this book. It involves the community of drummers that I'm inspired by"

Chad Smith



Available at
amazon

STICKSNSKINS.COM

A Unique Insight Into The Community of Drummers

Critique continued

A Double Shot of Jack

Franco Ambrosetti *Cheers*

Eliane Elias *Music from Man of La Mancha*

After a storied career spent redefining the limits of jazz drumming with artists like Miles Davis, **Jack DeJohnette** continues his prodigious recording output, playing on two albums released in the first months of 2018. Trumpeter Franco Ambrosetti's *Cheers* finds DeJohnette splitting drumming duties with **Terri Lyne Carrington**, including an impressive pairing of the two on the track "Drums Corrida," in which listeners can't necessarily tell where DeJohnette's dexterous fills end and Carrington's pinpoint patterns begin. On other sections of *Cheers*, DeJohnette simultaneously sustains right-hand ride patterns and left-hand hi-hat accents, each so intricate that it's difficult to imagine many players would be capable of recreating *either* on its own. While the joyful jazz compositions on *Cheers* feel designed to highlight Ambrosetti's trumpet, there's plenty of interesting rhythmic work happening throughout, courtesy of DeJohnette and Carrington. (Enja)

Jack is also behind the kit on Eliane Elias's jazzy reimagining of the Broadway musical *Man of La Mancha*, ensuring that even musical theater-averse listeners will find quality musicianship and engaging instrumentation in this set.

Undergirding each arrangement is DeJohnette's talent for tasteful intricacy, shading, and texturing the show tunes until they feel vibrant and alive. (Concord) **Keaton Lamle**



SOTL *Grand Hotel*

Power trios typically throw macho lightning bolts. SOTL do it differently.

Sure, SOTL can fire up the joint, as they prove on "Warm-Up" from their second release, *Grand Hotel*. Here guitarist Florent Athénosy hammers halo-circling chords as drummer **Andy Shoniker** plies scattershot rhythmic tremors. But more often than not on this eighteen-minute collection, SOTL play dark and moody, one meditative groove after another. The title track is bittersweet, with pretty guitar chords gliding over mallet-whacked toms and billowy cymbal crashes. Even when navigating the odd-metered edges of "Song for Lo," Athénosy leans toward the dreamy while Shoniker plays a deep funk pocket with neck-cracking odd accents, though generally floating forward like an airy zeppelin. Shoniker is deceptively graceful in the closing track, "What We Do," dancing around the groove like Lowell George's mythic fat man in the bathtub. (Alter-Nativ) **Ken Micallef**

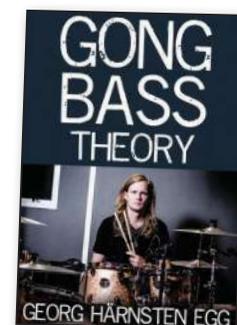


MULTIMEDIA

Gong Bass Theory by Georg Härnsten Egg

An inspired substitute for double bass, and a guide for thinking beyond your feet.

Georg Härnsten Egg, drummer for Swedish metal band Dynazty, won't win any points with double bass purists with his new method book. But his ideas on mimicking the style using a gong bass drum set to the left of his hi-hats is not only ingenious for those looking to break the mold, but also extremely useful for players who are in search of novel fill ideas. This stuff will require practice and reworking your mind to hear your left hand committing to the role your left foot would usually have. The lessons here range from triple paradiddles between your right (kick drum) foot and left hand, and instruction to keep your left foot playing quarter notes on a hi-hat and switching up right-hand patterns. Egg gives examples inspired by Meshuggah's "Future Breed Machine" and throws in some transcriptions of his parts on Dynazty tunes. In the real world, gong bass drum setup space could be at a premium, and tuning the instrument to exist alongside a normal kick is a concern. But the artistic possibilities here are endless. (gongbasstheory.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

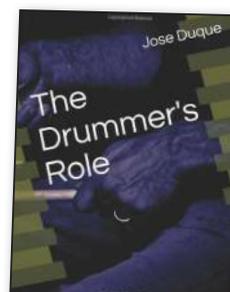


The Drummer's Role by Jose Duque

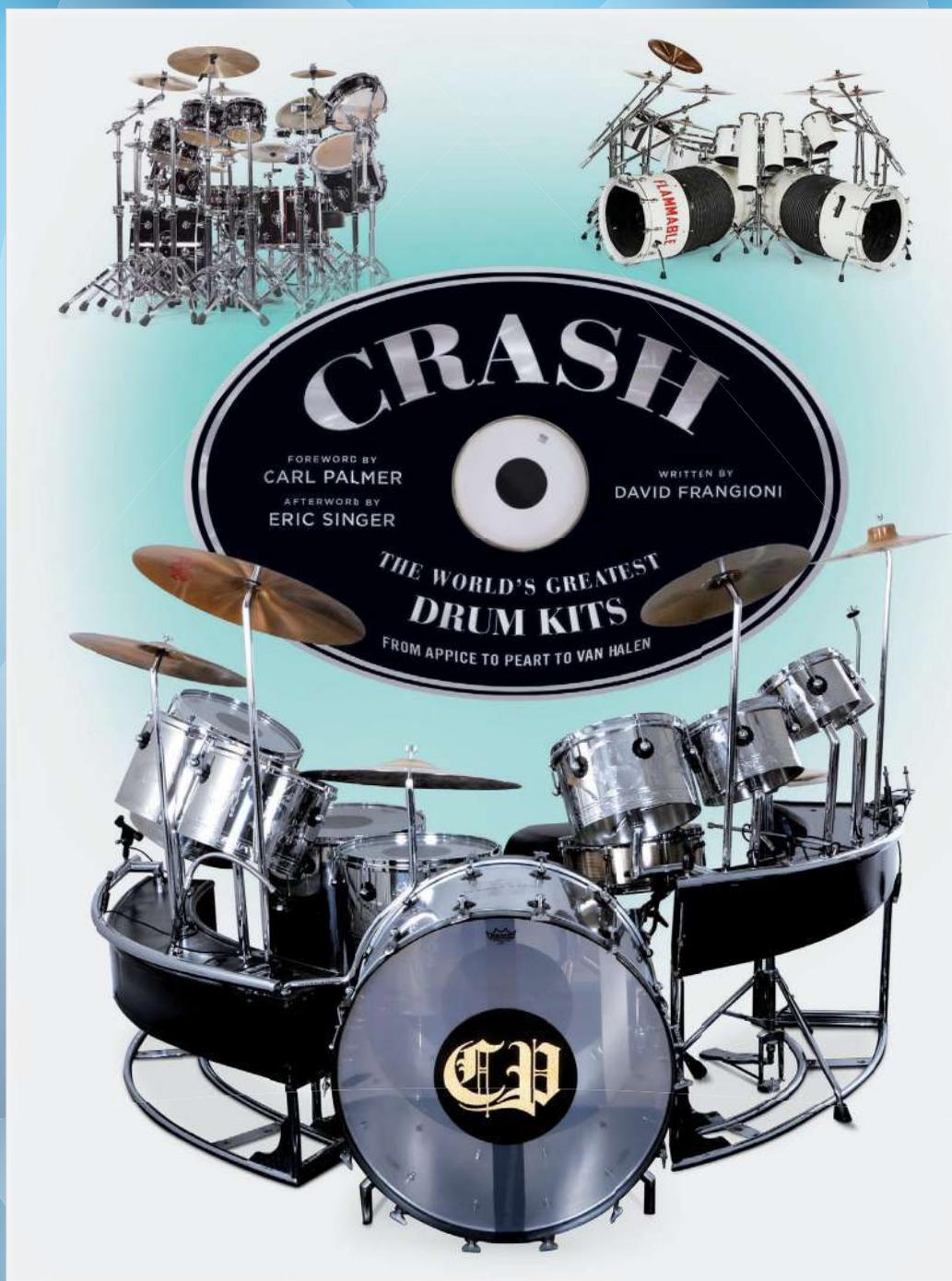
A beginner's guide to drum basics, with some revealing insight about our function on the instrument.

This book by Venezuelan Berklee grad Jose Duque is broken up into three sections. The first is appropriate for beginners and includes the author's ideas on everything from setting up your drums to musical form to subdivisions, including various notated examples. Duque recommends other instructional books, videos, and some classic records for students to check out as well. The second section contains Duque's favorite warm-ups, including a triplet exercise the author saw Dave Mattacks perform at a clinic. The concluding chapter contains a series of interviews with drummers and other musicians about what our role is in the studio and on the gig, and it's full of enlightened comments from people like Antonio Sánchez and keyboardist Adam Holzman. There are other places to get the setup and rudiment information found in this book, but the real-world Q&A with the players is informative, even if it doesn't beg to be referred to time and again. (\$18, joseduque-drums.com)

Ilya Stemkovsky



A NEW & **AMAZING** DRUM BOOK!



"Amazing Rock Drum Set history in one book now for the world to see. Sit back and enjoy!" - Carl Palmer

INSIGHT EDITIONS
insighteditions.com

Available at Amazon.com

Learn more at www.frangionimedia.com | @FrangioniMedia

Jethro Tull's *Stand Up*

As the drummer for the progressive/folk/hard rock band Jethro Tull in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Clive Bunker infused the group's music with a frenetic, raw energy. Body twitching, using the butt end of his sticks, Bunker beautifully brutalized all before him, mixing single strokes, flams, triplets, and other rudimentary patterns, sometimes until his arm movements appeared to be little more than a blur. Sixteenth-note double kick patterns shook his entire kit, threatening the structural integrity of the very stage upon which he played. And to cap off his solos, Bunker would remove his floppy-brimmed hat and deploy his fro-topped cranium as a makeshift striking implement, no doubt denting the surface of his crash cymbals.

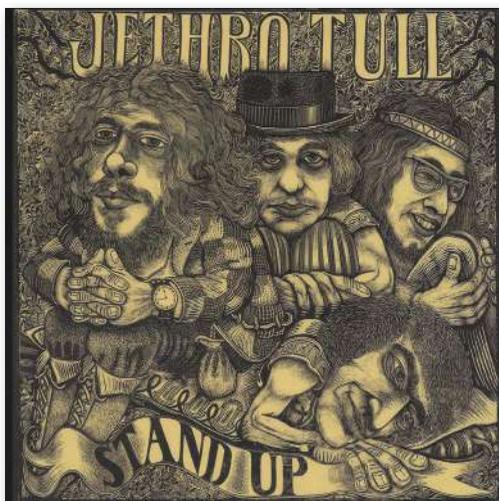
The man was simply a force of nature. Yet for decades Bunker downplayed his own drumming expertise, and in the December 1990 issue of *MD* he went as far as to be downright self-

deprecating. And to be sure, the heavy-browed Bunker did work the bruiser angle fairly well. But he was far from one-dimensional. It's these multifaceted qualities that are readily apparent on Tull's 1969 sophomore studio album, *Stand Up*, which marks a turning point in the band's storied career. The booklet accompanying the 2016 "Elevated Edition" reissue of *Stand Up* (remixed to stereo and 5.1 surround sound by Porcupine Tree mastermind Steven Wilson) quite rightly puns on the concept of the real Jethro Tull "standing up" for their new identity.

A rift dividing the band's two major protagonists foretold seismic shifts in musical direction. Founding guitarist Mick Abrahams entered into a tug-of-war over band control with flute-fondling frontman and lead singer Ian Anderson. History tells

us that a confident and curious Anderson emerged as the band's undisputed wild-eyed leader as knight in shining armor Martin Lancelot Barre (Abrahams' replacement) helped to facilitate Tull's burgeoning commercial success.

Granted, the band's classic 1971 album, *Aqualung*, with all its Gothic imagery and lyrical double entendres, may have been more appealing to fans of '70s progressive rock. But *Stand Up* signifies the dawning of a Jethro Tull that would conquer America and the world. And it's Bunker's commanding presence that literally sets the pace—and then some—for these tunes.



The slip-sliding 12/8 feel of the album's blues-rock opener, "A New Day Yesterday," is a great example of how well Bunker led his merry gang through a sonic forest with his woolly, explosive rhythmic patterns. The aggregate effect can be disorientating for the listener, a circumstance compounded by phasing, amplified guitar sounds saturating the track.

Despite being in 4/4, "Nothing Is Easy" nearly falls off a cliff. Quarter-note accents on the ride clash with 8th-note triplets on the toms and snare, underscoring the tension in Anderson's fight-or-flight lyrics. The instrumental section is totally bonkers: Bunker acts as master of ceremonies, generating buffering flams that announce the arrival of individual musical showcases. Intensity levels build until staccato pulses

threaten total musical anarchy.

"We Used to Know" displays Bunker's sensitive side, juxtaposing rolling tom fills and restrained shuffling, while the closer, "For a Thousand Mothers," churns with a menacing groove in a very haunting 6/8.

While later Tull drummers would display greater technical facility, there's an intelligence and swing in Bunker's playing that complemented Anderson's breathy and percussive flute performances in a unique and highly appealing way.

Further links between Anderson and Bunker exist. Circa 1968–69, just as Anderson began designing songs with more sonic richness, Bunker's textural palette was expanding, too. Bongos, tambourine, clave, and what sound like maracas add a slightly Indian or Middle Eastern vibe to "Fat Man," a song shaped as much by circus-like exoticism as its politically incorrect ridiculousness. A close cousin to "Fat Man," the balalaika-infused "Jeffrey Goes to Leicester Square," bubbles over with the sounds of what could be bongos or an equipment road case, hinting at something rootsy, folkish.

Despite Clive generally being remembered as Tull's well-oiled, revved up engine, the myriad facets of his playing helped establish the aesthetic of one of the most unusual and beloved catalogs in all of rock music. **Will Romano**

Hot Stuff

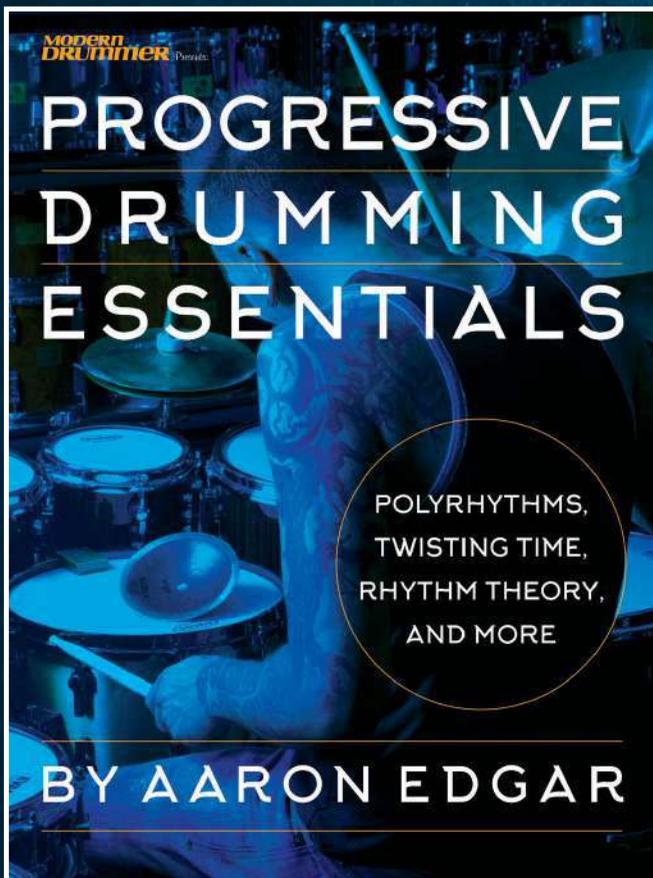
Beyond bashing. The more one examines Clive Bunker's playing, the more dynamic and broad it seems. For instance, in "Bourée," the band's classic cover of J. S. Bach's Bourrée in E minor, Clive avoids the obvious backbeat and enters into a jazzy conversation with bassist Glenn Cornick and Martin Barre.

Functional "family." The semi-autobiographical tale spun by Ian Anderson in "Back to the Family" is met with a subtly twisted drum performance. Bunker quietly chatters away in the verses with quarter-note hi-hat beats, a 2-and-4 pattern on the kick, and rimclicks stressing the "&" of each beat. The inverted feel stands in contrast to the cymbal thrashing Bunker delivers at other moments of the tune.

Take five. Tracks that appear on the *Stand Up* reissue but not on the original album include the orchestral and slightly Latin-jazzy "Living in the Past," a top-five hit in the U.K. (it just missed the top ten in the U.S.), on which claves tick away in 5/4 time as the constant ruffling of tambourine jingles provides a rudder for one of Bunker's most streamlined and controlled performances.



Play More PROG



SECTION 1: FUNDAMENTALS

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING ODD TIME SIGNATURES

Before we can play odd time signatures, we need to understand the concept of a time signature. A time signature is a symbol that appears at the beginning of a piece of music and tells the drummer how many beats there are in each measure. The most common time signature is 4/4, which means there are four beats in each measure. Other common time signatures include 3/4, 2/4, and 6/8.

QUARTER-NOTE METERS

Quarter-note meters are the most common type of meter used in music. They are characterized by a steady, regular beat. The most common quarter-note meter is 4/4, which means there are four quarter notes in each measure. Other common quarter-note meters include 3/4, 2/4, and 6/8.

8th-NOTE METERS

8th-note meters are characterized by a steady, regular beat with eighth notes. The most common 8th-note meter is 4/8, which means there are four eighth notes in each measure. Other common 8th-note meters include 3/8, 2/8, and 6/8.

12/8 TIME

12/8 time is a common meter used in many styles of music, including jazz, blues, and rock. It is characterized by a steady, regular beat with 12 eighth notes in each measure. The most common 12/8 meter is 12/8, which means there are 12 eighth notes in each measure.

16th-NOTE METERS

16th-note meters are characterized by a steady, regular beat with 16th notes. The most common 16th-note meter is 4/16, which means there are 16 sixteenth notes in each measure. Other common 16th-note meters include 3/16, 2/16, and 6/16.

SECTION 6: A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON POLYRHYTHMS

PART 1: TWO OVER THREE

Two over three is a common polyrhythm used in many styles of music. It is characterized by two beats in the left hand and three beats in the right hand. The most common two over three polyrhythm is 2/3, which means there are two beats in the left hand and three beats in the right hand.

3/4 OVER 2/4

3/4 over 2/4 is a common polyrhythm used in many styles of music. It is characterized by three beats in the left hand and two beats in the right hand. The most common 3/4 over 2/4 polyrhythm is 3/4, which means there are three beats in the left hand and two beats in the right hand.

4/4 OVER 3/4

4/4 over 3/4 is a common polyrhythm used in many styles of music. It is characterized by four beats in the left hand and three beats in the right hand. The most common 4/4 over 3/4 polyrhythm is 4/4, which means there are four beats in the left hand and three beats in the right hand.

5/4 OVER 4/4

5/4 over 4/4 is a common polyrhythm used in many styles of music. It is characterized by five beats in the left hand and four beats in the right hand. The most common 5/4 over 4/4 polyrhythm is 5/4, which means there are five beats in the left hand and four beats in the right hand.

Progressive Drumming Essentials is an expanded collection of articles originally written for *Modern Drummer* magazine. The book progresses from the fundamentals of odd time signatures all the way up to super-advanced concepts like implied metric modulation and displaced polyrhythms. For the most adventurous modern drummers out there, this is a must-have!

Order your copy now at www.moderndrummer.com

John “Jabo” Starks

1938-2018

Courtesy Naomi Starks



Courtesy Naomi Starks



Above: Jabo performing with James Brown. Left: onstage with Bobby “Blue” Bland at Club 54 in Los Angeles, 1960.

“He had that ‘stop-your-heart’ groove.” That’s how Fred Wesley, former bandleader for the “Godfather of Soul,” James Brown, describes the drumming of John Starks, who died this past May 1 at the age of seventy-nine. And the description is apt.

John Henry Starks was born in Mobile, Alabama, on October 26, 1938. “Jabo,” as he was known, broke into the scene with blues and R&B legend Bobby “Blue” Bland, with whom he played between 1959 and 1965. “Musically,” Jabo once said, “that was the best band I ever played with.” Starks recorded most of Bland’s major hit recordings, including “Turn on Your Love Light,” “Don’t Cry No More,” and “Stormy Monday Blues.” He attributed his famous, unique drum break on “Turn on Your Love Light” to his affinity for the tambourine playing he heard as a child when his grandmother took him to church in Mobile. He played somewhat of a similar groove in the bridge to “Super Bad” when he was with James Brown.

When I interviewed Jabo for my book *Give the Drummers Some!*

he told me that he always remembered the advice he got from trumpeter/arranger Joe Scott and trombonist Pluma Davis when he started out with Bobby Bland. “They told me, ‘Remember this—play time. You’re the heartbeat. Once that time starts, you hold it right there. Whatever anybody else does, don’t you go there. Make them come back to you!’

“I’m not going to let you pull me,” Jabo continued, “and I’m not going with you. If you say that the tempo is here, then it’ll be here. When you finish what you’re doing, playing all those curlicues and fancy licks, and finally get back, the time will be right here in the same place where you left it.”

James Brown had his eye on Jabo for several years. He sent people from his organization to wherever Bland was playing to tell Starks, “Mr. Brown wants you to join the group.” Jabo wouldn’t budge until he finally got an offer he couldn’t refuse—double what Bland was paying him. By that time he had a wife and family to support.

Payin’ It Back

“Kind, gentle, funny, generous, steady as a rock, and as funky as they come. The ‘pop’ of his backbeat was what I thought every backbeat should sound like. That drum break on ‘Turn on Your Love Light’ shook up the world. And most people don’t realize how difficult it was to play with James Brown. Being onstage with a performer who brought a hundred percent meant you had to bring a hundred *fifty* percent every night. Then you had to watch his every move, so you could ‘hit’ him every time he wanted to be hit. In the early ‘70s with Bootsy and Catfish, Jabo and Clyde [Stubblefield]

had the groove on lockdown. They’ve both been sampled thousands of times without credit or compensation, but in the end they played for the joy of it. Jabo always felt blessed because of the support he got from his loving family, and I feel blessed having known him. Heaven just got a (whole) lot funkier. God Bless John ‘Jabo’ Starks.”

—Steve Jordan

“John ‘Jabo’ Starks was the master groove-maker who showed us that space is the place where the notes *not* played make the difference. His syncopations and

backbeats ignited the nation and the world, teaching us what it meant when the music’s got to be funky. Thank you, Jabo Starks and Clyde Stubblefield, for a lifetime of musical grace and pleasure.”

—Peter Erskine

“Jabo was a big influence early in my life, as were all the JB drummers, who were always on the cutting edge. Jabo was a master of the groove—no fills, no frills, just groove for the length of a song. That was revolutionary to me, and it changed my concept of a drummer’s role in a contemporary ensemble. I still

love listening to him. He always reinforces my understanding of what my basic function as a drummer is.”

—David Garibaldi

“I thought Jabo was one of the finest drummers in the world. He was a great person as well. And that’s what I liked about him. He was real.”

—Bernard Purdie

“Jabo Starks has been one of my heroes since I first heard him on Bobby Bland’s ‘Stormy Monday’ and ‘Turn on Your Love Light.’ I loved his flat-tire shuffle

This decision was the start of a long relationship with his drumming partner, Clyde Stubblefield, as well as with James Brown bandleaders Fred Wesley, Alfred "Pee Wee" Ellis, and Maceo Parker. When Brown's "old band" revolted and left in 1970 because of pay and working condition disputes, Jabo honored his contract, stayed in the drum chair, and worked with "Bootsy" Collins and his brother, Phelps "Catfish" Collins, to anchor a new direction in Brown's music. Between 1970 and 1975, Jabo recorded more charting singles than any other drummer in the singer's long career, among them "Get Up (I Feel Like Being a) Sex Machine," "The Payback," "Soul Power," and "Super Bad." The latter was based on a groove Jabo learned playing behind dancers, and it features an infectious bridge similar to his famous "Turn on Your Love Light" solo. (See sidebar.) The list of hits goes on: "Licking Stick—Licking Stick," "Doing It to Death," "Papa Don't Take No Mess"... And who could forget Jabo's hits with Brown's spinoff groups, like the J.B.'s songs "Gimme Some More" and "Pass the Peas," and a track credited to Maceo & the Macks, "Soul Power '74."

Jabo's sound was hugely important to the Godfather. The drummer had a sophisticated jazz touch and a unique feel. He could put the groove somewhere between 16th notes and 16th-note triplets and turn funk into an infectious, swinging half-time shuffle. His drum tracks, sampled again and again by hip-hoppers and hit-makers, attest to the strength and longevity of his creative talents.

Fred Wesley sent a tribute to Jabo that the mayor of Mobile read at the celebration the night before the drummer's funeral. "Jabo was my favorite drummer," said Fred. "I could just lose myself in that 'stop your heart' groove and just blow free. I'm sure you can hear it in the shuffle on 'Doing It to Death.' I just rode that groove like I was flying through the wind."

When I attended the funeral at the Ebenezer Baptist Church the next morning, I was overwhelmed. The packed church, the respectful people, the friendly ushers, the huge choir singing with unbelievable force and conviction—I hadn't cried openly in years, but that day I couldn't stop the tears. I learned so much from this man. He was slow and steady, but also persistent and unstoppable. He was extremely hard-working and always joyful, and above all, he was wise and tough, with years of experience that he willingly shared with all.

Jabo Starks had that "stop-your-heart" groove in his body, and he had it in his soul.

Jim Payne

on 'Further on Up the Road' and 'I Don't Want No Woman.' The swingin' funk Jabo brought to the James Brown band had a huge impact on me. He was an innovator, a pioneer drummer, and one of the inventors of what people now call funk! Above all, he was a hell of a nice guy."

—Mike Clark

"Jabo was one of the undeniable architects of funk music. His playing was streamlined, slinky, always in the pocket, and so funky. His right hand often closely resembled the jazz ride pattern, and he played with a beautiful lope

with the slightest hint of swing. I got to hang with and know him a little bit, and he was incredibly sweet, humble, and gracious. Jabo, thank you for your contributions to modern drumset playing and to music. You will be missed."

—Stanton Moore

"Jabo was truly an inspiration for so many of us, from Bobby 'Blue' Bland's 'Turn on Your Love Light' to all of his groundbreaking work with James Brown. His illumination continued until he passed, and even now it lights the path into the future."

—Skip Hadden

Jabo's Signatures

From his work in Bobby "Blue" Bland's group to his legendary tenure with James Brown, John "Jabo" Starks laid down plenty of iconic grooves. Let's check out a few examples.

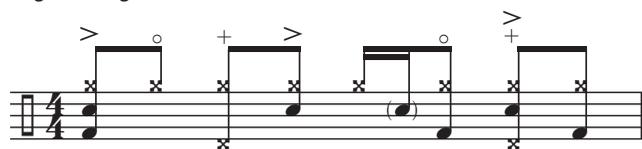
"Turn on Your Love Light"

Here's the legendary break Starks plays on the Bobby "Blue" Bland song around the 1:02 mark. The 16th notes should be played with a swung interpretation.



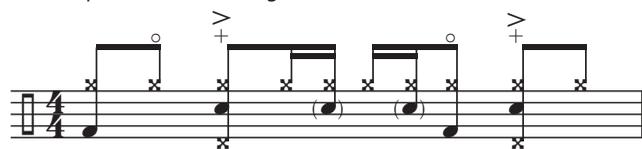
"Super Bad"

At the top of this James Brown classic, Starks lays down this instantly recognizable groove.



"Get Up (I Feel Like Being a) Sex Machine"

Jabo plays this funky groove on the 1970 studio version of this James Brown staple. Be sure to swing the 16th notes.



"Doing It to Death"

Jabo demonstrates his mean shuffle throughout this Fred Wesley & The J.B.'s tune.



Jim Payne, shown here with John Starks at the James Brown Tribute at the Hollywood Bowl in August 2014, is the author of Give the Drummers Some! He can be reached at funkydrummer.com.



As this issue went into production, Modern Drummer was saddened to hear about the passing of Colosseum drummer Jon Hiseman, longtime Elvis Presley drummer D. J. Fontana, and Pantera cofounder and Hellyeah drummer Vinnie Paul. Keep an eye out for tributes to these drummers in upcoming issues of MD.



INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

Jazz Drummer and Composer Matt Wilson Awarded Two 2018 Jazz Journalists Association Honors

The Jazz Journalists Association, an international professional organization of writers, photographers, broadcasters, videographers, and new media content providers, recently honored New York-based jazz drummer and *MD* cover artist Matt Wilson with Musician of the Year and Record of the Year awards, the latter of which Wilson received for his 2017 release, *Honey and Salt*. Recipients of the 2018 JJA awards were chosen by the organization's voting members and will be receiving engraved statuettes for their accomplishments. "I'm very honored to be recognized by the Jazz Journalists Association," says Wilson. "[Their] passionate commitment to the art form helps strengthen our great community."



John Abbott

Randy Pratt of Sweetwater Sound Passes

This past May 8, the music industry veteran Randy Pratt passed away. Pratt spent more than two decades in positions at Guitar Center and Musician's Friend, and he most recently worked for the music dealer Sweetwater Sound.

Sweetwater vice president of corporate communications Christopher Guerin shared this statement with *MD*: "It is with deep sadness that Sweetwater announces the passing of our dear friend and coworker Randy Pratt. Randy was a legend in the drum and percussion world, having been a mainstay in the industry for more than twenty-five years. We were privileged to have Randy join the Sweetwater team in April of 2015, when he became our senior



category manager of drums and percussion. He was responsible for all drum and percussion merchandising and inventory planning, and—in concert with key vendor partners—developed exclusive product training programs for the sales team.

"Randy was a highly talented drummer himself, which made him an invaluable resource both to Sweetwater and to the music instrument industry," Guerin continued. "And he was never without a smile on his face, a kind word, or an offer to help—as his many, many friends will readily attest. His loss will be felt here at Sweetwater, by manufacturers and artists in the industry, and by his countless friends and loving family. Our condolences to his family on his passing. We'll miss you, Randy."

KoSA Celebrates Seventeenth Edition of Cuban Drum and Percussion Camp

The seventeenth annual KoSA Cuba drum and percussion camp was held this past March 4–11 in Havana. Organized by KoSA's directors, drummer and percussionist Aldo Mazza and Dr. Jolán Kovács, the week-long event was scheduled in conjunction with the Fiesta del Tambor, a local rhythm and dance festival.

The KoSA program offered hands-on classes, workshops, concerts, and lectures for international participants. Students studied drumset and Afro-Cuban percussion while immersing themselves in Cuban rhythms. The ethnomusicologist Dr. Olavo Alén Rodríguez also delivered seminars on Cuban music. Participants studied with top Cuban artists such as Amadito Valdés (Buena Vista Social Club),

Enrique Plá (Irakere), Juan Carlos Rojas Castro (Chucho Valdés), Tomás "El Panga" Ramos (studio), and Adel González (Afro-Cuban All Stars).

Special guest artists including Jim Riley, Antonio Sanchez, and Nanny Assis (Nanny Assis Trio) were also featured during the Fiesta del Tambor concerts, and one night was dedicated to select Sabian artists. A "Nights in Brazil" concert featured Assis, Janis Siegel (Manhattan Transfer), and the Brazilian artists João Donato and Fabiana Cozza.

Next year's KoSA Cuba event is planned to take place in early March of 2019.

Who's Playing What



Cramer

Hayley Cramer (Pop Evil), **Roy Mayorga** (Stone Sour), and **Lilliana de los Reyes** (George Benson) have joined the **Vater** artist roster.



Paris Jeffree (Years & Years) and **G. Maxwell Zemanovic** (Miranda Lambert) have joined the Gretsch artist roster.



Jeffree

Lance Comer (Lindsey Webster) is playing **Doc Sweeney** drums.





18th Annual Hollywood Drum Show And Music Fest

OCTOBER 13th, 2018 (10 AM to 7 PM)

GLENDALE CIVIC AUDITORIUM
1401 N. VERDUGO RD. GLENDALE CA 91208
[Across from GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE]

MUSICAL GUESTS, DRUM CLINICS, BANDS AND MORE!

CLINICIANS: SPECIAL GUEST ARTISTS:



JIMMY FORD & RANDY CAPUTO
DRUM DUEL



JEFF HAMILTON JAZZ TRIO



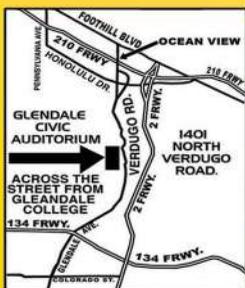
STEPHEN PERKINS



DAVE WECKL

TIMES WILL BE ANNOUNCED FOR ALL THE CLINICIANS

CUSTOM SNARE RAFFLES & GIVEAWAYS FROM: AQUARIAN, LUDWIG, D.W., DUNNETT, CRAVIOTTO, GRETSCHE, REMO, YAMAHA, MEINL, MAPEX, MAYER BROS., SABIAN, ZILDJIAN, ANDERSON INTL. TRADING, GUITAR CENTER, BEATO BAGS, PRO-MARK, SONOR, TAYE, TAMA, PAISTE, VATER, GEORGE WAY AND MORE!



NEW! USED! VINTAGE!
DRUMS, CYMBALS, PARTS AND MORE!

FOR ADVANCE TICKETS OR EXHIBITOR INFORMATION CALL:
KERRY CRUTCHFIELD (323) 461-0640 or E-MAIL: drumcrutch@aol.com,
SEND CHECK TO: KERRY CRUTCHFIELD, 6324 IVARENE AVE., HOLLYWOOD CA 90068
VISA OR MASTER CARD ACCEPTED FOR ADVANCE TICKETS & EXHIBITOR SPACE.,
If using PayPal, send to: drumcrutch@aol.com
Buy advance tickets at: www.hollywooddrumshow.com
See us on Facebook-Hollywood Drum Show

Co-Sponsored By: Drum!, Modern Drummer Magazine, Drumsmith Percussive Arts

DISCOUNT TICKETS ALSO ON SALE AT PRO DRUM SHOP HOLLYWOOD.

TICKETS:
\$15.00 IN
ADVANCE
\$20.00 AT THE DOOR



**KIT
OF
THE
MONTH**

The “Bam Bam” Kit

The Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based drummer Patrick “Pattycake” Morris custom ordered this 3.1 mm aluminum-shell drumset from Trick Drums. The kit features a unique pine-tree wrap, which the drummer specifically requested from the manufacturer.

“My idea for the kit came from being a carpenter for many years while also gigging on the weekends,” Morris explains. “I wanted a kit that looks realistic but that’s an eye-catching masterpiece. Some might question why I’d wrap aluminum to look like wood. For one, the shells sound amazing. I’m also now touring full-time all over the country, and I don’t have to worry about negative climatic effects on the shells while travelling from state to state. Plus, with all the research I’d done, I couldn’t find a wrap that suited me. Contacting Trick was a blessing, because they made my dream a reality.”

The kit consists of an 18x22 bass drum, 10x12 and 10x14 toms, and a 16x16 floor tom. In addition, Morris has included two 6" Octobans and a 6x20 gong drum, and had the drumset’s rims and lugs powder coated.



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



COMING UP IN MD
CLUTCH'S JEAN-PAUL GASTER →
JAY-Z'S BOOTS GREENE • JOST NICKEL
SAM LAY • NICK MASON • AND MORE!



Rick Malkin

MIC IT. LIKE IT.

Chris Kimmerer / Thomas Rhett

Finding your sound is easy with Gretsch Renown, just ask some of today's top Nashville aces.

A 7-ply all-maple shell, 302 counter hoops and Remo Emperors® guarantee mic-friendly tone on stage or in the studio.

The sound is Renown!

Shot on location at Southern Ground Studios, Nashville. Hear and see it on YouTube or at gretschdrums.com

#micitlikeit



TURN UP THE EFFECTS. TURN DOWN THE VOLUME.

Introducing the new L80 18" China. Now you can get the full effects of a traditional China, but at 80% lower volume for those quieter gigs, small rooms or practice. And just like the rest of Zildjian's L80 series, you won't have to sacrifice the sonic characteristics of traditional cymbals. Give them a listen at zildjian.com.

L
LOW VOLUME
80

Larone "Skeeter" McMillian



©2018 Zildjian Company

Zildjian