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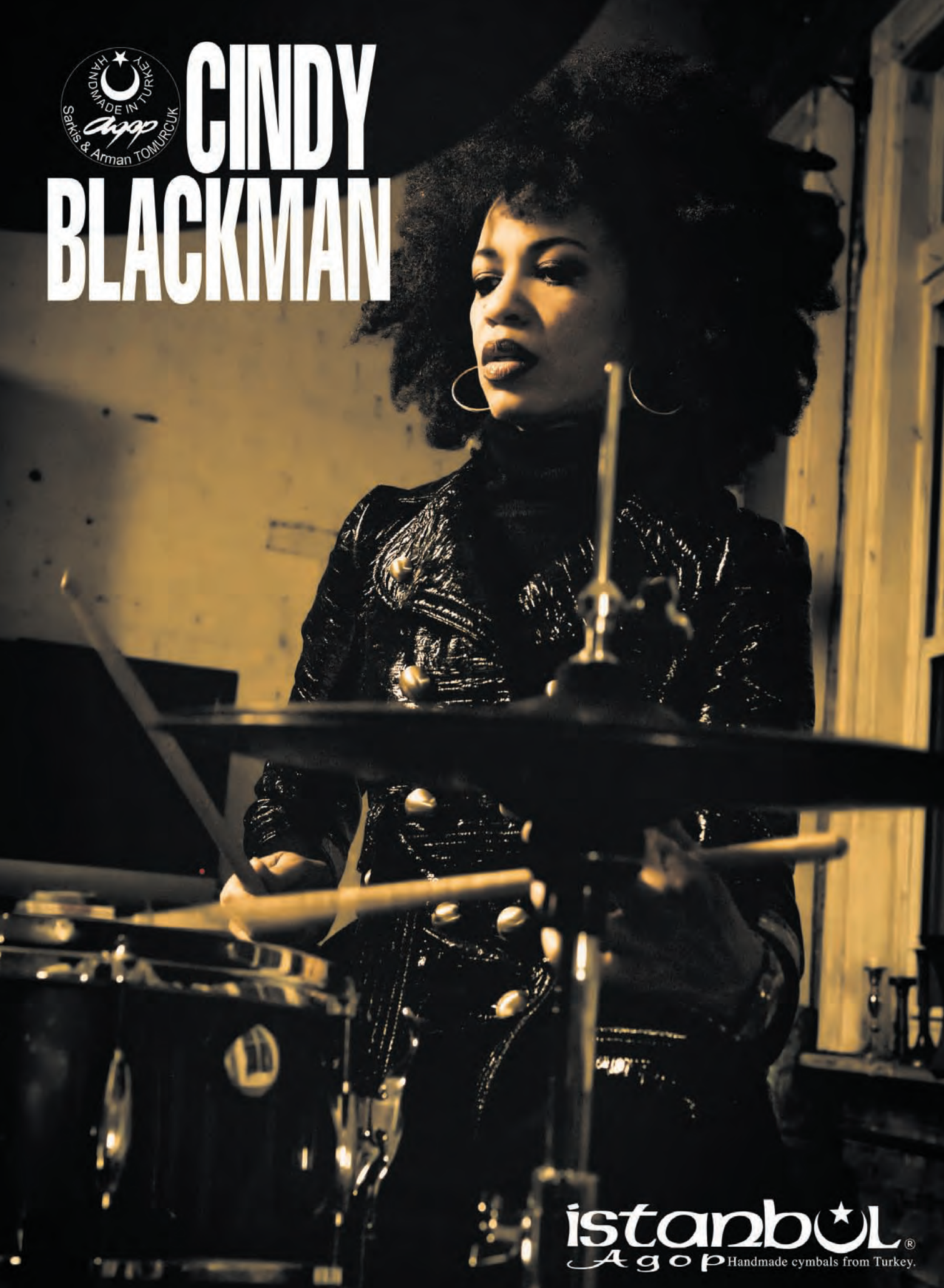


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MAKE MUSIC, GRAB A GUITAR



Whenever one of my non-drummer musician friends sits behind my kit and struggles to hammer out a basic beat, he or she ends up making a comment like, "I don't know how you do it," or "This is *hard*." I always respond through a slightly smug smile, "Damn right, it's hard!" As we all know, the drumkit is one of the most difficult instruments to master. The physical demands alone—getting our hands and feet to do exactly what we want them to do—are enough to drive most people crazy. And there's *always* something more to learn. But that's inevitably what makes being a drummer so much fun!

There's no greater feeling than the satisfaction of breaking through a technical barrier. I still remember the day I conquered the first system in Gary Chester's classic method book *The New Breed*. For that fleeting moment, I was *awesome*. If I'd been smart, however, I would have stopped there, closed the book, and spent the next few days or weeks experimenting with creative and musical ways to apply what I had just learned. But I didn't. Instead, I became a practice-room madman, spending the next several years hacking through the remaining systems in *The New Breed*, while also devouring every other method book I could get my hands on. In my mind, having total technical control, seamless independence, and an awareness of every possible drumming concept out there was the be-all and end-all of musical mastery.

It wasn't until I attended graduate school that the veil of super-drummer-dom was finally lifted from my technique-obsessed eyes. In this particular program, all musicians—including drummers—were required to work through a curriculum that included classes on melodic and harmonic transcription, big-band arranging, composition, and jazz improvisation.

At first, I was horrified: "You mean I have

to transcribe a Charlie Parker saxophone solo? How is that going to make me play drums like Roy Haynes?" But it didn't take long for me to realize that the hours I was now spending at the piano transposing the chords to "Have You Met Miss Jones?" in all twelve keys was doing much more for my drumming than trying to squeeze out 1,200 single strokes in a minute. I was now on the path to becoming much more than "just a drummer." I was exploring the details, the magic of music making, that eventually made my experiences behind the kit much more meaningful and emotionally driven. Don't get me wrong; I still love learning new drum tricks. And I practice with as much, if not more, determination as I did when I was fifteen and *had* to figure out Dennis Chambers' floor tom/snare sweeps. But now I try to stay focused on the creative and artistic side of what I want to accomplish.

Several of the artists featured in this issue epitomize the type of creative freedom that's possible when you look beyond the drum stool. New York jazzer Tyshawn Sorey is one of the most fearless drummers out there, but he also makes amazing music on piano. Like Tyshawn, fusion great Gary Husband is as adept on keyboard as he is on drums. And superstars Josh Homme and Jack White, both of whom are high-powered and opinionated frontmen of influential rock bands—Queens Of The Stone Age and the White Stripes, respectively—consider their experiences as *drummers* to be a major driving force behind their fresh and ultra-hip approach to writing and producing music.

So what am I trying to say? Stop playing drums and start taking accordion lessons? Of course not. Just be careful not to get too caught up in the "game" of being a drummer. Have fun working your paradiddles up to warp speed. But when you need to take a break, grab your brother's guitar and see what you can do. You may be surprised.

Mike Dawson

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Michael Bettine, John Emrich, Robyn Flans, Dr. Asif Khan, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Mark Parsons, Mike Haid, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel Weiss, T. Bruce Witte.

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MICK FLEETWOOD

Thank you so much for running an outstanding interview with Mick Fleetwood in the June issue. Mick seems to speak from his heart with every word he says, and he is now at the top of my list of drummers I would love to meet in person one day. Thanks for running it!

Will DeBouver



I had just finished watching my DVD of Mick Fleetwood's *Two Sticks And A Drum* when I had this thought: *I wish MD would do an article on Mick.* Well, my June issue just arrived in the mail, and who should grace its cover? Mick Fleetwood! I immediately went to the in-depth article and began reading. The interview covered many details that the DVD did not, and it left me feeling satisfied that I now know so much about one of the true drumming icons of our time. Thank you for such an excellent

piece on one of my favorite drummers, and please keep up the amazing work.

Ted Cobena

GIMME 10!

My drumming career rarely takes me more than ten miles from home. I have, however, spent most of the last two decades as a frequent business traveler, so Victor DeLorenzo's Gimme 10! in the May issue really resonated with me. Thanks for some well-articulated, practical advice that *anyone* who travels for a living needs to commit to memory. Great stuff!

Peter Spaulding

TRADITIONAL VS. MATCHED GRIP

Many thanks to Ian Froman for his insightful and timely article on traditional vs. matched grip in *MD's* April issue. For many years the teaching has been that traditional grip is superior and absolutely necessary for playing jazz. As a part-time drummer, I have contemplated a switch to traditional grip but have been unable to devote enough time and effort to accomplish this difficult transition. Many of my favorite drummers do use traditional grip, but thanks to Mr. Froman's Jazz Drummer's Workshop article, I feel validated in using matched grip. On behalf of matched-grip players everywhere, Mr. Froman, we salute you!

Steven Johnson

MD FEST

Felipe here from Carmine Appice's SLAMM! I want to thank the amazing *Modern Drummer* staff for all your support and for a great time at the 2008 MD Festival. The article in your June issue was wonderful. Also, excellent work with Hudson on the DVD. We are all honored, and we wish you the best. Keep rockin'!

Felipe Torres

CRITIQUE

I am a big fan of *Modern Drummer* magazine. In the April Critique section, writer Mike Haid reviewed Colin Woolway's *Drumsense Vol. 2* instructional video. It was listed as beginner to intermediate level. In actuality it is an intermediate to advanced video and should have been critiqued as such. I use *Drumsense* in my teaching, and I hate to see it get wrongful negative exposure.

Gregg

MORGAN ÅGREN

I was both happy and sad reading the April issue. Saddened by Bill Miller's passing but happy that *MD* has done a meaningful piece on Morgan Ågren. Morgan has offered me the kind of inspiration that mirrored my first hearing Terry Bozzio, Jojo Mayer, and Vinnie Colaiuta. Very deserving of the title "true innovator," Morgan is a drummer's drummer and a great person, and people need to hear him. God bless.



David Palmer

MD VIRGIN

Although I have been playing for some time and had the honor of meeting Keith Moon on a few occasions—what a gent!—the May '09 issue was my first time reading your excellent magazine. I especially enjoyed the article on Marti Frederiksen. I found the question of quick-aging cymbals shocking...why have I spent the last thirty years polishing my Zildjians? Anyway, now I'll be obtaining a subscription. All the best to drummers on your side of the pond!

Paul "Styx!" Stansfield, U.K.

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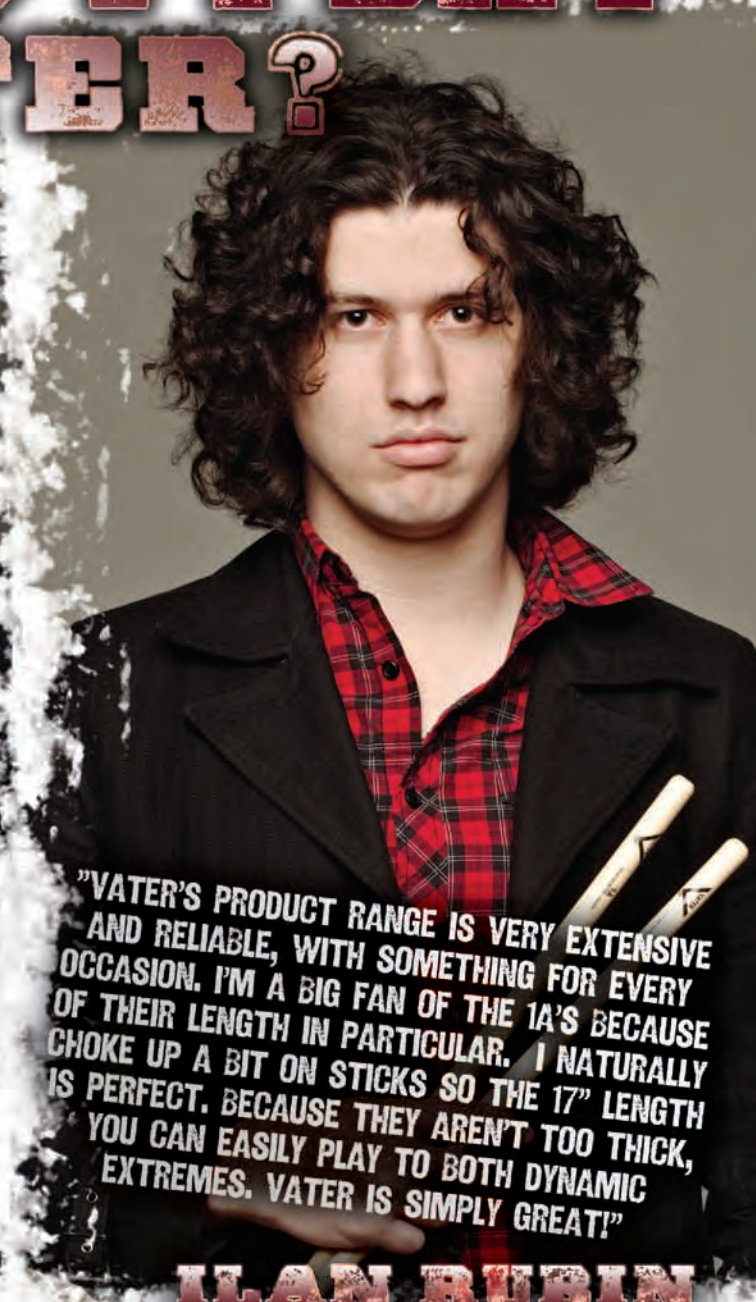
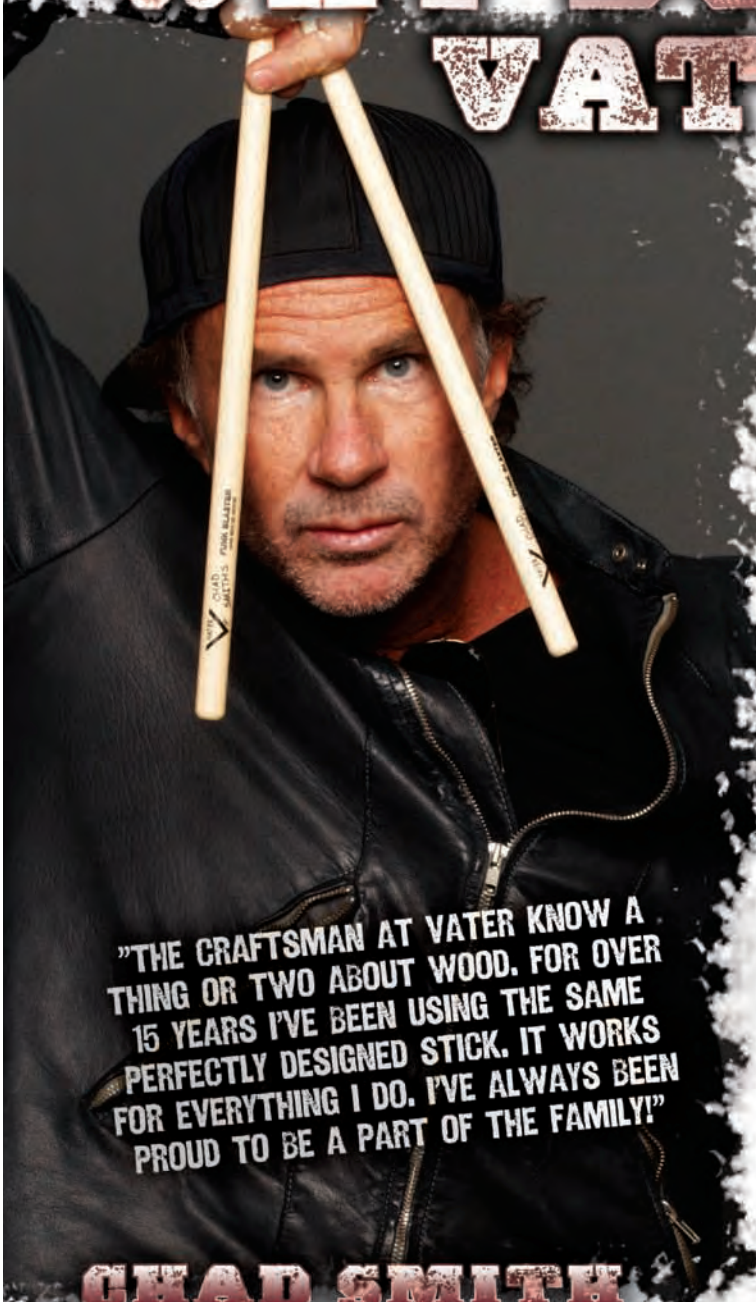
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BRIAN TICHY

Writing hit records with Rock Star A one day, touring with Rock Star B the next... An in-demand drummer answers the question: **Once the phone call comes, what happens next?**

While in writing mode with Billy Idol, I was asked to rejoin Foreigner for their 2009 tour. I grew up playing to Foreigner

producer. Marti's a drummer himself, and he knows what kind of fills and grooves he's looking for. We also have a history of working together. I'll give him



records. In fact, I learned how to do double strokes on the bass drum from their song "Hot Blooded," which has killer kick drum doubles in the verses. It took a good, painstaking two weeks, but it finally came together.

We recently finished the drum tracks for Foreigner's first album of new music in a long time. I'm real proud to be on this record, which was produced by my bud Marti Frederiksen. Marti was featured in the May '09 issue of *MD*, and the dude works fast and gets killer tones. The drums were done in his living room, proving that it's all in the tuning and the proper attack of the drummer—and in the ears and the knowledge of the producer.

Preparing for a record can be done in many ways. Some bands go into preproduction alone, some with a producer. Some go through the process of demoing and improving said demos until it's agreed upon that the record should be started. In other cases, the drummer gets called when the writers and producers feel it's time to bring a song to life. Foreigner and Marti got to the point where they had narrowed down many songs to the top twelve, and then they called me to track.

I come in with a basic chart after having an MP3 sent to me days before. I then discuss what sounds they're looking for and go with the flow of the pro-

ducer. Marti's a drummer himself, and he knows what kind of fills and grooves he's looking for. We also have a history of working together. I'll give him then something isn't right. It could be the drummer's inability to assimilate and adjust to certain changes or feels. This is why there are cats out there who keep getting the call to do many different artists' records.

As far as preparing for a tour with Foreigner, I have the advantage of having played with them between 1998 and 2000. I also filled in for Jason

Bonham when he was rehearsing with Led Zeppelin in 2007. So I already know most of the ins and outs of a live Foreigner set. Plus the set is nothing but hit songs that I'm a fan of. I can honestly say it never sucks having to play "Hot Blooded," "Double Vision," "Feels Like The First Time," "Cold As Ice," and so many others. These are classic tunes that I loved when I first heard them.

The members of Foreigner, especially founder Mick Jones, are very dialed in to the natural groove of the song, and it's real important to nail that feel every night. We don't play to a click, nor are there any background vocals on tape. These guys sing all the harmonies every night, a rarity in this day and age. Hats off to Foreigner for that!

I simply refer to a Tama Rhythm Watch programmed in the order of the set list and do a quick tempo check to start off each song. Sometimes I look at the little flashing lights on the metronome during the performance, but that can really take your concentration away from your basic role of being a timekeeper. You need to own your gig with confidence. You can't let the excitement of the live show get to you and affect your tempos, and you really have to watch the whole push and pull that adrenaline can create. Outside of that, I sit back and knock on wood that I don't have to start pumpin' gas or diggin' ditches yet!

what he wants, then we'll do another take with optional grooves and fills, which he can sit with for a while after we finish.

Depending on the producer and other basic circumstances, recording sessions should be relatively painless. If it's not fun to record drums and music,

BEFORE THE TOUR 5 THINGS BRIAN TICHY WON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT

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2. CELL PHONE. Life is short. Getting a call out of the way when you have a spare five minutes can save you many hassles down the road.

3. IPOD. It used to be a Discman or a Walkman, but I finally got the iPod together. Load it up and fill in the gaps of boredom, or take it for a run.

4. LES PAUL. Tapping on a pad or couch or air drumming is fun for only so long. I would go crazy if I didn't have my guitar with me on tour.

5. SPEED BAG. Go to YouTube and search for "speed bag truck" to see my new addiction, which prompted the realization that...drumming is merely an extension of my speed-bagging skills. Bag on!

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TINTED WINDOWS' **BUN E. CARLOS** POWER POP PERFECTION

Before the term *power pop* had even been coined, the Who's Keith Moon was establishing guidelines for the genre's future drummers with his spastic manner of serving Pete Townshend's songs. He wasn't bashful about getting his licks in, or about hammering away at the cymbals like they'd spoken rudely of his mum.

Then, just over a decade later, Bun E. Carlos comes along and hones Moon's template with his performance on Cheap Trick's 1978 single "Surrender." On the rock radio classic, Carlos supports singer Robin Zander's soaring melodies with a rock-solid backbeat, and when the third verse modulates he underscores the surge by riding on the crash cymbal with extra gusto. Bun gets his licks in too. Who could forget those two-measure snare fills he plays throughout the song?

For over thirty years, Carlos has been infusing Cheap Trick's songs with a style best classified as simplicity with a twist. Think about his playing on the shape-shifting "Dream Police," his shuffle-to-straight time transitions in "Southern Girls," and the '50s-style flair he adds to "California Man"—it's not your run-of-the-mill power pop timekeeping.

Even when Carlos plays it a little straighter, like on the self-titled debut from the supergroup Tinted Windows, there's not a wasted accent or fill to be found. Straight or with a twist, Bun E. Carlos has perfected the art of power pop drumming.

MD: Your parts on "Surrender" sound very well thought-out. Did you spend a lot of time refining the performance?

Bun: We cut an early instrumental track of "Surrender" with Jack Douglas, and I was doing a lot of ghost notes on the verses—boom, bap, ba-boom-boom, bap. He'd say, "You don't need that."

Then [*Heaven Tonight* producer] Tom Werman, he would want more licks. We'd sit there and argue: "I'm not doing a lick there!" "You need to do a lick there!" He finally convinced me to do a lick going into the chorus. There was probably more thought put into those fills than some of the stuff I do these days.

MD: And you still play them faithfully. Does it ever become tedious?

Bun: Nah. I recognize that's what works best—that's why it's there. You can't change [the fills] too much. You can sit there and go, "This is boring. I've been doing it for thirty years." But you can also say, "This is why I'm famous. It's what's on the record; this is what people want to hear."

MD: Before Cheap Trick was signed, you cut your musical teeth in bars, when bands played four forty-five-minute sets a night.

Bun: In the old days, you'd play for a few years before you got a deal. People don't have that luxury anymore. When we started Cheap Trick it was all bars and dance floors. Our first big rule was, "Let's not clear any dance floors." And Rick [Nielsen] was writing really good pop-oriented songs, so I started approaching them like, What really needs to be in here? I noticed the more licks I played, the more speeding up I did. So I was suddenly playing no licks.

We had also backed up a few of those old rock 'n' roll guys. I got instant lessons from Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley on what to do and definitely what *not* to do. Chuck Berry wanted boom, bap, boom-boom all night. He said, "Don't play no drum licks." That stuff worked so good it became our de facto feel. We just got in that pocket. Our original songs started to come along, and a lot ended up like that.

MD: That old-school approach has shown up in

the way you often bash out half notes on the cymbals and how you'll double an 8th-note hi-hat pattern by dragging along on the snare.

Bun: The cymbal wash would fill in all the holes for a three-piece. I noticed that with Keith Moon. The riding on the snare drum I got from the Dave Clark Five, things like "Glad All Over" and "Bits And Pieces." He was playing the hi-hat and the snare about the same, and it sounded great. That became my style, and people used to come up to Rick all the time in clubs and say, "Your drummer's no good. He doesn't play any licks. I'm a drummer—I should be in your band." We'd go, "Sure, get up and play some songs." Most of the time they'd die the death.

MD: You mention Keith Moon and Dave Clark. Who are some of your other favorite drummers?

Bun: Terry Williams [Rockpile, Dire Straits] was fantastic. I remember when I met him in '78; it was great to meet a kindred spirit. Mick Fleetwood was a big influence because he had a big, fat beat and he didn't have to do dopey drum licks every verse.

MD: Your time has always seemed so solid. Did you usually track with a click?

Bun: We used one on "On The Radio," but I remember it was really annoying. We probably didn't use one again until "If You Want My Love." Maybe three songs on the first six albums had a click. A couple of years ago I put together a disc of all the songs we play nowadays from those records. The tempos get faster every year, so I wanted to play along and find my original motivation. And some of these songs that I thought were really steady, like "Big Eyes" or "Oh, Candy," they're speeding up and slowing down. [laughs] They're not that steady.

Patrick Berkery

ERNIE & THE AUTOMATICS' **SIB HASHIAN** GETTING THE FEELING BACK

More than thirty years after playing drums on Boston's self-titled 1976 debut—an iconic rock album if there ever was one—drummer Sib Hashian feels he's finally getting his chance to shine. That might sound surprising, considering that Hashian's drumming can be heard on ubiquitous rock anthems like "More Than A Feeling" and "Peace Of Mind," which are still among the most popular tunes on classic rock radio. Still, Sib doesn't consider *Boston* to be a "drummer's" album.

"We laid down all the drum tracks first with a rhythm guitar track," he explains. "Then the entire album was layered on top of the drums. There were multiple overdubs of guitars and vocals, and the drums were very compressed. It's really a guitar album with a little bit of drums in the background!" Secondary status or not, Hashian is proud of his legacy. But these days he gets just as excited about drumming with Ernie & The Automatics, and about the band's terrific new album, *Low Expectations*.

The all-star Automatics, who capture the good-time blues-rock vibe of Stevie Ray Vaughan jamming with Johnny and Edgar Winter, also feature former Boston guitarist Barry Goodreau. "When we play live, the people have so much fun," Hashian says, "and

it's contagious." A disciple of Gene Krupa and Buddy Miles who's "dedicated to the 2 and 4," Sib gets to show off his chops on *Low Expectations*. "There are so many different drumming styles on this CD," he says. "We've got hard rock, blues, and in 'Fly In The Milk' there's even a 6/8 jazz waltz. My style is always supportive of the vocalist and the instrumentalists. If I could ever give any key advice—and you'll hear this on the CD—it's, 'Don't step on the vocalist or the guitar player.' My mind isn't wired for solo drumming; it's more about laying back and giving the groove a feel and taste, and adding harmony. Mostly I just enjoy playing that R&B/funk feel.

"It's important that people can hear my drumming skills on this record," Hashian adds. "When I was coming up, so many drummers told me they learned by playing along to the *Boston* album. But this album



Rebecca Gauchman

has so many different feels and grooves happening, it's like a drum lesson."

For information on Sib's upcoming gigs, visit ernieandtheautomatics.com.

Gail Worley

BERNARD PURDIE LETTING THE SUN SHINE IN

If you've caught the current Tony-winning Broadway revival of the musical *Hair*, you may have seen a familiar face on the onstage bandstand—and felt a familiar groove. Yes, that was Bernard Purdie, perched with some of his bandmates in the bed of a truck at stage left, animating classic songs like "Aquarius" and "Manchester England" with his feel-good drumming.



Terrill-Lynn Pellegrini

"I actually started *Hair* more than forty years ago," Purdie says of his collaboration with Galt McDermot, who wrote the show's music. The drummer opened the original 1968 Broadway production (eventually letting Idris Muhammad take the reins), and he played on the soundtrack of the 1979 Milos Forman-directed film version. He and McDermot continue to perform together occasionally in the New Pulse Jazz Band.

Purdie relishes his role in *Hair*, and not just because "this is the first time in twenty-five years I've actually had a steady paycheck." It's largely a matter of rhythmic liberation. "The notes are there," he says, "but I can play around them and play with them because of Wilbur Bascomb, the bass player. He allows me to have that freedom. There are times when he pushes me up front, and there are times when I push him up front. We think alike. We're like two peas in a pod.

"It's about energy," Purdie goes on. "I give the energy. And it's different every night. I've got the horn section [on a riser] over my head. They just sit up there listening to what we do, and sometimes they forget to come in!"

To those who miss Purdie live, rest assured that his effortlessly funky beats will be all over the hippie musical's revival cast album. "They've put the rhythm out front where it's supposed to be, because that's what's gonna sell the record," the drummer says. And is his buoyant namesake groove, the Purdie shuffle, a part of it all? "Oh, yes. It's inside half a dozen songs. Galt didn't realize how many times I put it in. When he heard the recording, he had the smiley grin. He said, 'Aw, you got me again!' I said, 'Just a little bit. I only put a little bit.'"

Michael Parillo

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Jeremy Enigk: <i>OK Bear</i>	Victor Garcia*



*Read their blog at moderndrummer.com.

BLOG INSIGHTS

"With each record I play on, I find a new appreciation for the sound of an old drum or cymbal I'd given up on. Suddenly the energy of the room, the engineer, the other players, the artist, and the producer all comes together, and I find a new sound in something that wasn't there before."

—William Fitzsimmons' **Aaron Sterling**

"I've been playing drums since fourth grade. My older brother convinced me I didn't want to play guitar but drums. He was already a guitarist and secretly wanted to have a drummer in the house. I can't thank him enough for tricking me into it."

—**Pat O'Shea** of Millions

Quotes pulled from the Blog page at moderndrummer.com.

ON TOUR

Travis Barker with Blink-182

Moses Archuleta with Deerhunter

Stan Frazier with Sugar Ray

Ed Toth with the Doobie Brothers

Carolina Parra with CSS

Francis Macdonald

with Teenage Fanclub

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with Faust



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PRACTICAL ADVICE FROM
PROS WHO KNOW

DENA TAURIELLO

There are always going to be ups and downs in the music biz. Antigone Rising's resilient drummer offers tips on dealing with road woes.

by Adam Budofsky

Drum journalists realize early on that the players whose careers last the longest are the ones who are the most dedicated. To their bandmates. To their fans. But most of all, to the art of drumming. Dena Tauriello and Antigone Rising have experienced some impressive career highs—opening for the Stones and Aerosmith, having an album distributed by the powerful Starbucks label, being featured in national ad campaigns, seeing their videos go into heavy rotation... heck, as a wee lass Dena even got to meet legendary singer—and drummer—Karen Carpenter, essentially setting in motion her own career as a musician.

Tauriello has also experienced plenty of music-biz hardships: endless touring in rough conditions, the loss of a charismatic lead singer, going back to the indie route after having success with a major label. And being taken seriously as a woman in what has essentially been a man's musical world can, amazingly, *still* be an issue. But Dena has toughed it out, staying as positive as she can through the hard times, taking gigs that some of her peers might scoff at just to stay working, and branching out by flexing new drumming muscles, such as writing articles for this very magazine. Through it all, she's remained a humble, reliable, and skilled player, bringing her solid grooves and warm personality to whatever gig she takes.

While Antigone Rising searches for the perfect singer to replace the recently departed Cassidy, Tauriello continues to keep a very busy playing schedule, and the band (also known as the Antigone Four) goes on playing high-profile shows with road and radio vets like the Bangles and Joan Jett. Still in the thick of it, Dena gladly takes the time to share what she's learned as pro drummer slogging it out in the trenches—and slamming it home on the music world's greatest stages.



1 FIND A WAY TO CREATE A ROUTINE.
For me, it's working out every morning. It helps to know there's something consistent amidst the chaos and unpredictability of the road.

2 TRUCK AND REST STOPS ARE NOT KNOWN FOR FRESH OR FLAVORFUL COFFEE.
You'd be surprised by how hard it is to find a coffee shop in some parts of this country. Request your favorite brand on your rider. A great cup of coffee can make your day.

3 USE A METRONOME TO COUNT IN ALL YOUR TUNES.
Your perception of time can be altered by the fatigue created by constant travel, or by excitement at a great opening slot. Using a metronome makes for a much more consistent show.

4 DEFINITELY PACK SOME SORT OF ANTIBACTERIAL LOTION.
It's shocking how much filth you encounter in your travels.

5 STRETCH YOUR PUNY PER DIEM—GET HEALTHY SNACKS.
Stock up at grocery stores rather than fast-food joints. You'll have increased energy without an increased midsection.

6 GOTTA LOOK SHARP.
While it can be very cool and rock 'n' roll for the guys to show up dirty and unshowered, the girls are absolutely held to a different standard. If it's your first time in town, the clubs already assume you can't play your instrument. You won't help the cause by showing up looking like a hag. Look presentable... then get on stage (even at soundcheck) and rock the house!

7 NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE COMFORTS OF HOME.
Be sure to pack your favorite items: sweatshirt, pillow, pictures, blanket—whatever you need to make the weeks feel a little less long.

8 MAKE TIME IN THE DRESSING ROOM TO DO SOME PAD WORK AS YOUR WARM-UP.
It's hard to carve out any practice time on the road, especially if you're doing a van tour. Your hands get used to doing only what is required of them as part of your show. To keep your hands and mind fresh, push yourself to do different stickings and exercises each night before you go on.

9 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVERY PIT STOP TO GET OUT AND WALK AROUND.
If playing shows and lugging gear don't get to you, rotting in a van for hours on end most definitely will. A quick walk around the parking lot will be enough to clear your head. Breathe some fresh air, feel the sunshine, and get your blood flowing. It will help keep you from feeling like roadkill.

10 FIND WAYS TO CREATE SOME ALONE TIME.
Let's face it, you go from the van/bus to the venue and then back to the van/bus and to the hotel, seemingly attached at the hip to everyone. As much as you may love your bandmates, try to eat some meals alone, go get coffee and walk the neighborhood while you're waiting for soundcheck, put on your iPod—whatever it takes!



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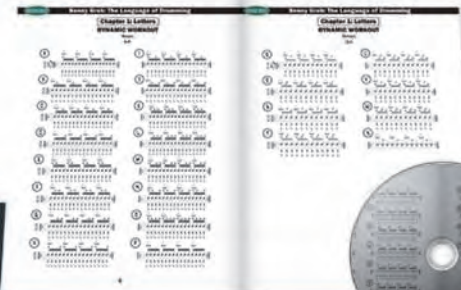


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CHRIS PENNIE

The influences behind Chris Pennie's wondrously complex drumming with **Dillinger Escape Plan** and more streamlined attack with **Coheed And Cambria** are wildly unexpected—just as you might expect.

by Mark Griffith

Chris Pennie's monstrous poly-rhythmic drumming with his old band the Dillinger Escape Plan—performed on a surprisingly small drumset—set the metal world on its ears. Now Pennie is reaching a wider audience with the sweeping epic rock of Coheed And Cambria. But the sharp command he details in his remarkable book, *Polyrhythmic Potential*, is ever present.

Pennie is always eager to talk about music, and when *MD* sat down with the drummer and his iPod, it was immediately clear that the music Chris loves crosses borders and genres with the same ease that he grooves in twenty-one. Let's get the rest in his words.

GABRIEL AND REZNOR

When Peter Gabriel's *Up* came out a few years back, I didn't immediately take to it. I was really into Nine Inch Nails' *The Fragile*, and truth be told I was sort of obsessed with that record. So I didn't give *Up* its proper due. But I've gotten back to it, and I'm loving it. Lyrically it's really good, the textures that Peter uses are always great, and the production value is just flooring me. Peter Gabriel is a genius, and he has always brought these aspects together on his recordings, but this one is really striking a chord with me.

All my life I've been a fan of music, but when *The Fragile* came out in 1999, I had been spending a lot of time pay-

ing attention to drummers and drumming. Then along comes this big-production record of great songs that are all connected. It's basically two complete albums presented in one package. It really made me think about how music is made and examine how elements of sound can come together to create really different music. I've become a real fan of Reznor's musical process. He opened me up to the fact that anything can be used to create a great song, by way of cutting loops from real drums and combining them with programmed ones, and vice versa. That entire process entered my way of thinking and planted some big seeds that came to fruition on Dillinger's *Miss Machine* recording. I invited those forces into our writing philosophy when we were doing that record.

SERVING AND INDULGING

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CHRIS PENNIE

a songwriter from Wisconsin named Bon Iver. His songs are chilled-out and mel-low. The guy has something to say, and he writes great music. He's about as bare bones as you can get; it's the complete opposite of Nine Inch Nails.

I've also been listening to Anthony Green's record *Avalon* a whole lot. He sings for the band Circa Survive, and I love his voice. Dean Butterworth plays drums on it, and the drumming is tasty, with a nice room sound. It's a record that sets a happy vibe for me. It's a good driving record, and I listen to it a lot on my way to rehearsals with Coheed And Cambria.

Jazz bassist Avishai Cohen's last record, *Gently Disturbed*, is really good. I might be a little biased because the drummer, Mark Guiliana, is a friend of mine, but I don't think my potential bias plays into my love for this record.

One thing I've noticed recently is that a lot of people aren't putting enough care into making records. Whether it's getting a good sound or really crafting a song, a lot of people are glossing over many of the subtleties of making music.

The whole process is just getting a little too rushed. People wonder why the music business is in the state it's in. I think if you give the public bad goods, then people aren't going to buy them, and there are a lot of companies and artists out there producing bad goods. It's as simple as that. It's great to have the technology to facilitate making music, but you can't use that stuff as a shortcut. The process of making music is the great part.

When you hear Avishai's record, it's the complete opposite of that. You can tell a lot of love and care went into making it, and that means the world to me. When I see Mark Guiliana play, there's a lot of color and caring there as well. He's able to pull so many sounds out of a single drum. Mark is a constant source of inspiration to me. He really cares about painting a complete tonal picture, and you can hear that.

When I listen to music, I don't listen for one specific thing. Of course, I'm a drummer, and that will sometimes play a part in my enjoying a particular recording. But the drums are just one

part of the entire picture, and the entire picture is very important to me. It's important to serve the music, but it's also important to indulge yourself in the music. You need that contrast and that bounce to make things interesting. We all go through different phases in our careers. There are so many things that can be tackled and tapped into.

David Bowie's *Earthling* has a great electronic vibe. Coheed did some shows with a band called Mute Math, and I really liked the way they sounded. They had many different textures happening and a lot of unconventional drum sounds. They have a mature writing style, and although I hate to say that bands sound like other bands, at times they have a very Police type of sound.

There's a band called Oceansize from the U.K. that I like, specifically their recording *Effloresce*. I really don't like to pigeonhole things as "progressive," but there are a lot of meter changes and different time signatures happening.

I've also been listening to Dafnis Prieto a lot. His playing with Michel Camilo is ridiculous. Yet as much as I



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like his drumming, I am as floored by his composing. His recording *About The Monks* is amazing, and Michel's *Spirit Of The Moment* is a really good listen. Dafnis is a bright star on the horizon.

I listen to Jeff Buckley a lot too—I just love his voice. And I like both of Justin Timberlake's recordings. I really like his writing and his voice. Of course Led Zeppelin CDs are always close by, but that should be a standard in anyone's listening habits, especially drummers'. If it's not, take a lesson!

STEAMROLLERS OF GROOVE

The latest Meshuggah record, *ObZen*, is killing me. They are a highly influential band for me. When I was growing up, bands like Metallica made me want to play the drums, but hearing Meshuggah's *Destroy Erase Improve* did wonders for my rhythmic vocabulary. It was way ahead of its time.

I was never a real fusion guy. I discovered drummers like Vinnie, Chad Wackerman, and Steve Smith through the drummer for the bands Cynic and Death, Sean Reinert, and I knew that he was pulling a good deal from those influences. But Meshuggah is what did it for me. Today they continue to hone their art with *ObZen*.

Lots of guys are talking about the tune "Bleed" for obvious reasons. The band's sense of phrasing is getting longer and more developed, and now there are more peaks and valleys in each tune. When you hear their music, you can still bob your head and tap your feet to it. They're great writers as well, they groove really hard, and they've brought a lot of cool rhythmic stuff to that approach. And they never lose their focus within a tune. I never hear anything that makes me think, *That wasn't needed*.

Which brings me to Metallica. I know a lot of people just love to get on the hating-Metallica bandwagon, but their latest record, *Death Magnetic*, is really good. People are saying it's not brutal enough, but I don't know what people expect. The thing about Metallica is that they've always had great songs. Go back and listen to *Ride The Lightning*, *Master Of Puppets*, and even *Kill 'Em*

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CHRIS PENNIE

All. What people have to realize is that you can only do what you do for so long. People are going to catch up and surpass you, then you have to pass the torch. But now with *Death Magnetic* they've gone back to writing really inspired tunes, and it sounds sincere and real.

I also enjoy the band that Marco Minnemann was in, *Necrophagist*, a great deal. They were extremely technical but very symphonic and unbelievably tight. They were really something to marvel at. It always sounded to me like the person who was writing the music was way into the rhythmic scale. The music didn't have many meter changes, but it would run the rhythmic gamut, jumping from triplets to quintuplets to groups of nine and then right back to triplets. They did this in unison, and it was really tight.

And there's a Zach Hill record called *Astrological Straits*. Zach is best known for playing drums in Hella, and he's a really interesting guy. I've always enjoyed his playing. I remember being on tour with Hella, and he had Gregg Keplinger make him all these metal creations that he used as cymbals. Zach is on a different level; he just goes for it. This record is just him, running his drums through all sorts of effects. It's a constant pummeling assault of percussion.

CREATING IMAGES

All the music I mention is very emotional, and I like it because I'm a highly emotional person. Sometimes that's good, but sometimes it's bad. That emotionality has led me to listen to a lot of soundtrack music. It's really exciting when you're watching a movie and the music is just perfect for the image on the screen. For instance, I love the music from *The Matrix* and *8mm*.

Composers like James Newton Howard really amaze me. He has done so much great work for so many films. I really admire the ability to compose music that will create an atmosphere or a vibe. Danny Elfman is another one of my favorites; I really like the music for *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and especially *Edward Scissorhands*. Elfman created moods in *Edward Scissorhands* that are

truly priceless. Of course, everyone has some sort of visual imagery that corresponds with specific music, but being able to create music for a specific image is a gift. I think what those film composers do is very close to what great drummers like Danny Carey and Terry Bozzio do. Those guys really create a mood from the drums. It goes back to what I was saying about putting the ultimate care into creating a piece of music. That's what guys like Danny and Terry represent to me.

SHADOW PAINTING

The subject of soundtracks makes me think of a record that was pretty huge for me when I was growing up. There was a band called UNKLE, which at the time was a collaboration between DJ Shadow and James Lavelle. Their record *Psyence Fiction* featured a bunch of all-star guest singers. The tune "Rabbit In Your Headlights," which features Thom Yorke from Radiohead, encapsulates everything we've been talking about. It has three feels happening in the beginning, and it sets a gloomy piano-type mood. But about halfway through this mysterious, slow-building ride filled with samples and sounds, everything just drops out. Then DJ Shadow hits you with this massively heavy groove. He has a lot of stuff swirling around, and it becomes a little confusing. But when that groove hits, it all becomes clear.

I love listening to DJ Shadow; he paints vivid pictures with sound. His recordings *Endtroducing* and *Private Press* are really special. I enjoy that he has a completely different way of making music. His tunes are dark, and that appeals to me. Guys like DJ Shadow, Aphex Twin, and the Flashbulb are very musical, and they think rhythmically. When DJs layer all those sounds and rhythms, it becomes hard to pick out all the elements, but it creates a wonderful texture. The cool thing is that when you start hearing that and you start thinking like that, you start *playing* like that as well. Jojo Mayer's band Nerve has been doing that stuff for a long time, and they are musically very happening.

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INTERPRETING 8TH NOTES WITH A SWING FEEL

I have a lot of music books to study from, but I'm not sure how to count combinations of 8ths and quarter notes using jazz interpretation. Can you explain how to do this so that I can play the phrases correctly?

D. Melendez

The most commonly accepted interpretation of 8th notes in jazz is to think of them as the first and third notes of a triplet. For instance, a succession of steady 8th notes...



...would be played more like this:



To place quarter notes within that swung-8ths jazz feel, simply replace two successive notes in Example 2 with a single note. Some quarters will fall

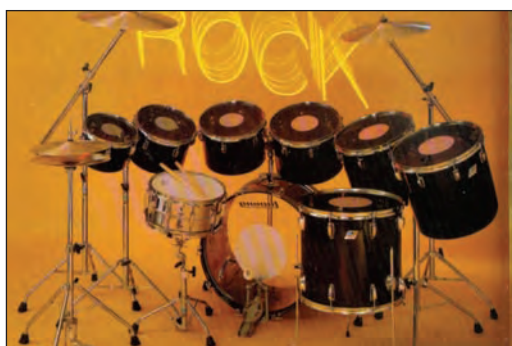
directly on the beat, and some will be placed on the third triplet. Here's a common phrase that incorporates quarters and 8ths.



And here's how that phrase would look when played with "proper" jazz interpretation.



Keep in mind that this triplet interpretation is only one way to play 8th notes with a swing feel. There are no hard and fast rules. You could play the 8th notes flatter, making them closer to straight 8ths. Or you could play them tighter, which would sound more like a dotted 8th followed by a 16th note. A tune's style and tempo, as well as the way the other musicians in the band hear the rhythms, will ultimately determine how to best interpret the figures.



POWER FACTORY KIT CARE

I recently acquired a 1979 Ludwig Power Factory kit, which consists of single-headed concert toms with 6-ply maple shells. How should the exposed wood be cared for? What sort of sealer did Ludwig apply during manufacturing? I want to preserve the kit without altering the sonic character of the drums.

Jon K. Lindsey

We sent your question to Ludwig sales coordinator Gary Devore. Here's his response: "Congratulations on your find, Jon! Drums of that era were sprayed on the inside with two layers of clear lacquer for protection. The artwork included here is taken from page 6 of the 1978 Ludwig catalog, which details your kit's shell construction. Rob Cook also describes the clear interior spray in *The Ludwig Book*, an excellent source of information on Ludwig drums and Ludwig history.

"As with all things made of wood, try to avoid keeping the drums in places with heavy moisture and prevent them from experiencing sudden changes in temperature or humidity. With single-headed drums, you'll want to use extra care when setting up and tearing down, to avoid setting the exposed edge of the drums on anything that might damage or soak into the wood."

RELEASING THE PRESSURE OF SITTING IN

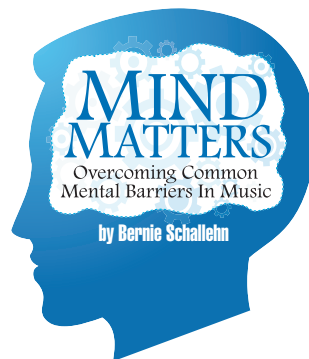
Many years ago, when I was in my twenties, I was fortunate to play with a band that had a couple of regional hit singles. Now when I'm at a party or a wedding where there's a band playing, someone always asks me to sit in. The bandleader inevitably introduces me as some sort of "rock star," even though it's been years since I've felt anything close to that. I take a seat behind the kit, and feelings of dread and an almost paralyzing anxiety set in. I think everyone is watching my every move and expecting me to play something flashy. When the song ends, even though I receive applause, I feel I didn't meet expectations. Any advice?

You're under no obligation to sit in, so why put yourself through the agony? You can always say you're not in the mood to play. But I'm guessing you'd ultimately like to be able to sit in and truly enjoy the experience. Two things are ruining that possibility: fear of negative evaluation, and erroneous thinking.

Let's pretend you agree to sit in and you struggle from the first bar. You're rushing and dragging, blowing fills...

So what happens then? Are you sent to Siberia for ten years of hard labor? Of course not. I'm sure you beat yourself up for a while

Bernie Schallehn, a drummer and percussionist for over forty-five years, holds a master's degree in counseling psychology and was a certified clinical mental health counselor.



afterward, but nothing *really* bad happens. And here's the real kicker: Some, or maybe even most, of the audience never even noticed your mistakes or your anxiety. But because your erroneous thinking had you believing that all eyes were glued to you, you manufactured a huge fear of being evaluated negatively.

Although someone's eyes may be looking at you, don't assume that he or she is *thinking* about you. More likely, the people at the party are worrying whether the kids are okay at home with the new babysitter, or they're plotting a dance with a bridesmaid.

Of course, a few musicians at the party probably watched intently as you flubbed your way through the song. But so what? It's over, and you'll get another shot at playing again. Everyone can have a bad day once in a while. Just learn from it and move on. Next time, try to focus on how much *fun* it is to be able to play music and entertain your friends, even if you don't have the same panache you once had.

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The Number 12 Looks Like You's

JON KAREL

He's got CHOPS FOR DAYS, but this particular drummer is more interested in motivations than technicalities.

by Gail Worley



Marco Soccoti

“I think most of my colleagues would agree that heavy metal drumming is very fulfilling,” says Jon Karel of the New Jersey-based experimental mathcore quintet the Number 12 Looks Like You. For a band whose music is rarely described without a liberal use of the word *challenging*, the Number 12 balances unbelievably technical musicianship with compositionally complex songwriting on its new CD, *Worse Than Alone*.

“I have a very developed perspective on the rhythmic aspects of our music,” Karel offers. “My primary responsibility is to guide the parts in a rhythmic direction that’s going to

work. But our songwriting process is very collaborative in that we all play an equal role in the composition of the music, deciding how to set it up so that it feels like a real story being told and not just this random flurry of chaos.”

Karel grew up in a musical household, with a father who played drums and sang in his own wedding band. Jon was initially inspired to take up drums at age eight, and in high school he discovered heavy drummers like Tool’s Danny Carey, Pantera’s Vinnie Paul, and Sepultura’s Igor Cavalera. “That was when I decided I wanted to see drums from a broader perspective,” he says.

Through his own independent studying, Karel also familiarized himself with the legacy of great jazz drummers including Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, and Philly Joe Jones. Then a classmate turned him on to the band Napalm Death. "That was a fast education," Jon says with a laugh. "When I got my first taste of extreme metal, hearing Mick Harris play drums with Napalm Death, Pete Sandoval with Morbid Angel, and Flo Mounier with Cryptopsy, it was like a dream come true for a sixteen-year-old. At that time, these bands were exposing really heavy-duty emotional themes in their music—shame, sadness, guilt, depravity, sexual confusion.... The drumming, guitar playing, and songwriting were exploring these extreme emotions. It was always very exciting."

Although he's quickly earning a buzz in the metal



metal genre. "Extreme metal has somewhat lost touch with the idea of searching for the darker side of yourself," Jon says. "Besides anger, there are very few lyrical themes, and the drumming expresses very few concepts

Jon Karel's Gear The Whats And The Whys

Drums: Tama Starclassic Performer bubinga birch in antique white sparkle: 9x12 and 14x16 toms, 18x22 bass drum. 8x14 Starclassic G-Maple snare.

Cymbals: Zildjian. 14½" K Custom Hybrid hi-hats, 13" A New Beat hi-hats, 21" Z Custom Mega Bell ride, 22" K brilliant crash/ride, 20" A Custom Projection crash, 22" Oriental China, 9½" and 6" Zil Bells.

Hardware: Tama. Road Pro stands, including hi-hat. Iron Cobra Rolling Glide bass drum beater, hard rubber, black beaters. "I set my pedals approximately shoulder width apart," Karel says. "The pedal boards are adjusted almost as high as they will go. This dramatically increases the leverage and adds a lot of power to the stroke. The beater angle remains at approximately a 45° angle. The beater height is set about 85 percent of the way up. I move the counterweights up and down depending on how much volume I'm looking for on a given night. The spring tension is set to about 85 percent of the maximum. And I make sure to always place the foot of a cymbal stand directly in front of the slave pedal when I play. This prevents slippage, even without much of a rug."

Heads: Evans. Power Center Reverse Dot on snare batter, Hazy 300 on bottom. No muffling. Extra-wide 40-strand strainer on bottom. "I keep the strainer at about 80 percent tension," Jon says. "I tune the bottom head about one whole step higher than the top, somewhere around the tone of a lower-pitched timbale. I'm looking for a slightly soft feeling on top, with lots of rebound and a real throaty midrange combination of 'boom' and 'pop.' When I play dynamically and softly, I like to play out of the center of the drum toward the rim. The extra-wide snare strainer really gives me sensitivity, even on that big 8x14 drum."

G2 on tom batters, G1 on tom bottoms. No muffling. "Occasionally, when trying to stretch the life out of a dead head on tour, I'll use a Moongel to get me through. But if I can avoid it, I try to stay away from muffling."

EQ2 on bass drum batter, EQ3 with 4½" mic hole on front head. "I put a small rag inside to prevent feedback from internal miking. I tune the batter head about 15 percent tighter than thumb tight. Again, I try to tune the resonant head about one whole step higher. I like a big, resonant 'boom' sound. If I bury the beater I get a real fat staccato sound. If I play out of the drum, in the right room I get a big TR-909 sound. And when I play fast 16th-note rolls on the bass drum, you hear the high-end sound from the hard rubber beaters and get this huge rumbling roar of low end from the kick itself."

Sticks: Vic Firth Extreme Design 5B, hickory. "I go back and forth between nylon and wood tips. I can't make up my mind, and apparently now they're adding aluminum tips to the equation. Great—more choices!"

Electronics: Roland SPD-S sampling pad. "Works great for sound bites and loops. It's so user-friendly, I can't wait to incorporate it into more and more music. I just wish it didn't use 512 MB compact flash cards. Those things are damn near impossible to find. Roland should really do something about that."



drumming community as an adept technical player, Karel reveals that his technique comes from having a spiritual perspective on drums and drumming. At age twenty-five, he's part of a new breed of players determined to push the polyrhythmic envelope in an effort to unlock what he calls the mystical side of drumming within the extreme

and principles other than speed and impossible physical challenges. It's become a little disheartening, but I'm so excited to be in a band that's open to pushing the genre's evolution, striving to find a new place for the song to go that's still very sincere and soulful. We're trying to push as far as we can in this exploration of the darker side of

human nature.

"My philosophy about music and drumming involves three main aspects that I'm constantly trying to develop in myself," Karel continues. "There's the conceptual aspect, which is all the theory, principles of subdivisions, intervals, and relationships between rhythms. Next, there's the physical aspect, which encompasses technique, the laws of physics, what happens with drums themselves, and how you can train your body to do these very unnatural things. Then there's the spiritual aspect, which

people talk about when they're describing the feel, the vibe, or these somewhat hard-to-explain aspects of music, as well as context and history.

"Music history is such an important thing for me," Karel adds. "I need it so badly to really get inside the feel of certain things. But if any of these three aspects is undeveloped, then it really hurts my playing. I have to constantly make an effort to push forward with all three areas. I'm all about the math and the conceptual side. I will totally use that as a tool to get me out of a jam.

But mostly the inspiration for the grooves and the vibes you hear in our music comes from more of a soulful place rather than a predominantly mental space."

Karel has blazing hand technique and moves effortlessly between traditional and two variations of matched grip, often within the same song. He explains why switching grips works for his playing in the Number 12: "I use German matched grip, where the basic motion is generated from wrist pronation, and French matched grip, which is more of a finger-player grip. With traditional grip being more of the asymmetrical approach, I use that in an effort to explore the more spiritual side of my playing. Traditional grip helps me to invoke a little more creativity sometimes.

"I think many drummers naturally switch grips," Jon continues, "based on if they're getting fatigued or just looking for a different sound. You get very comfortable switching if you don't burden yourself with the idea that one technique is going to solve all your problems, because there's no one move that's ever going to answer all your musical questions. You can practice and get used to using the finger grip to be faster, more agile, and more finessed, and then use the German grip for more power, more wrist, and more muscle.

"If there's just one belief I'd like to share," the drummer concludes, "it's that the questions of what to do and how to do it are important, but it's never going to sound good unless you answer the question of *why*. Knowing why you're playing something, why that groove is what it is, and why it feels or sounds good—that's always going to be what gives it that oomph. If you're only answering what and how, then you're just playing the notes and the beats. You're playing the groove, but it doesn't have any soul. I really want to encourage everybody—my colleagues, my students, and the guys I play with—to keep asking themselves that question. If music is your goal, then asking the question of why ends up being a really big deal."



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1. GMS's first foray into the entry level, the SL series, features all-birch shells, rich lacquer finishes, precisely cut 45° bearing edges, RIMS-type suspension mounts, and first-quality Evans UNO heads. These drums are available in four- and five-piece kits, bundled with SL series pedals and hardware. Finish choices include natural birch, red fade, "midnight stain," "coffee fade," and "caramel burst."
gmsdrums.com

2. ZENIAN handcrafted drums feature stave (block) construction and are made from several Australian woods and imported timbers, including purpleheart, Brazilian walnut, Tasmanian blackwood, figured silky oak, and figured Tasmanian oak.
zenian.com

3. HIGH FIDELITY HEAROS use a tuned resonator and an acoustic resistor to allow musicians to hear a balanced, unmuffled sound with up to 20 dB of noise reduction.
hearos.com

4. AQUARIAN's Z-100 black coating has all of the sensitivity, resonance, and durability of the com-

pany's Z-100 white coating and is available on Hi-Velocity, Response 2, and Super-Kick III heads.
aquariandrumheads.com

5. PRO-MARK's TX515W Joey Jordison autograph model drumstick is .551" (14 mm) in diameter, 16" long, and made of American hickory. The TX515W is based on the popular 777 design but is slightly shorter in length. The round wood tip provides exceptional articulation, power, and consistency. A Japanese oak version (PW515) is also available.
promark.com

6. THE ZENDRUM Z4 is an upgraded version of the acclaimed MIDI percussion controller, featuring even more precision, speed, resolution, and dynamic articulation. The new "dedicated save" function allows users to edit presets and then revert back to the previously saved version or commit the changes. Other upgrades include a "MIDI channel-per-pad" feature, a hi-hat pedal control input, a volume pedal control input, and additional trigger pad capability.
zendrum.com

7. THE CRASH 'N FLASH lighting system allows drummers to control lighting cues by hitting cymbal crashes.
crashnflash.com

8. SHURE has released two new microphones that are ideal for drummers. The SM27 (\$299) is a rugged and versatile large-diaphragm cardioid condenser mic that has a 1" ultra-thin Mylar diaphragm for superior transient response, exceptional low frequency reproduction, and low self-noise (just 9.5 dB SPL), to reveal fine detail when recording or during live performance.

The SM137 (\$179) is a cardioid probe microphone for instrument recording applications. It employs an ultra-thin diaphragm for smooth high end and tight, controlled low end. Its 15 dB attenuator enables it to handle sound pressure levels as high as 154 dB SPL, which is perfect for drums.
shure.com

9. The CYMPAD is a cymbal-felt replacement designed to control cymbal volume without losing tone quality. Sizes range from 40 mm, for minimal dampening, to 90 mm, for maximum dampening.
cympad.com



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Eric's influences consist of an elite group of players, including legends like Patato, Eddie Montalvo, Johnny Rodriguez and Giovanni Hidalgo. His reverence for the traditional techniques is shown in his own style, based heavily on indigenous Afro-Cuban technique, to which Eric has contributed a number of unique variations.

For more information on Eric, visit our newly designed website, tocapercussion.com



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CADESON

GLAZE SERIES LEWIS PRAGASAM SIGNATURE KIT

by Michael Dawson

Although Cadeson Musical may not be as high profile in the U.S. market as it is in Southeast Asia, this family-owned and operated business has been making an assortment of custom drums for over two decades. Unlike other Taiwanese manufacturers, who often use generic parts built in one of a handful of mega-factories, Cadeson claims to make everything itself, including shells, hardware, lugs, and finishes. This is all in an effort to provide some of the most original instruments coming out of Asia. In pursuit of this goal, the designers at the company frequently team up with endorsers to produce what Cadeson calls “the kinds of drums that drummers want.”

DISTINCTLY MODERN

One of Cadeson's most recent collaborations has been with Malaysian super-drummer Lewis Pragasam, the founder of the world-fusion project Asiabeat who also regularly performs and records with legendary jazz/fusion/R&B artists like bassist Nathan East and keyboardist Bob James. Pragasam needed a versatile instrument that could keep up with the dense sounds of contemporary fusion music while also providing a sweet response. Together, he and Cadeson found the perfect blend of modern and classic sounds with the drummer's signature Glaze series acrylic drumset.

STRAIGHT FROM THE ARTIST'S MOUTH

Before we discuss how this drumset performed for us, let's get some commentary from Lewis Pragasam himself on what he believes makes his kit so special. “First off,” he says, “the shells are much thicker than most acrylic drums on the market. This helps make the drums structurally stronger and also fatter sounding. These drums are punchy and have an articulate sound at any volume, but they really start to speak when you dig into them.

“Another quality inherent in the acrylic shells is that they have a melodic tone in any tuning range,” Pragasam continues. “Tune them high, they sing. Tune them low, they rumble. But regardless of the tuning, the attack is always evident. Also, depending on how the drums are tuned, they have a decay that resembles a short delay effect, which is pretty cool.

“In live situations, these drums cut through anything, while retaining all of their tonal qualities. Front-of-house engineers love them, as they don't have to keep the mic signals very hot because of the drums' enhanced projection. In the studio, the drums record beautifully. They blend well with both acoustic and electronic sounds, as well as samples and sound sculptures.”

UP-CLOSE INSPECTION

The Lewis Pragasam signature kit has a six-piece configuration: 16x20 kick, 8x10 and 9x12 rack toms, 12x14 and 15x16 floor toms, and a matching 6x14 snare. The toms are outfitted with Remo Pinstripes, the snare has a coated Ambassador, and the kick has clear Powerstroke 3s on both sides. All of the 2.3 mm rims and single-bolt lug casings are plated in black nickel, which complements the subtle black tint in the acrylic shells. The tom shells are 5 mm thick; the kick is 6 mm.

The six-lug rack toms feature minimal-contact two-bolt tom mounts. The eight-lug floor toms come with standard-style legs and brackets. The ball-and-socket tom mounts have to be flown

from multi-clamps on cymbal stands or from Cadeson's heavy-duty curved drum rack, since the bass drum has no built-in hardware aside from a pair of simply designed telescoping spurs. All of the lugs and mounting hardware are held to the shell with metal washers. Acrylic shells have been notorious for cracking over time, so if you're worried about potential damage, you might want to insulate these stress points with plastic or rubber washers.

PUNCHY LITTLE KICK

The 16x20 acrylic bass drum was possibly the punchiest kick I've ever played. Every note, including quick grace notes and double bass ruffs, was clear and articulate, which would allow dense kick patterns to easily chop through fast-paced fusion or Dillinger Escape Plan-type math metal. This extra attack also kept me from having to crank the high-end EQ when recording tracks for an Alice In Chains/ King's X-style project. When I tried the drum with my Cranberries/Doves-influenced atmospheric rock band, however, the lead guitarist commented, “That's a very punchy kick. It would be great for jazzy fusion...but not for us.”

Overall, I really enjoyed the “modern” punch of this kick. A sizeable low-end “woof” was revealed when I added a Subkick mic in front of the drum for some sessions. The only thing I felt was missing was that sense of bigness you get from larger drums. I'm sure a 22" version would be perfect.

A SNARE THAT CRACKS

There's a great video on YouTube of Pragasam demonstrating what his signature kit can do. (Search for “Cadeson product introduction by Lewis Pragasam-3.”) When discussing the 6x14 snare, Lewis comments, “This guy has got a *whack*.” And that pretty much sums it up. The drum was all about attack and articulation, which translated into a lot of subtlety too. Soft strokes came through with crystal clarity, while rimshots had all the bite you'd need to cut through in just about any situation.

After experimenting with many different tensions, I found the snare performed best when tuned just below the point at which the top head starts to choke. From there you can detune a couple adjacent lugs if you want to get a thicker sound. I used this snare on all ten tracks for the previously mentioned Alice In Chains/King's X-style record. The songwriter loved how it cracked through the thick, drop-tuned guitar riffs.

SILKY SMOOTH WITH A SNAP

While the kick and snare were great-sounding instruments, the true sonic magic of these acrylic drums was found in the toms. If you're like me and you usually spend a lot of time and effort fine-tuning your drums to tweak out pesky overtones, you'll be amazed by how quickly these toms can be dialed in to a very pure resonance.

I even went so far as to break out my chromatic tuner to see if I could get each lug to register an exact pitch. The 10" rack tom sang out with the bottom head tuned to an E flat, so I started there and tuned down in 4ths. Each of the remaining



toms responded wonderfully, with the 12" pitched to a B flat, the 14" to an F, and the 16" to a C. Once I had the bottom heads in near-perfect tune, I simply tensioned the top heads to a point where they felt good to hit and resonated with a full, pure tone. This tighter-bottom/looser-top setup created a great sound with even sustain and tons of snap. To add a bit of pitch bend, I detuned one lug on each batter head, which instantly made me want to break out my favorite Dave Weckl licks.

The only downside of the toms' being so responsive to tuning is that they had a tendency to fall out

of tune pretty easily, especially when played hard for extended periods of time. Luckily, getting them singing again was as simple as finding the lug that had lost tension and slowly bringing it back up to pitch.

WHEN WOOD ISN'T ENOUGH

When I'm hired for a session these days, nine times out of ten the producer, engineer, or artist uses words like *big*, *warm*, and *round* to describe the type of drum sound he or she wants. So most of my drum collection reflects that aesthetic (vintage

maple shells, rounded bearing edges, reinforcing hoops inside the drums, and so on). But every once in a while a project comes up, like the hard rock session mentioned before, where I need drums that have that distinct "modern" vibe. In the past, I'd probably look to borrow a kit with birch shells and sharp bearing edges to get me that studio-perfect sheen. But if I had *these* drums at my disposal—especially the toms—there'd be no need for anything more. Retail price: \$3,499.

cadesonmusic.com





PAISTE

BLACK ALPHA CYMBALS

by David Ciauro

Slipknot drummer Joey Jordison and Swiss cymbal company Paiste teamed up to give the heavy metal giant's personal selection of Alpha cymbals a sinister makeover for his 2008/2009 touring kit. These CuSn8 alloy (aka 2002 bronze) cymbals get the company's high-tech manufacturing treatment before being finished off with traditional hand hammering. The result is a fair-priced, professional-quality line designed to withstand the punishment of heavy-handed metal mayhem.

GETTING INTO CHARACTER

I replaced all the cymbals on my rehearsal kit with Black Alphas, and I enjoyed the Alphas'

and I lowered the tension of my tom heads to just above wrinkling to get a fast, slappy, aggressive sound. Going for those specific drum tones brought these focused cymbals to life. I was amazed by how differently the Alphas reacted once I changed the vibe of my kit.

Compared with uncoated cymbals, the ColorSound-coated Alphas offered a slightly muffled attack and a slightly lower overall volume at regular velocity—but these cymbals are meant to be wailed on. When I hit them with a lot of force, the coating did well to keep the cymbals from overpowering the drums. They were raw and aggressive, and they became brighter and more musical the harder I hit

coated on both sides.) The crimped edge of the bottom cymbal made for a fast response and a tight "chick" when played with the foot. The hi-hats were bright, with a crisp attack and a quick decay, and they offered a nice closed "tick" that clearly articulated fast stickings. Playing the hi-hats open with the top cymbal held tight in the clutch produced a rigidity that drove the groove and balanced out bottom-heavy double kick assaults.

SUPER-DENSE RIDE

Stick articulation on the 20" metal ride (\$305) was crystal clear. This was a dense cymbal with long, robust overtones and a heavy ping for rapid-fire blasting. The bell would easily cut through walls of high-gain amps.

DISSONANT CRASHES

When I hit the Black Alpha crashes lightly in size order (17", \$245; 18", \$270; 19", \$287), a minor triad was created. This added a dark harmonic wash when I alternated between the three crashes at louder volumes. Overtones were prolonged yet even, maintaining a compressed decay that never got messy. These were surprisingly bright crashes, even though they were fairly low in pitch; they didn't possess the warmth of traditional hand-hammered cymbals. And the more abuse they took, the better they sounded. Their sturdiness made them work well as crash/rides. My favorite was the 18", which I found to be the most versatile of the bunch.

A SPLASH OF EVIL

The 10" metal splash (\$123) had a rather untamed attack that stood out nicely among the stark sturdiness of the crashes and the heavy

TIGHT, CRISP STUDIO TONES

Boasting a shiny black-coated finish with the Slipknot logo silk-screened in gold, the Black Alpha line consists of 14" Sound Edge hi-hats; a 20" metal ride; 17", 18", and 19" rock crashes; a 10" metal splash; and an 18" rock China. The ColorSound technology pioneered by Paiste in the 1980s not only adds an ominous appearance but is also said to improve durability.

characteristics both individually and collectively. When I began using them in conjunction with my drums, however, the balance was off. Instead of faulting the cymbals for this, I glanced at the Slipknot logo and considered the drummer and the genre for which these models were made. Although my drumming roots are in metal, these days I primarily play rock-related gigs, and my drums are tuned with that in mind. I thought it only fair to create the right environment to test the Black Alphas, so I retuned my kit. I went for a tight, snappy snare and a "clicky" kick sound,

them. If you're not used to playing extremely hard, you may find the coating's added thickness makes the cymbals feel a bit stiff. And you're going to have to strike even harder than usual to get the volume you'd achieve with uncoated cymbals.

CRIMPED HI-HATS

The first thing I noticed when setting up the 14" Sound Edge hi-hats (\$350) was that the underbelly of both the top and bottom cymbals are left uncoated. (The crashes, ride, and China are



ping of the ride. It was quite loud for a splash, as it should be in order to create a presence among its counterparts. The sound was on the gong-like side, but it worked well given the splash's intended application.

SMOOTHED-OUT CHINA

China cymbals are often loved—or hated—for their abrasive attack. The ColorSound coating on this 18" rock version (\$270) slightly lessened the harshness, which allowed the effect of the

China to be heard without jumping to the front of the mix. It had a fairly long decay, and it too produced a more colorful sound when played aggressively.

CONCLUSION

Bringing Black Alphas to a jazz gig would be about as appropriate as wearing a tuxedo to the beach. Overall, the prolonged overtones remained focused enough that they never became annoying. Some drummers might see

this as a turnoff, but in the metal arena most overtones would go unnoticed in the din of high-gain guitars, thunderous low-end bass, and decibel levels meant to make the devil dance. Some might prejudge these cymbals to sound dull or lifeless based on how they look, but a few good whacks will show that they can be quite musical and bright and that they possess a variety of distinctive tonal qualities.

paiste.com



ORGANIC CUSTOM DRUMS 7x14 DUAL FLOATING SHELL



The concept behind this unique drum is simple: A maple ring in the center (which houses tube lugs) holds together two free-floating shell segments that are connected at the rims with tension rods. The only crafting done to the shells is the cut of the bearing edge and the finish. The absence of drill holes is said to allow the wood to resonate to capacity.

The drum we were sent for review came assembled with two 3" 8-ply maple shell pieces. The top shell had a 30° bearing edge, while the bottom shell was cut at 45°. Both edges were slightly

rounded. The company also sent a 3" 6-ply mahogany shell segment. When I swapped this piece with the top maple shell, the drum took on a whole different tone. This was the configuration I used on a gig. With the mahogany/maple combo, the drum sounded mellower and didn't offer the same bright attack that it did when I used the two maple pieces. Mixing the woods like this created a very comfortable, controllable sound.

After I experimented for a while, I realized how easy it would be to customize your own sound for each gig if you had this drum plus a few extra shell

segments. The shells took only a few minutes to swap out, and the drum tuned up quite easily. I can see session drummers really liking the "dual floating shell" concept, since they wouldn't have to carry as many snares to the studio.

Shells are available in a variety of woods, and metal configurations are planned for the future. Our reviewed 7x14 maple/maple drum lists for \$899. The 3x14 mahogany shell lists for \$189.95.

organicdrums.biz



TYCOON

ARTIST RETRO SERIES CONGAS

by Michael Ramsey

Tycoon Percussion—a company based in Thailand—has been making a big push in the U.S. percussion industry for the past few years, specifically in the areas of Afro-Latin, West African, and other types of “world” instruments. For this review, we’re checking out four congas from the mid-level Artist Retro series.

WHAT YOU GET

Artist Retro congas arrived straight from the factory, with stands included. The sizes of the drums in this series are 10", 11", 11³/₄", and 12¹/₂". The 10" and 11" pair (\$589) comes with a double-braced double conga stand, while the larger drums (\$679 for the pair) are shipped with individual basket-style stands. The double conga

stand was very durable, and the basket stands were surprisingly stable, considering that they were fairly lightweight.

THE DETAILS

The shells and hardware on Artist Retro drums are both beautiful and heavy duty. The wood is renewable Siam oak, and each drum comes with a card describing Tycoon’s dedication to promoting environmentally friendly products. The two-tone striped shells alternate between dark and

ware isn’t my first choice for aesthetic reasons, it looked like it should last for years to come. After playing these drums for several weeks and observing the quality of the shells and hardware, I feel Tycoon has created a great product, practically from top to bottom; the skins were one area where I found there was room for improvement.

To be blunt, I felt the heads on these drums were simply too thin for most percussionists’ tastes. The sound suffered a bit from unwanted overtones, reducing the fundamental note of the drum and creating an overall weak tone. But if you know you’re going to swap out the stock skins for custom-made or synthetic ones (maybe you do a lot of outdoor playing and need the tuning stability and durability of plastic heads), then you should definitely consider buying these congas. Just don’t expect them to give you rich, Giovanni Hidalgo–style tones right out of the box.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the Artist Retro series congas provide high quality for the price. And the included hardware is a huge bonus. After swapping out the thin stock heads with some thicker synthetic ones, I really enjoyed playing these drums. They’d be a perfect first set of congas or an affordable option for church or school music programs.

tycoonpercussion.com

SEPARATE PAIRINGS

On their own, the 10" and 11" congas would be great for elementary or middle school students. But when they were grouped with the other two drums in this series—which are full-size congas—they just didn’t *feel* right, and their sound reflected their small size. So these four drums essentially represent two separate pairings: a small “student size” setup and a larger duo that’s designed for traditional applications.

natural stain, and the wood grain shows through nicely. The finish is super-glossy, and it seemed to be quite durable. Even though flat-black hard-



SABIAN

RAW BELL DRY RIDES

by Ben Meyer

Sabian has brought more tasty choices to the table by adding the popular Raw Bell Dry ride to the AA, AAX, and HHX series (the ride was previously available only in the venerable HH line). Now drummers who prefer these series can tap into the unique cymbal's defined and controlled sound. Chris Pennie, Jose Pasillas, Walfredo Reyes Jr., Matt Abts, Nir Z, and Steve Ferrone are just a few of the Sabian artists who've already jumped at the chance to try out the new models.

NOT TOO DRY

Differing from most of the other cymbals in their respective series, Raw Bell Dry rides feature an unlathed bell, with very effective overtone and spread control built into the cymbals' design. I found that none of the four cymbals—we received the three newer models along with an HH, all 21"—would build up to a washy roar, even when bashed with the shank of a stick at a loud rock show. I also tested all four models on a quiet bar gig where I used brushes and bundle sticks most of the night. Though I wasn't able to get the metal moving much with such light implements, I found that all of the rides produced a bright, shimmering attack without building up too much of a gong-type undertone.

I was also able to listen to a few other drummers play the rides on gigs where I was playing bass. They liked the various models, though one drummer felt the cymbals were a bit *too* controlled for his taste. The rides could also come across a bit strong in an unmiked setting because they project sticking patterns so effectively. But these cymbals would definitely shine in a large venue where everything is miked up and run through a PA.

All four models sported a defined attack "click," and I found they responded with a darker overall tone when I used a teardrop- or acorn-tip

stick rather than a round-tip variety. I got a consistent stick attack sound, regardless of how I struck the cymbal bow, which reminded me somewhat of the uniformity I'd expect from a flat ride. Given its controlled wash and consistently restrained overtones, it's helpful to think of the

HHX was the darkest and funkier of all the Raw Bell Dry rides, and the AA was most similar to the other cymbals in its line.

I found the HH to be the most versatile, which explains why it has been so popular among drummers of many types. The AA and AAX models

THE RAW DEAL

The original HH Raw Bell Dry ride was designed by Sabian master product specialist Mark Love in response to requests for a cymbal targeted at modern applications that combined a dark overall sound with a defined stick attack and controlled wash. The resulting HH model became one of Sabian's best-selling rides and helped to introduce customers to the concept of unlathed bells, a feature found on many of the company's newer cymbals.

Raw Bell Dry ride as a kind of high-volume flat ride with a very musical bell.

EVERY TIME A BELL RINGS

The unlathed bells of the four models contributed greatly to the cymbals' focused sound. But they weren't as thick and cutting as I would have expected, given their raw appearance. The bells on the HH and HHX models had a surprisingly mellow sound that might be more at home on a Motown record than on a blistering fusion or funk tune. Steve Ferrone's ride sound with Tom Petty is a good example of these models in action. If you're looking for a ride with a bell that will cut through anything and melt faces at twenty-five yards, I would suggest checking out the AA and AAX models over their hand-hammered brethren.

SO WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Playing the four Raw Bell Dry rides side by side, I could really appreciate the subtle distinctions of each, which were mostly found in their pitch and their bells. The HH and HHX models had lower fundamental pitches than the AA or AAX model.

would be appropriate in a loud rock or pop situation, where everything is amplified and you want your ride to come through with clarity and not as a wall of sound. They'd function better, for example, in Neal Peart's setup with Rush than in Brad Wilk's kit with Rage Against The Machine, as Wilk often bashes his ride for a washy wave.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Each of Sabian's Raw Bell Dry rides served its intended purpose well. Don't expect them to open up and scream, but *do* expect them to project your bow and bell sticking patterns to the last seat in the house, with a slightly different color from each series. If you favor the AA line of crashes and hi-hats, you'll probably like the AA Raw Bell Dry ride best. If you're an HHX drummer, you'll most likely prefer that one, and so on. This speaks volumes about Sabian's ability to create cohesive families of cymbals while still allowing each model to have its own voice.

sabian.com

MD PRODUCT SHOOTOUT!

NEW BASS DRUM PEDALS

Story and photos by Mike Haid

One of the most personal pieces of hardware on a drumkit is the bass drum pedal. In recent years there has been a surge in the advancement of technology in this area. From longboards, split boards, and heel-less short boards to direct-link, chain, and nylon-strap drives, there are numerous options to custom fit your pedal to your musical demands. Do you need a pedal that offers power? Finesse? Speed? Versatility? Electronic triggering capabilities? We've gathered several recently released pedals to help you figure out which one might be your best bet.



**Extra Spring
In Your Step**

TAMA IRON COBRA POWER GLIDE WITH COBRA COIL (SINGLE, \$254.99; DOUBLE, \$579.99)

With features like a double-chain offset cam for increased power and speed, Vari-Pitch beater angle adjustments, and a Speedo-Ring that allows independent tweaking of the footboard angle, this is one of the smoothest pedals in its class. The Speedo-Ring, with its high-quality built-in ball bearings, replaces the traditional nylon rocker cam. The Iron Cobra Power Glide also comes equipped with nylon insulators for the bearing housings inside the pedal frame, keeping the Oiles bearings in a centered and stable position that eliminates side-to-side motion and adds speed and smoothness. The Quick-Hook spring adjustment allows for fast tension changes by dismounting the spring assembly from the top, adjusting the tension, and easily slipping the assembly back on. And Spring Tight, a half-moon-shaped spring tension rod, keeps the spring from twisting, which delivers consistent tension.

Tama recently raised the bar on the Power Glide by adding a special steel spring under the footboard. This lightweight spring—the Cobra Coil—helps return the footboard to its original position for a quicker stroke and amplified rebound. The extra bounce from the spring seemed very subtle, with the most notable enhancement being with the slave side of the double pedal.

The effortless feel of this double-chain pedal was almost identical to the smoothness and responsiveness you get with direct-drive pedals, but with more power. If you dig the old-school feel and power of a double-chain drive, you'll find this pedal to be one of the smoothest.

tama.com



**Convertible
Footboards**

PEARL DEMON DRIVE ELIMINATOR (SINGLE, \$559; DOUBLE, \$1,149)

Pearl's new Demon Drive Eliminator bass drum pedal is a truly innovative and forward-thinking high-end system. The sleek, futuristic, industrial design, with its brushed aluminum profile and burnt-orange highlights, commands attention. Both single and double pedal versions were easy to assemble, and the factory settings felt great right out of the black cloth-covered soft cases.

Practically every adjustable part of the Demon includes index marks to note exact settings. The footboard angle adjusts from the top of the floating spring pendulum. The two main bearings in the axle are micro-polished Japanese Ninja bearings originally designed for skateboards, and they contribute immensely to the super-smooth action and effortless feel. The direct-link drive features self-aligning spherical bearings to compensate for inconsistent, shifting pedal pressure from the foot. The upper portion of the direct-

link system offers two-position settings for a lighter or heavier feel. There's absolutely no play in the drive, producing a true, direct stroke. The beater holder also features two-position settings, for finesse and power. When you loosen a single key bolt, the entire beater holder can be repositioned on the axle to move closer to the head (for finesse/a shorter stroke) or farther away (for power/a longer stroke).

The most impressive feature of the Demon is the Duo-Deck footboard. This is the first pedal of its kind to convert from a standard split board to a longboard—you simply remove six screws and reposition the heel plate. Making this switch creates a totally different feel, which allows you to adjust your foot technique to the style of music you're playing. All adjustments on the Demon Drive pedal are made with the supplied multifunction drum key. Just don't lose this key or you're in *big* trouble.

pearldrums.com



Heels-Up Only

DW 5000ADH (\$483.99)

L.A.-based drummer Michael Packer designed this specialty pedal for heel-up players. It has all the high-end features found on the classic DW 5000, including fully adjustable tension and throw and a side-adjustable hoop clamp. What makes this pedal design unique is that the heel plate is removed and the footboard hinge is attached at the very end of the base plate. This functions similarly to a longboard pedal in that it allows you to play farther back on the footboard, generating more power and leverage in the heel-up position. The action and feel of the double-chain drive is a little heavier than what you get with direct-link pedals, but it's still smooth and powerful. This is a pricey single pedal, but it's proven to be a useful design for heel-up players.

dwdrums.com



Effortless Feel

FP-9500C

YAMAHA FP-8500 (SINGLE, \$259.99; DOUBLE, \$829.99), FP-9500 (SINGLE, \$329.99; DOUBLE, \$829.99)

Yamaha hardware has always combined simplicity with quality and durability. The recently improved line of 8500 and 9500 series pedals offers impressive upgrades that include an ergonomic, self-locking spring tension adjustment, quick and easy beater and footboard angle adjustments (using a standard drum key), and a convenient side-adjustable wing bolt hoop clamp. All 9500 series models also include a hard-sided soft case.

The affordable FP-8500B is a lightweight, woven-nylon-belt-drive, split-board pedal with an exceptionally smooth feel and sharp accuracy. The hard felt beater had more punch than most high-end felt beaters, and the

lengthened and ergonomically designed split board added power and extended leverage to my heel-up foot technique. The rubber-coated tips on the conventional wire frame made the pedal quiet, flexible, and easy to transport, but this model doesn't quite offer the solid feel of the 9500 series pedals with full base plates. But overall it's one smooth and powerful pedal for the money.

Yamaha's no-frills double-chain-drive FP-9500C single and DFP-9500C double pedals offer separate beater and footboard angle adjustments and include optional woven nylon straps, which are easily installed with a drum key. The

double-chain drive offers a bit more power, while the strap lends finesse to the feel. The new plastic/felt two-sided beater is well balanced, with a powerful smack from the plastic side. Although chain-drive pedals like this aren't quite as smooth as ones with a direct-drive linkage system, the chains offer an intangible old-school vibe that direct-drive pedals lack.

The DFP-9500D direct-drive double pedal proved to be one of the more powerful-feeling double pedals, striking a happy medium between the feel of a chain drive and more advanced "zero latency" direct drives.

yamahadrums.com



Triggering Made Easy

AXIS A LONGBOARD WITH EKIT (SINGLE, \$315; DOUBLE, \$799; EKIT, \$99)

The Axis A Longboard pedal system has been a longtime favorite of metal drummers because it's one of the smoothest, fastest, and most precise pedals on the market—products of its extended footboard, uniquely constructed lightweight aluminum frame, and direct-drive link. It's also one of the most sensitive pedals we've tested. The Variable Drive Lever (VDL), a small wing-bolt-controlled piece that fine-tunes the position of the linkage strap and changes the ratio of the footboard movement to the arc of the beater, is helpful in giving the heel-down player more power and leverage and the heel-up player more foot support and speed. The VDL wing bolt, however, which is positioned dangerously close to the base of the beater shaft, is small and a bit

awkward to adjust.

The most innovative feature of this pedal system is the EKIT electronic trigger. The trigger box attaches directly to the main column of the pedal, and the trigger detonator—a small spring-mounted brass hammer with a nylon tip—attaches to the axle. When you play, the hammer strikes the trigger box and the beater hits the head simultaneously. The EKIT can be tedious to assemble, especially on the double pedal. But the triggering quality is impressive. There's also a Beater Stop Block that attaches to the hoop-clamp assembly, allowing the pedal to convert to a stand-alone trigger pedal.

axispercussion.com



Sleek Simplicity

TRICK DOMINATOR (SINGLE, \$499.99; DOUBLE, \$1,100)

The Trick Dominator is a sleek, futuristic-looking, lightweight pedal system made from AL13 aerospace alloy with black anodized finish. It's so well designed that I easily figured out how to make adjustments without consulting the manual. That's a big plus. Another impressive feature (there are many) is the spring tension adjustment knob, which utilizes a state-of-the-art, wear-resistant, internal-compression spring that allows for precise tension adjustment on the fly using a large, well-placed knob.

The adjustable metal beater head on the Fatigue Proof beater shaft makes it easy to tweak the vertical position of the beater to accommodate different bass drum sizes without repositioning the shaft. The smooth, rectangular, rear-hinge longboard has a perfectly balanced feel. Footboard and beater angles adjust independently via a split cam system. The easily adjustable drive and beater cams include laser-engraved reference markers for pinpoint positioning.

trickdrums.com

TAYE PSK701C SINGLE (\$159), PSK702C DOUBLE (\$349)

If you're looking for a more affordable alternative to costly high-end double pedals, the new Taye PSK702C offers several professional features, including a sleek new spring assembly, an adjustable stabilizer plate, and adjustable connecting rods. The pedals are heavy, but they produce a smooth, solid feel with adjustable flathead felt beaters, a sturdy double-chain drive, and a well-balanced spring assembly. The beater angle is easily adjusted at the spring assembly, while the clever adjustable stabilizer plate allows the base plate to expand for more finesse (accommodating the heel-down player) or compress for more power (for the heel-up

player) using two easy-access wing bolts. Master and slave pedals include adjustable spikes to prevent slipping, which is especially important for the slave pedal. A flexible rubber casing protects the universal joints of the drive shaft, keeping them well lubricated and free from dust, dirt, and potential damage. The split footboard includes a toe stop and a cool engraving that helps the foot grip the board. The convenient side-mounted hoop clamp is also a plus. Although it doesn't have all the bells and whistles of the high-end models, this mid-line pedal system deserves a good look.

tayedrums.com

Affordable, Durable, And Functional



Alesis

USB PRO AND DM5 PRO KITS WITH SURGE CYMBALS

by Michael Dawson



Alesis has been a major player in the world of electronic drums since releasing the SR-16 drum machine in the early 1990s. That studio-staple beatbox has maintained a longstanding relationship with recording engineers, songwriters, and electronic drummers for three main reasons: It's easy to use, it contains a range of usable sounds, and it's reasonably priced. Alesis has strived to live up to this standard of simplicity, versatility, and affordability in all of its subsequent product releases, including the two complete electronic drumsets reviewed here—the MIDI controller USB Pro and the self-contained DM5 Pro, both with SURGE cymbals. Let's see how they fare.

SAME DIFFERENCE

The basic components of the USB Pro and DM5 Pro kits are very similar. Each setup comes with a three-sided rack consisting of 1½" plastic-coated metal tubes, plastic rack joints and drum/cymbal mounts, single-tube cymbal arms, a standalone bass drum tower, and a hi-hat controller pedal. Each kit also comes with a pair of sticks, a set of brass-alloy SURGE cymbals (12" hi-hat, 13" crash, and 16" dual-zone ride), and five drum pads. The USB Pro kit has four 8" dual-zone pads, for the toms and snare, and a single-zone 8" pad for the kick. The DM5 Pro kit has an 8" dual-zone pad for the snare; the

remaining four pads are single zone.

NOT-SO-SIMPLE SETUP

Although we were able to find a comfortable setup position with both of these kits, assembly required a considerable amount of time. The plastic rack joints and tom mounts fit very snugly on the rack pipes, so they weren't very easy to get into place or to adjust. The metal L-arms used to mount the drum pads had a limited range of motion. If you want to raise or lower the toms more than an inch or so, you have to move the entire crossbar of the rack up or down on the vertical leg posts. To adjust the angle of the pads, you have to rotate the tom mount forward or backward on the rack, since the L-arms are welded at a 90° angle.

Once we had the kits arranged the way we liked them, they proved to be sturdy enough to handle some pretty forceful hitting. The bass drum tower was stable, as was the hi-hat controller. The rack will fold into a reasonably compact bundle that should fit into the back of your SUV, if you need one of the kits for a gig or recording session.

USB PRO VS. DM5 PRO

Aside from the differences in the number of single- and dual-zone drum pads, the USB Pro (\$899) and DM5 Pro (\$999.97) are designed for very different

functions. The USB Pro kit has no sound module. Instead, it comes with the Trigger iO, which is a USB trigger-to-MIDI device that allows you to play software instruments on your computer from up to ten different electronic pads. The USB Pro combines the Trigger iO with Alesis's electronic pads and SURGE cymbals in an affordable package for drummers who don't need a high-end sound module. (A free copy of FXpansion's BFD Lite software is included with this kit.)

While I love the concept behind the USB Pro kit, I found some technical snags in its functionality that you should be aware of. First off, the default setting of the Trigger iO has all of the drum rims assigned to the same MIDI note, which is one that usually plays a bass drum sample. This seemingly minor quirk requires that you change the MIDI note of each rim trigger before the kit will function correctly, unless you like hearing random kick samples when you play rimshots on the various pads.

The triggers on the USB Pro are also susceptible to crosstalk, which is when playing one pad causes the trigger in a different pad to fire as well. Alesis is aware of this issue, so the company has published a document on its Web site to help you calibrate the Trigger iO correctly. But going through these troubleshooting steps is very time consuming. If you rush through the setup process, you'll likely skip over a very important step, result-



“REAL” ELECTRONIC CYMBALS

The Brass-alloy SURGE cymbals are designed to provide the playing experience of real cymbals. To mute the resonance, the surface of each cymbal is coated with a clear film. Piezo Smart Trigger electronics are attached to the underside of the cymbals. Crashes and hi-hats have one trigger each, and the ride has two, which allows you to designate different sounds for the bow and bell.

Like the drum pads, the SURGE cymbals gave off a lot of stick sound when I struck them. They didn't respond like thin vintage rides—they were much closer to the rigid feel of thick “rock” cymbals—but they did provide a more realistic playing experience than the plastic/rubber pads often used for cymbals on other e-kits. The hi-hat and crash triggers followed my dynamics quite well, and the dual-zone ride responded well when I switched from bell to bow. A cymbal-only three-pack of hi-hat, crash, and ride lists for \$579, or \$599 for a three-pack with “choke” capabilities.

ing in a kit that doesn't perform at its best.

It took several hours of tweaking before I found settings that responded well to my playing style. (Gain, threshold, velocity curve, and retrigger parameters can all be adjusted.) Thankfully, you have to go through this process only one time. Once I had optimized the USB Pro, I had little trouble recording convincing-sounding beats with a decent amount of subtlety. (I tested the kit using various drum VST instruments, including BFD Lite, BFD2, EZdrummer, and Superior 2.0.) Some of my notes didn't trigger when I played faster fusion-style licks, and sometimes the hi-hat controller didn't respond to my subtle open/close motions. For that type of busier playing, I had to spend a little more time fine-tuning the Trigger iO's editing parameters. When I recorded simpler grooves with standard fills, though, everything worked fine with my initial setup.

If playing software instruments isn't your thing, Alesis also offers a premium electronic drumset, the DM5 Pro with SURGE cymbals. Instead of the Trigger iO, the DM5 Pro kit comes with the well-respected DM5 module, which contains 540 sounds and twenty-one preprogrammed drumkits. More advanced e-drummers might find some of the tones in the DM5 to be a bit overhyped and artificial sounding for professional use. But there are plenty of interesting electronic and ethnic sounds, as well as some useable acoustic drum samples, that should keep you inspired during practice sessions. The DM5 Pro could also work if you play electronic

music that doesn't require a lot of nuance or extreme dynamic response.

TICK, TICK, TAP

The 8" drum pads on these kits are said to be “acoustic feeling” due to their tunable Mylar drumheads. Acoustic foam is used inside the pads, and the rims are covered with black rubber. Even though they're muffled in this way, don't expect the pads to give you the quiet “apartment proof” playing experience that you can get with mesh-head pads. These pads produced a lot of stick sound, similar to what you get when striking a Remo practice pad.

KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTING

Again, Alesis's mantra has been to provide versatile products at affordable prices. From a versatility standpoint, the USB Pro kit has a lot of promise. There were technical issues that required some time and effort to get past, but the premise behind the kit forecasts much of what's in store for electronic drumming in the coming years. Hopefully future upgrades will further refine the innovative idea of using an electronic drumset to play software instruments. The DM5 Pro kit isn't nearly as versatile as the USB Pro, since it relies on a hardware module with a fixed set of sounds (some of which may be deemed a bit outdated by users). But it functioned well and had enough cool sounds and features to make it a worthy consideration for cost-conscious buyers.

alesis.com



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QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE & JOSH HOM & JOEY GA



EAGLES OF DEATH METAL'S ME STILLO

Story by "Pistol" Pete Kaufmann
Photos by Alex Solca

BETWEEN MULTITALENTED ROCK HERO JOSH HOMME
AND STORM-BRINGING JOURNEYMAN JOEY CASTILLO,
THERE'S ENOUGH HIGH-PERFORMANCE DRUMMING
TO POWER TWO SUPERCHARGED BANDS.

It's the middle of winter, and it's eighty-five degrees. I'm in L.A., fresh off the plane from a very cold NYC, driving up the freeway to Pink Duck Studios to meet Josh Homme and Joey Castillo from Queens Of The Stone Age. Castillo holds the drum chair in Queens, and Homme (rhymes with Tommy) is the band's leader, singer, and primary guitarist. Josh is also a unique and creative drummer.

Homme plays down his kit abilities, but don't let his humility fool you. Besides being extremely involved in the drum parts on Queens records, he's the main drummer and co-creator, along with lead singer Jesse "Boots Electric" Hughes, of the band Eagles Of Death Metal.

Homme's drumming has been described as quirky, unconventional, original, and even "ass shaking" by some of the biggest musicians in the industry. EODM songs like "I'm Your Torpedo," "Prissy Prancin'," and "Tight Pants" move to an oddly funky variety of desert rock 'n' roll drums, born from a distinctive songwriter's imagination and delivered by an old-soul basher who knows *exactly* what he wants to hear in a drum performance.

Given Homme's hectic schedule, he's able to tour with Eagles Of Death Metal only when time permits. That's where things get interesting, if not a little confusing, as Castillo handles a big part of the gigging duty with EODM—when, of course, he and Homme aren't on the road or in the studio with Queens.

Castillo's enthusiasm, work ethic, and talent have taken him precisely where he wants to go, and he's filled some pretty big shoes. Joey took over the QOTSA drum chair when Dave Grohl went back to Foo Fighters after recording and touring behind Queens' 2002 album,

Songs For The Deaf. Castillo is grateful and honored to be playing in two of his favorite bands, but he's not phased by it. Listen to his playing on the Queens recordings *Lullabies To Paralyze* and *Era Vulgaris* to hear the ideas, the groove, and the commitment this mighty drummer brings to everything he plays.

Castillo is happy to go from one gig to next with very little rest, because he doesn't think of it as work. QOTSA and EODM are much more than two successful bands; they're part of a musical family tree whose branches are *way* longer than the average group's: Grohl, Jack Black, Josh Freese, Samantha Maloney, Claude Coleman Jr., Dean Ween, PJ Harvey, Billy Gibbons, Peaches, Mark Lanegan, and Rob Halford are just a few of the friends and guests they've worked with. If this were a high school gym class, theirs would be the team you'd want to play on.

As I pull up to the studio, Brian "Big Hands" O'Connor, bassist for EODM, lets me in through the gate. "B.O.C.," as he's known, is also building a deck for Homme's studio. (I told you these guys are a family!) Inside, I run into Jesse Hughes and we catch up about life, music, and what it's like playing with two completely different drummers in the same band. Hughes says he's probably one of the luckiest men on Earth to be doing what he does and collaborating with such great talent.

Just as Hughes begins playing a few new songs for me, Homme and Castillo enter. We say hello, the two drummers begin setting up their kits for the photo shoot, and I jump in and get the interview rolling. After all, it's not every day that you get to enter the kingdom of the Queens and soar with the Eagles.

JOSH AND JOEY'S FAVORITES

JOSH

Devo Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are Devo! (Alan Myers) /// **AC/DC** Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap (Phil Rudd) /// **Black Flag** all (Chuck Biscuits, Robo, Bill Stevenson) /// **Led Zeppelin** Led Zeppelin II (John Bonham) /// **Band Of Gypsies** S/T (Buddy Miles)

JOEY

Buddy Rich all /// **Led Zeppelin** all (John Bonham) /// **Fear** The Record (Spit Stix) /// **The Damned** Damned Damned Damned (Rat Scabies) /// **Chuck Biscuits** all

MD: Eagles Of Death Metal's first album, *Peace Love Death Metal*, is so stripped down and raw—the drums sound as if they were played on buckets, pots, and pans.

Josh: That album was done in two days. Taylor Hawkins gave me this kit I'm using, this little Ludwig that was in his house. I've never tuned it, and I've never cased it. Before, I was playing with pieces of stuff that Jesse and I had.

With the Eagles we kind of knew what detractors were going to say and what people who were into it were going to say. The detractors, not knowing that Eagles predates Queens Of The Stone Age, were going to be like, What's this side project? Why is Josh on drums, and who's this guy with the moustache riding coattails? It's very natural for us to do, and Jesse's moustache is not ironic.

MD: When I was touring with Amandla, the band led by Claude Coleman Jr., who was in Eagles Of Death Metal for a short time, he made me use his drums, and we never packed them in cases. He didn't pack them when he was playing drums for Eagles either because he said it cut into his "rocking time."

Josh: I used to put the other drums inside of each other like Russian dolls. [Homme and Castillo don't use bottom heads in EODM.]

MD: The late New Orleans drummer James Black said drums should be played in the gutter or on the sidewalk. It's all about playing them, not how clean or nice they look.

Josh: I also think the mystery of tuning drums is not really that big of a mystery. They key is to have a sound in your head that you'd like to hear. Otherwise, you're not quite walking toward something. If you have a specific sound in mind, you have a destination you're heading for.

MD: Speaking of sounds, it appears you have a concept in Eagles—a lot of wood-blocks, shakers, tambourines, and unique drumbeats. It sounds very thought-out.

Josh: It is. I've always had a close relationship with the drummers I've played with. [Former Queens bassist] Nick Oliveri and I got to jam with Hunt Sales [Iggy Pop, David Bowie, Todd Rundgren] when we were looking for a drummer for the Queens, and Hunt said something that's always stuck with me: "Decent drummer, good band. Great drummer, classic band."

Regarding the drum parts being interesting, I've always played guitar like a bass player, so the notion of hi-hat in the verse and ride in the chorus doesn't mean anything to me.

MD: Drummers who start on a melodic instrument often play differently from

PROPS FROM PEERS

Longtime Queens and Eagles associates give it up for Josh and Joey.

JOSH FREESE

I'm a big fan of Joey and Josh's playing, and I feel fortunate to call them friends. QOTSA and EODM are also two of my favorite bands making music today. Each has unique sounds that are defined by their distinct approaches to rhythm. As Devo's longtime drummer, I very much appreciate and can relate to Joey and Josh's angular, direct drum parts and patterns that never sound arbitrary. It just sounds *good* to me. It's what I want to hear when I get in my car most days. I like their style!

CLAUDE COLEMAN JR.

My favorite drummers have always been songwriters who can put it down pretty confidently on the kit, like Todd Rundgren, Stevie Wonder, Dean Ween—and Josh Homme. Their approach in many ways is beyond that of drummers who only play kit, and they're usually *very* specific about the parts they want on their music, down to the fills. And as a drummer, Josh is putting the roll back with the rock—getting the music to move that ass like it should be doing in the first damn place.

I've always felt a kinship with Joey. He's the last of a dying breed of *real* rock drummers who propel, push, and drive, punching you through the back of your head. It's a raging sonic force. I don't play any games on the bandstand—it's freakin' warfare—and neither does Joey. You can hear his drums coming off the stage acoustically, even under 8 million decibels of sound out of the front of the house.

SAMANTHA MALONEY

Josh Homme's approach to the drumset is different from your average drummer's. He comes to the kit with the mind of a guitarist, so his fills sometimes don't make any sense as a "drummer" would play them. At times they feel awkward to play—so wrong, yet so right—because you can no longer rely on your instincts. For me, playing drums for EODM was pure fun and also bizarrely a challenge—sometimes it was so "easy" that it was actually *hard*.

DEAN WEEN

I've gotten to work with Josh on four different albums over the years, and I like the way he uses the studio. There's a big contrast between recording and playing live, and Josh will try anything in the studio to see what happens. This is very similar to how Ween does things, so I feel right at home when I work with him. He's a very good engineer and could probably work as a producer full time if he wanted to. *Songs For The Deaf* is one of the best-sounding rock albums of the past twenty years, and a lot of those sounds came from Josh playing around with strange mics and amps and generally knowing his shit.

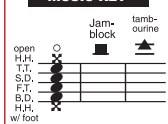


LULLABIES TO ANALYZE

by "Pistol" Pete Kaufmann

Examining the deceptively simple parts Josh Homme and Joey Castillo lay down with Queens Of The Stone Age and Eagles Of Death Metal is an advanced lesson in controlled creativity.

MUSIC KEY



QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE, "Little Sister," *Lullabies To Paralyze*, played by Joey Castillo

This is the signature Queens beat (what Homme calls "the white man's groove"), with lots of offbeat 8ths on the bass drum, a Jam Block used as an alternative

timekeeper, and very tight drumming during the verses. The bass drum plays the "&" of beats 1, 2, 3, and 4. Variations of this beat can be heard on the Queens songs "Regular John," "In My Head," and "3's & 7's." There's very little downbeat here, which creates a momentum that pushes the beat forward like a train with no brakes.



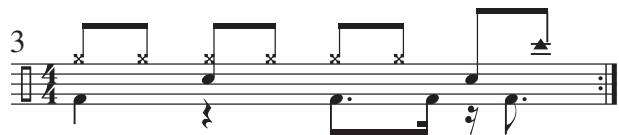
EAGLES OF DEATH METAL, "I Want You So Hard (Boy's Bad News)," *Death By Sexy*, played by Joey Castillo

Castillo shows off his powerful single-pedal mastery by playing constant 8th notes on the bass drum around beats 2 and 4 on the snare. A great example of Joey's musical drumming, it's a busy approach that nonetheless doesn't get in the way of the music. Played fast, this beat is a real workout for the bass drum foot. Another great example of Castillo's single bass drum skills can be heard on "Sick, Sick, Sick" from Queens' *Era Vulgaris* album.



EODM, "Flames Go Higher," *Peace Love Death Metal*, played by Josh Homme

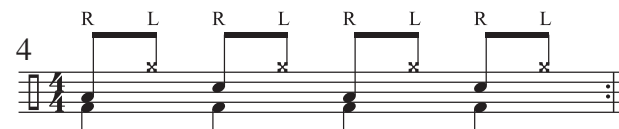
This is a funky simple groove with a lopsided feel, and it's a perfect example of Homme's "less is more" playing. Notice the tambourine on the "&" of 4, another signature sound of the Eagles. Josh barely strays from the beat and plays no fills. Ain't it funky now!



EODM, "Kiss The Devil," *Peace Love Death Metal*, played by Josh Homme

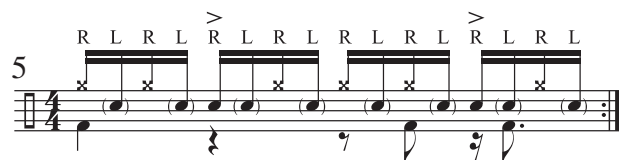
A musical display of Homme's unconventional drumming style. The right hand plays beats 1, 2, 3, and 4, alternating between the snare and floor tom, while the left hand stays on the hi-hat, filling in the "&" of every beat. The bass

drum plays quarter notes to anchor the pattern, while the hands do all the work. Be careful, though: If you play this beat too fast, you might fly away!



EODM, "(I Used To Couldn't Dance) Tight Pants," *Heart On*, played by Josh Homme

You can hear Homme's evolution as a drummer in this song. Check out his great linear playing—very James Brown-influenced and groovy. The hands are busy playing alternating 16ths (RLRL) between the hi-hat and snare, and the right hand comes back over to the snare to accent beats 2 and 4 for the backbeat. All other notes on the snare are ghosted. The bass drum is minimal, playing beat 1, the "&" of 3, and the "e" of 4. Homme considers "Tight Pants" some of his best drumming to date, and we agree.



QOTSA, "Run, Pig, Run," *Era Vulgaris*, played by Joey Castillo

Castillo says this beat, which appears during the verse, is one of the harder patterns on *Vulgaris* to play. A workout of 16th-note hand and foot combinations broken up over the kit, it creates the illusion of a double pedal. Though Joey used a double pedal for this song's chorus on the recording, he plays a single pedal live.



EODM, "Stacks O' Money," *Peace Love Death Metal*, played by Josh Homme

Homme plays a broken-up pattern between the hi-hat and snare, never using both sound sources together. Check out the full quarter-note duration of the open hi-hat, reminiscent of a guiro pattern. This is one of those deceptively easy beats; try to play it consistently for three minutes straight and you'll see what we mean. Make sure your hi-hat foot is down tight until you have to open the hats—a subtle touch that makes a huge difference.



ones who start on drums and play only drums. Did you start on drums or guitar?

Josh: When I was about eight years old, I started begging for a drumset. I would play with chopsticks on wicker trash cans. My old man told me he'd buy me a guitar, and in five years if I became an accomplished guitar player then we'd talk about getting drums. The running joke was, "Am I good enough yet?" By fifth grade I could play the set and had

the coordination with my feet.

MD: Drummers who play another instrument also don't overplay as much.

Josh: I call that a misplaced sense of vitality. I always swore I would never play with a drummer who didn't play another instrument, up until I played with Joey. Joey plays a little bit of guitar, and he would rip balls on guitar if he played all the time. He's got an absolute musical sensibility, and he plays with his

head up.

Joey: I'm especially like that in Queens. It's an unspoken language when we're up on stage. Somebody takes the lead, somebody follows, and we go for X amount of bars. It's something you have to be aware of.

Josh: You have to be able to talk songs. **Joey:** Exactly! I learned to play by listening to records. So it was always important to me to understand what a song

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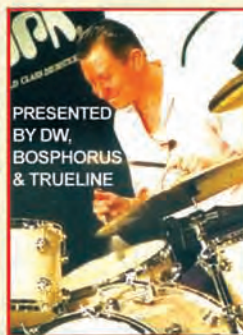
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was about—what’s happening, and why.

Josh: We need to be able to change it up night after night, so we don’t get bored.

Joey: When we do rehearsals or try to work things out for “in-stores” or something, it’s often without a kit. It’s with a tambourine, a pair of sticks, a snare—or a chair. I recently did an in-store with the Eagles where there was supposed to be a drumset, but nothing was there when we showed up. There was a wooden stool, a pair of sticks, and a tambourine, which I taped to the chair. We did six

songs that way. You’re forced to make something out of nothing.

MD: When I think of the Eagles sound, I think of early New Orleans or vaudeville, when drummers would create kits by mixing and matching various percussion instruments to come up with a new sonic palette.

Josh: The key thing about the Eagles that permeates every instrument is that rock ‘n’ roll is supposed to be fun. We had to start out with the worst stuff possible to prove we didn’t take ourselves

too seriously, and to overcome limitations. For a while I was using a drum rack, only because I can’t stand them. I also have Rototoms because that absolutely made no sense to me at all. That’s how the whole China cymbal thing started. I was always like, “China is a country.” Now it’s my favorite cymbal of all time. It’s the most expressive.

Joey: It’s a signature of the Eagles, absolutely.

MD: Former EODM drummer Gene Trautmann said it was the life of the Eagles sound.

Josh: It’s the one thing that can’t be missing from the Eagles. Let’s not just use the things we dislike the most, let’s lean on them. On the verses let’s look for something else to play other than hi-hat, another white noise to keep the time that’s different from what’s used all the time. These other percussion things don’t take up the same amount of space. They’re your “drinking buddies” all of a sudden. And then going into the chorus, the change is huge! There’s a dramatic dynamic shift that happens when you’re using less.

MD: Sometimes it’s hard to tell what you’re riding on—a rim, a closed hi-hat, a dead-sounding floor tom.... When I saw Joey recently with the Eagles, I was like, Oh, so *that’s* how it’s done.

Josh: I like to find ways that are fun to play and specifically patterned. The kick and snare relationship is more important to me than fills. To me fills should sound like an old man falling down the stairs. They need to be funny, but not in a silly way. A fill has to make me chuckle, like, “You badass!”

MD: Joey, you recorded the last two Queens albums, *Lullabies To Paralyze* and *Era Vulgaris*, but there were several great drummers in Queens before you—Alfredo Hernández, Gene Trautmann, Nick Lucero, Dave Grohl....

Josh: And none after—ha, ha, ha!

MD: You play all their parts authentically, like a studio drummer.

Josh: The hardest thing for the drummers before Joey was to respect what the other person did and be able to switch stylistically from song to song without mowing down everything—to play respectfully and be your own person at the same time. One of the things I

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said to Joey after *Songs For The Deaf* was, "You know what we need to do? *Nothing.*" I asked Joey to pull back, pare down, and serve the song harder. I knew everybody was going to try to compare Joey to Dave [Grohl]. But Joey was never worried.

Joey: Well, I was a Queens fan since day one. My old band Sugartooth played with [Homme's former group] Kyuss. All those drummers ahead of me, I've seen them with the band, respected them, and appreciated what they did. When I

came into Queens, I wasn't trying to outplay those guys, I was just grateful for the chance to be playing some of my favorite songs with my favorite band. I wanted to do the best job I could and put a bit of me on it.

Josh: We don't do open auditions, so when we needed a drummer it had to be someone we knew or who someone close to us knew well. We jammed with three or four other drummers, and I was ready to hang it up. It's hard to find someone to play with. When Joey

came by I kept saying, "Dude, you gotta come in," and he kept saying, "You do this tour first, and then I'll start learning stuff."

Joey: Because it was a lot!

MD: Where you nervous?

Joey: Of course.

Josh: No one could play it all. No one could do what the other guys were doing *and* be themselves. No one was even close. You know in about fifteen to twenty seconds. When Joey came in, we played "Avon" off the first Queens record until we made a mistake, which was at the very end. I said, "Stop right there. I'll be right back." And I left the room.

Joey: Which I thought was the *end*.

Josh: I went outside and called the dude we had been jamming with and said, "I'm sorry, it's over. It's not personal." We had eight hours to go before we left on tour. That's how much I believed I made the right decision with Joey.

Joey: *Songs For The Deaf* was just coming out, and Grohl played his balls off on it. I had a copy of the CD for two days, and it was a bit of a scary jump, but I was ready to take it.

MD: And all the Queens songs have very distinct parts and arrangements. You can't fake it.

Joey: There's no jumping in and thinking you're going to cruise through this. And I knew the history of the band. I knew the four guys that came and went before me. [laughs]

MD: And you were thinking you didn't want to be the fifth.

Joey: I told Josh that in the beginning: "You know, you have the worst rep for beating up on drummers." And he was like, "Really? I do?" [all laugh]

Josh: I think we should all try to be the best we can be and serve the song. I've never questioned that, but I've been around people who have.

Joey: That's just it. I was coming from Danzig, who is also somewhat of a drummer and a fan of the drums. I replaced Chuck Biscuits, who was my idol.

Josh: Biscuits was rad.

MD: Joey, you got a lot of your schooling playing in punk rock bands.

Joey: Yeah, my first band was Wasted Youth.

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HOMME & CASTILLO

MD: How did you adapt to a band as versatile as Queens? On *Era Vulgaris* alone, one song can be R&B oriented, like "Make It Wit Chu," which is like an Al Green/Al Jackson Jr. groove....

Joey: That's exactly what I was going for when I played that.

MD: But then you have to switch it up, like for "Battery Acid," which has an industrial kind of sound. And on "River In The Road," your beat is meringue/calypso oriented. Your musical vocabulary is very good for someone coming from a punk background.

Joey: My roots are in punk, but my playing on "Make It Wit Chu" and "River In The Road" is influenced by my love for lots of other kinds of music. I was learning how to play in Wasted Youth, but my parents listened to everything, including soul music. And in this band, everybody listens to all kinds of different things. It's not about rock, or punk, or this and that. That's boring.

MD: *Era Vulgaris* almost reminds me of a Ween album—each song is different from the others in style and sound.

Josh: We have more in common with Ween than any band out there. Because Ween plays whatever they want, whenever they feel like it, *and* they play it well. All I've ever wanted to do is be in a band that plays like a record collection, like a good mix tape. *Era* is supposed to be like a Leatherman: You can use it anywhere.

The reasons there have been so many drummers in the group is that you keep having to up the ante, and that cancels some people out. That's the gamble of trying to do what you don't see being done. There are people who aren't into the Queens, and that's totally fine. But you can't say we don't try hard, and with the Eagles it's the same thing. It ain't a joke, brother! [all laugh]

Joey: So many drummers think it's a walk in the park to play with the Eagles, but it's not. It's a real challenge to be refined and make things count and be part of this magic that happens. Josh will be the first to tell you. There's nothing more amazing in the world than an Eagles audience dancing and partying.

Josh: It's unreal.

Joey: You gotta be able to work that machine.

Josh: Girls don't dance to fills. With Eagles, I love playing a straight beat. I could play it for hours without going into something else, because it *feels* good. It gives me a weird rush. Joey understands

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HOMME & CASTILLO

that philosophy so well, and he does it so much better than I do.

Joey: Honestly, it's from playing with Josh and knowing him as long as I have.

Josh: It's about what you *don't* do, which is the hardest thing to do.

Joey: Of course, the drums are a blast, and you want to go off and show people what you have.

Josh: And you can be tempted to play more, especially when it's simple. There are times when I have to tell myself, *Don't!* Because it isn't necessary.

Joey: Phil Rudd has made it work for AC/DC. He's always been one of my favorite players, because he's so solid and in the pocket that when he *does* change it up, it's explosive.

Josh: The funny thing is, you get the sense from hearing Phil Rudd talk that people have said to him for years, "Dude, why don't you go off?" I always imagine that he just looks at the person and walks away. That would be just like his drumming style.

Ninety-nine percent of what makes up a person is the same as everyone else. That's how we relate to each other. But it's the one percent that's different that matters. Finding that one percent is the challenge.

Joey: I remember Mike Bordin, back in the Faith No More days, telling me when I was touring with Danzig, "If you just keep doing what you're doing, you're going to be fine." He said that once I accepted the fact that I was who I was and stopped trying to be just like everybody out there, I'd come into my own and people would accept me and appreciate that.

Josh: It's the endurance that people end up respecting. I love that people understand Joey now.

MD: Fans are still getting to know Joey and hear what he's got. Like on "Suture Up Your Future," from *Era Vulgaris*, he plays some nice Bonham-influenced doubles on the bass drum. And "Into The Hollow" is rockin' hard and has an R&B groove, reminiscent of "I Want To Take You Higher" by Sly & The Family Stone. It makes you want to dance, like old records did.

Josh: It has to be that. We're working through these songs, trying to write

parts together. I write a part, Joey writes a part, and it's got to be this symbiotic thing. It's about pieces that work well together.

MD: Joey, on the live Queens DVD, *Over The Years And Through The Woods*, you dig hard into the hi-hat. It really seems to anchor the groove.

Josh: The shoulder swing! It's like the way Marky and Tommy of the Ramones would play.

Joey: With the Queens, it sometimes doesn't get translated correctly, but there's a certain stiffness that turns into a groove.

Josh: I refer to it as "the white man's groove."

MD: Queens has a signature sound, and that carries over to the drums. There's a lot of upbeat 8th notes on the bass drum that push the groove forward, and a lot of the fills and kicks are syncopated and over the barline. There are also tons of signature fills that stem from the first Queens album. The drummers have changed over the years, but the drum parts have a consistency.

Josh: "Regular John" is my favorite beat.

Joey: That song in general is the Queens groove.

Josh: That's why it's the first song on the first album. For me, arguably, it's our best song. That song basically says, "It goes like this."

MD: Alfredo Hernández was the drummer on the first album. Did he create that beat?

Josh: No. I wrote that first record, and the focus was on making the drums and guitar the same thing, like a broken factory—making the same wrong thing, over and over.

MD: Isn't that what you dubbed robot rock?

Josh: Yeah, because I didn't want to be in a "stoner" rock situation, and I knew that with "the white man's groove," if everybody played stiff and mechanical it would become so funky and unstoppable.

MD: Songs like "Little Sister" and "In My Head" have that clear and precise robot rock beat, with the bass drum playing the "&" of beats 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Josh: It's gotta be danceable. That

upswing really makes people dance.

MD: That's more common with jazz and funk than with rock music. In rock, crashes and fills generally end on the downbeat, most commonly on beat 1. Queens tends to hit the "&" of 1 more often, creating a feeling that's like someone hitting you with a left hook when you're expecting a right.

Josh: There's a lot of that in the Eagles stuff too, like "Miss Alissa," off *Peace Love Death Metal*. There are cymbal shots where there's no kick or snare. That's one of my favorite songs to play. There's no fill the whole song, but it's a nightmare because the hi-hat is closed so tightly that it doesn't even wiggle when you hit it. When you take your foot off, it barely opens or moves.

MD: You can hear the evolution of the Eagles. On *Peace Love Death Metal*, it sounds very stripped down and bare. On the second album, *Death By Sexy*, you guys still have that Chuck Berry rock 'n' roll sound, but Josh, your drumming gets a bit more adventurous. Joey, you played on a few songs on that album as well, right?

Joey: I played on "Shasta Beast," "Boy's Bad News," and "Chase The Devil."

MD: Josh, I love your drum part on "Cherry Cola" on *Death By Sexy*. The drum parts are more involved than anything on *Peace Love Death Metal*.

Josh: For Eagles I've been taking advantage of where Jesse's at. With *Peace Love Death Metal*, Jesse was totally green, and it was such a beautiful moment, so I just played green. We kept it as raw and simple as possible. We made a three-record plan, which we did with Queens also. The third record, which would become *Heart On*, was supposed to be our version of *Back In Black*. The production level and songs are meant to be deeper and more involved.

MD: "High Voltage" and "I'm Your Torpedo" sound like cosmic funk, like a spaceship landed in the desert, picked up the boys, and went to outer space.

Josh: That's what it is, the spaceship Funkadelic. Jesse is a huge Parliament fan, and so are Joey and I, so that influence started creeping in. You don't need to shift out of it till it's the

right moment.

MD: To me, Queens and Eagles are kind of like that deodorant, Secret: "Strong enough for a man, but made for a woman."

Josh: You don't know how many times I've said internally that we need to be like Secret. That was the whole mantra for *Rated R*. You just made me really happy!

MD: A lot of bands that focus on technical ability attract mostly musicians and dudes. Queens has a great balance

of songs and musicianship, and at shows there's an equal blend of men and women.

Josh: I've always played for respect; I don't want anything else. But when it changes from the respect of men to the respect of ladies...

Joey: Big difference! [all laugh] "Turnin' On The Screw" on *Vulgaris* is a perfect example. It's got heavy drums, distortion, synths, and cool drum fills, and the girls love dancing to it.

Josh: That's the secret!

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MD: Tell us a little about that song.

Joey: It petrified me. I could not hear where Josh was playing the main riff.

Josh: [Guitarist] Troy [Van Leeuwen] and Joey heard it on the other side of the beat, flipped. These guys hated that song because of that.

Joey: It sounded like a hillbilly melody!

Josh: But I didn't know they were hearing it that way, so I'd switch it around, and they would switch it around on me *again*. I kept asking, "Why are you doing that?" Then I played it while tapping my foot, and it made sense to them.

MD: Joey, how did you come up with that drum part? The timekeeping is all tambourine, right?

Joey: At a rehearsal we were trying to keep the volume down, listening to the riff to hear what was happening, so I started riding the tambourine. Josh was like, "That's it! Stay there!"

MD: So that tambourine part wasn't overdubbed?

Joey: No way, dude. I played it in the studio the same way I do it live. We don't make it easier in the studio. That's

the challenge.

Josh: We do it like that 'cause it's supposed to be hard. I don't want to take the easy road, and Joey doesn't either. It should kind of hurt to play Queens songs.

Joey: Troy actually threw out his back playing "Everybody Knows That You Are Insane."

Josh: If something isn't bleeding, you should try again. [all laugh]

MD: I've heard that with Queens all the cymbals are overdubbed.

Josh: We've done that since *Rated R*.

MD: What do you hit instead of a cymbal?

Josh: It started out with towels on the cymbals, but now we use V-Drum pads, because then you're hearing cymbals in your head. We still need something to hit because it affects the groove.

The challenge separates the men from the boys. I started doing it because of a conversation I had with engineer Chris Goss six years earlier: "What if we had no cymbals and then you overdubbed them?" You could do things sound-wise to the drums that couldn't normally be done. On "Better Living Through Chemistry" from *Rated R*, we

pull the drums out and the cymbals are still there. Then we bring 'em back in and it's like, "Hey!"

MD: Joey, do you find it tricky playing those quirky Eagles drum parts?

Joey: It's starting to become natural. I understand why Josh is doing those parts; I know why he's stripped it down. "Anything 'Cept The Truth," from the last Eagles record, is one of the most fun songs to play. I wouldn't have played it that way, but watching Josh do it, and then having to replicate it, is a blast. And it's made me a better drummer.

MD: What were some of the more challenging songs to play on *Era Vulgaris*?

Joey: "Run, Pig, Run" was tough because it was very physical going back and forth between the hands and feet, plus there are quick breaks. We recorded that live, except for the cymbals.

MD: It sounds like you're playing 16th notes on a double pedal in the chorus. I don't recall you normally playing a double kick.

Joey: I use a single pedal live, but I used a double pedal for just that one part on the album. The verses are

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broken up between the floor tom and kick drum.

MD: On the live DVD, "Song For The Dead" looks like boot camp training for drummers. It's got Grohl's parts—which are tough to play to start—plus a pretty involved arrangement and a drum solo over a vamp. By the end you look exhausted because the band is playing it a lot faster than on the album.

Joey: Josh doesn't like it to be one way. He likes to push, he likes to pull, and I have to be able to move with him. I can usually read his body language pretty well. "Song For The Dead" is very physical, and obviously you can see that. We've pulled tempos back since then, though it depends on how the band is feeling.

MD: On "Sick, Sick, Sick" from *Era Vulgaris*, there's a lot of nice bass drum work, especially that four-on-the-floor part during the breakdown. How did that come about?

Joey: Josh said he wanted to do something with no fills at all. Just kick and snare. But he wanted it to be somewhat of a conversation between his guitar

and the drums. I think we did that song in one take.

MD: Two Eagles songs in particular come to mind in terms of creative drum parts. "Kiss The Devil" from *Peace Love* has a really cool 16th-note pattern broken up between both hands on the hi-hat and snare. Did you take a similar approach to the song "Tight Pants" from *Heart On*?

Josh: I wanted to funkify it. The roots of the song come from Jesse, who is heavily influenced by funk. "Tight Pants" was kind of my triumph for this record. It feels so good to play that beat. Same with "Kiss The Devil," where the left hand is on the hi-hat and I'm just alternating my right hand between snare and floor tom.

MD: Josh, when you first started touring as the drummer, did you have any problems because of lack of endurance?

Josh: Yeah. We rehearsed for hours and hours because I needed to get my wind up to play full shows. Joey really helped me because I was holding the sticks the wrong way and getting a crazy pain that was shooting through

my wrists. I was having to tape the drumsticks to my hands because the pain made my hands want to open.

MD: Early on, did you hit any serious clams or have any major train wrecks?

Josh: Some, but you just keep going. But to be honest, I never care about that, and the Eagles audiences never cared either. They're like, Don't worry about it, just go! And it doesn't really happen anymore.

MD: You've become a better drummer since the first Eagles album.

Josh: When we did *Peace Love Death Metal*, I didn't have the opportunity to play all the time, and that's why I was so excited about it. Now that I have more chances to play, I take it. It doesn't matter that I'm not the world's best drummer, I just like it. And that's how I feel about the Eagles in general. To dissect the Eagles is far beyond a waste of time. The relevant question is, Do you like it? And at this point in my life I'm only focused on pursuing the things I love.



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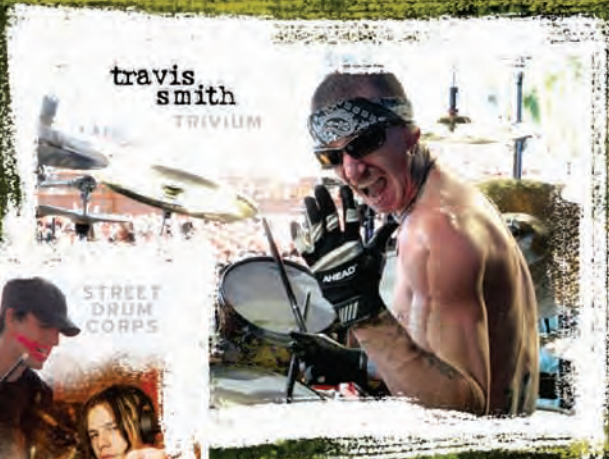
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The DEAD
WEATHER's

Jack White

by "Pistol" Pete Kaufmann

Richard Sibbald

Yes, *that* Jack White. The frontman for **the White Stripes** and **the Raconteurs**, the killer guitarist, singer, producer, writer, and engineer...well, he's a drummer too, **and a great one at that.**

Jack White doesn't need much of an introduction. He's *the* Renaissance man of his musical generation, hands down: a rock star with brains, skills, opinions, style, taste, and an uncanny ability to master every aspect of music making. Even the drums.

Some people might be surprised by or suspicious of White's latest role as drummer in the Dead Weather. But be assured, this is no star maneuver; Jack played every lick on the band's debut album, *Horehound*, and he stays behind the kit live. And to those familiar with his backstory, or those who noticed his awesome drumming performance on "Another Way To Die," his duet with Alicia Keys from the James Bond movie *Quantum Of Solace*, the drummer/leader role almost seems to be what his career has been leading up to. In fact, White started playing drums as a teenager before he began playing guitar, and his first professional tour was drumming in the band Goober & The Peas. So this is not unfamiliar territory for him.

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The Dead Weather comprises White on drums and vocals, Alison Mosshart of the Kills on lead vocals, Dean Fertita from Queens Of The Stone Age on guitar, and the Raconteurs' Jack Lawrence, aka Little Jack, on bass. *Horehound* is as rock 'n' roll as it gets: dirty, raw, groovy, and driven by heavy distorted guitars and open-sounding drums reminiscent of the old days of bluesy rock. White's drumming is powerful, musical, fluid, and creative. And he switches gears with ease—one minute channeling Led Zep's John Bonham on "Treat Me Like Your Mother," the next reminding us of Sabbath's Bill Ward on the Bob Dylan cover "New Pony."

The album's first single, "Hang You From The Heavens," opens with a funky, broken-up, syncopated drumbeat with open hi-hat barks almost as raunchy as Zigaboo Modeliste's famous grooves with the Meters. And White's swinging funk feel on "I Cut Like A Buffalo" and dirty surf-rock rumba on "Rocking Horse" are ridiculously creative and grooving.

You can also hear Jack's influence oozing out of *Horehound's* production. The album was recorded in White's new studio, Third Man, and he worked extremely hard at getting the right drum sounds. MD had a chance to catch up with the Jack of many trades on a rainy day in New York City while the Dead Weather was in town for a show at the Bowery Ballroom.

MD: Many people are unaware that you started off on drums. You've come full circle.

Jack: Yeah, and I'm so glad. I grew up doing nothing but wanting to be a drummer. I started out when I was fourteen. I got a 4-track reel-to-reel, and I needed to play drums to something, so I taught myself how to play guitar. I learned about recording techniques through that process as well.

MD: Well, the production on the album is great; it sounds like what rock 'n' roll was originally like—dirty. And you can hear the natural tone of everything.

Jack: Thank you. I'm glad you think that because we were really aiming for that. I designed the studio from scratch. It has everything I've wanted in a studio for the last decade. I have the microphones I want, and the Neve board is incredible. We only used eight tracks—and no computers. It just feels so soulful, and when we play things back it sounds exactly how we want it to sound. The acoustical techniques that I designed into the framework of the building are lending to it as well.

MD: The drums definitely have a '60s/'70s rock 'n' roll vibe.

Jack: In my mind there's an arc of where the sound on records changed from the '60s to the '70s to the '80s, when all the digital technology came in.

I can't help but rewind and say, Okay, when did music sound the best? I mean, is there a guitar amp that sounds better than a blackface Fender Twin Reverb? Is there a better-sounding microphone than a Neumann U 47? Not really.

And it's not about trying to be retro or trying to re-create something that happened on some record I had when I was twelve years old. All I want is for the tones to be as soulful and rich as possible. As opposed to when I was ten or twelve and literally using drums I found trash picking, now I'm blessed with the opportunity and the ability to design the studio myself and design from scratch a drumset for live performance and for recording, which I did with Ludwig. It was so cool for them to allow me to design this unique set with all these components put together in one kit. This kit is just so *full* sounding to me.

MD: I love the sound on "Will There Be Enough Water?" The bass drum sounds so open, like a jazz kit. And you don't put the bass drum in till much later; when it comes in it has such personality.

Jack: If you withhold the bass drum, it's like not bringing the bass guitar in until the second verse—you think it's already there, but when it enters you're like, Holy hell, now the song is just exploding! Also, a lot of old records have that

Jack's Dead Weather Kit



Drums: Ludwig Classic Maple in black oyster. 16x26 kick, 5x16 snare with Millennium strainer and Vibra-Band mount, 12x14 marching snare with P-87 Classic strainer and gut snares, 7x16 rack tom with Vibra-Band mount, 14x16 floor tom, two 16x16 floor toms. The kit also has a matching 12x22 Seat Case throne and a matching 16x18 second bass drum that White has dubbed "the jazz cannon."

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implied bass drum that you can't really hear—like Little Richard, Chuck Berry, even Rolling Stones records where you're like, Is there a kick in there?

This whole album was recorded with either two tracks of drums or mono on one track. Nobody's doing that anymore—mono drums. We did that with Patrick Keeler's drums on "Steady As She Goes" from the first Raconteurs album. You'd never think that was mono. The funniest thing, we licensed the song to a video game, and we had to send them stems on each track [to split for the video track]. They were like, "Where's the drum stem? It's not stereo—it's just one track. We don't get it!" [laughs]

MD: Does producing from behind the kit change how you look at things now?

Jack: Of course! The scary thing is, I'm preferring it. As the producer, it's almost like I'm finally getting to conduct the orchestra. As the songwriter you always give direction to the drummer, like, "Here's the tempo." With the White Stripes I'll write on piano and think, *We'll make it electric when I get with Meg.* And then she brings that really childlike cavewoman thing to the song and it takes on this whole new life. The structure becomes really guttural, so that becomes in control of the song, which is great.

But I love being the drummer and being so hands-on as a producer. And I gotta tell you, this kit really has unique tones. I have a 16" snare drum instead of a 14", and in front of it I have a shal-

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JACK WHITE

low 16" rack tom. So they're both sort of the same drum—one with chains, one without. It's almost like I'm hitting a snare without chains on it, but I lower the pitch so it sounds really deep. And I have a marching snare—that's the really high snare sound on "Cut Like A Buffalo." Then I have two 16" floors and a 14" floor, so I have three and three. With the 26" bass drum, I had split the front head when I was trying to put a hole in it, so I put one on with no hole. All the subwoofer elements of the drum came out, and that changed the tone of the whole kit in the studio.

MD: Your version of the Bob Dylan song "New Pony" almost sounds like a Black Sabbath jam. Your drumming is so loose and so fluid, like Bill Ward.

Jack: That was wild. That was done totally live, including the backup vocals, and it was the first take. It just had so much energy to it.

MD: How about "Hang You From The Heavens"?

Jack: That's us playing at different speeds. I played the high-pitched marching snare drum at a slow tempo,

so when we sped it up it sounded twice as high. And we did the opposite with the other snare, recording it at a high speed and then slowing down the tape. We did that as overdubs, but I mimic that when we rehearse and play live.

MD: "Heavens" is really funky, especially when the drum breakdown comes in. The high-pitched sound in the background is almost like Clyde Stubblefield's snare on James Brown records.

Jack: Oh yeah, and we accidentally erased those drums. The tape was at the wrong spot when we pressed record, so I had to redo all those drum overdubs. But we topped it—we came back with something better. That's something you don't get with Pro Tools; things don't actually get erased, so you don't have to force yourself to come up with something new. You just recall it.

MD: Your drumming is so earthy, it almost sounds like Levon Helm or some old R&B drummer. Who were your influences?

Jack: When I was younger I was in love with Gene Krupa—listened to the Carnegie Hall concert all the time. Then

I got into Ian Paice when I was a teenager, then Stewart Copeland, and then I fell in love with this drummer called Crow from the Flat Duo Jets. He pretty much had this one rockabilly beat, but it was such a good beat you could listen to it all day long. That got me back into the older drummers from the rockabilly and surf eras, and then back to big-band drummers, like Lionel Hampton.

MD: Your pocket is the first thing I noticed when I heard *Horehound*. It doesn't sound like someone who just started playing drums again. It sounds like someone who never stopped in the first place.

Jack: That's good to hear, man. What's great is that I'm working with Little Jack on bass; he's been in so many projects with me, and I'm finally in the rhythm section with him for the first time. But I said, "Look, I gotta tell you, like I do with the White Stripes or when I perform live, I get so into it that I start playing things fast." There aren't other musicians to keep us in time, like there are in the Raconteurs. Though with the Stripes, the more you get into it, the more the audience feeds off it, and you can feel that energy from the crowd. If we always played it like the album, some songs would feel dead.

MD: Speaking of the Stripes, I saw you play, and once when Meg hit the cymbal I watched you catch it. It was very loose and organic; there was no real set list. I got a similar feeling with "60 Feet Tall" from the Dead Weather album. It progressed into blues changes later in the song, and it sounded like Alison wasn't aware that you guys were going into that section.

Jack: Yeah, that's what happened. That was done live. We just went through it once or twice—nothing written down. There was no discussion ahead of time about playing louder or softer in different parts of the song. That long space in the beginning when I play that fill was completely unplanned. That's why we wanted that to be the first song on the album; it just sort of spelled out what we want it to be about.

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DRUMSET ARTISTS OF BRAZIL

Samba, Bossa, And Beyond

by Chuck Silverman

So many drummers from all around the world have much to share with us. They move us with the rhythms of their respective countries. These rhythms, some of which are mixtures from many cultures, have a way of reaching down deep into our soul that makes us want to explore them and bring them to our own drumming. A number of these rhythms have become a standard part of our drumming culture, while others remain fixed in their country of origin. Likewise, some of the drummers who play these rhythms are well known around the world, and others are not.

My mission as a professional musician has been to share the beauty of these various styles with all drummers and to show how the rhythms can be used as building blocks for developing your own way of expressing yourself on the drums.

The rhythms of Brazil have been deeply rooted in my drumming for decades now. I've been very fortunate to travel to Brazil to perform, to learn, and to cast myself into the deep cauldrons of drums and drumming found in various regions of the country. I know I'm but a child when it comes to learning about the rhythms of Brazil. Each neighborhood in each city has its own way of interpreting rhythms. But learning and sharing is my goal. With that in mind, I want to introduce to you seven great drumset artists of Brazil: Robertinho Silva, Christiano Rocha, Ramon Montagner, Giba Favery, Celso de Almeida, Tutty Moreno, and Teo Lima.

Chuck Silverman has been involved with drums and percussion for forty-two years. His book *Practical Applications* was named as one of *MD's* "25 Greatest Drum Books" (August '93). Chuck has had a long-standing love affair with Cuban, Brazilian, and Uruguayan music. Visit chucksilverman.com for more information about drums, drumming, and a new DVD project, *The Latin Funk Connection*. Chuck is on the faculty of the Musicians Institute in Hollywood, California.



ROBERTINHO SILVA was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1941. His many influences include styles emanating from all over the country: Afro-Brazilian rhythms such as ijexá, capoeira, and maculelê; rhythms from the northeast regions of Brazil, like baião, maracatú, and forró; and so many more. Silva's drumming influences include Luciano Perrone—"the Pope of Brazilian drums"—and Plínio Araújo, who's been playing with the Orquestra Tabajara for sixty-three years. Silva also credits bossa nova drummers Edison Machado, Dom Um Romão, and Milton Banana, plus American jazz drummers Philly Joe Jones, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, and Tony Williams, as having a major impact on his music.

When asked how someone who hasn't been exposed

to Brazilian music should begin to learn about it, Robertinho suggests, "Listen to the music, feeling the way it swings. It's different from anything else. Brazil has a huge variety of rhythms. We have more than fifty rhythms that are 'registered,' and many others are in a phase of study and discovery. It demands dedication to learn about Brazilian music."

Silva has created the Batucadas Brasileiras school, for students between fourteen and twenty-five years old who come from low-income families, and the Orquestra De Percussão Robertinho Silva percussion group. Visit www.batucadasbrasileiras.org.br to find out more about Robertinho's school.

myspace.com/robertinhosilva50



TUTTY MORENO was born in the rhythm-rich city of Salvador, in the state of Bahia, Brazil. He's one of the true purveyors of Brazilian jazz drumming. He began playing drums at sixteen, after first playing trumpet and saxophone. His primary influences are John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Elvin Jones, '60s-era Tony Williams, and Brazilian drummer Edison Machado.

Moreno always begins his daily practice by playing very fast tempos at very soft levels. This helps him develop dynamic control.



CELSO DE ALMEIDA was born in 1960 in Tupa, a small country town in São Paulo. His very first influence was his father, Ary de Almeida, who was also a drummer. Ary introduced Celso to the music of Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa, and such Brazilian drummers as Edison Machado and Rubens Barsotti. De Almeida enjoys listening to Jeff Hamilton, Clarence Penn, Peter Erskine, Brian Blade, and Vinnie Colaiuta, as well as Brazilians Panticco Rocha, Cezinha, Toinho Batera, Jorge "Samba" Gomes, Jorginho Gomes, Lêlo Izar, Marcio Bahia, and Edu Ribeiro.

myspace.com/celsodealmeida



GIBA FAVERY, who lives in São Paulo, has been playing drums for twenty-three years. He credits Buddy Rich, Neil Peart, John Bonham, Stewart Copeland, Steve Gadd, and Joel Rosenblatt, along with Brazilian drummers Celso de Almeida, Eriavelton Silva, Toninho Pinheiro, Paulo Braga, and Kiko Freitas, as his influences.

When asked to characterize the differences between samba and bossa nova, two of the most common Brazilian rhythms, Favery says, "In bossa, the dynamics are usually very soft and controlled, which makes the use of brushes applicable. The rim-click patterns of samba—many times based in rhythms of samba de roda and partido alto—are usually more free than in bossa. The tempos in bossa aren't usually very fast, while in samba there is more room for tempo differences, from the slow pace of samba-canção to extremely fast tempos around 160 bpm."

gibafavery.com.br



CHRISTIANO ROCHA lives in the city of São Paulo. He started playing drums at the age of fourteen. At seventeen he began more formal study at the Talentus Music School, where he soon became a teacher. Rocha, who has written a wonderful book about Brazilian drumset, *Bateria Brasileira*, points out that not just music but many things in life—art, nature, and other diverse subjects—influence his drumming. He also lists Vinnie Colaiuta and Jeff Ballard, along with Brazilian greats Milton Banana, Rubens Barsotti, Celso de Almeida, Cuca Teixeira, and Carlos Bala, as some of his musical inspirations.

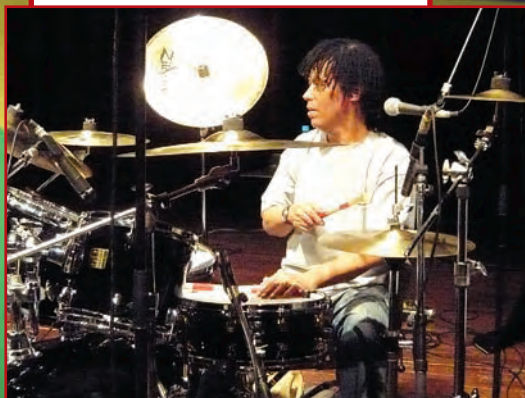
When asked what categorizes Brazilian music, Chris answers, "The rhythms, melodies, and chord progressions are unique. The music translates the land's geography and people's soul. The weather and women are inspirational. And bossa nova translates the spirit of Rio."

christianorocha.com

TEO LIMA was born in Maceió, in the Brazilian state of Alagoas. He heard a lot of Jackson do Pandeiro, Luiz Gonzaga, and other musicians who were adapting the folkloric rhythms of the north and northeast part of Brazil. When Teo moved south to Rio de Janeiro, he started listening to the American bands of Henry Mancini, Woody Herman, and others. He has also been influenced by the modern sounds of the Brecker Brothers, Herbie Hancock, and Claus Ogerman. Lima enjoys listening to drummers Harvey Mason, Steve Gadd, Peter Eskine, Lula Nascimento, Wilson das Neves, Dom Um Romão, Edison Machado, and Rubens Barsotti.

When asked how to become acquainted with the world of Brazilian music, Lima suggests, "Listen to music with Brazilian influences. If you listen to samba coming from other places, you will not understand Brazilian music. It would be like learning jazz from Brazilian musicians. You might be able to assimilate the harmony, but the rhythmic application would be the difference."

myspace.com/teolimadrummer



RAMON MONTAGNER, born in 1975, lives in Campinas, in the state of São Paulo. He started playing guitar at age ten and switched to drums when he was twelve. Montagner's family is musically inclined, which, of course, had an influence on Ramon as a young boy. But he was also captivated by hard rock and heavy metal drummers like Nicko McBrain, Neil Peart, and Carmine Appice. His other influences include Vinnie Colaiuta, Art Blakey, Brian Blade, Horacio Hernandez, Ignacio Berroa, Bill Stewart, and Brazilian drummers like Tutty Moreno and Teo Lima.

Montagner mixes percussion into his drumset playing in an amazing way. He invented a unique blended setup called "percuteria," which he uses on various gigs. "I started to incorporate percussion into my drumset in my work with Brazilian Duet, a duo with Alexandre Cunha that created Brazilian rhythms for two drums and percussion," Ramon says. A key component of Montagner's style is working two pedals with his left foot at the same time. He can play many rhythms, like maracatú, ijexá, samba, and agogo patterns, using two blocks with different pitches. Ramon recently released an instructional DVD called *Brushes With Brazilian Music*, which explains the essence of playing Brazilian rhythms such as samba with brushes.

ramonmontagner.com



Turn the page to check out a series of insightful lessons from these modern masters.

DRUMSET ARTISTS OF BRAZIL

MUSIC KEY

open	R.C.	Add 1
H.H.	Bell	T.T.
T.T.		
S.D.		
F.T.		
B.D.		
H.H. w/foot	rim-click	F.T. rim
		L.H. F.T. (no stick)

The following grooves and exercises come from **Christiano Rocha**. Here's the basic ostinato for the piece "Baião De Três." The hi-hat opens on every third 8th note. Rocha uses this ostinato as the basis for drum solos.

1 $\text{♩} = 130$

Here's the basic jequibau rhythm, which was created in the 1960s in São Paulo. It's in 5/4, but the hi-hat is played in 2/4.

2 $\text{♩} = 144$

Bom Retiro is a samba played in 7/8. This pattern appears on acoustic guitarist Zezo Ribeiro's album *Gandaia*.

3 $\text{♩} = 270$

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

The following samba surdo (bass drum) pattern is good for developing the swing and accents of samba. Play it on a floor tom, using the palm of the left hand and a stick held in the right.

4 $\text{♩} = 106$

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

Here's a samba in 9/8. The hi-hat plays a pattern in 2/4.

5 $\text{♩} = 206$

Rocha plays this rhythm on the final part of the title track of his CD *Ritmismo*. Each limb plays a different meter. The bass drum is in 2/4, the hi-hat is in 3/8, the toms are in 7/16, and the ride is in 5/16.

6 $\text{♩} = 206$



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This is an adaptation of the samba de roda rhythm from southeast Brazil. The hi-hat plays a rhythmic pattern that is traditionally rendered using handclaps.

7

This is a samba reggae groove in 7/8.

8

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

In this bossa nova pattern, the left foot and the rimclicks are playing opposing rhythms.

9

The following samba/bossa grooves are from **Celso de Almeida**.

10

11

12

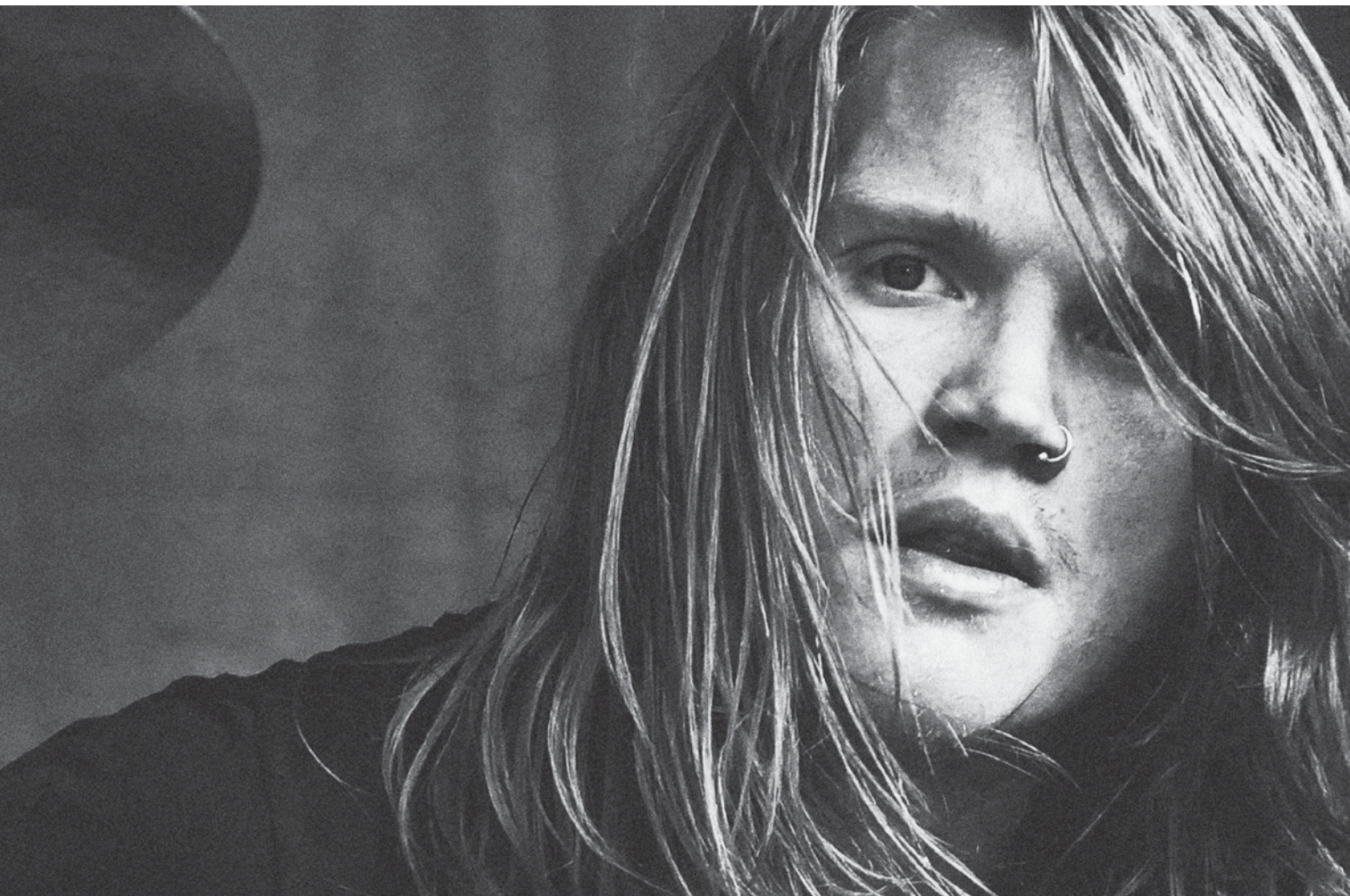
13

14

15

16

17



DRUMSET ARTISTS OF BRAZIL

18 


These three bossa nova grooves come from **Tutty Moreno**. They're much more funky than the straightforward bossas that are often transcribed in method books.

19 

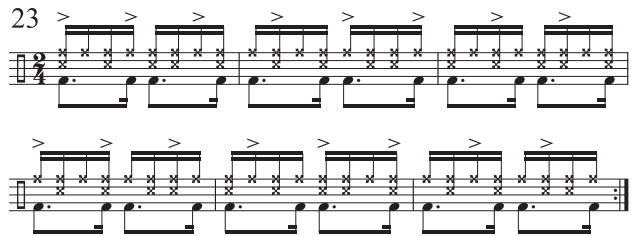
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21 

These exercises, from **Giba Favery**, were created in order to develop velocity and endurance. Use a three-part motion—accent, tap, upstroke—with one smooth movement, similar to the Moeller stroke.

22 


Once you have that smooth ostinato under control, add the following left-hand rimclick pattern, which is taken from the telecoteco rhythm that's traditionally played on the tamborim.

23 

For an advanced samba groove, play the following ostinato with the left hand (hi-hat and snare) and the feet.

24 

Now play around the toms and snare with the right hand.

25 

Here are two samba-funk grooves.

26 

27 

Here's an example of samba reggae. The snare should be played with one hand.

28 

Now layer on some melodic tom patterns with the other hand. Here are two possibilities.

29 

30 

I hope these lessons offer greater insight into the world of Brazilian drumming. Check out **modern drummer.com** for video lessons with some of the artists included in this article.



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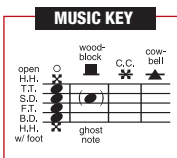
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Nouveau Retro

PART 3: CLASSIC SWING

by Daniel Glass



This series of articles focuses on classic genres that helped create the blueprint for how we play today. Although these styles may not be

stock market crash of 1929, which triggered a worldwide economic depression, forcing millions into unemployment and an uncertain

with jazz, the “hot” music that had been evolving over the previous two decades in places like New Orleans, Chicago, and Kansas City. In time,



Duke Ellington's group featured fifteen players, typical of a big band in the classic swing era. Check out drummer Sonny Greer's monster rig, complete with timpani, vibraphone, chimes, and gongs. And people thought Neil Peart was the first guy to do this!

prominent on your radar screen, knowing a bit about each of them will connect you more deeply with your craft, not to mention make you more employable. Last time we talked about the rhythm and blues of the 1940s and '50s. Now let's turn back the clock even further and focus on the era of classic swing.

Swing as a genre arose from the

future. With no relief in sight, Americans turned to inexpensive forms of popular culture as a means of escape. They fled to darkened movie houses, learned to dance by the millions, and embraced a new low-cost medium called radio, which offered access to free news and entertainment.

Accessibility to the airwaves allowed Americans to become more familiar

many began to view jazz—with its joyful, foot-stompin' beats and electrifying musicianship—as the perfect antidote to the woes of depression-era America. By the mid-1930s, swing (as it was now called) emerged as America's pop music of choice.

The rise of swing was fueled by a generation of young people who saw in jazz music and dance a means to cele-

Getting Started 5 key recordings to introduce you to the sound of classic swing

Benny Goodman, *Live At Carnegie Hall*. If you're looking for the perfect introduction to swing, go no further than this album, which is the first “live” record ever released. Aside from its incredible sound quality and stellar performances, the legendary 1938 concert features the sensational drumming of Gene Krupa.

Count Basie, *Ken Burns Jazz*. Basie's rhythm sections set the gold standard for sheer swingability. Hear the four-beat style at its finest on this classic collection, which features Basie's two best-known drummers, “Papa” Jo Jones and Sonny Payne.

The Rhythm Club All-Stars, *Introducing The Rhythm Club All-Stars*. This modern quartet (led by yours truly) presents a contemporary take on the 1930s sound. The disc provides clearer fidelity than older

recordings, so you can hear many of the concepts discussed in this article: press rolls, vintage hi-hat grooves, cowbell/woodblock fills, and swing-style solos.

Woody Herman, *The Thundering Herds, 1945–47*. Woody Herman's bands always injected plenty of cutting-edge musicianship into their swing. This burning release features three of the most celebrated drummers to emerge from the swing era, Dave Tough, Don Lamond, and Buddy Rich.

John Kirby Sextet, 1941–43. In addition to big bands, classic swing also had its share of important small groups. John Kirby's band is one of the hidden gems of the era, as it managed to create a tremendous sound and swing with just six members, including drummer O'Neil Spencer.



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brate in the face of tough times. Swing became the soundtrack to their struggles, and the vehicle that carried this style to the world was the big band. Leaders like Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and Glenn Miller emerged as kings of the genre, while tub thumpers like Gene Krupa, Dave Tough, and Chick Webb elevated the status of the drummer to a whole new level.

The role of swing intensified when the U.S. entered World War II in 1941. During these dark days, music helped to prop up the nation by filling Americans with patriotic fervor. To our wartime allies, swing music and dance personified the American ideals of hope, freedom, and equality. In short, swing transformed jazz from a relatively obscure subculture to a bona fide

American art form, and it helped establish the U.S. as a global trendsetter in pop culture.

Let's examine how classic swing was expressed on the drumset.

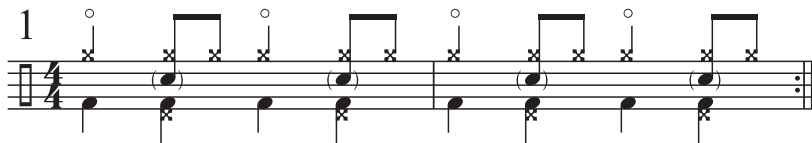
The bass drum. It's important to remember that although classic swing is a form of jazz, it evolved *before* bebop and other "straight ahead" styles that we associate with jazz today. Whereas modern jazz stresses complex syncopated rhythms, swing was *dance* music, plain and simple. As such, the primary job of the drummer was to create a smooth, pulsating groove that mirrored the walking feel of the bass. This four-beat pulse—as mastered by drummers like Count Basie's "Papa" Jo Jones—was anchored in the bass drum and hi-hat.

Playing quarter notes on the bass drum might seem like no big deal. But keeping a relaxed feel at low volumes takes some practice, especially if you're used to hitting the drum with Bonham-like intensity. Start by placing your heel on the footplate of the pedal. Tap the head lightly, then allow the pedal's spring action to immediately bring your foot back. Picture the motion as a nudge rather than a punch, and stay focused on the rebound rather than the downward force. If you're doing it right, your bass drum will be more felt than heard.

The hi-hat. Another element that played a role in the swing sound was the invention of the hi-hat, which first appeared around 1931. This dual-cymbal apparatus, consisting of a spring-action pedal and a long vertical tube that allows the cymbals to be positioned just above the snare, quickly became the main instrument for keeping time. When combined with the four-beat bass drum pulse, the hi-hat created a smooth groove that drove dancers into a frenzy.

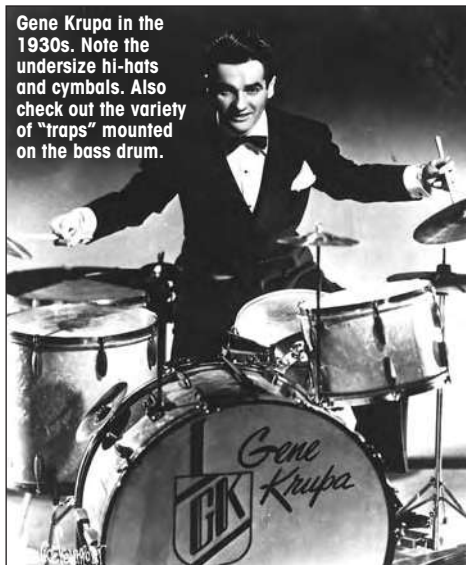
It's important to point out that ride cymbals 20" in diameter or larger didn't become commonplace until the rise of bebop in the mid-1940s; during the classic swing era, the main timekeeper was the hi-hat. Keep that in mind when you approach swing era standards like "In The Mood" or "Take The 'A' Train." Another interesting fact is that the first hi-hat cymbals were smaller than the ones we typically use today (10" to 12" in diameter vs. 14" or 15"). Experiment with smaller and thinner cymbals, and you'll have a much easier time capturing an authentic swing feel.

Here's a basic swing groove. Make sure the hi-hat and bass drum dominate and the level of the snare sits just underneath. Remember to push the time along as if you're gently thumping someone in the butt with a pillow.



Press rolls. One weapon that swing drummers kept in their arsenal was the press roll, a holdover from the early days of jazz, when timekeeping was still associated with rudimental and marching drumming. Using press rolls is a great way to change up the

Gene Krupa in the 1930s. Note the undersize hi-hats and cymbals. Also check out the variety of "traps" mounted on the bass drum.



intensity of your groove, and the rolls can be played in any number of variations.

To play swing-style press rolls, start by playing quarter notes with the right hand against 2 and 4 in the left.



Now bounce the left-hand stick on the head to create a buzz.



Here's a more complex example, in which both hands play the buzz strokes.



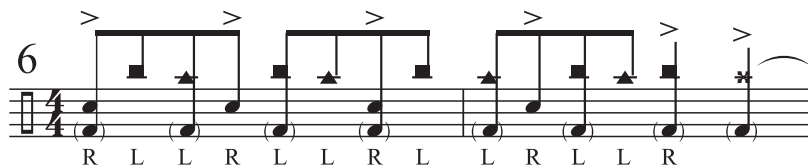
Fills. During the classic swing era, fills (a shortened form of the term *fill-ins*) were radically different from what we're used to playing today. Although tom-toms were starting to assume a larger role in the overall drum sound, the majority of swing drummers still played fills on cowbells, woodblocks, and other "traps" that had characterized the sound of early jazz. Crash cymbals were smaller and thinner, creating more of a splash-like effect than the explosive sounds we expect today.

Drummers rarely placed crashes on beat 1 of the bar following a fill. Such a move was seen as stepping on the beginning of the next phrase and was therefore frowned upon. Instead, fills were often played with a three-against-four polyrhythmic feel, followed by a crash on beat 4.

The following example is what a typical swing fill looks like. To get the right feel, start on a single surface and play the accented notes with the right hand and the unaccented notes with the left.



Once you get used to that sticking, and to playing crashes on beat 4, try moving the left hand to a variety of surfaces while keeping the right hand on the snare. The bass drum plays steady quarter notes.



Next month we'll get into the heart of early rock 'n' roll.

Since 1994, **Daniel Glass** has played drums with the pioneering "retro swing" group Royal Crown Revue. He has also recorded and performed with Bette Midler, Gene Simmons, Mike Ness, Freddy Cole, and many others. Daniel's writings on drum history have appeared in *The Encyclopedia Of Percussion*, *MusicHound Swing: The Essential Album Guide*, and numerous other music and drumming publications. His latest book is *The Commandments Of Early Rhythm And Blues Drumming* (cowritten with Zoro). You can learn more about Daniel's obsession with classic American music at danielglass.com.



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Top 10 Rudiments

PART 6: HAND-TO-HAND FLAMS

by Bill Bachman

Playing alternating flams demands a certain amount of chops. Fast hand-to-hand flams require whipping Moeller strokes, which is a natural motion that many drumset players use every time they sit down to play. If you can master the technique needed to play hand-to-hand flams, your accent/tap motion will become much stronger and faster while requiring less energy.

A flam is simply a grace note tied to a main stroke. The primary note has metric value and should land exactly in time. The grace note is used to add texture and thickness to the sound and should be placed just before the primary note. If the grace note hits at the same time as the primary note, then you're playing a "flat flam," which is actually a double stop (two notes in unison) and not a flam at all.

A player with good control can play both tight flams, where the grace note is placed very close to the primary note, and wide (or fat) flams, where there's a bigger space between the grace note and the primary stroke. Ultimately, grace note placement is a musical choice based on style, drumhead response, and speed.

Let's look at the technique you'll need to play alternating flams at slow and medium speeds. Each hand plays a high accent stroke followed by a low grace note. Use the downstroke/upstroke technique for these. Be sure to squeeze the stick a bit with your fingers after the accent in order to freeze the stick pointing down toward the drum. Then play a relaxed low grace note as an upstroke, since you'll need to lift the stick for the following accent. Avoid hitting the accents extra hard and with tight strokes, where your fingers are squeezing the stick while you play the grace notes. Other than the split second after the accent, when you stifle the stick's rebound, everything should flow smoothly. Note that the downstroke is also commonly referred to as a staccato stroke. *Staccato* is the musical term meaning short and separated, which in this case refers to the accent's hand motion being short and separate from the following grace note's hand motion.

If you tried playing fast hand-to-hand flams using the above technique, your wrists would tighten up and seize, since there's not enough time to stop the stroke, restart the motion, and then lift up. This is where the Moeller stroke comes in: to replace the wrist motion with a forearm motion. When you use the forearm, the wrist can relax. (To review: A Moeller stroke is a modified downstroke where the stroke is played from the forearm with a whipping arm motion, rather than from the wrist.) Don't stop the stick after the accent. Let the accent stroke's energy flow into the next grace note. This grace note should be played with what I call a Moeller upstroke, where the stick hits the drum as you lift the forearm, with the wrist hanging limp.

The technique behind playing hand-to-hand flams will be easier to understand as you play Example 1, which isolates the motions in each hand. You should feel like you're playing quarter notes with your forearm while a little rebound stroke drops in on the upbeats. This is the key hand motion for fast hand-to-hand flams. (It's similar to the shoulder/tip hi-hat motion that many drummers use when playing 8th-note grooves.)

Practice the following exercises slowly using the downstroke/upstroke technique—stopping the sticks after the accents—as well as the whipping Moeller technique. (A great way to achieve speed with all rudiments is to practice a fast tempo's technique slowly. I've seen many players struggle to achieve high speeds because they practice only the slower tempo's technique.) Be sure to practice the following exercises using the correct stickings; the stickings marked "T" should be played with both hands in unison. Use a metronome or play along with your favorite tunes, and don't go any faster than you can play comfortably. In addition to the exercises provided, practice hand-to-hand flams using the traditional slow-fast-slow breakdown evenly over one minute, gradually changing your technique in correlation with the speed. Good luck!

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

2

R R R R R R R R T T T T T T T T L L L L L L L L T T T T T T T T

R R R R R R R R T T T T T T T T L L L L L L L L T T T T T T T T

3

R
L L

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

4

L
R R

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

5

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

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

6

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

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1. Post a video of your Dunnett Classic or George Way snare drum** in action, live or in the studio, on YouTube.com. The video should be between 90 and 120 seconds in length. 2. Visit moderndrummer.com between the dates below and look for the Dunnett Classic Drums/George Way Drum Company contest button; fill in all fields on the form, especially the URL for your video on YouTube. Ensure the video title has "Dunnett Classic Drums" or "George Way" in the title so it can be easily searched for and found on YouTube. 3. ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 4. CONTEST BEGINS AUGUST 1, 2009, AND ENDS SEPTEMBER 30, 2009. 5. Grand Prize Drawing: Winner will be selected by viewing all of the video submissions on or before October 14, 2009. Winner will be notified by phone or email on or about October 16, 2009. Judges' decisions are final. 6. Employees, and their immediate families, of Modern Drummer, Dunnett Classic Drums, and the George Way Drum Company, and their affiliates, are ineligible. 7. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries, nor for entries lost due to Internet and/or Web site problems beyond its control. 8. Open to residents of the U.S. and Canada, 18 years of age and older. Void in Quebec, Canada; the state of Florida; and where prohibited by law. 9. One prize awarded per household per contest. 9. Prizes. First Prize: one (1) winner will receive a Dunnett Classic Titanium snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$1,195. Second Prize: One (1) winner will receive a Dunnett Classic MonoPly maple snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$850. Third prize: One (1) winner will receive a Dunnett Classic Stainless snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$765. Fourth Prize: One (1) winner will receive a George Way Advance model 302 solid maple snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$875. Fifth Prize: One (1) winner will receive a George Way Hollywood heavy model 904 brass snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$825. Sixth Prize: One (1) winner will receive a George Way Aero model 903 aluminum snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$795. Seventh Prize: One (1) winner will receive a George Way Elkhart model 802 copper snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$795. Eighth Prize: One (1) winner will receive a George Way Indy model 202 bronze snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$795. Ninth Prize: One (1) winner will receive a George Way Studio model 402 4-ply snare drum; approximate retail value of prize: \$659. Approximate retail value of contest: \$7,550. 10. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. 11. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or the winner's name, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/Dunnett Classic Drums/George Way Drums/Official Rules/Winner's List, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

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DAVE MATTHEWS BAND'S Carter Beauford

BIG WHISKEY AND THE GROOGRUX KING

by Ed Breckenfeld

The new release from Dave Matthews Band is an emotionally charged tribute to sax player LeRoi Moore, who died during preproduction from complications suffered in an ATV accident last year. Having dedicated themselves to delivering a studio recording that's as thrilling and as creative as their legendary live shows, DMB believes *Big Whiskey* is their finest album to date. Groove wizard Carter Beauford seems especially inspired, designing a new batch of quirky, compelling beats to drive the songs as only he can. Here's a look at some of the drummer's ear-grabbing creations.

"SHAKE ME LIKE A MONKEY"

Beauford's groove for the verse of this horn-driven funk tune mirrors Matthews' 16th-note guitar riff. Ghost notes and cool hi-hat work are naturally part of the package. (0:23)

1
♩ = 113

"FUNNY THE WAY IT IS"

Syncopation dominates the verse groove of the album's first single, with Beauford offering a stark contrast between open space and busy rhythms. (0:32)

2
♩ = 103

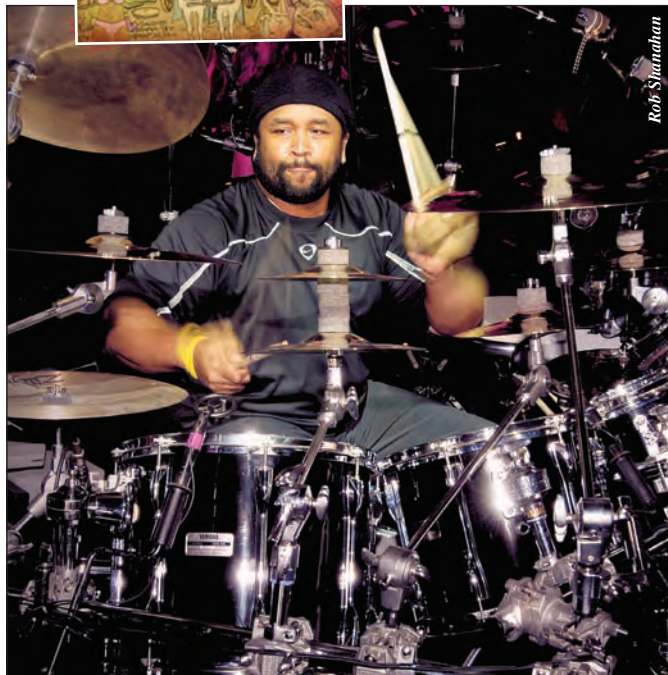
"LYING IN THE HANDS OF GOD"

Beauford is a master of intricate ghost notes, which he displays in full force on the intro of this slow song. His offbeat hi-hat accents, sparse kick drum pattern, and backbeat stand out above the barely audible 32nd-note ghost work transcribed in Example 3. This wide dynamic range allows the ghost notes to enhance the feel without making the sequence sound like a drum solo. (0:07)



MUSIC KEY

open	choked
H.H.	Splash
T.T.	C.C.
S.D.	Ghost note
F.T.	
B.D.	Add'l
H.H.	Tom
w/ Foot	B.D.2



3
♩ = 132

"WHY I AM"

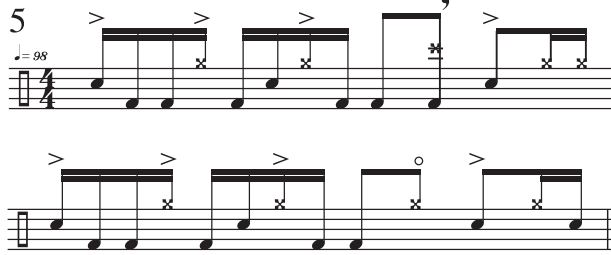
Beauford's highly stylized hi-hat patterns have been lauded for years. Here's a nice example that blends accents and semi-open hi-hat effects. (1:24)

4
♩ = 129

"SPACEMAN"

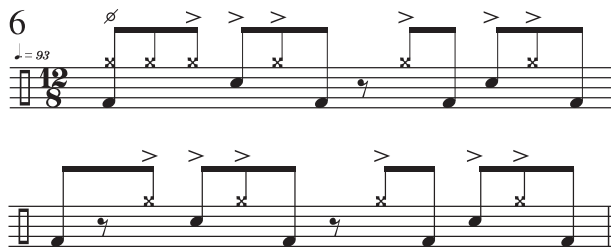
The turned-around groove for this tune is a duel workout between Beauford and bassist Stefan Lessard. Carter opens

the verse with rimclicks, then moves to the snare and adds effects like open hi-hat hits and choked splashes. (0:28)



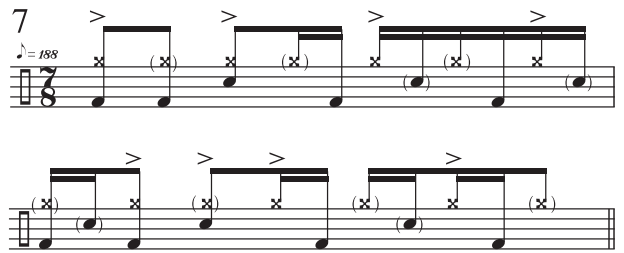
“SQUIRM”

On this tune, Beauford shows how to personalize a standard 12/8 groove by syncopating the hi-hat around the kick and snare. (0:33)

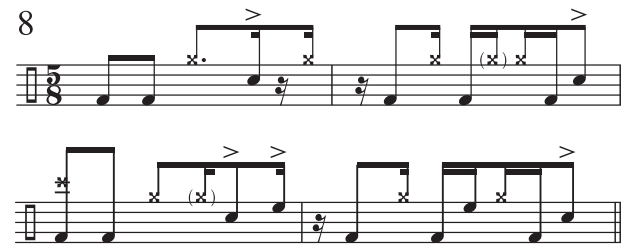


“SEVEN”

Aptly titled, this odd-time track features a two-measure beat with an accented quarter-note pulse on the hi-hat. The hi-hat accents switch from the downbeat to the upbeat from measure to measure. (0:14)



“Seven” also ventures into 5/8 time, and Beauford comes up with one of his most head-scratching patterns. His ideas may seem somewhat random, but he locks in with the rest of the band on crucial accent points at the beginning and end of each guitar riff. This is the kind of linear playing that has earned Carter his monster-drummer reputation. (1:33)



Ed Breckenfeld's book *Off The Record: Inside The Playing Of Today's Top Drummers* was recently released by Modern Drummer Publications. You can contact Ed through his Web site, edbreckenfeld.com.



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Polyrhythms

PART 2: MORE FOUR AGAINST THREE

by Rod Morgenstein

MUSIC KEY

	C.C.	R.C.
H.H.	*	*
T.T.	*	*
S.D.	*	*
F.T.	*	*
B.D.	*	*
H.H.	*	*
w/ foot	B.D.2	

The last two examples in my previous article (July 2009) focused on extending the four-against-three polyrhythm to longer phrases. By continuing the pattern into second and third measures, you're now playing "over the barline," which blurs the downbeats of those measures. This effect is great for creating musical tension.

Here Examples 1–8 expand some of the one-measure patterns from the previous article into two- and three-measure licks. While practicing these examples, count quarter notes ("1, 2, 3, 4") out loud. To put them in a musical context, play a two-measure groove followed by each of the exercises.

In Examples 9 and 10, the hi-hat pattern accents the downbeats while the bass drum and snare play the four-over-three polyrhythm.

10

In Examples 11 and 12, the bass drums play constant 16th notes underneath the alternating four-over-three hand pattern.

11

12

Example 13 shifts the pattern in Example 11 so that it begins on the "&" of beat 4. Once you've internalized the feel of the four-against-three polyrhythm, you can start these licks anywhere in the measure. This will add even more excitement to the music. I played this pattern on the Dixie Dregs song "Take It Off The Top." The bass guitar doubles the polyrhythmic hand pattern with a walking line. The 4/4 time signature is defined with the rock beat that occurs at the beginning and end of this example.

13

bass line rhythm:

Now let's look at another way to create a four-against-three polyrhythm. All of the previous examples involve playing constant 16ths and accenting every third note. If you play just the accented notes, you have a pattern that's in 3/4.

14

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a

Here's that same pattern extending over the barline within two- and three-measure phrases. See you next time!

15

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

16

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

Rod Morgenstein is a founding member of the groundbreaking fusion band Dixie Dregs. He was also a member of the progressive Steve Morse Band, as well as the pop/metal band Winger. In addition, Rod has performed with the Rudess/Morgenstein Project, Jazz Is Dead, Platypus, and the Jelly Jam. Rod is currently a professor of percussion at Berklee College Of Music.



10 REASONS TO LOVE



by Ken Micallef

SLAYER'S DAVE LOMBARDO

Dave Lombardo is one of the founding fathers of thrash metal drumming and is thus one of the most revered players of modern times. His amped-up “skank punk” beat is the stuff of legend. His double bass prowess has been lauded by Shadows Fall’s Jason Bittner, Slipknot’s Joey Jordison, and any number of famous followers. And his “hour of power,” Slayer’s 1986 album, *Reign In Blood*, is considered a classic recording even outside the world of metal. But perhaps what most sets Lombardo apart from his contemporaries is his quest for musical situations that lie far beyond the thrash territory he helped put on the map.

Upon quitting Slayer after fifteen years—the band wouldn’t allow him time off for the birth of his first child—Lombardo threw himself into largely uncharted waters, hooking up with border busters like DJ Spooky (*Drums Of Death*), John Zorn (*Taboo & Exile*), and ex-Faith No More singer Mike Patton (several albums with the group Fantomas). Lombardo returned to Slayer for 2006’s *Christ Illusion*, and the band’s follow-up release is imminent.

“Everything on the new album stands out,” Lombardo says. “And not only my drumming, but the cymbals I’m using. There’s an Art Blakey quote I relate to: ‘I

hear violins in my cymbals.’ Mine don’t sound exactly like violins, but when I go from crash/riding one cymbal to another within a song, it creates a different ambience. It’s difficult to explain, but if you pay attention to the cymbals on the new record, you’ll hear it.”

Lombardo adds that the upcoming album features what he calls a natural crescendo. “Slayer has its own style, and we don’t venture out much,” the drummer explains. “But this time we slowed things down to find each song’s sweet spot. For instance, if a song was 187 bpm, maybe we’d drop it down to 183. Believe me, you can feel that. It makes a big difference in the delivery of the guitar and drum rhythms. We focused a lot on the tempo, making sure it felt good. On some songs we used a click; on some songs we didn’t. Where the songs sped up we captured that natural crescendo. Metal has become so metronomically correct that you lose the natural groove. When you hear me speeding up, it’s not bad, it’s flowing with the music. It grooves, and it feels so good.”

For this month’s Reasons To Love column, we jumped at the chance to have Dave comment on some of his greatest performances. Taking a break from his iPod—strains of theremin, Haitian voodoo music, Stockhausen’s “Helicopter

Quartet,” George Crumb, John Zorn, Latin jazz, Cuban tunes, and Yoruban tribal music—the drummer spoke at length while en route to a Slayer rehearsal.

1. SLAYER, “SHOW NO MERCY” (1983)

The title track from Slayer’s debut album features Lombardo’s signature skank punk pattern. “That’s one thing I really like to play,” Dave says. “It’s one of my favorite drumbeats. You can hear its rawest form after I do the big drum solo.”

2. SLAYER, “ANGEL OF DEATH” (1986)

The fast part of “Angel Of Death,” the opening cut on Slayer’s most popular album, *Reign In Blood*, contains what Lombardo calls “a more defined version” of the beat in “Show No Mercy.”

3. SLAYER, “SILENT SCREAM” (1988)

While discussing this favorite from Slayer’s fourth studio album, *South Of Heaven*, Dave sings its mad 16th-note rhythm. “The first upbeat is on the snare; it starts the beat,” he explains. A classic song featuring intense double bass.

4. GRIP INC., “TOQUE DE MUERTO” (1995)

Grip Inc.’s debut, *Power Of Inner Strength*, is the first album Lombardo recorded after leaving Slayer. “What I love about the beat in “Toque De

Muerto' is that it shows my roots," he says of the opening track. "It shows African and Caribbean rhythms, particularly Cuban rhythms; I was able to express all those in that piece."

5. JOHN ZORN, *MUSIC ROMANCE, VOLUME 2: TABOO & EXILE* (1999)

Saxophone and composing iconoclast John Zorn's *Taboo & Exile*, which features famed bassist/producer Bill Laswell and out-rock guitar god Fred Frith, is about as far from thrash as you can get. "I was looking up to these guys before I ever had the opportunity to work with them," Lombardo says. "Hanging out with Mike Patton helped open doors into that genre of music. Sometimes working with other musicians will [reveal] the kind of musician that you are. If you involve yourself with musicians from genres other than your own, you'll be considered a musician who can play other things too. It's good to step out of the box."

6. JOHN ZORN, *XU FENG* (2000)

Despite the fact that the music on this Zorn "game piece" album was improvised in the studio, Lombardo succeeds at finding his own powerful and dramatic way through the material. "That album brought out the spontaneity of my ability to play drums," Dave says. "And it brought out my improvisation capabilities. That's a unique piece; it may sound like noise to some people, but when I first heard what we were going to do, I thought, *This is somebody who thinks out of the box, like I do.* That is not the norm."

7. FANTOMAS, "THE GODFATHER (THEME)" (2001)

Lombardo says he had to rely on a conductor to help him through the movements of this tune from Fantomas's sec-

ond album, *The Director's Cut*. "That track really had a special energy," Dave says, "because I was able to incorporate more of the time feel from the conductor."

8. DJ SPOOKY, *DRUMS OF DEATH* (2005)

This album was pieced together by DJ Spooky from improvs recorded in Lombardo's home studio. "I rented a DJ console with two turntables, and we sat down in my room and jammed," the drummer explains. "I have a love for R&B, rap, and jazz, and I love jungle music, which is like really fast reggae. I mimic that style on *Drums Of Death*. To me it feels almost like metal, or like Miles Davis hip-hop. It's awesome."

9. SLAYER, "SUPREMIST" (2006)

"I used beats on this song that I developed after I started Slayer, after I developed the skank and punk beats," Lombardo says of his Slayer comeback album, *Christ Illusion*. "It's the blast beat, or the grindcore beat—double kick and snare hitting on every double bass part: bata-bata-bata-bata. That was great for Slayer because all these players had been stealing from us throughout the years and developing their own style from what we'd developed. So what I did was pick from what drummers are doing now with that blast beat. *I can do it too*, I thought. And on the forthcoming record we're doing that again."

10. APOCALYPTICA, "LAST HOPE" (2007)

Seething with double-time sections and containing ample space for Lombardo's furious skills, this instrumental track from the Finnish "chamber metal" group Apocalyptica's *Worlds Collide* album works as a kind of cinematic homage to speed and wide-open expanses. "It has a lot of great rolls," Lombardo says. "It's like a drum solo in the middle of the song. And there are three or four cello players as well. I love that." Indeed, between the longer sections you can hear Lombardo having a blast trading fours with the rest of the group.

For more on Dave, including the concepts behind his reconfigured kit setup and his "out of body" playing experiences, go to modern drummer.com.

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TOOLS OF THE TRADE

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WHAT
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ABOUT...?



GARY HUSBAND

by Ken Micallef

His skills as a drummer make him a favorite among fusion guitar royalty. Remarkably, his skills as a keyboardist and composer are just as coveted.

There's a moment on John McLaughlin & The 4th Dimension's concert DVD, *Live At Belgrade*, where Gary Husband pulls off something that only he can. Playing keyboards on "Senor C.S.," accompanied by drummer Mark Mondesir, bassist Dominique Di Piazza, and, of course, McLaughlin on guitar, he works through the time-twisting track, improvising and burning, until the group lands on a slow-groove jam. Husband proceeds to extract sci-fi sounds from his Roland SH-201 synth as the band simmers around him. Before you know it, the

quartet launches into "Little Miss Valley"—and Gary is no longer on keys but on drums!

It's a small cocktail kit, to be exact, and Husband slams it like it owes him a cool 50K. Standing and smoking as McLaughlin shoots him a wicked grin, Husband swings the tiny kit with robo-fever, while Mondesir adds equally hot sparks. It's spine-cracking, electricity-stoking improvisation, with Gary bashing trash-can-looking cymbals and drawing a stunning array of rhythms from his cookin' kit. Just as quickly as his sticking flurries began, he's back on

the keys, matching maestro McLaughlin note for note.

That Gary Husband is a triple-threat drummer, keyboardist, and composer is an established fact among the global electric jazz intelligentsia. While you may know the burly drummer from his work on guitar innovator Allan Holdsworth's *I.O.U.* (on which he also played piano), *Metal Fatigue*, *Atavachron*, *Sand*, *Wardencllyffe Tower*, *Hard Hat Area*, and *Then! Live In Tokyo*, this manically talented man is much more than Holdsworth's worthy adversary on the skins.

Husband's career began in the 1970s, when Gary performed classic Dorsey/Miller material with the Syd Lawrence Orchestra. He graduated to London's burgeoning fusion scene, blasted through numerous albums with Holdsworth, and evolved via recordings with a who's who of the jazz and rock elite. Jack Bruce and Robin Trower, Gary Moore, Level 42, Gongzilla, Steve Topping, Germany's NDR Big Band, Ray Russell, Jimmy Nail, Dick Heckstall-Smith, and Billy Cobham all value Gary Husband's massive skill set. And he's still kicking it hard with his old mate Holdsworth, most recently on a success-

ful European tour. (A quick YouTube search yields multiple concert performances.) Not content as a sideman, Husband has also recorded six well-received solo piano albums and, most recently, his first foray into post bop, *Hotwired* by Gary Husband's Drive, a septet performing acoustic jazz with its leader's feverish swing-machine drumming fueling the varied material.

"The big impetus for *Hotwired* was exploring more of a straight-ahead way of playing," Husband explains from London. "Entering that kind of stylistic realm has a lot to do with the sound of the drumkit itself. I want a good open-sounding production, and I try hard to make sure it gets recorded well. The acoustic bass and ringing bass drum are two of the hardest things to get right. One of the most consistent elements of all my drum work is that the drums are always open and ringing."

Regardless of style, Husband's playing has certain constants. "I have the kind of technique where I play straight into the middle of the drumhead," he explains. "I'm able to adjust how much the drum will ring by the way I hit. I've had situations with sound engineers where I insist that I will be my own noise gate. I can make the drum pop and deliver the minimum ring just by the way I apply my stroke."

Husband sees the contrast between his roles as drummer and keyboardist as equally fluid, and practically without boundaries. "I view myself like someone with two computer monitors: He can move his mouse pointer to either end of either monitor, and they function as one. That's how I view my two different instruments; you don't even see the joints. Apart from the different tools required, I don't separate them in my conception. The one meets the other, and where they

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Husband plays **Pearl** drums (Gary Husband special Masters MMP 4-ply maple with no reinforcement rings), **Zildjian** cymbals, **Factory Metal** and **LP** percussion, **Pro-Mark** 747 sticks (Gary Husband hickory model), and **Remo** heads.

KNOW THESE TOO!



PIP PYLE

A small drummer with a gracefully propulsive style, Pip Pyle played with such U.K. jazz-rock acts as Gong, National Health, and Hatfield & The North (essential listening: Hatfield's *The Rotters' Club*, featuring the whimsical complexities "Mumps" and "Fitter Stoke Has A Bath"). A central figure on the Canterbury scene, working with Elton Dean and Soft Heap, and a member of British jazz/prog royalty that included notables like Phil Miller (bass) and Dave Stewart (keys), Pyle also ran the experimental bands Pip Pyle's Equip'Out and Pip Pyle's Bash! He issued various solo albums as well. Fantastically lithe, with overt jazz tendencies and influences, his drumming was a study in finesse, economy, and craftsmanship.

"Even the simplest thing in music can be almost the most difficult," Pyle once said. "I've spent all my life trying to play a really slow, laid-back rhythm and blues shuffle like Jimmy Reed or something. Adrenaline usually seizes hold and ruins it. Technique, energy, and exhilaration can be an obstruction sometimes. You just need to play what you hear in your head. Perhaps sometimes I think too much." Pip Pyle passed away in 2006.



PIERRE MOERLEN

French-born Pierre Moerlen made his name as the drummer/leader of Gong, but he also worked and recorded with a wide array of artists including Thin Lizzy's Phil Lynott, Mike Oldfield (of "Tubular Bells" fame), and Brand X. Navigating the odd meters and challenging structures of prog rock, Moerlen's drumming was both cerebral and physical. Gong's *Angel's Egg* (1973) and *You* (1974) are steeped in experimental prog-psy sounds, twisting 3/4 waltzes, orchestral embellishments, Latin and jazz influences, and pointillist prog drumming to the nth degree within creative (if at times esoteric) '70s-style arrangements. At the time of his death in 2005, the drummer was rehearsing with a new version of Pierre Moerlen's Gong.

actually meet I don't know. They both make sense as a whole."

Husband grew up in Yorkshire, in the north of England, where his father was a professional flutist and pianist who held a radio job with the BBC Northern Dance Orchestra. Inspired by Stan Kenton's drummer Baron John Von Ohlen ("He had the lazy swing of Mel Lewis with the power of John Bonham," Husband says), a young Gary took up drum studies, but only after five years of classical piano instruction.

"I would go to the drums when I wanted to and practice rudiments," Husband recalls. "But I'd been putting in four to six hours a day on piano. Drums was something of a liberation from all that. I enjoyed the discipline of piano, though; maybe it was instilling what you can get from doing something extremely slowly and for a long period of time. I did this with drums later, repeating things very slowly and keeping total control, and that's when you really start to feel this energy. It's like something opening up with an amazing amount of intensity; you feel superhuman."

Later, while Husband was gigging in London with Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia and other fusion outfits, he became enamored of Tony Williams,

whose undeniable presence can be heard on Husband's early records with Allan Holdsworth. "When I first got into Tony Williams," Gary says, "I tried to go with his essence and channel what I heard from him that I didn't hear from anyone else. I was just aware of this poetry and intelligence. Every single note mattered with Tony. I tried to set myself on a path where I could resemble some of that musical effect. It gave me confidence in leaving space and indulging in a kind of perpetual momentum of improvisational flow. Tony was a major influence, but so was Eric Gravatt; he had something really separate—extremely emotional and intense." Husband also credits Billy Cobham, Lenny White, David Garibaldi, Ian Paice, Art Blakey, and Max Roach for making a mark on his music.

Williams' influence would serve Husband well on his debut with Holdsworth, *I.O.U.*, but first he had to work his way out of Paraphernalia. "I was fired from Paraphernalia for playing too crazily," he says with a laugh, "but during one gig Allan Holdsworth came out and said he really enjoyed my playing. Two days later we went into a studio at noon, five of us. At some point three guys left, and when Allan and I finally stopped playing it



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GARY HUSBAND

was dark outside. Time disappeared and we weren't aware of anything. It was one of the most natural, trancelike experiences I've ever known."

How does Husband meet the changing technical requirements of the diverse gigs he plays today? "I know what the demands will be, and for that reason I do a lot of warm-up, starting very slowly. I do that on pillows mostly, or on a mattress, going from soft to hard. I regard the drumset as being lots of different surfaces, and the response is different depending on what you're hitting, from a hi-hat to a low tom. But all the real practice I do is in my head. I'm hearing things, figuring out how I can play them, in what context, towards what effect. All my conceptual work is done there. Strange but true.

"On Robin Trower and Jack Bruce's *Seven Moons*, for example," Husband continues, "I play right-handed lead, using lots of hard single strokes, a 'slamming' kind of method. Much of it is about projection and getting good power with a simpler vocabulary, but it's also musically conversational and interactive. If I go to my group Drive straight afterward, I'm in an infinitely more sensitive physical requirement—lots of doubles, altogether more control with a lesser velocity and greater, more delicate nuances, with power and extreme fire when needed. With John McLaughlin, Allan Holdsworth, or a more fusion approach, it's a broad combination of all those elements, so again there's a different requirement."

Working on yet another solo piano record while planning to join two of his favorite guitarists—we'll all just have to guess which ones—in a true supergroup configuration, Husband inhabits a unique musical role: successful solo pianist, keyboardist, composer, and drummer with a historically based yet distinctive style that merits more investigation than this space allows. And that's what you didn't know about Gary Husband.

"I'm just as involved with making music as I am with playing drums inside of it," Husband says. "The impetus is coming as much from the writing as from the playing side—and from the sense of adventure I get that touches me on the shoulder and says, 'Let's do it.' What I do changes frequently, the frantic obsessive that I am, but in some shape or form something will materialize to feed this lust I have for music. I couldn't stop if I wanted to. It's just a need, and I feed that need."



THE FAB FAUX'S

RICH PAGANO

by Billy Amendola

Whether searching for the perfect tones for a Hollywood soundtrack or analyzing the minutia of Ringo's recorded sounds, **Rich Pagano lives in a world where details matter.**

Twelve years ago, when Rich Pagano got together with *Late Show With David Letterman* bassist and session great Will Lee, *Late Night With Conan O'Brien* guitarist Jimmy Vivino, and session players Frank Agnello and Jack Petruzzelli to form a Beatles cover band called the Fab Faux, no one could have guessed that all these years later they would still be together—and more in demand than ever. “It started when we used to play at the China Club here in NYC for free,” Pagano recalls. “We never thought it would be going this long. It’s incredible—it’s got long legs of its own, and I get to play with Will Lee.”

In addition to his Fab schedule and session work, the drummer is excited about adding the final touches to his solo CD, *Rich Pagano & The SugarCane Cups*. Rich spoke to *MD* about these topics and more from his studio in New York City.

MD: What’s your work schedule like these days?

Rich: Besides live gigs, movie soundtracks are where I’m making my living now. I’m mainly hired when someone wants a Mitch Mitchell or a Hal Blaine vibe, or of course Ringo. It’s been nonstop since November. I recently worked with Danny Elfman on a film called *Finding Woodstock*. He was more concerned with sounds. He said to me, “I know you can play this stuff, but I need someone who can get the sounds as well.” I’m also working with Philip Glass for a movie based in the late ’60s. He asked me to contract a Hendrix-type band, so I hired Steve and John Conte. It’s been fun.

MD: For as long as I’ve known you, you’ve always had a studio setup.

Rich: Yes! And I started a new one-to-one class, which is different from the singing and playing class I’ve been involved in. People can choose from a list of old drum sounds, like, for instance, the John Bonham sound, Ringo—early or late period—Nigel Olsson, later Charlie Watts.... We listen to the records, look at photos, and do the best we can to re-create the sound of those drums. Students get to leave with a disc of each track separately and then all of the tracks together. I get more John Bonham requests than anyone else. I love teaching that class!

MD: You often sing while playing. What tips can you offer on that concept?

Rich: My approach is to somehow live in the middle of the groove and the vocal. It took me years to get to that place—making it sound like you are reacting to your vocal. In other words, if you sing a specific rhythm, react to that with a similar rhythm in a drum fill, because it suddenly entwines both duties.

The king of that is my mentor, Levon Helm. I tell all of my students: Watch *The Last Waltz*, and

specifically “Up On Cripple Creek.” The last chorus he’s so entranced by what’s happening with his vocal and his drumming that he almost transcends it; he makes it a third thing. He’s reacting to his vocal with the snare drum and the kick—when to use grace notes on the snare, when to hit the snare on certain words. There is so much information from him.

Also, never sing from your throat. Always sing

“crack,” so I use a muffling ring for everything recorded after ’68, for the most part. Whenever we do *The White Album* the floor tom is tea toweled most of the night. I actually use a sheet, and that retains a lot of the tone. You have to tune the drums correctly when you use the towels, to bring out a bit more tone.

MD: Let’s talk about your solo record and how it was recorded, particularly in terms of the drums.



from right behind your palate. When you’re doing vocal exercises, sing that note so it resonates in your head and not in your throat, and you’ll never blow out your voice.

MD: With the Fab Faux you do an amazing job of re-creating Ringo’s parts and sounds. When I saw the band live, I noticed you even used “tea towels” like Ringo did.

Rich: In the studio, the Beatles would go into the kitchen and ask for the towels that they would use when they broke for teatime—they’re like large napkins, but they’re very thin, like a dishrag. With the Fab Faux there are certain songs that you’ve got to use tea towels on, like on the floor tom for “Revolution” and “Get Back.” I don’t use them on my snare because I want a bit more of a live

Rich: I wish I could say it was recorded with a live band, but it wasn’t. I would write a song and then teach it to my engineer, Rich Lamb. Besides being a great engineer, he’s also a fine keyboard player. So I would teach him the song, get the correct tempo, and create a click. Then he would block the chords into the click as I sang a scratch vocal to him, and we would record that. I would then imagine a band playing the songs. I had already spent two weeks thinking about what the guitarist and bass player would be doing, so I would call in players to get something that in the end sounded like a band playing together. I didn’t use the analog deck this time; I went right to Pro Tools, so editing was quick.

We spent a lot of time on drum sounds. Being that I wasn’t on the clock for anybody and it was my

Christine Grant



FAUX-ING RINGO

Rich Pagano uses two distinct “Ringo” kits at Fab Faux gigs. The setup on the left is for songs from the Beatles’ 1969–70 period and comprises an SJC bass drum and toms featuring single-flange hoops (14x22, 9x13, 16x16, 16x18), a 7x14 wood Slingerland snare, a 9x13 vintage Leedy wood snare, and Sabian cymbals (20” HH Bounce ride, 18” HH crash, 18” AA medium crash, 14” AA hi-hats, and an 8” cymbal disc played by Jack Petruzzelli on “Everybody’s Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey”).

According to Pagano, “Ringo’s later-period blonde five-piece kit had a drier, more dampened, and more pointed sound, making the sonics somewhat of a challenge to figure out. To replicate engineer Geoff Emerick’s penchant for pushing the microphone position in toward the drums for more presence, this set speaks with darker cymbal tones, muffled toms that are tuned lower, a muffled snare—Ringo used a tea towel taped over the snare; I want a bit more tone for live shows so I employ a muffling ring—and an extra floor instead of a 13” tom, since I can’t play comfort-

ably with a double-rack setup. The kick drum is packed tightly, and sometimes I towel the floor tom when the song calls for it.”

The kit on the right is for songs from the 1963–67 period. It comprises a GMS bass drum and toms (14x22, 9x13, 16x16), a 5 1/4x14 chrome snare drum (vintage brass shell ‘60s Slingerland or vintage ‘60s Ludwig), Sabian cymbals (21” Vault ride, 18” Pro crash, 14” AA hi-hats), and Cosmic Percussion bongos.

“Ringo’s early sound varied from record to record,” Pagano says, “so this kit is a bit of a hybrid, with flowering, bright cymbals to help emulate a slow-release compression setting; they shimmer as if the overhead mics are doing most of the work.” (On certain early Beatles songs, fewer mics were used on the drumset.) “The toms are tuned higher, with no dampening, and the bass drum has less fabric against the batter head. The main prerogative is to make sure the kit resonates. Sometimes, depending on the album we’re performing, engineer Joey ‘Cheech’ Chinnici and I will pull the snare mic back from the hoop for a roomier sound.”

Rich uses Vic Firth 5AN sticks with both setups.

record, we were able to come in the night before and I would describe to Rich what I was looking for. Then he and I would set up mics and get the correct phasing and ambience. There were a couple tracks where I would say, “I’ve got to track this song *now*. Let’s just put three mics up and record it.” You’ll know when that drum sound comes up because it’s real ambient and sort of distant.

MD: What gear did you use?

Rich: About a quarter of the record was done with a 1972 Ludwig Vistalite kit, but for the most part I used my GMS kit or my 1962 blue sparkle Ludwigs. And Sabian cymbals.

MD: Were you channeling anyone in particular with your playing?

Rich: It’s funny; the first batch of songs that I wrote had more of a John Bonham approach, the next batch were more Al Jackson Jr., and the last batch I aimed for Levon. So those were my muses as far as the individual tracks went, and I wanted to keep them in that mode when I put overdubs on them. The musicians also helped in that regard. Everyone who played on this record was in my studio working on other projects, and I was able to say, “Hey, can you play on a track for me?” So when I had the Conte brothers in here, we were doing something that was Zeppelin sounding, or when I had John Leventhal—who I toured with in Rosanne Cash’s band—those tracks had more of a Band sound. We’re such freaks for that!

For more on the Fab Faux, go to thefabfaux.com, and for more on Rich, go to richpagano.com.

GIRL IN A COMA’S

PHANIE DIAZ

by Denise HaHer

Girl In A Coma has it all: famous fans, great songs, and a drummer who possesses two generations’ worth of timekeeping DNA.

Eight years ago, two teenage girls were on a mission to become something big. So Phanie Diaz and her best friend, Jenn Alva, decided to start a band. Only they needed one major ingredient—a drummer. After a few years of messing around on rhythm guitar, Diaz began learning to play the drums on a friend’s set. Alva recognized her pal’s potential and encouraged her by trading in some of her own guitars for a kit. “I told Jenn, ‘I can’t play drums—I can’t keep a beat,’” Diaz says. But she worked overtime and eventually learned how to play by watching drummers and picking up some of their techniques.

It wasn’t long until Phanie’s little sister,

Nina, expressed interest in being a lead vocalist/guitarist, and the trio named themselves Girl In A Coma after one of their favorite Smiths songs, “Girlfriend In A Coma.” But never did they dream that someday they’d be playing on the same bill as Smiths singer Morrissey. As Diaz recalls, one of the highlights of their career thus far was opening for their idol at L’Olympia in Paris. Afterward the girls got to chill with the famously “charming” man. “He came into our dressing room and brought us champagne, and we talked about the New York Dolls and Jeff Buckley,” Phanie says. “It was such a great night.”

Still, the drummer insists that her





Amber Rodriguez



Ray, Tattoodaddy

ming, with small subtle things that make the song," she says—but the natural ability she possesses comes from somewhere deeper. Phanie happens to be a third-generation drummer: Her father played for the legendary singer/accordionist Esteban Jordan, and her grandfather was in a Tejano/rockabilly band. In fact, GIAC named their second album, this year's *Trio B.C.*, after his group. "He would tell us about how that was the best time of his life," Phanie says.

Like *Girl In A Coma's* critically acclaimed 2007 debut album, *Both Before I'm Gone*, *Trio B.C.* was released on Joan Jett's Blackheart label. The girls came up with the songs during a busy eighteen-month period of touring with Tegan and Sara, the Pogues, Social Distortion, and Cyndi Lauper. Tracks were laid down at Sonic Ranch in El Paso, where the Yeah Yeah Yeahs recorded much of their latest album. This time around, Diaz and her bandmates collaborated with producers Greg Collins (U2, No Doubt) and, once again, Gabriel Gonzalez (formerly of the band Sparta). A couple of other tracks were done with Joan Jett and her longtime producer and songwriting partner, Kenny Laguna.

Diaz says she got to experiment more with percussion and tribal beats this time, crediting Collins and Gonzalez as major influences on her approach to the title track and the song "Empty Promise." "I was

doing stuff I normally don't do," she says, "like knocking on the rims. It was very cool."

The drummer knows her strengths from her weaknesses. "I'm really good at keeping time," she insists, adding that she dislikes using click tracks. Recently she's been playing a maple Gretsch Catalina Club drumkit. "It's a very simple set," she says, "but I love it. I like to pound the shit out of them, go nuts and put on a show. If you're having a bad day, playing the drums is a good release."

Right now GIAC is busy touring with the Los Angeles band Miss Derringer. But when things slow down a bit, Diaz says she'd like to further develop her drumming skills. "I want to improve my snare work, and I want to be able to explain what I'm doing and not just say, 'I'll show you what I do.' I'd like to be able to talk the talk." As far as aspirations for GIAC, she simply hopes to go on to make many records, like another of their favorite groups, Sonic Youth.

The publicity surrounding GIAC's new album and their quickly growing fan base is exciting for Diaz to be a part of. "We'll ride around our hometown and skater kids will scream out, 'Girl In A Coma!'" she says. "It's rad. I'm proud to be from a place that has yet to be put on the map music-wise. I know we're opening lots of doors for our fans."

favorite shows are the ones GIAC performs back in her hometown of San Antonio, Texas. Growing up, she drew musical inspiration from artists such as Patsy Cline, the Ramones, and Nirvana—"I like simple drum-

RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS'

ERIC GREEN

by Gail Worley

Being a great live drummer, it turns out, is all about the basics: a pad, a good pair of headphones, and a healthy appetite for practicing.



Arson Narro

Channeling the raw energy, contagious fervor, and hook-heavy songwriting of legendary American punk bands like the Adolescents and Rancid with its fourth CD, *Underneath The Owl*, Austin-based Riverboat Gamblers breathe new life into a genre that often lingers on the brink of tedium.

Having grown up on "70s rock, old-school soul, and a little bit of jazz," drummer Eric Green authentically mixes a variety of feels within the punk rock domain, perfectly suiting his group's crossover appeal. "This band is strongly influenced by the Dictators, the Ramones, and other great garage-punk bands of that era," he explains. "What's important to us is making timeless records. On this CD, each of the songs definitely has its own vibe."

Green cites influences as diverse as Bill Stevenson of the Descendents, Rick Buckler of the Jam, and John Maher of the Buzzcocks. You can also hear a touch of Stewart Copeland in the reggae/ska rhythms of "Pilgrims In An Unholy Land." And the drumbeat in "Robots May Break Your Heart," Eric admits, is a homage to Devo drummer Alan Myers. It all makes *Underneath The Owl* an

immensely satisfying listen.

With Riverboat Gamblers' reputation for over-the-top live performances, Green stays conscious of maintaining the correct technique. "This band plays sets that don't stop from one song to the next," he offers. "My technique is based on the principle of playing ergonomically while also playing hard and loud, because I have to pace myself but still put out good energy. I spend hours with a pad and Metrophones, going over rudiments and grip and just practicing proper technique, which is unbelievably important, especially in this genre of music."

"I've seen drummers destroy their wrists and hands," Eric adds, "because they don't understand that there are ways to hit hard without injuring yourself. For example, when you bury the stick in the head, it causes the drum to choke. With a whipping motion, which is how I would best describe my technique, the drum can resonate properly, giving you more volume with less effort. I'm really practicing that, along with stick placement. I don't want to end up with carpal tunnel syndrome. I want to be doing this twenty years from now."



Liberated to find his own path,

Tyshawn Sorey

is turning the roles of conventional drumming on their head, and back again.

Story by Ilya Stemkovsky
Photos by Paul La Raia

Drummer/composer Tyshawn Sorey sits behind a beautiful new Gretsch kit in his William Paterson University rehearsal space, flanked by an impressive spread of mallets, brushes, and sticks of different sizes and bead shapes. "The stick can affect the music on many levels," he says in a low baritone. "I switch to different stick types depending on the musical situation, the song, or even the room. That way I have more of a sense of what's needed."

Sense, texture, and color are what Sorey is all about. Put on your thinking caps, kids, because here's a drummer concerned with the bigger picture. Rarely does he mention paradiddles or double strokes or any traditional drumming lingo. Instead he strives for total musical liberation.

His composing pedigree and ability to interpret an eclectic array of styles have landed him high-profile gigs with Anthony Braxton, Wadada Leo Smith, Dave Douglas, Steve Coleman, and Fieldwork, the latter a forward-thinking collaboration with pianist Vijay Iyer and saxophonist Steve Lehman.

On Lehman's latest release, *Travail, Transformation, And Flow*, Sorey's super-busy linear beats and dizzying fills wash over the music but

never detract from the core pulse. And where many drummers would showcase their straight-from-the-shed chops on a solo debut, Sorey released 2007's *That/Not*, a sprawling two-disc set filled with abstract brush strokes, nontemporal sound collages, and a hypnotic forty-three-minute piano piece performed by Sorey himself.

But before you peg Tyshawn as "one of those free guys," delve further into his work. You'll find the twenty-nine-year-old musician to be equally proficient at straight-ahead swing and the almost machinelike, pseudo drum 'n' bass skills needed to handle Lehman and Coleman's demanding odd-time rhythms. "I grew up in Newark, New Jersey, where I was exposed to R&B, but my dad would play me live performance videos of Bruce Springsteen and reruns of *The Ed Sullivan Show*," Sorey says. "I'd also listen to John Mellencamp, Queen, country music, and contemporary classical music on the radio. Eventually, my ears opened up to jazz."

Listening to Sorey speak about music, it's clear he's not necessarily thinking about regurgitating a lick out of *Stick Control*. He is a modern drummer in the truest sense, drawing from a world of disparate influences with an emphasis on creative expression.

Istanbul
Agop



MD: Take us through your years of musical development.

Tyshawn: Up through high school, I played classical trombone in ensembles. I was very serious about the instrument and would arrive at school at six in the morning, just working on learning tunes and improvising. I was also playing drums at the time, but they were mostly a hobby. At a summer jazz program in Montclair, New Jersey, I met Michele Rosewoman, a brilliant pianist/composer living in New York. She was perhaps the biggest influence on me in terms of pursuing creative improvised music—jazz, or whatever you want to call it—as my life’s work.

There was also the New Jersey Performing Arts Center’s Jazz For Teens program, where I had the fortunate experience of learning from some of the people I was checking out at the time—drummers such as Billy Hart, Keith Copeland, and Kenny Washington. It was then that I decided to work toward



having an identifiable sound.

Rosewoman and I would talk about ensemble playing and composition, and this was also when I began composing. She must have heard something she liked from me on the drums because three years later she brought me to Europe with her ensemble Quintessence.

That tour helped me learn a great deal about being a bandleader, dealing with the business aspect, playing with people in an ensemble, and developing as a person.

MD: Did you have a drumming mentor at this time?

Tyshawn: Kenny Washington is probably the biggest reason I’m playing drums today. Back then I didn’t play with any dynamics, and he would tell me to play lighter and do what’s best for the band. Other guys helped me with coordination and ways of dealing with rhythm. When I got to William Paterson, I was seeing

Tyshawn's Setup



Drums: Gretsch 2009 USA Custom Vintage Tribute series in orange sparkle

A. 5 1/2x14 snare (or 6 1/2x14 Gretsch 125th Anniversary snare in silver mist lacquer)

B. 8x12 tom

C. 14x14 floor tom

D. 14x18 bass drum

Cymbals: Istanbul Agop Mel Lewis series

1. 14" hats

2. 21" ride with two rivets

3. 21" ride

4. 20" ride

Sticks: Vic Firth SD2 Bolero, 5A, SD10 Swinger, Joe Porcaro diamond tip (8AN), AJ6,

AJ3, Peter Erskine signature model sticks; Vic Firth retractable Heritage brushes with rubber handle; Vic Firth T1 General, T3 Staccato, and T4 Ultra Staccato mallets; Pro-Mark Broomsticks, Hot Rods, TUBZ, and Cool Rods.

Heads: Remo. Fiberskyn Ambassador (or coated white Ambassador) batter heads on snare, tom, floor tom, and bass drum batter; clear Diplomat on bottoms of tom and floor tom; Fiberskyn Ambassador (or coated white Ambassador) as a resonant head for bass drum.

Hardware: DW 6000 series cymbal stands and hi-hat stand, DW 7000 series bass drum pedal, Yamaha 740 snare drum stand



guys like [fellow students] Mark Guiliana and Johnathan Blake, and I wanted to play on that level.

I studied with John Riley, who was on the faculty, and he helped me get a sound from my cymbal, among many other things. I was spending countless hours practicing and going through my period of emulating others such as Jeff “Tain” Watts, who I had the most respect

for. Also Brian Blade, Billy Higgins, and some of the great organ drummers like Donald Bailey. Sometimes I'd lock myself in a room for six hours and just play time on a ride cymbal.

MD: When did your voice begin to emerge?

Tyshawn: After 9/11, actually. I was playing it safe and trying to sound like everyone else. But after 9/11 my style and thinking changed. I was no longer



interested in being like others. It got to a point where I saw that jazz schools wanted you to stay the same. Max and Tony and Elvin all found their own way, and they didn't have to go through so-called "jazz education" to do it. I was going to jam sessions in New York, and in 2002 I started to work with Vijay Iyer, whom I met through my best friend and mentor, tenor saxophonist Aaron Stewart. Eventually Vijay and I had a session, and a few days later I was asked to join his quartet for the premiere of *Blood Sutra*, which ended up being one of my first major gigs in NYC and perhaps the first official release that featured my playing. We've worked together for the past seven years in various configurations, most notably Fieldwork.

MD: How did you prepare for your first recording? Were you nervous?

Tyshawn: Yes! I was an unknown guy playing in a situation where creative music was happening, and it was so complex. I figured I would play in a straight-ahead thing in the beginning and then expand toward other music, but I came out playing this stuff.

MD: What's your approach to free playing?

Tyshawn: Well, I like to believe that I play free all the time. [laughs] In other words, I don't consider myself an avant-gardist, jazz purist, or any kind of stylist. I guess I'd call myself a traditionalist—not in the way we think of what a traditionalist is, but there is a tradition in all of the great masters we study that makes them great masters. I mean, they were "free" players also—free in the way they expressed themselves whenever, with whomever.

Freedom for me is having enough resources in your drumming that you can do anything you want to do, coupled with discipline and the willingness to bring the best out of the other musicians you play with. Listen to Louis Armstrong recordings, and then to the stuff that Kenny Clarke and Max Roach did with Charlie Parker, the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, James Brown—I mean, to me that shit is just as free as what we call avant-garde. I don't think there is any qualitative difference there, in terms of how free they were to play themselves.

So I would like to think I have this kind of freedom, where I can be as creative as I can be and be able to play with anybody, in any style. And it comes from within yourself, and from discipline. It's like what Elvin Jones once said: "If you don't know what discipline is, then you don't know freedom either."

MD: Does your mindset ever change for different musical situations? How about your solo work?

Tyshawn: When I perform my own work I barely play, because I'm interested in what the other musicians are doing. I want to think of myself not as someone who's "making something happen" or "providing" but making something happen by not doing anything. There's a lot to say by not playing. It comes from a Taoist philosophy. I'm not interested in sounding "killin'."

I'm interested in doing whatever is best for the song or for the room. Sometimes what's best for the room is for me not to play—if the situation allows me to be that free.

MD: You play with great sensitivity and a wide dynamic range on one standard kit. If you're not bringing in different kits for each playing situation, how do you make one serve all your purposes?

Tyshawn: It's in me to do that. The room plays an important role once again. I don't think it's the drums' responsibility for me to interpret the music correctly. It could be my choice

Liberal Arts

TYSHAWN'S RECORDINGS

Tyshawn Sorey *That/Not* /// **Vijay Iyer** *Blood Sutra* /// **Steve Lehman** *Demian As Posthuman; On Meaning; Travail, Transformation, And Flow* /// **Fieldwork** *Door* /// **John Escreet** *Consequences* /// **Michael Dessen** *Between Shadow And Space* /// **Pete Robbins** *Do The Hate Laugh Shimmy* /// **Meilana Gillard** *Day One*

HIS FAVORITES

Tony Williams *Lifetime* *Turn It Over* (Tony Williams) /// **Anthony Braxton** *Quartet* *London 1985* (Gerry Hemingway) /// **Meshuggah** *ObZen* (Tomas Haake) /// **John Zorn** *Masada: Live In Middelheim* (Joey Baron) /// **Wayne Shorter** *Etcetera* (Joe Chambers) /// **The Meters** *The Meters* (Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste) /// **Jason Moran** *Facing Left* (Nasheet Waits) /// **Nirvana** *In Utero* (Dave Grohl) /// **John Coltrane** *Sun Ship* (Elvin Jones) /// **Duke Ellington** *Far East Suite* (Rufus Jones) /// **Weather Report** *I Sing The Body Electric* (Eric Gravatt) /// **Tony Oxley** *4 Compositions For Sextet* (Tony Oxley) /// **Dillinger Escape Plan** *Calculating Infinity* (Chris Pennie) /// **Joe Lovano** *Quartets: Live At The Village Vanguard* (Billy Hart, Lewis Nash)

Plus composers John Cage, Henry Threadgill, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Morton Feldman, Pierre Boulez, Cecil Taylor, and Anton Webern, and much twentieth-century literature and painting, notably the work of Robert Rauschenberg, Charles Bukowski, Samuel Beckett, Mark Rothko, Alan Watts, Jackson Pollock, and Henry Miller.

of cymbals, but it should be inherent in me. And I seldom change the tuning, whether it's a blues gig that's loud or whatever. But it seems to work.

MD: Steve Coleman and Steve Lehman both write involved and rhythmically challenging material for the drummer. Is there a common thread in how you approach each?

Tyshawn: Upon repeated listening, I figure out what they want. I'm listen-

TYSHAWN SOREY

ing to everything that's happening in one space, not just to what the drums should be doing. Lehman specifically provides MIDI realizations [charts] of the music.

MD: Do they ever suggest drum parts?

Tyshawn: Sure, tons of that. Lehman sometimes provides actual drum scores. On *Travail, Transformation, And Flow*, there are drum parts I'm playing that he orchestrated himself. This brings me back to my classical days and being able to read. Steve Coleman also has all these special, nontraditional notations for drum music.

MD: What's going on in "Echoes" from Lehman's *Travail*? There's a jagged rimclick/kick drum/hi-hat groove with these cymbal "flashes." Were those flashes improvised?

Tyshawn: That drum part is written out, and I improvise within that so it doesn't sound written. Originally those flashes were written into the part, and I asked Lehman if he wanted me to play them or not. You've got five, seven, and nine, and later on there are measures of four. So I play the flashes as underlying pulses. I figured if I marked every one of those 7/16 parts, it would help lock the band in. If I didn't play them, then the horn players would fall back. But I didn't want any of it to sound like it was written out or mechanical. I wanted to be liberated from the paper.

MD: The track "Dub" has a drum 'n' bass vibe but a lower-tuned snare, where usually that music has a crackling, high-pitched snare. Was this on purpose?

Tyshawn: Yes. I just wanted to do it my own way, really. I wanted to achieve a sound that was organic and dirty. I thought if I tuned the snare lower and rode on the bell of the cymbal it would change the vibe.

I don't want to be compared to the great drum 'n' bass drummers, and I don't want to disrespect them by trying to sound exactly like them. People like Jojo Mayer kill that stuff! But I love drum 'n' bass music, and I respect it highly enough to make some version of my own. I love how artists like Autechre and Squarepusher manipulate snare and cymbal sounds, so I like to bring an unpredictable element to a situation like that. I don't think I even told Lehman that I was going to do that! [laughs] But I know that in my history of working with him he has a trust in my ability to execute the music in the best way possible. So I know I'm in good company. Sometimes it really takes trust on the part of the band-leader to be able to pull off something like that.

MD: Were you studying former Steve Coleman drummers Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Gene Lake, and Sean Rickman before you got the Coleman gig, or

were you trying to approach it fresh?

Tyshawn: Way before I got that gig, actually—and I also tried to approach it fresh. I just knew there would be an expectation for me to sound like Smitty or Rickman, who are great. But we had one rehearsal and then a gig in France where Coleman was throwing stuff at me that I didn't even hear before, scattling out "drum chants"! I was used to stopping after every tune, but he was using all these different musical cues for going from one tune to the next that you'd have to pick up on. You had to learn all these relationships between what the drums and the bass and the melody were doing. That's what was challenging—not to mention the fact that sometimes the sets were two hours long. Those first shows kicked my ass.

MD: Fieldwork, your cooperative group with Lehman and Vijay Iyer, benefits from compositional contributions from all three musicians. Is there a challenge in presenting your material to the others?

Tyshawn: It's a challenge for each of us. We're investigating different ways of dealing with rhythm and pitch content. First we challenge ourselves and then each other. Everything is written out, and then when we come together we arrange it collectively. Sometimes we'll get surprised by mistakes and change the arrangements from gig to gig. There are endless possibilities within each composition.

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MD: Do you ever experience a bias toward composing drummers?

Tyshawn: This is actually something that has been bothering me for some time. There are so many drummers that are also really great composers. Susie Ibarra is my favorite percussionist/composer around right now, and it's a shame that not many people know she has a lot to offer as a composer. The same should go for Paul Motian, Mark Guiliana, Gerald Cleaver, Dan Weiss, Billy Martin, Max Roach, Joey Baron, Marcus Gilmore, and Jeff "Tain" Watts, among others.

To me it's shallow to only think of drummers as sidemen. It's ironic because what these drummers contribute to the music of their respective bandleaders is so strong and powerful that what they create becomes an essential part of the music itself; they make the composition, as far as I'm concerned. The liner notes to my record *That/Not* state that I'm not focused on my abilities as a drummer but on my abilities as an artist. I think the drumming community is greatly underappreciated on a compositional level, because people are so fixated on the idea that drummers have no theoretical training and would not be able to compose music.

MD: How do you deal with musicians who aren't gelling, such as a bass player with bad time?

Tyshawn: You have to know how to make the situation better. I try to bring

out the best in others. It's a learning situation too—how to make it work. My first tour I realized I needed to do a lot of personal work to make the band sound good, to make me sound good. Your own insecurities don't help. When I worked with Dave Douglas in his group Nomad, I was going through a period of questioning myself.

MD: Questioning yourself even after landing these nice gigs?

Tyshawn: Yeah. During a tour with Nomad, Dave and I had lunch one day and he asked me what my deal was. I told him I thought I wasn't playing well and all that. And Dave said, "I don't care what you think you sound like—it matters to me what you make the band sound like." He asked how I could be so selfish to think about my own playing within a situation. Before, I was thinking I had to be the greatest musician on the stage, but after he said that, it brought it all into perspective. That helped me take my playing to other places.

MD: Some of the groups you've worked with don't have a bassist. How do you approach the drums in these situations?

Tyshawn: I need to fill in a little more space than usual, and do it texturally. I really don't look at drums as merely a timekeeping instrument. The drums are an equal part of everything else, and I consider it more like an orchestral instrument anyway. I have to make sure to support the musical situation at

hand—no matter if I play with a lot of dynamics and space or if I don't play at all—but also to be an equal part of the music, because the responsibility lies on the whole band, bass or no bass. I don't really want to play a "role." People like Tony Williams, Vinnie Colaiuta, Terri Lyne Carrington—all these drummers I admire—I've heard them play in all kinds of situations. They use their entire instrument. And that's what I'm thinking about.

MD: Do you find it increasingly difficult to live a life of creativity when NYC clubs close left and right? How about in this economy?

Tyshawn: I get the feeling that it's just chaos right now. It's difficult for everyone. Even in Europe, festivals are less willing to take chances on lesser-known groups. Making a living doing it is difficult, especially as a drummer. Plus I'm trying to compose and get that music out there. Clubs are concerned with having a crowd, how many people are buying drinks. I don't want that association with my music. It's also tough when clubs want you to play for the [take from the] door. It's a struggle.

MD: What's next for Tyshawn Sorey?

Tyshawn: I have some recordings and gigs coming up. I'm hoping to document as much of my work as I can so that I can have opportunities to play my music everywhere and further encourage young drummer/composers to do the same.



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FREDDIE "GOLDENSTIX" HOLLIDAY

An R&B journeyman finds peace and inspiration right at home.

Story by Adam Budofsky • Photos by Maylee Wolf

Freddie "Goldenstix" Holliday has been a popular presence on the live R&B circuit for over twenty years. A product of Philadelphia's legendary music scene, he started out in show business as a young teenager, working the sound effects at a theater near his home. Soon he was asked to replace the drummer in the pit band for a play, which ran for a year and a half. "I was like, I can't believe I have a bank account at thirteen years old!" Freddie laughs at the memory. "I thought I was the man." The experience turned out to be an important lesson in how to serve the music.

Right out of high school Holliday began touring with established acts like the Tymes and First Choice. Eventually he fell in with a group of musicians who started doing talent nights across the city, serving as sort of a live karaoke backing band. "We had Philly sewn up," Freddie recalls. "We'd work every night at a different club." Next, Holliday replaced the drummer with the New York-based vocal group Ray, Goodman & Brown. He brought his bass-playing brother, Bay, into that gig, which led to jobs with other bands of the era, like Blue Magic, Billy Paul, the Delfonics, and the Stylistics.

"A lot of people wanted their show to be the way Bay and I put together Ray, Goodman & Brown's," Freddie says, "with that much energy. We started referring to ourselves as the doo-wop mafia. We became the band for so many groups, we couldn't do them all, so we started farming out the shows. And any musician who wanted those gigs had to come through us."

Eventually Holliday's contacts led to work with a young, ambitious vocal group called Boyz II Men. Since then he's been the go-to guy for the record-breaking "hip-hop doo-wop" quartet. And about

four years ago he became the live drummer for the legendary Sound Of Philadelphia band the O'Jays.

Between the two groups, Holliday has to be a master at playing soul ballads, mid-tempo '70s-style funk, slick four-on-the-floor Motown, hip-hop.... Just looking at the number-one hits among the two acts—"It's So Hard To Say Goodbye To Yesterday," "Uhh Ahh," "End Of The Road," "I'll Make Love To You," and "On Bended Knee" by Boyz II Men; "Back Stabbers," "Love Train," "I Love Music," and "Use Ta Be My Girl" by the O'Jays—makes you

and a drum room separated by a sound-proof wall with a large glass window, the converted basement serves as the perfect place for Freddie to chill between tours, put a few tracks down with local musicians, or do overdubs for projects like his daughter Shaneka's slamming dance tracks.

Unlike some drummers' woodsheds, Holliday's place isn't overflowing with hundreds of drums and cymbals. And though he recently obtained a Mac loaded with Logic Pro and a Pro Tools Digi 003 interface, as well as a set of tiny portable "lipstick" security cameras for instructional



appreciate the heaviness of Holliday's job. And the drummer is commanding in every context, as evidenced by his performance on the recent Boyz II Men DVD, *Motown Live: A Journey Through Hitsville USA*. A live O'Jays DVD is planned for release later this year as well.

GMS recently introduced a 5½x14 Freddie Holliday signature snare drum, which features a cobalt-blue aluminum shell and gold-finish die-cast hoops. It's a flashy but classy drum, befitting Freddie's style. (See our review of this snare in the October '08 issue.) That cool, urbane, somewhat retro vibe is also reflected in Holliday's studio, located in his suburban Philly home. Consisting of a control room

video production, he's not pretending to have a full-service location where a five-piece band could stretch out and jam. Rather, it's a sensibly sized project studio outfitted with gear that allows Holliday to get up and running fast, ideal for a drummer who wants to achieve pro sounds without having to keep a pro engineer on call. And the studio's modest features don't come at the expense of ambience; entering the space, you immediately feel you could get lost in a recording project for long, long hours. And that's just what Freddie had in mind when he designed it. Here's a rundown of the gear found in the Goldenstix shed.



1. GMS GRAND MASTER DRUMKIT.

Holliday keeps a six-piece setup in his studio, with an 18x22 bass drum; his 5½x14 signature snare; 8x8, 9x10, and 10x12 rack toms; and a 12x14 floor tom. He adds a 14x16 floor tom when he hits the road with the O'Jays. And with Boyz II Men, the set increases to a ten-piece, with a second 18x22 bass drum, an 11x13 rack tom, and a piccolo snare. Freddie also has a duplicate kit in a silver-sparkle finish, which he stores at CenterStaging in the Philly area. The drums are mounted on a Gibraltar rack. He plays Zildjian cymbals and uses Remo heads and Zildjian sticks. Also visible in the shot is a ddrum PadStation, which is hooked up to a ddrum4 brain and a Roland TD-7 module.

2. AKAI MPC 3000 DRUM MACHINE.

"When that came out," Freddie says, "everybody was like, 'You gotta have that machine.' After I got it, it sat in the box for nine months because I was so intimidated by it. So I stuck with the Roland R-8 for a long time. A lot of people have a newer version of the MPC, but I swear by the 3000. Most people who have them won't get rid of them. That's the last one that Roger Linn put his name on."

3. YAMAHA AW4416 PROFESSIONAL AUDIO WORKSTATION.

"At first I had a Soundcraft 16-channel mixing board hooked up to an ADAT recorder, then I jumped to a Tascam DA-88 DAT machine. From there I went to an Akai DR16 digital hard-disk recorder with a Yamaha O1V mixer. Then, after seeing the Yamaha AW4416 demonstrated at a NAMM show, I thought, *I can get rid of almost everything else if I use that.*"

4. FURMAN POWER CONDITIONER

5. PRESONUS CENTRAL STATION. "That ties the two rooms together, allows talk-back, and acts as a speaker switcher."

6. APHEX AURAL EXCITER

7. TANNOY SYSTEM 600 UNPOWERED SPEAKERS (on desk), **JBL LSR28P SPEAKERS** (on stands, with subwoofer under the desk)

8. ROLAND PC-300 USB MIDI KEYBOARD CONTROLLER. "I had a case made that allows me to carry the MPC, the controller, and a little Mackie mixer. I'll go to my hotel room and just start creating."

9. ROLAND JV-90 KEYBOARD

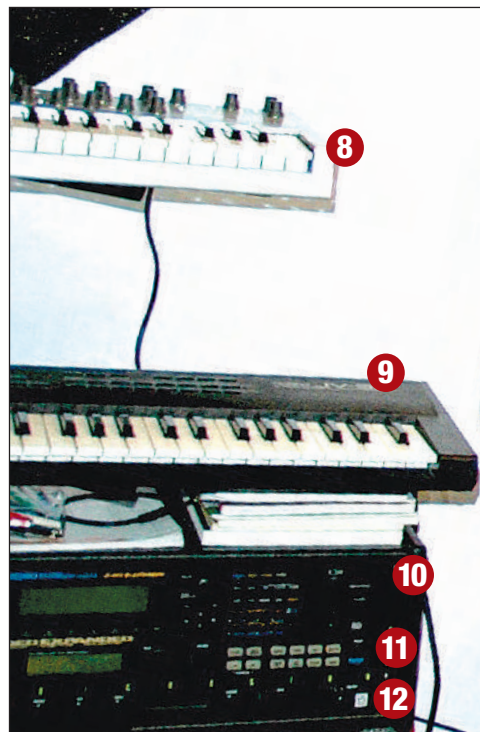
10. ROLAND JV-2080 SOUND MODULE

11. ALESIS DM5 SOUND MODULE

12. E-MU PRO/CUSSION SOUND MODULE. "A lot of people slept on that one. It's got nothing but percussion sounds—ethnic instruments, all kinds of crazy gongs and timpani. I love it. It works great with my Zendrum."

Not shown:

- Akai MPC 1000 Sampling Production Station
- Alesis Ion analog modeling synthesizer



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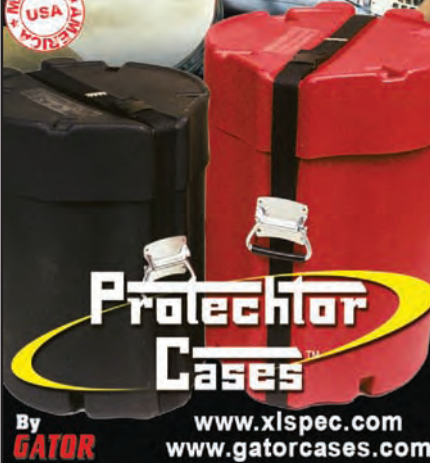
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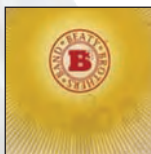
RECORDINGS



★★★★★

WILCO WILCO (THE ALBUM)

GLENN KOTCHE, underrated? When it comes to his abilities as a player of *the song*, absolutely. So much is made of Kotche's inventive concepts that his skilled way with a backbeat goes somewhat unheralded. Some of Kotche's best song-oriented work within Wilco is featured on *Wilco (The Album)*. Though in some ways this is the least daring album of his tenure with the band, the songs are strong and Kotche serves them well. He plays the squared-off patterns and fills with conviction (the simple stomp of "You Never Know" is simply beautiful), and when the mood calls for something more dynamic, like in "Everlasting," he's right there with syncopated snare work and a sweet swing. (Nonesuch) **Patrick Berkery**



★★★★★

BEATY BROTHERS BAND B3

On the Beaty Brothers Band's double-horn/acoustic trio outing, **ARI HOENIG** favors a style that can only be called orchestral. Whether swinging ("They Cried") or layering tight linear phrases ("Genbaku"), Hoenig's drumming sounds as thoroughly composed as the material itself. Though his approach is heavily improvisational, Hoenig nonetheless creates elaborate parts, sharp commentary, and clever insights that are essential to the music's movement. He plays a solo that acts as a kind of alternate melody in "Genbaku," he offers loose marching-type figures within a flowing funk pocket in "Ares," and he lays down a simmering, subtle pulse in "Insomnia." Drummer = composer? Ari Hoenig nails it. (beatybrothersband.com) **Ken Micallef**



★★★★★

TORI AMOS ABNORMALLY ATTRACTED TO SIN

MATT CHAMBERLAIN graces Tori Amos's dark and sublime *Abnormally Attracted To Sin*, and his decade-long association with the pianist/singer now feels like a hand in a glove. Chamberlain channels "Kashmir"-era Bonham on the forceful "Strong Black Vine," and the rolling-toms/shimmy-shake beat of "Not Dying Today" is infectious and propulsive. Throughout, Chamberlain's ultra-modern drum programming and slick sampled loops complement a beautifully recorded kit to great effect. A headphones listen reveals a myriad of drum production subtleties and overdubs just under the surface. But then, during the heavy dirge of "Police Me," you're reminded that Chamberlain is here to rock. (Universal Republic) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

★★★★★

RENOLDS JAZZ ORCHESTRA CUBE

Composer and saxophonist Fritz Renold's sacred suite attempts to celebrate religious themes by way of a swinging all-star big band. Drummer **ADAM NUSSBAUM** and percussionist **WILLY KOTOUN** drive the music ever forward and provide support for big-name soloists including Randy Brecker. Nussbaum has an uncanny sense of dynamics while kicking the band up a notch and then dropping down for the vocals ("Ascension"). Check out how his cymbals are put to the test on the Latin pulse of "Caiaphas," and dig the smooth transition from a lilting rumba to a fat quarter-note throb behind Brecker's trumpet on the title track. (shanti-music.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

★★★★★

DRUMBO CITY OF REFUGE

Former Captain Beefheart skins beater John French, aka Drumbo, doesn't exactly dazzle us with his technique, but he still manages to make a "drummer's record." French's syncopated patterns are the architecture for these tracks, especially the opener, "Bogeyman" (check out Drumbo's Howlin' Wolf-style vocals, which you can't help but compare to the Captain's), and the support musicians—former members of Beefheart's Magic Band—enhance the rhythmic momentum of each composition. You'll find little of the Dire Straits-esque sophistication of French's solo debut, *Waiting On The Flame*. Instead, be prepared for edgy, sonically raw, and slightly perverse music. (Proper) **Will Romano**

MULTIMEDIA



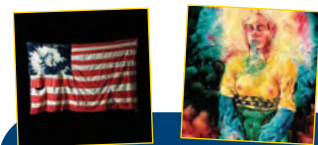
★★★★★

ESSENTIAL DRUMSET FILLS: THE COMPONENT RHYTHM SYSTEM

BY JEFF BOWDERS

BOOK/CD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$19.99

There are plenty of books designed to help us drummers learn how to play beats and grooves, but not enough focusing on fills. Jeff Bowders of Musicians Institute helps "fill" the gap with 119 glue-bound pages of phrases for your kit plus a little more. The book is divided into eight chapters; most of the early ones start out with the components of the fill, i.e., quarter notes and 8th-note triplets, followed by orchestration around the kit. The fills include pretty much all the major rhythmic notations as well as flams and rolls. The last two chapters get pretty heavy: polyrhythmic feels, 16th-note/three-note grouping, double bass...even some play-along tunes. An included CD helps you hear everything the way it's meant to be played. (Musicians Institute Press/Hal Leonard) **Fran Azzarto**



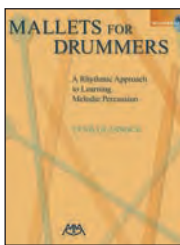
STAFF FAVES

THIS MONTH:
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
ADAM BUDOFSKY

At any given time the band Akron/Family might remind you of the proggy new wave of '80s-era Talking Heads and King Crimson, '90s avant-pop groups Tortoise and the Sea And Cake, or shaggy '70s British acoustic prog bands like Jethro Tull and Traffic. What makes it all work together is the conviction behind the band's ideas. And A/F's dastardly approach to polyrhythms on *Set 'Em Wild*, *Set 'Em Free* makes every song here compelling. The band members all play multiple instruments, though **DANA JANSSEN** is apparently the main drummer. From the percolating alterna-funk approach of "Everyone Is Guilty" to the not-quite-Mitch Mitchell-istic but still great 12/8 tumble of "Gravelly Mountains Of The Moon" to the galloping garage freak-out of "MBF," Janssen makes the right moves every time. Fantastic stuff. (Dead Oceans)

Quest For Fire reminds me of a somewhat less impolite/more detached Queens Of The Stone Age, or maybe Sonic Youth if they were from Joshua Tree rather than New York. This is warm-feeling, riff-loving psychedelic stoner garage rock that's a level above most other bands treading similar ground (and there are a few). Drummer **MIKE MAXYMIUK** is a significant reason why. Opener "Bison Eyes" immediately suggests there's a heavy drummer in the house; you could build a two-story structure atop Maxymuk's unstoppable double-time backbeat. From there it's a variety of tom-heavy tribalisms, big washy cymbal swells, and other examples of controlled looseness and attention to dynamics. (Tee Pee)

To find out what else the MD editors are listening to every month, sign up for the Wire e-newsletter at moderndrummer.com.



★★★★★
**MALLETS FOR DRUMMERS:
 A RHYTHMIC APPROACH TO
 LEARNING MELODIC PERCUSSION**
 BY LYNN GLASSOCK

BOOK/CD
 LEVEL: BEGINNING TO INTERMEDIATE \$19.95
 For drummers who are interested in studying a melodic instrument, Lynn Glasscock's new

book might be a helpful doorway. *Mallets For Drummers* covers all the basics of reading music, including note names, scales, and key signatures. The exercises explore more advanced rhythms than the usual quarter and 8th notes. And the twenty-five reading studies are more interesting than what's usually found in beginner books, including jazzy melodies in a triplet feel. Top it off with eighteen solo pieces that include some advanced time signatures (7/8, 6/16), and you'll be conquering melodic keyboard percussion in no time. (Meredith Music)

Andrea Byrd



★★★★★
**ROBIN DIMAGGIO
 PLANET GROOVE**

DVD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED
 \$29.99

Robin Dimaggio's *Planet Groove* offers a lot of hip patterns, with the in-demand drummer's famous backbeat feel at the center of it all. The DVD, which consists of twenty-four

lessons covering nine styles from jazz to hip-hop to Brazilian to rock, is more of a watch-and-play video than a straight-up instructional lesson, though Dimaggio does introduce each section with a short explanation of what he's about to play on the kit. The audio is clear, and the multi-camera shoot makes it easy to see everything that Robin plays. Each lesson also includes a section where the beats are slowed down for easier understanding—definitely a nice touch. (Hal Leonard) **Fran Azzarto**



★★★★★
ON THE BEATEN PATH: METAL BY RICH LACKOWSKI
BOOK/CD LEVEL: ALL \$19.95

Molten licks and grooves from Haake, Jordison, Bittner, Roddy, Adler, Benante, Lombardo, Ulrich, McBrain, and Burr, plus Bill Ward and Black Sabbath's metal anthem "Iron Man," are creatively explained and thoughtfully transcribed here. Using a condensed *Modern Drummer*-style format, Lackowski highlights each metal master's career and contributions, including a drumkit diagram and abbreviated transcripts of classic tracks, supported by sound supplements competently performed by the author. The supplemental songs are played at the original tempos, which does make it difficult to accurately distinguish certain up-tempo examples. Still, this is an affordable introduction, overview, and chops builder for the ever-evolving subgenres of metal drumming. (Alfred) **Mike Haid**

PERFORMANCE DVDS

★★★★★

**MIKE STERN BAND
 NEW MORNING: THE PARIS CONCERT**

There's nary a style, technique, or advanced rhythm that **DAVE WECKL** doesn't demonstrate with conviction on the Mike Stern Band's *Paris Concert* DVD, recorded last year. Just check out opening track "Tumble Home." Swung funk, lighter-than-light brushes, raging rock, mature soloing—it's all there. Weckl's playing has benefited from a Freddie Gruber-inspired fluidity for years now, and it's about time we got a beautifully recorded 5.1 document shot in hi-def. Bassist Tom Kennedy holds down the bottom in Weckl's own band, so their rapport is breathtaking. They finish each other's thoughts and lock in like only masters can. A how-to on rhythm-section expertise and fusion pyrotechnics. (Heads Up) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

★★★★★

**JEFF BECK
 PERFORMING THIS WEEK...
 LIVE AT RONNIE SCOTT'S**

This companion DVD to the earlier CD release features Beck, **VINNIE COLAIUTA**, bassist Tal Wilkenfeld, and keyboardist Jason Rebello executing brilliant versions of the guitarist's hits. Eric Clapton, Imogen Heap, and Joss Stone guest. Until Colaiuta produces his own long-awaited DVD, this is the next best thing. (Eagle Rock) **Ken Micallef**



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ROCK 'N' ROLL FANTASY CAMP

DRUMS UP DREAM JAM

The Los Angeles Rock 'N' Roll Fantasy Camp session held this past April 29 through May 3 provided many highlights. Among the most memorable was a once-in-a-lifetime all-star drummer jam. The legendary Hal Blaine kicked off the night by answering questions from the campers, and then former Wings/Paul McCartney drummer Denny Seiwell played "Live And Let Die," a track he recorded with Sir Paul for the James Bond movie of the same name.

With three kits in place, special guest Carmine Appice, camp counselor Alan White of Yes, camp counselor Danny Seraphine of Chicago, Chris Coleman of New Kids On The Block, and up-and-coming drummer Matty Amendola took turns on stage. Then the floodgates really opened up, with Jethro Tull's Doane Perry, metal master Seven Antonopolous, Jessica Simpson's Gordon Campbell, L.A. session drummer Ryan Brown, camp counselor/Joan Jett drummer Sandy Gennaro, camp counselor/Stray Cats drummer Slim Jim Phantom, former Guns N' Roses drummer Steven Adler, and *MD*'s Billy Amendola joining in. Also in attendance were Rooney's Ned Brower, Fountains Of Wayne's Brian Young, Collective Soul's Ryan Hoyle, TSOL's Anthony "Tiny" Biuso, TV personality Damien Fahey, Street Drum Corps' Frank Zummo, Steve Lukather's Eric Valentine, *MD* writer Robyn Flans, *MD* e-media sales rep Lisa Jenkins, photographer Rob Shanahan, and session drummer Denny Fongheiser.

Olympic gold medalist figure skater Scott Hamilton, who was a drumming camper, said of the experience, "Rock 'N' Roll Fantasy Camp was beyond anything I have experienced. Being in a band and bonding with new friends was life changing. I always wanted to be a drummer, and now I guess I am! The demonstration given by Billy Amendola and *Modern Drummer* magazine was something I never could have dreamed of. The lineup of legends and future legends was awesome. Camp was like any great ride—you just can't wait to experience it again. Play loud, play proud, and rock on!" For more photos and video clips, go to moderndrummer.com; for more info on the camp, visit rockcamp.com.

Photos by Alex Solca



Chris Coleman



Hal Blaine



Danny Seraphine

Billy Amendola, Hal Blaine, Doane Perry, Scott Hamilton



Carmine Appice



Denny Seiwell, Sandy Gennaro, Chris Coleman, Doane Perry, Gordon Campbell



Matty Amendola



Denny Seiwell



Seven Antonopolous



Carmine Appice, Danny Seraphine, and Slim Jim Phantom rocking at the drum jam

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WHO'S PLAYING WHAT

Ronnie Vannucci of the Killers and **John Blackwell** (Prince, Justin Timberlake) have joined the Zildjian family of drumstick artists and have designed their own Artist series models.

Tony Royster Jr. (Jay-Z), **Jim Riley** (Rascal Flatts), **Cora Coleman-Dunham** (Prince), and **Todd Sucherman** (Styx, Brian Wilson) are among the early adopters of the Sabian AAX X-Plosion fast crash cymbals.

The following artists have joined the Regal Tip family:

Tommy Clufetos (Rob Zombie), **John Longstreth** (Origin), **Will Romain** (Romeo Must Die), **Tommy Buckley** (Soilent Green), **Keith Pickens** (American Dog), **Marc Anthony** (the Fifth), and **Orlando Hernandez** (Chayanne).

Vic Firth welcomes the following artists: **Matthew Nicholls** (Bring Me The Horizon), **Christoph Schneider** (Rammstein), **Jerome Flood II** (Guitar Center Drum-Off 2008 winner), and **Cindy Blackman**.

Taye Drums is proud to announce a partnership with New Jersey educators **Sam Ruttenberg** and **Yisroel Plaut**, as well as jazz/calypso master and Rutgers-educated drummer **Dion Parson**. Also joining the Taye roster are **Erick "EvL_e" Tatuaca** (DJ Adam Freeland) and **Ben Cordonero** (Salvador).

Future Sonics' Atrio professional earphones has added *American Idol's* **Teddy Campbell** to its roster.

Derico Watson is playing a Mapex Saturn series drumset on his upcoming world tour with Stanley Clarke, Marcus Miller, and Victor Wooten.

Dave Mackintosh (DragonForce) has joined the Meinl cymbal family.

RimRiserUSA has signed **Robin Dimaggio** (sessions), **Jonathan Moffett** (Madonna, Michael Jackson), **Jon "Bermuda" Schwartz** ("Weird Al" Yankovic), Latin greats **Richie "Gajate" Garcia** and **Bobby Sanabria**, **Jerry Marotta** (sessions), **Carlos McSwain** (Snoop Dogg), **Kevin Lamar** (Asher Roth), **Franklin Vanderbilt** (Lenny Kravitz), and **Bo Swanger** (independent).

Shine Custom Drums & Percussion has signed **Joey Bumpus** (Lady Gaga, Brandy).

Xavier Muriel (Buckcherry) is now a member of the Toca artist roster.

Joining the Vater artist roster are **Dan Lamagna** (Suicide City), **Atom Willard** (Angels and Airwaves, Social Distortion), **Daren Taylor** (the Airborne Toxic Event), **Eli Logothetis** (David Archuleta), **Keenan Ephraim** (Lil Wayne), **Drew Steen** (Demi Lovato), **Brent Easton** (J. Moss), **Yoron Israel** (assistant chair of percussion at Berklee College Of Music), **Sean Skeete** (assistant chair of ensembles at Berklee College Of Music), **Neil Beaton** (the Veer Union), **Ryland Steen** (Reel Big Fish), **Sib Hashian** (Ernie & The Automatics, ex-Boston), **Andy Selway** (KMFDM, the Dwarves), **Keith McKrae** (Ryan Leslie, Ryan Shaw), **Franklin "Third" Richardson** (Warren Hill), **Tobias Gustafsson** (Vomitory), **Brent Duckett** (Becoming The Archetype), **John Lawson** (Kanye West), **Larry Herweg** (Pelican), and **Felix "D-Kat" Pollard**.

Mark Zonder is playing DW drums.

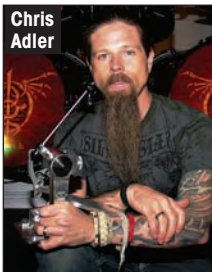


Xavier Muriel

Robin Dimaggio



Dave Mackintosh



Chris Adler

Joining Paiste are **Jason Scarboro** (Dead Confederate), **Mikey Martin** (Shiny Toy Guns), **Daniel Lopez** (Kingsfall), **Dan Weiner** (*Wicked, The Musical*), **Andrew Blanco** (*The Color Purple, The Musical*), **David Astor** (Pathology), **Bucket Baker** (Macy Gray), **Matt Hankle** (Kaki King), **Lyn Jeffs** (Annotations Of An Autopsy), **Johnny Dee** (Doro), **Vladimir Zinovoyev** (Nversmile), **Anthony Van der Wee** (the Ditch), and **Robin Dimaggio**.

Craviotto Drum Company has announced the addition of Nashville session great **Chris McHugh** to its family of artist endorsers.

Jim Calvert (Jambi's Revenge) is playing Aquarian drumheads.

Lamb Of God's **Chris Adler** is playing the Trick Pro 1-V Detonator bass drum pedal.



Prime Cuts



Modern Drummer's *Snare Drum Selects, Volume 1* is a BFD2-compatible collection of studio-quality sound samples taken from 12 high-end snare drums that were selected for MD's "Snare Drum Of The Month" column. The samples are recommended for use in home and professional studio recording situations as well as live performances with electronic drums or acoustic drum triggers.

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Peter Erskine



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ROTOTOM MADNESS

This month's very shiny kit comes from Chicago's Bill Roberts, who started with a 6"-8"-10" Rototom set in the early '80s and collected the rest from eBay and Craigslist over the years. "All the Rototoms were bought out of state," Roberts says of toms shipped his way from such far-flung locations as California, Utah, Mississippi, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts.

The set includes fifty-plus rack clamps and around thirty boom mounts for the cymbals and drums. The Remo chrome-on-chrome Rototoms range from 6" through 18" (there are three of the latter), and the kit also has 6" and 8" timbales. The rack-mounted snare is a Remo Mastertouch with a copper finish.

"The whole unit doesn't move very often," Roberts says. "It comes apart in four areas, with memory locks at every connection so I can hopefully put it back together." The rack and other hardware are DW and Pacific. And the Paiste cymbals include 2000 and 2002 models and two remote hi-hats—12" Micro Hats and 14" Sound Edges.

But wait, there's more: "I also have another set that's black-on-black epoxy but set up in a different configuration," Roberts says. What we want to know is whether Bill has an assistant who's willing to run around tuning the Rototoms as he plays. Now *that*, we'd like to see.



Photo Submission: Digital photos on disk as well as print photos may be sent to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Hi-res digital photos and descriptive text can also be emailed to billya@moderndrummer.com. Show "Kit Of The Month" in the subject line of the message. Photos cannot be returned.

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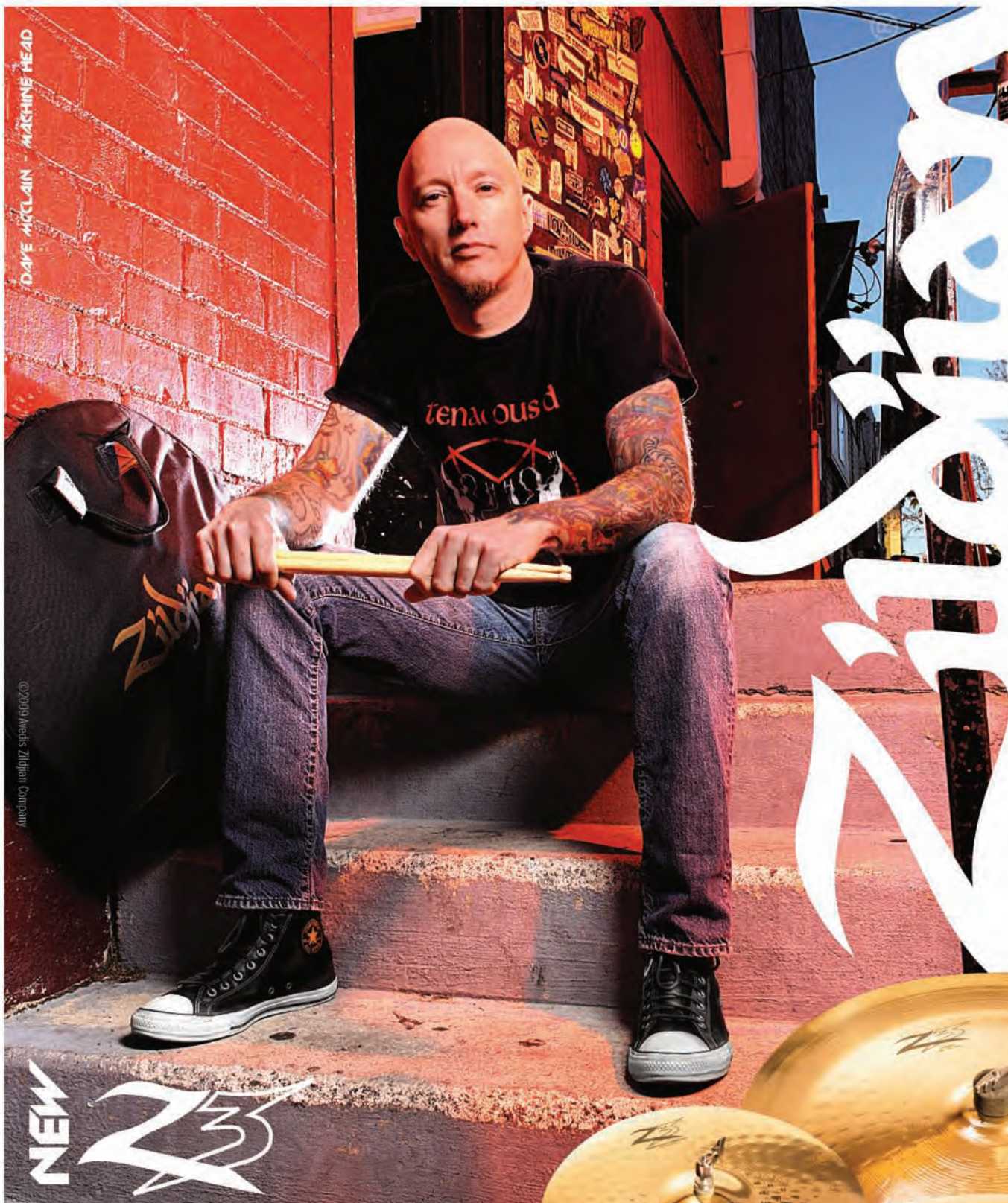
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DAVE MCCLAIN - MACHINE HEAD

Artwork by Jeffrey Sipalay 6/00 ©



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