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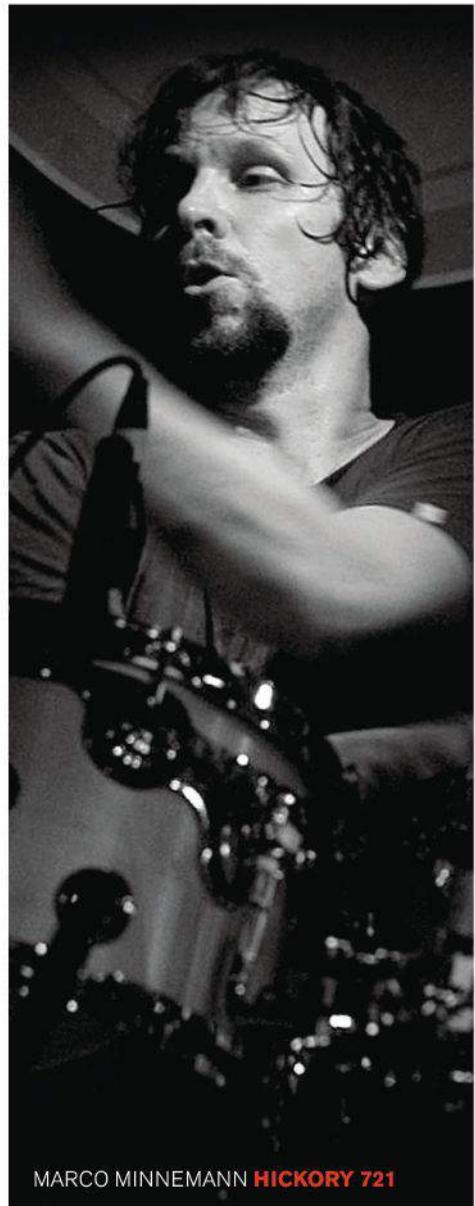
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TOMAS HAAKE IS

OBSESSED



Tomas Haake is Obsessed with writing lyrics. Fitting words to the complex music of Meshuggah is what he loves to do. When he needs a break, he turns to his other Obsession: fishing. Hooked since the age of 4, it's become his antidote to the madness of life as a rock drummer. But back onstage, it's all about his **21" AAX X-Treme Chinese**. The perfect combination of musicality vs. aggression, it's the only China Tomas plays.

Learn more about what makes Tomas Obsessed.

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A SOUND
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Doing the Hard Work

When you take a close look at *MD*, you can find a thread that runs through the patchwork quilt of drummers' success stories: True pros work hard behind the scenes. Part of the effort, in fact, can go toward getting to the point where it seems as if there's no work involved at all. But these players only make it look easy.

"If I have a goal in mind I absolutely will practice every day, and there's no other way to get it." That's what Neil Peart of Rush said in his interview for our December 2011 issue. *There's no other way to get it.* Neil would know.

We've all seen things go the other way. We've seen some drummers coast on their success and lose the eye of the tiger. And in our own lives, whether as professionals, semiprofessionals, or hobbyists, we've probably been in situations where we let up on the gas when we should have been flooring it, or we just said, "Ah, I'll do that tomorrow...." As the saying goes, that's why they call it work.

But even if your work ethic isn't exactly intense, as a drummer you've seen the handsome rewards of applying yourself in the practice room. You know that putting in a couple of solid hours will yield results; you've seen that when you actually play along with a new song before rehearsal and don't just listen to it in the car a few times, things go more smoothly with the band—and you feel more confident. Confidence means so much in performance, and working at drumming attracts it in two forms: Your body learns how to make some new moves, bringing physical confidence, and, more important, your mind gains strength as obstacles fall and experience deepens.

This month's cover star, Tommy Igoe, could tell you all about working hard, and so could his many students. (Having a teacher to guide you, and push you, is always a plus.) Gene Hoglan, Daughtry's Robin Diaz, Snarky Puppy's Robert Searight, Antibalas's Miles Arntzen, the Melvins' Dale Crover—all of these guys, along with many of the other artists and educators featured in this issue, would not be in *MD* today, and wouldn't be playing on stage tonight, without being eager to get some serious work done.

The good part is that becoming an accomplished drummer is possible if you're willing to put in the time and the effort. Anyone can go out and get it.



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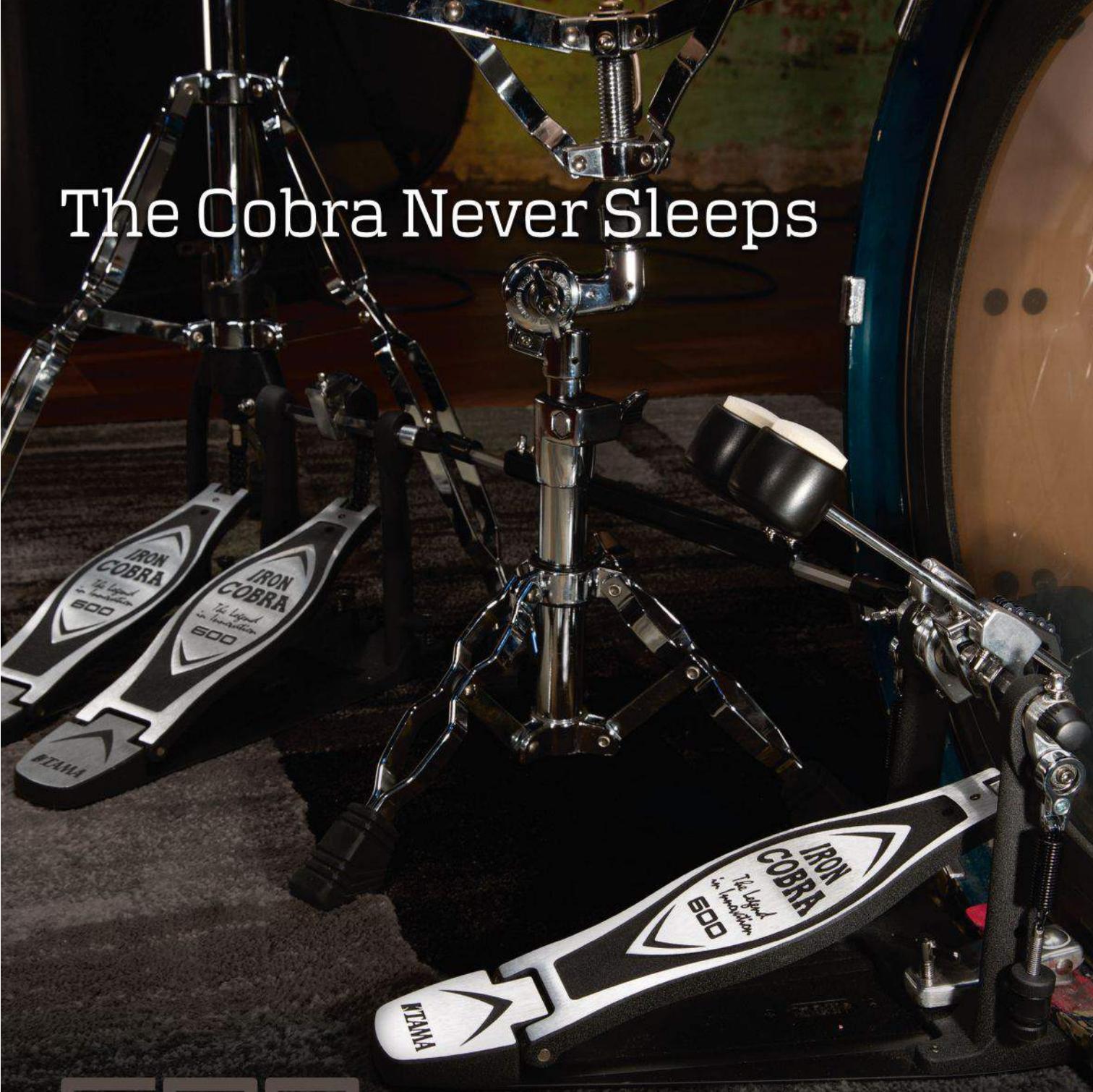
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**INFLUENCES:
PAPA JO JONES**

I'd like to compliment *Modern Drummer* and author Jeff Potter on the excellent—and well-deserved—profile of Jonathan “Papa Jo” Jones in your February 2013 issue. Papa Jo was indeed the bridge between the early swing era and contemporary jazz swing.

The article rightly credits Jones for stylistic innovations that made him “one of history’s most influential drummers.” To that information I’d like to proudly add that Jo made his mark on the drumming scene behind a set of Gretsch-Gladstone drums. In fact, the photo of Jo that’s on page 44 of your issue appeared on the cover of the 1941 Gretsch catalog, as well as in print ads of that time.

The kit that Jo played was distinctive for a number of reasons, but perhaps most notably for the T-style tension rods on the tops of the toms (which had tacked-on bottom heads), for the console rail that surrounded the bass drum and held small cymbal mounts, and for the legendary Gladstone three-way tension system on the bass drum itself. It was a unique drumset for a unique drummer.

Fred W. Gretsch
President, the Gretsch Company

I thoroughly enjoyed the tribute to Papa Jo in the February issue. I had the good fortune to see him play a few times, and I also watched him give a lesson in tact and intelligence one night in the mid-’70s when I was playing a month-long gig at the Copacabana after it reopened.

Buddy Rich’s club, Buddy’s Place, was open, and I was there every night I could make it. This particular night, Buddy was playing with his sextet (Illinois Jacquet on sax), and Papa Jo walked in with a few friends. Buddy acknowledged him from the stage, called a couple more tunes—



one including a trademark blistering solo—and then said, “Papa, come up and play one,” and stepped off the bandstand. Papa walked up, sat down, and called for “Caravan.” He never touched a stick. He played with hands and fingers, snares off, just a perfect easy groove behind the band. Big smile. I remember noting to myself: You just got a lesson in musicality, and smarts.

As good as Papa Jo was, he knew better than to be compared with Buddy technically. Instead he delivered a masterful display of restrained taste, volume, and swing—and got an ovation for it. Emphatically one of the all-time greats.

Raice McLeod

HI-HAT SUBSTITUTION

I enjoyed Tobias Ralph’s November 2012 article (“Don’t Disturb the Groove!”) on using the hi-hat foot to replace the other hand or bass drum notes within a groove. This approach is also incorporated into his January 2013 follow-up article. Though Ralph gives a nod to Steve Gadd in the January issue, I think it would be worthy to specifically note for readers that hi-hat substitution, along with the left hand on the hi-hat, was the basis for Gadd’s groove on Paul Simon’s “50 Ways to Leave Your Lover.”

Jim Davis

A HAPPY CUSTOMER

I have been a drummer all my life, and I still look forward to getting my *MD* in the mail with the same excitement I had as a kid! There are a lot of drum rags out there now, but nothing compares to *MD* and all you have offered since day one. Thank you for this great publication. I always tell my students to get a subscription right away, and I mention *MD* at workshops and clinics when I do them. I will always have a subscription. All of us drummers need you, so keep up the great work and know that you bring great pleasure to so very many drummers. And there are a lot of us!

Denny Ray Pelletier

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NIR Z.

Leaving behind a well-established career in the Big Apple is a bold move. But it's taken only two short years for this **studio ace** to make considerable noise down on Music Row.

We last caught up with Nir Z. (Zidkyahu) in 2009 at his Brooklyn studio to interview him for a Woodshed feature. At the time, he was one of the busiest drummers in New York City, often jumping between sessions in major rooms like Avatar and Mission Sound or his personal space, while also racking up frequent-flier miles jetting to Los Angeles or Nashville to work on different projects. Nir's track record includes top artists like Genesis (*Calling All Stations*), John Mayer (*Room for Squares*), Jason Mraz (*Mr. A-Z*), Chris Cornell (*Carry On*), and Wynonna Judd (*Sing: Chapter 1*).

It wasn't long after our interview, however, that Nir had to decide whether to stay in New York or try his hand elsewhere. After all, studios in the city were closing down left and right, and most of his independent production work could be done from anywhere in the world. Plus, he now had two young children to look after. So in November 2010, Nir said farewell to the Big Apple and moved

his family south to Nashville, where his kids could enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle while he took a crack at the city's tight-knit session scene. "It was tough for the first few months," the drummer recalls. "I felt like I was on a constant audition, and people had big expectations of me. Everything from how I tuned the drums to how I treated the songs was being looked at critically."

Nashville is known as a "dues paying" town, and musicians often struggle for years, taking whatever gigs they can in hopes of catching enough of a break to be able to make music a full-time career. Fortunately for Nir, his well-deserved reputation as a drummer who can deliver creative, energetic, and master-ready performances on the first take allowed him the opportunity to start recording with many different artists and producers almost right away. "They liked that I brought something different to the table," Nir says. "One producer said that I brought some

'danger' to the music, which I guess has to do with me coming from New York, where everything is straightforward and in your face. An engineer said he recommends me because he doesn't have to spend much time mixing my tracks. I try to make life easy on the technical side of recording. Producers and engineers have different priorities, so I just try to cover it all."

Just before this Update interview, Nir sent samples of his session work from the past two years, which includes the modern country act Love and Theft's self-titled debut and new releases from singer-songwriter Liz Longley, neo-soul singer Daphne Willis, German fusion guitarist Lothar Kosse, classic roots rockers Rayburn, and up-and-coming country artist Katie Armiger. In each setting, the drummer's no-nonsense and highly musical approach shines through. Nir's also excited to announce that he's now playing Gretsch drums.

Michael Dawson

MILES ARNTZEN

The **Afrobeat upstart** earns the drum seat in Antibalas, records with Daptone's Gabe Roth, and pushes limits with EMEFE.

How many drummers can pinpoint the moment they fell in love with a style of music and say that they then earned their way into their favorite band through sheer determination and hard work at the tender age of nineteen? Miles Arntzen can.

"I first heard Afrobeat music when I heard Antibalas play at Highline Ballroom in New York City in 2008," Arntzen says. "I'd never heard a groove like that, and it literally took over my body and soul in that moment. I felt free to move and dance. The music was taking me on a spiritual journey that has stuck with me to this day."

After an upbringing in Manhattan filled with joyous musical experimentation fostered by his horn-playing father, Leif, the younger Arntzen connected with his future Antibalas bandmates while a freshman in the Jazz Studies program at NYU. On making that connection, Miles says, "I am a huge supporter of YouTube. In 2008 I began uploading videos of me playing my favorite songs on drums, and that included an Antibalas cover video. A year later, in 2009, I reached out to [band members] Stuart Bogie and Victor Axelrod on Facebook and MySpace. They both offered their initial critiques on the video, and that began months of studying the music with a magnifying glass. I went to all of their shows, and they knew I could play their music verbatim. When they needed somebody to fill in on drums, they called on me."

Arntzen toured with Antibalas throughout 2012 and recorded the band's most recent, self-titled album with famed producer Gabe Roth at Daptone Records' House of Soul studio in Brooklyn. "Gabe



and I talked a lot about the specific drum patterns for each song," Arntzen explains, "and about where the dynamic shifts were. It was an extremely inspiring experience to work with somebody like him."

Studying with heavyweights Ari Hoenig and Tony Moreno at NYU, Dave Anania of Blue Man Group, and Billy Martin of Medeski Martin and Wood helped prepare Arntzen for the musical challenges that lay ahead. On his organic approach to learning, Miles says, "From my first drum lessons at age six to today, I practice by playing along to my favorite songs. In this way, my favorite drummers have acted as my teachers."

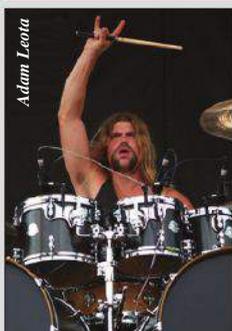
Arntzen's gig with Antibalas requires a certain vibe from the drums, which is accomplished with a Drummers World nesting kit. "I've used that for years," Arntzen says. "Unfortunately, Drummers World in New York went out of business, so I'm lucky I snagged one. The 14x18 kick has enough bottom to rock big rooms, but the [8x10 and 12x14] toms have this

quirky bellowing sound that I love. I always use a T-shirt on the top half of my [Gretsch 14" New Classic maple] snare drum in order to deaden it, so it has a nice pop. The kit is perfect for Afrobeat and dance music in general, because I can easily move from hitting hard all over the kit to lightening up and sitting in the pocket. I've also used Sabian cymbals since age six—the AAX hi-hats were my first ones ever. Sabians are the most expressive cymbals I've ever played, which explains why I usually only use one, a 21" HHX Groove ride." Miles' stick of choice is the Vic Firth Peter Erskine Ride model.

Aside from his gig with Antibalas, Arntzen leads EMEFE and plays in Stuart Bogie's experimental group Superhuman Happiness. "EMEFE fuses Afrobeat with a heavier funk influence, all with a rock 'n' roll edge," the drummer says. "I write all the music and conduct the band from behind the drumset." Look for Arntzen on the road with EMEFE in 2013.

Ben Meyer

ON TOUR



Knuckles with Eels

Martin Skaroupka
with Cradle of Filth

Jordan Mancino
with As I Lay Dying

Jorma Vik with
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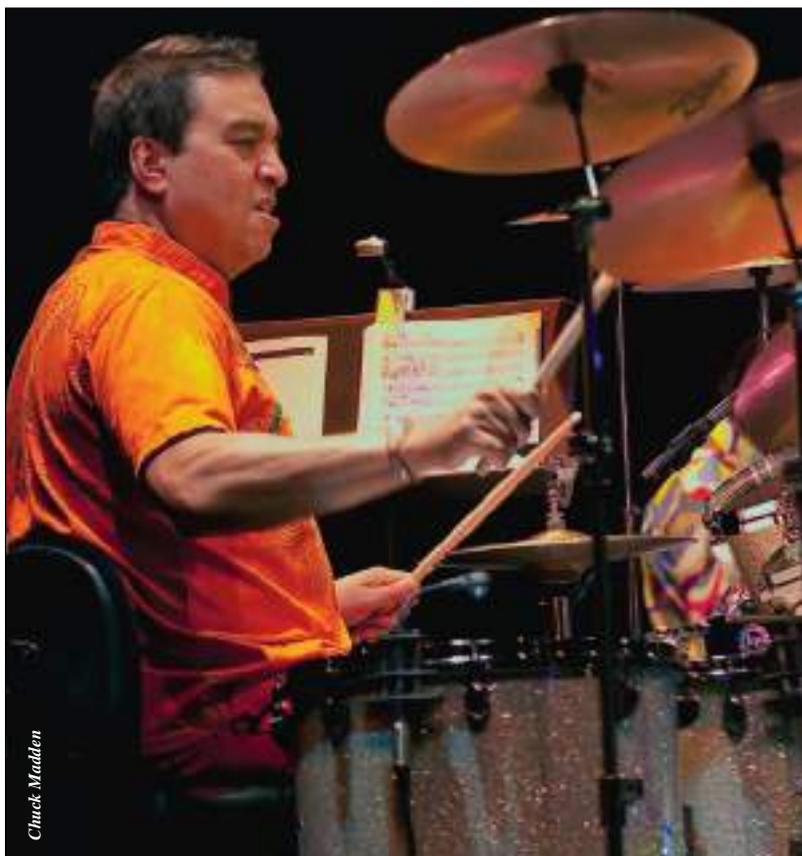
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KEVIN ELLMAN

Even if you've never heard of the **original drummer with Todd Rundgren's Utopia**, you've probably heard of one of his biggest fans—Neil Peart.



Chuck Madden

On neilpeart.net, Rush's drummer writes that Kevin Ellman "was a pioneer with monster concert tom fills in the early '70s, and definitely inspired me in that direction." As a member of Todd Rundgren's prog/fusion band Utopia, Ellman offered much to spark the imaginations of creative young drummers: funky, complex patterns that weave through constant time changes, orchestral percussion interludes, innovative electronic triggering, and the melodic, dramatic use of eight concert toms.

As a teenager, Ellman spent five years of intensive study with the famed educator Jim Chapin, practicing eight hours a day. After attending Berklee and touring with the Manhattan Transfer, he became the drummer of choice for New York luminaries such as Bette Midler, Barry Manilow, and Moogy Klingman. When Klingman and Rundgren formed Utopia, Ellman found a perfect vehicle for his jazz chops and rock intensity.

Despite his growing recognition as a player, Ellman ended his musical career in 1975, joining his father in the family

business, Beefsteak Charlie's. "Basically, I burned out on the road," Kevin says. "I got married, had kids, and realized it would be very hard to live a balanced life while being a traveling drummer."

While he remains a successful businessman, Ellman made a return to drumming in 2000, playing rock, soul, and fusion gigs in New York and New Jersey with old friends like John Siegler (Utopia) and Don Sarlin (Van Morrison). For much of 2011, Ellman and the rest of Utopia reunited to help Klingman with his cancer-treatment expenses. Klingman performed several great shows with the group before succumbing on November 15 of that year. "Moogy was a catalyst," Ellman says. "If not for him, there would have been no Utopia, before or now."

Of his current drumming skills compared with Utopia's heyday, Ellman says, "I don't have quite the same speed, but my groove and musicality are as good as ever. During the Utopia tour, the word was 'Ellman still has it.' My goal is to keep it as long as possible."

Alex Hicks

NEWS



As we went to press, we were saddened to learn of the passing of Pro-Mark founder Herb Brochstein. Look for more on Brochstein's achievements as a player and a drum industry veteran in an upcoming issue of *Modern Drummer*.

Blues for Aaron. Besides being the drummer on Joan Osborne's *Bring It On Home*, which has been nominated for a Grammy in the Blues Album category, Aaron Comess recently finished recording the Spin Doctors' new all-originals blues album, *If the River Was Whiskey*. "I guess my Texas blues roots are coming around," the ever-busy New Yorker says with a chuckle, adding that *Whiskey* should be available in May. "That album is very raw—just the four of us in a room, playing. I really like it."

Dig his scene. MD contributor Jim Payne's Week on the Scene program will be held this April 1 through 5. By day, Payne leads educational drumming workshops; by night, he plays tour guide for drum-centric live performances in NYC. For more information, visit funkydrummer.com.

WHO'S PLAYING WHAT

Evans has added the **Phantom Regiment drum corps** to its artist family.



Alex Acuña has joined Sabian's artist roster.

Jarrold Alexander (My Chemical Romance), **Jeff Friedl** (Devo, A Perfect

Circle, Filter, Ashes Divide, Puscifer), **Buddy Gibbons**, **Steve Goold** (Owl City), **Matt Greiner** (August Burns Red), **Christopher Hartz** (Childish Gambino), **Benny Horowitz** (Gaslight Anthem), **Michael Iveson** (Gotye), **Elmo Lovano** (Christina Perri), and **Aaron McVeigh** (Foxy Shazam) are now playing Remo heads, while **Omar Tavarez** (Pitbull) and **Jamal Moore** (Cee Lo Green) are playing the company's heads and percussion.

Yamaha has added **Matt Halpern** (Periphery), **Earl Hudson** (Bad Brains), **Mark Colenburg** (Robert Glasper Experiment/Maxwell), **Ben Smith** (Heart), **Allen Gant** (Arrested Development), and **Johnny Richardson** (Travis Tritt) to its endorser list.

Vater recently welcomed **John Miceli** (Meat Loaf), **Chris Ralles** (Pat Benatar), **Scott Pellegrom** (independent), **Darren King** (Mutemath), **Jessica Goodwin** (Diamonds Under Fire), and **Mike Robinson** (Empires) to its artist roster.



Must-Have Gear

Equipment the Pros Won't Leave Home Without



This month: Usher/Alicia Keys' AARON SPEARS



I've become very dependent on my DW 7x14 maple/mahogany Top Edge snare drum. It's the ultimate balance of attack and body. It doesn't matter if I crank it high or tune it low—the tone it gives me always delivers. People ask in amazement, "What snare is that?"

I also absolutely cannot do without my Zildjian cymbal stack. It's a 16" A Custom EFX crash with a 10" EFX splash on top. I call it "the Holey Moley." The combo is quick and trashy, perfect for playing fast accents and hits together with the band. The decay is extremely short and to the point. It's the perfect exclamation point for saying what needs to be said musically.

Interview by Mike Haid

BACK Through the STACK

In the February/March 1982 issue of *MD*, legendary Miles Davis drummer **PHILLY JOE JONES** described one of the more unusual gigs of his illustrious career: **playing with the Buddy Rich band.**

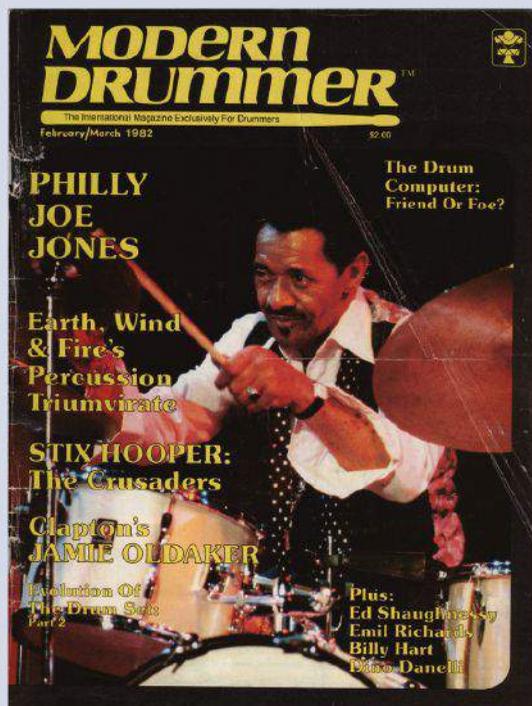
I was in Buddy Rich's band in 1951, right after I left Duke Ellington. Buddy would play a big solo once a night, and the rest of the time he would direct the band, and even sing! I would play the show. He didn't want to play that music all night long. He would come up on the stand and play a spotlight, and that would be it for him. I would play all the rest of the music.

To be a drummer and play in his band is hard, because Buddy will look at a drummer like, "What the hell are you playing?" I've heard him say that to other drummers. In fact, when I got the job, I went down to his rehearsal and he was throwing sticks at a drummer. He was saying, "Get off the bandstand. I don't know what you're playing." Allen Eager recommended me for the job, so I went in and Buddy said, "You want a job?" I was taken aback. "Sure, I want a job." He said, "Go ahead—play this music." So I sat in with the band and got

the job.

He used to stop at the Alvin Hotel every night and pick me up on his way to work. Buddy Rich is beautiful. He is such a giant in the business that most drummers get a chill when they're around him, but that's because they don't know him. I hear people talk, but I don't pay any attention to what I *hear*—I go by what I *know*. Buddy is very warm. He loves drums and he loves drummers, when they *play*. He will say it. He's made many statements about different drummers. He says what he likes and what he doesn't like. He's entitled to his opinion.

I had a lot of fun in Buddy's band. Buddy is funny. He don't show nobody *nothin'*. I'd ask him, "Come on, man. Where do you get all of that power?" He would give me little suggestions about things I could do to get power. Not too much, but he would give me just enough, and I would take it home and work on it.



To read the entire Philly Joe Jones feature—and all the other great material from the February/March 1982 issue—go to moderndrummer.com and click on the App Store link. And to read much more about Buddy Rich, check out the December 2012 issue, also on sale at the App Store.

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Relic in the Attic

A friend of mine recently found this snare among the belongings of his grandfather, who was a World War I veteran. Is this a Ludwig Black Beauty? The badge is missing. M.M.

According to Collector's Corner columnist Harry Cangany, "That is a rare bird! It's a 1929 or 1930 Ludwig New Era Deluxe, aka Black Beauty, that has snares under the top head and above the bottom head. This design was used because if the top head tore, the drummer could flip the drum over to keep playing. Not many of these snares were made. In fact, I read that only three—now four—of them have resurfaced in recent years. This model is rare, because the idea just didn't catch on. There should be an engraved hoop with 'Ludwig New-Era' on it."



MIND MATTERS

by Bernie Schallehn

Why Can't We Be Friends?

I'm the drummer in a wedding/party band. The members' ages range from the late twenties to the late forties, and I'm the youngest. I love this gig, but since day one the keyboardist all but ignores me. It's like the opposite of being bullied; he acts like I don't exist, even though I've tried to be his friend. He's close with everyone else in the band, so this freeze-out really makes me tense. What am I doing wrong? T.C.

You're expecting that the world should function like one big Facebook, where everyone is your "friend." I've talked about core beliefs in past columns, but here's one to burn into your brain: Not everyone in this life is going to like you.

I'll assume you were born into a family where your mom and dad raised you in an environment of unconditional love. Because they were good parents, initially your self-esteem—the belief that you were this incredibly lovable creature—was pure, unblemished, and fully intact. But the minute you were set free into the outside world, it was inevitable that

another kid (or an adult) would put a smudge on that pristine self-esteem of yours. Most likely it was done with four little words: *I don't like you*. Or maybe it was done nonverbally with a punch in the face, a toy truck being thrown at you, or a shove in the back as you were lining up for the school bus. As you matured, there were other individuals who didn't care for you. So what's so different about this guy? Why do you crave his attention? I have a theory.

I think social media are great. I use Facebook and Twitter on a daily basis—for business and for fun. But I wonder if all this "friending" has deceived you into thinking that your 5,000 contacts on Facebook would take a bullet for you. And you don't truly believe that everyone who follows you on Twitter really cares what you had for breakfast, do you?

In essence, so much of this faux Internet intimacy has seeped into the collective unconscious and led you to think that you need to have all these friends, that everyone needs to like you and "like" the comments you post online.

You need food, water, clothing, shelter, and love. You might want a Ferrari, a six-figure income, and a private island in the Caribbean, but they're not essential to sustaining life.

Okay, I've been a little rough on you. Let me soften up a bit and speculate as to why this guy is avoiding at least some semblance of a relationship with you. Here are three possibilities.

JEALOUSY

The keyboardist doesn't engage in a relationship because he's jealous of you. Jealousy, or envy, if referred to as one of the seven deadly sins, is one of mankind's ugliest, but most prevalent, emotions. Sometimes it's overt, but sometimes it's covert. This guy could be jealous of your talent, your appearance, your crowd appeal, your age, your vehicle, or your day job. The list is endless.

FEAR

When I was in graduate school for counseling, I was required to do an internship. I had to see clients who had problems, but because I was a student I was supervised closely. The day before my first session, I met with my mentor. I told him I was terrified. "You're terrified?" he bellowed. "Your client is going to walk into your office, cold, not knowing you from Adam, pour out his heart and soul, talk about intimate aspects of his life, and possibly reveal some embarrassing information to a stranger. And you're terrified?" I got the message.

Just entertain the possibility that in some way this keyboardist fears some-

thing—or a lot of things—about you.

POWER

Your bandmate is on a power trip. He holds power over you because he knows that you desperately want a friendship with him. He gets his jollies by withholding that relationship. I can only speculate that this is tied in with some form of jealousy toward you.

Now I need to put the gloves back on. You have to stop seeking camaraderie with this guy, because it's making you tense. If that tension continues, it may indeed start to erode not only your contentment with this band but your performances too. Tension, stress, and anxiety—if left

unchecked—can wreak havoc on the body, mind, and soul. Put your energy into playing well at every gig, continue to interact with those band members who have exhibited friendliness toward you, and don't expect that a musical ensemble will necessarily fulfill all of your social wants in life.



Bernie Schallehn has been a drummer and percussionist for over forty-five years. He holds a master's degree in counseling psychology and, while in private practice, held the credentials of a certified clinical mental health counselor and a certified alcohol and substance abuse counselor.

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DALE GROVER

ON MELVINS LITE'S
RECORD-SETTING
51/51 TOUR

On September 5, 2012, Melvins Lite—guitarist Buzz Osborne, bassist Trevor Dunn, and drummer Dale Crover—embarked on a fifty-one-day rock 'n' roll journey that even other road warriors would consider insane. Here, Crover tells the tale.

Hello, fellow drummers! Dale Crover here from Melvins Lite, the "Lite" part differentiating between the two line-ups of our band we currently have going. For the past six years we've been playing with Jared Warren and Coady Willis, the rhythm section of Big Business. While they've been busy with their own band, we decided that we would do something completely different and add a stand-up bass player. Enter one Trevor Dunn, who has played with Mr. Bungle and Fantomas, as well as with avant-garde composer John Zorn.

We did a test-run Melvins Lite tour with Trevor a little over a year ago to see if playing with a stand-up bass would even work. We decided that it was indeed something cool and that we should record a new album with Trevor and do a record-setting tour of the USA—all fifty states plus Washington, D.C., in fifty-one days. If we could accomplish this, we'd hold the Guinness world record for fastest tour of the U.S. and D.C. by a band!

The tour would take us to states we'd never played before. After a warm-up gig in Sacramento (because you have to warm up before playing fifty-one shows in a row), we flew into Anchorage, Alaska, for show number one. There was a seventy-five-mile-an-hour windstorm when we flew in. After a shaky landing we were happy to be on the ground. This was one of two fly-in gigs, the other being Hawaii. I'll bring the basics for shows like this—sticks, pedals, and cymbals. I've gotten used to dealing with whatever drumkit is available and making it work for me, but I was happy to get a nice set of Tama Starclassics. Great gig for our first time playing here. One down, fifty to go!

We flew back to Seattle for show number two. From here until Hawaii we would be driving ourselves in a van. In Boise we met up with the band Tweak Bird, who would be joining us for most of the rest of the tour. I sold their drummer, Ashton Leech, my old John Bonham-size Ludwig kit a few years back. I used those drums on our early records. It's nice to be able to hear them every night! We would've had Tweak Bird on all the shows, but they would have beat us to the record if we did that. Still, they played forty-seven shows in a row, which is pretty impressive.



DALE'S "LITE" RIG

I normally play pretty big drums, but for this lineup and tour I wanted something smaller in size. I needed a kit that was suitable for rock, as well as the brushwork I've been doing on some of the new songs. I've been endorsing Tama for a long time now, and I called them up to see if they could help out with a new kit. I already knew by researching their website that I wanted Silverstars. I was able to get a sky blue sparkle kit—18x22 bass drum, 10x13 rack tom, 14x16 floor tom, and 5x14 snare drum. For heads on this kit I used Aquarian Response 2s on the toms, a Force 1 on the bass drum, and a Hi-Impact on the snare. I went down in size on cymbals and sticks as well. I used Paiste Alphas—22" Rock ride, 20" and 18" Rock crashes, 18" Rock China, 15" Rock hi-hats, 13" Mega Cup Chime, 12" Flanger Bell, and a 14" and 18" Trash set. For sticks I switched from Regal Tip Quantum 3000s to the Death-Ex model with a custom 51/51 tour logo. For brushes I used Regal Tip Whiskers and Flares. The mics on the kit were all Shure, and I use a Shure headset mic for vocals.

I wasn't too worried that we could play this many shows consecutively. We've certainly done longer tours, like three-month stretches a few times. This tour was a little over seven weeks long. That's a fairly normal length for a U.S. tour. Our personal record for shows in a row was thirty-something. When you're on tour you don't really have a day off anyhow. A day off for us means we have a 600-mile drive to the next gig. Normally we'll book a day off if we have a monster drive like that.

There were going to be some long hauls on this trip—that was unavoidable. We carefully planned the routing that made the most sense. I guess our biggest worry was making it to the gig without breaking down or, God forbid, getting into an accident. We did have two flat tires in one day near the end of the tour. We used up the spare on the first flat. Thankfully we weren't too far out of town, and Tweak Bird came to the rescue in their van.

The first few weeks on tour are always the hardest. I have kids at home, which means I'm up early and usually in bed by 11 P.M. That's about the normal time we would be playing, so I had to get used to staying up late and playing, but I'm used to the lack of sleep. Then, of course, there's the physical aspect of playing. Playing live is always more intense than when you're practicing your set for the tour. You're more amped up than normal. I'm always a bit more sore and tired at the beginning of a tour. The beginning of this trip seemed to be going slow. But by the time we were in the Midwest we were in full swing, and it really started to pick up. The band was playing like a well-oiled machine. We joked how it was starting to feel like the movie *Groundhog Day!* Get up, drive, set up, play, load the van, drive, sleep....

I've been playing with brushes on a few of the songs from last year's Melvins Lite record, *Freak Puke*. I've played with Regal Tip Blasticks in the past, but never with traditional wire brushes. The first song on the new record, "Mr. Rip Off," which has a bouncy swing to it, was recorded with wire brushes. Live, I added some sweeping technique in a few sections where it's mostly ambient bass noises. I was playing harder live compared to the recorded version, and the brushes weren't taking it so well. I experimented with a few different styles and found that Regal Tip Whiskers—nylon brushes with aluminum handles—held up the best. I also used Regal Tip Flares on a few songs. I used the same pair for the whole tour, and after a while they became frayed and flowery looking, which gave them a unique sound.

We always play the same set every night. I think it works out better that way. I've never felt that it was stale, or that I was bored playing the same songs every night. Parts in the songs develop and change throughout the tour, keeping it interesting. And a lot of thought goes into the song order. We always view it as one big performance and not just individual songs. Like a play or a film.

All in all this was one of my favorite tours we've ever done. Everything ran relatively smoothly, and no one lost their sanity. Our next plans? Fifty-two shows in fifty-two weeks—one show a week! Wish me luck!

Until next time,
Dale Crover



Dave Curran

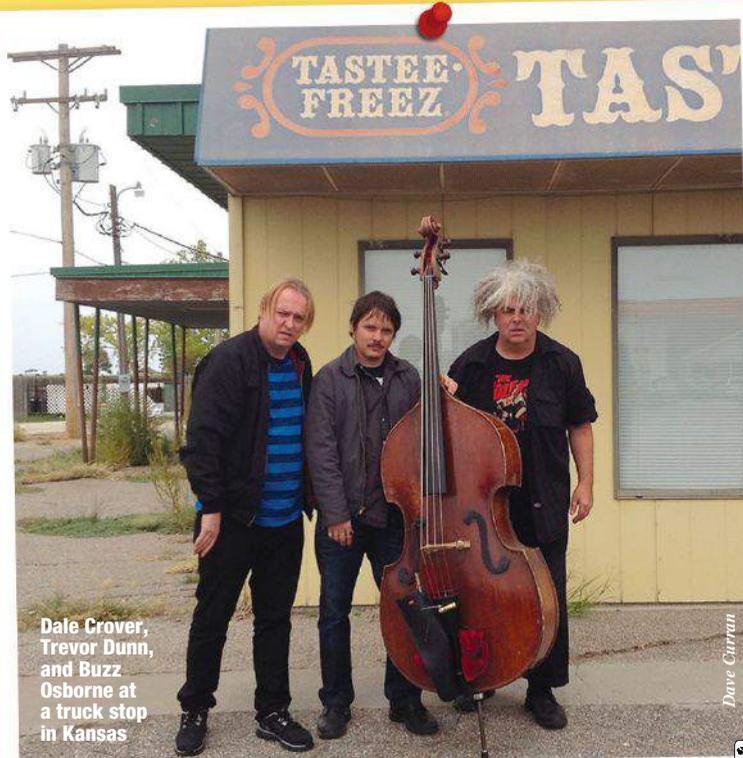
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 51/51 TOUR

CHEYENNE, WYOMING. This show had the venue move a few times. Never a good sign. We ended up at a Grange Hall type of place called Forum 619. It had the feel of a DIY punk rock show from the early '80s. Except now people know who we are and like us. We like shows where the audience is right up against you!

MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA. We only played this state once before, in 1994. Absence makes the heart grow fonder. Crazy show and crowd at 123 Pleasant Street!

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. This show was at the Masonic Lodge at the Hollywood Forever Cemetery. Lots of famous folks buried here: Peter Lorre, Mel Blanc, and both Johnny and Dee Dee Ramone. Our first time playing at a cemetery!

HONOLULU, HAWAII. Our first gig in Hawaii and the last show of the tour, at the Republik. Great last show with an enthusiastic crowd. I would like to have stayed for a few days of relaxing. I did get a chance to jump in the ocean and stare at Diamond Head. Vacations for us mean being at home!



Dale Crover,
Trevor Dunn,
and Buzz
Osborne at
a truck stop
in Kansas

Dave Curran



PRODUCT CLOSE-UP



by Miguel Monroy

Imagine the day finally comes when you get to purchase your dream drumset. You've been researching the characteristics of different species of wood, you've thought of the coolest color, and you have the exact sizes figured out. As you place the specs for your ideal set in front of your local drum dealer, the last thing you want to be told is that he or she has no idea how to make it all possible. This is exactly the type of situation that Dixon hopes to resolve with its Artisan series.

SHELL CONFIGURATIONS

The Artisan line is composed of three shell configurations. Artisan TMS provides a traditional maple shell, a type that drummers have relied on for years because of its ability to deliver a versatile, warm sound. Artisan MBS consists of bubinga inner plies and maple outer plies. This popular hybrid shell maintains the warmth of maple while providing a deeper fundamental tone.

The third and most expansive configuration is Artisan Select, which allows you to choose from a wide selection of wood species to create the exact sound you desire. This was the type of kit we received for review.

A BUFFET OF OPTIONS

The first customizable choice within all three Artisan shell configurations is the hardware. Four finish options are available, including chrome, black chrome, satin chrome, and black nickel. Although custom designs are not currently available, the expansive list of drum finishes that Dixon offers covers most of the bases for players who prefer classic, natural, or more modern looks. Some of the finishes that really caught my eye were the four Matrix colors (green, gold, copper, and red), the four Star Dust colors (gray, black, blue, and red), the flamed maple finish, and the natural waterfall bubinga.

All drums within the Artisan series have a 6.2 mm shell with a 45-degree bearing edge. As with most other high-end lines, the set must be purchased piece by piece, with hardware being chosen separately. Each mounted tom comes equipped with the Artisan suspension mount, a bracket, and a single-tom adapter that can attach to any

cymbal stand. The suspension system delivered everything I would expect from top-of-the-line hardware: great isolation, die-cast metal construction, ease of use, and durability.

The list of wood options for the Artisan Select series can change each year, depending on availability. The current list includes curly maple, New Guinea walnut and maple, North American maple, North American maple and bubinga, North American maple with a flamed-maple veneer, oak, sycamore, and waterfall bubinga.

OUR ENTRÉE

The kit we received for review is a four-piece Artisan Select waterfall bubinga. The sizes include a 16x18 bass drum, an 8x12 rack tom with suspension mount, a



13x14 floor tom, and a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 snare. Each drum had seven plies of bubinga and an additional outer veneer of waterfall bubinga. I couldn't believe how beautiful these drums looked. The veneer's grain appeared to weave unpredictably, similar to the way water would follow the contours of an uneven ridgeline. The drums also had a beautiful clear finish that enhanced the warm, golden-brown tones of the wood. According to product representative Jim Uding, Dixon is currently the

of music (rock, jazz, Latin, fusion, and more) during our lessons. After tons of time with the kit, I found that its wide tuning range, plus the bubinga's ability to deliver a deep sound, complemented almost any style that we could dish out. For bigger rock grooves, the small bass drum couldn't quite fill the space the way the toms and snare did. But this specific setup wasn't meant for rock; it was sized more closely to a traditional bebop kit. Since every set in the Artisan Select series is custom built to the customer's specs, you would be able to get the most appropriate sizes for your playing style.

The toms and snare came equipped with die-cast rims, and the bass drum had matching waterfall bubinga hoops. The outfit also featured Evans coated G2 batter heads and clear G1 bottoms on the toms, a coated G1 snare batter, and an EQ3 bass drum batter. The toms sang right out of the box. They had a remarkable balance of depth, tone, and sustain.

As I continued to explore the capabilities of the kit, I found myself going back to funky, syncopated grooves between the bass drum and snare. I was drawn to that type of playing because the snare had a deep, piercing crack when I played rimshots and a low, full-bodied sound when I played more quietly and in the center of the head. The snare came tuned slightly lower than I would usually have it. At that tension it gave a hint of sustain without the extensive overtones and ring that you usually hear from an unmuffled drum.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Without a doubt, the Artisan Select series features superb quality and craftsmanship. Dixon is well on its way to reinvent-

As high-end as they come, Artisan Select drums allow you to build the kit of your dreams. And they sound great too!

only manufacturer in the U.S. to offer waterfall bubinga.

IN USE

I set up the Artisan Select kit in my studio, where I record instructional videos and teach private lessons. I had the opportunity to test out the set with my students, as we dove into several styles

ing itself as a company that can deliver a huge selection of custom options for serious drummers who want a little more control over their purchase. At the end of the day, it's not our review drumset that really matters. It's more about the ways in which the Artisan Select series allows you to build *your* dream drumset.

playdixon.com



PAISTE

Formula 602 and Giant Beat Additions

by T. Bruce Wittet

We received a batch of Paiste cymbals for review—a generous selection of Thin and Paper-Thin Giant Beats and Formula 602s—in sizes 16" through 20". From the first glancing blow, they proved themselves to be textbook crashes. Some doubled as light rides—extremely light rides. In addition, Paiste sent 14" Formula 602 Medium hi-hats, which had been discontinued but were brought back by demand fueled by urban lore.

Let me first own up to being old enough to remember these cymbals before they were discontinued in the early '70s, having played a number of 602 models and the 24" Giant Beat ride. My verdict on these new versions, following two months of rigorous testing on club dates and outdoor festival stages, is an unequivocal two thumbs up. There's no point in describing each size of Giant Beat Thin or 602 Paper-Thin cymbal, because, frankly, their response is so alike that we'd end up just discussing pitch variations. So let's go to the highlights.

Each of the crashes responded extremely well to the lightest flick of a pencil-size stick yet retained its tone when hit with force. This broad dynamic range was astounding. I found myself probing for discrepancies or flaws, but I honestly couldn't find any.

The Giant Beats and 602s are marked "thin" or "paper-thin," but Paiste stops short of designating them as rides or crashes. The application is up for grabs and depends on the unique touch of each drummer. All things equal, however, I suggest you exclude the Giant Beats and 602 Paper-Thins as rides. They can articulate the passage of time as rides, but that's not their forte; they're built to respond like lightning.

I found the new Giant Beats and 602s every bit as compelling as the originals and true to character. The new models exhibited the purity of tone of the originals and operated in the same frequency window, but they seemed to be slightly more complex sounding, with a wider dynamic range. And they seemed to be more durable. The new Giant Beats and 602s are made from the same sheet B8 and B20 bronze, respectively, and are cold-worked similarly to the originals, right down to the straight-on round-peen hammering (Giant Beat) and the oblique, more "Turkish" oblong-peen blows (602).

MUSICAL CONTEXT

The new 14" 602 Medium hi-hats had it all: sufficient foot "chick," rapid-fire open/closed stick sounds, and a sibilant, elongated sizzle when held slightly open. Grunge to jazz, they could do it all. At one point, I brought

in "Black Dog." These hi-hats would also be perfect for Soundgarden's "Black Hole Sun." And Vince Gill's "What the Cowgirls Do" would shuffle for the better with the addition of a 16" Giant Beat and an 18" 602 Paper-Thin. In the same breath, I'd recommend trying the 20" 602 Thin as a ride for playing John Coltrane's epic suite *A Love Supreme*. Seriously.

I'd also consider using the 18" 602 Paper-Thin for mallet swells, while reserving the 18" Giant Beat for exclamations. Both opened up frightfully quickly, but for various reasons—perhaps the alloy or the cold-working manufacturing method—the 602 was the richer of the two and ever so slightly resisted the tendency to give it up immediately.

With regard to Paiste's legendary consistency, the bulk of the review cymbals were supplied by Sean Browne at Paiste Canada, with Paiste USA's Andrew Shreve couriering

Rounding out the reissued Giant Beat and 602 series with some thin crashes and medium hi-hats, Paiste has won us over once again with its supreme musicality and surgically precise consistency.

out a 14" 2002 rippled Sound Edge bottom to see if it would enliven the chick. It did just that, but it was unnecessary. Although rich in tone, the 14" Medium hats did not lack bite.

If I were asked to sub in the Roots (dream on, right?), I'd definitely use the 602 and Giant Beat 20" Thin cymbals. Either would set up the chorus in the song "The OtherSide" perfectly. Then I'd add a 16" or 18" Thin from either series and leave the 14" 602 Medium hi-hats lightly flapping during "The Fire," which summons Bonham

the 20" 602 Thin model to round out the selection. Shreve hadn't the faintest notion of what his colleague had sent, but his 602 sat impeccably with its fellows and with the Giant Beats.

As these cymbals linger in my music room before they return to Paiste, I can't stray past them without flicking one with a fingernail, even at 3 A.M., when the rest of the world slumbers. I mean, I don't need to smack them to hear the whole story. Beat that!

paiste.com

AQUARIAN

Nu-Brite Film and Super-Kick 10 Bass Drum Head

by Michael Dawson



My first experience with Aquarian heads was in the mid-'90s, when a friend showed up at a gig with a new Super-Kick I on his bass drum. I played in the opening act that night, so I got to test out this head on my friend's kit. I was

enough snap and presence under microphones. (At least that's what the engineer told me.)

I ended up switching back to my original brand, but when I heard that Aquarian had adopted a new Mylar film, dubbed

distinction was subtle but noticeable. It's similar to the variation in timbre you get between a completely unmuffled head and one that's dampened with a small piece of tape or a quarter of a Moongel. As I remembered, tuning Aquarian heads

is very easy. All we did was twist each rod about three-quarters of a turn, and the head was almost perfectly balanced. We had to fine-tune only a

The clearer Nu-Brite film offers brighter and more open tones, while the Super-Kick 10 provides a deep, thuddy punch right out of the box.

completely knocked out. The bass drum had a big, round tone with a lot of focused low end, plus a solid, punchy attack. What impressed me most, however, was the fact that there wasn't any muffling inside the shell, yet the overtones were controlled and the sustain didn't linger.

The next time I changed heads on my kit, I switched to the Super-Kick I, and I made the jump from my usual-brand tom and snare batters to Aquarian's Texture Coated models. For the next six years I used nothing else, and I loved the way my drums sounded: warm, fat, pure—perfect for the jazz, fusion, and big band gigs I was mostly playing at the time. Things changed, though, when I started getting calls to go into the studio to record with local pop and rock artists. The warmer, darker sound of the Aquarian heads, which I loved when playing my drums acoustically, turned out not to have

Nu-Brite, I was very eager to give these heads another try. Nu-Brite film is said to be clearer looking, with a brighter and more open sound. We happened to have some older Aquarian heads here at the office for comparison, so we did a little experiment. We put older (but still brand-new) Classic Clear heads on one side of some toms and Nu-Brite Classic Clears on the other. Then we tuned both heads to a medium tension and matched the pitch at each lug. This setup allowed us to quickly compare the attack, tone, and sustain of both heads by simply flipping the drum over and playing on either side.

Visually, the Nu-Brite heads are as clear as glass, while the older versions look cloudy by comparison. As Aquarian claims, the big sonic difference between them is in the attack and sustain. The Nu-Brite had a slightly sharper attack, brighter tone, and longer sustain. The

couple lugs on each head to get the pitch of the drum to ring clear.

The Super-Kick 10 is a 2-ply version of the original Super-Kick I; the older model features a single piece of 10 mil film and a unique muffling system that incorporates a floating piece of felt around the circumference of the underside of the head. (Like the 10, the Super-Kick II head is 2-ply, but it has layers of thinner 7 mil film.) We tried the Super-Kick 10 on a 22" drum made from a Keller maple shell. When compared with the Super-Kick I, the 10 had less rebound, more punch, and a deeper low end. You won't need any additional muffling with this model, as it had a very focused tone with short sustain. The head also had a soft feel, so it would work great with playing styles that require you to dig in and bury the beater. Time to reconvert!

aquariandrumheads.com

ANTONIO DRUMS

4 1/2x14 True Solid Maple Snare



by Michael Dawson



Antonio Drums is a small company based in Croatia that operates under the direction of master drum builder Anton Sutej ("Shoe-tay"). Sutej's specialty is making single-piece instruments, with either steam-bent shells or what he calls "true solid" construction, which is basically a drum carved from a hollowed log. The snare we have here is a 4 1/2x14 True Solid maple with eight proprietary tube lugs, twenty-

strand Canopus snare wires, and a Dunnett R40 throw-off. The shell is 7 mm thick, and there are 15 mm reinforcement rings on top and bottom. The 45-degree bearing edges are slightly rounded from the outside. The snare beds are wide and shallow, which helps increase sensitivity. The wider beds also allow you to use a larger snare set if you like, but the included twenty-strand wires provided plenty of crispness. In fact, this True Solid drum proved to be the fastest, most sensitive, and most articulate snare we've played in quite some time, even with the supplied double-ply, pre-muffled Evans HD Dry bat-

the wires kissed the bottom head, the drum opened up with a beefy tone, while remaining ultra-quick and articulate. The True Solid also responded very well to brushes.

For backbeats, I preferred to keep the top head tuned medium to tight. The sweet spot ended up being with the batter tuned

around Bb (87 on a DrumDial) and the bottom head tuned a perfect fifth higher (F). The solid maple shell provided a lot of depth, warmth, and body, despite only being 4 1/2" deep, and the over-

tones were always even and controlled. Fans of the tight snare sound on the Wallflowers' hit single "One Headlight" will love the thick, woody pop that this guy provides.

antoniodrums.com



Antonio Drums' "True Solid" snares are built the ancient way—by being carved down from a single log. The resulting sound carries plenty of warmth, depth, and pop, plus sensitivity for days.

strand Canopus snare wires, and a Dunnett R40 throw-off. The shell is 7 mm thick, and there are 15 mm reinforcement rings on top and bottom.

The 45-degree bearing edges are slightly rounded from the outside. The snare beds

are wide and shallow, which helps increase sensitivity. The wider beds also allow you to use a larger snare set if you like, but the included twenty-strand wires provided plenty of crispness. In fact, this True Solid drum proved to be the fastest, most sensitive, and most articulate snare we've played in quite some time, even with the supplied double-ply, pre-muffled Evans HD Dry bat-

ter head. (The snare-side head is a super-thin 2 mil Hazy 200.) With the top head medium tight and the snare-wire tension pretty tight, the drum provided a spot-on Roy Haynes-style "snap, crackle, pop." With the R40 throw-off backed off a bit, so that

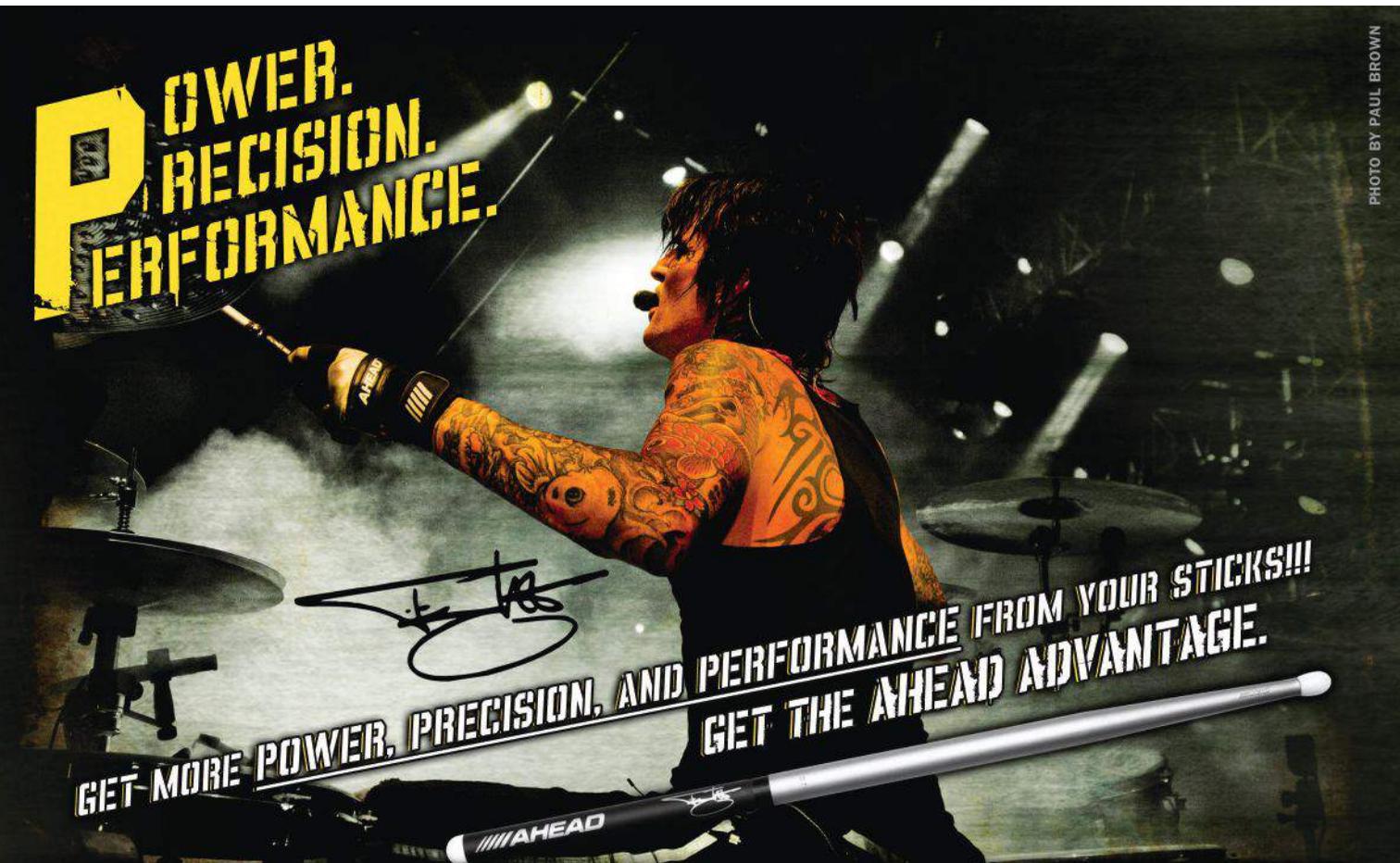


PHOTO BY PAUL BROWN

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AHEAD
DRUMSTICKS

AKG D12 VR Microphone

by Butch Jones



Since its launch in 1947, AKG has been at the forefront of recording technology, manufacturing DYN series microphones, which were handmade, plus other top-level mics, like the C12, C451, C1000, D1000, and D112. The company was also responsible for the very first uni-directional cardioid dynamic microphone, the D12, and recently reissued this classic as the D12 VR.

SPECS

The D12 VR is a large-diaphragm cardioid dynamic microphone, made specifically for bass drums, that uses a thinner diaphragm to enhance its performance in the low frequencies. This mic is manufactured with the same transformer used in the studio-standard AKG C414 and has a frequency range of 17 Hz to 17 kHz.

The "extra" in this model is the AKG-patented electronic filter technology, which has three selectable filters, engaged via phantom power through a standard three-pin XLR cable. The microphone operates in dynamic mode until phantom power is turned on, which acti-

seems to have put in a pretty severe roll-off at 700 Hz, which took out a little too much body for my ears.

On the Slingerland, the D12 VR was placed approximately 3" from the center of the skin, and I must say this was one of the best sounds I've ever gotten from a closed-head drum. This microphone is going to have a wonderful life in the world of jazz bass drums. In dynamic mode (with the phantom power turned off), the sound was clean and round with a nice attack. The first filter position (green) had a really nice low-end bump and a crisp attack in the midrange. The third position (blue) didn't have quite the bottom of the others, but it did offer a bit more crispness in the upper range. My choice for this setup was the green filter, which is actually the setting that AKG recommends for ported bass drums.



First introduced in 1953, the AKG D12 set the standard for low-end-enhanced microphones and quickly became a favorite on bass drums. The new D12 VR pays tribute to that classic model, while featuring new filter switches for flexible EQ response.

vates the filters and illuminates one of the filters' LEDs (green, red, or blue). These lights are very bright and make it easy to recognize the chosen setting. It should be noted that as soon as phantom power is activated, the output volume drops 10dB, allowing for a uniform level when comparing the sounds of the three filters.

The filter switch is located directly beneath the LED lights and easily slides to the various lock positions. The filter shapes have been categorized by AKG as "open kick drum" (green), "vintage" (red), and "closed kick drum" (blue).

IN ACTION

For this review, my partner broke out a 22" Slingerland kick drum with a non-ported front head, as well as a 22" Rogers with a ported head and some muffling. The microphone sounded good on both drums, but I felt the tone fell a little flat with the vintage (red) sound setting. AKG

tight and punchy. The first filter position (green) had full low-end punch and an aggressive midrange. The second position (red) was the same as before, because of the midrange roll-off. The third position (blue) didn't have as much bottom as the first position but did have a crisper top end. Green wins again.

As we were winding down the testing session, I felt the urge to try the D12 VR microphone on an African djembe. The low end captured was off the charts at all settings, and the green filter prevailed once more. Needless to say, I will be trying this microphone frequently on percussion instruments that have a lot of low end.

SUMMING UP

It looks like we've found another great microphone for home studio owners looking to keep their budget lean but the quality of their drum sounds extremely high. With the option to dial in your preferred sound using the different filters, the D12 VR will hold its own against any other models out there. You'll find this mic very easy to work with, and you'll get some instant sound gratification on your first recording. You'd be hard pressed to find another microphone in this price range (\$499) with the same capabilities. The recorded sounds, which you can hear at moderndrummer.com, were captured without equalization.

akg.com



On the Rogers kick, I centered the D12 VR 1" away from the port, which allowed me to capture some of the air coming out. This drum is much tighter sounding and has a lot fewer overtones, but the mic responded in similar fashion at all settings. In dynamic mode, the sound was

VITAL SPECS

Here's a rundown of some key features of the D12 VR bass drum mic.

- Based on the classic D12 design, which set the template for bass drum mics.
- Three switchable filters and dynamic mode allow for multiple preset tones.
- Green LED filter is intended for ported bass drums but had the best overall recorded sound.
- Dynamic mode would be ideal for live applications.
- Sounds great on hand drums and instruments with a lot of low end.
- List price: \$499

GEARING UP

Drumkit Details,
On Stage and Up Close

DAVID BYRNE AND ST. VINCENT'S BRIAN WOLFE



Drums: 1960s Ludwig in silver sparkle finish

A. 5x14 early-'70s Acrolite snare (mid to high tuning, medium snare tension, and two or three Moongel pads for muffling)

B. 9x13 tom

C. 16x16 floor tom

D. 14x20 bass drum (with two Evans EQ pads inside, one touching each head, and two felt strips on resonant side)

E. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 Yamaha Maple Custom snare (very low tuning, loose snare tension, and two Moongels and a Zero Ring for muffling)

"Only a small percentage of sounds that you're hearing are samples," Wolfe says of the rig he used on tour with David Byrne and St. Vincent. "The toms aren't triggered; they're miked and amplified beautifully. We tuned them as low as we could for a nice, fat sound. The kick and snares are a blend of the live sound and triggered sounds from the record. The front-of-house and monitor engineers knew what we were going for and how far to take it. We wanted to make it feel like a real drummer playing but have these other colors added to enhance the vibe and feeling of the songs."

Heads: Remo Coated Ambassador snare and rack tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Coated Emperor floor tom batter and Clear Ambassador bottom, and Coated Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter and ported vintage Ludwig front head

Electronics: Roland, including SPD-S sample pad, two PD-8 V-Pads (one mounted on the hi-hat stand and one mounted on the hoop of the bass drum), RT-10K trigger on the bass drum, RT-10S triggers on the

snares, and TMC-6 trigger-to-MIDI converter

"Most of the music features sample-based drumming, so I had the challenge of re-creating it live. After I get the pads and triggers the way I want them, all of those channels go into the TMC-6, which gets snaked across the stage to Daniel Mintseris, co-musical director, keyboard player, and Ableton Live guru. He has all the samples from the album in his rig, so he's the one responsible for changing my sample configurations as the show goes on. Sometimes he switches my sounds from section to section of a song. Using this system, we're able to play all of the music ourselves, rather than hit a button and play along to a track. I prefer this because I'm playing all of the parts, and we're able to use the sounds from the album. This makes for better music because it's more exciting and real."

Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 15" 1960s A Thin hi-hats (on loan from fellow Brooklyn drummer Dave Scalia)
2. 20" K Constantinople Medium ride
3. 21" K Custom Special Dry ride
4. 17" K Custom Dark crash stacked on 17" K China

"These cymbals are what I've been using on most of my gigs for the last couple of years—I like them big and dark. The 15" hats are thin and warm and have this beautiful musical quality. When I do a foot splash, they sound like an orchestral crash. The crash to my left is technically a ride cymbal, but I never use it that way. It has great pitch and tone, and I love the way it opens up when I hit it. I only use the stack cymbal at the end of one song, to elevate it. Then my drum tech removes the China and returns the crash."





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GET THE BEST

Compilation albums that really pack a punch—plus further must-have tracks.
This month: multi-disc sets from British rock royalty. by Ilya Stenkovsky

THE ROLLING STONES

Grrr!

(50-track deluxe edition)



Released to commemorate the band's fiftieth anniversary, *Grrr!* won't differ too much from the slew of previous compilations by the monu-

mental British rockers, though the generous helping of fifty tracks helps to remind us how many phases the band has gone through, and how **CHARLIE WATTS** has been the rock holding it all down from the beginning. Early Stones cuts are still electrifying, as the drummer's sloshy hats and iconic snare fills on "Get Off of My Cloud" still pack a punch, and the propulsive shuffle of "19th Nervous Breakdown" taught many would-be players how the blues could swing. Has there ever been a sexier groove than "Honky Tonk Women" or more perfectly placed disco-fied hi-hat openings than on "Miss You"? "Street Fighting Man" (from 1968's *Beggars Banquet*) is still one of the coolest syncopated kick drum patterns, and 1983's "Undercover (Of the Night)" is a nasty slab of funk from across the pond. The band's output has tapered off in recent years, but even two newly recorded tracks ("Doom and Gloom" and "One More Shot") prove that an ageless Watts still drives the band like only he can.

Amazon.com physical triple CD (from 2012): \$22.99*

iTunes full album download: \$24.99

EXPAND THE PICTURE: Deep album cuts are aplenty from the Stones, so download from iTunes Watts' slinky, laid-back 16th-note beats on "Can't You Hear Me Knocking" (from 1971's *Sticky Fingers*) and "Loving Cup" (from 1972's *Exile on Main St.*). Then gingerly move into the live stuff, like the head-bobbing quarter-note snare rocker "Live With Me," from the excellent 1969 Madison Square Garden document *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out*.

THE WHO

The Ultimate Collection



KEITH MOON brought unadulterated attitude and charisma to the Who's "maximum R&B," but he also exhibited an unheralded sense of

finesse and craft over the course of his career. Want unconventional? Well, then forget hi-hats, because he seldom used 'em (except on stuff like "I'm Free," from 1969's classic *Tommy*, or the title cut from 1978's *Who Are You*, both included), and dig the very subtle yet unpredictable double bass work on "Pinball Wizard" and "Bargain." Moon's shuffle on "My Generation" swings hard and fast, and the 16th-note-triplet barrage that ends the tune should raise the eyebrows of newcomers used to hearing only today's Pro Tools rock. All the expected brilliant performances are here, from the air-drum heaven of "Baba O'Riley" (from 1971's *Who's Next*) to the manic intensity of "The Real Me" (from 1973's *Quadrophenia*). The extended playing time allows for the inclusion of quirky tracks like "Boris the Spider" and gives some love to Moon's successor, former Small Faces skinsman Kenney Jones, who brings a reverent but modern approach to tunes like "You Better You Bet" and the monolithic "Eminence Front." But Moon's the show here, and his playing on heard-it-a-million-times-before selections like "Won't Get Fooled Again" is still as fresh today as ever. And as with Led Zeppelin's Bonham, whose life was also tragically cut short around the same time, we can all wonder just what else could have been.

Amazon.com physical double CD

(from 2002): \$11.88*

iTunes full album download: \$19.99

EXPAND THE PICTURE: For many, like Jane's Addiction's Stephen Perkins, *Live at Leeds* just might be the greatest live rock album ever, and the sound quality, for something recorded in 1970, is a revelation. Moon is simply an *animal* on tracks like "Substitute" and "Summertime Blues," and iTunes carries a deluxe edition that restores the entire *Tommy* set, also performed at the show.

LED ZEPPELIN

Mothership



Led Zeppelin mastermind Jimmy Page always believed the group's music was best experienced in the full album setting. (Famously, "Stairway to

Heaven" was never officially released as a single in the States, despite its ubiquity on FM radio.) But if you need a primer or quick access to the cream of the band's catalog, *Mothership* does the trick. "Good Times Bad Times" kicks things off just as it did on Zep's self-titled 1969 debut, and there is no better intro to the mighty power of **JOHN BONHAM** than the still-killer kick drum triplets that inspired a generation to shed and shed and shed. Sequenced chronologically, the collection shows the band's and the drummer's development over the course of the '70s on incredibly diverse material, from Bonham's explosive snare entrances on the choruses of "Ramble On" (*Led Zeppelin II*), to the weighty, slightly behind-the-beat 12/8 blues dirge of "Since I've Been Loving You" (*Led Zeppelin III*), to the classic drum-god intros that make the fourth album's "Rock and Roll" and "When the Levee Breaks" the stuff of legend. And whether he kept it tight, like on *Physical Graffiti*'s "Kashmir," or brought a hail of fills and cymbal crashes, as on "Achilles Last Stand" from the underappreciated *Presence*, Bonham always played what was right. With absolutely no skippable tracks, *Mothership* is as close to a rock drumming bible as you can get.

Amazon.com physical double CD

(from 2007): \$11.88*

iTunes full album download: \$13.99

EXPAND THE PICTURE: Any Zep track is an education. As good a place as any to begin adding even more Bonzo to your library would be to download from iTunes *III*'s "Out on the Tiles," showcasing some tricky barline turnarounds. Dig Bonham's aggressive performances on further *Graffiti* tracks "The Wanton Song" and "In My Time of Dying." And then follow that up with the title tune from the live *The Song Remains the Same*, a 1973-era Bonham ass-whooping that certainly gets the lead out.

*Online prices tend to fluctuate.



JANE'S ADDICTION'S

STEPHEN

Alex Solca



PERKINS

ON THE WHO'S *LIVE AT LEEDS*

by Ilya Stemkovsky

"No matter how many times you listen to *Live at Leeds*, it surprises," says MD Pro Panelist Stephen Perkins, who's been touring with Jane's Addiction behind its latest studio album, *The Great Escape Artist*. "It's so unpredictable, because these guys are so alive. You feel like you're hearing it for the first time—the attitude, them stepping on the gas. It's dangerous. Where are these guys going? And when they land there, it feels right."

For musicians from Perkins' generation, *Leeds* broke the mold of what could be done on stage and provided a clear example of how the great drummers stepped up their game in the live arena. "The studio versions of these songs were already pretty exciting," Stephen says, "but *Leeds* has all these new parts—rhythmic changes, going to half time, and these solid, straight-ahead rockers that go on for thirty-two bars and then disappear, but you wish they were a song. Live, the Who can sit right next to Coltrane, with Elvin Jones going into outer space; it's that type of partnership. It's a conversation. There's a sense of urgency—it's desperate.

"And there's Keith Moon, with three big



cymbals across the front, no hats.... There's this constant wash, but the mix isn't too bright, so it doesn't hurt you. And he's playing orchestrally, with a sort of drum-ensemble approach. People who don't understand think it's just a rumble back there. That's bullshit. Moon is a precise, Bruce Lee technician on drums, with chops, but it's full of personality. And he's not just listening to the bass and guitar—he's on every vocal part. There's something cosmic going on."

Perkins' favorite musicians are the kind

where you can hear "their crazy lives" in their playing, and Keith Moon is certainly an ideal example. "I listen and I feel like I know him," Stephen explains. "You gain insight into who these musicians are. They're out there showing it. And you get a feeling like you want to break out of your own skin. You feel that on *Live at Leeds*."

Perkins says he's inspired by the album to this day. In fact, Jane's will occasionally welcome the *Leeds* muse into its own performances. "I've been playing Jane's Addiction songs since 1986, and we always ask, 'How do we electrify it?' Because we're here to do it like they did it and take it for a ride. Sometimes I'll put my iPhone through the PA and we'll jam on *Leeds* and other live albums from Zeppelin or Rush. It's what we grew up on. Then, during the show, [guitarist Dave] Navarro will hint at something. We've done 'Sparks' from *Tommy*, for instance.

"There's no way in hell the Who thought about money when they released *Live at Leeds*," Perkins concludes. "The whole experience of buying it, with that cool artwork... it was dirty, it looked like a bootleg, like it was just in a wrapper with a stamp—like a do-it-yourself record. But in 1970, *Leeds* changed people. It proved you could still be a dangerous live band and really make a mark, and people would listen."



A FREELANCE DRUMMER'S CREDITS
ARE HIS STOCK IN TRADE.
BUT THE REALITY IS, SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO KEEP
MUM ABOUT YOUR BEST BEATS.
THE DAY HE SAID YES TO AN INVITE TO JOIN THE
HEAVY HIT MAKERS DAUGHTRY,

ROBIN DIAZ

COULD CLAIM SOLE OWNERSHIP
OF HIS WORK.

MD'S BILLY AMENDOLA, WHO'S BEEN KEEPING
TABS ON THE DRUMMER ALL ALONG, REPORTS.

Photos by Alex Solca

On April 16, 2010, the chart-topping band Daughtry surprisingly announced on its website that original drummer Joey Barnes had left the group, and that L.A. session drummer Robin Diaz was filling in on tour. The arrangement was intended to be temporary, just until Daughtry found a permanent replacement for Barnes. But after a few shows with Diaz, band and drummer were hitting it off so well, musically and personally, that Robin was soon faced with the decision of sticking with a lucrative studio career or throwing in his lot as a full-time member of an international act.

At the beginning of 2011 it became official—Diaz chose to remain with Daughtry, and he began recording the band's third album, *Break the Spell*, which debuted at number eight on the *Billboard* Top 200 chart and, on the strength of the hit singles "Crawling Back to You," "Outta My Head," and "Start of Something Good," soon went gold. Diaz, it seemed, made the right decision for himself, and given the group's continuously high profile since, it

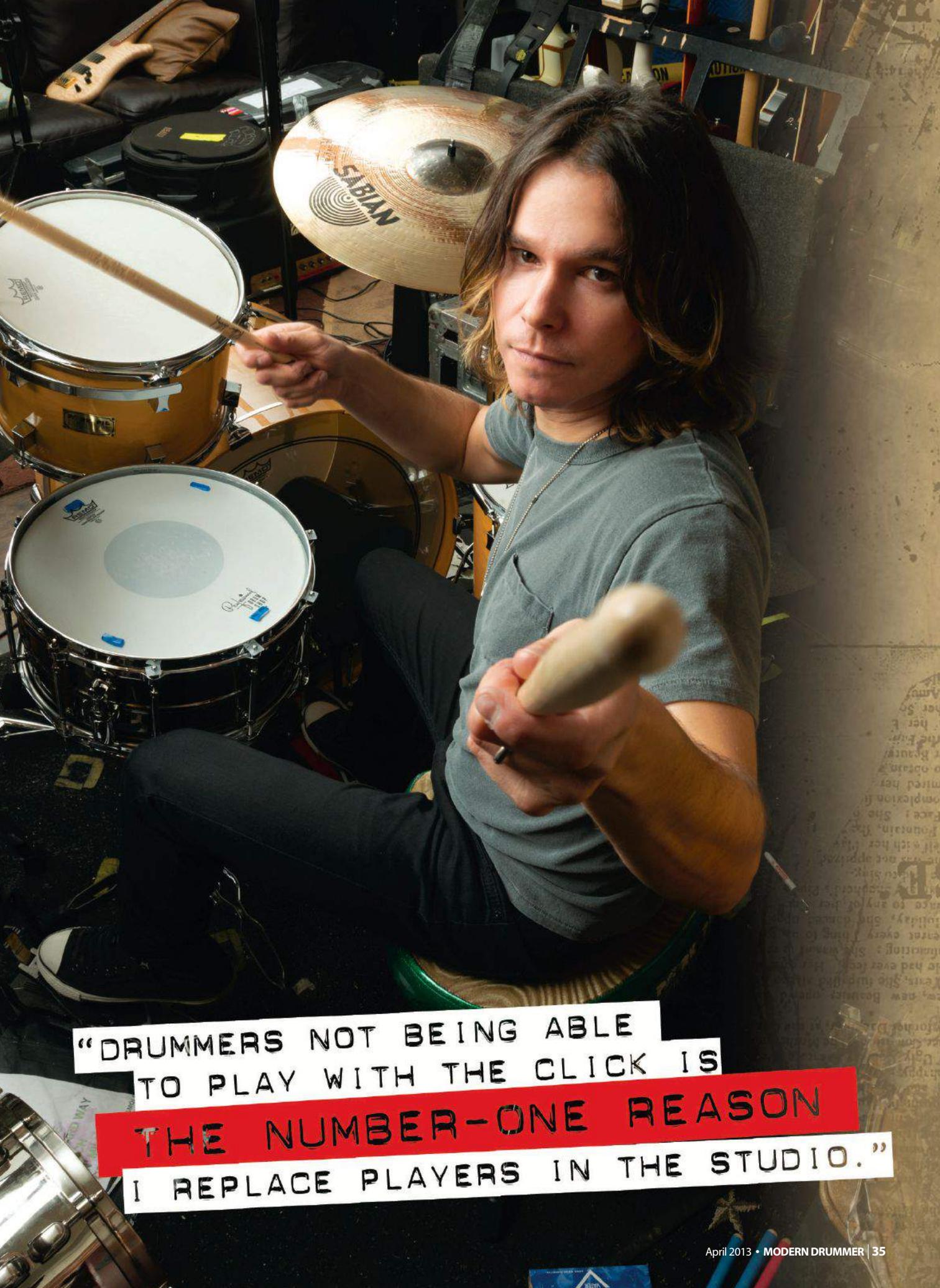
would appear that Daughtry made a pretty good choice as well.

Diaz was born in Maywood, California, on May 16, 1978, and started playing drums at a very young age. He soon found his way into a number of bands, and while still in his teens he began landing steady session work in L.A. I first met Robin at a NAMM show ten years ago, when reps from Vater, the drumstick company he endorses, brought him to dinner to meet the *MD* gang. We kept in touch, and afterward, whenever we'd talk on the phone or hang out in New York, he'd fill me in on his recent recording projects.

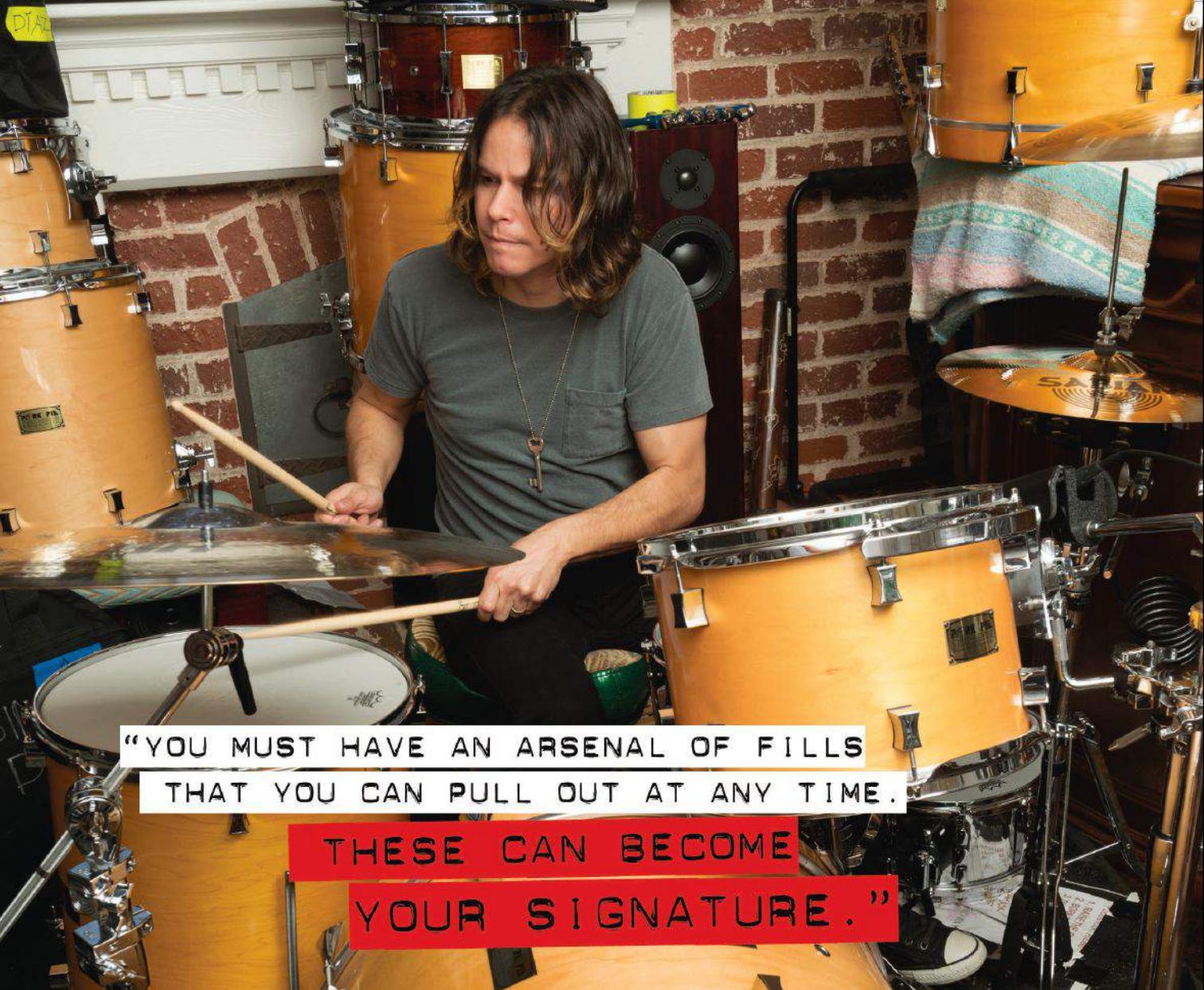
Often, Robin would start off by saying, "Now, you can't tell anyone about this—I got paid well, but I'm ghost drumming on it and signed a confidentiality agreement." After a few such stories, I began to think, *Is this kid BS'ing me?* But, as I'd soon find out, it was all true. Obviously I kept my mouth shut, but it was tough knowing that Robin had done so many prime gigs—and we couldn't tell our readers about most of them!

One project that Diaz was particularly excited





“DRUMMERS NOT BEING ABLE
TO PLAY WITH THE CLICK IS
THE NUMBER-ONE REASON
I REPLACE PLAYERS IN THE STUDIO.”



“YOU MUST HAVE AN ARSENAL OF FILLS THAT YOU CAN PULL OUT AT ANY TIME.

THESE CAN BECOME YOUR SIGNATURE.”

about was the debut by a much-buzzed-about band from Oklahoma called Hinder, *Extreme Behavior*. At the time, in 2005, Robin wasn't sure if he would be credited in the liner notes of the album, because, as with most of his ghost-drumming work, the band in question had a full-time drummer, in this case Cody Hanson. An agreement was worked out, though, and fortunately for Diaz he was given proper credit—especially since that album contains the number-one smash hit “Lips of an Angel.” (Hanson cowrites most of the band's material, so really it was a win-win deal.)

On a great many other hit records, however, Diaz's contributions will never be known by the general public. Still, check out this list of artists the drummer has worked with that we *can* tell you about: Trapt, Theory of a Deadman, OAR, Danzig, Adelitas Way, Outernational, Ace Enders and a Million Different People, Rev Theory, Chris Cornell, Avril Lavigne, Three Doors Down, and Liars Inc. Diaz's work extends beyond rock as well, with *American Idol* singers Kelly Clarkson, Allison Iraheta, Lee DeWyze, David Cook, and

Kris Allen. The drummer even did a few tracks with his childhood heroes in Kiss.

Among the big-name producers Diaz works with are Nickelback's Chad Kroeger (*Theory of a Deadman*), Brian Howes (*Extreme Behavior*), and Howard Benson (*Break the Spell*). “Robin has an innate feel for emotional rock 'n' roll drumming,” Benson says. “I've produced multiple hit records with him, and the experience is always amazing. We are always on the same page.”

MD spoke with the talented drummer while he was on a rare two-week break from touring. (Daughtry spent most of 2012 on the road, and 2013 will be much the same.) This is Robin's first full feature in *MD*, but we're pretty sure it won't be his last.

MD: When did you begin playing, and who influenced you to get started?

Robin: I first got turned on to drums when I was five years old. An older kid down the street had this enormous blue Ludwig Vistalite kit with all the bells and whistles. I would sit outside his house and just listen to him play. Once



“Robin Diaz eats, sleeps, and breathes drums. His passion on stage is infectious, and he always plays from the heart. And that's all a frontman could ever ask for from his drummer.”

—Chris Daughtry

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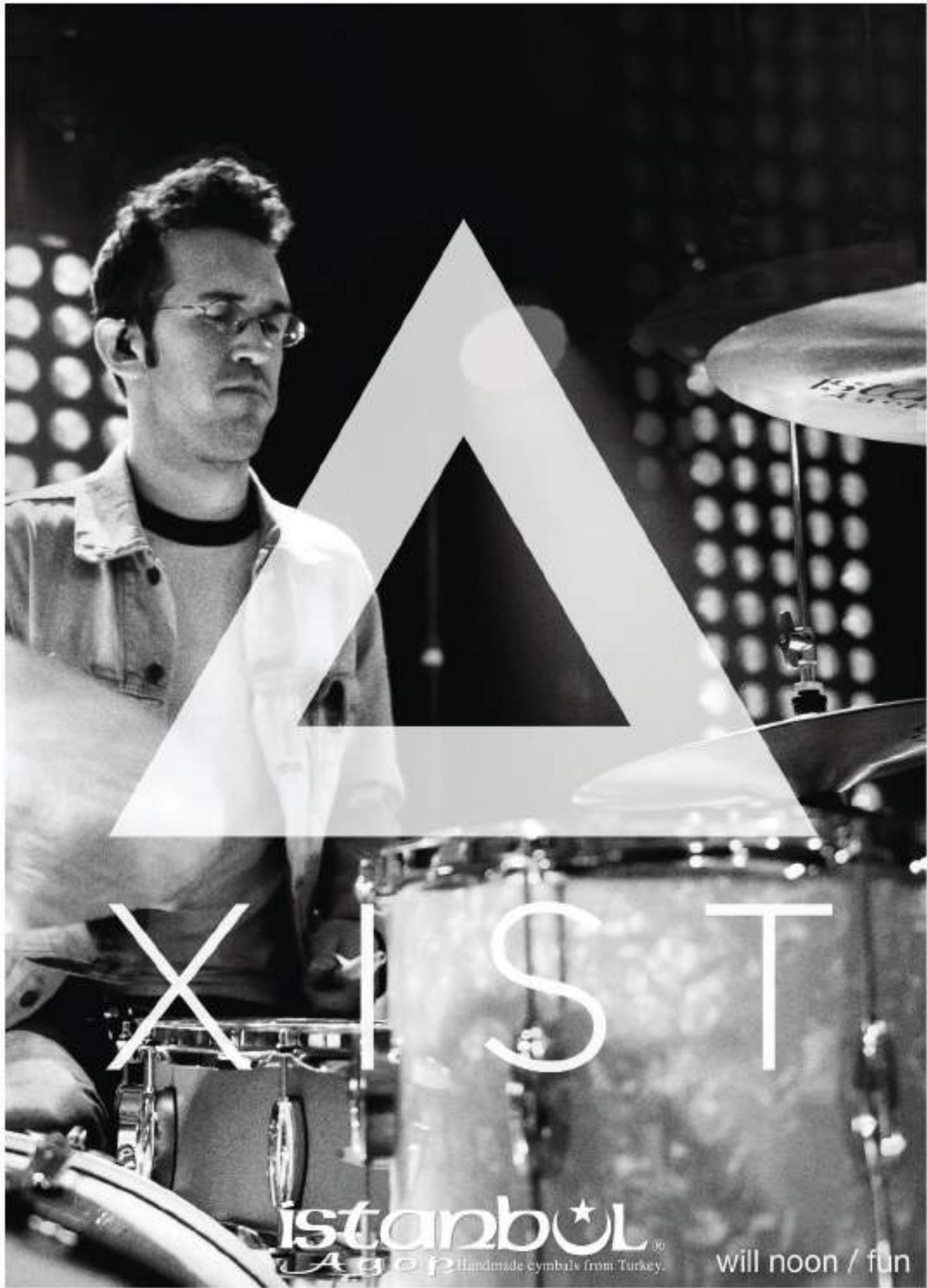
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in a while he and his band thought it would be cool to let the little kid come over and watch them, and if I was lucky I'd get to sit behind his kit.

MD: What kind of music were they playing?

Robin: They would play Van Halen, Black Sabbath, AC/DC, Kiss, and Ozzy songs all day and night. That was where my love for rock 'n' roll music and the drums began. Shortly after, my mom bought me a pair

MD: What was your practice routine at that point?

Robin: Playing along to records and videos. My all-time favorite record to play along to was *Kiss Alive II*. Peter Criss's drum solo in "God of Thunder" was mind-blowing to me. From there I learned all the Kiss records I could get my mom to buy, along with AC/DC's *Back in Black*, Zeppelin's first two albums, the Stones, Sabbath, and, thanks to my dad, Chuck Mangione's *Live*

"I've been working with Robin for ten years now, and we've had many hit records together. He's my go-to guy for all the big projects I do, because he's the most creative drummer I've ever worked with. He always comes up with an interesting spin on the songs. The beats he lays down are actually hooks that bring the tunes to life. He's also a songwriter, and that's one of the reasons that he plays for the song and not just to impress other drummers. He's usually a one- or two-take guy, and he has a knack for making grooves feel good. And he owes me huge for hooking him up with his beautiful wife." —**Producer Brian Howes**



of drumsticks, and I would beat the heck out of our leather sofa. [laughs] Awesome bottom end, by the way! But it wasn't until my Grandpa Jo bought me a drumkit for my sixth birthday that I was able to start learning to play along to all the records that my family owned.

at the Hollywood Bowl. I watched and played along to Tommy Aldridge's double bass video and to Steve Gadd's videos, especially to learn the Paul Simon track "50 Ways to Leave Your Lover." That groove is infectious. And Jeff Porcaro's video with the "Rosanna" shuffle was

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ROBIN DIAZ

difficult, but it was a building block to becoming a well-rounded drummer.

MD: Did you have any formal training?

Robin: During elementary school I played drums for every talent show, and in junior high and high school I began playing in garage bands, playing rock covers and original music. We would play backyard parties and skating rinks and enter battle-of-the-bands contests. Then, before my senior year of high school, I went to the Musicians Institute PIT summer session program. During that program I met and studied with Fred Dinkins, Ray Luzier, Ralph Humphrey, and Joe Porcaro. That was life changing for me. At that point I definitely knew I would be a drummer! Upon finishing high school, I immediately started up at MI for the one-year program. MI opened my eyes to the technical aspects of music and broadened my understanding and appreciation of all styles and types of music.

MD: How did you get into studio work?

Robin: Initially by recording with friends and local bands here in L.A. From that I caught the attention of one producer

and then another, and I went from small projects to medium ones to big ones. It was a very gradual progression.

MD: How do you prepare for a recording date?

Robin: A few different ways. Sometimes I get acoustic demos of the songs sent to me in advance so I can learn the songs, make charts, and work on my personal ideas. Sometimes I'll do preproduction with the band for a couple of days, working out the parts together and learning the songs from top to bottom. And sometimes I just go in cold with no rehearsal. I'll just listen to the song in the control room, make some cheat sheets, and go for it. That way can be stressful, but it's one of my favorite ways to record, because it's fresh and there are no preconceived ideas of how the drums or the song should sound.

MD: How did the sessions for multi-platinum records by Trapt and Hinder come about?

Robin: I recorded the entire debut Trapt record after their manager heard about my playing on the song "Headstrong" through an A&R friend of mine, Joshua



ROBIN'S SETUP

Drums: Pork Pie maple in metallic green with black center stripe

- A.** 6x14 '80s Tama Bell Brass snare (with die-cast hoops) or 6¹/₂x14 Pork Pie Big Black snare
- B.** 9x13 tom
- C.** 16x 16 floor tom
- D.** 18x18 floor tom
- E.** 18x24 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1.** 15" AA Medium hi-hats
- 2.** 19" Vault V crash
- 3.** 21" HH Raw Bell Dry ride
- 4.** 20" AAX X-Plosion crash
- 5.** 20" HHX Evolution O-Zone crash

Sticks: Vater 1A hickory

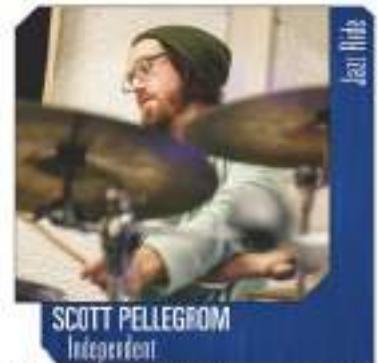
Heads: Remo Controlled Sound snare batter and Hazy bottom, Clear Emperor tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, and Coated Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter

Hardware: DW 5000 single bass drum pedal and 9000 series hi-hat stand

Percussion: LP tambourine

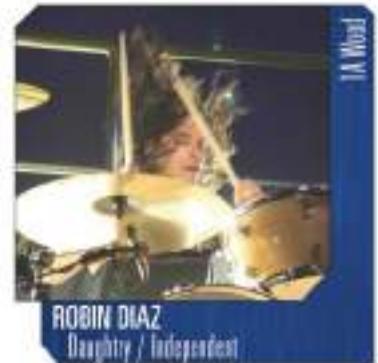
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Sarubin. There was no click used on the recording of that song. The producer, Garth Richardson, said he wanted to capture a live rock band in its element. And there's no double bass on it—happily I'm blessed with a Bonham foot!

The drum pattern of "Headstrong" was special because of the fast upbeat verses that went into the half-time sing-along chorus. That song epitomized the perfect harmony between rock and pop beats. At that time most rock songs were half time and heavy, but "Headstrong" had a fresh, interesting, upbeat yet heavy sound.

"Headstrong" actually changed rock radio at that time. It reached number one on *Billboard's* mainstream rock and modern rock charts and crossed over to the U.S. pop charts. It also won in the best modern rock track and best rock track categories at the Billboard Music Awards in 2003.

MD: How about Hinder? How did you get involved with them?

Robin: Hinder's self-titled debut was produced by Brian Howes. Brian and I were in a band together, and he always appreciated my drumming and knew of the other

session work I was doing at the time. The hit song "Lips of an Angel" was a stripped-down rock ballad where I played for the vocals and the song, not for myself. As a drummer that can be a hard thing to learn to do, but it's especially important on a song slated to be a radio rock/pop single, and thankfully that's what "Lips" accomplished—big time.

MD: Tell us about recording the first few Theory of a Deadman records.

Robin: I was brought in to record their first record by Chad Kroeger of Nickelback. We had met on the road touring and had become friends. Theory was the newly signed band to his label, 604 Records. The guys in the band then brought me back for the second and third albums, *Gasoline* and *Scars & Souvenirs*, which were produced by Howard Benson. I recorded all of *Scars & Souvenirs*. We did two weeks of preproduction, and Howard came in with his ideas and changes for the songs and drum parts.

MD: Can you talk about your approach to one of the biggest hits from that album, "Bad Girlfriend"?

Robin: That's a straight-up, crowd-chanting rock song. My approach for tracking it was simple: Play with feel and hit hard, solid, and with attitude.

MD: How did you come to play on Chris Cornell's recording of "Light On," which later became a hit for *American Idol* season-seven winner David Cook?

Robin: I was asked by Brian Howes, who was the producer and cowriter on that track. We did it at Jim Henson's A&M studios, off Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. The night before the session, we all met at a hotel in L.A. to get acquainted and just hang out. Chris wanted to go over the approach and arrangement of the song. Little-known fact: Chris started as a drummer. So he showed me by jumping behind my kit. His enthusiasm and love of the drums made the session so much fun.

MD: You no doubt play to a click regularly in the studio. What tips can you offer to make it more comfortable?

Robin: Being able to play to a click is imperative for session work. I was fired from one of my first recording gigs back in 1995 for not being able to play to the click. That experience was humbling, but at the same time it forced me to go and shed for a long time.

I would start the click at around 50 bpm and keep increasing the tempo. I also wrote my own drum charts to practice along to. This enabled me to play behind, on top of, and perfectly with the click, until I was comfortable and not scared of the click anymore. It takes a lot of dedication and practice to play with a click. But

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once you master it, it's like riding a bike. Drummers not being able to play with the click is the number-one reason I replace players in the studio. Once a producer knows you're comfortable and confident behind the kit, the session goes smooth.

MD: These days, with everyone having a home studio, what can you suggest to someone wanting to be a session player?

Robin: Practicing fills and dynamics is so important. Every drummer must have their arsenal of fills that they can pull out at any time. These can become your signature. Hitting hard and consistently saves time during the recording process and during the drum comping process. This makes for a very happy producer and editor, which will guarantee you callbacks for future recording sessions. Also, being able to take and follow direction and to quickly make changes in the studio is very important.

That being said, no one wants a stiff drummer, and that's why you can't lose your cool and feel for the song. It's a difficult balance, but putting your ego aside will help tremendously. This is something I have personally struggled with, due to my ADHD. For me, yoga helps. Also, understand that the drums are like the foundation of a house, and if the foundation is weak it'll compromise the whole building.

MD: Now that you're touring so much, as opposed to when you were working in the studios of L.A. more often, how do you balance your family life?

Robin: Balancing life and family on the road can be difficult. I don't know how bands did it back in the day, but thankfully now there's FaceTime and Skype! My wife, Lisa, and I try to stay connected as much as possible by always texting, emailing, and talking on the phone. We totally take advantage of free Wi-Fi!

My wife has always said she knew what she was getting into when we got together, and she's grateful to have the support of her amazing friends and family. She feels it's essential to have a life beyond her rock 'n' roll husband but feels it's equally important that we stay relevant and connected in each other's lives. We both have careers and work hard at what we do, but being together is what is most important at the end of the day.

I also try to take some of my home life with me on the road, whether it's my practicing of yoga and exercising, calling and texting with close friends and family in order to stay up to date on things, or taking in a little sightseeing on days off and hitting up a pub. I like to get out in the fresh air and make new friends—

that's always better than being stuck in hotel rooms and buses.

MD: Was it a difficult decision to join Daughtry as a full-time member and leave the sessions behind?

Robin: For the past three years I've been recording and touring with the band all over the world. We've been in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Singapore, South Africa, Moscow, and recently Dubai. What an experience playing to thousands of fans! We've performed on every TV show imaginable and shared the stage with many great musicians.

And Daughtry challenges my drumming because of the dynamics in our live show and the evolution of the band's sound during the record-making process. It's not just bash-bash drumming; it's all about the feel, the songwriting, and Chris's vocals. Deciding to join Daughtry was a no-brainer, because, number one, Chris is an amazing vocalist. Two, all the guys are great players and songwriters, with no crazy baggage. Three, we're all married and care for one another and our families. And finally, we're pretty successful. Who could ask for anything more?



Photo by Sayve Joan Berman

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The Education of Tommy IGOE

Few contemporary players have learned so much about drumming—or have passed the wisdom of the ages down to so many. Even more important, though, the Broadway and big band vet has a natural ability to home in on what truly matters in any given musical situation. **Class is now in session.**

Forty-seven-year-old drummer Tommy Igoe leads two popular big bands, one on each coast, yet he largely disavows tradition. Before attending William Paterson University as a music major, he learned his craft from his father, Sonny, a storied big band and broadcast drummer—yet he scoffs at the idea that a musician must be college educated. He's played all manner of jazz and rock, yet he's a trained pianist who loves to conduct. So just who *is* this man on a mission?

Igoe's Birdland Big Band presents modern material in shouting, sixteen-piece, huge-brass form. Big bands have recently experienced a comeback, in the hands of Maria Schneider, Christian McBride, and Ron Carter, and continuing in that vein Igoe's group draws on the past while residing in the here and now, performing the music of Chick Corea, Michael Brecker, Michel Camilo, and other contemporary jazz composers. The DVD *Tommy Igoe and the Birdland Big Band Live From New York* shows the ensemble steaming, sweating, and grooving.

A fervent instructor with notoriously strong viewpoints, Igoe has produced multiple top-selling educational materials, including Hudson Music's *Groove Essentials 1.0* and *2.0* book-and-DVD sets and *Tommy Igoe's Great Hands for a*

Lifetime. He's a passionate, driven, demonstrative musician, one whose fervor for the instrument and the music seethes from seemingly every pore of his being. He just can't contain himself. Ask Tommy about the ultimate chops builder, and he'll explain his father's "Lifetime Warm Up" routine in precise detail. Ask him about the state of jazz education, and he'll energetically question those who all too easily support a universal approach. Ask him how he managed to build a loyal following for his weekly big band performances at the Razz Room in San Francisco and (the perpetually packed) Birdland in New York City, and, well, you can read his reply for yourself here.

But perhaps the most unusual thing about Igoe is his drumming. Though you can definitely hear the spirit of Buddy Rich and Mel Lewis, as well as flashes of Dave Weckl, in his big band delivery, Tommy is always playing in the service of his bandmates. He's the leader, but he plays with such sensitivity to the charts, and with such an egoless demeanor, that the drummer inside you almost wishes he would play *more*. Even when Igoe, thrillingly, takes it from whisper soft to left-hook loud, it's with a consistent underlying sense of empathy. From delicate brushwork to butt-kicking solos, Tommy keeps his ears trained on the band.





MD: The Birdland Big Band CD *Eleven* shows your vision for a new kind of approach. But why a big band? It wasn't hard enough to be a jazz drummer alone?

Tommy: I love how that's always the first question, because it's so true! Back in 2006 I wasn't looking to start a big band, but the opportunity presented itself. I had played in Birdland's previous big band, and it was a ghost town. There was a core base of older fans, but that was it. I asked the club to give me a shot to create something different and unique, something for a younger audience. After we started playing, people started talking about the band. We became really, really good, and people responded. Within a year we were selling out pretty consistently. The moral of the story is that opportu-

nities will present themselves, and you have to be ready to run with them.

MD: What is your new big band approach?

Tommy: My approach is to not have an approach. I simply want to play the best music I can, with zero nostalgia. We want to reach people emotionally and tell a story about the songs. I'm not a full-time composer; I don't have an allegiance to anybody, including myself. The only thing I care about is music that can be absorbed by the general public. I don't want a roomful of jazz snobs. I would rather people have never heard jazz or a big band and that we completely blow their minds. The 99 percent of the world that doesn't know this music is who I want to reach.

MD: You're a natural communicator on the instrument, which comes across

on video. But there's tradition in your solos, that big band spirit. Your drumming is clear, and it touches people.

Tommy: A lot of jazz communicates intellectually or historically but perhaps not emotionally. Instrumentalists have to communicate in a wordless structure. The challenge is to break the wall down between audience and musician, to make them feel like we're all in this together. Rock and pop artists do that, but jazz rarely does. Jazz can be kind of exclusionary. I don't like that.

We have weekly residencies in New York and San Francisco. We can't just get up there and play a bunch of charts at an average level, with me playing a couple fast single-stroke rolls, and expect that it's going to be an experience that will make people return. I'm

Drum education has been a big part of Tommy Igoe's life since he first picked up the sticks, due to the influence of his father, Sonny, an in-demand player and noted instructor.



always preaching to the band and to myself that the bar has to be astronomically high. I also talk to the audience a lot about where the songs come from or why the composer wrote them or why I selected them. That helps

music if you serve it up and deliver it in a way that invites people in.

MD: Is the ability to communicate from the drums something you learned from your father?

Tommy: Yes, my dad was my first and

most important mentor. I learned so much being around him, there's no way I can articulate it all. He was a true pro. He always had a smile and loved playing music. Some musicians are really dark, maybe thinking about the gig they didn't get. My dad was never

like that. A career is full of hills and valleys. Whenever I got to a point where I felt unsatisfied, I thought of my dad, who always rolled with the punches. He was a man of grace. So I choose to approach the art from a positive area. Every day I wake up, and I can't believe how lucky I am—I get to make music!

MD: Your dad played on Ed Sullivan's and Jackie Gleason's shows, during an era when every television variety show had a big band and orchestra. I hear a similar sense of orchestration and style in your drumming; it's like the spirit of Ed Shaughnessy and Bobby Rosengarden.

Tommy: If you listen carefully to everyone who has studied the language, you will hear the icons coming out. You can't play in a big band with authenticity without using Jo Jones' vocabulary, for instance. Or Buddy Rich, or Mel Lewis. Those guys were there when the music was at its most

“We are all studio musicians today. If you're a young player with aspirations of being a professional and you don't have a drum room where you can record your kit, you're either A) not serious, or B) living in the past.”

take it out of the mundane “Here's a blues.” Snore...

MD: You do play older material, such as Sonny Stitt's “The Eternal Triangle.”

Tommy: Absolutely. That's a relatively recent chart by John Clayton. Jeff Hamilton played on the original ver-

popular. It was a different kind of relationship between the public and the music then. When I play in a big band, I don't think about tradition, because I *know* the tradition, stone cold. Our forefathers didn't have to worry about maintaining tradition. They were free

to make amazing music. Now we have music being played in many large ensembles that are looking backwards—living history lessons. With all due respect to them, that's not what I'm interested in creating.

MD: So what are you doing differently?

Tommy: My bands are "rhythm section first."

A rhythm section that plays deep grooves unlocks the true brilliance of the horns. Any horn player will agree. With most big bands, when they float from genre to genre, some genres are weak because the rhythm section doesn't have the authenticity to make the different genres

shine. It's not a horn problem; it's a rhythm section problem. One thing we pride ourselves on is trying our best to keep the grooves as authentic as we can.

MD: On *Eleven*, the Birdland Big Band

composers. The trick was coming up with great new arrangements. Take "Got a Match?" or "Spherical." Those are great tunes on their own. But you have to arrange them for the entire band, and

"I got my ass kicked as a freshman. I shut up and observed. But I just don't know if going for a jazz performance degree in 2013 is the smartest thing to do."

covers the music of Michel Camilo, Herbie Hancock, Don Grolnick, Mike Stern, Chick Corea, and Michael Brecker; you're bringing fresh material to the big band format.

Tommy: You can't go wrong with those

that's where things can go wrong. There's a way to write arrangements that will make you cry or make you feel power or suck you in, but it's hard to do and hard to find.

MD: Being the bandleader, paying musicians, dealing with club owners—does your drumming suffer?

Tommy: Not really, but I tell all my students, you better practice now, because if you get a career going you'll have barely any time to practice. I'm good at compartmentalizing that stuff; if there's friction in one aspect of the music, I put that aside and focus on the joy of playing at that moment.

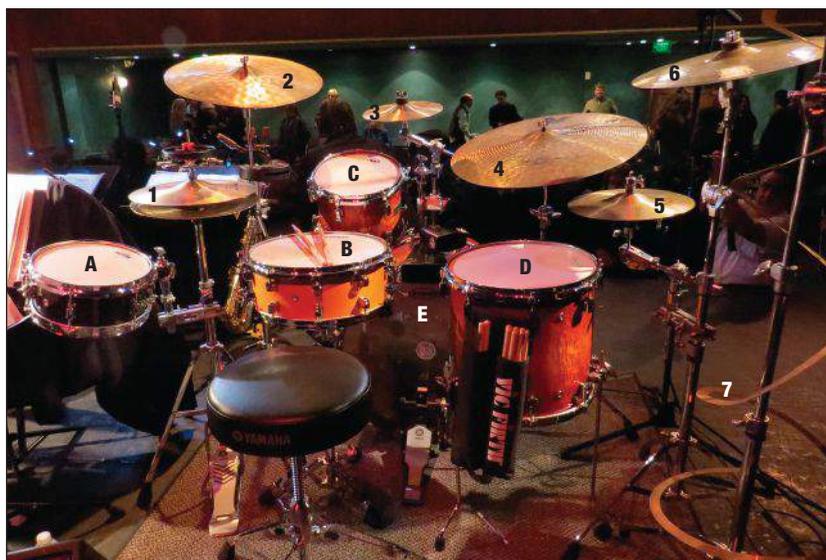
MD: You began drumming at the age of two. What was the focus of your lessons with your dad?

Tommy: I had a lesson every Sunday. We focused on having a strong foundation in rudiments, being a professional behind the drums, being able to play various styles, and being able to play concert snare on a classical piece as well as jazz and rock. I was constantly playing anyway, so he would give me pages of a book and I would get it together. It was a very organic experience.

MD: When did you start playing with other musicians?

Tommy: School bands started in fourth grade, then at fifteen I joined the Bayonne Bridgemen drum corps for three years, which gave my chops a whole new dimension and power. I won stuff like the All-State competitions for jazz ensemble, and I played rock in garage bands. In the house growing up, my dad played jazz and classical, and my sisters played rock. I heard Art, Tony, Buddy, Mel, Ringo, and Bonham, all at the same time. I was a sponge. And I studied piano privately. Then I went to William Paterson University and studied

TOMMY'S SETUP



Drums: Yamaha Phoenix or Club Custom

- A. 4³/₄x10 Musashi snare
- B. 5x14 Sensitive series snare
- C. 8x10 tom
- D. 12x14 floor tom
- E. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 13" K Mastersound hi-hats
- 2. 18" prototype crash
- 3. 10" K splash
- 4. 22" High Definition ride
- 5. 12" Special Recording hi-hats (closed)
- 6. 16" K Dark crash
- 7. 16" Spiral Trash

Percussion: Rhythm Tech G2 Hat Trick tambourine and Moon Block; LP Sliding

Bass Drum Mount holding Mambo and Cha Cha cowbells

Heads: Evans coated Power Center Reverse Dot snare batters and Hazy 200 bottoms, coated G1 tom batters and clear G1 bottoms, and EMAD bass drum batter and ported Ebony front head

Sticks: Vic Firth Tommy Igoe Groove Essentials signature stick, Heritage brushes, and Rute 505

Hardware: Yamaha HS740A hi-hat stand, FP8500C bass drum pedal, CHH 930 closed hi-hat, SS950 snare stand, CS755 cymbal stands, DS840 drum throne, and CH750 splash cymbal arm



with bassist Rufus Reid, who is an incredible educator. I left after a year to play with the Glenn Miller big band, for the opportunity to tour internationally at eighteen years old. We got to go behind the Iron Curtain! It was an experience that had a powerful effect on me.

MD: You've talked about the politics that occur even at the college level. How did you overcome that?

Tommy: I got my ass kicked, that's how! That was the best thing for a freshman. I shut up and observed. I watched the upperclassmen tussle over who was going to get in the big band or get this or that gig. But I'm not a hardcore school guy. I believe in college—I just don't know if going for a jazz performance degree in 2013 is the smartest thing to do. Each student has to be given the facts and weigh them in their personal situation, and then they can decide for themselves. I don't counsel every student to automatically go to college for a music degree, especially a performance degree.

MD: Why not?

Tommy: Because for some people, to put it bluntly, it's not the right fit. One size doesn't fit all when you're talking about a pathway for the arts. For many, school just might be the best option. But if you're



Among Igoe's popular drum tutorials are his *Groove Essentials* multimedia sets and his *Getting Started on Drums* and *Great Hands for a Lifetime* DVDs.

INFLUENCES

Chick Corea Now He Sings, Now He Sobs (Roy Haynes), Three Quartets (Steve Gadd) /// **Wynton Kelly** Smokin' at the Half Note (Jimmy Cobb) /// **The Beatles** Abbey Road (Ringo Starr) /// **Stan Kenton** Live at the London Hilton 1973, Vol. II (Peter Erskine) /// **John Scofield** Loud Jazz (Dennis Chambers) /// **Paquito D'Rivera** Manhattan Burn (Ignacio Berroa) /// **Buddy Rich** Swingin' New Big Band (Buddy Rich) /// **Tower of Power** Live and in Living Color (David Garibaldi) /// **Remember Shakti** The Believer (Zakir Hussain)

RECORDINGS

The Birdland Big Band Eleven, Live From New York /// **Tommy Igoe** New Ground /// **Pacific Mambo Orchestra** PMO /// **Brent Stanton** The Sign of the Kiwi /// **Michael Zilber** Stranger in Brooklyn /// **Patrick Brent** Oz in the House /// **Lauryn Hill** "Little Drummer Boy" /// **The Lion King** original cast recording /// **New York Voices** What's Inside, New York Voices, Collection



enough to get gigs, but to get gigs and have that burden hanging over your head? That's really tough. I'm an advocate for students to completely know what they're getting themselves into. Then, armed with knowledge, they can make the best decisions for their personal situation.

MD: But don't college students play in ensembles and meet certain requirements? Doesn't that prepare them for the real world?

going to be a performance major, it might be a good idea to double major with something else. Or, if you're really hardcore and only interested in performing, maybe moving to New York City, eating SpaghettiOs, and meeting some other young, bold musicians while studying privately is the right move for you.

As educators, if we really care, it's our job to be completely honest and not sell a formula. But here is my biggest problem with college now: When I went to school in the 1980s, it was relatively cheap. Not anymore. We're turning out young musicians—the ones *not* on scholarships—with often crushing debt that follows them for decades. It's hard

Tommy: After witnessing thousands of students, I can say with confidence that it really depends on the program and the student. I've had graduates of esteemed schools come to me unprepared to survive as a professional, and there are no-name schools that have produced polished monsters. Look, an ensemble is only as good as the leader.

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Great educators are rare. Some guys are teaching because the playing thing didn't work out, not because they have a real passion for education. Also, the playing opportunities are a lot less now. Broadway has become one of the last bastions of steady performance employment that allows you to *not* tour while making a substantial living. But we're still turning out thousands of exquisitely trained musicians every year who are going to be looking for a gig in a smaller pool.

It's happening right now. I believe we have to do a better job of communicating the realities of the music business, so they have the information they need to make the right decisions. Like the idea of being a studio musician—that doesn't exist anymore.

MD: College students are being told they can become session players?

Tommy: Are you kidding?

MD: There's still session work in Nashville and L.A., to some degree.

Tommy: And there will always be a little of what we now call "real" session work. My point isn't that there aren't any studio musicians anymore; my point is that we are *all* studio musicians. More drum tracks are created in private drum rooms owned by the player than in commercial pro studios. The biggest game changer now is the affordable gear. It used to cost unimaginable amounts of cash to record drums well. Now impressive quality is within reach of almost every budget.

If you're a young player with aspirations of being a professional today and you don't have a drum room where you can record your kit, you're either A) not serious, or B) living in the past. For a very elite few, like Vinnie Colaiuta and Josh Freese, they will always be busy in "real" studios, whatever that even means anymore. It's just not like thirty years ago, when a drummer like Steve Gadd had three kits rotating in New York daily and had a tech who was as busy as he was. Underneath Gadd there were drummers twenty-five deep, and they were all working every day!

Real drums are becoming a luxury item on recordings. To succeed in 2013 requires different skills than it once did. Once you understand the realities, then you can kick some ass. The studio legends of an era gone by didn't need to be able to physically record themselves with their own gear. We do.

MD: You played *The Lion King* on Broadway. When did that begin?

Tommy: In 1997, and I did it for fourteen years. They originally tried a concept of all percussion—no drumset. It didn't work, because it was still Elton John music, and it needs a backbeat of some sort. But on the first day of rehearsals, the music producer, Mark Mancina, said, pointing at my drumset, "This can't sound like a drumset." They didn't want anything Western. They wanted it to scream *Africa*. A lot of the grooves are drum based, not cymbal based. I would play syncopated backbeats accenting the "a" of 1, then 4. The groove would naturally percolate. So it was about presenting the groove without having

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THOMAS LANG



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it sound like a drumset. It was a real challenge.

MD: Did you sometimes play air drums to “feel” the cymbals?

Tommy: Yes! Or I would tape up the floor tom so it was dead and use rods on it. That gave it a low, cool, organic sound. That forced me to get outside my comfort zone.

MD: You’ve released a number of popular instructional books and DVDs. What is your general focus with private students?

Tommy: I give students a comprehensive and exhaustive manifesto before the first lesson to let them know exactly what they are getting into. I never cover licks or dissect a particular song. For example, I won’t teach you how to play a Rush song. Neil Peart is great, but instead of me showing a student what a drummer is playing, I’m way more interested in giving the student the tools to figure it out for themselves, opening a much larger world. I want to empower students to function away from me, rather than make them

dependent on me. It’s all about unlocking their ears. The drumming is secondary.

Also, I bring computers and YouTube into the lessons. There are amazing performances on YouTube, like Papa Jo Jones playing a great drum solo with Count Basie. I give students specific instructions, such as writing three paragraphs about Steve Gadd [after watching three different clips]. Then we discuss the videos. And instead of the standard approach, assigning a page to be learned by next week, I put the responsibility on them. I ask if there are any questions, then I listen to them briefly play the page.

The majority of the lesson is spent with the student playing music and being recorded. When you record a student in the lesson, all the reasons why we’re actually in the room together become clear.

MD: What is the “Lifetime Warm Up”?

Tommy: My dad created that in the early ’50s. It’s basically a routine that flows through the rudiments, with the

double-stroke roll as the connector. We did that in every lesson.

MD: What is your next book, *Filosophy*, about?

Tommy: Fills and solos. That’s where most drummers seize up. It’s a real problem for a lot of players. *Groove Essentials* was to the point on grooves, and *Filosophy* will be the same for fills and solos.

MD: Where do your drive and passion come from?

Tommy: I’ve always been this way. I do everything one hundred percent—it’s just the way I’m wired. I play hard, and I work hard. It’s fun.

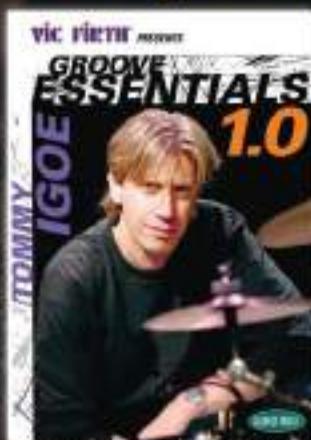
MD: Are you a musician who happens to be a drummer, or is being a drummer what you’re really all about?

Tommy: Isn’t that a Catch-22? I am a musician, and playing the drums is what I do best. I tell students, “Be a musician who plays the drums; don’t be a drummer who is trying to play music.”

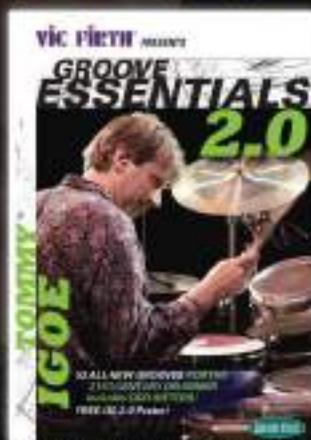


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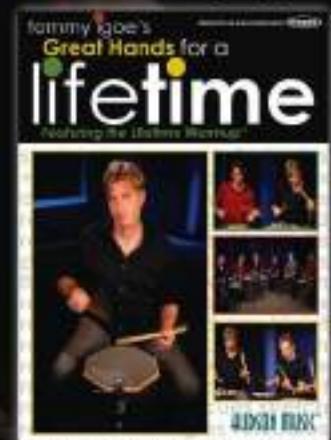
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Alex Solca

GENE HOGLAN: Lifting Metal Drumming Ever Higher

By marrying the syncopated swagger of Steve Gadd and other non-metal drummers to his uniquely staggered double bass passages and dual-ride flourishes, Hoglan introduced into metal a certain ebb-and-flow type of playing that strayed from the beaten path. His approach launched a new style of drumming that was technically demanding yet hypnotically musical.

Hoglan first caught the attention of those within the metal scene in 1986, with the L.A. thrash band Dark Angel. When he joined Death in 1993, the pioneering group had begun morphing into a more technical thrash band with smatterings of jazz in its compositions. This allowed Hoglan the opportunity to stretch beyond his metal roots. By the time Death released *Symbolic* in 1995, Hoglan was not only sending all the in-the-know metal drummers back to the woodshed, he was inspiring many young metalheads to expand their musical palette.

"I was so impressed with Gene's use of multiple ride cymbals on *Symbolic*," Lamb of God's Chris Adler recalls. "That remains one of my favorite metal records. It symbolized where I wanted to go as a drummer. Gene brought a capability that showed the band could not have existed the same way without him. His playing was as important as any of the guitar riffs. It wasn't straightforward, but it also wasn't progressive to the point of being beyond a developing drummer's ability to grasp. Gene wasn't trying to show off to the point where you couldn't bang your head to the music."

For almost thirty years now, Hoglan, or "the Atomic Clock," as he's known, has been playing nonstop, either as an active member of multiple bands at once or as a session player and touring fill-in. Job for a Cowboy drummer Jon "the Charn" Rice was only a year old when Dark Angel came on the scene; the now-twenty-five-year-old extreme metal drummer recounts how he first got into Hoglan's artistry while in high

learning songs and coming up with drum parts on the spot and then nailing them in one or two takes. His elephant-like memory and ability to execute complex compositions with mind-boggling precision has translated into countless subbing spots for touring bands. When a group hires the

the industry."

Though the extreme nature of much of Hoglan's work prevents it from crossing over, the bands Strapping Young Lad and Dethklok have introduced the drummer's mastery to significant audiences. This is especially true of Dethklok, whose albums have broken *Billboard* records with no small amount of help from the animated TV series *Metocalypse*, which features its music.

In Strapping Young Lad, Hoglan's creativity and intensity caught the attention of



Atomic Clock, it's with the utmost confidence that even with only a few days' notice, he can come into the situation with little or no rehearsal time and play a flawless set.

"I really enjoyed hearing about Gene being an incredible fill-in drummer," Rice says. "His ability to learn an entire band's

notable drummers from outside metal. During a recent interview with *MD*, Gene recalled a story about how he was surprised to hear that fusion great and fellow Pearl drum endorser Dennis Chambers was a big fan of his playing on the band's records. Chambers subsequently invited Hoglan to one of his clinics so they could meet afterward and talk drums.

Hoglan's influence has also been recognized by one of the most influential metal drummers of all time, Bill Ward of Black Sabbath, who dubbed Gene "the new John Bonham—the leading light of a new generation." It's no small thing when a list of musicians like Bill Ward, Dennis Chambers, Chris Adler, and Jon Rice, who represent four distinct generations of drummers, show such respect for a fellow player. Perhaps what they all share is the recognition that Hoglan has always stayed true to himself musically and achieved success with his integrity intact. Chris Adler might put it best: "Gene's always been more dedicated to the instrument than the industry."

David Ciauro

"In the backstage circles, everybody knew Gene—what bands he was playing with, what record he had just put out, because it was something we would all be looking forward to checking out and learning from." —Chris Adler

school. "After I heard Death's *Individual Thought Patterns*," Rice says, "I was hooked on Gene's playing—his style, relaxed sound, and creativity. From there I sought out other records that he played on. This really helped me to appreciate why he is so deeply respected in the metal and extreme metal drumming communities."

In the studio, where time is always of the essence, Hoglan earned a reputation for

set list in virtually no time at all is something I try to emulate when I do fill-in work. I've had the opportunity to be a touring and session drummer with a few bands that I've looked up to for a long time. I always try to fulfill the consistency, quickness to learn, and adaptability that Hoglan has displayed over his entire career. I hope that one day I can have even half of the rapport and demand that he has in



Loosen Up!

18 Triplet-Roll Warm-Ups to Get You Going

by Joel Popelsky

The drumset is one of the most physically demanding instruments. As with any other high-intensity physical activity, it helps to loosen up your muscles first with some basic exercises. In this article we're exploring a warm-up routine based on the double-stroke roll played as triplets. To begin, practice doubling each stroke of the 8th-note triplet, as shown below.

1

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

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

In each of the following exercises, we'll play a measure of 8th-note triplets with different accents, followed by a measure with the same accent patterns but with double strokes (RR or LL) in place of the unaccented notes. Each exercise should be repeated several times before you move on. Start at a tempo that feels comfortable. I typically play these exercises anywhere between 100 and 160 bpm. The practice surface you use is up to you. I like to play the warm-ups on a pad or a closed hi-hat, along with quarter notes on the bass drum.

Exercises 2–5 are based on accenting every fourth note of the 8th-note triplets. In Exercise 2, we start with an accent on beat 1.

2

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

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

In Exercise 3, we shift the accent one note to the right, so the pattern starts on the middle note of the first triplet.

3

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

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

In Exercise 4, the accent starts on the third note of the first triplet.

4

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

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

In Exercise 5, the accent pattern starts on beat 2.

5

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

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

Exercises 6–8 are based on accenting every third note of the 8th-note triplets, with a shifting pattern similar to the one in Exercises 2–5.

6

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

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

7

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

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

8

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

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

Exercises 9 and 10 are based on accenting every other note of the triplets.

9

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

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

10

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

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

Exercises 11–13 consist of two consecutive accents followed by two unaccented notes.

11

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

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

12

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

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

13

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

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

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

The next few exercises contain random accents.

14

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

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

15

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

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

16

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

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

17

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

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

18

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

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

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

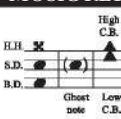
Once you've mastered these exercises, experiment with different ways to apply them to the drumset. For example, you can play the unaccented notes on the snare and the accented notes on toms, or you can play the unaccented notes on the snare and the accented notes on cymbals together with the bass drum.



Implied Brazilian Rhythms on Drumset

Part 1: Maracatu by Uka Gameiro

MUSIC KEY



The musical style Maracatu is an amalgamation of Afro-Brazilian concepts within the context of the annual festival of Carnival. Maracatu, or Maracatu de Baque Virado (“turned-around beat”), originated in religious

Candomblé ceremonies used to crown kings and queens of Congo and Angola in Recife, Brazil, the capital city of the north-eastern state Pernambuco.

The Maracatu ensemble consists of alfaias (large wooden roped-tuned drums), gongue (large cowbell), agogo (two smaller cowbells), tarol (shallow snare drum), caixa de guerra (another type of snare), and mineiro (cylindrical shaker). First I will demonstrate each of the essential parts played in a Maracatu percussion ensemble. These are only a few variations and possible patterns, especially with the alfaia (bass drum) parts.

Cowbell Parts (Gongue)



This second example is usually played as the clave (root rhythm) for the Maracatu ensemble.



Snare Parts (Tarol and Caixa)



Bass Drum Parts (Alfaia)



Drumset Applications

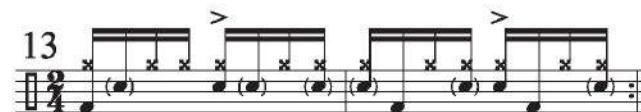
In the next example, you'll be playing the agogo parts on high- and low-pitched cowbells. You'll need to work on your coordination a little in order to play this.



Here are some basic implied-Maracatu beats that use the alfaia parts on the bass drum and a backbeat on the snare.



Finally, here are two grooves with ghost notes on the snare and some 16ths added on the hi-hat.



Uka Gameiro was born in Recife, Brazil. He's the author of the upcoming book *Brazilian Pernambuco Rhythms: Implied Beats*. For more info, visit ukagameiro.com.



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Grooving With Fives

A Progressive Approach to Phrasing Quintuplets on the Drumkit

by Mike McPhee

MUSIC KEY

open	○
H.H.	⊗
S.D.	⊗ (●)
B.D.	⊗
H.H.	⊗ Ghost note
w/foot	

Sixteenth-note quintuplets are five notes played per quarter note. The simplest way to count them in 4/4 is, "ONE, two, three, four, five; TWO, two, three, four, five; THREE, two, three, four, five; FOUR, two, three, four, five." As you can see, I'm emphasizing the downbeat of each quintuplet. I recommend doing that as you're first learning to feel and hear the fives, but you should be able to remove the emphasis once you're comfortable with the rhythm.

In this article we're going to explore ideas based on a very simple combination for your right hand, left hand, and bass drum. But before we get into that, we'll practice the basic 16th-note quintuplet on the snare while counting aloud.

The pattern in Example 2 is right-left-right-left-foot. Start simply, by using the right hand on the closed hi-hat, the left hand on the snare, and the right foot on the bass drum. Play this pattern slowly a few times to get comfortable with it. Add the counting, and throw on a metronome to make sure you're playing the quintuplet in perfect time.

The next step is to add a simple backbeat by moving the downbeats on beats 2 and 4 from the hi-hat to the snare. Try to make the backbeats jump out.

For even greater contrast, try playing all the unaccented snare notes very softly.

Next, we'll take a look at how to add an ostinato (repeating rhythm) to this groove. We're going to play the quintuplet in

2/4 with the backbeat in place. If you hit the backbeat with your left hand on the snare, you can now maintain a hi-hat ostinato that consists of the first and third note of the quintuplet. To make this pattern more playable, remove the second note from the second quintuplet. Your right and left hand will be playing together on beat 2. Be conscious of the dynamic of the hi-hat as you hit the accent on the snare. It's okay to accent the hi-hat, as long as it's intentional. Just be sure you can play the hats at an even dynamic as well.

The next three examples show different ways to apply these ideas in 3/4. In each, keep the "one, three" ostinato on the hi-hat while playing the backbeat on different downbeats.

For Example 9, we've taken the original pattern in Example 3 and shifted it forward by one 16th note. We're starting on the second 16th note from Example 3. I feel that understanding how to displace rhythms not only adds tasteful and colorful ways to vary grooves but also helps you get one step closer to achieving complete musical freedom on the instrument.

The Half-Time Shuffle

Variations on One of *Drumming's Slinkiest Grooves*

by Dave Beyer



MUSIC KEY

open	○	R.C.
H.H.	×	
S.D.	●	(●)
B.D.	●	
H.H.	×	Ghost note
w/foot		

The half-time shuffle is a signature beat for some of the most legendary drummers in history. Guys like Bernard Purdie, John Bonham, and Jeff Porcaro are all considered masters of this feel. Let's take a look at how each of these players customized the groove, and then we'll check out a few other variations to round out your own half-time shuffle.

Our third example in this section is John Bonham's pattern on the Led Zeppelin track "Fool in the Rain."

Fundamental Focus

To get a handle on the basics of the half-time groove, start with the basic hand pattern shown here.

1A

Add some ghost notes on the snare, and you have what's known as the Purdie shuffle.

1B

Once you've established a smooth groove with those patterns, try the following variations. Start with the quarter note at 90 bpm, and work your way up to 170 bpm. The goal is to maintain an even, relaxed feel at all tempos.

This variation is from Toto's "Rosanna," with Jeff Porcaro on drums.

2A

This version is from Steely Dan's "Home at Last," with Bernard Purdie on drums.

2B

2C

While all three of those songs share the same basic groove, what makes each one unique is the combination of how the pattern is being played and the variations that each drummer brings to the table.

The Masters' Variations

Jeff Porcaro's playing on "Rosanna" is a clinic in consistency. The bass drum, hi-hat, and snare accents (on beat 3) are rock solid, while Porcaro varies the ghost notes to enhance the feel. He starts by omitting a few ghost notes, and eventually he fills them all in. Notice that in both examples (3A and 3B) Jeff plays a Bo Diddley-inspired bass drum part, and check out his subtle yet effective two-note snare variation at the end of the phrase.

3A

3B

On "Home at Last," Bernard Purdie begins without playing any ghost notes on the snare, and he slowly sneaks them in to create a dynamic performance. He also adds an upbeat open hi-hat note to give the choruses a lift. The trick to achieving the slinky Purdie feel is to play quarter notes with your hi-hat foot while using the tip of the stick on the top of the hats. As difficult as it may sound, the key is to not try too hard—just let it happen.



John Bonham's groove on "Fool in the Rain" is loose and powerful. In the verses, Bonham incorporates an open hi-hat on the upbeat of beat 1 and occasionally throws in an extra snare on beat 4 to complement the phrasing of the vocals.



Bonham plays quarter-note triplets on the bell of the ride during the chorus to kick it up a notch.



Examples 7A and 7B are ride and hi-hat variations inspired by Purdie and Bonham. In 7A, the hi-hat opens on beats 2 and 4, giving the groove a reggae-type lift.



In 7B, we've displaced (shifted) Bonham's quarter-note-triplet bell part by one note and adjusted the snare part to fit with the bell.



You can also enhance the feel of the half-time shuffle by embellishing some of the ghost notes. In Example 8A, the slash marks through the note stem indicate a double stroke, while "Z" in Example 8B tells you when to play a buzz.



Make It Your Own

You can create your own variations of the half-time shuffle in a few ways. One thing you can try is to orchestrate the groove differently by moving either hand to a different sound. For example, try moving some of the ghost notes from Examples 2A–2C to the hi-hat or toms. Or play the open hi-hat part in Example 7A on the bell of the ride.

You can also combine ideas. For instance, you could play the hand pattern from Example 4 while reading through the bass drum patterns from all the examples. For an extra challenge, try moving the quarter-note-triplet part from Example 6 to the kick drum, and then read through the hand patterns from all of the other examples.

This is just a sampling of possible variations. The key to applying the ideas in real-life situations is to listen closely to the phrasing of the melody and to the other musicians' parts. Sometimes the song needs something as detailed as playing along with, or in between, a specific vocal part. Other times you'll just need to throw in a little something to give the guitar solo or chorus an upbeat lift.



Dave Beyer has played with Melissa Etheridge, Christopher Cross, Wilson Phillips, and the Motels. He teaches at L.A. Music Academy in Pasadena, California. For more information, visit davebeyerdj.com.



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Pete La Roca Sims

Style & Analysis by Steve Fidyk

MUSIC KEY

H.H.	C.C.	R.C.
T.H.	bell	
S.D.		
F.T.		
H.D.		
H.H.	Chorus	
w/foot	sole	

The great jazz drummer Pete Sims was born on April 7, 1938, in New York City, and passed away on November 20, 2012. He gained early professional experience playing timbales in Latin groups, and it was during this period that he acquired his nickname, La Roca, which translates to “the rock.”

Sims’ time feel had an attitude and a constant propulsion, and the drummer’s rhythmic ideas always left the listener surprised. One example of this is the way Sims placed accents in unexpected places within a phrase. In a 1998 *MD* interview, he spoke about his approach and experience. “Back when I was studying Stravinsky,” Sims recalled, “I came across the idea that you don’t always have to finish an idea. Once you’ve set it up, the listener’s ear knows what the conclusion is, so you can do something else. You might think that he has left an idea unfinished, but he’s really relying on your ear to resolve it.”

When asked how his background in classical music helped shape his jazz drumming, Sims replied, “I started playing kettle drums in junior high, and my teacher really taught us how to enjoy music. I did two years there, and then I went to the High School of Music and Art in Manhattan. I did four years there on kettle drums, and then I played in the City College Orchestra. During most of that period I wasn’t playing traps, only kettle drums. You have to count a lot of bars of rests as a kettle drummer. So when you actually make an entrance, it’s an event! I’m applying my



Paul La Roca

basic experience with how [classical composers] used the drums, as opposed to typical jazz drumming. It’s always totally responsive to what is occurring around it.”

Sims’ drum sound on record was extremely musical, and his snare was crisp and dry. His ability to draw tone from the kit could be a direct result of his experience playing timpani.

Pete’s cymbal phrasing at medium tempos favors the quarter-note pulse with a tight skip note.

His two feel (half-time swing) places emphasis on the last triplet partial of beats 2 and 4.

At fiery up-tempos, Sims’ cymbal phrasing straightens out and becomes dynamically balanced.

Prime Pete
Here’s a sampling of Pete La Roca Sims’ finest playing on record.

Pete La Roca Sims Basra, Turkish Women at the Bath	
Sonny Rollins Trio St. Thomas: In Stockholm 1959, A Night at the Village Vanguard	
Jackie McLean Bluesnik, New Soil	
Joe Henderson Our Thing, Page One	
Freddie Hubbard The Night of the Cookers: Live at Club La Marchal	
Charles Lloyd Quartet Of Course, Of Course	

Sims' main comping sources were his snare and bass drum, and the repetitive riff-style rhythms he created helped provide tension in the groove. For a sample, check out "Drew's Blues" from the Jackie McLean recording *Bluesnik*. Each riff has a lift and roll that recalls rhythms you'd hear from Elvin Jones. As you practice each phrase, strive for a consistent sound among your limbs without sacrificing the forward propulsion on the ride cymbal.

Examples 4 through 8 show five different snare and bass drum patterns in 4/4 time. Example 4 is a simple backbeat. Examples 5 and 6 feature more complex, repetitive patterns. Examples 7 and 8 include triplets and other rhythmic variations.

For a taste of Sims' Brazilian playing, check out Joe Henderson's recording *Page One*. La Roca plays the grooviest-sounding bossa nova beats on "Blue Bossa" (Example 9) and during the intro to "Recorda Me" (Example 10) by changing texture with his rimclick, brush, and hi-hat.

Examples 9 and 10 show bossa nova beats. Example 9 is labeled "Brush on S.D. w/ RH" and features a pattern of eighth notes on the snare drum with a hi-hat. Example 10 shows a similar pattern with a different texture, including a double bar line at the end.

Example 11 is labeled "Snare off" and shows a pattern of eighth notes on the snare drum with a rim click on the final note.

Sims was great at knowing what to play and when to play it, and he really knew how to listen to the musicians on the bandstand and respond accordingly to help move the music forward. A very fine recording of Pete's is his first as a leader, *Basra*. Check out the intro solo and first chorus of time from "Candu." Pete's solo statements frame the melody perfectly, and his mambo feel is loose and slinky.

Examples 11 and 12 show snare off patterns. Example 11 is labeled "Snare off" and "Rim" and shows a pattern of eighth notes on the snare drum with a rim click on the final note. Example 12 is labeled "Muffle w/ stick press" and shows a pattern of eighth notes on the snare drum with a muffled note on the final note.

Example 12 is labeled "flat flams" and shows a pattern of eighth notes on the snare drum with a flat flams on the final note.

For a sample of Sims' solo vocabulary, let's take a look at the four choruses of blues he trades on the track "Homestretch" from the aforementioned *Page One* by Joe Henderson. His time feel has an edge that recalls Philly Joe Jones, mixed with language and phrasing reminiscent of Roy Haynes, Art Blakey, and Jimmy Cobb.

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14

15

16



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Steve Paire

ROBERT "SPUT" SEARIGHT

What's on this monster multi-instrumentalist's mind when he's at the drumset with the kaleidoscopic groove machine known as Snarky Puppy? **Melody, of course.**

by Ken Micallef

Who would take a mini orchestra navigating funk, jazz, fusion, and world music and name it Snarky Puppy? Bassist Michael League, that's who. League leads the madcap marauders into unique terrain on their latest release, *groundUP*, on which drummer Robert "Sput" Searight plays with all the funky flow of his heroes Jabo Starks and Clyde Stubblefield and with the metric sophistication of his equally important influences Mike Clark, Steve Gadd, Harvey Mason, Buddy Rich, and Max Roach.

The thirty-seven-year-old drummer is no stranger to good grooves, his impressive biography including seven years as the touring drummer for Snoop Dogg, plus further road work with Justin Timberlake and Erykah Badu. A native of Dallas, Searight has worked extensively on that city's gospel scene, tracking drums for the Clark Sisters, Tamela Mann, Twila Paris, and Kirk Franklin; with Franklin he won a Grammy for the 1997 hit single "Stomp."

In Snarky Puppy, Searight originally played piano, an instrument he pursued along with drums in college. Sput's broad knowledge also serves him well as a producer, on recent work with Quincy Jones (for an upcoming Clark Terry record) and

with the R&B artists Diane Cooke and Eugene Young.

But Snarky Puppy is Searight's current home, his three albums with the twenty-five-strong unit the kind of diverse outings that recall everyone from Frank Zappa and English progressive rock to Weather Report, Tower of Power, Headhunters, Funkadelic, and the Brazilian trio Azymuth.

MD: Coming from hip-hop and gospel, how do you bend your style to the quirky arrangements of Snarky Puppy?

Sput: Eight years of studying jazz extensively helped me merge the different styles for Snarky Puppy. I went to Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Dallas [play-

ing piano in the number-one jazz combo], where Roy Hargrove and Norah Jones also attended. I went to Rutherford College for my associate's degree in music education, where I also played jazz piano in the big band. I played drums in a second band. Then I went to North Texas State University, where the Snarky band members came from. All the raw drums that I had under my belt kind of met the technical side.

I took all these styles and merged them into one, really internalizing my influences and trying to play from all those viewpoints with Snarky. There's a lot of freedom with Snarky. So I'm trying to take some of that freedom and use those influences and groove, because that's what it's really

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Searight plays German-made DrumCraft drums in black maple finish. His primary snare is a 6x14 birch model, and his second is an 8x14 aluminum placed in the first floor tom position. His mounted toms are 6x10 and 6x12, and a 14x14 floor tom sits to the right of his auxiliary snare. Sput's Meinl cymbals include 16" Byzance Traditional Medium hi-hats, a 10" Byzance Dark splash stacked on a 10" Byzance Extra Dry splash, a 20" Byzance Traditional Extra Thin Hammered crash stacked on a 12" Classics Custom Trash splash, a 22" Byzance Jazz Big Apple ride, a 20" Byzance Extra Dry Thin crash, and an 18" Byzance Traditional Thin crash stacked on the 14" bottom cymbal from the Generation X 12"/14" X-treme stack. Evans heads and Vic Firth A1 sticks complete his setup.



Steve Pitre

about. This is a dream gig for a drummer, because you're not bound. I am also challenged to create in ways that aren't always improvisational.

MD: Playing piano must have influenced your drumming.

Sput: Yes, I got a lot of information from the piano's perspective. I like Herbie Hancock, George Duke, Oscar Peterson. I don't sound like any of these guys, but they're my favorites. And Count Basie, because of how he phrased. He played from a melodic standpoint more so than chopping and fast scales. He made the songs sing like a vocalist when he played the piano. I was fascinated with his playing.

MD: How does being a skilled piano

player make you a better drummer?

Sput: It's meant everything for my drumming. When I play music, I'm thinking tones and melodies. I'm playing from a weird perspective for a drummer, actually. I'm looking for melodies and using my ears differently, as opposed to always playing from a rhythmic standpoint. I am thinking melodies first.

MD: What formed your practice routine in college?

Sput: During junior college I practiced eight hours a day. It took a long time to catch up on school! I was practicing coordination, learning different styles. I wanted to practice both piano and drums, so I did four hours apiece. I played to Elvin Jones on records and transcribed his solos. I

tried to transcribe Steve Gadd grooves as well as try to mimic the James Brown drummers. I'd see how long I could lock a groove and make it feel good. My career took off after my first year at North Texas. Now, after having a career in professional music for fifteen years, I don't have a lot of chances to practice like that anymore. I only attended North Texas for a semester and a half as a percussion major, then I began working. Snarky would come to Dallas for jam gigs. We mixed together in the Dallas community of music.

MD: What's the most important element of your success?

Sput: In a nutshell, being aware of broadening my horizons, so that I didn't limit myself to playing one genre. I wanted to know every style, be in every situation and succeed. I wanted to be able to comply with every artist and producer. Being a professional, being on time, all these things have contributed to where I am today. I was taught by people who were very professional and encouraging and offered me good advice. I advise drummers to put themselves in the environment they want to be in. Work with musicians who will kick your ass—guys who will not just praise you but will tell you what you're doing wrong and give you the opportunity to learn. They'll be a big factor in the kind of musician you will become.



Steve Pitre

CUTTING-EDGE CYMBALS

HOW TO TURN BROKEN CYMBALS INTO SPECIAL EFFECTS

BY MARK GARRETT

As a drummer, I'm always searching for new sounds to add to my arsenal of effects. A few years ago, I had the good fortune of winning a trip to the Zildjian cymbal factory in Norwell, Massachusetts, and from there an idea was born: I wanted to make an effects instrument out of broken cymbals.

I had always wondered what became of the broken cymbals that were returned to Zildjian under warranty. While taking the tour, I learned that old models can't be reintroduced into the melting process, for fear of contaminants such as rust, cleaning agents, or other foreign matter, which affect the quality of the alloy. Instead, broken cymbals are cut up and sold as scrap metal.

After my trip to Norwell, I decided to try to make an effects cymbal out of a broken one. I reached out to friends and requested cymbals of any size, in any condition. Some of those I gathered were broken on the outer edge, while others had cracks around the bell. If a cymbal had a crack or break in it, I could easily design around that. Most of them, however, had multiple cracks and breaks, so I knew it wouldn't work to use one design for everything. Instead, I needed to develop a few different ideas, while devising an easy method to single out the sections that needed to be removed.

MAKE A TEMPLATE



My dad, John Garrett, is a woodworking expert, and he suggested that I design a template on a large piece of cardboard, which we could later transfer to a piece of wood so it would be more durable. I started by getting a woodworker's compass from the hardware store. I adjusted the compass arms so that they spanned the full desired radius of the largest cymbal I was going to cut. I made a circle on the cardboard and then drew two perpendicular lines across the center of the circle to create four quadrants.

Those lines are used as guides for deciding where to cut. Center the broken cymbal on the template and turn it until all the cracks are within one of the quadrants. The best part of using the template as your guide is that a cymbal of any size can be cut perfectly symmetrically.



FIND A DESIGN AND TRACE THE CUTOUTS



Determining which design to use depends on where the cymbal is broken. For cymbals that are cracked near the edge, I use a design called X-Crash. To do this one, cut a piece of cardboard in the shape of a rounded V and place it over the spot on the cymbal that you want to remove. Keep the guide to the left of the reference line, and trace the V there and at the same spot in each of the quadrants, so that you have a symmetrical design with four identical areas marked to be cut out.

The second design looks like the warning label for biohazard materials. I call this one Bio-Crash.



Bio-Crash

The third design, Prop-Crash, looks like an airplane propeller in motion. I use this and the Bio-Crash on cymbals that have larger cracks at the edge or near the bell.



Prop-Crash

MAKE THE CUTS

Once all of the lines are drawn, it's time to make the cuts. *Do not* attempt to cut cymbals with a jigsaw, which is very dangerous and time consuming. The most efficient way to cut bronze cymbals is with a band saw that has a metal-cutting blade. Be sure to take the appropriate safety measures while using a band saw: Unplug the machine when you're changing parts or performing maintenance, wear safety glasses, secure loose clothing, and always keep your fingers and hands away from the blade. Take your time, cut the cymbal slowly and carefully, and follow your measured lines.



Once the metal has been cut, you can select the type of attachments you want to use to give the cymbal a unique sound. Tambourine jingles, rivets, chains, and washers all work well. To attach the hardware, measure in from the outer edge three to four inches, mark the spots, and then, using a drill press or a drill with a bit that's slightly larger than the pin, rivet, or screw you're attaching, bore the holes. Make sure the holes are placed evenly on each side.

If you're using tambourine jingles, sit the jingle over the hole and attach it with a #6 or #8 machine screw. Affix the screw with a hex lock nut.

When the desired hardware has been added, you're almost finished. The edges of the cut metal will be extremely sharp, so it's important to soften them with a piece of sandpaper designed for metal objects. The sanded cymbal will still be sharp, so always handle it with care. I suggest nestling it in bubble wrap, plastic, or an old T-shirt for transport.

The sound of your new effects cymbal can be modified depending on how much tension you put on it with the wing nut. Experiment and try different-size washers to see what works best. The cymbal will produce an explosive, trashy sound, which I've found to be great for occasional accents or dense, polyrhythmic patterns.

For additional information, email cuttingedgecymbals@gmail.com.



NEW
and
NOTABLE



AHEAD Lars Ulrich Scary Guy Drumsticks, Bell Brass Snare Drums, and Strap-On Drum Pad

A cross between Ahead's 5B and 2B models and the Lars Ulrich signature drumstick, new Lars Ulrich Scary Guy sticks feature a hand-drawn icon created by the Metallica drummer. Two models are available, the LU-SG Standard with silver logos and the LU-SGL Light with red logos. Both are 16" long. The Standard weighs 64 grams, while the Light is 58 grams. List price: \$36.49 per pair.

Ahead snare drums now include two new Bell Brass models. The cast brass, 6x14 drums are available in a black-on-brass or polished-brass finish and feature a Dunnett R40 throw-off, Fat Cat snares, S-Hoop counterhoops, Tight Screw tension rods, and Remo drumheads. List price: \$999.99, with an Ahead Armor case included.

The new Strap-On Pad is a portable practice pad that secures to the upper leg using hook-and-loop-fastener straps, eliminating the need for stands or tabletop surfaces. The gum-rubber playing area is said to provide a natural feel and controlled volume. List price: \$26.95.

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T-Cymbals is a Turkish company that produces custom handcrafted cymbals. The drummer-owned firm offers a wide range of products, including signature models for artists seeking their own line. The T-Cymbals North American office is located in Poughkeepsie, New York. **tcymbals.com, tcymbalsusa.com**



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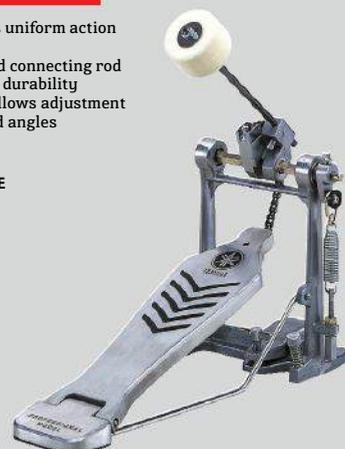
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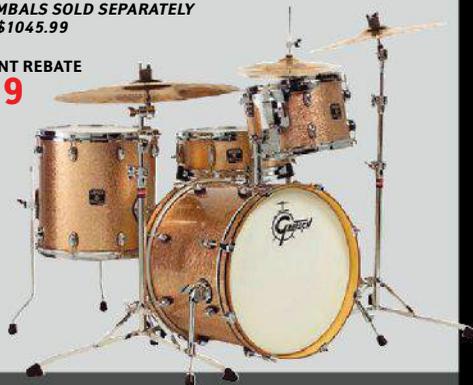
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LIST: \$259.00

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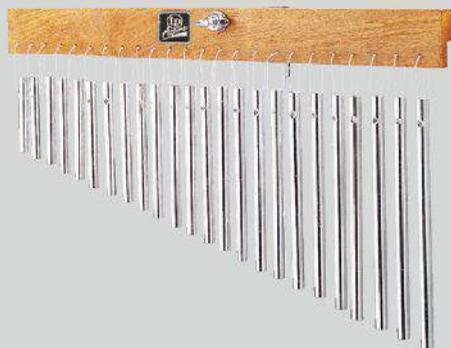
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(21909MB) (21809MB) (21816MB) LIST: \$396.00 - \$423.00

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TOP STORE EXCLUSIVE

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(25005XXPGC-NB) LIST: \$1295.00

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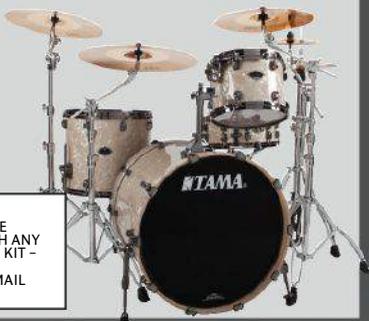
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(ZBTC4P-SP) LIST: \$905.00

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ratroddrums.com



SIMMONS SD Xpress Electronic Drumkit

This compact kit contains four velocity-sensitive drum pads and three velocity-sensitive cymbal pads, plus built-in hi-hat and bass drum pedals. It includes ten preprogrammed kits, 193 drum sounds, ten song styles with a built-in metronome and real-time song recording, a USB MIDI connection, a stereo MP3 input, and a headphone output. List price: \$199.

simmonsdrums.net



DW Concrete and Aluminum Snare Drums

DW's 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 and 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 concrete snare drums feature a MAG throw-off system with a three-position butt plate, True Tone snare wires, True Pitch stainless steel tension rods, 3 mm steel True Hoops, and DW heads by Remo. The cast 1 mm shell includes standard 45-degree bearing edges. Each concrete drum is made to order and lists for \$1,230.99.

DW's 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 and 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 aluminum snare drums have a 1 mm shell, a matte gray powder-coat finish, and rolled bearing edges and snare beds. Standard features include chrome hardware, a MAG throw-off system with a three-position butt plate, True Tone snare wires, True Pitch stainless steel tension rods, 3 mm steel True Hoops, and DW heads by Remo. List prices: \$661.99 and \$692.99.

dwdrums.com



TRX CRX CYMBALS

The new, lower-priced CRX cymbal series from TRX is created from B20 bronze and includes a full selection of ride, hi-hat, crash, and effects models in three tonal/performance categories: Classic (medium), Rock (bright), and Xtreme (dark).

trxcymbals.com

SNAREWEIGHT Drum Hardware

Made of a three-quarter-pound piece of brass, an N52 neodymium magnet, and a detachable leather insert, the Snareweight eliminates unwanted ring by connecting to any standard steel or die-cast hoop (via the magnet) and adding mass to the drumhead. Additional leather inserts are available in a variety of styles, and a case is included. List price: \$44.99.

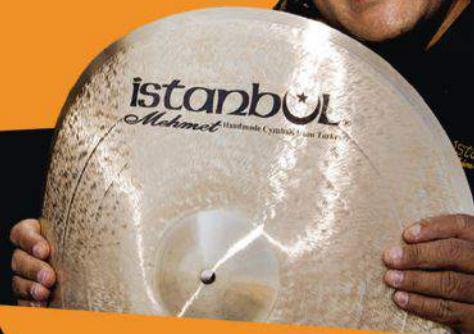
snareweight.com



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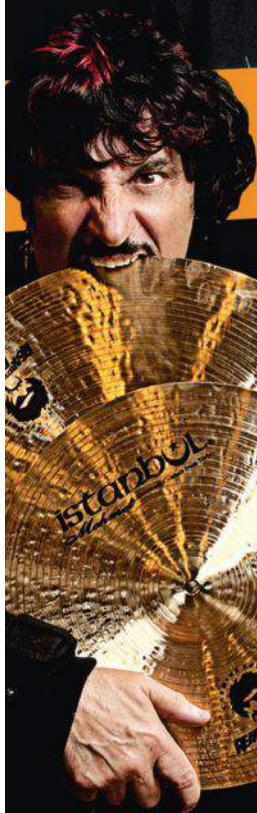
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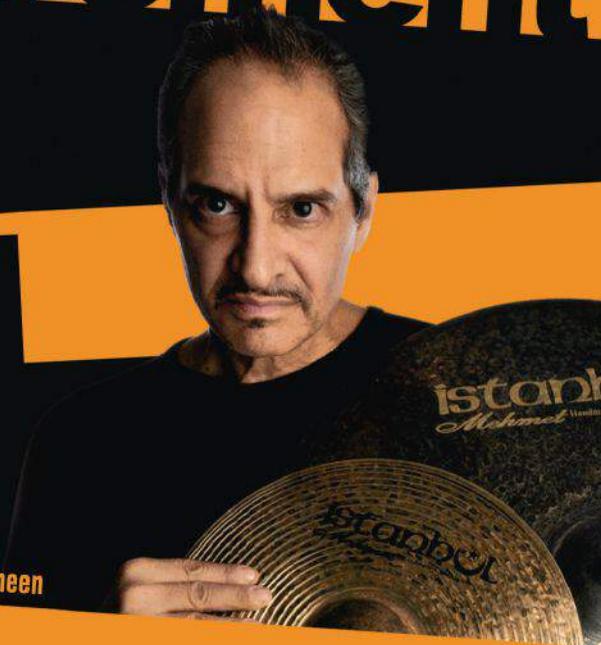


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Carmine Appice



CORE DRUMS Full-Line Korean Drum Company

Korean drummer and businessman Bong Jo Lee has launched Core Drums, which offers multiple lines using traditional and newly developed drum-crafting technologies. Bedazzle drumkits feature hand-selected North American maple shells with reinforcing hoops and are available in thousands of configuration combinations. Apex series drumsets incorporate a choice of clear or colored acrylic shells with laser-etched graphics and Core's "Xyzyzy" LED internal lighting and control module. Additional lines include Collision, Destiny, Echo, Frontier, and Glare.

coredrums.co.kr



DRUM GURU Interactive Educational iPad/iPhone App

The Drum Guru educational application for iPad and iPhone delivers interactive multimedia drum lessons. The free version comes with a sampler pack containing seven trial lessons. The exclusive material currently available on Drum Guru is new and was shot specifically for the app. Initial pack offerings include Beginner Rock Fills, Beginner Rock Grooves, Classic Rock Fills, and Classic Rock Groove packs, in addition to custom artist packs from Steve Gadd, Steve Smith, Mike Portnoy, and Chad Smith. New lesson packs will be released regularly.

Lesson Mode features a high-quality video tutorial that can be played back at regular speed or in slow motion for analysis. Practice Mode includes an onscreen transcription of the lesson, and the Pack Info tab contains overviews, lesson descriptions, and information about the artists/teachers. Users can share their practice updates on Facebook and Twitter. Packs, each with seven to ten lessons, are priced from \$3.99 to \$4.99 and can be purchased and downloaded within the app.

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REMO Apex Djembe and Crown Percussion

The Designer series Apex djembe has a new green Kinte Kloth finish, upgraded contour tuning brackets, and a high-density rubber-molded base. The 22x12 Apex djembe is manufactured using a traditional carved design molded from ABS plastic and features a weather-resistant Skyndeeep graphic drumhead that is said to stay in tune in all environments. List price: \$297.

Crown Percussion features newly designed conga and bongo drums equipped with tucked Fiberskyn3 drumheads and chrome counterhoops and hardware. Congas are available in four sizes (10", 11", 11³/₄", and 12¹/₂"), and bongos are available in a 7" and 8¹/₂" set. All are constructed from toon hardwood in a natural finish. The Crown collection also includes agogo bells, cylinder shakers, 6" triangles, maracas, two-tone woodblock scrapers, wood guiros, cabasas, rattleboxes, tambourines, and bar chimes.

remo.com



PRO-MARK Neil Peart Clockwork Angels Stick Six-Pack

The Neil Peart Clockwork Angels collector's edition drumstick six-pack commemorates Rush's current worldwide tour. Pro-Mark Shira Kashi oak sticks are autographed by Peart and copper-ink branded with six Rush tour logos. promark.com

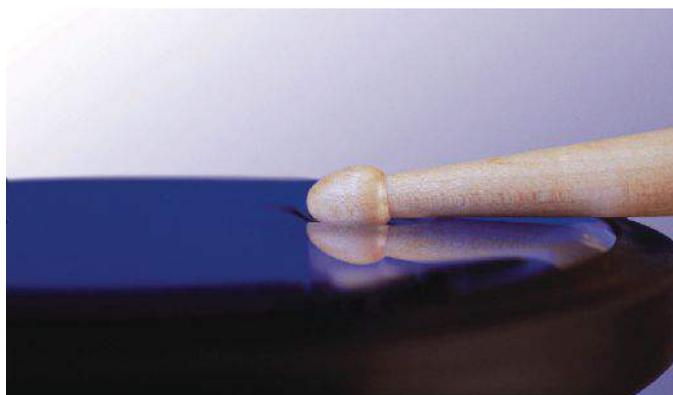


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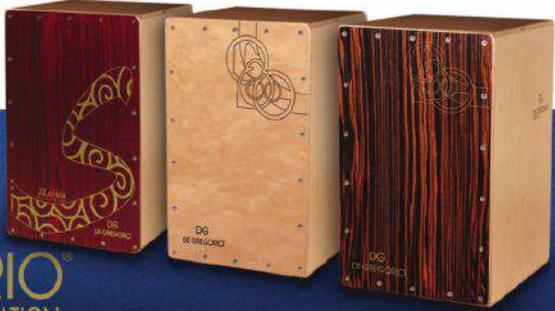
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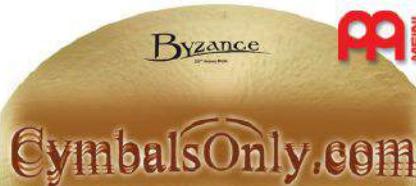
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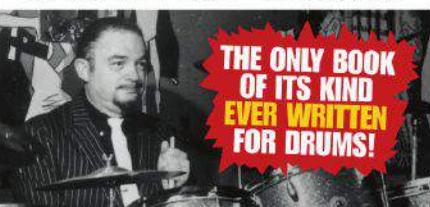
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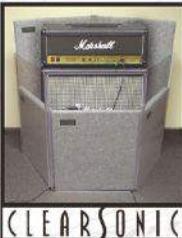
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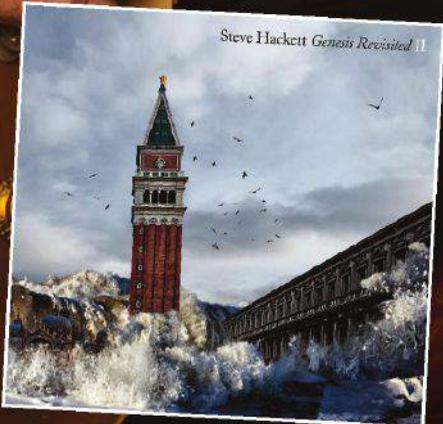
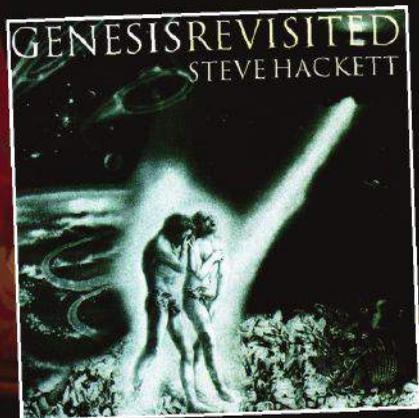
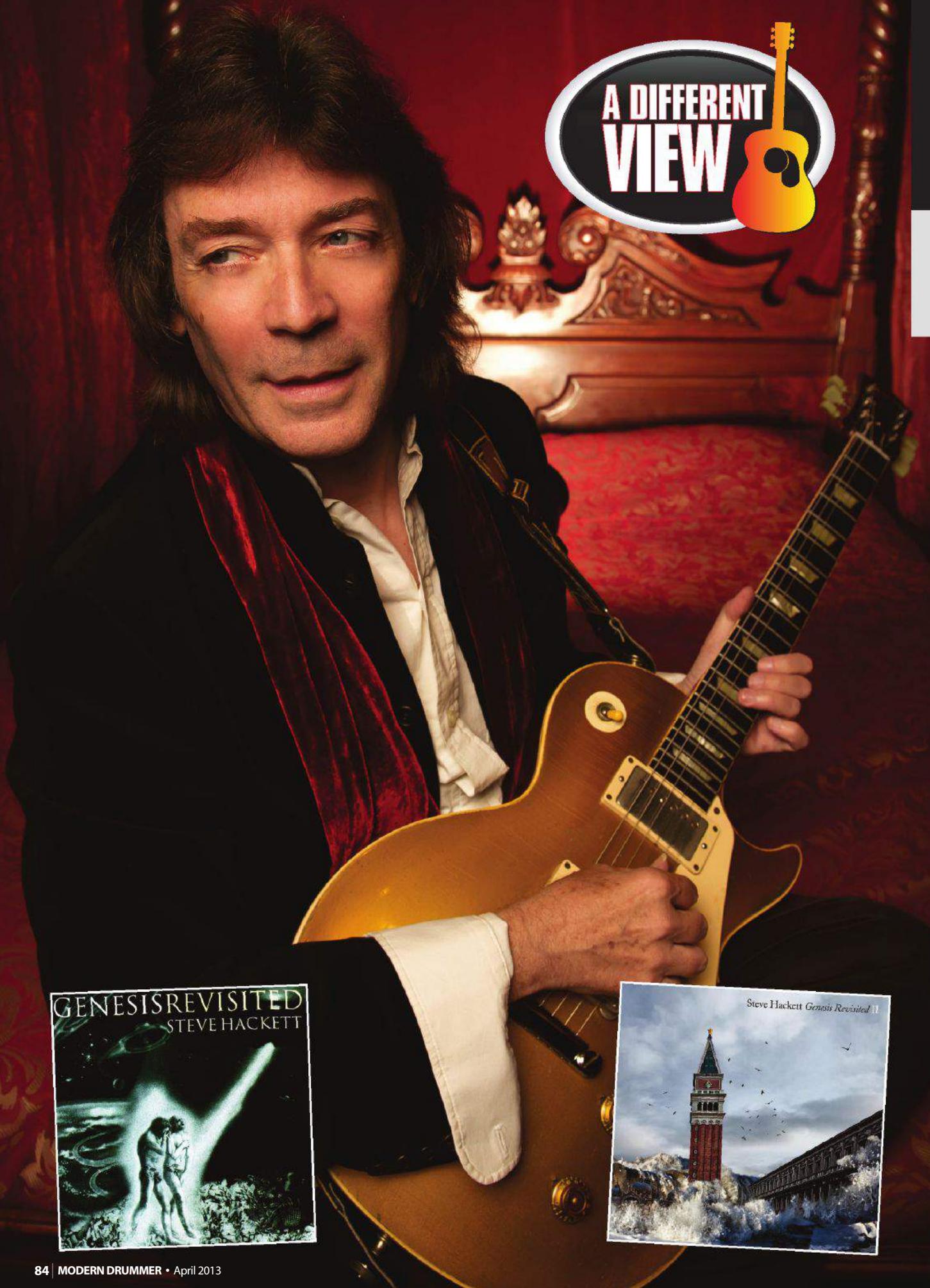
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A DIFFERENT
VIEW 



STEVE HACKETT

The Genesis guitarist, who helped shape some of the most enduring music to come out of England in the '70s—and who's remained quite busy since—continues the unique and painstaking re-creation of his rich body of work. The opportunity to discuss the power and charm of his bandmate Phil Collins' drumming was too good for *MD* to pass up.

by Will Romano

"Genesis was one of the first professional groups I'd worked with," legendary guitarist Steve Hackett says, "and Phil Collins just happened to be the drummer. I thought every drummer was as good as that."

Collins certainly played a crucial role, not only in transforming Genesis from peculiar progressive rockers to Hall of Fame icons, but also in acting as the group's rhythmic guru. "Phil was a master at taking these unlikely constructions, these chord sequences that date back to early music, and making them flow," Hackett says.

In the eyes of some, however, Hackett was every bit as integral to his former group's early artistic successes, bringing atmospheric effects, classical-flavored acoustic passages, and pioneering two-handed fretting techniques to some of prog rock's most sacred recordings. Simply put, few popular stringsmiths have demonstrated Hackett's better-dead-than-shred aesthetic and commitment to experimentation.

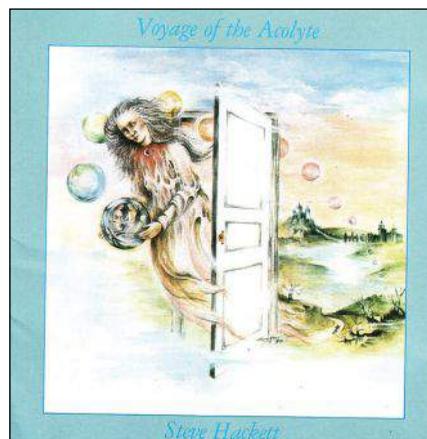
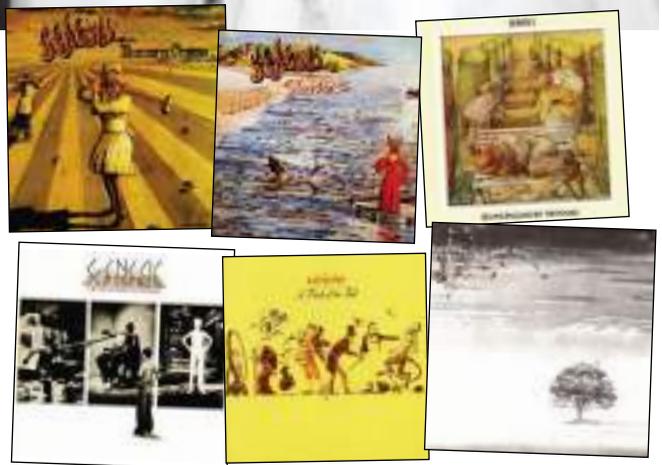
"Part of the approach with Genesis was the attempt to make keyboards sound like guitars and guitars sound like keyboards," says Hackett, who would later use the "fret-board as keyboard" by triggering synth samples via MIDI for the short-lived '80s supergroup GTR, which he formed with Yes guitarist Steve Howe. "Lots of twelve-strings working together at once sounded like some third hybrid [of keyboard and guitar], where you couldn't tell if you were listening to mass harpsichords or Paraguayan harp. I thought, *We can create orchestras out of the stuff, if we're careful.* The ensemble could sound bigger than the number of guys on stage."

Hackett brews anew this heady sonic concoction for his latest release, *Genesis Revisited II*, a sequel to his 1996 effort. The twenty-one-track double disc boasts reinterpretations of epic Genesis and Hackett tunes such as "Supper's Ready," "The Return of the Giant Hogweed," "The Musical Box," "Dancing With the Moonlit Knight," and "Camino Royale."

A stellar cast of players, including Simon Collins (Phil's son), John Wetton (King Crimson, Asia), Steven Wilson (Porcupine Tree), Mikael Åkerfeldt (Opeth), Francis Dunnery (It Bites), Neal Morse (Flying Colors, ex-Spock's Beard), Conrad Keely (...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead), and Steven Rothery (Marillion), manages to stamp its identity on these tracks without stomping all over the originals. Hackett's sustain-driven performances remain utterly fresh and riveting, proving that the guitarist can still administer a shot of aural adrenaline as directed. Steve spoke with us from his HQ studio in England.



Armando Gallo



From top: Phil Collins and Steve Hackett backstage at a 1977 Genesis show; the classic Genesis studio albums the pair contributed to; and Hackett's solo debut, *Voyage of the Acolyte*, which Collins played and sang on.

MD: The production value of *Revisited II* is crisp. The drums are captured nicely.

Steve: There are two main drummers on the album: Jeremy Stacey, who has a studio in London near Earls Court and played on the *Squackett* album I did with [Yes bassist] Chris Squire, and Gary O'Toole, who recorded in his home studio. On the song "Camino Royale" Gary was joined by Szilárd Banai of the Hungarian band Djabe. [Keyboardist/recording and mixing engineer] Roger King did a fabulous job presiding over the drum recordings for Gary, and Ben Fenner did a great job with Jeremy's tracks.

I really enjoy the sound from overheads. Sometimes this music requires a drummer to play quietly, as we had done with Genesis. But that can sound very tippy-tappy if it's just close-miked. I don't mind that slightly shed-y type of sound that you get from the overheads. I've done some good recordings in sheds in my time.

MD: Did you give direction to the drummers on *Revisited II*?

Steve: I think for the version of "...In That Quiet Earth" we used a bit of compression with the drums. That was my input: to slightly John Bonham-ize the drum tracks and make them sound a little bit like the latter-day Phil Collins.

MD: Was there a lot of compression used on the original Genesis drum tracks?

Steve: Well, in those days it wasn't in general use. Each studio might have one compressor, and that might generally go on the vocals. There was a little bit of compression round about the time of the *Foxtrot* album [1972]. I can spot it on the original tracks.

MD: Your solo records are all over the map, musically and rhythmically. For instance, 1984's *Till We Have Faces* features a full-on Brazilian percussion ensemble. Why the interest in Latin percussion styles?

Steve: I was interested in the polyrhythmic approach. For a samba rhythm, for instance, the surdo drum, which is like a bass drum, often takes the place of the snare. So it's like the reverse of a rock rhythm. I was told that that was supposed to sound like a train. I've also heard the sound of two or three hundred drummers all working at once, playing this rhythm, which is an extraordinary noise. You think you're hearing something amplified, but it's

"Even now, when I write a melody, I say to myself, 'Would Phil have approved of my spacing and timing?'"

sheer manpower.

South American percussionists often vary something busy with something very far down in the mix, which is what was done for a track called "What's My Name" on *Till We Have Faces*. There's all sorts of busy stuff happening in the background with [Simmons electronic] drums

holding down the rhythm. At the same time, you have someone hitting pots and pans and all of this metalwork suspended from a frame. At first I said, "Wow, that sounds terrible. That'll ruin the track." But the idea was to use this really quietly, like the chatter you'd hear in the jungle, you know? It's insect life coming out at

night. That was an eye-opener.

We were doing this style a few years prior to Paul Simon and before the term *world music* was in common parlance.

MD: You've used some percussion on your recordings over the years. Did you ever record yourself playing kit drums?

Steve: The nearest I've come to it is with the nylon-stringed acoustic guitar. I do things with it that make me sound more like a flamenco player, tapping on the guitar body to produce rhythm. But I've never sat behind the kit, as much as I am tempted sometimes. I'd love to be able to play, but it's a lifetime away for me.

MD: What was the approach to recording Phil Collins' drum tracks on the original Genesis material?

Steve: We would do a few takes of each number. Sometimes we would do just one take, if we thought it was good enough. But it was often the case that we used the take where Phil felt he was most tired. I think in the playing itself you're not hearing a tired drummer, or tired playing. It seems to me what you're hearing is a great drummer, who may be physically tired.

In the early days we were trying to get a feel for all of us playing live. However, often the band would have a chance to overdub and fix tracks. Phil said, "You guys can do that, but as the drummer, I can't." So you're getting whole takes from the drummer. Sometimes you'd have edits between performances, but in the main, what you hear is what you get.

MD: How do you think Phil dealt with this?

Steve: I think he was frustrated in those early days when it came to the drum sound itself. Those early albums were done very quickly, in

JEREMY STACEY

The well-traveled vet, who lists Sheryl Crow, Yes bassist Chris Squire, and Oasis guitarist Noel Gallagher among his credits, tackles two of Genesis's most ambitious tracks on *Revisited II*.



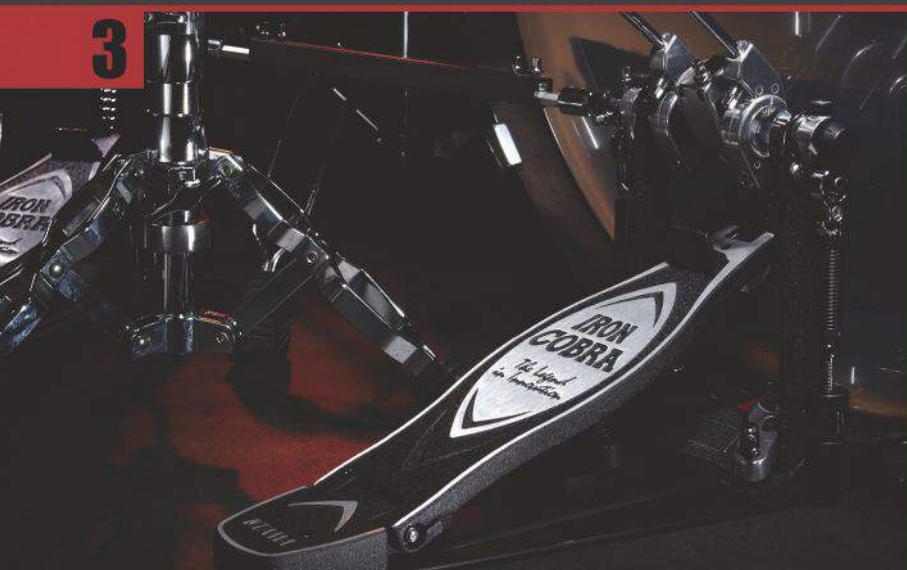
Andy Harrison

"When I got the call to do these sessions, I sat down and listened to the music and said, 'This is going to be quite difficult,'" recalls drummer Jeremy Stacey, who appears on "Supper's Ready" and "Dancing With the Moonlit Knight" on *Genesis Revisited II*. "I knew these songs internally, but I never tried to learn any of the drumming. I think 'Dancing With the Moonlit Knight' is technically more difficult, because it's faster and has all of those paradiddles going on. But, obviously, the 9/8 section of 'Supper's Ready' [Apocalypse in 9/8] is harder in a different way. Nine is not easy. But the great thing for me about recording that track was the fact that a riff is played throughout that section of the song. It provides a kind of guide.

"For the recordings I used a Gretsch maple kit featuring 12" and 13" rack toms, 14" and 16" floor toms, and a 24" bass drum. I used a Camco brass 5x14 snare for 'Dancing With the Moonlit Knight' and a 6 1/2"-deep Ludwig Super-Sensitive 402 snare for 'Supper's Ready.' It has just a little fatter sound, which I thought worked best for the song."

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A DIFFERENT VIEW: STEVE HACKETT

the midst of hectic tour schedules. Later, when Phil had a partnership with [producer] Hugh Padgham, that was important; once his drum sound started to develop, then he would have that on tap. But in the early days of Genesis, his main role was as a drummer. He was also heavily involved with the arrangements of the melodies to make them swing more. Many times you might have a melody that would be good harmonically but was in need of a shake-up rhythmically. Phil had the ability to take almost any melody and give it that swing feel. Most everything was syncopated to such a degree that you wouldn't recognize the original melody. You would hear a Buddy Rich influence, which was all important to us in the early days.

MD: Later on Phil had evolved, dare we say, beyond the drums.

Steve: His gift for writing songs is legendary. Some of us are a slow learn in certain departments. I'd often bring him something that I thought was harmonically interesting, like "Los Endos" [from *A Trick of the Tail*, 1976]. You can hear in the introduction the guitar is sailing in. [Sings guitar line.] That's how I wrote it. I was thinking orchestral string melody, film music—not that I've ever arranged it that way. But Phil said, "Yes, we can do it that way, or we could do it with this fast baión rhythm." The attack is fast from the word go, and accents, of course, are all important in that school of thought.

When we did the song "Dance on a Volcano," from the same album, we were working on the introduction, and we all hit the accents together. There was some telepathy going on with the writing at that time. It's always a marvelous moment when a band doesn't have to sweat over every single thing. For some reason there was something going on over and above the expected, because we all seemed to take that introduction, the first thirty seconds, without conferring, which is pretty amazing. But I think it was because we were trying to think like drummers; we were trying to think like Phil. Even now, you know, when I write a melody I say to myself, "Would Phil have approved of my spacing and timing?"

MD: "Supper's Ready," from Genesis's *Foxtrot*, is twenty-three minutes long, and you cover it on *Revisited II*. Was the original track recorded in parts, and did Phil play live with the band?

Steve: Genesis recorded the song in sections and then joined them together. The song starts with a lengthy acoustic basis. There was no point in having Phil sit around whilst everyone else was playing twelve-strings. We edited it together like a film, although it was written as a whole.

GARY O'TOOLE

The longtime Steve Hackett drummer was more than ready to tackle Phil Collins' parts—at the kit, and at the microphone.



"Phil Collins was a great influence on me," says Gary O'Toole, who performs the majority of the drum tracks on *Genesis Revisited II*. "As we'd been doing more intense work, Steve said to me, 'Do you want to sing lead?' Suddenly I was singing and playing drums on about five of the old Genesis songs, including the classic 'Watcher of the Skies.' I've been singing and playing drums on those songs for a number of years. When it came time to record *Revisited II* at Steve's studio, I sang 'Blood on the Rooftops,' 'Fly on a Windshield,' and 'Broadway Melody of 1974.'

"I remember the first album I recorded with Steve, *To Watch the Storms* [2003]. He came out with a track called 'Mechanical Bride.' We played it on the road, but when we got into the studio Steve said, 'Look, this might take some time.' I counted it in, and it was absolutely note for note what Steve had asked for. He was blown away. It was kind of from that experience that Steve got the confidence in this band. Just prior to this, Steve was wondering whether he should retire. The early 2000s was like his last roll of the dice. Over time it's been good to see the man flex his muscles and say, 'Yeah, I want to do this.'"

For *Genesis Revisited II* O'Toole played a Mapex Saturn Pro kit featuring two 22" bass drums; 8", 10", 12", and 13" rack toms; 14" and 16" floor toms; and an 18" mounted bass drum.

Phil played live with the band [for the] long takes.

MD: Bill Bruford was an interesting fit for Genesis when he toured with the group in 1976. Did he bring a sense of improv and jazz to the dynamic?

Steve: I think he did. At that time, when we had lost Peter Gabriel as a singer, and the fact that we had Bill, who was such a huge star in his own right and an influence on Phil, it gave the band that seal of approval from on high, really. I couldn't believe it when he came down to our rehearsal and just joined in with one of the numbers and said, "Yeah, it sounds great. I'd like to work with you guys, if you're up for it." King Crimson had ended at that point.

I think Bill gave the band a lot of energy. He's a very clever and innovative player. I enjoyed working with him, as I enjoyed working with his successor in the live

band, Chester Thompson, who was similarly phenomenally gifted and modest. Hugo Degenhardt, who was in my solo band, is another phenomenal player. He's currently playing with the Bootleg Beatles. At times I would stand up on stage when he and bassist Doug Sinclair would do a bass-and-drum solo and think, *I'm redundant here. Let them play.*

MD: What does it ultimately take to record great drum tracks?

Steve: I keep coming back to the sound that Frank Zappa obtained on *One Size Fits All*. It's essentially a crisp, small sound that fits right in front of the speakers. I can understand why drummers might like that. Then again, I can understand why they might hate it. The only way for a drummer to ever be happy with his drum sound is to become a producer. Some are lucky enough to do that. Otherwise you might have to commandeer the console.





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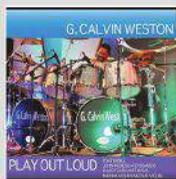
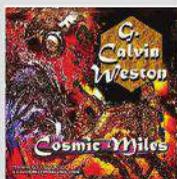
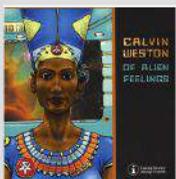
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These underground hardcore/metal stalwarts are known for their thoughtful and expressive lyrics (ranging from misanthropy to hope) and frenetically powerful instrumentation. As such, *Reach Beyond the Sun* is uniquely Shai Hulud. Coming in

at a hair under thirty-five minutes, the album never lets off the throttle, and you never want it to. "To Suffer Fools" confronts the band's well-noted frustration head on. In less than two minutes, the track provides cathartic aggression and undeniable head-banging riffs as well as ear-grabbing grooves and meaty syncopations by drummer **Matt Covey**. Covey's playing evinces the sweat, honesty, and fearlessness that make Shai Hulud a flag bearer for what underground hardcore can be at its best. Check out the title track's outro and the breakdown riffs in "Man Into Demon: And Their Faces Are Twisted With the Pain of Living" for some marquee moments. (Metal Blade) **Billy Brennan**



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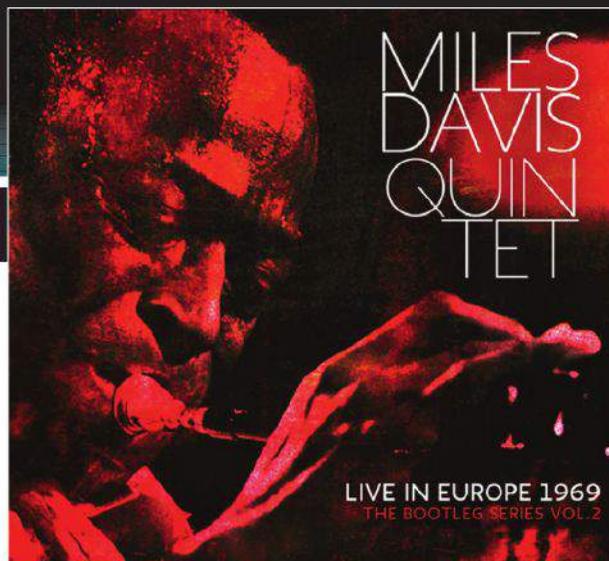
Each of G. Calvin Weston's new albums is unique, but taken collectively the trio represents an adventurous mind, and body, at work.

Of Alien Feelings is a guest-laden fusion-y collaboration with guitarist/bassist Karl E.H. Seigfried. Highlights include Weston's uber-shuffle on opener "The Electric Wizard" and his heavy-rock attack underneath Todd Rundgren's blow-back-your-hair guitar solo on the Sabbath-esque "First of the New Age Masters."

On *Cosmic Miles* the drummer employs synthetic drum pads and plays overdubbed trumpet, pulling off a pretty nice tribute to the album's namesake. "Not the Promised Land" is a disconcerting '80s hip-hop loop gone wrong, while "Maaahh!!!" finds Weston laying down a spacious, washy (synth) hi-hat dotted-funk beat while he and saxophonist Elliot Levin blow reverb-drenched horns all over each other.

The appropriately titled *Play Out Loud*, another set of extreme electrified jazz, boasts a band with violinist Marina Vishnyakova, bassist Elliot Garland, and MMW keyboardist John Medeski, along with guest guitarists. Weston works in toms melodically on opening solo "Drum Alert" and shows his ease at sailing along odd meters on the funky "7-Up" and ominous "The 5 Spot." Medeski's presence ups the groove quotient considerably on this date, and perhaps that aspect makes the album the most conventional of the three.

Still, Weston displays chops, musicality, and ferociousness throughout the recordings, showing no fear to dive into the murky, still-cool-if-you-do-it-right waters of modern fusion. Just avoid throwing the discs on for a nice romantic evening. (*Cosmic Miles* and *Play Out Loud*, G. Calvin Weston Records; *Of Alien Feelings*, Imaginary Chicago Records) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



MILES DAVIS QUINTET

LIVE IN EUROPE 1969: THE BOOTLEG SERIES VOL. 2

The vaults reveal yet another of Miles' phases, this time highlighting Jack DeJohnette's maiden voyages alongside the man with the horn.

In 1970, Miles Davis released the groundbreaking *Bitches Brew* album, which hinted at the jazz-rock explosion to come. **Jack DeJohnette**, who had replaced Tony Williams in Miles' quintet, was clearly ready and equipped to burn on the trumpeter's striking new material. This enthralling three-CD/single-DVD live set, culled from several European concerts in 1969, chronicles yet another innovative Davis quintet, albeit in this case one that never made a studio recording. Accompanied by DeJohnette, bassist Dave Holland, keyboardist Chick Corea, and sax player Wayne Shorter, Miles absolutely assails the senses here. The often-volatile material runs the gamut from standards like "I Fall in Love Too Easily" to then-futuristic behemoths "It's About That Time" and "This." With the exception of the drummer's early ECM recordings, these are perhaps the greatest examples of the young DeJohnette's playing, with his splashing, elastic, attacking, swinging style sounding like a thousand kamikaze fighters simultaneously hitting their targets. The forty-five-minute DVD is a special treat, allowing us to witness DeJohnette in all his delicacy, aggression, and effortless musicality. (Columbia Legacy) **Ken Micallef**



KARIZMA *PERFECT HARMONY*

A triple CD from keyboardist David Garfield's legendary L.A. fusion group reunites friends past and present.

Karizma has always featured a revolving cast of musicians. The new recordings on this collection feature **Vinnie Colaiuta** and

Oscar Seaton (Lionel Richie, George Benson) sharing drum duties, with **Lenny Castro** on percussion. Of note is the immaculate recording of each drummer's kit on the first two discs and an overall instrument balance sure to satisfy even the most discerning audiophile. Colaiuta does his pocket thing on the Toto-esque 7/4 of "Oh Sweet Oso" and whips out some tasty hi-hat licks on "And Yelling All the Time," before switching to brushes for the guitar solo. And try following along with Seaton's rumbling solo on "Mujaka" after everyone else drops out, or finding the drummer's 1 on the Modeliste/Meters tribute "Zigaboo." The third disc contains cool archival stuff, including live tracks from 2005 with Seaton as well as older material featuring **Jeff Porcaro** and original Karizma drummer **Carlos Vega**. (creatchy.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



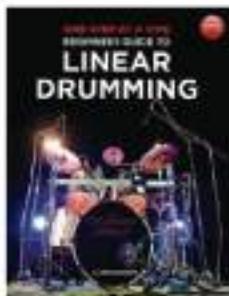
KAMELOT SILVERTHORN

The Floridian metal maestros weave a long and winding tale on their latest. Drummer Casey Grillo never loses the plot.

Silverthorn is the tenth studio album by the symphonic metal band Kamelot. (It's also the first with new singer Tommy Karevik.) Always a group to blend a variety of styles, from progressive metal to gothic doom to classical, Kamelot tells the story here of a nineteenth-century girl named Jolee who dies in an accident, including the surrounding reactions to said tragedy. The layered melodies and soaring vocals are the focal points, and drummer **Casey Grillo** keeps that in mind as he carves out a supporting niche with his grooves. The lead single, "Sacrimony (Angel of Afterlife)," opens with blistering double bass and a driving snare and features a well-tensioned bridge vamp over four-on-the-floor kicks. More impressive is Grillo's knowledge of when to play subtly (the ghosted snare on "My Confession") or not at all ("Song for Jolee") to provide the strongest contrast. (SPV) **Billy Brennan**

MULTIMEDIA

RATINGS SCALE



ONE STEP AT A TIME: BEGINNERS GUIDE TO LINEAR DRUMMING

BY LIAM MCGORRY
BOOK/MP3/DOWNLOADABLE PDF

LEVEL: ALL \$18.76

Before you're ready to tackle famous (and intricate) grooves like Gadd's "50 Ways to Leave Your Lover" or any number of Garibaldi beats with Tower of Power, you'll need a solid foundation of linear drumming

concepts and practical examples of doable exercises to get you going. Northern Ireland-based drummer Liam McGorry provides just that by starting slow. Section one of his new book focuses on quarter- and 8th-note patterns with just kick and snare, before introducing hi-hats into the equation. Snare accents, 16th-note fills, and "stepped hi-hat" examples are covered in the following sections as the exercises get more advanced, and McGorry suggests trying some of the patterns leading with your opposite (weak) hand, which will do wonders for your coordination and creativity if you don't quit in frustration. Thoughtfully included is space to write your own ideas on staff paper, plus password codes for free MP3 downloads of much of the material. (thedrumbook.com, amazon.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

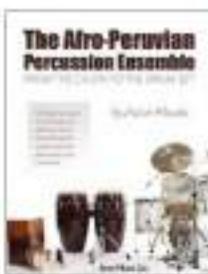


DEREK RODDY PLAYING WITH YOUR DRUMS: A VISUAL GUIDE TO PERSONALIZING YOUR SETUP

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$12.99

On this indispensable DVD, extreme drumming maven Derek Roddy offers the knowledge you need before you attempt to play his infamous blast beats—or any beats, for that matter. Roddy, who shares that he's

been asked general kit-setup questions for years, collects his thoughts on topics ranging from proper seat height, drum angles, and hardware placement to using your available space on stage and the importance of a drum rug. Watch Roddy as he slowly builds his set from the ground up, speaking about each individual piece with a panel comprising a few of his working-drummer buddies, each of whom throws in ideas in a casual, conversational manner. Footage of Roddy ripping along to some intense tracks is a nice bonus. The draw might be for metal enthusiasts, but Roddy plays a variety of styles well, and the philosophies behind his setup choices are universal. Perhaps he'll even inspire you to reconsider bringing that fifteen-piece kit to your next bar gig. (Hudson Music) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



THE AFRO-PERUVIAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE: FROM THE CAJON TO THE DRUM SET

BY HECTOR MORALES

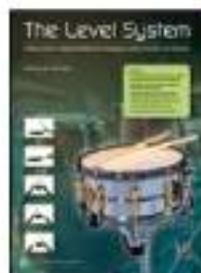
BOOK/DVD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$30

Recording artist and educator Hector Morales has contributed a rich and concise new look at an under-covered topic. A valuable addition to the library of world percussion, *The Afro-Peruvian Percussion Ensemble* provides us with a cultural overview as well as instrumental

specifics. Especially helpful is the emphasis on the accent placements within phrases that give the music its distinct flavor in the pantheon of African-rooted rhythmic genres.

Following a historical overview of the music itself, the book guides us through the history, basic techniques, and rhythms of traditional native percussion instruments, including the cajon, cajita, and quijada. The more familiar "extended family" of congas, bongos, and cowbell gets similar treatment. Characteristic Afro-Peruvian popular styles and rhythms are outlined, including festejo, landó, zamacueca, and panalivio. Bringing the genre up to the present are drumset applications for the rhythms.

For the DVD, a superb group of authoritative musicians (including Morales) demonstrates key rhythms and styles. Each instrument is played alone and in an ensemble. It's in these delightful group segments—where everyone's obviously having a ball—that the special sound and breadth of Afro-Peruvian music truly shines through. Illuminating and joyful. (Sher Music Co.) **Jeff Potter**



THE LEVEL SYSTEM

BY JEFFREY W. JOHNSON
BOOK LEVEL: ALL \$10.99

The level system, as taught by George Lawrence Stone (*Stick Control*) and presented here by Jeffrey Johnson, is all about having your hands in position to play the next beat correctly,

paying equal attention to the stroke and the after-stroke. That can be the difference between what you hear yourself play and what you imagined sounding like—the small accents, played with proper dynamics. Johnson identifies four basic strokes (full, tap, up, and down), specifying hand position before the beat and after the rebound. The goal is smooth dynamic changes, and crescendo and decrescendo at any speed—in essence, more musical playing. Included are control and endurance exercises, drumset applications, and routines varying accents within flam, diddle, and drag rudiments. (Alfred) **Robin Tolleson**

Marvin McQuitty Jr.

He worked with nearly every major artist in the gospel genre, including Fred Hammond, Yolanda Adams, Mary Mary, Israel Houghton, Maurette Brown Clark, and Kirk Franklin. *Modern Drummer* contributor **Stephen Styles** explains, from the head and from the heart, just how deep an impression the drummer left.

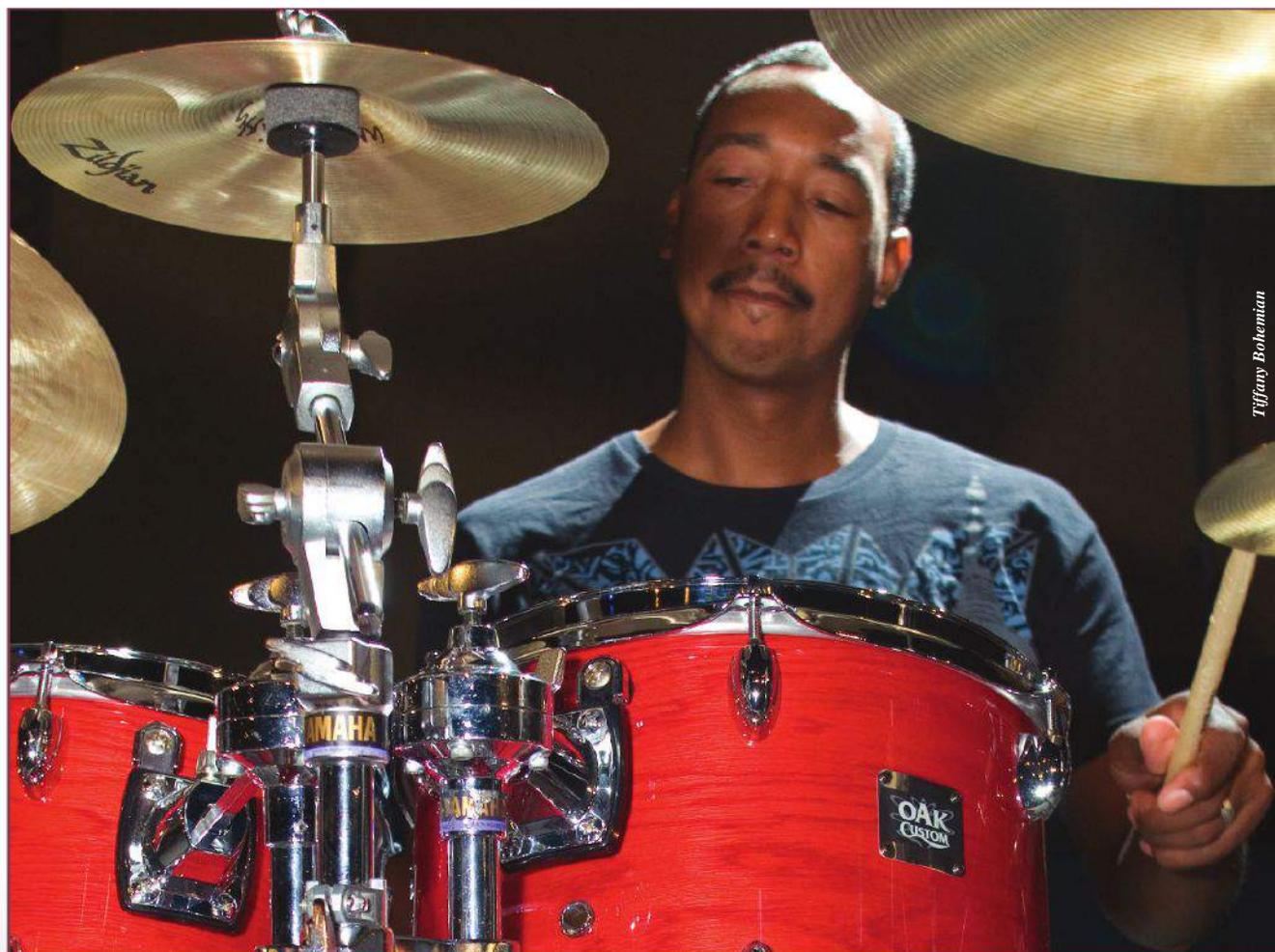
Gifted drummer and dedicated Christian Marvin McQuitty played on the soundtrack to my walk with God. This might seem like an unusual opening for an article in a magazine that, as a general rule, focuses on the art of drumming from a secular standpoint. But it's an inescapable fact

that applies not only to me but to scores of other players who were touched by McQuitty's life and legacy, and it provides evidence of how his career as a drummer and his commitment to his faith were inextricably tied.

To understand McQuitty's musical impact, drumming style, and profes-

sional success, the reader must first know that all three of those things—and so much more of what made Marvin great—are directly connected to his conviction that his musical gift came from God, and that his responsibility as a drummer and a Christian was to use his talent to worship God and be a blessing to His children around the world.

There's a scripture in the Bible (St. John 4:24, King James Bible) that says, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Put in the context of drumming, it's hard to imagine another drummer



Tiffany Bohemian

whose ability to worship, and to inspire worship through his playing, has ever been as impactful as McQuitty's. Marvin's nearly ten-year collaboration with Fred Hammond introduced a sound to gospel drumming that had never before been heard and would help usher the presence of God into the homes, churches, and concert venues of countless listeners around the world.

For most of us, music is a major part of our lives. We play it in the car, on special occasions, or for no reason at all. In the lives of many Christians, praise-and-worship music is an accompaniment to our journey in faith. It is played during church services, at home during private prayer time, and even during Bible study or times of reflection and meditation. And on more occasions than I can remember, the music I've chosen when I've desired to feel closer to God, wanted to give thanks, or needed to pray because times were hard and I didn't know where else to turn—in my best and worst moments, the songs that played as I sang or wept or studied or praised—featured Marvin on the drums. Thousands of drummers and Christians around the world can say the same thing.

McQuitty's father was a drummer, so from a very early age Marvin was exposed to all things rhythmic. The McQuitty household enjoyed all kinds of soul, R&B, and gospel music. Marvin was also raised in the black church, which is arguably one of the richest musical environments a developing drummer could ask for, given the energy of worship, the dancing and shouting, the quick cues that come from the choir director and preacher, and the myriad styles a drummer must have under his hand.

Having honed his craft in the woodshed, with neighborhood bands, at



church, and anywhere else the music took him, Marvin was considered by many of his close friends to be one of his home state of Michigan's best-kept secrets. Were it not for his deeply rooted faith, he might have remained only a regionally known musician.

"Marvin was my brother," recalls fellow Michigan native and gospel drumming legend Dana Davis, "and I didn't really want him to go through so much of the negative stuff that I went through. I told him my horror stories about how the money was inconsistent on the road. He had a wife and kids and a job with benefits. But Marvin believed God, and I'm so glad he didn't listen to me."

Refusing to be swayed by the bad experiences of others, or even by his own concerns about being able to provide for his family, McQuitty left the security of his city job as a bus driver to accept the drum chair for Fred Hammond. This leap of faith proved to be the launching pad for a touring, recording, and producing career that would span nearly twenty years.

Hammond's music is widely considered the most powerful and nuanced on the gospel scene, and McQuitty's playing served to elevate the artist's recordings and concerts to soaring heights. Hammond's material lent itself to Marvin's approach, which had more to do with being a worshipper than playing to be noticed. That doesn't mean he didn't play things that *would*, in fact, be noticed. But at the heart of his method was a desire to serve and elevate the song and the sound of praise. His drumming intent was, ultimately, to please God.

Stylistically, McQuitty's playing was all about having a deep pocket and serving the song. "He had impeccable taste," says 2011 *MD* Pro Panelist Jeff "Lo" Davis, "a groove that was so effective, it was sort of hidden. It lived in the music and didn't stand out." Marvin played with rudimentary precision, masterfully infused syncopation, tasteful placement, and the use of bold hand/foot combinations to introduce a sound to gospel music that

hadn't been heard before. His style bridged the gap between the more traditional pocket sound of the '80s and the fusion-inspired vibe heard on many gospel records today. Even his setup showed his passion for pushing the limit, featuring a double kick pedal and rack tom positioning that placed his 12" drum to the left of his 10". Throughout his career, he was set on being an innovator.

McQuitty expanded the role of what a drummer could and should do on a gig and otherwise. "Marvin was a good steward over every opportunity," Dana Davis explains, "from learning more about drums to becoming more informed about mics, cables, and engineering. He never let an opportunity to learn or improve pass him by."

Jeff Davis agrees: "Marv knew how to talk to anyone in any situation, whether it was businesspeople, record companies—anyone. He brought respect and credibility and got the industry to view gospel drummers in a

whole new way. He also business-managed and road-managed for several artists and was one of the first gospel drummers to really navigate getting professional endorsements."

Affectionately known as "Uncle Marv," McQuitty served as a major influence on an entire generation of drummers. Upon learning of his passing, drummers from around the world took to Facebook and Twitter to share their stories about how gracious, humble, and friendly Marvin was. His drumming legacy will live on in the work of many well-known players, such as his Rhythm Alliance partners Teddy Campbell, Gerald Heyward, Aaron Spears, and Gorden Campbell, who credit McQuitty for helping to shape their own unique sounds and styles.

McQuitty also leaves a legacy of strong family values. He and his wife, Kim, were married in 1988, and before Marvin's passing the couple started a ministry called the Musician's Family

Focus, to help strengthen musical families by sharing the wisdom they'd amassed over their nearly twenty-five years of marital experience. Marvin and Kim also raised two strong and talented daughters. A testament to Marvin's example of worshipping God through it all can be found on Kim's blog at kimmcquitty.blogspot.com. In her entry dated October 5, 2012, titled "The DNA of a Worshipper," Kim shares the story of how her daughters, immediately upon learning that their father had passed, lifted their hands and their hearts to God to worship. It's an amazing and emotional story that gives rare insight into Marvin McQuitty as a man and a worshipper.

God bless you, Marvin. May you rest in peace.

Stephen Styles is the author of Modern Drummer feature stories on Chris Coleman, Keith Harris, Calvin Rogers, Camille Gainer-Jones, Joel Smith, and Jeff Davis.



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20
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This Old Thing?

Lou Feist, of Montoursville, Pennsylvania, has been a professional drummer for most of his seventy-seven years. It seems rhythm runs in the family, as Feist's father, Glenn, was a drummer ("He played when people still had no hi-hats on their drumset, just low boys," Lou says), and so is his son Dan.

"I used and improvised with this kit for over twenty years, to achieve an old-time sound with a razzmatazz band from Williamsport, Pennsylvania, known as the Morgan Valley Road Band," Feist explains of his unusual throwback setup. "This crazy band played from Cape May, New Jersey, to Longwood Gardens to the Bedford Springs Hotel to the Seven Springs Resort in Pennsylvania to Airstream national festivals."

The 26" Leedy-Ludwig bass drum is from 1928 and sports a hand-painted landscape scene by an unknown artist. (You'll see a similar front head pictured in Daniel Glass's feature in the January

2013 issue of *MD*.) The bells and temple blocks are Leedys, as is the white tom-tom, which was made around the 1930s. The two Chinese toms with tacked heads are from the early '20s, and the 6x14 Slingerland snare is from the '40s.

In the old days, before trying synthetic drumheads, Feist used natural-hide models. "The bass drum was big and very deep, so it sounded similar to what Buddy and Krupa were playing in the '40s," he explains. "I tuned the kit like theirs, as best I could, because with [natural] skin heads it was difficult to hold the pitch. Everyone who came to see the band wondered what you were doing, because you were turning this and touching that and tweaking everything while you were playing. With that bass drum I had to put a light bulb in it to warm it up on cold nights, in order to get a sound. I was always walking around with an electrical cord!"

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



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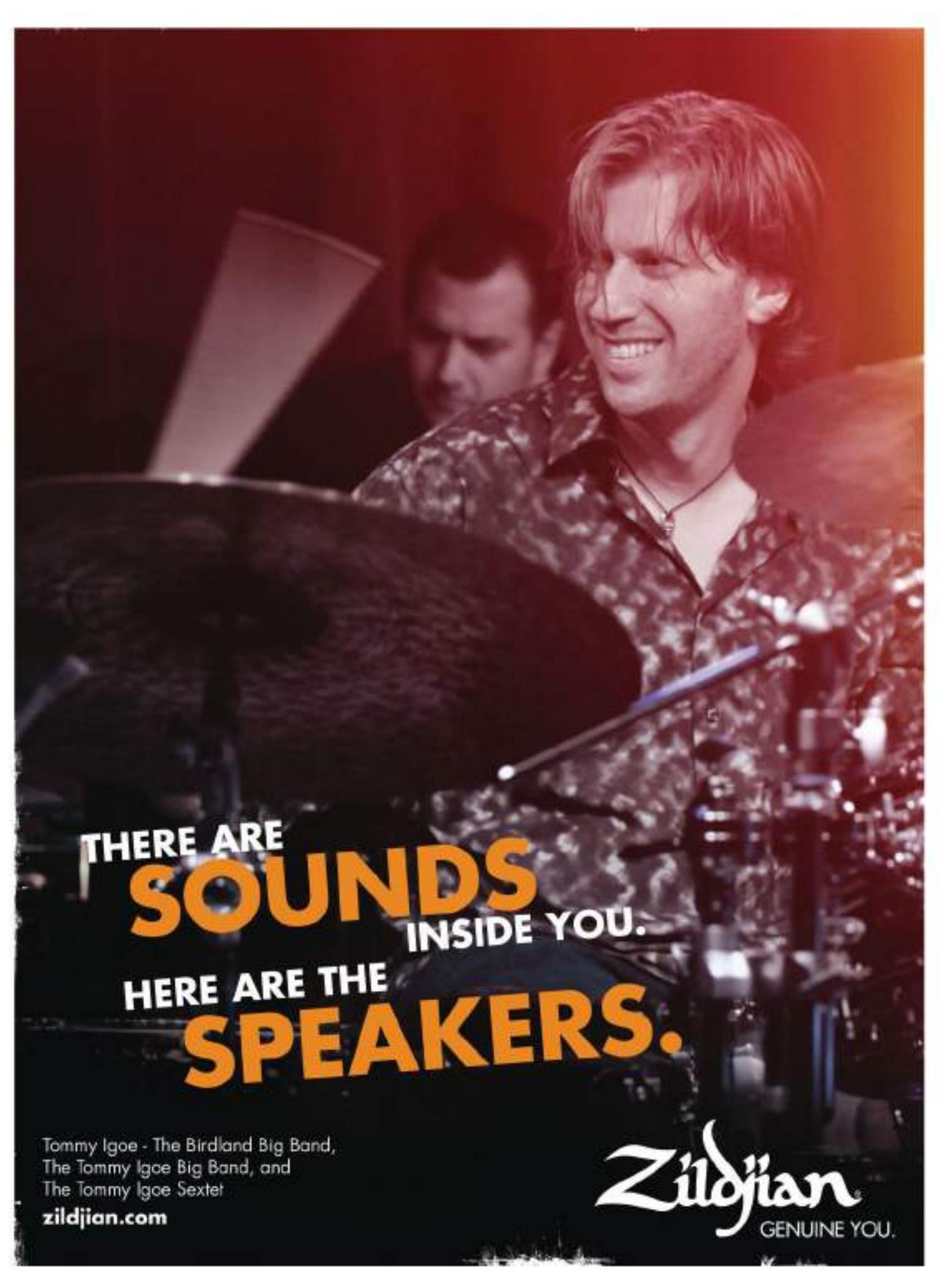
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