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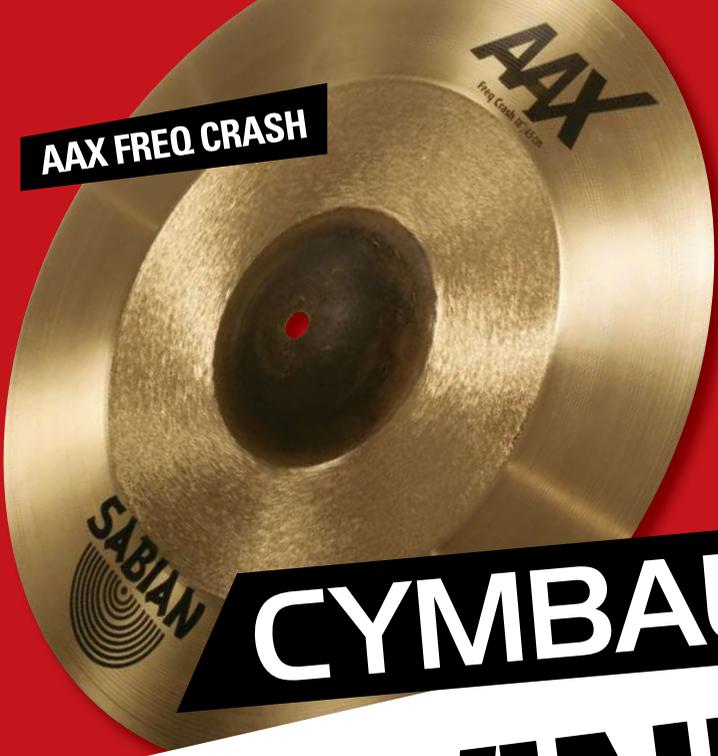
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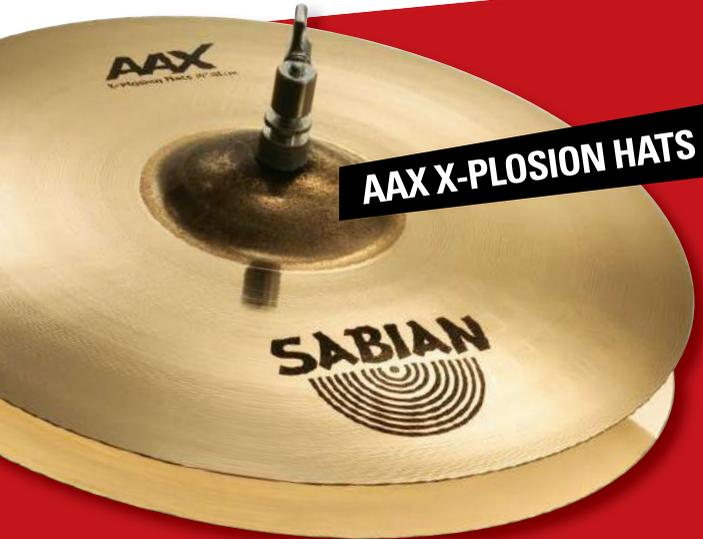


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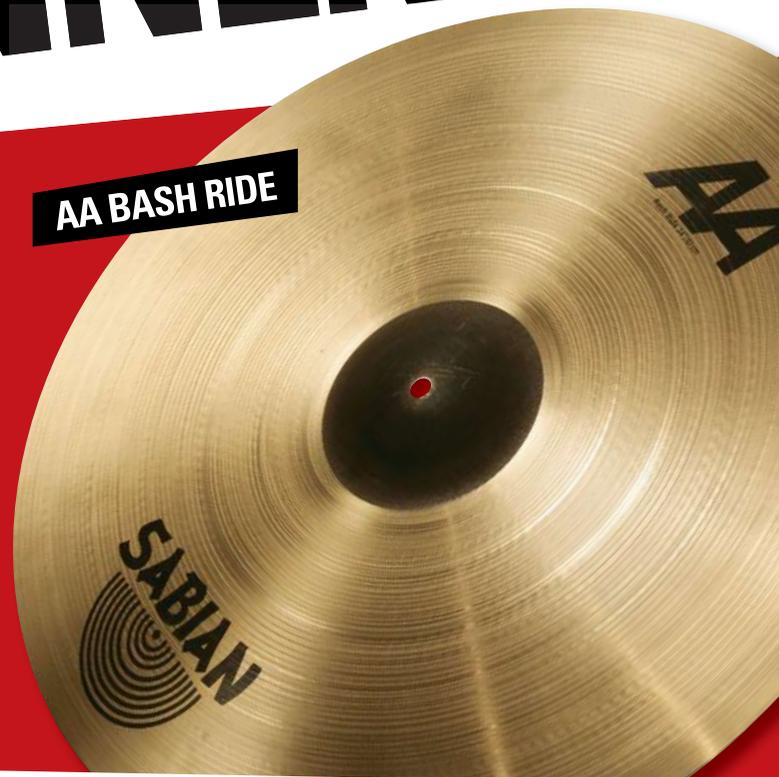
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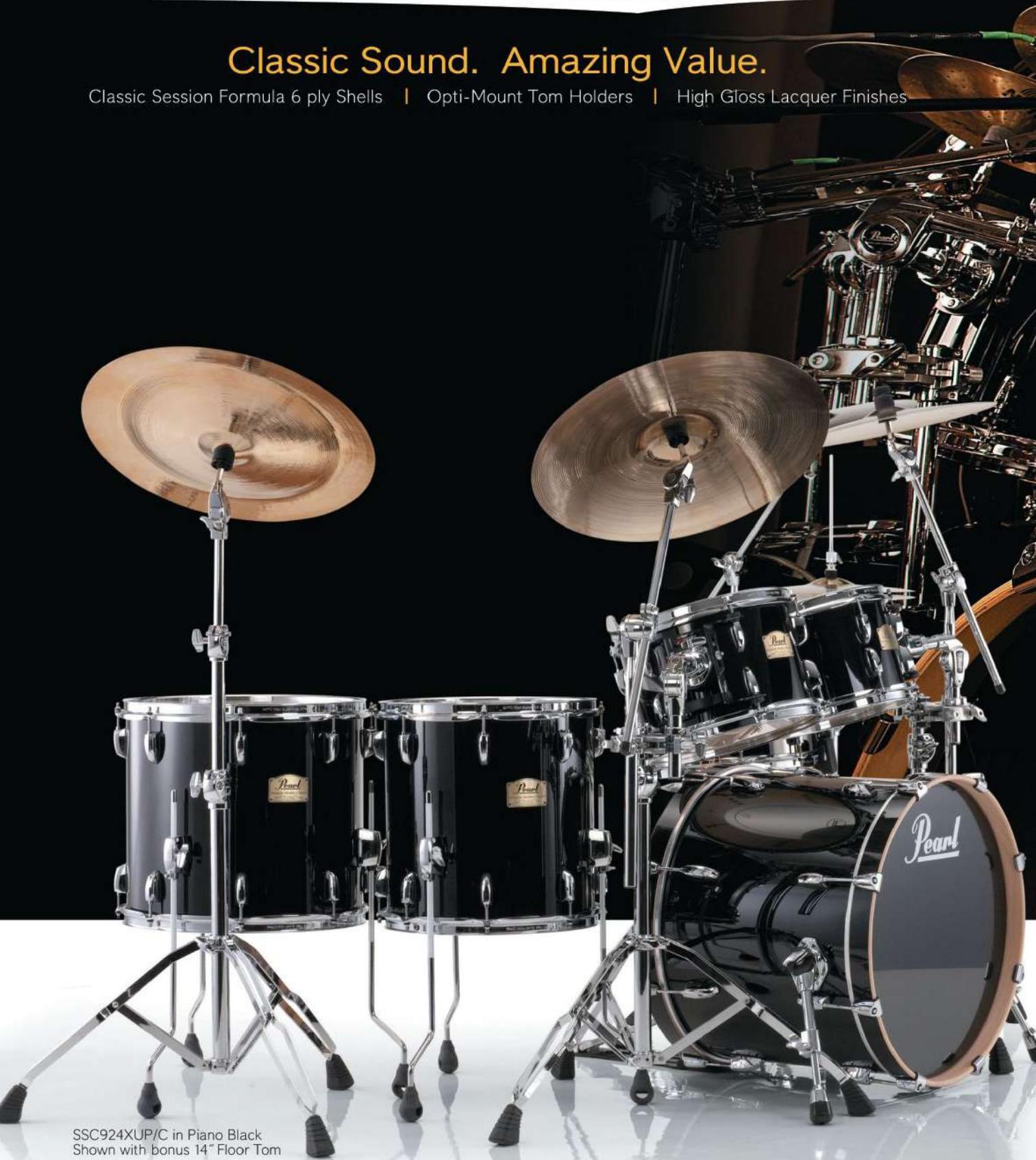
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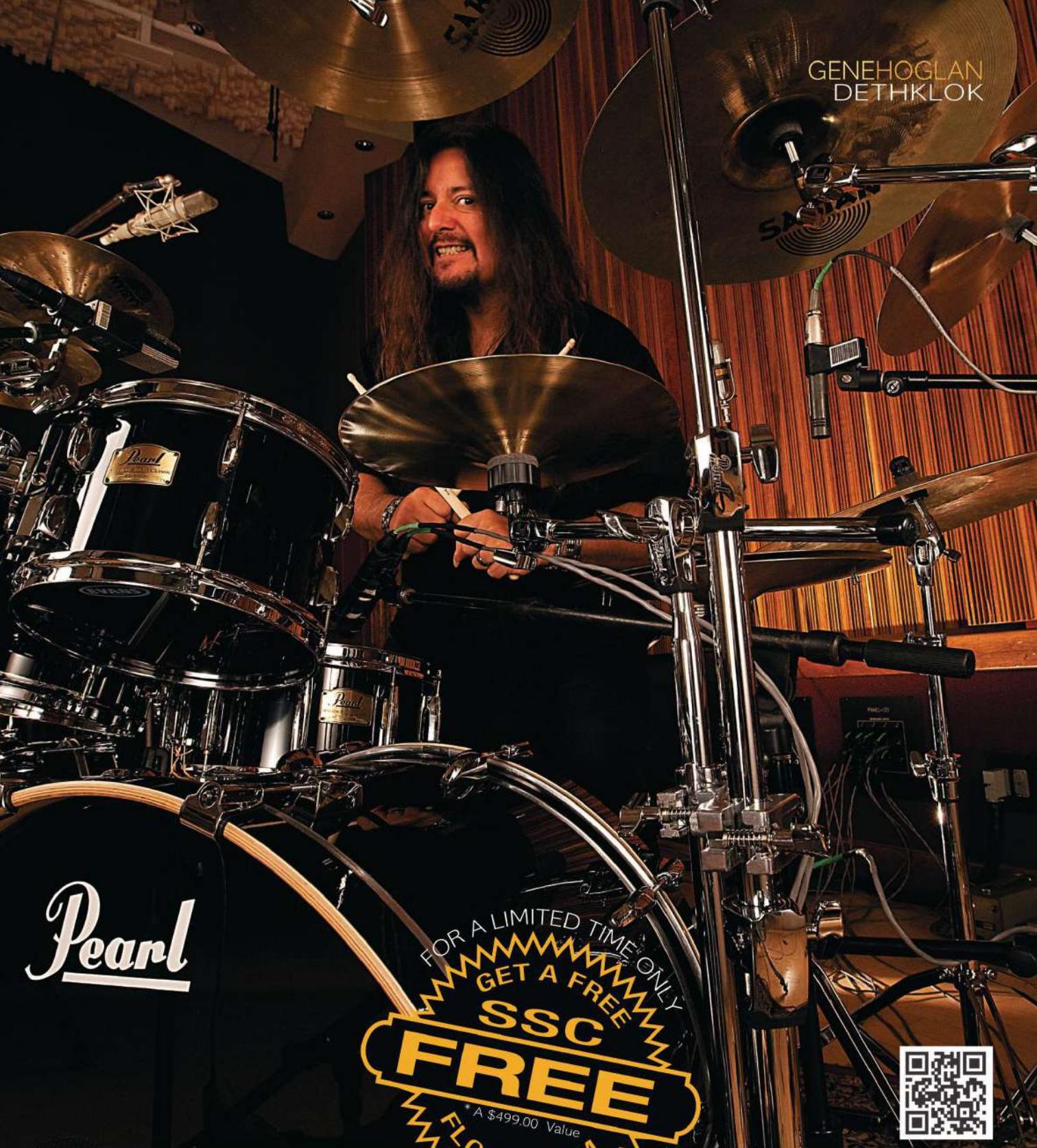
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## On the Cover

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Once upon a time, the Rascals were the coolest, most innovative American rock 'n' roll band—and they featured the scene's coolest, most innovative drummer. Today, *forty years* after their breakup, they've returned—and they're tearing it up. *by Bob Girouard*

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# Know Your History

I have a photographer friend who doesn't have any favorite photographers. This makes very little sense to me—probably because I'm a drummer, and the idea of a drummer existing apart from tradition is pretty much unthinkable. Even the most wildly innovative practitioners of any craft—music, fine arts, architecture, cooking, and so on—are best served to have at least a basic understanding of what came before them in their field. And then there's the “follow your bliss” principle: It stands to reason that if you like playing drums, you like *hearing* drums; if you enjoy taking pictures, you love looking at them too. There's so much to learn from the past, and so much to simply savor.

With every issue of *MD*, we aim to reflect the present day while looking back at the past and also gazing into the future. It's all one long continuum anyway. In this month's Jazz Drummer's Workshop, Steve Fidyk discusses something that ties together the eras in the world of jazz: the standard. It's a huge part of the common language, and it's incredibly sturdy yet unusually flexible. A standard tune is tough enough to weather the decades and endure any type of reinterpretation that musicians can dream up. You can play it straight, or you can mess around with the time signature, the melody, the harmony, any and all of it—don't worry, the tune can take it. Have you heard Chris Dave's version of Coltrane's “Giant Steps”? How about Chris Potter's?

If you ever wanted an example of a drummer who has a firm grasp of tradition and who lives exuberantly in the moment while pushing forward the art of timekeeping, Antonio Sanchez is it. In this issue we chat with Sanchez about his latest recording, *New Life*, which is bursting with beautiful compositional ideas and hot playing. Again, the album would not be possible without the influence of Antonio's musical heroes, yet it is very much a product of the year 2013 and all of the cultural and sonic forces that exist *right now*.

Finally, do yourself a favor as you read our cover story on Dino Danelli and check out clips, old and new, of the Rascals playing live. Take a gander at the band on TV in 1966, and you'll understand without question how Danelli has influenced generations of drummers. His work from nearly fifty years ago—with its flash, its playfulness, its bounce—seems new even today. And his drumming on the band's current *Once Upon a Dream* tour is equally tasty and stylish. So, who helped this early rock 'n' roll drum hero form his distinctive approach to the kit? Jazzers, of course, as Danelli explained in March of 1989, in his first *MD* cover story.

“My style came from Lionel Hampton and Sonny Payne,” Dino said. “Sonny Payne was the most incredibly flashy player who ever lived, bar none. I never missed him when he played. I took all his jazz stuff and made it rock 'n' roll—the bass drum accents, the way you move your sticks and throw them up. All that stuff melted into rock without any problem at all.”



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**MODERN DRUMMER** magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2013 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

**EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:**  
**MODERN DRUMMER Publications,**  
12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: (973) 239-4140. Fax: (973) 239-7139. Email: [mdinfo@moderndrummer.com](mailto:mdinfo@moderndrummer.com).

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

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** US and Canada \$34.97 per year; \$56.97, two years. Other international \$59.97 per year. Single copies \$5.99.

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

**MUSIC DEALERS:** Modern Drummer is distributed by Hal Leonard Corp. (800) 554-0626. [sales@halleonard.com](mailto:sales@halleonard.com) [www.halleonard.com/dealers](http://www.halleonard.com/dealers)

**INTERNATIONAL LICENSING REPRESENTATIVE:** Robert Abramson & Associates, Inc., Libby Abramson, President, PO Box 740346, Boynton Beach, FL 33474-0346, [abramson@prodigy.net](mailto:abramson@prodigy.net).

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

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

**MEMBER:** National Association For Music Development, National Association Of Music Merchants, Percussive Arts Society

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## STEVE FIDYK'S FOCUS ON BRUSHES

I enjoyed Steve Fidyk's brush tips in the June issue of *Modern Drummer* (Jazz Drummer's Workshop, "Focus on Brushes"). In the photos, it appears Steve is using old Ludwig L-195 brushes with the white plastic handles. Since Ludwig no longer makes the L-195 the same way, do you know a source for them? I've been using those brushes since high school, when I learned to play by copying Joe Morello off those great Brubeck records, and I've finally used up all I had.

It was a treat to see Steve's analysis of some of Morello's brushwork. Even though I still use Joe's trademark brush ride, with the sweep sound accenting the final 8th note of the triplet, I always wondered how he got it so loud, or was it just great miking by the Columbia engineers? Even the classic Hank Garland record that was cut here in my (now) hometown of Nashville has that sound.

**Austin Bealmear**

Producer and host, *Jazz on the Side*

## FIDYK RESPONDS

Hi, Austin. I appreciate the kind words regarding my brush piece. The brushes pictured on pages 64 and 66 of the June issue are an old pair of Ludwig L-195s. These were the brushes that Joe Morello, Jo Jones, Ed Thigpen, and Vernel Fournier used in the '60s. To my knowledge, Ludwig still makes them, but now they're manufactured with black handles, as opposed to white (the fan gauge and weight are still the same). Joe Morello also used these brushes in his up-tempo segment on the DVD *The Art of Playing With Brushes*. They have a certain feel that produces a snappy and light sound. Joe managed to get a very deft sound with them. This was primarily due to his reflex action, and that he used only the outer third of the fan when sweeping and swinging. He told me once that he learned to play with wire brushes by watching Jo Jones at the Embers club in NYC in the early '50s.

In my opinion, Joe's sound with brushes had little to do with the mics or the placement of them. Joe could make any drum with any head sound just like the record, because his sound came from within.

**Steve Fidyk**

## QUICK AND EASY MIKING

I wanted to say how good I thought the "Minimal Miking Techniques" article (Electronic Insights, May 2013) was. I've been recording drums for over twenty years, and the info still came across as fresh—not dumbed down but accessible for those newer to recording. Plus the emphasis on fewer mics focuses on players' ability to balance themselves rather than rely on a mix to correct dynamic problems. The idea of getting a great classic sound by using a few basic mics helps keep the fuel for gear lust at a low simmer. Kudos!

**Chris Prescott**

## JEAN-PAUL GASTER

Thank you for the great article on Jean-Paul Gaster in the June issue. I really believe that he is one of the greatest and most underrated drummers in rock music, and reading about his recording techniques was a bonus.

**Andrew Toy**

## DROPPED BEAT

In the Sabian Live recap in June 2013's *Backbeats*, the photo of Ray Luzier was taken by Alex Kluff.

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# UPDATE

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## MARCO MINNEMANN

The drumming Aristocrat comes of age.

**M**arco Minnemann spends much of his time between tours writing for his solo recordings, as well as for his prog-fusion band the Aristocrats, featuring bassist Bryan Beller and guitarist Guthrie Govan. “Most of what I write will end up on my releases,” Minnemann says, speaking with *MD* from his lakeside home in southern California. “Then some will end up on recordings like the new Aristocrats CD, *Culture Clash*.”

“The Aristocrats is a joyous experience,” Marco adds, “because we share the writing, and all of us contribute three songs to each of our recordings. We write for each other’s playing style and personality. But what makes the band really special is that we are all great friends and get along well. That’s very important when you’re on the road together as much as we are.”

Aristocrats members are involved in several of Minnemann’s other endeavors

as well, including Porcupine Tree mastermind Steven Wilson’s solo album *The Raven That Refused to Sing*. Minnemann recorded drums on the Alan Parsons–produced release, and he and Govan have been touring with Wilson in support of the album. Minnemann and Beller, meanwhile, will be backing Joe Satriani on the guitar wizard’s upcoming world tour. (Chad Wackerman is filling in on the Wilson dates that Minnemann can’t make.) “The new Satriani music is very refreshing, with lots of different musical directions,” Minnemann says. “He used Vinnie Colaiuta on the recording, who is one of my childhood drum heroes. So to be called to do this tour is very special to me.”

The ever-evolving Minnemann, who has spent the better part of the past fifteen years contributing to a steady stream of high-level progressive material, says that he has reached a point in his career where he’s being recognized for his depth and

individual drumming style. “I feel like I’m finally getting called because of my musical abilities,” Marco says, “and not just for the crazy drumming stuff. The Aristocrats have really been the catalyst for much of what I’m doing now. And the band came together totally unexpectedly. It’s ironic how I’m now involved with so many of the musicians who inspired me to play music. It’s a bit strange to realize that I’m part of that circle.”

Later this year Minnemann will be performing in Europe with Banned From Utopia, which features Frank Zappa alumni, and writing for a new project with bassist Tony Levin and Dream Theater keyboardist Jordan Rudess. “There’s always a mission for me to write music,” the drummer says, “and I’ll continue to do it—as long as it’s fun. There is much joy in what I do now. This is something money can’t buy.”

**Mike Haid**



**RICHARD CHRISTY DEVELOPS ANIMATED WEB SERIES**

The drummer/leader of Charred Walls of the Damned has masterminded a new animated Web series, *Majestic Loincloth*, which he describes as “quite possibly the manliest, most metal, sword-swinging, testosterone-filled movie ever made.” Of course, Christy’s other job is as a sidekick to Howard Stern, so, as you’d expect, the humor’s pretty raunchy.



**RICHARD LEE ADELMAN SERVICE AWARD ESTABLISHED**

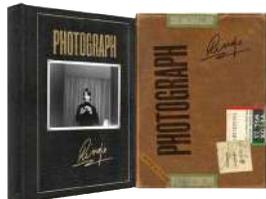
The Richard Lee Adelman Service Award was created to honor those who have made exceptional contributions to the lives of individuals with disabilities. Adelman, who died in 2012, played drums with Donna Summer, Jonathan Edwards, Rita Coolidge, the Hues Corporation, Martin Mull, and Billy Vera and the Beaters. His performance on Summer’s album *Live and More* earned him a platinum record award, while his playing on Edwards’ hit single “Sunshine” earned him a gold record. For more information, go to [adelmanaward.org](http://adelmanaward.org).

**SILVERFOX ANNOUNCES CONTEST WINNERS**

SilverFox Drumsticks, a division of Grover Pro Percussion, has announced the winners of its Ridiculous Stick Tricks contest. The



competition, which ran this past spring, involved drummers sending in video submissions of their most outrageous and creative drumstick moves. The SilverFox staff, most of them drummers, chose the top three videos as finalists. Drummers around the world were then able to vote for their favorite entry. The first-place winner was Lee Humerian of the band Phinehas. First runner-up was Alex Pepper, and second runner-up was Koen Van den Abeele. All entries, including the winning videos, can be viewed on YouTube.



**“AS THE YEARS GO BY...”**

Genesis Publications and Ringo Starr have released *Photograph*, a collection of never-before-seen photos taken by the Beatles drummer, including exclusive images from his own personal archives. The material was initially published as an e-book in conjunction with the Grammy Museum exhibit Ringo: Peace and Love, where select images are displayed. A limited edition, hand-bound book, signed by Ringo, will follow this December. *Photograph* is available for download via iTunes.

**HOW A MARIMBA IS MADE**

Mallettech, a manufacturer of high-end, professional marimbas, vibes, xylophones, bells, mallets, and drumsticks, was featured on the long-running TV show *How It’s Made* this past May. Mallettech’s segment, which covers the fourteen-hour manufacturing process involved in making a marimba, was filmed at the company’s factory last summer.



**ORNETTE COLEMAN DRUMMER AMIR ZIV COFOUNDS NEW LABEL**

The New York–based drummer Amir Ziv and trumpeter Jordan McLean have founded Sound Chemistry Records, producing a series of audiophile-quality downloads and 180-gram vinyl steeped in the movements of electronica, punk rock, classical, American roots music, and avant-garde jazz. For more information, go to [soundchemistryrecords.com](http://soundchemistryrecords.com).



**BENNY GREB MASTER SESSION**

Sprawling snowcapped mountains and a cozy barn locale provided the perfect combination of seclusion and comfort for Benny Greb and the twenty-five attendees at the award-winning drummer’s Master Session, held at the Full Moon Resort in Big Indian, New York, this past March 14 through 18. Greb was kind enough to extend *MD* an invitation to visit the sold-out event, and although we were there for only a few hours, it was all we needed to realize we were in the presence of something truly special.

Those familiar with Greb’s acclaimed instructional DVD and book, *The Language of Drumming*, know that Benny’s approach transcends drumming, chops, and music. It’s an all-encompassing lifestyle and worldview that helps drummers learn how to communicate fluently through their instrument and take command of their craft.

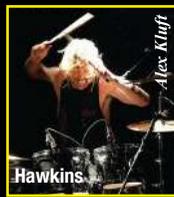
At the session there were no moments of Greb blasting “Can you show me the way to the train station?” licks. The group often played together with the instructor, with each exercise given an ample amount of time to be absorbed, fostering a communal learning experience. Greb’s philosophies, affable demeanor, and sagacious insight were captivating and inspiring, and we were quick to understand why attendees crossed continents, time zones, and state lines to share in this unique experience.

Regardless of the individuals’ ages or skill levels, the group cohesion was palpable. During breaks, attendees rarely scattered—they continued to learn from each other and *about* each other. A gentleman from Massachusetts summed up the experience by saying, “The feel of the group became an extra limb, and I found I was able to do things I didn’t think I could do. But we’re all here because of Benny.” **David Ciauro**



**ROCK AGAINST MS BENEFIT**

Rock Against MS took place this past March 27 at the Whiskey a Go Go in Los Angeles. The event, which was organized by publicist Nancy Sayle, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2009, featured Glenn Hughes, John 5, Orianthi, Rick Springfield, Gilby Clarke, Billy Morrison, Teddy “Zig Zag” Andreadis, Mark McGrath, Jeff Pilson, and Billy Idol, backed by drummers including **Marky Ramone, Kenny Aronoff, Brian Tichy, Ginger Fish, Taylor Hawkins, and Erik Eldenius.**



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# PETER PRESCOTT

Mission of Burma's drummer discusses the virtues of getting loop-y and building the perfect Minibeast.



Edwinland Designs

When the artsy post-punk band Mission of Burma called it quits in 1983, no one, not even the members themselves, ever expected a reunion. Bassist/vocalist Clint Conley found his way into TV production, and guitarist/vocalist Roger Miller's tinnitus had become increasingly aggravated by the waves of ringing overtones the band produced on stage.

The New England-based Burma was certainly loud and proud, but the group didn't exactly go out with a bang—it just kind of drifted away. "There were no arguments, no fights," drummer Peter Prescott says from his home in Providence, Rhode Island. "It was about as natural a breakup as could be. We were happy to let whatever small legacy we had just sit."

Flash forward nearly two decades. The Burma boys shrugged off the idea of regrouping until 2001, when they finally came to a startling realization. "We simply thought that pretty soon we may not be able to reunite even if we want to," Prescott says. "If we cared at all about doing it, we had to do it then and put it together ourselves."

Brisk ticket sales for the initial concerts convinced the Burma camp that a full-fledged comeback was possible, if not imminent. "We played a few shows overseas, which we had never done," Prescott says. "Then we played a few more in the U.S., and suddenly we were recording."

Since returning to the scene, Burma has released four studio albums, including 2004's *Ono-on*, the group's first record of original material in over twenty years, and 2012's seething *Unsound*. "It's kind of absurd," Prescott says. "But if it ever felt false to us, we would have stopped it. It didn't."

During Burma's dormancy, Prescott remained musically active with the likes of the mid-'80s/early-'90s band Volcano Suns and the Boston-based acts Kustomized and the Peer Group, both of which featured Peter on guitar and vocals. In 2012, under the Minibeast moniker, he released a limited edition vinyl LP, *Look Don't Look*, which features elements of electronica, ambient music, and psychedelia weaving through creepy soundscapes.

Although Minibeast was established in part to explore many different musical



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# AIM drummers tearin' it up!

Find out what Jerome, Chris, Pete, and Terrell discovered at the Atlanta Institute of Music!

## Jerome Flood

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Travis Barker  
Pastor Troy  
Cantoh Jones  
Ricardo Sanchez

## Chris Coleman

*Alumni 2002*  
Chaka Khan  
Christina Aguilera  
Babyface  
Patti Labelle  
New Kids on the Block

## Pete Alexander

*Alumni 2003*  
Janette Monáe  
Jully Black  
Edwin McCain  
Rachelle Ferrell  
Lloyd

## Terrell Sass

*Alumni 2006*  
Tyler Perry  
Jennifer Holliday  
Rick Ross  
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## UPDATE

avenues, the use of loops and samples is strangely reminiscent of Mission of Burma's modus operandi. "The whole album is sort of built on drum loops and samples," Prescott says. "It kind of traces back to the direction of Burma." Loops have been an integral part of the sonic fabric of Burma's material ever since Frippertronics fanboy and tape machine operator Martin Swope first interacted with the band, circa 1980. Currently, Bob Weston (of Shellac fame) manipulates a four-track Electro-Harmonix 2880 looping device to provide an auditory

foil for Burma's musical and rhythmic bombardment.

"I think the nature of the group is about clash," Prescott says, "and about trying to construct a song while raging around inside of it. As musicians we're really fascinated by confusion, by this big ball of sound bouncing off the walls. Sometimes the musicians are adding confusion, and sometimes the loops are adding the confusion. There's a constant juggling of those roles."

**Will Romano**

## OUT NOW



**Arthur Channel** Arthur Channel (Jack Irons) /// **Fight or Flight A Life by Design?** (Mike Wengren) /// **George Duke** DreamWeaver (Gorden Campbell, John Roberts) /// **The Dodos** Carrier (Logan Kroeber) /// **Walking Papers** Walking Papers (Barrett Martin) /// **The Fall** Re-Mit (Keiron Melling) /// **Billy Ocean** Here You Are (Terry Silverlight) /// **Jane's Addiction** Live in NYC (Stephen Perkins)



## WHO'S PLAYING WHAT

**Mike Terrana** (Masterplan), **Rolf Pilve** (Stratovarius), **Fathi Shayan** (Chakuza), **Dario Esposito** (Balletto di Bronzo), **Alex Cooper** (Katrina and the Waves), **Marc Atkinson** (Wayne Newton), **Billy Freeman** (Dustin Lynch), **Michael Green** (Jenny O), and **Pablo Viveros** (Chelsea Grin) have joined Paiste's artist family.



**Chad Sexton** (311), **Thomas Hedlund** (Phoenix), **Mike Cox** (Coal Chamber), **Gil Sharone** (Stolen Babies), **Melanie Howe** (independent), **Nate Mullins** (W.E.R.M.), **Harry Judd** (McFly), **Ben Russin** (Title Fight), **Isaia Gil** (independent), **Ellington Ratliff** (R5), **Jesse Kristin** (Jukebox the Ghost), **Tom Hane** (In This Moment), **Brent Taddie** (Crown the Empire), **Rich Walker** (Alvarez Kings), and **Drew McKeon** (Daryl Hall and John Oates, Michael Bolton) are playing Vater sticks.



## ON TOUR

**Jack DeJohette** with the Jarrett/Peacock/DeJohette Trio /// **Brady Miller** with Best Coast /// **Sean Stockham** with Middle Class Rut /// **Chris Benelli** with the Waterboys /// **Ilan Rubin** with Nine Inch Nails /// **Sean Kinney** with Alice in Chains



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# Must-Have Gear

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## This Month: World Percussion Icon PETE LOCKETT

**REMO FRAME DRUM HOLDER.** This is a very important piece for me. Mounting frame drums proves to be a really awkward thing to do, and the myriad of bulky, inappropriate hardware solutions really don't tick the boxes for me, especially when they add 3 kilos to my luggage. With rising excess-luggage costs, this becomes a really important consideration with all hardware choices. If it can do the job and still be light and easily transported, then it is definitely on my list. This funky little thing can be thrown in the bag, and you can mount it on any cowbell post, tom arm, or cymbal stand at your destination. I normally take a couple of them with me, providing the possibility of adding a couple of frame drums to my setup. It's also really easy to just lift the drum from the mount if you want to hold it and play it, thus adding another option. It opens up a lot of possibilities for frame drummers who want multiple drums in their setup. Until now, this has been rather difficult to achieve.

**METAL UFO UDU.** This is one of my specialty items that definitely ends up on all my sessions. I designed it and got it made in India. It's a very simple construction: Two small cooking woks are welded together, then a large hole is cut in the top so one can achieve the *vhuup-vhuup* bass-end tone one associates with an udu or ghatam. I also found that cutting a second smaller hole gives additional opportunities for pitch bend, etc. Of course, looking at the size, you can imagine that the bass tone is a lot higher than on a traditional udu. That said, it still gives a really cool option for higher-pitched overdubs, especially if one has put down a part on a lower udu or ghatam. Film composers in particular love this drum, as it fits into a colorful and interesting area of percussion that is not culturally specific to the listener. I normally use finger-style tabla techniques on it, but it also sounds pretty cool with brushes and mallets. Next time I might even get a finish on it to stop the rust! I will never change this one, though; I love the homemade "industrial" nature of it.

**WINE TOPS SHAKER AND SOUND EFFECT.** You got it, another homemade Lockett goodie! The idea came to me after I spent £60 on a shaker effect. I got home and was really disappointed with it. It was too loud, artificial sounding, and as subtle as a hippo in a fridge. I was soon experimenting with stringing together various items into a similar configuration. I tried many things, ranging from slithers of bamboo to sliced and diced old ride cymbals. They all sounded great, but nothing amazed me more than when I started to use bottle tops. I tried all sorts—plastic milk tops, metal beer bottle tops, yogurt tops, and more. The most successful proved to be tops from wine bottles. Besides being a great excuse to drink wine, it left me at the end of the day with a shaker—again, sought after and asked for by many composers I work with. String and bottle tops is all you need, so go forth and multiply! They're great for swish/rainstick-style swells and also very tight and dry for quarter-note or 8th-note patterns.

Interview by Mike Haid



Remo frame drum holder



Metal UFO udu



Wine tops shaker and sound effect

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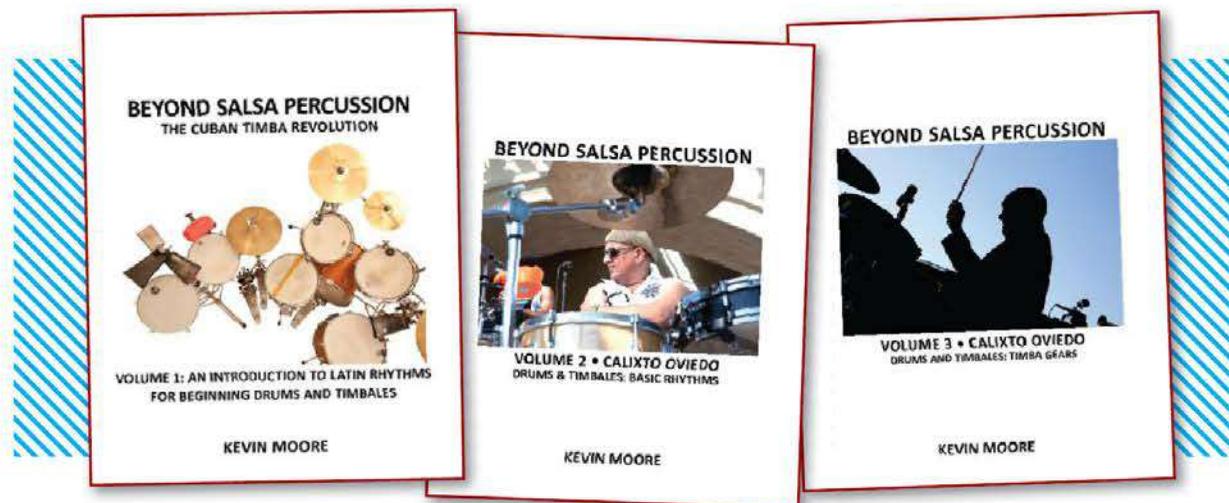


**SATURN IV**

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# Beyond Salsa Percussion

Revealing the Secrets of Controlled Improvisation by Jeff Potter



Violinist/pianist Kevin Moore grew up in L.A. as an avid fan of rock, jazz, and classical music. A transcription gig that landed in his lap piqued his interest in Latin styles, and he eventually performed and recorded with the band Orquesta Gitana. But it was his first visit to Cuba, in 1999, that truly changed his musical life. The modern stew of “timba” was exploding, and it was an epiphany.

“It was at a key point in Cuban music history,” Moore says. “It was like being in London in ‘67 or New York City in ‘42—or Vienna in 1804.” His new goal was “making what comes naturally to these musicians accessible to a student.” Today Moore continues to build a line of educational materials and is also a cocreator of and frequent contributor to the extensive Latin music website [timba.com](http://timba.com).

After producing three book/DVD volumes of Mel Bay’s *Tómas Cruz Conga Method*, Moore undertook a massive project of his own: the *Beyond Salsa* series. It started with piano books—now eleven volumes strong—and expanded into *Beyond Salsa Percussion*. The products in the series are available in multiple formats. A student can purchase hard-copy books, download e-book versions, and supplement those with companion DVDs. And the series offers a unique, more revolutionary tool: a downloadable video version that Moore upholds as the ultimate performance-analyzing format.

To access this version, users first need to acquire Transcribe! shareware software. With this tool, the audio/video drumming sequences of *Beyond Salsa Percussion*’s second and third volumes can be slowed down to one-fifth of their original speed without affecting pitch or sound, and any chosen segment can be marked for use as a surprisingly smooth loop.

“It’s basically the Holy Grail for musicians,” Moore says. “If you showed this program to any musician active from 1999 or earlier, it would be like, ‘Beam me up, Scotty!’ It’s just unbelievable that we can now slow it down with perfect audio quality and seamless loops. And the speed and pitch can be changed independently. It has to be seen and heard to be believed.

“My central idea is that the way to learn to play as these masters play—I call it ‘controlled improvisation’—is to take

one loop, one cycle of their improvised playing, and learn it note for note until you can move on to the next variation. You eventually find yourself switching effortlessly between the individual sections, as the players do, and soon you acquire a vocabulary from the individual parts.”

A helpful starting volume for all instrumentalists is *Understanding Clave and Clave Changes*. As a next step, the first volume in the *Beyond Salsa Percussion* series, *An Introduction to Latin Rhythms for Beginning Drums and Timbales*, lays down the basics. “My premise for this book was that before you touch the sticks, you learn to sing and clap all the rhythms,” Moore explains. “Then, when you go to your lesson, you can keep your eyes on the teacher and learn the way we learn as kids—through imitation. The right side of your brain is free to imitate, because your left brain isn’t freaking out about details like what the sticking is.”

Volume two, *Drums and Timbales: Basic Rhythms*, and volume three, *Drums and Timbales: Timba Gears*, feature Calixto Oviedo, the remarkable drummer formerly of the influential Cuban timba group NG La Banda. Oviedo also expertly demonstrates the material for both volumes on the companion DVD/download. “He’s a monster,” Moore says with a grin.

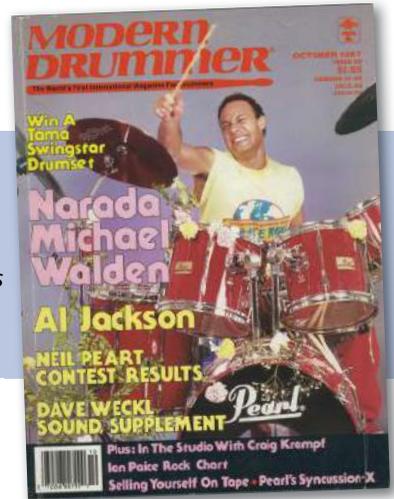
The two Oviedo volumes offer observations on the drummer’s rhythm section approach and transcriptions of his grooves and variations. *Basic Rhythms* covers danzón, chachachá, Mozambique, pilón, simalé, and upa-upa. The more challenging *Timba Gears* highlights Oviedo’s takes on grooves such as marcha arriba, marcha abajo, marche de mambo, muela, bomba, and presión.

Upcoming series will include *Beyond Salsa Bongó* and *Beyond Salsa Congas*, each one featuring multiple volumes. With more than twenty-one books in his canon, the prolific Moore can’t foresee any limits. Seeking to document ever more topics and artists, he says, “I’ll write however many books it takes to cover their styles.”

For details on *Beyond Salsa* products, go to [beyondsalsa.info](http://beyondsalsa.info). To experiment with the loop/speed control functions of Transcribe!, go to [seventhstring.com](http://seventhstring.com) for a free one-month trial; there is one-time \$39 fee for use beyond the trial period.

# BACK *Through the* STACK

## Narada Michael Walden



Last month, fusion drumming great and MD Pro Panelist Steve Smith geeked out on Narada Michael Walden's performance on the Mahavishnu Orchestra's 1975 album, *Visions of the Emerald Beyond*. This month we go back to Walden's October 1987 cover story, in which we asked what he learned from playing with Mahavishnu leader John McLaughlin.

Drummers aren't always going to understand the way I talk, but this is what I learned: I learned how to surrender—to be the drummer he needed me to be. When you're playing with someone, you have to learn how to be with that person. I had to learn to close my eyes, because if I looked at him, I would get so turned on by the speed of his fingers or the expression on his face that I would not be concentrating fully on the spirit of what I was playing. I had to close my eyes to reach that deeper place so that my playing would mesh with his.

On a technical level, I learned how to utilize the toms more, because that sounded good with what he was doing. Of course [original Mahavishnu drummer] Billy Cobham inspired a lot of that. I wasn't necessarily trying to fill Billy's shoes, but I did need to give John that kind of support. It was a new frontier for me. I liked to lock into a groove that the other musicians could fly over. But John wanted me to fly as well. So in that respect, he taught me to free

myself. And to be free, you have to surrender.

So I would say that, with Mahavishnu, I learned about the spirit. The Mahavishnu Orchestra always played to the limit. When you do that consistently, you know when the spirit is right, and you know when it's not quite there. Hopefully you can then play even the simplest thing on a Whitney Houston date or an Aretha Franklin session, but when you listen back to it, you'll know that *this* is the take you should use, as opposed to another one that was not quite there. You know that the spirit has been captured, because you've been there.

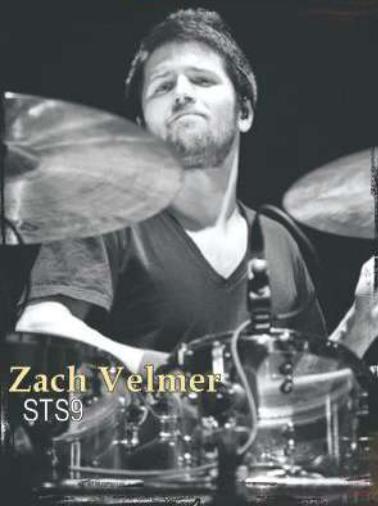
So, I'm not really giving you technique, but I really believe that the spirit *is* the technique.

To read the entire Narada Michael Walden feature—and all the other great material from the October 1987 issue—go to [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com) and click on the App Store link.

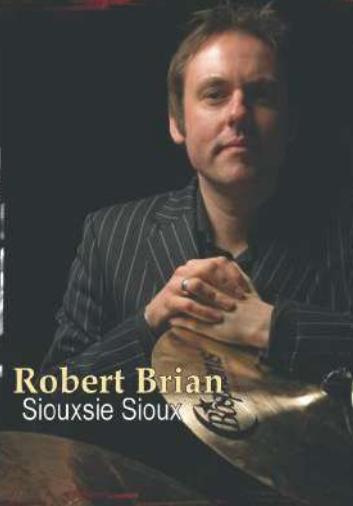


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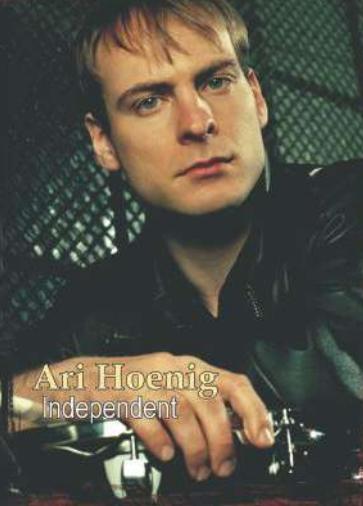
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## How Should I Tune My Snare?



I recently inherited an old Slingerland Artist series maple snare from my uncle. It sounds really nice as it is, but the heads are worn out. I would like to change them, but I'm afraid the drum won't sound as good with new heads. Do you have any suggestions on how to get the best sound possible?  
Ryan

First off, if the drum sounds good as it is, leave it! Just because the heads look old and worn out, that doesn't mean they need to be changed. Some drummers, including studio great Steve Jordan and modern jazz experimentalist Elliot Humberto Kavee, rarely change skins unless they're broken. There's often something magical that happens when a drumhead has had years to bond with the bearing edge; the tone is often rounder and warmer, and the drum has a more distinct character. If you decide to change the heads, here's the tuning method that we use at *MD* to explore a snare drum's full sonic potential.

1. With the snares turned off, tighten the batter head—evenly—to medium tension, so that the head rings with a full tone but has a nice response for buzz strokes. When you start to lose some of the low-end frequencies, you've gone too far and should back off the tension a bit at each lug. If you use a DrumDial, aim for a reading of 85 at each lug.

2. Tune the resonant head a perfect fourth higher than the batter head. Use a chromatic tuner, like the Tune-bot, or a pitched instrument to find the note. Or you can simply sing the first two notes to "Here Comes the Bride," using the batter-head note as your starting point. The resonant head will be tuned to the second pitch.

3. Play the drum at this tuning for a few hours to ensure that the heads are seated and properly stretched. You can also push in the center of the head if you want to expedite the breaking-in period.

4. Using quarter turns at each lug, tune the batter head up to its highest possible note. (For DrumDial users, this is usually around 90.) Don't overtighten the lugs, but don't be afraid to take the drum up pretty high. It should now produce an extremely dry, focused "pop," with bright, metallic-sounding overtones. Check out some videos or recordings of Steve Jordan playing his tightly tuned Yamaha signature snare for an idea of the sound you're looking for.

5. After playing the drum at its highest tension for a bit, loosen each tension rod on the batter head a quarter turn and play some more. Did the timbre change?

6. Repeat this process until you get the batter head down to its lowest possible pitch, taking notes along the way on which tunings produce the best results to your ears. Certain drums will sound great at all tensions, but some will work only in a narrow window, often between medium and medium-tight.

When you get down into the lower range, you may need to add a little bit—or a lot—of muffling in order to keep the overtones in check. You'll have to experiment with the snare wire tension too. We often find that extremely low-tuned drums sound better with either very loose or very tight wires. If you own multiple snares, repeat this tuning test with each of them to see how they compare with one another.

To check out what the *Modern Drummer* Education Team has to say about drum tuning, log on to [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com).

# Mind Matters

by Bernie Schallehn

## Is Sexy Stage Wear Necessary?

I'm a female drummer, and the other members of my band are guys. Here's my problem: The bandleader insists that I dress sexy on stage, but I'm kind of a modest person. He says that I'm "eye candy" and it helps us get gigs. The bandleader likes to wear ashly outyts and often ties scarves on his microphone, but the other members of the band can wear whatever they like. I'm not comfortable wearing short shorts or tight tops, but I do so because everything else about this band is really good. When I get on stage, I feel like all eyes are on me, and I get nervous. I know it affects my playing in a negative way. I thought I was hired for my drumming, not for my looks. What do you think?  
K.C.

The truth is that sex sells. So when your bandleader says that your appearance helps get gigs, I'm sorry to tell you, but he's probably right.

Did you catch this year's Super Bowl halftime show with Beyoncé? She and her former bandmates in Destiny's Child were dressed sexy, and they busted out some incredibly seductive dance moves. Also check out Lady Gaga's suggestive stage wear. And how about some of the outfits Madonna has worn over the years? I've noticed that Carrie Underwood is showing a lot of leg on stage these days, and Taylor Swift, whom I remember wearing a simple cotton dress with cowboy boots, is now strutting around on stage in a majorette outfit. She even has a portion of her performance where her backup dancers rip off some of her clothes. With all of these female vocalists, I don't know whether it's their personal decision to show skin or if it's part of a marketing plan concocted by their management team.

However, here's the million-dollar question: Are you willing to compromise your comfort level to stay in a band that you call "really

good"? I'm guessing that if you continue to feel uncomfortable, you'll never derive any fun or fulfillment from playing drums in this situation, and your performances will suffer. That said, here are the options that I see for you at the moment.

### NEGOTIATE

Over coffee, away from the rest of the band, sit down and have a heart-to-heart with your bandleader. Look him straight in the eyes and let him know that you're not comfortable with what he's insisting you wear. Let him know you're a drummer, not a performer in a burlesque show. (I'm not a lawyer, but I think his requests/mandates may also come dangerously close to sexual harassment.) Give your words a few moments to sink in, and see how he reacts.

You could also try using some humor. Tell him you're all for dressing sexy, but only if the male musicians agree to wear booty shorts and cutoff T-shirts that expose their bellies. Your point may fall flat, but a comedic statement can sometimes help resolve a sticky situation.

You could also suggest a compromise. See if he'll go for flashy, colorful, or outlandish costumes for you, rather than ones that you feel are tawdry. Offer to work with him on picking out or designing the clothing. You might be able to find a happy medium.

### GET BACKUP

If the one-on-one conversation with the leader doesn't produce the outcome you want, meet with your bandmates and ask for their backing. There's usually strength in numbers.

### WEAR WHAT YOU WANT

You could always simply show up to a gig clothed in what you want to wear. Or, if the other members are clad in jeans and T-shirts, you could wear something similar. If you want to choose an outfit that highlights your femininity but doesn't make you feel self-conscious, do it. I have no idea how your bandleader will react to this decision. He may fire you or fume all night, or he may just roll with it. Even if he ends up furious over your actions, he'd be an idiot to tell you to pack your gear and get out before the gig, which would leave him without a drummer for the night. If he fires you after the gig, that's a pretty fair indication that he hired you more for your

"eye candy" appeal than for your drumming skills.

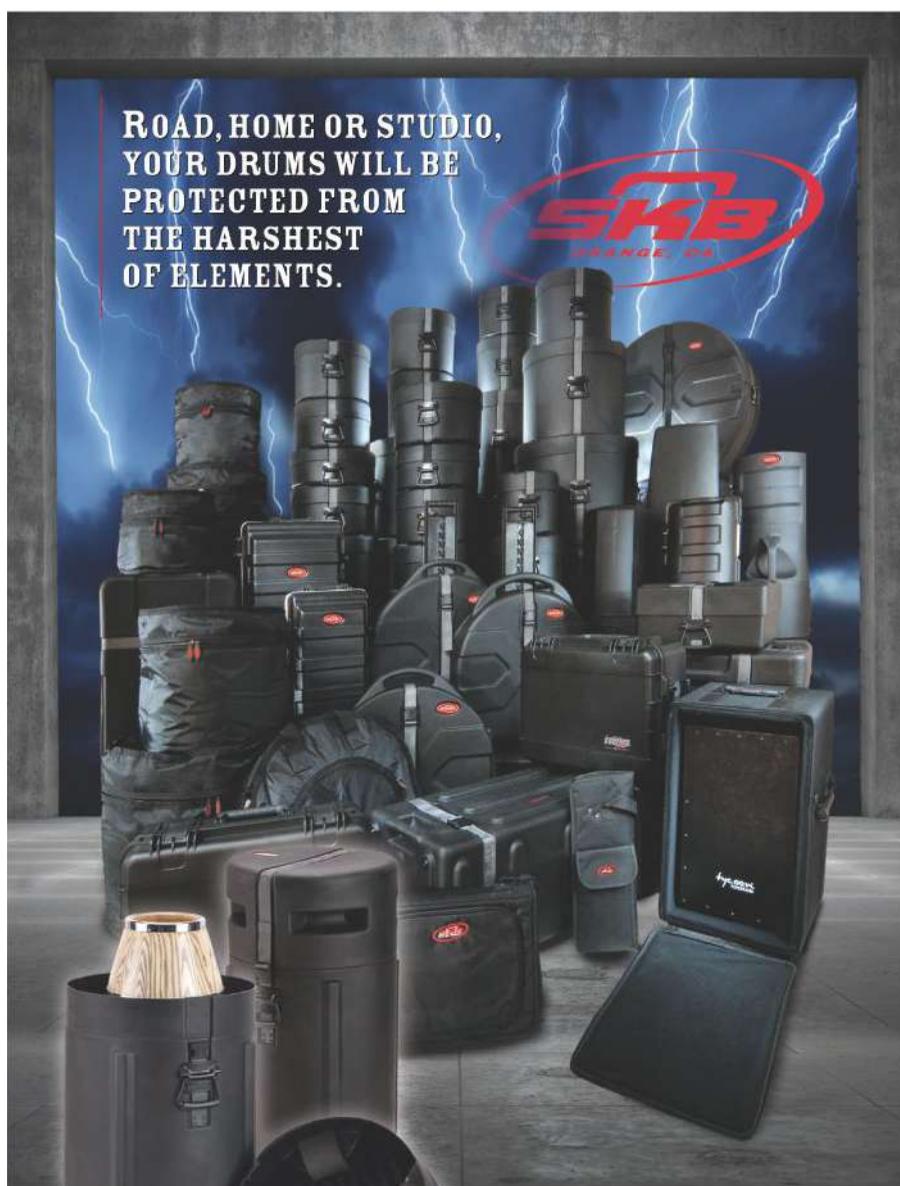
### SHUT IT DOWN

If your bandleader's stance is non-negotiable, you can always leave the group. The angst you're suffering isn't worth it. You'll find another band.

One last thought: Whether you're wearing a teeny-weeny bikini or a nun's habit, you're a performer, and the audience will *always* be looking at you. If you're not okay with that, you'll need to work on your overall stage persona. Good luck!



**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.



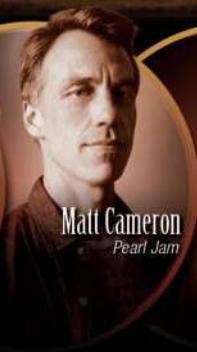
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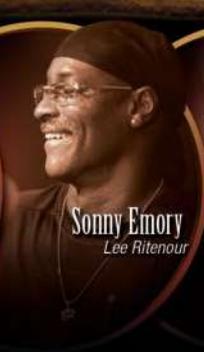
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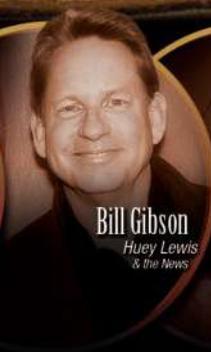
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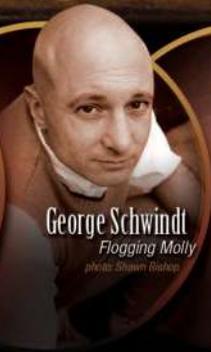
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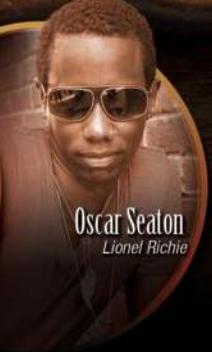
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# SABIAN

## CYMBAL VOTE 2013 WINNERS

by Mark Parsons

Sabian's Cymbal Vote program is an innovative mix of R&D and new

***The 2013 Cymbal Vote winners lean toward the brighter side of things, offering unique but usable sounds within Sabian's AAX and AA lines.***

product promotion. The company makes a dozen prototype models, often featuring unique attributes, and then takes them on tour to music stores to let drummers play them and vote on their favorites. The four winners are introduced at the Winter NAMM Show and are put into production. We were sent a set of this year's Cymbal Vote models for review.

### THE WINNERS

The winning cymbals don't necessarily comprise a family of voices to be used all at once, but it turns out that three of this year's additions are from the AAX line. (The fourth is an AA.) Even so, each has a strong individual personality. Three of the models are also available in different sizes. The 2013 winners include the AAX Air splash, an effects cymbal available in 8" and 10" sizes; the AAX X-Plosion Hats, bright, modern hi-hats in 14" and 16" versions; the AAX Freq crash, an aggressive 18" cymbal with some unique tonal qualities; and the AA Bash ride, an interesting crash/ride available in 21" and 24" sizes.

Besides testing the cymbals in a studio

environment, we also took advantage of an eclectic gig during the review period to see how the instruments performed within a range of genres covering

everything from older R&B dance tunes to classic rock and newer alt-rock.

### AAX AIR SPLASH

On first glance, this little guy looks similar to an O-Zone splash, but there are some distinct tonal differences. Yes, the Air has six holes spaced in a circle, approximately midway between the center and the edge, but these holes are smaller and are proportionate to the diameter. The 10" version (\$129) has 1" holes, and the 8" (\$115) has .75" holes. The splash also sports fine lathing and faint circular hammering throughout, except on the bell, which is raw and unlathed.

Sonically, the Air splash was like a traditional splash, but with an undertone of the breathy "pah" you get from a China. It was closer to the splash end of the effects spectrum than a trashier O-Zone splash is, and it was fast and bright without being harsh. The two sizes of this articulate model worked well in tandem, with the thinner, lighter, brighter 8" serving as a good accent to catch with the left hand and the 10" acting more like a small, China-flavored crash. I really liked both of

the Air splashes, which performed well across a variety of genres.

### AAX X'PLOSION HATS

These medium-heavy hi-hats feature a brilliant finish with unlathed but polished bells. They had a strong cut and worked nicely when held half open in a high-volume context (particularly the 14" pair). What gives these hi-hats their "X-Plosion" name is a higher profile, especially on the bell, which results in increased sustain and upper-mid overtones. The 14" set (\$339) seemed right at home in alt-rock, providing plenty of bite to help cut through guitars.

Swapping out the 14" X-Plosion Hats for the 16" pair (\$399) brought in a different vibe. Not only did the larger set have a lower pitch, but it also sounded bigger and warmer and had a slower response. The cymbals were less precise and articulate, but not in a bad way. Sure, they could still bash and crash with the best of them, but they had an older, looser vibe that was cool in its own right. They wouldn't be as universal as the 14" set; they're more distinctive. I typically run older, heavy 15" hi-hats as an auxiliary pair on my studio kit—usually positioned slightly open—for a heavier/sloshier alternative color. The 16" X-Plosion Hats would work very well in that context.

### AAX FREQ CRASH

The unique-looking 18" Freq crash (\$239)



has three different finishes on top. The bell is dark, raw, and unlathed; the outer half of the bow has fine lathing and a medium polish; and the inner half of the bow looks like it's been surfaced by an aggressive wire wheel. (You could file your nails on this thing!) All three surfaces are repeated on the bottom.

The sonic results of this cymbal were just as interesting as the aesthetics. It's fairly heavy for a typical crash, and the higher profile, increased thickness, and three-surface design join forces to increase the sustain and raise the pitch, especially in the overtones. Overall, the cymbal was loud, aggressive, and bright sounding. In some ways the "Bash ride" label might be better suited to this model than to the larger cymbals, as the Freq generated a Warped Tour-appropriate wash of high-frequency overtones that would reign over the densest guitar mix. If aggressive music is your bag, you'll want to hear this crash.

#### AA BASH RIDE

This was the Cymbal Vote model that initially caught my attention at this year's NAMM Show, especially the 24" version (\$359). The giant cymbal is a walking contradiction. Other than the bell, which

is dark, raw, and unlathed, the ride has typical AA lathing. But for a supposedly aggressive cymbal, it had a remarkably warm tone. Even when I was crash-riding it, its overtones were more smooth than piercing. And riding it in the normal fashion was a pleasant surprise. All in all, this thing is truly sweet. Yes, if you lean into it, the overtones will quickly build up. But in low- to medium-volume situations, it generated a very "pretty" tonality. It was particularly great for playing ballads, which is counterintuitive for a cymbal with the word *bash* in its name. The bow is thinner near the edge, so playing on the outside inch adds a warm wash to the ride tone. Simply move a few inches closer to the bell, and the sound gains brightness and definition—almost like having two cymbals in one. The bell yielded a perfectly nice, universal medium-ride-type tone.

The 21" Bash ride (\$279) was a lot like its bigger brother, so if you like the concept of this cymbal but don't want to haul around a massive seven-pound hunk of

bronze (the 24" test sample weighed in at 3,317 grams), then you can get a similar sound with the smaller version. The pitch was slightly higher, but everything else was comparable. Either of the Bash rides could be a good choice for drummers using a pair of hi-hats and just one other cymbal for crashing and riding purposes.

#### CONCLUSION

The Cymbal Vote campaign is a great concept, gathering input from a large number of players to determine what they'd most like to see and hear in new models. I found this year's selections to be a strong crop of interesting and useful instruments, especially the Air splashes and Bash rides. They really do deserve the title of "winner."

[sabian.com](http://sabian.com)



# ROCHEFORT

## CUSTOM DRUMSET AND SNARES

by Stephen Bidwell

Rochefort Drums, of Denton, Texas, sailed into the sea of American boutique drum companies sometime in 2012. Proprietor Jordan Rochefort offers custom pieces made to each client's specifications, with an emphasis on high quality and affordability. Stave, ply, and steam-bent single-ply shells are offered in a wide choice of wood species. Inlays and wood hoops can be chosen for all drums, finishes and wraps are customizable, and any available hardware the customer wants can be used. While the company is still quite young in the spectrum of American drum builders, the Rochefort kits and snares we've encountered are true works of art, with fine craftsmanship and sounds that stand their ground next to the classics.

### DEEP IN THE HEART OF "NORTH" TEXAS

Denton would seem an opportune locale for a drum builder. Aside from hundreds of percussion majors attending the renowned University of North Texas, the town has a great music scene and is in close proximity to the drummer-dense Dallas/Fort Worth area. I first met Jordan Rochefort when he

was delivering a backline kit to Utopiafest, which is a festival that takes place ninety minutes west of San Antonio, and I was impressed with the oil-finish mahogany/poplar kit with inlaid wood hoops that he supplied. For this review, Rochefort

### *This Texas-based company designs instruments to j̄t drummers' needs as comfortably as a well-worn pair of jeans.*

shipped us a four-piece maple and poplar ply kit with beavertail lugs in a dark-walnut oil finish, with an abalone inlay stripe around the center of each drum. The set included a 14x22 bass drum, an 8x12 rack tom, and 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms. Two snares were also offered: a 7x14 walnut and maple stave hybrid drum, and a 5.5x14, 8-ply maple model with a detailed inlay.

### SNARES

Rochefort snare drums are gorgeous. Each of ours came with a Trick multistep strainer and PureSound Custom Pro snare wires. The 5.5x14 maple drum had a holly and bubinga inlay in middle of the blonde maple shell and was finished in a high-gloss lacquer. Having bought my first

pro-level kit in the late 1990s, when maple was about the only shell type offered, I found the sound of this 8-ply snare to be familiar. But detailed woodwork and hand-finished 45-degree bearing edges set it apart from most mass-produced drums.

The snare came with a Remo Coated CS batter head and a Clear Ambassador on the snare side. The CS is thicker than what I would normally put on a drum of this depth, but after some tweaking it had meaty low and middle ranges, as well as a substantial crack at higher tunings.

The 7x14 snare features a core of .5"-thick stave maple between upper and lower sections of .5"-thick walnut. The three layers are joined together on the outside by bands of tulipwood and sycamore inlay. Ten large chrome tube lugs counteract the rustic oil finish, and the bearing edges were cut round on top and to 45 degrees on the snare side. The drum was fitted with a thicker Remo Coated CSX batter and offered a weighty low tone

when it was tuned just above wrinkling. At low and middle tunings, it produced a damp, papery sound that brought to mind one of studio great Matt Chamberlain's signature textures. Tuned up higher it had fullness and authority, and it didn't lose body or "woodiness" at tight tensions. I took this snare on some funk shows, and it performed well when cranked up. I would grab it more often, though, for rootsy rock sessions or any kind of country gig.

## THE KIT

The shell combination of this kit, which includes maple and poplar plies with reinforcement rings, brought to mind classic Ludwig and Slingerland drums of the '60s and early '70s. The beavertail lugs were accompanied by Gibraltar mounting hardware and floor tom legs. The bass drum came with an Evans EQ2 head on the batter side and a Remo Fiberskyn 3 logo head in front. The toms had Remo Coated Emperor batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms. The walnut oil finish was handsome on its own, but the real Hawaiian paua abalone inlay band at the center of each drum made the kit look exceptionally stunning, even from far away.

The bass drum offered a very full and breathy smack. The batter head came with a Fiberskyn contact pad in the beater area, which provided a subtle emphasis to the

attack. The front head had no hole in it, so it brought out every ounce of warmth from the 14"-deep shell. The shells themselves have five alternating plies of thin maple and slightly thicker poplar (the maple is used for the outer, inner, and center plies), with 10-ply maple reinforcement rings. The bearing edges are cut round like a baseball bat to allow for a lot of head-to-shell contact. These round-over edges made for great articulation and punch at low and medium tunings, and they helped to shorten the decay. While the warmth of the kit's overall sound was exaggerated in the best way possible, the drums still had enough attack and presence to compete—unmiked—with three loud guitar amps and a big bass rig.

The supplied Coated Emperors were a thicker choice than what I would initially think to use with this kit, certainly on an 8x12 rack tom, but they ended up exceeding my expectations. Not only did they sound classic-rock-era-appropriate when I attempted some of Carmine Appice's more bombastic Vanilla Fudge licks, but all three toms also had great sensitivity and presence at quieter



volumes. The floor toms, in particular, had a nice cushy feel when struck. When I closed my eyes for a minute, I could swear that I was playing my friend's 1968 Ludwig kit.

The suggested retail price on the kick and three toms that we checked out is \$2,649, but a three-piece kit with a simple stain or oil finish and beavertail lugs starts at \$1,849. The hybrid stave snare on review retails for \$695. Single-species stave and steam-bent single-ply snares start at \$599, while standard ply snare models, with a George Way throw-off, start at \$399. For truly custom drums, these are quite reasonable prices, and Rochefort is committed to helping each client find his or her desired sound and look.

[rochefortdrums.com](http://rochefortdrums.com)

# DIXSON

## BASS DRUM LIFT

by Eric Novod



The Dixon Bass Drum Lift is one of those products that make you think: *It really took someone this long to figure this out?* The ingenious little device is claimed to enhance bass drum resonance and tone quality by propping the pedal side of the bass drum off the ground. The pedal attaches to the lift instead of the hoop, eliminating stress on the drum and allowing the shell to sit parallel to the floor, at the same height at which you have the

***It's hard to believe that a device as simple as this, which elevates the batter-side bass drum hoop off the ground by a couple inches, could make such a noticeable improvement in sustain and low end. But it's true.***

legs propping up the resonant side. The Lift, which works on any drum from 16" to 24", also makes it easier to get a more centralized striking position.

We tested the product on several different drums, and it delivered stag-

gering improvement with some and modest results with others. If you use a thuddy-sounding or clicky 22" kick, you might not hear much of a difference. But if you're looking for more tone from a bass drum, especially a smaller one, the Lift undeniably heightens the dynamic and tonal possibilities. Being able to prop up a 16", 18", or 20" drum so that the beater strikes the exact center of the head at a perfectly perpendicular angle makes a significant difference in the

sound, bringing more punch and low-end resonance.

The Bass Drum Lift is lightweight, easy to set up, and fairly inexpensive (street price: \$39.95). It's made of sturdy poly-filled nylon and features hook-and-loop

fasteners on the bottom to secure it to your drum rug, so it won't break or slide under heavy playing. It also comes with an additional foam rubber pad, in case you need to lift the drum another half inch.

If you prefer to mount rack toms directly to your bass drum, you may want to consider an alternative tom holder, like a snare stand or a cymbal-stand mount, when using the Lift. We found that an 18" bass drum with a 12" rack tom mounted to the shell tended to sway off balance if not set up properly. That said, we're happy to welcome the Dixon Bass Drum Lift into the world of practical, useful, and effective kit accessories. Every little bit helps!

[bassdrumlift.com](http://bassdrumlift.com)



# LIVERPOOL

## BRAZILIAN-MADE DRUMSTICKS

by David Ciauro

Here in the States, the name *Liverpool* likely sparks images associated with the British Invasion. The word *drumsticks*, on the other hand, would likely bring to

***It may seem unusual to make drumsticks from roxinho and jatoba, but for the Brazilian brand Liverpool these seemingly exotic woods are just as easy to harvest and sustain as maple and hickory are for American companies.***

mind familiar brands like Pro-Mark, Vic Firth, or Vater. In Brazil, however, Liverpool is drumsticks, as the company has been in business for over two decades and is the country's largest manufacturer of drumming implements.

A key to Liverpool's success is Brazil's sprawling forests. The company employs an array of native hardwoods, such as roxinho (purple heart), jatoba (cherry), abiurana (maple), and marfim (ivory). Liverpool's use of these "exotic" woods is not an attempt to capitalize on an untapped niche in drumstick manufacturing. It's simply a matter of using wood species found locally in the company's surroundings.

Of course, all woods have specific properties, such as hardness, that help dictate their usefulness once harvested. According to Liverpool's stateside distributor, Alan Adelstein, "These hardwoods are grown in one of the wettest areas on earth and typically have longer fibers than conventional hickory sticks. Depending on the type of hardwood, the longer fibers help the stick to create a subtle yet unique

sound, feel, and resonance."

We were sent a selection of 5A and 5B models in various species, all of which were harvested from sustainable forests.

The first thing we noticed was that they all measure 16.5" in length. The roxinho 5A with wood tips was very balanced, with a dense core that was felt through the entire stick, yet it maintained enough flexibility to absorb the shock of rimshots. The shoulder has a consistent taper, which gives the stick an energized rebound. After several hours of woodshedding, this model proved to be rather durable, with no splintering and only superficial pitting.

The jatoba 5A and 5B are similar in density to the roxinho but feel a bit lighter, despite having a less-tapered shoulder and a slightly beefier shaft. These slow-wearing sticks had decent rebound and clear articulation on cymbals, making them a good choice for hard hitters.

The Blue Water

5B, made from marfim, has a very light feel. The weight is anchored in the butt end, which puts the power of the stick more in the hands of the player. Although this model felt great to play, it was quicker wearing than the others. The middle of the stick started to peel, rather than splinter, so these likely wouldn't endure excessive rimshots.

The Eco Bio series 5B, made from abiurana, was the only stick to feature a plastic tip. The wood is very dense, but it doesn't have the same amount of "give" as the roxinho. These were more rigid, and I could feel their less-forgiving nature when playing rimshots. What they lacked in flexibility, however, they made up for in durability.

Liverpool sticks cost roughly the same as other major U.S. brands, with street prices in the ballpark of \$10.99 to \$13.99 per pair.

[americanrecorder.com](http://americanrecorder.com)

### THE DRUMMER'S WRENCH

Liverpool's U.S. distributor, the California-based company American Recorder Technologies, also offers an eight-in-one multi-tool designed specifically for drummers. The Drummer's Wrench (\$29.95) is encased in a sturdy belt holster and is outfitted with a full-size retractable drum key, plus a .75" adjustable box wrench, a 2" knife blade, a 2" saw blade, a slotted screwdriver, a Phillips-head screwdriver, scissors, and a bottle opener. The quality of the design and construction of this tool, which has a solid-rubber grip with stainless steel components, was impressive. The saw teeth and knife blade were incredibly sharp, so be careful with them at the end of a gig—especially if the bottle opener was your most-used tool for the evening.



# ACOUTIN CUSTOM

**METAL/WOOD SNARE DRUMS** by Stephen Bidwell

DIGITALLY  
ENHANCED  
modern drummer.com

I first became aware of Acoutin Custom at PASIC 2012. Owner/operator Cooper Acoutin was sharing a booth space with fellow builder Ronn Dunnett, and while I was there looking for Ronn, I was

***Metal/wood hybrid snares are trending throughout the drum industry. But ones that sound as good as these are a rarity.***

surprised by the fresh ideas Cooper was implementing in his drums. If you often have a hard time deciding whether to take a wood- or metal-shell snare on a gig, these unique creations offer a refreshing hybrid solution.

Each Acoutin snare has a metal center shell, which holds all the hardware, and outer wood edges that interlock with the center portion. According to the company website, the system in which the pieces meet is "focused around keyed index points, which allow for exact alignment of snare beds and edges." This system also "ensures precise positioning with every swap of edge material and depth size." You could potentially try out several different wood options for the outer shell, as they are interchangeable.

Metal centers are currently available in stainless steel and brass, while there are more than twenty steam-bent or stave-constructed choices for wood edges. The metal cores are made to the same dimensions, so you could use the same core on the currently available 5.5"-, 6.5"-, or 8"-deep edges with some different lug screws. Head sizes are currently limited to 13" and 14". Stave-constructed wood edges can be purchased separately for around \$199, while steam-bent edges are \$309 per set. These aren't unreasonable prices, given that you're basically making a new drum by purchasing the components.

We got our hands on two Acoutin snares, both of which were 6.5x14. One featured a stainless steel center in matte black finish and a steam-bent maple outer shell with reinforcing hoops. The other had a brass center finished in satin bronze and stave-constructed hickory edges, also with reinforcing hoops. All wood shells are sourced from Joshua Tree Percussion, and most of the metal work is done in Cooper Acoutin's grandfather's shop. The drums came with Dunnett snare hardware, premium hoops and lug screws, and a modern take on the classic tube lug that had "Acoutin Custom" laser

engraved on each. They shipped with Remo heads (Coated Ambassador batter, Clear Ambassador bottom) and Ellis Island twenty-strand snare wires.

The drums arrived tuned fairly high,

which made for a perfect pop or funk sound in both cases. They were very crisp, responsive, and articulate, and they left me wanting to explore other tuning ranges to see how differently the metal and wood timbres worked together. While the wood edges are interchangeable, once locked to the metal core they maintain the integrity of a solid shell.

I opted to get acquainted with the steel/maple drum first. The inside of the steel shell was hand numbered with the inscription "LEONOVA #0001." The first date I took this drum on was a house concert where I needed to use a lot of brushes and bundle sticks, so I tuned it down substantially. I used half a Moongel to quiet some overtones, given my hasty tuning. The woody sound of the maple provided a sweet, familiar finish to the strong honk of the steel. After the gig, I concluded that this drum could easily be the love child of a single-ply maple Craviotto snare and a steel-shell Dunnett. The Acoutin was in the same arena in terms of quality, with the sound and feel characteristics of each of those other models. In louder situations, the steel/maple would give you all the authority you'd expect from a metal shell, along with the comfortable, buttery stick feel and warm overtones of a handmade wood drum.

Next I took the brass/hickory model to several gigs and rehearsals. I was most curious about this one, as my current main

snare is either a 1970s 6.5x14 chrome-over-brass Slingerland or a newer 6x14 hickory Gretsch. I generally prefer the sound of brass over steel, and I've discovered that hickory has a focus and warmth that I really like. The 16-gauge brass of the Acoutin drum is thicker than what most of us may be familiar with, but any wild ring that would have occurred with the beefier metal shell was reined in by the focus and warmth provided by the hickory edges.



Steel/maple



Brass/hickory

The feel of this drum was as great as that of the steel/maple, with rich body at lower tensions and plenty of substance when tuned higher.

The price point on these Acoutin snares may put them out of the grasp of the average player. But if you're an aficionado of high-end custom drums, these models are actually positioned in the middle price range, at around \$999. Considering that you can further customize any center shell by purchasing additional edges for \$199 to \$309, you could argue that it's a smart deal for such an exceptional product.

**acoutincustomsnaredrums.com**



# GEARING UP DRUMKIT DETAILS, ON STAGE AND UP CLOSE

Interview by Michael Dawson • Photos by Ronn Dunnnett

## Marilyn Manson's JASON SUTTER

**DRUMS:** Ludwig Classic Maple in custom "eggshell black" finish

- A.** 7x14 Gregg Keplinger black iron snare (8x14 Ludwig Classic Maple with die-cast hoops as alternate)
- B.** 16x20 bass drum (mounted on floor tom legs)
- C.** 11x14 tom with Mach lugs (on snare stand)
- D.** 16x16 floor tom
- E.** 16x18 floor tom
- F.** 14x26 bass drum

"This is the same basic setup that I've used on every gig for the past eight years, from Foreigner to Smash Mouth to Chris Cornell and the New York Dolls," Sutter says. "It's basically Bonham meets Bad Company meets Cozy Powell. The drums are actually from an older silver sparkle kit that I used with Smash Mouth, Chris Cornell, and Foreigner. The sparkle had changed to different colors over the years, so I decided to spray them black with car-interior paint for this tour. That way, if any of the drums get smashed or knocked around during a show, they can be touched up or replaced easily."

"The mounted bass drum is used for the tribal beats in a lot of Manson's tunes, like 'Beautiful People' and 'Disposable Teens.'"

**CYMBALS:** Paiste in black Colorsound finish

- 1.** 15" 2002 Sound Edge hi-hats (Medium bottom used on top)
- 2.** 18" 2002 Medium crash
- 3.** 20" 2002 Medium crash
- 4.** 24" 2002 ride
- 5.** 12" Alpha Metal splash on top of 16" Alpha China and 16" Alpha Thin crash
- 6.** 20" Alpha Rock crash
- 7.** 19" 2002 Wild China

"The Medium bottom hi-hat on top gives me a heavier sound with more articulation. The stack was put together at the suggestion of Christian Wenzel from Paiste. I wanted something trashy, and what he came up with sounded amazing."

"The black finish takes away some of the shimmer of the

cymbals. The ride has a very dry point to it, and they're not as loud as the unfinished versions, which is actually great. I use giant cymbals, but on this gig the crashes need to hit and get out of the way. The black finish helps make the cymbals sound more industrial. That's also why I have the stack, which I treat almost like an X-hat."

**HARDWARE:** DW 9000 series stands (painted black) and 9000 series double pedal, Tama 1st Chair throne

**HEADS:** Remo Emperor X snare batter and low-profile Clear Snare Side, CS Black Dot tom batters and Ebony Ambassador bottoms, and Clear Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter and Ebony Ambassador front head

"I've had the snare tuned really high for this tour, because that's where it sits best in the music. I've always felt that the perceived pitch of snare drums drops as the sound travels, so I generally overcompensate for that."

"The CS Black Dots make these drums open up perfectly, and they don't mis-trigger at all."

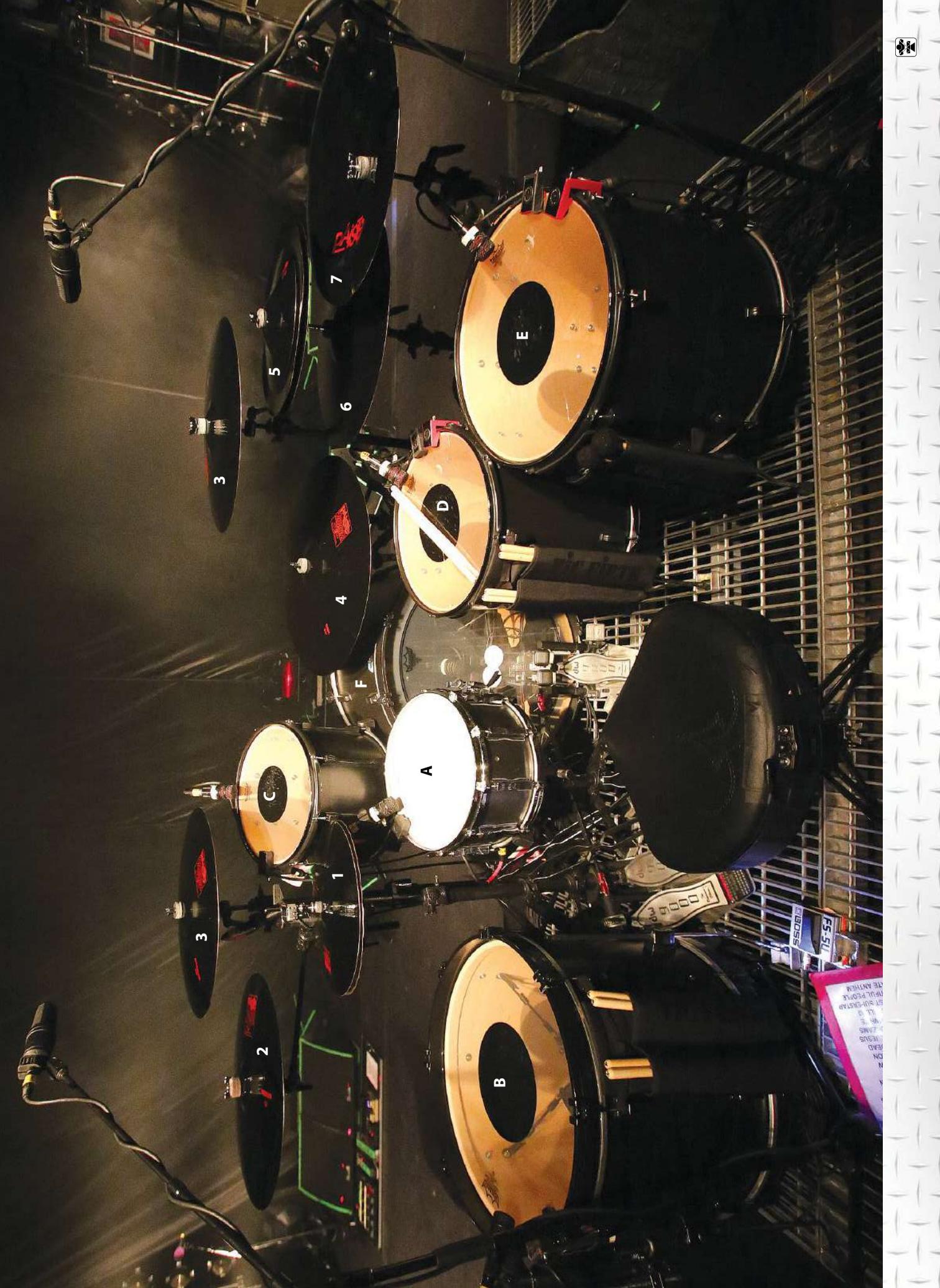
**STICKS:** Regal Tip Jason Sutter model

**ACCESSORIES:** PureSound twenty-strand snare wires, Kelly Shu bass drum miking system, and Gregg Keplinger handheld metal shaker sticks (used between songs and during spatial sections)

**ELECTRONICS:** drumKAT controller, ddrum triggers, and Propellerhead Reason software

"I have triggers on all of the drums, and I get a tiny taste of the triggered sound in my monitors. But most of what I hear in my ears is the wide-open sound of my drums, which have very little muffling. That way I can still play the way I play, while the audience gets a mix of the two sounds."





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# TOWER OF POWER

## *In the Slot*

Incredible ensemble playing, brass and rhythm section arrangements that have never been equaled in terms of sheer syncopated power and precision—and some of the headiest groove-oriented drumming ever committed to tape.

Concurrent with the 1970s fusion wave that merged jazz with rock, Tower of Power's urban funk, a dramatic amalgam of deliriously syncopated 16th notes and sweet vocal soul, was equally powerful—and has perhaps weathered the years better. Recorded in 1975, the group's fifth studio album, *In the Slot*, is a masterpiece of gritty soul/R&B. Performing like nine interlocking gears, the band, propelled by the innovative rhythm section of drummer David Garibaldi and bassist Francis Rocco Prestia, brought jazz technique to pop and funk approaches, driving every note with a conviction and mastery that were unheard of at the time.

Tower of Power was formed in Oakland, California, in 1968, and its earliest albums, *East Bay Grease* (1970) and *Bump City* (1972), were raw, oily affairs of mean, Marvin Gaye- and Stevie Wonder-influenced street soul that expressed the earthiness of urban life rather than superstar visions. *Tower of Power* (1973) produced the hits "So Very Hard to Go," "This Time It's Real," and "What Is Hip?" And 1974's *Back to Oakland* featured "Squibb Cakes," one of Garibaldi's most imitated grooves, as well as the covertly syncopated "Can't You See (You Doin' Me Wrong)." But while *Back to Oakland* pushed harder on the romance meter, with *In the Slot* the group seemed determined to not only reaffirm its street cred but to inject it with even more guts, more spit, more power.

Parallel to Mike Clark's jazz-funk innovations with the Headhunters, Garibaldi's complex patterns and ghost-note-filled, rimshot-cracking stickings were grounded in pure Oakland



funk. Garibaldi was so sly in his delivery, light in touch yet nailing every rhythm with a potent intensity. Indeed, he's the spark that ignites *In the Slot*. "Just Enough and Too Much" blasts out of the gate, with

Garibaldi slipping and sliding while the horns slither between his accents. "On the Serious Side" disguises the 1 in a tug-of-war between drums, bass, horns, and organ, as the rhythms constantly shift gears yet retain a serious groove. It's metric modulation between states of mind—multiple pulses existing in one tightly wound spiral.

"Ebony Jam," pure 4/4 street groove, is followed by the R&B pocket puncher "You're So Wonderful, So Marvelous." The 1 is further assaulted in the Latin magic of "Vuela Por Noche," an extremely complex but grooving lesson in rhythmic displacement and hi-hat/bell propulsion. "Drop It in the Slot" closes the album back on the block, with grunting brass and popping bass riffs driven by Garibaldi's advancing hi-hat designs, which dance and spin with their own special magic, like *In the Slot* itself.

**Ken Micallef**

### **Tower of Power *In the Slot* (1975)**

Just Enough and Too Much • Treat Me Like Your Man • If I Play My Cards Right • As Surely as I Stand Here • Fanfare: Matanuska • On the Serious Side • Ebony Jam • You're So Wonderful, So Marvelous • Vuela Por Noche • Essence of Innocence • The Soul of a Child • Drop It in the Slot

**Hubert Tubbs:** lead vocals

**Bruce Conte:** guitar, vocals

**Chester Thompson:** keyboards, vocals

**Francis Rocco Prestia:** bass

**David Garibaldi:** drums

**Lenny Pickett:** sax, piccolo, clarinet,

contrabass clarinet, Lyricon

**Emilio Castillo:** sax, vocals

**Steve Kupka:** baritone sax

**Mic Gillette:** trumpet, trombone, flugelhorn,

piccolo trumpet, bass trombone, vocals

Produced by Emilio Castillo and Tower of Power



Jonathan Moffett

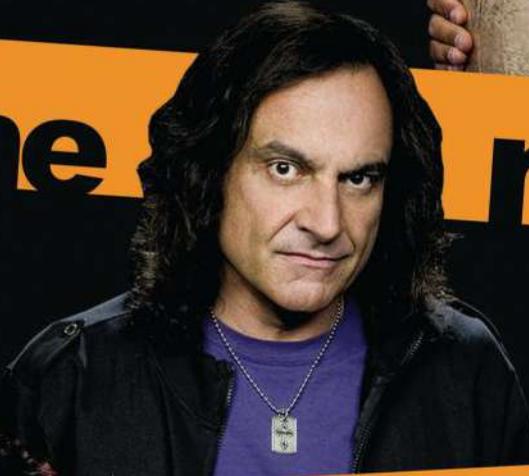
Rick Latham

Join



Horacio El Negro Hernandez

the movement



Vinny Appice

we did



Robby Ameen

we're serious



Carmine Appice

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# Arturo Stable

More than most, this percussionist understands that necessity is the mother of invention—and you never want to leave Mom hanging. So whether he's collaborating with heavyweight jazzers or leading his own unique ensembles, he always answers the call to create new rhythmic and sonic possibilities.

by Michael Dawson

Last fall, the Cuban-born, Philadelphia-based composer/percussionist Arturo Stable met with four of his favorite musicians—saxophonist Seamus Blake, bassist Edward Perez, guitarist Lionel Loueke, and vocalist Magos Herrera—at Peter Karl Studios in Brooklyn, to track a handful of original compositions and spontaneous improvisations for his latest album, *Cuban Crosshatching*. Conspicuously absent from the two-day session, however, was a drummer.

On his previous records (*3rd Step*, *Notes*

(18" bass drum, hi-hats, and cymbals), various percussion instruments (cajon, djembe, bongos, pandeiro, frame drum, dombek, bata, rattles), and a custom snare made by master luthier Matthew Smith that features a goatskin head and a truncated conga-style stave shell.

This unique setup allows Stable to shift seamlessly from driving drumset-like grooves ("Havana Lights," "Mr. Brake") to more traditional percussive approaches ("Táita," "Duet With Sax," "Habana del Este") and impressionistic textures

drawn to music as a child growing up in a family of artists in Santiago de Cuba.

Stable's family eventually relocated to capital city Havana, and Arturo went on to study percussion at the Amadeo Roldán Conservatory. In 1993 he moved to Puebla,

**"With percussion you either embellish or lay down a groove. The function of the contemporary jazz drummer is much more interactive. So making that switch in my head was very important."**

on *Canvas*, and *Call*), Stable brought in his longtime friends Francisco Mela and Dafnis Prieto to man the throne. This time Arturo decided to go it alone, absorbing both roles by playing on an unusual hybrid kit that incorporates common drumset elements

("Pienso en Ti," "Reverence," "Letters to Luz"). The result gives *Cuban Crosshatching* a unique and refreshing sound, something the ever-curious thirty-seven-year-old Stable has strived for since first being



## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Stable's setup changes from gig to gig, but for *Cuban Crosshatching* he used an 18" Slingerland bass drum; a Meinl doumbek; LP bongos, Vibra-Slap, and Stanton Moore signature pandeiro; a traditional djembe, cajon, thumb piano, and frame drum; a custom-made rebolo; a signature goatskin-head snare and quintillo; a Zildjian 20" Flat ride and 14" K Custom Dark hi-hats; a 22" Sabian HHX Manhattan Jazz ride with three rivets; a 22" Bosphorus Master Vintage ride; and assorted shakers, rattles, gongs, and cowbells.



Mexico. This is where he began to absorb musical styles from other areas of the world, including American jazz.

In 2001, Stable enrolled at the Berklee College of Music, and in 2006 he earned a master's degree in music from Philadelphia's University of the Arts, where he's currently on the faculty. Since coming to the States, he has kept himself busy with a slew of his own projects, including an intimate piano/percussion duo with fellow Cuban Elio Villafranca, whose first album, *Dos y Mas*, was released in 2012. Stable is also a first-call percussionist for legendary artists such as vibraphonist/marimbist Dave Samuels and saxophonist Paquito D'Rivera, as well as for contemporary greats like bassist/vocalist Esperanza Spalding and drummer Terri Lyne Carrington, whose critically acclaimed 2013 album, *Money Jungle*, Arturo appears on.

Stable fills the rest of his schedule

teaching hand drums and Latin drumming at UArts and working on commissions for various big bands and chamber ensembles around the world. At the time of our interview, which occurred a few weeks before he headed off to Europe for a short tour, Arturo was scrambling to put the finishing touches on a twenty-minute string quartet/jazz ensemble piece composed to accompany a Marc Chagall painting on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. We decided to start our conversation here, on this most recent—and most pressing—assignment.

**MD:** What is the commission piece about?  
**Arturo:** It's a piece for string quartet based on a big painting called "A Wheatfield on a Summer's Afternoon." Chagall painted it for an opera about the Pushkin poem "The Gypsies."



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## ARTURO STABLE

The painting has a humongous wheat field and a huge orange sun and moon. There's also a little boy in a blue boat, and within the wheat field there's the head of a sheep that looks like it's been decapitated. What you see when you first look at the painting is the sun, moon, and wheat field, but when you really dig in you realize that the most important element is the little blue person.

But I'm not trying to replicate the painting. I just tried to use some of the elements as inspiration. I started with the story of the poem, which talks about a city guy who leaves his life to be with a Gypsy girl but then kills the girl and her lover when he finds out she's been sneaking out on him. The main elements I decided to work with were the sun, the moon, death, and the feeling of loss and solitude.

**MD:** This sounds like a very ambitious project for a contemporary jazz percussionist.

**Arturo:** I know. What was I thinking? [laughs] I could have just gone there with my jazz quartet and played a tune that works with the painting. But no, I had to do a string quartet, so I ended up writing music for hours every day for a month. But it's fun, and I don't want to have too much control over my creativity.

### CUBAN CLASSICAL UPBRINGING

**MD:** How did you get into writing music?

**Arturo:** The first important thing I wrote was at a family reunion when I was ten or eleven. There was a big fight, and I felt so bad that I went to the piano and started playing a melody. As I was playing, everybody stopped arguing. The fact that my family paid attention to it, and that my dad said I had a gift for writing, really encouraged me.

**MD:** When did percussion come into your life?

**Arturo:** I started taking piano lessons when I was very young, but at that time Cuba had a strict Russian-style music school. I wasn't able to study piano because I started school a year

early, but I could study percussion. I worked really hard on piano at the same time, thinking that after a couple years I could ask them to change, but I fell in love with percussion. If you live in Cuba or Brazil the coolest guys are the percussionists, and they were the guys who got the girls. [laughs]

**MD:** How is percussion taught in Cuba?

**Arturo:** Until the late '70s, everything that was taught in school was classical music, while popular and folkloric music was taught on the streets. But that system was changing when I started. You studied classical, but you took courses on folkloric. My teacher was classically trained, so he only taught the basics. But on the streets you could learn from different mentors. My dad was a musician, so he would talk these great percussionists into having me to their houses to hear me play. You had to show them that you were worth their time, because they didn't charge money. Back then everything was based on pride and mentorship.

### PERCUSSIONIST TURNED DRUMMER

**MD:** Aside from the duo with Elio Villafranca, you've mostly worked alongside drumset players. But for *Cuban Crosshatching* you decided to absorb the role. How did that come about?

**Arturo:** It was partly about economics. With the way the scene is today, the less people you have involved the better, and the only element that I had repeated in my groups was percussion. Also, a lot of the music I write is not based on clave or folkloric elements, where the percussion plays a very specific function, so incorporating cymbals and other textures started happening naturally.

**MD:** What's the difference in mentality of being the drummer versus the percussionist?

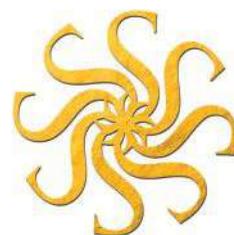
**Arturo:** The first is the function. If you're playing rumba, each drum has a pattern that interacts with the others in a very specific

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## ARTURO STABLE

way. But in contemporary music, the drummer is the one who drives the intensity and handles the transitions. Percussion is not traditionally played that way. You either embellish with colors and textures or lay down a groove. The function of the contemporary jazz drummer is much more interactive, so making that switch in my head was very important. And, of course, there's the technique of playing with sticks. I still work on trying to get the cymbal to sing.

I have two people to blame for me taking this new direction. One is Francisco Mela. We played a lot in Boston, and he was the one who pointed out that the music I was writing could benefit from different approaches.

The other guy is a Spanish sax player named Javier Vercher. He booked a tour, and he wanted to use percussion instead of drums. I went to Spain with him for three weeks, which was an eye-opener. I didn't know what I was doing, but the people loved it.

**MD:** What was your setup at that point?

**Arturo:** I went to Home Depot and bought three garbage cans and filled them with everything I had. [laughs] I didn't know what I was doing, so I would set up different stuff each time. It was hilarious, but it was a lot of fun. I just needed to find a way to do it right.

All of that is what drove me to make *Cuban Crosshatching*. Recordings are like photos of a stage in your life. They don't need to be perfect or groundbreaking. We made that record under a year ago, but I feel that I'm already playing a lot differently.

**MD:** What was the inspiration for the compositions on *Cuban Crosshatching*?

**Arturo:** I wanted to do something that I would feel good about as an artist but that would also reach out to people. That led me to think about why I got into music in the first place. For me, it was traditional Cuban and classical music, like Bach, Mozart, and Schubert. Then I thought about what type of jazz was the most influential for me. It wasn't *Bitches Brew* or Herbie Hancock funk from the '70s—it was Louis Armstrong and things like that.

### IDLE HANDS...

**MD:** What else are you working on these days?

**Arturo:** I'm working on a piano trio. I'm writing tunes that have specific poly-chords that the pianist and bassist have to work within. We're going to hit the studio

at some point, but I'm not in a rush. What I don't want to do is record first and then gig. When you do it that way, a year later you're playing the music differently. Even if it takes a year or two, I want to let life dictate the circumstances.

**MD:** How do you stay focused with so many things going on at once?

**Arturo:** My main focus is to try to keep from losing focus. [laughs] I've had to make some sacrifices along the way. For instance, I really wanted to learn tabla, but I had to say no. I'm a curious person, and I have natural skills for a lot of things, which

actually works against me sometimes. I learn pretty quickly, but nothing's fast enough if you want to do it really well. Even if I can learn tabla quicker than most, it's still going to take me two to five years to really master the instrument. Can I do that? No.

**MD:** Nothing comes overnight.

**Arturo:** Right! So I have to put limits on myself. Part of my nature is to do a lot of things, but sometimes I want to do too much. I mean... I just bought a mandolin. Why did I do that? [laughs]

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Story by Bob Girouard • Photos by Rahav

# Dino DANELLI

“With all due respect to my drummer friends—and most of my friends are drummers—he was and still is the greatest rock drummer ever.”

When Little Steven Van Zandt said those words in May of 1997 while inducting the Rascals into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, he spoke for a great many drumming fans. Now Van Zandt has put his money, his time, and his reputation where his mouth is, bringing the famously fractious foursome back together to tour and star in a series of groundbreaking Broadway shows.

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---

**B**ack in the '60s, *The Ed Sullivan Show* was much like *American Idol* is now: a barometer of pop culture. Its impact on the baby-boomer generation was immense. And while in 1964 scores of future drummers were clearly affected by a certain lad from Liverpool, it wasn't until March of '66 that many of us late bloomers were witness to what seemed like the second coming of rock drumming.

At first, this particular Sunday night seemed no different from any other, as the stiff but likable host introduced the evening's musical guest with his familiar lead-in: “*And now, right here on our shew... the Young Rascals!*”

People in the know had heard of this band out of New York with two great lead singers. One played a Hammond B3 and sang with a voice that sounded

like Smokey Robinson colliding with Ray Charles. The other, tambourine in hand, sang like a bird and danced up a storm. To his left the guitarist churned out rhythms on a semi-solid-body Gibson while flashing a big smile.

This unusually soulful display was anchored by a drummer who was a show unto himself. It's safe to say that many TV viewers had never seen anything close to this—almost totally enveloped by his Ludwig drumkit, he was bobbing his head from side to side; cracking his snare; slashing, splashing, and choking cymbals; twirling drumsticks; and assaulting the instrument with a combination of speed and power that was mesmerizing. The audience was going *nuts*. Tonight the message was loud and clear: A drumming prophet had spoken, and his name was Dino Danelli.



**B**rought up in the streets and nurtured by a doting mother who loved big band music, Danelli had magnetic qualities that were inherent from the start. "I was always treated like a star," Dino says, "from my mother on up. She gave me so much. Whatever I did, it was met with praise."

Danelli's addiction to the drums was evident by the fact that he memorized the parts on every Gene Krupa record he could get his hands on. That, along with his sister's doo-wop collection, provided the foundation that he built his own inimitable style on. From there,

he was like a budding Picasso meets P.T. Barnum. At age twelve Danelli invited all the kids in the neighborhood to

mean, none of the drums matched, and they were all different colors and weird sizes. It was a mess. But I made it work."

**"I remember standing in front of the club and watching Gene Krupa, thinking to myself, 'One day I've got to play on that stage.'"**

watch him play—for ten cents—in his basement, nicknamed Dino's Casino.

Recalling his first drumset, Danelli says, "I took it from my grammar school—a real cobbled-together kit. I

Dino's Casino became so popular that it had to be closed by the police. Only a year later the young drummer was making the rounds of the local clubs, often with his mother in tow, sitting in

## Innovations

Danelli's art background has played a major part in his attention to aesthetics, in terms of both gear and performance, and some of the concepts that he's introduced have become staples of many players' setups and playing vocabularies.

**Big bass drum.** Although large kick sizes were not uncommon with big band drummers, rock players in the mid-'60s pretty much topped off at 22", while contemporary jazzers were downscaling to 18" models. Danelli was playing a wide-open 24" drum (with newspaper as an internal muffler) as far back as 1961—well before John Bonham or Carmine Appice.

**Mounting a rack tom on a snare stand.** One of the hippest things—so simple yet so effective. Ironically, it's used by more drummers today than when Danelli popularized it. "That was out of frustration," Dino says. "In those days, if you hit hard, the bass drum tom mount would fall apart. So one day I just took an extra snare stand and put my rack tom on it. It worked great, and apparently some people thought it looked good as well."

**Timpani cymbal felts.** "I was strictly going for the look on that," Danelli says. "I just removed the tops of the mallets and put them on my stands. It looked cool...everyone was wondering where they came from, and nobody could find them!"

**Cymbal choke and stick twirling.** "I got the choke from Sonny Payne. The twirling was from him and Lionel Hampton. By the way, it doesn't come through the thumb and index finger. It spins around between the index and the middle finger."

**Double-handed cymbal crash.** "The double-handed crash came around '88, during the Good Lovin' tour. I was inspired by tennis greats Björn Borg and Jimmy Connors, and the power they got from that stroke. Though it's kind of rough on cymbal stands!"



# Drummers on Dino

## DANNY SERAPHINE

Dino Danelli was one of my earliest influences back in the day. I grew up with Gene Krupa as my first drum hero, then came Ringo when the Beatles hit. But Dino, well, he had that same flair that I had in my playing, so I could relate to him a lot more than Ringo, Charlie Watts, or Dave Clark. He really was ahead of his time. As a matter of fact, "Saturday in the Park" was my tribute to Dino. I'm so happy for Dino and company that they have reunited, and that they're getting the respect they deserve. From one Italian drummer to another, my hat is off to you, my friend!

## JIM KELTNER

I got to see Dino play at an event sometime in 1969. I was there with Delaney & Bonnie. His drums were all white, and he was set up on a very high riser. I just remember his hands flying furiously and this great sound coming off the stage. But what was most fun to watch was the intense energy he put into every song, and how great he looked doing it!

"I wanted to be Dino!" —Liberty DeVitto

## ROGER MANSOUR OF THE VAGRANTS

Dino Danelli was one of the greatest drummers of the '60s. I would watch him play at the Barge in the Hamptons when the Vagrants played across the street at the Tiana Beach Club. I will never forget how his playing and solo would completely blow my mind. We did many gigs with the Rascals, and they helped us get signed to Atlantic Records. Great memories from an old friend!

"Dino was the Buddy Rich of my generation."  
—Andy Newmark

## RICK MAROTTA

When I first started playing drums, the Young Rascals was one of the most popular bands in the world. Thanks to my friend Andy Newmark, I was introduced to the playing style of Dino Danelli. Andy and I would soak up everything we could and watch him whenever possible, and then we would compare notes. I remember sitting in my parents' attic, playing along to "Good Lovin'," "Mustang Sally," "Midnight Hour," and just about everything else they had recorded. That was school for me. It was a period where Dino was king. It's great to see one of America's seminal bands back together, doing what they always did best, groovin' with one of the most influential drummers of the era.

## CARMINE APPICE

I've known Dino since 1964, when he was opening for Gene Krupa at the Metropole jazz club in New York City. He came off the stage and we started talking, and he showed me a cool rock drum pattern with 8th notes on the snare accenting the 2 and 4, with 8ths on the ride cymbal and a syncopated bass drum. It was awesome and very innovative. He was the man. I always loved Dino. Glad to see he's back!

## PETER CRISS

I would watch Dino play, and it made me want to play. I copied his showmanship, like how he moved his neck and puckered his lips. I loved everything he played, especially his offbeats.

## JOHN BLACKWELL

There were a few drummers who influenced me in terms of showmanship, but one man that stands out is Dino Danelli. He was one of the main drummers I would watch on TV and try to imitate when I was growing up and practicing. Thank you for the lessons. Much love and blessings to you.

"Saturday in the Park" was my tribute to Dino."  
—Danny Seraphine

## GREGG BISSONETTE

Dino Danelli—what an incredible musician, and a big influence on me. There is a passion in his playing with the Rascals that stands out now just as much as when I heard them for the first time. What is so crucial for a drummer, and what I always want to share with other drummers, is the importance of groove, and that's what Dino Danelli brought to everything he played. The way his personality shines through makes his style unique and so relevant. When you listen to him play, it's dynamics, it's heart, energy, feel, groove—it's everything about drums that makes music so powerful.

## LIBERTY DEVITTO

Dino Danelli affected me both musically and personally. I met him when I was fifteen years old and he was my idol. When he spoke to me, he treated me like a person, like a young musician, like I mattered. I am greatly indebted to him for taking the time to make me feel important. Dino played for the song, whether it was bongos to fit the mood of Central Park in "Groovin'" or driving like a freight train on "Come On Up" and "Too Many Fish in the Sea." I wanted to be Dino!

## ANDY NEWMARK

I was about sixteen years old when the Rascals came out with "Good Lovin'." However, I saw them a year before that at Madison Square Garden opening for James Brown. I had no idea who they were when they came on stage. Dino and the band completely blew my mind that night. In an instant they became my favorite band ever! I had never seen or heard anything remotely like the Rascals. Prior to them, I really liked the Beatles and the Stones, but those bands did not turn me on like Dino and the Rascals did. The Rascals had that American blue-eyed-soul thing going on, which I was deeply into. Dino was the Buddy Rich of my generation, no doubt. He was really laying down some deep shit. He was a serious player with chops, funkiness, and tons of soul. His feeling is what got me the most. When I saw Dino play, I knew for sure that music was the most important thing in my life. It's quite possible that Dino is the main reason I dedicated my life to music back then.



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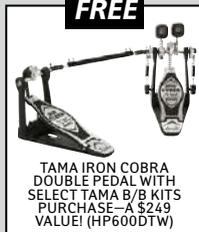
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**EXCLUSIVE**

- 14x6.5" 1.2mm black nickel-plated steel shell
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**HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY**

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**AFTER \$80 INSTANT REBATE GREAT GREEN STARTING AT**

**\$599<sup>99</sup>**

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**\$70 INSTANT REBATE**

- Your choice of configuration: 10, 12, 16 and 22" or 12, 13, 16 and 22"
- Available in wine red (shown) or black finishes

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**COLORS AND MODELS VARY BY LOCATION (SP5NWR5) (SP5NBK5) (SP5WRS) (SP5BK5)**  
**LIST: \$479.99**

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**EXCLUSIVE**

- Compact, full-featured electronic drum set
- Includes 130 voices and 14 amazing drum kits
- 40 song-style patterns to jam with
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### OCDP 13x7" MAPLE SNARE WITH CHESTNUT-STAINED ASH OUTER PLY

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- 13x7" maple shell, outer ash ply, chestnut stain finish
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**(OCSN0713CA) LIST: \$399.99**

**\$199<sup>99</sup>**

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### THIS 13x4.5" BLACK STEEL PICCOLO SNARE FROM OCDP PACKS A PUNCH

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# Zildjian



## BIG SAVINGS ON SELECT ZILDJIAN A CUSTOM CYMBALS 16" OR LARGER (OR HI-HAT PAIR)

**\$40 INSTANT REBATE**

Zildjian A Custom cymbals utilize radical rotary hammering techniques, thin to medium weights and a striking brilliant finish for a crisp, sweet, sophisticated sound. Not too dark, not too bright—just right for modern music.

(A20501) (A20839) LIST: \$383.00 - \$621.00

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## THE ZILDJIAN A 390 PACK OFFERS CUT AND CLARITY

**NEW AT GUITAR CENTER**

- Pack includes 14" New Beat hi-hats, 20" medium ride, 16" medium-thin crash and added value 18" medium-thin crash
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(A390) LIST: \$1825.00

**NEW**

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## THIS ZBTP390 SUPERSET WAS DESIGNED TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF TODAY'S MUSIC

**NEW AT GUITAR CENTER**

- Includes 14" ZBT hats, 14 and 16" crashes, 20" ride, plus an added value 18" crash and 10" ZXT trashformer
- Produced with a revolutionary manufacturing process to deliver a bright, intense tone that cuts through any mix

(ZBTP390-SP) LIST: \$930.00

**NEW**

**\$399<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE 56% OFF LIST



## SPECIAL SAVINGS ON REVOLUTIONARY CYMBALS IN A CUSTOM-CONFIGURED PACK

**\$100 INSTANT REBATE**

- The world's first hybrid acoustic/electric cymbals
- Includes: 13" hi-hats, 14" crash and 18" crash/ride cymbals
- Dual-head mini microphone "pickup" design
- Includes a Digital Cymbal Processor with preset tone-shaping capabilities

(G16AEB52G) LIST: \$1224.00

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## TRILOK GURTU "THREE-LOK" SIGNATURE STICK PACK

**EXCLUSIVE**

- Hickory, wood tip, thumb groove at fulcrum point
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**EXCLUSIVE**

Zildjian sticks are made with the same care and exacting attention to detail as Zildjian cymbals. They feel great, and they're guaranteed to be straight. This month, Guitar Center is offering 4 pairs for the price of 3.

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**YAMAHA LIVE CUSTOM DELIVERS MORE POWER AND DEEPER SOUND ONSTAGE**

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**SELECTION VARIES BY LOCATION**  
**(LC2F40AWS) (LC2F40BWS) LIST: \$3320.00**

**NEW**

YOUR CHOICE

**\$1799<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE 45% OFF LIST



**THE YAMAHA DTX522K LETS YOU SOUND YOUR ABSOLUTE BEST**

**NEW AT GUITAR CENTER**

- Features the exciting new DTX-PAD snare
- Exclusive 3-zone hi-hat and cymbal pads
- New DTX502 module
- USB port allows you to control VSTi software

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**(DTX522K) LIST: \$2200.00**

**NEW**

**\$999<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE 54% OFF LIST



**TOP-NOTCH YAMAHA SOUNDS ON THE COMPACT DTX430K ELECTRONIC KIT**

**\$50 MAIL-IN REBATE**

- Yamaha's high-quality tone generator with realistic acoustic drum, cymbal, and percussion sounds
- High-end oak, maple, beech and birch drums, with velocity-sensitive samples that respond to your playing dynamics

**SELECT STORES**  
**(DTX430K) LIST: \$899.99**

BEFORE \$50 MAIL-IN REBATE

**\$599<sup>99</sup>**

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**YAMAHA STAGE CUSTOM KITS COME IN A MIX OF EXCITING COLORS AND CONFIGURATIONS—INCLUDING THIS EXCLUSIVE BEBOP KIT**

**EXCLUSIVE**

- 3-piece Bop kit comes with an 18" kick drum
- 5-piece kits come with your choice of a 20" or 22" kick drum

**HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY**  
**SNARE NOT INCLUDED ON BEBOP KIT**  
**COLORS AND CONFIGURATIONS VARY BY LOCATION**

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**(SCB8F30) (SCB0F50) (SCB2F550)**  
**LIST: \$900.00 - \$1180.00**

**NEW**

3-PIECE BIRCH BEBOP KIT STARTING AT

**\$499<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE UP TO 44% OFF LIST



**CUT THROUGH WITH THE BRIGHT EDGE 14x6.5" STEEL SNARE FROM YAMAHA**

**EXCLUSIVE**

- Deep, resonant sound
- 1.2mm steel shell
- 10-lug design
- Yamaha custom quality at a great price

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**(SD266A) LIST: \$249.99**

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**EXCLUSIVE**

- Siam oak shells for warm, resonant open tones and sharp slap tones
- EZ Curve rims for hand comfort
- Tucked heads for classic tone
- Steel bottoms provide extra durability and stability

**SELECT STORES**  
(LPP311-BFLC) (LPP312-BFLC)  
(LPP313-BFLC)  
LIST: \$296.00 - \$440.00

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SAVE UP TO \$430 OFF LIST



**LP AMERICANA SERIES GROOVE CAJON—  
MADE IN THE USA**

- Americana series cajons from LP give working percussion pros everything they need to wow the crowd

**SELECT STORES**  
(LP1427) (LP1437)  
LIST: \$299.99 - \$479.00

**STARTING AT**  
**\$189<sup>99</sup>**  
SAVE UP TO \$169 OFF LIST



**LP CLASSICS II SERIES CONGAS**

**SAVE OVER \$100  
WHEN PURCHASED TOGETHER**

- 30" tall, 2-ply Siam oak shells
  - Pro Care integrated shell protection
  - Hand-selected rawhide heads
- (LP1175-AW) (LP1250-AW)  
LIST: \$618.00 - \$671.00

**\$499<sup>99</sup>**  
**PER PAIR**  
SAVE \$789 OFF LIST



**TOCA FREESTYLE SERIES DJEMBE**

**EXCLUSIVE**

- The West African djembe is both powerful and portable, and makes a great drum circle lead instrument

(TF2DJ-12ADB)  
LIST: \$240.00

**\$144<sup>99</sup>**  
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- The first bell designed by LP for non-Latin musical forms
  - Made of 14-gauge steel, heavier than all other LP cowbells
  - Intended for mounting and designed specifically to take a beating
- (LP007) (LP008)  
LIST: \$60.99 - \$79.99

**STARTING AT**  
**\$32<sup>99</sup>**  
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**GRETSCH CATALINA MAPLE ANNIVERSARY 5-PIECE SHELL PACK IN TOASTED ORANGE LACQUER**

**NEW AT GUITAR CENTER**

- 7-ply, 2.3mm all-maple shells with natural interiors
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- GTS suspension systems, die-cast claw hooks, hinged tom brackets, Mini Gretsch lugs
- Famous Gretsch round badges on all drums

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**NEW**

**\$799<sup>99</sup>**

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**GRETSCH'S WARM CATALINA JAZZ KIT WITH COPPER SPARKLE FINISH**

**\$80 PRICE DROP**

- 18x14" kick, 12x8 and 14x14" toms, 14x5" snare, and all-mahogany shells with a 30° bearing edge
- GTS tom suspension system
- Copper sparkle finish

**HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY (CCJ484-COS) LIST: \$1045.99**

**\$599<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE \$446 OFF LIST



**GRETSCH 14x6.5" TAYLOR HAWKINS SIGNATURE SNARE DRUM**

**NEW AT GUITAR CENTER**

- 14x6.5" steel shell plated with gleaming black nickel
- 2.3mm triple-flanged hoops, 10 lugs and adjustable throw-off
- 20-strand snare wires, Remo drum heads
- Signature Taylor Hawkins badge with "The Hawk" symbol

**(S6514TH) LIST: \$385.99**

**NEW**

**\$249<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE \$136 OFF LIST



**THE REVOLUTIONARY GIBRALTAR G-CLASS SINGLE BASS DRUM PEDAL**

- Sleek, smooth surface hi-performance styling for a comfortable feel
- Adjust spring tension at the turn of a wheel
- 2-point cam adjustment changes resistance to suit your playing style
- High-quality machine parts, die-cast foundation plate

**(9711GS) LIST: \$349.00**

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**A GIBRALTAR REMOTE KICK PEDAL FOR YOUR CAJON ATTACHMENT**

**BEST SELLER**

- Frees up your hands to play other instruments
- Delivers the woody, dry tones of your cajon

**CAJON SOLD SEPARATELY (GCP135343) LIST: \$169.99**

**\$99<sup>99</sup>**

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Sabian took 12 of their finest prototype cymbals directly to their customers, drummers just like you, by touring the country and offering demo workshops in many Guitar Center stores. Following each session, drummers tested each cymbal and voted on their favorites. Six cymbals emerged as clear winners in the Sabian Cymbal Vote, and Guitar Center is proud to carry all six.

**MODELS VARY BY LOCATION**  
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**THIS SABIAN B8 CYMBAL PACK COMES WITH A FREE 16\"/>**

**EXCLUSIVE**

• This set features a clean-toned set of 14\"/>

PERFORMANCE SET +16

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SAVE 45% OFF LIST



**FREE 18\"/>**

**EXCLUSIVE**

• Includes 14\"/>

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(25005XXPGC-NB) LIST: \$1295.00

**\$649<sup>99</sup>**

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**MOVE TO THE NEXT STAGE WITH THE SABIAN XS20 SUPER SET**

• Includes a pair of 14\"/>

**\$599<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE 40% OFF LIST



**BRING ACCENTS TO THE MIX WITH SABIAN'S CHOPPER AND ALU BELL CYMBALS**

• Alu Bell: bell-like tone and great sustain  
• Chopper: innovative 3-layer design, delivers super-fast white-noise responses

SELECT STORES  
(AB7) (CH10) LIST: \$114.00 - \$265.00

ALU BELL  
**\$69<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE 38% OFF LIST

CHOPPER  
**\$159<sup>99</sup>**

SAVE 39% OFF LIST



## Recordings

### THE YOUNG RASCALS



**The Rascals** "I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore" and "Good Lovin'" from *The Young Rascals*, "(I've Been) Lonely Too Long" from *Collections*, "You Better Run" and "Find Somebody" from *Groovin'*, "See" and "Hold On" from *See*, "Peaceful World" from *Peaceful World*, "Jungle Walk" from *The Island of Real III* // **Fotomaker** "Plaything" and "Pain" from *Fotomaker*, "Name of the Game" from *Vis-à-Vis*, "Woman Like You" from *Transfer Station III* // **Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul** "I Am a Patriot" and "Undefeated" from *Voice of America*

**Video:** Modern Drummer Video Archive, "A Conversation With Dino Danelli and Liberty DeVitto," October 2008

with the likes of sax great King Curtis.

In 1959, the wild ride was only just beginning, as Danelli would sneak into the famed Metropole club in Manhattan, copping tips from his idols Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, and Sonny Payne. Krupa in particular became a mentor to the fearless upstart. "I remember standing in front of the club and watching Gene," Danelli says, "thinking to myself, *One day I've GOT to play on that stage.*"

In 1961 Danelli did just that, with

the group Ronnie Speeks and His Elrods. While literally living at the club, Danelli befriended the legendary Cozy Cole, who gave Dino his red Rogers set. It was at this time that Danelli developed his visual persona. "The club had mirrors everywhere," he recalls, "so I learned to check myself out while I was playing, to see what would look good or not. Technically, I learned from everybody that played there. Even bad drummers have a lick or two that's good. Everybody stole from each other."



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# Dino's Gear

Although he's played many types of drumsets over the years, Danelli will be forever linked to the Ludwig kits he used in the '60s with the Rascals. Here are some of his most fondly remembered setups. Each of these particular outfits, with the exception of the "Claude Monet" rig, featured a 5x14 Supra-Phonic snare drum, a 9x13 rack tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 14x24 bass drum.

## Silver Sparkle, Burgundy Sparkle, and Champagne Sparkle Kits

These drumsets were often seen on TV shows like *Ed Sullivan*, *American Bandstand*, *Hullabaloo*, *Mike Douglas*, *The Tonight Show*, *Joey Bishop*, and *Music Scene*. Danelli gave his famed silver sparkle kit to Willie Davis of Joey Dee's band. "He was a great drummer," Dino says, "and a fabulous showman."



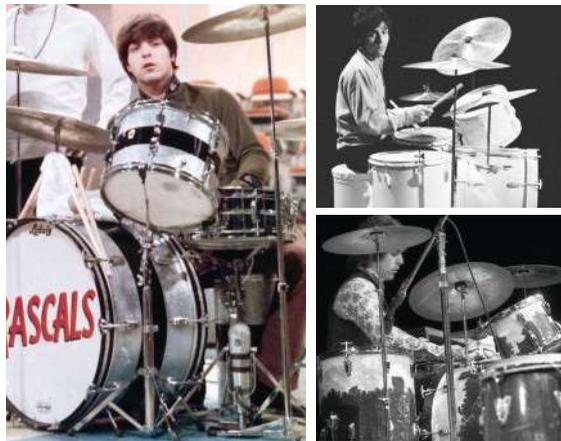
## Yosemite Sam Kit

This was a real conversation piece, handmade by Dino, who covered the shells with posters of Yosemite Sam, Scrooge McDuck, and an American flag top hat. He gave the set to L.A. record producer Peter Bunetta.



## Silver Sparkle Kit With Duo-Tone Black Stripe, White Kit, and Claude Monet Kit

The two-tone set was featured prominently in a photo of Danelli playing in a Nehru jacket. With the white kit, he painted the shells, hardware, and stands all white (though the set looks pink on the back cover of the *See LP*). The Monet kit featured jazz-size drums—18" bass drum, 12" rack tom, 14" floor tom—that Danelli covered with prints of the painter's works and secured with polyurethane. This set was used in 1969 and 1970, including on singer Tom Jones' TV show, and was the last set Dino used on stage during the Rascals' original run.



## Cymbals

Zildjian has been Danelli's primary choice throughout his career, though there was a brief stint with Meinl in the early '80s and with Sabian between '88 and '90. The drummer's '60s setups generally included 14" New Beat hi-hats, an 18" or 20" Medium ride, and 18" Medium and Medium-Thin crashes.

Photos courtesy of Joe Russo/TheRascalsArchives.com

At the ripe old age of sixteen, Danelli headed to New Orleans, soaking up the sounds of the city's rich jazz and R&B culture. "I didn't believe what I was seeing down there," he says. "It was one great player after another." Danelli specifically attributed his syncopated bass drum approach to the influence of drummer Eugene "Bones" Jones of Sugar Boy and His Cane Cutters, who cut the original version (called "Jock-a-Mo") of the staple New Orleans song "Iko Iko." "You couldn't help but absorb the 8th-note shuffles," Dino says. "But what I got from Bones was the way he played his bass drum: open, but with solid accentuation. After I got back to New York everybody was doing it, including Ringo!"

In 1964, while backing the songstress Sandu Scott in Las Vegas, Danelli and organist/vocalist Felix Cavaliere planted the seeds of their own band. A year later, back on the East Coast, the two hooked up with vocalist Eddie Brigati and guitarist Gene Cornish (like Cavaliere, former members of the "Peppermint Twist" hit makers, Joey Dee and the Starlites), and the Rascals took flight.

Danelli's big, splashy sound was the perfect fit for the group's unique melding of rock and R&B. "In the beginning we were a cover band," Dino says. "We didn't have a plan, though our approach to instrumentation was modeled on Joey Dee's band.



## Dino's Once Upon a Dream Setup

### Drums:

- A. 5x14 clear Vistalite snare (5x14 Supra-Phonic 400 metal snare as alternate)
- B. 10x10 tom
- C. 10x12 tom
- D. 16x16 floor tom
- E. 16x22 bass drum

**Heads:** Remo Coated Vintage snare batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Clear Vintage Emperor tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, and

Clear Vintage Emperor bass drum batter and Clear Ambassador front head. No muffling.

### Cymbals

- 1. 13" Zildjian A Custom Mastersound hi-hats
- 2. 14" Zildjian A Custom EFX crash
- 3. 16" Zildjian A Custom EFX crash
- 4. 16" Sabian AAX Aero crash
- 5. 18" Sabian AAX Aero crash
- 6. 18" Zildjian A Custom EFX crash

**Sticks:** Vic Firth RockN model

In fact, it was the configuration that defined our sound: the Hammond organ with rhythm guitar and drums, minus bass guitar. My right foot *was* the bass, along with Felix's bass pedals and Gene's early rock 'n' roll-influenced rhythms.

"Each of us brought something to the table with our instruments," Danelli continues. "Felix had a world of sounds at his disposal. There was Gene, with the way he applied the rhythm. And from the get-go I treated my drums like an orchestra. I always wanted to be a lead singer—I just did it from the drums! It was amazing, the sounds Felix and I were able to come up with. Our instrumentation, although not unique, was used very effectively.

"In my mind," Dino adds, "the other defining element was our vocals. Besides Felix and Eddie, there was Eddie's brother, David, whose voice gave us that extra dimension. It was around the time of the *Collections* album that we really started to come

into our own."

The Rascals' rise was meteoric, with SRO crowds at venues like the Choo-Choo Club in New Jersey and the Barge in Long Island sparking a feeding frenzy among record labels. The eventual winner was the R&B powerhouse Atlantic Records, which signed the now officially named Young Rascals—following objections by a group called the Harmonica Rascals—as its first white act. Promoter Sid Bernstein, acclaimed for bringing the Beatles to Shea Stadium, already had management dibs on the band, and the stage was set for a bona fide rock 'n' roll monster.

Between 1966 and 1972, the Rascals recorded nine studio albums and more than a dozen charting singles, with total record sales today exceeding 30 million. Their greatest songs, among them "Good Lovin'," "Groovin'," and "It's a Beautiful Morning," became instant American classics, each one elevated by Danelli's inventive drumming. But as '60s feel-good grooves gave way to

## Playing Time on Cloud Nine

Rascals bass player/musical director Mark Prentice comes full circle.



Michelle Nicoletti/Prentice

On February 10, 1967, I went to my first concert, and it was the Young Rascals. They played at my high school in Watertown, New York, the only venue large enough in our little town. I had just turned thirteen and owned a guitar, but what I saw and heard that night changed my life, and I decided then and there to become a musician. I've been really fortunate and have had a great career, played and recorded with dozens of my heroes, won a Grammy, etc., but all of that takes a backseat to playing with the Rascals. Dig it: I'm the bass player that gets to play with Dino Danelli, the guy that connected Gene Krupa to rock 'n' roll for so many drummers. And I have the honor of being the only bass player to ever share the stage with all four

original Rascals, so right now I'm on cloud nine.

Dino's style is unique—powerful and definitive. He's a force of nature that somehow supports and interprets the music at the same time. The subtlety of his playing is really deep, subdivisions superimposed over time and spread around the kit. I'm flying every time we get to hit together, and I'm very proud to now call him my good friend.

Dino's approach to a song is so different and interesting. He takes these songs for a ride. His energy is totally "live" and changes with how he's feeling it on a given night. The overall picture is the same, but he'll play an across-the-bar fill or break a section down in a slightly different way and I'll look up at him on the riser, and he's cool as hell, ageless, and he's somehow twirling sticks in the middle of his groove. Talk about living the dream!

I first hooked up with Felix Cavaliere just over a decade ago, and that association led me to this opportunity. I love all these guys. The *Once Upon a Dream* show is surreal, and I'm the luckiest cat alive.

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## DINO DANELLI

'70s bombast, the group failed to retain its lofty position in the rock pantheon, and the members decided to follow their individual paths.

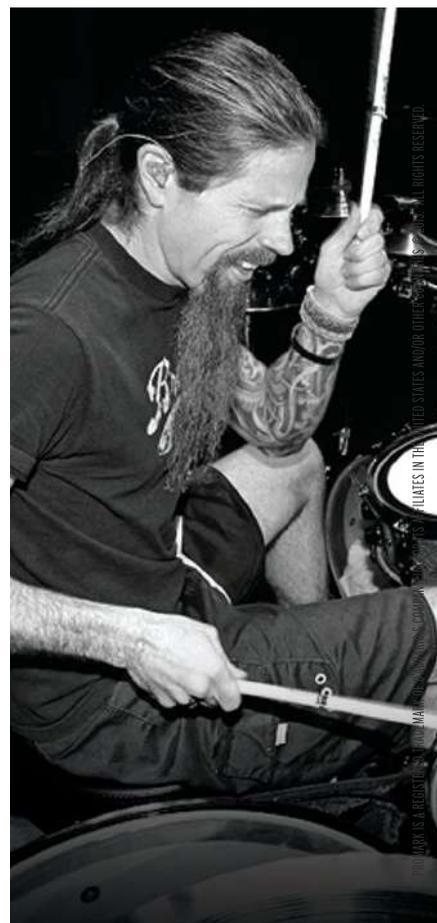
Actually, Danelli and Cornish stayed close, and soon they formed the band Bulldog, which released two albums. A few years later the pair started the highly acclaimed Fotomaker. Back home on Atlantic, this new group was a pet project for label honchos Ahmet and Nesuhi Ertegun, who touted it as a sure thing. Danelli stepped out with a fresh, "melodic" approach, implementing multiple toms and additional cymbal coloration. But none of Fotomaker's three albums—1978's self-titled debut, that same year's *Vis-à-Vis*, and 1979's *Transfer Station*—became significant hits.

"Fotomaker was ahead of its time," Dino says. "We had the songs, vocals, and musicality. It shouldn't have missed." Indeed, pop gems like "Where Have You Been All My Life" and "Miles Away," though filled with hooks and

inspired performances, got lost among the hundreds of new-wave and power-pop albums that flooded the late-'70s record market.

Danelli, for his part, was far from done contributing to the music world. In 1980, E Street Band/Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes guitarist Little Steven Van Zandt formed his own group, the Disciples of Soul. Right from the start Van Zandt had only one drummer in mind. Danelli brought the perfect dynamic to Little Steven's brand of rock, locking in a massive groove beneath the wall of guitars, horns, and keyboards. Ever the innovator, Dino experimented with electronics and triggering on a Plexiglas kit that that he designed himself.

When asked about the Disciples of Soul, the drummer recalls the band's popularity outside the States. "Europe was wonderful," he says. "We played to a lot of people and sold a lot of records. It was a great band, and over there Steven really had his own identity."



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## DINO DANELLI

Danelli recorded the Disciples albums *Men Without Women* (1982) and *Voice of America* (1984). And even though he had to leave the band because of an illness in his family, he maintained his affiliation, serving as art director on 1987's *Freedom: No Compromise* and 1989's *Revolution*.

Meanwhile, Rascals songs were suddenly being heard on soundtracks of Hollywood movies like *The Big Chill*, *Legal Eagles*, and *Platoon*. A band resurgence was inevitable, and in 1988

the original lineup, minus Eddie Brigati, appeared at Atlantic Records' 40th Anniversary Celebration at Madison Square Garden, laying the groundwork for a fifty-city Good Lovin' comeback tour that summer. Danelli was in fine form, integrating new rhythmic approaches to many of the band's classic songs. And his showmanship was as remarkable as ever.

The reunion was short-lived, though, and the group soon broke into two distinct factions—Felix Cavaliere's

Rascals, and Danelli and Cornish's New Rascals—both of which toured over the next decade. It seemed as if the lineup that longtime fans knew and loved might never work as a unit again. But the faithful were given reason to be optimistic on May 6, 1997, when Danelli and all his Rascals mates played together during the ceremony for their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Fittingly, Little Steven did the honors, bringing the house down with a hilarious and heartwarming tribute—which inadvertently proved to be his screen test for the Silvio Dante character on *The Sopranos*.

Once again, though, a full Rascals reunion proved to be elusive. Danelli continued to play the classic-rock circuit with the New Rascals, and he filled the rest of his schedule with music production gigs and creative projects in the worlds of art and film—until 2010, when the idea for one more attempt at a full-band get-together began to gain traction.

The spark this time was the annual dinner for the Kristen Ann Carr Fund for cancer research at Robert De Niro's Tribeca Grill in New York City. The star-studded audience was blown away by the majesty and power of the original lineup's performance—augmented by none other than Bruce Springsteen on "Good Lovin'"—reminding everyone just how important the Rascals are in the history of rock, and proving that the band's legacy has been untainted by the passage of time.

In fact, everyone in the group was so excited by the success of that evening that plans to hit the road were quickly devised. That would have to wait, but Van Zandt had a bigger idea anyway: He wanted to present an elaborate Broadway-style production that would give audiences a chance to see the classic lineup perform once again, but in a unique dramatic environment. The result is *Once Upon a Dream*, a "bio-concert" that features the Rascals on stage playing their most beloved songs, while a high-tech video screen shows filmed scenes of actors portraying key moments in the band's history, as well as period news snippets

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and archival footage of the group.

Produced and directed by Van Zandt, with lighting and projection by the award-winning designer Marc Brickman, the show is ambitious, even by Broadway standards. But perhaps a bigger question than whether the multimedia concept could be pulled off was whether the band could live with each other for an extended period.

"As far as playing together goes," Danelli says, "I knew that with the collective spirit we had at the Tribeca, plus the four of us committing to each other to do this with Steven, I felt it was finally going to happen." Despite some initial obstacles, the project went into development in 2012. Following a rapturous sold-out six-night run at the Capitol Theatre in Port Chester, New York, in December of that year, the show moved to the Richard Rodgers Theatre on Broadway, where it played for two weeks early in 2013. This summer, *Once Upon a Dream* trekked across the U.S. It will return to the Great White Way in the fall.

Ultimately, the plan is to have the Rascals continue well into the future. From a playing standpoint, there's no reason they shouldn't. Danelli, somehow, is brasher and bolder than ever. The man is an ageless wonder, shaping and propelling the music like only he can. "I'm exercising and watching my diet," he says when asked how he handles the rigors of playing consecutive thirty-song shows. "Plus, the multimedia aspects break up the song continuity. It's pretty relaxed. Mentally, I wasn't sure what my reaction would be, especially having not played some of this material for years. But after doing it and seeing the flow and the reaction of the audiences, I'm more confident now."

On stage, Danelli is his quintessential self. Perched on a high riser, he takes a confident, animated approach to the instrument, which is in evidence on classics like "(I've Been) Lonely Too Long," "Come On Up," and "How Can I Be Sure." Utilizing traditional and

matched grips and integrating new rhythms into the songs' arrangements, what he does with deep cuts like "Do You Feel It," "What Is the Reason," "Mickey's Monkey," "Too Many Fish in the Sea," "Hold On," and "Heaven" is exhilarating.

Purists need not worry, though. "I'm trying to approach the songs in a way that anybody who remembers the original rhythms won't be alienated," Danelli says. "I'm not going to disappoint fans by trying to be so cool that nobody recognizes the songs. Though I *am* incorporating new parts during solos, bridges, etc. Most of it, I think, fits well. Steven, being a traditionalist, had some reluctance, but by and large he's embraced everything I've come up with."

Longtime Dino-philes will be glad to see Danelli once again sitting at a set of Ludwigs. For this tour he chose clear Vistalites, reminding us of his appetite for visual and aural stimulation. "I prefer them, and yes, they have a bit of a different sound," he says. "Since the old days, I've been playing wood sets and acrylic sets, and I like both. But, at least for this show, I prefer the tone I'm getting out of the acrylic kit. I'm also preferring the new cymbals I'm using, a combination of Zildjian and Sabian models with holes in them. I like their timbre, their softness—they're not as high-endy. You can crash and ride, which creates a beautiful wash behind solos. It's a nice feel for me, and they allow me to hear the other instruments differently. Instead of articulating each note, they blanket them with a warmer edge. Interestingly, I think they were initially created as effects, but they're much more than that, and I'm using them in a variety of ways."

Based on the phenomenal success of *Once Upon a Dream*, Danelli is digging in and preparing for the long haul. "This time it's for our legacy," he says. "We've always been short-changed in that area, and so have all of our fans that have stood behind us for the last forty-plus years. We're going to change all that by returning their thanks and putting a permanent stamp on the Rascals' place in history, once and for all."

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Libor Hadrava  
- Educator/Clinician



# Antonio

The greatest artists never stop evolving. Here the veteran drummer with Pat Metheny, Chick Corea, and Gary Burton details his kit work on each track off his latest solo album, making a connection between his growth as a composer and as an instrumentalist.

Story by Michael Dawson  
Photos by John Abbott



# Sanchez

**T**here's a long history of jazz drummers making the transition from the role of supporting cast member to bandleader: Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Art Blakey, Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, Jeff Watts, Brian Blade.... Next in this great lineage is Antonio Sanchez, an award-winning drummer who's spent the past fifteen years working his way to the top of the modern jazz echelon, thanks in large part to his long-running associations with the legendary guitarist Pat Metheny and vibraphonist Gary Burton, as well as earlier work with Latin and contemporary jazz artists such as saxophonists Paquito D'Rivera, David Sanchez, Michael Brecker, and Miguel Zenón;

pianists Danilo Pérez and Chick Corea; and bassist Avishai Cohen.

Earlier this year, the forty-one-year-old drummer released his third solo album, *New Life*, which is the first to be made up entirely of his original compositions. While there's no shortage of creative and adventurous drumming throughout the record (check out the musical and dynamic drum solos on "Uprisings and Revolutions," "Minotauro," and "The Real McDaddy" for examples), the music itself has much more substance than simply providing a backdrop for jaw-dropping fills and polyrhythmic flourishes. For instance, the title track is a fourteen-plus-minute opus that takes you on a slowly evolving journey, from a reflective piano arpeggio to a

hard-hitting 3/4 vamp and epic saxophone solos, yet Sanchez's drumming takes a decidedly supportive role, helping to mold the dynamic contour of the piece with subtle twists of shape and texture.

It's clear from tracks like "New Life," which showcase musical maturity over virtuosity, that Sanchez has gleaned much from his years backing some of the finest artists in jazz, and that his own artistry—as drummer, composer, and leader—is coming into full bloom. We met up with Antonio at Drummers Collective in New York City, a few days before his CD release run at the Jazz Standard, to dig into the concepts behind each track on *New Life* and to talk a bit about how and why he ended up adopting this new role.

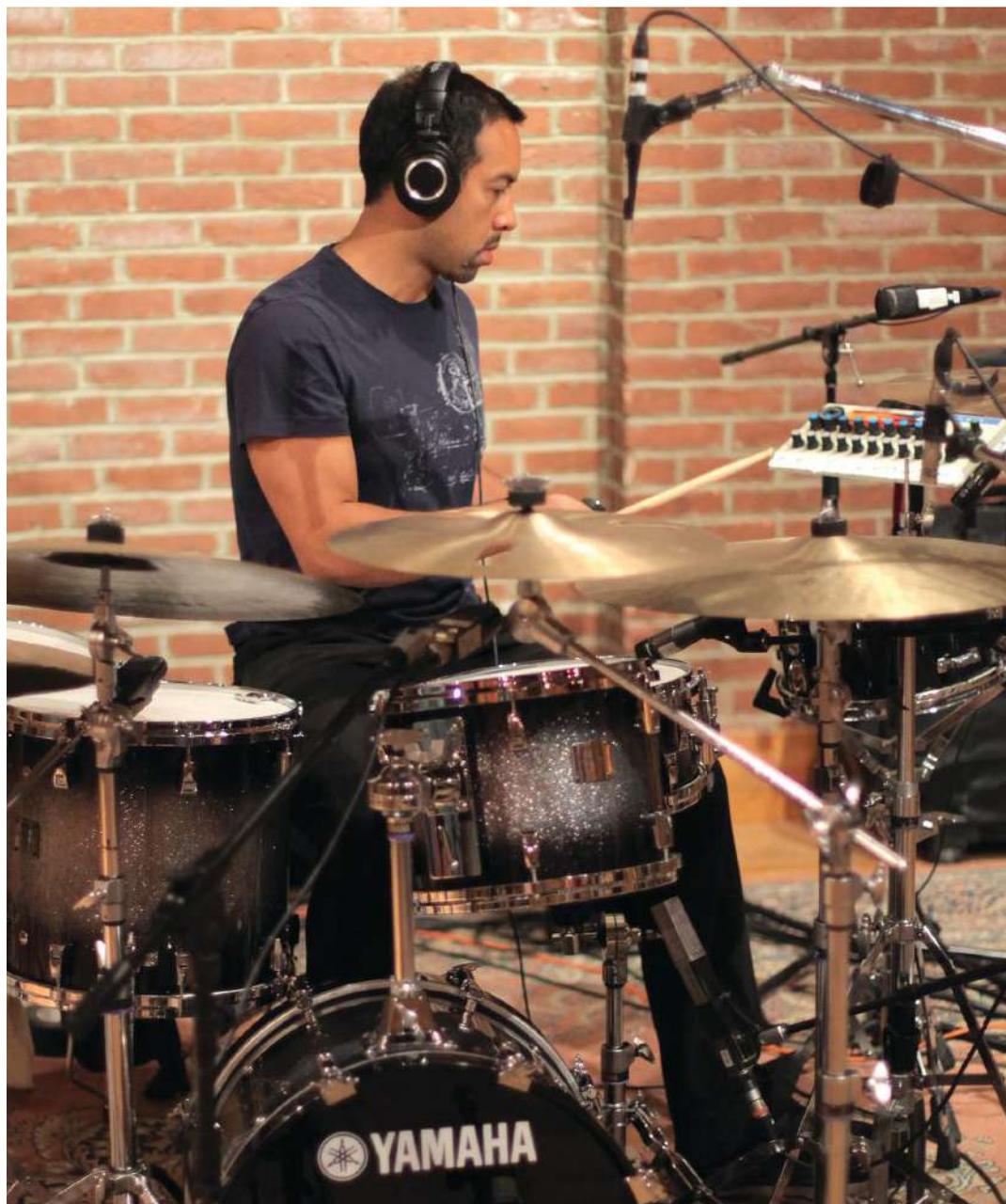


## Recommended Listening



**Antonio Sanchez** *New Life, Live in New York, Migration* // **Pat Metheny** *Unity Band, Tap, Speaking of Now, The Way Up, Day Trip, Tokyo Day Trip Live* // **Michael Brecker** *Wide*

*Angles* // **Chick Corea** *Dr. Joe* // **Gary Burton** *Quartet Live, Common Ground, Guided Tour* // **Miguel Zenón** *Ceremonial, Looking Forward, Jibaro* // **Avishai Cohen** *Colors, Unity* // **Danilo Pérez** *Motherland* // **David Sanchez** *Travesía, Melaza* // **Kenny Werner** *Balloons* // **Donny McCaslin** *Soar, In Pursuit, Perpetual Motion*



**MD:** Being that you're still active with both Gary Burton and Pat Metheny, why did you decide to start leading your own band?

**Antonio:** It just felt like it was time to start doing something like that. I knew of a lot of drummers who led bands, but what I didn't see too much of was drummers that were also writing their own music. I always composed, but I was very shy about it, especially after playing with all these great bandleaders and composers. But finally in 2007, I decided to do a record [*Migration*] with half of my own material. Little by little, because of that record, people started calling me for gigs with my band, so it was an organic transition.

But it's really hard as a bandleader. For example, let's say you have ten gigs in Europe. You have to pay for everybody's ticket to go from here to there and then from city to city, and on days off you often have to pay for hotels. Then you have to pay the band, the manager, and the booking agent. A lot of times, there's absolutely nothing left. But I think of it as an investment for the future.

As a sideman, the natural process is to do tons of gigs when you're young, for not very much money. When you start getting better, you get more calls, which raises your profile, so you can charge more. That can go on for a number of years, but behind you there

are always young guys, who are getting really good too and are willing to play for a lot less. At some point, the work starts getting less. I want to be on the other side, where I can call people to work for me instead of me waiting to get called. If I lead my own band, I can work forever—hopefully.

**MD:** How do you choose personnel for your band?

**Antonio:** You tend to gravitate toward people who are in your same generation, because you've been exposed to a lot of the same stuff. I feel like my generation is very versatile. We have listened to everything from rock to jazz, pop, and hip-hop. I gravitate toward people who can handle all of that, and who are also nice people, because you have to be on the road for a long time sometimes. If you're with people who aren't in the right frame of mind, it can be disastrous.

**MD:** Let's talk about the opening track on *New Life*, "Uprisings and Revolutions." I hear some Elvin-ish swing, and it's in 7/4. How do you get so comfortable swinging in seven?

**Antonio:** This used to be a straight-8th ballad, but one day I started hearing that bass line and decided to make it a super-aggressive tune with a Coltrane/Elvin vibe. It has a rubato section at the beginning, and we never know where that's going to go. That's why I called it "Uprisings and Revolutions," because there's a call in the beginning for something bigger that happens later.

**MD:** Are you hearing the bass line throughout to keep track of the seven?

**Antonio:** You could play in seven a million different ways, and the bass line

is often what tells me how to approach the tune. Everybody is kind of playing off that, so we can agree on when to start and finish phrases, when to create tension, and when to release.

**MD:** Where in that bass line is your resolution point?

**Antonio:** You can end on the 1, but we play over the barline a lot. On the record, it's more like a sample of what we do live. Sometimes we end up playing a funk thing over the seven. In my solo, I go from straight to swing, but it's always based on the same quarter notes. It's what you play in between that dictates the feel.

**MD:** Your solo starts with a very melodic motif. Let's talk about melodic soloing.

**Antonio:** Melodic soloing and motivic development are my main concerns. I like to start solos by laying the groundwork for something I can develop, and I love to leave space. I can play a phrase

and repeat it a few times, leave space, and then turn the phrase around. When you leave space, you have time to think of what you're going to play next. If you just let your hands go, chances are you're going to play some of the same things. I like to play different melodies. That's also how people follow the story that you're trying to tell.

**MD:** Did you study Max Roach for this type of soloing?

**Antonio:** Yeah, but I also studied non-drummers. Pat [Metheny] has been a huge influence on motivic development. Everything he does comes about because of something he played before. It's storytelling.

In this tune, every time I play the main motif, I play something different in between. That provides something to latch on to between the other ideas. I also don't play the motif at the same points in the bar, but the orchestration

## Antonio's Studio Setup



### Drums: Yamaha PHX

- A. 5x14 snare
- B. 8x12 tom
- C. 14x14 floor tom
- D. 16x16 floor tom
- E. 14x18 bass drum
- F. 5x14 auxiliary snare

**Heads:** Remo Coated Ambassador X snare and tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Yamaha single-ply logo head on front of bass drum

**Sticks:** Zildjian brushes and Antonio Sanchez signature model sticks

### Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" vintage A hi-hats
- 2. 18" K EFX crash
- 3. 22" Constantinople Medium Thin High ride
- 4. 16" EFX crash  
(or stacked ZXT Trashformer and 12" splash)
- 5. 21" vintage K ride
- 6. 22" A Custom Flat ride
- 7. 6" A Custom splash inverted on 18" prototype crash (with holes)
- 8. 22" A Swish

**Hardware:** Yamaha

*Mike Johnston*

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is the same.

At some point I'll break from the motivic development and just go with the energy, and in this case it's my job to bring it up to when the band comes in. Contrast is paramount.

**MD:** "Minotauro" has a subtle metric modulation where the bass plays a hemiola in 4/4 that later turns into the downbeat in 6/8. Can you explain that a little bit?

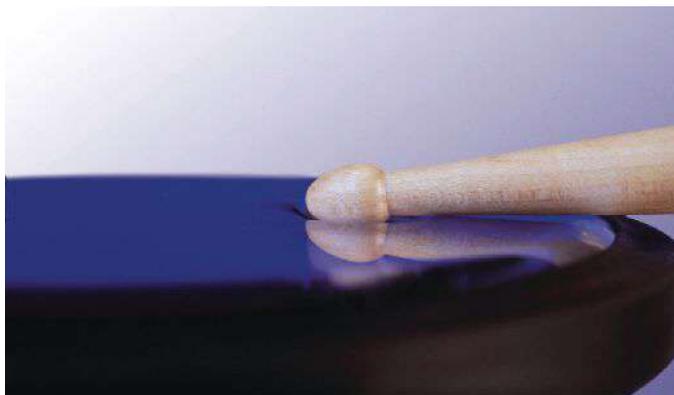
**Antonio:** This tune starts in 4/4. The bass plays dotted quarters over the barline, but it restarts every four bars. It's fun to play with the hemiola, but I didn't want to make it too obvious, because that's a very easy place to go as a drummer.

**MD:** The song showcases your interactive approach when playing behind soloists.

**Antonio:** Yeah. What I like doing the most is to fill in the blanks when they're not playing. It's like a conversation.

The drum solo is over the same bass line. Again, I like to do as much motivic development as I can, twisting the same idea around in different ways. But sometimes I like to just play different sounds. I also go from feeling the bass line in 6/8 to feeling it in 4/4.

**MD:** How do you shape what you're doing between the interactions with the soloist?



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It's ever evolving, rather than just laying down a groove and filling every eighth bar.

**Antonio:** If I were to play a basic 6/8 groove in "Minotauro," it would have been like putting handcuffs on it. I want to have enough of the groove going all the time but also leave space to have time to react.

**MD:** It's in this part of your playing—interacting with the soloists—where I hear some percussion influence.

**Antonio:** Absolutely. I developed a lot of this from playing with Danilo Pérez, David Sanchez, and Paquito D'Rivera. With Danilo, I would have a set of bongos, a conga, a Gajate pedal with a cowbell, a flat timbale, and two or three extra cowbells and woodblocks. I was still trying to play loose, but with all of those percussion sounds. My intention wasn't to sound like a timba drummer, which is more like funk with clave. This song is based on Afro-Cuban 6/8, but it's looser.

**MD:** Let's move on to the title track, "New Life."

**Antonio:** This is one of those tunes where the drums were the last thing I thought about. It started with the piano arpeggio, which just turned out to be in seven. The drum part I created was on the computer, and the cymbal followed the piano part, which creates a comfortable bed. My drumming instinct wanted to break away from that, but it just wasn't right. It's a little of a Metheny thing, where the ride is *there* all the time. You can do whatever you want over here, but the cymbal is the basis of the groove.

**MD:** Then it switches to a heavier section in 3/4.

**Antonio:** The 3/4 part is something I had already written. I like how the different sections move seamlessly from one to another. For this song, there's at least four minutes of written material before the first solo. I could have gone to the solo sooner, but I really liked how the melody was developing, so I wanted to keep it going.

**MD:** "Nighttime Story" is a very soulful ballad.

**Antonio:** Drumming-wise, this tune is super-straight-ahead, but it isn't easy

to orchestrate on the drums, because it has a really long form. I needed to figure out when and where to change things a little bit. It starts with brushes on the snare, and then I move one brush to the open hi-hat. When the two horns come in, I go to the cymbal, and then when it gets to the high point, I go to a stick on the cymbal, but I keep a brush on the snare.

**MD:** The deliberateness of the orchestration is almost like a producer's mindset rather than a drummer's.

**Antonio:** Totally. That's another thing that Pat influenced. We did this tune where he wanted a perfect crescendo in two bars, so I had to go from brushes to rods and then to sticks. There was so much of that in his tunes that I had to have a drum case on each side of me with a set of everything on it so I could grab whatever I needed at any point. It was a lot of work, but it was very effective. On a tune like this, where it's a groove that repeats, you have to be careful of when you do things, to make sure that the music goes where it needs to go.

**MD:** How did you decide what gear to use on the record?

**Antonio:** It's the same basic set that I've been using for a while now. Drums and cymbals are so personal, but it takes a long time to get to know exactly what they do. I don't switch cymbals often, for that reason. I know exactly how my crashes and rides are going to react.

**MD:** Did "Medusa" begin as a bass line? The bass part seems to be the underlying theme throughout.

**Antonio:** Yes, this was an experiment to write everything over the same bass line. Chick Corea and Pat do this type of thing a lot, where you play all kinds of crazy stuff over a bass line, yet it's not so difficult that you're sweating about losing it.

**MD:** What does a syncopated bass line like this do to your drumming?

**Antonio:** It gives you a lot of things to play off, because it has so many accents in it. The idea is for it to be like a snowball that gets bigger and bigger all the time and is always moving. I like these kinds of bass lines because they

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never settle. They give you so much liberty, and there's space for a lot of conversing.

**MD:** "The Real McDaddy" is more playful and really exposes the adventurous spirit of your music.

**Antonio:** This is the most fun song for me to play live, and people always go crazy for it, because they never know where it's going to go. Live, we leave really long pauses in the melody, and the intro is completely free.

The idea was to write a tune that had a bunch of kicks within the structure that we play during the solos. That allows you to play all kinds of crazy stuff and still land together on those hits. I also love soloing over the form, which is more interesting than playing over a vamp.

**MD:** Your solo is very dynamic.

**Antonio:** The element of surprise is super-important to me, so I like to get soft and loud in different parts of the solo.

**MD:** You have amazing dynamic control. How did you learn to play quietly?

**Antonio:** That's something you really have to practice, and playing intense and soft is the hardest. I really started developing that when I was with Danilo Pérez. We would be working in places where we couldn't play very loud, so I had to keep my level down. I struggled like crazy in the beginning, because I wasn't used to playing so soft. But everybody should practice that.

It's like if you want to learn how to play super-fast. You have to practice it. You cannot just get to the gig and expect to be

able to do it. You should always be able to do *more* than you need. You have to do that with everything—playing fast, loud, soft....

**MD:** Your solo phrasing always emphasizes contrast.

**Antonio:** I learned a lot of that from listening to other musicians, like Keith Jarrett. I've learned so much about shape and overall form and structure from him.

I love to start open solos without a clue of what I'm going to do. It's like problem solving. If you get into trouble, you have to try to get out of it in a musical way. You don't want to start something and then move on to something completely unrelated. You can do that, but I don't think it's going to sound that good.

**MD:** So you work with the ideas that you start with, no matter what.

**Antonio:** Exactly. For me it's all about transitions. It's like when you play swing and want to go into 6/8 or a Latin groove. You have to prepare that transition, or else it feels like it comes out of nowhere. But I love getting myself into a mess and seeing how I can come out of it. For that, you need patience. It's easy to change it too fast. But if you stick around with the same thing and see how many different ways you can play it, and *then* move to the next subject, it'll sound better.

**MD:** "Air" is a very spacious song with mostly light brushes and cymbal colors and textures.

**Antonio:** This tune has a lot of space, and I like how it builds up. Even though it's a ballad, it's more dramatic. It's so much fun to be able to go from nothing to really loud and back in a ballad. A lot of people don't know what to do in ballads, and often the tempo drops. Every time I play one, I have to really concentrate to keep it moving.

It's important to record yourself so you can know your tendencies. That's why I don't like to just do four takes in a row in the studio without listening. If you do that, you're basically using the same approach all the time. But if you had listened to it, maybe you would have realized that the vibe wasn't exactly what you wanted, and you could have made adjustments. I've learned that lesson the hard way.

**MD:** The closing track, "Family Ties," has a really nice vibe and flow.

**Antonio:** The entire record has some hope to it, and this was a nice closer because of that. It's also a lot of fun to play, because it has some stuff in seven, and it's not too hard, but it's not too easy either. And there are hits in the melody that we do during the piano solo.

**MD:** There's some fast ride cymbal work in there too.

**Antonio:** Yeah, that's also some of the Metheny influence, where you're almost playing bebop, except that nothing about it is really bebop. That's the cool thing about this kind of music. It's all based on bebop and straight-ahead jazz, but what we're actually doing ends up sounding like something completely different.

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# Jon Wurster

Since joining the hugely influential indie band **Superchunk** in 1991, he's gone on to save the day for a host of highly regarded artists, from **Marah**, **Bob Mould**, and **the New Pornographers** to **Guided by Voices**, **Ryan Adams**, and **Jay Farrar**. All the while, he's developed some of the most appealingly twisted characters in contemporary comedy. He's even found the time to occasionally write for this very magazine. *MD* editorial director Adam Budofsky wants to learn how he manages such a wide, varied, and demanding workload.

on the well-known, independently run New Jersey radio station WFMU.

The guy is funny. *Really* funny. Like, give-him-his-own-series-on-FX-already funny. And he plays the kit like he damn well means it. *Modern Drummer* sat with the amiable yet thoughtful Wurster on the eve of the release of Superchunk's bracing and tuneful new album, *I Hate Music*.

If you subscribe to the ancient Chinese philosophy of yin and yang, then you'll need very little convincing that somewhere on our planet lives one chronically dimwitted, arrhythmic, humorless, mumbling, unemployed fellow. This hapless chap serves the purpose of balancing the existence of the singularly intelligent, groovy, sharp-tongued, booked-solid drummer and humorist known to music lovers as Jon Wurster and

understanding Wurster's career. For not only has Jon spent the better part of two decades playing decisive, hook-filled drums with an all-star cast of indie-rock heavy hitters, including former Hüsker Dü/Sugar leader Bob Mould, Guided by Voices mastermind Robert Pollard, Mountain Goats honcho John Darnielle, and the influential band Superchunk, but he has also been at the center of some of the smartest, funniest, and strangest humor to creep onto our airwaves

and laptops. Wurster's slacker doppelgänger would have to absolutely freeze on camera, for

"I'm exactly where I'd hoped to be when I was a kid. Though I assumed it would have happened in my twenties! But it's great, because I can really appreciate it now."

to indie radio and comedy fans as, among other things, Philly Boy Roy, the Gorch, and Ronald Thomas Clontle.

Grasping the idea of cosmic balance is, indeed, at the heart of

our hero has contributed hilarious onscreen appearances to music videos by Mould, Aimee Mann, and the New Pornographers, as well as skits with his longtime collaborator Tom Scharpling, creator of the *Best Show*

**MD:** You have such a multifaceted career. How do you balance it all?

**Jon:** I'm lucky in that everyone I play with is at least my age. We're all in our forties, which is old enough to know what's an achievable goal and what's not. Another thing is, all three of my main bands—Bob Mould, the Mountain Goats, and Superchunk—are on the same label. We all know each other, so scheduling-wise everybody can talk and make it work.

**MD:** Even though it isn't as active as it once was, Superchunk is still an ongoing concern. It's impressive how the band has adapted to everyone's needs.

**Jon:** We all agreed to not break up and to just do stuff when we can, and let other things come first. But we're in the great, unique position where two of the people own the record label, which has become incredibly successful. [Merge Records, founded by Superchunk singer-guitarist Mac McCaughan and bassist Laura Ballance, has released such hit records as the Arcade Fire's *Neon Bible* and *The Suburbs*, Spoon's *Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga*, and



D.L. Anderson

She & Him's *Volume Two*.]

**MD:** And at the same time you've enjoyed this alternate outlet in comedy and writing. How does that fit into everything else you do?

**Jon:** I remember that when I was touring with Marah in 2004, the only way I could afford to play with them was by being able to write in the back of the van. At the time, I was writing these funny commercials for MTV. I've also done some writing for Adult Swim shows like *Squidbillies*. But I work on the radio show *The Best Show on WFMU* as often as I can. Writing is a great way to use another part of your brain.

**MD:** Did you have aspirations to do comedy when you were young?

**Jon:** No. I always liked comedy, but I came into that through the back door. In '92 Superchunk played at the Ritz in New York with Pavement and My Bloody Valentine. Tom Scharpling, who had a fanzine called *18 Wheeler*, had written an early story about Superchunk back when they were still known as Chunk, so he knew Mac and came to our show. He and I hit it off, talking about comedy, and we became best friends after that. He was a longtime writer/producer for the TV show *Monk*, and he got me into writing an episode. That was a cool experience,

just seeing how that world works.

**MD:** You've been playing with Bob Mould for several years now. How did that association start?

**Jon:** Toward the end of a tour with the Mountain Goats in March of '08, I got a call from Jason Narducy, Bob's bass player. A few years earlier, Jason and I had been in Robert Pollard's band together. We stayed in touch for the next couple years, and he was calling to tell me that they were having problems with their current drummer, and would I finish their tour of the States? I was a huge Hüsker Dü fan, so I knew that material, and I knew some of the Sugar

stuff and his solo songs, and I said, "Send me the list of songs you're doing. I'll download what I don't have, and I'll just live with it for the next few days."

The Mountain Goats played Philly that night and D.C. the next day, and I just had the earphones on the whole time. Then I drove to North Carolina, showered at my parents', and flew to L.A. that night, and we met and played the next day in San Diego. We did soundcheck, and Jason would give me big cues, and it worked.

**MD:** Bob's music is intense. How do you react to the different energy levels among the people you play with?

**Jon:** That's what I'm so excited about. I'm exactly where I'd hoped to be when I was a kid. I assumed it would have happened in my twenties! [laughs]. But it's great, because I can really appreciate it now, especially since I've been sober the past few years.

It's definitely different between bands, though. Superchunk is pretty rockin', and Bob is just full on. But the Mountain Goats is a whole different thing. I play brushes most of the time, and I love that, though it was a steep learning curve. The Mountain Goats has taught me a lot about space and when not to play. Bob is the opposite. He's on 11 most of the time, and that keeps me in the best physical shape of my life.

**MD:** The years can catch up to rock 'n' roll musicians. But if you're healthy...

**Jon:** ...you can do it forever. When I started doing all this touring with the Mountain Goats and Carl Newman, I was still drinking a fair amount, and that got to be a problem. So I had to make a decision: Am I going to be healthy, or am I going to try to get by while still partying? So I just made a commitment. And it helps so much. The drinking takes away a lot. I remember in the '90s sometimes getting so drunk after a show that I'd still be hungover at showtime the next day.

**MD:** So did you just cut it out of your life?

**Jon:** Yeah, it's been more than three years, and I love it. I'm having so much fun.

**MD:** What about playing with the force necessary for Bob Mould?

**Jon:** I've been training for the Bob stuff for months—I go to the gym every day; I do yoga. And it's about letting the sticks do the work and learning economy of movement. You can create the illusion of giving a thousand percent in the first song but actually conserve energy for the whole show.

**MD:** Bob Mould's band isn't the only gig you've had relatively little time to prepare for. But that hasn't stopped you from taking the plunge.

**Jon:** I have this thing where I don't want to regret not doing something. In 2010 Aimee Mann called and said, "Can you play with me on *Jimmy Fallon* in a couple days?" She's a friend, but I'd never played with her before. But I was like, "Let me see if I can do this."

**MD:** What specific challenges have you had playing with the various leaders you've been associated with over the years?

**Jon:** With Jay Farrar I really had to learn to lay back. I'm more wired to be on top of it—so with Bob Mould there's two guys pushing. He likes everything faster, or *much* faster, than it is

on the record. It's easier for him to play and sing like that.

In November of 2011 we did this show in L.A. at Disney Hall that was a celebration of Bob's music. Jason and I were the drummer and bassist for these other artists who would come in and do a couple of Bob's songs. That was really cool, because we got to play with Britt Daniel of Spoon, and he's got his own thing that we had to kind of fall in with, his own style that's unmistakably him. So I'd think, *How would I play like Spoon drummer Jim Eno, but still make it Bob and still make it me?* Dave Grohl played a set of Hüsker Dü songs with us, so I was soaking up his thing. He and I switched on one song—I played guitar and he played drums, and I got to really see what he does.

**MD:** Some famous leaders have a surprisingly sketchy meter.

Have you ever experienced that, and if so, how do you deal with it?

## Jon's Kits



### Mountain Goats Setup

**Drums:** C&C maple with 7-ply bass drum, 6-ply snare and toms, and steam-bent hickory hoops

**A.** 7x14 snare

**B.** 9x13 tom

**C.** 16x16 floor tom

**D.** 14x24 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Paiste

**1.** 15" Twenty Medium hi-hats

**2.** 17" Dark Energy crash

**3.** 22" Twenty Light ride with four rivets

**Hardware:** DW 5000 bass drum pedal with oversize soft beater

**Percussion:** Meinl hi-hat tambourine, Rhythm Tech Live shaker, LP maraca

**Heads:** Remo Vintage A snare and tom batters and bottoms, and Coated Ambassador bass drum batter

**Sticks:** Vic Firth 5B wood-tip sticks and T1 General mallets, Regal Tip Ultraflex nylon brushes, Pro-Mark Thunder Rods

**Jon:** I don't think John Darnielle, the leader of the Mountain Goats, would mind if I said this, but since he came up playing and recording a lot of his own music without drums, he has a very personal sense of timing. Sometimes songs would move around tempo-wise, but it works within the songs, so I have to move with him. But he's worked on his time and has gotten good in that sense.

**MD:** As drummers we're trained to be the anchor, but maybe sometimes there's a higher power to serve. You listen to Velvet Underground albums, and there's proof right there that time is relative.

**Jon:** It's so great that you say that, because that's definitely where I've had to get to in the last five years. I used to obsess about songs speeding up or whatever. But all the best records have these things in them. There are going to be mistakes—that's rock 'n' roll.



## Bob Mould/Superchunk Setup

**Drums:** C&C maple 7-ply with light-brown pearl finish

- A. 6.5x14 Ludwig Black Beauty snare
- B. 9x13 tom
- C. 16x16 floor tom
- D. 14x24 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Paiste

- 1. 15" Twenty hi-hats
- 2. 18" Signature Power crash\*
- 3. 19" Signature Power crash\*
- 4. 22" Twenty Full ride

\*Pictured: Paiste 18" and 19" Reflector series crashes

**Heads:** Remo Coated Ambassador snare and tom batters for recording (coated Emperors live), Ambassador snare-side, Coated Ambassador tom bottoms, and Coated Powerstroke bass drum batter

**Hardware:** DW 5000 bass drum pedal with round beater

**Sticks:** Vic Firth 5B wood-tip

**MD:** What's your general approach to supporting songwriters?

**Jon:** I sometimes think it's a good drum track if I kind of don't notice it. If there's a great fill, that's awesome, but "I Wanna Be Sedated" has like one drum fill. Or "Sitting Still" by R.E.M. I like stuff like that. I kind of don't want the drums to catch my ear unless it's something really cool. I like the song more than I like crazy drumming.

**MD:** Let's go back to your early life as a drummer. When did you start playing?

**Jon:** I grew up outside of Philadelphia, though somehow my whole family ended up migrating to North Carolina. But I started taking lessons on a pad when I was around ten, for about six months. That's so unsatisfying for a child, and I stopped. I took lessons again when I was fourteen, on actual drums, and learned about jazz and stuff, but I was also getting into the Clash and new wave and playing along to records.

**MD:** Do you remember the first album you played along to?

**Jon:** *Squeezing Out Sparks* by Graham Parker. No one in my family played an instrument, so I'm so grateful that they allowed me to do this, and that my neighbors were cool. I'm glad I stuck with it. Otherwise I would have ruined everyone's lives for nothing. [laughs]

**MD:** What were your first serious bands like?

**Jon:** In 1981, when I was fourteen, I was in this band called Hair Club for Men. Everyone else was older; the oldest guy was twenty-eight. We played parties and stuff. I graduated high school in '84, and by then I was into R.E.M. and hardcore punk and Hüsker Dü and Paisley Underground stuff. It was a great time for music.

After high school I was playing in this band called Psychotic Norman. We played on the punk rock scene and were sort of like the Fall, the Minutemen, the Ramones.... But it was obvious that it wasn't going to be a full-time thing. Meanwhile, I'd seen a review in *Trouser Press* of this band from North Carolina called the Right Profile. [R.E.M. producer/Let's Active leader] Mitch Easter had produced their record, and I ordered the single and kept in touch with the band.

One day my brother, who was in college at Wake Forest in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, called and said that he knew the guys in the Right Profile and that they were looking for a drummer. And the call came on a day when I was *not* pleased with my band. We used to rehearse at the bass player's house, and he didn't show up for rehearsal that day—at his own house! So that night I called my brother and said that I wanted to try out for the Right Profile. My dad gave me the money to fly down there. I tried out, and I got in the band. And three months later, in April of '86, we were in Clive Davis's office getting signed to Arista Records. I was nineteen. And it all went downhill from there.

**MD:** What happened?

**Jon:** We got signed to this record deal, and we had the same management as the Replacements and the Del Fuegos, two bands we really liked. But with Arista, the amount of red tape was insane, just to get the go-ahead to make a record. We were constantly making demos of songs to send them. Sidebar: One of the two main guys in the band, Stephen Dubner, went on to

write this incredibly successful book called *Freakonomics*.

Anyway, we got halfway into making a record with Jim Dickinson at Ardent Studios in Memphis. He'd just done *Pleased to Meet Me* by the Replacements and a Green on Red record. This was summer of '87, a time when there were really big production sounds happening. Everything was crushing and really not swinging at all. It was a weird thing in that Dickinson wasn't that kind of producer, but he wanted to give Arista

**"If I had focused on the fact that I was working with the greatest drummer in the world, I would have been incapacitated. So I was lucky that I was losing my mind in *another* way at that point."**

what he thought they were looking for. And so it was done with this early sampling synth called a Fairlight. I was always reading magazines in the studio, and once I was reading *Modern Drummer* and Jim said something like, "You can tell your drum magazine people that this is as close to playing on the record as you're going to get."

**MD:** Ouch.

**Jon:** Right. It was those early days of editing on a computer. So it ended up sounding really stiff. We cut bait on the record and then just lost all our momentum. Thankfully we eventually got cut loose from Arista. But it took so long. We signed in '86 and didn't get off there until at least '89. And then we changed the name of the band to the Carneys and got a publishing deal through this woman at Warner/Chappell. She said, "I have this guy I want you to record with," and it was Steve Jordan. So we sent Steve some demos and he liked them, and we came to New York to work with him, which was just magical. He never said "Try this" or "Do this"; you just soaked up his thing. That was life changing for me, by far my biggest drumming experience.

**MD:** Was Steve already doing production work at this point?

**Jon:** He hadn't done much yet. The first big thing he was going to do was the Soul Asylum record *And the Horse They Rode In On*. Our thing was right before that. So we went to the Hit Factory in Times Square, and we were really

excited that we were going to experience some of this guy's mojo. It was him and Niko Bolas, who had just engineered Neil Young's *Freedom* record. So it was all these magical people, and we were just these rubes. Niko even thought of us that way—he paid to have hay bales brought to the studio, which was ridiculous but funny.

**MD:** Did Steve's agreeing to work with you make you feel more confident?

**Jon:** It was that, but also at that time I was having some personal problems. If

I had focused on the fact that this was like the greatest drummer in the world and I was twenty years old, I would have been incapacitated. So I was lucky that I was losing my mind in *another* way at that point.

A cool thing happened one night. I was upset that I wasn't going to get to see Joe Strummer play at the Palladium. It was the *Earthquake Weather* tour. We just didn't have any money then. So Steve goes in his wallet and hands me twenty-five bucks and says, "Just go." And it was one of the top five shows I've ever seen. I remember coming back afterward, and while I was gone, Steve wanted to have a drum hit happen at the beginning of one song, but since I wasn't there, Charley Drayton dropped by and played it. So he and I were on it together, one of my all-time favorite drummers.

So then that got shopped around, but nothing happened. I ended up moving to Chapel Hill in March of '91. I got a job washing windows, and one of our customers was this local record store where Mac from Superchunk worked. I'd met him a few years earlier when I'd go to shows at Maxwell's in Hoboken, New Jersey, when the Right Profile had moved to New York as a band. We did that just to be closer to the record label, which was a stupid idea. Mac was in New York at the time, going to Columbia University.

Anyway, the Carneys did this terrible last-ditch tour in the summer of '91, and when we got back to Chapel Hill, I

literally had two dollars to my name. The day I got back I drove to where my brother worked, and he said, "Mac from Superchunk called." I was like, "Please let this be what I think it is!"

They had their first album out on Matador, but their drummer wasn't working out. They'd just recorded their second album, *No Pocky for Kitty*, so I did the tour for that. We'd been courted by a couple major labels, mainly Atlantic, but Mac and Laura had plans to do it on their own. Having gone

through the experience with Arista, I was into that. And it turned out pretty terrible

for all those indie bands that ended up getting signed based on the hope that they could sell like Nirvana, or Smashing Pumpkins, or one of the three other bands that managed to break that big.

**MD:** Times have changed, huh?

**Jon:** It's funny—I think today is *great*. I'm excited that all these bands like Superchunk and the Mountain Goats can make records and tour and make a living at it. Back in the '90s, unless you were one of those bigger bands, you were barely getting by. So now I feel like we're getting our just rewards.

**MD:** Between when you joined in 1991 and when the band went on a hiatus in 2001, Superchunk toured relentlessly and put out half a dozen extremely well-received studio albums, plus several comps of singles and unreleased material. Why did things slow down?

**Jon:** We went on tour right after *Here's to Shutting Up* came out on September 19, 2001. The world was in a horrific state at that point because of 9/11. A lot of bands canceled their tours, but we didn't and went straight to Japan, then Europe, then America. We wanted to do it as quickly as possible, which was a bad idea. Turnout wasn't great, and at the end we were like, "We don't really want to do this anymore." We did go on tour with the Get Up Kids in the summer of 2002, but that wasn't any better. It looked good on paper: opening for a band that was really big and that cited us as an influence. At a

show in Florida I remember thinking, *These kids are gonna dig us!* But we didn't make any sense to them, and that was kind of the end of the first run of Superchunk.

**MD:** Before the break, you'd worked with a few other artists, like Ryan Adams, Rocket From the Crypt, and the Connells. But during the hiatus you were able to focus much more on your freelance work, playing with Marah, Caitlin Cary of Whiskeytown—you even did an R.E.M. Christmas single. One of the more demanding gigs was with Guided by Voices leader Robert Pollard.

**Jon:** I'd played one show at Irving Plaza in 2001 with Guided by Voices when their drummer couldn't make it. Because of that, I was considered a former member of the band, so I got to play a song with them at their final show, which was at the Metro in Chicago on New Year's Eve 2004. Knowing the band was over, I sent Robert a written letter afterward: "If you need a drummer..." And he wrote back: "Yeah—you be my drummer." [laughs]

The band was me, Jason Narducy, and Tommy Keene and Dave Philips on guitar. For about a year we played shows with Bob, behind two of the Merge records he did [*Coast to Coast Carpet of Love* and *Standard Gargoyle Decisions*].

That was really cool, because there's a lot of prog in his stuff, which I don't know anything about. I tend to take offense if someone gives me a song that has a weird time signature or something. "Why are you *doing* this to me?" [laughs] But with his songs I didn't mind, because they're so weird and it actually serves the songs. Listening back to some of the shows that we did, I have no idea how we counted this stuff. But somehow we were able to make it work.

So that was a great learning experience.

**MD:** What would you rely on to learn complicated songs like these?

**Jon:** Charts, notes, and just repetition and polishing. The cool thing about stepping into a situation like that is you get to learn somebody else's thing and take from that what you like or what you can pull off. Sometimes you *can't* pull off stuff. It hurts to admit that kind of thing, but some guys are just wired to be able to play a certain way.

**MD:** In 2009 you started planning the first Superchunk album in ten years, *Majesty Shredding*.

**Jon:** I was living in Brooklyn at this point, so I'd fly back to Chapel Hill, stay with my parents, and record three or four songs at a time for the album, and then go back out on the road. Mac would send us demos and I'd listen to them. I'd never play them until we'd rehearse the day before the recording, which is great, because you don't think about them too much. And that's why I think that record is so good.

**MD:** Why did you move to Brooklyn from Chapel Hill in '08?

**Jon:** I thought I was going to come up here and write comedy, but that's when all the stuff with Carl Newman and Bob Mould and Mountain Goats started happening. All these people I met over

the years needed a drummer at the same time! Somehow the universe decided: "You should be playing music."

**MD:** Today, if you could talk to your twenty-year-old self, what would you say?

**Jon:** It all seems so life-or-death when you're young. "If this doesn't work out, it's over!" So I think what I would tell myself is, "Something else will come up." And that's what happened. I found that once I stopped trying to *make* stuff happen, things started progressing. It's weird—when you try so hard and push at something, you can keep it from happening. But once I kind of let stuff happen, more gigs started to present themselves.

I'd also say, "Don't burn any bridges." I think that's one of the reasons I tend to get work. A lot of the wildly gifted musicians I know, the social skills are not really there. And that's really sad, because there are so many musicians who are great but just can't get along with people, so they never get the success. I was never really a jerk to anyone, and I'm pretty sane. I might not be the greatest drummer in the world, but I'm good enough to do it, and I'm easy to get along with. I know how all of this works at this point.





# Garrett Goodwin

Nothing about the 2013 *MD* Readers Poll Up & Coming winner is predictable—including his route to success.

by Ilya Stemkovsky

At just twenty-six, Garret Goodwin has already traversed the globe with the pop-country superstar Carrie Underwood, bringing rock-solid power to crowd favorites like “Before He Cheats,” “Cowboy Casanova,” and “Blown Away.” Clearly fans have taken notice of the drummer’s dynamic playing style, as they voted him into the top slot of this year’s *Modern Drummer* Readers Poll in the Up & Coming category.

The circumstances surrounding Goodwin’s landing the Underwood gig seemed unusual at the time, though maybe there was a larger plan at play. Garrett explains: “I was asked to soundcheck another drummer’s kit for a church conference in Nashville. Honestly, I was thinking, *You’re calling me to do THAT?* But I did it, and the band’s guitarist, Glenn Pearce, said he ‘might have something’ for me. A

couple days later I get an email from Carrie Underwood’s musical director with some songs to learn. The next thing I know, I’m playing a festival. I was nineteen, and I turned twenty before my first tour with her.”

Goodwin says he’s got one particular reason to be proud of the success he’s achieved so far. “After I got my first kit,” he remembers, “I went to my first drum lesson at a local music store. I’d never picked up a pair of sticks before. The teacher sent me home after the lesson,

and when I came back a week later, I showed him what I thought I was supposed to do. He looked at me and said, ‘You will never be a drummer. Don’t come back.’ I was twelve. It’s what drove me. I said, ‘I’m going to do this. I’m going to make it happen.’ And I never took another lesson from that day on.”

Though Goodwin had some fairly significant jobs before joining Underwood, the country superstar’s show was “big time” in every aspect. Did Garrett have to make any particular adjustments? “I know

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Goodwin plays DW Collector’s series drums, including a 6.5x14 steel snare, a 12x14 floor tom in the standard rack tom position, a 14x18 floor tom, and an 18x26 bass drum. His Sabian cymbals include 22” and 24” Medium AA crashes, a 24” AAX Studio ride (“perfect for crashing or riding”), and, for hi-hats, an 18” Paragon crash on top of an 18” AA Rock crash. “I don’t like any wing nut or anything on top of the cymbals,” Garrett says, “because I like them to be able to swing naturally.”

Goodwin uses Pro-Mark’s 2S model stick. “It’s the same thickness as a 2B,” he says, “just an inch longer. They don’t make them in a natural finish—with the natural ones you can spit or dump water on your hands to make them stick better—so I have them make custom ones. Otherwise I wrap the handles with tennis-racket tape. I do that mainly when I’m playing shows every day. It takes the initial hit off your hands if you hit hard, plus they stick in your hands better.”

Goodwin’s pedals are from DW’s 5000 series. “The newer stuff is too smooth for me. I prefer heavy, loose, almost worn-out pedals—same with my drumheads. I like pretty much everything about finger tight.” Those heads include Remo Black Suedes or Coated Emperors on the toms and Powerstroke 3s on the snare and bass drum.

it's country and pop," he says, "but I hit hard—I'm all out the whole night. So I needed stamina to play for two hours a night every other day. But everything fell into place."

When asked if he was into country music before taking the gig, Goodwin is honest and succinct. "Absolutely not," he says. "I like pretty much any style of music *except* country, which is the funniest thing. That's one of the questions I was asked: 'Do you like country?' 'Nope, I hate country.' [laughs] I've learned to appreciate aspects of it, but really, Carrie's music isn't super-country—it's pretty pop. I'm using a click for 90 percent of the night. The musical director is about pocket and groove. He'll say, 'I hired you. I trust you. Do what feels right.' He just wants me to nail my part, not twirl my sticks in the air while doing triplets with my left whatever. And Carrie is into the good hang as well. It's who you know and who you meet and being in the right place at the right time."

Goodwin grew up in Pensacola, Florida, where he cut his teeth playing in church revivals attended by thousands of people. "It was a huge way of getting experience at such a young age," he says. "I was raised pretty strict too, not allowed to listen to Led Zeppelin and AC/DC. It was strictly Christian music, bands like Sonicflood."

And even though he was drumming in church, Goodwin avoided the whole "gospel chops" scene. "I'm not a flashy drummer at all," he explains. "I never saw that stuff as too important. I'm all about pocket and feel. I'm influenced by Nashville session drummers like Steve Brewster, Scott Williamson, and Chris McHugh. And I don't really geek out on drummers, though now Abe Laboriel Jr. is the ultimate to me."

After Goodwin moved to Nashville at seventeen to play in different churches with his musical mentor Lindell Cooley, his name eventually got around, and he joined the Christian band By the Tree. That gig "opened more doors and opportunities," Garrett says.

So what's with that funky setup, which features his snare, as well as a floor tom in the standard rack tom spot, positioned low and angled away from him. "It's just comfortable for me," Goodwin explains. "When I first started playing, everything was up in front of me, and not too long after I started messing with different things, and it slowly evolved into the tilted thing. It still feels to me like everything is flat. It has to do with my 'throw'—the natural way I hit the drum and land the stick consistently.

"I also sit very low and on the front edge

of my stool," the drummer continues. "I don't necessarily hunch over, but I lean forward a lot. I actually have DW cut down my snare stand so it can be lower. Every time I hit my snare, I also hit my leg, so I always have the biggest bruise. It was never a big technical thing. It just makes sense to me. That's the most-asked question I get: 'What is going on here?' 'Why?' [laughs] My drum tech will set things up the way I like and then disappear. The stagehands will then twist everything into how they think it looks right, and then my tech will return to find that!"

Goodwin has big plans for something near and dear to him, a company he

founded called KMLM NYC, which sells backpacks to help the less fortunate. "For every bag we sell," he says, "we send one containing educational materials to a child in need. We just dropped 120 bags in Haiti and 400 in Barbados. I'm creating a drum instructional DVD to go in the bags, for the schools that want a music program but don't have a teacher. Education has the ability to break the poverty cycle."

And was Goodwin surprised by the MD Readers Poll win? "Yeah, someone told me I was nominated," he says, "and I thought, *What are you talking about?* There are a ton of Carrie fans, and in country music, they're fans for life, so that's a huge part of it."



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# PLAYING THE SIXES

Part 2: Speed and Orchestration by Chris Prescott

## MUSIC KEY

T.T.  
S.D.  
F.T.

It can be difficult to get young students to feel excited about sitting down and working on rudiments. The material in this two-part series is designed to encourage drummers to dig into some of the basic rudimental sticking patterns and think beyond single strokes.

Of course, single strokes are a huge part of the drumming repertoire, but with a little creative thinking we can find endless uses for slightly more complex patterns. As with any concept, time must be spent before you can really feel the patterns confidently in your hands. Things that may feel awkward initially can become second nature after you woodshed them a bit. The examples covered here can be quite useful, as the basic rudiments are the building blocks for everything we play.

I often use a baking analogy to describe mastering simple things: The ingredients have to be of high quality in order to produce something that tastes great. If you bake a cake using low-quality or stale flour, the end result won't be very good. You can decorate the cake with sprinkles and make it look pretty, but it's still based on something that's foundationally poor. Rudiments are to drummers what flour is to the baker. If your rudiments are underdeveloped, your musical foundation won't be solid. Even if you sprinkle your playing with some flashy fills from time to time, the core of what you're playing is weak.

The most complex rudimental stickings can be reduced to simpler ingredients like flams, singles, and double-stroke rolls. If you make sure you have control of those fundamentals, you'll be able to combine and reorganize the basics into increasingly complex patterns.

In the previous article (August 2013), I described some of the unique benefits to employing rudiments in your playing. It's a vast topic, but when teaching the material I tend to simplify the concept into four categories: volume, accent character, speed, and orchestration. Here we'll examine the topics of speed and orchestration as they relate to the rudiments.

## SPEED

A beginning player may not have enough control over rebounded double strokes to confidently incorporate them into musical phrases. It's worth spending time to develop strong doubles, because once you do, your speed will increase dramatically. It also becomes less strenuous to play fast phrases, since doubles allow the sticks to do more of the work for you. Even though they can sound fast, rudimental patterns such as paradiddle-diddles contain sections of double strokes that allow your hands to relax.

Rudimental patterns have tempo sweet spots. Try to

discover the speed at which each one feels most comfortable and confident in your own playing. Once you identify that place, note the tempo. This should be your baseline for making improvements. Besides pushing to play things at increasingly faster tempos, be sure you work at slower tempos as well. You might be surprised by how difficult and awkward it can be to play certain rudiments in slower phrases. The goal is to expand your comfort zone and make these patterns useful in a wide range of musical situations.

## ORCHESTRATION

Perhaps the most obvious reason to use a mixed-sticking pattern is to allow for different orchestration possibilities on the drumset. Simply place each hand on a different surface while playing rudiments, and something that sounds interesting will emerge. I remember having this epiphany when I first played paradiddles between the cymbals and drums.

Another practical benefit of using mixed stickings is that they allow you to avoid arm-tangling movements around the kit. Perhaps you need to attack the downbeat at the end of a phrase with your left hand? By throwing a double stroke into what you're playing, you can easily switch your lead hand to the opposite side.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

The following exercise, which I call Playing the Sixes, illustrates a useful way of applying rudiments in a musical context. It consists of a two-measure pattern in any feel (rock, jazz, samba, etc.) with a fill on beats 3 and 4 of the second measure, comprising two sets of 16th-note sextuplets. Play the fill using the following rudimental stickings.

Single-stroke roll: RLRLRL-RLRLRL

Double-stroke roll: RLLRRR-LLRLLL

Paradiddle-diddle: RLRRLL-RLRRLL

Six-stroke roll: RLLRRL-RLLRRL

Double paradiddle: RLRLRR-LRLRLL



In the first installment of this series, we looked at the subtle differences in rudimental patterns when they're played on one surface. This time around I want to explore some basic ways to orchestrate these rudiments on the drumset.

An easy one to start with is moving the first note of each sextuplet onto a tom, while keeping the rest of the notes on the snare drum. Keep your hands relaxed, and make the double strokes flow comfortably. The snare drum usually has a good response for rebounded notes, especially when it's tuned to a higher tension.

2

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

Now try separating your hands to explore the more melodic possibilities of each pattern. Place your right hand on the floor tom and your left on the snare. This is also a good way to ingrain the sound of the pattern into memory. I've added a few accents, to either accentuate the pulse or to emphasize the single strokes, which sound heavier naturally because they can be played using larger arm movements.

3

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 L R R L L R L R R L L

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

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

Here are a few other fun ways to move the patterns around the drumset. There are endless variations, so make sure to spend some time coming up with your own.

4

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

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

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

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

Finally, here's a series of patterns that use double strokes around the kit. They can be particularly useful when you're playing at quieter dynamics. Using double strokes also helps you avoid having to cross your arms while moving from the right side of the kit to the left side.

5

R R L 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 R R L L R R L L

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



**Chris Prescott** is a San Diego-based multi-instrumentalist who currently drums for Pinback and the Montalban Quintet. His drum education book, *Creative Construction*, is available at [ccdrrumbooks.com](http://ccdrrumbooks.com).



# THE ODDS ARE IN YOUR FAVOR

Three-, Five-, and Seven-Note Fills by Mark Powers

**MUSIC KEY**

Searching for a way to break out of the old four-16th-notes-per-drum rut when playing fills? Applying odd note groupings can equip you with some fresh ideas that also sound very hip. This article will explore a few ways to incorporate three-, five-, and seven-note phrases into your arsenal of fills.

## THREES FOR MOMENTUM

Phrasing in threes can imply an overlapping triplet meter, and it can create a sense of urgency by making a fill feel as though it's gradually getting more ahead of the beat. To ensure that you stay locked to the original pulse, practice all of these exercises while maintaining quarter notes on the hi-hat with your foot. This will keep you aware of where the beat is and will provide you with an added independence challenge.

Practice each example slowly, count out loud, and be sure to use a metronome. You should also play the patterns along to your favorite recordings, to give you an idea of what the parts feel like in a musical context.

Start by feeling where every third 16th note falls in a standard measure of 4/4.

1

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L  
1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

You can voice the three-note phrase around the drumset in many ways. For starters, simply move the right-hand accents to the floor tom and the left-hand accents to the high tom. This pattern works perfectly as a fill within a standard rock beat.

2

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

Now incorporate the right foot by substituting every third note with a bass drum.

3

R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L  
or: R L R L R L R L R L R

Let's go back to the snare drum, but instead of accenting every third 16th note, we'll play two 32nd notes.

4

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L  
1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

When you're comfortable with that, move some, or all, of the notes to the toms or other parts of the drumset.

5

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

Now insert a bass drum in place of every third 16th note. This is a classic Steve Gadd-style lick that all drummers should have in their bag of tricks.

6

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

## STRETCH IT OUT

Now let's move on to five-note phrases. Begin on the snare drum, accenting every fifth 16th note in a measure of 4/4. To stay aware of where each beat falls, practice playing quarter notes on the hi-hat with your foot.

7

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L  
1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

As we did with the threes, try voicing the pattern around the drumset by moving the right-hand accents to the floor tom and the left-hand accents to the high tom.

8

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

To get the right foot involved, replace every fifth note with a bass drum.

9

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

The five-note phrase also works well for triplet-based fills.

10

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

Another option is to break the five-note phrase into smaller sections. Accenting the first and third notes gives you a 2+3 feel.

11

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

Instead of always using an alternating hand pattern, try applying various sticking combinations. Here's Example 11 with the accents played with the right hand while the left hand fills in the unaccented notes.

12

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

Again, move the accents around the set to develop some fun and slightly odd-sounding fills. Note that this sticking causes the left hand to play the downbeat following the fill.

13

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

One of my favorite five-note applications involves a sticking that my friend and teacher Marvin Dahlgren (coauthor of *4-Way Coordination*) calls the "paradiddle-one" (RLRRL). When used as a variation within a paradiddle-based groove, it creates the feeling that you've modulated into a slower rhythm for a short time. Notice the inclusion of a paradiddle-diddle (RLRRL) at the end. This allows the right hand to land on the downbeat at the beginning of the next measure, in order to smoothly transition back into the original beat.

14

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

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

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

### CHOPPING UP SOME SEVENS

Since the seven-note phrases are longer, you can make them more clear by dividing them into smaller sections. Accenting the first, third, and fifth notes creates a 2+2+3 feel. (Note that each measure of 4/4 will have two seven-note groupings and a single grouping of two 16ths.)

15

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

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

Here's that same pattern with the right-hand accents voiced on the floor tom and the left-hand accents on the high tom.

16

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

Rather than using an alternating sticking, play all of the accents from Example 15 with the right hand, while letting the left hand fill in the unaccented notes.

17

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

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

Again, move the accents around the drumset.

18

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

To mix things up, you can move the two extra 16th notes to other places in the measure. Here's 7+2+7.

19

(7+2+7)

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

Finally, try exploring different ways to interpret the seven-note groupings between the hands and feet using 16ths and triplets, or by doubling up each note to create a 32nd-note fill.

20

R L

21

22

RL RL RLRL RL RL RLRL RLRL  
1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a



**Mark Powers** is a percussionist and educator residing in Portland, Oregon. For more info, visit [powerspercussion.com](http://powerspercussion.com).



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# DOUBLE BASS WORKOUT

Part 2: Grooves by Todd Vinciguerra

**MUSIC KEY**

- H.H. X
- S.D.
- B.D.

In this lesson we'll explore some challenging yet practical double bass grooves. We're mixing 16th notes, 16th-note triplets, 32nd notes, and 32nd-note triplets.

Remember to always practice to a metronome or click track. Start off slowly and master each pattern before increasing the speed.

To take the exercises a step further, try turning them into two-, three-, or four-bar phrases. Also try mixing up the hi-hat pattern to include quarter notes, 8ths, 16ths, and combinations of all three. The bass drum patterns can be played different ways by switching up the lead foot or by using double strokes with either foot.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

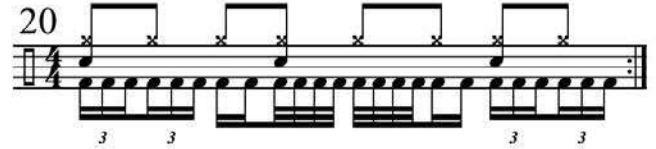
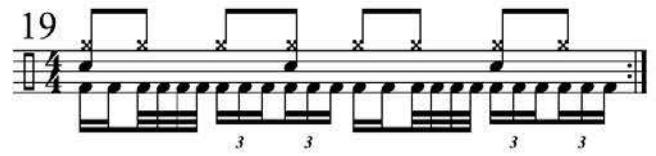
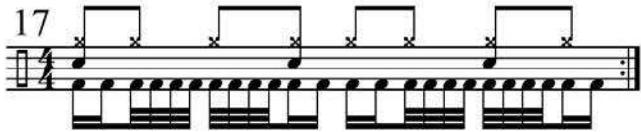
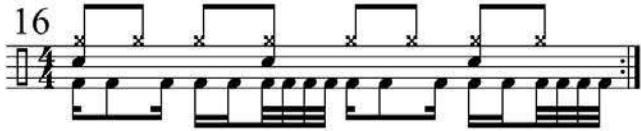
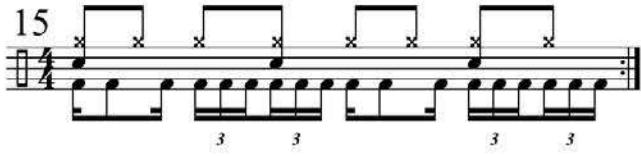
You can enhance the grooves by using different snare patterns. Experiment and have fun!

11

12

13

14



**Todd "Vinny" Vinciguerra** is the author of several drum instructional books. His latest, *Double Basics: Complete Double Bass Drum Book*, is available through Mel Bay. For more info, visit [anotherstateofmind.com](http://anotherstateofmind.com).



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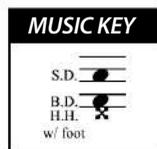


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# APPROACHING STANDARDS

A Framework for Musical Practice, Part 1: Phrasing by Steve Fidyk



Jazz musicians spend a considerable amount of practice time learning standard tunes in a variety of keys. By doing so, they become versed in the tradition, while developing a repertoire of music to be played with other musicians. Many choose to learn these songs from *The Real Book*, which is a compilation of dozens of lead sheets that outline the melody and chord changes, while others transcribe music from the original recordings. (Transcribing can be especially beneficial because it teaches structure, chord voicings, harmonic movement, phrasing, articulation, and melody all at once.)

Tunes from Miles Davis, Jimmy Webb, John Coltrane, Lennon/McCartney, George Gershwin, and Thelonious Monk have become “standards,” because musicians continue to call them on the bandstand years after they were written. It’s a canon of music that has withstood the test of time, and we drummers should give it some attention. This article series is designed to expose you to different ways to apply the rhythmic material of the melodies of these standards.

## YOU’LL HEAR IT

At one time or another, most jazz drummers have been put in the awkward position of not knowing a tune called by the bandleader. When you find yourself in this situation, remain cool and ask obvious questions like: What is the style? Would you prefer brushes or sticks? How are we getting in and out of the tune? Of course, the best-case scenario is to know the form, melody, and basic arrangement of as many standards as possible so you can be fully engaged in the improvisational process.

## LEARNING TUNES

There are many ways for drummers to become better acquainted with new songs. If you have some basic knowledge of music theory, I highly recommend that you sit at a piano and slowly plunk out the melody of different tunes. This will give your ear a chance to become familiar with the overall structure and contour of the songs. The next step would be to add each chord’s root note with your left hand, as your right plays the melody. This can be followed by playing each chord shell (the root, third, and seventh) in the left hand as accompaniment to the melody. You can also try playing the melody on a mallet instrument, like vibraphone. If you have aspirations of writing or arranging music, knowing some basic theory, and being able to function on a keyboard instrument, can certainly help you realize your goals.

## ALTERNATE STICKINGS

When asked to play the melody of a tune on the snare drum, most drummers tend to lead with their strong hand and

alternate. This is one way of playing, and it produces a specific feel and sound. To alter the phrasing, I suggest mixing in combinations of singles and doubles, while strictly adhering to the rhythm of the melody. (You should begin by limiting the instrument choice to the snare, because it’s more challenging to create different inflections of sound on one source as opposed to many.) By mixing up the sticking, you’re able to phrase the melody more accurately to match the original recording. In general, double strokes can help bring a sense of legato (smoothness) to an instrument that is naturally staccato sounding, like the snare.

Below are various sticking examples applied to the standard twelve-bar blues tune “Straight No Chaser” by Thelonious Monk. Practice each sticking along with the different versions that appear on these classic recordings: *5 by Monk by 5*, *Monk in Tokyo*, *The Best of Miles Davis & John Coltrane (1955–1961)*, *The Cannonball Adderley Quintet in San Francisco*, and Oliver Nelson’s *Sound Pieces*. Listen to each recording actively, and mine out as much detail as you can with regard to the feel, articulation, and phrasing.

Here are the first four measures of the melody of “Straight No Chaser,” played using an alternating sticking that begins with the right hand.

1

L R L R L R L R L R L

R L R L R L R L R L R

Once you have control of the rhythm by itself, add the bass drum and hi-hat ostinatos as accompaniment.

A

B

This next example, which includes the entire twelve-bar melody, incorporates double strokes that start with the right hand. Notice how the sticking influences the phrasing.

2

R R L L R R L L R

Examples 3-6 use combinations of single and double strokes. Observe how the stickings affect the phrasing of the melody.

Example 3: R L L R R L L R R L L R R

Example 4: L L R R L L R R L L R R L

Example 5: L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R

Example 6: L L R R L L R R L L R

Examples 3-6 use combinations of single and double strokes. Observe how the stickings affect the phrasing of the melody.

3

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

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

4

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

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

5

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

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

6

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

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

As you get comfortable with the melody and different stickings, experiment by employing different sounds and

articulations. Example 7 mixes in press rolls to better replicate the actual length of each note.

7

Continue to work on "Straight No Chaser" until it's firmly ingrained in your memory, while also beginning the process with other standards. In the next installment, we'll explore ways of using a standard melody as a vehicle to comp and improvise around the drumset.

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

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# SEEING SOUNDS

Part 3: Funk by Donny Gruendler

Funk drumming is synonymous with masters like James Brown's Clyde Stubblefield, Tower of Power's David Garibaldi, P-Funk's Tiki Fulwood, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers' Chad Smith. Although these four gentlemen have very different approaches to timekeeping, each has contributed to the funk art form in a unique way and created classic drum tracks. Their sounds are diverse, including everything from midrange tunings to ultra-muffled, pillowy tones and stadium-rock hybrids.

Definitive funk sounds like those, which we're exploring this month, are built from the concepts we discussed in the previous two articles (June and July 2013 issues), so be sure to reference the earlier installments as you go along. I'll present key differences and tonal modifications that will allow you to play and record most styles of funk.

## BASS DRUM

The midrange, punchy articulation often used in funk is achieved by employing a double-headed 20"-diameter drum that's 14" or 16" in depth. This is a standard size offered by most companies. An elongated 18x20 drum will work for this sound too, but you'll lose some of the articulation associated with a shallower depth.

The desired sound is best achieved using a 1- or 2-ply clear batter head and a single-ply resonant with a hole cut for easy microphone placement. Use a uniform medium tension and gently muffle each head by rolling two towels into a tube shape and placing them where the head meets the shell. Use gaffer's tape to secure the towels to the shell. (You can also use similar commercial dampening devices, such as Remo's Weckl muffling system and DW's muffling pillow.)

Next, place the mic inside the drum, with the capsule pointing at the beater impact point on the head. A dynamic tom-type mic, such as a Sennheiser 421, works well because it places equal



emphasis on the attack and the tone of the drum. Place the mic just past the middle of the shell (closer to the resonant head) to produce a round attack with even sustain. Moving the mic closer to the batter head will achieve more attack and a thinly focused thump.

Finally, apply a second dynamic microphone outside the resonant head's porthole, and blend it with the internal kick mic in your recording software. Unlike the previous article's subwoofer mic, this secondary dynamic mic will capture some lower-mid frequencies while retaining a decent amount of punch.

You should also use a medium-size felt beater and play off the head (don't bury the beater). This combination will retain some attack while allowing the low fundamental tone of the 20" drum to shine through.



## SNARE DRUM

Due to its presence in most funk mixes, the snare's voice is the most important tone within this study. A standard crisp and cracking sound is achieved by employing a 14" metal drum in a shallow depth (3.5", 4", or 5"). The depth of the drum can vary based on style. For an old-school '60s James Brown-type track, many prefer a classic 5x14. For a busier linear-type song, a 3.5"- or 4"-deep piccolo could be a good choice.

Using a single-ply coated batter head, tighten each tension rod so that the head feels somewhat tight. The batter shouldn't be tabletop tight, but it shouldn't feel like a pillow either. Turn the snares off and make sure the lugs are in tune with each another. Next, bring up the tension of the snare-side head. This will add focus to your rimshots and articulation to your ghost notes.

While playing, experiment with your stick placement. A center-stroke rimshot will produce a full attack and even sound, while an off-center rimshot will achieve a crisper attack with a lengthy overtone. Should you want a warmer sound, avoid rimshots and play in the center of the head.

To capture the snare drum's attack and high-pitched crack, replace the midrange dynamic microphone with a single condenser, pointing directly at the stick impact point. This type of mic will focus on the upper frequencies, which lends itself perfectly to the funk style of drumming.

In this instance, place a secondary large-diaphragm condenser mic on the bottom of the snare. It will pick up the



high-end sizzle of the snares and the ghost notes. Point the capsule toward the snare wires at a 70-degree angle.

### TOMS

The low, rich, attack-laden articulation often

used in funk is achieved by employing double-headed, shallow-depth toms. Standard tom sizes in the '60s meant either an 8x12 or 9x13 rack tom and a 16x16 floor tom. In the '70s, many drummers moved to smaller drums, such as an 8x10 or 8x12 rack tom and a 14x14 floor tom. For this study we'll focus on the latter two sizes.

Single-ply coated or clear batter heads work well alongside single-ply clear resonants. Each tom should be tuned to a medium tension, with both heads set at the same pitch. Once the heads are in tune, pick one batter-side lug on each drum and loosen it slightly. Not only will this add a downward bend to the note, but it will also increase the amount of stick articulation. Detune one lug on the bottom head of the floor tom as well. This will help the pitch bend become more pronounced and will make the drum feel bigger and more grounded.

To capture the tom tones, place a dynamic microphone so that the capsule is pointed directly at the impact point on the head. As with last month's examples, the greater the incline of the mic body and the more off-center you aim the mic toward the rim, the more low-end frequencies and overtones will enter your mix.



### OVERHEAD MICS

To complete the sound of the kit, use condenser mics as overheads. I prefer to place them in a spaced pair, which is accomplished by standing behind your snare drum and extending your arms outward to form an inverted triangle. This is the starting point for your overhead placement (equidistant from the snare in terms of both height and length). Both mics should then be raised another 12" to 16".

The additional height will capture an accurate picture of the entire kit, rather than focusing on the cymbals and snare.



### HI-HATS

To round out your funk sound, use medium-weight 13" or thin 14" hi-hats. They should be bright in tone, with the bottom cymbal heavier than the top. To capture their voice, place a small-diaphragm condenser mic so



that its capsule is facing away from the snare. This will keep the mic from picking up too much bleed from the snare, and it will allow the woody attack of the drumstick striking the top cymbal to be clearly audible within the track.

### HYBRID COMBINATIONS

In order to achieve more contemporary hybrid funk tones, you can combine the techniques in this article with what we discussed in the previous installments. For example, if you were to utilize the pillowy bass drum and dead snare sound from part two alongside the tom, overhead, and hi-hat tones discussed here, you would have a convincing mid-'70s P-Funk vibe.

By employing the all-purpose pop-rock bass drum and snare timbres from part one, you can imitate achieve a Chad

Smith funk-rock hybrid.

Remember that playing the drums is not just about technique, chops, and showmanship. It's also about touch, tone, timbre, and aesthetics. It's my hope that you will continue to focus on tuning, during your practice sessions, gig preparations, and recording dates. Until next time!

## FUNKY TONES



For recorded examples of the classic funk sounds discussed in this article, check out James Brown's "Sex Machine" and Tower of Power's "Soul Vaccination" and "Don't Change Horses (in the Middle of a Stream)." The hybrid examples can be best heard on Parliament's "Give Up the Funk (Tear the Roof Off the Sucker)" and the Red Hot Chili Peppers' "Power of Equality" and "Funky Monks."



**Donny Gruendler** is vice president of curricular development at Musicians Institute in Hollywood, California. He has performed with DJ Logic, Rick Holmstrom, John Medeski, and Rhett Frazier Inc. For more info, visit [donnygruendler.com](http://donnygruendler.com).



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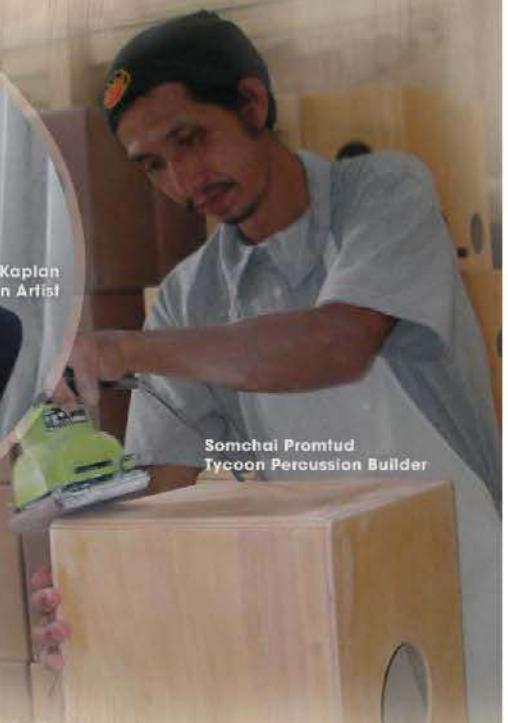
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# LUDWIG SUPRA-PHONIC SNARE

*The World's Most Recorded Drum*

by Mark Cooper

Many instruments played an integral part in shaping the rock 'n' roll sound of the 1960s and '70s, including Fender Stratocaster and Gibson Les Paul guitars and the Hammond B3 organ. Of course, rock music is all about the beat, and drummers often hammered out powerful new grooves on one of the most iconic drums of all time, the Ludwig Supra-Phonic 400 series snare.

First introduced around 1963, the Supra-Phonic 400 was offered in 5x14 and 6.5x14 sizes. The drum featured a special seamless metal-alloy shell, consisting mostly of aluminum, with a center bead and flanged edges for extra strength. The simple P-83 strainer provided effective snare control. Ludwig's catalog boasted that these newly designed snares offered "instant response over the entire drumhead. Vivid tonal definition, each beat crisp and clear. Brilliant sound, choke-free at full volume." The price of this remarkable new drum

**The Ludwig Supra-Phonic 400's distinct voice is considered by many to be the ultimate snare drum sound. Bright, loud, sensitive, and powerful, this extremely versatile metal-shell model is arguably the most recorded drum in history.**

was a mere \$88 when the model was first released.

In addition to the Supra-Phonic, Ludwig produced the Super-Sensitive, which was mostly identical in design but featured a special extended snare system. During the '60s,



Ludwig ad from 1969

metal-shell snare drums became very popular, and by 1970 they were standard equipment on most Ludwig kits.

The Supra-Phonic actually had its origins in the mid-'30s. In 1936, the Ludwig & Ludwig drum company proudly introduced its Silver Anniversary snare drum, which featured a solid brass shell and newly designed, art-deco-style Imperial lugs. These lugs were used on all of Ludwig & Ludwig's top-of-the-line drums until the demise of the company in 1950.

When the all-metal Super-Ludwig snare was introduced in the late '50s by the new Ludwig drum company (formerly W.F.L.), the classic Imperial lug was employed once again, along with a heavy brass shell and brass hoops. While most of these drums were chrome plated, a lacquered brass finish was optional for a very brief

period. The Super-Ludwig was the precursor to the alloy-shell Supra-Phonic 400 that appeared in 1963.

While the basic design of the Supra-Phonic 400 remained the same for years, a few changes were made. Around 1965,

counterhoops were being constructed from steel instead of brass, and by 1969 the P-83 snare strainer was given a makeover and dubbed the P-85. A slight change in the bottom hoop design also occurred at that time, and a new Ludwig badge was used.

It wasn't until the late '70s and early '80s that Ludwig began to expand its line of snare drums to include shell variations such as hammered bronze and hammered chrome. As a nod to the company's long history, a solid-brass Black Beauty version of the Supra-Phonic was also offered and featured a black gunmetal finish and fancy engraved shell, reminiscent of the company's '30s drums.

Due to their short production period, the original solid-brass Super-Ludwig drums of the early '60s are relatively scarce today and are highly collectible. Examples in fine condition have sold for \$1,000 and more. Because the aluminum-alloy Supra-Phonic 400 was produced in such large numbers, these drums are quite common today and are very affordable.

Unlike their brass counterparts, however, older Supra-Phonic aluminum-alloy snares are often plagued with plating loss. It's not unusual to see flaking, pitting, or even peeling of the chrome finish. The unstable chrome plating used on so many of the Supra-Phonic 400 shells was a result of the electro-plating process. Aluminum forms a passive film that's impossible to electro-plate, so a coating of zinc must be applied before an aluminum-alloy shell can be chromed. Even the zinc coating itself can be somewhat porous, which can lead to pitting.

The Supra-Phonic 400's distinct voice is considered by many rock and jazz drummers to be the ultimate snare drum sound. Bright, loud, sensitive, and powerful, this extremely versatile model is arguably the most recorded drum in history. From Joe Morello's opening 5/4 groove on the Dave Brubeck Quartet classic "Take Five" to the lightning-fast fills played by Deep Purple's Ian Paice, the drum can be heard on countless recordings from the past fifty years.

The list of famous drummers who've played a Supra-Phonic 400 is quite lengthy, especially in rock. Cheap Trick drummer and avid vintage collector Bun E. Carlos played most of the band's hits in the '70s and '80s on a 400. With Led Zeppelin, John Bonham laid down his forceful and forever influential drumming primarily on a 6.5x14 version. Santana's Michael Shrieve played a metal Ludwig snare during his electrifying solo at the Woodstock festival, and the prolific studio drummer Hal Blaine pounded out most of his hit-making tracks on a Supra-Phonic 400 as well. Other notable users include Carmine Appice (Vanilla Fudge, Rod Stewart), Simon Kirke (Bad Company), and this month's cover star, the Rascals' Dino Danelli. Even the great Buddy Rich, who was usually a proponent of wood-shell snares, played an alloy 400 during his tenure as a Ludwig endorser in the early '60s.

The powerful and sturdy Supra-Phonic 400 has proven to be a true workhorse and a timeless classic that continues to be the go-to snare for many of today's players. If there's a hall of fame for drums, this Ludwig model, the world's most recorded snare, deserves a place at the top of the list.



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The Saturn MH kit features 6-ply snares and toms and 8-ply bass drums constructed of a hybrid of walnut and North American maple, with chrome hardware. The Saturn MH Exotic series features the same specifications as the MH series but with an outer ply of exotic wood veneer. The line comes standard with black-chrome hardware.

[mapexdrums.com](http://mapexdrums.com)



## SELA Casela Professional Snare Cajon

The Casela Professional Snare cajon is said to have an extra-strong body with a soft-veneer playing surface for comfortable, fatigue-free playing. Features include rounded edges made of solid maple, individually adjustable corners, and a removable snare system.

The cajon is made in Germany and comes unassembled in three models: Satin Nut, Tineo, and Zebrano. Front panels and a snare crosspiece are also available separately.

[sela-cajon.com](http://sela-cajon.com)



## ZILDJIAN 390 Cymbal Packs

To celebrate its 390th anniversary, Zildjian is offering a few new cymbal packs. The 390 K Custom Hybrid pack includes 14.25" hi-hats, a 17" crash, and a 21" ride. The 390 K pack includes 14" hi-hats, a 16" Dark Thin crash, and a 20" ride. The 390 A pack includes 14" New Beat hi-hats, a 16" Medium Thin crash, a 20" Medium ride, and an 18" Medium-Thin crash.

Featuring thin to medium-weight cymbals that are said to be bright sounding and melodic, the 390 ZHT pack includes 14" Mastersound hi-hats, a 17" Fast crash, a 20" Medium ride, and a 16" China. The 390 ZBT X pack, which is said to offer a fast, bright, high-volume sound, features 14" hi-hats, a 17" crash, and a 22" ride. The 390 ZBT pack includes 14" hi-hats, a 16" crash, a 20" ride, and a 10" Trashformer.

[zildjian.com](http://zildjian.com)



## TECHRA Carbon Fiber Drumsticks

Now available in the United States, Techra carbon fiber and polymer drumsticks are said to be well balanced and have consistent density. The Carbon Pro series utilizes carbon fibers to increase the stiffness and durability of the stick, enhancing control, tone, and power. Techra sticks also feature an anti-vibration system that has been designed to minimize wrist fatigue and increase comfort. Carbon Pro sticks are available with Super Grip, a specially formulated rubberized grip that minimizes slipping. A more affordable Basic line is also offered.

[sonicus.net](http://sonicus.net)

## KAT KT1 and KT2 Digital Drumsets

The KAT KT1 digital drumset comes with more than 150 sounds and forty play-along tracks. Features include five drum pads, three cymbal pads, a programmable control module, a multi-pin cable snake, and a preassembled frame. A Silent Strike bass drum beater is also included to reduce noise while playing. List price: \$849.

The KAT KT2 digital drumset has more than 500 drum, cymbal, and percussion sounds, eighty play-along tracks, thirty preset drum configurations, and space for ten programmable kits. The control module has multiple built-in ports including MIDI and USB, stereo outputs, a headphone jack, and an input for MP3 devices. The KT2 has five drum pads, including three dual-zone pads for toms and snare, a hi-hat pad, a choke-sensitive crash, and a ride cymbal. The control module includes two trigger inputs for additional drum and cymbal pads. The KT2 frame has a preconfigured wire harness and is said to be easy to assemble. List price: \$1,180.

[katpercussion.com](http://katpercussion.com)



## STAGEWORKS Drum Accessories

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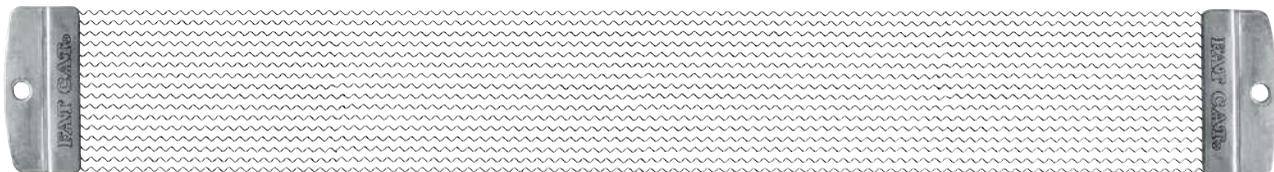
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## BIG BANG Snare Accessory Upgrades

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Fat Cat's new Dynasonic and Radio King vintage-style snare wires are said to improve the sound and performance of those classic drums. The Dynasonic Fat Cat model features sixteen strands of stainless steel alloy with modified, pre-aged end clips designed to be mounted on Rogers' Dynasonic snare cradles made between 1961 and 1986. The Fat Cat sixteen-strand Radio King wires fit Slingerland Radio King drums made from 1935 to 1957 with the "clamshell" throw-off.

[bigbangdist.com](http://bigbangdist.com)





## DREAM Re-FX Series

The 10" Re-FX series Scott Pellegrin Crop Circle is a ring cymbal that's ideal for dropping over a hi-hat or ride. It also fits on top of 12" and 13" snares. List price: \$39. The Re-FX bell creates a unique effect that is said to work well as an add-on bell sound or stacker element and lists for \$29. The Re-FX HAN 10 bell has an ultra-thick, unlathed bell and a thin, flanged edge. List price: \$97.

The Re-FX series is made from recycled cymbals collected through the Dream Cymbals dealer network.  
[dreamcymbals.com](http://dreamcymbals.com)



## MANHASSET Drummer Stand

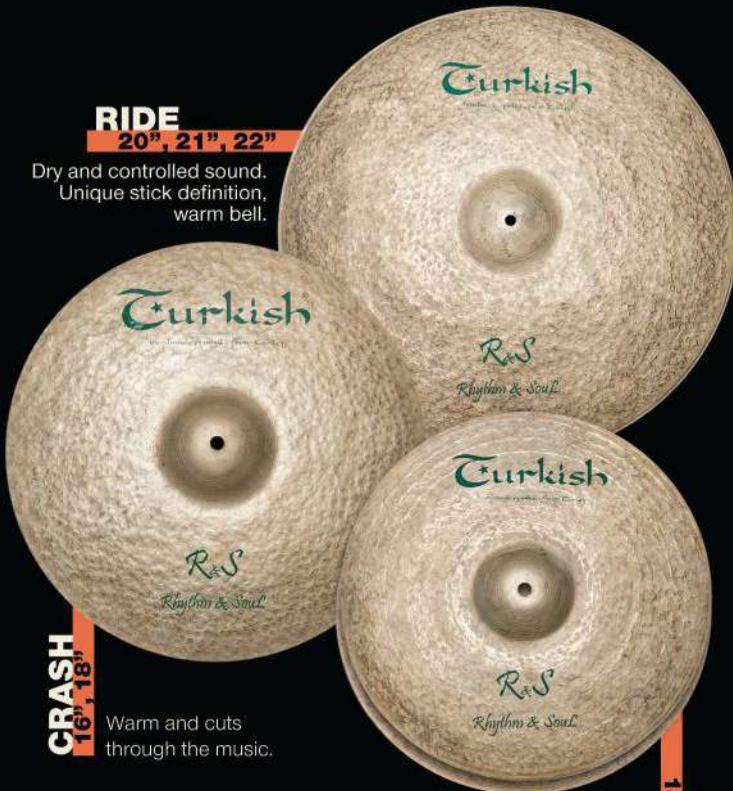
The new Manhasset Drummer Stand was designed by drummer/author Andy Ziker and features a swivel-clamp mounting system, a full-size desk, and a curved shaft that enables the device to be connected to hi-hat, cymbal, and snare stands. Also available is a wider model featuring Manhasset's 32" desk, which is designed to accommodate multiple pages, and the Drummer Stand Super-Pack, which includes both a curved and straight shaft along with the multi-clamp and full-size desk.  
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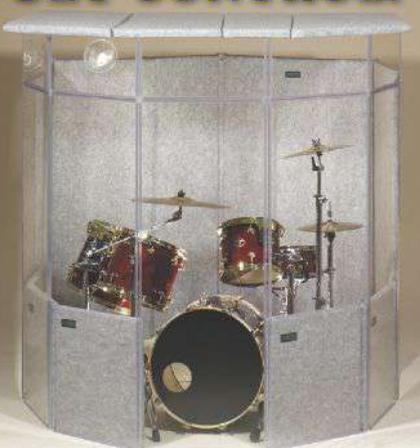
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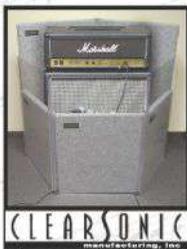
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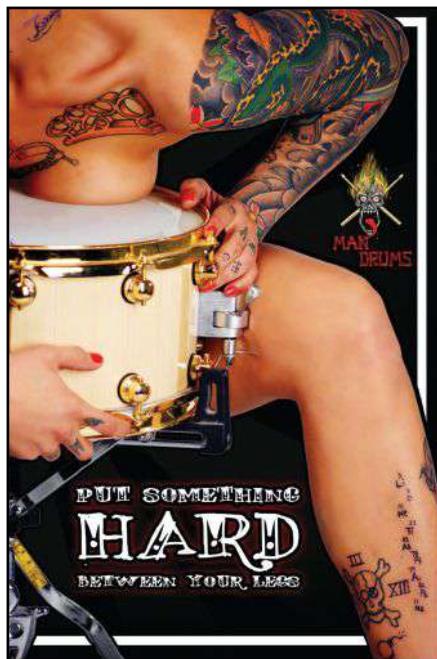
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## WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...?

Big Country's

# Mark Brzezicki

By following his instincts and bucking trends, he's built a career that's a virtual case study of how to brave the fickle winds of the music industry.

Story by Nick Lauro • Photos by Andy Labrow

At a rest area off a busy highway in Slough, Berkshire, England, in the late 1970s, a windowless Ford Transit van sits in a parking space usually reserved for trucks. Inside, oblivious to the stream of passing motorists, a tall, lithe young man sits at a drumset, working on licks lifted from vinyl records featuring Phil Collins, Steve Gadd, and Harvey Mason. The commuters whizzing past don't know it yet, but in just a few years their car radio speakers will be shaken by the same rhythms emanating from the stationary vehicle.

The early '80s would be fertile times for session musicians, on both sides of the Atlantic. Albums would sell, budgets would thrive—perfect timing for a dedicated drum practitioner to emerge from the suburbs and enjoy the fruits of the music industry's harvest.

Mark Brzezicki (pronounced *bru-ZEE-key*) cut his drumming teeth playing with his siblings in the Flying Brzezicki Brothers, and shortly after in *On the Air*, a band fronted by Who guitarist Pete Townshend's younger brother Simon. *On the Air* teamed Brzezicki with bass player Tony Butler, and together the pair formed a successful dial-a-rhythm-section service called Rhythm for Hire. In 1982 their musical union led Brzezicki and Butler to Phonogram Records, where they were recruited into Scottish guitar wrangler Stuart

Adamson's post-Skids project, Big Country. The success of the band in the ensuing years would elevate Brzezicki into the session-fixers' big league, helping him carve out a busy career that he sustains to this day.

On Big Country's 1983 debut album, *The Crossing*, Brzezicki stamps his identity into the Celtic-vibe compositions by mixing layers of overdubbed rolling toms with Gadd-esque military snare work. This could have been a recipe for overkill, but thanks to Mark's fantastic taste in grooves and producer Steve Lillywhite's deft

direction, the drummer's thunderous performances helped raise Adamson's songs from post-punk gems to bona fide worldwide hits.

"The first thing that struck me," Brzezicki recalls, "was how many Celtic and traditional Scottish elements were in the band, particularly the guitar sounds. I remember thinking, *My God, this music sounds so traditionally Scottish*. It affected my drumming straight away. My first thought was [to approach the music with] a slight kind of marching feel."

Brzezicki's intuitive rhythmic reaction





## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Brzezicki's setup features Pearl Reference series drums (two 22" bass drums; 8", 10", and 12" rack toms; and 14" and 16" floor toms) and brass and maple 14" Free Floating snare drums, plus Remo Ambassador heads, Zildjian cymbals, a 14" Remo Rototom hoop, a 6" North tom, two 6" Pearl or Tama tube toms, and Pearl hardware. Mark uses Vic Firth 5A hickory sticks.

was on point, a perfect complement to the dramatic soundscapes created by the pioneering use of the EBow on electric guitars, which produced Big Country's famous "bagpipe" effect. "I think that sound was the result of something naturally happening between Stuart and [second guitarist] Bruce Watson," Brzezicki says. "But for me, probably being a southerner, I did feel at the time that it sounded like bagpipes, I have to admit it!"

Big Country created an organic, muscular sound sorely missing from keyboard-dominated early-'80s pop music. Indeed, the group was surfing on a wave that would propel contemporaries like U2, Simple Minds, and the Alarm to the forefront of British music.

Although he was originally signed as a Big Country band member, Brzezicki had a clause in his contract allowing him to accept session work with other artists on the blossoming U.K. session scene. His A-list session drumming status was soon established, with artists including the Who's Pete Dinklage and Roger Daltrey, Frida Lyngstad of ABBA, Queen's Brian May, Marillion singer Fish, Peter Gabriel, Sting, Nik Kershaw, Ultravox, the Cult, Lionel Richie, the Pretenders, Leo Sayer, Rick Astley, Howard Jones, Joan Armatrading, Go West, and Bob Geldof, as well as Band Aid and the Prince's Trust house band.

In the ostentatious '80s, Brzezicki's kit did not disappoint in terms of visual appeal. Mark sat at a rig that incorporated multiple toms and tube toms, gong drums, auxiliary snares, a plethora of splash and China cymbals, and, eventually, two kick drums. However, it would be a mistake to assume his approach was to play everything all at once. "My attitude is that my kit is something that's there for me to express myself on," Brzezicki says. "I may not use all the drums in one song, but the

facility to play them and for them to be heard is there."

Thanks to his unique sound and tasteful use of his wall of drums, Brzezicki did very well to work at a time when it became increasingly convenient to program a machine to do the job of a drummer. After all, this was the period when drum sounds were becoming more about processing a relatively lifeless acoustic source with the latest compressors and digital reverbs, resulting in what many today regard as unappealingly unnatural tracks. Brzezicki, however, managed to bypass the "emperor's new clothes" producer syndrome by providing exceptionally well-tuned drums that sounded as good acoustically as they did in the imagination of technology-obsessed engineers. In a not insignificant way, he won his fight to keep real drumming on records and to keep drums sounding like drums, while fashion dictated that MIDI-generated patterns were the future. "You'll never get rid of the drummer," Mark still insists. "He may get pushed around into jazz or something, but he'll always be around."

Without a doubt, Brzezicki does owe some debt to the Stewart Copeland school of splash/Octoban flurries. But what sets Brzezicki apart from busier drummers with equally sizable kits is the influence of classic groovers like Harvey Mason and Steve Gadd. In contrast to the tom-heavy patterns found on many Big Country songs, there was always plenty of delicate hi-hat/snare work, often weaving an unobtrusive tapestry between the layers of vocals and melodic instrumentation. Check out the hi-hat parts on Big Country's "Chance" or the overdubbed brushwork on "The Storm," both from *The Crossing*, for examples of Brzezicki's aptitude for treading lightly with his sound sources.

While Big Country enjoyed success in Europe, the group failed to truly crack the U.S. market, with only *The Crossing*

attaining gold status. Despite repeated visits to America in support of major acts, the band never surpassed the success of its debut, and in 1989 Brzezicki departed. He did rejoin in 1993, after which Big Country released some modestly successful albums and continued opening for bands like the Who and the Rolling Stones. But by 2000 Adamson, who'd previously moved to Nashville, was focusing on a folkier musical direction with the Raphaels.

"Big Country perhaps didn't break America as we should have," Brzezicki says today. "Stuart needed to be at home to sort out [some personal issues], and people needed to keep their family life together. That was always something that was teetering on the brink with Big Country: We needed to neutralize ourselves by making sure that families were not being neglected. In hindsight, that's something that Stuart always battled with; he was torn between being a family man and wanting to see success with the band globally."

Despite Adamson's stated intent to re-form Big Country at a future date, the singer took his own life in a Hawaii hotel room in December 2001. "Because Stuart always had so much hope—he always tried to see the good when things were bad—I was shocked to see how it all ended," Brzezicki says.

In 2010, Big Country surprised many by re-forming once again, this time fronted by the Alarm singer Mike Peters—the very person Adamson once suggested as a potential successor. The band has performed steadily and has just wrapped up a summer tour of the States, and this past April it released its first studio album in fourteen years, *The Journey*.

The twenty-first century has been challenging for studio drummers. Although like all pro players Brzezicki has seen session dates fall, his work has continued in recent years, with Procul Harum, Roger Daltrey, Midge Ure, Rick Astley, Fish, and, of course, Big Country. Mark still prefers a formidable setup, despite many of his peers' having moved to smaller kits. But he has never been a drummer who's followed trends, preferring to tread his own established path.



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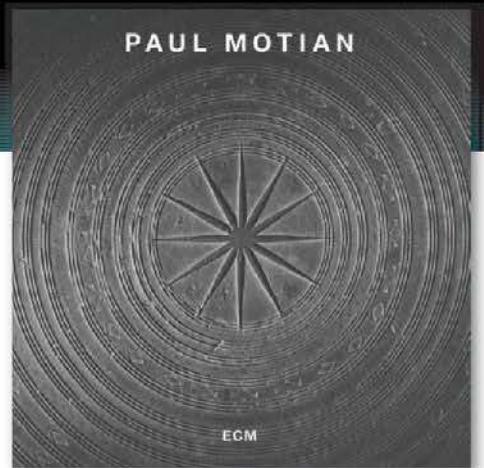
## SPOCK'S BEARD

### BRIEF NOCTURNES AND DREAMLESS SLEEP

**The popular prog band's longtime touring drummer gets a promotion.**

On Spock's Beard's eleventh studio album, **Jimmy Keegan** wastes no time in proving he's up to the task of extending his contributions in the recording environment, replacing studio drummer/live singer

Nick D'Virgilio, who recently left the band. The double album's opener, "Hiding Out," finds Keegan conscientiously laying the foundation for guitar and organ pyrotechnics and soaring vocals, while adding his own spice to the mix, including some excellent bass drum ruffs. He also makes the most of subtle variations within the predominantly straightforward groove of "Afterthoughts," which perfectly complements the song's hypnotic retro-video-game-theme funk. The second disc kicks off with another standout, "The Man You're Afraid You Are." Keegan plays the ideal head-bobbing groove under the catchy yet ominous riff and infectiously geeky bravado of the vocals, while the break at the 5:00 mark lets the drummer *stretch*. (Century Media) **Billy Brennan**



## PAUL MOTIAN ECM

**The avant-garde guru's first six recordings for the ECM label trace a journey from sideman to visionary.**

In the jazz world, where idiosyncrasy is embraced, Paul Motian is among the *most* idiosyncratic musicians. This box set is an ideal format to track the development of the drummer's quirky, deeply personal compositional voice. Indeed, it's a showcase for Motian's writing as much as his drumming, providing long-form, immersive listening experiences that unfold slowly yet unpredictably, sometimes rounding sharp corners into edge-of-the-cliff territory.

Players and instrumentation shift across the recordings, and studio tones change. Motian's drums are deeper and drier on 1972's *Conception Vessel*, his first album as a leader, than on 1974's *Tribute*. The latter contains "Tuesday Ends Saturday," which is notable for its driving drum part, a rarity in a set rich with mellow, contemplative, and sometimes downright eerie rhythms. ("White Magic," from *Psalm*, has an actual slamming backbeat.) *Dance* (1977) and *Le Voyage* (1979) are trio outings with Charles Brackeen on saxophone, and they continue to display Motian's gift for creating twisting, exotic-sounding melodies and his fondness for blending free, abstract drumming with more pulse-oriented material. Far from calypso, *Dance's* "Kalypso" instead contains some of Motian's most buttoned-up martial-style playing. "Abacus," from *Le Voyage*, with its indelible melody, elicits a short, crescendoing drum solo that toys with rhythmic placement—little bursts here, open spaces there—but shows Paul is always in touch with the main theme.

The exciting final two offerings, 1982's *Psalm* and 1984's *It Should Have Happened a Long Time Ago*, document Motian's beginnings with saxophonist Joe Lovano and guitarist Bill Frisell; the three would remain an active band until Motian's death in 2011. The quintet heard on *Psalm* is distilled to the trio on *Long Time Ago*. "India," from the latter, is a quiet track that bears the Motian/Frisell/Lovano stamp: It makes prime use of space, it's gorgeous—and a little weird—and it shows that even when Motian is the leader, he has no interest in anything but a band of equals. (ECM) **Michael Parillo**

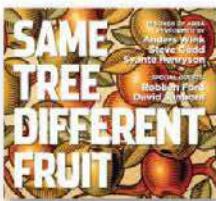


## HIROMI MOVE

**The pianist once again rounds up longtime Michel Camilo bassist Anthony Jackson and fusion ace Simon Phillips to explore her unique amalgam of classical, jazz, funk, and rock.**

The lengthy odd-meter compositions here allow ample room for **Simon Phillips** to dig deep into his advanced rhythmic vocabulary. Instead of blasting

hard-to-decipher, nonsensical chops, Phillips creates musical patterns that flow naturally over Hiromi's piano ostinatos. "Suite Escapism: Reality" finds Phillips nudging the boundaries of up-tempo, odd-meter jazz/rock. The Latin-tinged "Suite Escapism: In Between" pushes Simon to his creative brink, while the closing piece, "11:49 PM" (which is 11:29 in length), displays dynamic musical communication between the pianist and drummer, and again allows Phillips to improvise tastefully. This may be the most impressive improvisational recording that Simon has been involved with outside of his own original fusion projects. (Telarc) **Mike Haid**

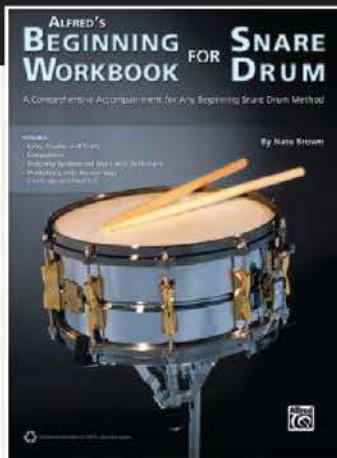


## ANDERS WIHK/STEVE GADD/SVANTE HENRYSON SAME TREE DIFFERENT FRUIT

**When he isn't touring with Eric Clapton or James Taylor, a drum legend still burns, and in some unlikely places.**

Performing here with a trio led by Swedish keyboardist Anders Wiik, **Steve Gadd** goes ballistic

on the classic pop material of ABBA. He unleashes his trademark Mozambique/samba on "Voulez-Vous," starting with a flowing 16th-note hi-hat pattern and then easing into samba mode as the trio turns ABBA's famous vocal accents into an up-tempo Latin romp. Groove city. Further Latin rim work and behind-the-beat funk follow in "Money, Money, Money," and Gadd's memorable 2-and-4 pocket (hi-hats accenting the "&" of each beat) and sweltering swing drive "Take a Chance on Me." Other tracks aren't quite as intense; nonetheless, Gadd unearths his innovative '70s spirit across the board. (Wiik Music Productions) **Ken Micallef**



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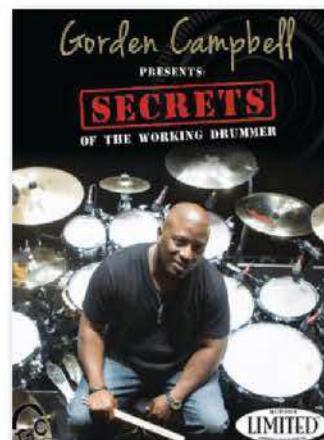
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#### SECRETS OF THE WORKING DRUMMER

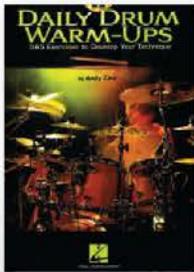
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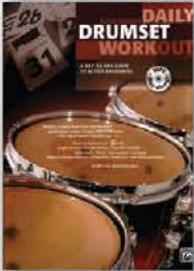
**Robin Tolleson**

# ONE DAY AT A TIME

Two new books facilitate an honest assessment of drummers' technical progress, while supporting structured and, in some cases, rigorous routines.

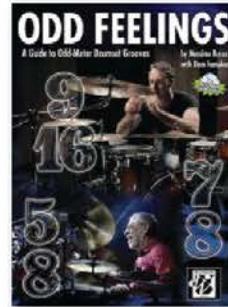


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*Daily Drum Warm-Ups* presents 365 hand-technique exercises (and twenty kick ostinato patterns) and assigns rhythmic concepts for each day of the week ("If it's Tuesday, it must be Accented Pattern Day"). Jumping headlong into these exercises, drummers will not only ultimately slip into a kind of meditative warm-up zone, they'll also grow increasingly more adept at tackling the next day's challenge. (Hal Leonard)

Due to the depth of the material, the accompanying CD containing MP3 audio files, and gobs of grooves, Claus Hessler's *Daily Drumset Workout* illuminates methods by which users can apply a variety of patterns that traverse a number of rhythmic styles. Unlike Andy Ziker's book, *Workout* doesn't plot a specific practice routine for every day of the year. Rather, Hessler, a German authority on the Moeller technique and open-handed playing, provides scads of accented 16th-note, double-stroke, flam, and other exercises and recommends that users take advantage of weekly self-evaluation charts. (Alfred) **Will Romano**



●●●●●  
**ODD FEELINGS: A GUIDE TO ODD-METER DRUMSET GROOVES** BY MASSIMO RUSSO WITH DOM FAMILARO  
 BOOK/MP3 CD

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED \$16.99  
 Originating from a chapter in educator and coauthor Dom Famularo's book *It's Your Move*, this study delves even deeper into the mysterious world of changing time signatures. Italian drummer/educator Massimo Russo breaks down eighteen odd-meter rhythms through chapters on quarter-, 8th-, and 16th-note-based meters, along with a simple counting system (for example, 9/16 counted as 3+4+2), so the groundwork is laid out for you. The black pages—and your eventual tears—come toward the end, where charts of 17/8 and 21/16 are listed, in case you want to understand your Zappa one day. A multimedia disc includes select Russo-recorded example tracks, handy drum-less instrumentals, and video. (Alfred) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



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## The Common Thread Clinic Tour

This past April, online instructor Mike Johnston (mikeslessons.com) and Guitar Center Drum-Off 2011 champion J.P. Bouvet met at Periphery drummer Matt Halpern's home near Baltimore to pack into an SUV and head to Drums Etc. in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to kick off the weeklong inaugural leg of their Common Thread clinic tour. Other stops included the Laboratory and Russo Music in New Jersey; Alto Music in Middletown, New York; and Sam Ash and Drummers Collective in Manhattan.

While multi-artist clinics aren't unheard of, the premise of Common Thread wasn't simply to pump products or to show off each player's exceptional technique. "The tour came about after the three of us spent time together at the Meinl Drum Festival in Germany," Halpern says. "We were the only three Americans, so that was our first common thread. After getting to know each other better, we realized there were many common threads between us. After the festival, Mike got in touch and presented his idea for a clinic tour." Once everyone was on board, Johnston coordinated with Chris Brewer of Meinl USA, since Meinl was the only shared endorsement between the three drummers, to determine routing and venues.

"Our goal is to get every person in the room to go home and practice until the neighbors complain," Johnston says of the tour. "We want them to realize that what they're seeing isn't based on talent—it's based on effort and drive.



If the three of us can do it, so can they." Halpern adds, "We want drummers to feel empowered and confident so that they never give in to self-doubt, which we all experience sometimes."

Bouvet, the youngest of the three, says, "[We] are involved in different areas of the music industry, are at different ages, and are running different businesses on the side, but we share several internal common threads, and those are the things that have brought us success in our respective endeavors. Achieving goals is simply a by-product of working very hard, committing yourself fully, and not being afraid of taking risks."

The trio drew numbers out of a hat to determine the playing order, but there was no headliner, and they made a point to explore new topics each night, be it thematic soloing, ghost notes, linear patterns, or, in Halpern's case, breaking down Periphery songs. "We really wanted to emphasize that there's zero competition between us," Matt says. "The only competition drummers should experience is the [one] they have with themselves. It's that drive that pushes you to grow and work harder." Johnston concludes, "It's more of an inspirational clinic, with the drums being the backdrop, than being about independence, technique, and speed."

For more info about the Common Thread clinic tour, including updates on an early 2014 West Coast run, log on to [facebook.com/commonthreadclintour](http://facebook.com/commonthreadclintour).

**Michael Dawson**



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# Glad in Plaid

This Rogers rig comes from Chris Ardoin, who hails from Louisiana but is currently in grad school in Rhode Island. The seldom-seen "Scotch plaid" wrap was featured only in Rogers' 1958 catalog; it never quite caught on and was phased out before long. "The finish was ideal for Legion drum corps, high school and college bands, and other marching bands, although it was not often used on drumkits," Ardoin explains. "The contact-paper quality of the finish made it more susceptible to damage, and it shows age more than your common wrap from this era."

The kit includes a 14x22 bass drum, a 9x13 rack tom, and an extremely rare 14x14 floor tom. "In the 1957 Grossman Music Corp catalog," Ardoin says, "Rogers offered a three-piece bass, snare, and tom-tom outfit, called 'Scottie.' It was sold without

a floor tom, with triple-flange hoops as an additional option. During this time, 16x16 floor toms were more popular, making the 14" size less common and more valuable today. Note the bread-and-butter lugs around the floor tom, with a center outside ridge.

"Not too many Scottie sets survived, due to the fragile nature of the finish. Only a few sets or pieces have surfaced over the past fifteen years, and none that I can find that have a 14" floor tom. Made with vintage Rogers Perma-Built construction, with 3-ply jasper shells and strong reinforced liners, the drums have an amazing round tone and resonance. Factory interior finishes would include black paint, red paint, gray paint, and clear coat, with an internal paper 'Scottie' tag and serial number."

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



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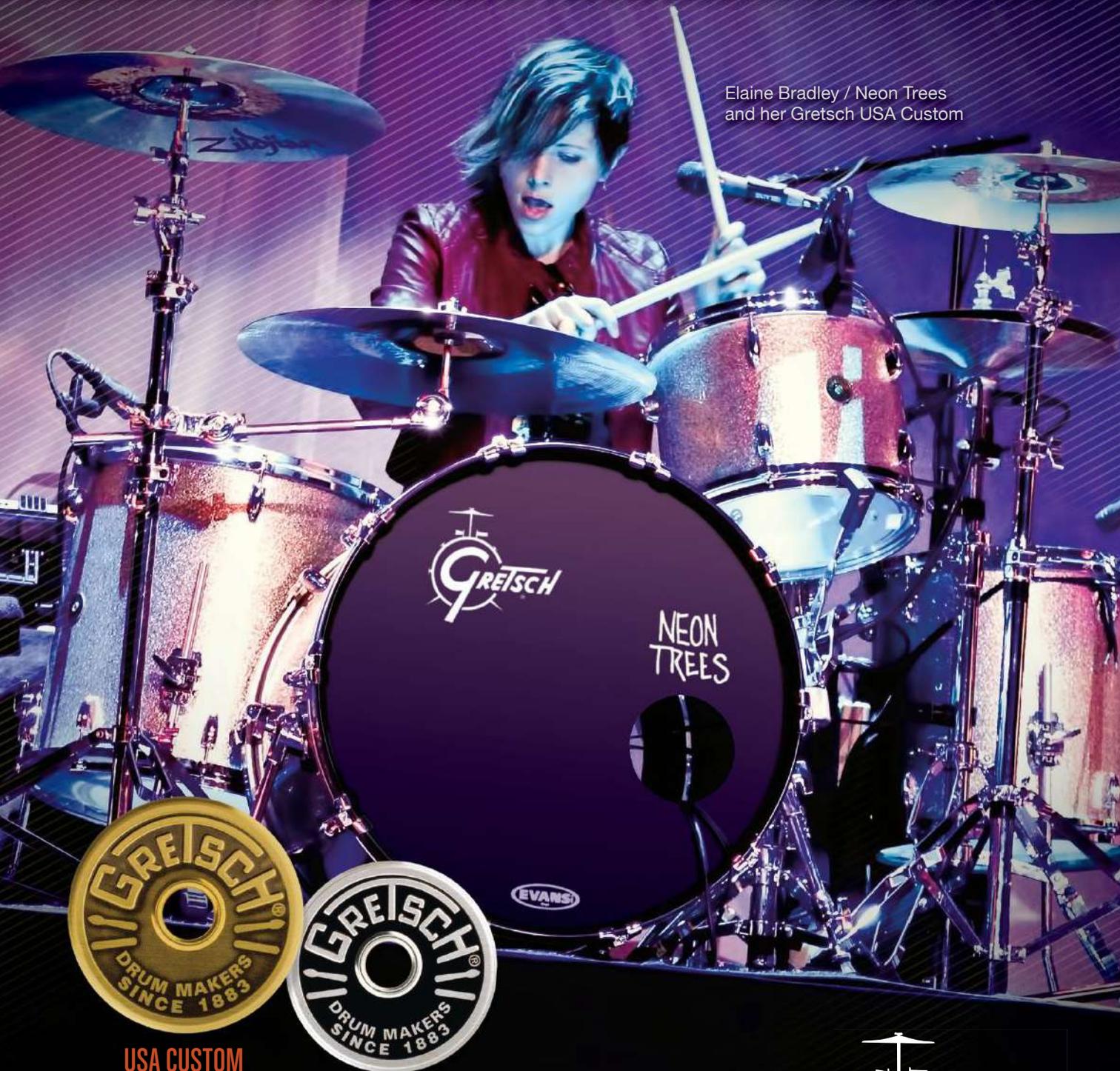
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