

2017 MD READERS POLL—VOTING'S OPEN!



MODERN DRUMMER®

THE WORLD'S #1 DRUM MAGAZINE

IMPROVE YOUR PRACTICE

WIN A \$6,000 TAMA/MEINL PACKAGE

SANTANA'S MICHAEL SHRIEVE

Ralph Peterson

Still Stunning

HOW A JAZZ SURVIVOR BEAT BACK THE DEMONS AND TRIUMPHED

+ PLUS +

JOHNNY CRAVIOTTO REMEMBERED • ARGENT'S BOB HENRIT CALLE 13'S ISMAEL CANCEL • BRITISH HITMAKER ASH SOAN GRETSCH, CANOPUS, ZILDJIAN, AND TAMA REVIEWED

DECEMBER 2016

\$5.99US \$5.99CAN



0 71486 01203 0

FLUID

Machined Chain Drive



Fluid Design = Fluid Motion. Responsive, accurate, powerful and decidedly DW. The all-new MCD pedal represents the convergence of engineering and art. Play one at an authorized DW retailer now.



MORE BIG & UGLY

THE VERSATILITY WILL SURPRISE YOU & THE FUN WILL INSPIRE YOU

18" AA SICK HATS

Thin and very dry overall, 18" AA Sick Hats are surprisingly controllable. 28 holes allow them to breathe in ways other Hats simply cannot. With virtually no airlock, you'll hear everything. Want more body, less air in your face, and the ability to play patterns without the holes getting in your way? Just flip 'em over!

New Big & Ugly

18" AA Sick Hats
14" XSR Monarch Hats
18" XSR Monarch
20" XSR Monarch
14" AA Apollo Hats
16" AA Apollo Hats
18" AA Apollo
20" AA Apollo

Big & Ugly is all about sonic versatility, tonal complexity – and huge fun. Learn more.



SABIAN.COM/BIGUGLY

Capture the Music™

Stage or Studio

Audix is the pioneer of application-specific microphones for drums and percussion. The result, award-winning microphones which perfectly balance tone and attack across your entire kit.



Photo of Anthony Jones, Pink Martini

Audix. Today's Mic.

AUDIX
audixusa.com

©2016 Audix Corporation All Rights Reserved. Audix and the Audix Logo are trademarks of Audix Corporation.



D2



D4



D6



ADX51



i5

BIG SOUND FROM LEGENDARY DNA

BIG BEAT



24
22
21
20
19
18
16
15



**RIVAL
SONS**
MICHAEL MILEY

HAND CRAFTED SOUND  SWISS MADE QUALITY





MIKE PORTNOY

PROMARK
ACTIVEGRIP™

HEAT SWEAT PRESSURE



HANDLE IT.

INTRODUCING THE MIKE PORTNOY 420X.

The new heat-activated grip stick from Promark, designed to add more power and control to your arsenal.

INTRODUCING

Masters

MAPLE COMPLETE

The thin shell 100% maple drums
you've been waiting for.

Jen Ledger

SKILLET

ROBERT DOWNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Masters Maple Complete features our all new EvenPly-Six Shell configuration providing six ultra thin .9mm plies of cross laminated pristine Maple. This is the lightest, most resonant and affordable Masters Series ever. Shell packs start at just \$1349.

Pearl®

34 On the Cover

Ralph Peterson

"I'm a better player. My energy is used to uplift the people I play with now, instead of beating them down in some testosterone-induced display of musical machismo."

The jazz drummer and educator was chuckling as he said those words, but there's a seriousness between the lines that tells of hard battles, and sweet successes.
by Ken Micallef

Cover and Contents photos by Paul La Raia



FEATURES

18 THE 2017 MODERN DRUMMER READERS POLL

Cast your vote in the drumming world's most prestigious ballot!

22 Catching Up With...JERRY MAROTTA and BILLY FICCA

46 MICHAEL SHRIEVE. At twenty, Santana's "classic lineup" drummer cut an image at Woodstock that still defines the era. But the past is the past...or is it?
by Jeff Potter

50 ASH SOAN. The highly in-demand British drummer never takes his eye off the singer, or the song.
by Robin Tolleson

56 WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...BOB HENRIT?

That's him playing the oddball, contagious beat on Argent's perennial FM fave, "Hold Your Head Up." But it's just the tip of the iceberg.
by Will Romano

60 SETTING SIGHTS: ISMAEL CANCEL. While the world-renowned Puerto Rican group Calle 13 takes a breather, its drummer explores the unknown with singer iLe.
by Ilya Stembkovsky

EDUCATION

- 66 Teacher's Forum**
More Effective Learning
Improving Practice Skills, Memory, and Drumming
by Marc Dicciani
- 68 Basics**
Fundamental Fills,
Part 5: Six-Stroke Stickings
by Donny Gruendler
- 70 Strictly Technique**
One-Two-Threes
Exercises for Control
by Bill Bachman
- 71 Jazz Drummer's Workshop**
Rhythmic Conversions
Part 3: Half-Note Triplets
by Steve Fidyk
- 72 Rock 'n' Jazz Clinic**
Groove Construction
Part 8: Three-Note Variations
by Jost Nickel
- 74 Rock Perspectives**
Advanced Overlapping Phrases
Superimposing Groupings
by Aaron Edgar
- 76 Concepts**
Are You Playing the Drums?
Or Are the Drums Playing You?
by Russ Miller

EQUIPMENT

- 26 Product Close-Up**
Gretsch Renown RN2 Drumset and Full Range Hammered Black Steel Snare
Zildjian Avedis Series Cymbals
Canopus Yaiba II Maple, Yaiba II Birch, and Black-Nickel Brass Snares
Tama Iron Cobra and Speed Cobra Pedals
- 62 Gearing Up**
Fear Factory's Mike Heller
- 78 New and Notable**

Enter to win one of three incredible prize packages from Tama and Meinl valued at more than \$6,000!
Page 20



DEPARTMENTS

- 8 An Editor's Overview**
Tell Them How Good You Are...
by Adam Budofsky
- 10 Readers' Platform**
Favorite Drum Shells
- 14 News**
On Tour with the Pretty Reckless and John Brown's Body, new albums by Blonde Redhead and Dance Gavin Dance, and more
- 16 It's Questionable**
Mind Matters: Playing in a Band or Solo?
by Bernie Schallehn
- 80 Showcase**
featuring Drum Market
- 84 Critique**
Manu Katché solo album, Mark Guiliana method book, and more
- 90 In Memoriam**
Johnny Craviotto and Dennis Davis
- 92 Backbeats**
2016 DCI World Championship Results
- 96 Kit of the Month**
Envirodrum



Red Mist

100% BIRCH ...STRAIGHT FROM THE LAB

The new **Unity Birch** drum kit from Sound Percussion Labs starts with **all-birch shells** for exceptional tone, and then adds SPL's new **Arch-Tech™ bearing edge** design for a warmer, richer sound and easier tuning. You'll also find a matching, **solid wood bass drum hoop** and world-renowned **Remo heads**. The result is a complete, 5-piece drum kit

that produces a satisfying, resonant tone while keeping all of its attack and punch, **and all under \$500**. Includes chrome plated, double-braced stands, chain drive pedal, cymbals and throne. Check one out today, and experience the new SPL — **straight from the lab**.



Black Mist



Silver Mist



Available exclusively at:



Musician's Friend

Tell Them How Good You Are...

The second part of that title is ...Just Be *Cool* About It.

Make what you will of this, but I've always viewed much of life through cool-colored glasses. Blame it on Clyde. Walt "Clyde" Frazier was the super-smooth NBA guard who, in the early '70s, played on the New York Knicks' only two championship teams. On and off the court he was known for his high style and chill demeanor. Clyde passed behind his back. He called his autobiography *Rockin' Steady*. He was my hero.

Of course, basketball is entertainment, and in real life some things are just unavoidable. To be sure, the time's going to come when you'll be chatting up someone at a bar and later realize you had a booger sticking out of your nose the whole time. Or maybe the person sitting next to you was this hot producer; unfortunately you were on your fifth drink and they were still on their first, and your unsolicited offer to help 'em out the next time they're "stuck in the studio with some crappy indie drummer" lands with a thud, managing only to insult them and slap a red flag across your forehead.

Life's a minefield, man. But here's the thing. Boogers...boogers happen, and there's no point in losing sleep over that. But blowing a potentially career-altering opportunity because of a lack of self-control and an overabundance of ego? That's on us. And that ain't cool.

Self-confidence is good. Egotism is not. And most people can tell the difference in a second. Veteran music producers, bandleaders, journalists—they have notoriously sensitive BS meters. One of the reasons Clyde Frazier was so cool was that he didn't brag. He let his playing do the talking. Okay, that and his custom-made suits. And his Rolls-Royce. The point is, the real reason people paid attention to him back in the day was because he was an elite player. And today, as a TV commentator for Knicks games, he commands our respect because he's a fountain of wisdom with the playing cred to back it up.

To be fair, musicians have always had to sell themselves to survive. If in the service of acting cool we're keeping our talent to ourselves, that's as career damaging as developing a rep as a local blowhard. We need to let people know how diligently we're working, and how much we love that work. And there's no shame in sharing how proud we are of our recent projects. But we have to do it in a modest, conversational way.

It seems obvious, but musicians far too often fail to recognize that the way into someone's heart—and contact list—is to find out what *they* need and figure out how to help them with it. I suppose it's possible to get a nibble by standing up in the middle of a party and yelling, "Hey, everyone! I'm a drummer and I'm awesome! Takers?" But generally playing the long game, and observing social protocol, works much better.

Today the internet offers more opportunities than ever to announce "Amazing drummer for hire!" It also offers more opportunities than ever to leave a less-than-stellar impression. Just like in life, at some point we're going to be seen with a metaphoric booger sticking out of our nose—maybe even a real one! But if we strive to be like Clyde, doing the work and playing it cool, we too should be rockin' steady, for a long time to come.



Jim Esposito

MODERN DRUMMER

Founder
Ronald Spagnardi
1943–2003

Publisher/CEO
Isabel Spagnardi

Senior Vice President
Lori Spagnardi

Vice President
Kevin W. Kearns

Associate Publisher
Tracy A. Kearns

Advertising Director
Bob Berenson

Advertising Assistant
LaShanda Gibson

Senior Art Director
Scott G. Bienstock

Editorial Director
Adam J. Budofsky

Managing Editor
Michael Dawson

Associate Editor
Willie Rose

Editor at Large
Billy Amendola

Business and Content Development
Miguel Monroy

Digital Media Director
EJ DeCoske

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

MODERN DRUMMER ADVISORY BOARD:

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

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Patrick Berkery, David Ciauro, John Emrich, Bob Girouard, Mike Haid, Dr. Asif Khan, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Mark Parsons, Martin Patmos, Jeff Potter, Will Romano, Bernie Schallehn, Ilya Stemkovsky, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel Weiss, Paul Wells.

MODERN DRUMMER magazine

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

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMBER: National Association for Music Development, National Association of Music Merchants, Percussive Arts Society

MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE: www.moderndrummer.com

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES

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

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

Robby, Vista, CA



Kick pedal, snare stand, and hi-hat stand not included

Roland TD-30KSE

Outstanding playing feel plus a huge range of incredible Roland SuperNATURAL drum sounds! This kit has it all!



DW Collector's Series Exotic Shell Pack

These stunning maple/mahogany shells sound and look absolutely amazing — in a Dragon finish you'll only find at Sweetwater!



Sabian B8X 16"/18"

Two vibrant, focused crash cymbals that live up to the logo — plus a BONUS 10" splash!



Pearl Ash Cajon

Pearl's Ash Cajon delivers great dynamics, plenty of thump, and satisfying snap. This ash version is a Sweetwater exclusive!



Zildjian Studio Recording Set

Selected by our in-house drummer, Nick D'Virgilio, this cymbal set delivers peak studio performance!

Sweetwater®

Music Instruments & Pro Audio



FREE SHIPPING



FREE TECH SUPPORT



FREE 2-YEAR WARRANTY

(800) 222-4700 **Sweetwater.com**

0% INTEREST for 24 MONTHS* on purchases of select manufacturers' products made with your Sweetwater Musician's All Access Platinum Card between now and December 31, 2016 - 24 equal monthly payments required.

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

Charlie Watts Gearing Up

I've been a player and reader of *MD* for many years. Your article on Charlie Watts' gear in the August issue inspired a few memories, so I dug out my back copies from the basement. Sure enough, there was Charlie in the February 1990 issue with the exact same Gretsch kit right down to the no-name Italian flat ride, hardware, and pedals—although his snare of choice then was a Ludwig Supraphonic.

Looking through the other pages, which featured lots of power-tom sizes, big kits, now-defunct products, and plenty of bad hair, it was interesting to reflect upon what endures and what doesn't. At that time, Charlie's setup was probably a bit of an anachronism. Many of the players and innovations of that era have come and gone. By the same token, the whole vintage thing had yet to take hold. In that context, Charlie, and his modest yet classic setup, have resolutely stood the test of time.

Brett Thomson
Sydney, Australia

Dropped Beats

The snare drum that appeared on the bottom of page 76 in the September 2016 issue was incorrectly labeled as a 1929 Ludwig & Ludwig Super-Sensitive. It's a 1929 Ludwig & Ludwig Standard-Sensitive.



The photograph of Jason Bittner on page 20 in the September 2016 issue should have been credited to Robert Downs Photography.

Favorite Drum Shell Type?

This month we asked our social-media followers about their favorite drum shells. While maple was heavily favored all around, birch, mahogany, bubinga, and oak rounded out the top five, respectively. Here are some of your comments and picks.

I've played kits ranging from solid maple to solid birch to the drums I currently have now, which feature 6-ply blended kapur and birch shells. They're quite the sonic pairing to my ears. I also came up in a time when any sort of hybrid wood shell implied lower quality. Today, there's almost no limit to the sort of shells manufacturers are creating.

Nelson Steele

I have DW maple with reinforcement rings, but my next kit would probably be DW's maple/mahogany set. It has a dark tone but fits any genre of music, which is what I'm looking for. A maple kit also fits any genre of music, but doesn't offer the same tone that a maple/mahogany kit does.

Janus Nicolajsen

I like thin shells. I think they give out more tone and finesse than thicker ones. I also prefer hybrid shells because they amplify the sonic spectrum of the drums, making them more versatile for all types of music. There are many good combinations, but I own a '98 Premier Cabria with blue gum eucalyptus and dark red meranti wood. The eucalyptus is as hard as bubinga while the meranti is soft but very porous. I love it. It gives out a very resonant sound but is focused with lots of low frequencies. Another great combination is bubinga/maple or bubinga/birch. I think the trick is to mix woods that give a dark sound with other woods that are brighter to get the perfect combination.

Nelson Rodriguez

I bought the new Yamaha Live Custom oak shells a couple of years ago, and I have to say, it was a great choice. They have a deep, resonating sound with a great attack, and they're so easy to mike



up to get a great sound. I added a Craviotto hand-made oak snare in January. It's a killer setup for hard rock.

Terry Shields

Birch. The natural characteristics of that wood make it great for all settings. For example, in a large room with cathedral-type ceilings, you don't have to stress on muffling so much, especially if using single-ply heads, because that shell has such a focused sound.

Christopher Whitfield

For low pitches I like walnut because it offers an amazing tonal range. For higher pitches I prefer cherry because it has a certain richness to it.

Warren E. LaFever

I have two birch sets—one modern and one vintage—and they're surprisingly very different-sounding. I love the rich tone and impact you get from birch, and I find it has a much more defined tone than maple. My favorite snare is still my homemade Honduras rosewood. With a 7x14 stave construction and .875"-thick shell, it's a beast and weighs a ton.

Kit Cunningham

My favorite shells produced today are Dixon ultra-maples. They're thin and don't have reinforcement rings, and they have a really pure tone with lots of warmth. The placement of the bearing edge toward the inside with a rounded outer cut makes for great head contact. They'll go high for bebop without choking, or sit slow and low. They project well and have a nice mix of attack without sacrificing beef.

Brian Ferguson

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

HOW TO REACH US letters@moderndrummer.com



This is what
happens
when the
world leader
in percussion
gets authentic.



THE WOOD BRICK CAJON

Meticulously hand-inlaid in Peru from solid walnut, mahogany and almond, offering the quintessential Spanish cajon sound. The Art of Rhythm is LP.

LPMUSIC.COM

©2016 LATIN PERCUSSION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Experience & Soul



Celebrating 20th Anniversary With A New Product Line.

Bosphorus Cymbals



Available at Prime Dealers

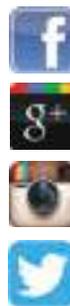
www.bosphoruscymbals.com

■Bosphoruscymbal ■Bosphorus_TR ■BosphorusTurkey

Now on **MODERN DRUMMER**.com

BLONDE REDHEAD'S SIMONE PACE

The New York indie-rock band has reissued its groundbreaking early recordings, and they're a revelation. We speak with the group's founding drummer about where he was coming from in the early '90s, and where his head's at today.



TOMMY BENEDETTI OF JOHN BROWN'S BODY

The twenty-year vet with one of the most successful American reggae bands hips us about changes on the scene and how to go for an authentic Jamaican feel.



BE IN THE ROOM AS WE CHECK OUT THE GEAR!

Watch video demos of the **GRETSCH** Renown drumset, **ZILDJIAN** Avedis series, and **CANOPUS** Black-Nickel Brass and Yaiba II Maple and Birch snares, all reviewed in this month's Product Close-Up.

EDUCATION

Video lessons straight off the pages of this month's **BASICS**, **ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC**, **JAZZ DRUMMER'S WORKSHOP**, and **ROCK PERSPECTIVES** columns.

Plus interviews with

- Jamie Perkins of the Pretty Reckless
- Matt Mingus of Dance Gavin Dance

DRUM DAY

— N A S H V I L L E —

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES BY



DERICO WATSON



RUSS MILLER



CHRIS COLEMAN

Join us for an afternoon of **CLINICS, PRODUCT DEMOS, ARTIST PERFORMANCES, GIVEAWAYS,** and **ONE-DAY-ONLY DEALS** on some of the best products from all 3 brands.

NOVEMBER 5TH, 2016
@ SOUNDCHECK — NASHVILLE
1 P. M. — 5 P. M.

Visit www.DrumDay.info for event reservations and full details.

SPONSORED BY

 SONOR®



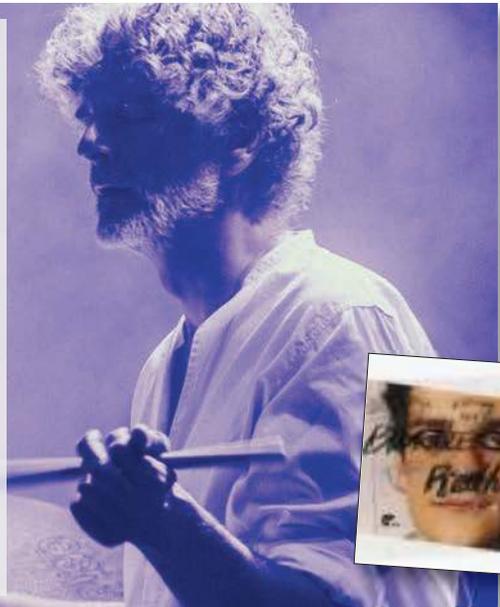
NFUZD™
AUDIO

Out Now

Blonde Redhead *Masculin Féminin*

For twenty years the members of the popular New York City indie-art-rock group Blonde Redhead have thrived by embracing their natural inclination to evolve, viewing internally and externally generated changes as opportunities to explore new realms, rather than reasons to retreat to past successes. The new four-LP/two-CD package *Masculin Féminin* offers plenty of evidence that singer Kazu Makino, drummer **Simone Pace**, and Simone's twin brother, guitarist/vocalist Amadeo, have always been uniquely able to find fertile ground wherever they plant their musical seeds. The thirty-seven tracks here, originally released on Sonic Youth drummer Steve Shelley's Smells Like Records in the early '90s, are wildly diverse but inevitably thrilling.

"There was so much I wanted to express at the beginning," Simone Pace tells *Modern Drummer*, "especially because I had just so many different interests in music, and I really wanted to give each song a chance to be unique." One approach that Pace uses to this day to give Blonde Redhead tracks their own voice is to focus on individual elements of his setup. "I'm always interested in using each part of my drumset like a single instrument," he explains, "and giving it the attention it needs. I learned a lot from playing Brazilian and Cuban styles on the kit, [where] you are in fact approaching the different drums and cymbals as sections of a percussion ensemble. So interesting—and I'm so lucky to be able to bring that into an alternative context." (Numero Group) **Adam Budofsky**



Dance Gavin Dance *Mothership*

An organic, genre-defying groove imbues the intricate breakdowns and unison guitar riffs on *Mothership*, the seventh studio album from the post-hardcore group Dance Gavin Dance. Drummer **Matt Mingus**, a member of the band since its inception in 2005, attributes the feel to a wide range of idols. "I heavily draw influence from funk and Motown artists," Mingus says. "I love the Four Tops, Aretha Franklin, Earth, Wind & Fire—all that good stuff. I've also always been a fan of classic rock music, like Steely Dan, the Eagles, the Who, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and of course Prince—you can't forget about the legend. I feel I pulled a lot of my sense of groove out of a combination of those artists."

Mingus finds that the group's recording process presents a worthy challenge. "Usually in the studio there are one or two tracks where our producer may change the double kick patterns just a little to follow the guitars, and [the new part] might be a little outside my abilities," he says. "I like it because then I have no choice but to learn them for the live show. I've most certainly found it's a good way to put a little pressure on myself to get better." (Rise) **Willie Rose**



More New Releases

Donny McCaslin Beyond Now (Mark Guiliana) /// **Norma Jean** Polar Similar (Clayton Holyoak) /// **Taking Back Sunday** Tidal Wave (Mark O'Connell) /// **Kings of Leon** Walls (Nathan Followill) /// **Memphis May Fire** This Light I Hold (Jake Garland) /// **Famous Last Words** The Incubus (Craig Simons)

For more with Simone Pace and Matt Mingus, go to moderndrummer.com.

Stickman Drum Camp

This past June 29 through July 2, in Saskatchewan, Canada, the Stickman Drum Experience camp completed its fifth season with a world-class lineup of instructors including Carter McLean, Jason Sutter, Mark Kelso, Emmanuelle Caplette, Brent Fitz, Jayson Brinkworth, and Chris Dimas. Thirty campers were provided with personal

instruction throughout the four-day event. Drummer Kevin Churko (Ozzy Osbourne, Disturbed, Ringo Starr, Slash) related life experience garnered from his journey to becoming a top engineer and producer, and Ronn Dunnett led a select group of campers through the hands-on process of designing and building their own snare drums.

Camp producers George Dimas and Jayson Brinkworth organized the event at Living Skies Retreat and Conference Centre, in the picturesque Qu'Appelle Valley. A large outdoor tent served as a drum-building venue and held end-of-camp concerts in which attendees performed while applying what they'd learned. "Every year gets better



**On
Tour**

Tommy Benedetti with John Brown's Body

The veteran roots-reggae band John Brown's Body is currently touring in support of its September groove-laden release, *Fireflies*. Drummer **Tommy Benedetti**, whose exceptionally deep pocket has powered the group for more than twenty years, explains, "Our touring has evolved toward a more strategic approach in the last few years. We aren't really out for more than two weeks at a time. Mostly we'll do three- or four-date runs and then fly home in between. Then maybe four times a year we'll go out for two weeks. Don't get me wrong—in the early days we *would* be out for two months straight, and yes, it was challenging! Thankfully now we travel more comfortably and have settled on a schedule that gives us a good balance of tour life and home life."

On record, the songs brim with pure and tasteful grooves, but live Benedetti feeds on audience excitement. "With the energy of a crowd—and JBB is a high-energy show—I tend to play a lot more fills than you'll hear on record," he says. "I consider myself more of a live player, and I have big ears, so I'm always listening to the horns, bass, or vocals for something to react to." **Willie Rose**

Tobin Vogesser, NoCoast

Jamie Perkins with the Pretty Reckless

With an album in the can, a new chart-topping single, and an extensive domestic fall tour underway, things look bright for veteran drummer **Jamie Perkins** of the Pretty Reckless. Together with producer Kato Khandwala (Blondie, Breaking Benjamin), who previously worked with founding band members Taylor Momsen (lead vocals, guitar) and Ben Phillips (guitar, backing vocals), the group whittled more than twenty songs down to the twelve gutsy, gritty best for the band's third full-length album, *Who You Selling For*.

Live, Perkins ditches the click to create a natural vibe for the new tunes. "[It's] as organic as possible," he says. "I have a Roland SPD-SX that I use to trigger intros, and if there's a sound effect that somebody wants to use, we'll throw it in there. There are no tracks so far, but there's a song on the new album called 'Prisoner' where we might wind up having a track of the intro when we play it live." **Ben Meyer**

Also on the Road

Alan Cassidy with Black Dahlia Murder /// **Remi Aguilera** with Daughter /// **Jamie Saint Merat** with Ulcerate /// **Charlie Schmid** with Tombs /// **Chris Ulsh** with Power Trip /// **Jack Bevan** with Foals /// **TJ Orscher** with Bear Hands

For more with Tommy Benedetti and Jamie Perkins, go to modern drummer.com.

Tanya Decken

and more diversified," Brinkworth says. "The snare-building course was so cool, so we plan to bring that back next season. The 2017 camp promises to be our best ever."

Text and photos by Ronn Dunnett



Mind Matters

Playing in a Band or Solo?

by Bernie Schallehn

I'm new to the drums and to your magazine. I've been taking a few lessons, watching videos, playing along to songs on my iPad, and making up my own beats. I'm really enjoying myself. However, reactions from family and friends have been a bit troubling. One friend asked me, "Why did you choose an instrument that simply accompanies other instruments?" Other people in my life have been

asking, "When are you going to start or join a band?" It feels like pressure, and it takes away from my enjoyment of drumming. Are drums truly only an instrument designed to accompany other instruments? And am I wrong to just keep playing my drums solo? **S.G.**

First off, delete the word "just" from your last question. That word diminishes an activity that gives you pleasure and enjoyment. Make it: "Am I wrong to keep playing my drums solo?" And the answer is a resounding "no."

If you and your drums never come out of your basement or bedroom, so what? The truth of the matter is that you're engaged in a pastime that makes you happy and, coincidentally, is good for you. When you play, your heart beats a little faster, and your respiration increases. Play faster and harder, and your cardio-vascular system gets a nice little workout. The Clem Burke (Blondie's drummer) Drumming Project found that working professional drummers had a heart rate profile similar to those of pro football players and that they expended a significant amount of energy, 400–600 kcal per performance. Research tests included measurement of heart rate, oxygen uptake, and blood lactate in rehearsal and monitoring heart rate and blood lactate during live performances. The Tokyo Medical and Dental University found that drummers have an above-average white blood cell count, which are the cells that are instrumental for the immune system to fight off infection. So keep drumming for

your health as well as your own personal satisfaction.

Solo drumming is also a great way to change your mental state, emotional state, or both. If you're angry or anxious, cue up some fast, hard-driving rock on your iPad, play for a while, and then note how you feel. Calmer? More relaxed? Not as angry or anxious? Good! If you're feeling a little sad, play along to some upbeat music or freestyle on the kit—any type of drumming that you think might help elevate your mood. If you're feeling happy, translate that emotion onto your drums and cymbals. It might make that emotion stick around a bit longer.

Each of us has two lives. There's the one we're given at birth, and the one we make for ourselves. Attempting to please everyone in your sphere of existence is an excellent way to stay in a state of constant frustration and unhappiness. Make your way of life one that lets ignorant statements like, "Why did you choose an instrument that simply accompanies other instruments?" bounce off you. Better yet, take the person who asked you that question to a solo concert by Terry Bozzio. The reason Bozzio is able to create a mesmerizing two-hour show is because he thinks differently about the drumkit. He

has referred to the drumkit as a relatively new invention that he hopes will someday elevate to the status of a more traditional solo instrument, like piano. Terry's massive drumset has an almost unlimited array of percussion sounds used to convey the essential elements of music: melody, rhythm, and harmony.

Those pushing you to join or form a band will eventually tire of asking the same questions and will back off. Stay strong in your conviction that all you really want is solo time with your kit. However, as time passes, you may feel the urge to play with other musicians. Should this happen, check out various music pages on Facebook or Craigslist. Look for listings from other players who desire to jam just for fun, with no intention of coalescing into a gigging band. Set up a time to get together with them, hold your head high, and make some music. Afterwards, assess how it felt to play with others. Did you like it? If you did, then maybe try jamming with them again. If it wasn't that much fun, you can always go back to your practice room and play on!

HOW TO REACH US

iq@moderndrummer.com



Anika & Cympads: Pro Quality.



"Cympads let me adjust the sound and sustain of my cymbals depending on the music and room I am playing in."

Anika Nillos (drummer/songwriter)

Cympad Red Chromatics Cellular Foam Cymbal Washers

CYMPAD[®]

www.cympad.com

DIRK VERBEUREN STEPS INTO THE FIRE



Getting the call from his childhood metal idols, Megadeth, Dirk had a lot to think about: leaving Soilwork, which was Dirk's home for the past 12 years, was not a lighthearted decision. One thing Dirk didn't have to worry about was his gear. TAMA Starclassic drums are a perfect fit for Megadeth: loud, powerful, sturdy and boasting a ferocious tone and attack that will shake venues everywhere.

THE

MODERN DRUMMER

MAGAZINE

READERS POLL



CAST YOUR VOTE IN THE DRUMMING WORLD'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS BALLOT

Voting is open between November 1 and December 15, 2016 at moderndrummer.com.

Hall of Fame

Peter Erskine
David Garibaldi
Harvey Mason
Rod Morgenstein
Clyde Stubblefield

Metal

Eloy Casagrande
Brann Dailor
Alex Rüdinger
Gil Sharone
Jay Weinberg

Up & Coming

Louise Bartle
Jonathan Pinson
Loniel Robinson
Chris Turner
Chris Woollison

Jazz

Carl Allen
Scott Amendola
Mark Guiliana
McCleanty Hunter
Ralph Peterson

MVP

Will Calhoun
Shannon Forrest
Mark Guiliana
Robert "Sput" Searight
Steve Smith

Alternative

Josh Block
Abe Cunningham
Ira Elliot
Nate Lotz
David Sandström

Prog

Craig Blundell
Aric Improta
Jimmy Keegan
Navene Koperweis
Mike Mangini

Fusion

Cliff Almond
Adam Deitch
Jojo Mayer
Anika Nilles
Robert "Sput" Searight

Rock

Tommy Aldridge
Will Calhoun
Barry Kerch
Steve Smith
Sarah Tomek

Studio

Shannon Forrest
Ash Soan
Aaron Sterling
Steven Wolf
Nir Z

Pop/R&B

Josh Dun
Andrés Forero
Terence Higgins
Carter McLean
Rashid Williams

Country

Garrett Goodwin
Pat McDonald
Rich Redmond
Jim Riley
Ben Sesar

Clinician/Educator

Benny Greb
Claus Hessler
Mike Johnston
Thomas Lang
Jost Nickel

Educational Product

Mark Guiliana,
Exploring Your Creativity on the Drumset (book/DVD)
Dafnis Prieto,
A World of Rhythmic Possibilities (book/online audio and video)
Jim Riley,
Survival Guide for the Modern Drummer (book/CD)
Steve Smith,
Pathways of Motion (book/DVD)
Aaron Sterling,
Sound of Sterloid, Vol. 1 (web video series)

Recorded Performance, Audio

Mark Guiliana,
Blackstar (David Bowie)
Deantoni Parks,
Technoself (Deantoni Parks)
Robert “Sput” Searight, Larnell Lewis, and Jason “JT” Thomas,
Culcha Vulcha (Snarky Puppy)
Joshua Wells,
IV (Black Mountain)
Matt Wilson,
Beginning of a Memory (Matt Wilson's Big Happy Family)

Recorded Performance, Video

Mikkey Dee,
Clean Your Clock (Motörhead)
Neil Peart,
R40 Live (Rush)
Daniel Platzman,
Smoke + Mirrors Live (Imagine Dragons)
Rat Scabies and Andrew “Pinch” Pinching,
Don't You Wish That We Were Dead (the Damned)
Chester Thompson and Ralph Humphrey,
Roxy: The Movie (Frank Zappa)

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!
Go to moderndrummer.com today.

BEST OF THREE

TAMA, MEINL, & Modern Drummer are offering one lucky winner their choice of one of these new Retro finish Limited Edition Starclassic Performer B/B kits. Each is complete with hardware, hand-picked MEINL cymbals, and a one year subscription to Modern Drummer.

To enter the contest and for complete contest details and pricing, go to moderndrummer.com



OPTION 2

6pc 16x22" BD limited edition Starclassic Performer B/B kit complete with hardware and MEINL Byzance cymbals

Tempest Green (TGS) finish



Total Value:

\$6,981.61

Consumer Disclosure: 1. To enter, visit www.moderndrummer.com between the dates below and look for the TAMA Drums Contest button (one entry per email address). 2. ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 3. CONTEST BEGINS SEPTEMBER 1, 2016, AND ENDS NOVEMBER 30, 2016. 4. Prize Drawing: Winner will be selected by random drawing on December 6, 2016. Winner will be notified by phone or email on or about December 8, 2016. 5. Employees, and their immediate families, of Modern Drummer, TAMA Drums, Meinl cymbals, and their affiliates are ineligible. 6. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. 7. Open to residents of the U.S. and Canada, 18 years of age or older. Void in Quebec, Canada; Florida; New York; and where prohibited by law. 8. One

GIVEAWAY!

OPTION 1

4pc 14x22"BD limited edition Starclassic Performer B/B kit complete with hardware and MEINL Byzance cymbals

Electron Blue (EBS) finish



Total Value:

\$5,992.61

OPTION 3

4pc 14x24"BD limited edition Starclassic Performer B/B kit complete with hardware and MEINL Byzance cymbals

Fire Brick Red (FRS) finish



Total Value:

\$6,089.61

TAMA **MEINL** **MODERN DRUMMER**

prize awarded per household per contest. 9. One (1) winner will receive from TAMA, MEINL, & Modern Drummer their choice of one (1) of the 3 prize options as described above. Approximate retail value of the 3 prize options as described above. Approximate retail value of contest as described above. 10. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 271 Route 46 W, H-212, Fairfield, NJ 07004, 973-239-4140. 11. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or the winner's name, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/Tama/Official Rules/Winners List, 271 Route 46 W, H-212, Fairfield, NJ 07004.

Jerry Marotta

The drummer returns to the scene of his original artistic flowering—singer Peter Gabriel's legendary early catalog.

"My motto has always been to keep growing both artistically and personally," Jerry Marotta says. "If I didn't, I'd probably fall asleep."

Indeed, and despite the fact that he named his recording studio Dreamland, there's no need to worry that the Woodstock-based drummer will be nodding off anytime soon. Marotta is busily forwarding his art in a wide range of settings, including recordings and performances with the Security Project, whose repertoire consists of interpretations of Peter Gabriel's music.

Named after the singer's groundbreaking 1982 album, which Marotta played on, the Security Project has so far put out two in-concert recordings. Its debut album, *Live¹*, focuses mostly on tracks from Gabriel's groundbreaking third and fourth releases, while the brand-new *Live²* reaches more deeply into material from his first two albums, as well as forward to tracks from 1986's *So* and 2000's *OVO Millennium Dome Show* soundtrack. (Genesis freaks will no doubt appreciate the inclusion, on both releases, of tracks from the classic double album *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway*.) As this issue of *MD* is hitting newsstands, the band is in the midst of a U.S. tour.

Although he's largely known for his studio work, Marotta still yearns to be part of a greater whole. "My role model and mentor," he explains, "is obviously my brother [session legend Rick Marotta]. He had the foresight to bring me to a Columbia Records session with him and Al Kooper back when I was just thirteen years old. But my inclination was then—and still is—to be in a band."

His first, the Woodstock-area group Orleans, netted Marotta the "can do" rep that has stayed with him throughout his career. He joined the band in time to record its second big hit, "Still the One," from the 1976 album *Waking and Dreaming*. "Back then," Marotta recalls, "if I had the chance to be in Orleans or the Beatles, I would have chosen Orleans hands down. They were my favorite band."

Fast-forward to 1977, when, after internal strife led Marotta to leave Orleans, he got



When Jerry Marotta appeared on the cover of the March 1986 issue of *Modern Drummer*, he'd been with Peter Gabriel for nine years, appearing on four of the former Genesis singer's solo albums, including the radical yet hugely popular tracks "Games Without Frontiers," "Biko," "Shock the Monkey," and "Red Rain." Yet Marotta had already worked with an impressive list of artists before he'd even heard of Gabriel, including Orleans and Daryl Hall and John Oates. Marotta was unavailable to play on much of Gabriel's 1986 album, *So*, due to being in the studio with Paul McCartney for the ex-Beatle's *Press to Play* album, and wouldn't appear on subsequent Gabriel studio albums. But he kept quite busy, touring and recording with the Indigo Girls through most of the '90s, and he's spent much of the new millennium working on projects in his own Dreamland studio in upstate New York.

an offer to play with the little-known (at the time) Gabriel. "Peter influenced my life forever," the drummer says today. "I was with him for ten years, and everything changed. Because of the way Peter made music, he revolutionized my approach, which really required experimentation. Recording at [Gabriel's home studio] Ashcombe House provided that freedom."

At home on anything rhythmic—traditional and electronic drumkit, African and Native American drums, hand percussion—Marotta still embraces every new project with a gleam in his eye. "I love

to play," he says. "In addition to Security Project, I'm excited about Karma Darwin, a young band I recently produced; the Fragile Fate, a band featuring me, Fixx keyboardist Rupert Greenall, and guitarist Eric the Taylor; and Thor Jensen, a phenomenal guitarist who I'm working with in a project with Flav Martin, who is a great guitarist himself. And naturally Dreamland studio is open for business.

"Check us out," Marotta adds with a chuckle. "We may even make a few of your dreams come true." **Bob Girouard**



G e o r g e K o p p

Billy Ficca

This indie-rock hero is happy to revisit past glories. But he's not exactly waiting around for the opportunity.

The bands Billy Ficca is most commonly associated with are all pretty different from each other. Television had those lean, anxious guitar jams that sound as ahead of their time today as they did back in the mid-to-late '70s. The Waitresses were an art-y band that flirted with Top 40 success (yes, that's Ficca you hear on "Christmas Wrapping" each year around the holidays). The Washington Squares were eclectic folk revivalists. And the band Ficca has been playing with the last couple of years, the avant-garde "supergroup" Heroes of Toolik (featuring members of the Modern Lovers and the Lounge Lizards), specializes in experimental pop songs with trombone and violin serving as the primary lead instruments.

Seems like a pretty diverse lot on paper. But as far as Ficca is concerned, there's a common thread connecting those bands and his job within each. "To me, it's all kind of like dance music," he explains. "A drummer's job really is to get people to dance, or to move—or to at least think about moving. Doesn't matter if I was playing fast folk with the Washington Squares or the weird, kind of ska things the Waitresses would occasionally do. My job was the same. And really, that's what a drummer's body does when you're playing—you're dancing. The way the limbs are working, the way your body moves across the kit... it's a dance."

It would be a stretch to characterize some of the more meditative pieces on Heroes of Toolik's latest album, *Like Night*, as dance music. But Ficca's dance moves across the cymbals on songs like "8 Miles" and "You Will Not Follow" fill the wide-open spaces tastefully, with washes, pings, and sweet overtones lingering and blending nicely with the rest of the ensemble. It's a top-down approach to drumming that comes from a love of jazz greats like Tony Williams and Elvin Jones. "Not only did those guys swing, but listen to how they played the cymbals," Ficca says. "It's beautiful. That's why I've always been really into cymbals. But not smashing the hell out of them. Just hitting a really nice cymbal the right way and letting it fill some space. I think it's one of the nicest sounds there is."

These days Ficca is juggling Heroes of Toolik with his Television commitments. TV did a short European run earlier in the year and played a handful of U.S. dates in late summer. Ficca says the band will likely mark next year's fortieth anniversary of the influential *Marquee Moon* with some shows where they'll play the album in its entirety. As for new Television music, that's not as likely. "We started working on some new stuff a while back," Ficca explains, "but there's still a lot that needs to be completed—lyrics, vocals.... I'd say it's somewhere between being on the shelf and being shelved completely." **Patrick Berkery**





MEINL
SUBWOOFER JUMBO
BASS CAJON WITH
WALNUT FRONTPLATE

\$199⁹⁹

(SUBCAJ5WN)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



MEINL
SIAM OAK STRING CAJON WITH
MAKAH-BURL FRONTPLATE

\$169⁹⁹

(CAJ3MBM)



MEINL
SLAP-TOP CAJON
WITH MAKAH-BURL FRONTPLATE

\$109⁹⁹

(TOPCAJ1MB)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



MEINL
HEADLINER SERIES CAJON

\$109⁹⁹

(HCAJ1NT)



MEINL
MIDSIZE BIRCHWOOD CAJON

\$69⁹⁹

(SCAJ50NT)



MEINL
BONGO CAJON

\$49⁹⁹

(BCAJ3NTEBKM)



MEINL
HEADLINER SERIES
ROPE-TUNED DJEMBE
\$148⁹⁹

(HDJ3L)



MEINL
HEADLINER SERIES BONGOS
YOUR CHOICE
\$69⁹⁹

(HB50R) (HB50BK)



MEINL
SONIC ENERGY UNIVERSAL SINGING BOWLS AND BELL
STARTING AT
\$19⁹⁹

(BM) (SBU400) (SBU600) (SBSE800)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM

ADD-ON
Meinl leather mallet
(SBRMLE)
\$7.99



MEINL
PERCUSSION PACK WITH COMPACT FOOT JINGLE
TAMBOURINE, CLASSIC HARDWOOD CLAVES AND
ARTIST SERIES SHAKER
\$29⁹⁹

(PPI)



Bring this coupon in and
GET AN EXTRA

\$20 OFF*
your purchase of \$99 or more

OR

\$50 OFF
your purchase of \$199 or more



dclmae459c

*\$20 off purchase of \$99 or more, \$50 off purchase of \$199 or more. Not to be used in conjunction with other coupons, promotions or offers. Excludes discounted and clearance items, price matches, used gear, tax/shipping charges, scratch and dent, vintage equipment, Gift Cards, String Club and Stick Club memberships, and musician services (Pro Coverage, Guitar Center Repairs, Guitar Center Rentals and Guitar Center lessons). No cash value. Coupon is redeemable in-store, online or at 866 543-0741, only with valid coupon code. participating brands: Meinl, Yamaha, Sabian, Latin Percussion, Toca, Gretsch, OCDP, Simmons, SPL, Proline, Road Runner, Tama, Zildjian, Treeworks, Ahead, Drum Dial and Aquarian. Offer valid 11/1/2016 thru 12/31/2016.



YAMAHA

\$50 OFF

YAMAHA 14x6.5" STAGE CUSTOM STEEL SNARE

REG. \$149.99
\$99.99

(SD266A)



YAMAHA DTX-MULTI 12 DIGITAL PERCUSSION PAD

\$599.99

(DTXM12)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



\$100 OFF

YAMAHA DTX430K ELECTRONIC DRUM SET

REG. \$599.99
\$499.99

(DTX430K)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



YAMAHA STAGE CUSTOM BIRCH SERIES 5-PIECE SHELL PACK

YOUR CHOICE
\$649.99

(SBP2F50RB) (SBP2F50CR) (SBP0F50NW)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY
COLORS VARY BY LOCATION


Also available
in these colors



\$10 OFF

YAMAHA 700 SERIES HARDWARE PRICES TOO LOW TO PRINT

(SS740A) (CS755) (HS740A) (FP7210A)





\$25 OFF

**SABIAN
B8X CRASH PACK**

REG. \$159.99
\$134⁹⁹

(45006XMF)



FREE

8" B8X splash
included in box
A \$45 VALUE

\$50 OFF

**SABIAN
B8X PERFORMANCE SET**

REG. \$319.99
\$269⁹⁹

(45003XPOZ)

FREE

16" B8 Pro O-Zone crash
included in box
A \$109 VALUE



\$100 OFF

**SABIAN
AAX X-PLOSION CYMBAL SET**

REG. \$749.99
\$649⁹⁹

(2500587XBGC)
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM

FREE

18" AAXplosion crash
included in box
A \$249 VALUE



**SABIAN
XSR SERIES SUPER SET**

\$659⁹⁹

(XSR5007SB)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM

FREE

Free 10" splash and 18" crash
included in super set box
A \$260 VALUE



**SABIAN
HHX EVOLUTION CYMBAL SET**

\$899⁹⁹

(15005XEBCG)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM

FREE

18" Evolution o-zone crash
included in box
A \$319 VALUE



**SABIAN
22" AAX SERIES MUSE CYMBAL**

\$349⁹⁹

(22280XM)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



dw



\$10 OFF

TOCA FREESTYLE COLORSOUND DJEMBE

REG. \$39.99
YOUR CHOICE
\$29.99

(TFCDJ7LW) (TFCDJ7MR)
(TFCDJ7MI) (TFCDJ7MG)
(TFCDJ7MO) (TFCDJ7MV)
(TFCDJ7MB) (TFCDJ7PR)
SELECTION VARIES BY LOCATION



LP COLLECTABELLS COWBELL OR SLEIGH BELLS

STARTING AT
\$41.99

(LP204CMC) (CP374)



LP CITY SERIES CONGA SET WITH STAND

YOUR CHOICE
\$324.99

(LP646NYBK) (LP646NYVSB)
SELECTION VARIES BY LOCATION



LP AMERICANA GROOVE CAJON

\$199.99

(LP1427)



INCLUDED

Matching bongo set
(LP601NYBK)
(LP601NYVSB)
AN \$87 VALUE



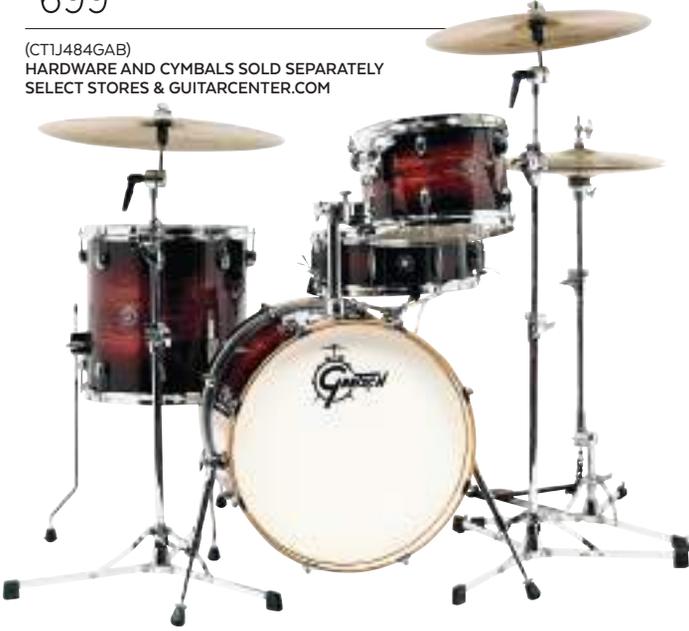


NEW

GRETSCH
CATALINA CLUB 4-PIECE SHELL PACK
IN GLOSS ANTIQUE BURST

\$699⁹⁹

(CTJ484GAB)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



GRETSCH
CATALINA MAPLE 6-PIECE SHELL PACK
WITH FREE 8" TOM

\$999⁹⁹

(CM1E826PGDCB)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM

FREE

8" tom included with
Gretsch Catalina kit purchase
A \$199 VALUE



GRETSCH

14x6.5" TAYLOR HAWKINS SIGNATURE SNARE DRUM

\$199⁹⁹

(S6514TH)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



GRETSCH

ENERGY 5-PIECE DRUM SET
WITH ZILDJIAN CYMBALS

YOUR CHOICE
\$749⁹⁹

(GE3825VZG) (GE3825VZR)

 Also available
in this color



NEW

GRETSCH
RENOWN SERIES MAPLE 5-PIECE SHELL PACK

\$1499⁹⁹

(RN2E825NWF)
HARDWARE AND
CYMBALS SOLD
SEPARATELY
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM





SPL
LIL KICKER 3-PIECE
JR. DRUM SET
WITH CYMBALS, HARDWARE
AND THRONE

YOUR CHOICE
\$139⁹⁹

(D1316WR) (D1316BK) (D1316WH)



Also available
in these colors



SPL
KICKER PRO 5-PIECE JR. DRUM SET
WITH CYMBALS, HARDWARE AND THRONE

\$299⁹⁹

(D2518SMG)



SIMMONS
SD300 OR SD500 5-PIECE
ELECTRONIC DRUM SETS

STARTING AT
\$349⁹⁹

(SD300) (SD500)



AGAZARIAN
TRADITIONAL CHINA CYMBALS

STARTING AT
\$34⁹⁹

(AGTC12) (AGTC14)
(AGTC16) (AGTC18)
MODELS VARY BY LOCATION



OCDP
14x6" MAPLE SNARE IN NATURAL BLACK BURST

\$209⁹⁹

(OCSN0614NBBA)



\$20 OFF

OCDP
DRUM THRONE

REG. \$149.99

\$129⁹⁹

(OC949RT)





20% OFF

REMO
CLEAR PINSTRIPE HEADS

REG. \$12.99-\$44.99
STARTING AT
\$10³⁹

(PS030600) (PS030800)
(PS031000) (PS031200)
(PS031300) (PS031400)
(PS031600) (PS031800)
(PS132000) (PS132200)



20% OFF

REMO
POWERSTROKE 3
BASS DRUM HEADS

REG. \$35.99-\$50.99
STARTING AT
\$28⁷⁹

(P31322C2)
(P31320C2)
(P31020ES)
(P31122C2)
(P31222C1)
(P31324C2)
(P31326C2)
(P31022ESDM)
(PR132000)
(PR112200)
(PR132200)
(PR132400)



\$5 OFF

REMO
10" FIXED-HEAD TAMBOURINE

REG. \$31.99
\$26⁹⁹

(TA521070)



\$5 OFF

REMO
KID'S PERCUSSION RAINFOREST BONGOS

REG. \$41.99
\$36⁹⁹

(KD540001)



REMO
TABLE TOM WITH MALLETS

\$43⁹⁹

(TU508016)



REMO
CUSTOM DJEMBE IN
CONSTELLATION PURPLE

\$54⁹⁹

(CD190325DJMBE)



Zildjian

\$15 OFF

ZILDJIAN
8" ZBT SPLASH CYMBAL

REG. \$44.99
\$29⁹⁹

(ZBT8S)



ZILDJIAN

5A ACORN TIP DRUM STICK 4-PACK

\$29⁹⁹

(SDSP239)



\$30 OFF

ZILDJIAN
PREMIUM CYMBAL BAG

PRICE TOO LOW
TO PRINT

(ZCB24P)



\$40 OFF

ZILDJIAN
ZBT 5-CYMBAL BOX SET

REG. \$299.99
\$259⁹⁹

(ZBTC4PALT)



FREE

14" ZBT crash included in box
A \$59 VALUE



ZILDJIAN

L80 SERIES LOW-VOLUME 4-CYMBAL BOX SET

\$299⁹⁹

(LV468)
SELECT STORES
& GUITARCENTER.COM



\$50 OFF

ZILDJIAN
ZBT 7-CYMBAL SUPER SET

REG. \$399.99
\$349⁹⁹

(ZBTP390SP)
SELECT STORES
& GUITARCENTER.COM



FREE

18" ZBT crash included in box
AN \$89 VALUE

\$100 OFF

ZILDJIAN
K SERIES 5-PIECE
CYMBAL SET

PRICE TOO LOW
TO PRINT

(KP110)
SELECT STORES
& GUITARCENTER.COM

FREE

18" medium-thin
dark crash
included in box
A \$309 VALUE



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



MEINL
16" HCS TRASH CRASH CYMBAL
\$59⁹⁹

(HCS16TRC)



MEINL
HCS SERIES CYMBAL PACK
\$99⁹⁹

(HCS131410S)

FREE
3 lessons from
Mike Johnston
with HCS
pack purchase
(Coupon in box)
A \$10 VALUE



**FREE
SPLASH**

**FREE
LESSONS**



**FREE
STICKS**

MEINL
10" CLASSICS CUSTOM SPLASH
\$69⁹⁹

(CC10S-B)



MEINL
20" CLASSICS CUSTOM
DARK RIDE
\$189⁹⁹

(CC20DAR)



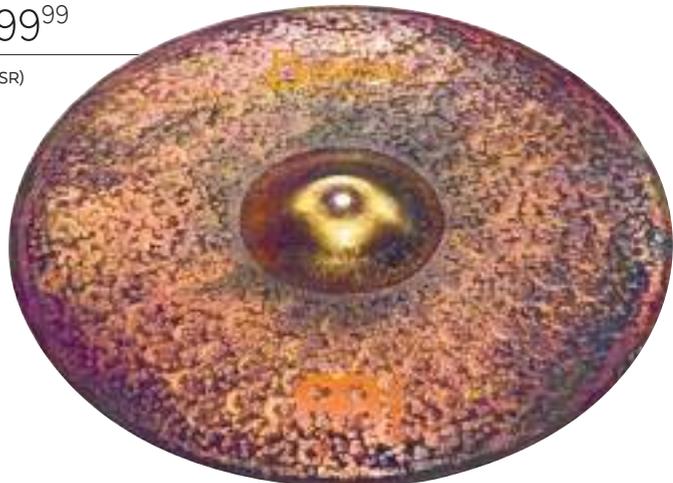
MEINL
18" BYZANCE DARK CRASH
\$299⁹⁹

(B18DAC)



MEINL
21" BYZANCE MIKE JOHNSTON
SIGNATURE TRANSITION RIDE
\$399⁹⁹

(B21TSR)



Gretsch

Renown RN2 Drumset and Full Range Hammered Black Steel Snare

More classic appointments to the brand's top import lines.

The professional-grade Renown series drumset has been very popular among touring, gigging, and session drummers for its combination of classic Gretsch quality, clean and contemporary tone, and competitive price point. For the second-generation version, called RN2, the company incorporated more of the features found on the high-end US-made Brooklyn and Broadkaster series.

We were sent the RN2-E825 shell pack (7x10, 8x12, 14x16, and 18x22) in satin tobacco burst finish, plus a 5x14 Full Range series Hammered Black Steel snare. The shell pack lists for \$2,499.99 (which includes a matching maple snare). The Hammered Black Steel snare lists for \$549.99.

Shell Pack Specs

RN2 drums, which are made in Taiwan, feature 7-ply Gretsch-formula maple shells with the company's signature 30-degree bearing edges. There are no reinforcement rings, and the interiors are painted with Gretsch's legendary Silver Sealer. The rack toms have five lugs per side, the floor tom has eight, and the bass drum has ten. The lug casings, tom brackets, memory locks, bass drum spurs, tom mount, and thumbscrews are stylized to give this kit a classic Gretsch look, which is complemented by timeless round-badge nameplates.

The rack toms come with the company's discreet off-the-shell mounting system that connects to two lugs without obscuring much of the drums' classy satin finish. The tom mount attaches directly to the bass drum, which makes setting up this kit quick, easy, and consistent. I prefer this type of mount, as opposed to flying toms from cymbal stands, because I can lock in the tom position without having to adjust cymbal bases and booms to get my crashes and ride where I want them. Even if the extra weight of the toms on the bass drum sacrifices some tone (I didn't notice any), I feel that this was a smart decision by Gretsch, especially for gigging/touring drummers who have minimal time to make adjustments on stage. It's also worth noting that the tom brackets and floor tom legs Gretsch uses on the RN2, as on the US-made lines, are big and chunky, and they lock into place very securely. I doubt you'd ever have to worry about them slipping in the middle of a gig.

For Renown RN2 toms, Gretsch swapped out the die-cast hoops for its newer 3mm, double-flange 302 design, which was previously only available on US-made Brooklyn and Broadkaster drums. The 302 hoops bridge the gap between the open sound and flexible feel of triple-flange and the more rigid feel and focused snap of die-cast. These hoops definitely helped give the toms a tight, clear tone without choking the sustain. They also produced strong and chunky rimshots.

Tone for Days

I've tested a few Renown kits over the years and have always been impressed with their no-fuss, easy-to-tune contemporary sound. The adjustments Gretsch made for the RN2 have made these kits even more versatile, offering a big, warm tone with plenty of attack and projection, plus all the clarity and control you'd need to employ them in the recording studio.

The most notable difference I found on the RN2, when compared to its earlier incarnations, was in the length of the decay. I was able to get the RN2 toms and kick to produce crystal-clear pitches quickly and easily at several tensions (from high and tight to low and loose). The sustain remained clear and balanced, and the decay was long and smooth. Tuned tight, the RN2 toms sang like timpani, and tuned low, they thumped without becoming papery.

The 18x22 RN2 bass drum was the least versatile of the kit, but not because it couldn't be coaxed for many different sounds. Its 18" depth made it a little impractical for use as an everyday gigging kick, especially when playing in cramped quarters, and it needed to be hit a little harder than a shallower 22" drum would in order to get the heads and shell to vibrate fully. But when going for a punchy, powerful kick tone for modern rock or pop, the 18x22 RN2 is a killer. It pushed a lot of air and had a ton of low end, and the articulation was crisp without being clicky.

The RN2 toms came with Remo Clear Emperor batters and clear single-ply bottoms. The bass drum came with a Clear Powerstroke 3 batter and a coated P3-type front.



5x14 Full Range Hammered Black Steel Snare

Rather than include a matching maple RN2 snare to review, Gretsch supplied one of its new 5x14 Hammered Black Steel snares. This drum has a 1.2mm steel shell that's been uniformly hammered across the entire surface, which helps give the drum a drier and more focused sound. It comes with die-cast hoops, twenty-strand wires, a standard side-lever throw-off, a Remo Coated CS White Dot batter, and a clear, thin bottom.

Steel snares are known to have a lot of power and articulation, plus considerable overtones. The Gretsch Hammered Black Steel

sounds as strong and cutting as any steel drum I've played, especially when cranked up, while also having a tighter and more controlled tone. Its sensitivity is superb, and the overtones are smooth, so no muffling is required. This drum has potential to replace a few in my collection that I often go to when I need a tight, Chad Smith-type "pop." But it's not a one-trick pony. This Full Range Hammered Black Steel snare has plenty of versatility to complement the all-purpose sounds of the RN2 kit. Well done, once again!

Michael Dawson



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

Zildjian

Avedis Series Cymbals

A retro refit of classic '50s designs for today's applications.

Given the great success of the vintage-style Kerope line, which was launched at the 2014 Winter NAMM Show as a tribute to highly coveted Turkish-made K cymbals, it comes as no surprise that Zildjian would do a similar reworking of its seminal brighter-sounding A series.

The A series was Zildjian's initial offering when it opened shop in Massachusetts in 1929, and those clean, bright, breathy tones can be heard on many landmark pop, R&B, jazz, and rock 'n' roll records throughout the twentieth century. The Avedis series pays tribute to those original cymbals and is named in honor of Zildjian USA founder Avedis Zildjian III. These new old-school cymbals are available in limited sizes (14", 15", and 16" hi-hats and 18", 19", 20", 21", and 22" crash/rides). All Avedis cymbals feature a special aged-patina finish, a hollow late-'70s-style Zildjian logo on the underside, a '50s-era trademark stamp, and a small logo on top that was generated from Avedis's passport signature. The bell shape and bow curvature used on the Avedis series is similar to those of cymbals made in the '50s. We were sent a complete setup to review, so let's check them out.

14", 15", and 16" Hi-Hats

Zildjian's original hi-hats featured a pair of identical, thin-weight cymbals. It wasn't until the advent of the New Beat model, which was designed with legendary big band drummer Louie Bellson to achieve a stronger foot "chick," that matching a lighter top with a heavier bottom became commonplace. The Avedis hi-hats split the difference and come with a slightly heavier medium-weight bottom. The tops are thin, but not as paper-thin as their '50s predecessors. All three sizes feature identical small, steep bells, and the bow curvature is significantly flatter than that of a New Beat or other contemporary designs.

The 14" Avedis hi-hats (\$449.95) we reviewed had a 970-gram top and a 1,192-gram bottom. They have a clean, high-pitched sound with a bit more emphasis on the lower-mid tones and slightly attenuated highs. They're still crisp and articulate, and they have plenty of brightness and presence to serve as all-purpose hi-hats for most playing situations. They recorded very well, thanks to their softer overtones and shorter sustain helping to minimize bleed into the snare mics. I'd feel confident using the 14" Avedis hi-hats in any application where I would typically grab a trusty set of New Beats. They can rock, they can swing, and your soundman will love them.

The 15" Avedis hi-hats (\$489.95) had a 1,122-gram top and a 1,370-gram bottom. They have a deeper sound than the 14" cymbals, with a chunkier attack, a throatier open voice, and a wider foot "chick." They have a balanced tone that's expressive at soft and loud dynamics. But I felt they sounded most at home when playing big, bombastic rock beats that required a more bellowing wash and a denser attack.

The 16" Avedis hi-hats (\$519.95) come with a 1,244-gram top and a 1,590-gram bottom. These oversized timekeepers turned out to be my favorite of the series. Whereas some 16" hi-hats sound more like a pair of crash cymbals and thus lack clarity, the larger Avedis 16" hi-hats provided a great balance of brightness and depth. They had a clean, crisp attack that sat atop a mature medium-low sustain.

They also recorded very well, responded great at all dynamics, and provided plenty of volume and power when needed. The 16" Avedis hi-hats would be a great go-to choice for singer-songwriter, roots rock, and modern country gigs, as well as any other situation requiring something with a bit more vibe than traditional 14"s.

18", 19", 20", 21", and 22" Crash/Rides

The Avedis crash/rides are thin and have a bell shape that's wider and more gradually sloped than it is on the hi-hats. The 18" cymbal (\$329.95) weighs 1,338 grams, the 19" (\$349.95) is 1,564 grams, the 20" (\$369.95) is 1,900 grams, the 21" (\$389.95) is 2,242 grams, and the 22" (\$409.95) is 2,648 grams. They're designed to have a loose, played-in feel with a balance of bright and dark overtones.

The 18" and 19" models had a bright and flashy crash sound that opened up easily but had a shorter sustain and punchier attack than that of a regular A Thin or A Custom. The shorter sustain of the Avedis cymbals also helped increase the articulation for lighter ride patterns.

In the studio, the 18" and 19" Avedis crash/rides were great for songs that called for clean and bright-yet-warm accents that hit strong without obliterating the rest of the mix. They also worked well on a few club gigs in rooms where standard crashes would have sounded too harsh. On the flipside, I found myself overplaying the 18" and 19" Avedis crash/rides on a louder rock gig; they didn't have quite enough wash to create the big, sloshy sounds that that situation required.

The 20", 21", and 22" Avedis crash/rides possess more traditional ride characteristics than the 18" and 19" models. They also have nice crash potential, with more emphasis on the lower-mid overtones. The 20" had a throaty sustain and a clear, glassy attack, which reminded me of the distinctive ride sounds used by post-bop greats Mickey Roker and Joe Chambers on various Blue Note recordings from the 1960s. The 21" also had a clean and glassy attack, but the sustain was deeper. To my ears, the 21" was the "jazziest" of the Avedis crash/rides, evoking shades of bebop legends Max Roach



and Philly Joe Jones with every stroke of the stick or brush.

The 22" Avedis was my favorite crash/ride in this review. It had the most all-purpose sound, whether struck repeatedly at the edge for the warm, enveloping sounds of the British Invasion, tipped delicately on the bow for lighter jazz patterns, or shanked with authority on the bell for extra drive and power.

The bell of the 22" was the most balanced sounding of the

bunch, but they all produced bright but integrated tones that sat comfortably within the wash instead of jutting out on top of it. While I don't know if these new Avedis cymbals will be replacing vintage cymbal lovers' coveted classics, they do an excellent job of replicating those mellower tones and aged aesthetics within a more consistent and sturdy modern-day design.

Michael Dawson

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

Canopus

Yaiba II Maple, Yaiba II Birch, and Black-Nickel Brass Snares

A trio of top-notch drums to cover all your bases.

Canopus is one of the premier boutique drum manufacturers in Japan, specializing in reinventing classic designs from the past and refining contemporary drum construction methods. The Yaiba II series is the company's foray into a more affordable price point and includes a limited but practical range of professional-grade maple and birch drumsets and snares. We were sent 6.5x14 6-ply maple and birch Yaiba II snares to review (\$350 each), as well as a sleek 6.5x14 black-nickel brass (\$724.07) with Canopus's new thirty-strand Back Beat wires (\$50). Let's check them out.

Yaiba II Maple

Canopus cuts some of the expense of the Yaiba II series drums by using cast lugs instead of its higher-end solid-brass tube versions. Even though they're cast, the Yaiba lugs are sturdy and precisely built; all of the tension rods fit into them perfectly with no sign of misalignment or strain. The maple Yaiba snares are available in two sizes—5.5x14 and 6.5x14—and in seven finishes, including three new matte lacquers (Antique Amber, Antique Ebony, and Antique Brown). We received the 6.5x14 version in the amber finish.

The Yaiba Maple snare has a 6-ply, all-maple shell, eight Yaiba cast lugs, 2.3mm steel triple-flange hoops, a simple side-action throw-off, Bolt Tight tension rods (featuring leather discs that sandwich the metal washer for greater tuning stability), and Canopus non-plated Vintage series snare wires. The drumheads are made by Remo and include a Hazy Ambassador Coated batter and a Snare Side

Ambassador bottom. The bearing edges are smooth and precisely cut to forty-five degrees.

We tested all three drums at a variety of tunings, starting in the medium range and then exploring the limits of their higher and lower registers. The Yaiba II Maple had a very open, fat, pure, and musical voice at all tunings, and it never required muffling to dampen troubling overtones.

Medium tunings on the maple were tailor-made for rock, pop, and country studio recordings. Tight tunings brought out a strong and thick "pop" for modern R&B, funk, and fusion, and low tunings sounded punchy, dense, and powerful. Snare sensitivity was exceptional, but the drum never succumbed to uncontrollable sympathetic buzz when played within the kit.

Every drummer needs a great jack-of-all-trades maple snare in his or her collection, and the Yaiba II fit the bill as well as any.

Yaiba II Birch

The 6.5x14 Yaiba II Birch snare is constructed exactly the same as the maple, but it has a 6-ply all-birch shell. It came in the new Ice Black Sparkle lacquer finish. (Ice White Sparkle is also available.) Like the maple, the Yaiba II Birch snare has a very balanced, full, and musical sound regardless of how you tune it. Compared to the Yaiba II Maple, the sustain on the birch was a little shorter (but not choked), the attack was a bit punchier, and the overtones were more focused. Those qualities gave it incredible articulation at higher tunings and



Yaiba II Maple



Yaiba II Birch

a more centered, fat “splat” at lower tensions. If you’re seeking clarity and control over breadth and versatility when shopping for a new snare, put the Yaiba II Birch at the top of your list. It’s fantastic.

Black-Nickel Brass

Another must-own snare for many drummers is a top-quality brass model, like Canopus’s 6.5x14 black-nickel version. This drum features a 1.2mm brass shell, eight solid-brass single-point tube lugs, 2.3mm steel triple-flange hoops, and thirty-strand nickel-plated Back Beat snare wires. (The Yaiba drums came with twenty-strand Vintage

wires with no plating and crimped end plates.)

This black-nickel-over brass snare is a powerhouse with a huge, singing tone, extremely crisp snare response (thanks to the wider snare wires), and remarkable presence and tuning versatility. Tune it medium for a perfect balance of bright and musical overtones and a fat attack, crank it up for symphonic-like articulation and powerful rimshots, or detune it all the way for a chesty thump coupled with sparkling high-end snap. Canopus’s Black-Nickel Brass snare is a beautiful beast that sports many different voices.

Michael Dawson



Black-Nickel Brass

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

Tama

Iron Cobra and Speed Cobra Pedals

Major upgrades to two of the most revered pedals around.

Tama has introduced the next generation of its Iron Cobra and Speed Cobra pedals with smart enhancements that focus on feel, stability, and sound. The company's engineers managed to reduce weight in certain key areas while fortifying the pedals' overall structure. The balance between those two accomplishments, along with the pedals' impressive adjustability, allows you to home in on your ideal setting better than ever. The existing features received practical upgrades to increase durability and performance, while the new features addressed some areas of improvement based on feedback from Tama endorsers.

Familiar and New

The Iron Cobra is available with either a Rolling Glide or Power Glide cam, whereas the Speed Cobra is available only with the Rolling Glide cam, which more aptly suits the longboard style. The Rolling Glide cams

are forty-percent lighter than before, which reduces mechanical latency. Both pedals have dual-chain drives. The Speed Cobra and Iron Cobra list prices are the same for single and double pedals, \$279.52 and \$698.80 respectively. There are left-handed double pedals available for the Speed Cobra and for the Power Glide version of the Iron Cobra. Each of the pedals comes in a hard-shell carrying case and includes Tama's DH7 Drum Hammer, which has a standard tuning key on one side and an Allen wrench, for adjusting the pedal, on the other.

The Iron Cobra and Speed Cobra pedals include the unique Cobra Coil spring underneath the footboards, which is said to increase the return rate of the beaters. This mechanism is silent and, of equal importance, has an invisible presence while playing. The coil is functional without making the pedals' momentum feel awkward.

An exclusive feature on these pedals is the patented Swivel Spring Tight spring assembly. On most pedals, when the springs are anchored, they flex on an angle when the pedal is depressed. Tama's swiveling assembly moves in conjunction with the pedal's motion, allowing the spring to be aligned as it flexes and closes. The result is a smooth and energy-efficient stroke.

Also new to the pedals is the Hinge Guard Block and patented Oiles Bearing Hinge. These serve to eliminate side-to-side motion in the footplate. The Hinge Guard Block, which is located at the bottom of the footboard, is composed of two pieces, so it can hold the bearing more evenly. The bearing is made from bell-brass and has a Teflon coating. The Hinge Guard Block and Oiles Bearing Hinge create a solid base that serves as an anchor for powerful playing while also providing smooth action for all types of strokes.





Another enhancement on these pedals is a wider frame to increase stability. The revolving shaft supports are 15mm wider than on previous versions, and the under-plate is 12mm wider. Those might seem like nominal enhancements, but the added strength and stability is clearly noticeable under the foot.

The most obvious changes for these pedals are the new beater designs. The Iron Cobra features the Power-Strike Cobra beater, which has a thicker but smaller-diameter felt head for additional attack. There's also an increased distance between the front of the felt and the shaft, which seemed to balance the weight distribution to offer more control. The Speed Cobra has a similar-looking Accu-Strike Cobra beater with a Butadiene rubber surface. This rubber was chosen because of its wear-resistant properties, lighter weight, and clear and articulate sound. The angle of the beaters is drum key-adjustable so you can ensure that the playing surface is flush when it strikes the drumhead.

In Use

If you favor a longboard pedal, the Speed Cobra is likely the one you'll gravitate toward. However, the Iron Cobra's extended footboard provides a lot of support without feeling as though there's too much metal under your foot. The Iron Cobra allowed for a balanced feel between heel-up and heel-down playing.

I ran each pedal through a litany of settings, adjusting the beater shaft angle, spring tension, and pedal-board height, and found that in every setting the pedals were incredibly smooth. The amount of power or finesse depended on how the pedal was configured, but all of the adjustments are intuitive. Whether playing along to Miles Davis or Slayer, there was a setting on each pedal that helped my foot adapt to the genre. I was also able to easily find a setting that allowed me to seamlessly switch between styles.

The slave pedals on the double-pedal models are ideal in the sense that I didn't need to think too much about them. I

simply mirrored the settings from the primary pedal, and they responded beautifully.

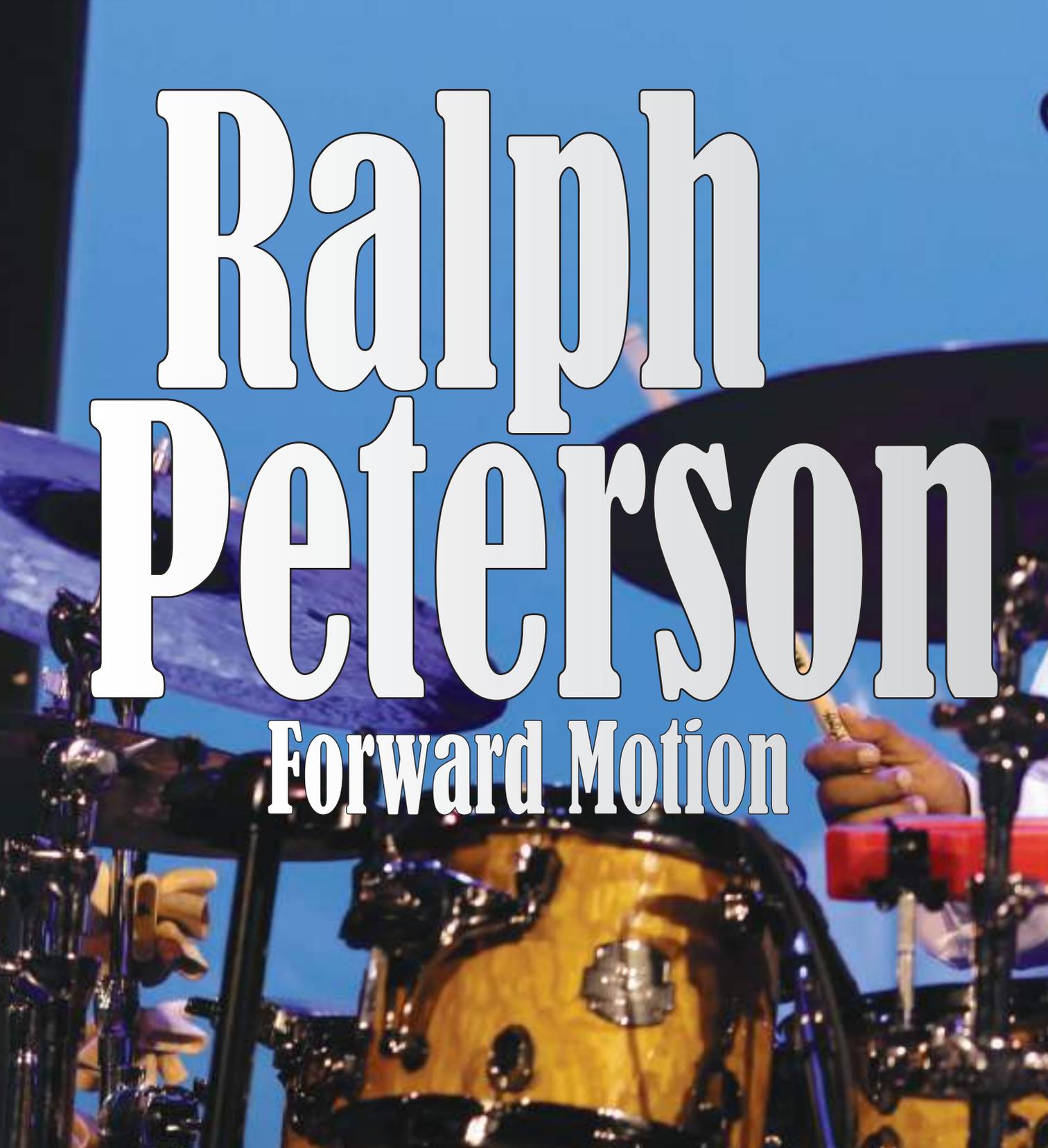
When using the Speed Cobra with the rubber beater on a drum outfitted with a Remo Powerstroke 3 Black Dot drumhead, I did experience a tiny amount of tack on the beater return when laying into the head with a powerful stroke. When I swapped in a bass drum with a coated drumhead, the rubber beater rebounded with no noticeable resistance. If your playing style is one where you consistently lay into the head, this may be food for thought, but certainly not a deterrent.

True to Name

The overall feel, responsiveness, and power of the updated Iron Cobra and Speed Cobra pedals were impressive. They're built like tanks, designed with expertise without feeling over-engineered, and are versatile enough to cater to a wide array of playing styles.

David Ciauro





Ralph Peterson

Forward Motion

Ralph Peterson Jr. burst onto the late-'80s/early-'90s jazz scene like a tornado, tsunami, and forest fire rolled into one. On a series of superb Blue Note releases featuring his inventive compositions sprinkled with the odd standard, Peterson recalled his heroes Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, and Philly Joe Jones but also revealed a deeper thread leading back to such big-bang jazz drummers as Baby Dodds and Zutty Singleton. Peterson's drumming and personality were raw to the bone and consistently tipping the scales. His music

danced on the head of a needle. His fiery drumming was original and provocative. And his boisterous personality only added to his volcanic image.

In addition to his own projects, Peterson performed and/or recorded with the greatest talent in jazz, including Branford Marsalis, Michael Brecker, Craig Harris, David Murray, Ron Carter, Terence Blanchard, Charles Lloyd, Stanley Turrentine, the Count Basie Orchestra, Steve Coleman, Stanley Cowell, and Betty Carter.



Story by Ken Micallef
Photos by Paul La Raia

Peterson was the *only* person to share the bandstand as co-drummer with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. But while musicians were roundly stunned by his drumming and compositions on albums such as *V*, *Triangular*, *Volition*, *Presents the Fo'tet*, and *Ornettology*, each recorded with a unique configuration and lineup, beneath the accolades and extremes Peterson was burning out—and fast.

When *Modern Drummer* interviewed him in 1991 for his first full-

length feature, Peterson was already deep in the throes of a serious crack cocaine addiction. At the time, he was highly functioning, making gigs and making even bolder claims. But soon he began losing jobs, money, and friends. Even while under contract to Blue Note, Peterson was essentially homeless. Dark days turned into dark years for a man whose giant personality, gregarious and giving nature, and tremendous talent should have seen him garnering awards and burnishing his legacy.

By 1996 Peterson had, remarkably, fully kicked the habit. He slowly revealed his hard-won wisdom in a series of new recordings on his own Onyx Productions label that featured mature compositions and showed his explosive style to be fully intact. He pursued his love for taekwondo and earned a fourth-degree black belt, then opened his own taekwondo school. And he taught at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Long Island University, the New School, the North Netherlands Conservatory in Holland, Rutgers University, and the Juilliard School of Music. Currently a professor at Berklee College of Music—his duration fourteen years and counting—Peterson has instructed such drummers as Ari Hoenig, Justin Faulkner, EJ Strickland, Rodney Green, Tyshawn Sorey, Antonio Sanchez, Dana Hall, and Obed Calvaire, as well as the saxophonists Tia Fuller and Melissa Aldana and his current trio bandmates Zaccai and Luques Curtis. Peterson, who also plays piano and trumpet, maintains a heavy class load at Berklee, teaching four ensembles including big band, the Art Blakey Jazz Messenger Small Group, and the class Jazz Drumset Repertoire, in which students are pushed to learn fifty tunes in fifteen weeks.

"I was fortunate to take lessons with Ralph back in the early '90s, when I was trying to get my jazz vocabulary together," Antonio Sanchez tells *MD*. "I remember coming into the classroom, and Ralph was casually sitting down holding a trumpet. He signaled me to sit behind the drumkit. We started playing a blues—he was playing the *hell* out of that trumpet—and he kicked my butt right from the

get-go. I learned a lot about musical conversation that day. Question and answer. Tension and release. Ralph got his point across, crystal clear, in the best possible way."

Back on the scene, though, the tribulations were not over. Peterson underwent multiple hip surgeries and now has a metal plate in one hip and four screws and a rebuilt disc in his back from a spinal fusion. Then, when all seemed finally clear, Ralph was diagnosed with colorectal cancer. After lengthy treatments he is currently cancer free.

Peterson's latest recordings maintain his high compositional standards, while his drumming, though as in-your-face and blazing as ever, is more streamlined, focused, even compact. Peterson says more with less. His cymbal beat is a clear, pointed, forward-leaning thing of beauty. His snare drum playing remains explosive, while his brushwork is a textbook lesson in panache and punch.

After nineteen records as a leader and thirty years in the business, Peterson's legacy is that of a warrior king. Nearly felled by addiction but ultimately conquering it, attacked by disease yet beating it too, Peterson has kept moving on. The original spirit of the music that's been so important to him all of his professional life lives on as well. "The Messenger Legacy Band honors my apprenticeship under Art Blakey," Ralph says, regarding one of his current groups and one of his greatest influences, "and being chosen by him as the last Jazz Messenger drummer. I want to carry that spirit forward and make sure the Messengers' sound remains viable and active."



MD: Listening to your latest records, *Triangular III*, *The Duality Perspective*, and *Alive at Firehouse 12*, compared to your early-'90s trio recordings, you're the same guy: the incredible energy, the respect for tradition, and the extreme forward motion. How do you hear your drumming then versus now?

Ralph: Much in the same way that I've changed as a human being, I've grown up. I like to think I'm less selfish, that I listen more. And I think more before I speak. All those things that accompany my growth as a human being are reflected in my music and my drumming.

MD: Your playing is more agile now. Even when slamming a full kit, you're extremely graceful. Where does that level of sensitivity come from?

Ralph: Understanding that I don't have anything that I need to prove to anybody anymore. That I can simply be who I am, and that that's good enough for me. I have a wonderful relationship with my wife, Diane Elyse Peterson, and better interpersonal relationships with students and family. Through my recovery from cancer I had to learn to live the adage that "If you can't love me where I am at, then leave me where you found me."

MD: And that affects your ability to play more gracefully on the drumset?

Ralph: I believe so. You can't separate one's persona from one's music. The music is a more honest expression of who you are.

The Absent Years

MD: When *MD* interviewed you in the early '90s, you were a drug addict.

Ralph: Oh, yeah, you interviewed me at Bretton Hall on the Upper West Side [of Manhattan]. That was part of my using period. Back then it was no secret. I was a crackhead. The only person who didn't know that everybody knew was me. Addicts are often the last to know.

MD: How did you shake the addiction?

Ralph: I had help; it wasn't an immediate process. I learned that my brain is biochemically different from most people's brains; I didn't have a cutoff switch. One of my taekwondo instructors, Keith McKinley, made a big difference. He put me in an apartment across from his and looked out for me. He reached out to me when I was essentially homeless, while I had a deal with Blue Note Records. For two or three years I was actively absent.

MD: You missed a lot of gigs.

Ralph: When I started getting fired for nodding off on gigs, as with David Murray, and when I could no longer get to the airport or the club because I couldn't get past the cab ride, I knew I was out of control. Most addicts know they're out of control long before they summon the courage to ask for help. I got clean off the compassion and caring of people. I went through eighteen days of rehab and missed recording dates. Eventually I put together a year clean. Staying clean is neither simple nor easy. It requires courage and work and faith and trust, those principles that I'd lost touch with. I needed to recover and reconnect. I'm not that guy anymore—but I know where he lives! [laughs]

MD: How did being clean change your drumming?

Ralph: It took me a minute to learn how to enjoy playing unaltered, because I'd done it [high] for so long. I realized I was [beginning to do] some of my best work, as with the Reclamation Project. I realized that not only am I a better player now, I'm a much better composer.

That was self-evident. My energy is used to uplift the people I play with now, instead of beating them down in some testosterone-induced display of musical machismo. [laughs]

Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones

MD: Did working with Art Blakey contribute to your volcanic style?

Ralph: Yes, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, and Philly Joe Jones were my holy trinity. From Blakey I got the sound of the hi-hat and the ride cymbal, and the concept of building and constructing a solo with the soloist. While a drummer's main role is as accompanist, the jazz language has become more conversational as compared to when the original role of drummers was being completely in service to the soloists. Now the soloist is as responsible for listening to the ideas coming from the rhythm section as the rhythm section is for listening to the soloist's ideas. I think that way as a trumpeter as well. I got all that from Blakey. I would watch him [train] Terence Blanchard and Wynton Marsalis in the Jazz Messengers. Art would let them know when they made their move too soon or when they

“Being a musician is actually being a part of the service industry. The thing we serve is the music, and the music is a principle greater than any musician who plays it.”

played too long. He would simply go to another intensity of volume level and swallow them whole. They would be pushing and pushing but you could only hear Art's cymbals.

MD: What life lessons did you take from Blakey?

Ralph: That there was only one Art Blakey. Musicians from that era paid the price and suffered many indignities that I know nothing about as a professional. I remember after I got clean, [trombonist] Curtis Fuller said it was good to see me getting my act together, because, "You young cats don't even have the same reasons to be out there as we did, because you didn't face what we faced." Being in the presence of Messengers was a huge influence on me.

MD: What did you take from Philly Joe Jones?

Ralph: What I got from Philly Joe was articulation, clarity of thought, and execution. Being articulate and erudite in what you're trying to say on the drums. Art Blakey didn't always pick the right words, but you understood what he meant. Philly Joe was so lyrically accurate. He taught me about the elegance of rudiments.

Cymbals

MD: Were your Meinl signature Byzance cymbals designed to your specifications?

Ralph: Yes, the basic sound I wanted was the classic Turkish, throaty, breathy, low-pitched ride that was not pingy, that had air but also definition that cuts through and locks in with the sound of the bass frequency. A lot of the cymbal roar is subsonic.

MD: Your ride cymbals really cut.

Ralph: In a trio configuration I use the Byzance Nuance as the primary ride. It has a more compact sound. I also use the Byzance Vintage crash/rides, Byzance Thin Dark crashes, and custom 14" hi-hats. These hi-hats really have finesse. Sometimes you get hi-hats that are dark and chunky sounding with a strong chick, but they sound clunky when you play something delicate or nuanced. With

trios or singers, I use the 21" as the primary ride, with 14" hi-hats.

Not Technique, but Mechanics

MD: Why do you sit high off the kit?

Ralph: Vision. I can see the whole kit better. It's just a position I like. Some like to sit back; I like to see over the front edge.

MD: Watching your current and older videos, it's like your hands are spring-loaded. You're incredibly dynamic, and you have total control. Does that control come from the fingers, or is it more of a Moeller technique?

Ralph: I teach without using the word *technique*. I use the word *mechanics*, as in the way a pitcher throws a curveball.

MD: How does that relate to drumming?

Ralph: It's about keeping the hands even on an even plane, which is something I learned from Tony Williams. Another reason I sit high is because if my arms are down they're relaxed. If I have to hold my arms up to play a high snare drum, I have to flex and use muscles that I wouldn't use if I sat up at the drums. I'm not impressed with my hand speed, but I've worked hard, and I teach Alan Dawson's Ritual.

MD: So you rely on fingers or rebound to control the sticks?

Ralph: I'm somewhere between the two. The true way lies in the middle of whatever extremes may be pulling on you.

MD: What is your focus on hand technique, or mechanics, with students?

Ralph: For one, I teach amplitude. If you want the stick to come back, you have to drop it from a higher place. You don't have to swing the arm. If you raise the stick, gravity will help the stick get to the drum. So there is rebound, but also finger and hand movement. I speak to students about their hands, that the sticks are an extension of their hands. The stick must be controlled by the fulcrum muscle. Most of the things I play are from the traditional-grip position. It always depends on the sound I want to get.

MD: You're speaking to the left-hand fulcrum?

Ralph: There is a right-hand fulcrum too, but most drummers aren't aware of it. The second joint on the index finger of the right hand is where the stick usually intersects, and the thumb comes across to support it. That's the fulcrum point, but the fulcrum muscle is the outer muscle on the base of the thumb between the thumb and



index finger. If you squeeze your thumb up against the side of your hand, that muscle will pop up. That is the most important muscle in drumming. That muscle controls and moves the stick. When you play with your arms, you're dealing with larger muscle groups; it requires more energy, it's inefficient. When your arms move in response to where your hands are going, there's a proficiency of motion that allows you to play more freely.

In the left-hand traditional grip, I don't fold the index finger over the top of the stick, but rather allow the stick the same arc of amplitude that I have in the right hand. So if you hold the stick between the thumb and index finger, then strike the drum once, the stick will rebound naturally. Once you see the stick's arc, you shape your mechanics to follow the natural amplitude of the stick. It's not a willy-nilly bounce approach. For me it's using the rebound but not being dependant on it, using rebound as a tool for freedom of execution and efficiency of motion.

MD: What other concepts do you explore with students?

Ralph: Elbow position is very important. Most drummers sit with their elbows pinned against their body, trying to keep their hands close to themselves. But that restricts your breathing. The drumset is one of the most physically demanding instruments, so to prevent the muscles from locking, you bring blood to the working muscle group by breathing. Like in martial arts, breathing is very important to

Tools of the Trade

Drums: Peterson plays **Mapex** Orion and Saturn series drumkits. For work with his Sextet, Unity Project, Fo'tet, and Aggregate Prime group he uses an 8x14 snare drum, 8x12 and 9x13 toms, 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms, and a 14x18 bass drum. For Trio and Messenger Legacy Band work he uses a 5x14 snare, a 10x10 tom, a 13x13 floor tom, and a 16x16 or 16x20 bass drum. His **Evans** heads include G1 and G2 Coated or Onyx snare batters and Clear 300 snare-sides, G1 Coated or Onyx tom batters and G1 Clear resonants, and G1 Coated bass drum batters and front heads. His **Meinl** cymbals include a 22" Byzance Jazz Thin ride, a 20" Byzance Extra Dry Thin crash, 15" Byzance Traditional Medium hi-hats, a 19" Byzance Extra Dry Thin crash, a 21" Byzance Nuance Ralph Peterson Signature ride, and a 22" Byzance Symmetry Ralph Peterson Signature ride. He plays **Vic Firth** American Jazz AJ1 sticks, Heritage brushes, Rute 606s, and T3 Staccato mallets.



playing both fast and slow. Slow tempos pull in one direction; medium tempos can pull fast. Taking a deep breath before you play can help center your playing.

MD: How do you teach speed?

Ralph: When playing fast, you want to be in control. I learned to play fast by playing with the records of Betty Carter, Johnny Griffin, and Max Roach/Clifford Brown. [Drummer/educator] Michael Carvin taught me how elbow position can restrict breathing. And when studying trumpet, I learned about the anatomy of the diaphragm. Most people think that when they take a breath they're lifting their chest, but the diaphragm is a dome-shaped muscle, and it extends around to where the elbows are. If your arms are pinned against your body, you're not getting the air you need.

MD: What's your opinion on heel up or heel down on the bass drum pedal?

Ralph: For me, playing on the ball of the foot is a byproduct of sitting higher on the drums. There are tempos and musical idioms where playing heel down helps generate the sound. Generally it's hard to apply any one thing to all aspects of music. It's important to listen; it's important to play good time; it's important to not be selfish. You have to serve the music. Being a musician is actually being a part of the service industry. The thing we serve is the music, and the music is a principle greater than any musician who plays it.

MD: You don't think of yourself as a fast player, but how do you attain speed when you need it?

Ralph: I hear the sound; I visualize the sound. I don't have to practice to play fast; I have to be *relaxed* to play fast. I can't play fast if there's any tension. I have to breathe.

MD: How do you teach Alan Dawson's Ritual?

Ralph: I teach it as an introductory element. A lot of students come to Berklee having seen the Ritual, which makes teaching them easier. The Ritual is a 400-bar, 86-rudiment megalithic mega-giant! Alan grouped the rudiments almost Darwin-istically. The first section is ruffs, the second is flams, the

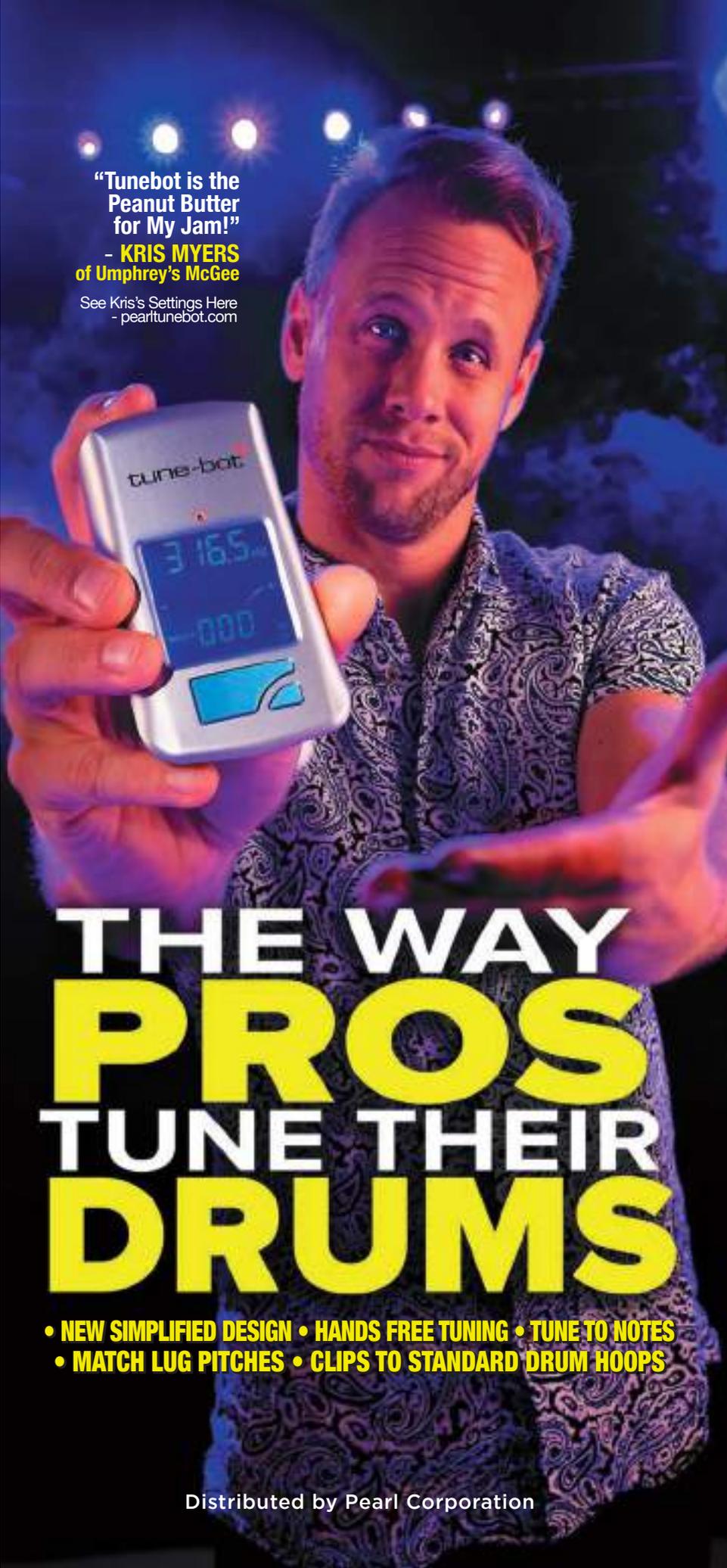
Recordings

Out of the Blue Inside Track /// **David Murray** New Life /// **Branford Marsalis** Royal Garden Blues /// **Ralph Peterson Quintet** V, Subliminal Seduction /// **Ralph Peterson Trio** Triangular /// **Ralph Peterson Fo'tet** Ornettology, The Reclamation Project /// **The Unity Project** Alive at Firehouse 12 Vol. 1 /// **Ralph Peterson Trio Featuring the Curtis Brothers** Triangular III

"Tunebot is the Peanut Butter for My Jam!"

- **KRIS MYERS**
of **Umphrey's McGee**

See Kris's Settings Here
- pearltunebot.com

A man with a goatee, wearing a patterned shirt, is holding a silver Tunebot device in his right hand. The device has a small screen displaying '3 165' and '000'. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is dark with some blue and purple lighting.

THE WAY PROS TUNE THEIR DRUMS

- NEW SIMPLIFIED DESIGN • HANDS FREE TUNING • TUNE TO NOTES
- MATCH LUG PITCHES • CLIPS TO STANDARD DRUM HOOPS

Distributed by Pearl Corporation

Ralph Peterson

next section is double strokes, then Swiss rudiments. From those four sections, which include the twenty-six American and forty PASIC rudiments, the next two sections are hybrid combinations of the four sections. It's worth noting that I didn't study this with Alan, which most instructors at Berklee did.

MD: How do you teach students who grew up with hip-hop but want to play jazz?

Ralph: I learned from Art Blakey that a strong beat is a strong beat. Buhaina [Blakey's surname following his adoption of Islam] would always slip backbeats into the middle of swing. Funk, swing, Afro-Cuban,

and Caribbean music have more things in common than not. The strength and consistency of the beat is more important than the stylistic decoration of it.

MD: But when a student plays swing and it's not swinging, how do you help him?

Ralph: I say, "How did you learn to play that?" They name some drummers and I say, "But you came to me to get your jazz stuff together." I don't have jazz juice to sprinkle on drummers so that they leave my office swinging. I tell them, "The same process that you used learning to play you must now apply to what you want to play next."

The ego doesn't want to spend time doing stuff at which it sucks. When you're sad at something and it's kicking your ass, that's the character-building beauty of learning to play an instrument. I wasn't a jazz baby. I came up with Kool and the Gang and Earth, Wind & Fire and Tower of Power, the large funk orchestras. So I connect with the funk-oriented student where they are. If you want what I got, you have to do what I did.

MD: For students of jazz, what's the biggest problem?

Ralph: MP3s. When I was learning music you only had records, then cassettes. Now a student can carry 10,000 tunes in their phone and not know anything about any of them. They have every Miles Davis record but they can't sing any Miles Davis solos. When you learn a solo you understand better what Elvin Jones or Philly Joe is doing behind the soloist, because it gets you past the "what" and "how" into the "why, where, and when." The latter three are the most important questions, and that's the challenge. Drummers are facile now, have great hands, and can play at incredible velocity, but they have no idea where to put most of the stuff they can play. They need to study nuance and dynamics and patience. You have to study European classical and music from the African diaspora.

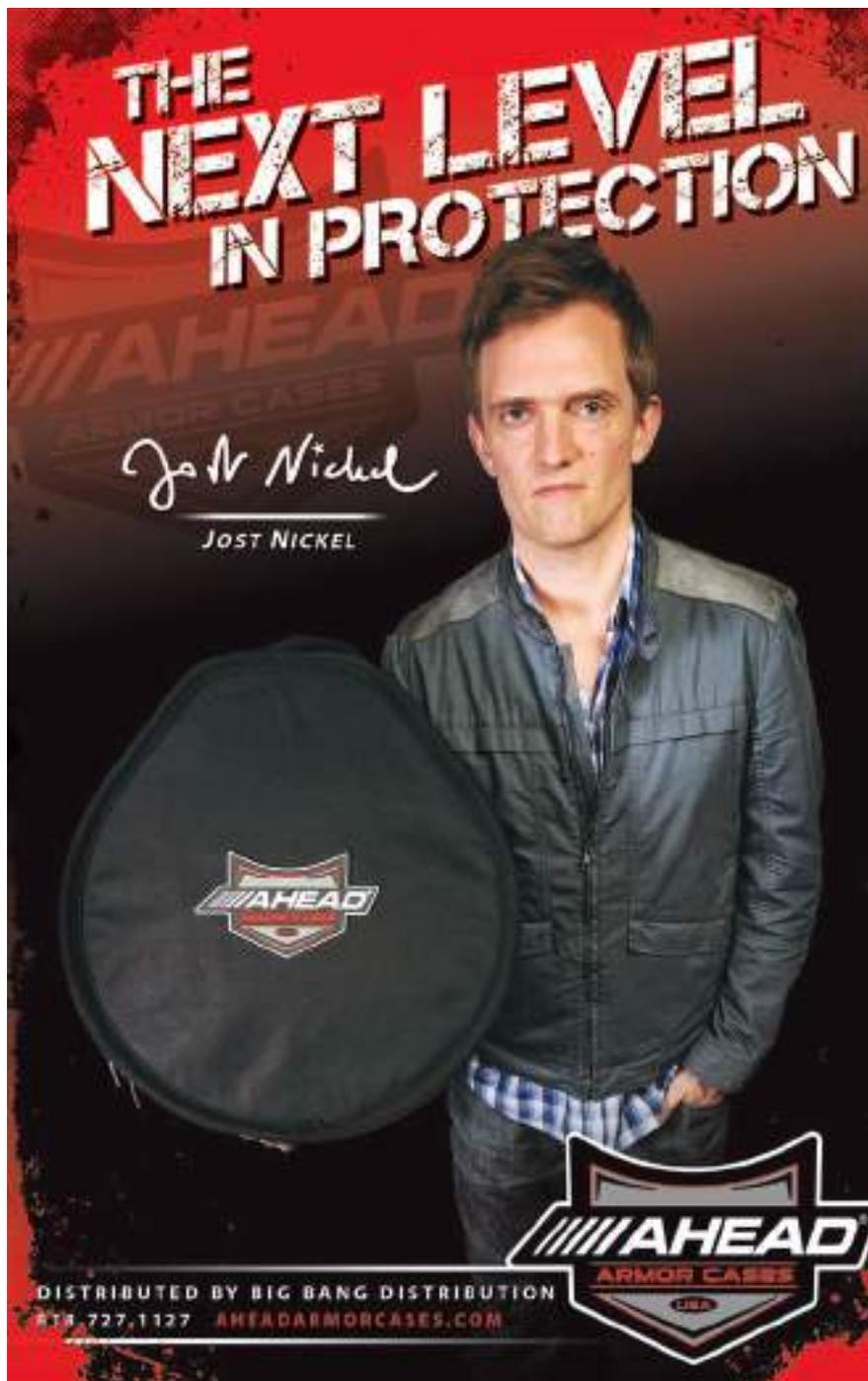
The Ralph Peterson Trio: *Triangular III*

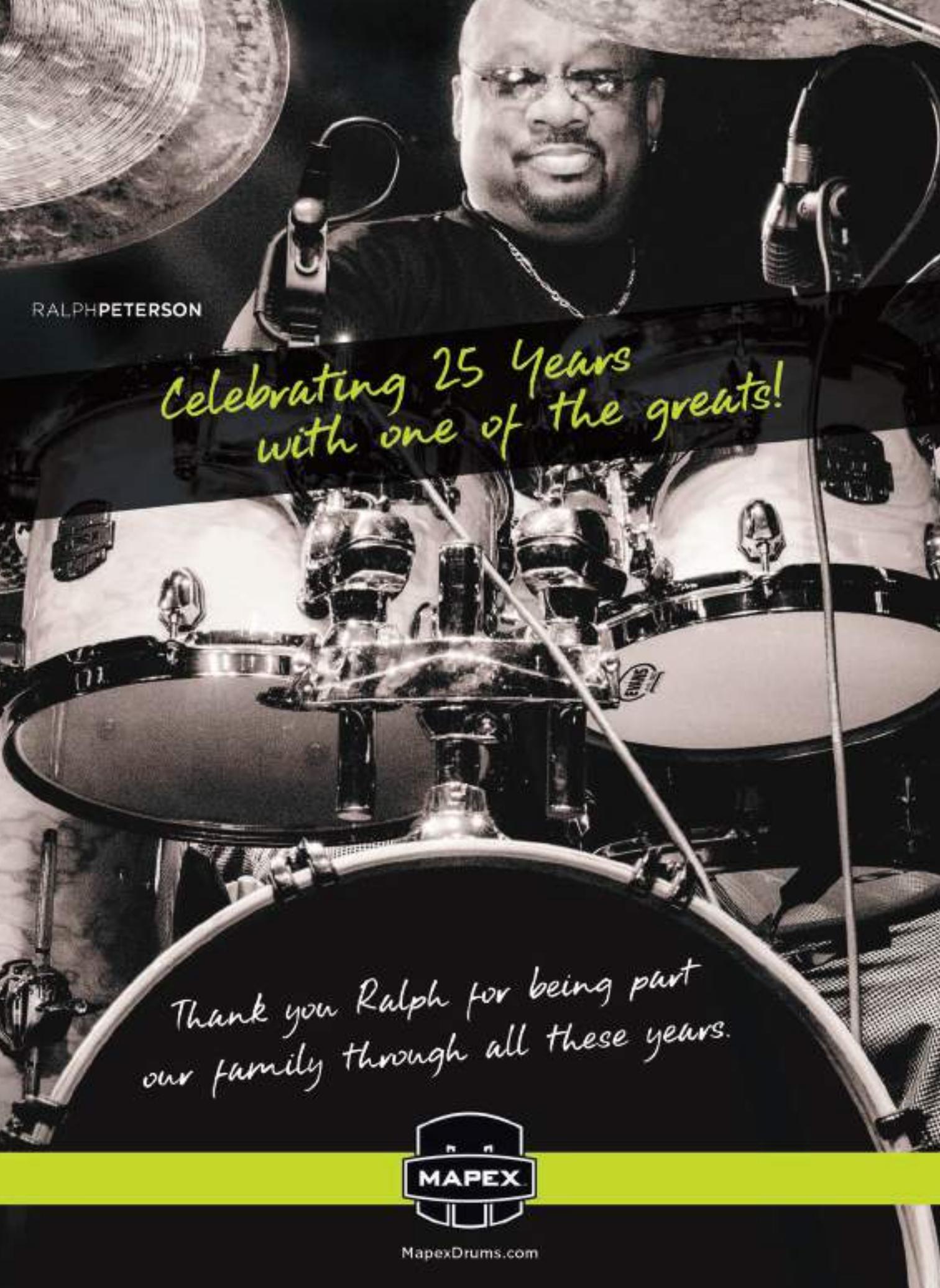
MD: Your brushwork on Sam Rivers' "Beatrice" from *Triangular III* is great. You're playing multiple rhythms below the surface but still jabbing accents and putting it in the pocket. How do you teach brushes?

Ralph: We practice the rudiments and the Ritual with the brushes. Some brush things, like popping the snare drum, I have them play the Ritual as you normally would with sticks, and again with a focus on getting that *pop*. That helps the student to locate that sound without looking for it. Ease of execution is about repetition. That puts things we want to play in an area where we can access them from any angle. The pops and jabs that I execute while playing cross-rhythms with brushes come from working really hard to have access to these tools from any position.

MD: You sound like a small Latin rhythm section in "Inner Urge." It's very authentic. What are you playing there?

Ralph: I rail against the term *Latin*. There is no more a "jazz beat" than there is a "Latin beat." There's a backbeat, a shuffle, etc. Max Roach rode the cymbal one way, and Art Blakey rode the cymbal another way, and there are subtle differences and similarities between the two. You need that same understanding of African culture as





RALPH PETERSON

*Celebrating 25 Years
with one of the greats!*

*Thank you Ralph for being part
our family through all these years.*



MapexDrums.com

Ralph Peterson

it pertains to music in the Caribbean. Even "Afro-Cuban" is becoming too narrow a concept for me. "Afro-Caribbean" is more accurate. My people are from Barbados. New Orleans is just the Caribbean northwest.

"Inner Urge" is Luques [bass] and Zaccai [piano] Curtis's arrangement. We play the clave in five there. I often use Ignacio Berroa's DVD, *Mastering the Art of Afro-Cuban Drumming*, to teach the fundamentals of Afro-Cuban drumming on the drumset. But the fact that you hear me sounding like a drum ensemble in "Inner Urge" means I'm on point in terms of my goal. I'm not trying to

sound like a jazz drummer playing Latin, but a tumbaó player or a clave player on a single instrument with all of these components. That's the same way I learned second line, from the bottom up. I'm attempting an ensemble approach to playing Afro-Cuban and Afro-Caribbean clave-based music, not play it like a set drummer.

[Horacio] "El Negro" [Hernandez] and Antonio Sanchez are... let's call them rhythmic mutants in their ability. I have to lean against something when they play, because they severely mess with my head. Antonio's kit looks more like an organ than a

drumset! Look at all those pedals. I emulate those guys. But most importantly I now trust what I feel in my gut and my spirit. I'll listen to an ensemble of hand drummers and try to understand their technique and apply it to the drumset. Then I gain understanding. Sometimes I'll have a student take notes as I work through a new piece of music, as an example. I try to avoid telling students what to do. I try to share my experience. That's all I really have to share. But I love playing "Inner Urge" and "Bemsha Swing," all those Afro-ethnic grooves. I hope we convey the swing on *Triangular III*. I hope there's continuity in what we play.

MD: How do you play the ride cymbal? Your sound is precise yet effortless, driving and shimmering.

Ralph: The sound is in my head and in my hands. It's back to the whole fulcrum thing, letting the stick do as much of the work as it can, rather than driving the stick with my wrist all the time. If I'm thinking about my wrist I'm snapping that joint up and down. That will give you carpal tunnel. You have to find that middle point between bounce and pushing the stick. Push and pulse.

Conceptually, I hear the ride cymbal as a quarter-note pulse. The function of the jazz ride cymbal is to connect with the bassist, who is not playing the standard "dang, dang, da-dang" ride cymbal pulse. He's playing quarter notes. Very often I start with quarter notes, then I try to get the quarter note moving on its own energy. Then I will add skips to the quarter notes. If the bass player is walking, then I'm skipping or dancing. Someone skipping has a kind of buoyancy. That's my visual and aural conception in playing the ride cymbal.

MD: In "Moments" on *Triangular III*, you start with an open solo. Is that foreshadowing the form of the tune?

STORM SERIES 6PC KIT
WITH HARDWARE PACK AND ZILDJIAN CYMBALS*

SONIC CLEAR BEARING EDGE

*Black Plated 400 Series Hardware Pack
Deep Black

*Chrome 400 Series Hardware Pack
Camphor Wood Grain & Ebony Blue Grain

*Includes Zildjian Planet Z 4pc Cymbal Pack†

MAPEX

MAPEXDRUMS.COM

†Cymbal Pack includes 20" Ride, 16" Crash, 14" Hi-Hats

Drum Sizes: 22"x18", 18"x14", 12"x8", 14"x12, 16"x14", 16"x16"

Influences

Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers

Free for All (Art Blakey) /// **Miles Davis**

Live at the Plugged Nickel (Tony

Williams) /// **Philly Joe Jones** Drums

Around the World (Philly Joe Jones) ///

Clifford Brown and Max Roach Live

at the Bee Hive (Max Roach) /// **John**

Coltrane Coltrane's Sound (Elvin Jones)

/// **Larry Young** Unity (Elvin Jones) ///

Joe Henderson Power to the People

(Jack DeJohnette) /// **Roy Haynes**

When It's Haynes It Roars (Roy Haynes)

/// **McCoy Tyner** Supertrios (Tony

Williams, Jack DeJohnette) /// **Wes**

Montgomery Smokin' at the Half Note

(Jimmy Cobb)



Search Ralph Peterson Meinl Cymbals on YouTube

RALPH PETERSON'S SIGNATURE RIDES



Ralph Peterson's Signature Ride Cymbals

The Byzance Jazz series 22" Symmetry Ride and Byzance Jazz series 21" Nuance Ride with six factory-installed rivets. Two distinct rides for one setup.

The Byzance 22" Symmetry Ride and the Byzance 21" Nuance Ride were designed with Jazz icon and Berklee College of Music professor Ralph Peterson. Ralph wanted two distinct rides that can be used in one setup. Both cymbals capture the golden age of the genre and still have the clarity and cut to hold up in today's modern Jazz. The rides have a low, dark sound with a stick-friendly bounce and oversized hammered bells that are deeply complex. Listen to them yourself at your authorized stocking Meinl Cymbal dealer.

MEINL CYMBALS ARE ONLY AVAILABLE AT AUTHORIZED STOCKING DEALERS.
FIND YOUR DEALER AT MEINLCYMBALS.COM/DEALERS





NEW FIESTA CONGAS



Available now as a full-size 11"/12" set with durable, lightweight stand. Black powder-coated teardrop top ring provides long-playing comfort, while the combination of Mango shell and pre-fitted rawhide head produces rich, open tone and tight, crisp slaps. Smartly priced to fit the average percussionist's budget, don't settle for less than legendary Gon Bops quality and tone!

Gon Bops™

GonBops.com

A DIVISION OF SABIAN

Ralph Peterson

Ralph: I try to incorporate elements of either the melody or some rhythmic motif of the melody. That song has a melodic hook. [Sings melody] Zaccai is playing bell-like tones on piano there, so I play the edges of the cymbals as if they were bell chimes. Each cymbal is pitched differently, so I'm able to follow the contour of the melody. You can imply the melody doing that. I can also get two pitches out of my 16" bass drum. I can bend the pitch with my foot.

MD: Which ride cymbal are you playing in "Blues for Chooch," which is fairly up-tempo?

Ralph: That's the 21" Byzance Nuance Ralph Peterson Signature ride. I use that song to think of ways to challenge my students to play on the blues, such as ascending, descending, half steps, or playing around the circle of fifths. Then I added six- and ten-bar phrases. I love how those phrases open up and give you more room to express and develop an idea than with four- and eight-bar phrases. Then we added harmonic turns so they aren't repetitive. It's an eighteen-bar blues with a III-VI-II-V turnaround. That short-circuits the automatic pilot, that conditioned response once you know blues structure.

MD: How did you develop the fast ride playing we hear in "Blues for Chooch"?

Ralph: For playing fast, check out Betty

Carter's records. My big brother is Kenny Washington, who also played with Betty. [Like Washington, Peterson played in Carter's "school of jazz," which has educated drummers including Clarence Penn, Lewis Nash, and Gregory Hutchinson.] I spent a summer trying to learn those fast tunes with Betty. That's the endurance part of preparing for that. The mechanics of playing up-tempo ride is thinking in half strokes. So if the tempo is very fast, physically I'm thinking quarter notes in half time. The rest is manipulation and control of the rebound.

MD: How do you get multiple strokes from one stick?

Ralph: You can get two, even six, strokes out of a stick. The trick is getting them to fall in line in a certain shape, then being consistent about how high to lift up the stick. You don't want the cymbal to open up on you. Also, *where* to ride on the cymbal matters. As the tempo increases I tend to move toward the bell. The sound is tighter there. The decay is quicker and more articulate. The rest is just getting in there with repetition and learning to breathe through that fast tempo. When I hear a fast tempo counted off I take slow, long, deep breaths. I try to slow everything down. Not the tempo, but all of my biomechanics, my breathing, my heart rate. I halve the tempo being counted off.



Blue Note, the Return?

MD: When will Blue Note reissue your epic albums from the '90s?

Ralph: [Producer] Michael Cuscuna told me that my early Blue Note records were going to be released in a two-CD set on Mosaic Select. Almost two generations haven't heard *V*, *Triangular*, *Ornettology*, and *Presents the Fo'tet*. Not because the music isn't valuable, but because the record industry has this policy of deleting a record three months after its release, unless it's a megahit. Or it's only available digitally. I asked Michael if I could buy back the rights and release those records on my label. The stock market crashed in 2008 and I no longer heard from Michael Cuscuna. It all evaporated. Now I plan to rerecord all of those albums. That area of my recording history will resolve itself, because my label, Onyx Productions, is up and functioning. Perhaps this story will reignite interest in those records! That would be a beautiful thing.

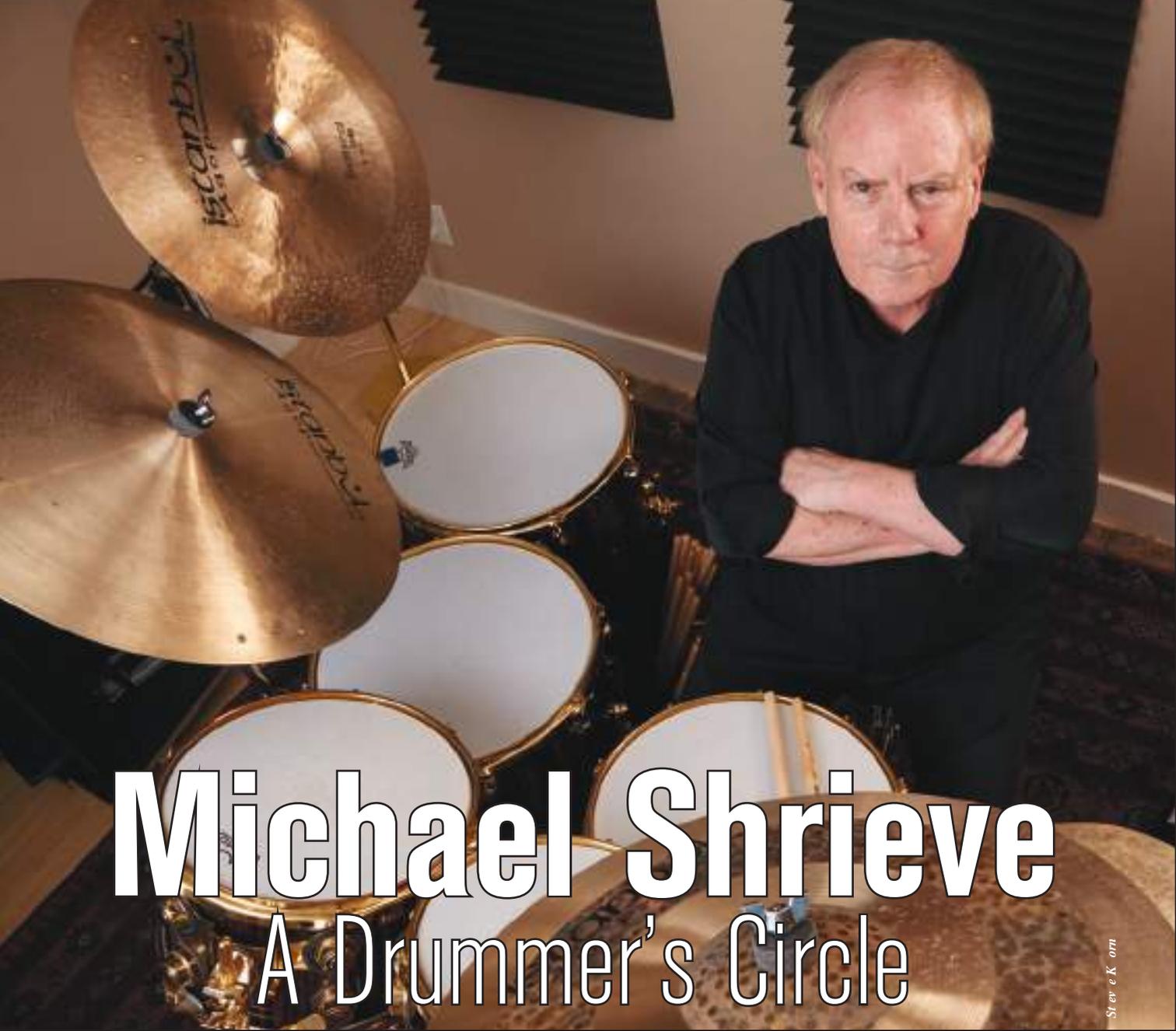




Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson



Jojo Mayer



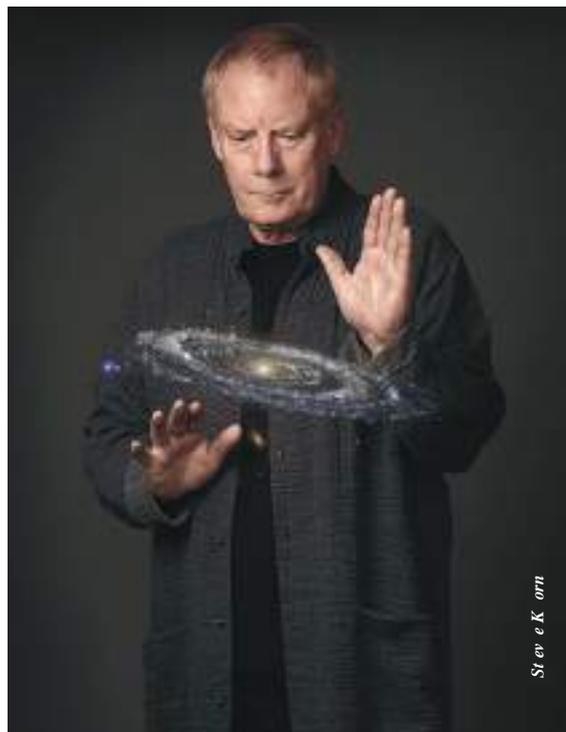
Steve Korn

Michael Shrieve

A Drummer's Circle

The original set player in the most famous Latin-rock band of all time has always placed a dedication to the larger musical picture well above any attempts at stylistic authenticity. And in doing so, he's succeeded magnificently in becoming exactly what the music has always needed: a uniquely qualified facilitator of rhythmic magic.

by Jeff Potter



Steve Korn

It's a heady ride having a hit album on the charts. Michael Shrieve has been there many times before. But this time the success is even sweeter. When *Santana IV* debuted at number five on the April *Billboard* charts, the drummer, who's now sixty-seven, thoroughly enjoyed his domestic bragging rights. "I was able to say to my twenty- and twenty-five-year-old sons, 'Who's your daddy?'" he laughs. "Above Kanye! Above Bieber! Above Drake!"

The album features the reunion of five members from the classic lineup last heard on 1971's *Santana III*: guitarists Carlos Santana and Neil Schon, percussionist Michael Carabello, keyboardist Gregg Rolie, and Shrieve, supported by two current Santana members, percussionist Karl Perazzo and bassist Benny Rietveld. True to the band's original ethos, the new material on *Santana IV* combines infectious melodic tunes driven by Latin-Afro-rock grooves, interspersed with jam explorations.

Mega-band reunions are often contrived affairs, but Shrieve happily concurs with the disc's glowing critical reception. "It doesn't just sound like an excuse to make some money," he says.

Santana broke big, *really* big, on stage at Woodstock, just prior to releasing its classic 1969 debut disc. With the performance of "Soul Sacrifice," Shrieve became enshrined in the firmament of Great Rock Moments when his feverish extended solo was highlighted in the *Woodstock* film. He went on to drive Santana through eight albums as the group evolved from Latin rock into jazz/rock fusion terrain, before his departure in late 1973. But even if Shrieve hadn't made his mark as a member of one of rock's great bands—as acknowledged by his 1998 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame—his career would still stand as impressively prolific, diverse, and adventurous.

Upon departing Santana, Shrieve itched to venture

further afield, forming the prog-rock/fusion unit Automatic Man and later joining the experimental supergroup Go, featuring percussionist/leader Stomu Yamashta, singer/multi-instrumentalist Steve Winwood, guitarist Al Di Meola, and synth wiz Klaus Schulze.

Pursuing a growing interest in electronic music, Shrieve collaborated with Schulze on 1984's *Transfer Station Blue*. Subsequent solo discs featured cutting-edge notables, including Mark Isham, Andy Summers, Shawn Lane, Jonas Hellborg, Bill Frisell, and Wayne Horvitz. And in the early '80s, Shrieve ventured into grooving power pop/new wave with Novo Combo.

Shrieve's recording credits include tracks with the Rolling Stones, Steve Winwood, David Crosby, Pete Townshend, George Harrison, Dave Edmunds, Pat Travers, Bob Moses, Mick Jagger, Roger Hodgson, Jim Carroll, Jill Sobule, and the quartet Hagar, Schon, Aaronson, Shrieve. The drummer is also an accomplished producer as well as a composer of film and television scores.

Currently Shrieve is juggling multiple projects, including leading the Seattle instrumental band Spellbinder, whose eponymous second disc was launched in June. And soon to be released is a long-gestating labor of love, *Drums of Compassion*, a project combining ambient and world music sounds with improvisations by guest drum/percussion masters.

Watching that Woodstock moment again today, you're struck by the intensity in the eyes of the just-turned-twenty Shrieve and his bandmates. The message is clear: "This is our moment, and we are *taking* it." Forty-seven years later, Shrieve has no intention of losing that edge. "I think the record sounds really strong," he says of *Santana IV* without swagger. "It's got some balls. We put the record out ourselves, so we didn't have anyone telling us what we could or couldn't do."

MD: When you started with Santana, fusing Latin and rock was new terrain. The Latin music community often held fast to certain "rules" of that genre. But you and the band forged ahead. In the decades since, you've acquired a greater Afro-Latin vocabulary. Did that knowledge influence how you approached the new disc?

Michael: I did learn new stuff in the interim between the early Santana and now. But to tell you the truth, when I came to the table, I didn't try to insert any of that knowledge; I approached the music the way I always did. I do not play with anywhere near the authenticity of a Latin drummer. I just don't. I took lessons in the '80s with Frankie Malabé, and I've played with some great guys in Santana over the years. But I just bring what I bring to the table, and the *mix* is what makes it interesting.

For instance, I'm often not playing cascara types of rhythms. When the other guys are playing Latin rhythms, I'm often playing

a jazz swing on top. So I'm limited in how authentic I am with all that stuff, and that's part of the reason why Santana sounded like it did: Nothing sounded "authentic"—it sounded like authentic *Santana*.

MD: More important, you infused the rock energy, the inherent feel.

Michael: Yeah, the *energy*. It had a rock feel—there was that kind of rhythm with the guitars and Gregg Rolie, who's coming from a more rock 'n' roll place. But I was coming from more of a jazz place. And I just tried to fit in with those guys.

MD: There was also the challenge of finding the space—fitting in your kit parts with two percussionists in hard-driving grooves.

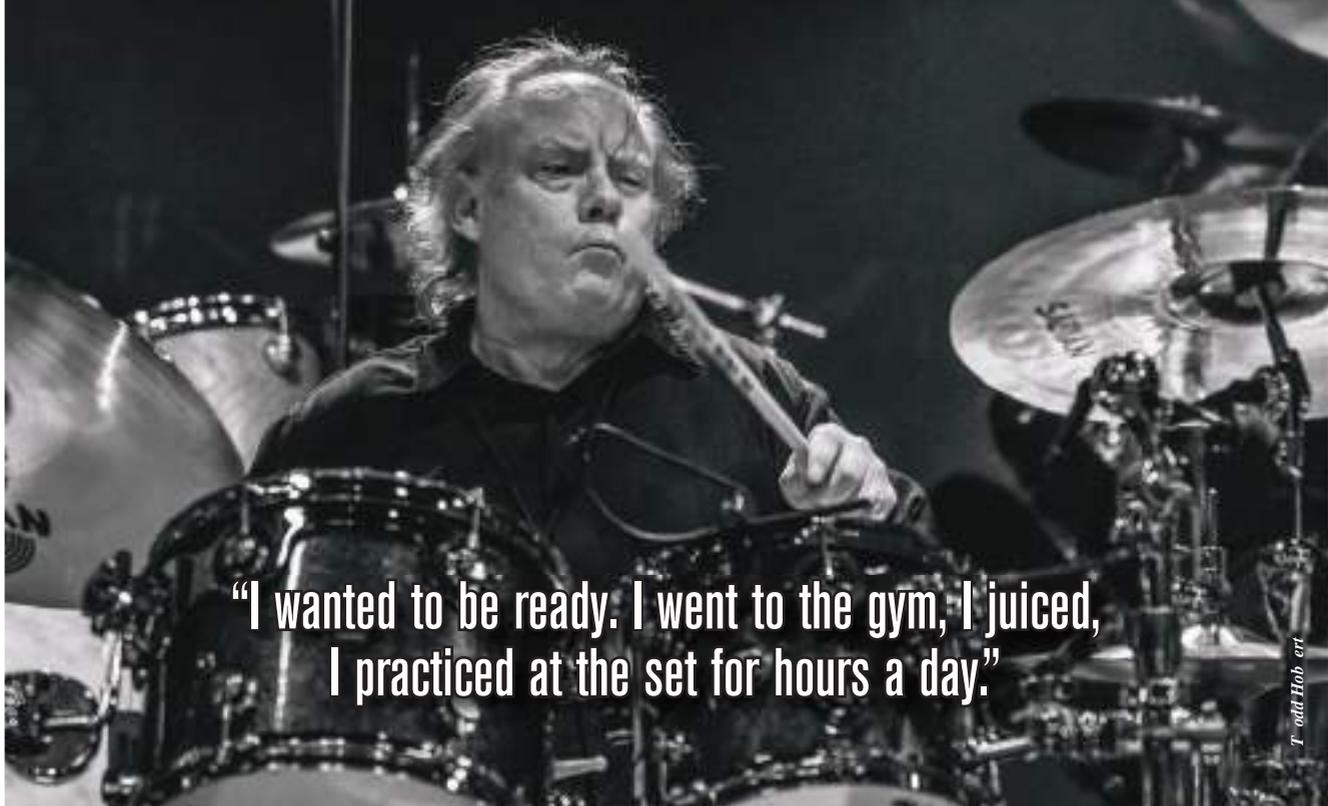
Michael: I remember that when I first played with them in their rehearsal space, I approached it with a lot of hi-hat, then started adding cymbals. I did work in snare and toms, but because I was coming in there without an authentic knowledge of Latin playing, I wanted to listen more, stay

out of the way, and add to the fabric of what they were doing.

Also, choosing pitches was important so that we weren't all in the same frequency. We even ran into that problem on a couple things on the new record, regarding what drum selections to make. But my stuff with Santana was pretty straightforward until we started moving into the era of *Caravanserai* [1972], *Welcome* [1973], and *Borboletta* [1974], when it became much more influenced by Jack DeJohnette—and I always listened to Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes, and all the greats.

MD: In addition to the rhythmic/pitch space, you had to make it work at high volume without stepping on each other's toes.

Michael: It's much louder *now*, I'll tell you. [laughs] When you listen to those early records, the mix is very low, so it's hard to hear exactly what I'm doing. It was very much a blend of the percussion section and, in fact, the whole band. I know there were



Todd Hoberg

“I wanted to be ready. I went to the gym, I juiced, I practiced at the set for hours a day.”

tom things I did that were similar to the congas. But it all felt good with a swing on the ride. And then there was stuff I picked up from people like Chico Hamilton that he did with Gabor Szabo.

MD: Santana eventually leaned more toward jazz influences. But even in the beginning, jazz was already evident in your drumming—in the feels and certainly in your chops and strong rudimentary skills. There was even some Buddy in there.

Michael: Definitely. I studied out of Buddy Rich's book, and I was a big fan of his *West Side Story* record [*Swingin' New Big Band*]. I played in a big band in junior college, and I used to go see Count Basie with [drummer] Sonny Payne. I couldn't believe that stuff. And then I started getting into small jazz groups. In the '60s that was *hot* stuff—Art Blakey, Miles with Tony, and Coltrane... come on! Also, I was a fan of the Kinks, the Stones, and the Beatles too. You had to be a *super* jazz snob if you were sixteen or seventeen and didn't like that music. [laughs]

I played in marching bands too, so I loved the rudimental stuff. So when I got to Santana, I certainly wasn't a rock drummer, and I wasn't a fully blossomed jazz drummer

yet; I was not fully formed. Being thrown into that situation, with congas and timbales and electricity, I had to find my way into it.

MD: On the new disc, “Shake It” is a real burner with a tom-driven groove, and the toms are melodic.

Michael: I played with the guitar line that Neil Schon wrote. When he first wrote that, I didn't know what to play. Initially I was playing a backbeat groove, trying to do it like a John Bonham syncopated half time. But once we got into the studio, it felt more natural to beat the toms like that—they were tuned—and add a snare accent when appropriate, like on the pre-chorus buildup section. It's one of my favorites to play live. It feels like a combination of Led Zeppelin and old Fleetwood Mac with Peter Green.

MD: You were in your early twenties during the Santana years, and you're now in your sixties. How did you prep for the physical demands of revisiting the band?

Michael: I wanted to be ready. I went to physical therapy three times a week for three months. I was having issues with my thumbs, starting to get arthritis. I was also concerned about locking up, cramping, because the music is so intense. I went to

the gym, I juiced, I practiced at the set for hours a day, and even did it with the heater on so it was like hot yoga—so I wouldn't be surprised by the heat of the lights on stage.

MD: After leaving Santana, Go offered you a chance for radical genre bending.

Michael: That was exciting for me. After playing Woodstock, I was being known for a drum solo, so I was required to play a solo every night. I was always listening to the greats, but then I started seeking out listening outside the normal realm of jazz and rock. And then I heard Stomu Yamashta in a record store in Berkeley. His percussion stuff just got to me. I got his records and just fell in love with them. So I sought him out.

I had wanted to do avant-garde percussion stuff. When I finally met Stomu, he was already putting a new thing together.

MD: You were an early electronic percussion pioneer.

Michael: I definitely was. In 1973 I was using Impact electronic drums, which was a company out of Portland, Oregon. I used their first drums, and I was an investor. They were created by Steve Lamme and his son, Ettiene. I donated them to the Percussive Arts Society Museum a few years back. Bill Bruford used to come by and check out the rig. And the record I did with David Beal, *The Big Picture* [1989], that's all from triggered pads—the horns and everything else. I'm about to begin exploring that again and will try to take it to another personal level in terms of using electronic music and playing drums on top of it.

MD: Your record *Trilon*, from 2014, explores that territory.

Michael: On *Trilon* I'm playing a kit that

Tools of the Trade

Shrieve plays a **DW** custom 3-ply kit in pink champagne finish, with 8x10, 8x12, and 9x13 toms, 13x15 and 16x16 floor toms, and a 14x24 bass drum. His snare is a 5.5x14 black nickel over brass model. His hardware is from DW's 9000 series, though for gigs around town he uses the company's Retro series lightweight models. Michael recently began using **Istanbul Agop** cymbals; though he's still experimenting with various models, of late he's been playing 21" and 18" rides, 16" crashes, and 14" hi-hats. His **Remo** heads include Coated Ambassador tom batters, a Clear Ambassador snare batter and Clear Emperor snare-side, and a Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter.

looks like a regular drumset, with a bass drum, snare drum, two small toms, and floor tom. But everything except the bass drum is a different-sized snare drum. The “toms” are smaller and the floor tom looks like a floor tom, but it’s a snare as well. That’s why there are no toms heard on the record.

MD: You’ve had an ongoing history as the leader of Spellbinder.

Michael: I named the band Spellbinder after one of Gabor Szabo’s records, to remind me of what my job is: It’s not all about me; it’s that you’ve got to create a *spell*. You’ve got to play rhythms that bring people *in*. If we do our job correctly and the rhythm is transporting, we provide a door for the listeners to come through, allowing them to close their eyes, relax, let go, and fully move into the music.

The band formed about five years ago. We played a weekly residency for years at a club in Seattle. Now with the new record out, we’ve started to gig again. The players are great, and people are loving it wherever we play.

On the first album [*Live at Tost*], I didn’t want to do a “backbeat” thing. I wanted to work within the idea of playing rhythms that came naturally to me, so that the

feeling was like a river flowing. All the music utilizes that side of my drumming. But on the new record, there’s much more backbeat stuff. The music’s really atmospheric and ensemble oriented. I don’t want to be a “jazz band,” just because it’s instrumental. And I don’t want three solos every song.

Also, I’m a drummer but I love melodies. I like to play music with beautiful melodies with this band. For instance, on the new record we did an instrumental version of a Dulce Pontes tune, and we did the same thing with “1902,” a song by John Leventhal that I’ve wanted to do for years.

MD: Another meeting of electronics, ambient, and percussion that’s been a long time in the making is *Drums of Compassion*, a project that features an amazing roster of drummers and percussionists.

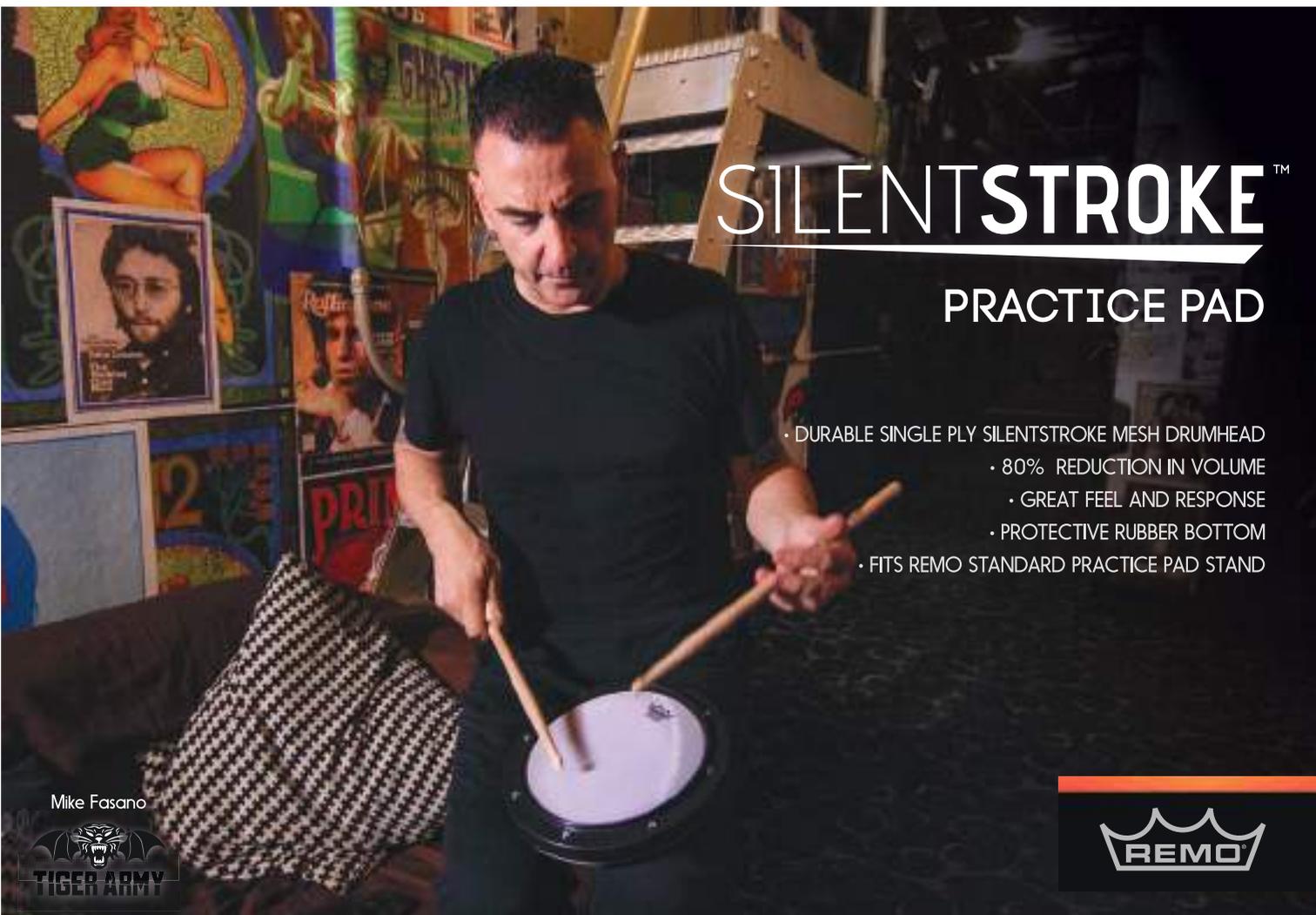
Michael: *Drums of Compassion* is very important to me, and that’s why it’s taken so long. Again, it’s very influenced by Stomu Yamashta. I play sixteen tom-toms in a semicircle while standing up. When I played with Stomu, he used to do that.

The record started from this idea: I asked myself, *If I go out to listen to music and come home at two in the morning, what kind of*

music would I want to listen to? I wouldn’t want more groove music—I’d want to listen to something ambient, or classical or choral music. It was more of a philosophical approach: I want to be able to be in a chill or prayerful state or even a trance space, but it wouldn’t be *rhythm* rhythm.

I always liked working with ambient synthesis artists—I liked that space. Jeff Greinke, from Seattle, is masterful with that. He and I originally did the whole thing with just drums and electronics, but it felt a bit too new-agey. So I invited Jack DeJohnette, Airto Moreira, Zakir Hussain, Pete Lockett, and some other artists, and they all contributed. And I even have [a recording of African percussionist] Olatunji doing an invocation at the beginning. It’s pretty exciting.

This record represents the shaman side of me. The whole thing is very much an invocation, a calling to a deeper side of ourselves that can be reached by the sound of the drums, combined with an electronic synthesis. I call it *Compassion* because it’s a play on Olatunji’s famous *Drums of Passion* albums, but it’s also “compassion,” because that’s what we need in the world right now.



SILENTSTROKE™

PRACTICE PAD

- DURABLE SINGLE PLY SILENTSTROKE MESH DRUMHEAD
- 80% REDUCTION IN VOLUME
- GREAT FEEL AND RESPONSE
- PROTECTIVE RUBBER BOTTOM
- FITS REMO STANDARD PRACTICE PAD STAND

Mike Fasano



ASH SOAN

THE SONG WORKER

BY ROBIN TOLLESON

Ash Soan has built an enviable studio drumming career—topped by a Grammy win with Adele—a burgeoning social-media presence, and his own recording studio. Housed in a 200-year-old windmill located on his property, the striking, round-shaped studio has recently found Soan producing drum tracks for the likes of James Morrison and Jeff Lorber. “It’s amazing how successful you can be if you can only do one thing,” the London-area resident jokes.

“I wasn’t very academic,” Soan continues. “I wasn’t very sporty either. And then music turned up. I *had* to play the drums, and I loved it so much—and still do. And I’m fortunate that among the hundreds of thousands of people that want to do it for a living, for me it actually did happen.”

Soan was ten when his parents bought him a drumkit. They paid for private lessons and encouraged him to attend college in Manchester. In 1991 he moved to London, where he continued his studies at Drumtech. A chance encounter with bassist Pino Palladino near his flat in the Blackheath area helped cement Soan’s musical path. “I was twenty-one, and I proceeded to be the bane of his life, knocking on his door at all times of day,” the drummer recalls. “It was an amazing time, and he was very open.”

Soan’s persistence was rewarded a year later when Palladino recommended him to the band Del Amitri (“Roll to Me,” “Always the Last



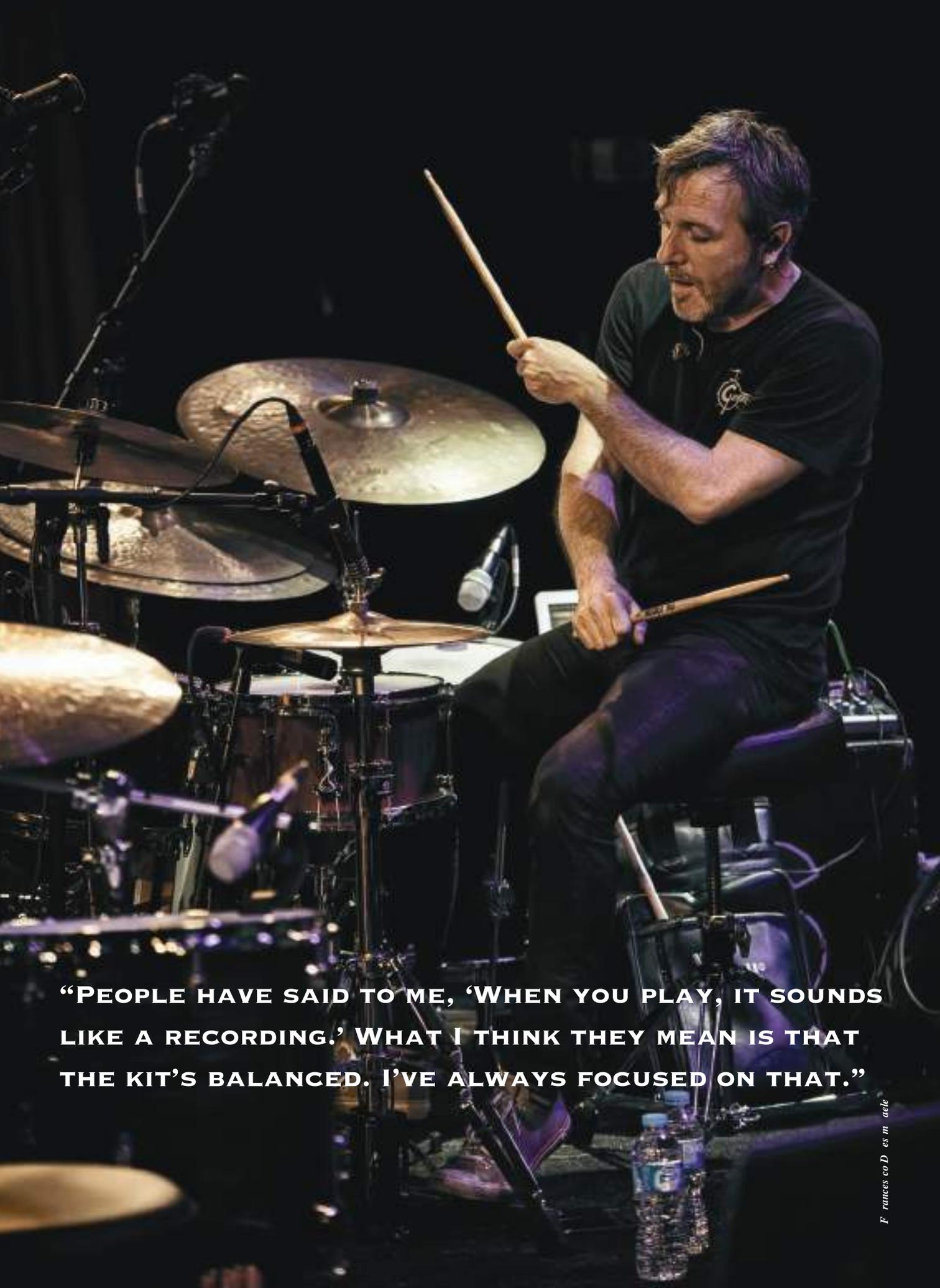
to Know”). Ash wound up touring and recording with that group for three years, making connections that have served him to this day on studio and live dates with the likes of Nelly Furtado, Seal, and Billy Idol, as well as on soundtrack work and in the house band of *The Voice U.K.* We begin our chat by asking Soan about his first true professional drumming experiences.

Ash: The band Del Amitri gave me a proper start. Justin [Currie], the singer, is a fantastic songwriter. I’ve played all sorts of music and still do, but songs have always been at my heart. In Manchester I got into jazz and fusion—Omar Hakim, Vinnie Colaiuta, and all those guys. Justin didn’t know any of those drummers and didn’t really *want* to know any of those drummers. He wanted Ringo Starr, he wanted Charlie Watts, he wanted Keith Moon. So he made me a cassette of tracks [featuring drummers he liked], and we talked about what it was that those drummers brought to their bands, and what he wanted for Del Amitri. And of course it was much more about songs, not the individual—serving the song and playing things that were right for the song.

MD: When you were learning to play, were you thinking about becoming a session drummer?

Ash: No, I just wanted to play drums. I guess I always knew that I would be playing different genres of music. I never really thought that it would turn into one day doing a session for Jeff Lorber and the next day recording Billy Idol’s album. Del Amitri’s producer called me to do a session, and that’s when it started to change for me. I realized that I was well suited to working for other people in a short time frame and I could facilitate what a producer wanted me to do.

Being a session musician is not just about technique and your knowledge of drums. Other things come into play. There’s a sociable aspect. You have to be like an amateur psychologist



“PEOPLE HAVE SAID TO ME, ‘WHEN YOU PLAY, IT SOUNDS LIKE A RECORDING.’ WHAT I THINK THEY MEAN IS THAT THE KIT’S BALANCED. I’VE ALWAYS FOCUSED ON THAT.”



“YOU HAVE TO GET TO A POINT WHERE YOU’RE CONSCIOUS OF WHAT YOU’RE DOING BUT RESPOND TO THE MUSIC SUBCONSCIOUSLY. IT’S A DIFFICULT PLACE TO BE. I’M STILL WORKING ON IT.”

sometimes to figure out what’s going on with the dynamic in the room. It’s a constant monitoring of the situation, and that’s got nothing to do with the playing. Just trying to make it cool. I realized that I seemed to be able to do that. People were happy when I played on their stuff. It’s just snowballed beyond belief, really, and it’s still going.

MD: You mentioned some of the fusion guys that influenced you, but you are such a

groove player too.

Ash: Yeah, you know, I discovered Steve Gadd and Jeff Porcaro, and I learned that those guys...there’s something properly going on there, you know. People talk about groove and about pocket, but when it comes to it, most drummers’ default is to chop out, and again it gets back to songs.

There’s a drummer in this country called Ian Thomas, and I used to watch him play

with Hamish Stuart from the Average White Band, one of the greatest groovers I think this country has ever seen, at the 606 Club in London. It’s like you can’t go off pace straightaway; you’ve got to lay it down. I’ve worked with Hamish for about twenty years myself. I’m so blessed that I’ve played with people like that, because they’re carrying a torch that you don’t see that often in modern set players, where the groove is at

Recordings

Adele “Set Fire to the Rain” from 21 /// **Seal** 7, Soul 2 /// **Jeff Lorber Fusion** Step It Up /// **Robbie Williams** Reality Killed the Video Star /// **Del Amitri** Some Other Sucker’s Parade /// **Producers** Made in Basing Street /// **Cher** Closer to the Truth /// **Ronan Keating** Time of My Life /// **James Morrison** Songs for You, Truths for Me





F rances co D es m aele

their heart and the songs are at their heart, and technique and stuff has to be there but is slightly less of the focus.

My technique over the past three or four years has come on leaps and bounds because I've got my own studio. It's quite interesting—I basically built a little studio here in Milford, where I live, and I just put a video up one day. I got an incredible response from it, and I've just carried on. Lots of drummers follow me on Instagram. It's grown to about 60,000 followers or something. For a little English drummer it's not bad.

MD: As much as we rely on engineers in the studio, are you also mixing it in your own head as you're playing?

Ash: Absolutely. You know, every time I've played, people have said to me, "Wow, when you play it sounds like a recording." And that's very flattering, but what I think they mean is that the kit's balanced. I've always focused on that, to try to get a sound from the drumkit so it's balanced rather than a collection of

instruments being played. You get a sound from the thing, and the balance is already there—you don't have to mess around with mixing too much. It should be a pretty simple process.

MD: I hear great conviction in your playing—you never waste a measure.

Ash: I play very simply, actually. A fill should obviously never interrupt the time feel—it should flow—and everything should dynamically kick along as nicely as you can make it happen. And one of the ways of making that happen is to be conscious of what you're playing. Don't fluff anything. You have to get to a point where you're conscious of what you're doing but respond to the music subconsciously. It's a difficult place to be; I'm still working on it.

MD: Is there a formula to a drum part when you're thinking of a hit record?

Ash: Every song has got its own life. But I

Tools of the Trade

Soan plays one of two **Gretsch** Broadcaster sets; his Anniversary Sparkle kit features a 12" tom, a 16" floor tom, a 22" bass drum, and a 6x14 snare; his Antique Pearl studio kit has a 10" (or 13") tom, a 16" floor tom, a 22" bass drum, and a 5.5x14 snare. His **Zildjian** cymbals include 14" A hi-hats circa 1969, 14" K hi-hats circa 1950, new A and Kerope hi-hats of various sizes, a 22" Constantinople Renaissance ride, various A crashes and rides, and 16", 18", and 19" Kerope crashes and various rides. His **Remo** heads include Vintage A and Vintage Emperor models and a Coated CS on his snare for a deeper sound. He uses **Vic Firth** 5A wood-tip sticks, **DW** pedals and flat-base hardware, a **Porter & Davies** tactile monitoring system, **JH Audio** Roxanne in-ear monitors, and **Protection Racket** cases.



F rances co D es m aele



F rances co D es m aele

guess the formula that I work from is just trying to honor the song, and trying to do an honest and emotional performance. It gets harder and harder, because you'll do a performance and it'll be chopped. People will edit some of the stuff that you put there purposely to try to make the track become something. It's almost like sometimes people don't want any emotion on their

track, and that's cool too—I totally get why people do that in certain circumstances. But I just try to play something that might pop out to the listener, like Gadd and Jeff and all those amazing guys do.

I also try to provide the right sound for the song. That's a big thing. The feel, approach, attitude, and sound are the things that are most important to me,





Influences

John Scofield Still Warm (Omar Hakim) /// **The Beatles** Revolver (Ringo Starr) /// **Little Feat** Feats Don't Fail Me Now (Richie Hayward) /// **The Police** Reggatta de Blanc (Stewart Copeland) /// **Toto** Toto, IV (Jeff Porcaro) /// **The Rolling Stones** Exile on Main Street (Charlie Watts) /// **The Who** Live at Leeds (Keith Moon) /// **Bill Withers** Live at Carnegie Hall (James Gadson) /// **Donny Hathaway** Live (Fred White) /// **D'Angelo** Voodoo (Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson)

it ticks and tocks. If you can play one and make it sound convincing and consistent... you've got to be at a certain technical ability to pull it off, and your kit's got to sound a certain way.

Yes, I love it. It's a groove that I think all drummers should be able to play. If you ask a drummer to play time, he'll usually play something straight. It's very rare that you get a guy who will just come out of the audience and play a groove that's swung, or triplet-ized. And one of my things is, your straight playing is always going to be okay, because that's what you do most. But if you can get your swing playing, and your shuffle playing, feeling as comfortable as the other end of the spectrum, then you're on to something. Because all of the really cool feels operate somewhere in the middle ground, you know.

Think about all the grooves that are slightly swung, all that really cool stuff—that's what I think feel is all about. And if you can play a half-time shuffle to a good degree, then your time feel is going to be better. And that's a feel that I'm quite comfortable with now. People have been slightly sort of freaking out that I've been playing it so fast. I'm not meaning to freak people out. It's a feel that can work at faster tempos as well, and yeah, it's a dead-cool feel.

MD: I love the grace note you play after the backbeat.

Ash: I realized that Jeff Porcaro was doing that. Years ago, back when I lived near Pino Palladino, I didn't realize that was what was happening to create the rolling motion you need to play that. That's really important, that one after the backbeat. To master it properly you've got to get that down. That's the key to it, I think—in the left hand, for sure.

MD: On the Adele track "Set Fire to the Rain," I like that simple hesitation, almost a little dancehall vibe you give it.

Ash: We chatted about the drum part on that track with Adele. She actually came

and they're certainly important to singers and producers. And if you get it right, everybody's happy.

MD: You work with a lot of singers.

Ash: Well, yeah, I play drums on *The Voice U.K.*, so there's about a hundred every year on that show that I'm working with. Pop music in this country is the best way to earn a living as a musician, if you're fortunate enough to get involved in it. I've played on a lot of songs, with the odd dalliance with other types of music. I love instrumental music too—it's kind of a guilty pleasure.

MD: It's one thing to play a simple part but another to make it sound great.

Ash: I think I've been blessed because of the amount of time I've spent in the studio. You know, hearing yourself back continually is quite... well, to start with, it's quite a horrible thing. [laughs] But eventually, working in the studio environment, you can work on that consistency and on your sound, and eventually you get to that point where it's sort of automatic. That's the way you play... that thing that we were talking about earlier with balance and stuff. In the end you just end up playing like that because at some point you become very conscious of it, and then you're not—it's just what you are.

MD: Do you leave more space in your

playing in the studio? Do you play any differently from the way you would in a live setting?

Ash: I try to approach studio and live exactly the same way. And even if I'm playing in front of 10,000 people, I try to play with the same kind of dynamic. People kind of think that's impossible—and if you're playing with a rock band, that might be the case. But most of the time when I'm playing songs on stage, I'm using the same dynamic, and the guy out front just turns me up.

So yeah, that again is something I've sort of figured out later in life, that just because you're playing in front of 80,000 people it doesn't mean you have to play super-hard so they can hear it acoustically in the back of the room. It's not that. I would watch Gadd—I've seen him play at the Albert Hall quite a few times—and I remember watching him one night and it was just like he was playing in a club, but it was in front of 6,000 people. That was fascinating. Everything about his playing was fantastic—the dynamics, the consistency, and the sound of the kit was cool.

MD: You and Gadd both play a great shuffle, which isn't as easy as some people think.

Ash: Yeah, it's a groove that I've always absolutely loved. For me, as a drummer,

up with the part. She said, "This is it." She's the real deal, the gal. I love her. There's no question in her mind. She said, "I can hear this snare pattern in the verse," and she sort of sang this thing to me. And I went in and played around on the snare as an overdub. The little rolling snare pattern that comes in, I facilitated it, but that was Adele's idea. So that part was sort of a collaboration between me and Adele and [producer] Fraser T. Smith, who cowrote the track with her.

And that sort of rolling tom thing, I've done that on quite a few recordings. There's a pulse, but it's not 2 and 4. Adele had pretty much finished the album and that track came in, and I was fortunate to get a track in at the end of the record. I actually turned to Fraser that night—Adele had gone—and I said, "Fraser, I'll see you at the Grammys," and we were laughing. And six months later he phoned me up and said, "Do you want to come to the Grammys?" I couldn't believe it.

MD: Do you like knowing what the lyrics are going to be, having a lot of information about the track, and being in the room with the singer?

Ash: Well, to be honest, singers being in the room, now that's a pretty rare occurrence. When we did the Billy Idol record a couple of years ago, we did track with Billy. I could see him from my drum booth. That was an amazing experience. But nine times out of ten the artist isn't there. Adele was there. I could see her through the glass. She wasn't singing, but she was certainly in the session, and her vocal was already down. Knowing lyrics is really important to me as well.

I did an album once with [producer] Trevor Horn for an Italian artist, and the engineer took the vocal out when I was tracking. I said, "Where's the vocal?" And he went, "It's in Italian." It's like, "I know, but..." I can't speak Italian, or even understand what he's actually singing, but I was getting emotional information from the sound of his voice that would help guide me through the song, and also guide me to where I should be dynamically and stuff. We laughed a lot about the fact that I wanted to hear this guy singing even though I couldn't understand a word. But there's information in the vocal, and it's absolutely paramount to the way you react when you're playing, the way you approach your instrument.

Trevor was talking about how the vocal is the most important thing on a track, and when he said that I remember thinking that's probably why he likes me, because it is to me as well. We haven't ever talked about this, to be honest, but I know there are things that we agree on, and that's

one of them. The vocal and the musicians' response to it is paramount. That, and the content of the song—you should take that on emotionally when you play, and hopefully I do.

MD: If you get an hour to practice, what do you do?

Ash: I just play the drums. I'm trying to approach the kit as an instrument, not as individual instruments, so I just play. And if I ever do work on something specific, it'll be something like David Garibaldi's "Oakland Stroke" groove. I'll try and work that out,

try and get that to feel good. It's always the same thing for me, just trying to make it sound and feel great, as good as when David Garibaldi plays it. And I'm still working on that particular one.

The music and the feel are the most dominant things in my life, and that's what I focus on. That's the goal. The second bar of the "Oakland Stroke" groove is particularly naughty, and to make that feel like music, rather than an exercise, is hard. That's the sort of thing that I love.



We are Family
proud to have been taking care of your drums since 1994

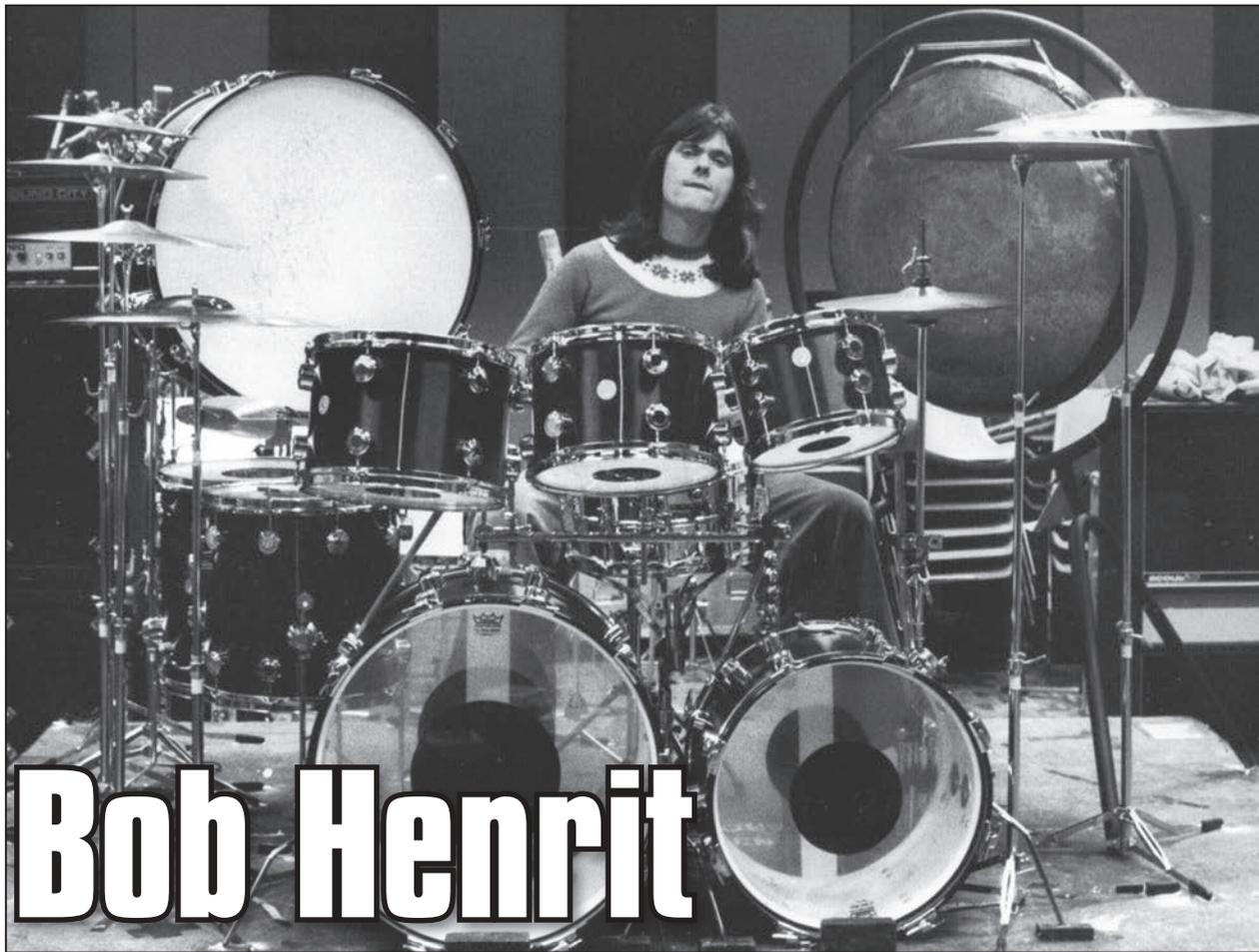
Ash Soan

GRETSCH

PROTECTION racket
www.protectionracket.com

Mini Stock Photograph: J. Desmarais

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...?



Bob Henrit

His recent autobiography tells a fascinating tale of rock 'n' roll survival, navigating ups and downs and twists and turns with seminal British acts like Argent and the Kinks. As usual, constant work and artistic growth provide the fuel for a still-active career.

by Will Romano

The veteran British drummer Bob Henrit may not have consciously sketched a career plan at age eighteen, but through hard work and determination he's lasted for more than five decades in the relentlessly challenging music business. Chance, it would seem, had relatively little to do with his many musical successes. Perhaps under-credited for his contributions to the evolution of rock drumming, Henrit has perfected a precise, in-the-pocket style through endless gigging and recording, and his work appears on a not-insignificant number of classic-rock radio staples. He's also won the admiration of many of his peers, including the Who's Keith Moon, and can be heard on releases by a wide range of artists: Argent, Adam Faith (and the

Roulettes), Unit 4 + 2, Roger Daltrey, Leo Sayer, Phoenix, and, most notably, the legendary brother-led British Invasion band the Kinks.

Of course, being in the right place at a precise time in history is advantageous, but was it by pure luck or design that the trailblazer's greatest musical victories coincide with the rise in popularity of rock from the 1960s through the 1980s?

Henrit's ability to survive the business is an inspiration to musicians of all walks, and the drummer's recent autobiography, *Banging On!*, is practically a handbook for doing such. Henrit has further served the drumming and musical community at large by having owned and operated a retail drum store on Wardour Street in London's

West End. "The old adage used to be that you had to learn the rules before you could break them," Henrit says. "We were breaking them without having any idea that there were rules."

Bob Henrit was born in 1944 during the dying days of WWII, was raised in Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire, England, and spent much of the early and mid '50s attending Catholic school and doing a bit of trainspotting. After graduating from the washboard to drums, he began to glimpse the first stirrings of what would become his life's work. Yet, for someone who was shaping and molding what would be deemed classic rock, Henrit appeared to be working in the dark for most of the early '60s.

“I realized that if I was going to make it in music, I needed to be better equipped than I was.”



“My generation, to a man, never knew that ‘Peggy Sue’ [Buddy Holly’s 1957 hit, driven by drummer Jerry Allison] was a paradiddle,” Henrit says. “We had no idea. Even if we knew what it was, we would have no idea how to play it. Then, suddenly, I realized that if I was going to make it in music, I needed to be better equipped than I was. I knew I had to read music, and I became a bit more self-aware.”

To meet these challenges, Henrit threw himself into a musical life, signing on for an endless string of sessions and live performances. Simply put, he worked his ass off, hoping it would pay dividends on more than one level. “In the beginning with [British vocalist] Adam Faith,” Henrit recalls, “we would do a radio broadcast and then go to the studio in the afternoon to do a record. Then, that evening, we would do a gig. It went on like that for years.”

The cycle continued with a group called Unit 4 + 2, whose breakthrough song, “Concrete and Clay,” soared to number one in the U.K. in early 1965, and into the top thirty in the U.S. in May of that year. “Those

were the days when you had three hours to get the A-side and the B-side down,” Henrit says. “When ‘Concrete and Clay’ came out, it became more popular than sliced bread. We got five pounds, fifteen shillings, and sixpence. That’s not a lot of money. But if anybody had said to us, ‘Do you want a piece of the action or do you want forty dollars?’ we would have said, ‘Give us the forty dollars.’ You didn’t know if the record was going to be a hit or not.”

Although Henrit confesses he narrowly missed being the drummer for massive hits such as Procol Harum’s “A Whiter Shade of Pale” and “You Really Got Me” by his future employers the Kinks, in general his life and professional career were about to turn a corner. In 1968, Henrit and a longtime friend and collaborator, guitarist/vocalist/songwriter Russ Ballard, joined the Zombies (“She’s Not There,” “Tell Her No,” “Time of the Season”) as the group was transitioning into the band Argent. Led by keyboardist Rod Argent, the erstwhile Zombies sought to radically break with their musical past. In virtually no time at all, Argent’s music successfully mixed blues-based hard rock and full-blown progressive rock, as evidenced by such tracks as the FM hit “Hold Your Head Up,” the eight-minute-plus “Be Glad,” the harmony-luscious “Love,”

Tools of the Trade

Henrit plays **Mapex** drums, **Zildjian** cymbals and sticks, and **Remo** heads.



The Official Drums of Jerry Marotta

Yamaha artist since 1979, Jerry Marotta’s tight and soulful style has been heard on some of the most popular songs of the last four decades. A well-respected vocalist, composer, and multi-instrumentalist, Jerry has been the groove engine behind such artists as Peter Gabriel, Stevie Nicks, Indigo Girls, and Hall and Oates. What this legendary drummer has brought to countless classic tracks and current sessions are a study in intricate percussive rhythms and pure tonal bliss.

Get to know Jerry here:

4wrd.it/OfficialJMarotta



SHARING PASSION & PERFORMANCE



www.yamahadrums.com

VATER

PERCUSSION
USA

TWO NEW KEG MODELS

Same dimensions as our top-selling 5A and 5B but with a Keg / Barrel shaped tip for great cymbal articulation and tone. Now available through your local Vater Drumstick dealer.



KEG 5A

L 16" • 40.64cm D .570" • 1.45cm

VHK5AW



KEG 5B

L 16" • 40.64cm D .605" • 1.54cm

VHK5BW



TACKY SACK

VTS

A grip enhancing rosin powder that absorbs moisture and provides added control of your drumsticks while performing in humid and sweaty conditions. Gently "clap" your hands on the Tacky Sack to apply rosin powder to your palms. Cord included to hang Tacky Sack from your snare drum, stick bag, hardware etc.

#SWITCHTOVATER

VATER.COM

the fusion-y "Music From the Spheres," the high-wire cross-genre balancing act "Circus," and Ballard's U.K. top-twenty ditty, "God Gave Rock and Roll to You," later covered by Kiss.

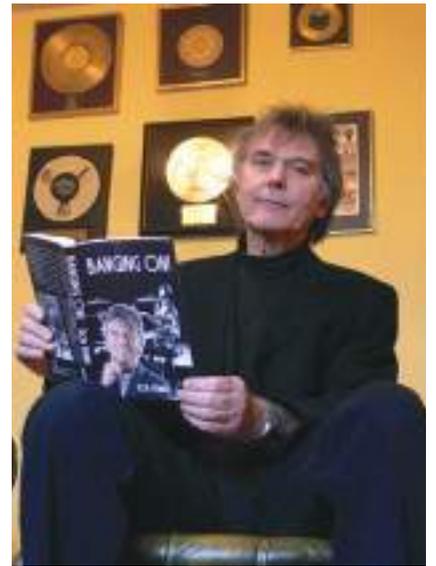
Through cleverness, flair, and stamina, Henrit met the myriad challenges of a rapidly evolving band, including dueling with and ceding sonic ground to the unmistakable siren blasts of Argent's screaming organ. As the group became more adventurous, Henrit's grooves became bolder, more precise, and texturally sophisticated. "Hold Your Head Up," from 1972, which was a top-five hit on both sides of the Atlantic, contains Henrit's infectious and slightly swung hi-hat pattern, jangling tambourine, kick drum thumping, and offbeat snare cracks.

"We went to Germany to get the band together, man," Henrit explains. "That was like working down the mines—only more difficult. But we loved it. We used to play Aretha Franklin and Laura Nyro songs, because we had nine forty-five-minute spots to fill. The very first song we did was 'Dimples' [John Lee Hooker]. That sort of 2/4 way of doing it. Then we might go to 6/8, 12/8, and then 5/4, simply because we could. That's where 'Hold Your Head Up' came from. Having gone through 'Dimples,' we went into [sings the drum pattern of 'Hold Your Head Up'], with the moved-off beat. It worked."

Album releases such as *Nexus*, the double live effort *Encore*, and the conceptual *Circus* are rife with counterpoint vocal complexities, classically influenced and jazzy electric-piano lines, and snaky instrumental passages closely aligned with material that prolific fusion artists of the early and mid '70s were producing. It was obvious that the road work logged by Henrit and Argent had paid off.

"Cozy Powell [Jeff Beck, Rainbow, Black Sabbath], who was my mate, was in Germany at the same time we were," Henrit says. "I spoke to him and he said, 'The thing about it is, if you can't hack nine forty-five-minute spots a night, how on earth are you going to make a twelve-hour recording session?' He was absolutely right. You're not going to be able to sustain concentration. This was part of what we did, and it was our grounding."

As the Age of Aquarius dawned, the very concepts of space and time seemed to lose their traditional meaning. This timelessness was reflected in the structure and tempo of popular musical composition. In skilled hands the music became not just



hummable hooks strung together for possible commercial value but a living, breathing organism. "My generation was taught to play with the peaks and troughs," Henrit explains, "which was made by slowing down when you get to the verse, and when you hit the chorus you move up a bpm or two. What we were getting away from was strict-tempo music. In the 1970s, songs sped up on purpose."

Further pushing the boundaries of timekeeping and creativity, Henrit explored the nuance of drum solos, elevating his onstage activities to an art form. "You start the drum solo and the subconscious takes over," he says. "It was about seeing where it would go next and where my subconscious could push the envelope."

Henrit's musical universe was expanding in size and dimension. While still a member of Argent, the drummer recorded with Leo Sayer at Roger Daltrey's Barn Studio in England. Apparently the iconic Who vocalist liked what he'd been hearing and decided to put together a record himself. This could have been a potential drumming minefield, but Daltrey never put pressure on Henrit to mimic the Who's wild-man drummer, Keith Moon. Instead, the experience expanded Henrit's percussive palette and workspace.

"In this barn was Moony's drumkit, a red Premier, that had two tom-toms and two floor toms," Henrit says. "This was 1973 or so. I had two kick drums, an 18" and a 22", but I didn't have two tom-toms. Moony inadvertently turned me on to that."

Argent was effectively over by the late '70s, but the '80s found Henrit still busy, founding the Argent offshoot Phoenix, recording with former Fairport Convention singer Ian Matthews, joining

the sophisticated London pop ensemble Charlie, gigging with Don McLean ("American Pie"), and, by 1984, holding the drum throne with the British rock royals the Kinks, replacing original drummer Mick Avory. (Argent bassist Jim Rodford had made a similar move several years earlier.)

As Henrit tells it, Kinks vocalist/guitarist Ray Davies had caught the drummer playing a gig at a jazz club and offered him the job. "We got to the end of the set, and this chap came over and it turned out it was Ray," Henrit says. "He'd enjoyed the show and said to me, 'Do you fancy doing some recording with us?' Next thing I knew, I was at the band's Konk studio, putting down lots and lots of tracks, probably for a month. After that I was supposed to be off on a tour with somebody. I said, 'I've been offered this tour. Have you finished with me in the studio?' But Ray said, 'You can't do a tour with anybody else—you're in the Kinks.' We went for a drink and the very next day I was learning the Kinks canon prior to going to America for a tour in mid-1984."

Henrit had won the job, though on records like 1984's *Word of Mouth*, 1986's *Think Visual*, and 1989's *UK Jive* he found himself sharing drum duties with Avory, whose contentious relationship with guitarist Dave Davies but amicable one with brother Ray resulted in a new part-time role. Henrit rolled with the situation, though, and can claim credit for having played on such memorable Kinks tracks as "Living on a Thin Line," "Scattered," "Lost and Found," and the popular single "Do It Again."

Unlike other major '60s British groups like the Hollies, the Animals, the Dave Clark

Five, and even (gasp!) the Beatles, the Kinks remained relatively intact and released new music on a consistent basis well into the '90s. Through it all Henrit's fat, steady backbeat provided the perfect complement to the Kinks' late-period productions, which led to the band becoming even more popular in the States than it had been during its fertile British Invasion era. And the famously contrary group was still full of surprises.

"I did one day's rehearsal, made copious notes, as you do, and came back the next day to discover that the songs were not the same as the day before," Henrit recalls. "I said, 'Ray, we didn't do that ending yesterday.' He said, 'We don't always play the same endings and beginnings.' I suddenly realized that the Kinks was not a drunken man's gig. Ray would play songs because they came into his head. If you were lucky, the first song on the list would be the first song played."

"That would happen with Don McLean as well," Henrit continues. "Don would trust me enough to go into a Buddy Holly song or 'Baby I Don't Care' or some other Elvis Presley song. He just assumed I knew it. It's interesting, because when we used to play on radio a lot with Adam Faith, we had to come up with a dozen songs, different songs, every week. We had to have a good knowledge of music."

By the mid-'90s, the Kinks' second life at the top of the pops had come to an end. Columbia Records dropped the band following decreasing album sales, and though the well-regarded, partially live-in-the-studio album *To the Bone* came out

in '94—on an indie label—no new Kinks activity was being planned, and Henrit's ride with the band seemed to have spun its final revolution. "The thing is, there has never been a letter that went around stating, 'The Kinks are dead—long live the Kinks,'" Henrit says. Kinks alumni have subsequently joined forces for the cheekily named *Kast Off Kinks*, with Henrit sitting in when Avory is unavailable. "Everybody in the *Kast Off Kinks* says it began because they were sacked," Henrit says. "Of course, Ray Davies says, 'I never sacked anybody.' It depends on who you believe, but the name does give it something good to hang it on, anyways."

When asked about the Kinks' future, Henrit flatly responds, "That comes under the title of 'f**k if I know.' I'm not sure anybody knows. If a reunion does happen, my view is you will have to have a football team of players to do all the different songs. There's a great possibility that Mick and I could play together."

A lack of new Kinks material or fresh live performance under the official banner hasn't prevented Henrit from performing. With 20,000-plus gigs under his belt, including pubs, arenas, and television spots, why should he stop now? "People of my generation are not playing pop music," Henrit says. "We're not selling sex. Well, even if we are, nobody is buying. At seventy-odd years old, we're playing angry rock music. Certainly [Hollies drummer] Bobby Elliott is still out there doing it, and a great many other drummers are out there thumping. Whoever thought that would have happened?"



MADE WITH HEART

PLAYED WITH HEART

TYCOON HANDHELD PERCUSSION

WHERE INNOVATION AND TRADITION MEET!

tycoon

MADE WITH HEART. PLAYED WITH HEART.

www.tycoonpercussion.com



Alejandro P. editors a

Ismael Cancel

When the rhythm ace with the enormously popular yet unclassifiable Puerto Rican band Calle 13 began working on singer iLe's much-anticipated solo debut, he found that a no-rules approach worked best.

by Ilya Stemkovsky

As part of the Puerto Rican urban/hip-hop band Calle 13, drummer Ismael Cancel mixes up an eclectic stew of beats and patterns, from reggaeton to funk with lots of points in between. The band's resident female vocalist and rapper, Ileana Cabra Joglar, has now stepped out on her own, with a new name, iLe, and a new sound that's decidedly different from the high-energy music of Calle 13. Her new record, *iLevitable*, is a throwback to Latin music's past, and Cancel acted as a producer, songwriter, and drummer for the sessions.

On display is a kinder, gentler Cancel—some sweet brushes here, an understated conga part there.... Throughout he provides perfect accompaniment for the plaintive ballads and emotional vocals

featured on the album. "It was an ongoing process from the other groups I've been in," Cancel explains. "This project has been about approach. I could have come in like a drummer or percussionist, but I didn't. I didn't even know if I was going to be playing drums on the record. At first iLe had some sampled drums, but there was a song that needed organic drums, so I recorded them."

Such attention to detail has served the songs well, with minimal flash but enough craftsmanship, and even some modern production touches, to make things percussively interesting. "The album was us experimenting from start to finish," Cancel says. "We didn't have a plan, and things changed along the way. But we still got there in the end." With Cancel, it's about the journey *and* the destination.

MD: With Calle 13, you're bringing a dance-oriented style of drumming. Here with iLe, you turn your attention to subtle rhythms. Was it an easy transition to play quieter music behind a more subdued vocalist?

Ismael: That was the hardest part. Calle 13 has huge audiences at festivals, and I have to play with a certain energy and vibe.

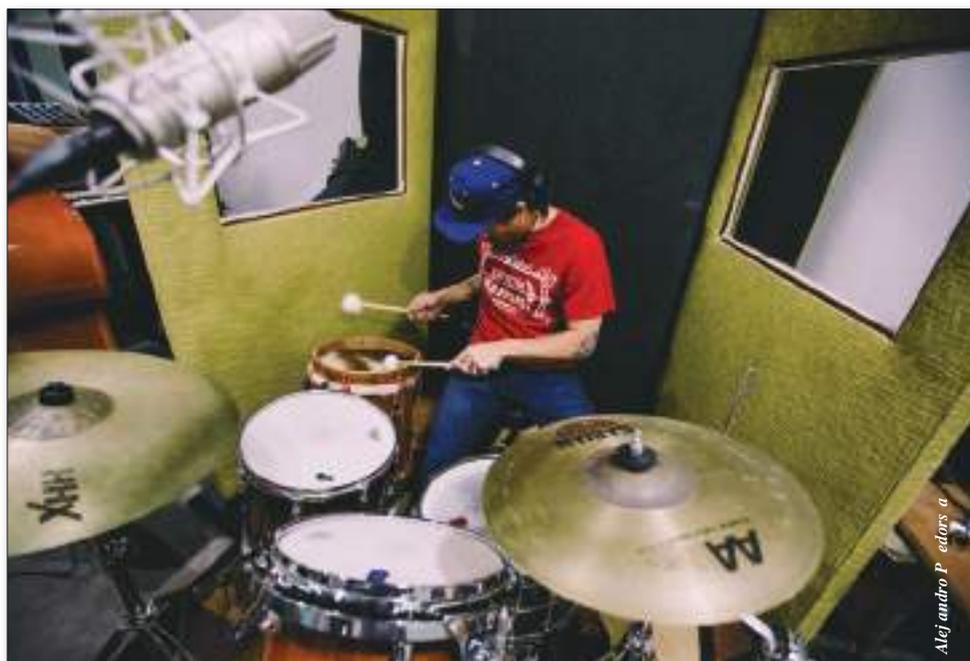
We wanted to put dynamics in the songs, but the level I was working at was totally different. With iLe, we started to rehearse and I could feel the difference in the way we would have to perform—all of us as a band, not just me on the drums. We'd have to adapt and make that sound bed for Ileana. I have to be a lot more delicate with

every stroke and move I make.

MD: Did you always have this bag of styles with you? Or did you have to do some research and shedding to prepare and learn to execute tracks like "Rescatarme"?

Ismael: We did do research. We wanted it to feel old. It was a mix of music we had heard before and some stuff that we had

“I tried a lot of stuff. We used some felt to muffle drums when we needed to; we recorded timbales very roomy. But mostly it was new gear that we worked to sound old-ish. We didn’t have a guide. We had to figure it out in the moment.”



to listen to and study a little bit to get there. “Rescatarme” was one of the more difficult songs on the album. Also, my grandfather used to listen to a lot of that music when I was growing up, and my mother has said that she would play salsa and older music when I was in her belly.

MD: In addition to songs that fit clearly within traditional Latin styles in terms of rhythm and production, the album also features songs like “Canibal” and “Out of Place,” on which you take a more contemporary approach. Was it a conscious decision to make it more modern?

Ismael: When we started working on the album, we really didn’t have a master plan. We just wanted to do an album where we could show different variations of Ileana’s voice. She worked on “Canibal” on her computer and passed it to me, and we came up with a 1960s influence, but also with an alternative thing so it didn’t stay ‘60s. So it was a matter of constructing each song like a piece, and hopefully when the album was finished all the songs would blend together. And they did, because Ileana’s voice made that happen.

MD: How did you juggle your role as a percussionist and a producer?

Ismael: When we started working on the album, we approached a lot of musicians. I was never supposed to be the only drummer. We even recorded some other drummers. I knew I wanted to do some

[playing] and be involved, but I wasn’t tied to that. Sometimes we would get a conga recording down before it was even clear to us what we wanted. So at the end, I had to record percussion on some songs myself. It wasn’t about virtuosity or getting the best drummer.

We produced it ourselves, and we had to discover what Ileana wanted with each song. As the process went on, I’d record the timbales on one track because I knew what needed to be done. So as drummer, percussionist, and producer, it was all one. If it was necessary for me to record, I did it. And if I needed to call someone else, I did.

MD: What are you doing to get those percussive sounds in “Triángulo”? The “clacking” sound on the backbeats is cool, and the way you keep it in waltz time during the 5/4 section is interesting.

Ismael: Ileana came up with the idea of a Mexican waltz, so we tried to figure out an idea of which way to work the percussion. We had a friend who is very good at programming, and we wanted something to form a groove but not overpower the music. That sound [on the backbeat] is a sample from a Japanese percussion kit we experimented with. In the live show I use the rim of the snare to get that sound. And I also had the idea of three batá drums played with mallets that forms almost like a click. So the drums, without being that present, give the song a modern feel.

MD: What was the gear you used? Old gear with new mics? New gear with old mics? Old cymbals?

Ismael: I tried a lot of stuff. We used Tycoon percussion and Taye drums with Sabian

cymbals. But we used some felt to muffle drums when we needed to. We recorded timbales very roomy. But mostly it was new gear that we worked to sound old-ish. We didn’t have a guide. We had to figure it out in the moment. If it sounded too new, we would put a shirt or a towel on the drums. Our principal recording engineer, Harold Wendell Sanders, was great. We felt like we were going to school. We also worked very hard with mixing engineer Noah Georgeson, who did outstanding work.

MD: What’s your live setup for iLe, as opposed to Calle 13?

Ismael: I’m going to break it all down with iLe, so her voice can be on top. With Calle 13 I’d have a mini timbale, two snares, and a lot of cymbals. Now I’ll go with a ride, two crashes, and one snare drum. I’ll also play some brushes. And I change sticks from song to song, though I prefer lighter sticks. I’ll play timbales on a couple songs and conga on another.

MD: Have you been doing anything specific to improve your brush technique?

Ismael: In my early days I did practice brushes. But it’s been almost ten years, so I’ve checked out some videos just to see what people are doing. I recorded all the brushes on the album, and it wasn’t that bad. But live it’s a whole other thing.

MD: So is Calle 13 on a hiatus now?

Ismael: We didn’t break up. Everyone wanted to do something else for a little while. It’s just a matter of when everyone wants to get together and play. It’s a family. We’re focused on iLe right now. But we’ll do something in the future.

Tools of the Trade

Cancel plays **Taye** drums, **Sabian** cymbals, and **Tycoon** percussion, and uses **Vic Firth** sticks and **Remo** heads.



GEARING UP ON STAGE AND UP CLOSE

Interview by Dave Previ
Photos by Heather Courtney



Fear Factory's Mike Heller

- Drums:** Tama Starclassic Bubinga in Diamond Dust finish
- A. 8x14 snare
 - B. 7x10 rack tom
 - C. 8x12 rack tom
 - D. 12x14 floor tom
 - E. 18x22 bass drum
- Heller also carries an SLP G-Bubinga snare as a backup.
- Cymbals:** Meinl
- 1. 20" prototype mega-bell ride
 - 2. 18" Mb8 China
 - 3. 14" Extreme Metal hi-hats
 - 4. 11" prototype hi-hats
 - 5. 17" Classics Custom Medium crash
 - 6. 12" Byzance Medium hi-hats
 - 7. 19" Mb10 Medium crash
- Hardware:** Tama stands, Iron Cobra hi-hat, Czarlie Kopyto custom Mike Heller pedals, and Meinl stick bag, stick holder, drum rug, and cymbal bags
- Electronics:** Roland TM-2 module and RT-10K kick triggers, Yamaha mixer, Ultimate Ears in-ear monitors, Apogee interface, and MacBook Air laptop with Logic Pro and Pro Tools software
- Drumheads:** Evans G2 or Remo Emperor
- Sticks:** Vic Firth Metal N and Steve Smith signature models

"I'm a huge fan of the 10"/12"/14" configuration," says Yonkers, New York-based metal drummer Mike Heller. "I like smaller toms even though that isn't the case for most metal players. I like their tightness and present attack. The Starclassic Bubinga drums are incredible; they have so much body. There's no dead area, so I couldn't get them to choke if I wanted to. The snare is one of the most amazing drums I've ever heard in my life. Our front-of-house guy, Wedge Branon, said he wants to buy one for everybody he does sound for. It's loud but controlled."

Heller says that he prefers to use a single kick drum because he likes the feel better and finds it easier to get a consistent sound. "That's what I use in my band Malignancy," he says. "Fear Factory wants two kick drums, though. I have the left drum tuned higher, so I can hear a difference."

Another aspect of Heller's setup that's influenced by his current band is the employment of several sets of hi-hats, with two of the pairs having a twin on the other side of his kit. "Most of the songs call for different hi-hat sounds," he explains. "Some of the hi-hats on the record are electronic, but I recreate them without using samples by having different pairs placed around the kit."

Likewise, Heller's Chinas and rides are repeated left and right. "That way," he says, "I can play any part on either side of the kit. And the rides are smaller than average. I like to fit them close to my body so that I don't have to extend my arm too much for parts that call for the bell." Heller adds that he goes for maximum separation between his two crashes. "I've noticed when watching bands at festivals that the crashes tend to blend together," he says, "so I was very particular about making sure the 17" was super-different from the 19".

"These bass drum pedals are built like tanks," Heller concludes. "The more weight I have under my feet, the more I'm able to feel what I'm doing. I like direct-drive pedals because there's a lot of starting and stopping with Fear Factory, which can cause some delay with a chain-drive. I can't have that with the ridiculously fast tempos I have to play."



maisticymbals.com

2

1

3

D

7

4

E

C

6

A

B

5

4

E

3

2

1

DRUM-OFF

IT'S YOUR TIME

DW
14x8" PERFORMANCE SERIES
STEEL SNARE DRUM
\$333.⁹⁹

(DRPM0814SSCS)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



VIC FIRTH
WIRE BRUSHES

STARTING AT
\$20.⁹⁹

(HB) (SGWB) (WB) (LW) (SB)



GRETSCH
CATALINA CLUB 4-PIECE SHELL PACK
\$699.⁹⁹

(CT1-J484-GAB)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPERATELY
SELECT STORES & GUITARCENTER.COM



EVANS
EMAD BASS DRUM HEADS

STARTING AT
\$40.⁹⁹

(BD18EMAD) (BD20EMAD)
(BD22REMAD) (BD22EMAD)
(BD22EMAD2) (BD22EMADHW)
(BD22EMADCW) (BD22EMADONX)
(BD24EMAD2)



ZILDJIAN
A CUSTOM CYMBAL SET
WITH FREE 18"
A CUSTOM CRASH
\$749.⁹⁹

(A20579-11)



FREE

18" custom crash
included in box
A \$269 VALUE

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

YOUR CHOICE
\$649.⁹⁹

(SBP2F50RB) (SBP0F50NW)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS
SOLD SEPERATELY



TAMA
IRON COBRA 900 POWER GLIDE SINGLE
AND DOUBLE BASS DRUM PEDALS

SINGLE
\$199.⁹⁹

DOUBLE
\$429.⁹⁹

(HP900PN) (HP900PWN)



MUST-HAVE GEAR FROM SOME OF THE

SEMIFINALS NOV. 15

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT GUITARCENTER.COM/DRUMOFF

FINALS JAN. 14

TICKETS ON SALE NOV. 1 AT AXS.COM

LP
CYCLOPS TAMBOURINE
\$34.⁹⁹

(LP150)



PROMARK
REBOUND BALANCE
ACTIVEGRIP
DRUM STICKS

YOUR CHOICE
\$10.⁹⁹

(R5AAG) (R5BAG)



MEINL
18" BYZANCE DARK CRASH
CYMBAL
\$299.⁹⁹

(B18DAC)
SELECT STORES &
GUITARCENTER.COM



\$100 OFF

SABIAN
AAX X-PLOSION CYMBAL SET
REG. \$749.99
\$649.⁹⁹

(2500587XB-GC)

FREE

18" AAX X-Plosion crash
included in box

A \$239 VALUE



REMO
PINSTRIPE CLEAR DRUM HEADS

6" STARTING AT
\$12.⁹⁹

(PS030600) (PS030800)
(PS031000) (PS031200)
(PS031300) (PS031400)
(PS031600) (PS031800)
(PS132000) (PS132200)



ROLAND
SPD-30 OCTAPAD
\$699.⁹⁹

(SPD-30)
PEDALS, KICK TOWER AND
STAND SOLD SEPARATELY



PEARL
EXPORT NEW FUSION 5-PIECE DRUM SET
WITH HARDWARE

YOUR CHOICE
\$649.⁹⁹

(EXX725S/C704) (EXX725S/C703)
CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY



TOP NAMES IN DRUMS AND PERCUSSION

More Effective Learning

Improving Practice Skills, Memory, and Drumming

by Marc Dicciani

As a private teacher, professor, and researcher, I have a great interest in learning how our brains, neural systems, and bodies work together as we develop music and drumming skills. I've done research for several years to devise ways for me and my students to translate that information into effective and efficient practice techniques.

Over the past few decades, cognitive psychologists, neurologists, neuroscientists, and others have begun to build a body of evidence containing the most effective learning strategies. In so doing, they've come to understand that some of the ways we currently learn and train are based on theories that have been handed down, and some of those may be ineffective. Although many public school teachers have begun utilizing these new methods, they've not yet made it into the mainstream of music instruction.

Many drummers have benefitted from having had great teachers, as well as from going through a lot of trial and error and spending countless hours practicing, studying, and playing. However, if some of this current research had been known to us years ago, we might have saved ourselves significant amounts of time and frustration, and maybe even developed quicker and with deeper understanding. From these recent findings, we can now identify methods to maintain and increase our skill levels and musicianship by maximizing whatever time we have available.

There Are No Shortcuts

Learning is an acquired skill, and we can all become better at it. Successful learning and effective practice is intentional—not just the result of putting in the time. Of course, we need not become experts in neurobiology, neuroscience, psychoacoustics, cerebral physiology, anatomy, genetics, perception, and cognition in order to become better learners. But we should try to adapt and make use of the research from those areas that is now available.

It's important to understand that this research hasn't produced any shortcuts. Acquiring skills and developing ability still require time, a plan, commitment, desire, consistency, perseverance, and patience. And effective practice should be deliberate and effortful, in the "learning zone" (more on that in a moment), and organized but variable, and it should incorporate constant feedback.

Practice is deliberate and effortful when we coordinate the "what" and the "how." First, select specific aspects of your playing that you want to improve, and then make your practice session focused, directed, creative, conscious, dedicated, contextualized, repetitive but interleaved (divided into varied segments of short chunks of time for each idea), and broken into small components. Practice is never automatic and should always include our own input, imagination, and creativity.

To contrast, a more typical but less effective form of practicing, called massed practice, is when you spend hours playing one or a few specific things. This approach is similar to cramming for a test. You feel like you've attained some mastery, but it's short-lived. Most drum method books are filled with exercises and patterns, some of which can be extremely valuable to learn. But if we just practice the exercises and overlook the underlying concepts, our learning may be illusory. It's easy to mistake fluency in playing specific examples with mastery of the fundamental ideas. When using books and other

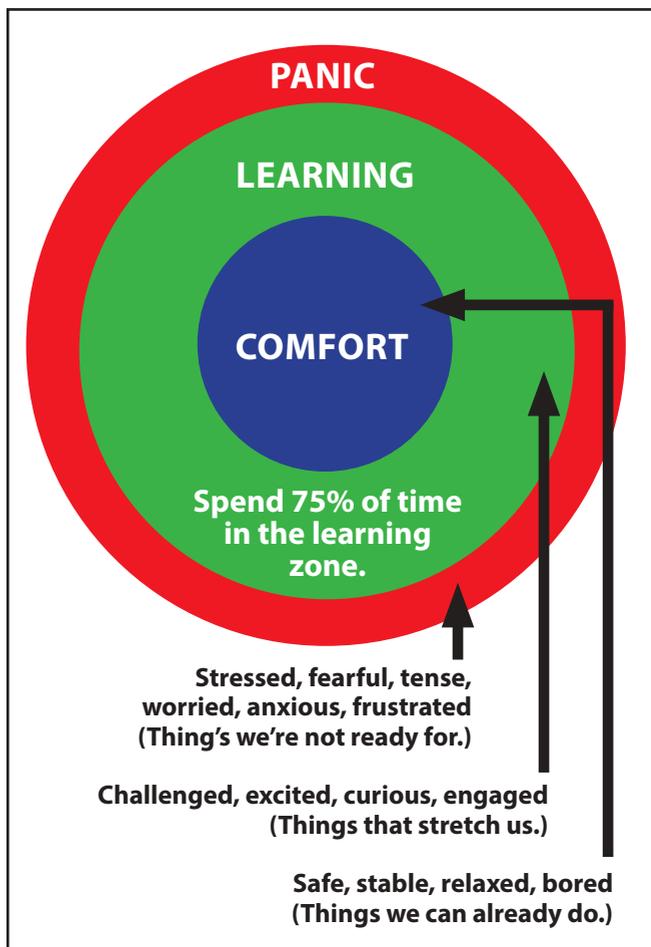
printed materials, make certain to incorporate your own ideas and interpretations.

The Learning Zone

It's important to practice in the learning zone by dividing your time at a ratio of about three-to-one between development and maintenance (comfort zone). This ratio is ideal for rapid growth. You know you're in the learning zone when you feel challenged, but not frustrated, with what you're practicing. These are things that we can't yet do fluently but that we understand. Below is a chart that illustrates this concept.

Feedback Is Your Friend

In order to incorporate constant feedback into your practice routine, you need to spend time listening to recordings of the masters, to the advice of your teachers, and to recordings of yourself playing along with albums, play-along tracks, loops, your band, and so on. Make it a habit to record audio and video of your playing daily.



Be Organized But Varied

Practice sessions should be organized but variable, elaborative, and interleaved. Organize your practice by listing specific goals (see the practice grid chart at the top of the facing page). Vary what you

Movement	Technique	Styles/ Musicality	Improvisation	Reading/ Literature	Other

practice (don't practice the same things every day), and vary the locations and times in which you practice, if possible.

Elaborative practice is when you work on something for a shorter period, and you follow that with some improvisation based on what you've learned. Interleaved practice is when, after practicing something for twenty to thirty minutes, you move on to something completely different. Then during the following day or two, you return to practice the original idea, at first relying on your memory and incorporating improvisation and interpretation that uses different tempos, dynamics, and so on. Combining elaborative and interleaved practice is critical in developing recall and being able to bridge the gap from practice to performance.

The Practice Chart

The six subject areas I practice for twenty to thirty minutes at a time before moving on to the next category are movement/mechanics, technique, styles/musicality, improvisation, reading/literature, and "other" (reading magazines, transcribing beats and solos, studying videos, etc.). After ninety minutes of continuous practice, I take a break for between fifteen minutes and a couple of hours. Below is the practice grid that I use for myself and with my students.

Here's how to use the chart. First, place an appropriate idea in each of the boxes that you want to practice. Work on the first one for twenty to thirty minutes, and then move on to the next box in the same row. When you finish a row, move down to the next row, and repeat the process. After ninety minutes, make a note of where you're at on the chart, and take a break. The break will help deepen your learning.

Start your next practice session where you left off, and when you get to the bottom of the page, go back to the top and start again. After a few weeks, as items begin to move toward your comfort zone, create a new practice schedule with things from your last routine that you want to continue working on, and add some new items.

The "other" category is intended for items that don't require you to have sticks in your hands (transcribing, researching, drum tuning,

etc.), so you can skip that category until a time later in the day when you can't be at your drumset.

Final Thoughts

Change it up! Contrary to popular belief, most people do better over time by varying their study routines and practice locations. The greater number of environments in which you practice or rehearse, the sharper and more lasting the recall of that material becomes. Since we cannot predict the context in which we'll have to perform, we're better off varying the circumstances in which we prepare. This kind of experimenting reinforces learning and strengthens memory and recall.

Finally, here are some further tips I share with my students:

- Always set goals, and remember that *how* you practice is as important as *what* you practice.
- Practice in context through a wide range of tempos.
- Don't play when you practice, and don't practice when you play.
- Practice mentally (rehearsing, imagining, thinking, analyzing) whenever possible. Although physical practice is preferable to mental practice for learning a motor skill, mental rehearsal is an effective method for augmenting learning.
- Learn many styles of drumming and music, even if it's just to inform your primary interests.
- Read and research often.
- Use your imagination and develop a unique musical voice. Learning becomes unlimited through elaboration (adding your own elements and ideas to what you're practicing).
- Repetition alone is not enough. Understanding, as well as the conceptualization and self-expression of what we learned, makes information useful and usable.
- Be patient, be engaged, be enthusiastic, and have fun!

Marc Dicciani is the dean of the College of Performing Arts at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and an international touring artist and drum clinician. He can be reached at dicciani.com.



Fundamental Fills

Part 5: Six-Stroke Stickings

by Donny Gruendler

During the 1960s, Motown drummers such as Benny Benjamin, Richard "Pistol" Allen, and Uriel Jones introduced the six-stroke roll to the masses with their signature opening fills. In the following decade, session ace Steve Gadd expanded these ideas in the fusion arena. Today these fundamental yet sophisticated fills continue to be put to use by funk and R&B drummers such as Stanton Moore and Homer Steinweiss.

This month's lesson will help you master 16th-note-triplet six-stroke fills. We'll start working with these figures on the snare before orchestrating them on the kit. As we move these figures fluidly around the toms and cymbals, many creative doors to additional ideas should open up.

Six-Stroke Stickings

First we'll get comfortable with playing 8th-note accents on the downbeats and upbeat accents with a shuffle feel. We'll also connect downbeat accents and upbeat accents. Let's look at each in detail.



Exercise 2 demonstrates how to play accented downbeats within a 16th-note-triplet six-stroke sticking.



Here's an upbeat accent pattern.



Exercise 4 demonstrates how to play accented upbeats within the six-note figure.



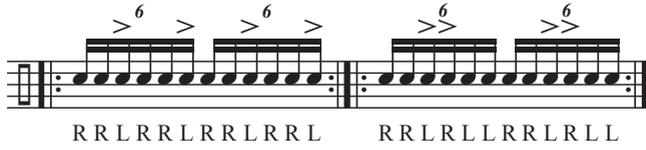
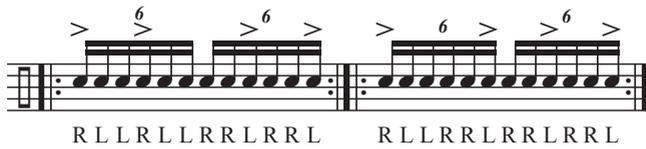
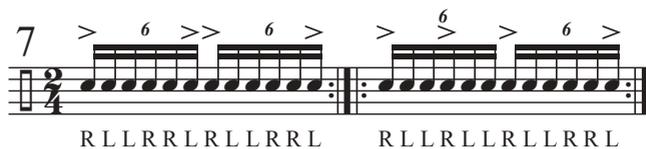
Now we'll connect a downbeat accent to an upbeat accent.



When connecting a downbeat to an upbeat, play the first half of the phrase with the sticking RLL, and follow that with the sticking RRL, as shown in Exercise 6.



Now let's work through a series of fill fragments. Although these are written in 2/4, they should be practiced in 4/4 as well.



Fill Creation

Here's a demonstration of how to apply the previous sticking patterns to one-measure fills. We'll start with the first measure from Exercise 7.



Next, set your metronome to 70 bpm with an 8th-note subdivision, and play rimshots for each of the accents while filling in the unaccented notes with the appropriate sticking. To maintain a steady pulse, play quarter notes on the bass drum and beats 2 and 4 with the hi-hat foot.

9

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

Once you're comfortable with Exercise 9, orchestrate the accents around the toms. Here's one possibility.

10

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

Finally, try replacing the snare or tom accents with hits on the bass drum and cymbals while filling in the unaccented notes on the snare. Continue to play beats 2 and 4 with your hi-hat foot. Here's an example.

11

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

Let's apply this method to another fill fragment. In this instance, we'll use the fourth measure of Exercise 7.

12

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

Again, play rimshots for each accent, and fill in the unaccented notes with the appropriate sticking. Play quarter notes on the bass drum and 2 and 4 with the hi-hat foot.

13

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

Once the previous exercise is comfortable, experiment with orchestration by moving the accents around the toms. Here's a possibility.

14

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

Try replacing the snare and tom accents with a bass drum and cymbal voicing while playing the unaccented notes on the snare, as shown in Exercise 15. Continue playing beats 2 and 4 with your hi-hat foot. Repeat this process with each fill fragment.

15

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

Fill Practice

Once you've mastered these concepts, pick any comfortable groove, such as an 8th- or 16th-note funk beat, and practice these fills at the end of a four-bar phrase. Here's an example using a tom orchestration of the fourth measure of Exercise 7.

16

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

Here's a bass drum and cymbal orchestration using the same fill fragment. Repeat this process for each measure of Exercise 7.

17

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

The number of variations and orchestrations using the fill fragments from parts 1-5 of this series is limitless. But remember that we're striving to develop authoritative, confident, and consistent fills. Oftentimes in music, simple and clear fills work best. It's my hope that you'll apply these options tastefully and carefully when you play with a band. Best of luck!

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



DrumDial

"DrumDial gives me the ability to tune quietly while achieving the same great sound show after show. I rely on my DrumDial, both at The Voice and in the shop because no other tuning device comes close."

Steve "Steevo" Morrison
Drum Tech, Drum Tech Services
Currently for Nate Morton, The Voice

watch the video

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

One-Two-Threes

Exercises for Control

by Bill Bachman



In this lesson we're going to work on a fun and challenging hybrid rudiment that does wonders for developing finger control. In the exercises, the right hand plays one note, the left plays two notes, and then the right plays three more notes. The sticking reverses before repeating the entire phrase.

Playing the triple strokes with equal velocity can be challenging, but the biggest hurdle is going from the triple stroke almost immediately into a double stroke when the sticking alternates. The one- and three-note groupings are accented, while the double strokes should be played as low taps. Here's the rudiment.

1

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

The first note should be played as a free stroke with a full rebound to prepare for the accent that follows on the triple stroke. The triple strokes should be played as two free strokes followed by a downstroke. The last stroke of the three-note grouping should be a downstroke because of the low diddles that follow. Be sure to practice these exercises very slowly at first so you can focus on the accuracy of the stick heights and stroke types. Here is the pattern with the stroke types labeled (F = full, D = down, T = tap, U = up).

2

F T U F F D F T U F F D F T U F F D F T U F F D

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

Now we'll break up this rudiment and put it into an exercise. The exercise may not look like much, but it can be challenging to play at even a medium tempo. The first three bars contain the same pattern, but the lead hand alternates. The fourth bar serves as a turnaround. After those four bars, repeat the exercise with the opposite sticking until you've cycled back to the beginning.

Try to play all three beats of the triple stroke at the same volume (incorporate the fingers as the tempo increases), and use a low alley-oop ("drop/catch") wrist/finger combination for the low diddles. Make sure that the isolated accents are played as loose free strokes (i.e. full strokes). I recommend starting this exercise slowly (40–50 bpm) so that you can pay careful attention to each stroke type. As you increase the speed, use the arms to initiate the double beat to give the hands a little assistance. Here's the exercise with the stroke types labeled. Enjoy!

3

F T U F F F F D F T U F F F F D F T U F F D F T U F F F F D F T U F F F F D F T U F F D

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

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

F T U F F F F D F T U F F F F D F T U F F D F T U F F F F D F T U F F F F D F T U F F D

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

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

Bill Bachman is an international drum clinician, the author of *Stick Technique* (Modern Drummer Publications) and the founder of drumworkout.com. For more information, including how to sign up for online lessons, visit billbachman.net.



Groove Construction

Part 8: Three-Note Variations

by Jost Nickel

In this lesson we'll use a three-note grouping to create highly effective groove variations. We're going to incorporate the following hand and foot pattern into our phrases.



Now take a look at Exercise 2. The three-note figure starts on the "e" of beat 2 and ends on the "e" of beat 4. It's played three times in total and creates an interesting groove with a common bass drum figure.



Next we'll explore a few variations. The placement of the three-note figure won't change throughout this lesson. However, we'll experiment with orchestration.

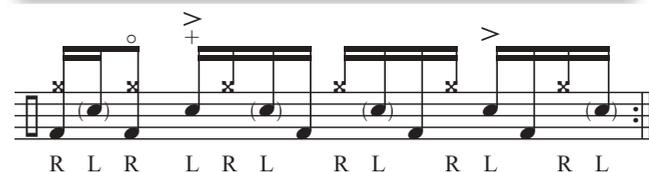
In Exercise 3, we'll move the right hand to the cowbell when playing the three-note grouping.



The next variation is what I call a switch groove, in which you swap the orchestration of your hands within a groove. In this case, we'll switch our hand placement during the three-note phrase. The right hand will play the snare while the left hand moves to the hi-hat. The only exception is the snare accent on beat 4, which remains unchanged.



Exercise 5 combines Exercises 4 and 2 into a two-bar phrase.



In Exercise 6, we'll start replacing the bass drum with the hi-hat foot during the three-note figure, which makes the groove sound lighter.



Now try combining the left-foot version with the original groove from Exercise 2.



Next we'll combine Exercise 6 and the switch groove from Exercise 4. The additional hi-hat openings happen naturally when switching hands.



Here's one more two-bar pattern, which combines Exercises 8 and 6.

9

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

I always dedicate portions of my practice routine to checking out ways of varying my grooves with orchestrations and dynamics. I hope this lesson encourages you to check out some fresh and new orchestration possibilities for your favorite patterns.

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

Jost Nickel is a top session and touring drummer in Germany, as well as an international clinician endorsing Sonor, Meinl, Aquarian, Vic Firth, and Beyerdynamic.

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



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

FRANK ZUMMO - SUN 41, KREWELLA & STREET DRUM CORPS

GET MORE POWER, PRECISION AND PERFORMANCE

AHEAD WWW.AHEADDRUMSTICKS.COM | 818.727.1127

PHOTO: ANDREW HARRIS

Advanced Overlapping Phrases

Superimposing Groupings

by Aaron Edgar

I've always been inspired by phrasing that seems to dance its way around the pulse. Bands such as Meshuggah apply this effect. You can bob your head in quarter notes and feel their phrases starting on different parts of the beat—sometimes for several bars—before the figure eventually lands comfortably back on beat 1. We often hear this phrasing using common subdivisions, but applying this concept to advanced subdivisions such as quintuplets or septuplets can create some incredibly unusual rhythms.

Here's a four-note pattern superimposed over quintuplets. You'll have to play the four-note phrase five times before it resolves on the first partial of the quintuplet on beat 1.



Make sure you start very slowly, somewhere around 60 bpm. Count the quintuplets out loud using the syllables “ta, ka, din, ah, gah.” Go slowly, count, and practice the pattern until it feels solid.

It's imperative that you feel the bass drum as the quarter-note pulse as opposed to the hi-hat pattern. The five hi-hat accents create a five-over-four polyrhythmic feel. To really emphasize the 4/4 pulse, try adding a snare backbeat on beats 2 and 4.

The next step is to embellish the groove underneath the four-note phrase. In Exercise 2 we've added snare ghost notes and the bass drum while keeping the quarter-note pulse steady.



We can also design a groove around this phrase in which the accents follow the hi-hat pattern instead of the quarter note. Depending on how strictly you follow the pattern, you can easily create an implied metric modulation. In Exercise 3 we'll do exactly that. Don't forget that you need to feel the quarter note as your pulse, regardless of what you're playing on top of it. Don't trick yourself!

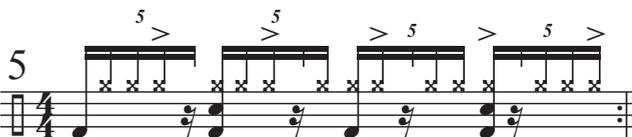


Exercise 3 can be used to transition out of Exercise 2 or for simply adding an interesting variation that creates rhythmic tension. If you play it after a similarly phrased 16th-note groove, it'll sound as if you sped up by twenty-five percent.

The next example takes a similar approach to phrasing to the one we took in Exercise 3. This time, however, we're putting emphasis on the third accented hi-hat note in each four-note grouping.



Next we're going to displace the hi-hat pattern. Don't let the notation scare you. It's the same as if you were to start Exercise 1 on beat 4 of the bar, where the first note of the hi-hat pattern starts on the second partial of the quintuplet (“ka”). To make the rhythm clearer, I've written it as a four-on-the-floor groove. When this phrase is comfortable, use it as a template to embellish some of your own beats.

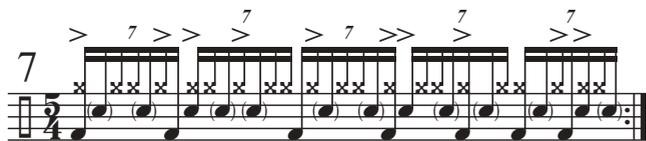


Now let's apply some of the same steps to a five-note pattern across septuplets, which fits evenly in a bar of 5/4 time. Count out loud using the syllables “ta, ka, din, ah, ge, na, gah,” and make sure you're feeling the bass drum rather than the hi-hat as the pulse.



Once you have a handle on the basic version, you can embellish it into a groove. In Exercise 7 we'll continue accenting the quarter-note pulse to contrast with the hi-hat

pattern. Seven equally spaced hi-hat accents in 5/4 give this groove a seven-over-five polyrhythmic feel.



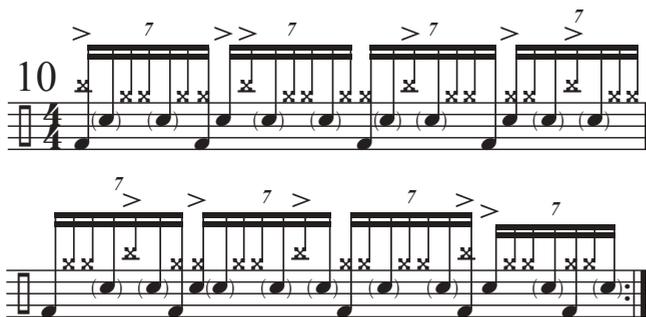
In Exercise 8 we're shifting the emphasis to the five-note grouping. With the exception of beat 2, we're also accenting the quarter-note pulse. This results in a heavily syncopated groove that accents both sides of the polyrhythm. Phrasing this way is interesting because you can choose which side of the rhythm you want the rest of the band to follow. Or, for a multi-dimensional rhythmic effect, guitar and bass parts can be designed around both sides of the rhythm.



Now we'll displace the hi-hat pattern to start one note later on the second note of the septuplet ("ka"). In this exercise, the accent pattern follows the hi-hat rhythm.



So far, all of the rhythms we've explored have been shorter than the subdivisions to which they're applied. But you can implement this concept in longer phrases as well. The last rhythm we're going to try is a common eight-note pattern that could work well in 16th-note funk grooves. We'll superimpose it over septuplets and accent the first note of each eight-note phrase on a cymbal stack. This results in seven equally spaced accents over two bars of 4/4 and a seven-over-eight polyrhythmic feel.



These rhythms are often considered odd only because we don't hear them often. But they'll become much more comfortable with diligent practice. So throw on your metronome, and start exploring some unique rhythmic territory!

Aaron Edgar plays with the Canadian prog-metal band Third Ion and is a session drummer, clinician, and author. He teaches weekly live lessons on Drumeo.com. You can find his book, *Boom!!*, as well as information on how to sign up for private lessons, at aaronedgardrum.com.

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



FIND YOUR GROOVE

WITH

DAVID GARIBALDI

ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL DRUMMERS OF HIS GENERATION; AN INNOVATOR IN FUNK DRUMMING.

Photo by Tina Abbaszadeh

Off the Record

Contains 10 Tower of Power drum transcriptions, personally transcribed by David Garibaldi. Each transcription features an in-depth analysis of David's interpretation and approach to playing each tune. Titles: Knock Yourself Out • Down to the Nightclub • Soul Vaccination • What Is Hip? • Can't You See (You Doin' Me Wrong) • Don't Change Horses (In the Middle of the Stream) • Squib Cakes • On the Serious Side • Vuela Por Noche • Drop It in the Slot.



NEW

alfred.com/drums



Alfred Music
LEARN • TEACH • PLAY

MOONGEL®
DAMPER PADS



NEW

LETS MAKE IT CLEAR

Moongel is the #1 most effective dampening gel on the market for any of your percussion needs

- Now available in BLUE and CLEAR
- Comes in a 6 pack container
- Easily washes with soap and water for continuous use

BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION

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

RTOM

Are You Playing the Drums? Or Are the Drums Playing You?

by Russ Miller

This month's quote represents a classic sentiment that seasoned drummers often feel necessary to share with younger players. By this stage in my career, I've witnessed many occasions when it would have been useful to repeat—at a clinic, for instance, when the drummer just couldn't

issue of *Modern Drummer*, I wrote about playing from the inside out. This month's topic is an extension of that concept, but with a different focus. I was inspired to write this piece because of a situation I was in recently where another drummer on the same bill was melting down because the

able to execute the gig or not, then you're playing it way too close to the edge. I love to challenge myself musically, but I never want to go to the stage barely being able to execute something in a performance. If you're not prepared for a gig, your playing is going to feel uncertain—you might even wreck the show altogether.

One of the most important elements that a drummer's playing must have is a sense of intention. If you sound like you're putting a question mark at the end of a musical statement, then you're not showing command. Lack of intent tends to alienate listeners and leave them feeling uneasy. This can also create the perception that you don't have a voice in the music.

Part of our job as musicians is painting a picture for the audience. I equate a musician performing music to a visual artist painting a picture, in real time, in front of others. Our picture is auditory, and the palette is our drumset. A visual artist

"We become what we behold. We shape our tools, and then our tools shape us."

—Marshall McLuhan (writer and sociologist)

do the gig on a 22" bass drum because his standard setup had a 20"; or at a gig where an unsteady player blamed failures in the groove on a slipping hi-hat pedal. And many of us have no doubt heard a particularly heavy-handed drummer saying something like, "I can't play quietly on these drums—they're too loud!"

In my article in the September 2016

rental kit was missing a tom and had the "wrong" pedal. I understand that having your preferred pedal makes things more familiar for you, but saying that you can't play the gig without it might indicate that you're dealing with some issues that need to be addressed.

If having a pedal that operates a little better is the difference between your being

MIKE JOHNSTON
MIKESLESSONS.COM

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

WITH A WIDE SELECTION of everything from pedals and sticks to full drum sets, Cascio's inventory of more than 30,000 drum items provides drummers with everything they need to take their performance to the next level.

SIGN UP for our free complete drum catalog, drum info, contests & ways to save at www.interstatemusic.com/drumgear

ENTER TO WIN GREAT PRIZES AT INTERSTATEMUSIC.COM/CONTESTS

FREE SHIPPING • FAST DELIVERY • LOW PRICES GUARANTEED

ONLINE INTERSTATEMUSIC.COM	CALL CENTER 1.800.462.2263	SUPERSTORE 138TH & NATIONAL AVE, MILWAUKEE, WI • 262.789.7600
---	--------------------------------------	---

Cascio
interstatemusic.com

doesn't let the brushes and the colors on the palette dictate the scope of the piece. He or she can mix paint together in an almost infinite number of combinations to express whatever is wanted. The final picture resides in the mind before it's translated to the canvas.

The Sand Trap of Our Tools

In my opinion, the drums are the most personal of all instruments. No other is so customized to the particular player. That being said, many players get too wrapped up in their setup. The music you're playing should give you inspiration for which items to use. If you add elements to your kit and *then* look for a place in the music to use them, you've stopped playing music and started playing the drums. Many great players add or subtract colors from their setups for nearly every gig, whether that means switching out cymbals or adding another drum or percussion instrument. Other drummers have to play the same music the same way every night, so their setups rarely change. Others still establish a large palette of colors that they can draw from at will. This last approach can be a wise way to go, but it involves a serious commitment to the logistics of keeping a

larger setup.

Rush's Neil Peart is a great example of someone who has adjusted his instrument specifically for the material that he is going to play on a particular tour. Over the years he added things to his kit that were necessary to execute certain parts from the band's latest recordings in a live setting. He ended up with a huge rig, but it got to that point because the music demanded it.

Don't allow the gear (yours or rented) to be a distraction from your craft. The pulse, feel, and dynamics of the music should come from your heart and mind, rather than being created by the limbs and the drums. Avoid being too tied to parts, such as highly orchestrated fills, that are locked to one specific setup. I tend to think of my parts in relation to the general flow of the notes. That way I can play them on different parts of any drumset, whether it's a random rental or my preferred setup.

It's very important to build up your core musical voice before concerning yourself too much with a particular configuration of drums and cymbals. You should strive to play a great-feeling groove with a strong pulse in any situation, even if you're hitting a piece of cardboard with brushes. You should also be able to express a beautiful, musical

statement on a super-simple drumset. From there, if you have other colors you want to work into the mix, then do it! Expand your palette as widely as you want, but just make sure all the different shades are there for a reason.



Russ Miller has recorded and/or performed with Ray Charles, Cher, Nelly Furtado, and the Psychedelic Furs and has played on soundtracks for *The Boondock Saints*, *Rugrats Go Wild*, and *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*, among others. For more information, visit russmiller.com.



WE'RE BIG ON QUALITY.



Darryl Howell
Nicki Minaj
Elijah Wood
Shania Twain
Bastien LaFaye
Chunk! No, Captain Chunk!

Val Sepulveda
Drake Bell
Demian Arriaga
Iggy Azalea
Christian Gomez
Alejandra Guzman

DRK Thunder

MDM/BRT Blends

X Series

LTD Crash-Rides

DRK-BRT Hi-Hats

BRT Lightning

NRG Series

In order to provide today's drummers with the highest level of sound, performance and musical relevance, every TRX Cymbal is handcrafted in small batches by master cymbal smiths. We admit this isn't the fastest, easiest or least expensive way to make cymbals

but, like the drummers who play TRX, we measure success on quality, not quantity. You see, it's never been our goal to be one of the biggest cymbal companies in the world—just one of the best.

HIGH-CONTRAST
TRX CYMBALS

available at
Musician's Friend
and other leading retailers

TRX
Young Turks • www.trxcymbals.com

NEW *and* NOTABLE



DW Mick Fleetwood Rumours Snare

The latest Collector's Series Icon snare honors Fleetwood Mac's Mick Fleetwood. Hand-crafted from eleven plies of North American hard-rock maple, the 6.5x14 drum features HVL shell technology, True-Pitch 50 tension rods, True-Tone snare wires, True-Hoops, a MAG throw-off with 3P butt plate, DW heads by Remo, and gold hardware. Protected by an ultra-thin coat of hand-sprayed polyester gloss lacquer, the limited-edition collectable includes a DW carrying case and certificate of authenticity. dwdrums.com

AUDIO-TECHNICA Hypercardioid Dynamic Instrument Microphone

The ATM230 low-profile mic is ideal for high-SPL applications, including miking rack and floor toms, snare drums, and other percussion instruments. Its proprietary capsule is said to deliver full, well-rounded audio with an exceptional low-end. The hypercardioid polar pattern reduces pickup of sounds from the side and rear, improving isolation of the desired sound source. A drum mount and soft protective pouch are included. List price is \$139 per mic and \$349 for a pack of three. audio-technica.com



RICH STICKS Twist Rods and Brushes

Rich Sticks' 13"-long retractable wire brush features a wide wire spread and a 0.555" diameter rubber handle. The 14.25"x.555" Rich Sticks nylon brush features extra-long bristles and a lacquered hickory handle.

Available in three sizes, the Rich Sticks Twist Rod is a brush rod with adjustable O-ring and a rubber mallet butt end. The PVC shaft wrap is extended, and the shaft is glued for strength. The North American birch dowels are twisted, creating spring-loaded action for better rebound and a fatter sound.

richsticks.com



Twist Rods



ADORO Low-Volume Drums

Adoro drums are said to offer a full, rich sound and sensible response when played softly, making them ideal for worship bands and events when a professional, low-volume stage sound is needed.

worship-drums.com

KICKLIDZ Drum Art

Custom printed KickLidz are made of a thin, flexible plastic material that allows movement with existing drumheads. Said to not affect the quality of sound, KickLidz attach with four small pieces of hook-and-loop tape and can be interchanged with other KickLidz.

drumheadgraphics.com

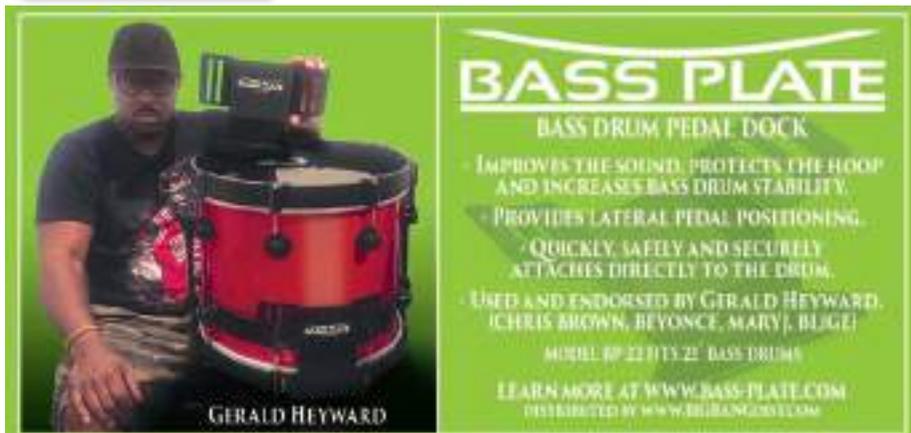


TAMA Silverstar Cocktail-Jam Kit

The Silverstar Cocktail-Jam kit is a travel-friendly, two-bag setup that features a 6x16 bass drum, 5x10 and 5.5x14 toms, and a 5x12 snare drum. Upgrades include Silverstar's birch shells, Sound Arc hoops, and an Evans EMAD bass drum head. Finishes include Indigo Sparkle, Vintage Burgundy Sparkle, and White Sparkle.

tama.com





BASS PLATE
BASS DRUM PEDAL DOCK

- IMPROVES THE SOUND, PROTECTS THE HOOP AND INCREASES BASS DRUM STABILITY.
- PROVIDES LATERAL PEDAL POSITIONING.
- QUICKLY, SAFELY AND SECURELY ATTACHES DIRECTLY TO THE DRUM.
- USED AND ENDORSED BY GERALD HEYWARD, CHRIS BROWN, BEYONCE, MARYJ BLIGE

MODEL: BP-22 FITS 22" BASS DRUMS

LEARN MORE AT WWW.BASS-PLATE.COM
DISTRIBUTED BY WWW.BIGBANGDIST.COM

GERALD HEYWARD

WWW.CYMBOMUTE.COM

CYMBOMUTE The Optimum Cymbal Mute Design

AVAILABLE ON AMAZON

NEW 17" & 19"



HANDCRAFTED SOUND
SWISS-HELVETICALITY

Everything you have heard is true:
The KoSA Cuba Workshop & Fiesta del Tambor
"...an unbelievable experience..." ➔ 5-12 March 2017




JOIN US!
music/educational/cultural trips for **school groups** to Cuba year 'round!

www.kosamusic.com



DRUM CLIP
EXTERNAL DRUM RING CONTROL

www.TheDrumClip.com

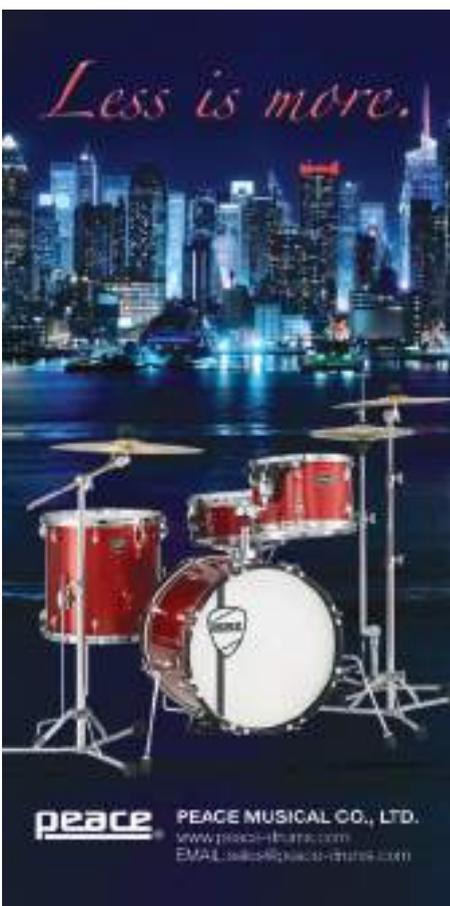
For Deen I Hear People Have Been Asking Me
WHAT IS THAT DRUM?
-Winnie Colajatta



LONGO Custom GOLD SHELLS

570.788.5820 Longodrums.com

Less is more.



peace PEACE MUSICAL CO., LTD.
www.peace-music.com
EMAIL: info@peace-music.com

KASZA
CYMBALS

HANDMADE
QUALITY
TRADITION

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




Hear the Kasza Cymbals in action

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

AHEAD
SPINAL GLIDE
THE ULTIMATE IN COMFORT AND SUPPORT




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

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

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

Holistic Drum Agency

A different kind of drum tuition
www.holisticdrumagency.co.uk

Stone Custom
 Exotic Drums
 For Warm, Inland USA

Custom American made drums & shells built on the original Singstad tools and more!
 Quality You Can Hear!

Stone Custom Drum

260.403.7519 • stonecustomdrum.com

(888)756-5777

PRO PERCUSSION CENTER

RUPPS DRUMS

WWW.RUPPSDRUMS.COM
 Denver's only PRO DRUM SHOP.

ROLAND CUSTOM DESIGN YOUR KIT.

NEW 17" & 26"

HAND CRAFTED SOUND

PAISE

GET CONTROL!



IsoPac B

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

ClearSonic Panel
 Acrylic Shields

SORBER
 Sound Absorption Baffles

www.clearsonic.com

A revolutionary design in bass drum risers.

The Lift®

www.bassdrumlift.com



" THE LIFT...affected my positioning in a way that makes me feel more comfortable and most importantly it changed the sound of my 22" bass drum - I've been LIFTED !!! "

- Will Kennedy

" I always use it on my 18" drum."

-Horacio "el negro" Hernandez

"The Heart of Your Sound Starts Here"

- Shells Sets Snares Singles & Custom
- Pre Drilled Replacement V stali e Shells
- The #1 most preferred acrylic shell used by professional Drum Makers Worldwide



Made in America by Americans at RCI Starlite USA

Famous Drum Manufactures top endorsement artists ask for RCI Starlite Super Duty Shells for their custom tour drum sets. DW Artists Chad Smith RHCP, Zac Starky The Who, Jason Bonham Led Zeppelin, Brett Fitz Slash

RCI
 Super Duty International

Starlite Percussion Products
 "The Choice Is Clear"
www.starlitedrums.com

KICKPORT

KICKPORT™ FREQUENCY RESPONSE DATA
 22" BASS DRUM



SEAL - KICKPORT DRUM - WITH KICKPORT



www.dwdrums.com
 ©2016 Drum Workshop, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

WE HAVE YOUR BASS DRUM SOUND COVERED.

The new Control XL bass drum beater.
 Customize your sound.



fd
 FACTORY ACCESSORIES

www.dwdrums.com/factoryaccessories
 ©2016 Drum Workshop, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

STOP DROPPING STICKS



Gibraltar
GIBALTARHARDWARE.COM

DRUM MARKET

INSTRUCTION

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

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

Jeff Indyke now seeking ambitious students. Visit youtube.com/JeffIndyke drums or jeffindyke.com. 516-263-9782. Drumline 516-781-taps.

MISCELLANEOUS

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

VINTAGE SHOWCASE

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

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



ALESIS
CRIMSON ELECTRONIC DRUM SET

\$999⁹⁹

(CRIMSONMESHKIT)
SELECT STORES
& GUITARCENTER.COM



\$50 OFF

LUDWIG
BREAKBEATS BY QUESTLOVE 4-PIECE SHELL PACK

REG. \$399.99
\$349⁹⁹

(LC179X023D)
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS SOLD SEPARATELY

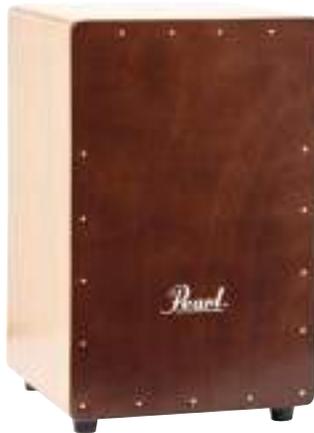


\$20 OFF

PEARL
CANYON CAJON
WITH FIXED SNARES

REG. \$109.99
\$89⁹⁹

(PBC511CC)
SELECT STORES
& GUITARCENTER.COM



\$20 OFF

PEARL
VISION BIRCH SNARE DRUM

REG. \$109.99
YOUR CHOICE
\$89⁹⁹

(VPX1455SB31) (VPX1455SC437)
COLORS VARY BY LOCATION



\$10 OFF

RHYTHM TECH
DRUM KIT PACK

REG. \$49.99
\$39⁹⁹

(DKP)

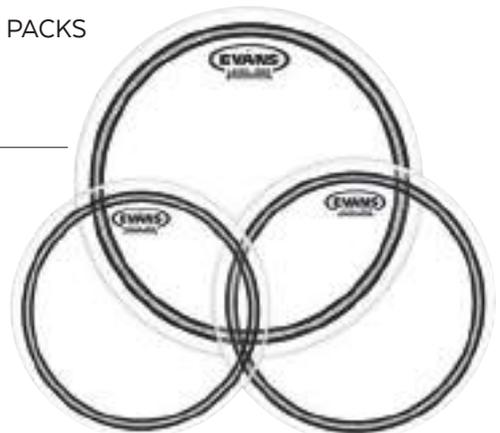


\$10 OFF

EVANS
DRUM HEAD PACKS

REG. \$43.99-\$45.99
STARTING AT
\$33⁹⁹

(ETPEC2SCLRS)
(ETPEC2SCLRR)
(ETPEC2SCLRF)



CRITIQUE

RECORDINGS Taking the Reins

Chrome Over Brass *Chrome Over Brass*

Referencing a popular snare finish in the name of a drummer-led project is a cool move. Happily, the giant workouts within are just as awesome.



The self-titled album by Chrome Over Brass features nine pummeling tracks covering a range of heavy styles, all recorded to tape at Boston-based drummer and engineer **Alex Garcia-Rivera's** Mystic Valley Studio. Garcia-Rivera has toured or recorded with a variety of heavy bands, Give up the

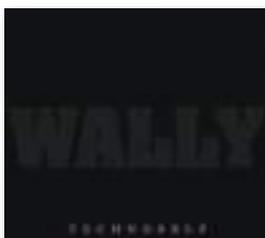
Ghost, Shelter, Piebald, and Bloodhorse among them, and the grooves here reflect his long résumé of hardcore and metal experience. The multi-instrumentalist blasts through some metalcore on tracks like "Bear Attack," "Black Rainbow," and the closer, "One Night in Saint Regis"—the latter begins with forty seconds of impressive singles all over the kit—and elsewhere on the album he digs into the stoner-rock bag à la High on Fire. It all works extremely well, and the upfront drum sounds clearly prove that, in addition to his writing and playing prowess, Garcia-Rivera is ace at getting great tones in the studio. (chromeoverbrass.bandcamp.com) **Stephen Bidwell**



Technoself *WALLY*

More experimental mayhem and tight drumcraft from the cutting-edge Deantoni Parks.

Technoself, from 2015, was **Deantoni Parks'** full realization of his body-splitting drumkit-plus-sampler hybrid of incredible physical dexterity and modern-yet-throwback sounds. The follow-up continues down that path, but the music is even more obtuse, right down to the file-number



track names that give the proceedings a slightly more impersonal quality. *WALLY* is filled with the expected sensory overload, from the flanged-out "0901," where Parks plays offbeat hi-hats and huge 1980s boombox snare backbeats over a not-too-obvious sample of Prince's "Let's Go Crazy," to the high-pitched squeal atop wickedly speedy left-hand work on "1501." There's purposely less variety to the kit tones this time around, and the uniformity of timbre can get exhausting. But Parks' music is not arranged to be easily digestible sugar candy. Now all we need is a live DVD document of this stuff to really blow our minds. (deantoni.bandcamp.com) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

Manu Katché *Unstatic*

Unmistakable groove and compositional excellence from this drummer/leader.

Manu Katché's singular pocket and time feel are all over this latest effort from the French drummer, but it's the cohesive band interplay and fresh writing that set *Unstatic* apart. These same musicians were documented on a live disc a couple years back,



but here Katché augments the group with upright bassist Ellen Andrea Wang, whose support is subtle though crucial. The drumming throughout is so very hip, from the feather-light snare ghosting in the breezy "Rolling" to the signature tom accents in the dark-tinged "Ride Me Up." Katché weaves in and out of the grooving title track, throwing in a splash or riding his open hats for a wash effect during a brief organ solo, but he's also not averse to breaking things down so the horns can float above. Looking for some funky jazz played with distinction by one of the all-time great drumming voices? This is your next stop. (Anteprima) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

Other Drummer-Leds to Check Out

Pete Magadini Trio Outside in the Present /// **Nick Fraser Quartet** Starer /// **Sriram Gopal** The Fourth Stream /// **Bob Holz** A Vision Forward /// **Franklin Kiermyer** Closer to the Sun /// **Olivier le Goas** Reciprocity /// **Tony Moreno Quintet** Short Stories



ALICE COOPER'S GLEN SOBEL AND HIS CUSTOM GIBRALTAR RACK
SEE MORE AT GIBRALTARHARDWARE.COM



Gibraltar[®]
RACK SYSTEMS

BATTER BADGE™
TRIAD PAD™
 Patented Armourphragm™ Design
 Polycarbonate impact pads for bass drumheads



Compact Shape works with single or double pedals

Heavy Duty model with Poly-Gel Center Disk

MADE IN USA www.slugdrums.com

SLUG PRODUCTS AVAILABLE FROM: BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION

CRITIQUE continued

The Pineapple Thief *Your Wilderness*

Proof that Gavin Harrison's presence elevates anything he's on to the next level.

The Pineapple Thief exists somewhere between progressive rock and pop with an edge.



The melodies on this, the group's eleventh album, are strong, and the arrangements demand your attention. But it's the drumming of special guest **Gavin Harrison** that brings everything into focus, with varied parts, high-level musicality, and a beautifully recorded kit sound. On album opener "In Exile," Harrison moves from an engaging rimclick and hat-doubles pattern to a driving backbeat replete with booming toms before opening up with his ride underneath a guitar solo. It sounds as if throughout *Your Wilderness* Harrison had a green light to offer his own ideas and parts, so Porcupine Tree fans will hear the same kind of brilliant attack and construction they've grown to love. Dig the slick brushes

on "Fend for Yourself," and how the drummer is dormant for almost three minutes of "No Man's Land" before asserting himself with inventive fill after fill for maximum drama. (Kscope) **Ilya Stemkovsky**

Helms Alee *Stillicide*

Tribal chants, metallic riffing, and progressive compositions combine to great effect on Helms Alee's fourth album.

Over the course of four full-length releases, Seattle's Helms Alee has developed into a virtuosic power trio capable of blurring genre lines. The band's most recent album is packed with towering chord progressions and absurdly accomplished drumming from **Hozoji Margullis**, who deserves extra kudos for also handling lead vocals on many tracks.



Margullis's work behind the kit strikes a balance between speed and power, using caffeinated double-kick action to escalate tension rather than relying on it as a default setting—a creative approach that keeps



"THE AHEAD SWITCH KICK® ALLOWS ME TO CHANGE MY BASS DRUM SOUND, SPEED AND PERFORMANCE WITHOUT FUMBLING AROUND FOR A DRUM KEY, BOTH LIVE AND IN THE STUDIO."

JOHNNY RABB
 Collective Soul, Author, Clinician

REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR BASS DRUM IN SECONDS

SWITCH KICK

AheadDrumsticks.com BY **AHEAD**

istanbul[®]
Mehmet Handmade Cymbals from Turkey

MR. MEHMET TAMDEĞER'S TRIBUTE TO ONE OF HIS ESTEEMED MASTER KIRKOR KÜÇÜKYAN

Kirkor
KÜÇÜKYAN

T R I B U T E - R I D E

Mehmet Tamdeğer learned his art from Mikhail Zilcan, the grandson of Keropé Zilcan. In the 1950s, at the age of nine, Mehmet Tamdeğer started to work for Mikhail Zilcan in the K. Zilcan factory in Istanbul. Mikhail Zilcan and Kirkor Küçükyan taught him every aspect of this ancient Turkish art, based on a history that stems back to the early 17th century.

Dry stick definition, warm and complex overtones.



AVAILABLE SIZE | 22" Ride

SAHRA

This cymbal offers you a low sustained, dry and a controlled sound. It has a unique stick definition and a great warm bell.

AVAILABLE SIZE | 22" Ride



CRITIQUE continued

listeners from becoming desensitized to louder sections.

While the heavy drumming, epic production, and screamed vocals occasionally scan as metallic, there's enough variation in the speed and tonality of the songs to disorient anybody attempting to pigeonhole this band. Propulsive, chugging riffs stop on a dime and transform into cavernously large grooves layered with soaring vocals. Despite odd time signatures and entire songs that refuse to resolve into predictable backbeats, Helms Alee has a knack for writing complicated instrumental parts as catchy as any teen-pop hook; see "Andromenus" and "Untoxicated." (Sargent House)

Keaton Lamle

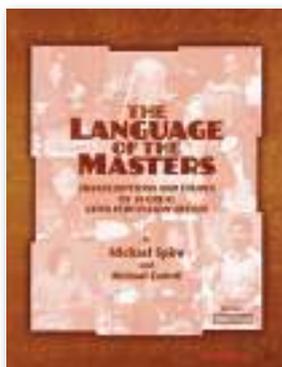
MULTIMEDIA

The Language of the Masters: Transcriptions and Etudes of 10 Great Latin Percussion Artists

by Michael Spiro and Michael Coletti

A crash course on the indelible influence of key percussion trailblazers.

This 127-page volume compiles transcriptions drawn from signature solos of seminal Latin percussionists. Coauthor Michael Spiro stresses that the examination of these artists' styles sheds light on today's rhythmic language. He also suggests that the etudes will serve well as college audition pieces. As a percussionist who has grooved on hundreds of Latin recordings, and who's also a professor of music at Indiana University, Spiro has wisely chosen the book's watershed sources. There are three etudes from each artist, covering congas (Tata Guines, Mongo Santamaria, Ray Barretto), bongos (Rogelio "Yeyito" Iglesias, Johnny "Dandy" Rodriguez, Armando Peraza), and timbales (Guillermo Barreto, Tito Puente, Manny Oquendo, Orestes Vilató).



Companion audio downloads are available, containing demo and play-along tracks. While the text is not technique oriented, Spiro offers insightful execution tips, making the book most productive for those with intermediate experience and beyond. (\$26 book, \$19 pdf download, shermusic.com) **Jeff Potter**

Exploring Your Creativity on the Drumset

by Mark Guiliana

A systematic yet open-ended curriculum for unlocking your artistic side.

In this eighty-eight page book and three-hour video package, modern jazz/fusion great Mark Guiliana shares the clear-cut practice methods he's used to discover his own voice on the drumset.

The crux of the course is what Guiliana calls "D.R.O.P.," which refers to dynamics, rate, orchestration, and phrasing. The rate chapter focuses on a rhythmic loop of 8th notes, triplets, and 16ths that's cycled through a plethora of contexts. (Guiliana includes blank staves on each page for composing your own variations as well.) The orchestration chapter explores the different pathways and combinations of sounds available on the drumset. The phrasing chapter keys in on shifting resolution points, flam accent studies, and paradiddle applications.

The beautifully shot video contains up-close demonstrations of many of the exercises included in the book, as well as dynamic performances by Mark, bassist Tim Lefebvre, and keyboardist Jason Lindner. This is a rare look inside the systems and practices of one of the most distinctive and influential drummers of the past decade. (\$29.99 [book, DVD, and video download], HUDSONMUSIC.COM)

Michael Dawson



REMEMBERING OUR DEAR FRIEND, COLLEAGUE & MENTOR, JOHNNY.
WE LOVE YOU, MISS YOU & WILL NEVER FORGET YOU.

COOPER, OLLY, MATT, RONN & CURT

MODERN DRUMMER®

Reading *MD* gives
the high from playing
drums...without
hitting anything!

All the information
in *MD* makes me a better
drummer. This includes
my rhythm, technique,
and style.

—Stephen Perkins,
Jane's Addiction

Alex Solera

DRUMMERS
WHO KNOW
READ *MD*.

KEEP YOURSELF IN THE KNOW. SUBSCRIBE AT MODERNDRUMMER.COM.

Johnny Craviotto

Johnny Craviotto, who died on July 15 at age sixty-nine, may have passed on, but his legacy isn't going anywhere anytime soon. Craviotto thrived in the music industry as an innovator and a dear friend to many. His handcrafted solid-shell drums were the epitome of custom drum building and remain some of the most coveted instruments in the world. In this special tribute, players and friends from the industry share their stories about what Johnny meant to them, and how his legacy lives on.

Johnny was such a lovely guy and a master drum craftsman. What can you say, really? Just a wonderful vibe all around. I was fortunate to have had a very memorable dinner in Frankfurt with Johnny, along with some other magnificent drum artisans—Ronn Dunnett, Curt Waltrip, Cooper Acoutin, Todd Trent—full of great stories and laughter, and it will remain a cherished memory. He leaves an incredible legacy of top-shelf drums and great times.

Todd Sucherman
Styx

The best way to describe Johnny is “master craftsman.” But he didn’t just craft beautiful wood into incredible instruments—he crafted meaningful relationships. His passion for music and drums was equally powered by his passion and love of people, and that heart shines through every piece of musical art that his hands ever made. I’ve never known someone who could match his meticulous attention to detail and the years of study and research that he dedicated to his craft. I will always strive to treat people with the love and respect that he showed me. May we all walk as humbly and kindly as you did, Johnny. You are missed.

Chris Tyrrell
Lady Antebellum

I first met Johnny at Neil Young’s ranch during a recording for Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young [the *American Dream* album] in 1988. He’d brought the first four snare drums produced for a start-up custom snare drum company called Select. It would later be called Solid. That began a friendship that would last until his passing. I’ve played Johnny’s drums since he began making them, and I watched him become the finest drum maker in the world. Nobody has matched his work with wood. I’ll treasure my deep friendship with him forever and will always be grateful for his

encouragement and generosity. Those drums changed my life for the better. They’re part of who I am.

Chad Cromwell
Neil Young

Johnny called regularly to talk about many things, but mostly to say thanks for playing his drums. Sometimes it was with pure excitement: “I got an idea and I want to run it by you!” He always valued your opinion. His instruments are on an entirely different level, something you have to play to understand. It’s obvious to those of us who knew him personally how much of his life, love, and passion he poured into everything he made. My respect for what he built, and the deep relationships he had with all his artists, is second to none.

Jason McGerr
Death Cab for Cutie

During the past ten years of being on the Craviotto team, I became quite close with Johnny. At times I’ve even referred to him as my crazy uncle. We spoke on the phone almost weekly and would often get together for lunches or dinners or beers and talk about whatever. It was almost as if building instruments for me to play was secondary to the nature of our friendship. I’m sure he made everybody feel a similar way. He was a complete artist. A drummer. An inventor. A father and husband. A lunatic with a heart of gold. And he was a great friend. I was lucky to be a part of his life and feel lucky that he was part of mine.



I’m going to miss him and will always think of him when I play and look down to see his signature inscribed on the inside of my drums.

Ronnie Vannucci
The Killers

There isn’t anything unsaid about my dear friend Johnny Craviotto’s work. He was an elite craftsman—one of the finest our industry will ever enjoy. What truly made Johnny so special was the unique relationship he had with everyone. We all felt loved, respected, and mentored, but in the same way that he crafted each drum, those friendships were individual and very personal. His absence now leaves a vast expanse in our industry and an even greater emptiness in my heart. The only true way to celebrate him is to try to carry forth the values he instilled in us through those friendships and apply them to our respective trades as musicians, artists, and craftsmen. That would make him smile.

Ronn Dunnett
Dunnett Classic Drums

Johnny had a special presence about him. He had this fantastic energy everyone wanted to be a part of. His laugh, handshake, and heart were enormous.

Every day was an adventure with Johnny. We selected wood once in this place he called the Catacombs. Once there, he started throwing these huge boards around like toothpicks—singing and yelling the entire time. Occasionally he'd stop to examine one, only to deem it unfit and start again. Dust and cobwebs were everywhere. After searching through several large piles, he found exactly what he wanted. Johnny used it as a teaching moment and explained exactly what he was looking for and why.

Johnny's passion for life, for his craft—and for sharing it—was so incredible. I think

the energy and enthusiasm Johnny shared is evident in every Craviotto drum. It's part of our secret formula.

David Victor
vice president, sales and marketing,
Craviotto Drum Company

Johnny will forever be in a class of his own. I had the pleasure of knowing him since the start of my career. He had such a kind spirit and was so encouraging to everyone, regardless of what they were doing. His legacy will live forever through the next generation of drum craftsmen he inspired, myself included.

Sahir Hanif
Masters of Maple Drums

I got a surprise phone call from Johnny Craviotto many years ago. My first drum teacher, Allen Herman, connected us. Johnny told me how much he liked my approach and style of drumming and insisted on making me a drumset. Very flattering! He even flew out to Maxwell's drum shop for the premiere of my film *Life on Drums* and announced that I was now a Craviotto artist. What love and dedication Johnny had for handcrafted instruments. I will miss him very much. Johnny is the Stradivarius of drum makers. Thank you, Johnny.

Billy Martin
Medeski Martin and Wood

Dennis Davis

There's much to love about every drummer who played behind David Bowie. From Mick Woodmansey's workmanlike chops to slick groove merchants like Andy Newmark and Omar Hakim to Mark Guiliana's envelope-pushing concepts, all did amazing work with Bowie. It's a useless exercise to attempt ranking them—though you could make a pretty good argument that of all the drummers to play with Bowie, no one covered as much ground as Dennis Davis.

Davis, who died this past April 6 after succumbing to cancer, was a jazzier at heart, having studied under Max Roach and Elvin Jones. Though from his first track with Bowie—the slamming, slashing funk of “Fame”—it was clear he could drive a rock band *hard*, and with the type of sophistication a world-class iconoclast like Bowie demanded. His fearlessness on the kit meshed perfectly with Bowie's increasingly adventurous songs, and Davis would serve as the singer's go-to drummer during the highly creative phase that spanned 1976's *Station to Station* to 1980's *Scary Monsters*, anchoring the core rhythm section of bassist George Murray and guitarist Carlos Alomar with a style that was alternately funky, freaky, and fierce.

Cue up any Bowie song from that era, and the drumming will blow you away. Two particular highlights among dozens: The smooth transitions into and out of the two-handed 16th-note hi-hat patterns and the halting syncopated fills on *Station to Station*'s “Stay,” and the “Heroes” deep cut “Blackout,” where Davis twice stops the hard-hitting groove cold to drop in crazy conga-tom-snare combinations.

And he wasn't only an amazing player; Davis's experimental spirit was perfectly suited to the sonic possibilities Bowie was exploring with producer Brian Eno during that time. “I told him about a Charlie Mingus gig that I saw where the drummer had polythene tubes that would go into the drums, and he would suck and blow to change the pressure as he played,” Bowie told *Modern Drummer* in 1997. “Dennis was out the next day buying that stuff. Dennis is crazy, an absolute loony man, but he had a lot of his own thoughts on things, and he would throw us all kinds of curveballs.”

Sadly, Davis and Bowie both left us this year. But the music they



made together sounds as groundbreaking today as it did upon its release. Chalk that up to Bowie's musical genius, and to the bold, beautiful playing of his drumming collaborator.

Patrick Berkery



2016 DCI World Championship Results

The Bluecoats Capture First Title

A rainy week in Indianapolis didn't dampen the excitement as the Bluecoats, from Canton, Ohio, won its first Drum Corps International championship in its forty-four-year history. Becoming just the tenth organization to earn the title, the Bluecoats held onto first place during preliminary, semifinal, and final rounds held this past August 11–13, besting last year's champion Blue Devils, from Concord, California, by four tenths of a point before a crowd of more than 22,000 at Lucas Oil Stadium. The Bluecoats—an audience favorite since it won the first major regional competition of the season in San Antonio, Texas, on July 23—scored a 97.65 at finals while also capturing the Donald Angelica Best General Effect award.

"It's unbelievable," says Roger Carter, percussion caption head for the Bluecoats. "We were lucky enough to be able to teach that music and have the members perform it. This was also my first win as a caption head, and it's quite an incredible feeling."

"This is my fourteenth year with the corps, and I couldn't be prouder," adds Brad Palmer, front ensemble coordinator for the Bluecoats. "Since the first day of auditions, these kids have worked hard all summer—logistically and performance-wise. They've had a great work ethic, and their last show was fantastic."

The Bluecoats' innovative "Down Side Up" program featured an opening snare solo on top of a large movable stage that the snare line slid down, a front ensemble with an unconventional fifty-yard spread, and constant movement throughout the show. The program's music included material from contemporary composers such as guitar legend Pat Metheny, famed pianist and composer Lyle Mays, and Hungarian percussionist Aurél Holló.

"During the percussion feature, we played a hybrid rudiment called a blue cheese, which is drags with a grace note on the second note of the double stroke," Carter says. "I've never seen a line do something like that before. It's more of a soloist lick, but we had the whole drumline do it. We also spread out the keyboards, so it's not so cluttered on the front sideline. We're using in-ear monitors to make it more like a professional situation, like what you might do in the studio."

The Bluecoats also used a lot of electronics in the pit. "Vince Oliver [composer and electronics designer] did a great job of arranging and orchestrating these brand-new sounds," Palmer says. "None of them are canned sounds. They're all created by him and triggered and produced in the moment."

With three corps neck-and-neck as the season drew to a close, the Blue Devils took a close second-place finish at the championship, while 2013 gold medalists Carolina Crown, from Fort Mill, South Carolina, grabbed third place and won three caption awards in the brass, color guard, and visual categories. Fourth place Santa Clara Vanguard, from Santa Clara, California, won the coveted Fred Sanford Best Percussion Performance award for the twelfth time (and the second time in three years). The award was SVC percussion caption manager Paul Rennick's fifth High Drum trophy.

"We tried to simulate some of the natural phenomena that happen with the sounds of weather and storms," Rennick says of SVC's "Force of Nature" program, which is based on Vivaldi's *Four*





Emotions ran high during the Bluecoats' Saturday-night performance as the corps captured its first DCI World Championship title.

BACK BEATS

Seasons. “During the tornado section, the drill writer used the battery as the eye of the storm, so we composed all sorts of chromatic and dissonant things to feature the drum line. In the rainstorm section, we covered the mallets in cellophane to imitate raindrops falling, combined that with some rain samples, and had the battery play with their fingers on the drums. The programmatic ideas sparked some interesting orchestrations.”

The warm-up areas—parking lots, Indianapolis’s Military Park, the Indiana Convention Center—were popular venues with DCI fans. In its entertaining routine, the Bluecoats’ battery played along with Carter on drumset. “Instead of having a metronome blaring through a speaker or clicking some drumsticks, I felt that having the drumset out there makes it more of a groove-oriented approach,” Carter explains. “Everything is in the context of a musical idea rather than just techniques and technical proficiency.

“For us, it’s all about quality of sound, tempo control, and dynamic control—the contrast between your louds and softs,” Carter continues. “So instead of just listening in and playing cleanly with one another, we focus on what each person is playing. It’s very important for each individual to play in time and with a beautiful sound quality.”

DCI also hosted the fourth annual DrumLine Battle during the three-day championship. Nine drum lines, including two from Canada and two from China, competed in a tournament-style bracket. For the second consecutive year, the 7th Regiment from New London, Connecticut, was crowned champion.

The annual Performers Showcase, sponsored by System Blue, gave individual members of the corps a chance to shine. The winning percussionists represented six different corps. Eighteen-year-old University of North Texas freshman Bryce Gardner (Santa Clara Vanguard) was named best individual snare. Best individual multi-percussion went to twenty-year-old rookie Alex Garay (Pacific Crest), who’s studying at Musicians Institute in Hollywood.

Other outstanding percussionists included Blue Devils timpanist Lionel Giron, multi-tenor player Michael Siciliano (Madison Scouts), and marimbist Steve Vonderohe (Blue Stars). The Blue Devils percussion ensemble, the Oregon Crusaders bass drum ensemble, and the Madison Scouts cymbal quartet also won awards.

Text and photos by Lauren Vogel Weiss



Bluecoats percussion caption head Roger Carter keeps time on a drumset while the drum line warms up before a show in Dallas, Texas.

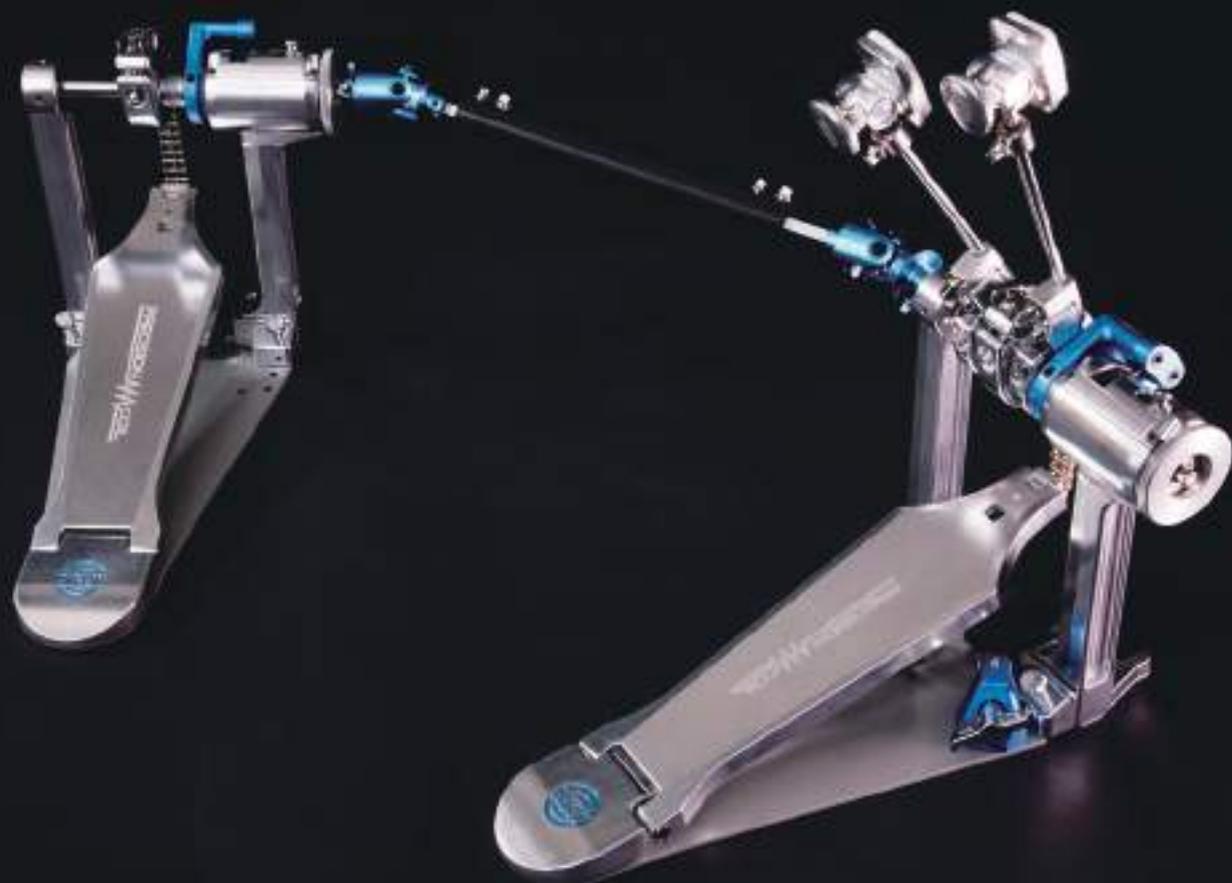


For the second year in a row, the 7th Regiment from New London, Connecticut, was named Grand Champion at the DrumLine Battle.



Santa Clara Vanguard won its twelfth High Drum title—the corps’ second such award in three years.





The Power of Control

- Chambered coil spring with a direct axle/cam connection
- Fewer moving parts for efficient transfer of energy
- Seamless response shadows the precise motion of the foot



Visit precisioncoil.playdixon.com
for a 3D Precision Coil demo.



A SOUND CHOICE



Shawn Heyward

Envirodrum



"I felt there was an important message to share with students and adults of all ages about the importance of recycling and preserving our environment," says Jeff Salem, educator and founder of the group Envirodrum. "What better way to do it than in a percussive presentation?"

All of the gear that Envirodrum plays on is recyclable and made out of plastic, metal, or wood. Among the instruments are rubber garbage bins that have wooden legs screwed into the sides for bass drum spurs; on the batter sides, traditional bass drum pedals are attached using a retrofitted clamp. Bins set up in the back row act as toms. "We attach Evans Hydraulic heads to those for durability," Salem explains, "and the space between the head and the plastic bin creates a slap sound that almost mimics a snare. A PVC bar across the front makes a nice, high tone when played." The cymbals are all by Sabian—Sick Hats, Choppers, and a prototype Shade cymbal are staples for the band.

"The gear is supported with traditional drum hardware and pedals," Salem continues. "The big blue and green carts make great

instruments to drum on, and closing the lids creates the effect of a large symphonic bass drum. They also act as road cases to pack our gear. Handheld percussion instruments such as plastic water bottles filled with rice or popcorn make great shakers. Other metal products such as wheels, ladders, frying pans, and saucepans are used to mimic cowbells. A plastic, ribbed downspout makes for a great guiro, and cardboard paper-towel rolls are used as pitched instruments similar to Boomwhackers."

Envirodrum, which was founded in 2009, performs world music styles and popular radio songs at schools, theaters, and festivals. To learn more, go to envirodrum.org.

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



Alex Solica

COMING UP IN MODERN DRUMMER

CHRIS DAVE—THE MODERN GROOVE PHENOMENON GOES SOLO

SNARE DRUM EFFECTS—GET YOUR SOUND • GUNS N' ROSES' FRANK FERRER • AND MORE!

MIC IT. LIKE IT.

Gretsch Catalina Club isn't just for gigs. Warm tone and a wide tuning range equals studio-friendly. The pros know a good thing when they hear it.

Zach Danziger • Independent



Hear it for yourself on YouTube or at gretschdrums.com



Zildjian®

©2016 Avedis Zildjian Company

BE EXPRESSIVE

WITH THE NEW S FAMILY

Zildjian's new S Family will redefine your expectations of what a B12 alloy cymbal can deliver. We spent years of R&D building these from the ground up. Where the technology didn't exist, we invented it. With a balanced frequency response, long sustain and a wide variety of models to choose from, you'll have everything you need to break through. **So be bold. And let them hear what you *really* sound like.**

#BEEXPRESSIVE

To learn more about the S Family and hear all the different models, go to Zildjian.com/SFamily.

Kent Slucher / Luke Bryan

