

WIN AN ALESIS E-KIT WORTH \$2,400!

# MODERN DRUMMER

THE WORLD'S #1 DRUM MAGAZINE

THE JOBBING  
DRUMMER  
CREATE  
YOUR OWN  
SUCCESS!

THE FOO  
FIGHTERS'

# TAYLOR HAWKINS

INSIDE CONCRETE AND GOLD

THE ALLMANS'  
JAIMOE REMEMBERS  
BUTCH TRUCKS



GET KNOWLEDGE: THE SNARE BED  
HI-HAT ACCENTS: ADD MELODY TO YOUR GROOVES  
DWEEZIL ZAPPA'S RYAN BROWN GEARS UP

JANUARY 2018





SABIAN.COM

# THE EVOLUTION OF HHX EVOLUTION

## 19" HHX EVOLUTION CRASH

A warm, explosive crash with fast, shimmering response and increased projection and cut.



## 21" HHX EVOLUTION RIDE

Crisp attack and warm undertones in a shimmering ride with excellent Crash-ability.


## NEW HHX EVOLUTION

Extra-thin, with buttery-soft feel and glassy attack, HHX Evolution has been setting the standard for modern crash cymbals since 2002. And now drummers seeking larger cymbals can choose from a 19" Crash or 22" Ride... with all the unique sonic characteristics that have made Evolution one of the most iconic and successful cymbal lines on the planet.



SABIAN.COM



44  
IF I'VE GOT  
EVANS   
DRUMHEADS,  
IT DOESN'T  
MATTER WHAT  
BAND I'M  
PLAYING WITH.  
THEY MAKE  
MY SOUND.

—AQUILES PRIESTER

SET THE TONE | **EVANS**  
DRUMHEADS

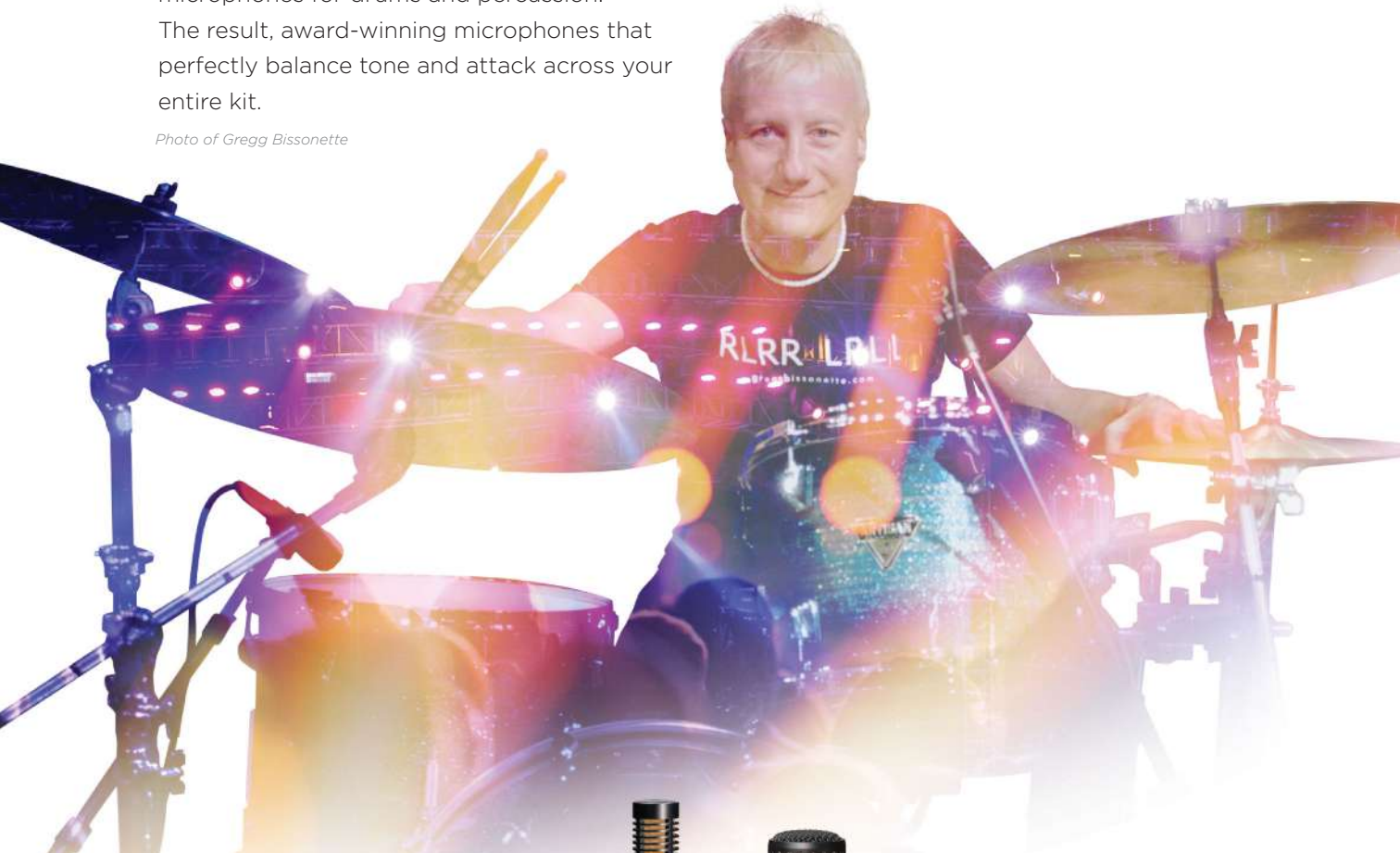


# Capture the Music™

## Stage or Studio

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

*Photo of Gregg Bissonette*



D2



D4



D6



ADX51



i5

Audix. Today's Mic.

**AUDIX**  
audixusa.com

©2017 Audix Corporation All Rights Reserved. Audix and the Audix Logo are trademarks of Audix Corporation.





*MACHINED* TECHNOLOGY



## Put your best foot forward.

DW MCD™ (MACHINED CHAINED DRIVE) DOUBLE PEDAL + DW MDD™ (MACHINED DIRECT DRIVE) HI-HAT > FORWARD-THINKING TECHNOLOGY IS WHAT MAKES DW MFG PEDALS AND HI-HATS SO ADVANCED. JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF ENGINEERING FORETHOUGHT ALLOWS PLAYERS TO MAKE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS TO CUSTOMIZED FEEL AND PLAYABILITY. MACHINED FROM 6061-T6 ALUMINUM AND EMPLOYING THE TIGHTEST TOLERANCES POSSIBLE FOR SMOOTH, EFFORTLESS OPERATION. ONLY FROM DW, THE DRUMMER'S CHOICE® [www.dwdrums.com/hardware/dwmfg/](http://www.dwdrums.com/hardware/dwmfg/)



WHEN WE SAY  
BENNY WAS  
INVOLVED IN  
CREATING  
THIS STICK,  
WE MEAN IT.

The New  
Benny Greb  
Signature Stick

Feels like a 5B. Plays like a 5A.

To see Benny tell the story, and for more  
info go to [vicfirth.com/benny-greb](http://vicfirth.com/benny-greb)

**VIC FIRTH**<sup>®</sup>  
THE PERFECT PAIR<sup>®</sup>

Photo by Gerhard Kühne  
©2017 Vic Firth Company





Make Your Drums Do More



# EAD

Electronic Acoustic Drums



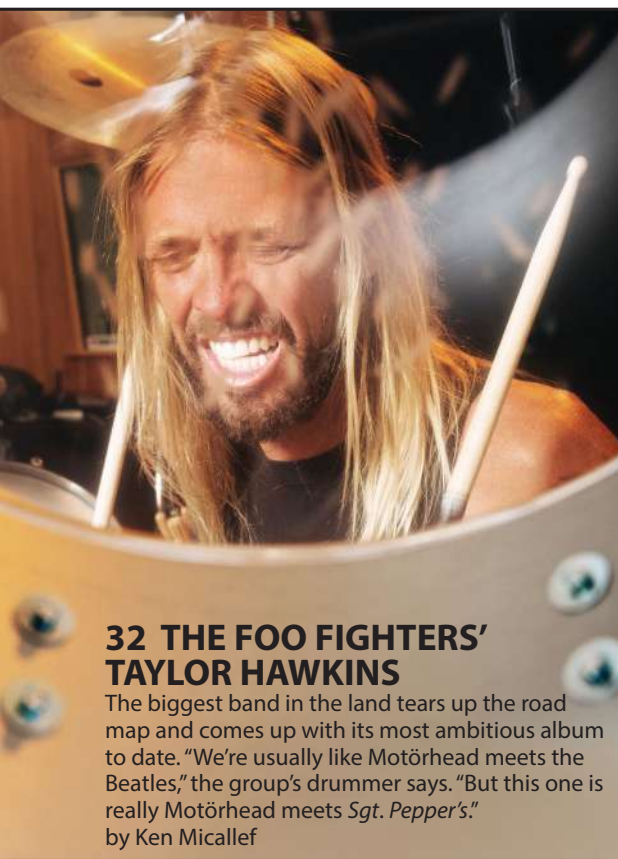
See how EAD can make your drums do more at <http://4wrdr.it/EAD>

@YamahaMusicUSA





## FEATURES



### 32 THE FOO FIGHTERS' TAYLOR HAWKINS

The biggest band in the land tears up the road map and comes up with its most ambitious album to date. "We're usually like Motörhead meets the Beatles," the group's drummer says. "But this one is really Motörhead meets *Sgt. Pepper's*." by Ken Micallef

### 26 IBEYI

These dynamic siblings derive much inspiration from their ancestry. But the direction of their art is undeniably full speed ahead. by Robin Tolleson

### 30 311'S CHAD SEXTON

Everything about 311 seems epic: their longstanding lineup, their semi-annual concert/celebration, their throngs of dedicated fans—not to mention the grooves of their founding drummer. by Stephen Bidwell

### 42 THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS' JOE SEIDERS

The popular Canadian band knew he could play the drums. When they learned he was a good hang—and a great singer—the deal was sealed. by Patrick Berkery

### 46 JON EPCAR

He's made inroads into the highest levels of pop, rock, and Broadway drumming by honing his ability to create a perfect part in a flash. Ilya Stemkovsky

### 50 CHRIS COHEN

The multi-instrumentalist has found success with a number of important contemporary artists by excelling in many different roles. by Keith Carne

### 54 JAIMOE

The death of Allman Brothers Band drummer Butch Trucks and singer/keyboardist Gregg Allman hit the rock world hard. Few felt the loss more than the man who was there from the very beginning. by Robin Tolleson

### 74 GET GOOD: LISTENING

Becoming a truly great listener will improve your value as a musician. We ask the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Brian Chase and MD Pro Panelist George Marsh to help get you there. by Elizabeth Walsh

## LESSONS

- 60 Basics**  
**Linear Drumming Fundamentals**  
Defining the Concept  
by Joel Rothman
- 62 Strictly Technique**  
**Velocity and Energy Shifters**  
8th-Note Paradiddle Transitions  
by Bill Bachman
- 64 Rock 'n' Jazz Clinic**  
**Hi-Hat Accents**  
Adding Melody to Your Grooves  
by Powell Randolph
- 66 Jazz Drummer's Workshop**  
**Rhythmic Conversions**  
Park 6: Funk Grooves and the Half-Note Triplet  
by Steve Fidyk
- 68 Rock Perspectives**  
**Accented Three-Note Groupings**  
Unique Variations and Phrases  
by Rick Gratton
- 70 The Jobbing Drummer**  
**Create Your Own Success**  
Before, During, and After the "Big Gig"  
by Jim Riley
- 72 Concepts**  
**Drum Design Knowledge**  
Part 3: The Snare Bed  
by Russ Miller

## EQUIPMENT

- 16 Product Close-Up**  
**SJC** Paramount Series Shell Pack  
**Dream** Energy Series Additions  
and Dark Matter Eclipse Ride  
**Focusrite** Scarlett 18i20 Audio  
Interface and OctoPre Dynamic  
Mic-Pre Expansion Unit  
**Promark** Classic 5A FireGrain  
Drumsticks  
**One Beat Better** Timbre Jam
- 58 Gearing Up**  
Dweezil Zappa's Ryan Brown
- 76 New and Notable**



## DEPARTMENTS

- 8 An Editor's Overview**  
Live Vibes  
by Willie Rose
- 10 Readers' Platform**  
What Album Features Your  
Favorite Drum Tone?
- 12 Out Now**  
Langhorne Slim's  
Malachi DeLorenzo
- 13 On Tour**  
Paul Koehler with Silverstein
- 14 News**
- 15 Must-Have Gear**  
Steve Jordan
- 78 Retailer Profile**  
Absolute Music
- 80 Showcase**  
featuring Drum Market
- 84 Critique**  
Matt Wilson, Stanton Moore,  
and Brad Dutz take the reins
- 88 Kit of the Month**  
"A Little Better All the Time"





“Sound, space, easy setup, easy breakdown! The Cocktail kit packs a surprising punch. I’ve met my new best friend!”

– *George SPANKY McCurdy*



**COCKTAIL-JAM**

compact and portable kit

Includes: 6" x 16" BD, 5" x 10" TT, 5.5" x 14" FT, 5" x 12" SD, single pedal, single tom attachment (x2), bass drum mute, drum bag, hardware bag

 Tama Drums  TAMAofficial  officialtamadrums  @TAMAofficial





# AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

## Live Vibes

Having somewhat recently moved to northern New Jersey, I've been enjoying the opportunity to check out some of the jazz clubs that have long defined New York City culture. Although some of the more prominent venues have moved from their original spots, each one still fills you with a sense of Manhattan's rich music history, and the thick atmosphere generally radiates an invigorating spirit. (The city's tolls, traffic, and parking headaches...



well...we can save those issues for another time.)

Mostly I've been relishing the chance to see musicians that I've previously been able to listen to and study only through recordings. There's often a different spirit that becomes clear when seeing a band live. Often I've pored over albums or watched live DVDs or online videos and felt like I understood what an artist was all about, but then I'd check them out live and think, *Oh, THAT'S their vibe.*

Over the past couple of years I've spent an unhealthy amount of time with the album *Taming the Dragon*, from Brad Mehldau and Mark Guiliana's Mehliana project, blasting through my headphones. Yet it wasn't until I checked out the duo live that I got an enhanced takeaway on their concept and intention. Witnessing Mehldau and Guiliana trade figures and musical jabs back and forth was like watching two boxers clashing—yet, in this case, each wanted the other to win the bout. That feeling certainly comes across on *Taming the Dragon*, but after seeing them in person, I got a much more complete, enlivened take on their approach.

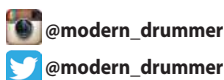
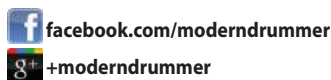
Recently I got a chance to check out the English drummer Karl Brazil play an arena show with the pop star James Blunt. Blunt's songs have had a significant presence on Top 40 radio since the release of his 2004 album, *Back to Bedlam*, so I was certainly familiar with his music. But on stage, his group's vibe really came across. The players seemed impervious to the stresses that might come with performing in a larger venue. The band passed around comfortable, enthusiastic smiles while effortlessly slamming home Blunt's hits, and it seemed like they were performing in someone's living room rather than in an arena. Thinking about my own, much more modest gigs, I asked myself, *How can I get straight into that headspace on stage?* It was quite a learning experience.

I spoke with a friend of mine, who's a great jazz drummer, about the opportunities he had to check out legends like Elvin Jones and Tony Williams while they were still alive—opportunities I never had—and he described the intense feelings they could fill a room with, as well as their abilities to coax everything from shimmering cymbal swells to thunderous drum tones from their instruments. Their intensity certainly lives forever on their records, but for my friend, each drummer's vibe thrived there at the shows. After poring over their albums, I wished that I could've been there too.

So, this holiday season, perhaps you should give *yourself* a present: Go check out some shows, and see if you don't come away with a deeper understanding of the music and the artists you love.

Enjoy this month's issue.

**Willie Rose**  
Associate Editor



# 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**

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

**MODERN DRUMMER ADVISORY BOARD:**

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

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:**

Patrick Berkery, Stephen Bidwell, David Ciauro, Bob Girouard, Mike Haid, John Martinez, Rick Mattingly, Ben Meyer, Ken Micallef, Jeff Potter, Will Romano, Bernie Schallehn, Ilya 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 2018 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

**EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/**

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:**  
**MODERN DRUMMER Publications,**  
271 Route 46 West, Suite H-212,  
Fairfield, NJ 07004. Tel: 973-239-  
4140. Fax: 973-239-7139.  
Email: [mdinfo@moderndrummer.com](mailto:mdinfo@moderndrummer.com).

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

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

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

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

**MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE:** [www.moderndrummer.com](http://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



# New Music Gear for Your Holiday Wish List

IN-STOCK  
GEAR SHIPS  
IMMEDIATELY!

CALL  
TODAY!  
WE'RE HERE  
TO HELP!



55-POINT  
EVALUATION



FREE  
SHIPPING\*\*



FREE TECH  
SUPPORT



FREE 2-YEAR  
WARRANTY

## Sweetwater®

Music Instruments & Pro Audio

(800) 222-4700

Sweetwater.com



**GET 0% INTEREST for 24 MONTHS\***

on purchases of select manufacturers' products made with your Sweetwater Card between now and December 31, 2017 - 24 equal monthly payments required.



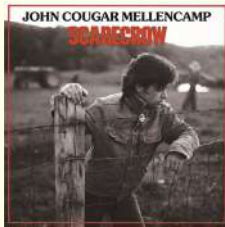
**GIFT CARDS**

The perfect gift for any musician on your list. [Sweetwater.com/shop/gift-cards](http://Sweetwater.com/shop/gift-cards)

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



# What Album Features Your Favorite Drum Tone?



**D**rummers have long lauded and attempted to duplicate certain distinct tones from records that span a variety of decades and genres. John Bonham's powerful, booming tone with Led Zeppelin, Elvin Jones' thunderous onrush with John Coltrane, and Stewart Copeland's dry yet driving crack with the Police are among the slew of notable recorded drum sounds often referenced in the pages of MD and on countless online forums. So it's no surprise that when we asked our readers and social media followers about their favorite recorded drumset tones, a slew of comments quickly piled up. Check out some of the responses.

John Mellencamp's *Scarecrow*. Kenny Aronoff's sound is crisp and clean, and that snare tone, while pleasing, cuts right through everything else in the mix. That album has great production, top to bottom.

**Micah Newby**

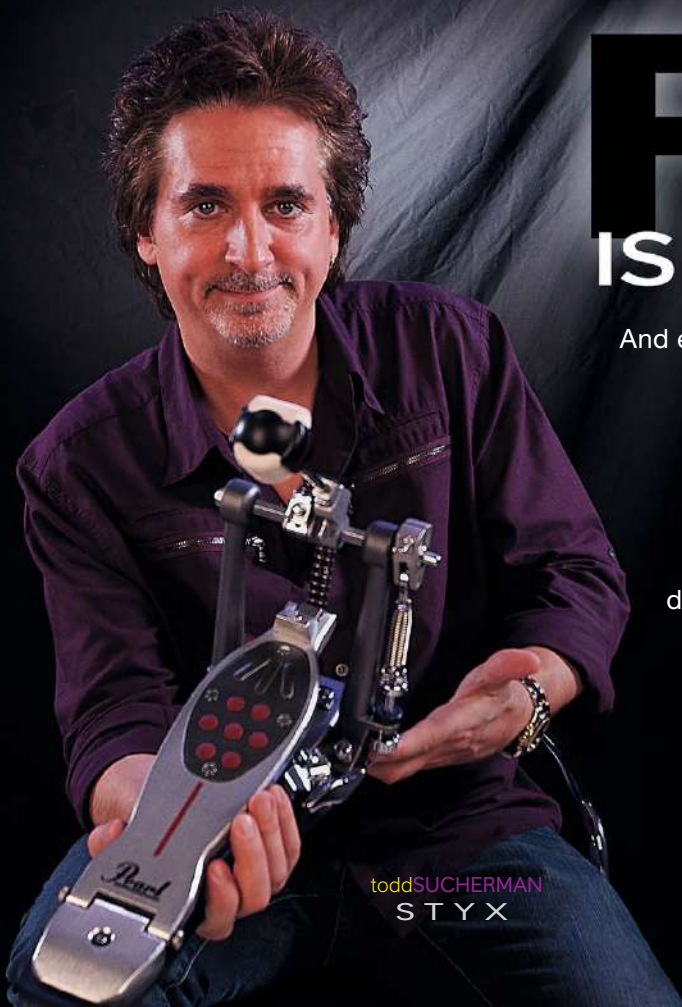
Soundgarden's *Superunknown*. The drum tones transcend real drums without bastardizing the way a kit actually sounds in a room. Each song has slightly different tonal characteristics, though the sounds from song to song are still cohesive. Bravo, Matt Cameron and [producer] Michael Beinhorn!

**Joey Waters**

Heernt, *Locked in a Basement*. Mark Guiliana goes ham on this one, playing on pans and choked cymbals, all while maintaining such a deep hold of the time. His booming floor tom and bass drum combo really does it for me as well.

**Brad Pew**

Yes's *Close to the Edge*. Bill Bruford's tightly tuned, highly resonant snare and punchy yet melodic toms were so unusual in a day when heavily muffled drums seemed to be the mainstay. The kit was a bit



# FEEL IS EVERYTHING.

And everything about this pedal is designed for perfect feel.

The Eliminator Redline family is packed with all the features that made the original Eliminator the choice of the working pro and even a few things that we "borrowed" from our flagship Demon Series. The Eliminator's Interchangeable Cam System allows you to swap cams with a simple push of a button to deliver the perfect balance of speed, power and finesse.

There simply is nothing else like it.



Todd's choice is the **RADICALLY** progressive red cam

toddSUCHERMAN  
STYX



upfront in the mix, so it really shined. To this day, it's one of the most engaging drumset sounds ever recorded.

**Bob Campbell**

Led Zeppelin's *Houses of the Holy*. The drum sound is so huge and rich. Heavy rock drummers have been trying to emulate that sound ever since. Bonham had a great sound before this record, but I think it shines through really well on *Houses*.

**Brad Anderson**

*Traveling Mercies* by Chris Potter, with Bill Stewart on drums. It's got that classic Gretsch bop-kit tone in a modern jazz setting.

**Adam Alesi**

The Wallflowers' *Bringing Down the Horse*. Matt Chamberlain's snare is punchy, and his bass drum is nice and thick. The cymbals cut through when needed, yet are also dynamically appropriate throughout. I'm not sure how much of the tone is derived from Matt's playing or T Bone Burnett's production. Regardless, the combo makes for an amazing drum sound.

**Andrew DeLaubell**

Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers' output on Blue Note, including *A Night in Tunisia* and *Free for All*. That nice, warm, and open sound from Rudy Van Gelder's mix made Blakey's drums explosive!

**Andy Cook**

Danny Carey's kit on Tool's *Ænima* is my top pick. There's a wonderful sense of dynamics, and the tuning of each voice is perfectly enhanced with just the right amount of reverb. They captured every detail of

Carey's playing with that mix, and I'd go as far as to say that the drum tone on that record is a modern equivalent of the huge sound that drummers like Bonham are known for. It perfectly balances modern punch and attitude with old-school clarity and character. It's a masterwork of drum mixing!

**Vijay Jayant**

Dream Theater's *Metropolis, Part 2: Scenes From a Memory*. That drumset has the greatest sound I've ever heard—that high-pitched but powerful snare, those warm yet defined toms, and that punchy bass drum. The hi-hats also had the best stick definition without losing that rock sound, and the ride has the exact right amount of ping and balance between dryness and wash—perfect cymbal mixing. The beautiful drum sound worked well with the incredible music on that mind-blowing album.

**Nano Quaresma**

Lenny White on *Romantic Warrior* by Chick Corea's Return to Forever. The snare is fat and crisp, the toms are deep and clean with just a touch of reverb, the kick is punchy without being overwhelming, and the cymbals have the right amount of stick definition and shimmer.

**Glenn Fischer**

Pearl Jam's *Ten*, with Dave Krusen on drums. It had a huge, throaty snare sound and big, deep toms, and the drum mix is right up front but still balanced.

**Tyler Walton**

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



# ELIMINATOR REDLINE

**INDEPENDENT TRACTION GRIPS**

Exclusive reversible Traction Plate insert allows individual traction grip configuration

**NINJA BEARINGS**

NiNja Bearings use micro-polished steel balls for incredibly fast and smooth performance.

**THE CONTROL CORE QUADBEATER**

4 unique beater surfaces with an elastomer center adds feel and power eliminates vibration

**POWERSHIFTER FUNCTION**

provides 3 positions to fine tune the power and feel of the pedal.

**ZERO PLAY HINGE**

Stainless Steel Hinge provides maximum freedom of motion and prevents play between footboard and heel

**ROLLER HOOP CLAMP**

Quickly adapts to a wide range of hoop thicknesses for the smoothest, most secure grip possible.

**CLICK-LOCK SPRING ADJUSTMENT**

Locks the desired spring settings into place and prevents tension creep under play.

**UNI-LOCK BEATER ANGLE CAM**

Grips the axle a full 360 degrees and allows infinite beater angle adjustments



**P2050C**  
Chain Drive  
Single Pedal

**P2050B**  
Belt Drive  
Single Pedal



## Malachi DeLorenzo on Langhorne Slim's *Lost at Last, Vol. 1*

A drummer and producer talks about the subtle, refined, and contemplated figures and tones that bedeck an indie/folk singer-songwriter's latest release.

Released this past November 10, *Lost at Last, Vol. 1* sees Pennsylvania native Langhorne Slim, aka Sean Scolnick, refine his distinct brand of reverb-laden Americana. The songwriter's drummer and producer, Malachi DeLorenzo, whose father is

Violent Femmes' founding sticksman, Victor DeLorenzo, gracefully dresses the album's serene odes with inventive, tasteful parts. And by adjusting the technique and approach he usually employs with Slim, he places a unique foundation under the group's indie-folk vibes. "I decided to try to keep the drums muted and subdued on most of the songs," DeLorenzo explains. "I wanted as little edge as possible without making the drums feel boring, which is a fine line to walk. Since we tracked most of the material live together in the room—including vocals—keeping my performances as subdued as possible was going to have a big impact on the mix. Had I been bashing away, we would've had a ton of bleed."

DeLorenzo's modest approach also opened more room for the group to stretch rhythmically and dynamically throughout *Lost*. "The concept that I had for the drum and percussion parts on this record was basically to avoid 'playing the drums' as much as possible," Malachi says. "Even though it didn't exactly work out that way, I wanted to avoid some of the more straight-ahead feels and sounds that

I've used on most of our records. I thought that if I tone down the amount of power coming from the drum parts, then the band will have no choice but to give more power and rhythm in their parts. The other concept I had was to—if possible—not use the snare

with the snare wires on. To my surprise, when we settled on the final sequence, I don't think there's a song on it where I have the snares on. That concept is a little ridiculous—but that was my thinking."

DeLorenzo explains that he had to strike a balance between his approach and input from Kenny Siegal, who shared production duties with the drummer and Slim. "In terms of Kenny's feedback, I'm pretty sure my concept for this record was a bit of a pain in the ass," DeLorenzo says. "For songs that called for straight-ahead drum parts, Kenny spent a fair amount of time simply trying to convince me to turn the snares on, let alone to play in a straight-ahead manner. I badly wanted to find a way to get the power of a track to shine through without forcing it from a drumming perspective. In the end, I think the push and pull of our sensibilities probably led us to a more interesting result."

Aside from *Lost at Last*, DeLorenzo recently produced and played on the indie-Americana

singer-songwriter Izaak Opatz's solo debut, *Mariachi Static*. For more with the drummer, check out an extended interview at [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com). **Willie Rose**



Derek Brad

## More New Releases

U2 Songs of Experience (Larry Mullen Jr.) /// Spock's Beard Snow Live (Jimmy Keegan and Nick D'Virgilio) /// Mavis Staples If All I Was Was Black (Stephen Hodges, Glenn Kotche, Spencer Tweedy) /// Anti-Flag American Fall (Pat Thetic) /// Converge The Dusk in Us (Ben Koller)





# ON TOUR



Daniel Hadfield

## Paul Koehler With Silverstein

**Hot off the release of a new record, the heavy hitter propels his tireless rock band around the world with a never-stop attitude.**

Since forming in Burlington, Ontario, circa 2000, the post-hardcore band Silverstein has rigorously toured the world and released nine full-length albums that have sold over a million copies in total. In 2017 the group released *Dead Reflection*, which coincided with a run on the Vans Warped Tour. As the year draws to a close, the group continues the grind on a European tour that lasts through mid-December.

"Touring is an essential part of our career," says Paul Koehler, Silverstein's founding drummer, who also has the job of band manager. "It allows us to connect with fans, create new supporters, and promote our music. In our genre, the live experience is very important to fans. It adds another dimension to the songs and allows fans to further appreciate the music."

Silverstein has enjoyed a fairly stable lineup—a feat that's

---

Koehler plays a Pearl Reference Pure Music City Custom kit in black-and-white oyster finish, with a 6.5x14 Hybrid Exotic Cast aluminum snare. He also plays Meinl Byzance cymbals and uses Evans heads and Promark sticks.

somewhat rare given the rigors of the road and the increasingly volatile nature of the music industry. "I think we all share the same passion for creating music and touring the world," Koehler says. "That keeps us together. It's been over seventeen years, but the time has gone by fast!"

For his practice routine, and to keep in shape for Silverstein's heavy touring schedule, Koehler prefers working from the band's lengthy discography. "Because our writing style has changed over the years, it can be a nice challenge to work through an array of songs from our catalog," he explains. "I'm always pushing myself to play as clearly and cleanly as possible, but I also like to hit as hard as I can. It can be an interesting balance, pushing yourself beyond what you're capable of and then settling into a place where the parts feel the best they can."

Koehler's toms and cymbals are positioned nearly flat, and his snare and floor tom actually tilt away from him. "I started playing with flat tom angles because I found it easier to play that way," the drummer says, "especially when I really lay into the drums. From there, I think my cymbal angles became [flatter] as well. I'm not sure when my snare angle changed, but now it's angled quite a bit away from me. For some reason it looks and feels completely natural when I'm sitting at the kit, but if I step away, I wonder how I can play it like that!"

**Willie Rose**

## Also on the Road

**Brann Dailor** with Mastodon /// **Paul Mazurkiewicz** with Cannibal Corpse /// **Chason Westmoreland** with Whitechapel  
/// **Shawn Cameron** with Carnifex /// **Aaron Stechauner** with Rings of Saturn /// **Chris Ulsh** with Power Trip



# NEWS

## Virgil Howe, English Rock Drummer and Son of Yes Guitarist Steve Howe, Passes

Virgil Howe, the drummer for the British rock band Little Barrie, passed away this past September 11 at the age of forty-one. Virgil, the youngest son of Yes guitarist Steve Howe, recorded three full-length albums with Little Barrie since joining in 2007 and played with the group on the theme song for the *Breaking Bad* spinoff show *Better Call Saul*.

"We're heartbroken that we have lost our dear friend and brother Virgil Howe," Little Barrie vocalist and guitarist Barrie Cadogan says. "Our thoughts are with his daughter, family, and partner." Lewis Wharton, bassist and vocalist for the group, adds, "I'm utterly devastated to lose my friend and a positive force in my life."



## Free Drum Lesson Lab Tents Once Again Featured on Vans Warped Tour

This past summer, for the sixth year in a row, the Percussion Marketing Council (PMC) sponsored Free Drum Lesson Lab Tents at six Vans Warped Tour stops across the United States. The PMC says the grassroots approach exemplifies the organization's mission to create and expand the next generation of drummers and connect retailers with youth-oriented markets in local communities by providing free beginner drum lessons.

Billy Cuthrell, a PMC member with the Raleigh, North Carolina, music retailer Progressive Music Center and program director for the PMC Warped Tour initiative, introduced the idea eight years ago. "I'd been pushing to get outside the normal channels for finding and growing new drummers," he says. "The attendees matched our target demographic perfectly."

PMC member Hal Leonard Corporation, represented by the company's vice president of musical instrument products, Brad Smith, was at the Milwaukee stop, which was hosted by the Cascio Interstate Music Superstore. "It still amazes me every year," Smith says. "A new crop of young people wants to play drums, and more than half of them are female. These are our people."

Plans are in development for the 2018 PMC summer tour, with dates and locations announced in early spring.



PMC educators and retailers offered free drum lessons at select Vans Warped Tour stops throughout the country this past summer.

## Latin Percussion Joins MusiCares Hurricane Relief Efforts

This past September, percussion manufacturer Latin Percussion joined forces with the MusiCares Foundation, a philanthropic organization supported by the U.S.-based Recording Academy, in pledging support to those in the music community who've been affected by recent devastating hurricanes. LP plans to donate 100 percent of the proceeds from sales of a limited edition Texas Flag Collect-a-Bell cowbell to MusiCares' Relief Fund. Assistance includes coverage of medical expenses, clothing, instrument and recording equipment replacement, relocation costs, home repairs, debris removal, and basic living expenses such as shelter, food, utilities, and transportation.

Donations can also be made to the relief fund at [grammy.com](http://grammy.com). Music professionals impacted by the storms can request disaster relief by contacting the South Regional MusiCares office toll free at 877-626-2748.

The Texas Flag Collect-a-Bell is based on LP's popular Black Beauty Cowbell model. The company uses a special process to embed the graphics into the cowbell's surface for a durable look and sound. Sales and shipping of the Texas Flag bell are limited to the United States.



## Who's Playing What



**Edward Tucker** (Fate Up) is using **Regal Tip** drumsticks, **Soultone** cymbals, and **Humes & Berg** drum cases.



**Ben Thatcher** (Royal Blood), **Tony Royster Jr.** (Katy Perry), and **Denny Fongheiser** (Ann Wilson) have joined the **Porter & Davies** family of artists.

**Ian O'Neill** (Kelsea Ballerini) has joined the **Vater** artist roster.



David O'Donohue





# Steve Jordan

## 10 Things the Groove Master Has to Have on Tour

No touring musician is exempt from the grueling demands of life on the road. Whether he's playing sold-out arenas with John Mayer or Eric Clapton or hip clubs with Robert Cray or the Verbs, Steve Jordan has ten things that he always keeps close by. "They keep me sane and fit," he says.

### 1. Yoga Mat

I've been doing yoga for a long time. It keeps me not only fit and loose, but centered. It's really important for your overall well-being. Sometimes we go from the stage right to the car, to the plane, to the next city. It's hard to unwind after the show. We have very irregular sleep schedules, so a yoga mat is essential.

### 2. Penta Water

Penta water is ultra-pure with no additives. It's fast-hydration, patented-process water. It's my favorite, and it keeps me good.

### 3. Workout Clothing

It's always good to have some workout clothing with you, just in case you have time to go to the gym. If you have time, you can also run for twenty to thirty minutes. The combination of cardio and yoga really is a good thing for me.

### 4. Instant Organic Oatmeal

I always have some instant organic oatmeal just in case I get to a hotel and they don't know what they're doing with the breakfast thing. It's very important to me.

### 5. Journal

I always have a journal with me to document how the shows went, to have an overall view of what I'm doing, to look into the future, and to look at what happened a week or so ago. If something was happening and I feel like I need to adjust, I can refer to my notes.

### 6. Listening Device and Good Headphones

A lot of times you don't have enough room to carry a lot of stuff, so a really great pair of headphones is nice.

### 7. Comfortable Travel Clothing

Often you run off the stage and then you're in some restricted garb for travel. It's good to be able to make a quick change, and then you can get loose and everything is cool.

### 8. Organic Fruit

Any food that is organic is paramount for me, but fruit is very important. Organic bananas and apples are fantastic. Those are essential.

### 9. Killer Pair of Shades

It's always good to have a killer pair of shades. I always have cool shades, whether it's Dita, Oliver Goldsmith, Oak, or whatever.

### 10. Positive Frame of Mind

The main thing for me is your frame of mind on the road. Know that you're going out there to have a good time, to give the people a wonderful performance, and to spread the good cheer. As musicians, we are ambassadors of good will. That shouldn't ever be forgotten. Once you have that in your psyche, it puts things in perspective while you're traveling.

Interview by Miguel Monroy. Go to [modern drummer.com](http://modern drummer.com) to check out an exclusive video with Jordan shot on the last John Mayer tour.





# SJC

## Paramount Series Shell Pack

A professional-quality, affordably priced kit designed to exceed nearly any working drummer's needs.

**SJC was formed in 2000** by teenage brothers Mike and Scott J. Ciprari, who used their parents' and grandmother's basements to warehouse parts and assemble their first drums. By 2006, SJC had become a nationally recognized brand, thanks in part to one of its eye-catching wood-hoop kits being played by Spencer Smith with Panic at the Disco at the MTV Video Music Awards.

Over the past decade, SJC continued to build notoriety for its no-holds-barred approach to customization. But in recent years, the company refocused some of its efforts to serve the wants and needs of gigging pros and hobbyists with more limited budgets. The Taiwanese-made Paramount all-maple series is one such offering.

### The Specs

The Paramount series is SJC's answer to drummers desiring an affordable, durable, versatile, and classic-looking drumset. Two shell packs are available: a three-piece including 8x12 and 16x16 toms and an 18x22 bass drum, and an expanded five-piece adding a 7x10 tom and a matching 6.5x14 snare. The shells are made from 7-ply North American maple, and the finish is a rich high-gloss walnut lacquer. The bass drum has matching wood hoops, and the snare and toms have 2.3mm triple-flange rims. All of the hardware is chrome, and the rack toms include suspension systems and L-arm mounts. The tension rods have black-plastic washers to help facilitate smoother and more stable tuning, and each piece of hardware that's mounted to the shells is insulated with a plastic gasket. The drumheads are made by Evans and include coated 2-ply tom batters, clear single-ply tom bottoms, and single-ply bass drum heads with built-in muffling rings. The bearing edges, which were smooth and precise, are shaped to forty-five degrees and have a slightly rounded back cut.

### Details Matter

We tested the three-piece Paramount pack. The drums looked classy and performed as well as any professional-level kit we've reviewed. The dark walnut finish is gorgeous and will no doubt stand the test of time as various aesthetic trends come and go. SJC made a smart move by designing a distinct but unobtrusive shield-shaped lug, which is a subtle reminder that these aren't run-of-the-mill mass-produced drums. Other minor hardware-design details, such as large and plastic-insulated thumbscrews on the tom mounts and spurs and wider-angled floor tom legs, should appeal to drummers who demand a stable, rugged kit that can withstand thousands of setups and teardowns.

### The Sound

The 12" and 16" toms tuned up easily and had a great sonic range from low and punchy to high and snappy. The all-maple shells produce smooth and even tones that can be left wide open for maximum cut and projection or dampened down a bit for darker and more controlled timbres. The 2-ply coated batters not only increased durability, but they also facilitated fat, focused sounds without requiring muffling. Regardless of their tuning, the Paramount toms had a balanced mix of crisp articulation, full sustain, and smooth decay that would work in any live or studio situation. SJC offers add-on Paramount toms in 14x14 (\$349.99) and 16x18 (\$449.99) sizes, and the 6.5x14 maple snare can be purchased separately for \$299.99.

The 18x22 Paramount bass drum has a big, thunderous voice with a ton of low-end fatness and high-end snap when played without muffling or a port. To get the most versatility out of this drum, however, you'll likely want to cut a hole in the resonant head and throw in at least a small towel to help focus the attack and tighten up the sustain. The 18" depth helped increase this drum's power and low-end thump, but it also required me to play a little more aggressively in order to get both heads activated. This may be too much drum for those of you playing quieter gigs, but if you're working in louder venues, with or without full PA systems, the Paramount kick has plenty of volume headroom for when you need it. For a tight, focused tone, simply throw a blanket or pillow inside the shell to dampen the heads. This results in a deep chest-thumping punch that hits hard but gets out of the way quickly.







While leaning towards louder applications, the 18x22 Paramount kick delivers a versatile, contemporary sound appropriate for nearly any modern rock or funk-influenced playing style. (A smaller 16x20 kick is available in SJC's Pathfinder series.)

The three-piece Paramount shell pack sells for \$1,399.99, and the five-piece is \$1,899.99, which is a heck of a deal considering how well they're made, how sophisticated they look, and how versatile they sound.

**Michael Dawson**



## PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

# Dream

## Energy Series Additions and Dark Matter Eclipse Ride

Big, all-purpose plates and a clean, quick dual-finish ride.



**Canadian company Dream** built its reputation by producing thin, vintage-style cymbals at low price points. But its catalog also includes a range of cleaner and heavier models, the Energy series, which are designed for more contemporary playing styles. We were sent some of the latest additions to the Energy series (19" crash, 21" crash-ride, and 21" ride) as well as the partially lathed 21" Eclipse ride from the raw, dry Dark Matter lineup. Let's check them out.

### Energy Series Additions

The Energy series is meant for players who require explosive crashes with smooth decay and rides with extra ping and stronger bell tones but don't want to sacrifice the warmth and richness found in handcrafted cymbals. All Energy series models feature finely lathed tops and bottoms and raw bells.

The 19" Energy crash is medium weight, which helps increase its power and projection, but it still has a soft, flexible feel. It has a fairly bright and flashy attack, clean and breathy sustain, and a moderately quick decay. The raw bell provides a nice, metallic tone, and you can get a decent amount of articulation from riding on the bow. This cymbal is a great all-purpose option for players favoring larger crash sizes.







The medium-weight 21" Energy crash-ride feels a touch firmer than the 19" crash, but it still opens up easily and has a big, balanced sustain. The bell tone has a clear, full tone while also integrating nicely within the wash. The ride sound has a bit of vintage complexity but with more ping than you'd get from a thinner cymbal. This model would be an excellent choice for minimalist setups that require cymbals to serve equally as a crash and a ride.

The 21" Energy ride is medium-heavy, but it has the flex and soft feel of a thinner cymbal. This one has the cleanest tone of the three, so the ride and bell tones cut a bit more without being overly bright or metallic sounding. The 21" crash-ride has a more complex voice that's better suited for crashing, but the 21" ride can be hit on the edge for slower and more enveloping accents. Again, this is an excellent all-purpose cymbal that would sit well in most applications, from rock to contemporary jazz/fusion.

### Eclipse Ride

The Dark Matter series comprises a range of unique raw-looking cymbals that are matured over several months via multiple rounds of heat exposure. The result of that proprietary process is a deep, articulate sound with gritty undertones.

The 21" Eclipse ride is a medium-heavy cymbal that's been lathed from the middle of the bow to the edge in order to introduce a broader wash while retaining the Dark Matter series' signature dry attack. There's a noticeable increase in articulation when moving the stick from the lathed to the unlathed portions, and the bell has a deep, earthy tone.

This cymbal responded surprisingly quickly to edge strikes, producing a full, rich crash, but the sustain dies down quickly so you can shift right back to riding the bow without losing clarity. This is another great option for players who require multiple voices from a single cymbal, especially those who play styles of music that require quick, nimble ride patterns.

**Michael Dawson**



# Focusrite

## Scarlett 18i20 Audio Interface and OctoPre Dynamic Mic-Pre Expansion Unit

A clean and simple sixteen-channel recording setup that sounds great and won't break the bank.



**Focusrite is an English company** that was founded in 1985 by legendary electronics engineer Rupert Neve. The goal of the company was to produce the highest-quality recording consoles possible. Neve sold the brand to another audio industry veteran, Phil Dudderidge, in 1990, and soon Focusrite began to expand into separate outboard modules, like preamps, EQs, and compressors.

Longtime Pro Tools users will likely remember the collaborative effort between Focusrite and Digidesign to create the affordable MBox USB interface in 2001. Focusrite has continued to expand its offering of high-quality but reasonably priced audio interfaces for home studio owners. For drummers, there's a great option that provides sixteen channels of top-notch mic preamps, with compression available on eight of those channels. This is the Scarlett 18i20 USB interface and OctoPre Dynamic mic-pre expansion unit. The combined total price for both pieces is under \$1,000, which is less than you'd pay for a single channel of most high-end mic preamps. Let's take a look at this great one-stop solution for burgeoning home-studio drummers.

### 18i20 Interface

The Scarlett 18i20 is a second-generation audio interface that has improved microphone preamps with lower noise and increased gain, and recordings can be made at sample rates of up to 192 kHz. (For reference, most CD-quality audio is mastered at 44.1 kHz.)

There are two XLR mic cable inputs on the front of the unit, and six more on the back. The front inputs are also configured to work with quarter-inch instrument cables. Each input has its own control knob, and phantom power is available for each channel

via easily accessible buttons on the front panel. The input levels are indicated on an LED bar graph. The main audio output of the 18i20 is controlled with the Monitor knob, and there are separate buttons to mute or dim the output level by 18 dB, which is a great feature for testing mixes at a quieter volume. The 18i20 provides two headphone outputs, which can be configured with separate mixes.

In addition to six XLR mic inputs, the rear panel of the 18i20 has eight quarter-inch mono line outputs (one per input) and a stereo pair of outputs for studio monitors. There are optical in/out ports for connecting additional ADAT-compatible equipment, like the OctoPre Dynamic eight-channel mic preamp. Other connections are included for MIDI, SPDIF, Word Clock, and USB 2.0 cables.

### Focusrite Control Software

Focusrite's Control Software is designed to be a simple, intuitive solution for configuring and controlling how the 18i20 interface interacts with your recording program. One of the most important features for drum recording applications is the Low Latency Monitoring option, which routes the signal directly from the mic preamps to the headphones output. This is done to eliminate the delay that's often created when audio has to travel from the inputs of the interface, through the computer, and then back to the headphones output. The only downside of monitoring drum recordings this way is that you won't be able to hear any effects that are applied to the channels within the DAW as you're tracking. I often prefer to monitor my tracks without effects because it causes me to be more aware of my dynamics and drum tones.

Navigating the adjustments for channel levels and output assignments within the Control Software is simple and logical, with





easy-to-decipher graphics included to help you figure out what's what. What I liked best about Focusrite's software was that the faders and controls for the inputs are grouped separately from the faders and controls for the audio that's being sent back from the computer, such as backing tracks and previously recorded overdubs. I was able to get all of the inputs, outputs, and playback channels configured correctly within a few minutes, which hasn't always been the case with other interface control software.

### OctoPre Dynamic

While some drummers can make do with the eight inputs included with the 18i20 interface, many of us will require additional channels to capture the entire kit. Focusrite's Scarlett OctoPre Dynamic is an ideal choice to double the number of inputs, plus it offers simple one-knob compression on each channel that can be applied before the signal is sent to the computer. The OctoPre Dynamic connects to the 18i20 via ADAT cables, and the inputs and outputs of the OctoPre Dynamic are controlled with Focusrite's Software Control program.

The front and back panels of the OctoPre Dynamic are similar to those on the 18i20, except that all of the mic inputs are on the backside, and there aren't any headphone jacks. Each input has its own level knob and an overload LED light. Phantom power is available to all eight channels, as is the compressor.

The compressor has two controls. The Compress knob decreases the threshold and increases the output gain as it's turned clockwise. Engaging the More button bumps up the compressor's ratio from 2:1 to 4:1. The attack and release times are fixed at 1.2 milliseconds and 28 milliseconds, respectively.

For general use, I found that keeping the compressor knob at the minimum setting helped rein in the dynamics without over-coloring the tone. A medium compression setting (with the control knob positioned at 12 o'clock) worked well for fattening up the sustain. The maximum compression was a cool option for creating exciting, pumping sounds.

### In Application

I spent a few weeks testing the Focusrite Scarlett 18i20 and OctoPre Dynamic combo in my home studio, and not only was it easy to configure, but it also was incredibly stable and captured a very clean and honest audio picture of my drums. When compared to my regular—and much more expensive—rig, the Scarlett system more than held its own. I felt confident that it was capable of producing high-quality, professional drum tracks without requiring a ton of post-production mixing to get the sounds dialed in. Having a simple, versatile compressor built into the OctoPre hardware was a nice bonus for times when I wanted to tighten up the dynamics when recording parts that extended from very soft to very loud (such as cymbal swells), or when I wanted to interact with the pumping tone of the compressor as I was tracking for aggressive grooves.

Focusrite also includes two of its most popular plug-ins, the Red 2 EQ and Red 3 Compressor, as well as a bundle of reverb, delay, multi-band compression, and saturation effects to help you sculpt a more finished mix in your DAW of choice. Focusrite may have started as a spare-no-expense recording equipment company, but it's currently killing it in the more-for-less home-studio market.

**Michael Dawson**

# Promark

## Classic 5A FireGrain Drumsticks

Fire-hardened for increased durability.

**Promark's Tennessee sawmill** burned down in 2014, which led the company to innovate new manufacturing processes during the rebuild. In addition to developing new machinery that sorts out the strongest wooden dowels possible, Promark began experimenting with fire-hardening hickory sticks to increase durability. The result of this new process is the FireGrain line of drumsticks. These sticks are currently available in eight sizes (Forward, Rebound, and Classic 5A; Forward, Rebound, and Classic 5B; and Classic 2B and 7A). We were sent a few pairs of Classic 5As to review. Let's check them out.

### What Is Fire Hardening?

Fire hardening is a process of slowly heating wood with a flame to remove moisture and to change the molecular structure to make the stick more durable. While we're not sure of Promark's exact process, the traditional method of fire-hardening wood involves charring the wood and then polishing the surface to embed the carbonized particles into the grain. Those two steps are repeated several times until a hardened glaze forms on the outer surface of the wood. This glaze is what makes the stick harder and more durable.

Promark's FireGrain sticks are treated from end to tip and they have a smooth, satin-like feel that's a little glossier than a standard Promark hickory stick but not as glassy and slick as heavily lacquered models from other brands. While they may appear to be painted or varnished, Promark explains that the darkened appearance is entirely a result of the fire-hardening process.

### How Do They Feel?

The Classic 5A FireGrain sticks Promark submitted for review featured the company's original oval tip and measured .551"x16". They had a fairly short taper, which gave them a noticeably front-loaded feel. The diameter is a bit thinner than that of other 5As sticks I've used. (For comparison, the Promark Forward and

Rebound 5As are .565" thick.) And even though they're of a standard 16" length, the Classic 5A FireGrains felt as if they had more reach, and they seemed a touch heftier than some similarly sized sticks in my bag.

While a side-by-side comparison with other 5As revealed no significant weight increase, the combination of the darker- and wider-sounding oval tip and the shorter taper put the Classic 5A FireGrain's response and power closer to that of a denser oak stick than a hickory. I found myself choking up on the FireGrain to compensate for the heftier feel when I needed more dynamic control. But when I needed to pull the biggest sound possible from my drums and cymbals, this stick is designed to do so naturally, even though it's a smaller-sized 5A.

### Hold Do They Hold Up?

In addition to looking cool, FireGrain drumsticks are engineered to be more durable than standard hickory sticks. I used our test pair throughout a long weekend of gigs that involved two straight hours of hard-hitting classic rock and modern country, three hours of modern-rock bashing, and four hours of low-volume acoustic rock. While I didn't break either stick, they did get chewed up quite a bit below the tip from shoulder hits on the hi-hats, and the rimshot area of one of the sticks developed a 1" splinter. The tips remained pristine and there aren't nearly as many dents or other deformities in the shoulder area as I expected, especially after smashing them with loud rimshots for nearly five hours in total. And I was still able to execute clean, articulate cymbal sounds and responsive rolls with them at the quieter gig, even though one stick had started to splinter. I wouldn't say that the durability of the Classic 5A FireGrain is exponentially increased, but these new fire-hardened models succeeded in bridging the gap between the average strength of standard hickory sticks and the more rugged yet heavier oak option. List price is \$13.65 per pair.

**Michael Dawson**





## PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

# One Beat Better Timbre Jam

A practice pad or a woodblock? You decide!

**One Beat Better is a Philadelphia-based company** that makes a unique hybrid idiophone/practice pad called Timbre Jam. Available in a variety of woods (maple, birch, walnut, and poplar), Timbre Jams produce a tonal sound that's a cross between a tongue drum, a woodblock, and a temple block, but with a pleasingly subdued attack.

These square, wood instruments feature an open area just under the rubber playing surface, which can be stuffed with an included hard-foam dampening block to mute the sound for quieter practice sessions. As a practice pad, the Timbre Jam has an amazing feel and great rebound. Without the foam mute, you get a very musical and subtle woodblock sound from every strike. One Beat Better offers Timbre Jams with three different-sized openings to change the pitch (high, medium, and low). This allows you to combine several pads into a set to create a fun multi-tone instrument.

The Timbre Jam sits nicely on a table, drum, or your lap, or you can mount it to a cymbal stand via the optional metal tray and Magne-Mount. The Magne-Mount has several magnets on the top that connect to the bottom of the mounting tray. It also has threads

that are sized to fit an 8mm cymbal stand. The trays are available for single, double, or triple configurations.

Each Timbre Jam itself has a magnet embedded in it, so it also attaches securely to the mounting tray without requiring clamps or screws. The magnets are very strong, so the block stayed in place regardless of how hard I struck it.

The Timbre Jam is an impressive multi-purpose practice device and percussion instrument. It is well designed and expertly constructed, and it offers a level of versatility that you can't find from standard wood and rubber pads. Check them out at [onebeatbetter.com](http://onebeatbetter.com).

**Brian Hill**





**MEINL**  
SIERRA BIRCH SNARE CAJON

\$99<sup>99</sup>

(SCAJ200NT-LB)



**MEINL**  
SUBWOOFER JUMBO BASS CAJON

\$199<sup>99</sup>

(SUBCAJ5WN)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM



**MEINL**  
HEADLINER SERIES  
BONGOS

YOUR CHOICE  
\$69<sup>99</sup>

(HB50R) (HB50BK)



**\$10 OFF**

**MEINL**  
BONGO CAJON

REG. \$49.99  
\$39<sup>99</sup>

(BCA3NTEBKM)



**MEINL**  
10" DJEMBE HEADLINER  
BLACK RIVER SERIES

\$78<sup>99</sup>

(HDJ3-M)



**EXCLUSIVE**

**MEINL**  
HEADLINER DESIGNER SERIES  
STRING CAJON

\$129<sup>99</sup>

(HCAJ2-ATS)



**MEINL**  
TURBO SLAP-TOP CAJON

\$139<sup>99</sup>

(TOPCAJ2WN)  
SELECT STORES AND GUITARCENTER.COM





# Top Picks

Our best deals—on sale Nov. 1 thru Dec. 31

**MEINL**  
HI-HAT TAMBOURINE

\$16<sup>99</sup>

(HTHH1BK)



**MEINL**  
6" CHING RING JINGLE EFFECT  
FOR CYMBALS

\$14<sup>99</sup>

(CRING)



**MEINL**  
SONIC ENERGY SMOOTH OR ENGRAVED  
SINGING BOWLS

STARTING AT  
\$49<sup>99</sup>

(SBU400)  
(SBU600)  
(SBSE800)



**MEINL**  
PERCUSSION PACK WITH COMPACT  
FOOT TAMBOURINE, CLASSIC HARDWOOD CLAVES  
AND ARTIST SERIES SHAKER

\$29<sup>99</sup>

(PPI)



**MEINL**  
TURBO CABASAS

\$19<sup>99</sup>

(CASBK-S)



**MEINL**  
LUIS CONTE SHAKERS

YOUR CHOICE  
\$14<sup>99</sup>

(SH5R) (SH45GR)  
(SH4BK)



**NINO PERCUSSION**  
5-PIECE RHYTHM SET

\$29<sup>99</sup>

(NINOSETS5)



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: KHS, Mapex, Sonor, Remo, Orange County Drum, SPL, Simmons, Proline, Zildjian, Sabian, Yamaha, D'addario, Meinl, Evans, Promark, Puresound, Majestic, Nfuzd and Control Acoustics. Offer valid 11/1/2017 thru 12/31/2017.

# Zildjian

## ZILDJIAN L80 LOW VOLUME SERIES CYMBAL SET

\$299<sup>99</sup>

(LV468)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM



## ZILDJIAN 10 AND 20" L80 LOW VOLUME SERIES SPLASH AND RIDE CYMBALS

STARTING AT  
\$69<sup>99</sup>

(LV8010S-S) (LV8020R-S)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM



**\$50 OFF**

## ZILDJIAN ZBT 390 SERIES SUPER CYMBAL SET

REG. \$399.99  
\$349<sup>99</sup>

(ZBTP390-SP)

**FREE**

Free 18" crash included in box  
**AN \$89 VALUE**

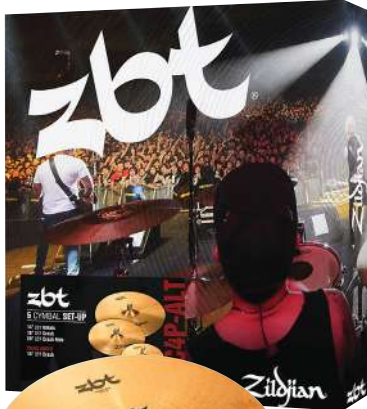


**\$40 OFF**

## ZILDJIAN ZBT PRO CYMBAL SET

REG. \$299.99  
\$259<sup>99</sup>

(ZBTC4P-ALT)



**FREE**

Free 14" crash included in box  
**A \$59 VALUE**



**20% OFF**

## ZILDJIAN 5A AND 5B DRUM STICKS

REG. \$9.99-\$18.99  
STARTING AT  
\$7<sup>19</sup>

(ZG9) (5ACWDGP) (5ACWDGG)  
(5ACWWRD) (5ACD) (5ACB)  
(5AMG) (5BND) (5ANN) (5AND)  
(5AWD) (5AWA) (HS5AWN)



**\$10 OFF**

## ZILDJIAN CYMBAL GIG BAG

REG. \$49.99  
\$39<sup>99</sup>

(TGIG)







**SABIAN**  
HHX EVOLUTION CYMBAL SET  
WITH 21" RIDE

\$899<sup>99</sup>

(15005XEB-GC)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM



**FREE**

18" Evolution O-Zone crash  
included in box  
**A \$329.99 VALUE**

**SABIAN**  
XSR SERIES  
PERFORMANCE SET

\$499<sup>99</sup>

(XSR5005GB)



**FREE**

Free 18" crash included in box  
**A \$249.99 VALUE**

**PRICE DROP**

**SABIAN**  
AAX X-PLOSION CYMBAL SET

\$699<sup>99</sup>

(2500587XB-GC)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM



**FREE**

Free 18" crash included in box  
**A \$249.99 VALUE**

**\$25 OFF**

**SABIAN**  
B8X CRASH PACK

REG. \$159.99

\$134<sup>99</sup>

(45006XMF)



**FREE**

Free 8" splash included in box  
**A \$49 VALUE**

**\$70 OFF**

**SABIAN**  
B8X PERFORMANCE PACK

REG. \$319.99

\$249<sup>99</sup>

(45003X-POZ)



**FREE**

Free 16" B8 Pro O-Zone crash  
included in box  
**A \$107 VALUE**

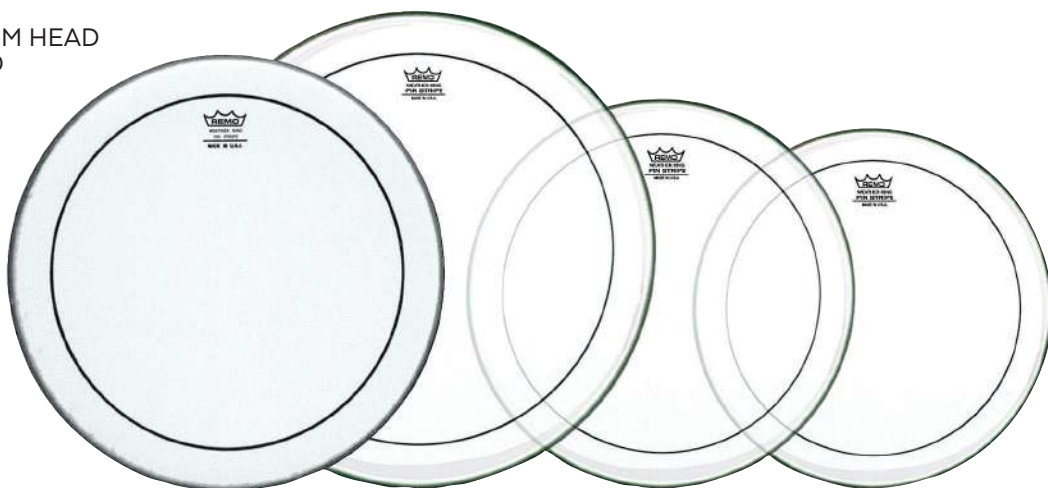
For more great drum shop deals or to find a store near you, visit [guitarcenter.com](http://guitarcenter.com).



**REMO**  
PINSTRIPE STANDARD DRUM HEAD  
PROPACK WITH 14" COATED  
POWERSTROKE 3 HEAD

\$62<sup>99</sup>

(PPG312PS)



**REMO**  
14x8" CUSTOM DJEMBE

\$58<sup>99</sup>

(CD190325DJMBE)



**REMO**  
CROWN PERCUSSION CAJON

\$159<sup>99</sup>

(CRP62070)



**REMO**  
10" TABLE TOM WITH MALLETS

\$46<sup>99</sup>

(TU508016)



**REMO**  
14" POWERSTROKE 77 COATED  
CLEAR DOT DRUM HEAD

\$19<sup>99</sup>

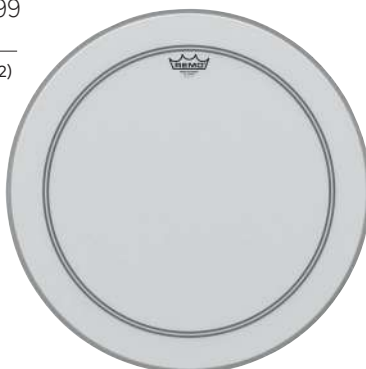
(P70114C2)



**REMO**  
22" POWERSTROKE 3 COATED  
BASS DRUM HEAD

\$42<sup>99</sup>

(P31122C2)



**REMO**  
PINSTRIPE CLEAR NEW FUSION  
TOM DRUM HEAD PACK

\$44<sup>99</sup>

(PP1470PS)



For more great drum shop deals or to find a store near you, visit [guitarcenter.com](http://guitarcenter.com).





**\$100 OFF**

**MAPEX  
MARS SERIES 5-PIECE  
CROSSOVER SHELL PACK**

PRICE TOO LOW  
TO PRINT

(MA528SFBZW)  
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS  
SOLD SEPARATELY  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM



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

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

(T775)



**MAPEX  
ARMORY SERIES  
EXOTIC STUDIOEASE  
SHELL PACK**

**\$899<sup>99</sup>**

(AR628SUM)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM  
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS  
SOLD SEPARATELY



**\$24 OFF**

**MAPEX  
ARMORY SERIES  
RESPONSE DRIVE  
BASS  
DRUM PEDAL**

REG. \$119.99  
**\$95<sup>99</sup>**

(P800)



**\$17 OFF**

**MAPEX  
ARMORY SERIES  
BOOM CYMBAL STAND**

REG. \$84.99

**\$67<sup>99</sup>**

(B800EB)



**\$15 OFF**

**MAPEX  
ARMORY SERIES  
SNARE DRUM STAND**

REG. \$74.99

**\$59<sup>99</sup>**

(S800EB)



**\$26 OFF**

**MAPEX  
ARMORY SERIES  
HI-HAT STAND**

REG. \$129.99

**\$103<sup>99</sup>**

(H800EB)





**\$100 OFF**

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

PRICE TOO LOW  
TO PRINT

(SBP2F50RB)  
(SBP0F50NW)  
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS  
SOLD SEPARATELY  
SELECTION VARIES  
BY LOCATION



**\$100 OFF**

**YAMAHA**  
DTX430K SERIES  
ELECTRONIC DRUM SET

REG. \$599.99  
\$499<sup>99</sup>

(DTX430K)



**\$20 OFF**

**YAMAHA**  
14x5.5" STAGE CUSTOM BIRCH SNARE

REG. \$119.99  
\$99<sup>99</sup>

(SBS1455HA)



**YAMAHA**  
600 SERIES DOUBLE-BRACED  
HARDWARE PACK

\$269<sup>99</sup>

(HW680W)





# EVANS™

## DRUMHEADS

# PROMARK™

BY D'ADDARIO

### EVANS UVI COATED DRUM HEADS

STARTING AT  
\$15<sup>99</sup>

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



### EVANS BLACK CHROME TOM PACK

\$49<sup>99</sup>

(ETPCHRR)



### EVANS 22" EQ3 AND EMAD RESONANT BASS DRUM HEADS

STARTING AT  
\$44<sup>99</sup>

(BD22RB)  
(BD22REMAD)



### PROMARK REBOUND AND FORWARD BALANCE ACTIVEGRIP ACORN TIP DRUM STICKS

YOUR CHOICE  
\$10<sup>99</sup>

(R5AAG)  
(R5BAG)  
(F5BAG)  
(F5AAG)



### EVANS 22" EMAD AND EMAD 2 CLEAR BASS DRUM HEADS

STARTING AT  
\$44<sup>99</sup>

(BD22EMAD)  
(BD22EMAD2)



### PROMARK 5A AND 5B FIREGRAIN DRUM STICKS

YOUR CHOICE  
\$12<sup>99</sup>

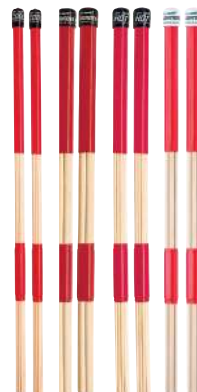
(TX5AWFG)  
(TX5BWFG)



### PROMARK LIGHTNING ROD DRUM STICKS

YOUR CHOICE  
\$19<sup>99</sup>

(LRODS6)  
(HRODS6)  
(TRODS6)  
(CRODS6)



For more great drum shop deals or to find a store near you, visit [guitarcenter.com](http://guitarcenter.com).

# SIMMONS®

# SPL™

**NEW**

## SIMMONS SD2000 SERIES ELECTRONIC DRUM SETS AND EXPANSION PACK

5-PIECE  
\$1299<sup>99</sup>

7-PIECE  
\$1599<sup>99</sup>

EXPANSION PACK  
\$299<sup>99</sup>

(SD2000 KIT) (SD2000XP KIT)  
(SD2000XPPAK)  
SD2000XP AND SD2000XPPAK  
AVAILABLE ON  
GUITARCENTER.COM ONLY



## SIMMONS SD550 ELECTRONIC DRUM SET WITH MESH PADS

\$549<sup>99</sup>

(SD550)  
BASS DRUM  
PEDAL INCLUDED



## SIMMONS SD350 ELECTRONIC DRUM SET WITH MESH PADS

\$399<sup>99</sup>

(SD350)  
BASS DRUM  
PEDAL INCLUDED



**NEW**

## SPL UNITY BIRCH SERIES 5-PIECE COMPLETE DRUM SET

\$499<sup>99</sup>

(DBX5522BKM)



## SPL LIL' KICKER 3-PIECE JUNIOR DRUM SET WITH THRONE

YOUR CHOICE  
\$149<sup>99</sup>

(D1316WR) (D1316BK) (D1316WH)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM



Also available  
in these colors



For more great drum shop deals or to find a store near you, visit [guitarcenter.com](http://guitarcenter.com).





**MEINL**  
HCS CYMBAL PACK

\$99<sup>99</sup>

(HCS131410S)



**MEINL**  
HCS SUPER  
CYMBAL SET

\$299<sup>99</sup>

(HCS5CB)

**FREE**

Free 16" crash included  
in super set box

A \$129.99 VALUE



**MEINL**  
20" BYZANCE BENNY GREB SAND RIDE

\$369<sup>99</sup>

(B20SAR)



**MEINL**  
21" BYZANCE MIKE JOHNSTON  
SIGNATURE TRANSITION RIDE

\$399<sup>99</sup>

(B21TSR)



**MEINL**  
CLASSICS CUSTOM DARK CYMBAL PACK

\$499<sup>99</sup>

(CCD48016TR)  
SELECT STORES AND  
GUITARCENTER.COM

**FREE**

Free trash crash and  
Ching Ring included  
in cymbal pack

A \$144.98 VALUE



**MEINL**  
18" CLASSICS CUSTOM  
TRASH CHINA CYMBAL

\$169<sup>99</sup>

(CC18TRCHB)





Amber Mahoney

# Ibeyi

**These dynamic siblings derive much inspiration from their ancestry. But the direction of their art is undeniably full speed ahead.**

by Robin Tolleson

**T**hat's what I like—my bass," Naomi Diaz says, referring to the low tones of the cajon and bata-cajon she plays. "I want people to hear the sound that I like, to feel the lows, feel the bass. I hate it when you don't *feel* anything."

Naomi and her twin sister, keyboardist/vocalist Lisa-Kaindé Diaz, make up the group Ibeyi ("ee-bay-ee"), which means "twins" in their ancestral language of Yoruba. The duo's recently released second album, *Ash*, is a delicious blend of acoustic hand percussion, layered voices, keyboards, and other electronic sounds that intermingle within a mix of Yoruba folk, American soul, French pop, and Afro-Cuban funk. Guest musicians include bassist and singer Meshell Ndegeocello, pianist/electronic artist Chilly Gonzales, modern-jazz

saxophonist Kamasi Washington, and Spanish hip-hop vocalist Mala Rodríguez.

"We like to use traditional drums like cajon and batas," Lisa-Kaindé says. "Batas are religious drums. So we take that which is from our culture, those songs and sounds that we've heard for so long, and we mix them with new music, music that we listen to every day. That's an important part of Ibeyi—playing with the past and the future, or with the tradition and the new music."

"Yeah, it's a good combination," Naomi agrees. "There's not a lot of people that are doing it, actually. It sounds good to have wood and electronic sounds. At some point you don't even know what [a sound] was. And that's the fun part—it has to almost be like, *Is this a*



cajon that they lowered, or is this a drum machine?"

"It's having a good cajon, and a good sound engineer when you play," Naomi says.

"And you hit it super-hard," her sister adds.

"Yeah, but that's my hitting," Naomi responds. "Some people don't hit hard and they have a good sound. You just have to find your way to be comfortable. I always start with my right hand. Some people start on their left, some people both. It just has to be comfortable for you. There aren't really rules."

Naomi and Lisa-Kaindé are the twenty-three-year-old daughters of the French-Venezuelan vocalist Maya Dagnino and the late Grammy-winning Cuban percussionist Miguel "Angá" Díaz, who played with the legendary Cuban collectives Irakere and Buena Vista Social Club. As we spoke over coffee at Le Café Tournesol, near the twins' home in Paris, a man recognized them and approached to pay respects. He wanted them to know how much he'd enjoyed getting to spend a few hours with their father when he was playing with pianist Omar Sosa in Lebanon in January of 2006.

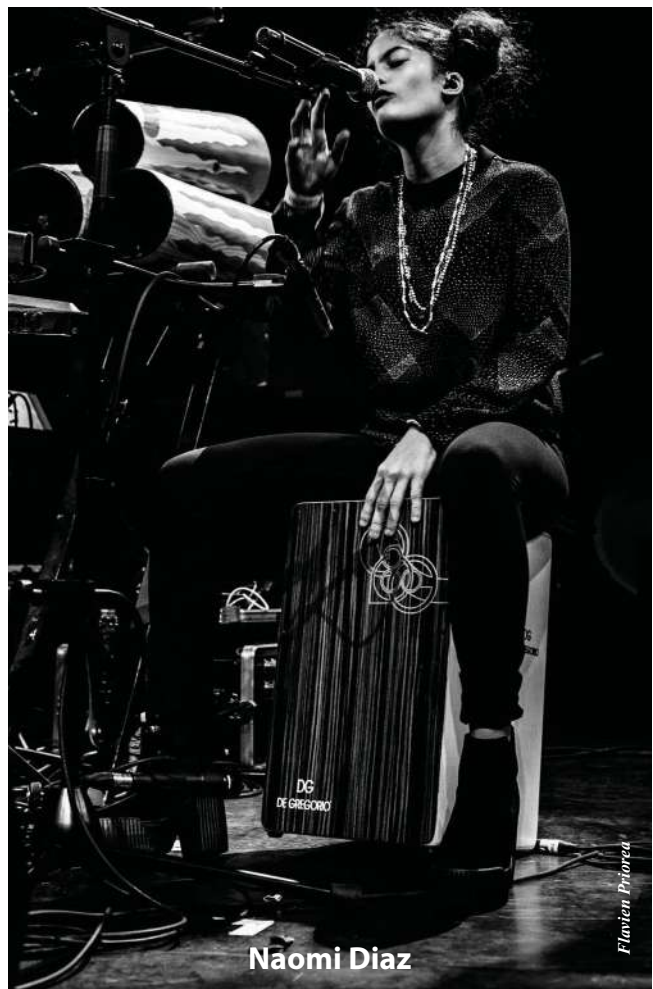
The first time anyone can remember Naomi playing a cajon was the day after their father passed away, later that year. The girls were eleven. "She actually played a rhythm," Lisa recalls. "That's why I remember it so vividly, because we all were like, 'What is happening? She's playing!' She understood the dynamic of it."

"I think I didn't have to really learn," Naomi says. "It was weird. I learned by myself, then I had a teacher, Miguel y José Ballumbrosio, who's an amazing cajonero from Peru. With Miguel I learned more and more rhythms, opened my ears to rhythms."

Naomi says she often thinks of the sounds of the drumkit when creating her parts on cajon. "I listen to a lot of people on the traps," she explains. "I love the beats of Sheila E. I think of high and low, you know, bass and high notes, and ghost notes."

"When Naomi first said to me, 'For Ibeyi I think it's better with cajon,' I was like, 'Yeah,'" Lisa recalls. "There's something about the cajon, because it's with your hand, it's with your body, and it's wood also. So it's so much more organic and sensual and real. And the groove that she gets is incredible. She really gets to be *in* the time."

"Away Away" (the first single from *Ash*) and "I Wanna Be Like You" feature Naomi's powerful cajon work, with fluttering ghost notes and



Naomi Diaz

triplets. "There's cajon, and there's a beat," Naomi says, "but it's not a lot. Maybe it sounds full because it goes well together."

"We wanted something joyous," Lisa adds. "And Naomi was determined in having more rhythm and more bass, more hip-hop."

## Aluminium & Steel

# HYBRID

HARDWARE SERIES

Less than

**2**  
**3**

the weight



CSS-4HY  
7.4lb



CDT2-1HY  
13.4lb



CBS2-2HY  
6.8lb



CHS-3HY  
9.9lb

**CANOPUS**

[www.canopusdrums.com](http://www.canopusdrums.com)

# tune-bot

STUDIO

## FIND YOUR SWEET SPOT

TUNE AND RE-TUNE RAPIDLY

FIND THE BEST SETTINGS

ELIMINATE PROBLEM SOUNDS



"THE BEST DRUM TUNER HAS JUST GOTTEN BETTER. THE SOUND I GET  
WITH THE NEW TUNE-BOT STUDIO IS AMAZING" - JOST NICKEL

SEE JOST'S TUNINGS AT  
[TUNE-BOT.COM](http://TUNE-BOT.COM)

## Ibeyi

After two years of touring, you know what experience you want in a live show, so we wanted that movement and energy. We wanted people to dance."

Ibeyi's percussion tracks are composed in layers. "It comes really...inadvertently," Naomi explains. "The rhythm I find at home, and our beats, it's like we do them when we're not working, when we're just playing around with [producer] Richard [Russell]. John [Foyle], the sound engineer, he's always recording everything, so actually we don't even know we're doing the album. We're just playing around."

"I feel like the three of us have established a mostly nonverbal studio language for Ibeyi," Russell explains, "which is that everyone tries out ideas, and if the ideas create excitement in the room, they tend to stay in. That way we end up with the right sounds, and the connection between the live aspects and the sampled or electronic aspects is seamless."

"Naomi plays cajon and batas with real expression," the producer continues. "I've never really tried to direct Naomi's playing verbally; she already sounded great before I started working with her. But sometimes I will play along, either on my Akai MPC [electronic workstation], on the Roland SPD-S [sampling percussion pad] with sticks, or using acoustic percussion such as woodblocks, and that often creates different directions in her playing. We also had a breakthrough on this album by going back to the most fundamental of all drum machines. I would program a pattern on the [Roland] 808 and Naomi would play along with that, and the results were often spectacular."

On the track "When Will I Learn," Naomi gets thunderous tones from the bata-cajon; finger snaps and handclaps, as well as treats from Russell's samples vault, are put to good use as well. "I often pitch Naomi's percussion down using the Logic Pitch Shifter [plug-in]," Russell says, "and that's one of the things that helps the live playing sit in with the electronic sounds. The pitching creates a grainy texture."

Naomi plays De Gregorio cajons, as her father did ("I wanted a sound as close as possible to the one my dad had," she says), and her bata-cajon was custom-made by Miguel Ballumbrosio. "It's not the traditional Cuban batas with skin. It's all wood, and I love the sound of it. It hurts to slap the wood, but it's worth the pain. I put a special microphone on the bass drum to make the sound bigger when I play, and that's it. We like to play with the sounds to blur the lines between acoustic and electric."







These are the most complex, unique, creative and inspiring instruments I have ever played. Each Dream Cymbal I have touched opens an entirely new sound world for me to explore and be inspired by. They are fearless in their new creations and constantly leading the way when it comes to modern cymbal makers. Get your hands and ears on one today and find out what your Dreams sound like.

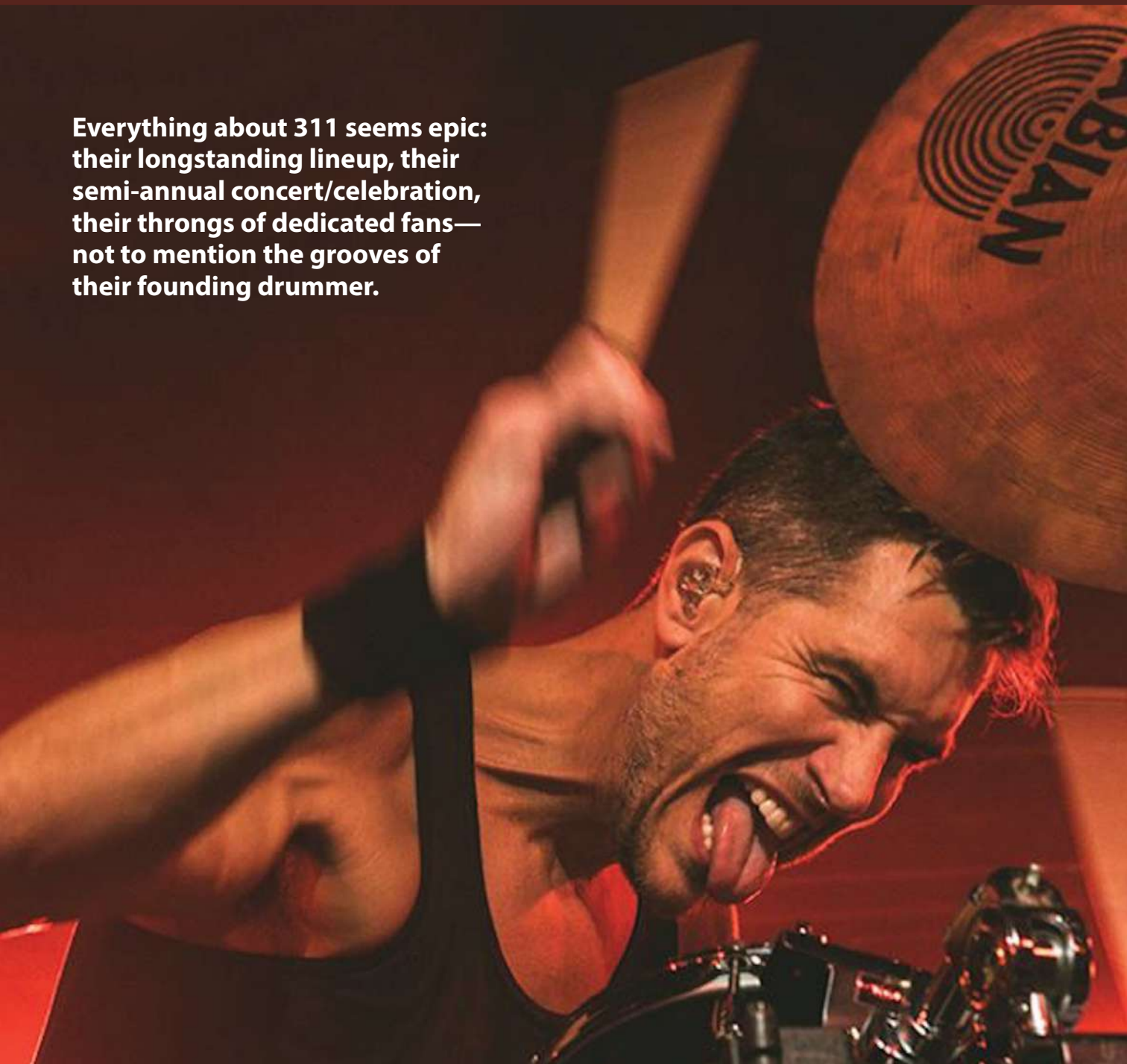
- Scott Pellegrin





# Chad Sexton

**Everything about 311 seems epic: their longstanding lineup, their semi-annual concert/celebration, their throngs of dedicated fans—not to mention the grooves of their founding drummer.**



It's rare that a band can survive with the same lineup beyond the first few albums, but the same five musicians who make up 311 have been thriving together for more than twenty-five years. The group has managed to remain a staple of both radio and the summer touring circuit, and every other year since 2010 it's thrown a huge performance/celebration for diehard fans on its own unofficial holiday, 311 Day.

For the band's recently released twelfth album, *Mosaic*, drummer Chad Sexton wrote the music for two songs and mixed twelve of the seventeen tracks. "This new record has been two and a half years in the making," Sexton tells *Modern Drummer*. "That's one of the longest times we've spent on a record. It gave us the benefit of trying out a bunch of different things and making sure the arrangements and our parts were right.

Every record of ours is pretty different, and this is just the latest version of our musical adventure."

Experimenting with gear and recording environments has been a constant in 311's history. For *Mosaic*, Sexton tracked drums at the band's North Hollywood studio, the Hive. "We've owned that studio since probably 2000," he says. "We've tried different things. On our 2009 record [*Uplifter*] I recorded the





Iron Mike Samola

as important to 311's recorded sound as any of the instruments. "I'm so thankful for the dude," he says. "He visited our studio once, because he designed the board that we have, a 72-channel AMEK Neve 9098. I don't think there are very many of those boards, but they're very particular in terms of the sound and the quality of the EQs and the mic preamps. They're really top of the line. We love the old-school '70s and '80s Neves as well—the 1073s and stuff like that. They're great, especially for snare sounds, and that will always be a badass sound. But the 9098s are more like a modern Neve, like a '70s muscle car with modern technology."

If you've followed Sexton's gear choices over the years, you may recall him using Remo Falams marching snare heads, but Coated Ambassadors or Emperors have proven more favorable to him of late. "When you have a snare drum that rings out—and it's not just one note, but when the drum's singing for a long time—when you get the rest of the band in, you can't really hear all that ring anymore," Chad explains. "That's kind of the reason for us looking to have a live-er sound. More open and with more high-end presence—resonance, basically. Falams heads weren't working out [in that regard]. I wish they were, because I had a real unique sound with them back in the day. But it's a different day."

*Mosaic's* snare sound originated for the most part with a 5.5x14 steel-shell Pearl Sensitone model. "It's a great go-to drum," Sexton says, "and I'd been using it live. I have too many snare drums. It gives me a lot of options, but if you want to search out all those options, it really takes up time. But we tried them out, new and old. I even tried out the snare drum I recorded my first record on, in 1992 [an early 6.5x14 maple Pearl Free Floating model]. I was really hoping that was going to be the drum on the whole record, but I think we got it onto one song." These days brass and phosphor bronze Sensitones are also in Sexton's regular rotation, as is a 6.5x14 Masterworks snare that matches his current touring kit.

A band generally doesn't last twenty-seven years without a shared sense of humor, and 311's appearance on *The Eric Andre Show*, a television comedy series on Adult Swim, certainly confirms that's the case with Sexton and his bandmates. "They approached us and asked if we'd be on his show, and we said, 'Are you serious!' And they said, 'Yeah, and he wants to kind of torture you guys while you're playing.' We didn't really know what

**Sexton plays Pearl drums and percussion and Sabian cymbals, and he uses Remo heads, Grip Peddler pedal pads, and Vater sticks.**

was going to happen, but we're usually good sports and don't take ourselves too seriously, so we decided to do it. I think Eric Andre is hilarious, and it was a good experience. They kept shocking me as I played, and that was pretty funny, and then he would come over and beat me with a foam rubber bat. It actually put a few bruises on me. But I get it—it has to look real."

Among the things that 311 is famous for is its habit of playing songs from throughout its enormous repertoire. The band's 311 Day concerts and 311 Caribbean cruises—which take place on alternating years—involve career-spanning set lists, as well as special guests. This year's 311 Day show is split into two nights, but the 2014 edition comprised three sets featuring sixty-six songs, played over five hours, with appearances by the Rebirth Brass Band, a thirteen-piece orchestra, and a marching drum line joining Sexton during his regular solo feature on "Applied Science."

"Drum corps really helped me in terms of memorizing [large amounts of] music," Sexton says. "And it's not a bunch of loops. It's different in almost every measure, through the entire show. So practicing that while I was a kid really helps me retain drum parts from twenty years ago."

As far as his approach to revisiting five hours' worth of 311 music for one performance? "We just get in there and do it," Sexton says. "We don't really think about it. We will do a lot of rehearsing, because there's a lot of songs. But that's what 311 Day is about, playing some of the deep cuts throughout our history so that the hardcore fans can hear songs they only get to hear maybe every two years. That's how 311 Day started out, and it's grown into something kind of special."

The event has become a true year-round operation; the day after their summer tour ends, the band is already writing the next record and planning the next massive party. "You know, organizing so many people and [planning] special things we do, and then all of the crew getting ready and making visual content—it's a long process," Sexton says. "But at least we're ahead of the curve, and that's what we'll be doing [until the next event], just preparing for the future."

**Stephen Bidwell**



drums in Burbank at another studio, and the drums for *Stereolithic* [2014] were done at my house. This time I figured I'd bring it back to the Hive. I'm glad I did, because it's hard to beat the Neve mic preamps that we have there for recording. We're always trying to get great sounds and change it up, even though we have our own studio."

Sexton suggests that audio engineering legend Rupert Neve's handiwork has been

A photograph of Taylor Hawkins, the drummer of the Foo Fighters, playing the drums in a studio. He has long blonde hair and a beard, and is wearing a black tank top. He is captured in a moment of intense performance, with his eyes closed and a wide, joyful smile. The background shows a professional recording studio with various pieces of equipment, including microphones and a large speaker.

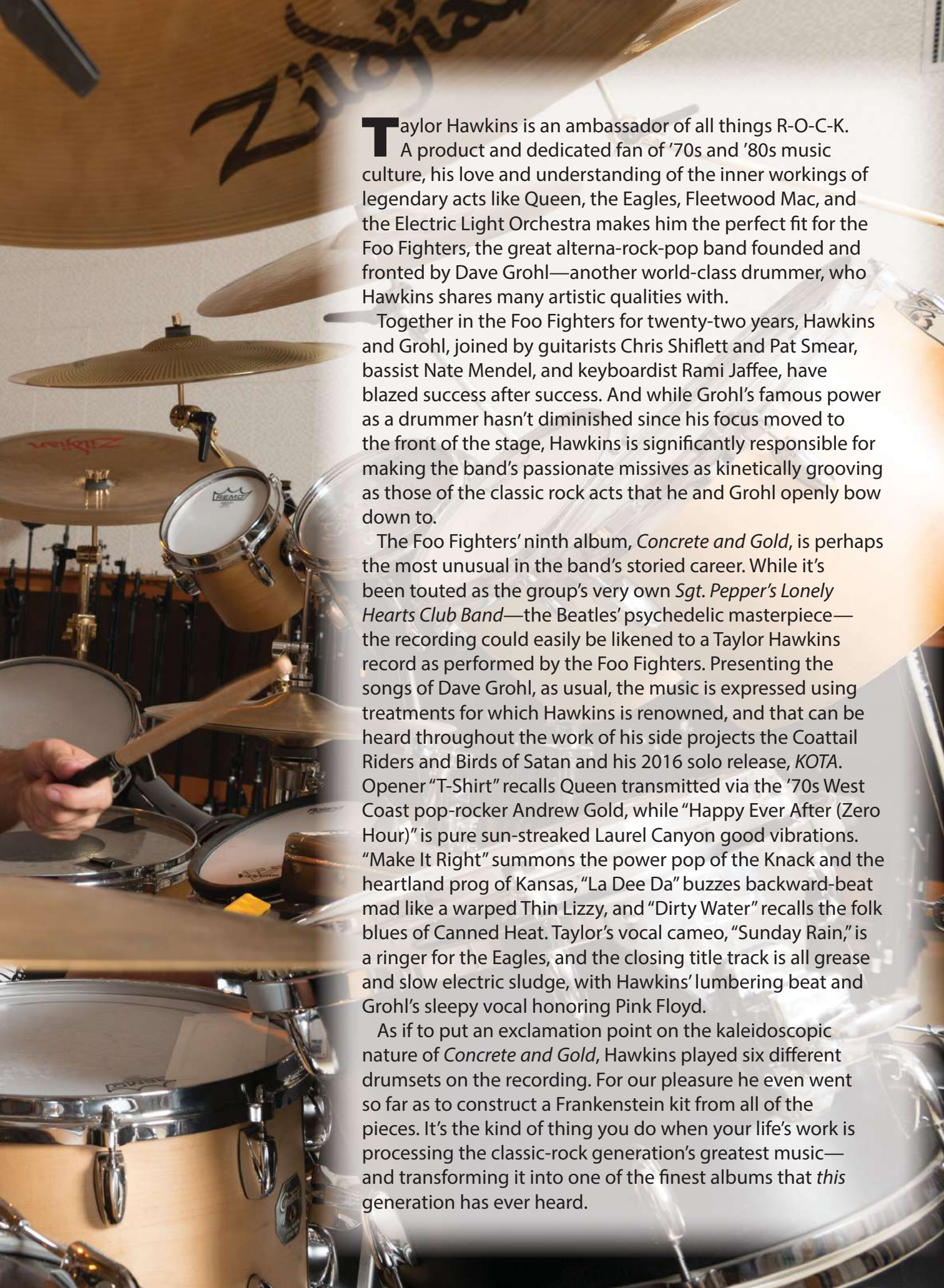
# The Foo Fighters' Taylor Hawkins

Story by Ken Micallef  
Photos by Alex Solca

As any recording artist will tell you, part of the fun of heading into a project with a new producer is not knowing exactly what sonic pathways you're going to find yourself exploring, or just what the final result is going to sound like. Case in point: This month's cover star couldn't have guessed that a pendulum swing back toward digital techniques would in fact result in his band's most classic-rock-sounding album to date—and he sure as heck wouldn't have predicted that he'd be singing lead while an ex-Beatle took his place at the drums. But that's *Concrete and Gold* for you: ambitious, unexpected, and a whole heap of fun to make—and to listen to.

Here's to tearing up the road map.





**T**aylor Hawkins is an ambassador of all things R-O-C-K. A product and dedicated fan of '70s and '80s music culture, his love and understanding of the inner workings of legendary acts like Queen, the Eagles, Fleetwood Mac, and the Electric Light Orchestra makes him the perfect fit for the Foo Fighters, the great alterna-rock-pop band founded and fronted by Dave Grohl—another world-class drummer, who Hawkins shares many artistic qualities with.

Together in the Foo Fighters for twenty-two years, Hawkins and Grohl, joined by guitarists Chris Shiflett and Pat Smear, bassist Nate Mendel, and keyboardist Rami Jaffee, have blazed success after success. And while Grohl's famous power as a drummer hasn't diminished since his focus moved to the front of the stage, Hawkins is significantly responsible for making the band's passionate missives as kinetically grooving as those of the classic rock acts that he and Grohl openly bow down to.

The Foo Fighters' ninth album, *Concrete and Gold*, is perhaps the most unusual in the band's storied career. While it's been touted as the group's very own *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*—the Beatles' psychedelic masterpiece—the recording could easily be likened to a Taylor Hawkins record as performed by the Foo Fighters. Presenting the songs of Dave Grohl, as usual, the music is expressed using treatments for which Hawkins is renowned, and that can be heard throughout the work of his side projects the Coattail Riders and Birds of Satan and his 2016 solo release, *KOTA*. Opener "T-Shirt" recalls Queen transmitted via the '70s West Coast pop-rocker Andrew Gold, while "Happy Ever After (Zero Hour)" is pure sun-streaked Laurel Canyon good vibrations. "Make It Right" summons the power pop of the Knack and the heartland prog of Kansas, "La Dee Da" buzzes backward-beat mad like a warped Thin Lizzy, and "Dirty Water" recalls the folk blues of Canned Heat. Taylor's vocal cameo, "Sunday Rain," is a ringer for the Eagles, and the closing title track is all grease and slow electric sludge, with Hawkins' lumbering beat and Grohl's sleepy vocal honoring Pink Floyd.

As if to put an exclamation point on the kaleidoscopic nature of *Concrete and Gold*, Hawkins played six different drumsets on the recording. For our pleasure he even went so far as to construct a Frankenstein kit from all of the pieces. It's the kind of thing you do when your life's work is processing the classic-rock generation's greatest music—and transforming it into one of the finest albums that *this* generation has ever heard.

**Q:** As a musician who's conquered the world, what are your goals?

**A:** Making the Foo Fighters sound better live. I'm constantly watching our shows the next day on YouTube. I'm always checking my tempos and figuring out how to do things better and make the band sound better. I'm on a constant search for a form of perfection.



**MD:** So where are you speaking to us from, Taylor?

**Taylor:** I'm hiding out from my family so we can talk. I've been cruising around on my mountain bike, trying to find a good spot to chat.

**MD:** So you're in Southern California?

**Taylor:** I'm in Laguna Beach, where I grew up. I'm right across the street from my parents' old house. They don't live there anymore. But this is where I had a lot of my earliest musical memories. I used to sit on the curb and think about music. I remember being sixteen years old and sitting here, sneaking cigarettes, dreaming about faraway lands—and someday being in *Modern Drummer*. Now I'm talking to *Modern Drummer*!

**MD:** *Concrete and Gold* is like the Foo Fighters doing a Taylor Hawkins record. As with many of your records, there's a real '70s focus to some of the tracks.

**Taylor:** It's funny that you say that. This is the first record where we've used a computer in a while. But I've played the record for people who've said, "Wow, this is the band's most '70s record." The funny thing is, the last two records we did were '70s-style, recorded to tape. This time we decided to utilize more of the tricks you can do with Logic and these amazing recording platforms that we have now. So I find it ironic that we actually thought we were making a modern record and everyone says, "This is '70s rock!" But I'm great with that.

**MD:** I hear the Beatles, Cheap Trick, ELO, Alan Parsons Project, Thin Lizzy....

**Taylor:** I'll take it all.

**MD:** Even the Eagles, on...

**Taylor:** ... "Sunday Rain." That's the song where I sang. It's funny, because I started layering harmonies on that, and [producer] Greg Kurstin said, "You know, that sounds like the Eagles." I learned to sing harmony in the back of my mom's car, listening to the Eagles, picking out all the different harmonies from Don and Glenn and Joe and Randy. That and Queen are how I learned to sing harmonies. A lot of the multilayered harmonies on the album are Dave by himself.

But whenever I start layering harmonies, it comes out like the Eagles. That's what's in my gut—both in my singing and my drumming. There's nothing I can do about it.

**MD:** On which tracks are you singing harmonies?

**Taylor:** "T-Shirt," "Concrete and Gold," "Make It Right," "Arrows," and one more. And I do all the vocals on "Sunday Rain."

**MD:** Was the *Sgt. Pepper's* mindset of reframing the band in anyone's mind?

**Taylor:** Only indirectly. When Dave first came to us with the idea of using Greg Kurstin as producer, I had been into his Bird and the Bee record. It's beautiful. And Greg has this complex yet pop sensibility. The first thing Dave said is, "Let's see what he can do to our sound." We're usually like Motörhead meets the Beatles, but this one is really Motörhead meets *Sgt. Pepper's*. It's hard rocking yet it's got this shimmering quality, and what really gives it that feel is all the layered harmonies.

**MD:** And some of the songs are pure pop rock, like "Happy Ever After."

**Taylor:** That's got a Beatle-y thing going on. At end of the day we just try to write good songs. Hopefully they are. Some people have told me it's taken them a while to totally digest the record. Some people think this is the best record we've ever made.

**MD:** You played a wild assortment of drums—North drums, concert toms, Rototoms....

**Taylor:** I did use a lot of weird drums on the record, and a lot of different drumsets. We had this studio, EastWest, a huge recording facility—the first time we'd been there. We rented the biggest room and stuffed six different drumsets in there and miked every drum. I had a straight-ahead five-piece kit, a rock kit, a giant 28" Bonham-type kick drum setup, then a full Phil Collins setup with all concert toms, and a tribal-y kind of setup. Some sets were recorded using the full room sound, some of them were baffled, some were more Beatle-y—we had an old '60s Ludwig kit set up too. I also played a set from Masters of Maple, kind of a new company from here in the San Fernando Valley.



When we were ready to shoot the *Modern Drummer* photos, I was like, well, I used so many different drumkits on the record—let's set up as many drums as we can! So we set up the most insane drumset possible. And that's what we got. It's a composite of all the drums I played on the record. Dave came by afterward and said, "Dude, you *have* to play this set on the road." I said, "I'd love to, but I don't think it's possible!" Maybe Terry Bozzio could play that drumset, but I couldn't. [laughs]

**MD:** Where did you find the North drums, and are you playing those on the record?

**Taylor:** I played them in that long Neil Peart drum fill in "Make It Right." I bought them on eBay. I just had to have a set of North drums. I always wanted a set, since I saw them as a kid. I also bought a Trixon drumset. They were a German company; I think Ringo played them for a little while. Buddy Rich even had a Trixon set for

bass drum on the beginning of "Sunday Rain" is really boomy, for instance.

**Taylor:** I have something to tell you about "Sunday Rain." That's not me playing drums. That's Paul McCartney. Dave is buddies with Paul. Dave had kind of demoed the song. It's a Beatles kind of song, with a *White Album/Abbey Road* vibe to it. I kept the drumming really simple in the demo. Then Dave took off to go to write lyrics. We were texting and he said, "You need a new song to sing." He wanted me to sing "Sunday Rain," and he wanted Paul to play drums on it. No problem!

What a graceful musician he is. I love that drum track—it's so un-me. When we play it live I take more of a Don Henley approach. The way that Paul played it, it's almost like the way Stevie Wonder plays drums. It's all musical. All feel. There's no "I'm going to play this fill here." Nothing like that. Dude, the guy had literally never heard



a while. We recorded those a little bit on the record. James Brown's drummers used them too. Vox and Trixon were part of the same company. The Trixon kick drums look like mushrooms. They're pretty cool.

**MD:** What other drums are in the giant setup?

**Taylor:** A lot of it was from the Gretsch kits I've assembled over the past ten years, because I've been playing Gretsch. Most of that kit is actually Gretsch and Masters of Maple.

**MD:** What does a North drum sound like?

**Taylor:** They're really tight, quick concert toms. They're not loud at all. I think they do the exact opposite of what they were supposed to do, which is one of the reasons they never totally took off. And they're not easy to set up. I call them "the bell-bottoms of drums." It's difficult to find a spot to place them because of the way the bottom bells out.

**MD:** There are a lot of different drum sounds on the album. The

song before. He walked in, Dave picked up a guitar and said, "It goes like this...verse, chorus, bridge...then we'll just jam it out at the end." I stood there with a drumstick conducting Paul. He never, ever heard the song before! He played it twice; what you hear on the record is pretty much the first take.

**MD:** How was he to work with?

**Taylor:** Totally great, and so generous with his time. I was trying not to look at him like he's Santa Claus. And that's his drumset too—he brought his own drumset and had his tech come and set it up. It's an '80s, middle-of-the-road Ludwig kit. It's not a high-end set. He has storage in L.A., so it just showed up. He also has a bag of cymbals he's collected over the years. And when he plays the drums, it sounds like him. He's such an obviously amazing musician, and his drumming is unique, but very real. He worked with Ringo all those years, and I'm sure their styles blended together.

**MD:** Was there a click running for "Sunday Rain"?





**Taylor:** No. There are a few songs that don't have a click track. "Sunday Rain," "T-Shirt," "Dirty Water," "The Sky Is a Neighborhood." We didn't do quantizing or anything like that. You can't quantize stuff if it ain't got a click track, ya know. We still [go for] a big human feel on the songs. We may have done a move here or there. The good thing about recording with computers is you can move quick. There's no auto-tuning, though we utilized the things in Logic that let you [manipulate] sound. It's limitless what you can do now.

That limitlessness can sometimes hinder a good rock 'n' roll record, though. And we've been out of that world for the last eight years. We shied away from computers because we made this record *Echoes, Silence, Patience & Grace* with Gil Norton, and he was into the computers to fix everything. That made us move away from the whole idea of using a computer and rather catch the human feel. I think you can do both. But this record changed because of the drumsets and the tweaking of the drum sounds. I have to be honest—I do my drum track and I'm done. Then I would come back and hear how they'd treat a snare drum sound, and it would knock me out. Greg and the engineers were doing some crazy shit.

**MD:** There are so many unusual sounds, like the opening to "Make It Right." Are you playing multi-rods on a suitcase or something?

**Taylor:** That's just me playing to a delay. A stick on a hi-hat and sidestick on the snare drum. Playing kind of [straight time] but with a U2/Edge guitar echo on it—16th notes, I believe.

## Hawkins' Live Setup



PACK  
LIGHT

PLAY  
BIG



TYCOON STARGLASS DJEMBES



www.tycoonpercussion.com





**Drums:** Gretsch USA Custom in hot pink finish

- 6.5x14 USA bell brass snare
- 7x10 concert tom
- 9x13 tom
- 16x16 floor tom
- 16x18 floor tom
- 16x20 bass drum
- 14" Remo Rototom

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

- 15" New Beat hi-hats
- 19" K Custom Hybrid crash
- 19" A Custom crash
- 20" A EFX Custom crash
- 23" Sweet ride
- 20" A Medium Thin crash
- 22" Oriental China Trash

**Hardware:** DW 9000 series, including 9000XL boom cymbal stands, 5000 single bass drum pedal

**Accessories:** Zildjian stick bag

**Percussion:** LP Ridge Rock cowbell, Jam Block (medium pitch), and Cyclops mountable tambourine

**Sticks:** Zildjian Taylor Hawkins Signature series

**Heads:** Remo, including Emperor X snare batter and Ambassador snare-side, Coated Vintage Emperor tom batters and Coated Ambassador resonant (on the 13"), Coated Powerstroke 4 floor tom batters and Coated Ambassador resonants, Clear Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter and Custom Ambassador resonant, and Emperor X Rototom batter

**MD:** Sometimes the Foo Fighters are like a heavy metal pop band, but no matter how heavy the song is, you ground the band in a very human way that a pure metal drummer probably wouldn't do. And the drums sound more intimate than ever on the new album. Is it the bigger recording space, how the drums were treated...?

**Taylor:** It's all those things. It's the engineer, Darrell Thorp; it's the different drums we used; and it's my love of people like Stewart Copeland and Roger Taylor. And Dave has a lot to do with the drum parts. If he doesn't like the sound of a ride cymbal, we change it. He's very involved, but he knows I have my [style]. I love Stewart, I love Alex Van Halen, I love Phil Collins, Stephen Perkins. I like high toms and sounds that poke out, which a lot of people don't really do anymore. The record sounds more intimate because of the way it was recorded on a lot of levels. It's such a broad-sounding record; every inch is filled with sound, but there's an airiness to the guitars that lets the drums have tone. Sometimes when you have three guitars blasting you're lucky to even hear the drums. But the guitar tones Greg came up with left a lot of room for drum tones. Maybe that's different from the last couple records.

**MD:** The drum sound is closer to your records. Your energy, tone, and spirit come across.

**Taylor:** We all come from the same spots musically. Dave and I both loved AM radio when we were kids. And the Police, Zeppelin, Queen, the Beatles, Soundgarden—those were things that we really

**Improve your sound.  
Improve your look.  
Improve your feel.**

**Optimizers or Chromatics**

Available in black and 8 colors. About \$10 for a 5-Pack.



**CYMPAD.**  
Optimize your cymbal sound • [www.cympad.com](http://www.cympad.com)



## Taylor Hawkins

bonded over. We both think Matt Cameron is a master. He's without a doubt one of the greatest drummers ever, end of story. Chris Cornell was one of my big heroes, and his loss is so devastating. I just can't get over it. The last record they made, *King Animal*, was a perfect addition to where they were heading as a band. It ranks up there with their greatest records. Matt and Chris together was such a magical combination. Such a great band. They were set to make another record. I'm forty-five, and if you were a musician in our age group and you heard Soundgarden coming up, you knew, whoa, these guys are serious players with a lot of heart and soul.

**MD:** "T-Shirt" is a great opening song.

**Taylor:** That's so wide open and big and slow. I just wanted to support that. Not a lot of thought went into it. What would [Pink Floyd's] Nick Mason do? I'm washing the ride cymbal on the chorus; at one point I'm playing a cymbal bell.

**MD:** In "Run" there are twangy Byrds guitars and a massive snare drum sound.

**Taylor:** I'm playing kind of a merengue beat there. [sings pattern]

**MD:** At first I thought the first two songs were one song.

**Taylor:** Yeah, it's kind of the "We Will Rock You" into "We Are the Champions" approach. [laughs] That's all live, played straight through.

**MD:** The groove of "Make It Right" is interesting, with the ghost notes and snare drum accent variations.

**Taylor:** It's really not that interesting! I guess the chorus is more interesting. But I'm literally playing [sings beat], like, "When the Levee Breaks." But all the delays there create this 16th-note "Rosanna" feel. It sounds complex and busy, but what I'm playing is really simple. It's almost like the Police's "Walking on the Moon." Or Queen's "Loser in the End." When doing the demo, Dave meant to add delay to the

guitar but accidentally put it on the drums. He brought in the idea and I thought it sounded amazing.

**MD:** At 3:07 in "Make It Right," you play a fun roll around the whole kit. Concert toms to North drums?

**Taylor:** Definitely concert toms, but I can't remember if it's a North drum. Probably not. It's 8", 10", and 13" toms and a 16" floor tom.

**MD:** The beat in "La Dee Da" sounds backward. Fast cut time, or 4/4?

**Taylor:** It is unusual, and when Dave showed it to me, it took me a second—well, more than a second—to figure out where the 1 is. And I've got to be honest, I'm still not quite sure! [laughs]

Whenever I have to do something in an odd time, or an odd feel... the late, great Chris Squire told me that Yes never knew what time signatures they were playing in. They learned the music; he called it "parrot." You can teach a parrot to say anything. It has no idea what it's saying—it's just saying whatever you taught it to say. Well, I'm not sure exactly what's happening in "La Dee Da." I just know how to play it. That song reminds me of the Cramps in the chorus; then it has that weird turnaround. But I don't know how to count it.

**MD:** In the beginning of "Arrows," is that a treated snare drum?

**Taylor:** It's a regular drum sound that Greg and Darrell put into their weird little world. I'm not sure exactly what they did. One of Greg's biggest tricks on this record is his Roland Space Echo. He put Dave's voice through that a bunch. But that's not the snare drum sound on "Arrows." I think it's just distorted.

**MD:** "The Line" sounds like a classic Foo Fighters song.

**Taylor:** We knew when we did it that it's most like "Best of You." I don't want to say that it's typical, but it does have an archetypal Foo Fighters sound to it.

**MD:** In general, when you know you're doing an album, does the

**THE LIGHTEST  
FASTEST  
STILL POWERFUL  
DRUMSTICK EVER**

**X CARB**

**LEAVE THE WOOD  
IN THE FOREST  
USE CARBON!**

**TECHRA**  
THE ULTIMATE DRUMSTICKS

f i y

www.techra-drumsticks.com



band rehearse?

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah. We do demo session after demo session. All of the songs on the album have been demoed and recorded and rerecorded. We recorded ten versions of "Run" before we came to the final version.

Dave will do a quick demo at his house sometimes. Or he and I will get together and do demos. Then the band will do a set of demos. Then a week later we might change or redo a section. It all culminates to where we feel like the songs are totally perfect and cohesively arranged to be on the final record. We do a lot of prep work. But there are some songs, like "Dirty Water" and "The Sky Is a Neighborhood," where we didn't do any demos. Dave presented a song idea; we learned it and played it down.

**MD:** What does that mean, "the sky is a neighborhood"?

**Taylor:** I have no idea. [laughs] I asked Dave that question and he said, "I don't know, dude, I was just looking up at the sky and I thought the sky is a neighborhood." Maybe there's a deeper meaning and Dave's not interested in revealing it. He likes it to be ambiguous



so anyone can interpret it for themselves.

**MD:** What do you practice now?

**Taylor:** I don't, really. I mainly practice with my cover band, Chevy Metal. Every once in a while I'll throw on the Police's first record or Rush's *Moving Pictures* or Soundgarden's *Superunknown* and play along. Songs with a killer groove. I don't really practice as much

THE FUTURE IS NOW

CYMBOLT

CYMBAL SAFE TECHNOLOGY

CYMBOLT

CYMBOLT®  
.COM

SEE WHY THERE REALLY  
IS A DIFFERENCE

PERCUSSION  
DYNAMICS LLC

@CYMBOLT

## Taylor Hawkins

as I should.

**MD:** Off the road, do you maintain or stabilize your chops? Or when a tour is over, do you feel like you've had enough of the drums?

**Taylor:** Oh, no, no, no. I keep going. Chevy Metal's turned into a great cottage industry. But I'm not the kind of guy to woodshed the drums. Never was. I get bored. For the most part interacting and playing with other musicians is what I do.

Fifteen years ago, when we were on a major hiatus, a friend and I started Chevy Metal. We played little Mexican restaurants. It's grown and grown and now it's my side band, my drum thing. Dave has played with us a bunch. We played at restaurants and sushi bars. We do rock festivals and corporate shows. Once in a while we'll play bars around L.A. I do it for fun and to keep my chops up.

**MD:** Does it demand something different from the Foo Fighters?

**Taylor:** It demands a lot less as far as taking it seriously. It's just fun. At the same time, we might learn a song like the Knack's "My Sharona." You think, *That's easy—I can play that*. But it's not easy at all! That's a very difficult song to play on the drums. Bruce Gary was a great drummer who does not get

the credit he deserves. He was a master. It takes a lot to get that song tight.

**MD:** What advice do you give to younger drummers?

**Taylor:** Kids always ask me, "How can I become a rock star?" I tell them to write their own material, but also do as many cover songs as they can. When you learn the inner workings of a song like "My Sharona" or the Vapors' "Turning Japanese" or AC/DC's "Let There Be Rock" or Queen's "Under Pressure," you're learning how to arrange songs. And you learn how drums make a song work.

I also always tell kids, "You need as much time on stage as you can get." If you really want to get great, play all the songs your audience wants to hear. That's what Van Halen did. They started out as a cover band.

**MD:** Did Chevy Metal take over from the Coattail Riders?

**Taylor:** Yes. I did a record called *The Birds of Satan*, which was an offshoot of Chevy Metal. We also incorporate Coattail Riders and my solo stuff into Chevy Metal. My side projects are ever weaving and moving. But right now my head is in Foo Fighter Land, and will be pretty much for the next six months. I'm always writing and making demos. At some point, after we're done touring the

new record, I'll make a record. I feel like I have to put a little fork in the road so I have something to say. The Foo Fighters are really there to support Dave's songs. I did get to write a song on this record, which is amazing. Dave wrote the music for "Sunday Rain," and I wrote all the lyrics and the bridge and the outro melody.

**MD:** Do you keep a set of drums at home?

**Taylor:** I have a couple sets at home and a basic recording studio. That's where I recorded my last solo record, *KOTA*. My son is a good drummer; he's got a great backbeat. If he wants it, he's got it. You can tell. And my daughter plays guitar. It's a very musically free house.

**MD:** As a musician who's conquered the world, what are your goals?

**Taylor:** Making the Foo Fighters sound better live. I'm constantly watching our shows the next day on YouTube. I'm always checking my tempos and figuring out how to do things better and make the band sound better. I'm on a constant search for a form of perfection. You never really reach it.

**MD:** Dave is a great drummer, but he doesn't have what you bring to the Foo Fighters.

**Taylor:** Dave's a much better drummer than me.

**MD:** But it wouldn't be the Foo Fighters without your natural-feeling groove, and that really comes to the fore on *Concrete and Gold*.

**Taylor:** Check out *KOTA*. I play everything on it—the guitars, the drums, the bass and keyboards, with a little help from friends. The music is a continuation of the Coattail Riders, and it's got my signature Eagles and Queen vocal sound. It's my voice and the way I think musically. It's more basic, because I'm playing all the instruments. It's less muso in that regard—no ripping guitar solos.

**MD:** Is "KOTA" an acronym for something?

**Taylor:** King of the Assholes. There's a theme to the record. I live in Hidden Hills, which is in Calabasas. I live around all these strange, entitled, new-money folks. I live next to the Kardashians. I'm a fish out of water, and I don't know how we ended up there. I find it all hilarious.

**MD:** Where are you heading next on your bike?

**Taylor:** I'm going for a surf. I'm going to jump in the water; the waves are great the last couple days. I'll catch some waves. Hopefully my son is already there. He's got a pretty knarly board. This is at Thalia Beach; it's where I grew up surfing. I've been surfing since I was a kid. They used to call me "Hawkins Spazz" as I came down the water. "Here comes Hawkins Spazz!"

**THE FINAL WORD ON SNARE DRUMS**

**CHICAGO DRUM...  
BECAUSE HISTORY MATTERS™**

Chicago Drum produces a vintage style 14" snare that starts with our own high-quality 5-ply shell, a nearly 3/8" thick lay-up of Maple/Poplar or Mahogany/Poplar.

Solid steam bent maple reinforcement rings, ultra-smooth bearing edges with 30 degree round overs, and deep, flat, wide cut snare beds are standard to enhance sensitivity.

As former Slingerland® employees from 1955 through 1986, we built some of the finest drums for the best players in the world.

Now it's time to experience our versions of a timeless classic... from our skilled hands to yours.

**DISCOVER TRUE VINTAGE™**  
Classic Styling • Legendary Sound • Made in the USA  
We built them back in the day. We're building them again.™  
www.chicagodrum.com  
Dealer inquiries welcome.



*Tony Williams*



© Jim Marshall Photography LLC

## THE DNA OF THE MOST ICONIC CYMBALS EVER



*Tony's original Miles Davis  
Quintet cymbal set*



*The Tony Williams  
Tribute Cymbals  
from Istanbul Mehmet*

At the throttle of the famed Miles Davis Second Great Quintet, Tony Williams rocketed music forward into uncharted territory, blazing a trail that we still follow today. Tony assembled his iconic cymbal set from this era with vision and utmost intention and in their unearthly sound he found his true voice. With full access to Tony's original Miles Davis Quintet cymbal set, the Master Artisans at Istanbul Mehmet have captured their DNA. Handmade in Turkey, the Tony Williams Tribute Cymbals make his legendary sound live again. Available in sets featuring 22" Ride, 18" Crash, 14" HiHats, and now also individually.

**istanbul**®  
*Mehmet* Handmade Cymbals from Turkey

[www.istanbulmehmet.com](http://www.istanbulmehmet.com)

# The New Pornographers' Joe Seiders

Story by Patrick Berkery • Photos by Alex Solca

Hundreds of stories have appeared in *MD* over the years with drummers talking about the skills that helped them land a particular gig. This typically ranges from a knack for supporting songs with creative, unobtrusive playing to the ability to shapeshift from song to song. Being a good hang in the studio and/or on the road always seems to help as well. But rarely do we read about drummers who earned a job based largely on their vocal chops. Enter Joe Seiders, who says that a rehearsal involving zero drumming and a whole lot of harmonizing is what helped him land the gig manning the kit for the veteran indie-pop outfit the New Pornographers.

Seiders had been bouncing between band and session work for a decade with Bleu, Tracy Bonham, Juliana Hatfield, Adam Lambert, John Oates, and Emmitt Rhodes—first in Boston, then Los Angeles—when the New Pornos, a group he absolutely loved, needed a drummer on the eve of the *Brill Bruisers* album release and tour in 2014. Seiders had an “in”—his brother is the band’s tour manager/front-of-house engineer. But that connection guaranteed him nothing more than consideration for the gig, an opening that had to be filled within seventy-two hours so the band could play the Rifflandia festival in Victoria, British Columbia. Eighteen songs under his belt and forty-eight hours later, Seiders found himself in a hotel room with lead singer/guitarist Carl Newman, multi-instrumentalist/vocalist Kathryn Calder, and guitarist Todd Fancey, strumming and singing through a set they’d play in front of 10,000 people the following day. Fortunately he’d been working out potential harmonies while woodshedding the drum parts.

“I didn’t know exactly what parts I’d be singing, so I just tried to think of all of the harmonies,” Seiders says about his crash course in New Pornography. “They tell the story now that apparently when I walked out of the hotel room, Todd said, ‘Hey, he’s a nice guy—we should hire him.’ I think basically I got the gig for singing and being a nice guy. The harmonies are more important than the drums, for the most part. It’s such a vocal band. And then the next day we finally got together to play the show and I was like, *I better focus on playing these drum*

*parts now!*”

In the same way Seiders’ voice blended seamlessly into the New Pornographers’ signature harmonies, his steady, propulsive drumming was perfectly suited to the buoyant and clever songcraft, as evidenced on his first recorded effort with the band, 2017’s *Whiteout Conditions*. Unlike the forty-eight-hour window he had to prepare for his first gig with the group, Seiders had a little time to think about how he could humanize the robotic feel that chief songwriter Newman was going for on songs like “Play Money,” “High Ticket Attractions,” and the title track.

“I really stewed over how I was going to approach this record,” Seiders says. “I went in a different direction sort of in every take, and we ended up with a million ideas and pieced a lot together. And I think they were really stoked by that, because that’s not how they did it with [former drummer] Kurt Dahle. I think they really appreciated being able to put a lot of input into the drums and throw a lot of ideas at me.”





**MD:** On the album you do a very nice job of playing with a metronomic feel without the music feeling at all stiff. Did you have much experience with that type of drumming?

**Joe:** I think my time playing to loops and tracks with Bleu was great preparation for this sort of thing, things like “High Ticket Attractions,” where there’s sequencing going on. Carl sent me these demos, and they all had this sort of Krautrock beat—*guh-guh-guh-chick*—with just a very basic drum machine, kind of manic. And we got into the studio and thought, *How about we do a human version of these manic drum-machine beats?*

**MD:** Were you tracking along with the demos to capture that feel?

**Joe:** Carl had those demos going most of the time. Our bassist, John Collins, would play along so he could start working on his parts. I think it just helps the vibe when you have a bassist playing. John and Carl sort of produced it together. The way I normally work is, do three or four takes and cut something together. But they were like, “Just keep going—just give [us] more ideas.” John engineered it and really wanted to just sift through tons and tons of ideas. I gave them a lot of choices.

**MD:** Are the sequenced parts happening live as well?

**Joe:** Yeah, we have tracks going underneath. We play two or three songs that have a kick drum driving through the whole thing. I’ve

got a click running from a Roland SPD-SX.

**MD:** You had two days to learn a whole lot of material for the first show. Do you have a method for cramming like that?

**Joe:** I learn songs in a weird way. I don’t chart. I only listen to the song and imagine myself playing. It’s very odd. I just listen to it over and over again and pick up the song form. So when I went into that gig, I didn’t sit at a drumkit until we sat down to play. Looking back, that was a little dicey. I could chart—I have that knowledge, I know how to read music. But that’s not what works for me.

**MD:** Was it pretty surreal to be playing with a band you loved so much?

**Joe:** I still can’t believe it. As a fan, I was so in love with their [2005] album *Twin Cinema*. When we play “Sing Me Spanish Techno,” I still can’t believe I’m singing the harmonies on the pre-chorus. It’s mind-blowing.

**MD:** So let’s talk about your harmony singing. It’s an overlooked part of a drummer’s tool kit. Had you been singing and playing all along?

**Joe:** Since the Everyday Visuals, my very first band. I learned how to sing with those guys when I was fifteen. A few years later I got asked to play some shows with Juliana Hatfield and Tracy Bonham. I slipped into this ‘90s female rock thing for a moment there, which was awesome. And for the most part Juliana sang all of her own



## Seiders' Setup

**Drums:** C&C 12th & Vine

- 6.5x14 Ludwig Black Beauty snare
- 9x13 tom
- 16x16 floor tom
- 14x24 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

- 14" Avedis hi-hats
- 18" Avedis crash
- 19" Avedis crash

**Heads:** Remo Coated Vintage Ambassador snare batter, Coated Ambassador tom batters, and Coated Powerstroke 3 bass drum batter

**Sticks:** Vater Los Angeles 5A sticks, T7 mallets, and Poly Flex brushes

**Hardware:** DW 5000 bass drum pedal, Roc-n-Soc Nitro throne

**Electronics:** Roland SPD-SX sample pad

**Accessories:** JH Audio JH16 in-ear monitors, Shure Beta 87A vocal mic, Big Fat Snare Drum muffling device, Low Boy beaters

“This list represents my live rig,” Seiders says. “My studio rig is basically the same, except I’ll mix in some other Ludwig metals—Supraphonic, Acrolite—and get a little more creative with snare heads, such as Remo black dots and Emperors.”

# John Blackwell

*John Blackwell*



JOHN BLACKWELL JR.

September 9, 1973 - July 4, 2017

It was an honour to  
work with you...

# Turkish®

handmade cymbals from Turkey

Joe Seiders



backing vocals on the record. So when I was learning songs, I needed to sing harmony and learn how to sing her kind of female backing vocals, to get that female vocal blend. I was trying to hone my falsetto. That was a great learning experience, singing with Tracy and Juliana. It took a long time to feel comfortable singing and playing. I think I'm still figuring it out. [laughs]

**MD:** You grew up near Boston and eventually moved back there. Was attending Berklee something you were thinking about?

**Joe:** It totally was. I was obsessed with Berklee. To the point where when I was sixteen or seventeen I was putting together the audition tapes, getting ready to apply to the summer programs. But high school was kind of terrible for me. I let my academics slip. Band and chorus were seventh and eighth periods—the last two periods of the day—and I would only go in for those two periods. Finally the band teacher said, "You can't do this anymore."

I ended up getting kicked out of school; basically I dropped out. But an English teacher helped me get back into school. So once I got through high school, I didn't think I could go to college, because it was so hard for me to put effort into school. So I just didn't go to Berklee, which was a bummer at the time, but I'm fine with it now.

**MD:** Bleu was someone you hooked up with in Boston, and you guys have done a variety of things together, not just rock stuff.

**Joe:** The Everyday Visuals moved to Boston, then we hooked up with Bleu. He asked me to start playing in his band, and that became a duo thing—I'm still playing with him to this day. Through Bleu I sort of got into the power-pop world in L.A. I've done a little bit of writing with Bleu, and we ended up doing the score for the last Tinker Bell film, *The Legend of the NeverBeast*. They wanted some weird textures, so we ended up going to the hardware store with drumsticks and mallets and banging on everything, trying to make instruments and create different sounds and textures for this film.

We ended up using tons of that stuff. The composer, Joel





McNeely, was handling all the orchestral stuff, and Bleu and I were handling all the weird found-percussion stuff. I think he was trying to keep it more orchestral, and every time they would have a meeting, the producers would say that they wanted more of the weird stuff Bleu and I were doing. We didn't know if we were going to lose our jobs at any point. But it's in there a ton. We're banging on trash cans and whirly tubes, the corrugaphone or whatever they call it. We created this sort of soundscape with flower pots and these copper pipes, hanging them from strings—definitely not rock drumming.

**MD:** What's your setup with Bleu?

**Joe:** We've got a cool little thing going where I've got a kick drum turned over on its side, and I'll play it with a mallet. I've also got a keyboard, and I'm running some beats and he's looping some vocals. It's a weird experiment that we're still trying to figure out. It's definitely a different approach, but really good training for playing to tracks, trying to be on the click, playing along to weird loops and beats, and singing at the same time.

**MD:** Was it the opportunity for more work that prompted the move from Boston to L.A.?

**Joe:** That was definitely part of the move. It also felt like the Everyday Visuals had

exhausted our resources. It never got to the next step. We didn't take any more steps in L.A. either. [laughs] But I was always a band guy with them. Then I got asked to play some shows with Bleu, and that turned into another band, then the duo thing. So it's just the two of us, and I'm playing guitar and all these other things, and I thought, *Okay, I guess I could be a sideman.*

Then I got asked to play some shows with Juliana and Tracy. So I thought, *Maybe I can float around and not be dedicated to one band.* I always wanted to be more of a session guy, and there was going to be

more of that type of thing in L.A.

**MD:** Coming from a band you'd started as a teenager and juggling a variety of projects, how do you try to fit in—musically, personally—when you join a group that's been at it for seventeen years?

**Joe:** It's easy. They're Canadian—they're the friendliest people on earth. Every idea I've had, they've been game for trying. They don't have a crazy set way of doing things. Nothing's grueling. There's no practice schedule. They're very relaxed. I think that's what's made them successful.



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

**AHEAD**  
ARMOR CASES  
USA

[WWW.AHEADARMORCASES.COM](http://WWW.AHEADARMORCASES.COM) | 818.727.1127

(C)&(P)PHOTO BY F. DESMAELLE





# Jon Epcar

Story by Ilya Stemkovsky  
Photos by John Fell

Being in the band for the infamous *Spider-Man* show on Broadway required him to nail his cues as packed houses hung on to every wild moment of a sensational live-action musical circus. It's all in the bag of tricks for today's working pro, whose duties require single-minded preparation, nerves of steel, and the ability to make up a perfect part in the blink of an eye.

**J**on Epcar's master plan didn't involve drumming on Broadway. Born and raised in Los Angeles, Epcar went to a high school with a strong music program that included graduates like saxophonist Kamasi Washington. So the drummer got the bug and eventually headed east to Berklee College of Music, before forming the original rock band Carney. The group must have made quite an impression on theater director Julie Taymor at a gig, because not only was frontman Reeve Carney asked to star in her much buzzed-about show *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*, which featured music and lyrics by U2's the Edge and Bono, but the rest of the band was hired to partake in the production as well.

Going from playing clubs to working with Bono

and the Edge required a little adjustment. "I was kicking and screaming at the time, because I wanted to maintain this rock band thing we were doing," Epcar says. "But it was also this amazing opportunity. It's not every day you get to go into a room with the guys from U2 and some of the best musicians in New York."

From there, Epcar found himself involved in high-profile sessions with Carly Rae Jepsen, John Legend, Rihanna, Justin Timberlake, and Natasha Bedingfield. He even found time to release a moody, beautiful solo record, *Morning Drone*, which is lighter on drum pyrotechnics but heavy on taste and feel. Just another day at the office, you might say.

**MD:** Let's talk about being a sideman. Your credits are diverse. Is there anything specific that you do to prepare for each session?

**Jon:** Having a broad sense of things helps me prepare for whatever's coming along. For the John Legend session, for example, the producer explained the whole concept we were going for as Bonham meets Fiona Apple. There's something off-kilter with the Fiona approach. Most of her last record [with Charley Drayton] doesn't even sound like drums. I don't even know what Drayton's doing. It's

incredible, though. But having a wide range of things you're into helps you understand what that person is going for. Like, "Here's an idea of maybe something you heard on another record." Or maybe to them it's not a genre-specific part or concept, but used in that way it creates something new or fresh.

**MD:** But I'm sure you're not always with the artist, so do you need to reference a demo from the producer?

**Jon:** Sometimes you don't have a demo, and you don't necessarily have a concept. "We'll figure this out when

we get in the room." And sometimes you do have a demo, and they'll say they want me to do this exactly. They want these fills or the weird bass drum thing that's on the "&" of 4. You might have a day to create a song or you might have twenty minutes. What's important is being able to create new ideas quickly—and being able to abandon them completely if need be. A lot of times ideas come from people that influence you, and you learn from what they're doing. For me, that's guys like Jim Keltner, Aaron Sterling, Jay Bellerose, Shawn Pelton.

It depends on the artist or producer or whoever is bringing you in. It's about being able to roll with the punches, or trying to read the situation. It's about knowing when it's appropriate to interject your own sense of musical style or what you think is correct, and knowing when it's time to shut up and give them what they think is best, because they're creating the part.

**MD:** Do you like executing like that—doing a workmanlike job where the producer can rely on you and there's a satisfaction to that? Or are you thinking that you can come up with something cooler and it gets to be a bummer?



**“What’s important is being able to create new ideas quickly—and being able to abandon them completely if need be.”**

**Jon:** I've always tried to find the challenge in delivering that exactly. But I was finding myself more and more feeling slightly flustered with that, which led me into doing my own thing. I needed an outlet for the things that I was hearing. Doing my record put less pressure on those situations to fulfill

me artistically. For that artist or producer, this is something they care passionately about, and that part might not make sense to you, but to them there's a reason why it's so important. They're hearing it that way, and maybe they have a reference point that they're trying to nail.

**MD:** Are you bringing seventeen different snares to a session?

**Jon:** I still bring everything when I do a session. A million snares and bags of cymbals. But a lot of times I'll end up using whatever's at the studio, because a lot of times now these studios have great gear.

And not only is it in your hands, but the room dictates what you're going to play, just as much as the music does. The sound of the room is important, and what a drum sounds like in one room is not going to be what it sounds like in another room. Just because you tuned it at home exactly how you want doesn't mean you're going to hit it in the room and it will be appropriate. And sometimes it's not supposed to sound appropriate. It's okay to not have a drum sound exactly like a pristine drum.

**MD:** How did the *Spider-Man* show come your way?

**Jon:** I was in a band called Carney, with guys from my Hamilton High School days, and we did a show in New York at the Mercury Lounge. Julie Taymor was at that show and she really dug Reeve,

the singer. She brought him on to do the show. Bono and the Edge really dug him too. So we went into a studio and knocked out a few demos that they had, and sent those to Bono and the Edge to check out. Then we were brought on board. I had no idea that these types of shows were

operating at such a high level.

**MD:** Was there an adjustment period for you to get into “Broadway mode”?

**Jon:** A lot of it was using your ear to come up with parts. My reading was always kind of okay, so I could read well enough that I was getting the job done. I wouldn't ever want to sight-read a Zappa tune or something. But by doing a lot of shows, it upped my reading a lot.

And you're there to help deliver what the people in charge want. That can vary from show to show. There's not one style of Broadway. Someone doing *West Side Story* is going to have a very different concept musically from someone doing *Spider-Man*. *Spider-Man* was way more rock and heavy playing, and it was a lot looser as far as what you could play. But you're there to achieve that vision, which may or may not involve expressing yourself a certain way. Sometimes the fills are very exact, and sometimes the parts are very exact, and sometimes you look at the page and there are slashes all the way down and you have to interpret what's being asked. The Edge was super-awesome and worked with the band. Sometimes he'd send things via GarageBand, like, “This is a part for this,” and some things he came up with in GarageBand stayed in the show, which is insane that it was that good.

**MD:** What about *Amélie*? It closed quickly, but not because of the drumming, I'm sure.

**Jon:** These shows are a gamble. They're a lot of money to get up and running. *Amélie* had a lot of awesome people involved. I got brought in by the conductor, who also conducted *Spider-Man*. It just wasn't landing with audiences for whatever reason.

**MD:** Was that a little more in the “musical theater” drumming box, as opposed to a rock show?

**Jon:** For *Spider-Man*, I was in an isolated drum booth in the basement, not even in a pit. For *Amélie*, the orchestra was just eight people, and we were in the theater, in the “Lincoln seats” in the balcony, with no baffling. It was super-live, so I had to be very cautious of dynamics and volume. A lot of the show was with brushes or rods, and there was a lot more mallet percussion—glockenspiel, crotales. *Spider-Man* was more of a rock set. But *Amélie* was still more poppy than a traditional Broadway show; there just wasn't a lot of bashing. I only used sticks on one or two songs.

**MD:** Let's talk about your solo record, *Morning Drone*. It's not exactly a drum bonanza, which is cool.

**Jon:** Doing the *Spider-Man* show every day got me to feel stagnant. And Aaron Comess

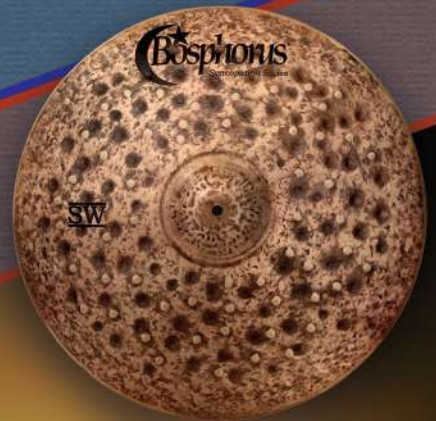


INTRODUCING  
**Syncopation Series**

*Complex and aggressive cymbals with 2 different finishes*



**SUSTAIN**  
**DEFINITION**



AVAILABLE AT PRIME DEALERS  
**#PlayOneAndBelieve**  
**BOSPHORUSCYMBALS.COM**

pointed me in the direction of Michael Carvin, who's a drum teacher in town. First lesson, he totally kicked my ass. I sat down. He said, "Play something." I played for ten seconds, and he said, "Stop." He immediately dissected my entire music history.

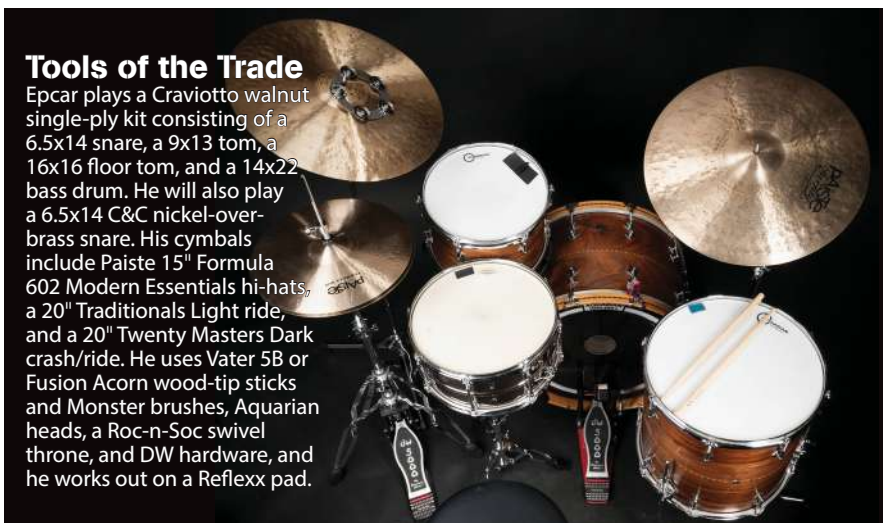
Michael's the drum Yoda. He has what I call these Carvinisms, like, "If you work on your weaknesses, you'll have no weaknesses." And then he'll just walk out of the room. It's incredible. He said, "The thing that you just did, play that as quietly as possible." And he explained that in his room we're only going to play as quietly as possible. Then he said to play it as slowly as possible. He quickly saw that I was having trouble with that. So he said, "Great, in this room we're only going to play as slow as possible."

It wasn't a chops session. He was going to rebuild you. He finds the things you really need to work on the most and zeroes in on them, which can be uncomfortable. But I wanted to find my inspiration again. And through doing it, I got excited about practicing again.

One thing he thought I should do was to lead a band and make a record. It was something I fought, but it started clicking more and more. I had to do something

### Tools of the Trade

Epcar plays a Craviotto walnut single-ply kit consisting of a 6.5x14 snare, a 9x13 tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 14x22 bass drum. He will also play a 6.5x14 C&C nickel-over-brass snare. His cymbals include Paiste 15" Formula 602 Modern Essentials hi-hats, a 20" Traditionals Light ride, and a 20" Twenty Masters Dark crash/ride. He uses Vater 5B or Fusion Acorn wood-tip sticks and Monster brushes, Aquarian heads, a Roc-n-Soc swivel throne, and DW hardware, and he works out on a Reflexx pad.



where I was making decisions and calling the shots, for better or worse. And I booked a studio, because the bassist and guitarist I wanted to work with were going to be in town for one day. I booked a day, two weeks away, and I had zero music. I was listening to a lot of Morricone and Daniel Lanois records. And I came up with three demos, sort of jazz heads, in GarageBand. And I got them in the studio and they were like, "So, what are we doing?"

**MD:** Sounds nerve-racking.

**Jon:** Yeah, I had to start making decisions. I put myself into an uncomfortable place, and it forced me into making the choices that ended up on the record. And I wasn't sure if I wanted it to be more melody driven or have this drum presence, and in the process of creating it, making this cinematic record was much more fulfilling. So it opened up this world outside of drumming.







# Chris Cohen

BY DREW SCHNEIDER

**The multi-instrumentalist claims to develop his chops only as far as the music dictates. But *only* is a deceiving word, given the distinctness and the success of the work he's created with many important contemporary artists, and in many different ways.**

Chris Cohen describes himself as a member of the Portastudio generation. It's a classification he's coined to describe musicians, now in their late thirties and early forties, who cut their teeth in production with Tascam's legendary Porta One tape machine. Largely used to overdub oneself before the advent of DAWs, the machines didn't just help to foster a class of musicians self-sufficient on the instruments listeners would find on a rock record, they created a homespun aesthetic and a can-do work ethic in those who used them.

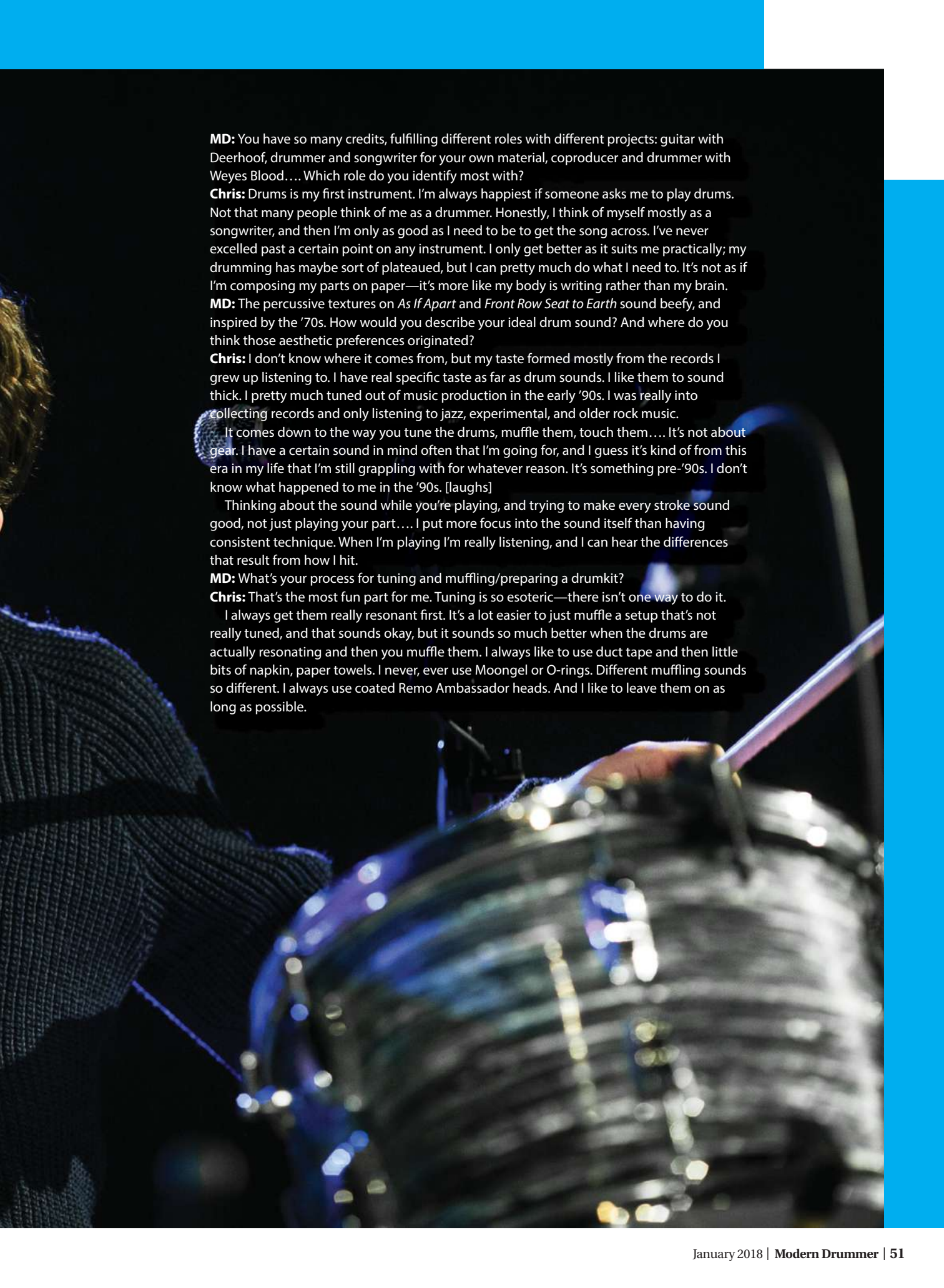
Cohen mentioned the Porta One while discussing his origins in creating music, but formative experiences with the cassette machine are evident in his output even today. Over the last fifteen years, he's worked on a number of projects that straddle mainstream and experimental borders,

moving around the bandstand from instrument to instrument in the process. Whether it's his guitar work on Deerhoof's early records, his production and playing on albums from his collaborative projects the Curtains and Cryptacize, or his songwriting on his two namesake records, *Overgrown Path* and *As If Apart*, you're likely to notice a considered and wide-ranging palette of sonic textures. Much of this music features shifting harmonic landscapes whose chord changes cascade across a solid but nimble percussive bedrock. Cohen's latest work, as coproducer and drummer on *Front Row Seat to Earth*, the most recent album from singer/songwriter Natalie Mering's band, Weyes Blood, is another vehicle for his idiosyncratic, '70s-inspired textures and efficient, floral musicianship.

**Story by Keith Carne**

**Photo by Dominick Mastrangelo**





**MD:** You have so many credits, fulfilling different roles with different projects: guitar with Deerhoof, drummer and songwriter for your own material, coproducer and drummer with Weyes Blood.... Which role do you identify most with?

**Chris:** Drums is my first instrument. I'm always happiest if someone asks me to play drums. Not that many people think of me as a drummer. Honestly, I think of myself mostly as a songwriter, and then I'm only as good as I need to be to get the song across. I've never excelled past a certain point on any instrument. I only get better as it suits me practically; my drumming has maybe sort of plateaued, but I can pretty much do what I need to. It's not as if I'm composing my parts on paper—it's more like my body is writing rather than my brain.

**MD:** The percussive textures on *As If Apart* and *Front Row Seat to Earth* sound beefy, and inspired by the '70s. How would you describe your ideal drum sound? And where do you think those aesthetic preferences originated?

**Chris:** I don't know where it comes from, but my taste formed mostly from the records I grew up listening to. I have real specific taste as far as drum sounds. I like them to sound thick. I pretty much tuned out of music production in the early '90s. I was really into collecting records and only listening to jazz, experimental, and older rock music.

It comes down to the way you tune the drums, muffle them, touch them.... It's not about gear. I have a certain sound in mind often that I'm going for, and I guess it's kind of from this era in my life that I'm still grappling with for whatever reason. It's something pre-'90s. I don't know what happened to me in the '90s. [laughs]

Thinking about the sound while you're playing, and trying to make every stroke sound good, not just playing your part.... I put more focus into the sound itself than having consistent technique. When I'm playing I'm really listening, and I can hear the differences that result from how I hit.

**MD:** What's your process for tuning and muffling/preparing a drumkit?

**Chris:** That's the most fun part for me. Tuning is so esoteric—there isn't one way to do it.

I always get them really resonant first. It's a lot easier to just muffle a setup that's not really tuned, and that sounds okay, but it sounds so much better when the drums are actually resonating and then you muffle them. I always like to use duct tape and then little bits of napkin, paper towels. I never, ever use Moongel or O-rings. Different muffling sounds so different. I always use coated Remo Ambassador heads. And I like to leave them on as long as possible.

## Chris Cohen

I like to use light, nylon-tip sticks for the way that they sound on the cymbals. I really believe in changing your snares when they start to lose their snap. For me, it has to be tight. The best snare drum sounds are from the late '60s, early '70s. Tony Williams on Eric Dolphy's *Out to Lunch!*—that's a snare sound. The kick and snare drum sounds are the things I care most about.

**MD:** Your music often involves fairly complicated harmonic rhythms, yet you use straightforward, almost old-school drum parts to frame that shifting harmony. For example, you often lay down a Motown-style quarter-notes-on-the-snare groove, while the keys play a more complex dotted-quarter-note figure that unfolds over barlines. How do you go about writing and recording the drum parts on your records? And how does your role as songwriter influence your drum compositions?

## Tools of the Trade

Cohen plays a 1967 Ludwig kit and Supraphonic snare, a Pearl Rhythm Traveler kit, and old Zildjian cymbals. He uses Regal Tip 7A nylon-tip sticks, Remo Coated Ambassador or Vintage Ambassador heads, an old Yamaha bass drum pedal, a Pearl hi-hat stand, and a Tama saddle drum seat.

**Chris:** The drum parts are written around the vocal melody. Their job is to support and accent the melody in the right places. The way I write a song, generally, is that I'll come up with a little riff on the keyboard or guitar and a vocal melody, and then the drums come next. The drum parts come in pretty quickly. I want them to be simple enough that I can play them well. I do a lot of takes and a lot of editing in Pro Tools, so it's kind of like fishing. I'll write a fairly simple part, and I'll try to have some fun while I'm playing it and then just look for the takes that have that fun stuff or some life in them.

I don't like drum parts that are overly complicated, though. One thing I really try to avoid are hi-hat or cymbal parts that are overly complicated. I want them to be super-functional and durable, something you can settle into and play with feeling.

**MD:** How does that process differ with projects that you produce? With Weyes Blood, for example, you functioned as both drummer and coproducer.

**Chris:** Every situation is different. Working with Natalie Mering, her guitar or piano playing was the bedrock of the song, because we knew that was going to be there. She'd been playing most of the songs live solo for a while.

If it's someone else's song, I always go from them. I believe they know best; they had the original intent, and I think getting as close to that as possible is best. I never second-guess if someone says, "This is the feel of the song." They've been playing the song for so many hours, and I've only heard it a couple of times. I don't trust myself enough—the cumulative hours that you spend working with the song, that's what you can trust.

For my music it's totally different, because I'm doing everything. A lot of times my best ideas are the ones I have first. The mood of the song is usually right from the beginning, and then if I start using my logical brain to try and figure things out, it usually gets worse.

**MD:** You perform all of the instruments on your recordings. Why not work with a band?

**Chris:** It's mostly logistics. I don't have the money to pay people to spend the time that I need to spend working on these songs to get them good. I don't like sketchy situations where you say, "Oh man, just help me out with this and there's gonna be some points." And there's usually no points. Well, at least in my music there's usually not a lot of money [laughs], and offering somebody points is kind of bullshit.

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

FRANK ZUMMO - SUM 41, KREWELLA & STREET DRUM CORPS

GET MORE POWER, PRECISION AND PERFORMANCE



**AHEAD** WWW.AHEADDRUMSTICKS.COM | 818.727.1127



Captured Tracks [Cohen's record label] gives me an advance that I use to pay my rent and eat while I'm doing these albums, and there isn't enough to bring someone else in. A lot of what I do is inefficient when I work by myself. I tend to work in circles: This drum part isn't working, so I go back and redo the drums, but now this guitar part isn't working.... Those are things a band does without even talking, just by each person tending to their own part and listening. Maybe they talk about it, but maybe not. If I were just playing with the right people and had the budget for that and had a little bit of time, who knows, maybe that would be more efficient? I'm interested in trying that in the future.

**MD:** You do have to hire a band for your live shows, though. Who do you get to play drums?

**Chris:** I used to play drums with the band live. I stopped with the newer songs, because they're a bit too hard. The current drummer is Josh Da Costa. He's also not only known as a drummer, but as a songwriter and singer.

**MD:** That means on previous record cycles you played drums and sang lead vocals?

**Chris:** Yeah, I would. But I realized I wasn't singing as well as I could. I felt like I could be a better singer if I'm playing guitar.

**MD:** What are the biggest differences between leading a band from behind the drumkit and from downstage, where you're playing guitar?

**Chris:** It's just a matter of standing up or sitting down. Though with drums I feel like you have more control over the music. That's what I like about it best. When I'm playing guitar I'm following more.

**MD:** People talk a lot about how difficult it can be for a

contemporary musician, especially in indie rock, to make a living. How do you go about supporting yourself?

**Chris:** Ever since Weyes Blood came out I've been making a living from doing producing. One or two projects a year that pay really well and are things I believe in artistically, and then to have the rest of the time for my music, would be ideal.

Before that I was doing all kinds of stuff—most of it not very glamorous, like picking up trash outside of an art gallery where I worked that would have big events. I worked on a farm.... Right now it's nice because I'm doing my music and then I'm also taking some time away from it and working on other people's music. My ideal would be to make a living from my own music, or make a living doing something outside of music that doesn't take any mental space whatsoever.

I guess the future that I'm seeing for music, I'm sad to say, it's sort of like where music is pay-to-play, where musicians pay for the illusion of being artists. They

pay for this virtual-reality scenario where they get to think that they're artists but actually they're just paying for it. That's how I see the music business evolving, sadly.

I'd be really sad if it came across like I was complaining or bitter about that, though. I'm very fortunate to be where I'm at. I'm still doing it. I'm able to be doing what I want to do. I'm basically living the dream that I dreamt as a kid. And what good is money, if not for that. I don't have any regrets.



**“I have real specific taste as far as drum sounds. I like them to sound thick. It comes down to the way you tune the drums, muffle them, touch them.... It's not about gear.”**

# HUMES & BERG

MFG. CO., INC.

*The Professionals Choice*



**“Whether I'm in Italy doing a clinic tour or traveling to the biggest football game of the year..... my Custom Humes and Berg Enduro Pro Cases reign supreme in protecting my gear.”**

**-Brian Frasier - Moore**

f /humesandberg  
 i /humesandberg  
 t /HumesandBerg

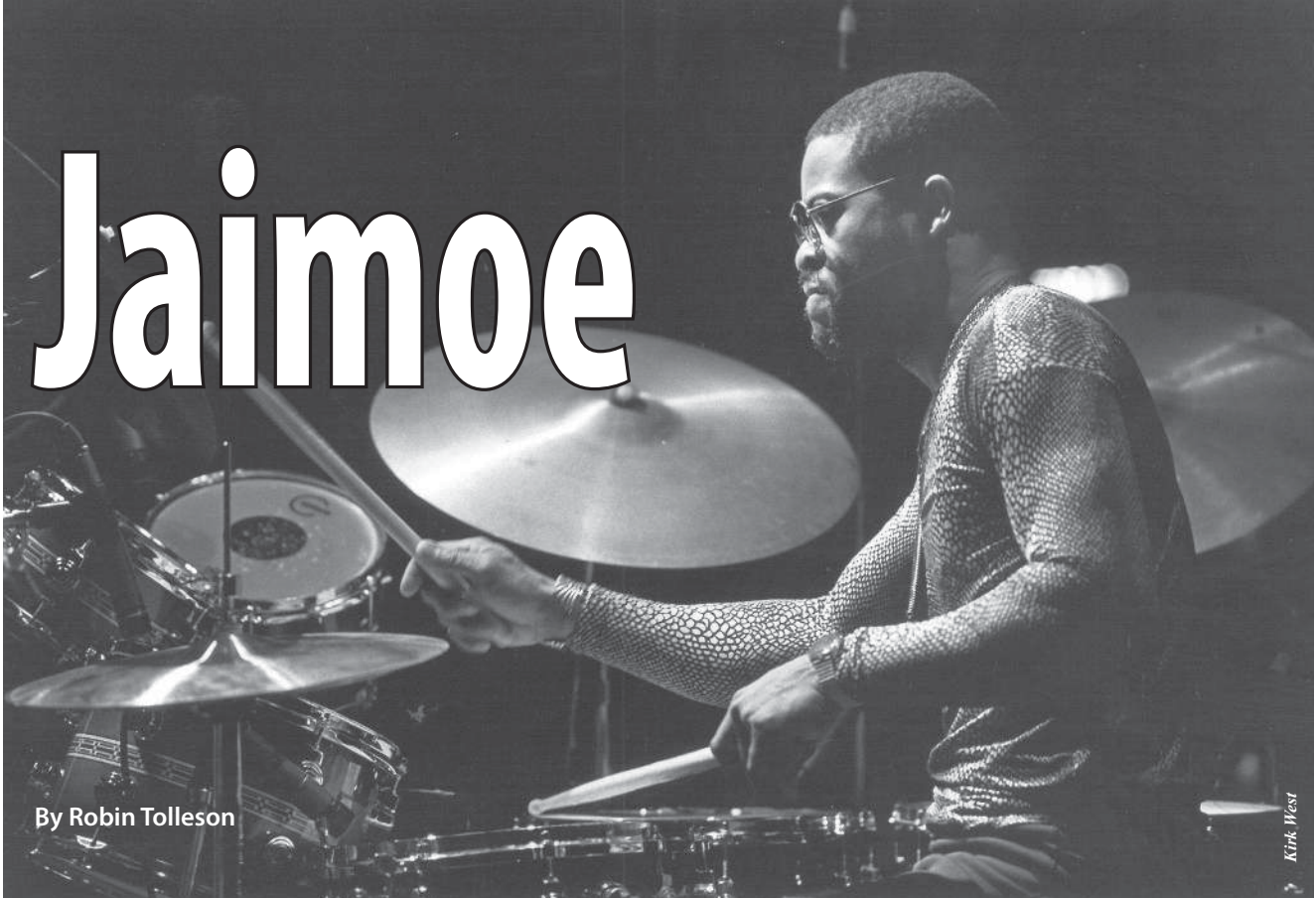


Family Owned and Operated For Over 80 Years

**www.humesandberg.com**



# Jaimoe



By Robin Tolleson

Kirk West

**The 2017 deaths of Allman Brothers Band drummer Butch Trucks and singer/keyboardist Gregg Allman hit the rock world pretty damn hard. But few could have felt the loss more than the man who was there from the very beginning.**

"Forty-five years is a long time, man," Jai Johanny Johanson says. That's how long the musician, better known as Jaimoe, occupied the Allman Brothers' iconic two-man drum section alongside Butch Trucks. "Butch was a great musician. And he was my friend, and brother."

Before joining the Allman Brothers in 1969—he recalls that it was guitarist Duane Allman's idea

to employ two drummers—the Mississippi-born Johanson played with soul stars like Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, and Joe Tex. His love of jazz revealed itself on Allmans jams like "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," and it was just this type of multi-genre mastery, shared by all of the group's members, that led to the Allmans becoming not only the face of contemporary Southern music,

but, by many people's estimation, the most influential American band of the classic-rock era.

Today the seventy-three-year-old Johanson maintains a regular performance schedule with his current group, Jaimoe's Jasssz Band. All told, he's made his living behind the kit for more than fifty years. "Time," he muses. "Where in the hell did it go?"

**Jaimoe:** There are two things I wished could have happened: for Otis Redding to have heard the Allman Brothers Band—he would have gone crazy—and for Butch and I to have played behind James Brown. Man, that would have been too much. Because basically he was the set drummer and I pretty much played percussions, which had a hell of a lot to do with making it work. The drumset is a percussion section, and there's a thousand ways to use it. And we did.

**MD:** You were more about putting the spice on top.

**Jaimoe:** Yeah, because... I used to listen a lot to the radio that came out of Cuba; Washington, D.C.; Europe—the short-wave radio. I heard all kinds of music, music that they certainly didn't play in the United States, not like that. I mean, continuously playing it. A lot of the stuff that I played came from listening to Dizzy Gillespie and Stan Kenton. Because they had some of those cats in their big

bands—conga players, timbale players. I got my introduction to basic percussions from having listened to those parts. When you start doing that, stuff in your head starts coming out.

From day one, Butch knew when to play, and he had his way of approaching the drums and I had my way of approaching the drums. He had the ability to play things that I certainly couldn't, and there were things I could play that he couldn't play. And it was just a matter of making it work.

**MD:** Talk about first meeting Butch.

**Jaimoe:** Duane and I were in St. Louis. We got into what we called the Dog Sled—a '69 Ford—and shot straight to Jacksonville, no stopping for anything. We got down there about two or three o'clock in the morning, and all Duane had to do was come to town and everybody in the world got up.

So the next day he took me over to this place. I had no idea



# ALESIS® *STRIKE* SERIES

Electronic drums. Acoustic soul.



**P A S I C 17**  
PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Booth #1219



# OWN THE CAJON



Pictured: Damon Grant ©2017 Vic Firth Company

## Introducing the Bru-Ilet and Cajon Beater from VIC

Discover new sounds with your current setup, or turn your cajon into the ultimate portable drumset.

See what they can do at [VICFIRTH.COM](http://VICFIRTH.COM)

**VIC FIRTH**  
THE PERFECT PAIR®

where we were going. But we get there, and he knocks, and this guy comes to the door. He goes, "Hey, man, how you doing?" Duane said, "This is my old drummer, Butch Trucks. This is my new drummer, Jai Johanny Johanson." That's how we met. About ten minutes after that, Duane left, and Butch and I was in love from that point on. We didn't know it yet, but it only took us about a day and a half, two days, and we never left each other's side.

We were trying to figure out where I would live, and Butch says, "Well, you might as well stay with me." And I did. A couple days later we took my drums out of the cases and set up in his dining room, and he set his drums up, and the rest of it is history. People say, "Did you practice this? Did you practice that?" We didn't practice anything. We do like doctors practice. We practiced



**Butch Trucks and Jaimoe**

what we do. It wasn't no rehearsal, this or that and the other.

He knew how to play, and I knew how to play, and it was a matter of...you're listening. You have a conversation and you listen to what somebody has to say, and the conversation goes on. You've got a part and I've got a part. Just like first trumpet, second trumpet, first tenor, second tenor, two guitars—one plays lead, one plays rhythm. There's a million things you can play. There's parts, there's parts that don't have to be the same. There's plenty of stuff there that you can play without playing the very same thing. We played the way we played; anything you hear, we played like that from day one.

**MD:** So there wasn't much talking about specific parts.

**Jaimoe:** No. This is the map. With a map, you're going from point A to point B. But what the map don't tell you is what's going to happen *between* point A and point B. A lot of shit can happen between A and B. So that's what the map was for, to get from A to B, and ever what came in between there, ever what you ran into, you dealt with, just like life.

**MD:** Did you approach recordings the same way, or did you think any differently in the studio?

**Jaimoe:** Same concept. Butch had experience playing in the studio, but I had no idea what the hell I was doing. So Butch played the way he played, and I just played less, you know. I got to the point where I made it fit, and they were happy with it, and that's pretty much that. But the ear had developed.

One way of dealing with it for me was, I started playing, like, left-handed. Because I figured out that I couldn't function as well playing left-handed. I didn't have the ability to do a lot of the things that were going on in my head if I played left-handed. And that's what I did on a whole lot of that stuff that we recorded in the studio. And that accomplished two things. It taught me another way to play and develop, and I got an idea about how to play in a studio band, making records, recording music. We never made a record—we recorded music.

**MD:** Did you two talk about the balance? It sounded like one person.

**Jaimoe:** It was supposed to. If you have a unit of any kind, regardless of how many great minds, if you don't think "one" about a project, you're going to have a lot of confusion. You have to think "one," just like a marriage or anything else. It can be rough sometimes, but that's how you make things like that work. The whole band was like one.

**MD:** And you were all mixing in your heads, on the spot.

**Jaimoe:** Yeah, you just played, and all of that took care of itself. The only complaint I ever had about the Allman Brothers Band: They were too goddam loud. I hate loud music. Other than that, shit...I'll take four or five lifetimes of that.





# BLACK PANTHER DESIGN LAB



## HEARTBREAKER

Concept Hybrid: **DARK / RUSTIC / THROATY**



## CHERRY BOMB

Concept Hybrid: **VINTAGE / CONTROLLED / PRECISE**



## EQUINOX

Concept Hybrid: **CLASSIC / BRIGHT / ARTICULATE**

## THE SCIENCE OF SOUND

The MAPEX™ Black Panther Design Lab Series embodies the performance qualities desired by top players. These distinctive instruments have been engineered using the Design Lab's "Concept Hybrid" approach to sound design, shell composition and drum construction to create unique and personal instruments for the demanding player. **Find out more at [MapexDrums.com](http://MapexDrums.com).**



# Dweezil Zappa's Ryan Brown

**Drums:** DW Collector's Series in Champagne Sparkle finish  
**A.** 6.5x14 Performance Series snare in Merlot Glass Glitter finish  
**B.** 8x10 tom  
**C.** 9x12 tom  
**D.** 10x13 tom  
**E.** 13x16 floor tom  
**F.** 14x18 floor tom  
**G.** 18x22 bass drum  
**H.** 6", 8", and 10" Rototoms  
**I.** 6x14 Gretsch Catalina Club snare (spare)

**Cymbals:** Sabian

1. 14" HHX Legacy top and Evolution bottom
2. 18" Prototype crash
3. 8" Paragon splash
4. 7" HH Radia bell
5. 18" HHX Power crash
6. 17" Paragon crash
7. 20" HHX Stage ride
8. 19" Paragon China
9. 20" Paragon China with a 12" Radia splash stacked upside down

**Drumheads:** Evans Genera HD Dry snare batters and Hazy 300 bottoms, Clear G2 tom batters and Clear G1 bottoms, EMAD bass drum batter and DW-logo front, and Black Chrome on Rototoms

**Electronics:** Roland SPD-S sampling pad, Tama Rhythm Watch metronome, and Jerry Harvey Audio JH-16 in-ear monitors

**Hardware:** DW 9000 double pedal, throne, and stands, and a 10" Vornado fan

**Sticks:** Promark 5A Texas Hickory wood tip, Select Balance Rebound .595" Hickory, TB-6 brushes, Thunder Rods, and Good Vibes Jerry Tachoir vibe mallets

**Microphones:** Shure Beta-52 on kick; AKG D-40 on snare and Rototoms, C-451 on hi-hats and ride, C-518 on toms, C-214 overheads, and D-5 for vocals



**When he took over the drum chair** with Dweezil Zappa more than four years ago, Southern California-based drummer Ryan Brown had to expand his setup in order to accommodate all of the sounds required in the extensive catalog that the guitarist was pulling from, which comprises mostly compositions by his father, Frank. "Before this gig, I was a four-piece guy," says Brown. "But this kit has the minimal amount of gear that I need to pull off everything that you hear on the records. In the song 'Inca Roads,' I do a run at the end that starts on the 6" Rototom and goes all the way down to the 18" floor tom.

"This setup took a while to get use to," Brown continues. "But I've always been a die-hard Frank Zappa fan. As a kid, I would play along to his records, but I never had all the gear to do it exactly like the recording. The extra toms, splash, bell, China, and stack are there to play the Bozzio-era stuff. For the cowbells, we decided it would be easier to put them into a sampling pad instead of trying to mic them up every night. I also use the pad for timpani and synth drum sweeps."

When asked if there's a specific tuning method for this kit, Brown says: "There is. I get out a piano app on my phone and hit an 'F' for the 6" Rototom. Then I go down in triads, à la 'Camptown Races.' The 6" Roto is an octave up from the 10" tom, and the 16" is an octave below it. The 18" tom is a fourth lower than the 16". When I go down the drums, it sounds like a chord. The toms are alternately panned—left, right, left, right, etc.—so the audience hears them bouncing from side to side. That was a Frank thing."

## GEARING UP ON STAGE AND UP CLOSE

Interview by John Martinez  
 Photos by Alex Solca







6

8

9

5

7

F

I

D

E

G

4

C

A

3

B

1

2

H

H

H

# Linear Drumming Fundamentals

## Defining the Concept

by Joel Rothman

**Although linear-drumming phrases** have been popular among drummers for some time, students often still ask me to explain the difference between linear and nonlinear drumming. To clarify, in linear drumming's purest form, no two surfaces are struck simultaneously. For instance, if playing a cymbal, no other drumset voice—such as a snare or bass drum—would be struck at the same time. In nonlinear drumming, multiple drumset voices can be played simultaneously.


There are two main reasons that drummers can be confused about the difference between linear and nonlinear patterns. First, many students often initially learn jazz and rock coordination using nonlinear exercises without addressing linear patterns in these styles. After a student spends extensive time practicing nonlinear exercises, playing in this fashion can become so ingrained that it can be difficult to employ alternate coordination. In order to play linear patterns, students may have to unlearn habits. Moreover, if you're unfamiliar with linear techniques, it can be difficult to pick out precisely what's being struck when listening to a drummer play linear patterns.

A second reason for confusion is the fact that drummers who play linear phrases rarely do so in a pure form. Many drummers play linear and nonlinear figures within the same tune or passage.

The following four hi-hat and snare patterns should help clarify the difference between linear and nonlinear drumming. Each of the patterns is first notated without the bass drum. That is followed by a linear version of the main pattern with the bass drum included. Finally, we'll take a look at a nonlinear version of the same groove.

Main pattern:                                  Linear variation:                                  Nonlinear variation:

1



Main pattern:                                  Linear variation:                                  Nonlinear variation:

2



Main pattern:                                  Linear variation:                                  Nonlinear variation:

3



Main pattern:                                  Linear variation:                                  Nonlinear variation:

4



For more linear-drumming exercises and concepts, check out my book *The Bible of Linear Drumming*.

**Joel Rothman** is the author of nearly one hundred drum and percussion books, which sell worldwide through his company, JR Publications. For more info, visit [joelrothman.com](http://joelrothman.com).











DDRUM'S M-A-X KITS COMBINE MAPLE'S TRIED AND TRUE TONE WITH  
ALDER'S DARK FOCUS AND PUNCH, CREATING NEAR-PERFECT ATTACK AND SUSTAIN.  
ENHANCED TUNABILITY AND PITCH SEPARATION AT THE TURN OF A DRUM KEY.

**M-A-X, DRUM TONE...PERFECTED.**

**ddrum®**

[www.ddrum.com](http://www.ddrum.com)  [ddrumUSA](#)  [ddrumUSA](#)  [ddrumUSA](#)  [ddrumUSA](#)







## Hi-Hat Accents

### Adding Melody to Your Grooves

by Powell Randolph



In this lesson we'll embellish 16th-note grooves with hi-hat accents. In Exercises 1–4, accents are placed on the main hi-hat in the first measure, and in the second measure the right-handed accents are moved to the ride or an auxiliary hi-hat. Play the accents with the shoulder of the stick and the unaccented notes with the tip so that the louder notes cut through and create their own melody within the groove.

You can try putting any of the accented notes on other voices, such as cymbal stacks, splashes, or other effects cymbals. Some of these phrases also make interesting tom grooves. To do that, simply move your right hand to the floor tom and your left hand to the rack tom, but keep the backbeats on the snare.

1

R L R L R L R L    R L R L R L R L

2

R L R L R L R L    R L R L R L R L

3

R L R L R L R L    R L R L R L R L

4

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

Next we'll orchestrate the following single-voice accent pattern, which is pulled from Ted Reed's classic book *Syncopation*.

5

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

Let's move the phrase to the hi-hat, while playing backbeats on the snare.

6

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

Now move some of the right-hand accents to the ride or aux hi-hat.

7

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

You can also try playing the snare on beat 3 to give the pattern a half-time feel.

8

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

Exercise 9 incorporates occasional ride cymbal accents within the half-time feel.

9

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

Exercises 10–13 combine the concepts discussed in this lesson with a few bass drum variations.

10

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

11

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

12

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

13

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

**Powell Randolph** is a drum teacher at Alpha Music in Virginia Beach and plays rock shows with orchestras around North America for Windburn Music Productions. Randolph can be reached through [powellrandolph.com](http://powellrandolph.com).





BENNYGREB

# The Time Machine



Shown in the new  
Vintage Black Slate Finish

**NOW AVAILABLE WITH  
OPTIONAL BD BRACKET**



*The SONOR team, in cooperation with artists and collectors, worked tirelessly to bring the Vintage Series drums as close as possible to the look, feel, and sound of its predecessor from the 1950's and 60's. SONOR then combined this with it's knowledge of modern drum building to create an instrument that will hold up to today's modern playing.*

**SONOR.COM**



## Rhythmic Conversions

### Part 6: Funk Grooves and the Half-Note Triplet

by Steve Fidyk

In this lesson we'll superimpose a new tempo over an existing pulse using a half-note triplet, and we'll manipulate the subdivision to create funk grooves in the implied pulse. Be sure to practice these patterns with a metronome and work through each slowly until you gain control of the rhythm.

Accenting every fourth 8th-note-triplet partial in a two-measure phrase of triplets creates a three-against-four polyrhythm over the existing quarter-note pulse. These accents outline the half-note triplet.

Once you can comfortably feel and accent the half-note triplet, try orchestrating it on the hi-hat with your dominant hand.

Next, play the half-note-triplet with the bass drum while playing every other half-note-triplet partial on the snare. The resulting funk groove has a four-on-the-floor feel superimposed over the original pulse.

When played as a time pattern, this conversion gives the illusion of a funk groove camouflaged within a swing feel. Try practicing four measures of swing time followed by four measures of Exercise 3. Practicing the transition in four-bar phrases will help you gain confidence when applying this concept with a band.

Next, experiment with the following bass drum rhythms while playing the hand pattern from Exercise 3.

You can also experiment with different hand patterns and stickings, as demonstrated in Exercises 9–12.

(RLRR)(LRLR)RLRR LRLRLRLRLRL



10

(RLLR)(LRRL)RLLR LRLRLRLRLRL

11

(RRLR)(LLRL)RLLR LRLRLRLRLRL

12

(RLRL)(LRRL)RLLR LRLRLRLRLRL

These are just a few possibilities. I encourage you to come up with your own funk patterns using this concept. Be patient, and have fun!



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



**NOW AVAILABLE!**

# black hole

**STARTER PACK**

includes our **5 best sellers**  
**Sizes:** 10", 12", 14", 16" and 22"

We turned down the price so you can turn down the Volume!

Retail: ~~\$328.00~~  
**Starter Pack: \$249.99**  
 Savings: \$70.00

**RTOM** see more at [rtom.com](http://rtom.com)

# RHYTHM BY KARL. COWBELL BY LP.

**THE KARL PERAZZO SIGNATURE COWBELL**  
 Made by hand in the U.S.A. This is the bell used to drive the Santana sound night after night. It includes LP's patented Vise-mount with memory lock that securely fits up to 1/2-inch diameter rods.

**LP**  
 LPMUSIC.COM

©2018 LATIN PERCUSSION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## Accented Three-Note Groupings

### Unique Variations and Phrases

by Rick Gratton

The following one-bar patterns demonstrate combinations of accented three-note groupings using 16th-note and 16th-note-triplet subdivisions. Throughout this lesson, we'll vary the accent placements and rhythmic combinations to create unique exercises and phrases.

When applying accents to most 16th-note patterns, we often tend to accent the beginning of each beat.

1

Instead of accenting every fourth 16th note, we can vary the subdivision so that accented three-note groupings can fit easily within the measure.

First let's vary the subdivision. In Exercise 2, we'll play 16th notes on beats 1, 2, and 3 and a sextuplet on beat 4.

2

Next apply an accent to every third note using an alternating sticking.

3

Let's vary this pattern by shifting the 16th-note triplets to the "&" of beat 2.

4

And finally, let's start the sextuplet on beat 1.

5

Once you're comfortable with these phrases, check out the following ways to creatively apply hand and foot orchestrations to these patterns on the drumset. The following combinations accent every third 16th note or 16th-note-triplet partial. We'll start out by voicing these exercises with only the bass drum and snare before we incorporate the hi-hat. Dig into these simple patterns, and make them groove.

6

7

8

9

10

11

**Rick Gratton** is a Grammy-nominated drummer who has recorded or performed with R&B great Patti LaBelle, singer/actor Dan Aykroyd, and Rush's Alex Lifeson and Geddy Lee, among many others. He's the author of the popular book *Rick's Licks* and is an active graphic designer for Hudson Music.







"My own rule has always been that I would never endorse any product that I wouldn't buy myself, if endorsements weren't an option. That's exactly how I ended up with Vater in 1992.

They had an early reputation among players as making great sticks. I checked out their sticks on my own, got used to them, and then began what would become a now 25 year relationship with the company. Their quality control is great, the sticks always feel good, and each pair is consistent.

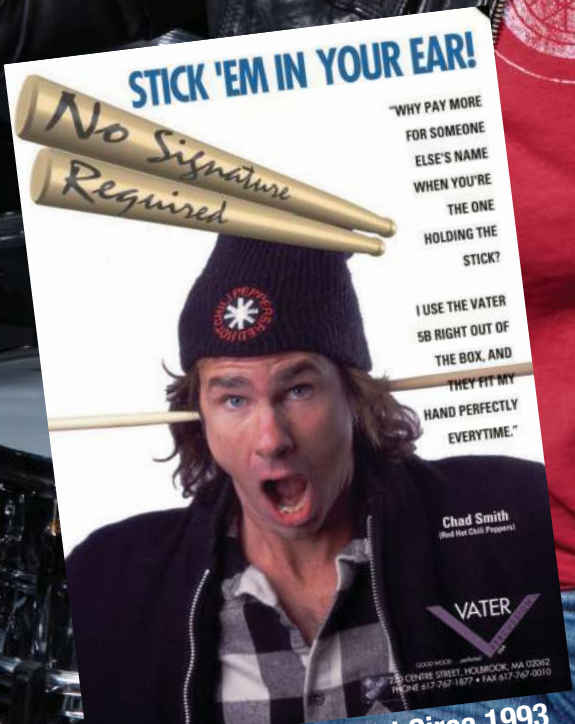
I just love how it's still a family business, starting with grandpa Jack, then going to Clary, and down to Alan and Ron. No corporate sell-outs here, folks. These guys live, sleep, breathe, eat, and dream of drumsticks. They get good wood about good wood, and are totally obsessed with making the best sticks possible.

Over the years we've had some pretty outrageous fun and the Vater's have always treated me like their brother. Together, we have celebrated life milestones like birthdays, weddings and the births of our children. They have always made me feel like a member of their family.

Together we developed the Funkblaster model, which today is still my stick of choice. Vater combines both kick-ass production techniques with a "work hard, play hard" attitude. It's always been an easy decision on who to stick with (pun intended!). They never let me down.

The Vater staff enjoy their work and I enjoy hanging with them whenever I can. They better keep it up, 'cause I plan to keep playing until the wheels fall off!!!"

*Chad Smith*



Early Chad Smith Ad Circa 1993



#SWITCHTOVATER

270 Centre Street | Holbrook, MA 02343 | 1.781.767.1877 | info@vater.com

VATER.COM



# Create Your Own Success

## Before, During, and After the “Big Gig”

by Jim Riley

**People often ask me about the keys to succeeding** in the music business. While there's no single answer to that question, there are certain measurable and quantifiable elements to discuss. I'm going to try as best as I can to lay out a generic playbook on how to achieve what you want from your music career. It's worth mentioning that many drummers can achieve success and happiness without landing what we think of as a “big gig.” But this article speaks to those who can't shake the desire to play music on the world's largest stages.

The first thing you must realize is that success is not a destination—it's an ongoing journey. This is important to understand if you want to sustain a career in music before, during, and after you land the big gig.

### Before the Gig

A successful music career is a marathon, not a sprint. Don't get too anxious or set unreasonable expectations for yourself. Just make sure you do something every day to advance your career. This can be as simple as having lunch with a fellow professional musician. However, it's important to make a list of things you need to get better at on the drums and attack them. Here are some items I believe every drummer trying to get to the next level needs to practice.

**Learn to play for the song.** You must be willing to set aside your own personal desires and ask yourself, “What does this song *need* from me?” Most players lack the self-discipline to do this. What you don't play can be as impactful as what you do.

**Develop a sound.** You must be able to produce a great sound that transcends the actual instrument that you're playing. While it's somewhat important to have professional-quality gear, it's far more important to have the ability to make mediocre gear sound great simply by the way you play it.

**Refine the fundamentals.** Learn to play all of the forty standard drum rudiments. The more you can do on a single surface, like a practice pad or snare drum, the easier it is to move ideas around the drumkit.

**Play all styles.** You must be able to play many styles of music, otherwise you're limiting your possibilities for professional gigs. There's no room for musical snobbery. When you say, “I hate country” or “I'm a jazz drummer,” what you're actually doing is limiting the amount of work that could be coming to you. If your goal is to be a working drummer, then you have to be willing and able to play any type of music.

**Learn how to chart songs.** There are several ways to write out drum charts, from simple shorthand to traditional notation and the Nashville number system. I choose which type of notation method works best for each situation.

**Get comfortable playing with a click.** Many top gigs require you to play to a click track. If you're not comfortable doing that, then it's time to get to work. You should also learn how to program drums and percussion in recording software like Logic or Ableton Live.

**Go where the work is.** If you want to play for a Broadway show, then you should move to New York City or New Jersey. If your dream is playing on movie soundtracks, then you need to



be in L.A. If you want to record and/or tour with big country acts, move to Nashville. In order to land a big gig, you need to be swimming in a big pond.

If you decide to move to a new city, make a point to check out and learn from the ones who are already doing what you want to be doing. Be patient and humble. Don't talk trash. Bad reputations spread like wildfire, but good reputations spread slow and steady. Make it your job to go out and meet other musicians and singers. Meet other drummers, and definitely make it a point to meet bass players. Those are the folks who are going to recommend you for gigs.

If you land an audition, be on time. Don't overdress, but do over-prepare. Know the music backwards and forwards. During the audition, look up at the people you're playing with and have a great time. When you're finished, shake everyone's hands, tell them you had a great time, and then leave. Don't call them; they will call you if you got the gig.

### During the Gig

When the phone call comes that you've been selected, you're going to feel like you've finally made it. But you haven't yet. You've simply been given an invitation to the big dance. Understand that this is an opportunity most people don't ever get to experience, so treat it like a privilege. Playing music is your job, so consider it as such. Keep the partying to a minimum, otherwise your trip to the big time will be a short one. Here are some thoughts on what you should (and shouldn't) do *during* the gig.

**Don't start calling drum companies to ask for endorsement deals immediately after you get a gig.**



Concentrate on getting settled into your new job, and worry about the other stuff later.

**Be considerate of your fellow musicians.** Traveling on a tour bus can be super-cool, but lack of respect for personal space or even a lack of personal hygiene can be the difference between keeping and losing a gig. The show is just two hours of your day. How you act during the other twenty-two is just as important.

**Keep some distance.** If you're a side musician, be friendly but keep some professional space between you and the artist you're supporting. It's just better that way.

**Save money.** When you get a big gig, you will likely be making more money than you have before. But understand that this gig could end at any time, so put the money aside. A chunk could go towards a retirement fund, and I also recommend putting away enough money to cover living expenses for six months in case of an emergency. If you buy a house, try to pay it off as quickly as you can. Assume, from a financial standpoint, that this gig won't last forever. Too many people spend money like it will always be there, but it won't.

**Keep growing as a player.** As the demands of the big gigs grow, you must continue to develop as a player or risk being left behind. Put your ego aside, and take some lessons.

**Diversify your portfolio.** Even if you're a full member of a successful band, you must diversify your income in order to minimize the impact of losing any particular stream. If you only have one source of revenue and you lose it, what will you do? Consider teaching, writing, producing, or pursuing other endeavors that will keep your income going once the big gig ends.

**Keep your eyes and ears open.** Pay attention to what the

non-musicians involved in the gig are doing (stage managers, tour managers, etc.). You might find a second career in one of these administrative areas of the music industry.

**Be nice to everyone.** Remember that you will often see the same people on the way down from a big gig as you did on the way up.

### When the Big Gig Ends

All good things come to an end eventually, so here are some things to consider when your days on the big stage are over.

**Don't live in the past.** If the gig came to an ugly end, take the high road and try not to become bitter, because nothing good will come of that. Be proud of what you were able to accomplish, and move forward with your life. If another big gig comes your way, that's great. But if it doesn't, take comfort in the fact that you were given a special opportunity and you made the most of it.

**Keep playing.** It's important that you continue to play your drums and make music. Some drummers quit because they don't see the point in playing on a smaller level after being at the top. Remember why you started making music in the first place, and don't be too proud to take some smaller gigs.

**Be a mentor.** I think it's very important to share what you've learned from your experiences. If you made mistakes, share those with the next generation so they can be better prepared for whatever opportunities come their way.

**Jim Riley** is the drummer and bandleader for Rascal Flatts. He's also the author of *Survival Guide for the Modern Drummer* and *Song Charting Made Easy*. You can contact him at [www.jimrileymusic.com](http://www.jimrileymusic.com).



## DrumDial

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

**Emanuel Harrold**  
Drummer, Producer,  
Composer, Educator



watch  
the video

### BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION

9420 Reseda Blvd. PMB 350, Northridge, CA 91324  
Ph. 800-547-6401 | [www.bigbangdist.com](http://www.bigbangdist.com)

MOONGEL®  
DAMPER PADS



## LET'S 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

RTOM

**BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION**  
9420 Reseda Blvd. PMB 350, Northridge, CA 91324  
Ph. 800-547-6401 | [www.bigbangdist.com](http://www.bigbangdist.com)

## Drum Design Knowledge

### Part 3: The Snare Bed

by Russ Miller

**We need to be experts at our jobs**, and knowing our tools is a part of that. I always put together my rig for tours or gigs, and then take suggestions from my tech on how to make the setup easier and smoother to recreate night after night. I like to know exactly

**“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”**

— Benjamin Franklin

what’s going on with my instrument at all times. I believe that’s a crucial component to developing consistency in my presentation.

In this installment, I want to continue our discussion about drum design with some information about snare beds, which are the portions of the drum shell where the snare straps pass over the bearing edge. Snare beds are somewhat of a mystery to many drummers. Hopefully this information helps you make more informed decisions about what gear to use for a given musical situation. For instance, you might want to play articulate, funky ghost-note patterns, but if you use a drum with rounded bearing edges and a shallow snare bed, you won’t get the sensitivity required to play that approach effectively. Let’s look at the components of the snare bed and how they affect the sound.

#### Snare Bed Basics

The width of the snare bed has a huge effect on the sensitivity and sustain of the snare wires. The pitch (steepness) of the snare bed dictates how cleanly the snares respond without extraneous buzz or sympathetic vibration from the toms. When the pitch is too great, meaning the angle is too steep between the bearing edge and the bed, the drumhead will wrinkle where the wires make contact. This often causes the wires to bow outward and rattle.

The depth of the snare bed is what determines how articulate the snares will be. Deeper beds can cause the wires to mute the bottom head and dry up the sound. As with everything

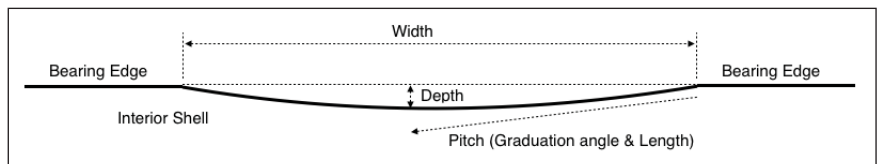
in instrument design, the type of snare bed you employ is a matter of preference.

Here’s a breakdown of different snare bed types and the sounds they produce. If you want a more articulate (dry but sensitive) sound, then go with deeper

snare beds. If you need a bigger sound with wide and long snare sustain, then go with a wider but shallower snare bed. For a cleaner sound with less buzz, utilize a snare bed with a more gradual pitch.

Keep in mind that there’s give and take with these different types of snare beds. An articulate, dry snare exposes every detail of your playing, but backbeats aren’t as big and wide sounding. You sacrifice some of the fatness of the drum’s tone in order to make it more sensitive and articulate.

Here’s a diagram to help you recognize the various parts of the snare bed.



#### Extended (Floating) Snare Systems

Another way of mounting the snares to the drum is with what is called an extended or floating strainer. This type of design utilizes wires that are longer than the diameter of the drum. The Ludwig & Ludwig Super-Ludwig snare drum was the first model to incorporate this design, back in 1925. The idea behind this design is that the snares aren’t pulled via tension on either end, but, rather, are attached evenly to the snare mechanism. The snares travel evenly up and down the span of the drum. These types of throw-offs usually have separate tension adjustment capabilities for

each wire. Extended snare systems are often used on symphonic drums, and many of them feature multiple compositions of wires (gut, steel, brass, cable, etc.). Drums with extended snare mechanisms feel a bit different because there’s little tension between the wires and the bottom heads. These drums can have more ambience, or they can be adjusted to create very articulate, controlled tones.

#### Conclusion

The conversation about snare beds really boils down to a few simple questions. First, how articulate do you want the drum to be? Do you need to hear every tiny ghost note clearly and precisely? You might think everyone would want that, but remember that a snare bed that increases articulation can also lead to a smaller backbeat sound. Conversely, if you need a wide, puffy, vintage-sounding backbeat, then you won’t want to use a drum that has an extra-deep snare bed.

I hope we were able to shed some light on the details of the snare bed, and why you should choose certain types over others. I encourage you to

spend time testing and playing as many drums as possible, and pay attention to the details of the snare beds for the various models. By educating yourself, you’ll be better equipped to know which drums will work best for different scenarios.



**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 [russtmiller.com](http://russtmiller.com).







# Found On *Reverb*

*Player Grade Vintage: 1970 Ludwig Blue/Olive Badge Super Classic 13/16/22*



BUY | SELL | PLAY

The world's largest marketplace  
for musicians, Reverb.com.

# Get Good: Listening

by Elizabeth Walsh

As a teenager in high school, I practiced classical piano for two hours a day. I could play really difficult music—as long as it was notated. I ran into trouble when it came to playing music with other people, because I'd never been taught how to listen to my fellow players. If I lost track of what measure we were on, I would be completely lost and would have to look busy until we got to a place I recognized.

Then I joined a rock band, where I learned a lot about performing. And when I began playing in classical groups again, I was surprised at how much easier it was. The secret was learning to listen, something that will do a lot to improve your experience and value as a musician.

To learn some ways to improve our listening skills, we spoke with drummers Brian Chase and George Marsh, who have spent significant time honing their own abilities in that area. And while we lost composer Pauline Oliveros in November 2016, she famously created and wrote extensively on a unique approach called deep listening, which we'll tap into for clues toward improvement.

## Listening Versus Hearing

Listening is very different from hearing. Hearing is automatic—you can't help noticing the car alarm out in the street, or the ring of your phone. But listening is intentional. As auditory neuroscientist Seth S. Horowitz wrote in a 2011 *New York Times* article titled "The Science and Art of Listening," "The difference between the sense of hearing and the skill of listening is attention."

Sometimes when we've played with a band for a while, especially one that's been playing the same compositions for a long time, we can fall into bad habits of hearing but not listening. We might begin to pay close attention only if something goes wrong. After a while,

we can begin to get bored, and the group can begin to sound sloppy. By reminding yourself to actively listen to your bandmates, you'll find that you can get a lot more out of the experience. You can be aware of, and respond to, small changes, creating a richer, more interesting musical stew.

In styles like free jazz and avant-garde music, where improvisation may be a fundamental part of the piece, listening to your bandmates can actually make the difference between success and failure. As *Modern Drummer* Pro Panelist George Marsh says, "It's really important to have communication between the players. If it's noise or just other sound, and people aren't listening, then it's really not any fun; I don't even understand *what it is*."

## Listening Will Make You Sound Better

If you're acutely aware of what your bandmates are doing, it's easier to accommodate all the little details that make a piece better—that crescendo the flute is dropping in, or the extra accent from the bass player. When each musician is aware of the others, a group becomes more of a single, expressive entity.

Brian Chase, drummer with the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, says, "There are lots of reasons why [listening's] important, the most important being that it serves the function of why the musician is there in the first place. The other thing is that it removes doubts."

This can be extremely helpful when you're improvising, especially if you're a little nervous about it. Chase says, "If you take the

### Suggested Listening

Pauline Oliveros/Stuart Dempster/Panaiotis Deep Listening /// Timeless Pulse (George Marsh/Jennifer Wilsey/Pauline Oliveros) Trio /// Brian Chase Drums & Drones



**George Marsh** moves back and forth between the worlds of jazz, rock, classical, and the avant-garde. Among the artists he's worked with are Joe Henderson, Mose Allison, Jerry Garcia, the Kronos Quartet, David Grisman, Pauline Oliveros, and Denny Zeitlin, with whom he's recently released the album *Expedition: Duo Electro-Acoustic Improvisations* (Sunnyside Records). Marsh also recently updated his drum method book *Inner Drumming: Drumset Exercises for Developing Mind/Body Awareness*.



The late **Pauline Oliveros**, one of the pioneering forces behind the creation of electronic music, began her career at the San Francisco Tape Music Center. In 1989 she cofounded the Deep Listening Band, a title that references not only the form of listening she had evolved at this time but also the location of the group's first album: a cistern fourteen feet below ground.



Peter Gammashkin

**Brian Chase** studied jazz drums at Oberlin College and Conservatory, sticking to the classics like Miles Davis and John Coltrane until a friend introduced him to John Zorn and the downtown New York City music scene. In 2000 he joined college friend Karen O in her band the Yeah Yeah Yeahs. He's since played with, among others, Seth Mifterka, Man Forever with John Colpitts, the Sway Machinery, Peter Aaron, and his own Brian Chase Duo.



emphasis off whatever dialogue is happening in your head and you kind of listen from the larger perspective of the music, then the music will often answer any questions."

Active listening will not only make you a better ensemble player, it may send you farther along on your own solo journey as a musician.

### Improving Listening Skills

As with everything else in music, you improve your listening skills through practice, and there are many exercises to help you do this.

In the 1960s, when George Marsh lived in Chicago, he was friends with Allaudin Mathieu, who at the time was a keyboard player for the famed Second City theater company. After hours, Marsh and Mathieu would take the improv games used by Second City and apply them to their own music. They found that despite any differences between the two art forms, applying the acting tools to their music making helped them respond to each other more sensitively.

Copying each other's riffs is also a great way to ensure that everyone in the band knows what everyone else is playing. "If you're playing with people and you think you're not being heard," Marsh says, "you can ask them to focus on what each person is playing, one at a time. Instead of criticizing, you're inviting people in. It solves the problem immediately." Opening up the lines of communication can do more than fine-tune and focus your hearing; it can also help defuse any possible conflict at rehearsal.

Pauline Oliveros created many exercises designed to improve listening skills. In one, called "Heartbeat," taken from her book *Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice*, she directed, "Each person detects and then expresses their own heartbeat, first by tapping on the body. When everyone is tapping, then switch to hand clapping. Each person keeps their own heartbeat and listens to the composite rhythms of the group." Playing polyrhythms like this is definitely challenging, but at its deepest level the exercise is as simple as focusing on your own heartbeat.

Chase says he focuses on his own place in the ensemble and how he can contribute to the overall sound. "If you're playing drums in a band," Brian explains, "and the band is playing a song, the more you listen as a drummer, the more you're kind of giving yourself to the song. And the less you listen, the more you shut out the rest of the band and the rest of the song. So the more that listening is happening for the song, the more energy is devoted to supporting the song."

### Deep Listening

Oliveros conceived the term *deep listening* to describe a meditative, highly aware form of listening. She drew on meditation practice, yoga, and tai chi to create listening exercises. As a composer who used improvisation as the basis for much of her work, she designed the exercises to also help with improvisation skills. "Pauline was really amazing about bringing our attention to the process of listening," Chase says. "I think part of the deep listening process's meditation is bringing awareness to the way we respond and react to sound."

The exercises, laid out in a set of creative instructions called "Sonic Meditations," range from the relatively mundane to the deeply spiritual. "Teach Yourself to Fly," for example, involves vocalizing within a group. But "Native" is a more spiritual exercise: "Take a walk at night. Walk so silently that the bottoms of your feet become ears."

### Everyone Can Benefit

Actively focusing on listening to the musicians you're performing with, and making an effort to internalize the process so that it becomes automatic, can only improve the results of your collaborations. And it matters little if the pieces you're playing are completely improvised or following strict charts; the music always benefits the more in-sync you are with your fellow performers.



NEW  
Fuse  
ZebraWood

of course -  
DIXON

NEW  
Motion Blue Burst

PlayDixon.com



# NEW *and* NOTABLE



## Promark

### Matthew Strauss Signature Sticks

This signature stick series is the first in the Promark catalog to use persimmon, a preferred wood type among concert percussionists for its strength, comfortable weight, and density.

The .670"x17" General Concert Stick features a long, arrow-shaped tip that provides enhanced surface contact to create full-bodied tones and smoother rolls. The 3" taper gives this drumstick a nimble feel with plenty of rebound. List price is \$35.

The .630"x15.875" Staccato Concert Stick features a small, injection-molded nylon tip that creates bright tones for increased clarity from the drum. The combination of a short front end and a rear taper gives this stick a forward-balanced feel that helps propel the momentum at soft dynamics. List price is \$40.

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



## ATV

### aDrums Artist Drums

These electronic drums feature an extended dynamic range and are ideal for drummers looking for an acoustic playing experience right out of the box. Kits are available in Standard and Expanded aD5 setups, and configurations without the module are also available.

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

## Cymbomute Pro360 Cymbal Mutes

Cymbomute Pro360 Cymbal Mutes are made from a new fabric-and-silicone material. The silicone bumper, which features a four-strand yellow reinforcement stripe, receives the impact of the stick, while the fabric absorbs the sound. Pro360s are available in four individual sizes, and list prices range from \$13.19 to \$17.15.

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





## Sabian

### Jack DeJohnette HHX Shimmering 75 Ride

This new limited-edition ride celebrates DeJohnette's seventy-fifth birthday. Triple-hammered and buffed for shimmer and glassiness, the medium-weight Shimmering 75 is designed for a controlled, musical ride, with great warmth and ample sustain. The bell sounds solid without being piercing.

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

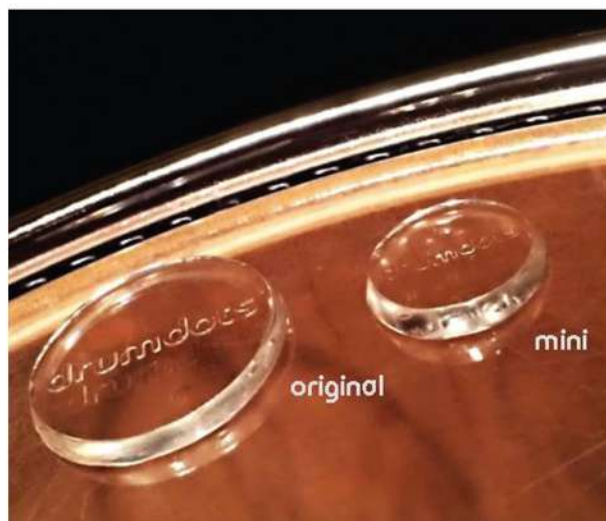


## Drumdots

### Drum Dampeners

Drumdots are engineered to control ring without sacrificing natural tone. Made of the proprietary polymer VTem, Drumdots can be used on any coated or uncoated drumhead, cymbal, or cowbell. Available in original and miniature sizes, Drumdots are said to be easily removable, reusable, and durable, and they will not melt, lose shape, or leave a residue.

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



# RED HICKORY EH?

Its true! We've achieved the impossible and extracted the heart of the tree to bring you a stick that's strong enough and tough enough to go the distance.



LOS  
CABOS  
DRUMSTICKS

Exclusively Distributed By:  
**BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION**  
800.547.6401 | [www.bigbangdist.com](http://www.bigbangdist.com)



## RETAILER PROFILE

# Absolute Music Bournemouth, England

Running a drum shop in the United States isn't without its challenges, from competing with the nearby Guitar Center and online giants like Musician's Friend and Amazon to maintaining a healthy profit margin when a majority of your sales are from small-ticket items like heads and sticks. But at least drum retailers on *Modern Drummer's* side of the Atlantic don't have to import the bulk of their stock or navigate the economic impact of something like Brexit, the U.K.'s prospective withdrawal from the European Union. This is the reality for U.K. music retailers, like the superstore Absolute Music, located in scenic Bournemouth on England's southern coast. Austin Lane, a veteran of bands like Face to Face and Seven, who had some European chart success in the late '80s and early '90s and opened arena tours for Richard Marx and the Monkees, joined Absolute in 2011 to set up its drum department. He shared his insights on what it takes to succeed in a market with such unique challenges.



Absolute's drum department: Shaun "Baldrick" Brown, Austin "Oz" Lane, and Chris "Dougal" Leredde

### The challenges have changed quite dramatically even in the last six years.

The latest challenge is the Brexit thing. Everything has gone up quite considerably since Brexit, some things as much as 30 percent. The pound crashing against the dollar has obviously affected that. Because with a few exceptions—you have Premier and the British Drum Company—we don't have a great deal of drum manufacturing going on here in England. And we have no cymbal manufacturers. So much of it—your major stick companies, heads, cymbals, and kits, even the Far Eastern drum companies like Pearl, Yamaha, and Tama—they're all paid for in U.S. dollars.

**I wouldn't say I've seen a drop-off in business due to Brexit, but there's a kind of underlying worry.** Luckily we're quite a big store, so we can maintain a level of business. But there's been quite a few casualties over the last few years, and not

just because of Brexit. A lot of smaller stores went under. The place I used to work, Poole Percussion, went out of business, and that was a reasonably sized store. A very big store in England called DrumWright also closed. Denmark Street in London, there's nothing there now, really. You've still got a couple of decent drum stores in London—you've got Drumshack, Footes, and Wembley Drum Centre. But there's very few major drum stores or drum departments left in the U.K.

**People keep blaming the internet, but I don't think it's just the internet.** We can all complain, "Oh, Amazon is selling this at whatever price..." Great, let them do it. But Amazon cannot fix your bass drum pedal on a Saturday night before a gig. Amazon cannot tune your drumkit up before you go in the studio. Amazon can't do a drum clinic. Go see Dave Weckl on Amazon? It's not gonna happen. We do a lot of clinics, a lot of big names. We've had Mark Guiliana,

Dave Weckl, Gavin Harrison, Benny Greb, Jojo Mayer, Russ Miller, Mark Schulman, and Bruce Coleman. We do things during the summer holidays where kids from ten to sixteen can come and make records in our studio. We're very proactive in attracting business. We accentuate what we *can* offer.

**We do a fair amount of online sales throughout Europe.** And we do get a fair amount of people from Europe in the store, particularly if they're holidaying in the U.K. Especially from places like Sweden. It's quite expensive for drum equipment in the Scandinavian countries. They're not necessarily coming to see us per se; they're in the U.K. on holiday. Bournemouth is one of the best tourist destinations in England. That helps.

**I've been selling drums now for twenty-five years, and I still get things horrendously wrong.** I think something is going to sell great, and I order a load of them and it kind of dies. Other times I think, *Well, that's not going to do very well*, and it sells like hotcakes. The biggest problem I find, particularly with kits, is colors. Color is always subjective. I love the Tony Williams yellow color. I've got an old Yamaha 9000 in 'mellow yellow' from '83—it's one of my favorite kits. So I love yellow kits, but other people, they come in the shop and see a yellow kit and go, *Ah, yuck...*

What's going particularly well at the moment are the Benny Greb Meinl Cymbal Tuners. I got that one right-ish. But I still have massive errors. That's when you'll find the Absolute Music drum department has a sale on stuff that I've cocked up on. [laughs] But my ratio is on the plus side. I get more things right than I get wrong."

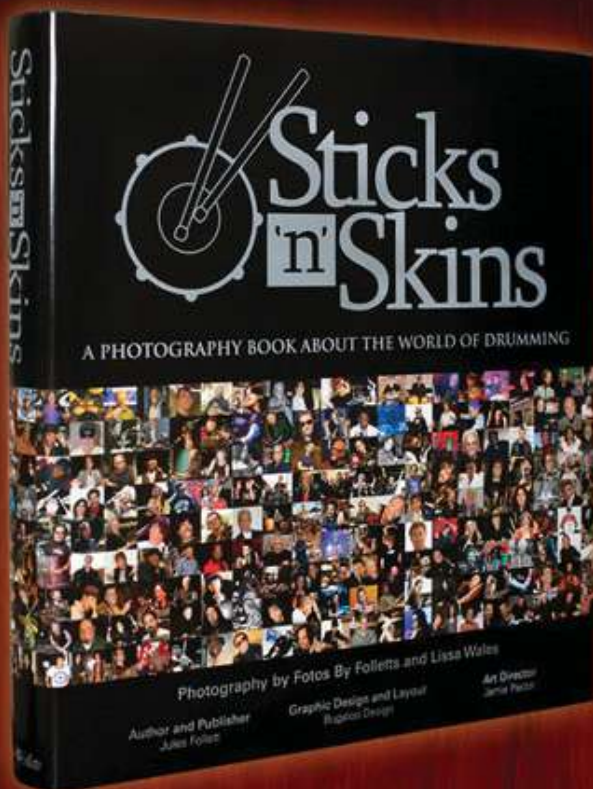
Interview by Patrick Berkery



Austin Lane estimates that Absolute's drum department takes up about 10 percent of the roughly 400,000-foot-store, a two-story complex that includes a recording studio, rehearsal space, lessons, and—taking a page from IKEA's book—a cafe. "If you're waiting while your son or daughter is having lessons," Lane says, "you can sit there and have a coffee—and it's actually good coffee."







# THE PERFECT GIFT FOR THE MUSICIAN IN YOUR LIFE!

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

## FEATURING OVER 500 DRUMMERS, INCLUDING:

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

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

Hal Blaine

"Thank you for doing this book"

Steve Gadd

"Simply irresistible"

Dom Famularo

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

Liberty DeVitto

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

Chad Smith



STICKSNSKINS.COM

A Unique Insight Into The Community of Drummers



# SHOWCASE

*Pete Dizon*  
Bass Drum Lift



[www.BassDrumLift.com](http://www.BassDrumLift.com)

The Bass Drum Lift has brought so much life to my drums; even on my 26" kick – *Garrett Goodwin (Carrie Underwood)*

What a great product! I use it with all of my Yamaha bass drums in the studio, and on tour, because it allows them to vibrate freely and sound their absolute best. It makes me sound better! – *Brian Fullen (Vince Gill)*

**Day of Salvation**  
An Extraordinary Independent Motion Picture About An Extraordinary Drummer  
Own It Now At: [cdbaby.com](http://cdbaby.com)  
The Perfect Movie For Your Drum Film Library

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

[www.billyblastdrums.com](http://www.billyblastdrums.com)  
[billyblast@att.net](mailto:billyblast@att.net)

**AHEAD**  
CUSTOM MOLDED EARPLUGS

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

DISTRIBUTED BY BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION 800.547.6401 [WWW.AHEADRUMSTICKS.COM](http://WWW.AHEADRUMSTICKS.COM)

**DRUM CLIP**  
EXTERNAL DRUM RING CONTROL ACCESSORY ADAPTOR

[www.KJMusicInc.com](http://www.KJMusicInc.com)

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

**LONGO Custom GOLD SHELLS**

570.788.5820 [Longodrums.com](http://Longodrums.com)

An Amazing Interactive Experience  
**DNA SERIES**  
*Kin Rivera Jr.*

**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.AHEADRUMSTICKS.COM](http://WWW.AHEADRUMSTICKS.COM)  
1 800 547 6401

**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](http://www.bigbangdist.com)



# LIVE AID

**CruzTOOLS**

**GrooveTech®  
Drum Multi-Tool**

888-909-8665 [www.cruztools.com](http://www.cruztools.com)

"Works great" – Derek Roddy  
"it's amazing!!!" – Tommy Lee

**KICK MOUNT  
StickARK**

Get yours!  
visit [MAXONIX.com](http://MAXONIX.com)

**DrumsForCures, Inc.**

# drum STRONG

drumming to **BEAT** cancer!

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

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

[www.drumstrong.org](http://www.drumstrong.org)

**MODERN DRUMMER** endorsed

**RBH DRUMS**

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

**Drums ON SALE .COM**

## GIGANTIC SAVINGS

11375 Robinwood Drive  
(College Plaza)  
Hagerstown, MD 21742  
[www.drumsale.com](http://www.drumsale.com)  
1-301-733-DRUM (3786)

Since 1961

## Custom Drums

Wrap  
Repairs  
Hardware  
Keller Shells

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

# FAT CAT

Dual Adjustable Snappy Snares

- **FAT**
- **TIGHT**
- **ULTRA-SENSITIVE**

- 24 Strand Dual Tension Snappy Snares
- 12 Throw Off Adjustable for a Tight Sound
- 12 Tension Reducible for a Sensitive Sound
- Eliminates the need for Two Throw Offs
- Fattens Your Sound
- Fully Active at Any Volume
- Fits most Snares Drums (cord or strap)

**BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION**  
9420 Reseda Blvd. PMB 350, Northridge, CA 91324  
1.800.547.6401 • [www.bigbangfat.com](http://www.bigbangfat.com)

Stone Custom  
EXOTIC DRUMS  
Fort Wayne, Indiana USA

Custom American made drums & shells built on the original Slingerland® tools and molds!  
**Quality You Can Hear!**

## Stone Custom Drum

260.403.7519 • [stonecustomdrum.com](http://stonecustomdrum.com)

## MAGNAKEY

— Magnetic Drum Tuning Key —

[www.KJMusicInc.com](http://www.KJMusicInc.com)

**ken stanton music**  
Since 1949

## KILLER PRICES FAMOUS BRANDS

CALL THE SPECIALISTS  
AT KSM | ATLANTA

Cheney – 770-670-4424  
Gary – 770-427-2491

## GET CONTROL!

IsoPac B

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

**ClearSonic**  
Panel  
Acrylic Shields

**SORBER**  
Sound Absorption  
Baffles

AmpPac 33

[www.clearsonic.com](http://www.clearsonic.com)

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

**MODERN  
DRUMMER**

Alex Shter

**DRUMMERS  
WHO KNOW  
READ *MD*.**

**KEEP YOURSELF IN THE KNOW. SUBSCRIBE AT MODERNDRUMMER.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/JeffIndykeDrums](http://youtube.com/JeffIndykeDrums) or [jeffindyke.com](http://jeffindyke.com). 516-263-9782. Drupline 516-781-taps.

### MISCELLANEOUS

**N.A.R.D. Is Back!** The National Association of Rudimental Drummers. Approved by Ludwig. [www.nard.us.com](http://www.nard.us.com)

**KATAMACUE.** Unique drum poster/note card. [www.katamacue.etsy.com](http://www.katamacue.etsy.com)

### FOR SALE

**Matt Bettis: Independent CymbalSmith**

### VINTAGE SHOWCASE

Ludwig, Rogers, Slingerland, Leedy & Gretsch books by Rob Cook, producer of the Chicago Drum Show & publisher of drummer biographies. Rebeats 989-463-4757. [rob@rebeats.com](mailto:rob@rebeats.com), [www.rebeats.com](http://www.rebeats.com)

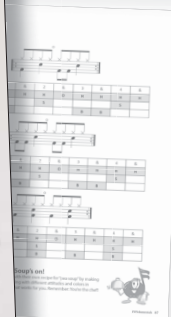
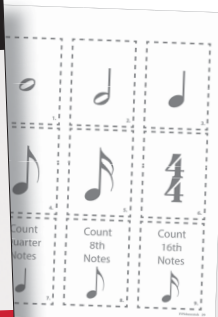
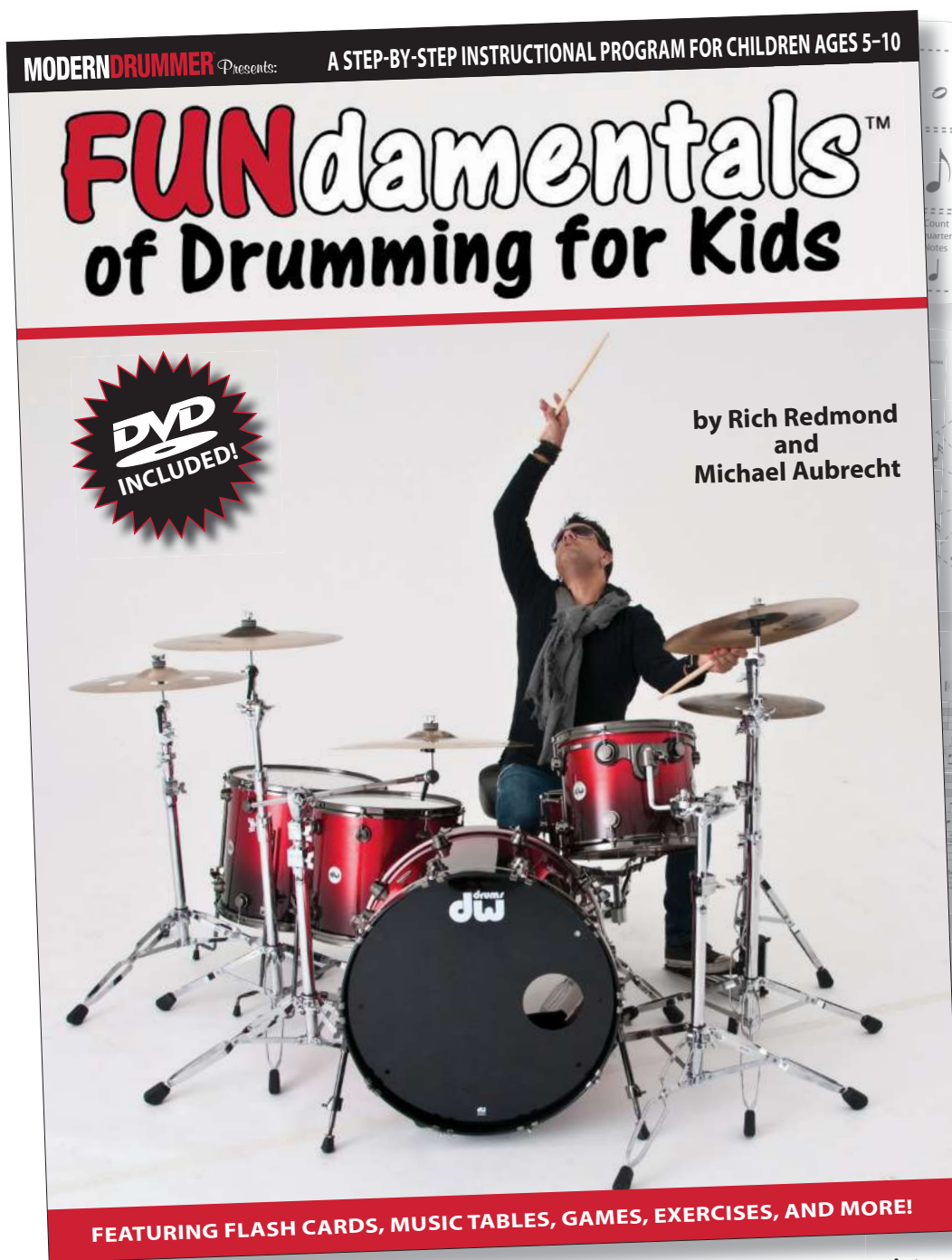
[www.drumatix.com](http://www.drumatix.com), home of the reproduction super 'clamshell' snare strainer handle, and drumsets, snares, singles and cymbals.

**For information on how to advertise in Drum Market, please contact LaShanda Gibson at 973-239-4140 x102 or [lashandag@moderndrummer.com](mailto:lashandag@moderndrummer.com).**





# Start Them Young!



The FUNdamentals of Drumming for Kids™ program uses a variety of age-appropriate teaching techniques that mimic the curriculum used in the elementary classroom. These FUN exercises present drum theory by incorporating rare photographs, illustrations, tables, flash cards, coloring pages, cutouts, and more.

A perfect tool for music instructors and their students!

**\$19.95 includes book and instructional video**

**Available now at  
[moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com)  
or [musicdispatch.com](http://musicdispatch.com)**



**Order your copy today!**

# CRITIQUE

## RECORDINGS

### Entheos *Dark Future*

**Embracing a trend that's become more popular lately, NAVENE KOPERWEIS chose to forgo sample enhancement and heavy quantization on his band's second full-length release in as many years.**

Ravenously awaited by Entheos's quickly expanding fan base, *Dark Future* grooves harder than the band's previous releases without losing any of the signature brutality, and Navene Koperweis's dense playing style comes through beautifully. Featuring the first consistent lineup in the band's short history, *Dark Future* showcases Koperweis's ferocious hand/foot combos and textured fills along with stellar contributions from bandmates Chaney Crabb (vocals), Travis LeVrier (guitar, formerly of Scale the Summit), and Evan Brewer (bass, formerly of the Faceless). Standout drumming moments among the album's ten tracks include tight double bass bursts, grinding grooves, clever metric modulation ("Sunshift [II]"), and chugging domination ("White Noise [II]"). (Spinefarm) **Ben Meyer**



heavyweight history includes a long association with Herbie Hancock, excels in this territory. "Soul Eyes" showcases Jackson spearheading nine and a half minutes of unflagging up-tempo blaze. On "Detour Ahead," his restrained brushwork lends a sensual aura. And in yet another contrast, he steps out with attitude on "This I Dig of You," launching a spectacular solo that slyly shifts into and out of half time. It's astonishing how much muscle Jackson can wield via a sensitive touch. The disc's title could just as well refer to him. (Whirlwind)

**Jeff Potter**

### Arcadea *Arcadea*

**Mastodon's BRANN DAILOR unleashes a drum-and-synth side project that takes listeners on a frenetic sojourn five billion years into the future.**

Arcadea's self-titled debut is progressive, psychedelic, and heavy, which shouldn't surprise Brann Dailor's fans. But here's the twist: synths! Arcadea is a new breed of power trio, with Core Atoms (Zruda) and Raheem Amlani (Withered) blazing away on synthesizers, while Dailor provides both vocals and the jet-propulsion drumming chops that rocket this concept album into its futuristic setting. Dailor effortlessly weaves hairtas, coast-to-coast fills, and frantic polyrhythms through manic arpeggiating "synthedelic" compositions. By the fifteen-second mark of the opening track, "Army of Electrons," Dailor makes his presence known, and he doesn't let up for the rest of the record. Arcadea has succeeded in creating a full spectrum of explosive science-fiction soundscapes, and the energetic interplay between the synths and the drums is in constant flux. But Dailor's natural drum tones and solid aesthetic keep these dense synthetic songs rooted in the organic. (Relapse) **David Ciauro**



### Bobby Deitch Band *Grateful*

**Lettuce/Break Science stickman and producer ADAM DEITCH has to have gotten his sense of pocket from somewhere. The family-affair vibe present on his father's new album suggests that groove appreciation began at home.**

*Grateful* is eleven tracks of original soul, R&B, and funk, with Bobby Deitch covering lead vocals, keys, and some drum duties. Son Adam appears on drums and production, and wife Denise contributes background vocals. The decidedly upbeat disc opens with Adam working out a second-line groove on "Start Livin' Your Life," with assists from New Orleans vets George Porter Jr. (the Meters, bass) and Jon Cleary (Bonnie Raitt, piano). **Nikki Glaspie** puts a smooth Purdie-esque shuffle under "Don't Start Don't Stop," not the only track here that brings to mind the blue-eyed soul of Hall and Oates or Boz Scaggs. Bobby's arranging chops shine on the title track, with Earth, Wind and Fire-style horn breaks over a tight pocket from Adam and Bobby's regular bassist, Dave Reiss. Album closer "Lovetrain" is not a cover of the O'Jays' classic, but it does share some Philly-style soul bounce in the spirit of Gamble and Huff. (bobbydeitchband.hearnow.com) **Stephen Bidwell**



### Nicolas Meier *Infinity*

**Vinnie COLAIUTA brings his attack game to some odd-time, Middle Eastern-flavored material.**

Vinnie Colaiuta and Jimmy Haslip have a history of making a sweet noise together as part of the Jing Chi group with Robben Ford, so their work on Swiss-born acoustic fretless guitarist Nicolas Meier's new disc of world fusion is focused and inspired. Opening track "The Eye of Horus" alone goes through so many changes of feel, tempo, and meter that it becomes obvious these players have come to throw down the rhythmic gauntlet. Colaiuta solos with dramatic flair over an ascending vamp twice, filling all the space with a flurry of tom rolls and cymbal wash. The rimclick groove in the 15/8 of "Riversides" gives way to a 7/8 section that the drummer *devours*, stretching the time with outrageous metric modulation. The melody returns with Colaiuta applying a four-on-the-floor kick pattern with totally over-the-top ride bell accents and left-hand tom and snare work set to Octopus Mode. Yes, we know it's all about supporting the music and lead instruments with taste, but when the master lets loose like he does here, it's tough to listen to anything else. Bravo. (Favored Nations) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



### NYSQ *Sleight of Hand*

**A straight-ahead standards quartet with fire. Drummer GENE JACKSON is smoking.**

NYSQ (New York Standards Quartet) goes back twelve years, and the inevitable bond that time provides is evident in its ensemble tightness leavened by breathing ease. Saxophonist Tim Armacost, pianist David Berkman, bassist Daiki Yasukagawa, and drummer Gene Jackson favor the classic jazz canon, visiting reharmonizations and rhythmic reimaginings while simultaneously observing tradition. Not too in, not too out. And they definitely cook. Jackson, whose






**\$100 OFF**

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

PRICE TOO LOW  
TO PRINT

(SBP2F50RB)  
(SBP0F50NW)  
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS  
SOLD SEPARATELY  
SELECTION VARIES BY LOCATION

  
Also available  
in this color



**\$40 OFF**

**ZILDJIAN**  
ZBT PRO CYMBAL SET

REG. \$299.99  
**\$259<sup>99</sup>**

(ZBTC4P-ALT)

**FREE**

Free 14" crash  
included in box  
**A \$59 VALUE**



**\$100 OFF**

**MAPEX**  
MARS SERIES 5-PIECE  
CROSSOVER SHELL PACK

PRICE TOO LOW  
TO PRINT

(MA528SFBZW)  
HARDWARE AND CYMBALS  
SOLD SEPARATELY  
SELECT STORES



**\$50 OFF**

**ZILDJIAN**  
ZBT 390 SERIES SUPER  
CYMBAL SET

REG. \$399.99  
**\$349<sup>99</sup>**

(ZBTP390-SP)

**FREE**

Free 18" crash  
included in box  
**AN \$89 VALUE**



**20% OFF**

**MAPEX**  
ARMORY SERIES HARDWARE

REG. \$74.99-\$129.99  
STARTING AT  
**\$59<sup>99</sup>**

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



**VATER**

5A OR 5B 4-PAIR STICK PACK

YOUR CHOICE  
**\$35<sup>99</sup>**

(VSP45A1LM)  
(VSP45B1LM)

**FREE**

Little Monster brushes and  
keychain included with the  
purchase of a Vater 4-pair  
stick pack

**A \$24.99 VALUE**

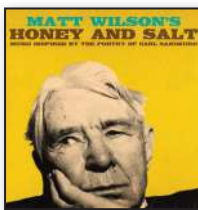


## TAKING THE REINS

### Matt Wilson *Honey and Salt*

Wilson's jazz/poetry hybrid truly works.

The phrase *poetry set to jazz* can be a cringe-inducing red flag for indulgence. But Matt Wilson transcends that big time. As always, the drummer/composer is serious about his art yet humorous and earthy. Honoring poet Carl Sandburg, Wilson's music complements—and cleverly contrasts with—the writer's brief, sage verse. Guest jazz stars read several poems, while other tracks are sung by vocalist/guitarist Dawn Thomson. The inventive quintet paints from a palette of jazz, rock, country, folk, and gospel. Wilson is frequently content to offer simple support, but there are plenty of breakout moments, including some rave-up New Orleans grooving ("We Must Be Polite"), driving swing ("Paper 2"), and a "melodic" solo on a demented march ("Choose"). A surprising highlight is Wilson's "duet" with a tape of Sandburg himself reading "Fog." Circling around the toms with mallets, Wilson phrases with the poem as if it were a head, and then responds and expands. (Palmetto) **Jeff Potter**



### Stanton Moore *With You in Mind*

The drummer's seventh album as a leader is an all-star tribute to songwriter, producer, and arranger Allen Toussaint.

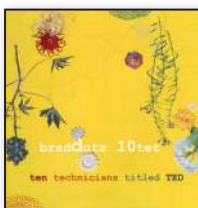
*With You in Mind* is steeped in NOLA grooves and vibe, with hometown heroes Cyril Neville, Maceo Parker, Nicholas Payton, and Trombone Shorty, among others, making appearances alongside Stanton Moore's regular trio. Moore brings the funk with a tinge of Mardi Gras Indian on opener "Here Come the Girls" and in a gritty four-on-the-floor groove between detuned toms and a fat, dry snare on "Night People." The title track gets a lush piano trio treatment, with the drummer filling in the space on brushes, and "Southern Nights" begins with Moore playing brush accompaniment under a spoken-word reading by actor Wendell Pierce, which segues into a slow 12/8 soul-ballad interpretation. Fans of Moore's use of street beats will not be disappointed by the trad-jazz reading of "Java," a 7/4 arrangement of "Life" (with tabla—listen for it), and a 5/4 take on "Everything I Do Gone Be Funky" that owes as much to James Black as it does to the second-line groove on Lee Dorsey's version. (Cool Green/Mascot Group) **Stephen Bidwell**



### Brad Dutz 10tet *Ten Technicians Titled Ted*

The kind of band name/album title only a drummer would come up with—and the kind of music that only this unique rhythmist would devise.

You've definitely heard L.A.-based percussionist Brad Dutz, whether on albums by artists like Kiss, Willie Nelson, and Alanis Morissette, on major film and television soundtracks, at one of his clinics, or on one of the more than thirty recordings released under his own name. Typically his solo projects are with trios and quartets, but his latest self-produced album features his own 10tet, and is fittingly titled. The numeric and alliterative theme continues through *Ten Technicians Titled Ted*: All



the music is in five-, ten-, or fifteen-beat phrases, all the compositions have (at least) four T's in the title, and Dutz even tracked them in Tujunga, California. This is fun, bubbling, and funky chamber music with a good balance of improvisation and through-composed sections. The leader's regular cohort **CHRIS WABICH** covers drums, percussion, and steel drum, as on "Twilight of the Triangle Trios," which also showcases Dutz's pandeiro and hybrid percussion setup. The rest of the ensemble features five woodwind players (including Dutz's son Jasper), two brass, cello, and bass. Dutz and Wabich employ numerous textures and treatments, like the avant-lounge groove on gongs, chimes, and various hand drums on "Trouble Tonight Tackling Tanks" or the ethereal vibraphone and mysterious metal percussion on the cinematic "Trusting Tire Taping Takes Its Toll." (braddutzmusic.squarespace.com) **Stephen Bidwell**

### Other Drummer-Leds to Check Out

**Jonas Johansen** Charmcatcher /// **Tony Martucci Quintet** Ancestral Voices /// **Richard X. Heyman** Incognito /// **Denny Zeitlin** and **George Marsh** Expedition /// **Chris Parker** Moving Forward Now /// **Giampaolo Scatozza** Travels /// **Julian Gerstin Sextet** The One Who Makes You Happy /// **Elijah Gilmore** Return to Zen

## MULTIMEDIA

### 143 Binary Algorithms Applied to Paradiddles by Steve Forster

A heap of fresh rhythmic variations, interpretations, and applications inspired in part by Joe Morello.

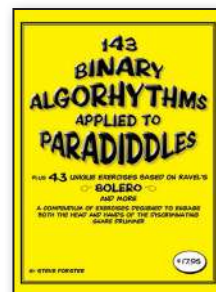
Reinterpreting single-voice rhythmic literature and stickings with creative concepts has long been a trend in drum education material. (Think *The Drummer's Complete Vocabulary as Taught by Alan Dawson*.) With his new book, *143 Binary Algorithms Applied to Paradiddles*, author Steve Forster continues this trend while drawing on concepts he gleaned during studies with the late jazz pioneer and educator Joe Morello.

*Algorithms* deals with reinterpreting straight 8th-note rhythms, such as the patterns found in the opening pages of George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*. The book mostly employs a paradiddle example rhythm for its many interpretations ("algorithms"), but the concepts can be applied to other figures. Forster suggests using *Stick Control* to work through each idea.

Endurance studies precede a section on triplet interpretations and variations. A substitutions section replaces right- and left-hand stickings with an alternate figure specific to each hand (i.e., when you see an "R," play one rudimental sticking, and when you see an "L," play a different rudimental sticking). Consistency is covered using several subdivisions, and rudimental variations abound.

Exercises based on the main rhythmic theme of French composer Maurice Ravel's *Boléro* are included and demonstrate Forster's concepts in a different rhythmic context, and a Morello-inspired accent study is featured as well.

*Algorithms* could easily get plenty of wear in drummers' sheds. (\$14.95, FiveFour Press) **Willie Rose**





# Enter to Win This Alesis Strike Pro Eleven-Piece Electronic Drumkit!



The prize features an eleven-piece state-of-the-art electronic drumkit with a 14" dual-zone snare, four dual-zone toms (8", 10", 12", and 14"), a 14" kick, a 16" three-zone ride, three dual-zone 14" crashes (with choke feature), and a 12" moveable hi-hat. All of the cymbals have a hammered look. The Strike Performance module has a 4.3" color screen and comes with 110 drumkits, 1,600 multi-layer instruments,

and more than 14,000 individual samples. The module has onboard sampling capability, an SD card port, and USB/MIDI connectivity for use in conjunction with any DAW as well as the Strike Software Editor. The module has individual outputs and faders for real-time mixing. A four-post chrome rack, a double-braced snare stand, a cable snake, cable wraps, a drumkey, and drumsticks are included.

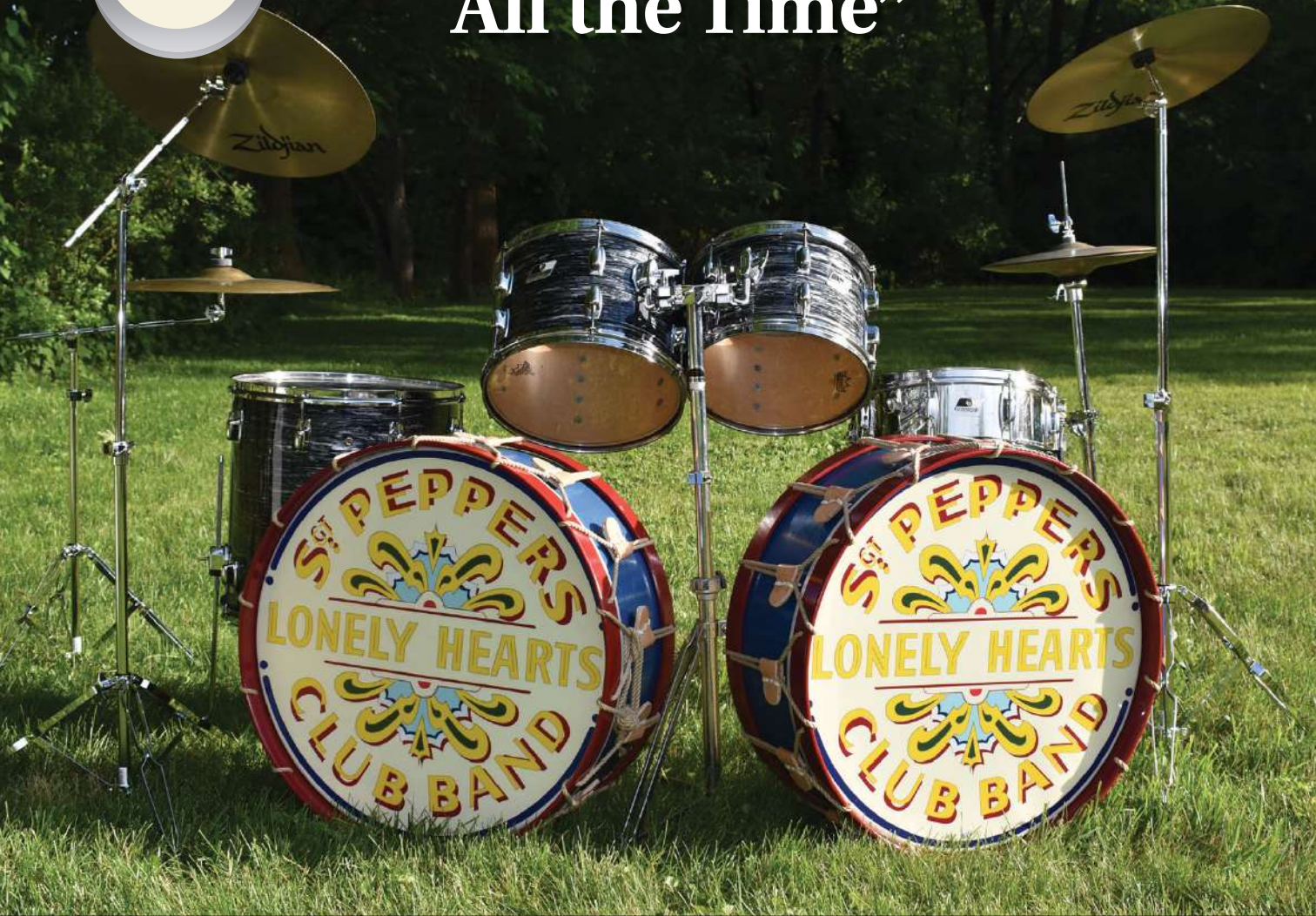
**Enter today at [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com)**

Consumer Disclosure: 1. To enter, visit [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com) between the dates below and look for the Alesis Strike Series Contest button (one entry per email address). 2. ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 3. CONTEST BEGINS DECEMBER 1, 2017, AND ENDS FEBRUARY 28, 2018. 4. Prize Drawing: Winners will be selected by random drawing on March 6, 2017. Winners will be notified by phone or email on or about March 8, 2018. 5. Employees, and their immediate families, of Modern Drummer, Alesis, inMusic Brands, Inc., and their affiliates are ineligible. 6. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. 7. Open to residents of the U.S. and Canada, 18 years of age or older. Void in Quebec, Canada; Florida; New York; and where prohibited by law. 8. One prize awarded per household per contest. 9. Prizes: 1st Prize – One (1) winner will receive a Alesis Strike Series electronic drumkit as described above. Approximate retail value of contest is \$2,400. 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/Alesis Strike/Official Rules/Winners List, 271 Route 46 W, H-212, Fairfield, NJ 07004.





# “A Little Better All the Time”



**This month's featured kit** comes to us from Edward McCarthy of West Springfield, Massachusetts, who recently purchased this vintage 1970s Ludwig set. McCarthy explains that the drums, which were originally covered in a wine-red wrap, had seen better days. But with the fiftieth anniversary of the Beatles' album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in 2017, the drummer was feeling inspired when he began refurbishing them.

"I refinished the drums using a black oyster pearl wrap like the one that Ringo used," McCarthy says. "I also added double bass—

something Ringo never used—but I felt [the marching-style] drums were appropriate because of the *Sgt. Pepper's* anniversary." Along with the bass drums, which are limited edition pieces made by Steiner Sports in conjunction with the anniversary, the set features 8x12 and 9x13 toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 14" snare. McCarthy completed the outfit with 17" and 18" Zildjian crashes and a 20" Zildjian ride. "I recently played a Fourth of July party," he says, "and the set sounded great."

**Photo Submission:** Hi-res digital photos, along with descriptive text, may be emailed to [kitoftthmonth@modern drummer.com](mailto:kitoftthmonth@modern drummer.com). Show "Kit of the Month" in the subject line.



## COMING UP IN MODERN DRUMMER

### MATT WILSON

SPOON'S JIM ENO • JD MCPHERSON'S JASON SMAY

WILL CALHOUN • JASON BONHAM • AND MORE!



#micitlikeit

# MIC IT. LIKE IT.

The reimagined Gretsch Renown represents true versatility and playability.

Experience studio-quality tone courtesy of an ultra-resonant 7-ply maple shell, classic 302 hoops and a newly-included bass drum mount.

The sound is Renown!

Connor Denis - Beartooth

Hear it for yourself on YouTube or at [gretschdrums.com](http://gretschdrums.com)



#zildjiansticks



**DEFY EXPECTATIONS.**

*Zildjian*

Premium drumsticks that make a statement.