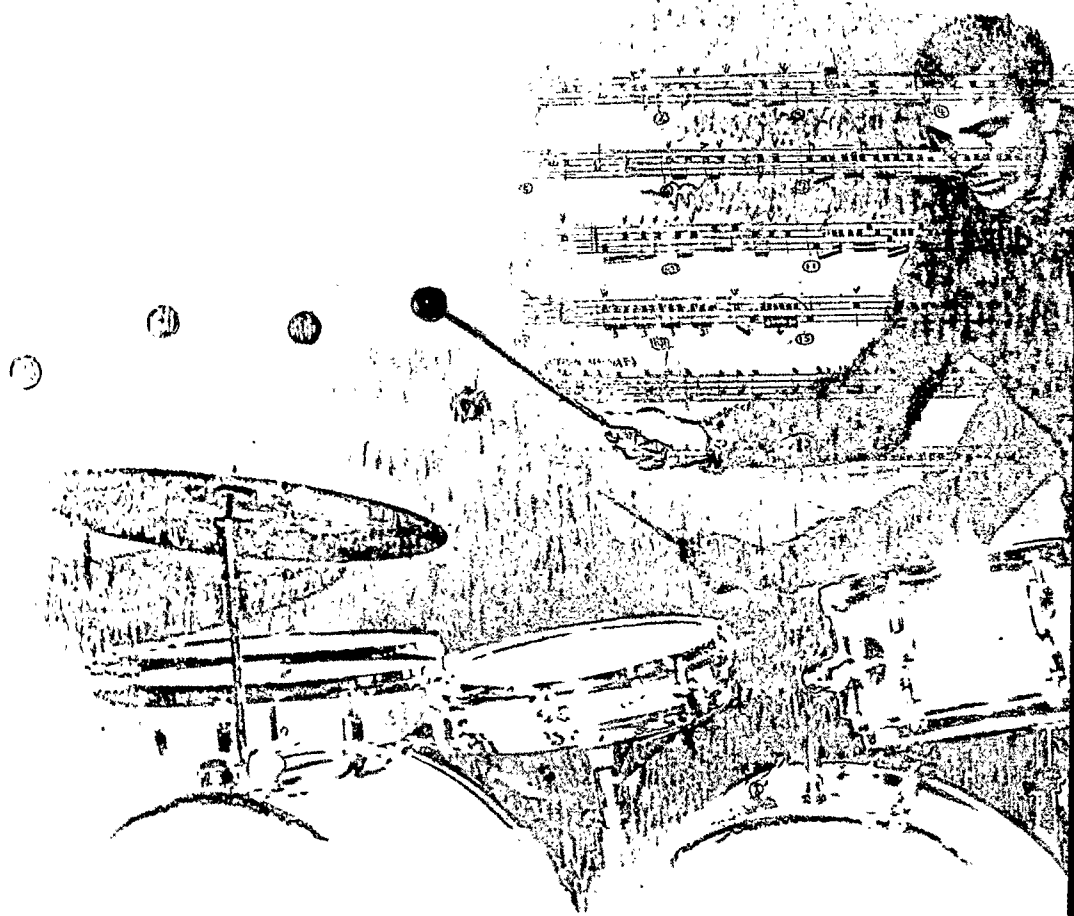


# A HISTORY OF JAZZ DRUMMING

by Thomas Shultz



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Sheraton Center (Americana)  
 7th Avenue at 53rd St.  
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Laguardia, New York City (Carey bus service available to east side of terminal -

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Pre-registration for PASIC "79" and Banquet must take place by October 1, 1979. PASIC "79" registration in lobby of Hotel Taft

TIMES: Oct. 25 - 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., on Thursday

Oct. 26 - 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Friday

Oct. 27 - 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday

**PRE-CONVENTION ATTENDANCE**

Thursday, October 25, 1979

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (Meet in lobby at each location approximately 20 minutes prior to session)

Rehearsal New York Philharmonic - Zubin Mehta, conducting - Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Meet the New York Philharmonic Percussion Section - Green Room at Avery Fisher Hall

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. (select one)

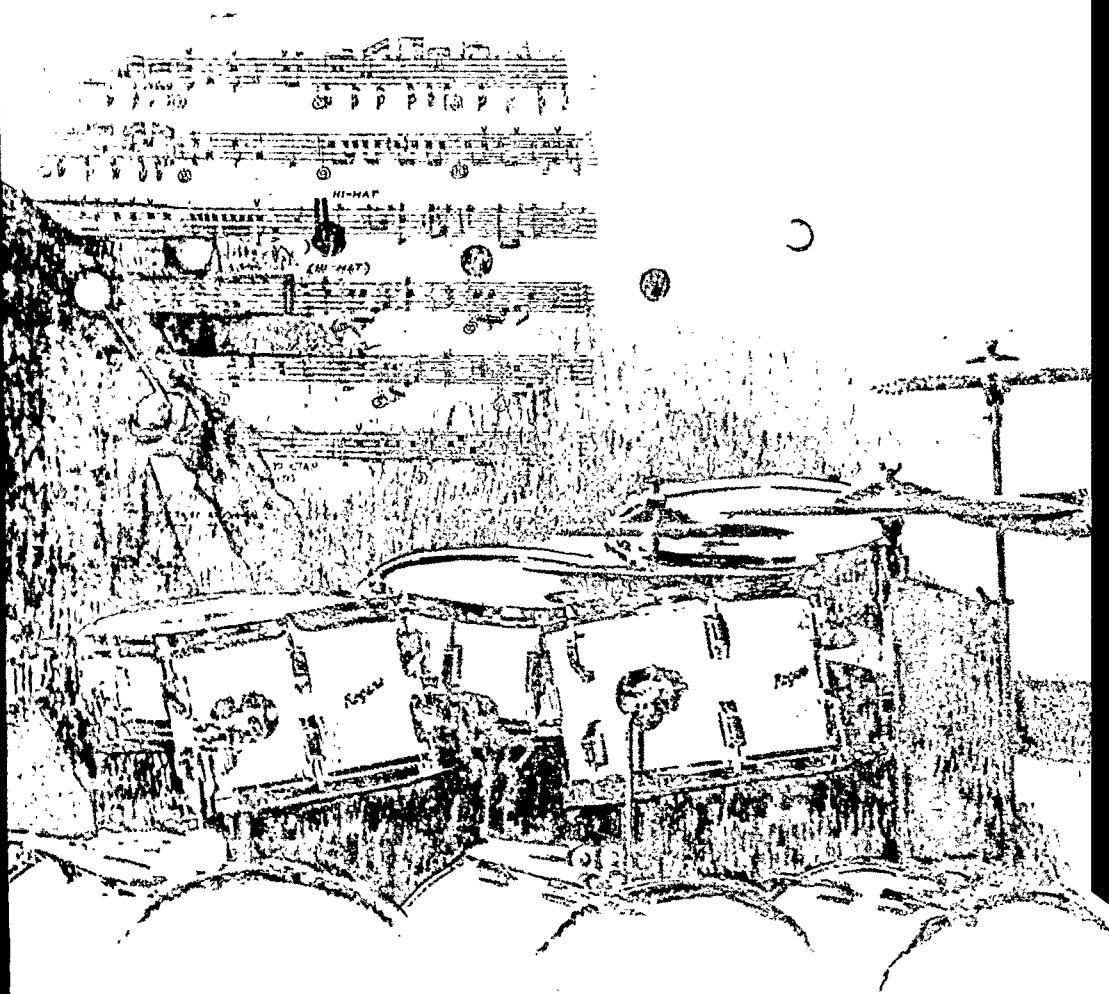
Metropolitan Museum - Musical Instrument Collection with  
 Vera Gillis, Host, 86th St. & 5th Ave.

Juilliard Percussion Ensemble Rehearsal - Saul Goodman, Conductor  
 Juilliard School, 66th St. & Broadway

Visit the collection of Carroll Musical Instrument Rental, 351-53  
 41st, New York City

The history of jazz, and therefore jazz drumming, is acknowledged to have originated in New Orleans around 1900. Although there is evidence that jazz developed in other southern cities at the same time, New Orleans receives the lion's share of the credit. This is largely due to New Orleans' uniqueness upon the American scene.

New Orleans was part of the Louisiana Territory and was founded about 1718 by the French, being named for the Duke of Orleans. The city was ruled by France for the next forty-six years, and then ceded to Spain in 1764. The Spanish governed the city for the next thirty-six years. In 1800



Spain returned the territory to France, and in 1803 Napoleon sold the Louisiana Territory to the United States.

These French and Spanish influences, plus the addition of slaves from Africa and the West Indies, gave New Orleans an environment which was decidedly different from the rest of the United States at that time, which was predominantly British-Protestant.

Marshall Stearns credits the beginning of jazz as taking place in an empty lot in New Orleans, known as Congo Square. Here the slaves would hold wild sexual and trival dances and also "Vodun" ceremonies. Many slaves came from the French West Indies, and were worshippers of "vodun," or voodoo. These voodoo ceremonies were usually held in secret, but were sometimes performed publicly in Congo Square, off and on from 1817 to 1885. These public performances were legalized by the city council as an attempt to combat secret "voodooism," and to keep the slaves contented. Herbert Asbury describes an early performance thusly.

At a signal from a police official, the slaves were summoned to the center of the square by the prolonged rattling of two huge beef bones upon the head of a cask, out of which had been fastened a sort of drum or tambourine called the bamboula. The favorite dances of the slaves were the Calinda, a variation of which was also used in the Voodoo ceremonies, and the Dance of the Bamboula, both of which were primarily based on the primitive dances of the African jungle. . . .the entire swamp was an almost solid mass of black bodies stamping and swaying to the rhythmic beat of the bones on the cask, the frenzied chanting of the women, and the clanging of pieces of metal which dangled from the ankles of the men.<sup>1</sup>

While Stearns tries to show jazz as originating from the tribal dances and drumming of Africa, it is generally agreed that there is much more of the military band than African music in early jazz.

The popularity of the military band reached its peak in France during the reign of Napoleon. New Orleans followed this fashion, and by 1880 there were many bands in the city. This was made possible by the fact that when the Civil War ended, many Confederate army bands dumped their instruments in New Orleans pawn shops.<sup>2</sup> The Negroes were able to buy these instruments quite cheaply, and taught themselves how to play. Bands were employed for many occasions; parades, picnics, concerts, riverboat excursions, dances, funerals, and New Orleans became famous for its bands.

There were many Negro secret societies and fraternal organizations in the city, which always had a funeral parade for a deceased member. People would join these organizations out of pride, so that they would have a parade when they died. These funeral parades were instrumental in the development of jazz. On the way to the cemetery the band would play solemn music in 4/4, such as "Nearer My God to Thee," and "Come Thee Disconsolate." On the way from the cemetery, after one or two blocks, the drummer would play a special cadence, and the band would start ragging tunes in 2/4, such as "Didn't He Ramble," "Ain't Gonna Study War No More," and "When the Saints Go Marching In." The famous New Orleans drummer Warren "Baby" Dodds said, "They used

to hire me because I knew just when to cut in and start and real jazz home.”<sup>3</sup>

From around 1900 to 1917, New Orleans offered employment for from 200-300 professional musicians, black, white, and creole.<sup>4</sup> In Storyville, the dance halls, brothels, sporting houses, and barrelhouses employed many jazz musicians. Here, for a nights work, 8 p.m. to 4 a.m., they got \$1.50 or \$2.00 and free wine, but tips sometimes ran as high as \$15.00 apiece.<sup>5</sup> Also there were innumerable jobs throughout the city playing for street parades, political rallies, store openings, garden parties, dances, cotillions, and other social and civic functions. The town danced, gambled, drank, elected, worshipped, marched, socialized, and buried to the accompaniment of music.<sup>6</sup> In New Orleans music was a way of life.

This musical environment came to an end in November, 1917 when the secretary of the Navy closed down Storyville, because a navy base was established not far from the district. This ended the employment boom for jazz musicians in the city, and it has never been the same. Some of the musicians went back to other occupations, while others joined small, obscure territory bands. Many good, tough-fibered jazz musicians made their way to Chicago, where the next employment boom for music opened up with the beginning of Prohibition and the Al Capone era.

The instruments that the early jazz drummers used were quite different from what are currently employed. The earliest jazz or dance bands used two drummers, one on snare and one of bass, the same as marching bands. In fact, many of the bands would play both dances and parades with the same personnel and instruments. This changed after 1894 or 1895, when “Dee Dee” Chandler built a crude wooden pedal for a bass drum, so he could play bass drum with his foot, and snare drum with his hands.

Chandler took a standard brass bass drum and bolted a piece of spring steel on the top of it, bent so that the loose end of the spring was over the center of the drum head and a few inches away from it. He put a covered block of wood on the loose end so that the block would hit the drum head if the spring were bent. On the floor he put a hinged wooded pedal, cut out of a Magnolia Milk Company carton he’d gotten from the King Grocery where he worked, with a chain stretched from the raised end of the pedal to the end of the spring. When he stepped on the pedal the chain pulled the block against the drum head, and when he released the pedal the spring pulled the block back. He tied a trap drum onto the side of the bass drum with a rope. The sound was probably erratic, but Chandler was a sensation and was widely imitated. Some of the drummers improved on his design by using a steel rod and a baseball instead of the spring and wooden block.<sup>7</sup>

John Robichaux, for whom Chandler was playing, received the reputation as “the first man to add traps to the orchestra.”<sup>8</sup>

It is interesting to note that in 1894 in Chicago, William F. Ludwig, Sr. was using an all wood heel pedal for playing dance jobs.<sup>9</sup> He doesn’t claim to have designed or built it, so it’s difficult to determine just who actually built the first bass drum pedal.

In addition to the bass and snare drums, drummers began adding a variety of other paraphernalia to their sets. They started using wood-blocks, temple blocks, cowbells, cymbals, gongs, Chinese tom-toms,

and other individual accessories. The temple blocks and cowbells were generally used in tuned sets, and both heavy Zildjian and Chinese cymbals were used. From one to four Chinese tom-toms were placed around the set, and usually they and the outer bass drum head had pictures painted on them, no two being alike.

George Wettling once itemized the equipment that Baby Dodds was using while playing the Lincoln Gardens in Chicago:

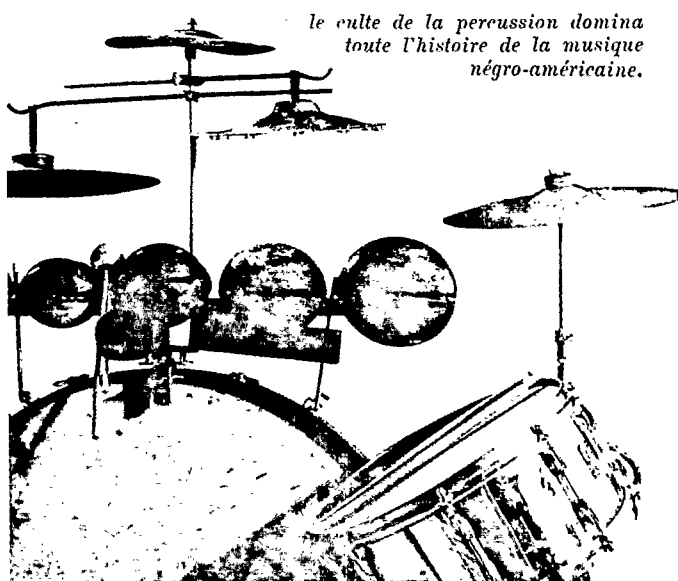
a 28 inch bass drum, a 6½-inch all-metal snare drum, an overhead pedal, four tuned cowbells, a woodblock, a slapstick, a 16-inch Chinese crash cymbal, a 16-inch Zildjian cymbal, and a 10-inch Chinese tom-tom.<sup>10</sup>

While this itemization took place later than we are talking about, Dodds never changed his style of drumming, and his equipment remained virtually the same.

The style of playing of the early drummers was at first very military oriented, and used an assorted variety of rolls, flams, ruffs, and other rudiments. They didn't maintain the beat on the cymbals, but used both sticks upon the snare drum, blocks, and rims for the most part.

The early recording sessions prohibited the use of the snare and bass drums, therefore, we have little or no recorded evidence of exactly how the set was used during the New Orleans-Dixieland period.

We do know that only rarely was a drum solo played in early jazz. Zutty Singleton recalls that the drummer played a subsidiary role: "We just kept the rhythm going and hardly ever took a solo."<sup>11</sup> When a solo was played, it often sounded as if it was taken from a military march.



Early Drum Set

As time passed, the drummers equipment began to change, and it is believed that tension drums, tuned with keys or thumb screws, came into general use around 1915. Wire brushes were used during World War I, but the date of origin is unknown. Tony Spargora (Spargo) says that he never saw a pair of brushes before reaching New York in 1917 with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. Spargo recalls that earlier, in New Orleans:

At the average dances that we'd play, the picnics, there was no such thing as a piano. We would work with guitars and string bass. You had to keep going, keep filling in as much as possible, and you never thought of a drum solo. You used the sticks because you needed that punch to make up for the missing piano.<sup>12</sup>



### **The Original Dixieland Jazz Band**

The original, or "first line" of drummers to play jazz in New Orleans included Louis "Old Man" Cottrell, Walter Brundy, Willie "Bunk" Johnson, Mack Murray, Henry Zeno, Henry Martin, "Black Benny" Williams, Dee Dee Chandler, Babe Mathews, who was noted for placing a handkerchief under his snare drum to deaden the tone, and "Ratty" John Vean. Vean is described as a man:

who shook all over, each part of his body to a different rhythm. He was the first to introduce the four-beat bass drum part, played with his right foot, his other leg vibrating with the speed of a trip-hammer. Meanwhile, both hands performed incredible feats of virtuosity on the snare drum, the rim, and various traps. The trouble with Vean was that, aside from being oversexed, he went to sleep on the job after a few drinks.<sup>13</sup>

The next generation of drummers in New Orleans included Paul Barbarin, Ray Bauduc, Tony Spargo, Fred "Tubby" Hall, his brother Minor, Arthur "Zutty" Singleton, and Warren "Baby" Dodds.

Zutty Singleton was born in New Orleans in 1898, and played with many bands, including the Maple Leaf Band, and Louis Armstrong. He

played the riverboats for awhile, and moved to Chicago in 1925. While in Chicago, he is said to have been an important influence on a young drummer named Sidney Catlett. Singleton has since lived in California and New York.

Almost from the beginning, Zutty used a more modest drum set from the other drummers of the time. He used a snare, bass, two tom-toms, and two or three cymbals. He didn't see the array of wood and temple blocks and cowbells that were so popular then.<sup>14</sup>

Singleton was one of the better and more popular early drummers, and retained his basic style of playing throughout his career.

Warren "Baby" Dodds (1898-1959) was the most famous of the New Orleans drummers. He was the drummer in King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, and later with Louis Armstrong's Hot Seven. He also played with his brother, clarinetist Johnny Dodds, and Jelly-Roll Morton.

Baby Dodds was perhaps the best example of a swinging, military influenced drummer. His playing embodied the spirit and tradition of military-flavored jazz, and showed the drive and swing this style can generate. Dodds was said to be the first to extract the full potential from the bass drum. He also displayed a subtle sense of pitch variation in his playing, by both tuning his drums and by using an assortment of "traps" or accessories. Dodds is also credited with being the first to play breaks, that is, to fill in between the phrases and solos. These breaks are sometimes named the beginning of the drum solo that developed later on.

In 1920 Dodds moved to Chicago and played with King Oliver at the Lincoln Gardens, where he was a tremendous influence upon the Chicago drummers. Gene Krupa spent much time listening to him, and stated:

Baby taught me more than all the others—not only drum playing, but drum philosophy. He was the first great soloist. His concept went on from keeping time to making the drums a melodic part of jazz. It was partly the way he tuned his drums—the intervals he used. And it was his concept of tone. Baby could play a tune on his drums, and if you listened carefully you could tell the melody.<sup>15</sup>

Another Chicago drummer, George Wettling said of Dodds, "Baby was the first drummer I ever heard play the basic cymbal beat that we all use today on our ride cymbal, in 4/4 time."<sup>16</sup>

Simultaneously with the growth of jazz in New Orleans in the early 20th Century, was activity in other sections of the country. Drummers in New York and the East Coast included Carl "Battle Axe" Kenny, Harry Green, Freddie "Rastus" Crump, and Arthur "Traps" McIntyre. Others were Sonny Greer with Duke Ellington, Buddy Gilmore with Jim Europe, George Hines, Earl Fuller with Banjo Wallace, and the two Wright Brothers—Hubert, who in May, 1919, stabbed Jim Europe to death backstage in Boston, and Black Steve.<sup>17</sup>

As mentioned previously, after 1917 many of the best New Orleans musicians moved north to Chicago, where there were more opportunities to ply their trade. Chicago became the musical capital of the United States for about a decade, and fostered "Chicago Style" jazz.



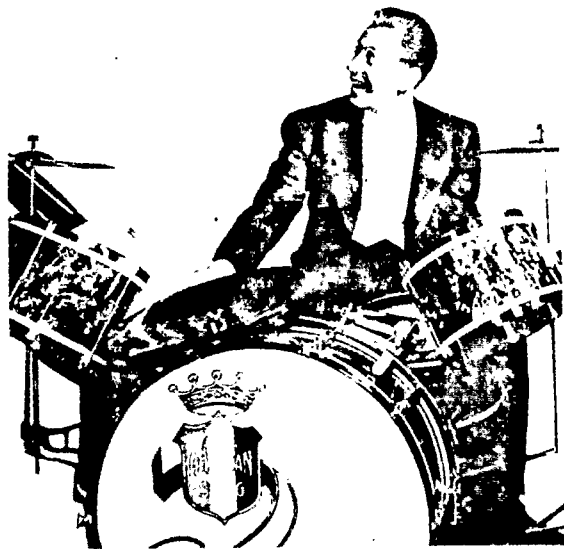


**Baby Dodds (Duncan Schiedt)**

This style of jazz took New Orleans—Dixieland music and added a sense of tension and urgency to it. There was an “explosion” at the end of every chorus that sent the succeeding one off to a flying start, and there was a Chicago tone, slightly off-pitch, with a buzzy rough edge. Driving on-the-beat excitement was what counted.<sup>18</sup> Also, there was a shift of accents, the “strong” beats now occurring on 2 and 4, instead of 1 and 3, as in New Orleans jazz. The Chicago drummers were concerned with technical skill, and experimented with the cymbals and bass drum. They allowed the cymbals to ring, instead of choking them as New Orleans men often did. Sometimes they played the bass drum on all four beats, instead of just the first and third. They also used a type of independent hand action known as “solid left hand,” where the left hand keeps time in addition to the bass drum, while the right hand plays syncopations on the wood-block, cowbell, cymbals, etc.<sup>19</sup>

The forerunners of the hi-hat came on the scene in the twenties. First was the “Snow Shoe Cymbal Beater,” where the cymbals were held horizontally, but very close to the floor. Next came the Low Boy, in which the cymbals were placed in a vertical position, still close to the floor. This was used for a number of years, until the hi-hat, or sock cymbal replaced it.<sup>20</sup>

There were three important drummers to come out of Chicago during this time. They were George Wettling, Dave Tough, and Gene Krupa. They were all about the same age, and had roughly parallel careers, playing in Chicago during the 1920’s, and later settling in New York. Wettling and Krupa studied with Roy Knapp, and all three were influenced by Dodds.



George Wettling is as well known as a writer on drum technique as he is playing drums for such great organizations as Red Nichol's Five Pennies, Mugsy Spanier, and the Paul Whiteman organization.

George Wettling was born in Topeka, Kansas in 1907, and moved to Chicago in 1921. He went to high school briefly, and began jobbing around town. He met the Austin High Gang, and played in many groups. His playing has been described as tasteful, imaginative, and firm without being obtrusive. Eddie Condon once said:

"There are other drummers who have a sure sense of time, but George is absolutely dependable. If a band's got George behind it, it knows it's got some strength."<sup>21</sup>

Wettling has also been active as a painter, and has written articles for *Downbeat* and *Playboy*. He lives in New York and has maintained somewhat the same style of playing, working with many Dixie groups.

David Tough (1908-1948) was the most important to emerge from the Chicago group, and may well have been the greatest drummer in the history of jazz. He was born in Oak Park, Illinois and was a member of the Austin High Gang. He jobbed around town with men like Bud Freeman, Frank Teschemaker, and Jimmy McPartland. After moving to New York, he worked with Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, and Woody Herman, among others.

Tough's playing was very subtle and inspired. He was a major influence on the use of cymbals, and made the first effective use of the ride cymbal. Tough used larger cymbals than had been used previously, and he made the top cymbal the basic instrument of the set. He never soloed, but played with an intensity that reportedly only Buddy Rich could match.



**Dave Tough**

Tough was rather intellectual, and had frustrated desires to become a writer. He suffered from poor health all his life, and at times thought that he was just no good as a drummer. In fact, shortly before he died he had definite ideas about quitting drumming and becoming a writer.<sup>22</sup>

It's interesting to note that Tough had no interest in other forms of percussion, as many other drummers have had. In discussing the Tommy Dorsey band, George Simon says:

Dave Tough—The bands mental wizard. . .extremely intellectual and able at writing. . .plays good golf, too. . .would rather quit drums entirely than have to sock a chime, a triangle, or a templeblock.<sup>23</sup>

Tough played Chicago, swing, and early bebop style drums. While highly regarded among musicians, he enjoyed little fame until 1944, when as a member of Woody Herman's "First Herd," he became known as a "drum wonder."<sup>24</sup>

Gene Krupa is the most famous drummer in jazz, and was the first ever to attain a position of global renown. He was born on the South Side of Chicago in 1909. His parents were Polish Catholics and had Gene marked for the priesthood. He went to parochial schools and attended St. Joseph's College, a prep. seminary, for a year. He quite school and began

gigging around town, getting a job with the Wolverines when Dave Tough left them.

In 1927 Krupa was the first drummer to have his bass drum recorded, on the Okeh label with the McKenzie-Condon Chicagoans.<sup>25</sup>

In 1928 he went to New York, and in 1935 joined Benny Goodman's big new band. The band caught fire and Goodman became the "King of Swing." Krupa was with Goodman from 1935 to 1938, and was a featured soloist. In 1937 the famous recording of "Sing Sing Sing" was made.

Upon leaving Goodman, Krupa started his own band in 1938, and was very successful. Among the hits his band had were "Wire Brush Stomp," "Drummer Boy," "Drummin' Man," and "Drum Boogie." In 1943 the band broke up.

He had another band from 1944 to 1951. After that he toured with Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic (JATP) for a few years. In 1954 he set up a drum school with Cozy Cole in New York, and more recently has played occasional jobs in the area.

Krupa's playing ranged through the Chicago and swing styles of jazz. He played very dynamically, using much energy, and employed a fair share of showmanship. "Gene's head jerked, his mouth clicked open and shut, and he would leap up, furiously thrashing his arms about."<sup>26</sup> Krupa's road manager, Lou Zito, reported:

"No one goes near Gene for at least half an hour after a stage show. He's completely exhausted and soaked to the skin."<sup>27</sup>

Krupa's influence in the evolution of drumming is almost immeasurable, and he was responsible for popularizing the instrument. Due to him, drums and drummers moved from the back of the band into a position of prominence.

During the late twenties and early thirties, so many jazz musicians moved to New York that it became the new capital of jazz. This was the second great exodus of jazz history, from Chicago to New York, and marked the beginning of the Swing era.

Swing may be characterized as "four-beat jazz," and also as the era of the big bands. The drummers generally played all four beats on the bass drum, and made numerous changes in the drum set. The Chinese cymbals gave way to the sonorous Zildjians, and the foot-cymbal, or low-boy was developed into the hi-hat, soon after 1930, which could be played with the sticks as well as the foot.<sup>28</sup> Many of the accessories were thrown out, and the drum set began to closely resemble what is currently used today.

The drummers who converged on New York found a new idol at the Savoy Ballroom by the name of Chick Webb. William "Chick" Webb (1907-1939) was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and moved to New York in 1924, where he formed his own band in 1926.

Webb was a tiny hunchback with large, stiff shoulders who endured numerous operations and much pain and suffering throughout his career. Although he was physically weak, he had dynamic control of his music, and was famous for his solos and breaks. Webb was a master of the



**Gene Krupa**

art of shading, and had magnificent control of the bass drum and cymbals. It was said that he could play a roll on his bass drum. Another of Webb's facets was his speed, of which only Buddy Rich has been able to match.<sup>29</sup>

Webb had the house band at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom, and would play opposite visiting bands. Gene Krupa recalled of playing there one night in 1937 with Benny Goodman:

I'll never forget the night when Benny's band battled Chick at the Savoy—he just cut me to ribbons—made me feel awfully small. That man was dynamic; he could reach amazing heights. When he felt like it he could cut down any of us.<sup>30</sup>

Webb discovered Ella Fitzgerald in 1935, and hired her to sing in his band. When he died of tuberculosis of the spine in 1939, Ella fronted the band for the next three years, until it dissolved.

Among the drummers Webb inspired were Gene Krupa, Davey Tough, Buddy Rich, Joe Jones, and Sid Catlett.

A drummer who was a mild sensation during the thirties was William "Cozy" Cole. He was born in East Orange, New Jersey in 1909, studied as a child, and was inspired by Sonny Greer.

Cole gained fame in the late thirties as a member of Cab Calloway's band, and was featured in the Calloway recordings of "Crescendo in Drums," "Paradiddle Joe," and "Ratamacue." As these titles suggest, Cozy was a major exponent in the school of military influenced drumming.

Cole's major contribution to jazz drumming was that of hand and foot independence. He was possibly the first one to develop this coordination, and mastered it to a very high and complex level.

Cole was very apt at playing in either a combo or big band, but had his limitations in other areas. He was largely unconcerned with the musical shadings, and most of his breaks seemed to lack in imagination, and didn't inspire the rest of the band, as did Webb's breaks.<sup>31</sup>

Cole studied at Juilliard, and also with Saul Goodman. In 1954 he started a drum school with Gene Krupa, and in 1958 he had the hit recording, "Topsy." He still lives and works in New York, maintaining the same style of playing.

In 1938 a young drummer came on the scene, was at once proclaimed a phenomenon, and still is to this very day. He is Bernard "Buddy" Rich, who was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1917. His parents were both in vaudeville, and he joined the act at the age of eighteen months.<sup>32</sup> When he was six, he was billed as "Traps, the Drum Wonder."

He began his jazz career with Joe Marsala in 1938, and also played with Bunny Berigan, Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey and Benny Carter before World War II. After returning from service, Buddy played with Dorsey, Harry James, JATP, and numerous combos. The last several years he has fronted his own band, which, sparked by his playing, has been quite successful.



**Chick**

In addition to his drumming, he is also a capable singer, was a tap dancer, and is an electric personality. He has also appeared as an actor on television.

Rich's style stemmed directly from Krupa and they staged several "drum battles" in the fifties.

Rich is admired almost universally by jazz drummers, who have to acknowledge his technical superiority. He has extremely fast hands, a great right foot, good taste, and never stops swinging. Rich's influence has been technical rather than conceptional in nature. In terms of



### Cozy Cole

playing the instrument, Rich is undoubtedly the best drummer in the world. George Simon said of Rich:

It's my feeling that when jazz history is set down, this tremendously inspiring, swinging drummer (Buddy Rich) will go down, along with Davey Tough, as THE man on his instrument.<sup>33</sup>

Another drummer of this general mold is Louis Bellson, who was born in Rock Falls, Illinois, in 1924. Also a very capable technician, he will probably be best remembered for developing the use of two bass drums, starting in 1946. He has also played and recorded some of the longest drum solos in history.

Meanwhile, to get back to the Swing era, another important drummer was Sidney "Big Sid" Catlett (1910-1951). Sid was born in Evansville, Indiana, and started playing in Chicago when he was sixteen. He moved to New York when he was twenty and worked a variety of commercial and jazz jobs. Among those he worked for were Benny Carter, Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman, Louis Armstrong, and Benny Goodman. Other musicians he worked with included Sidney Becket, Eddie Condon, Hot Lips Page, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker.

As can be seen, Catlett was one of the most versatile drummers in jazz history. He was equally at home in combo or big band work, and played all styles, New Orleans through early bebop.

Catlett's playing was said to be a combination of military and orchestra influences. He made good use of space in his playing and more



## Buddy Rich

## The New Sensation! with Joe Marsala

Only 19 years old and already in big time! Formerly a tap dancer, young Buddy Rich has risen to the heights of fame as a drummer. With Joe Marsala in New York he is

a tremendous hit. After first performance, autograph hounds mobbed him.



importantly, he used pitch variation, or the melodic concept more than had been used previously. Sid was always a showman, and sometimes played commercial type solos, but he was also an exceptional musician who showed that a drum solo could be a thing of beauty, as expressive as any other instrument. He made sparing use of the bass drum, also using it for explosions, which were echoed in the modern, or bop era.<sup>34</sup>

Catlett was a major influence on many young drummers, including Kenny Clark, Shelly Manne, Max Roach, and Art Blakey.

One more important drummer to emerge during the Swing Era was Jonathan "Jo" Jones. Jones was born in Chicago in 1911, but worked in the Southwest, becoming a member of the Kansas City School of Style, which was an offshoot of the general Swing era.

Jones attained fame and noteworthy rank among jazz drummers as a member of the Count Basie Band. Jo emerged as a major innovator, both for his playing and for the lasting changes he made in the drum set.

Jones discarded many of the accessories used by drummers previously, such as woodblocks, gourds, cowbells, and chinese cymbals and tomtoms. He reduced the size of the bass drum, and most importantly, he used the hi-hat cymbal as it had never been used before.<sup>35</sup> Previously it had been used simply to mark after-beats. Jo developed it into an



**Jo Jones (Slade)**



**Sidney Catlett**

instrument of surprising tonal and rhythmic variety, and it became the most important instrument in his set. This brought a new sound to jazz drumming, and it fitted right into the supple cross-rhythms and flowing 4/4 beat of the era.

Jones' playing showed strong orchestral influence, as did Catlett's. Jones injected relaxation, tolerance, humor, impeccable taste, and dynamic swing into his playing. He had the ability to inspire the whole band with a simple, but perfectly placed figure, and his use of the hi-hat has never been matched. He was also a master of wire brush playing, and was a group player, not given to displays of virtuosity.

In 1948 he left Basie, and has been playing in smaller groups ever since, living in New York. He was also a major influence on the bebop drummers.

Two other drummers of the Kansas City Style were Jimmy Crawford, who played with Jimmy Lunceford, and Gus Johnson, who played with Count Basie when Jones left.

The next major step forward took place with the development of bop or bebop, around 1940. Don DeMichael gives this account of what bop meant to drumming:

Bebop broke one of the last restraining links of the chain that bound the drummer to the military (march) tradition—the bass drum. The bop drummer saw no logical reason for his duplicating the steady four of the bassist with his right foot; instead he used the bass drum as another tone color in his expanding spectrum of sounds. Timekeeping was confined to the top cymbal; later the sock cymbal, sharply closed on the afterbeats, was added as a timekeeping device.<sup>36</sup>

The drummers of this era followed Jo Jones' example and got rid of most of their accessories, reduced the size of the bass and snare drum, and used larger, lighter cymbals. The drumsticks grew longer and



**Kenny Clarke (Herman Leonard)**

thinner, and wire brushes fell from favor. In short, the drum set had evolved into pretty much what is still largely used today.

The man given credit for founding bop (or “klook-mop”) drumming is Kenneth (Klook) Clarke, who was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1914. He had the house band at Minton’s Playhouse in New York, where, along with musicians such as Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, and Dizzy Gillespie, they experimented with, and developed the bebop style of playing.

Clarke had been experimenting prior to this, in the late thirties, and had been let go by Louis Armstrong and Teddy Hill because of it.<sup>37</sup>

Clarke’s playing was said to be a model of solidity and good taste, and his use and non-use of the bass drum was widely copied. Clarke influenced many young drummers, including Max Roach, in the early forties.

Clarke was the original drummer with the Modern Jazz Quartet, formed in 1952, and remained with them until 1955.

Since 1956, Clarke has lived and worked in Paris, France.

Other important drummers in the bebop era were Max Roach, Shelly Manne, Art Blakey, Stan Levy, Dave Tough, and Tiny Kahn, who died at 29 in 1953.

Max Roach was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1925, and has been perhaps the most influential drummer since Gene Krupa. Roach himself was influenced by Catlett and Clark, from who's conceptional tools he fashioned his own style. Roach was the first to audibly complete melodic lines, and gave this description of his view of drumming.

One of the prime functions of the drums is to serve as an accompanying instrument. This can be developed by listening to everything around you and by fitting yourself in without being smothered or smothering others. . . . You can play lyrically by phrasing and dynamics. You set up lyrical patterns in rhythm which give indications of the structure of the song you're playing.<sup>38</sup>

Roach is also well known for exploration in using meters such as 3/4 and 5/4. He also used devices such as superimposing 6/4 on 4/4, and groups of five.

Musicians Roach has worked with include Coleman Hawkins, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, and Clifford Brown. He has led his own combo since the late fifties, and continues to do so.

Toward the end of the forties, the nervous unrest and excitement of bebop were replaced by a tendency toward calm and smoothness, and this was the beginning of "cool jazz," or the Cool School.

Musicians important in developing this style were Miles Davis, John Lewis, Gil Evans, Gerry Mulligan, Lennie Tristano, and Chet Baker.

An offshoot of cool jazz was "West Coast jazz," so called because it was mainly California musicians who played it. This movement centered in Los Angeles, and many of those who developed it were studio musicians in Hollywood.<sup>39</sup>

The most important drummer of both the Cool and West Coast styles was Sheldon "Shelly" Manne. Shelly was born in New York in 1920, and his father was a drummer. Manne started drumming in the swing era, and was important in bebop. He has played in many groups, and became well known as Stan Kenton's drummer from 1946-48, and 1950-51. In 1952 he moved to California and worked with Howard Rumsey, Shorty Rogers, and Russ Freeman, among others.

Mann was always a colorist, and melodic drumming has always been a large element in his work, to the extent of sometimes tuning his drums to a definite pitch.<sup>40</sup> His playing is also marked by intricate combinations of snare, tom-toms, bass, and cymbals. In 1954 he made a duo record with pianist Russ Freeman on the Contemporary label which is one of the best drum records ever made, in terms of showcasing both Manne and this style of playing. In the liner notes Shelly says,

When I'm playing, I think along melodic lines. . . I can sometimes sound like I'm

playing the melody without being right in tune. . .I've only got four drums to work with, so I do the best I can with them to point out the melodic line.<sup>41</sup>

Manne has worked steady for many years in the movie and recording studios of Hollywood, and can be heard on hundreds of movie tracks and records. Until recently, he had his own jazz club, "Shelly's Manne Hole," in Hollywood.

Another West Coast drummer who met with some success is Foreststorn "Chico" Hamilton, who was born in Los Angeles in 1921. He also made attempts to integrate the drums into the melody. Chico was an original member of the Gerry Mulligan Quartet, formed in 1952, and in 1956 he founded his own quintet, featuring cello and flute.



**Shelly Manne (Bernie Thrasher)**

In the late fifties there was a reaction against the cool movement that became known as "hard bop," which was characterized by a strong, emotional drive. Important musicians in its development were Horace Silver, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, and Charles Mingus, to name a few. Drummers of this style often used complex, out-of-meter patterns in their playing, while keeping the beat with their cymbals. Three of the main drummers of hard bop were Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, and Elvin Jones.

Art Blakey was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1919, and joined the Fletcher Henderson band in 1939. He also played with the Billy Eckstine band and Buddy DeFranco's quartet. In 1955 Blakey formed his own group, the Jazz Messengers, and has toured for many years with it, with numerous changes in personnel.

Blakey was the wildest and most basic drummer in modern jazz, whose rolls and explosions are famous. His fiery, volcanic playing is sometimes raucous, and he has been known to knock over his floor tom while playing. He lived in West Africa for a while, and has been responsible for injecting an African flavor into jazz drumming.<sup>42</sup> While he may lack in finesse, he abounds in enthusiasm.

Joseph "Philly Joe" Jones was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1923. He played there for several years, then moved to New York in 1952 where he received recognition as a member of Miles Davis' group.

Jones' playing was said to combine the best elements of both Roach and Blakey, and also reflected the influence of Catlett, who was Jones' favorite drummer. Philly Joe's drumming was dynamic and explosive, with melodic elements in it.

Elvin Jones was born in Pontiac, Michigan in 1927. He played in Detroit for several years before moving to New York in 1956. There he played with Donald Byrd, Tyree Glenn, and Harry Edison in the fifties. In the sixties he spent eight years playing in John Coltrane's group, and became a drummer par excellence.

Elvin Jones was the last of the hard bop drummers to come to the forefront, and accordingly he has carried over into the next style of playing, the Avant-Garde.

Jones' playing contains a melodic instinct, which is coupled with the ability to make complex rhythmic juxtapositions and superimpositions. His conception is based upon complete independence of all four limbs, and he blends his hi-hat, snare, bass, tom-toms, and cymbals with the other players in a complex polyrhythmic structure.<sup>43</sup> His use of the bass drum has evolved from playing accents and explosions, to functioning as almost a third hand.

Jones rhythmically converses with the soloist he is accompanying, and often deliberately plays rhythms that are opposite those of the soloist. He said of this relationship with Coltrane:

It may sound like a duet or duel at times, but it's still a support I'm lending him, a complementary thing. It's much freer than the earlier style. John can move further ahead; he can venture out as far as he wants.<sup>44</sup>

As a soloist, Jones exhibits the same drive and energy that characterizes his accompaniment. He believes that a solo should be a free, personal expression. He has said, concerning soloing:

A solo can take any form the artist chooses within the framework of a composition. It goes back to getting away from the rigidity that jazz had to face when it was primarily dance music.<sup>45</sup>

As mentioned, the next style and also the current one is called Avant-Garde, or sometimes the "New Thing" movement. This style has seen not only rhythmic freedom, but harmonic freedom as well, which has been coupled with the dissolution of the phrase.

The Avant-Garde style has given drummers many freedoms. No longer do they state the rhythmic pulse in a prescribed manner, but employ free



**Elvin Jones**

polyrhythms which serve as both rhythmic and melodic functions. The hi-hat no longer marks off any regular beat, and the accent on 2 and 4 in each measure of 4/4 has disappeared entirely. Often various forms of triple or compound duple meter are superimposed upon the standard 4/4.

The drum set is undergoing some changes again, as additional tomtoms, mounted or raised, are finding their way into many setups. Many different types of cymbals are also being used, and the old Chinese sizzle with the up-turned edge has become rather popular again.

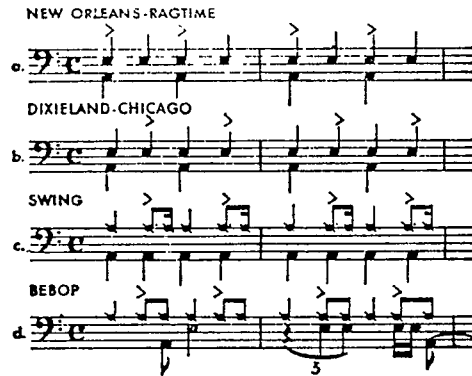
A new, younger generation of drummers has emerged who play this style. The more outstanding ones include Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, Andrew Cyrille, Billy Cobham, Oliver Jackson, and Sunny Murray.

Tony Williams is probably the best known of this group. He was born in 1947, and joined Miles Davis at the age of seventeen. He stayed with Davis for several years, and has also played with John Coltrane and Cecil Taylor. More recently he has headed his own group.

To sum things up, we have seen how jazz drumming started, the styles that followed and the techniques of playing them, the general evolution of the drum set, and the most important drummers, in terms of style and general contributions to drumming.

The basic styles of playing, up through bebop, can best be seen in this example.<sup>46</sup>

## THE ELEMENTS OF JAZZ



In regard to styles, it's to be noted that some drummers have played several styles, such as Shelly Manne, while others have stayed mainly with one throughout their careers, such as George Wettling. Still others have played without being in any particular style or school. Such is the case of Sonny Greer, who was with Duke Ellington for about thirty years. Aside from this, the most interesting thing about Greer is that he used a full complement of percussion instruments in his setup. He had timpani, mallet instruments, gongs, and was known for always having a set of chimes directly behind him. Greer was one of the very few jazz drummers to use this type of setup, which was common to the show or "pit" drummers of the day.

We have also seen that drums emerged from a seemingly subordinate role in the back of the band to a position of musical prominence. Similarly, the drummer has emerged from being musically illiterate to a person who can read music, often play one or more other instruments, and sometimes compose and arrange.

While many drummers have previously been mentioned, many very able and talented ones have not. A partial list of such men would include, in the 1940's and 50's:

Ray McKinley, Nick Fatool, Buddy Schutz, J. C. Heard, Lionel Hampton, Shadow Wilson, Osie Johnson, Gus Johnson, Sonny Payne, Sam Woodyard, Don Lamond, and Frank Isola.

In the 1960's and 70's we have:

Mel Lewis, Jake Hanna, Joe Morello, Chuck Flores, Larry Bunker, Roy Burns, Connie Kay, Ed Thigpen, Roy Haynes, Harold Jones, Denzil Best, Jimmy Cobb, Albert Heath, and Louis Hayes.

Other modern players are:

Allan Dawson, Ed Blackwell, Pete LaRoca, Billy Higgins, Ben Riley, Danny Richmond, and Milford Graves.

To conclude, we know that whether the drummer is sitting back keeping time, having melodic interplay with the soloist, or soloing

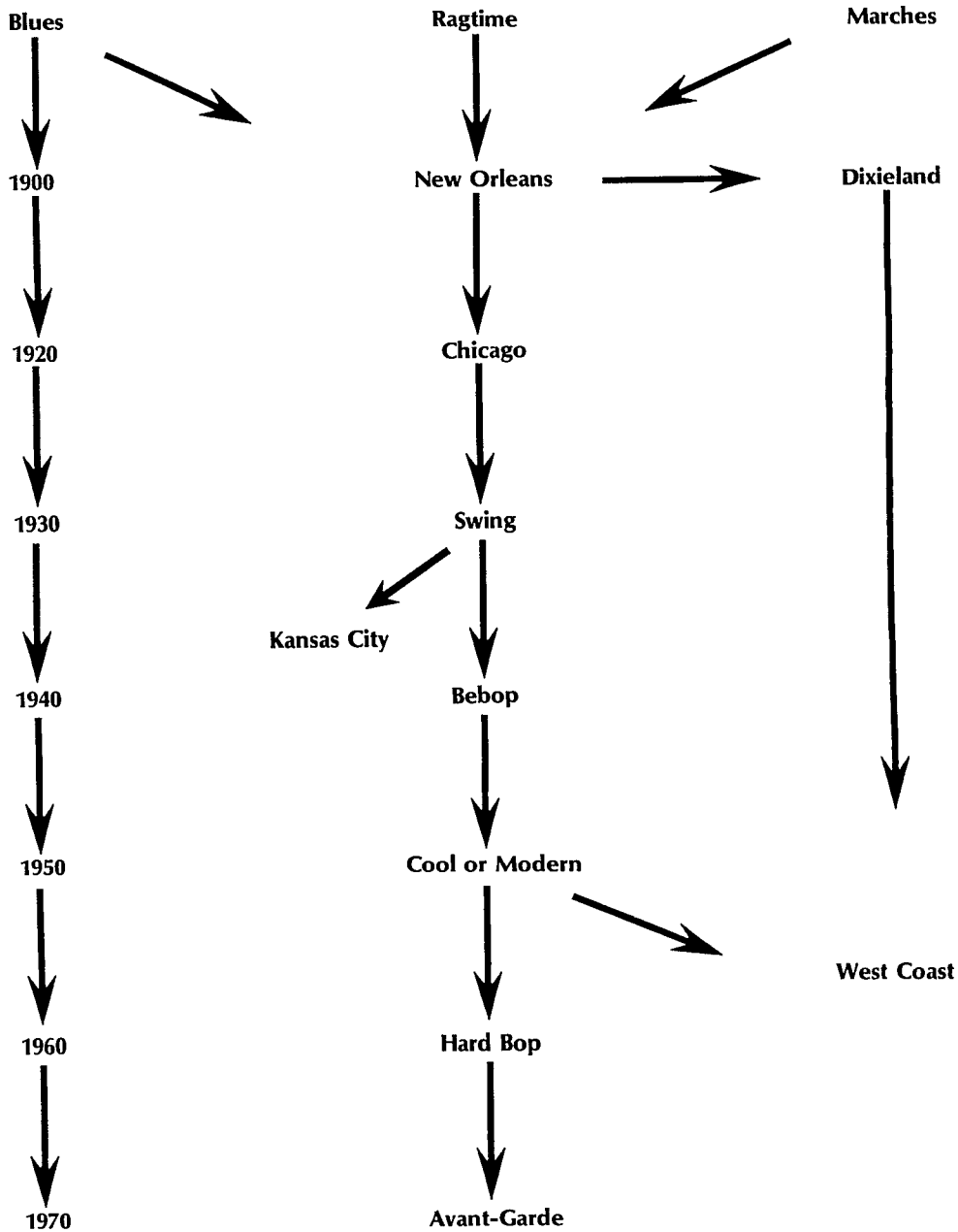


himself, his role within the group is of utmost importance. In discussing the role of the drummer, Count Basie once said:

You may think you're the boss, but that drummer is really the head man. When he's not feeling right, nothing is going to sound good.<sup>47</sup>



*The Beat*



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# FROM THE PAS MUSEUM COLLECTION

## BASS DRUM PEDALS



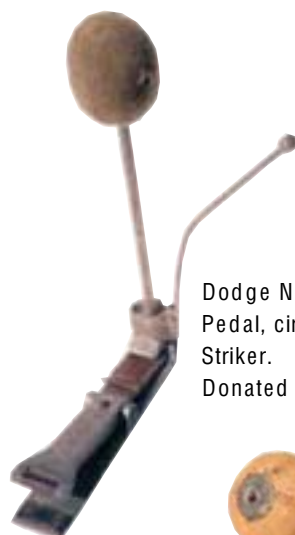
Early 1950s—The Original Ghost Pedal features circular "clock" style springs designed for a smooth action in both directions. This pedal was originally developed by Bob Ramsey of Springfield, Oregon, with the assistance of Shelly Manne. Donated by Florence "Flip" Manne



1920s Leedy Mfg. Company "Professional" Bass Drum Pedal with Cymbal Striker. Donated by Robert Stuart



Double pedal arrangement from Roy Knapp's trap set. On the left is the original 1909 Ludwig & Ludwig pedal, and on the right is the modified 1924 Ludwig & Ludwig pedal. Donated by Jim Knapp.



Dodge No. 12 Bass Drum Pedal, circa 1900 with Cymbal Striker. Donated by Gordon Peters



1960s "The Phantom Action Ghost" Pedal—This second generation pedal was further developed by Ramsey and endorsed by Shelly Manne. The Ludwig Drum Company acquired the Ghost pedal in the late 1970s and developed the next generation. This pedal was discontinued in the early 1980s. Donated by Florence "Flip" Manne



1924 Ludwig & Ludwig Bass Drum Pedal with Cymbal Striker. This pedal belongs to the "Jack O'Grady's Varsity Entertainers" drumset. Donated by Joel Leach



Smoothie Pedal—No date is available and little is known about this pedal with its unique horizontal spring design. Donated by Royal Studio Cartage

# Feature: Drumset

## History of the Drumset - Robert B. Breithaupt

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**Goal:** To discuss various musical styles and their implications upon the function, playing and evolution of the drum set.

*Note: Most significant advances in the development of the acoustic drum set and the function and independent application of the limbs came through jazz drumming. Notable elements of drum set evolution emanating from other styles will be noted, including the association of rock drumming with the evolution of electronic drums and accessories.*

### Pre-Dixieland

The origin of modern drum set is generally traced to a period when one drummer began to serve the function that two or three drummers had served in the past: that is, the snare drum, bass drum and accessory/sound effect instruments were all manipulated by one musician.

Following the Civil War, many black musicians began to form groups, first serving as funeral bands in New Orleans and other large metropolitan areas. These ensembles included instruments which were often left from the war and became indigenous with later "dixieland" styles, such as cornets, trombones and clarinets. Banjos and guitars were also incorporated into these groups. The marching units featured at least two drummers, with one playing the snare drum and the other playing the bass drum, often with a cymbal attachment. The instruments, implements and playing techniques ("traditional" snare stick grip, etc.) were borrowed from the marching units. Bass drums were 26"-30" in diameter and the snare drums were of the rope-tensioned "barrel" type, typical of regimental marching bands. Musical selections consisted of an interesting mix of blues, spiri-

tuals and folk songs.

During the late Nineteenth Century, these marching units began to perform indoors, providing entertainment for dances, parties and various social gatherings. As certain ensembles began to exist solely for indoor entertainment, the need for two or more drummers diminished, both through economic pressures and ingenious inventions of these early drummers. Snare drums which had been used on a sling were replaced by smaller, orchestral-type drums which were either placed on a chair or cradled in a stand. Drummers developed a curious method of playing both a snare drum part and the bass drum, called *double drumming*. This method involved coordinating the hands to play both parts, accomplished through clever positioning of the snare drum (at an angle), the bass drum (to the right of the drummer), the small Turkish cymbal (mounted on the bass drum) and through various double-sticking patterns, a technique which became a hallmark of jazz drumming in future generations. Many players found the double drumming approach limiting and concentrated their efforts on developing methods to free the hands to play patterns on the snare drum while having the bass drum played with the foot.

Early attempts at developing the bass drum pedal included a device which would strike a small cymbal attached to the bass drum rim simultaneous with the striking of the bass drum, emulating the sound of the traditional marching bass drum/hand cymbal function. Early efforts at bass drum pedal design produced crude, though ingenious inventions by George Olney and H. A. Bower (*pictured*) and a revolutionary design by a young Chicago percussionist, William F. Ludwig (*pictured*), who was later to become one of the world's foremost drum manufacturers.

The early sit-down drum set also included a variety of sound effect instruments and percussion instruments from other cultures. The sound-effect instruments, referred to as "contraptions" or "traps," consisted of various whistles, slapsticks, washboards and other devices used by drummers for minstrel shows, vaudeville shows and in silent movie houses into the 1930's. Instruments such as woodblocks, temple blocks, tom-toms, camel bells and Chinese cymbals were introduced to the American drummer through immigrants or through the popular Worlds Fairs of the late 1800's and early 1900's. By 1920, the standard instrumentation of the drum set included bass drum with pedal and cymbal attachment, concert snare drum, Turkish cymbal, Chinese cymbal, wood block and/or temple blocks, camel bell/cowbell, small and/or large Chinese tom-toms and assorted sound effect instruments.

### Performance - Pre-Dixieland

Early drum set players were influenced by the regimental music of the Civil War as well as the African-influenced dance music which remained a part of the black heritage of New Orleans and other cities. Ragtime's syncopated feel was infectious and became a part of the repertoire of New Orleans brass bands as well as the popular John Phillip Sousa Concert Band. The ability to improvise and/or augment drum parts within a particular style was a necessity. Many drummers created a "syncopated" quality to both the march-style music as well as ragtime by emphasizing the "weak" or "up-beat" (2 and 4), often accomplished through the use of a closed or "crush" roll on those beats or by mirroring the melodies on the drum set (primarily in ragtime).

## Dixieland

By 1910, improvised music based on the blues, ragtime and other influences was being performed by many groups in New Orleans and in other cities. All-black ensembles were gaining popularity throughout America and Europe and the drummer was the focal point of much of the excitement, due to the array of instruments which were often a part of the drummer's setup. Drummers were beginning to mix dotted rhythms and triplets with syncopated eighth-note patterns when soloing. Tony Spargo (also known by his real name Tony Sbarbaro) was the drummer for a group called the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (ODJB), an ensemble of young white musicians emulating the improvised music they had heard black bands perform in the cafes of New Orleans' Storyville district, the red-light district which spawned much of the early examples of the music which was to become known as "jazz." Spargo, generally considered to be the strongest musician in the ODJB, was known for his flamboyant style of playing, much of it based in a syncopated ragtime style.

Warren "Baby" Dodds is considered by many to be the first "jazz" drummer, due to his ability to support the improvising soloist as well as to improvise himself. Dodds' musical foundation was deep, having been born to a family where his ancestors were African drummers and his brother, Johnny Dodds, was a notable clarinetist. Dodds grew up in New Orleans, influenced by street drummers as well as ragtime players. His playing with the "King" Oliver band and with Louis Armstrong in the early and mid 1920's reveal the typical "New Orleans" dixieland style; a more controlled style than ragtime, often in a "four" feel rather than in "two" as was often the case with both ragtime and the later "Chicago-Style" dixieland. Dodds' improvisatory efforts are best documented with the Oliver band when playing woodblock, where he effectively mixed rolls, trip-

lets and dotted rhythms as background to the horn solos rather than to simply play a series of ostinato patterns or to elaborate on a melody in the manner of the ragtime drummers. This characteristic set Dodds apart from drummers before him and depicts the primary role of the drum set drummer to the present day; to support and in turn become influenced by the musicians which the drummer is accompanying.

Dodds and other drummers of the 1920's such as Zutty Singleton, Paul Barbarin, Ben Pollack and Chauncey Morehouse were to continue the development of the time-keeping nature of the instrument through New Orleans dixieland as well as a more rollicking version, called "Chicago-Style" dixieland. The Chicago style often featured the "two-feel," where the downbeats were accentuated. The "back-beat" feel developed in the Chicago style, as drummers stressed the "weak" beats with snare drum rolls or accented patterns. The cymbal was often choked for accent effects as well as being used as a time-keeping instrument, applying wood block rhythms directly to the cymbal as well as alternating between open and choked. The hi-hat did not begin in its modern form, but started as the "snowshoe cymbal beater," a device which featured two small cymbals attached to wood planks, operated by the foot. The snowshoe, as well as the predecessor of the modern hi-hat, called the "low-boy," appeared as part of drum sets beginning in the mid-1920's. The low-boy, which set 10"-12" high, was operated by the means of a foot pedal attached to a metal rod, holding a cymbal which, when the foot was depressed, would move toward the other cymbal. The cymbals used on both the low-boy and early high hat were called "Charleston cymbals," small, rather thick brass cymbals with an exaggerated bell designed to provide the impact needed for the back beat, or "sock" function of this early device.

The low-boy was popular since it could produce the back-beat without being in the way of other instruments, a distinct advantage for the performer who required a large amount of equipment, such as a vaudeville percussionist. The hi-hat first appeared in the late twenties and was soon to become part of the standard drum set.

Drummers began to use brushes (which were fly-swatters before being mass-produced by the drum companies) in dixieland music, emulating the sound of sandpaper blocks rubbed together, a popular dance effect used by minstrel show and vaudeville show drummers. The legato effect of the brushes was created by moving the brush in a rotating motion on the drum head. Both hands could move in this fashion, creating a very smooth sound, or one hand could drag the brush in an oval while the other hand was to play a rhythmic pattern. Drummers such as Zutty Singleton and later Chick Webb and Jo Jones were to make an art out of manipulating the brushes.

By the end of the 1920's the drum set had not changed dramatically from the beginning of the decade, with the exception of the addition of the low-boy (or hi-hat) and brushes. Recording techniques were improving so as to allow the drummer to bring the battery of instruments into the recording or radio studio rather than to compromise the performance by playing drum parts on instruments such as the wood block. This was a common practice of the early 1920's and makes the study of drum set development more difficult, since early recordings often do not represent the actual performance practice of the period.

## Swing

The beginning of the "swing" sound is difficult to pinpoint, but a variety of developments in jazz of the late 1920's led to this new form.

During the mid to late 1920's, large ensembles began to form in New York, featuring written arrangements

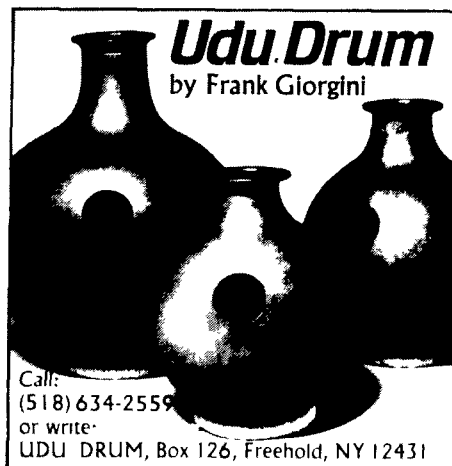
and led by musicians such as Don Redman, Fletcher Henderson and Duke Ellington. The employment for these groups came in the large ballrooms, where a large ensemble was appropriate and organized arrangements featuring both improvisation and ensemble playing were used. While "two-beat" styles remained popular, especially with the white dance bands (called "sweet" bands), black and aristocratic white audiences were beginning to listen and dance to a new style of jazz which featured a more restrained, "flat-four" feel (more equal emphasis to each note) to the music. The development of this style had a profound effect on the drummer and the entire rhythm section, which by the early 1930's included piano, drums, string bass (double bass) and guitar.

Drummers of the period supported the new style by beginning to incorporate connected, legato rolls, sustained cymbal crashes and ostinato patterns onto various instruments (especially the hi-hat cymbals) creating a time-keeping effect on a lighter sound. Time-keeping on an instrument with a lighter texture had the effect of relaxing the feel as well as enhancing the efforts of the strong bass players (such as Jimmy Blanton with Duke Ellington and Walter Paige with Count Basie) of the period. The drummer and the bass player were to become a cohesive time-keeping team. The ostinato patterns were often quarter notes or a combination of quarter notes and triplet figures, a carry-over from the wood block beats of the dixieland style, which were to become known as "ride" patterns as they were applied to the cymbal.

Since the right hand was usually the limb which was playing the cymbal ostinato, the left hand was free to begin to occasionally punctuate on the snare drum in support of the musical arrangement, the melody or the improvisations of the soloists. Drummers such as Walter Johnson and Kaiser Marshall were the pio-

neers of these early examples of "independence," with Count Basie's drummer Jo Jones being the primary exponent of this style. Jones coupled with bassist Paige, guitarist Freddie Greene and Basie on piano redefined the role of the rhythm section in jazz through the development of the flat-four feel and Basie's sparse chordal backgrounds. Jo Jones' reputation was built by his uncanny abilities as an accompanist, through the use of brushes and his development of three distinct hi-hat sounds: the closed hi-hat (with the back-beat played on the hi-hat stand), open/closed combinations and the half-open hi-hat, all being decedents from the hand-held cymbal techniques of the previous decade.

The 1930's brought recognition to the drummer as a soloist. Gene Krupa, a Chicago drummer, made an international reputation for himself as a Swing Era musician playing a drumming style much more associated with ragtime and dixieland. Krupa was a dynamic soloist and became a star as a member of the Benny Goodman group before forming his own band. Krupa was known for his relentless bass drum beats as well as his boundless energy and hand-to-hand technique. His extended solos became a trademark and the accented tom-tom patterns seemed to be borrowed from the dixieland drum solo style which Baby Dodds called "spooky drums." Krupa's ability to structure a drum solo captured audiences of the era and set a style which drummers continue



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to use in the present day. William "Chick" Webb was the only major jazz drummer to lead his own band in the 1930's, allowing him to feel free to experiment with his playing style within the context of a big band. Webb's playing was very influential to drummers of the 1930's. His playing technique was exceptional, utilizing rhythmic groupings and double-stroke techniques containing elements of both dixieland and swing drumming, but accompanying ensembles and soloists with a tasteful unabrasive style.

The drum set of the late 1930's was generally void of many of the traps of earlier sets, instead reflecting the demands of drummers of the period. All sets included the typical bass drum, but the Chinese tom-toms had begun to be replaced by single- and later double-tensioned tom-toms produced by the drum companies. Ride cymbals were expanding to 18"-22" in diameter, and would reach sizes as large as 25"-26" during the 1940's and 50's. Chinese cymbals were included in many sets, often 14"-16" in diameter. The "crash" cymbal would come into vogue as the ride cymbal became a single-function instrument, with the crash cymbals ranging from 12"-16" in diameter and the hi-hats were generally from 12"-15" in diameter. The snare drum had become the trademark of many players and companies, utilizing the latest in features, such as separate-tensioning of the heads, a variety of snare adjustment mechanisms, and a wide choice of shell materials and designs.

### Be-Bop

The early 1940's saw revolutionary changes in the way jazz musicians viewed themselves and their music. Many musicians were beginning to recognize jazz as an expressive art form, capable of bold rhythmic and harmonic experimentations. Small groups of musicians were leading a movement away from the dance halls and into small venues, where the purpose of the band was for listening

rather than frivolous amusement. The art of improvisation was the focal point of this new music called "be-bop." Be-bop featured disjunct melodies, extended harmonies, alternate chord changes and a variety of musical concepts and materials which provide the basis for the study and application of jazz improvisation to the present day. Since the purpose of the music was to showcase the talents of the improvising musician, tempos became faster as well as slower for ballad playing, the result of not being driven by the demands of the dance band.

Kenny Clarke was the pivotal drummer between swing and be-bop styles. While drummers such as Jo Jones and Dave Tough had begun to move ostinato "ride" patterns onto the cymbal in the late 1930's, it was Clarke who officially broke the "barrier" and began to use the bass drum as a punctuating and independent voice on the drum set around 1940, first in Teddy Hill's band and most notably with pianist Thelonius Monk at the after-hours club called Minton's Playhouse, a club in Harlem managed by Hill. It was at Minton's that be-bop, a cult following for the music and the corresponding drumming style was born. Clarke's playing was a departure from what had come before. By the end of the 1930's, drummers had begun to use the bass drum as an independent voice in solos and fills, but it was Clarke who was to incorporate this independent playing, sometimes called "dropping bombs," into the time-keeping and accompanying function. Clarke was also responsible for playing the majority of his cymbal ostinatos on a large cymbal, soon to become known as the ride, or "bop" cymbal. He also began to fill with the left hand on the snare drum, or in combination with the snare drum and bass drum, in odd groupings rather than in phrases. The mature bop drumming style, heard in the playing of Sid Catlett, Shelly Manne and especially Max Roach is a combination of technique and communication between drummer and soloist.

Max Roach was considered to be a part of the mainstream of the bop movement by the time he had reached his early twenties, working with the major purveyors of the art, saxophonist Charlie Parker, trumpeter "Dizzy" Gillespie and Thelonius Monk. Roach, unlike Clarke, did not alter an existing swing style, but developed his own approach to the music, thriving on the challenge of the break-neck tempos and free-flowing rhythmic ideas between drummer and soloist. The technique of passing ideas between the limbs was referred to as "coordinated independence," a term invented by teacher and author Jim Chapin in the late 1940's as he began to analyze and codify the techniques that drummers such as Clarke, Catlett, Roach, Manne, Tiny Kahn, Stan Levey and others were using in the new style. Be-Bop offered the drummer the opportunity to be considered an integral and equal member of the ensemble, not just as a soloist but as an improvising member of the group. Roach was a dynamic, articulate soloist, generally using hand-to-hand patterns in his improvisations and tuning his drums considerably higher than drummers of previous styles so as to enhance the clarity of his ideas.

### Cool

The development of any art form is marked by individuals or groups who create a new artistic style as a reaction to a previous style. Such was the case with a new style of jazz, called "cool." Cool jazz generally featured moderate tempos, vibratoless playing and a much more restrained approach. Musicians such as pianist/composer Lennie Tristano, saxophonists Lee Konitz and Gerry Mulligan and trumpeter Miles Davis were among the major exponents of this style, which would meet with relative commercial success and pave the way for the "West Coast" jazz sound to develop later in the 1950's. Drummers would often ac-

company this style with brushes. The limited equipment demands of this style helped to "downsize" the standard drum set: the bass drum was often 20"-22" in diameter and the tom-toms were 12"-13" and 14"-16" in diameter. Tom-toms were mounted onto the bass drum by sturdy mounts and by the late 1940's floor toms had removable legs. Bass drums began to appear with a revolutionary concept, "retractable" spurs. Many of these equipment changes reflected the less obtrusive role of the drummer in the cool style as well as to accommodate the increased popularity of the small "club-date" combo rather than the big band. Professional drummers, especially those who were living in New York or touring by car were demanding more portability in their equipment.

### Hard Bop

Many jazz musicians found the "cool school" limiting and lacking emotion. During the mid-1950's a growing number of young disciples of the be-bop style began to form groups which featured improvisation as well as an increased emphasis on composition within a jazz context. These groups were to also feature the drummer as a soloist, often improvising as an introduction or over the entire form of the tune rather in an "open solo" style. Max Roach, a notable band leader in the hard-bop style, was a major exponent of these techniques as was Art Blakey, a young band leader whose Jazz messengers included some of the music's greatest stars early in their careers. Blakey typified the hard-bop style with a forceful back beat on the hi-hat as well as the energetic and liberal use of polyrhythm and independence techniques. Blakey, as well as other major performers such as "Philly Joe" Jones and Roy Haynes were to begin to freely use the bass drum as a melodic voice during solo improvisations. Other major band leaders of the period included Miles

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Robert Breithaupt is an Associate Professor of Music at Capital University, where he directs the percussion program and serves as the Division Head for jazz Studies and Music Industry. Under his direction, Capital's percussion groups have performed at state and national conventions as well as numerous jazz festivals throughout the nation. Bob maintains an active professional schedule as a performer, clinician and adjudicator in addition to serving as faculty member and coordinator of the Summer Drumset Workshops. He is the drummer for the Jazz Arts Group of Columbus, the nation's oldest publicly-funded jazz ensemble, and performs as extra percussionist with the Columbus Symphony and Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra. Bob has written articles for *Modern Drummer* and *Percussive Notes*. He is editor of the *Drumset Forum* column in *Percussive Notes*. Bob is past-president of the Ohio Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society and is an artist/endorsee for Zildjian Cymbals and Yamaha Percussion.



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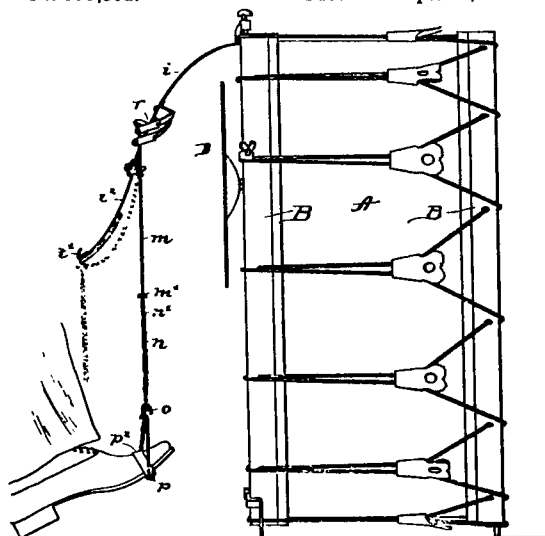


FIG 2.

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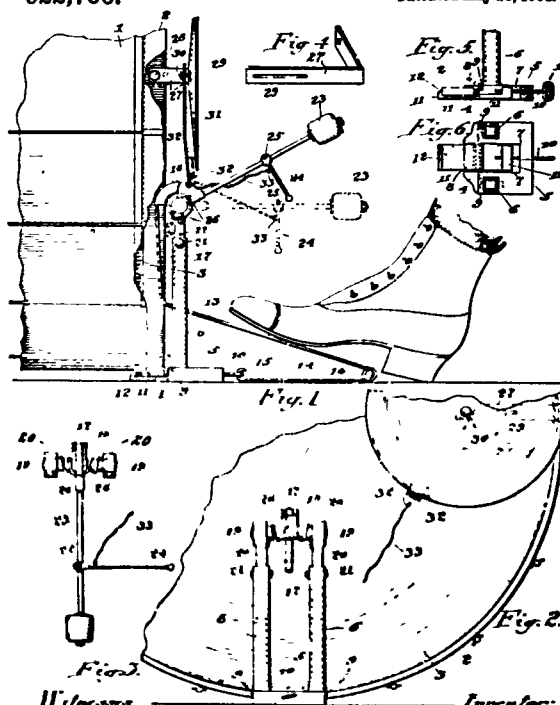
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922,706.

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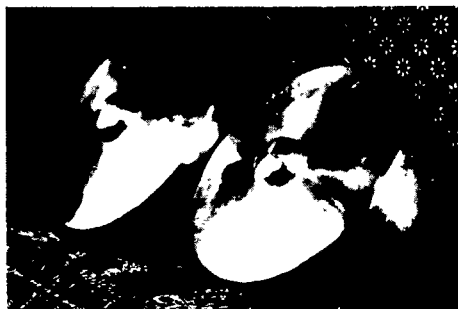
Witnesses:  
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# Focus on Performance: History of the Drumset, Part II - Bob Breithaupt

*Editor's Note: This article by Bob Breithaupt is the second of a two-part series. Part I appeared in the Fall, 1989, edition of Percussive Notes. JL*

## West Coast, Third Stream

The growing population and public infatuation with California in the mid-1950's was realized in a new and popular outgrowth of cool jazz, called "West Coast." Most of the musicians who made this music popular were alumni of the Stan Kenton, Woody Herman and Les Brown big bands who moved to California to become a part of the growing recording industry in Los Angeles and Hollywood. West Coast jazz was primarily consumed by white audiences who were listening to a more restrained jazz product than the hard-bop groups were producing in New York at the time. The West Coast drumming style was generally very smooth, utilizing brushes and other implements such as mallets, fingers, etc. to produce new effects. Drummers such as Shelly Manne, who were excellent be-bop players in their own right, seemed to adapt well to this style and became an integral part of the West Coast movement. Although West Coast jazz was generally known to feature small groups (such as those led by Barney Kessel and Andre Previn), the big bands of Shorty Rogers and especially Terry Gibbs featured outstanding drumming by Mel Lewis. Lewis' interpretation of big band "charts" was a curious mixture of the relaxed West Coast small-group style and the be-bop approach.

A non-traditional facet of the music, called "third stream," had developed toward the end of the 1950's, featuring non-traditional groups, instrumentation and musical materials. Musicians such as Gil Evans and the Modern Jazz Quartet (who used Kenny Clarke as the original drummer in the group) had met with suc-

cess in mixing "classical" instrumentation (Gil Evans' orchestra with Miles Davis) and musical forms. Composer/pianist Dave Brubeck (a pupil of Darius Milhaud) gained an international following for his music, which featured "odd" meters of 3/4, 5/4, 7/4, 11/4 and others, popularizing a technique which Max Roach's groups had been featuring for some time. Brubeck's drummer, Joe Morello, became a sensation in drumming circles due to his uncanny fluidity in these meters as well as for his displays of technical skill, such as the one-handed "roll." Chico Hamilton was noted for his unique approach to the drum set, utilizing mallets, accessory instruments, etc. as well as a 16-inch bass drum. The four-piece drum set remained standard through the 1950's, with the cowbell and woodblock still considered a part of the standard set-up for commercial Latin-American rhythms such as the cha-cha and mambo.

## Latin-American

During the late 1940's band leaders such as Dizzy Gillespie and Stan Kenton began to incorporate elements of Latin music as well as Latin percussion instruments and instrumentalist in their bands. Gillespie hired Cuban "hand drummer" Manchito as a member of his band. Kenton began to tour with a Latin percussionist at this time and his band was to become identified with Latin-influenced arrangements and compositions. Drummers of the time would learn to play "commercial" beats such as the samba and the mambo on the full set, but when coupled with an entire Latin percussion section, as was the case with some of the Gillespie recordings, the drummer would merely keep time, delegating most of the work to the Latin percussionists. Jazz musicians' interest in Latin and Latin-influ-

enced music would continue, becoming a part of the hard-bop repertoire as well as gaining mass appeal around 1960 with the emergence of the Brazilian "Bossa-Nova." Part of the lure and the challenge for the jazz drummer playing Latin music was the fact that he must perform a "new" style of music where the rhythmic emphasis fell on the "downbeat" rather than the "upbeat," as was the case in most jazz styles to this point. The influence of Latin music in jazz has remained strong, providing a major element in the eclectic of "fusion" styles of jazz.

## Four-Way Independence/Neo-Bop

By the beginning of the 1960's, drummers had learned to utilize all four limbs for soloing, with a few pioneering efforts to use all limbs for time-keeping as well. Elvin Jones made a reputation for himself as the drummer for saxophonist John Coltrane's quartet, a part of what some observers have called the "neo-bop" movement. Jones' playing generally had an underlying triplet feel, with each part of the triplet distributed to a different limb. Many observers have felt that Jones was intentionally creating "polyrhythmic" patterns between the limbs in his solos and during his accompanying. However, careful listening will often reveal that the note distribution, coupled with his unique ability to displace accents and stress points, gives the music a polyrhythmic or polymetric "feel" rather than to changing the meter. Roy Haynes helped to break the hi-hat "barrier" in much the same manner that Kenny Clarke freed the bass drum around 1940 by using the hi-hat for various fills and anticipations during the course of time-keeping. Haynes did not leave the ride cymbal a great deal for time-keeping chores, becoming known as a master of the ride rhythm; the ride patterns had a "duple" quality and would vary with

the music rather than remaining a stagnant ostinato pattern. Roy Haynes' drum set of this period (as well as the set which Tony Williams was to play) included an 18-inch bass drum, 12" diameter mounted tom-tom, 14" diameter floor tom-tom and a standard or piccolo snare drum. Cymbals included a 20"-24" ride, 16"-20" crash and 14" hi-hats.

Tony Williams was a young (16 years old) prodigy when he joined Miles Davis' group in 1963, having been a student of the master teacher Alan Dawson and a veteran of saxophonist Jackie McClean's group. Williams was to gain fame as a part of a spectacular young rhythm section in Davis' band which also included bassist Ron Carter and pianist Herbie Hancock. Williams' work with the Davis groups was so notable that performers still consider an accurate transcription of a Tony Williams accompaniment or solo to be a formidable accomplishment. The elements of four-way control were so complete in his playing what Williams was able to keep time with ride cymbal patterns, drum patterns or through his seemingly limitless hand-to-foot coordination. These techniques predate and serve as the impetus for the development of "linear" drumming concepts, a term depicting the use of a single line or sticking pattern which is distributed among the limbs to create interesting patterns. Williams' popularity and notoriety with the Miles Davis group seemed to underline the fact that, since the 1920's, drum set playing had advanced from a truly "dependent" two-way system (snare drum and bass drum) to an advanced method of playing, incorporating all limbs. The next logical advancement in drum set playing was its use in music where boundaries of form and structure were either liberal or non-existent.

### Free Jazz

The term "free jazz" defines a style where adherence to musical structure is eschewed, with the result of

being a product that many choose not to define as "music," due to its disjunct quality. Musicians such as Ornette Coleman rarely use standard forms, chord changes and they like to construct their compositions. Coleman will often use a "head" or melody as a basis for the song but does not adhere to a particular melodic, harmonic or rhythmic structure for soloing. Free jazz musicians found a loyal audience of artists, intellectuals and human rights activists due to the "freedom" which many feel the music depicts. Drummers such as Ed Blackwell and Billy Higgins were active in this movement, making significant contributions with Ornette Coleman and others, but not playing with the total improvisatory freedom of players such as Rashied Ali, Andrew Cyrille (with pianist Cecil Taylor) and Sonny Murray. Complete freedom in this music permits the drummer to respond to the music in any manner, either by providing a time line which may or may not be adhered to by the other musicians or by freely improvising on the drums and accessories without regard for providing a particular pulse. Free jazz drummers would often supplement the standard "four-piece," or four drum set with a variety of accessory and ethnic percussion instruments.

### Rock Drumming

Early rock, or "rock and roll" drumming was a combination of two drumming styles: country and western and rhythm and blues. These drummers borrowed techniques and set design from the jazz drummers of the day, but the music was to have its own distinct rhythmic feel by the beginning of the 1960's.

The triplet, of 12/8 feel was prevalent in early rhythm and blues and rock styles. Drummers outlined this feel by using the ride cymbal, with pioneering rock drummers such as Fred Below playing fills reminiscent of jazz styles. Strong emphasis on the back beat, often played on the snare drum, was a part of this style. Evi-

dence suggests that the back beat which became a part of early rock drumming was the drummers version of "slap bass," a technique used by string bass players where the down-beats were played and the string was slapped against the fingerboard on the up-beats, (beats two and four). Some early rock recordings also suggest Latin/Cajun influences upon drummers as well as examples which incorporated only drums and cymbals. Drummers also began to incorporate straight eighth-note ride patterns and began to construct various beats which used the bass drum as a facet of the pattern.

By the early 1960's rock and roll had taken on a life of its own, complete with electric guitars, basses and a growing youth population to support it. Rock drumming's notable advances during this period came in the form of the sheer popularity of the music and the drums, led by drummers and groups such as Cozy Cole ("Topsy, Part II"), Sandy Nelson ("Teen Beat"), and The Sufaris ("Wipe Out"). With the exception of "Wipe Out," these drum features and many which would follow (including the enormously successful "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida," by Iron Butterfly and "Toad" featuring Ginger Baker with Cream) used drumming techniques and patterns made popular by Gene Krupa twenty years earlier. Krupa remained popular through the 1960's, and served as an inspiration to many young players who found him to be more accessible as a person and as a drummer than they found many of the modern jazz players.

Prior to the early 1960's the drum set was essentially the same instrument for all musical styles: a four-piece set. Drummers began to add a second tom-tom, mounted on the bass drum, during this period, possibly to allow for a descending "melodic" line from snare drum to floor tom during the course of a four-beat fill. Hal Blaine, one of the most recorded drummers of all time, expanded the drum set to a multi-tom set-up. This change in

the instrument was a significant departure from the standard outfit and helped to signal a change in the development and marketing of the major drum manufacturers. Following the arrival of the Beatles to the United States in 1964, the market for "combo" instruments exploded, with changes in rock music setting the trends for drum set design. The music and drumming were less subtle than jazz, with each drum and cymbal becoming one-dimensional in their function within the drum set. Larger, lower pitched drums were used in rock music, both for increased projection as well as for visual impact. Hi-hat cymbals were made thicker to accommodate the heavier playing and the fact that the cymbal ostinato which had been played on the ride cymbal in the past was now being played on the closed hi-hat. Single-headed tom-toms were popular, producing a direct sound which could project through amplified music easier than other tom-toms. Fiberglass became a popular shell material due to its brilliant sound. Drum companies were marketing hardware based on strength and durability rather than portability. Drum heads and sticks became thicker. Multi-tom and double-bass drum outfits became prominent in drum catalogs, with the five-piece drum set replacing the four-piece set as the standard configuration by 1970. Cowbells, woodblocks and brushes no longer came as standard equipment with the purchase of a drum set. Rock music had become the popular music of the era as well as the driving force of the musical instrument market.

During the mid- to late-1960's, black drummers such as Benny Benjamin and Bernard Purdie had developed a more syncopated form of rock drumming within "soul" or "Motown" music. These styles required great facility and independence between the limbs, especially the snare drum and bass drum. By this time there was a clear distinction between fundamental rock and jazz drumming: basic rock patterns emanated from

the right foot and the left hand (bass drum and snare drum), while in most jazz styles of the day the basic swing pattern emanated from the opposite limbs. These differences, along with attitude, caused some players to view rock drumming as a "simple" form. The efforts of Benjamin and Purdie with Motown, James Brown and other offered a challenge to many drummers and spawned interest in black music of the 1960's. Drummers like David Garibaldi with groups like Tower of Power gave rise to "funk" styles, which provided many of the technical influences for the "fusion" groups of the 1970's and 80's.

### **Jazz-Rock/Fusion**

The late 1960's featured a myriad of musical influences, with an audience for nearly every effort. No one group or sound dominated the popular music scene as the Beatles had just a few years earlier. Instead, many different facets of the contemporary musical culture were heard, with expanding groups like Blood Sweat and Tears (featuring drumming of Bobby Colomby), Chicago (Danny Seraphine) and Dreams (Billy Cobham) introduced horn sections into the rock context and, in turn, were responsible for a music call "jazz-rock." These bands were not the first to employ horn sections; James Brown's group and other rhythm and blues artists had been using horn sections for quite some time. However, these bands integrated Rock drumming- affected by the emergence of two outstanding British drummers, Mitch Mitchell (With Jimi Hendrix) and John Bonham (with Led Zepplin). Mitchell and Bonham stand out from a multitude of drummers playing "hard" rock during the late 1960's. Both players possessed fine technique, boundless energy and the ability to incorporate techniques such as "linear" sticking and rhythmic displacement into their playing. The application of these techniques were important for the advancement of rock drumming as well as to the

"fusion" music which developed around 1970.

Tony Williams was already considered the "boy wonder" of contemporary jazz during the 1960's, making himself a legend in the music by the time he had reached his early twenties. However, as he began to listen and became influenced by rock music, Williams chose to leave Miles Davies (who also had begun to experiment with rock elements [the "Bitches Brew" sessions, which included the fine playing of Jack DeJohnette] in his own group) and form a highly-influential band called Lifetime, which included organist Larry Young and guitarist John McLaughlin (who was to later form the Mahvishnu Orchestra). Many consider this effort to be an example of the true "fusion" of jazz and rock styles rather than a music which incorporated elements of either style. Williams was spectacular in this medium, redefining the possibilities of drumming within a rock-related context with his mastery of four-limb independence. Late in 1970, the Mahvishnu Orchestra, featuring Billy Cobham on drums, was formed. This band featured music which used changing meters and seemed to be influenced by Eastern melodic and harmonic materials, perhaps a reflection of John McLaughlin's interest in Eastern culture at the time. Cobham's dominance of the music was staggering, utilizing his impressive hand-to-hand technique on a drum set which evolved to enormous proportions (including as many as three bass drums at one point) during his tenure with the band. Cobham was also an exponent of an "ambidexterious" approach to the drum set, playing the ride cymbal and hi-hat with either right or left hands and feet. Due to this "balanced" approach, Cobham used "matched" grip nearly all the time, an unusual technique for a player outside of the rock arena at the time.

English drummer Bill Bruford has proven to be influential, serving as a member of the groups Yes and King



Crimson as well as leading his own recording dates. Bruford's fluid control of sticking patterns while executing the intricate meter changes of King Crimson's music make him a joy to watch. Bruford was also one of the pioneers of the electronic percussion movement.

An important element of the fusion style during the 1980's was Latin-based music. Pianist Chick Corea has continued to incorporate Latin influence into his music, beginning with the inclusion of Brazilian drummer and percussionist Airto Moriera in the classic Return to Forever band of the early 1970's. Alex Acuna's work with Weather Report in the mid-1970's was an early example of Latin-influenced drumming in a mature fusion context. This playing required the drummer to approach the instrument differently than before; intricate sticking patterns were often distributed between the limbs while the bass drum and/or hi-hat played an ostinato pattern, an unusual but infectious sound which created a great deal of excitement. Drummers such as Steve Gadd, Peter Erskine and Vinnie Colaiuta are important exponents of these influences.

#### Electronic Drums and Accessories

Electronic devices have been associated with rock music since the 1950's, but not until the 1970's did electronics have an lasting impact on drums and early efforts at "electrifying" drums (Hollywood™ brand drums in the 1960's) were not successful and were merely designed to be a self-contained electronic drum set with pick-ups, based on the principle of the electric guitar. The acoustics of the drums and the lack of technology did not permit those efforts to succeed. Internally and externally-mounted microphone systems were developed in the 1980's which were more successful. Drummers began to become aware of microphones and sound reinforcement techniques during the 1970's, as it became evident that a sound system could not only enhance but drastically alter the

sound of the drum set.

Electronic drums began to appear in the 1970's, as single-drum units containing a pickup which channeled the electronic signal through filters and was amplified by a guitar amplifier or sound system. These devices (the most popular being the Synare™ and Syndrum™) had limited diversity in sounds, and became stylized as a popular sound in "disco" music. The Simmons company developed the widely-available electronic drum set, a five-piece set of "pads," each containing a pickup, or transducer. Each signal contained a separate channel on a mixing board. These sounds became very popular in music of the early 1980's, but were still analog sounds, much like those generated from early synthesizers.

The most dramatic changes in electronic percussion came in the developments of the drum machine and Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI). The drum machine had the ability to play "perfect" time and be programmed to play standard patterns and song forms or to create new patterns which could be impossible for a drummer to play. Many drummers felt this device, which was programmed through the use of buttons, was a threat. In fact, the drum machine did replace musicians in some production related facets of the music business where creativity and "human" feel were not as critical as the cost-effectiveness of the electronic device. Many other musicians were to feel threatened with the advances in MIDI technology, where drum machines, synthesizers, computers and sequencers can "talk" to each other through digital (computer-based) signals and information. This technology permits the performer to "trigger" a variety of sounds through one instrument. In other words, one instrument, or computer, becomes the controller, or "master," while the other instruments become "slaves." The excitement of "silver lining" to this process is that percussionists can use the controller concept to access an unlim-

ited number of sounds. During the late 1980's, it became apparent that electronics were not to make the acoustic drum set or the drummer obsolete, but were to provide enhancement to the sound possibilities of the drummer, something drummers have attempted to do since the beginning of the century.

Through increased literacy, drummers found new life in the electronic music world, with other musicians generally being unable to realize and program drum "parts" on the electronic drum machines and computers in the same manner that a drummer does. This reality supports the case for continued study of "standard" practices in drumming and the teaching of various drumming styles on the acoustic drum set. The drummer of the future will need to be well-versed in fundamental technique and style as well as the technology which will shape our future.

*Bob Breithaupt is professor of percussion at Capital Univ., Columbus, OH.*

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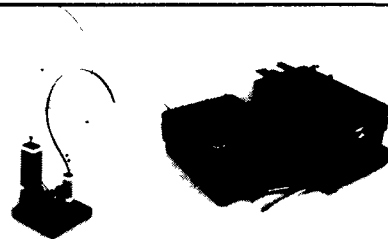
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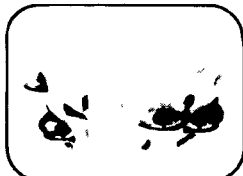
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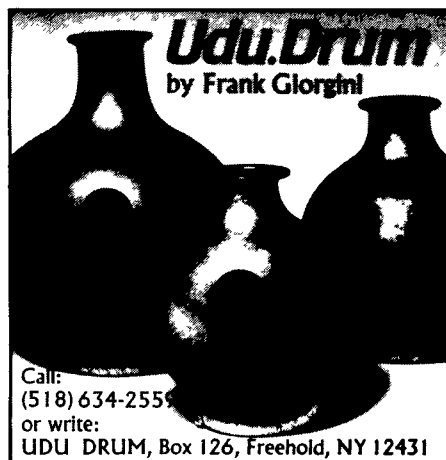


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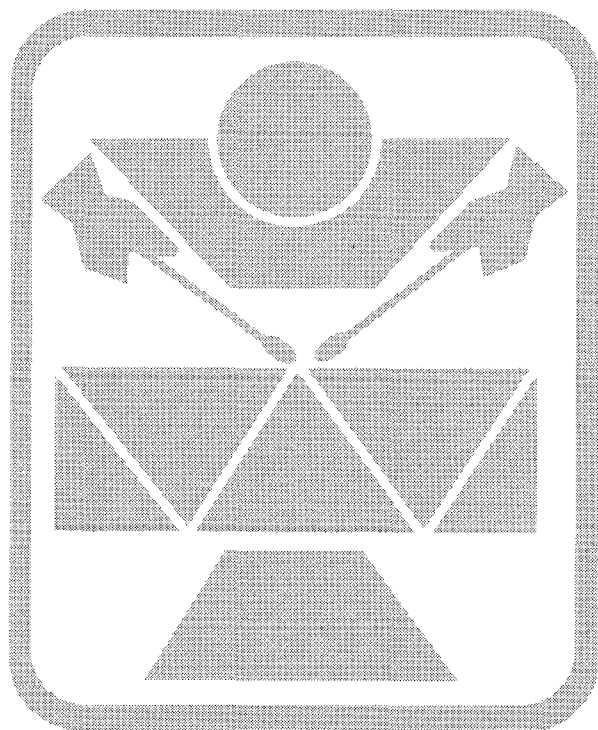
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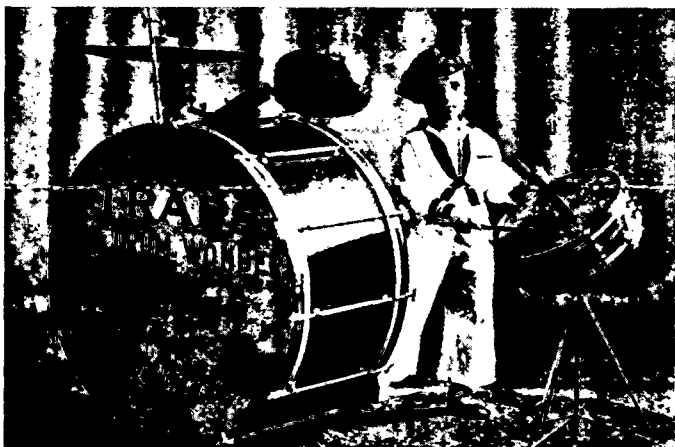
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## Remembering Buddy Rich

William F. Ludwig, Jr.



Buddy Rich at age four touring with the Greenwich Village Follies (photo: Ludwig)

Buddy Rich was literally born in a wardrobe trunk back stage in 1917. His parents were a song and dance team in vaudeville on the RKO circuit and would play a week at a time in various theaters all year long. Traveling with them Buddy was introduced to show business right from the start. At about 2½ years of age, he was toddling about the back stage and pit area and stood hour after hour watching the drummer. About that time, the drummer let him tap the snare drum and, very soon thereafter, Buddy was standing up to the drum set with foot on pedal and sticks on the snare drum, playing after the last evening show.

The drummer soon pointed out to the Rich parents that Buddy was very proficient on the drum set and less than three years of age. Thus it was that he became the centerpiece of the Rich & Rich vaudeville act. His parents dressed him up in a sailor suit complete with flat-topped cap and ribbons. His Ludwig & Ludwig set was painted "Traps, the Drum Wonder" on the front head and a small "Ludwig" at the bottom.

The curtain would open and all the audience would see was the drum set, but they could hear a rapid rhythm and see an occasional stick flash up from behind the bass drum and then the boy wonder would step from behind the bass drum at the conclusion of his opening unaccompanied solo to a thunderous ovation. With this song, dance, and drum act the three Riches toured the United States and Australia until sound pictures replaced the silent picture era and vaudeville lost its attraction to the general public. This was in 1928-29.

Within this ten year or so span Buddy, of course, grew taller. So it was necessary to stop at the Ludwig & Ludwig factory in Chicago to get measured annually for a larger diameter bass drum. My father remembered well these annual visits of the Riches – father Bernard and son Buddy. The bass drum they would order was increased in diameter about two inches with each visit until the family was carrying around a 36" bass drum designed to continue to hide Buddy at the opening of the act.

If there was something that annoyed Buddy during these factory visits, he would express his anger in no uncertain terms, sometimes stamping his feet on the floor boards to get his way. Even then he was the temperamental star! One might say that Buddy Rich's fabulous rhythmic sense and timing came from the earlier tap dancing abilities of his song and dance team mother and father in the teens of this century!

I first met Buddy Rich in the "Hickory House" bar and grill on West 52nd Street in New York in 1938. He was playing with the Joe Marsala quartet on a raised band stand near the bar. He was 21 years of age and was a sensation even then! Naturally, I was interested in getting him on my drums which were WFL drums at the time. My dad had just started up again in 1937 after leaving the company he had founded in 1909 which he had sold to the Conn Corporation of Elkhart, Indiana in 1929.

1938 was the dawn of the swing era and people flocked into the intimacy of the Hickory House for good food, drink, and to hear this swinging quartet sparked by Buddy. It was tough to get to speak with him since everyone clamored for his attention whenever he got off the stand. Finally, by staying very late, I was able to talk with him and get to know him well. But when it came time to talk about changing drums he said, "No thanks, I'm happy with this set, and besides it isn't the drums that makes it, it's the fellow behind the set." Seeing my hang-dog expression he relented a little and said he'd try one of our snare drums if I'd bring it around. Several days later I did just that, but he said it would have to be no charge, and since I couldn't afford it being a new company, nothing ever came of it. But he did like the WFL twin strainer drum very much.

Some years later – after World War II – when he was playing in the Panther Room of the old Hotel Sherman I enticed him up to Roy Knapp's big drum studio, which was largely supported by the GI bill of rights. The accompanying picture shows Buddy sounding off on a WFL 16"x16" tom tom. Roy Knapp is to the left in the picture and a much younger Bill Ludwig Jr. (yours truly) is standing in the middle. Buddy played a real fast lick on this tom tom and Roy said, "You've got the sticking wrong – you can alternate the sticking there." Buddy replied: "Listen – I'm the fastest there is and I can play single sticking just as fast as you can play double sticking," and with that burst into the most amazing display of percussion pyrotechnics either of us had ever seen. It brought all the students and instructors from all the studios in the percussion school. Everyone gasped in utter amazement and when Buddy finished he turned to the startled crowd of youngsters and teachers and said: "Any questions?" And was greeted by stunned silence followed instantly by thunderous applause. Roy said, "I've just witnessed a miracle, he's God himself!"

We all laughed at that and I drove Buddy back to the Sherman. He said, "He (Roy Knapp) is a nice elderly fellow, but I don't believe in all that teaching and practicing – I believe you practice when you play." I replied, "That's easy for you to say being as gifted as you are, but that doesn't work for most of us." He shrugged it off.

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Roy Knapp, William F. Ludwig, Jr., and Buddy Rich in the late 1940s

On another occasion I witnessed Buddy and Ernie Byfield (the manager of the Panther Room) in a heated argument. Ernie was asking Buddy to play quietly during the first set while the guests were eating and then he could let go in the second set when the diners would be finished with their dinners and would get up to dance. Buddy replied: "Listen, you, here's my drum sticks — you go up and lead the band and I'll stand here and seat the people." And with that he spun on his heels, marched up to his band, sat behind the drums, and proceeded to blow everyone out of the place! Ernie Byfield said he would never have that band back again!

The same thing happened in a ballroom in Calumet City on Chicago's south side. The ballroom owner asked Buddy to have his band play some slow tunes for the young couples on the floor. Buddy said: "You run the dance hall and I'll run the band — O.K.?" And proceeded to play one fast and loud tune after another. In a half hour the room was half empty and the owner was really hot. Shortly thereafter the room closed. One time with Tommy Dorsey in 1941 at the Commodore Hotel in New York, the singer asked Buddy to play pianissimo — not Buddy, he just opened up all the more and he and the singer almost came to blows.

On another occasion just a few years ago when he was touring with his big band on a series of endless one-nighters he told the band: "You guys are playing like high school musicians so I'm going to pay you like high school musicians." Immediately, the band shaped up!

In about 1952, he was playing racquet ball here in Chicago and he fractured his left wrist hitting the wall. So his left arm was in a sling for about a month. He still went on stage leading his band (4 shows daily) and playing entirely with his right hand, better and faster than most others with both hands functioning.

When I was first married I took my bride back stage to meet Buddy and he was out of sorts and complaining about the billing, the stage, and the other musicians. My wife and I stood patiently to one side awaiting an opportunity to break in. Finally after a long time — maybe 20 minutes or so I had a chance to introduce Buddy to my wife Maggie. By this time Maggie was so exasperated that as we left she said, "Nice to have met you Mr. Krupa." And without missing a beat, Buddy said, "Same to you Mrs. Leedy." We all got a big laugh out of that.

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