“We were innovators, we took chances”

Clem Burke

On 40 years of influential beats with Blondie

The Latest Drum Gear Reviewed

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HELLO!

From small acorns mighty oaks grow (here’s hoping)

Last month I talked about going back to basics and committing some serious time to my practice regime, something I’ve been guilty of neglecting in the past. My reason for doing so is that a few months back, over a couple of pints, myself and Total Guitar magazine’s editor talked about how we missed getting together regularly with other musicians and how our playing had suffered as a result. We made a pact that night to book a rehearsal room and get a few covers going. We pulled it together and, despite a shaky start, we blasted the cobwebs off and it quickly started sounding great. The best thing for me was that little extra time I’ve been spending on the practice pad (40 minutes to an hour every other night) had my playing looser but more controlled than ever and I was able to pull off tricks that have evaded me in the past. It was such a buzz and we’ve got our next few sessions booked in. We’re already looking to fill bass player and singer-shaped holes and we’re hoping to gig later in the year once we have a complete set together. Exciting times and I’m hoping it will give my playing the boost it needs.

It’s a veritable feast of drummers in Rhythm this month who have had no such problems getting ahead behind the kit! Blondie’s Clem Burke looks back over his 40-year history with the band, as well as contemplating future plans. Gogo Penguin’s Rob Turner gives us some brain-frying insight into the band’s musical approach and Steel Panther’s Stix Zadinia offers some sage advice on hair styling, gigs involving jetpacks and hitting the big time. Enjoy!

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THIS MONTH’S EXPERTS

CHRIS BURKE
Before joining Rhythm, Chris spent a good few years interviewing rock stars and more for Loaded magazine. This month he interviewed cover star Clem Burke (no relation) of Blondie to talk about the band’s new album and amazing year, their 40th as a band. Find it on page 28!

WILL IRELAND
Will Ireland is one of Rhythm’s top photographers, having previously captured the best sides of many of the world’s finest drummers with his magic lens. This month Will turned his camera on Blondie’s Clem Burke and his red sparkle DW kit for our cover feature, which starts on page 28.

 CRAIG BLUNDELL
Craig is one of the UK’s most well-respected clinicians, and is an in-demand and busy session artist alongside his own work as Dr oKtopUs. This month Craig begins a new column Making Money Playing Drums in which he will be dispensing advice on how to make a successful career in drumming. See page 22!

PLAYLIST
PUMPING ON OUR STEREO...

MASTODON
ONCE MORE’ ROUND THE SUN
The band’s ‘fullest’ sounding album to date, thanks in part to producer Nick Raskulinecz. Drummer Brann Dailor lays down a typically ferocious performance.

LINKIN PARK
THE HUNTING PARTY
We’ve been enjoying Rob Bourdon’s full-on, hard rock ‘n’ roll beats powering the crunching riffs of a back-to-form Linkin Park. Aggressive and tasty drumming, and we thoroughly approve.

GINGER BAKER
WHY?
Considering his Marmite persona, Ol’ Gin ge poses quite the question with his new album title, but this tasty collection of jazz compositions suggests he’s still got it.
Regulars

06 BEAT
All the latest news and hot gear, plus tips, classic sounds and more

18 INTRODUCING
New bands and drummers you need to have on your radar this month

20 REVIEWS
New stuff from Linkin Park, Mastodon, Blondie, Ginger Baker and more

108 ASK GEOFF
Your kit conundrums solved by our resident gear guru

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“[Moon] basically tore down the walls and limits of rock drumming forever and it is up to us to carry on with that tradition. There is always room for personality and charisma”
Brian Tichy is a man that knows how to honour his heroes.

The former Whitesnake drummer has already, in partnership with Joe Sutton, put on renowned tribute shows to John Bonham (the infamous Bonzo Bash nights) and Randy Rhodes, and he’s now given Keith Moon and John Entwistle similar treatment.

The Ox and Loon tribute show was held in Hollywood on 24 April, and featured an all-star cast of musicians tipping their hats to The Who’s rhythm section – including Chad Smith, Kenny Aronoff, Stephen Perkins, Mike Portnoy, Metallica bassist Robert Trujillo, ex-KISS guitarist Ace Frehley and more.

On his love for Moon, Tichy told Rhythm: “He represents the side of drummers that is reckless and lets loose and stops thinking about all the years of practice and ‘drummer’ stuff. Keith is one of a kind. His playing is his personality and vice versa. He basically tore down the walls and limits of rock drumming forever and it is up to us to carry on with that tradition. There is always room for personality and character and charisma. Keith leads that movement forever.”

The night saw a revolving cast of star drummers get behind a special Natal Pictures Of Lily kit.

Discussing the inception of the kit, Tichy says: “It’s a Natal kit I wrapped myself with the authentic artwork sent to me by Ashley at the Keith Moon Estate. She’s great. I told her of my idea of doing something that resembles the Pictures Of Lily kit. She said, “You want the graphics? We own them!” She got approval and there you go.

“I was so stoked that we got the chance to do that, as I knew the drummers, bassists and audience would freak. It’s Keith’s coolest most groundbreaking drum finish.

“I did not ask Natal to customise the drums to the exact sizes as I had many other things to worry about planning the show. And I know it’s all about tuning and heads and imagery. We used two 22”x18” kicks, three 13”x11” rack toms, and three 16”x16” floors. We used a 14”x5½” wood snare that I spray-painted black in my backyard.”

You would have thought with so many big-name drummers taking to the stage throughout the night that the job of the drum tech would be a particularly tricky one, but it seems not.

The show’s drum tech Stuart Murray said: “With the impressive and excessive line-up of drummers, I thought I would be scrambling with kit changes all night, but this wasn’t the case at all. These guys just came up and owned it the way our ‘Dear Boy’ Keith would have. Most switches being the hi-hat in and out for various songs which we all know The Loon went without mostly.”

During the show Kenny Aronoff was honoured with a Drum Legend Award. Kenny told Rhythm: “I was totally surprised with an honour... I was speechless, well almost!”

There was a fitting finale as all drummers took to the stage during “Won’t Get Fooled Again” for a solo section before trashing the kit. The Loon would have been proud.
Jumping from a metal supergroup to an arena pop tour may sound an unlikely situation, but it’s exactly the path Dave Elitch has taken.

Elitch’s new band Killer Be Killed, also featuring Dillinger Escape Plan frontman Greg Puciato, Soulfly’s Max Cavalera and Troy Sanders of Mastodon, has just dropped their self-titled debut album.

On how the band came together, Elitch tells us: “Greg and I were hanging out at NAMM a few years ago and he told me that he’d been sending rough ideas back and forth with Max and that he wanted me to play drums on whatever the project was going to end up being. That led to the three of us locking ourselves in a rehearsal studio three or four times over the next several years for about a week each time and we wrote the bulk of the music that way. Once it was clear that we needed a bassist, I called my good pal Troy Sanders from Mastodon and he was immediately into the idea.”

You might expect that in his eagerness to impress his all-star metal mates Dave threw all of his chops into the project. You’d be wrong. “It was funny because Greg and [producer] Josh Wilbur had to keep yelling at me to play more fills, or be busier in parts, etc. I have nothing to prove at this point, so I want to make a statement, but it doesn’t necessarily have to be one strictly of technical virtuosity. I want everything to fit together and feel good. That’s important to me.”

Killer Be Killed isn’t all Dave has had on the go, he also hit the arenas with the world’s most famous twerker – Miley Cyrus. “I had just finished recording the Killer Be Killed record a week prior, so I thought it would be really fun to drastically switch things up so soon,” he says. “This was the day before ‘Wrecking Ball’ blew up, mind you, so the timing was really perfect. I just got back from doing three weeks on the Bangerz tour and it went really well.”

Elitch has also hooked back up with former Mars Volta bandmates Cedric Bixler-Zavala and Omar Rodriguez-Lopez and some bass player named Flea... “The week before I was heading out on the Bangerz tour with Miley, I was at lunch with some friends and Cedric just texted me, saying, ‘Hey man, what are you doing tomorrow? You wanna jam? Next day myself, Omar and Cedric jammed at a small studio in the valley and the vibe was just electric, I hadn’t felt that way since I was in high school jamming with friends in my mom’s garage, I tracked five songs and then had to head out with Miley. In the meantime while I was gone, Flea came in and tracked some bass. We dove back in right when I returned and we’re in the thick of it right now.”

---

ECLECTIC ELITCH
Mars Volta man jumps from metal titans to pop superstar

Juggling Gigs
“To be honest, I really have no idea how I juggle so many gigs, I can tell you that I put absolutely everything in my calendar and try to keep my schedule as organised as possible. That becomes invaluable.”
Are you having fun playing with The Headhunters again?
"This is a really good band. I haven't played any of this type of music in quite a while. I've mainly played bebop. I didn't know how I was going to feel about it but I'm enjoying it."

Has your reputation been defined by your '70s jazz-funk recordings?
"It was never my forte. I was always a post-bop and bebop drummer. I never really thought about playing funk and getting famous for it but because I played with Herbie that was the result. Most people think that's what I do. That's one record date that I did. I didn't know it was going to last me a lifetime, but in another way, thank goodness it did. It's a double-edged sword, no doubt about it. We were breaking some new ground so people really liked it. I liked it when I did it and then once I left the band I really didn't ever want to repeat it but sometimes you have to make a living in this business and it's not easy. This particular Headhunters band, it's not loud, it's interactive and I like it a lot."

Any new jazz in the works?
"Michael Wolff [keys player] and I have a new group called The Wolff And Clark Expedition. We have a record coming out on Random Act Records, it's a straight-ahead acoustic jazz record featuring Wallace Roney, Christian McBride, newcomer Hailey Niswanger – a saxophone player who played with Esperanza Spalding – and Daryl Johns on bass on some tracks. He's the new 18-year-old wonder from New York. So it's pretty killing. We're excited about that for sure. We did a few Monk things, we took a few pop things, made them swing and re-harmonised them, '1999' being one of them and we both wrote some original pieces. I really love this record, I don't love every record I make because I'm the drummer on it, but I like this one! I have another coming out called Live At The Iridium and that will be out maybe three months after Wolff And Clarke on the same label. This features Randy Brecker, Christian McBride, Donald Harrison, Rob Dixon, Antonio Farao from Italy on piano and myself. So I've got a busy schedule, plus I decided to do some more Headhunters."

Will you be returning to the UK?
"I will be coming back with Wolff And Clarke. It's really fun to play with Michael Wolff. He's brilliant. He played with Cannonball [Adderley] for years and he was Nancy Wilson's musical director. He's a great jazz musician, he swings, he's a good friend on top of it, so it's cool."

From jazz-funk to bebop, Mike Clark keeps exploring new territory…

**MIKE CLARK**
**THE HEADHUNTERS**

Winery Dogs recently kick-started their US tour, and we got the band to talk us through their gear – including Mike Portnoy's diddy new kit.

**GIANT TIP FROM ILAN RUBIN**
Ilan Rubin has bagged gigs with the likes of Nine Inch Nails and Paramore, so who better to offer you advice on how to ace an audition? Ilan did just that by giving us his top tips.

**GEAR: GREGG BISSONETTE**
Session superhero Gregg Bissonette has joined the Dixon Drums artist roster. The Ringo Starr drummer is working on his own signature Dixon kit.

**VIDEO: TRASHED KITS!**
When drummers get angry! We’ve rounded up clips of six drummers trashing their kits, including Tre Cool and Keith Moon.

**PLUS**
Why Ginger Baker is a drum legend, Brad Wilk suggests RATM is over, Joey Kramer on the future of Aerosmith & more.
DRUMMER’S TOOL KIT

HAND/FOOT TRIPLETS

Splitting triplet figures around the kit

Although the three ideas I demonstrate on the video (print and iPad editions only) are slightly different from one another, the order in which you move each limb to strike a drum remains the same. It’s always: right hand, left hand, bass (kick) drum. I learned this figure from listening to John Bonham, who uses this on loads of songs, including ‘Moby Dick’ and ‘Rock And Roll’. Ex.1 is inspired by Bonham’s fills in ‘Since I’ve Been Loving You’. Your right hand maintains the eighth-note pulse, with the left hand and bass drum playing 16th-note triplets in between. Ex.2 uses the same figure, but shifts the eighth-note pulse to start with the left hand, so the ‘sticking’ goes: left hand, bass drum, right hand, with an accentuated left hand stroke. This should be an ad-lib flourish. The third idea retains the pattern from Ex.2 to emphasise a two-note melodic phrase between the snare and high tom.

01 Fills in a 12/8 slow blues.

02 A flourish to finish a song.

03 Accenting a melodic phrase.

New Leicester-based music school BCME opens its doors this month

Get schooled

NEW LEICESTER-BASED MUSIC SCHOOL TO TEACH MUSIC ‘LIFE SKILLS’

The British Centre for Music and Enterprise (BCME) opens in Leicester this month, offering a wealth of courses for aspiring musicians and music industry professionals. Courses on offer include music performance in drums, bass, guitar and vocals, music business, event management, music technology and production.

Ajay Naik, chief executive of BCME, explains, “Schools don’t always have the resources to help their students learn the skills they need to secure employment in the notoriously competitive music industry. By teaching students key life skills, the BCME will give them all the tools they need to take their career aspirations as far as they can.”

Session drummer Tom Meadows, the BCME’s Global Ambassador who has toured with Kylie and Leona Lewis, adds: “I’m delighted to be working with the BCME as a global ambassador, I believe strongly in their message and, more importantly, the ethics behind the school.”

For more info, go to www.thebcme.com.