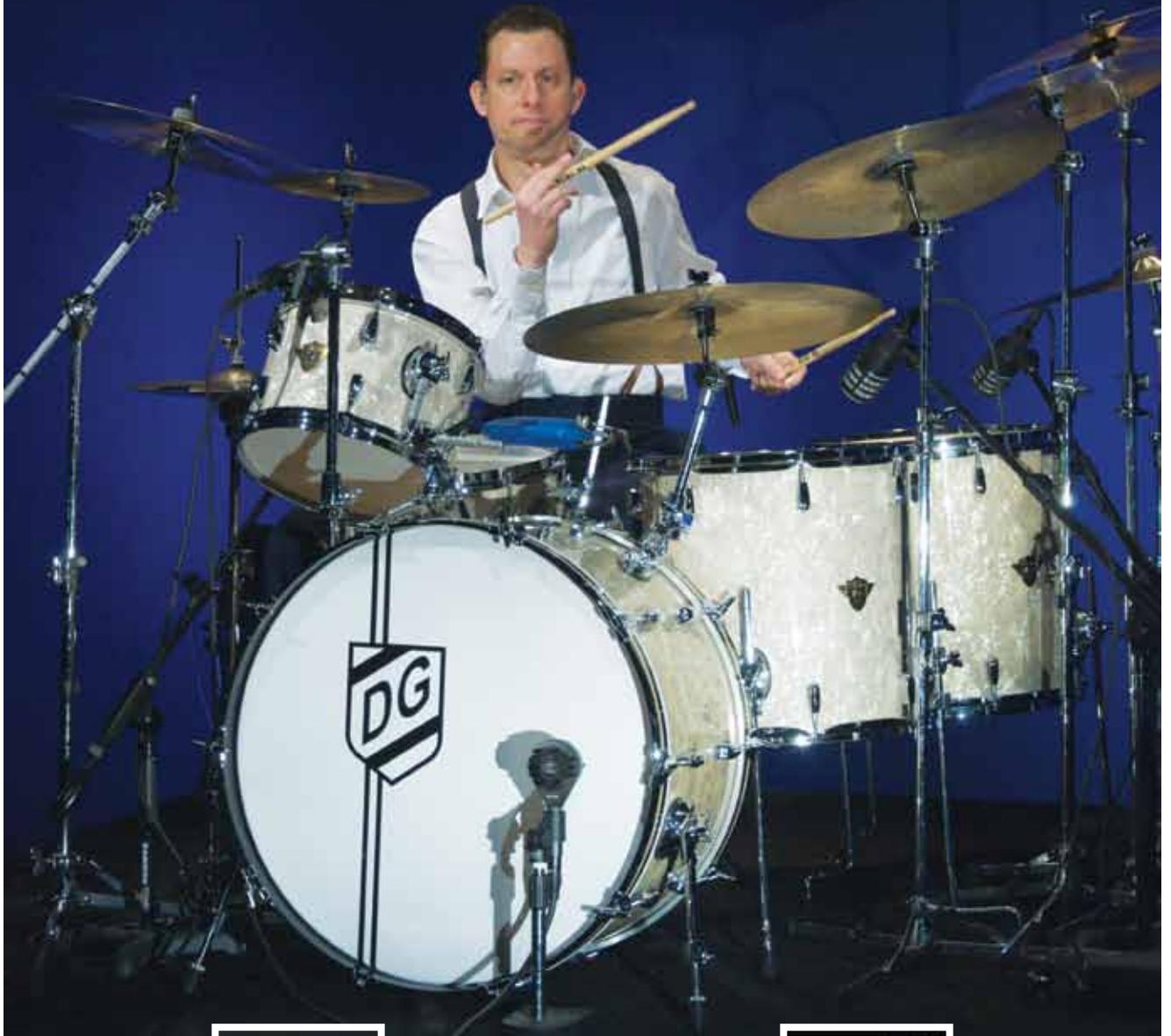
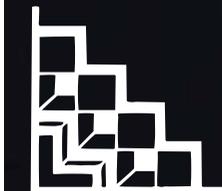


DANIEL GLASS

TALKING 'BOUT THEIR GENERATION



STORY: MICHAEL AUBRECHT
PHOTOS: JOSE ALTONAGA



Cicero once said: "Who knows only his own generation remains always a child." This is a timeless proclamation that the Roman philosopher used to warn us that, before any generation can effectively grow in the present, it must first acknowledge the contributions of its past. This theory of "looking backward in order to move forward" is no more evident than in the arts, where poets, painters and musicians routinely draw upon their predecessors in order to develop inspiration and more importantly, a foundation. Therefore it is no surprise that the inspiring sources for many successful artists can be found by examining the legacies of their forefathers.

Daniel Glass understands Cicero's philosophy. It has guided him through a diverse career as an award-winning drummer, author, historian and educator. Few percussionists have done more to preserve and present the roots of American music than he has. From his 19 years as a member of the pioneering swing-band, Royal Crown Revue, to his side work with the Brian Setzer Orchestra, Bette Midler and Liza Minnelli, Daniel is the embodiment of the classic American drummer.

Growing up in Honolulu, Hawaii, Daniel began playing the drums at the age of eight. After graduating from Brandeis University in Boston, he moved to Los Angeles to study at the Dick Grove School of Music. He later worked as a freelance musician in LA, recording for a variety of independent labels and touring with jazz and blues performers. Daniel was also a student of beloved master-teacher Freddie Gruber whose

own approach to drums echoed the sentiments of Cicero.

In the mid-'90s Daniel joined Royal Crown Revue and became the backbone of a swing phenomenon that routinely landed the band's handiwork in movies and on television. These high-profile gigs enabled

Daniel and his counterparts to introduce a new generation of fans to their parents' and grandparents' dance music. The response was overwhelming and the resurgent

popularity of big-band music that erupted, thanks to the efforts of RCR and its peers, continues to resonate today.

Ever the historian, Daniel continued to play roots music with his own group, the Rhythm Club All Stars. He became a popular clinician who conducts 25 or 30 clinics every year, and routinely appears at major drum festivals like the Modern Drummer Festival and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC). Daniel also published five books to date: *The Ultimate History of Rock'n'Roll Drumming: 1948-2000*, *The RCR Drum*

Transcription Book and the award-winning *Commandments of Early Rhythm and Blues Drumming*.

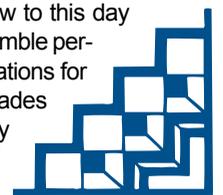
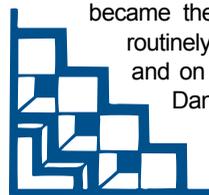
One of Daniel's most recent offerings comes in the form of two critically acclaimed DVDs. Created in conjunction with drumchannel.com, these documentaries are the culmination of a journey that started over a dozen years ago. It was while playing for Royal Crown Revue that Daniel first began to research the origins of his instrument. Soon after, he came to the startling conclusion that if one could understand more about the life of the drum set, he or she could inevitably understand more about every single style of popular music that we play and listen to today. This revelation ignited a passion for preserving and presenting the history of both the drums and drumming.

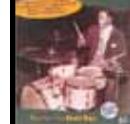
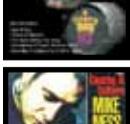
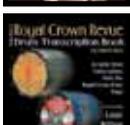
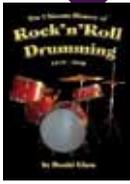
The Century Project: 100 Years of American Music From Behind the Drums takes the viewer on a 100-year thrill ride from 1865, at the end of the Civil War, right up to 1965

and the dawn of the British Invasion. *TCP's* timeline presents how drums and pop music evolved hand-in-hand, and how, by 1965, the drumming blueprint that we follow to this day had been cemented. Multiple solo and ensemble performances provide lively musical demonstrations for each genre of music discussed. From decades before the arrival of Baby Dodds and Zutty Singleton, through the swinging years of Gene Krupa, all the way up to Beatlema-



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nia and Ringo Starr, TCP presents an intimate and definitive look at their contributions to the craft.

TRAPS: The Incredible Story of Vintage Drums (1865-1965) is a complementary follow-up that presents an in-depth look at the evolution of the instruments themselves. Daniel and drum historian John Aldridge bring together an unprecedented collection of gear, including 11 vintage drum kits and other museum-quality pieces. Daniel also uses more than 300 product stills and catalog shots to touch on a wide range of vintage-related topics. Not just a documentary, *TRAPS* also presents some practical instruction. Among several special features, the DVD also includes an instructional video with tips on how to make a modern drum set sound more vintage.

What one immediately grasps when watching these DVDs is that Daniel Glass clearly knows what he is talking about. He not only presents a century of drumming history, but he does so while playing incredibly creative and accurate examples of each era that he presents. This ability to immerse himself in the music of our forefathers harkens back to his early days with Royal Crown Revue. In an exclusive phone interview Daniel explained his path from percussionist to historian:

"When I joined RCR in 1994, all of the guys were already deep in the pop culture of the '30s, '40s and '50s. They collected vintage cars, wore vintage clothes and had a tremendous knowledge of that era. I couldn't help but do the same. Collecting the artifacts, dressing in the period suits, combing our hair the way they did, these things enabled us to gain a larger perspective of the music that we were playing." He added, "By living in that era, it put things in proper context and helped us to understand, beyond the music, WHY the musicians played like they did."

Understandably, vintage drums were among the collectable items that caught Daniel's interest. Touring with Royal Crown Revue enabled him to find and purchase rare drum kits and accoutrements. Unlike some collectors who relegate

their collectables to the glass display case, Daniel fully intended to play on his

investments. He soon verified the old adage: *They don't make them like they used to.*

"I look at vintage drums just like the cars of the 1950s," he said. "They may not have all of the bells and whistles, but they are sure built to last." Remarkably, Daniel still performs frequently with the very first vintage kit that he purchased in 1995, a beautifully preserved 1957 WFL kit.

It was this combination of Daniel's playing experience and penchant for collecting classic instruments that ultimately influenced his desire to produce DVDs that present both legacies. Daniel also felt a distinct need for capturing this subject matter due to an acute awareness of the dilemma that those who strive to preserve and present history constantly face. "I spent over 12 years interviewing many of the classic American drummers whose contributions we still use today," he continues. "You cannot even begin to imagine the wonderful stories that they told me. Many of these guys eventually became my friends. Unfortunately most of them are in their golden years and they are leaving us more frequently each and every day."

The Century Project (a two-DVD set) is an excellent effort on their behalf. Presented much like a drum clinic, Daniel speaks to a studio audience about the evolution of American music from the drummer's perspective. Vintage kits on pedestals dress the set while an incredible assemblage of period photographs is projected above. Appropriately beginning with a drum solo, Daniel plays a historically progressive sequence of styles. Starting with a marching cadence reminiscent of the Civil War drummer boy, he skillfully evolves through time, visiting milestone eras such as ragtime, swing, bebop, jazz and rock. It's quite striking how seamless these genres appear to transition and build upon themselves. Daniel goes on to share the incredibly compelling story of American drumming while covering topics from the most influential players



of each era and technological advances in equipment, to the social influences and repercussions of 100 years of music.

Daniel explained the origins of *The Century Project*. "I had been doing these clinics that presented a portion of the material that we cover in the film. As I continued to grow in my own knowledge, my clinics kept getting longer and longer." He added, "In order for me to tell the whole story, I had to create something outside of these speaking engagements. *The Century Project* is really an enhanced and extended version of my clinics that enable me to cover everything I wanted and more"

TRAPS: The Incredible Story of Vintage Drums (1865-1965) (also a two-DVD set), is the complementary follow-up and is presented in more of a conversational style. Minus the audience, Daniel is joined by fellow drum-expert John Aldridge, the founding publisher of *Not So Modern Drummer Magazine* and virtuoso drum tech for REO Speedwagon. Surrounded by a collection of artifacts that would make any museum curator salivate, both men discuss a wide range of drum history while focusing on several of the vintage drum kits used in *The Century Project*. The breadth of their collective knowledge is astounding. Topics include: the invention of rope drum, early traps, manufacturing advances in wood plies and hoop plating, the evolution of lugs and badges, the transition from animal skin to plastic heads, and the epic popularity of the "Ringo-style" Oyster Black Pearl shell wrap.

Daniel explained how *TRAPS* evolved. "The amount of gear that we had assembled while making *The Century Project* was almost overwhelming. There was no way that we could examine the drums in much detail within our time constraints; so the most logical solution was to make a

separate film that focused just on the drums." He added, "I think folks are surprised when they see that many of the items they think of as modern, such as the remote hi-hat and double-bass pedals, were actually being used decades ago."

As one of the music industry's most active and enthusiastic drum historians, Daniel Glass has built a résumé around a career that truly pays homage to the drummers and musicians of days-gone-by. Remarkably, he has found a way to make it fresh, interesting and timeless. His ultimate goal is not only to entertain, but to educate by instilling a greater appreciation for the forefathers of his beloved instrument. It is a mission that he pursues in everything he does, both from behind and in front of the drum kit.

Lately Daniel has been busy editing a book with Steve Smith for Hudson Music called *The Roots of Rock Drumming*, set to be published in the fall of 2013. He is also working with the Percussive Arts Society (PAS) designing an exhibit on the history of the drum set for their Rhythm Discovery Center and Museum in Indianapolis.

"In everything that I do, I want to impart some historical perspective. Not just HOW we play what we play, but more importantly, WHY we do it. The answer is found in those who came before us." He continued, "I believe that we have an obligation to share their wisdom and experiences with future generations so that their work will be understood and more importantly, appreciated."

The Century Project and *TRAPS* are available at all major retail and online locations. For more information about Daniel Glass, and to purchase autographed copies of his DVDs, please visit www.danielglass.com.



VINTAGE DRUMMING ON VINTAGE DRUMS

Most folks are familiar with the phrase “They sure don’t make them like they used to.” This adage is very true when considering antique percussion instruments. Much like classic cars, vintage drums have endearing and sometimes infuriating features that make them unique. Daniel Glass used 11 different drum kits in the making of *The Century Project*, each one distinctive in its own way. These throwbacks required him to meet a variety of challenges both in their assembly and utilization.

One of the special features on Daniel’s *TRAPS* DVD provides tips on how to make a modern drum kit sound more vintage. Despite the ability to make modifications such as installing special heads, Daniel admits that there is nothing that compares to playing the real thing. We asked him to help us profile three of these vintage kits from both the player and presenter perspectives. Daniel selected a “Double Drumming” setup, a 1930’s Slingerland “Rolling Console” and a 1960’s Gretsch “Bebop” kit. Each one of these kits represents a major milestone in the evolution of drum playing and construction.



This unorthodox style was necessitated by the desire to have one drummer play the role that was traditionally held by two. These roles were originally fulfilled by a bass drummer and snare drummer who played separately in marching units. Double-drumming enabled a single drummer to play both parts as the bass drum was set on the floor and the snare drum was placed on a nearby chair. Prior to the development of a foot pedal, drummers were relegated to playing everything with handheld sticks or mallets.

One of the biggest challenges in demonstrating a double-drumming kit is learning how to properly play it. Due to the fact that the style is so antiquated, very little reference material exists. Fortunately Daniel was able to find an article titled “Tips From A Tapster” in an issue of *The Ludwig Drummer* magazine from 1930. That article enabled him to transcribe a series of double-drum beats that harkened to the days of ragtime, marching and vaudeville playing. He then improvised his piece.

Defining an accurate playing style was only one of the challenges with this kit. Comfort and safety were also important considerations. In order to effectively play the kit without contorting his posture, thereby inviting injury, Daniel had to elevate the 26” bass drum to be level with the snare. When considering this awkward configuration, one can easily understand why the bass drums of this era were exceptionally large, often reaching 40” in diameter. The snare stand had not yet been invented, so the chair used to hold the snare drum was most likely whatever chair was available at the time. Period photographs depicting these setups in recording studios clearly show what little respect and consideration was given to the first session drummers. We can easily understand why so many early musicians opted for the horn.



THE DOUBLE-DRUMMING KIT

Daniel’s take: “Playing this kit was clumsy, awkward and incredibly challenging.”

Specifications: 26x14 1920’s Ludwig and Ludwig kick with calfskin heads and internal light bulbs. When plugged in, the bulbs create a consistent temperature that helps to keep the calfskin from excessively stretching or shrinking due to weather conditions.

Snare: 14x4 1911 “Tango-style” (unknown make). A tango design indicates there are no lugs or guides in the shell. The drum is held together by rods and hooks that are thumb tensioned. These must be manually spaced to create even tension.

The primitive approach known as “double-drumming” represents one of the earliest drum set techniques used in American music. Popular during the second half of the 1800s, it continued to be used by drummers well into the 1920s.

1960’S GRETSCHE ROUND BADGE BEBOP KIT

Daniel’s take: “More musical. More melodic.”

Specifications: Drums: 20x16 kick, 14x5 snare, 12x9 rack, 16x16 floor.

Cymbals: 14” A Zildjian hi-hats; 18” K Zildjian ride; 20” Pasha ride (Pasha was an Italian manufacturer that became a predecessor to UFIP).

As the flamboyant rhythms blaring from the swing-drummer’s skins began to quiet down in favor of smaller jazz groups, the drum kit was also reduced in its physical size and

scope. This “de-evolution” however did not compromise the sound or the playing quality of the kit. In fact, lessons learned up to that point resulted in a completely new approach to the manufacturing and playing of drums. This radical change in the drummer’s role caused many new innovations.

No longer interested in projecting an avalanche of sound beyond the bandstand, drummers started looking for instruments that would allow them to be more expressive within a smaller ensemble. Drum manufacturers met this demand by greatly improving the quality of their construction. Sound and functionality mattered more than ever, and this necessitated the introduction of six-ply shells, specially cut bearing edges, smoother bass drum and hi-hat pedals and more adjustable tom mounts. These innovations ultimately helped the drummer to perform better, as the ability to display one’s “chops” was now more achievable.

Smaller drums and larger cymbals also changed the dynamic between other musicians and their time-keepers. Drummers were now being integrated as part of the collective voice, which enabled them to contribute to a group’s sound in a way that was never embraced before. This newfound creativity and the freedom to truly explore the drums unleashed a renaissance that resulted in a new approach to the instrument. Additional items that are immediately noticeable on this kit are streamlined die-cast hoops, and flat-based stands, which gave the Gretsch kit a space-age appearance.



1930’S SLINGERLAND ROLLING CONSOLE

Daniel’s take: “Playing this kit was heavenly.”

Specifications: Drums: 26x16 kick, 11x8 rack, 13x9 rack, 16x16 floor and 14x6.5 ‘Cloud Badge’ Radio King snare.

Cymbals: All are Zildjian. The hi-hats are 11” inches in diameter, the standard size in the 1930s. The splash is 9” in diameter and the crashes are probably 15” and 16” in diameter. There is no formal “ride cymbal.” The large, heavy rides that we use today did not become a standard part of the kit until the early 1940s.

Auxiliary Percussion: Cowbell and woodblock (mounted to the bass drum hoop). The trap table holds sticks, brushes and mallets.

Drum technology went through a major progression during the “Big-Band Era” of the late 1930s. Advancements in materials and manufacturing enabled drum companies to produce a wide variety of innovative setups and features. One particular invention resulted in a rolling console kit that provided drummers with a more manageable rig that could be quickly moved on and off stage.



Even the casual observer cannot help but notice the impressive hi-tech (for its time)

elements presented with this configuration. Modern drummers who rely on a rack-mounting system will have to give props to what was the very first rack of its kind. In an effort to assist drummers with setups and take downs, the 1930’s style kit features a series of modular components such as a bass-drum arm for securing the snare drum and a locking-wheel system that holds the entire unit in place. One particularly fascinating item on this console is the trap table. It is constructed from translucent Plexiglas, which was a rarity during the years leading up to the war. This particular unit is said to have been designed by the legendary drummer and inventor Billy Gladstone.

Another impressive feature is the variety of mounts. This kit includes two slot mounts for toms, and “arms” for three cymbals. Although they are somewhat adjustable, the sheer distance between the toms makes them difficult to reach. Like his predecessors, Daniel had to approach the concept of fills in a completely different manner. Instead of playing traditional “runs” down the toms, he alternated between them and the auxiliary “traps” (woodblock and cowbell) or the snare. The tripod basket-held floor tom on this kit is also of particular interest. After Gene Krupa pioneered the concept of two-sided tunable toms, drum manufacturers labored to keep up with the demand. This sometimes required them to mix and match hardware parts to eliminate back-inventory. Although the floor tom featured with this kit was constructed to have separate, dual tension lugs, a close examination reveals that it was constructed with two-sided lugs (on both the top and bottom) with the innermost screw holes remaining unused.

When preparing this kit for filming, Daniel ran into a tricky issue involving the bass drum and the surrounding console. The 26” bass drum that had been selected did not fit under the 24” rack. The solution to this problem required putting the entire unit up on painted blocks. It is also worth mentioning that the sizes of both the drums and cymbals on this kit are different than those of today. This kit features an 11” rack tom and much smaller and more flexible cymbals. Although these smaller plates produce a more authentic sound, the hi-hats in particular are more challenging when playing a 2 and 4 “chick” with the foot. It is understandable why drummers of this era often “rode” their snare drums in the absence of a projecting hi-hat or ride cymbal.

DANIEL’S MODERN KIT

Drum Workshop “Classic Series”

In his own work with the Royal Crown Revue and the Brian Setzer Orchestra, Daniel plays DW Classic Series, drums that are specifically designed to capture the same warm, rich sound as the old Radio Kings and WFLs. For someone who is a fan of vintage drums, you will not get any closer to the real deal than these. Features include poplar/mahogany shell construction, vintage style butter-bearing edges and bass drum-mounted hardware for rack tom, ride cymbal and splash attachments. In live performances with Brian Setzer, Daniel also plays a customized stand-up kit. He uses Vic Firth sticks, Aquarian drumheads and plays hand-hammered Crescent cymbals, which are manufactured in Turkey. In his setup, Daniel uses a combination of different Crescent models: Vintage, Classic, Eon and Vanguard. *

