



THE Heavy Hitters

By Ryan Shuvera

CANADIAN MUSICIAN'S 2014 PERCUSSION SPECIAL

Hard hitting, versatile drummers take centre stage in this year's focus on all-things percussion. We've gathered a range of percussionists covering everything from straight-up rock and roll to punk and indie. Keeping a beat is only one of a drummer's many concerns, and as this panel proves, there's a reason they sit on a throne and not just a stool. Let loose and dive into the kit and minds of some great timekeepers including Daru Jones, drummer for Jack White and a list of hip-hop artists, Brad Wilk of The Last Internationale, Jonah Falco of Fucked Up, Kurt Dahl of One Bad Son, Phil Maloney of Hey Rosetta!, and Danny Miles of July Talk.

THE Heavy Hitters

Gretsch Catalina Club Drums

- 26-in. Kick Drum
- 14-in. Rack Tom
- 16-in. Floor Tom
- 18-in. Floor Tom

Ludwig Supraphonic Snare

Istanbul Mehmet Cymbals

- 24-in. Nostalgia '70s Ride
- 22-in. Mehmet Legend Ride
- 22-in. Traditional Original Ride
- 22-in. Nostalgia 50s Ride
- 20-in. Traditional Thin Crash
- 20-in. Traditional China
- 15-in. Nostalgia Hi-Hats

ProMark Hickory Natural 2B Sticks

Evans EC2 Clear Tom Heads

Evans Power Centre Reverse Dot Snare Head

KURT DAHL

One Bad Son

Chances are if you've tuned in to a Canadian modern rock station for even part of the day in the last couple of years, you'll have heard Kurt Dahl and his bandmates in One Bad Son tear through one of their many riff-centric hits. The latest batch comes from their huge-sounding 2014 release *Black Buffalo*.

CM: What's the most important piece in your set-up that you couldn't do without?

KD: Honestly, I play with a lot more passion than technicality. I've got a nice big '70s Gretsch kit, which I love, but it's always been about the feel of the kit. The feeling of being lost in the moment is the gift of rock and roll. That's what I get on stage and that's the one thing that's irreplaceable.

CM: One Bad Son has been playing together for a decade now. What kind of influence has the rest of group had on your playing style?

KD: Drummers are interesting because they're kind of at the whim of their band

mates, or at least I am, to be inspired. I've always been inspired by whatever riff [guitarist Adam] Hicks has, or melody Shane [Volk, singer] has or what Granny [Adam Grant] has on bass. I'm only as good as my band mates and can only grow as much as they allow me to.

CM: How has your drumming style changed over the past 10 years?

KD: When I first started out, I was really thinking about my playing. But I really believe that when your brain turns off and it's just all instinct, that's when the magic happens. I'm heavily influenced by [Led Zeppelin's John] Bonham and [The Who's Keith] Moon. I guess my style is about trying to combine the unpredictability of Keith Moon and the power of Bonham and then when it comes through my lens, it becomes something that I hope is totally original.

CM: You've said previously that (2014's) *Black Buffalo* is the album that you've been wanting to record since you started

the band. What is it about this record that makes it so satisfying?

KD: I think this is the first album that we've been able to come close to catching that energy and unpredictability that we have live – that rawness and intensity. That's always been the goal for us and I think that's the goal for a lot of rock bands. I hope we keep getting closer.

CM: Interestingly, you also work as an entertainment lawyer. How do you balance the demands of both careers and the somewhat contrasting lifestyles?

KD: I don't really consider myself a "lawyer," just a musician who knows a lot about the law. Lawyers will never be cool in the eyes of musicians and musicians will never be smart in the eyes of lawyers, so I don't try to impress both. It's just all kind of who I am. The cool thing is I can bring my laptop on the road and read over some contracts for clients during some of our downtime. I really love what I do on both sides.