

The 57 Vintage Cymbal Vintage Drum Set-up

by Juan Salgado

Five years ago I decided to add another cymbal to my drum set. I had been playing the same drums and cymbals set-up since the mid 60's and had become especially fond of the solid sound of vintage drums and the dark and sweet sound of vintage cymbals. For several weeks I visited various musical instruments stores and checked out more than a hundred cymbals. I found that the newer cymbals have more cutting power with a brighter sound, than their vintage counterparts, but my preference is for the dark and sweet sound of the old. Then I realized that vintage drums need vintage cymbals to establish the proper sound balance of vintage drum sets.

I started my search for cymbals from the sixties, initially, with the sound of my cymbals as a point of reference. Eventually, I learned many factors that help to determine the approximate age of a cymbal and expanded my search for cymbals from the 1920's to the 1960's. The first cymbals produced by the search integrated easily with the original ones in my drum set, confirming my view that vintage drums need vintage cymbals.

As I added more cymbals, I began to run out of space and noticed that the close proximity of cymbals to one another affected

their sound. From then on, determining the position, height and angle of additional cymbals to be added would be critical. A set of criteria for cymbals to be added was in order. First, cymbals must have a functional purpose, they are not to be added for looks or cosmetics; I must be able to reach all cymbals while sitting in my drummer's throne; all supporting hardware must be original vintage; and I must adapt my drumming to the space limitations and sound combination opportunities of having walls of cymbals all around me.

By the end of October 2002, I had 57 cymbals in my drum set, including 14 hi-hats of which 10 are of the closed type. I operate 4 regular hi-hats with my left foot

and they are used alternately in combination with specific ride and crash cymbals for optimum sound.

The hi-hat ensemble includes 2 sets of 15" A.Zildjians from the 50's - 60's, two sets of 14" Pasha top/A.Zildjian bottom from the 50's - 60's, a 14" set of 60's A.Zildjians, a 13" set of A.Zildjians from the 60's, a 12" set of 50's A.Zildjians, a 12" Zilco/A.Zildjian set from the 40's, two 12" A.Zildjian sets from the 40's, an 11" set of 50's A.Zildjians, a 10" Leedy/Elton sock set from the 20's - 30's, and two unknown brand 10" sock sets from the 20's - 30's. If you are counting, there are 28 cymbals in 14 hi-hats.

The largest cymbal is a 23" thin A.Zildjian ride from the 50's. Other rides include a 22" medium A.Zildjian from the 50's, and two 20" medium t h i n A.Zildjians (one from the 50's and the other from the 60's). There are two 18", one 17", four 16", and two 15" crash ride A.Zildjians from the 50's and 60's. The c r a s h e s include: four 14" from the 40's - 50's, two 12" from the 40's, four 11" from the 40's and a 10" from

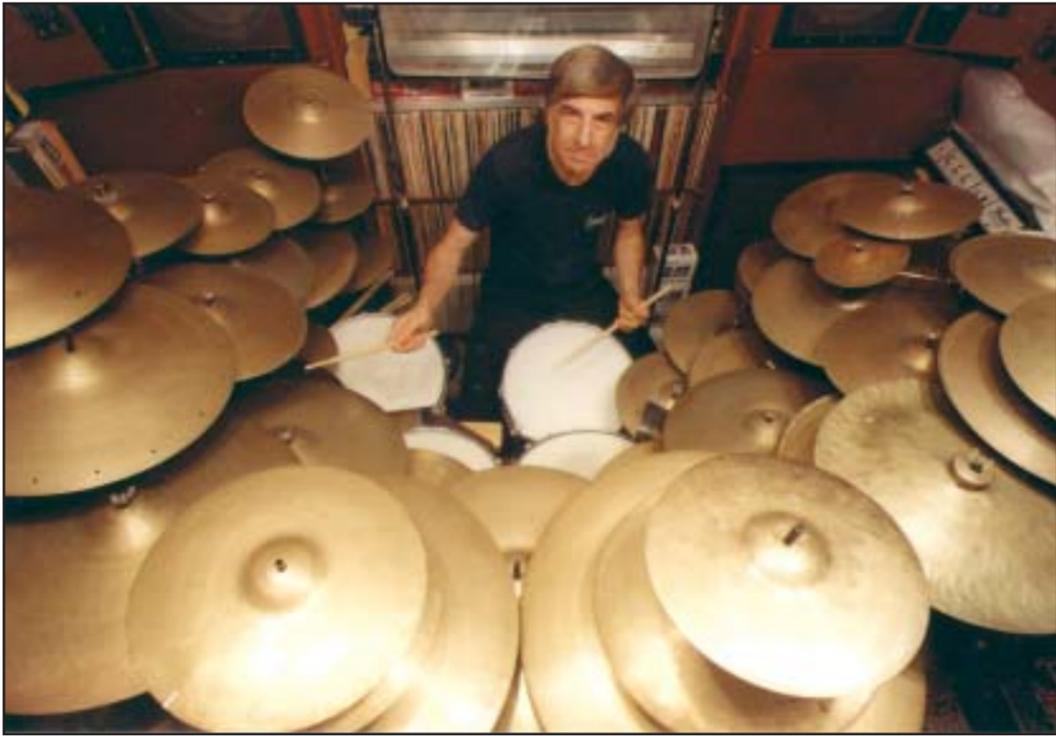
the 50's. Original Chinese cymbals include a 16" and a 12" from the 20's - 30's. The smallest cymbal is a 7" Ludwig from the 20's.

To support the cymbals, the following are used: twelve Ludwig flat base and six Rogers swiv-o-matic cymbal stands from the 60's; four Rogers swiv-o-matic, a Rogers Delux and Ludwig #1124 Big Beat hi-hat stands from the 60's; nine Gretsch, Duplex, Ludwig, Slingerland, and Leedy and Ludwig nickel "L" arms with clamps from the 30's - 40's; ten Ludwig and Slingerland cymbal tilters from the 50's - 60's, and a Duplex Rockin' cup from the 30's - 40's.

By this time some of you may be asking yourself how do I manage to set up and break down this monster set. The answer is I don't. I went out on gigs and

played in many bands during the 60's and early 70's, but in 1975 I went to graduate school for my M.B.A. and stopped playing in public. Since that time my drum set has been on a permanent location on top of a wood platform where I have enjoyed almost daily, drumming as a hobby.

In vintage drums you find many fine individuals who go out of their way to help you. I am especially grateful to the following: Rita Walters, Louis Porsi, John Aldridge, Frank Uberti, Billy Jeansonne, Rick Hines, and Bob Rupp.



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