



talkin' Drums...

Drumscene reviews the latest in product releases.

Reviews by Vince Samia.

Brady Drum Company

INTRODUCTION

In the 1970's, West Australian Chris Brady had a vision 'to produce drums to the highest quality of craftsmanship, giving a wide-open tone that no mass produced drum could match'. The Brady Drum Company has since gained international recognition amongst the 'Who's Who' of the world's drumming fraternity. High profile players such as Kenny Aronoff, Travis Barker, Dennis Chambers, Vinnie Colaiuta, Virgil Donati, Harvey Mason, Scott Phillips and Chad Smith have all purchased Brady drums as the tool of their trade, even though they are officially endorsed by large companies.

Chris Brady has been responsible for a number of inventions and 'World 1st's':

- The 'Solid Wood' drum
- 10" and 12" snare drums
- 'Non cross-laminated' ply shells
- The introduction of only even tom sizes; and
- Previously 'unknown' timber species to musical instrument manufacturing.

Of course, some of these innovations have since become industry standards, which we now take for granted.

Brady Drums have always taken a different approach in the making of drums. Chris Brady has never adopted established manufacturing techniques and his inventions are developed around his ideas of how a drum should sound like. All Brady Drums are 100% handcrafted, using simple wood tools and small machines without the need for large machinery or computerized technology, assuring a 'one drum at the time' attention to detail.

Today, Brady Drums offer three different product ranges, which are categorised by their different construction methods.

PLY DRUMS

In a revolutionary method pioneered in 1988, Brady is the only company of its kind that is able to produce small quantities of their own ply shells. Most other 'custom drum manufacturers' do not make their own shells. Other major drum manufacturers produce their own shells, generally using cross-laminated maple or birch and applying steam bending manufacturing techniques. Brady shells are made in a dry mold system, using spe-



cial, epoxy resin glue. This system excludes the introduction of water into the shells, making reinforcement hoops and other stability measures unnecessary. The shell is guaranteed never to go out-of-round. This is a world first and has not been copied by other manufacturers, mainly due to the fact that mass production of this technique is not possible.

Hand-selected Jarrah veneer is used for Brady's Ply Drum manufacturing. Jarrah is a unique hardwood that only grows in Western Australia. It is much harder than rock maple. While Jarrah is fairly common in Australia, it is regarded as an extreme exotic timber to the rest of the world.

The drum is pressed in a straight grain method. Each sheet of veneer is cut from the same section of the tree and all timber grain runs in the same horizontal direction around the drum shell (not cross-laminated). An airbag applies extreme pressure to the shell and is left for a minimum of 24 hours to harden, assuring an accurate and perfectly round drum shell. In this method, the glue and the timber literally melt into one unit. The unique binding of the non cross-laminated sheets of the veneer form a 'solid wood-like' drum shell, which is the basis of the distinctive, Brady sound. The raw drum shells are then released out of the mould, cut into length and cured for several days before they undergo the finishing process. Production in these quantities ensures quality control throughout all manufacturing stages, which is not possible in a mass-produced environment.

The appearance and array of available exotic timber finishes on these drums, have made Brady 'Jarrah Ply' Drums very sought after.

BLOCK DRUMS

Brady is possibly the only company to handcraft these drums from the tree to the finished product. From selecting the tree, to all aspects of cutting and drying timbers, they are 100% self-sufficient in their manufacturing processes. Brady sources all of their own timber and work in association with a timber mill, to have the logs cut to the right specifications. After the timber curing process, the timber is cut into special tongue and groove blocks then cut to length and hand matched for each individual drum. The timber is glued into cylinders and cured again. They are then lathed from the inside and the outside to their proper shell thickness, sealed and cured again before forwarded to the finishing process.

The sound of a Block shell drum differs from a Ply shell, because it has a very quick decay and thicker tone. Sound Engineers no longer need to use noise gates or heavy reverb to enhance natural tones. Subsequently, over the years, Brady 'Block' Snares have been the secret weapon behind countless session and live performances!

Different woods are used for their distinct, fundamental notes. Accordingly, Brady offers three main categories of block drums.





talkin' Drums...

TYPE CHARACTERISTICS

Jarrah low-end note, with minimal overtones and warm body.

Sheoak mid frequency with extreme volume and strong rimshots.

Exotic high-end cut and attack.

All Block drums are only available in their natural beauty. Exotic timber finishes are not available for these instruments, since they are not pressed like ply drums and cannot be veneered. You have the option for all Block drums to be lacquered in a 'Satin' or 'Gloss' finish.

SOLID DRUMS

These drums are extremely rare and are produced in minimum quantities. Each drum is built in direct collaboration between the player and Chris Brady himself. Originally touted as impossible to build, Chris created a true piece of art in these instruments. In fact, only a handful of these original 'one of a kind' drums were made in the early 80's and were quickly snapped up by the likes of Jeff Porcaro and Trilok Gurtu. As are all Brady drums, 'Solids' are guaranteed for life to not to go out of round.

The Brady Drum Company is responsible for every process involved in the crafting of their Solid Wood snare drums, beginning with the felling of the tree. Log sections are then reserved for future solid drums. These drums are literally hand carved out of the solid trunk of a tree. Depending on the timber, they take up to 3 years of curing between the various steps of production. The log is hand-chiselled into a general round form before it is machined

in a lathe to slowly turn it into a drum. This process is extremely laborious and time intensive and there is no such thing as a 'quick' solid drum. Timber never completely cures and a later movement of this 'one piece of wood' drum shell needs to be eliminated - this is the most vital part of the manufacturing. Once the shell finally reaches its preferred thickness, it is sealed and ready to be finished.

Like Block drums, Solid Wood drums are only available in their natural beauty and are not available in exotic timber finishes. All hardware on Solid Drums is offered in 24k gold plating.

FINISHING PROCESS

All drum shells are now drilled and sanded. The shells are sanded from the inside and outside. This is especially time consuming for ply drums, in order to clean the surfaces of the shells from excess epoxy glue. The bearing edge is cut by hand and the lacquering process begins. There are several coats of lacquer applied, all of which utilise high quality, polyurethane lacquers and involve a sanding and curing process in a drying room.



With all drums and finishes, you are offered the choice between Satin or Gloss finish. Both finishes seal the drums to protect them from environmental changes, such as humidity and temperature. They are maintenance free and easy to clean. Satin finishes illustrate the natural look of the timber - like an 'oil' finish. Gloss finishes are hand buffed and amplify the depth of the grain structure. The satin or gloss finishes are a cosmetic and personal preference only and do not effect the sound of the drum. Gloss finished drums are more expensive than Satin due to labour intensity and the drum undergoing a final hand buff.

All drums are stored as drum shells and are only fitted right before they leave the Brady Drum Factory. This involves a final and thorough quality control check. All drums are tuned before they are packed and shipped into your hands.

Visit www.bradydrums.com.au

Brady

the sound dreams are made of

...strikes again



www.bradydrums.com.au