

LAST CHANCE TO WIN

\$3,500 OF SAMSON RECORDING GEAR! p.66

DRUMMING FOR FANATICS

DRUM!

George Kollias
Of
Nile

At The Apex
Of Speed
And Skill

Ben Horowitz
Unexpected Rock
Stardom With
The Gaslight Anthem

Daniel de los Reyes
Goes Country

Dafnis Prieto
Genius Of
Improv

Road Tested!

- ▶ Sonor ProLite Kit
- ▶ Vic Firth Signature Sticks
- ▶ Toca Kalani Flex Drum

ISSUE **195**

\$5.99 US \$5.99 CAN September 2012



THE INSTRUCTION BOOK

R EVOLUTION



Once the cornerstone of every student's musical education, standard print method books are experiencing a tectonic shift in the digital-centric modern world. And while "adapt or die" is the mantra of writers and publishers everywhere, no one has felt the change more intimately than Dave Black, Alfred Publishing's vice president and co-author with the late Sandy Feldstein of *Alfred's Drum Method, Book 1*, the best-selling drum instruction title in the company's 90-year history. On the 25th anniversary of the book's publication, we picked Black's brain on everything from catering to new readership expectations to what prospective authors need to know about getting published. ▶▶▶

**NEW WAYS
TO LEARN
MEANS NEW
WAYS TO EARN**



**INTERVIEWED
BY ANDREW LENTZ**

THE INSTRUCTION BOOK **R**EVOLUTION

DRUM! How did *Drum Method* compare to other drum books at the time?

DB: Back in 1987, the *Haskell Harr Drum Method* had been out for 50 years, and *Elementary Drum Method*, by Roy Burns, had been out for 25 years. Those two methods had been widely used, but it had been 25 years since a major snare method had come out, and so we felt we could update those two books. It was the first drum book to include full-length solos after each concept taught, so there's a total of 23 full-length solos suitable for contests. We also introduced rolls

in a way that was easier to understand (particularly the 7-stroke roll). Something else unique to the method was the fact that we incorporated actual drum parts from Sousa marches and well-known concert band pieces. It was the first book to show how rudiments such as 5-stroke rolls and flams were used in actual drum parts. A VHS video that correlated to the book was also made available, making it one of the first products to ever have that element. And, we actually taught a lesson live on camera. In keeping up with the changing times, the video was later

released on DVD and is now available digitally for your iPad.

DRUM! How has the method book world changed in 25 years?

DB: Students and teachers now want to have full audio and video to accompany their basic methods. They also don't want the "one size fits all" approach anymore because we live in a world where you can download the music you want without being forced to buy something you don't like just because it's included on an album. As such, Alfred has created

DAVE BLACK'S SIX-PRONG ATTACK FOR ASPIRING INSTRUCTION BOOK AUTHORS

→ FOR DOING RESEARCH:

"Potential authors can either go to their local bookstore and browse the publications in the bins or, better yet, go to the major music publishers' Web sites to see if they have anything similar in their catalog. I also suggest they browse the larger music dealers or on-line stores such as J.W. Pepper, Sheet Music Plus, etc."

→ FOR GAUGING YOUR AUDIENCE:

"A book for a broader audience is going to have more sales potential than one for a smaller, more passionate audience. If the publication is for a particular kind of school or studio where the books will be required reading, then publishing for a small audience may work as you now have a built-in sales audience."

→ FOR NOT WASTING A PUBLISHER'S TIME:

"I usually like to have any potential authors submit a table of contents and one or two chapters to get an idea of what the book will cover, get a feel for the author's writing chops, and move them in a direction that will fit into the house style without them having to go back and rewrite an entire book. It's also a good opportunity to suggest any other areas they may need to cover."

→ FOR CONFRONTING THE BRAVE NEW DIGITAL WORLD:

"It used to be you could turn in a handwritten piece of music or a manuscript, but many publishers now will not accept something unless it's submitted in a program such as Sibelius or Finale. If someone is intimidated by technology, the only other way to get around the problem would be to hire someone else to input the music. Because technology is now the way music is produced, anyone wanting to be involved as a writer will have to have and/or know how to use one of these programs in order to survive."

→ FOR GOING THE DIY ROUTE:

"There are now a number of self-publishing outlets that are available. Amazon is starting a publishing division; Apple computers now have templates for you to create your own books, send them off, and receive printed books. Xlibris is another company that produces, publishes, and markets self-produced books. Again, the same amount of research will be required for a self-published book as one you would submit to a major publisher. You have to research who your audience base is; you have to research book sizes to determine the size of book that will be best for your market; you have to apply for ISBN numbers and bar codes; you have to register the work with the Library Of Congress; and you have to come up with a marketing vehicle and a way to be able to sell your book — Internet, Paypal, e-mail blasts, etc."

→ FOR STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD:

"Unless the book has a different spin with a great audio or DVD component to it, it's going to be a pretty dry book with very little sales potential. I think the best kind of books combine both a certain amount of technique, as well as genres of music to show how that technique can be applied. If you want to get a metal guy excited about Latin music, I think the book has to have killer audio and/or DVD tracks to go with it. Someone in that field is not necessarily going to be motivated by technique and exercises as much as they're going to be drawn in by the visual/audio appeal of that style of music. Another way to get them excited about a style outside their own comfort zone is to stress the importance of being a well-rounded drummer and how that can increase their longevity and marketability." —A.L.

THE INSTRUCTION BOOK **R**EVOLUTION

the world's first-ever customizable band and string methods. That technology will soon be utilized with other instrumental methods such as drum, guitar, bass, and keyboard publications. Students and teachers will be able to choose a number of features (starting rhythm, rudiments, choosing matched or traditional grip, etc.), as well as the ability to swap out some of the play-along tunes contained within their printed book.

DRUM!: Are student needs different today? If so, how?

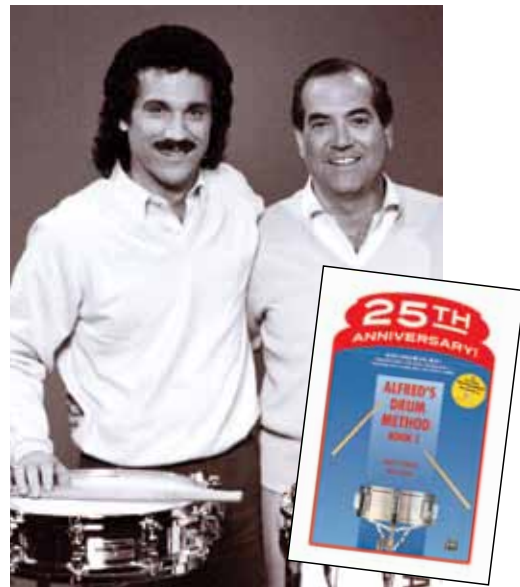
DB: We've already talked about the importance and impact technology continues to play. We also have to remember that students, educators, and schools are currently faced with a tremendous amount of challenges. Most states are experiencing difficult budget crises which have resulted in the elimination of school music programs and outside music activities. As a result, tools, such as videos or DVDs, will give students (especially those in rural areas where a teacher is not accessible) an opportunity to see how to set up, hold, and take care of their instruments, as well as hear how a passage or exercise should be played. It doesn't take the place of a good teacher, but it's better than nothing.

DRUM!: What impact has multimedia had on the printed book market?

DB: Technology is playing a bigger part in education than it ever did before. Tools such as the online SmartMusic program are being used to help teachers assess their students' performance abilities. Audio, DVD, and music software components are now included in most of our method books. These components include games, exercises, ear training, and testing. Tempo-changing technology now gives students the ability to be able to speed up or slow down a particular exercise or passage. Many of our books are also available digitally on iPads, Kindles, and Nooks. Moving forward, most new publications will automatically include a digital version, or will be released as just an e-book.

DRUM!: How have new media innovations altered how you select what ideas get published?

DB: The market over the last 25 years has become saturated with drum books. I often see something I think is interesting or unique, but I have to ask myself if it's the right fit for Alfred. I've seen many things over the years I thought were good, well-thought-out ideas, but I didn't accept them because I knew they wouldn't sell



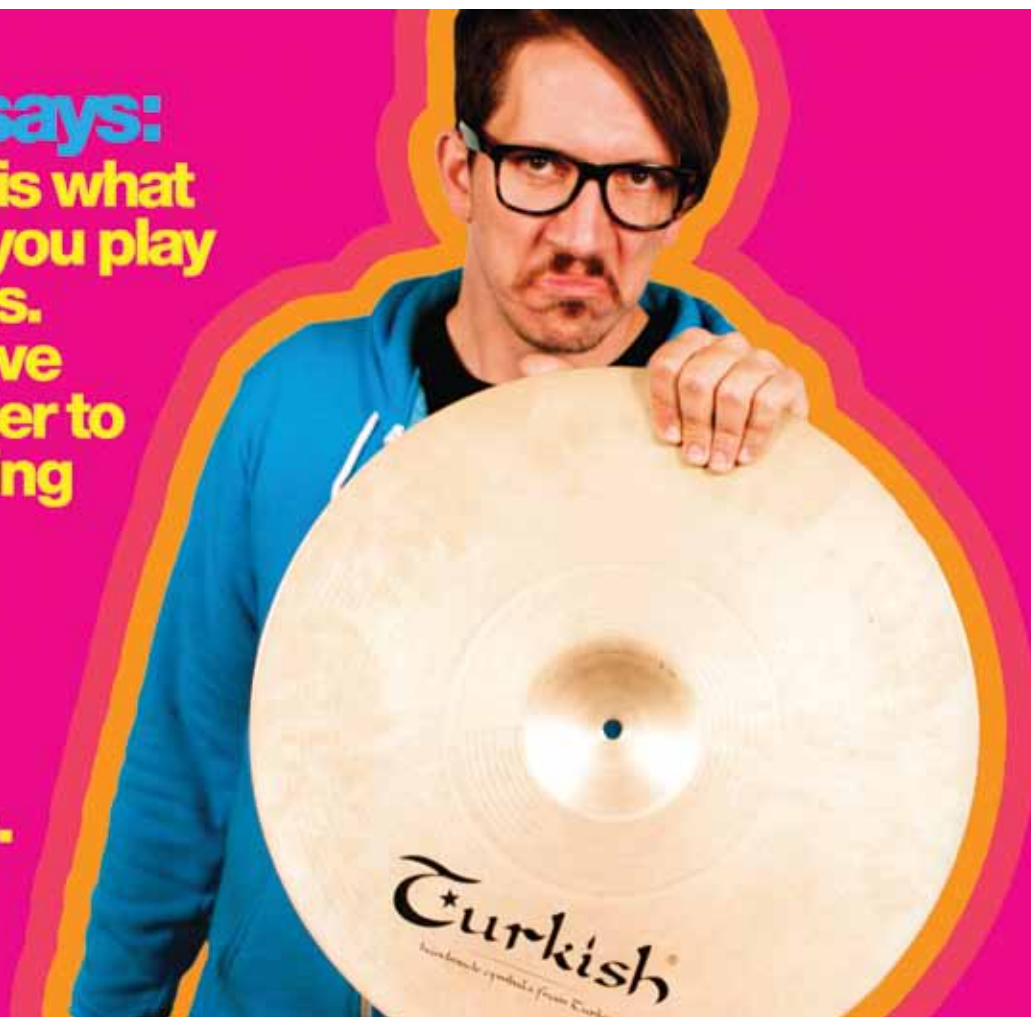
Black and Sandy Feldstein had no idea they were penning a classic method book back in 1987.

enough copies. So, if a publisher rejects something, it doesn't always mean the idea is bad. It may simply mean it's just not the right fit for our catalog.

The digital press has changed the way we make decisions on what to publish. It

Brad Davis says:
Turkish Delight is what happens when you play Turkish Cymbals. The cymbals have enough character to be very interesting without being distracting. I like them AS MUCH as I like pizza and that terrifies me.

Turkish
handmade cymbals from Turkey



THE INSTRUCTION BOOK **R**EVOLUTION

has given me the opportunity to publish in areas we haven't touched for years, such as steel drum pieces and percussion ensembles. We didn't publish those types of pieces in the past because with traditional offset printing, you would have to print at least 500 copies in order to get a good print price. If you only sold 100 copies the first year, you'd have 400 copies left that you paid for and would have to warehouse. With the digital press, however, if I predict a publication is only going to sell 100 or 200 copies,

then I can print just 100 or 200 copies. Something I would have rejected five years ago because it didn't have a big enough market or was too esoteric, I will now publish because I don't have the expense of having to print hundreds of copies that might never sell.

And, because of programs like Sibelius and Finale, people are now able to submit manuscripts that are already engraved [with music notation]. We will clean them up, but we don't have to pay to engrave a publication from scratch, and so that

helps keep our costs down.

DRUM!: In your role as an editor, how many aspiring writers do you come into contact with in a year?

DB: Too many to count! Very often, a proposal or conversation starts out with, "I have never seen anything like this on the market," but when I start flipping through the manuscript, I can name several books that have a similar content and/or approach. So when they say they haven't seen anything like this, they probably haven't done their homework.

Before someone proposes a book or an idea to a publisher, they should first do some research and visit their local music stores, in addition to the Web sites of major music publishers, to see what's already out there. You can't write another drum book and expect to get it published unless it has a different twist or element from those already on the market (and there are already lots of them). If you still need clarification, contact the publisher directly and ask if there's a need in their catalog for the book you want to write. If so, what would the publisher suggest you do to make it different? Unfortunately, not many people do that kind of groundwork in advance.

Another mistake I often see are people who try to write the bible of whatever subject matter they're trying to teach, and they'll send in a 200-page manuscript. No one is going to publish a book that size. Had they talked to the publisher in advance and asked for a recommended page count, they could have saved themselves a lot of time.

DRUM!: What kind of books interest you? What kind get signed?

DB: A new idea or a different spin on an old idea. A recent example is Steve Fidyk's new book, *Big Band Drumming At First Sight*. There have been other books about interpreting big band drum charts, but he came up with a system of being able to look at drum parts at a glance in order to make them easier to read the first time through. The audio CD he created includes full-band versions (with and without drums) as well as isolated beat and ensemble figure transcriptions featuring three styles of loop examples. This gives the student the ability to be able to work on just those figures and really get them down. He was able to dissect big band charts in a new way (both visually and audibly), and so it was a different take on that subject. That's what I look for.

20,000 DRUM PRODUCTS ONE SOURCE.

Sean Carey
bon iner

Cascio
interstatemusic.com
60,000 ITEMS • ONE SOURCE

ORDER A FREE DRUM CATALOG AT 800.462.2263 OR VISIT OUR ONLINE eCATALOG AT INTERSTATEMUSIC.COM/DRUMCATALOG

Cascio Interstate Music • Milwaukee, WI • 800.462.2263 • www.interstatemusic.com

One of the advantages of owning engraving programs such as Finale and Sibelius, and layout programs such as InDesign, is that manuscripts look like a finished book when submitted. Reviewing a book or performance piece that's been handwritten or poorly laid out can be a turnoff for the editor. Submitting books with music that's already engraved, that are well laid out, and include nice-sounding audio tracks, not only makes a good impression, but makes the manuscript a lot easier to evaluate. I'm more likely to accept a book that's submitted that way than one that comes in sloppy and will take a lot of work on our end to clean up for publication.

DRUM!: What are the key skills an author needs to promote his/her book?

DB: Because of the vast number of social media outlets available, authors now have a greater number of promotional tools available to them that were not available five or six years ago. If I get a well-written book by an unknown author but I don't have room in my production schedule, sometimes I will advise the author to self-publish. Their local music stores will probably sell it for a percentage, and they can advertise it on a number of available social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, or their own Web site. If that book starts to produce some sales or buzz, the author can then go back to a major publisher and say, "I did this book on my own; it has sold a thousand copies; and several teachers are using it." That would make me take a second look and consider publishing it, because now it has a following and has proven itself in a local market.

Of course, if you have a name and are out on the road with an artist or clinic circuit, that is obviously a great opportunity to reach a lot of people and sell books. If you can get prominent names to endorse your product, those endorsements can be used as a great promotional tool on all the social media sites as well.

DRUM!: Will there be another Alfred Method Book in 25 years?

DB: Oh, I don't think there's any doubt that there will be another. Of course, it will be much different than what we currently have, as it will most likely not be published in a traditional printed format. I believe within the next five years or so, students will be bringing their iPads to a class or lesson, putting them on the music stand, and playing from those devices.

"YOU CAN'T WRITE ANOTHER DRUM BOOK AND EXPECT TO GET IT PUBLISHED UNLESS IT HAS A DIFFERENT TWIST OR ELEMENT FROM THOSE ALREADY ON THE MARKET."

You'll be able to store hundreds of tunes or books in that one device rather than having to carry around or store a stack of printed music.

It's going to be interesting to see where this all goes, but it's happening

very rapidly. Publishers are all scrambling to keep up with the technology and to make it accessible. If they don't, they're not going to survive, because that's the way future generations are going to want to purchase product. ▣

I'm a Natural!

"My name is Melissa Houston. I'm a Canadian-born, New York City-based drummer and owner of Drums and Other Noise Productions. I also teach drums at the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls. I started drumming at 8 years old. I was a shy kid, and rock n' roll drumming was the way I could express myself the loudest. I love teaching because it gives the girls the opportunity to do the same. Supernaturals are the most musical cymbals I have ever heard, made by people who clearly care deeply about music. The Diamond Drives are the pinnacle of cut, tone and versatility. They never leave my kit."

Melissa Houston
Currently playing with Jane Lee Hooker and teaching at Willie Mae ROCK CAMP FOR GIRLS

Supernaturals
HANDCRAFTED TURKISH CYMBALS

To find out more about the Supernaturals Diamond Drive series cymbals, visit www.supernaturalcymbals.com

Are you a Natural?
Visit www.supernaturalcymbals.com or Facebook/Supernatural Cymbals Worldwide and let us know your story. If chosen, you could appear in future advertisements for Supernaturals and tell the world why you play drums and choose Supernaturals.

Photo by Greg Lofaro