



# LONDON ARTIST SESSION 2015

News from the Zildjian, Remo and Vic Firth artist meet-up at the Hard Rock Cafe, London

**Words:** Paul Jones **Images:** Tina Korhonen

I arrived at the Hard Rock Cafe with fellow drummer and friend Kari Paavola (Cinerama, Antti Railio) and received a warm welcome from Gary Mann of Remo, Tina Clarke of Zildjian and Joe Testa of Vic Firth. They then took us around the hall to see the glut of new products on display.

First up was Zildjian, who had two new Kerope Rides in 20" and 22" to wow the crowd. These models are heavier weighted so they give more stick definition at higher volumes. The 21" Custom Organic ride also stood out thanks to its clean and articulate stick definition, which can open up without washing out.

The 20" K Constantinople Renaissance ride, developed alongside Adam Nussbaum, drew plenty of admiring glances, too. The bell gave it a more contained sound and boosted its crashability. It really was a delicatessen of discs: the 8" and 10" FX Oriental China trashes offer great versatility as they can be used on their own or to complement other cymbals; the 7.5" FX Zil-Bell provides a unique mid-tone option;

and the 10" and 12" FX Spiral stackers, which stack on top of other cymbals, gave a fantastic trashy sound.

Vic Firth showed three brand new products: the Split Wire brush with two different length rows of wires, and the new 5A and 5B Barrel sticks, with a new barrel tip. Meanwhile Remo showed its new Powerstroke 77 coated snare head and the Powerstroke 3 black dot kick drum head, for yet more sonic options.

Once downstairs, there was a great backstage-like buzz with drummers mingling freely. Here's some of the gossip I was able to pick up:

Andrew McGuinness (Baltic Soul Orchestra) has relocated to England after 23 years in Germany and has opened Drum'n'Basement in Folkestone, a new drum shop and rehearsal space.

Aicha Djidjelli (the Kenneths) spoke to me about her imminent 45-day US Vans tour, gig with Hans Zimmer, recording with Guy Chambers and desire to write film music.

Alex Torjussen (Rumer) has been recording with Max Milner (ex-The Voice) and Lucy Spraggan.

Richie Spaven (Jose James), will be doing some shows with Gregory Porter, notably the Marciac Festival, France.

Crispin Taylor (Blow Monkeys, Galliano) is currently working with Lee John (Imagination).

Kevin Whitehead (Barclay James Harvest, Lisa Stansfield) is now playing for Dare, a new Irish rock band, and has recorded on Lisa Stansfield's new album.

Lea Mullen (George Michael) has been working with film composer Craig Armstrong and also sitting in for Pete Lockett.

Spike T Smith (Morrissey, the Damned) spoke to me about his plans for setting up future BIMM punk rock masterclass sessions. ●

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