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The Evolution of Recorded Music and Its Impact on Session Drummers

When you listen to a song, what is the one entity that pieces it all together? What would you guess to be the foundation of the overall energy that the song tries to convey. I'll give you a hint: the answer is the same when discussing all different genres of music, whether it's rock, jazz, latin, reggae, hip hop, or even classical arrangements. It's the drums! For generations, the drums, otherwise known as a membranophone, and percussion have been classified as a concept to the building block and architectural make of a musical piece as a whole. Drummers are very important in all styles of music. They are the bread to your butter. The lace to your shoes. They are what put the car in drive. They are the conductor that keeps the train within the tracks. Without drummers, it would be like trying to tread water without any arms. Unfortunately, with the advancements in technology that we have seen throughout the last century that is regularly used in popular and contemporary music, the importance of the session drummer has been lost. This loss of importance has resulted in the shortening of work and jobs for the everyday session drummer.

Drummers have revolutionized the way a general audience listens to music. The importance of the drummer in popular music is that the drummer establishes the overall feel of a

song. Every song as a pulse, just like how humans have heartbeats. Our heartbeats follow a certain pace, or tempo, the same way the song follows a certain tempo or B.P.M (Beats Per Minute) and all different types of music follow a different pulse or feel. Whether you are talking about straight time or swing time, this will determine how a song feels and behaves in a musical flow. The more challenging thing about drums than any other instrument is that you are required to use all four limbs when playing and keeping the beat. This requires an abundance of coordination between all your arms and legs, and being able to play different rhythms in each limb independently. This is called Interdependence (Riley). When we are referring to a pulse or tempo of a song, we are also referring to the “quarter note”. When you are tapping “1,2,3,4” with your feet when following the beat of a song, you are following the quarter note pulse.

The quarter note goes all the way back to the big band and ragtime era of the 1930’s. These styles of music are where the drummer especially became important in popular music. Music from groups like the Count Basie Orchestra and the Duke Ellington big band had major contributions to the reputation of the drummer. Both the drummer and the upright bass player followed this quarter note feel and it was proven that people really like to dance to this feel. The drummer, Jo Jones, and bass player, Walter Page, in the Count Basie Orchestra became so popular that they had their own rhythm section name, which was the All American Rhythm Section (Glass). Because of this, a drummer was now and forever necessary. The role of the drummer is to make people move, in whatever way is intended. In jazz, the drummer's job is to make people dance and swing, in heavy metal it’s to make people head bang. Drummers even have their respective roles in a marching band and gospel choirs.

The evolution of this instrument has been extremely significant. Drums are by far the oldest and simplest instrument known to man, yet the most powerful. All types of drums and percussion instruments have been used in a plethora of situations, such as religious ceremonies, marching to battle, and an entertainment piece for sound effects and setting the tone. The drum set is a bundle of different types of drums and cymbals put together into one giant instrument. The drum set, or drum kit, consists of the bass drum, snare drum, tom toms, hi-hats, crash, and ride. Before the very first concepts of the drum set being set in the late nineteenth century, they were all used separately. The bass drum is the largest and lowest sounding drum. Its size and depth is what really allows the drum to give off the low frequencies that is used in popular music and music all around the world to help follow the pulse. One hit on the bass drum should let out a giant BOOM! sound that is used to help the other musicians know where they are in the charts. The bass drum alone would usually be controlled by striking in the middle of the head with a giant mallet, but on a drum set, the bass drum is controlled with your foot using a kick pedal.



(“Pearl Reference Bass Drum.” *Musician's Friend*,

www.musiciansfriend.com/drums-percussion/pearl-reference-bass-drum.)

(“Evans G1 Batter Coated White Bass Drum Head.” *Steve Weiss Music*,
www.steveweissmusic.com/product/evans-g1-coated/drumset-bass-drum-heads.)

The snare drum is another essential element to the drumset that has its own unique sound and important role to the music overall. The snare drum went through a lot of evolutions in its own right, but the most popular version of this instrument was developed in the mid-eighteenth century. Where the bass drum is a large sound that is used to develop the pulse, the snare drum is a shorter and brighter sound that is used to develop the backbeat followed in music. When compared to the size of the bass drum, the snare drum is much smaller and thinner, usually 14” in diameter and 5” to 6” in depth. The snare drum also contains the snare wires on the bottom head, or resonant head, that you are able to turn on or off.



(“Ludwig Supraphonic Black Beauty Snare Drum.” *Guitar Center*,
www.guitarcenter.com/Ludwig/Supraphonic-Black-Beauty-Snare-Drum.gc.)

Both the snare drum and bass drum are made of different types of woods, such as maple, oak, birch, chestnut, walnut, and sometimes even brass (“The Evolution of the Drumset.”). The

snare drum and bass drum are the two ultimate fundamental tools of creating a grid for musical structure.

When you hear a song like “We Will Rock You” by Queen, although the song was recorded with the members of the group “standing on a drum riser vigorously bashing their feet onto a drum riser at Wessex Sound Studios in London”, a wide audience believe that the sounds that they hear as the “BOOM BOOM CLAP, BOOM BOOM CLAP” repetition is actually just the bass drum as the “BOOM” and the snare drum as the “CLAP” (Barrell). This is a rocking song that has a lot of beef both musically and lyrically, and the only two drums that were needed at all to emulate that feeling were the snare and bass. There’s not even any guitar introduced until the tail end of the song. Of course when the band played it live, the band couldn’t just get up and physically play the BOOM BOOM CLAP’s like they did in the recording, so the drummer Roger Taylor had to emulate those parts on the drumset with the snare and bass, but had to perform the song with the same beef and intensity that the recording has.

Following the snare and bass are the younger additions to the drumset, which are the tom toms. Unlike the snare drum, the tom tom drums don’t have any wires you are able to turn on or off. They’re more like the bass drum, expect smaller in size. They are just the shells and heads that you put on the top and bottom of the drum for tuning, and nothing more. Tom toms, or just toms, can range from as small as 6” in diameter to about 18” and in depth. There are all different types of sizes for toms, and drummers can have as many toms as they want on their drum set. Usually, you will have one rack tom mounted off of your bass drum and one floor tom that stands on its own next to the snare drum. Toms weren’t added to the drum kit until the early twentieth century and became a popular tool for years to come by none other than the great

American jazz drummer, Gene Krupa (“The Evolution of the Drumset.”). You can especially hear Gene using them on the classic hit by Benny Goodman, “Sing, Sing, Sing”.



(SONOR GmbH & CO. “Tom Tom.” *SONOR*,

www.sonor.com/instruments/drums/prolite-series/tom-tom/)

The final piece to this puzzle of the modern drum set we know today are the shiny trinkets we see about the drums on most kits, which are the all the cymbals. Cymbals have been around for centuries before being added to the drum kit, being used for rituals and ceremonies about 400 years ago by the Ottoman Empire. The first cymbal company to be established was Zildjian, whom are still very much around today. About 300 years later, a drum company by the name of Ludwig & Ludwig came around with their own kick pedals they would attach to the kit in order to hit the bass drum with. Some of these pedals they offered had an “extension arm” that gave you the possibility of playing a small cymbal along with the bass drum. This invention eventually led to the founding of the low-boy setup, which involved two cymbals placed on top of each other and controlled by a pedal in order to clang them together.



(“Antique Lowboy Hi-Hats: How to Reuse?” *DRUMMERWORLD OFFICIAL DISCUSSION FORUM*, www.drummerworld.com/forums/showthread.php?t=79823.)

After the low-boy came the hi-hat cymbals around the 1920’s when big band music started to hit the scene. Hi-hats were also controlled by a pedal with its own stand, except the stand would be much taller in order for the drummer to be able to hit the cymbals with their stick. If you are a right handed player, you would control the hi-hats with your left foot, while controlling the bass drum with your right foot.



(“CB Percussion JRX07C Mini Hi Hat Stand with Cymbals.” *Musician's Friend*,
www.musiciansfriend.com/accessories/cb-percussion-jrx07c-mini-hi-hat-stand-with-cymbals.)

Apart from the hi-hats, there is also the crash cymbal and the ride cymbal. The crash cymbal didn't become popular until the days of rock'n'roll came about and drummers needed a louder cymbal to bash on to complement the newly distorted electric guitars. The ride cymbal had been around since the days of jazz. This cymbal is what you were the main “ding, ding ding ding, ding ding ding” swing pattern on (“The Evolution of the Drumset.”). With new advances, creativity, and originality, the instrument has grown into the modern drum set we know today.



Crash - 17”

(Connor. “Zildjian A Custom Crash Cymbal - 19’ Thin.” *InSync*, 12 Sept. 2017,
www.sweetwater.com/store/detail/AC19C--zildjian-a-custom-crash-cymbal-19-inch-thin.)

Ride - 21” (“Zildjian 21.” *Hohner Marine Band Diatonic Harmonica - Key of G Major and More Harmonicas At*,

www.interstatemusic.com/57216-Zildjian-21-And-quot-Sweet-Ride-Cymbal-Natural-A0079.aspx.)

With all these parts set up, it becomes the modern drum set we know today.



(Moore, Aaron. *Beginner Drums Lessons*,
rockstaracademy.net/course-previews/beginner-drum-lessons.)

There are specific drummers to name and thank for the inclusion of certain parts of the modern drumset and the way drummers today approach the kit. As previously mentioned, Gene Krupa is to thank for the inclusion of the multi-tonal tom toms that are used in a musical manner today. Without John Bonham, we wouldn't have the ever-so famous "Bonham triplet" fills that we hear in so many players today. Without Bernard Purdie, we wouldn't have the "Pretty Purdie Shuffle". Neil Peart of Rush and Carter Beauford both contributed to the excessive use of the Herta fill. This goes to show that using real drummers in music can showcase originality and flavor. Flavor that you wouldn't be able to emulate anywhere else.

The sad truth is that this unique texture we hear in recordings, from what I believe to be the golden age of music, has been lost. We have lost it to the use of technology in modern music.

In contemporary pop songs from the Top 40 Billboard charts, the drums in these tracks are most likely not a real recorded drummer. These sounds are sampled from Pro Tools, or Logic, or whichever software the engineer is using to mix the track. Built into these softwares are millions upon millions of sampled drum and percussion sounds that you can use at your own will.

The way music is recorded has changed drastically from the time it was first discovered to even be possible by Thomas Edison in 1877 when he invented the first phonograph. This machine was able to create sound waves through the vibration of a piece of tinfoil placed onto a rotating metal drum. After a few failed attempts by Edison, he went on to other inventions he was working on at the time and put his phonograph on hiatus. Once Alexander Graham Bell and Charles Tainter started playing around with ideas, they decided to replace the tinfoil on the cylinder-shaped drums with a hard-wax cylinder and it resulted in a reproduction of sound.



(*Bell-Tainter Graphophone*, www.edisontinfoil.com/ducretet.htm.)

The problem with this tactic was the process of mass producing the sound recording on multiple copies. Each performance would only be able to be recorded onto 25 cylinders before the original cylinder became worn out, so the performer would have to re-record multiple times onto multiple cylinders for the mass production that was requested (*The History of the*

Microphone). You can imagine how much of a toll this would take on the performer, Then Emil Berliner took matters into his own hands with his ‘gramophone’ invention around 1887, which involved a disc instead of a cylinder and was placed on a vibrating diaphragm. It was then noticed that these discs could be copied in a steam-heated press and duplicates of recorded discs started to be produced (“*A Brief History of Recording to Ca. 1950*”). This was the start of a new industry.



(“Antique Phonograph Gramophone.” *Caputos Pawn We Are the Pawn Store You Can Trust*, [caputospawn.com/product/antique-phonograph-gramophone/.](http://caputospawn.com/product/antique-phonograph-gramophone/))

Continuing on with the acoustic era of recording, the big feud in the industry at the time was whether you preferred cylinder recording or disc recording. Both had their pros and cons. Cylinder recording was said to be a much easier process because of the constant movement of the cylinder being turned. This gave the recording more room for dynamic contrast to be picked up by the performer. That being said, disc recording was much cheaper to produce to a wider

audience and in this case was better for a marketable standpoint. Eventually, everyone realized this and disc recording became the general consensus.

The mixing process during the acoustic era of recording was extremely difficult, as performers would have to physically move closer or farther from the horn. This was the way of recording until the electrical era of recording came around in the mid 1920's. This era introduced us to the microphone, which was now used to record sounds. The labels immediately switched over to this process of recording and the industry was never the same again. The microphone recording process was also said to have improved sound quality enormously. The horn recording process was now completely scratched. The mixer was invented along with the microphone and engineers realized they can get a better and more defined sound from an orchestra using multiple microphones set in different areas around the performers instead of just one capturing everything (*The History of the Microphone*). This changed the recording process forever.

Although the electric era brought in new ways of capturing the sound at a greater quality, it still didn't give engineers the possibility of editing tracks that have been pre-recorded. By the early 1900's, once magnetic recording techniques first came into the scenario, the first invention that dealt with this way of recording was the wire recorder. This machine involved a thin wire that reverberated inside a machine that captured what the microphone was picking up.



(Techmoan. “Retro Tech: The Wire Recorder.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 3 July 2016, www.youtube.com/watch?v=90ihiTwJPCc.)

This style of recording didn't last too long as it resulted in a sound that was hard to listen to. Once the 1940's came around, we started seeing tape recorders become popular and used by engineers worldwide. This procedure became the general style of recording amongst the entire music industry because it gave engineers the ability to edit tracks.



(“Old Style Tape Recorder.” *FeaturePics*, www.featurepics.com/online/VintageTapeRecorderPictures66587.aspx.)

Producers now had the opportunity of cutting a certain section of a track and filling that space in with another part of a take. The first musician that ever used a tape recorder for the production of his record was Bing Crosby. Crosby was amazed by the features that this new innovation allowed him to do with his music and his radio appearances. He was the first star in the country to pre-record his radio broadcasts. Not only did this machine change music, it changed the radio and movie soundtracks. Crosby later ended up invested \$50,000 into Ampex

Electric and Manufacturing Company (“The Evolution Of Recording.”). This new power changed the way music was recorded forever.

The other grand power that was now available to the hands of the engineer was power of multitracking. By the 1950’s, you were now able to record four separate tracks and place them over each other to create one giant sound. This was also referred to as four-track recording. If the performer messed up in one specific area of the track that was just recently recorded, the engineer could now bring them to that specific part of the track and just re-record that one sliver of performance, instead of having to re-record that entire performance as a whole. This made work a whole lot easier and efficient. With different tracks going on around one song, this added in the stereo feature. This meant that you can hear multiple sound sources coming from different directions in one tracks. This is due to the multiple tracks recorded by the tape machine. The old style of hearing recordings was called mono, which meant you would hear the multiple instruments coming from one directions. This would make the overall recording sound compressed. All the sounds would be shoved into that one channel to be heard (“Mono vs Stereo.”). Stereo is pretty much the main source of listening these days.

With the innovation of multitracking, new recording techniques were created by musicians who had a lot of time to experiment with this invention. One of which being the late and great Les Paul, the godfather of the electric guitar. Paul was first to use an eight-track recorder instead of four-track and helped construct the process of overdubbing, which is essentially taking one track and placing it over another. This was rehearsed by taking vocal tracks recorded by Paul’s wife Mary Ford and creating harmonies over the main melodie, all

sung by Ford herself (Lindblad). Thus, the process of overdubbing was born, which is still widely utilized in recording music today.

By the time the 1960's came around, four-track recording was everywhere. All of the top bands, musicians, engineers, and producers were using this advanced technique. These groups included famous contenders at the time like The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. This style of recording is the reason why albums like Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band sounds the way it does. The music sounds more fleshed out and real. Almost as if you are in the same room that the band is playing. This feeling of density and fullness that the music was giving off had a lot to do with the inclusion of the four-track recording process. By the 1970's, engineers had the privilege of using 24-track recorders. You can only imagine what that did to the profession of recording music. The opportunities were endless now.

Recording has come a long way since the days of the wax cylinder and tin foil experiments. As time went on and advancements in technology were being conducted, we start to see even more giant shifts in the way music is recorded. The invention of the computer had a huge impact on the recording industry. This is when we start to see the drastic shift from analog sounds to digital sounds and audio. The way engineers store sound data from anything they record is now saved into a computer file, rather than a physical piece of tape that could easily be ripped up or lost. This quality of recording also does something to the sound of the music that changed up the future of music forever. It made everything sound cleaner and polished due to the "changes in air pressure" that was captured by the microphone, which was then transferred to the interface and into the computer as a digital copy of the recording ("History of Digital

Recording.”). This new innovation in recording paved the way of the music business for years to come.

By 1977, we started to see digital audio recorders hit studios all around the globe. The first one being the Sony PCM-1, which “converted analog audio into digital audio” (“History of Digital Recording.”). Soon, companies like Sony and Panasonic started coming out with CD’s and CD players that would eventually blow cassette and cassette players out of the water as the new medium for music listening on the go. This all seemed like the simpler record and distribute music, but not everything that hit the radio was completely original, and that had to do with the shift to digital recording. A big reason why originality started to diminish in the music industry was due to a little thing called sampling.

This all started to hit the scene around the late 1980’s when hip-hop was really making its big debut. Artists would tend to sample famous drum tracks from music they grew up with and overdub these grooves into their own mixes. For instance, the most famous drum groove to ever hit the scene was Clyde Stubblefield’s funky beat towards the end of “Funky Drummer” by James Brown, where Brown gives Stubblefield a few measures of spotlight to really showcase his own craft. The groove became vastly appreciated by drummers and musicians all around the globe that they stole it and placed it into their own work. Artists like Public Enemy overdubbed the groove into their song “Fight The Power”, LL Cool J uses it in “Mama Said Knock You Out”, “Justify My Love” by Madonna also includes this sample, even Prince and 2 Live Crew have overdubbed this groove into their tracks.

The sad truth to go along with this musical “copy and paste” is that Stubblefield has never received any royalties for these sampled tracks. None of these hits display any type of

written down recognition for the use of Stubblefield's innovative drumbeat in their tracks ("Clyde Stubblefield: The World's Most Sampled Drummer"). This is absurd and completely disrespectful to the work of a true virtuoso. Unfortunately, a drumbeat cannot be copyrighted and therefore artists can use these samples freely in their work.

This same example occurs with Bernard Purdie's revolutionary "Pretty Purdie Shuffle", but not exactly in the same vein. The "Pretty Purdie Shuffle" is a half-time shuffle groove with triplet ghost notes and accents on beats two and four put in between. To give a quick description of what a shuffle is, it's a swung eighth-note groove, as opposed to a straight eighth-note groove. If you don't know what ghost notes are, according to Bernard Purdie, "THEY AIN'T NOTHING BUT REBOUND" ("Bernard "Pretty" Purdie: The Legendary Purdie Shuffle"). You can hear this groove played by Purdie himself in tunes like "Home at Last" and "Babylon Sisters" both by Steely Dan.

The difference between the uses of the Purdie shuffle and the Clyde Stubblefield sample over the years is that the Purdie shuffle has not drastically been sampled nearly as much. Instead, drummers have emulated the shuffle in their own tunes with their own variations of the groove. You can hear these variations played in songs like "Fool in the Rain" by Led Zeppelin, "Rosanna" by Toto, "Walking on the Moon" by The Police, "Grapevine Fires" by Death Cab For Cutie, and countless more. For drummers and musicians all around, when you hear this groove you know exactly where it is derived from. None other than Mr. Bernard Purdie himself.

Part of this had to do with the fact that technology hadn't made its way to the modern digital production that is now followed in the studio. Back in the 1960's or 1970's, musicians would visit places like Abbey Road Studios or Sun Studio and record their tracks in the live

room, in which case their performance would be sent over to an analog tape recording control console where it would then be mixed and edited by the studio engineers. Analog recording took a lot more physical human labor to make the recordings sounding perfect. If you wanted to move a snare drum hit or an opening of the hi-hats to a different part of the track, you would physically have to cut the tape and place it in your desired spot.

Recording digitally through a computer doesn't require as much hands-on labor. Instead of physically having to cut a tape to split and drag the pieces of recording to your liking, you can now visualize the tracks you have recorded on a giant computer screen and simply edit the tracks while sitting down and doing the ol' point and click with the mouse ("Digital vs. Analog – Recording | Unne Liljeblad - Mix Engineer."). Digital recording has come into the forefront for engineers in the last twenty years. Everything we hear today on the radio has been recorded digitally. I will admit, recording digitally is the cheaper route, and it is a much easier tool for everything else in modern technology, but what we lose with digital recording is the depth and humanization of the music.

Everything that we hear from a digital recording is all binary sounds. By this, I mean that we are literally just hearing 0's and 1's. Two sound bits that are emulating the instruments from the microphones to the interface and into the software. For this reason, it makes the music sound very compressed and inhumane. Take any Beatles song for example. Half way into the Beatles career, the band decided to end it with the live shows due to the excessive amount of noise coming from the screaming girls that oversupplied the audience. Even at their biggest public spectacle on August 15, 1965, Shea Stadium, the band complained that they could not hear themselves or their instruments (Fleming). Ringo Starr has stated that he didn't risk playing any

fills because the band would easily lose track of where they were in the song. So he just kept time. All of the recordings by the Beatles sound tremendously warm in tone and you can hear little nuances of each player's approach to their instrument. You can honestly feel Ringo's windshield washing technique when he swings on the hi-hats. This is all thanks to analog recording.

Take drummer Jeff Porcaro for example. Porcaro was one of the busiest working session drummers of the late 70's and majority of the 80's. He was Toto's original drummer and founding member of the band. He also played on tracks with Michael Jackson, Steely Dan, Michael McDonald, and many more. In the song "I Keep Forgettin' (Every Time You're Near)" by Michael McDonald, there is a certain point in the second verse of the song where you can hear Jeff Porcaro fidget while playing and accidentally hit an accented beat on the hi-hat that was not originally supposed to be there ("Jeff Porcaro Throwback Thursday from the MI Vault."). Regardless, they kept it in the track. This type of texture really adds to the realism of the overall sound. It makes it as if you are actually in the next room listening to the band serenade you.

Now, let's look at some more modern music that branches off from this philosophy. If you take any songs by Post Malone, Jay-Z, Imagine Dragons, or any other major artist today, they are all using preset drum tracks from their recording softwares. These softwares come with built-in drum machines that try their best to emulate the sound of real drums, but clearly do not hold up to the quality of having a real drummer. Even if a recording engineer did decide to use a real drummer in the studio, his drums were most likely triggered. Triggers are what you connect to the drums to, later in the mixing process, go back and switch the sound of the real drums with samples to get a more clean cut sound. Drum machines have been around since the 50's, but only

started being used in popular music around the 70's. They especially became huge in the 80's with New Wave music like Duran Duran, Simple Minds, Modern English, The B-52's, and so on (Shim). Although this music is loved throughout society, something about using drum machines as opposed to real life musicians takes the soul away from the music. It makes it sound very bland and unoriginal to the ears.

One of the biggest modern artists around is Thundercat, an extremely talented bass player and musician from Los Angeles whom has worked with groups like Flying Lotus and Suicidal Tendencies. Currently he is performing with drummer Justin Brown. Brown, coming from a Jazz and Gospel background, kills it and gets very close to stealing the show. The biggest thing to take away from Brown's performance with Thundercat in a live setting is that Brown takes the drum parts given to him in the studio recordings and builds upon them with his own influences and approach. Take a listen to the studio recordings of Thundercat's biggest hits like "Them Changes" and "Heartbreak and Setbacks". The first thing to take note of when comparing the studio experience to the live experience is that the recordings don't nearly hold up to the sound of a live venue. To be fair, with all the giant concert monitors all the around the venue, it's going to sound more intense regardless, but the material that was put into place with the live drums just gave the music so much more substance and character.

This is what is lacking in music today and due to this lazy process of making music, many drummers have lost their jobs in their dream career. Technology has spoken and the universe, in this case the music industry, decided that MIDI drums and triggers are the way of the future. Gone are the days of spending hours in the studio setting up drum mics to the

drummer's content. Gone are the days of finding unique ways and obscure areas to track the drums to emulate more of a echoey and ominous tone.

Even the drums in some live shows has changed tremendously. With some groups, you would always see the drummer have a bunch of little percussion pieces and trinkets up on stage with them. If they wanted a shaker, a caxixi, tambourine, triangle, claves, guiro, castanets, or any little percussive accessory, they would have to physically bring one to the gig. These days, you will see drummers have this little thing to the side of their drum set known as a sample pad. These digital pads contains hundreds of sounds all in one machine that will allow you to emulate certain percussive sounds from that machine. You can just hook them up to a speaker or PA system, and they will sink right into the embodiment of the group and sound like it is just another part of your drum set. Some sample pads have eight pads, some have ten, and some even have twelve pads that you can get a different sound from each of those pads and find your own configuration of sounds to play around with.

Although these sample pads create such a range of creativity with all different sounds to play around with and mix and mash all different types of percussion pieces together, there's really nothing to them except just hitting a rubber pad with a stick to get the effect rather than bringing the real and authentic instrument. It's understandable as to why you would need something like a sample pad in an arena or large theatre type of setting. The little percussion instruments just themselves won't be loud enough unless properly set up with the microphones. Even then, getting the angle right would be very difficult. Sample pads are the cheap route to take. Not in terms of money, but in terms of performance and authenticity.

One of the great drum tracking stories to ever have happened will always be the story of how “When The Levee Breaks” by Led Zeppelin was recorded. Andy Johns, the engineer for ‘Led Zeppelin IV’ wanted to create a more “earthy delay” for the effect on the drums. Bonham would explain to John’s that there was not enough “frudge” in the drum sounds. So they decided to place the drums in the middle of a stairwell so they can captivate a more natural delay (Welch).

In the last century, music has seen a major shift. The technological advancements we have seen in both recording processes and how music is produced has changed the way music is viewed. For a lot of people in this generation, music is not seen at the high class that it used to be. Due to these new advancements, anyone can be a composer from the desk in their own household. The majority of music today is household generated. No artist wants to pay thousands of dollars on studio time, session musicians, mixing, or mastering of their own products anymore. Now that softwares like Logic and Pro Tools can be used on anyone’s laptop or desktop, anyone can make music. Whether it being good or bad. Obviously, people are going to lean towards the cheaper route. A lot of music we hear is created on an individual’s laptop and sent off to labels for a record deal. This showcases absolutely zero evidence of musical talent. Same thing with streaming music. Applications such as Spotify and iTunes allows anyone to stream music for free, with an extremely small percentage going back to the creator. All of this affects how music is created. At the end of the day, everything is affected by money. “The majority of music today is household generated.” (Swift) Because it is the cheaper route to develop electrically generate beats rather than hiring a professional session drummer who can offer a different vision, that is the route that most producers decide to take.

With this drastic change in the way music is recorded, there are not nearly as many professional music studios as there used to be. Of the famous studios that were around in the 1980's, only a few still exist. Those being Avatar and Electric Ladyland. Many studios where incredible records that went down in history as the greatest recordings of all time almost all cease to exist. For many aspiring session musicians out there that were hoping to make it big in the recording world, that world is a lot smaller and much more difficult to get noticed now. This is due to the new technologies that corrupt the music business today. MIDI, drums machines, sample pads, self-contained home studios, they all circulate the industry. "To survive today a musician, or any artist for that matter has to have multiple income streams." (Morales). Tons of session musicians these days don't only rely on sessions as their full income. A lot of them perform locally and tour. A lot of them teach and do clinics at schools or organizations. Many write books and become motivational speakers. Although there is still a possible career in being a session musician, there is no doubt that the evolution of recorded music and impacted the lives of these talented artists.

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