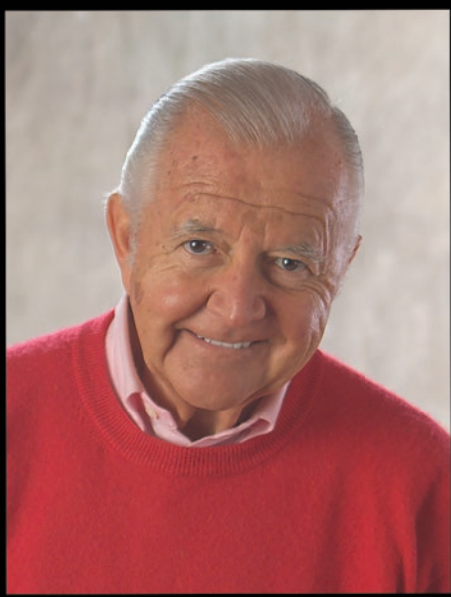




VIC FIRTH® presents

A Century of Drumming Evolution

BY DANIEL GLASS



1865

As the U.S. Civil War ends, drummers begin experimenting with ways that a single player can do the job of an entire percussion section. By 1876, "Double Drumming" becomes popular in theater orchestras and dance bands.



1890's

The first photographs appear showing drummers with a pedal integrated into their set up.

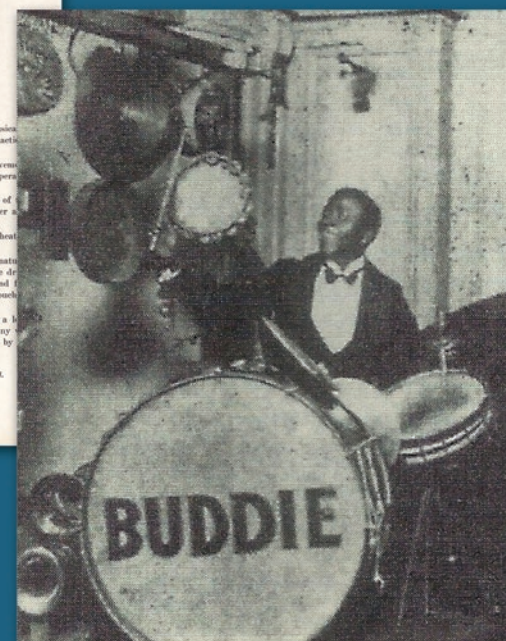
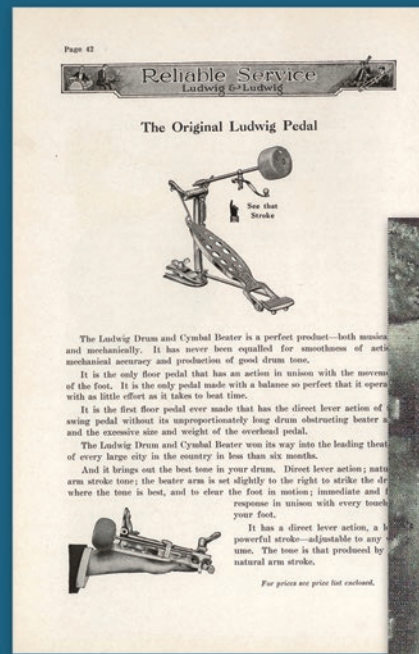


Immigrants arrive into the United States in record numbers. Many of the ethnic instruments they bring with them begin to be adapted into the drum set.



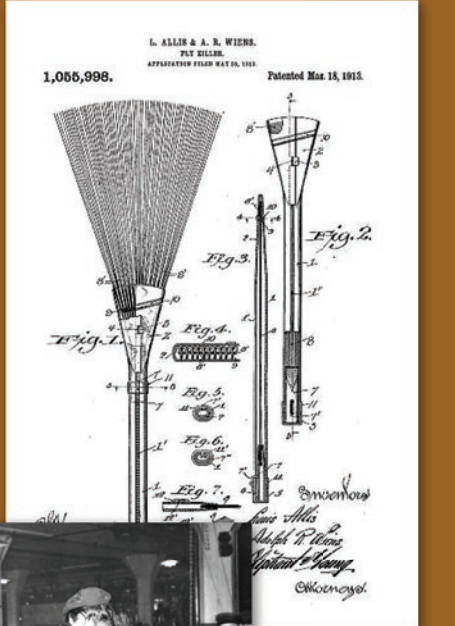
1900's

Ragtime showmen like James Lent and Buddie Gilmore make some of the first recordings that feature a drummer. In 1909, Ludwig patents the bass drum pedal design we still use today.



1913

Henry Ford introduces the first moving assembly line in his auto plant. The same year, retractable flyswatters are patented and drummers pick them up as a quieter substitute for sticks. Brushes are born.



1917

The Original Dixieland Jazz Band makes the first official "jazz" recordings. New Orleans drummers like Baby Dodds head up north, where their style becomes highly influential.



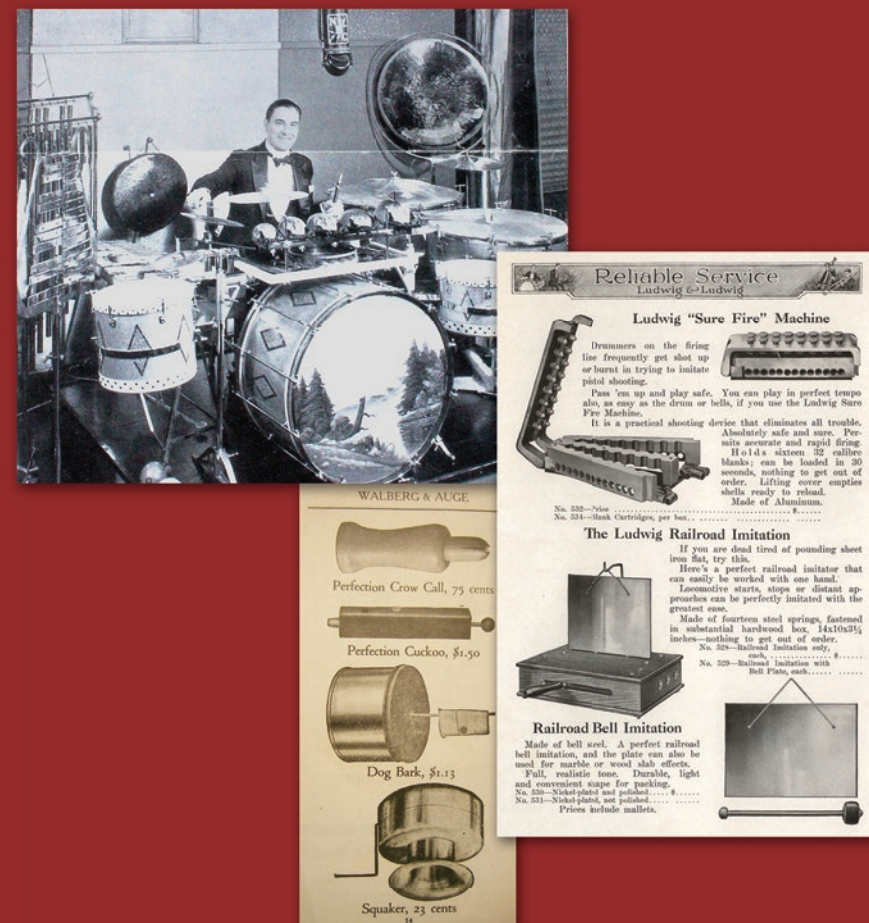
1919

Prohibition is enacted, leading to the "Roaring Twenties" and the emergence of Chicago as the center of jazz evolution.



1927

The first "talkies" – films with sound – are released. Within two years, thousands of trap drummers who provided sound effects for silent movies are put out of work.



1929

The stock market crashes, leading to the Great Depression. The first recordings with hi hat start to appear, heralding the dawn of the Swing Era.



1935

Gene Krupa explodes on the scene with the Benny Goodman Orchestra. Swing becomes the dominant pop style in America.



1941

The United States enters WWII. The following year, bebop pioneers (including drummer Max Roach) begin perfecting the style in regular jam sessions at Minton's Playhouse in Harlem.



1949

In the early 1940's, swing veteran Louis Jordan pioneers a small-band style based on heavy shuffle rhythms. By the end of the decade, this new style, dubbed "rhythm and blues," is the first to feature a heavy backbeat on the snare drum all the way through a song.



1952

As a member of the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Louie Bellson composes and performs "Skin Deep" – the first significant recording to feature double bass drums. The exploding popularity of Las Vegas-style lounges inspires several drum manufacturers to introduce a "cocktail kit."



1955

Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" becomes the first rock song to be included in a movie soundtrack (*The Blackboard Jungle*). Kids stay in theaters all day so they can dance to the opening credits. That same year, Bo Diddley's first hit introduces a traditional African rhythm that would come to bear his name, "The Bo Diddley Beat."



1956

Carl Perkins' rockabilly classic "Blue Suede Shoes" (featuring drummer W.S. Holland) becomes the first record ever to hit number one on the pop, country and R&B charts. With roots in all three of these genres, rock'n'roll can now be identified as a musical style in its own right.



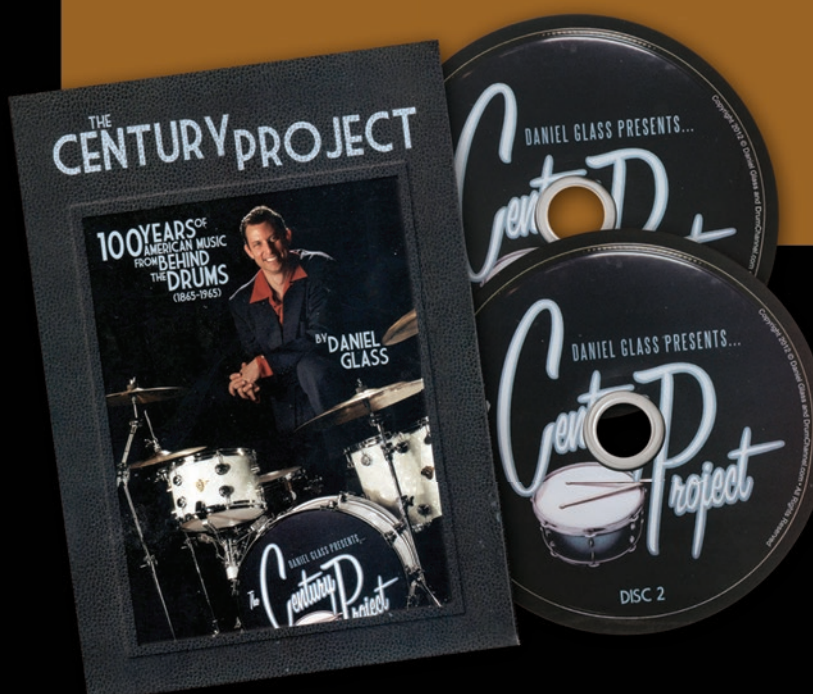
1963

Vic Firth starts to commercially manufacture his sticks. He goes on to invent the process of matching pairs of sticks by pitch and weight, revolutionizing the way sticks are made.



1965

"Matched grip" is quickly adopted by drummers around the world after the Beatles' breakout televised performance at Shea Stadium. A year earlier, Buddy Rich puts together the big band he will lead for the next two decades.



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