

Dom Famularo Part 2

Interview by Sean Mitchell // May 01 2016



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<https://youtu.be/NiUhOef0XUU>

Dom, still to this day, one of my favourite books, Cycle of Self-Empowerment ... on sale at your website, I would imagine. And then Dom's pad sticks, of course.

That's funny, these pad sticks, the Vic Firth Company makes them for me and Vic started making them for me many years ago. It was a stick that I designed from an old Bunken 3S, which is a stick that looked like my stick that was actually used by Billy Gladstone, George Lawrence Stone and Sanford Moeller in their lessons 'cause it was a big stick that was long with a round ball but it was maple so it was not a heavy stick; it was a light stick but big so you could over exaggerate your movement.

They had stopped making that stick so when I found one Bunken 3S, I then re-created the stick, Vic Firth makes them for me and I send them all around the world. I'm so excited to hear students helping their technique be using these sticks and continuing on the tradition that these great masters from 100 years ago have still continued to do.

Like you said, Dom, you've played some great gear and you're friends with most everyone in the music industry, as far as the drumming industry is concerned. You probably could have the pick of the litter with regard to equipment; why do you choose Mapex?

I'm a very loyal person in what I do. My strength in the educational program is to keep pushing this art form to a level and try to develop the next level of generation of teachers that are out there. So when I had gotten involved with Mapex, a very dear friend of mine, Joe Hibbs, had joined Mapex. I was involved with Joe at Tama Drums. I was involved with Tama for about 15 years, a wonderful company, we had a wonderful education program. Then at that time in the late-'90s, Tama Drums decided to change their education program, and although the product

was excellent, it was the education program that was stopped and not being funded any more. We parted our ways because I wanted to have an education program that would allow me to continue doing what I was doing.

When Joe Hibbs left Tama and went to Mapex, he called me up and said, “Dom, we really want to put together an education program to continue what we were doing at the old Tama days.”

I said I would love to do it, and to work with Joe was just a gem. Joe was an incredibly dedicated, hard working son-of-a-gun that would work seven days a week. He would call me Sunday mornings at 6 o'clock just to talk drums. It was crazy for him to call that early in the morning, but what was crazier was I was up doing things with drumming at 6 o'clock in the morning! We would talk everyday about programs and ideas.

Mapex proved to me that not only are they making a great product, their Saturn 5 drums blow me away - the thin shell; the creative hardware that they have; the Falcon double pedal that I play that I swear by; the new design of the Falcon 2 legged hi-hat, which I feel is the best on the market, and it goes low enough so I can adjust it to play open-handed and the hi-hat comes with two different rod lengths (a longer rod where you can play cross-handed and a shorter rod that you play open-handed). I get the hi-hat and put the shorter rod in and I'm ready to go. That concept of playing open-handed, for me, is very important. What a creative innovative company to do that and present that to the world! So they create a great product, they support education, and there I am.

Dom, you have a couple of other publications that are recently coming out. Let's talk about Guide to the Big Band and Play Drums.

Oh, thanks so much. The Guide to the Big Bands was written by Gary Williams. Gary Williams is a phenomenal jazz player that lives out in the Seattle area - phenomenal teacher; he plays and has a great band Ecstasy in Numbers and he's out there pushing and pursuing jazz, and of course, funk and rock because he's a very seasoned versatile player. He put this book together, which is about big band playing in a unique way because he's got play-along tracks in there, he's got the charts in there, and it really came across with delivering this fun way of playing big band and learning it. There isn't that much material that's out there for students to step into the big band world and to be able to have that and play along to it. It's shown an incredible excitement with drummers getting back into big band understanding.

That book came out a couple of months ago. It's hit the markets and is available worldwide everywhere. Wisdom Media is the publishing company that has gotten the book out and it's just exciting to see big band kind of having this resurgence again. To be able to play and feel and get that when you go to hit an 18-inch crash and you hear this brass section behind you, man, there's no greater feeling than to have that kind of high - real fun stuff!

The other book that we have coming out is called Play Drums. Felipe Drago is an incredible drummer that was originally from Brazil that moved to London. He's a dedicated player, has a great teaching practise out there. He's got a band called Cherry White that has been signed in the UK. He tracked me down and said he wanted some lessons. We started doing some Skype lessons, then he flew here for a week. We did literally six days, eight hours a day at my studio. We just spent all day working on these techniques and concepts. He just grew from there and then we continued on with Skype lessons, every couple of weeks from London to New York. He's has an incredible style of teaching and when I kind of saw how he was teaching, he showed me some material he had. He's able to get a student who comes in for lesson one on the drums and playing and having great fun immediately.

My partner Joe Bergamini and I, when we had seen [Felipe's] material decided to publish this book and put this out. Again, it has got play-along tracks; it's got video clips in there explaining it; he's on there doing it and it really is an immediacy of first lesson "you're on the drums, play the drums."

You never know where you're going to find these people or what material is going to come out of it and just when you think you've seen it all, someone comes up with a creative angle that just blew us away.