

Dream Dark Matter Cymbals

Fire-Forged Tones

Dream's Dark Matter cymbals are not your run-of-the-mill cymbals. With their dark visuals, ominous tones and fire-forged origins, they're more like something out of *Lord Of The Rings*. The Dark Matter line has recently expanded from four rides (two 20-inch and two 22-inch) to an additional 24-inch ride, two crashes (16-inch and 18-inch), hi-hats (14-inch) and the massive 22-inch Moon Ride.



The common thread among the various Dark Matter models is that they have all been through the heating/tempering/shaping process two full times. Basically, Dream takes a perfectly good cymbal and sticks it in the fire again, then lets them sit for several months. This process is responsible for creating the complex and dissonant trashiness that characterizes the line.

The Dark Matter Energy series is based off of the company's Energy line. This is a fully lathed cymbal that has been reheated. The re-firing process adds a drier, complex undertone while still retaining the projection and warmth of the original Energy series. When I first tried out a 22-inch ride, it had great stick definition and interesting undertones, along with a washiness that never threatened to overwhelm. This struck me as a great all-purpose cymbal.

The next set is the Dark Matter Flat Earth rides. These cymbals were based off of Dream's 24-inch Small Bell Flat Ride. Originally introduced in 20-inch and 22-inch models, a 24-inch version has now been added. This cymbal is a close cousin to a flat-top ride, as it has almost no bell and a very small curvature. Because of the process, it has excellent stick definition like a flat-top, as well as the interesting overtones the Dark Matter process provides. I took the 22-inch and 24-inch for a drive, and they had incredible character (especially the 24-inch). The undertones were big, washy, dark and exciting. The 22-inch was a bit more controlled on the low end, but they both had a unique tone with enough bite to cut through an ensemble. I discovered I could give both the Dark Matter Energy and the Dark Matter Flat Earth a good *thwhack* with the shoulder of my stick to create an explosive sound with a quick decay while the lows sustained. It had a gong-like quality without sounding like an actual gong.

The Dark Matter Moon Ride is Dream's first non-lathed cymbal. To quote Brian LaRue, Dream's director of U.S. operations, it's like an "anvil with tone." This is a massive cymbal. If you like the sound of a Hammered K Custom but find yourself feeling like "it just needs more," then the Moon Ride is for you. By far the least crashable cymbal in the line due to its thickness, its ping and stick definition are outstanding. Somehow it keeps the dark undertones subtly within its quick decay. And the bell is huge—it actually looks like half a moon.

Rounding off the new line is an 18-inch crash/ride, 16-inch crash and the 14-inch hats. The crashes, like the rides, had an explosive attack but trailed off quickly with the lows sustaining. The 16-inch in particular had a gorgeous kind of low shimmer to it. The hi-hats were not as washy as I thought they would be, but they had a good, solid "chick" that cut through nicely when recording.

If you are after a dark, rich cymbal experience, make sure to keep this new line of Dark Matter cymbals on your radar.

—Matt Kern

Ordering info: dreamcymbals.com