

Dream Cymbals

Energy & Dark Matter



BY ALEX COHEN AND JEFF WITHERELL

As far as new cymbal companies go, Dream is most definitely a serious and powerful force on the market with their various brands of affordable, handmade, high quality cymbals. Made in China, these cymbals are fired and produced in a unique manner that creates an original, rich, handcrafted tone.

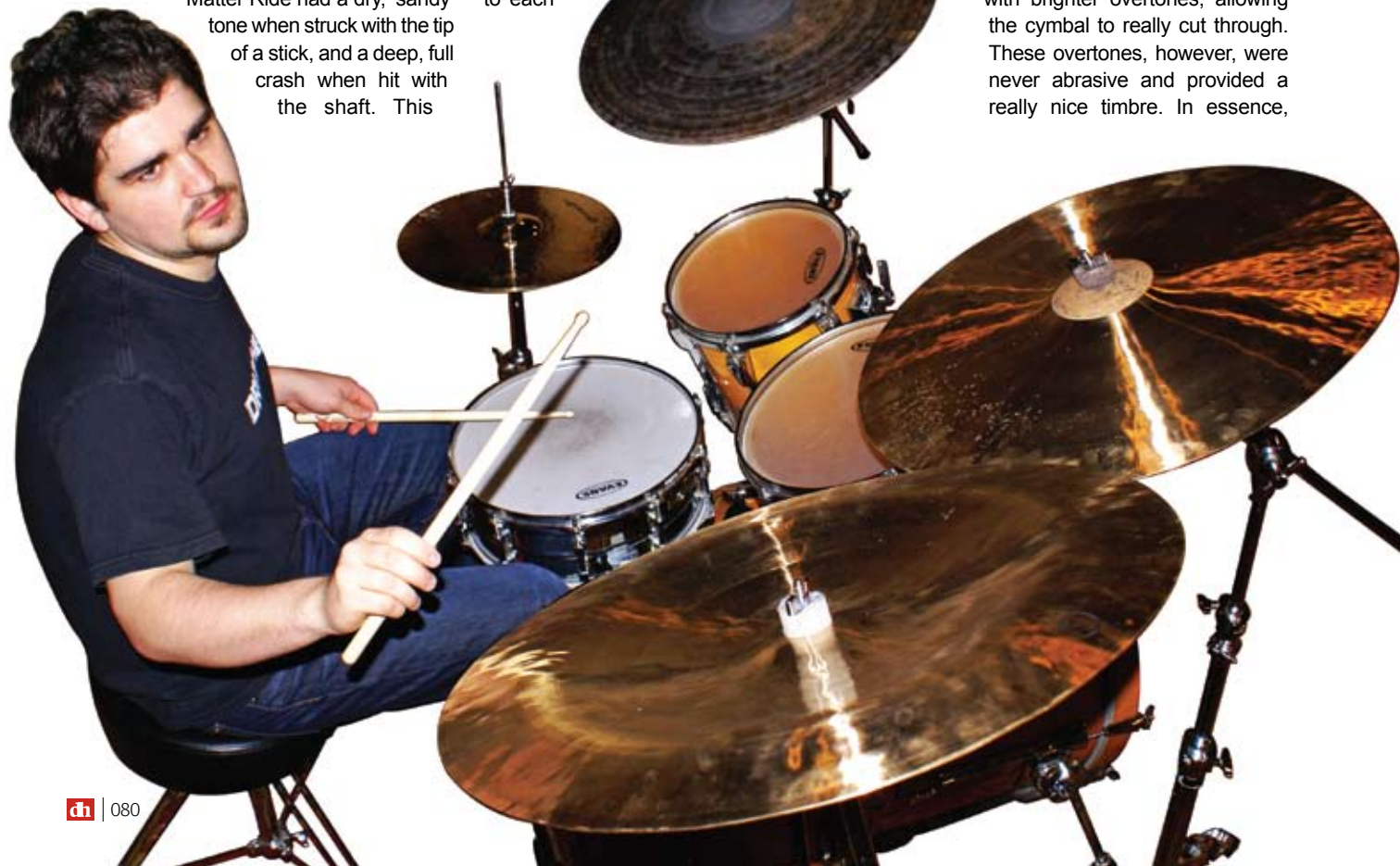
We received cymbals from two lines: Energy and Dark Matter. The Dark Matter line has a dark gray, unlathed, dirty appearance that matches their raw sound. The Energy cymbals have a bronze-lathed finish and an unlathed bell that gives them a brighter, more defined attack, while allowing them to retain some of the same grit of the Dark Matter series. We received 20- and 22-inch rides in both the Energy and Dark Matter series and 18- and 20-inch Chinas. Upon testing these cymbals, here's what we found in our Dreams:

The Dark Matter cymbals are painstakingly crafted through a specific method invented by Dream Cymbals. Although the Dark Matter cymbals are made from the same alloy as the Energy series, they produce a very different sound due to their production process. The cymbals receive the same hammering and heating as the Energy series, but are then re-fired, hammered, and tempered a second time to give them their unique, black look. The 20" Dark Matter Ride had a dry, 'sandy' tone when struck with the tip of a stick, and a deep, full crash when hit with the shaft. This

cymbal could work equally well functioning as either a ride or crash. The 20" also responded exceptionally well to a dynamic touch, and was very controllable. Some drummers may find that hand-hammered cymbals are not as sonically matched as machine-made, but Dream has produced some very consistent cymbals here. They were well suited to each

other's tones. The 22" also worked as a ride or crash, with a larger attack that allowed it to reach greater volumes. This cymbal also had an outstanding bell with a higher pitch that contrasted well with the deep body of the cymbal. These two rides sounded great when double-crashed as well.

As an overall line, what we found was that these cymbals seemed to have a dark attack that rung out with brighter overtones, allowing the cymbal to really cut through. These overtones, however, were never abrasive and provided a really nice timbre. In essence,



these are purely musical cymbals that transcend genre labeling.

The Energy series is the same alloy as the Dark Matter, but only processed once and then lathed with a bright finish. The Energy rides, as the name would suggest, have a bright presence and iridescent overtones that linger just long enough to provide some nice color. These were heavy rides, but had no 'gonginess'. The 20" ride responded with a quick, precise sound from the cymbal bow, and had a glistening crash. The unlathed bell was smaller than that of the Dark Matter, giving it a more focused attack and higher pitch. The 22" ride was similar to the 20", retaining the tight, consistent sound but had a lower pitch and larger bell.

Like the Dark Matter series, these cymbals were exceptionally matched and also made terrific crashes. However, the Energy series had a virtually opposite tone to the Dark Matter. While the Energy rides had bright attack, their overtones were deceptively dark. They emanated from the cymbals with a translucent effect that was very pleasing to the ear. These cymbals had an overall higher volume range than that of the Dark Matter line, and Dream's website describes them as being geared toward louder styles of music. The Energy series can certainly satisfy any drummer's craving for a loud cymbal, but still have an extremely flexible sound that can fit in nearly any situation.

We also received 18- and 20-inch Chinas. We can truly say that Dream really knows how to make China cymbals. The attack could be described as 'filthy in a really great way.' These were harsh, nasty and absolutely beautiful cymbals. Both Chinas had a very different sound with the convex side facing up or down. The 18" had a higher pitched attack and a shocking presence that provides the ideal effect that a China cymbal is meant to have. It could make jutting, panga accents with the convex side down and had a sweet, washy ride sound with the convex side up. These Chinas also had an upturned bell similar to the Paiste Novo series, which allowed other cymbals to be stacked on them with ease. The 20" sounded absolutely massive, with a roaring gong-like crash and almost ethereal ride sound. Again, these cymbals were perfectly matched and almost sounded like a scale of tuned notes when played in succession. For those looking for a warm China with a fierce presence, these cymbals are definitely for you.

*We tested mallets on every single cymbal received, and found that they produced extremely smooth and balanced cascading swells and crescendos. Both the rides and Chinas responded well to any and every dynamic that we applied.

Jeff: I used the 22" Energy Ride and the 20" Dark Matter on a recording session, and both were extremely effective cymbals in the studio.

The Energy ride had a defined and uplifting presence in the mix, and its unique blend of overtones was never overbearing. This is a cymbal that will sound great in just about any circumstance. The Dark Matter ride was used as a crash, and it really took the choruses to the next level.

Alex: I used the 20" Energy Ride, 20" Dark Energy Ride and 18" China on a pop-rock gig. Both rides responded well as big crashes or ride cymbals, and despite their identical size, the tones were very different and contrasted extremely well. The China was really spectacular. It had a substantial presence that never seemed overly intrusive, and I loved the huge variety of tones I got out of it. I turned it over in between two songs and it sounded like a completely different, yet still excellent, cymbal. In a sense, it was like two cymbals in one.

In summary, these are some of the finest cymbals around. Especially when you consider their amazing affordability and sound, these really are extraordinary in every category. Whether for drummers looking for a new addition to their cymbal set or trying to upgrade their cymbal sound, these might just make your Dreams come true. ✨

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