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The 19th annual Chicago Drum Show was held May 16 and 17, 2009 at the Kane Country Fairgrounds in St Charles, Illinois— a few miles west of downtown Chicago. A record crowd turned out for the weekend of exhibits, presentations, clinics, and master classes.

“I was very pleased with this year’s turnout, particularly in the face of so much “poor economy” press,” said show organizer Rob Cook. “Our paid attendance was down, but by less than 2%. We had increases in VIP attendees, press, and exhibitors, so overall the attendance was up. Was the depressed economy a factor? Yes. Many companies are being very careful these days; downsizing exhibit spaces, cutting back on artist support, staff travel, and general advertising budgets. Doug Carrington, who has managed the consignment area at the Chicago Drum Show for a number of years, noted that this was the first year that consignment sales didn’t seem to kickstart a “circular economy” at the show. He explained that when consignment sales are brisk, the sellers tend to spend that cash at the show with vendors who then spend the money with other vendors, etc. Between the expected economic recovery and the special events planned for the 2010 20th Anniversary show, I am very optimistic about next year.”

A total of just over 1350 people attended the show, coming from all parts of the country as well as Canada, and Europe. The Swine Flu scare caused the Japanese government to curtail travel, causing one Japanese exhibitor to cancel.

“Our total exhibitor count increased from 82 to 86, which we were easily able to accommodate in the new building we were in this year.” reports Cook. We’ve gone from from about 18,000 sq feet to over 32,000 sq feet. That meant wider aisles, more elbow room in the clinic area, and improved acoustics.”

There were two special evening events at the 2009 Chicago Drum Show. Friday night after exhibitor setup, there was a special screening of Ludwig’s new Anniversary DVD, which was introduced for sale to the public at the show. Attending the screening with the exhibitors and VIP guests were project participants Dick Schory, Wm. F. Ludwig III, Bun E Carlos, Todd Trent, Jim Catalano, Kevin Packard, Bermuda Schwartz, and Rob Cook.

On Saturday evening after the exhibits closed, show attendees were treated to an appearance by Fluke Holland. Holland was Johnny Cash’s longtime drummer and musical director who has the distinction of having played on the first sessions at Sun Records and is scheduled to play at the final sessions there before it is converted to a video facility. Fluke spoke, answered questions, and with the help of guitarist Ron Haney and local bass player Jay Olaszek played some of the million-selling hits from Holland’s days with Cash. At the end of the presentation, Rob Cook presented Fluke Holland with an engraved Lifetime Achievement award.

The 2009 clinician roster included solo marimbist Jane Boxall, Zoro, Will Calhoun, Donny Osborne, Bermuda Schwartz, and Danny Seraphine. Master Classes were presented by Zoro, Calhoun, Osborne, and Seraphine. “Sponsor support is what really drives the clinic program,” says Cook. “It would be impossible to bring in so much top-drawer talent without the generous support of the companies who help underwrite these artists. DW, Audix, Beyer, Auralex, Remo, Evans, Sabian, Zildjian, Craviotto, Firth, LP and Pro-Mark all helped in very big ways.

Master Classes were presented by Zoro, Calhoun, Osborne, and Seraphine. “Since we now have a huge new conference room to use for our DW Master Class series, we were able to increase class sizes,” reports Cook. “We even had two special programs; a special mini-clinic by Jerome Deupree and a snare drum-building class presented by the folks at Ghost-Note online forum. There was a lot of interest in that one- they actually set up the equipment and built a drum!” Practice pads for Master Class attendees were provided by Prentice Practice Pads.

Clinic MC Gregg Potter distributed free shirts, DVDs, books, cymbals, etc. to crowds assembled for the clinics. Items were donated by Hansenfutz, Zildjian, Sabian, Pro-Mark, Firth, Aquarian, Remo, Gibraltar & Evans.

Raffle prizes included a unique hand-crafted gong in the shape of a Bat (Nolan Customs), brass rims from Joyful Noise, a Diril cymbal, and snare drums from Craviotto, Tempus, George Way Drum Co., Ludwig, Vaughncraft, Ghost-note, MCD Percussion, and DW.

People wanting a closer look at the 2009 show are encouraged to visit the show site www.chicagodrumshow.com for photos and links to pictorials posted by guests and exhibitors. Youtube will also soon feature clinic highlights. Youtube hits on prior year’s Chicago Drum Show clinic highlights now exceed 200,000.

“In many ways, the 2009 show was a dress rehearsal for the big 20th show coming up in 2010,” says Cook. “Our planning is well under way for the big show; there will be many special displays, a clinic program of all top-tier drummers, and lots of surprises.” The 2010 Chicago Drum Show (20th Annual) is set for May 15 and 16, 2009; details will be posted soon both at the Rebeats site www.rebeats.com and the show site www.chicagodrumshow.com.

2009 Chicago Drum Show



Crowds lined up for show opening

Overview, one of the two exhibit halls



Clinic area



Jane Boxall



Jerome Deupree



Will Calhoun



Fluke Holland performance

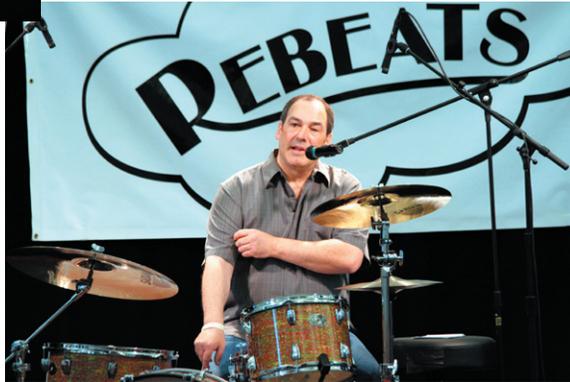


Fluke Holland accepting lifetime achievement award from Rob Cook



Donny Osborne

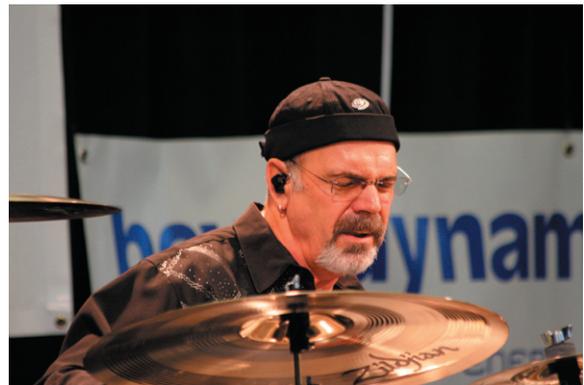
ZORO



Bermuda Schwartz



Ghostnote.net drum building master class



Danny Seraphine