

Interview Chad Smith for DRUM! magazine, and win some cool stuff. See page 4 for details.

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# DRUM!

## DRUMMING INOVATION

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Guide To  
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Conventions  
Drum

# PUNK DRUMMING

## Bobby Schayer of bAd Religion

### Punk Rock Perseverance

**B**ORN AND RAISED IN ENCINO, CALIFORNIA, THE 27-year-old Schayer is the son of a dancer and a policeman. He began playing drums at the age of 14, and some of his early influences include Ringo Starr, Clem Burke and Tommy Ramone. After taking beginner's lessons for about a year, he continued practicing on his own and started playing with friends. It wasn't until he began taking lessons with the Circle Jerks' Lucky Lehrer, that he began to take drumming seriously. On Lehrer's recommendation, Schayer joined Bad Religion on April Fool's Day, 1991, which is where we take up the story. . .

**DRUM!:** Were you very familiar with Bad Religion before you joined?

**Schayer:** It's funny, because I hadn't seen the band in about eight or nine years. It was weird to be playing with them. When I first joined I thought I was just going to fill in, nothing permanent, maybe just do a couple local shows, and that would be it. So I



went in and learned the whole catalog and just nailed that, and I've been with them ever since.

**DRUM!:** What was the first album you recorded with the band?

**Schayer:** *Generator*, that came out in '92.

**DRUM!:** What did you learn from that experience?

**Schayer:** It was fun, actually. It was pretty much done on the spot and really quick. These weren't songs that we had actually rehearsed. We just went in and did them. Because usually the Bad Religion beat is a 2/4 beat. Whereas, you take the Ramones and it's a 4/4 beat. It's very physical, I'll tell you that much. We do about 30 songs a night, so . . .

**DRUM!:** What is the key to playing that quick 2/4 beat

all night?

**Schayer:** Just relax and pace yourself, that's all. I usually look over the set list and figure out where it will slow down. One song might be a simple beat, and then the next three in a row will be fast ones, so you get yourself ready for it.

**DRUM!:** Because many of the songs are so fast, do you ever feel limited in what you can do with your fills?

**Schayer:** Sometimes I do, because the song moves so fast I'm kind of like, "Geez, how can I get this in here?" That can be a problem sometimes, but that kind of makes it exciting, in a way. If I actually do get something in it's an accomplishment.

**DRUM!:** Do you try to take advantage of the slower songs and do slightly more melodic fills?

**Schayer:** Yeah, I do. I try to throw those in there, I can actually get it in there. It is weird, because when you're playing like that it's actually a matter of finding where the verses and the choruses come, because you want to separate the sounds, and make it as diverse as you can.

**DRUM!:** How has your drumming changed since you've joined the band?

**Schayer:** It's probably gotten faster. Because we're doing 30 songs a night, in about an hour and 15 minutes, so you've got to keep it going. It's a challenge, like, "Can I keep this up?" Even if I get tired toward the end, and only make it through 28 songs, I'm thrilled. But the main thing is just having fun with it. I'm definitely not trying to prove anything to anybody. About the only thing I am proving is that anyone can do this.

**DRUM!:** But is that really still true? Comparing your new record to early punk like the Sex Pistols, your music is so much more melodic and so much faster. I'm not sure an amateur could just step in the do what you guys are doing.

**Schayer:** Well, you never know, because at one time I was an amateur, too. I never thought I could play to a Beatles album, and I did.

**DRUM!:** Well, sure, with some work. But in the late '70s a lot of punk musicians really couldn't play their instruments very well, which was part of the appeal, but you guys can really play. Has that ethic changed somehow?

**Schayer:** I don't really know. I guess influences have a lot to do with it. We must be having some kind of impact on people, because I've had kids come up and say, "I play drums in a band, and we play 'Atomic Garden.'" And then you ask, "How old are you?" And they say, "I'm 13." And you think, "Geez that's a really fast song. If they can play that I must have made some kind of impact on someone."

**DRUM!:** Besides things getting faster, are there any aspects of punk drumming that have changed over the last 20 years?

**Schayer:** I would say it's definitely improved. There are so many drummers, even from metal bands, that have been influenced by the Ramones or the Sex Pistols. It's amazing. I've met so many guys who use double-kick that were totally influenced by the Sex Pistols first album, and you would never imagine that. They say, "That record taught me how to play the drums." So I think that's important, and that's definitely an improvement right there.