

NEW GEAR

EXCLUSIVE

THE FX9 ALLOY

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THE ELECTRO STACKS

produce an abrupt, fizzing sound with rapid decay

MEINL GENERATION X CYMBALS

From £61 Meinl has set out to prove that you can obtain cutting edge electronica sounds from acoustic instruments. Now Adam Jones challenges them to bring the noise

An innovative project developed with the assistance of Johnny Rabb, Thomas Lang and Benny Greb, Meinl's Generation X range strays way beyond the usual sonic boundaries. The three new models on review have been designed to emulate processed cymbal sounds and white noise effects that can usually only be created in a studio or with the aid of a sampler. With the 'breakdown' section now a staple ingredient of songs across the mainstream, the Gen X's value spreads far beyond the dance and hip hop genres.

Build

Generation X cymbals are formed from one of two alloys: standard B8 bronze or FX9 - a tinless blend of copper, zinc and manganese with a dash of aluminium. FX9 is not used in any of Meinl's other cymbal ranges, and is more commonly found in the internal components of computers. All Generation X cymbals are pressed from sheets of either B8 or FX9 and then machine hammered. The shapes of the cymbals vary from the conventional to the radical, with many details added to alter sound and response. We got to grips with a pair of Benny Greb-inspired 12"/14" Trash Hats, three Jingle Filter chinas

(10"/12"/14") and two sets of Electro Stacks (8"/10" and 10"/12").

At 12", the top cymbal of the Trash Hats is two inches narrower in diameter than that below, and has three airholes. The 14" bottom cymbal is china-shaped and sports a crinkled Soundwave edge. Due to the flange of the china, the two cymbals can be coupled in the usual manner on a hi-hat (or X-hat) stand, or the 14" bottom cymbal can be flipped and the pair can be stacked on a cymbal stand.

Jingle Filter chinas are essentially mini-chinas with three pairs of jingles attached. Each cymbal is also perforated with holes that range from 5mm (10" model) to 7mm (12" and 14" models).

Electro Stacks consist of two cymbals that differ in diameter by two inches, with the top cymbal being the smaller. They are stacked on top of each other, and the top cymbal is shaped like a china with an upturned, crinkled edge. The bottom cymbal possesses a normal bell but from there outwards curves upwards rather than downwards, so that its edge is almost as high as the bell of the top cymbal.

Hands On

Closed tightly, the Trash Hats give a sharp, dry sound. Relaxed, their response is much

thicker, with a metallic edge still present. The effect is much like a distorted snare sound, though they could also be used for keeping time. Each Jingle Filter china opens with a sizzle of the jingles while the cymbal rings on below. The sustain is quite surprising, with all three Jingle Filter chinas sounding a bit like a set of dirty chime bars. In comparison, the two Electro Stacks are ruthlessly abrupt. Neither of the cymbals in each pair is tuned cleanly, and together they produce a hard, fizzing sound with a rapid decay. The smaller pair cough like a turbo-charged splash, while the bigger two throw out shards of pure attack.

Verdict

Expanding your sonic palette can only be a good thing, and Meinl's Generation X cymbals enable this to be achieved quite frugally. They can be used to reproduce studio-like sounds in a live setting or they can simply add some seriously leftfield sounds and textures to your kit, offering far more in the way of control and options than if you made do with stacking old, broken cymbals together. As with all effects and accent accessories, for maximum impact use sparingly. **R**

Rating ★★★★★

ESSENTIAL SPEC



PRICES

Trash Hats £169
Jingle Filter chinas £61-£92
Electro Stacks £115-£129

CAST OR PRESSED

Pressed

ALLOY

B8 and FX9

FINISH

Buffed

HAND OR MACHINE HAMMERED

Machine

COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE

Germany

DIAMETERS

8"-18"

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