

SABIAN HH REMASTERED



From £148 Sabian's famous Hand Hammered range is back with a vengeance. Introducing HH Remastered

WORDS: TOM BRADLEY

When Sabian was founded in 1981 by Robert Zildjian, the Hand Hammered or 'HH' series was its pioneering line. Thirty-five years on, these famous cymbals have been treated to a well deserved make-over. Sabian promise that with even more hammering, the HH series will now deliver more complexity and more tone.

Build

For review purposes, we have been sent the 14" X-Celerator hi-hats, 14" Fusion hats, 16" Thin crash, 18" Medium-thin crash, 16" and 18" O-Zone crashes, 18" Thin Chinese, 20" Garage ride, 21" Raw Bell Dry ride and 10" splash. Among others, the range also features Medium and Dark crashes and hi-hats and a host of ride cymbals, including the Power Bell ride and Vintage ride.

In comparison to the original HH cymbals, the new ones are supposedly treated to a much higher level of hand hammering. "Because each cymbal is now hammered more intensively, the profile of each cymbal has been carefully thought-out and worked for the cymbal to be more sonically effective and musically responsive." Interestingly, we could expect a single pair of hi-hats to be hammered up to 2,000 times. Or a 24" ride cymbal, a whopping 4,000 times!

For the seasoned Sabian users out there, it may be worth taking note that the weight ratings have changed slightly for the Remastered collection. The cymbals are now hammered thinner which means that the new 'thin' crashes for instance are in fact the equivalent of the old 'extra-thin' profile.

Hands On

Visually, the HH Remastered range are described by Sabian as that of a 'vintage' style. This is evident from the beautifully lathed, un-polished, natural bronze finish on

Also try...



1 ZILDJIAN KEROPE

We say: "The Kerope set achieves Zildjian's own vintage brief beautifully, recalling a classic era increasingly desired by the modern player."



2 ISTANBUL AGOP MANTRA

We say: "Jazz-based cymbal retaining that hallmark traditional Istanbul character, but with a sharper, brighter cutting, rocking edge."

the majority of these cymbals. Not to mention of course, the innately high-quality hand-hammering which can be seen covering the cymbal from bell to edge. As a whole, this treatment gives the cymbals a dark, classic sound. In addition, despite being greeted by the expected rich and traditional tonality, the new HH remastered have a cheeky surprise up their sleeve. They also possess a slightly modern brightness to their sound which not only equips them with more attack, but also the potential to be incredibly versatile; in a best-of-both-worlds kind of way. There is a shortness to the length of decay which when combined with a fairly non-intrusive dynamic range gives them the ability to announce themselves quickly but not linger in a track. It also means you can

give them a fair thrashing without running the risk of being too dominating.

I won't beat around the bush here, it was hard to tell the difference between the thin and medium-thin crashes considering that one of them is a 16" and the other is 18" (respectively). That said, the thinner profile of the 16" explains why it was noticeably lower-pitched than the 18".

There is plenty of definition in the attack of these crashes, whether riding or crashing. They are not excessively loud but have plenty of presence and a warmth to their sound. They seem to possess just the right frequency range to sit well and not be overbearing in almost any musical situation. Perhaps the same can't be said for the O-Zone crashes, which (as anyone who has played one before will know) are notoriously cutting. These quite frankly impertinent cymbals have a uniquely sharp and glassy sound which gives them the



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FINISH

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SOUND

Cymbals have a dark classic sound, but also possess a slightly modern brightness which gives them more attack

ability to leap headfirst out of a mix. Not to say however that these aren't great cymbals, if used with an air of caution. On to the 18" china: as with most china cymbals, the HH china is expectedly brash with a quick and trashy stick response. Thankfully though, the cymbal isn't too panga and like the rest of its family, is decidedly musical.

As the name might suggest, the Raw Bell Dry ride is lathed all except for the bell which is left with its original dark, baked finish. This not only provides a striking aesthetic but also gives the bell sound a dark, earthy quality. The Garage ride on the other hand is left completely un-lathed which gives the cymbal a very dry attack but also a clear stick definition. Developed with Claus Hessler, this cymbal is extremely quiet

and the level of versatility will depend largely on the ear of the beholder. Almost perhaps more of an FX cymbal than a usable ride.

Finally, the two sets of hi-hats are both absolute beauties. Both are also available in 13" diameters as well as the 14" models in question. The lighter X-Celerator hats feature a rippled 'Air Wave' bottom, making them very quick and cutting. The Fusion hats however are much heavier (particularly the bottom) and feature air-vents in the bottom hat. Once again, these make for incredibly versatile, musical cymbals which would hold their own in styles from rock to jazz. **R**

Essential spec



PRICES

8" Splash, £148; 14" X-Celerator hats, £492; 14" Fusion hats, £492; 16" Thin crash, £296; 18" Medium-Thin crash, £350; 16" O-Zone crash, £305; 18" O-Zone crash, £359; 18" Thin Chinese, £359; 20" Garage ride, £400; 21" Raw Bell Dry ride, £441

CAST OR PRESSED

Individually cast

ALLOY USED

B20 Bronze

FINISH

Traditional

HAND OR MACHINE HAMMERED

Hand Hammered

COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE

Canada

DIAMETERS AVAILABLE

Splash, 8" & 10"; X-Celerator hats, 13" & 14"; Fusion hats, 13" & 14"; Thin crash, 16", 17", 18" & 22"; Medium-Thin crash, 16", 17" & 18"; O-Zone crash, 16" & 18"; china, 18" only; Garage ride, 18" & 20"; Raw Bell Dry ride, 21" only

SUITABLE FOR

Most styles

CONTACT

Westside Distribution
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distribution.com
www.sabian.com

VERDICT: Sometimes a remake can be a bitter disappointment but in this case, Sabian got it dead right. The HH Remastered are brilliantly musical and show a great level of versatility.

BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★
PLAYABILITY ★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★
RHYTHM RATING ★★★★★