

LUDWIG SNARE DRUMS

From £329 Three new contrasting snare drums add to the mighty Ludwig canon

WORDS: GEOFF NICHOLLS

Long famous for its snare drums, Ludwig is gradually adding more options to its extensive catalogue. Today we have Joey Kramer and Corey Miller signature models and The Brick, a feisty wooden heavyweight.

Build

Unbelievably, Joey Kramer has been drumming with Aerosmith for 40 years, for which he surely deserves this stunning black beauty. It's a limited production and each drum is hand-signed by Joey on an internal paper slip. The 14"x6½" black nickel

finishes - Transparent Red, Natural Birch and Transparent Black.

Although it's the cheapest offering, The Brick has thick black gaskets under its lugs where the other two tube lug drums do not. The Corey Miller has steel washers under the tension rods while the other two have nylon.

All three drums share the same conventional throw-off, which is a familiar generic model. It's solid and works a treat. But could Ludwig not have at least put its name on there somewhere, particularly on the relatively expensive signature drums? It rather cheapens what are otherwise typically impressive Ludwig snares.

JOEY KRAMER'S BEEN DRUMMING WITH AEROSMITH FOR 40 YEARS, FOR WHICH HE SURELY DESERVES THIS STUNNING BLACK BEAUTY

over 1.5mm gauge brass shell is gloriously engraved with dragons and complemented by the 10 black nickel-plated brass tube lugs and 5mm die-cast hoops.

In stark contrast, Corey Miller's similarly-proportioned 1.5mm steel shelled drum is powder-coated in white both outside and in. Hoops are 2.3mm triple-flanged and there are 10 chrome-over-brass tube lugs. Corey is better known for his tattoos than his punk drumming, and his drum is laser-engraved with hand-drawn samples of his trademark rose and dragon designs. It's a cool looking drum, especially if you get Corey's full Ludwig kit and tattooed Remo heads to accompany it.

The Brick is a 20-ply, 15mm thick, 14"x7" heavyweight with a Chinese birch shell. It slots into Ludwig's mid-range Epic series with 2.5mm triple-flanged hoops, 20 single-ended Keystone bridge lugs and choice of three

Hands On

After a lifetime mostly spent playing metal shell snares I'm gradually coming more and more to enjoy wood shells. Certainly when it comes to The Brick. I took it out last night on a pretty rowdy pub covers gig and was bowled over. First of all it's as lively as most metal drums but with a woody tone, the result of having such a thick shell and it being birch. Where metal shells have high-pitched rim-shots, wood ones have a reverberant woody clonk. And The Brick has a clonk to die for. Putting in the ear plugs for the inevitable noisy second set I realised it continued to cut through as I played harder. There is no choking, it just continues to open up the harder you play. I absolutely loved this drum - it has warmth because the shell is deep and brilliance because it is thick. The ring on rim-shots had some overtones which turned nasty when I tried tuning the batter down. This

Also try...



1

WORLDMAX BLACK BRASS 14"x6½"

We say: "Cheaper alternative without the famous name, but excellent quality and great value."



2

MAPEX BLACK PANTHER PHATBOB

We say: "The thick shell elevates the pitch and potential volume, while the rounded bearing edges soften the impact a little, fattening up the tone."

is where it's tempting to resort to a spot of damping, or better, pay extra care to even tensioning. But as I tightened it right up again it simply sang.

Steel is probably the brightest, most penetrating of shell materials. Corey Miller's drum has a white powder coating on the inside as well as the outside making it ultra-reflective. The outcome is a hollow, oil drum sort of clang. It still rings, even when struck dead centre without rim-shotting. It looks pretty but is designed to be offensive - in the nicest possible way - to crash through the nastiest of punk.

Joey Kramer's brass shell drum is physically much heavier and has a deeper, darker fundamental than Miller's steel drum. The die-cast hoops are potential stick-splitters, but enfold the sound more, so that although loud (the keystone badge says 'hit hard') the effect is less unruly than with the steel drum. It has a fatter and warmer tone with more snare and less clank. It's expensive, but it looks fantastic and is refined, capable of a wide tuning and dynamic range. Tuned high or low it sounds good. For example, I tuned it way high and the enunciation was so clean it was a joy. While at medium tension there is a majestic, warm, thick snare fatness - a stadium beater. **R**

VERDICT: The Brick is a winner - it looks slick, sounds terrific and is affordable. Engraved metal signature snares are inevitably expensive, but Miller's and Kramer's do what they say. It's just a shame about those cheap skate strainers.

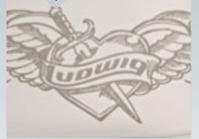
BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
PLAYABILITY	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
RHYTHM RATING	★★★★★



THE BRICK

Heavyweight wooden snare is as lively as most metal drums but with a woody tone

Essential spec



PRICES

Corey Miller, £449;
Joey Kramer, £699;
The Brick, £329

SHELL MATERIAL

Corey Miller, 1.5mm steel;
Joey Kramer, 1.5mm brass;
The Brick, birch wood

CONSTRUCTION

Corey Miller: seamed steel
1.5 mm; Joey Kramer:
seamed brass, 1.5 mm;
The Brick: birch wood ply

NUMBER OF PLYS

The Brick: 20 plies

BEARING EDGES

Corey Miller: rolled edges,
45°; Joey Kramer: rolled
edges, 45°; The Brick,
machine-cut 45°

FINISHES

Corey: white powder
coated, laser-engraved;
Joey: black nickel-plated,
laser-engraved; The Brick:
Transparent Red, Natural
Birch and Transparent
Black stain with gloss
lacquer (pictured)

HOOPS

Corey Miller: 2.3mm
triple-flanged; Joey Kramer:
5mm die-cast, black
nickel-plated; The Brick:
2.5mm triple-flanged

SHELLS

Corey Miller, 14"x6½";
Joey Kramer, 14"x6½";
The Brick, birch wood ply,
14"x7"

LUGS

Corey Miller, 10 brass tube
lugs; Joey Kramer, 10 brass
tube lugs; The Brick: 20
separate tension Epic
Keystone lugs

SNARE STRAINER

Corey Miller: Black Magic,
generic design; Joey
Kramer: Black Magic,
generic design; The Brick:
Epic generic design

CONTACT

Active Music Distribution
Tel: 020 8693 5678
www.ludwig-drums.com

COREY MILLER SNARE

Drum is laser-engraved with the tattooist's trademark rose and dragon designs



JOEY KRAMER MODEL

Snare looks fantastic and is refined, capable of a wide tuning and dynamic range

