

LATIN PERCUSSION BLACK BOX CAJON

£149 *It's under starters orders for the brand new entry-level black box cajon from LP...*

WORDS: DAVE HOLMES

Latin Percussion is renowned for its percussive prowess, and today the trusted LP brand is synonymous with hand percussion. The new Black Box cajon is the latest addition to the company's extensive catalogue which now boasts a variety of over 30 models of the Peruvian instrument in all shapes, sizes and finishes.

Build

Hailing from LP's City Series, this new model has a 6mm-thick MDF body and a tapa made from Baltic Birch – a material which LP says is found on some of the more upmarket models they have to offer. The exterior is plain and understated but is smoothly finished in matte black spray paintwork. To the front is a small sticker displaying 'LP' and USA as the country, together with a series of Phillips-type screws holding the tapa in place.

Smack in the centre of the rear panel is a 10cm diameter sound hole where we can view a clutter-free interior. Here LP has opted for two end sections of a snare strainer to produce the 'snare' effect. These are fixed in position (remaining non-adjustable), on a chunky piece of plywood that spans from one side of the cajon to the other. The bare wire ends are tilted up against the tapa towards the uppermost portion of the box.

Hands On

The whole cajon feels wonderfully smooth to the touch, allowing the hands to glide rapidly over the entire playable surface with ease. At the upper end of the scale, finger taps are clear, sharp and well-defined which leads me to produce some satisfyingly brisk rhythmic patterns.

The edges are beautifully rounded which proves advantageous when playing with force and without causing damage to my precious digits. This proves a useful attribute as, unless the cajon is subject to a really hefty belt aimed at the top of the box, the

snare effect is barely audible.

Oddly, the upside of this quietness is the clear distinction between the tonal areas, which I find quick to pinpoint. However, having played the box on a variety of floor surfaces and room settings, those really low-end tones don't make an appearance until seated in the corner of a room. Here the cajon provides a more acceptable, enhanced lower tone. **R**



UNDERSTATED EXTERIOR

The matte black provides a cool, stylish look

Essential spec



PRICE

£149

CONSTRUCTION

Body: MDF; Tapa: Baltic Birch

NUMBER OF PLIES

Shell: 1; tapa: 3

THICKNESS

Body: 6mm; tapa: 3mm

SIZE

48cm high, 28cm wide, 26cm deep

CONTACT

GEWA
www.gewamusic.com
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VERDICT: In comparison with the many budget boxes available, this instrument looks cool and feels great to play. However, in terms of overall sound, and indeed price, there's little here to get excited about.

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