

## Deftones' Abe Cunningham

**Drums:** Tama Starclassic Bubinga in satin bubinga finish

**A.** 6x14 Abe Cunningham signature 3mm brass snare with four 2" vent holes

**B.** 7x13 S.L.P. G-Maple snare with tamo ash veneer

**C.** 9x12 rack tom

**D.** 8x10 rack tom

**E.** 16x16 floor tom

**F.** 16x18 floor tom

**G.** 18x22 bass drum

**Not Shown:** 6x14 Starphonic brass snare (spare)

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

1. 15" A Custom Mastersound hi-hats

2. 19" Z3 medium crash

3. 8" K splash

4. 21" K crash-ride

5. 10" A Custom splash

6. 22" A Custom Ping ride

7. 19" K China

**Electronics:** Roland SDP-SX multipad and JH Audio JH-7 in-ear monitors

**MD caught up with Cunningham** at Irvine Meadows Amphitheater in California to chat about his gear. "I used to play a four-piece and always had the ride tucked in at the perfect spot," Abe says. "I added another rack tom and had this dilemma of not being able to get the ride close enough. I eventually started having my ride really high, but that was uncomfortable. So I flipped the toms, à la Kenny Aronoff. That lets me get the ride a little lower, and it's fun when you do a basic around-the-world fill and it sounds like you're playing something crazy."

"We don't trigger anything," Abe explains in regard to his use of electronics on stage. "But when we're recording the songs, I might mess around with something, and then it becomes something that I have to have live."

Explaining his approach to tuning, Cunningham says, "John Tempesta turned me on to bubinga years ago. The pitch is fundamentally low, so

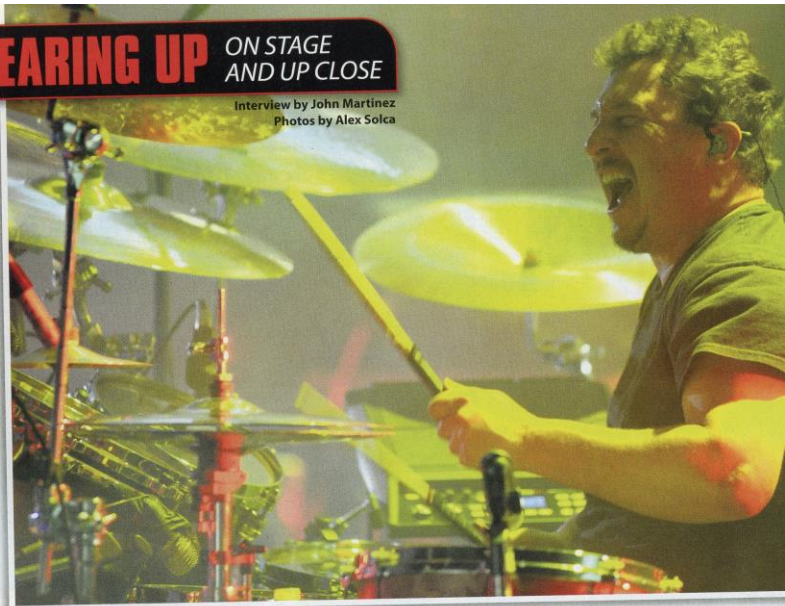
**Drumheads:** Remo Black Max (or Falam II) on main snare batter and Hazy Ambassador bottom, Coated Controlled Sound white dot side-snare batter and Hazy Ambassador bottom, Clear Emperor tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Powerstroke 3 Black Dot bass drum batter and Fiberskyn front head (muffled with Fried Chicken Dinner pillow by Kick Pro)

**Hardware:** Tama Star stands, Iron Cobra Power Glide double pedal (felt beaters), Speed Cobra hi-hat stand, Tama throne with Butt Kicker attached, and a generic fan

**Sticks:** Promark Abe Cunningham signature with Promark stick wrap, and Promark mallets

## GEARING UP ON STAGE AND UP CLOSE

Interview by John Martinez  
Photos by Alex Solca



it's pure beef. My floor toms are tuned pretty loose, and my rack toms are in the middle. On the song 'My Own Summer,' from *Around the Fur*, I played the world's simplest fill: *boom pop*. I've repeated that fill everywhere as a joke, so it's somewhere on all of our records. As far as tuning goes, the 10" has got to sound like it does on that record."

Tama recently released Cunningham's signature snare, which is an attempt to combine two of the drummer's favorite sounds in one drum. "I've always played vented maple snares, but I also love brass drums too. So it has the best of both worlds. The main snare is tuned for more crack for some of our older material, while the side snare is tuned really low. I use a marching head on the main snare, and the front-of-house engineer loves it. It gives the drum a lot of crack, but you lose a lot of the subtleties. It's like hitting a plank, but it sounds great live."

