

Peter Erskine - 3 Nights / 1 Afternoon

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New Creative Percussion Products

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Creative Percussion



Twist Rods Hex Pad & Percussion Accessories

Reviews: Charles Wiley

Creative Percussion has taken their motto of helping drummers “be creative” to the next level. They have introduced a line of percussion accessories that will not only allow you to expand your sound but even create something all of your own. They have expanded their Twist Rod line, released a new practice pad, added to their percussion accessories and created the MFX system which allows you to create your own sound combinations. *Drumhead* was sent an assortment of goodies to try!

The two new additions to the Twist Rod line are the Yeti and the Hybrid model. These new Twist Rods are made with the same method as the other models *Drumhead* reviewed last year in our June 2018 issue. To summarize briefly, Twist Rods differ from most bundle sticks because the rods are twisted dowels - actually twisting up from the bottom base all the way to the top. There isn't a foam center or a larger dowel in the middle holding the rods in place, just the actual dowels themselves. Because of that, they have better rebound and playability than most bundle sticks. The dowels are dipped in a lacquer finish and come with an “O” ring that can slide up or down to adjust the fan of the rods.

The Yeti model features 37 1/8” x 16” birch dowels and has a shorter heat-shrink grip than their other models which gives the dowels more room to move. No matter the model

of drumstick you use, the Yeti's are going to feel pretty big in your hands. With the “O” ring higher up the dowels, the Yeti's have a nice fat “swack” and focused sound; not as loud as I was expecting but still plenty of volume. With the “O” ring lower down on the dowels, the rods fan out and provide a nice, bright sound; the attack is less focused but with a wider spread. For such big sticks, they did feel very comfortable in my hands. I liked that they provide different sound textures that can be applied to many different gigs.



The newest addition to the Twist Rod line is the Twisted Hybrid Multi-Rod. The Hybrid Multi-Rod features 17 1/8”x16” dowels twisted around a 7A nylon tip maple drumstick. This model also includes the “O” ring. With the “O” ring lower on the dowels and the fan open, this model had a similar brightness like the Yeti, but when I played them a little harder the 7A stick could be heard more and it provided a nice solid back beat. With the “O” ring up, the sound was very focused and controlled. These rods were a lot of fun to play at gigs and in my practice studio.

The description on the Creative Percussion website said the Twisted Hybrid Multi-Rod can be used as a practicing tool for developing a lighter touch around the kit. “By playing lightly and only engaging the outer dowels you'll work on that ‘feathery’ feel and by playing a little heavier you'll engage the outer dowels first and then the center stick to give you a Twist Rod sound as well and a solid strike.” I found that to be true and even a bit of a fun challenge; using the rods to get different sounds and textures while also working on dynamic control.

Up next was the Hex Practice Pad/Aux Snare/Acoustic Snare Drum. The Hex Practice pad is hand-crafted and assembled using two playing surfaces. The “CP red side” has full 10” snare wires stretched across the inside and the “CP black side” is more of a tom-tom/regular practice pad with no snare wires. The shells are made from 1/2” Arctic Birch plywood and the playing surface is made from 1/8” Arctic Birch plywood. The playing surface has 1/8” foam and Mylar-like plastic to simulate a drumhead. It also comes with a round metal tray to fit a snare drum stand, allowing you to flip the pad without having to loosen the snare basket.

I was able to use the Hex Pad in a few different settings and it works well as a snare drum for acoustic gigs and has a lot of volume. Removing the cork on the side and allowing the air vent to be open provided a wider sound. With the cork in, the sound is tighter and more controlled. I used sticks and the Twist Rods when playing the Hex Pad;



The Hex Shakers are made from 1/8" Arctic birch and are sold as a pair; each shaker is filled with a different material allowing you to use them together or separately and get a variety of sounds. These also fit very comfortably in my hand and when using the two together it was easy to grip them without feeling like they were going to fall out of my hand. I would say when used as a pair, the Hex Shakers are a touch louder than the Baseball Shaker but individually they aren't as loud.

Creative Percussion has created the MFX system which is basically a series of enhancements that you add to your drum set or percussion set up. At the core of it, the MFX system utilizes rare earth magnets and allows the addition of jingles to be placed on places like the MFX bass drum beater weight or MFX foot bands. They also sell MFX targets – one side is 3M adhesive and the other the rare earth magnet. You can attach the adhesive side to any playing surface and attach a jingle to the magnetic side. Drumhead was sent the foot band, beater weights, targets and jingles to try. I used a combination of all of them and really liked the versatility of them. The foot band over the toe of my shoe with a jingle on it sounded really nice in a cajon setting. Using the beater weight with a jingle on my bass drum pedal added another dimension of sound when playing a jazz gig. If you like experimenting with sounds then you should check out the MFX system. You can create and customize your own sound depending on what you want to hear for your playing style.

These new additions to the Creative Percussion line really showcase owner Kevin Feeney's desire to keep coming up with new and interesting ideas. I personally like that all of these new products have multiple uses and can provide a different array of sound options for drummers and percussionists. If you're looking to add some new flavor to your set up, definitely check out these products. *

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I felt more confident that I wasn't going to break the pad using the Twist Rods. That's not to say the Hex Pad isn't strong or durable; it definitely is. It has more to do with the quality and look of the pad. It looks so nice and the quality is top-notch, so I wanted to be careful to keep it that way.

Using the Hybrid Multi-Rod gave me the best of both worlds; a nice bundle sound when played lightly and a nice solid back beat when played harder. The round metal tray is a great touch too; I was able to place the pad on the tray and turn the pad over without any problem. Calling the Hex Pad a practice pad is a definite understatement. You can certainly use it for practicing but if you do any gigs where you would normally bring a cajon or cocktail kit, the Hex Pad is definitely worth checking out.

Creative Percussion has also released their new Baseball Shaker and Hex Shakers. The Baseball Shaker is shaped, well, like a baseball - even with raised seams. It's made with hard plastic and fits easily in your hand. Using the seams for gripping the shaker worked really well and it was easy to get different sounds out of the shaker. If you are a baseball fan, using different pitching grips is a fun way to experiment getting different sounds from the shaker as well; I preferred the change-up grip personally! Because of the circular shape of the shaker, getting sweeping sounds was very easy. The sound is nice and crisp but not overly loud or abrasive.

