

# BACH GETS A BACKBEAT

Andrea Vadrucci, aka Vadrum, has gone viral with his YouTube posts. This made us inquisitive here at *Drummer* about the Italian drummer and how his new *Classical Drumming* album came about. We speak to the maestro himself.

## What inspired you to start drumming to classical music?

Classical music has always been something I loved since I was a little kid. I was attracted by this magical world of amazing compositions and melodies, interesting and cool instruments, beautiful places (theatres and arenas) and this kind of amazing energy and interaction between the director and so many musicians. I realised my dream of owning a real drum set, something I always wished for, but modern drums were not an instrument to join a symphonic orchestra with. My passion for rock music was becoming bigger day after day, so I slowly walked away from classical music and focused my energies and passion to rock music and my first

bands. Many years later, around 2005, I started to experiment with audio/video [self-] production, recording myself drumming along to music. I was listening to one of my favourite classical pieces when I thought, "Why don't I try to add some drums to it?" My main aim was to have fun trying something different from the regular "2 and 4," and classical music seemed to be a perfect experiment and the perfect solution.

## What was the first piece of classical music you played drums to?

It was the amazing 'William Tell Overture' by Gioacchino Rossini. Actually the idea came out after watching the *A Clockwork Orange* movie that has it as the main soundtrack. I had the song in my head

for days, and I started to translate those melodies into drum parts.

## How do you go about putting the drums together for each piece?

First of all I do a selection of the piece. I mean, if I like the tune and I can see an interesting melody/structure/rhythm that stimulates my creativity and I can enjoy myself, I quickly go

ahead with it. The next step is to listen accurately to the chosen track and start to mentally translate the themes and melodies into grooves and fills. Then, I play those concepts and ideas on my drum set, with the original tune in the headphones, experimenting and trying various and instinctive solutions.

## Is there a favourite piece or composer that you like to perform to?

The main Rossini overtures are something that I love to perform to. There's so much energy, power and joy in those compositions that I cannot avoid to feel them in every part of my body when I'm just listening to or playing along. And this is awesome because these positive vibes influence my performance in a good way.

**"I didn't have the opportunity to rehearse with the orchestra, so it was a kind of first and unique take"**



**VADRUM**

**When did the Classical Drumming album come about?**

I started to seriously think about the album after seeing the great reaction of people on YouTube after the first videos in 2007. Actually, the album was a dream; I never thought that one day it could become reality! So in late 2009, I returned in Italy after a year spent in the US studying music and drums, and I started to move toward working on the production of the album, taking care of every single aspect of it, from the selection/arrangement of the tunes to the release of the CD through the independent label I created, Vadrum Records.

**What was it like to record the album with an orchestra? Did you do this live?**

Like every experiment, it was a surprise. Before the recording I had the chance to play with a wind ensemble, but it was just a four- or five-piece ensemble, and the genre was completely different. With the album orchestra, an actual 36-piece orchestra, it was something totally new for me. It was very exciting and stimulating to do. Unfortunately I could only record just one piece together – ‘The Barber Of Seville’ overture that you can watch on my YouTube channel – because I preferred to record a clean orchestra and clean drums separately in two different takes, like in most of the studio album. But it was awesome; I received very positive feedback from musicians, and everybody was like shocked and amazed after the recording. I didn’t have the opportunity to rehearse with the orchestra, so it was a kind of first and unique take. None of us had done anything like it before and it was great to see these cool classical performers having fun, following something they didn’t know.



**What future projects or plans do you have?**

At the moment I’m preparing a show with a smaller ensemble and planning some solo performances. The album is going well in different parts of the world and I can’t wait to share this amazing adventure with as much people I can!

**And finally, what is your drum set-up?**

For the album and my solo projects I used my experimental drum set that I’ve played for several years now. It’s a birch drum set composed of a 22” bass drum, 10” and 12” toms, 14” and

16” floor toms, two 6” octobans, a 10” timbale, a 12” hammered steel snare and a 10” auxiliary steel snare. The tom configuration is ‘reversed’, starting from the left with the 12” tom and finishing to the 6” octoban, like a left-handed drum set – actually I’m left-handed! The 14” floor tom is on my left, together with the 10” snare and a tambourine, and the 16” floor tom is on my right, together with the

10” timbale that sounds ‘higher’ than the 6” octobans. I have a wide range of big and typically rock-type cymbals. I use a Zildjian 21” rock ride, two 19” crashes, a 17” crash, an 18” china and 14” regular hi-hats. Besides those I have some special effects cymbals, an 18” EFX crash, 7” and 8” splashes, a nice 12” stack – made by a 12” mini china over a 12” splash – a remote 10” mini hi-hat and a 6” bell. I use a double pedal and a

three-sided rack that holds everything. You can find a detailed photo of my set-up on my website.

**“I was listening to one of my favourite classical pieces when I thought, ‘Why don’t I try to add some drums to it?’”**

You can see Andrea Vadrucchi’s (Vadrum’s) videos and buy a copy of the album from the following sites;

**Official Website:**  
[www.andreavadrucchi.com](http://www.andreavadrucchi.com)  
**Classical Drumming:**  
[www.classicaldrumming.com](http://www.classicaldrumming.com)  
**YouTube Channel:**  
[www.youtube.com/vadrum](http://www.youtube.com/vadrum)