

# Quick Looks

## BOPWORKS DRUMSTICKS

by Michael D'Amico

**B**opworks makes drumsticks designed to replicate the response and feel of various jazz models that were popular in the '50s and '60s from major American manufacturers like Ludwig, Slingerland, Gretsch, and Pudge. They're double-bitted, round, and have four holes that make correct hand models, which make them ideal for use on super-thin-rim cymbals in a jazz-travel gig.

There are currently four models in Bopworks' line: Richard Wood, Gene Lee, Neil Clark, and Memphis Jazz. The tip and shoulder length of each model is proportional to the stick's overall length and width, but each also features the same straighter end tip shape.

The Richard Wood is the smallest of the line (17 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long and .300" in diameter). It's said to be designed for "the jazz drummer who requires a light stick that won't produce excessive overtones on the ride cymbal." And that's exactly what I saw. I had no trouble playing full-rim patterns of any sort without feeling like I had to fight on the cymbal. These sticks would be great on gigs where volume control is of utmost concern.

The medium-weight Gene Lee model is the same length as the Richard, but has a slightly larger diameter (.320"), that also adds weight. They have three holes (two on the main body, one on the return) and are light and pliable. Of all four models, these were the least comfortable for my hands, and they left a sore on my arm. They were especially difficult to control when I tried to execute quick subdivisions (regard being what wasing the air).

The Neil Clark stick has a little more length (18"), but it's thinner (.280") than the Gene Lee. As soon as the stick touched the rim, I felt it was. It was perfectly weighted, which allowed me to play effortless legato-like patterns of 16th notes of any tempo. I couldn't play as softly as I



could with the Richard, but the sound was full and focused, with just the right amount of attack.

Bopworks' largest stick, the Memphis Jazz, is 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long and .340" in diameter. It's designed for drummers who require extra thickness for big band, intense pop, or funky New Orleans-style grooves. The model sits somewhere between a traditional 7A and a 5B, which would make it a nice all-purpose jazz stick. I was able to play quickly enough to feel comfortable using them with a press kit, but they also have an adequate amount of weight to let me to punch out crashes with a full force motion. 40 models for \$21.99 per pair.

[www.bopworks.net](http://www.bopworks.net)