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Australia's Ultimate Drummers Weekend

AUDW 2009

AUSTRALIA'S ULTIMATE DRUMMERS WEEKEND CONCERT, WORKSHOPS AND EXPO



L-R: D. JASON HEERAH, KEVIN MURPHY, DAMIAN CORNIOLA, VIRGIL DONATI, FRANK CORNIOLA, PETE LOCKETT, RONALD BRUNER Jr., DOM FAMULARO, GERRY PANTAZIS, THOMAS PRIDGEN, JOHN SALERNO

This year's AUDW Concert, Workshops and Expo was held on the weekend of the 25th and 26th of July at the Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre in Melbourne Australia! Following the success of previous years, the 2009 event was again sold out as demand for tickets was particularly high!

Hundreds of fans and enthusiasts packed the centre to see the most versatile and eclectic mix of talent ever assembled in the event's 17 year history. This year saw the staging of more than 40 performances including 5 workshops over 2 days, a huge concert line up, expo product demonstrations every hour and competition final performances by some of Australia's greatest new talent. An added feature this year was that all of 'Australia's Best Up & Coming Drummer' competition finals were held in the main theatre, giving finalists a taste of performing on the big stage. This new 'morning finals' concept also allowed, for the first time - all ticket holders, (including just Expo tickets), access to the main theatre to view the finals spectacle! This proved highly popular as the theatre burst with enthusiasm at 9am each morning!

Featured in concert and workshop, the line up for 2009 included; Dom Famularo, Virgil Donati, Thomas Pridgen, Ronald Bruner Jr, Pete Lockett, Damian Corniola, Jason Heerah, Kevin Murphy, John Salerno and Gerry Pantazis with band Damage.

Frank Corniola and Drumtek would like to thank all the major sponsors whose support for the event is integral to the success of AUDW as a truly international event.

The finals for this years' 'Australia's Best Up & Coming Drummer Competition' took on a new look and feel as the finals performances and judging were moved to the main stage, allowing contestants the experience of performing on the big stage in the main theatre. The finals began at 9am each morning and for the first time in AUDW history, Expo ticket holders were also allowed into the theatre to view the finals spectacle and get a taste of what happens in the main arena.

The winner of the 2008 Open division of Australia's Best Up & Coming Drummer Competition 'D', opened with an atmospheric solo then went to the other end of the spectrum with a Death Metal band performance.

Local talent John Salerno, displayed great chops and feel with a combined band performance featuring Simon Hosford on Guitar and Chris Bekker on bass.

Ronald Bruner Jr is certainly one of the most versatile players on the international scene today - taking the audience through funk, groove, jazz and progressive fusion with blistering chops, speed and dexterity

Gerry Pantazis and band 'Damage' were the Australian "ALL STAR" group of the weekend. Gerry's great feel and maturity were complemented by the amazing line up of Phil Turcio on keyboard, Brett Garsed on guitar and Craig Newman on bass guitar.

Thomas Pridgen is definitely the international 'new kid on the block' who steals the limelight

wherever he goes. Thomas' heavy progressive rock grooves and technical skill combined beautifully to impress the audience.

Australia's own R&B masters, Jason Heerah and Kevin Murphy shed a fresh light on this years' AUDW concert as they sang lead and harmony through every performance while cutting the deepest grooves and funkiest moves.

Damian Corniola impressed the audience with his innovative concept of 'Drum 'n' Trance'. Marrying the hypnotic groove of the Trance music scene with his love for drumming and all things technical, Damian showcased a whole new genre.

Dom Famularo and Special Guests featured Australian born Andrew Hewitt while Mike Mignogna made the long trek from the U.S.A. The trio was an inspiring addition to the weekend's line up.

Pete Lockett is an amazing percussionist with incredible technical ability. His knowledge of ethnic and world percussion instruments is second to none. Pete's great sense of humour won the hearts of a league of new fans who sat mesmerized by his Tabla playing.

Virgil Donati took the stage to close the weekend at 4.40pm on Sunday. He constantly amazes audiences all over the world. Just as you think you've seen it all, there's Virgil! Again! Continually pushing himself and the boundaries of artistic expression, Virgil was rewarded with a standing ovation as his home crowd in Melbourne acknowledged their favourite son.