

BOSPHORUS STANTON MOORE SIGNATURE CYMBALS

by John Nymca

IT'S A BRASS-HANGIN' THANG

DETAILS

MODEL: Bosphorus Stanton Moore Signature Cymbals

SIZES AND PRICES:

20" Wide Ride	\$495
22" Wide Ride	\$545
20" Trash Crash	\$495
20" Pang Thang	\$495
14" Fat Hats	\$495

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Stanton Moore puts the fun back into funky – again!



Way down in the funkified quarters of N'awlins there's been a sonic liaison made between those crazy Turks at Bosphorus and Stanton Moore. Maybe it was something in the water that made for this mingle. We know the gulf coast waters off of New Orleans have floated a world of influences that led to the best musical gumbo ever. The body of water that cuts through Istanbul, called the Bosphorus, has certainly seen a lot of funky history of its own for, oh, maybe 4,000 years or so, and it is along this waterway that the Bosphorus cymbal dudes beat out each cymbal by hand. Yes, by hand, and if the web site photos are any indication, this factory is so retro-funky we wonder if they even have electricity, let alone machine-hammers.

The Bosphorus folks are the real deal, and so is Galactic/Corrosion Of Conformity drummer Stanton Moore, who

was raised, reared, and still resides in the Big Easy. Bosphorus has previously collaborated on cymbals with endorsers Jeff Hamilton and Ignacio Berroa, and this newest trip with Professor Moore has resulted in a nasty-good aural gumbo of cymballicity.

Moore has put his initials on four items – the Wide Ride, Trash Crash, Pang Thang, and Fat Hats. The names are not only slick enough to repeat, they're also pretty good descriptions.

WIDE RIDE. This one comes in two sizes, 20" and 22". The 20" Wide Ride is quite a thin cymbal, prone to letting out a lot of wash, but it has a really nice cushion of *tah* under the attack, a bit like raindrops. It's a very glassy cymbal when played lightly and in the middle; if you whack it or get anywhere near the edge of the bow you will be under severe volume restrictions. The bell is distinct and dry,

craving a part in some Latin music. Good for softer volumes of jazz and funky rock.

On the other hand, the 22" Wide Ride is muscular and stellar. It gives that feeling, with each stroke, that your stick is sinking into the cymbal somehow, and has a distinct and dry ping that lays upon a wet bed that darn near exudes from the body of the cymbal. The roar doesn't wash out the ping, because the illusion of two separate sounds – attack and wash – remains through most volumes. Cool beans! The bell is a bit more integrated than we'd like, giving quite a gentlemanly performance. On the 20", the bell sound jumps out. On the 22", the bell is a different voice, but an equal volume. We'd rather the bell took things up a notch.

As with all ride cymbal reviewing, we use lots of different stick shapes and weights. And we'll be danged if the 22" Wide Ride didn't like 'em all in different ways. There are limits, of course. The Wide

Ride, like so many jazz-influenced rides, wouldn't be the best choice if you want a clear, pingy, metal music *ding-ding-ding*. It's not one of those. But it is what it is, which is a nod to tradition, with some extra muscle. We even had the opportunity to record a hippie-jam song with it and were no less than thrilled. A great ride cymbal.

20" TRASH CRASH. We liked this one plenty, but it is a tad confusing. It's called a Trash Crash, but our sample cymbal was stamped "RIDE" on the bottom. So we rode it. And it worked great as a funky ride cymbal. It was reminiscent of "Chinese" ride cymbals that jazz greats like Mel Lewis used to play under soloists. We suspected from the first that this one could be beat upon with much more modern vigor. We certainly gave it a whippin', and it kept on trippin'. It has a distinct, sharp ping in the attack, and an exotic, Oriental roar that never lets up, but doesn't overwhelm, either. The pitch is low, mellow, and moody. Playing it with the shoulder of the stick gave a fat, bold, thick wang-dang-doodle of an accent. Cool, cool, cool. The bell, on the other hand, is integrated to the point of near-invisibility.

Yes, we did also crash the Trash Crash, and it roared at us. But we defer to the dude that handcrafted the cymbal and stamped "RIDE" on it. The Trash Crash sounds a lot like a trash can lid, though you would probably have to pop a lot of lids before you found one this sweet, and a trash can lid wouldn't have the lovely violent clusters of deep, round hammer marks that encircle the border of this cymbal. They look, more than anything, like the bullet holes you see in road signs. Cool.

20" PANG THANG. First question we had: what's the difference between the Trash Crash and the Pang Thang? Our confused answer is the Trash Crash is better for riding with its lower pitch, and the higher-pitched Pang Thang is better for accents. But we're still wondering about the "RIDE" stamp on the bottom of the Trash Crash, so ...

In technical terms, we can report that the bow edge on the Trash Crash flattens out, while the Pang Thang's bow edge curls up in the that familiar Chinese pang/swish shape we've bashed on all these years.

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Whew, something we're used to (too much innovation gives us a headache)! Following this thread of certainty, we parked the Pang Thang on the cymbal stand upside down and double-felted it in place. Then we played some of the great pang music of the ages. For the geezers, that would be Gary Mallaber's famous intro to Steve Miller's cheesy "Rock 'N Me," or John Guerin riding the rickshaw tone on the L.A. Express' "Day Way." For the young'uns, we played along with Galactic, of course! The Pang Thang is high-toned and sweet, with a hollow-toned bell that speaks separately.

The Pang Thang, we'd say, is unique in that it has a cool name. Other than that, it joins the ranks of *good* pang and swish cymbals on the market today. Very much worth a comparative listen.

FAT HATS. These 14" hats are dirty. Mean, low down, and dirty. They're also very thin, thin enough to create pitch bend from your hi-hat foot, a trait that we expect from inexpensive hats, but not from these. But perhaps the thin weight that leads to the pitch bending also

supplies the gritty character. And they are also close to a matched weight. We were about to mount them on the stand in reversed roles, but the stamped "BOTTOM" and "TOP" caught our eye. The top cymbal, based on a nearly scientific hefting in the palm of our hands, is heavier than the bottom. And the top cymbal is a teensy-weensy bit smaller than the bottom. (Shades of Steve Gadd.) However, the top cymbal still has the higher pitch, and both cymbals sound good, struck individually. Which is probably why they make a terrific foot-splash sound. But played together, they are somewhere between "dark and dirty" and "dull and mushy." A matter of taste, but we'll pass.

As a group, these cymbals maintain a consistent attitude. They are all a bit washy, funky, and dirty – just what we expected from Stanton Moore, and just what we expected from the company's hand hammers. However, we don't know how consistent each cymbal will be, store to store, order to order. Bosphorus really does hand-hammer each cymbal, and then they turn the cymbal on a lathe, by hand,

one at a time. This individually created craftsmanship means if you find one you really like, grab it, because it may be the only one of its kind. The Bosphorus cymbal makers sign their work, and we assume Stanton gave these a thumbs-up, too.

THE VERDICT. Though we readily confess that the Fat Hats didn't appease us at all, they seemed to do okay by Stanton, so we will leave them to their fate at the hands of popular opinion. The Pang Thang and the 20" Wide Ride are great sounds that deserve to be auditioned against any cymbal in their type. The 22" Wide Ride – so sweet, strong, and *tab*-rific, is a new favorite, a big favorite. The 20" Trash Crash (ride?), with those bold shoulder-accented and dark character, is a great option when a different ride color is needed, and would be readily welcomed into our cymbal bag. And we didn't even get started on stacking. The Pang Thang and the Trash Crash are ripe for layering with other cymbals, opening up even more nasty new possibilities for these pies. Hail the Turks and pass the gumbo!

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