

The WFLIII Story

"WFLIII Drums is more than just a company. It's the resurrection of a family legacy and the creation of a new breed of drums my forefathers would be proud of". -William F Ludwig III

WFLIII Drums is part of a tradition of drum builders that goes back over 100 years. As the only living Ludwig in the drum business today, Bill Ludwig III (B3 to his friends) is bringing back the craftsmanship and legacy of America's First Family of drum building.

Started in 2016 with the experience of over sixty years in the industry, Bill III set out to redesign the classic drums of his family's past using traditional processes for modern drummers.

In the beginning

William F Ludwig Sr. founded Ludwig & Ludwig™ in 1909 with his brother Theobald. The company's first major product was the bass drum pedal, invented by the brothers, drummers themselves, to meet the increasing needs of drummers worldwide. By the 1920s, the company had become the largest drum company in the world.

The end of the 1920's was a turbulent time for not only the music industry but the country as well. The country was entering what would become the worst depression in its history and the new advent of "talking movies" was putting theater drummers out of work. In 1930, William Ludwig decided it was time to sell his beloved company.

Then, in 1937, with a burning desire to continue innovating for the drummer Community, Ludwig Sr. along with his son Bill Ludwig II, co-founded a new company and named it WFL Drum Co.™ Due in large part to this new company's success, the Ludwig family was able to buy back their original company in 1955. The Ludwig Drum Company™, under the leadership of Bill Ludwig II and Bill Ludwig III, would go on to become the most dominating drum company in history through the 1960's and 70's before it was sold in 1981.

The crossroads

At 61 years old, Bill Ludwig III was at a crossroad. Unfulfilled in his current work and longing to re-enter the drum business that he so loved. As a young man, B3 saw the fortunes of the American drum industry rise and fall and he knew the difficulties of starting a new company. But, like his grandfather before him, B3 knew, that as a Ludwig, he had to build drums.

Today

In 2014, taking a cue from his grandfather, B3 named his company WFLIII Drums™ and set a course to continue his family's legacy of innovation and world class drum manufacturing.

Starting with the classic 1728N series of maple snares, Bill III recreated the classic 3-ply maple shells developed by his grandfather. Due to its thin plies of American Hard Maple and North American Poplar these drums have been described as "classic", "vibrant", "resonant" and "full bodied".

Soon, B3 turned to his good friend and drum designer Mike Dorfman, to create a unique and classic metal snare drum. Soon, the 1909 series of aluminum snares were introduced. Critics have called these drums reminiscent of the classic Black Beauty™ of the past.

Today, CEO Kipton R Blue and President Bill Ludwig III have built WFLIII Drums into a thriving, full-service drum company, manufacturing artist-grade snare drums and shell packs in its modern, Midwest factory with the care and precision that would make B3's father and grandfather proud.

"We are seeing a renaissance in the drum community today. Drummers are looking for drums with a pedigree, less flash and more substance. Drums they can depend on to meet a variety of playing styles and settings. I believe we have created some of the finest drums on the market today to meet those needs and provide drummers with a sense of community that only a family can offer"

says William F. Ludwig III.

Shell Packs:

All WFLIII Shell packs are expertly finished and offer the perfect balance of tone and projection with a melodic sustain and mellow decay. The WFLIII Generations shells are constructed of 3-ply maple/poplar/maple with hand finished 45° bearing edges for maximum head contact, custom WFLIII springless lugs, Remo® ambassador heads and 2.3mm triple flanged hoops for maximum full-bodied attack.

With its sharp attack, warm tones and melodic sustain, nothing beats the musicality and playability of quality maple shells. Over the last 100 years, several configurations of maple shells have been produced, but the one that remains a favorite among drummers who know, is the 3-ply maple/poplar/maple shell developed by William F Ludwig Sr. over 60 years ago.

WFLIII Drums was a recipient of the Editors Choice Award by Music Inc. publications at this years National Association of Music Merchants international trade show in Anaheim, California.

WFLIII Drums are available at select retailers and online at Sweetwater Sound, Guitar Center and direct from WFLIII Drums at www.wfliidrums.com