



# HI-PERFORMANCE

## JOHN DOUGLAS IS THE CUSTOM CREATOR OF CHOICE TO THE STARS

**A**s a working drummer himself, John managed to combine his passion for the instrument and his love of art. He's created custom finishes for the likes of Steven Adler, Frank Beard, Chad Smith, Alex Van Halen and more. He's also a working drum tech. Drummer simply had to corner John to find out more about his shenanigans!

**John, how did you get involved in creating custom pieces of art/instruments?**

Music, more specifically drums, and art have always been my two passions. In every band I played in I would design the logo, create flyers, posters, album covers etc. In an effort to set myself apart from other drummers, I started modifying, customising and ultimately painting my drums. I was inspired by the unique and

over-the-top drum kits of Alex Van Halen and the custom paint on the drums of Myron Grombacher. I was never intimidated by the prospect of ruining my drums. Taking things apart, seeing how they work and putting them back together has always intrigued me.

**Who was the first major artist that you completed work for?**

I painted two kits for Steven Adler when he was still in Guns N' Roses. I was working in a drum shop in Houston, Texas, when this guy walked in to buy some gear. He noticed one of my painted drums and asked me for my name and number. I never thought anything would ever come from it. A few months later I get a call from Tama drums telling me they were sending me two sets of drums for me to paint for Steven

Adler. Around this same time I was playing clubs around Texas and the guys from ZZ Top would come out to see my band. Eventually I met Frank Beard and he asked if I would ever be interested in painting some drums for him. So I said, "Sure." And that was the start of a 20-plus-year friendship in which I have created about 13 different drum kits, each one more involved than the next.

**"I KNOW DRUMS AND DRUMMERS. YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO VISUALISE THE KIT COMPLETELY ASSEMBLED AND SET UP ONSTAGE."**