



## 1. VITALS

**BAND:** BLOODHOUND GANG **AGE:** 31 **BIRTHPLACE:** PHILADELPHIA, PA  
**INFLUENCES:** MIKE BORDIN, JOHN BONHAM, PETER CRISS, DAVE GROHL, TIM ALEXANDER **CURRENT RELEASE:** HEFTY FINE

## 2. ALL GEARED UP

**DRUMS:** PEARL **HARDWARE:** PEARL **CYMBALS:** ZILDJIAN  
**HEADS:** REMO **STICKS:** PRO-MARK



VIBE

## NEW IS GETTING OLD

“ I do get to show off some skill, so I’m happy about that ”

BY BILLY RAMIREZ

**I**n the wild circus of disappearing singers and promoters with loose bowels stands a comparatively normal individual. Meet Willie The New Guy (a.k.a., Billy Brehony by his parents), an amateur Jay Leno impersonator and *Simpsons* trivia machine. Since joining the Bloodhound Gang in the late 1990s, Willie has remained the new guy and probably will keep his nickname until it is etched into his tombstone when all is said and done. “To be honest, it’s been six years that I’ve toured and recorded for this band, and I’m still the new guy. I don’t really see an end to it any time soon, unfortunately,” Willie laughs. “I have better nicknames, but for now that’ll have to do.”

Willie The New Guy was very new when he picked up the sticks at age five. It’s a bit difficult to picture today’s burly, tattooed drummer as a young ankle-biter bashing away on his first Red Oyster Mickey Mouse drum set back in 1978. He beat the kit hard enough to make Minnie Mouse and Pluto cry, too, and Willie had found his calling. “Right then, I knew, and I don’t know if it was by default or genetic, but I fell in love with it and since then that’s all I ever wanted to do.”

After graduating high school, the Philadelphia native traded fabulous

cheese steaks for smog, fake cleavage, and a chance to play drums. He bolted for Los Angeles and joined post-punk hardcore band The Wave, with which he toured up and down the West Coast. When The Wave turned into little more than a small trickle, Willie found himself in need of a new band.

In the late 1990s, the Bloodhound Gang was rattling around in everyone’s head with addicting songs like “The Bad Touch” and “Fire Water Burn.” Oddly enough, the only person who hadn’t heard of the gang was their future drummer. “I actually didn’t really know the band at the time. I was just looking for a way to expose my talent and get paid to do it. I just saw an ad in the *LA Weekly*, and I saw they were holding auditions.”

As luck would have it, Willie’s lack of familiarity with the band’s music wasn’t a gig killer. It turned out that he and the rest of the gang – singer Jimmy Pop Ali, turntablist DJ Q-Ball, bassist Evil Jared Hasselhoff, and guitarist Lüpüs Thünder – are all from Pennsylvania. The homeland bond scored Willie some bonus points, but his mad drumming skills put him over the top and landed him the job. “I went down there to the audition, and we knew a lot of the same people, and coming from Pennsylvania we knew a lot of the

# VIBE THE NEW GUY CONTINUED

“It’s kind of hard to get any sort of credibility ... when you’re in a sort of humorous band”

## 3. INSIDE TRACKS

### BLOODHOUND GANG *HEFTY FINE* Geffen/Republic/Jimmy Franks



It’s nice to know that we’re living in such genteel times that a song like “Foxtrot Uniform Charlie Kilo” can be sent out as a single, be almost universally ignored by radio as a result of lyrics deemed “too suggestive,” and then retracted and replaced by “No Hard Feelings,” whose title alone seems more than a little racy. If we can postpone comment on the drums for just another moment, the problem seems to be twofold: (1) The deadpan delivery of the lyrics makes them more legible and therefore dangerous than they might

be if slurred, drooled, or snarled; and (2) these guys are having way too much fun singing about genitalia or poop. Of course, a lot of their good-time vibe owes to Willie The New Guy, whose drums slam joyfully against the synths that pulse through most of the album. Even when he pulls back and locks into that Devo vibe, he throws a little life into it – the trippy kick pattern, for example, on “Farting With The Walkman On.” And on that new single, Willie sprinkles bits of techno and Latin into a sizzling mix – whose lyrical hook, by the way, is “Ain’t my job to f\$!k you on your birthday.” If that makes sense to you, you just might have a future in radio programming.

— Robert L. Doerschuk

same places. It clicked. I played well, but there were some other things to see if we could get along together, and it worked out.”

First things first, Willie had to become accustomed to the band’s raucous, if not overboard, partying on tour. “I was never really terrified,” he admits. “It was a little out of hand at first, but these are things I expected and hoped rock and roll was like. When I got the first taste of it, I was part of the game too, and I wanted to run with it and do all the things I always dreamed of doing. I got to do it and I didn’t really care what anybody else thought. It took a little while to get acclimated with not sleeping in the same bed and flying all

over the place and this and that. I wouldn’t change it for the world, although the touring part I could probably change. I could probably take a break from that. Touring is just grueling.”

The Gang sprinkles some fun throughout the grueling tours. Unfortunately for promoters, they have become the source of entertainment on the new tour. Between giggles, Willie explains: “We have a really good gag for this tour, and I’m really excited about this. It’s so childish and ridiculous, but it’s going to turn out so cool. What has to happen is when we arrive to the venue, the promoter has to come to the dressing room and greet every one of us by saying,

‘I did poo poo in my diapee.’ That’s going to be beautiful! I can’t wait for that – to get these scumbags to say they [pooped] their diapers.”

Including making promoters admit to intestinal failures, Willie has achieved his dream – or part of it, at least. He moved to L.A. to join a successful band, and he did just that, but the timing of it all may have been a little out of whack for his liking. “For years, I’ve been playing somebody else’s parts, and nobody wants to do that. I guess it’s probably closer to four years [since the last record] now. I didn’t record the last album, I just did the tour. We’ve had about three and a half years off now.” →

## 4. “RALPH WIGGUM” Transcription by Anthony Geluso

While the groove on “Ralph Wiggum” is fast and straightforward, the first and second endings might throw you for a loop.

♩=166

The notation shows a drum part in 4/4 time. The first ending consists of a series of eighth notes and rests, leading to a double bar line. The second ending is a more complex sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, also leading to a double bar line. The tempo is marked as 166 beats per minute.

## VIBE THE NEW GUY CONTINUED

Willie had to wait several years before he would brand the band with his own drumming imprint. During the hiatus, the Gang played a handful of one-off shows and toured Europe briefly. The New Guy also took his drums and played elsewhere. "I had a side project in Los Angeles called Gustavo. It was more my style. I was able to bring a lot more to the table because as far as the Bloodhound Gang goes, the arrangements are fairly simple and poppy, but with Gustavo, I was able to stretch out a little bit and do something I'm more in tune with. It was a little more experimental and a lot more energetic, kind of like a cross between The Melvins and Helmet. It was a lot of fun."

Alas, the fun ended when Gustavo's singer packed up and disappeared. "One day he went and did his own thing and never came back. I have no idea whatever happened to him. We recorded an album with [producer] Alex Newport about two years ago, and we never released it because our singer sort of disappeared off the face of the earth, and I still haven't heard from him. He was a strange cat to begin with. He was very eccentric and kind of did his own thing."

The Gang's new album, *Hefty Fine*, began to slowly take shape during the break. The band traveled around the world and slowly compiled enough songs to put an album together. "Hopefully it will be worth the wait. My drum tracks have been done for at least a year. We're just playing the waiting game now, but it's coming to a head. From what I've heard from it, it's the best work to date."

"I obviously took care of most of the drum parts and after the initial tracks were done, I'd come into the studio with Jimmy Pop, and we'd talk about what could be done. I definitely had a voice in it and I think it turned out right. I really like the drum sound. Some songs, you have to stick to the formula – verse, chorus, verse, chorus, four measures – but there are some tracks where I do get to show off some skill, so I'm happy about that."

Ultimately, Willie wants to show off his skills in the studio as a session drummer. A couple of years ago, the band relocated back to Philadelphia and Willie is adamant that moving away from the entertainment capital of the world will not prevent him from achieving his goal. "I'm an independent artist, basically. I'm part of this band, but at the same time what I

really want to do is get into session work. I have a lot of friends who do that and most of them are based in L.A., which is fine. If I have to move back there to be as productive as I want to be, it's a move I'm willing to make. It's a small planet now. You can be as productive in Philadelphia as you can in Los Angeles if you're not afraid of flying or you're computer literate.

"I've done teching in the studio with a couple of friends of mine. I haven't gotten to record any sessions but that is definitely my ultimate goal. It's kind of hard to get

any sort of credibility as a serious [artist] when you're in a sort of humorous band. I'm not going to mince words. Everybody in the Bloodhound Gang is realistic, and they're really cool with me doing my own thing. If another gig comes up, I'm an independent guy and the contract states that. Pop bands are just fleeting and you can't really bank on anything. Not that you can bank on session work, but at least I'd get to challenge myself and get to play different things and hopefully bring something to the table." ■

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