

Odery Drums

Sights And Sounds From The Rainforest

HITS

beautiful finishes and sounds

easy to tune and work with

MISSES

aluminum hoops and brass fittings make
imbuia drums heavy

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In May of 2003, I had the pleasure of seeing the legendary Airtó Moreira in performance at the MD Festival Weekend. Besides being dazzled by the many facets of Airtó's playing, I remember being struck by the clarity of his drum sound. And not only did the drums sound good, they *looked* good as well. That was my first encounter with Odery drums from Brazil.

Odery drums are handmade from araucaria and imbuia, which are woods indigenous to the southern regions of Brazil. Araucaria comes from reforestation areas, which allows the trees to be harvested when they are between forty-five and eighty years old. Imbuia trees, on the other hand, have a lifespan of up to *nine hundred* years. Brazil's environmental regulations are so strict that the only imbuia trees that can be cut into timber are those that fall due to the forces of nature. Both woods exhibit beautiful grain patterns and textures. Odery sent one kit made from each kind of wood, plus an Airtó Moreira Signature snare.



The araucaria kit features wood hoops and an imbuia fade finish.

The Araucaria Kit

The araucaria kit came with a stunning imbuia fade finish. The kit also featured imbuia wooden hoops, as well as hardware finished in antique bronze. I personally love the look of a stain finish that fades from light to dark—including the colors of the wood hoops. The toms were 8x10 and 9x12 (each 4-ply, with six lugs per head) and 12x14 (4-ply, eight lugs per head). The 16x20 bass drum was 6-ply, with ten lugs per head, and the 6x13 snare was 6-ply, with eight lugs per head.

The snare was shocking in its cutting power, with clarity and crack. The wood hoops made for clear, strong cross-stick playing and fat, woody rimshots. The toms were pure and smooth in their sound. The drums proved very easy to tune, and the tone that I tuned them to was projected very clearly when I played them.

Odery drums come standard with Evans heads. Rack and floor toms are fitted with G2 Clear double-ply batter heads and Genera Resonant heads underneath. Bass drums get G2 batters and EQ3 Black front heads. The snare drums come with Uno 58 coated batters and Hazy 300 snare-side heads.

The araucaria bass drum produced lots of ring, and I knew that I'd have to do something to muffle it. I replaced the G2 batter with an Evans EMAD batter. Once I tuned it up, the sound of the drum was round and sweet. It could have punch if needed, but it really generated more tone.

The Imbuia Kit

Our second review kit was made from imbuia wood, with a natural waxed finish. It was fitted with hard aluminum hoops, as well as hardware given a brushed steel finish. The toms were 7x8 (4-ply, five lugs per head), 8x10 and 9x12 (4-ply, six lugs per head), and 11x14 and 13x16 (4-ply, eight lugs per head). The 18x22 bass drum was 6-ply, with ten lugs per head, while the 6½x14 snare featured two 8-ply shells and ten lugs per head.

The snare drum features two separate shells—one within the other. These twin shells are part of the Air Control System invented by drummer Renato Siqueira and developed by Odery. This system lets you custom-tailor the sound of the drum by changing the opening of the four 1¾"-diameter air vents located around the shell. You loosen a rod and rotate the inner shell to partially or fully close the vents, which, in turn, changes the character of the drum sound. The Air Control System is available on snare drums that are 5½" deep or deeper.



The imbuia kit features aluminum hoops on all but the bass drum.



The imbuia snare drum features Odery's Air Vent system. An inner shell can be rotated to open or close four large vent holes in the drum.

While playing the drum on a gig with the holes in the fully open position, I heard lots of volume and snare sound. When the vents were fully closed, the drum took on a more contained sound: dry, with lots of attack and clarity. Because the shells can be positioned to set the vents anywhere between fully closed and fully open, the drum's sound could be tailored to work with many types of music.

I brought the imbuia kit on a gig that required some fairly strong playing, and the voices coming from all of the components were very cutting and clear. I usually comment about snare drums that don't choke up when played louder, but in this case it was true of the whole kit. The bass drum especially seemed to grow in depth and resonance as I played harder. It had tons of punch, and just wouldn't quit. While I was first tuning the bass

at home, it rattled the windows and shook the walls. When I had a friend play the kit on a gig while I left the room, I could hear the bass (and the snare) from half a building away.

In a side-by-side comparison of the two Odery kits, the araucaria drums produced a pure, warm tone when struck. The imbuia set had more attack, followed by low overtones that deepened the character of the sound. This is mostly due to the fact that araucaria is slightly softer than maple, and possesses its warmth. The harder imbuia shells are more reflective, providing greater volume and projection for a more aggressive sound.

The Airoto Signature Snare

I also tested the 6½x14 Airoto Moreira Signature snare. The shell is made of araucaria wood with a Moonlight Lacquer finish. The brass lugs are anodized in natural aluminum, and the hoops are cast aluminum with a black anodized finish.

I used the Airoto snare for a local show, and the whole orchestra was impressed with it. It had great sensitivity when played quietly, and it could speak with plenty of power when necessary—without sacrificing snare response. It impressed me as the kind of drum that can change one's playing. It smoothed out all my press rolls, and it was crystal clear in articulation. Don't borrow one of these drums to try unless you can deal with the pain of separation when the time comes.



The Airoto Signature snare drum is made of araucaria wood with a Moonlight Lacquer finish.

Special Appointments

All of the drums feature lugs fashioned from solid brass, with a nylon gasket between them and the shell to minimize contact. The single lugs on the toms and bass drums attach to the shells with a single screw each. A spring pin extends through the lug to hold the threaded receiver in place. The other end of the pin goes through a hole in the gasket and into an indentation in the shell. The result is only one hole through the shell per lug, with minimized contact between the two. The suspension mounts for the toms fit onto the tension rods between the lugs and the hoops.

The double-ended lugs on the snare drums still had only one point where they attached to the shell. Pins underneath the central brass

fitting hold the threaded receivers in place, yet allow them to move slightly, minimizing the chance of cross-threading the tension rod. All three of our review snares had Nickel Drumworks strainers and butt plates.

The bass drums have solid brass fittings fastened onto the hoops. The tension rods pass through these fittings into the lugs, eliminating the need for claws. The tension rods were fitted with nylon washers to ease tuning and eliminate rattling.

The bass drum spurs fold against the shell, and have aluminum mounts on the shells. The wing nuts and spurs are die-cast brass. The Odery wing nut features an interesting design. It's round and flat, with three indentations for grip. It seems to melt against the shell, and it's comfortable to operate. Odery doesn't make stands or tom hardware. Rather, they offer mounts made by Pearl or Gibraltar.



Odery's unique tightening knob—shown here on the bass drum spur—is also used on tom mounts. Notice as well the clawless lug system used on Odery's bass drum hoops.

All of the brass fittings and mounts on these kits make the drums heavy to move around. This is especially true of the imbuia kit, with its oversized aluminum hoops. If you gig in different locations each night, you'll have to deal with that weight factor as part of owning one of these kits.

Final Thoughts

Odery seems totally dedicated to producing their products at the highest level. They combine old-world craftsmanship with the latest technology to ensure quality control. Our review kits were among the most beautiful looking *and* sounding drums that I have experienced. Watch for your chance to see and hear them in person.

THE NUMBERS

Araucaria wood-hoop drumset	\$2,800
Includes 8x10, 9x12, and 12x14 toms, a 16x20 bass drum, and a 6x13 snare drum	
Imbuia aluminum-hoop drumset	\$5,033
Includes 7x8, 8x10, 9x12, 11x14, and 13x16 toms, an 18x22 bass drum, and a 6½x14 snare drum	
Airoto Moreira Signature 6½x14 snare	\$ 780

Note: Odery drums are just beginning to enter the US market. The figures above reflect estimated retail prices from US drum shops once a dealer network is established. In the meantime, drums can also be ordered directly from Odery. Contact the company for further information.

USA: **Arnaldo Busack, (917) 561-2444. Brazil: (011) 55 19 3278-1788.**
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