



Poland seems to be a better place to practice black or death metal than Russia, what the mighty Behemoth learned the hard way some time ago.

Especially in the case of drumming Russia doesn't seem to care much, focusing more on home-brewed moonshine and improving the parameters of their MIGs.

No wonder Aleksandra is trying trying her hand at drumageddon in the motherland of such dozers like Behemoth, Vader, Decapitated, Vesania or Hate. "Polish Austrian" Mirek Lehner, also known as Krimh, successfully started his drumming career, let invitation to Meinl Drum Festival be the proof of that.

Aleksandra came to Poland for good after she met Slawomir Archangielskij from Hate –on what she expands below. Unfortunately, he untimely passed in 2013 during the Hate's German tour due to cardiac rhythm abnormalities. Nonetheless, Aleksandra decided to stay in "Polsza" and pursue drumming in the extreme varieties of rock'n'roll there. Recently she teamed up with Czarcie Kopyto drum pedals – we thought it was a good excuse to ask her a few questions and get to know her better.

How did you get into drums? Russia is more connoted with conservatorium and piano.

Well, I am not sure exactly, it was a long time ago in a small city in the depths of Russia. I was 14 back then. I started to sing in one band, I believe the only one in my city. Later the drummer left and there was nobody to take over – so I sat behind the kit! There are never enough drummers (laughs), and so I slowly got into it. Piano was also present in my life, but only for learning music in general.

Is there a chance to make a career by playing death metal in Russia?

No, there is none. People are more concerned with survival than playing in a band...

You came to Poland with Slawek, the bassist of Hate. How did you two meet?

We got to know each other on the Blackthorn's and Sinful two weeks long Polish tour. Slawek was a session bassist for Sinful. That's how we met! He wasn't even my type (laughs) but after days we were inseparable. It's kind of weird because I couldn't speak Polish and he couldn't speak Russian, but somehow we made it. Later Slawek told me I was his wife and I didn't argue (laughs). It was a true love with all the emotions, envy, and a heck of problems, but life doesn't exist without that. I was thinking about saying 'no'. But no, with love you can go anywhere and everywhere, no matter the conditions.

Currently you play in Minetaur, but you have some other projects too.

Yeah, right now my main focus is on Minetaur. They give me strength to move forward. I once played anywhere, in the beginning I switched from one band to another over and over again. Later I stayed longer with Blackthorn and Sinister Frost. For some time I also played bass in Sinful. As I said before, it is not spectacular with concerts and progress in Russia. After my husband's passing I played a few gigs with Hate, Naumachia and Saltus, but it was just to calm myself.

Czarcie Kopyto is proud of your presence and you are a proud owner of Czarcie Kopyto...

I used Axis Longboard before but I wasn't really fond of its durability, sometimes the repairs consumed half of the pedal's worth. I had a chance to test Czarcie Kopyto for the first time on the same tour when I met Slawek. Not only the bassist was "hired" for Sinful but also the drummer – Stanisław Malanowicz, who is using Czarcie Kopyto. During the tour I saw how many times these pedals fell off, were knocked over, and didn't show a single scratch. My Axis wouldn't survive two days of such treatment. After the tour has ended I was completely sure that I needed one of those!



What are you most focused on when practicing?

I concentrate on feet and technique of doubles. I managed to conquer that! It's quite hard because in my case the main focus is to make a living in Poland. Somehow I succeed to combine both.

Please tell me, what pisses you off most in Poland? Be honest!

It pisses the hell out of me that Poland is still struggling with me about the terms of my stay. They try to send me back to Russia all the time, but I don't have anywhere to go! Their only and constant argument is that "I don't have a husband, I don't have anything to do in Poland". And it's the same all over again. I'm helpless... god how it f**king pisses me off!!!

So, how do you handle your gear, then?

As for the cymbals I can be kinda harsh and not up to everybody's liking. In the clubs where 90% of the time there is a band playing you won't hear much of a difference between the cheap and expensive cymbal. It means that your listeners won't notice if you're sporting a set of \$3k or \$1k and for me it's crucial – I will destroy either one of them just as quickly. The recording session is a different thing, I borrow them and complete the set so their sound would fit the atmosphere of the record in the best way. As for the live shows my set is a peculiar one. Once I used an entire Sabian AA set. I have broken the crashes after six months. I've bought another one, six months pass and the situation repeats itself. Later I used Sabian APX, Sabian AAX, Sabian HH, Sabian B8Pro, even Paiste 101, Paiste Alfa, Sabian HHX, and then I ran out of cash (laughs). There was this one 'fantastic' moment when my cymbal broke right before the gig and there was no time to buy or borrow another. So I hanged this Sabian Hand Hammered ride. There was no other way. I didn't like this ride at all, it

had a disgusting sound and an unnatural noisy sustain. In other words – it made me want to throw up! Then I picked up thicker sticks and... a miracle! The cymbal started to sound full and loud, like it wasn't a ride at all. Now I like this sound so much that you won't be able to separate me from this so-called "crash".

Even though I plan on buying a legitimate crash I won't get rid of this beloved one (laughs). My little crash also brings attention because of its history - it's a Zildjian made in 1979. As for the ride, I have searched for its role for the longest time. I wanted a clear low accent without any noise. And I found it. It was a Paiste Dark Ride which I still use. My hi-hat is Sabian AA. Snare - steel, deep, Pearl Joey Jordison signature ¹³. The cymbal setup changes depending on the songs and the cymbals that I actually have - here I add a splash, there I add a bell...

Predictably, there are stereotypes about drumming women, especially in metal...

I don't care about stereotypes. I think you only need to listen once to what I recorded to eliminate any questions, ha! I play what I like!

Recently you've recorded some material/music with Minetaur...

Yeah, it's an EP. I had 2 days to record the drums. I finished everything in one and later it turned out that the cameraman was to come on the second day to film all of that. Oh, well. I arrived the next day and recorded one song.

The guitarist was supposed to be there during the drum recording process. Of course he showed up when I was almost finished so I had enough time to arrange all the details the way I wanted to.

What annoys you in drums?

Well... let me think. I guess nothing annoys me in playing and setting up the kit, it's just a process, and in fact I like it. I don't carry my drums because I have some back problems caused by an accident, but the back in the day I used to drag everything by myself. The dudes are handling it right now. I hate it when I see my stuff disorganized, scattered all around the stage and its surroundings. I make a fuss and piss off the guys (laugh). Discipline is a must! Drums, guitars, cables, cabinets, everything needs it's separate place, otherwise you take a risk you'll miss something or somebody's gonna accidentally take some gear that doesn't belong to them.

How do you see your future?

Unfortunately, I am unable to foresee my future. Humans are not eternal - I mean I won't play drums forever. I have a lot of activities but sometimes solitude and other things from my head are 'choking' me. For every activity you need time and money. And in my case, I constantly miss both...

Interviewer: Maciej Nowak for Magazyn Perkusista

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