

# MODERN DRUMMER

APRIL 1978  
\$1.75



A Contemporary Publication Exclusively for Drummers

IN THIS ISSUE

CARMINE APPICE

MEL LEWIS

JACK DEJOHNETTE

REGGAE RHYTHMS

DRUMSTICK MAKING

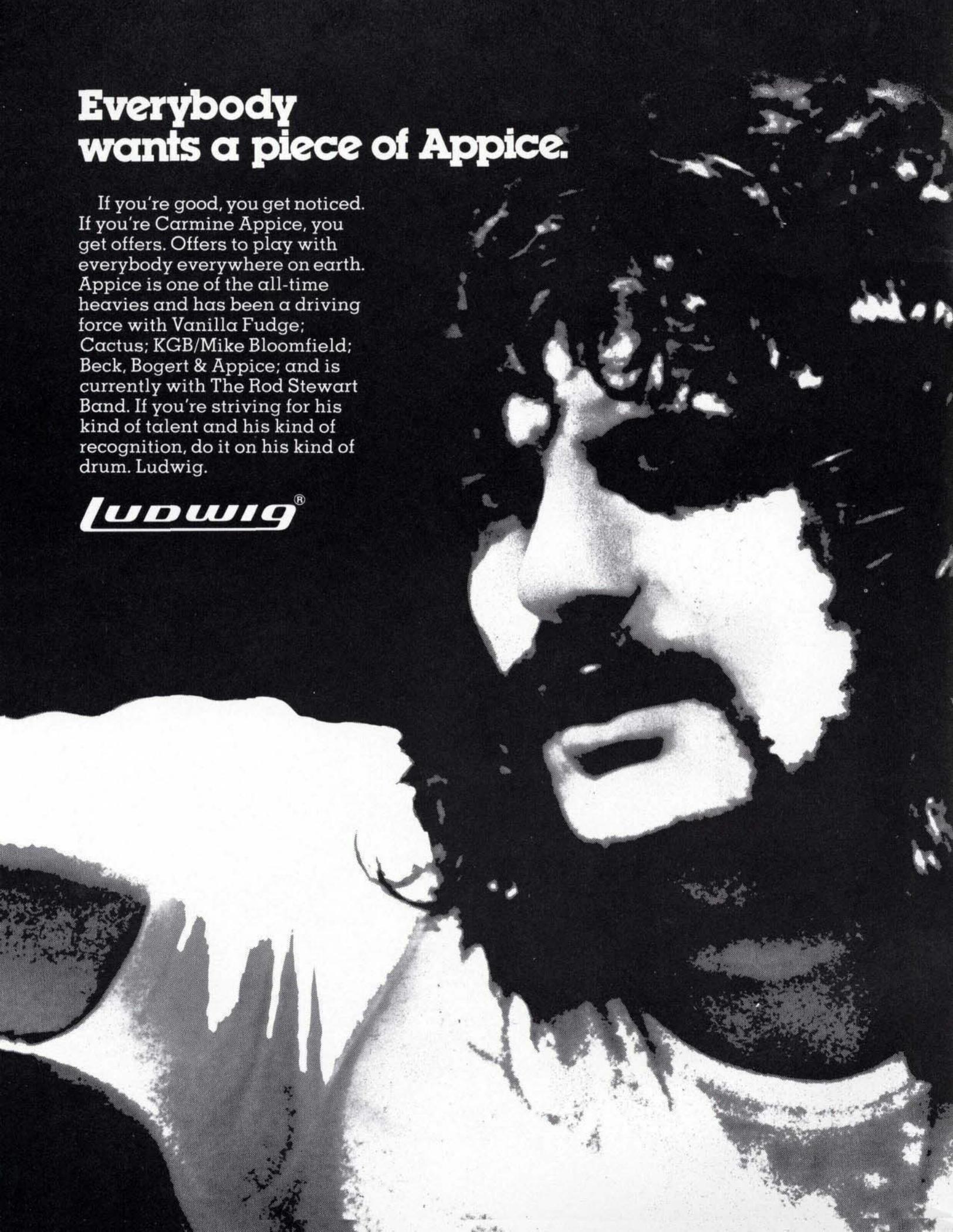
THE ELECTRONIC REVOLUTION

ORGAN AND DRUMS: MAKING IT WORK

# Everybody wants a piece of Appice.

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## EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



Several months back we chose to run a notice asking for correspondents from the nations major cities. The response was exceptional, and MD now can proudly proclaim a roster of active contributing writers from nearly every major American city coast to coast, plus several in Canada and one in London. The members of this selected network will keep us abreast of drum world happenings by gathering and supplying the information necessary to keep you informed. Implementing the program was quite an endeavor but certainly worth the effort considering the realm of communication now available to us.

The new MD T-shirts are now available and advertised in this issue. Our thanks to all who requested them and anxiously awaited their arrival. MD assigned the artistic task to designer Peter Garrone, resulting in an exciting creative rendering which clearly captures the essence of the magazine. Sorry guys, model not included.

April's MD contains perhaps the most diversified line-up of feature artist personalities we've ever assembled in one issue. From the world of rock; Carmine Appice — presently the rhythmic impetus behind the Rod Stewart aggregation and a truly outstanding artist. Jazz enthusiasts will find our discussion with progressive stylist Jack DeJohnette worthy reading. Add to that, veteran Mel Lewis — one of the great big band drummers around, with some comments that should interest everyone.

Ever wondered how drumsticks are made? We did, and found out when we assigned MD's Cheech Iero to take us on a guided tour of the Cappella Company, one of the leading producers of drumsticks in the world. Live and learn.

There's more; like rock hi-hat technique, metric modulation for jazz drummers, raeggae rhythms, and more ways than one could imagine to move paradiddles around three drums. Noted New York author-teacher Charley Perry looks at forming a teaching approach, and R. Willis Tate has a delightful portrait of the late drumming giant, Big Sid Catlett.

On the subject of drumming giants; the most recent addition to the already impressive MD Advisory Board this month is none other than the exciting Lenny White. Our kind thanks, Lenny. Very exciting, indeed.

# MODERN DRUMMER



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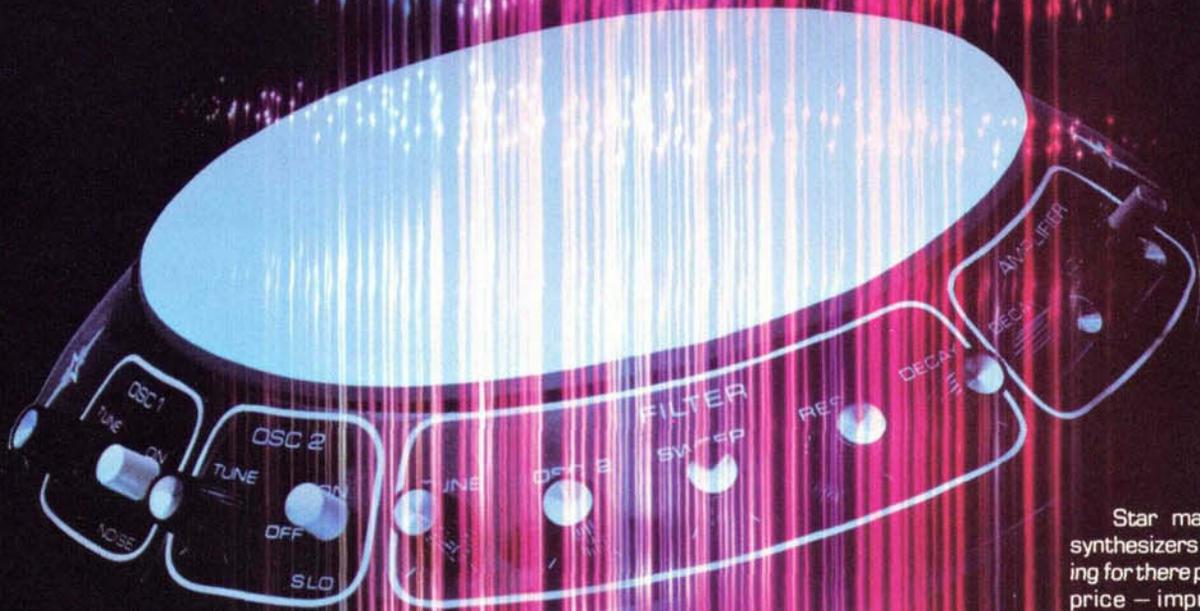
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## READERS PLATFORM

I congratulate you on a fine first year effort. There are so many drummers worthy of mention, so many technical ideas, so much new equipment, there certainly shouldn't be any problem generating material. Thanks to Lowell Schiff for his efforts on behalf of Max Roach's artistry. (MD: Jan. 78) Though I do submit that the standard drum notation system really gives you the feel of Mr. Roach's marvelous structural clarity and precision, and his beautiful compositional balance.

ROBERT AUSTIN  
NASHVILLE, TENN.

I never go on the road without all of your previous issues. I think the best feature of MD is that you only recommend techniques of drumming that have been accepted by the greatest drummers in the world. We can now get drumming information right from the top, instead of from the second or third stringers.

RAYMOND HEATH  
CLAREMONT, N.H.

I was pleased to see the article on Roger North and his amazing drums in the October issue of MD. I was floored the first time I saw and heard them, and the impact was not lessened by Roger's unique southpaw style. I'm glad to see that the drumming and listening public has picked up on this truly significant change — or rather — improvement in the drum.

DAVID DEASON  
COLORADO SPRINGS, COL

Congratulations on a fine magazine. Yes, we even get MD way up here in Northern Australia. I've received copies of Vol. 1, No. 2 and 3 and have benefited greatly from the wealth of good reading material in the magazine. Thank you.

G. PORTA  
CAIRNS, QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

I have to disagree with Mr. Fred Wickstrom's statement in COMPLETE PERCUSSIONIST (MD: Jan. 78.) that

no college or university offers a degree in drum set performance. I happen to know from firsthand experience that Berklee College of Music in Boston offers precisely that. Berklee has some of the finest drum set teachers in the U.S. on its staff and a comprehensive program of arranging, harmony and ear training courses. Let's face it. For any college to offer a degree in just drum set without harmony or theory training, would be ridiculous. To be a good set player, a knowledge of harmonic and melodic structure is essential, as is a good ear.

WILLIAM WUERFEL  
BOSTON, MASS.

Your publication is a terrific asset to all of us who regard drumming as an art, even on the "weekend gig" level. Even playing on this level is beginning to crackle as more and more drummers are beginning to tell their story. And all it took was the knowledge that someone cared to listen. Your magazine has contributed greatly to my awareness that we're all in this together, and we each have something to give. You've fired me up, and I'm back into study and 4 hours of daily practice. Folks are noticing — thank you.

BURT DOTSON  
TULLAHOMA, TENN.

My congratulations on your first year of publishing. It's nice to see that such talent and enterprising spirit still exists in what is at best, a risky business.

RONALD VAUGHAN  
ONTARIO, CANADA

I'm looking forward to seeing more good progressive rock interviews. How about a story on Aynsley Dunbar of *Journey*?

BLAINE BETTS  
SILVERADO, CALIF.

I recently picked up an album by Ben Sidren and there's a cat by the name of John Guerin on the LP. I gotta' know

more about him! Maybe an interview?  
ROGER HANSON  
WOODBIDGE, NJ

How about an interview with Narada Michael Walden. He has executed some of the most interesting and complex beats on the jazz-rock scene today.

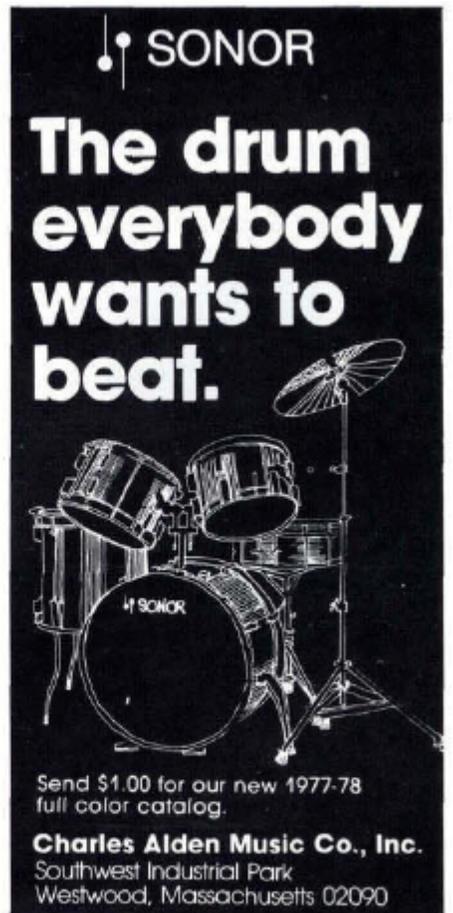
THOMAS CAGLIOTI  
DEER PARK, NY

OK. Recent editorial staff meetings have included all of the above-mentioned on our 'must-get' stories list. Each is in various degrees of progress. Carl Palmer & Steve Gadd, too. Thanks gents.

ED

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for helping a new and struggling little drum shop like mine, isolated in the frozen north, to keep in touch with what's happening in the rest of the percussion world. Your current series on places like the "Drum Shop" (Shop Hoppin—MD: Jan. 78) are very helpful in setting some goals for this place.

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Lenny White



Mel Lewis

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by JIM PIEKARCZYK

Q. I'm considering purchasing a swish cymbal and want to know what size would be best. Some of my favorite drummers like Louie Bellson, Larrie Londin, John Guerin and Billy Cobham use them. Also, could you please tell me what sizes and weights they play?

D.F.

MOBILE, ALA.

A. *The most popular sizes are 18", 20" and 22". Usually thin to medium weight. When choosing a swish cymbal, take into consideration the type of group and style of music you're playing. Louie Bellson plays a 22" medium, Larrie Londin a 20" medium. Billy Cobham a 22" medium (played upside down), and John Guerin a 20" medium thin.*

Q. I have a fiberglass drum set and I can't seem to get a mellow sound when tuning low. I use CS heads on both top and bottom. Can you help?

G.M.

HOUSTON, TEX.

A. *The important thing to keep in mind is that the bottom head, for the most part, determines the pitch of the drum. I would suggest a clear Diplomat head on the bottom, and the CS head on top. The Diplomat is thin and will allow more vibrations. This will produce a lower tone. Also, some experimentation with varying degrees of tension on both heads should result in the mellow sound you are trying to achieve.*

Q. I live in Toronto and have looked all over the city for the "Carl Palmer" drumsticks made by Promco. Could you please help me in my quest for these sticks?

J.S.

TORONTO, ONTARIO

A. *"Carl Palmer" drumsticks are no longer available from Promco. However, the sticks will be distributed by Pro-Mark some time this year. If you would like to write for information, the address is: Pro-Mark, 10710 Craighead, Houston, Texas 77025.*

Q. I have a student who is left handed and I'm teaching him opposite the way I play. Since my drums are set up for a right handed player, I have trouble showing him things without changing the whole set-up around. What do you recommend?

B.U.

E. NORWALK, CONN.

A. *First, try using two drum sets or practice sets in your teaching. Secondly, have the student transcribe the right handed notation for his left handed set-up. This will enhance the students reading and writing skills, along with demonstrating your own ideas.*

Q. What type of microphone will give you the best sound reproduction for live performance? Also, should you mike from the top or bottom of the drum?

D.H.

PLYMOUTH, WISC.

A. *In my experience — for live performance as well as studio work — the sound men use the AKG 224 on cymbals and toms, and the AKG D-190 for the bass drum. For best results, mike the tom's near the edge, about three inches off the heads. The bass drum mike should be dead center, about five inches from the drum head. It's also good to place an AKG-224 directly overhead, about three feet in height to pick up cymbals and obtain a balanced sound over the entire set. MD will be presenting an in-depth feature article on the art of miking drums in a forthcoming issue. Watch for it.*

Q. In the October issue of MD, (Vol. 1, No. 4) Lenny White talks about a snare drum with a special snare strainer and nylon snares by Hinger. Can you tell me where to write for additional info on the Hinger snare?

R.S.

READING, PA.

A. *Information on the Hinger snare drum can be obtained from the Hinger Corp., PO Box 232, Leonia, NJ. 07605.*

Q. I, like many drummers, am trying to achieve four-way limb separation. I jog regularly to keep up my stamina for performing. Would the coordination developed from jogging aid my ability for four-way limb separation?

J.A.

BAY CITY, MICH.

A. *Jogging is a great way to keep in shape, and an excellent means of sharpening motor responses and add to overall muscular coordination. Swimming is also an effective way to develop endurance. However, to truly master the coordinative ability you speak of, it will be necessary to discipline yourself to a regular practice routine — preferably under a teachers guidance — with the appropriate study materials available on this subject.*

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# APPICE:

## LEADIN' THE WAY

by SCOTT KEVIN FISH

As I prepared myself for an interview with Carmine Appice, it seemed hard to believe that it had been ten years since his first appearance on record with *Vanilla Fudge*. Even then he was a drummer to be reckoned with. His influence on drummers in the 60's was considerable. Since the *Vanilla Fudge*, Carmine has anchored *Cactus*, *Beck/Bogart and Appice*, and *KGB*. Now he is the driving force behind Rod Stewart.

We met at a Ludwig Drum Clinic presented by the Long Island Drum Shop in North Merrick, New York. The clinic was held around the corner at a firehouse and it was like old home week for Long Islander Carmine, as he was besieged by well-wishers, former students and autograph seekers. Three other musicians had been called to form a pick-up band, and after Carmine was introduced, the band kicked off with a jazz-rock jam. Appice was in rare form. He breezed through the jam in 4/4, and then through a demonstration in 7/8, 9/8 and 6/8. His use of Polyrhythms, dynamics and space were as good as any of the more popular drummers known for their jazz-rock drumming.

After the clinic, Carmine invited me to his parents home in Brooklyn to do the interview. My first question was in regard to his practice routine. "I try to teach about six hours a week. That's the only way I get to practice. I'm so busy that it's hard to just sit down and practice. I force myself by teaching. I used to practice about an hour and a half a day with books, and at least two hours just playing with people. Whenever I'm home, I call my students up and say, 'Okay, if you want to come, I can put you in here or there! and we get it together. They understand that I travel and they take it for what it is.'

Carmine uses a unique right hand grip, holding the stick between his index and middle fingers rather than the thumb and index finger. "I hold it that way primarily to twirl the stick. That's the way it came about. It also helps when your hand sweats. It's a better grip between those two fingers, where there's a lot of pressure. This way the stick can't run away. When I'm playing loud, I use this grip about 75%



of the time because, I'm always twirling."

Carmine named Buddy Rich, Joe Morello, Philly Jo Jones, Louie Bellson, Bernard Purdie, Billy Cobham and Lenny White as influences. He claimed to have known every lick off of Max Roach's records at one time, and by coincidence, he had plans to see the Max Roach Quintet at Storyville the very evening of this interview. Bearing in mind the ability of Max and others to play great drums without 'flash', why shouldn't a rock drummer remain relatively deadpan on stage without 'tricks'? Is showmanship essential to playing rock drums? "Not only that. The type of music Max plays is a lot lighter than my music. My music is a full force body effort. You've got to put your whole body and soul into it in order to get the power behind it. Year's ago, I used to sit there just like Max, and do all these things and not even blink an eye. Then when I joined Vanilla Fudge, I played louder and I realized I had to put more effort into it."

There had been some reservation in Carmine's mind about joining the Rod Stewart band, basically because he wanted to play progressive. After Stewart had unsuccessfully auditioned twenty-five

drummers, Carmine's wife convinced him to give it a try. "At the first rehearsal they were playing all of Rod's songs with a Chick Corea flavor on drums. It was ridiculous. They were calling me 'The Dentist,' for fill-ins." In the end, Rod and Carmine came to a mutual understanding. If Carmine would play like he did with *Cactus* behind Stewart's vocals, he would get his own solo at concerts, thereby not cramping his style or disappointing his own fans.

The Rod Stewart band has been getting rave reviews all over the world, and both Stewart and Appice are quick to point out that this is a band and not a group of musicians backing up a lead singer. Everybody in the band gets a chance to shine.

"I made the drums polls in England for the first time. Number five. You've got to be in a big group, a steady group, to make the polls. Or be a solo artist. I'm not really a solo artist yet, but I'm not just a band member either. I'm in limbo, and I hope my new solo album takes me out of that limbo. We have a few record labels interested. I've got Max Middleton playing on it. Verdine White, from *Earth, Wind*

and Fire, and Dick Wagner from *Alice Cooper*. It's not jazz-rock. It's rock-jazz. It's got a 'Zeppelinish' type bottom, with Max adding the only jazz overtones. The album is half instrumental, half vocal, and there's a drum single on it called *A Twist of the Wrist*. It's really nice. I did the writing with guitarist Ben Schultz, who played with KGB and Buddy Miles."

It would seem to be a frustrating experience for a drummer with the desire and ability to play progressive music, to have to play loud rock and roll most of the time. "I have two sides. My rock side — and my jazz-rock, technical side. My concept is to play with Rod, and when we have off, play gigs and clinics on my own, and play the kind of stuff that's on my album. That's why I do clinics. So I can play and release all the crazies I have inside. I really dig it. With the studio I had we really broke it (drum playing) all down. You can't imagine."

The studio was Long Island based and run jointly by Carmine and his good friend, drummer John Markowski. "John was an amazing drummer. He would get up everyday and go through twelve drum books, cover to cover! A student would come in with a Billy Cobham record and ask, 'How does this go, John?', and he'd write it out like nothing. We were a good combination, because John was very, very technical, and not that into it on stage because he never really played with a band. I was the opposite. So, we had a good give and take. He helped me out a lot with the technical things, and I helped him out as far as stage things."

Several noted New York drum teachers were in attendance for Carmine's clinic. A question came up regarding the validity of the half-hour lesson. "I don't believe in half-hour lessons. I think they're a waste of time. A student has got to have at least an hour. When I teach, it's supposed to be an hour but we go on and on. I couldn't do that when I had the drum studio because there were days when I had like twelve students. On Saturday, John and I would go from ten in the morning until ten at night. I dedicated the whole house to the

---

**"I REALLY FEEL SORRY FOR YOUNG DRUMMERS STARTING TO COME UP, BECAUSE THEY'RE GOING TO GET STUCK IN THE REALM OF JUST TRYING TO MAKE IT. THEY'RE GOING TO END UP PLAYING SO COMMERCIAL AND SO SIMPLE, THAT THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE A NEW GENERATION OF GREAT DRUMMERS."**

---

drum studio. Guys would fly in from all over the country. I had a room with a kitchen and a bedroom that they would rent. They'd stay for a month and take a minimum of six lessons a week. I'd just ram it down their throats — and it worked! It was like being in a symposium. We'd give them two years worth of work in concepts on cassettes, and they'd write things down and work them out at home. I'd teach with videotapes. I'd taped *Deep Purple*: Ian Paice's solo. I jammed with *Deep Purple*, and we taped that with me and Ian trading fours. Carl Palmer, and even Buddy Rich and Elvin Jones were on those tapes. I'd sit down with the students and we'd just look at the video. If they had any questions as we went along, I'd stop the tape, rewind it, and try to tell them what was happening. It was good because the kids got to see all different styles of playing. Something like that is worth a million dollars. I have plans for like ten drum studios around the country when I get a little older, and get tired of the road. I think the teaching method that we developed can definitely work, and has worked." A series of forty-eight to sixty ways of going through any rock book can all be found in Carmine's books, *Realistic Rock* and *Realistic Hi-Hats*. He smiles at the mention of his hi-hat book because of its forty-thousand variations.

A common question about studying any instrument, is what should I study, and what shouldn't I study? Drum teachers and students inevitably choose sides when questions arise about the validity of rudiments, or the superiority of one grip over the other. Many professionals avoid unnecessary books, and concentrate only on what they are going to use on the gig. "Everything I studied with my teachers, I used at one point or another. You do need rudiments to a point. If I didn't go through all the rudiments, I would never have developed my hands. They really develop the hands. I also prefer the matched grip. I think the other way is dying out. I played twelve years with the traditional grip. I switched over in the studio about four years ago. I thought it would be better — and it is better."

An even more neglected area of teaching is the development of foot control. Since Carmine displayed some fine technique on both his double bass drums and hi-hat, I asked him about the study of foot development. "I've got a new book coming out called *Rudiments to Rock* which takes in Ted Reed's *Syncopation*, Stone's *Stick Control*, Buddy Rich's book, and a beginner rock method. I start by having the feet play time, and then I have the feet play different rhythms. This way the feet get involved immediately. It teaches phrasing between the hands and feet, and not just the hands. I didn't start playing double-bass until I was playing about six years. I use it less now than I used to. I use more hi-hat stuff now."

---

**"HE [TONY WILLIAMS] WAS THE ONLY DRUMMER TO EVER FLOOR ME IN TWENTY SECONDS. TOTALLY BLEW MY MIND. WHEN I WAS WITH THE FUDGE, I WAS ON AN EGO TRIP. I WENT TO HEAR TONY AND I SAID TO MYSELF, 'ALRIGHT, LET'S SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO' — WELL, HE PLAYED LIKE TWENTY SECONDS, AND I SAID, 'ARE YOU KIDDING'."**

---

Carmine's stress on hi-hat technique was met with mixed reactions from his clinic audience. One spectator went so far as to dismiss the hi-hat as "unmusical." Weak hi-hats, Carmine pointed out, were quite common among his students. I asked him if he found this to be a symptom of rock drummers as opposed to jazz drummers. "Well, yeah. A big band drummer is going to keep his hi-hat on two and four. But, we're talking about modern playing, where the hi-hat is really important. Very important. You should take lessons and learn how to read music, because you can always use it. It's the best thing you can do. Sometimes you might find yourself stagnating, but if you can read, you can pick up any drum book and better yourself. You can grasp more and varied material."

Carmine uses a medium-heavy stick playing mostly with the butt end, even on cymbals. All of his tom-toms are single-headed. Most recently, he's been playing with front heads on the bass drums with holes cut in the head. "I have the original *Octa-Plus* set that Ludwig made in 1971. It's walnut wood and it just sounds amazing. I've been with Ludwig a long time. I helped them develop their heavy-duty hardware. All my hardware is custom made, and I never had much trouble with it — until this tour. I open my mouth during interviews and say I never break anything anymore. On the first night of the tour, I broke a foot pedal during my solo. Second night I break the seat. Third night I cracked a cymbal stand. But now we're back to normal. Nothing's been breaking. Basically, everything holds up. All of my cymbals are Paiste. They don't crack on me for some reason. I've got a 52" Paiste gong that is great sounding. I'm really happy with my set-up. I've got a stainless steel set and I'm trading them in on a new Ludwig six-ply wood. Those drums are really good, really thick. Stainless steel sounds good for a small club gig, but when you get into big places and start running

*continued on page 23*

# CAPPELLA

## The Drumstick People

by CHEECH IERO

The Cappella Drumstick Company has been making quality drumsticks for over twenty years. The firm, founded by John and Tom Cappella, began in East Brunswick, New Jersey in 1957. The brothers Cappella moved the operation to Hightstown, New Jersey several years ago and since then, the business has continued to diversify and grow to the point where the twenty-four man shop turns out 600,000 pairs of drumsticks per year. Cappella enterprises, with its 42 types of drumsticks, now holds sixty percent of the market in this country. "In fact," says President John Cappella, "fifty percent of the name drummers in this country use our hickory products."

Hickory is the most popular wood used in the production of drumsticks since it possesses certain physical properties which make it ideal. Hickory is both hard and strong, and also maintains the greatest resilience and shock absorbing qualities. This means less player fatigue. Axe and sledge hammer handles are also made from this wood, basically for the same reason. Hickory also resists crushing almost twice as well as oak, and it resists splitting because of its long, tight interlocking grain.

An improvement upon nature is the chemically petrified hickory wood which is impregnated with liquid phenolic resins and subjected to intense heat and pressure. This process actually improves the properties of hickory by increasing the specific gravity to achieve maximum resistance to impact. The process is called densifying, and it permits normal fabrication of the wood while giving the surface remarkable protection against mars, dents, splinters and warpage. The operation also controls surface hardness up to 80% over untreated hickory, resists all normal impact without crushing the wood fibers or damaging the finish, and shows greater depth of grain and beauty.

Truckloads of hickory in rough rectangles arrive at the Cappella plant and don't leave until they're packaged and ready for drummers throughout the country.

These rough rectangles of cured hickory are cut into drumsticks by workmen at lathes. The skilled workers learn to determine the value of the raw stock by the sound it makes as the blades of the lathe cut into the wood. Despite the variety of shapes and lengths of sticks, production is relatively fast and simple due to the use of some ingenious equipment. Wood turning lathes are equipped with special cutter blades which are sharpened every six hours of machining time to guarantee that each stick will have a smooth surface, free of torn wood fibers.

Another precaution to insure smooth cutting without torn fibers, is heated linseed oil as a lubricant in the operation. Each cutter blade is designed to shape the drumstick, shaving away just the right amount of wood as a length of dowel-like hickory passes across its cleverly contrived cutting edge. A number of other wood-turning chores, notably the production of beater handles for bass drums and timpani are produced by the same technique, permitting the machining of knob-like ends simply and accurately. This equipment also facilitates production of square drumsticks, valued by some drummers because they don't roll.

Affixing of the revolutionary nylon tip is a relatively new addition to the manufacturing procedure. Nylon tips are heated in an oven to expand. The tips, with special lock-on interior rings and matching grooves made on the stick itself, are then glued in place. When the tips cool and contract, and the glue dries, the drummer is assured of a virtually trouble free, 'tight fit.' The sticks are then placed in wire cages and dipped into buckets of lacquer. Production of beaters requires several ad-

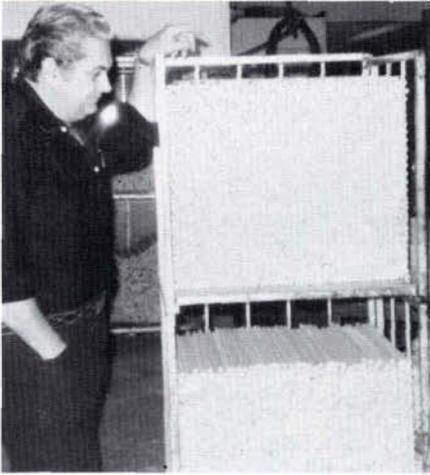
ditional steps and definite skills such as cementing on a multi-sectioned cork core, application of a cushioning felt cap, and finally, the sewing of an orlon lambs wool cover.

With the completion of the manufacturing procedure, those sticks with obvious defects are removed. The approved product moves along to storage under carefully controlled humidity and temperature conditions. They remain under these conditions for approximately one week before final sorting and inspection. This gives the sticks a chance to reach dimensional stability. Sticks that are going to warp, will warp within this time period.

The sticks are then separated into weight and grain categories, and later, rolled and tapped to check for straightness and similarity in sound before final packaging in air-tight plastic bags.

Another line, branching out of the Cappella enterprise are the *Simpson Sticks*, designed and patented by a drum instructor. This special model is the same length as the regular stick and has the same point and taper, however each stick has eight grooves cut into the butt end. Colorful plastic rings are then fit snugly, two to each stick. The rings weigh no more than the cut-away wood and the sticks remain properly balanced. The grooves on the sticks differ from each other, thus providing the drummer with a 'right hand' and a 'left hand' stick. Some drummers declare this particular design assures them of a higher degree of control.

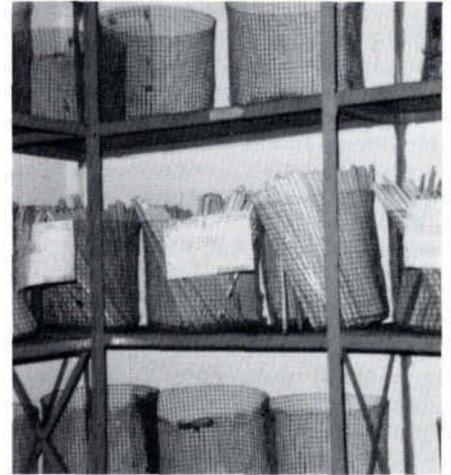
Cappella is one of four or five major firms in this country currently producing drumsticks. Others are located in East Brunswick, New Jersey, Chicago, Illinois, Niagara Falls, New York, and Houston, Texas. At Cappella, business is better than ever with the factory being expanded to 10,000 square feet of manufacturing, 5,000 square feet of raw material storage space, and an inventory of over 250,000 pairs of drumsticks and beaters. Anyone interested in further information on the Cappella line, can write: Cappella, PO Box 247, Hightstown, NJ. 08520. 



*President John Cappella, looks over a newly arrived bin of raw stock.*



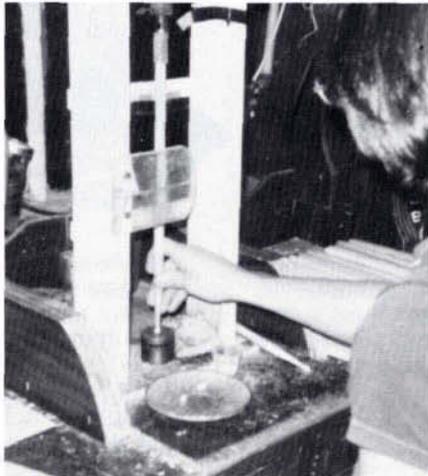
*The stick is inserted into a special machine which rounds off and smooths out the butt end.*



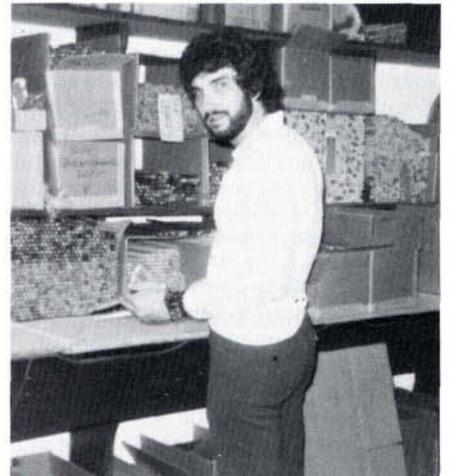
*Sticks are stored in cages to dry after lacquer dipping process.*



*A skilled workman operates a wood lathe which shapes and tapers the stick, shaving away just the right amount of wood.*



*A workman operates a machine which affixes the nylon tip to the drumstick.*



*Drummer-author, Cheech Iero, tries his hand at the testing where sticks are checked for straightness and similarity in sound.*



*A 'sanding machine' smooths the grain of the stick after it has been tapered.*



*The drumsticks are put into wire cages and dipped into large buckets of lacquer.*



*The final step: finished product from sorted bins, is packaged and sealed in air-tight plastic bags, ready for shipment.*

*Jazz is very much alive in Montreal, Canada, largely due to the efforts of the city's Rising Sun Club. It recently hosted Jack DeJohnette's Directions band which includes John Abercrombie on guitar, Mike Richmond on bass, and Alex Foster on sax. Modern Drummer caught the show one chilly evening and spoke to the famous drummer-leader.*

*Jack DeJohnette is one of those few for whom we reserve the title "Drummers' Drummer". His talents transcend "chops", "licks", and other common descriptives. He's played with the greatest: Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard, McCoy Tyner, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, Thelonius Monk, Sonny Rollins, and the list continues. The man has paid the dues necessary to attract musicians of extraordinary talent and integrity.*

*Jack is a little reluctant to discuss the past, firstly because he is humble and secondly because his interests lie ahead. When confronted with the task of dealing with some biographical questions, he amiably suggested that we "cancel all that". Suffice it to say that Jack DeJohnette was born in Chicago in 1942. He studied piano for 12 years and played the instrument professionally at age 14, switching to drums at age 16. Initially, Jack worked out of his home town but quickly embraced New York, California and the rest of the United States. Next he turned to continental Europe, and currently alternates between Old World and New. His travels and experience bespeak a maturity and confidence which make him an ideal band leader.*

*Approached between sets as pre-arranged. Jack was a gracious and willing participant. He's disarmingly casual, but make no mistake. The conversation will steer towards his three loves: music, his drums and cymbals, and his recording ventures.*

*We first talked about his drums, and the logic behind his fairly new set-up.*

MD: You've changed your set-up. The extra bass drum is used for more than punctuation.

JD: Well, I use drums for harmony and melody, as well as rhythm. That's to do with the tuning which is the aspect of using double bass drums. The idea of double bass drums is not a new one; they've been used for a long time. My concept of using the double bass drum is if you're going to have them, have them tuned to different pitches.

MD: Are there specific intervals?

JD: I tune them in fourths or fifths. D and G. They're also tuned up high so that they penetrate. Not so much in terms of volume but in the pitch and tonalities.

MD: Are they both 14 by 18 inch drums?

JD: Yeah. They're both 18's. I got back into two bass drums with a good friend of mine, Stu Martin. He played with John Surman in the Trio and lived for about a year in America. We were involved with Creative Music Studios in Woodstock. I was playing on his drums, and I decided to get two bass drums. I was originally using a 20 and an 18, but the 18, actually because the timbre was stronger and the pitch - it was louder than the 20. It's a matter of definition of tone. So I switched to two 18's.

MD: I can sense the tight tuning. What type of heads are you using?

JD: I just got into a new line of heads. They're called Pin Stripe, by Remo

MD: For both live and studio work?

JD: Yeah, but just on the batter side. Because what I wanted, especially for miking and things was a ringing open bass drum. But on the edges of the drums are a lot of unwanted overtones, so you don't get the definite tone. The pin stripes are double the thickness around the edge of the head, which is where the unwanted overtones come from.

MD: That's interesting: the recent McCoy Tyner "Super Trios" album has a picture of you using black dot (Remo) heads.

JD: That wasn't my drum set. Those were Jim Stern's drums, Rogers drums, all with one head tuned as high as I could get them.

MD: Someone once said that you practiced by doing rudiments in front of the T.V.

JD: Well, that was when I was just beginning. I don't do that

# JACK DeJOHNETTE

by T. BRUCE WITTET

anymore. I don't practice anymore: I just play, I improvise. I may sit down on piano.

MD: You can sit down at the piano at leisure, but adding another bass drum on stage is a different thing. Did you just put it there and blow?

JD: I had it at home, but I just took it and, like, if it's there I'm going to use it. I just let it develop naturally. I develop a concept of the double bass drum as I go along. I know it's there and it's another pitch. It's been interesting. You know, (laughs) sometimes I'd be playing and the beater would jump out of the pedal and I'd be stuck with the left bass drum, so then I'd have to think of the left bass drum as the right foot, and it would help me develop my right foot.

MD: Do you play mostly heel-down on the pedal?

JD: I play both.

MD: What sort of pedal do you use?

JD: I use a Sonor pedal — all Sonor equipment. They're a beautiful drum. I've been with them four or five years. I love them.

MD: It's difficult to get, and it's expensive.

JD: It's expensive because it's imported, but it's the best equipment going.

MD: You tune them high, I mean, really high, and yet they still project. Why do so many drummers tune their drums so low?

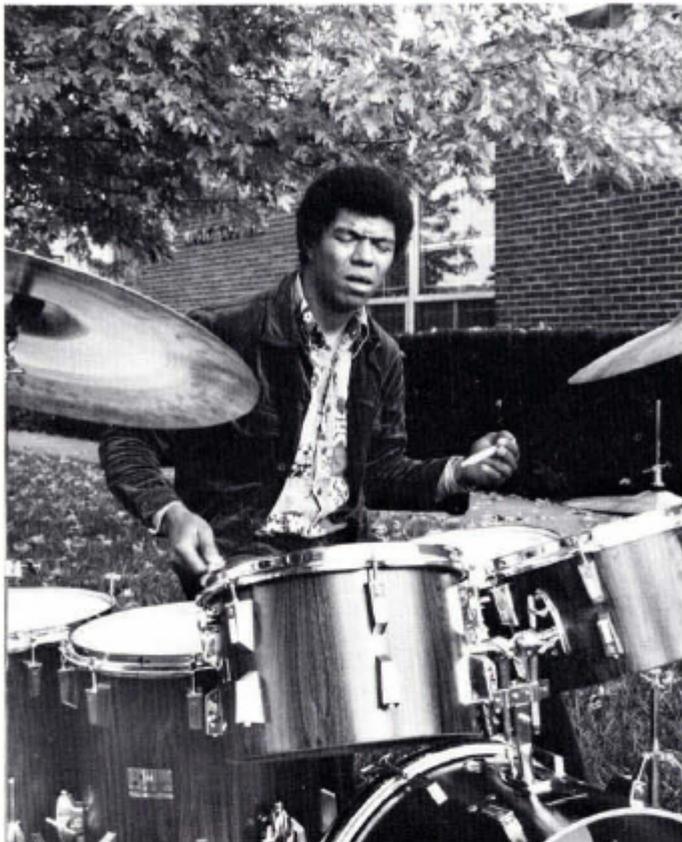
JD: It's the commercial sound, that's all. My tuning, it's a jazz tuning. Ten years ago it was considered a basic jazz tuning, before rock. The concert toms give you more range. They made me a special set which has double heads.

MD: They've got a high pitched tone!

JD: I'd like them even higher, but one of the heads busted this week. I've got the bottom head on the top, so I have to replace it.

MD: A lot of people are concerned about the issue of matched versus traditional grip. I notice that you compensate for traditional grip by turning the left stick around and playing with the butt end.

JD: Either way, if it feels good. For Latin playing it's nice to use matched grip. I like to play more with this grip (gestures traditional left-hand grip) though because I get more of a touch. I can do it the other way too.



*The basic DeJohnette drum set, apart from bass drums and custom concert toms, consists of a 5 1/2 inch metal snare, a standard small tom and floor tom, and finally, twin wooden "timbales" which he uses "just on some" because "they cut through to the back".*

*For a long while the "DeJohnette signature" has been his imaginative use of cymbals. Although he has changed his cymbal-set a number of times over the years, he has consistently been an advocate of the Swiss-made Paiste cymbal. On record, he uses an array of sizes and weights from cup-chimes to gongs to China Types with their upturned edges and cylindrical bells. For high hats he uses the Sound Edge line which have heavy bottoms rippled around the edges. Jack's cymbal colourings stem mainly from his ride cymbals, however, and he uses the Flat and Dark Rides. The latter come in 22" size only, and have a bumpy, moon-like surface.*

MD: Can you tell us about your cymbals. First of all, that's a Dark Ride, is it not?

JD: Yeah, it's a Dark Ride; they're all Paiste cymbals. I use only Paiste cymbals. We worked a long time on this Dark Ride cymbal; it's been years. It's an extension of the K.Zildjian sound. The Dark Ride is a modification of the K-sound, but it's darker, dryer. The purpose of the Dark Ride is to give you a minimum amount of overtones — a minimum amount of splash. That's what the deep indentations in it are for. They cut down the build-up.

MD: What are the rest of your cymbals?

JD: Well, there's an 18 and 16 inch 2002 splash, a Formula 602 flat ride, and a China Type, 20 inch. Paiste is coming out with a whole new line of cymbals, dark cymbals. There'll be dark flats, rides, crashes, and high-hats. The closest sound I could give you for the high-hats was Tony's (Williams) sound when he was with Miles, but it's a modification of that sound — brighter, with more highs.

MD: You went to Switzerland to the Paiste factory to pick out your cymbals?

JD: Yeah. I did a thing in Monterey sponsored by Paiste. They commissioned George Grunz — he's a Swiss-German piano composer who does the Berlin festival. He wrote a suite called "Percus-

sion Profiles" for two Swiss drummers, Pierre Favre and Freddy Studer. At the factory we talked about this Dark Ride. The thing I like about Paiste is that they're like artists with their cymbals. If you tell them the sound you're looking for, they'll experiment. Robert Paiste is an incredible guy. When he hears his cymbals on the ECM records he's flipped out.

MD: A final note about cymbals. Some of the advertisements make it confusing for the young drummer. Your name is still seen connected with another cymbal company.

JD: I'm not with them; I use Paiste. I guess I just didn't tell them I was changing over.

*Jack DeJohnette's musical convictions have found a vehicle in the German Manfred Eicher's ECM record label. Eicher chooses to produce every single album released by his company and he is generally acknowledged to be a master craftsman. The "ECM sound" has become a standard of excellence for both producer and consumer alike.*

*In the final part of the interview Jack reflects on his relationship with ECM and about his ideas on the music scene as he encounters it.*

MD: Your California work doesn't have the distinctive drum sound; is that Manfred Eicher's influence?

JD: Yeah, nobody but Manfred can do that. Manfred and the musicians. Together we worked on getting a drum sound, each time we do an album. Manfred really knows how to record cymbals: it's a conception of the thing having clarity no matter how busy it is. It's also the use of echo to enhance sounds — just the right amount.

MD: How does he get that ride cymbal sound?

JD: Well, he gets all the overtones, especially with these Paiste cymbals. He loves to record my cymbals, the touch and everything. It's great to be doing it regularly when you know you don't have to worry about telling a guy what to do about the engineering. And every time you do it you get more familiar, but I always come in with new cymbals. You know, it's placement of mikes and the mixing; he adds just enough to enhance the quality of the tone and the sustain, so it rounds it out and makes the cymbal sing.

MD: What mike set-up do you use in the studio?

JD: I usually use two on bass drum, maybe a couple of stereo mikes, one mike on the snare and high hat and over the floor tom tom.

MD: You've done a lot of work in Europe. Is that your preference?

JD: I like to work in both places. I'd like to get more happening in the States?

MD: What do you see as problems in the American music scene?

JD: The big record companies in the States ruin jazz by giving out too much front money. They don't make any money. ECM's policy is lower advances so that you can see some returns on your sales. Also you get a lot of airplay in Europe. There's more music being played. It's a building process, and that's the thing American record companies aren't into: if the record doesn't jump right out there and hit the charts right away . . . I'm trying to build something. It's a foundation. It's just music! The band being what it is, "Directions", has been called everything from fusion music to avant garde. I don't care what anybody calls it. I like to play all different directions.

MD: You say that people have called you a "fusion band". Fusion bands usually have really straight rhythm sections. Is that jazz?

JD: Well, it's not a collective thing. It's a form of jazz, but it's a level and there are different levels. I'm more into group improvisation. I'm more into, say, aggressive players.

MD: I noticed that tonight. Everyone is really pushing.

JD: Well, it's a primitive kind of challenge. We challenge each other: that's where the surprises come from. I think that our *New Rags* album captures that spontaneity. I really like that record; I think it captures best in the studio what this band sounds like live. Spontaneity — that's the most important thing to get on records.

MD: Do you do a lot of takes when you record?

*continued on page 29*

# THE ELECTRONIC REVOLUTION

by RANDY HESS

## Fantasy, Fact, Future?

*Randy Hess is Marketing Director for STAR Instruments, Inc., manufacturers of SYNARE Percussion Synthesizers. He is a graduate of Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, PA with a B.S. in Music, and also has a degree in Electronic Music Composition from Lycoming College, Williamsport, PA. Mr. Hess also serves on the MD Advisory Board as Advisor on Electronic percussion.*

It had to happen sooner or later. Modern technology has extended its helping hand to almost every facet of our lives today; even music. Electronic instruments and their related effects have had a steadily growing influence on the new music that we hear every day. Think what electronics have done for the musician already. Keyboard players take their own instruments with them to a gig rather than rely on a clunky house piano. Bass players no longer lug around upright double basses. The guitar player really came into the spotlight with the advent of the electric guitar. Now; why not the drummer? Shouldn't he be allowed to advance from the metronome position, to one of musical contributor? Doesn't the drummer have the same drives and ambitions as any other musician? Shouldn't he be allowed to compose and solo like the rest of the group? These are the drives behind the electronic percussion movement. Let's look at where it's coming from and what's available for today's drummer/percussionist.

As the other members of the group began playing electronic instruments, the drummer found it necessary to make his drums to keep a balanced sound. Soon, he found he could electronically alter the sound of his drums with special effects boxes and pedals introduced to him by the guitar player. It was simple to patch these devices between the mikes for his drums and the amplifier. Whether he realized it at the time or not, the drummer was opening a door for electronic percussion.

With the advent of the synthesizer, the entire future of music was to be changed. The keyboard was chosen as the controller for this factory of sound because of its universal acceptance and knowledge. But is the keyboard the real solution to the control potential for the synthesizer? We are slowly finding that it may not be.

Take a look at today's rock group. What you'll probably find is a guitar player with a dozen different effects pedals, boxes and switches layed out before him, taking his guitar and its sound to the limits of its potential. Now look at the keyboard player. Don't feel threatened. Your average keyboardist of today could have anywhere from 3 to 15 keyboards positioned around him in an Apollo Command Module set-up. And finally, there is the drummer, playing a set comprised of instruments that have evolved very little, (except for construction material), since the animal skin was first stretched across a hollow log and struck with a bone. It is time for the drummer to get in on the gig. The time is today.

The percussion synthesizer can be found in several forms today. A drum that controls a keyboard synthesizer module, several drum-like units that connect to their own control box, self contained units with practice pad like rubber heads, and battery operated drums that have the controls right on them. Though they vary in construction, features, and price, they all have one objective in common; to give the drummer/percussionist the ability to make new and different percussive and melodic sounds that his mechanical drums cannot afford him. What sounds? Like any synthesizer, the ability to closely reproduce any musical or percussive sound or instrument plus generate sounds that until the evolution of the synthesizer — were unheard of.

How many times have you wished that you had timpani for a tune, or a 28" gong, or orchestra bells, tubular chimes, marimba, xylophone, vibes, congas, or even more exotic instruments like the amadinda, surdos, kalimba, or other sounds of the Far East and Africa. How about wood blocks, temple blocks, slide whistles, slapstick, ratchet, siren, bird whistle, horse hoofs, finger cymbals, castanets, triangle, pop gun, trains, horns, you name it. This is what the percussion synthesizer can do for you. Imagine going to a job with an instrument no larger than your snare drum that could make all of these percussive effects and thousands more that can't even be named.

Is this whole happening to be considered a threat to your present mechanical drums? Not likely. When the keyboard synthesizer came out, were people burning their grand pianos? Did the electric guitar put the acoustic one out of business or make the upright bass obsolete? The percussion synthesizer is to be used to accent your drums and playing. It produces sounds of instruments and tone colors that you currently do not have available. Don't misunderstand me however; the latest percussion synthesizers and electronic drums *could* be used as electronic replacements for most of your kit. You'll probably still need a real snare drum and cymbals, but the electronic drum could handle the rest.

The question is, how *close* to the real thing does it sound? No string synthesizer to date sounds exactly like a string orchestra, yet having the effect available is worth the sacrifice of a little of the quality to project the mood. The same applies here. Real timpani may be difficult to achieve on a synthesizer, yet having the effect still gets the musical idea across. As synthesizers and their related technology improve, realistic and near perfect duplication of a sound will become commonplace. Your music, in the meantime, should not have to suffer for it.

Playing electronic percussion instruments is easier than you may think. You needn't have degrees in Electrical Engineering and Acoustical Physics to control a unit. For one, your playing style remains the same. Rudiments are rudiments and aside from perhaps a little spacial relations adjustment, (electronic percussion takes up a lot less space than ordinary drums), your playing will go on as normal. Practice becomes easier. When could you ever practice your drums into headphones before while the old lady watches her soaps right in the next room.

In the studio, for recording purposes, is where they will really shine. No renting equipment. Easy set-up, and best of all, they can be patched directly into the line for recording. No mikes. No taping heads or stuffing your drums to get a dead sound for recording. That tight sound is at the touch of a button.

What it really comes down to in the end, is you — the drummer. In the hands of a fool, any instrument can sound really ugly and worthless, yet the potential is still there. The first time that you hit a drum it probably sounded pretty bad. But did that mean that the instrument was worthless? It takes time, patience and most important, TASTE. 30 minutes of crashing ocean waves won't get you an audience, and if you intend to use your percussion synthesizer as a means of getting back at the rest of the group for years of supression, your wasting your time, money, and the instrument. The only way to play *any* instrument with taste is knowledge, and knowledge comes from practice.

Electronic percussion is here and now. With the help of talented musicians like Carl Palmer, Billy Cobham, Andre Lewis, Steve Smith, Michael Shrieve, and drummers like yourself, the future of electronic percussion is limitless. It will really depend on what you make it. 

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# ON THE PEARL BEAT

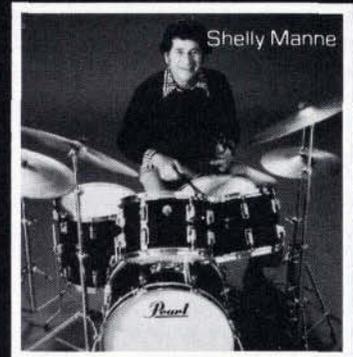
## Pearl Drums and all that jazz

It takes the finest drummers to play jazz — artisans like Art Blakey, Candy Finch and Shelly Manne. They're the ones who put those distinctive beats in the music of Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonius Monk, Woody Herman, The Messengers,

Jimmy Smith and the like. And likewise, it takes a free form, versatile and sensitive drum with a damn good sound to live up to all that jazz. So, these artists drum it up with Pearl.



Candy Finch



Shelly Manne



Art Blakey

# Pearl

DRUMS

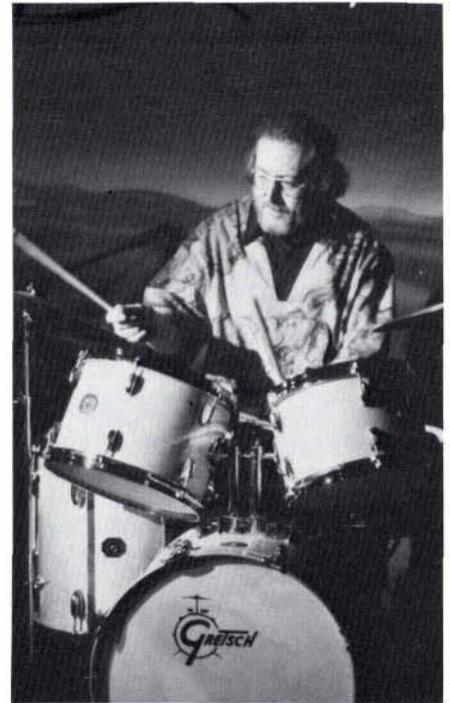
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*The Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra has been going strong for some thirteen years now, consistent poll winners, and the hit of almost every jazz festival they perform at. All the more reason for my shock when drummer co-leader Mel Lewis informed me that, "there haven't been any profits yet; the profits have all been in the music making — and in the fun and pleasure."*

*Spending the better part of an afternoon at his plush New York City apartment, we listened first to a tape of the 1955 Stan Kenton band, the vehicle which brought the distinctive Mel Lewis brand of drumming to the attention of all who respect and admire him today. Later we listened to a Jones-Lewis Orchestra concert taped live a short time ago in France. In this relaxed and cordial atmosphere, we settled back for an afternoon of conversation where Mel spoke openly about drumming, and about the state of the art to which he's dedicated practically all of his adult life.*

*Later — in transcribing his comments — I realized that some of what Mel said could easily be misinterpreted as egotistical. Not so. To know thyself is a virtue, and Mel Lewis might very well be the most honest person I've ever met. He spoke as an artist dedicated to "pure jazz," with its roots firmly imbedded in bop.*

*His style of playing hasn't changed all that much since he first gained recognition with the Kenton band, and this is not to slight him. It's just that Mel Lewis has been an excellent drummer for a long time.*



# MEL LEWIS

SF: During the fifties and sixties you were one of the most in demand studio drummers in New York. Do you still do much studio work? What sort of knowledge did a studio drummer have to have in those years?

ML: I do very little studio work now. I guess it's a combination of my own doing, and of the changeover. I've been sort of phased out of the studio's because of style. The average studio drummer today is basically a rock drummer, and most of them don't know how to do a damn thing. I'm not a rock drummer — although frankly — I think I play better rock than the whole lot of them. But it's not legitimate — what they call the "real rock." I think I play it better and with more feeling. I'm not a pounder and I'm not a cymbal breaker.

When I was really heavy into studio work, I'll have to admit the music was pretty damn good and a lot of good writers were involved. I'd perform in a studio daily with anywhere from two guys, to one-hundred piece symphony orchestras. The music was good, and it was challenging. A studio drummer had to know everything. You have to be a good reader, and you had to have good time, or tempo actually, because time to me is really "feeling."

When I was doing jingles they didn't use click tracks. I had a secret, a way of play-

ing with a click track where I wouldn't sound metronomic. The secret was not to play with the track, but play around it. Keep it relative but don't keep it exact, otherwise you sound like a metronome.

You needed a knowledge of all styles of music. In the course of one day you'd be playing ragtime, or music from the twenties and thirties. You had to know the Goodman style of swing, and early Basie. You had to know how to play a show. You had to know Dixieland, and in my case, I was called upon to play avant-garde and bop which is my main thing. That's where my roots are and that's where my heart is. To me, bop is the most complex music of all.

SF: How did you learn all of those styles of drumming?

ML: Ears. By listening to bands on records and in person, and I never slighted anyone. When I first came to New York in the forties, my evenings weren't all spent at the Royal Roost listening to Max, Kenny Clarke and Shelly Manne. I made sure I heard Sid Catlett, Cozy Cole, George Wettling and Morey Feld. I listened to them all.

My father was my first influence. He was a pit drummer, a show drummer, and also a good wedding and bar mitzvah drummer. I knew his style backwards. He

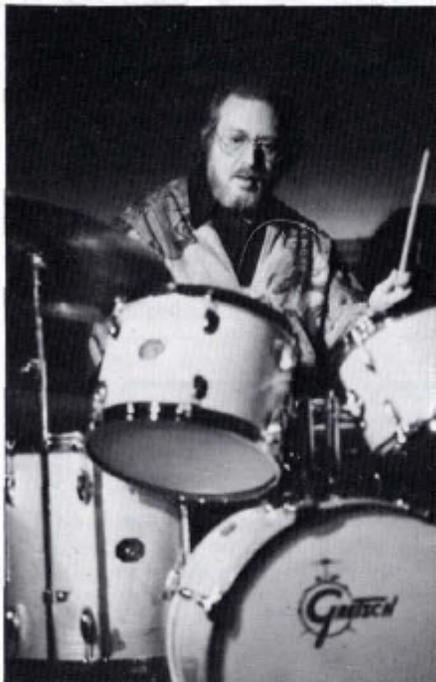
could read anything and he had excellent time. Bill Robinson (Mr. Bojangles) was crazy about his feel. He was also a very tasty drummer, and I think I was blessed with his time and taste.

My favorite drummers in the thirties were Gene Krupa and Jo Jones. Max made a big impression on me in the forties, and then it was Roy Haynes. I heard Roy talking about things in the forties that Elvin was talking about later. Roy was one of the first "out" drummers.

I was lucky enough to be in what was considered a famous Kenton band between 1954-55. Critics and jazz fans alike say that was probably the most swinging band he ever had. That's where I made my name. I was with a slew of commercial dance bands prior to that. I've been playing with big bands since I was thirteen or fourteen years old.

SF: What's your opinion of stuffing drums for recording purposes, and the trend towards making all studio drummers sound alike?

ML: Actually, you hear a drummer playing on his drums, but the sound you hear is the engineers. I'm against all that. No engineer is going to do that to me. You get my sound or forget it, man. I will not take my front head off. I won't stick something in there. Both heads all the



# STRAIGHT AHEAD

by Scott Kevin Fish

time. No muffling on the outside head of the bass drum. Just a thin felt strip and a Gretsch bass drum tone control on the batter head. That's all I still use.

SF: No mufflers on your snare drum?

ML: No mufflers. Tom-toms either. Everything is off, everything open. If I play a rock date where I gotta get that dry sound I throw my wallet or a date book on the drum head. When I used to smoke, I'd throw my pack of cigarettes down there.

SF: Would you do a studio rock date?

ML: Oh sure, I'll do it if they let me do it the way I do it. But, not if they want me to sound like the latest hit record. I don't want to sound like Steve Gadd. To me, he's fine. I think he's one of the best. I've heard his work enough and I know he's probably the busiest studio drummer around, but he doesn't have to do all the things we had to do. He does all the stuff that's done in rock style, most of it. I can't stand that sound. I don't like the sound of Steve's drums at all because it's a rock sound. A dead sound. But, I think Steve does a helluva good job.

SF: I remember reading in the liner notes to a Jones-Lewis composition called *Ahunk Ahunk*, that you used stuffed drums for that "now sound."

ML: I used the studio bass drum — a stuffed drum — but I didn't take the front

head off. I loosened my toms and I didn't take any heads off them either. I put the mufflers on. I used one of my Ludwig & Ludwig snares and I put my wallet on it. That was it.

SF: You're the only drummer I can think of still using calfskin heads. Do you use them on all your drums?

ML: No, just the top of the snare, and the bass drum batter. Plastic on the bottom. I've been doing that for years. I've tried plastic, but with brushes, none of them make it. Only calf. It's a little hard to use them in California. There's something about the weather out there that makes it pretty rough. I like it damp though, I prefer a little moisture in the head, not bone dry. Then they're too tight.

SF: How frequently do you have to tune them?

ML: Maybe twice a night. Sometimes it's perfectly alright when I sit down, and that's the way they stay all night. I don't like tight drumheads, but if a drummer likes a tight sound he can certainly get it with calf. But, he's got to remember that he'd better not leave it that way. The tighter you make a calf head, the more it stretches. The head will probably go dead a lot sooner than if you kept it medium. You have to remember to change tension at the end of the night. There's something about

the feeling and sound of calf. Plastic doesn't feel right to me. Plastic heads on the toms are alright. I'm not thrilled with the sound, but I don't have time to mess with them. You hit the toms so hard and get all those dents in them, that gives you an idea of why it's basically dangerous to use calf on tom-toms. I don't hit a snare drum as hard as I hit a tom for some reason or another. When I want volume from a snare, it's usually with a rim shot.

SF: Do you tune your drums in any specific way?

ML: The tuning of my drums isn't exact. As long as the sound is right, I don't care. I start out trying to be exact but it never ends up that way. I don't always have time to finish tuning, so sometimes everything is sitting there a little crooked. Nothing's perfect, but I get my sound. I strive for a full sound. I try to make my drums sound like a fat sounding trumpet. I like to get a big sound.

SF: Are you still using the Gretsch wooden snare?

ML: I use mostly wood, but I own a couple of metal snare drums built back around 1928. I have a *Leedy & Ludwig*, and a *Ludwig & Ludwig*. They were the best snare drums ever made.

SF: Have you used them on any of your recordings?

ML: I used them on the vocal albums where I played a lot of back beats, and on the *Central Park North* album. On all the other live albums I've used the wooden snare. I'm going to start using the metal snares live with the band, because the snare drums aren't coming off too good today. I've been using Gretsch drums for thirty-one years and I'll be using them another thirty-one years — if I'm playing that long — but they're gonna have to get something going on the snare drums. As far as I'm concerned there isn't anybody putting out a good snare. They all sound like boxes — wooden or metal. I still prefer the Gretsch wooden snare drum, but I'm unhappy with some of the workmanship. I'm using calfskins and I'm not getting a fit. They're only worrying about plastic heads. In the old days we all played calfskin and never had those troubles. Why should there be trouble now? We used to tuck the heads ourselves. Some of us did lousy jobs but they still worked. The drum still sounded.

Why should it be any different today? The strainers were better too. I think they all make rotten strainers today, all of them. A strainer has a lot to do with the sound of a drum.

SF: You once made reference to your playing as being strong, but not loud. Can you explain the difference?

ML: What counts is the intensity. Volume doesn't mean a damn thing. There's a volume you can play at that's sensible. To me, piano to mezzo forte is enough volume for normal playing in a big

*continued on page 31*

## ROCK HI-HATS

by Denny Kinne

In the last several years, the hi-hat has come to play an increasingly active role in drum set independence — especially for the rock drummer. The sustained or "splash" sound emanating from the hi-hat is basically the action of the hi-hat foot in the open position while simultaneously being struck with the stick. The hi-hat foot is quickly raised on the accent, returning immediately to the closed position. In exercises 1-6, the hi-hat foot is raised only on the accented "ans", where the 0 is marked over the note. See below.

In exercises 7 and 8 we have two accents where the hi-hat remains open for one full beat. Note also, the bass drum's reinforcement of the hi-hat accents in each exercise. In example 7 the hi-hat opens on the count of 2 and closes on the count of 3. The stick strikes the hi-hat cymbals in open position on the counts of 2 AN.

Example 8 utilizes the same principle on the counts of 4 AN.

These are only a few of the most commonly used open hi-hat variations. There are literally hundreds of other possible combinations. Experiment, and see how many original ideas you can come up with.

All of the above practice material was reprinted from "Rock Socks" — A Study for Hi-Hats in Rock Drumming, by permission of author Denny Kinne.

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## METRIC MODULATION

by Rupert Kettle

Among the many lessons to be learned from the playing of Max Roach is the concept of musicality in drumming. This is shown no more clearly than in his solo work, particularly in the fact that Max has almost always played choruses of the tune being played, and most often uses little phrasing tricks to complement those choruses. One of the best of these is defining the bridge (or B sections if the tune is ABAB) through a shift in rhythmic base, just as a standard tune shifts its harmonic base for that period. At medium to medium-up tempos, Max affected this by generating a triplet feel in the A sections (as in Example 1) then shifting to a straight-eighth/sixteenth feel for the B parts (as in Example 11) or vice-versa.

At the fast tempos, for which he is famous, Max most often resorts to a change in tone color for a tune's different sections, but a few examples of the rhythmic device may be found. *Cherokee* with Clifford Brown, is a good one.

Having learned this lesson, and wishing to experiment further with the idea, the creative soloist could begin by working with changing the meter, while still retaining the structure of the original tune, to offset the A and B sections. Rothman and Lang have laid some good groundwork here (*Phrasing Drum Solos* and *The New Conception*, respectively) but only within a four-measure framework. Same idea here, just simple arithmetic.

Let us assume you wish to set up some practice routines jumping back and forth between two eight measure 4/4 periods, A and B. At B, you wish to change to 3/4 meter, but still remain within the confines of eight 4/4 measures. Eight (measures) times four (beats per measure) equals thirty-two beats in the period. Three (beats per measure) goes into thirty-two ten times (or ten 3/4 measures) with two left over. You would write a chart, just using "time" for the moment, and practice it. See Example 111.

Note that while you've gone into 3/4 for awhile (with a measure of 2/4 to round things off) you've still played the exact amount of beats as the basic eight 4/4 measures. After practicing playing time this way for a few days, you should be able to get loose enough to start working some solo patterns into both the A and B sections.

Once you are used to the 3/4 idea, similar schemes may be contrived. Phrasing the B parts in five (six 5/4 measures plus one 2/4 measure equals eight 4/4 measures. Seven: (four 7/4 measures plus one 4/4 measure equals eight 4/4 measures) etc. When all of these possibilities are exhausted, there is always the sixteen measure period to work with, along the same lines. Another possibility exists in shifting from a base of 3/4 or 5/4, into meters superimposed on given numbers of measures.

Hopefully, I've presented some food for thought and practice. Concluding are a couple of short solos along the lines of the above to help you get started. See Example IV and V.

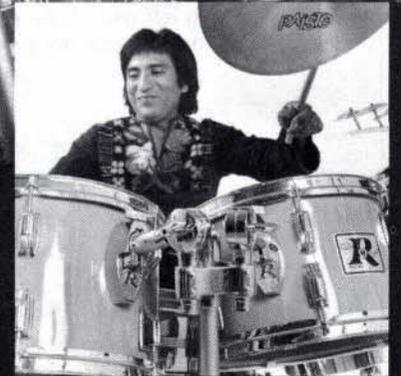
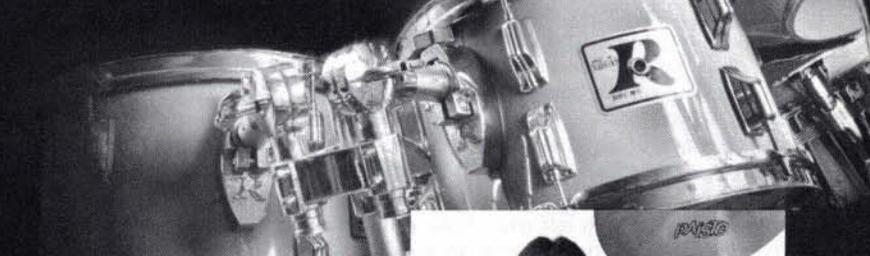


Alex Acuna, world-famous percussionist/drummer, has earned an amazing breadth of musical credentials. In addition to his important role with Weather Report, he has played with noted musicians representing nearly every part of the music spectrum...ranging from Pablo Casals, Perez Prado and Sergio Mendes to Elvis Presley and Diana Ross.

## ALEX ACUNA ON CREATIVE DRUM TECHNIQUES AND ROGERS.

"The word creativity means different things to different drummers. For me it all starts with the set-up...the variety of instruments I use. With Weather Report I often play bongos, Paiste cup chimes, cymbals and gongs...in addition to four mounted toms, floor toms, timbales, timpani, congas, snare and bass.

All of these instruments give me flexibility to create the exact sound I'm looking for. In addition, Weather Report supplements my set-up sounds with synthesized special effects and bass special effects to add even more percussive texture to the music we play. It's important to remember, however, that you have to select from this wide scope of percussive sounds with a



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Another aspect of creativity involves the mixture of different types of percussive sounds in unusual musical forms. One type of unusual percussive form, for instance, involves the use of poly-rhythms (that is, the use of "independence techniques"). In this style, each of three or more rhythms is equally important and must be heard clearly. Since each rhythm must have an equal voice, each individual drum must cut through crisp and clear in order to sustain the integrity of the musical idea.

Sound character and tuning, therefore, become really critical and that's another reason I use Rogers. Each drum can be accurately tuned without taking a long time to do it...and Rogers has the precise sound that reflects the quality materials used in their construction.

I know this may sound like a commercial for Rogers, but I really do find that their equipment works best for me. I think that good equipment is essential for drummers who are interested in exploring creative new sounds. In that way, the musical concepts you have in your head can be recreated in the music you play. And you can mix this sense of creativity with musical consistency for a professional performance every time!

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# FORMING AN APPROACH

by Charley Perry

*Noted author-teacher Charley Perry — long recognized as a leading authority on modern drumming methodology — has worked with artists Bud Powell, Sonny Stitt, Stan Getz, Benny Goodman, Stan Kenton, Jimmy Dorsey, and Buddy Morrow, to name a few. An ex-Kenton Band Camp faculty member, Charley now serves on the faculty of Five Towns College in New York and devotes the majority of his time to teaching.*

When I first began to teach drumming, I did a great deal of studying, mainly about methodology. I studied with one teacher after another, learning method upon method. I found however, that none of the methods were concerned sufficiently with the popular form of drumming. Instead, they dealt with one or more of the traditional forms or parts: orchestra and rudimental drumming, sticking technique, text book reading, etc. True, these traditional methods served the needs of the orchestra and rudimental drum student, but what of the jazz student?

Because most of my students were interested in the jazz form of drumming, I found it necessary — as did other teachers — to supplement the traditional format with the material of what can be termed 'contemporary', popular performance drumming. The constant need to supplement the traditional method, to alter or change it, seemed to indicate that a serious gap existed between drumming as it was taught, and drumming as it was professionally performed in the popular field. Because of this, I could not help asking myself many disquieting questions which challenged the methods that I had been taught to use as a teacher. I put two of these questions to the teaching profession as a whole: 1) Is the drum teacher viewing drumming as it has come to be, or is he merely projecting his own theories; theories formulated in a different era, with a different purpose in mind? 2) Is the student being taught to function in the contemporary music world, or is his learning experience fitting him for the kind of drumming long since gone?

If he is to reach the student, if he is to prepare him thoroughly for professional performance drumming, the teacher must know our current music world intimately.

Ideally, the teacher should also be capable of participating in this world. It became evident then, that the supplementary approach was not enough; that it was essential to develop a comprehensive plan for teaching the jazz form of drumming. The traditional rudiments had to be viewed in their proper perspective — their possible relation to jazz drumming. Reading had to be correlated with jazz interpretation; technique had to be applied to the entire drum set, instead of merely to the snare drum.

What I had learned over the years through listening, observing, assimilating, and performing had to be documented and formularized. The drummer's rhythmic patterns, fill-ins, and solos had to be related to improvisation, the chorus form, the rhythm section, the soloist, the group, etc. The principles of jazz drumming had to be clearly formulated to provide a basis for a system of teaching this form of drumming. Thus, my approach to teaching took form.

No form, however, should be thought of as being absolute or unchangeable. To settle on one way, and one way only, is to invite stagnation. Music is not a static art, but a dynamic process; teaching should be the same. No method, therefore, beautifully wrought as it may be in principle, should be rigid. Flexibility in any teaching system is a "must" if it is to succeed. An evolving concept, a change in purpose and direction in music, must be recognized and acted upon by the teacher. Ideally, the teacher should even be actively involved in the developmental process that is taking place in music today.

A crucial point is the bridge between the subject matter, the student, and the method. The link between the three must be strong if the method and the subject matter are to serve the essential needs of the student. Since each person in this world is different from every other person, it is important that the teacher vary his ap-

proach with each individual. He must truly know each student's strengths and weaknesses, immediate problems and needs, goals and purposes. This is accomplished by careful observation of the student and through discussion with him, beginning with the very first lesson. Only then, can the teacher determine the best course of action and in many cases, even help the student develop appropriate aspirations and incentives.

On the other hand, the "generalized" approach to a student-teacher relationship is weak. This method treats every student alike regardless of the student's needs, desires or abilities. With this concept, the teacher may smother the student with a mass of poorly related material, taking for granted that some of the information will be useful to, and probably assimilated by, the student. Since the material is presented in an isolated manner, the student finds himself left fairly much on his own without proper guidance. He is then confronted with the monumental task of relating 'flat facts', to the actual performance. True, the teacher may use much of the same study material with almost all of the students, but when and how it is used are the key factors in the success or failure of any course of study.

Too many teachers quiet inner doubts by becoming overly concerned with technique or method. By assuming a wholly technical emphasis, the teacher can remove himself from anxiety producing issues and problems. But in so doing, he also removes himself and the student from the very essence of music itself. The spirit, fervor, charm and spontaneity of the musical experience is lost.

Obviously, there are many problems and possibilities in forming an approach to teaching. I hope that what has been said here will encourage a re-examination of some previously held views, and stimulate some discussion among members of our profession.

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# STRICTLY TECHNIQUE

by Louis Delpino

This article is intended to give jazz and rock drummers a means of exploiting to the fullest degree the application of paradiddles around the standard 3 drum outfit: snare, small tom-tom and large tom-tom. The following definitions are essential to understand how the accompanying exercises may be combined to form paradiddle variations around the drums.

- 1) PARADIDDLE UNIT: The traditional single paradiddle, played either RLRR or LRLl.
- 2) PARADIDDLE SET: Two units played with alternating sticking, either RLRR-LRLl or LRLl-RLRR.
- 3) PRIMARY UNIT: The initial unit of a paradiddle set.
- 4) SECONDARY UNIT: The closing unit of a set.

set

R L R R      L R L L

or: L R L L      R L R R

**primary unit**                      **secondary unit**

There are 27 ways in which a basic unit can be played around the three drums. UNIT SERIES A, shows the 9 possibilities starting from the snare drum. UNIT SERIES B, shows the 9 possibilities starting from the small tom-tom. UNIT SERIES C, shows the 9 possibilities starting from the large tom-tom. Variations of sets are formed by combining the same or different units. A total of 729 unique sets may be achieved this way, and by combining sets a virtually infinite array of extended patterns can be generated for breaks, fills, or solo playing.

UNIT SERIES A - all starting from the snare drum

UNIT SERIES B - all starting from the small tom

## PARADIDDLES FOR THREE DRUMS

UNIT SERIES C - all starting from the large tom

Many sets resulting from combinations of various units not only sound good but may be played at rapid tempos with a minimum of physical exertion. Others are extremely awkward and do not "lay" well with respect to cross-sticking. An example of this problem is seen in C-9, which goes smoothly as a primary unit with RLRR sticking but poses difficulty when the sticking is reversed in order to repeat C-9 as the secondary unit. Another example of an awkward set is the combination C-6/C-9.

In any event, the point is not to be able to play all 729 possible sets with equal dexterity and speed, but rather to master those combinations which lie within your own technical capability. The best way to profit from these exercises is to play each basic unit a number of times, using both RLRR and LRLl sticking, at a tempo you find comfortable. This will help you develop a feel for moving around the drums, and for determining whether "over" or "under" cross-sticking is most suitable for playing specific difficult patterns. Speed will increase naturally with practice, and in time you will be able to play extended paradiddle phrases without having to formulate them consciously.

The following 12 measures illustrate just a few of the ways in which units may be combined. In addition to playing each measure repeatedly as a separate exercise, play the 12 combinations straight through down the page as well as across.

## APPICE

them through monitors, you can't turn them up. They feedback. There's too much ring inside. I took them on tour of Europe when I was with Jeff Beck. We had fifty dates, and I used them on the first twenty-five. I was going crazy trying to get a sound out of them through the P.A. My walnut set was in London. We put it up the second night in this place where we were playing six nights. The difference was unbelievable. The whole band said, 'Now, that's what we're looking for.' When I hit the tom's, you could feel the stage rattle, so I said that's it. The six-ply maple set was supposed to have been ready for the Stewart tour, but manufacturing of the custom bass drums held up the works."

Carmine had been using 26 X 14 bass drums, but he wasn't able to get the bass drum beater to hit the head dead center. So, Ludwig now makes him a special set of bass drums, 24 X 15. His snare drum is a Ludwig Super 400, with Remo CS heads. Ludwig Silver Dots are on all of his tom-toms. Another addition to the set-up are the Syndrums. "They were invented by Joe Pollard of Pollard Industries. I think they go very well with natural acoustic drums because they're total opposites. One is totally electronic, and one is acoustic. They have the most incredible natural tom-tom sound. In fact they're used on that hit by Rita Coolidge, *Higher and Higher*. That's how Hal Blaine and a lot of the L.A. players get their tom-tom sound. I use it that way, but I also like the *Star Wars* type effects. What's good about the Syndrum is that you operate it yourself. Cobham and Palmer have synthesizers on their drums that are plugged into a synthesizer legitimately. It costs like twenty-thousand. Syndrums cost about \$400 a drum, and with each drum you get the brains as well. Each brain is like one little synthesizer for each drum. I've got a set of four, but I only use two at a time. I put them to the side of me and I can operate them as I'm playing. I also use a wah-wah pedal on my snare drum. It's my own invention. It's hooked up through the P.A. and the monitors. I work the pedal. I like to have control over my own things. When I'm working it, I can control it dynamically. It's a lot better to have full control of your total sound, electronically. Andy Johns did the sound on the new Stewart LP and the drum sound is superb. There's a little piece of electronic music on my album called *Syndrum*. It's eight Syndrums playing different patterns and melodies."

Sometimes we hear sounds on records that are hard to define or duplicate such as the use of the Syndrum as a tom-tom. I asked Carmine if he altered his drums in anyway from stage to recording studio. "I'm totally against stuffing drums. As a matter of fact, in the studio I try not to

make the drums sound like non-drums. I don't go into the drum booth either. I go right in the middle of the room and get all the room sound. A really big, gigantic sound. Playing huge bass drums full of pillows, blankets and newspapers, is stupid. Then you're back down to a twenty-inch bass drum sound. I've never taped my drums. When you tape them up they sound like pillows. I like a big fat sound. My drums are very easy to record. In ten minutes I've got my drum sound down. I've come to a point in my playing where I know exactly what has to be done. I know that my big tom-tom rings a little,

so I put a little piece of tape on it. I don't dampen it very much, or stick tissue paper on it. Just a piece of tape to stop the vibration when I hit another drum. That's about it."

The road life gets hectic, in fact Carmine wrote *Realistic Rock* in hotel rooms while he was with Cactus. I questioned him about any possible camaraderie between on-the-road drummers. "Most of the guys I run into on the road are guys that looked up to me. So I give out all my secrets. In the rock business, the only guys I'll sit down and rap with are John Bonham and  
*continued on page 24*

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Ian Paice. They're good friends of mine. When Carl Palmer and I are around, we'll call each other up and rap for an hour. I've talked with Louie Bellson and Joe Morello. Like tonight, I'll get to see Max for the first time. Hopefully, I'll get to rap with him, but I feel funny going up to him and saying, 'Hi, I'm Carmine Appice, and I play Ludwig Drums', y'know. The first time I saw Tony Williams was when he had Jack Bruce in *Lifetime*. He was the only drummer to ever floor me in twenty seconds. Totally blew my mind. When I was with the Fudge, I was on an ego trip. I went to hear Tony and said to myself, 'Alright, let's see what you can do' — well, he played like twenty seconds, and I said, 'are you kidding'. He had a four-piece set with an 18" bass drum and I didn't know where he was coming from, or where he got his rhythms from. As I progressed and started doing more clinics and getting into it, I started realizing what was going on. I probably do the same thing to these young kids. I'll play some odd figure and they look at me like, 'Wow, what is it?'

Drumming has both progressed and digressed since the heyday of the 60's, when Carmine first came on the scene. There are many good players around but there seems to be an increasing public demand for bands that offer little creativity for drummers. We reminisced about the 60's and tried to bring the current music scene, especially the drummers, into perspective.

"The business now is almost like it was ten years ago. Underground progressive music like Cream and Mahavishnu aren't making it. All the big Madison Square Garden things are not progressive music anymore. It's all commercial. The Rod Stewart's... the Zeppelin's... it's very easy drumming. Simple drumming. I feel I was lucky to come into this business when I did. I made my reputation by my association with a lot of big name people. Being with Beck, and now with Stewart. I couldn't play in a band if I didn't have my little spot. I'm known as a soloist. That's where I shine. I shine playing with the band also, to a point, but like playing with Rod, I just play rock. Very simple and powerful. I play eighty-five percent of what I play, with him. But most of my stuff, I do during my solo. I'm worried. I don't think it's a very good time for drummers. I mean, what new drummer has come along that has really blown everybody's mind? Cobham was the last one with Mahavishnu in '72. That kind of music just isn't around anymore. Today, it's all very commercial, image oriented music. Disco, rock, heavy rock, and Kiss type music. When I first made it with Fudge, there was Cream, Hendrix... all the instrumental based music. People were freaking out over it. Nowadays, it's wierd.

Today we get knocked in the news because Rod Stewart has a band that does solos. I mean, do they want to hear *Tonights the Night*, all night long? I really feel sorry for young drummers starting to come up, because they're going to get stuck in the realm of just trying to make it. They're going to end up playing so commercial and so simple, that there isn't going to be a new generation of great drummers."

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Speaking about his own future, Carmine was optimistic. "I plan to book a month of clinics, and maybe charge a couple of bucks at the door. In the last five years, they've only charged at three of my clinics. I'll bring a road guy with my own drums, gong. . . the whole trip. A couple of amps with a tape of music that I'm gonna play. No bass player or guitarist, just the tape. This way, I'll never have a problem. I'll make the presentation a drum show rather than just a clinic. I think that's all virgin territory, like a mini-rock thing, y'know? Going to a clinic that's on as big a scale as a concert. I could do a whole month of that

and really create some excitement, maybe even bring some lights along. I think there's a lot of room in rock drumming. I'm trying to promote it like big band drumming, by writing the books on it, doing the clinics. I'm the only one doing it, and I'm proud that I was the first. A drummer today has got to accept where music is at, and try to do it. Anything could change. I'm sure this pop stuff isn't going to last more than three or four more years. Maybe it will get a bit more progressive. I think that any drummer who wants to play progressive, first has to learn it. I mean, really get it down. Then add a little bit of flash. Spinning sticks. Tricks. It's all part of the show. People want to be entertained now. It's very different, but you have to adjust with each change, y'know."



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# SOUTH OF THE BORDER

by Norbert Goldberg

The Caribbean Islands have long been a source of diverse and interesting music coupled with exciting rhythms. Although the Latin sounds of Cuba and Puerto Rico have been recognized for some time, the music of the English-speaking island of Jamaica has only recently gained in popularity. Even though they all share an African heritage, the difference in English and Spanish cultures has greatly influenced the music of these islands. This is particularly true with the Jamaican reggae, whose rhythm is quite different from its Latin neighbors.

Although the basic reggae beat is technically simple, it is the feel that requires special attention. For that reason it is recommended that you listen to some reggae records by Bob Marley And The Wailers, Peter Tosh, or Jimmy Cliff, in order to hear what else is going on around the beat, and to understand what the music is all about. For instance, the constant stress on the "and" of each beat by the guitar or organ is one of the main characteristics of reggae. The bass usually plays a repeated pattern mostly based on sixteenth note rhythms — that, combined with a strong bass drum accent on 2 and 4 typifies the essence of the hypnotic reggae rhythm.

Here's an example of a basic reggae beat:

Although the above beat may sound simplistic when played by itself, it takes on a beautiful character when accompanied by the other instruments.

There are a few variations of the hi-hat rhythm which change the overall feel and are best suited for certain tempos. These rhythms can be embellished by adding accents or by opening the hi-hat at certain points, as is demonstrated in some examples below.

Play each of the hi-hat rhythms on top of the basic beat concentrating on evenness and keeping good time. Since there is little activity with the bass and snare drum, it is particularly important to keep the hi-hat steady in order to keep the pulse going.

# REGGAE

The snare hand functions at times much like a jazz drummer's, placing accents and syncopations within the beat established by the hi-hat and bass drum. As always, the drummer should use his discretion as to when and how much to play. Below are some suggestions for the snare. You can also substitute different hi-hat rhythms.

Aside from playing on 2 and 4, the bass drum can play on every beat, with a slight stress on the 2 and 4. A fairly new development in the reggae beat has the bass drum playing straight eighth notes which creates a double-time effect. Some Jamaican drummers also play syncopated accents and fills with the bass, achieving some very interesting results. Here are some more beats which incorporate most of the elements and variations I have discussed. Remember, reggae is a SLOW rhythm, so keep this into account when practicing these beats.

Reggae fills usually span the last two beats in a measure with eighth or sixteenth note triplets which often include short rolls or ruffs. Straight sixteenth note fills are usually the case for the livelier "double-time" reggae. Naturally, there are exceptions, but because of the slow tempo the general trend is for sixteenth note fills.

Ex.

It is also common to finish a fill with a cymbal crash on the fourth beat or the "and" of the fourth before the downbeat. This type of fill is often used as an introduction to a song.

Ex.

Because each reggae beat is suited to a song, there is not much deviation or changing of beats. Percussion instruments such as tambourine, cowbell, and woodblocks are often used, providing added color. Although I have suggested some fairly intricate variations, the reggae rhythm is basically simple and repetitious, and it's effectiveness lies in just that fact.

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# ORGAN AND DRUMS: MAKING IT WORK — MAKING IT SWING!

by Bruce H. Klauber

For approximately a ten-year period (about 1957-67) bands comprised of tenor sax/organ/drums, guitar/tenor sax/organ/drums, organ/drums, etc. abounded both in the night club and recording arenas. Jimmy Smith, Jimmy McGriff, Richard "Groove" Holmes, Jack McDuff and Shirley Scott were among the newer names of the time who were thrust to the very top of the recording and performing heap, while veteran stalwarts like Bill Doggett, Wild Bill Davidson and Milt Buckner were afforded the opportunity to reach a wider audience than ever before.

But there is a problem that existed both in the early days and more than ever today: Only a small number of contemporary working drummers have bothered to realize that their lot is a most specialized one. The method of playing with an organ or organ-based group is entirely different from accompaniment given to a conventional combo. Because few of the younger percussionists know this, the ultimate performance and intensity of swing often suffers as a result. It's not the most tangibly evident quality I speak of, to be sure, but it's one that is lacking seriously enough to warrant at least an attempt at discussion and examination.

The beginning of my experience in this genre occurred when I had the good fortune of working a few weeks with jazz great Charlie Ventura's trio. During the first set, it was apparent that things did not sound exactly right. Though I couldn't put my finger on it until sometime later, I eventually termed the culprit rigidity. It's true that almost every drummer has a style of sorts, or at least a number of perceptible influences that serve to color his playing. Naturally, a percussionist's inherent concept must not be thrown to the winds, rather, it should be combined with a sense of looseness and flow which complements and colors the statements of the soloists, the band's arrangements and musical basis.

A looser concept must pervade because of the very nature of the organ. Because it is not acoustic, there is a minute delay

from the time the player strikes the keys until the sound reaches the ears. Though the lapse is slight, it must be taken into account. The idea of getting into the tempo's "groove" is not simply a count-off, 1-2-3-4 matter. DRUMMER, organist and any other additional instruments must feel their way, and "fall in" to the tempo set by the leader.

Another reason for this is the somewhat elusive nature of the band's bottom. More often than not, the bass line will be carried by the organ's left hand or bass pedals. The line eventually established is nowhere near as definite as one played by an electric or standup bass, hence, the drummer's job is made even more difficult. Additionally, it must be realized that the setting of tempo and the falling-in idea are almost instantaneous processes which will naturally evolve once a drummer becomes more familiar with the organ's nature. With experience and practice, a steady, definite tempo will be ascertained in two to four measures, hopefully after the tune's introduction.

Once within the composition, it will help, especially in middle tempo numbers and ballads, if the drummer becomes more melodically oriented, and aware. Because there may frequently be as few as two men in the band, it will enhance matters musical if the drummer becomes more familiar with song construction, dynamics, the capabilities of the organ stops and Leslie-type speakers, and the style of the player. Not in terms of sheer technicality, but knowledge of the infinite variety of sounds they produce.

In the beginning, I learned by way of a quick combination of listening, doing and osmosis that on ballads, an overabundance of open gaps would present themselves — spaces that could not adequately be filled by either simple tempo keeping or stock fills. I don't advocate over-playing, or attempting to constantly cover the organists obligato or chord changes, as that practice is even more hazardous to the music. A few soft, elastically roll-like melodically-oriented

figures on tom-toms or cymbals will often work well. This type of fill should be simple, rather than a fast, multi-noted passage, and the end result should be implied and felt instead of strictly heard. Sometimes, just a slight variation on the basic cymbal beat will do. The key is a relaxation of style.

The drums' actual sound and timbre is of the utmost importance. Drummers with a rock-type background more often than not have spent a great deal of time perfecting a dead sound, while many jazz players allow some of the natural ring to remain but pitch the snare and toms way up. In either case, the sound that will result in tandem with the organ will be an intruding one, serving only to impede the music's natural flow. A middle or lower range sound on all drums and a slight loosening of the snares will make the whole sound of the band smoother, looser, more ensemble-oriented and ultimately easier on the ear. The same goes for cymbals. Dead, taped cymbals, which many drummers have become fond of, have no place here. A lower pitched sound and judicious use of the natural overtones are essential. A sizzle cymbal is also recommended. Its vibrations and ring easily help fill the music's gaps and can add much to the color, dynamics and range of the group's repertoire.

The various suggestions and factors described are only guidelines, of course, which must be related to the drummer's particular musical situation. But regardless of the type of music played, the problems listed will almost always manifest themselves in a small group situation with an organ at its center. Listening is the best way one can realize what has to be done. Donald Bailey's early work with Jimmy Smith; Jimmy Cobb's playing with Shirley Scott; Alan Dawson's playing with Milt Buckner and Illinois Jacquet on Cadet's "Go-Power," and Jo Jones work with Milt Buckner and Buddy Tate. All are prime examples of "how-to," which can be easily adapted to your own situation.

DeJohnette

JD: Not a lot. Two, maybe three at most. Then we leave a piece and come back to it, or we do a whole other thing. We don't labour on it. You should get it by the third take. Sometimes a studio is cold and you have to warm up.

MD: Do you listen to much music? What sort of influences have you had?

JD: It's hard to say. I listen to so much music it's hard to be specific. I like pop groups, I like Redbone, Bob Marley, reggae music.

MD: Speaking about reggae, "Malibu Reggae" ("Untitled" album, ECM) is a really nice statement!

JD: Yeah, a lot of people missed that. I remember Billy Cobham did a blindfold test (in Downbeat magazine) to that. He said something to the effect that "I could go to the bathroom and make music like that". That's a nice compliment (laughs). Somebody told me "Billy Cobham put you down, put you down!" When I found out what he said I thought it was great! I've known Billy for years.

MD: What is your opinion of Billy Cobham, Buddy Rich?

JD: Billy can do anything. Billy can play jazz or he can play rock. He really excels at jazz-rock. He's got enormous chops. I like Buddy. I like a lot of drummers. I have no ... I mean, I like musicians, period. Not just drummers.

MD: You don't seem to have a problem of compromising your standards. Do you have trouble competing since your music isn't really commercial?

JD: Well, my music is not considered as accessible as Jan Hammer's, Chick Corea's, or Herbie Hancock. But it's not important to me. I'm just happy to be with ECM, which has a distribution which has established a criteria for quality regardless of what people say about it being too "pretty", "classical", or "European". You just have to keep your mind on the fact that there are people around who care. I play this music because I know there are people around who appreciate it. 

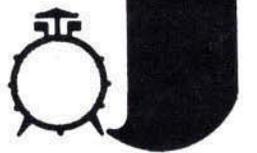
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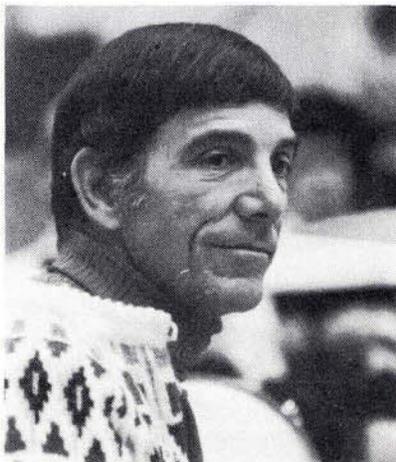
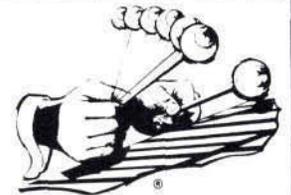
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## BIG SID CATLETT

by R. Willis Tale



Sid Catlett, to those unfamiliar with the name, was considered one of the greatest jazz drummers of the 30's and early 40's, and is still recognized as one of the most significant forces in the evolution of the art of jazz drumming. His playing greatly influenced the new modernists of the late 40's and early 50's. Shelly Manne, Kenny Clarke, Gene Krupa, and Buddy Rich are just a few of the drummers who were directly influenced by the Catlett style.

He was a giant of a man, both musically and physically, born in Evansville, Indiana in 1910. He arrived in New York City in 1930 with Sammy Stewart, to be followed by stints with Benny Carter, McKinneys Cotton Pickers, Jeter-Pillars, Fletcher Henderson and the Don Redmond band of 1936-38. Redmond led one of the top black bands of the thirties. A four year stay with Louis Armstrong filled the years 1938-42, along with a brief engagement with the Benny Goodman band of 1941. He led his own band in California up to 1945, though the last years of his playing career were spent freelancing in the Chicago area. Winner of the Esquire Gold award in 1944 and 45, Big Sid died in Chicago in 1951 at the age of 41.

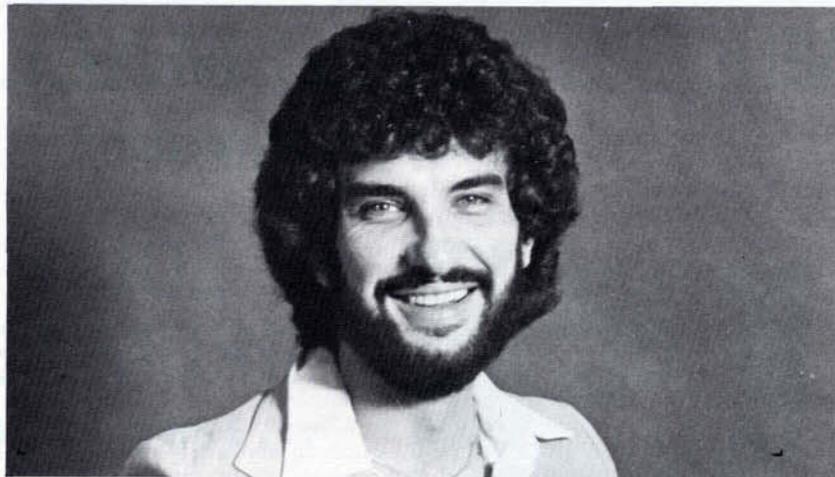
It is essential to note, when looking back at the overall musical influence of Catlett, that his distinctive style which ultimately influenced so many players, had deep roots itself. Roots which could be traced back to the military jazz flavored march style predominate in the playing of Zutty Singleton, Tubby Hall and the legendary Baby Dodds. The swing and drive of this style had a great influence on him. But Sid wasn't content just following along the lines which preceded him. Musical thought and conception were of the utmost impor-

tance to him. Sid clearly pointed to a new direction in terms of rhythmic thinking, and he was soon to develop a style unheard of before him. Rather than constructing his solos in a purely military rhythmic framework, his solo work became definite explorations and variations on musical lines and themes. His solos would practically carry the melodic line of the music, combined with daring and fascinating variations on those melodic lines. He would state patterns, repeat them, and embellish them thru ingenious use of melodic and tonal invention. Catlett took the drum solo and made it a true personal musical expression, clearly demonstrating a new concept to the instrument, and carved a path for the evolution which was soon to follow.

Sid Catlett was also the first drummer to make more careful and subtle use of the bass drum. The bass — up to this point — had been used primarily for a heavy

emphasis on time. Sid's approach was different. He underplayed the bass drum, yet maintained firm and steady time. He began to use the bass drum for accents and explosions of a startling nature, thus blazing a path for the new school of bop modernists who eventually dropped the time-keeping role of the bass drum altogether, preferring to use it as a separate solo voice.

Catlett, in essence, was the key figure in bridging the gap between the military style and the bop school which was to come. His musical thought led the way for Kenny Clarke, leading forerunner of the bop era, and perhaps most noticeably in the work of Max Roach who was to be greatly influenced by both Catlett and Clarke. Catlett's style was soon to be studied and absorbed by an entire group of young drummers who were to become the great contributors in the evolution of the instrument. Big Sid Catlett. A true giant.



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SF: When Thad writes something for the band, do you write your own charts?

ML: No, he writes them. But I'll memorize everything usually the second or third time through and that's it! I put the part away — never to be looked at again. If it's going to be recorded right away, Thad will really write things out. If it's something that we have time to work on, then it's not necessary. Thad's first choruses usually have a lot of rhythm section figures, and he'll write those out. That means top line, bottom line, middle line, whatever. He uses different instruments for different sounds too, and I'll play those. The rest he knows I'm going to hear, so he doesn't bother.

Most arrangers don't know how to write for rhythm. That's because so many drummers in the old days didn't read. A lot of drummers can't read that stuff today, either.

SF: Have you ever thought about writing a book?

ML: I'm writing a book right now, with Clem DeRosa. You know, I agree drum books are very important, but I sure wish the writers would write something that young drummers could really use on the job. All these exercise books are nothing

but exercises. There's so many guys who can read the hell out of those books. Then you put a simple chart in front of them and they can't play it! My book will be a text-book type of thing, but the exercises will definitely be things you can use on the job. The book is aimed at playing drums, and not wishing that I knew more than I know.

SF: Would you still recommend that a drummer have as much of a background in all styles of playing as you did?  
ML: There is no phase of the business I would tell a guy to avoid. I think a young drummer should occasionally go to a Broadway show, and if possible get a front row seat so he can listen to the drummer. Watch him, and see how he sets up. Follow some of the music. I think teachers active in this type of work should take their students on the job with them whenever they can. I did all that, and I consider myself very lucky.

SF: Do you believe a drummer should expect to make a living just playing jazz?

ML: I think anybody who wants to be that good, can make a living at it. It's a matter of being that good. Everybody that starts out to be a drummer isn't going to be a great drummer. An outstanding player will always work. How do you become an outstanding player? Hard work! A lot of talent is involved, and a lot of listening and studying. I think anybody can become great at what they do, if they put the time in. Somebody who doesn't have it will usually find out pretty early.

Now, I've seen guys that are great players walking around with no jobs, but you've got to look into their lifestyle a little bit. A lot of them are undependable. They walk around with chips on their shoulders, or they've got some bad habits. That's the reason they're not working. Not because of their playing.

SF: Are you involved in teaching?

ML: Actually, I'm doing more coaching than teaching. I let my students show me what they can do, and tell me what they want to do. I'll either show them an easier way, or the right way, and certainly let them know what they're doing wrong. I explain all about life and playing in general. I fill their heads with knowledge, not actual playing. I feel they've got to do their own playing. I want them to develop themselves. I don't want a whole bunch of guys playing like Mel Lewis. First of all, they can't do it — no more than I could play like Buddy. That's why I had no interest in playing like Buddy. I admire him for what he does, and that's the way it should be. I feel sorry for a whole bunch of Buddy Rich imitators. They've been failures as far as I'm concerned.

I've seen a whole lot of my imitators fall by the wayside. If you like my playing that much, absorb and be influenced, but take it and change it around a little bit. Turn it into your own thing. Use it, use me, use others. Use it in some kind of way — but not deliberately. When you get deliberate

— when you actually try to copy note for note, lick for lick — you're not doing anything to help yourself. If you like my sound, and you know you're not getting a sound as nice as mine, make it a point to get a better sound. Ask me, or somebody else; "What can I do to get a better sound?" Be influenced by the fact that I have a good sound, but you don't have to get my sound. You can't get my sound. My touch has to do with my sound, and nobody has my touch except me. I don't have anybody else's touch either. Get your sound. You'll know about it because people will complement you for your sound.

SF: I would like to know about your conception of drum soloing.  
ML: You know it's funny. Nobody ever thought I could play solos because my solo's were never visual. When a drummer makes a name for himself as a soloist, the solo is very visual. Gene, Buddy, Louis and Joe Morello come to mind as the top solo drummers — visually speaking. Of course

*continued on page 32*

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those four guys happen to be great drummers, but I've watched them all play and their solos were also visual. I'm from the other school. Mr. Long Stoneface. I'm serious and I smile, sometimes. If you like what I'm doing, you just as soon don't watch me. I do everything easy. All these things are happening but it looks as though I'm doing nothing. That's the way I want it. I have a very limited technique. I work all this stuff out of this little amount of technique. I can't play fast single strokes. I'm basically a double stroker, and lots of press rolls. I make sounds. Whatever I hear, I do. I don't even know how, I just do it. I know what I do isn't easy.

I did some soloing on my new small group album, *Mel Lewis and Friends*. Horizon Records, probably more than I've ever done in my whole life on record. I thought they were pretty good. They're sure different. I've been getting a lot of complements from young drummers. They ask me; "How do you think like that?" I think like a horn player. I like to cross bar lines, to think meters without thinking anything other than 4/4. I sort of think like Thad. He'll start phrases in the middle of nowhere, continue them on through and end up where you're supposed to. You really have to have a very good awareness of where you are.

SF: Do you practice that?

ML: No, I don't practice anything. I'll have to be honest. I stopped practicing when I started working, at about thirteen years of age. I'm not condoning it. I'm not saying that's what everybody should do. When I was young, I played every day. I played in school dance band and orchestra, and on the weekends I was working with non-union dance bands. I touched the drum every day of the week, almost.

SF: How important is it for a drummer to listen to the other members of the band?

ML: It's all important. Listening is the whole thing. I'll tell you exactly how I play. My whole approach to playing is reaction. I don't listen to myself play. I'm not aware of myself because I'm too busy listening to everything going on around me. All my body is doing is reacting to that. Sometimes I'm forcing things, making things happen another way, but I'm reacting to everything I hear. The composition I'm creating as I play is because of what I'm hearing. How can you work out how you're going to accompany somebody? You can't! You're supposed to be complementing and accompanying. Everything depends on your ears. If I'm busy listening to me, then I'm not hearing the rest of the band.

When the band is playing as an ensemble, I'm a part of that ensemble. I've been told another reason I'm not noticed so much in our band is because I'm heard as part of that ensemble in its entirety —

which is exactly what I'm striving for. The rhythm is a section of three individual instruments. We're the only section of that sort. You've got four trumpets, five saxes, and four trombones, basically. All those horns are playing together to get one big beautiful sound of harmony. Nobody sticks out. As a listener you can isolate if you want to hear the drums. But, when you hear the whole band and say; "Man, that's one big sound," that's when it's right.

SF: Have you ever been given advice from musicians who were not drummers which helped you in your playing?

ML: I've been given good advice and bad advice. Nobody offers you advice unless they think they can help you. When a guy comes over and really wants to talk intelligently and offer something like; "You know, maybe if you laid out once in a while, or if you changed sound, or if you went to brushes, it might be a little more effective," that cat's trying to help you. Try it. Listen to the guy. We all had to learn at one time. Somebody's always gonna like somebody else better than you, or this one likes you and this one doesn't. You've got to be strong enough to hold them all together whether they like you or not.

When I was a sideman with other people, it was very important for me to have the respect of as many of the guys as possible. In my own band, I try to make everybody feel that if you don't like something, speak up. I'm not the show. We're all working on that stand together. Don't be afraid to tell me something you don't like, and don't be afraid to pat me on the back when you do like it.

SF: What are your feelings on the problems of leading a big jazz band within the current music scene?

ML: Basie and us are the only pure bands out. Maybe Thad and I are wrong, but I don't think so. Somebody in this world has to remain an artist and try to lead the way. We believe in the good old American tradition of swinging. The kids don't know about it. It's brand new to them. It's harder to play than rock. The basics are always a little harder, but we're pretty complex basics. Most young drummers we hear coming up can't play 4/4 worth a damn. It's all a straight eighth note feel, all this shit they're doing. 4/4 is triplets, you've got to get that triplet feel, and they can't do it.

Fusion music is alright, but I'm against it. The people who used it to make money drew a lot of kids over to jazz, and when they got them there, they should have showed them what jazz was really like. The kids will listen to them. Chick Corea, Joe Zawinal, Herbie Hancock and others like that are great musicians who've been plowing and playing that other shit continuously. There's nothing new happening. They could take their following and say; "Hey, here's what we used to do. Here's what we really like to do."

Thad and I are friends with all those musicians, and we know damn well that they'd like to be doing what we're doing. But, they started making money. Sure, they deserve the money, but they should be making it playing what they originally played, because they were fine jazz players. SF: Who do you consider to be the good big band drummers of today and yesterday?

ML: John Von Ohlen is one, and Ronnie Zito. He could do it. Ed Soph is a very good big band drummer. Frank Dunlop who was with Maynard, and who I'd like to hear with Basie's band. I liked Ron Davis in Al Porcino's band. Joe LaBarbera could do it, and I still like Harold Jones.

There's only been a handful of expert big band drummers. Probably only fifteen or twenty, really first rate. Jo Jones, Buddy, Davey Tough, Don Lamond, Krupa, Tiny Kahn, Jake Hanna, Sonny Payne and Gus Johnson. Shadow Wilson was one of my all time favorite drummers. Sam Woodyard with Ellington, and Sonny Greer was a lovely player. A lot of people thought he was corny, but he was a very musical player. Of course, Louis Bellson, Irv Cottier and Shelly Manne. I suppose if

you wanted to cut it down to just the absolute greatest, it would take a little time. I would have to be very honest and leave myself out, although I would love to put myself in that category. I'll have to leave that up to somebody else.

I know I'm good, but I'm not gonna ever say I'm the greatest. I'm not the greatest. I am my own favorite drummer. When you're good, you should always be your favorite. You don't have to walk around with a big head, but you should feel that you're as good as anybody. You should never feel inferior to another drummer. If you feel inferior then you haven't made it. There has got to be a point where you feel confident that there's nothing you cannot do. Not to the point where you have no more to learn, but where you can handle any job thrown in front of you. When everybody hires you for work, you're recording, doing all the gigs, your name is in print, you know that people admire you. When you're known by musicians around the world, at that point you should be your own favorite drummer. You should feel that there's nobody better than you are — but by the same token — that you're not better than anybody else.



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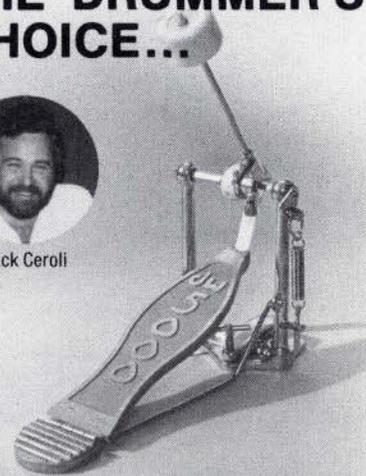
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# INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

## PEARL DRUMS MOVES TO A NEW FACILITY

During November, the Pearl Drum Center moved to its new home at 408 Harding Industrial Drive, Nashville, Tennessee. This new plant is six miles from the former location and provides 50% more space and many improvements in product quality, efficiency, and service levels. Pearl is enjoying record sales each month and the new facility assures the ability to support this growth. Pearl also will be capable of providing even faster, more accurate dealer service.

## COBHAM PACKS 'EM IN

Drumming great Billy Cobham was the featured artist at a recent jam-packed drum clinic sponsored by Sam Ash Music of New York. Cobham now plays and endorses the Tama drum line.

Pictured in photo, (l to r), Paul Ash, Ken Hoshino from Tama, Mike Rayber, Sam Ash store coordinator, and Toshi Hoshino, also from Tama.



## MIXED RHYTHMS

A bill to protect the jobs of drummers was almost drummed out of the Minnesota State Legislature when lawmakers thought the word "rhythm" had something to do with birth control.

Minnesota State Senator Collin Peterson proposed a bill to outlaw the commercial use of automatic electronic "rhythm units", calling for a gross misdemeanor charge on the first violation. The penalty for the second offense would be one year of forced listening to the mechanical drum beats. Peterson claimed the devices were being used to replace drummers in small dance bands.

The bill's description of rhythm units confused Senate officials, and, thinking the bill would ban a birth control device, referred the measure to the Health, Welfare and Corrections Committee.

Carmine Appice and Les DeMerle played a three night engagement at the Celler in L.A. in late January. The six-year-old club owned by Les gives Angelinos the chance to see jazz/rock music in an intimate setting.

The first night of the series featured friends of Carmine's with the two drummers playing music from Carmine's forthcoming album. One piece called "Twist of the Wrist" could become a drum single. Said Carmine, "I want to try to bring drums up to the front again. I want to be the Gene Krupa of rock."

The following two nights featured Les' band, *Transfusion*, and both drummers placing more emphasis on jazz. The shows provided much soloing by both percussionists. It was a fun event for the musicians as well as the audiences.



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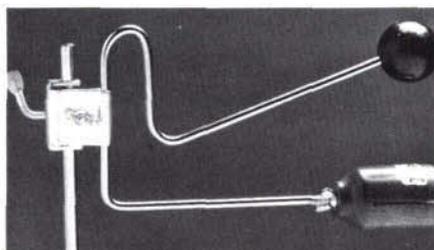
## JUST DRUMS



### LUDWIG LAUNCHES UFO

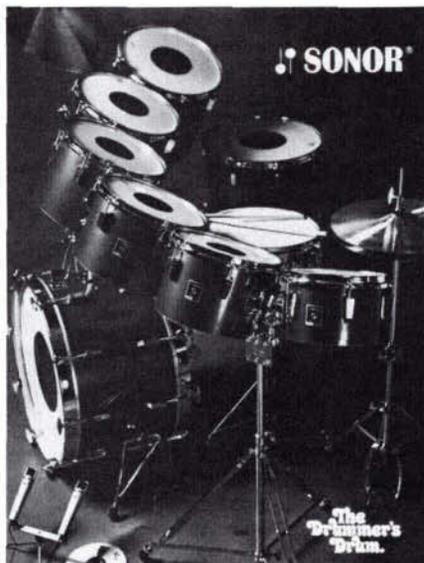
The new Ludwig UFO Snare Drum Kit features the popular Ludwig 404 Aeolite Snare Drum, a quality metal shell drum with Ludwig's famous center bead. Also included is a Gladstone Practice Pad, a pair of sticks, sturdy snare drum stand and an instruction book entitled, *The Ludwig Drum Method*. Everything fits neatly inside built-in compartments in the one piece molded case, with two snap latches and a steel handle clasp.

Just introduced from Camber Cymbals, 101 Horton Avenue, Lynbrook, N.Y., the *How to Choose A Cymbal* consumer pamphlet giving the prospective new cymbal buyer the important basic points of what to look for when purchasing a cymbal. Covered in the pamphlet are: the right cymbal for the right job; how to try them out; how to break them in and how to care for them once you've purchased them.



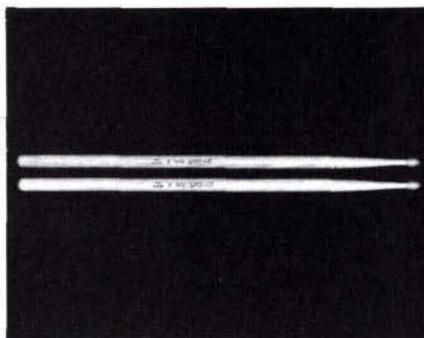
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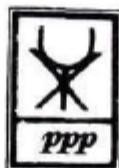
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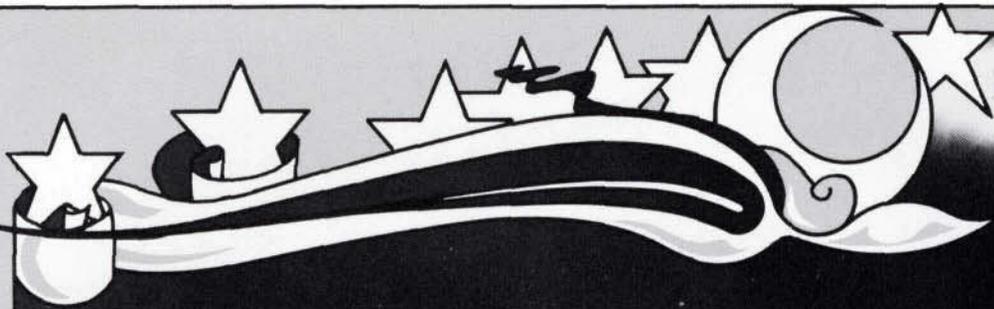
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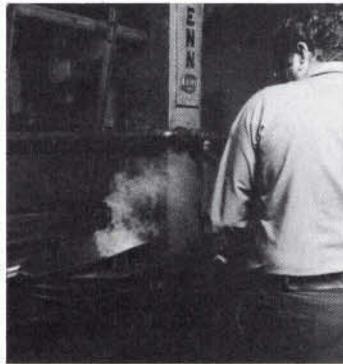
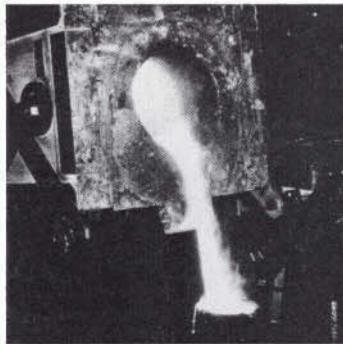
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