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Chad Wackerman

Lionel
Hampton

Allan
Schwartzberg



W I N
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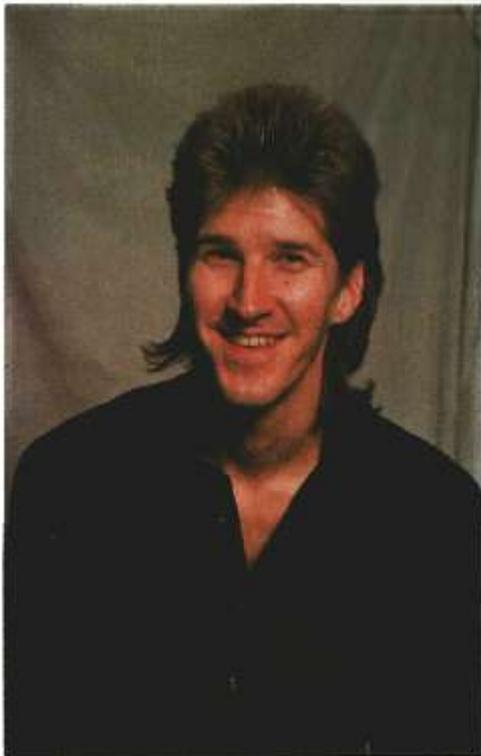


Photo by Rick Malkin

20 CHAD WACKERMAN

His work with Frank Zappa and Allan Holdsworth has established Chad Wackerman as a drummer who can handle extremely complex music, while his playing with Albert Lee and Men At Work shows that he is equally comfortable with simple grooves. For Chad, the goal is to play each style convincingly.

by Robyn Flans

26 ALLAN SCHWARTZBERG

A typical day for a busy New York studio drummer involves a number of sessions and a variety of challenges. We followed Allan Schwartzberg around on one of those days for a revealing look at the real world of session drumming.

by Robert Santelli

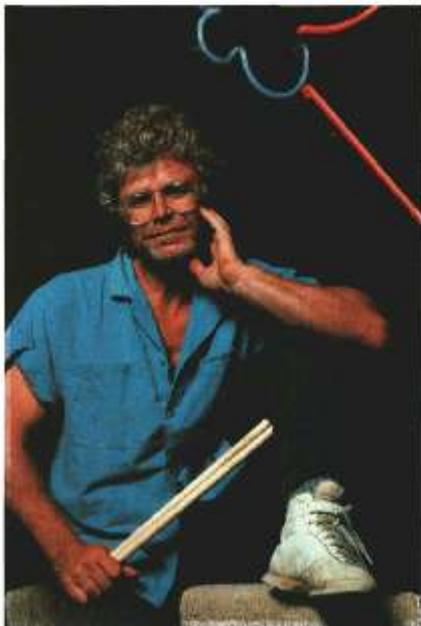


Photo by Ebet Roberts

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Known primarily for his pioneering use of the vibraphone, Lionel Hampton started out as a drummer, and his work on both instruments has contributed greatly to the history of jazz. Here, he traces his long career and discusses the importance of swing.

by Burt Korall

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The Live Action

I recently reviewed the results of a nationwide poll conducted by The National Research Center For The Arts. One segment of the poll examined how young Americans are spending their leisure hours, and what forms of entertainment are most popular. Interestingly, though live music events scored high in popularity, actual attendance figures were *down* an astounding 26% since 1984.

The reasons for the decline ranged from a lack of time, to exorbitant ticket prices, to a shortage of performances in certain areas. However, the strongest contributing factor was the increasing popularity of CD's and VCR's, which apparently are being used nowadays as substitutes for live entertainment. Evidently, a rather substantial percentage of young people are content to stay at home with their entertainment centers, rather than attend live music events.

This trend seems to further indicate that today's young musicians are making less of an effort to see their favorite artists in *live* performance. And that doesn't strike me as being a particularly healthy sign. Of course, there's obviously nothing wrong with purchasing the records and viewing the videos. But, in truth, neither can ever really replace being part of a live audience. We all learn best from careful, repetitive, close-up observation of the players we admire—something recordings and TV simply cannot provide. Observing the live action is an essential aspect of learning.

A classic example stands out vividly in my memory. Some readers, old enough to remember, may recall a place called Birdland in New York City. Despite its legendary status, Birdland was actually nothing more than a rather dingy basement nightclub, with about as much atmosphere as a Burger King. And yet, hundreds of wide-eyed musicians would file down that narrow flight of stairs into this literally underground establishment seven nights a week. For a mere two-dollar admission, you could sit for *hours* in the "Peanut Gallery," not more than five feet from some of the finest drummers of all time. Aspiring players would come from miles around to sit shoulder to shoulder in that cramped "Gallery." But nobody cared. We were there to watch, to listen, and to marvel at the greatest drummers in the world. And that's all that really mattered. It was a truly inspiring learning experience.

We do our best to enlighten you each month on the styles and techniques of the great players of our time. But reading about it is only *one* aspect. More important is to get out and see the players you admire and wish to emulate, and absorb all you can from their *live* performances in the concert halls and clubs around the country. This is most definitely one phase of the learning process we should never overlook or underestimate.

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READERS' PLATFORM

AIRTO, SPENCER, AND VELEZ

Hooray for you guys! It's good to see a publication keep its promises. When you announced that *Modern Percussionist* was to cease publication as of the September 1987 issue, I was very disappointed. I am a working percussionist with only a moderate interest in the drumset, and I had greatly enjoyed the features and columns contained in *MP*. So it was with some trepidation that I subscribed to *Modern Drummer*, based on your assurance that *MD* would dedicate a fair share of coverage to the percussion world. But I must say, in addition to columns you've already presented by Emil Richards and Anthony Cirone, your September issue—with its cover story on Airtio and profiles of both Julie Spencer and Glen Velez—reaffirmed my faith in those assurances. Thanks very much for all the information on these excellent performers. Please continue to include such excellent coverage of the non-drumset side of our fascinating percussive world.

William Reynolds
Omaha NE

DAVE TOUGH

Thanks for printing Burt Korall's piece on Dave Tough. [September '88 *MD*] Articles like that—making us aware of the musical tradition/heritage of the instrument, and of the techniques and ideas of one of the artists who are part of that tradition—are greatly appreciated and desperately needed.

Ed Soph
Denton TX

Thank you for the wonderful article on Dave Tough. It was beautifully written and very informative. It was listening to Dave that inspired me to be a drummer, when I was ten years old and Dave was with Tommy Dorsey. For years, I wondered how he got those beautiful sounds from his bass drum

and snare. Your article was very enlightening.

Alex Menriquez
Arlington WA

I can't thank you enough for publishing the Dave Tough article. It has been long overdue. I am sure that many of the people you feature in most of your issues are better schooled and have better chops than Davey ever had. But while Dave wove magic carpets, these people drive piles. I know that's what the music industry requires these days, and you are to be congratulated all the more for printing something that goes against the common wisdom and features a true drumming artist.

Don Robertson
Brookside NJ

BUDDY MILES

Buddy Miles was a tremendous influence on me as a young drummer in the late 1960s. I appreciated the power and soulful feeling that he brought to the music of the Electric Flag and his own Express. Looking back now, I realize what a pivotal figure he was in the transition between "soul" music and "rock" music, which laid the foundation for so many successful bands that followed. I was pleased to see an article on Buddy in *MD*, and even more pleased with the straightforward manner in which Buddy spoke of both his good and bad times. Robert Santelli is to be commended for a fine interview.

Jake Previllar
New Orleans LA

TWO-WAY STREET

I was very pleased and thankful for your September '88 *Editor's Overview* ["A Two-Way Street"], which dealt with the relationship between music dealers and musicians. The editorial was on the money, and

with a magazine of your size and profile, I'm sure it will influence the thinking and behavior of both partners in the relationship. Thanks for your sensitivity to an issue that affects us all.

Warren Price
President
The Drum Shop
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

TRIGGERS II CLARIFICATION

First off, I would like to thank all of you at *MD* for the fine and most favorable article and review of our *Drum Bug* contact pickup and *Drum Bug DT-1* trigger in the September issue.

Secondly, I would like to clear up some possible misconceptions that Bob Saydlowski, Jr. may have had at the time he wrote the article. When using the *Drum Bug* contact pickup as a trigger on the bottom side of the batter head, we do not ever recommend running the cable between the head and rim. This is asking for trouble, bent rims, cut cables, etc. If it can't be mounted on top, as it was designed to be, and must be mounted underneath, then we suggest removing the bottom head of the drum so that the cables can run out the bottom of the drum.

The *Drum Bug* is a contact pickup to replace mic's and stands and provide isolation in the mix. Triggering is better left to our newer *Drum Bug DT-1* trigger, as it was designed specifically for a triggering application with the new units on the market in mind. How many triggers have drummers had to replace, just because the cheap cable had broken? We've sought to eliminate that problem by creating a durable sensor head that has replaceable cables. The *DT-1* has a phono plug on top, and each unit comes with its own cable, consisting of a right-angle RCA phono plug, 7" Belden cable ending in a 1/4" female jack with mounting

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SHURE

Breaking Sound Barriers

Max Roach



It's been 72 hours since the official announcement, and for Max Roach, the sensation lingers. "I didn't sleep at all last night," said a smiling Roach backstage after performing a solo set before an adoring crowd of University of Massachusetts students and faculty. It's no complaint, just a measure of what a MacArthur Fellowship has meant to the 64-year-old composer, percussionist, and UMass professor, considered by many the greatest drummer in jazz.

Roach, the first university professor to receive the award, will receive \$372,000 from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation of Chicago over the next five years. The no-strings-attached grant has been given to some 254 fellows since 1981. The other 30 winners this year range from butterfly expert Philip DeVries to military historian David Alan Rosenberg and puppeteer Bruce O. Schwartz.

"I got a message in the school office," said Roach, "and I noticed it was from the 312 area code. I thought it might be something about the Chicago Jazz Festival in the fall. I called and they told me what it was. I was completely speechless, dumbfounded, and humbled. It was beyond my wildest dreams."

For Roach, who considers the award a tribute to bebop, this is a chance to create opportunities for others.

This performer, who has cherished his black heritage and musical roots while

forging fresh musical territory, plans to create a music school in New York's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, where he grew up and learned the drums in the neighborhood church. "I've always been fortunate to play with the most creative people," says Roach. "I've always been able to make ends meet. Now, I can

pay back a few of the things that I've gotten from the community I grew up in."

Roach has always mixed his artistry with activism, be it in protesting the Vietnam War or in compositions like the 1961 "We Insist! Freedom Now Suite" he wrote with Oscar Brown Jr. "He's very much of a risk-taker," says noted jazz pianist, historian, and fellow UMass professor Billy Taylor, a friend of Roach's for 40 years. "Because of his beliefs, he's jeopardized his career. Some people don't take activism lightly in this country."

"We were always politically aware," said Roach, who felt the sting of blacklisting in the '60s. "I was like that during the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War. I was very affected by what happened in South Africa."

Roach was a beneficiary of the New Deal's Works Progress Administration (WPA), which brought subsidized artists into the public schools. "I didn't know the implications of all the development at the time, but I knew I could study an instrument. Nowadays public schools are in a lot of trouble. But it's a funny thing, talent will surface anyway."

Roach, who won an Obie for his compositions for the stage, has long been active in academia, lecturing at the School of Jazz in Lenox, Massachusetts, and serving as a full-time UMass professor from 1973-78. He teaches master classes a few weeks a year now. He also plans to

begin work on his autobiography. "I think I've just scratched the surface with it," said Roach. "I think of what I'm doing as being much like what a writer does. I'm creating a story on an instrument. That's the approach I could take working with Dizzy and Duke. Now my students are taking it another step further."

—David Perry

Gary Burke



Photo by Rupert Herman

When we last covered Gary Burke (Sept. '87 *MO*), the cliff-hanging question we were left with was, "Can Gary and the Joe Jackson band possibly pull off a live presentation of the fully orchestral *Will Power* album?" We're pleased to report that "Yes!" is the answer. Gary and members of the Jackson band jetted to Japan to join the Tokyo Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Yoshikazu Tanaka, for a live *Will Power* concert. With two days of rehearsal, the massive 80-piece ensemble pulled together a successful show.

"It was a huge undertaking and difficult to know whether it would fly or not," explains Gary. "It turned out great, and it was actually easier playing the music live in concert than it was recording it. The Japanese musicians were very strong, precise players, which set well with the precise rhythmic passages in Joe's music." Offers for similar orchestral collaborations have come to Jackson from Europe and also from major domestic orchestras, including the

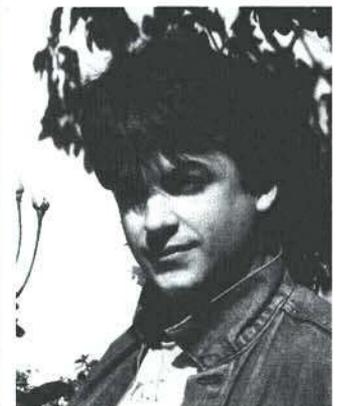
prestigious Cleveland Orchestra.

Another winning collaboration was Gary's composing work with The National Dance Company of Portugal in Lisbon. His piece, "Sopa Do Dia" ("Soup Of The Day"), composed on the *Emulator 2* and the Linn 9000, is now an official part of the company's repertoire. In London, Burke joined Jackson to work closely with director Francis Ford Coppola while recording the soundtrack of the film *Tucker*. Jackson's score called for a 30-piece band that let loose plenty of swing. "It was a change of pace for us and a lot of fun for me to play that kind of music again," says Gary.

Producing has also kept Gary busy. He produced singer/guitarist Greg Kroll's album *Two Sides* and is working on another project that is a potential act for Canada A&M Records. Gary's inspired drumset playing can be heard in many other media currently, including the "Nighttime" celebrity spot recorded with Jackson for a Michelob TV ad, on a two-hour video from the *Big World* tour entitled *Joe Jackson Live In Tokyo*, and also on two sides of Jackson's retrospective live double album, *Joe Jackson 1980/1986*. Gary plans to continue growing through composing and producing. And as for his future versatile projects on Jackson's team? "With Joe, you just never know what's next," he laughs.

—Jeff Potter

Denny Fongheiser



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Denny Fongheiser is enjoying quite a busy time at the moment, between working live with Belinda Carlisle and in the studio on countless recording projects.

"I used to worry about losing studio work by being out of town," Denny admits, "but actually, this tour was really good for me in that respect. We were only out for three or four weeks at one time, and a couple of projects waited until I got back, which was really nice. It just made me realize that you can keep it going. It's good to be able to do both studio and live work, just for a different energy. In the studio, it's very creative, and it's a different song every day. There's much more mental concentration with more technique involved. Also, the endurance is different. Live, there isn't as much of a technical pressure, so there's more of an energy you produce.

"I flew home to do Quarterflash during a few days off from touring, and it was great to be in the studio again, because I love studio work. But if you're in there every day, sometimes you just start going for some of the same, safe things. Getting away from it for a few weeks, I come back with a whole fresh approach.

"With Belinda, we had a lot of freedom," he continues. "She was happy as long as the playing was strong and we had the right feels and tempos of the songs, and certain key parts were done consistently every night. All the songs were real up-tempo, with real straight-ahead grooves, so I perceived my job as just holding that groove. There isn't a lot of flash or anything."

One of the more creative studio gigs for Denny has been recording Tracy Chapman's debut offering. "That was great to do because it was very different. It was back to the way they used to make records. Everything was tracked live, at least all the bass, drums, Tracy's guitar, and her vocals. We did a couple of songs a day, and David Kershbaum produced. His whole approach was to make Tracy's vocal and guitar the focus, and

bassist Larry Kline and my job was to support it and put coloring in around her. This was actually my favorite project, because most of the projects I get called for are more heavy-handed stuff. In this project there were so many subtleties. And she is great—a real good person and really, really talented."

Four tracks on Tom Cochran's recent record were also a lot of fun to do, according to Denny. "I did that record with Don Gehman, who is pretty much responsible for all the records happening for me. He gave me my first start, and I've been working with him for about the last three years. That project was a lot of fun because there was a lot of playing involved in it, and it was more than just holding down a groove. They really wanted to create interesting parts and different feels. I would take whatever groove they had, and suggest different things to make it feel better, to make it move forward better. I'd take transitions or different parts like bridges, and make big changes so that there was something new and interesting, like doing fills on two different snare drums, one tuned really high and the other tuned medium or low. We went for some different sounds and tried to create some different moods for the record, which is something I really like to do."

In addition to these projects, Denny has been in the studio with David Kershbaum, working on records for a band called Show Of Hands, a track by the band Berlin, and tracks for the Burns Sisters. Other projects include Brian Setzer's latest album, half of the Dancing Hoods' latest LP, and producing a band called Rain On Fire for a TV pilot called *Gang Of Four*.

—Robyn Flans

David Owens

David Owens was working as a staff musician at Knotts Berry Farm when a friend showed him an ad in *Music Connection* magazine announcing auditions for Thomas Dolby.

"That night I put a tape together, thinking, 'Boy, that would be nice,' but I didn't think I had a chance in the world," David confesses. "But about three weeks later, I got a call to audition. I didn't feel real good about that first audition, though. At the second audition, Thomas stopped me and said, 'You're not playing any fills' and I said, 'Well, I'm just trying to make it groove,' because it certainly wasn't grooving. He called me a third time and set me up with bass player Terry Jackson, who got the job. He talked to me afterwards and said, 'We like your playing, and we're pretty sure we're going to use you, but we still have more people to hear.' By the fourth time I went in I figured he wouldn't have called me back unless he was pretty sure, and we started rehearsals after that."

Even though it seemed that the auditions didn't go that well, David says he probably got the gig because, "I wasn't overplaying. In fact, I was just playing the basics. I didn't go in there and try to show chops at all, because I figured enough guys in L.A. could do that. And under the circumstances, that wouldn't have worked anyway, so I went in and played the feels as best I could. He told me after the second audition that my main competition was Lou Molino, who I had auditioned against years back in Cock Robin. The two of us play completely different, though, and Thomas just had to make up his mind what sort of player he wanted,

I suppose.

"Thomas is looking for someone who doesn't approach the kit incredibly conventionally, although I'm not that unconventional. Sometimes he would actually toy with me. I'd have my sample-setup to the left, and he would have me put different sounds on different pads and play something with my left hand, then he'd say, 'Now do that with your right hand,' and he'd kind of mess with me and work with me almost like he was programming on his Fairlight, only he was using me."

The band rehearsed for seven weeks, played some local clubs, and then tracked for two weeks. Six months later, as the record neared completion, David went back into the studio to do overdubs. "Thomas really spends quite a bit of time in the studio, and he's very relaxed. Bill Bottrell was the best engineer I've ever worked with; there was no pressure, and he was really helpful and encouraging. It was a great atmosphere to work in."

After the release of the album, titled *Aliens Ate My Buick*, the band did some dates in England and went on the road for another month. Currently, David is just trying to keep himself busy, something he doesn't seem to have too much trouble doing. He works twice a week at Bill Medley's The Hop, doing a '50s and '60s show called *Rock Around The Clock*—"a lot of good musicians and a high-energy fast-paced hour-and-a-half show." In addition, he does *The British Invasion Show*, works with a band called Private Eye in Orange County—doing R&B, reggae, and rock in clubs—does casuals, and still subs down at Knotts. He even does a fair amount of jingles as well, for such products as Chief Auto Parts, McDonalds, Toyota, and Ralph's Market. Even with all that activity, David says he would still like to do more recording.

—Robyn Flans



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Let's face it, there's a forest of sticks out there. Some have real trendy names like Power Smashers or Thunder Thumpers. Then there are the ones that say they've been "specially designed" to handle everything from Light Rock to Heavy Metal. There's also some sticks that are used and endorsed by a bunch of famous drummers you've never even heard of.

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Charly Alberti



As percussionists, when we hear about Latin American music, we tend to think in terms of congas and cabasas, sambas and salsas. But at the moment, the biggest band south of the border is closer in spirit to English bands like Simple Minds than to the rhythms of Airto. Yet Charly

Alberti, drummer for the enormously popular Argentine band Soda Stereo, says that their influences aren't quite so easily gleaned. "Just like folkloric music, rock music from any country, and from any city within that country, has the personality of that place. The music of Argentina is the tango. Though we've never been into tango, it's something that is inside of us because we've been around it since we were kids.

This is somehow subconsciously expressed; the *spirit* of tango is in our music."

Charly goes on to say that their song "Cuando Pase El Temblor" ("When The Shaking Passes") was the most popular tune on their last tour—which included huge stadiums in Chile and Peru, among other countries—and that it retains

much of the feeling of the folkloric music of Northern Argentina.

In addition to (and perhaps as a result of) his role as drummer in such a popular band, Charly has become the first Latin rock musician of a strictly Latin band to be an endorser for international percussion companies. Charly actually took the initiative in the deals, approaching Remo when they were recently in South America and Pro-Mark and Sabian when he was in Los Angeles, to include him on their rosters.

This accomplishment seems a bit ironic, then, when one hears that this band from the most European of South American countries has no intentions of remaining a secret to all except the Spanish-speaking rock 'n' roll markets. They've already recorded two of their songs in English with Lena Lovich, and hope to put a tour together of college campuses in the States next March. And their first American release, produced by David Bowie's musical director (and fellow Argentine) Carlos Alomar and entitled *Doble Vida* (*Double Life*), will contain two tracks sung in English. According to their record company, CBS International, Soda Stereo are also the first Latin American band to put out a CD, and are the first band to be interviewed on MTV's new program, *MTV Internationale*.

Though Soda Stereo's songs avoid topical themes, world politics have probably had a profound effect on their rise to fame. Several years ago, during the Falkland Islands confrontations, all English-language music was banned from the airwaves. This gave the hundreds of Argentine bands waiting in the wings a crack at the big time with their own brand of heavily European-based rock 'n' roll. If all goes as Charly Alberti and Soda Stereo hope, the sounds of Latin America may soon become much more popular to non-Latin listeners than in the past, and what they hear might not sound all that unfamiliar.

—Adam Budofsky

NEWS...

Mike Baird on albums by Eddie Money, Bill Medley, and Billy Idol, as well as scattered tracks on Kenny Loggins' recent release and a recent session with Barry Manilow...
Drummers John Hartman and Michael Hossack and percussionist **Bobby LaKind** in the studio working on a Doobie Brothers album, featuring all original members, after which there are plans for a worldwide tour...

Paul Garisto is on tour with Iggy Pop supporting the new release, *Instinct...*

Michael Thomas on the road with the Bellamy Brothers...

Rod Morgenstein can be heard on Ensoniq Keyboard's promotional CD with the Dregs, whom he recently rejoined forces with to do a short tour. He is now a member of a new Atlantic Records band called Winger, which he says is in the vein of Def Leppard, Ratt, and Van Halen. On a jazzier note, he and **Danny Gottlieb** shared drum responsibilities on Players' *A Dream Come True*, and when one was on drums, the other played percussion. Rod also played piano on a song he wrote called "Crest Hollow" (with **Dave Samuels** on vibes). Dreggs guitarist Steve Morse's album was finally released in September after nearly a year's delay, and Rod's instructional video became available at the same time...

Rick Allen on the road with Def Leppard...

Josh Frees played on Mickey Thomas' soundtrack contribution, "Dream A Little Dream," as well as playing drums on camera in *Teen Witch...*

Larrie Londin currently in Europe with the Everly Brothers...

Jeff Donovan working with Dwight Yoakam...

Rick Gomez touring with Roy Clark...

Cecil Brooks recently gigging with Houston Person and Etta Jones, and with Michele Rosewoman...

Pat Mastelotto doing studio tracks with XTC.

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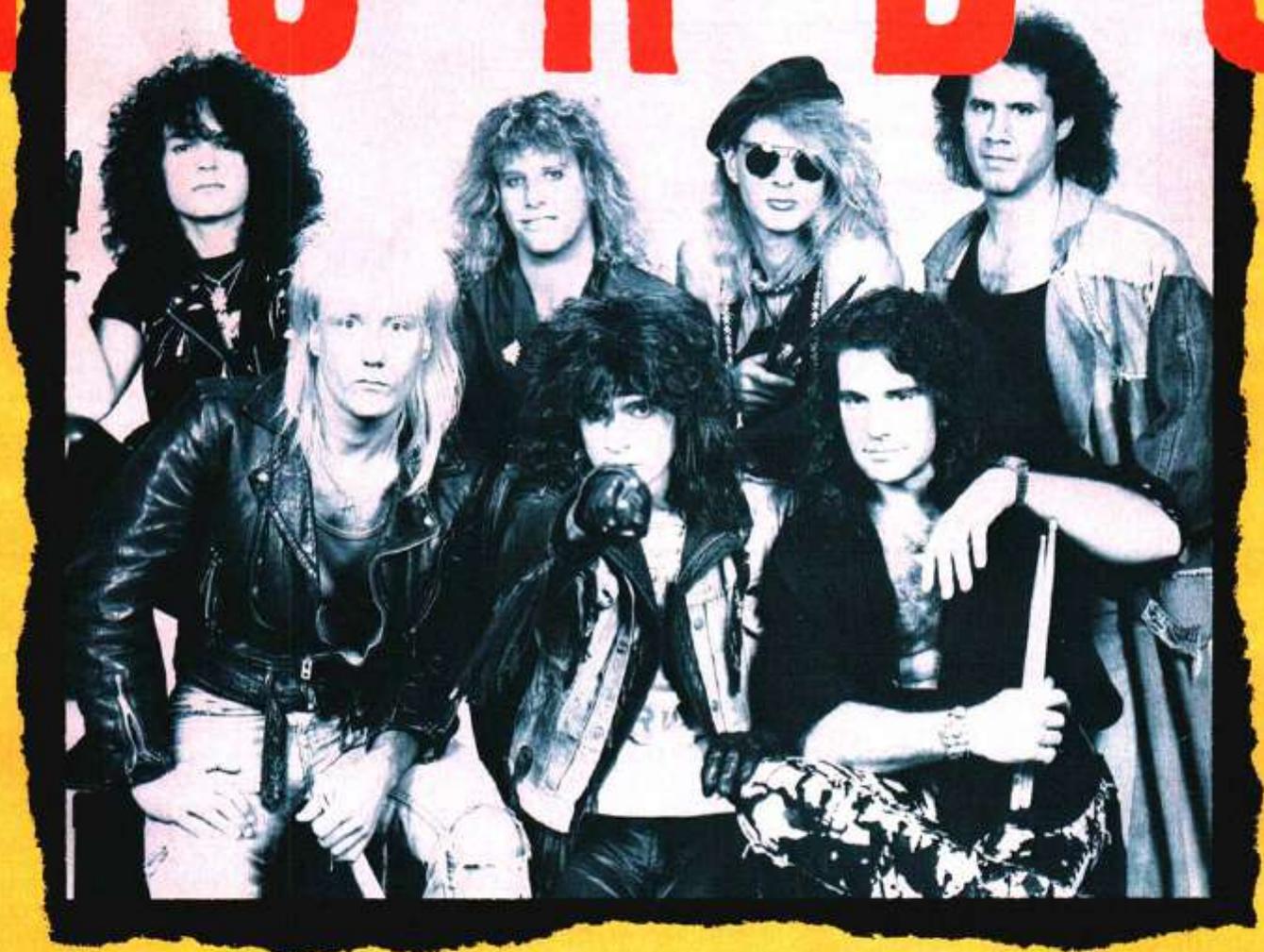
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CHARLIE BENANTE

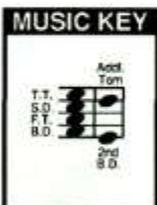
Q. I would like to know how to play the beginning of "Indians." Could you write out that intro, please? Good luck on your next album!

Q. I think you are a very dedicated musician and the greatest drummer around! I was wondering if you could show me the three fills in the middle of "Panic," where you play by yourself.

Stan Klecha
Luzerne PA

Chris Kelly
Toms River NJ

A. Thanks for the good wishes. Here's the intro to "Indians"; play the single bar shown four times.



The next three examples are the fills from "Panic."



JOHN SANTOS

Q. I have learned much from your *South Of The Border* columns in MD. I'd like to know if you have written any books on conga and Latin drumming. If so, how may I obtain them?

Dick Gratz
Oxford IA

A. Thanks for your appreciation and interest in my writing. I've been working on a book for many years. I've felt many times that I was near completion, only to experience delays due to my travels and activities as a musician and instructor. For this reason, it is difficult to predict when this book will be available. I love my work a great deal, and I really want the book to be done right, so obviously I'd rather not rush it. However, it shouldn't be too long before publication, and I do feel it will be worth the wait. In the meantime, I'm grateful for your encouragement.

DENNY CARMASSI

Q. The sounds you achieved on the *Rock Candy* sessions are the sounds I love. That is what music is all about—sounds that please the heart. I would like to know how those sounds were achieved, in terms of mic's used, tuning, size of drums and thickness of shells, and even what type of setting the mixer and P.A. might need in order for me to get similar sounds.

F.A.
Lockport LA



A. The *Rock Candy* sessions were done at *Sunset Sound* in Los Angeles, and most of the sounds have to do with Ted Templeman, who was the producer, and Don Landy, who was the engineer—two very talented guys. A lot of the "drum sound" is really the room sound; that room is real

good for recording live drums. It's a pretty good-sized room, with cinderblocks from about half way up the wall, which make the room very "live." The room was used to record only the drums in; the guitars and bass were isolated in other rooms.

I've also worked with guys like Ron Nevison, who produced the *Heart* records, and Andy Johns, for whom I just did some work on a *Cinderella* record. Both of these gentlemen worked with *Led Zeppelin*. What I've learned from them is that those real ambient drum sounds are a result of using the room to amplify the drums. That doesn't always require a big room; "big room" does not necessarily translate as "big drum sound." It could be a fairly small room, but if it's just right it will amplify the sound of the drums, and that's what you want. It has more to do with the nature and construction of the room than the sheer air space. That's how you get those big, ambient drum sounds.

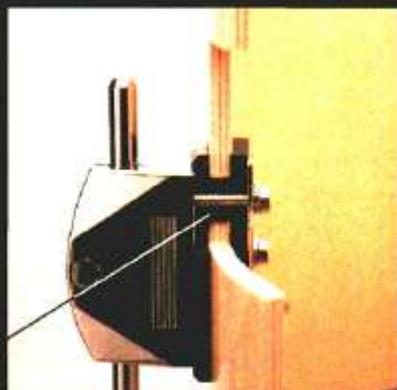
Another thing that I've learned from Ron Nevison is that there are a few ingredients that go into that type of drum sound. There's the room, as I've just mentioned. Then there's the tuning of the drums, and also the player. Ron says that in order to get a real good drum sound, the player has to have a good balance in the way he or she plays. In other words, you don't hit one drum harder than another, you don't hit your cymbals harder

than the rest of the drums, etc.

And when it comes to "miking tips," the miking techniques used then were basically the same as those used now, which are no great secret: The drums are close-miked and then the room is miked. One thing that Ron and Andy both use is two mic's way up high—maybe 10' or 15' above the drumkit and slightly to one side. The mic's are placed fairly close together—only as far apart as your ears would be. Instead of a big stereo effect with mic's on either side of the room, you get the natural stereo of how you hear with your own two ears. Mic's placed far apart tend to phase-cancel each other, anyway.

For the *Rock Candy* sessions I used just a basic Ludwig drumkit, with a 26" bass drum, a 12x15 rack tom, and a 16x18 floor tom. They were pretty big drums, especially for the time of those sessions in 1973. They were the older type of drums—thin plies and reinforcing rings. As far as shells and that kind of thing go, I don't really think they have as much of a bearing on a drum sound as the tuning does, and there are no real tuning tips I can give you that you haven't heard a million times before. It's all just a matter of making the drums sound as big and good as they can on their own, and then further enhancing that sound by recording them in a good-sounding room under the control of a talented engineer and producer.

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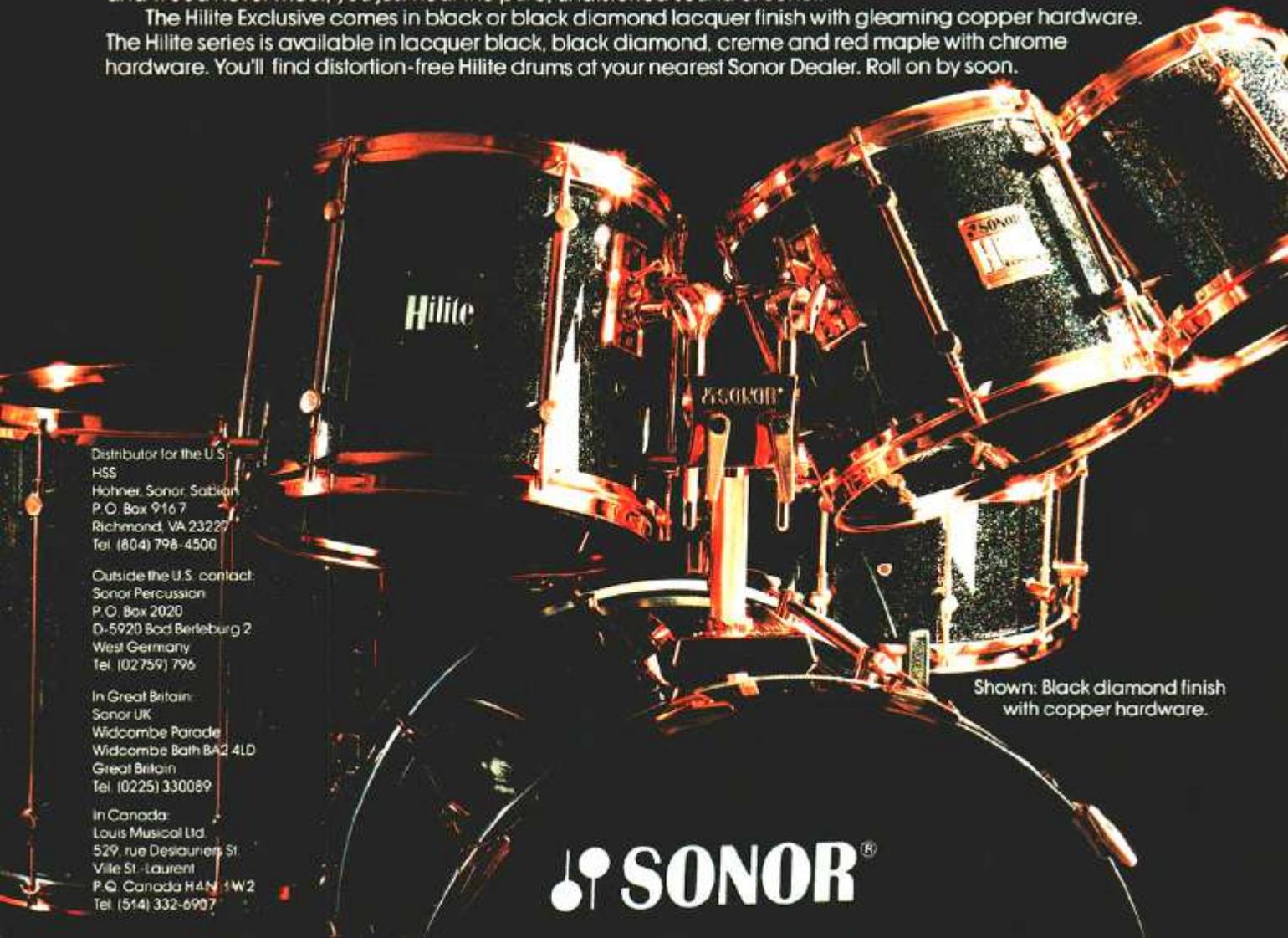
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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Q. After reading your article, "The World Of Drum Corps," in the August '88 issue, I was surprised to discover that there are all-female drum corps. Could you please give me any information I might need to contact such corps, along with some that are co-ed?

D.G.

Cherry Hill NJ

A. Your best bet for obtaining contact information for the types of corps you are interested in would be to contact the offices of Drum Corps International (DCI). You can reach them at 719 South Main, Lombard, Illinois 60148, (312)495-9866.

Q. I recently bought a Ludwig five-piece set. I believe that the shells are made of stainless steel, yet the welds are invisible on the outside. There is no wood whatsoever inside. My question is, what kind of drums are these? Everyone I ask has never seen them before.

K.T.

Clifton Park NY

A. We forwarded your question to William F. Ludwig, Jr., who gave us the following reply: "The shells are in fact made of stainless steel, and the reason that 'the welds are invisible' is because there are no welds! The shells were drawn and spun from one piece of stainless steel. Each square of stainless steel was first cut to a circular shape, and then inserted into a huge hydraulic press. The press slowly exerted pressure on the steel, shaping it into a cup. Then the bottom plate was knocked out in another press. Finally, the two edges of the resulting cylinder were spun on a lathe to produce the V-shaped bearing edge on each rim.

"Since the material was stainless steel, no polishing, buffing, or plating was involved. We had arrived at this miracle metal through a process of evolution in which we had first used brass materials requiring brazing, welding, and expensive polishing and chrome plating. These drums proved expensive and heavy in weight. Then, for several years, we produced a line of aluminum shells. But these would not accept chrome plating, since chromium and aluminum are incompatible metals. The finish soon pitted and sometimes even flaked off, causing expensive returns to our company for rework.

"Thus, in 1971, we arrived at stainless steel as the ideal metal for all-purpose field and outfit drums. Being press-drawn and spun, the dimensions are exact—far more accurate than wood shells. However, we had to abandon this fine metal in the late 1970s when the price of stainless steel zoomed out of sight and the drums could no longer be economically produced."

Q. I'm having a problem with the material connecting the snares to the snare strainer on my Cosmic Percussion snare drum. I've tried both plastic strips and store-bought strainer cord, and have consistently broken both of them. I'm a heavy hitter, but so are a lot of other drummers who don't seem to have this problem. Can you offer any suggestions?

M.B.

Mt. Pleasant Mills PA

A. Most often, the consistent breakage of snare-connecting material is a result of a combination of factors. Obviously, the more snare tension applied, the greater the strain is on the connecting material. High snare tension, combined with the added pressure of the snare side head pressing on the snares under "heavy hitting" will sometimes be too much for the connecting material. A simple solution would be to back the snare tension off just a bit to give the connecting material a bit of "headroom" for those split-second moments of heavy impact.

Several snare drum manufacturers have begun to use flat straps made of nylon webbing for snare connections. These tend to resist breakage better than strips of plastic such as you describe. You might wish to check into these alternative straps at your local drum shop. In addition, check the snare strainer itself for burrs,

sharp edges, or other irregularities. These could actually be cutting into the plastic strips or snare cord, thus setting them up for breakage when you play.

If these suggestions still do not produce the desired results, you might consider some non-traditional methods of attaching the snares to the strainer. A number of hard rock players have had success using the braided type of shoelace most often used on sneakers. These are made of strong fabric, and the braided construction makes them even stronger and difficult to slice through. They will tend to stretch, and so will require a "break-in" period. But once they are broken in, they can take a lot of tension and have proven quite durable under "field conditions." Just make sure to get a size that can be fitted into your snares and the snare strainer easily.

Q. I'd like some advice on how to get a small band going. I'm in the 8th grade and live in the middle of nowhere. I have several musician friends who are very willing, as I am, to do anything it takes. But we don't know quite where to begin. Can you help us?

M.M.

Colstrip MT

A. The best way to get a band going is to sit down with all the prospective members and decide what direction you wish to take as a group—what your goals are. At your age, your best bet might be to put together the type of group that can play popular music at a variety of locations and functions. In that way, you will gain professional experience while you also gain expertise on your instruments.

There's a lot that goes into putting a band together. Obviously, you need to have sufficient equipment with which to perform. This includes each member's personal instrument(s), and some form of P.A. system. The type of equipment you are able to use will depend a great deal on your budget. Expensive equipment is not required at the outset; you just need what is adequate to fulfill your needs. As your career improves, so can your equipment.

As you are assembling your technical gear, you also need to be putting together your repertoire. You mention that you are "in the middle of nowhere." Music is popular no matter where people live; the important thing is to know what kind of music is popular, and to cater to that popularity. Versatility is important, because you may want to be able to play for a variety of audiences. For example, since you live in Montana, there's a good chance that country & western music might be popular in your area—especially with adults. Rock is pretty universal among young people, so you might consider building up a repertoire of C&W and rock tunes that are on the charts now, along with a few popular "oldies" from those styles. If you'd like to expand your horizons even more and play for weddings, family parties, and organizational functions (where mixed age groups will be present), you might want to add a few "standards" for older folks, including a few ethnic tunes, some Broadway hits, etc. Most of these can be obtained in piano/vocal songbooks available in most music stores, or on albums that your parents or your bandmates' parents might have. Build up a repertoire that will allow you to play for at least four hours in any given style, and you should be ready to accept work in almost any situation.

If you plan to specialize in one style, such as rock performed only for younger people, realize that you may be limiting your potential market for nearby gigs. In that case, plan to expand your territory as much as possible. Check out schools, clubs, youth organizations, and other job sources within as large a traveling area as is practical for you. Again, due to your age, you may be calling upon parents or older siblings to transport you to and from your gigs, so find out what your limits are right away. Then do some research to find out what job possibilities exist within those limits.

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continued on page 105



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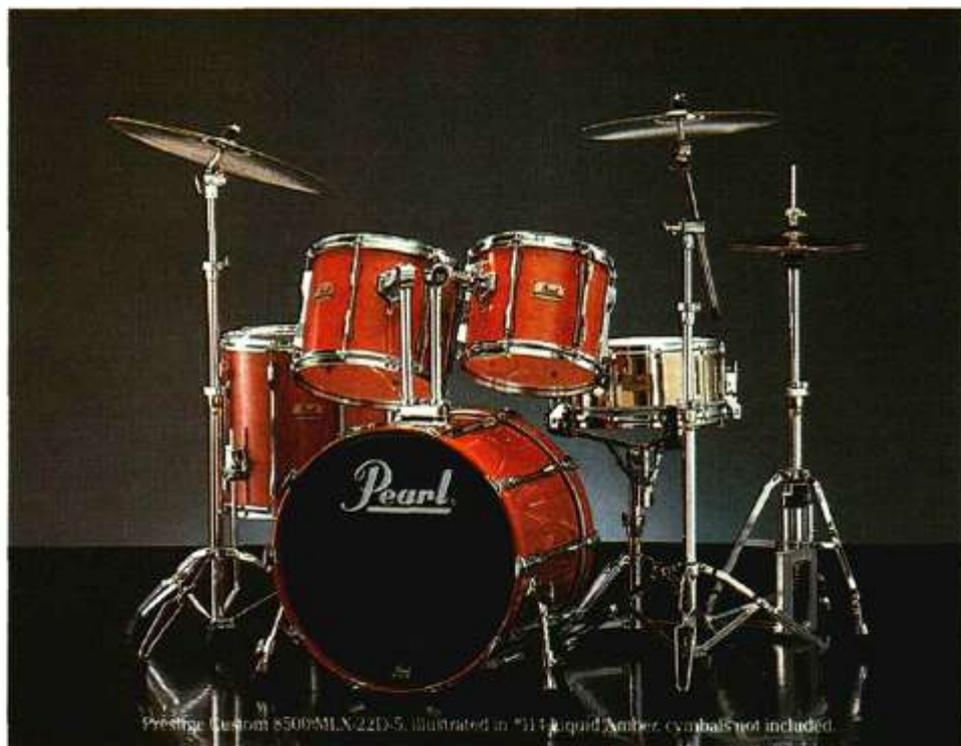
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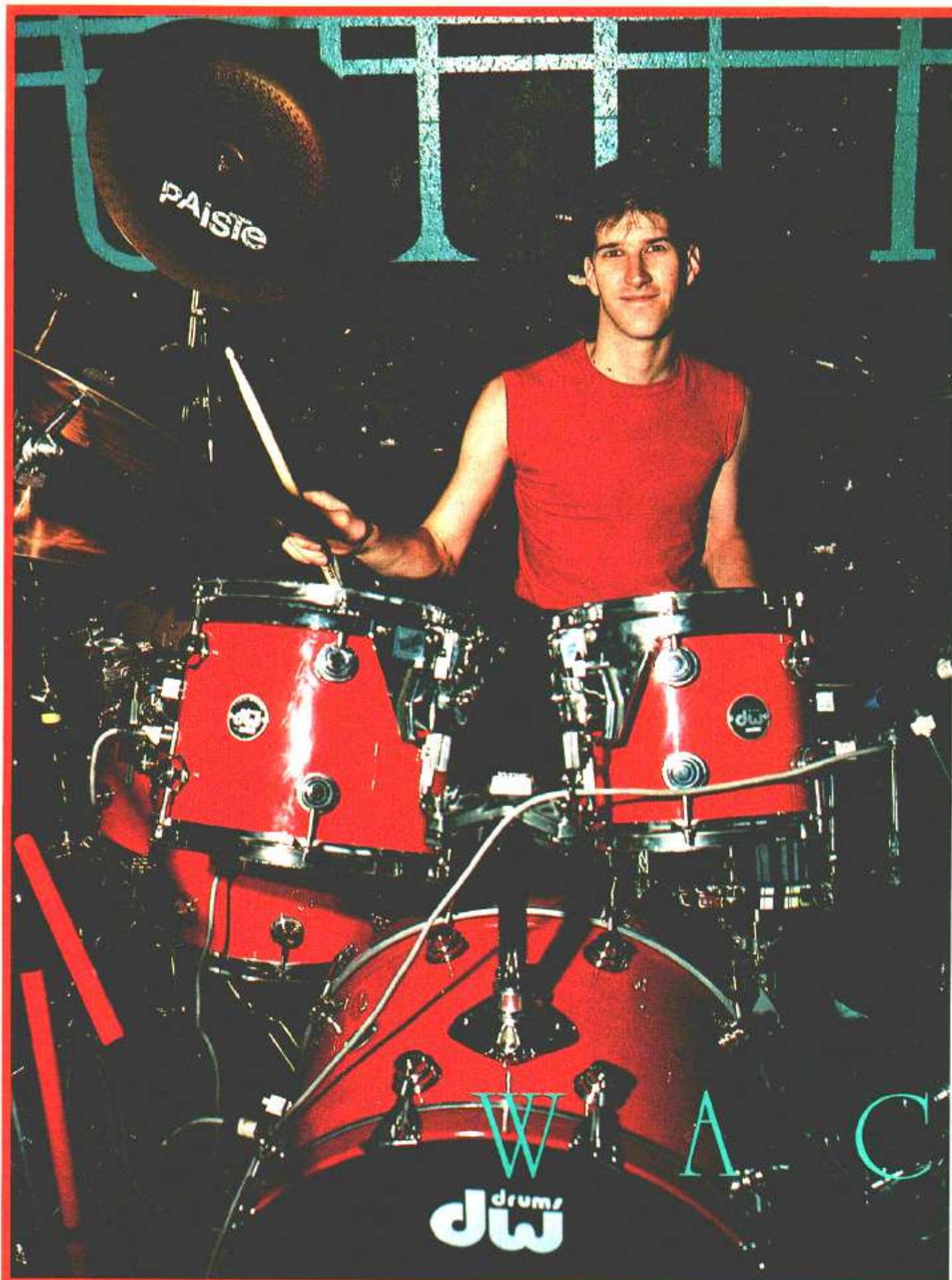
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C H A D

When one learns that Chad Wackerman landed the gig with Frank Zappa when he was just 21 years old, it conjurs up definite images. He must be a whiz kid, you think, with a head full of math equations to work out the ridiculous rhythms that Zappa writes expressly to stump his musicians—or so his musicians have been known to say. But Chad emphasizes more than the need for an incredible technical prowess; he stresses the necessity of playing many different styles authentically. He adamantly tries to shed the image that first comes to mind: that of a fusion drummer.

In preparation for our talk, Chad made a tape of some of the recordings that he is most proud of. It's obvious from this selection that he can run the gamut from the complexity of Zappa and Allan Holdsworth to the simplicity of Colin Hay or Albert Lee. (If you want to hear Chad at his simplest, check out Barbra Streisand's *One Voice* concert on video.)

Chad started playing drums at age six under the expert tutelage of his father, Charles Wackerman. He went on to take private lessons from such notables as Chuck Flores and Murray Spivac, and participated in Stan Kenton's jazz clinics at an early age. A gig at Disneyland and an association with keyboardist Jim Cox lead to gigs with Leslie Uggams and Bill Watrous. Executing the varied styles in those formative years, he says, was a major contributing factor to his subsequent gigs, although nothing, but nothing could adequately prepare him for the audition with Zappa, as he revealed upon his recent return from the road with him just days before a tour with Allan Holdsworth.

K E R M A N

by Robyn Flans

RF: I was amused by the story you told in your last *MD* interview about the Zappa audition. The way it came across, it didn't go too well. You didn't know how to do some of the things he wanted. So why did he hire you?

CW: [laughs] Well, no one else knew how to do those things either. I had a certain understanding of things like the polyrhythms. Polyrhythms are basically large groupings of small, odd groupings, but there were a lot of drummers who didn't know how to play five 16th notes per quarter note. So if you couldn't play that, you couldn't play five 8th notes over two quarter notes. I, at least, knew how to play things like quintuplets, which are five per quarter note, or septuplets, which are seven per quarter note. So when I saw those things, I could play them properly, but I didn't know about the large groupings. That's kind of the next step.

RF: Did you have to spend a lot of time trying to understand polyrhythms?

CW: Yes, as soon as I got the gig.

Photo by Sergio Albonico



RF: Before that, what did you know about polyrhythms?

CW: Not much, but if you can understand a figure like quarter-note triplets, then that's the concept you use to understand those larger odd groupings. If you can play five 16th notes per quarter note, and then you see five 8th notes over two quarter notes, that's got to be half the speed of the five 16ths—half as many notes in the same amount of space. So if you think of five 16ths per quarter and play every other one, that's going to be the rhythm. So I started figuring out these formulas to get the basic concept of polyrhythms down. After a while, it's like anything else; you can hear it. If you see it on paper, you know exactly what it's going to be, and you don't have to count every note out.

RF: So this was after you got the gig?

CW: Yes, once I got the gig, I realized I'd better start practicing to keep it.

RF: What else did you do after you got the gig?

CW: We started rehearsing the next week, so I had a week at home with an unbeliev-

able stack of music and albums. He's put out 50 albums, and a lot of them are double albums, so there's so much material to learn.

RF: What was the hardest piece of music you had to learn, and how did you go about learning it?

CW: "Mo And Herb's Vacation." That one took me quite a while. I just continually practiced it. Even on the road I'd try to brush up on it. It's a classical piece, and the clarinet has the melody, which is very, very bizarre. It has all sorts of polyrhythms right next to each other, like a 15 next to a 14, each one over two or three beats. It's a clarinet solo, but the drums are in unison with the clarinet, so you have to play every note exact. In fact, we did a version of it with the London Symphony when we went to London to do a classical album of Frank's work, and the orchestra had a terrible time playing it. I had practiced it and had it down exactly, but they hadn't seen it for very long, so their rhythms weren't quite as accurate. So I actually had to lay out on parts. After a few years of working on this piece and getting it down, I couldn't do it properly, because they hadn't had enough time to work it out.

RF: When you first looked at this piece of music, what specifically did you do?

CW: I began to dissect it bar by bar, just trying to figure out the subdivisions first, and playing the notes where they belonged, in the right rhythm and at the right speed. The next step was figuring out the sticking, because there are so many notes, and certain stickings will make it easier and make it flow better. Then the dynamics come into it along with all the accents and the final details.

But with this sort of piece, the first thing is just getting the notes played in the right places.

RF: How long did you practice that piece?

CW: Frank thought we might do it at first, so I practiced it a lot, but we ended up not doing it. I think Vinnie [Colaiuta] and Ed Mann had done it with the rock band as a duo. Ed played the melody—the clarinet part—and Vinnie played the drum part. It's much harder than "The Black Page."

RF: With music like that, how do you make it feel good when you have so many notes to play?

CW: There are so many ways. A lot of different drummers can play the same music, but they all turn out sounding different. I always try to be very relaxed about it and still have feel—even if it's something in 17 or 19. My concept of it is that you have all these small subdivisions—all these different two's and three's strung along together—and you find places where you can put backbeats and make it a long phrase. Instead of making it very, very choppy, I try to flow over the whole thing, and I know

Vinnie and Terry [Bozzio] do that as well.

RF: Can it become more technique than feel?

CW: Well, you have to have a lot of technique to play that kind of thing. But now a lot of Frank's stuff is reggae, and it wouldn't be appropriate to be as flashy or to put all those subdivisions into the music. With other tunes, though, that's the way the music is written, and you're playing that part, which has to be exact. Then there are the rock 'n' roll tunes. A lot of it is very open, where he hasn't specified a part, so we end up making up our own part—unless he doesn't like it, and in that case he'll tell us another part to play. A lot of it is up to us, and I tend not to be as busy on a lot of those parts, because the classical sections are so busy.

When you play with Zappa, a lot of people assume you're a fusoid drummer who just plays very busy. I wouldn't want to be known as a fusion drummer, because a lot of music that is called "fusion" music, I don't really care for. Obviously, I couldn't do a Barbra Streisand gig playing like that.

RF: Streisand's *One Voice* concert was perhaps the most opposite to everything else you've done, because it was very sparse playing. What did that gig require of you?

CW: It required playing a part that complemented her singing, that didn't get in the way, that was tasty and appropriate. It is definitely more pedestrian, but there's a certain flavor that's still me; I'm just playing a different style of music. With Barbra Streisand, you're not there to do anything flashy. If it's a groove tune, you're there just to supply the groove and set up a nice feel. It's not your place to come up with anything wild, too over the top, or too creative. You have to have good time and groove when that's appropriate, and play nice ballad brushes when that's appropriate, and be as tasty as you can and support wherever the music is going. You have to know when to play a fill, when a chorus is coming up, and not to overplay on the fills. You have to play something with enough space, yet still with enough intensity to build it when it's supposed to build, and bring it down when it's supposed to come down. In a case like that, where you're not playing too many fills, people are more aware of them when they do happen, so you have to be more careful with them. You're there to fit in with the music and not get in the way, whereas a gig with Allan or Frank is much more drum-oriented, so you're much more in the spotlight. She's so amazing that I didn't mind doing that at all. It was a fun experience. It's amazing just being in the same room and hearing someone who can sing like that, let alone playing along. I have the same kind of respect for her that I have for people like Albert Lee or Allan Holdsworth, because she's reached such a high level of accomplishment. She can do things with her voice that I've never heard anybody else do.

RF: Back to Zappa—could we take a song

and talk about your approach? Take "Zomby Woof," which you included on the tape.

CW: Well, that's a very old song, so I just listened to the arrangement.

RF: Did you have creative allowance on songs that were played before?

CW: I pretty much played what was played previously. On that tune we pretty much kept the same feel, though on a lot of them Frank will change the feel. He might do it halfway through the tour; he might do it on stage one night while we're playing. He gives visual cues to immediately change styles, and everybody just shifts gears. It doesn't matter if we've rehearsed it as a waltz or a swing tune; if he bangs his head, it means heavy metal. If he twists his hair like dreadlocks, it means reggae, twisting both sides means ska, and a baton in the mouth means to play "Carmen." These cues can happen any time, so we really have to keep our eyes on him. We never know what he's going to go into; the show is different every night. We rehearsed four months for this tour, eight hours a day, five

days a week.

RF: How much material did you dissect in four months?

CW: I think we learned 106 songs—seriously. Some aren't as long as others. Frank changes the show every night.

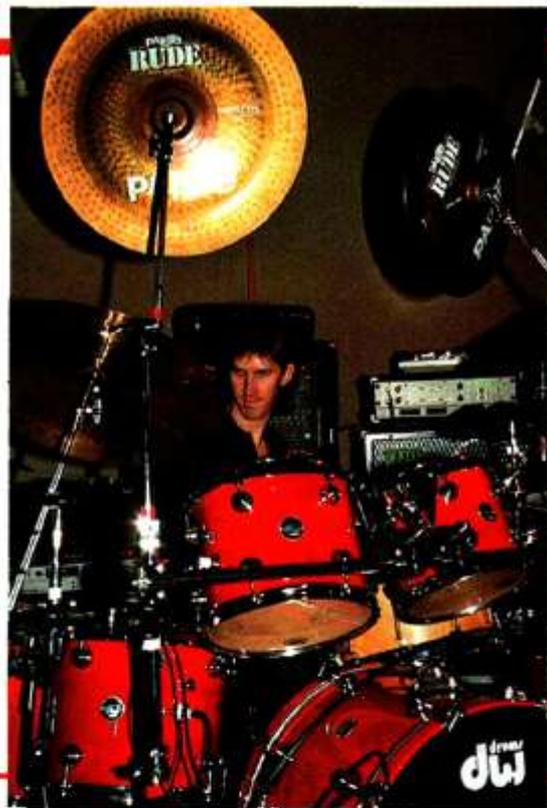
RF: So you might do a certain song one night and not do it again for how long?

CW: Maybe three weeks. Most bands get a set together, go out and do that set for months and months. It drives everyone nuts to play the same music over and over, but Frank changes it all the time.

RF: Within the songs, how much improvisation goes on?

CW: There's probably more improvisation between me and the bass player during the guitar solos. That's the most open that it gets. Every once in a while he'll give me a solo or give some of the horn players solos.

RF: I know you always get a solo with



CHAD WACKERMAN'S SETUP

Drumset: Drum Workshop in custom red finish.

Cymbals: Paiste.

A. 7 x 14 Noble & Cooley wood snare (or 6 1/2 x 14 or 8 x 14 DW brass)

B. 9 x 10 rack tom

C. 10 x 12 rack tom

D. 12 x 14 rack tom

E. 14 x 16 floor tom

F. 16 x 18 floor tom

G. 16 x 22 bass drum

1. 13" 602 heavy hi-hats

2. 13" 2002 crash

3. 17" 3000 crash

4. 18" Rude China

5. 20" Rude China

6. 20" 3000 ride

7. 15" Rude hi-hats (mounted on a cable hi-hat stand)

8. 404 top hi-hat cymbal on top of 18" Sound Creation dark crash

9. 18" 3000 thin crash

AA. electronics rack

BB. Roland Octapad

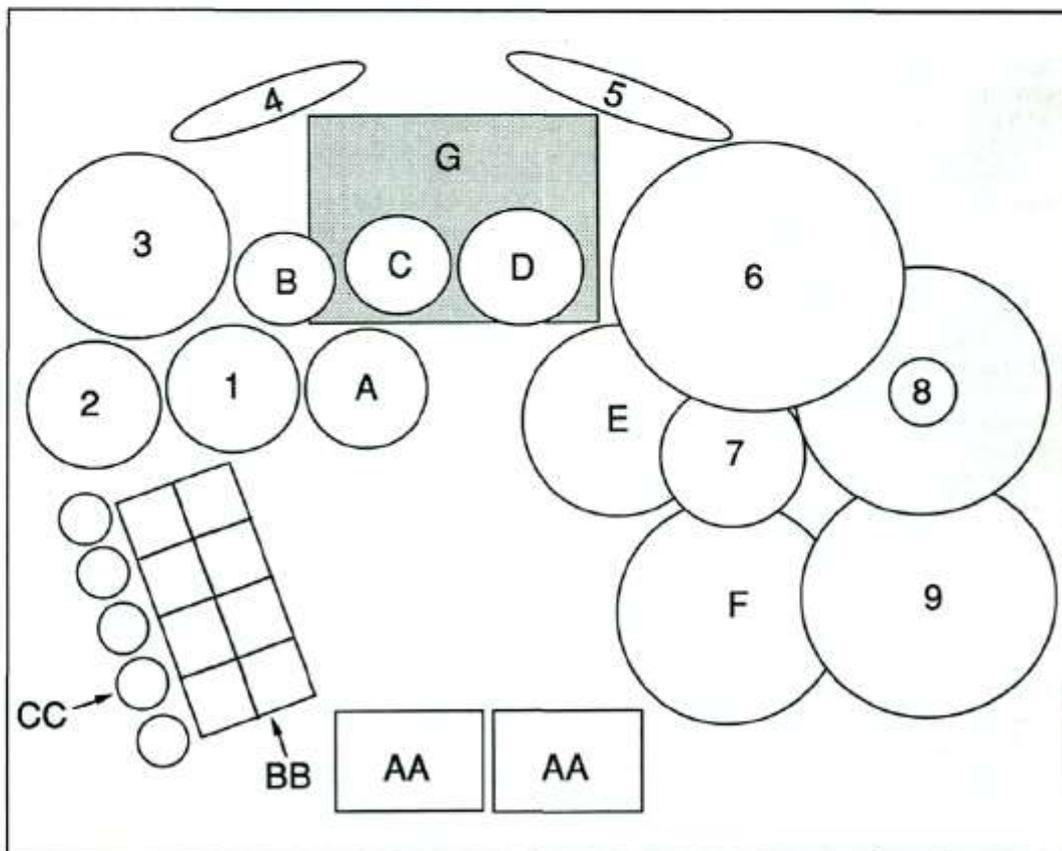
CC. Daz electronic pads

Hardware: Drum Workshop hi-hat stand, remote hi-hat stand, and double pedal with plastic/felt combination beaters. The set is supported on a Collarlock rack system.

Heads: Remo coated *Ambassador* on snare with a mylar ring for muffling. Remo coated *Ambassadors* on tops of toms, and clear *Ambassadors* underneath with no muffling. Remo clear *Ambassador* on batter side of bass drum with *Ebony Ambassador* on front.

Sticks: Vic Firth 5B with wood tip.

Electronics: Dynacord *Add-one* with disc drive, Akai S-900 sampler, Roland *SRV 2000* reverb unit, Yamaha *SPX 90*, two Roland *SDE 3000* delay units, Roland *Octapad*, Dan Daz pads, Barcus Berry triggers, Akai MIDI patch bay, Switchcraft patch bays, DW trigger pedals, and three Fostex mixers (eight channels each). May EA miking system with Shure *SM 57*'s on the snare and 10" tom, Sennheiser 409's on the 12" and 14" toms, and AKG *D112*'s on the 16" tom and the 22" bass drum.



Holdsworth. What is that gig like for a drummer?

CW: That's very, very open. Basically, I write my own parts, and the bass player writes his own parts. First, Allan writes the guitar parts; then we write parts that fit with that.

RF: What about material that was previously recorded?

CW: It's still pretty open. Actually, Frank said the same thing when I joined his band: "Whatever you do, don't become a Vinnie clone or a Terry clone. I don't want a replica of someone I've already had." Allan feels the same way. Allan's approach is that he likes to get guys in his band who play the music the way he wants to hear it, but he never gives us any instruction at all. We never talk about it; we just play it.

RF: Take one of the songs you did with him and analyze that—maybe "Clown."

CW: That's off the latest album, *Sand*. I think I was away when he did the basics, because he did it with a drum machine first. He took the drum machine away, and I played over it.

RF: That was probably more confining than others, so pick a song where you feel good about the drum part you created.

CW: There's one called "Tokyo Dream," which is on the *Road Games* record. I could play it for you, but I can't really describe it. There's a part that matches up to the guitar part pretty well, where the rhythms and the punctuations are the same. The accents on guitar are the same as the drums. I used my bell cymbals to match his harmonics, my garbage cymbals to match the bass line, and a couple of different hi-hats.

RF: How was that piece brought to you?

CW: Allan played the guitar part for us. He usually has a song section and then a separate section that is the solo section, rather than using a jazz form of A-A-B-A, and just going over and over that. The tune section is fairly strict rhythmically, which isn't very typical of him, but then on the solo section, it's much more open and a bit floatier. I usually try to hear the music first. I normally don't think of drum patterns first. I try to fit in with what's going on musically.

RF: So that's a lot of improvisation live.

CW: Yes. There's still form to pieces, but they're very open.

RF: Where did you learn the art of improvisation?

"MOST DRUM SOLOS SOUND LIKE A CIRCUS ACT TO ME."

RF: So how do you change a safe approach?

CW: That was up to me. He would throw out these different ideas, and then it was up to me. I didn't really want to learn licks from anybody, because I had done loads of transcribing off records, like David Garibaldi's *Tower Of Power* stuff. Before

CW: Through playing jazz. My father's a jazz drummer, and I started learning from him. He'd take me to jazz concerts. When I got a bit older, I played in the school jazz ensemble and jazz bands and went to a few Stan Kenton clinics and met Peter Erskine, who helped me a lot. I just started listening to jazz a lot and played it throughout high school. I got into rock later, during college.

RF: Who were some of your influences?

CW: There are loads, and a lot of them are really typical ones—people like Steve Gadd and Stewart Copeland and David Garibaldi. I did listen to them for quite a while at one time. That was when I was in my transcription mode—when I was trying to write a lot of things out just to figure out what other guys were doing, trying to build up a bigger vocabulary. I was probably 18 or 19 at the time, just trying to figure out why these people sounded so different.

RF: Take a few key people that you might have listened to a lot and whose concepts you might have studied and made part of who you are.

CW: Peter was a big influence at one time, because I met him through the Stan Kenton clinics. We hooked up when he moved out to L.A. to play with Weather Report. I wanted to take lessons from him, but because he knew I was playing gigs already, he said that, rather than sitting behind a drumset, we could spend afternoons talking—which we did—and if I had a gig, he'd go out and hear me.

RF: What did you talk about?

CW: Just concept things. I was playing with Bill Watrous's big band at the time, and one of the first things he told me was that I was playing it much too safe. I was playing the parts fine, but playing kind of pedestrian fills.

RF: Is that how you felt about it?

CW: I didn't realize it at the time. I was just trying to set up the band, trying to make it easier on the horn players, because it's a hard job playing in a big band. But he was right.

that, it was Blood, Sweat & Tears records. I knew it wasn't good to do that too much, because then you start mimicking people too much—becoming more of a parrot than having something original. I did that a lot, so I felt I got enough from a lot of other drummers. What I could do was take the beginning of a fill and change the end of it by putting something of my own in there, so it didn't sound like a Tony Williams lick or a Billy Cobham lick.

RF: Can you actually pinpoint things in your style and say, "Gee, I got that from so and so"?

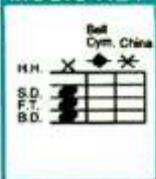
CW: I hope that at this point things like that aren't obvious for people listening to me, saying, "Oh, he got that from so and so," or "That's a Steve Gadd lick." I really desperately try not to do that. Sure, I've had a lot of influences, but now I'll listen to whatever type of music and try to get the flavor of it. I don't transcribe licks anymore. Even when I practice, I really don't practice that many patterns.

RF: I guess I keep asking about influences because there are readers who are wondering, "How do I become like Chad Wackerman?"

CW: Number one, tell them not to become Chad Wackerman. Really, that's crucial; that must be emphasized. I completely understand the importance of learning things from other drummers, but you should learn things from *many* different drummers. A lot of people have really analyzed Steve Gadd as much as they can, and it's as if they're looking at him through a microscope. You need to do a bit of that. But if you can do it with many people, you can have a kind of comparison, which I think is much healthier. It will also open you up to different kinds of music. You should check out Larrie Londin as well as Steve Gadd, as well as Neil Peart, as well as Tony Williams, as well as the guy playing down at your local club. Even if you're in a small town, you should go out and listen to a lot of music. Even if players aren't so great, you need to hear them and think, "Why doesn't this

"Tokyo Dream"

MUSIC KEY



LISTENERS' GUIDE

Q. For readers who'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend? (Please list in order of preference.)

Album	Artist	Label/Catalog#
Sand	Allan Holdsworth	Relativity 88561-8152-1
Atavachron	Allan Holdsworth	Enigma 73203
Metal Fatigue	Allan Holdsworth	Enigma 73222
Road Games	Allan Holdsworth	Warner Bros. 23959
Them Or Us	Frank Zappa	Barking Pumpkin SVBO-74200
Looking For Jack	Colin James Hay	CBS 40611
Speechless	Albert Lee	MCA 5693
You Can't Do That On Stage Anymore	Frank Zappa	Rykodisc RCD10081-2

Q. Which records have you listened to the most for inspiration?

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label/Catalog#
Michael Brecker	Michael Brecker	Jack DeJohnette	MCA Impulse 5980
Bring On The Night	Sting	Omar Hakim	A&M 6705
8:30	Weather Report	Peter Erskine	CBS PC236030
Tinsel Town Rebellion	Frank Zappa	Vinnie Colaiuta	Barking Pumpkin PW23/336
Heavy Weather	Weather Report	Alex Acuna	CBS 34418
Synchronicity	The Police	Stewart Copeland	A&M 3735
Four & More	Miles Davis	Tony Williams	Columbia 9253
Heavy Metal Be-Bop	Brecker Brothers	Terry Bozzio	Arista 4185

drummer sound as good as so and so?" It's really good to hear all levels of players. I hear quite a few young drummers who are trying to clone someone like Steve Gadd.

RF: Growing up, it's a real issue learning how to listen to someone like Tony Williams without becoming a clone. How can it be used to further who you are?

CW: I always tell people to steal from everybody. Don't concentrate on one person so much, because you need a huge musical vocabulary. Then, if you have all these statements you can make, you can make up your own musical sentence.

RF: Who else did you steal from?

CW: I listened to Tony Williams a lot. When I was younger, my dad took me to see Louie Bellson—big band gigs and things like that. Also, I took lessons privately when I was pretty young, so I knew how to read and write music.

RF: Is that important?

CW: Yes it is. It's helped me a lot.

RF: Were there things you had trouble with growing up, and if so, how did you work on them?

CW: When I started taking lessons from Murray Spivak, that changed the way I played in a very basic way—in as simple a way as in making a stroke. The way Murray teaches, you really analyze how to make a stroke, how to play very basic rudiments without using any extra energy, being very concise and relaxed with it. Many drummers do waste a lot of energy; you can tighten certain muscles so much that it can actually hurt you. That was a big milestone for me. With basic strokes, he showed me how to make an up-stroke, then a down-

stroke for the accent. Instead of coming from a very low place on the snare drum to a high place for an accent, he had a way of doing it that prepared your hand to go way up, then down for the accent. It was a much more natural way to do it. That was his method in a nutshell, dealing with up-and-down-strokes, and it worked with flams, ruffs, and all the roll strokes.

I really believe that studying privately sped up my learning process. My other teacher was Chuck Flores, and he's a fantastic teacher. At one time I was just going to Murray for hands and reading snare drum things—mainly rudiments and basic strokes. With Chuck I studied drumset. He had me reading out of books with four lines—a cymbal line, a snare line, a bass line, and a hi-hat line—and then going back and switching all the lines. So you would be having the bass drum or hi-hat doing more complex patterns than you normally would. I was very lucky to have such great teachers, and they really saw what I needed to work on. And whenever I did a gig, I would tape it and bring it in, especially to Chuck, so he could hear what I was doing drumset-wise and make suggestions.

RF: How has your formative training had a bearing on your career?

CW: In various situations, it's been very helpful. There are a lot more employment opportunities if you can read. For gigs where there is no time to rehearse and they need somebody immediately, you sit down and read the notes. I used to rely on reading a bit too much. I wasn't listening quite enough.

RF: Why is that a problem?

CW: On Frank's gig, you can't read music, because then you won't be able to see his visual cues, plus the lights are going on and off. So you have to memorize things rather than rely on written music. In a rock 'n' roll situation, where things don't have to be so specific, reading music is that extra step you don't really need. When I started rehearsing with Frank, I started using my ears a lot more.

RF: What did you do when Peter Erskine told you that you were too safe?

CW: When Peter said that, I knew I had enough technique where I didn't have to be playing like that. It didn't necessarily mean I should play faster or flashier, but just with a bit stranger fills, a bit more random. I think it was more the fills I was concerned with, setting up things, not starting from the first tom down to the last one, mixing up all those voices much more. Also, I started thinking more orchestrationally. Instead of learning a bunch of licks and repeating them, you can think of things like voices. I keep my tom-toms wide open, and they're the closest things I have to melodic notes, so I think of those voices melodically. I think of other things percussively, like snare drums. Or they could be brass sounds like trumpets—which cymbals are like—or the bass drum could be the bottom voice, like how a choir might play over a brass ensemble or something, and having things answer back in statement and answer.

RF: What do you mean by that exactly?

CW: It's like we're having a conversation; it's like jotting down the rhythms of our conversation of the different pitches and

continued on page 50

ALLAN SCHWARTZBERG

The Working Drummer

"What do you think?" asks Allan Schwartzberg. "Should we take our chances here, or should we make a move over to Eighth Avenue?"

His two musician-friends in the back of the car who are hitching a ride analyze the situation and advise the latter. Schwartzberg nods in agreement and adroitly maneuvers his Mercedes from Sixth Avenue's far right lane over into its far left lane like a cool and seasoned cabbie. Quickly he turns down a Manhattan sidestreet and escapes the traffic snarl behind us.

It turns out to have been a smart move. Eighth Avenue is certainly less congested, so we make it up to midtown in pretty good time. The two musicians in the back-seat are dropped off at their studio minutes before their next session. Schwartzberg, however, won't fare as well. He knows he'll be a few minutes late for his next session, thanks to another traffic tie-up. This time it's on the street where he normally parks.

"What happens when a session player is late for a session?" I wonder out loud. Schwartzberg shakes his head. "These days, you gotta really try to be on time for every session," he says, as we finally get to the parking garage. Schwartzberg pulls in, screeches to a stop, and gives the car keys to the attendant. I help him lift his gear out of the car. Together we lug it a half block to the recording studio. "When you're late, you hope that you can come up with an amusing excuse," he says. "Last week, I told a producer, I'm sorry to be late, but I'm still not as late as your checks!"

You'd think the pressures of negotiating New York traffic, running from session to session, playing jingles one minute and album tracks the next, working out parts to songs you have never heard before, hoping like hell that what you play is indeed what's

needed to be played, skipping lunch and sometimes supper too, trying to make it back to Brooklyn in time to see the wife and kids before bedtime—you'd think that after nearly 20 years of all this, Allan Schwartzberg, one of New York's elite session drummers, would be tired of the heavy grind.

"I love it," the admitted workaholic and perfectionist laughs. "I really do. I love being busy. I love making music and good money. I like it best when I'm so busy that I don't even have time to think."

Allan Schwartzberg *is* busy. There's no denying that, especially not today. It starts the night before, like it always does. He checks in with Registry: three messages, three sessions. He checks his calendar. A couple of weeks ago he penciled in a live date with Maureen McGovern at the Twenty Twenty Club. Tomorrow his day will be consumed with work. That makes Allan Schwartzberg smile.

That night Schwartzberg calls me and says, "Come into the city tomorrow. It's a good day. You'll get a good idea of what I'm about and what this business is about. Meet me at 10:00 at Hip Pockets Studio on West 20th Street.

The next day I arrive on time. Allan is already behind his drumset. He's working on a fill to add to the Budweiser beer jingle he and the other musicians hired for the session will be cutting in a few minutes. They'll have but an hour to learn it, perfect it, and record it.

The producer calls the session to order. He announces some last-second changes. Then Schwartzberg and the rest of the musicians run through the jingle, which will be sung in Spanish by Jose Feliciano later on and used to sell beer south of the border.

"Again," says the producer. "Let's change the intro. Two beats of C, then another beat, and we're off." The session players do it again. The producer confers with the engineer in the control room. In the studio, the guitarists chat and Schwartzberg stretches.

The producer is back. "One more," he says. In all, there are close to 20 attempts

**"NEW YORK
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by Robert Santelli

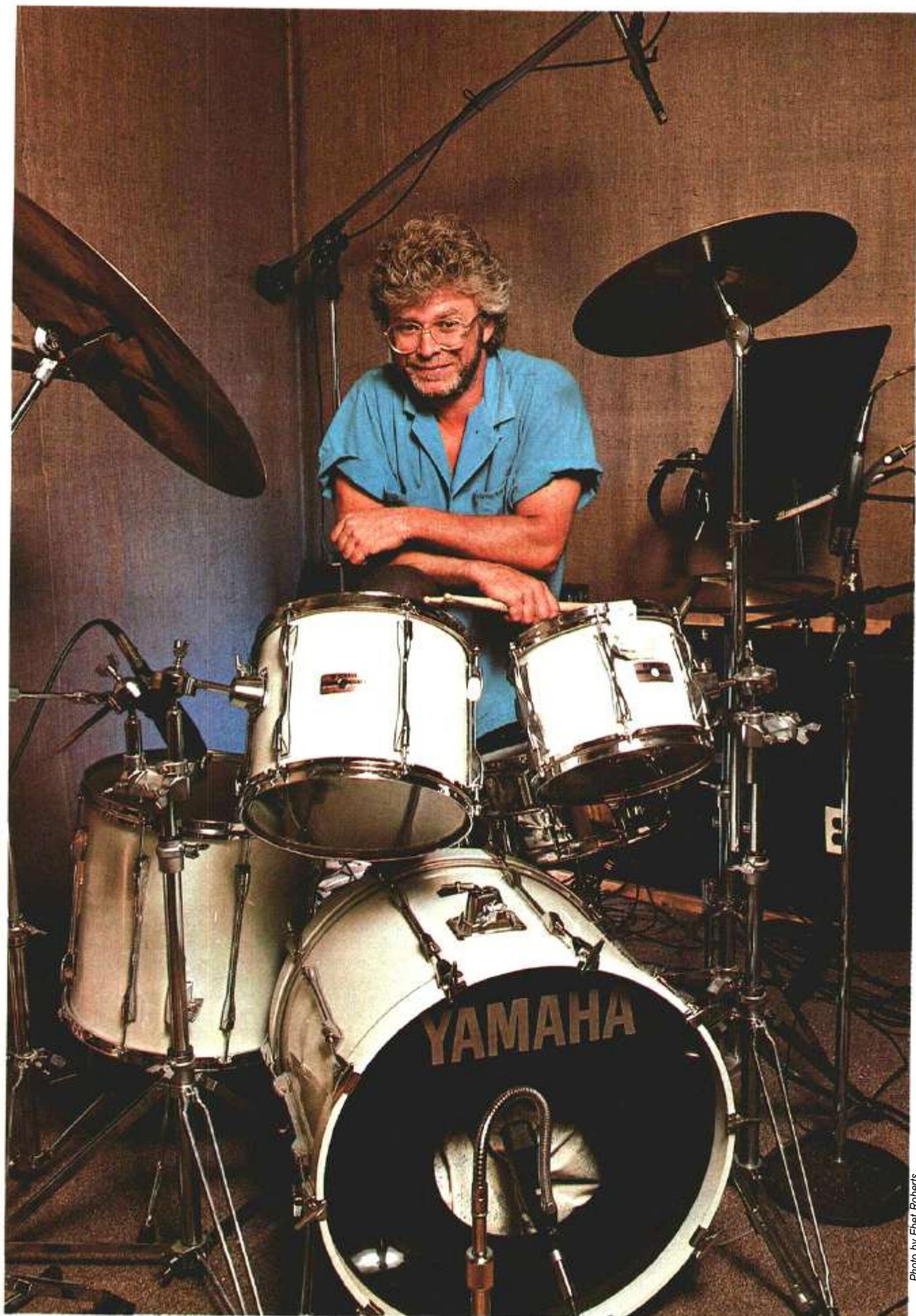


Photo by Ebet Roberts

to make the jingle right. But by the end of the hour the producer has something he can take back to Budweiser and feel good about.

While the other musicians pack up, Allan comes over to me and introduces himself. "Funny, you don't look Italian," he says. "Come on, we've got to go. We can talk in the car on the way to my next session. It's in 30 minutes, and I've got to drop off two friends."

RS: You're a very successful New York session drummer. You've been doing this sort of thing for a long time. Others like

yourself have come and gone. What's your secret? How do you stay in demand?

AS: It mostly has to do with talent and knowing how to get along with the right kinds of people. There are a bunch of musicians that are in the bull's-eye. The difference between us could boil down to who brings the best work attitude to the session—who does this producer want to spend some hours with.

RS: You're in the bull's-eye, no?

AS: Yeah, you could say that. It's been that way for quite some time.

RS: And how, exactly, did you get there? Can you be specific?

AS: I have a reputation for caring about my performance and what my playing sounds like. I never walk into a session without that attitude. It's my ego problem that's working to the producer's advantage. Everyone gains by it. The drums are an unbelievably important instrument. It's the motor that runs the beautiful car. If I'm happy with my drum performance, then the people who hired me and believe in my abilities are going to be happy. What makes me happy is a great performance. It doesn't have to be a showy type of performance. Also, I don't care who comes up with what I play. The music is what's important, and in the end I'll get credit for it anyway.

RS: Let's go back a bit in time. How did you get into session work in the first place?

AS: For a long time I was a jazz player. I used to be the house drummer at a place in New York called the Half Note. I played with guys like Jim Hall, Ron Carter, Zoot Sims. I also went on the road for a little bit with Stan Getz. I wasn't really having fun, though. I definitely wasn't making any money. My bar bills were much more than I was getting paid. This was 18 years ago. I used to eat, sleep, and live jazz. All I wanted to be was a drummer who played like a combination of Elvin Jones and Tony Williams.

RS: You and a lot of other drummers.

AS: That's definitely true. But see, I realized I wasn't happy, and neither were most

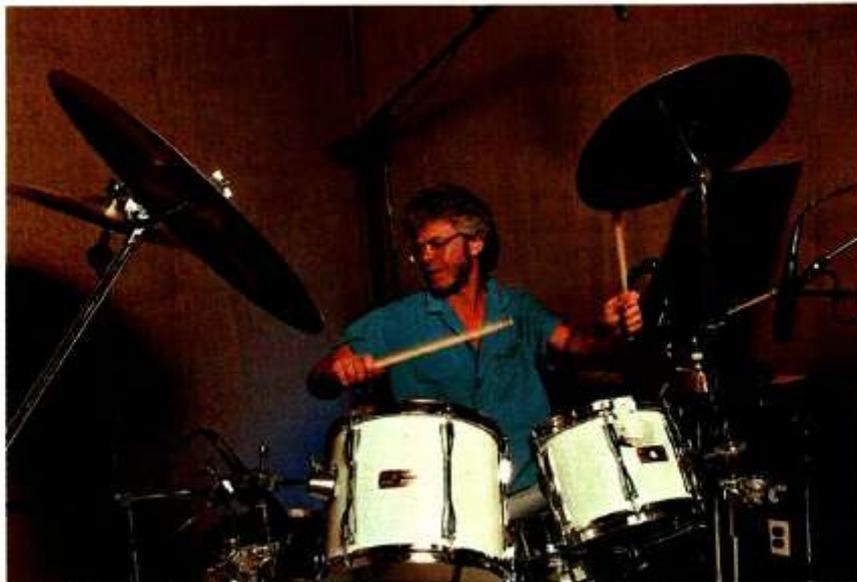


Photo by Ebet Roberts

of the other jazzers then. So I left it. At the time, jazz was going through a severe depression. No one was listening to that music in, say, 1969 and 1970. It was terrible. I had to survive somehow. And I wanted above all to keep playing the drums.

RS: Were you married at the time?

AS: Yeah, but it wasn't to the right girl. It wasn't the take, if you know what I mean. But I've since remarried. I'm very happily married now, with two beautiful, loud kids.

RS: Having a wife and not making any money must have been tough.

AS: It was. Plus, I just wasn't having any fun playing jazz.

RS: So what happened? How did you change gears?

AS: I heard Roger Hawkins' first backbeat on Aretha Franklin's "Chain, Chain, Chain" record. Then I heard a James Brown record called "Got The Feeling." You've got to understand that I never cared about any music but jazz back then. Growing up, I didn't even listen to the Beatles because their time was all over the place. But when I heard Aretha and James Brown, well, their music just went up my spine. What they sang was as cookin' as anything I had ever heard. I discovered other acts, like the Meters. So, basically, I came into contemporary music through R&B. It was more of a logical channel for me than to pursue rock 'n' roll, because R&B is more closely associated with jazz.

RS: Was this a gradual or an abrupt transition?

AS: It was gradual. It really didn't happen overnight. But I knew things were coming along when I played on some of James Brown's records, and he liked me a lot. It was a great accomplishment for me to have The King of Soul think that this Bar Mitzvah boy had some, too.

RS: Did you also start to discover rock 'n' roll at this time?

AS: Yeah. I started hearing and loving the Beatles the way other people were. I listened to a lot of other things, too, like Little Feat, Led Zep, and Hendrix.

RS: What about recording and making records back then? What was your approach?

AS: First of all, there was a lot more of it then—single artists without bands, and lead singers wanting to stretch out without their regular guys. I felt at home in the studio. I loved the control. All jazz records back then were one take. Three hours in the studio, and you had yourself an album. I never got into that concept of recording. I like the idea of being able to perfect what you play. I think my approach has al-

ways been the same: trying to find the perfect beat for a particular piece of music. It's like making records the way composers write songs.

RS: How did you work your way into steady session work?

AS: It was just like today; you have to know the right people and they have to love you. You either have to have an uncle who owns a recording studio and who can introduce you to all those people you need to know, or you have to be an amazing player who can cover all kinds of music so well that producers are practically forced to hire you. Those were the only two ways to break into the studio back then, and it's the same way now.

A bass player named Don Payne gave me a shot at doing jingles. The first one I ever did was for Kent cigarettes. I went into the studio and worked as hard as I could so that what I came up with sounded special. I tuned the drums before the session, which nobody was doing then. Studio guys had a tendency to get a bit jaded. They usually walked in and played the drums just the way they found them. In New York, every studio has its own set. But I didn't like the way the drums sounded, so I tuned them. Everyone was pretty surprised by this. Then, I'd always ask for another take if I didn't think the producer got my best performance. I'd always go into the control room and listen to the playback, which wasn't common for musicians to do in those days. I really cared. Every little dinky demo I did, I cared about. It turned out to be to my benefit. Word got around. I was a new face, a new guy, and producers were looking for new faces. Producers are still always looking for new faces, which is a bitch. That's why I always feel the pressure of staying one step ahead of everyone in the business.

RS: You seem to thrive on pressure.

AS: Yeah, but I'm not so sure it's healthy. I mean, I did 30 sessions in a week on a number of occasions during the late '70s and early '80s. Talk about pressure—I feel

LISTENERS' GUIDE

Q. For readers who'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album	Artist	Label/Catalog#
Peter Gabriel	Peter Gabriel	Atco 36147
Flesh And Blood	Roxy Music	Atco32102
Crash Landing	Jimi Hendrix	Reprise 2204
Goes To Hell	Alice Cooper	Warner Bros. 2896
Reality	James Brown	Polydor (Out of print)
Gene Simmons	Gene Simmons	Casablanca 826239
NY Cats Direct	John Tropea	DMP CD-453
Parting Should Be Painless	Roger Daltry	Atlantic 80128
Nils Lofgren	Nils Lofgren	A&M4756

Q. Which records have you listened to the most for inspiration?

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label/Catalog#
Various	John Coltrane	Elvin Jones	Various
Various	Miles Davis	Tony Williams/ Philly Joe Jones	Various
Various	Aretha Franklin	Bernard Purdie et al	Various
Various	James Brown	Various	Various
Various	Bill Evans	Various	Various
Look A Py Py	The Meters	Zigaboo Modeliste	Josie 4011
Living In The Material World	George Harrison	Jim Keltner	Capitol 16216

okay now, but I'm not sure I want to see the X-rays.

RS: How did you come up with a steady stream of good ideas and quality performances with that kind of workload?

AS: There were some tough spots. There are some people who still don't like me because of the way I was in those days. I got involved with drugs, and I did a lot of drinking. I was always on the edge. But I had to deal with the pressure somehow. Fortunately, I learned before it was too late that those substances turn you into an aggressive asshole with too many suggestions.

RS: So you've given up drugs and alcohol?

AS: With the exception of an occasional beer, yes. I stay away from both booze and drugs. They could have and would have destroyed my career like they destroyed the careers of so many other studio musicians. I used to call what I took "Einstein"; now I call it "losing powder." I didn't want to lose, so I just stopped using drugs cold. I haven't touched the stuff since. And I won't, because I'm really frightened of losing what it took me so long to get.

RS: What about the business end of being a session musician? Is it as lucrative as many musicians say it is?

AS: It's not as lucrative as it used to be, because there's not the volume there used to be. But there are a bunch of us who are still cranking out a nice living. I'm not sure it compares to what, say, the drummer in Bon Jovi's band is making, especially if he has a piece of the band and a good accountant. The money to be made in the studio scene is in the writing end of it. Anyone who tells you the studio scene is like it was in the late '70s and early '80s is

not telling you the truth. It's the technology that's cutting into things, and it's the quality of drumming that you hear from young drummers these days. I used to make a lot of money drumming for self-contained bands like Alice Cooper and Kiss when it came time for them to make a record.

RS: You haven't just done studio work. I know you've toured with some name artists in the past.

AS: I went on the road with Peter Gabriel, Mountain, B.J. Thomas, Pat Travers, and a few others.

RS: Is there a reason why you haven't done more touring?

AS: I never thought I'd enjoy playing the same songs every night. But lately I've been itching to go on the road. Every so often it's a refreshing experience. At one time I even thought I might want to join a full-time working band. I seriously thought about joining Journey a couple of years ago. This is a funny story. The band flew me out to California to audition. I was flattered that they did that. Later, I found out there were 50 drummers auditioning before me as well as after me. Anyway, I practiced for about a week before the audition. I learned all Journey's songs. At the audition I played as hard as I could for the first tune. I'm a big believer in first impressions. Well, the band liked what they heard. A couple of guys said, "Hey, that was pretty good. Let's do it again." I said, "Wait," huffing and puffing. "Whoa, let's just take a minute." You could



Photo by Steven Ross

see my heart pounding through my shirt. Well, that was it for me. They didn't want me to die right there at the audition.

After that, I knew I was crazy to think I could play 38 songs a night with a band like Journey. Session work is the right kind of work for me. I belong in the recording studio. When I get behind a good set of drums, and I look around at all of the great musicians I'm playing with, I feel comfortable, satisfied, and at home.

It is 11:45 A.M., and we are in the midtown Manhattan office building where Crushing Enterprises is located. Allan is here to do some drum programming and overdubbing for a Pillsbury project.

After a few hellos, Schwartzberg is handed the music for the jingle. He steps into one of the recording cubicles, which seems to have been a broom closet before the office space on the floor was made into

continued on page 58

"At one point in the
1970s, I thought
drummers were lost.
The swing was gone.
I stood in front of
several of my bands
and wondered what
was happening."

Photo by Jesse Leijn

LIONEL



by Burt Korall

HAMPTON

Swing 1s



Photo by Tom Copi

Promptly at noon one bright, warm day this past summer, Lionel Hampton burst out of the bedroom of his Lincoln Center apartment. He looked around his living room, with that great view of Manhattan, and gave me a big smile.

But he seemed preoccupied. "Hey Gates," he said. "I've got this tune on my mind. Ideas began coming to me a little while ago. And I have to work them out."

Hampton moved over to the vibes, set up near the couch. He tried a phrase, then another, experimenting with various rhythms. Progressively, a little composition took shape, as he continued to add and subtract from it. After about five minutes, he seemed satisfied, the piece having been completed. He sat down and began to talk:

"I had to do that, man. If I had just done the interview without going to the vibes first, I wouldn't have been able to concentrate. By getting my ideas together, I straightened out what was on my mind, and I feel better. My little tune needs some more work. But now I know what to do with it."

"Playing is my way of thinking, talking, communicating," he said. "I've always been crazy about playing. Every day I look forward to getting with my instruments, trying new things. Playing gives me as much good feeling now as it did when I was a bitty kid. I think I love it more as I get older because I keep getting better—on drums, vibes, and piano."

Hampton—an intense, happy man—has no identity problems. From the time he was "a bitty kid," he knew what he wanted. Hampton was a drummer as far back as he can remember. He initially banged around his mother's kitchen, creating patterns on pots and pans. Sometimes he'd use the rungs of a chair as drumsticks and the bottom of a wooden chair as his drum. Until he got his first drum, he used whatever he had at his disposal.

Hampton was born 80 years ago in Louisville, Kentucky. His family

encouraged his musical inclinations, but only his father, a promising pianist who was killed during World War I, was deeply musical. He lived briefly in Birmingham, Alabama, with his mother and her parents, Richard and Lavina Morgan, after his father passed away. When his grandfather, a fireman on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, was transferred to Chicago, the family picked up stakes and moved north. The youngster was surrounded by warmth; his mother and grandparents wanted only the best for him. Because his kin didn't approve of the rowdy atmosphere in the Chicago public schools, he was sent to Holy Rosary Academy in Kenosha, Wisconsin, not far from Chicago.

"That's where I met Sister Peters, a Dominican nun, who was a super drum teacher," Hampton pointed out. "She taught me the 26 drum rudiments and how to read music. She wasn't easy. If I didn't do the right things, she'd take my heavy marching-band sticks and beat me on the knuckles, or work me over with the long, pointed shoes she wore. The Sister couldn't take it when her students were lazy or careless."

"Because of her, I became a drummer who could really play the instrument. In addition to being a strict disciplinarian, she realized she had to give me a little room to be myself, so Sister allowed me to improvise during my lessons. She'd say, 'First you play the rudiments the way they're written, then you can do them your own way.' By doing this, I learned to play all the variations of the rudiments. Each one became second nature to me. So when I started to play with other musicians, I could execute them in a very natural way. I was lucky; the Sister gave me some good direction."

"Jimmy Bertrand was another terrific teacher," Hampton continued. "When I was coming along in the 1920s, he could be seen and heard with the Erskine Tate Band at the Vendome Theater in Chicago. We kids went to the theater all the time to dig him. A great showman, great at everything when it came to percussion, Bertrand really knew his job. He swung the rudiments and had a fantastic beat. All of us fought to get seats down front so we could see how he worked."

"Bertrand had a lot of drums and cymbals; he used temple blocks and timpani and played xylophone, too. Everyone interested in drums, particularly in the Chicago area, admired him."

"I never actually studied with Bertrand," he noted. "But I found out where he lived and made an appointment to visit him. Bertrand didn't have time to give me lessons because he was so busy. But he showed me some new ways to play paradiddles and how to play scales on the xylophone. Jimmy was a real musician. That's rare in any era. He could read very well and adapt to any sort of music. Tate was into all styles; he had to be. When an orchestra was in residence at a major theater, it had to play everything. There was such a variety of acts that worked at the Vendome. And the shows changed quite frequently."

"That's why Tate had great musicians like Bertrand, pianist Teddy Weatherford, who later worked in China, and Stomp Evans, a little guy who used to stand on a box when he took his solos on baritone saxophone, and Louis Armstrong—need I say more?"

Drummers remained on Hampton's mind as he spoke about some other early influences. "There was a guy known as 'Snags.' His real name was Clifford Jones. What a tremendous showman! He was the one who flipped sticks up in the air and caught them without missing a beat."

The late Barney Bigard, the great New Orleans clarinetist, described Snags in his book *With Louis And The Duke* (Oxford University Press): "He had only two teeth, and so the people called him 'Snags'....He would put the sticks under his arms, through his teeth, bang them on the floor, and catch them. He was a sensation."

"Then there was Jasper Taylor, with the Dave Peyton Orchestra," continued Hampton. "The orchestra performed at another big place

The Thing

in Chicago, the Grand Theater. Taylor's specialty was the washboard. He could get to audiences by doing some impossible things on the 'board. But, like Bertrand, he was a complete musician. Taylor didn't have any trouble reading music and played all the percussion instruments. As I said, you had to *know* in order to play with those bands."

Studying became important to Hampton early on. He viewed it as *the* means to becoming the sort of player he admired. After moving to another private parochial school in Chicago when the Holy Rosary Academy was relocated, he found an organization that was to be a key source of his musical education.

"One day, while I was walking home from St. Monica's Grammar School—the place I attended after coming back to Chicago—I heard some music coming out of a mansion about a block away from school. This large building had been given to the newsboys of the *Chicago Defender*, a black newspaper, by Madame Schumann-Heink, the great opera singer. I found out that the music was being played by a band of newsboys, with the instruments provided by Robert Abbott, the publisher of the paper. The great thing about this deal was that you could get free lessons and play in the *Chicago Defender* Newspaper Boys Band if you signed up as a newsboy. I got involved right away!

"When I joined the band, there wasn't a position open on drums. So I carried the bass drum during street parades and concerts in the park, which were our key activities. I did that for several weeks, then the bass drummer left and I took his place. I was very ambitious. Before long, I was noticed and became snare drummer in the band.

"Major N. Clark Smith, our teacher and the band's director, was a fine musician who knew how to communicate with young people," Hamp explained. "He had a staff of eight teachers and kept us very busy. I got to the mansion at 3:30 in the afternoon, right after school, Monday through Thursday. I practiced, took my lessons, and played with the band and the concert orchestra as well.

"It was great for a youngster trying to find his way in music. There I was at 13, getting all this wonderful training. Major Smith wanted his students to really know music. One day, after giving me a drum lesson, he said, 'Anyone who plays drums should know harmony.' A graduate of a great music school in Heidelberg, Germany, Major Smith became my professor in solfeggio harmony. After a while, I began playing xylophone and timpani, and developed my reading to the point where I could handle difficult concert music—overtures and things like that.

"I was a step ahead of the other drummers because of the training I had received from Sister Peters. With that background and what I learned from Major Smith, I really came out ahead. They gave me the tools I needed to become a well-rounded percussionist."

During the three years Hampton studied music and played with the *Chicago Defender* Newsboys, he listened to recordings, trying to develop a jazz concept. "My idol was Louis Armstrong," he said. "I took his solos off records, note for note, and played them on the bells or the xylophone. I wanted to understand how he thought and put things together. Once I grasped his ideas, and later those of people like Coleman Hawkins and Benny Carter and a few others, I began to get my own



Photos on this page courtesy Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University

thing going."

Hampton worked in and around Chicago as a drummer—on-the-job training that would help him progress. One of the musicians he gigged with was saxophonist Les Hite, who would later play an important role in his career. By this time Hamp had his own drumset, "with a light inside the bass drum, temple blocks—the whole thing," he recalled. "When I was about 16, I left town for the first time, with Detroit Shannon's band.

We got stranded somewhere. But it didn't matter to me. I would have gone with any band, just as long as I could play drums. I was beginning to play well. My time was firm; I knew how to use

my foot and make accents. Older musicians liked to work with me because I made them feel good."

In 1927, at 19, Hampton moved to California with his aunt, who got a job in a motion-picture studio. He had been asked to come to the Coast by Les Hite; soon he was playing with a series of bands that either featured Hite or were led by him.

"My first gig on the Coast was with the Reb Spikes band," Hamp recalled. "I had no trouble with the band's charts because I was a good reader and could make the arrangements swing. I also played with Curtis Mosby's group. He was a drummer, too. But I persuaded him to be just the front man while I played drums.

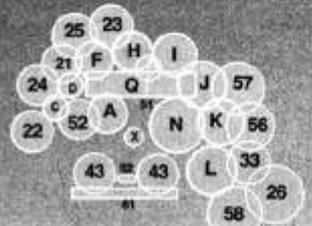


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MEET OUR QUALITY

Nicko McBrain

PLAYING PAISTE 20 YEARS

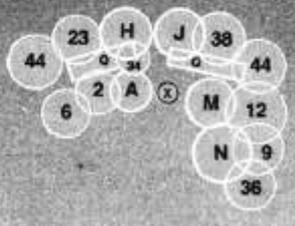


NICKO MCBRAIN

... My choice of cymbals has always been Paiste... they have exactly the right ingredients... the 3000s are a much more robust cymbal, therefore they can take an awful lot of punishment... they are marvelous cymbals for our kind of music... the cymbal quality is so unique and is so consistent. I have tremendous respect for the people that make the cymbals...

Tommy Lee

PLAYING PAISTE 9 YEARS

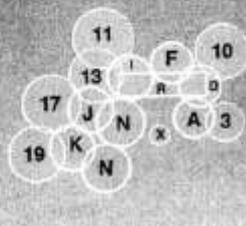


TOMMY LEE

... In our style of music, I am always competing with major amounts of volume... the cymbals always cut through and never let me down when I need a big crash... and the Hi-Hats, I'm using the 3000, are just great and I really love those... Paiste are the only cymbals that can withstand the thrashing that I give them... I've been using the 2002 for quite awhile, and the new 3000 series... I really like the new line...

Ian Paice

PLAYING PAISTE 16 YEARS



IAN PAICE

... The nicest thing I can say about my cymbals, is that I don't have to think about them ever... they do the job... the 3000s are now my first love... it's refreshing that the company didn't lie back on the floor and keep pumping out the same product all the time... there is a development process of improvement and expansion on all the ranges... it keeps life interesting...

There are five quality control points at our factory. Yet, the final one is in the hands of the artists. These drummers and percussionists could play anything. But they have made their choice with Paiste. We'll let Nicko, Tommy, Ian, Charlie, Cozy, Bobby and Tico tell you in their own words.

Then, find out for yourself what it took for these fine artists to stick with Paiste. Visit your local dealer and play a Paiste cymbal—the best quality—and consistency—you can find... anywhere.

PAiSte
CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

CYMBALS, GONGS & SOUNDS

- 1—3000 13" sound edge hi-hats
- 2—3000 14" heavy hi-hats
- 3—3000 15" sound edge hi-hats
- 4—3000 14" crash
- 5—3000 16" power crash
- 6—3000 18" power crash
- 7—3000 20" power crash
- 8—3000 18" crash
- 9—3000 20" crash
- 10—3000 22" crash
- 11—3000 24" crash
- 12—3000 22" heavy ride

- 13—3000 22" power ride
- 14—3000 24" ride
- 15—3000 18" novo
- 16—3000 20" novo
- 17—3000 22" novo
- 18—3000 20" china
- 19—3000 22" china
- 20—3000 REFLECTOR 14" sound edge hi-hats
- 21—3000 REFLECTOR 16" power crash
- 22—3000 REFLECTOR 17" power crash
- 23—3000 REFLECTOR 18" power crash
- 24—3000 REFLECTOR 19" power crash
- 25—3000 REFLECTOR 20" power crash
- 26—3000 REFLECTOR 24" power crash

- 27—3000 REFLECTOR 18" crash
- 28—3000 REFLECTOR 20" novo
- 29—3000 RUDE 8" splash
- 30—3000 RUDE 12" splash
- 31—3000 RUDE 17" crash/ride
- 32—3000 RUDE 16" crash/ride
- 33—3000 RUDE 20" ride/crash
- 34—2002 12" splash
- 35—2002 18" heavy crash
- 36—2002 18" medium
- 37—2002 20" medium
- 38—2002 20" medium
- 39—2002 20" heavy crash

- 40—2002 22" heavy crash
- 41—2002 22" heavy ride
- 42—2002 20" china
- 43—2000 COLORSOUND 18" china
- 44—2000 COLORSOUND 20" china
- 45—2000 SOUND REFLECTION 18" crash
- 46—2000 SOUND REFLECTION 20" ride
- 47—1000 RUDE 14" crash/ride
- 48—1000 RUDE 18" crash/ride
- 49—RUDE 8" splash
- 50—RUDE 10" splash

CONTROL TEAM

Charlie Benante

PLAYING PAISTE 8 YEARS



CHARLIE BENANTE

...I like the 2002 and 3000 Rudes...the Rudes give you that extra edge...they are one of the keys to my sound...I have a lot of lines in my set up, like the 1000s, which are a cheaper cymbal in price, but they sound amazing...I just got two 2000 Sound Reflections, they're nice and light, they're really quick...Paiste Cymbals look amazing...I hope Paiste Cymbals are around forever...

- 51--602 13" heavy bell
- 52--602 14" extra heavy hi-hats
- 53--602 15" extra heavy hi-hats
- 54--602 13" medium ride
- 55--SOUND CREATION 14" dark heavy sound edge hi-hats
- 56--SOUND CREATION 20" bright ride
- 57--SOUND CREATION 22" bell ride
- 58--SOUND CREATION 22" dark china
- 59--6" cup chime
- 60--36" symphonic gong
- 61--40" symphonic gong
- 62--chimes (C,D,E)

Cozy Powell

PLAYING PAISTE 19 YEARS



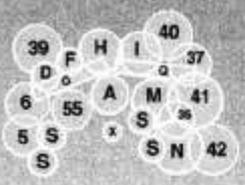
COZY POWELL

...For the way that I play, Paistes are number one... the 3000s give me just a little bit more edge, they last a little bit longer, they have more brilliance to them, and they are more durable...I think that the 3000 are the best of the lot...just about every one I know in rock uses them... they are the best cymbal available, and I think that every professional has to use the best equipment...

- DRUMS & OTHER INSTRUMENTS**
- A -- 5-1/2x14 snare drum
 - B -- 8x14 snare drum
 - C -- 6" mounted tom
 - D -- 8" mounted tom
 - E -- 9" mounted tom
 - F -- 10" mounted tom
 - G -- 11" mounted tom
 - H -- 12" mounted tom
 - I -- 13" mounted tom
 - J -- 14" mounted tom
 - K -- 15" mounted tom
 - L -- 16" mounted tom

Bobby Blotzer

PLAYING PAISTE 14 YEARS



BOBBY BLOTZER

...They are so musical that they stand out on their own...I don't use anything but Paiste...to me 2002 sound the best...I like the 3000, I use those in the studio...the 3000 is a better recording cymbal...the company is a family run thing, they thoroughly believe in what they are doing, it shows in the workmanship and in the sound...I plan to be with Paiste the rest of my life...

- M -- 16" floor tom
- N -- 18" floor tom
- O -- 20" floor tom
- P -- 22" bass drum
- Q -- 24" bass drum
- R -- 26" bass drum
- S -- electronic drum pads
- X -- throne

Tico Torres

PLAYING PAISTE 5 YEARS



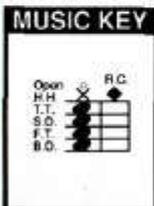
TICO TORRES

...I need a cymbal to cover me in an arena situation, plus, in the studio, to have the fine consistency of a pin dropping...the 2002 is my favorite...I like the 505 for certain sounds. I like the variety...in the new lines, I think the sound is better... it's a totally different sound, a step up...I've been to the factory twice, and I was really impressed...the workmanship in the products is impressive...

The statements in this ad are based on interviews conducted with the artists on their playing, cymbals, sounds, and on Paiste. Write to us at Paiste America, 460 Atlas St., Brea, CA. 92621, and ask for the ones you'd like. Mention Dept. USA3. Please include \$3 for printing, postage and handling.

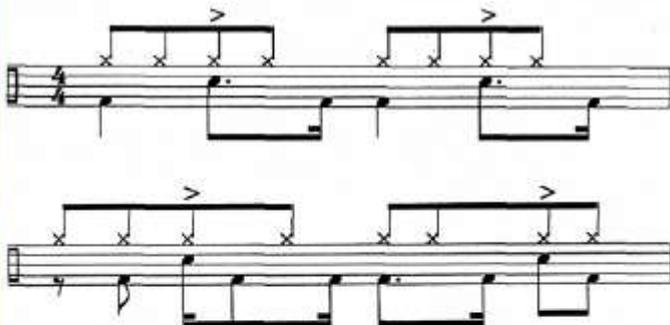
by Gary Chaffee
Transcribed by Lyman Mulkey

Linear Drumming



There are basically three ways of creating time feels in rock drumming. The most common way is through the use of cymbal ostinatos. The term "ostinato" means "a repeated rhythm," so with cymbal rhythms the most common would be quarters, 8ths, or 16th notes. This method has been around for a long time, and the majority of time feels today are still based on cymbal ostinatos.

When you play a cymbal ostinato using 8th notes, a lot of the notes are being played by more than one voice. About half of the notes in the following example are played together. This happens in all cymbal ostinatos, because one voice is always playing. When two voices strike at the same time, we call it *layering*.



Linear Phrases

There are two newer ways of playing time besides layering. These are called linear phrases and sticking phrases. "Linear" means "resembling a line." When you play linear time, you're playing a single line of notes broken up between various parts of the drumset. There are *no* points where two voices strike at the same time.

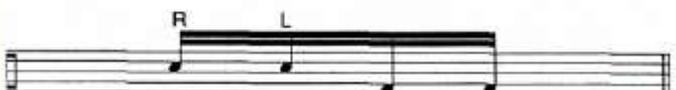
In linear phrasing there are basically six types: The first is The 8 (six notes in the hands, two with the foot):



There is also The 6 (four notes in the hands, two with the foot):



and The 4 (two notes in the hands, two with the foot):



All of the above examples are similar in that they're all even, they all end with two bass drum notes, and they all use single sticking.

In addition, there are also three odd groupings—The 3 (two notes in the hands, one with the foot):



The 5 (four notes in the hands, one with the foot):



and The 7 (six notes in the hands, one with the foot):



Now that we have looked at the basic patterns, let's concentrate on The 8. The first thing we can do is make a time feel out of it by moving the right hand to the hi-hat.



Rock feels generally contain accents. We'll put accents into the sticking by placing a left hand accent on the "ah" of beats 1 and 3.



If we want a more common 2 and 4 accent, we must bring the right hand over to the snare drum.



Once you get the basic accent line down, there are a few things you can do to color the phrases and make them more interesting. One thing would be to divide any of the notes into 32nds. Here they are on the first and third beats of the phrase.



Here's an extended example using this technique.



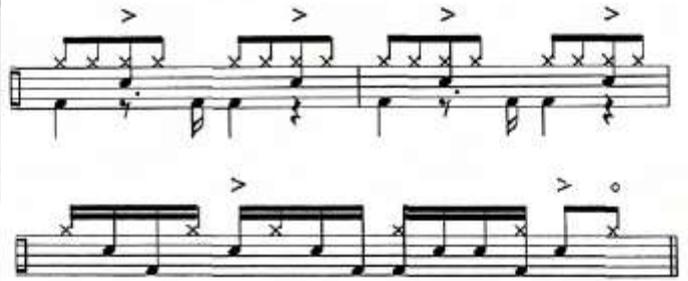
You can also open the hi-hat to achieve a longer sound.



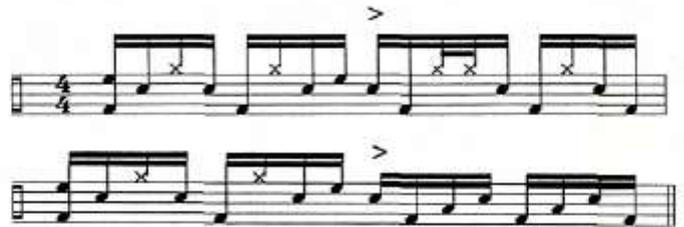
Here's a four-bar example using 32nd notes, accents, and open hi-hat



Linear phrasing doesn't always work well for fast time playing. It's better for medium to slow tempos. As you can see, the phrases are more syncopated, so they're good for funk time playing. If you want to use them in a rock groove, you'll need to play shorter versions, less of them, and mix them into the groove. Here's an example:



Another one of the exciting things happening today is the playing of more time feels using the full set (including toms), as opposed to cymbals only. Linear drumming works very well for doing that.



When you work on linear lines, don't be satisfied with just doing them one way. Vary them to develop flexibility around the set, and *make music* with the phrases.

Sticking Phrases

Another way of playing time is with varied stickings. One of the most common is a variation of the paradiddle.



Again, play the right hand on the hi-hat and the left hand on the snare drum.

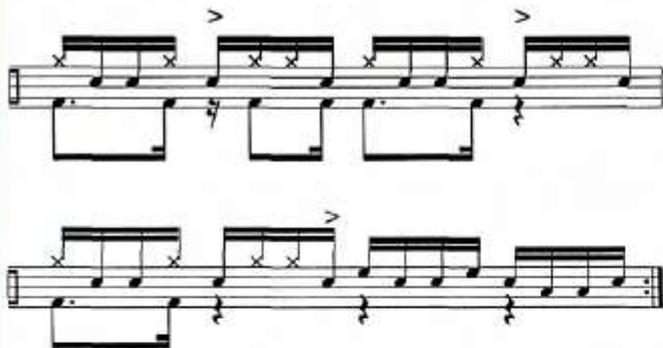


It's also good to work on bass drum phrasing along with the new linear sticking pattern.



Now, add accents, open hi-hat, and toms.

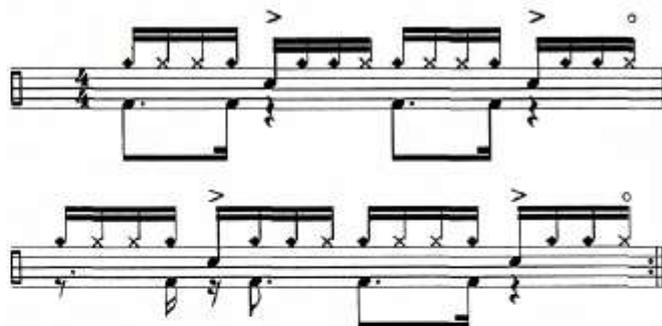




Another thing you can try is playing the stickings in different ways on the set. The next example has the same sticking pattern (RLLR LRRL), with the right hand on the ride cymbal bell.



Now, keeping the right hand on the cymbal bell, put all of the unaccented left-hand notes on the hi-hat.



Sticking variations can also be used for special feels like the half-time/double-time feel. Here's a 32nd-note pattern using a RLRR LLRR sticking.



This is a six-note sticking (RLRRL) with one bass drum added.



There are many ways to apply linear concepts in time functioning situations. Listen closely to players like Steve Smith, Vinnie Colaiuta, Steve Gadd, Omar Hakim, Jeff Porcaro, and others, to clearly hear this exciting approach in action.

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Trusting Your Own Ideas

One of my students recently attended a clinic/concert by one of the best young professional drummers playing today. The student, who is only 16, said, "After hearing the clinic/concert, I became depressed." "Why is that?" I asked. "Nothing I play sounds good to me," he replied. "I don't like my ideas." I responded, "Don't you think you're being a little hard on yourself?" He said, "Well, maybe, but everything he played sounded so good that I don't sound good to myself anymore." "Give yourself a little time," I suggested. "You're only 16. Allow time for you and your ideas to develop. Everyone needs time and experience in order to grow musically."

One of the reasons for my student's response is that when you are young and hear someone who is great, it's a powerful experience that makes a deep and lasting impression. For example, when I was 16, I heard Louie Bellson and Buddy Rich for the first time. I was completely blown away. These guys were so good that I felt like giving up. However, after 24 hours, I

couldn't wait to get to the drums and try to do some of the things that I had seen and heard. Depression had turned into inspiration. That concert, in my memory, inspires me to this day.

One of the reasons that other players sound so good to us is not just that they are more accomplished. It's because you don't know what to expect. You don't know what the drummer in question is going to play next. You're on the edge of your seat, anticipating, enjoying, and being totally caught up in the music. Everything is a surprise—especially when you are just 16.

The other impressive factor for my student was the group that accompanied the drummer in question. They were top-notch players with a lot of performing experience. They added even more power to the impression being generated by the drummer. The whole musical effect was powerful, and situations like this make for an intense and lasting impression.

Most of us have to practice and perfect our ideas until we develop enough control

to play them naturally and with feeling. After doing this for years, you can use your ideas spontaneously to create new ones. This takes time and experience. You need to learn what is appropriate for a particular fill or song and what to leave out. When you play just what is needed, your playing will demonstrate maturity and feeling.

Early in my career, I learned some great lessons while recording. Ideas that I thought would sound great on tape really did not sound good at all. Other ideas that I had sort of taken for granted sounded much, much better than I thought they would. From these experiences, I learned that while you are playing, it is difficult to be objective about how you really sound. This is why recording can be such hard work. You have to concentrate and listen. That's why you often hear the comment in the studio, "Can we hear that back?" After listening to the track, you very often will want to make adjustments in your playing.

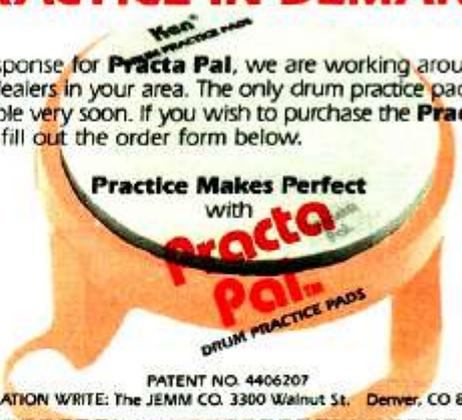
This is one reason that I recommend taping practice sessions, rehearsals, club gigs, and concerts. Listening objectively to what you (and the other members of the group) have played is a great way to learn. You can hear it as someone else would hear it. This, as you can imagine, is almost impossible to do while you are performing. Learning to listen to yourself objectively is a key to improving.

When you are young and want to do well, you have high hopes. As you improve, you begin to think, "I am pretty good." Your view of yourself and your playing may not be quite accurate. Consequently, when you encounter a great, experienced drummer, it does deflate your ego a little. However, this can also be positive, because it helps to give you the perspective to determine where you really stand. All—or at least most—of us need an attitude adjustment every now and then to help keep our perspective of ourselves realistic.

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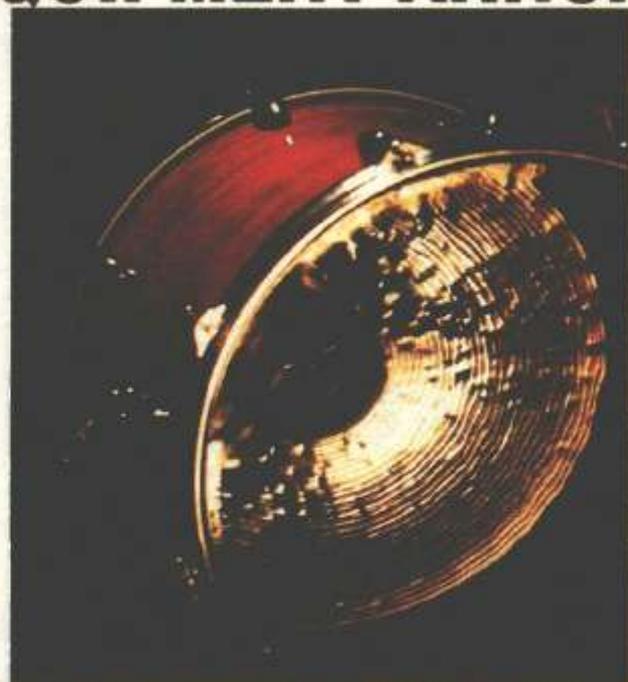
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by Peter Erskine

"Erskoman"

MUSIC KEY

Open	X	f.c.	C.C.
H.H.	X		
T.T.	X		
S.O.	X		
F.T.	X		
B.D.	X		
H.H. w/foot	X		
	X	Cross Stick	T.T. Ghosted Notes

My recent columns have dealt with improvisation and ethnic beat variations. I would like to devote this month's article to a particular expansion and merging of those two themes, drawing from my latest recording, *Motion Poet* (Denon compact disk). The first tune on the album is entitled "Erskoman" (composed by me, and arranged by Vince Mendoza). It starts with a calypso-like bass line, played by Will Lee. The bass and drum parts look like this:

♩ = 88

Drums

Elec. Bass

etc.

The bass drum and cross-stick snare parts are basic and repetitive. They form the body of the groove. The syncopated hi-hat creates an interesting counter-rhythm, and makes an otherwise solid and simple beat dance along. As the melody, which is itself syncopated (and quirky), enters and develops, the hi-hat part becomes more "regular"

and simple.

The arrangement produces more and more horn and guitar counter-lines, so by necessity the drum part stays simple and solid. A groove is great fun to play, and I think that we can agree that—by "jazz fusion" standards, keeping my byline in mind—the above groove is about as basic as one can get. This groove has a chance to fly a little more when I go from the hi-hat to the ride cymbal. The hi-hat now plays in a double-time manner, thus giving the music another subtle dimension (i.e., another level of time).

or

Cym. Bell

One advantage of the drummer being the composer of a tune is that the composer doesn't need to instruct the drummer as to how the drum part should go! Also, the drum ego is sublimated, in part, by the composition's unfolding and development. However, I do get to have some real drum fun for eight bars—a solo! Motivically, I draw from the spirit and the ensemble figures of the tune.

It is a drum solo, but you'll notice that there isn't a lot of ink being used in the transcription. As I *improvised*, I was just trying to *compose* some more of the tune, then and there. I didn't want to just play some flashy licks (I don't know too many, anyway) or play something else that my hands just "knew." The solo is, I hope, unique, musical, and complementary to the rest of the music.

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♩ = 88
Drums

Band

Solo

Calypso—walking bass

Band

etc.

I hope that you enjoy "Erskoman" and the rest of the music on *Motion Poet*. In my next article, I'll share some more rhythms and interpretations from the album and from my current musical lexicon.



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intonations, and having that all over the drumset. It's like thinking of things as a voice instead of just keeping the bass drum on four beats, or every time you hit a cymbal, having to hit a bass drum with it. I'll do things like hit a cymbal by itself and let the tone of the cymbal ring out where it's more obvious. If you hit a cymbal by itself, it's isolated, and nothing is covered up by any other instrument. If it's a large crash cymbal, you can do that, or if you have a small splash cymbal or quick-sounding cymbals, you can play rhythms on them. If you play those kinds of rhythms on a large cymbal that is very sustaining, it'll just wash out. I like things to speak out individually. It's kind of like a lot of people talking at once, and you can think of people shouting at each other or whispering. I do that a lot when I'm soloing. I try to start with some sort of theme and try to make it a bit more musical, because I hate most drum solos. I think most drum solos are hard to listen to. Though Peter Erskine plays amazingly beautiful solos that are melodic. Max Roach also does that, and there are other drummers as well. But most drum solos sound like a circus act to me.

RF: Do you think your background on violin and viola had any kind of melodic effect on you?

CW: [laughs] I don't know; it may have.

RF: You laughed when I brought it up. Why?

CW: Because I put that away after high school. But yes, it probably did, and I think it made my reading a bit more musical, too. I think the other thing it did for me was that it made me realize what other instrumentalists have to go through. A lot of drummers just get so wrapped up in drums—especially younger drummers. Younger drummers are learning and trying to get a big vocabulary together to have something to say, and often they don't think rhythm section-wise to begin with, let alone what other people have to go through—like a sax player having to wet a reed and stick it on his instrument and blow through this plumbing to try to get notes out. Playing

violin kind of showed me what violinists have to go through, and that, yes, they have reason to get upset if they can't hear themselves. Drums are a very powerful, loud instrument, so I think I can understand things a little more from a string player's point of view.

RF: What about that concept of rhythm section playing as opposed to solo playing? When you were learning how to play, you were in your room alone transcribing and becoming an instrumentalist, as opposed to an ensemble player.

CW: As I was transcribing, I couldn't write down what the other instruments were doing, but I was checking it out, and I could hear it—how the bass drum was working against the bass, or noticing, "Hey, those guitar beats are also being played by the snare drum," and these things set up different types of grooves.

RF: Some drummers only listen to the drum part, and that limits the concept of playing with others.

CW: The drum part alone doesn't mean much.

RF: So you always knew to listen to the whole?

CW: Pretty much. Not patting myself on the back at all, but I think that's usually how you can tell when someone has played for a while; he or she usually plays to help the song and the music, rather than, "This is what I've practiced in my room." That doesn't mean a thing.

RF: You must have known that pretty early, because you were playing professionally at a very young age.

CW: I was with Frank when I was 21, but I was 19 when I started professionally and went on the road with Leslie Uggams. She is very good, and the band she had was great. In fact, the keyboard player was Jim Cox, who got me on the Barbra Streisand gig and also on *The Late Show*.

RF: It was Jim Cox who hooked you up with Albert Lee, too. I was thinking what a strange pairing that is. Was that odd to do?

CW: It was great to do. It was a blast, and I

loved it. I don't play country music very often, and he wanted that album [*Speechless*] to be a bit weird anyway.

RF: There were some jazz inflections in there.

CW: We did a Duane Eddy tune, and we took it completely left. The bass player was a very country bass player, and I think he thought we were absolutely mad, because on the solo section, Jim started taking it out, and Albert was saying, "Yeah, yeah, that's what I want."

RF: So in a situation like that you get to infuse some of yourself in there.

CW: Yes, although on other tunes we kept it very, very safe and straight and more appropriate.

RF: There is one that is a train feel, and I wondered how you even knew how to play country music.

CW: I had played country music gigs before—not a lot, but I've played a few clubs. I've played the Palomino a few times. I think it was someone Jim Cox was working with again.

RF: And you didn't have an attitude about it?

CW: No, we had a great time. Jim is amazing at it, a real specialist. He gets an unbelievable steel guitar sound just on a *Prophet*.

I've played all sorts of gigs. Before I played with Frank, I played with Leslie Uggams, which is a Vegas-type show with strings and that kind of thing.

RF: And you didn't get crazy?

CW: No, we had a good time, and at the same time, the rhythm section had a fusion band going, and that same rhythm section became Bill Watrous's rhythm section. After a while, people were just hiring us as a rhythm section because we could play jazz and rock and most styles.

RF: Has there ever been a situation where you felt creatively stifled?

CW: When you start playing a style you're not used to, you feel a little bit strange. When I first played with Bill Watrous, he would count off tempos that were so fast, I don't know if they're even on a metronome. And he's so amazing that he can solo for 15 minutes, cycle breath, and go on and on and on. That took a while to get used to.

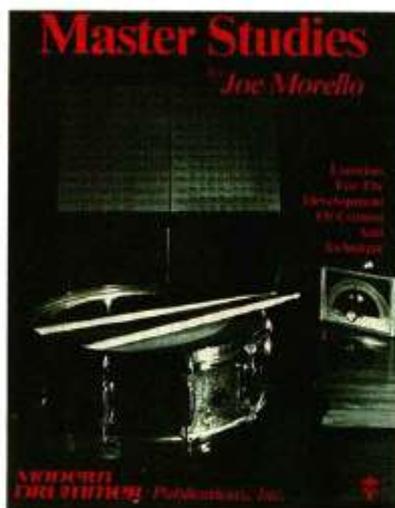
RF: How did you work with that?

CW: I had to practice just a basic swing beat—dinga dinga, dinga ding—for a long time at home, and make sure I could do it. If you ever tense up, you're not going to last. You're going to hurt yourself and have to stop playing, especially in that situation where you have to play fast for a long period of time. So I started analyzing what my hand was doing, making sure it wasn't working more than it had to, using all the energy, making as much out of it as I could without playing too hard. I'd try to play lighter and make sure I wasn't using a bigger stroke than I had to, which would take up more time or energy.

RF: Take each situation you've been in for a length of time and tell me what kind of playing was required of you and how you

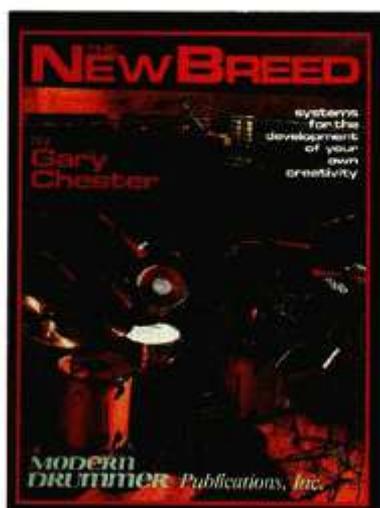
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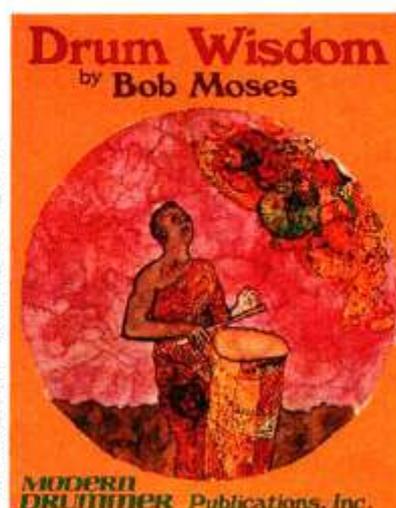
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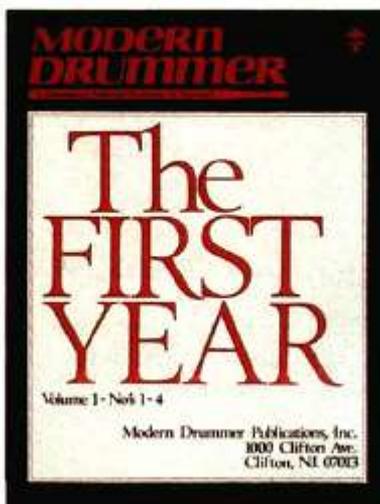
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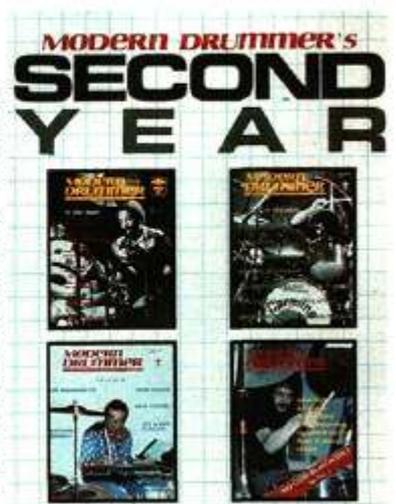
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attempted to fit the bill and approach the music.

CW: In Frank's situation, a lot of it is dictated to you, so you often have the role of basically doing what you're paid to be doing. A lot of that is taking music home and practicing it—multiple percussion parts that are like classical parts. That, for me, is probably the hardest side of that gig—just memorizing all those notes and all the different figures.

Allan's band is just the opposite of that. You're more of a composer as far as the drum part goes; that's what you're hired for. There may be only a few people he likes, but he is not going to tell them what to do; he wants them to play the way he likes to hear it. It's a real problem to find somebody, and just until recently, there hasn't been any music written for Allan's stuff because Allan doesn't write it down. Jimmy Johnson, the bass player, finally wrote some of the drum parts out because there have been a couple of times when Gary Husband or I couldn't do the gig. Gary and I have been juggling it around for quite some time. Allan has had a few really amazing drummers play, but it may not be just quite the way he wants to hear it. But he's still not going to tell them *how* he wants to hear it. You don't get any direction; it's a lot of luck, I guess. And if you're going to have a situation that's that open, when somebody steps in, it's going to make it completely different. The way Gary Husband plays and the way I play are completely different. He's probably even wilder than I am. He's really, really amazing, and we approach the music differently too, so that gig is a strange one, because it's so open. Every other gig I've done, somebody has said, "Now, put the backbeat here," or, "we're going to half time." None of it is ever talked about with Allan, whereas with Frank, a lot of it is talked about.

RF: Does it still feel creative?

CW: It still does, because once Frank puts on the guitar, it's an open section. So in parts of it you're more like a classical percussionist, playing the notes. It's like somebody playing Mozart and being asked, "Are you being creative?" It's not really your job at that point to be creative. You're not in a composer's role; you're in a musician's role or a sideman's role. But for solos and improvisation sections, it's now your job to be creative. That's how I look at it.

RF: Is there anyone else that you might have worked with that required something completely different?

CW: Those are the extremes. Everything else kind of falls between them. I worked with Men At Work for four months, and that was all grooves, which was completely different.

RF: Who were your influences in that respect?

CW: One who really impressed me and who can do that type of thing really well is Jeff Porcaro. Another drummer named Bob Wilson, who played with a group called Seawind, was a great groove drummer. He

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didn't play anything that was terribly technical, but just the way he laid it down was amazing. I would go out and see that band a lot, and whenever Jeff Porcaro was playing, I'd see him. Also, when I was a bit younger, I listened to John Guerin. I'm sure those drummers can do a lot of things, but when I heard them, they were playing a lot of groove stuff. I always practiced grooves.

RF: How did you practice that?

CW: Different ways. Often I'd get a bass player friend to come over and just play all day—just grooves and feels. Or, if I was alone, I'd set a metronome and try to play different feels, or try to get it exactly locked, or try to play with an edge a tiny bit, pushing or laid back. I was pretty aware of those type of things.

RF: What was it like going from a Zappa mindset to something like Men At Work?

CW: I was playing grooves much more before I played with Frank, because I was doing demos and recording a little bit. I wasn't really playing a lot of fusion stuff. I was playing some jazz, and any session I did was pretty much a pop tune or a rock 'n' roll groove—which did help with Frank, too, because a lot of times you have to play patterns. They can be simple patterns, which you probably don't notice as much as the musical Olympics. So it was just getting back into that mode.

When I'm on tour with somebody, I like to listen to the opposite music of whatever music I'm playing on the tour. It's a good change. Often with Allan Holdsworth, we'd listen to pop music, Top-40 radio. I worked at Disneyland with Jim Cox in a Top-40 band when I was younger. I was very fortunate. I went to Long Beach State University when John Ferraro and Gordon Peak were there, and I learned a lot from them. We all kind of gave each other gigs, and Jim Cox was the keyboard player at school at the time. John Ferraro had the gig at Disneyland, and when he got called to play with Larry Carlton, he called me to take over his gig at Disneyland. That's where I got pretty tight with Jim Cox, which led to Leslie Uggams and a lot of other things. So I've been playing grooves for a long time.

RF: What would you say is your forte? You play all this music and you don't seem to

have an attitude about any of it. So what do you think are your strengths, if you would pat yourself on the back for a minute?

CW: I really don't have any kind of problem with reading, and once again, by playing Frank's gig, that's brought that to another level, even though I might not read for six months. I do like playing pop music. It's really fun to just sit back and play a real strong groove, and try to play very simple fills that can lift a tune before a chorus, and do it in a way that is pedestrian enough, but not so much so that it could be anybody. I love working with Allan. It's so free, and I just love the way he writes. I feel I can do that pretty well. I think I can play in Frank's situation pretty well, too. Odd times aren't really a problem. I've done it so much. I think a lot of people get tense about doing that, because they don't get to practice it very much. I'm not the world's greatest brush player. I haven't done that for a long time, not since Bill Watrous or Leslie Uggams or any jazz albums I've done. That's something I could work on.

RF: How would you do that?

CW: That's something I've been thinking about lately, actually. I'd like to take a few lessons from a few players. I haven't taken any lessons in about ten years, so I'd like to take some from somebody who plays completely different than I do. Peter could show me some brush things, actually, and Jake Hanna. Jake's amazing. He plays beautiful brushes. I haven't done it, but I've been thinking about calling up Alex Acuna, because I haven't played a lot of Latin things. I feel that my Latin playing is too jazz-influenced. The way I play a samba is a jazz samba; it's not a true Brazilian samba, because I've played with some bass players who have played true Brazilian samba, and it's not the same as a jazz samba. They leave half of the notes out, and I'm not sure if the samba I would play against that would be completely traditional. I like to know what the formula is to make up different styles of music.

At this point, I feel pretty confident, especially coming off of a tour. Your chops are really up when you get off the road, and in Frank's situation, I do get to play a

lot of different styles. I usually don't get nervous in the studio. At first I did because I was worried about how my drums were really going to sound, getting along with the engineer, what he was going to do to the sound, and things like that.

RF: That was something else you mentioned in your last article that I wanted to get more into. You said drums should sound different with every different thing you do.

CW: It's like a synthesizer player. He can be more elaborate than you can be with drums, but you have to know the right kind of sounds to put out for the music. If James Taylor calls, you're not going to walk in with a Stewart Copeland-sounding snare drum. You have to be aware of that. It's going to be a bit lower pitched, unless he wants to change. But he's pretty much established a type of sound that fits his music, and I imagine he likes to hear that. And the same thing if, say, Ziggy Marley would need a drummer. You wouldn't walk in with a Russ Kunkel or Carlos Vega snare. You have to be aware of these things—the different tunes. For reggae you can tune it very, very tight, make it very timbale-ish sounding, maybe use a sizzle cymbal, something Bob Marley used in his band.

RF: What do you do with Frank?

CW: We have to shift gears all the time, so it's a pretty general-sounding kit. It's a rock-sounding bass drum with a blanket in it; it's not a jazz bass drum. The toms are 10", 12", 14", 16", and 18", and they have white heads on top and clear on the bottom. They're all completely open, so with that sound you can pretty much do anything. The snare drum is fairly tight; we don't do any James Taylor-ish songs.

RF: What about with Holdsworth?

CW: I use pretty much the same thing with him. I often use more cymbals, though. It's very spacious music, and I want to use more bells and more variances in sounds.

RF: You changed drum companies from Slingerland to DW since your last article.

CW: I ended up buying a kit of DW's since I liked them so much, and then I thought, "This isn't right. I don't want to be endorsing something I wouldn't want to use in the studio," so at that point I changed. It was hard to do, because Slingerland took me on when I was very young, and they were terrific—really, really great people. But the DW stuff is amazing, and it's all handmade. They take a lot of pride in it, and a big reason I like them is that their bearing edges are really true, so there's a wide range for every drum. I can tune them way down and way up, and they won't sound choked when they're too high or too papery when they're too low. I can go for the Megadeth sound or a jazz sound.

RF: What about getting a drum sound in the studio as opposed to live?

CW: My drum sound is very similar in both situations. The room is always different in the studio, and live you have to deal with a PA, which can be a real problem if you don't have enough EQ on the mixing console like you would in the studio. Some-

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times you're working in a club and you can only do so much, but I always try to get really tight with the engineer and try to work with him to get the best sound possible.

RF: What about tuning?

CW: I'm really careful about tuning. On my kit, I have all even sizes. I purposely avoid 13" and 15" toms—not because I actually go for pitched notes, but I try to go for a wide enough interval between each drum so you can actually hear the tone of the drum. With a 10", 12", 13", and 14" setup, I find I can't get a big enough space. I like to hear each drum individually. I can really hear when I'm on the 10" tom as opposed to the 12". There's a fairly big gap, pitch-wise. Each tom is very independent-sounding, so on solos, I try to be more melodic about it. I think of them more as

tones than as tom-toms, and I think that my setup helps me do it. I also do that with cymbals. I don't get too many cymbals that have the same frequency range, which is a big reason I like my Paistes. I have a 14", a 16", and an 18", and each one isn't completely covering up the other's frequency range. You can hear a bit of a tone to each one and you can hear more of the note. And I have mic's in all of my drums. Really good mic's make such a difference going out over the PA. In the studio, I tune for the song. If I'm in the studio with Barbra Streisand, I'm not going to go for as high a pitch snare sound as I normally do with Frank and Allan. As far as snare drums go, I'll either use Drum Workshop brass drums or I'll use Noble & Cooley wood drums.

RF: Do you take the same equipment into the studio?

CW: Yes I do. I basically have three drumsets that are very similar. I have two with the setup I just mentioned. The set I use with Frank has an 18" floor tom as well, because he wanted a really huge floor tom.

RF: What do you want to do at this point with your music?

CW: I'm trying to write music.

RF: What kind of music do you write?

CW: Kind of a bit of everything, like what I play. I've got a couple of tunes that are finished; one is a light reggae tune with vocals on it, and the other is more of an R&B funk tune. Allan has helped me out with these and played on them, and my brother played bass.

RF: What do you compose on?

CW: Either keyboards or a Chapman *Stick*. I got the *Stick* a few months ago and took it on the road. I think it's a great writing tool. And I have a *Macintosh*. I would eventu-

ally like to be a composer. I would like to be a solo artist and put out an album. These tunes don't sound like a drummer wrote them. But I have other things that don't fit that mold either and are a bit wilder.

RF: What about the recording work you do in town?

CW: I do a lot of jingles. I work for John Trivers and Liz Myers a lot. They're the greatest people, and it's usually me and Jim Cox or Alan Pasqua. The first one I did was a Nike ad, which involved basketball players playing, so it was all drums. They wanted kind of a Police feel—really wild—and it was basically a drum solo that they put some sound effects to later. You never know what they're going to be. The client might say, "We just want piano," or "It's got to be Van Halen," or "Did I say Van Halen? No, I meant a polka." Those things are often like Frank's gig; they change all the time. They really write great music and still keep the ad people very happy. It's not the normal way of doing jingles. From what I understand, that's usually guys in and out of the studio in an hour. We spend a good hour or two just getting a drum sound. They do it at Village—studio A or studio D—at Capitol B, or at Studio Ultima, and they spend time with the sounds and hire great people.

RF: What would you bring to that gig?

CW: My usual set plus my electronics.

RF: Do you use electronics with Zappa?

CW: Yes I do.

RF: Can you give me an idea of what you use?

CW: I use the Dynacord *ADD-one* and an Akai *S-900* sampler—basically the two brains—and it's all wired into a Switchcraft patch bay. I had it done properly, so that there are no hums and no buzzes. We did 85 gigs with Frank, and it hummed one day, which is unbelievable. Ron Aston put it together for me. Every sound comes up at the patch bay and the mixer. I have out-board gear, a couple of Roland delays—an *SPX-90* and an *SRV-2000*—and I trigger off the drums. I have *Octapads* and Dan Daus pads, which are little electronic pads that you can put all over the kit. I'm into electronics in a big way. On the '84 tour with Frank I used a real bass drum, snare drum, cymbals, and ten pads.

RF: Why do electronics interest you?

CW: Engineering interests me a lot. On tour, I'm usually hanging out with the sound engineer. Allan is an engineer as well, so I've learned a lot from him. I'm always picking his brain. Before the '84 tour, I was using the Simmons *SDS-7* and had 16 different patches that I could use. I use a lot of different sounds. For Colin Hay's record, a lot of those rhythm parts were being played from an *Octapad*, not keyboards. Sometimes for a really ridiculously huge snare drum, I'll use white noise on a *Prophet* and some other sound on a *DX*, plus the other samplers. On the jingles I use different sounds all the time. It's great, because you can get an instantly huge sound by having multiple units being played together.

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RF: How electronic do you sound?

CW: I didn't start triggering until this tour. I always pretty much kept them separate and used them as effects or for solos—and not only drum sounds either; sometimes I'd use marimba sounds, so I could play melodies and chords. But I wanted more sound possibilities.

RF: Is Frank into this?

CW: Oh, yes. For the '84 tour he wanted everything electronic, but we decided to keep the kick and the snare drum acoustic.

RF: How did you feel about playing pads?

CW: It was pretty strange at first, because at that time it was the SDS-V, which had the very hard pads. I couldn't imagine playing those for a whole tour. Some of Frank's roadies were working with Missing Persons, so I went over to Terry's [Bozzio] warehouse where he had his electronics setup. They tapped on it for me and it sounded so amazing, really hi-fi, and I thought, "That would be really amazing if you could actually get a great sound wherever you are." So I thought, "That's another completely different way to think." It would be great to have everything sound really expensive on stage, coming out in stereo with the correct reverbs and correct delay times. I used the electronics with Men At Work, too.

RF: With Men At Work, was it weird coming into a situation where there had been another drummer?

CW: There had been another band. Colin [Hay] and Greg [Hamm] were the only ones left. This was kind of a version two. The tour was going to be amazing. They had booked a month in China after Wham! had played there. We rehearsed in Melbourne for a month, and the bass player, Jeremy Alsop, was great. It turned out we had all the same influences, and he was really into Zappa and Weather Report. But China got cancelled, and they panicked because they had us all on salary. So they ended up booking all of Australia, and we went to the outback, to Broken Hill, and these mining towns. It was a wild experience. But I met my wife on that tour, who was singing with the opening band, so I'm glad I did it.

RF: So what's your focus?

CW: Can't you tell I'm not focused at all? [laughs]

RF: What about burning desires?

CW: I have a burning desire to do this solo thing. That's a huge goal. That's not much to do with drumming at all, but it just seems like the right step to take at this point. Sometimes you can get tired of being a sideman. You finally get to the point where you think, "I should be doing something on my own as well." Not that I would do that 100% of the time, but I have a lot of ambition to do something more.

JEAN-PAUL CECCARELLI (Sting/Studio)

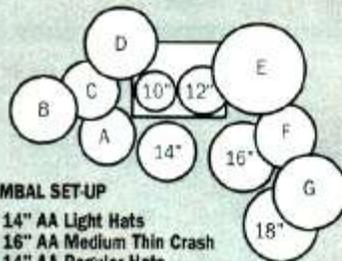


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Schwartzberg works through the music. It's not the most challenging work; in fact, Schwartzberg fights off boredom as he adds electronic drums to what is a pretty catchy melody.

RS: You're not the world's biggest fan of

drum machines, are you?

AS: Yes and no. The electronics thing that's been occurring in music was difficult for me to accept at first. It's only been in the past four years that I really got into modern drum technology. I love the sonics of the electronic drum technology, and certain things are almost impossible to play any other way, but there are uncomfortable areas for me.

RS: Why is that?

AS: Because there are hidden factors. Things go wrong, and I don't know why. That really bothers me. When I use a drum machine, I'm speaking through an instrument that's cold and sometimes insensitive. It's not a direct means of musical communica-

tion as far as I'm concerned. I do feel I can program anything that I can play, yet there are things that make me uneasy. Take, for instance, this piece that I'm working on. Something could happen three quarters of the way through the session. The Linn could go down. It could simply crash. Then I'd have to start all over again. It's nerve-racking more than anything else, I guess. That's especially true when I'm dealing with the 9000. It's the best-feeling drum machine on the market, but it can give you a heart condition.

RS: Did you get into drum programming out of necessity?

AS: Yes. A good friend of mine, Steve Shaeffer, who does the first-call film work in California, just about threatened my life if I didn't learn how to program. He said to me, "Allan, you're not going to make a living if you don't. You're going to be an old guy like those die-hard beboppers." He saw the handwriting on the wall. He was definitely right. Not only do people really want you to use a drum machine in the studio, but having a machine like the Linn and knowing how to program is a definite indication of whether or not you're really "here" in the present. If you're not dealing with electronics, you're not happening in the session world. A session player like me has to keep up with technology. It's that simple.

RS: What kinds of electronic equipment do you find yourself using most in the studio?

AS: I use the Linn 9000, *Octapads*, and tons of samples that I've made and traded with Sammy Merindino, who is, without a doubt, the absolute champ at this stuff. My equipment is the kind that I can break down, pack up, put under my arm, and take to the studio. Any other equipment I'll get from the studio itself. Most of the studios I work at have great outboard equipment and great engineers. Why not take advantage of that? I set up Yamaha MIDI pads for the toms and mount *Octapads* on the hi-hat stand to play live percussion and sound effects, like cymbal swells, backward sounds, etc.

RS: What are your feelings about the relationship between percussion and drums?

AS: Percussion is great fun to play. It's the icing on the cake, or it can be the whole feel itself. Percussion and drums together make the rhythmic fabric. Try to imagine the Miami Sound Machine without percussion.

The late Jimmy Maelen was the best there ever was at doing that stuff. He had an overview that very few possess, and he could find slots in the music that you didn't know were there. We worked together almost every day. Playing with live percussion is such a treat for a drummer, especially with someone like Maelen. Ask Andy Newmark about that. Jimmy was a rock. He was my dearest friend.

RS: Is there a difference in the level of satisfaction you experience when you complete a drum programming session as opposed to a session where you used acoustic drums?

AS: Oh, yeah. When I finish programming

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a drum part, it's like a wet dream. I did everything in the dream that I would do when I'm awake, but I didn't really *do* anything. It's an artificial sense of satisfaction. That's a weird analogy, but it's true.

RS: These days a lot of keyboard players are getting involved in drum programming. How do you feel about that intrusion into a drummer's territory?

AS: It's scary to hear some of the drum parts that non-drummers are coming up with today. Most of them suck and have a stupid, robotic feel. I asked Steve Shafer what he says when he hears a great drum program by a keyboard player. You know what he told me? "Don't say anything. Don't tell him it's good. Let's try to keep keyboard players at the keyboards."

While the rest of the staff at Crushing sits down to a lunch of fried chicken and rice made by the resident cook, Schwartzberg and the producer of the jingle go over programming details. Schwartzberg has time for a couple of bites of an apple and a swig of beer, but no lunch.

Next up is overdubbing. To watch Allan work is to witness an exercise in concentration. He immerses himself in the music and doesn't come up for air. He checks and rechecks his work, and he continuously tries to improve upon it until he's exhausted every possible idea in his head. For someone who says he's not completely comfortable with electronics, Schwartzberg is indeed in command of the instrument. It's no wonder nearly a third of the studio work he does involves his drum machine.

RS: How and why did you become a drummer?

AS: This is strange, but honest, it's absolutely true. I've told this story before. I don't know how many people believe it, though. There was a magical moment in my life when I was about eight years old. I was on my way to school one day when I heard a Gene Krupa record. Somebody was playing it in an apartment, and the music was escaping through an open window. It was incredible. I froze in my tracks. I mean, it was like a mystical experience or something. I went into a trance. It was as if somebody reached into my body and turned on a switch. When I went home later that day, I immediately began banging on the table and the side of the washing machine. You have to understand that there are no musicians in my family. Everyone is either a doctor or a lawyer or a jeweler. But I pleaded with my parents to buy me a set of drums, which, fortunately for me, they did.

RS: You don't get to hear stories about musicians who experienced such single, profound awakenings as you did, at least not that often.

AS: It was really crazy. I mean, who knows



Photo by Steven Ross

where this fascination with drums came from? I never even heard anyone play drums before that day. I'll never forget it as long as I live. The only other mystical experience I've ever had was when I made eye contact with my wife, Susan, for the first time.

RS: Did your parents support you in your early musical endeavors?

AS: They bought me a set of drums. But, generally, they tried to discourage me from pursuing music as a career. They knew the music business was a shaky business. They wanted me to become a doctor or a lawyer.

RS: But you persisted and stuck with the drums.

AS: That's right. I was very much into sports as a kid. But when I discovered the drums, I gave up sports. I just gave them up. One day I was playing baseball. I was standing there in the outfield, and I suddenly said, "Screw this!" Something clicked in my brain that forced me to walk off the field in the middle of the game. That was it. I went home to practice the drums. I practiced eight hours a day. I'd go into a trance while I was practicing. I'd memorize Max Roach solos and just imitate drummers.

RS: Your musical focus was primarily jazz?

AS: I didn't notice any other music.

RS: But, growing up in the '50s, weren't you affected by Elvis Presley and the birth of rock 'n' roll?

AS: No. Ironically, I love that stuff now, but at the time, I didn't notice a thing. When I got past the Gene Krupa fascination, I turned my attention to black jazz drummers. I loved Philly Joe Jones and Pete LaRoca and Max Roach. I bought everything that Elvin Jones ever played on. I loved Tony Williams's drum style. I still do. Later on, I worked across the street from where Elvin Jones was playing, and I got to know him. Philly Joe Jones, though, was so great, I couldn't even begin to emulate his style of playing. Elvin Jones seemed easier for me to imitate.

RS: Do you remember your first set of drums?

AS: Oh, yeah. It was a Gretsch set. I've

LARRIE LONDIN

(Everly Brothers/Studio)

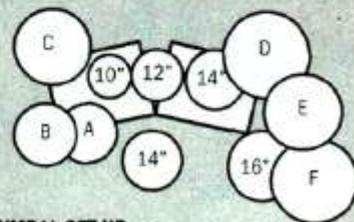


Photo: Jan Meyerowitz

One of the most recorded and successful session players of all time, Larrie Londin's dynamic drumming and creative versatility have made him the choice of a multitude of major artists...resulting in a resumé that reads like a who's who of the best in contemporary music.

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been so lucky. As a kid I lived in an apartment house with neighbors on all sides. I used to practice all day, and the neighbors didn't mind. I lucked out...or maybe they moved out.

RS: Did you take drum lessons when you were a kid?

AS: I studied drums with a guy named Sammy Ulano, who became an inspiration of sorts to me. He embarrassed me into practicing. He made me feel bad if I didn't practice. He was the only real drum teacher I had. He taught me how to read. I learned everything else from records. So, in a way, Tony Williams, Elvin, and Philly Joe were my teachers. Later on, Keltner and Roger Hawkins were teachers. I can say the same

thing about Bernard Purdie, who I thought was absolutely great. Purdie has got to be given credit for inventing the "groove." Nobody grooves as hard as he does. He's the missing link between rock 'n' roll, rhythm & blues, and jazz. Everyone has stolen from him in one capacity or another.

Schwartzberg completes the overdubs, packs up his Linn, and is on the move again. Next up: session number three—a simple overdub jingle session. Then there's number four. Schwartzberg says he's looking forward to this one, since he'll be cutting one or two rhythm tracks for an upcoming Linda Ronstadt album. We get into the car and again confront midtown traffic.

Our destination is Automated Studios on 43rd and Broadway.

On the way, Schwartzberg talks about the session he just completed. "It's a funny thing," he says. "I've been doing this session thing for a long time. But every time I record, there's a slight fear that's left inside me. It comes from, I don't know, maybe an uncertainty about my performance. Something inside me always asks, "Was that the best you could play?"

We inch our way to the studio. Rush hour has begun. We make it to Automated with minutes to spare. Guitarist John Tropea, a close friend of Schwartzberg, greets us. He tells us there will be a bit of a delay. Allan doesn't complain. He'll get paid for a few minutes of relaxation. It's the first bit of leisure he's experienced all day.

RS: What's the difference, if any, between the New York session scene and the one in L.A.?

AS: Sometimes I think the L.A. scene is the opposite of what we have here in New York. Out in L.A., things seem so amazingly elegant, compared to New York, which one might consider the slums. At L.A. studios there are parking spaces for the musicians. What a luxury. The equipment scene is completely different. Everybody in L.A. owns tons of stuff, and it's all carted to every session where it's played in huge rooms. Here we have mostly little rooms and people jumping in and out of cabs. In New York we take back-to-back sessions. Out in L.A., a session player might take a session from 10:00 to 1:00 and maybe another one from 2:00 to 5:00. They have to have space between sessions. Here in New York I can take a session from 10:00 to 11:00, from 11:30 to 12:30, from 1:00 to 2:00, and so on. Musicians do a lot of film work in L.A. In New York we do a lot of jingles. The film work pays a lot, I might add, which is good for those guys. They get a Motion Picture Fund check at the end of the year. New York session musicians get residuals from the jingles they play on. Most of the jingles in the U.S. are done here in New York. I think there are more record dates going on in L.A., though.

RS: Which scene do you think is more competitive?

AS: Somebody in the business once said you can see the knife coming in New York, but in L.A. you don't. I've always enjoyed working in L.A., and I've been doing some writing for a show out there. I've written some things with John [Tropea]. We wrote the whole music package for a TV show called *Hour Magazine*. We're going to try to do some more of that.

But, to answer your question, I used to feel this competition thing you're referring to. I must admit that I always felt like a kid from a poor neighborhood whenever I went out to work in L.A. There is less of a pressure factor out there. If you're out of work in New York, you're a goner. If you're starving in L.A., you can always pick an avocado off a tree and whip up some guaca-



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mole.

RS: Is there such a thing as a "New York" feel when one talks about New York session drummers?

AS: I think there is. It's the type of thing that has to do with intensity. The old saying is that New York drummers play on top of the click, while L.A. drummers play behind it. I'm not sure that's true, but it might be. We're on top of the click because there's a crisis here—millions of people jammed into one town, talented, competitive, nervous, and freezing their asses off in the winter. We're a product of our environment.

RS: You seem to read music rather well. Is that a basic requirement for session players?

AS: For me it is. Reading music is easy—same as a newspaper. There is really no reason why a session player can't read. But there are some musicians who can't read and still manage. The bottom line is that most session musicians read.

RS: What happens to a session drummer who can't read when a producer hands out sheet music and says, "Play this"?

AS: Well, that musician better have great ears. Sometimes a producer will say, "Okay guys, get out your pencils and change the piece so that when we go back to the top we cut out the last three bars and make the fourth bar 3/4," or something to that effect. Now, for someone who's just learned the music and who can't read, well, he has to relearn the piece. It's going to take him at least two to three attempts to get it right. The other guys around him will play the piece in its revised form and probably won't make any mistakes. Often, they'll get annoyed at the drummer who can't read. You can't really blame them.

It's a funny thing about playing drums. When something is not feeling good at a session or in a band, all sights—as in gun sights—are on the drummer. You're the engine of the band. A drummer can't afford a bad day. A session drummer isn't in a band. But—and this is important—he's supposed to *sound* like he's in a band, and he's supposed to make everyone *else* in the studio sound like they're in a band, too.

A producer hires me knowing that I'm going to take this music he's just handed me, and I'm going to interpret it and produce on my instrument. That's what I really am—a drum producer. I produce drum parts. You can't play what's written in the music. Very few people know how to write for drums. Van McCoy was one of the exceptions. John Tropea is an exception.

Speaking of Tropea, he enters the room Allan and I have been talking in and calls Allan back into the studio. The equipment is finally set up, and he overdubs three drum fills in a Pizza Hut commercial. Then we're out of there and on our way to the last session at Sunset Sound. Schwartzberg and the others will work on one Ronstadt rhythm track. Despite three previous sessions, no lunch or supper, a number of mini-interviews conducted by yours truly,

and the frustration that goes with working in Manhattan (traffic, parking, etc.), Allan is as sharp as a tack for this session. What he plays seems perfectly tailored for the song he and the other musicians work on that night.

I begin to think that Schwartzberg's true talent—and that of any successful studio drummer—is his staying power. Allan rarely loses his edge. He seems to be able to call up an energy reserve and a heightened set of concentration skills when an ordinary drummer would be ready to pack it in for the day. The result is that the last session of the day for Schwartzberg often sounds as fresh and rewarding as the first.

Schwartzberg is at Sunset Studios until 8:30 P.M. He leaves his drums at the studio and races down to the Twenty Twenty Club where Maureen McGovern is nervously waiting for him. In minutes he's on stage with her and her band. After the set, which is about an hour long, I get to speak with Schwartzberg one more time.

RS: It's been a long day.

AS: Yeah, but the pace and the workload are things you get used to. I'm probably not as tired as you are.

RS: You're probably right. You've played a number of roles today. You cut three jingles, did an album track, and played a live date. Does it ever get a bit overwhelming?

AS: I feel like I'm a character actor. Years ago, before Robert Duvall became famous as an actor, I often identified with him. Duvall used to be a guy whose face you knew, but you didn't know his name, even if he was so believable in so many roles. That's the way I see myself. I'm not a star like Steve or Dave. [laughs] I just blew it. I was hoping that this would be the first drum interview that didn't mention Gadd and Weckl.

As for my drumming, I have certain identifiable things—emotional tom-tom fills, nice colors in sensitive parts, things like that. I try to take a drum part as far as I can without the drums sticking out or showing off. I say to myself, "What's the most I can do with this piece of music?" I'll do some inventive things when I can. Once I put a beer bottle on top of the hi-hat stand. I played the hi-hat and the bottle and got this high-pitched glass sound just before the backbeat. I don't ever see myself playing in a boring fashion. I always try to play with some wit. I consider Keltner, Richie Hayward, B.J. Wilson, and old-timer Sol Gubin to be really witty drummers.

RS: It seems like you always try to use Yamaha drums.

AS: I endorse Yamaha drums. I only went after a drum endorsement once, and that's when I discovered Yamaha drums. I was knocked out by their drums. I even got most of the studios in town to buy Yamaha equipment. Almost every studio of note in Manhattan now has a Yamaha drumset on the premises.

RS: What's the ideal setup for you?

AS: I like to play the Recording series. That's

STEVE FERRONE

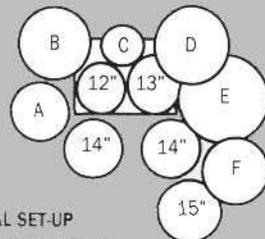
(Eric Clapton/Studio)



Photo: Ron Lee

Although his drumming with Brian Auger's Oblivion Express won him a legion of fans, it was Steve Ferrone's longtime stint with the soulful Average White Band, most notably, his rock steady syncopations on their hit album 'Cut The Cake' that launched him into the successful sessions career he now enjoys.

An impressive technician capable of laying down the most intense grooves, Steve has long been a popular recording and tour choice with such diverse notables as Chaka Khan, Peter Frampton, Steve Winwood, Al Jarreau, Paul Simon, George Benson and Duran Duran, who incorporated his funk/rock style as an integral part of their "Notorious" album and tour. Along the way Steve has also become a regular in Eric Clapton's all-star band (a position he occasionally shares with Phil Collins) and has recently assembled and recorded his own new group, Easy Pieces.



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the set I own. I have a 20" bass drum, and 10", 13", and 16" toms, plus the Yamaha electronic pads. I use only Vic Firth sticks, and only Zildjian cymbals. My hi-hats are 14" Zildjians. One of my favorite pieces of equipment, which isn't a Yamaha, happens to be a Roland mount that fits anything that's cylindrical. What this means to me is that I can mount my *Octapads* on anything that has a pole.

RS: Do you still practice?

AS: When I do things at sessions or live dates that I'm not happy with, or when I know I could have played better, I go home and practice. It could be something really basic, like a straight 8th-note bass drum pattern. But if I don't do it just right—like I might hear a little "skipping" feeling, a slight dotted-8th feel, in the playback—I'll go home and practice that.

RS: How many other session drummers react the same way to a less than perfect session as you do?

AS: I don't know. Probably not too many.

RS: How many session drummers are there in the business who are making a good living and are working regularly?

AS: I'd say there are about eight of us. I'm not including great players like Steve Gadd or Dave Weckl; they're on the road a lot. So the top six or so drummers are working five days a week. Drummers seven and eight are probably working four days week.

RS: You obviously work five days a week.

AS: Most of the time.

RS: Could you, if you wanted to, work

more?

AS: No, I don't think so. It's pretty much a five-day-a-week situation. I would work seven if the music was worthwhile and the money was good, though. I recently did a great album project with Elliot Randall, Elliot Easton, and Will Lee that stretched into the weekend, but it was worth it because the music was so good.

RS: What are the down sides of being a session drummer in New York?

AS: You could, one day, find yourself staring at the telephone. Remember, people have to ask you to show up at a session.

RS: Did you ever find yourself staring at the phone?

AS: No, it hasn't happened to me, thank God. I'm waiting for it to happen, though. I'm always thinking that it's going to happen today or tomorrow or the next day. I live in fear of the phone not ringing. I might get a call for only one session today and maybe nothing for the rest of the week. Then I start thinking, "Maybe this is the week that it all ends." A guitar player I know recently told me that he hasn't worked in three weeks. He said the calls just stopped coming.

RS: If the studio work did, in fact, dry up for you, would you stay in music? Or would you do something else with your life?

AS: Oh, I'd stay in music. Actually, I'm very prepared for the day when I don't have to play drums. I love producing records. I have a jingle company called Picture Music. I've written, co-written, and

arranged jingles. I'm ready.

RS: The classic gripe against a session player is this: He's a hired gun. He has no real emotional connection to the music. To him the song is just another song and the session just another session. How do you respond to that?

AS: It's a stigma that some of us are trying to live down. Let's face it, there are some session players out there who sound like machines. I think some studio musicians would be the first ones to admit that on certain kick-ass rock passages, it doesn't quite sound like they're playing standing up. You have to play believably. You strive to sound believable all the time. You know what I'm most proud of?

RS: What's that?

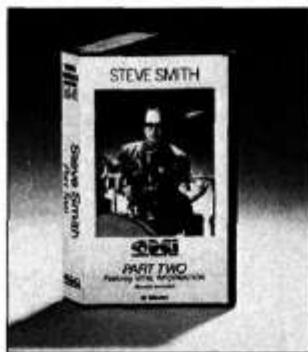
AS: That I was able to play live gigs with Stan Getz, Mountain, and Peter Gabriel in one career.

RS: You even got to put your drum mark on some of Jimi Hendrix's music too, right?

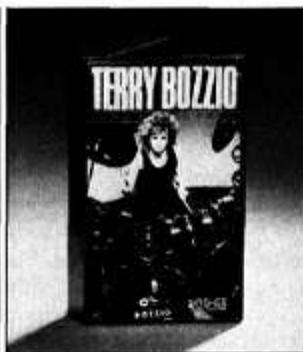
AS: That's right. I met Hendrix once. I was playing with Mose Allison at the time. I thought Hendrix was kind of a noisy player. He and his band were playing opposite us. He was a loud and lunatic kind of player. Later on I did a thing at Media Sound here in New York where I overdubbed the drum parts on some Hendrix tracks that were released after he had died. We could all swear that the session was spooked. Bars didn't count out right and other weird things occurred. That was a tough job for me because those guys [Hendrix and his band]

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were wrecked when they played. I had to trace the tempo—or should I say tempos. I remember Hendrix counting off once. It went something like this: "One, two," and then in another tempo, "a one..., two..., three..." The records were *Crash Landing* and *Midnight Lightning*.

RS: Have you done a lot of this sort of work in the past?

AS: I'd say so. I also overdubbed a lot of Sly Stone stuff. I was amazed at how uneven the time was on Sly's material. They didn't use a click track back then. Fortunately, everyone was uneven together. Like the Beatles.

RS: What are some of the other albums you played on that you're especially proud of?

AS: Roxy Music's *Flesh And Blood*. I played on Peter Gabriel's first solo album, which is a great one. I also played on Alice Cooper and Kiss records. I did a lot of the disco records in the mid-'70s. In fact, I have the dubious distinction of being credited with creating the disco beat on Gloria Gaynor's "Never Can Say Goodbye."

RS: One thing you've done a few times over the past few years is sub on the Letterman show. What's that like?

AS: Best job of all time. It's 4:00 to 6:30 in the afternoon, when nothing else is going on around town, [laughs] You play with a hot band with hot music guests, your mother sees you on TV, and you make a nice taste. Paul Shaffer is the greatest—ten times fun-

nier off camera.

RS: What contemporary drummers do you especially admire?

AS: I enjoy Jim Keltner, B.J. Wilson, Richie Hayward, and Sol Gubin. I love Mickey Curry because he plays the way I like to play. Steve Shaeffer is a great drummer. He has absolutely perfect time. Dave Weckl is a fantastic player. I also admire Jeff Porcaro.

RS: When you go home after a long day like this one, what do you do? Do you plop into a chair and relax?

AS: I go home at night and think about what I could have played on a session but didn't. I'll tap my fingers on the table as I'm waiting for dinner. I can't shake the drums. I'm always worried about losing my edge. It's a bitch. If I go into a slump, I'll wonder if I'll ever get out of it. I have moments where I'm really creative, but then every once in a while I'll have to look at all the records on the wall. I'll say to myself, "Wait a minute, you've accomplished all this. Calm down. Besides, you're booked tomorrow. Be cool." But maybe that's one of the true secrets about making it as a session drummer. Maybe it's one of the reasons why I'm still here, still making a good living. I never come up for air. I keep digging, I keep pushing. Maybe that's the way to stay around in this business. Anybody can climb up the session ladder. The trick is to stay up at the top once you get there.

RS: Is there anything in particular that you want to accomplish before you give all this up?

AS: I'd love to reach out and get into that zone of playing where the hands play all by themselves. In that zone you become a mere spectator; you *watch* your hands do the playing. I've experienced that a couple of times in the past. I'd like to get to the point where I'm doing it and experiencing it more often—that magical state of mind and body. I guess I just want to play like this drummer I hear in my dreams.



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Neil

Auditions can be both nerve-wracking and an excellent opportunity to show off musical technique and skill. They can be remembered as leaving a good impression or a bad impression—or a smile.

Neil Grover had just completed his freshman year at Florida State University when he decided to audition for Saul Goodman at the Juilliard School of Music in New York. Neil continues the story: "I had decided to play a selection from Elliott Carter's 'Eight Pieces For Timpani.' At the time, I was using Vic Firth timpani sticks, which Mr. Goodman was not too pleased about. After I tuned the timpani—Goodman drums, of course—I looked directly at him and said, 'Mr. Goodman, I would now like to perform the Carter "March For Timpani."' I took a deep breath in preparation to play, and he interrupted me to say, 'By the way, who is this piece dedicated to?' And I jokingly replied, 'This is dedicated to someone named Saul Goodman, but I never heard of him!' Unfortunately, he didn't think that was very funny, and proceeded to lecture me on being a wise guy. I left that audition thinking I should cross Juilliard off my list!"

Despite his inauspicious audition, Neil was accepted by the prestigious school. However, he chose to attend the New England Conservatory of Music, where he could study with Vic Firth, timpanist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. This was the beginning of a 12-year association between Neil and the musical environment of Beantown, an association that still continues today.

AB: When was the first time you performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra?

NG: As I recall, it was in 1975, when I was a student at Tanglewood. There was some type of mix-up where some of the percussionists that were supposed to be at Tanglewood were still in Boston, playing for the Pops, so they needed someone at the last minute. I remember the personnel manager asking, "Would you play this afternoon's rehearsal with the BSO?" Of course I was thrilled.

AB: What piece was the orchestra playing?

NG: It was *Scheherazade* by Rimsky-Korsakov, which I knew. But I ran back to my dorm room, scraped up the music, and within an hour I made sure I knew it cold.

AB: Which part did you play?

NG: Triangle, which is really a very difficult part. All the fellows in the section were very supportive and very nice to me. Ever since then, I've substituted in the orchestra—occasionally at first and fairly regularly today.

The section in Boston is wonderful. Frank Epstein is an artist; Tom Gauger is a wonderful percussionist; Charlie Smith is the mainstay of the section up there. Arthur Press has the most amazing snare drum technique; I know why they call it a "press roll"! And what can I say about Vic? He is



Photo by Liz McNeil

the ultimate timpanist.

One other musician in Boston who has been really close to me is Fred Buda. Fred is probably familiar to most people because he is the drummer in the Boston Pops, which is telecast on PBS. He's a consummate musician: He's a wonderful mallet player, plays timpani with great finesse, and he's a marvelous jazz drummer. I can learn something just by listening to him. He's a real inspiration.

Boston is a very good situation because the percussionists are like a big family and are supportive of each other. I learned a lot from my colleagues up there.

AB: What is it like playing under the direction of Seiji Ozawa?

NG: In my opinion, Seiji has the best stick technique in the business. You know exactly where to place each note. He's a very demanding conductor; he knows what he wants and does what he has to do to get it. If something gets off slightly, he'll look right at you without hesitation. He's very much in control over the music he's conducting. I enjoy working with him.

AB: You also play regularly with the Boston Pops, who play a somewhat "lighter" repertoire than the traditional classics. How is it different?

NG: There's a lot of running around—playing everything from mallets to accessories to the kitchen sink! Believe it or not, I play more in one Pops concert than I do in

some entire ballet seasons. That's because most of the arrangements we do are scored specifically for the Pops and the arrangers know how to write for percussion. They are very difficult, "meaty" parts.

AB: John Williams has been the conductor of the Pops since the days of Arthur Fiedler. What's it like to play for him?

NG: John Williams is an excellent conductor and a phenomenal musician. Both his father and brother are percussionists, so he knows a lot about percussion. He's very sensitive to tone color and doesn't hesitate to tell you what he wants.

AB: It's fortunate that he knows so much about your instruments.

NG: That's evident by his writing. Anybody who has played *Star Wars* knows that the timpani part is a great part. John Williams is very aware of the

percussion section. If anything, he has toned down the section somewhat, because he's used to studio work, where they don't have to produce as loud a sound because everything's picked up in the recording. Boston has a tradition of aggressive percussion playing. Not to indicate that it's distasteful, but it's a full sound, and there is a lot of presence in the percussion section. John also likes to hear a little more string sound, so he's changing the balance of the orchestra a little bit. He's a fine musician who is very supportive of the percussionists in the orchestra.

AB: To change the subject, let's discuss your early years. Following high school, you attended Florida State University for one year. Who did you study percussion with at FSU?

NG: I studied with Robert McCormick, who was a wonderful teacher and who helped me with my percussion playing. But soon I realized I wanted to concentrate on timpani so I could play in an orchestra, and that I needed to go someplace where it was musically more sophisticated. At that point I decided to transfer. Bob encouraged me to study with a major timpanist—someone like Vic Firth or Saul Goodman.

AB: We already heard about your infamous audition at Juilliard. How was your audition in Boston?

NG: I had met Vic Firth the year before at Tanglewood. I heard him play and was very

Grover

impressed. I thought he would be a wonderful teacher. So I auditioned for him, and he told me right away that he would like me to come there and study with him. I told him about my audition for Saul Goodman, which he thought was humorous, and he told me to consider Juilliard because it was a good school. But I knew I wanted to study with him; Vic was the deciding factor. So I moved to Boston, got myself an apartment, and for the next three years I worked very hard while in school.

AB: What type of things did you work on with Vic Firth?

NG: We did all aspects of percussion playing—from the traditional marimba concertos to his snare drum books. I'd have to say I got the most out of him as a timpani teacher. Going through his book with him was very inspiring, but I benefitted the most from going through the repertoire with him. He's a wonderful musical coach. I intentionally scheduled the last lesson on Friday mornings, because Friday afternoons I would always talk him into sneaking me into the Symphony where I could listen to the concert. I'd always like to go through the repertoire of that week with him and then hear him play it. That was really a great experience. Vic has been a tremendous influence on my life, as well as a really great friend.

AB: Did you concentrate on timpani or did you work on everything?

NG: It was mostly timpani, but I also played a lot of mallets. I played the Kurka, Milhaud, and Creston concertos, but I only played marimba when I had to. I was more interested in playing xylophone. And I was the only one at school who practiced bells, because I realized I would probably be playing bells more than anything. I had no intention of becoming a marimba soloist. I used to shy away from practicing on the marimba because I wanted to practice on the instruments that I would be playing on professionally. That has paid off because I do play a good deal of xylophone and bells, and I have also played marimba professionally.

AB: When was that?

NG: In 1983, I took a year off from all my free-lance activities to go on the road with the Broadway production of *The Pirates Of Penzance*. It has an incredible mallet part that far exceeds any concerto I know. It's two hours of solid playing.

AB: How did you get the part?

NG: It's a funny story. They had trouble finding someone to go on the road who could play the book. Karen Ervin had played it for a while and then left. My name had come up, so when they called me, I told

them I would do it. I went down to pick up the music at a place on Broadway. The clerk handed me the book, I opened it up to look at it, and then handed it back, saying, "You gave me the piano book by mistake." The clerk replied, "No, that's the mallet book!" And I only had two weeks before the first rehearsal! I literally locked myself in Jon Hass's loft, which he let me use, and practiced eight hours a day. I wanted to know it cold by the first rehearsal.

AB: What was the part like?

NG: The setup included a 4 1/2-octave marimba, a 3 1/2-octave xylophone, orchestra bells, and two octaves of chromatic boobams. And the part was non-stop. Not only was it technically demanding, it was written piano-style, utilizing both the treble and bass clefs. They put all the string parts into the percussion part, so I was playing the bass, cello, viola, and violin lines!

AB: How many people were in the ensemble?

NG: There were 13 people in the band, including two synthesizer players, some winds, and three percussionists—myself, a drummer, and another percussionist playing chromatic timpani parts! It was tremendously demanding. That was a period when my mallet chops were at an all-time high, just from playing two hours of mallets seven times a week. It was a great learning experience.

AB: What was it like on the road?

NG: We traveled all over the country for almost a full year. I had just started Grover

Enterprises, and I took the opportunity to show my products all around the country. We would usually be in one place for a week or two. We would play a show in the evening, and then I would spend the rest of my time visiting the local music stores. If there was a university in the area, I would find out when the percussion ensemble met and then go talk to the director. I actually did a combination clinic: I talked about the mallet parts in the show, since it was so unusual, and then I spent some time introducing my products. I had a really good time.

AB: How did you become involved with the Boston Opera?

NG: At that time it was more or less a pick-up orchestra. They asked the timpanist, John Grimes, who they should get. Since he enjoyed working with me, and since Sarah Caldwell liked my playing, I got the job as principal percussionist. John and I started working together and developed a great relationship, which lasted for seven years with the Opera.

AB: How is playing with the Opera different than playing with the Symphony?

NG: The Opera is completely different, because the orchestra is an accompanist to the singers. I think this is something every musician needs to learn. Music is an expressive art form, and the greatest expressive musical form is singing. You always hear musicians talking about "bel canto," which is a singing quality. My colleague John Grimes is a very expressive timpanist, and we would often discuss this idea to-



Photo by Kevin Hickson

gether. I believe in exciting percussion playing, but I had to learn to tone it down, because people are coming to the opera to hear Beverly Sills, not Neil Grover. So I learned to have excitement in my playing but yet learn to accompany.

AB: Sort of a controlled excitement.

NC: That's a good way to put it. It's like an inner intensity in the playing. This was a repertoire I was unfamiliar with except for a few famous operas like *La Boheme*. We went through a lot of repertoire, and I learned a lot of music.

AB: There are many difficult percussion parts in opera literature that most people don't consider part of the "percussion repertoire."

NG: Right. *Carmen* has some very difficult tambourine parts that are not in the orchestral suite. We do *La Boheme* on tour with just one percussionist and timpani, and we cover almost all the parts ourselves. It's a juggling act within a multiple percussion setup!

John Grimes and I would discuss every aspect of working together—from matching tone colors to phrasing together. I'd never worked with someone for an extended period of time—in this case seven years—where we tried to work as one unit. We insisted that all the other percussionists work *together* as one unit, not as individual players. We would discuss cymbal col-

ors and timpani colors. We would use different bass drums for different pieces.

AB: You also play for the Boston Ballet. How is that different?

NG: The ballet orchestra accompanies the dancers, and the percussion is used mainly in the fast numbers. It's more aggressive playing because you don't have to worry about covering the singers. Plus the music is more rhythmic and driving.

AB: Do you play mainly percussion or timpani?

NG: As I was principal percussionist in the Opera, I went to the Ballet as a percussionist. And now I share the timpani playing.

AB: Is it a smaller orchestra than the Opera?

NG: The Ballet uses anywhere from 30 to 40 people, whereas the Opera uses a full complement. So it's a different type of experience. I'm still learning a lot of the ballet repertoire, which is different. I found the opera repertoire more interesting, because sometimes the ballet music is background for the dancers.

AB: And then you do 48 performances of *The Nutcracker**. How do you do it?

NG: After a while you don't even open your music; you just know it. We have to try to entertain ourselves. This year I put up a little mirror on the side of the pit so I could see the dancers every once in a while. Even if it gets monotonous, you realize you

have a job to do, and you have to do the best you can, consistently.

AB: Is it different playing in the pit than on stage? For example, the audience is not looking directly at you but rather at the action on stage.

NG: In that aspect, it's more relaxed. But the projection is totally different. For instance, the instruments don't project as much as they do on stage. You can play out more in the pit, but since part of the pit is enclosed, it's sometimes deafening down there. You have to be careful because you don't want to work in a situation that's going to damage your hearing. I prefer to play on a stage, because certainly I like the attention paid to the musicians, and you have better projection, and you can *hear* better. It's hard to hear what's going on across the pit. So there are different balance problems. In ballet and opera you have fewer strings than in a full symphony, and consequently the brass and percussion have to alter their dynamics. My forte in the pit is going to be different than my forte on stage, just as a forte for Mozart is going to be different than a forte for Mahler. It's all relative, and you have to use your ears and compensate.

AB: So far we have discussed your career as a performing percussionist, but there's another side to you, too—that of a businessman. When did you form Grover Enterprises?

NG: I never really decided to start a business. In 1979 I couldn't find a good tambourine, so I decided I was going to try to make one. I took apart all my tambourines and started experimenting on the jingles. I hammered them, threw them in my barbecue and cooked them, poured water on them—I tried everything! [laughs] I finally made a jingle I liked and put it on a shell I had. One of my friends said, "That's pretty nice. Could you make me one?" At that time I wasn't doing a lot of work, so I agreed to make him one. The next thing I know, somebody else asked for one, and then someone else. So I made a few. Then I got a call from Lone Star Percussion in Texas, and they wanted to buy my tambourines. I said that I wasn't really in the tambourine business, but they told me, "You are now!" [laughs] And all of a sudden I'm in business.

Over the years it has evolved to where I'm making my own shell and my own jingles. It used to take me three hours to hammer a set of the original jingles. My favorite tambourine is the beryllium copper, because its jingles are unique. To me, it's the ultimate sound. There are occasions where I'll use the German silver if I need a little extra articulation, or the phosphor bronze if I want a darker sound. I feel a percussionist should have a variety of colors at his or her disposal—the way a painter has more than just one or two primary colors on his palette.

AB: You are also well known for your Super Overtone triangle. How did that develop?

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NG: I had the assistance of MIT. One day I went down to their acoustics and vibration lab and asked them how I could make a triangle with a lot of overtones. A couple of students were intrigued, so we worked together, and that meant I had the greatest research facility in the world at my disposal! That was my "research and development" of triangles.

AB: Did you try to copy the sound of a triangle you had previously heard?

NG: No. There was only one triangle that I really liked, and that was an old Ludwig triangle owned by the Boston Symphony. Charlie Smith told me that Sy Sternberg, who used to be a percussionist with the Boston, went through hundreds of triangles to pick that unique one out. Charlie lent it to me, and I took it down to MIT and had it analyzed. Most people don't realize that there's more to a triangle than just metal and bending. I started studying metallurgy and asking a lot of questions until I came up with just the right one. I'm still trying to figure out what to do with the hundreds of trial triangles I have sitting in my basement!

AB: How would you describe the sound of your triangle?

NG: I tried to get away from having one pointed sound. If you had to graph the sound, instead of one little line, it would be a whole spectrum of overtones. I want to be able to play my triangle for ten different people, ask them what pitch they heard, and get ten different answers. There should be a real blending of a lot of different frequencies. The difference between a bell and a triangle is that a bell should have one predominant fundamental with as few overtones as possible. A triangle should be the opposite; you want to mute the fundamental and have as many overtones predominate as possible.

AB: You make both a 6" and a 9" triangle. Do you have a preference between the two?

NG: I had originally developed a 9" triangle because I thought that was a proper orchestral size. Then a lot of people began requesting smaller triangles that were a little lighter with a higher fundamental pitch. Actually, the 6" size has become the more popular model. People who I never designed things for are using them. I've even heard of marching bands and drum & bugle corps using my triangles. I can't believe that! But it makes me feel good.

AB: One of your newest developments is an orchestral snare drum. Can you describe what makes it special?

NG: It's a 6 1/2 x 14 fiberglass drum that has some unique features, like nodal venting. You have to have some escape for the air, so they have traditionally just drilled an air hole in the center of the shell. I experimented with different placements of the hole, and found the best place to vent the air is near the nodal point in the shell, which is about 1/5 of the way up—the same as a marimba bar. That allows air to escape quicker and get back into the drum quicker.

And now I've given away my trade secret! But the drum is more responsive, and the *Wolf* cable snares give it a darker sound. I tested it in the orchestra and it sounded like a million dollars.

AB: You are one of a growing number of small percussion manufacturers in the country making specialized products.

NG: Right. I'm trying to fill a niche. A lot of the larger companies, while they started with high quality products for percussionists, have long since abandoned us. They have moved on to making drumsets and importing things from overseas. The serious percussion market is relatively small in relation to the drumset or rock market. So there are a lot of companies like mine that are growing and filling the void.

AB: The rise of the small manufacturer.

NG: That's right. My business started out of necessity. I couldn't find a tambourine I wanted. If there had been great tambourines on the market then, I probably wouldn't have gotten into it. It's a lot of work, but I love doing it. It's an honor for me to think that my products are being used all over the world.

AB: There is a *person* behind your products.

NG: That's the important part. I'm the salesman, the manufacturer, the shipping clerk. The worst thing that can happen is that you might get my answering machine instead

of me! [laughs] If someone has a question, they can get in touch with me, and I'll try to answer it to the best of my ability. I put my name on each product, and I take a lot of pride in that. I'm not doing it out of necessity; I *enjoy* doing it. I want people to feel that my products contribute something to their performance. If I can accomplish that goal, then I know I'm successful.

AB: What is your "real" job? Is playing your job and the business your hobby, or vice-versa?

NG: No, I would say that I have two separate lives. I still do a lot of playing, although not as much as I was doing. But I spend many hours every day in my business. Many times I've stayed up all night working. And I'm always trying to think of new things.

AB: How do you divide your time?

NG: I probably average at least 40 hours a week at the business. Some weeks during the Pops season I'm playing concerts six or seven times a week, plus two or three rehearsals, and I still do the business. Sometimes I don't have a concert all week, and then I'll devote all my time to the business. I'm doing a little bit of a juggling act right now, but I love playing and I love making products. This is the unique combination that makes me me!



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Photo by Tom Copi

"I got to know and like the work of a drummer by the name of Tin Can Allen. He played a kazoo and used a tin can to get a 'wah-wah' sound that gassed audiences. Like many other good drummers, Tin Can was a showman."

Hampton replaced Allen with Paul Howard & the Quality Serenaders. The band worked at L.A.'s Club Alabam, the Kentucky Club on Central Avenue, and the exclusive Monmartre Club in Hollywood, and recorded for Victor. Hamp made his first recordings in 1929 and early 1930 with the Serenaders. According to jazz historian Stanley Dance, the Serenaders "were a cut above the many others catering to the teeming nightlife of the Cold Coast." The band was made up of top players, including trombonist Lawrence Brown, who became internationally known and was widely admired during his long stint with the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

Hampton's association with Les Hite helped establish his name. The drummer first played with the Elkins-Hite Sextet. But his most important job up to that point was with the 12-piecer headed by Hite: "We worked a lot on L.A.'s South Side. Clubs and organizations, many of them for women, put on dances almost every night. And the jobs paid well. Gladys Riddle, who later became my wife, was a member of one of the organizations, the Antiques Club. She first saw me with Hite at one of those affairs.

"The word got around about the band. We had our thing together. We played good music with a sense of interpretation. Our library included Ellington compositions, some Casa Loma charts, our own things, and stock arrangements. One night, a guy who worked at Frank Sebastian's Cotton Club in Culver City—a top place—heard us and told Sebastian that the band was very lively and swinging. We got an audition, and Sebastian hired us immediately to play on a show with the Mills Brothers.

"The band was a hit. A lot of musicians came to hear us. I met Charlie Barnet, who later became a great bandleader, during this engagement. He was at the Cotton club every night.

"The club was a great showcase," Hamp explained. "Like the Cotton Club in New York, Sebastian's had big shows. There were 'pony' chorus girls, who did the fast dances, and tall models, too. They were really beautiful girls. Sebastian hired the best talent. Eddie 'Rochester' Anderson, a star of *The Jack Benny Show* on radio and TV later on, was one of the headliners at the place. And I remember working with Rutledge and Taylor there. They were fantastic dancers.

"In 1930, following the Mills Brothers, Louis Armstrong opened at the club, and we were held over. The management wanted the Hite band to back Louis because we could read real good and cut the show. It was a tremendous thrill for me to be working with Louis. He had been my man for so long.

"I wasn't the only one who found Louis exciting. All kinds of show people and musicians, nightclubbers, and just plain folks crowded the club every night during the nine months Louis was the headliner. And from what I was told, listeners up and down the Coast and into the Midwest looked forward to our broadcasts. Louis was a favorite from Vancouver to Tijuana and as far East as maybe St. Louis. Those late-night remote broadcasts thrilled a whole lot of people. The reason? Louis's playing was unbelievable. There was so much melody, so much going on in his solos.

"I was playing drums most of the time back then. But I did have one feature number on orchestra bells with Hite, 'Song Of The Islands.' I played Louis's solo from the record and it tickled him.

Louis encouraged me to play behind him when he sang and suggested I do more numbers on the bells. Later we did 'Rockin' Chair' in the show.

"Louis and I became great friends during the engagement. I was his music librarian, and he used my little Ford car. Hey, the guy was so great and did so much for me. He was the one who gave me my start on vibes.

"One afternoon in the fall of 1930, we went in to record for Okeh. We had done some good sides for the label a few months earlier. I played drums on things like 'I'm A Ding Dong Daddy From Dumas,' 'Confessin,' and 'Body And Soul.' This time around, Louis spotted a vibraphone in the corner of the recording studio. 'Can you play it?' he asked. Being a young blood with some confidence, I said, 'Yeah, I can play it.' It had the same keyboard as the xylophone, and I was familiar with that. Louis said, 'Play it!' And I did, on 'Memories Of You.' Eubie Blake had sent Louis an arrangement of the tune. I played the introduction on the record and also behind him when he sang."

Hampton's interest in vibes progressively grew. Though he loved drums and earned his living playing them, he wanted to excel on this new instrument. Gladys Riddle, by then his sweetheart, sensed this was a direction he ought to follow, and encouraged him. Hamp set up the vibes at home and practiced endlessly, even on days when he didn't really feel like it.

His need to be the complete musician, along with Gladys's prodding, motivated him to study piano, harmony, and counterpoint at the University of Southern California, on and off, over an 18-month period. Hampton came to know exactly how music was organized. In addition, his training sharpened his ear. It was no mystery to him where music was going, or how the chords moved. He couldn't be fooled if someone shifted gears and changed keys on him.

As Hamp became increasingly proficient on vibes, his need to play them on the job at Sebastian's increased. "But Les Hite didn't approve, and some of the cats in the band agreed with him," Hamp said. "They'd all insist, 'Just play the drums, man!' So I left Hite and formed my own band. As a leader, I could play *all* the instruments: drums, vibes, piano."

Soon after Louis Armstrong returned to the East, Hamp took his new band, which he co-led with trumpeter Buck Clayton, into the Cotton Club. Sebastian wanted him at the club because he felt Hampton could draw crowds. During the Armstrong engagement, Hampton had attracted attention with his flashy drum solos. He would start on drums, then proceed to play on the walls and tables of the nitery. It was good show business. A booking agent by the name of Jack Hamilton also had great faith in Hampton's abilities as a musician and showman, and booked him up and down the West Coast.

"It was a good band," Hampton said. "I hired Don Byas, a great alto player from Muskogee, Oklahoma, and put him on tenor. He did most of the charts for the group. Teddy Buckner was on trumpet, Herschel Evans on tenor sax, Caughey Roberts played sax and clarinet, the pianist was Henry Prince, and Johnny Miller, who later played with the Nat 'King' Cole Trio, was our bass player. Herschel and Buck left after a little while; Buck went to Shanghai, China, to play in a club called the Canidrome, and Herschel joined Basie."

All the while, Hampton continued to develop as a drummer and vibes player. "Some people had a strong effect on me. One was a drummer by the name of Alton Redd. He had some good ideas and used to work with bands in the movie studios, creating 'atmosphere' on the set. I paid very close attention to Sonny Greer, with Duke; he was a great showman, a very personable cat, and had an ability to make wonderful 'colors' for Duke's band. He and Duke were a great team.

"Cuba Austin, the drummer with McKinney's Cotton Pickers, was another great showman; I learned some tricks from him. The black tap dancers certainly were a major source of ideas for me. The little 'riffs' that drummers in the 1930s and 1940s played on the snare drum—many of them came from the black tap dancers.

"There really was no one around on vibes when I began. A few people played xylophone, but mostly for effects. Red Norvo and

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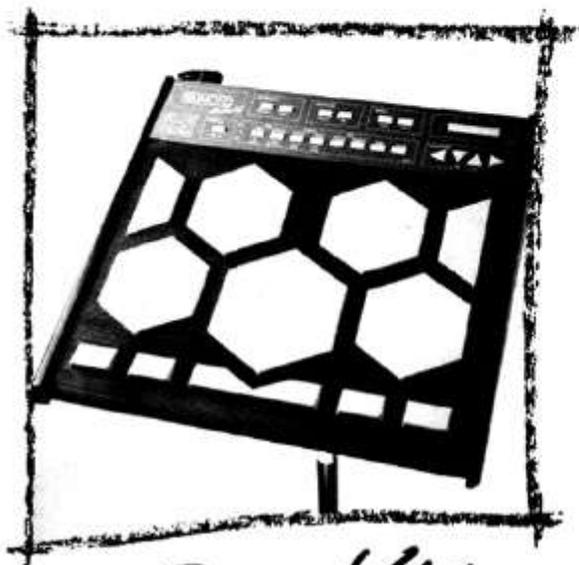
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Adrian Rollini made an impression in the 1930s. Red concentrated on xylophone; he didn't begin on vibes until the early 1940s. And Adrian played a lot of other instruments in addition to vibes.

"But I didn't listen to them," Hamp insisted. "My models were instrumentalists like pianist Earl Mines, tenor man Coleman Hawkins and, of course, Louis Armstrong. I brought Louis's ideas to the vibraphone, later adding stuff I had learned from the other guys. Somehow I got credit for being the pioneer on vibes. I guess I got there first.

"Showmanship has always helped me. I must say that," Hamp commented. Sometimes accused of being too concerned about audiences, Hampton comes from a generation that played theaters and clubs—did *shows*. A musician had to hold his "spot" in a presentation, or it would go to someone else. Jazz and popular music were *show business*. "I became involved in showmanship so I could communicate better with audiences. And if you did things that pleased the people, there was more of a demand for your services. Showmanship is still a factor in what I do."

It was Hampton's capacity as a musician, however, that ultimately made him a major star. Benny Goodman was the key to his future. Hamp's lady, Gladys, set the stage, though it didn't seem so at the time. She became ill and had to be operated on. She went home to stay with her mother during the recovery period, and Hampton took his band off the road. He went to work in San Pedro, in order to be close by.

He did so well there—"I practiced all the time and stayed in top form"—that the owner moved him and his group down to his place on Sixth and Main in L.A. called the Paradise. It was a club where sailors stopped for those last few beers before returning to base in Long Beach. Hampton became very successful at the Paradise. The management was motivated to take the sawdust off the floor, put white linen cloths on the tables, and charge a \$1.50 fee to get in. There were lines around the block. As a result, Benny Goodman heard about Hamp. But he wouldn't have if Gladys hadn't been ill and Hamp, responding to this, had not come off the road.

"One night John Hammond, who helped Benny in so many ways, brought Benny, Gene Krupa, and Teddy Wilson to the club," Hamp explained. "I wasn't aware the guys were in the place until I heard some unusual playing. The clarinet work was out of sight. Then I thought to myself, 'Wow, Tyree [Glenn]—who filled in for me on drums—is really swinging.' Of course, it was Gene. By the time Teddy soloed, I knew something really great was going on. The four of us went on for two hours."

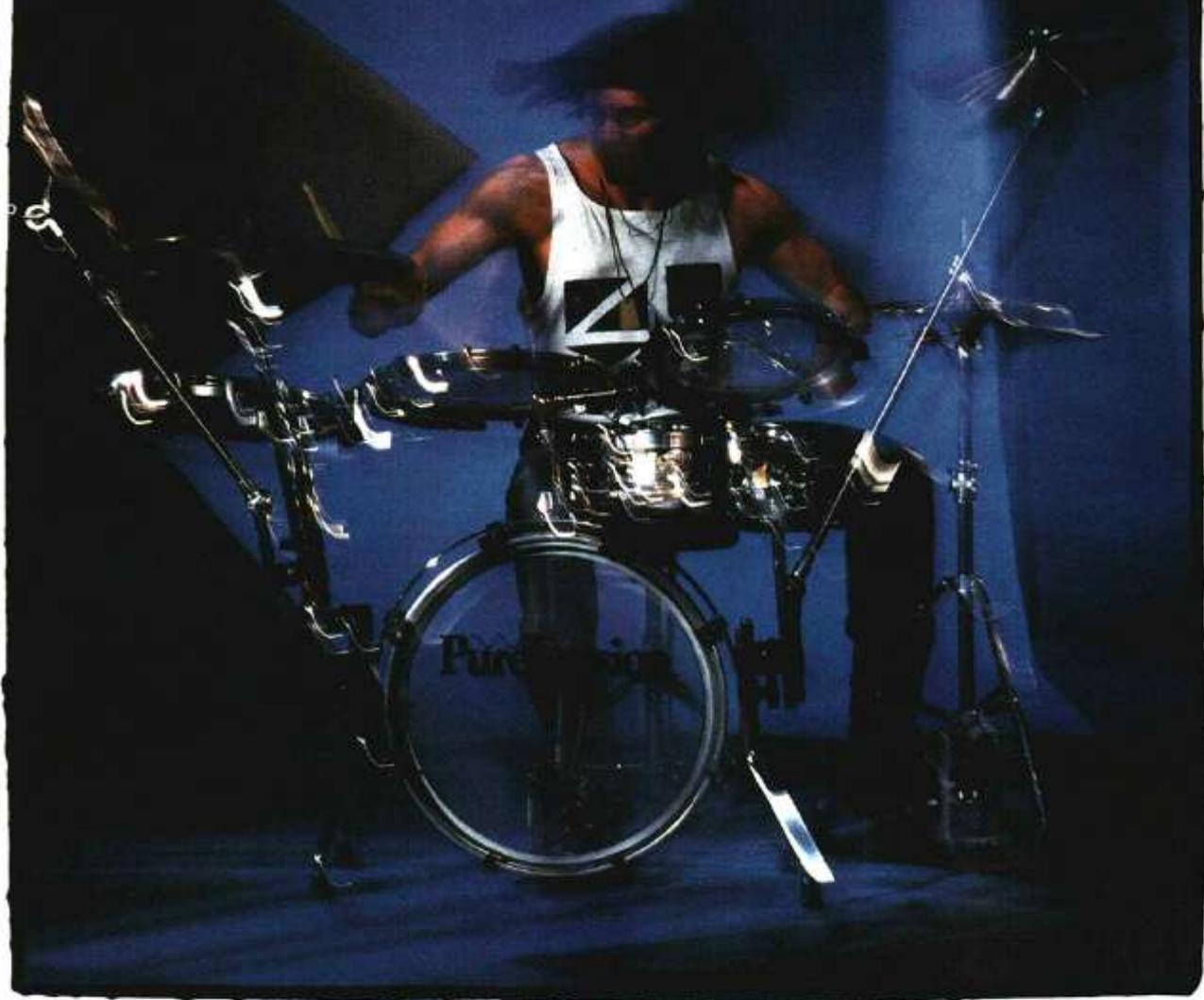
Goodman knew he had a good thing. He brought the quartet into the recording studio the very next day, August 26, 1936. And the first Goodman Quartet sides—"Dinah," "Exactly Like You," and "Vibraphone Blues"—were made, the latter two featuring Hampton's vocals. But it was his work as a vibraphonist that brought him immediate recognition. Hampton played with unusual facility and flair, and made the music work for him. The training and constant practice paid major dividends.

Goodman asked him to join his band, to come East to play on the *Camel Caravan* radio show. Hamp accepted, making only one specification. He'd come if he could bring Gladys. "Of course," B.C. said, and Hamp drove East in Gladys's white Chevrolet, marrying the lady along the way in Yuma, Arizona.

Hampton's relationship with Goodman, who was a rather difficult man, was extremely positive. The clarinetist gave him every chance, pushing him into the foreground.

As Hamp has told me on several occasions, "Working with Benny was an important thing for me, and for black musicians in general. Black and white players hadn't appeared together in public before Teddy Wilson and I began working with B.C. In fact, Teddy appeared as an intermission pianist with Benny, collaborating with him and Gene only on the trio recordings, before we got the quartet together. Looking back, I feel honored to have been a part of that dramatic change. It helped make possible what happened later. Benny should receive all the credit in the world; he treated us great. Gladys and I traveled in the room right next to his on trains, and he insisted that Teddy and I get the best accommodations in hotels."

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Being in what was considered "the big time," Hamp was on intimate terms with the best drummers. He learned from them, and they from him. His favorite was Dave Tough, who replaced Gene Krupa in the Goodman band in March of 1938.

"Dave was the greatest timekeeper we ever had in the business," Hampton said. "Sid Catlett was fine, so was Cozy [Cole]. And Chick Webb had this marvelous rhythmic feeling in his playing and was a great soloist. But Davey was fantastic to have in a band or small group. He gave you so much freedom because his time was so great, and because he responded to all the important things that were happening.

"In the quartet, he was dynamite on those last choruses. He had a way of playing the cymbals. The sound swelled, the pulse grabbed hold, but the time never moved. Only he could do this. He'd sit there so correct and straight. And it all came out so natural from his hands and foot—what a wonderful foot!

"Dave hated playing the big solo numbers, like 'Sing, Sing, Sing.' He told Benny to let me play that stuff, that it was in my groove. Dave wasn't flashy or too technical. But every band he was with rose to the top because he got to the roots of drums."

We then turned the conversation to Gene Krupa. "He was the miracle drummer-boy," Hamp chuckled. "He had great technique and did things most people had never seen or heard before. A great showman, he had a way of reaching audiences—the way he used his arms, chewed gum, the movements of his body, how his hair fell in his face. The people, particularly the girls, went for that. Gene was a great drummer. He made everyone believe what he did on drums. He was very professional."

During the four-year association with Goodman, Hampton not only recorded and played with Goodman, but cut in the neighborhood of 90 sides for Victor with musicians in his peer group. Among the players with whom he was associated were Charlie Christian, Ziggy Elman, Jess Stacy, Vido Musso, and Allen Reuss from the Goodman band; Cootie Williams, Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, and Sonny Greer out of the Ellington organization; and Dizzy Gillespie, Milt Hinton, Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, Chu Berry, Freddie Green, Zutty Singelton, Nat "King" Cole, Sid Catlett, and Cozy Cole. These recordings, perhaps more than any other assemblage of Hampton records, define how well he played each of his instruments. On such numbers as "Drum Stomp," "Gin For Christmas," and "I Know That You Know," he drummed up a storm. His enthusiastic, strong pulse uplifted his colleagues. His solos, notable for a swinging use of rudiments, great speed, and instinctive sense of development, certainly were the envy of young drum students. Hamp simultaneously was flashy and musical, though not quite as subtle as some other drummers.

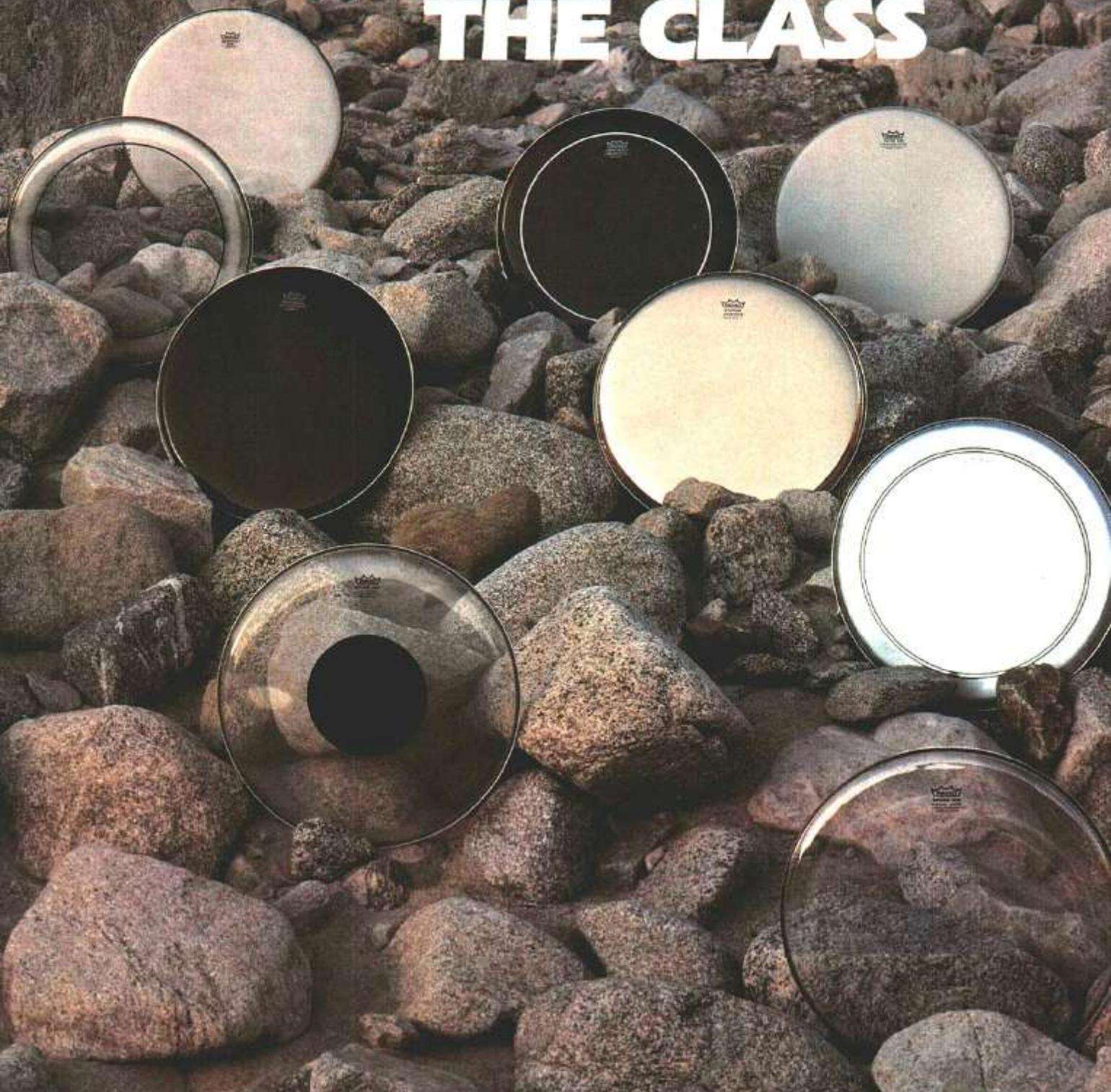
In September 1940, after the Goodman band broke up because of the leader's trouble with his back, Hamp decided to go out on his own—with B.G.'s blessing. "When I formed my own band," Hamp said, "I hoped I would bring to it the sort of discipline that Benny did. He was a tough leader and got good results."

In the new Hampton band were such future stars as tenor saxophonist Illinois Jacquet, trumpeter Ernie Royal, guitarist Irving Ashby, pianist Milt Buckner, and drummer Lee Young, among others. A parade of excellent musicians passed through the band over the years, including Dexter Gordon, Shadow Wilson, Quincy Jones, Charles Mingus, Joe Newman, Clifford Brown, Art Farmer, Al Grey, Pepper Adams, Arnett Cobb, Jerome Richardson, Wes and Monk Montgomery, Johnny Griffin...the list goes on endlessly. And lest we forget, Dinah Washington and Joe Williams sang with the Hampton band.

The band has gone through a number of phases and continues to evolve to this day, with Hampton as the central focus. It moved from swing, to bop, to Latin, to rhythm & blues, culminating in the present Hampton 18-piecer that concerns itself primarily with contemporary jazz—though Hamp, ever the audience-pleaser, never turns down requests for the Hampton hits like "Flying Home" and "Hamp's Boogie Woogie."

An innovator as a band leader, Hamp introduced electric bass and organ to big bands. Free and open, he has allowed his musicians to be expressive; he learns from them, and they get more than a little going to his "school." His work as a drummer remains

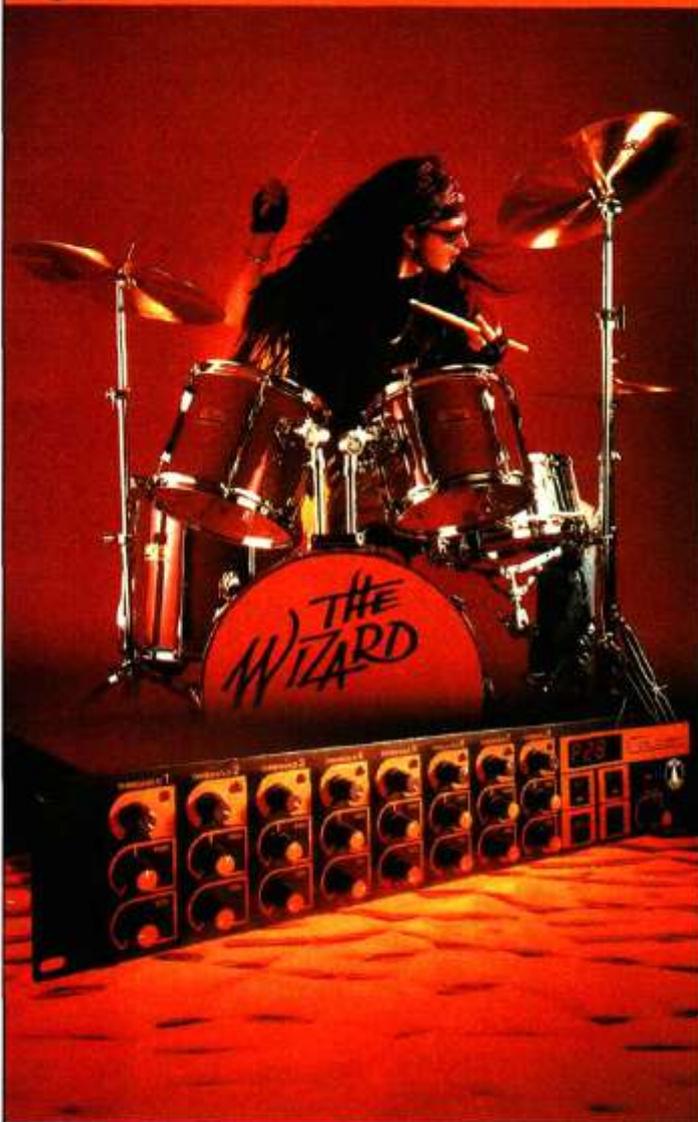
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rooted in the traditions of mainstream jazz, though his instincts and training make communication possible with younger players.

Lionel Hampton is best revealed as an artist on live recordings. A key Hampton performance on vibes is his rendition of "Stardust," mostly in double time, from a 1947 "Just Jazz" concert in California. I also suggest the recording of the *Esquire* Ail-American Award Concert at Carnegie Hall. Both albums are on the old Decca label.

"Stardust," an example of Hampton's ability to remake a piece of music, is permeated with his personality and various jazz subtleties. He has added a lot to the original material without sacrificing its basic quality, shape, and message. One senses when listening to this extended improvisation that Hampton digs more and more deeply into himself as the solo develops. Often one gets the impression he is carrying on a conversation between the material and himself.

The Carnegie Hall recording indicates how powerful and natural the Hampton band was at its peak and how important its leader was to its impact. In its best moments, it projected an enviable sense of affirmation, immediacy, and love.

The recordings Hamp has made over the years, from the Goodman quartet items to those he taped with Art Tatum and Buddy Rich, remain contemporary. Yes, Hamp is linked to swing, but his training and capacity to learn have allowed him to move along. At 80, he is anything but dated.

He frequently gets out to hear musicians, and cites numerous drummers as favorites, such as Duffy Jackson, Joel Rosenblatt, Frank Dunlop, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones—"who plays counterpoint with himself"—and such former Hampton drummers as Shadow Wilson, Freddie Radcliffe, Alan Dawson, Ellis Bartee, and his current drummer, Jimmy Ford.

"Jimmy plays some miraculous things, using his hands and feet in a very creative way. I practice with him all the time, and we have come up with very interesting triplet ideas that we use on gigs."

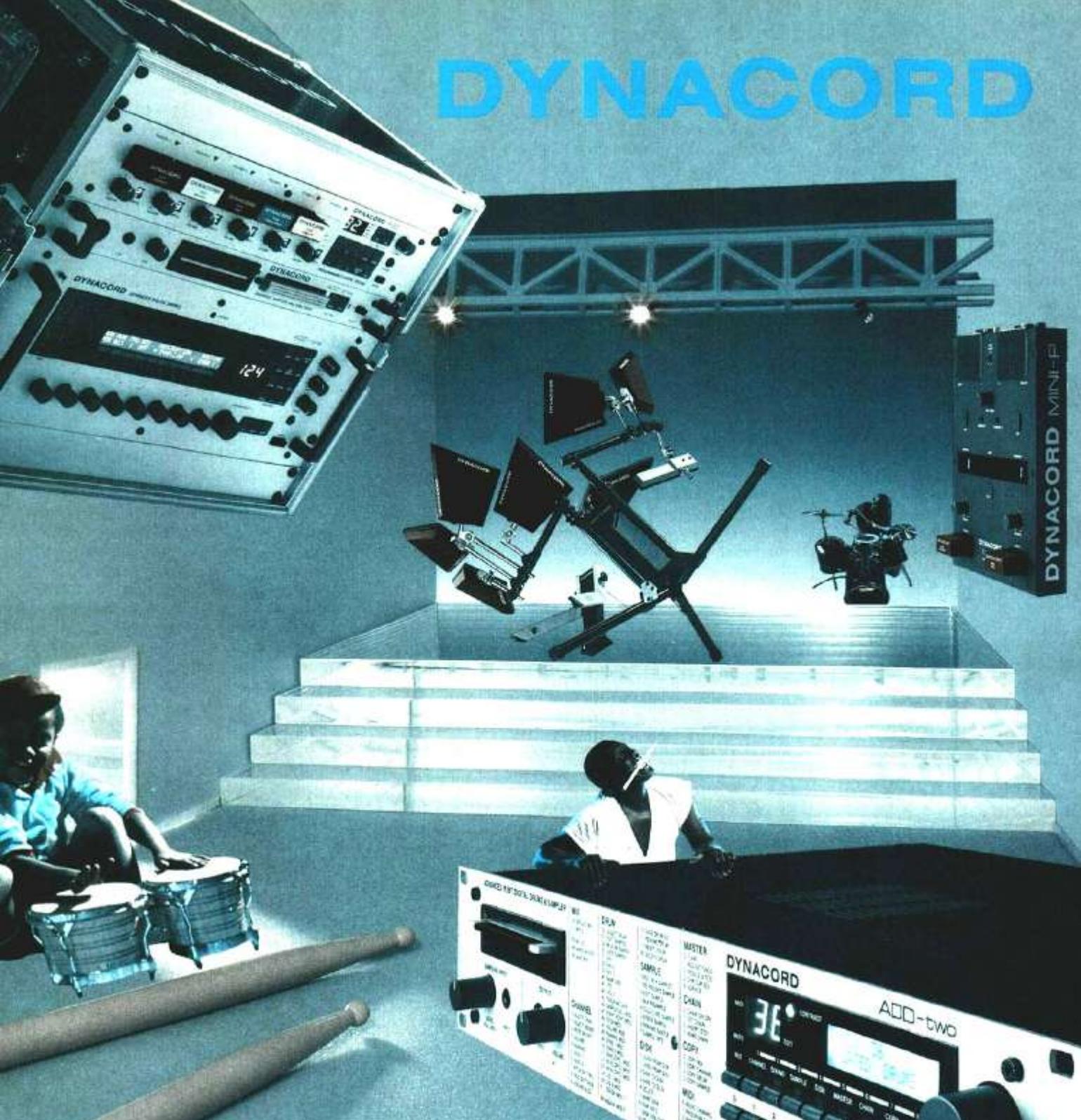
For Hamp, swing is the thing. Without the beat, he says, the

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music is not jazz as he knows it. "The drummers that have come up since the 1950s are too involved with intricate rhythms—one rhythm in the right hand, another in the left, something else happening with the feet. In some cases, the swing is left out. And that's unfortunate, because horns can't really swing on their own.

"I believe in adventure when it comes to playing drums, but the time feeling and the sense of movement have to be there. Drummers don't use the bass drum enough these days. The bass drum is there to play; it's not an ornament. It adds to the sense of swing.

"One thing really bothers me about some of the young drummers: They play too much, get in the way when a soloist is expressing himself. A drummer should take the spotlight when he has a solo. The rest of the time, his job is to be supportive and to swing.

"At one point in the 1970s, I thought drummers were lost," Hamp said. "The swing was gone. It didn't seem important to the guys coming along. I stood in front of several of my bands and wondered what was happening. And then things started to turn around.

"The best of the jazz players—drummers and horn men—*swing*. Dizzy swings and gives you a good melodic line when he plays; Bird always swung on his horn. The better young cats incorporate the feeling in their work. It's a must, you understand?

"I like Max [Roach]; he's the greatest of the modern drummers—a master. Max admired Chick Webb; he came up with the Benny Carter band. He has a good foundation. I played with him last year at the Jackie Robinson festival in Connecticut, and we got down with it. They were really finger poppin' around the park. I told Max, 'You haven't forgotten your roots.'

"I'm encouraged by what I hear now. Drummers and all players are returning to the tradition. Young musicians, in particular, are learning from the old masters, reinterpreting what they've done, and going on from there.

"I've lived through a lot in jazz," Hamp concluded. "But my love for the music and playing remains strong. I look forward to every day. I'm busy, still traveling all over this country and around

the world, still bringing music to the people. I tell the young musicians, 'You have to give the people out there the things that they want. They must be considered! You don't have to be commercial; just understand that the people who come to see and hear you don't know as much about music as the players and composers do.'

I'm involved with new ideas; they excite me. But I always give my audiences something they can take home with them. When I do a concert or a show, I play a couple of things for the fans and then a few numbers for myself. It works out better in the long run."

Hamp got up just before I left, and played me a new CD that featured the original Benny Goodman Quartet. As we listened to Gene, Teddy, Benny—and Hamp, of course—he seemed to fill up with feeling. After three numbers he took my arm, looked very intently at me, and said, "Even though a lot of musicians are great today, they don't have that sort of *magic* in their playing. I don't know what it was. Maybe the times and chemistry were special. I was young. The music was happening. Who knows?"

The words came in a rush. The memories obviously were relished. A climactic moment of our two-hour interview, it closed the book on the past, and we talked about what he had coming up in the future. He wandered back to the vibes and played some after the CD had run its course. We had come full circle.

Hamp insisted that he wants to keep going and play and compose music that is meaningful to him. A busy man who has little time for leisure, Hampton obviously is kept young by the constant activity. "I wake up every day and look forward to what might happen," he said. "There are so many possibilities. I could write another standard like 'Midnight Sun,' or get started on a suite along the lines of the 'King David Suite.' I could play my instruments better than I did yesterday. I always have the feeling that each day will offer me a good musical experience.

"My responsibility? To remain in good form. When you leave, I'm going to practice—some vibes, drums, perhaps a little piano. I never can tell what'll happen when I go to work in the evening. That's what makes it all worthwhile."



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by Gil Graham

Solo Fills And Figures

MUSIC KEY

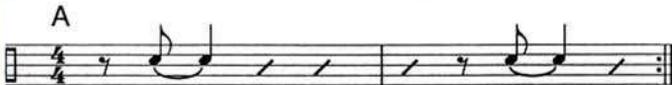


In the last article in this series, we looked at fills and the importance of reading ahead in order to execute the fill and set up the figure properly. In this article, I will explain some fill exercises designed to further develop your counting and improvising skills.

In my teaching experience, I have found that many chart reading problems stem from the inability to count and play simultaneously. One exercise I have found useful is to improvise a solo through an exercise rather than playing time. This challenges your improvising and creative abilities and also helps to further your counting ability.

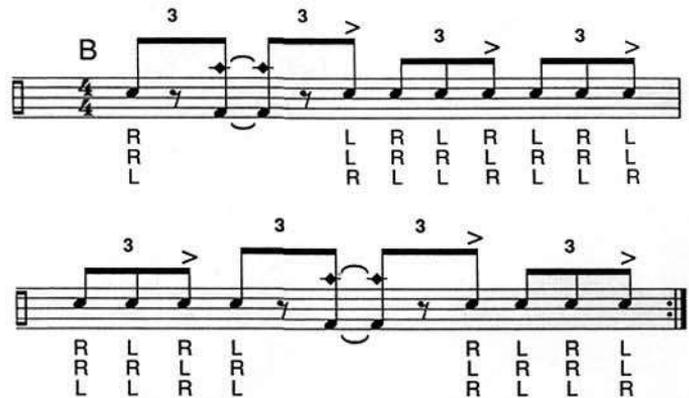
In previous articles, we have looked at various dotted quarter-note figures. I have explained how to play those figures with and without fills. In this article we will look at how to expand fills to such an extent that you are indeed soloing through the entire exercise rather than playing time on the cymbal.

Example A is a two-measure phrase that we will be referring to later in this article.

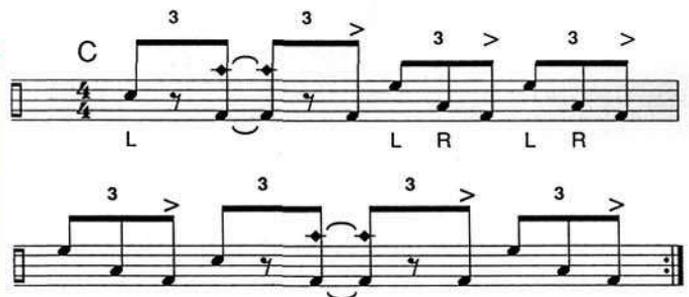


In previous columns, I have discussed how you should play these types of figures with or without a fill on a drum chart. Once you feel comfortable with each method, try creating your own

solo as you repeat these two bars. Example B indicates how you can begin this procedure, rather than just playing time on the cymbal. This is a simple solo being played between the figures. As always, continue playing your hi-hat on beats 2 and 4.

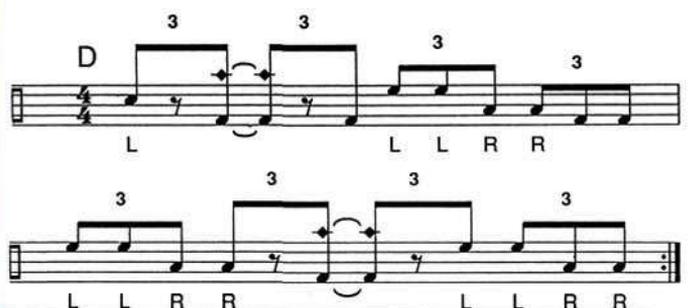


This solo is written out entirely on the snare drum and contains accent and sticking patterns very common in jazz. Repeat example B exactly as it is written until you are comfortable with each sticking, and then try improvising your own solo. Example C indicates a similar sticking and accent pattern applied to different drums.

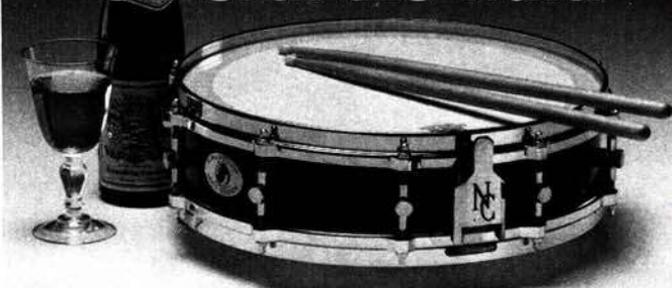


Use the patterns in examples B and C to stir your imagination and begin the improvising process. Remember that they represent only two solo ideas out of countless possibilities and are designed to inspire your own creativity. Playing these solos exactly as written should be only your first goal. Your main objective should be to simultaneously challenge your own creativity and counting ability. In these exercises, your ability to improvise a creative solo is as important as your ability to play the figures properly. When you improvise, be sure to continue counting so that you can consistently set off and play the dotted quarter-note figures accurately. Always try to be original with your solos and vary your ideas as much as possible.

Examples D and E offer two more ideas. Begin by playing the figures with your right hand, then use your left.



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E

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F

L L R L L R R

Once you are comfortable soloing over the two-bar form shown in example A, try soloing over the four-bar form of example F.

The following four-bar exercises are also designed to further challenge your counting and soloing abilities. Once you have mastered the procedure outlined so far, you may apply the same principles to these four-bar exercises in the following ways: first, to each measure; second, to a combination of any two consecutive measures; third, to a combination of any four consecutive measures; and fourth, to the whole exercise.

G

You will find that improvising over these longer phrases places increased demands on your counting ability. Your goal should be to develop your soloing and counting abilities to the extent that it becomes easy to read all 20 bars (examples F and C) consecutively. However, do not forget that the exercises I have outlined in this article are designed to improve your counting and concentration while reading a drum chart. When you play a solo or use a fill, you must never lose sight of your primary objective: time!

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Like many companies in the percussion industry, Vater is a family business, and is in fact the product of the merging of two musical merchandizing families: President Joan Vater's father was the aforementioned Jack Adams, and her husband is Clarence Vater, founder of Vater Percussion and for-

This do-it-yourself philosophy permeates almost every aspect of Vater Percussion, from the homemade racks where the varnished sticks dry, to the moving of the entire company—machines and all—by the employees to their new headquarters in Holbrook, Massachusetts. A great deal of Vater's success can surely be attributed to their ideas and persistence, and theirs alone. In fact, Vater's sales department, which services about 300 private shops and several brand name drum companies that market Vater sticks as their own, really isn't a sales department at all. Calling customers, carrying out correspondence, ordering the wood, traveling to trade shows—all this is carried out by Alan Vater. A friendly, outspoken, truly motivated man, Alan gets visibly excited when talking about his company and about drumsticks in general, and has an obvious pride in the family business. "I think we've carried it this far on our own," he says, "and I think that I have more of a vision of what I want and of what my customers want than what any marketing person could tell me. Maybe I will develop a concept and tell a marketing person what to do with it. But a lot of outsiders? No, I don't think they understand what we're trying to do here. Some people ask me, 'Why don't you let more of those bad sticks through?' And I tell them, 'Get it through your head: It's not the money; it's the *product*.' Because you can sell a lot of product, but down the road, people can say, 'You know, these sticks aren't so good.' First of all, we don't want to be the biggest, we want to be the best. Second, we want to have the best stick at the best price; we sell our sticks at over 50 cents less than brand names—direct. We don't want to have the best stick and have it looked upon as a Rolls Royce."

To Vater, making their sticks "the best" means starting with the proper raw materials. Vater was recently picked out of over 200,000 companies by the Small Business Administration as Small Business of the Year in Massachusetts. The honor—which included several days spent in Washington D.C. and a speech by the President—was due to the company's excellence in several areas, including finding and using the proper raw materials. In Vater's case, that material is hickory, a subject Alan is eager to elaborate on. "Hickory mainly grows from Illinois right down the Mississippi River. It only grows in North America, and our sources are from Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, Pennsylvania.... We have to have different sources because, as we grow, we have to find more wood. That became a problem with us; you can find hickory, but

we only get the real good hickory—the best wood. We work really tightly with the people who do it for us.

"We mainly run hickory because, in the States, that's what drummers are looking for. In Canada, maple is popular because that's what is grown there. And in Japan, oak is really popular because that's what is grown *there*. We've been successful selling other types in these areas, too.

"I feel that a good piece of hickory doesn't have to be compressed. Over the centuries they've made striking tools—hammers, axe handles. And you say to yourself, 'They've got resin, metal compounds, but they're still turning out wood handles every day.' And that's because the structure of hickory is very resilient; it absorbs shock. Oak sticks vibrate; that's why we won't use oak."

According to Alan, a quality stick starts with the dowel, the form in which the wood comes into the factory. The company spends over \$150,000 a month on the wood, which arrives in weekly shipments. The dowels come in different lengths and thicknesses, depending on what size stick will be cut from them. Vater not only makes sure the wood looks good, but also that it is uniform in its inherent qualities. "You want the color to be consistently white," Alan emphasizes. "No two-tone colors. Overall appearance, grain structure, weight, strength—these are the important factors. It's also the way the wood is dried. It's going to be more moist on the inside than



The Vater Staff

merly of the C. Vater Music Center. Joan and Clarence's two sons, Ronnie and Alan, then decided to join the company, and along with some industrious and inventive employees, proceeded to slowly build a drumstick manufacturing plant almost from scratch.

"You can't go into any store and buy equipment to make drumsticks with," says Clarence Vater. "You have to find something and modify it, or design it yourself." Because so many of the machines used in the Vater factory are, in fact, the only ones of their kind that exist, secrecy is obviously of the utmost importance. Alan Vater says that nobody outside of the company has actually seen the inside of the plant before now, and, needless to say, photographs are only permitted of those few machines (such as the back-knife lathe that first cuts the wooden dowels) that weren't designed by Vater employees.



George Morgan overseeing back-knife lathe

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Alan Vater rolling sticks for straightness

Alan goes on to explain how there is controversy among drumstick makers as to just what characteristics are most important in a drumstick. "Some people say you should pitch-pair. We feel differently. First of all, any drummer that I know is looking for sticks that are the same weight. When you break a stick during a gig and you reach down to pick up another one, you want that baby to be consistent with the one you just broke. If you're a snare drummer in a symphony, then you're looking for pitch. But if you're a rock 'n' roll drummer, you're looking for weight. A rock 'n' roll drummer is riding a cymbal and hitting a snare drum. What does pitch have to do with anything? Response is important, too. Some sticks have a rubbery response; we chuck those out."

Another area that Alan Vater has strong opinions about is colored drumsticks and other such novelties. "Illuminated sticks are just fads; they have a product life. As far as synthetics are concerned, I think they have a place in the market, but I don't think they have a dominant place. Drummers are always going to come back to good old natural sticks. The natural resonance, the tone that wood gives you as opposed to, say, graphite—you don't get the same tonal quality, the same feel."

"People used to paint sticks, and it was a detriment to the product in general. The

product chipped, you'd sweat and have blue all over you. So there was a reason not to like it. But then the way we made it, using a porcelain finish, there was no reason not to like it. About 25% of our sticks sold are colored. We chose to make stained sticks in black and red; one is very bright, and one very dark. We try to get away from a really high-gloss finish. It feels like you have a piece of wood in your hand, not a candle."

In addition to drumsticks, Vater also makes wooden timpani mallets, which employ a mechanically and chemically bonded cap that allows the head to rotate. The company also has plans to manufacture wood and poly bass drum beaters, which would require the design and building of new machinery. As stated earlier, this wouldn't be the first time the company would have to build its own machines; some of the others that were created when the need arose are a sanding machine, one that knocks nylon tips onto sticks, and the stamping machine that every private-label stick goes through.

It seems the kind of self-reliance needed in a company like Vater has resulted in a closer employee/manager relationship than may be apparent in other companies, and Clarence Vater is quick to give the company's crew due credit for their success: "If we didn't have the help we have today, there is no way we would have progressed." Alan Vater amplifies his father's thoughts: "It's not like one decision is made

People say, 'Your sticks don't break like some of the others,' and it might be the design, but it's mostly the wood."

Even though the wood Vater uses is quality-checked before it's cut, the sticks are still checked at every stage of production for straightness. On the final cut, every 30th stick is measured, and if it doesn't pass a tolerance check of 3/1000', the machine is shut off and adjusted.

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here; everyone is working together. There have been meetings where we have called the whole shop in. When we make really heavy decisions, we want everyone involved. It's not like a big company. Some of these guys are friends that I grew up with. It's a tight-knit group, and everyone understands what has to be done."

The amount of success that Vater has achieved in the industry is a bit surprising, considering that the company has never once advertised. Rather than attempting some sort of media blitz, Vater has inched its way through the back door, concentrating on elevating the quality of private label sticks, and spreading their reputation throughout the nation's drumshops. "A private-label drumstick was usually just a bucket of sticks with the store's name on it," says Alan. "It didn't have the quality of a name-brand stick. But we've taken that aspect and concentrated on it, giving it a top priority."

Vater found that the private stores appreciated their line of thought, using Vater sticks with their own names stamped on them as a way to advertise their shops. And it has been this kind of personal attention to the small-time dealer that has carried the company thus far. "Our customers' competitors will call me up, wanting our sticks, and I won't give them to them, because we give regional exclusives. If you are Columbus Percussion Center, who are a good customer of ours, and somebody else off the street wants them—sorry, we

can't do it. And they come to you and go, 'I have six stores.' 'I'm sorry, I can't do it for you.' And you want to do it, but you can't, because that loyalty is what carries you. Then again, it's not the bottom line; it's doing the best job you can for someone who is supporting you.

"Word of mouth has carried us through. We wanted to put the product ahead of the name, and we don't have what they call 'bottom-line thinking.' There's no percentage that we're looking for. What we get out of the run—what we feel is a perfect stick—is what we get out of it. We don't say, 'Oh, no. We've got 40% loss on this run.' We say, 'Hey, they're all good sticks; people are going to come back and buy them again.' That's an attitude that I think is gone now. The money will come."

Though Vater's ethics may seem decidedly populist, this doesn't quite mean that they're resigned to be somehow left behind the larger drumstick manufacturers in terms of having their piece of the pie. The sticks the company cuts for name brands provide a good portion of Vater's income. These companies will submit drawings and specs for their own sticks, and will actually buy the knives used to cut those sticks. "Those specs stay in this shop," explains Clarence. "The only way they'll go anywhere is if we have written authorization on a second-quality stick, which we have the option of selling."

Besides doing business with the bigger companies, Alan sees no reason the com-

pany shouldn't be in their shoes, and is ready to take a cue from some of the ones he feels have done things right. He particularly looks up to the Calato company as one to emulate. "The best thing for this company would be to look like a Regal Tip. I really look up to them. They've done so much. Their dad invented the nylon tip, and he shed blood, sweat, and tears his 30-year career just making drumsticks. Now they're wholesaling and have operations all over. The ultimate thing would be for people to recognize Vater drumsticks as being *the* best, and for us to be able to support it and expand into different lines. We're thinking now about making wood products like toys—something high-quality. Because, this building here is a temporary resting place for this company.

"Our biggest challenge is coming out with our own line of drumsticks—to have the Vater name mean something to the drummer. It's marketing, and that's too bad. We have a good stick and a good name, but no one knows how to identify our stick, because we don't have our name on it. We haven't even concentrated on getting our name out. This is our first interview, our first touch with anything. The stick has taken us this far. Now, if we start to advertise and market behind that, look out. I believe that if something is good and worth the money, it's going to go. We're ready to reach out now."



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Leroy Clouden: "Century's End"

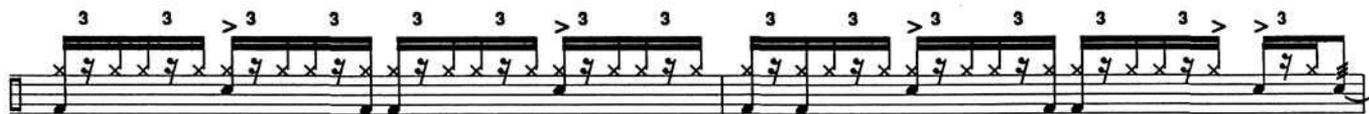
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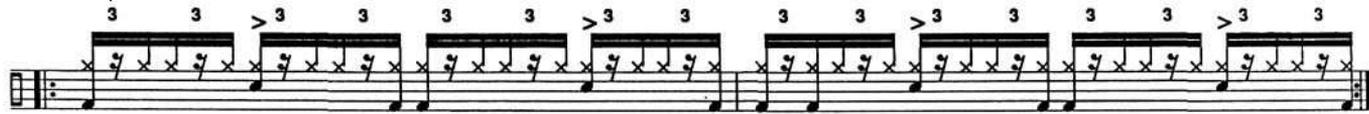
This month's *Rock Charts* features "Century's End," Donald Fagen's hit from the soundtrack of the movie *Bright Lights, Big City* (Warner Bros. 4-27972). Drummer Leroy Clouden plays a crisp, tight funk-shuffle against Fagen's sequencers and programs, for a hip, contemporary feel. This is an excellent example for playing this type of feel.

This page contains ten staves of musical notation for a drum set, organized into two groups of five staves each. Each staff contains a sequence of rhythmic exercises, primarily consisting of eighth-note triplets. The exercises are marked with accents (>) and dynamics (>). The notation includes stems, beams, and 'x' marks for cymbal hits.

The first group of five staves is labeled with a **D** at the beginning of the fifth staff. The second group of five staves is labeled with an **E** at the beginning of the fifth staff.



Repeat and Fade





8
Oct. 30, 1985



9
May 11, 1986



10
May 18, 1986



11
May 30, 1986



12
May 30, 1986



13
June 5, 1986
Oct. 25, 1987



14
Oct. 19, 1986



15
Nov. 12, 1986



7
Sept. 22, 1985



6
April 23, 1985



5
Oct. 8, 1984
March 2, 1986
April 26, 1987
July 15, 1987



4
Oct. 8, 1984



3
Aug. 14, 1984
June 3, 1985
Nov. 2, 1986
Nov. 8, 1987



2
March 26, 1984
Nov. 12, 1984
Oct. 4, 1987



1
Feb. 27, 1984
July 26, 1987



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16
Nov. 12, 1986



17
April 5, 1987



18
April 26, 1987



19
May 17, 1987



20
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21
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22
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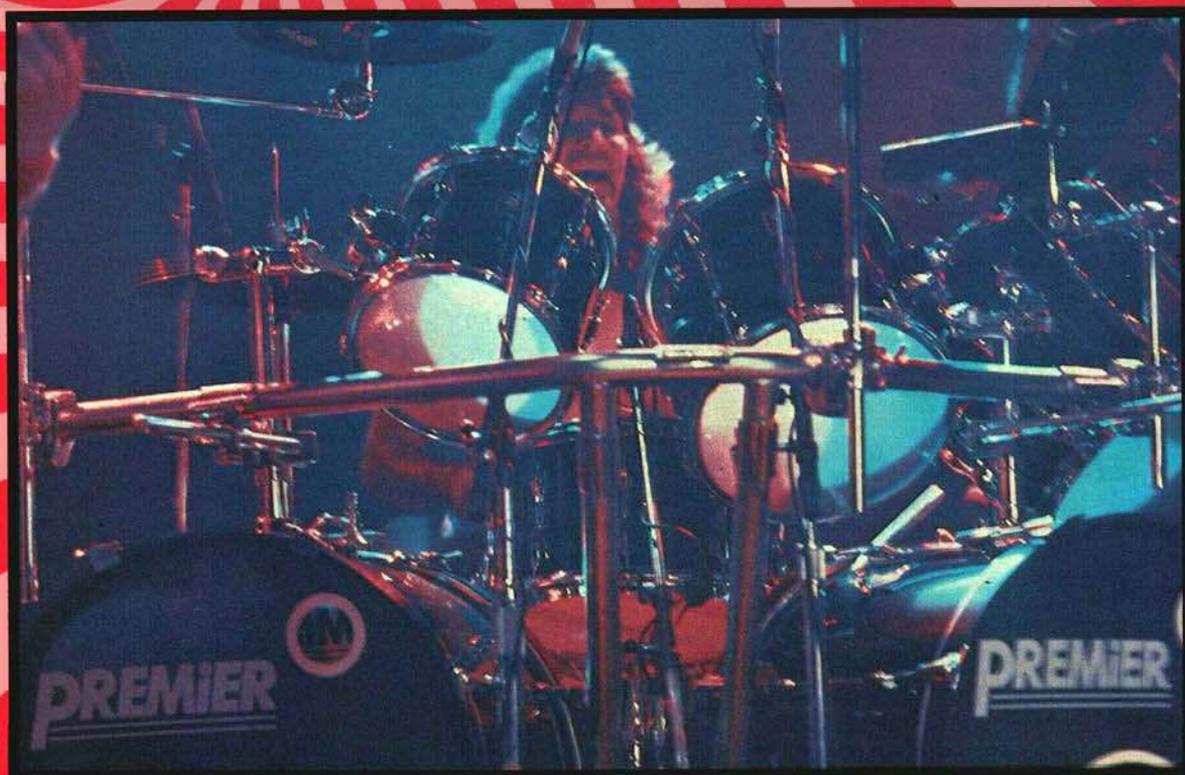
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W ROD MORGENSTEIN'S D DRUMS!

The legendary Dregs reunited this spring to record a CD single and for a brief tour.

Rod usually plays Premier *Resonator* drums, but wanted to try a new sound for the Dregs project. He chose a prototype set of Premier's new *APK* drums.

The new *APK* drums were designed for high-volume music and feature heavy-duty construction and hardware. And here's your chance to own Rod's very own prototype set. *All it takes is the correct answer to this month's Drum Trivia questions—and a post-card!*

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- 2 - 22 x 16 Bass Drums
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- 1 - 10 x 9 Tom
- 1 - 12 x 11 Tom
- 1 - 14 x 13 Tom
- 1 - 16 x 16 Floor Tom
- 1 - 18 x 16 Floor Tom

It also includes a full set of Premier's new *3000 Series* hardware, two *254* bass pedals, hi-hat, snare stand, two boom stands, and straight stand.

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CONTEST RULES

- 1) Submit postcards only; be sure to include your name, address, and telephone number.
- 2) Your entry must be postmarked by Jan. 1, 1989.
- 3) You may enter as many times as you wish. All entries must be mailed individually.
- 4) Winners will be notified by telephone. Prizes will be shipped promptly, direct from the manufacturer.
- 5) Previous *Modern Drummer* contest winners are ineligible.
- 6) Employees of *Modern Drummer* and employees of the manufacturer of this month's prize are ineligible.

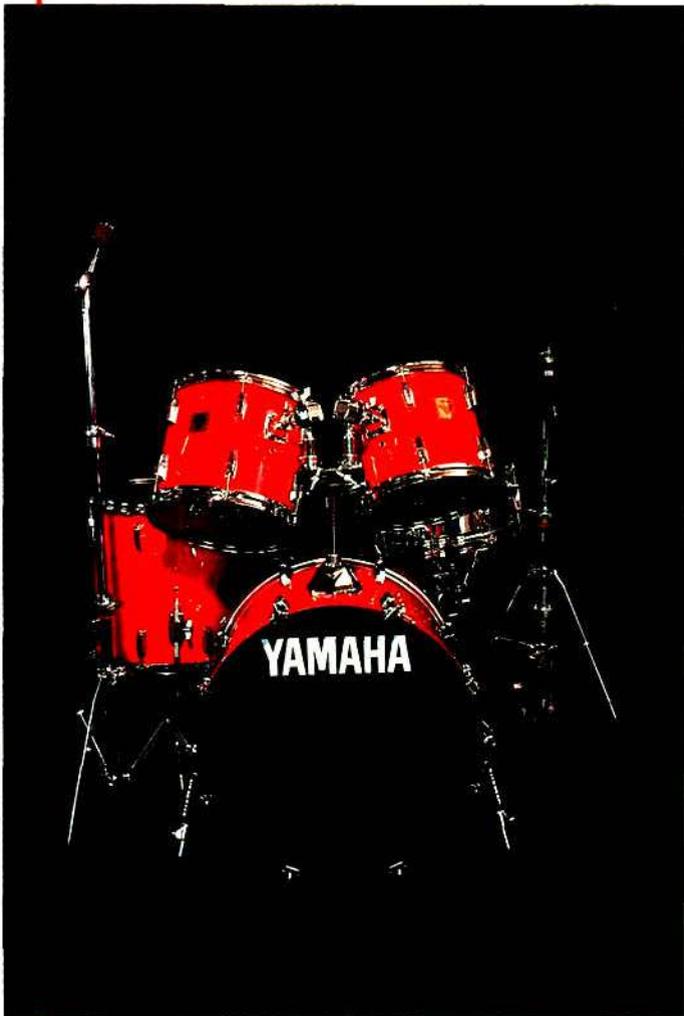


Just answer the following questions. One winner will be chosen from among the correct entries. Send your answers to *Modern Drummer* by January 1, 1989.

QUESTIONS

1. Rod met the other members of the Dregs at what university?
2. What category in the Modern Drummer Poll did Rod win this year?
3. Where are Premier drums manufactured?

Yamaha Po



without marring the hoop's finish.

The *Power Vs* spurs are externally mounted, and have a large wing bolt adjustment. They fold flush for packing, and allow a few different forward setup angles, depending upon where you place the leg in relation to its plate. Each spur tube is cut away in back, exposing an inner telescopic leg. A square-headed screw is used to release and lock the inner leg. (I'd prefer a wing screw here.) The spurs have spike tips, surrounded by rubber, and hold the bass drum in place just fine. (Yamaha has taken the opportunity to plaster its logo on the spur legs. This may be good for promotion, but is nonetheless gaudy.)

The drum came fitted with a clear Yamaha batter (made at the Premier factory?) and a black front head with a pre-cut 9 1/2" hole. Yamaha did away with the normal felt muf-

fler strip usually included with bass drums, and instead thoughtfully included a Remo *Muff 1* (which I just happen to love!) The *Muff 1* helps to give a solid, tight sound to the bass drum. The drum is quite punchy, especially when played with a wood beater. It has great tonal depth, and produces ample volume.

Mounting System

A new tom-tom holder has been developed for the *Power V* kit, based on the tried-and-true Yamaha swivel-ball system. A large receiver block is mounted atop the bass drum, and accepts a single down tube. The down tube is held in the receiver by a wing screw, clamping an inner nylon piece. The tube is fitted with a memory ring, and the entry hole on the receiver is multi-slotted to make it convenient for placement of the square screw on the memory ring. On this particular holder, the down tube fit very tightly inside the receiver, requiring some additional force to insert or remove it.

Atop the tube is a large, rubber-bumpered chrome block that has two holes (also multi-slotted) to accept the individual tom arms. The arms have memory rings, and are wing-bolt clamped. Each tom arm utilizes a

swivel ball, almost totally enclosed within a chromed casing. Adjustment/locking is via a wing screw on top of the ball casing. This method is identical to other Yamaha holders, and affords a wide range of angle adjustment. Past the ball joint, the arms are hexagonal steel, to mate with the hex receivers on the tom-tom shells. The hexagonal design resists any twisting or turning of the drums. All in all, it's a relatively sturdy holder, and I was able to obtain the angles and heights I needed. I did find, though, that at acute angles the right tom could foul the arm holder block.

Tom-Toms

The 10 x 12 and 11 x 13 toms have 12 lugs each; the 16 x 16 floor tom has 16 lugs. There are no internal mufflers, and the drums have one venthole each. (The rack toms are vented near their holder receivers.) The floor tom has three legs, knurled at their tops, that fit into wing-bolt brackets. All the toms are fitted with Yamaha's made-in-England clear heads, top and bottom.

The 12" and 13" toms required some dampening when I tested them in live playing, but the floor tom really didn't need any modification. The toms do not "boom"; instead, with just a little muffling (tape or a *Zero Ring*), they have a nice punch. All the toms possess good attack and volume at all pitches. The floor tom is amazingly deep-sounding in itself; in fact it's one of the loudest I've played. (Maybe the "V" in *Power V* stands for volume?)

Snare Drum

A 6 1/2 x 14 steel-shell snare completes the five-piece *Power V* kit. It has eight double-ended lugs, a single venthole, and uses a simple side-throw strainer. (The throw-off side has a fine-tension adjustment knob.) The drum has 20-strand wire snares, held by black fiber strapping. There's one really great feature on this drum I like—minor, but worthy of mention: Square-headed, drumkey-operated screws are used to clamp the throw-off and butt plates where the snare connector strips pass through, instead of regular slotted screws. It's a lot easier to adjust the snares with a drumkey than with a small straight-edged screwdriver. Give the designer a raise!

Snare gates are made in the bottom hoop by cutting away the hoop entirely at those points, which allows the snares to drop fully when released. A good idea, but it could make the strapping, the bottom head, or even the hoop itself prone to possible damage by accident.

This snare has a mirror chrome finish,

Enter yet another series of Yamaha drums: the *Power V*. Yamaha has developed this line with the idea of combining pro quality and affordability. The *Power V* kit is manufactured in England, not Japan, and I read this as the first endeavor by Yamaha to take advantage of their acquisition of Premier.

The *Power V* shells are 9-ply Philippine mahogany, with their interiors painted black. The snare drum has a steel shell. The drums have a different lug design from the rest of the Yamaha family: They're more squared-off, and have a slight taper down. Components of the Yamaha *Power V* kit are 16 x 22 bass drum, 10 x 12 and 11 x 13 tom-toms, 16 x 16 floor tom, and 6 1/2 x 14 snare drum.

Bass Drum

The 16 x 22 bass drum has 16 lugs with T-handle tuners. The bottom two rods on each side of the drum have square-headed screws—an increasingly popular feature nowadays. Black painted wooden hoops are fitted to the drum, and they are inlaid with plastic, matching the drum's finish. (The hoops, by the way, have squared-off edges.) Yamaha has glued a piece of ribbed rubber onto the bottom of the batter hoop for easier pedal attachment and stability

Power V Drumkit

which is a simply great plating job. (The Premier process?) The drum came fitted with a Yamaha TS white coated batter, and a transparent Yamaha snare side head. There is no internal damper, so instead, Yamaha includes a plastic ring to lay over the batter head, covering the outer 1 1/2" perimeter of the head and reducing overring. (It's a bit heavier and thicker than Noble & Cooley's *Zero Ring*.) This works so well in controlling overtones, I wonder why Yamaha doesn't include sizes for the three toms, as well.

Yamaha's coated head is not as responsive to brushwork as a Remo coated is, so the country and jazz players who use the drum may want to change the batter to a rougher textured one. I had a slight problem with constant snare rattle on this drum during soft playing; the snares were either slipping, or were bent. However, in loud playing, the rattle disappeared, and with the plastic overlay ring, the drum's sound tightened up to produce a really great snare sound. This drum is not particularly sensitive, but responds well to loud playing, without choking. Latin-type rim clicks were not as loud as on other snares I've played, and regular rimshots sounded a bit thin. The drum does possess good volume and crispness, and overall, I really did like its sound.

Hardware

The *Power V* hardware has labels reading "Made In England," so once again there's evidence of the Premier connection. All the stands have large, grooved rubber feet (which, too, have the Yamaha logo), and all height adjustment points contain black nylon bushings for non-slip-page.

One *CS720P* cymbal stand is included with the kit. (Yamaha's ad for the kit displays two.) It has a single-braced tripod base, and two adjustable height tiers. A ratchet tilter is used for setting cymbal angle. It's just your basic, normal stand, and it's sturdy enough to hold most any cymbal. (Maybe it's so good that someone stole the second one?)

The *SS720P* snare stand also has a single-braced base, and uses a basket design to hold the snare drum. A threaded T-screw adjuster at the bottom closes the basket, and the stand tilts on a flat steel hinge.

The *HS820* hi-hat stand and *FP725* bass drum pedal both have two-piece aluminum footboards with large ribs in their upper halves for a more positive "foot grip." The hi-hat is single-braced at its base, and has two knob spurs set into its frame. It works on the direct-pull method, and uses a fat



chain linkage. A large hose clamp serves as a memory ring for the height tube. Tension adjustment of the enclosed spring is done via a large plastic wheel, set horizontally into the spring housing. The actual degree of adjustment is visible through a slot in the housing, which is gauged to show "heavy" to "light" action settings. In what was perhaps an oversight, there was no metal or fiber washer for the bottom cymbal cup—the tilter screw directly contacted the felt washer, squashing it. The stand has smooth, quiet action. It may be a bit too springy for some, but in general, it works fine, and changing spring tension is easy and convenient.

The bass drum pedal is of a simple design, using a single expansion spring stretched downward. A knurled knob at the frame's bottom right adjusts the tension of the spring holder. There are no spurs on the pedal, nor is there a toe stop. The pedal's axle is hex steel, onto which the linkage cam and beater housing are mounted (and locked with Allen screws). A flexible strap is used for the linkage, and the pedal mounts to the drum with the common plate clamp/wing screw method. A square-headed screw holds the felt beater in its housing; once again, I'd like to see a wing screw instead, just for convenience.

This pedal is lightweight, and has good action. It felt a little small under my foot, but not so that it was ever out of control. The pedal has a natural-feeling swing, and

responds well, whether playing heel-down, or toe-only.

Cosmetics

The *Power V* kit I tested was finished in Italian Red plastic covering. (Other colors available include black, white, and chrome.) I detected a few bumps on the bass drum's covering, but overall, the finishing was okay, and all seams are hidden from the audience view. Each drum in the kit has a newly designed square gold logo badge, screened with black graphics. (There are no serial numbers imprinted.)

The kit is easy to set up and tear down, the hardware is all good (if not great) quality (especially the tom holder), and the drums have good tonal characteristics and volume. So I guess Yamaha has accomplished what they set out to do. In my opinion, the *Power V* leans more towards the *Tour Series* in quality than the cheaper *Stage Series* line, and I consider it to be worth every penny of the \$1,195 suggested retail price.



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by Steve La Cerra

Recording Your Drum Machine

Recording studio time is an expensive commodity, and since the majority of us have limited resources, that time should be used as efficiently as possible. A live band going into the studio must rehearse before recording rhythm tracks. Similarly, in the interest of saving time, drum programs are best written *before* going into the studio. Then, since you can bring your drum machine to the studio, recording can be as easy as getting the sound and pressing "record."

The purpose of this article is to assist drummers in getting the sound they want out of drum machines and samplers. We will assume that the programming has already been worked out.

The major decision to be made is whether or not to record processed sounds. Often, a group will record sounds directly off the sampler without adding further reverb or equalization. This method can be useful when the overall ambience of the song has not yet been determined. Once all the other instruments and vocals have been recorded, drum sound processing can be done in the mix.

Assuming that you're working with a limited budget (a reasonable assumption), you are probably in a studio with a limited number of outboard processors. Additionally, the band may own an extra digital reverb or delay. The point is that in the mixing process, it is desirable to have as many signal processors as possible available for the vocals, keyboards, guitars, etc. Sound quality will suffer when one reverb is used for a multitude of tracks. The problem becomes clear when you realize that

three or more separate reverb units may be needed for the drums alone.

Therefore, it is advantageous to record the drum sounds as close as possible to what you want in the final product, including equalization, reverb(s), compression, or any other effects. If you are not sure about the reverb, print (record) a modest amount now and add more later.

Determine next how many tracks are available for the drums. The minimum for a stereo spread is two tracks. In this case, you practically *must* get the reverb sounds on tape; adding reverb later will allow you only to add reverb to the entire drumset, which is not always desirable. Two tracks are fine when using an eight-track format, leaving six tracks for the band.

If the drum machine has only two outputs, you may run into trouble at this point. There are basically two or three options in solving this problem. If the drum machine allows it, pan the snare drum and toms to one side and the kick drum and cymbals to the other. This lets you add reverb to the snare and toms without putting it on the kick and cymbals (which are frequently left dry). These sounds are then recorded on two different tracks. The disadvantage here is that when mixing, both of these tracks are likely to be placed in the center of the mix (kick and snare are most often panned to the center of the left-to-right "stage"), leaving your drums in mono. You must decide which is more important.

A second option is to take the two stereo outputs of the drum machine and go through two identical 10- or 15-band graphic EQ units (for the most flexible tone

control), and then add one reverb to the whole set. If so, go for an ambient reverb sound (i.e., one that simulates a small room) as opposed to that "Lincoln Tunnel" sound, which is great on the toms but will mess up the definition of the kick drum and cymbals. Another option is syncing the drums to tape, but that really is a subject for another discussion.

When dealing with 16 tracks or more, I strongly suggest printing the processed sounds. If you are limited to four of the 16 tracks, print the kick and snare each on its own tracks and a stereo mix of the toms and cymbals on the last two tracks. Be sure the volume relationship of the toms and cymbals is correct because you will not be able to change it later on.

If possible, use at least six tracks for the drums: kick, snare, toms right, toms left, cymbals right, and cymbals left. If it is a three- or four-piece band, convince them to give you a seventh track for the hi-hat, and you'll be in great shape. All these tracks allow you more depth, separation, and control in the final mix.

If the drums stop playing at some point in the song, be sure to print a temporary quarter-note click track so that the band can still keep time. When all of the instruments are down, it can then be erased.

With 24 tracks, you can definitely put the hi-hat and even each tom on its own track (depending on how many instruments are to be overdubbed). If you have more than 24 tracks, use your imagination.

Now you are ready to have the engineer connect everything. If the sampler or drum machine is somewhat noisy, patch a noise

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gate right off the output of the machine to eliminate noise when there is no signal, as well as leakage from the other outputs. Next should come the equalization. In most cases, that will be the EQ on the recording console, but for kick and snare drums, you may want to use a 10- or 15-band graphic unit. Use the graphic EQ to change the character of the kick and snare drums so that they do not sound like the kick and snare everyone else gets from the same drum machine.

For toms and cymbals, the board EQ should do nicely. Don't be afraid to add high end to the cymbals and attack to the toms. When recording on analog tape, the tape may lose some of these frequencies. If your crash cymbal decay is too short, send it through a digital reverb with a long decay and adjust the wet-to-dry mix control so that you cannot tell where the reverb decay picks up from the end of the cymbal sound. This trick keeps the cymbal from stopping in mid-decay and sounds more convincing.

Dedicate one reverb to the snare drum alone. For more traditional sounds, have the engineer place the reverb after the EQ. If you want to go for some really wild sounds, have the engineer patch the reverb before the EQ. Then connect another gate after the reverb/EQ combination and go to the tape machine. If at mix time you find the snare drum reverb too long, gate it again and shorten the gate to cut off some of the decay.

If the toms are to be printed in stereo, you can use one reverb for all of the toms and pan them left to right (or vice versa). If you are putting one tom on a track, you can dedicate one reverb to each tom, in line after the EQ. This sounds best if you have multiples of the same reverb unit on the same setting (i.e. four Lexicon *PCM-6ffs* set at the same program), and enhances the sense of depth given to the drumkit. If you are running low on gates, place the

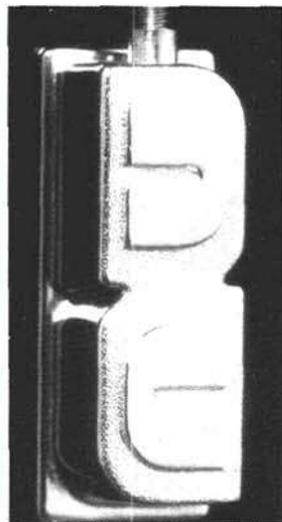
gates after the reverb only (as opposed to after the output of the machine *and* after the reverb). For two stereo tom tracks, gate each side and go to the tape machine.

For a dynamic-sounding hi-hat, you can program a quarter note and send it through a digital delay adjusted to get 8th or 16th notes. The sound on the beat will be the actual sample and the other notes will decay as per your setting on the delay unit.

As with cymbals, do not be afraid to crank up the high end—especially if the drum machine is an older unit without today's state-of-the-art frequency responses.

If you are reverb-shy, you can go for a room ambience type of sound instead of a cavernous reverb sound. Just add enough reverb to make the drums sound like they are being played in a medium-sized room, not from a little black box.

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by Craig Krampf

Session Rehearsals

The sounds are up on the console, and the headphones have been roughed in. The artist, musicians, producer, and engineer are set to go, and the tape begins to roll. One...two...thr—*Wait a minute!* What are we going to cut? What song are we going to try to record today, and how do we learn this important piece of music?

Sessions fall into two basic categories: rehearsed, where the music has previously been worked on during separate rehearsal sessions, and unrehearsed, where you'll be creating on the spot. With either type, the musicians will learn the song via a chord chart, a main rhythm chart, a real *specific* drum chart, or, many times, by the "write your own chart" method. Also, all of the above methods may rely on the use of a demo tape. Let's first examine the procedure for a rehearsed session, and look at the types of learning methods utilized.

Many producers like to precede the actual recording session with rehearsals. All the sessions I did for producer Val Garay over the past seven years were prepared for in this fashion. If it was an entire album project, we'd spend a week rehearsing the first half of the album, and after that was in

the can, we'd go back to the rehearsal hall and learn the remaining songs. In some instances, this back-and-forth procedure went on for many months. Oftentimes, a song just didn't cut it. Maybe the arrangement wasn't right, or perhaps we'd record a lot more songs before the final ten were chosen for the album.

This pre-production preparation can be really beneficial in getting the most out of a song. Plus, less experienced artists and players can search out parts and experiment without worrying about that expensive studio clock that's always running. It's a lot better spending \$15 or \$20 an hour for rehearsal space than \$185 or more an hour in the studio.

At these rehearsals, the artist will either sing or play the song for us, or he'll play us the demo. Usually the keyboard player will write up a chord chart. After the chart has been copied, everyone likes to hear the song again so that they can make their own notations. If the artist plays us the song on guitar or keyboard, the parts are naturally more open to interpretation. However, the artist *may* have something very specific in mind. He or she will generally convey this to us in terms that can range from the very vague ("It's kind of an East Indian thing played by a Toledo blues band"), to the most exacting ("Play everything just like Springsteen's 'I'm On Fire'").

I'll usually try to get a tempo reading, either with a stopwatch (timing every two bars) or with a drum machine. It's good to start out trying to duplicate the speed at which the artist feels the song naturally. Everybody will try to do their best during the first few run-throughs. But usually these first attempts are quite cosmic sounding, as people search out parts. What Neil Peart said regarding the two approaches in his article "Creating The Drum Part" (August '88 *MD*) is quite true. Neil said, "Some people start as simply as possible. Then, if they feel compelled to add to that minimalist approach, they will. Other people start the opposite way, trying everything they can possibly think of in the first few run-throughs, and then gradually eliminating ideas that don't work."

I think every musician utilizes both of these methods, depending on the song, the artist, producer, fellow musicians, and his or her own creative mood on that particular day. I've scared people doing it both ways. I've also found that if I try the second method, in an effort to stir my creative juices, it's better to *warn* people ahead of time. Once again, open communication always works best.

If everyone is in love with the demo, sometimes this will mean transcribing the

demo just about note-for-note. Some demos are very well done, and often we studio players feel like we're in a Top-40 band learning a new song. I can't tell you how often a producer or artist will say, "It's just not quite right yet; let's listen to the demo again."

Sometimes a direct order to "cop the demo" is given. We then know we're going to be playing that world-famous recording game called "Beat The Demo!" This often leads to a song being programmed. Most demos nowadays are cut with drum machines. If we get the order to "cop the demo," it's usually because the artist or producer loves the machine aspect of it. This is a whole separate topic that I'll cover in another article.

For the Melissa Etheridge album, *Melissa*, bassist Kevin McCormick and I rehearsed casually for a month. We'd get together two or three times a week to work up the songs. I *should* say "re-work" the songs; the first version of the album, which we had also played on, was scrapped because the president of the record company felt that the real essence of this woman and her music was lost. He put it in our hands to get it back.

We stripped down the songs to just voice and guitar, and we rethought and re-learned them. When the record company exec finally heard what we did, he told us we were now the producers. It was our job to go in and capture on tape what he had just heard. We basically cut the album live, including live vocals. Only a few overdubs were added. The whole album was on tape in nine days! The point is, it would have been impossible to accomplish this without *rehearsing*. I should also mention that we didn't write up charts for this project. I made up a little road map for myself for a few songs, listing the order of things, the number of bars, and any unusual figures, but that was it.

Some people contend that rehearsing can take away the spontaneity of a session and sterilize the final product. This can be true—if you rehearse to the point of boredom. But any professional should be able to get up and perform well when that red light goes on. Not everything that winds up on tape always sounds like it did at rehearsal. Once under the studio microscope, certain things may not work: Parts change, grooves and tempos change. But in general, these changes always lead to a better final product. Rehearsals are just another good way of fine-tuning the whole recording process.

Next month we'll look at the unrehearsed session, and the challenges of creating *on the spot*.

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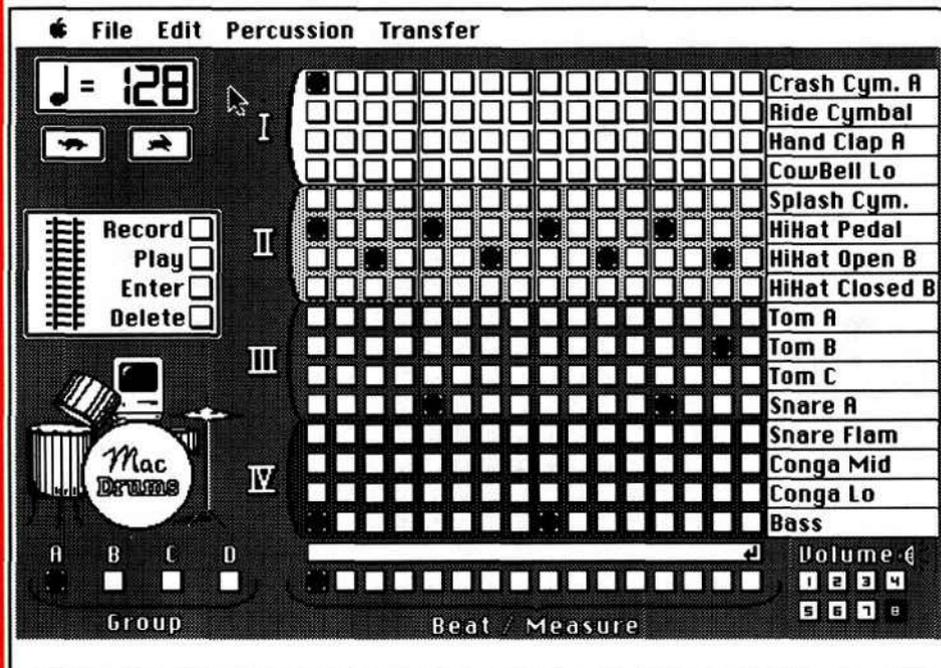
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You Can Make Music

by Rick Mattingly

MacDrums



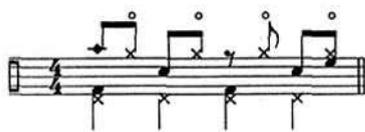
We've heard over and over that drum machines are really just computers, so if that's the case, it shouldn't be hard to use a computer as a drum machine. That's what Coda Software's *MacDrums* program lets you do with your Macintosh.

The *MacDrums* package is actually divided into two parts: *MacDrums* and *MacDrums MIDI*. The first one lets you use the Macintosh itself as a drum machine. The second lets you use the Macintosh as a controller for a separate drum machine. Let's look at each one individually.

MacDrums

This is a pretty basic drum machine package, but it is easy to use and could be quite adequate for a lot of people's needs. The program contains 35 digitally sampled drumset and percussion sounds, and lets you record patterns and songs.

Putting a pattern into the program is very easy. You are given a grid that has 16 rows of 16 blocks. Each row represents a different instrument, and each block represents a 16th note. You program a note by simply clicking the mouse arrow over a block. Visually, you will see a black dot appear in the box. To remove the note, click over the box again. When programmed into *MacDrums*, the following rhythm



would look like what is programmed into

the sample screen shown above.

The basic *MacDrums* program will only let you play four notes simultaneously. For that reason, the grid is divided into four groups. Within each group, only one note can be played at one time. For example, in the sample screen, you could not play the crash cymbal and the ride cymbal at the same time. (If you really *had to* play both of them together, though, you could move one of them to another group. The main point to remember is that you can only have one sound from each group, giving you a total of four.)

You can program up to 64 measures in a single memory location. This is accomplished by having 16 measures in each of four groups, labeled A, B, C, and D. (In the screen example, we are in group A, shown by the dot in the box marked A in the lower left corner of the screen. We are on the first measure of group A, indicated by the dot in the first box in the Beat/Measure row under the grid.)

Once your measures are recorded, you can set the volume and tempo. The volume has eight settings, and covers a pretty good range from soft to loud. The tempo, however, doesn't have as much flexibility as one might expect. The lowest setting I could get was quarter note = 001, which was very slow. I could get every number from 002-034, and from there, the sequence was like this: 036, 037, 039, 040, 042, 045, 047, 050, 052, 056, 060, 064, 069, 075, 081, 090, 100, 112, 128, 150, 180, 225, 300, 450, 900. There are a lot of tempos between, say, 80 and 180 that

would have been more useful than the slowest and fastest ones provided. The lack of more tempos is possibly the biggest flaw with this program.

The next thing you can do is link patterns together into songs, or "tracks." The capacity for a single track is pretty good: from 2 to 999 measures. When you are in the record mode, the tempo indicator changes into a measure counter, which is useful for letting you know where you are at any given time.

One limitation of the track recording is that you can only add or delete measures from the end. In other words, suppose after programming 12 measures, you decide that you want to remove measure 6. You cannot simply call up measure six and delete it. Instead, you first have to delete measures 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, and 7. The good news is that you are not removing the patterns themselves from memory; you are only removing them from the "list" of pattern numbers that the program reads when playing a track. And the process is pretty fast, so as long as you don't have to delete too many measures, it won't take too long to put them back. There are also "cut," "copy," and "paste" commands that can save time.

So far, it might appear that you can only program a 4/4 measure with 16th notes. Not true. There is an arrow underneath the grid that marks the stopping point of the pattern. In the screen example, that arrow is underneath the last box, meaning that the program will play through all 16 boxes. However, that arrow can be moved forward, and the program will not play anything that is behind it.

That gives you a certain amount of flexibility. If you want 3/4 time, just move the arrow up four boxes. If you wanted 5/8, you could put the arrow under the tenth box to get 16th notes, or under the fifth box to get only 8ths. There are limitations, however. You could not have a 5/4 measure with 16th notes. The best you could do with 5/4 is put the arrow under the tenth box and think of each box as an 8th note. The other major limitation is that you cannot mix meters within a track. If you set one of your measures to, say, 3/4, then all of the measures in the track will be played in 3/4. Even if you have other notes programmed, *MacDrums* will ignore them.

The final thing to talk about is the instrument selection. You can have up to 16 instruments in a single setup, and you have a total of 35 to choose from. The program came with three different setups that could be used, but it is easy to mix and match instruments to come up with any setup you desire.

The sounds themselves are pretty good. Of course, if you are only going to use the speaker that is inside the Mac, it's going to sound like a cheap transistor radio at best. But by connecting the Mac's headphone jack to an amplifier or stereo system, you can blast out the MacDrums sounds at whatever volume you wish.

MacDrumsMIDI

This program lets you use your Macintosh as a controller for a MIDI drum machine (you'll need a MIDI interface for your Mac). For the most part, everything works the same way in terms of pattern writing and track recording. But there are a couple of differences worth noting.

The first difference has to do with the instrument selection. With the basic MacDrums, you have 35 instruments to choose from. With MacDrums MIDI, you can access any sound on your MIDI drum machine. When you first take the program out of the box, there is a sample list of instruments, whose MIDI note numbers corresponded to the Yamaha RX5 that I used to test the program. But it is quite easy to change the name and note number to anything you want.

You can also select the MIDI channel for each sound. This would be useful if you had two drum machines and wanted, say, the snare drum from one machine and the bass drum from the other machine. In addition, you can set the velocity for each sound over the full MIDI range. This only works, of course, if your drum machine responds to velocity data. Also, you cannot control individual notes, only individual instruments. In other words, you can use the velocity to control the overall mix between the different instruments, but you cannot use it to vary the dynamics on a single instrument's part.

An advantage of the MacDrums MIDI program is that you are not necessarily limited to four notes at a time. Using the RX5, I could get 12 notes simultaneously, which is the capacity of that machine. But if I had used a second machine, I could have had up to 16 sounds at once.

There is an important limitation that you should be aware of. You cannot program a pattern on MacDrums MIDI and then load that pattern into your drum machine (or vice versa). That means that if you want to program patterns to play along with on a gig, you'll have to take your Mac along. On the other hand, drum machines only have so much memory anyway, but you can have an unlimited number of Macintosh disks with all of the patterns you want.

Conclusions

The MacDrums package is easy to use (the manual is very clear), and for basic drum machine applications, it might be all you need. One of the primary benefits of a program such as this is that it lets you program patterns visually, which is generally easier and faster than normal step-time

programming on a drum machine. Also, if you don't have a drum machine but you do have a Mac, this could be an inexpensive way to have basic drum machine capabilities: The program lists for only \$59.95. (You should not buy a Macintosh for the sole purpose of using this program, however. For less than half the price of a Mac you could buy a much better drum machine.)

For more professional drum machine programming with a Macintosh, Intelligent Music's *Upbeat* program (reviewed in the February 88 MD) is a much better bet. But then, it lists for \$150.00. So basically, you get what you pay for. If you are only looking for a basic drum machine program that is easy (and fun) to use, MacDrums might be for you.

And one final note: Included in the pack-

age is a pair of MacDrums wrist bands. It's nice to see a software company with a sense of humor.



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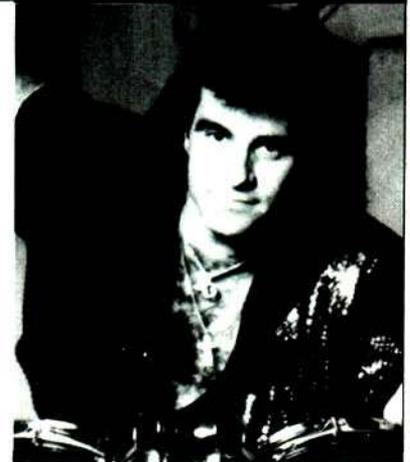
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Stocking

The December 1985 issue of *MD* featured a *Club Scene* column entitled "Stocking Stuffers." In it, I offered some suggestions for items that might be given as gifts to a drummer (or purchased by drummers as gifts for themselves). The idea was that these would be items that drummers might not need to select personally (such as sticks or heads), but would still find useful and/or fun to receive.

I'm not going to reiterate my reasons for including all of the items in that column. (You can go back to that issue and check them out.) But I will list briefly those that are still available (and still just as valuable as gift choices). They include: catalogs and posters; cough drops, *Lug Locks*, earplugs, drum muffling devices, *Beato Tips*, cymbal polish, stick wrapping tape, product-related T-shirts, drum gloves, *Pro-Caddy Rax*, subscriptions to *MD*, the *Pro-Fan 707*, and the *Gig Rug*.

Once again, for this column, I've made a point of selecting items that are reasonably low in cost (except where specially noted), and that might be particularly useful to working drummers. Please note that there may be other, similar versions of some items available from other manufacturers. I have included items that I have used—or at least tested—myself, and thus am in a position to genuinely recommend.

If you have a drummer somewhere in your life (husband, girlfriend, son, mother, etc.), check out this list of possible gifts. If you are that drummer, either consider treating yourself to some of these items, or leave your copy of *MD*—opened to this article—in a conspicuous place around the house.

\$10.00 And Under

Hand Lotion. Any drummer would appreciate a bottle of hand lotion to carry in his or her trap case. Loading in or out of gigs in bad weather can cause dry, chapped hands, and dry hands make for painful drumming. There are many excellent lotions, including those with lanolin, aloe, and other soothing ingredients. My personal favorite is *Corn Huskers Lotion*, because it works well and is available in a small plastic bottle that is easily portable and unbreakable. You should be able to get a small bottle of hand lotion for under \$2.00 in any drugstore.

Cymbal Sleeves. Cymbal sleeves are one of those items that a drummer rarely thinks about until his or her cymbals start showing wear from contact with the threads on a cymbal tilter. Any number of accessory companies offer packages of cymbal sleeves made from a variety of materials. Some are

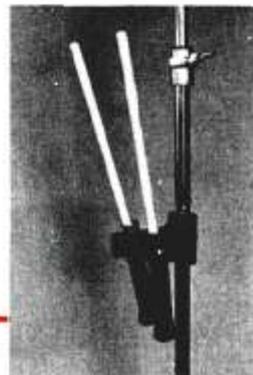
hard plastic or nylon, others are of a softer material. I can personally recommend sleeves from Dan-Mar (the harder variety) and Beato Musical Products (extremely durable surgical tubing). A package of four such sleeves should cost around \$3.50 or so at the local drumshop.

Cymbal Totes. A new item that's just come on the market, *Cymbal Totes* are exactly what they sound like: a method for carrying around one or more cymbals. They are not a case or protective container, but rather a comfortable handling device for holding and moving cymbals from place to place. If you've ever had occasion to carry a stack of cymbals of different sizes, you know that it definitely takes two hands to manage the job safely and comfortably. What happens when you need to open a door? A *Cymbal Tote* allows you to carry the stack of cymbals via their center holes, using only one hand. If you often need to



carry uncased cymbals from place to place (and especially if you don't encase your cymbals at all), this simple device could make life a lot easier. A *Cymbal Tote* is also handy to take to the music store when testing new cymbals, so you don't have to suspend a 20" heavy ride on your thumb. If you can't find *Cymbal Totes* in your local drumshop, contact Cymbal Tote, c/o Eric Gonzalez, 303 South Hewitt Street #211, Los Angeles, California 90021. *Cymbal Totes* are available at \$4.99 each.

Stick Depot. Pro-Mark recently introduced this handy item for holding a spare pair of drumsticks within easy reach. Many



drummers drape stick bags around floor toms to contain spares. But a pair of sticks immediately reachable on a hi-hat or other stand can often be

more convenient when a quick grab is necessary. The *Stick Depot* consists of two metal tubes, one on either side of a spring clip. The clip allows the device to be attached to any stand, and the tubes are large enough to accommodate virtually any size of drumstick. The *Stick Depot* detaches from the stand as easily as it attaches, making pack-up quick and easy. It sells for \$7.95.

The Fanner. The all-pervasive fatback snare has lost some of its popularity in recent years. Higher-pitched snare sounds have become more popular, with the result that higher-pitched snare drums (including piccolo snares) have once again become a standard item. However, there are still those times when a fat, beefy two-and-four backbeat is called for on a given tune. Enter *The Fanner*. This is a circular sheet of extra thick Mylar material designed to be laid right on the batter head of the snare drum. It isn't a muffling device per se, although it does have a certain amount of muffling action. Its main purpose is to add an additional sound, lower in pitch, to the existing sound of the snare drum. The sheet of Mylar is supposed to float freely on top of the batter head, rather than being secured in any way.

I've used a *Fanner* in club situations where I wanted to dramatically change the pitch of my snare instantly. And it really works quite well for this purpose. You do lose a bit of rebound action from the batter



head, due to the "floating" nature of the *Fanner*, but when playing a simple backbeat, this isn't much of a problem. The use of two *Fanners* together lowers the pitch even more, and gives an almost "gated"

sound to the snare. However, it also reduces projection quite a bit, and probably would work best in a miked situation.

The Mylar material is thicker than a standard drumhead, and the sheet must be absolutely flat in order to work properly. This means that it's more economical to buy an actual *Fanner* than to cut up a drumhead of your own in an attempt to get the same effect. An old drumhead will be pitted, and thus won't be perfectly flat; a brand-new drumhead would be more expensive than

Stuffers II

by Rick Van Horn

the *Fattner* would be in the first place. This is an interesting sound-varying device (and an acoustic one, at that) worth trying. It's available for just under \$10.00 per pair from Timeline Products, P.O. Box 7523, Vallejo, California 94590.

\$10.00 To \$20.00

Ratch-It. Another new accessory item from Pro-Mark, the *Ratch-It* is a combination drumkey/screwdriver tool that is ideal for inclusion in a drummer's trap case. The ratchet handle is shaped to fit comfortably in the hand and provide excellent lever-

age. A hexagonal chuck accepts a special square drumkey bit, or a reversible straight/Phillips screwdriver bit.



(A small slot in the top of the plastic handle holds the screwdriver bit when not in use.) This is a convenient, compact tool for quick head changes by hand. It's available in drumshops at around \$14.95.

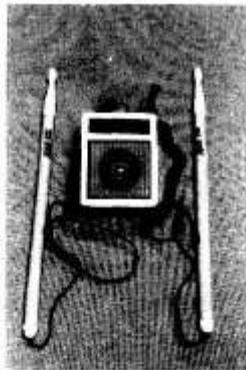
Musician's Key-Per and *Pocket Key-Per.* Part of survival in the music business is establishing a network of people to work for and with. This includes other musicians, employment venues, booking agencies, studios, etc. The *Musician's Key-Per* is an organizer designed to help you establish and keep track of that network. The book is filled with pre-printed page blanks onto which you can fit a tremendous amount of information about a musician, venue, etc. A lot of that info requires only a check mark in a specific indicator box.



As a result, a large number of entries can be made in quite a compact space. Major sections include: musicians, clubs/lounges/organizations, booking agencies, recording studios, and other important addresses. In addition, there is a personal data page,

equipment inventory listings, a time zone map, a list of AF of M area codes and locals, an interchangeable and separate show-dates calendar/expense book, and a separate pocket address book. The *Key-Per* is bound in a brown padded vinyl cover, and measures about 7" x 9". This book could be a one-stop reference for most gigging musicians, who often have a habit of jotting down names of players or club managers they meet on cocktail napkins, business cards, etc.—and then searching desperately for those names later. The *Musician's Key-Per* is available from Liddle Buddy Productions, P.O. Box 4412, Spokane, Washington 99202-0412 for \$19.95 (plus \$2.25 shipping). A condensed, paperbound version called the *Pocket Key-Per* is also available for \$7.95 (plus \$1.50 shipping).

Hit Stix. This is an item that might be the perfect gift for a very young person showing interest in drumming. It consists of a pair of plastic sticks, each connected by a wire to a small, battery-powered amplifier/speaker box (designed to be worn on a belt). Either by tapping the sticks on a surface, or simply by snapping them briskly in the air, the "player" can generate an electronic white noise sound something like an electronic snare drum.



Admittedly, this is not a musical instrument. But in terms of a musical toy, it is superior in many ways to others on the market. It's electronic, which makes it "hip" and exciting, and yet it's still a pair of traditional drumsticks. There are no buttons to push; a certain amount of "sticking technique" is required to make it operate. In this way, a young person could be encouraged to pursue his or her interest in drumming, while enjoying a very "contemporary" sound-producing toy. You should be able to find *Hit Stix* in any sizeable toy store. I've seen it in several at just around \$20.00; it may be a bit higher in more expensive department stores.

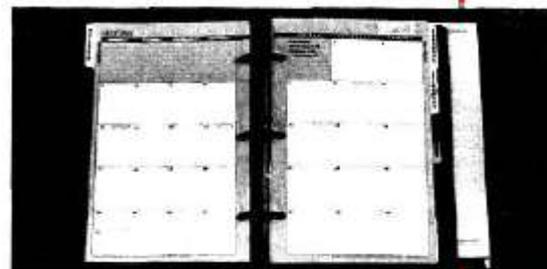
Over \$20.00

At this price range, we leave the realm of "stocking stuffers." But there are a few new

items on the market that I think are worth mentioning, and that might make excellent major gift items for working drummers.

Musician's Organizer. Somewhat similar to the *Musician's Key-Per*, the *Musician's Organizer* is designed with additional sections and headings that might make it a bit more useful for touring and/or studio players who need a little more detailed information than weekend or local full-time musicians. Included are a monthly calendar, a personal resources section, a player resources section cross-referenced by name and instrument, a section listing venue resources including contact name, pay scale, stage size, sound system, lighting info, etc., an instrument inventory, a studio resources section listing address, phone number, board size, rates, special gear, etc., an itinerary planner for touring details, a notation pad with staff paper, an expense report/receipts section, a zip-lock envelope for pens, pencils, business cards, and other miscellaneous items, and a floppy disk holder for 3.5" 'disks (database, sound samples, etc.).

The *Musician's Organizer* is bound in vinyl, and measures about 8" x 9". Updated sections will be available from the manufacturer, so the information can always be kept current. If you're a touring pro or a busy studio player, this book could possibly make your life a good deal easier.



You can order a copy from M.O.R.E. (Mega ORganizational Enterprises), P.C. Box 17060, Encino, California 91416-7060. The price is \$49.95.

Tap Key II. The original *Tap Key*, from Randall May International (creators of the May EA miking system), was a battery-powered drumkey fitted with a clutch mechanism to facilitate very quick and even drumhead tuning. It was designed to fit into a trap case or stick bag for emergency changes of one or two heads. Its major problem was the limited amount of power it could store in its rechargeable battery. After a couple of head changes, the unit had to be recharged. This problem kept it

from appealing to the very people who could most benefit from a combination torque wrench/powerful drumkey—provided that it could change a lot of heads at a time. These people included drum techs, drumshop repair technicians, people involved with drum corps, and even individual rock drummers with large kits and a need to change heads frequently.

Enter the *Tap Key II*. The new version has been fitted with a removable "battery bullet" in place of its original, permanently-installed rechargeable battery. This "bullet" is capable of storing much more power

than the previous battery, and recharges in a special charger unit outside the *Tap Key*. With the purchase of a second "bullet," one can be in the charger while the other is in service, thus providing the option of a

fully-charged "bullet" at all times. RMI maintains that the new "bullet" will easily power the *Tap Key II* sufficiently to change all the heads on a large drumkit.

The new *Tap Key* also features a hinged design, allowing it to operate in either a long, cylindrical shape or in a "pistol" configuration. This flexibility helps the unit to fit into tight spaces on a drumkit that's already set up.

I've worked with the new *Tap Key* in both stage and workbench situations. When trying to change a head quickly on a gig, and get it in tune while other noise is going on, I found the *Tap Key II* to be a real help. By setting the adjustable clutch to the desired tension, it's possible to get a drumhead evenly tensioned without having to really hear it clearly. From that point, of course, fine tuning must be done by ear, but the amount of time required for the overall changing/tuning process is reduced dramatically.

In a workbench application, when simply refitting an entire kit with new heads, the *Tap Key II* proved just as valuable, if not more so, simply by eliminating the "tired wrist" syndrome that results from loosening and then retightening dozens of lugs in a short period of time. I was able to change the top and bottom heads of seven toms and one snare drum in about 15 minutes—and get them all pretty close to "in tune" to boot! For drummers who have occasion to change drumheads frequently and would enjoy using a tool to make the job easier and faster, the *Tap Key II* is definitely the tool. However, it doesn't come cheap. It costs around \$115.00, and a spare "battery bullet" costs an additional \$29.00. However, if this price is regarded as an investment spread over the entire period of

a drummer's head-changing career, it's well worth considering. For further information, contact Randall May International, 77112 B Talbert Avenue, Huntington Beach, California 92648.

The Beat Bug. L.T. Lug Lock, manufacturer of *Lug Locks* and the *Gig Rug*, is now offering the only "meter monitor" I know of on the market. The device is a digital metronome in reverse: Instead of setting a tempo, it reads out the tempo that is being played. This allows drummers to constantly monitor their own playing speed, rather than having a "correct" speed dictated to them by a click track, drum machine, or other outside source.

The *Beat Bug* is a small unit designed to fit over the rim of a snare drum and just come into contact with the outer edge of the drumhead at a fairly small point. The entire unit is encased in molded polyurethane for simplicity and durability. When installed, it sits on the opposite side of the drum from the player, and is quite unobtrusive. It does not affect the sound of the drum in any way; it simply reads the vibrations of the snare hits and gives a digital readout in beats per minute. It's powered by an AC adaptor that plugs into the unit via a mini-plug jack on its bottom.

Okay, the question that comes to your



mind at this point is, "Why would I need such a device?" Well, I've been using it non-stop on my gig ever since I got it, and it has proven very useful—and not a little revealing. Obviously, its sole function is to monitor a drummer's timekeeping—and I stress "monitor." This readout provides an aid to keeping steady time at a desired speed, and to doing so *naturally*, via one's own sense of control. There isn't that feeling of being imposed upon that can come from working with a click track—and yet the end result is the same. All a drummer needs to do is to be aware of the speed he or she wants to be playing at, and keep an eye on the meter. If the time starts to vary, the meter indicates the change so that an adjustment can be made. Everything comes from the drummer, rather than from the outside, and thus the solidity of the drummer's time is improved while his or her playing remains uninhibited.

Another tremendous advantage to using the *Beat Bug* is that it establishes an unquestionable point of reference for tempos that are often "in dispute." Once the band has agreed upon the "correct" tempo for a given song, the drummer can use the *Beat Bug* to verify that the song is being played at that tempo every time. From a psycho-

logical point of view, this can relieve a lot of tension among bandmembers—no small contribution in itself.

The *Beat Bug* serves another useful purpose when it comes to establishing tempos. I'm generally the one who counts off the tempos for my band's songs, and I've come to appreciate the fact that I can use the *Beat Bug* as a gauge on nights when I might be feeling a little tired, or a little too excited, and thus might be more likely to count in the tunes too slow or too fast. If I have done that, the readout on the *Beat Bug* tells me, and I can then bring things back to the pre-established tempo both comfortably and accurately.

The *Beat Bug* costs \$150.00, which may seem a bit daunting. But when you compare it to the cost of a pro-quality 20" ride cymbal (another timekeeping device), it's significantly less. And for the contributions it can make to a drummer's playing—musical, psychological, and physical—I personally think it's well worth its price. Information on the *Beat Bug* can be obtained from L.T. Lug Lock, Inc., Box 204, Tonawanda, New York, 14151.

Well, there you have my 1988 list of "stocking stuffers." Let me stress that the purpose of this article is not to promote any of the products I've included. Rather, it's to give you some idea of the amount of useful accessory equipment available on the market specifically designed to make a drummer's life easier. Drop by your local drumshop or music retailer for even more suggestions, and be sure to have a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

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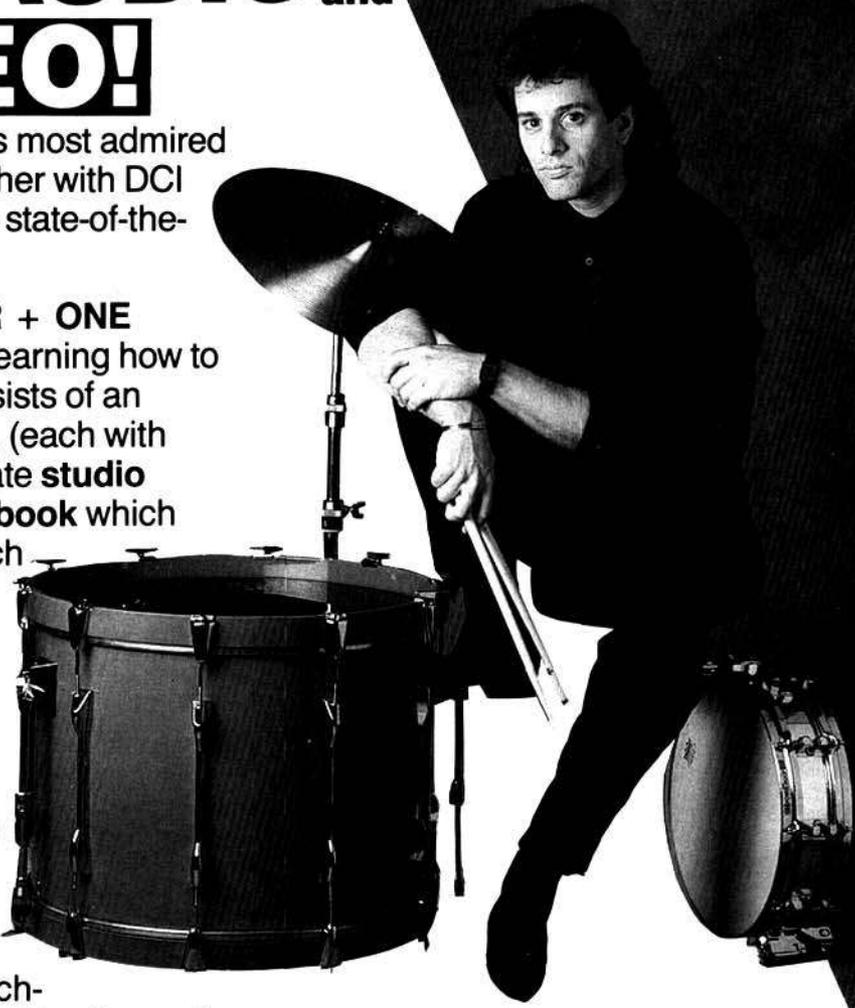
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Continued on page 105

ddrum[®] 2



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poor job markets improve their situation by renting a hall, or arranging the use of school or other public facilities to stage their own dances. Of course, the income here is unpredictable, since you'll be working for whatever the "take" is at the door, less your expenses. But at your just-getting-started level, it might be more important for you to gain experience and exposure than to make a great deal of money right away.

The rehearsal process is very important when just getting started. You need to have a place where you can rehearse reasonably often, and in privacy, until you feel confident about your repertoire and presentation. At that point, it might be good to invite some people whose opinion you respect to listen to you at a practice and give you their comments. You don't want your first appearance before anyone at all to be at a paid performance.

Most of all, remember that you need to keep your musical activities fun. By all means, adopt a professional attitude and do the very best you can to make your group popular and profitable. But don't let the "work ethic" overshadow the fact that playing music, whether for the paying public, for one's friends, or just for one's self, should always be an enjoyable activity that provides you with personal satisfaction and entertainment. Good luck!



clip, and two adhesive pads. Bob mentioned that he prefers less obtrusive, flatter pickups, while ours is 1/2" high. But some drum rims are almost that high. Our trigger was designed so that the cable, when plugged into the top of the DT-1, would flow over the rim without touching it, thereby eliminating false triggers from the cable bouncing on the rim, and also extending cable life.

When I sent Bob the unit to test, I informed him that we would be encasing the piezo and solder points of the DT-1 in the future. In his article, Bob wondered if this encasement would reduce the sensitivity. I would like to let consumers know that we also were aware of this possibility, and as a result we increased the output and sensitivity of the unit before encasing it to improve the durability.

Steve Hickman
J.T. Enterprises
Kennewick WA

MALADIES & REMEDIES

After reading Rick Van Horn's "Maladies & Remedies" in the Club Scene section of your September issue, I would like to thank you for all the advice that you acquire and pass along to your readers. I've always noticed that people who play drums are usually more likely to pass along secrets or helpful hints than are most guitarists or other instrumentalists. The fact that I read your magazine every issue proves that to me every time. I've read everything from how to silence a practice room in a way I've never seen to getting rid of the hiccups. I'm not one to pick up a magazine these days simply to see who's dating who, but rather to learn different ways of improving my playing or my setup. That's why I've kept my subscription to Modern Drummer. Thanks for all your help in the past, and for keeping your eye on what's happening to all the modern drummers!

Bart Windsor
WichitaKS

BISSONETTE SOUND SUPPLEMENT

I would like to thank Modern Drummer for the great Sound Supplement by Gregg Bissonette in the July issue. I think Gregg's playing—particularly on the tune "The Brain Dance"—was very impressive and creative, and the feeling was good, too! Thank you, and let's have more of this type of feature.

Riku Rautvuo
Helsinki, Finland

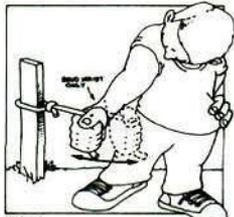


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DRUMKAT MIDI CONTROLLER

The *drumKAT* is a MIDI controller specifically designed for drummers. The unit is 17" by 11.5" with a natural gum rubber playing

zones to allow the user to choose the shapes and sizes of separate drumming areas differently for each song. Each pad has separate software settings for sensitivity.

The *drumKAT* has two MIDI INs that can be selectively merged to four MIDI OUTs, nine analog trigger inputs (with separate software gain and mask settings),

an on/off switch and a removable AC power cord, and is 110V/220V switchable for playing outside the U.S. Sensitivity settings for the trigger inputs can be set by "autosensing" of soft and hard strikes on the trigger pads. A large range of sensitivity is possible.

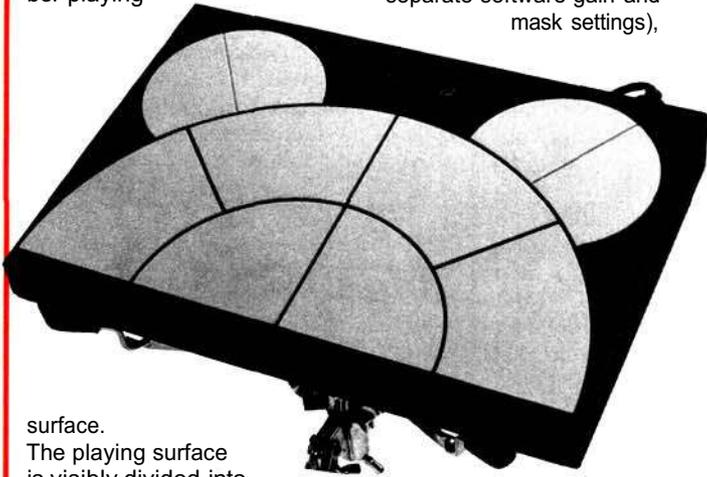
The *drumKAT* has a backlit display with four 16-character lines, providing a large amount of readable information even on a dark stage. A MIDI monitor feature is provided to allow observation of system MIDI activity. Even a MIDI cable test feature is provided.

Thirty-two "kits" of performance settings are contained in the *drumKAT*. These settings include zoning, MIDI Channels and Notes (up to three per zone), velocity settings, gate times, Program Changes, and Volumes (six per kit). Special features include: dynamic note shift, dynamic gate time shift, individual delay times when using three notes on a zone, and even MIDI commands from the zones. A drummer

may also use the *drumKAT* to directly control the MIDI clock tempo and song selections on external sequencers. For further information, contact KATMIDI Controllers, P.O. Box 60607, Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01116, or call (413)567-1395.

DDRUM 2

The *ddrum 2* is an eight-channel, fully programmable, MIDI-implemented brain utilizing internal sound memory as well as outside cartridge ports for sound storage. ROM memory assures an instant change of sound without any loading time. Any sound may be assigned to any pad or combination of pads, parameters may be changed, sounds may be linked together, etc., in order to create an endless number of "drumsets." Memory is protected even when the unit is turned off, or sounds may be stored externally via RAM memory (known as the *ddrum kit pac*).



surface.

The playing surface is visibly divided into ten adjacent "pads" that are circular sections. These "pads" can be grouped into

four footswitch inputs, and a click out. It has an

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The *ddrum 2* has two sound generators per channel, which, according to the manufacturer, gives all sounds a very natural characteristic. The unit has 1,000 increments of dynamics for maximum sensitivity. For more information, contact Chris Ryan at *ddrum*, 25 Lindeman Drive, Trumbull, Connecticut 06611, or call (203) 374-0020.

PRO-MARK EXPANDS MARCHING STICK LINE

Pro-Mark has expanded its line of Texas *Hickory* marching drumsticks to include several popular models previously available only in Japanese Oak. Those models are the *DC-2S*, *DC-3S*, *DC-9*, and *DC-70*, each specifically designed to meet the requirements of the most demanding drum lines. For further information,

see your local Pro-Mark dealer, or contact Pro-Mark, 10707 Craighead Drive, Houston, Texas 77025, (800) 822-1492.

NEW PERCUSSION PRODUCTS FROM GROVER

Grover Enterprises has announced several new products. In addition, improvements have been made on existing items.

Two new mallet models have been added: Model *M2X* (11/4" nylon-headed bell/glock mallet) and Model 5 (brass alloy head). Both feature rattan handles. A new line of gong/tam-tam beaters includes Model 77-7 (extra-large, with dual-radius hard rubber core, for use on large gongs) and Model 77-2 (general-purpose,

with single-radius core and special balance disc in the head for added weight). Both feature hardwood handles that are hand-sanded and sealed, a protective tip, and mounting cord. Each mallet is individually hand-wrapped using three-ply yarn.

Grover offers a protective tambourine case made of rip-proof Cordura. Each case is padded and will accommodate one 10" double-row tambourine. Cases are available in black or red.

Seven new models have been added to the *Wolf snare* system, each of which will retrofit any standard drum. These new snares are manufactured using 12-strand wound nickel-silver or bronze wire. Each strand is individually tensioned prior to casting into a plastic resin butt end. Two models are available for 13" snare drums; five are available for 14" drums.

Grover has made improvements to its *Projection Plus* tambourines. The solid hard-

wood shell has been reduced in width by 1/4" to create an easier grip and reduced weight. The tambourines also now feature a "two-tiered" staggered jingle arrangement, with the top "tier" of jingles mounted in slots 1/16" narrower than the bottom "tier."

According to Grover, this creates a smoother tremolo and shake roll. The tambourines offer calfskin heads and a choice of German silver, beryllium copper, or phosphor bronze hand-hammered jingles. For more information on any Grover product, write Grover Enterprises, Pro Percussion Products, 29 Bigelow Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

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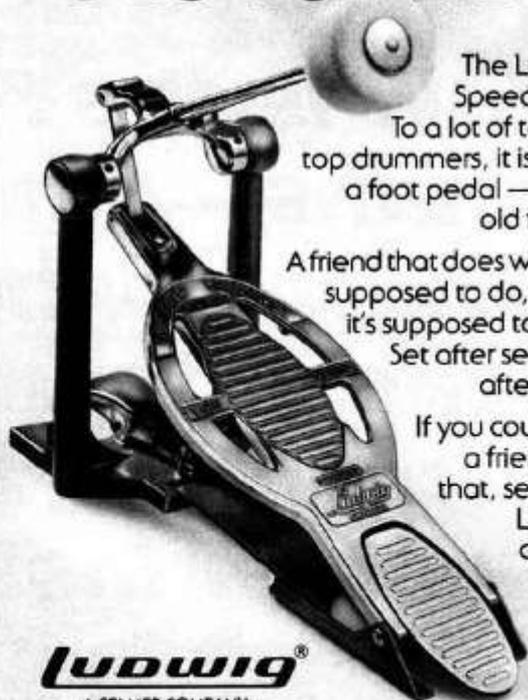
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Volume #2—Six More *Guatemalan Marimba Pieces*. The selections include works by Hurtado, Bethancourt, Guzman, and Ovalle. Each is arranged for three players on two instruments (marimba or xylophone) on large page format. Two extra parts are included (doubling parts one and two) to accommodate two additional players to create the full orchestrated effect of the authentic Guatemalan marimba. For more information, write to L Oddo, P.O. Box 1074, Maywood, New Jersey 07607.

LANG PERCUSSION ADDS MIDI MASTER VIBE KIT

Lang Percussion, Inc., has added a new MIDI Vibe Con-

verter manufactured by K&K Sound of Germany to its line of electronic percussion accessories. The converter is sold as a retrofit kit that can be made for any size vibraphone.

The kit includes a MIDI converter, individual pickups for each bar, and a pair of collecting bands. The pickups are easily epoxied onto the node point under each bar, and do not affect the acoustic quality of the instrument. The outfit has both MIDI OUT and standard 1/4" male plugs that can be used for straight amplification, as a synth trigger, or any mix of natural and synthetic sounds. It is touch-sensitive; notes can be rolled and the unit responds to mallet muffling. The response of each bar can be adjusted, and the patented wiring system eliminates feedback and distortion. For more information, contact Lang Percussion, Inc., 635 Broadway, New York, New York 10012, (212)228-5213.

LP RELEASES NEWSLETTER

Latin Percussion, Inc. has released its *Highlights In Percussion Summer 1988* newsletter. The newsletter includes a 12-page historical and educational overview of Latin percussion as an integral part in today's music. Articles include: tips on playing the clave from Bobby Sanabria; Martin Cohen's photo shoots of musicians from the world's great cities; and an LP endorser update. There are also interviews with Richie Morales of Spyro Gyra and percussionist Steve Forman.

Other pages are devoted to product news, gift items, and other consumer-related information. Copies are available at LP dealers nationwide, or directly from Latin Percussion, Inc., Dept. 559, 160 Belmont Avenue, Garfield, New Jersey 07026.

NEW ROLAND PRODUCTS

Roland has recently introduced several new products of interest to drummers and drum programmers. These include the *Pad-80 Octapad II*, the *Pad-5 MIDI Rhythm Controller*, the *R-8 Rhythm Composer*, the *T-110 Sampling Sound Module*, and three models of compact mixers from the Boss line.

The *Pad-80 Octapad II* is an updated version of Roland's popular *Pad-8 Octapad MIDI controller*. It has been fitted with several additional storage, patching, chaining; and mixing functions, improved control parameters, and such features as a MIDI Soft THRU function allowing multiple units (or other controllers) to be connected together in order to expand the user's performance capabilities.

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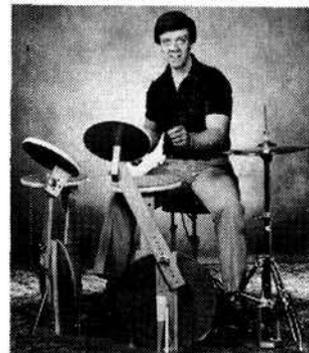
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The *Pad-5 MIDI Rhythm Controller* is a drumpad tailored especially for the home market. The unit connects directly to MIDI instruments with built-in rhythm sound sources, and allows users to perform rhythms by hitting the pads with their hands or with drumsticks. Five

pads are positioned on a unit that can be held or placed in a lap-top position, making it easy for anyone to play. The *Pad-5* could also be useful for inputting drum/percussion parts on a MIDI rhythm machine or sequencer.

The *R-8 Rhythm Composer* is Roland's top-of-the-line



drum machine, offering high-quality sampled sounds, velocity-sensitive pads, a "human feel" function for natural-sounding rhythms, and extremely sophisticated control and editing functions. Forty-eight sampled drum and percussion sounds are stored in the unit's internal memory, and a Copy Voice function allows users to alter parameters such as Pitch and Decay and save an additional 16 edited sounds. When an optional *M-128D* ROM card is used, 16 more drum and percussion sounds can be saved, allowing users to play a total of 80 different sounds.

Roland's *T-110 Sampling Sound Module* is a sample playback unit for musicians who wish to use sampled sounds, but do not have the facility or the interest to sample their own sounds. The unit's front panel features four ROM card slots that allow the use of up to four optional ROM cards at once. With the

combined use of four ROM cards and the internal ROM memory, the total memory capacity is increased to 32M bits (or the equivalent of eight *S-50* samplers). The *T-110* is shipped with 14 different sounds stored in the unit's 16M-bit ROM, including acoustic piano, electric piano, strings, and rhythm sounds. A wide variety of sampled sounds will be available on optional ROM cards from Roland as well as from third-party developers.

Also from Roland are three Boss compact mixers. Useful as sub-mixers for multiple electronic setups or multi-track recording mixdowns, the units are available in four- (*BX-40*), six- (*BX-60*), and eight-channel (*BX-80*) versions. Additional features increase with the larger sizes.

For information on any Roland product, contact RolandCorp US, 7200 Dominion Circle, Los Angeles, California 90040-3647.



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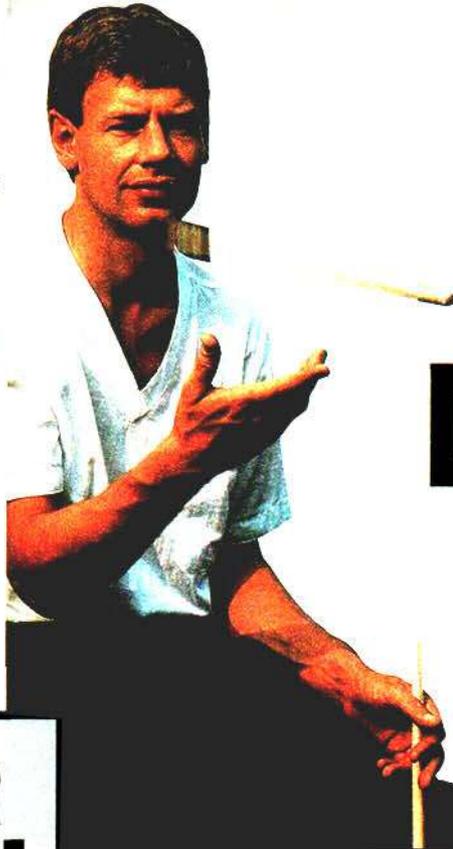


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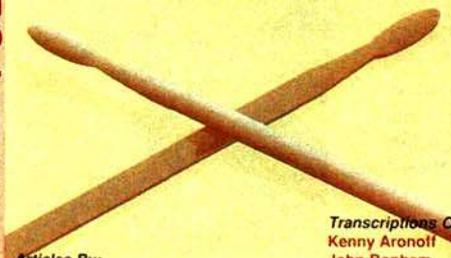
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Kenny Aronoff
John Bonham
Phil Collins
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YAMAHA DRUMMERS' SHOWCASE

On August 14th, 1988, at Royce Hall on the campus of U.C.L.A., Yamaha Drums sponsored the company's first *Drummers' Showcase*. Featured artists included Alex Acuna, Tommy Aldridge, Bobby Blotzer, David Garibaldi (and his group, Wishful Thinking), and Dave Weckl. Other Yamaha artists made guest appearances as well. In order to share this exciting day of music, dialogue, and performance with drummers unable to attend, Yamaha videotaped the *Showcase*; the tape is slated to be available shortly.



Tommy Aldridge demonstrated his famous bare-handed solo technique.



Ratt's Bobby Blotzer.



Alex Acuna combined drumset, Latin, and other unique sounds in his performance.



Ralph Humphrey made a guest appearance on electronic drums.



Dave Weckl



David Garibaldi

SABIAN HONORS HARGROVE

James V. "Nort" Hargrove, Assistant Vice President of Manufacturing for Sabian, Ltd., was recently honored by that company with the "Team Player Of The Year" award. The award was presented to Hargrove in special recognition of his achievements, commitment, and overall contribution to the company.

In presenting the award, Sabian President Robert Zildjian lauded Hargrove's

"highly significant contribution to the development and advancement of Sabian products worldwide." Dan Barker, Sabian's Vice President of Manufacturing, recounted specifically Hargrove's "extraordinary team play abilities and his exemplary cooperation with manufacturing personnel, head

office staff, and the far-flung branch employees of the Sabian organization."



(Front row, l. to r.): Craig Gardner, V.P. Finance; Nort Hargrove, Asst. V.P. Mfg. (Back row, l. to r.): Edmond Bauthier, V.P. Sales, Europe; David McAllister, V.P. Mktg.; Robert Zildjian, President; Dan Barker, V.P. Mfg.

MUSIC EXPO '89 ESTABLISHES NEW SITE; NAMES ADVISORY BOARD

Music Expo '89, designed to be the world's largest showcase for music and music-related products, will be held May 12-14, 1989 at The Pasadena Center in Pasadena, California.

Originally scheduled for spring of 1988, the Expo has been moved to The Pasadena Center because the size and diversity of the venue make it a better facility for the myriad activities envisioned by the show's promoters. The three-day event will host over 200 manufacturer and vendor exhibits in a trade show format structured for consumers.

An advisory panel has been created to provide additional input to the directors of the Expo. Composed of noted

members of both the musical instrument and entertainment industries, Music Expo's advisory board has been instrumental in helping shape and format the overall structure for this inaugural consumer exposition. Notable individuals from the percussion industry named to the board include: Pat Brown, National Sales Director, Pro-Mark Corporation; James Cooper, President, J.L. Cooper Electronics (makers of the Cooper *Soundchest*); and Rick Van Horn, Managing Editor of *Modern Drummer Magazine*.

Further information on Music Expo '89 may be obtained by contacting Musex, Inc., 723 1/2 N. La Cienega

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SUMMER DRUMSET WORKSHOPS SUCCESSFUL IN 1988

The annual Summer Drumset Workshops sponsored by Capital University of Columbus, Ohio were held, as usual, on the University's campus. However, for the first time, additional workshops were also held at the University of Utah, in Salt Lake City.

The workshops, now in their ninth year, were attended by students from 16 states, all involved in the intensive five-day course. That course included classes in drumset history, basic musicianship, technique, reading, drumset styles, and fundamentals of drum machine programming and application. In addition, all students received both group and private lessons as well as the opportunity to be videotaped while performing with a rhythm section.

The workshop director, Robert Breithaupt (Associate Professor of Music at

Capital University), was joined by Guy Remonko (Associate Professor of Music at Ohio University), Steve Houghton (percussion instructor, Percussion Institute of Technology, Hollywood), and Ed Soph (faculty member, University of North Texas). Doug Wolf was the host at the University of Utah. The workshops received support from the Yamaha Drum Company and the Sabian Cymbal Company.

Next year's dates for the Capital workshop are June 12-16, 1989. The workshop at the University of Utah will be held July 17-21, and a third workshop is being planned, with location and dates to be announced at a later date. For further information, contact Robert Breithaupt, Associate Professor of Music, Percussion Department, Capital University, Columbus, Ohio 43209.

ENDORSER NEWS

Larry Londin has recently signed as an endorsing artist for Drum Workshop drums, in addition to his existing status as a DW pedal endorser....Def Leppard's Rick Allen and Europe's Ian Haugland are now both using ddrum electronic drums exclusively....Canadian studio star Barry Keane has been added to the list of Pro-Mark endorsers....Aquarian Industries recently announced that Whitesnake's

Tommy Aldridge is using and endorsing Aquarian's new drumhead line....Sabian's artist roster has been expanded with the addition of Jean Paul Ceccarelli (formerly of Sting's band), Kelly Keagy (Night Ranger), Cornell Rochester (Josef Zawinul Syndicate), Charly Alberti (Soda Stereo), Steve Clarke (Fastway), Steve Kellner (Fischer Z), Tom Rivelli (Randy Travis), Kim Weemhoff (Funky Stuff), Ron Pangborn (Was [Not Was]), Kevin McCloud (Jack Mack & The Heart Attack), Frank Bellucci, and Jojo Mayer (Depart and Stiletto)....Drummers currently endorsing Beyerdynamic's Percussion Croup micro-phones include Peter Erskine, Steve Ferrera, Jerry Marotta, and Gerry Brown....Ricky Lawson is using the Akai S900 sampler on Michael Jackson's *Bad* tour.



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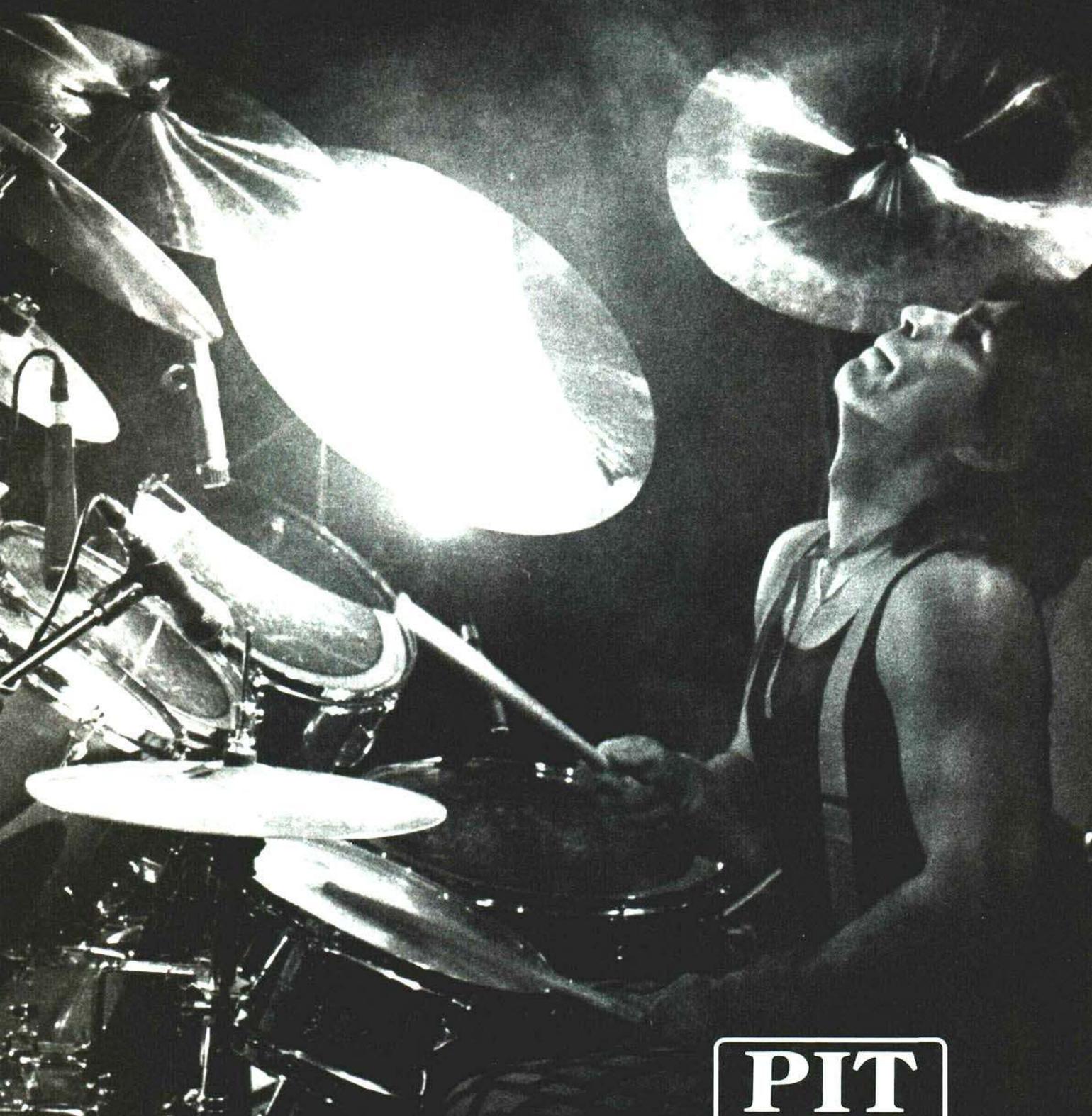
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1988 INDEX UPDATE

In our continuing effort to maximize the value of *Modern Drummer* as a reference tool, the editors of *MD* are pleased to offer this *1988 Index Update*. The listings presented here are a guide to virtually all of the biographical, educational, or special-interest information presented in *Modern Drummer* in the past year. Information presented in *Modern Drummer* issues dated 1986 or earlier is indexed in *MD's Jen-Year Index* (which was presented in the December 1986 issue). Year-end indexes were established in December of 1987, and will continue as a regular feature in the future.

The format for the index varies somewhat, according to the information being presented. For example, the names on the *Artist Reference List* and *Industry Personality Reference List* are presented alphabetically, followed by coded information showing where any biographical or educational information pertaining to each person named might be found. In other words, you should be able to look up your favorite drummer and immediately see where anything *MD* published about that drummer in 1988 may

be located. You'll also be informed as to whether that drummer has written any columns for *MD*, and if so, in which column departments you should look them up.

Unless otherwise noted in their headings, the column departments are indexed alphabetically by the author's last name. In this way, you can check out "everything written by" your favorite columnist in 1988. Notable exceptions are *Drum Soloist* and *Rock Charts*, which are indexed by the artists' names—as are the reviews in *On Track*, *On Tape*, and *Printed Page*. Product reviews—regardless of the column in which they appeared—are listed alphabetically by manufacturer or product name in the *Product Review Columns* section. In this way, you can quickly find out what our reviewers thought of any particular piece of equipment simply by looking up the item by name.

It is our hope that the manner in which we have organized our *Index Update* will make it easy to use, so that you can have quick and easy access to the wealth of information presented in *MD's* pages over the past year.

KEY TO SYMBOLS USED THROUGHOUT THE INDEX

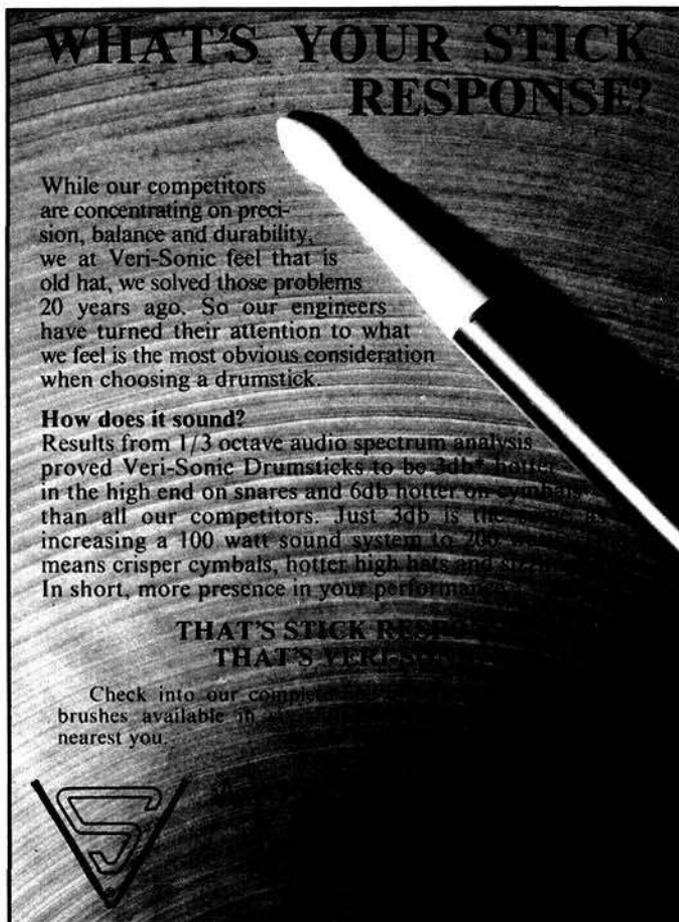
The parenthetical abbreviations indicate where information on (or authored by) a given artist may be found. (In the case of the *Product Review Columns*, the abbreviations indicate where information on a given product may be found.) With the exception of (F), all

abbreviations refer to column or department titles.

(A) = Ask A Pro
(AW) = Around The World
(B) = Basics
(ER) = Electronic Review
(F) = Major Feature Interview
(FP) = From The Past
(IH) = Industry Happenings

(IM) = In Memoriam
(IS) = In The Studio
(JDW) = Jazz Drummers' Workshop
(KP) = Keyboard Percussion
(NN) = NewAnd Notable
(OP) = Orchestral Percussionist
(P) = Portraits

(PCU) = Product Close-Up
(RJ) = Rock 'N' Jazz Clinic
(RP) = Rock Perspectives
(SU) = Setup Update
(SDS) = Show Drummers' Seminar
(SB) = South Of The Border
(U) = Update
(UC) = Up And Coming



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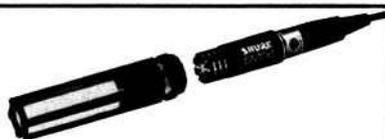
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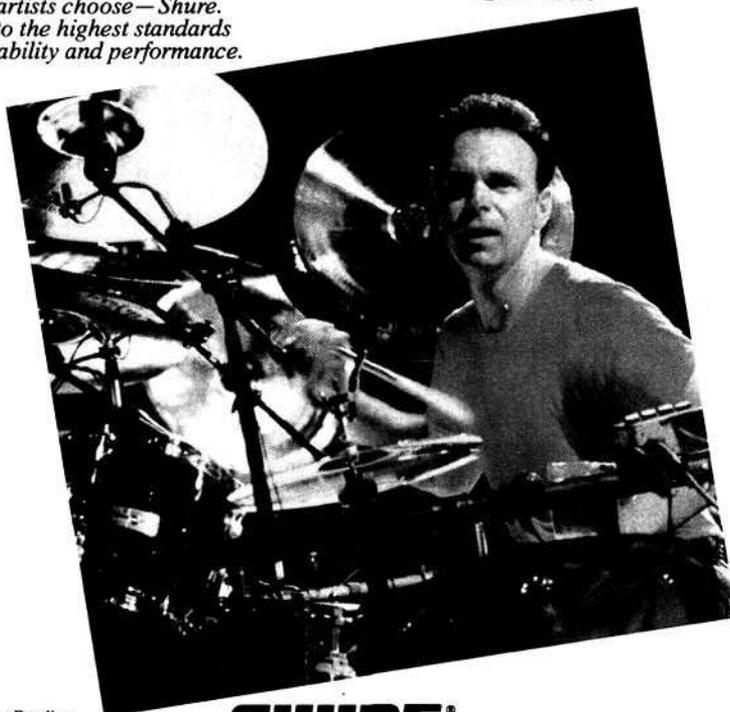
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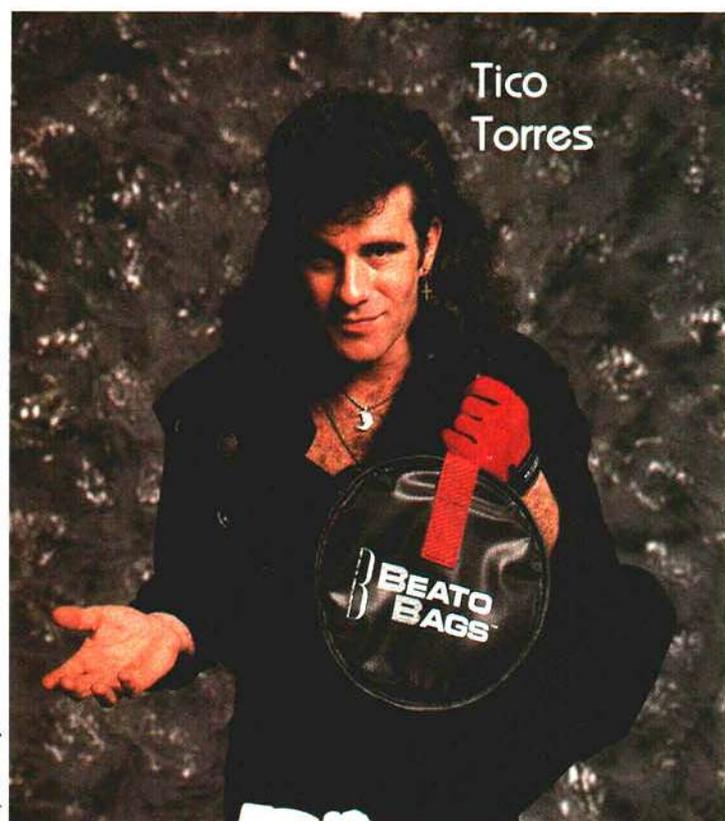
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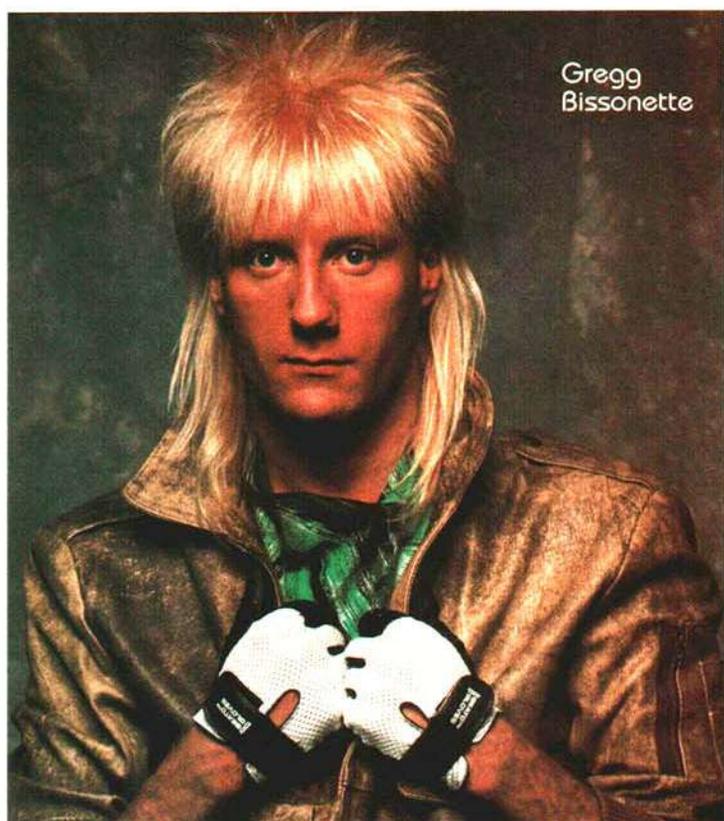
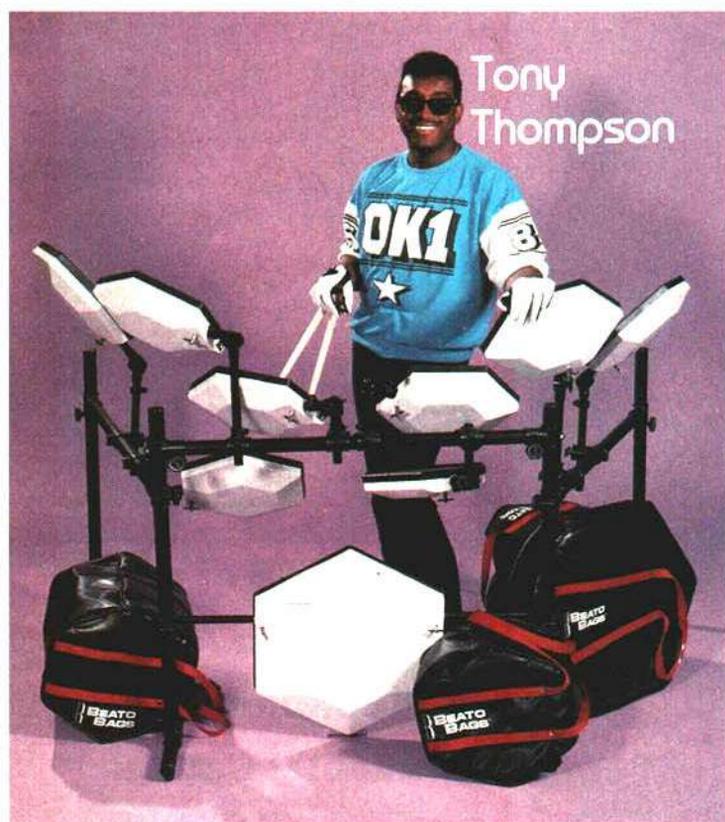


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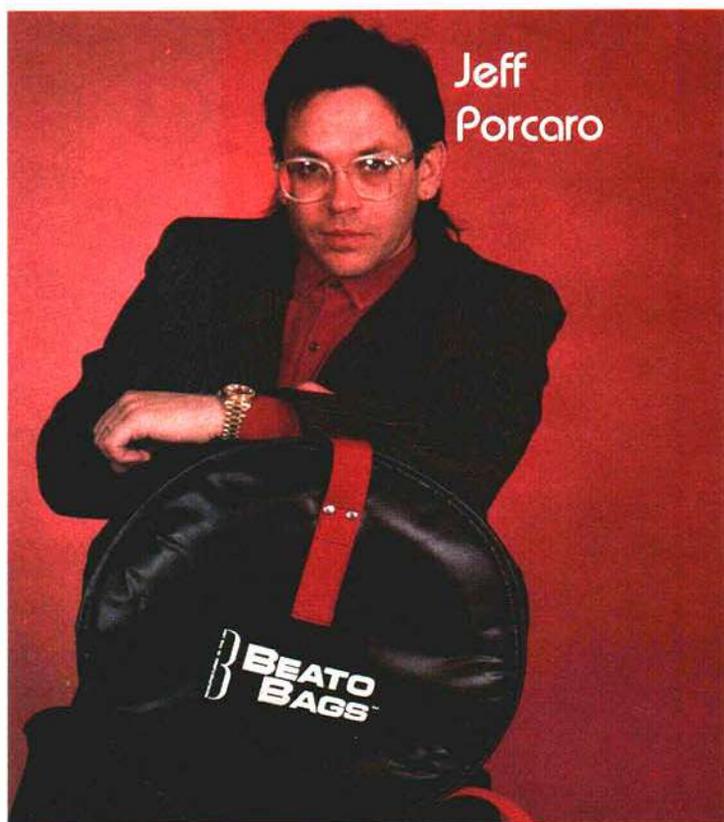


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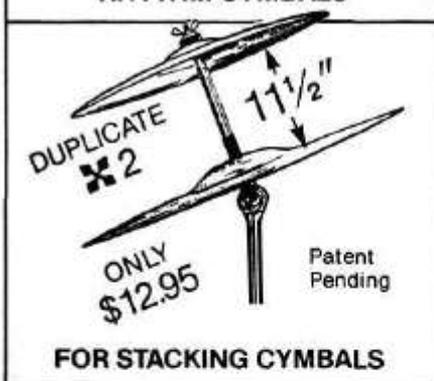
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CB-700 Piccolo Snare Drum (PCU)—Oct. '88

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R.O.C. Piccolo Snare Drums (PCU)—Oct. '88

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Yamaha *SD-496*, *SD-416*, *SD-498*, and *SD-493* Brass Snare Drums (PCU)—Mar. '88,
Power *V* Drumkit (PCU)—Dec. '88

Zildjian *ZMC-1* Miking System (ER)—Apr. '88,
Hi-hat cymbals (PCU)—Jul. '88,
Drumsticks (PCU)—Aug. '88

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Profiles in Percussion

Steve Ferrera

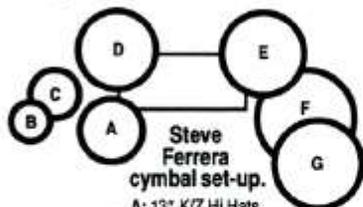


Acclaimed for his work both on record and live with "Suzanne Vega," Steve Ferrera has rapidly become recognized as one of the most prodigiously talented percussionists around.

Though he is based in New York, Steve's talents have also become greatly sought after in the recording studios of London, England. He has lent his unique rhythmic voice to artists such as "Hipsway," "Mica Paris," "Habit" and many of the freshest acts currently emanating from the furtive British pop scene.

Steve studied all aspects of percussion at the New England Conservatory of Music. He believes that the ability to play all styles of music is essential for a successful career in today's music industry.

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Kenny Aronoff
Anthony Cirone
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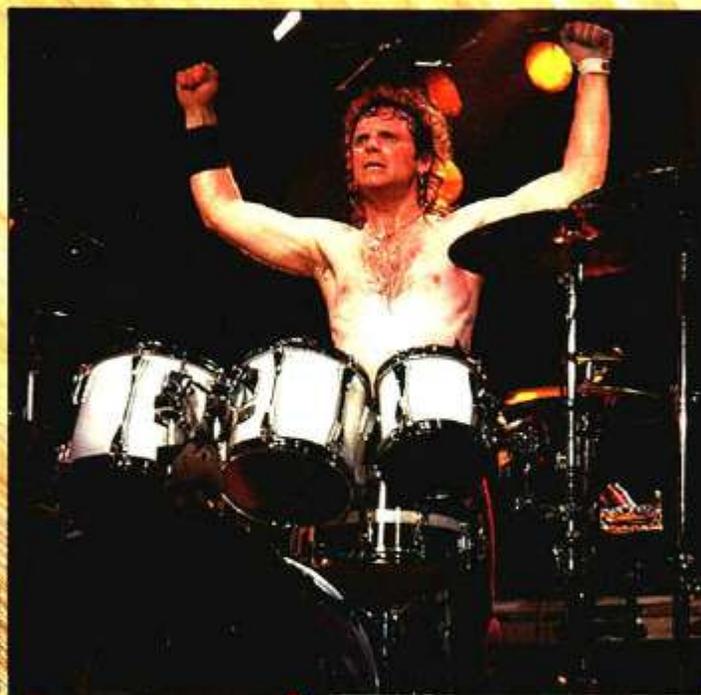
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