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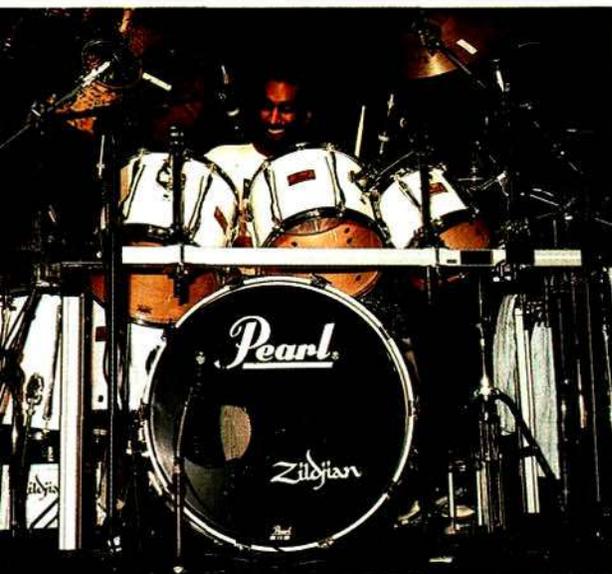


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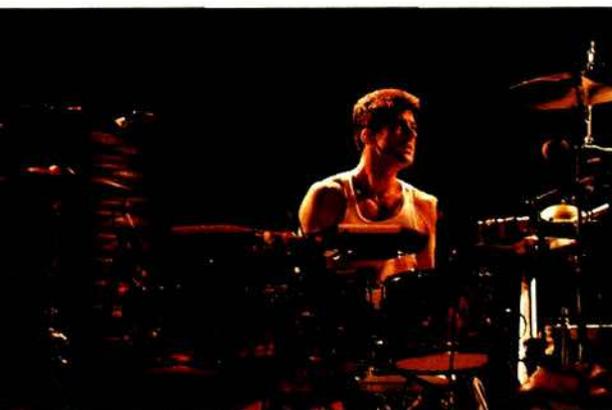


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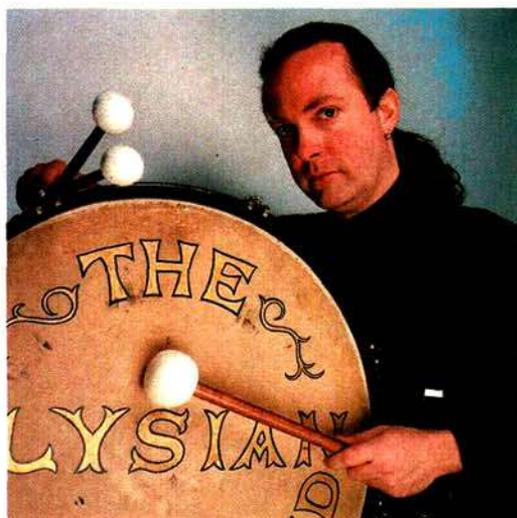


Photo by Aldo Mauro

## 18 OMAR HAKIM

After proving his versatility by following a stint with Weather Report with a gig as Sting's drummer, Omar Hakim took some time off from being a sideman to concentrate on his own project. The result is a solo album that features his drumming, composing, singing, and abilities on guitar and keyboards.

by William F. Miller

## 24 ROB HIRST

Long regarded as one of Australia's top bands, Midnight Oil has recently made a major impact in the States with a successful album and a lot of nights on the road. Rob Hirst recalls his background, and tells how the band's experiences in the Australian bush country affected their music.

by Debbie Scott

## 28 MICHAEL BLAIR

By approaching drumset from a percussion point of view, Michael Blair has developed a unique style that has enabled him to work with unique artists, including Elvis Costello, Leo Kottke, Paul Winter, and Tom Waits. He discusses his concept that "anything goes," giving specific examples of how he has applied it.

by Robyn Flans

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"Put Up Or Shut Up," an exclusive recording featuring Jonathan Mover, accompanied by transcribed examples of his playing.

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## EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

# A Matter Of Attitude

Recently, on a brief vacation, I was driving through a very small, suburban community just off the main highway. My attention was drawn to a local music store huddled amidst a group of neighborhood shops. I often spot-check these local "mom & pop" operations, without mentioning my affiliation with *Modern Drummer*. I enjoy conversing with the owner or manager, and obtaining an unbiased opinion on the drum activity in that particular area.

As I entered this dimly-lit shop, I was greeted by an elderly gentleman wearing bifocals and a tweed vest. I asked for a new copy of *Stick Control*, merely to satisfy a need I felt to buy *something*, and followed the proprietor to what apparently was the drum department a few steps away. I knew I was *in* the department when I stumbled over a used, dust-laden drumset, topped with an old, tarnished cymbal. As the owner rumaged through a beat-up metal file cabinet in search of the book, I took advantage of the opportunity to look around. Aside from the fact that there was no selection of anything to speak of, the existing merchandise was in considerable disarray. Folded-up snare drum and cymbal stands were spread out across half-opened boxes of drumheads. A pile of sticks lay in a cardboard box, unsorted. Unrelated pieces of hardware were spread out everywhere. A dozen or so cymbals were leaning against a back wall, with no way to view the selection, much less try one out.

"So how's the drum business up here?" I asked, surmising what the answer would be. "Drums? Never did get much drum business," he responded. "Most of the drummers in this area come in and look around and never buy a thing. They waste my time," he said, digging deeper into the file. "Maybe if you had a little wider selection, set up in a really attractive manner, they'd buy more," I suggested as discreetly as possible. "Never happen," he commented, refusing to even *consider* the thought. "They'd still go into the city to buy. Never understood it myself."

Well, the problem was pretty obvious to me, as *I'm* sure it is to you. Actually, it didn't lie so much with the clientele in the area as it did with the attitude of the owner towards drums and drummers in general. With so little respect and concern for the instrument and the players—evidenced by the comments and the shop itself—why shouldn't the local drummers take their business elsewhere? Lower-volume dealers must realize that they usually get back what they put in. Those who choose to give the instrument second-class status—with little interest in merchandise selection and organization, and low regard for the customer—will likely end up with a second-class drum business. It really boils down to a matter of *attitude*.

The metal drawer suddenly slammed shut! "Nope, don't have it," he said. "Not sure I ever heard of that one. Anything else I can show you?" "No, that's alright," I said. "I think I've seen enough!" I thanked him, hopped in the car, and continued on my journey. But as I drove, I couldn't help but replay the scene and wonder how often that scene is duplicated at smaller shops across the country. And I thought about how, whenever I encounter it, it never fails to amaze me.

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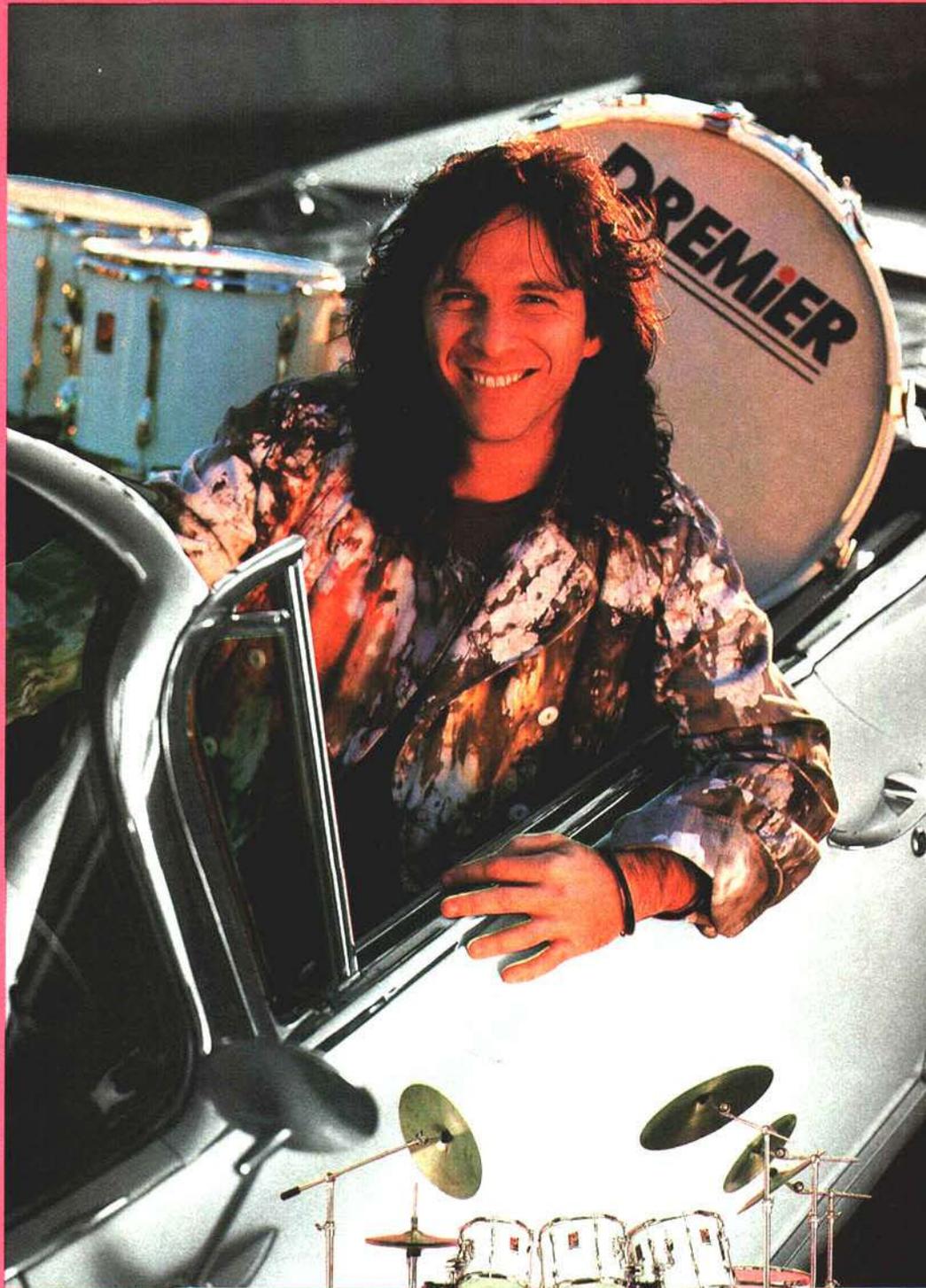
# Street Rod

**Rod Morgenstein's** talent has taken him down some interesting musical streets. His playing broke plenty of rules with the highly acclaimed Dixie Dregs. He toured the musical ozone layer with the Steve Morse Band. And now, the rest of the world has the chance to hear Rod with America's first hard-rock-with-chops heroes —Winger.

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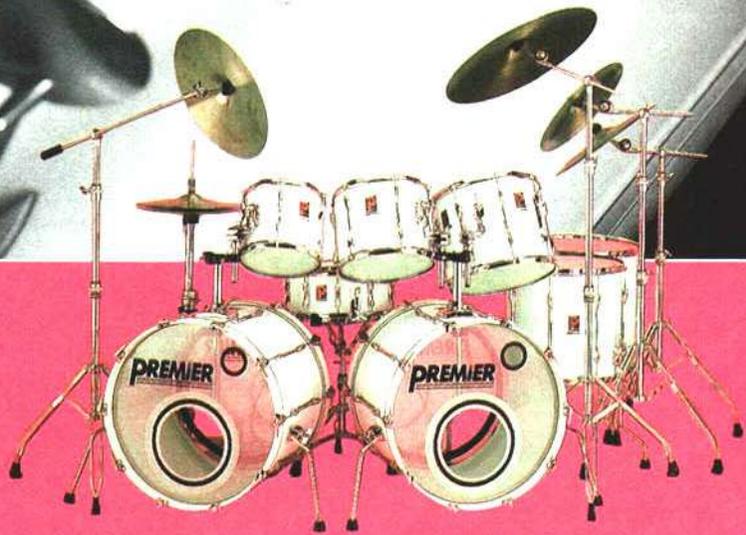
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# READERS' PLATFORM

## STEVE JORDAN

What a story on Steve Jordan! [April '89 MD] Steve is one of my all-time favorite drummers, and I had been dying to know why he left the Letterman show, how he hooked up with Keith Richards, what it was like playing with three giants in musical history (Keith, Aretha Franklin, and Chuck Berry) within a two-year period—and lots of other details of Steve's recent career. And the interview answered all those questions.

I can't think of any other interview in MD's history that entertained and informed me more than this one. Steve is very communicative when it comes to his attitudes toward music, sounds, history, and integrity as a player. I admire him even more now than I did before, and I congratulate Rick Mattingly on putting together one of the finest interviews with a musician I've read in any music magazine.

Paul Kinnock  
Green Bay WI

It's always fun to find out that superstar drummers have the same basic interests as we "lesser mortals" do. I got a kick out of discovering that Steve Jordan is a vintage drum freak and a Beatles fanatic—just like me. And I really enjoyed the anecdotes relating to how the Chuck Berry project came about. Steve strikes me as a fun guy with a serious approach to authenticity in his sound and his playing. I really respect that attitude, and I'd like to thank MD for giving Steve the opportunity to express it and me the opportunity to read about it.

Andy Szimfer  
Detroit MI

## CASTRO AND COLON

I'm both a drummer and a percussionist, with probably my heaviest emphasis on Latin percussion playing. Due to my interest in that area, I've really appreciated MD's recent coverage of two of today's best percussionists: Frank Colon (in the March issue) and Lenny Castro (in the April issue). Both of these gentlemen had a good deal of information to impart regarding their area of the music business, and I found a lot that I could apply to my own career. Lenny Castro, especially, cut right to the heart of things regarding his street background and the way race and heritage can play both positive and negative roles in the development of a percussionist and his or her career. I hope that MD will continue to focus on notable hand percussionists in the future; all drummers and percussionists can benefit from their unique perspectives.

Raymond Alfredo-Ruiz  
Los Angeles CA

## PAUL AND GREGG ON NOVA

I would first like to say thank you for an incredible publication. I am a regular subscriber and read your magazine religiously.

While reading through the April '89 issue I noticed an article on Canadian drummers. Of particular interest to me was drummer Paul Brochu of the band UZEB. The interview mentioned that UZEB had not solidified a deal in the U.S. yet. I thought your readers might be interested in knowing that UZEB signed with NOVA Records in the spring of '89 (just after the MD interview), and their seventh album, *Noisy Nights* (NOVA 8919), should be in stores by April or May of this year (possibly be-

fore this letter is published). Keep an eye on this group; their music is hot!

*Modern Drummer* also produced a sound supplement featuring Gregg Bissonette in the July '88 issue with excerpts from the NOVA release *The Other Side Of The Story* by Brandon Fields (NOVA 8602). Knowing of Gregg's playing on this record, it was a pleasant surprise to see the exposure that both Gregg and Brandon received through MD. We received several calls from drummers who were interested in the recording. I only hope that Paul Brochu and UZEB achieve as much success!

Thank you for your time and for a great magazine. Keep up the good work!

Denny Stilwell  
Marketing Director - NOVA Records  
1061 Broxton Avenue  
Los Angeles CA 90024

## THE DRUMMERS OF MONTREAL

Merci bien! It was wonderful to see five of the excellent drummers of Montreal receive recognition in your magazine. It's important that the drumming world know that quality players don't all live in the U.S. or the U.K. Please continue with this coverage of drummers all over the world. It will help to bring us all together as one global family of musicians!

Pierre Rondeaux  
Quebec City, Canada

## DAVE MATTACKS

I was glad to see that you finally caught up to one of rock 'n' roll drumming's best-kept secrets: Dave Mattacks. I've admired his simple style for many years. But I was

*continued on page 104*

## The sound of different drummers.



Bobby Blotzer    Dave Garibaldi    Alex Acuña    Tommy Aldridge    Ralph Humphrey    Dave Weckl

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## Tico Torres

Photo by Mike Jaehies



Being a member of one of the world's biggest bands, Bon Jovi, allows Tico Torres to branch out a bit musically, given the advantages often attached to superstardom. One of the perks he relishes is the impromptu jams that take place on the road.

"One of the nicest things about this situation is that I get to play with a lot of interesting people," Tico comments. "We were having dinner with Paul Young the other night, and he said, 'Do you think we can find a rock club that we can jam in?' And we did. When we were in England, Elton John came by and sat in with us. It gives us an opportunity to play with our peers as well as musicians we look up to. Every chance we get to go out and jam, we do it. Last week we were in Louisiana, and we just took over the hotel bar band where we were staying. It was a helluva lot of fun."

Tico also maintains an intermittent R&B side gig with musicians Tony Levin, Bobby Messano, Howie Brown, Joe Beesmer, and Gary Corbett, called the Uncle Funk All-Stars, who play around the New York/New Jersey area when time permits.

Additionally, Tico has recently put out an instructional video. "What I did," he says about his preparation for the project, "was to look at every video I could get my hands on and try to figure out what they weren't teaching. Most of the ones I saw really weren't for beginners, so I tried to cover what they left out. What I came up with is a video that

deals with the basics for any drummer starting out. I discuss things like tuning and muffling placement—basic but very important stuff that any drummer should know. I think this is a good start for me, because I'd like to build from here and do two or three more videos."

He says that being the focal point in the video was a slight adjustment for him. "It was definitely something new," he says, "being stage front instead of way in the back. Plus, there was this big camera, and I had to speak," he laughs. "I was a bit nervous, but you have to break the ice at some point. I'd like to do more of that stuff if I have the chance."

With the exposure of a band like Bon Jovi, Tico feels that his playing abilities are being recognized more. He has recently worked on projects with Alice Cooper, Cher, and Jimmy Barnes. "People are starting to find out about my past, and that I do play other types of music," he comments. "Even if you're in a rock band, it's good to have a background of funk, blues, and jazz, because it's always going to help you."

—Teri Saccone

## Steve Goetzman

This past year was one of turmoil for Steve Goetzman and Exile. Within just a few months, both their lead singers departed the band. They hired 26-year-old "wiz kid" Paul Martin, who is now sharing lead vocal duties with long-time member Sonny Lemaire. Then they went off to the Carriage House in Stamford, Connecticut to work with Elliot Scheiner (Bruce Hornsby, Glen Frey) on *Shelter From The Night*, which Steve describes as an "experiment."

"The attempt was to maintain our country-fan base and broaden the audience. Quite frankly, we wanted to

follow in Alabama's footsteps; that's essentially what they did. In fact, they did it with Exile songs. They were a popular country band and they took 'The Closer You Get' and 'Take Me Down' from an Exile pop album, recorded them country, and had smash pop hits with them. So we tried the same thing, but the politics weren't working as they should have been at the time of the album's release. We never got the support of the national record companies, and the support we did get didn't go beyond Nashville."

Steve says that sound-wise, working with Scheiner was "absolute heaven. Elliot has won Grammys for his engineering on some Steely Dan albums. He's a former drummer, too, and used to play with Jimmy Buffett. So, man, does this guy have an ear for drums. Before we went into the studio, he said to bring in what I was most comfortable playing, because sounds don't matter anymore. If we didn't like the sounds, we could just use sampled ones. I have several kits, but since he said to bring what I was most comfortable with, I brought the road kit I'm always on. I put a new set of heads on them, tuned them up, let them sit overnight, tuned them again, and then Elliot said to start whacking them. I have done drum checks that took eight hours, but in 20 minutes he said they sounded great, and I thought, 'Well, he means they sound great because he knows he's going to sample everything.' As it turned out, that was the sound we used on the whole album, and we never sampled anything. They just explode on the album. He used some effects, like a reverse gate on the snare and God knows what else, but it's the best drum sound I believe I've ever had."

But Schemer's pop slant altered Steve's approach somewhat, which he says was not always comfortable for the songs he was playing. "I made a very important discovery about myself as a drummer when we were doing this album. I realized how much my love of country music has grown over the last few years.

Elliot asked me to play out a lot on this album. He asked for more elaborate fills and things, which at first I really enjoyed, but after a while, it began to grate on me a bit. I like to play to complement the song, and beyond that, I'm not interested. So it was really tough after a while to give Elliot what he wanted and at the same time not detract from what the song was saying, which is so important in country music. It was definitely a growth experience, though."

The album *Exile* is currently recording will be done in Nashville in between lots of road dates, and Steve's trying to get in a little creative writing. A recent personal triumph for the drummer was that he had his first article printed in *Music City News*.

—Robyn Flans

## Mickey Hart

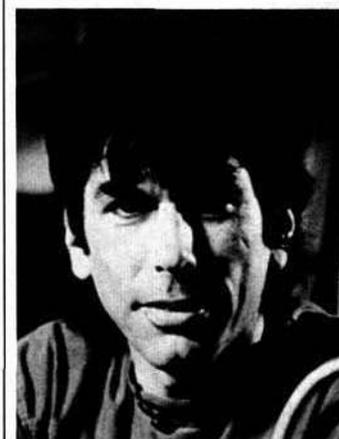


Photo by John Warner

Mickey Hart is the member of the Grateful Dead you'd catch running through the Egyptian desert or the Arctic Circle with NAGRA recording equipment, trying to capture some of the local sounds. He's the one who'd convince some great world musicians to come by his studio and jam during an off-day on tour. "It's important for people to see how small the world really is," Hart says. "And the music is the same; it's just in different languages."

Over the past 17 years, Mickey Hart's hobby has been recording musicians from all around the world, quite often in very intimate, authentic settings. Now Rykodisc has worked with Hart in transferring his "private library" onto

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CD. Hart has "bumped up" the recordings to the digital domain and taken great care in remixing the tapes, some of which are from once-in-a-lifetime sessions ten years ago.

Hart got his first taste of World Music while growing up in New York City, with Machito, Tito Puente, and the Latin bands of the day. The Rykodisc collection includes a remixed version of Hart's great percussion ensemble, The Diga Rhythm Band. "That was our attempt to make a 20th Century gamelan, a tuned percussion orchestra," says Hart. "It's a monstrous percussion machine just churning out these incredible rhythms and uni-sons."

Hart calls his 1986 production of Babatunde Olatunji and Drums of Passion's *The Invocation* "a payback." Babatunde's talking drums were a big influence on Hart. "He taught me that not every drum had to be a fixed pitch. He had the first variable-pitch drum I'd ever heard."

Also in Hart's Rykodisc set is *The Travelling Jewish Wedding*, by the Golden Gate Gypsy Orchestra ("Fun, Jewish soul music," says Mickey), and *Sarangi: The Music Of India*, by Ustad Sultan Khan. "The sarangi sounds so human-like, and so vocal," says Hart, who with fellow drummer Bill Kruetzman has brought more and more ethnic percussion into the Grateful Dead's stage show over the years.

Hart recorded Hamza El Din's *Eclipse* at his home studio in California in 1978, showcasing the virtuoso on oud and tar. Mickey learned to play the single-headed tar from Hamza. "He's a master drummer, master of what I would call romance drums, the drums of quietness and beauty. He's a master of calmness," says Hart, who also recently produced a record by the Gyuto Multi-Phonic Choir from Windham Hill.

Much of *The Music Of Upper And Lower Egypt* was recorded during and after the Grateful Dead's 1978 Egyptian tour. They were Hart's most adventurous recording sessions yet. "Some pieces were actually recorded on the Nile River on a boat, alongside of another boat,

using shotgun mic's. And some were recorded on Mosquito Island at Aswan. You go to an area and hang out for a while and meet the people. You play for them, and they play for you. You have a party. You don't just walk into a place and open up microphones and record."

The Grateful Dead isn't 24 hours a day anymore for Mickey. The release of his private library by Rykodisc gives him great satisfaction. "These are my babies, you know. These are like my children. It's sort of a hobby and a passion that got out of hand."

—Robin Tolleson

## Fish

Fishbone is attempting to bridge some gaps and cross some boundaries. "It's just soul music," drummer Fish exclaims. "Not soul music as in Motown, but soul music as in music from the soul. It can be a reggae vibe, it can be a jazz vibe, it can be speed metal. We've never had a problem with our variety, it's just that a lot of people say they're confused. But they'll never deny that they enjoy it."

This last year has been a busy one. Fishbone did a music score for a film called *Tape Heads*, a song for a comedy called *I'mo Git U, Sucka*, as well as recording their second LP, *Truth And Soul*.

"The music comes from a lot of different ways," says Fish. "It can come from me standing in a phone booth, hearing something in my head, or it can come from sitting down with all of the equipment and working it out with everybody, or it can just come in the studio. We're six individuals who constantly live and breathe music, even when we're doing something else."

Fish also played on albums by Parthenon Huxley and Spooky, both on CBS, a track for Little Richard for a blues compilation album, a film track for the Red Hot Chili Peppers, and an album with Curtis Mayfield. "That was one of the biggest learning experiences of my life," Fish says of the Mayfield record. "He just has so much knowledge, on a personal level and on a musician's level. It's

just something I'll cherish forever."

And all that activity took place when the band wasn't on the road, which isn't too often, as Fish explains: "We tour a lot, but that's where all the action is. It's like being on the front line. It takes a lot more to be out on the road, especially to make it sound tight. You can get up there and be sloppy, and if you have made a name for yourself, people are going to love it anyway. But when we get on stage, we strive for tightness and to be as energetic as possible and to leave a lot of room for a lot of spontaneity. A lot of it is spontaneous, although people never really know that, so we must be doing something right."

"It's a real energetic show," he continues, "which is just natural from the vibe of the music. I've been on stage sick with the flu, but when the crowd is going nuts, you have no choice but to give it up to them."

—Robyn Flans

## News...

**Ringo Starr** is teaming with country artist Buck Owens on a remake of "Act Naturally," which was a hit for both Owens and the Beatles in the '60s.

**Walfredo Reyes, Jr.** is now with Santana for recording and live dates. Congratulations to Walfredo and Carolina on their recent marriage.

Congratulations to **Stu Nevitt** and Shadowfax, who won a Grammy for Best New Age Performance with their album *Folk Songs For A Nuclear Village*.

Congratulations also to **Evelyn Glennie** on her Grammy for the Bartok *Sonata For Two Pianos And Percussion*.

**Mike Barsimanto** gigging with Ivan Neville and The Room, as well-as with Patrick O'Hearn.

**Sol Gubin** playing drums and percussion on *WarAnd Rememberance*.

Just home from tour with Michael Jackson, **Ricky Lawson** has been recording with Philip Bailey and James Ingram, and producing Fatt Burger.

**Roy Martin** working with Elektra artist Mark-V.

**Tommy Wells** working on albums by Ray Stevens, C.C. Chapman, and the Wright Brothers.

Hats off to drummers who have given their time for Musicians for UNICEF: **Chet McCracken, Eddie Tuduri, Marty Fera, Ian Wallace, Tony Braunagel, Mick Fleetwood, Joe Lala, and Leann Harris.**

**Tommy Aldridge** on new Whitesnake LP.

**Gordy Knudtson** is on the road with Steve Miller. He can also be heard on Miller's new album, *Born 2 B Blue*.

**Tim Hedge** is on the road with Holly Dunn and will be cutting a track on her upcoming album.

**Jack White** can be heard on the latest Steve Hunter solo album and will be touring with Gary Puckett.

**Dave Mancini** recently released a duo album with saxophonist Denis DiBlasio entitled *One On One* on Mark Records. He is also the author

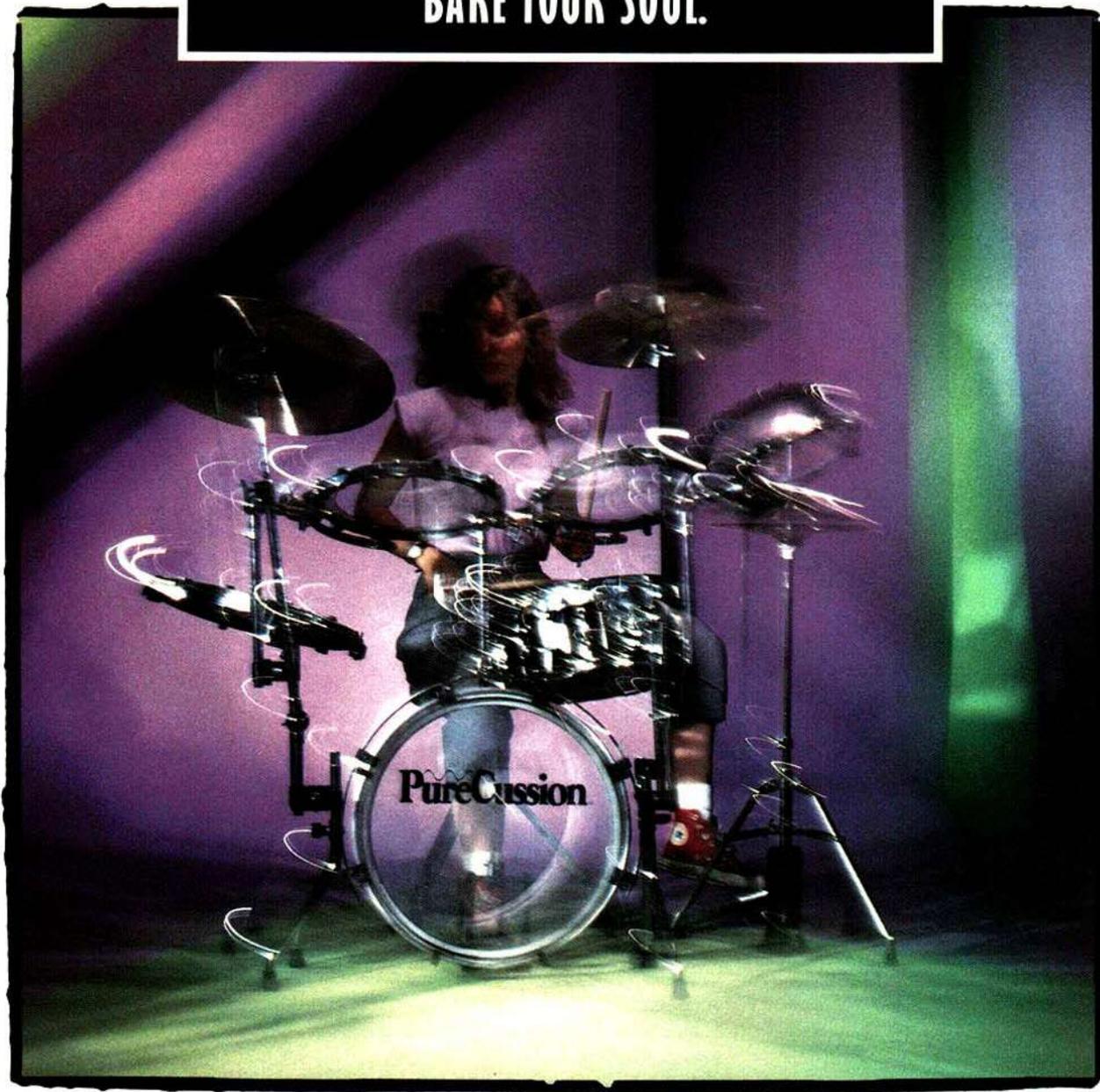


Photo by Bonnie Champion

Marky Ramone and Max Weinberg recently took part in a tribute to *The Ventures*, to be shown on TV later this year.

continued on page 12

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## ANDY NEWMARK

**Q.** I've noticed that you mount your crash cymbals very high. I was wondering if you do that to avoid having the cymbals leak into your tom mic's, or if there is another reason.

Orson Miller  
Aurora IL

**A.** No, it has nothing to do with miking. I mount the cymbals high because of the way I like to hit them. I can use a full arm stroke and get the weight of my body be-



hind it, sort of like the way you might serve a tennis ball. Also, I like to strike the edge of the cymbal, rather than the top. So having the cymbals mounted high and almost parallel to the floor allows me to do that easily. I should also mention that I got the idea to mount my cymbals that way from Dino Danelli, who used to have his cymbals mounted higher and flatter than most drummers did in the '60s.

Photo by Steven Ross

## STEVE JORDAN

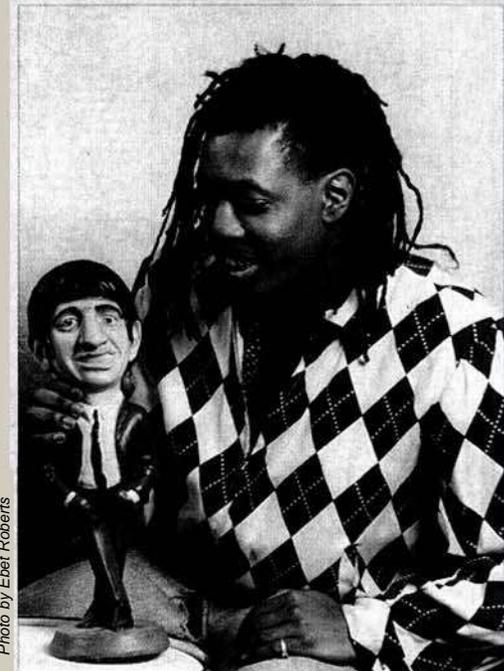


Photo by Ebel Roberts

and I found it interesting that you like to put together different setups for different situations. The one setup you didn't discuss, however, was the vintage Ludwig kit that was shown in several of the photos. What's the story on that one?

Randy Eston  
Clarksville IN

**Q.** I just finished your interview; it was super, and I didn't want it to end. However, you've got to answer a question for me. Is the "Beatles" bass drum head in the photo authentic?

Dennis Kash  
Madison Heights MI

**A.** Finding that drumset was an incredible stroke of luck. Rick Mattingly called me up one day and told me that he had seen this old, black-oyster Ludwig kit at a shop called Creative Music in Wethersfield, Connecticut, and that I might want to check it out. I went up there, and the kit was immaculate, so I bought it.

The entire kit consists of five drums: a 14x20 bass drum, a 4x14 snare, an 8x12

tom-tom, and 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms. The individual drums are from two vintage; three of them are from '63 and the other two are from '66. The ones dated December 26, 1963 have to be from the same group of drums that Ringo's kit came from, because he got his first Ludwig kit in '63.

The head is another story. That head was suspended over the drum department at Manny's for years. When I was a kid, I used to go in there and look at it all the time. Then about four or five years ago, Manny's remodeled the drum department and moved it upstairs. I went in there one day and the head was gone, so I asked them what had happened to it. I was prepared to pay a lot of money for it. But they said, "It's right here in the back. Take it, Steve, it's yours." When they gave it to me I realized that it wasn't the real head; it was only an 18". (I just set it in front of the 20" bass drum head for the MD photos.) I never got the name of the artist, but whoever it was did a great job. Back when I was going to school, I used to draw pictures of that logo in my notebooks, so I could appreciate how good this one looked.

**Q.** I really enjoyed your recent interview,

**UPDATE** continued from page 10

of a new method book, *Drum Set Fundamentals*.

**Michael Blair** in the studio with Lori Carson and Shawn Colvin.

**Peter Clemente's** band, Diving For Pearls, is about to release their first Epic LP.

**Ernie Durawa** has just completed a track for the upcoming Jackie King/Willie Nelson record.

**Clint de Canon** just completed albums for Peter Moffitt, Mitch Foreman, and Dionne Warwick.

**Pat Petrillo** doing sessions with Jim Davison and keyboard/producer Atticus Finch, while house drumming at Chalet Sand Studios and heading the percussion department at the new Sam Ash Music Institute.

**Greg Haver**, recently back from touring with Corey Hart, can be heard on Helen Terry's new album as well as on an album by a new SBK/PolyCram group, Waterfront, and a cut on Robert Hart's new release.

**Brian Barnett** working with Jo-el Sonnier.

**Ron Ganaway** now with Steve Wariner.

**Elvin Jones** on Marcus Roberts' *The Truth Is Spoken Here*, out earlier this year.

Al Macomber on a recently released Savoy Brown album, *King Of Boogie*.

**Butch Miles** keeping busy as usual with the Great American Swing Band and the Billy Mitchell Band, and performing at various jazz festivals.

**Ciaran McLaughlin** on drums for Virgin Records' *That Petrol Emotion*.

**John Riley** working with the John Scofield Trio.

**Dougie Bowne** recently in studio with Jack Bruce.

**Martin Parker** on new album by The Wolves In Cheap Clothing.

**Sue Hadjopoulos** on new albums by Joe Jackson and Laurie Anderson. Sue has also done some live dates with Laura Nyro.

**Ed Breckenfeld** in the studio with the Insiders.

**Mark Zonder** in the studio with Fates Warning.

**Andy Newmark** recently in the studio with Nils Lofgren.

Mojo Nixon percussionist **Skid Roper** has released his own album, *Trails Plowed Under*. He is joined by the band Whirlin' Spurs, with **Lance Solidey** on drums.

**Dave Weckl** recently in the studio with Eyewitness. Dave also plays on *Greetings From New York* by the SOS All-Stars.

Our best wishes for a speedy recovery to former Spyro Gyra drummer Eli Konikoff, who recently broke his collarbone.

**Peter Erskine** on recent recordings by Eliane Elias, Aurora, and David Benoit. He has been in the studio with Ricky Lee Jones, Don Grolnick, Bob Mintzer, Mike Stern, Warren Bernhardt, and Akiko Yano. Peter has also been in DCI's studio preparing his first drum video.

Our condolences on the death of **Steve Wahrer**, who helped lift the Trashmen and their hit single "Surfin' Bird" to the national pop charts in the early '60s.

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# IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Q. With the recent resurgent popularity of piccolo-type snare drums in mind, is it possible that Ludwig might reintroduce their old 3x13 chrome-plated, metal-shelled piccolo snare? Once, back in the early '70s, I had the opportunity to play one of these little drums and I was quite impressed. If Ludwig were to reintroduce this drum, with the addition of bronze and wood shells, I think they might sell pretty well.

N.L.

Forest Grove OR

A. We contacted Bill Ludwig, III, of Ludwig Industries, whose first reaction was, "It's funny you should ask!" Bill went on to tell us that Ludwig has been in the process of developing 3 x 13 piccolo snare drums over the past several months. The drums will be available in wood- and bronze-shelled models, and the company plans to debut them at the June NAMM Show in Chicago.

Q. I own a Gretsch drumset that I have bought over a period of time, piece by piece. I am wondering if there is any way I could refinish the drums in a natural stain color. I am also aware of the silver-colored sealer that Gretsch uses on the insides of their drums. Would it harm the sound of the drums if I were to refinish the outside, and should I leave the sealer on the inside?

J.T.

London, Ontario, Canada

A. Refinishing a set of drums is a painstaking, time-consuming task, but one that can result in a beautiful kit and a terrific feeling of accomplishment. The key to the job is preparation, both in terms of knowing what you're doing and having all the tools and materials necessary to do the job. MD has done several articles on the subject of drum recovering, the most comprehensive of which was David Creamer's Shop Talk article, "Refinishing Your Drums," in the December '84 issue. If you don't have that issue, a reprint of the article can be obtained by sending a note requesting it, along with a check or money order for \$5.00 (in U.S. funds) to MD's Back Issue Department, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, New Jersey 07009.

Refinishing the outside of a drum generally will not adversely affect the sound, assuming care is taken not to damage the bearing edges or do anything else that would affect tuning. In fact, if you are planning to refinish a drum that was originally covered with a plastic covering, you may actually improve the sound, since such a covering can muffle the resonance of a drumshell. Removing such a covering also slightly reduces the diameter of the drum, allowing drumheads to "float" a bit on the bearing edge, which promotes projection and tone. Specifically in the case of Gretsch drums, you would be wise to leave the silver sealant on the inside, since that is and always has been an element of Gretsch's acoustic design.

Q. I am a young drummer who subscribes to your magazine. I really enjoy reading and learning from it. Your magazine really helps to bring the drumming community close together. I've been playing snare drum for nine years and drumset for about four. I find that my biggest problem on drumset is trying to develop creative and exciting drum fills. I have read Jim Pfeifer's articles on "Power Fills" and have found them helpful. I was wondering if you could assist me in finding some sources that are more challenging and would help me to develop creative fills. My favorite styles are rock and jazz, and I want to learn to be creative in both. Your help would be appreciated.

S.G.

Willow Street PA

A. There are several sources available with information on creating exciting and musical drum fills. One excellent source is Rod Morgenstein's audio cassette *Grooving In Styles/Filling In The Holes*. It's part of a three-part cassette series by Rod, and addresses

just the type of problems you describe. Danny Gottlieb also has an excellent tutorial audio cassette out called *Drumming Concepts*, which could give you some creative ideas. Both are available from BAMO, P.O. Box 13, Plainview, New York 11803. You can call (718) 706-4009 for price and ordering information.

Phil Perkins has a book entitled *The Logical Approach To Rock Drum Fills*, and Joel Rothman offers *Simple Jazz Breaks Around The Drums*, both of which should be obtainable through your local drumshop. If not, you can order both from *Drums Unlimited*, 4928 Saint Elmo Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20814. Both books are geared to the beginning-to-intermediate drumset player.

Q. I am in search of a good miking system. I would like a system that duplicates the true sound of my kit—especially the hi-hat and bass drum. Can you give me some advice on what to look for in the way of individual mic's for recording and for live performance? Also, can you tell me how accurate the Zildjian ZMC-1 cymbal miking system is?

CD.

Houston TX

A. Your questions call for a great many subjective opinions. Duplicating the "true sound" of your drums involves more than just the type of mic's you choose. From a technical standpoint, you must also consider the sound system being employed, including the fidelity and size of the speakers, the type and quality of the sound board, any E. Q. or sound processing being used, etc. Then there is the question of mic' placement. The same mic' can produce significantly different results when placed in different spots around a drumkit. Lastly, you have to determine what you consider the "true sound" of your kit to be. Is it the sound that you hear sitting behind the drums, the sound that the rest of your band would hear a few feet away, or the sound that someone in your audience might hear at a greater distance? A drum's acoustic sound is produced by a combination of its own components (head, shell, mounting system, etc.), the way in which it is tuned, the way in which it is struck and the stick used to strike it, and the ambience of the environment in which it is being played. It is almost impossible to designate any single microphone that would be the "best" at capturing all these elements exactly as you would wish them to be captured. Your best bet is to understand the capabilities of various microphones and make an educated selection on that basis.

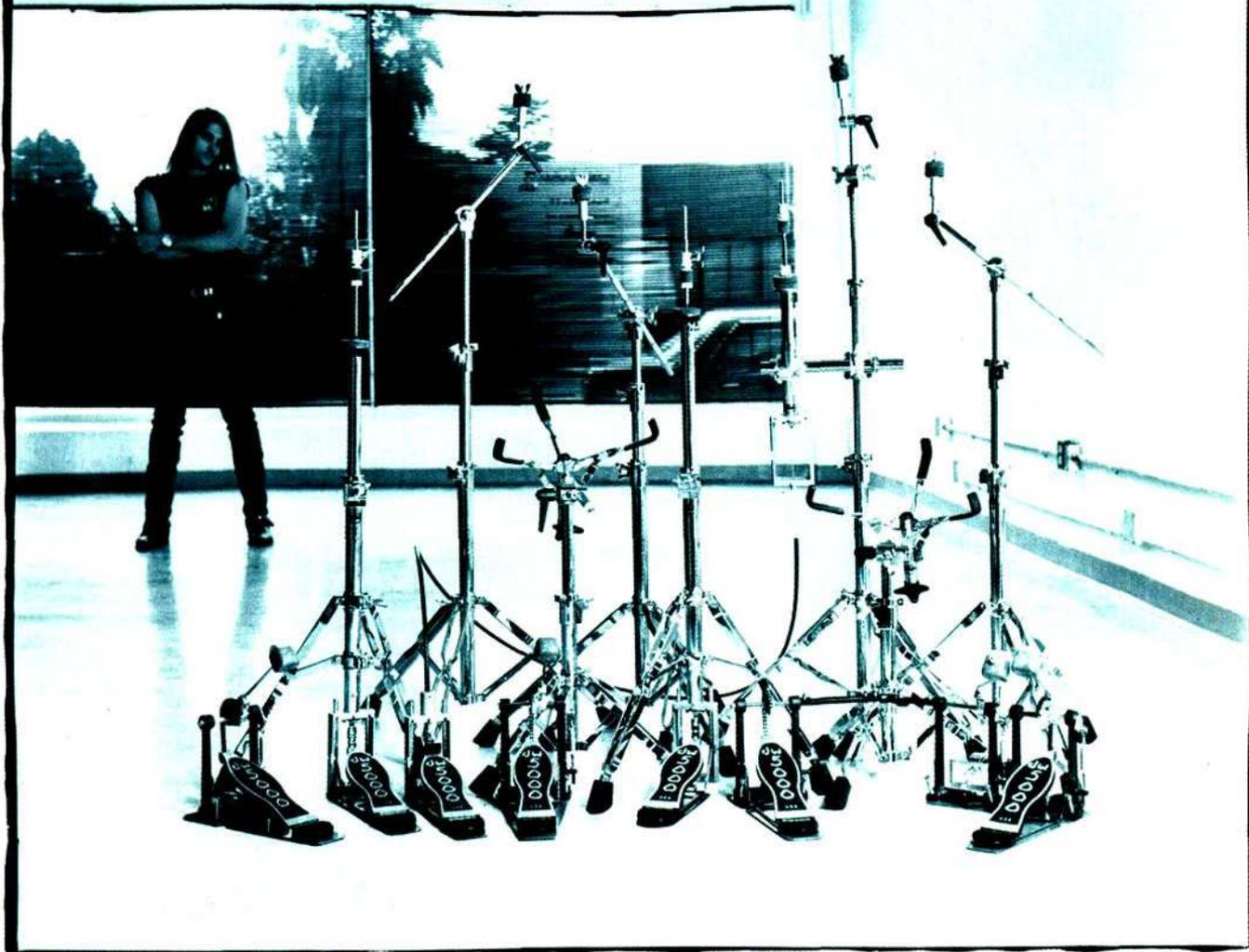
In order to gain that understanding, look over Bob Lowig's Electronic Insights column entitled "Choosing A Mic' For Acoustic Drums" in the October '88 issue of MD. Bob goes into great detail as to what types of microphones exist on the market, and how they can best be applied to drum reinforcement.

You refer to a "miking system" in your question. You may not wish to purchase a "system" made up completely of one brand. Although most microphone manufacturers offer mic's for every drumkit application, time and experience have taught most sound engineers that certain models from various manufacturers seem to do the best job on certain drums and/or cymbals. This is why you'll see particular mic's being used consistently for bass drums, and others (from other brands) being used consistently on toms, snares, hi-hats, etc. On the other hand, certain manufacturers (notably Beyerdynamic) have recently begun to promote entire series of microphones dedicated to drumkit miking. And there are additional companies, such as MAY-EA and C-T Audio, that offer complete systems for drum miking with the mic's mounted inside the drums.

In terms of evaluating the performance of Zildjian's ZMC-1 system, MD reviewed that system in the April '88 issue. Additionally, the product is currently in use by a number of notable artists. While that, in itself, is no reason to buy something, it is an indication that the product can perform satisfactorily at a high professional level.



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# Omar

*The motion picture is Sting's Bring On The Night, the 1985 film biography about the solo artist's first post-Police band. During the concert sequence of the film, the band performs a song called "I Burn For You." It begins quietly, the groove becoming more syncopated throughout, and as the end nears, the excitement increases, with the band churning and the drummer, Omar Hakim, propelling them with an emotional solo. As the lights flash and the sound builds, Omar's entire body is in motion as his arms flail about the kit. Just when you're sure he's gone as far as he can, he takes it further. The music practically erupts off the stage, and as the solo ends, the audience is driven to their feet by Omar's performance.*

*That performance was emotional as much as it was technical. Most would agree that the greatest drummers are the ones with good technique, but who play the music from the heart. Omar Hakim definitely fits into that category. Throughout his varied career, Omar has brought to the music a lot of emotion, never letting the technique become the main issue. Perhaps that's why he's been so successful. His two biggest-*

# Hakim

*exposure gigs, three years with Weather Report and two years with Sting, brought him to the top of his profession. Yet, with all of the accomplishments he has had so far, it may be just the beginning.*

*Since leaving Sting almost two years ago, Omar has been relatively out of sight, with the exception of some record dates including Anita Baker's hugely successful Giving You The Best That I Got album, and appearing as the featured drummer on David Sanborn's Sunday Night television program. Omar's main focus has been on his first solo album, recently released on the GRP label. The record has been a few years in the making, and Omar's schedule seems to be getting very busy.*

*As Omar begins his career as a solo artist, an entire new side of him is being revealed. On the new album, Omar not only composed the songs, wrote the lyrics, and played many of the instruments, he also sang all of the lead vocals. For those who have been wondering how Omar became such a great drummer, the answer may well lie in the fact that Omar is a great musician.*



*by William F. Miller*

**WFM:** What's the title of your new album?

**OH:** *Rhythm Deep*. The title comes from a song off the album. The whole idea of the song was to talk about the common element inside of music that everyone can relate to: rhythm. There's all this talk of world beat music, where kids in London are listening to Eastern music and kids in America are listening to African music, and so forth. I thought this concept of universal rhythm was a good idea to write about, and it seemed to be even more appropriate for

the title of my album.

**WFM:** How did your record deal come about?

**OH:** Well, I had been looking for a deal for many years. Before I joined Weather Report back in '82, I had gotten a small budget from Warner Bros, to record some demos. They were interested in me as an artist then. At that point my concept had nothing to do with your typical "drummer album." I was more interested in trying to write quality songs where the drumming would be secondary to the music. I mean, my main work was as a drummer, but I wasn't going after a record deal to showcase my playing. Drums were the first outlet for the music that I was feeling, and it was the first instrument that I got into, but I was just interested in creating the music that was inside of me.

It was really weird when all of a sudden I was getting all these serious calls for my drumming. When I joined Weather Report it was a strange time in my life because my focus was starting to get away from the drums, even though I had just finished doing things with David Sanborn, Mike Mainieri, and Gil Evans. But right before Joe [Zawinul] and Wayne [Shorter] called me, I was determined to get my own thing happening. I wanted to start writing and concentrate on that for a while. When I got the call from Weather Report, I thought, "Yeah, maybe I'd better get serious about the drums again." [laughs] I really woodshedded for that gig because I realized it would require everything I had and more. So, thanks to Weather Report, I received a lot of exposure as a drummer, and so I got off the track a bit with my writing and solo ideas.

Getting back to your question, I went to a lot of major labels when I finally had the time to commit to my own thing, and their reaction to me was to do a drummer type of album. Most of the labels were like, "Omar must want to do something like a Billy Cobham-type thing." And so, when I tried to show that I wanted to go in a different direction, or I should say a few different directions, I think that threw them off a bit.

**WFM:** How would you describe the musical direction of your album?

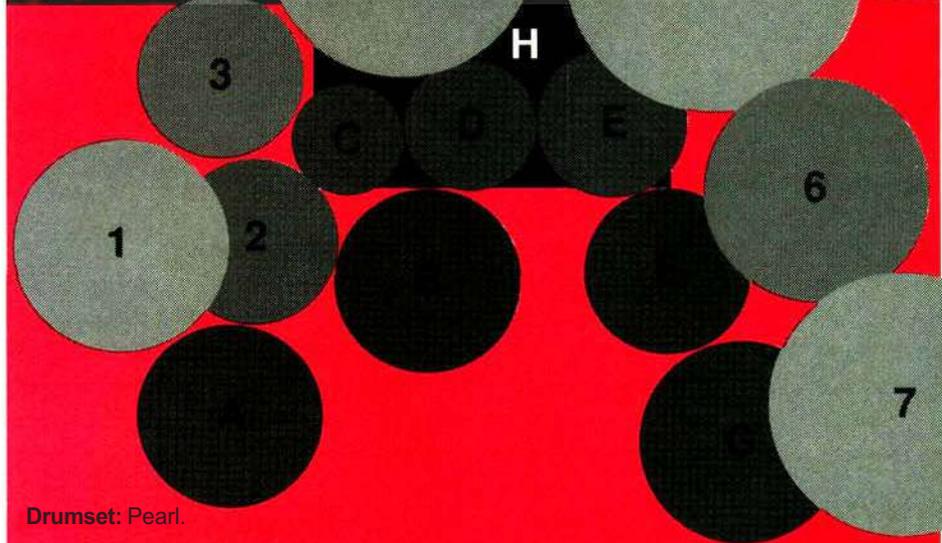
**OH:** That's hard because there are a few different styles on the record. There are 12 tunes included on the CD, nine of which are vocal tunes and three that are instrumental. Some of the vocal songs I would consider as crossover-type things. There are three ballads. There are some fun playing tunes with me, Victor Bailey on bass, and Michael Beardon on keyboards. I also have Chielmi Minucci from Special EFX playing guitar. I think the album represents my total music personality at this point. It's a weird thing to try to be who you are musically on the 45 minutes to an hour of music that you can fit onto a CD.

**WFM:** When I listened to your album, I noticed a strong R&B influence in the music and your drumming. Who were some of the drummers who influenced your R&B playing?

**OH:** When I was in junior high and high school, I was crazy about Earth, Wind, & Fire and the Commodores, and I was heavily into Stevie Wonder. I also liked the Ohio Players. However, the drumming on my album is really a mixture of all the different styles of music and drumming that I have liked, so it's tough for me to mention specific R&B players. I really liked Bernard Purdie's playing on the Aretha Franklin records and on a lot of James Brown's records. With so many of those groups out of the '60s, the drummers were never given credit, like on a lot of the Motown things, which I really liked. I wish I knew who more of



Photo by Louis Myrie



**Drumset:** Pearl.

- A. 3 1/2 x 14 brass piccolo snare
- B. 6 1/2 x 14 Free Floating snare with either maple, brass, or chrome shell)
- C. 9 x 10 rack tom
- D. 11 x 12 rack tom
- E. 12 x 13 rack tom
- F. 14 x 14 floor tom
- G. 16 x 16 floor tom
- H. 16 x 22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian.

- 1. 16" China Boy High
- 2. 13" K/Z hi-hats
- 3. 13" A thin crash
- 4. 19" A medium-thin-cash

- 5. 20" K Custom ride
- 6. 17" A medium-thin crash
- 7. 19" China Boy Low

**Hardware:** All Pearl hardware, including a P-880TW double pedal.

**Heads:** Remo coated Ambassador on snare. Clear Emperors on tops of toms, chrome Starfire heads on bottoms. Remo Pinstripe on bass drum.

**Sticks:** Vic Firth Omar Hakim signature model.

**Electronics:** Dynacord ADD-one, Akai MPC-60 sampler, Korg DDD-1 drum machine, Roland Octapad, and DW EP-1 pedals.

those musicians were, because that was some good playing.

**WFM:** Were there any specific drum parts on your record that you found challenging?

**OH:** I had the most fun with a tune called "The Mystics Glance." It's in 6/8, and I tried to stretch out a bit over the ending vamp. I feel very comfortable soloing in six for some reason. It seems many of the times that I've played solos that were effective, they were always in six or a three feel. When I was with Weather Report, Joe and I had a musical duel in a song called "Where The Moon Goes," which was in 3/4 time. Even the Sting song "I Burn For You" was in six, so I must feel comfortable soloing in that meter.

Actually, each song had something in it that was fun for me to play on the drums, like the song "Rhythm Deep"—a combination of groove and playing loose at the same time. On one hand the part has to be tight so that the track feels great and has that forward motion, but at the same time I wanted it to be free enough so that I could play some more involved drum fills. On that song, as well as a few others, I recorded the drums while listening to a percussion part that I had programmed on a drum machine. What that did was force me into a tempo parameter that helps keep things moving forward. I find that better than using a regular old boring click track.

**WFM:** One specific song that comes to mind that has what sounds like a programmed percussion track is "Constructive Criticism." Is that one of the tunes where you recorded the drums to a percussion track?

**OH:** All of the percussion on "Constructive Criticism" is programmed. Before we did a take, I just pressed Start on the machine, did a live countoff, and then we all kicked right into the song. So everything was recorded at the same time.

**WFM:** I liked the solo drum part at the end of the song.

**OH:** I started improvising that beat right after we had finished recording the tune. It happened right at that moment; I hadn't planned to do it. I just started improvising on the beat I had played during the song. So right after the musicians played that last note, I just jumped right in. When I went into the control room to listen to the song, I felt it worked. So that was one of the times when trying something a little crazy worked out.

**WFM:** There are a lot of interesting beats on the record. How did you come up with the different patterns?

**OH:** If I'm going to do R&B, pop, or any kind of dance music, I think that I, being a drummer, should come up with a different way to play those beats. I have done so many record dates where the same rhythms are used all the time. We have been dancing to the same basic drumbeats in pop music for so long; nobody has tried to be adventurous with it. So when I came up with the parts, I would sit down and play things that I just felt, and I didn't worry about it if the beat I happened to be playing wasn't the same old thing.

**WFM:** One thing I like about your playing on this record, and in general, is that when you play a standard type of groove, you keep the feel of that groove, but then you also embellish it in interesting ways. You'll play things like open rolls on the hi-hat, incorporating the toms into beats, and other things like that, which you use to make a standard beat more interesting.

**OH:** On my record, when I was coming up with the drum beats, I would record those basic beats or play them on pads into the computer. I would really spend a lot of time thinking about those beats. Then I would refine those patterns, keeping just what I thought worked, and adding things that would embellish them, as you said.

**WFM:** Something I noticed about the album was the different sounds that the drums had, almost changing from song to song.

Did a lot of thought go into that, too?

**OH:** Every piece of music on the record has a different mood, and I figure the drums should sound in such a way to bring out the correct mood. Some people use the same drum sound on an entire album. But I thought since I'm known as a drummer, it's my responsibility to make sure the drum sounds are right. I wanted to show some different "colors" of drum sounds. I wanted the drums to be interesting both rhythmically and sonically. That's the reason why on some songs I played acoustic drums, and on others I played electronic stuff—so that I could shape the sound of the drums to a greater degree.

**WFM:** I'd like to ask you a more general question about the music. I recently interviewed a drummer who got a record deal, but the label he signed with dictated the style and type of music that he recorded. Does your album represent the kind of music that you want to create?

**OH:** The record really does represent who I am at this point. It's a combination of the music I enjoy listening to and things that inspire me. Growing up in America in the '60s and '70s, musi-



Photo by Louis Myre

cians were exposed to so many different types of music. My dad was a jazz musician who taught me appreciation for a lot of different music, and he taught me how to listen. I've always loved jazz and bebop as well as R&B, rock 'n' roll, and fusion. It would have been impossible for me to have been influenced by just one thing. So I think it's quite natural that my record would reflect different ideas.

The great thing about being on GRP is that the presidents, Dave Grusin and Larry Rosen, didn't tell me what to do with my music. They heard what I had, understood the direction I was pursuing, and had enough vision to let me do my thing. I think that at most other labels everybody's an "expert" on songs and music, and what's a hit and what's not. Most labels try to make an artist conform within a certain guideline, and often it doesn't even represent what that artist is about. I'm sure Bobby McFerrin defied everybody's opinion of what a hit record could be when "Don't Worry, Be Happy" became a number-one pop record. So that goes to show you it is ultimately what the people respond to that determines a hit, rather than a so-called record company expert.

**WFM:** I understand that you played a lot of the instruments on the album. What else do you play besides drums?

**OH:** I use the piano and guitar as writing tools. So when it came time to do this record, I felt that instead of showing someone else the parts and the feelings that I was trying to get across, I'd just record it myself. I didn't do that on every tune, but on a majority of

things I worked this way. I was lucky to find Michael Beardon, who played keyboards and helped me produce the record, because he adopted my approach and became very comfortable with it. So besides the piano, I played all of the rhythm guitar on the record, as well as the drums and percussion.

**WFM:** Why did you get involved with other instruments besides drums?

**OH:** I think it's good for a drummer to experience other instruments. My dad used to tell me that as long as I was practicing something, then my chops were going to be okay. And that has really stayed with me. He said just practice *something*—if you don't feel like playing your drums, play the piano some, and if you don't feel like playing the piano, play your guitar, but practice *something*.

I think that if I were to analyze it from a purely physical standpoint, when I play drums, I use my fingers a lot. I'm sure a lot of drummers have seen the book *Stick Control* with the whole thing about using your fingers to control the sticks. Playing the piano and the guitar both require a certain amount of dexterity that I'm sure has helped my drumming. Not only that, just experiencing another instrument makes you more sympathetic to what other musicians go through to make music. In other words, if you understand the thinking that goes into playing another instrument, it will alter your approach in a positive way.

**WFM:** It sounds as if your father was a big influence on your career.

**OH:** Yeah, he's tremendous. In fact he played a gig last night where I hung out and did some jamming with him. He still plays a lot. His name is Hasan. He's a trombonist and a teacher. I played my first gigs with my dad. I can

remember being nine years old, walking into the gig, playing, and then being so tired afterwards that he had to carry me out on his shoulder.

**WFM:** Getting back to your new album, how did you go about putting together an album where you played most of the parts?

**OH:** It came together a few different ways. I enjoy fooling around with computers and synthesizers and all that kind of stuff. Before I got my computer setup, I was recording everything onto tape. I had an 8-track studio in my basement. I would learn the arrangement on the piano, and I would memorize the whole form. Then I would sit at the drumset and record the arrangement down with no music. Then I would go back and overdub the other parts, like the piano, guitar, and bass. The drag was that it was very limited. For example, if I wanted to change the key of the song, I would have to go back and redo everything.

The advent of computer technology really helped me a great deal. At first I was using a drum machine and playing piano and other instruments along with that. Then, when all of the *Octapad* and *Dynacord*-type things came out, I was able to play drum performances directly into the computer. So I stopped using the computer as a sequencer and started using it as a really fancy tape recorder, where I would just do performances. A lot of people just record sequences—the verse groove, the chorus groove, etc.—and they string them all together. What I did was to jam right into the computer. This gives me a live-sounding drum part programmed into the computer.

On the album I used that idea on four of the songs. The rest of the album was tracked live. I did this because I wanted the record to have a contemporary feel, in that I was using the latest technology, and yet still have the tradition as well. That was important to me. When I used the technology I never just programmed the part; I played it with sticks. The reason for using the computer and not tracking everything live is because it makes it possible to change sounds later on in the production process. It gave me a lot of different options to make it interesting for me.

The first two songs off the album, "Crucial 2 Groove" and "Rhythm Deep," we tracked live in the studio. "Take My Heart," the third cut, was one of the things that I recorded at my house. I did it in my MIDI studio, and then dumped all of that onto 24

track. It's one of the few tunes where I played most of the instruments and sang all of the vocals. I used the *ADD-one* kit from *Dynacord*, as well as an *Octapad*. I came up with a pattern for that song that worked well on the pads.

The next song after that is a ballad called "Amethyst Secrets." That was another track where I overdubbed the drumset part after I had already recorded the piano parts and Victor Bailey played the bass. That song was built up in stages. So that will give you some kind of idea as to the different ways we put this album together.

**WFM:** You already mentioned that nine out of the twelve songs on your album have vocals; you didn't mention though that you sing all of the lead parts and most of the background vocals. How long have you been singing?

**OH:** I've been singing off and on, sometimes good and sometimes bad, since I was young. My aunt and uncle were musicians, and they had a piano, and there was always some singing going on in the house. I've sung in



Photo by Rick Malkin

## Listener's 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 #
Procession	Weather Report	Columbia 35DP46
Domino Theory	Weather Report	Columbia 35DP140
Sportin' Life	Weather Report	Columbia CK 39908
Let's Dance	David Bowie	EMI CDP7 46002-2
Dream Of The Blue Turtles	Sting	A&M 32XB-30
Still Warm	John Scofield	Gramavision 18-8508
Rhythm Deep	Omar Hakim	GRPCR-9585

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

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label/Catalog #
Kind Of Blue	Miles Davis	Jimmy Cobb	Columbia CU-40579
Greatest Hits	Sly And The Family Stone	Various	Epic PE-30325
Birds Of Fire	Mahavishnu Orchestra	Billy Cobham	Columbia PC-31996
A Love Supreme	John Coltrane	Elvin Jones	Impulse MCA-5660
My Favorite Things	John Coltrane	Elvin Jones	Atlantic SD-1361
That's The Way Of The World	Earth, Wind & Fire	Freddie White and Ralph Johnson	Columbia PC-33280
All-N-All	Earth, Wind & Fire	Freddie White and Ralph Johnson	Columbia PC-34905
Where Have I Known You Before	Return To Forever	Lenny White	Polydor PD-6509
Band Of Gypsies	Jimi Hendrix	Buddy Miles	Reprise SN-16319
Study In Brown	Clifford Brown and Max Roach	Max Roach	Emarcy EXPR-1008
Crosswinds	Billy Cobham	Billy Cobham	Atlantic S D - 7 3 0 0

bands, either lead or background, since I was a teenager. When I got more into the drums, I got away from it. But for this record I threw myself back into it, and I really enjoyed it. I think singing will be my next thing to really develop. I have to learn to be more comfortable with it, and have even more fun with it.

**WFM:** How do you go about composing? Is it something that you have to regiment yourself to, or do you do it only when you're inspired?

**OH:** I generally only do it when I'm feeling inspired. Melodies and lyrics come to me very randomly. Sometimes when I'm strumming around on the guitar I'll come up with a progression that I like. From there I might come up with a melody or a feel. When I started writing with James Golden, he was primarily concerned with the lyrics, and I was doing the music. Because we have written together for so long, he has started to come into my territory, and I've been going into his territory. Our writing is very collaborative.

I have found that there's no set way for me to write. I'll sit at the piano and come up with things that way, but sometimes lyrics come to me first. On *Rhythm Deep* I didn't write all of the lyrics. Conceptually, a lot of the stuff is both James' and my ideas. On some of the tunes, James wrote a verse, and then I came up with the next verse. Some of the songs are all his lyrically, and I wrote the music. I feel that art just comes to you in so many different ways that there's no way to fit it in a box. As soon as you try to do that, you're in trouble. It's just like improvising or playing a solo. If you really want to keep that spirit of improvisation in your playing, it's very important to do it all on the fly and experience it while it's happening, because that's when it's the most potent. As soon as you have a couple of processes that you think worked for the last record or for that last drum solo or whatever, you're in trouble. It's much more exciting for me to keep my antennas up high enough so that I can experience the music while it is happening, rather than just playing something I've already done.

**WFM:** But how do you stay inspired to be able to keep doing it?

**OH:** Well, it's not a music thing. The best playing of music that I could muster up comes from just living. It comes from observing life, moving about in the world, and being sensitive to things that are going on around me. The reason I speak of it this way is that music, for me, isn't that kind of technical thing. My approach to it has never been that way. I think there is a certain amount of technical skill required, but once you get to a certain point, it goes beyond technique.

Here's an analogy for you: You learn the alphabet, and you learn grammar and all of the components of grammar. But when you speak, you don't think about those things. You're concerned with trying to convey your point to the person listening to you. That's the way I try to play music. I try to understand the components and practice them to a certain degree, but when I go in public with it, I want to experience it rather than play it. I mean, people used to come up to me and say, "Man, we're really looking forward to the show tonight," and I'd say, "Me too!" Because I'm going to the gig with them. I don't really know what's going to happen. We all, audience and player, go to receive this gift of music. I feel blessed that I can be a channel for some music, whether I'm on stage playing the drums or in my house writing it or recording it. That's how I really live my music. It's important to me to play from that angle. It goes a lot deeper than just some notes on a page. Hopefully the music, whatever it is, will affect both the performer and the listener in a spiritual way.

**WFM:** It seems music is something that affects you very deeply.

**OH:** That's true. I'm living it, breathing it, sleeping it. You come to my house and the whole place is just music. It's my life. The thing

is, it feels good. More than anything, I'm just happy that I've been able to make a living doing it, which is pretty awesome. I've been lucky.

**WFM:** Getting back to the record, how do you feel about it overall?

**OH:** I definitely feel good about it. I had some really great people around me who gave it the best they had. And I gave it the best I had at the moment, and if you do that, you have to be satisfied. There are some fun tunes, some mood-type things, some tunes to dance to, some tunes to laugh with, and some tunes to make you think a little bit. So I'm proud. I think the best records are the ones that you not only hear, but that you also *experience*. When you sit between those two speakers and close your eyes, you can enter that artist's world.

I remember seeing a fight with Mike Tyson, and his attitude influenced me tremendously. An announcer asked him if he thinks about his wife or his family when he's in the ring, and Tyson said, "When I'm in the ring, I think about nothing but the ring. When I'm in the ring, the ring is my world." That was something that I



Photo by Ebet Roberts

could really relate to. When I'm sitting at my drumset and playing, or writing music, or whatever, that's my world and that's all I'm focused on. And hopefully on my record, I want to get that feeling across to the people listening. If they close their eyes and really listen, they'll be able to get the same feelings I had when creating the music.

**WFM:** Are you planning on touring to support the album?

**OH:** Definitely! There is a nucleus of people on the record—again, Michael Beardon on keyboards and Scott Ambush on bass. I am planning on putting together a band around these two guys and myself. I intend to get another drummer for the band, even though I will play a lot of drums during the show. There will be times when I'll be playing drums, and other times when I'll be playing guitar or piano, or singing up front.

**WFM:** I find that really interesting that a drummer of your ability is going to be auditioning other drummers. What will you be looking for?

**OH:** Well, for this project, because it is a very groove-oriented situation, I don't need a drummer who is a soloist. I'll need a drummer who is familiar with percussion and who will want to switch off with me. I'll play some percussion while he or she plays set, and he or she will play percussion while I'm on the set. I'll want somebody who shares the same conceptual ideas as I do about the drums. I want a great strong groove player who won't feel like it's below his or her ability to just play what's right for the song and groove like mad.

You know, there are a lot of musicians who have tremendous

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## by Debbie Scott

In the August '88 issue of the Australian musician's magazine *Sonics*, the musical composition chosen for dissection in the *Songlab* column was Midnight Oil's "Beds Are Burning." The writer sliced the song into sections, by chords and arrangement, to illustrate his contention that Midnight Oil "effectively delivers the Aboriginal land-rights message from a musical point of view."

It was quite interesting to see such an in-depth analysis of the band's music, since it is generally their lyrical messages that are torn apart. It reinforced what is often overlooked about Midnight Oil: Their real effectiveness lies in their ability to creatively convey those lyrics through music that captures the essence of the message.

Rob Hirst's intense drumming style has always played a prominent role in the band's impact, helping to propel the music's urgent messages right off the vinyl and into the soul. But equally important to the band's success has been Rob's attitude toward his profession and how it fits into the music's big picture. He feels that once a drummer has learned his craft, he should tailor his drumming around the goals of his band, and not around his own self-serving interests.

Says Hirst: "When you're a young player, there are a whole lot of ego problems you've got to get out of the way; you have to feel that you can play as good as the next guy. That's good, but when you get to a higher level, you should try to fit into the band you're playing with and be a contributing member of that band. Because, let's face it, if what you're doing as a band

doesn't make sense, then no one will ever hear about what you're doing as a drummer."

People are quite aware of Rob Hirst in Australia, and his respected reputation has enabled him to carve his own personal niche in drumming history. He has held a seven-year grip on the title of Best Drummer in Australia in the *RAM* magazine annual readers poll. But in keeping with his modest personality, Rob dismisses the honor as being a reflection of the popularity of the band, not of him personally. Rob then specifically illustrates his perspective on his career—a perspective that is subsequently reflected throughout the interview: "You see, I'm not into drums really, per se. I am interested in the role that drums play and in combining that instrument with others to make great bands and to make great music."

Although nearly all of Midnight Oil's six albums and two EPs contain great music, it is their latest LP, *Diesel And Dust*, that is the real testament to Rob's philosophies. For a band to have taken such an abrupt change in style, the individual members had to abandon their own raw-edged instrumental delivery to make room for the collective effect. Rob explains that it was the band's experiences on their 1986 trip into remote Aboriginal communities of Australia's outback that shed new light on the meaning of the word "music."

"What happened with *Diesel And Dust* was we'd been very heavily influenced by what we'd seen and heard out in the desert. We'd heard acoustic instruments—the clap-sticks and the dijeridus and acoustic guitars we'd

taken out there—and they all sounded fantastic under those expansive skies, around a campfire in the middle of nowhere. And we thought, 'These songs, such as "Beds Are Burning" and "The Dead Heart"—which were already written at that stage—sound great in this acoustic environment. If we can just get that down on tape, then those acoustic instruments will inevitably sound better on record than electronic instruments, samplers, drum machines, and all that.' So our job really was to try to recreate some of that atmosphere.

"From a drumming point of view, I was trying to express in a rhythmical way what it was like to travel hundreds and hundreds of kilometers down dirt tracks, driving through mallee scrub and mulga and basically feeling like that mountain range in the distance isn't getting any closer four hours down the track. And you get this sort of rhythmical thing with the diesels and the motors going at a certain pace; you're charging down the Gunbarrel Highway or one of those in central Australia, and it's a perpetual rhythm thing. It's very different than, say, on the *10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1* LP, where songs like 'Only The Strong' are made up of five different takes all cut together and with gear changes and dynamic bits. We wanted the opposite on this; we wanted this sense of perpetual space. These people have been out there for 40,000 years, and things happen very slowly if they happen at all. It's very different for white boys brought up in cities to slow down."

Rob is quick to point out

that, while his drumming approach on *Diesel* may be somewhat different than on previous albums, he doesn't think it is any more laid back, but instead is more "appropriate." "People have misunderstood the LP; they've said *Diesel* is more commercial or that my drumming is not as wild. And I say, 'Look, to be a good player is to be an appropriate player.' And this 'around the drumkit, hitting every drum at once' sort of stuff that I love doing and that would be appropriate for some songs, simply wouldn't have been right for 'Put Down That Weapon,' 'Warakurna,' or 'The Dead Heart.'"

Midnight Oil's live appeal to young Aussies is largely based on the raw power and aggressive instrumental attacks wielded by the band. But it was through embarrassing audience walk-offs in some of the Aboriginal communities that the band members learned the meaning of being an "appropriate" player.

"You see," Rob says, "when we went out there and did the tour, the first couple of shows we played the way we play at the Sydney Entertainment Center in front of 11,000 kids. And it was totally inappropriate; black folk just walked off into the bush! It took us a while to slow down and make the music appropriate, and that is where this whole idea came from."

Although several of the tracks on *Diesel And Dust*, such as "Dreamworld" and "Sometimes," were recorded using only straight drums, Rob and producer Warne Livesey employed a combination of acoustic and sampled sounds on other tracks. Warne explains how they

# An Appropriate Player

# Rob Hirst



Photo by Ken Duncan

were able to achieve this: "We used an Atari computer that was running a Steinberg Pro 24 sequencing package, and all the rhythm tracks were recorded to click tracks generated by that package, so that we could actually sequence things along to the real drums."

Despite Rob's focus on rhythmic consistency on *Diesel And Dust*, many of the songs are sprinkled with an array of percussion that adds to the LP's vivid imagery. "Sell My Soul," which Rob says is the most electronic track on the LP, was worked up by

"No, really I think that chain-gang sort of thing is what we were getting at."

On "Bullroarer"—which is the name of an instrument used by the Australian Aborigines—the motive for some of the sounds included was a little more apparent. But Rob explains immediately that they didn't actually use a real bullroarer. "A bullroarer is a sacred Aboriginal instrument twirled over the top of the head, and is used as a message-sending device. If you've seen *Crocodile Dundee II*, Paul Hogan used one on top of a mountain," he says.

for that."

Rob also used some Aboriginal claves known as clap-sticks in "Bullroarer." This track, like "Sell My Soul," is based on a combination of acoustic and sampled sounds, but this time the computer-generated sounds were sampled in the studio, so they could use the Aboriginal instruments. The basic tom-tom rhythm heard throughout the song was generated by computer, and Rob played his bass drum, snare, hi-hat, and other miscellaneous instruments over the top of that.

Hirst says he would prefer to

sort of beat, and you think, 'Ah, this is quite nice to listen to' and then suddenly this explosion comes in and it's like, 'Wake Up!' It's just punctuations and unusual combinations. I like to combine mainly acoustic instruments, but then throw something in that sort of kicks you in the guts."

So how does Rob feel overall about the use of electronics? "I hate it!" he laughs. "No, really, I think the use of it is fine, but I think you have to treat it with the contempt it deserves. You can't let it dictate what you're going to do. If you want to hit something and you've got this great sound that you couldn't get from an acoustic drum, that's fine. But there's still something about wooden sticks played on wooden drums tuned right that appeals to me more than anything else about drumming. Electronics can often be a really cold and clinical way of drumming, and it doesn't inspire the heart-strings as far as I'm concerned."

In his live setup Rob relies mainly on his acoustic kit, but he does use some electronics to help recreate some of the combinations from the albums. For songs like "The Dead Heart" and "Beds Are Burning" he has a couple of Simmons pads to trigger a collection of sampled sounds from the LPs. "Same with the snare sounds," he explains. "The snare is bugged with a trigger, and we mix the acoustic snare in with the sampled sounds. For 'Kosciusko,' which sounds like the General Motors Holden Pressing plant on a Monday morning, to get that sound it's easier to do it that way."

Rob's attitude about choice of gear parallels his philosophy that 'to be a good player is to be an appropriate player.' A good setup is made of the appropriate gear, and for him, practicality is more important than flash. "The latest Japanese multi-tom monstrosity doesn't appeal to me at all," he says. "People don't realize that often



Photo by Susan Alzner

blending some simple acoustic sounds with a lot of sequenced percussion generated by a couple of Akai S900s. One of the sounds generated implies the use of an anvil. Since this is not a common rock 'n' roll instrument, its inclusion is intriguing and possibly intentional—providing a subtle relation to the song's theme: hitting an anvil, selling your soul, being a slave. But Rob's aloof reaction leaves the question a mystery. "Yes, now that you come to mention it, that sounds good," he laughs with a surprised expression. But is that really the truth? He answers fairly convincingly,

"Well, it's a sacred instrument, and he shouldn't have used it; only initiated men are supposed to hear those sounds. So we didn't use a real bullroarer, as that would've been cultural imperialism. Instead we used an imitation bullroarer that school kids in Australia use. It is a ruler with a piece of rope wrapped around it. A real one is made out of a piece of hardwood about two feet long, attached to a piece of hide or skin. The idea behind the song was that we had been given the opportunity to hear those sounds in the desert, and this was to express our gratitude

work up more of his own sounds, but in the case of *Diesel And Dust*, the studio they recorded in wasn't very good. "We had a real battle on our hands in this studio, and we couldn't work up as many of our own sounds as we would have liked to," he recalls. "So we had to rely a little bit more on Warner's 'briefcase full of sounds' for this album."

On some songs, such as "Beds Are Burning," Rob's use of sampled sounds is very limited. On that particular track he basically threw them in to keep listeners alert. "On 'Beds' you've got this cruise-y

## "Here's a band writing about saving our forests, and I go through 30 sticks a night."

it's the acoustic environment you're in, rather than the drums that you're playing, that make the good drumset. So my advice to young drummers is to go and get a little Ringo or Charlie Watts style kit that sounds good, is made of good wood and by craftsmen, rather than buying this \$10,000.00 atrocity."

With the exception of the snare—which is a Premier *Piccolo* (3" deep)—Rob's kit is made up of three different Ludwig drumkits thrown together. "Mainly they're the ones Ludwig made in the '60s, the ones that Ringo used to play," he explains. "I like the way they made drums in the '60s; they're nice, warm-sounding drums."

The kit includes three 13" tom-toms, a 16" floor tom, and a 22" bass drum. "The kit is actually divided in two," says Rob. "The first two toms are tuned up really high, like timbales, with white *Ambassadors* on the top, and the other 13" tom and the 16" floor tom are fitted with *Pinstripe* heads and tuned really low. So I've got like a toppy, responsive kit to the left and these thunderous deep toms on the right.

"We've also got this ingenious invention made by the Australian Sound Clamp Company called the Australian Crocodile Clamp," Rob explains. "It is a hydraulic mic clamp—that's the best way I can describe it—that clamps onto the side of all the drums. With this clamp we don't have to have independent mic stands, and it eliminates the vibrations that you'd normally get transmitted through the drum to the microphone. The mic's are sitting on this hydraulic cylinder. They're great!"

Rob's drumsticks are also made by an Australian company—one called Ozbeat—and Rob says they are modeled after a 5A with wood tips. He wraps them with terry cloth for better grip, since he feels that wristbands aren't enough to absorb sweat.

His choice of cymbals

includes a Zildjian 20" medium crash and a 20" crash ride, a Paiste 2002 ride, and 14" Paiste hi-hats. He also has a cowbell and a UFIP 8" Lebell.

As with his Ludwig drums, Rob prefers older pedals. "My hi-hat pedal and foot pedal are

more I hit it, the better it sounds. It's got this big dent in it." [laughs] Although he doesn't use it a lot, when he does, Rob takes full advantage of its sound-generating potential. Not only does he whack away at it, but he also runs his drumsticks up and

Rob also does melodramatic maneuvers with his drumsticks. Often during a pause he flips them backwards into the water tank. Other times during a tune, with each consistent lick on his upper right Zildjian, he'll let the stick go propelling off it across the stage, and then



Photo by Susan Alzner

Premier, the old ones that they used to make in the 60's. I'm scouring the countryside for them," he declares, "so if anyone's got any...! They're fantastic because they never break down—simplicity itself, which is the essence of everything, of course. I still have a few of those left, fortunately, but I don't know what I'll do when I smash all those up, because I don't like any of the new ones."

The most conspicuous and unconventional component of Rob's setup is what Aussies call a water tank. (To Americans, it's more commonly known as a corrugated culvert.) It measures approximately 32" high by 21" in diameter, and Rob has it miked up along with the rest of his gear. "We found it out in the desert and threw it on the back of the truck," he explains. "It's sounding even better now; the

down the tank, perpendicular to the corrugations, for a guiro type of sound.

"People pop out of it occasionally," Rob says. "We were playing once in Melbourne, and I was doing a drum solo for 'Power And The Passion,' and I heard someone else playing along as well, and I thought, That's funny; I'm not playing this! So I stopped, and I realized that Paul Hester from Crowded House was inside the tank, playing along! He finally popped his head out."

During live shows, Rob's energized personality commands attention. He has a non-stop smile; he also channels his reactions to audience eye contact and the emotional intensity of the song being played by magnifying his actions behind the kit. He frequently leaps up, playing from a standing position.

rhythmically repeat the action. And at the end of the set he takes two handfuls of sticks, and with one sweeping bash, sends them scattering about. Rob shrugs it off, with a reply about as unpredictable as his behavior: "Not very ecologically sound, is it? Here's a band writing about 'Dreamworld' and saving our forests, and I go through 30 sticks a night; there's a lot of contradiction there, huh? Of course, the crew does rush around and pick them all up, though."

So showmanship isn't all that important? "The showman side of me is just the way I play, and I don't give it a second thought," Hirst says. His actions are quite erratic, but he also exhibits a great deal of creative control. Well, his actions appear controlled, but then again.... "I just think it's part of your personality and

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# Michael Blair

*The word "boundaries" isn't in Michael Blair's vocabulary. And it is no coincidence that, while he splits his time between New York and Stockholm, he plays drums and/or percussion with artists with similar approaches: Elvis Costello might use steel guitar, Laurie Anderson a Fairlight, and Tom Waits could growl in front of banjos—or any other instrument not associated with today's pop music. Other artists whose "no holds barred" approach Michael has enjoyed working with are The Paul Winter Consort, The Lodge, John Zorn, Brian Ritchie from the Violent Femmes, poet Allen Ginsberg, veteran folk singer Eric Anderson, Dagmar Krause, Syd Straw, Claudia Schmidt, and Japanese fusion cellist Hajimi Misoguchi. Though Blair's philosophies in life and in music might be considered a little left of center, a tad on the eccentric side, his work is undeniably creative. That his eccentric philosophies and playing have made him successful proves that someone can make a living by playing alternative music and following his heart.*

*by Robyn Flans*





Photo by Aldo Mauro

# A Different Road

Photo by Aldo Mauro

**RF:** Whatever made you pick up a drumstick?

**MB:** When I was seven, someone came around my neighborhood in Long Beach with these little accordions that looked wonderful. An accordion was small enough for me to play, and it looked fun with all those buttons to push. A few years later, I

found myself working out Beatles and Dave Clark Five songs on the accordion, and I figured that wasn't really going to go far. Of course, the accordion wasn't a rock instrument, but it was a black-dotted pearl accordion, which was like the colors of Ringo's set. So I knew I was moving the right direction.

When I was ten and a half, I got the telephone book out and taped paper to one half of it, so that when I hit the paper, it sounded different than just hitting the book. That was my approximation of a hi-hat sound. At the time, I didn't really know if my parents would go for buying me a drumset which is a big expense. But I sat them down and said, "I can't play accordion one more day; I have to play the drums," and they said, "Okay." They were frustrated musicians themselves. They both had been singers in college, and my dad had played some piano. But they hadn't pursued show business, so watching me was a kick for them.

I played in rock bands in junior high and high school, where we did Doors and Hendrix tunes. I stopped playing in high school, though, and got interested in other things, like politics and sports. Then I went to Johnston College in Redlands, California, which was an experimental school. I went there thinking I was going to be a psychotherapist. I was still into sports at that point, but I separated my right shoulder in a football game, and I couldn't play anymore. I had to have pins put in it, and I was in a sling for a couple of months. While I was laid up, I realized I wanted to play drums.

There was a composer at the school named Barney Childs, who ended up being my advisor. He was a well-known contemporary composer, and had this new-music ensemble that played contemporary chamber music and avant garde stuff. I heard all these sounds, and it was like, "I want to do that." So I grew up sort of as a kiddie rocker, and then I found avant garde chamber music, which is "anything goes." If you don't do anything, it's

fine. If you pick up a lead pipe and hit it, it's fine. Or you can put together a multi-percussion set with all different instruments. I began learning to play mallets because I was never a keyboard player, even though I played accordion.

**RF:** What about your arm?

**MB:** After the pins came out, I started practicing right away, and that ended up being part of my therapy. From that winter on, I started performing and practicing and gave up sports. I was studying with Mitchell Peters, who is the principal in the L.A. Philharmonic, and who was recommended by my teachers in Redlands. The school was a very fertile musical place. Friends who left there all ended up going to San Francisco, L.A., or New York to play new music—not pop music, but chamber music stuff.

**RF:** While you were in this very intense program, what were you doing musically?

**MB:** I played in the orchestra, in the concert band, and in the jazz band. I studied with Mitch—basic snare drum rudiments, orchestral excerpts, and all that stuff—and I started writing music and theater pieces with choreographers. A lot of the music we were given was pretty intense, notated, orchestral chamber music, and some of the times we'd get pieces that were like little postcards with instructions on them, like abstract images.

There was a Jim Tenney piece where there were images of white—like snow and paper. We had to "think almost white," or "nearly snow."

**RF:** And you had to interpret that musically on your instrument?

**MB:** Right, and I'd agonize, going, "What do I do with this?" It was always presented as being as valid as anything else, which was great conceptual training. I started to incorporate the new playing techniques that I was learning then. I'd do things like suspending things above the timpani or right on the timpani. I'd use triangles or Japanese temple bowls and stuff like that, which ring, and then I'd use the copper shell of the timpani and the playing membrane as a big resonator. The pedal changes the pitch, so if you hit something and it resonates into the timpani head, you can change the pitch using the pedal so that it sounds like a whale screaming.

There's a vibraphone trick where you don't use the motor, but you hold the pedal down, strike the metal bar, and hold your mouth directly over the bar and use it as a resonator. You open and close your mouth, and that gives a vibrato just like the motor would. But you do it yourself so you can control the speed. I would also do something I first saw Gary Burton do, where you strike the vibraphone bar, and then slide a hard mallet from the node—where the cord goes through—to the end of the bar. It makes the pitch descend a little bit. There were a lot of things like that that just fascinated me to no end, because I wasn't particularly technically adept at that point, like being able to read Bach on the marimba and do all that stuff that I learned how to do later.

**RF:** As you were getting heavily into percussion, what music were

you listening to?

**MB:** I listened to lots of rock, because as a kid, I listened to the radio heavily. I was in Southern California, hearing the Four Seasons, the Beach Boys and surf music, then Motown and the British invasion. I was listening to whatever there was at the time—a lot of Steely Dan, Hendrix, the Doors.

**RF:** Were you listening to chamber music as well?

**MB:** Not as much as playing it actually, and that's always been a big problem for me with contemporary chamber music. As a performer, diving into technically advanced music tended to be rewarding, but as an audience member, a lot of the pieces didn't sound good. They seemed to be incredible intellectual exercises, but many of the pieces just left me cold. I didn't walk away as an audience member really enjoying what I'd heard. But I learned a lot about multi-percussion playing through performing those sort of scary technical pieces.

The perception of percussion, musically, has changed a lot in the last 80 years, so as a player I feel very fortunate to be in the middle of that. And I feel a part of the tradition, so it's important for me to extend that. That was perhaps my contribution—my conceptual musical thing—because if I wasn't going to be a therapist or a politician, I still had to impact my community. It wasn't a "let's save the world" kind of thing, but that's how I could go out into the world and say something. Pop music is very powerful because everyone hears it all the time, even people who hate it.

**RF:** Were there drum influences along the way?

**MB:** I've gotten to work with Jim Keltner a few times. I'm quite a fan, and I've stolen a lot of licks from Jim and Andy Newmark and the people who played on a lot of the records I listened to. Ringo was a big influence because of his personality and his sense of time—the phrasing. I'll repeat the cliché that's said about Ringo: The technique that he had was perfect for that band.

I want to go one step further, though. Having worked with a lot of pretty bull-headed eccentric songwriter, McCartney actually is a very musical drummer, and Lennon, I believe, had a lot of pretty clear ideas of how he wanted a rhythm section to sound. After working with Tom Waits and Elvis Costello, I understand a lot more now about why certain choices are made. It's almost like an arrangement choice or a production choice: That drummer on that sound or that phrasing is really the best-suited for whatever kind of music it is. Ringo was the right person because he came up in a very natural way through the scene, and the way he understood this kind of groove was very different for pop music at that time. The Beatles did not write like anyone else after they let go of the Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly, Little Richard, and Chuck Berryisms. After they shed some of that, Ringo was still willing to move with them as songwriters.

You can't just place a Stewart Copeland or a Simon Phillips—who seem to be very aggressive, lots-of-notes players—in any situation. I'm not saying they play *too many* notes. There are a lot

of fusionesque drummers who came up then that have those kinds of chops and that use them in ways I very much disagree with, but Simon and Stewart are two people coming out of that scene I very much appreciate, as well as Al Foster. The upshot of it is there's a place for all of it. People call me because they want a drummer who may play like a percussion player.

**RF:** What is that?

**MB:** In my case, the groove is sort of orchestrally built up, and in a recording sense, it'll be a lot of instruments, which sort of end up sounding like a drumset. There will be low drums in the bass drum function, and in the tom-tom function perhaps there will be metal sounds—hubcaps, brake drums, lead pipes. There are some instruments that are commercially made now that can be combined with snare drum figures, which then move in a different way. It's not just "bang, bang" on the snare drum. Then in the cymbal category, I always use a lot of gongs and Chinese cymbals and things from Thailand and Japan, where the function is not to sound like music from a specific culture, but just that want a different kind of cymbal sound. I might make a multi-percussion setup since I got used to doing that in college for the chamber music stuff. I was used to having a lot of different instruments around me, so I might create a drumset that's full of a lot of different things. I'll have my big Chinese drum to use as maybe the third tom-tom, or I'll have icebells and all kinds of stuff.

On the last Tom Waits tour, I sampled a lot of my stuff that is really a pain to carry because it's very heavy, like my orchestra chimes, lead pipes, and big plates of metal from the junkyards. I used an *E-max* sampler to make the hard disks. It's much easier to have the sound person be able to combine the sampled sounds for some of the things that are really specific and that don't sound like a drum necessarily. If I'm going to spend that much time with the frequencies, and—getting back to the recording thing—if I'm going to

build up something with all these different instruments, I want that frequency to be heard and to be able to be mixed like an album. On this Waits tour I had an *Octapad* off to the side where a third floor tom would be. I sampled a big bell, which I hit with a hammer. I also sampled some chime notes I needed for some songs. I hate hitting plastic, but it sounded better, which was a pleasant surprise.

On the Costello record, *Spike*, some times we intentionally didn't have a drumset player—me or anyone else. My big Chinese drum would function as the bass drum, and we might have a basic track of acoustic guitar and Elvis's guide vocal, and then I would start building something off a bunch of my metal sounds, the Chinese drums, and all kinds of other stuff. They just sound a little different, but it still ends up having the same frequency, and the groove is



continued on page 88

## HONOR ROLL

MD's Honor Roll consists of those drummers whose talent, musical achievements, and lasting popularity placed them first in MD's Readers poll in the categories indicated for five, or more years. We will include these artists, along with those added in the future, in each year's Readers Poll Results as our way of honoring these very special performers.

This year, it is MD's pleasure to add a new artist to the Honor Roll. With his fifth win in the Mainstream Jazz category ('79, '80, '86, '87, and '89), Hall of Fame member Tony Williams joins the other outstanding performers named below.

### AIRTO

Latin American and Latin/  
Brazilian Percussion

### GARY BURTON

Mallet Percussion

### VIC FIRTH

Classical Percussion

### STEVE GADD

All Around Drummer;  
Studio Drummer

### NEIL PEART

Rock Drummer;  
Multi-Percussionist

### BUDDY RICH

Big Band Drummer

### DAVID GARIBALDI

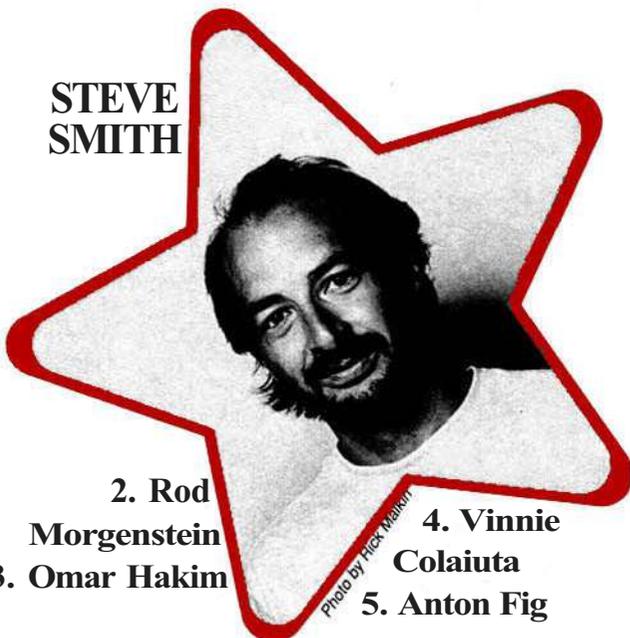
R&B/Funk Drummer

### TONY WILLIAMS

Jazz/Mainstream Jazz  
Drummer

## ALL AROUND

### STEVE SMITH



- 2. Rod Morgenstein
- 3. Omar Hakim

- 4. Vinnie Colaiuta
- 5. Anton Fig

## HALL OF FAME

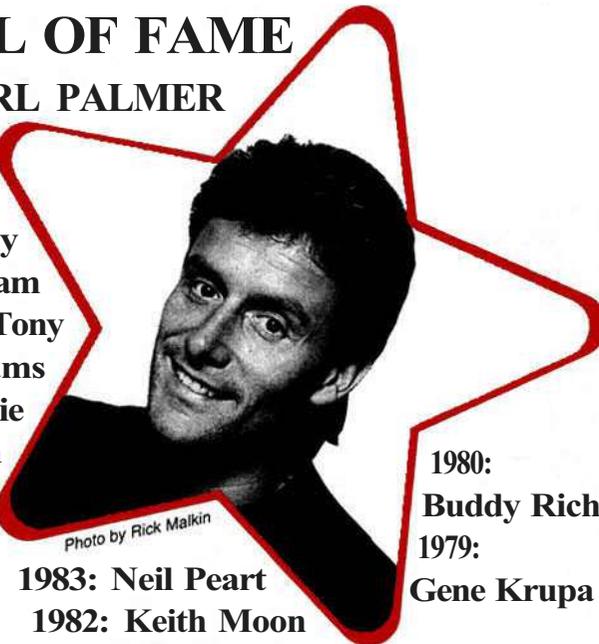
1989: CARL PALMER

1988: Joe Morello

1987: Billy Cobham  
1986: Tony Williams

1985: Louie Bellson

1984: Steve Gadd



1983: Neil Peart  
1982: Keith Moon  
1981: John Bonham

1980: Buddy Rich  
1979: Gene Krupa

In order to present the results of our Readers Poll, the votes were tabulated and the top five names in each category listed here. In the event that a tie occurred at any position other than fifth place, all names at that position were presented and the subsequent position eliminated. When a tie occurred at fifth place, all winning names were presented.

# POLL RESULTS

## STUDIO

VINNIE COLAIUTA

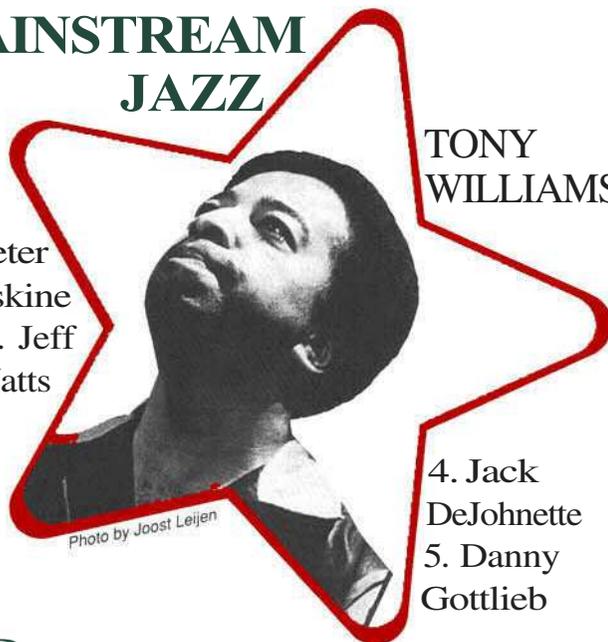
2. Jeff Porcaro
3. Anton Fig
4. Simon Phillips
5. J.R. Robinson



## MAINSTREAM JAZZ

TONY WILLIAMS

2. Peter Erskine
3. Jeff Watts



4. Jack DeJohnette
5. Danny Gottlieb

## BIG BAND

ED SHAUGHNESSY

2. Louie Bellson
3. Mel Lewis
4. Peter Erskine
5. Steve Houghton

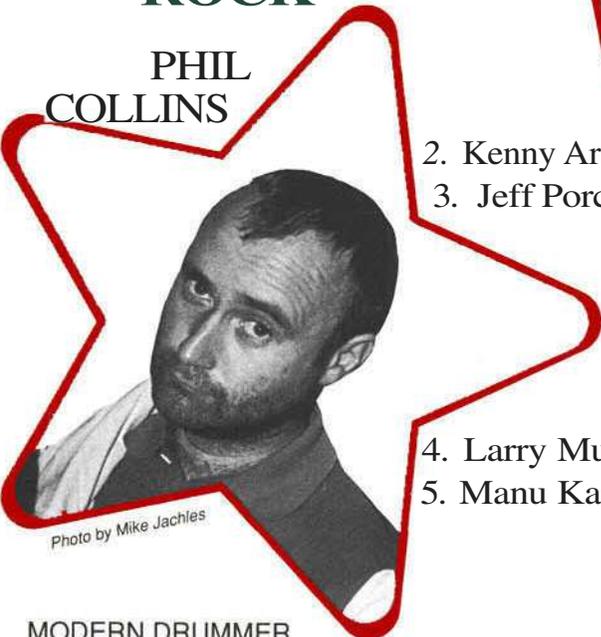


## POP/MAINSTREAM ROCK

PHIL COLLINS

2. Kenny Aronoff
3. Jeff Porcaro

4. Larry Mullen, Jr.
5. Manu Katche

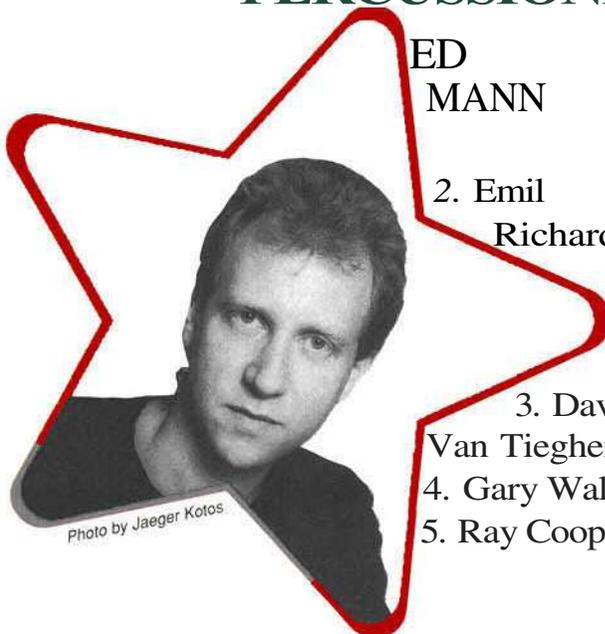


## MULTI-PERCUSSIONIST

ED MANN

2. Emil Richards

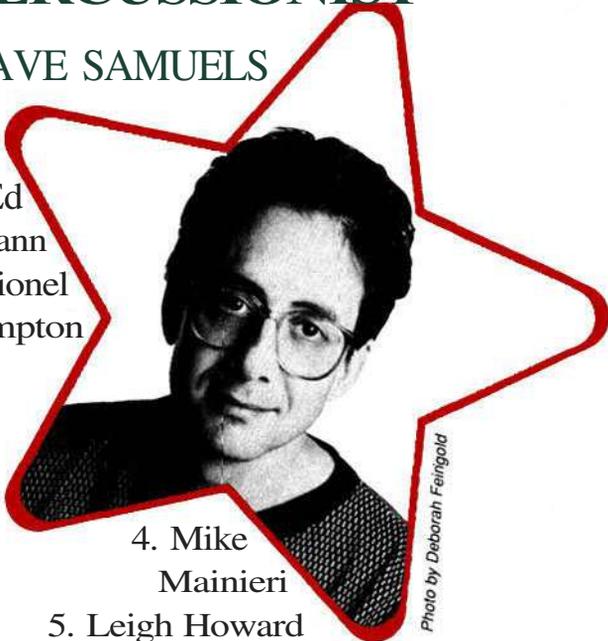
3. David Van Tieghem
4. Gary Wallis
5. Ray Cooper



# MALLET PERCUSSIONIST

DAVE SAMUELS

- 2. Ed Mann
- 3. Lionel Hampton



- 4. Mike Mainieri
- 5. Leigh Howard Stevens

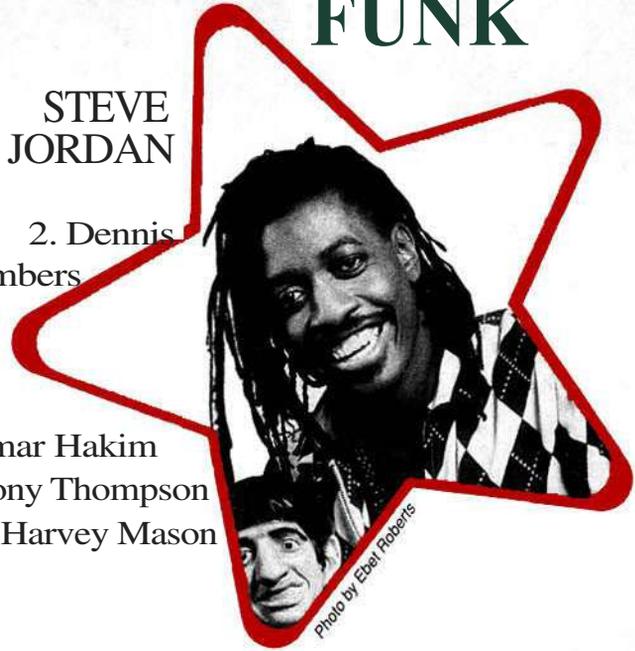
*Photo by Deborah Feingold*

# FUNK

STEVE JORDAN

- 2. Dennis Chambers

- 3. Omar Hakim
- 4. Tony Thompson
- 5. Harvey Mason



*Photo by Ebel Roberts*

# UP & COMING? DRUMMER

WILLIAM CALHOUN  
(Living Colour)



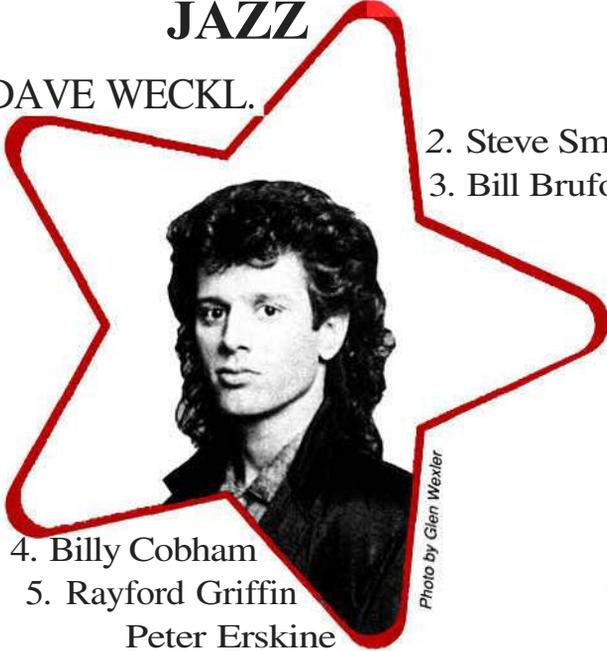
*Photo by Adam Budofsky*

- 2. Steven Adler (Guns N' Roses)
- 3. Jason Bonham (Jimmy Page)
- 4. William Kennedy (Yellowjackets)
- 5. Joel Rosenblatt (Michel Camilo)

# ELECTRIC JAZZ

DAVE WECKL

- 2. Steve Smith
- 3. Bill Bruford



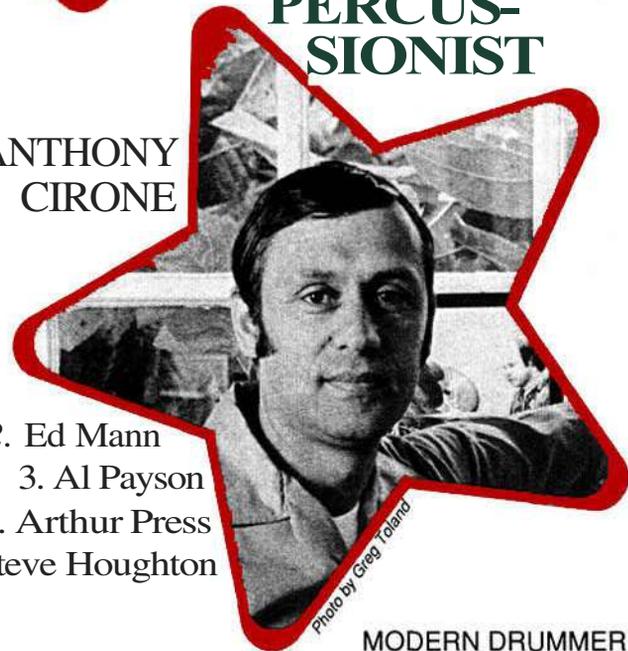
*Photo by Glen Wexler*

- 4. Billy Cobham
  - 5. Rayford Griffin
- Peter Erskine

# CLASSICAL PERCUSSIONIST

ANTHONY J. CIRONE

- 2. Ed Mann
- 3. Al Payson
- 4. Arthur Press
- 5. Steve Houghton



*Photo by Greg Toland*

## COUNTRY

LARRIE LONDIN

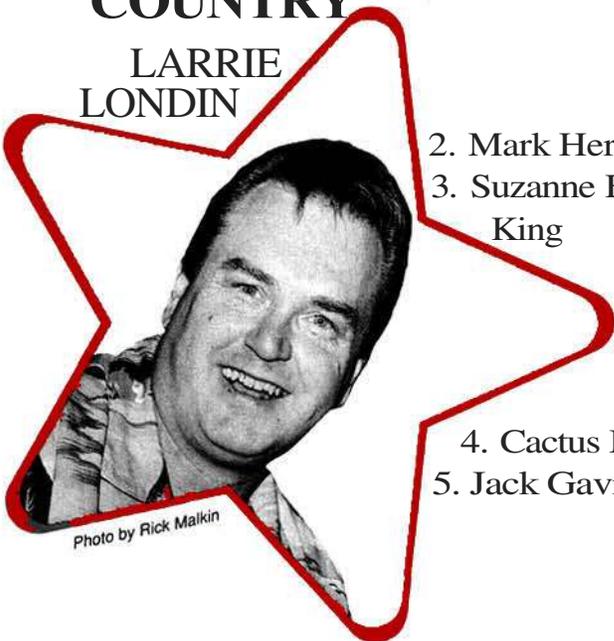


Photo by Rick Malkin

- 2. Mark Herndon
- 3. Suzanne Elmer-King

- 4. Cactus Moser
- 5. Jack Gavin

## LATIN/ BRAZILIAN

ALEX ACUNA



Photo by Rick Malkin

- 2. Tito Puente
- 3. Frank Colon

- 4. Manolo Badrena
- 5. Mino Cinelu Sheila E.

## RECORDED PERFORMANCE

NEIL PEART

RUSH

*A SHOW OF HANDS*

- 2. Lars Ulrich—Metallica: *And Justice For All*
- 3. Rod Morgenstein—Winger: *Winger*
- 4. Dave Weckl—The Chick Corea Elektric Band: *Eye Of The Beholder*
- 5. Alex Van Halen—Van Halen: *OU812*



## HARD ROCK/ METAL

LARS ULRICH



Photo by Mark Weiss

- 2. Alex Van Halen

- 3. Tommy Aldridge
- 4. Rod Morgenstein
- 5. Gregg Bissonette

## PROGRESSIVE ROCK

ROD MORGENSTEIN

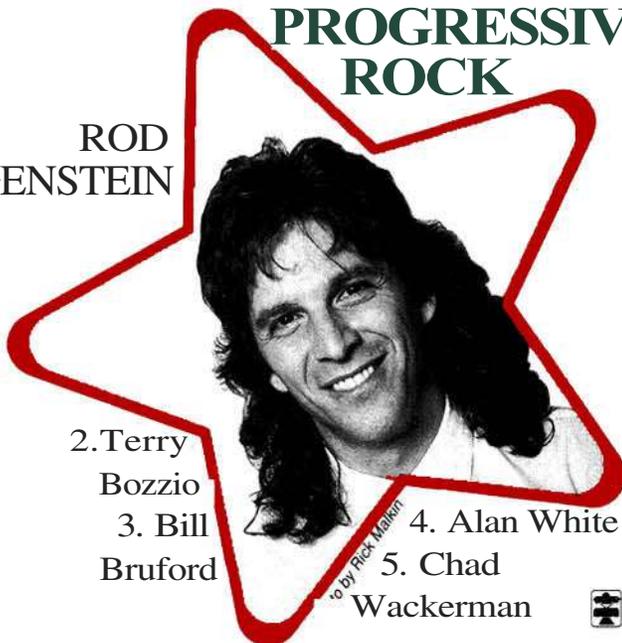
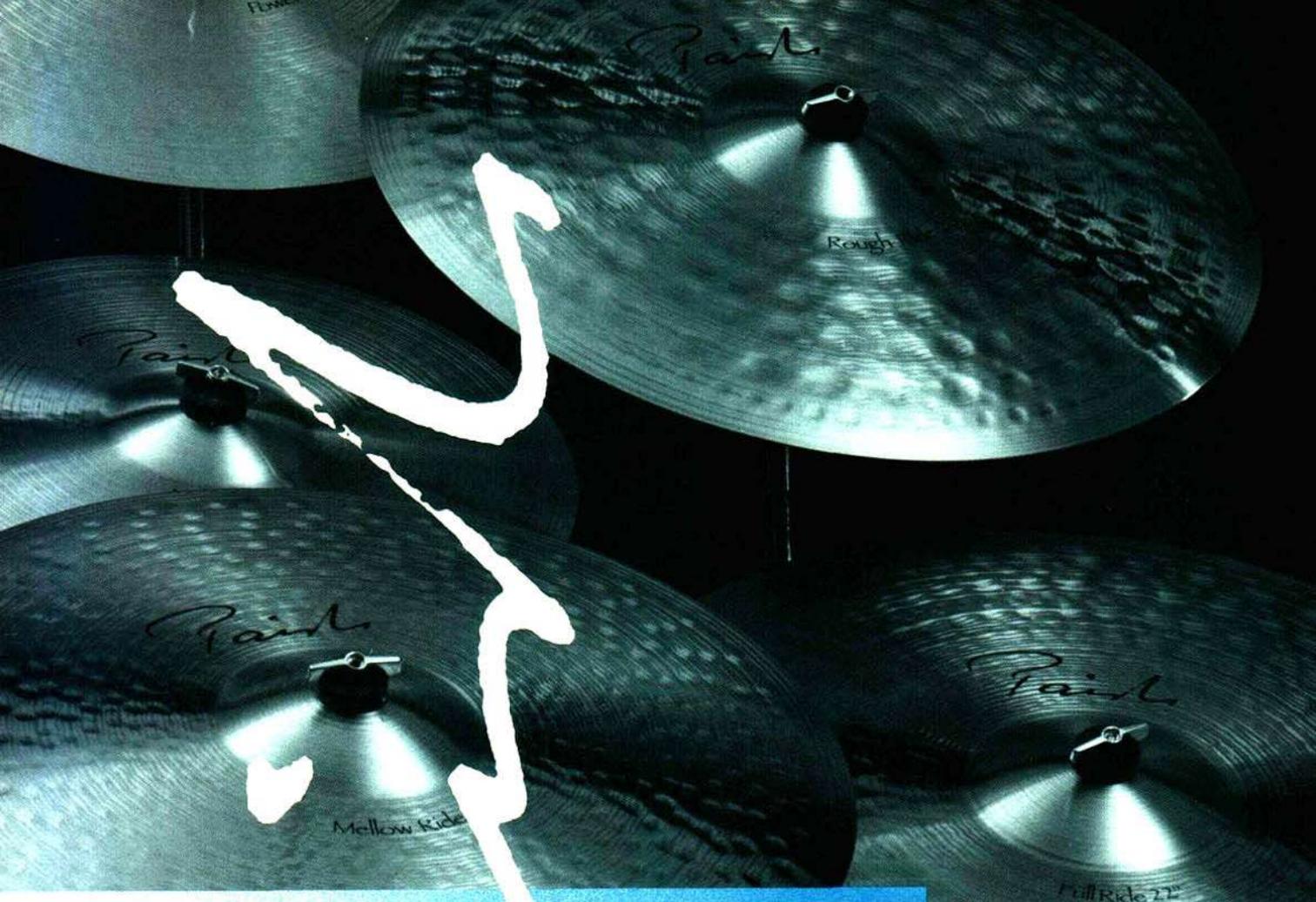


Photo by Rick Malkin

- 2. Terry Bozzio
- 3. Bill Bruford

- 4. Alan White
- 5. Chad Wackerman



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MUSICIANS  
AND THEIR  
MUSIC**

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—JEFF PORCARO

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—NICKO McBRAIN

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—SHEILA E.

"You feel like playing with these cymbals. They've got fantastic stick rebound. They just swing by themselves."

—AL FOSTER

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—BILLY HIGGINS



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—STEWART COPELAND

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—JON HISEMAN

"They are like a whole new generation of cymbals—for every generation of players. There is one cymbal for every style of music."

—IAN PAICE

"These cymbal sounds will inspire drummers to tune their instruments accordingly. The sound of the drums has to be richer to complement the cymbals."

—PIERRE FAVRE

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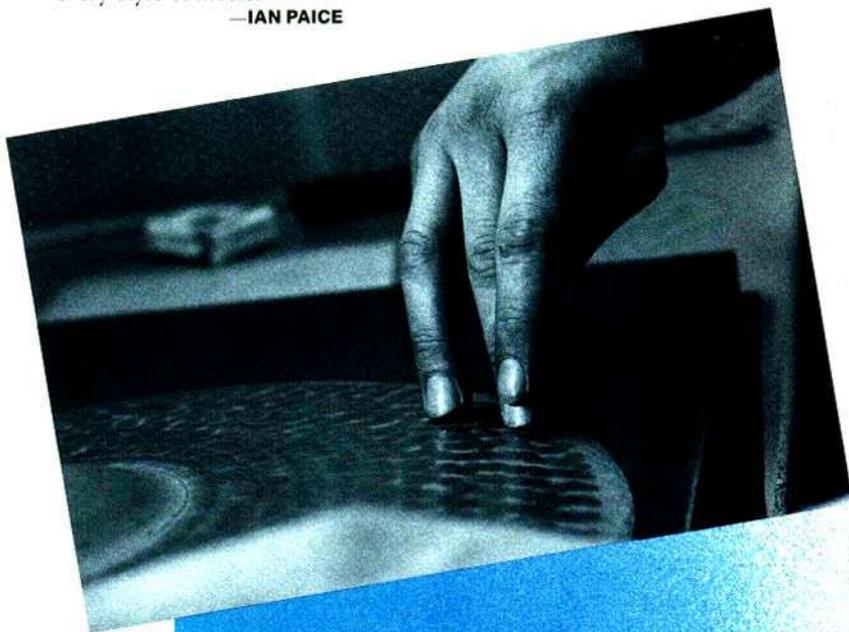
—LEON NDUGU CHANCLER

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—MARK HERNDON

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—FREDY STUDER



# Zildjian Cymbal Alloy Snare Drum



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Just when you thought you'd seen snare drums made in every possible manner and out of every useable material, along comes still another intriguing idea that hasn't been thought of before. In this case, it's the 360-year-old Avedis Zildjian Cymbal company, along with the designers at Noble & Cooley, makers of hand-crafted wood drums since 1854, who are responsible for this one-of-a-kind entry in the snare drum market.

What makes this drum unique is that its thin, cast-bronze shell is constructed of the same alloy Zildjian uses to craft cymbals. It's the first time in the history of the company that this alloy has been used for anything other than cymbals and gongs.

The drum is available in a 6 1/2" depth only, and adheres closely to the basic design of Noble & Cooley's *Classic SS*, which has become popular over the past few years. Snare beds and bearing edges are all precision-cut, and the drum features ten antique-style lugs positioned at the "nodal point." This point is approximately 1" to 1 1/2" up from the bottom of the shell, and, according to Noble & Cooley, offers *maximum* snare drum resonance with the least amount of interference.

You'll also find the same strainer that's used on the *Classic SS* model, complete with a knurled fine-tension screw adjustment. Though I've never been a fan of throw-offs that swing out—because of the additional room they require—I must say this strainer is probably one of the smoothest on the market. The beauty of the mechanism lies in its design simplicity. It's as

functional a device as you'll find on any drum, and does precisely what it was designed to do—minus the frills and gadgetry we tend to see on some higher-end models.

The drum reviewed came equipped with 20-strand snares and with *Genera* heads by Evans, top and bottom. The *Genera* batter head is a relatively new design that incorporates a thin, circular plastic dampening strip affixed to the underside of the head. It's a valid idea, and particularly important with a drum such as this. What with no other means of muffling supplied, the *Genera* concept—or some other means of dampening the overtones produced from a drum constructed of a cymbal alloy—is absolutely essential. However, even with the *Genera* head, the drum tended to produce a rather overbearing ring. I added another plastic ring on top of the *Genera* batter, but it seemed to choke the drum just a bit too much. Ultimately, the perfect combination turned out to be Yamaha's suede *Ring Arrestor* in conjunction with the *Genera* head. This seemed to offer just the right amount of overtone reduction, and improved articulation considerably. This is not to imply that the drum didn't sound good with the *Genera* head, but only that the internal strip simply was not enough to do the trick, and additional dampening was required. I also tested the drum with an *Ambassador tap/Diplomat* bottom combination and no muffling. Here, too, the ringing had to be subdued with either a plastic ring or a *Ring Arrestor*.

Once I had settled on head combina-

tions and dampening, I decided to put the drum to the test in the workplace. It was here, in a moderately high-volume club setting, where I could fully appreciate all that this drum had to offer. Not surprisingly, the drum was bright, crisp, and lively. I had little trouble cutting through a wall of synthesized sound with a minimum of effort and no mic'. It was also relatively easy to achieve a nice wide tonal range, from a crack with lots of bite at the high end, to a deeper, more meaty tone when tuned down a bit. The drum was extremely sensitive from dead center to the perimeter, and rimshots and clicks popped with authority and definition.

Along with its fine responsiveness, this is also one of the loudest snare drums I've ever played. Striking the drum from a stick level of 2" to 3" off the drum was equivalent to striking a lesser-quality shell from a level of 9" or slightly higher. No question, this is one powerful piece of equipment. But for this very reason, it might not prove to be the ideal instrument for the small group player. The drum would probably work best in the hands of power players who truly require this level of volume and projection, or club date drummers in moderate- to high-volume situations. The drum should also win favor among studio players who'd like to add another snare drum voice to their collections. The drum possessed a nice combination of the rounded warmth of wood, with the crisp presence of metal, which could prove useful in the studio environment.

Also be aware of the fact that this is by no means a light drum. Next to the Sonor *HLD 590*, it's probably one of the heaviest drums I've ever had to lift on and off a snare drum stand. You'll need a strong one to keep this drum firmly positioned, and be prepared to carry that additional weight around in a sturdy case.

Finally, it's impossible to overlook the appearance of this drum, a factor that certainly contributes to its appeal. Zildjian's bronze alloy shell offers a rich, brushed-gold effect that contrasts beautifully with Noble & Cooley's gun-metal black chrome hardware. It's quite a distinctive-looking instrument, with a classic elegance. Of course, rarely do high quality, good performance, and exceptional beauty come cheaply. The snare drum is priced at \$1,195, and is likely to appeal to only a limited segment of the drum market. But for those who aren't yet members of that elite upper echelon, this is certainly one instrument well worth saving up for. For more information, contact The Avedis Zildjian Company, 22 Longwater Drive, Norwell, Massachusetts 02061.

—Mark Hurley

# Collarlock Bar System

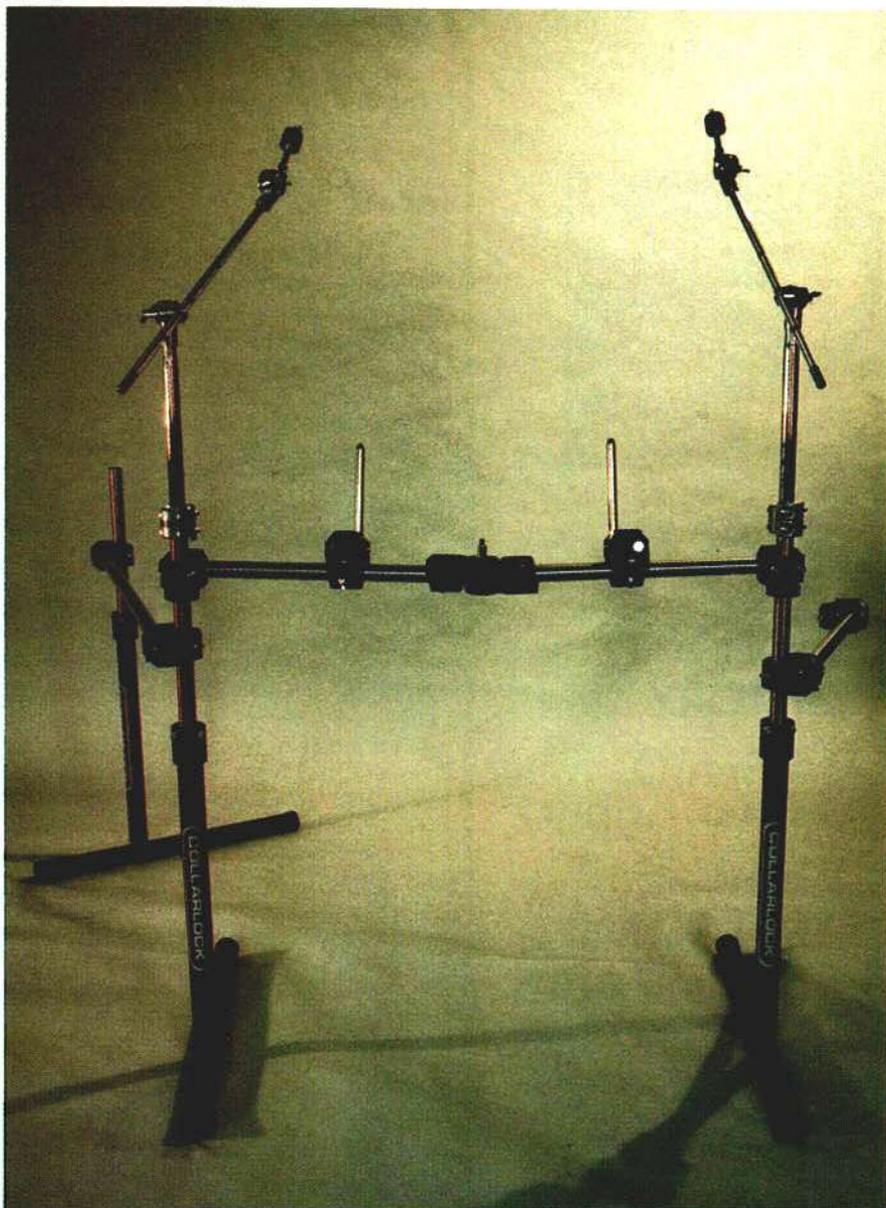


Photo by Rick Mattingly

When I first reviewed Collarlock's Bar System back in June '85, the unit was engineered for use with existing cymbal stands on your drumkit. Since then, the company has made some design changes, which warrant another look at the "new, improved" Collarlock product.

While the System can still be used with cymbal stands as supports, Collarlock now has its own support units. The supports are 1 1/2" diameter tubing, finished in black. The supports come in two types: End Supports (which are basically an off-set T shape utilizing a 24" horizontal base), and Center Supports (which are a T shape and use an 18" horizontal base). The End Supports are designed for all applications of support except between two bass drums. Center

Supports are designed to be positioned from right to left between bass drums to counter-act side-to-side motion on wider or double-bass systems. The supports dismantle into two pieces by means of a recessed key screw underneath the horizontal tube, making them compact for transport. The vertical section of each support contains an adjustable 1" diameter post within. This section is height-adjustable for the tom-tom mount cross-bar, and will disappear completely into the vertical support tube. The post is marked with graduated lines to assist in an even, balanced height setting for both supports without having to use a ruler or another form of measuring.

A nifty feature of each support is the disappearing tube that can serve as a receiving base for any hardware item with a 7/8"

down tube—such as a cymbal boom or tom arm. (Many such items are of that size.) Collarlock provides a double-sized memory collar called a *Teleclamp* for this purpose. The bottom half of the collar clamps onto the top of the disappearing tube; the top half clamps to whatever item you put in. I tried it with two generic Taiwanese import cymbal booms, and the concept worked great; the memory collar established the cymbal height, and the portion of the boom's down tube below the collar simply disappeared into the support base. This effectively did away with two cymbal stands. I could just have easily inserted two Pearl-type tom arms and used them to add small toms, electronic pads, or percussion items.

At this point, I should mention that *all* adjustments and settings in the Collarlock system are drumkey-operated. Well, actually, a special oversized Torque Key is supplied to assure secure pressure clamping of all components. A regular drumkey will work in a pinch, but Collarlock's special key provides just a little more leverage on the square-head screws.

A standard Bar System for a double-tom setup utilizes a 40" bar, which is made of 1" stainless steel tubing. Both ends of the bar have a black, hinged, double-holed split clamp (Collarlock calls them *Fast Clamps*) to connect the bar with the support tubes. The *Fast Clamps* have swivel nuts on one side, allowing quick removal of the bar from the support. Granite-finished aluminum memory locks are used on the support posts to set the bar height accurately every time you set up. The memory fittings interlock with the *Fast Clamps* to provide sure stability and positioning.

*Fast Clamps* are also used to hold the tom-tom mount arms to the bar. Collarlock has five clamp sizes, all with one side 1" in diameter (for the bar), and the other side ranging from 5/8" to 1 1/8", to hold practically any drum, cymbal, pad, or accessory you have (depending on the holder diameter). In addition, they offer seven different sizes of tom arms, from 3/8" to 1", to accommodate most manufacturers' drum brackets. The arms are chromed steel, and are formed at a 90° angle. An arm fits into a *Fasf Clamp* with a 5/8" hole, and allows lateral drum angle as well as forward angle adjustments on the bar. I had no problem setting my toms as I wanted them, and they remained stable. I found it best to leave both the clamps and the arms on the bar when breaking down, as there are no memory locks provided for the tom-tom *Fast Clamps* or the arm inserts. (I guess hose clamps could be used on the bar for positioning the *Fast Clamps*, which would then allow you to take advantage of the quick-release feature.)

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From this basic setup, the Collarlock system can be expanded to whatever configuration you need by adding bars, support bases, and *Fast Clamps*. The company offers bar lengths from 12" to 72" that can be used in horizontal, vertical, or angular positions. Two bars can be connected by means of a special ratchet-angle *Bar Connector* to create horizontal angles, or to mount three or more toms in front of you in a slight V-shape. Even a hi-hat stand can be connected to the Collarlock system via a special mount that uses a 24" bar, a bar-to-bar *Fast Clamp*, and a *Fast Clamp* for the hi-hat height tube diameter. (Since the connector surfaces are round, any outward or inward angle can be achieved.) Microphones can also be added to the setup, since the company has 15" and 18" mic' holders available. With all these options, it's still possible to employ the original Collarlock idea of using your own cymbal stands as the means of support, rather than Collarlock's End Supports.

The initial setting up of the system takes a little while, but past that, future setup and teardown is simple and quick. With everything mounted up, the unit is very stable and gives a sleek, clean look (unlike some others I've seen that look like a plumber's nightmare). I can't fault the Collarlock system, except for perhaps the fact that if you change brands of drums (and thus tom holder brackets), different-sized tom arms and *Fast Clamps* might be needed. This is a fairly minor problem, however, since one size of *Fast Clamp* (FC-78, 7/8") will accommodate Pearl and Yamaha tom arms while one other (FC-10, 1") will handle DW, Gretsch, Ludwig, Rogers, Tama *Granstar*, Tempus, and probably a few others. Thus, using one or the other of these sizes of *Fast Clamps*, it may be possible to use a manufacturer's original-equipment tom arms, rather than Collarlock's specially adapted ones. In essence, you have a choice, which could prove beneficial in terms of economics.

The basic CBS-21 bar system for mounting toms, using two End Supports and one crossbar, is priced at \$529.00 (\$233.00 if you use your existing cymbal stands). Collarlock has thought out four different system "packages," as well as The CUBE (Collarlock Ultimate Bar Expansion), a cage-type arrangement for mega setups with cymbals suspended above, gongs in back, or whatever. (It lists for \$2,463.00.) By piecing together various Collarlock components, you can easily come up with an efficient custom bar-mount system that is sturdy, lightweight, easily transported, and quick to assemble and break down. You can contact Collarlock at 283 E. 11th Ave. #101, Vancouver, BC V5T 2C4, Canada.

—Bob Saydowski, Jr.



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by Rod Morgenstein

## Accented Triplet Warm-ups



Photo by Rick Malkin

### MUSIC KEY



One of my warm-up routines involves single-note accents on 8th-note triplets. By single-note accents I am referring to an accent that falls on either the first, second, or third note of an 8th-note triplet. Simple as this may seem, they can create quite a challenge when played in combination with one another. First, let's play the three basic patterns separately. (Pay special attention to example 2, as the accent falls on a very awkward part of the beat.) Be sure to tap your foot or count on every beat to make certain that you feel the accent in the right place. After you can play these and all of the exercises in this column as written, add flams to the accented notes.

R L R L R L R L R L R L

Now, combine the previous examples to form this three-measure exercise. Again, once you are comfortable with the example as written, add flams to the accented notes as we did in the previous examples.

The following example combines two beats of each accent pattern to form one measure of 6/4.

Examples 6 through 11 consist of various combinations using two of the accent patterns.

If we play each of the accent patterns for one beat each, they combine together to form the following example in 3/4.

You might try some of these licks on your drumset, playing the accented notes on the toms and the unaccented notes on the snare. I find these patterns very helpful in strengthening both a feel for triplets and an overall command of time.



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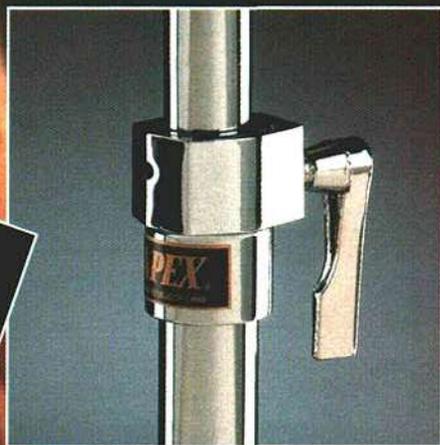
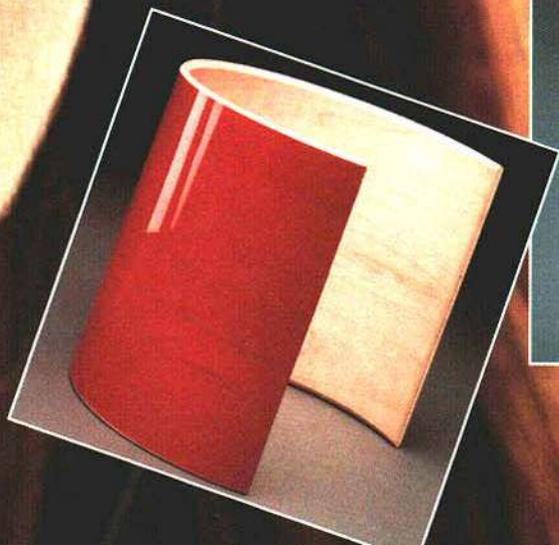
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## Combining Your Drumkit

### MUSIC KEY



There was once a time when drum machines didn't exist and acoustic drums were used for everything, both live and in the studio. However, when the drum machine was invented, drummers started being replaced. Most of this occurred in the studio, as songwriters and all kinds of musicians started using drum machines for demos and even records. It became an either/or situation:

They used either a drummer playing acoustic drums or the drum machine. Today, in addition to these two options, people are combining drum machines and live drums, creating another approach to making records. The combination of the human feel from the live drummer with the relentlessness and exactness of the drum machine has become a perfect meeting point of man and machine.

I used to bring my acoustic drums and percussion instruments to recording sessions, but now I also bring a drum machine, and sometimes other sound sources with sampled sounds and MIDI capabilities. I think of these electronic instruments as just more sounds to choose from and more options to work with when trying to create good music. There are many different ways you can use the drum machine in the studio. It just depends on the song, and on the direction the artist and producer want the song to go. I always try to think about what will make the song sound best, and then take it from there.

I recently recorded the song "Live It Up" for Marshall Crenshaw's upcoming album, and I felt that this particular song would sound better if I programmed a beat on a drum machine and overdubbed real drums, as opposed to doing one or the other. It had a dance feel (drum machine) mixed with a Stones-like rawness (live drummer). So I programmed the following beat on my drum machine, using these sounds: handclaps (written on top staff, space above staff—diamond shape), open hi-hat (top staff, space above staff), tambourine (top staff, fourth space from bottom), side stick (top staff, third space from bottom), deep snare drum (top staff, second space from bottom), maracas (lower staff, space above staff), and cabasa (lower staff, second space from bottom). When the band recorded the basic track for this song, we used this drum machine beat as our click track:

On my acoustic drumkit I played the following beats during the intros and verses:

and together they looked like this:

I recently recorded an album with John Eddie, and once again I used the combination of drum machine and real drums. First I programmed a basic drum and percussion part on the drum machine. I then isolated the bass drum by assigning it to its own output (output 1), and later recorded it on its own track. The concept for the basic drum tracks was to combine the programmed bass drum (output 1) with my live acoustic drums minus my acoustic bass drum. This meant playing my drums without using my right foot—awkward but effective! After I programmed the drum tracks, the other musicians (bass, keyboards, guitars, vocals,

by Kenny Aronoff

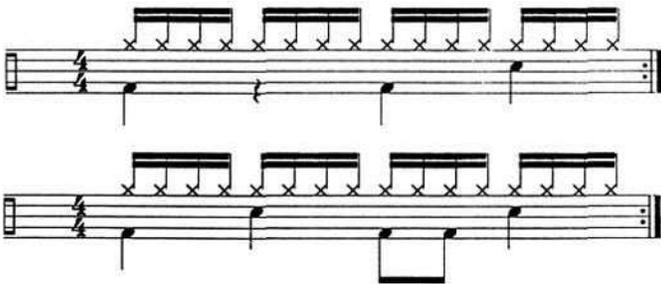


Photo by Rick Malkin

# With A Drum Machine

etc.) overdubbed their parts. Then I went into the studio and overdubbed my acoustic drums. To make the bass drum sound more powerful, I MIDled my drum machine up to another sound source with great sampled sounds, and stacked three different bass drums together.

I had to play every note perfectly in time, in order to lock up with the bass drum. This was a challenge. The basic track ended up having a great combination of a real solid, consistent bass drum on the bottom with a human feel on top. Here is an example of how I recorded "Shake My Faith" on John Eddie's record:



On one song from Seth Marsh's album, I programmed a simple drum beat and overdubbed tom-tom fills and cymbal crashes from my acoustic kit. Once again, I MIDled my drum machine to another sound source to make the machine parts sound bigger. Because the engineer put SMPTE time code on tape, I could always go back after everyone else's parts were recorded and edit the parts that I had programmed on the drum machine. [SMPTE time code was originally developed by NASA as a means of accurately logging telemetry data, and was later adopted and modified by the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers. SMPTE time code labels each frame of a videotape by recording a unique piece of digital data on that frame. The SMPTE time code emanating from a SMPTE generator can be recorded on tape and played back into a SMPTE time code reader, which precisely identifies where you are on tape. This data not only helps synchronize audio to video, but can also synchronize two or more audio recorders together.]

In some situations I've been hired to completely replace drum machine parts to try to make the song swing or groove more. It's a tough situation, because you're very much restricted to the existing feel and groove of the song. Everyone else's parts and feels are already on tape, and instead of leading the band as I usually like to do, I have to play with the pre-recorded band and drum machine perfectly. It's like playing with machine-like time, but still adding as much human feel to the track as possible. It's important to play real tight with the drum machine track so that the producer has the option of using only your live track, keeping the drum machine track after all, using both tracks together from beginning to end, or using bits and pieces from both tracks.

These are a few examples of some of the combinations and possibilities you can come up with when using your live performance on acoustic drums combined with a drum machine. Integrating real drums with machines is not only what is happening today, but what is going to continue to be happening for a long time. Drum machines are becoming so versatile, with human-like feels and great sampled sounds, that the possibilities are endless. Be open-minded and think of an electronic instrument as just another option or sound to consider when playing or recording music. If

you own a drum machine, practice some of the following combinations:

1. Learn how to use all the functions on your drum machine. Be able to program beats and songs, edit, copy, erase, offset, mix, etc. The machine you have will determine what you can do, but try to do whatever is possible.
2. Program a drum pattern and play real drums with it. Try to lock both parts perfectly, as if you and the machine were one instrument. Program fills, punches, breakdowns, etc. to play along with. Experiment!
3. Program a percussion part on your drum machine and come up with a beat on your acoustic kit that grooves and works well with the machine. Once again, try to lock both parts perfectly.
4. Program a song on your drum machine and leave room to do fills and/or a drum solo on your kit. Keep a percussion part going as you solo so you don't lose your place. Also try different time signatures like 7/8, 7/4, 9/8, 5/4, etc.

These are a few examples of things to practice when integrating a drum machine with acoustic drums. The drum machine will never replace the live drummer completely, but it has found a place in music, and it's here to stay. It's a good idea to at least become familiar with one.



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The following section goes from triple strokes to multiple-rebound buzz strokes. *Do not tighten up during the buzz strokes.* Your hands will be moving at the same speed, but you'll be applying different finger pressure.

Note that the buzz roll will not sound smooth when you play these slowly. However, just concentrate on making the sticks rebound as much as possible. After you develop a good rebound, increase the tempo and close up the roll. Repeat each exercise at least ten times before proceeding to the next one.

8  
R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L

6  
R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L

6  
R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

9  
R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R L R L R L R L

10  
R R R L L L R R R L L L R L R L

11  
R R R L L L R L R R R L L L R L

12  
R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R L L L R L L L R L L L R L L L

3  
3  
3  
3  
R R R L R R R L R R R L R R R L

13  
R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L R R R L R R R L R R R L

14  
R R R L R L L L R R R L R L L L

Here are a few suggestions for variations on these exercises:

1. Play at all volume levels. Try everything from extremely soft (*ppp*) to extremely loud (*fff*). Stay relaxed.
2. Play exercises 1-7 with brushes. This is a great exercise for wrists and fingers, and will improve your control with sticks. Anything that can be played with sticks can be played with brushes, with the exception of closed rolls. In that case, simply substitute single strokes in place of the stroke and rebound.
3. Practice all of the preceding exercises starting with the left hand.

Any questions on this article may be directed to Joe Morello c/o Modern Drummer.



## Learning Polyrhythms:

### MUSIC KEY



Earlier in this series I discussed what I call "consonant" polyrhythms. Now I would like to cover "dissonant" polyrhythms. A dissonant polyrhythm can be any combination of rhythms played together. However, these polyrhythms don't necessarily combine rhythmically as well as the consonant polyrhythms.

The word "consonant" comes from harmony and is used to describe notes that, when heard, fit well together. The word "dissonant" describes notes that don't necessarily fit well together. I use these same descriptive words for polyrhythms. Here are some examples of dissonant polyrhythms.

### 11 over 4

Sound Pattern:



Written:

(counted two ways: 1-11, or 1-6, 1-5)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11  
1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5

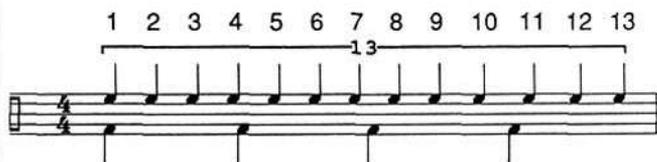


### 13 over 4

Sound Pattern:



Written:



Learn these rhythms by hearing how the top rhythm combines into the same space in time as the bottom rhythm. Do not feel that you always need to know exactly how the two rhythms work mathematically. By now you know enough about polyrhythms to understand how to work them out with your own ear. This ultimately turns out music and not mathematics.

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photo by Dion

# Part 5

by Peter Magadini

Here is a solo exercise that combines many of the polyrhythms we have discussed in this and previous articles.

♩ = 72

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 72 quarter notes per minute. The exercise is a solo exercise for a single melodic line, likely for a drum set, as indicated by the rhythmic notation. The notation includes various polyrhythmic patterns, such as 3/4, 5/4, 6/4, 7/4, 11/4, and 13/4, which are indicated by brackets and numbers above the notes. The patterns are complex and involve multiple accents and syncopations. The exercise is designed to challenge the drummer's ability to maintain a steady pulse while playing these complex rhythms.

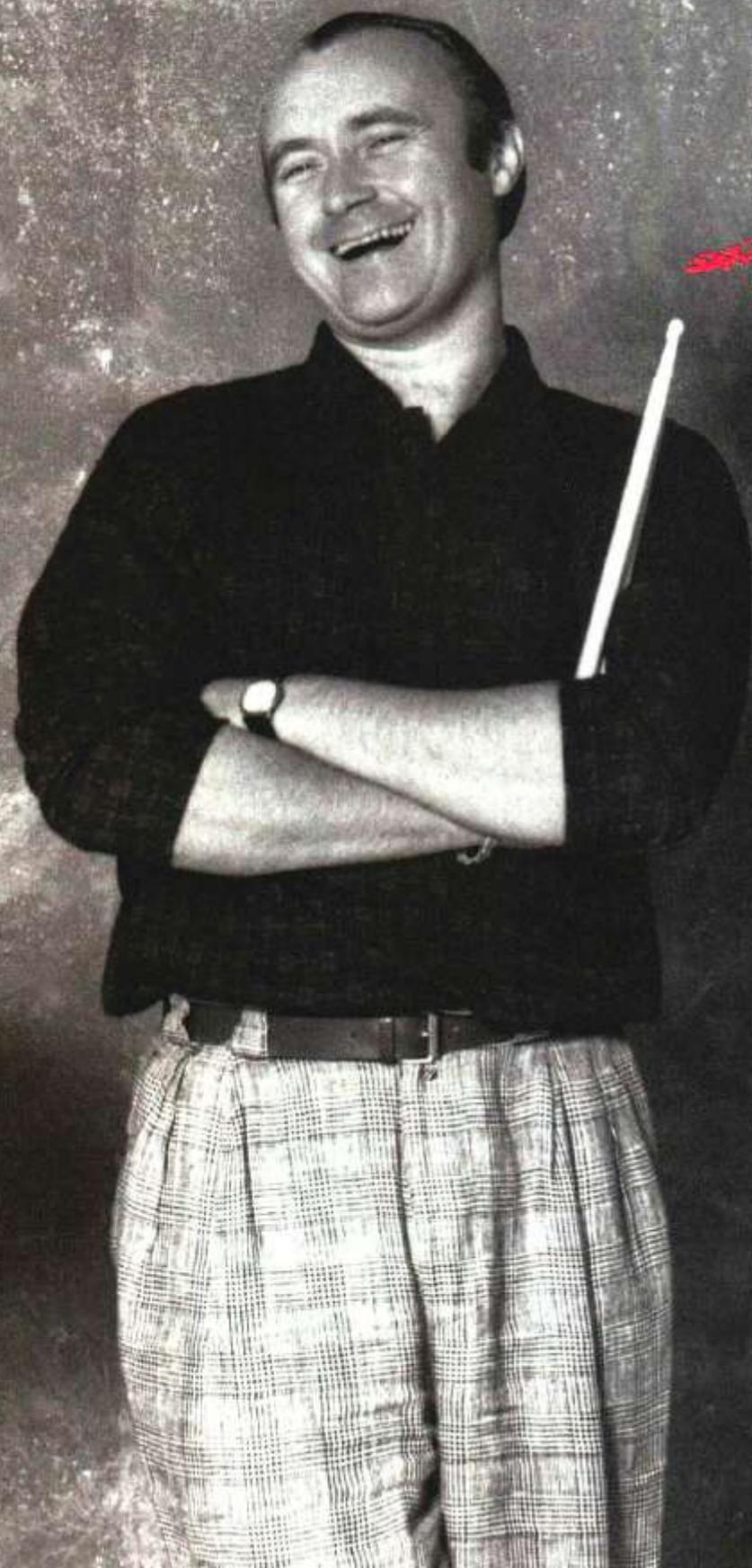
If you have followed all or part of this series of articles, you should have a comfortable knowledge as to how the concept of polyrhythms works in music. Even if you just managed to read one article in the series, you should have increased your understanding of polyrhythms and polymeters as they might relate to your own drumming style. The one message I hope you take with you is that polyrhythms are a part of music. They are as much a part of rhythm as tapping your foot, dancing, or playing in 4/4. The use of polyrhythms is not an invention of twentieth-century musicians; it is a musical fact that has always been with us. If you spend the time learning how to hear and understand polyrhythms (as I think all drummers should), you will develop into a better drummer and musician regardless of whether you need to perform with them or not.





Photographed in London by Chris Cuffaro for Sabian.

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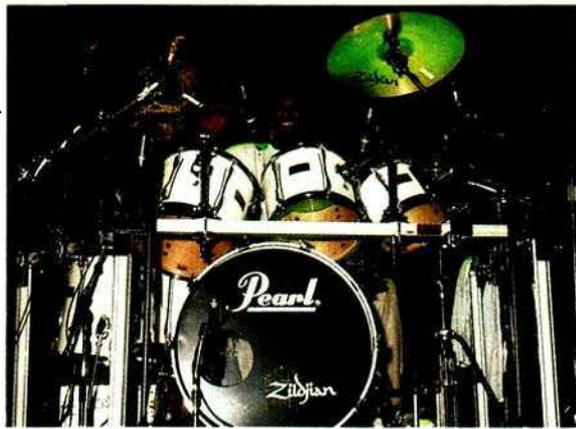


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chops, and they're not happy playing a simple groove. For me, my whole approach is to groove. On all the record dates I'm called for, they call me because I'm going to show up and groove. There's a joy in just doing that. That is the essence of drumming for me. So for my band, I'll want a drummer who definitely shares that attitude. When we groove, no matter how

Photo by Lissa Wales



There's another friend of mine that I grew up with that I used to trade gigs with. His name is Trevor Gayle. He's another guy who could do a great job for me. But these guys work so much I doubt if they'd be available.

**WFM:** I'd like to change the subject a bit. In your last MD interview [December'84], you were playing with Weather Report. I'd like to discuss some of the things you've done since then.

**OH:** Actually, *during* my time with Weather Report I did a few other projects about the same time that article came out. I did two albums with David Bowie, *Let's Dance* and *Tonight*. During my time with Weather Report I also did a record with Brian Ferry called *Boys And Girls*. Weather Report was in London performing some gigs at the Hammersmith Odeon at the time Brian was recording. Brian heard I was going to be in town, and he called me up. I'd never met him, but he had heard my work on some records, I believe.

I had a ball doing that record. I was doing some wild stuff, like playing Simmons pads with my hands. I did this because I wanted to be in the control room to hear the song, but the stick sound on the pads was too loud. So I just turned the sensitivity way up and played them with my hands. I did a lot of Simmons overdubs this way. That was fun. Right after I finally left Weather Report, and right before I joined Sting's band, I did the Dire Straits album *Brothers In Arms*.

**WFM:** That was something I never had clear. Had Weather Report completely broken up when you left to join Sting, or were you thinking about rejoining Weather Report?

**OH:** Actually that was a strange time.

simple the part may be, it has to feel unbelievable.

**WFM:** Do you think it will be tough to be in front of a band that's playing your music, and you won't be on the drums?

**OH:** It's going to be different for me. I've been thinking about that a lot. I ask myself how am I going to find another drummer who is going to be able to play the parts I played, parts that are important to the song, with the same care that I had when I recorded them. Even though I'm doing a lot of singing on the record, I think the drumming on the record is still very interesting, and I'm going to need the right person to pull it off.

I have some friends around town whose playing I love. I would love to be able to get them to go on the road. These guys are so busy now that I don't see it happening, though. For instance, William Calhoun, the drummer from Living Colour, and I stay in touch constantly while he's on the road. Man, if I could get Calhoun to play drums on my tour it would be great. I know that he shares this concept of groove, even though Will can play the drum solo of life! But he doesn't feel it's below him to sit down and play the hell out of a groove.

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# LECT KORY



Weather Report was working on a record about the time I finally decided to go with Sting. They ended up getting Peter Erskine back to do the record. Joe Zawinul wanted me on the record, and so I flew out to L.A., but I was exhausted. I was whipped, and I was trying to play a track for him. That was the last thing I did with Weather Report.

**WFM:** How did the gig with Sting come about?

**OH:** When I was working on the Dire Straits album, Sting came by to visit Mark Knopfler. We were recording at AIR studios, where the Police had recorded several of their albums. It's on an island in the Caribbean called Montserrat; the place is a paradise.

I met Sting at dinner when I was with Mark. Sting was talking about his new solo thing he was about to start and mentioned that Branford Marsalis was going to be working with him. So when I heard that, even though he didn't know who I was—we hadn't been introduced—I just told him, "Man, if you need a drummer, let me know!" We were introduced at that point; he had heard of me through Stewart [Copeland], who had heard some of the Weather Report things I had done.

A funny thing happened when Sting called his office in New York when he was in Montserrat. His management was setting up the auditions for drummers, and they had everybody they wanted. But they were looking for one more drummer who had been recommended to them—some guy named Omar Hakim! So Sting said, "Wait a minute. He's here with me!" I thought that was very interesting. It was fate, [laughs]

**WFM:** So did you actually audition?

**OH:** I was such a wise guy with him that,

*"When I take on a gig,  
I throw myself completely into it.  
My whole objective is to find a way  
to make that music work,  
no matter what it is."*

when I went to the audition, I didn't act like it was an audition. I said to him, "How do you expect me to learn all these tunes if you don't give me a tape?" I was being silly and having a good time. I just told him, "The gig is mine, I'm taking it. I'm here to play." [laughs] We all cracked up and had a good laugh, and it all worked out musically.

**WFM:** How was Sting to work for?

**OH:** He's a tremendous inspiration to anybody who wants to be a recording artist, because his experience is so vast. I got a kick out of watching him conduct press conferences. His whole commitment to what he is doing and his concentration is really amazing.

Working with Sting was really educational. It was the most fun that I had ever had on a tour in my life. There wasn't a bad gig on that whole tour. There are not many bands that you can say that about, but the talent in that band was tremendous. Most times when you go on the road and you play the show 170 times, things can get old. But the players in that band would just go out and inspire each other every night. When you've got Darryl Jones running around, playing and dancing his brains out, and you've got Branford Marsalis never playing the same solo twice, and Kenny Kirkland just firing it up, and Sting with his energy, it's impossible for it to get old.

**WFM:** After playing such involved music in a band like Weather Report, did you find Sting's material challenging?

**OH:** Well, for me the music was very satisfying. Sting's gig called on me to use a lot of references in my drumming. I've been lucky in my career to get gigs that have allowed me to express different parts of my personality. When I take on a gig, I throw myself completely into it. My whole objective is to find a way to make that music work, no matter what it is. I'm not there to play solos or hot licks. That's a musician's responsibility to the music—to find the things inside of the music that will make it satisfying and make it happen. You have to satisfy the person you work for as well as satisfy yourself in that you feel you're doing the best you can do

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for the music. If you don't feel that way about the music, you should quit the band.

Sting's music covered a lot of things that I like to drum to anyway. I enjoy playing funky grooves, and we had the tune "Set Them Free." I enjoy stretching out and playing solos over a 6/8 groove, so we had "I Burn For You." I enjoy reggae music, and we had tunes that were in that style. Then there was the rock thing, too, so it was great for me.

**WFM:** When I saw *Bring On The Night*, I

*"If you really want to keep that spirit of improvisation in your playing, it's very important to do it all on the fly and experience it while it's happening, because that's when it's the most potent."*

got the impression that Sting wanted to keep that band together. Why did you end up leaving?

**OH:** It was a combination of things. I was really tired after being on the road for so

long. Also, I knew that I wanted to start working on my own thing. It was getting to the point where I could just keep working as a sideman for other people, and I thought that it was time to commit to my own thing. Another reason I left was due to some business things with Sting's management. We

had our moments of stress and strain in terms of negotiating the business end of things.

**WFM:** I get the impression that Sting's manager, Miles Copeland, is quite a difficult person to deal with.

**OH:** He's not easy. In fact I remember having early negotiations with him on the phone. Sting walked up to me and asked me who I was talking to, because things were getting a bit intense. Sting told me I should get somebody else to talk to Miles for me, because he's tough. I was fussing on the phone with him, and I finally said to him, "Look, some of my best friends back in New York are some of the greatest drummers happening on the music scene. I think I should just put you in touch with one of them to play the gig instead of going through this with you." I never freaked out about it, because I knew I would be working.

Up to that time, all of my decisions as to who I wanted to play with were primarily determined by the music and not how much I was going to be paid. For example, David Bowie asked me to go on tour with him after I finished the *Let's Dance* album, since I played on most of the record. But I was with Weather Report at the time. I knew I could go out with Bowie and make a ton of cash. But at the time, Weather Report was more important to me from a musical standpoint. I was glad that I recognized the value of the Weather Report gig to me in terms of the music. What I got from Joe and Wayne money couldn't buy. So when it came to dealing with Sting's management, I didn't want to have to fight over money. I just decided to pursue my own thing, and now because of that I have my own record coming out. Had I stayed with Sting, I would have just been finishing up the last tour he did. By the way, I caught one of his New York performances. It was interesting to see him from the audience's perspective. He's a genius. It also made me realize that it's time for me to start playing live again.

**WFM:** I read a quote where Sting said that, when recording, you would almost always nail the track on the first take. I was wondering what you consider to be the main factor in being able to do that. Is it confidence, concentration...

**OH:** Yes to both, [laughs] I think that's an important question, because I'm sure there are a lot of drummers who want to know what to work on to develop their recording skills. I think mainly it's about being comfortable. That comes about from gaining experience, and just from playing with a

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lot of different people. You learn mainly what works and what doesn't. The whole sound and motion of a recording hinges on the drummer. A guitarist doesn't have the same impact that a drummer has. A drummer in the studio has to be confident and able to make quick decisions, and make them work. A drummer also has to be sensitive to the musicians around him or her in the studio. The more I think about it, it's definitely not just one factor but many.

I'm sure people have heard this before, but experience is the best teacher. Many of the things people have heard me on sound professional, but I've got some early things that I've recorded that I wouldn't want anybody to hear. So I want people to know it's something you get better at in time. You just don't walk in and be this great studio drummer.

**WFM:** Are there things that you have to alter, either in your playing or your equipment, when going into the studio?

**OH:** As far as equipment, I don't really change anything. My mental approach to drumming is pretty consistent whether I'm playing live or recording. The positive things that you would want to have in the studio—things like good time, good tone, good posture, accuracy—are all things that I strive for when playing live. That may be why I enjoy recording. My concentration level is just as high when I'm playing live as it is when I'm recording. I think that's a good, balanced approach to have to drumming.

As far as I'm concerned, when a drummer plays, the music should dance. The music should have motion and aliveness, whether it's in the studio or not. My favorite drummers are the ones who make it happen, whether they're playing the simplest pattern or the most complex. There's something in their playing that makes the music happen that can't be written on any chart.

I did a record with Anita Baker, *Giving You The Best That I Got*. Somebody came up to me and said, "I didn't know you played like that." I guess people expect busier playing from me because of my Weather Report days. But I think good drummers are the ones that are sensitive enough to know to play only what the music requires. I think maybe that's been my whole approach to drumming. If I were to describe my playing, I would say my main objective was to be as tasteful as possible. If it's time to wail, wail! If it's time to be quiet, be quiet. If it's time not to play anything, don't play. Also, I've always felt that, even when you're playing difficult music, it shouldn't *sound* difficult, and it should flow.

**WFM:** "Flowing" is a word I've heard before when people describe your playing. Even in the way you physically play you have a very fluid style.

**OH:** That might come from my love of dancing. I'm not a great dancer, but I enjoy the act and the motion of dancing. I think I move my entire body when I play. I don't think of it as one hand doing one thing and

the other doing something else. It's the whole body moving together.

The best way to learn a groove that you don't know how to play is to go to a club that is playing that music, and dance to it. By doing this, you can get your body into the habit of moving a certain way. If you can dance to it, then you can sit down at the drums and recall the feeling that made you move.

What you're trying to do is take something that your spirit feels and hears, then bring it into your body, and then transfer it into a physical thing—being able to play it. I think that you have to be comfortable with your body in order to make music. Drumming requires your entire body. It

requires you to breathe a certain way, it requires you to sit a certain way.... In fact, my dad used to make me really work on my breathing. Before I could even hold a trombone, my dad would hold it up for me and make me blow air into it. He wanted me to develop breathing habits. He used to tell me that you'll play your best stuff if you sing and play it. When you hear a phrase in your mind, you should sing it as you're playing it. The moment that you sing it you're taking a breath, and you're getting a flow going already. I analyzed it physically and realized that the moment you run out of air, you have no oxygen in your bloodstream, and it causes your muscles to burn and get tense. So breathing is very impor-

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tant.

**WFM:** Are there any problem areas in your drumming that you feel you need to work on?

**OH:** Oh yeah, man. I want to learn how to play double bass well. It's not that I want to play that same old 16th-note train thing. I want to be able to do some interesting things between my hands and my feet. I'm not interested in double bass as some constant rumbling sound underneath the music. But there are times when I want to hear some little firey things down in that frequency range. I've had some ideas about it, but I don't have the facility yet to pull it off, so that's something I want to work on.

The other thing I want to do is brush up

on my reggae playing. That's my weak style of playing that I need to understand more. I'd also like to get with an amazing brush person and really learn how to play brushes well. Some things you can teach yourself, and I have my own crazy way of making a pair of brushes work, but I'd like to learn some of the tricks. Those are the things on my mind at the moment.

**WFM:** Do you still have the desire to sit at the drums and practice, especially with all of these other things going on?

**OH:** At this point I have a bigger desire to work on things within the context of the music. So during a break in a rehearsal, I'll go crazy with what I want to get down and practice what I hear. It's easier for me to

actually practice a technique for a certain musical idea than to just practice technique for the sake of technique.

**WFM:** Some things take a bit longer to get down, though.

**OH:** That's true. On the way to this interview I was imagining a perfect world for me—something that looked like a gym, with a set of drums in one corner, and a piano in another corner, and a guitar somewhere else, and all the time in the world to work out on each of them. When you start to get heavily involved into your career, it's hard to find the time. I do try to make time to be alone and make progress on my music.

**WFM:** How has your drumming evolved since playing with Weather Report?

**OH:** I'd say my playing has become much more relaxed than it was back then. I suppose that has to do with being more confident.

**WFM:** One rather obvious thing that I noticed about your setup is that you were using a lot more drums with Weather Report than when you were with Sting.

**OH:** Well, I think that all gets back to using what the music needs. My setup can change from gig to gig because I'm only going to use what is needed. If I don't need two 28" bass drums and eight power toms and a rack, then I won't use them. But if I do have a use for that much equipment you better believe I'll have it up there. I'm not stuck in that regard.

With Sting's gig, I was doing a lot of kick/snare stuff—just nailing the time. The piccolo snare on the gig was a must because of the reggae things we were doing. I didn't need any more than four toms. Sting said he doesn't like to hear a lot of tom fills anyway. So the few toms I had were mainly for my own solo thing.

I'm still contemplating what I'll be using on the road with my own band. I guess I do have a basic setup that I use, but from there I'll add anything that I need to get across what I want, and that includes electronics, too.

**WFM:** Talking about equipment, you recently switched to Pearl. I was wondering why the switch.

**OH:** The best part of a deal is a relationship. I didn't feel like my previous relationship was very clear, and I didn't feel satisfied with it. Pearl offered me a great relationship, and they were really interested in my opinion of their gear. They are concerned with providing drummers with the best that they can. As a result they've come up with some wonderful new gear. They offered me an endorsement deal opportunity that Yamaha didn't. I think that in this business, if a drummer can get that type of thing in his or her career, it's a good thing. My first reason for going to Pearl drums was the drums. I didn't pick Pearl because they offered me cash to play them. I picked them after about three years of courtship; by that I mean having them send me different drums and trying them out and having discussions with them about the product. After I was pretty sure I wanted to be in-

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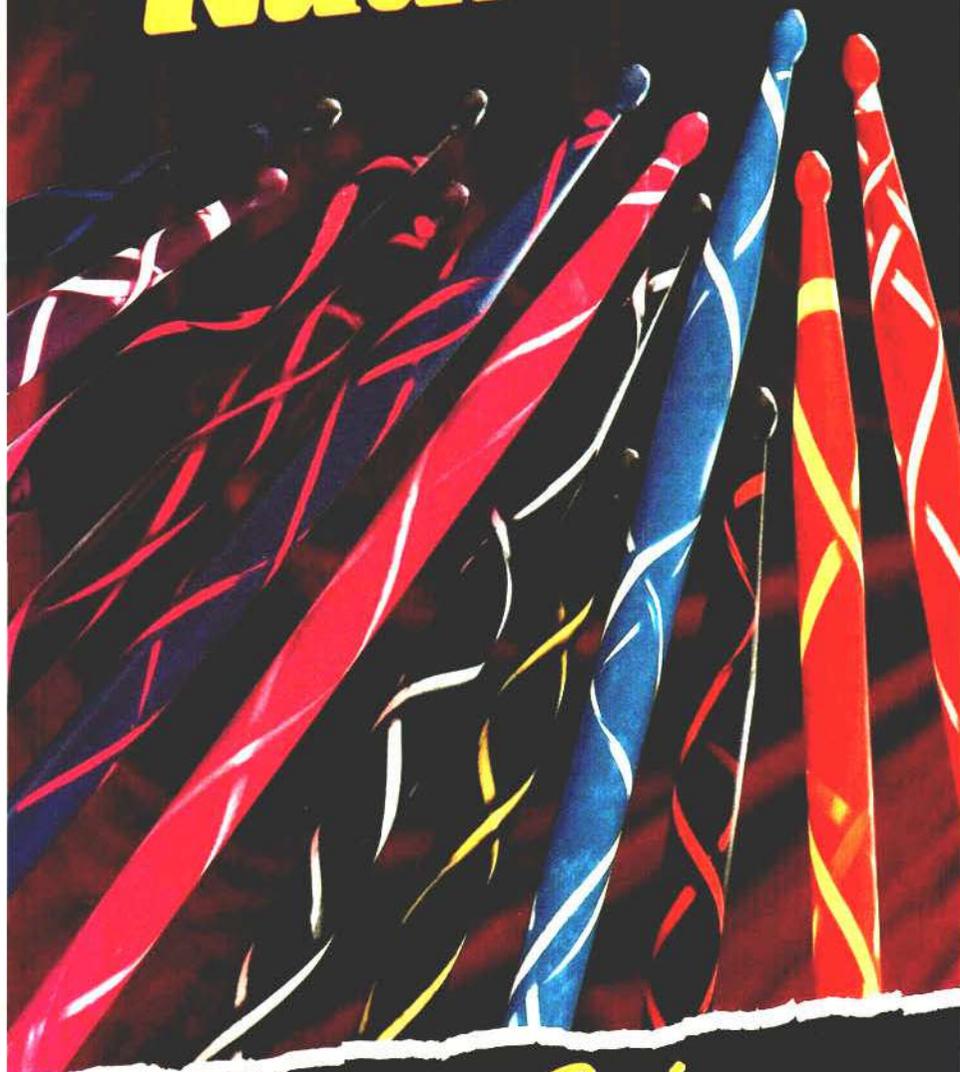


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volved with Pearl, they sent a few of their people to New York to meet with me. We got together and spelled out a relationship that we all could be happy with. You can see by the way they put together my ads that they have an interest in my career as a drummer. That was important to me, and also, they're good people.

Their drums are kickin'. When I recorded the album and used acoustic drums, I didn't use some old kit of mine that I had in a closet or in my basement that I don't play live. A lot of drummers do that. But on my record it's my Pearl kit, and I think it sounds wonderful.

Along with Pearl I'm still using Zildjian cymbals. I'm also using Vic Firth drum-

sticks. They've just finished a signature model especially for me that I'm very happy with. It's a combination of a 5A and a 5B. The tip is small and round, and the stick's a little longer than usual. I tried a few different variations until we came up with this shape. I was using three types of sticks on any given gig. I would switch from either 5A's, 5B's, or 2B's. I hope that some drummers will find it useful. I like it.

**WFM:** One other project that you are involved in at the moment is the *Sunday Night program*. How did that come about?

**OH:** David Sanborn, who is the co-host of the show, told me about it last year. He said he had an idea for a variety show, and when it happened his manager gave me a

buzz. This was May of '88. By August of last year we were in the studio taping.

**WFM:** What's the rehearsal schedule like for the show?

**OH:** It's pretty intense. For every show that we do, there are two rehearsal days and a taping night for the musicians, which lasts about 12 hours. Every show normally has two or three acts on with us, so we have to learn their music as well, unless they are a self-contained band. On the actual taping day, we have camera run-throughs, a dress rehearsal, and then the actual taping.

It's a six-day week when we do two shows: Monday and Tuesday rehearsals, Wednesday taping, Thursday and Friday rehearsals, Saturday taping, Sunday off. Monday we start all over again. We just finished taping the first season. It's funny because everything sort of finished at the same time with my album and the show."

**WFM:** So now that it's over, what's next?

**OH:** At this point I'm gearing up to tour in support of my album. I've also been getting calls to produce some records, but it's going to be hard to fit all of that into my schedule.

**WFM:** Do you think you would like to follow in the footsteps of drummers-turned-producers like Narada Michael Walden and Phil Collins?

**OH:** Sure, but not for a pile of artists. I don't know if I have that kind of energy to give what is necessary to a lot of artists the way I would want to work on a project and make it special to me. If there were some artists that I really liked who were interested in having me produce them, then I would go for it.

I'm already writing new material for my next record, and I've got a 12" remix to do of "Crucial 2 Groove," because they want to release it as a single. Like I mentioned, I still have to put together a band and hold auditions, so there's a lot to do!



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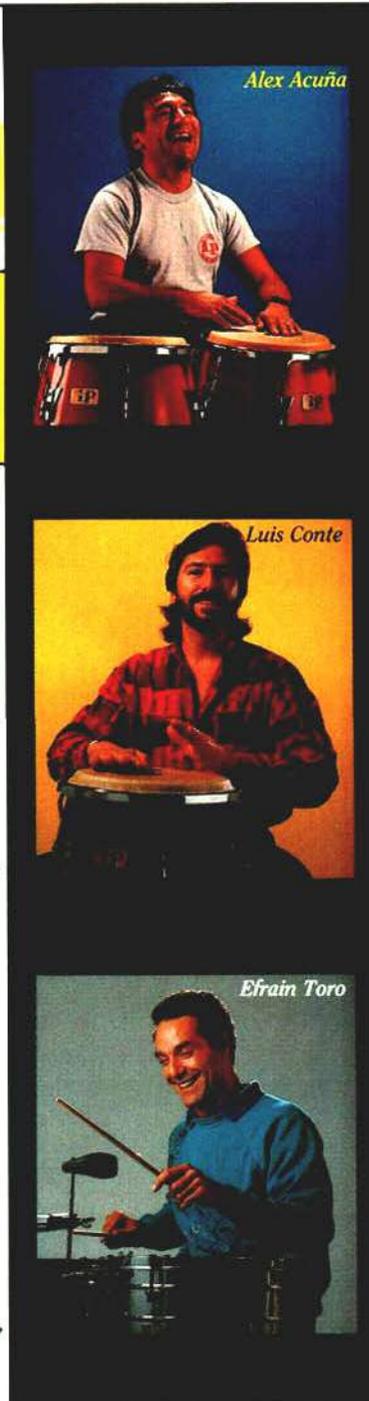
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by Rick Van Horn

# Denise Fraser

*You may have seen Sandra Bernhard on David Letterman's show. She's a multi-talented lady who combines a biting wit, musical abilities, and characterizations to create a unique persona. Recently, she brought her talents to the Off-Broadway theater scene in New York, where she staged a highly successful one-woman show. That designation—"one woman"—is not wholly accurate, however, because Sandra was not the only person on stage. She was accompanied by a hard-working quartet of musicians.*

*And more to the point, Sandra was not even the only woman on stage, since the drummer/percussionist in that band was also a multi-talented lady by the name of Denise Fraser.*

*Denise is young, but a veteran in the music business. She is extremely purposeful and self-confident, but tempers these attitudes with a realistic outlook. She knows that she's in a business that's basically "The Boy's Club"—as she puts it. But she chooses to let others worry about this minor detail, preferring instead to simply go on about her business, which is that of being a professional musician—period.*

**RVH:** The obvious opening question is, why drums?

**DF:** This may sound corny, but I think sometimes we're born with a natural talent. I started asking my parents for drum lessons when I was four years old. At that time, I was not aware of records, and I don't remember seeing a drummer on TV. But my mother always said that she couldn't remember a time when I was *not* tapping on tables, or what have you. I asked for drum lessons, but they said, "Let's start you off on the guitar first." I liked the guitar, but I never practiced. It was not where my heart was. I knew that I wanted to play percussion. So I started taking lessons at 11. At my first lesson, my teacher was convinced that I had played before. I said, "No. I've been *wanting* to forever, but...." I could play a solid beat and I had okay time. The drumsticks just



fell naturally, as though I'd played before. I ended up studying with him for about eight years. I've been in bands consistently since the age of 13. I was in all the bands and orchestras in school, and I won awards for Most Outstanding Musician. Then I went on to the Dick Grove school in Los Angeles. I continued to play in bands, while I studied drumset and total percussion at the same time.

**RVH:** Did you ever encounter any teachers who were reluctant to give you lessons, on the basis of your being a girl?

**DF:** The teachers that I've had were always extremely supportive. I was very lucky in that way. I feel if you get hooked up with a bad teacher it could *damage* you. My teachers always inspired and encouraged me. They thought it was wonderful that a girl wanted to really *study* the drums. It wasn't like, "Well, I only take male students."

I did get harassed a bit when I was in elementary school. The first time I ever performed on the drums in front of people was at my sixth grade graduation. The boys were jealous. Back then, no

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girls played drums; it was unheard of. Even in the early '70s and beyond, I would get comments from people like: "You think you can play drums?" I would never take their comments seriously, because I knew they were jealous. They weren't comfortable with themselves.

**RVH:** As a professional drummer, there must have been times when you've auditioned for a job and missed it by "that much." Did you ever have the feeling that it wasn't a question of your playing abilities but rather a question of your gender?

**DF:** Sometimes I felt it was a question of my gender, because I knew I played my ass off on that audition. Women drummers have come a long way, but there are still many people who are just used to having a guy behind the drumset. It's such a physical instrument. And it is an instrument that carries the band. You have to be completely in command. You're calling the shots, you're holding the band together—you and the bass player. It's a very tough position and a major responsibility in a band situation. A lot of guys think that women can't handle that. But that's been changing over the past

few years. For example, Sheila E. has really opened doors. She's a really good musician who can hold her own with *anybody*. She has made the industry more open to the idea of female percussionists. We're out there playing and we're not stopping—we're just getting better and better.

**RVH:** You've been in bands consistently since the age of 13, so it doesn't sound like you've had too much trouble keeping work. Most successful women drummers—few though they are—spent most of their time in all-girl bands. Was that your story as well?

**DF:** I think I've had a different experience than a lot of female drummers. I've only been in one all-girl band. Otherwise, I've always put myself in bands in which I was the only woman. It's never been a handicap, but I do feel that if I go out to an audition, I have to prove myself a hell of a lot more than the next drummer who is a male. They *expect* that male to be great. I have to prove that I'm serious, and that I can play just as well as the next *guy*. Well, just not anyguy; if I went up against Vinnie Colaiuta, I'd run out the door, [laughs] But once I prove myself, they respect me and take me seriously.

I've always been very confident and sure of myself, although I'll be the first to admit I still have a long way to go. I don't let the fact that I'm a female be a problem. I don't look at myself as a "female drummer," I look at myself as a *percussionist*. When I

was 18 or 19—I'm 27 now—guys would come up to me and say, "You're pretty good—for a girl." So I would say, "You're not bad—for a guy." It's hard not to get bitter, because you're trying to be taken seriously. That's all you want. You've studied just as hard as the next guy, and played and gotten your experience just like the next guy, so why should the fact of being a female be an issue?

I've talked to a lot of female musicians, and a lot of them have had weird experiences. As a result, they only want to play with all-girl groups. It's all valid; I can understand where they're coming from. But, fortunately, I've never experienced those kinds of events. I've always been in all-guy bands where I've proven myself and they've looked at me as an equal.

**RVH:** How did you get from working a variety of different bands to working in studios, which is a different scene altogether?

**DF:** I was playing at a club in Los Angeles about five years ago. A record producer by the name of Phil Cacayorin came up to me after my gig and told me he was really impressed with my playing. He said he owned a recording studio and asked me if I would be interested in doing some sessions. I had gotten to the point where I could tell who was telling the truth and who wasn't, and I knew he was for real. He gave me his card and the next week he called me. This turned into a three-year association. Prior to that I had done some demos and recorded with bands, but when I met up with Phil I jumped up two more levels. He really opened a lot of doors for me. He hired me for a lot of sessions, and that's how I got very familiar with being in the recording studio. Now it's like a second home to me, because I've recorded a *lot* since that time.

**RVH:** Did you ever experience any kind of discrimination in the studio environment?

**DF:** Yes. Phil hired me for an R&B session he was engineering. I walked in and introduced myself to the producer, saying, "I'm the drummer on the session." He just looked at me and said, "You've got to be kidding." Phil came walking in, said, "Hey Denise, how you doin'?" then turned to the producer and said, "Denise is the drummer for the session." The producer said, "Phil, could I talk to you for a minute?" I could hear Phil say, "Trust me. Do you think I would bring her in if I didn't think she could cut it?" The producer was already writing down names of other drummers to call. The guys on the session were also more than a little skeptical. They were definitely not treating me as an equal. It was upsetting for a minute. But after they threw the chart at me, and we ran down the song, they ended up apologizing. That was the only time I ran into any kind of discrimination in the studio.

**RVH:** You recently gained some attention by playing in the band for Sandra Bernhard's one-woman show in New York. How did you hook up with Sandra?

**DF:** I was playing in a club in Los Angeles

## HOT SHOT

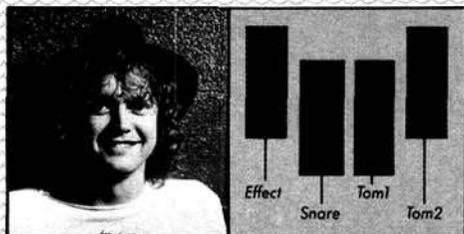
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with a blues band. Sandra walked in and saw me, introduced herself, and asked me if there would be another time when I would be playing in a completely different musical situation. She wanted to see how versatile I was. The next night I had a gig with an R&B band, and the following week I had a gig with a pop band. She came to each one. Then she told me that she was going to take her show to New York—Off-Broadway—and that she was looking for musicians for her backup band. So I auditioned and got the gig.

**RVH:** Coming out to three or four different gigs to see someone play is quite an effort on a potential employees part. Just to explore the other side of what we were talking about earlier, did Sandra ever give you any indication that she was particularly interested in you *because* you happened to be a woman?

**DF:** She wanted one female in the group, but she didn't know on which instrument. She knew she was going to have sax, keyboards, guitar, and a percussionist. When she saw me, it sort of helped to make that decision for her.

The show was created originally in L.A., but Sandra had been trying to get it produced Off-Broadway for about two years. In March of '88, we flew to New York from Los Angeles and opened the show. It was amazingly successful. When we first came out, we were told it would be a six-week run. It ran for six *months*. It was a great gig for me because the band was an integral part of the show. We weren't in a pit or off to the side; we were on stage with Sandra. The show was about an hour and a half of monologues, which Sandra would incorporate into musical numbers. So there was a *lot* of music. I played drumset and percussion: chimes and a lot of congas.

**RVH:** Were these pop covers or original music?

**DF:** Mainly pop tunes and standards—primarily done as parodies. She would do a monologue and then break into "Ain't No Mountain High Enough"—with her own version.

**RVH:** So in terms of the show's musicality, you were called on to play in a wide variety of styles.

**DF:** Exactly. We went from jazz—we did this whole jazz segment—to "Kansas City"—real bluesy—to "Ain't No Mountain High Enough"—which was real R&B-ish—to music by Prince. We had to be very versatile. The variety of club work and studio things I'd done prepared me for that.

**RVH:** When did you finish the show's run in New York?

**DF:** October 2nd, 1988. But I started sending out my headshots and resumes long before the show ended. I did one audition in New York for a tour, but I turned the gig down when I found out that 85% of the drums were going to be on tape. The act just wanted a female percussionist to dance around on stage, show a little cleavage, and beat on an *Octapad*—basically just faking it. This is the very reason it's difficult

for female drummers to be taken seriously. Acts like that reinforce people's perception that female drummers or percussionists are *always* faking it, and are really just there for stage-dressing. That makes it so much harder for women like me who have musical integrity and really want to *play*.

Shortly after that audition, I returned to Los Angeles. Things are going pretty well for me at the moment. A live album of Sandra's show, which we recorded during the week before it closed in New York, was just released this March. And a film version is in the planning stages right now, which is real exciting. In the meantime, I'm doing more studio work, and also some contracting. So I'm keeping busy—even though I haven't hit on that "one big gig" yet. But

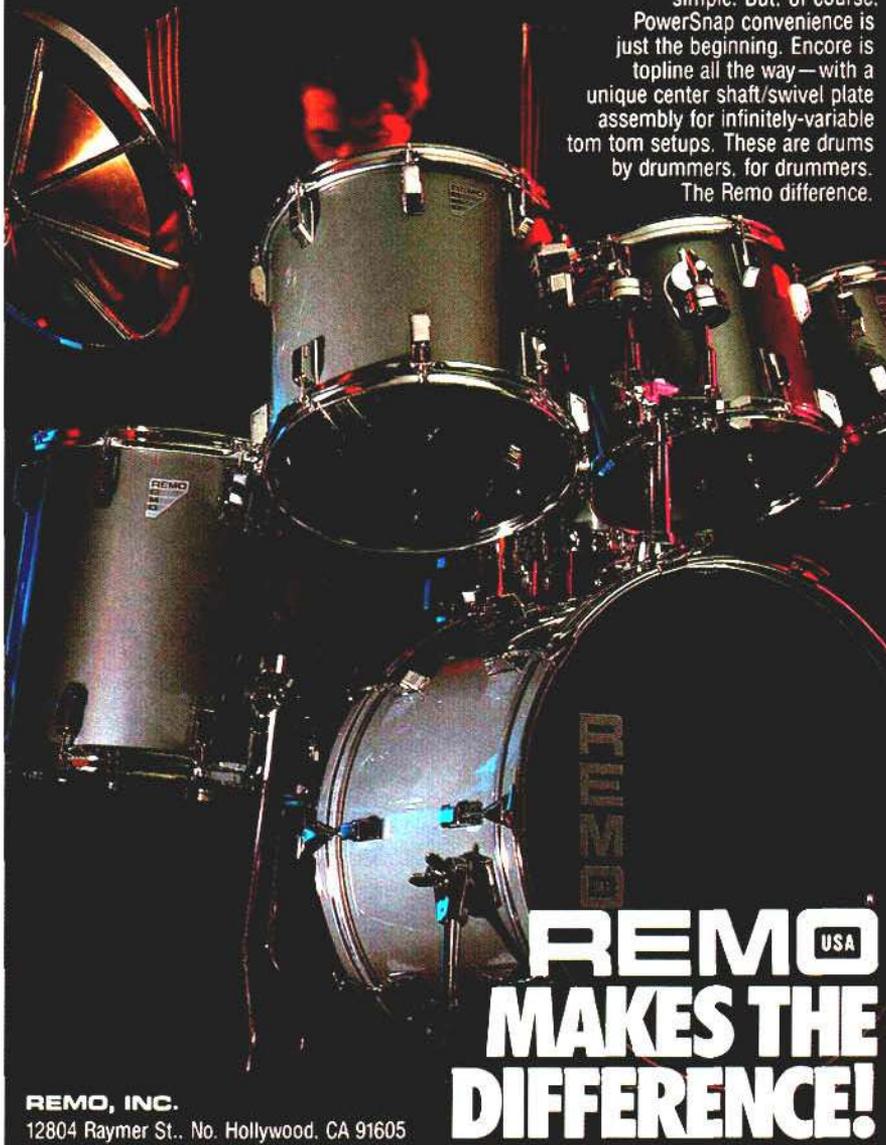
I'm not too worried, because if I go through a long period of time in between gigs I occupy myself with studying and practicing. I'm looking for a really good situation to get into—like a tour, or backing up a major artist.

I want to be respected by my peers. I want to be on the same level as the top male drummers. Sheila E. is on that level. She's really been a pioneer as far as female percussionists go, because she can play so well. That's what I'm striving for, which is why I put myself in challenging positions. If somebody said, "Oh yeah, there's Jeff Porcaro, there's J.R. Robinson, and there's Denise Fraser," it would be the happiest day of my life!



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# "PUT UP OR SHUT UP"

by JONATHAN MOVER

**MUSIC KEY**

Open	◊	R.C.	◊	R.C. Bell	◊	C.C.	X	China	X	Cowbell	*
H.H.	◊	T.T.	◊	S.D.	◊	F.T.	◊	B.D.	◊	H.H.	◊
w/foot	X										

Not long ago while on tour with Joe Satriani, being the only member of the trio without a record contract, I was approached by a few different labels asking if I had the desire to put out an album of my own material, just as my bandmates Joe and Stu Hamm had done. I must admit, even though in the past I had been a composer with both Marillion and G.T.R., I hadn't really considered the idea of doing my own project. You know—my music, my responsibility!

Well, the more I pondered, the more intrigued I became. So I got together with a couple of my friends—who happen to be two of the best players in Boston—lucky me—and ventured forth into the studio to put thought to tape and come up with the demo that these particular companies had requested.

"Put Up Or Shut Up" is one of the songs from that demo, as well as an example of what is sometimes going on in my brain. Not all of my music is comprised of odd times, polyrhythms, and drum solos, but for *Modern Drummer*, I thought this one most appropriate. Hope you enjoy it.

The following examples represent the basic rhythms that I played during the different sections of the tune; they may vary slightly from measure to measure.

**Intro Groove**

**1st Verse Groove**

**Basic 7 Groove**

7 Groove During Melody

Musical notation for '7 Groove During Melody' in 7/8 time. The piece consists of two staves. The top staff features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including rests marked with 'x'. The bottom staff provides a bass line with eighth and sixteenth notes, also including rests marked with 'x'.

1 st Bridge

Musical notation for '1 st Bridge' in 6/4 time. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests marked with '>'. The bottom staff has a bass line with eighth notes and rests marked with 'x'.

2nd Bridge

Musical notation for '2nd Bridge' in 6/4 time. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests marked with '>'. The bottom staff has a bass line with eighth notes and rests marked with 'x'.

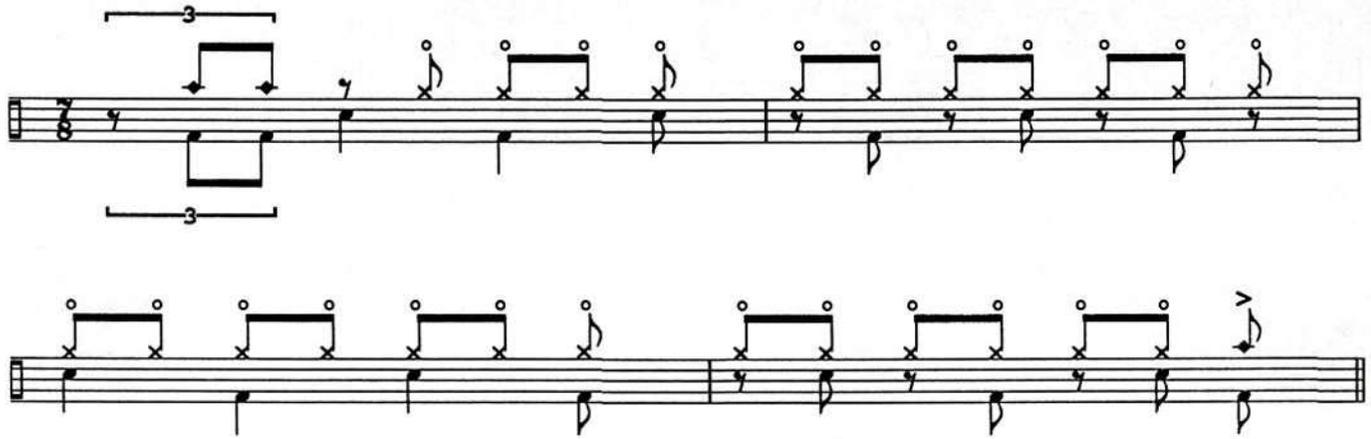
7 Latin

Musical notation for '7 Latin' in 7/8 time. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests marked with '\*'. The bottom staff has a bass line with eighth notes and rests marked with 'x'.

1 st Four Measures Of Solo

Musical notation for '1 st Four Measures Of Solo' in 7/8 time. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests marked with 'L', 'R', and '>'. Above the staff are the letters 'R L R R L R'. The bottom staff has a bass line with eighth notes and rests marked with 'x'. Below the first measure is the number '3'. Above the second measure is the letters 'R L R R L R L R L'. Above the third measure is the letters 'R L R R L R L R L'. Above the fourth measure is the letters 'R L R R L R L R L'.

Last Four Measures Of Solo



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THANKS TO: Joe Hibbs and all at Tama, Colin Schofield and all at Zildjian, Ron Bienstock, Courtlen Studios, Bob (for masking), and everyone at *Modern Drummer*.

Special thanks to Brian for the extra set of ears.



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# Drumming On

You've spent the day on the sandy beaches of St. Thomas, sipping a piña colada and working on your tan. Evening's setting in and it's time to head back. You board one of the sleek ships waiting alongside the pier. You have dinner, shower, slip into your tux, and head for the bandstand. For the next few hours you'll play with some excellent musicians for a captive audience. When the gig's over, it's time for a midnight snack, a drink with the boys, or a walk on deck. Tomorrow, it's Nassau, Martinique, St. Croix—maybe even Jamaica! Sound *too good to be true*? Actually, this is not unlike a day in the life of a cruise ship drummer.

One of the last true holdouts for live music, the cruise ship industry is going strong and growing at a remarkable rate. New ships are being built every season. But before you pack your sticks and suntan oil, here are a few things you should know about the business.

## What's Out There

There are currently some 130 cruise ships around the world, representing about ten major lines and 25 smaller ones. Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, and L.A. are the busiest U.S. ports, and the majority of ships using these ports cruise the Caribbean in fall and winter, and Alaska during spring and summer. Ships from the West Coast usually travel to the Mexican Riviera during winter and fall. Most lines offer cruises lasting anywhere from three to ten days, with seven being the most common.

Almost everything that is important about a ship depends on size. That includes the number of bands on board, how you'll live, work, eat, and spend your free time, and the equipment and skills you'll need. Basically, *the bigger the better!* A smaller ship carries between 400 and 700 passengers, with one or two bands on board. An average-sized ship will carry 700 to 1000, with at least three working bands.

Most of the small to medium-size ships have a trio or quartet playing cocktail music in one of the lounges. On medium-size ships, one of the bands is likely to be a five- or six-piece party band. This group is often made up of musicians who, although unable to read music, can copy a tune note for note from a recording. This band usually works on a set schedule in one room, except when there are deck parties or special events. On ship lines where this band is made up of musicians who do read, they're also used to back the late-night acts after the oldest and youngest of the clientele have gone to bed.

## The Show Band

The biggest, busiest band at sea is the show band. Almost every ship, regardless of size, will have a show band. This is due in part to the job the band does, to the clientele that wants a live band sound, and in no small part to the acts who come on board demanding to be backed by a live band.

The show bands often consist of six to ten players, and are called upon to play many styles with different setups and locations. The band will spend at least two sets per day playing dance charts. Sometimes they'll form into a smaller group to play cocktail music for special deck parties, before the evening show, or during "sail away" from home port.

The most important role of the show band is to back the singers, dancers, comedians, jugglers, and instrumental acts who perform nightly. Even acts without music need to be played on and off the stage. On the larger ships, it's not unusual to find full-fledged, Vegas-style revues, complete with dancing girls, elaborate sets, flashy costumes, and challenging music. The band also plays the "book" shows, which are shortened adaptations of Broadway musicals. Here the show band becomes a pit orchestra. Since every show is different from the previous night, the number of days on a cruise determines the number of acts on board. With a new show every night, you'll seldom have a full day off.

## Job Requirements

The show band drummer must be extremely versatile. While the lounge band drummers can get away with limited versatility, the show drummer must be an excellent reader and be well-acquainted with many styles. You'll often be called upon to sightread well-written charts and to decipher poorly arranged ones.

It's not unusual for the show band to have only *one* rehearsal on the day of the show. There's little time for questions or clean-ups, regardless of the quality of your part. The wide variety of acts on board usually require every conceivable style, and often ask for unusual kicks or punches. In a sense, it's not unlike playing for the circus.

In the pit orchestra setup, you need a solid working knowledge of musical theater scores, with intensity at low dynamic levels. The Vegas-style revues often use sweetener click tracks, so you'll have to know how to play along with them. As can happen, the tracks are often poorly mixed and poorly edited, and require as much patience as talent.

One of the nicer aspects of the gig is that occasionally a "name" act will come on board with some better charts. After playing endless mambos for jugglers and magicians, it's a real pleasure to play down some hot tunes behind an exciting act. The real pros will let you know exactly what they want, and often speak up when it's done just right. A compliment can go a long way, and his or her name on a resume never hurts.

## On The Bandstand

Most showrooms are designed to accommodate about half of the passengers at one sitting. Thus, every show is performed twice a night. One group watches the show while the other has dinner. While the smaller ships have smaller showrooms, the bigger ships may have rooms designed to hold 1000 people or more. The cocktail lounges vary in size and shape, and the deck parties also provide a dramatically different environment.

Unfortunately, most bandstands, even on the larger ships, are cramped. They require flexibility, not only for playing, but in establishing a line of view to the leader. On some ships, the band actually has an orchestra pit, or is above the stage on a balcony. In most cases, however, the bandstand is a small raised platform directly behind the stage and usually doubles as a dance floor.

For many years a last refuge for older, experienced musicians, cruise ships now attract recent conservatory graduates, studio players, and other talented musicians. Lounge bands are also turning to cruise ships as an alternative. While most of the bands come on as a unit, the show bands are almost always made up of free-lancers from all over the country. Since so much reading skill is required, usually only the better players end up in the show bands.

However, not everything is always top of the line. While cruise ship gigs provide plenty of challenge, they can provide plenty of frustration as well. The show band, or a combo made up of its members, often has to play such favorites as the passenger "Talent Show," the "Costume Parade," and the "Fun and Games" night. These often contain some of the most mundane and downright silly music ever conceived. But as the show band drummer, you'll almost always find yourself participating in these mind-numbing events.

## Life On Board

Without question, musicians have one of the easiest jobs on a cruise ship, compared to other hired help. You'll have most

# The High Seas

by Scott D. Babcock

of the day free, except for short rehearsals, and this means you'll have time to visit almost every port of call. While other workers are asked to sell bingo cards, or work on the gangway or tour office, musicians are seldom asked to do anything other than play.

Your room and board are generally provided without cost. Lunch and dinner are eaten in an employee cafeteria, or in a public dining room when it's not being used. Breakfast is seldom seen; sleeping in is an artform perfected by cruise ship musicians. However, should you actually be around for it, breakfast is usually available. In general, good food is never difficult to find on a cruise ship.

Perhaps the worst thing is the living arrangements. You'll almost always share (two to a room) small, windowless rooms below deck, and space is extremely limited. But most free time isn't spent in the room anyway. Most musicians spend their days on deck in the sun, or in port when the ship is at anchor. Another nice perk is that there's usually a cabin steward to clean the room every day.

There are also certain restrictions that should be taken into consideration when looking at various cruise lines. While most permit and expect you to associate with passengers, proper attire is expected. In most cases, long pants indoors and a jacket after 6:00 P.M. is about the extent of it. However, it's not unusual to find other restrictions, like no sitting on barstools, no gambling, and no dancing (no kidding!). You might even find some curfew rules, though not often. Use of facilities varies from ship to ship. However, when they're open for the staff, you'll often find access to pools, weight rooms, saunas, whirlpools, game rooms, jogging tracks, and computer rooms.

## Breaking In

The best way to find cruise ship work is to first find out who books musicians for a particular line. Several lines have entertainment directors who do all the hiring. Others work through an agent generally located in New York, Miami, or L.A. To find out, contact a local travel agent and get names and numbers of several cruise lines. Then contact the line and ask for the party in charge of hiring musicians.

Be prepared to send a resume with a photo and a tape. The tape should contain examples of your musical versatility, especially if you're looking to get on the show band. Most agents will require an audition, unless they're extremely hard pressed, in which case the first cruise serves as an

excellent audition. In any case, *do not* board the ship without a contract in hand. Most contract periods last three to five months, and unless your performance has been substandard, you'll usually have first option to stay on board for more contracts. Also, many agents offer raises if you stay on for additional contract periods. Some even offer unemployment benefits if you've worked long enough, and few require that you be a union musician.

## What To Bring

In most cases, it's a good idea to bring your own equipment. The ship will sometimes have a set, but it's usually in poor shape. This is the set to use for outside deck parties. Spare heads and accessories are seldom provided. It's also a good idea to bring the "toys" (cowbells, woodblocks, wind chimes, etc.).

Unlike the other musicians, you'll rarely get to practice on your instrument. Your drums will often be in a lounge or show-room that's used throughout the day by passengers. A practice pad will usually be the extent of your practice equipment.

Be aware that your equipment will occasionally be used by other drummers. Ground rules regarding what should not be moved can save a lot of reset time before shows. Cultural acts from port may also be brought in for a show, and they'll need to use the equipment in that room. Make sure the cruise director knows who owns the drums, and how they're to be treated.

Since a cruise ship's domain is the sea, certain unique problems do present themselves. For instance, salt air really causes chrome and brass parts to suffer from corrosion. They need to be cleaned and polished routinely on board, and given a good protective coat before leaving. Salt air isn't the only problem. On a ship, the show-room—like everything else—moves! In rough seas, equipment will actually have to be tied down. This also means that your body is subject to a bit more strain than usual. Keeping steady on that small throne during rough seas can make light playing and heel-up pedal work a real challenge.

You'll almost always need to bring along a tux, a band jacket, or other regulation outfit. You'll also need clothes for Alaska as well as the Caribbean, should your contract overlap a season change. It's also wise to have a current passport. While most ports of call will not require a passport, almost every ship does. The passport is held by the ship when the crew pass is issued. The pass then serves as ID at every port and when boarding the ship.

## Other Factors: Good And Bad!

Like any gig, the glamour on a cruise ship wears thin after a while, and the first thing one notices is that the walls start to close in. Subsequently, most musicians spend much time off the ship while it's in port, and a lot of energy finding interesting ways to keep busy at sea. While in port, you can rent jeeps or take local transportation to beaches or favorite hidden spots. You could also participate in the guided tours that are available. Some lines even insist that musicians take these tours so they can better describe them to passengers. Just like a theme park gig, everything revolves around making the customer happy, and it's your job to do this both on and off the bandstand.

It's actually worth considering the age of the clientele when looking into cruise ship work. Ships are like department stores: There are those that offer fun-time, blue-light specials, and those offering a highly polished, glitzy product with a hefty price tag. The fun and sun ships, which cater to a younger crowd, will insist on livelier, louder music. And the hours will be a bit longer. The more luxurious ships, with a classier clientele, will usually require older, softer music, with few late night shows.

As for the ports of call, not *all* are as attractive as the brochures suggest. The rule of thumb is, the more ports, the merrier. Three-day runs usually only go to one port, and they can get old very fast. But keep in mind that you'll usually have to work your way up the ladder before landing a cruise to the better ports. There are plenty of veteran musicians out there who know which ships have the best runs.

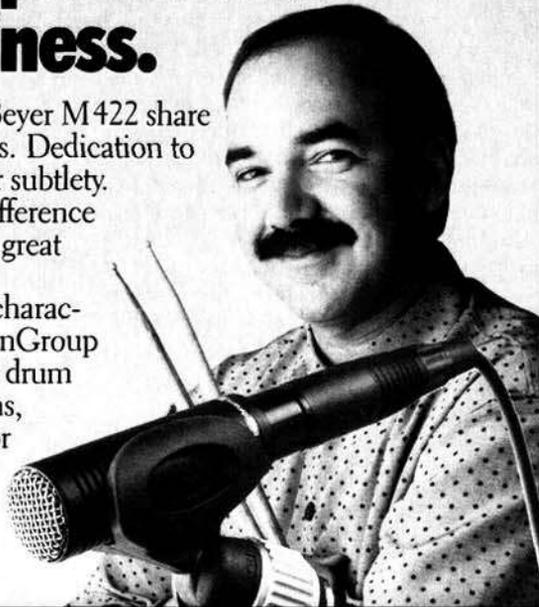
Also, expect to be pretty much out of touch with the rest of the world. After all, cruises are designed to be escape vacations. Mail arrives only once a week or so, and is frequently delayed or misrouted. And when you've been at sea for several months, it can be difficult getting back into the musical mainstream.

All things considered, cruising does offer the serious musician a chance to hone playing skills while traveling the world. You might even save a few bucks in the process. Keep in mind that most lines don't encourage musicians in their teens to apply. Of course, a cruise ship is *not* the place for those who easily get claustrophobic or seasick. But it's indeed the place for a drummer in a good trio or pop band, or a free-lancer who knows many styles, has good reading skills, and is looking for an interesting place to put those talents to work. *Don't forget your suntan oil!*

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your makeup. If you're a vandal like I've always been, then you tend to be a vandal on the drumkit as well. You'll find that drumming is the same as driving a car: It's an extension of your personality. If you're a ratbag character, you'll drive like a ratbag." He continues, laughing, "If you're a mad, lame dog, and slightly erratic, that'll sort of come out in your drumming, too."

As far as his favorite drum tracks to play on stage, Rob says he doesn't have any in particular, but he sees some as more of a challenge than others. "Songs like 'Kosciusko' or 'Only The Strong' from a purely drumming point of view are a real challenge, because I've got to sing at the same time."

So when did Rob actually get interested in drums? "Oh, well, you know, I think it's in the blood. I started playing along on the carpet to Beatles records when I was around seven," he recalls. "I listened to the Beatles four or five years obsessively, and then discovered there were other bands apart from them. I watched all the Merseybeat bands. In Australia there was a show called *Thank Your Lucky Stars*, and it used to have all the Merseybeats on it, like Freddie & the Dreamers, the Hollies, and the Dave Clark Five. All those British bands were early influences. Later in the '60s I fell in love with Creedence Clearwater Revival and the Who. They were my major influences."

His first experiences drumming outside of home were at school. "First of all I was playing in school in these military sort of bands, which are good to learn the basic rudiments. They sent me away to this camp where they set you down for six hours a day to practice your paradiddles and triplets and so on.

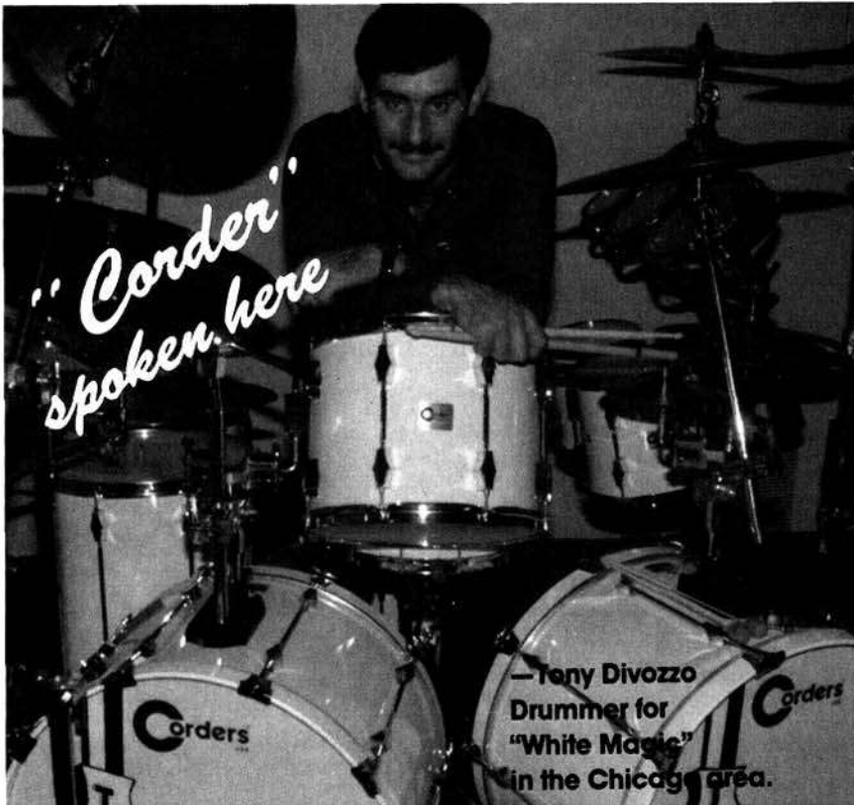
"At the school I went to, you had to do two years in the cadet corps, whether you liked it or not. I was horrified by this idea, so I thought, 'How can I get out of this?' and the only way out was to join the band. The band used to attract all the scum of the school. Everyone volunteered to play cymbal, bass drum, and triangle, and so you had all these misfits—bam, bam, bam.

"But in retrospect, these were a lot of the people that I still keep in contact with because they were the people who learned early on that it was better to strap on a Premier snare drum than to fire off rounds into the bush like some bush turkey."

So this was a marching band? "This was mainly for cadet marching," Rob replies. "So it was a convenient way of not strapping on weapons, just joining the band. It did me a lot of good, though, because I got the rudiments of playing. I suppose I was about 14 or 15 at the time."

Aside from what he learned at the camp, Rob didn't take formal drumming lessons. Instead he learned his craft by listening to and observing other players. "I used to watch other players a lot. And I used to put the headphones on and play along to tracks, so I could play exactly as they did. That was good for discipline and timekeeping.

"There was also a jazz drummer, Jon



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Collins, who had a music shop out in back of my place in Sydney. I used to harass him for information all the time; bless his heart, he was very tolerant and a nice guy. So he gave me a few ideas as well, and a few lessons.

"Then having reached a stage, my old man finally relented and bought me this hideous Japanese drumkit. Lava," Rob laughs, "this red/blue/green-lava sort of one. It was called a Star. It is interesting that even today I play this hideous lava drumkit, only it's Ludwig—or bits and pieces of Ludwig. I was always attracted to this incredibly bad-taste thing."

Purchasing the drumkit was an extremely significant happening in the Midnight Oil history book, because it marked the band's genesis. "I bought the drumkit because I'd been introduced to Jim Moginie, and we started the band."

So you haven't ever played in any other band? "No, I bought a drumkit to play with Jim, and he had this sort of funny white Japanese guitar. That was the birth of the band. I've never played with anyone else; he hasn't either. Martin was in the rival band at school, and when they eventually broke up, he originally joined on bass."

Once the band was fully intact—with Peter Garrett on lead vocals and Andrew James on bass—they began touring the pubs up and down the coast of New South Wales. Rob was already establishing his reputation as a flailing powerhouse when the band released its first LP, titled *Midnight Oil*, in 1978, which Rob describes as being a "historical document. It sounds like this sort of white noise, like Animal from the Muppets."

In 1979 they released *Head Injuries*, which was followed in 1980 by an EP called *Bird Noises*. At this point bassist Andrew James left the band and Peter Gifford took his place. It was also in 1980 when Hirst began his reign in the *RAM* magazine reader's poll.

1981 saw *Place Without A Postcard* burning up the Oz charts like the previous releases, but it was 1982's 10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 that catapulted the band into the royal ranks of success. It was on this album that U.S. audiences got their first taste of Hirst's power with the infamous "Power And The Passion," and then also on their first U.S. tour. Rob explains that he used a Linn drum machine on the track, but that the solo was done in one take. "We just put together everything you could hit and threw it in the studio. And [producer] Nick Launay said, 'We'll just sort of count down, and you start hitting things.' It was just adrenaline coming out, and it was thrown on top of the Linn track."

*Red Sails In The Sunset* entrenched Rob's drumming reputation even more with songs such as "Best Of Both Worlds" and "Kosciusko." Although his philosophy is generally to work the drums into the overall musical aims of the band, "Kosciusko" was an example of just the opposite. "'Kosciusko' sounds like a drum track and a

vocal track with guitars put around the outside of it," Rob says. "There was so little room for anything else, once the drums had gone on it—they were so huge, typical Nick Launey stuff, huge drums and vocals—that you just put everything else around it."

It was not until *Diesel And Dust* that Midnight Oil really caught fire in the U.S. The album subsequently brought them on a long, three-part tour of the country. With his enthusiastic character and obnoxious water tank, Rob Hirst garnered a lot of attention on the '88 tour.

Since Rob is one of the main songwriters in the band, it has helped him better tailor his drums into the songs right from Midnight Oil's initial stages of development.

Does he feel that has contributed to the overall cohesiveness of the drums in the music? "Yes, because if you're in a song-writing position, you realize that the drums aren't the 'be all and end all' of it. Drummers sort of get right into their instrument, which is great, but then you've got to get right out of it again, to put it into perspective. If all you want from a drum track is

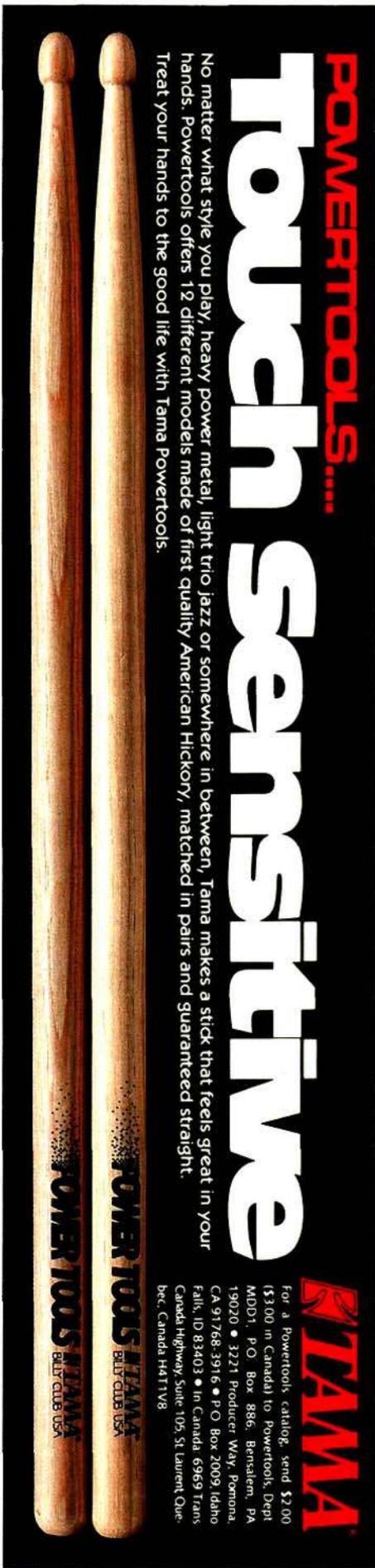
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STEVE HOUGHTON <i>Big Band, Classical</i>	TONY THOMPSON <i>Funk</i>
WILLIAM KENNEDY <i>Up &amp; Coming</i>	CHAD WACKERMAN <i>Progressive Rock</i>

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someone throwing a tambourine against a wall, then that's all it needs. So it's good for perspective."

Conversely, Rob's songwriting ability enables him to get drumming ideas from the very start. "If I've got a line and a lyric and a melody, then I'll think about what sort of tempo is needed. What happens is—and anyone who writes songs will tell you this—that lines will suggest tempos; there's a certain speed that they'll come out at."

With Rob being such a creative personality, both on the drums and with songwriting, it is surprising to see him with one band, the only band he's ever played with after all these years. Does he ever feel his creativity is stifled by this? "No, because we're fortunate to find members in Midnight Oil with as much musical latitude as we need and very open-minded attitudes towards music, so there has never been a need to look outside what Midnight Oil offers in the music world. I mean, *Red Sails In The Sunset* sounds like a different band on every track. That was always the attitude of the band: Whatever anyone would throw up, we'd have a go at it. Now we feel very fortunate that we haven't had to hack around at sessions; it must be awful to have to do that. I know there are people who are very good at it, but we've never had to do it. We come from the opposite school of thought; we've always believed in the chemistry of great bands. The sort of

thing you get after years and years together, an instinctive thing that you have with four or five other people, is very precious.

"There are millions of players, millions of fantastic drummers," Rob continues, "but that's not the point. We're talking about music here, we're talking about songs, about moving people's minds and hearts. To do that you've got to combine yourself with people who feel the same way.

"One of the strengths about Midnight Oil is that no one has really done anything outside of the band, ever. The band has an ability to satisfy all musical whims and desires, and I don't feel you need to go outside the band context to do it. We get enough production expertise when we're making the records because they're all coproduced by the band, and we get enough chance to explore any musical area that the band has within the confines of the Oils."

The one slot in the band that has changed has been the bass player. Since the drum/bass relationship is usually an important one, has working with three different bassists caused problems for Rob? "When Andrew James, who was the original bass player, was in the band, there never was a rhythm section. He was sort of like a lead player on bass, and we never really played together anyway, so it didn't matter. Peter Gifford and I actually developed a rhythm section in a way. And I thought that chemistry would be very hard to replace, be-

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cause, as I was saying before, great bands are made of years and years of sweating it out together. We've been lucky enough to find someone like Bones—I don't know how we do it, plucking out of thin air—who has fit in, in the space of 12 months. So I feel as comfortable as I did all that time."

Many drummers get discouraged over the years, battling the ups and downs of the music business. But Rob Hirst *always* displays an endless amount of enthusiasm and self-confidence. He explains that his occupation in a way provides for this attitude, because the act of drumming itself is sort of rehabilitative. "I reckon there would be a lot less crime and domestic violence in the U.S. if everyone had a drumkit," he says. "I just think I'm lucky I have got this outlet to annihilate something that's supposed to be hit loudly and often."

"Everyone gets aggressive, everyone gets disappointed and frustrated, and I've had this drumkit to take all that out on; and that's a therapy in itself."

Apparently Rob has found a formula for success in the music business, which is to approach it with sort of an aggressive and enthusiastic attitude, while still being able to step outside its confines for objective analysis. And, as with all the Oils, Rob feels that his job is far more than just bashing away on the instrument. In order to use music to mold people's attitudes, Rob and his fellow musicians must treat their respective instruments as only one of the tools needed from the toolbox to achieve their goal. Rob also says that there is no ultimate goal for him, but rather he sees it all as just an ongoing process. "Well, I'd like to play a bit of drum track, write a bit of song... you know, the goals don't stop. I can tell you the next record won't sound like *Diesel And Dust*."

Expanding his work into other areas of drumming doesn't appear to be one of Rob's goals at this point, since he has no desire to get into session work or production, nor does he feel that he should teach. "People come to me and ask me if I do any teaching, and I usually refer them to a few great drummers I know in Sydney, like Jon Prior. It's not something I particularly would feel responsible enough to do," Rob laughs. "Anyone learning from me might end up as a fairly reckless product of mine. I'd rather leave it in the capable hands of someone like Jon, who is a drummer's drummer."

With Rob's feelings toward being part of a musical entity and not just being a "drummer," it is unlikely we'll ever see him aspiring to reign over the drumming world. Rob agrees, re-emphasizing his attitude: "As I said before, basically the long and short of it is that really none of us in the band has ever played with anyone else, and so I think that when Midnight Oil finishes, I'll probably send the lava red/blue/green drumkit back to the shop, and that'll be it."



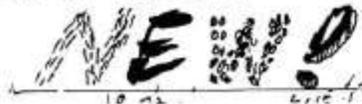
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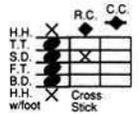
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Photo by Rick Malkin

# Steven Adler: "Sweet Child O' Mine"

## MUSIC KEY



This month's Rock Charts features Steven Adler playing on the Guns n' Roses tune "Sweet Child O' Mine." This particular track is from their *Appetite For Destruction* album (Geffen 9 24148-2). Adler is an excellent player in the heavy rock genre, and on this tune, he plays a straight rock groove that propels the tune without getting in the way. This is a good example of the "less is more" approach to drumming.

$\text{♩} = 126$

The image displays ten staves of musical notation, each representing a different rhythmic pattern for a modern drummer. The notation is written on a five-line staff with a treble clef. The patterns consist of various note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Dynamic markings, such as accents (>) and slurs, are used to indicate emphasis and phrasing. The patterns are arranged in a sequence, with some staves containing multiple measures of a single pattern and others showing variations or more complex rhythmic structures. The notation is clear and precise, suitable for a professional or advanced student drummer.

This page of musical notation is designed for a drum set. It consists of ten staves of music, each containing various rhythmic patterns. The notation includes eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and rests, often grouped with slurs and accents. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of  $>$ . The second staff includes a  $\text{mf}$  marking. The fifth staff features a section with measures numbered 4, 6, and 8. The sixth staff has measures numbered 10, 12, and 14. The notation is presented in a clear, black-and-white format, suitable for a drum set player.

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by Emil Richards



# You Never Know What To Expect

Tom Tedesco, who is one of the greatest guitarists in the world and who has been working in the studios for at least the past 30 years, used to say, "Studio work is 99% boredom and 1% pure terror!" I would agree with that. The point is, you have to be ready for that 1% of hard or difficult parts (or terror, as Tom puts it), because you never know what to expect.

It is very rare that you will be told what to bring to the studio, let alone be told by the composer what part might be difficult. You must take the initiative to find out all you can about the parts you'll be playing—and who you will even be working for. When you are called for a session, it's usually through an answering service, which most studio players in town have. You will usually be told who the contractor is, and who is hiring you. You then

should be sure to find out who the leader is. This may give you a clue to the composer's writing for the session, but this isn't always true. When recording for a film, you never know what the composer was asked to write for the project; it may be very different from other things he or she has written. You should try to either call the composer or ask the contractor to get you the name of the copyist, so you, as a percussionist, will at least know what to bring.

In most cases composers don't know the qualifications of the percussionists, and it's not their responsibility to know whether you would consider a part difficult or not. So for just about every call you receive, you will not be given the parts until you get there. If you are asked to bring or play something like steel drums, cimbalum, santure, dulcimer, Swiss hand bells, African marimba, gamelan, microtonal instruments, etc., it would be to your advantage to try to get the parts beforehand, so you can see just how difficult they may be.

Oftentimes a composer or copyist may say that the part doesn't warrant looking at because it's very simple. But what may appear easy on conventional mallet or percussion instruments may be a dog on steel drum, cimbalum, dulcimer, or other non-conventional instruments, because of the way the parts are laid out structurally. So you'd *better* get a hold of those parts and look them over.

For specific musical examples to look at this month, I have chosen four pieces that relate to mallet percussion playing. Note that the four pieces were played this year in four different mediums of studio recording work.

"Envie D'Amour" was for a singer from Europe, Ute Lemper. The piece was a French ballad sung on Ute's record album session, and it was performed with a string quartet, piano, vibes, and bass. This should be performed at quarter note = 140 on a metronome. (See example.)

"Skin Deep" was written by Henry Mancini and is from the movie of the same name, released earlier this year. This piece should be performed at quarter note = 100 on a metronome. It would usually be written in bass clef, which would have made it a lot easier to read. However, it's good practice to read with lots of ledger lines to keep your reading chops up!

"EM 22" came from a TV cue for a miniseries called *Pancho Barnes*, was written by Allyn Ferguson, and should be performed at quarter note = 90 on a metronome.

"Slipped Disc" is an old swing era tune that was passed out on two live *Smothers Brothers* TV shows for a juggling act. We had to repeat it six times, so we took solos the second, third, fourth, and fifth times. The vibes had the third chorus to improvise on, and we all played the chart the first and sixth times. Try this at quarter note = 80 on the metronome! How about that intro, for instance? You never know what to expect!

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123 *f* PED

131 *f* PED

139 *f* PED

147 *f* PED

155 *f* PED

163 *f* PED

171 *f* PED

179 *f* PED

187 *f* PED

195 *f* PED

203 *f* PED

211 *f* PED

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227 *f* PED

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5627 *f* PED

5635 *f* PED

5643 *f* PED

5651 *f* PED

5659 *f* PED

5667 *f*

VIBES

EM-22

*SOFT*

*1 Ped down*

ALSO JUNO REEN MUSIC Publishing CA 90224 (714) 486-2797

(2)

*Piano - Vibes - Ch.*  
*Swing - D.S.*  
*(NO REPEATS)*

*4x5 (1st RINGING)*

*D.Soudx*

*(Piano)*

RHYTHM

SLIPPED DISC

"Vibes"

*1st. 1-112*  
*SWING FEEL*

*(A)*

*(B)*

(3)

*(F)*

*(2a)*

*(G)*

*(H)*

# Omar Hakim's No. 1 Picco.

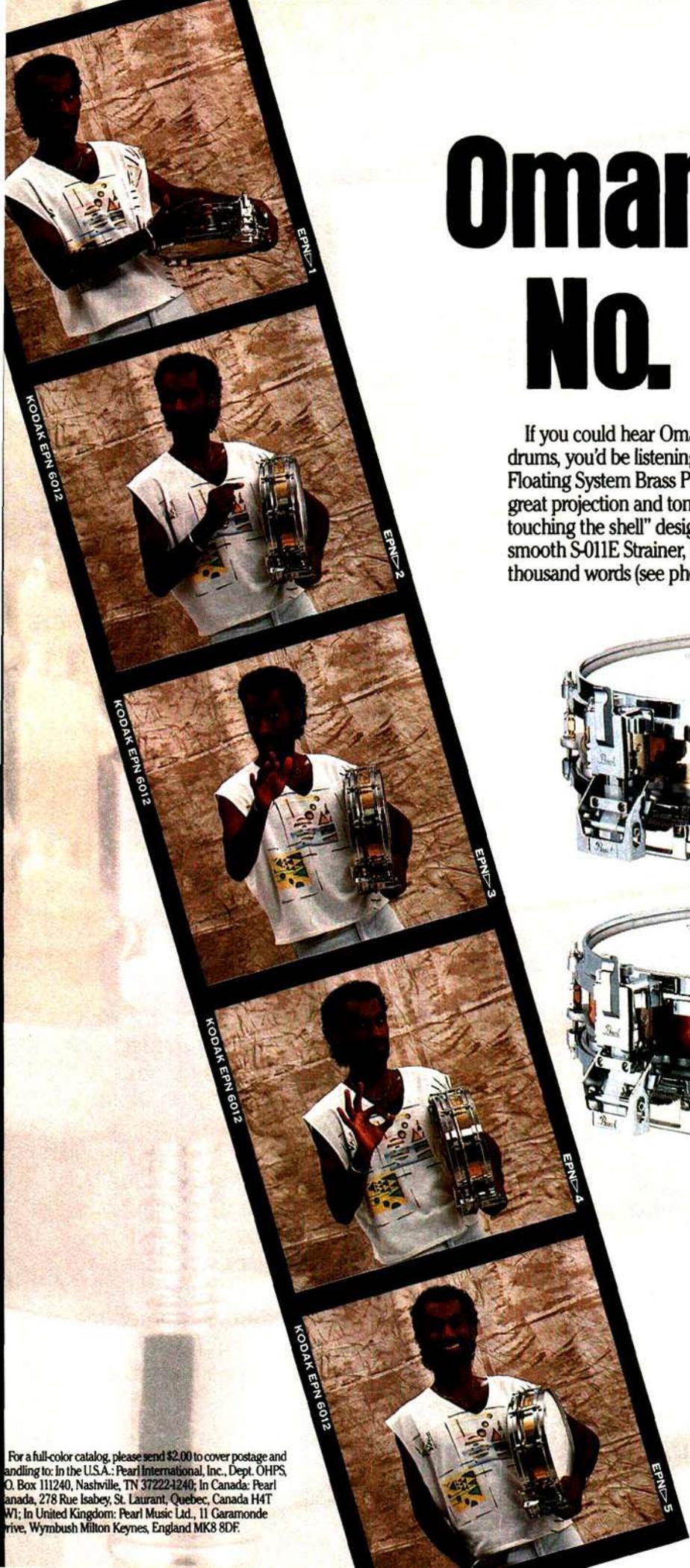
If you could hear Omar Hakim talking about his choice of snare drums, you'd be listening to a testimonial on the Pearl 3½"x14" Free Floating System Brass Piccolo. Omar discussed its unique sensitivity, its great projection and tonal properties, its exclusive "no hardware touching the shell" design and the rugged die-cast hoops and super smooth S-011E Strainer, before deciding that one picture is worth a thousand words (see photo 4).



B-914P Brass Shell Piccolo



G-914P Maple Shell Piccolo



For a full-color catalog, please send \$2.00 to cover postage and handling to: In the U.S.A.: Pearl International, Inc., Dept. OHPS, P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, TN 37222-1240; In Canada: Pearl Canada, 278 Rue Isabey, St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada H4T 1W1; In United Kingdom: Pearl Music Ltd., 11 Garamonde Drive, Wymbush Milton Keynes, England MK8 8DF.

*Pearl.*

The Best Reason To Play Drums



# WIN!!!

## DRUM ACCESSORIES FROM J.T. ENTERPRISES

Four lucky *MD* readers will win a selection of percussion products from J.T. Enterprises. Each winner will receive:

- 1 *Air Chair* drum throne seat
- 1 *Drum Bug* contact pickup
- 2 *DT-1* Acoustic Drum Triggers
- 1 *Speedball* ratchet drumkey
- 1 Musician's Tool Kit

### QUESTION:

Jack DeJohnette once led a group called *Compost*, in which Jack played keyboards. Who was the drummer?

You can be the lucky winner of these great accessories by entering *Modern Drummer's* exciting drum trivia contest!

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Very simple. If you know the answers to our trivia question, simply jot it down on a postcard, along with your name, address, and telephone number, and drop it in the mail. That's all there is to it! If your postcard is the first entry with the right answer to be drawn at random, these fantastic prizes will be yours—

**ABSOLUTELY FREE!!**

### CONTEST RULES

- 1) Submit 3"x5" or larger postcards only; be sure to include your name, address, and telephone number.
- 2) Your entry must be postmarked by August 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.
- 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.

Mail your entries to: **MD Trivia**  
870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009

# Stick the audience in your hip pocket.

Ever notice what happens when a drummer grabs a pair of New Generation Pro-Mark Drumsticks? The sticks become an extension of his hands... playing the beat of his heart... and touching the soul of the audience.

After all, these aren't just ordinary drumsticks. They're Pro-Marks. Worldwide, more drummers buy Pro-Mark drumsticks than any other brand. And for good reason.

Pro-Mark drumsticks are precision crafted from the world's finest hardwoods for legendary strength and durability. And hand-finished for that classic Pro-Mark look and feel.

Play the world-class sticks that help you sound your best. With better balance, a finer feel. And that crisp, clean Pro-Mark sound.

Whether you prefer the feel of select American Hickory or legendary Japanese White Oak, Pro-Mark has your number. With more than 48 wood-tip and 30 nylon-tip models to fit your style.

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# ANNOUNCING

## MODERN DRUMMER'S

# FESTIVAL WEEKEND '89

### BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER!

*Modern Drummer's* Drum Festival for 1989 has been expanded to a weekend-long event!

On each of two successive days, MD will present three top drummers in clinic—  
and a fourth with a complete band in concert!

Each day's program will feature four different artists,  
giving you the opportunity to listen to, learn from, and appreciate  
the talents of eight of today's finest drummers.

The roster of artists will appear in the September issue of MD.

### ENJOY THE FULL WEEKEND AT A DISCOUNT!

Order tickets for both days now, and receive a discount of \$6.00 off the price of two daily tickets.

Seating is limited, and both the '87 and '88 Festivals sold out well in advance.

Ticket orders must be handled on a first-come, first served basis,  
*so send your order today!*

Please use the form below (or a photocopy) to order your tickets,  
and note that your order must be postmarked *not later than*

**August 18, 1989.**

Tickets will be accompanied by a flyer giving directions and transportation information.

### SEE YOU THERE!

**Saturday, September 16, 1989**

**Sunday, September 17, 1989**

**beginning at 1:00 P.M.**

Memorial Auditorium, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, New Jersey

(Located within convenient traveling distance by public or  
private transportation from anywhere in the New York City/North New Jersey area)

#### MD'S FESTIVAL WEEKEND '89 TICKET ORDER FORM

I understand that tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and that my order must be received by MD postmarked not later than **August 18, 1989**. I also understand that if tickets are no longer available upon MD's receipt of my order, my money will be refunded.

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday, September 16: \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets @ \$18.00 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday, September 17: \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets @ \$18.00 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sat/Sun Ticket Package: \_\_\_\_\_ Packages @ \$30.00 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL**  
**(enclosed)**  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

(PERSONAL CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS  
ONLY; CASH CANNOT BE ACCEPTED)

Mail order form to:  
**MD FESTIVAL WEEKEND '89**  
**870 Pompton Avenue**  
**Cedar Grove, NJ 07009**

(Note: Artists scheduled to appear  
are subject to change without notice.)

# Players who play to win

Congratulations to Ludwig/Musser performers on their great showing in the 11th Annual Modern Drummer Readers Poll. Winners include:

---

## BEST RECORDED PERFORMANCE

---

Neil Peart—"A Show of Hands"

Alex Van Halen—"OU812"

---

## MAINSTREAM JAZZ

---

Danny Gottlieb

---

## BIG BAND

---

Ed Shaughnessy

---

## MALLET PERCUSSIONIST

---

Lionel Hampton

Leigh Howard Stevens

---

## PROGRESSIVE ROCK

---

Alan White

---

## METAL ROCK

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Alex Van Halen

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**MUSSER**

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*Neil Peart—1st in the Recorded Performance category.*



*Ed Shaughnessy—1st in the Big Band category.*

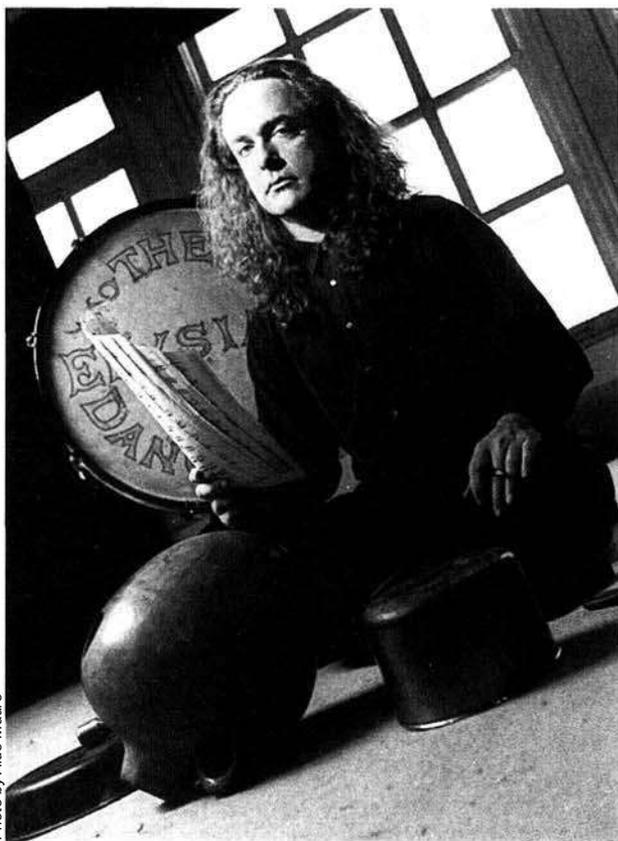


Photo by Aldo Mauro

the sounds, and if it's the right sound for that moment in the composition, then that's what's necessary.

**RF:** So on *Spike* there's no drumset?

**MB:** The way it worked out was funny. I got to help arrange, I was conducting, and I was writing the charts with T-Bone Burnett, so when the time came for the drumming, Elvis said, "I think it's time for someone who has never heard this stuff to come in. If you play on everything, it's going to sound more like your record than mine." I played drums on a couple of tracks, but on some others, they brought Jerry Marotta and Jim Keltner in. It was a very big learning experience for me watching Jerry and Jim. Jerry went in and just blew through the stuff. He would hear the grooves, and we would delete the drum machine programs. We would sort of decompose it so it was just maybe the guitar, Elvis's voice, and my

still strong. It doesn't sound like gratuitous ethnic bullshit either; I'm not trying to sound like someone from China or Brazil. I like

percussion stuff, which sort of gave it a groove and an atmosphere. So I played a lot of mallets and timpani, and a little drum-

ming, which made me feel good.

**RF:** Let's go back to your college education.

**MB:** I started at Johnston College and studied with Mitch Peters in L.A. Then still as an undergrad, I went to study with Tom Siwe, who's had a very thorough and innovative percussion program at the University of Illinois in Champaign. In Illinois I could go from playing in the opera, to doing an avant garde chamber concert, to playing in a modern-dance concert, to conducting the percussion ensemble, to playing in a rock band at a fraternity—and I wanted to do all of that. At Johnston I was able to write my own curriculum, so a year and a half of my undergraduate work was done at Champaign. I went back to Johnston in '76, graduated with a music degree, and studied with Mitchell some more. Then I went back to Illinois for a year of graduate school, working towards a masters in percussion performance. I didn't finish it, though, because, one, I wanted to get the hell out of school, and two, I got hired by Paul Winter in the spring of '77 to join the Consort. He was working on an album at the time, and I played on a track of that, which was the first time I had ever played on a real album.

**RF:** What did you play?

**MB:** I just played some shakers and cymbals and stuff like that. It was the *Common Ground* record, and Steve Gadd played on it. It was the first record where Paul had things like wolf howls, whale songs, and

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eagle cries, which he would use tonally. It was rather interesting, and it was a great gig for a percussion player. That was actually like graduate school. I went to graduate school, but this was like professional grad school, because we were doing big theaters and pretty conceptual things. For a while I was one of three percussion players, and at the end of that year I was the only one. I would play timpani, then I'd play drumset, then the Amadinda, which is a Ghanaian mallet instrument. I'd also play tabla, and we'd improvise, so I got thrown right in the middle of it.

**RF:** Would you consider yourself as having a specialty?

**MB:** No, not really.

**RF:** Has that ever been a problem for you?

**MB:** Sometimes, because it's the stereotypical thing, where people think, "Percussionists don't play drums," or "Drummers don't play orchestral percussion." I want to bring people to the idea that someone can play all this stuff and that, actually, it's almost desirable musically.

**RF:** You ended up being this sort of *artiste*, if you will, who plays very artistic sorts of gigs, or, as you put it, alternative music. What actually was your goal and how did you expect to make a living?

**MB:** Because I wanted to do it so much and because I felt it was the most coherent way I could contribute, I didn't expect *not* to make a living. If I had thought about how many drummers and percussion players there were in New York, I never would have thought I should move there. It's only 11 years after being in New York that I have found there aren't as many people pursuing what I'm doing as I thought there would be.

As far as being in the alternative, non-commercial world, I don't mind being commercial. I wouldn't mind playing on a monster hit or writing one. I grew up listening to the radio, so I'm not averse to that. But as a lifestyle, I don't want to live and breathe for that. I just happened to get

hooked on avant garde chamber music and modern dance and things like that, which pretty much have small audiences as far as numbers, but not as far as cultural importance or development as an art form. I figured if that was what I was going to do, I was just going to have to make a living at it.

As far as a lifestyle choice, it's not the cheap-shot choice of sex and drugs. For me, it was a political choice. If I'm creating my own style of playing, I have to do it in a way that's not dependent on trends, even though at a certain point I needed to relate to them, integrate with them, understand what they were, and learn from them.

**RF:** You once told me there were things you did that you didn't want to do.

**MB:** I didn't necessarily *not* want to do them, but I didn't see them as a focus or the best thing I could do with myself. But they were important to learn from, like teaching in the National Endowment for the Arts program. In this program, I worked with a movement specialist. We would actually work within the curriculum of public schools, from kindergarten through high school, with special-ed kids who were very much sensorily handicapped. We would try to communicate basic educational concepts through art, really working with the teachers and the curriculums. I really enjoyed teaching, even though I knew I wasn't going to do it all the time. But I did that my first few years in New York after I left the Consort. Actually, I was asked to leave the Consort. Paul had some trouble with my youthful exuberance at the time.

**RF:** What do you mean?

**MB:** I might not have been as respectful to his wishes as I should have been. I was not trying to be belligerent, but maybe I was improvising a little too much on stage. Being the kid in the group—I was 22 or 23—I had a lot of things I wanted to try in public. I didn't think, "I'm going to be the star tonight." It's just

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that I had so many ideas that I wanted to try, and I thought this would be a forum for that. I thought I was being respectful, but it wasn't always received that way. I thought I was being involved; I thought I was participating, and ultimately, I think it just got on Paul's nerves.

**RF:** How long were you with them?

**MB:** About a year. Then I did the NEA program for a couple of years, and I taught at schools like Sarah Lawrence College and Hunter College in New York. I would do master classes at Cal Arts, teaching composition for dancers, which was great. I had a lot of experience working with choreographers, so it was fun. I was in a band called No Guitars, which was one of the better

unfound pop/fusion bands in New York. The leader, Michael Levine, was a brilliant electric violinist, and we thought we were going to stick with it after we did our own record and an unfortunate tour. My tendonitis got so bad that I literally had to stop playing for a year, just as I was starting to get known as a good pop drummer in the New York club scene.

**RF:** What did you do?

**MB:** I worked in an office and I worked for a catering company. I would cut my hair, get in my tuxedo, and serve important people. The coolest thing I did was work as the bartender for Madonna's bridal shower. That was an interesting year.

After that year was over, I started playing

a little bit. I was working with an acupuncturist and a physical therapist, and I was meditating more—not in a "cosmic" way, but just to settle down. In June, '85, before I dove completely back into the scene, Tom Waits called me. The production assistant for the *Rain Dogs* album had a list of musicians in New York who might be appropriate for Tom's music. When he called me and we talked, something clicked that he was comfortable with. I also had a lot of the instruments he was interested in.

**RF:** Like what?

**MB:** A lot of the Oriental and metal instruments. I could also get around the mallet instruments. Victor Feldman had sort of twisted Tom's head about percussion. Singers have trouble with drummers and percussion players a lot because there aren't that many—a lot of drummers are going to hate me for this—who give the support that singers need.

**RF:** Like what you said earlier about being over-exuberant. That can get in the way.

**MB:** Of course that can.

**RF:** In fact, I was going to ask if there was a lesson to be learned in all of that for you.

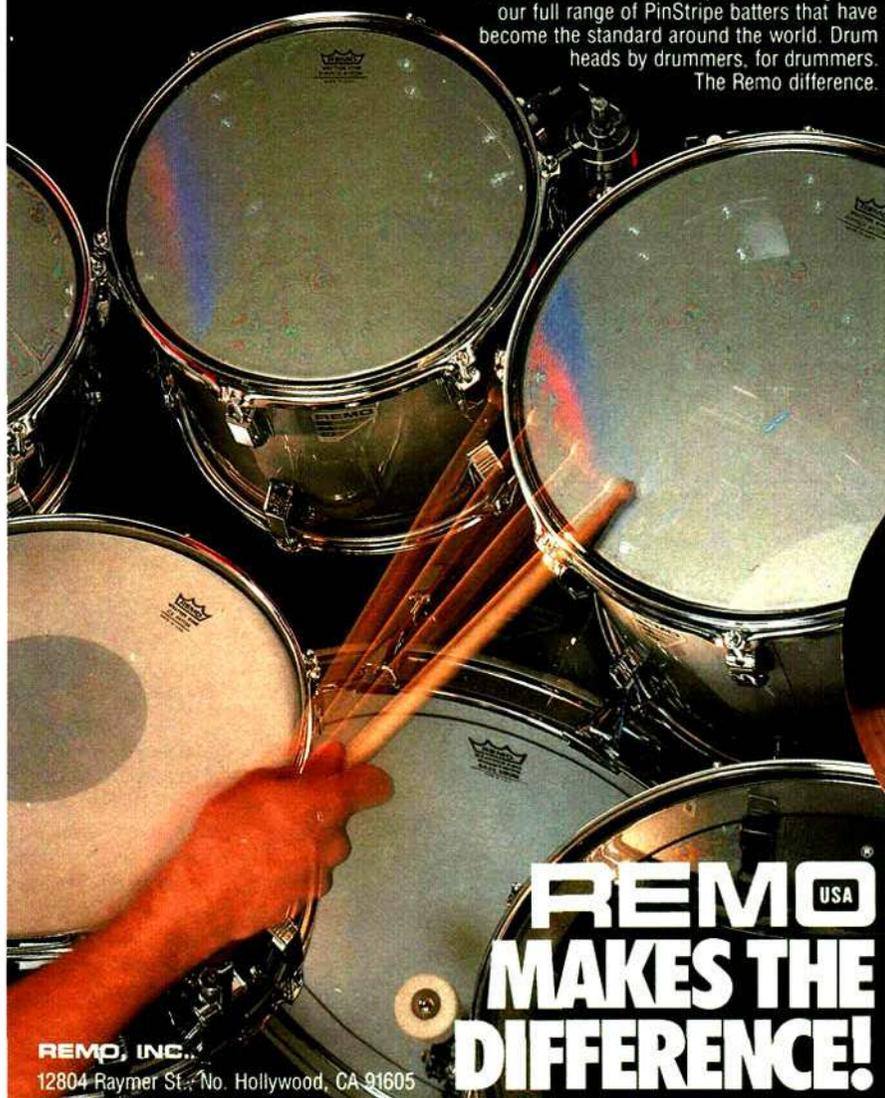
**MB:** The thing that became a natural editing device was my hand and arm troubles, because I couldn't physically play everything I heard. I lost a lot of rudimental chops, and there were patterns and hand-drumming things that I just physically could not deal with. I stopped playing tabla and all kinds of things because my right wrist wouldn't do that anymore. So it was a little scary. What ended up happening was that all these arrangement ideas would keep running through my head, but I weeded them out before they found the instrument. And also, being 29 is a whole lot different from being 22. I didn't feel like a failure, I just felt like a normal human who always had more ideas than were appropriate for any given situation. I got more tactful and a little more confident about what was appropriate.

**RF:** So you got the call from Tom...

**MB:** And I went in the next day and unloaded all my boxes. Tom was very happy to see all these toys. I want to be careful with the word "toy" because I have a very strong issue with the "toy" aspect of percussion playing. I don't want to be looked upon as an extravagance. I don't want to be the monkey on the organ grinder's instrument.

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**RF:** You want to be an integral part of the music.

**MB:** Which is also why I've ended up using all the instruments all the time, because then people really can't deny that.

**RF:** What do you mean by "all the instruments all the time"?

**MB:** The orchestral stuff is as important to rock as a straight-ahead drumset, and vice versa. New, more muscular ways of approaching folk instruments can be used in pop music, instead of their always sounding superfluous or, "how the funny bits come in," and then it's gone, and it's never heard again. Everything is completely valid. If it's looked at as normal that we go on these sorts of travelogues and create them through writing and playing, then it won't be considered foreign or "out there somewhere."

**RF:** So if there are no boundaries and everything goes, how do you make choices on what to use when?

**MB:** Frequency balance. An engineer, producer, or artist, in making a record or creating the building blocks for a piece of music, either adhering to a tradition or really wanting to break out of one, sort of has an idea where the muscle is, where the melody is, where the harmony lays—where the nuggets are. Like when the Beatles started going to India, they started hearing melodies differently. Whether it's completely wanting to sound like something that happened before or just getting influenced by something you just happened to hear, you still have to put it together, it still has to read. If it's vocal music, you have to understand the words, you have to hear the melody, you have to feel the rhythmic propulsion.

The more I heard orchestral music or contemporary chamber music, which were combinations of completely disparate kinds of instruments and in non-orchestral settings—an oboe and an accordion and a lead pipe—I saw that if it worked, then great. Like I said, if you consider it real, then it is real, right away; you don't have to convince yourself. Just accept it, and it's fine. That's always made a lot of sense to me, so I will bring in different sounds to a drumset to make it almost sound like there are two people playing at once. That will be a different way of propelling the band.

**RF:** Like how?

**MB:** Well, on the last Waits tour, we didn't

bring a percussion player. On the *Franks Wild Years* record, I played all of it anyway, and on *Rain Dogs*, I played the bulk of it, so we just focused more intently. Marc [Ribot] would play screaming rock guitar, jazz, and banjo, and he would also play trumpet. Greg [Cohen], the bass player, played upright and electric bass, and alto horn. The keyboard player would play accordion, synthesizer, Hammond organ, and Indian hand drums. We all did a whole bunch of things. So in my setup, I had about half of my old Ringo mid-'60s Ludwig set, some other tom-toms, the Chinese drums, the cymbals and gongs, and the *Octapad* triggering the chips. Sometimes we would play German theater music, re-

creating everything from the German revolution through the '50s, people like Brecht and Weill, who really wrote evocative theater music that a lot of cabaret people like Marlene Dietrich would sing. So for those things I'd use brushes and maybe a different kind of hi-hat sound, like you would have in a little theater band. Then we would play kick-ass funky blues tunes that had a real scary shuffle, like Howlin' Wolf, where Marc would play his butt off and Greg would turn his bass up and I would be slamming. Then some of the metal sounds would be the accents or combined for the backbeats, so it almost ended up being an industrial kind of arrangement. It's like wanting to either sound like more than one

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The glockenspiel can be really great for bringing a hook or a melody line that may be in the range of the voice. A lot of the '60s stuff is like that. Burt Bacharach did that a lot with the Dionne Warwick things, or the Dusty Springfield stuff—that kind of beautiful pop arrangement with the mallet instruments bringing out the answer melodies to what the person was singing.

With Elvis, we did a bunch of that kind of thing. I helped arrange one of the tunes where there were lots of mallet instruments, and the glockenspiel and the vibraphone and marimba brought out all these lines. Then you put the rest of the band in, and it becomes this beautifully full—but still different-sounding—arrangement, with the glock at the top. The frequency range is above the voice, so combine that with a lower line or a bass line and you can hear the counter melodies without increasing the volume. Some synthesizer players do it well, although I'm not convinced that most do, and it's not just because I'm a drummer. There's a way of using mallet parts for the harmonic movement, so you get the action of something hitting something, which sort of moves the rhythm along in a different kind of way.

I still think nothing replaces the sound of a mallet hitting a piece of wood. All instruments are tonal—woodblocks, triangles,

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everything. There's a note in there. If you don't hear it, you're not listening closely enough. So I choose the right tonal sound, be it a triangle or a glock or a woodblock or whatever it is—whatever needs to be brought out. If I want a bass drum sound that's not like a thump, but that's a real rock thwack, I might use an orchestral bass drum or one of my big calfskin Chinese drums and play it by hand, or I'll use that to also trigger another sound. Then there can be shaker parts instead of hi-hat parts, or shaker parts *and* hi-hat parts, panned really strongly left and right so you get this movement. There are special things you can do with very little volume, just by picking the right frequency.

**RF:** On Claudia Schmidt's album *Big Earful* you play something called a chopskin. What is that?

**MB:** It's just a sound that we made with a beat-up drumhead. I always carry a lot of chopsticks with me to use as beaters; having like 20 chopsticks in each hand makes an interesting sound. They all hit a little differently, so it's sort of a messy sound, a nice "patter, patter, patter" as sort of a texture that can be used behind something. In this one song, I taped the plastic head onto the hardwood floor, we miked it really closely in stereo to spread it a little, and I played with the chopsticks. Since it wasn't on a drum, we didn't get the depth of a drum sound like when you play brushes or *Blasticks* or something like that on a snare

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drum. This was just like a flat, plastic surface, and we wanted to call it something funny.

Another time, I was on my back underneath the piano, with one heel keeping the sustain pedal down, and I hit the bottom of the piano with a marimba mallet, which ended up sounding great. The whole piano will vibrate when you keep the pedal down, and it sounds like a ghostly knock from far away, like in a horror movie or something. So we used that on the tune called "Bend In The River." There's a middle section that has sleigh bells, maracas, and these offbeat accents on the bottom of a slit drum. It doesn't sound exotic really; it just sounds like a cool wood sound in the middle. At

the end, there's this little thing that goes "whack, whack," turning that section around to go back into the next verse. We did a reverse reverb kind of thing where I just slap the old 1 x 4 on a hardwood floor. We taped the sound, reversed the tape, and then flew it in from the quarter-inch to the multi-track. You can get synthesizers that do that now, but it still sounds better to me if you have the natural decay of the instrument going backwards. We just went nuts on Claudia's record—still in the context of her music, but nuts.

**RF:** Another creative project you've mentioned to me is a recent Leo Kottke record. Tell me about that.

**MB:** I was in New York in the beginning of

December when T-Bone called me up to ask what I was doing. I was rehearsing for a European tour with the Ambitious Lovers, which is Arto Lindsay and Peter Scherer, who have this sort of funk, out, rock, Brazilian kind of band. When I told T-Bone how nuts my schedule was, he said, "Why don't I make digital copies of the masters, send them to Stockholm, and you can do it there?" I spent a couple of days in the studio around Christmas doing the kind of layering thing I told you about with everything from timpani to marimba to drumset and shakers. T-Bone had a couple of ideas, too, from things he had heard me do on the Elvis record, so he guided me on a couple of tunes. But he also told me to do what I wanted to do. I even used a mellotron, which is the instrument the Beatles used on "Strawberry Fields," a pre-synthesizer kind of thing that uses tape loops.

**RF:** We're talking about all this wonderful creative freedom, but I'm wondering if you've been in situations where one would think it was very creatively free and yet, because of the producer or whatever, it was not free, but dictated.

**MB:** Yes, I've definitely been called in where either psychologically or musically it's not been right. What I try to do is count myself out or don't fight it when I'm asked to leave. Money's great, but I don't really want to play with people I don't get along with very well. I tend to get almost too involved psychologically. I'm not good playing on a McDonald's jingle. My temperament does not suit the "Let's play this now and we're on to the next thing five minutes later" mentality. I respect people who can do that, but I will not pursue that.

Getting back to the idea of a career, I want to define "career" for myself as playing with friends and people with like minds, or being found by people like Tom and Elvis or Dagmar [Krause]. Dagmar's music is all kinds of orchestral stuff in the German theater music context. I really enjoy that. I had done similar music with Tom, and I obviously had studied European theater music in school. So that seems to keep happening.

**RF:** But it didn't use to.

**MB:** No, because I probably wasn't as focused either. Maybe part of the problem was that for a certain time I didn't really understand what I was doing. I got the technical stuff together finally, but I would

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get the concept first and then learn the technique to express whatever that idea was. I've never been a "technique first" person. I don't want to have so many chops where I'm overwhelmed by my own musicality. I would rather get frustrated because I can't play something I would like to, and then have to go find out how to do it.

**RF:** What's your goal?

**MB:** One of my goals is to keep on doing what I'm doing, because I'm feeling very fortunate being able to do this kind of work. I'm doing a project with Syd Straw soon, who is a really wonderful singer and who used to sing with the Golden Palominos. She has her own record coming out, and I'm going to do some concerts with her. Marc Ribot, Bill Frisell, and I are going to put a pop band together. I write a lot and sing, so I'll be in the front of that one. I hope we get signed, but it won't be a big hustle. I usually end up playing with people who aren't hit-oriented, so perhaps I won't be either. I think the Gavin Friday record I just coproduced with Hal Willner has a couple of hit tracks, which were done without sitting down and saying, "Let's make a hit for our friend's first solo album." But I am very pleasantly surprised with the outcome of it.

I want to get signed as a solo artist, and I want to have the same group of musicians be signed to do instrumental records and have our albums come out simultaneously, so that my film score/modern dance/out jazz pieces have an outlet. But I don't want these records to end up being these obscure little weird jazz records that no one listens to. Having the pop stuff done by the same players would show, again, that if you don't think there are boundaries, there aren't any.



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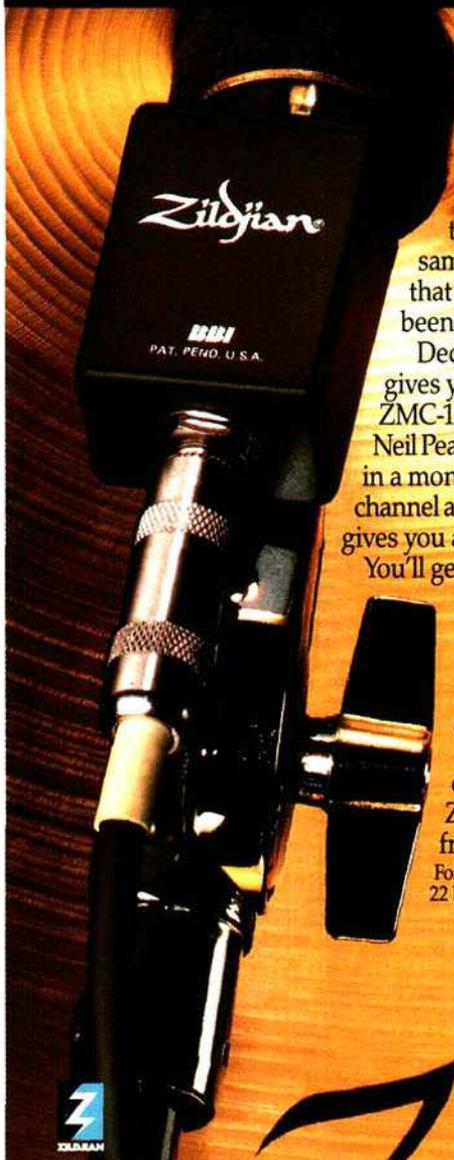
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by Roy Burns

# Money Vs. Music

Drummers have a tough time in life. Besides devoting long hours to practicing, resigning themselves to working nights and weekends, and often spending protracted periods traveling, they are faced with the basic difficulty of earning a living.

"Earning a living" presents every musician with what might be his or her greatest personal conflict: "Do I try to play the music I love, or do I play what makes me money?" The lucky ones make money playing music they love. However, they pay a price for this—usually in the form of traveling. For example, Tommy Aldridge of Whitesnake will embark on a 20-month tour sometime this year. No matter how you look at it, that's a lot of traveling: a lot of waiting in airports, a lot of hotels, and a lot of strange restaurants.

In Tommy's case, he is at the top of his profession. So at least his traveling will be arranged in a very professional way. This makes it a little easier. However, the drummer who is not a star, or who is not with a big-name group, may find the traveling a lot tougher. Many bands have climbed into a van and driven themselves from job to

job—and most likely slept in the same van more times than they would have cared to. To make this kind of effort in the hope that the monetary rewards will come takes courage. But, if you want to be a successful musician, you have to start someplace.

Let's say that you've been able to travel with successful bands, but have become tired of being on the road constantly. To stay in one place and make a living requires that you become an all-around drummer. You have to play whatever comes along. This means that the music you play may not be as satisfying as when you were touring.

For example, it is not unusual for members of the *Tonight Show* band to play small nightclubs, just to get out and play. TV shows are great for making a living, but even the *Tonight Show* band rarely plays for more than a few minutes at a time. Consequently, you will see and hear a lot of the guys playing clubs for a chance to play and have fun.

Ed Shaughnessy plays the *Tonight Show*, performs as a guest artist, presents clinics, and from time to time does some teaching. Occasionally, Ed puts a big band together on his own. He has the best of both worlds. However, the not-so-well-known drummer may play weddings, parties, shows, or whatever. Again, the drummer will usually sacrifice a little personal preference regarding the music in order to "stay in town." There is certainly nothing wrong with this. Some people have more difficulty on the road than others, whereas other people enjoy being on the road, and wouldn't have it any other way.

Buddy Rich traveled and played one-nighters right to the very end of his life. He was known to say, "Can you imagine sitting in some office all day, every day, from 9 to 5, doing the same things over and over with the same people? No way!" Of course, another way to look at it is to think, "Can you imagine getting on the same bus, every day, with the same people, traveling, and playing the same charts, every night?"

I know this used to drive me crazy when I was on the road. It all depends on what you love to do and what you are willing to put up with in order to do it.

Some drummers develop another career so that they can afford to take the musical jobs that are more fun. I have a good friend, Steve Hilstein, who opened a drum shop called the Drum Circuit about a year ago. Steve teaches, runs his shop, and plays about four nights per week. He lives and works in San Luis Obispo, a beautiful community in northern California. Steve has found the balance between music, making a living, and staying in one place. He does work a lot of hours, but he works at the things he loves to do. I have another friend who has developed a very profitable photography business. He also has a music store and a teaching studio, and he still plays clubs with musicians he likes to play with. He, too, has found a balance between money and music.

You will note that the music business is tough. You will also notice that all of the people I've described are hard workers. They put in a lot of time and work so that they can play some music that is personally satisfying.

Many people enjoy being in the public eye; many others don't enjoy it or simply don't care about it. Some of the best studio players really couldn't care less about notoriety. They work at a high professional level with excellent musicians, make a good living, and "stay off the road." Other musicians love to play for a live audience. Recording is one thing, but playing in front of people who are into what you are playing is a special kind of thrill. You simply have to ask yourself which lifestyle appeals to you. If you are not sure, go on the road if you get the chance. I know that I wouldn't trade the experiences I gained by traveling all over the world for anything. It is a great education in many, many ways. It can also be exciting and, at times, a lot of fun. You get to meet some truly interesting and great people. If, after some time, you become weary of the road, be grateful for the experience, but take the steps necessary to "stay in town."

Whether you're "on the road" or "in town," music vs. money will always be an issue. For example, let's say that you are offered the drum chair in a band that plays music you really like. However, at the same time, a more famous group—whose music you really don't care for all that much—also offers you a job—for twice as much money. Which job do you take? The decision is yours.

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**MICHEL CAMILO**—*Michel Camilo*. Portrait Records OR 44482. M. Camilo: pno. M. Johnson, L. Goines: bs. Dave Weckl, Joel Rosenblatt: dr. Mongo Santamaria: cng. *Suite Sandrine Part 1 / Nostalgia / Dreamlight / Crossroads / Sunset / Yarey / Pra Voce / Blue Bossa / Caribe*.

Michel Camilo is a brilliant pianist, with equally exceptional composing talents. Eight out of the nine tracks on this album are original compositions. In short, Michel Camilo's acoustic piano stylings and intricate arrangements are a combination of precise ensemble phrasing, Caribbean influences, jazz, and funk all rolled into one. This is totally uplifting music, despite a Corea-influenced complexity that can make it difficult to fully absorb in one listening. But it's music that can certainly be appreciated the first time around, and well worth the time spent on repeated listenings.

It takes special musicians to accurately interpret the music of this exciting young talent, and one couldn't ask for anything better than the two superb rhythm sections Camilo chose for this date: Marc Johnson and Dave Weckl on side one; Lincoln Goines and Joel Rosenblatt on side two.

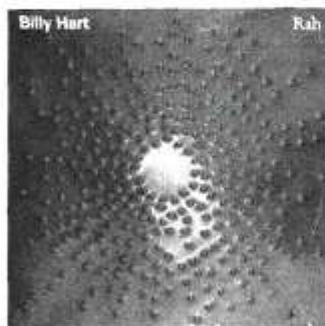
Weckl is in customary top-flight form here. From the machine gun precision that integrates so perfectly with Camilo's writing on "Suite Sandrine," to some wonderfully sensitive brush work on "Nostalgia," Weckl is dynamic in this setting. For added inspiration, check out the burning "Crossroads" to hear not only an incredible—yet tasteful—display of chops, but total command of the straight-ahead jazz idiom, as well.

Joel Rosenblatt has yet to receive the recognition he truly

deserves. The four tracks on side two offer clear evidence that this guy's one of the best around. Though somewhat looser in feel than Weckl is on his cuts, Rosenblatt is no less effective at addressing the challenge Camilo's music presents. Listen to his meticulous drumset orchestrations on "Pra Voce" and the intensity of "Caribe," a fiery Latin excursion that has Camilo weaving in and out of the rhythmic framework, while Rosenblatt and Goines glue it together down to every last 16th note.

Anyone unfamiliar with the music of Michel Camilo might find this recording the ideal place to begin the investigation. It's his exciting performance, combined with the extraordinary drumming of Weckl and Rosenblatt, that makes this a truly delightful listening experience from beginning to end.

—Mark Hurley



**BILLY HART**—*Rah*. Gramavision 18-8802-1. Billy Hart: dr. D. Liebman, R. Moore: sx. E. Henderson: flghn. C. Visentin: ob. K. Eubanks, B. Frisell: gtr. M. Grey: syn. K. Kirkland: pno. E. Gomez, B. Williams: bs. *Motional / Reflections / Naaj / Breakup / Reneda / Reminder / Dreams / Jungu*.

According to the press release that accompanied this record, Billy Hart wants to compose music that reflects "a sense of history—the '60s revolution, Coltrane, Cecil Taylor, Miles—without ignoring current innovations." Judging by the music on this album, however, it's the history that dominates. Indeed, although synthesizer is listed on several of the tracks, there are no overtly electronic sounds to be heard, so just what the "current innovations" are, I haven't a clue.

But I'm not complaining, as

this is a fine mainstream jazz album by a true keeper of the flame. Hart has always shined as an accompanist, and that's what he does here in a good variety of styles and tempos, with only one tune featuring a drum solo. But in this case, "accompanist" does not translate to "sideman." Rather, Hart plays with a drive and conviction that clearly mark him as a leader, not a follower.

—Richard Egart



**TERRI LYNE CARRINGTON**—*Real Life Story*. Verve Forecast 837697-1. Terri Lyne Carrington: dr, vcl, perc. Don Alias: perc. H. Bullock, J. Scofield, C. Santana: gr. K. Jones: bs. P. Rushen: kybd. G. Washington, G. Osby, G. Albright, W. Shorter: sx. D. Reeves: vcl. *Message True / More Than Woman / Blackbird / Shh / Obstacle Illusion / Human Revolution / Real Life Story / Skeptic Alert / Pleasant Dreams*.

It's nice to hear a drummer's solo album that gives you a good sense of the artist's personality, especially when there are a number of prominent guest musicians. All too often, the only thing the drummer is able to accomplish in a situation like that is to show off the ability to accompany well. But if the artist tries to demonstrate too many different abilities, there can be a lack of direction for the album as a whole.

But Terri Lyne is clearly in control of this project. One thing that helps is that despite the different players who turn up on various tracks, the Carrington/ Alias/Jones/Rushen rhythm section remains a constant. Having that as a base, Terri Lyne can work with different musicians and styles while retaining a unity in approach.

The single most impressive feature of the album is this

young artist's maturity. She has been working professionally for quite a few years now, and she obviously doesn't feel the need for the type of "show-off" playing that often mars young players' first albums. Instead, Terri Lyne offers command and taste, defining her own style of jazz drumming that owes as much to the present as to the past.

—Rick Mattingly



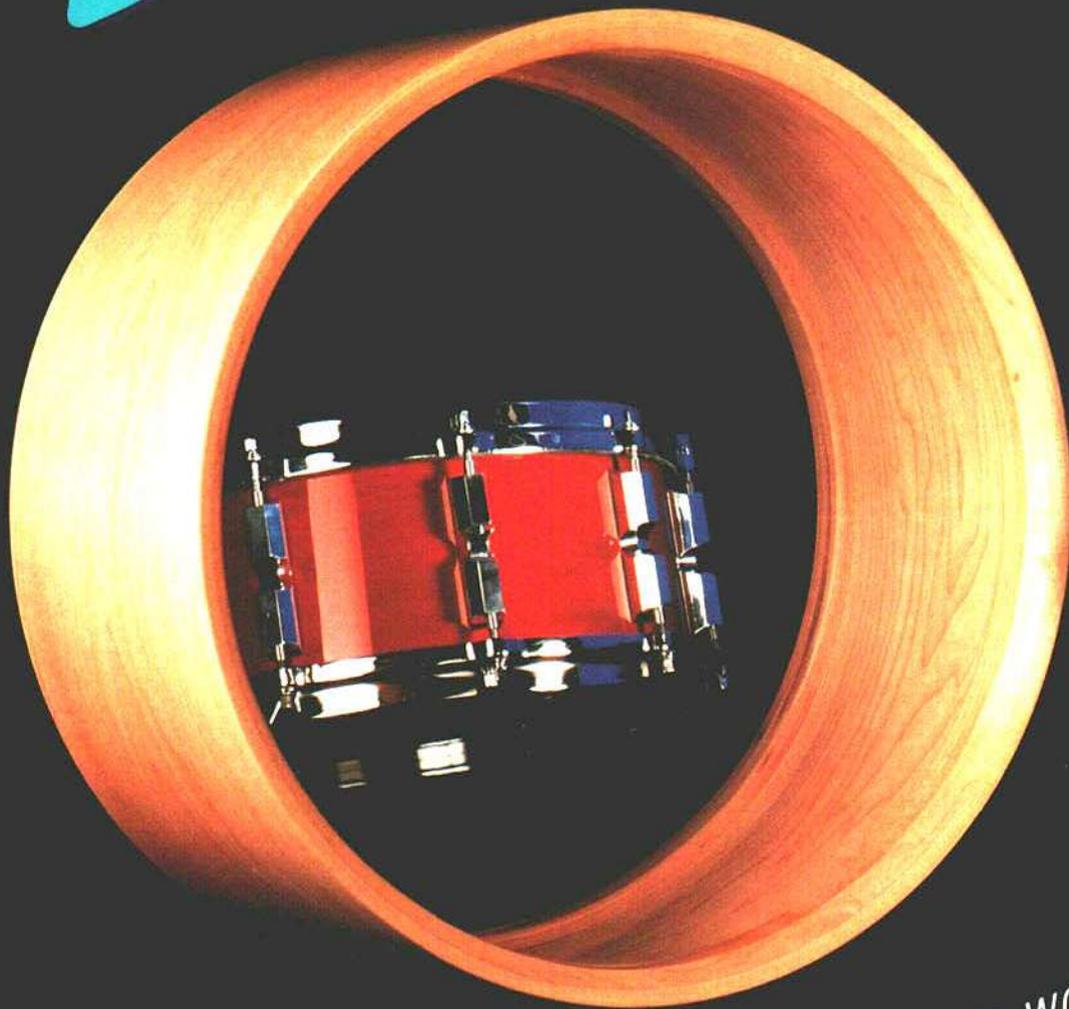
**RALPH PETERSON QUINTET**—*V*. Blue Note B1-91730. Ralph Peterson: dr. T. Blanchard: tr. S. Wilson: sx. G. Allen: pno. P. Bowler: bs. *Enemy Within / Monief / The Short End Of The Stick / Soweto 6 / Viola's Dance / Bebopskerony*.

I think one of the best compliments any drummer could give an album is, "This music makes me want to sit down and play the drums." That's exactly how I felt after listening to this record. Ralph Peterson has put together a very strong debut album with *V*, and this young jazz drummer is slowly but surely making a name for himself as a hot player.

The record opens with "Enemy Within," a driving tune that Ralph swings hard on, and he displays a lot of technique and independence, doing so in a musical way. The most outstanding item about Ralph's playing on this tune, and on the entire album for that matter, is his use of dynamics. He's not afraid to take it to extremes, and he makes it work. The second track, "Monief," is my favorite on the album. The time signature is in 1 7/8 subdivided into two bars of 5/8 and one bar of 7/8. Ralph really attacks the drums and cymbals here, and he plays through these odd meters with conviction and confidence, setting up the other musicians nicely. He also plays a good solo near the end of the tune. The

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rest of the album features some medium swing, a ballad, a Latin/swing tune in three, and a hard-bop tune. In each case, Ralph's drumming is a strong influence on the other musicians, who offer up some fine performances as well.

In the liner notes Ralph says, "It is my hope to further the cause of drummers as leaders, not by leading with drums, but by leading with a high level of musicality." If Ralph can continue with more quality work like this, he should be leading a band for a long time.

—William F. Miller



**CHICK COREA**—*Akoustic Band*. GRP 9582. C. Corea: pno. J. Patitucci: bs. Dave Weckl: dr. *Bessie's Blues / My One And Only Love / So In Love / Sophisticated Lady / Autumn Leaves / Someday My Prince Will Come / Morning Sprite / T.B.C. (Terminal Baggage Claim) / Circles / Spain.*

There aren't enough actual jazz groups making records any more. While there are plenty of bands playing in clubs, when it comes time for a record, the leader often forsakes his regular group and assembles some type of all-star lineup—frequently using different players on different tracks. While that probably helps sales, it doesn't always serve the music well, as the players do not have much time to really get to know the music before recording it.

So it's great to hear an album by an honest-to-God band. Corea, Weckl, and Patitucci have been working together for several years now, and they really know each other's playing well. In addition, this recording was made immediately after a week-long gig at New York's Blue Note club, giving the band an opportunity to live with the music for a while. As a result,

the musicians are able to come up with more interesting arrangements, playing them with a relaxed confidence that only comes from knowing the music and each other so well.

Musically, this is the most straight-ahead jazz playing I've heard from Weckl. As you might surmise from the album's title, there are no electronics to be found, proving (for those who place too much importance on equipment) that Weckl's sophisticated electronic-reinforcement setup is only a type of packaging he uses for certain situations; it's not his content. Further, for those who have felt that perhaps Dave tends to be too accurate in his playing, this setting shows a more relaxed, looser side of his drumming. Overall, it strikes me as one of the most honest recordings I've heard recently. There's no glitz or fancy production tricks—just three fine musicians making music together.

—Rick Mattingly



**LOU REED**—New York. Sire 9 25829-4. L. Reed: vcls, gtr. M. Rathke: gtr. R. Wasserman: bs. Fred Maher: dr, bs. Maureen Tucker: perc. *Romeo Had Juliette / Halloween Parade / Dirty Blvd. / Endless Cycle / There Is No Time / Last Great American Whale / Beginning Of A Great Adventure / Busload Of Faith / Sick Of You / Hold On / Good Evening Mr. Waldheim / Xmas In February / Strawman / Dime Store Mystery.*

For those of us who value a drummer who gives exactly what the music requires—no more and no less—and who is able to do this in many diverse situations, Fred Maher is an interesting example. From a number of "out" musical collaborations with New York-based avant fusion players like Bill Laswell, Robert Quine, and Fred

Frith (including the famed Material), to funky electronic programming for the British band Scritti Politti, to several years of providing stripped down but creative backing to Lou Reed, Maher has been refreshingly elusive.

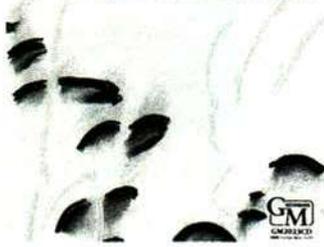
This time out, Maher not only played the role of Reed's time-keeper, but also played a little bass guitar, was mixdown engineer on one cut, helped mix the album, and coproduced along with Reed. Now, the drumming on *New York* is nothing fancy, but that really doesn't matter, and is in fact the idea, since "fancy" isn't in Reed's musical vocabulary. This album, as Reed is known for, is a bare-bones, no bull, rock 'n' roll version of everyday reality, with nary an embellishment or sweetener in earshot. Since *New York* is a thematic representation of Reed's hometown, the job here was to convey the hardness, hopelessness, and despair of NYC sonically, and Reed and Maher's production and playing do so accurately.

Playing-wise, Maher could probably perform most all of this record on a four-piece set. Yet the almost claustrophobic feeling of *New York* makes it seem like we're listening to these songs performed right in our own living rooms, magnifying Maher's and everyone else's parts 100 times. We get very intimate with Maher's playing because of this, and realize that though there isn't a lot of flash in his performance, it is his drumming that instills the fire in this very intense music. The groove is what counts here, with the mostly unadorned rock beats making Maher's snare fills or his neat little hi-hat/snare combinations all the more powerful. Maher's drum parts are similar to what Kenny Aronoff might play on a John Cougar Mellen-camp record, to give you a rough idea, yet there's a pervasive nastiness about Reed's music that seems to cause his musicians to play—not sloppy—but loose, gritty, say, the moral opposite of "studio" playing. Maher rises (or sinks, perhaps) beautifully to the occasion, significantly contributing to *New York's* successful sonic interpretation of a city in decline.

—Adam Budofsky

## MARIMOLIN

Nancy Zeltsman: marimba Sharan Leventhal: violin



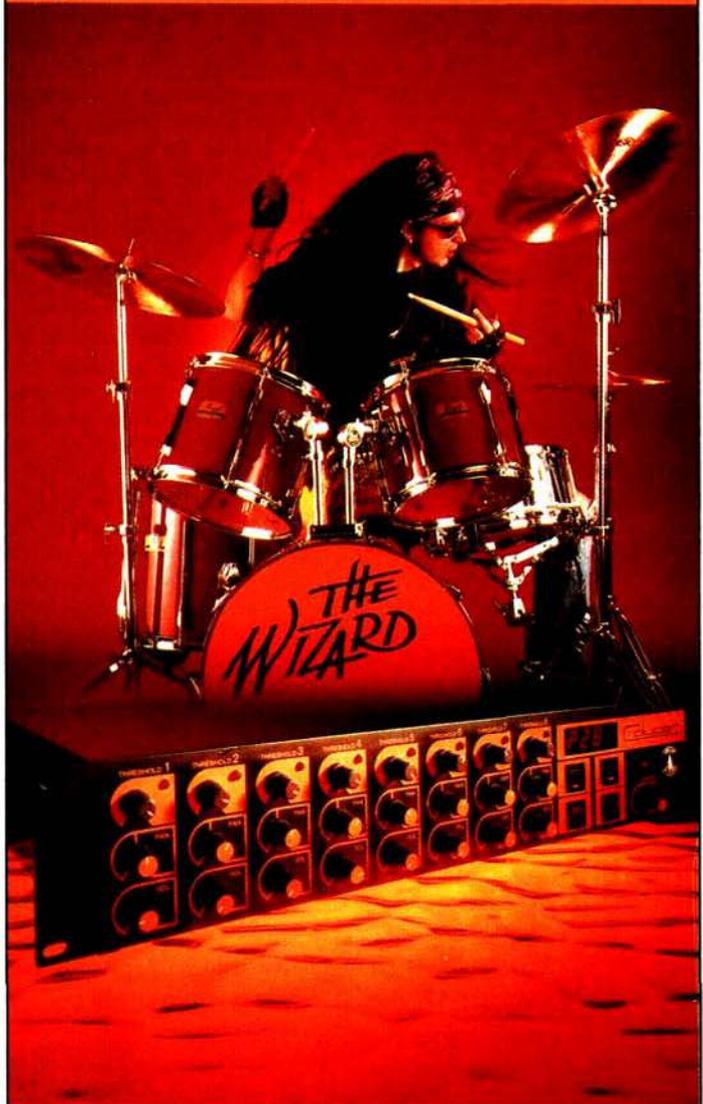
**MARIMOLIN**—*Marimolin*. CM 2023. Nancy Zeltsman: mar. S. Leventhal: vln. S. Cornelius: tri, tabla. K. Halvorson: ob. L. Thimmig: bs cl. N. DeLand: hn. *Marimolin / Threedance / Lyric Variations / Bluefire Crown 111 / Shadow-Play / Somewhere In Maine*.

One of the problems that marimba players have to deal with is the fact that the marimba has been largely thought of as a solo instrument, with its ensemble use being primarily limited to percussion ensemble. Add to that the lack of literature for the instrument, and one begins to see why a career as a marimbist can be limited in terms of opportunities. With that in mind, it's refreshing to see a group like Marimolin, a Boston-based duo consisting of marimbist Nancy Zeltsman and violinist Sharan Leventhal. First, much of the music they play is commissioned by them, thereby adding to the available marimba literature. Second, combining marimba with violin helps it move away from the novelty category and more into the mainstream.

Musically, this recording is a delight. The marimba and violin set each other off beautifully, and both musicians display sensitivity as well as technical expertise. The highlight for me is "Somewhere In Maine," written by Pat Metheny Group keyboardist Lyle Mays, which combines electronic enhancement with the two solo instruments. It sounds at times as if the duo is being backed by a full orchestra, but all of the sounds were generated by the violin and marimba.

Ultimately, it's a recording such as this that is going to advance the marimba. With all due respect to recent marimba recordings of Bach transcriptions, the instrument needs new com-

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positions (the oldest composition on this recording is from 1986), and people need to hear that the marimba can function in more traditional chamber-music settings. And a composition such as the one by Mays shows that the marimba can fit in with current technology. This is not merely a good recording, it's an important one.

—Rick Mattingly

**TRILOK GURTU**  
"USFRET"



**TRILOK GURTU**—*Usfret*. CMP CD33. Trilok Gurtu: perc, dr, con, vcl. S. Gurtu: vcl. R. Towner: gr, kybd. D. Cherry: trp. Shankar: vln. D. Goyone: pno, kybd. J. Hellborg: bs. W. Quintus: tambura. *Shobarock / Shangri La/Usfret / Om / Deep Tri/ Goose Bumps/ Milo*.

Whether by design or acci-

dent, CMP Records has become the leader in quality recordings featuring percussion. This latest disc features the Indian percussionist Trilok Gurtu, perhaps best known as Colin Walcott's replacement in the group Oregon, after Walcott's untimely death in a touring-bus accident. Gurtu was perfect for Oregon's world-music ethic, as his playing included everything from traditional Indian tabla to some very Elvinish ride cymbal.

This recording further documents his command of a number of influences. There is a strong Indian feel throughout, but elements of jazz and rock are blended in effortlessly. In particular, his approach to the drumset is solidly based in the jazz tradition, and yet he has his own voice on the instrument.

Also featured on *Usfret* is Trilok's mother, Shobha Gurtu, who vocalizes. Because of the Indian quarter tones, she will often sound out of tune to Western ears, but once one becomes accustomed to the sound, it adds an interesting quality. Think of Flora Purim using Indian scales and you will begin to get the idea.

—Richard Egart



**STEPS AHEAD**—*N.Y.C.* Intuition Records C1-91354. Mike Mainieri: MIDI vbs, Synclavier, pno, perc. Steve Smith: dr. Bendik: sx, kybd. S. Kahn, R. Gomez: gr. T. Levin: bs, Chapman Stick. *Well, In That Case / Lust For Life / Senegal Calling / Red Neon, Go Or Give/ Charanga / "Get It" / N.Y.C. / Stick Jam / Absolutely Maybe / Festival / Paradiso*.

For a group made up of such outstanding instrumentalists as Steps Ahead is, it's somewhat surprising to discover that this album's emphasis is on ensemble work. Solo passages are kept to a minimum, in favor of the color and textures of layered sounds contributed by all. The best example of this is "Senegal Calling," where a happy, rolling triplet groove is augmented by three African percussionists and a vocal chorus to create a very successful dramatic content. To be sure, there is tasty blowing on many tunes—notably from saxophonist Bendik. But considering that Mike Mainieri is the leader of the group and the producer of the album, there is a noticeable lack of "out front" vibe work—the exception to this being a couple of extremely nice (but perhaps too brief) solos on "Charanga" and "Get It." Mike also plays well on the opening track, but is frustratingly obscured by horn, synth, and guitar comping (read: various squeaks and squawks) that should be much more in the background.

Steve Smith plays a much more supportive role in this group than he does with Vital Information, which is both understandable and commendable, since he is in the position of a sideman with this band. However, there are several tunes that could have benefitted from a bit more fire in the drumming, and Steve is certainly capable of delivering it. He makes some very musical contributions with

his cymbals on such tunes as "Senegal Calling," "Red Neon, Go Or Give," and "Charanga," and he does get a brief chance to shine on "Stick Jam." (That tune actually demonstrates the best individual playing from all the musicians.) But again, it's too brief. At other times, the grooves Steve lays down could have been played by any drummer well-versed in this musical area. And on a few occasions—notably "N.Y.C."—the drumming sounds positively sequenced.

The tunes provide a wide variety of mood changes, and that is where the strength (or weakness, depending on your point of view) of the album as a concept shows itself. This is mood music—electric-jazz style—rather than exciting instrumental improvisation or exceptional compositional work. The performing is first-rate, but the overall production seems balanced precariously between instrumental jazz and full-on New Age music. Depending on where your inclinations lie, you will either like *N.Y.C.*, very much, or feel a bit disappointed at the lost opportunities it contains.

—Donald Quade



**JONATHAN HASS**—*18th Century Concertos For Timpani And Orchestra*. CRD 3449. Jonathan Hass: tmp. G. Hunt: ob. Bournemouth Sinfonietta, H. Farberman: cond. Johann Fisher: *Symphony For Eight Timpani And Orchestra / Georg Druschetzky: Partita In C Major / Druschetzky: Concerto For Oboe, Eight Timpani And Orchestra*.

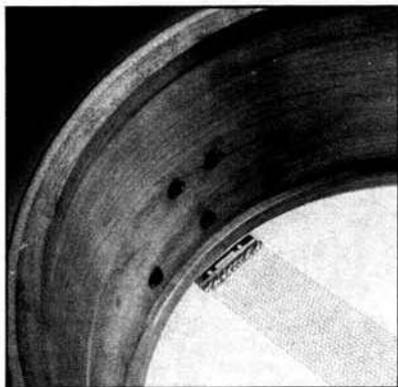
One looking for solo material for timpani could probably be excused for overlooking the 18th century. After all, the timpani of 200 years ago were rather crude compared to today's standards. Having no pedal, each drum had to be

continued on page 104

# Solid snares.

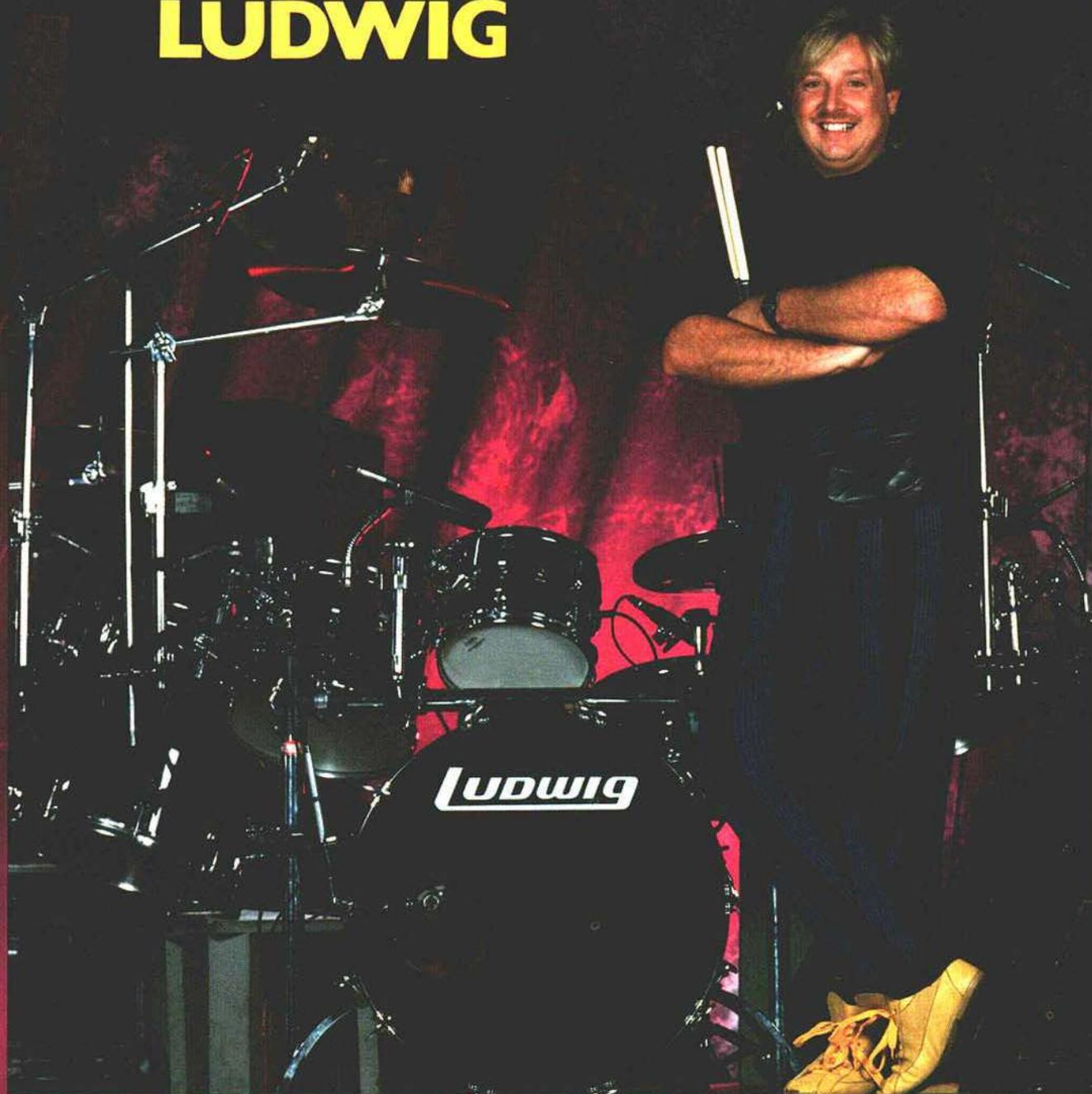
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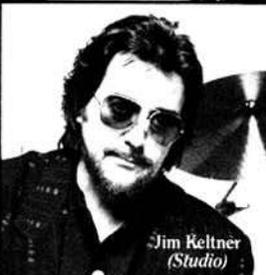
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shocked to see no mention of his work with Richard and Linda Thompson, with whom he's done much of his better drumming. Was this just ignorance, or was it overlooked on purpose? I think it would serve us all better to get a complete and accurate representation of a drummer's ability through his previous recordings.

Leor Beary  
San Francisco CA

*Editor's note: While MD's writers do strive to be as comprehensive as possible in their line of questions, the final outcome of any interview must be up to the artist being interviewed. The quality of any story is greatly enhanced when the artist concerned is enthused about the subjects being discussed. As a consequence, MD makes it a policy to let the interviewee set the tone and direction of the interview as much as possible. In this particular instance, Dave Mattacks was more eager to discuss his work with Fairport Convention and his attitudes toward studio playing than his work with the Thompsons. Should you have any particular questions for Dave regarding that part of his career, you may direct them to him via MD's Ask A Pro department. We'll be happy to pass them along to Dave.*

#### A NOTE OF THANKS FROM CHILE

I wish to compliment you on the extremely good magazine you publish. As an amateur and, occasionally, professional drummer, I appreciate that a good deal of thought has gone into the editing of the magazine. Since I started reading MD with the November '88 issue, I have derived much enjoyment. I have also learned a great deal from columns such as Peter Erskine's *Jazz Drummers' Workshop*. Again, congratulations on your beautiful and useful magazine.

Patrick Carrazana, Ph.D.  
Faculty of Physics  
Pontificia Universidad Catolica  
Santiago, Chile



#### ON TRACK continued from page 102

tuned by hand, causing 18th century composers generally to write for only two timps, relegating them to giving harmonic support to the tonic and dominant—not the stuff from which solo literature comes.

But Mass has found two composers who attempted to stretch the limits by using more drums. (The *Partita* uses six, the other two each use eight.) This allows the timpani to serve a more melodic role in addition to its rhythmic and support functions. The result is an enjoyable program of 18th-century orchestral music that features timpani without overdoing it. Mass is billed as "virtuoso timpanist," and while in this particular case a lot of his "virtuosity" involves simply handling the physical requirements of getting around eight drums, he proves himself to be a sensitive, musical performer.

—Richard Egart



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## SELMER TO SELL LUDWIG AND MUSSER DIVISIONS

On April 5, 1989 the Selmer Company announced that it would seek a buyer for its Ludwig and Musser percussion instrument division. Selmer has retained the investment banking firm of Bowles Hollowell Conner & Co., based in Charlotte, North Carolina, to act as financial advisor in the sale of the division. The Selmer Company was itself acquired in December, 1988 by an affiliate of Integrated Resources Acquisition, Inc., which engages in management-led buyouts.

"The Ludwig and Musser division has performed well for Selmer and has enjoyed continued growth in sales and profits over the past seven years," said H.W. Petersen, President of Selmer. "However, we have decided to focus Selmer's full resources on its woodwind, brass, and string instruments and accessories to serve our primary market of dealers, music educators, and musicians."

Mr. Peterson emphasized that during the selling process, Selmer will continue to vigorously produce, promote, and market

Ludwig and Musser percussion instruments and accessories. In addition, the company will provide full service to its domestic and international dealer network as well as its professional and student customers.

## SELECT SNARE DRUMS, LTD. BECOMES SOLID PERCUSSION, INC.

Bill Gibson, company President, announced that Select Snare Drums, Ltd. has officially changed its name to Solid Percussion, Inc. Bill commented, "The name change is due to possible marketplace confusion with the Select line of guitar products distributed by Kuffner International, and we appreciate their cooperation in resolving this situation in a friendly manner."

Dave Patrick, Marketing Director at Solid, said, "Our new name, Solid Percussion, Inc., will serve us well in several ways. It shows our intention to give quality goods and services to the percussion industry and reinforces our commitment to one-piece shells as the

superior construction method for snare drums."

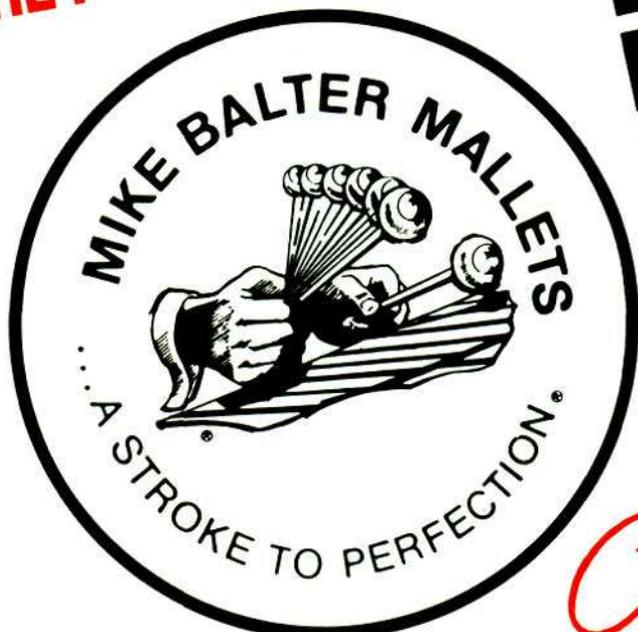
For information, contact: Solid Percussion, Inc., P.O. Box 511, Watsonville, CA 95077, (408) 728-2299.

## MD TRIVIA WINNER

The March '89 MD Trivia Contest drew our greatest response yet. Hundreds of drummers sent in thousands of cards, trying to win a set of Paiste cymbals autographed by **Carl Palmer**. Of course, they first had to correctly answer the following questions: "Although he is legendary for his work with ELP, Asia, and now with 3, Carl performed earlier in his career with a British artist known for his outrageous stage performances. This artist's group, including Carl, had one hit record on the U.S. charts in the late '60s."

1. What was the full name of the group?  
2. What was the title of the hit song?"  
The answers are: 1. The Crazy World Of Arthur Brown; and 2. "Fire." And the person whose card (with the correct answers) was drawn as our winner is **Henry Kaiser**, of Canoga Park, California. Congratulations to Henry from Carl Palmer, Paiste, and *Modern Drummer*.

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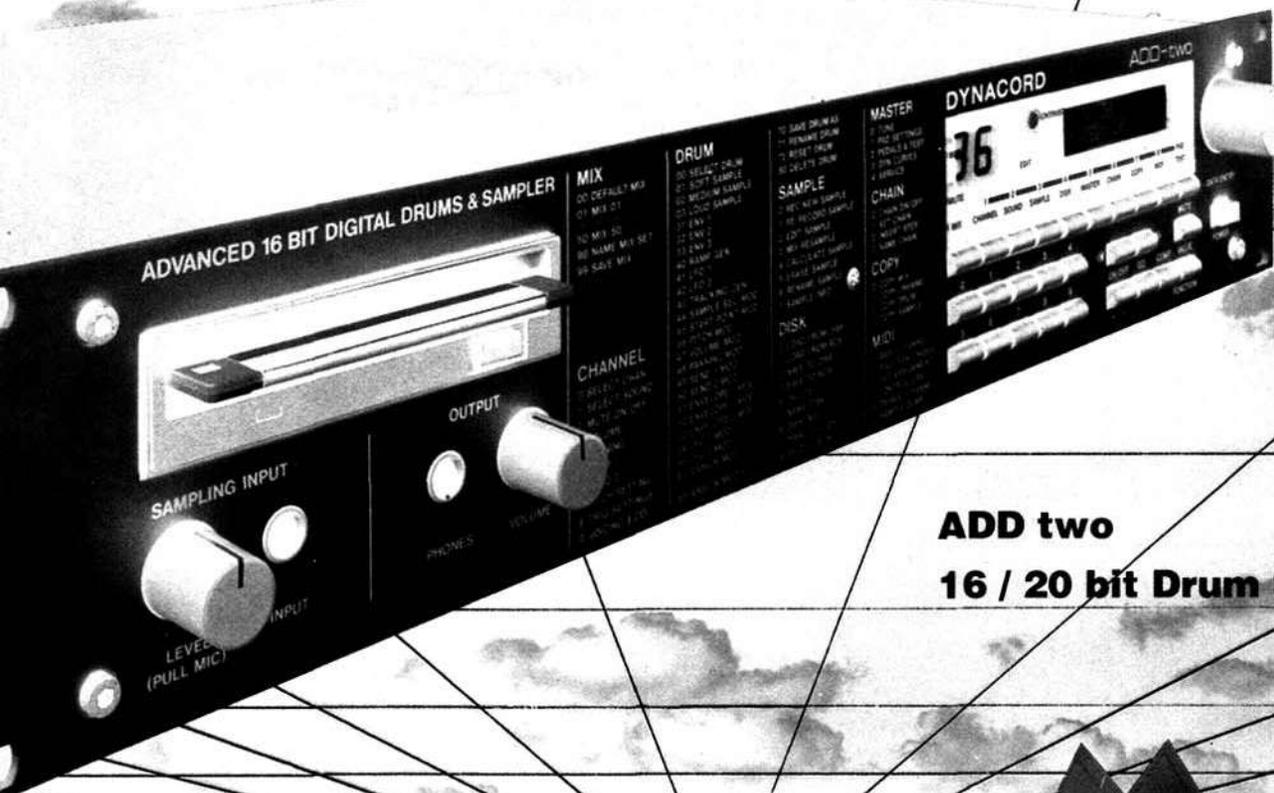
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# FIFTH INTERNATIONAL DRUMMER MEETING

The first weekend after the Frankfurt Music Fair is the ideal time for a German International Drummer Meeting. At no other time of the year are there so many international drummers available in or around Germany. This year marked the fifth time the event—the brainchild of organizer Jurgen Mader—has been held. The Meeting was very successful this year;

in fact, there are plans to expand it to two days next year. The number of visitors (600) was one indication of the need for a bigger venue.

Joe Porcaro treated two groups of interested drummers to his master class on Saturday and Sunday mornings. "Since the focus of the meeting is mainly on rock 'n' roll," Joe explained, "I concentrated on jazz." Song form, cymbal turn-arounds, and a demonstration of jazz interpretation of the Charlie Wilcoxon rudiments were some of the topics of the class. With the addition of a pianist and a bass player, Joe was able to demonstrate his theories live.

Jojo Mayer, a 21-year-old Swiss drummer, took care of the opening of a

series of clinics on Sunday. Along with his free-lance work, Jojo has a duo with former Mahavishnu bassist Jonas Hellborg and works with several other groups. One of his steady jobs is the Intergalactic Maiden Ballet. "It's hard to describe the style of that band," Jojo said. "We usually call it Science Funk & Fiction Bop." Jojo's "science" aspect is well represented by the creative way he uses his Akai sampler/



Vinnie Colaiuta



Jojo Mayer



Jim Chapin, demonstrating his Moeller Technique



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**BILL BRUFORD**  
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*Octapad* combination, which was demonstrated in his solo.

Jim Chapin, who just finished five days of ad hoc private teaching at the DW booth in Frankfurt, was next. For most of the attending drummers, Chapin's clinic was their first introduction to the Sanford Moeller technique.

Chester Thompson presented a very relaxed clinic, in which he stressed the importance of "making drumming musical. It's more than just muscles and playing hard all night long. You have to learn how to listen to the music that's being made around you."

Argentine drummer Alex Sanguinetti came up next. Alex joined Gerry Brown



Alex Sanguinetti

with the Inter South American All Star Drummers at the Berlin Jazz Festival in 1982. Shortly after this event he decided to move to Germany permanently. Though he plays jazz most of the time, he tries to play as many styles as possible. "Listening to ethnic music is a great source of inspiration for me. I've been listening to some Chinese music lately, and there's a lot of things in there that can be applied to our Western drumsets."

Being the only percussionist at a drummers' meeting is always a hard job. Martin Verdonk, who is originally from Curacao (Netherlands Antilles) but lives in Holland, took care of this assignment in the best way possible. With just a couple of congas, he played some very musical and relaxed solos, keeping the crowd silent and interested. Martin is a specialist in the "floating hand" technique. "Floating hand refers to the visual aspect that it gives," explained Verdonk. "It is as if your hand is floating just over the drumhead. What you actually do is play very fast, alternating heel and fingertip beats, trying to get a bass sound and a slap tone at the same time."

Next was Sonny Emory, doing

his first clinic of a European series of seven, right before moving into the studio to do the next Earth, Wind & Fire album. After a very dynamic solo in which his astonishing stick twirling techniques were only outshined by the musicality of his playing, Sonny presented a very well-prepared clinic, dealing with finger exercises, pedal techniques, linear rhythms, and a variety of other subjects.

Vinnie Colaiuta's appearance opened with a giant cake, but his birthday didn't prevent him from being very much present at the meeting, even after an exhausting Frankfurt Fair, where he did four clinics every day. Vinnie started off with a grooving solo in 19/16. Of course his other specialties, metric modulation and four-way coordination, were also demonstrated. The fact that the audience didn't leave before Vinnie played his last note clearly demonstrated the quality of his performance.

Meanwhile, backstage, Jim Chapin never stopped discussing technique, rudiments, rolls, and diddles with the clinicians. If his energy is characteristic for drummers, we all still have a long time to go....

—Hugo Pinksterboer

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## DW SCHEDULES "MASTER CLASS" EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS

According to Drum Workshop President Don Lombardi, DW will be sponsoring an ambitious program of "Master Class" drum seminars at participating DW dealers across the United States during the months of May, June, and July, 1989.

"The Master Class program was developed to allow drummers from all over the country to study with some of the world's best drum teachers by enrolling in a kind of traveling drum school," said Lombardi. "For a fee of \$90 serious drum students will be able to study with each of the three Master Class instructors who will be visiting selected DW dealers this spring. The first semester of Master Classes will feature Larrie Londin, Chad Wackerman, and Jim Chapin, and if the program proves to be as successful as we expect, we'll continue to schedule Master Classes on a regular basis."

The DW Master Class dealers for spring '89 are **Long Island Drum** (No. Bellmore,

NY), **Russo Music** (Trenton, NJ), **Dicenso Drum Shop** (Quincy, MA), **Gordon Miller Music** (Towson, MD), **Dixter's Music** (Milford, CT), **Huber & Breese** (Fraser, MI), **Drum Design** (Coral Springs, FL), **Drum Center, Inc.** (Indianapolis, IN), **Memphis Drum Shop** (Memphis, TN), **Knut Koupee** (Minneapolis, MN), **Drum & Keyboard Shop** (Houston, TX), and **D.O.C. Percussion** (Nashville, TN).

With enrollment limited to 25 per class, interested drummers should immediately contact a participating DW Master Class dealer or Drum Workshop at 2697 Lavery Ct. #16, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 499-6863.

DW also announced that future instructors for the Master Class program will include Gary Chaffee, John Ferraro, Fred Gruber, John Hernandez, Rick Latham, George Marsh, Chad Rager, Casey Scheuerell, and Danny Seraphine.

## REMO AND SABIAN SUPPORT CLUB ACTS

Remo, Inc and Sabian, Ltd. are two of the equipment manufacturers that have joined

with the Miller Genuine Draft Band Network in supporting top regional and emerging national club acts, with this year seeing the addition of 12 new acts to the roster. In all, the 1989 lineup consists of 26 acts from 16 states. The complete lineup was introduced during a five-hour event on Monday, January 16 that featured a keynote address from Bob Merlis, vice president for publicity for Warner Bros. Records, along with performances by nine bands on the roster.

## ENDORSER NEWS

All three percussionists from the Tito Puente Orchestra—**Tito Puente**, **Johnny "Dandy" Rodriguez**, and **Jose Madera**—are now LP endorsers....**Alan Dawson**, **Les Harris, Jr.**, **Debbi Peterson**, **Gordy Knudtson**, and Soda Stereo's **Charly Albert!** have joined Pro-Mark's family of endorsers....**Billy Cobham** now endorsing the Electro-Voice series of *N/DYM* mic's.... Solid Percussion snare drums are now being played by **Bill Gibson**, **Richie Hayward**, **George Marsh**, **Kenneth Blevins**, and **Michael Jochum**.



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## FRANKFURT MUSIC FAIR 1989

The following is a list of products of interest exhibited at the Frankfurt Music Fair 1989.

ABC Percussion Mallets are available in four series. Custom-made mallets can be made in any size, style, material, and weight. **ABC Percussion Mallets, Driehoek 13, 3328 KG Dordrecht, The Netherlands.**

Afro Percussion, well-known for their free-floating system timbales, introduced the *Patum*. A *Patum* is a long p.v.c. tube with a built-in mini shaker. It can be played as a shaker, but sounds best when stamping it lightly on the floor. The *Patum*, which is available in six lengths (26"-36"), has a mixed Octoban/shaker-like sound. Meinl will also sell this instrument. A new, easily collapsible percussion table and a black & white catalog were also shown. **Afro Percussion, Wyenweg 328, 6446 SZ Brunssum, The Netherlands.**

Bloch & Brink finish their hickory and rock maple *B-sticks* with beeswax, making them less slippery. Only the tips are lacquered. **Bloch & Brink, Asminderod-**

**gade 46, 3480 Fredensborg, Denmark.**

Capelle's *Fusion* drumshells are made in an overlapping fashion, similar to Premier's. A reinforcing ring keeps the four-ply maple shells in shape. All *Fusion* drums have die-cast Zamac hoops. The Capelle "Ergonomic System" die-cast bronze tom holder can be adjusted horizontally as well as vertically. **Capelle, Route D'Archeres, La Chapelle La Reine, 77760, France.**

Class cymbals are hand-made by UFIP, Italy, in a similar way to the UFIP hand-hammered *Solid Ride* series. The Class cymbals are specially selected for Pro Percussion Centre, Germany. **Pro Percussion Centre, Theaterstrasse 4-5, 3000 Hannover, West Germany.**

Honsuy had a five-piece, single-headed set on display. It featured, according to their catalog, a 22" Bombo, 12", 13", and 16" Timbals, and a 14" Caja Metalica. **Honsuy, S.A. Conde de Rodezno, 1, 46930 Quart de Poblet, Valencia, Spain.**

Kolberg displayed a snare drum with a pedal-controlled snare strainer. **Kolberg Percussion Instrumente, Stuttgarter Strasse 157, D-7336 Uhingen, West Germany.**

Mapex drums are made by KHS Musical Instruments, Taiwan R.O.C. KHS have been making hardware for other drum companies for several years, and now have decided to combine their experience of hardware making with a series of good-looking shells. **KHS Musical Instrument Co., Ltd., No. 178 Chung-Shan 2ND Rd., Lu-Chow Hsiang, Taipei Hsien, Taiwan, 247 R.O.C.**

Percussion Plus featured a wide range of British-made educational and professional percussion instruments. All their mallet instruments are made and hand-tuned in England. **Percussion Plus, E.) Arnold & Son Ltd., Parkside Lane, Dewsbury Road, Leeds LS11 5TD, England. Distributed in the U.S. by MIDCO International.**

PJ Drums & Percussion completed their Session Line series of congas with the addition of a 13" Super *Tumba*. A number of new cowbells, a cylinder-shaped Tube Agogo bell, and a combination of four square bells mounted inside each other were also shown. **PJ Drums & Percussion, Fredriksberg Bredegade 1, DK-2000 Copenhagen F., Denmark.**

Pro Orca presented their *JM Crip Sticks*, featuring a latex grip that is said to have anti-allergic, anti-static, and positive grip

## BACK ISSUE CLEARANCE—50% OFF!

We're clearing the warehouse to make room for more recent back issues. If you missed any classic *MD's*, now is the time to complete your collection and take advantage of this special limited-time offer! All clearance back issues are available at **\$2.00 per copy**. That's 50% off our regular \$4.00 back issue price.

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- #36—October 1982  
Stewart Copeland, Ed Thigpen, Drum Book Reference Guide.
- #45—July 1983  
Steve Gadd, Myron Grombacher, Drumsticks.
- #49—November 1983  
Phil Collins, Joe LaBarbera, Inside Sabian.
- #50—December 1983  
Carl Palmer, Simon Kirke, Guide To Drum Computers
- #61—November 1984  
Russ Kunkel, Cozy Powell, Horace Arnold.
- #62—December 1984  
Terry Bozzio, Omar Hakim, Ian Paice, Inside Calato.
- #63—January 1985  
Alan White, Shelly Manne, Ollie Brown, Nick Mason.
- #64—February 1985  
Mel Lewis, Mark Brzezicki, Mick Avory, Inside Meinl.
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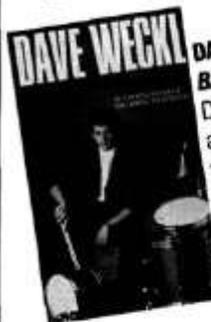
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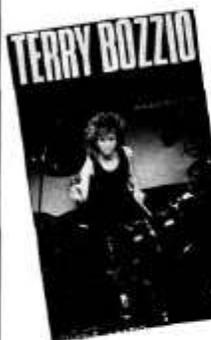


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characteristics. Manu Katche is one of their endorsers. The latex grip is inserted inside the stick, so the diameter does not increase. **Janin S.A., Avenue Paul Langevin, F-01200 Bellegarde, France.**

Schlagwerk Klangobjekte improved the wooden "heads" of their wood drums. They also displayed two sets of pentatonic tuned Square Tube Bells. **Schlagwerk Klangobjekte, Brunnenstrasse 7A, D-7340 Ceislingen/Steige, West Germany.**

Shawstix added 14 models to their existing range of sticks. Each model is available in Colored Laminate, Standard Laminate, Hickory, Japanese Oak, Maple, Lancewood, or Hardwood. Most of the models are available with nylon tips in five sizes. Since last year, Shawstix, who used to manufacture only for other brands, sells their sticks under their own name also. **Shawstix, William Shaw & Co., 273 Whitechapel Road, Scholes, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire, BD19 6HN, England.**

Spizz, the smallest cymbal manufacturer on earth, displayed two new series. The Spizz 3 series are hand-hammered B8 cymbals. The 4 series feature a special tempering, giving them a wider frequency range. The hand-hammered Spizz B20 cymbals have been temporarily discontin-

ued, but will be available again in the future. **Spizz Cymbals, Roberto Spizzichino, Bespeco Prof, s.r.l., SS 16 km. 3155, 60022 Castelfidardo (AN) Italy.**

Supercussion added a couple of traditional-sized Cuban bongos to their series. The *Professional Superwood* conga series was expanded with a 10" Super Quinto drum. The low-budget Leo Percussion congas are now available in wood also. Specifically for congueros who play sitting down, Supercussion designed a tilting conga stand with one telescopic leg. **Supercussion, Alberto de Hond, Roeterstraat 18A, 1018 WD Amsterdam, The Netherlands.**

Tamburo make their congas in a unique "barrel" fashion. Snare drum shells are 6mm thick, toms and bass drums are 7mm and 8mm respectively. The lugs of the Tamburo drums are covered by wooden housings, isolating the metal parts from the shells. All the drums are handmade by the two owners of the firm. Sets with 16" bass drums and 8", 10", 12", and 13" toms were shown at the fair. Larger sizes are available. **Tamburo, Via S. Giulio, 11 Novara, Italy.**

UFIP introduced a series of hand-hammered B8 *Galaxy* cymbals, designed for

drummers who need extra power and volume. President Luigi Tronci also showed a broad collection of cast B20 sound plates, tam tams, and crotales. **UFIP, Via G. Galilei 20, Pistoia, Italy.**

Vancore is the new name for Custom Drums, formerly made for Concorde. The shells have been improved and are now being made of solid beechwood. Vancore Custom Drums are available in any size, thickness, and finish. Vancore also featured unbreakable synthetic temple blocks and "wood" blocks. **Vancore, Tolhuisweg 7A, 8501 ZR Joure, The Netherlands.**

VRUK is a bass drum pedal attachment that allows a player to use the heel as well as the front of the foot, making fast patterns possible without the need for a second pedal. The VRUK mainly consists of a heel-piece mounted strongly on a leaf spring. **VRUK Int., Ltd., Longhill Road, Catford, London SE6 1UA, England.**

Zanki, another small Italian company, featured their B8 *Rock* cymbals, which are slightly heavier and hammered more intensely than their standard B8's. **Zanki, Fiorello & Figli, Via Dalmazia 337, 51100 Pistoia, Italy.**

—Hugo Pinksterboer



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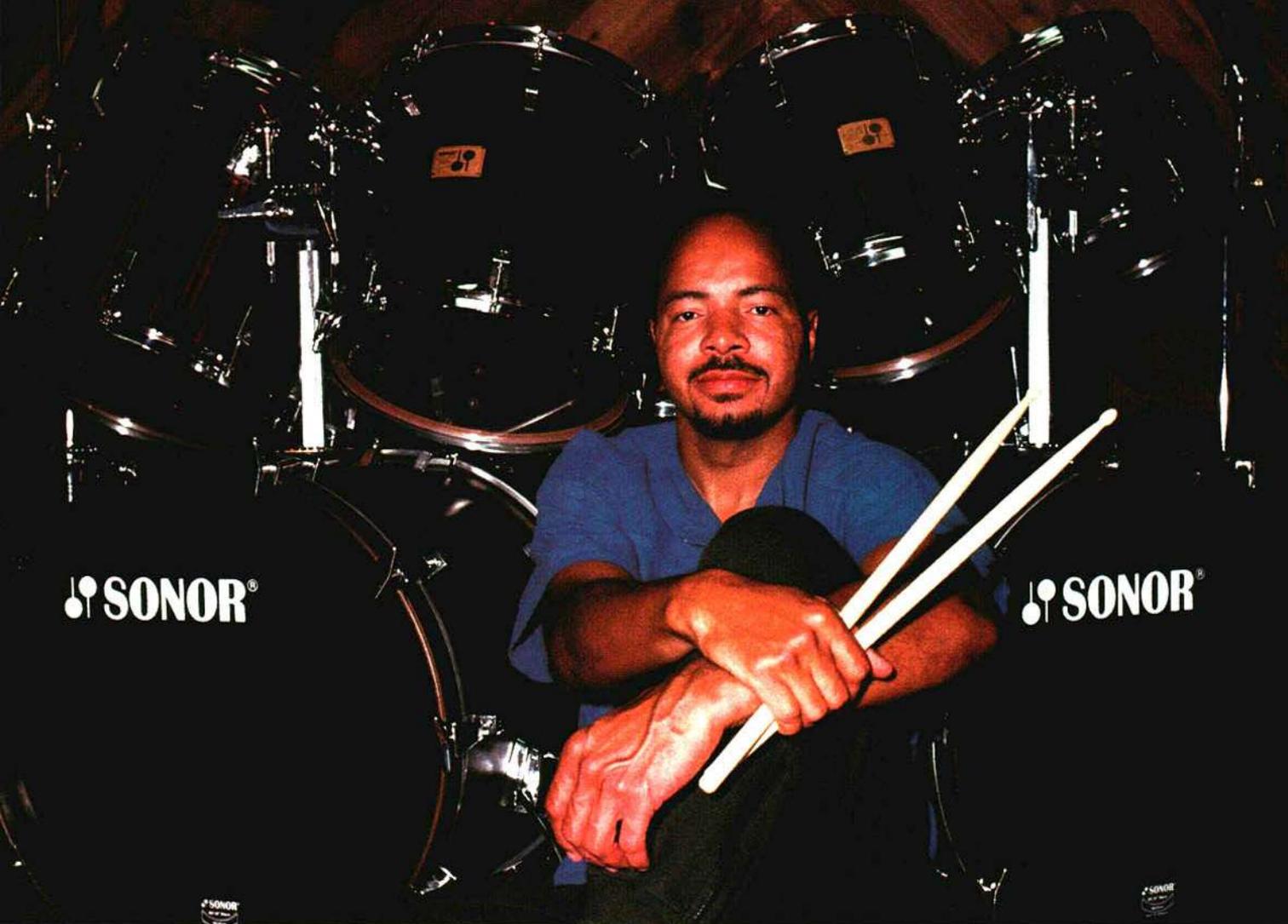
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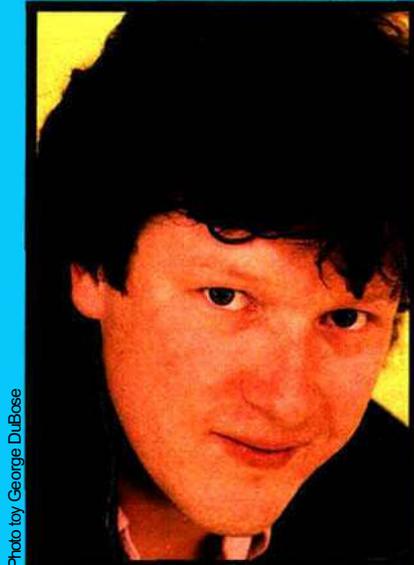


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