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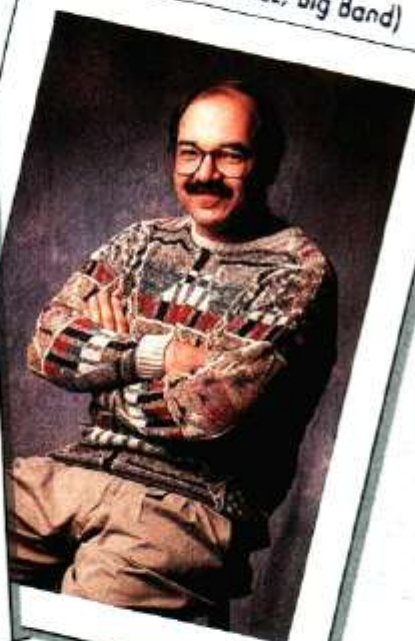
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FEATURES

SHEILA E.

Sheila E. may be a *Sex Cymbal*, as the title of her new album playfully reminds us, but she's also one of the top drummer/percussionists around. In this interview, Sheila discusses how she balances the two roles, and details her work with Prince and her own solo projects.

•by Robert Santelli

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DAVE LOMBARDO

Speed metal—no, it still doesn't get the respect it deserves. But those who've taken the time to explore the style know that it came about through a very valid, interesting, and exciting musical marriage. Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo was there at the beginning, mixing punk, metal, and megachops into a new and explosive music. Here Lombardo traces that evolution.

•by Teri Saccone

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TUNING UP WITH THE PROS: PART 1

One of the joys (some would say curses) of being a drummer is being able to get your own unique sound by developing your own unique tuning system. In this special feature, MD examines the setups of top pros, who openly share what they've discovered over the years about getting their sounds.

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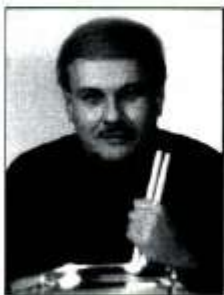
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Prince's
Michael Bland

BY TERI SACCONI



On Tuning



Of the many inquiries *MD* editors receive each month, questions on drum tuning continue to be among the most common. In fact, *MD's Guide To Drumset Tuning* in the February '84 issue is still high on the list of our most frequently requested reprints.

Why is tuning a matter of such great interest—and occasional frustration—for so many drummers? Though most of us have a pretty clear concept of the sound we'd like to achieve, the various approaches to drum tuning are so numerous that actually *achieving* that elusive sound can be a mind-boggling experience. Further complicating the situation is the fact that the drums are a unique instrument. Unlike keyboard, brass, woodwind, and string instruments, which operate on standard tuning systems, we tune according to our personal preferences. And since there really *are* no rules, every drummer tends to approach it somewhat differently.

Unfortunately, tuning can also be incredibly frustrating for those unaware of the basic principles of producing an acceptable sound. However, books and articles have been written on the subject, and several name artists have dealt with proper tuning methods in their videos. Still, most of us tend to learn what we know through trial and error. It's part of the challenge of being a drummer.

Tuning might best be viewed as both an art *and* a science. First, choices of shell materials, sizes, and tonalities offer the player a host of possibilities. All that becomes even more complex when head selection enters the picture. Different brands and models, creative matching of top and bottom heads, and the tension of those heads in relation to one another are other variables to consider. And then there's selecting among the dozens of dampening methods drummers have been known to use over the years. The truth is, it *can* get overwhelming, and even some of the leading professionals I've spoken with have admitted that after years of drumming, they still continue to experiment with tuning.

Following up on our *Guide To Drumset Tuning*, we thought it would be interesting to approach the same subject from a different angle by questioning a wide array of top players. Most were more than happy to supply us with their personal choice of gear, some very definite opinions about tuning, and the methods they've used to achieve their own signature sounds. We're presenting it all this month in the first of a two-parter entitled *Tuning Up With The Pros*. We think it offers some valuable insight, and we're certain it will answer a lot of the questions we receive. More importantly, I think we'll *all* end up with a more thorough understanding of a subject we'd all like to know more about.

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MD Made His Day

I wanted to drop you a line to say "Thanks very much" for the two Brady snare drums I won in *MD*'s December 1990 Trivia Contest. I wanted very much to win that fantastic prize. It was so weird, though, how it happened. I had just walked into my office with a fresh cup of coffee. Before getting back to work, I decided I would look through a previous issue of *MD*, trying to find the transcription of James Brown's "Superbad." As it turned out, my attention fell on a different article—one by Rick Van Horn. As I was perusing that article, the phone rang... "This is Rick Van Horn, from *Modern Drummer*." I almost lost it! The phone was in my left hand with Rick on the line, the *MD* was in my right hand with Rick's article showing, and I hadn't even begun to think about why in the heck *Rick Van Horn* would be calling *me*. About the time I realized what the reason had to be, he was already verbalizing it on the other end. I had just crossed over to the Twilight Zone. What a fabulous day. I can't wait for the drums to arrive!

Larry Rice
Chula Vista CA



A Cinderella Story

It was with great pleasure that I read your interview with Fred Coury [February '91 *MD*]. Having experienced the same nightmare one Cinderella album earlier, I can vouch for the uncertainty and insecurity that can rise from just such a situation. I always thought a producer was meant to work *with* a musician, not against him. I agree wholeheartedly with every word Fred had to say on the subject, but I would like to take this opportunity to correct a few minor details.

First of all, my last name is spelled Drnec. Secondly, Fred replaced *me*, not Jody Cortez, as your article intimated. Jody was brought in strictly for the

Nightsongs sessions, and was not a member of the band.

I have always found your magazine interesting and informative. Keep up the good work.

James Drnec
Upland CA



Review Rebuttal

I was very grateful that my *Combinations* book was reviewed in your March '91 *Critique* column, yet disappointed that the review didn't at least list the different topics the book addresses that make it stand out from typical drum books. Because of the uniqueness behind the book, I felt that it warranted a deeper review.

I was also shocked at the general claims made about the book: "Creating exercises through a system such as this is somewhat haphazard in terms of coming up with practical beats and fills..." I don't know how Richard Egart could make such a sweeping critical statement when I address those issues. Not only did he do a disservice to *Combinations*, but also to your readers by haplessly reviewing—and thereby misrepresenting—the book.

As far as coming up with "practical fills," all the drummer has to do is use "strips" that have standard notes written on them that are usually played in fills: 8th, triplet, and 16th notes; the odd groupings are there for those drummers who want to break away from playing the drumset like everyone else. In order to develop "practical beats," the drummer would insert the cymbal "strips" into the chart and would see countless ways of playing interesting patterns every time it is manipulated. The book comes with other topics: double-bass, four-way coordination, polyrhythms, and much more. *Combinations* is for those drummers who want to develop their own ideas and not have them dictated by an author; there

are enough of those books out there already.

Richard Santorsola
Boston MA

Editor's note: The determination of what constitutes a "practical" beat or fill must ultimately be up to any given drummer. However, the "slide rule" system of interchangeable strips employed by the book in question presented such rhythmic patterns in the form of mathematical combinations, rather than musical compositions. As such, although a drummer might find many of the combinations interesting and beneficial from a developmental standpoint (as Mr. Egart clearly pointed out in the review), he or she might find difficulty in immediately creating patterns directly applicable to his or her given style of playing. It is this inherent difficulty with such a system that Mr. Egart referred to in his review.



Supporting The Troops

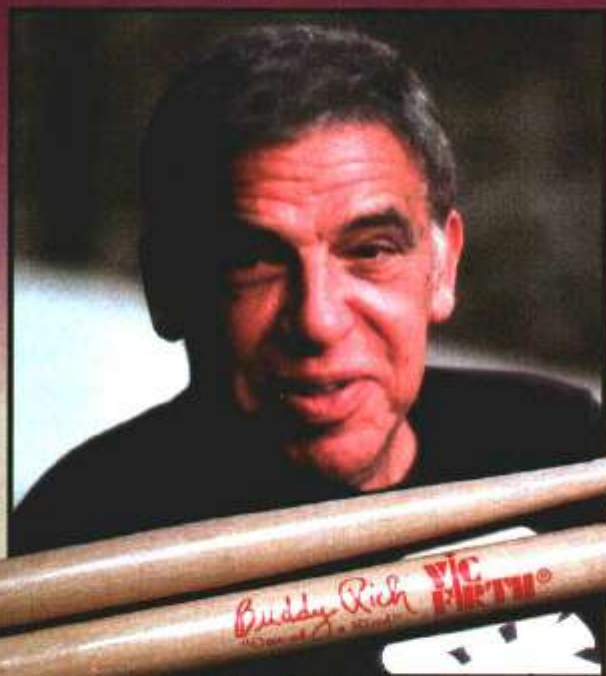
I would just like to take a moment to thank the drumming industry for not forgetting about the troops in Saudi Arabia. I'm a marine currently stationed in the Gulf. A few months ago I wrote several letters to the large drum companies. All of them cooperated greatly by sending brochures, T-shirts, and many other items that were distributed to my fellow marines to raise morale. The Zildjian people were particularly nice, and I'd like to thank them greatly. It's really good to know that the group of musicians I belong to supports us so far from home. Thanks again to everyone who has helped keep me and my fellow drummers entertained during this crisis.

Lcpl. Chris Melvin
US Marine Corps
Operation Desert Storm



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Ronald Shannon Jackson

Although Ronald Shannon Jackson's *Red Warrior* was recently released on Axiom-Mango, the album was actually recorded two years ago. This is usually the case, Ronald explains, because he records his music right when it comes to him. The expenses usually come out of his own pocket—with a little help from his friends—and then he seeks out a record company for release. Because Ronald's isn't the most commercial music, sometimes that process can take time.

"*Red Warrior* is an album that shows total harmony and integration of rhythm and melody," Jackson says. "I made a long tour of Africa, and I realized from listening to the players there that there is a marriage between the string instruments and the rhythm in the music. So on *Red Warrior*, especially on a composition like 'Ashes,' the music shows that



kind of dialog.

"The drumming on this record is very animated. It's very alive and very pres-

ent," Jackson continues. "That's because it's a result of putting my whole life force into that particular moment." Like all of Jackson's ventures, *Red Warrior* was recorded live in one day.

Ronald plays in a variety of situations, such as the groups Last Exit, Blues Experience (with James Blood Ulmer), and his own group, the Decoding Society. Playing that much, he says, enables him not only to support his wife and two kids, but to have ample outlets for all his ideas.

Jackson works those ideas out in his studio in New York City, where he can play 24 hours a day, "as loud as I want to. I work every day, so I'm coming up with different ideas," he elaborates. "Each day is a development of the day before, and if it's a strong rhythmic pattern, I'll take it and work on it for 21 days at a time, so it totally crystallizes in my mind and I can call on it in my sleep."

• Robyn Flans

Steve White

Since he left the Style Council in December '88, Steve White's career has developed very much as he hoped it would. There has been a variety of studio and live work with the jazz quartet led by English organist James Taylor, and with Steve's own band, the Jazz Renegades. Album projects have included *Working Week*, Terry Ronald, jazz singer Sarah Jane Morris, and Ian Dury. Steve also recorded some TV themes with Steve Nieve, late of Elvis Costello & the Attractions.

Breaking further new ground for Steve was producing *A Certain Kind Of Freedom*, an album featuring some of the best young British jazz musicians. "I tried to get as many people as possible working on it," Steve says, "So that we could show all aspects of British jazz. From a drummer's point of view, we had Phil Gould doing a track, which was the first thing he had done since leaving Level 42. Gary Husband did a solo piano track, which is brilliant. Mark Mondezir, who plays with Courtney Pine, is also on there, Gary Wallis plays percussion, Martin Ditcham, who played with Sade, is there, and I played on a couple of the tracks, as well as producing and doing some of the writing. The great thing for me is that I was really able to cut my teeth on it from a production point of view."

Steve has also found himself working again with the Style

Council's Paul Weller, in his new project, the Paul Weller Movement. "It's wonderful to be working with someone of that caliber when he's at his best," Steve enthuses. "Paul's new music is much earthier than the later stuff with the Style Council was. It looks like I'm going to be committed to this band for the foreseeable future." An American tour is being planned for the late summer.

"It's been a really interesting couple of years for me. I feel that I've found my identity as a drummer," Steve sums up. "I've never felt so sure about what I do stylistically, and that's so important for a musician."

• Simon Goodwin



David Kemper

"I like LA," says long-time Los Angeles resident and session drummer David Kemper. "I remember when Orange County was still orange groves."

Indeed David should like it where he is. Kemper has maintained a session career in LA spanning 20 years, and in the process he has assured himself a spot in the Session Players Hall of Fame—if one ever comes into existence.

Although he spends a lot of his time these days touring as a member of the Jerry Garcia Band, Kemper has left a legacy of record dates in his wake that rivals those of more familiar players Jim Keltner and Jeff Porcaro in sheer volume. He still manages a busy recording schedule in LA, most recently with Japanese pop star Yazawa, John Hiatt, and Art Garfunkel.

Kemper says his career has gone exactly as he hoped it would. "I've always thought of my career as a long process. I wasn't concerned with being the most well-known drummer and trying to sustain a peak," he says. "The most important thing was being able to make a living playing music I liked."

Among the other artists Kemper has recorded and/or toured with are Linda Ronstadt, John Hiatt, Joan Armatrading, the Average White Band, Carly Simon, Leo Kotke, and T-Bone Burnett, with whom he recorded the acclaimed *Truth Decay* album.

Kemper also played with Jerry Lee Lewis on the soundtrack for the movie *Great Balls Of Fire*, which was based on the life of the legendary piano basher. Kemper says recording with Lewis was a

memorable experience. "The first session was just me and Jerry Lee. The producer wanted to see what kind of shape he was in and if he could still play like a kid again," Kemper says. "It was amazing. From the minute he began, he was a firecracker. He was 'The Killer.'"

Despite Kemper's resume, it seems that outside of the tight-knit Los Angeles recording community, few people are familiar with his name. "I don't know how to hustle for work," David explains. "I wouldn't know what to say to somebody. I was fortunate enough that all through the '70s, I never had to do anything to promote myself but answer the telephone. I just did the best I could do on every project, and I still do."

• **Leor Beary**

Tom Roady

Percussionist Tom Roady says that in the nine years he's been living in Nashville, the attitude toward percussion has broadened. Some of that change has to do with the trend of more contemporary-edged music coming out of Music City these days, and Tom gets called for the more progressive sessions.

"Recently I cut three tracks on rhythm dates with Eddie Bayers and Leland Sklar for Suzy Boggus's record," Tom says. "The first track we cut was a 5/4 Mexican fiesta song, and there was all kinds of room for percussion. I put four or five tracks of percussion on it, like castanets and congas. On the stuff I get called for, there are usually a couple of songs I can use congas on and some more island stuff, like with Lacy J. Dalton."

A recent session with Eric Silver saw Roady using a Hadgini drum as the basic track, and then putting shakers and other percussion over it. "Then they overdubbed some drums and put this African chant to it," he continues. "On the Brentwood Jazz Quartet project I also used the Hadgini drum. When the song lends itself to it, it's really cool."

Ironically, Tom says that a lot of the subtlety and taste he must employ on percussion was actually learned from one of his favorite *drummers*. "I learned a long time ago that in this town it's knowing what *not* to play," says Roady. "I started out in



Muscle Shoals, so all the years of listening to Roger Hawkins taught me taste. If anybody is an influence on the way I play, it's definitely Roger."

• **Robyn Flans**

D.J. Fontana

"We're living proof that rock 'n' roll just goes on and on," says DJ. Fontana, Elvis Presley's original drummer. "We might be getting up there in age, but we still know what it takes to make a song work and what gets people's feet tapping."

Fontana is talking about his group, the Sun Rhythm Section, a Memphis-based "co-operative" band made up of musicians who in the 1950s had some connection with Sun Records and the Sun Studios. It was in that legendary studio on Union Avenue in Memphis that Elvis cut his first songs in 1954.

The Sun Rhythm Section came together three years ago after the Smithsonian Institution called bass player Stan Kessler, who still works at Sun, and asked him to form a rockabilly band to play a two-week stand at the Washington, D.C. museum.

Although Fontana didn't perform at the Smithsonian, he joined the band shortly after the engagement, and has been with them ever since. In the past couple of



years the band has played all over the world, often as part of a U.S. government cultural exchange program. They've also recorded one album, *Old Time Rock & Roll*, on the Flying Fish label, and Fontana says a second will be released by a small Swedish label sometime in 1991. "I'd rather do this than sessions any time," says Fontana. "Sessions are too regimented for me. I like going on the road and playing in front of an audience. That's always been the thing for me."

Fontana also gets requests to visit with Elvis Presley fan clubs and sit in with Elvis-styled rockabilly bands, especially in Europe, where the King's legacy remains strong. "I don't mind spending time with old fans," says Fontana. "I sign autographs, tell a few stories, talk about the old days. I do a little playing. In the end, everybody has a good time, including me."

• Robert Santelli

News...

Alvino Bennett is on Stevie Wonder's tracks from the film *Jungle Fever*. He also recently did an on-camera stint for an episode of *Perfect Strangers*, plus he's been doing some live gigs with Jack Sonni.

Alan Childs has been working with Debbie Gibson.

Tommy Wells in the studio with Don McLean and Shane Barnby.

Scott Crago on projects by B.B. Steal, the Divinyls, Toni Childs, Infectious Grooves (along with **Stephen Perkins** on two tracks), and Vince Rocco, and in the studio working on a new album for his band, Venice.

Rikki Rockett on tour with Poison.

Reed Mullin in the studio with Corrosion of Conformity, working on a record for

Combat Records.

Phil Varone on the road with Saigon Kick.

Ricky Lawson has been on the road with Whitney Houston. That's him on Houston's latest LP, as well as Anita Baker's latest. He also did studio work with Take 6, James Ingram, and Michael O'Neil.

Les DeMerle and band performing at Caesars in Atlantic City in June, and at the Ritz Carlton Hotel, Amelia Island, Florida, in the month of July. Les also has a new instructional video about to be released, *Rock Fusion Volume 2*.

Frank Colon on the road with the Manhattan Transfer, with **Rayford Griffin** on drums.

Richie Mattalian recently completed tracks for Glenn

Hughes.

Ed Mann recently took his "Perfect World" band on a three-week tour of Europe.

Burleigh Drummond has replaced Chad Wackerman in the band.

Russ McKinnon is currently in the studio recording Tower of Power's first album for Epic/Sony Records.

Chris Parker has been quite busy of late. He's been in Hawaii working with Walter Becker and Donald Fagen, and he's on the new Roberta Flack and Lou Rawls releases.

Howard Fields is working with the Steve Chapin Band in a 10th anniversary Harry Chapin commemorative tour. (July 16, 1981 was the date of his fatal car crash.)

Casey Scheuerell has been on the clinic circuit late-

ly. He recently did a clinic in Mexico City, sponsored by the Mexico City Drummer's Club. The event was held at the Arcano Jazz Club to a standing-room-only audience. Casey also has done clinics at the Drummers Meet in Koblenz Germany, and recently performed with the Velvet Knights Drum line in Los Angeles, with **Walfredo Reyes**. Casey has just completed his first album with the group Secret 9, and is currently looking for a record label for the band.

Kenny Holton recently toured Europe with Molly Hatchet, and is currently in the studio working on a new album with the band.

Congratulations to Liz and **Bill Gibson** on the birth of their daughter, Olivia Noel.



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ASK A PRO



Peter Criss

Q You're one of my all-time favorite drummers. When you were with KISS, pictures of your drumkits seemed to indicate that they were of Pearl's wood/fiberglass series. I was wondering if you still had the drums, and, if so, whether you would be interested in selling them. I have similar drums, and I love them. Also, could you tell me what you are doing, musically, and what equipment you're using these days?

Matt Convery
Corunna MI

There are a couple of drumkits I would like to get rid of. I have too many, and it would make my wife, Debra, happy to have more room in the garage. I have moved to LA near the ocean, and I love it. I am working on my own music and going for a record deal soon. I have also written a book, waiting to get it published. I am also producing bands now. I play Drum Workshop drums now, along with Sabian cymbals and Pro-Mark sticks—all the best, I think.

Thanks for writing. I think *Modern Drummer* is a great publication; I get it every month. And keep on playing. I hope to see you on the scene, soon. I'm always willing to help a brother drummer.



A Thanks, Matt; it's nice to know that there are drummers still thinking of me. As to your questions:

Nicko McBrain

Q I have always enjoyed listening to Iron Maiden's recordings, and there are a few questions regarding your playing and other things I'd love to have answered. First, how do you get your bass drum to sound so deep and powerful? Second, what are the models and sizes of the *Paiste* series and other *Paiste* cymbals that you use? Third, what kind of heads do you use, and how do you go about tuning them? And last—but most important—what kind of drums did you use on the 1984 recording of *Powerslave*? What series were they, what were they made of, and of how many plies? I value the answer to this last question very much, because I think they are the most beautiful sounding drums I've ever heard. So, if you just happen to have that old set still laying around and not in use, I would be very grateful if you wouldn't mind giving it up! Thanks very much!

John Basara
Lacey WA

A First of all, thanks for all the kind comments. My, you don't ask for much, do you? To try to take your questions in order: My bass drum is an 18x24 Sonor *Signature* series drum, with the internal damper system removed. I use a Ludwig *Silver Dot* batter head with a Remo *Muffl*, and we mike the drum with an AKG D-12 microphone. And then there is the expertise of Mr. Martin Birch, with all his knob-twiddlin'.

The *Paiste* series cymbals I use are 16", 17", 18", 19", and 20" *Power Crashes*, a 20" *Full Crash*, 20" and 22" *Power Rides*, 14" *Power Hats*, a 22" prototype crash, and one 22" and two 18" *Heavy Chinas*. I also use a 13" *Heavy Bell*, which might be a 2002, a 3000, or even a

Formula 602. It's been painted, and to be honest with you I'm not sure what it is anymore. Finally, I also use a 40" symphonic gong.

All the top batter heads on my kit are Ludwig *Silver Dots*; the bottoms are the Sonor *Ebony* series. What I usually do is remove the batter heads on the drums and tune the bottom heads as close as possible to the actual pitch and tone that I want from each drum when the top head is on. Then I put on the top heads and tune them up to the note I want to hear—which winds up pretty close to the bottom head.

Finally, the drumkit I used on *Powerslave* was my old Sonor XK-9212 kit, which was a series they had out from 1965. It's a 9-ply, beechwood-shell concert tom system, with all standard-size shells, rather than power depths. The diameters were 6" through 16" hanging toms, a 19x18 floor tom, and a 14x24 bass drum. As far as my "giving up" that kit...you're out of luck, mate! I keep all my drumkits in a warehouse in London. They all have special meaning to me, so I hang on to them. Besides, I just may want to use that kit again someday!

Louie Bellson

Q Why do you now use only one 9x13 rack tom between your twin bass drums, instead of two such toms as you've done in the past?

Eliot Landsberg
Plantation FL

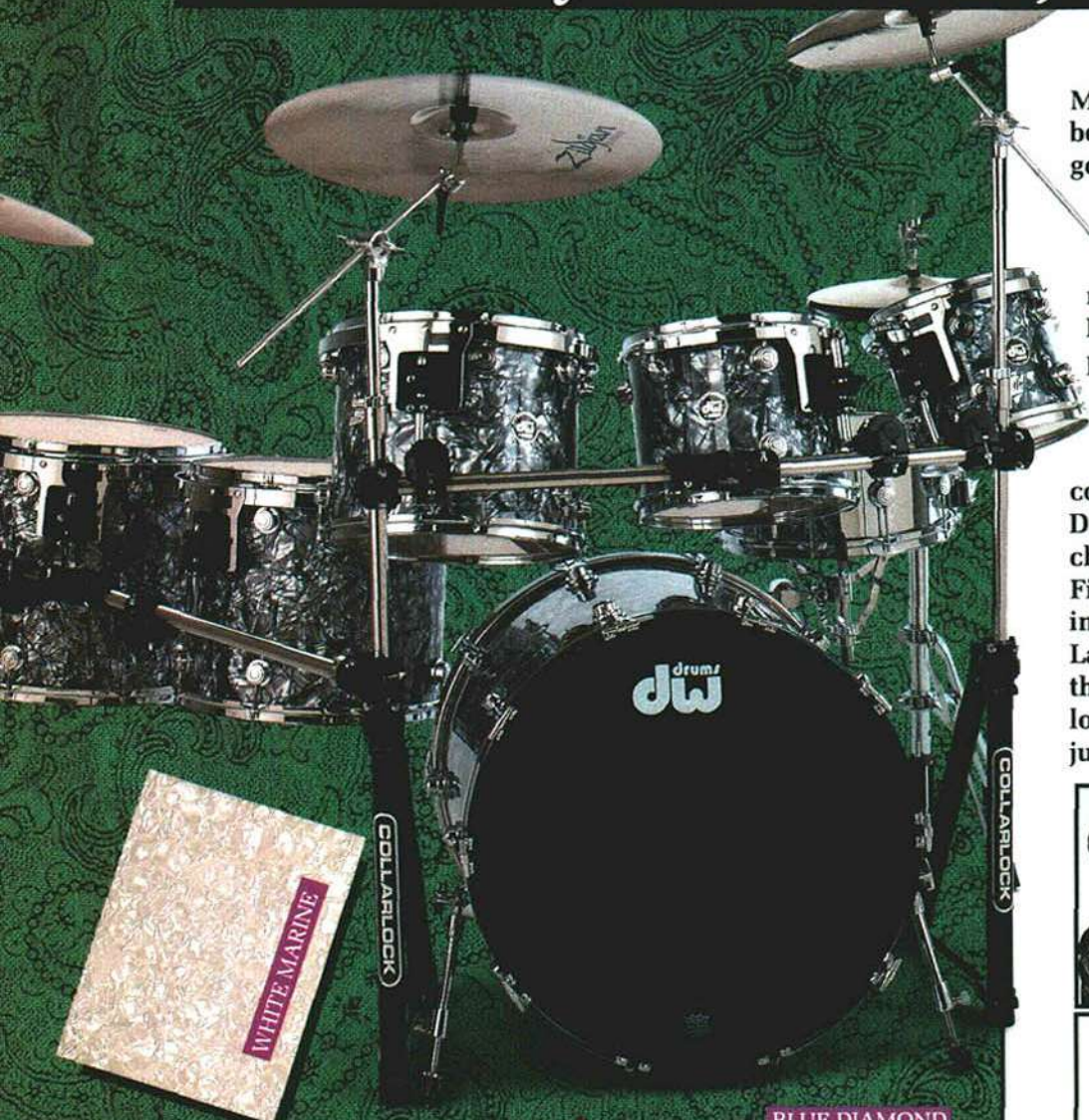
A I cut down to one 9x13 tom to allow my cymbals to be closer, for time playing. However, I am going back to the two 9x13-tom setup for the future. Thanks for the question!



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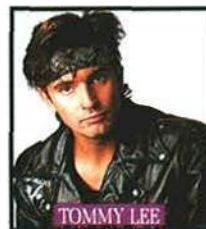
BLACK OYSTER



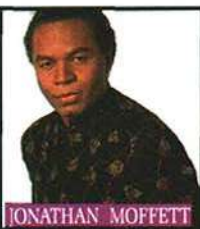
SOLID RED



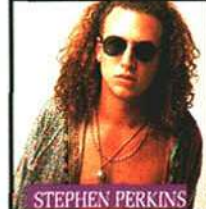
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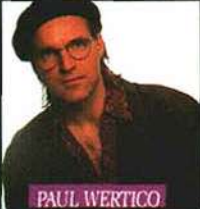
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IT'S QUESTIONABLE



Q Where To Find Slingerland Parts?

I recently bought a 6 1/2x15 Slingerland snare drum, circa 1955, at a yard sale. It is missing the snare side-lugs, the snares, and the cord to tie the snares to the strainer. I am most worried about finding lugs to fit the snare. The casings are bullet-shaped. Where can I order these lugs?

Kelly Minnis
Nashville TN

A According to Buzz King of H.S.S. Inc. (distributors for Slingerland),

"The lugs currently in production are model numbers S565, S566, S567, and S568. These can be purchased from H.S.S., Inc. through any Slingerland dealer or drumshop. *Radio King*-style lugs (the so-called 'beavertail') are not currently available. If you are unsure of the style of lug you need, I suggest that you compare your model to the current *Spirit* or *Slingerland Lite* lugs, as these are identical to the lugs of the '60s, '70s, and '80s. For further information, feel free to call me at (804) 550-2700."

Q How To Install Floor Tom Legs?

I recently bought a used Ludwig *Super Classic* eight-piece drumset. It is somewhere between four and seven years old. The two floor toms (16x16 and 16x18) are mounted off of a single-braced tubular stand (which I believe was Ludwig's *Atlas* line). Although the stand is sufficient, the slightest bump sends the heavy toms crashing to the floor. I know a double-braced stand might solve my problem, but I prefer floor toms that have their own legs. Is there a way I could install legs to my floor toms so I would no longer have to mount them off of a stand? If so, is there a big chance of damaging the shells or of weakening them so that they would wear out quicker? After installing the legs, would the opening left

in the shell from the mounting from the stand make a big difference in the sound? What parts would I need? Any advice and instruction would be greatly appreciated, since the closest drum store is hours away.

Heath Brady
Albert KS

A We checked with Ludwig Product Specialist Dick Gerlach, who gave us the following information: "If you wish to mount legs on your floor toms, you'll need six *P1216* leg brackets and six floor tom legs. With the brackets, we now provide a spacer (*P218*) that you can use as a template for drilling the appropriate mounting holes in the shells of the drums. You'll need six of those, too. The lower hole for the brackets should be 2 1/2" from the edge of the shell; the template will give you the spacing for the upper hole. (The hole itself requires a 5/16" drill bit.) You can obtain the necessary parts from any authorized Ludwig dealer.

"Drilling the shell yourself should not weaken the shell in any way, as long as you do the job with care. If you are concerned about the effect of removing the current stand-mounting hardware, you might just leave it on. In any case, removing it should make no appreciable difference in the sound of the drum."

Q Pearl Add-On Drums?

I own a set of silver Pearl wood-fiberglass drums. I want to add some toms to the set. Could you tell me which sizes the toms were made in? Also, I'd like to know how many sets were made, the original cost of the sets, when they were made, and where I could purchase add-on drums.

Matt Convery
Corunna MI

A According to Pearl's Ken Austin, "The wood-fiberglass drums you are asking about were made with the same maple shells as our *Prestige Custom MLX* line. The shell was finished internally with a sheet of fiberglass. It was an interesting aural combination, as the drums exuded the warmth of maple while they featured the projection and attack of synthetics. There were several thousand sets made between 1979 and 1981. If you would like a complete list of prices from that period, please write us directly at P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, Tennessee 37211; the list is too extensive to run here. As to where you can purchase add-on drums, I suggest you run an advertisement in *Modern Drummer's Drum Market* section. Since MD's readership is the most extensive in the industry, it is more than likely that you will hook up with a seller of the Pearl drums you desire."

Q How To Eliminate Grommet Rattle?

I own a set of Yamaha *Recording Custom* drums. I've had them about two years, and I love them very much. But recently I've noticed an annoying buzz coming from the metal grommets in the air vents on two of my largest toms. Is there any way I can tighten these loose grommets without damaging the drumshells?

Paul Bilodeau
Marshfield MA

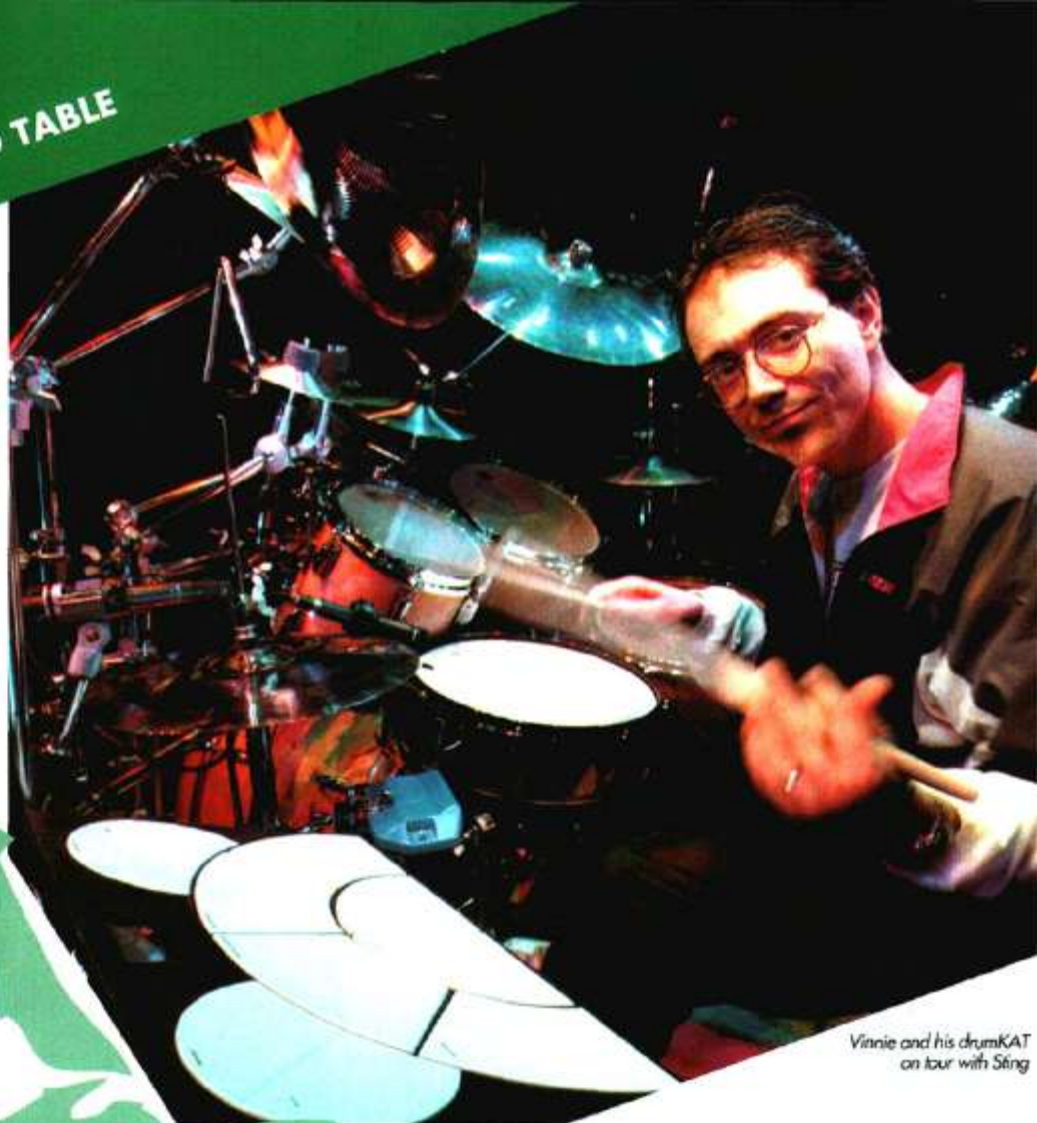
A Yamaha's Steve Ettleson suggests the following: "Find a bolt approximately the size of the air hole in the grommet, and about 3/4" long. Put it through the air hole with a washer on the outside of the shell and both a washer and a nut on the inside. The washers should be touching the grommet. Tighten the nut until the washers press the grommet against the shell, and then remove the nut, bolt, and washer. This should stop the rattling."



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Vinnie Colaiuta has become an icon for drummers as the "new voice" in modern drumming. Likewise, the drumKAT has become a symbol for the most powerful, player friendly intelligently designed percussion controller available anywhere.

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Sometimes Sheila E. really likes to wear sunglasses. Inside the Warner Bros. New York office on this dreary winter day, Sheila's shades—cool, sexy, oval ones—stay glued to her face.

Some stars hide behind sunglasses. They can mask their identity with a pair of good, dark lenses. Shades can also provide a warm, somewhat secure sense that the eyes behind those lenses can see you, but you can't see them.

It's not that Sheila E.—Prince's passionate percussionist who's a certified recording star in her own right—is unusually shy, mind you. Nor does she seem uncomfortable when it comes to doing interviews. Soft-spoken, perhaps. But not shy.

By Robert Santelli



That must mean Sheila E. isn't hiding from me or anyone else. What it might mean is that Sheila E. is establishing a certain state of hip. Call it soft-spoken hip.

You could say that Sheila E. defines hipness. Her hot, Latin looks are in marked contrast to her ladylike sense of reserve. Her determination to master what's still too often considered a man's instrument has drawn respect—and envy—from all corners of the pop music world. Sheila has risen above the sex-symbol image that follows her everywhere she goes, and she has asserted herself not only as a first-class drummer/percussionist and performer, but also as a vocalist and songwriter. These things have made her a role model of sorts for young women with similar aspirations.

Mention this to Sheila E. and she smiles softly. "There is a reason for everything," she says. "I've always known what I wanted, and I've always figured out a way to get it." Her secret? Persistence. Family. Talent. Prince.

Although known for her work in the late '70s and early '80s as a session player and performer with George Duke, Herbie Hancock, Lionel Richie, Spyro Gyra, and Jeffrey Osborne, among others, it wasn't until Sheila began her association with Prince that her career blossomed. "Prince and I hit it off right away," she explains. "We always had an incredibly special relationship. He has helped me in more ways than I know."

But the relationship hasn't been as one-sided as Sheila E. makes it sound. When Prince called, Sheila came. She performed on the *smash Purple Rain* soundtrack and was both his opening act and part of his stage band on the resulting tour. Later on in the '80s, her stunning percussive work was heard on Prince's *Sign O' The Times* and *Lovesexy* projects.

Sheila E. also signed with Warner Bros. through Prince's Paisley Park Label. First came *The Glamorous Life* in 1984, a fabulous solo outing that resulted in a slew of Grammy and American Music Award nominations. Next it was *Romance 1600* and *Sheila E.*, two capable follow-up albums. And now, after a four-year recording hiatus, comes *Sex Cymbal*, a masterful blend of rhythmic tension and uncut percussive power.

"I feel like I've traveled a lot and come full circle," says Sheila E. "I like where I've been and where I'm going."

RS: It's been a long time since we've had a new album from Sheila E. Did you deliberately stay away from the recording studio?

SE: Not really. Actually, it was more of an artistic move. I wanted to move away from being a solo artist and go back to being a drummer, which is what I enjoy most. In order to do that, I had to join a band. But before I did that, I had to figure out who I wanted to play with. At the time, Prince was starting a new band, so I joined it.

RS: Some people might consider your move away from being a solo artist as a move backwards.



SE: I didn't think so. Too many people put too much emphasis on dollar signs. I don't think of money at all. It's not important to me. Well, in a way it is, because we all need it to survive. But all I wanted to do was get away from the pressures of being a solo artist. I just wanted to play the drums. I wasn't thinking that the move was going to affect my career. And to tell you the truth, a lot of people told me it was the wrong move to make. They told me it wasn't smart to go from being a solo artist and having some success at it, to playing behind someone like Prince again. I disagreed. I thought it would be a good move. I still think it was. I didn't want people



necessarily coming to see *me*. I didn't want to have to be out front, which is something I don't like very much.

RS: Why's that?

SE: Because it takes away from my playing the drums. I consider myself a musician much more than I consider myself a female pop vocalist or whatever it is they call me. I guess, to answer your question, I'd have to say that it was important for me to get back to playing the drums because I was just tired of having a band and being the one out front all the time.

RS: What's it like playing in Prince's band? Did it meet your expectations?

SE: It more than met my expectations. See, I grew up playing with my dad [Pete Escovedo] in his band. I was 15 when I first started with him. It was a great experience because the music was so intense. Sometimes it was almost overwhelming. Sometimes I'd hear the music and it would make me cry and give me chills. It really did. The only other artist that I've played with in my career that has given me the same kind of feeling is Prince. That meant a lot to me.

RS: When did you first meet Prince, and how?

SE: I first met him in 1979. He was doing his first album, and I think I saw him at the Greek Theater in Berkeley at an Al

Jarreau concert. I had heard about Prince, but I didn't know if the Prince at the concert was the same guy. He was standing against a wall and we just sort of made eye contact. Less than a year later he had his first album out, and I went to see him. He was doing a show, and I went backstage to tell him that I really liked his music, that I liked it because it was different and unpredictable—just like him. As soon as I went backstage, he came right up to me and said, "I know who you are." I was shocked because he told me he was following my career. At the time I was playing with George Duke. Prince wanted me to play drums for him. The first thing he asked me was how much I charged. I told him, and he said, "Well, I'll never be able to afford that." Well, things changed. [laughs] We

became friends then, and we've been friends ever since.

RS: When was the first time that you played with Prince?

SE: I guess that was in 1984. But one time before that he came over to my house and we sat down and did a little playing. We just jammed. But it was in 1984 that he called me into the studio. I was playing with Lionel Richie at the time. I did some singing and played some timbales for Prince.

RS: Let's talk about your new album. How is *Sex Cymbal* different, or, for that matter, similar to your previous albums?

SE: It's mainly a continuation of the things people have heard on my other albums. I think, though, that I've matured as an artist since my last album, and that's reflected on *Sex Cymbal*. But one thing that does make it a little different from the

'80s albums is that this is the first album I've ever made that was, for the most part, recorded in the Bay Area. It was done in Oakland.

RS: What made you choose Oakland?

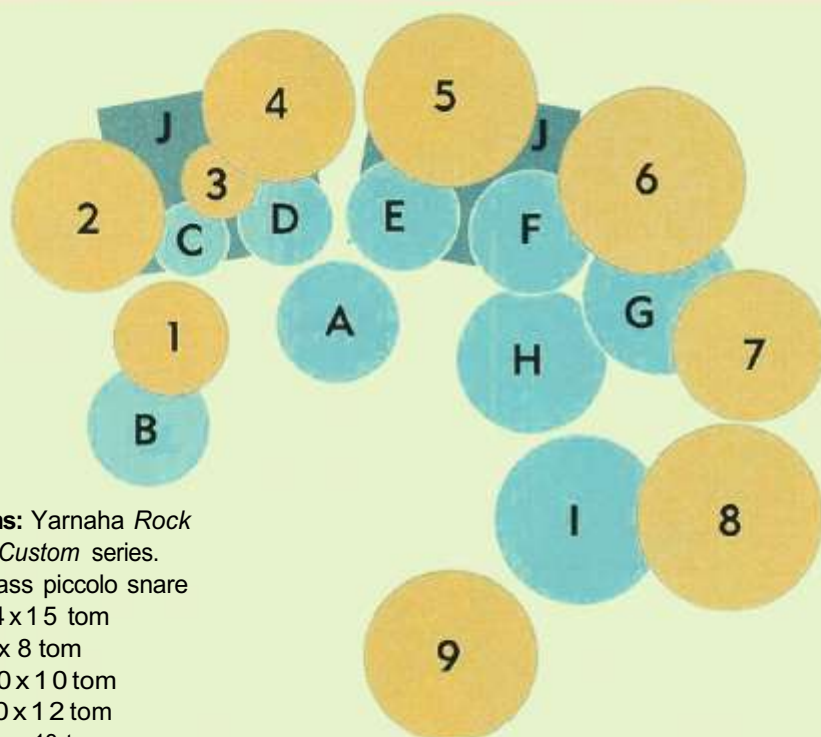
SE: I really wanted to capture that Oakland vibe, that Latin vibe that I knew was back there. The Bay Area is where I grew up. I feel comfortable there.

RS: Another difference between *Sex Cymbal* and your earlier albums is the amount of drums you play on it. It seems to me that there's a lot more drumming on this record than on *Sheila E.*, for instance.

SE: You're right, there is. And I think that's good. That's what I was striving for, because it goes back to what I was saying before about wanting to return to the idea of me being a drummer first and everything else second.

RS: You returned to Oakland, there's an increased emphasis on Latin rhythms on *Sex Cymbal*, and your brother, Peter Michael, coproduced and played on the album. It's almost as if you've gone back to your earliest roots.

SE: Very much so. You know, in the early days when I played with my father, everyone told us Latin music would never sell. But ever since the success of Miami Sound Machine, the door has been opened for artists to explore all kinds of



Drums: Yamaha *Rock Tour Custom* series.

- A. brass piccolo snare
- B. 14 x 15 tom
- C. 8 x 8 tom
- D. 10 x 10 tom
- E. 10 x 12 tom
- F. 13 x 13 tom
- G. 14 x 14 tom
- H. 16 x 16 floor tom
- I. 16 x 18 floor tom
- J. 18 x 22 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste Signature series

- 1. 13" hi-hats
- 2. 16" fast crash
- 3. 8" splash
- 4. 17" crash
- 5. 18" crash
- 6. 20" ride
- 7. 16" crash
- 8. 20" China
- 9. 18" China

Hardware: All Yamaha, including an *HS 920* hi-hat stand and *FP 820* bass drum pedals with felt beaters. All toms mounted using RIMS.

Heads: Remo coated *Ambassador* on snare, *Pinstripes* on tops of toms with coated *Ambassadors*

on bottoms, *Pinstripes* on bass drum batters with *Ebony Ambassadors* on front with 8" holes.

Sticks: Vic Firth *Sheila E.* model

Additional Percussion: LP timbales (used separate from set)

Sheila's Setup

Latin sounds and rhythms. Plus, people today understand Latin music a little more than they did years ago. They're not afraid of it like they were.

RS: You mentioned the importance of Miami Sound Machine to the influx of Latin rhythms and such into pop music. But your family played a part in bringing Latin to the forefront, far earlier than Miami Sound Machine. You already mentioned that your father was into Latin music early on. So was



your uncle, Coke. I remember seeing him in Santana in the early '70s.

SE: That's right. My dad still has his band going. They still play around the Bay Area.

RS: Do you ever wish that perhaps you could have kept playing with your father, playing the kind of Latin music that you grew up hearing?

SE: It's hard to make money being a musician. As soon as I did the commercial thing, I became popular. Sometimes it

seems a shame that you have to sacrifice one thing to get something else. I just want people to know that I did have a life before I met Prince. I think a lot of people don't believe that. I grew up listening to lots of Latin and jazz.

RS: What song on *Sex Cymbal* is the most adventurous drum-wise?

SE: I'd have to say "Heaven" because I've never done a song like that on any of my albums. That song reminds me of playing with artists like George Duke, Herbie Hancock, and Billy Cobham. It's got that good mixture of jazz and funk. In addition to being adventurous, it was also fun to play because it was so spontaneous. It took just one take. There are no overdubs on that song.

RS: "Droppin' Like Flies" is a favorite song of mine.

SE: Peter Michael wrote that song two years ago. I always liked it because of its pop/Latin feel. It's mainly about the drug problem. I wanted the song to be somewhat authentic, so you hear real dialog from Hispanics from the Bay Area who know about the street. I went down to a part of Oakland where they hang out and asked them about doing some dialog for the song. I asked them to come into the studio and talk like they do on the street. But I also had to tell them to keep their curse words down. [laughs]

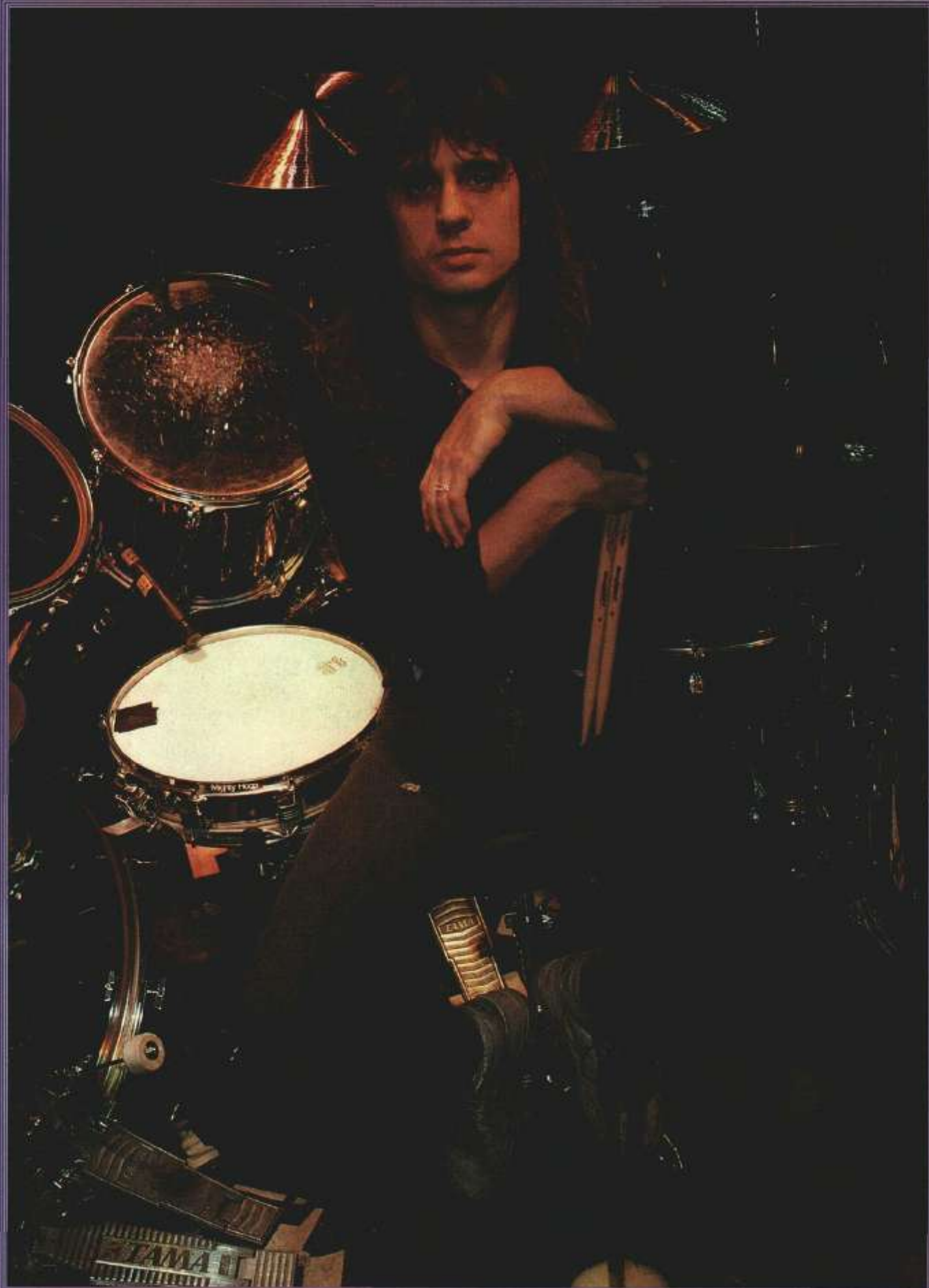
RS: You have a neat one-

↓

"I always
had to prove
myself
to male
drummers,
but I
enjoyed it
because
I loved
watching
them eat
their words."

↑

continued on page 68



D • A • V • E

EXPANDING THE SPEED METAL FORM

- Back in the mid-'80s, when Slayer started gaining prominence with speed metal enthusiasts, their music was largely considered by the media to be heavy metal from hell. It was violent, almost overpowering, with lyrics that etched stark nightmares of mental depravity, death, and more than a few passing references to the fire down below. Of course, those lyrics were often ambiguous and certainly a little tongue-in-cheek. One thing is certain, though: Slayer has apportioned a vast amount of lyrics towards social criticism and the basic fight for survival.
- While Slayer has never broken into the mainstream, they have nevertheless quietly sold millions of records, and their popularity continues to flourish with their latest release, *Seasons In The Abyss*. This band, like Metallica, has achieved success without the benefit of air- or video-play. The music of Slayer has almost exclusively spread by word-of-mouth and constant touring.
- Speed metal is an acquired taste, and not for the meek. But in that idiom, Slayer's four musicians are considered to be some of the very best. The devastating speed and insane aggression of Dave Lombardo's drumming sets the standard for the genre. Lombardo has set new records for his speed and for his double bass playing, yet in the following interview, he insists that speed doesn't necessarily mean a sacrifice to imagination and creativity. His playing on the last five Slayer releases proves that speed metal drumming is an artistic expression, with plenty of style and ingenuity.

• LOMBARDO •

• By Teri Saccone • Photos By Ebet Roberts •

"I was into playing fast because I was listening to punk and playing along

TS: Do you think Slayer has sacrificed part of a potential audience because the band's image has been rather dark and somewhat controversial?

DL: That was what we wanted to do right from the start—to get attention. It was like, "Oh, man. Look at what *these* guys write!" It really made people stop and take a look at what we were doing. But then it went a little too far, and people started saying, "Are you really like your image? Do you really do those things?" For us, it's always been fantasy—completely. It's like we were making a movie through our music. Movie makers take things from the back of their minds or from what they read, and put them into a movie. That's similar to what we do, except we put it on record. It's the music. You let your mind go and you put what you want into it. But we're not that way and we're not about that image.

TS: Producer Rick Rubin has been such an influence on Slayer, both musically and business-wise. You've worked with him from the beginning. What does he do for you in respect to drums?

DL: He'll sit there during my entire session—for an album it usually takes five days to lay down the basic tracks—and he'll just work with me. He gives me ideas and suggestions, and he really gets into it. I've never experienced that with any producer before. It's really neat to have somebody help you out

and coach you along. Having him give his ideas helps to broaden the entire thing. One little idea can completely open up this whole new area you can work with.

When it comes to bass drum patterns, he really showed me that patterns should work with the song. He also told me that right before you go into a chorus—before the roll—you should put that extra kick in there to startle people. And it's in there.

He's an incredible person to work with, and I like him a lot. He's had a lot of experience with rap bands, and rap bands use a lot of kick drum. I like to play with a lot of double and single bass, and with his experience with rap, he really likes to punch it in there before a chorus comes in. Also, he doesn't rush us. He believes in taking as long as you need to get it to work.

TS: What about your background? Where are you from, where did you grow up, and how did you get interested in music?

DL: I was born in Havana, Cuba, but I'm an American citizen. My family came over here in the mid-'60s—we were running from communism—we settled here in California, and we've all been here ever since. The music comes through my family. They listen to a lot of Latin, jazz, and salsa, so I guess I got the rhythm in me from when I was a little kid. That



with those records, and I just applied that to heavy metal and Slayer."

music has so much rhythm to it: a lot of congas, timbales, drums. I think that's where I got it.

As far as where metal music comes in, I guess it's the same way as most other 12- or 13-year-old kids got into it back then: You heard Led Zeppelin or Cream. My older brothers were listening to those bands, and they told me to listen to them, too. They got me little boxes and pencils and then put me in front of the stereo and encouraged me to play along to the music. That's how it started with me when I was really little—about five or six. Then I completely stopped playing drums until I was about 12. I was still very interested in music, and if I saw a drummer on TV I would stop and watch. But it wasn't that big a part of my life until I was 12. At that age, you start getting more of an idea of your goals, what you want to be. That's when drumming clicked back in for me. That's when I got my first drumkit, joined my first band, and started doing things like that.

TS: Tell me about some of those band experiences.

DL: One band was called Escape. There were two guitarists, but we didn't play much. Then we got a band called Sabotage together with the same two guitarists, and we added a singer, but still had no bass player. We played a couple of shows, but that was it.

TS: Did you sound anything like you do now?

DL: No, it wasn't anything like that. We just did copy songs. We played a couple of house parties. We practiced and practiced, but I ended up quitting. It was a time when my parents were saying, "You better get a job."

TS: What kind of a job did you get?

DL: I ended up working security for a department store. Around that time I met Kerry [King, guitarist]. Kerry lived four or five blocks down from my house. One day I was driving by, and I happened to see him, so I said, "Hey, let's get together. I play drums and I know you play guitar." So we exchanged cover tunes that we liked, and we started doing that. Then we got hold of Jeff [Hanneman, guitar], and he came over to my house along with Kerry, and all three of us started playing in my *garage*. Kerry said he knew of a bass player and singer, so that's how we got Tom [Araya].

TS: You were still a teenager at the time?

DL: Yeah.

TS: How long did it take for the band to get a record deal?

DL: It was less than a year before we got a deal with an independent record label, Metal Blade Records. At first we were playing the clubs, just opening shows for other bands. Then this producer walked up to us and said, "I want you guys to do a *Metal Massacre* album." This was in '83. *Metal Massacre 1* had bands like Metallica, Ratt, and a bunch of LA bands. We

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Tuning Up With The Pros: Part 1

Searching for that elusive sound from your drums but can't seem to find it? There's more to it than tightening a few lugs. Read on and learn how the pros get *their* signature sounds.

SIMON PHILLIPS



DRUM	Size
Main S.D.	6 1/2x14
Secondary S.D.	3 1/4x13
Main B.D.	16x24
Secondary B.D.	16x24
Toms	9x10, 10x11, 11x12, 12x13, 13x14, 14x15
Gong Drum	14x20
Octobans (four)	6"

HEAD

Top:
Bottom:
Top:
Bottom:
Batter:
Front:
Batter:
Front:
Top:
Bottom:
Top:
Top:

Brand Remo

"
"
"
"
"
"
"
"
"
"
"
"

Model

coated *CS Reverse Dot*
Ambassador or *Diplomat*
coated *Ambassador*
clear *Ambassador*
"
"
"
"
"
"
"
clear *Timp 2200*
clear *Ambassador*

MY SOUND: Dynamic, live, and clear.

I TUNE FOR: I tune so they sound good to my ear.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Tight batter head. **Bass Drum:** Both heads very loose. Toms: Same tension on top and bottom heads.

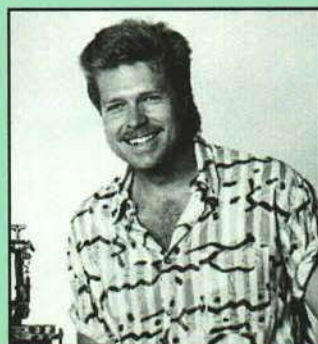
DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** None. **Bass Drum:** A rolled up towel placed at the bottom of the batter head. No front head hole, though I occasionally dampen the front head with a towel—but very little. Toms: None.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Toms:** None really, though they tend to end up in intervals of minor 3rds, major 3rds, or 4ths.

COMMENTS: I have to use new heads to attain the sound I want. My tuning does not differ between live and studio playing. It's also important to be aware of the difference in sound between where you're sitting and where people are listening from. There's quite a difference. This also applies to a microphone sitting two inches away from the drum.

When other drummers sit at my kit, they can't believe how high my toms are tuned. The important thing is that they sound big out front and on tape. You need that ring to help them project.

J.R. ROBINSON



DRUM	Size
Main S.D.	3 1/2x14
Secondary S.D.	4x15 1922 Ludwig
Main B.D.	14x24
Toms	11x13, 12x14, 16x16

HEAD

Top:
Bottom:
Top:
Bottom:
Batter:
Front:
Top:
Bottom:

Brand Remo

"
"
"
"
"
"
"
"

Model

coated *Emperor* w/dot
clear *Ambassador*
coated *Emperor* w/dot
clear *Ambassador*
coated *Ambassador*
"
coated *Emperor*
clear *Ambassador*

MY SOUND: Big, controllable, crisp, and fat.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Top head is very tight. I bring the pitch down slightly after the head seats. **Bass Drum:** All lugs are barely snug. **Toms:** The top heads are tight until seated. Then I detune for the desired pitch.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** A Rogers clip-on muffler, or nothing. **Bass Drum:** A very thin packing blanket just touching both heads. **Toms:** None.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Toms:** Perfect 4ths.

COMMENTS: Tuning is a very personal thing. Producers and engineers shouldn't demand certain tuning techniques. They should allow the drummer to be himself, creatively.

MARVIN "SMITTY" SMITH



DRUMSET: Pearl *MLX*

DRUM	Size
Main S.D.	6 1/2x14
Main B.D.	16x22
Secondary B.D.	14x18
Toms	8x12, 9x13, 14x14, 16x16, 16x18

HEAD	Brand	Model
Top:	Remo	<i>Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Pinstripe</i>
Batter:	"	<i>Ambassador</i>
Front:	"	<i>Pinstripe</i>
Batter:	"	<i>Ambassador</i>
Front:	"	"
Top:	"	"
Bottom:	"	"

MY SOUND: I like a warm, full-bodied, live sound.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** I tune the bottom head tighter than the top. Bass Drum: Both heads same tension. Toms: Bottom head tighter than the top.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** None. **Bass Drum:** One felt strip across the batter side of the 18" drum. On the 22", a 2"-thick foam pad half the circumference of the drum. Toms: None.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Bass Drum:** 18": E flat, 22": A flat **Toms:** 12": F, 13": D flat 14"- A flat, 16": E flat, 18": B flat. **Snare Drum:** 14": G.

COMMENTS: Experiment with different tuning combinations, heads, and shell sizes until you achieve the sound you want. Remember that the people you're influenced by and are listening to are showing you only *a few* possibilities of how drums can sound. Ask yourself how *you* want to sound sonically as well as musically.

KENNY ARONOFF



DRUMSET: Tuma *Artstar II*

DRUM	Size
Main S.D.	5x14
Secondary S.D.	6 1/2x14
Main B.D.	16x24
Secondary B.D.	18x22
Toms	9x10, 11x12, 13x14, 16x16

HEAD	Brand	Model
Top:	Remo	coated <i>Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	clear <i>Ambassador</i>
Top:	"	coated <i>Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	clear <i>Ambassador</i>
Batter:	"	coated <i>Ambassador</i>
Front:	"	none in studio
Batter:	"	coated <i>Ambassador</i>
Front:	"	none in studio
Top:	"	coated <i>Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	clear <i>Ambassador</i>

MY SOUND: A warm, powerful sustain with some brightness. I try to tune a drum to sound like it wants to sound naturally.

I TUNE FOR: I tune the way I like them, but I'm open to all suggestions in any situation. I'll work with the engineer and producer.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Bottom head medium for an aggressive attack, but not to where it chokes. I tune the top head until it chokes, and then tune back down a bit. I usually bring at least 12 to 15 snare drums to a session. I never know what my primary drum will be, I'll change drums a couple of times during a session. **Bass Drum:** Batter head is almost floppy, so I can slam the beater into the head without it bouncing off. **Toms:** Medium tension on both heads. I like the drums to ring a lot with a natural decay.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** I try *never* to dampen my snare. However, if a producer, artist, or engineer wants a dead sound, I use a ring from an old snare head. **Bass Drum:** A pillow or blanket with a weight, just touching the batter side of the drum. **Toms:** No muffling. If someone wants the drum to ring less, I detune one lug on the bottom or top. If that's not enough, I'll detune on both bottom and top.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Toms:** I try to tune my toms so they sound good individually. Usually they sound great in 4ths or 5ths.

COMMENTS: Tuning takes a lot of time and practice. I didn't really get good at it until I was in situations where I had to tune a lot. There are just *so many* variables that can affect your sound.

DANNY GOTTLIEB



DRUMSET: Ludwig *Classic and Super Classic*

DRUM	Size
Main S.D.	5x14 <i>Black Beauty</i>
Secondary S.D.	5x14 Eames
Main B.D.	16x22
Secondary B.D.	14x20
Toms	6x10, 8x12, 9x13, 14x14, 16x16, 16x18

HEAD	Brand	Model
Top:	Ludwig	<i>SilverDot</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Ensemble Snare</i>
Top:	"	<i>SilverDot</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Snare</i>
Batter:	Ludwig or Remo	<i>SilverDot</i>
Front:	Ludwig or Remo	<i>Pinstripe</i>
Batter:	Ludwig	<i>SilverDot</i>
Front:	Ludwig	<i>Pinstripe</i>
Top:	Ludwig	<i>SilverDot</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Rocker</i>
	"	<i>SilverDot</i>
	"	<i>clear Rocker</i>

MY SOUND: I go for a relatively low, resonant sound. I start with the floor tom, get it as low as possible, and tune up from there. I also like the drums to sound good at *all* dynamic levels.

I TUNE FOR: I tune for my own ear. If the sound people have a problem, I'll work with them on it. Usually you have monitors so you can get a basic idea of the amplified sound. I tune the un-amplified drums first, and then adjust them with the monitors on, as needed.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Relatively tight top and bottom. **Bass Drum:** Fairly tight front, loose on the batter side. **Toms:** Usually bottom head a little tighter than top. I get a basic sound by tuning the top head, and then fine-tune using the bottom.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** One or two strips of tape over 1/4 of the head, away from the mic'. **Bass Drum:** A hole in the front head, a blanket or pillow inside, and usually a felt or moleskin pad at the beater impact point. **Toms:** Sometimes I use tape on the top and/or bottom to stop excess ring.

COMMENTS: When you tour in Europe, you often use rented drums. So you don't have much time to worry about fine-tuning. You need to set up, come up with some basic parameters for your sound, get

through soundcheck, and play the gig.

If a particular drum has a ring I just can't get out, I'll tape it up. If a drum has a unique sound, I'll try to incorporate it into the music. I don't obsess too much about the tuning. I get the drums as close to what I think my sound is, hope there's a good sound person at the board, and then do the best I can!

TERRY BOZZIO



DRUMSET: Remo *Custom*

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	7x14	Top:	Remo	coated <i>Falam</i>
		Bottom:		clear <i>Ambassador</i>
Main B.D.	18x22	Batter:	"	clear <i>Emperor</i>
		Front:	"	Ebony <i>Ambassador</i>
Secondary B.D.	18x22	Batter:	"	clear <i>Emperor</i>
		Front:	"	Ebony <i>Ambassador</i>
Toms	6x6	Top:	"	clear <i>Emperor</i>
		Bottom:	"	none
	8x8, 8x10, 9x12, 14x14, 16x16	Top:	"	clear <i>Emperor</i>
		Bottom:	"	Ebony <i>Ambassador</i>

MY SOUND: A crisp, cracking snare mixed with a rich, warm "bonk" from the batter head. My toms are resonant and ambient, with lots of sustain and a full, powerful dynamic range.

I TUNE FOR: My own ear. Then I adjust to any problems the engineers might have.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Generally, I tune both heads to the same tension and adjust either one up or down until it sounds good to me. It's more feeling and intuition. **Bass Drum:** I usually tune the batter head so it feels good to my foot; not too sponge-y, not too board-like. Then I tune the front head to a pitch that resonates pleasantly. It's usually pretty loose. **Toms:** Same tension on both heads. Then up or down to find the best pitch for each tom.

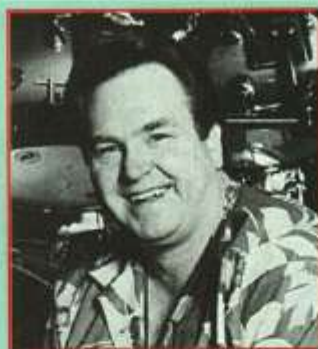
DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** A little gaffer's tape near the rim, but *only* if the engineer insists! **Bass Drum:** I use blankets or pillows against the batter head, and sometimes a weight on top, which somehow adds more low-end thud. No front head in the studio. For live, un-miked situations, I use Remo *Muffl's* on the batter head and sometimes on the front head, with no other muffling. **Toms:** No muffling. If a drum has a ring problem and muffling is suggested, I change heads and that solves it.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Bass Drum:** The left bass is tuned higher than the right **Toms:** A perfect 4th between toms, though major or minor 3rds are also okay.

COMMENTS: Get every head evenly tensioned by tapping near each lug while the drum is on the floor or a stool. That isolates the sound of the head you're tuning. Seating the head properly by pressing firmly and then taking up the slack is also essential. From there I just tune to the same pitch, and then go up or down until it sounds good.

Every drum seems to have a range that sounds best. If it's higher or lower it sounds choked. This may have to do with the pitch of the shell, and tuning to *that* specific pitch. That's a concept I intend to experiment with in the future.

LARRIE LONDIN



DRUMSET: Drum Workshop

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	5x14 maple	Top:	Evans	<i>ST-Dry</i>
		Bottom:	"	<i>Rock 500</i>
Secondary S.D.	4x14 brass	Top:	"	<i>ST-Dry</i>
		Bottom:	"	<i>Rock 500</i>
Main B.D.	30x22	Batter:	"	<i>Genera EQ-Studio</i>
		Front:	"	
Secondary B.D.	30x24	Batter:	"	
		Front:	"	
Toms	8x8, 10x10, 12x12, 12x14, 13x15, 14x16	Top:	"	<i>Genera</i>
		Bottom:	"	clear <i>Uno 1000</i>

MY SOUND: Open, but very *controlled* so that all drums ring in tune with one another.

I TUNE FOR: When drums are in tune with themselves, and are not wavering around the note or chord, then it must be good for all of us.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Top head tighter than bottom. 4 to 5 turns on top, 3 to 4 turns on bottom. 42-strand snares. Very crisp and bright. **Bass Drum:** Batter heads sound deeper when *firm*. Front head a bit looser. **Toms:** On batter heads, I look for a playable tension where the drum tunes the best. Bottom head is looser to get the depth and pitch I like.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Evans *ST-Dry* require no dampening. Other Evans heads may require two strips (2x3) of duct tape near the hoop on the far side of the drum. **Bass Drum:** No muffling with EQ System. **Toms:** No muffling with coated *STs*. *Generas* ring more, though I like that and do not muffle.

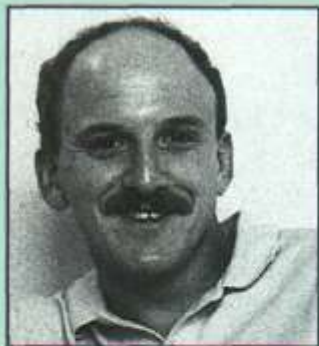
PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Bass Drum:** I just go for a round, deep, punchy sound. The pitch is usually a 3rd to a 4th down from my lowest tom. **Toms:** I work off the tuning of "Reveille," starting with the lowest tom.

COMMENTS: When you start with drums and heads that sound like a set that goes *together*, then most of your work is done. Heads that need no tape to match up in sound, and shells that are in tune with themselves, help make tuning problems disappear.

ADAM NUSSBAUM

DRUMSET: Sonor *Sonorlite*

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	7x14	Top:	Evans	<i>Uno 58 1000</i>
		Bottom:	"	<i>Glass 300</i>
Secondary S.D.	5x14	Top:	United Rawhide	Calfskin
		Bottom:	Evans	<i>Glass 300</i>
Main B.D.	15x18	Batter:	"	<i>Genera</i>
		Front:	"	<i>Genera Ambient</i>
Secondary B.D.	16x20	Batter:	"	<i>Genera</i>
		Front:	"	<i>Genera STD</i>
Toms	10x12, 11x13, 16x15	Top:	"	<i>Uno 58 1000</i>
		Bottom:	"	<i>Resonant Glass</i>



CHAD WACKERMAN



MY SOUND: Warm, resonant, and earthy. I want *snap* and *fullness* from the snare, and generally go for single-ply heads. They allow me the maximum amount of attack, flexibility, color, and expression.

I TUNE FOR: On acoustic gigs with little or no amplification, I tune to my ear for projection and clarity. On a heavily amplified gig, I work with the sound person to get a good sound for the mic's. It's his job to project *my* sound.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Heads must be in tune with themselves, with equal tension at every lug. Bottom head is usually tighter than the top by about a 3rd or 4th, but not too tight where it chokes. If it's *too* tight, the drum won't have any body. **Bass Drum:** Punch and resonance, with enough ring to be able to vary the sound. With acoustic bass I go for a longer sound. With electric bass I prefer more punch. **Toms:** Heads in tune with themselves. I don't like the drum to dip up or down. I want a constant musical tone. Sometimes the same tension on both heads, sometimes the bottom is tighter.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** None. If the drum is in tune—top and bottom—it should *sing* with no annoying overtones. **Bass Drum:** I remove the extra E-Ring with the Evans *Genera* heads. With the conventional single-ply heads, I generally use a piece of paper towel with gaffer's tape at about 3:00. For more muffling, a piece of foam between the pedal post and the head. **Toms:** None.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Bass Drum:** Just a nice, low, full tone that's earthy and musical. **Toms:** The intervals are usually Do-Me-So, or major 3rds with three toms. I basically want the drums to resonate with maximum projection. I think of toms as *&family* with a similar tonal character.

COMMENTS: You have to make adjustments for acoustic and electronic situations. Generally, I'll change my bass drum sound, but the drums stay the same. I love calfskin heads, though different atmospheres can make them almost impossible to deal with. But that's the sound I strive for with plastic. It's the sound I have in my head—and I go for it!

DRUMSET: Drum Workshop

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	4x14	Top:	Remo	coated Ambassador
		Bottom:	"	Ambassador
Secondary S.D.	5x14	Top:	"	"
		Bottom:	"	"
Main B.D.	18x22	Batter:	"	coated Ambassador
		Front:	"	Ebony Ambassador
Toms	8x8	Top:	"	coated Ambassador
		Bottom:	"	clear Ambassador
	9x10, 10x12, 12x14, 14x16	Top:	"	"
		Bottom:	"	"

MY SOUND: I like a very big, live, open drum sound. The snare has a nice bright crack. Toms are very open with no muffling. Bass drum is tuned very low with a little more tone or sustain than typical.

I TUNE FOR: I tune to where it sounds best to my ears. Then I let the engineers hear them and we work together to make the sound appropriate for the song. Nine times out of ten I don't need to change anything.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** I start with every drum tuned near the fundamental of the shell. Top head is tuned high, with the bottom head tuned a little tighter than that. **Bass Drum:** I like a very low-pitched bass, so the batter side is pitched low, with the front head tuned loose but without wrinkles. **Toms:** I tune all the bottom heads first, close to the fundamental of the shell. The top heads usually end up being a little *higher* than the bottoms. I try to get each tom to where it sustains the longest.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** A Mylar ring cut in half on top of the drum. **Bass Drum:** A small down pillow inside of the drum, lightly touching both heads. **Toms:** Wide open. No muffling ever.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Toms:** No two toms are close in pitch.

COMMENTS: With Remo heads, I have to stretch each head around the collar on both sides to let the *Mylar* separate from the epoxy. Otherwise, you can tune your drum, then hear a mysterious cracking sound because the plastic separates from the glue, and your drum goes out of tune. *Always* stretch the head. Be sure to tension the drum evenly. Check the pitch at every tension rod by tapping lightly with your finger or a stick. Every tension rod area should be the same pitch. I normally tune the toms fairly high in pitch. If I want a heavier sound, I'll tune the bottom heads down. This gives a much lower note to the drum and makes it sound deeper.

JIM KELTNER



DRUMSET: Drum Workshop

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	5 1/2x14	Top:	Remo	Ambassador
		Bottom:	"	Diplomat
Secondary S.D.	4x14	Top:	"	Ambassador
		Bottom:	"	Diplomat
Main B.D.	16x22	Batter:	"	Ambassador
		Front:	"	"
Secondary B.D.	16x20	Batter:	"	"
		Front:	"	"
Toms	8x12, 10x12, 9x13, 14x14, 14x16, 16x16	Top:	"	"
		Bottom:	"	Diplomat
		Top:	"	Ambassador
		Bottom:	"	"

MY SOUND: A cross between the big band drummers of the '30s and '40s, the jazz drummers of the '50s and '60s, the R&B, rock, and pop drummers of the '40s through '60s, plus African, Balinese, and all Island drummers!

I TUNE FOR: My own ear. Occasionally I'm asked to do something to my drums for a particular song, and I have no problem with that. As for playing live, every venue presents a different set of tuning problems.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** I wish I had one to share—but I don't! **Bass Drum:** Generally a bit tighter on the batter side, but not much. **Toms:** I've had tom-toms that have made me feel as though I don't know how to tune. As often as it's been explained to me about the difference in shells and their construction, I'm really only interested in one thing: Does the drum *sound* good low, high, and in between after putting the key to it, and with thin or heavy heads.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Most of the time my snare drums are not dampened at

all. But if they *do* need it, I prefer a little roll of tape half on the rim and half touching the head. **Bass Drum:** Either a folded blanket, pillow, foam wedge, shredded newspaper, or an old rim-mounted muffler. Best of all is no muffling at all, and just playing with dynamics that allow for a real acoustic sound. **Toms:** Toms do not sound good to me when they're dampened.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Bass Drum:** If the bass drums have both heads on, I'll try for a sympathetic pitch. **Toms:** I try to get them somewhat in tune with each song.

COMMENTS: Find out what other drummers do and see if it works for you!

ROB AFFUSO



DRUMSET: Pearl *MLX. BLX. or Custom Z*

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	8x14	Top: Bottom:	Aquarian	<i>Hi-Energy</i> <i>clear Classic</i>
Main B.D.	16x22	Batter:	Remo	<i>Pinstripe</i>
		Front:	Pearl	black logo
Secondary B.D.	16x22	Batter:	Remo	<i>Pinstripe</i>
		Front:	Pearl	black logo
Toms	11x13, 12x14, 16x16, 16x18	Top: Bottom:	Aquarian	<i>Studio-X</i> <i>clear Classic</i>

(All heads listed are for live performance. Heads for studio work change as needed.)

MY SOUND: I like a crisp attack off the top head with an open resonance from the drum.

I TUNE FOR: I usually begin tuning the way I like, and then adjust as needed.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** A thin, coated head tuned tightly will usually give me the best sound in the studio, though it doesn't hold up well under heavy hitting. For live gigs, I tune as tight as I can without choking the drum. **Bass Drum:** At a live concert or in front of their stereos, I want listeners *to feel* the kicks right in their chests. I've had the best results tuning the front tighter than the batter. The batter is tightened just enough so that it won't buzz. **Toms:** Top head tighter than the bottom by about a whole step. This way I get the crack of the stick off the top, while the resonance off the bottom helps me get that big, open sound. The following trick also works for me: Determine the pitch you like. Gently place your finger in the center of the drum. While pressing, strike the drum in front of a lug and roughly 1" in from the rim. Match the pitch in your head to that part of the drumhead. Once you've found it, continue pressing with your finger and tune the other lugs to that pitch. Remove your finger and strike the drum in the center. Adjust the sound slightly to your ear.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Remo muffling rings. **Bass Drum:** A piece of foam rubber 3" thick and 21" wide, about a quarter of the way around the drum. I place it a finger's width away from the batter head and allow the front head to resonate. I also have a 13" hole in the center of the front head. **Toms:** No muffling. If a drum is tuned properly, it almost *never* needs dampening.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Bass Drum:** I tune my left kick slightly lower than the right, and just enough to give each drum an identifiable sound. **Toms:** I think I subconsciously tune to thirds.

COMMENTS: It took me 20 years to get a true grip on how to choose the correct head and why. The same for tuning. Unless you have perfect pitch, it takes time to find a tuning that's right for you, and to learn how to achieve that sound. Patience and persistence will lead to the right sound for you.

ANTON FIG



DRUMSET: Yamaha *Rock Tour Custom*

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	5 1/2x14	Top:	Remo	coated CS
Secondary S.D.	6/2x14	Top:	"	coated CS
Main B.D.	16x24	Batter:	"	clear <i>Emperor</i>
Toms	8x10, 9x13, 16x16	Top: Bottom:	" Yamaha	clear <i>Emperor</i>

MY SOUND: A deep, strong, resonant tone. This means that the tension is medium to loose.

I TUNE FOR: Always go for a good sound where *you're* sitting. It's the engineer's job to get a good sound at the board.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: In all cases, I keep the bottom heads tighter than the tops. I keep the top heads not only where they sound good, but also where they feel good to play on, and that's usually a medium tension.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: I try to keep all my drums as open as possible. Sometimes in the studio, I add a little tape and tissue paper near the edge of the snare to avoid excessive ringing.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Toms:** Occasionally, I try to tune the toms so they sound *in tune* with the song, though there's little time for that on the Letterman show.

COMMENTS: So much depends on *how* you hit, the size of your sticks, and the kind of music you're playing. Give yourself a fair chance by starting off with new heads. I change heads whenever I feel they've lost their snap and edge.

CHARLIE BENANTE



DRUMSET: Tama *Artstar*

DRUM	Size	HEAD	Brand	Model
Main S.D.	9x14	Top: Bottom:	Ludwig Remo	<i>SilverDot</i> <i>Ambassador</i>
Secondary S.D.	8x14	Top: Bottom:	Ludwig Repo	<i>SilverDot</i> <i>Ambassador</i>
Main B.D.	22x24	Batter:	"	<i>Black Dot</i>
		Front:	"	<i>Ambassador</i>
Secondary B.D.	22x24	Batter:	"	<i>Black Dot</i>
		Front:	"	<i>Ambassador</i>
Toms	8", 10", 12", 13", 14", 16", 18"	Top: Bottom:	" "	clear <i>Emperor</i> <i>Ambassador</i>

MY SOUND: Very live!

I TUNE FOR: I tune for myself. I know the sound I want from the drums.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Bottom head is a little looser than the top, otherwise the drum tends to sound choked. **Bass Drum:** I like a lot of punch from my kicks, so I tune them as tight as possible. Our sound person hates it, but I *love* the feel when they're tight. **Toms:** A warm tom sound with a nice top end.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** One piece of tape and that's it. I want it *live*. **Bass Drum:** A Remo *Muff* ring. **Toms:** A piece of tape here and there.

DENNY CARMASSI



DRUMSET: Noble & Cooley

DRUM	Size
Main S.D.	5x14
Secondary S.D.	3x14
Main B.D.	18x24
Toms	8x8, 8x10, 9x12, 10x13, 12x14

HEAD	Brand	Model (live/studio)
Top:	Repo	coated <i>Emperor/Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Diplomat</i>
Top:	"	coated <i>Emperor/Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Diplomat</i>
Batter:	"	coated <i>Emperor/</i> clear <i>Empower</i>
Front:	"	coated <i>Emperor/</i> clear <i>Emperor</i>
Top:	"	clear <i>Emperor/</i> clear <i>Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Diplomat</i>

MY SOUND: Natural and wide open with very little dampening. I try to find a sound that works with the room. A good room will amplify your drum sound.

I TUNE FOR: I tune for myself. I'm the one who has to play the instrument. I'll take input and meet someone halfway, but if the drums are tuned or dampened so that they're uncomfortable, then it defeats the purpose.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Bottom head in tune with itself. Top head tuned until the drum sounds good to my ear. **Bass Drum:** Equal tension front and back for a nice, round sound. If need be, I'll loosen the batter head just a bit. **Toms:** I tune the tops for feel and rebound, the bottoms for tone and depth. Bottoms end up a bit *lower* in pitch than tops.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Usually none. A thin *Zero-Ring* on occasion. **Bass Drum:** In a big hall or arena, I use 1/2" of foam halfway around the inside, touching both front and back heads. Usually, you record with the front head off in the studio. A packing blanket touching the batter head works well. **Toms:** None.

COMMENTS: Every drum has its own character, personality, and limitations—what it *will* and *will not* do. It's up to the player to get to know his own instrument. Tuning should be no great mystery. You must start out with a good drum. I've had drums that just won't tune. I think this is why the older drums are so popular. I've used old snare drums in the studio where you couldn't *make* them sound bad!

DENNY FONGHEISER



DRUMSET: Drum Workshop

DRUM	Size
Main S.D.	5x14
Secondary S.D.	6 1/2x14
Main B.D.	18x24
Secondary B.D.	18x22
Toms	9x10, 10x12, 12x14, 14x16, 16x18

HEAD	Brand	Model
Top:	Repo	coated <i>Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	<i>Ambassador</i>
Top:	"	Custom White Dot
Bottom:	"	<i>Ambassador</i>
Batter:	"	clear <i>Ambassador</i>
Front:	"	Black DW
Batter:	"	clear <i>Ambassador</i>
Front:	"	Black DW
Top:	"	clear or <i>coated Ambassador</i>
Bottom:	"	clear <i>Ambassador</i>

MY SOUND: It depends on the style of music, the artist, and the song. Though I go for an open sound, the length of decay and amount of ambience depends on the *situation*.

I TUNE FOR: I tune to where the drums resonate the best. Every shell has a sweet spot, and with DW you can choose the intervals you want between drums. Drum sounds can change from room to room, so you need a variety for recording.

TUNING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** Bottom head tighter. Top head determines the pitch. **Bass Drum:** Front head very loose. Batter head determines the pitch. **Toms:** Bottom head tighter. Top head determines the pitch.

DAMPENING TECHNIQUES: **Snare Drum:** I use a piece of duct tape 2 1/2" long and 1/4" to 1/2" wide. 1/2" of tape is on the head, followed by a 1" space, which creates a hump, and then another 1/2" of tape on the head. **Bass Drum:** I've used an old Levi jacket that works perfectly. It touches across the bottom 3" of the batter head, and slightly touches the front head. If the drum needs to be tighter sounding, I'll use a pillow. **Toms:** Same as snare, except sometimes I'll tape the bottom head.

PITCHES OR INTERVALS: **Bass Drum:** I tune to the shell and the track. There's usually a small range in which the drum sounds best, and I adjust that pitch for the track. **Toms:** If I'm using three toms, I like a wider interval between toms two and three than there is between toms one and two.

COMMENTS: There are no rules. Every situation is different. Just make sure you're getting the most out of every drum. Sometimes it may take an uneven tension to get the sound you want, or you may have wrinkles in drumheads. The point is, you do whatever it takes and you stay open to new ideas and approaches.

Look for Part 2 of "Tuning Up With The Pros" next month, for more tuning tips from Jonathan Mover, Gregg Bissonette, Rod Morgenstein, Rikki Rockett-and more!



'91 READERS POLL RESULTS

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 five new artists to the Honor Roll. With their fifth win this year, **Steve Smith** (All-Around Drummer: '87 through '91), **Ed Shaughnessy** (Big Band Drummer: '86 and '88 through '91), **Phil Collins** (Pop/Mainstream Rock Drummer: '87 through '91), **Dave Weckl** (Electric Jazz Drummer: '87 through '91), and

Alex Acuna (Latin/Brazilian Percussionist: '87 through '91) join the other outstanding performers named below.

ALEX ACUNA

Latin/Brazilian Percussionist

AIRTO

Latin American and Latin/Brazilian Percussionist

GARY BURTON

Mallet Percussionist

ANTHONY J. CIRONE

Classical Percussionist

PHIL COLLINS

Pop/Mainstream Rock Drummer

VIC FIRTH

Classical Percussionist

STEVE GADD

All-Around Drummer; Studio Drummer

DAVID GARIBALDI

R&B/Funk Drummer

LARRIE LONDIN

Country Drummer

ROD MORGENSTEIN

Rock/Progressive Rock Drummer

NEIL PEART

Rock Drummer; Multi-Percussionist

BUDDY RICH

Big Band Drummer

ED SHAUGHNESSY

Big Band Drummer

STEVE SMITH

All-Around Drummer

DAVE WECKL

Electric Jazz Drummer

TONY WILLIAMS

Jazz/Mainstream Jazz Drummer



HALL OF FAME

1991: ART BLAKEY

1990: Bill Bruford
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



ALL-AROUND DRUMMER

STEVE SMITH

2. Vinnie Colaiuta
3. Omar Hakim
4. Rod Morgenstein
5. Anton Fig



STUDIO DRUMMER

VINNIE COLAIUTA

2. Jeff Porcaro
3. Kenny Aronoff
4. Simon Phillips
5. Danny Gottlieb

ELECTRIC JAZZ DRUMMER

DAVE WECKL

2. Steve Smith
3. Danny Gottlieb
4. Bill Bruford
5. Dennis Chambers

MAINSTREAM JAZZ DRUMMER

JACK DE JOHNETTE

2. Peter Erskine
3. Jeff Watts
4. Joe Morello
5. Butch Miles





POP/MAINSTREAM ROCK DRUMMER

PHIL COLLINS

2. Kenny Aronoff
3. Jonathan Moffett
4. Liberty DeVitto
5. Chester Thompson



BIG BAND DRUMMER

ED SHAUGHNESSY

2. Louie Bellson
3. Peter Erskine
4. Shannon Powell
5. Steve Houghton

HARD ROCK/METAL DRUMMER

TOMMY LEE

2. Lars Ulrich
3. Scott Rockenfield
4. Gregg Bissonette
5. Tommy Aldridge



PROGRESSIVE ROCK DRUMMER

WILLIAM CALHOUN

2. Terry Bozzio
3. Jonathan Mover
4. Scott Rockenfield
5. Bill Bruford

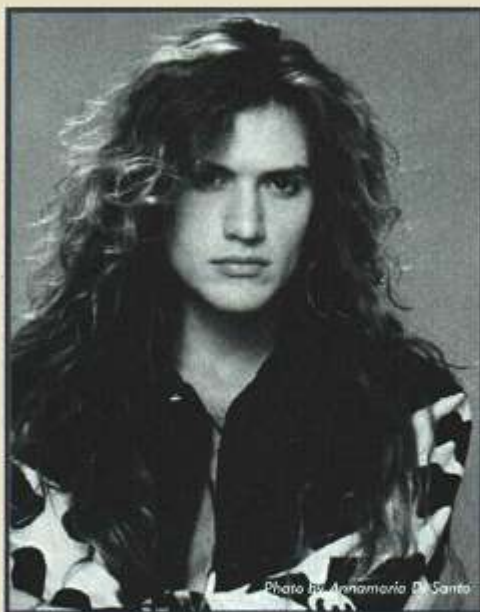




LATIN/BRAZILIAN PERCUSSIONIST

ALEX ACUÑA

2. Tito Puente
3. Luis Conte
4. Manolo Badrena
5. Paulinho da Costa



UP & COMING DRUMMER

BLAS ELIAS (Slaughter)

2. Stephen Perkins (Jane's Addiction)
3. Van Romaine (Steve Morse Band)
4. Mike Bordin (Faith No More)
5. Chuck Morris (Arsenio Hall Show)

COUNTRY DRUMMER

MARK HERNDON

2. Paul Leim
3. Fred Young
4. Jack Gavin
5. Eddie Bayers/Cactus Moser/John Stacey

FUNK DRUMMER

DENNIS CHAMBERS

2. Chuck Morris
3. Steve Jordan
4. Omar Hakim
5. William Calhoun





MULTI-PERCUSSIONIST

ED MANN

2. Alex Acuna
3. Emil Richards
4. Airto
5. Trilok Gurtu

MALLET PERCUSSIONIST

ED MANN

2. Dave Samuels
3. Lionel Hampton
3. Bobby Hutcherson
5. Terry Gibbs



CLASSICAL PERCUSSIONIST

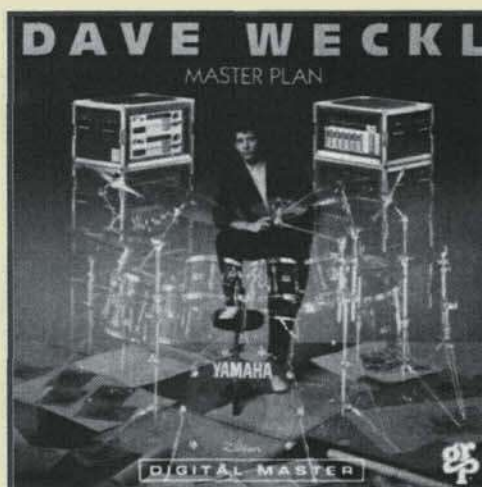
EVELYN GLENNIE

2. Arthur Press
3. Chris Lamb
4. Ed Mann
5. Alan Abel/Steve Houghton/
Leigh Howard Stevens

RECORDED PERFORMANCE

DAVE WECKL—*Master Plan*

- Z. William Calhoun—Living Colour: *Time's Up*
3. Rod Morgenstein—Winger: *In The Heart Of The Young*
4. Scott Rockenfield—Queensryche: *Empire*
5. Roy Haynes—Pat Metheny: *Question & Answer*



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

EDITORS' ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is given by the editors of *Modern Drummer* in recognition of outstanding contributions to the drum/percussion community by a performer, author, educator, manufacturer, etc. The person or persons so hon-

ored may be notable figures in drumming history or active participants on today's drumming scene. The criteria for this award shall be the value of the contributions made by the honorees, in terms of influences on subsequent

musical styles, educational methods, product designs, etc. There will be no limit as to the number of honorees that may be designated each year. For 1991, *MD's* editors are pleased to honor:

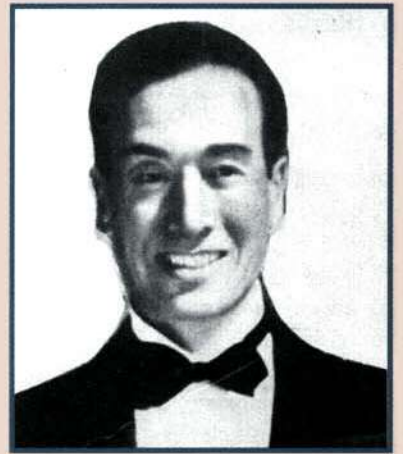


KENNY CLARKE

Kenny "Klook" Clarke is credited with moving the timekeeping role from the bass drum to the ride cymbal for jazz drumming, earning him the title of "The Father Of Bebop Drumming." His innovative stylings—in performances with Dizzy Gillespie, as a founding member of the Modern Jazz Quartet, and with his own Clarke/Boland Big Band—influenced such artists as Philly Joe Jones and Max Roach, and served as the basis of Jim Chapin's classic *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*.

BILLY GLADSTONE

Billy Gladstone was a consummate player, a creative inventor, and a notable teacher. His snare drum work as a member of the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra in the '30s and '40s served as an inspiration for Buddy Rich, Joe Morello, and other top players, while his contributions to the art of drum design still influence manufacturers today.

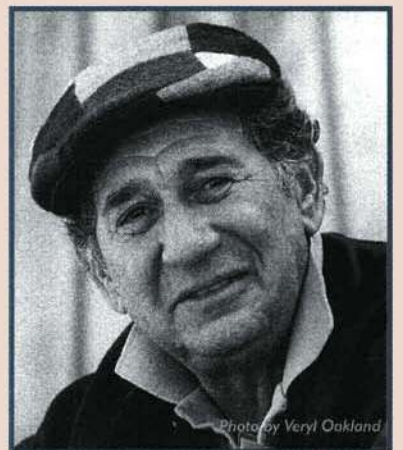


AVEDIS ZILDJIAN

From his arrival in America in the late 1920s, Avedis Zildjian dedicated his life to the art of cymbal manufacture. Over the next 50 years, he cultivated the acquaintance of the world's top drummers, constantly seeking their input and attempting to meet their needs. As a result, he can be credited for elevating the cymbal from a minor acoustic accessory to a percussion instrument in its own right.

SHELLY MANNE

Shelly Manne is revered as one of the most creative and musical drummers of all time. Although he epitomized the West Coast "cool" jazz style, he was equally at home with a big band or a studio orchestra. Shelly was one of the first jazz drummers to get into studio work seriously—and he dominated the L.A. recording scene for many years. He also contributed to the careers of many other drummers by employing them at his own club, Shelly's Manne Hole.



Noble & Cooley H.P. Snare Drums

by Rick Mattingly

**When is a ply shell
not a ply shell?
When it's a horizontal-ply shell...or
so says Noble &
Cooley.**

As an alternative to their solid-maple snare drums, Noble & Cooley has introduced the *H.P. Series* snare drums, which are constructed from horizontal plies of maple. There are five sizes to choose from: 6 1/2x14, 4 1/2x14, 6x13, 4 1/2x13, and 6 1/2x12.

First of all, what is this "horizontal-ply" business all about? According to N&C, most ply drums are constructed from two-ply sheets of cross-laminated wood—meaning that the grain runs horizontally on one layer and vertically on the other. Many six-ply drums, therefore, are made from three two-ply sheets of prefabricated cross-laminate. The cross-lamination does give the shell a lot of strength, but according to N&C, it also results in a shell that does not have a lot of resonance.

Noble & Cooley wanted to build a ply shell that would share some of the characteristics of the solid-maple shell, and yet be an alternative sound. Hence, the horizontal-ply construction. To start with, the grain on all of the plies runs in the same direction (horizontally), which approximates the grain on a solid shell. All of the plies are then joined at the same time, as opposed to the method

described above, in which the pre-fab laminates could have been manufactured months before they were joined into a shell. Furthermore, when using sheets of pre-fab laminate, the wood could be coming from a lot of different places. All of the layers on a given Noble & Cooley *H.P.* snare come from the same run, giving a greater consistency to the shell and maximizing its potential for resonance.

The *H.P.* shells, then, are made from six maple plies, with one ply of mahogany on the inside. (The 12" model has five plies of maple and two of mahogany.) According to the company, the mahogany was added simply to give a little different character to the sound.

So that's the story behind the shells. Before describing the characteristics of each drum, here are the general materials and methods they have in common. The *H.P.* drums feature the same die-cast rims and brass hardware you would find on any Noble & Cooley drum. The essential difference is that the tension casings are attached to the shell at the top and bottom nodal points, rather than just at the bottom, as with the company's solid-maple drums. The 6 1/2x14 drum has ten lugs, the 4 1/2x14 has eight, and the other three sizes have six lugs each.

The strainer has a vertical throw-off design, and is quiet and smooth. I've always found the N&C strainer difficult to adjust, as the throw-off lever is in the way of the adjustment screw, and the screw itself is not particularly easy to turn. On the positive side, however, once you get it set the way you want it, it stays there. That's what really matters.

All of the drums have multiple, symmetrical air vents; the 14" drums have four, the 12" and 13" drums have three. The vents are located near the bottom of the shell, below the tension lugs and virtually hidden from sight. According to the company, the size and number of vents were designed to maximize the compression in the drum at all dynamic levels. If too much air can escape, the drum will have a lot of attack at loud volumes, but won't respond well to softer playing. If not enough air can escape, the

drum will choke when struck loudly.

Because of the nodal mounting of the tension casings, the tension screws are shorter than on most drums. That didn't seem to cause any problems, as they still go into the casing far enough to hold well. I did notice one thing, though, when changing a head on one of the drums. The threads inside the casings come to the very top of the cylinder. Because this is a springless design, you have to be very careful to line the screws up properly so as to avoid cross-threading. If there were just a little bit of "collar" above the threads, that could help the process.

All of the drums came fitted with Evans *Genera* heads and Noble & Cooley's *Cam Action* snares. Now, on to the individual drums.

I started by taking the largest of the group, the 6 1/2x14, to a gig with a rock band. It had a big, deep sound. About ten years ago, when deep snare drums were in fashion, I could easily have recommended this as a fine choice for a primary drum. However, as higher-pitched sounds are in vogue at the moment, I think I would use this as a secondary drum. I enjoyed it most on rock ballads, where I wanted a fat sound with lots of body, and didn't need as much high-end crack. It was especially nice, on those tunes, when played with Calato *Splitstix*.

Because the drum had what I would call a more "traditional" sound, I decided to try something else a few days later. Among the products I recently received for review were several sets of Patterson cable snares, one of which was designed to sound like gut snares. I mounted that set on the 6 1/2x14 Noble & Cooley, and the resulting sound inspired me to launch into "The Downfall Of Paris." My performance wasn't necessarily memorable, but the sound of the drum was. For a symphonic or concert-band player who needs a good *tambour militaire*, this drum with cable (or gut) snares would suit the purpose admirably. (A full review of the Patterson snares will appear in a future issue of *MD*.)

I next tried the 4 1/2x14, assuming that



Photo by Rick Mottingly

it might be the most general-purpose of the batch. But in a certain sense, it might be the most unique. First of all, it has the most "woody" sound of the five drums. I tried cranking it up to almost piccolo range, but found that it performed best with a medium-range tuning. The drum had a certain "dark" sound that made me want to use it in the type of situation where my cymbals would be of the dark, old K type. It had a certain funkiness that could be good for certain rock situations—and it was certainly loud enough for that application—but I personally would choose it for jazz playing due to its general timbre.

The drum I *would* describe as the most general-purpose turned out to be the 6x13. The 13" head size helped give it the high-end crack that is currently in favor, while the extra depth gave it a lot of body. For live playing where I am not going to be miked, I usually go with a 5x14 metal drum, as I can tune it high

enough for a reasonable crack and still have enough body for projection. But this drum, frankly, did that job even better. It had a brightness more characteristic of metal than wood, and had an excellent blend of cut and body.

The 4 1/2x13 was similar in a lot of ways, but obviously didn't have quite the body of the deeper drum. In a studio setting, or a live situation where the drum is going to be miked, this might be the better choice. Also, this would work well for tighter, crisper playing. It sounds good with a medium tuning as well as with a higher pitch.

Of all the drums, the 6 1/2x12 is probably the most specialized. I would classify it as a soprano voice, and although it does have a bit of a "toy" drum quality, it has more body and character than other 12" snare drums I've played. (Perhaps the credit belongs to the extra ply of mahogany.) I could imagine this being a nice auxiliary drum for someone who

plays reggae, or who wants more of a "pop" than a "crack."

Besides being an alternative sound to the Noble & Cooley solid-maple drums, the ply construction enables the company to offer the *H.P. Series* at a slightly lower cost. The two 14" drums list at \$675 each, and the 12" and 13" models list at \$650. That certainly is not in the budget range, but is a little more affordable for someone who wants a quality snare drum.

In the past, I've sometimes received several snare drums of different sizes from the same manufacturer, and have been hard pressed to find a whole lot of difference between them—other than that the bigger ones were louder and the smaller ones had more crack. But I was very impressed by the fact that each of the five Noble & Cooley *H.P.* snares had its own character. These are really five *different* drums.

ToneRyte Bass Drum Dampener

■ by William F. Miller

When I was first given this product to review, I thought, "I'm definitely the wrong guy to be reviewing something that muffles a bass drum." My ideal bass drum sound is a ringing, booming, almost out-of-control *wallop!* However, most sound engineers (and lots of drummers) prefer something a bit more controllable underfoot.

Enter the *ToneRyte* bass drum damp-



ener: It's basically a wedge-shaped piece of foam that fits neatly inside your bass drum. It comes in three sizes: 14", 16", and 18" deep, and it's very thin: only about 3" high at the batter side and 1" high at the front head side. Also, it's a lovely dark grey color that looks very nice in your drum, as compared to old towels, underwear, diapers—the usual stuff drummers are known to stick in their drums.

I used the 16" depth *ToneRyte* inside a 16x22 bass drum. The drum itself had single-ply heads front and back, with a small hole in the front head. I took the front head off and placed the *ToneRyte* in the drum with its thick end against the batter head. I placed the front head back on, with the *ToneRyte* pressed against it. (The depth of the 16" *ToneRyte* is actually about 17", so on a 16" deep drum the *ToneRyte* is wedged quite securely against the two heads.)

So how did it affect the sound? Honestly, it muffles the drum a good amount, but not so much that the drum doesn't have any guts. In fact, it sounds a lot better than placing pillows or other larger muffling items inside the drum. That's because with the *ToneRyte* there is still a good amount of room for air to move around inside the drum.

One disadvantage is that you don't have control over *how much* the drum is muffled, unless of course you try cutting the *ToneRyte*. In that way you could adjust the amount of muffling for, let's say, the room you play your drums in most often. However, when moving the drum from room to room, its sound will vary, and you might want to change the amount of muffling. That might not be too practical five minutes before show time.

Incidentally, if you don't use a front head, you could make the *ToneRyte* work for you by cutting most of a front head away, leaving a ring of drumhead material just large enough to hold the *ToneRyte* inside the drum, yet still giving you a single-head effect.

If you prefer a more "dead" sound, or if you play a style of music that calls for that sound, the *ToneRyte* is a hassle-free way to muffle your bass drum. The list price for the 14" deep *ToneRyte* is \$16.95; the 16" and 18" models list for \$17.95.

Q What does Ed Shaughnessy do every night before he plays "Here's Johnny"?

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The New Drum Rack by Pearl.

Pearl's revolutionary drum rack system totally changed the way drummers approached their set-ups. It's simplistic folding design and ultimate stability separated it from all the rest. No other rack system offered it's quick, easy set-up, it's compact storage with all clamps in place, or it's non-slip square tube design...until now. Introducing the second generation drum rack by Pearl.

Totally Square. All rail framework is now completely square allowing the new tom and cymbal holder clamps to be mounted on top, bottom or either side of the rail. The newly designed clamps also hinge for easy installation.

Two Sizes. The new DR-100 is specifically designed for 22" bass drums and the new DR-200 accommodates 24" bass drums. All legs are now steel for added strength and support and both racks are black anodized for supreme durability.

Expandable. The basic DR-100 or DR-200 is now expandable allowing endless creative set-up possibilities. The expansion option consists of one leg and one rail. Simply remove and replace a bolt to install. Add as many as you need for your signature set-up and just fold the entire rack away for storage or transport.

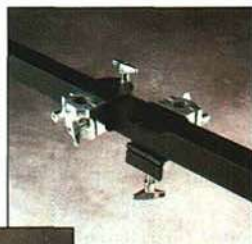
If you've had enough experience in constructing pipe puzzles and want to return to the reasons you considered a rack in the first place, the new Pearl drum rack is the answer. We'll let the other guys create all the questions.



DR-200 Standard Rack

Pearl.

The best reason to play drums.



Hinging Clamps

All hardware clamps can now be mounted on top, bottom or either side of rail and hinge for easy installation. PC-10 for 7/8" pipes, the PC-5 for smaller accessory pipes.



Expansion Option

The new expansion option (DR-022 or DR-024) allows you to add to your rack to create your own signature set-up. Add as many rails and legs as you need, assemble it once, then hinge it for compact travel.



Easy Expansion Assembly

Simmons Drum Huggers

by Rick Van Horn

These nifty little add-ons can open the MIDI door for you.

Drum Huggers are a combination trigger pad/MIDI interface system designed to attach to acoustic drums. The idea is to provide a compact, convenient method of triggering electronic sounds from an acoustic drumkit without the use of triggers on the drums themselves.

The system is comprised of one *Master Hugger* and four *Slave Huggers*. The *Slaves* are simply trigger pads; the *Master* contains the electronic circuitry and control buttons to effect necessary programming, select patches, and send the combined MIDI signal from the four *Slaves* and its own playing pad to the sound source. (The four *Slave* pads can also be used as direct trigger pads, since they utilize 1/4" phone jacks. The *Master* outputs only via a MIDI cable, and cannot be used in this manner.) Power for the *Master* is supplied via a 9-volt AC adaptor.

Physically, the *Huggers* are lightweight and easy to handle. The clamps that attach the units to the drums hold them securely in place. (Special clamps are also available to attach to units to the metal bands of RIMS mounts.) The size of the *Huggers* (roughly 8" wide by 4" high) could be a problem in some tight spots, but this would depend on individual setups. The units are constructed of black, high-impact plastic, with a grey rubber playing surface. Playing response was acceptable, given the slight angle that

each *Hugger* presented when attached to a drum rim.

Triggering sensitivity is adjustable via a dial on each *Hugger*. Apparently, Simmons was afraid that too much sensitivity would cause false triggering when the drum on which the *Hugger* was

clamped was struck. (This did not occur when I used the units.) As a result, I had triggering problems when playing low-volume rolls or other quick sticking passages—even with the sensitivity set full up. I've been informed that newer models have been improved with greater shock-isolation features, to allow for a higher amount of sensitivity. Other than the sensitivity-threshold problem, triggering from the *Huggers* was clean and accurate.

It's certainly convenient to have the patching and editing controls for your MIDI triggers right in one of the pads on the kit—as opposed to in a separate rack-mounted unit. With the touch of a button, you can select any one of 16 pre-determined patches. On the other hand, I was concerned that stick impact might eventually damage the internal circuitry within that pad. However, the unit I tried was a sample model that had seen heavy use for over a year and showed no signs of electronic problems, so this risk may not be as great as one might think.

Programming is easy with the *Drum Huggers*: Call up one of the 16 available patches (using the two buttons on the *Master Hugger*), put the unit into Note Edit, and hit a pad. The *Master Hugger* reads the MIDI note number of the sound source, automatically assigning it to that pad. Ditto for the MIDI channel. Once those two are established, push both buttons again to enter the data, and



move on to the next pad. Once all five pads have been programmed, move on to the next patch and repeat the process. (MIDI Note and Channel numbers can also be changed via the buttons on the *Master Hugger*, so you can do your editing there, if necessary.)

The only minor inconvenience involved with patch selection is that it is non-cycling. You can't go from #16 to #1; you have to step back down in sequence. I suppose this is a matter of electronic economy, and it isn't an absolutely essential feature. But it would have been nice....

All in all, the *Drum Huggers* are a nifty method of accessing electronic sounds conveniently and easily. They're easy to transport, set up and break down quickly, and don't require any outboard interface unit or controller. If you're into sampling or otherwise augmenting the sound of your kit, check these out. A complete system lists for \$899.

In Brief

Simmons' new *Drum Huggers* offer a means of placing a complete MIDI trigger-pad-and-interface system within easy reach on or around a drumkit. Combining fairly compact size with internal electronics, the *Drum Huggers* eliminate the need for rack-mounted outboard interface devices or bulky pad controllers. And they feel pretty good, too!

Simmons SDS 2000

by Rick Van Horn

It has sounds! It has reverb! It has MIDI! It triggers! It slices! It dices! Oops. Well...almost.

The Simmons *SDS 2000* has been designed to be an all-in-one drum triggering system. It combines a five-channel electronic drum brain with a trigger-to-MIDI interface, and adds a digital reverb unit for good measure. The brain can be triggered via pads, acoustic drum triggers, or MIDI, and the unit is also capable of triggering other MIDI devices. Compact and reasonably priced, the *SDS 2000* is not tremendously sophisticated in terms of sounds and programming parameters, so it probably wouldn't be the first choice for high-tech studio electronics whizzes. (Simmons still offers the *SDX* for those folks.) But for working *players* who desire flexibility of sounds and ease of use for live performance purposes, the *SDS 2000* might be just the ticket.

The Pad Kit

The kit I tested combined the compact brain (two rack spaces high) with a five-pad kit comprised of Simmons' trademark hexagonal pads mounted on a lightweight drum rack that also featured two cymbal boom arms. (The rack and boom arms are optional extras.) The pads have been around since the days of the *SDS 9*; most drummers are familiar with them by now. I found them sensitive, durable, and very playable. If you play from your shoulders, hitting *any* electronic pad is going to be uncomfortable for you. But playing with any sort of

sticking technique at all is actually quite pleasant on most pads, since they give tremendous rebound. This was true of the Simmons pads, and I enjoyed playing on them for that reason.

The drum rack was functional, but not what I'd call heavy-duty. The pads aren't heavy themselves, so the rack supported them well enough. But the clamps that held the various components of the rack together could be stronger; the entire thing tended to wobble a bit under stick impact.

How functional this rack would be for a given drummer would depend to a great degree on how hard that drummer hit the pads, and how heavy the cymbals mounted on the stands were. A bag for containing the rack came with it, which was a nice touch.

The Brain

This brings us to the *SDS 2000* brain. Running it down quickly, the back panel features five 1/4" inputs (for the five pads, triggers, etc.), MIDI In, Out, and Thru jacks, five individual channel outputs, stereo left and right outputs, and a footswitch jack (for an optional kit-selector footswitch). The front panel features five individual channel-level sliders, left and right master volume sliders, and all the various control buttons and dials necessary to select, edit, and otherwise work with the various sounds and functions of the unit.

Sounds

The *SDS 2000* contains 40 on-board



sounds. When using the Pre-set kits, these sounds are arranged into eight kits—each of which contains a kick, a snare, and three toms. When a User kit is selected, any sound can be assigned to any channel. Additional sounds are available via optional sound cards, which can contain up to ten sounds each.

All of the sounds are 16-bit digital samples, and the recording quality is excellent. Commenting on the quality of the sounds themselves is a very subjective

In Brief

In terms of a self-contained unit (as opposed to a component system of trigger pads, interfaces, sound sources/samplers, reverb units, processors, etc.), the *SDS 2000* is a pretty hip system. It's easy to understand and to use, offers a range of acceptable-to-excellent sounds, includes a generous amount of sound processing, facilitates either direct or MIDI-interfaced triggering, and doesn't cost half of your annual salary.

tive matter. I liked several, disliked others, and was ambivalent about the rest. I suppose any drummer would have the same feelings. If you want a unit that contains only sounds that you love, you need a sampler, not an electronic drumkit. The limits of technology and economy dictate that a unit like the *SDS 2000* should offer a little something for everyone, so you can't reasonably expect to like every sample. There are parameters by which the sounds may be modified (within the User kits) to a certain degree. In addition, the optional sound card library gives you an expanded range of sounds to choose from—but these come at extra cost.

My biggest problem with the sounds in the *SDS 2000* was their arrangement in the Pre-set kits. I question why certain sounds were combined the way they were. For example, a flat, thuddy bass drum was included with the "Jazz" kit—which featured fairly live snare and tom sounds. In order to get kits that I thought had more consistent characteristics from drum to drum, I found myself copying several of the Pre-set kits into User kits, and then swapping the snare or bass drum for one from another kit entirely. The *good* thing about this process was that it was very easy to do, thanks to a convenient "Copy Kit" function and the ability to select any drum sound for any channel in the User kits. The *bad* thing about it was that I had to take up a User kit in order to get a "proper" arrangement for a kit that should (in my opinion) have been in the Pre-set kits to begin with. Having to do this with several of the Pre-set kits left me with fewer User kits available to build my own, completely original kits.

To describe the Pre-set kits quickly: There are two "Rock" kits (one slightly bigger-sounding than the other), a "Jazz" kit (with a nice, fat snare and round-sounding toms, but that flat bass drum that seemed out of context), an "Electronic" kit (the classic *SDS V* swoop sound), an "Ambient" kit (very Phil Collins), a "Studio" kit (which has a ringy, Van Halen-type snare and toms that are more lively than one might

expect under this description), a "Live" kit (which sounds like an amplified kit in a big room), and a "Hip-Hop" kit (which combines big drum sounds with lots of white noise, and actually might be quite useful in a rock context. I loved the bass drum.).

Novice electronic drummers often program their tom sounds very low—enthralled by the huge, deep sounds they can achieve—but discover, to their dismay, that those sounds don't cut through a band very well. Most electronic manuals caution against this. Apparently, Simmons didn't read those manuals, because many of the Pre-set tom sounds—especially on the "Rock," "Jazz," and "Live" kits—are quite low. Again, I had to overcome the problem by copying to a User kit—and then adjusting the pitch of the toms. (Once again, to be fair I should say that this was easy to do, because a "Kit Tuning" control facilitates the shifting of each sound up or down by up to seven semitones, or a fifth.)

Another useful function is "Pitch Shift," which emulates the variation in pitch that occurs naturally in a drum when it is hit harder or softer. This is a dynamic function; the harder the hit, the more the pitch shifts upward (up to seven semitones, or a fifth). This is an especially nice touch for snare drums, since there is no rimshot sound on the *SDS 2000*. You can program your snare to give it more cut—via a higher pitch—when you hit it harder. This function also works well for adding attack to the tom sounds.

Once a Pre-set kit has been selected, or a User kit has been created, the addition of reverb becomes an option. The *SDS 2000* is equipped with 30 on-board digital reverb pre-sets. These are categorized as Small, Medium, and Large Room, Live Room, Large Hall, Reverse, and Gated—with several different decay lengths for each setting. The choice of drums to which the reverb is applied is variable: all the drums, snare and toms, kick and toms, or toms only. Once a setting is selected and assigned, the depth of reverb applied to the drum sounds is

controlled by a dial on the front panel of the *SDS 2000* brain.

The application of reverb unquestionably improved many of the drum sounds. Some of the decay length settings seemed a bit impractical (10 seconds of delay in Large Room and Live Room, for example)—at least for live performance. You might find some sort of special-effects use for them, however, so it's nice to know they're there if you want them. I tend to think that the first two or three settings in each category would be the ones you'd use most often for realistic enhancement.

Working With The Controls

I'm not an electronics whiz; I'm a working drummer who likes things to happen quickly and easily. So I'm pleased to report that I was able to master the controls of the *SDS 2000* fairly quickly. Programming sounds is a matter of pressing a few buttons and turning a dial or two in the right sequence. I'm not going to go into every detail here; if you're interested in this unit you'll read the manual. Let me just say that by following the manual, I was able to set up the kits I wanted and edit them with no difficulty. (A cautionary word here, however. Don't expect to be able to set up your sounds via headphones and have them sound the same way through your sound system. You have to listen to the sounds through the equipment they'll ultimately be played through in order to get a realistic perception of their true pitch, timbre, and overall quality. This is no particular fault of the *SDS 2000*; it's true of any electronic sound source. Start with the headphones to get in the ballpark, but allow time before the gig to fine tune.)

One element of programming has been made exceptionally user-friendly, and that is the adjustment of pad or trigger sensitivity. Simmons has equipped the *SDS 2000* with what they call a "Learn" facility. With this, you simply utilize the "Sens" button, call up a given pad or trigger channel, and hit the pad or drum with a medium-hard stroke. The *SDS 2000* computes a range above and

below that impact level, and automatically sets the sensitivity of that pad accordingly. This means that if you have a heavy foot on the pedal but a light touch on the snare, the unit will adjust to that automatically. If you're not happy with the computations, just go through the process again, and hit the pad a bit harder or softer than you did before. The range will be adjusted accordingly. The final level remains constant for all the kits selected, and stays in the unit's memory when power is down.

What was even more important to me than the simplicity of programming the *SDS 2000* was how easy the unit was to employ in live performance. There are essentially 18 kits available at any time (20 if you're using a Sound Card), and these are accessible via three buttons. One is the "Kit" button: press it and you're in the drumkit performance mode, without any danger of changing anything. The other two buttons are simply "Up" or "Down" selector buttons that move you through the 18 kits. As long as you can keep the unit within arm's reach, this is certainly simple to do. (And if you can't, an optional footswitch can do the same thing.) My only gripe is that the kits cannot be cycled. That is, you can't go from kit #18 up to reach kit #1; you have to step all the way back down again. This might only take a second or two, and wouldn't be too much problem between songs. But if you wanted to make a kit change between parts of the same song, you'd have to be careful to have those kits on adjacent numbers.

Other controlling that must be done during performance includes volume levels. This is where the manner in which you output the drum sounds becomes important. If you output each drum channel individually into a mixer and have a sound technician to run it, then you have little to worry about. You might be able to set a standard level on the *SDS 2000*'s faders and forget about them for the rest of the performance. (This would also allow the optimum amount of outboard EQ and other pro-

cessing to improve the quality of the sounds.) However, if you are running your own mix, and/or if you are outputting the drum sounds via the stereo or even a mono (left channel only) output, then you will need to use the faders to modify the volume levels from kit to kit. This is due to the fact that the various drum sounds seem not to have been sampled at the same levels originally. As such, the relative volumes between the drums is different from kit to kit, and the overall volume of given kits will also vary—even with the faders set the same way. This is a minor inconvenience, but it is something to be aware of.

Generating The Sounds

In addition to the drumpads that came with this kit, the *SDS 2000* can be triggered by acoustic drum triggers. For test purposes, I used both K&K *Hot Shot* triggers and Simmons' own drumhead triggers. Both worked quite well, with no false triggering. I did find that trigger placement was critical from drum to drum—the larger the drum, the closer to the center of the head I had to place the trigger. (Other drummers I've talked to differ on this; they use the same units at the outer edges of all their drums with great success. It may vary according to drum brand, head type, playing style, and other factors.) I also used a DW *EP-1* electronic trigger pedal. Although its signal seemed to be a bit low for the *SDS 2000* brain and I had to run the fader all the way up to get an appropriate level, the triggering was excellent. (For the record, Simmons triggers go for \$155 for a set of six, or \$32 each.)

I enjoyed this application the most out of all the ways I used the *SDS 2000*. The sound of my acoustic drums, enhanced by those of the *SDS 2000*, combined to create some pretty *impressive* drum sounds out front. My bass drum, especially, became wonderfully thunderous with the help of the "Live" and "Hip-Hop" kick drum sounds.

The remaining way to obtain sounds from the *SDS 2000* is via MIDI. The unit will accept information from any

MIDI source (I used the *Drum Hug-gers*), and can assign each of its sounds to any note and/or channel number you desire (note range: 36 to 96; channel range: 1 to 16). Each kit within the *SDS 2000* can also have its own setting of MIDI notes and channels, so kits can be selected by incoming MIDI Program Changes. The unit can also send MIDI info, and thus trigger other MIDI sound sources. A few other MIDI-related features make the *SDS 2000* a completely flexible, functional unit for the MIDI enthusiast.

At a list price of \$2,329 with the pads (the rack and cymbal arms are about \$400 more), or \$1,849 for just the brain and six triggers, the *SDS 2000* is within the range of working drummers seeking the advantages of electronics. If you're one of those drummers, you owe it to yourself to check this baby out.

MD's Sound System

For the purpose of product reviews involving drum and/or cymbal miking, MD employs the following equipment:
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and SM57 microphones
Zildjian ZMC-10 Cymbal
Microphone System
Seck 122 12-channel stereo mixer
Shure M268 mixers (2)
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Funky Stickings

by John Xepoleas

MUSIC KEY

H.H. X
S.D. 
B.D. 

I'm sure a lot of you have heard Dave Garibaldi and Steve Gadd play some incredibly funky beats. Figuring it all out can be quite confusing and often frustrating. You might think that they're playing random stickings, when in fact what they're using is simpler than it sounds.

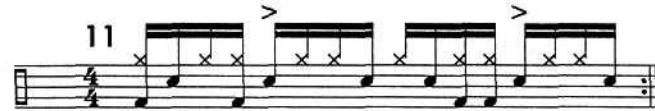
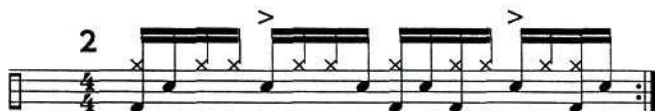
The following study is based on one of the more commonly used patterns. Learn the basic pattern, giving special attention to the snare drum part. Play all of the accented notes *ff* (loud with a full stroke) and all of the unaccented notes *pp* (very soft with a tap stroke 1" off the head). Start slowly at first, and then work these up to quarter note = 100 - 112. Here's the basic pattern:

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



Bass Drum Variations

All of the following examples incorporate the same basic stickings as above with different bass drum variations. For the best results be sure to lock in the hi-hat and bass drum parts.



Snare Drum Variations

Remember to play all of the unaccented snare drum notes very soft with a tap stroke and the accented notes with a full stroke.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

Two-Bar Combinations

1

2

3

4

5

6

After you've become familiar with the written examples, combine and compose your own grooves. Hopefully this study will open you up to a whole new world of possibilities.





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The Full Stroke

by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Keith Necessary

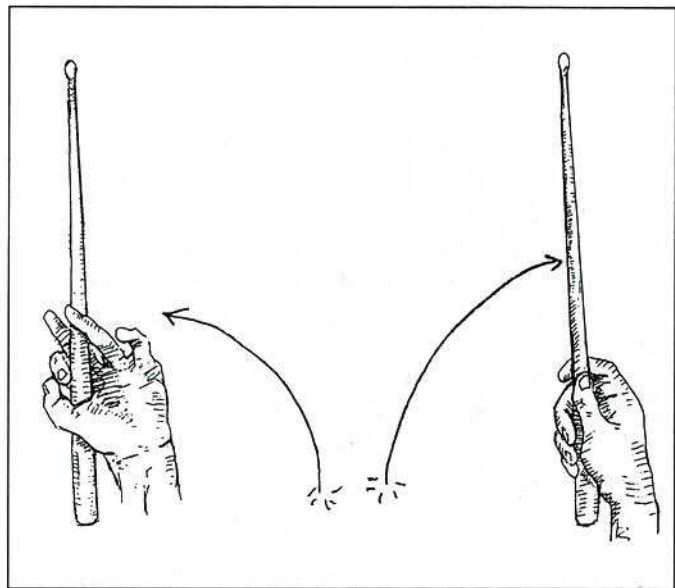


Photo by Rick Mattingly

The full stroke is one of the beginning strokes of basic technique. It is used to help develop the wrist and loosen all the muscles in the forearm and upper arm, develop reflex action, and draw the sound out of the drum.

The three basic stages of development are the wrist, the forearms, and the fingers. You develop the wrist first to a certain level of proficiency, then develop the forearms alone, then work them together. Next the fingers get developed, also to a level of proficiency, and then all three are worked together as one functioning unit, trying to get a relaxed, fluid motion. There is actually a lot more to this exercise than this simplified explanation. A more in-depth discussion will follow in future articles.

Start with your sticks pointing at the ceiling. This is what is called the full-stroke position.

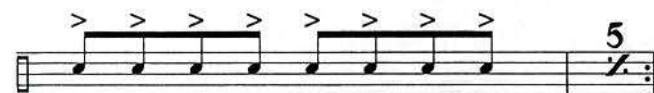


Snap the stick down, striking the pad or drum, then let the stick rebound back to the full stroke position. Do this with one snap of the wrist. Remember to throw the stick down hard, so it will rebound all the way back. It's a lot like bouncing a ball.

Try the following exercise: Play one bar of quarter notes and one bar of 8th notes using full strokes as described. Accent all the notes. Start slowly and work with a metronome set at about quarter note = 50.



When you become proficient and relaxed with the previous exercise, you can expand on it by playing two bars of quarter notes and then six bars of 8th notes. Keep adding bars of 8th notes for endurance. Don't be afraid of pushing the metronome speed as long as you are relaxed and playing the full stroke properly. (Danny Gottlieb can play this exercise at quarter note = 220.)



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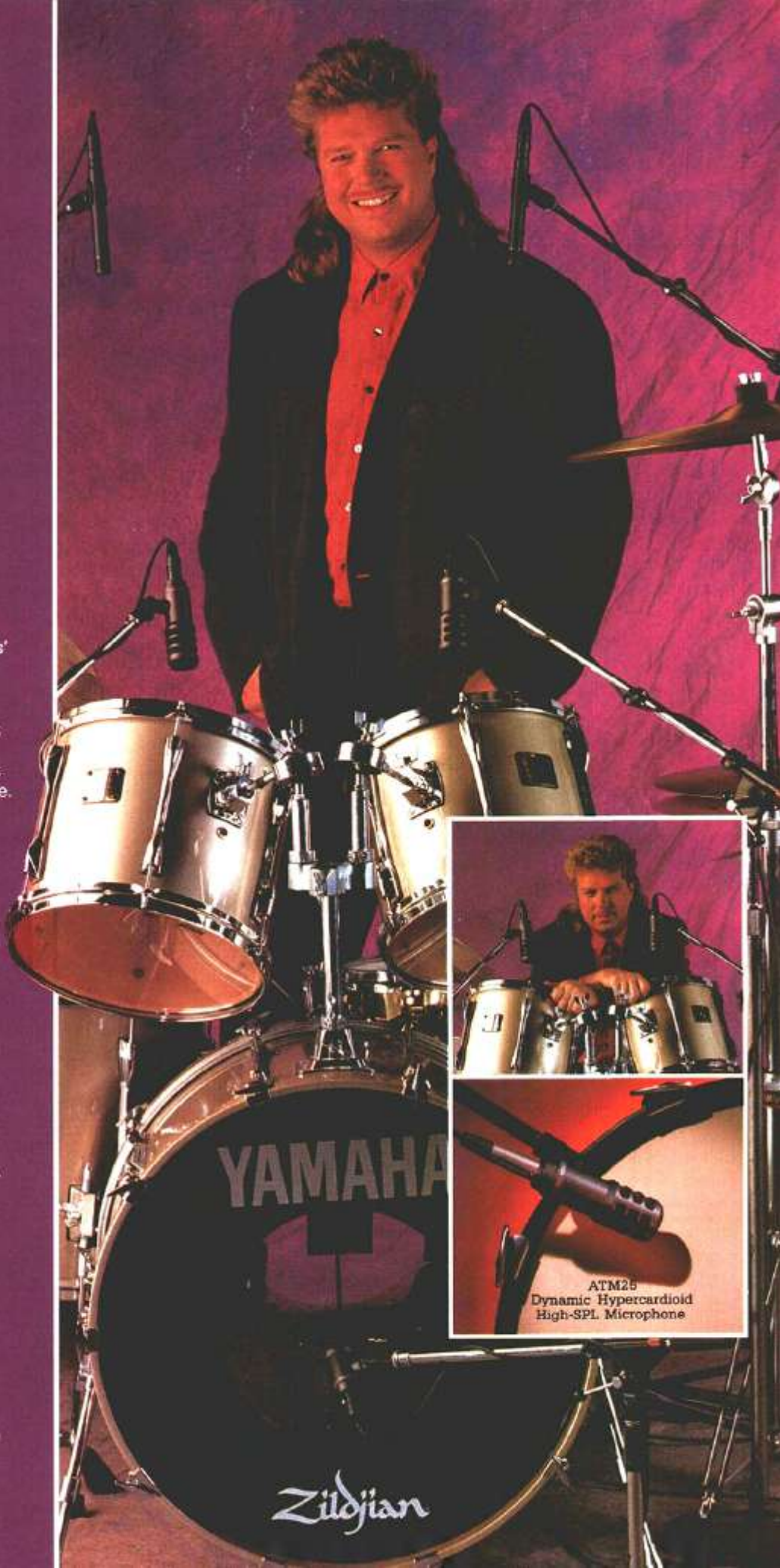
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Subbing A Show: Part 2

■ by Tom Oldakowski

Last month we talked about getting started with subbing: meeting the players, watching the show, and getting a copy of the book. This month we cover marking your book so that you can consistently play your best show. We'll cover standard notation shortcuts that will be useful not only in marking your sub book but in marking changes quickly during a rehearsal. I'll also share with you my own notation short cuts, some tips on what to use in marking the book, and some examples from the Radio City Christmas Show.

My personal philosophy on marking a book is that I want to give myself as much information as possible in an uncluttered, easy-to-read manner. Ideally, it should be possible to play a "perfect show" even if you're sight-reading. Remember, when you go into an unfamiliar situation, there will be things that can throw you (being nervous, an unfamiliar conductor, a drumset different than your own, etc.). And when you're subbing, it's not unusual for a few weeks to go by between calls. When you go in again after a layoff, it may feel like you're playing the show for the first time. The more information that is on the page, the fewer details you have to memorize. This frees you to concentrate on playing your best performance.

The most important marking is how each section of the music will be conducted. Why? Doesn't 4/4 mean four beats to a measure? *Not always.* Sometimes, for musical reasons (and sometimes just for comfort), the conductor will conduct a passage written in 4/4 in two, or 6/4 in three. A momentary lapse of memory on your part as to whether this section is conducted in two or four would be disastrous. The way to mark the conductor's beat pattern is to put the appropriate number of slashes above the first measure. (Measure 1 of the example is marked showing that it will be conducted in four.) Any time the conductor's pattern changes, mark it. (See measure 59.)

More and more shows have been using click tracks, including the Christmas and Easter shows at Radio City, and Broadway shows such as *Starlight Express*, *City Of Angels*, and *Chess*. Mark the click pattern the same way you marked the conductor's beat pattern. I also label the chart in the upper-left-hand corner (where it is easily seen), writing **CLICK** if the click starts at the beginning of the chart. If the click starts later in the chart (for example, at measure 99), I would write **CLICK** at 99. If the click and the conductor's beat pattern differ, I mark it as shown in measure 59. The click is in three and the conductor is in one. The count off for the click is marked with numbers and slashes. The count off to this particular chart is 2-3-4. This is marked before bar 1.

Frequently, changes need to be made in the printed part. The most common are: 1) to take out a measure(s) and 2) to tacet a measure(s). The first is done with the symbol used to "cut" from the end of bar 11 to the beginning of bar 14. (This symbol could also be used to cut from the middle of one measure to the middle of another.) There is another cut from measure 9 to measure 11, which could have been marked in the same way. But it makes a less-cluttered chart by just crossing out this one measure.

The second type of change—tacet a measure—is shown in measure 2. "Circling a part" means that the measure still exists, but it is not played. Another use of this technique is shown in measures 21 and 22. Originally the arranger wanted me to play this figure. During rehearsals it was decided that I should just keep playing the same groove as in measures 15 - 20. That is why I circled only the figure above the staff and not the whole measure. These notation short cuts work well in rehearsals when many changes need to be made quickly. But, when preparing my sub book, I would make it even clearer.

There are two ways to do this. The first is to cut blank pieces of manuscript paper, tape them over the measures to be changed, and then write in the new part. This is how professional copyists make fixes. It's a good idea to keep some of

Drum Notation Key

(left to right)



BD
Snare
Cross-Stick on Snare
Tom-Toms (hi to low)



Crash Cymbal (let ring)
Crash Cymbal (choke it)
Ride Cymbal
Ride Cymbal Bell



Closed Hi-Hat
Open Hi-Hat
Half Open Hi-Hat
Close Hi-Hat (with foot)
Splash Hi-Hat (with foot)



Rimshot
Woodblock
Triangle

these pre-cut strips handy for rehearsals. (Use tape sparingly. The changes you make today could be changed again tomorrow. Make sure you can remove these strips if necessary.) I use this method to make large or complicated changes in my part.

For smaller fixes, I use *White Out*, *Liquid Paper*, or a similar solution. (If you are working with a photocopy, get the product

designated for copies. It won't smear the chemicals in the paper.) This is available in any stationary store. By brushing it on, you can literally make any note or marking disappear. It dries in seconds and is easy to write over. I use it extensively to clean a book of any wrong or extra markings.

Use a No. 2 pencil to mark your book. Its soft lead makes a

DRUMS CUE: "Christmas in New York..."

SING A LITTLE SONG OF CHRISTMAS 1990

CLICK **-OPEN 3-**

RCMH CHRISTMAS 1990

2

The score is written on multiple staves with various drum parts and musical notations. It includes a 'SNARE SOLO' section, a 'Ride' section, a 'LEAD IN TIME' section, and a 'COND CLICK' section. The score is numbered 1 through 28, with some measures marked with 'ff' (fortissimo) and 'fff' (fortississimo). The tempo is marked 'FASTER' at the end. The score is written in a handwritten style with various musical symbols and annotations.

dark mark and erases easily for any changes. Believe me, you *will* be making changes. One of the shows that I sub on is *Cats*, which has been running for over eight years. Changes are made in the show every few months. If you mark changes in ink or magic marker, further changes will be a real headache. And if the parts you are marking are not your own, *never use anything other than a pencil*. This is a courtesy to the next player who'll be using this part.

Most drum notation is not standardized. You can solve this problem by making a key that tells you what each note means. Much of my key is fairly standard (snare and cross-stick), but some of it is my own (differences between crash and ride cymbals). Whatever you decide on, be consistent. By marking your parts the same way every time, you will know *exactly* what to play.

Labeling is another way to show exactly what is to be played. My key shows how I mark what is to be played on a woodblock, triangle, or specific tom-toms. (See measure 4.) But much of the labeling that I do is for more general things, such as, "Play this section on the ride cymbal," "This section is faster," etc. I write most of these in the margins in a one-word shorthand. (See measures 5, 15, and 23.) On most charts, the margins are empty. Putting general notes there keeps the music uncluttered and easy to read, yet full of information.

On my own copy of the *Cats* drum book, I box important labeling in erasable red pencil. This lets me quickly pick out the important aspects on each page. It helps me to look ahead as I'm playing and get ready for any tricky spots that are coming up.

There are other markings that I use. "Eye-glasses" (see above measure 27) tell me to watch out for something coming up (in this case an abrupt tempo and click change). Also, I add flanges to repeat signs so that they are easier to see (measures 15 and 22). Writing in a cue (very top of the chart) is helpful if there is a long break between tunes. It warns you when it's time to play the next chart. I prefer to use a bit of dialog, since it's usually easy to pick out a line that occurs a few moments before you play.

There is one more step to getting your sub book ready: page turns. I prefer to keep my music with only two pages open at a time, making all the page turns just as though I were reading a book. For this I find it's best to tape your photocopied pages together into complete but separate charts. This reduces the number of page turns and makes it easier to keep your book in order. Tape individual sheets together by applying masking tape to the back seam between pages. Masking tape, unlike transparent tape, doesn't tear or dry up with age. By putting it

on the back of the pages, the margins remain free for any notes you need to write.

Occasionally there will be difficult page turns. First try what the regular drummer does to make it easier. If that doesn't work for you, try re-folding the chart. Often doing a simple thing like opening three pages at the top of the chart makes all the other page turns easy. Again I recommend marking it ("open 3") on the part. (See the chart.)

If there is a particularly tricky page turn, I will write TURN! where I should turn. Sometimes a bad page turn will be between two single-page charts. In this case, I will write MOVE LEFT on the first one, adding an arrow pointing to the left to reinforce the instruction. Often, copying the last line of a page above the first line of the next page (or vice versa) will allow you to make the turn more easily. One other trick is to bend up the lower right corner of each page. This gives you a little handle to grab and makes for less fumbling on page turns.

All of this might seem like overkill, but I feel this type of in-depth preparation is essential. When you sub, you will frequently feel uncomfortable. You are not playing on your own set of drums. You don't work with this conductor every day. The bass player may also be a sub and unsure of the correct tempos. These distractions may make it difficult to concentrate. The trick is to be so prepared that you will be able to play a good show in spite of this. A well-marked book will help you do that, by allowing you to concentrate on playing well and not on remembering such details as, "Do I play this next section on the ride or hi-hat?" Anything you can do to ensure that you will play your best performance is worth the effort.

There is another benefit to investing the time to mark your sub book extensively. This past year, because of other work commitments, I was not available to sub on *Cats* for about ten

months. When I went back in this past February, the time it took me to relearn the show was minimal. This was because my copy of the book had been marked so extensively. For most of the show, I just needed to listen to the tape once. The parts and tempos that changed required a couple of listenings and a bit of notation update. That allowed me to play the "new" show and not the "old" version, all with a minimum of effort.

Next month we'll cover the final steps in getting ready to sub. This will include how to practice the show and watching the show a second time. See you then.

"The more information on the page, the fewer details to memorize. Now you can concentrate on playing your best performance."



"I personally stand behind every LP product. That's why I put my name on the label."

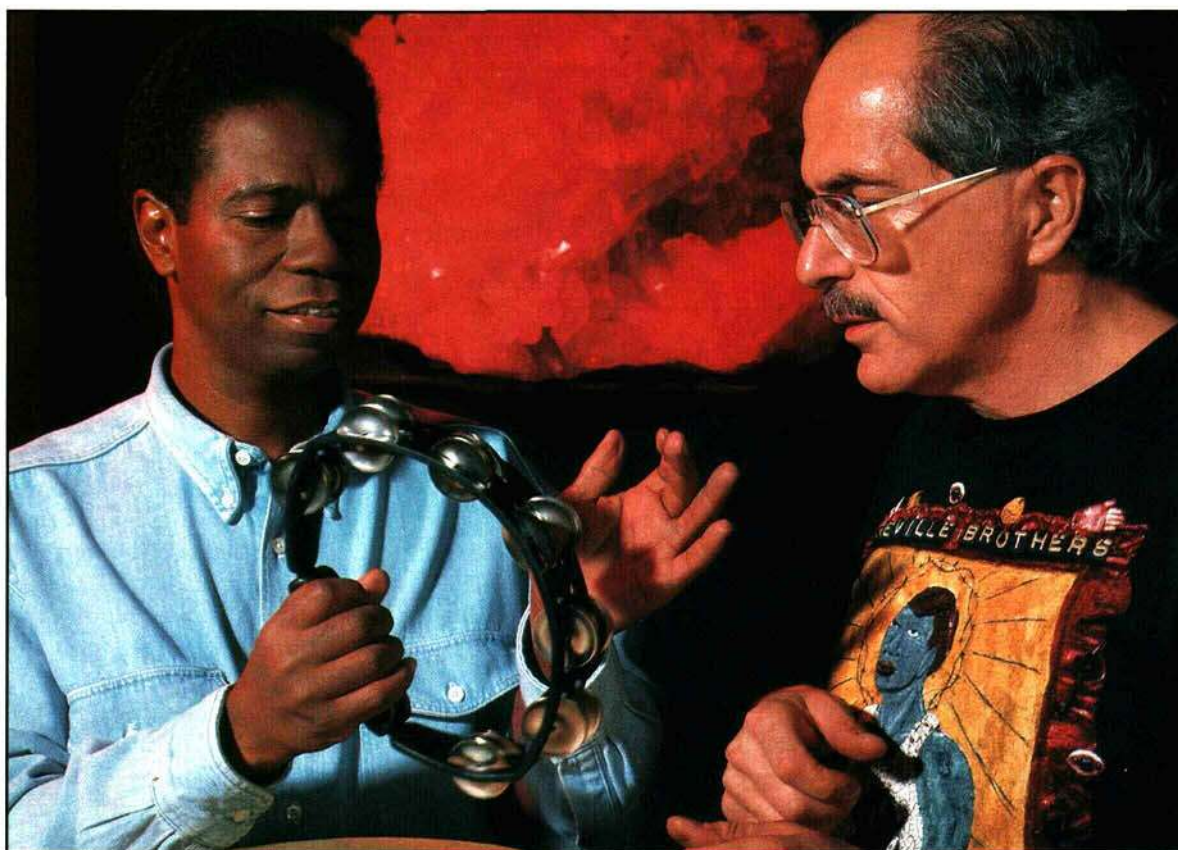


Photo by Cameron Wong

Paulinho da Costa and Martin Cohen discussing jingle design.

I personally stand behind every LP product. That's why I put my name on the label."

I've always sweated over details, starting with the first bongo drum I made back in 1963.

So when I began designing our new line of tambourine products, every detail concerned me, from the sonic quality of the jingles and how securely they are held in place to the balance of the assembled instrument.

I was shooting for a new level of excellence in tambourine performance, the same level

I'd achieved with my invention of the steel-balled Afuche/Cabasa. (That instrument's sound was brighter than its traditional predecessors. This brighter sound, initially considered undesirable, proved to be a major advance in recorded as well as live percussion, giving percussionists a more assertive voice in the music.)

I wanted the very best advice on every element of tambourine performance, and who better to ask than the most recorded percussionist in the world, Paulinho da Costa? (He has recorded three solo albums on Pablo label and will soon release a solo album on A&M Records.)

Paulinho's official union with LP comes at a time when we're preparing to expand our already vast line of percussion gear to include everything a pro like Paulinho needs for his diverse recording work.

When I finally release a new product to production, I must be convinced that it's going to be the best of its type. I personally stand behind every LP product. That's why I put my name on the label.



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The purpose of this department is to provide an avenue of communication directly between the consumers of drum and percussion equipment and those who design and manufacture that equipment. We invite all *MD* readers to respond to the questions presented; a representative selection of responses will be printed in a following issue. It is our hope that this department will provide an opportunity for drummers "in the field" to present their opinions and desires to the manufacturing community, while affording manufacturers an open, honest, and direct line to the wants and needs of their customers. March '91's question was:

Do you enjoy proclaiming your brand preference and loyalty via large logos on drums and cymbals, or would you prefer smaller, more subtle logos that would not be so visible from the audience?

I like the look of logos on drum equipment; they act just as any other type of graphic design. Also, I choose a certain brand of equipment because I feel that it is of superior quality, design, construction, and sound. When a company satisfies this criteria, I am more than happy to display their name. And by this, others will know what kind of drums I am using, should they like their sound and wish to try them for themselves.

As far as the audience is concerned, it shouldn't matter if the brand of my drums is plastered all over them. What matters is that I can make them roar. A good drummer will not need to hide behind a popular brand name, because his or her talent will overshadow any mere words emblazoned on the drums.

Joe Giacalone
GloucesterMA



I, for one, prefer more subtle, smaller logos. I feel that oversized logos simply take away from the beauty of the drumshell—especially when it comes to smaller sizes. And although the logo

looks nice when you first buy a cymbal, I just hate to see it fading away after long use and maintenance. I have no *objection* to logos; I'm proud of my setup and the brands I use. However, I think logos should be made optional when ordering a set. After all, we are paying; we should have the final say.

Carlo Anthony
Los Angeles CA



Heck, yeah: Logo-ize your stuff! You're probably using the equipment because you like it—so why hide it? Besides, most of the logos that are out there are fairly joyous in appearance. I think that logos add to the look and image of the equipment—and even to *your* image!

Phil Bryson
Tucson AZ



Why bother replacing logos that have worn off unless I endorse the product? Logos should stand for the quality of the *instrument*, not necessarily the musician. Displaying logos seems to be popular with people my age—probably because we see our heroes endorsing products. I don't care if the logos are large, small, or gone. If it sounds good, why should I care if the logo is Zildjian or Fisher-Price?

Joe Zajdel
Chillicothe OH



Having played the drums off and on for about 25 years, I very much prefer having the manufacturer's logo displayed. I use only particular equipment and hardware, and I like my audience to know what brands I'm using. Quite often, during breaks, people will come up and ask me questions about my setup. They want to know why I prefer this or that, and even how I feel about other brands.

As a drummer, I find myself checking album covers or looking closely on videos

or at concerts to see what the drummer is using. This helps me to evaluate other equipment without spending a lot of time in music stores. Therefore, I think it's good that the manufacturers use large logos. I wish that their logo stickers were more readily available; I'd like to display them on my cases.

Kerry Hart
Copperas Cove TX



The way I see it, there should be two avenues for drum and cymbal companies to take. First, since big logos are great for promoting products, the logos should remain the same size as they are now for drummers with endorsement deals. That way, crowds at concerts can identify the equipment, and the endorsers will be "pushing" the products. However, on drums and cymbals going out to the public, the logos should be smaller and/or more subtle. A great example of this was the Zildjian "outline" logo of the late '70s and early '80s. Even though the name was actually the same size as it is today, it wasn't as prevalent.

Lee Kelley
Misenheimer NC



Logos are a must! I love seeing the logo on the front of a bass drum. It gives a kit some definition and a bold look. Ditto for large logos on cymbals. Basically, they sum up the way I feel about my drums and cymbals. Labeling hasn't gone overboard; it's been done with a tasteful approach.

Andrew French
Midway CA



After training on my instrument for over 20 years, I want to be recognized for how I play, not for what brand of gear I use. So I would love to see the industry go to smaller, more subtle logos. Unfortunately, I don't think it'll happen. If they went

to smaller logos, they'd have to give away more product to endorsers (who can afford to buy it) and raise the prices (for those of us who wish we *could* buy it) in order to advertise. I appreciate the industry's need to promote their products, but it's a vicious circle that I wish could be broken.

Here's an idea: How 'bout if we drummers settled for even *bigger* logos, and the companies give away less to endorsers and bring their prices back down to earth?

Ron Hagelganz
Vancouver WA



Here's a suggestion for the drum and cymbal giants: Sell all the equipment you use to print your company's name on everything from T-shirts to toothbrushes, and concentrate on offering quality products at prices that working drummers can afford without holding up con-

venience stores in their spare time.

L.E. Thompson
San Francisco CA



While I do see the need for manufacturers to promote their products, I feel it is overdone. In my opinion, logos, badges, etc., should be much more subtle. A company's name on the product helps to identify it, but huge logos detract from the cosmetic look of cymbals, various shell finishes, and drumheads. I feel that the companies most responsible for this (the *big* companies) have the least need for this "advertising." They should have confidence enough to know—by their own sales records—that they don't need to spread their names across their products. Relax, guys: We'll still buy your stuff if it sounds good. Just make it look like it was meant to look—not like a billboard.

Anthony DiPietro
Wappingers Falls NY



This month's question pertains to the influence of endorsers on your personal decision-making. Manufacturers spend a great deal of time, effort, and money on their endorser programs, including advertising, clinic tours, and other forms of promotion. Our question is:

Are you likely to choose equipment based on what your favorite artists endorse, or do you prefer to make your choice based on your own experimentation and experience?

Send your response to Liaison, *Modern Drummer* magazine, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Please limit your response to 150 words or less, so that we may have the opportunity to print as many responses as possible.



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Photo by Rob Fisher

Prepared by Press Pros Printing Co. Bend, OR

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Taking The Plunge Into Electronics

■ by Richard Watson

There was a time, though it may be hard to believe it now, when electric guitars were seen as gimmicks and keyboard synthesizers were perceived as little more than expensive toys. Those biases have gone the way of most expressions of conservatism in the arts and consumer technology, and both instruments are now comfortably ensconced in our collective consciousness. Yet many drummers remain unnerved or downright reactionary to the very notion of electronic percussion. If the recent proliferation of new manufacturers and products have aroused your curiosity, it's important to consider how MIDI drumming may enhance, complicate, or otherwise change the way you play and the way you perceive your role as a musician.

A Broader Palette

The most obvious reason to explore electronics is the expanded range of sounds they provide. If you are a dedicated metal thrashmaster or bop/trad jazzier with a kit to match, this might not seem such a great attraction. Your needs are covered. But if your taste or your band's repertoire is more eclectic or you play with a number of stylistically diverse bands, chances are that you settle for a generic setup and tuning that will not seem out of place in any musical setting. By tapping the vast and rapidly growing library of sampled drum sounds, you'll have instant access to a Marley/Wailers reggae rig, Phil Collins' stadium cannons, a Moe Dee beat box, Art Blakey's classic four-piece, and practically any other kit you can imagine. Though not nearly as

important as having chops, time, and taste, coming up with just the right sounds may be the tiny edge that gets you the gig or that six-figure record deal. At the very least, unless you're entirely satisfied with your "signature" drum sound for every situation, exploring the sonic options of MIDI can be a lot of fun.

In addition to standard trapset sounds, MIDI's broader palette opens up a whole world of ethnic and orchestral percussion. Who among us hasn't played a clave part with a cross-stick, a guiro part on a hi-hat, a conga part on toms, or a triangle part on a cymbal bell? And likely as not, no one complained. The problem is, you would likely have also played timbale and bongo parts on the toms, shaker and maraca parts on the hi-hat, and cowbell and agogo parts on the cymbal bell. Get the picture? However you vary the patterns, the sonic images you create on one Latin tune are pretty indistinct from those of the next. And these examples represent just the surface of *Latin* percussion.

What about African talking drums, Chinese gongs, Trinidadian steel drums, Balinese gamelan, and Indian tabla? What about standard orchestral instruments like timpani, concert bass drums, and orchestral chimes? And to get really goofy, what about siren whistles, breaking glass, cuckoo clocks, and gunshots? If you're not a fellow variety hog, you may already have turned the page. But if you are intrigued by the thought of having the equivalent of the drum and percussion store of your wildest dreams in less space than your trusty five-piece, read on.

Tape Is Rolling

You've probably seen the cartoon with the beleaguered studio drummer nearly buried in pillows, and the recording engineer suggesting "just a little more muffling." Fortunately, the days of dead drum sounds are behind us. But I can't help wondering if that ugly era got started not because producers actually wanted drums to sound like stuffed farm animals, but simply to get rid of the creaks, rattles, and sympathetic resonances characteristic of acoustic drums. Even with a thoroughly rattle-proofed kit, achieving the proper tuning, ring uniformity, and acceptable levels of inter-resonance and snare buzz—at best—takes time. At worst, it takes a *lot* of time, hence money, and perhaps a tidy chunk of your sanity. By its very nature, a sampled sound source provides a clean, discrete signal for each of your drums, cymbals, and percussion instruments. Engineers should (but probably won't) pay you to record those samples.

A bonus—which you probably shouldn't mention in mixed company—is that electronic drums eliminate the above difficulties as a pretext for an engineer's altering the sound of your tubs to suit his or her own

personal taste. (If this sounds paranoid, then we've been dealing with different engineers.) The bottom line is maintaining more control over your own sound. (Unless of course you *did* land that six-figure record deal, in which case you probably *will* play on stuffed farm animals if the producer suggests it.)

Another important consideration for studio players is having the tools to meet industry trends. Recent advances in MIDI and recording equipment technology

"By tapping the vast and rapidly growing library of sampled drum sounds, you'll have instant access to practically any kit you can imagine."



continued on page 84

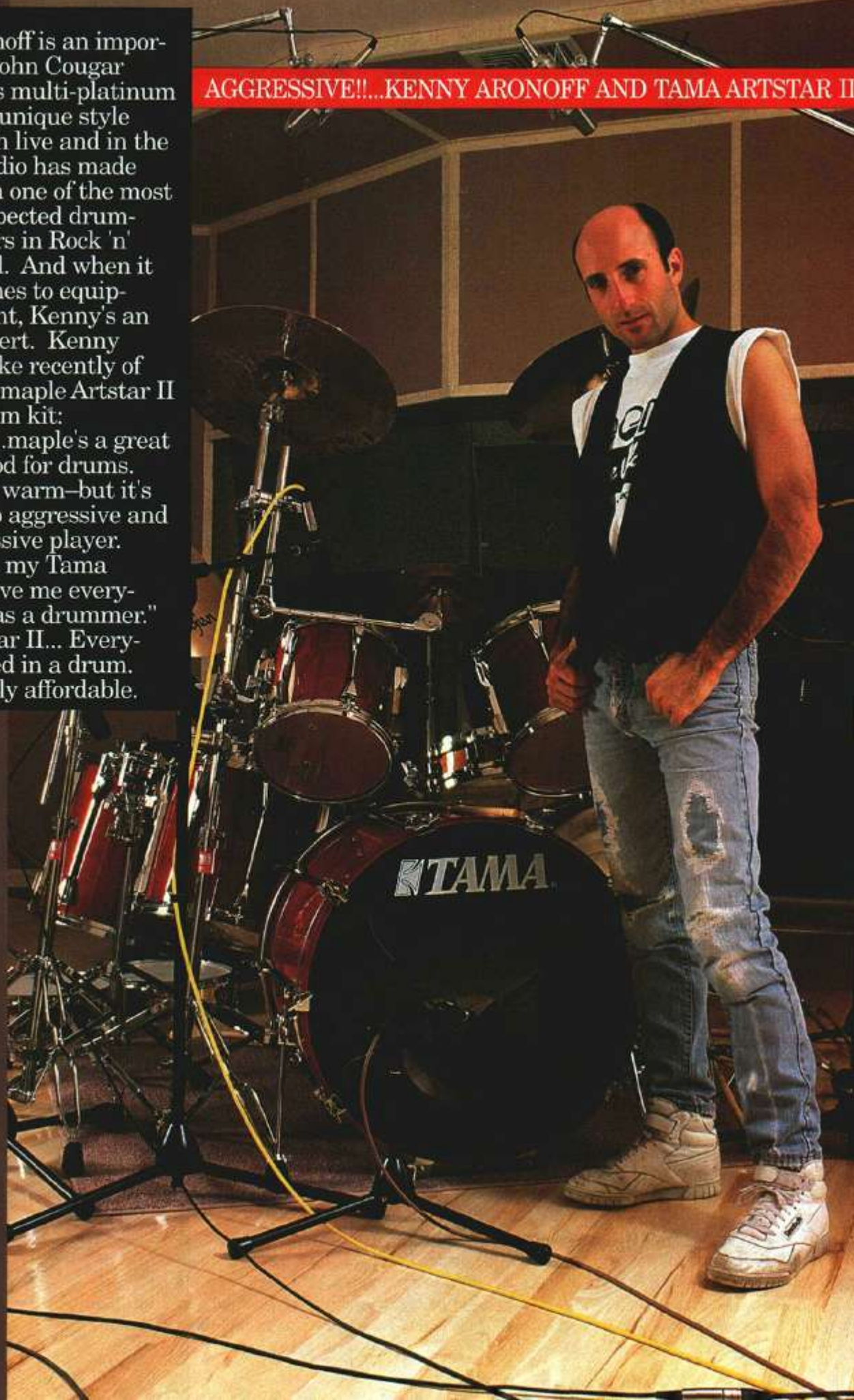
Kenny Aronoff is an important part of John Cougar Mellencamp's multi-platinum success. His unique style both live and in the studio has made him one of the most respected drummers in Rock 'n' Roll. And when it comes to equipment, Kenny's an expert. Kenny spoke recently of his maple Artstar II drum kit:

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AGGRESSIVE!!!...KENNY ARONOFF AND TAMA ARTSTAR II



Sam Lay:

The Paul Butterfield Blues Band

■ by Robert Santelli



The great blues drummers of the '50s and '60s rarely, if ever, got the respect and recognition they deserved. Yet drummers like Fred Below and Odie Payne supplied the heartbeat to the music of legends like Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, John Lee Hooker, and Little Walter. They were as essential to the music as any guitarist or singer, and they helped make urban blues—specifically Chicago blues—one of the sources from which rock 'n' roll often borrowed.

Add to the list of great blues drummers the name of Sam Lay. It was Lay who, as a member of the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, helped bring on the American blues revival in the mid-'60s, paving the way for the late-'60s blues-rock boom that saw British bands like Cream, Led Zeppelin, and the Rolling Stones take blues in a brand new direction. Were it not for the Butterfield band and its first, self-titled record, released in 1965, rock 'n' roll might not have rediscovered the blues with the conviction and intensity it did later in the decade.

Although Sam Lay stayed with Butterfield for only one album, his place in blues history is certainly secure. Few blues drummers, past or present, have performed with the dexterity and muscle in the recording studio that Lay did on The Paul Butterfield Blues Band

For proof, listen to his pumping snare and

his clever fills on the classic "Born In Chicago," or his brilliant, finesse-filled stick-work on "Shake Your Money-Maker," or even his riveting vocals coupled with his rock-steady beats on the Muddy Waters tune, "I Got My Mojo Working." They, like the other tunes found on this great American blues record, brought new life and excitement to the art of blues drumming.

RS: How did you come to join Butterfield's band?

SL: I was working with Howlin' Wolf before I joined up with Butterfield. But then Wolf went overseas, and I didn't go. I was playing with guitarist Smokey Smothers in this club on the Southside. Paul Butterfield sat in with the group one night. When I heard this white boy play his Mississippi saxophone [the harp], I was surprised he sounded so good. Pretty soon you'd hear these black blues musicians say, "Hey, that white boy gonna be here tonight?" Butterfield made that club—the Blue Flame—a popular place to be, I can tell you that. Anyway, one night he told me that I could make more money playing with him than I could playing with the Wolf.

RS: How much were you making playing with Howlin' Wolf?

SL: I usually made \$12.50 a night. Actually it was \$15, but Wolf took out for taxes. I didn't mind him doing that, because when we were out of work we could draw money from unemployment.

RS: So you left Howlin' Wolf to play with Paul Butterfield.

SL: That's right. It didn't take much to push me away from Wolf anyway. Just before I decided to leave, someone had stolen some of my equipment. Plus Butterfield said he found a place that we could play four nights a week and that I could make

way more than the \$12.50 a night I was making with Wolf. I said, "Way more...like what?" And he said, "Like \$20 a night." I grabbed at that right away. [laughs] Back then you could do something with \$20. That meant I was making \$80 a week. That was a good buck for a musician to make playing clubs in Chicago.

RS: The Butterfield Blues Band was an integrated band. Was that unusual for Chicago in the early '60s?

SL: If there was another mixed band around town, I didn't know of it. Butterfield didn't seem to care what color you were; he just wanted to be surrounded with good musicians.

RS: How long was it after you joined Butterfield that you went into the studio to make the album?

SL: It was probably less than a year. We were really drawing wherever we played in the city. At that time, as far as I can remember, they didn't have blues in any of the white-owned clubs downtown. In my opinion, Butterfield didn't just open the door for blues in the north side of town [traditionally, blues was played in the south and west sides of Chicago], he opened the door for blues in places where they didn't even have live music.

RS: This album was the first that the Paul Butterfield Band recorded. How did the record deal come about?

SL: There was this cat named Paul Rothchild who worked for Elektra Records back in the early and mid-'60s. Well, he had heard about the band and came to see us play, and he liked us. At the time we were playing at a club called Big John's on Wells Street here in Chicago.

RS: Where was the album recorded?

SL: In New York, at a studio called Mastertone.

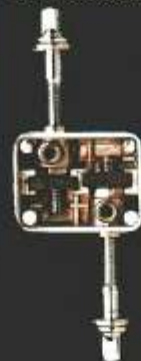
RS: How long did it take to record the album?

"Butterfield didn't seem to care what color you were; he just wanted to be surrounded with good musicians."



VERSATILE!!!...KENNY ARONOFF AND TAMA PICCOLOS

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Fast Set-Ups And Break-Downs

■ by Michael K. Golay

Over the past several years that I've been a working musician, I've been paid numerous compliments, and I've suffered several criticisms—like any drummer. Some people like the way I tune my drums for a resonant, wide-open, unadulterated sound. Others detest the way the drum actually has the audacity to ring after I strike it. Some praise my choice of cymbals: the many-colored tonal spectrum that I have put together through much trial and error. Others want to hear ride and hi-hat, and *not too loud*, thank you very much. Some laud the way that I play both harmonically and melodically. Others say, "Keep time and don't play so many notes or I'm not going to pay you...and I may *kill* you." But there *is* one thing upon which all those I've worked with will agree: *I set up and tear down faster than anyone they've ever seen.* (A life-brightening commendation, I'm sure you'll agree.)

In truth, the ability to set one's drums up quickly is crucial in some instances, and can ease stress in situations where there is little or no time to set up everything comfortably on the gig. Being a veteran of many high school and college music contests and festivals—as well as having played my fair share of hotels, clubs, and outdoor concerts where more than one act was on the bill only minutes before and after I played—I'm acutely aware of how little time drummers sometimes have to set up their kits and get playing. By the time you've lugged all of your equipment onto the stage, laid your carpet down, and haphazardly strewn your drums across it, everyone else in the band is glaring at you impatiently, muttering, "Aren't you ready yet?" You're exhausted from carrying your equipment, your forearms have ballooned up like Popeye's, and you're leaning over to make those critical cymbal-stand adjustments, when you hear the count-off and the first note played—which you miss. The rest of the gig is spent trying to put everything in its proper place, instead of playing music.

This type of situation used to destroy gigs for me—but no more. I've come up with a very elementary system of marking and organizing my stands and gig carpet, and I have constructed a very inexpensive and uncomplicated dolly for carting my equipment around. (It takes about 15 minutes to build, and will save an already stressed back from further injury.) The system is so simple that I wonder why I don't see more drummers using it, instead of fidgeting needlessly with minute adjustments and generally abusing themselves. Even if you're not in a hurry, these tips will save you much time and effort when setting up on the gig. You'll be having a soda while the others are still tuning up.

Here's what you'll need:

- two or three wide, felt-tip **markers** in different colors. (Get the permanent, mark-on-anything kind.)
- **a carpet** of appropriate size
- a 1"-thick, 2'x4' piece of **plyboard**
- four 4" **caster wheels**
- **a box** of 3/4" **wood screws**
- a box of 1 1/2" **nails**
- two 4'-long, 1"x4" **slats**
- Also helpful, but not essential, are **colored tape**, **a staple gun**, and an **extra** piece of **carpet** to cover the dolly's surface and edges.

To get started, set your drumkit up on the carpet that you'll be using on the job. Take time and care to put every last piece of equipment in its correct adjustment and place on the carpet. This step is crucial (but, as you'll see, not set in stone, should you decide to change your setup later). When your setup is satisfactory, take one of the markers and make a horizontal mark on each cymbal stand pipe just above each collar. These marks dictate stand height and make memory collars needless. (I don't like memory collars anyway, because if you ever have to break your hardware down completely—with all the pipes entirely inside each other—you must loosen the collars, which loses the mark that they were establishing. The same goes for tape: If you break the stand down completely, the tape either jams in the pipe or gets scratched up to the point that it's just a sticky mess.)

Next, take the same marker and make a horizontal mark across the *edge* of both halves of the cymbal tilter; all you have to do now to find that elusive spot at which your cymbal best sits is line up this mark with itself. Last, make a horizontal mark where the boom arm protrudes out of the boom tilter; this way you know how far out the boom must extend. Mark the snare stand, throne, tom mounts, and all other relevant spots, such as both sides (top and bottom) of where an accessory clamp attaches to a cymbal stand. If you have two or more crash or ride stands, mark C1, C2, or R1, R2, etc. on each stand's collar to eliminate any confusion about which stand serves which cymbal. If you sometimes use one stand for different cymbals in different situations that require different stand settings (I sometimes substitute a ride for a crash on one stand, requiring a secondary setting for the stand), simply set that stand up in the secondary setting and make a second mark using a different colored marker, which delineates the second setting. If there is a third setting, make still another different-colored mark. If any of these marks creates a setting that proves to be uncomfortable or inaccurate, simply remove it with rubbing alcohol and a cloth and make a new one. Now you can set up in a flash by simply lining up the marks on your stands. (You may have to re-mark your stands every month or so if you break down frequently, but this is a relatively minor inconvenience.) No messy tape, no fumbling with a drum key, no needless fidgeting.

Now that all of the stands themselves are marked, it's time to mark their positions on your gig carpet. I recommend a light-colored carpet (I have a tan one) if you hope to clearly see the marks

that you will make on the pile. If you have a dark-colored carpet, you can still mark it with small pieces of tape. This is advisable if you're not sure that the position you mark will remain the one you use. The tape will wear away and/or peel off eventually, but it's simple to reapply when needed. Better still is to first mark stand locations with tape, and then, when you are certain of the position, go back and mark the spot with a marker.

Using the same color marker you used to mark the primary settings on the stands, first make a mark in front of the bass drum

hoop, then make another mark at the heel of the bass and hi-hat pedals. Next is the simple matter of marking the stands' tripod bases, which is done by making a mark outside each of the rubber feet on each stand. (Mark the bass drum spurs, too.) If you use stands in different positions depending on the situation, simply make different colored marks on the carpet detailing which stand you use in that secondary position. The color of the secondary mark on the carpet should correspond with the color of the secondary mark on the stand. Furthermore, if you have two or more different hardware setups or drum-kits, you can easily detail different setups by marking them in different colors on the carpet. How many times have you caught yourself endlessly moving your stands back and forth, side

to side, trying to locate that "perfect" position? Now you'll never have to do it again. Your setup will be exactly the same every time. Anatomically speaking, this is very good for your body—as long as your equipment's position doesn't stress your body in the first place.

I cringe when I see musicians make multiple time- and energy-consuming trips from car to bandstand lugging heavy equipment, their faces a deeply etched mask of pain. How can you get up and play now? All you need is a simple flat dolly. Take your 2'x4' piece of plyboard (you may, of course, make this larger or smaller according to your needs) and nail your two slats along the edges for added strength. In the four corners of the dolly, use your wood screws to attach your caster wheels directly into the slats. (Call

around to pawn shops or surplus stores rather than hardware stores for casters, and you'll find them much cheaper.) Finish this off with a piece of carpet stapled to the surface and around the edges of the dolly to protect yourself from scrapes and splinters. With a little creative stacking you can get an entire five-piece kit and your hardware onto this dolly. You can attach a handle of sorts, but the dolly consumes less space and is less expensive without it, and it's just as easy to move around if you push it by grasping the equipment itself. You'll save so much time and energy using this

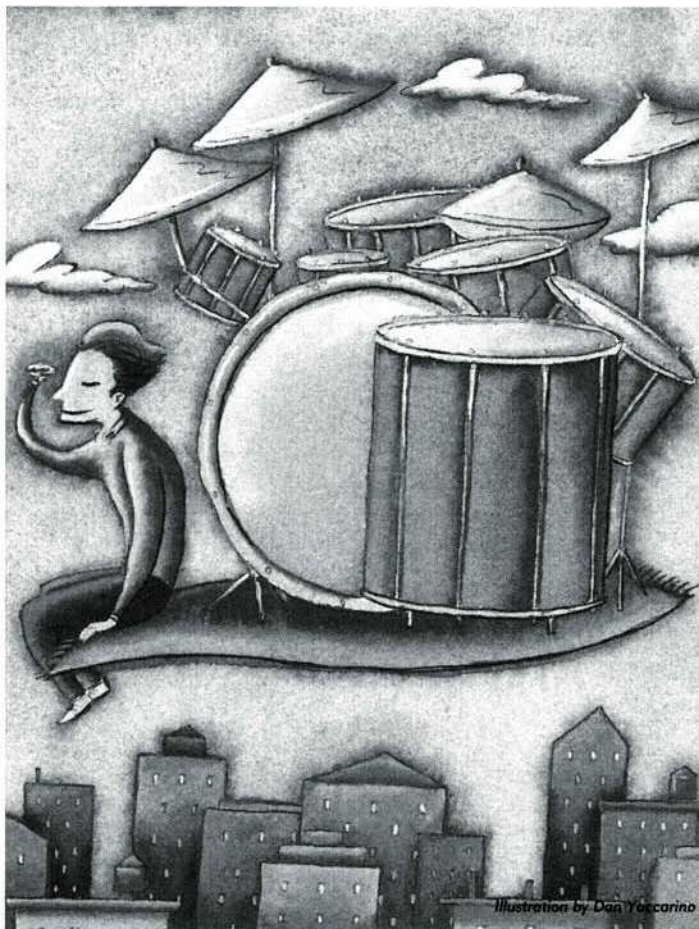
dolly that the \$15 (or less) cost will seem like a petty expenditure.

A few other ideas that will save you time and effort: 1) If you don't have a lot of hardware, don't use a bulky trap case, use a duffel bag. It packs easier in the car (on your floorboard, for instance), is about \$150 cheaper than most trap cases, and will stack directly on top of the cases on your dolly. 2) Don't re-tighten the screws on your stands when you tear them down; there is no need to do this. The stands won't magically set themselves up in your trap case overnight. You'll save a lot of time by not having to once again loosen, then re-tighten the screws when you set up. 3) Always assert your presence on the bandstand when setting up or tearing down. You have the most and the heaviest equipment; you should not have to pick your way around the other members of the band and/or risk injury when setting up and tearing down. Politely request that you be given ample space to set up and tear down and that you are afford-

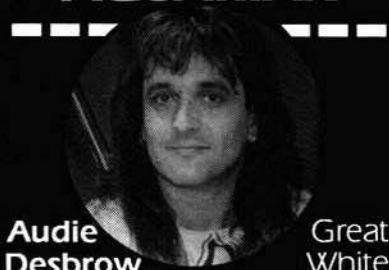
ed a clear path to move your equipment in and out of your area. Be courteous, but be assertive; this is not too much to ask. 4) Have a system. Set up and tear down logically, and do it the same way every time. Make it easy on yourself.

Obviously, I think systematic set-up and tear-down is important. When you have a system, it's easier to focus on the music that you are ready to play, rather than fret over how long it's going to be before you have to leave those three extra crashes and a floor tom in their cases because you don't have enough time to set them up. These tips are very simple, but very effective as well.

And lastly, if all of this seems like too much trouble for you, hire a roadie!



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SHEILA E.

continued from page 23

minute drum solo nestled between "Lady Marmalade" and "Loverboy."

SE: Yeah, that was a lot of fun, too. It's related to the idea of me being a drummer again.

RS: It's a strange song title.

SE: It used to be called "Cho." That's my nickname. But I didn't want it to get out. [laughs] Oh, well.

RS: Were there any songs on *Sex Cymbal* that were particularly difficult to get through?

SE: "Mother Mary" was a very hard song to sing. It took a long time to get right because it's such an emotional song for me. I don't usually think about keys when I write songs. I just write them. I'm not a very good singer. I sing okay, I guess. But I couldn't hit some of the notes I wanted to on that song. It took me a lot of takes to get to the point where I was happy with the results. There were times that I stayed up all night screaming and yelling because I couldn't hit the notes I wanted to hit. Finally, Bonnie Boyer, who sang backup

on the song, showed me how to enunciate vowels and connect them so that they don't hurt your vocal chords. That made singing the song a lot easier. But I must have attempted that song 15 times before I finally got it right.

RS: Being a drummer and a vocalist requires a lot of work if you strive to do both well. How do you handle balancing one with the other?

SE: It depends on the song. Sometimes I'll go into the studio, and I'll play the drums and sing at the same time, and sometimes I won't. Also, I don't always need to get the drum track down first before I work on the vocal tracks. I might put a rough drum track down just to get the song going. But then later on, when the song is just about done, I'll change the whole thing and redo all the drums. Some people might be surprised at that, because the drums are the backbone of the song, and to change the drums once everything else is finished might sound a little crazy. I mean, if I start to speed up and slow down, the tape stays the same. It's a challenge to get it right.

RS: You grew up in a very musical family,

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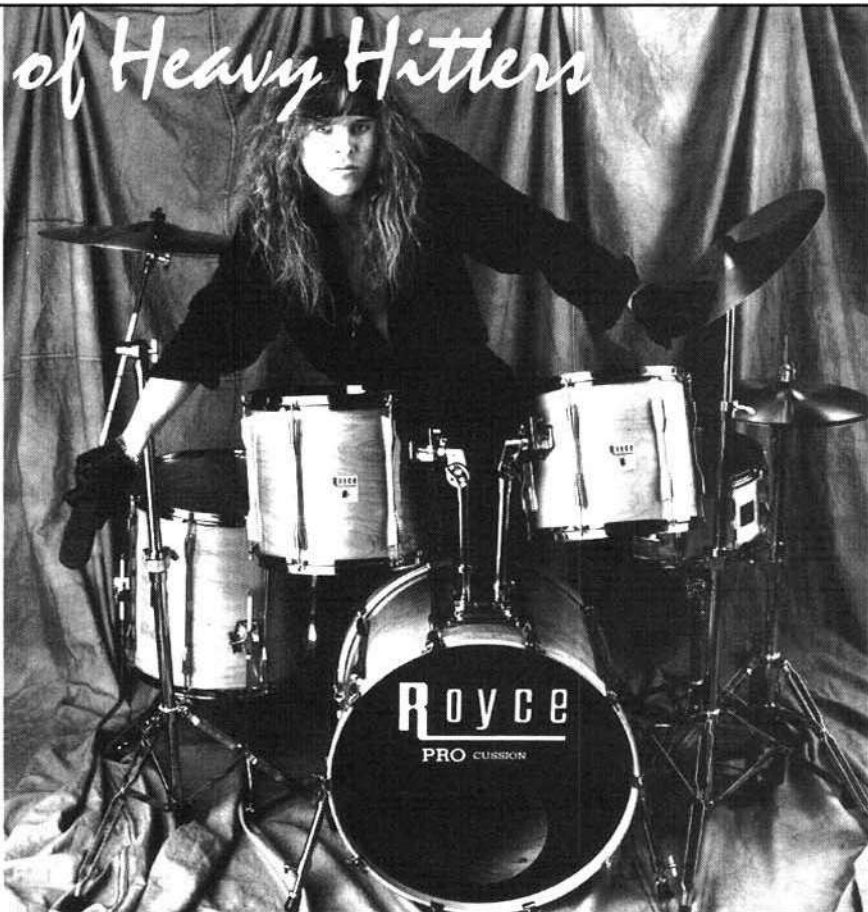
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so you had the support, I assume, of your parents and uncle. But did they push you to study music in a more formal setting?

SE: I never really took drum lessons. I think ninety per cent of who you are as a drummer has to do with having a gift. I never practice, I never had any lessons. All I did was watch and listen, whether it was to my dad's band or records. I listened a lot. By the time I was 15 I started seriously playing percussion and drums. I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't know that I had this talent inside of me.

RS: You took violin lessons as a kid, correct?

SE: Yes, I did. My dad made me take them when I was in third grade. I think it was the violin over percussion because he knew playing percussion is a hard way to make a living. I think that he thought playing in an orchestra would be a much better way to earn a living if I chose to become a musician. I kind of liked playing violin. I got three scholarships to go to school to study it. I turned them all down, though.

RS: Why?

SE: Because it was hard for me to deal

with. I mean, as soon as my teacher would play something, I'd play it back without looking at the music. I caught on pretty fast, which meant that I wasn't reading like I should have been reading. At that time I was also into sports. I was running track, and I really wanted to be in the Olympics. But then I played a show with my dad and got a standing ovation. After that I said, "Okay, this is what I want to do."

You know, music was around me every day. It was part of my life for as long as I can remember. My dad's band would rehearse every day in our apartment. After they were done, the kids would jump on the instruments and try to play. And when the musicians took their instruments home, I remember banging on whatever I could find—pots or pans, you name it.

RS: Aside from you and your dad, who else played music in the Escovedo household?

SE: My brothers, my sister—even my mom played. They still all play. Right now I have both my brothers [Peter Michael and Juan] and my sister, Zina, in

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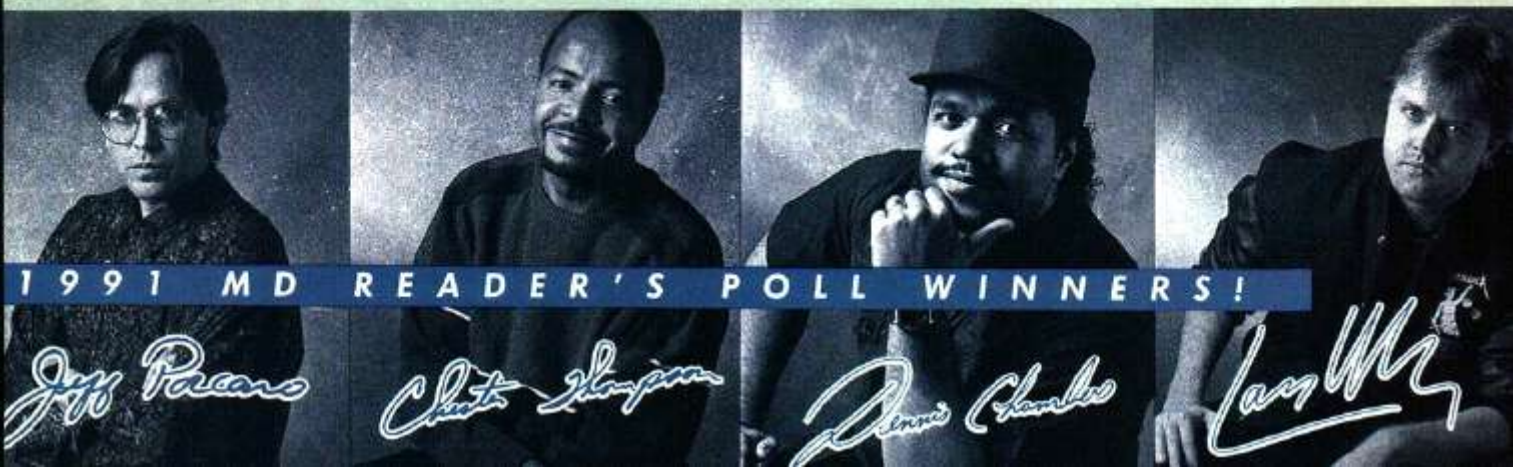
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my band. But in the early days, my father used to have people like Lou Rawls, Tito Puente, and the Whispers over to the house whenever he could. There were always musicians in the house, it seemed. It was a great education for me. Because of that experience I'm very open to all kinds of music, not just Latin or jazz. I think that reflects on my type of playing and my style of music.

RS: Outside of the obvious influences, namely your dad and uncle, were there other musical influences that today reveal themselves in your music or playing?

SE: Tito Puente was one. I call him my grandfather. He was an early influence. Later on I was very much influenced by Billy Cobham. My father and I did a tour with Cobham at one point. Just listening to him play on that tour allowed me to learn a lot. I also learned from Harvey Mason, Herbie Hancock, and George Duke.

RS: What did you play when you went out on the road with George Duke and Herbie Hancock?

SE: Mostly I played percussion and sang

backup. I did play some drums and keyboards, too. Basically I played a little bit of everything.

RS: What do you prefer to play?

SE: It depends on the music you're talking about. If it's Latin, I love to play congas and timbales. If it's jazz or funk, I love to play drums. I love playing the blues real bad.

RS: When I think of the '80s drummer/artists—Phil Collins, Don Henley—I've always thought that you belonged in that select group, even if you haven't experienced the success they have. But like them you're a drummer, a songwriter, a singer, a producer—a complete artist. Do you see yourself in the same light?

SE: I don't know. I do know that when Billy Cobham came to hear me play in San Francisco and told me and my father he'd call us about doing work together—and he did call—and after I met George Duke and he told me we'd work together—and we did—I guess I started to believe that maybe something big and exciting was going to come of all this.

All I ever wanted to do was play, even though a lot of male drummers I met

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resented my playing *their* instrument. It used to bother me, because I couldn't figure out why they resented me. Then I asked my father about why these drummers were having such a problem with me. He explained how the business side of drumming really was, and that it was a business that definitely had its ups and downs. But the thing I always had was confidence. I'd walk into a session and laugh because I didn't care what people thought about a woman playing drums. I knew I was good. I wasn't conceited. I didn't brag. But I knew what I was capable of doing, which was almost anything. As far as I was concerned, the harder it was, the better it was. I wasn't intimidated by anyone back then. I'm still not intimidated by anyone. And I hope it stays that way in the future. I always had to prove myself to male drummers, but I enjoyed it because I loved watching them eat their words.

RS: It sounds as if you were quite determined to succeed. Does that determination still burn inside of you?

SE: I love competition. Even as a child I always wanted to do things that were dif-

ferent. When I was on the track team in school, I'd always say, "Why don't we compete against the guys?" People would say to me, "Sure, anything to instigate something." [laughs]

I think I've always been a leader, not a follower. And because of that, I feel good about myself. I think it goes back to what my parents taught me about life. When I was young, my family never had a lot. Mostly what we had was love for each other, love for the family. It kept us together. It's one of the reasons why we're still very close.

RS: How does Sheila E. the musician come to terms with Sheila E. the pop star and sex symbol?

SE: There aren't any conflicts. I dress the way I want to dress. I'm an open person and I'm honest. Some years ago I was hired to play in Diana Ross's orchestra. You may know that she's the only one allowed on stage; the band plays in the pit. My first night on the job I was told to wear something black. I said okay.

Well, the orchestra consisted of about 25 musicians. I was the drummer, and when I play drums I don't like to wear a

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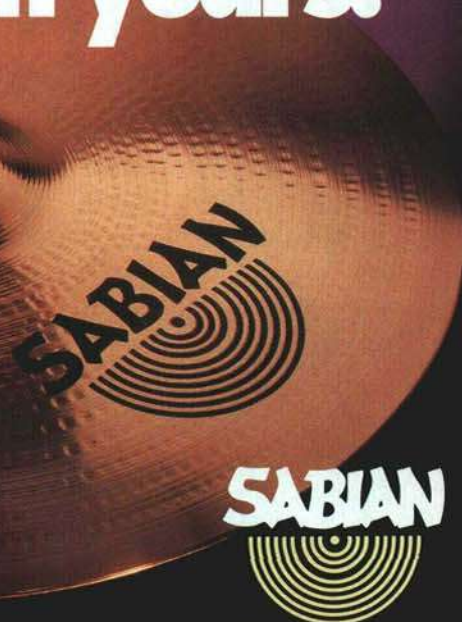
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lot of clothes, so I had on a halter top. It had nothing to do with wanting to look sexy. I mean, there's nothing *wrong* with wanting to look sexy. But that wasn't the reason I had on what I had on. Anyway, the conductor called me backstage after the first show and said that Ms. Ross suggested that I wear something else for the next show. I asked him why, and he said there was a problem because I was getting too much attention. I mean, there I was in the pit, in the dark, in the back of the band. I thought she hired me because I'm a musician, not because of what I look like or what color I am or that I'm a woman. So I didn't change my clothes. Well, after the second show the conductor came back to me and said, "Now it's a big problem." So I said, "How about if I just leave?" And that's what I did. I just quit.

RS: Wouldn't this incident then be a good example of how your sexuality might get in the way of your ability to project yourself as a drummer who just happens to be an attractive woman?

SE: Maybe, but I don't think about it. If I did, then I'd have to change in order to

please other people. I definitely don't want to do that. I've done that before and I was the one who suffered. I've proven myself. I think because of that I should be able to be me.

RS: What do you do to get away from these kinds of pressures? Is music everything?

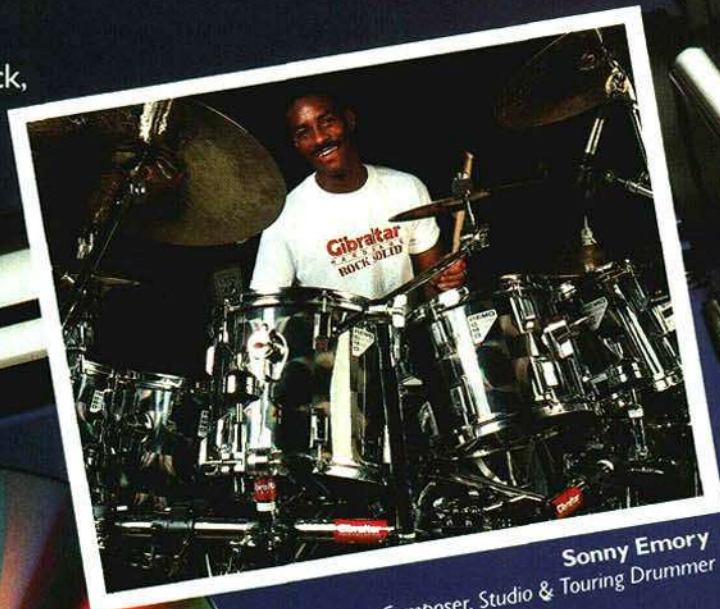
SE: I love sports. That might be the second most important thing in my life. I play pool, ping-pong, basketball, football, baseball. I have two motorcycles. I go fishing. Now I play golf. My dad got me into golf. It's been really good for me, because if you play, you really have to concentrate on what you're doing, which means you can't think about music. So golf is a good escape.

But music is the thing with me. It's weird, though, because I've never really been a student of music, if you know what I mean. But that's changing. As I get older, I find that it's harder to just get up on stage and play. It took a lot out of me to play with Prince. We played day and night. I have never done that before. See, when you're writing, singing, and producing, you just don't have the time

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RS: I understand that last summer you got pretty sick and were bedridden. Has that had a serious effect on your playing?

SE: I got so sick that I had to learn how to play all over again. My lung collapsed and then a disc went out in my back. I was paralyzed for about a week. At the time I was finishing *Sex Cymbal*. All of a sudden, my whole life just did a flip. I still have to go to physical therapy each week. I might have to go for the rest of my life.

So I have to learn how to play pretty much all over again. Just recently I had my drums set up in my house in Minneapolis so I could see where I was at. I played, but it took nearly all the energy I had just to play three songs. You have to understand that I was bedridden for two months. I couldn't walk, I couldn't do much. It was really pretty scary. I know I have to slow down a bit and take it easy.

RS: Do your doctors know what caused your condition? Was it drum-related in any way?

SE: They really don't know what caused it. I was driving along in my car on a

freeway in LA, and all of a sudden I had a tingle in my left arm. Then it went limp. Then I got chest pains, and then I couldn't breathe. Just like that.

RS: Will you be able to tour to support *Sex Cymbal*?

SE: I'm going to tour, I just don't know when. I mean, we had to postpone the release date of the album five times. I couldn't do a video. Finally it got done. I have to pace myself, so I'm not thinking about touring until I can get myself back in shape. I have to work out and practice my drumming for the very first time in my life.

RS: A lot of people who know you consider you a workaholic.

SE: I love what I do so much that after we do a show, I almost always stay up and watch the video of it; I'm constantly looking for things to improve. I never slept like I was supposed to. I just didn't think I needed to most of the time. But I've changed that. Sleep is important to me now.

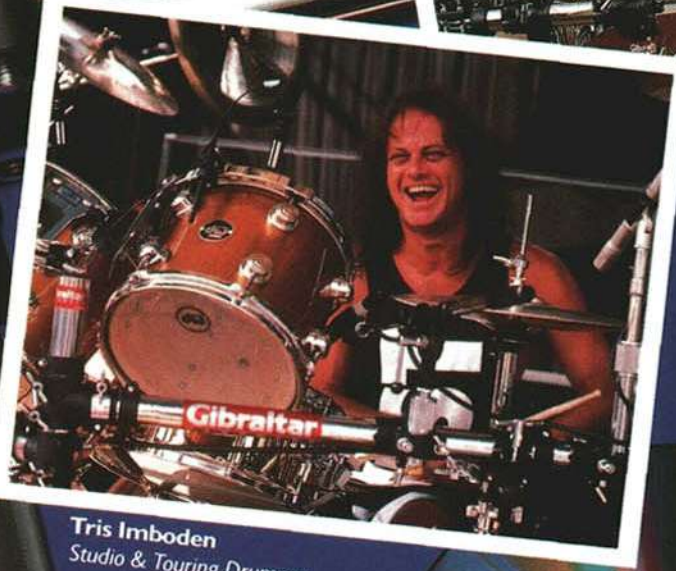
RS: When you move from percussion to traps, does it require a change of mind and outlook?

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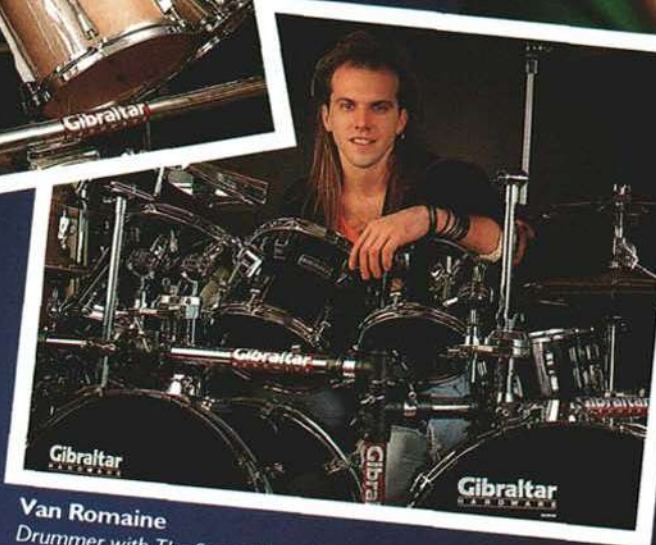


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SE: It's something that just happens. It was strange when I first started playing, because I was playing timbales and then I'd move to a drumset, and the sticks were different. I'd use timbale sticks for the timbales and drumsticks for the trap drums. But because I kept breaking my timbale sticks, I started to use drumsticks when I played timbales. They held up a lot longer, and also made the transition from timbales to traps a lot easier for me. I wasn't going from little sticks to big sticks, then back to little sticks

again.

RS: How do you define your approach to playing percussion as opposed to playing drums? Is there a difference?

SE: I don't know what my style of playing is. I don't ever really think about it. I try to play from my heart. I try to get the best I can out of me. You can tell when I'm getting that because I'll be up on stage with a big smile on my face.

RS: Was there ever a time in your career as a percussion player when you overplayed? It seems that most percussion-

ists go through a phase like that.

SE: A lot of percussionists—and drummers, too—have that problem. The way you overcome it is by developing discipline. I learned all about discipline when I became a session player. I'd go into the studio and the producer would say to me, "Okay, let's hear what you hear on the song." I'd play what I felt. Lots of times they'd say, "What you played was too busy." So I'd play again but cut in half what I played the first time. The reaction usually was, "It's still too busy." What I'd usually wind up doing was taking away three of my four conga drums and playing one drum with one hand. Most of the time the people I worked for wanted that clean sound. Instead of playing those in-between beats, they'd usually want something simple. I knew that if I was going to keep working I had to give people what they wanted, so early on, like at 16 or 17, I learned about discipline. The key is not to overplay, but to lock into the groove and stay there.

RS: What other advice would you give to aspiring percussionists?

SE: What percussion is all about is adding color to the music. A percussionist should never forget that. You play simple, lock into the pocket, and work on your discipline. As far as I'm concerned, these are the basics.


RS: If you could call your pre-Prince days Chapter One of your career, and then the years you came of age as a recording artist in your own right Chapter Two, then perhaps with all that's happened to you in terms of your injury and your new back-to-the-roots kind of album, you could consider yourself starting Chapter Three.

SE: That's a good way to look at it. It's kind of exciting, too. As much as I like the *Sex Cymbal* album, I'm ready to go back into the studio and make another one. I'm ready to do a jazz album now. And it'll be done under my full name, Sheila Escovedo. And the record will have a lot of drum solos.


RS: Do you have plans to record that album soon?

SE: Oh, yes. I've learned so much lately about life and myself that I want it all to come out in my music. I guess I have that need for self-expression.


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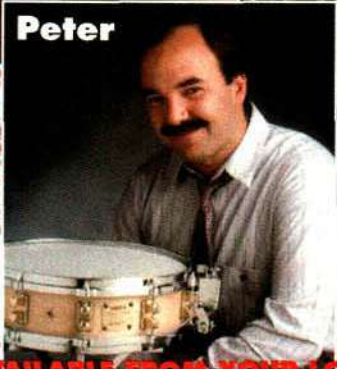
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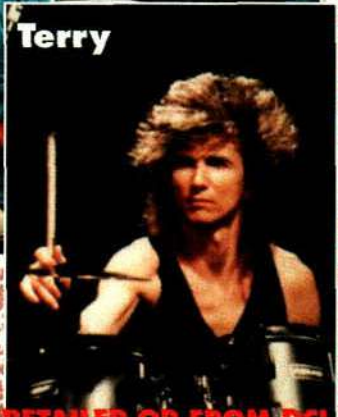
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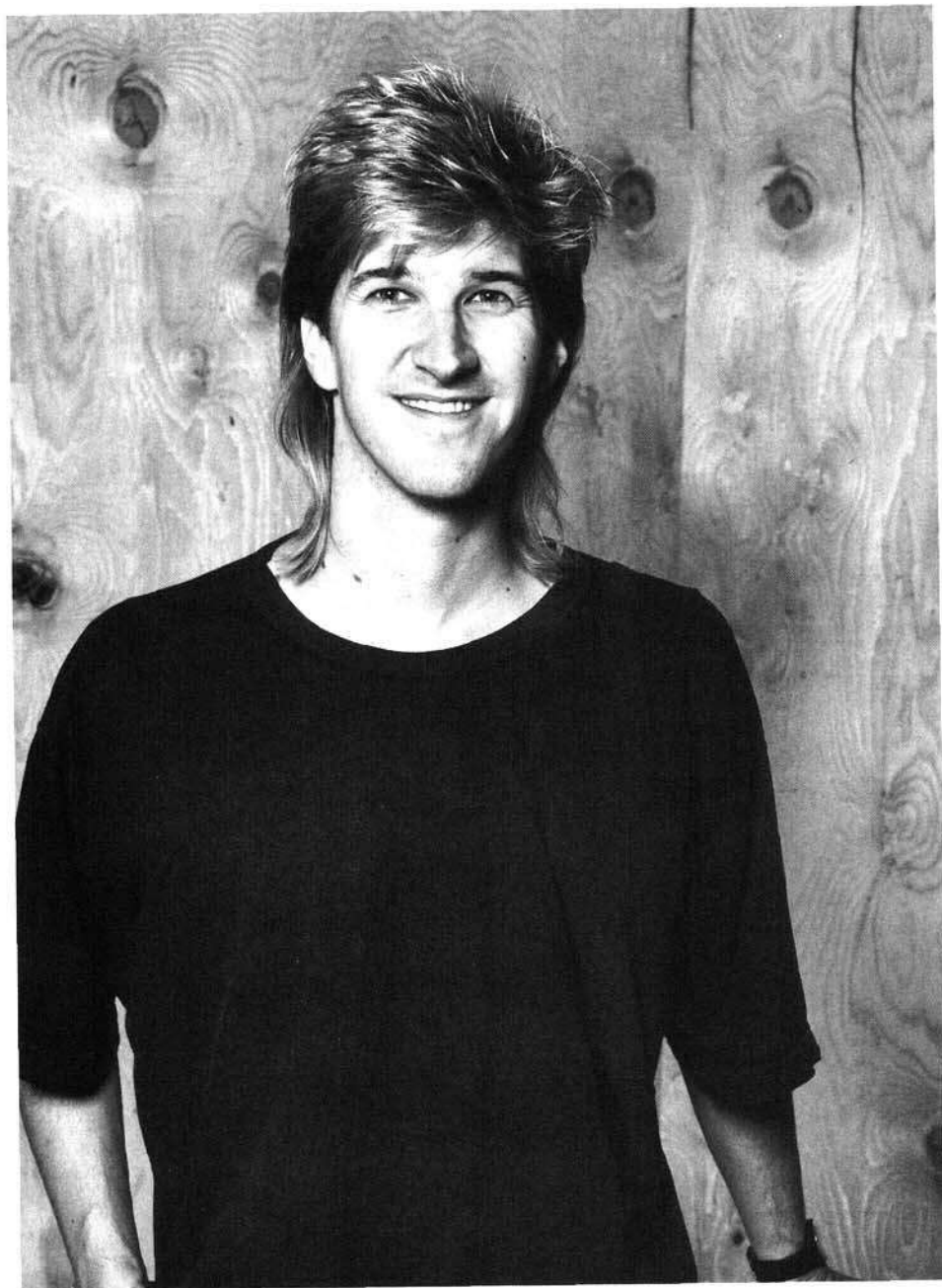
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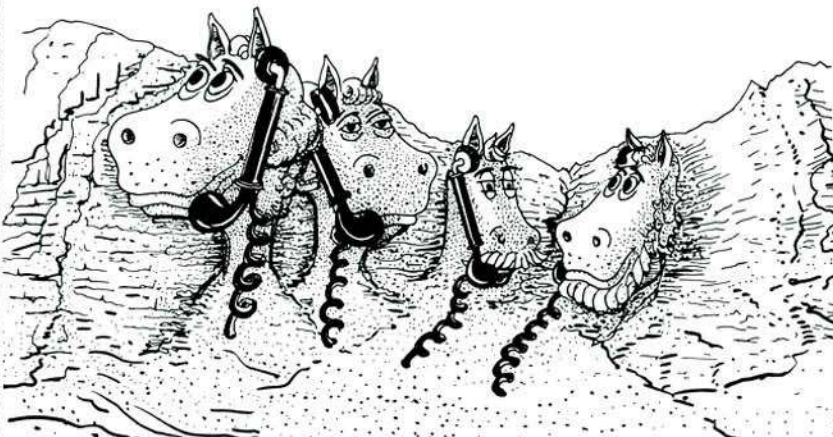
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had the first song on *Metal Massacre 3*, "Aggressive Perfection," and after we did that Metal Blade asked us if we wanted to do a complete album. So we did our first album with them, *Show No Mercy*. Then we did an EP with three songs on it, "Chemical Warfare," "Haunting The Chapel," and "Captor Of Sin." Then we did *Hell Awaits*, and after that album we got picked up by Rick Rubin.

TS: Slayer, along with Metallica, are considered to have started the style of speed metal. Did you go into a room one day and discover this way of playing heavy metal, using lots of 64th notes, really loud and really hard?

DL: No, no. We had been playing a lot of cover songs that nobody else would play. We would do "Number Of The Beast" by Iron Maiden. Everybody was saying that Iron Maiden was satanic at the time, although that wasn't true. But when that was going on, we were playing that song. We would play songs that no other rock cover band would play.

As time went on, Jeff was getting into a lot of punk. He was into the Sex Pistols and all kinds of hard-core punk. He started turning me on to this stuff, and I started listening to it and really getting into it. Jeff was also heavily into it. He shaved his head and we had to play shows with his head like that. It was kind of strange. But as I was listening to punk more and more, I wanted to play faster. I was inspired by the speed of the music. Eventually we changed things around: For a riff that had a slow beat, I would double it and make it fast, and it would fit. It kind of worked out for the better for us because all of this started happening. But it all was because of the punk music Jeff started me on. We would take metal riffs, speed up the tempo or double the tempo, and the result was Slayer.

TS: The tempos are set by the drumming in speed metal, and a lot of the control is dependent upon you. How do you keep consistent control at such high-speed playing?

DL: It developed naturally for me. It never became something I had to learn. I was into playing fast because I was listening to punk and playing along with those records, and I just applied *that* to

heavy metal and Slayer. It all came about naturally. It was never hard, and it's not hard to control now. I guess the older I get the easier it's getting.

TS: How do you keep your feet from tightening up at those speeds?

DL: It's in the balance. I get good spring action with the kick drum pedal. You get a momentum going with the bass drums, and everything just rolls along with it. It just works for me.

TS: Can you offer any advice on how to keep one's stamina level high during such athletic shows as yours?

DL: Before, I never worked out. All I did was go up on stage and play. But during the last part of the *South Of Heaven* tour, I started feeling that my double bass was dropping off, that I couldn't play as fast as before.

What I started doing for this tour was a lot of stretching. I stretch my legs a lot, plus my wife and I walk a lot whenever we go on tour. My roadie sets up a little double bass practice pad kit in my dressing room, and I sit there and warm up for about an hour and a half to two hours before the set. I drink occasionally, but never before a show. You have to be

physically ready before you go on stage.

TS: You do a few "slow" numbers during your live sets. How do you segue between the fast material and the slower numbers?

DL: You know what numbers are coming up, so you just slow things down. Sometimes it doesn't work that easy. Sometimes I would play slow songs at a real fast tempo because of the excitement. But I know if a song like "Skeletons" is next, then I'll count off real slow and start slow to get it right.

TS: What's the best advice you could give to drummers who want to play speed metal?

DL: One thing that I've noticed from a few drummers on the road who ask me to coach them is that they tighten up. The best thing for them to do is just loosen up and try to let the stick do the hitting—don't make the hand do the initial hit. Make the stick just bounce on top of the cymbal. Your left hand will come automatically, but with your right hand, just let that flow. Tap on something every now and then with a drumstick and try to go that fast. Eventually you'll hold the stick at the right place

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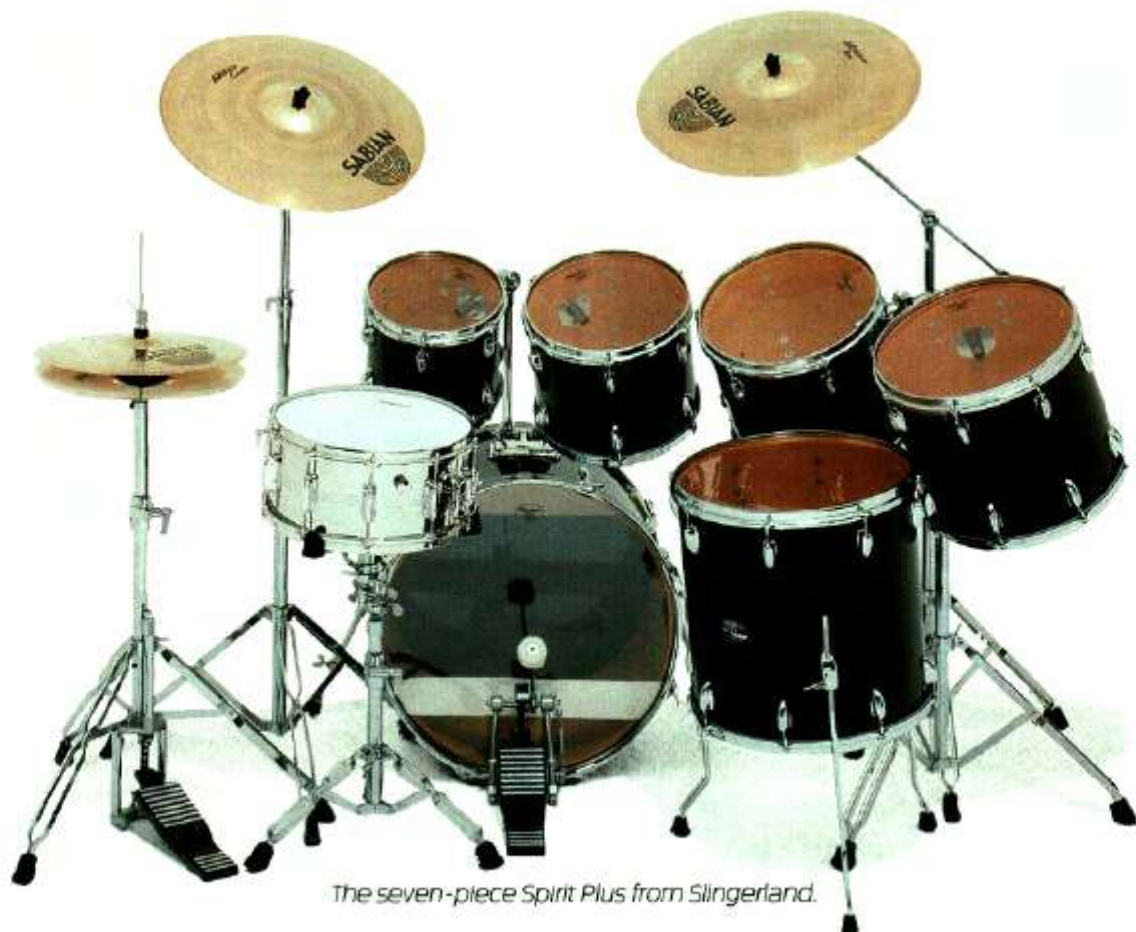
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Also, listen to a lot of music and listen to what the drummers do. Try to play along with it and listen closely. That's how I learned. I learned by locking myself in my room and putting books on my bed, and I hit the books while practicing along to the music.

Today I listen to a lot of different music, from reggae to the Police to Iron Maiden. You have to keep an open mind and listen to a lot of things. You can't stay with one thing. That's the way I used to be, and I got bored because nothing ever changed.

TS: Some people think that playing speed metal must do a lot of damage to your instruments. But just because you're playing fast, it doesn't mean your equipment has to suffer, correct?

DL: That's right. Take cymbals: You tend to crack a lot of cymbals if you don't hit them the right way. Drum heads tend to withstand a little more than cymbals. My snare head is changed two or three times a week by my roadie. So if we play shows consistently for seven days, the heads will be changed two or three

times, depending on how hard I'm hitting during those shows.

TS: To what extent does your drum roadie take care of your preparation for a show? Does he set up and tune the drums?

DL: Yogi starts about a week before pre-production. The band rehearses for a long time—maybe five or six months—before we record. Then afterwards, we practice for maybe a month before we go out on the road. Yogi comes out that last week before we go out to start fine-tuning the drums, learning how I want everything positioned on the drum riser. He tunes the heads for me that week, and he gets them the way that I like them to sound. He makes his notes from that week, and then when we go on the road I help him out for about the first day or so. Then after that it's all him. He sets everything up and gets it perfect. I could go up on stage and not even check my drums, and everything will be perfect.

TS: Do your requirements for your drum sounds and setup stay basically the same from tour to tour?

DL: It stays basically the same, but it

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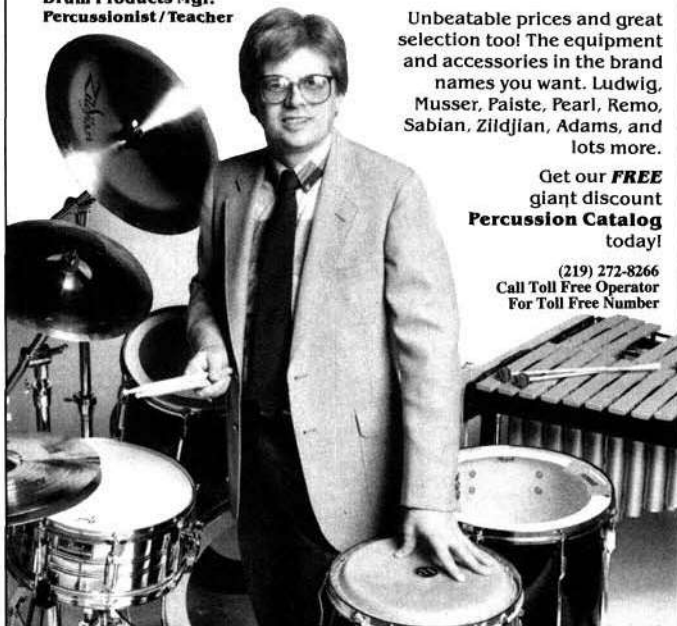
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depends on the kit. Sometimes Tama will come out with new mounts or drum sizes. Like the kit I'm using on this tour: It's got over-sized toms, so I have to angle things a little differently than I did two tours ago, when I used the smaller toms. But that's really the only change there is.

TS: Are both your live and recording setups similar?

DL: Yes. I use the exact same drums in the studio as I do live. All the members of the band like to reproduce the same sound live as we do on record. It really annoys me when I see bands that do a television show and don't sound the way they do on record. So I always use the same drums, the same cymbals, the same everything to get a real reproduction.

TS: You also avoid electronics.

DL: At all times. We don't use electronics.

TS: What's your basic philosophy when it comes to tuning your drums?

DL: I like a low tuning, where the drums sound like deep cannons. The snare has gotta be a crack. And live, when I'm sitting on top of my snare, it has to make my eyes want to shut because it's so loud. It's got to hurt my ears.

TS: Speaking of volume, do you ever use hearing protection?

DL: No, I can't. It doesn't feel right. I've got to hear the complete sound of the cymbals and drums to play right. Maybe some drummers can use protection and play well, but with my style of music, I can't.

TS: Don't you ever worry about what those sound levels could be doing to your hearing? Your shows are extremely loud.

DL: Towards the end of a six-week tour, my hearing changes. At the beginning of a tour, my monitor level is on one, and as the tour gets going I'll ask them to turn it up a little louder. By the end of the tour the monitor goes up to about six or seven. So my hearing does go out by the time a tour finishes up. But I'm not worried about it because every time I go out on tour they show me the levels I had the monitors at last time, and I always tell them to turn it down. So I regain my hearing. Maybe one day I'll completely

lose it, but I'm not worried about it now.

TS: In the studio, how do you go about laying your tracks?

DL: First we go through the basic tracks. I go into a room, and the guitarists and the bass player play in front of me, while their amps are enclosed somewhere else, also being recorded. I lay down my basic tracks and then they lay down their guitar tracks, then the leads, then the vocals. This album took us about five weeks in total.

TS: You mentioned that you rehearse for months before actually recording.

DL: They gave me a tape about a year before we went into the studio for this last record. I learned those songs, and then Kerry and I practiced them together six months before the whole band actually got together and practiced. So I was really warmed up, and I knew most of the songs before I came in. It took me five days to put the drum tracks down.

TS: They give you a tape with songs that are accompanied by a drum machine?

DL: Yeah, they have them on a drum machine. They just give me the basic breaks and the basic beats, and I go from there and add on what I want. I try to do as much as I can, do as many rolls as I

can, get as tasty as possible. I listen to the songs a lot, and I sometimes suggest things. If we don't know what to do with a particular song, that's when I come around with an idea. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

TS: You have at least a certain amount of control.

DL: The only thing I don't have control over are the basic beats of the songs and sometimes the breaks. As far as where the fills go and what I do within the song, it's all up to me.

TS: Do you use a click track for recording?

DL: No. Before going into the studio this time I rehearsed with a click to try to get my timing right, because with *South Of Heaven* I had a lot of problems with speeding up and slowing down.

TS: *Seasons In The Abyss* is more similar to *Reign In Blood* than to its predecessor, *South Of Heaven*, which was a slight departure for the band. How was your drumming different?

DL: *Reign In Blood*—the first one on Def Jam Records—was really aggressive. The music, the lyrics, everything was aggressive. That album was 29 minutes of pure speed, and it was done in about

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three weeks.

On *South Of Heaven*, we wanted to explore and expand. We didn't want to be considered just a speed metal band. So we kind of changed things around a little. We tried new choruses, new ways of writing the songs. Then we combined the first two records and came up with *Seasons In The Abyss*. It's more definitive of our sound than *South Of Heaven*, which was slower. The drumming was definitely slower on that.

TS: You obviously don't believe that speed should sacrifice creativity.

DL: No. Somebody who doesn't give it a

chance might call it all noise. You have to sit down and really listen to it and get into it to realize it's not noise. At first if you turn it up really loud on your car stereo or at home, it's not going to sound that good. But if you hear it at the right volume, you'll hear the creativity and the style in it. There's a lot of form in the writing. It's all just new to people, a new style that people aren't used to yet. Once you get used to it, you can listen to it all, and there's all different kinds of speed metal for all different tastes.

TS: Speed metal is still not in the mainstream. Do you ever resent that?

DL: No. We don't really care. You see, we set out to be this way at the beginning. It's gotten this far with us doing it the way we've wanted to do it. We're living comfortably doing what we want to do. Why should we care if somebody doesn't like it? It's been great for us.

TS: What's the best thing about playing this kind of music?

DL: It's probably the kids, who are fanatical. The thrill is when I go on stage and there's seven or eight thousand kids screaming their guts out to an extreme that I've never heard before. It's incredible and it's something I'll always enjoy. It's something I'll miss when we stop doing this.

That fanaticism is probably what I like the best. That and playing. The hour and a half that we're on stage can go by in a wink. There are nights that actually *feel* like an hour and a half, but I just enjoy playing so much.

TS: I know you like the live shows, but I've heard that the band isn't that fond of touring itself.

DL: No, we don't like touring. The whole point of us doing it is just to get to play—that's all we're into. But it's the same routine every day. The worst time is after the soundchecks up until we go on stage. Sometimes there are things to do, and we can go places, but sometimes that's not possible. There's nowhere to walk around except backstage and the dressing room, and there's no backstage entertainment. That's the time that really annoys me the most.

TS: You said that you'd miss the fans' enthusiasm when Slayer ends. Have you thought about what you'd like to do when things do end with Slayer?

DL: Yeah, I'll probably open up a jazz club and feature my own little jazz band. I'd like to do something like that—I'd like to own a place.

TS: Do you play jazz?

DL: No, but I'd like to. It's something that's always been in the back of my mind. I've always wished I could play like those big band guys. I'd really like to do that someday.



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continued from page 62

gy—along with producers' desires to cut costs—have caused a growing percentage of pop music pre-production—including rhythm tracks—to be recorded in small, less costly MIDI studios. This trend won't affect all styles of music, and there is a chance that the current minority movement endorsing a more organic approach to recording will someday prevail. Nor will mere possession of the right

equipment ensure that you'll get the call. But in the present technological climate, if contractors, producers, and other musicians have two lists of drummers—one MIDI-equipped and one not—doesn't it make sense to be on both?

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control it have on the quality of our sound. Playing quietly enough for small rooms or irritable club owners can be very frustrating, especially for drummers possessing a physical playing style. Maintaining speed and intensity at "lounge" levels is commonly problematic. Even if we manage it technically, our drums sound lame and out of context for rock and most other pop music styles. Muffling them to death is similarly disgusting. On the other hand, making drums cut through multiple Marshall stacks and a killer EA. may require tuning them to ringiness or pitches that don't sound good on stage or—in extreme cases—even to the audience. Recent innovations in shell design have helped, but due to the complexity of cylinder acoustics, unless you can afford to mike everything (a solution that presents some of its own problems), you've likely had to choose between tuning for a good sound on stage or a good sound in the house.

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harder/turn up" cycle, you'll probably love the improved stage mix clarity and inter-band communication, happy in the knowledge that you can still make the audience's ears bleed.

In case you're beginning to suspect that I've invested heavily in microchips, stay tuned for the other side of the story:

The Feel Factor

The most common complaint about MIDI drums is that they don't feel natural. "Feel," in this context, encompasses the pads' physical response (i.e. bounce), and their velocity sensitivity—which is how accurately and completely they follow your dynamic range from very quiet to very loud. While still not equal to that of acoustic drums, the ergonomics and responsiveness of later-model MIDI pads and pad controllers have improved dramatically since their "table top" archetypes. But some subtle psycho-acoustic properties of a "real" kit will likely never be duplicated by electronics. The locational origin of each drum and cymbal sound in a trapset is probably not something we even think about. But upon making the transition to electronics, many drummers experience a slight sense of disorientation. Even when spread over a stereo image, the sounds seem remote or somehow "disembodied" when heard through speakers. Using headphones may produce an opposite, claustrophobic sensation of your kit being crowded into your head. Most drummers will get over this difference just as guitarists and keyboardists did when they first began plugging in.

One of the reasons we love to play the drums is the required physicality. (Let's

face it, moving fast and hitting something has felt good since *Pithecanthropus whatever*.) Because the velocity range of electronics is narrower than that of acoustics, the big-sound-for-big-hit reward is diminished. Ponder also the size and layout of your acoustic drums compared with any electronics setup you consider. For some drummers, the compactness of integrated pad sets such as KAT's *drumKAT* and Roland's *Octapad* will be a convenience. Others will find them confining—at least when used as their entire set. Replacing a 20" ride cymbal with a 3" pad may require more accuracy or concentration than you're prepared to commit. Then again, try to keep your mind at least as open as if you were adapting to a new, bigger (or smaller) acoustic kit with more (or fewer) drums.

The Fear Factor

One of the great things about acoustic drums is their reliability. While guitarists' chords shorted and speakers blew and keyboardists' synths were doing Linda Blair impersonations, we drummers secretly have thought, "Better them than me." (C'mon, admit it.) Few equipment failures arose that couldn't be fixed with a little strategically placed duct tape. The mere complexity of MIDI technology creates a potential for breakdowns. This is not to say that something bad *will* happen, just that it *can* happen, and may not be as easily diagnosed nor quickly remedied as a broken snare cord or missing wing nut. This bitter reality forces MIDI drummers to accept a new level of responsibility for our gear, which may now include sound reinforcement equipment, and to devote a fair amount of time

to understand how it all works.

With acoustics, a completely demolished tom head could simply be avoided. But since an electronic system is integrated and interdependent, even a minor problem such as a loose MIDI cable will at least temporarily result in the same deafening silence as a total structural meltdown. If a problem does occur at, say, a soundcheck or (God forbid) a gig, you will at that moment feel like tossing your system—and then yourself—through the nearest window. Instead, you must calmly and rationally analyze the problem and correct it, bypass it, or implement one of several contingency plans you've devised for just such a nightmare. If this sounds more like James Bond than you, remember, guitarists and keyboardists have been doing it for years.

Polly Want A Sample?

In one respect, MIDI drums are very smart. They brilliantly reproduce almost any sound you tell them to, every time you tell them. In another respect, the way they "listen" to your playing is pretty stupid. Like parrots, they repeat what they're taught beautifully, but can't infer for beans. Basically, the only command they understand is, "I've been hit X hard." Electronics are perfectly capable of reproducing such taken-for-granted acoustic drum nuances as rack tom rimshots, cymbal scrapes, "slushed" or splashed hi-hats played with the shoulder of the stick.... But MIDI recognizes these sounds as distinct instruments rather than subtle variations in playing technique. This is important, because every nuance—and so every sample—occupies precious memory space in your synth or

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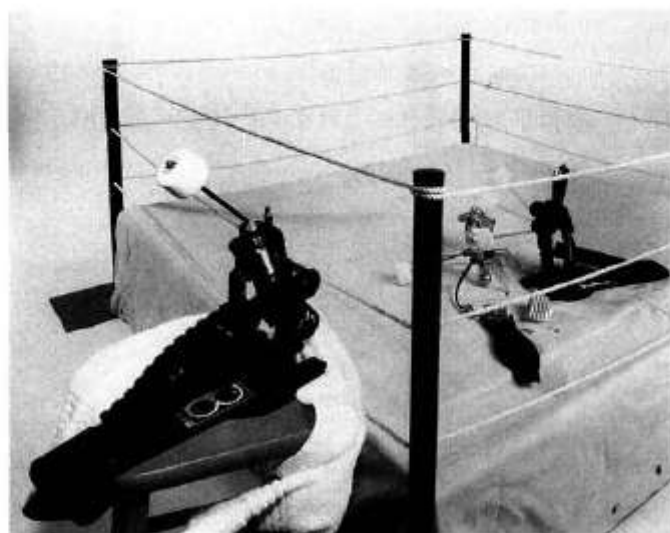
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sampler. It also usually occupies a pad or trigger input on your MIDI controller. Various forms of note stacking and velocity switching (different MIDI information triggered depending on how hard the pad is struck) will cheat significantly more sounds out of the same number of pads. But unless you can afford lots of extra triggers and more than one MIDI controller, you may eventually have to sacrifice one less-frequently used nuance for another.

Remembering The Basics

If you are old enough to have been around when keyboard synths first entered the scene, you may recall the blight of "one finger wonders," guys who were either heinous non-musicians or who were so fascinated, confused, or otherwise enthralled by their new toys that they contributed little to their bands but sonic novelty. Time and natural selection have reversed the phenomenon in the keyboard world, but there is a distinct danger of it befalling drummers as well.

Selecting, perfecting, and managing sampled and synthesized sounds takes a fair amount of time—especially when the technology is new to you. Fine. But because the process is very gratifying and, by definition of "perfection," unattainable, idle tinkering can become hard to resist. Submit to this temptation only long enough to explore your new gear's potential and to get comfortable with it. Thereafter, be aware that all those hours you're not spending practicing can hurt you. The coolest cymbal bell sound in the world won't make up for neglected chops or shaky time.

Try to be mindful also of the natural,

subconscious influence that electronics may have upon your musical taste and values. You may be tempted, for instance, to display all your new-found tonal colors at once. One obvious result—similar to that of cramming all your blinding licks into a single solo—is unmusical clutter. Another is context-thrashing. (Does your gamelan sample *really* complement that zydeco stomp?) Another, ironically, defeats a primary purpose of the technology: If every song uses every sound, no song will be texturally distinct from the rest. Conversely, you may begin to count on electronics' broad palette to generate variety and musical excitement that was once achieved only by your own rhythmic creativity. If you've wanted to simplify your playing—to play more sparsely—allowing space for all that aural exotica may be a welcome motivation. But be aware of it.

Made For Each Other?

Okay, so it's not right up there with getting married or joining the priesthood, but deciding to electrify is a commitment not to be made lightly. While electronic drums are cheaper now than ever, they are not, by most standards, *cheap*. They also require a major investment of study and a surrender of deep-rooted preconceptions. Reading articles and ads is a good first step to making a wise decision, as is conferring with other MIDI drummers. But the only way to fairly judge your compatibility with electronics is to check them out yourself. Listen to them, of course. But more importantly, *play* them. Convince the music store folks that you're seriously considering a major purchase (and not just in need of a place to

practice). You will need their patient assistance not only now to make an informed purchase decision, but later, to get you up and running on the gear. If they are unwilling or unable to help, find another music store.

As with many major decisions, the most important questions are the ones you ask about yourself. Consider your present musical needs. Do your acoustic drums fulfill not only the *requirements*, but also the *potential* of all the music you play? Are you often frustrated by volume constraints in live performance, or do you have trouble projecting your ideal sound at sufficient levels to the back rows of the audience? In the studio, do you like (or even *recognize*) "your" sound by the final mix? Do ethnic and orchestral percussion ideas dance in your head? Are you a techno-hoover, or do gadgets, buttons, and blinking lights annoy you? And finally, do you consider yourself to be a purist, or do you adapt readily or even eagerly to change?

Answering these questions should help eliminate fear of the unknown as a factor in your decision to turn on (or off) to electronics. Whether you end up taking the plunge or not, treat the research as an adventure. Have fun with it. At the very least, you may clarify your goals and priorities as a musician.



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continued from page 64

SL: It wasn't a long time, I can tell you that. On one or two occasions, one member of the band or another had to go back in the studio to finish something. For instance, when I sang "I Got My Mojo Working" there was no one in the studio but me. We had already laid the music down.

RS: Did the record company fly you back to New York to do the vocals for "Mojo"?

SL: No, we were already there. We were playing at the Cafe au Go Go and also at the Village Gate. We played downstairs at the Village Gate with people like Herbie Mann and Kenny Burrell.

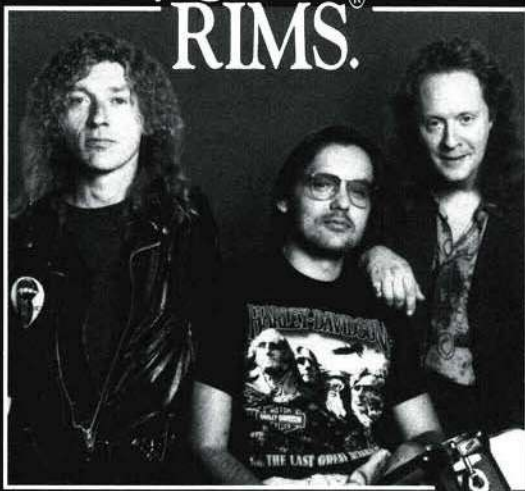
RS: Was it your idea to cut "I Got My Mojo Working"? It is, after all, the only song on the album not sung by Paul Butterfield.

SL: Actually, what happened was that we ran out of stuff; there wasn't another song that Paul wanted to record. I forget who it was—Butterfield or Mike Bloomfield—but one of them said, "Hey Sam, why don't you do 'Mojo'?" I said, "Well, okay. I can do that."

RS: Was that a song that you were known to sing?

SL: I used to play and sing that song with a

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lot of unknown bands before I met up with Butterfield. It seemed like somebody would always request that number and nobody in the band would know how to do it except me. When I was with Howlin' Wolf, sometimes he would ask me to sing a song, and that's when I would call up "Mojo."

RS: What was it like in the studio? Did you have much freedom to play what you thought was appropriate?

SL: Paul and the others seemed to like any ideas that I mentioned. It seemed to me as if the band was playing around my drumming. I guess every drummer likes to think that. But, at the time, that's the feeling I had.

RS: What's the most memorable track on the record for you? Which one comes to mind first when you think of the album?

SL: I think my favorite songs on the album, outside of "Mojo," were probably "Mystery Train" and "Shake Your Money-Maker." In fact, I still play those two songs whenever I can. I didn't write them or sing them, but I try to carry those songs on, if you know what I mean. They're great songs. People love them, and I still get a kick out of them. I do both of them in the Butterfield style,

too. "Shake Your Money-Maker" is an Elmore James tune, but I like the way Butterfield worked it out. I wish I could find a guitar player today who could play that tune the way Mike Bloomfield did.

RS: If I had to pick one song off *The Paul Butterfield Blues Band* that I think best illustrates your skill as a blues drummer, I'd pick "Shake Your Money-Maker." In fact, that song ranks as one of my all-time favorite blues drumming performances.

SL: Well, I thank you for the nice compliment. But to be honest with you, I think my best performance on that album is on "Mojo." I don't like to brag, but I don't think you can find anyone who plays that song like I do. The tempo we decided to use for that song was just perfect.

RS: If I recall correctly, you played a strange kind of shuffle on the song.

SL: That's right. Butterfield and the other guys in the band called it a shuffle, but they said it sounded like I was playing it twice in one lick. That's why I called it the "double shuffle." I remember Butterfield saying that it sounded like an echo coming back at you from each lick.

RS: Did you incorporate this "double shuf-

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fie" on any other songs?

SL: I think I might have played it with tambourine and sticks on "Mystery Train." Actually, I used one stick instead of two—and the tambourine.

RS: The most popular song on the album, "Born In Chicago," also contains some pretty exciting drumming. Do you recall what you played on that song?

SL: Now that was a great song, too. It was

written by Nick Gravenites. I played what I would call a calypso-like beat. "Born In Chicago" has sure become a blues standard. If you're a harp player, you better be able to play that song, because if you can't, you're nothing.

RS: Did you rehearse much before going into the studio?

SL: No, we didn't. We knew most of the songs we recorded pretty well because we

were playing them live. But we ran a lot of things down in the studio, too. It cost more that way, but that's the way we did it. In fact, we even made up some things in the studio. "Thank You Mr. Poobah" was made up right there in the studio.

RS: Who is Mr. Poobah?

SL: [laughs] Poobah was Paul Butterfield, which was a long way of calling him by his initials, P.B. When we was finished with the song, somebody up in the recording booth said, "What's the name of that song?" We called it all kinds of names, until somehow someone said Mr. Poobah, and it stuck.

RS: Another favorite song of mine from that album is "Blues With A Feeling." When I mention that song, what's the first thing that comes to mind?

SL: Little Walter is the first thing that comes to mind. It's a Little Walter song, you know, and I was a member of Little Walter's band before I played with Wolf or Butterfield. But I left Little Walter to play with the Wolf.

RS: What was Paul Butterfield like as a band-leader? Did he treat you fairly?

SL: He treated me fine. But he had a certain way about him. I'll give you an example. If he wanted to bring a new song into the band, he expected everyone to know it. I knew most of the ones he wanted us to do—say, a Little Walter song. But once, when Elvin Bishop didn't know a song—man, that was something that got Butterfield going, if you know what I mean. When Butterfield was on stage and he wanted to play a song that we never played before, that didn't matter to him. He expected it to come out right anyway. And if it didn't, he wouldn't take kindly to the situation.

RS: Which blues drummers at the time influenced you? Which drummers did you especially admire?

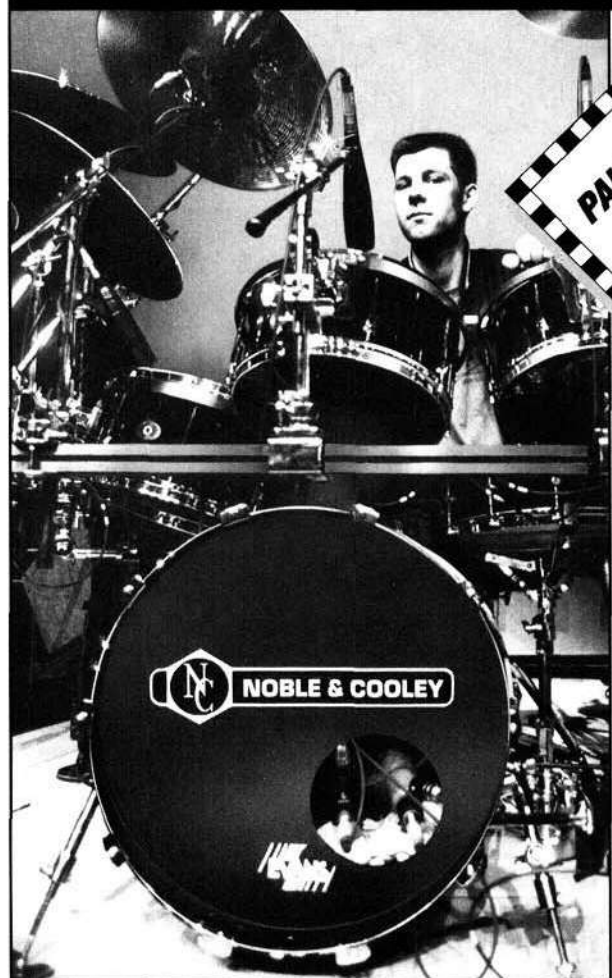
SL: Well, I learned to play by listening to blues records, and Fred Below was on nearly all the records I liked. I couldn't help but be influenced by him. Another drummer I liked was Earl Phillips.

RS: How much studio experience did you have before making the Butterfield album?

SL: Oh, I had a lot of studio experience. Before Butterfield, I recorded with Jimmy Reed, Wolf, Lightnin' Hopkins, John Lee Hooker—a whole mess of famous bluesmen.

RS: You didn't record another album with

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the Butterfield band after this one. Why?

SL: Because I left the band. After we made the album, I left to play with James Cotton, another great harp player.

RS: What did the blues community in Chicago think of the Butterfield album? What kinds of reactions did you get from other bluesmen around town?

SL: I can't remember what other blues musicians thought of the album, but blues fans were buying it up, I can tell you that. Right after the record came out, we didn't have the chance to work much around Chicago because blues fans around the rest of the country were buying the record, and we went and played other cities where the record was selling. I knew the record would be a good-seller. What we did on that album wasn't exactly brand new. It was the blues, and the blues had been around a long time before we got together to make that album. But we were new faces on the scene, you see, and we interpreted the blues in a way that people really liked. That was the key.

RS: If things were so good, why did you leave the Butterfield band?

SL: I wasn't intending to leave. I only left because I got sick. I left the band in December, just before Christmas. I couldn't

go any further because I was just too sick. I'd gotten pneumonia, which eventually turned into pleurisy. I didn't really know what pleurisy was at the time, but it landed me in the hospital for quite a few months after the doctors told me I had it. It was a funny thing, because three other Chicago blues musicians—Earl Hooker, Fred Below, and a drummer who used to play with Bo Diddley—were also in the same hospital that I was in at the time. Some days, when the doctors would do tests on me, I'd see Earl Hooker or Fred Below sitting in the same room.

RS: Had you not gotten sick, do you think you would have stayed with Butterfield?

SL: Well, I was tickled to death to have played with Butterfield and the rest of that band. I was just as tickled as a kid at a Friday fish fry, 'cause the money *and* the music were both good. And you know what? It was the first time I ever got any recognition. Other people I had recorded with had said, "Hey man, good job," gave me a pat on the back, and that was it. But with Butterfield it was different. I always appreciated that.



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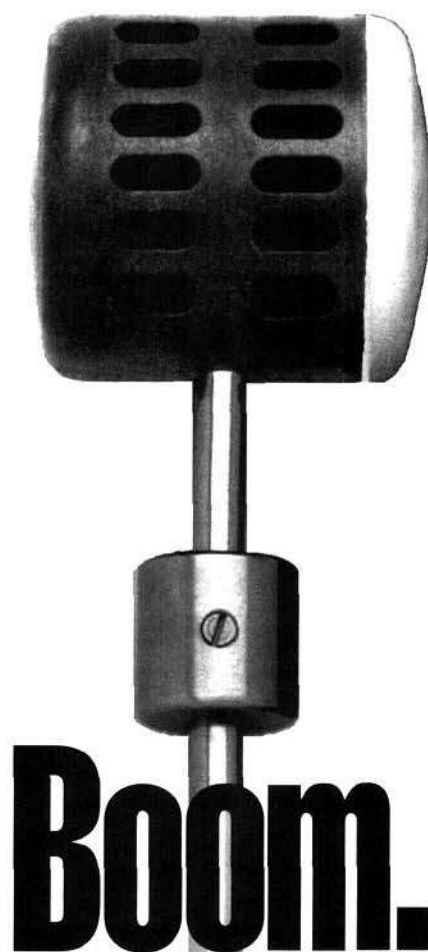
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Prince's Michael Bland

■ by Teri Saccone

The Summer of 1990 brought Prince's Nude tour to Europe, and with it an unveiling of Prince's newest and possibly tightest band ever. So impressed was Prince with this latest line-up that he decided to utilize some of the musicians (including the subject of this piece) on his next release. It's an unusual move for the enigmatic performer/composer, who normally prefers to play all of the instruments for a recording himself.

Michael Bland, who fills the drum chair for this hot new band, has proven to be a knockout. Unlike his predecessors—who leaned more toward Latin stylizations—Bland is an out-and-out, barn-burning rock drummer with an aggressively funky side. Although young, Bland nevertheless seems more than capable of handling anything that Prince throws his way. He's definitely a guy to watch out for in the future.

TS: Even though you were only 20 years old when you started working with Prince, you didn't attain "overnight success." You worked in a lot of bands back in Minneapolis. What was the turning point?

MB: The first gigging band that I was in in Minneapolis was an avant-garde ensemble called Bathoscope. I was in the tenth grade at the time. We played a type of music that was classified as "cynical pop." The guy who ran the band was a Latin fanatic and a brilliant composer, and he has affected my concepts of music ever since. The name of the band has been changed to Neetumi, and I'm still kind of a member—even though we're not doing anything at the moment. That led me to Doctor Mambo, which was a big break. That was a wild group. We'd take nostalgia tunes from about '67 to '74 and just bastardize them for fun.

TS: In what way?

MD: We'd play "What Is Hip" at twice the speed that Tower of Power ever did it. It was kind of a stump-the-dancers thing. People would try to dance to that band all the time, and I'd just be off in my own world, doing what I wanted. Polyrythmically, I just love flipping things upside down and turning them inside out. [laughs]

I guess I've gotten to play with just about everybody who has been influential on the music scene in Minneapolis. Now I'm playing with *the* most influential person to come from the whole state.

TS: Did you study or did you just absorb everything yourself?

MB: I picked up a lot of stuff, but I also studied for eight years with a guy named Floyd Thompson. Initially he taught me how to read, then he taught me all the basic clichés in every idiom for



a drummer. He was a great teacher, and he was always telling me to go out and look for things and to pay attention. He also referred me to other people, like Eric Gravatt—who played with Weather Report back in the early '70s. Eric lives in Minneapolis, and Floyd always told me I should go to see him.

TS: So you went?

MB: No. He was always very busy. But I met Eric, and I heard him play as many times as I could. He's truly a master in his field. He's mainly into Afro-Cuban rhythms, plus he's also played with McCoy Tyner. His playing is just so expansive for a drummer like me who is not familiar with that idiom.

TS: How did you evolve from a student to a professional player yourself?

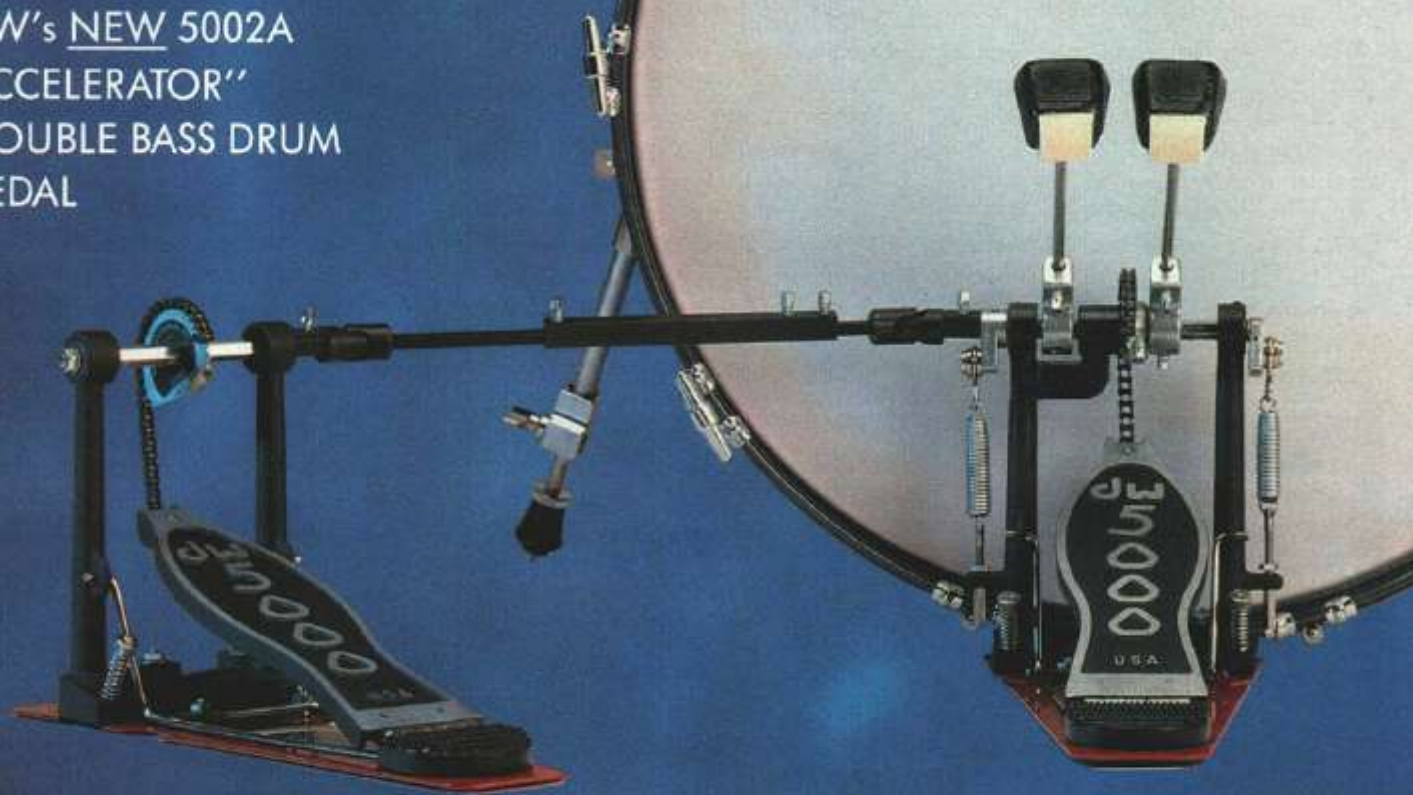
MB: The first gig that I got that really meant anything was with Hiram Bullock and Rick Peterson—who was the musical director for David Sanborn. Hiram came to town to record with Ricky, Charlie Drayton, and Will Lee. I got to hang out at those sessions. I was just out of high school. I was playing with Ricky's sister at the time, and I kept on asking him, "When am I going to get a gig?" He talked to Hiram, and I wound up rehearsing with Hiram for a show in Minneapolis. During those rehearsals, Hiram asked me if I wanted to go to New York. All of a sudden I found myself in New York, playing at Mickel's. It was like, "How did I get here?" Then Hiram told me, "Oh, by the way, we're going to Pittsburgh, too." [laughs] We played the Three Rivers Festival, which was the last gig I did with Hiram.

To play with musicians of that caliber was a revelation for me. So many things came to me. You know how the world unfolds as you grow up? Particularly in the area of drumming, I've felt that happen to me periodically. Things that you think about and try to force and then say, "Forget about it"—all of a sudden they come to you one day.

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TS: You've been exposed to opportunities that have allowed you to experience those advancements.

MB: The opportunities have been like trees just appearing in my path, waiting to be chopped down. At this point, though, I can't really take the credit for it. It's a matter of being open to what's there, rather than being the cause of what happens. It's not work for me. It's something that I can't live without and that I have the intention of refining every chance I get.

TS: How did Prince enter the picture?

MB: He had just finished the *Lovesexy*

tour, and for some reason he came down to see Doctor Mambo perform. I don't know why; I haven't asked him. But Gordy Knudtson—who's a great drummer and who has the studio thing pretty much sewn up in town—was sitting in for me. I had made a commitment to another band to perform that evening. One of the singers in the band told Prince that he had to come and see the band again because the regular drummer wasn't there—meaning me. The next day all I heard on my answering machine was, "You missed it last night!"

Prince did come back again, though. He sat behind the bar where no one could see him, but I knew he was in the room because he's got a presence. I was kind of reluctant to meet him because I didn't know what to say. But he just kind of waved and it was really cool; I didn't *have* to say anything. After the intermission he came up on stage and we asked him what he wanted to play. He said, "Don't you guys play 'What Is Hip?'" So we went into the song and played it just like the record—which was funny for us.

All through the time he was sitting in we made eye contact. I was kind of being auditioned in the way all auditions should be done. It was a real musical situation where we were on stage and anything could happen. After that he came down regularly. Sometimes he'd sit in, sometimes he'd watch. He invited us to a party at Paisley Park that he was having for Bon Jovi, and it turned out to be a big jam session. He started playing this groove, and we just sort of fell into it. Then he said to me, "Excuse me, son. Would you like a job?" It was a big joke at the time. Then two months later—it was the same day that I decided he would never hire me [laughs]—I got home and found all these messages his bodyguards had left for me. They had been trying to get in contact with me all day because he wanted to talk to me. When I called him he didn't mince words: He asked me if I wanted to join the band.

The best thing about working for Prince now is that he has my respect as an employer and as the person that he is. He's a great guy. I can see how some people could have problems with him as this visionary who wants everything to be perfect, but I don't find fault with that. I don't see why things *shouldn't* be executed perfectly.

TS: When you first started working with Prince, what were you doing?

MB: The first thing we did was rehearse the video for "Partyman," which we did in August of '89. Then we were in the studio when Prince mentioned that we would be doing something for TV I didn't find out until three weeks before we were supposed to go that it was going to be the *Saturday Night Live 15th Anniversary* show.

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varied drum sound live. Who decides on those colors?

MB: Prince goes out in the house every day and tells the sound guys what he wants. The reason the whole mix is the way it is partly is because of the engineer and partly because Prince knows what he wants to hear.

TS: Do you trigger a lot of samples in the live show?

MB: Just about every song is sampled off the record, yes. I've got tambourine and other percussion stuff, and on "Little Red Corvette" I have white noise.

TS: You had a really interesting bass drum sample on "Question Of U."

MB: I don't even know where that came from. One day we were about to play the song, and they had the samples off the release. They never know where Prince gets the sounds because no one is there when he makes them, and he doesn't save them. The engineers take the sounds off the record and put them in the *E-Max*. I don't have any knowledge of all the technology they use.

TS: How much of the drumming decision-making is up to you?

MB: It's hard to say. With this band, I have a more basic function than I've had in the past. It's a groove-oriented band, and it's not really a matter of chops. It's definitely not a situation where I'm out front. I believe that it's important for a drummer to share the composer's vision—to the extent of improvising within the composer's bounds. You have to allow yourself to be saturated by what makes those compositions what they are. If I work with someone long enough, it almost becomes a psychic thing that will govern how long I'll last—how long we can meet each other, how long he can mention something and I can tune in to what he's looking for.

TS: So things are implied, and then you take it from there?

MB: Right, which is fine for me. Most of the time, Prince gets behind the microphone and says, "Give me one of these." He'll start mouthing some beat and I just have to emulate it. In the past, during the recording process, he's been in the studio alone—which makes the current situation difficult at times. He'll say, "Can you make the snare drum a little ahead of the beat?" Sometimes it's hard to describe

that beat. I spent the last five or six years perfecting my meter; now I sometimes have to take myself out of that context to get closer to my goal. And sometimes in a live performance the adrenaline takes over and things speed up.

TS: What would you like to pursue next?

MB: I've got a list of five people in the music industry who I'm going to accost someday to play with. Prince has always been one of them. Peter Gabriel has always been one of them. Miles Davis—who's a friend of Prince's, which makes it even more possible—is another.

Someone else I'd like to work with is John Scofield, and the last person is someone I haven't even heard of yet—someone entirely new.

But for me, "making it" has nothing to do with what people usually think of as "success." To me, success is actually in performing. Like a football player who can be a totally great athlete but who is unknown, what it comes down to is the performance. So being successful means playing *well*, not necessarily just playing in a high-exposure gig.



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Being Serious

■ by Roy Burns

I've received a number of letters from young drummers stating, "I can't find any musicians to play with who are serious." One young drummer I know was asked to join a band. He said, "I went to rehearsal, and we worked on three songs. Then they broke open the beer, and that was pretty much the end of the rehearsal." His other comment was, "These guys just aren't serious."

Another situation had me thinking about the idea of seriousness recently: One of my students has a friend who is 20 years of age and is a fairly talented drummer. However, I've heard this young drummer say, "I would take lessons, but I'm so good already that I just can't imagine what anyone could show me." This young man isn't serious about his drumming. What he *is* serious about is his ego. The unfortunate part of this scenario is that his attitude will prevent him from reaching his full potential. I should add that this young man has never played in a professional situation of any kind. It would seem that the time for him to get serious about his drumming is now!

Another example of not being truly serious is the young drummer who says something like, "I want to be a top professional drummer—but I just hate to practice." Well, it's going to be difficult to develop your drumming ability without practicing. Wishing doesn't get it done. You must make a serious effort to grow and improve, or else your results will be a disappointment.

Part of being serious about your drumming career is keeping your word—which is another way of saying that you must keep your agreements. For example, if rehearsal is at 2:00, it means having your equipment set up and ready to play at 1:55. It doesn't mean showing up late and making the rest of the group wait while

you set up your kit.

Ask yourself this question: "Am I really serious about drumming, or do I just like the *idea* of being a drummer?" If you just like the *idea* of playing, then play and have fun. However, if you want a *career* in drumming, the sooner you get serious the better.

If you have decided to be serious, make a list of the things you will need to do to be successful. Note those things you have already done or are in the process of doing. Then make a list of your best qualities, and follow it with a list of weaknesses that need improvement. If you can't think of any weaknesses, you're either the greatest drummer who's ever lived or you just aren't being serious. Even if you *were* the greatest, I'm sure you could think of something to improve—if your self-evaluation was sincere.

Part of being serious is being concerned with important matters. List all the things you do regarding your drumming that may not be important. For example, do you spend a lot of time criticizing famous drummers—at least those who play a style of music other than your particular favorite? Do you spend a lot of time criticizing other drummers in your town? If you do these things, realize that they are unimportant. Remember, being critical of others does nothing to improve *your* playing.

Do you spend time making excuses to yourself or to others? For example, do you always have a reason for being late? Do

you make excuses to yourself for not practicing regularly? Do you keep putting things off?

Make out a weekly schedule. Write down what you do each day and how much time you spend on each activity. Next, ask yourself which activities are important. Then, add up the time you spend on unimportant activities, and you'll realize how much time you may be wasting.

If you're going to achieve *anything* in life, you must get serious. Do you want to play baseball or practice the drums? Do you want to go to the beach or to rehearsal? Do you want to be honest about where you really are as a drummer, or would you rather just go along and *dream* about making it?

Dreams are important. However, it takes a serious effort to make them a reality. If you are serious about your drumming, make a concentrated effort to find *other* serious musicians to play with. It's not always easy, but it is definitely worth the wait.

Last but not least, let me point out that getting serious doesn't have to mean not having fun. Although all great players are serious about their work, they have fun, too. But they know when to get serious. When I was young, I was at a rehearsal with a very good band. I was happy and I was making a few jokes. The bandleader leaned over to me and said, "Roy, in this band we try to make our conversation fit the situation." He was right. It was time to stop fooling around and get serious. Maybe it's time for you to get serious, too.

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Inverted Paradiddle Warm-Up

by Casey Scheuerell

MUSIC KEY



"Inverted paradiddle"—sounds like some weird engineering gizmo! No, it's actually a sticking device that can both help you warm up and help you get around the drums more efficiently. Once you get the feel of this little beauty, you'll find it an essential sticking tool. Think of it as just a paradiddle that's been shifted over one note, giving us the "diddle," or double, in the middle. Thus, there are two possible stickings for an inverted paradiddle: RLLR or LLRL. Another way to think of it is: a single + a double + a single.

Before we get into the exercises, it would be a good idea for you to look over *ray Head Talk* column in the February '91 issue of *MD*, "Paradiddle Warm-Up." We're essentially taking the same basic concept discussed in that article, and applying it to inverted paradiddles.

To make this into a warm-up exercise, we need a rhythmic structure, or "skeleton." Ted Reed's *Syncopation* or Louie Bellson's 4/4 text will do fine. For purposes of this article, we'll use some basic structures. Any phrase using quarter-, 8th-, dotted quarter-, or tied 8th-note combinations will work. You may also use rests of equal value. (16th-note values will not work.)

To explain this idea a bit further, let me break it down this way: When you see an 8th note, play either RL or LR. When you see a quarter note, play either RLLR or LLRL. When you see a dotted-quarter note, play RLLRRL or LLRLLR. When you see an 8th-note rest, play either LR or RL. And when you see a quarter-note rest, play either LLRL or RLLR. With any values longer than a dotted quarter note, continue alternating doubles. For example, a half note would be played either RLLRLLR or LLRLLRRL.

There are two rules: Every new note grouping begins in the opposite hand from the one used to end the previous phrase, and every rest grouping begins in the same hand as the one used to end the previous phrase. Again, if this seems too complicated, refer back to the "Paradiddle Warm-Up" article.

Now let's apply this concept to a simple example. Let's say we have a two-bar example that has four quarter notes in the first bar. Applying the concept, we would begin with the right hand and play four inverted paradiddles. That's easy to follow.

The second measure begins with an 8th-note rest. Following our rules, since the previous phrase ended with the left hand, we begin this rest with the left hand. For the next note, which we'll say is a quarter note, we'll follow the concept and play an inverted paradiddle. For the next two quarter notes we play inverted paradiddles, taking us up to the last note of the bar, an 8th note, which would be played RL. So, the second measure would be played LRLR RLRL LRLR RLRL.

This may sound a bit confusing at this point. However, let's take a look at what this looks like written out. Hopefully seeing it will answer any questions you may have. Here are both bars

written out:



Let's apply the concept to a slightly more complex example. For our next two bars we will use a dotted quarter-note theme, crossing "over the bar line." Notice how the sticking keeps coming back to the lead (R) hand.



Subdividing the previous two bars into a smaller division, we could come up with this:





Photo by Rick Malkin



The following are a couple of two-bar phrases that you can apply the concept to. If you have any problems, write out the 16th notes and mark your stickings.



Finally, let's look at a simple way you can orchestrate the concept on the drumkit. Use a crash cymbal/bass drum combination at the beginning of each group. In our first example, bar one would look like this:



Once you are comfortable with that, you can even accent the last note of each group on the snare drum, giving a very "pushed" feel to the phrase.



These are just a couple of ways to interpret an inverted paradiddle scheme. There are many more, so see what you can come up with!

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MD Trivia Winners

Stephen Leathart, of Lynwood, Washington, is the winner of a PureCussion drumkit and accessories package, thanks to his correct answer to MD's January '91 Trivia Contest question: "Who was the drummer that, early in his career, gave up the *Sonny & Cher Show* for the gig with Steely Dan?" That drummer was **Jeff Porcaro**.

Our February '91 winner is **David Anania**, of Stevens Point, Wisconsin, who knew that **Chester Thompson** was the drummer who was playing in the Chicago production of *The Wiz* before getting the call to join his current band [Genesis] on their *Wind And Wuthering* tour. David's answer earns him a Sonor *Hilite* soprano snare drum and a *Sonorlite* piccolo snare, courtesy of Sonor drums.

Congratulations to Stephen and David from PureCussion, Sonor, and MD.

In Memoriam

Tony Saputo, drummer in Reba McEntire's band, died this past March 16, when the plane he and other band members were on crashed following a gig in San Diego. Saputo was one of the most in-demand drummers in the St Louis area, and was especially known for his versatility. In addition to his gig with McIntire, he played R&B and pop with the Ralph Butler Band, jazz and fusion with Tracer, and rock with the Stranded Lads. Tony moved to Nashville in the fall of 1989, and joined McEntire's band in early 1990.

NDA's Drums For Fun

Shoppers of all ages have been treated to free one-minute drum lessons in East Coast malls recently. Sponsored by the National Drum Association in an attempt to spread the hobby of drumming, 50-

square-foot drumset displays are set up in shopping malls, and shoppers are invited to take a quick lesson and play along with their favorite music. After the lesson, the "new drummers" are given a program and a free gift bag from all the participating manufacturers, dealers, teachers, and publishers. They also sign a national drum mailing list and are encouraged to pursue the hobby further.

Indy Quickies

The **Hohner** instrument company has acquired the **Sonor** drum company. In related news, **Zildjian** cymbals, drumsticks, and accessories are now distributed in Germany exclusively by Sonor.

CARES, the Clearinghouse for Active Recording and Entertaining Stars, has been created to provide stage and studio performers with news on music/health-related topics, such as diet, exercise, drug and alcohol awareness, and joint, muscle,

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After a tornado devastated the town of Plainfield, Illinois last summer, the **Selmer/Ludwig** company loaned Plainfield high school's instrumental program a package of brass and woodwind instruments, marching percussion, and concert mallet instruments. All the school's instruments had been destroyed in the damage caused by the tornado.

The Drum Center of Indianapolis recently acquired the last Slingerland drumset that was owned and played by Buddy Rich. The set is part of the shop's museum of antique and collectible American snare drums and sets.

Endorser News

Michael Baker, Gary Novak, and Deen Castronovo are now endorsing

Calato sticks.

Michael Cartellone endorsing the *Nady Songstarter*.

Gregg Bissonette, William Calhoun, Peter Erskine, Anton Fig, Neil Peart, Michael Shrieve, and Chester Thompson are now endorsing KAT products.

Steve White playing Sabian cymbals.

Harvey Mason, Alvino Bennett, Larry Bright, Sue Hadjopoulos, Robert Sweet, Steven Wolf, Carmine Appice, and Chester Thompson using Gibraltar rack systems.

John Robinson using Audio-Technica mic's.

Rick Steel endorsing Aquarian heads, Amberstar practice pads, PureCussion RIMS, Brite Stuff cymbal polish, Sapphire Percussions electronics, and Trueline sticks.



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We ask that you keep your *DrumLine* tip to 150 words maximum. Photos or drawings are fine, but they cannot be returned. Send your tip, along with your name and address, to *DrumLine*, c/o Modern Drummer, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

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New from Sabian are their HH *EQ Hats*, a cross-matched pairing consisting of a heavy HH *Flat* top and a special AA *Rock* bottom. This bottom cymbal features air vents in its bell and outer edge, which are designed to facilitate the elimination of air lock. The sound of the *UHEQ Hats* is medium-high-pitched.

Sabian's 22" HH *Power Bell Ride* was designed to meet the request of Simple Minds drummer Mel Gaynor. According to Sabian, this big-bell cymbal is capable of positive ride qualities in both high and low-level volumes, and offers both a powerful bell and a musical cymbal sound. The 8" bell of the cymbal is unlathed and buffed to a brilliant finish, while the rest of the cymbal is fully lathed and delivers the tonally dark ride characteristics normally associated with Sabian's hand-hammered HH series. **Sabian, Ltd., Med-uctic, New Brunswick, Canada, EOH 1LO, tel: (506) 272-2019, fax: (506) 328-9697, telex: 014-27541.**

New Remo Products

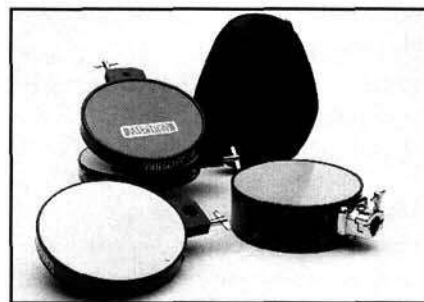
Remo has introduced two new 13" piccolo snare drums, the 5Vzx13 *Deep Piccolo*, and the 3V2x13 *Traditional Piccolo*. Both feature 5mm-thick *Acousticon* shells, a gradual-slope snare bed, and Remo's new drop snare gate. The shells have a hand-rubbed, clear-coat sealer that, according to the company, improves sound.

Remo has also introduced a broad line of carded generic and proprietary replacement parts and percussion accessories, including drum lugs, tuning rods, counter hoops, multi-clamps, stands, and accessories for bass drums, snare drums, and hi-hats.

Finally, Remo's new 24-page full-color catalog is available. It features the company's complete line of percussion products. **Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer St., North Hollywood, CA 91605, (818) 983-2600.**

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Slobeat Drummer T-Shirts

Slobeat Music Products has introduced a new line of T-shirts commemorating Buddy Rich, Keith Moon, John Bonham, and Gene Krupa. The company plans to introduce a line of contemporary T-shirts soon.

Slobeat has also announced sole distributorship in the United States for *Bright Sticks* (except in California and Nevada). *Bright Sticks* incorporate a process whereby the colorization penetrates the sticks' wood grain. In addition, Slobeat has become the exclusive distributor of *Holz* head protectors in the western United States. **Slobeat Music Products, 15854 W. 6th Ave., Golden, CO 80401, (303) 277-1067.**

New Russian Dragon

Jeanius Electronics has introduced the *RD-T*, a low-cost version of their *Russian Dragon*. (See MD's March '91 *Product Close-Up*.) Jeanius says that this new

Russian Dragon will have the same precision as the *RD-2* rack-mount version, but at about half its price. The company has accomplished this by eliminating some of the more expensive features not needed in the semi-pro market.

The *RD-T* is half-rack size and can be mounted on popular drum hardware. The unit's black chassis has a row of 25 LEDs and two input LED indicators in the front. Two input connectors, a power connector, a window knob, and sensitivity knobs are located on the back of the unit. **Jeanius Electronics, 2815 Swandale Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78230, (512) 525-0719.**

Two New ddrum Products

ddrum's *Double Kick Head Trigger* allows double bass drummers to use their tandem pedals and access either the same sound on each head, or (by switching a button on the unit and adding a cable) two completely separate and distinct sounds. The company has also introduced an 8-channel snake made with

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Soh Daiko Recording Released

Taiko drumming group Soh Daiko, who appeared at *Modern Drummer Festival '89*, have released their first recording in their 12-year history. Lyricord Discs has produced a field recording of their most frequently requested and performed music. Old and new members of the band were gathered for the performance. **Soh Daiko, 332 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10025.**

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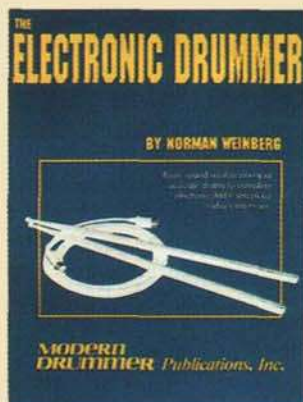
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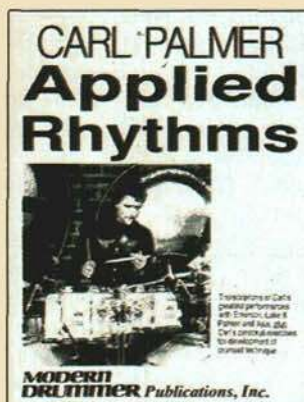
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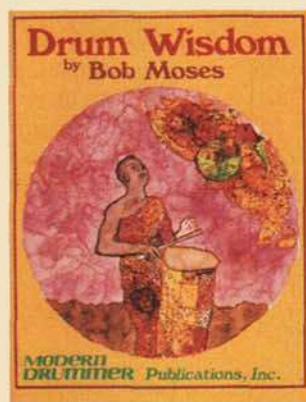
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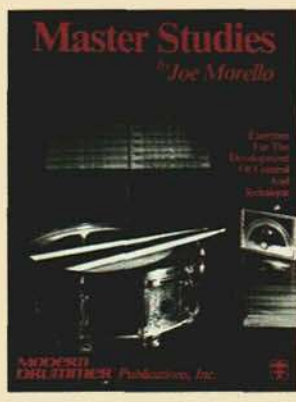
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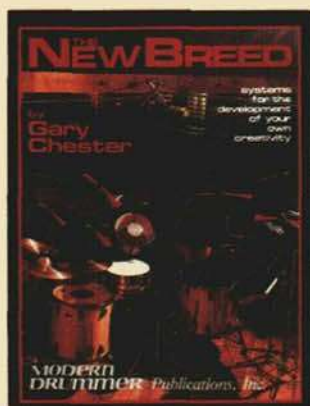
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	The Electronic Drummer (06631500)	\$9.95	
	Drum Wisdom (06630510)	\$7.95	
	Master Studies (06631474)	\$8.95	
	The New Breed (06631619)	\$7.95	
	When In Doubt, Roll! (06630298)	\$12.95	
SHIPPING AND HANDLING			\$2.50
GRAND TOTAL			

WI residents add 5% sales tax; MN residents add 6% sales tax

drums. Their stock line is made up of caddies and cases for mallets, sticks, cymbals, tambourines, and accessories. All products are constructed of top-quality materials, including Dupont *Cordura*, *YKK* zippers, and *Fastex* fasteners and hardware. Cases for drums, cymbals, and tambourines are foam-padded and lined with Oxford nylon. All products are guaranteed for life against defects in materials and manufacturing. **L.A. Caseworks, 4601 Eoff St., Wheeling, WV 26003, tel: (800) 366-7122, fax: (304) 232-0213.**

XL Improves Black Max Pedal

XL Specialty Percussion has recently improved their *Black Max* bass drum pedal. To make adjustments to the twin eccentric cams easier, a one-touch drum-key adjustment has been added. This new feature makes quick adjustment of the spring tension possible from an easily accessed screw, located at the top of the pedal. Other upgrades include a quick-release footplate attachment, allowing easy

storage when not in use, and a new spring lobe backstop, replacing the original solid backstop. According to XL, this new backstop gives a smoother feel and increased durability. The redesigned *Black Max* also lists at a lower price than the original. **XL Specialty Percussion, Inc., 3050 E. State Blvd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46805. (219) 482-7000.**



New From Grover

Grover Pro Percussion has announced the addition of three new products to its line. The *WB-1* is a large, 100% New England rock maple woodblock designed for general use. The *T2/SB* is a 10" double-row tambourine, featuring combination jingles of German silver and phosphor bronze. And *Alloy 303* triangle beaters are made from a special steel alloy that helps bring out maximum overtone resonance. Each beater features a plastic molded handle and color coding. The beaters are extra long (9"), are available in six weights and sizes, and can be purchased individually, in a standard set of six, or in a deluxe set of ten with a case. **Grover Pro Percussion, 29 Bigelow St., Cambridge, MA 02139, (617) 354-3786.**

Ensonia EPS-IB Digital Workstation

Ensoniq has introduced the rack-mount version of its *EPS-16* Digital Sampling

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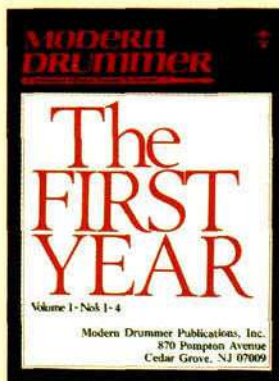
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Workstation. The new unit incorporates all the features of the keyboard version: true 16-bit sampling with 100dB signal-to-noise performance, 20-voice polyphony, extensive sampling and synthesis parameters, Patch Select buttons, "Play While Load" memory access, and resampling of sounds with their effects. The new unit also has an upgraded 16-track sequencer with complete editing and MIDI automated mixdown capabilities, and the ability to audition all editing changes against original parts. **Ensoniq, 155 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern, PA 19355, tel: (215) 647-3930, fax: (215) 647-8908.**

Gannon Snares

Gannon Percussion has introduced high-quality, 20-strand wire snares. Using a recessed crease, the snare cord slips through a channel to prevent snare buzz. Sets are available individually and are standard on all Cannon *Mega* series snare drums. **Universal Percussion, Inc., 2773 E. Midlothian Blvd., Struthers, OH 44471, tel: (216) 755-6423, fax: (216) 755-6400.**

Cappella Tico Torres Signature Slick

Cappella Drumsticks has introduced their *Tico Torres* signature model. This model features a 17" *Rock* stick with an acorn tip. In addition, the company has made available their new *Neon Sticks*, available in neon orange and neon yellow, both with a black tip. *Neon Sticks* are available in 5A, 5B, *Rock*, and 2B sizes. **Cappella, P.O. Box 247, Applegarth Road, Hightstown, NJ 08520, (609) 448-1153, (800) 262-BEAT.**

Mapex Upgrades Mars Series Drums

Mapex has upgraded its *Mars* drum series. The new series now features full-length tubular lugs mounted off the surface of the shell, with two contact points intended to provide greater volume and shell resonance. The *MS* five-piece outfit offers 10x12 and 11x13 mounted power toms, a 16x16 floor tom, a 16x22 bass drum, and a 6V2x14 metal snare. All toms and bass drums are constructed of 9-ply mahogany shells with genuine wood interiors. The *M5* comes complete with *Mars* series double-braced hardware, including *B300* boom stands. *Mars* series outfits are also available in seven- and nine-piece double-bass configurations. **Mapex Percussion Technology, 908 West Fayette Ave., P.O. Box 748, Effingham, IL 62401, fax: (217) 347-0316, tel: (217) 342-9211.**



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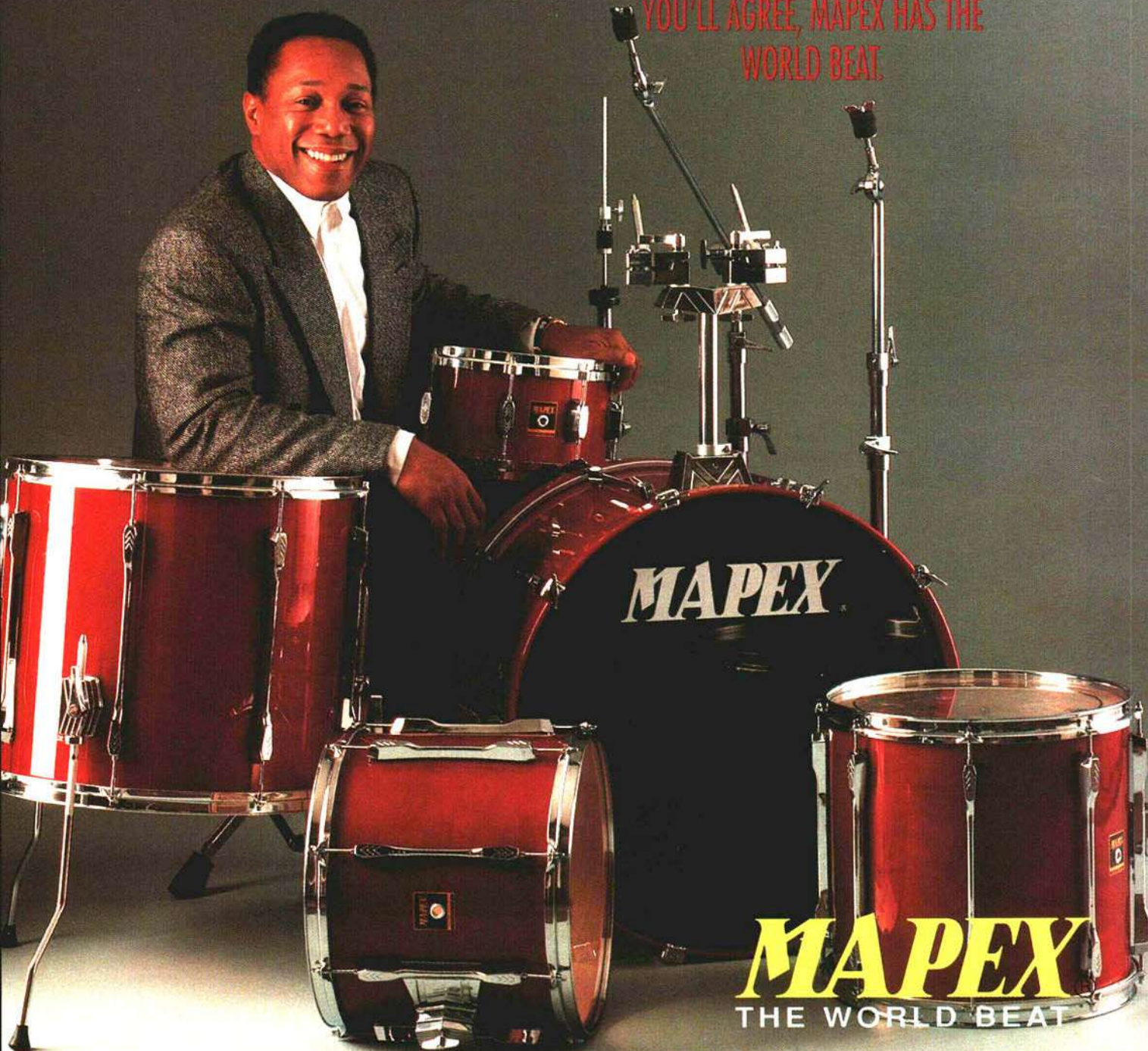
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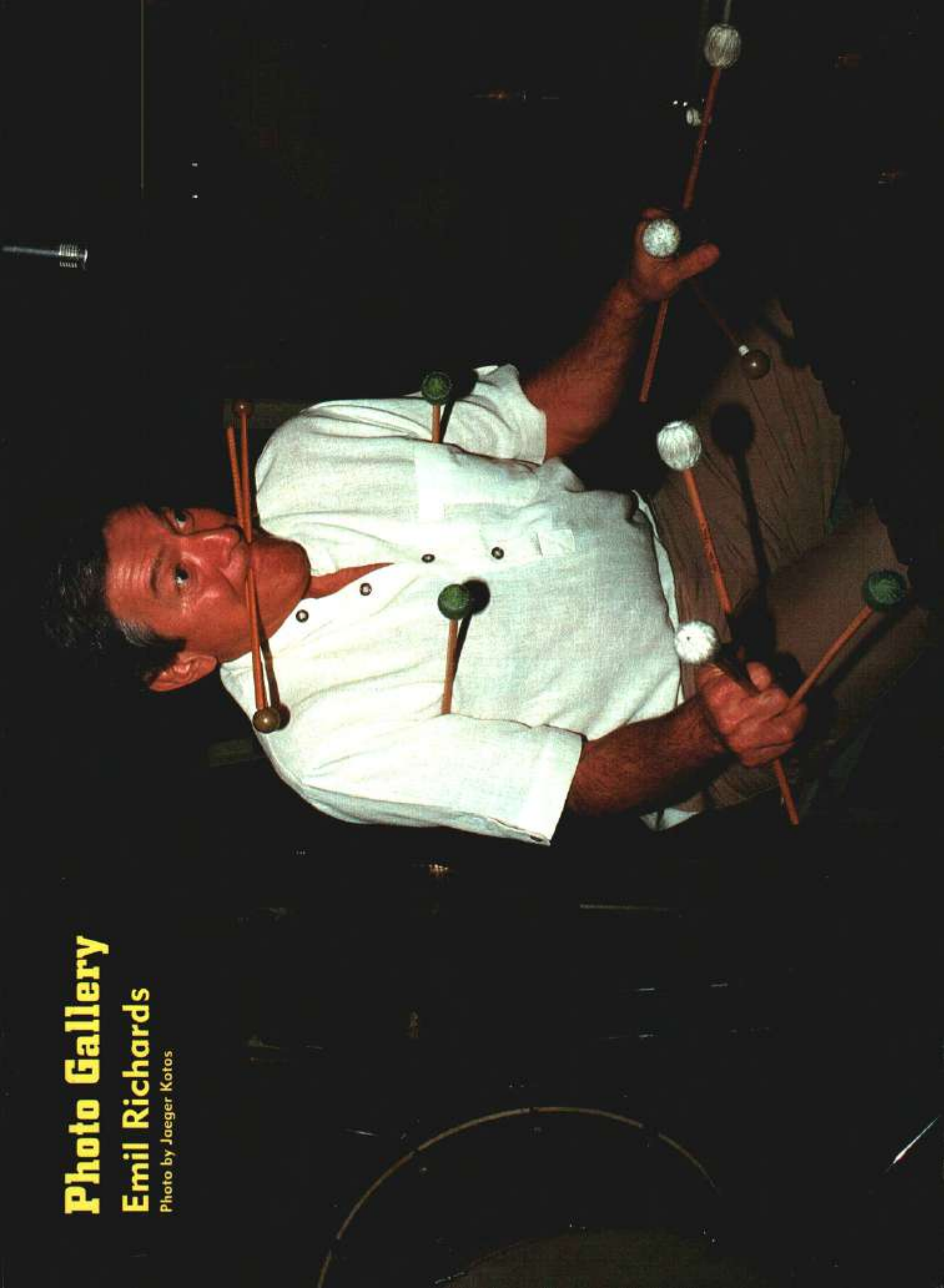
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