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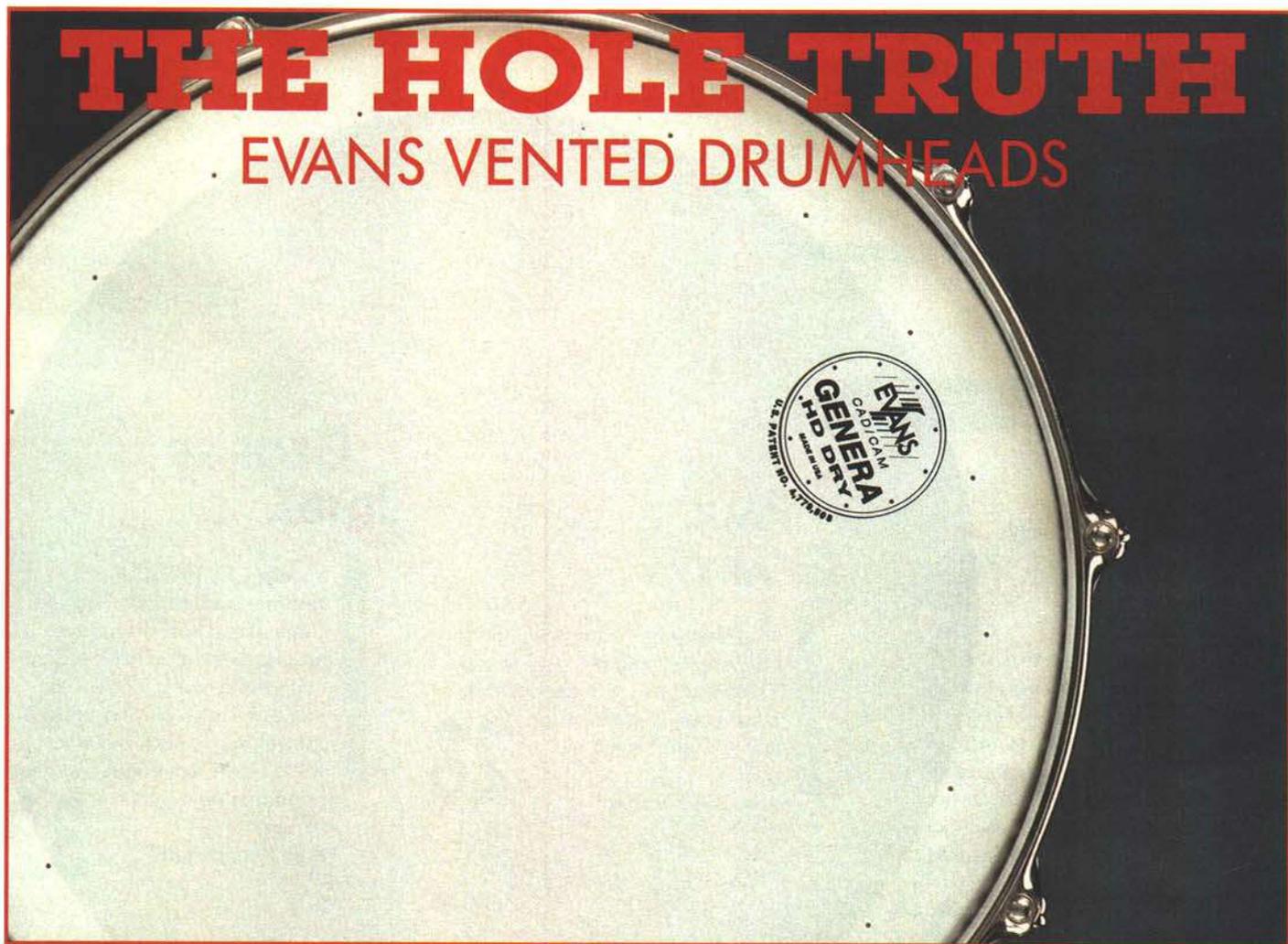
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### RICKY LAWSON

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## More Of The Best



Since we began publishing *Modern Drummer* back in 1977, we've done our best to stay as closely attuned to your needs as possible. One way we accomplish this is through reader opinion surveys, which keep us abreast of the current needs and wants of the readership. One thing these surveys have clearly told us is that rock and jazz drumming remain the primary interests of the majority of *MD*

readers. As a result, you may note that our *Rock 'N' Jazz Clinic* and *Rock Perspectives* departments appear in *MD* on somewhat of a regular basis.

However, in light of the fact that thousands of new readers have come on board since '77, it's certain that many have never had the opportunity to appreciate the wealth of information that's been presented through these two departments. Likewise, many long-time readers may simply have missed certain issues, and thereby missed out on much of this enlightening material as well. And so, the plan for *The Best Of Modern Drummer: Rock* was born.

This latest addition to the *MD* Library began with the research of tons of material presented in the two departments over the past ten years. Next, the editors had the formidable task of selecting SO of the very *best* articles among so many, to be included in the book and offered to readers in a single volume for easy reference and review.

Though a good amount of the material in the book was authored by relatively unknown—yet highly knowledgeable—drummer/writers, an even greater amount was written by some of the most proficient drummers on the scene today. The thoughts and performance techniques of drummers like Rod Morgenstein, Neil Peart, Gary Chaffee, Jonathan Mover, Chad Wackerman, Andy Newmark, Will Kennedy, Joe Franco, Jim Payne, Kenny Aronoff, Albert Bouchard, Bobby Rock, and Greg D'Angelo are all an important part of this compilation. And as an added bonus, the book also contains several of *MD's Style And Analysis* articles that closely examine the work of drummers like Bill Bruford, Steve Gadd, Simon Phillips, Steve Smith, and Terry Bozzio.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all the writers and artists who've shared their knowledge with *MD* readers over the years. Obviously, a book such as this would not have been possible without their willingness to share their ideas with other drummers. Serious students of drumming will quickly recognize that *The Best Of Modern Drummer: Rock* is brimming over with hours upon hours of relevant study material, material that will surely benefit anyone who cares to take advantage of the opportunity.

# MODERN DRUMMER

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**MODERN DRUMMER** magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Second-Class Postage paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1993 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

**EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:** MODERN DRUMMER Publications, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel.: (201) 239-4140.

**MODERN DRUMMER** welcomes manuscripts and photographic material, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Such items must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

**MUSIC DEALERS:** Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer, Dealer Service, P.O. Box 389, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. Tel.: (800) 334-DRUM or (815) 734-6013.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** \$27.95 per year; \$49.95, two years. Single copies \$3.95.

**SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE:** Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0480. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Toll Free Tel.: (800) 551-3786.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

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## ED SHAUGHNESSY AND JOHNNY CARSON

As a professional drummer for forty years and a subscriber to *Modern Drummer* almost since its inception, I feel compelled to comment on your September '92 issue. You people have published one of the best issues ever. The lead article on Ed Shaughnessy, by Robyn Flans, is not only interesting, entertaining, and very informative, it also brings out Ed's beautiful personality—a model for all drummers. This issue of *MD* is a "must read" for drummers.

Marv Gordon  
N. Miami Beach FL

I want to thank *MD* for its fitting cover story and tribute to Johnny Carson and the *Tonight Show*, with its spotlight on Ed Shaughnessy. I always found Johnny, "Doc" Severinsen, and Ed to be enjoyable entertainment, and what drummer didn't look forward to the exciting appearances of Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, and other great drumming guests? Drummers nationwide owe thanks to Johnny Carson for promoting drums and drumming. He and his TV gang will be missed by many grateful musicians.

Eliot Landsberg  
Coral Springs FL

## METAL DRUMMERS: THE QUEST FOR CREDIBILITY

Nice article about so-called "metal" drummers [Sep. '92 *MD*]. Tommy Lee's showmanship notwithstanding, I think the article went to show that they're all *Drummers* with a capital *D*. Each one has a particular attitude toward their technique, each one seems to have mastered some level of skill and applied it to their particular kind of music, and each one seems to have studied or learned respect for other styles as well. None of them would be where they are today if they weren't doing something right.

Why pigeonhole them? Aside from

occasional differences in dress or stage performance, they're all slaves to the beat like the rest of the drumming world. Is an African drummer any less a drummer because he knows little of the 26 rudiments—or a jazz drummer any less a drummer for reciprocal reasons? Drums (or percussion instruments in general) are one of the few instruments that we find in all cultures. Let's not squabble over little differences, but rejoice over what is common and learn from these diversities.

Paul Austin  
Danbury CT

## OVERCOMING PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

I'd like to thank you for printing the article on "Overcoming Performance Anxiety" by John Sacks in your September '92 edition. Being a veteran of the drum corps scene and also having various other live gigs, I can certainly relate to the problems of performance anxiety. I appreciate the helpful tips that you have given to me and the rest of your readers.

Paul Francis II  
Chillicothe OH

## STIMULATING CREATIVITY

The *Concepts* column entitled "Stimulating Creativity" by Woody Thompson (Sep. '92 *MD*) was superb. After many years of struggling with "creativity ruts," I have had to really search my conscience to spark new and musical ideas. For some reason, however, I never specifically noted how I managed to escape my ruts. This column, through its excellent suggestions, provides a way out of any non-creative period. Well done, Mr. Thompson!

Dennis Cote  
Denton TX

## MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING TO NAME VALUE

After reading my September *MD*, I felt compelled to comment on Pat Walters' letter condemning "signature model" drumsticks. This "trend" that Mr. Walters refers to is hardly a new concept; top players have been putting their names on musical instruments for years. (Does the name *Les Paul* ring a bell?) Although this is primarily an advertising and marketing concept, musicians in general have benefitted from instruments and equipment that are artist-developed and -tested. I personally love the wide variety of choices, and I don't want to revert back to the days of only being able to choose between 2B, 5B, 7A, etc. I currently play a *Dennis Chambers* model stick—not because his name is on it, but because it is a comfortable stick that I can play in a variety of situations from rock to jazz. I'd like to thank stick manufacturers for their efforts and for giving drummers a choice. In addition, I request that they continue to manufacture 2Bs, 5Bs, and 7As for Pat Walters—so that he can have his choice, too.

David Alexander  
Spring TX

## ALTERNATIVE SNARE CHOICE

In the *It's Questionable* section of the September '92 *MD*, reader Andy Puleo inquired as to how he could improve the snare response of his Gretsch 5 1/2 x14 wood snare. He mentioned that he had tried a 40-strand snare, but found the after-buzz objectionable. Rick Van Horn recommended that he go back to a 20-strand snare and change heads. I would like to suggest that another suitable approach would be to try the Rhythm Tech *Active Snare System*.

The *Active Snare System* was designed to provide greater snare sensitivity without increasing after-buzz. This is accomplished by pre-tensioning the snare wires in a slight bow. This increases the pressure of the wires at the center of the

continued on page 61

# WE'RE NOT TRYING TO REPLACE ACOUSTICS. JUST ATTITUDES!

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## Tommy Aldridge

When Whitesnake split up two years ago, Tommy Aldridge decided to take some time off to weigh his options. "I had a couple of very financially attractive offers from some pretty established bands," says Aldridge, "but I've never been motivated that way. I felt one of the situations just wasn't right for me musically, and the other didn't feel right personality-wise.

"Most of my career," Tommy explains, "I've pretty much been a hired gun—a sideman. I'm not complaining, because it's always been a very lucrative situation, and in some ways it was better because I maintained a semblance of freedom. I had a financial/profit-sharing interest in Whitesnake. The other things I was offered were already established situations. This time I wanted to get involved in something from its inception, not only creatively—in songwriting and things like that—but also in terms of my participation in ownership and such."

At about the same time Whitesnake dissolved, lead singer James Christian was looking to put together a new House of Lords after that group had disbanded. So with Aldridge, Christian, and Gregg Giuffria as the nucleus, they began recording *Demons Down*. "It's the first time in my career that



done. I never aspired to be a session drummer. To me, a successful drummer was one who toured as well. My experience is radically different from that of a session player, who usually goes home to the same place every night. I go from one state to the next, then to the next country, then to the next hemisphere. It's what I aspired to when I was a youngster, and I enjoy it now as much as I ever have.

• Robyn Flans

## Steve Ferrera

Studio and touring ace Steve Ferrera hasn't been too visible for the last couple of years, but not because he hasn't been busy. Quite the contrary: "I've been in the U.K.," says Steve, "doing a *load* of records. I finished doing the Suzanne Vega tour at Wembley Stadium at the end of '88, and some English artists saw me playing and asked if I'd come back after the tour to play on their records. I went over in the winter of '89—ostensibly just for four weeks. I did several record projects, all of which made the Top-10 by that following summer. Other people started wanting me to play on *their* records, and I wound up working over

there for the next two years.

"One of the bands I worked with is called Shakespeare's Sister. Their album is number 3 in the U.K., with a number 1 single called "Stay" that has gone to number 10 in the U.S. after six weeks on the charts. Both of the girls in the band were pregnant at the time, and believe me, it was an experience to work with them. In fact, when they were deciding on a title for the album, I jokingly suggested that they call it *Hormonally Yours*, considering what was going on with them while we were recording. They loved the idea, so that's the title. The other thing I'm proud of about that album is that I

co-produced it and co-wrote about half the songs.

"While I was doing all these projects, met two other British musicians with whom I've formed a band of my own called Lulabox. We signed a deal with MCA late last year, and we'll have an EP out in October and an album scheduled for a January '93 release on the Radioactive label. It's a pop band, with funky grooves underneath and nice Beatle-esque melodies on top. We plan to tour in support of the record, which will get me back on the road in the States. I'm really looking forward to that."

• Rick Van Horn

## Chris Layton

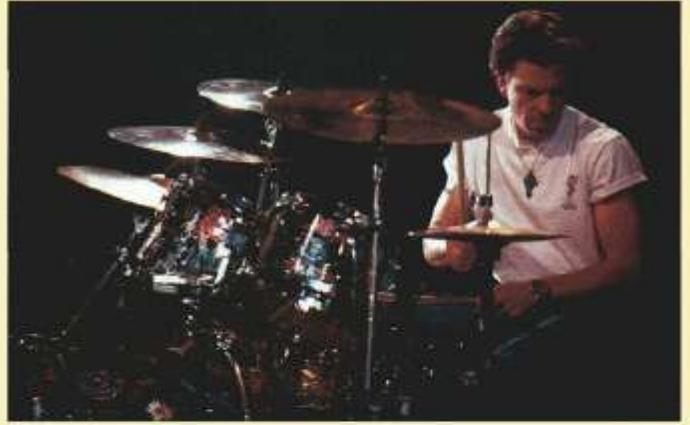
"When this band got off the ground, we all agreed we wouldn't try to make it a second Double Trouble," says drummer Chris Layton. "You know, things have happened, and life goes on. It's a different time now, a time to look ahead and move on."

Layton, who kept the beat behind blues great Stevie Ray Vaughan in the band Double Trouble, is talking about the new band he's in—Arc Angels. Along with Double Trouble bass player Tommy Shannon, the group also includes guitarists Charlie Sexton and Doyle Bramhall III. For Layton and Shannon, Arc Angels is a chance to put behind them the 1990 helicopter crash that killed Vaughan and left the two musicians searching for something to hold on to.

"It was very difficult to get over Stevie's death," recalls Layton in a somber tone. "The guy was a great guitar player and a great friend. You ask yourself why he had to die so young, and you don't have an answer."

Arc Angels came together after Layton, Sexton, Shannon, and Bramhall jammed a bit and then opened a show for bluesman Robert Cray in their hometown of Austin. The show was such a success that almost immediately afterwards, the Angels were being wooed by Geffen Records, who eventually signed the band.

"It all happened so quick," says Layton. "One gig—and what was just an interesting idea—suddenly became a band. Before we



knew it, we were working on songs and going into the recording studio."

Layton adds that he and Shannon have found solace in Arc Angels. According to the drummer, the new band, which cranks out Rolling Stones-like riffs with a bluesy Texas tint and sounds anything but angelic, gives him a chance to reveal a new side of his drumming. "A lot of what you hear on our album from me is the kind of drumming I had been doing before I met Stevie," says Layton. "I'm enjoying this band because it shows that I can do other things besides play the blues."

• Robert Santelli

## Sim Cain

Sim Cain doesn't consider himself a session musician, despite his varied work. In the past year, he's performed with master Indian tabla player Zakir Hussain as part of an artist-in-residence program in Philadelphia, and he's toured and recorded as a hand percussionist for guitarist Marc Ribot, among other projects. But Cain has spent most of the past six years drumming behind the ballistic narrative of Henry Rollins.

"I'd hate to be cooped up in the studio all the time," says the 29-year-old. "I don't think any drummer can play all

styles convincingly, and, for me, it always takes a couple of days to switch gears between projects. Still, I like to play in as many different environments as I can, but I also like to feel more involved with projects than a hired hand would be."

Cain undeniably plays a large role on *The End Of Silence*, the latest release by the Rollins Band—a 74-minute, riff-heavy, bottom-ended, yet dynamic backdrop for Rollins' throaty, angry poetry. "I'm involved in a lot of projects, but this is the heaviest thing I've done to date," says Cain, who cites his twelve-year part-

nership with bassist Andrew Weiss as one of the group's strengths. "Our music comes from collective jamming, and the songs don't stop evolving after they're recorded. There's a definite improvisational aspect to the band, but it's a structured improvisation. Our songs sometimes take on a life of their own, and they sound different from one show to the next, sometimes radically so. The energy of the crowd has a lot to do with what direction we take with our jams."

• Matt Peiken

## News

**Craig Krampf** on new albums by Alabama, Jason Ringenberg (from Jason & the Scorchers), Tanya Tucker, Billy Burnette, Karla Taylor, and Stacy Earle, and on RCA's songwriter's series, for artists Hugh Prestwood and Angela Kasset. He also recently produced Gregg & Rebecca Sparks.

**Russ Kunkel** on some upcoming Clint Black tracks.

**Simon Phillips** on John

Wetton's new solo album.

**Kenny Aronoff** on albums by Bob Seger, Indigo Girls, Meat Loaf, Patty Smyth, Chris Isaak, and Corey Hart. He is currently in the studio with John Mellencamp, and can be seen in his recently released instructional videos, *Power Workout I* and *II*.

**Jimmy DeGrasso** is now with Suicidal Tendencies.

The **Les DeMerle** Band

featuring vocalist Bonny Eisele has just returned to the States after a 13-week engagement at the Westin Plaza Hotel in Singapore. While there, the band recorded two CDs and a laser disc for a Japanese travel agency, to promote jazz in Japan. Les and the band are currently at the Ritz Carlton Hotel on Amelia Island, Florida.

**Dave Black** has recently

co-authored a book with Mitch Peters titled *Cymbals: A Crash Course*, published by Alfred Publishing.

**Peter Erskine** was recently honored by having a doctorate degree conferred upon him by the Berklee College of Music. On the playing front Peter has been busy touring with Chick Corea, replacing Dave Weckl in the Akoustic Band.



# WE FOUND A WAY TO MAKE SOUND LIKE THE A



*Monster backbeats. Breakneck tempos. Single strokes from hell. Close your eyes, and you'd swear there were two drummers up there, but it's just Dennis Chambers being, well, himself. Given his extraordinary abilities, it would be almost impossible to make*

*Dennis sound ordinary. However, two possibilities come to mind. The first is to break his arm (just kidding, Dennis). The second is to take away his new K. Zildjian Dark Crash Thin and Medium Thin cymbals. You see, the new K Dark Crashes are an inte-*

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OK, Dennis. You can take the cast off now.

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## Jeff Hamilton

**Q** I just saw your show in Minneapolis with Ray Brown and Benny Green, and I must say that it was fantastic—a moment I will surely cherish for my whole life. I noticed you had a nice-sounding China Boy (I especially liked its crash ability) and a seemingly normal Zildjian A ride—both with rivets in them. You also had a seemingly normal 18" A crash. Can you elaborate on your exact cymbal setup? I'd like to buy the exact same cymbals—except for the ride, which sounded too "tinty." (I'd like to get a ride that sounds like Ed Thigpen's when he was with Oscar Peterson. I like that bell sound better; maybe I'll have to do some taping to get it.) Also, I noticed that you had calfskin drumheads. How much do those run, and where the heck can you get them?

Tim Duna  
Minneapolis MN

**A** Tim, I was quite surprised that your *Ask A Pro* inquiry also included a critique. First, I'll answer your setup questions. The cymbals you heard were a 50- to 55-year-old 19" K (given to me by my first teacher in Indiana, John McMahan), a 30- to 35-year-old 22" K (given to me by



Mel Lewis), and a 22" or 23" Wuhan Chinese cymbal I bought in 1976. There are three rivets in Mel's cymbal and five or six in the Wuhan. You didn't ask, but my hi-hats are 14" *A New Beats* from the early '70s. The top is a medium-thin and the bottom is a medium. Currently, I'm looking for Zildjian *Pre-Aged* Ks to replace my old Ks.

I would not suggest taping any cymbal. There are good cymbals and bad ones; the tape just chokes them and they become good choked cymbals or bad choked cymbals.

I get my calfskin heads from Professional Drum Shop in Hollywood, California. Stan Keyawa, the owner, is one of the few people who keep them in stock. The prices are comparable to most plastic heads when you consider that calf will last a long time if played properly.

In response to your critique of my "tinty" cymbal, it's the one I've been using since joining Oscar Peterson two years ago. I'm glad you enjoyed the rest of our performance. Next time, introduce yourself and we can discuss your questions, whether they involve equipment or (more importantly) the music.

## Mikkey Dee

**Q** I've been a King Diamond fan—and more specifically a Mikkey Dee fan—since 1987's *Abigail* release. I would like to know what series of Sonor drums you play, what type of heads you use, and any muffling techniques you may have used on the *Them* album. The drums sound great!

Next, what made you leave King Diamond's band? And finally, I've heard that you're on the new Motorhead album. Is this true? If so,

when will it be released?

Jason Camarillo  
Whittier CA

**A** I use Sonor *Phonic Plus* drums when I'm on the road, and *Force 3000* drums in the studio. The *Force 3000* drums are very easy to work with in the studio and sound great, but they're not as roadworthy as the thicker, heavier *Phonic Plus* drums. All my heads are Remo: *Ambassadors* on the toms, a *CS*

batter on the snare, and an *Ebony Pinstripe* on the bass drum. When we recorded, I didn't use any muffling—but I did tune my drums a special way. I try to stay away from muffling my drums.

My reasons for leaving King Diamond were many; we had different opinions about a lot of things. I wasn't enjoying myself at the end, and for me that's the most important reason to play. As for the new Motorhead album: It's out now, so go get it!



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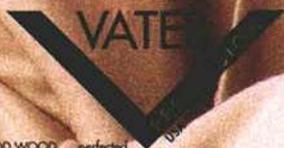
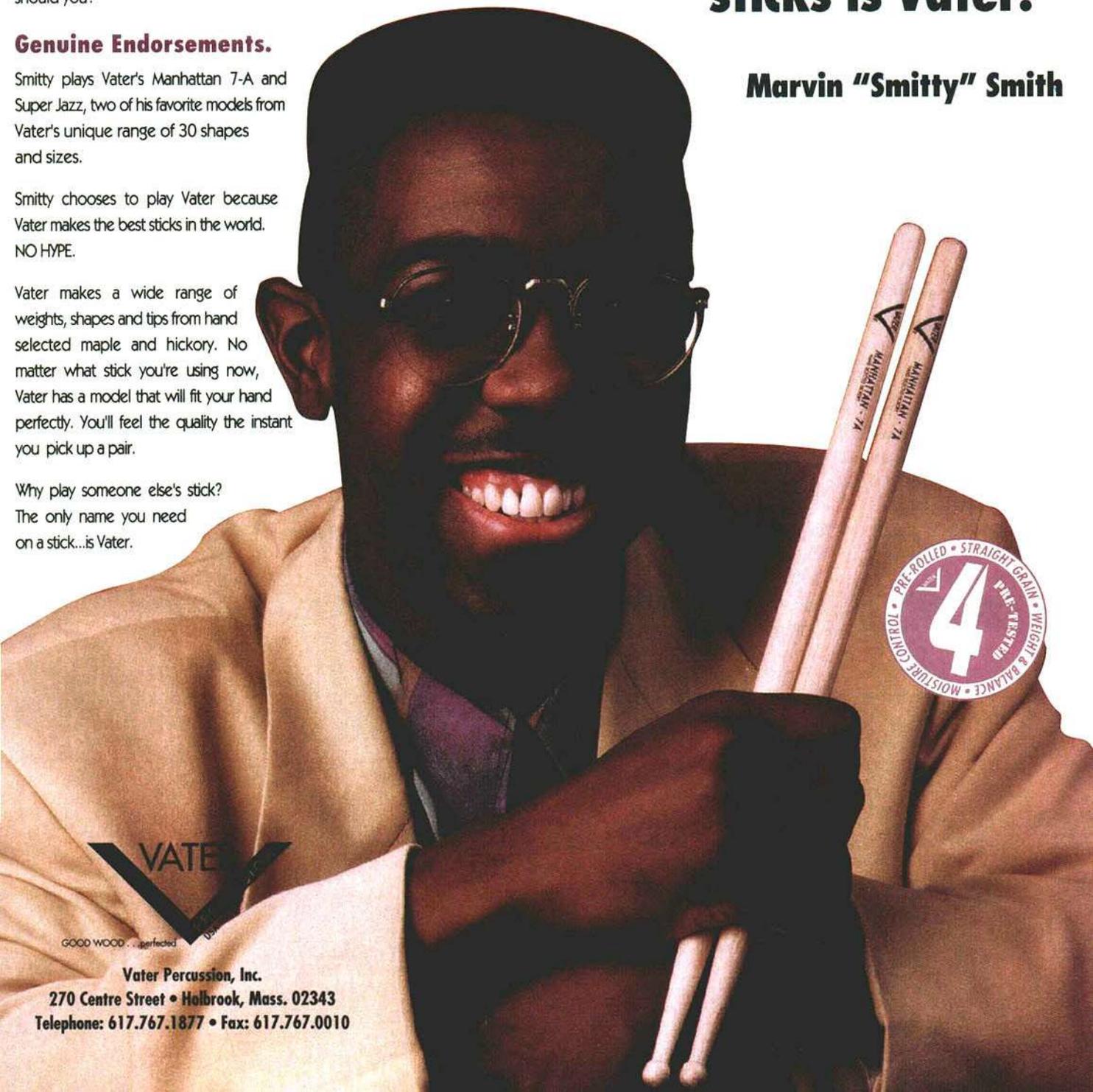
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## ODD TIMES ON AN R-70

**Q** I've just purchased a Roland *R-70* drum machine. One of the things I like to use it for is to program exercises from drum books I'm working out of. Can you tell me how I can program odd time signatures? I have a book by Michael Lauren called *Welcome To Odd Times*, and it would help me a lot to be able to program the patterns in the book so that I can get a better idea of how they sound before I work through them with a click or metronome.

Chris Randall  
Akron OH

**A** Roland's Percussion Product Manager, Steve Fisher, provided us with the following information: "To program odd time signatures in the *R-70*, hold shift and press the 'erase/format' button. Use the cursor and the 'value up' and 'value down' buttons to change the values for any time signature you need. To create multiple patterns in your odd time signature, use the 'pattern copy' function (after you have formatted the pattern), and copy as many patterns as you need for your song.

"If you have any other questions about the *R-70* or any Roland product, you can call our product support lines between 8:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. (Pacific Time) any business day at (213) 685-5141."

## CYMBAL WARRANTIES

**Q** I've always wondered: When you pay over a hundred dollars for a piece of bronze, do you get a warranty for a few months against cracks and dents?

Ryan Fitch  
Zionsville IN

**A** Yes, you do—as long as those cracks or dents are the result of a manufacturing defect and not caused by misuse or abuse. Paiste warrants their cymbals against damage resulting from material or workmanship defects for six months from the date of purchase; Sabian and Zildjian warrant theirs for one year.

Meinl, UFIP, Istanbul, and other brands offer similar warranties.

The procedure is to return the cymbal to the manufacturer (generally via the dealer you purchased it from, but not always), along with the sales slip (if possible). The manufacturer will inspect the cymbal, and may ask you for details about your playing style, how the cymbal was handled and stored, what sticks you use, and other factors that may have affected the cymbal. If they determine that the damage was, in fact, the result of a manufacturing defect, they will replace the cymbal. If not, they will generally return the damaged cymbal with a report detailing their reasons for denying your claim. But since all of the major cymbal companies are interested in promoting customer goodwill, this rarely happens. Generally, only cases of obvious misuse are denied.

## AMPLIFYING ELECTRONIC DRUMS

**Q** I have a set of Sapphire electronic drums and an LP *Spike* kit, which I connect to an Alesis *D4*—all on a Gibraltar rack. Currently, I pump the main outputs of the *D4* into my stereo aux to play at home. Could you recommend some amps/speakers that would be suitable for playing in clubs? If it makes a difference, I'll be playing Top-40 stuff. I may also want a mixer, to boost the cymbals, since their gain is rather low.

Mark Latessa  
Warminster PA

**A** We can't recommend specific brands or models of speakers and amps, because there are so many good ones, and much of your choice would depend on your budget. We can, however, give you some advice as to what to look for in a speaker/amp system.

Your speaker cabinets should be at least two-way (a low-frequency speaker or "woofer" and a high-frequency horn or "tweeter"); a three-way system (lows, mids, and highs) would be even better. The electronic drumkit produces frequencies ranging from the lowest kick drums to the most piercing rimshots and

cymbal crashes, and you need speaker/horn combinations capable of reproducing them accurately. The problem with this is that many two-way or three-way combination enclosures are pretty big, and if you are toting around your own system (as opposed to going completely through the band's PA), size is liable to be an important factor to you. So you want to achieve a compromise between acoustic frequency range and physical compactness, leaning toward the biggest speakers you can handle in order to get maximum bass reproduction.

Power is also important. Getting a good kick drum sound means moving a lot of air at low frequencies, and this generally eats up a tremendous amount of power from your amp. Thus, you want to get a power amp with the most "oomph" you can afford. Once again, the matter of size comes into play, because generally speaking, the more powerful the amplifier, the bigger and heavier it is. (One exception is the Carver line; they have several high-powered amps in incredibly compact sizes. But they're also expensive.)

If you need to have independent control over different sounds from the *D4*, you will certainly need a mixer. There are several brands of rack-mountable "line mixers" that are compact and simple to work with. Most do not have all the sophisticated sound-processing features that a "desktop" mixer would have, but this may not be a problem, since you can "process" your original sound at the source.

Another alternative would be to run your electronic drums through your band's P.A. (assuming that *it* has the speakers and amplification to handle them). In that case, you need to make sure you have adequate monitoring capability (speakers and power) to hear yourself for performance purposes. For either a monitor system or your own self-contained sound system, your best bet is to discuss your needs with a qualified (and cooperative) pro-audio salesman who can help you decide on equipment that fits your acoustic needs, your vehicle, and your budget.

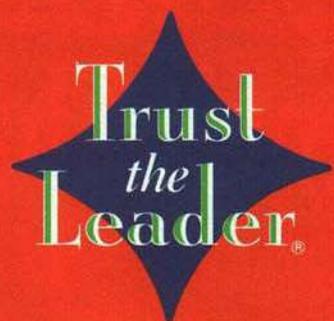


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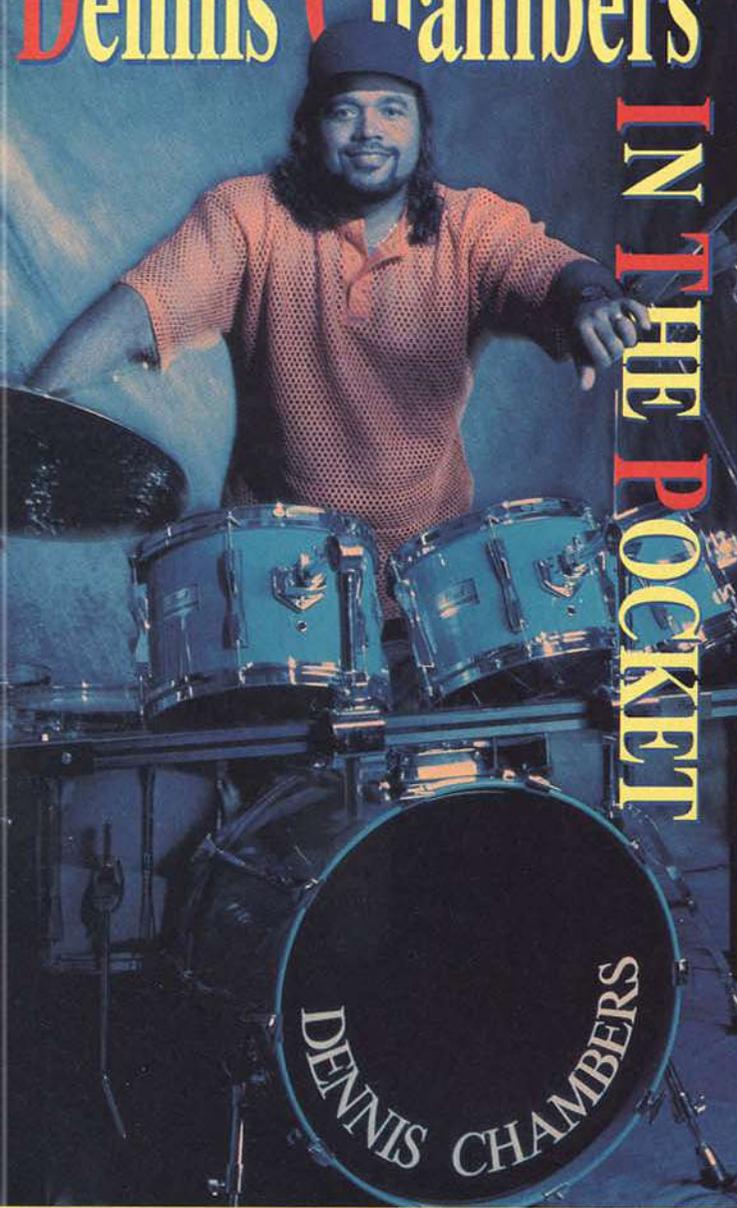
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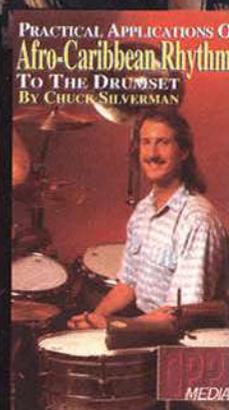
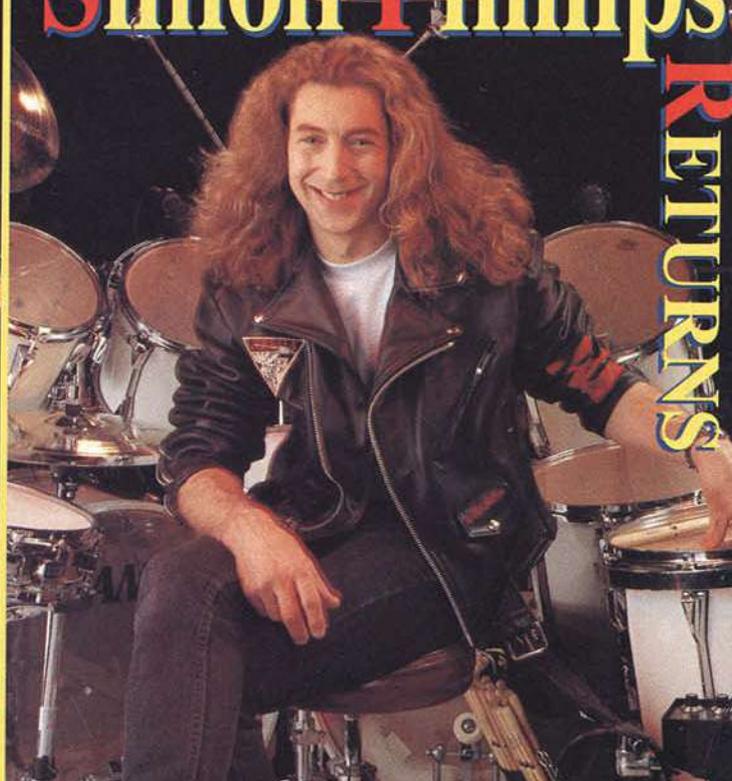
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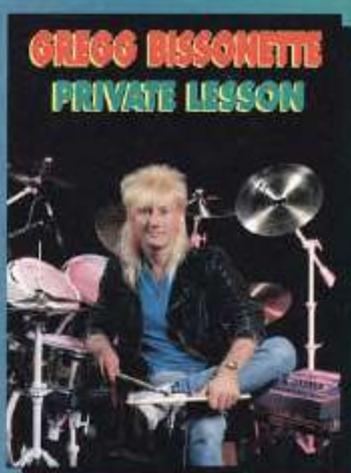
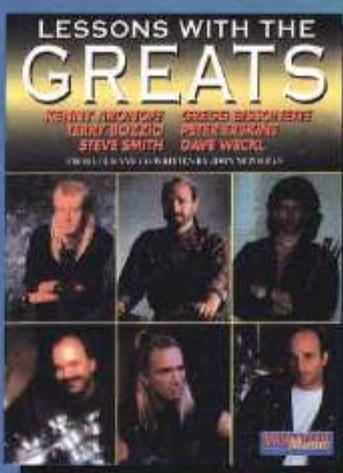
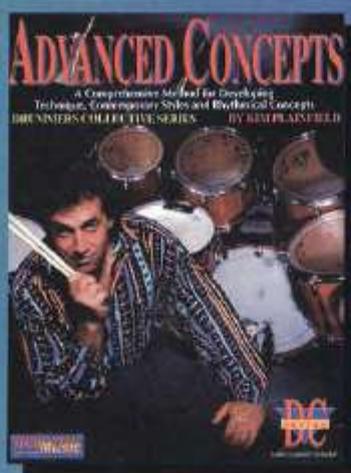
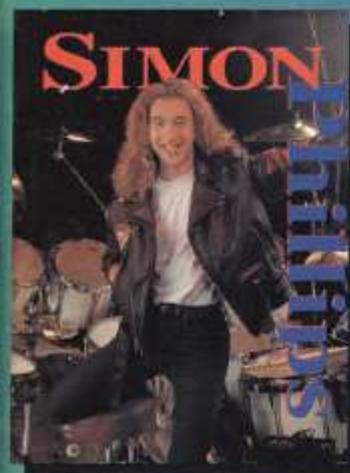
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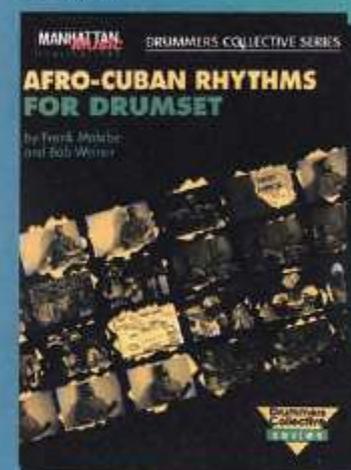
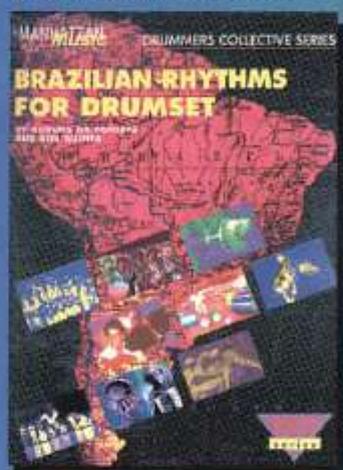
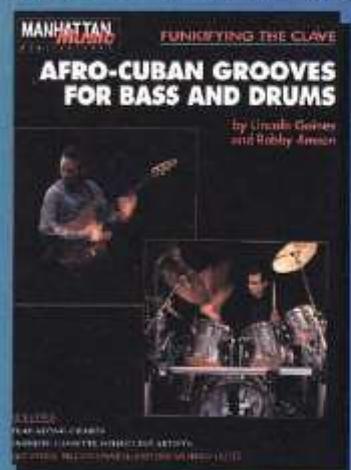
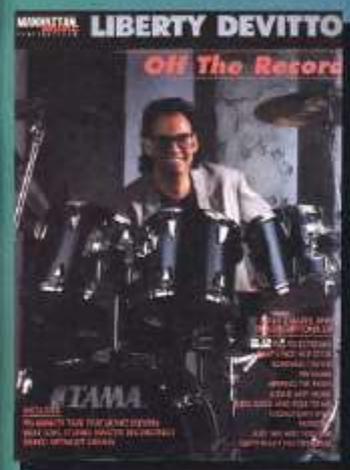


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 PUBLICATIONS



# Danny Gottlieb On...

■ by Ken Micallef

Known for his shimmering cymbal work and propulsive groove with the likes of Pat Metheny, Gil Evans, the Mahavishnu Orchestra, and his own band, Elements, Danny Gottlieb is usually typecast as a fusion drummer. But one listen to his recent solo release, *Brooklyn Blues*, shakes up such notions. The album is a straight-ahead, bebop burner that shows Gottlieb's surprising propensity for swing.

Gottlieb is the owner of one of New York's busiest stick bags; look for him on the Blues Brothers' *Red, White, And Blues*, Dade's *In The Shade*, Mark Egan's *Beyond Words*, and on his weekly gig with the Mel Lewis Big Band at the Village Vanguard in Manhattan.



## ...Will Kennedy

Dave Samuels: "Knots" (from *Natural Selection*)

Kennedy: drums; Samuels: vibes; Jimmy Haslip: bass; Russell Ferrante: piano

DG: I know that tune. I even think I played it with Dave. I know he was doing a record with the Yellowjackets, so that must be Will Kennedy. He's a great drummer. The first thing I noticed is that he's got an incredible single-stroke roll. And the sound of the tom-toms is really present. That's a fun song to play; you can really burn on it. It's also an easy song to rush and go crazy on, but Will really kept it in check. He played a lot, but he played very musically at the same time. This is a good representation of the way he plays live, in a freer jazz context. Samuels is also a monster. Good interplay.

## ...Trilok Gurtu

"Shobarock" (from *Usfret*)

Gurtu: percussion, drums, tablas, voice; Ralph Towner: acoustic guitar; Don Cherry: trumpet; L. Shankar: violin; Daniel Goyone: piano; Jonas Hellborg: bass

DG: My guess is Trilok Gurtu's record. He doesn't use a bass drum, so that was a tip-off. He uses these RotoTom-type things and a plate. Airto used to name him as his favorite percussionist. He sits on the floor when he plays, using a little 10" snare drum and small hi-hats. He is looking for a different approach. He's like Jack DeJohnette sitting on the floor playing some semblance of a drumkit with percussion. We've discussed writing a

book together about Indian drum rhythms for the Westerner. Trilok's a monster.

## ...Bill Stewart

Joe Lovano: "Here And Now" (from *Landmarks*)

Stewart: drums; Lovano: tenor saxophone; Ken Werner: piano; Marc Johnson: bass

DG: I think that's great playing, in a real individual style. I heard some Jack DeJohnette, some Jimmy Cobb, and some Billy Higgins. There was some snare drum ruff stuff in there that was incredibly neat, and also some slick things with the hi-hat. Great feel, good cymbal sound, wide-open drum sound...jazz tradition.

KM: It's Bill Stewart.

DG: That's Bill Stewart? Amazing! Having heard him play R&B with Maceo Parker makes that even more amazing. This isn't someone who "sort of" plays jazz. This is someone with a deep commitment to the jazz tradition. He doesn't give away the fact that he can play other things too. That snare drum stuff knocked me out. Right on Bill!

## ...Steve Gadd

Ben Sidran: "Seven Steps To Heaven" (from *The Cat And The Hat*)

Gadd: drums; Sidran: vocals, piano; Joe Henderson: tenor sax; Abe Laboriel: bass; Lee Ritenour: guitar

DG: A totally novel approach with Steve Gadd. Just the fact that they would do this tune in a funky, rhythmic style like that is interesting. The sound of the drums sounded like the '70s, which was a giveaway. It was very loose Steve Gadd, with a lot of crashing on the cymbals, which I never heard him do a lot in his studio heyday. Steve is one of the originators of this style, and one of the great artists on the instrument. He was able to incorporate an individual style into something that was accepted into a commercial idiom.

Steve seems like one of the nicest guys on the planet—very real. I love him for his uniqueness—for that style he kind of invented. It's interesting to see where other drummers have taken it, like Weckl, Cliff Almond, Zach Danziger, and Tom Brechtlein. They've all drawn on Steve's style.

## ...Zach Danziger

Chuck Loeb: "Starstream" (from *Balance*)

Danziger: drums; Loeb: guitar, synthesizer, and computer programming; Jon Werking: piano; Marc Johnson: bass

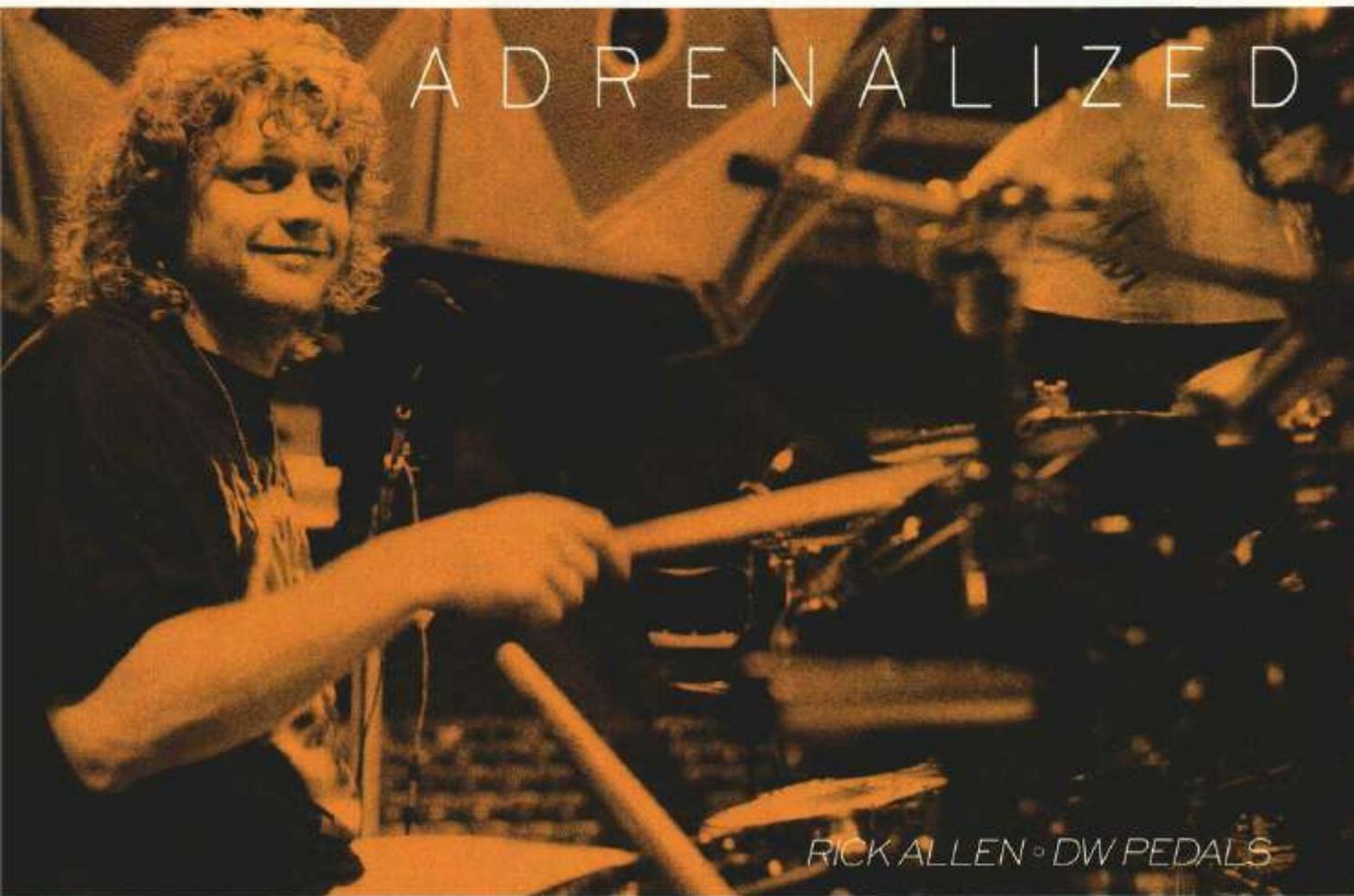
DG: My first guess would be Zach Danziger, and I wonder if it's a Chuck Loeb record.

KM: You're right.

DG: I heard Zach with Eddie Gomez, who I also play with. I heard them on a gig in Italy where Zach had to play this horrible set of drums. He totally blew me away. Zach comes out of the Steve Gadd, Dave Weckl school—very slick, very interesting

continued on page 70

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# RICKY



# Beatmaster For Michael Jackson

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There is an old adage: If you want to get something done, give it to the busiest person you know. People who are incredibly busy tend to have boundless energy, and so it is with Ricky Lawson.

Talking to Lawson during the two months of rehearsals for the Michael Jackson tour was like interacting with a tornado. His mornings were occupied preparing for a gig he had with Paradise Found (a band he co-leads with partner Bill Cantos) or working in his 24-track digital studio, helping some would-be bands get a start. Other mornings, however, were spent doing business in preparation for the day's rehearsal. It didn't leave Lawson much time to see his two children (Ricky has two others in Detroit from a previous marriage), but he'd see them off to school, and the next time he'd see them would be the next morning, going off to school again.

Rehearsals began at 2:00 at Universal, but Ricky, who lives an hour away, obviously had to leave considerably earlier. While rehearsals concluded at 11:00 P.M., Lawson invariably was there until 12:00 or 1:00, making adjustments and preparing for the next day. After a long drive home and a few more hours of sleep, he'd get up and do it again.

But work has never intimidated Lawson, who taught himself to play drums while growing up in Detroit. He'd borrow his Uncle Harold's drumset during the week, since Harold played on the weekends. His other uncle, Paul Riser, a successful arranger for Motown, served as a great inspiration, while Ricky's mom and Aunt Joanne looked after him and helped keep him "on the right track."

In fact, Uncle Paul is responsible for having first hooked Lawson up with the Brothers Johnson while Ricky was working with Roy Ayers. It was the beginning of a string of top artists Ricky has worked with, including Flora Purim and Airto, George Duke, Stevie Wonder, Kenny Loggins, Al Jarreau, the Yellowjackets, Lionel Richie, Whitney Houston, and now Michael Jackson—not to mention a substantial number of other record projects.

So Ricky isn't complaining. He's happy to be working in the major leagues—although, during the two months of rehearsals, the hectic pace of the upcoming world tour was looking to Lawson more like a much-needed vacation!

**By Robyn Flans**  
**Photos by Michael Bloom**

**RF:** Why two months of rehearsals? How long can it take to learn the music?

**RL:** They can give us a list of songs that we can learn in a week, but then we have to rearrange the songs, or they might even put in some new songs. We have to deal with the wardrobe, new equipment, the order of the tunes, and program changes. We also have to set up special sound effects for certain illusions that happen, plus set changes. There is a lot of choreography. In some of the songs, my drum technician, David Wills, has some choreography that he has to deal with, in terms of pushing buttons, stopping and starting things.

**RF:** What kind of machinery and equipment are you using?

**RL:** I have a custom-made drumset for this tour. It's designed by Remo and has photos of Michael's album cover on it. We call it the "Dangerous" drumset. I also use an *MPC* drum machine, and a sequencer and sampler by Akai. I use two Akai *S-1000* samplers because there are sounds on the record that Michael wants to hear. That's the heart of the equipment.

**RF:** One thing I've noticed about your kit is your ride cymbal. Why is it up so high?

**RL:** Quite simply, so I can see.

**RF:** Isn't it hard to play that way?

**RL:** No, you get used to it. Ndugu's [Chancier] ride cymbal is even higher than mine. It's just good to be able to see who you're playing with. A lot of times the ride cymbal is in the way. Either it's too low to play or it's placed where you can't see the musical director or somebody on stage that you need to be seeing. Over the years it's just sort of slowly gotten up there. And it looks good, too, I think.

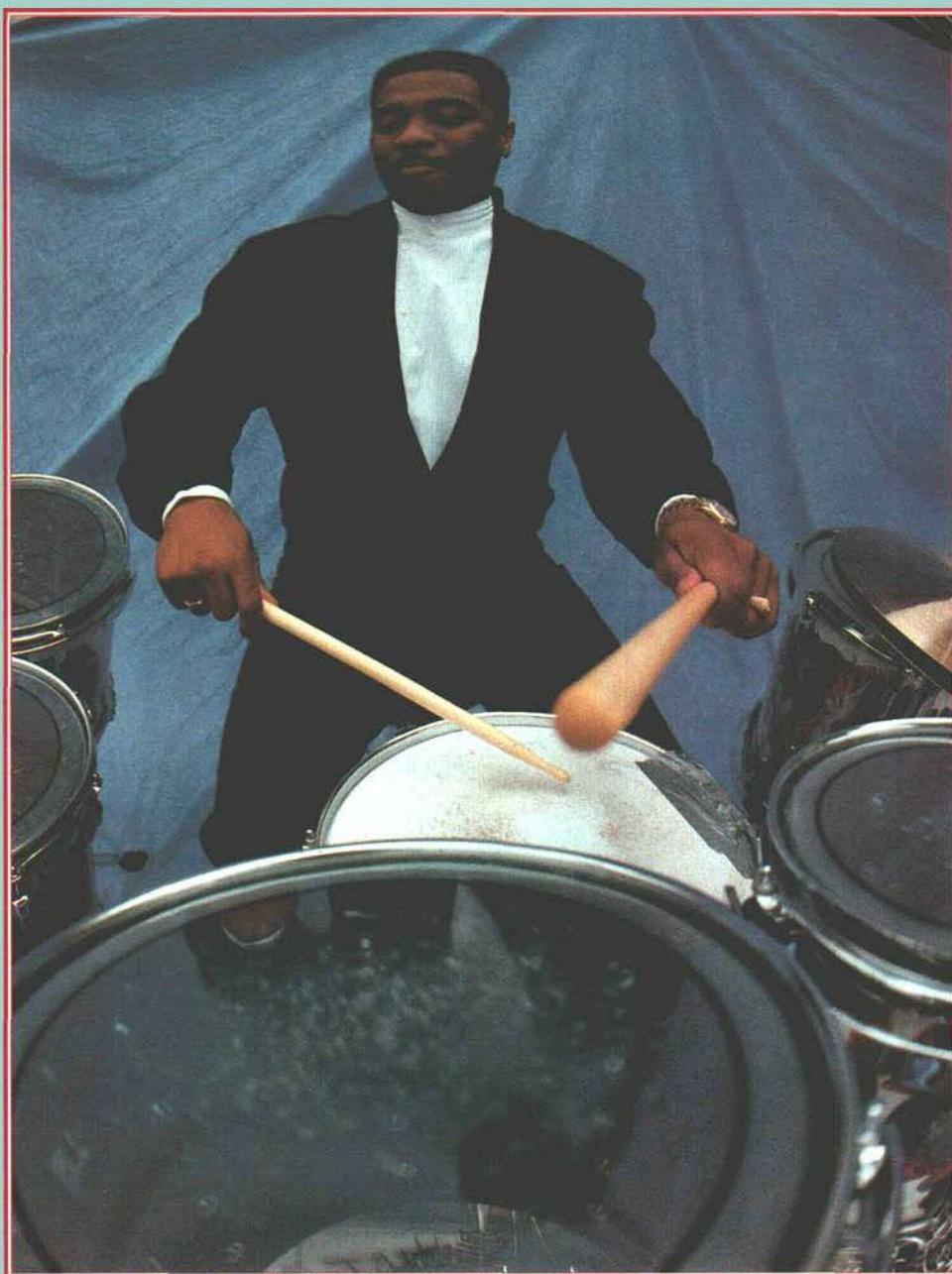
**RF:** You were just talking about

choreography. Jonathan Moffet once told me that no matter how much rehearsal there was, in concert, Michael Jackson does impromptu steps that the drummer has to capture and punctuate.

**RL:** To a certain degree. When everybody in the group is playing, he can ad-lib a little bit, but normally, if he doesn't get in the right spot, a prop might nail him. Things are flying all over the stage. He's got to hit the correct spot. There are songs like "Billie Jean," where he does a dance bit by himself, so he might ad-lib that. I'm the only one playing then, so he may go off there.

**RF:** Can you be specific as to how you might punctuate a move?

**RL:** You just have to keep your eye on him. He



wants you to play the show first. If you have some kind of creativity and you can come up with some things that might uplift his spirit, he's into that. But you have to know when to do it and when not to.

That comes with experience. You can't get too far out.

**RF:** So he doesn't need to hear the same thing every night?

**RL:** Right, at least in terms of the ad-libbing areas, whatever they are designated to be. Michael always gives the guys plenty of room to play. He allows growth, whereas a lot of people don't. He allows us to have input in arranging the music. Some of us, like myself, Gregg Phillinganes, and some members on the last tour, like Jennifer Batten and Don Boyette, had a lot of input in arranging some of the tunes, like "Heart-break Hotel." It was a nice arrangement, and they put real good choreography to that.

Michael likes people around him who have creative minds and who don't just play the record. He gets people around him he can believe in.

**RF:** Does anything come to mind if I ask you some of the fun punctuations you get to do? For instance,

what do you do when he moon walks?

**RL:** It varies. To me ad-libbing is sort of like eating a meal; you don't really want to eat the same meal all the time, so it's all up to the interpretation at the moment. One night we were playing "Billy Jean," and in the second verse he does a dance move where he drops his hand, and I just decided to hit a low floor tom. I was thinking, "What can I do that doesn't sound too loud, yet punctuates him and stays in the groove?" So I nailed it. He went crazy, and everybody in the band went crazy, because they didn't expect it. But now they love it; if I don't play it, I'm not playing the song.

Obviously that's a subtle thing, but when you're working with a big band, you can't take it too far out. The dancers are doing a lot of claps, hits, pats, and moves, and I have to be on top of it. There are six dancers and singers, as well as the full band. It's a big job, but I'm blessed and honored to even be a part of Michael's life, let alone to work with him.

**RF:** How did the gig come about?

**RL:** It's developed over a number of years. I played on a tune on the Jacksons' *Destiny* album called "The Things I Do For You,"

**Ricky's Kit**

**Drumset:** Remo in custom "Dangerous" finish  
**A.** 5 x 14 snare  
**B.** 8 x 8 tom  
**C.** 10x10tom  
**D.** 12 x 12 tom  
**E.** 14 x 14 tom  
**F.** 15x15 tom  
**G.** 16 x 16 floor tom  
**H.** 16 x 20 bass drum  
**I.** 16 x 22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Paiste *Signature*  
**1.** 13" *Sound Edge* hi-hats  
**2.** 17" *Full Crash*  
**3.** 16" *Full Crash*  
**4.** 20" *Dry Ride*  
**5.** 16" *Full Crash*  
**6.** 20" China

**Hardware:** All Remo, except for Drum Workshop pedals and RIMS tom mounts

**Heads:** Remo *Falams K* on snare, *Pinstripes* on tops of toms and bass drum batters, and clear *Ambassadors* on bottoms of toms

**Sticks:** Dean Markley

and it all stemmed from that and keeping in touch with Gregg Phillinganes. On the last tour we did, I was substituting for Jonathan Moffet.

Evidently, something happened schedule-wise where Michael went out early, and Jonathan, who was out with Madonna, stayed out late. I wound up doing the tour.

**RF:** Did you have to audition for it?

**RL:** No, I was just substituting. I had done a session up at Tito Jackson's house for a project they were doing, and one of the production people asked if I could do Michael's rehearsals. Evidently, I got in there and wound up being an asset to the situation, not only as a player, but hopefully personality-wise as well. And it all worked out. I had just come off the *Dancing On The Ceiling* tour with Lionel Richie. I was off for ninety days and walked right into Michael's *Bad* tour, where the rehearsals and the tour were eighteen months long.

**RF:** What's different on this tour musically for you than on the *Bad* tour?

**RL:** The new album is more drum-oriented and more *electronic* drum-oriented than some of his past albums. What you really hear on this album are drums and him, so it's good for me. It's gotten me working real hard. I have to trigger a lot more electronic sounds than I did in past situations. I had a

lot of homework to do, and I had to invest some money in the technology to be able to accommodate the different things.

Besides the electronics, I've had to get my hands on some other things. I called Paiste about getting a big gong for the song "Remember The Time." For that song onstage it's an Egyptian scene, I'm wearing a turban and a robe, and the gong comes down from the heavens. I hit it four times, and we break into a percussion situation.

**RF:** Sounds like fun. What are your favorite songs to play?

**RL:** My favorite song is "Rock With You." That's a great tune. It's a very happy, uplifting, spirited kind of song, and that's my thing. I'm into that. There's so much negativity and sadness around, so I'm really into the stuff that pulls you away from that. I also like to play "The Way You Make Me Feel." That's a fun tune to play, and it has a great groove. People always get off on shuffles. I like "Man In The Mirror," too. I like the message behind it: If you want to make the world a better place, then make a change within yourself.

**RF:** You've done some long touring. That must be hard on your family.

**RL:** I usually try to bring the kids out on tour as another form of education for them. They get a chance to meet the entertainers and hang out in that world. I took them out



on Whitney Houston's tour, and she loves children. We toured on the bus, and they were able to ride on the bus and hang out with the guys.

**RF:** Aren't busses hard to travel on?

**RL:** For me they are. I don't sleep very well on a bus. It's like a little gremlin is taking a stick and hitting me all night. And the compartments are very small, so they can be claustrophobic. But the kids loved it. And as far as seeing the kids besides that, if I'm in the States, sometimes I can fly home.

**RF:** One thing you said to me about the Lionel Richie tour was that you were impressed by the fact that it was a situation where Lionel was "one of the guys," and you could go to him if you needed to talk about something; there was no middle man.

**RL:** Whitney was the same way. She made herself accessible. And they really don't have to do that.

**RF:** So here you are in a situation that has got to be the opposite.

**RL:** Well, you have to understand it's not *who* you're dealing with, but *what* you're dealing with. Michael Jackson, in a way, is like the president. You can't just walk into the Oval Office and say, "Hey George, how 'ya doing today?" Michael has made this thing into an empire.

**RF:** So how do you, as a musician, deal with that inacces-

sibility?

**RL:** I understand it and adjust. He makes himself accessible when he has time, but you have to understand that everywhere he goes, everybody is trying to get to him, from presidents to emperors to media people.... He's great, and I really admire him as a person.

**RF:** The last time we talked, you were at a crossroads in your life. You had just made the decision to leave the Yellowjackets, and you were working with Lionel. It was a hard time for you.

**RL:** I won a Grammy shortly after that decision went down. It was for a composition I wrote for the Yellowjackets, which made it even stranger. Mark Russo from the Yellowjackets called me to congratulate me on "And You Know That" being nominated—and it actually won.

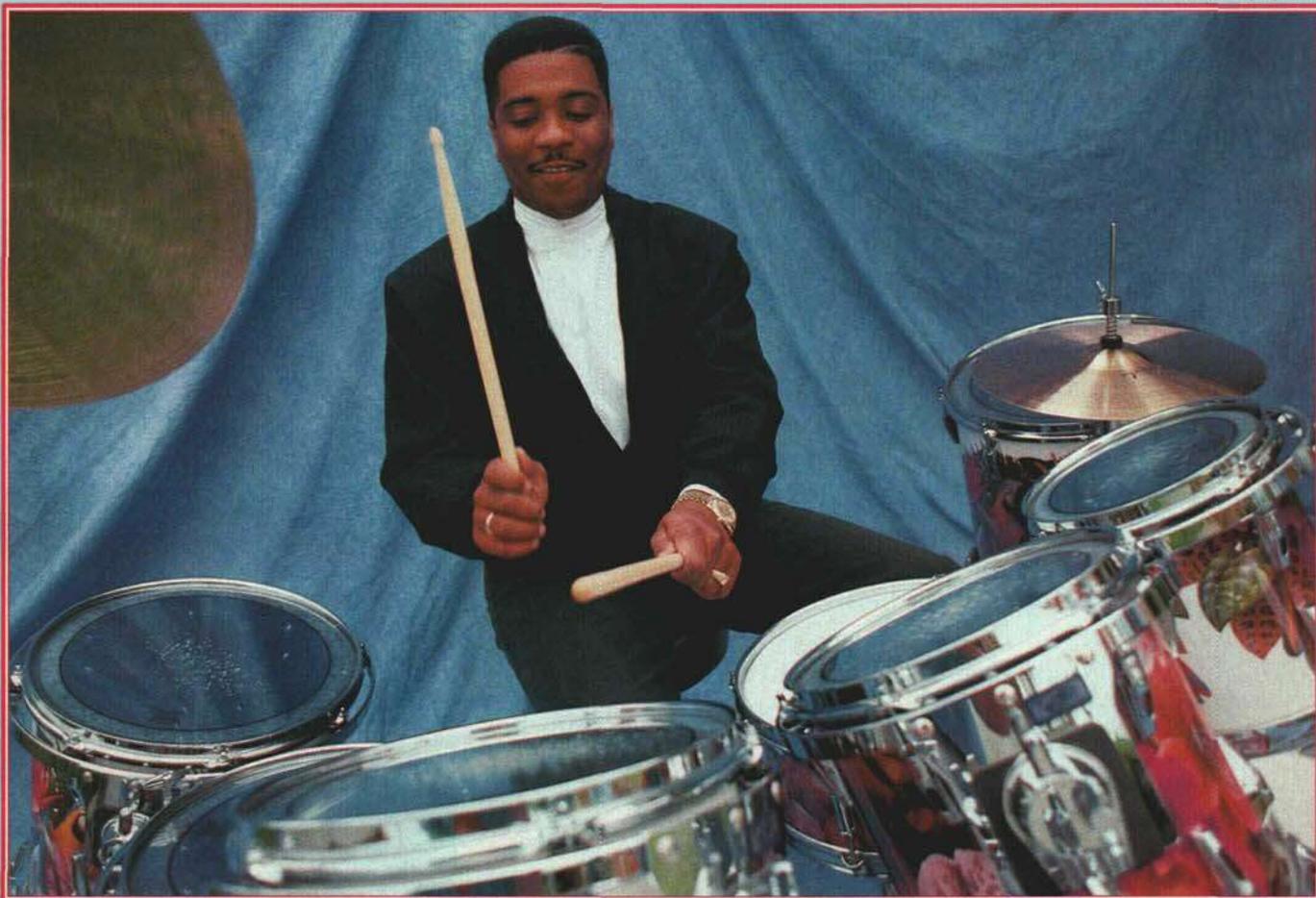
**RF:** What timing. That must have made you feel pretty weird.

**RL:** Weird, but good. I try to stay on the up side of things. I said, "Hey, I was able to contribute to the guys' getting their first Grammy award, and if I was going to leave a band, this was the best way to leave them."

**RF:** So why did you go with Lionel?

**RL:** The move to work with Lionel was for economic reasons. I had just bought a home, and I have a family to support. Even now, the guys in the Yellowjackets

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# Extreme's

# Paul Geary

It's an ironic tale: In June of 1991, Extreme catapulted to the number-one slot on the singles chart with "More Than Words," and remained somewhere near the Top-10 for the ensuing months of that year. The breezy ballad features dual vocals, a single acoustic guitar, and unfortunately, *no drums*. The album that spawned it, *Pornograffiti*, released in late 1990, followed to become a hit album on the heels of the single. Another chartbuster for the band, "Hole Hearted," a country-tinged rock stomp, sported only a bass drum.

But despite generally being out of the spotlight thus far, Extreme drummer Paul Geary has begun to purloin a faithful following. Geary's "trade secret" is really no secret at all. It's down to his simple, uncompromising style, booming clarity, and masterful command of time and tempos both live and on record (including 1987's *Extreme*, 1990's *Pornograffiti*, and their latest, *Three Sides To Every Story*).

In the pages of *Modern Drummer* you've probably seen words like "tasteful" and "straightforward" used to describe an economic style of drumming. But "tasteful" doesn't have to mean reserved or laid back—especially when a player like Geary is at the helm.

**By Teri Soccone**





**TS:** More than a decade ago you started what has now become Extreme.

**PG:** That's right. Gary [Cherone, vocals] and I put this together. Originally, we were called the Dream. Up until '85 we were a popular local band in Boston. Then in early '86 we became a new band when we incorporated Nuno [Bettencourt, guitar] and Pat [Badger, bass]. That's when our music took a big swing in direction.

**TS:** What were you like before the swing?

**PG:** It was more of a power-pop kind of thing, but we had a thick guitar, which kept it rocking. Nuno had been in a heavy metal band, so when he and Pat joined us, it was like a train crash of heavy metal and pop, which ended up as a funk/rock kind of thing. The sound has changed a lot over the last six years. As we began to play together, we found out all the cool things we could do with the kind of sounds we were making. The approach we found

was that the drums and bass were all about a pulse and just holding ground, with Nuno's innovative guitars. So by the end of '87, we had a deal with A&M Records.

**TS:** After recruiting Nuno and Pat, things took off pretty quickly for the band.

**PG:** It really did go fast once we had the right players. We were only playing a year and a half as Extreme when we were signed by a major label.

**TS:** How did the group actually come together?

**PG:** When Gary and I were playing together, Nuno and Pat were in different bands. There was a nightclub in Boston that we frequented as players, and on Halloween, 1984, they had a masquerade jam where members from all the different bands would come together and pretend to be a famous band such as Aerosmith or Van Halen. The idea was that no two players from the same group could be

in the band. Gary was going to be "Steve Tyler" in the Aerosmith clone band, Nuno was going to be "Joe Perry," Pat was going to play bass, and another drummer was going to be "Joey Kramer." But the drummer broke his leg that day, so they made an exception and I filled in. Extreme played together that night as a band, but we had no idea that in two years we would actually become a real band, and then go on to have a hit record down the road!

So we "played" Aerosmith together, and then at the end of the night everybody said their goodbyes and that was it. Then when Gary and I needed a guitar player, we said, "What about that guy who played with us that Halloween?" And that's how Nuno was brought in. Then about six months later the old bass player left the band, and that's when Pat joined. It just felt great and we knew we had something special just from rehears-



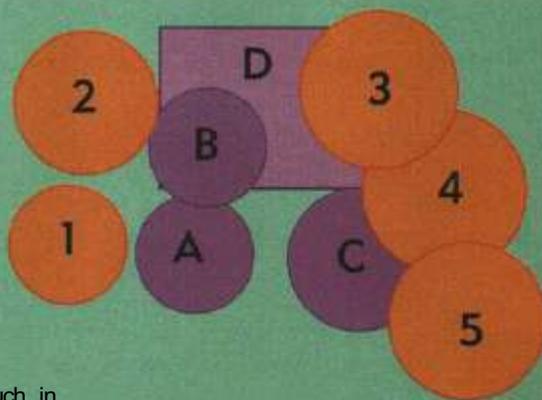
ing. Above all, we knew we had the right group of guys. That's when we realized that we had once all played together, and who would have known then how things would work out?

**TS:** What was it about Pat that made things click immediately between you?

**PG:** He was willing to come and play simple, solid bass lines that really complemented the song. In the past, bass players who had auditioned were more interested in being great technical bass players, but not the best players for the *band*. Those other guys were more into doing their own thing. For once, we found a bass player who was willing to play quarter notes if needed. My drumming has always been simple, and I try to play with as much conviction as possible. With Pat, that really forms a nice rhythm section, because it allows our guitar player the freedom to just go off in any direction and make any sound. While

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## Paul's Kit



**Drumset:** Remo Mastertouch in custom "Pornograffiti" finish

- A. 6 1/2 x 14 snare
- B. 12 x 13 tom
- C. 16x16 floor tom
- D. 16 x 22 bass drum

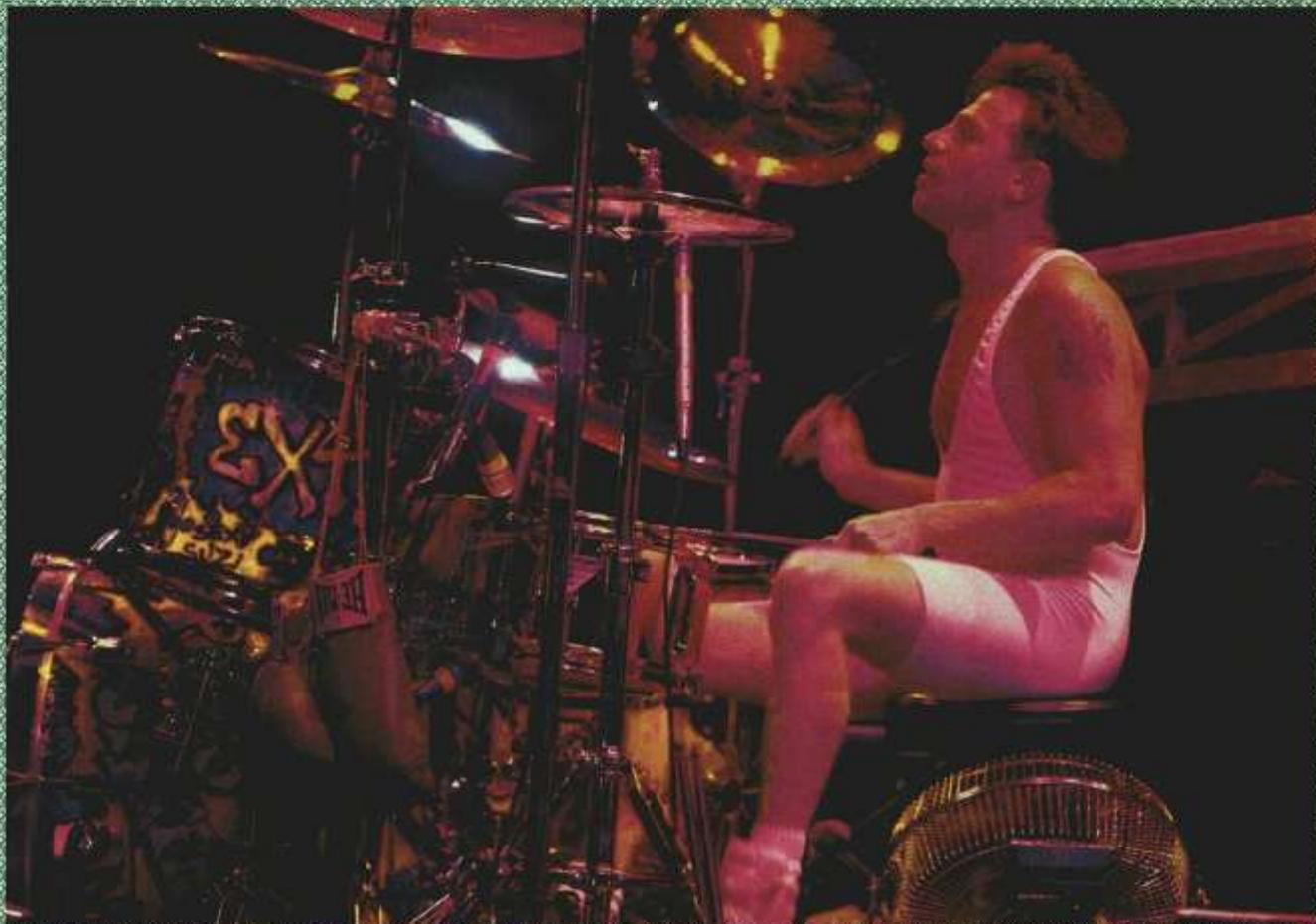
**Cymbals:** Zildjian

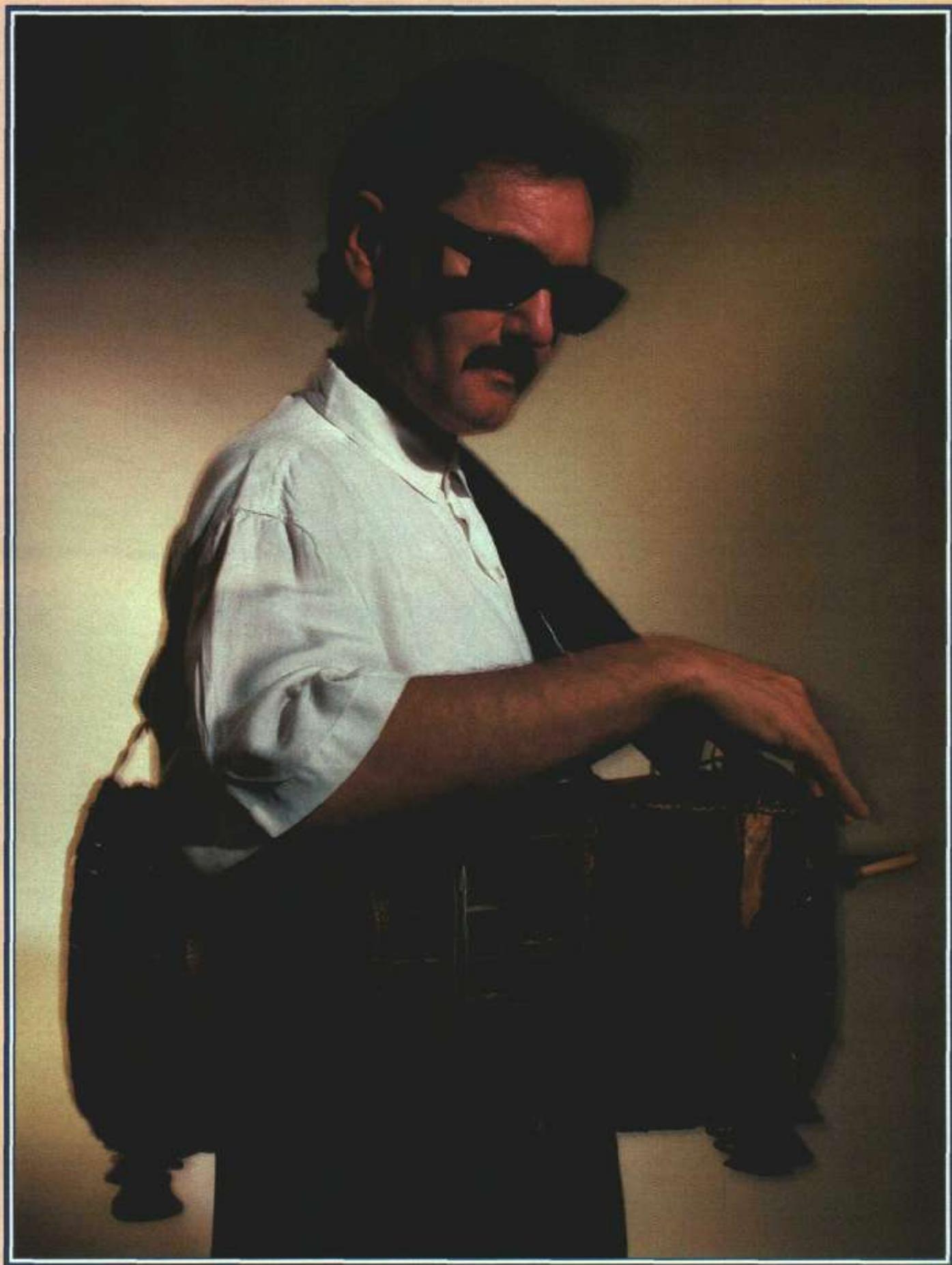
- 1. 14" Rock hi-hats
- 2. 16" medium Rock crash
- 3. 18" heavy Rock crash
- 4. 21" Earth ride
- 5. 18" China

**Hardware:** All Remo, except for Drum Workshop pedals

**Heads:** Remo coated *Emperor* on snare, coated *Ambassadors* on tops of toms, clear *Ambassadors* on bottoms and on bass drum

**Sticks:** Zildjian Z4A with wood tip





# GEORGE Jinda

## World News From A Global Village

Special EFX, the top-selling act in Chile (right behind Aerosmith), were playing world music/jazz long before the genre was fashionable. For the past ten years their buoyant blend of internationally oriented, electric folk melodies couched in slick, contemporary jazz settings have provided drummers like Dennis Chambers, Dave Weckl, and Omar Hakim ample space to twirl and flail with rhythmic panache.

Listening to Special EFX is a world-wide audio travelogue, one that can veer off to guitarist Chieli Minucci's ancestral hometown of Bologna, Italy, or just as easily fly over percussionist George Jinda's native birthplace of Budapest, Hungary. Dark and shyly serious, with a thick accent, Jinda's percussive presence can be best felt at a Special EFX concert.

As new member Lionel Cordew mans the drum chair, Jinda nimbly manipulates his gar-

gantuan setup, like a diminutive Barishnikov dancing around a cluttered stage. Not a percussionist of the traditional role, Jinda relies on his knowledge of jazz and other world musics to tell him when to extract a shaker sound here, or to pound on an Udu drum there. His sound is closer to leaves rustling in the wind than cannons signaling the attack, more like a rainstorm in the mountains than lightning in the desert.

His first solo project, *World News*, is similar to his previous work with Special EFX, though obviously more percussive and streamlined. It features Randy Roos on guitar, Szakcsi on keyboards, and Gerald Veasley on bass. Surrounded by percussion and all sorts of appliances in his Manhattan apartment, the ever-sunglassed Jinda (actually, he did take them off for the interview) spoke excitedly about *World News* and his forthcoming tour with Special EFX

By Ken Micallef  
Photos By Ebet Roberts

"I may be tough on certain drummers...if a guy's not happening I sometimes throw my sticks in the air."

**KM:** Why did you decide to make a solo record?

**GJ:** I had that urge to make my own thing. I was signed as a solo artist for many years, but for a while I just wanted to establish Special EFX as a commercially successful group. But now people know who Special EFX are, so I wanted to do my own thing as well as something that would be a little different. If you listen to the new Special EFX record, *Global Village*, and then listen to *World News*, you'll hear that it's a whole different thing.

**KM:** So a solo record helps you stay fresh as an artist.

**GJ:** Fortunately, my partnership with Chieli is working fine. I couldn't be happier. He's an amazing musician, a great composer, a great arranger; the formula is working. We always come up with something different.

**KM:** You have always let the musicians really stretch on your records.

**GJ:** We've always put a lot of thought into the musicians we've used. We let them explore what they're all about. *I'm going to hire Omar Hakim and tell him how to play? No way. I shouldn't hire him then. Our records sell well, but I couldn't look at my face in the mirror if we made our records like that.*

**KM:** A lot of people don't realize you were using Dennis Chambers long before he was popular.

**GJ:** He was in the band for three years; I just love the guy. He played live dates with us—Omar too, and Dave Weckl. And Rodney Holmes worked with us. I think he is one of the best drummers out there. Lionel Cordew, who plays with us now, is a great drummer—really fine. And we've had the best brass players. But the rhythm section is very important to me.

**KM:** Do you pick up a lot of your percussion instruments when you travel?

**GJ:** Yes. I have stuff everywhere—in the closet, in the kitchen. Also, I endorse many companies, and they send me lots of equipment. But certain things are too fragile, and I can't travel with them. But it all helps me to have my own identity, which I hope I have after all these years of recording and playing.

**KM:** Was *World News* recorded live in the studio with the other musicians?

**GJ:** No. Randy Roos, Szakcsi, Gerald Veasley, and I went in to do the pre-production. Some of it was recorded live.

**KM:** Do you follow any method when recording your percussion parts? Do you layer the instruments?

**GJ:** I play some basic stuff. Usually I'm playing a shaker or a rattle, setting up different polyrhythms. Then I'll add some of these guys [*George points to large wicker basket full of different-sized bells, horns, and metallic-looking objects*], just putting one on top of another. I never follow a set pattern; it depends on the song.

On *World News*, only one song, "Sheila's Caribbean Skirt," has drumset. Lionel plays cymbals, hi-hat, bass drum, and snare on one more tune, which is "Snowblow." The rest is just me.

**KM:** And drum machine on a couple of tracks?

**GJ:** Very light.

**KM:** Why not use a drummer on the whole album?

**GJ:** I wanted to feature myself more; you don't need a drummer necessarily to make the groove happen. Nana Vasconcelos is a monster at that, Trilok Gurtu also. They set up

## Toys Of The World

Jinda's percussion arsenal includes the following: a Pearl double-bass drum rack, Pearl bongos, an 11x13 Pearl tom-tom, timbalitos, Bushman rattles, Arabic shakers, OM Percussion tuned temple blocks, five Latin Percussion cowbells, Chinese double bells, Pete Engelhart *Crashers* and tuned bells, caxixi, a set of Udu drums, Sounds Junior congas, a set of Paiste cymbals including 14" and 16" *Paiste Fast Crashes*, *Sound Formula* 8", 10", and 12" splashes, a 16" *Paiste* thin China, an 18" *Paiste Flat Ride*, and a 20" *Sound Creation* gong.

amazing grooves all by themselves.

**KM:** Your music is world music.

**GJ:** *Global Village* is so much like world music, even more so than my solo record. Way before it was popular, I was always into those unknown Africans. I like all these guys—I don't even know their names, I just love what they do.

**KM:** Special EFX music has always been very evocative to me. The compositions sound like they're based on folk melodies from around the world.

**GJ:** The new one sounds as if you were in Brazil, even in Africa. I also play some straight-ahead drums at the end of *Global Village*. I've never done that before in this country.

**KM:** How has growing up in Hungary affected your playing?

**GJ:** Subconsciously, I'm playing differently. I'm playing all these African instruments, but I don't play them like an African. I play my own way. I don't play a talking drum the same way, though I use the right technique. But what comes out is not necessarily the same thing you'd hear from the guy who plays with Youssou N'Dour or with King Sunny Ade. When I played the ride cymbal growing up I always wanted to sound like Jack DeJohnette or Tony Williams. They were my heroes.

**KM:** So even in Europe you were listening to American music.

**GJ:** I was into Miles Davis, while everyone else was into the Beatles. That was it for me. Miles was a big influence for me. We opened for him a few times, and I got the chance to play with him at the Tokyo Dome with an all-star line-up sort of group.

**KM:** Why did you switch to percussion from drums?

**GJ:** When I did records in Europe it always seemed like the percussionist was having much more fun. It was much more natural to me after a

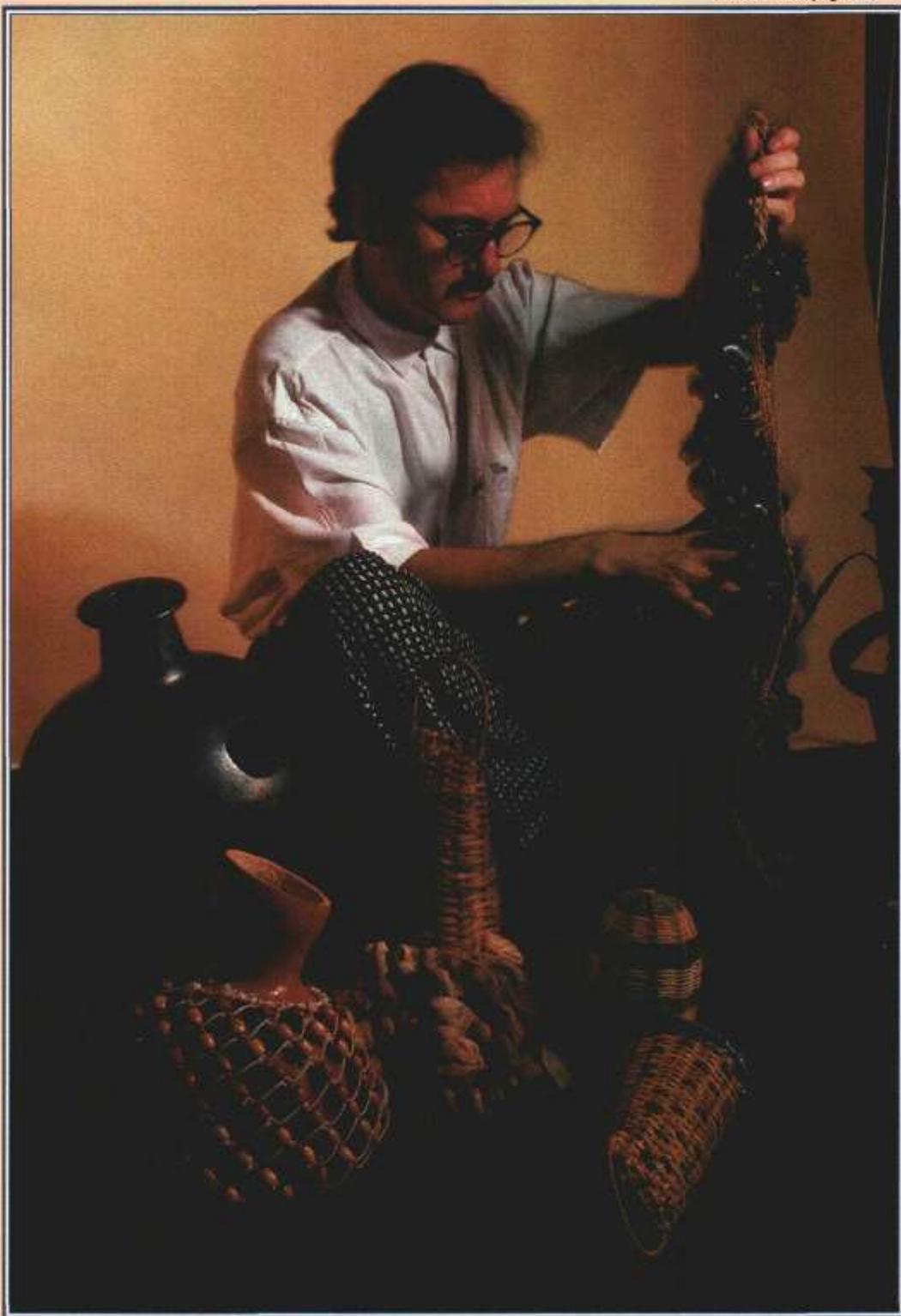
while. When a drummer would play a fast roll, I'd respond with a little cymbal "ding." It was natural for me.

**KM:** Did you come to New York as a drummer or percussionist?

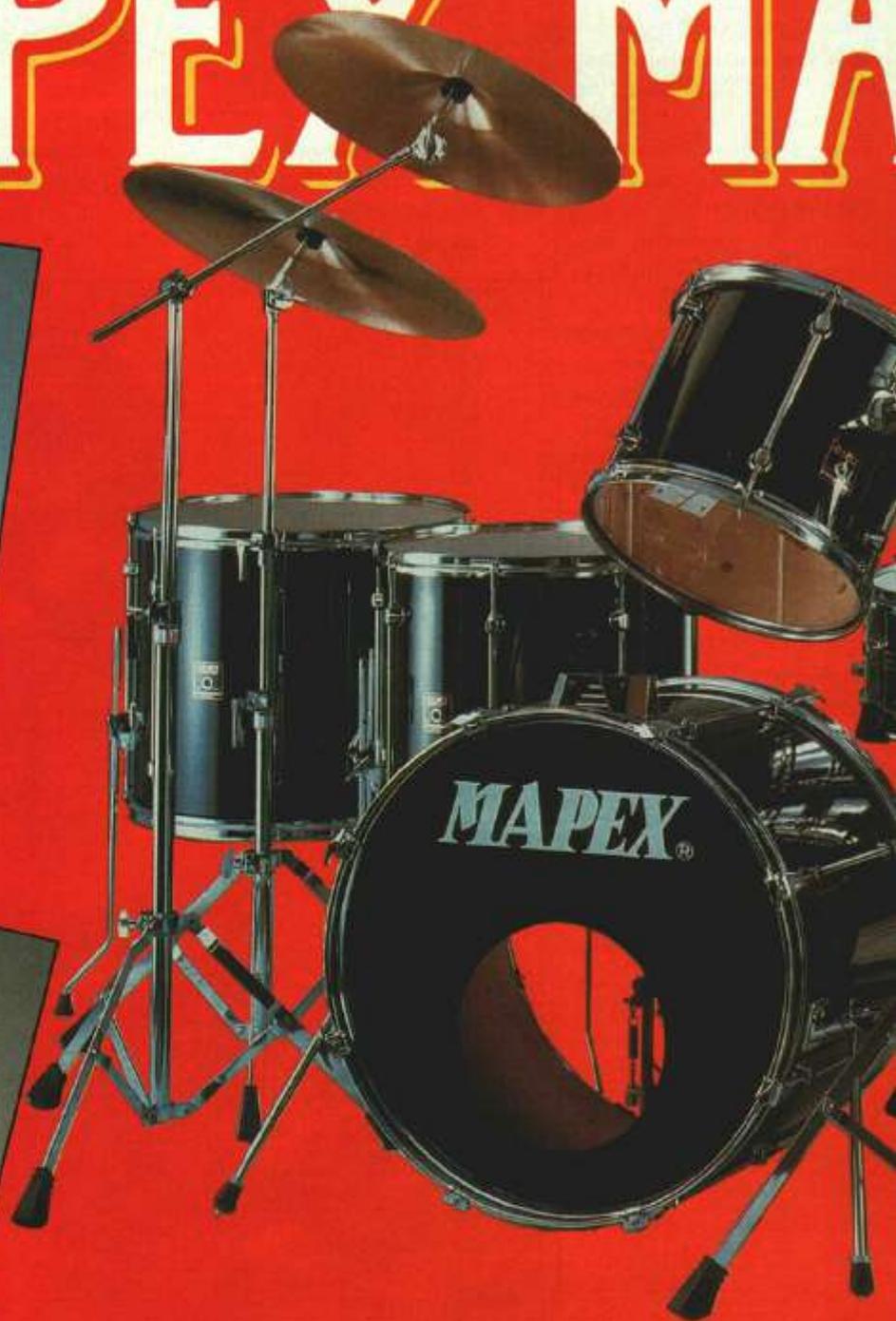
**GJ:** I only played drums a few times. I really concentrated on percussion.

**KM:** Would you agree that the scene in New York is not

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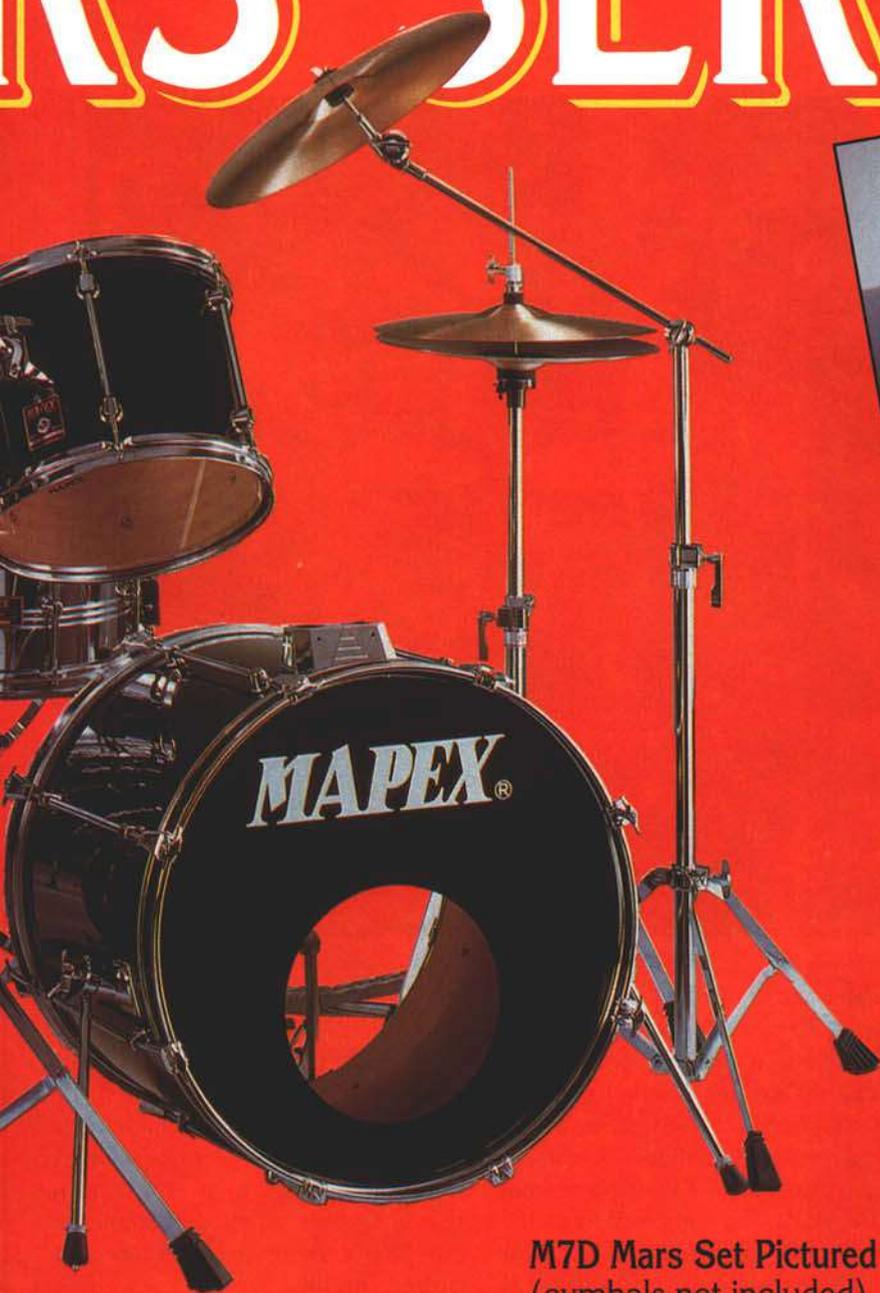
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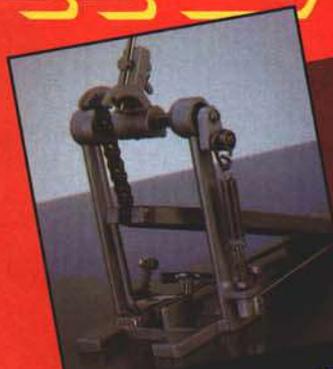
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# Yamaha Power V Special Kit

■ by Rick Van Horn

**Yamaha's entry-level kit has been upgraded in appearance and quality.**

Yamaha introduced their entry-level *Power V* kit in January of 1988. By 1992 they had decided to make some changes and upgrade the kit, and so they launched the *Power V Special*. The kit we received for review was one of five package configurations available: a 16x22 bass drum, 10x10 and 10x12 rack toms, a 12x14 suspended "floor" tom, and a 6 1/2x14 metal-shell snare drum. The bass drum features 9-ply shells with the inner three plies of poplar and the outer six plies of mahogany. The toms feature 6-ply poplar/mahogany shells. Three finishes are available: black, white marble, and the red marble finish of our test kit. The drums are made in Yamaha's manufacturing facility in England.

## Drum Sounds

The *Power V Special* snare drum features a smooth metal shell, inside and out. It's simple and clean, and it provided an acceptable, if unremarkable, sound. Fitted with a white-coated Premier head, it provided good crispness, decent snare response, and plenty of volume—just about all you could ask of an entry-level snare drum. The snare mechanism operated a bit roughly, and there was a noticeable "snap" sound when the snares were engaged again after being released.



Yamaha chose to use poplar for the interior plies on the toms and bass drums because it can be finished better than can mahogany. This allowed the company to give the interiors of the drums a very nice, polished surface—which, in turn, provides a certain amount of reflectivity for sound. When this reflectivity was combined with the clear Premier heads that came on the *Power V Special's* bass drum and toms, the drums had a very bright—but noticeably thin—sound. We swapped the factory heads for some heavier Remo heads to see if the sound improved. With those heads, the drums had good tone with a nice amount of warmth—more than might be expected from entry-level drums. However, they tended to lack projection, and seemed almost mellow. The 14" "floor" tom was especially noticeable in this regard, but that may also be due to its size; it couldn't be expected to provide the depth and punch

of a 16x16 drum (which is available in other *Power V Special* configurations).

Obviously, the choice of heads makes a great deal of difference with this kit—which is actually a commendation of its versatility. If you like a bright-sounding kit with a lot of attack, you should be able to get that sound with thin heads. If you prefer a more controlled, mellow sound, then thicker heads should suit you. In either case, the drums can be expected to serve your needs.

## Hardware

The hardware supplied with the *Power V Special* includes a snare stand, a bass drum pedal, a straight cymbal stand, and a double floor stand (to accommodate the 14" suspended tom and a cymbal mini-boom), all from Yamaha's 700 series. The hi-hat is from their 800 series. All of the tripods are single-braced (keeping both weight and

cost down). Even so, they were more than sturdy enough to withstand normal playing. All of the various adjustment points on the stands worked very smoothly. This is classic Yamaha hardware, and it works very well. The bass drum pedal especially was simple, lightweight, quick, and responsive.

The bass drum is fitted with two-position spurs that rotate back against the shell when not in use. We found them a little sticky to operate; they didn't release and rotate smoothly when the wing nut was loosened. This might be a problem that more frequent use would alleviate, but it was annoying, nonetheless.

### Appearance

The look of the *Power V Special* is one of its most appealing features. Although the red marble finish is a plastic covering, its depth and "texture" give it the

look of a lacquered finish. The streamlined one-piece long lugs are also quite attractive. The tom mount on the bass drum, along with the actual tom arm assemblies themselves, seem a bit out of context, though. While not inherently unattractive, they're extremely massive, and don't seem quite in keeping with the fairly minimal look of the lugs and the single-braced stands that accompany the kit. Ditto for the bass drum spurs and the tom-arm receivers on the toms themselves. All of these items seem scaled for a kit with a much "beefier" overall look. In fairness, all of these items are beautifully plated, and if you really like a lot of hefty chrome parts on your kit, you'll probably love this aspect of the *Power V Special*. In keeping with this particular theme, the bass drum hoops (black with red marble inlays) were quite deep and thick. And while

they added to the substantial appearance of the bass drum, we found their thickness to be a problem when it came to mounting certain other brands of bass drum pedals. A minor consideration, perhaps, but one to be aware of.

### Conclusion

At \$1,525, our test kit is not the least expensive entry-level drumset on the market. (The line ranges from a standard five-piece at \$1,425 to a monster nine-piece at \$3,020.) But in light of its quality of construction, the functionality of its hardware, its attractive appearance, and the potential for achieving a variety of sounds that it offers, the *Power V Special* is certainly a worthy consideration for a student seeking to upgrade from a "starter" kit, or a semi-pro player looking for a quality weekender at an affordable price.

## More Zildjian A Custom Cymbals

■ by William F. Miller

Earlier this year Zildjian introduced a new line of cymbals called the *A Custom* series. (Check out our initial review in the March '92 issue.) The popularity that the line has enjoyed since then has encouraged Zildjian to expand the series with several new models—two crashes, a set of hi-hats, two rides, and three swish cymbals.

Just to recap the basic sound characteristics of the *A Custom* line, Zildjian designed these cymbals to sound "brighter than Ks but darker than As." All models in the series have *Brilliant* finishes, and all are on the thin side. Also, they are hammered differently than other Zildjian cymbals, using an exclusive rotary hammering machine.



### Hi-Hats

The *A Custom* line originally offered only 14" hi-hats, but now a 13" pair is available. The bottom cymbal is a medi-

um weight, and the top cymbal is medium thin. Being that they are somewhat light in weight and have a *Brilliant* finish, the overall volume of these hi-hats is

a little softer than "normal" 13s. However, they're extremely responsive, and sound beautiful played partially open. You can smack the hell out of 'em without their becoming obnoxious. Quick chokes and closed playing also sounded great, although the "chick" sound was a little on the soft side. I found I had to widen the distance between the cymbals and use a little more force with my leg to get the same amount of sound as my regular 13" produces. Overall, though, on a gig where one might have to keep the volume down a bit, these would be perfect.

### Crashes

Of the entire *Custom* line, the crashes are my personal favorite. In our initial review the crashes were described as "big, full splash cymbals," and that is an apt description. The new sizes reviewed here are 14" and 19" models. The 14" crash really is more of a splash cymbal. In fact, I own a 12" A splash that has more of a crash sound than the 14" A *Custom* crash does. But whatever you want to call it, the 14" sounds nice. It's extremely quick and cutting, with a tone that's a little different-sounding—just slightly lower in pitch than you might expect.

As for the 19", I'll happily go on record

to say that the cymbal we received for review was one of the best-sounding crash cymbals I've ever heard! Normally a 19" crash needs to be *whacked* to get it to start sounding, but the *A Custom* is very responsive. Due to its thinner weight (and, I suppose, the new hammering system), it sounded excellent when just lightly tapped. And when I laid into it, the crash sound was very "splashy" and pure, with no unwanted overtones—just beautiful!

### Rides

The two new *A Custom* rides are 20" and 22" ping models. The two are very similar in character, with the 20" being a little bit higher in pitch. These are both good-sounding rides, with a clear bell sound, a nice tone, and not too much spread. Since this entire line is just a tad softer than "regular" cymbals, I found I could dig into the rides and not overpower the situation—almost as if there were a little bit of tape on them.

Something I particularly liked about the rides was their overall tone. The stick sound was clear and high-pitched, but there was still a slight element of what I like to call "trash"—a hint of that good ol' K sound. For me, it gave the cymbals just a little more personality than regular As.

### Swishes

The new *A Custom* swish cymbals are available in 18", 20", and 22" sizes. The general *A Custom* characteristics applied to swish cymbals is a nice combination. For me, the thinner the swish cymbal, the better. And since the *A Customs* are thin to begin with, all the swishes sounded good to me. Normally, when a swish cymbal has a *Brilliant* finish, there seems to be a "gonginess" to the sound—a little less trash and a little more tone. (Some people prefer that; I don't.) However, the *A Customs* are nice and trashy, and not very gong-like at all. Also, the pitch of these cymbals is surprisingly low for anything with an A printed on it! So, basically, they're low-pitched and *trashy*, with short sustain.

### Price

As mentioned in our previous review, not only do the *A Customs* fall between As and Ks in terms of sound, but also in terms of price, being slightly more expensive than standard As, but less than Ks. A pair of 13" *A Custom* hi-hats lists for \$314. The 14" crash is priced at \$175, while the wonderful 19" crash lists for \$264. The 20" ping ride sells for \$281, the 22" version is priced at \$334. The 18" swish is \$281, a 20" costs \$313, and the 22" goes for \$359.

## Easton AHEAD Drumsticks

■ by Rick Van Horn

By now you've most likely seen Easton's ad in *MD* depicting the evolution of drumsticks from a leg bone, through wood sticks, and ultimately to their new AHEAD (Advanced High Efficiency Alloy Drumstick) stick. It's a catchy ad, and it visually sums up what Easton feels

is the major advantage of its new sticks: technological evolution.

The sticks are created of high-strength 7075 aluminum aerospace alloy, fitted with replaceable, precision-molded polyurethane covers. These covers extend from just above the grip area (which is textured for easy handling) to just below the "super high-impact Zytel nylon screw-on tips." The object of this combination design is to gain the strength and power of aluminum, but provide a playing surface on the stick that will not damage drum equipment. And since that playing surface can be expected to wear out eventually, it has been made replaceable to extend the overall life of the stick and make it more

economical to use.

With their promotional literature focusing on power, durability, and speed, Easton's sticks are definitely targeted at rock drummers. Their lightest model is a *SB*, and their other models go up from there. However, designer Rick Grossman informed me that if the sticks do well with their initial release, further development will include lighter models for jazz and other styles.

Although Easton states that the flex and weight of the sticks are "matched to those of wood," I'd qualify that by saying that they're more closely matched to the flex and weight of oak sticks than hickory. But compared to other synthetic sticks I've tried, the overall balance and



feel of these sticks is significantly better. Part of this is due to the material, and part is due to the actual design of the stick. Rick Grossman was wise enough to realize that when dealing with a material already heavier than wood, it wouldn't be necessary to create a shoulder-heavy stick design in order to gain power and durability. Consequently, the sticks feature a reasonably gradual taper (this varies from model to model) that keeps them from feeling "clunky." As a matter of fact, I've played with wooden sticks (designed for power playing) that were much more difficult to maneuver.

Integrated into the design of the AHEAD sticks is Easton's proprietary Vibration Reduction System (VSR). In plain terms, this means that the sticks are designed to transmit less shock than you might expect, in an effort to reduce hand fatigue. I played with the sticks for several sets each over several gigs, and can attest to the fact that my hands felt no more tired than they would have if I'd been playing with comparably heavy wood sticks. In other words, the fact that these sticks were aluminum did not in any way reduce their playing comfort. Easton has also recently introduced its own brand of "high-traction, long-lasting grip" tape for their own (and anyone else's) sticks. I'm not fond of stick-wrapping tapes, but I will say that the use of this wrap added a bit of "cushion" to the grip, and made the AHEADs even more comfortable to play.

The weight of every stick is controlled to within plus-or-minus one gram for consistency, and the playability is enhanced by the fact that aluminum has

no grain. The grain of wood sticks give them directional properties, causing the stick to feel better when rotated one way in the hand than another. Easton's sticks have consistent flex characteristics no matter which way the stick is rotated.

Acoustically speaking, the sticks sounded pretty much like any other nylon-tipped sticks when played on drums and cymbals. Rimshots sounded just a bit brighter than those created by wooden sticks. As to their durability: Aluminum is a durable material, and can be expected to significantly outlast wood under the same stress conditions. So the metal shafts of the sticks are likely to hold up almost indefinitely against normal playing—even in hard rock circumstances. And as far as the polyurethane covers go, my testing failed to put much more than a scuff or two on them. Of course, I don't normally slam heavy crash cymbals edge-on, but I do whack my own cymbals pretty smartly. I also made it a point to test the sticks with lots of extra-hard rimshots and hi-hat riding—the type of playing that chews up the necks and shoulders of sticks pretty quickly.

Given the fact that a set of replacement covers comes with each pair of sticks, I'd venture to say that even power players who really abuse their sticks could get months of use out of their first pair of AHEADs—and even then they'd probably only need to replace the covers a second time. It would be a brutal player, indeed, who could actually snap the shaft of one of these sticks. But if that should happen, Easton provides the sticks with a 60-day replacement warranty!

One area in which the AHEAD sticks lose out to their wooden counterparts is versatility. They're designed to be held in the grip area and played tip-forward on drums and cymbals—period. They sound horrible on cross-stick playing, and you'd be crazy to play them butt-ended, since that would bring the uncovered aluminum shaft (and the heaviest part of the stick) against your defenseless cymbals. But otherwise, the AHEAD sticks offer a viable alternative to power drumming with wooden sticks. The 5B and slightly heavier 2B models are 16" long, the *Rock* model (which features a shorter taper than all the others) is 16 1/4" long, the *Matt Sorum Studio* model is 16 1/2" long, and Matt's *Concert* model is 16 3/4" long. All the models retail for \$29.95, with replacement covers available for \$2.95 per pair.

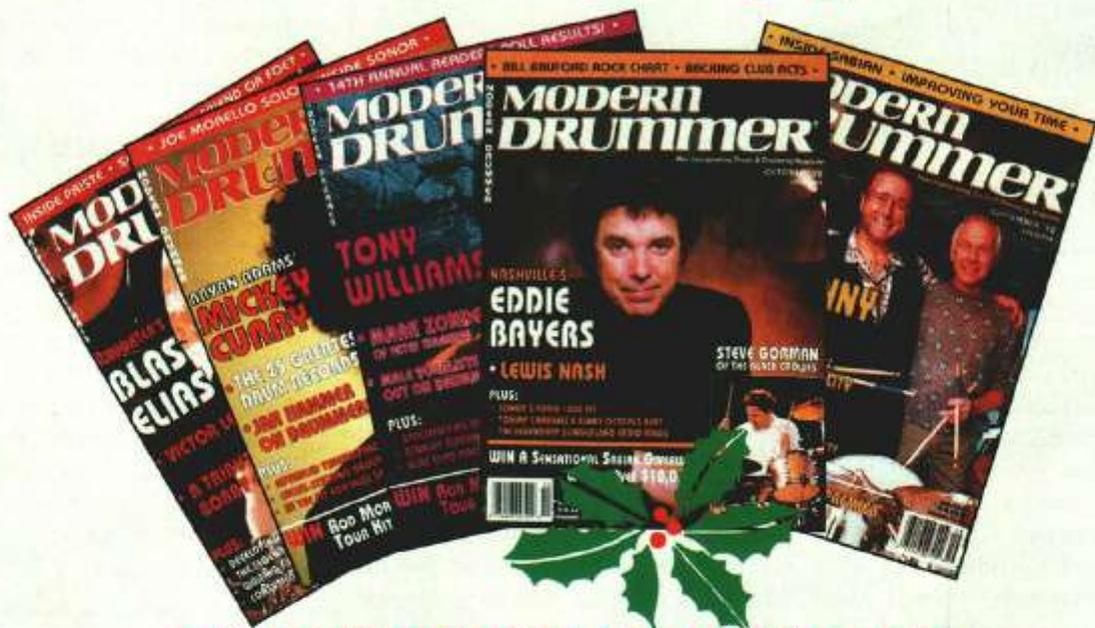
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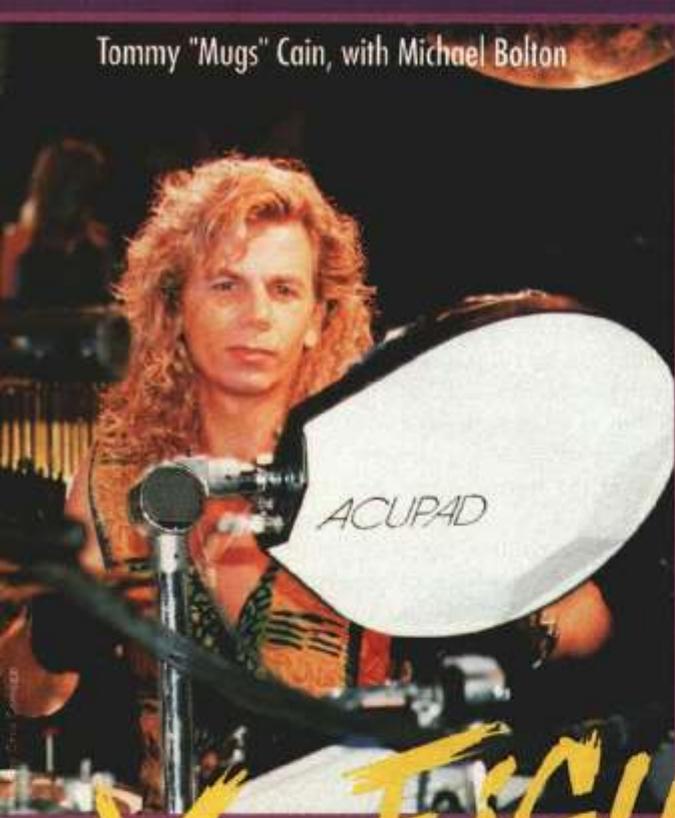
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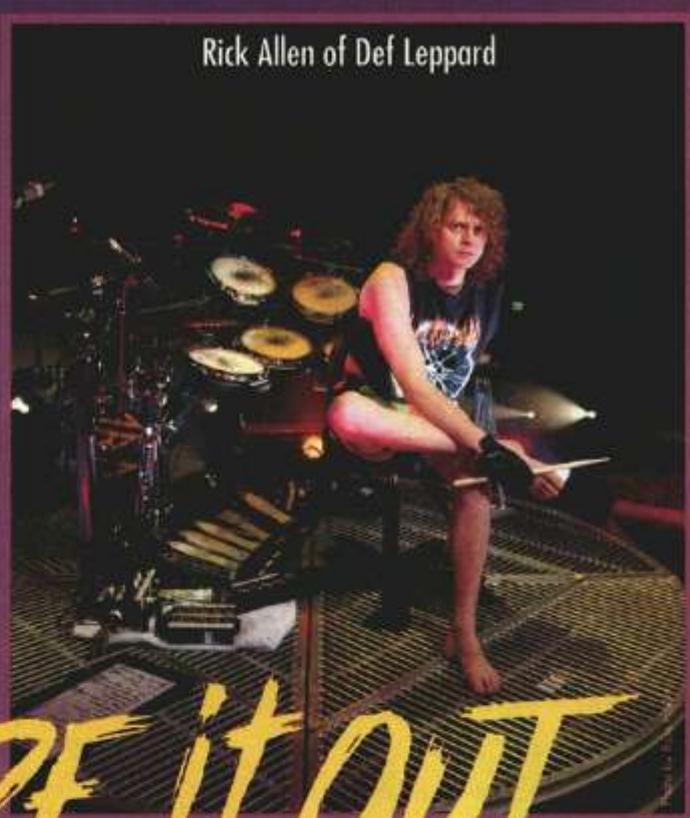
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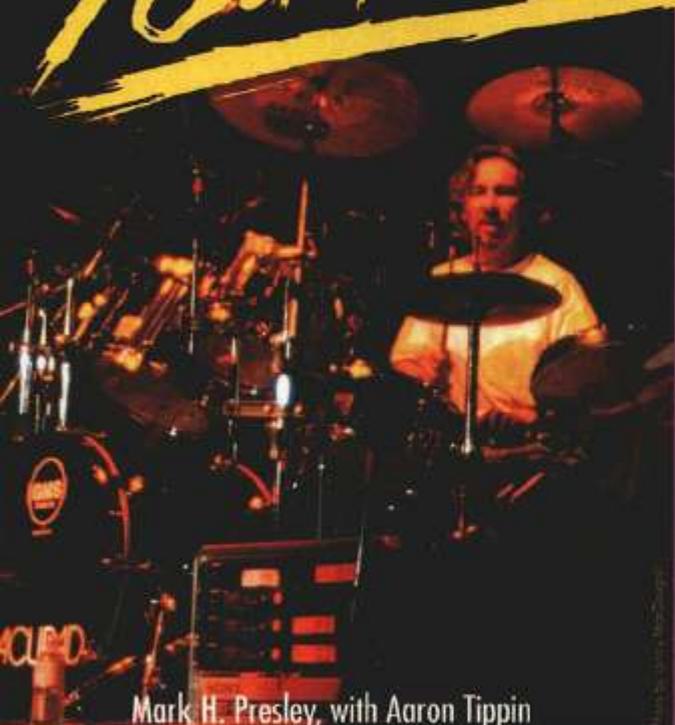
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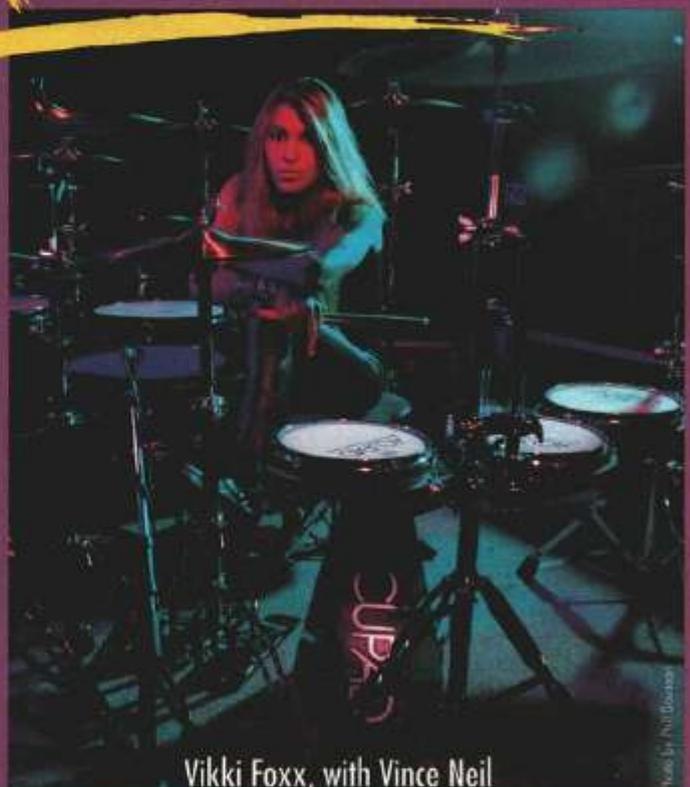
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# Bag End AF1 Monitor Speakers

■ by Ed Uribe

**These babies are big in every way: big size, big sound, big performance—and big price.**

Bag End's *AF1* speakers represent the absolute high end in onstage sound reinforcement. Their impressive features and quality have put them on the road with several high-budget tours, and their endorsers include Dave Weckl and Jonathan Moffett.

Let's start from the inside and work out. An 18" speaker with an 18-pound rear-vented magnet assembly and a 3" dual-layer high-temperature coil ensures that your bass drum—or any other low transient—will be pretty clean at very high levels. The mids are handled by a 12" speaker with a 15-pound magnet assembly. This speaker's coil mass and cone design allow for high-level output with high sensitivity and transparent midrange. The highs are handled by a constant directivity horn comprised of a 1" dome with a light coil—providing clear highs and uniform dispersion throughout the horn's covering range.

The *AF1*'s crossover provides a feature called "time alignment" throughout the mid and high range. This is the real outstanding audio specification of the Bag End line. Without getting too tech-

nical, time alignment is a system by which the speakers vibrate "in sync" with each other. It assures that the fundamental tones and overtones of a signal are reproduced with the same relationship as the electrical signal at the input terminals of the speaker.

The crossover's heat-sensitive variable resistors and semiconductor circuitry also protect against high-frequency driver overload. The 18" and 12" speakers are both mechanically and electrically crossed over, with the 18" speaker being filtered through a steel-laminated inductor and two pounds of copper wire. The 12" speaker is mechanically limited in a round, sealed sub-chamber to provide quick and clean mid-bass response. The enclosures are dampened and vented for maximum uniform output and minimum box sound. There is acoustical foam mounted to the enclosure around the high-frequency horn to absorb unwanted reflections.

The *AF1* cabinets are as sturdy and well-built as they come. Made from 3/4" plywood (with very meticulous workmanship going into the joining and gluing of wood segments), they are covered with black Ozite material. They have built-in wheels and built-in, recessed, spring-loaded handles—with a dampening material to avoid any rattling from vibration during performance. The grille is made from 16-gauge perforated steel covered with black vinyl—providing both a visually attractive and very rugged cover. A 3/4" road cover snaps onto the front of the cabinet to protect the grille and speakers.

Now that the specs are covered, I should mention that the best way to buy speakers is to forget about the specs and *listen* to them. Of course you have to consider the various aspects of your needs, but once you've picked out two or three types that fit the bill, close your eyes so you don't know which ones you're listening to and have someone play them all for you. Then pick the ones that *sound* best.

## Testing

I tested the *AF1*s in a variety of ways. First, I positioned them behind me, the way I position the two monitor cabinets I normally use (EAW *PM-315s*). I ran some sequences that were full MIDI recordings (with various keyboard, synthesizer, drum, and percussion parts) that I usually play to at clinics. To these I played live drums, (miked and processed through the mixers in my racks), triggered sounds from the acoustic drums, and played various keyboard, drum, and percussion parts from pads.

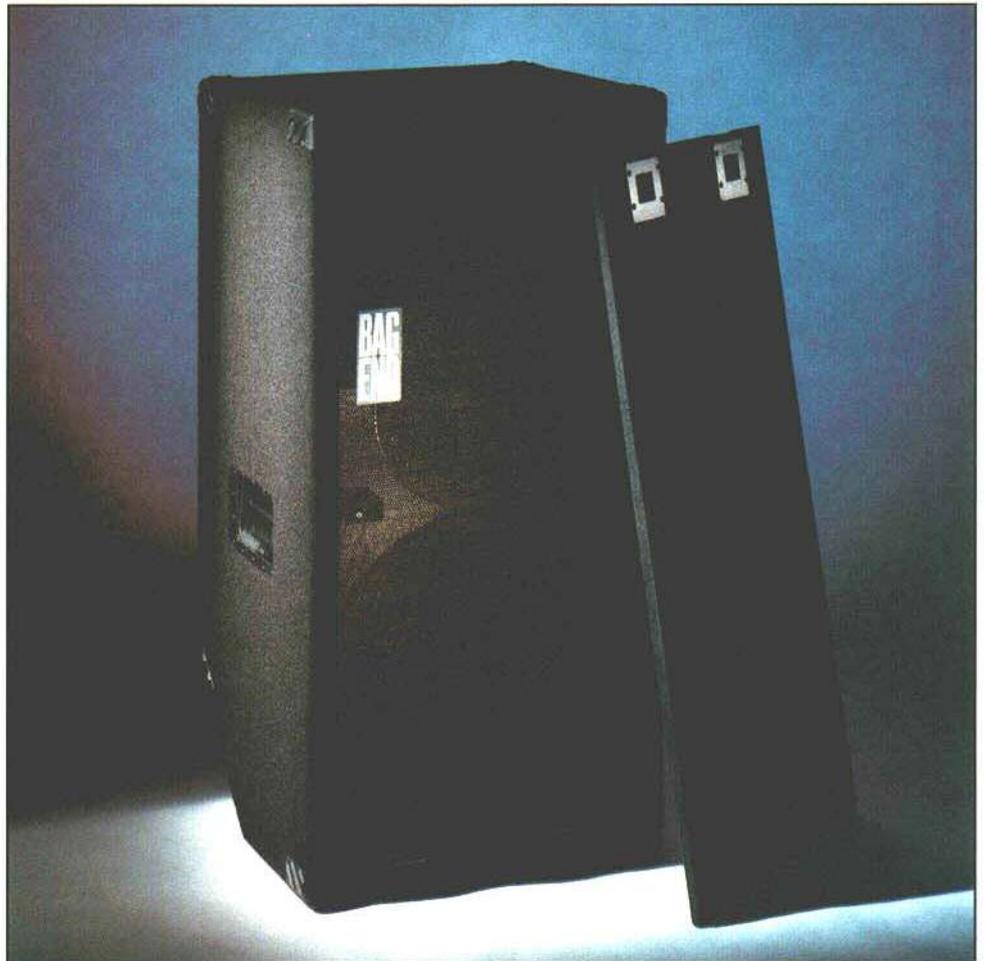
Next, I took several samples of various kick drums, snares, toms, cymbals, percussion, and sound effects, sequenced some loops, and listened to them with and without various types of processing. I tested with all the extremely low, hot, high-endy, and mid-rangy samples I could find, and I also used various reverbs EQed with a lot of highs, big gates, stereo regenerating delays, chorusing, phasing, and the like.

Finally, I recorded myself playing acoustic drums (ten channels of drums direct to DAT). I also recorded myself playing acoustic drums along with some MIDI sequences direct to DAT. I put the speakers about fifteen to twenty feet apart, turned everything up to eleven, put some ear plugs in, then stood back and hit the "play" button on the DAT's remote control. I slowly eased the ear plugs out and listened.

My monitoring demands are pretty high. I don't just want to hear a click or a bad reference track; I want to hear the whole orchestration of what I wrote—along with a clear representation of my acoustic sound and what I'm playing mixed with the MIDI—the same type of mix I want to hear of an entire band when I'm playing live. Well, playing with the *AF1*s as monitors felt great. They're definitely the biggest "headphones" I ever wore. I could hear a nice mix of everything I was playing live, along with the synths. At this volume level there was certainly no distortion.

Everything was quite clear. As a matter of fact, because the cabinets are so big and the three speakers cover the entire audio spectrum well, I was actually able to keep the volume a little lower than usual. (I like playing loud, but this is good!) The sequenced samples also came out well. Of course, these cabinets are not really meant for monitoring low volume levels, and the fidelity of the sound suffers unless you are at higher, live-performance levels. With everything cranked, they came out sounding *great*. (Of course, to say they sounded great with everything cranked in a 40' x 40' room in my basement studio is saying that pain feels good.)

While the speakers were cranked like this, I also tweaked the mixer EQ to bring out or take away various degrees of highs, mids, and lows—and the speakers reproduced everything quite well. Whatever shortcomings I heard came from the fact that I don't have the power to run the speakers at peak performance. I used a Carver *PM 350* with 300 watts per side. The *AFIs* are rated to handle up to 600 watts (with a system limiter), and although you can certainly run them with 300, you need more like 400 or 500 watts to run them optimally. With more power, you don't have to push everything to the max for volume—giving you a better sound at all listening levels. So if you purchase these speakers, you should be aware of the additional demand for an appropriate power source. It would be a waste to buy speakers of this quality and not have enough power to make them shine. Additionally, when running at these high power and volume levels, it isn't safe to operate without some type of compressor/limiter for speaker protection. Of course, this consideration is not exclusive to the *AFIs*, but it is another factor to be aware of. This brings me to the last



point of evaluation—the practical aspects.

### Practicality And Price

One feature that Bag End probably shouldn't boast about with these cabinets is their size and weight. They measure 3 1/2' x 2' x 1 1/2', and weigh 165 lbs. each. They do have wheels and handles, but outside of rolling them a few feet, you just can't move them alone. If every gig you do pays cartage, or you're in a band where everybody gets together to carry the equipment, this might not affect you. But if you have to move your own equipment alone, they simply aren't appropriate.

The other feature of the *AFIs* that limits their appeal is price: at \$1,590 apiece for the "R" series I tested (there

is a "C" series, without all the road-durability appointments, for \$1,360), they are definitely for those who can afford to spend top dollar for the best in high-end equipment.

If your *only* considerations are musical ones, then you can put *AFIs* on your shopping list. They're definitely some of the nicest cabinets I've ever played through, and are specifically crafted to withstand all the rigors of the road. However, if you have to deal with other, more mundane considerations, then look around: There are lots of great speakers out there that are a little easier to handle and a lot less expensive (including other models in the Bag End line).



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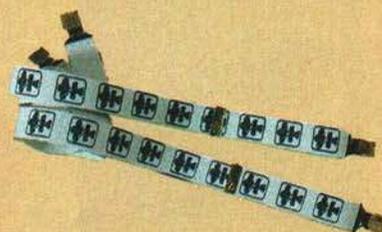
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## Meinl Live Sound Cymbals



Meinl's latest series of cymbals is called *Live Sound*. Manufactured from high-quality German bronze personally selected by company president Roland Meinl, the cymbals are said to offer "distinctly different, clean, cutting, bright sounds." Available are 14" standard and *Sound Wave* hi-hats, a 12" splash, 14", 16", and 18" crashes, and a 20" ride. Marching band cymbals are also available in 14", 15", and 16" pairs. *Live Sound* cymbals are distributed in the U.S. by **Gibson Musical Instruments, 1818 Elm Hill Park, Nashville, TN 37210, tel: (615) 871-4500, fax: (615) 889-0564.**

## Drumslinger Tom-Tom Bags

Newly designed tom-tom bags from Drumslinger feature a means of "cinching" the diameter of the bag to hug the drum—enabling each bag to hold several different depth sizes of drums. This allows drummers to change drum sizes without having to invest in new bags.

The design is essentially a bag within a bag. The inner bag is made of *Parapac* nylon, completely enclosing the drum and protecting it from the elements. An outside tongue made of *Cordura* and lined with *Nulite* foam surrounds the drum and is "cinched" with polypropylene web and secured with *Fastex* quick-release buckles. The tongue is drawn tight around the drum, holding it in place. Other features include a shoulder strap, a carrying handle, and an inside pouch to hold a spare head.

The new series includes 10", 12", 14", and 16" tom bags, and an 18" combination tom/bass drum bag. Each will accommodate the diameter of drum listed (in various depths) with or without a PureCussion RIMS mount. The 10" bag can also be used for an 8" drum. **Drumslinger Bags, Tough Traveler, Ltd., 1012 State St., Schenectady, NY 12307, (518) 377-8526.**

## DW Strap-Drive Accelerator Pedals



Drum Workshop has recently introduced strap-drive versions of their popular *5000 Accelerator* single and double bass drum pedals. Designated as the *5000AN* and *5002AN*, these new pedals incorporate many of the features of DW's top-of-the-line chain-drive pedals (such as stabilizing pedal plates, heavy-duty hinges, die-cast components, and a five-year limited warranty) while offering a more relaxed, floating feel attainable only from a strap-drive system. **Drum Workshop, Inc., 2697 Lavery Court, Unit 16, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 499-6863.**

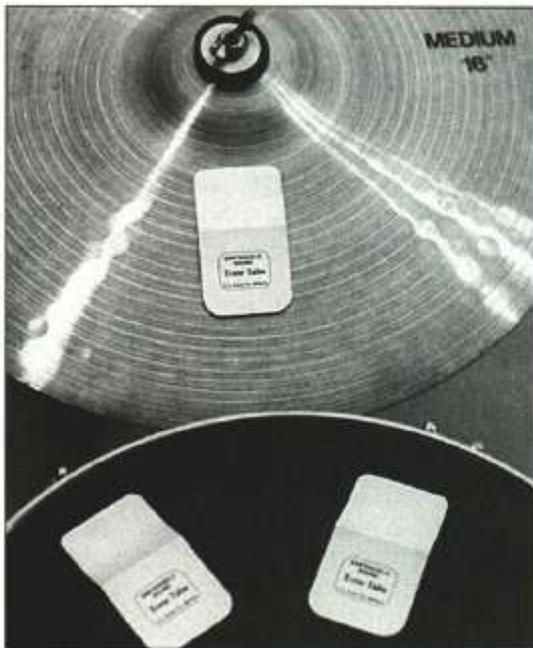
## Q Up Arts Sound Library

Q Up Arts is distributing a sound library containing the drum sounds of Tommy Lee, Alan White, and Jim Keltner. According to the manufacturer, the library delivers "the synergy of the entire set, not just miscellaneous drum sounds." Each sample has been digitally recorded and EQ-ed for album production at major professional studios. Over 400 hard and soft, dry and ambient versions of kicks, snares, toms, hi-hats, and cymbals are included—all played by the artists themselves and delivered at 44.1k stereo 16-bit for maximum clarity. The library was produced by Reek Havok, of Sounds Amazing, and is available in CD audio, EIIIIXP CD-ROM, and Akai *S1000* formats. **Q Up Arts, P.O. Box 1078, Aptos, CA 95001-1078, tel: (408) 688-9524, fax: (408) 662-8172.**

## Frederico Cowbell

Frederico Percussion has a new bongo-style cowbell. Sized at 9" x 5 3/4" x 2 1/2" and fitted with a handle for mounting, the bell also is claimed to have a nice feel for hand playing. The bell is available in brass brazed or copper brazed finishes; custom colors may be special ordered at extra charge. The cowbell is welded by hand in the U.S.A., and is guaranteed not to break under normal playing conditions. **Frederico Percussion, 152 Lancaster Blvd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, (717) 766-1332.**

## Tone Tabs Sound Control Devices



*Tone Tabs*, by Santangelo Sound, are 3" x 2" vinyl rectangles [firmly fastened in place by an adhesive strip. The *Tab*s are scored at the 1" mark for a slight downward bend, and have a soft, thin, 2" felt pad that rests on the head. The *Tone Tab* rises when the drum is struck, allowing the fundamental tone of the drum to come through. As the *Tab* comes back down on the surface, the felt pad absorbs unwanted over-ring. The *Tab*s may also be used to shorten the sustain of cymbals. **Santangelo Sound, 1943 Sunny Crest Drive, Suite 183, Fullerton, CA 92635, (714) 526-6327.**

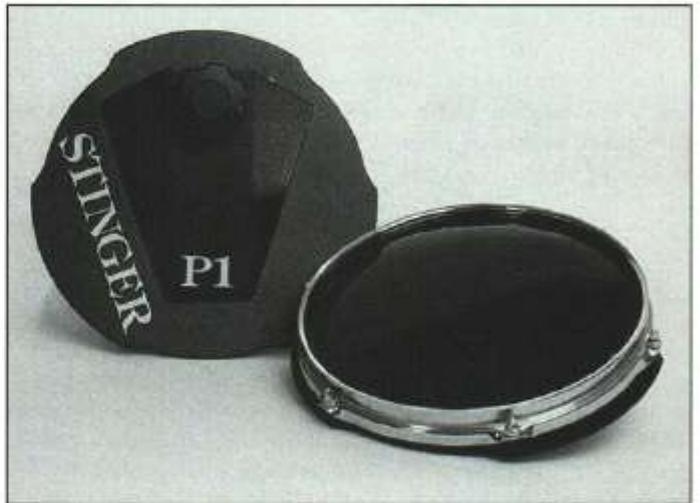
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# Alternative Funk-Rock: Part 2

by Rodney Ledbetter

**MUSIC KEY**

Open	O	CC
H.H.	X	
S.D.		
B.D.		

The last time we discussed the increasingly popular subject of "Alternative Funk-Rock" (April '92), we talked about some of the more interesting bands and grooves of this type of music. I'd like to continue what we talked about in the last piece and offer some insight into some new bands

that have surfaced since then.

First of all we have the Red Hot Chili Peppers, whose music in many ways helped to define the resurgence of funk in the early '80s. We've also heard a lot of interesting music from bands like the Brand New Heavies, whose music blends the '90s sound with sort of a "retro" feel from the '70s; Infectious Grooves, with their blend of metal and funk; and Fungo Mungo, with their own brand of East-Bay area funk. All in all it seems like everyone is being influenced by this style of alternative music, and in some aspects, many of these bands are influencing each other. Credit should go to Chad Smith, Jan Kincaid, Stephen Perkins, and Jeff Gomez for the grooves they've given us in the last year or so.

On Fungo Mungo's 1992 release, *Humungous*, many diverse influences are present. "Hype Is Stupid" demonstrates this; it has a relaxed groove with a triplet feel and should be played at about quarter note = 96 beats per minute.

Musical notation for the first example, "Hype Is Stupid" by Fungo Mungo. It features a 4/4 time signature with a triplet feel. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.

"Brothers And Sisters," also from *Humungous*, has many different influences as well. This particular example is from the drum break towards the end of the song. It utilizes a two-bar phrase and should be played at about quarter note = 108 beats per minute.

Musical notation for the second example, "Brothers And Sisters" by Fungo Mungo. It features a 4/4 time signature with a two-bar phrase. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.

Musical notation for the third example, "If You Have To Ask" by Red Hot Chili Peppers. It features a 4/4 time signature with a triplet feel. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.

The next example is taken from the Red Hot Chili Peppers' *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*. "If You Have To Ask" utilizes a two-bar phrase played with a triplet feel and should be played at

about quarter note = 92 beats per minute.

Musical notation for the fourth example, taken from the Brand New Heavies' self-titled release. It features a 4/4 time signature with a relaxed groove and a triplet feel. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.

This example is taken from the Brand New Heavies' self-titled release. "BNH" has a relatively relaxed groove and should be played at about 112 beats per minute. It also has a triplet feel.

Musical notation for the fifth example, taken from Infectious Grooves' "Punk It Up." It features a 4/4 time signature with a very interesting two-bar phrase. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.

Infectious Grooves was one of the most interesting bands to emerge in 1991. Its debut, *The Plague That Makes Your Booty Move...It's The Infectious Grooves*, is a very interesting mix of funk and metal. The track "Infectious Grooves" utilizes a straight-16th feel and should be played at about 88 beats per minute.

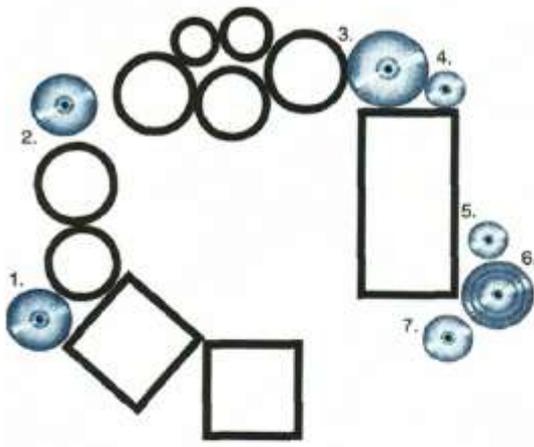
Musical notation for the sixth example, taken from Infectious Grooves' "Punk It Up." It features a 4/4 time signature with a very interesting two-bar phrase. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.

This next example, taken from Infectious Grooves' "Punk It Up," utilizes a very interesting two-bar phrase. This pattern should be played at about 104 beats per minute.

Musical notation for the seventh example, taken from Infectious Grooves' "Punk It Up." It features a 4/4 time signature with a very interesting two-bar phrase. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.

Musical notation for the eighth example, taken from Infectious Grooves' "Punk It Up." It features a 4/4 time signature with a very interesting two-bar phrase. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and a triplet of eighth notes.





## MUNYUNGO JACKSON

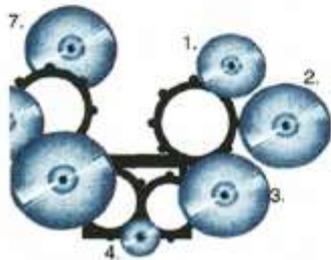
As a percussionist, we are a luxury that a lot of bands can't afford, so I try to make it special... like a painter splashing colors... My position is also to be the drummer's extra two hands and feet, to be inside his or her groove, like the small, quick and bright cymbals, as the drummer usually has the bigger, lower pitched ones. The Paiste splashes cut like shimmering glass!!"

### Cymbal Set-Up:

- ) 14" Paiste Line Thin China
- ) 14" 3000 Rude Crash/Ride
- I 18" 3000 Reflector Crash
- I 8" 3000 Rude Splash
- I 8" Paiste Line Splash
- I Accent Cymbal Row
- I 10" Paiste Line Bell

### Munyungo has played on:

- Soul Cages*"
- Sting
- Rooms In My Father's House*"
- Vinx
- I Love My Job*"
- Vinx
- Munyungo*"
- Munyungo Jackson



## SOKO RICHARDSON

I've been playing drums professionally for about 40 years and have played all kinds of cymbals live and for recording. About 5 years ago, I played on Paiste Cymbals for the first time, at Jack White's house, I was amazed at how good and full they sounded and decided right then and there that I was going to switch to Paiste!"

### Favorite recordings

- Soko has played on:*
- "Live At Carnegie Hall"*
- Ike and Tina Turner
- "New Year New Band New Company"*
- John Mayall
- "IceMan"*
- Albert Collins

### Cymbal Set-Up:

- 1) 15" Paiste Line Sound Edge Hi-Hats
- 2) 20" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 3) 20" Paiste Line Power Crash
- 4) 8" Paiste Line Splash
- 5) 22" Paiste Line Power Ride
- 6) 18" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 7) 20" Paiste Line Heavy China

## CHARLIE QUINTANA

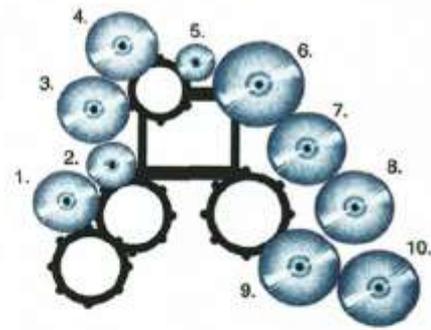
"Have a friend hit a cymbal while you tightly hold your ears. This is the other cymbals. Now free your ears and hear the brilliance and the clarity of Paiste! I'll take these."

### Favorite recordings

- Charlie has played on:*
- "It's Only Time"*
- Mark Curry
- "After Dark"*
- The Cruzados
- "Havalinas"*
- Havalinas
- "Izzy Stradlin And Thejuju Hounds"*
- Izzy Stradlin And The Juju Hounds

### Favorite Tour:

Bob Dylan



### Cymbal Set-Up:

- 1) 14" Paiste Line Heavy Hi-Hats
- 2) 10" Paiste Line Splash
- 3) 16" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 4) 16" Paiste Line Power Crash
- 5) 8" Paiste Line Splash
- 6) 20" Sound Formula Full Ride
- 7) 17" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 8) 17" Paiste Line Power Crash
- 9) 18" Paiste Line Thin China
- 10) 18" 602 Medium w/ 6 rivets

photo: Jack White



Enzo, Munyungo, Charlie, Soko

Los Angeles

## ENZO TODESCO

"I love the brilliance of these cymbals and the different textures of the sounds you can get by playing them dynamically"

### Favorite recordings

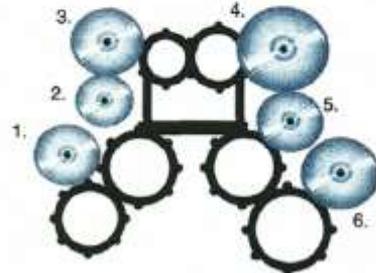
- Enzo has played on:*
- "Live In Montreal"*
- Gino Vanelli
- "WallyKurth"*
- Wally Kurth

### Favorite tours:

- Warren Hill
- Gino Vannelli
- Thom Rotella

### Cymbal Set-Up:

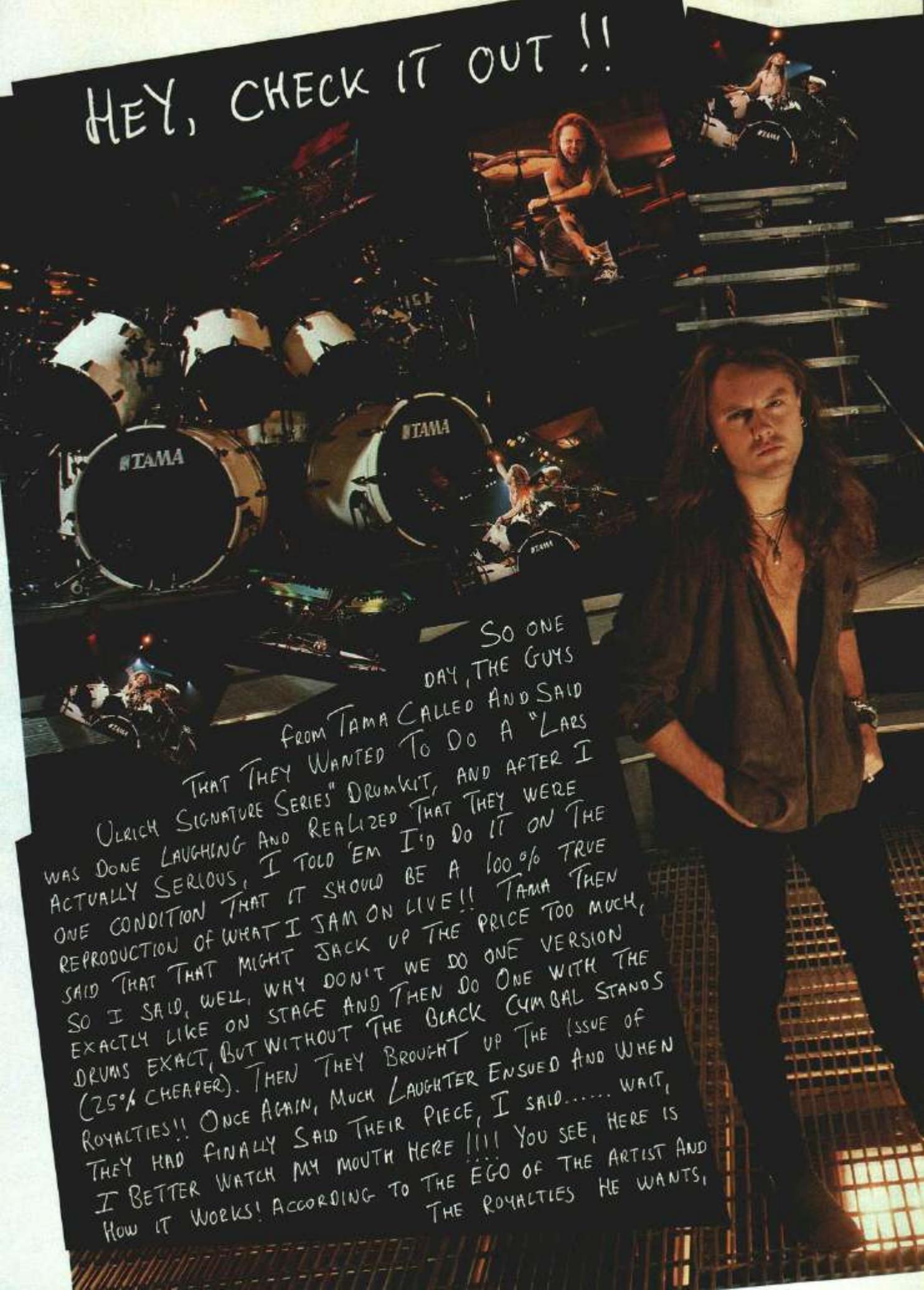
- 1) 14" Sound Formula Heavy Hi-Hats
- 2) 12" 2002 Splash
- 3) 16" Paiste Line Mellow Crash
- 4) 20" Paiste Line Dry Dark Ride
- 5) 14" 2000 Sound Edge Hi-Hats
- 6) 17" Paiste Line Full Crash



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continued from page 27



THEN JACKS THE PRICE UP BY THAT AMOUNT, SO  
 THEIR COSTS AND PROFITS REMAIN THE SAME AND  
YOU BASICALLY END UP PAYING EXTRA TO STROKE  
 THE ARTISTS EGO AND WALLET! FORGET ABOUT  
 IT!!! SO IF TAMA INSISTS ON GIVING SOME BODY  
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 AMOUNT OF A "NORMAL" ROYALTY AND PASS THE  
 SAVINGS BACK ON TO YOU! PRETTY STYLIN',  
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*Lars*

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| <b>FLORIDA</b><br><b>THOROUGHED MUSIC</b><br>Tampa (813) 838-6486   | <b>MASSACHUSETTS</b><br><b>E.U. WURLITZER</b><br>Boston (617) 788-7090   | <b>PENNSYLVANIA</b><br><b>DALE'S DRUM SHOP</b><br>Harrisburg (717) 852-8466<br><b>GEORGE'S MUSIC</b><br>Springfield (215) 543-2553  |   |
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have to do other things to subsidize their income. Russell [Ferrante] and Jimmy [Haslip] were writing most of the material, so they were getting more royalty money. I would only have one song per record.

**RF:** Your life took on a totally different course after that. You went from this very respected jazz/fusion gig, where you weren't making the money you needed to make, into this other situation of playing pop music. How did you feel musically?

**RL:** I love all types of music—country, pop, rock, Hare Krishna. You name it, I like it, as long as it's good.

**RF:** It's interesting, because you were a group member with the Yellowjackets, yet now you're making a lot more money as a sideman.

**RL:** Now there's more demand on me to perform. I'm getting paid more, and there's more pressure on me.

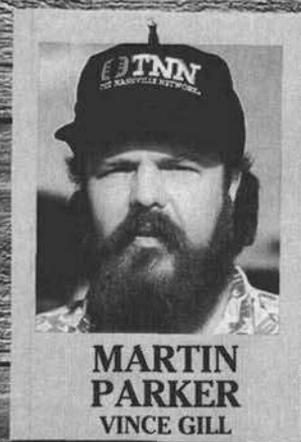
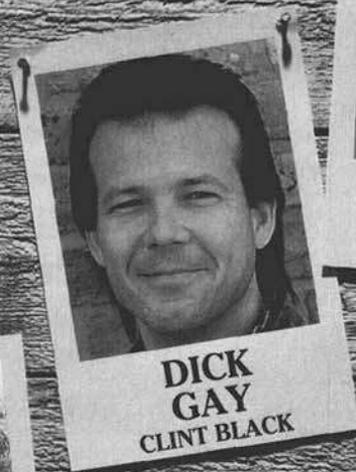
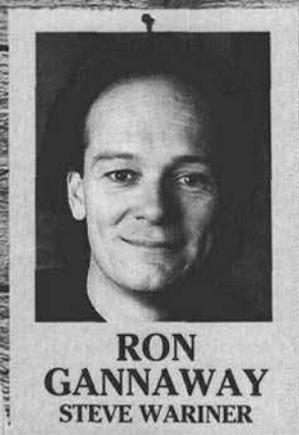
**RF:** Are you feeling as musically challenged and satisfied as when you were with the Yellowjackets?

**RL:** Yes, but in a different way. The challenge is to know everybody's parts, because I've been dealing in situations where I've been either the musical director or assistant musical director. As musical director, you have to know all the parts, and then you are allowed to use your ideas to arrange the music. It allows you to express yourself that way. It helps develop your arranging and producing chops. I've been doing some producing and co-producing for people lately. I recently did a project with Kirk Whalum where I helped arrange, and he let me co-produce with him. He really gave me the chance, which was a blessing.

**RF:** You mentioned being musical director. When did you actually do that?

**RL:** I was musical director on the last part of the *Bad* tour. Originally Gregg Phillinganes was musical director, but he left because he had another commitment, so I took over. That's a serious chair. You are the coordinator; you're the man in charge of music. You have to keep your troops together. You've got to be somebody people can confide in if they have problems or questions. If somebody isn't doing something or is

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late or something, you have to be the mom and work with them. If something goes wrong musically, they don't go to the band, they go to the musical director. It really matures you as a musician and as a person.

**RF:** You were saying you love all music. You've actually *played* many different styles. I'd like to take each gig you've done and talk about your approach on the drums, and also about what you learned from it. Let's start with the Brothers Johnson.

**RL:** That was my introduction to Los Angeles and to Quincy Jones. My approach on that gig was to play good, solid time, because Louis Johnson has a very percussive thumb style on bass. The two guitars are coming from the same thing, so everything was bouncing all over the place. They really needed a foundation so that whatever they played made sense.

On that gig, I learned how to get along with people in a very tight situation. We traveled on a regular Greyhound bus with the seats in it. So you learn how to deal and re-adjust. You pay these dues, and then you appreciate it when you get a gig like I have now. I went from them to Flora Purim and Airtio.

**RF:** So then you needed a Brazilian approach. What was different for you on your instrument?

**RL:** That gig called for me to be creative and to take more chances with the Latin/Brazilian thing, and the jazz thing, too. They didn't want me to do the same licks in the same spots every time.

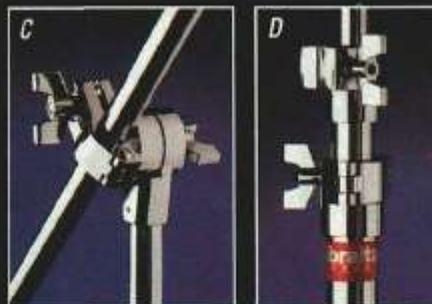
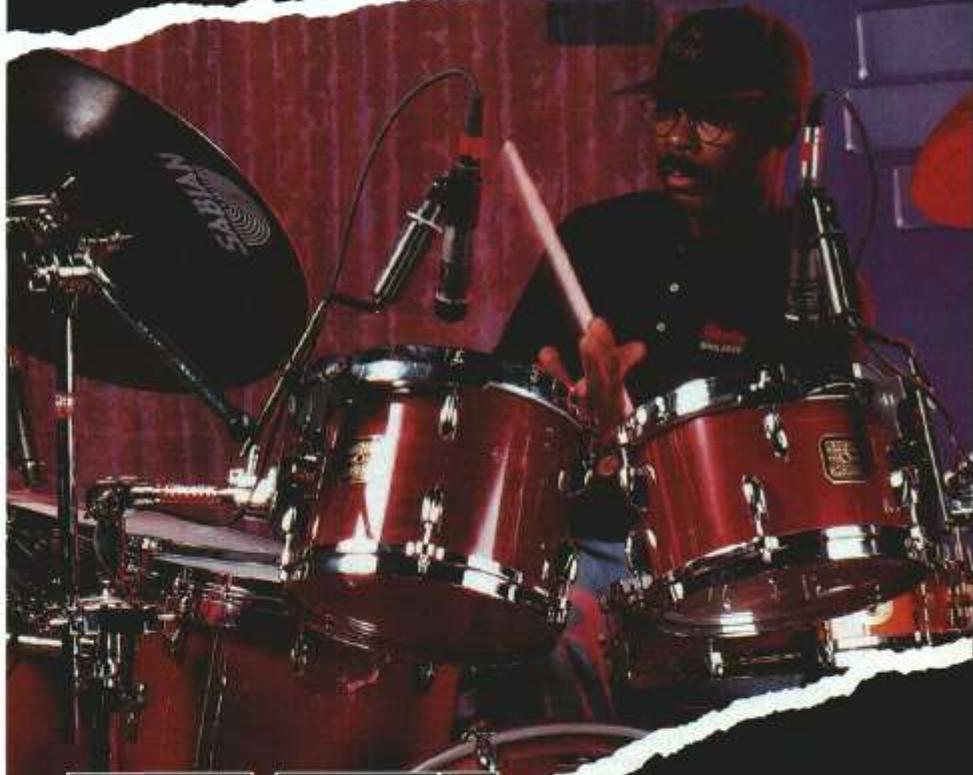
**RF:** What did you learn from that gig?

**RL:** Working with people from another culture, you have to really learn *why* they do what they do. You've got to hang with them and listen to what they say and listen to their music. You have to be like a chameleon and, to a certain degree, turn into what they are so that you can play the music like they do. I went from them to George Duke. The greatest thing I learned from him is to always be sensitive to the people around you. He's very sensitive to his musicians, both musically and personally. If George believes you can do something, he's going to encourage you all the way. I've done some of my best work with him, and I've worked with him for the longest period of time on a

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lot of different projects—Dianne Schuur, Deniece Williams, Jeffrey Osborne, Al Jarreau....

**RF:** What about the Yellowjackets?

**RL:** The Yellowjackets are like a family. It's like being married to three other people. There's a lot of compromising

that has to go on in a situation like that, because you all share the musical pie. You have to learn to accept all ideas and concepts and then come up with whatever is going to be the best thing for the whole of the project. Your idea might have been a great idea, but for that song

or that project, it might not be the best. I learned how to keep my mind and ears open to all other concepts and ideas.

**RF:** How did your approach differ?

**RL:** It was great because the way we played it made the song. By the time I was in the band, I was a little more mature and got the concept a little better. Maturity definitely helps. A little bit of time—and riding on a couple of those busses—definitely helped.

**RF:** Once you got with Lionel, your approach had to change quite a bit.

**RL:** Yes, a lot of discipline and simplicity. Lionel's music is so special because of its simplicity. It allows you to project the message a lot better because there isn't all this craziness going on.

**RF:** When did you work with Al Jarreau?

**RL:** That was in 1984, during breaks with the Yellowjackets.

**RF:** That was also different.

**RL:** It was a pop/jazz gig, but the way Al approached the gig and the way the music was, it was really the best of both worlds. You could make a little bit of bread *and* play your brains out. Plus, you had somebody who was leading, who really understood that. For a musician, it's one of the best gigs in the world. The gig with George Benson was like that too. It's basically a jazz gig, but a lot of his music is pop- and R&B-oriented. Al's thing is a little bit more extreme because he's very spontaneous in his

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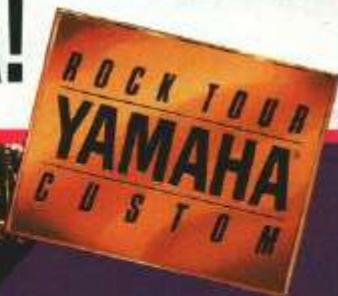
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approach; he can drop a trash can on the ground and take off from there.

**RF:** What about your approach with Whitney Houston?

**RL:** I kind of approach it like Lionel, but more "Vegas." Her thing is real show-oriented, a lot of glitter and glamour and sophistication.

**RF:** What have you learned from the Michael Jackson situation?

**RL:** I've learned to really strive to be the best I can be and to believe in myself. If

you want it bad enough, you can do it. If you keep pushing and give all you can give, whether it be to your family, to your friends, or to the public as an entertainer, you'll succeed. Michael spares no expense. He spends more money to do a tour than most people *make* on a whole tour.

**RF:** Since you play so many different styles, I'd like to discuss how you approach the drums in the various situations you play in.

**RL:** There were a lot of cymbals on the gig with the Yellowjackets, because with them, you paint pictures. With the jazzier gigs, you can do a little more painting. The R&B thing is a little bit more in the pocket, 2 and 4. The ballad things are very soft and sensitive. In a lot of the gigs I've been blessed enough to do, what happens is that every two or three songs, it's just another mood. With Michael, we'll do the tune "I Can't Stop Loving You," which is a pop ballad. Then he'll turn around and do "Beat It," which is rock 'n' roll. Then he'll do "Bad," which is a funk tune. You just adjust.

**RF:** What has prepared you for what you do?

**RL:** My whole past has prepared me for what I'm doing now.

**RF:** What made the greatest impression on you growing up? You didn't have any formal training.

**RL:** None at all. My uncle, Paul Riser—my dad's brother—made one of the biggest musical impressions on me. He had a high school education, believed in himself, worked hard at what he was doing, and became one of the biggest string arrangers in the business. He's one of those guys who always has time for you and always roots you on. He did the arrangements of "My Cherie Amour" and "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," among others.

**RF:** Did anyone ever stress your time or how to play?

**RL:** No, because I kept myself with the kind of guys who were always better than I was. I was always the weaker musician, so guys would say, "Have you heard this album? Listen to this. This is the concept." They turned me on to Tony Williams, Grady Tate, Bernard Purdie, Miles Davis, and Lenny White. They'd say, "You listen to those cats and they'll blow your mind," and that's what I did.

**RF:** Which of your recorded tracks are most representative of you?

**RL:** A lot of the Yellowjackets things come to mind. "And You Know That" is one of my favorite tunes. It's very-in-the-pocket, soulful, straight-from-the-heart type of playing. It's more R&B than some of the other things. And that's the tune I won the Grammy for.

I did a tune on Kenny Loggins' last album, *Leap Of Faith*, called "I Would Do Anything." It comes to mind because

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I remember doing the sessions with Kenny, who is one of my heroes. He's a wonderful guy, very sensitive, and the song conveys that message. He's really into his kids and I'm really into mine, and that particular session was a biggie for me. It was a little on the avant-garde side—not your conventional hit song. There are some real interesting rhythms and patterns, and it keeps going to different levels.

Anita Baker's *Rapture* album also comes to mind. That's one of my favorites. They allowed me to do a couple of nice drum fills on "Sweet Love," which kind of became a little signature of sorts, and if she doesn't do that on the gig, they get mad.

**RF:** Do you have to read to do a lot of the recording you do?

**RL:** It helps. If you can read, you can play more music in a shorter amount of time because you can read it and go on to the next song. I did a Japanese project where we tracked forty-three songs in four days, and being able to read certainly helped in that situation.

Another record I'm fond of was Anita Baker's *Compositions* album. That had

Gregg Phillinganes and Nathan East, two more of my heroes. When we get together, we have great sessions. We just knock that stuff out and we're outta there. No one track particularly comes to mind; that whole session was really great. Steve Ferrone did some of that album because I had to leave on Michael Jackson's tour, but I ended up on about four tracks.

One of my favorite albums is *Touch The World* by Earth, Wind & Fire. One of my mentors and heroes is Maurice White, who is also a drummer. I use him as a focal point to help keep me moving to do what he's done. That record was like a comeback record for them because they hadn't done one in a while. The title track comes to mind off that one.

BeBe and CeCe Winans' latest album, *Different Lifestyles*, comes to mind. BeBe's a buddy of mine from home, and it's always a pleasure to work with friends from back home. One of the greatest things about that project is the inspirational side of this group, the message. I'm a Christian, and the music they do is totally Christian-inspired. The other thing was I got a chance to work with a fabulous producer by the name of Keith Thomas.

**RF:** What makes a great producer in your book?

**RL:** He allows you the freedom to do what you do as a musician. When he calls you, he calls you because you have a particular kind of vibe or feel that you give to the music, and he allows that to come out. Plus, he's very open to suggestions; he knows exactly what he wants to hear and he allows you to come up with that for him. Keith also happens to be an excellent composer.

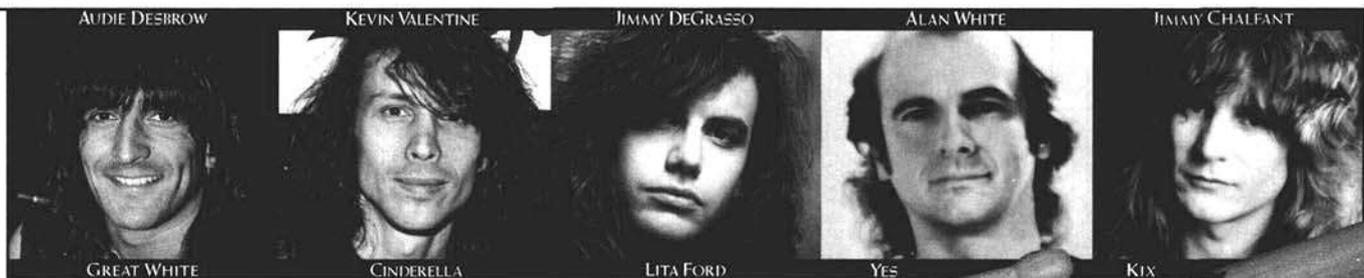
Jeffrey Osborne's *Emotional* was a good record for me because it allowed me to work with Jeffrey again. He had just built a beautiful recording studio, and I was the first live drummer to play there, to some fabulous tracks, too. There was an excellent engineer on that date, Tommy Vacari.

**RF:** What makes an excellent engineer?

**RL:** He knows what he's doing. When you're in the studio, it sounds one way to you in your headphones, but when you go into the control room, it can sound different. You get certain engineers who can accommodate you and take that into account, and you get some cats who can't. What they try to do is get you to change what you do to compensate for what they



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don't know. They try to get you to cover for their shortcomings. A lot of times the acoustic drums have a lot of overtones between the drums. Certain engineers have a technique where you can have the drums like you need them to play on. Some guys will say, "Can you put a piece of tape on it? They're ringing too much." But there are certain pieces of gear that will allow you to EQ certain frequencies out to a degree, which allows you to play your kit with a very open, live drum sound, instead of having to use muffling. Sometimes it's a combination of the engineer and drummer working together to get the necessary quality they need for the session. But sometimes it feels like the engineer is working against you. You're kind of at a disadvantage because he can go in there and turn a knob and say, "See, I told them that drumset wasn't happening."

Another great engineer is Eric Zohler, who is George Duke's engineer. He engineered a tune called "All Of My Love" on the last Al Jarreau album that George Duke produced. That one has a funny story: My daughter has a little toy drumset made by Remo. I had it with me in the trunk of the car, and I took it with me to the session. We were playing this tune and we took a break. I took the snare drum out of the car and put it up and started playing it to see what it would sound like. They heard it and went crazy. They got a good sound on it, and we wound up cutting it with that drum, which probably costs \$20.

**RF:** You've done a lot of live *and* studio work. How do you have to change your approach from live playing to the studio?

**RL:** In the studio, you really have to be on top of it, because you're in a controlled environment. Your equipment has to be really together, and your reading has to be together. The adjustment is to be spot-on every time, because tape does not lie. If the guy says, "You didn't play that beat in bar 57 of the first verse," and you say, "Yes I did," and he backs it up and it's not there, it's not there.

Playing live, the adjustment is being able to create spontaneously. You may only get one shot to do it because you play that song only one time that evening. You may get a chance to play a solo that you'll never play again, whereas in the studio, you could have recorded it. Playing live allows you to interact with the listening public, which gives you another kind of inspira-

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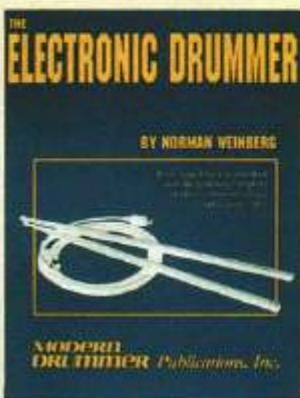


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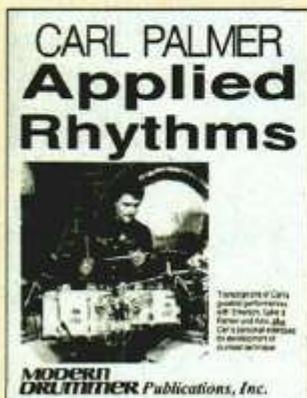
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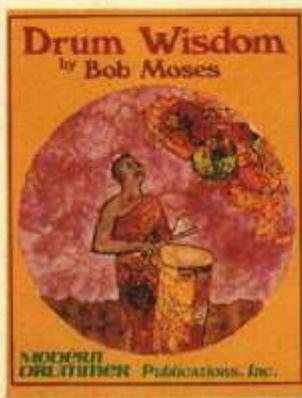
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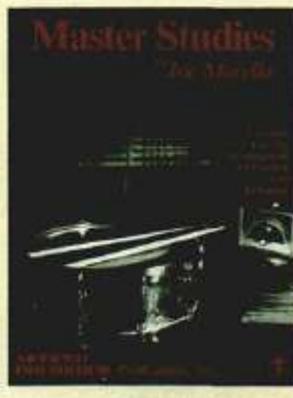
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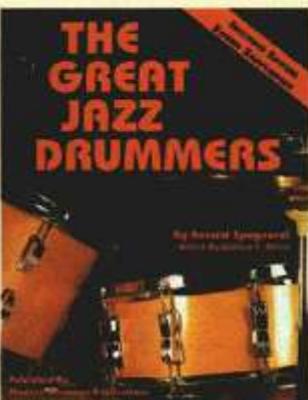
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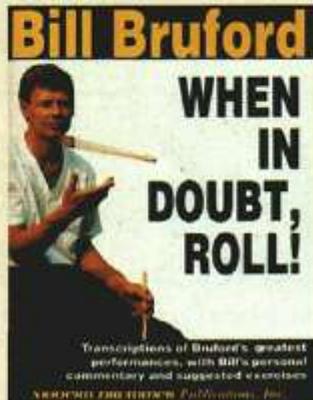
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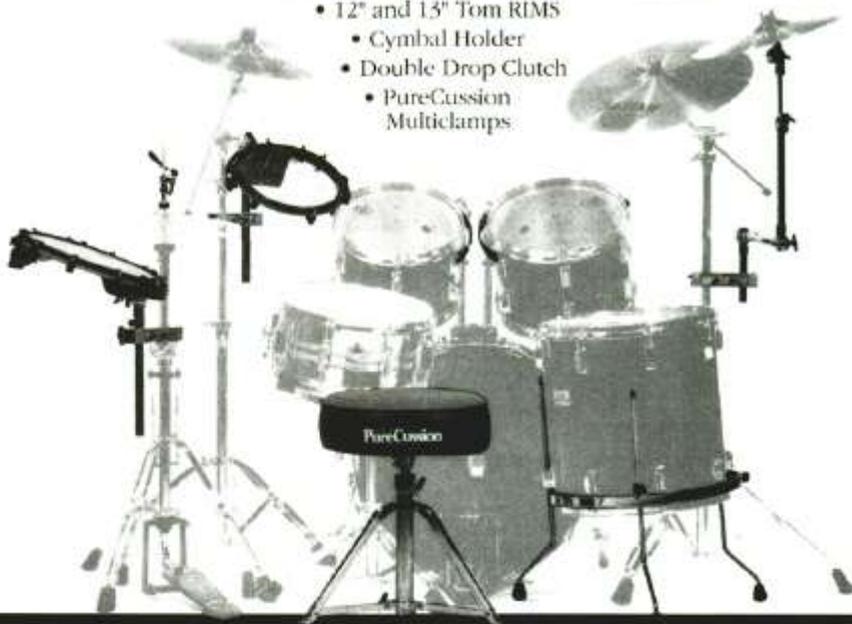
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tional thing.

**RF:** How do you alter your approach when playing those baseball stadiums?

**RL:** It's kind of deep because you have to keep the crowd up in a baseball stadium that seats anywhere from 50,000 to 100,000 people. If you get a solo, you can't be in there rooty-tootin'. You've got to play in such a way that keeps them going.

**RF:** Do you do a solo with Michael?

**RL:** I wrote a piece of music that we are playing called "The African Chant." It's a lot of percussion and bells and African rhythms with Egyptian overtones. I put it together to set up "Remember The Time."

**RF:** What do you think your strengths are as a player?

**RL:** My biggest strength is consistency with time. That's a drummer's first job. A lot of guys don't understand that. They want to play drum solos all over the place, and that's great. But when it comes time to play good time, they have a problem. I think my other strength is being able to inspire the musicians around me just in the feel that I give off in the playing—the spirit I give off.

**RF:** So much stuff goes on in a tour—good and bad—and you mentioned that you are a Christian. I wondered if sometimes it's difficult to maintain faith when you see a lack of morality around you.

**RL:** It can get nuts. But what I try to do in *everything* I do is be uplifting, and inspire other people, whether they be the singers or guitar players, or the people in production. I always try to approach them with a happy spirit because they have a lot to deal with. There are some guys who are literally staying up thirty hours to put this show together.

Being on the road is kind of an unreal environment. It's kind of a "head in the clouds" thing, because you have people waiting on you all the time and people going out of their way because of who you're working for. But I try to get out and do a lot of clinics, which helps keep me focused and helps keep my feet on the ground. Doing clinics, I get to meet a lot of the local people who are the die-hard musicians. That helps me realize how blessed I really am and how I need to be a blessing to those other people. With my pastor working with me and my family sticking with me and always rooting me on, there's no way that I can lose.

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# More Two-Handed Riding

by Howard Fields

**MUSIC KEY**

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This is my third article on the subject of two-handed riding. (The first appeared in the October '89 issue, the second in April '90.) It's time to check out another way to apply the concept.

The last two articles dealt with keeping the right hand on the ride cymbal and the left hand on the hi-hat. Now let's try a totally different texture of sound within the same rhythm and sticking patterns we discussed before. This is achieved by using the snare as our second riding source. The right hand will continue to play between the snare and the bell of the cymbal, while the left hand will remain on the snare. The effect will be that of a steady stream of ghosted 16th notes. Be sure to play all the left-hand snare notes lightly. The two right-hand snare notes are accented backbeats.

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

Once you get comfortable with this, try accenting some of the ghosted notes. Let's begin by accenting the "e" of 1.

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

Now accent the "e" of 3.

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

Combine the two previous examples.

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

Here's an accent on the "a" of 2.

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

Now accent the "a" of 4.

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

Combine the two previous examples, and we get the following:

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

Here are a few more combinations.

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

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

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

What we've done is taken a pattern through a series of changes by applying it to a two-handed riding technique. The only alterations made to the pattern, beyond the various accents brought to the beat, were the different riding sources that the two hands play on. No changes in rhythm or sticking occur. Therein lies the basis of this rather simple concept. Experiment with it, and you should soon realize just how much additional color and texture can be brought to any beat you play.





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*Zildjian*

continued from page 6

head, thereby equalizing the tension throughout the length of the snare.

Richard Taninbaum  
President, Rhythm Tech, Inc.  
Mamaroneck NY

## Perhaps You Got The Wrong Impression

Your August 92 *Impressions* article with Andy Newmark was quite distressing. With all the musical accomplishments Mr. Newmark has made, I am shocked at how he looks down his nose at musicians who play fusion.

Mr. Newmark, the "less is more" attitude you have does not fit in all musical situations. If you listen to *Chick's Music Magic* (Gerry Brown), *Spectrum* (Billy Cobham), *Terami Su* (Tom Brechtlein), or *Venusian Summer* (Lenny White), the "less is more" theory has no practical application.

I consider your comment calling musicians who play fusion "fusoids" very derogatory. Should we "fusoids" call you groove players "Johnny one-notes"? Mr.

Newmark, just because you may have heard a fusion drummer who couldn't groove, it doesn't mean all of us are like that. (That's like saying that all groove drummers can't walk and chew gum at the same time.) In fact, it's easier for a drummer with good chops who's worth his salt to play a simple groove than it is for a drummer with no chops to play in a complex situation. Watch who the young drummers try to emulate: Billy Cobham, Neil Peart, Jack DeJohnette, Dave Weckl, Buddy Rich, Gerry Brown, Will Kennedy—you know...drummers' drummers.

By the way, I do like groove merchants, too. I like *all* quality players. There are lots of great groove merchants with fantastic technical ability: J.R. Robinson, Bernard Purdie, Tony Williams, and Dave Garibaldi—just to name a few.

Jim Caterisano  
Niagara Falls, NY

*Andy Newmark replies: "Jim, I think you somehow misinterpreted my comments, because I am in complete agreement with just about everything you said in your let-*

*ter. I apologize if the term 'fusoid' sounded offensive; I meant it affectionately. I have the utmost respect for any style of drumming.*

*"I'm a great believer in keeping up one's chops and having a lot of facility. I certainly work on my chops all the time, although the styles I'm known for oftentimes don't display them. I respect the way anyone wants to play. If it's honest and sincere and that's where your heart is, then I say do it. As a couple of examples, in your letter you mention Tom Brechtlein as a notable fusion drummer, and Dave Garibaldi as a 'groove merchant' who also has great technical ability. In the article, I was extremely complimentary to both of these fine drummers.*

*"I do want to clarify one point that is very important to me. Your inclusion of Tony Williams in your last sentence might give someone the impression that I would 'look down my nose' at Tony. In fact, I idolize Tony Williams. He's been a major inspiration to me from his Lifetime albums to the present day, and I would hate for anyone to believe that I didn't think the world of Tony Williams."*



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continued from page 20

worked-out beats—but very adventure-some. I think Zach has a lot to offer as a soloist and as a musician—and he's only twenty-one. Unbelievable.

### ...Tony Williams

"Proto Cosmos" (from *Believe It*)

Williams: drums; Allan Holdsworth: guitar; Tony Newton: bass; Alan Pasqua: keyboards

**DG:** Kind of a dated keyboard sound. Is it

Steve Shelley  
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Tony Williams? It is [laughs]. It's a different sound for Tony; the mix is more drum-heavy than cymbal-heavy. Whew!

I wondered if it was Dennis Chambers with Mike Stern, but it was too dated with that Fender Rhodes in there. It was definitely more rock-oriented Tony. With the unfortunate passing of Miles Davis, I've been listening to a lot of Miles with Tony where the cymbal was the predominant thing along with the roaring drumset. This threw me for a minute. But those flams were unmistakably Tony—along with the busy, interesting bass drum work and open hi-hat. He's a master. I and all my contemporaries are influenced by Tony Williams. His whole career is an inspiration for all drummers. His approach is totally opposite from the Joe Morello approach. He holds the stick in a totally different way and he says he doesn't bounce it, instead he makes every stroke. Tony has a very specific way of playing. Very few have achieved that musical individuality as a drummer. I still aspire to that kind of individuality. I can't say enough about Tony's playing.

### ...JackDeJohnette

Michael Brecker: "Nothing Personal" (from *Michael Brecker*)

DeJohnette: drums; Brecker: tenor saxophone; Charlie Haden: bass; Kenny Kirkland: piano; Pat Metheny: guitars

**DG:** [after two or three bars] DeJohnette. The cymbals and open bass drum sound like him. Brecker with Metheny?

**KM:** Right.

**DG:** The drums sound like Jack's Sonors: open and very powerful. He loves that snare drum rimshot, the open bass drum, and the high-pitched tom-toms.

They give him a unique sound. Jack's another of the great drum stylists—as important as anybody in the history of the instrument, and still the epitome of modern jazz drumming. There's a bunch of us, in the next generation, who are aspiring to do something in the jazz tradition. But with Jack, you've got a technical whiz who plays unbelievable music. Metheny told me once that Jack might play very ferociously one night and very simply the next night—with no "drumistics" at all. He didn't have to prove to the world that he was Jack DeJohnette every night. He can just play music, which is the sign of an incredible musician. When I see him play live, he affects me emotionally: so powerful, so musical, so subtle, and so bombastic.

### ...Dave Weckl

Bill Connors: "Step It" (from *Step It*)

Weckl: drums; Connors: guitar; Tom Kennedy: bass

**DG:** First I thought Steve Smith, but with the cowbell it's got to be Weckl. I heard Weckl with the Corea acoustic trio. I had some time off from the Blues Brothers so I gave myself a present and played groupie. I rode in their bus and hung with Dave. It was great. Hearing them play live blew me away. Weckl did some really sensitive drumming using a flat ride cymbal—quiet yet precise. It was a very moving, musical experience. After hearing him play, I think what he did was very fresh; he played his own version of a jazz style, which is very hard to do.

I think the new Elektric Band album is great. Dave was the first person I heard, back when he was with French Toast, who played this incredible, independent bass drum stuff. He turned me on to Gary Chester. My time improved 100% from the first lesson with Gary.

Gary Chester called Dave a genius, and I do, too. He plays high-level, very involved drumming and some amazing drum solos. I found his style a little chops-oriented and "licky" for a while, but I don't feel that way now. After hearing him play recently, I feel he's gone on to a whole different level. He's a great guy, I like him a lot.

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# Facing Up To Forty

■ by Simon Goodwin

"Life begins at 40," or so they say. But having passed that particular milestone, I can't help pondering the truth of this statement. The point of the saying is, by the time you reach this magical age, you've supposedly established yourself in life. You're no longer young and green, but you're still a long way from being over the hill. The question I want to address in this column is, what does life have in store for a jobbing drummer of forty-plus?

For some of us in the jobbing business, music is a part-time occupation. There are many people who have successful careers outside music. This in no way detracts from their musical ability or their dedication, but for these people the *need* to keep playing in order to pay the bills isn't there. For people who haven't made a *career* in music, the fact that they're jobbing rather than appearing on TV or international tours would seem quite natural. The commitment toward those goals isn't usually compatible with following another career. On the other hand, the person whose principle occupation is playing music is usually hopeful of, one day, being up there in the "big league." While you're young there is always time, but as you get older you see your chances diminishing.

I've recently seen two friends of mine sell their equipment and give up playing completely. One said that he realized he wasn't going to get any further in music, and that there are much fewer gigs for someone in his position. The other just said he didn't enjoy playing anymore because the hassles involved outweigh the satisfaction.

Disillusionment can occur at any time, from the youngster who's disappointed because he discovers that you don't buy your first drumkit one week and appear on MTV the next, onwards. But a forty-year-old who has dreamed of stardom but never achieved it is particularly vulnerable. Let's face it, unless you're already in an established band, thirty is old to find success in rock music. The jazz scene is much more tolerant of age, but established artists usually recruit new sidemen from a younger age group. And in *all* styles of music, record companies like to have a youthful image to market.

There comes a time in life when you're no longer able to make the necessary sacrifices that are required if you want a crack at musical stardom. There's the need to earn a living for yourself, and perhaps for your dependents. This takes time and effort, which cannot be expended on playing gigs for no money in the hope of promoting a band with "potential."

People manage their situations in different ways. Some are able to put off the acquisition of responsibilities that might tie them down. Others endeavor to juggle jobs and business deal-

ings to still leave themselves free. But there comes a time when most people find they must settle down to a steady club gig, and possibly a day job as well.

Yes, it does happen to *most* people. There's only so much room at the top in any walk of life. In the same way that only a few make it to the level of corporation presidents or generals, only a few are able to reach the top in the music business. So what about the rest of us? I'm not suggesting we should give up all ambition and just sit back and become bored, boring, and complacent. But we have to be realistic about our situation. When you're young you can close your eyes and become your hero, playing in front of thousands of people. As you get older, you tend to fantasize less and just be yourself. It's vital for your peace of mind that you're at least reasonably happy with that self.

As you get older, you might not become a better player in terms of technique, but as long as you maintain an involvement with music, you're sure to become more experienced and more knowledgeable. The more you know about any subject, the more you realize what there is to learn. So the twelve-year-old who has just mastered the licks off his favorite Top-40 record thinks he's almost there. But the forty-year-old who can play at that standard and do a lot more besides *understands* his own limitations in relation to the abilities of some of the world's most successful drummers.

Some players in this position continually strive to improve—not necessarily out of ambition to be more successful, but purely because they love what they're doing and want to excel at it for its own sake. Others feel they've reached a standard that enables them to be good at what they do, and are content to leave it there.

It's all a matter of attitude. Sure, you're as young as you feel, but as you grow older your attitudes change. Here are a few symptoms that you might notice as time goes by: You find yourself worrying that perhaps you ought to be doing something more useful with your life, and you begin to wonder how much longer your credibility will hold out if you continue to play rock. You watch the charts to see if there are any hit records worth covering, and find yourself despairing over the banality of ninety-percent of what you hear. Similarly, you worry that you can't seem to enjoy music produced by a pile of electronic gadgets rather than by people, when the majority of the population couldn't care less. In matters of taste, you sometimes find that you'd rather be listening to a string quartet than to music featuring your favorite drummers.

Taking a more general view of your condition, you find that as this particular mid-life crisis drives more of your contemporaries away from active gigging, you're now "the daddy" in many of the bands you play in. Old school friends who went into "proper" professions, rather than music, now have big cars and big houses. Last but not least, you can no longer play a gig until 1:00 A.M., go to a party until 5:00, and then be at your office at 9:00. (Well, you can, but you feel like hell for days!)

When I was twenty-one I did some gigs with a bass player in his late 30's and who had been around a bit and done some

heavy-duty playing. This guy said to me, "You're quite good, but if you want to get on in this business you'll need to be a lot better. You should practice and do everything you can to improve yourself while you're still young, because as you get older you don't have too much time." Well, like a fool I thought he was being patronizing, and I shrugged off his advice rather than following it. It wasn't until five years later that I started taking lessons!

The majority of *Modern Drummer* readers are between fifteen and thirty years old. If you fall into this age group, you're probably thinking that everything I've been talking about is too far off to contemplate. Actually, it isn't. So this piece of advice that was given to me, I'm passing on to you: If you're past forty, or approaching it, realize that you're not alone, others are going through exactly the same experiences. And let's be fair. They're by no means all negative. So many people I know who are not in music—even the ones with the big cars and houses—are miserable! At least I'm doing something I enjoy—and I get paid for it. I don't wish my life away by watching the clock all the time. Sure, a bit more job security would be nice, but you can't have everything.

Yes, I did once dream about being rich and famous. But these days, not being famous doesn't bother me at all. Not being rich...well...that's another matter!



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# Steve Shelley

## Sonic Youth's Subtle Basher

by Adam Budofsky

Steve Shelley might have his work cut out for him. Recently, a lot of people have been introduced to Sonic Youth through "100%," the first single from their recently released *Dirty* album. With its screeching lead guitar twisting about in the background and its heaviest of heavy riffs, "100%" doesn't do much to dismiss the "noise band" label SY has grappled with for several years now. So it would be understandable if Shelley's rep as a technically proficient and tasteful drummer weren't widespread.

As usual, though, there's much more to the story. True, Sonic Youth have placed some of the loudest and most abrasive music in rock bins in recent times. But over the band's past few albums, the Sonic sound has matured significantly, inviting more subtlety and grace into the mix. And Shelley's drumming has followed suit. Where loud, thunderous tom-tom rhythms far outnumbered standard cymbal ride patterns in the past, today the band's music finds room for a sinewy James Brown groove and dancing ghost strokes. The bashing hasn't exactly been "grown out of," through. If anything, the subtler shadings only enhance the grunge through contrast.

Shelley joined Sonic Youth in 1985, after having played in various bands around Michigan. After trading tapes and correspondence with SY guitarist Thurston Moore, Steve decided to come out to New York City, where Sonic Youth were based. Shelley's description of a pre-enlistment meeting with Moore and bassist Kim Gordon illustrates SY's freedom aesthetic, which Steve would later come to relish: "I went over to Kim and Thurston's, and Kim and I sat down like we were going to have this talk. Thurston was distracted by something else in the apartment, and Kim was like, 'Well, Thurston, we were going to talk to Steve.' Thurston goes, 'About what—how to drum? He already *knows* how to play.' So that was pretty much it—it was like, 'Yeah, you're in.' Thurston said that I was a quarter of the band, not just hired on for a job or something. And that was really good; that's how I wanted it to be."

Shelley signed up just in time to accompany the others on their first European tour and to record the *EVOL* album, perhaps the first serious indication that Sonic Youth were capable of becoming "important" with a capital "I" on the alternative/college/indie scene. Though he would go on to record the ever-expanding *Sister*, *Daydream Nation*, *Goo*, and *Dirty* albums, Shelley's de-evolutionary drum style fit in per-



Photo by Richard Kern

fectly with what SY were about at the time. "I had gone through the same kind of development with my own playing in different bands in Michigan as Sonic Youth had," recalls Shelley. "I went from sort of playing straight music—verse/chorus types of things—to learning how to maybe just play one part throughout a whole song. It was a great time to join the band, because I still had a lot to learn, a lot of things to try."

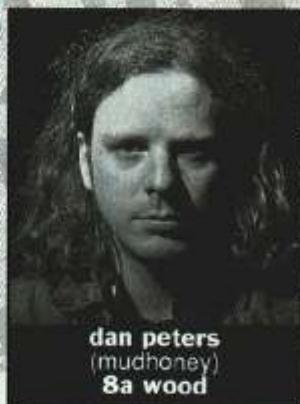
Because Sonic Youth tunes often didn't follow standard song form, Steve's drumming concerns might have been different than your average drummer's. He says that, rather than being concerned about technique in and of itself, he concentrates more on making sure that "the pieces I'm hitting are well-integrated with the story of the music and within the total sound. I go back and listen to band tapes and try to figure out how something can work better inside the song or within transitions."

Steve sees an improvement in both his and the band's playing over time. "I'm really happy with the point we've gotten to with this record," he enthuses. "That's one of the most exciting things about music—stretching it and taking it further. The recording of *Dirty* went really well; we didn't have to do a million takes. A lot of that was due to having [producer] Butch Vig there. He ran the board, and we just concentrated on getting good performances."

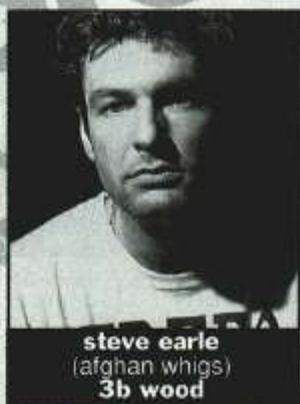
Though Sonic Youth's sound has progressed over the years, that "progression" doesn't always result in more complexity. Part of that progression is reflected in Steve's playing. "I enjoy playing really simple things right now," Shelley explains. "I think it's pretty difficult to do ultra-simple things and make them sound good. Like the song '100%'—there's really noth-

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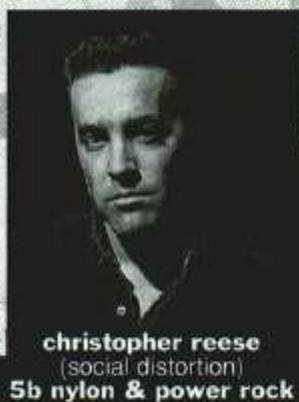
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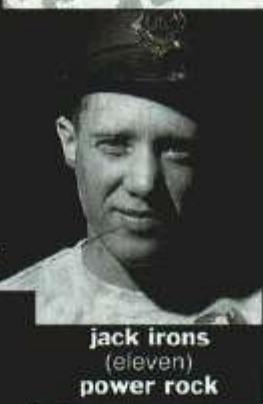
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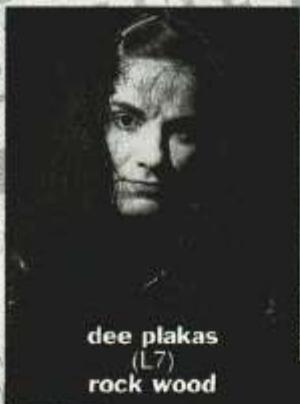
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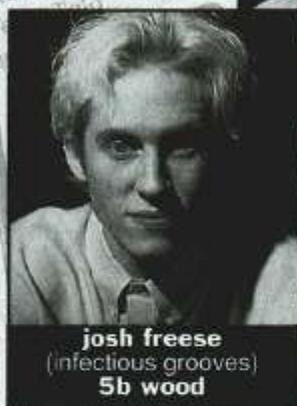
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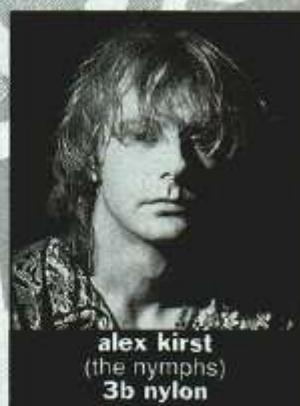
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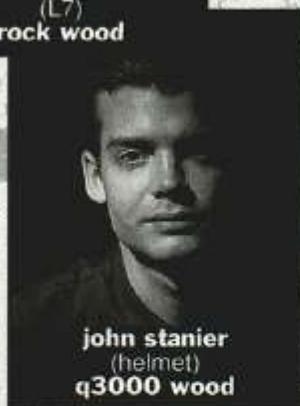
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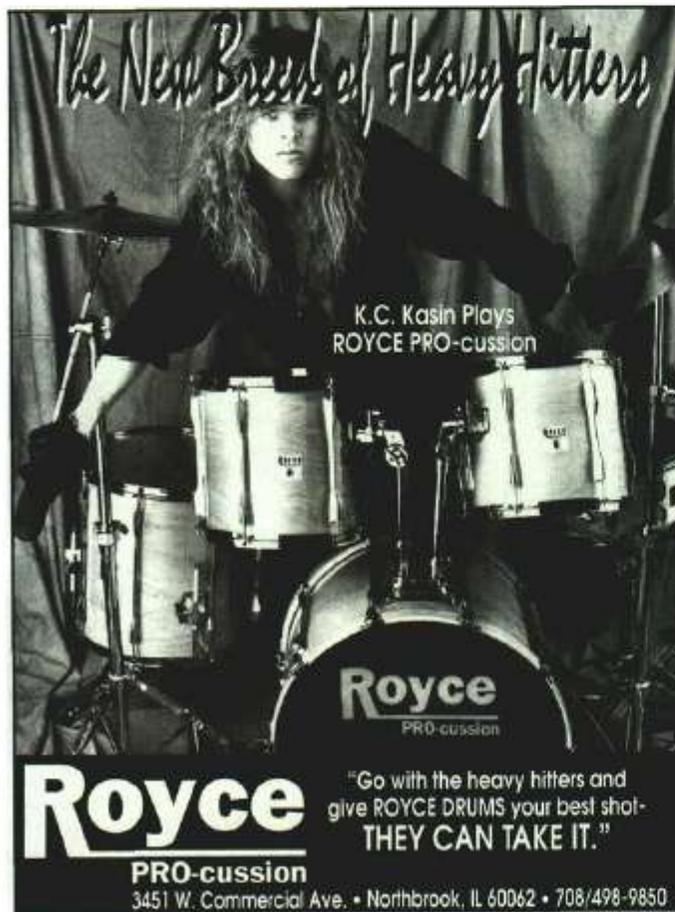
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ing weird going on with the drums. It's very basic, but it's just a blast to play. It's great to be able to play something that simple and like how it sits and how it feels.

"Actually, I have a problem with thinking too much about how everything sits, rather than just going with the feel or the flow of it. I gotta tell myself not to worry about it and not to think that it's got to be something different every time—like in every section there has to be some odd thing going on."

*Goo* marked Sonic Youth's first release on Geffen Records. Besides the distribution and marketing power the major-label signing provided, some more pragmatic concerns were now able to be addressed.... "When we signed with Geffen, I bought a new drumset—because I could afford one at that point," Shelley laughs. "I bought this Brady kit, which has helped me out a lot. I also started using coated *Ambassadors* instead of *Pinstripes*. The Brady drums are sort of oversized; the bass is a pretty standard 22", but the first tom is 12x12 and the next is 14x14, and the floor tom is 16x16. It's a little difficult to tune the bottom head with the top, but I like the way they feel."

Though they employ quite a wide dynamic range, when Sonic Youth plays loudly, they can get *quite* loud. Aside from ear protection ("That's something I'm definitely going to check out soon," Steve chuckles), are there other considerations Shelley takes into account, like maybe larger cymbals to cut through SY's dual guitar din? "I use average crash sizes live, like 16" through 20"," the drummer explains, "though I



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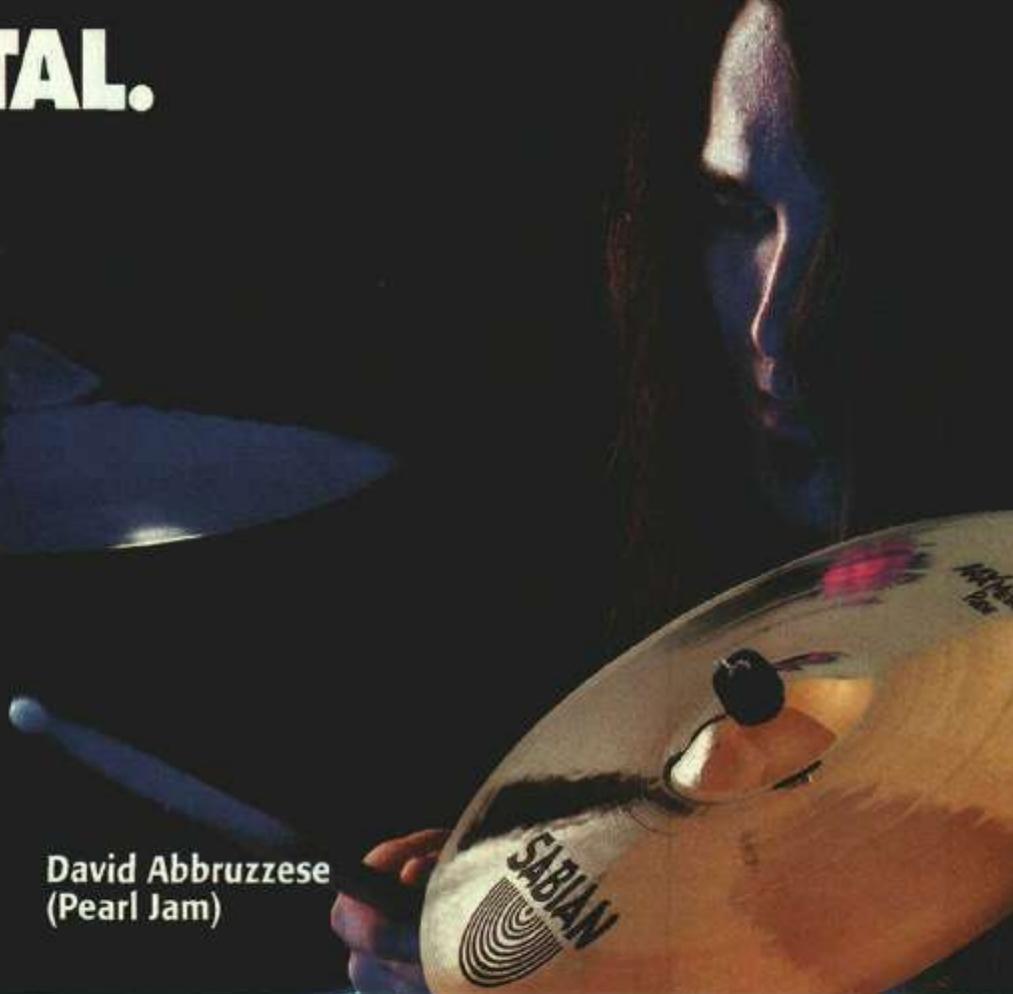
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section things, because it's something we haven't done a lot of in the past. But pretty much we travel similar paths and sometimes hook up together. It's not hard or easy to do at this point—it's just how it happens. There are actually a couple of songs on *Dirty* where there's no bass; Kim plays this East German guitar that she tunes half of really low and the other half sort of normal."

Such rule-breaking can be traced to different influences, but early post-punk music would have to be counted as a major source for much of Sonic Youth's iconoclasm. Shelley's more tom-oriented earlier work, for instance, comes from a lineage of such music, which he grew up listening to. "I guess it was partially conscious," he ponders, "and maybe I was influenced by bands who had that sound, like Joy Division. I liked a lot of Steven Morris's playing, especially the earlier stuff. I also liked the drummer in Echo & the Bunnymen—he played a lot of toms—and early Public Image, the Birthday Party, and George Hurley's playing in the Minutemen and FIREHOSE. But it's gotten to the point where if I did something on the tom-toms now, it would sound like something I did two albums ago, so maybe that's why I'm not playing that way so much now."

Perhaps an *un*-likely influence on Sonic Youth lately has been R&B, which is especially noticeable on *Dirty*'s "Shoot," with its James Brown-like groove. "I think that stuff is really cool," Steve agrees. "In fact, that's one of my favorite songs on the record right now. John Aldridge, who puts out *The Not So Modern Drummer* newsletter, loaned me a couple of *Black Beauties* when we recorded this record, so I used them when it

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was appropriate on a couple of songs, including "Shoot." I love James Brown, rhythm and blues, and a lot of straight blues—which you might not expect if you listen to our albums. This whole album has a little more of that groove, which is fun for me."

Another thing that's been fun for Steve is getting involved with various side projects, including indie-rock stalwarts like Jad Fair (of 1/2 Japanese) and Richard Hell. "I've been playing whenever I can with Jad for a number of years," Steve explains, "which has only been once or twice a year. But he just moved to New Jersey, so we can get together more often now. We recently set up in my apartment with a Tascam four-track and just a couple of mic's, and we did the *Mosquito* record, which is heavily distorted with some primitive drumming—it almost sounds like really messed-up country music in a way. We'll have a five-song CD coming out soon."

Steve also appeared on the *Dim Stars* project, which features Thurston Moore as well as Richard Hell and Robert Quine (both of highly influential New York pre-punk band the Voidoids). "On some of the pieces we would just jam together in the studio," Steve explains, "and then Richard would take the tape home and write lyrics to the music. He actually surprised us by being more old-school than we would have thought. We look at him as the originator of punk, and to us punk was about all this freedom. But we'd sometimes give him a piece of music that we thought was great, and he'd say, "Well, no, I'm not going to do anything with that," because technically or structure-wise there was something wrong with it. But the

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whole experience was really great anyway."

Steve has also worked with saxophonist John Zorn and a Japanese singer, doing an old 1950s tune (with Mathew Sweet on bass), and he has acted as his own indie record company exec by pressing a single by ex-Dinosaur Jr. bass player Lou Barlow, whose current band is called Sebadoh. "It's a song that he sent me, and so we decided to press up a couple of thousand copies of it. In a way this release was influenced by Thurston's label, Ecstatic Peace."

Steve also worked with Lee Renaldo, Sonic Youth's other guitarist, on a project called "Here To Infinity." "He did an album that was pretty much taped pieces that he would manipulate. But we did some live shows that consisted of both of us playing tape players with different sounds that we had recorded—like drum beats, bells, reggae and orchestral music from other people's records, and disturbing sounds like jackhammers or loud distortion. There was also a drumset, and I would run over and play to the tapes. Lee also had some guitars that he had tuned in a certain way. We did about a half dozen of those shows."

Shelley also worked with the previously mentioned Mike Watt of FIREHOSE on a single, which came out on Moore's Ecstatic Peace label. The pair, dubbing themselves the Lucky Sperms, recorded the Daniel Johnson song "Walking The Cow" (which also turned up on the last FIREHOSE album). "On the B-side we did the music to the Beatles' 'Tomorrow Never Knows' with



the lyrics to their 'Glass Onion.' Mike sang into a sampler and then played it back at an extra-slow speed, so it's barely intelligible."

Perhaps the most notorious cover situation Steve has been involved in, though, is Ciccone Youth, SY's alter ego, which released *The Whitey Album*, featuring their own twisted takes on Madonna songs. "That's a really odd record," Steve says. "But I think we've incorporated some of the things we did on it into Sonic Youth—especially on *Dirty*—which I'm happy about. When we went into the studio, we didn't have anything written; we just went in and started playing with drum machines and samplers."

Though Steve says he isn't exactly enamored with drum machines, he sees the Ciccone Youth project as beneficial, since the other players also got to work from the drum-part standpoint. "Everyone programmed the machines. We would put down a rhythm track, and the guitar or something else would follow along, which would become the basis of a song. Then we'd build by overdubbing on that. So that just brought something else into Sonic Youth, since everyone's natural rhythm leans a different way. Everyone in the band does as much other playing as possible. It's good to have as many other influences as you can."

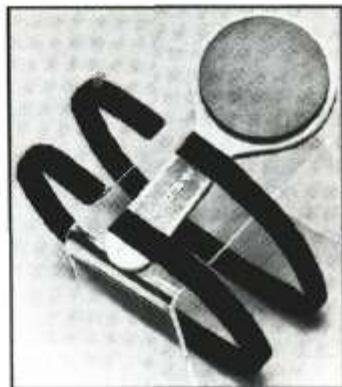


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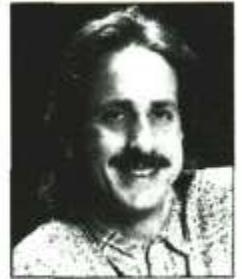
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# 6/8 Rhythms And Variations: Part 2



by Chuck Silverman

**MUSIC KEY**

This month's column finds more 6/8 patterns applied to the drumset as groove, fill, and double-bass ideas. Our first rhythm is a repetitive grouping of four 8th notes, one of the notes being replaced by an 8th-note rest. The pattern is repeated three times.

Now let's apply that pattern to a groove, adding a "shuffle" bass drum pattern and backbeat on the snare. This pattern requires much coordination and independence, but you'll find that once you work it out, it's worth the effort. It's a good change of pace from quarter notes or the same "shuffle" rhythm played on the ride cymbal.

Now for a double-bass idea: I've taken a left-foot pattern found in some Brazilian rhythms and applied it to two bass drums. It also works great in a triplet format. You can develop this double-bass pattern to work as a solo idea or as a groove. Start by getting comfortable with the feet pattern. I work at trying to almost "flam" the notes where the bass drums play together.

Now, as a groove idea, apply the hand idea from the first example, only this time accompanied by the double-bass pattern.

The 6/8 pattern in the first example can also work as a fill/solo idea. By permutating the pattern, we end up with another phrase, also built around a repetitive four-note group-

ing (with one rest).

Applying this pattern to the drumset, I've replaced the 8th-note rest with a bass drum note. Here are two of the ideas I've come up with. They're orchestrated on two toms, snare, and bass drum.

When the first fill idea is performed as 16th-note triplets, you get a very advanced-sounding fill. However, you might notice that what you're playing on the snare ends up just being quarter-note triplets.

Once you feel comfortable with these ideas, try setting up a groove and playing the fills in context.

Finally, there are two other permutations of the original 6/8 pattern. Your assignment is to develop some original ideas from these permutations. Remember that there is no limit to the creative possibilities.



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continued from page 31

he's doing that, the pulse and the groove is not lost.

**TS:** The simplicity of your playing has certainly enriched the overall music of Extreme. Had you ever maintained a

flashier, busier style previous to forming Extreme?

**PG:** When I was real young—about 15 or so—I was really into Emerson, Lake & Palmer. In high school I was doing the drum corps thing, so that's where I really got my technical ability and where I

learned to read. After Carl Palmer, I got into Rush, and the idea was to own as many drums as possible and to hit them all as fast as I could. That was really what I went through for a number of years—I just wanted to be a *great drummer*. It took some time, but when I saw Aerosmith, which was the first concert I actually saw, I began to "get it." I began to figure out that less is more in a lot of ways.

I still love to hear Rush, and Peart is still *the* exhibitionist. He never ceases to amaze me. But even though a lot of players play technically advanced stuff, for me, there's nothing like the feeling of a big, quarter-note bash thing: that rock 'n' roll feel. So I took my approach to that extreme—pardon the pun—and now I play only four drums.

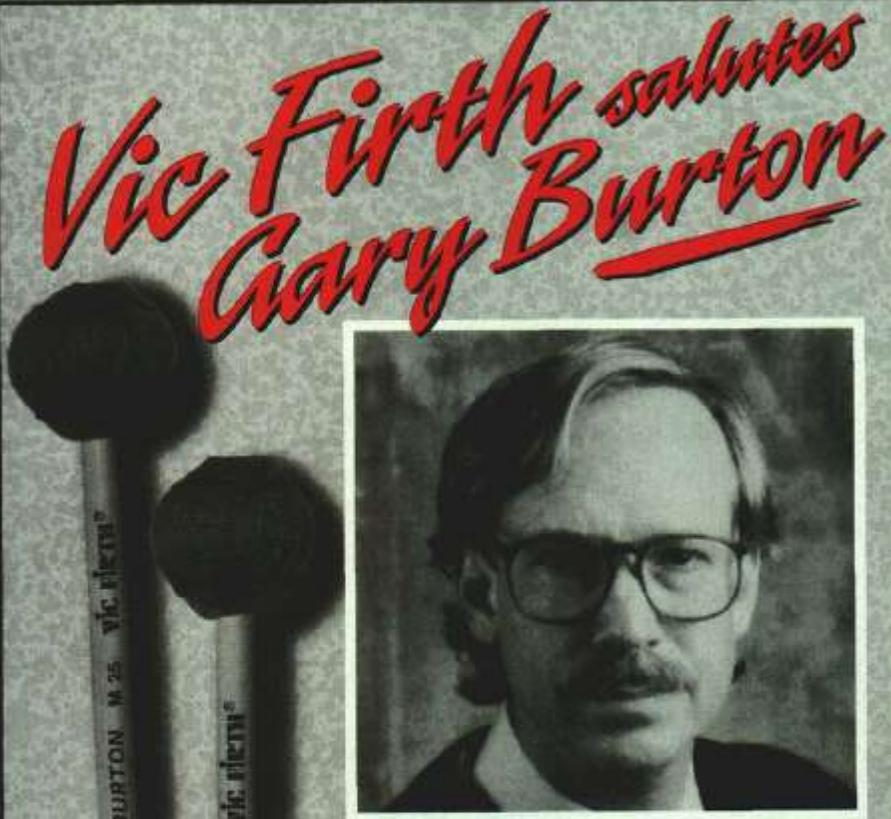
**TS:** Did you pare down the kit as you economized your style?

**PG:** They both happened gradually, but it probably took longer to temper my set. My head was slowing down and getting in tune with the idea that I wanted to be listenable and I wanted people to like what I did.

I love the Beatles and Led Zeppelin, and the Led Zeppelin thing was an example of a drummer who was playing simple, solid, and heavy. That's where I got the bashing end of it, with all the conviction that I try to keep in my playing.

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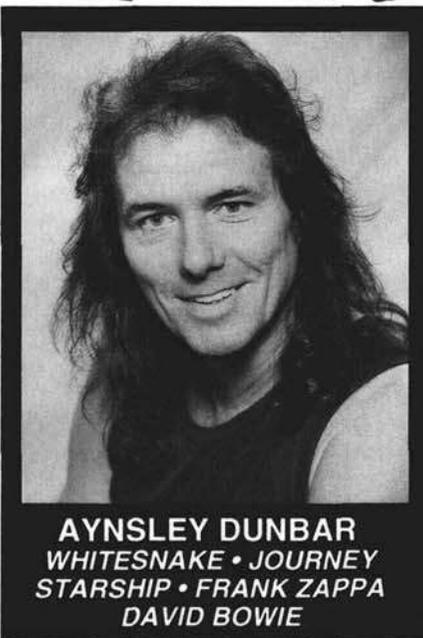


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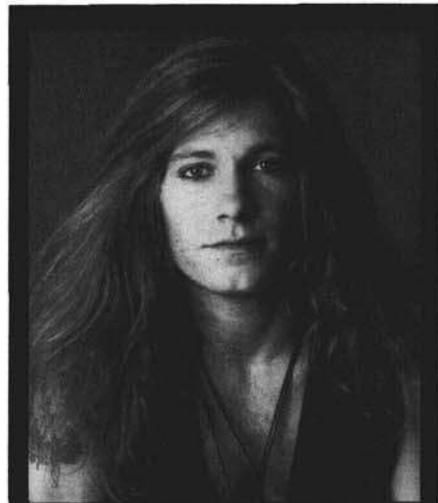


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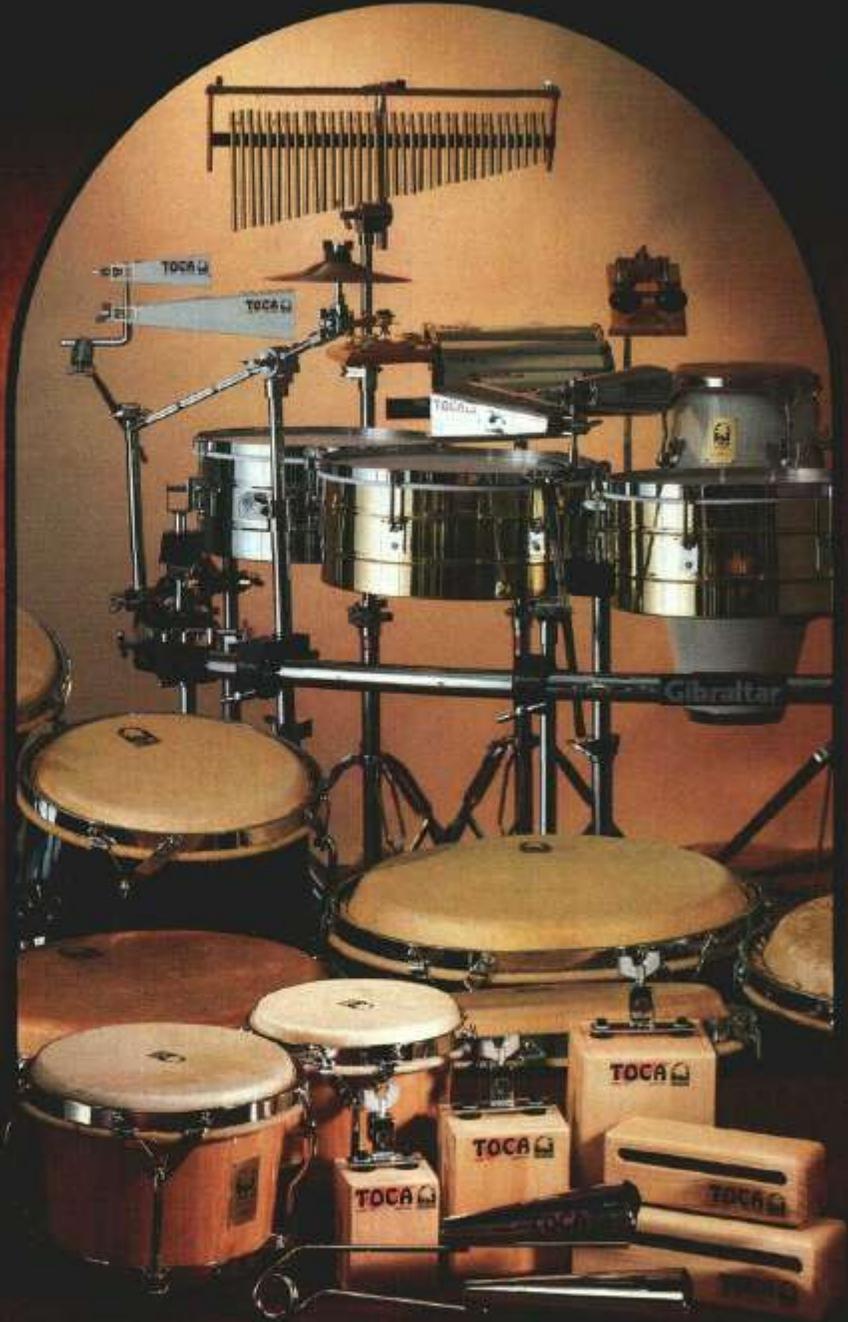


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changed, my kit began changing. Even up until the first album, I still had three toms and a floor tom. Then I finally thought that I might as well get serious about the idea. I'm in a good rock act that plays heavy stuff, yet I don't need thirteen drums. I don't look at myself like a Charlie Watts, but I do like to think that I play with definition. I do solo live, but I'm not into the boasting solos that are ten or fifteen minutes long. I like to do a two- or three-minute piece that gets the point across, because I like the idea of displaying some rudimental ability and some technique.

**TS:** Over the years as your style has become sleeker, has your taste changed to encompass the music of other drummers who also played with a more economic approach?

**PG:** My tastes have changed in music generally. When I was eighteen years old, I didn't want to hear anything that wasn't hard rock or metal. As I started to get older, I discovered the Beatles and how great they were. Even adult contemporary music and funk—everything I heard I started to appreciate for what it was. I was much more closed-minded when I was younger.

**TS:** Live, your time and tempos are as precise as they are in the studio. Since your command of time seems to be effortless, would I be correct to assume that you don't play to a click?

**PG:** Click tracks can be helpful. What I usually do is before we tour or when we're rehearsing an album, I use a click track in rehearsal so that I get a feeling for different parts of the songs that I might have a tendency to waiver on. Then by the time I'm ready to go out, I take it off, and at that point I know what the groove is supposed to feel like.

**TS:** So that's the only capacity in which you use a click?

**PG:** I think that everybody should try it and play with it. I don't think that everyone should play *out* with it, though, because it's not in the true feeling of what a live rock 'n' roll show is. To me, the best thing about a live show is the spontaneity when a mistake is made! It belongs to those people that one night. Who wants to see a band that plays to tapes live? Just get out there and be for real.



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When it comes to click tracks, I'd like to get out of the habit of using them at all. I play most of the songs on the records using click tracks, which I like. But listening back—I don't know if this is because I'm conditioned to hearing it—but I can tell that I did use one. When I interviewed Joey Kramer for my column in *Circus* magazine, he told me the same kind of thing: You can hear the difference between the first five or six Aerosmith records—where there's a kind of loose feeling, where there are speeding-up and slowing-down, but natural, really genuine-sounding tracks. Whereas the Aerosmith of today, it's click tracks. You can hear the difference between "Train Kept a-Rollin'" and "Dude Looks Like A Lady."

This thing about "perfect meter" is something I'd like to address. I don't want to get ridiculous and say that it's unimportant, because good meter is very important. But there's really no such thing as "perfect meter." What I'm striving for is to be a reference for the band. In Extreme, the guys out front are running around quite a bit while they're singing and playing. If anyone makes a

mistake and does the wrong thing, I want them to know that I'm there as a reference and that they can hop back on with me and be in the right spot. I have less to think about than they do.

**TS:** Live, three songs from *Pornograffiti*, "Get The Funk Out," "He-Man Woman Hater," and "Lil' Jack Horny," are slowed down. Why?

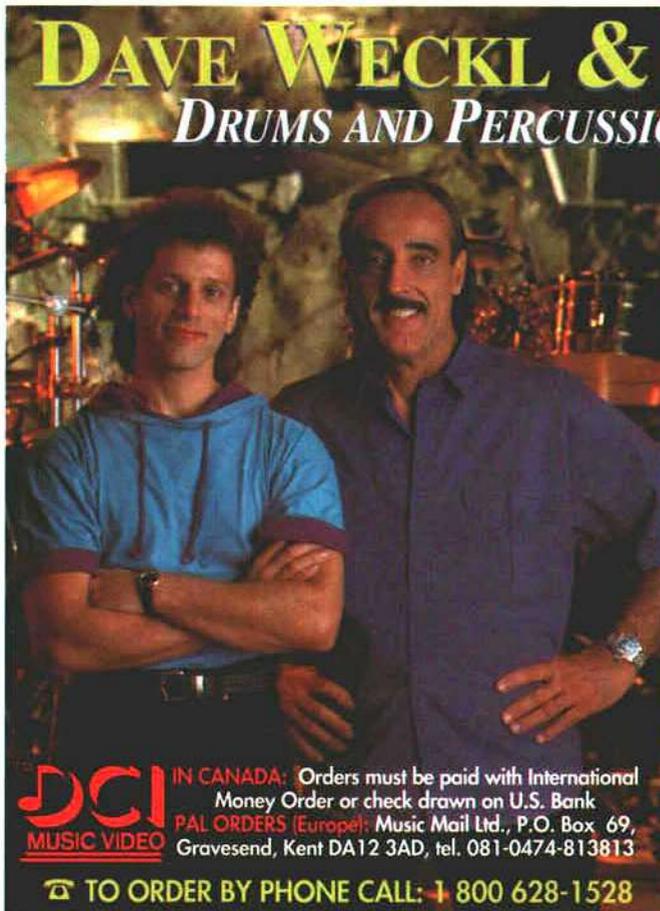
**PG:** To me, the bigger the places we're playing—and in the last two or three months we've been playing stadiums—a song like "Get The Funk Out" translates better when it's bigger, badder, and not *drastically* slower, but slowed down. It just makes it more audible in a 40,000-seat stadium. For instance, a song that's really movin' and groovin' and fast kind of loses its audibility when you're in a place so big that the booming effect is obvious. I'd certainly rather play slower than faster.

Of course, on a particular night that you might have heard us do those songs, it could have been that one of us just started slow. The idea is setting the meter properly in the first place. I might have a more comfortable feel for something live than I did when we recorded it

with a click track.

**TS:** How much input do you have as to what goes on the albums?

**PG:** It changes from song to song, and it's changed over the years. This last album was a weird thing because it didn't hit for six or seven months, so we were thinking that it wasn't taking off. "More Than Words" hit so fast and so big that within seven weeks or so we went from being off the charts to having the number-one song in America. The record started selling so crazily and the tour offers started pouring in. We were on tour with David Lee Roth, then ZZ-Top. And during those tours, Nuno was doing a lot of preparation for the next album in dressing rooms, just using an eight-track recorder and a drum machine. A lot of times, what he did was start with the rhythm or the drums or the bass, and a lot of those ideas remained on the new album. A lot of the ideas, beat-wise, were already formed when we went in to record this. My fills were something that I came up with and that I felt good about, plus the way I play—my feel—differs from what a drum machine does. But some of the songs on



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the new record are a few years old, and those were simply bashed out.

**TS:** Had those songs been featured in your live shows at any point?

**PG:** We'd play those songs every day at sound check—we were even playing the old songs that we hadn't played out, kind of revamping them for this album. Where the first album was bashed out and was completely a band effort, the second album was partly a band effort and partly written on the road. Probably about six of the songs on this album were written in dressing rooms with drum machines, then were given to us for ideas, which we worked out during soundchecks. The thing about this band is that by this, our third album, we really have a good idea between all of us what each person's position in the band is. So there are some guidelines that we go by: You usually find the snare drum on 2 and 4 in most tunes, and we use the bass drum to kick out the grooves and the funk end of it. When I use the word "funk" here I don't mean like Sly & the Family Stone or Parliament. I mean like early Aerosmith such as "Walk This

Way," and there were also a lot of Zepelin songs that had that kind of flavor. That was the traditional '70s kind of rhythm I grew up on. All of us in the band were fans of a lot of the same groups, but that's changing. I'd say the key word for Extreme now is diversity, because this new album is just full of diverse influences. Even *Pornograffiti* had a Frank Sinatra '40s-style swing piece. And "Hole Hearted" has almost a country kind of flavor.

*Three Sides To Every Story* is even more diverse in that sense. It's got a funk tune in a style that we've never played. There's a wild seven-minute instrumental-type song called "Cupid's Dead" where we really open up arrangement-wise. It's reminiscent of a Rush piece. Then there's a more straight-ahead rock song, "Peacemaker Die," that's a chunky, '70s-style rock tune. On side three there's some really off-the-wall stuff: We use the London Orchestra to play over a twenty-minute piece.

**TS:** Even though it's a "three-sided album," it's all compressed on one CD, right?

**PG:** It's one CD with 78 minutes of music, but conceptually it's three sides. The three sides are "Mine," "Yours," and "The Truth." Gary, who came up with the whole concept, wasn't trying to match a certain side with a certain type of music. His idea was to create less of a rollercoaster feel and more of a wave of songs.

**TS:** Do you normally go into pre-production before recording?

**PG:** In the past, we had all the time in the world to put an album together. This time, we were under a certain amount of pressure to release another record within a certain amount of time, because Extreme wasn't established as artists so much as a band that had a huge hit. There are a lot of people out there who heard "More Than Words" but couldn't name who did it. I think it was important for us to hustle right back there and get another good record out so that we could re-acquaint people. We hope that after this record we'll be in a position to take a step back and do a more traditional record and just bash away again. In fact, Nuno recently came to me to begin pre-

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senting him with drum patterns.

**TS:** You're already looking ahead to the next album?

**PG:** Yeah. I think what will happen over the next two years of touring and promoting this record is that we'll probably get forty songs together and use twelve for the next album. I think the next one will be back to basics for us.

But I'm confident about *Three Sides* in that it will be bigger than the last one. We've done extensive touring all over the world, we've broken hugely in Europe, we had the number-one album in Canada, we went gold in Japan—all on top of the success we had here. So we're in

good shape this time, and we're poised for our first huge record.

**TS:** You were a founding member of Extreme, yet Gary and Nuno get most of the attention. Do you ever resent that your role in the band is overlooked by the press?

**PG:** I suppose when the press says the wrong things, yes, but generally it's fine. I know what my place is: I'm a quarter partner in this band, and as long as it's always that way and there's always a democracy among us, then I'll feel good about it and I honestly won't care what the press says.

**TS:** With a small kit like yours, getting

the drum sounds that you like in the studio must come rather quickly.

**PG:** It's definitely easier—not only because of the small kit, but also because I play less. This time we went for a tighter sound than before, and I've got to say that producer Bob St. John and Nuno had a big hand in getting the drum sound. Together, we got as good a sound from the natural drums in the room as we could. Actually, some arguments went down along the way, but the final results are that the drums have a lot of attack and they're well-heard, and it really left room for everything else to be heard. Of course, there are a few things on the

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record that sort of bother me, but I'm sure each of the other guys in the band would have their points, too.

All of the songs are so drastically different on this album, from the way they were recorded to the way effects were used, that there isn't a consistent drum sound, where on our other records there was. Generally, the drum sound was put together based on whatever the song called for.

**TS:** You mentioned effects. What type did you opt for?

**PG:** We used them in a few places. In "Cupid's Dead," there's a section where there's a loud, messy, open-gated drum sound, just for four measures. There are actually some drum machine sounds as an intro—a tiny-sounding drum machine that's supposed to complement the sound of the real drums that are layered on top.

**TS:** The last couple of albums have mostly been comprised of straight 4/4 time. I understand there are odd time signatures on the new album.

**PG:** Oh, yeah. On the third side there's a piece that's really wild. I haven't actually counted it out, it's just something we felt



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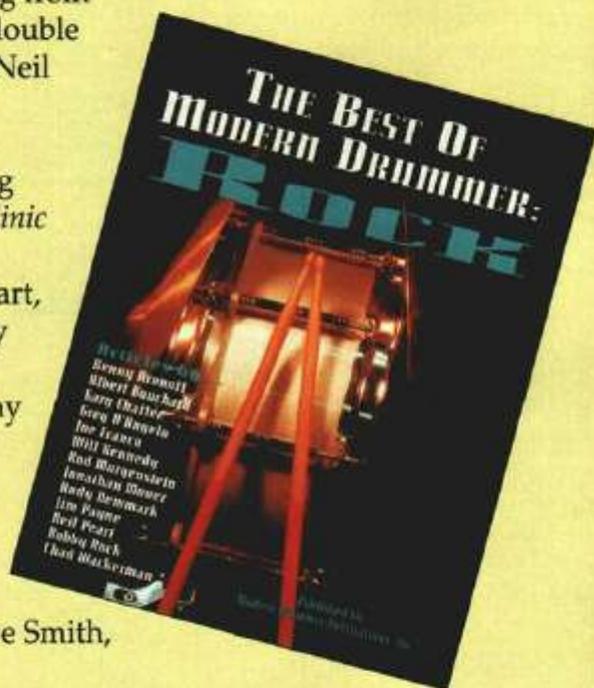
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and worked on together in the studio. It's called "Am I Ever Gonna Change?" Then there's a section in "Peacemaker Die" that's not that complicated—it's in 7/8—but it's a Zeppelin-esque up/down kind of thing, where the snare turns around every four measures.

**TS:** What are some of the changes you will be making in your live show to accommodate the diversity of the new album?

**PG:** We're planning to bring a horn section with us on the road. And we're planning on having a piano—maybe a grand piano—rolled out so that we can perform some of the things we might not have done when we didn't have enough stage room or money.

**TS:** The Freddie Mercury tribute in April must have had a staggering effect on the band. You had a big time slot, and you went over very well. This was all in the midst of recording the new album.

**PG:** We were in the studio at the time, so we had a really nice place to rehearse it. But Queen is the band that the four of us mutually grew up on. For Gary, it's his all-time favorite band, and Freddie Mercury was his all-time favorite front man. It was a few months before Freddie passed on that we developed a relationship with Brian May, and he came to our Hammersmith Odeon show in London and joined us on stage to play a Queen's "Tie Your Mother Down." At that time it was the best thing that ever happened to us. We were so elated about it. When we went back there for the Brit awards after Freddie's death, Brian invited us to dinner, and we met with the rest of the band. It was at that point that they asked us to play at the tribute. Of course we were honored and we thanked them. Then when we left the room and were sure they couldn't hear us, we started jumping up and down!

Brian had told Gary that we could do whatever we wanted: Queen songs or our own material. We thought, "Let's not try and jam Extreme down people's throats. Let's try to honor the moment," because it was a Freddie event. The bands that were playing, like Metallica and Guns N' Roses, were pretty heavy and pretty much one-vocal bands. But we have a big emphasis on vocals, and our music is diverse and sometimes Queen-esque. So

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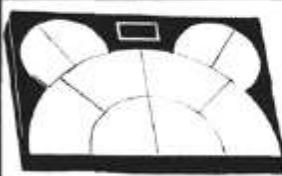
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we thought that if any of the bands were going to pull off Queen as it was originally done, we had the best shot at it. So we went for it. We had three rehearsals for this, but you've gotta remember that we grew up on this music, so we pretty much knew the songs to begin with.

**TS:** How did it feel to be playing to a worldwide audience?

**PG:** We were nervous. I was dying. In fact, I felt like jelly when I sat down, because I knew that Robert Plant, Elton John, Queen, George Michael, Metallica, Def Leppard, and all the other bands were watching. We had been talking to some of these people before the show, and to have long conversations with some of our long-time heroes was bizarre.

When we started playing, we were all really nervous. We knew we were the underdogs, the band who people knew the least. But we couldn't have asked for a better audience, and the nerves just melted away. We were used to playing to huge audiences after touring with all those bands we had been out on the road

with. The nerves kicked in because it was a special event with all those stars looking on. Before the tribute, it seemed like all of a sudden, Queen was coming back into the limelight in America. Bands were covering them, *Wayne's World* made "Bohemian Rhapsody" a hit again, and the last thing we wanted to do was let people think we were jumping on the bandwagon. But Queen had really been a big influence for all of us, and we were always mentioning them in interviews.

**TS:** I suppose that when you were up on stage, you never realized what a powerful impact the band was having.

**PG:** [laughs] No. I was too busy worrying about whether Robert Plant liked me. We had an hour conversation with Plant about our music and Led Zeppelin before the show, and that was amazing.

**TS:** We haven't talked about your formative years. Tell me about them.

**PG:** Well, I grew up in Boston, and I never was into school all that much. Eventually, I got thrown out of high school, and I was in trouble with the

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**TS:** A nice, respectable guy like you? I don't believe it.

**PG:** When I was young, it would have been an unusual day if I *didn't* steal a car to go to school in. I came very close to going to jail. In fact, I was sentenced to prison, sitting in a courtroom with my girlfriend and my family crying. Luckily, the prosecuting attorney's client—who was a credit card company that I had been involved with in a fake credit card scam—wanted their money, and they knew that if I went to jail they wouldn't have gotten any. They put me to work, luckily, and I paid it off. It was at that moment, as I sat in the chair and was sentenced, that I realized how stupid I was being, and it was from that day forward that I became a crazy nut playing drums every day. I knew that it was the only thing that I wanted to do. From then on, I never did another bad thing.

**TS:** Without getting too analytical or personal, did you ever question the reasons behind your rebelliousness?

**PG:** I think it's because I grew up very poor, but I wasn't living in that poor of a neighborhood. I was in a tiny apartment, but all my friends had nice things like minibikes and stereos. My parents tried very hard to do the best they could, but there were a lot of personal problems happening at home back then. The crowd I was with was also part of the problem, plus I was into drugs and all the other *crazy* stuff there was to get into. But luckily I straightened out.

**TS:** I guess you never dreamed things would turn around for you quite as drastically as they have.

**PG:** No, I never thought it would turn out this way. Things are going better than I would ever have imagined. I still can't believe that I actually own my own home! Sometimes I drive up to it and think, "I can't believe this is mine!" So the fact that I am making a good living and doing the only thing I want to do is *more* than enough.



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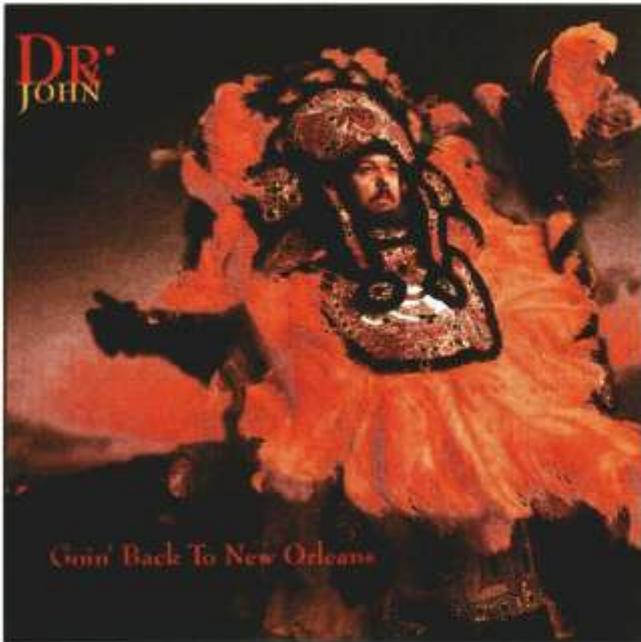
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Homemade is better. Recorded in New Orleans entirely with New Orleans musicians playing all established New Orleans tunes, Dr. John's *Goin' Back* corrals various styles of Crescent City

music into an authentic, uplifting celebration. The gritty-voiced Mr. Rebennack claims that this is an album of "street side" music he has always wanted to make—and his commitment comes through. Just as the indigenous material spans from the 1850s through the 1950s, the musicians also straddle generations, from old-timers like former Sidney Bechet and Satchmo sideman Danny Barker, to Pete Fountain, to the spring chicken Nevilles.

For drummers, this disc is like a condensed history clinic in New Orleans drum feels. Our teacher here is master Freddie Staehle, a veteran of several Dr. John discs including the classic *Gumbo*. Staehle hits the mark every time, whether it's blues, R&B, or second-line drumming as applied to pure Mardi gras parade style ("My Indian Red") to funky ("Do You Call That A Buddy?") to the festive local-style mambo of the title

cut. It's Freddy's lolling, sensuous feel that makes it all work, with a beat phrased so funkily far back that the band's already packed up while he's hitting his last note.

Sublimely rough-edged, most of the cuts here feel like they were caught live at the height of a block party. It can't be said better than in the Night Tripper's own informative and funny liner notes: "Take it from a native, this album definitely ain't one of those Chamber of Commerce Ho-Hum gigs."

• Jeff Potter

GINGER BAKER

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Ginger Baker has stated many times that there are drummers who play faster and with more technique than he does, but there is no one who sounds like him. *His* way has always been slightly different. As Baker has matured (he's into his 50's now) he seems to have come up with an approach all his own. *Unseen Rain* is more proof of this.

Just like several of the Bill

Laswell-produced discs Ginger has played on over the last four years, this Hellborg-produced offering has him exploring more of his full-kit approach. Ginger seems to be avoiding using traditional ride sources such as hi-hats and ride cymbals, preferring to incorporate the whole kit in the time. This creates a powerful groove, most of the time sounding quite African and tribal in nature. He may "swing" the feel a little bit (as on "Open Secrets"), or play it straight, but either way it's definitely Ginger.

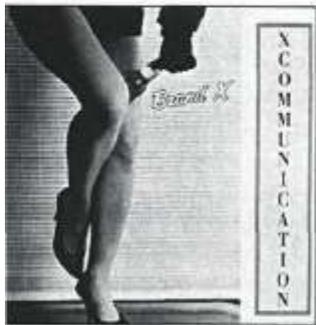
The combination of Ginger's approach with acoustic piano and bass is lovely, leaving the sound of the drums plenty of room to shine. (The drums and cymbals on this disc do sound great.) In fact the drums are really central to the compositions, with the bass and piano working around them. Again, a unique approach from a man who prides himself on cutting his own path.

• William F. Miller

BRAND X

*XCommunication*  
 Ozone OZ-001  
 FRANK KATZ: dr  
 PERCY JONES: bs  
 JOHN GOODSALL: gtr  
 Xanax Taxi; Liquid Time; Kluzinski  
 Period; Healing Dream; Mental  
 Floss; Strangeness; A Duck  
 Exploding; Message To You; Church  
 Of Hype; Kluzinski Reprise.

As an instructor for the past few years at Drummers Collective in New York, Frank Katz has been strictly behind the scenes, though his influence has been felt in the slick beats and cross-rhythms passed on to his students (some rather well-recorded).



in this reunion of Brand X, Britain's mid-'70s answer to Return To Forever, Katz steps forward and lays claim to his own signature beats. His crisp backbeat in the service of odd time signatures provides the pulse on Goodsall's "Liquid Time," and he unleashes some powerful funk chops on ones' "Kluzinski Period," taking the James Brown funky drummer tradition into a high-tech fusion realm.

Katz orchestrates his solo breaks on "Xanax Taxi" with command and creativity. And his adeptness on the kit throughout this project is infused with rock attitude, particularly on the solid backbeat number, "Church Of Hype" a showcase for Goodsall's flaming DiMeola-style speed picking. But his drumming high points come on Goodsall's fiery fusion showcase "Mental Floss" and the tumultuous "A Duck Exploding." Frank's slick interplay between bass drum, snare, and hi-hat on these tunes is simply phenomenal. His sense of precision independence may have been informed by two previous Brand X drummers, Kenwood Dennard and Mike Clark, but Katz is clearly forging some exciting new directions of his own. *Ozone Records, 201 Engert Ave., Greenpoint, NY 11222.*

• **Bill Milkowski**

**KUHN/NAUSEEF/  
NEWTON/TADIC**

Let's Be Generous

CMPCD53

Joachim Kuhn: kybd, pno

Mark Nauseef: dr, perc

Tony Newton: bs

Miroslav Tadic: gtr

The Prophet; Senegal; Avant Garage; Always Yours; Something Sweet, Something Tender; The Captain And I; Heavy Hanging; Don't Disturb My Groove; Snake Oil; Bintang; Kissing The Feet



Hard-hitting collective improvisation is the name of the game here. Titles and themes are formalities paving the way to thick, dark journeys into the unknown. (Eric Dolphy's name appears here twice, but the reference is mostly typographical.) These veterans have taken the impatient spirit of '70s jazz-rock to its logical, angry conclusion.

Tony Williams fans will remember bassist Newton from the startling 1975 Lifetime album *Believe It*. But this brief, ultra-processed treatment of that album's "Snake Oil" is hardly nostalgic. Mark Nauseef commands a formidable battery of fat Sonors and liquid Paistes, temple bells, metal plates, electronics, and barking miscellany. His groove is wide, straddling Newton's percolations as the front line sends up volleys of slashing distor-

tion. Nauseef's gamelan-flavored percussion brings a welcome sense of earth to these noisy proceedings.

Ironically titled, *Let's Be Generous* is rough listening. But if you want to know what happened to fusion after most practitioners took the elevator to the executive suite, this might be a good place to look.

• **Hal Howland**

**PRAXIS**

*Transmutation (Mutatis Mutandis)*

Axiom 314-512 338-2

Bernie Worrell: kybd

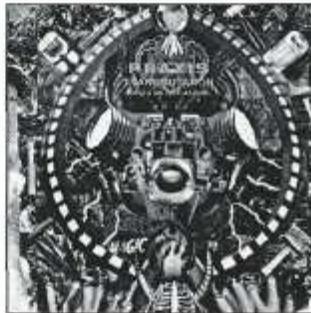
Af Next Man Flip: turntable, mixer

Bootsy Collins: bs, vcl

Buckethead: gtr

Brain: dr

Blast/War Machine Dub; Interface/Stimulation Loop; Crash Victim/Black Science Navigator; Animal Behavior; Dead Man Walking; Seven Laws Of Woo; The Interworld And The New Innocence; Giant Robot/Machines In The Modern City/Gozilla; After Shock (Chaos Never Died)



Twitching like the soundtrack to some futuristic Japanese monster movie, Praxis spew up a jamming mix of metal, funk, samples, and tape machine noise that heralds the arrival of an innovative new band. Guided by producer Bill Laswell's Merlin-esque presence, *Transmutation* is the next evolutionary step in the '90s musical feeding chain.

Everyone here is a master of his instrument, including

turntable scratcher Af Next Man Flip, who supplies needle-like jabs around the Limbomatics' Brain, whose hard-whack drumming is funky and clean as a smoking whip. Bootsy Collins adds bass, the proper vibes, and vocals ("It ain't nothing but a party, baby"), and Hammond organ apostle Bernie Worrell keeps everything soaked in hot sonic soul. Front and center is guitarist Buckethead, who is destined for guitar-god status. He can burn holes through his axe with ferocious noise-speed or easily summon up '70s prog-rock mysticisms.

*Transmutation* is experimental, eccentric, and occasionally lighthearted—the first record from the 23rd century.

• **Ken Micallef**

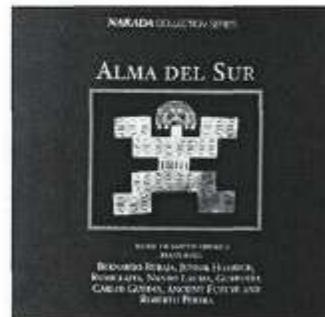
**ALMADEL SUR**

Narada ND-63908

Music of South America, featuring Bernardo Rubaja, Junior Homrich, Rumillajita, Nando Lauria, Gurrufio, Carlos Guedes, Ancient Future, Roberto Perera

The Hill Of Seven Colors; New Amazon; Mujeres Y Ninos; Que Xote; Orange Trees In Bloom; Las Marianas; Pantanal; Cactus De Paraguana; Por Ai; Celebration In The Village; El Gatillo Y El Armadillo; Lands Of Fire; Song For The Americas

This marvellous collection displays the many colors of South American music, and the subtle shadings and differ-



ences between the musics of various regions. Each artist has his own combo, and each group has a different percussion setup, which makes for very interesting listening. Ancient Future features Ian Dogole on a combination of kit and hand drums, along with steel drummer Jeff Narell (brother of Andy).

Former Weather Report percussionist Robert Thomas, Jr. sits in with Paraguayan harpist Roberto Perera, while Venezuelan harpist Carlos Guedes features three bata drummers in addition to a trap drummer. Berklee-trained guitarist Nando Lauria has a Brazilian jazz-pop feeling to his ensemble, while Bernardo Rubaja and Junior Homrich (playing the berimbau) are dedicated to preserving rich and ancient musical cultures.

There is much for the student of world music to learn here in terms of arrangement, dynamics, and musicality—and this might be the most pleasant music lesson you could have.

• **Robin Tolleson**

## VIDEO

### GRP ALL-STAR BIG BAND

GRP Video

Time: 59 minutes

Price: \$19.98

Anyone who doubts the fact that big band jazz is alive and well should have a look here. In celebration of their tenth anniversary GRP has assembled most of their top-notch players to form this once-in-a-lifetime, blue-chip big band.

Ten straight-ahead jazz classics were taken out of storage for this project and given a face-lift with gorgeous arrangements by Dave Grusin, Tom Scott, David Benoit, Russ

Ferrante, and Bob Mintzer. Though every chart is a delight, special mention should be made of Mike Abene's treatment of the Horace Silver burner "Sister Sadie," and the imaginative solo work of Ernie Watts on Sonny Rollins' "Airegen." Big band buffs should also find favor in Chick Corea's "Spain," orchestrated by Peter Sprague and with spirited solos by guitarist Lee Ritenour and Dave Valentin on flute. "Spain" is clearly one of the most difficult charts of the set, and it's a joy to see and hear this group of seasoned pros nail it on a perfect play-through. Finally, don't miss Gary Burton's high-flying solo on Bird's "Donna Lee" (with the head written for piccolo, clarinet, and vibes), or Arturo Sandoval's sensitive, lyrical trumpet work on the Benny Golson classic "I Remember Clifford."

Once again, Dave Weckl proves that he's just as comfortable in a big band environment as he is in every other setting we've heard him in. It's a fine lesson in the application of dynamics, taste, and superb phrasing. Very much in the style of Mel Lewis, Weckl lays down a cushion that solidly supports both ensemble sections and soloists, yet never gets in the way of either. Add to that a batch of perfectly placed fills and some great interaction with rhythm section colleagues bassist John Patitucci and percussionist Alex Acuna. Though there isn't very much solo room here for Weckl, ardent fans are sure to appreciate the camera close-ups of his slick, swinging statements on Miles' "Seven Steps To Heaven" and the Weckl/Acuna Latin fireworks on Dizzie's "Manteca."

Though GRP anticipates nominal sales on this project, one gets the sense that this was more a labor of love for label heads Grusin, Larry Rosen, and arranger/producer Mike Abene than anything else, where some great music took precedence over all else. Nonetheless, we'll guarantee that the GRP All-Stars will be collecting nominations in the big band jazz category at next year's Grammy Awards. Happily, all great music eventually breaks through.

• **Mark Hurley**

## BOOKS

### ESSENTIAL STYLES

#### Book Two

by Steve Houghton and Tom Warrington  
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.  
16380 Roscoe Blvd.

Van Nuys CA 91410

Price: \$17.95 (Book/CD or Book/Cassette)

In Book One of this series, Houghton and Warrington explored a variety of styles that any drummer should be familiar with. Book Two continues with the same approach, but where the first one concentrated on keeping each style pure, this package deals with applications of those styles, such as a tune that switches between jazz and Latin feels, or tunes that have a certain flavor without strictly adhering to a particular style, such as "Fusion Samba," or "E.C.M.," which is named for the record company and deals with a style of playing that combines jazz, rock, and Latin.

As with the original package, Book Two contains basic charts with commentary for drummers from Houghton. On the CD and cassette, each tune is played by a full band. The drums are only on the left

channel, so you can eventually tune them out and play along yourself. The package contains 20 charts, including Latin, odd-time, ballad, blues, rock, jazz, and shuffle feels.

Houghton's drum parts have a great feel, and certainly do their part to inspire one to learn these grooves. But he kept his playing fairly simple, concentrating on the basic groove. Some play-along packages of this type seem designed for the author to flaunt his chops, and they are often more intimidating than educational. But Houghton has wisely and maturely refrained from showing off, making the package very accessible.

• **Rick Mattingly**

### ETUDES

by Jeff Rettew

Pioneer Percussion  
Box 10822  
Burke VA 22009

Price: \$6.00

This is a collection of 19 solos (including one multi-snare drum solo) and two duets for the snare drum. Each solo is between 35 and 67 measures long and is prefaced by a brief explanation of the material. Despite the many awkward page turns, the tempos, accents, dynamics, and meter changes are all well-marked.

The intermediate-level etudes in this collection are intended as a supplement to increase technical ability and develop musicianship. These solos are a good value: At roughly thirty cents each, they provide good sight-reading or practice material. Or several may be combined to form a performance piece for recitals, auditions, and juries.

• **Andrea Byrd**

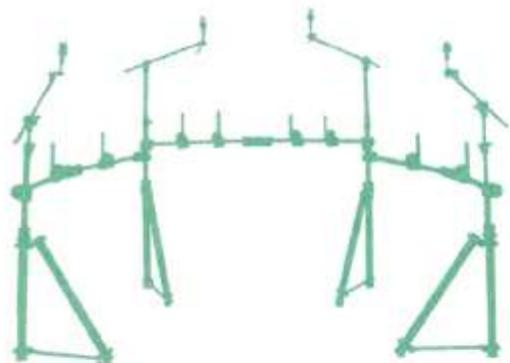


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Photo By Ebet Roberts



# Lewis Nash: "Giant Steps"

■ Transcribed by Kelly Paletta

This month's *Drum Soloist* features a 32-bar solo from the very talented Lewis Nash. On this uptempo arrangement from New York Voices's album *Hearts Of Fire* (GRP Records, GRC 9653), Lewis has to solo as well as set up several figures for the group. He builds the rhythmic intensity throughout, while still keeping the time constant and setting up the group effectively.

**MUSIC KEY**

Open	O	R.C.	CC
H.H.	X	◆	◆
T.T.	●	●	●
S.D.	○	○	X
F.T.	○	○	○
B.D.	○	○	○

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# Occupational Hazards:

## Beating Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

■ by Dr. Charles T. Resnick

Long practice sessions and frequent performances are essential for musicians who are trying to stay "tuned up." Many drummers, however, have found themselves singing the blues as a result. For the time and effort that goes into perfecting one's skill, the result is often muscle and tendon overuse and the development of a painful hand and wrist disease called Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS).

Notoriously known as the "disease of the '90s," CTS is a condition aggravated by repetitive movement. Because drummers must place their hands in unnatural positions for long periods of time, and engage in rigorous hand and wrist activity, they become especially susceptible to developing CTS. The disease is characterized by chronic pain; tingling and numbness of the hand, wrist, and arm; noticeable grip loss; and/or absence of feeling in the fingertips. In its most severe form, CTS can be a lifelong disability that can stop a drummer's career in its tracks.

A new procedure called Endoscopic Carpal Tunnel Release has proven to be a beacon of hope for many drummers. Unlike the traditional open surgery method, which typically leaves patients with long scars (from the center of the palm to just above the wrist), extensive recovery periods, and extreme discomfort, endoscopy is a less invasive procedure that has resulted in more favorable results. The procedure involves the use of a pencil-sized lens that is attached to a video camera. By making two small incisions in a patient's palm and wrist, the endoscope is used to relieve the pressure that has built up in the carpal tunnel (wrist area). The instrument may also allow observation of any other abnormalities that could pose problems in the future.

In experienced hands, the procedure is much simpler to perform and takes half the time than the conventional open method (approximately 15 to 45 minutes). The majority of patients are able to move their fingers and wrists in the recovery room immediately after surgery and experience a significant lessening of or complete relief from their pre-operative symptoms, such as numbness and pain.

In addition, Endoscopic Carpal Tunnel Release leaves minimal scarring, if any, and the patient usually can go back to work in a very short period of time. Though the recovery period can take up to six weeks, many patients have been known to resume normal manual activity in a matter of one

## Music And Your Hearing

■ by Dr. Jack Vernon

We've all heard that loud music can damage the ear, but some people simply refuse to believe it. Unfortunately, there really hasn't been a concerted effort among professional musicians to reduce the level of amplification, or to use adequate ear protection. Many people claim that they've been exposed to loud music for a long time,

and can still hear. However, the important question isn't whether or not you can still hear, but rather, how *well* do you hear—and is your hearing on a destructive course?

We must accept the fact that extremely loud sound of any kind damages the ear. And if you continue to do damage, not only will you lose the ability to make music, but you won't be able to hear whatever sounds you do make. The damage process that loud sound creates starts in the very high-frequency portion of the ear, and progressively works its way downward as the insult continues. Though a new and undamaged human ear can hear from 20 to 20,000 Hz, most of our speech and music is limited to about 4,000 Hz and below. (A grand piano or

xylophone can produce sound up to about 4,000 Hz; the acoustic guitar from 32 Hz to about 750 Hz; the violin from around 200 to 2,000 Hz; and the tenor sax from about 100 to 550 Hz.) So it's possible to lose a lot of hearing without realizing it. Does it matter if we lose that portion of the ear we don't use? The answer is, *yes it does*. The fact is, a person can damage their hearing without realizing it, and further damage is done by continued exposure to the damaging sound. The condition is complicated by the fact that some people are more resistant to sound damage than others. Therefore it's difficult to lay down realistic guidelines. But don't assume you have tough ears unless you've had your hearing tested.

---

to three days.

Because the music business is highly competitive, recovery time and costs are of great concern to musicians seeking treatment. Typical surgical fees for the endoscopic procedure and the traditional open surgery are the same, approximately \$1,200 to \$1,300. However, Endoscopic Carpal Tunnel Release is the economically viable alternative because there are no post-operative therapy costs involved, and the shorter recovery period allows patients to return to work and a normal lifestyle (and paycheck) much sooner. Patients of the open surgery method, on the other hand, usually require an eight- to twelve-week recovery period as well as occupational and/or physical therapy.

Musicians concerned with complications arising from the endoscopic release procedure can be assured that fewer than 1% to 3% of patients experience any complications following surgery, and those reported are generally minor. More than 85% show a substantial decrease in symptoms or are completely asymptomatic.

Never has the old saying "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" been more applicable than in potential CTS cases. Preventive measures such as conditioning exercises may help strengthen the hand and arm muscles and help reduce the need to compensate for weak muscles. Frequent breaks are recommended during practice sessions to allow fingers, wrists, and forearms to relax.

In addition, drummers are encouraged to re-position their fingers, hands, and wrists to alleviate pressure. Utilizing these recommendations can significantly reduce the likelihood of developing muscle/tendon overuse and CTS.

If symptoms such as numbness, tingling, and pain develop, don't wait until they become unbearable. The earlier you seek treatment, the easier the problem is to arrest. If you should develop a serious case of CTS, however, the revolutionary endoscopic surgery can keep you in sync with your career when other treatments fail. And that should be music to any drummer's ears.

*Editor's note: Charles T. Resnick, M.D., an orthopaedic hand surgeon who treats CTS patients at Orthopaedic Hospital in Los Angeles, California, is one of only a handful of surgeons in the world specializing in Endoscopic Carpal Tunnel Release. Board certified in both orthopaedic and hand surgery, Dr. Resnick is an assistant clinical professor at USC and a member of the American Society for Surgery of the Hand, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgery, and American College of Surgeons. He is regarded as an authority on CTS by both his profession and the general public. He has appeared on numerous national television programs, and has been the subject of several newspaper and magazine articles where he has discussed the endoscopic procedure.*

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Back to the point that we seem to have a lot of unneeded capability in the high frequencies from 4,000 to 20,000 Hz. In actuality, that area of the ear is the reserve we do need and do use. We totally rely upon it to understand speech in the presence of background noise. Noise, such as that found in a restaurant, a disco, or a busy office, is composed of speech and music signals. Our ability to understand speech in these situations depends on the high frequency portion of the ear. We automatically shift our ability to receive speech to the high frequency portion of the ear, which works, provided the high frequency portion has not been impaired. It's a tragic day when someone first realizes that they cannot understand

speech in the presence of background noise. They strain to hear, but no amount of straining will help. And if exposure to damaging sound is not avoided, the hearing loss will proceed downward until it then affects the lower frequencies as well.

We have indicated that a person's hearing ability can be damaged without his or her realizing it—but that's not always the case. Nature has provided us with a signal to indicate damage to the ear, and that signal is called *tinnitus*, which is a ringing in the ears. If, after exposure to loud sound, your ears ring even temporarily, it means the ears have been damaged. Initially, the ringing will stop, but that does not mean the damage has repaired itself. Moreover, repeated exposure will con-

tinue to produce tinnitus. Eventually it will *not* go away, and will become louder and more insistent. If you have continuous low-level tinnitus, you can be sure that continued exposure to loud sound will increase the loudness of the tinnitus.

Today, unlike yesterday, there are ways to handle tinnitus to some degree, and to protect your hearing before trouble starts. I invite you to write me if you have any questions, or if I may be of further help. I can be reached at the Oregon Health Sciences University, Hearing Research Center, 3515 S.W. Veterans Hospital Road, Portland, OR 97201.



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**GEORGE JINDA**

continued from page 35

as vibrant now as when you came here in the mid-'70s?

**GJ:** I'm a little bit out of touch because I don't have to go out to the clubs all the time now. Thank God things have worked out well for us. I just go out to hear new musicians. If somebody is leaving the band, I have to go out and look for new guys.

**KM:** So you do go to the clubs for new talent?

**GJ:** That's how we find new players. We also take people by recommendation.

**KM:** How did you find Lionel?

**GJ:** Lionel was recommended to us, and then we heard him at the China Club. After two bars I leaned over to Chieli, "Hey, there's our new drummer." The way he approached the song, he played just two bars of time and I knew this was the guy, even though he was playing in a punk rock kind of thing at the time. I hired him right away.

**KM:** The first time I saw Dave Weckl was with Special EFX at the Roundhouse in Manhattan in 1986.

**GJ:** Back then I didn't have the new setup that I use now. I was using cymbal stands and things hanging around. Now I use Pearl's double-bass drum rack. I have a great guy who does all the setup work. I just pick up the sticks and play.

**KM:** So your new setup is really big?

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**GJ:** It's huge. We need really big stages. I have a problem sometimes with my setup.

**KM:** You have a reputation as being hard on drummers. Why is that?

**GJ:** I may be tough on certain drummers...if a guy's not happening I sometimes throw my sticks in the air. And even with some big-name guys—I don't care to mention their names—they haven't been able to cut the gig. Sometimes I want to give up finding new players.

**KM:** What causes your frustration?

**GJ:** Somebody making mistakes or speeding up or slowing down. But we've been pretty fortunate to find great guys. When Dennis [Chambers] came to the band, I was in heaven. He's a lovable, fun guy. I am very fond of him. He's a great player. Also Omar Hakim—he's such an elegant drummer, so much sophistication. So many good ideas. And Dave Weckl—he is a perfectionist, never happy with his playing. He takes a long time before he's happy with what he's doing. He does some great, unbelievable stuff on our records.

**KM:** What do you look for in a prospective drummer for Special EFX?

**GJ:** The magic or chemistry has to be there. Someone who can play with the percussion player...I'm not the most ordinary kind of percussionist. Usually with a percussionist you think of a conga player who plays a little timbales and a cou-

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ple of cowbells, and that's that. I don't play any congas. I have some small congas, but I'm not a conga player. So I'm just looking for a guy with great time and a great feel. It's a very difficult chair to play with Special EFX. You have to know so many different styles. You have to cover a lot of territory. It's not easy for a drummer.

**KM:** Are you and Chieli hard on all the musicians, or just the drummers?

**GJ:** We are professionals. Chieli is more demanding of keyboard players. He tells the bass players to play less, I want them to play more because I want the energy to go even higher. When you think the energy level cannot go any higher, that's when I want the next level.

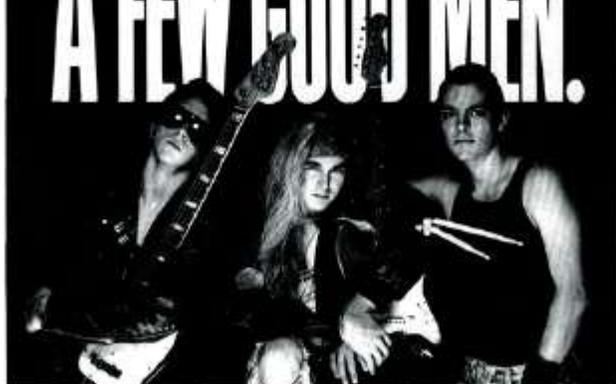
**KM:** Who will be in the road band for *World News*?

**GJ:** Mark Ledford will be singing and playing congas. He plays some percussion, but I wish he wouldn't since it's hard to keep it all from clashing. He's playing less and less because I bug him a lot! Szakcsi will be on keyboards. Then we have Lionel Cordew on drums, and Jerry Bruce, a great young bass player, another New York guy.

**KM:** I notice that there isn't a track-by-track listing of percussion used on *World News*. Why is that?

**GJ:** Not enough room to list it all! In addition to my usual setup, I am playing a lot of Udu drums and different talking drums. On one track, "Luscious Rebecca," I'm playing

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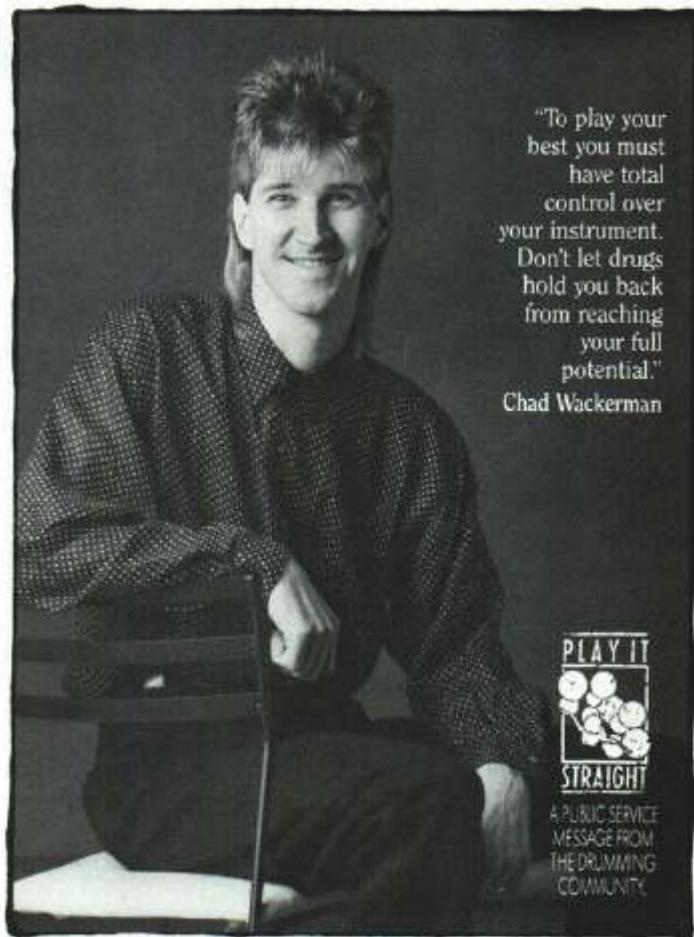
many different talking drums. Rebecca is a gorgeous bartender at a club here in New York. Special EFX played there one night, and the whole band was just stunned by her physical beauty. I'm going to take her a copy of *World News* as soon as it comes out.

**KM:** Is it hard to get insurance on all this percussion when you're traveling?

**GJ:** Certain ones I never take out on the road. Some of these [*George motions to many Udu and talking drums sitting about his apartment*] are very expensive. A set of these Udu drums, four or five, goes for about five thousand dollars. To make one takes a month.

**KM:** As a percussionist, what do you need to hear from other musicians?

**GJ:** Well, a chemistry has to be there—between the drummer, the bass player, and myself. That's very important. Musicians shouldn't step on each other's toes. They should listen to each other and, hopefully, make a sort of symphony. If one of us starts a lick, the others should be able to respond, and finish it. And they have to remember, I'm just another musician—period.



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MODERN DRUMMER JANUARY 1993

111

# Matt Spataro:

## Drumming For Dance

■ by Rick Van Horn

*The Laura Dean Musicians and Dancers modern-dance company is one of the most highly regarded such organisations on the contemporary dance scene. Ms. Dean—who established the company in 1975—is a multi-talented artist who both composes the music and creates the movements for her dancers.*

*The music that Laura Dean creates is performed live by a talented quartet of musicians. This in itself is unusual in this day of pre-recorded dance material. But what makes Laura Dean's musicians even more special is that they are as integral a part of her company's presentations as are its dancers.*

*Two members of that talented quartet of musicians are its drummer/percussionists: Matt Spataro and Jason Cirker. We spoke with Matt—who's been with the company since 1987 and doubles as musical director—about his unique position.*

**RVH:** When Laura Dean composes the music for her dance pieces, does she actually write the drum parts?

**MS:** No. The musicians aren't handed a written score. Laura works out a rough draft of the music and dance simultaneously. Then she'll meet with the musicians and ask us to play some of her ideas. She generally has a strong concept of what she wants to hear before we meet. It's really exciting to be part of the whole compositional process.

Most of the time Laura works with the dance and the music simultaneously. There's a lot of counting that goes on here; whole sections of music and dance moving together. So she needs a certain amount of help with "beats"—let's not call them "measures"—and we make sure that happens in sections. So we're thinking in terms of the big picture.

**RVH:** How long does it take to put together a typical piece, from the point that you get the music through to the first performance?

**MS:** Three to five weeks. We'll sit with Laura at least a week—maybe two. We'll do our rehearsals while the dancers do theirs—simultaneously. We don't work together until we're both ready. Once we are, we'll work together anywhere from ten days to three weeks.

**RVH:** The musicians for most Broadway musicals rehearse for only a day or two prior to opening.

**MS:** But in those cases, the arranger actually does all the



Matt Spataro (left) and Jason Cirker

groundwork, and the musicians are just supposed to play the written page. In our case, we're working from a concept and assembling as we go. So we require the additional time. I should say, however, that any given piece is very well put together by the time we leave Laura. Anything that happens afterwards is molding. She might shorten or lengthen a section, and we'll have to change our part accordingly. This is primarily due to the fact that we're playing patterns, rather than traditionally structured music.

**RVH:** With that in mind, might it be difficult for the average listener to relate to what you're playing from a *listening* standpoint—regardless of the movement taking place on stage? Is this toe-tapping music, or is it very abstract?

**MS:** It *can* be toe-tapping—if you have the rhythmic sense to find the beat. Sometimes it gets complex. For instance, sometimes I'll be playing a two-against-three pattern. You can hear the two, and you can hear the three. But then maybe the other percussionist is playing a phrase of five against that. Each time a section goes by, our patterns are going to overlap—which makes for more interesting listening, but can make it hard to grasp sometimes.

**RVH:** If it's hard to grasp, it must also be hard to remember for the performers. By the time you've finished your two weeks with Laura, has a written score been created?

**MS:** Although we don't read music for the performances, a score is created for future reference, so that if a regular musician wasn't available, the music could be played accurately by someone else. The responsibility for creating that score is one of my "musical director" chores.

**RVH:** When you create the chart for each piece, do you record only the music, or does the chart have to include notations and cues involving the dancers as well?

**MS:** Dance cues, no. In order to perform with Laura, a musician needs to understand the choreography. Each dance is docu-

mented on videotape. The musical score may say: "Play this pattern 24 times, then go to the next one and play it 48 times." Well, sometimes there are patterns that have to be played 150 times. I'm not interested in counting that many times, so I get the cue visually. It's possible to scuffle through: I've done performances of new works that I wasn't totally familiar with by counting my way through them. With two percussionists counting, cueing, listening, watching the dance, and executing the parts, it's very tough. We've gotta be on the ball every second, because every-



The Laura Dean Musicians and Dancers in rehearsal

thing goes by very fast. And there's lots of room for mistakes.

**RVH:** If you do make a mistake, how do the dancers react? Is it a train wreck instantly, or do they have the talent to adjust?

**MS:** It depends. If we change patterns, they know very well that we've changed. It's happened, and they move with us; they can find their spot. Of course, if the dancers make a mistake, then we have to adjust. Knowing cues is the trick. Luckily, this almost never happens, because we're very well-rehearsed.

**RVH:** Had you done any sort of playing or working with dance before you came to the Laura Dean company?

**MS:** Just Broadway shows and ballets, where the orchestra was in a pit and the dancers did their thing on stage. I was trained as a percussionist, and I have experience in both theatrical and classical playing. But this is the first playing situation I've been

in that involves this amount of interaction with the dancers.

**RVH:** What sort of special skills did you have to develop for your playing with the company?

**MS:** One was endurance: Being able to play as fast and as long as we're required to come with time and practice. The ability to play patterns against other patterns also took time. I already had strong counting skills and experience at playing. Locking in with Jason took lots of hard rehearsal, but we groove really well together now.

**RVH:** Are you playing the drumset in a traditional style?

**MS:** Not at all. Number one, there's the actual kit itself: There are no ride or crash cymbals—although there is sometimes a hi-hat. Other percussion instruments—such as timpani and tambourines—are often played as part of the kit. Number two, we almost never play a rock pattern or anything like that; we're really voicing rhythms around the drums.

**RVH:** Why don't you use cymbals?

**MS:** Laura doesn't like the sound of them—that's the first thing. And the second thing is that most of our rhythms are third-world types of rhythms. Like an African sound. You get a more fundamental, jungle-rhythm feeling out of tom-toms. That's the way all of us, including Laura, want it to come across.

## Composing For Drums

■ by Laura Dean

As composers, the beauty of our situation today is that we have access—depending on financial constraints, of course—to a lot of instruments that musicians didn't have a thousand years ago. We can just call up a New York music store and ask, "You got any timbales?...or this?...or that?" We have the ability to do everything. Drum sounds on a synthesizer can be mixed with acoustics. There's a whole other universe out there. Don't start saying, "Oh gee...we don't want to sound like the old days," or "Wow, let's not play

any old instruments."

I would like to think that composers are into sound, first and foremost. A composer by the name of Jon Hassell coined a wonderful expression. Jon said, "We should think of ourselves as the 'fourth world.' Let us take the best of traditions that are thousands of years old, put it together with the best of Japanese and Western technology, and move ahead."

Personally, I would not bring in typical African drums—because I have too much respect for that music. We use more modern drums in my dance company. My drummers are professionals who know how to use them: They know the sounds; they know what to get out

of them. But that's *my* particular choice; it's not to say that other composers shouldn't think about other options—as long as they don't lose respect for that particular instrument. I mean, if you're going to take a South Indian rotono, either really know how to play it—learn the rules before you break them—or don't use the drum at all.

We use timpani, but both of my guys have performed on timpani with orchestras. Therefore, I felt that I was able to say, "Okay, we know *that* about timpani...what would happen if we did *this*?" We just don't use an instrument because it looks pretty. We really do get to know the heart and soul of it. Then I can take it and compose.

**RVH:** I'm sure the dancers talk to Laura about certain movements. Do they also come to you with comments or suggestions about the music?

**MS:** Occasionally—mostly about tempos. Those are set for each piece and they have to be precise, because the pieces are usually twenty to twenty-five minutes in length. By the end of each piece, everybody is exhausted. It's important that we keep the correct tempo. If it's too slow, the dancers will have problems with certain moves or with their leaps; you just can't be in the air for too long. If we're too fast, we're gonna kill them. They know what the right tempo is, and sometimes if we are off a bit, they'll just give us a look—and then *we'll* know. But for the most part we're right on the money. That's part of the job.

**RVH:** Considering everything that you have to do as a performer, being musical director for the company as well sounds like quite a challenge.

**MS:** Well, it doesn't come into play very much while we perform. There's no conducting; all of the musicians are excellent, and that makes my job easier.

**RVH:** Then what does your role as musical director entail?

**MS:** It entails directing rehearsals. For the most part, Laura doesn't attend the musicians' rehearsals. She sets a piece of music and then says, "I'll see you at the first rehearsal with the dancers." We rehearse the music ourselves, and if there are any questions I'll go to her. My other responsibilities include taking

care of musical instruments, making sure everything goes well on stage, setting rehearsals—things like that.

**RVH:** Laura Dean's is a touring company, traveling to thirty or more performance locations per year around the world. Are there aspects of touring that cause particular problems?

**MS:** Sometimes the sound check can get rugged because the house doesn't sound good, or a sound system doesn't sound good.

**RVH:** What can you do in those cases?

**MS:** Just the best we can. There's a company sound tech, and the instruments are miked. As musical director, I work with the sound technician. Getting a good sound in the house takes a lot of time. We sometimes spend three hours on a sound check for three twenty-minute pieces.

**RVH:** Laura Dean's is one of the few dance companies using live music. Wouldn't this type of production be simpler if some or all of the music were taped or sequenced? The dancers would have consistent tempos, there would never be a problem with dropped cues, and sound could be mixed much more easily.

**MS:** You're right, and that's partly why most of the major companies *do* use recorded tracks. But I'm a musician—I'm here to play. And in my mind, there's absolutely no way you're going to get the same *excitement* from a tape—especially with Laura's music.



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# Mel Torme

■ by Robyn Flans

Judge Harry Stone of *Night Court* made him famous...well, more famous than he already was. For Mel Torme, being the object of the TV character's admiration is a big kick. "It's given me more visibility than anything I've ever done in my life," he says. "I can't walk through an airport or go anywhere without people recognizing me. The medium is extraordinary."

This from a man who has dabbled in *every* medium. From being one of radio's busiest child actors (1933-1941) to writing "Lament To Love" at 15 (recorded by Harry James, Les Brown, and others) to singing and arranging for Chico Marx (of the Marx Brothers), not to mention hosting a daily half-hour talk show in the early '50s and winning an Emmy in 1957 for Best Supporting Actor in a show called *The Comedian*. And let's not forget Torme the entertainer and recording artist (with 13 Grammy nominations) or Torme the author of a Judy Garland biography (*The Other Side Of The Rainbow*), his own autobiography (*It Wasn't All Velvet*), and a recent authorized biography of Buddy Rich called *Traps, The Drum Wonder: The Life Of Buddy Rich*.

But what many people forget is that Mel Torme began in music as a drummer. Although he still plays drums in his concerts, he has become so well-known as an entertainer that the drums have somehow been pushed into the background.

"I grew up in the period of Artie Shaw, Jimmie Lunceford, Duke Ellington, and Benny Goodman," Mel says. "When I heard people I really admired on drums—the likes of Ray Bauduc, Gene Krupa, Sid Catlett, Jo Jones, and Chick Webb—I always felt that if I really broke my brains practicing and getting experience, someday I might be in their class. It's a dream that all drummers have: to be as good as someone who is a role model." Mel pauses, then adds, "But I stopped thinking that when I heard Buddy Rich. I finally decided that I would continue to play drums, but that as long as there was a Buddy Rich on the earth, I always would be—as would everybody else—second best."

Mel was not without his offers, however—and prestigious ones at that. "Stan Kenton absolutely drove me crazy to come play drums in his band in '44 and '45," says Mel. "He even approached me once in '46 and said, 'Look, I know you have the vocal group the Mel-Tones, but we have a very important date coming up at the Meadowbrook in New Jersey. Would you come and just play for two weeks there? I want the band to be heard at its greatest advantage.' Believe me when I tell you I was really tempted, because I sat in with the Kenton band almost every



night at the Palladium when he was there, and I loved him. I didn't particularly love the band—it was a real chore to try to hold that band together—but he liked what I did, I guess.

"At the same Palladium," Mel continues, "On at least three occasions, Gene Krupa offered me the drum chair in his band, saying, 'Look, I've got the strings now; I stand out in front. I only play the opening tune and sometimes the closing tune of each set. I'd like you to come and play.' But the real kicker came when Tommy Dorsey offered me Buddy Rich's drum chair. Buddy desperately wanted to get out of Tommy's band to start his own. So he disappeared during an intermission. Tommy was raging: 'Where the hell is Buddy?' Tommy's bass player had worked it out with Buddy that Buddy would disappear so that Tommy would have to seek another drummer, and it would be me. He said to Tommy, 'I don't know where Buddy is, but Mel Torme, the kid who's got the vocal group, plays drums.' So I sat in and played four numbers with the band, just to keep time for them. I knew the numbers like the back of my hand. Then Tommy started a campaign to get me on his band, which was one of the most flattering things that ever happened to me. But I finally said to him, 'I'll tell you point blank, I don't want to try to fill Buddy Rich's shoes. Who could really do it?' Tommy would say, 'Drummer boy, you could do it.' He was drinking rather heavily in those days and not making a lot of sense. Those are the only offers I ever got as a drummer, but they were incredible offers: Kenton, Krupa, and Tommy Dorsey," Torme sighs.

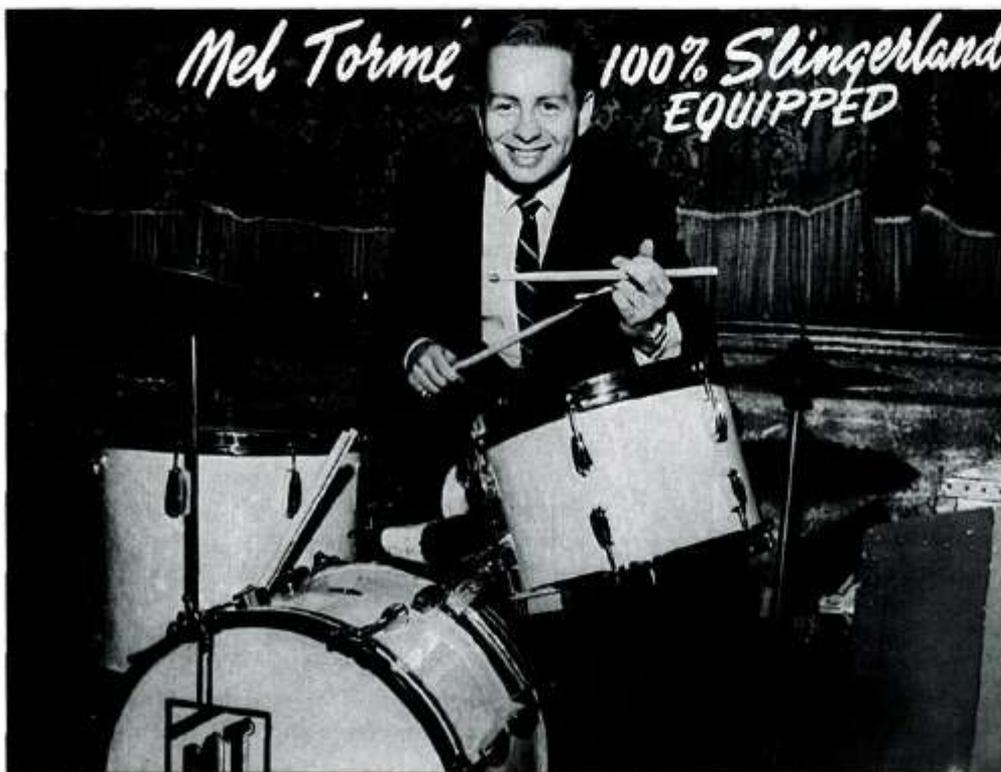
Being a drummer himself gives Torme strong ideas of what he wants from a drummer in his band—and Donny Osborne has fit the bill for sixteen years. "He is a selfless drummer," comments Mel. "I had a drummer before Donny for three years, and I won't even mention his name. He was a total jerk. He twirled his sticks behind me and was Mr. Personality. He played with me at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco, and Bing Crosby—who was a decent admirer of mine—came to see me. After the show he said, 'What the hell is your drummer doing? He's playing too loud and diverting attention from you.' When Donny came with me and had seen what this previous drummer had done, he said, 'Mel, what I *don't* want to do is what the last guy did.' In fact, he was almost too timid. I had to grab him and say, 'Donny, I appreciate your attitude, but you've got to kick me up the backside. I write these charts and I know what they need from the standpoint of propelling them.' Day by day and year by year, Donny has grown into an unbelievable drummer. In fact, sometimes I feel a little guilty in that I have subordinated Donny's career. I stood in the back every single night at Michael's Pub a short time ago and watched him play with the Buddy Rich Band, and I also took them on tour with me recently. Donny was breathtaking. I'd look at him occasionally and say, 'Donny, I'm doing you a disservice by asking you to play behind a singer when you can play like that.'

Mel continues to describe his feelings about drummers. "Everything springs from the rhythm section," he says, "which is the most important part of the band. I want the drummer to follow me. I write pretty detailed drum parts, and Donny inter-

prets what I write. I won't write the fill for him. If, at the end of an eight-bar phrase, I leave the last half of bar 7 and all of bar 8 for him to fill, I'll just write 'fill.' I'll write the figures that I'm writing for the brass section, but Donny's interpretive talent is such that he'll know what I want. He might play what I've written, but play it on snare drum, tom-tom, snare drum, bass drum. I tell Donny all the time, 'You've got more technique than any drummer I know except for the late Buddy Rich. Subordinate that technique to some degree and remember that the drum is principally a rhythm instrument. It's the glue that holds the band together. Whatever you do, don't sacrifice the time for your blazing technique. Think about it this way: The technique is the frosting; the timekeeping is the cake.'

"I'm in a unique position," Mel continues. "This is not said as a boast, it's just statistical: I am the only singer alive who writes his own charts. I write charts for the trio, for the big band, and for symphonies, so I think I'm a little more sensitive to what the charts need than the average singer would be. When Donny reads a chart down, I will say to him, 'Just keep an eye peeled for dynamics.' We go from a very, very strong *forte* down to almost not playing at all. Donny only needs to see this once and he does it. I think that Donny's greatest talent is not necessarily his blinding technique or the fact that he's a wonderful timekeeper, but that he pays very close attention to my notations and is subservient to the chart—he serves the chart and the singer and he never intrudes. He's not a guy who is constantly banging away with rimshots and things like that—but when he fills, the fills are breathtaking. Buddy once said that if you can play a roll, you can do anything—and Donny's roll is amazing. You can't hear the left hand or the right hand."

Mel Torme and Buddy Rich first became friends in 1944. It was in 1975 that Rich suggested that Torme write his biography. "We spent several sessions talking about everything: taxes, death, drumming, music, people—you name it," Torme recalls. "Then I put the Buddy Rich book aside to work on my own autobiography. But when Buddy was so ill, his wife suggested we get back together. She said he couldn't play, so this would pique his interest. I had one day with him. We started working on the book again on the first of April, and he died the next day. But I really think it's a rich—pardon the pun—book of anecdotes and stories about him." Torme says that his book is the truth about Buddy Rich, a man with a reputa-



tion for having been difficult. "One of the things a lot of people ask is why I would want to write a book about such a hateful son of a bitch, and I say, 'He wasn't hateful.' If you want to know why he got the way he was, read the book. I don't try to be an amateur psychiatrist, but I know his history, and this book was done with the collaboration and cooperation of the entire family. Buddy was witty, witty, and funny—and could be deeply sentimental and sensitive. He was as fascinating a character as Judy Garland was when I wrote that book.

"When you write a book," Mel continues, "you make a decision whether to write a puff piece or the truth. Thank God there were witnesses—Joanne Carson and Buddy's wife, Marie, were there when I asked him, 'What do you want? Do you want me to tell the world what a sweet pussycat of a man you were?' He said, 'Absolutely not. Write the book, warts and all. All I ask you to do is be accurate.' Out of ten, the book is eight and a half parts loving portrait and respectful tribute to Buddy Rich—but that missing part and a half is the truth about him. He was a very difficult, vitriolic, bitter, childish, abusive, abrasive individual. Late in life, I decided that if I wanted to be friends with him, I'd have to accept that. He probably hurt me a lot more than he hurt many people, but his genius was the overriding reason—at least for me—to maintain a friendship with him. So whatever you've heard about him, amplify three times. It's absolutely true. And I'm not laughing when I say that," Torme says firmly. "But Buddy, God rest his soul, would be the first guy to say, 'That's right.'"



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# Getting The Most Out Of Your Trip To The Music Store

■ by Stephan S. Nigohosian

Faced with economically trying times and the considerable cost of drum equipment, drummers must be especially certain that every purchase they make is a sound one. Following a few simple guidelines before and during a visit to the music store will help you get the most out of your trip. These steps will also help you make a well-educated and worthwhile decision, and perhaps even give you a greater appreciation for a new piece of equipment—since it is the culmination of all your hard work.

## Before Your Visit

Getting the most out of a visit to the music store begins before you ever step inside. The most important stage of the preliminary process is considering what type of equipment you are looking for, as well as what your expectations are of it. For instance, there are many cymbal brands available, each of which offers countless models varying in sound, size, shape, and even color. Give some thought to whether a trashy, rude-sounding China-type, or a tighter, brighter-sounding cymbal will better suit your musical taste and situation. Also, consider how much money you are willing to spend, and try to keep as close to that figure as possible.

In addition, when choosing a particular piece of equipment, it is important to keep in mind that it is the drummer who breathes life into the instrument, and not vice-versa. Simply stated, buying a first-rate piece of equipment will not make you a better player—only discipline and practice can do that. However, the excitement and satisfaction you feel while playing an instrument you have confidence in will shine through and complement your performance.

The next step involves researching the reputations and level of customer satisfaction of both the music store and drum manufacturer. This is not to suggest that you mull over a company's annual reports searching for a downward trend in sales. Rather, informally poll other musicians about their experiences with a particular music dealer or manufacturer to get a good idea of their service histories.

Also helpful are the brochures and catalogs available upon request from many drum and cymbal manufacturers. Although they are not intended to be a substitute for trying the product for yourself in the store, these materials should supply you with enough descriptions and pictures of the merchandise to begin making an educated decision. As a result, you will save both your time and the salesman's by having a basic idea of what equipment appeals to you.

But your most valuable resources for learning as much as possible about a product are the reviews found in such music/trade publications as *Modern Drummer* and *Musician*. These reviews are particularly helpful because the equipment is critiqued by a musician who knows what should be expected of a reliable piece of gear. The reviewer may also have the opportunity to test the instrument in a working situation, such as a club gig, and will not have reservations about reporting any drawbacks or problems that may arise.

## At The Music Store

Now it is finally time to apply all of the information you've learned up to this point and visit the music store. It is a good idea to bring any applicable product reviews or equipment brochures with you to clearly show the dealer what equipment you are considering. As a matter of fact, the more knowledgeable and prepared you are about what you're looking for, the better able he will be to assist you. "A customer who has 'done some homework' and has an idea of what he wants usually leaves the store satisfied," says Anthony DiBella, a music merchant in Bergenfield, NJ. "On the other hand," he adds, "things become more involved when a person has not given it any serious thought."

Having a good rapport with the salesman behind the counter is also desirable, because the more familiar he is with you, the more likely it is that you will get that extra bit of personalized attention. However, don't make the mistake of assuming that familiarity and trust give you license to relentlessly haggle with him over price. After all, he's not the one who sets prices, and he'll most likely become justifiably annoyed by your nagging. Instead, you can find out if the price is reasonable by comparing it to that of a competitor's.

Many times, looking over the store's "demo" equipment can reveal clues about a product's durability and sturdiness. Because demos are often pounded on, crashed, slapped, 01 struck several times daily by overzealous musicians, you may get an idea of how well they fare against intensely demanding conditions. In all fairness to the manufacturers and merchants though, give ample allowance to the fact that the chances of your equipment ever having to face such brutal conditions are unlikely. Therefore, a piece of equipment should not be disqualified *solely* on this basis.

Obviously, the most important factors in the selection of a piece of equipment are how it sounds, feels, and responds to your playing. However, trying out a drum or cymbal on display

is also a very touchy privilege that must be handled diplomatically. So before you reach for the nearest stick to begin wailing away on the floor models, remember that there is a certain unspoken etiquette when trying out demo equipment, and courtesy will get you everywhere.

The majority of music dealers have no objection to customers playing the equipment on display; that is what it is there for. The only provision is that you simply ask for permission before trying it. This avoids slighting the salesman, and allows him to instruct you about the store's procedure. For example, there is usually a supply of "test sticks" provided for striking cymbals and snare rimshots—so as to prevent the entire stick inventory from becoming pulverized. After all, how would you like it if you could only choose a new pair of sticks from a selection of battered and dented ones?

A rather obvious—albeit overlooked—practice when playing demo models is to take note of the store's ambience and acoustics (or lack of them). The characters of all musical instruments, particularly drums and percussion, vary considerably according to the surroundings. Some music dealers have partially addressed this problem by providing soundproof cymbal rooms, but by and large, drummers still have to make excep-

tions most of the time for less-than-favorable surroundings. Fortunately, you can make the best of this situation by taking into account the changes an instrument will undergo in a different playing environment. For instance, a bright, "pingy"-sounding ride may lose some of its cutting edge and projection in a plush room with deep pile carpet and heavy curtains. Conversely, the focused, lightning-fast decay of a splash cymbal may be affected by an unfurnished room with cement walls and hardwood floors.

### Enjoying The Fruits Of Your Labor

At last it is time to reap the rewards of your efforts by purchasing the most appealing piece of equipment and making it a permanent part of your drum outfit. Whether you buy a new cymbal stand or an entire drumkit, you will undoubtedly realize that all of the time and research you invested was well-spent. Every time you play the instrument, you should feel confident that you took every possible step to ensure that your choice was the most logical and beneficial. Furthermore, your tenacity will be rewarded with a quality piece of equipment that will serve you well for years to come.



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## Festival Weekend '93 Dates

*Modern Drummer's* sixth Drum Festival will be held on Saturday, May 15 and Sunday, May 16, 1993. The Festival, which had to be postponed in 1992 due to difficulties in securing the venue, will be held at Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, New Jersey. Further details, including ticket prices and ordering information, travel arrangements, and the roster of artists performing, will be announced in upcoming issues of *MD*.

## 1992 DCI Championship Results

To celebrate its twentieth anniversary, Drum Corps International (DCI) returned to its birthplace in Wisconsin to hold the 1992 World Championships at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison on August 15th. (DCI's first championship was held in nearby Whitewater, Wisconsin).

Following a week of exciting competitions, the Cavaliers, from Rosemont, Illinois, became only the seventh drum & bugle corps to win the coveted DCI title, scoring a 97.5 (19.8 in drums). Second in both 1990 and 1991 (as well as this year's quarterfinals), the Cavies won both the "high visual" and "high drum" caption awards this year on their way to winning the crown. Their program, entitled "Revolution!," included "Gavorkna Fanfare" by Jack Stamp, and "Cornish Dances," "English Dances," and "Peterloo Overture," all by Sir Malcolm Arnold. Capturing the spirit of the program, the corps featured a lone Celtic drummer marching down the 50-yard line at the beginning of the "Dances." The drum line also adapted some hand-drumming techniques (usually applied to a bodhran drum from Ireland) by using "tipper" sticks on the bass drums. Three of the cymbal players also switched to bass drums in the drum solo for a total of eight—four bass drums on one side of

the field with the snares and four more on the other side with the quads. The Cavaliers connected both musically and emotionally with the 40,000-plus members of the audience.

The Cadets of Bergen County, from Hackensack, New Jersey, scored a 97.0 (19.2 in drums) for a surprise second-place finish. Performing David Holsinger's "To Tame The Perilous Skies," they completed their theme with the color guard dressed as World War I fighter pilots, while the corps formed a giant airplane (complete with propellers) on the field.

Last year's champions, the Star of Indiana, from Bloomington, finished third with a score of 96.7 (19.2 in drums). Their "American Variations" program included "Star Spangled Overture" and "Amber Waves" by Morton Gould, "Chester" by William Schuman, and "Flag Of Stars" by Gordon Jacob. Their show began with the timpani playing the "O, say can you see..." melody from the pit! Star used the red, white, and blue colors very effectively, at one point forming a human flag with the guard (dressed in blue) twirling stars as the rest of the corps formed the red and white stripes. The drum parts were sparse and delicate as the drummers held up various scrimms depicting scenes of America during "Amber Waves." The split pit also created some nice stereophonic effects across the field.

In fourth place, with a score of 95.4 (18.2 in drums), were the Blue Devils, from Concord, California. The "Blue Crew" performed their program of "Big, Bad, And Blue" to the tunes of "Someone's There" by Harry Connick, Jr., "Cuban Fire" (an arrangement for the Stan Kenton band) by Johnny Richards, and "When A Man Loves A Woman" from *The Rose*. The pit was filled with ten keyboards and plenty of congas and timbales. The drum solo featured a "gong keyboard" and some "psuedo surdos," along with the driving Latin rhythms of the music.

The hometown favorite Madison Scouts took fifth place, scoring a 93.7 (18.5 in drums). The Scouts improved

last year's interpretation of Cy Coleman's *City Of Angels*, effectively capturing the dance rhythms and feel of the Broadway tunes. The Scout's eight-man marching cymbal line was also a real treat to watch.

The Crossmen, from Westchester, Pennsylvania, made a surprising move into sixth place with their final score of 92.2 (19.0 in drums). Their unusual show, entitled "Songs For Planet Earth," expressed concern for the environment. The Crossmen's snare line sounded as good as it looked (with its red snare drums and white hardware). The pit added some great colors with keyboards (playing lots of double strokes/diddles) and bird calls. The corps ended their drill with a giant symbolic question-mark formation.

The Santa Clara Vanguard, from California, celebrating their 25th anniversary, placed a disappointing seventh with a score of 91.8 (18.5 in drums). Bringing back a crowd favorite, the Vanguard performed selections from Jerry Bock's musical *Fiddler On The Roof*. The percussion equipment normally on the front sidelines was elevated on large rolling platforms, allowing the pit to be moved from the 40-yard lines to the center after the opening number. The tambourine playing by these percussionists provided the right "ethnic color" in "LJChaim."

The Phantom Regiment, from Rockford/Loves Park, Illinois scored a 91.5 (17.7 in drums) for an eighth-place finish. The Regiment's program was called "War And Peace," depicting Napoleon's attack on Moscow. Their repertoire included "Le Marsellaise," "March Slav," and "1812 Overture" by Tchaikovsky. "1812" began with a lone snare drummer on the right front sideline answering a lone bugle at the opposite corner of the field, while a dozen horn players performed in the pit. The powerful drum line provided the background music for the "battle," featuring the intricate backsticking of the snare drummers. The cannon and carillon effects were brought to life through the seven energetic members of the pit.

Scoring a 90.0 (18.3 in drums) for ninth place were the Blue Knights, from

Denver, Colorado—with a commendable performance of "Portraits Of Aaron Copland." The Knights' snare drums were eye-catching—blue with white hardware—and the pit added some wonderful sounds by using various shakers and bells. The keyboards did a tremendous job on some very tricky tempo changes in "The Red Pony."

The Velvet Knights, from Anaheim, California, scored an 86.6 (17.3 in drums) for tenth place. Their "Magical Mystery Tour" took everyone around the world in a program that climaxed in a hilarious finale ("Hungarian Dance No. 2"). There was so much to watch—from the *Energizer Bunny* to the shark from *Jaws*—that even with their bright neon yellow drums it was hard to focus on the drum line. The drum solo had an oriental flavor, with lots of gongs and drums. But everyone, from the cartwheeling cymbal players to the drumset player in the pit, looked like they were having fun!

The Bluecoats, from Canton, Ohio,

scored an 84.6 (16.8 in drums) to finish eleventh. Their program was "A Day In The Life" and featured music by the Beatles performed in a very '60s style. The rosewood marimbas in the pit produced a warm tone, even in the stands. The snare drummers switched drums in "Penny Lane," which produced a different sound and look (candy-striped). The show ended with a huge peace-sign flag.

Rounding out the "Top Twelve" were the Freelancers, from Sacramento, California, who scored an 83.1 (16.8 in drums). Their program was based on Sir William Walton's "First Symphony." The drum line nicely complemented both the music and the marching, while the pit created some lovely shimmering effects.

The Saturday evening finals competition began with performances by the Dallas Brass (brass ensemble); the Mandarins, from Sacramento, California (Division III champions); Southwind, from Montgomery, Alabama (Division II champions); and Future Corps, from

Epcot Center in Florida. The anthems were played by the "Division II/III All Stars," who are made up of 350 horn players and 50 drummers (including 31 keyboards on the field at one time).

In the Individual and Ensemble competition, held earlier in the week, individual awards went to snare drummer Nick Angelis, of the Vanguard (97.0); multi-tenor drummer Colin McNutt, of the Vanguard (97.0); marimbist Mark Falzarano, of the Blue Knights (95.0); timpanist Rell LaFargue, of the Cavaliers (98.0); and multi-percussionist Troy Molsberry, of the Velvet Knights (95.0). For the second year in a row, the best percussion ensemble award went to the Cavaliers (97.0). The best cymbal and bass drum ensembles belonged to the Santa Clara Vanguard (with scores of 99.0 and 98.0 respectively).

For 1993, DCI will move the finals competition down south to Jackson, Mississippi. Hope to see y'all there!

• fay Lauren Vogel



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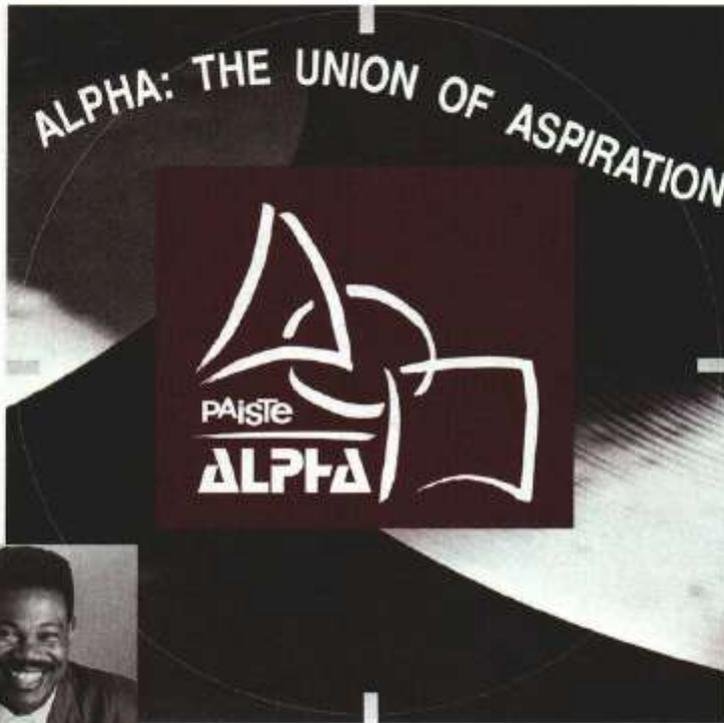
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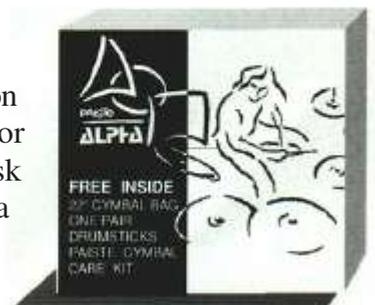
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