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FEATURES

Steve Smith

Steve Smith may be the epitome of the "thinking drummer." Yet with all the acclaim and success he's garnered, Smith's playing refuses to stand still. Along with lots of great drumming tips, here Steve honestly talks about his ups and downs—and about how the future of his drumming is tied to the past.

• by *Robyn Flans*

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Ed Thigpen

"Mr. Taste" has been doing his thing with giants like Ella Fitzgerald and Oscar Peterson for the better part of four decades. In this special interview, this master player and educator shares some of the pearls of wisdom he's gathered over the years.

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Buddy Rich Sound Supplement

You can talk about Buddy all you want—it don't mean a thing unless you hear what the man could do behind the kit. So here it is—a classic Buddy solo, incorporating the chops, art, and wit that left a million jaws dropped. Plus a special "lighter side" look at Buddy from his daughter, Cathy.

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Drumming In Las Vegas

Beyond the glitter and gambling, Las Vegas is a top entertainment city—with a good number of opportunities for working drummers. Learn what it takes to succeed in this unique and challenging scene.

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One More For Buddy



It's hard to believe, but April of '93 marks six years since the passing of Buddy Rich. Buddy was featured on three occasions in *Modern Drummer*, with the first being the most memorable for early *MD* staffers.

Getting our first issue out back in January of '77 was quite a challenge, especially since we were without a strong cover story right up until the very last minute. Shortly before we were ready to go to press, one of our early freelance writers approached Buddy and requested an interview to be conducted during a break on a one-nighter in St. Louis. Much to our surprise—considering we were virtually unknown at the time—he *consented*. Needless to say, we were off the ground and on our way with Buddy as our first cover story.

Five years later we celebrated our fifth anniversary with a feature called *Buddy Revisited*. We'd gained considerable publishing experience by this time and were able to present a much more meaningful profile. That interview turned out to be the essence of Buddy at his best: Opinionated, deeply concerned, somewhat abrasive, extremely witty, and always brutally honest.

Another six years would pass before Buddy would grace the cover of *MD* for the very last time. Sadly, it was our special tribute upon his death in April of '87. The issue contained Buddy's life story in words and pictures, and a host of fond remembrances from those who admired him for so many years. Interestingly, that issue is among one of the three *biggest-selling* issues in the entire sixteen-year history of *Modern Drummer*—an indication of just how revered Buddy was among musicians around the world.

Six years later we found ourselves in search of yet another way to pay tribute to Buddy. However, in all honesty, it didn't take us long to decide that this time we'd make his incomparable artistry the focus of this month's *Sound Supplement*. Special thanks to Cathy Rich and Steve Arnold for allowing us to use this six-minute solo excerpt from one of Buddy's live performances of the *West Side Story* medley. His performance here is only one example of a *career filled* with unforgettable performances. Rest assured that drummers the world over will continue to listen, to analyze, and to marvel at the genius of Buddy Rich for years to come. Some things in life are simply timeless.

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Trilok Gurtu

Three cheers for your November issue. I arrived in Minneapolis one Friday night last April and noticed that John McLaughlin was appearing at the State Theater. Twenty minutes later I was there, grooving with the rest of the crowd to the outrageous, electric, otherworldly rhythms of Trilok Gurtu. He is a master of time. Don't let all that Eastern percussion fool you; Gurtu laid down funk beats that had everyone slapping each other silly with delight. Rick Mattingly's article was right on the money, but nothing written prepares you for the fabulous, huge, on-edge sound of Trilok Gurtu!

Jon Margolis
Rapid City SD

The Drummers Of Steely Dan

Your November '92 feature, "The Drummers of Steely Dan," was most illuminating. I enjoyed the way the various drummers described their experiences working with Fagen and Becker. Through those descriptions, I began to understand what it was that has always bothered me about the Dan's music. It's unquestionably creative and innovative, and yet it seemed there was always something missing. That something was heart... soul...*life!* Steely Dan's music is so cerebral and so polished, with all the rough edges and natural elements refined away through dozens of retakes and overdubs. I found this article especially interesting when contrasted to the piece you did not too long ago on "The Drummers of James Brown" [Apr. '92 *MD*]. JB's music had little, if any, intellectual content—but oh, what heart, what soul, what *life!* It's all subjective, of course, but give me music played by talented people allowed to perform *naturally*, in a spontaneous atmosphere rather than under a microscope.

Tom Sempher
Chicago IL

Tim McGinley

I wish to commend you for your article on Tim McGinley, drummer with the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus [Oct. '92 *MD*]. When we think of the best drummers in the music business, the most obvious ones are those who we see on MTV and whose names accompany bands and artists on the hit charts. We tend to overlook some of the tremendous talent in high, but somehow obscure, places.

Tim McGinley is one of those tremendously talented performers who has been overlooked by many music enthusiasts simply because he doesn't have his own spotlight. *Modern Drummer* provided exactly the needed illumination. The creativity and innovation Tim displays, his flexibility and professionalism, and his confidence will be studied and greatly appreciated by many more drummers, thanks to your article and the attention *MD* gives to drummers of his caliber and noteworthiness. Thanks for bringing Tim to our attention.

John Perlman
Lubbock TX

Jeff Porcaro

I am writing to pay tribute to my godson, Jeff Porcaro. Joe Porcaro (Jeff's father) and I grew up together in Hartford, Connecticut. Jeff's chances of becoming a musician were great: his mother, Eileen, played flute, and of course Joe is one of the greatest drummers in the world. When Jeff was a baby, Eileen used to burp him by patting him on the back to the rhythm of the cymbal beat! When Jeff was in kindergarten he got a "D" in music because he used to clap on 2 and 4 when the teacher told the kids to clap on 1 and 3! Jeff and his two brothers, Mike and Steve, would never miss an opportunity to be around their dad and Godfather whenever we played. They formed Toto, and went on to be great musicians in their own right.

Jeff, we are keeping your memory with us in our hearts, so you can remain with us always. Your drumming will live on in the many wonderful performances you gave us on so many great albums.

Emil Richards
Los Angeles CA

Drum Workshop Revisited

After reading your article on Drum Workshop in the November '92 issue, I felt compelled to voice an artist's opinion on a company that is dedicated to the satisfaction of the consumer and working musician. Many of my friends who are DW endorsers are proud to be so, not just because of the products, but because of the family atmosphere that the artists and the company share. The people behind DW truly care about those who play their drums, and go out of their way to make *everyone* feel important. I think DW is a prime example of a company that can retain "old-fashioned" ideals while still competing successfully in today's market. Kudos to *Modern Drummer* for telling drummers what I've been telling them for years.

Scott Donnell
Los Angeles CA

ERRATA

In January '93's *It's Questionable* department, we answered a question from reader Ryan Fitch pertaining to cymbal warranties. In that answer, we erroneously stated that Paiste cymbals carry a six-month warranty. In fact, all Paiste cymbals are fully warranted for one year from date of manufacture. Our apologies to Paiste for this error.



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David Garibaldi

Since his *MD* cover story (in February '91), David Garibaldi has been a very busy man—and a content one. "It's been a great two years," David says. "I've been working really hard at getting back to what I'm about musically, and I think I've tapped back into it. Here in the Bay Area the musical menu is pretty diverse, so I get to experience a lot of things here that I didn't necessarily get to experience in southern California. There are positives and negatives to both scenes, but for this period of my life, this is a wonderful place to be."

At home, David's work schedule is full. He is recording with Latin jazz guitarist Ray Obiedo and with keyboardist Kit Walker's fusion group, *Living Daylight*, and he's working with his own percussion group. But David's also been doing his fair share of traveling, such as a September tour in Japan with Patti Austin—not to mention the N.D.A. programs and Yamaha and Paiste clinics that take him all over the country. David also went to Japan last July with John Robinson as a clinician for the Yamaha Big Drummer's Camp. "I was really impressed with John," he says. "I think the challenges he puts himself to are what make him what he is."

Garibaldi's been putting himself to his own challenges as well. As he pointed out in his last interview, his interests have taken him into an exploration of Cuban and Brazilian rhythms. "Since that time," he says, "I've worked really hard at it. I have a percussion trio called Talking Drums, where we take the Afro-Cuban rhythms—more of the folkloric style of playing—and combine



Photo by Rick Matkin

them with funk. I'm going to be doing a drumset video with DCI soon, and Talking Drums will be a part of that. Cuban music is so incredible to me; it's one of the richest musics in the world. For a drummer, it's heaven."

Garibaldi says that he's happy with his continuing progress. "I have periods where I'm very busy and doing things," he explains, "and periods where I'm in transition and developing things. I think one of the reasons that I still have the energy to pursue this is because I keep it at a real challenging level all the time. If you have a good sense of yourself, you can do anything you want to do."

• *Georgia Antonopoulos*

Michael Spiro

If it weren't for the bata drum, in-demand percussionist Michael Spiro says he'd lack a musical and spiritual center to nourish his life. Spiro says that studying the music of Cuba's Santeria religion was the most important reason he moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1980. Since then, the hourglass-shaped hand drums that descended from West African Yoruban tribes have continually mesmerized him. "This music always keeps me challenged, excited, humbled, and thrilled," says the 40-year-old.

"From a percussionist's standpoint, it's the most difficult form of Western drumming," Michael explains. "Every rhythm that I can think of that we would play in Western music—including bop and swing—is in the bata. To play it is so difficult that just the act alone is very humbling. When you sit down to play next to a master

like Francisco Aguabella, the last thing you could ever do is cop an attitude."

Besides the traditional religious use of bata, Michael applies it to other gigs whenever appropriate. He's loaned his percussive talents to movie soundtracks like *Henry And June* and *Soapdish*, and also enjoys regular calls for many Windham Hill artists, like pianist Barbara Higbie and guitarists Ray Obiedo and Steve Erquiaga. Since arriving in San Francisco, Michael has performed with salsa bands like Orquesta Batachanga and the Latin/Brazilian fusion sextet Canoneo, whose second recording, *Desperately Seeking Fusion*, made it to the Top-10 of national jazz airplay.

Second only to Spiro's passion for bata is Talking Drums, the trio he cooperatively formed with drummer Dave Garibaldi and percussionist Jesus Diaz. With a modest repertoire of pieces and a few clinic perfor-

mances under their belts, their future plans include assisting Dave for his forthcoming DCI video, and possibly adding a bass player and pianist. The group began shortly after Garibaldi approached Michael at a club and asked him for Latin music lessons. "It's pretty tough when your student is Dave," says Michael of their early sessions. "You teach him something, and a week later he comes back, not only playing the day-lights out of it—but with 98,000 permutations."

Meanwhile, Michael devotes so much time and energy to his bata studies that he occasionally turns down lucrative commercial gigs. "I got into this for the joy of music. As a human being, playing bata gives me a perspective on what I'm doing here and a sense of purpose beyond the mundane gigs.

• *Charles Levin*

Ron Tutt

In today's tight economy, one of the few acts who still has no trouble selling out arenas on a multiple-night basis is Neil Diamond. And drummer Ron Tutt says that after eleven years, the show *still* feels fresh to him.

For Tutt, one of the reasons that's true of the current tour (which began December, 1991 and continues into 1993) is that the stage is in a moving circular configuration. "That definitely keeps me on my toes," he says. "The acoustics are different because there are three areas set up for the musicians. I'm in one of the areas with the bass player, not quite facing the audience, and not quite facing in, but more facing outward. It's a little strange because the stage completely rotates twice in one direction—and then twice the other way. So I find myself going backwards at times. I think the first week a lot of us felt a little motion sickness and a bit disheveled."

Due to the nature of the show, two TV monitors were installed below the set, so that Ron could look down between his snare and first tom and see where Neil is on stage at any given moment. "He's moving all around the stage, but I can only see one area at a time," Ron explains. "I'm responsible for most of the endings and count-offs, so there *has* to be good visual communication between the two of us."

Besides communication, Ron says Diamond needs a great deal



Photo by Jaeger Smith Kotos

of professionalism from his musicians. "I think my job requires consistency and a certain level of excellence," says Tutt. "Cooperation is very important to him. We have a large organization, and during rehearsals and soundchecks he often opens up the floor for discussions. I think he counts on feedback about things like song order and audience response. We've kind of become experts on audience reaction over the years." With hundreds of sold-out shows over the many tours he's done, obviously Ron knows what to do.

• **Robyn Flans**

Tom Brechtlein

Tom Brechtlein has the blues these days—and he's loving it. After years of playing in jazz-fusion bands led by Chick Corea, Wayne Shorter, Al Di Meola, Jean-Luc Ponty, and others, Brechtlein has spent the last three years playing in a power-blues trio led by Robben Ford. The group, Robben Ford & the Blue Line, will release their first record on Chick Corea's Stretch record label this year.

"We can't even label the kind of music we play, but we're really proud of it," says Tom. "We're putting all of our energies into it. It's very different from what people

think I do. I always knew how to play a shuffle, but I play it better now thanks to Robben and [bassist] Rosco [Beck]. It's so much fun—I feel like I'm sixteen again playing with these guys. I can't think of two other musicians I'd rather be playing with."

The album's lead track, "The Brother," a tribute to Stevie Ray and Jimmy Vaughan, features a smoldering backbeat from Brechtlein. Other songs feature shuffles, and there's a Latin groove on "Real Man," one of the three singles the group has edited for radio play. "The

songs are real smooth. Live, we go for those moments when we rev it up, and the dynamics go from one end of the spectrum to the other. You *can feel* the audience listening."

In addition to the Robben Ford & the Blue Line album, Brechtlein can be heard on recent releases by Brandon Fields, Kei Akagi, Don Grusin, Chris Boardman, and Bob Shepherd. Robben Ford will be touring throughout the United States in 1993, so bring your notebooks along and hear how the blues is *supposed* to be played!

• **Adam Ward Seligman**

News...

Harry Stinson recording tracks for John Hiatt, the Texas Tornados, Joe Ely, Marty Stuart, and Kelly Willis. He also sang on Flaco Jimenez's recent recording, co-produced Kevin Welch's *Western Beat*, and produced artist Tommy Lee James.

Mike Keeley out with Three Dog Night. He has also been working with Zaca Creek as his schedule permits.

Joe Smyth on the road with

Sawyer Brown.

Watch for a new Tower of Power release with **Russ McKinnon** on drums.

That was **Steve Duncan** in the premiere episodes of *Delta* as the drummer of the band. He has also resumed filming *Hot Country Nights*, which will now be televised monthly.

Bobby Rock has been in the studio with Nelson, working on *Imaginator*.

Martin Chambers can be heard on Miss World's recently released, self-titled debut album and on the road with the band.

Nik Terry on the road with Skew Siskin, supporting their self-titled debut LR

Blas Elias on the road with Slaughter.

Fred Coury on Arcade's debut album, due out shortly.

Frank Avalon on Edan's debut LR, *Dead Flowers*.

Rick Diaz on Young Turk's recently released debut album, *N.E. 2nd Avenue*.

Peter Carleton Barbeau is touring with Celine Dion.

Andy James on new albums by Jeffrey Brecker and his own band, Titan.

Michael Blair is the musical director for a new Swedish TV talk show and is doing clinics for **drum** in Stockholm.

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-

TAKE DENNIS CHAMBERS AVERAGE DRUMMER.

gral part of Dennis' set-up, because they give

him a whole new range of sounds.

"I've been playing Zildjians all my life,"

notes Dennis, "and the reason

I like the K's is their real dark, warm

sound." Why do the new K

Dark Crashes offer so many sonic

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warm, low-pitched overtones. In 16", 17", 18", and

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bine the input of top players like Dennis,

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and Marvin "Smitty" Smith, with

the painstaking handcrafts-

manship that has made the K's, quite

simply, the finest cymbals

money can buy. The result, to quote

Dennis, is "a sound that's hard to

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



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Neil Peart

Q I could fill every page of this magazine with words of praise for your drumming, percussive talents, and lyrical abilities (can I say that here?), but I would still fall short of expressing my feelings, and probably annoy the editors greatly. So instead, I'll go right to my question: With very few exceptions, you play matched grip with Rush. When you performed at the 1991 Buddy Rich Memorial concert, you played predominantly traditional grip. Was this for the sake of "technique" or for "authenticity," and what advantages do you find with each grip?

Christopher McAdam
Acton MA

A Thanks Christopher; now you've got me blushing all red and stuff.... Anyway, here is a typically long-winded reply to your question:

In the pages of *Modern Drummer* we have all been able to learn a lot about the history of drums and drumming, and I find that very interesting. I remember reading in one article about the theory that the traditional grip originally evolved to accommodate military drums, which hung down to the player's right—to allow the fortunate guy to march while he played. Obviously, this would make the "cradling" grip more suitable for the left hand.

As the drumset evolved, and drummers no longer had to carry their drums (except out to the van), they still often mounted their snare drums on a stand that way—tilted down to the right—in order to continue the *traditional* way of playing. Drummers are often purists—sometimes religiously so—and so we all accepted the "received wisdom" that the traditional grip was correct, while the matched grip was lazy or unsophisticated.

Thus, when I began taking drum lessons, on Day One I was taught the tra-

ditional grip, and learned all my rudiments that way: hours of practicing on a pillow playing endless slow "ma-ma-dadas" and "pa-ra-did-dles." Simply put, when I later switched to the matched grip, I wasn't about to go through all *that* again just to learn something I'd already worked so long at. So I continued to play the



"finer" rudiments with traditional grip, switching back and forth when I had to. Thus, as you noted, for the Buddy Rich Memorial concert—which required a lot of that style of playing—I mainly used the traditional grip, while with Rush I almost always use the matched grip, except for the occasional rudimental passages.

But still the question remains: Why did I change? Well...another article that appeared in *MD* a while back was written by a doctor, who demonstrated that the matched grip was superior from a physiological standpoint; it utilized more muscles than the traditional grip and thus allowed greater control, power, and stamina. After a few years of playing, I had

found that to be true for me, and also that the matched grip permitted a greater range of left-hand flexibility—especially around an expanding kit. As drumming has progressed through the past twenty-five years or so, more emphasis has been put upon the left hand—not only to deliver a powerful backbeat on the snare, but to be more ambidextrous, more versatile and positive around the toms, cymbals, hi-hat, and even electronic pads.

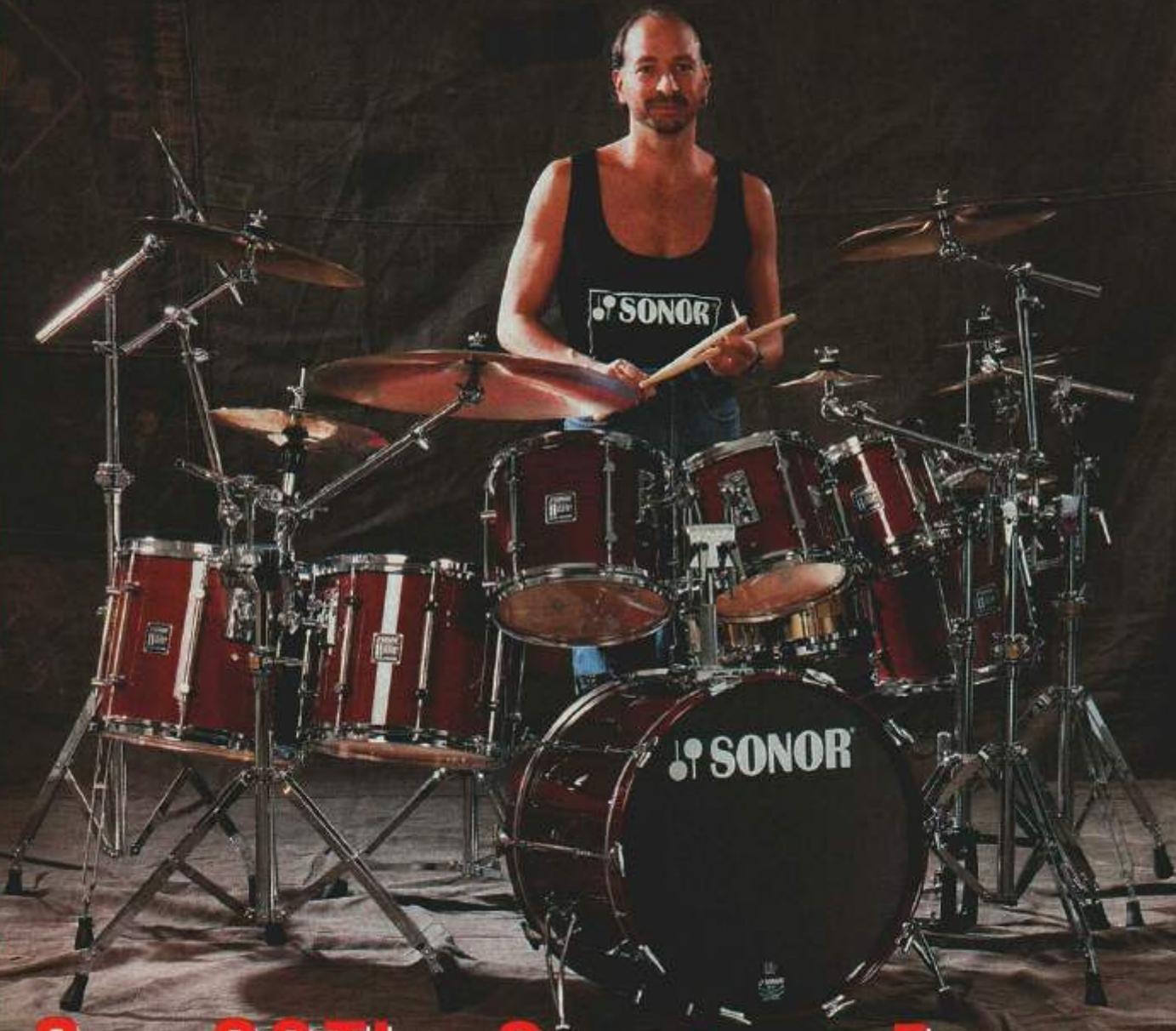
There is no doubt that people play beautifully with either grip, so I don't consider this a question of pure right-and-wrong. In other words, there's nothing to *argue* about! Drummers who have learned with the matched grip from early on are able to play a smooth and delicate double-stroke, while there are drummers who can lay down a powerful backbeat all night long with the traditional grip. But as one who has learned both grips, and has spent a lot of time practicing with each, I would have to say that, objectively, the matched grip compromises nothing and gains a bit of versatility for the left hand. (It seems to me that if the traditional left-hand grip *were* truly superior, it would have

evolved into the grip used by both hands—and we'd all look *really* funny.) Thus, if I were starting again, I would spend all those hours beating out rudiments on the pillow with matched grip.

Of course, the bottom line is what works for *you*—nothing changes that. But even us purists shouldn't be afraid of what simply makes sense. As an analogy, it's difficult to imagine anyone playing marimba or timpani with a mallet cradled in the left hand, so why should it be a superior technique on another multiphonic percussion instrument—the drumset?

That's what I think, anyway....





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For more information about the complete award-winning Sonor drum lines, write HSS, Inc., P.O. Box 9167, Richmond, VA 23227.

SONOR

A division of Hohner.

*Pictured above: Steve Smith with the Sonor Hillite drum kit.
You can hear Sonor and Steve Smith in the newest release from Vital Information: "Easier Done Than Said."*

Below you find what is
commonly called a win
win situation.



Prestige Studio.

Quality, craftsmanship, sound and value are all items of extreme concern for today's drummer. No percussion manufacturer understands this better than Pearl and there are no better examples of this philosophy than the ones you see below, Prestige Custom and Prestige Studio series drums.

Prestige Custom offers the full bodied timbre and warm distinctive tone of 100% aged maple. Artists such as Dennis Chambers, Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Richie Hayward and Tito Torres have all built their signature sounds around this outstanding maple drum set.

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Take a closer look at your local authorized Pearl dealer and we think you'll agree that the quality and craftsmanship of these professional instruments is simply unmatched in their price range. Prestige Custom and Prestige Studio by Pearl... the only way to lose in a situation like this is to purchase drums made by someone else.



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Prestige Custom



ASBA Pedals

Q I have an ASBA *Caroline* bass drum pedal, made in France. So far, in my years of playing, it's the best pedal I've used. It has a long footboard, allowing for heel strokes. It also has a leather hinge and a leather connecting strap from the footboard to the beater. It has a wonderful feel and response. My questions are, is this pedal still made? Where can I get parts? What is the possible age of this pedal? Are there any pedals, custom or otherwise, that have these specs? If so, where could I purchase them?

S.LeMay
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

A The French company that manufactured your pedal went out of business about ten years ago. However, the company that had been distributing them in the U.S., P.R. Percussion, still has a very limited supply of parts. Contact them at 1507 Mission St., South Pasadena, CA 91030, (818) 441-2484.

According to P.R.'s Paul Real, the design of the pedal was never changed from its inception, so your pedal could be anywhere from ten to thirty years old. To our knowledge, there has never been an import copy or any other pedal design that resembles the ASBA *Caroline*.

Preventing Stick Wear

Q When I strike my snare drum, I generally do a rimshot (some 80% of the time). Do you know of any product made to slip over my hoop lugs to prevent my sticks from being demolished in the middle?

Michael Evers
DeWitt IA

A HQ Percussion Products offers a device called *Stick Saver* for just your problem. Designed to mount over the drum rim in the area where rimshots

are played, it is a separate aluminum "rim" covered with a thick plastic coating. Two versions are available: a single piece that covers approximately one third of the rim's circumference, and two separate pieces that fit specifically over the left and right rimshot areas (between two lugs). Contact HQ Percussion at P.O. Box 430065, St. Louis, MO 63143, (314) 647-9009.

Another solution might be drumsticks designed to withstand the very abuse you give them. Aquarian now offers *Power Sleeve* wood sticks that are reinforced with a protective sheath in the rimshot area. Easton's *AHEAD* sticks are aluminum shafts with special sleeves that can be replaced when worn out by rimshots. Check with your dealer for the availability of these sticks in your area.

Album Sources

Q In your May '92 issue, Matt Peiken critiqued Non-Fiction's *Preface* album. None of the record stores in my area know anything about this album. Can you help me find it?

Shane Whitney
Hudson Falls NY

A The album is on Grand Slamm Records, a division of IRS Records. It is distributed by CEMA, 21700 Oxnard St. #700, Woodland Hills, CA 91367.

Editor's note: In our November '92 issue we asked for information on the source of A Social Grace by Psychotic Waltz. Readers Marc DeJesus, of San Diego, California, and Erik Slovens, of El Cajon, California, promptly informed us that the record is available through Blue Meanie Records, 916 Broadway, El Cajon, CA 92021, (619) 442-2212. Thanks for the help, guys!

Timpani Information

Q I recently acquired two old Ludwig timpani that I wish to use in an upcoming musical. There are no seals, serial numbers, or anything else to identify these drums other than the words "Ludwig Chicago" on the pedals. The sizes are 25" and 28". I have had considerable trouble in locating heads to fit these drums, not to mention determining what tuning range they require. (So far I have been tuning them to the 26" and 29" range, A-F and F-D, respectively.) I believe the kettles are highly polished copper. There is no master tuning handle nor any gauges, and each tension rod has a handle on it. The spring tension knob is also handle-operated. The larger drum has the number 1589 engraved on the inside bottom. I would like to know if any companies still make heads in these sizes, how old the drums are, and what the correct tuning ranges are.

Kathy Goff
Beach Haven NJ

A William F. Ludwig, Jr., provides the following reply: "In answer to your head question, yes, all head companies manufacture the 25" and 28" diameter Mylar plastic heads for timpani. There is no need for a master tuning handle on your drums, since their action does not require clutch tuning, but rather is balanced. However, tuning gauges can be added to update them.

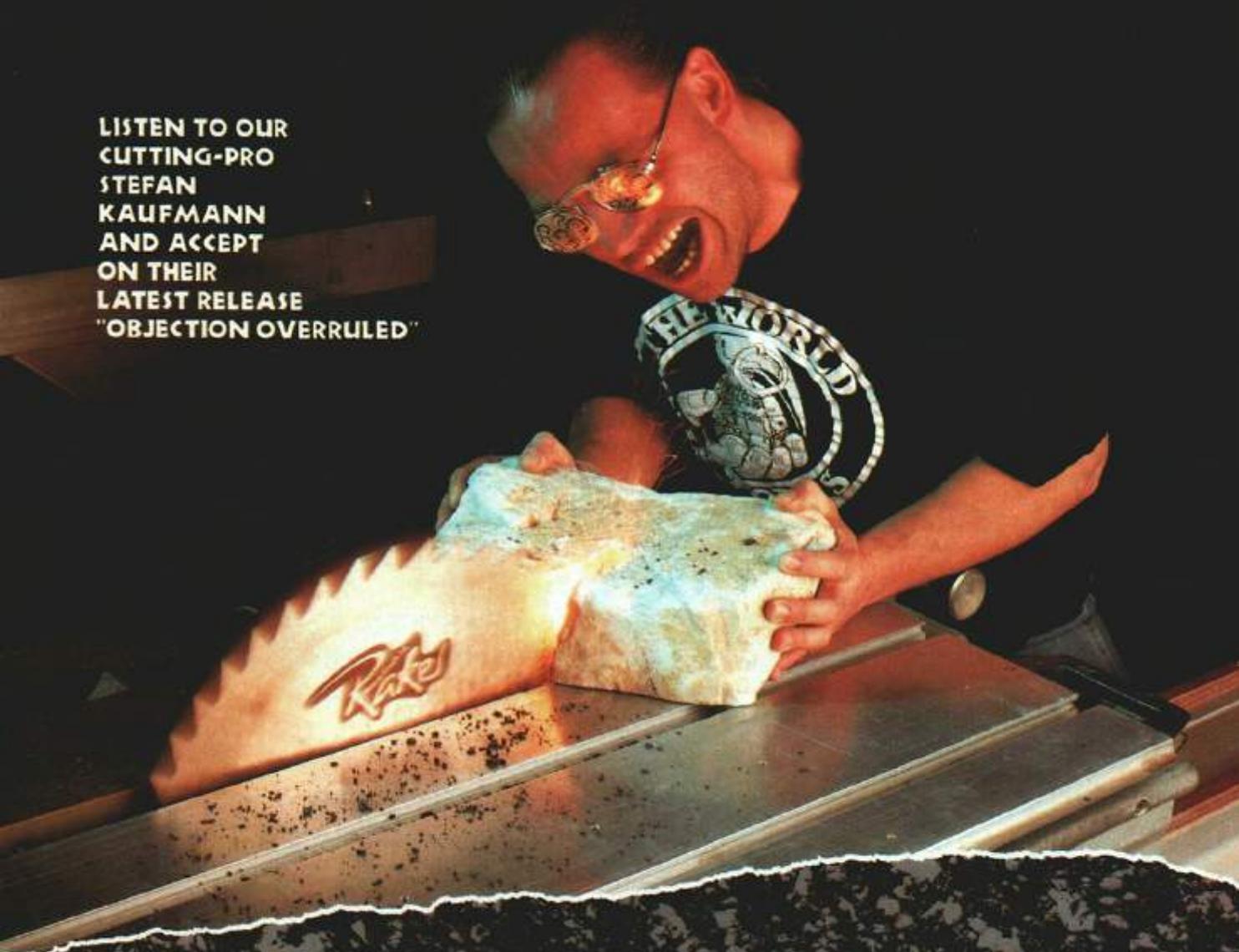
"I cannot pinpoint the age of your drums without a photograph. The number 1589 is useless in this regard, since it is merely the foundry's casting number for that particular part.

"The ranges of these 25" and 28" drums should be at least a fifth on each drum. They were built to secure a total octave, F to F, between the two of them. Sometimes you can squeeze out another whole tone on each; it depends on the head collar and the care given the drums."



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September 8, 1992

Pro-Mark Corporation
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ATTN: Bari Roggeri, Project X

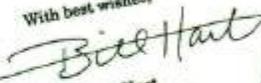
Dear Bari:

I want you to know about my change of address so I may continue to participate in **PROJECT X**.

As a lawyer, engineer, and business writer, as well as a drummer—(Actually, I don't do the first three things "as well as" I drum)—I enjoy participating in Pro-Mark's direct approach to marketing research. The intensity of your efforts to listen to your customers is apparent, greatly appreciated, and deserving of my support.

Pro-Mark can continue to count on me for honest and thorough product evaluations.

With best wishes,



William K. Hart
Chagrin Falls, Ohio

December 2, 1991

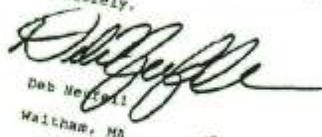
ProMark
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Houston, TX 77025

Dear Madam or Sir:

I'm just writing to say "thank you", for making such awesome sticks! I would never think of using anything but ProMarks! I do admit that I've tried other kinds of sticks, but yours were and always will be the best!

I use your size 2B New Generation American Hickory sticks. But no matter what size I use, they're all the best!

Sincerely,



Deb Newell
Waltham, MA

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It's not often that drumsticks inspire a musician to start writing. But, over the years, Pro-Mark has received thousands of letters from drummers all over the world. And, although these grateful drummers write for many different reasons, their letters all tend to end on the same note—they're all satisfied customers.

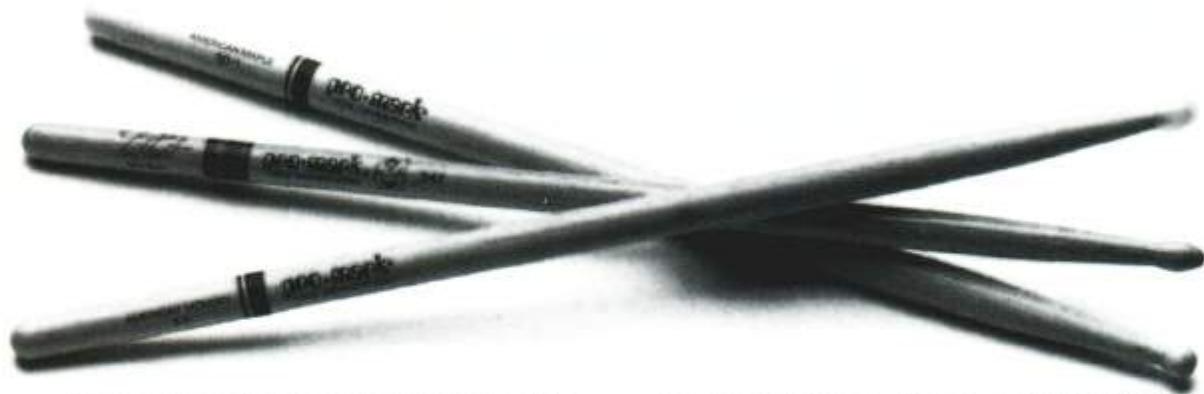
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The purpose of this department is to provide an avenue of communication directly between the consumers of drum and percussion equipment and those who design and manufacture that equipment. We invite all MD readers to respond to the questions presented; a representative selection of responses will be printed in a following issue.

**October '92's question was:
"I wish that the percussion industry made...."**



I have played the same Ludwig *L-201 Speed King* pedal for 15 years. The invention of the double bass pedal for single bass drums was wonderful. Why doesn't Ludwig make a double-pedal version of the *Speed King*. It's one of the most popular pedals ever made!

Alan Dumestre
Monticello GA



Many times, music stands are difficult to position on or around the drumset. I wish the percussion industry made a boom music stand—similar to a boom cymbal stand (or at least a music stand attachment for a boom cymbal stand).

Larry Pescatore
Santa Clara CA



Although there is more and more "vibraphone" music available for study and performance, many students, as well as professional performers, draw from the vast collection of guitar literature. Guitar music adapts to the vibraphone extremely well, with the one exception of the missing low E note. I would like to see the percussion industry manufacture a vibraphone with one more bar: the low E. This would make guitar adaptations more accurate and more musical, because the low E note would not have to be handled by jumping up the octave, or, in some cases, by just leaving it out. Also, a height adjustment system for vibraphone would be quite useful. This advantage is available on marimbas, and vibraphone players could definitely benefit from a similar feature.

Ginger Zyskowski
Hutchinson KS



I'd like to see a protectant you could put on cymbals to reduce or eliminate fingerprints. I think whoever invents it will sell a lot of it, because fingerprints are a big concern to most drummers.

Jermiah Holler
Grover City CA

I wish that the percussion industry made a 100% soundproof modular practice room. The thickness of the wall, ceiling, and floor sections would be 3" to 4" or less, and each section would be 2' x 6' in size. This would allow for future expansion and individual room-size preferences. Such soundproof rooms could be set up in basements, bedrooms, etc. so a person could practice on a real drumset without disturbing family or neighbors—especially in condos and apartments.

Brian Grams
Milwaukee WI



I wish the percussion industry made a double right *and* left remote bass drum pedal. Having *both* pedals be "slave" units would allow drummers to use one bass drum directly in front of them and still straddle their snare drum in a natural manner.

I was deeply influenced by Gary Chester's *New Breed* instruction book. A double remote bass drum pedal would facilitate a totally symmetrical setup, including three hi-hats (a traditional stand to the left, and remotes at center between the two rack toms and at right over the floor tom). This, in turn, would provide the ultimate in freedom for the drummer who leads both right- and left-handed and who uses two-handed ride patterns. A double remote pedal would also be practical for the jobbing drummer who doesn't want to transport two bass drums.

John Falzone
Rockford IL



This month's question pertains to the marketing of new drums, cymbals, drumheads, electronic sound sources, etc. In the past, a few manufacturers have inserted recordings featuring their new products in MD. Others have gone as far as making cassette or CD samplers, in an effort to give consumers an accurate impression of what their products sound like. But producing such "sound samplers" is very expensive, which prohibits most companies from taking part in this type of program. So our question this month is:

Would you be willing to pay a reasonable amount to offset a manufacturer's production costs for a recorded "sound sampler" accurately demonstrating the sounds of a new line of drums, cymbals, or other percussion equipment?

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



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When you love something, you use it all the time.

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STEVE
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Photo by Joy Blokesberg

It was really a blessing in disguise when Steve Smith's gig with Journey came to a halt in 1985.

Of course it hurt at the time, but as the dust settled, Steve began to focus his life in a long-overdue fashion. He started to realize that, while he learned a great deal from Journey, the music that truly made his heart beat was jazz.

Steve and the other members of Journey have actually reconciled their differences lately. In fact, since the breakup, Smith has worked on both guitarist Neil Schon's and keyboardist Jonathan Cain's solo albums. But jazz—in both its pure form and fused with other styles—remains Steve's passion.

Since the age of nine, Steve Smith has been interested in *learning* drums, not just playing them. From the fourth grade through the twelfth, Steve studied with Bill Flannigan in Massachusetts. His love of many types of music, from Count Basie and Oscar Peterson to Jimi Hendrix and Deep Purple, helped prepare him for his next musical quest, at the Berklee College Of Music.

After a year with Lin Biviano, a trumpet player who had worked with Buddy Rich and Maynard Ferguson, Smith left Berklee just before he was to graduate, for a gig with Jean-Luc Ponty. After a little over a year, Smith won gigs with both Freddie Hubbard and Montrose, but chose Montrose because the direction was more rock 'n' roll. Montrose opened for Journey on quite a few occasions, and in '78 Steve was offered their drum chair.

Looking back, Journey has definitely been the odd gig in Smith's career, though Steve has previously explained that if it hadn't been that band, he probably would never have played that type of music. The high caliber of musicianship appealed to him, though, and it was a situation in which his playing could—and *would*—grow immensely. You need only listen to the recent Journey compilation to appreciate how right Smith was for the gamut of their material—from the raucous rockers to the lush ballads.

But in 1983, Smith began to pine for his roots. Luckily he was given the opportunity to record with his then new band, Vital Information. Ten years later, it is his primary focus, though he alternates between gigs as Vital's leader and as a group member in Steps Ahead.

Smith admits it hasn't always been an easy road to travel, but now, with the release of his sixth album, *Easier Done Than Said*, his perseverance finally seems to be paying off.

By Robyn Flans

RF: I'd like to examine your role in Vital Information, including how much input you have in the songs, what the musicians play, and the shape the band takes—since you're at the helm.

SS: The concept has been pretty much the same from the beginning: to surround myself with musicians I really enjoy, both in their playing and writing. When I put a group together, I try to let the group find the natural place where we all come together. Each record is different because the combination of musicians meets in a different place. What I find with the current line-up is that the players are more oriented to be artists themselves.

RF: Why is that good?

SS: For me it's good because I'm much better in a collaborative situation. I can write some music, but as far as I'm concerned, I'm really not capable of writing a whole record. I'll contribute my share, but then I look to the other members to contribute. In this band, it's real nice for me because each musician is at a stage in their careers where they're not quite ready to have their own band full time. This is kind of a stepping stone for them because they can perform the music that they compose for this band as well as music from their solo records. They enjoy the band experience, and they also know that they're exposing themselves individually to an audience who will see their talent in a much clearer light, as opposed to their other situations—for example, Frank Gambale with Chick Corea, or Jeff Andrews with Steps Ahead and Michael Brecker.

I enjoy playing with the strongest players I can find because it brings out the best in me. That requires giving them a lot, but I like that because, like I said, I can't write all the songs. What I will do is set up an environment that is attrac-



Photo by Lissa Wales

tive and comfortable for great players to want to spend some time in. And that's what's happened now.

RF: What do you mean by "it requires giving them a lot?"

SS: It requires really listening to their input and not just dominating the situation. That's the contract of a sideman—just show up and play. You can offer some ideas, but the leader doesn't have to listen. You might get upset, but

Vital Listening

According to Steve, these recordings best represent his drumming...

Artist	Album Title
Journey	Escape
Journey	Captured
Tony MacAlpine	Edge Of Insanity
Y&T	Ten
Steps Ahead	N.Y.C.
Kit Walker	Fire In The Lake
Players	Players
Vital Information	Vitalive!
Vital Information	Easier Done Than Said
Gary Chaffee and Steve Smith	"Seventh Heaven"*

...and these were the most influential on his playing.

Artist	Album Title	Drummer
Buddy Rich and Max Roach	Rich Versus Roach	Buddy Rich and Max Roach
Jimi Hendrix	Are You Experienced?	Mitch Mitchell
Led Zeppelin	IV	John Bonham
Mahavishnu Orchestra	Visions Of The Emerald Beyond	Narada Michael Walden
Tony Williams	Believe It	Tony Williams
Billy Cobham	Spectrum	Billy Cobham
Keith Jarrett	Standards, Vol. 2	Jack DeJohnette
Cozy Cole	"Topsy, Part 2"	Cozy Cole
Ahmad Jamal	At The Pershing: But Not For Me	Vernell Fournier
John Scofield	Still Warm	Omar Hakim

* cassette and transcription package available through CPP Belwin

that's the contract. *This* contract is different from that.

Live, we don't have any problems because everyone has enough room to do what they want. When we play music from the other members' records, they have the final say in their own tunes. There is also a lot of solo space now, especially now that there are only four members, since we've dropped the saxophone. In the studio, I'm the producer, so if there's a dispute, I'll settle it. They give me that space, and it doesn't seem to be a problem. Tom Coster and Frank Gambale each make their own records, and it's only a matter of time before Jeff does, so it's not so important to fight over something. They have another outlet, so this isn't the all-important thing to them. The chemistry is very good, which is why the guys have committed to this band. We're really looking forward to turning it into a full-time group. It's taken a long time—ten years. It's been a slow building process.

RF: Has it been frustrating at times?

SS: Absolutely, in that it's taken so long.

RF: What obstacles have made it take so long?

SS: I can point to a number of things. First of all, I didn't have the right image. It has to make sense to the club owners and the audiences.

RF: So having been in Journey was a stumbling block?

SS: It gave me name recognition and an "in" with clubs and the press, but the audience I was aiming at wasn't aware of me, so I spent years up against a "Steve Smith of Journey" tag, which says "rock drummer." The jazz fusion audience either didn't know me or didn't care. Besides that, I didn't have the right personnel. Also, my playing was good, but it wasn't to the level it's at now. I have to give a lot of credit to Mike Mainieri for hiring me in Steps Ahead.

RF: Why did that help, just for your credibility?

SS: It helped in credibility, audience recognition, and playing experience. Steps Ahead is a band that a lot of people in the U.S. have heard of, but not a lot of people have seen. For the past three and a half years, we toured Europe and Japan almost non-stop, but very little in the U.S. It has exposed me to the very audience I am trying to penetrate. Now it makes a lot of

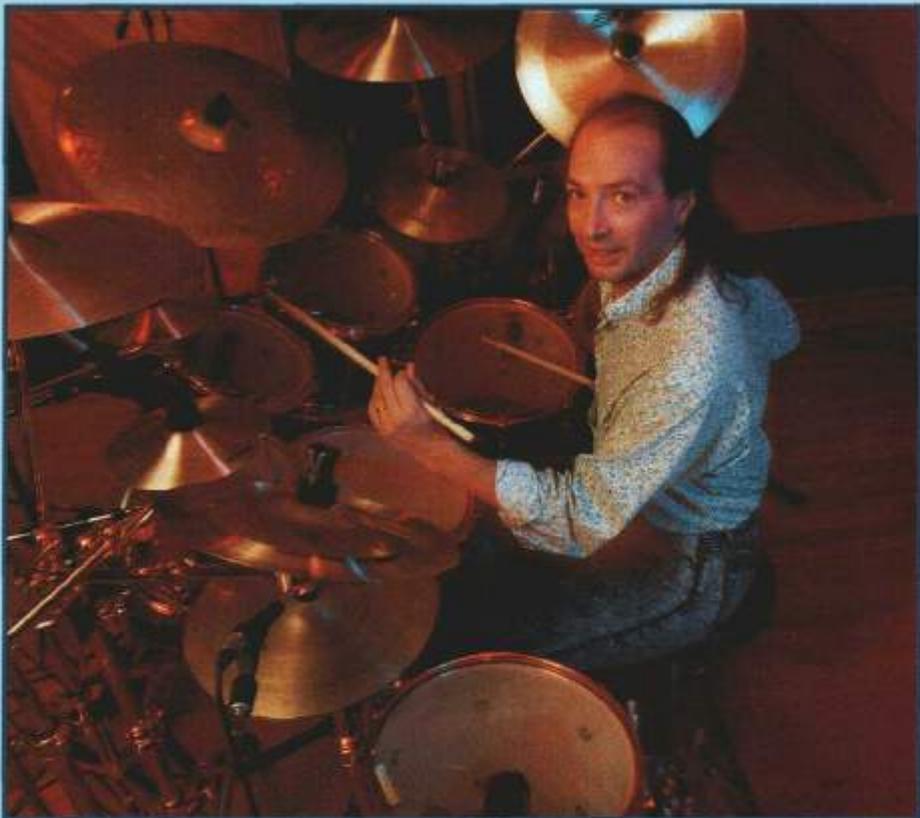
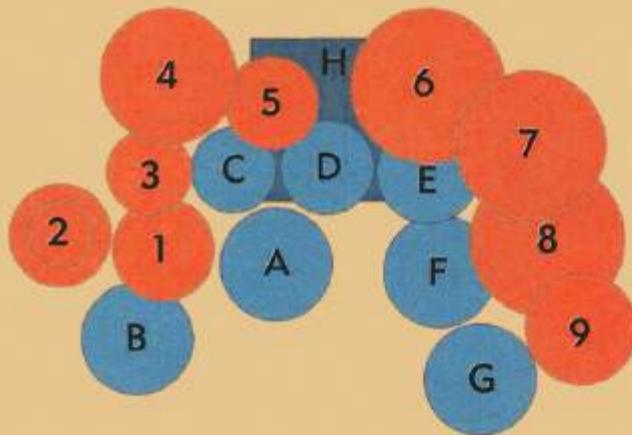


Photo by Jay Blakesberg

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Drumset: Sonor *Hilite*

- Exclusive* in red maple finish with copper-plated hardware
- A. 4 x 14 bronze piccolo snare (or 5¼ x 14 brass snare)
 - B. 11 x 13 tom
 - C. 8 x 8 tom
 - D. 9 x 10 tom
 - E. 10 x 12 tom
 - F. 13 x 14 tom
 - G. 14 x 15 tom
 - H. 17 x 22 bass drum

Heads: Remo coated *Ambassador* on snare, coated *Ambassadors* on tops of toms with clear *Ambassadors* on bottoms, clear *Ambassador* on bass drum (*Powerstroke* 3 in studio)

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 13" K/Z hi-hats
- 2. 12" EFX *Piggyback* with an 8" A splash on top
- 3. 8" K splash
- 4. 16" A Custom crash
- 5. 10" K splash
- 6. 20" Pre-Aged K ride (or 22", or 20" A Custom, or 22" A ping ride)
- 7. 17" A Custom crash
- 8. 20" K flat top with four rivets
- 9. 14" K Mini-China

Hardware: All Sonor, except for a DW 5000 double pedal (or Sonor *Pro-Tech* double pedal)

Sticks: Vic Firth Steve Smith model

continued on page 53

A LESSON WITH STEVE

Here is something I've been working on recently—a series of exercises that addresses a number of things at one time.

Since these exercises contain triplets with hand-to-hand sticking, the left and right hands are worked equally. I play the hi-hat throughout on 2 and 4, using the rocking motion with my foot, heel to toe. The bass drum is notated, so you also develop a nice interplay between the hands and feet.

The exercises can be played as four-bar phrases, but repeat marks are indicated if you want to focus on a two- or three-bar phrase. Examples 5, 6, 7, and 8 are especially challenging because they imply 3/4 time over 4/4. (Example 2 does also, but in a much simpler form.) Following the specific examples, I notated what these measures would look like in 3/4 time, using swing interpretation of only the accented snare and bass drum notes.

For other ways of applying this exercise to the kit, the accented notes can be moved to toms or cymbals, the accents can be played as flams, or you can play the hands as a buzz roll with accents. It's a good idea to play some time in between each example. The goal is to be able to play the exercises at a variety of tempos (I use a metronome clicking on 2 and 4), with a relaxed feel and good control. I've found them to be very centering, and they've helped my balance, both left-to-right and up-and-down.

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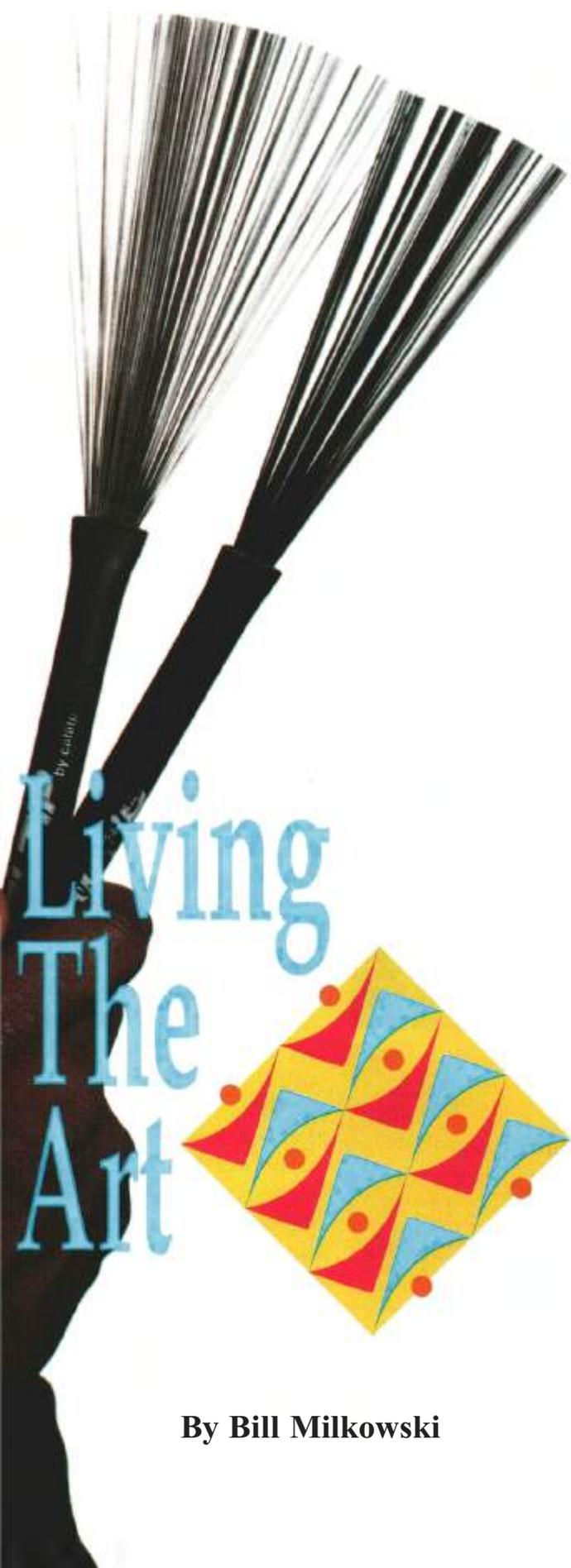
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Photo by Michael Bloom

Ed Thigpen



By Bill Milkowski

There's a certain nobility about the way Ed Thigpen unpacks his gear before a roomful of aspiring drummers. He conveys a kind of quiet dignity as he removes his cymbals from their cases and attaches the hardware, spinning the wing nuts and adjusting the height just so. It's a ritual he's been doing professionally for nearly fifty years now, a ceremony he conducts with elegance and pride, like a priest preparing the altar before a mass.

Finally, when all is in place, Thigpen steps behind his stool, exuding a regal vibe as he surveys the sea of young faces.

"What is this?" he calls out, holding up the stool.

"A throne," comes the answer.

"And who sits on a throne?"

"Kings and queens," shout the troops.

"Yes, and the band is your domain. Always remember that," he intones like the ancient Yoda drilling a gathering of Luke Skywalkers. And they hang on his every word as he speaks of things like finesse and dynamics, of feeling the music with your whole body. Of how *not* to use the bass drum.

"Music is a living art," he tells the congregation. "Notated music has never been more than a road map. It gives you the streets, the points of sound. But the interpretation of that notated music is up to the individual. That's when it becomes a living art."

More words of wisdom from the man who studied at the feet of Papa Jo Jones and came to prominence in 1959 with the Oscar Peterson trio—a prestigious gig he held for six and a half years before going on to support the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, Oliver Nelson, and Thad Jones. Ed Thigpen has been a part of this living art for five decades, and now he's giving some-

thing back as a clinician and educator.

"We need this music we call jazz," he says after conducting a clinic at the University of Northern Colorado. "I believe it has some intrinsic value toward the salvation of this country. And I enjoy passing the word on to the young people."

Ed does so through clinics and master classes, through his instructional books and videos, as a national chairman of the International Association of Jazz Educators, and as a member on the board of directors of the Percussive Arts Society. But beyond his work as an educator, author, and clinician, Thigpen is also passing on the word about this living art through his own example.

By his own reckoning, he's been on more than five hundred albums, probably closer to six. And he's been very active as a leader of late, recording four albums in the past four years, the latest being the aptly titled *Mr. Taste* on the Canadian Justin Time label, distributed in the States by Rhino Records.

A resident of Denmark since 1972, Thigpen is quick to point out that his first stateside release in several years should not be misconstrued as a "comeback" album. As he says, "Sometimes people feel like if you aren't working in the United States, you're dead. But I've never stopped playing. I'm not on any comeback trail. Let's just call it a re-entry of sorts."

Thigpen recently toured the States with his trio in support of *Mr. Taste*, flaunting his slick brush work and impeccable sense of swing in jazz clubs from Milwaukee to Chicago to Los Angeles, and several points in between. Thigpen's a venerable jazz missionary out preaching to the converted. We caught up with him in New York.



Mr. Taste's Equipment



Ed plays Remo drums and Sabian cymbals exclusively. His bass drum is 16x20, and he uses a 9x13 mounted tom and two 14x14 floor toms. He plays Sabian cymbals, including 14" hand-hammered hi-hats, a 22" ride and an 18" flat ride, a 17" medium-thin crash, a 13" *Sound Control* splash, and a 20" hand-hammered China. His sticks are Calato 8As, and he has his own signature line of Calato brushes made from a polyethelene synthetic, which allows for more flexibility.

BM: One thing that you and Billy Higgins have in common is that sense of joy you both exude when you're playing.

ET: Probably because the music saved our lives, and does so continuously. Playing has been a salvation and an escape for me. Having the pleasure and the honor to play has afforded me untold opportunities to meet wonderful people all over the world, getting on the bandstand and sharing that spiritual experience, that wonderful experience of playing for dancers. I'm blessed to have had that feeling. I wish everyone could experience it in some form. It's like my mentor used to say, "Play for the people you're working with. If you make them happy, you'll have the best seat in the house, 'cause they'll entertain you all night."

I love interacting with other musicians. To be part of something that brings joy to people...it adds a positiveness to life.

BM: How have you been able to persevere in the face of an industry that seems so heavily slanted toward commercialism?

ET: Well, there's always a flip-side to the coin. As bad as it is, that's how good it is, too, in the sense of creating individuals. How do you survive? By recognizing that your talent is a gift.

BM: On your new trio album, each member is playing the role of drummer at some point.

ET: That's the whole idea. That concept came from my reaction to this idea that everybody plays, and the drummer supports. And then

everybody plays fours with the drummer—like the drummer can't think past four bars for himself.

BM: You also pull off some incredibly melodic solos on this album, particularly on Jimmy Heath's "Ginger Bread Boy" and on "Invitation." And I really dug your slick brush solo on "You Name It."

ET: Well, I've been learning to get better and better at soloing, deliberately. Thank God I could swing and keep good time in the early days, because some of those fours and eights I played...they were sad. I said, "Lord, I *know* I didn't get these record dates because of those solos." But I could swing good, and that's why I was hired—basically as a good time-keeper, being able to enhance and make the music come alive. That's your first job as a drummer. But it's been a battle trying to become a good soloist. There haven't been that

many great drum soloists—Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Roy Haynes, Tony Williams, Philly Joe Jones, Billy Cobham. But other than that, there weren't that many drummers who were able to step out front, cats who had this rounded thing and then this uncanny ability to play solos that just knocked everybody out.

The funny part is, you have so many clones now. You got licks, you got videos, you got this and that. But how many are saying something, making a story line, making *music* out of it? You know, drums are music—if you play them well. It's rhythmic music. People associate primarily with melody, which is from a European standard. But African music is

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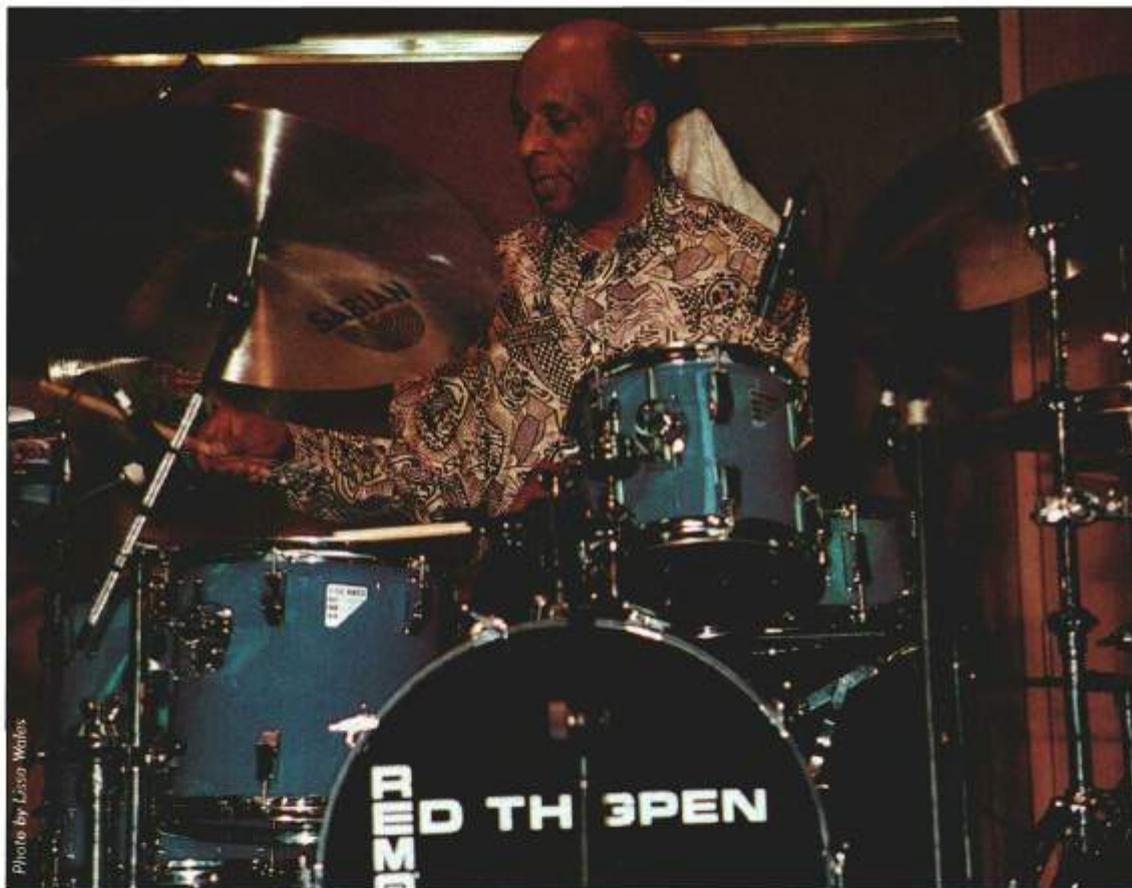


Photo by Lasso Wolfes

"Every family should have percussion instruments in the home. The family that jams together stays together."

Buddy Rich

A Classic Solo

It's hard to believe that six years have gone by since Buddy Rich passed away. Even though it has been a few years, the memory of his playing is still strong with all who admired his incredible drumming talents. *MD* recently obtained a never-released live solo performance by Buddy on Bill Holman's legendary "West Side Story" medley (recorded in 1978). We're happy to share it with you—and pay tribute to Buddy—in this *Sound Supplement*.

Beginning near the end of this lengthy arrangement, Buddy's solo demonstrates both his rhythmic inventiveness and astounding technical proficiency. Though the solo builds in intensity and complexity from beginning to end, Buddy actually structures the solo through the use of a series of interesting hills and valleys, with each new section building on the previous one.

During the first minute of the solo, Buddy dabbles in simple yet compelling rhythmic fragments between snare, bass, and toms. Though the tempo is not initially stated, one immediately feels the medium tempo groove that anchors the opening moments. Despite several jolting technical flourishes, Buddy actually maintains the listener's interest by interweaving these opening fragments and through the masterful use of *shading* and *dynamics*. Besides the musical pur-

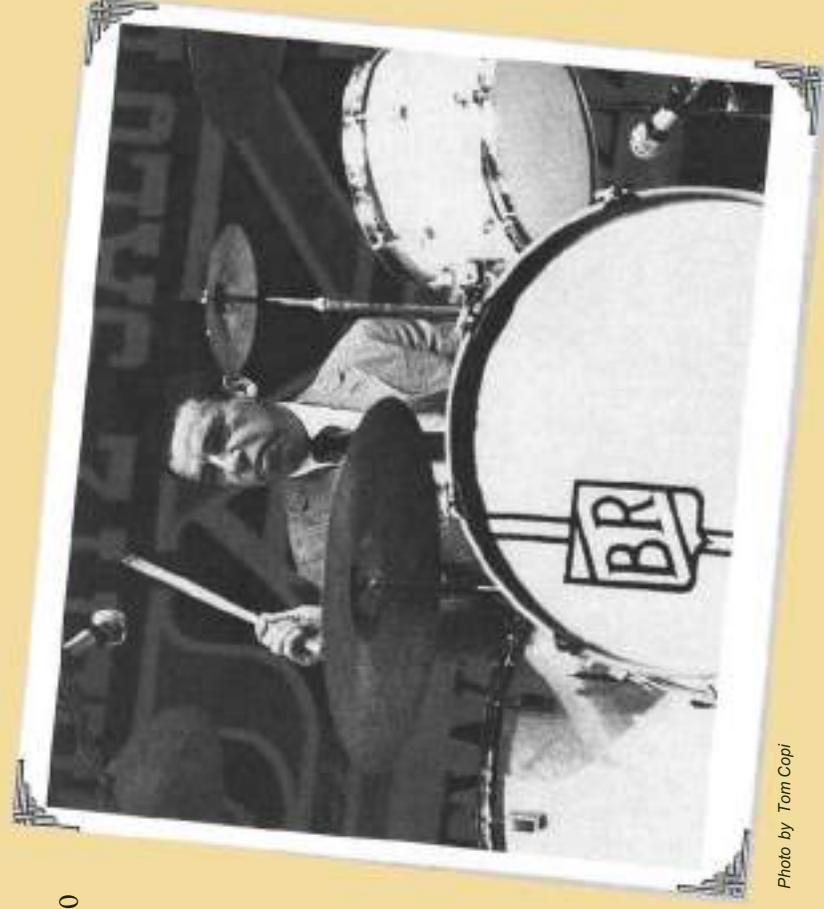


Photo by Tom Copi

poses, this is also evidence of an experienced Buddy pacing himself to conserve energy for what's to come.

Soon we hear the time delicately implied on the bass drum, while accented single-stroke 16th-note triplets, 32nd notes, and short roll figurations (some with a slightly polymetric feel) fill up the top end. Expanding on the foundation he's set, Buddy gradually gets more intricate with a more liberal use of tom-toms and cross-stickings.

With the building blocks in place, the rhythmic complexity of the solo increases as the tempo accelerates. It's difficult to determine the precise stickings and drumset orchestrations Buddy is using without a transcription, but his blazing drum-to-drum patterns and amazing footwork come across loud and clear. At

one point, we even hear Buddy borrow a figure from the fast 3/4 horn line that closes out the tune. Rather than taking the listener back to something that occurred earlier in the piece, Buddy ingeniously previews what's soon to come.

Just when we think the solo is reaching a climax, Buddy brings the intensity level back down, offering the listener still one more opportunity to delight in his meticulously executed flam rudiments, short buzz rolls, ruffs, and delicate rimshot work. But it's the final moment before the wrap up. The time is clearly stated once again, as Buddy takes us home with a fiery barrage of accented single- and double-stroke rolls performed with incredible speed, accuracy, and control. The solo builds in usual Buddy fashion, and is finally brought to a logical conclusion.

Buddy's performance on this version of "West Side Story" is truly the work of a master drum soloist, where simplicity, technical wizardry, rhythmic inventiveness, and creative use of dynamics and shading all come together to make this one of Buddy's finest works. A truly classic Buddy Rich moment.

Our thanks to Cathy Rich and Steve Arnold for their assistance with this project.

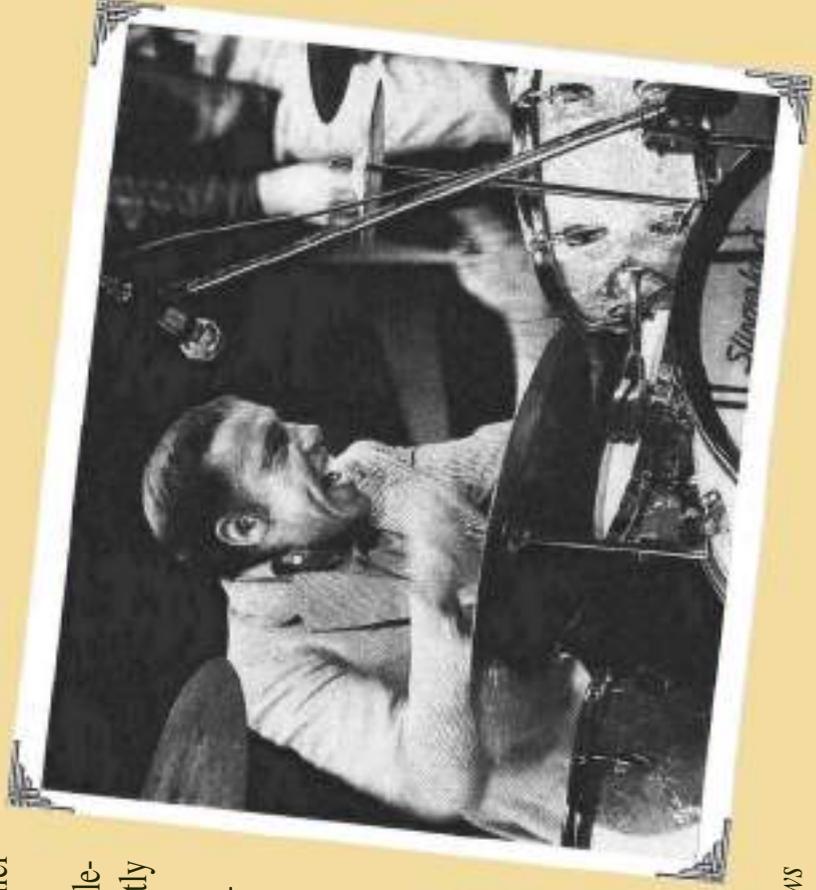


Photo by Tom Coppi



Photo by Tom Coppi

BUDDY



by Cathy Rich

The Lighter Side

My father's sense of humor is the thing I miss the most. It's what saved him in many situations. His wit is legendary. His mind was so quick and his view of things so off-center, almost anything could be healed by one of his sayings or jokes. But to me, he was his funniest when he didn't even know he was being funny.

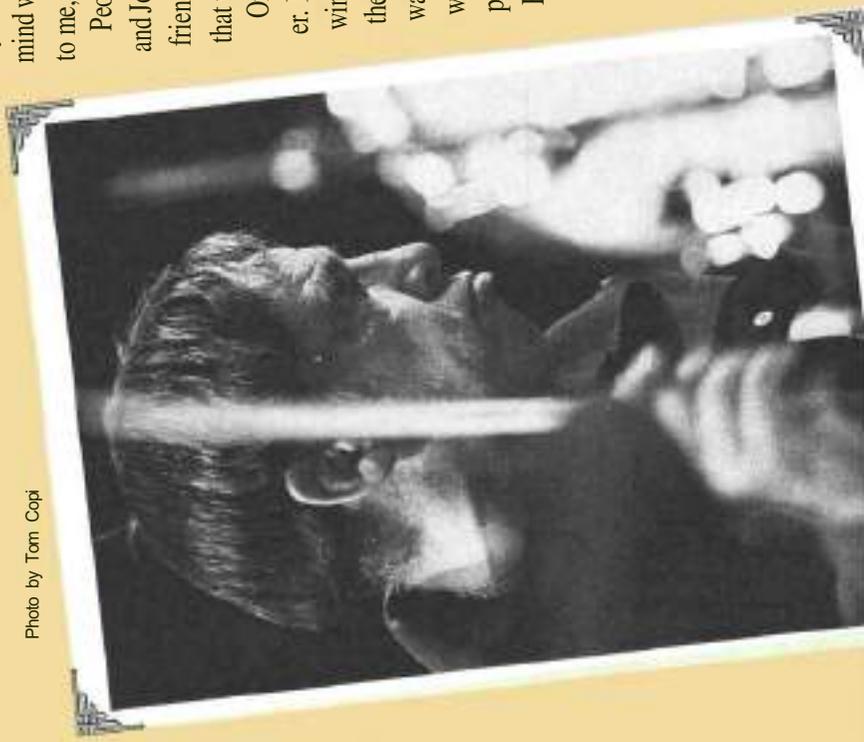
People who only knew Buddy through his appearances with Johnny Carson only saw a very small part of his humor. He and Johnny were very funny together on screen, but *off*screen is when it got out of control. Though they were very close friends, my dad and Johnny didn't get to spend a lot of time together, mostly because of Buddy's schedule. But it seems that whenever they did get together, something funny always happened.

One day many years ago, on one of my dad's infrequent days off, he and Johnny spent an entire day and night together. It started out rather harmlessly at Johnny's house. My dad was by no means a drinker, and for him to have a glass of wine with dinner, it had to be a special occasion. Well, on this particular day, he and Johnny started drinking wine in the afternoon, and the afternoon carried into the evening. Deciding that by this time they should eat, they made their way (by limo) to a restaurant in Beverly Hills. By now, my dad, who was totally blitzed, had ordered spaghetti and was waiting for it. When the food arrived, he lasted just long enough to give Johnny a farewell look as he passed out in his pasta! Johnny, on the other hand, was fine, and proceeded to eat his entire dinner while my father slept in his plate. He later told my dad that he didn't want to disturb him, thinking it was some sort of Jewish ritual.

The last time they were together socially, we all went out to dinner in Malibu. It was an amazing evening, and both Johnny and my dad were in rare form. The evening ended with me being the designated driver, and trying to find my way back to Johnny's house with little or no help from my fellow passengers.

After about forty-five minutes of driving up and down the same streets, I vaguely recognized the entrance to the Carson home. My father got out of the back seat to inform the guard, Bill, that we were depositing Mr. Carson. Bill said he needed to see Mr. Carson in order to let us in. By this time everyone was in fits of laughter, and Johnny

Photo by Tom Copi



now decided to get out of the back seat to show himself. He popped his head out of the car and said, "It's okay, Bill, it's me!" With that, the guard opened the gate, and I proceeded to drive through. As I did, the guard leaned over to my dad and said, "Could you please tell Mr. Carson that my name is Jim?"

My father was a terrible practical joker. Although funny, his jokes sometimes got out of hand. When he had his first club, Buddy's Place, he let an entire audience in on one of his gags. Mel Torme was coming in to see the show, and my father told the crowd not to acknowledge Mel when he introduced him. Mel walked in and was seated ringside. My dad stepped down from the drums and proceeded to give him a glowing, flowery, wonderful introduction. When he finished with, "Ladies and gentlemen, let's have a fabulous ovation for the great...Mel Torme," there was not a sound in the crowd. Mel stood up and turned white. For about the longest ten seconds in his life, he firmly believed that no one knew who he was. Then of course my father started laughing, and so did everyone else, including Mel.

On another occasion, again with poor Mel, my dad threw a lemon meringue pie at him on stage. Unfortunately he misjudged his target, and the pie flew all over the patrons in the front row. They weren't pleased, to say the least, and threatened to sue.

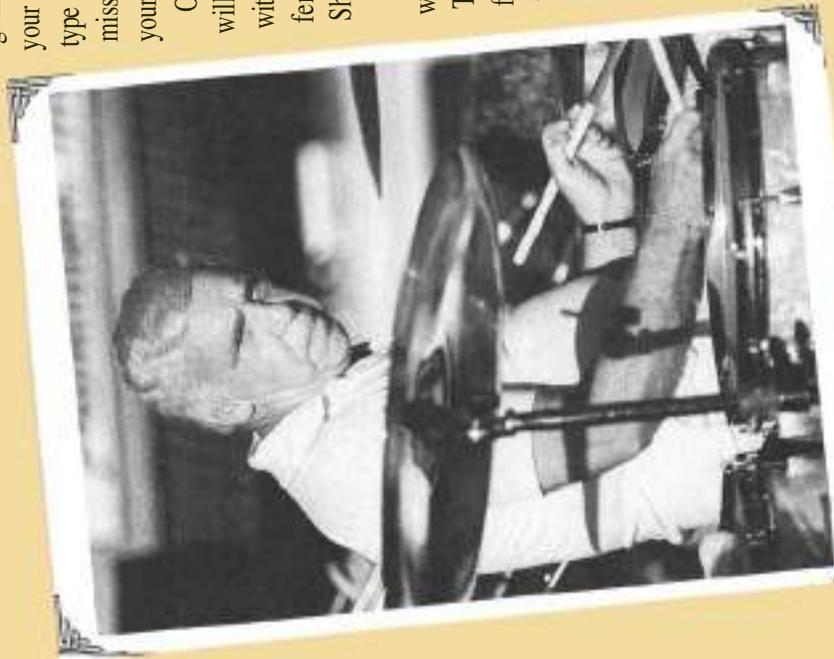
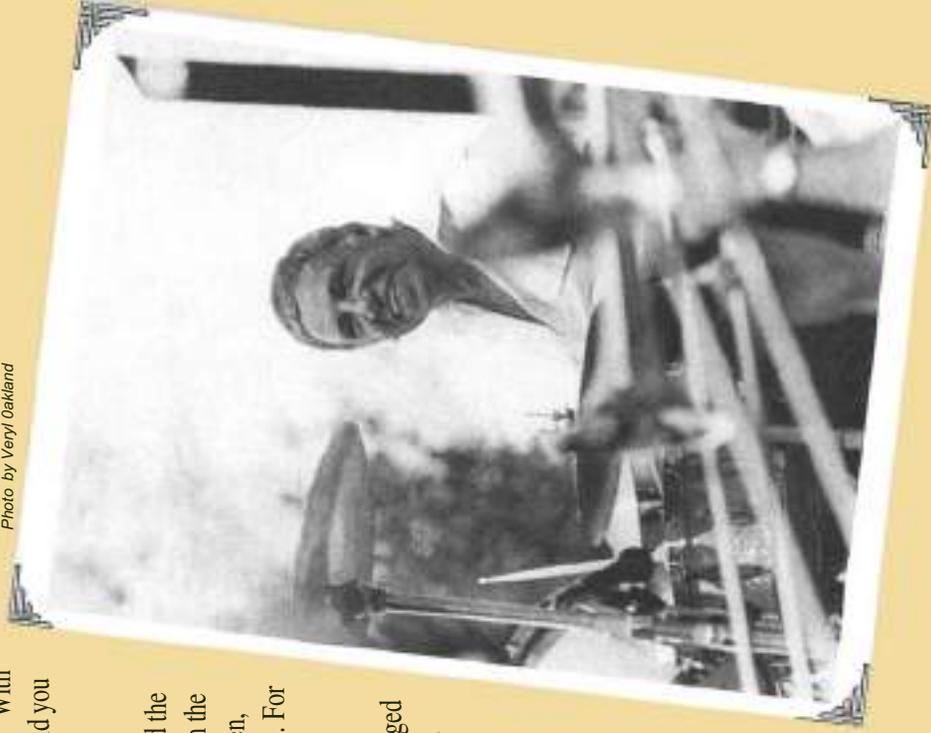
My father was an avid sportsman—at least in his own mind. He always thought that he would have the same facilities at sports that he had on the drums. Much to his dismay, that wasn't the case. Tennis and golf were his two favorite and most agonizing sports. Going out on the tennis court with him was like having your sanity removed. If you were the one who missed a shot or made any type of mistake, he was all over you. But if the tables were turned and *he* missed a shot, you had to either pretend that you didn't see it, or turn your face to the back wall and laugh so he didn't see you.

One sunny California afternoon on a tennis court, he said a line that I will never forget. We were playing doubles. (By request I was teamed with someone else.) My dad's partner hit a shot that went over the fence. Without thinking, Buddy snapped, "Why don't you get George Shearing to show you where the lines are?"

One of my favorite Buddy stories has to do with another game, golf. Again, not being the most patient man on earth, it was hard for him to comprehend the fact that it was best to learn a game *before* you went out and played it. But play it he did (or tried). This particular morning, dad was playing with a foursome in Las Vegas, and from what I have heard, he was not having a good day. The final blow came on the back nine when he hit his ball into the water. Without a word, he picked up his entire golf bag and tossed it into the pond and stormed off the course. I guess the people he was playing with were used to his behavior, and continued their game as if nothing had happened.

About ten minutes later, they looked up, and on the horizon was the outline of my father, seemingly trying to make his way back to where they were. Thinking that he had come to his senses and wanted to finish the game, they waited for him. But instead, he walked right by them, and without a sound, got to the edge of the pond, took off his shoes, rolled up his pant legs, and began wading into the water. With mouths hanging open they watched as he found his golf bag, dragged it out of the water, unzipped the side pocket, took out his car keys, threw the bag *back* into the pond, and walked away.

Photo by Veryl Oakland



DRUMMING IN

PIONEER
CLUB



EEER

CASINO

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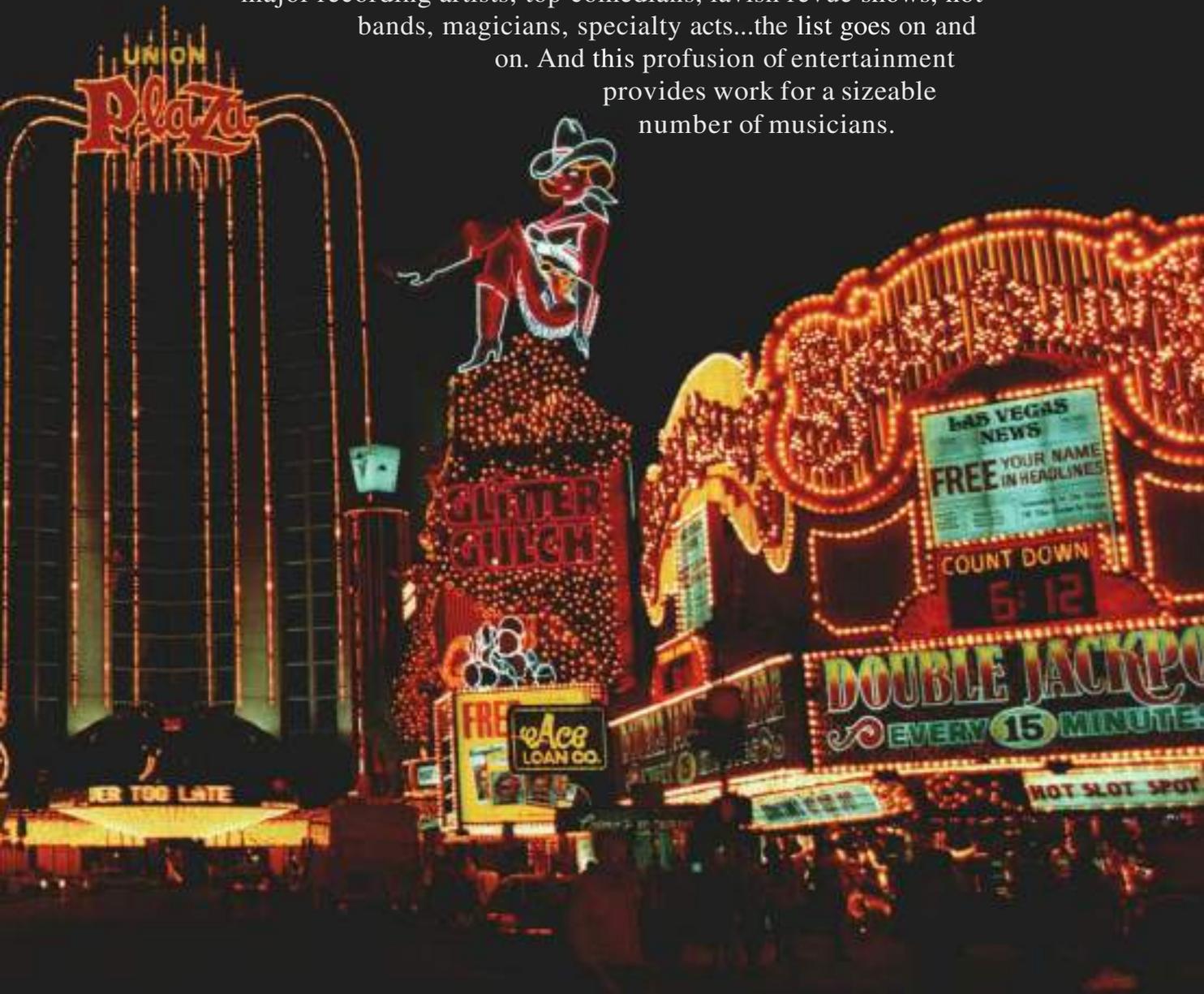
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LAS VEGAS

By Rick Van Horn

Some come hoping to get rich quick at the gaming tables; others come for the weather and inexpensive accommodations and food; still others come just to see what the excitement is all about. But no matter what brings people to Las Vegas, they invariably find time to enjoy one of the city's most famous attractions: live entertainment. This is the place to see every conceivable type of act: major recording artists, top comedians, lavish revue shows, hot bands, magicians, specialty acts...the list goes on and on. And this profusion of entertainment provides work for a sizeable number of musicians.



ust what sort of work are we talking about—particularly for drummers? How much work is there? Is it a closed shop, or could a new drummer break in?

What particular skills does it take to succeed as a drummer in Las Vegas? To get the answers to these and other questions, *MD* interviewed individuals from all facets of the Las Vegas entertainment scene. We spoke with drummers, union officials, musical directors, and hotel entertainment directors, in order to get the most complete perspective possible on the career opportunities for drummers in the "Entertainment Capital Of The World."

Background

Las Vegas is one of the fastest-growing cities in America, and offers all the musical amenities you'd find in any other major city. There are a number of local pop and rock clubs, some jazz gigs, a very active blues society, a significant C&W market (this *is* the West, after all), and the alternative music that you might expect in a college town—due to the presence of UNLV. There is a small but active studio scene, producing jingles and some private recording projects. The city boasts a symphony, several chamber groups, ethnic musical organizations, a marimba quartet, and a steel band. Musical education is readily available through UNLV and through the number of working professionals who also teach. The growth of the city (which is expected to achieve a population of one million before the turn of the century) bodes well for the health of the "local" musical scene.

But it is the showrooms and lounges of Las Vegas that offer the greatest amount of employment potential. Among the various hotels and casinos that line the city's famous Strip and downtown hub, fifteen have major showrooms, ten more have show-type lounges, and almost all have one or more smaller off-casino lounges. There are also dozens of smaller clubs and lounges on the Strip, along with smaller casinos situated off the Strip and catering to a local clientele. These, too, contribute to the total entertainment scene—and the potential job market.

But before you pack your bags to leave for the Nevada desert, it's important to be aware that working conditions in Las Vegas have changed dramatically in the past few years. Many musicians mistakenly believe that every major hotel in Las Vegas employs a full-time house orchestra—and there *was* a time when this was true. These orchestras would



The typical Las Vegas drumming gig: a pop/rock group performing in an off-casino lounge at Caesar's Palace

work behind stars like Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Elvis Presley, and would provide the background music for famous revue shows like the *Folies Bergiere*. If an entertainer brought in his or her own musicians, the house musicians were paid anyway, even though they did not play.

But times change. Pop stars like Cher, Paul Anka, Neil Sedaka, Lola Falana, and others scaled down the bands and kicked up the energy, preferring to work with synthesizers and rock rhythm sections rather than large orchestras. Many acts came into town totally self-contained. At the same time, several of the review shows converted to recorded tracks instead of live music.

In response to these changes, the Las Vegas musicians union went on strike in 1989, seeking higher wages and guaranteed employment. The strike failed, and today only five major hotels have full-time musicians on staff—generally a leader/contractor and a three-piece rhythm section. They may play the happy hour in a cocktail lounge one day and form the nucleus for a show orchestra the next. The rest of the musicians in town work on an "a la carte" basis. They are hired if and when a given act or show requires them. This could mean anything from a weekend engage-



The action's not all in the casinos: Axis is a hard rock act currently showcasing for major label attention.

merit behind a touring recording artist to a 32-week booking with a major show.

But even though the glory days for house orchestras may be gone, the fact remains that there are dozens of excellent gigs still to be had. As Clyde Duell, veteran Las Vegas drummer currently playing *for Jeff Kutash's Splash!* at the Riviera, puts it, "The opportunities aren't as great as they used to be. But the whole music business nationwide isn't what it was, and if you look at Las Vegas in terms of number of gigs per square mile, it's still lots better than most other places." And for once, drummers have an advantage, because while many shows cut horn or string sections, almost all—including many using recorded tracks—retained their drummers. And virtually all of the lounges feature acts that also use drummers: bands, stand-up vocalists, etc. The work is definitely there, and at this point it is up to the individual drummer to establish himself or herself as a desirable commodity in order to get—and keep—that work.

What Do Drummers Do?

Perhaps more than any other aspect of its appeal, Las Vegas is noted for the *variety* of entertainment presented at any one time. As a result, the drummers of Las Vegas comprise a widely diversified talent pool. The drummers I interviewed for this story form a pretty representative group:

Adam Shendal plays for Wayne Newton at the Las Vegas Hilton. This classic "headliner" showroom act combines a high-energy rock rhythm section with string and horn sections and backup singers. The show consists of pop, rock, country, and Broadway material showcasing Newton's versatility—requiring equal versatility from his drummer.

Clyde Duell plays *for Jeff Kutash's Splash!* at the Riviera Hotel. The town's hottest revue show, it features both a 14-piece orchestra and recorded tracks—sometimes simultaneously. The show combines high-energy production numbers with variety acts, so Clyde has to cover both the most up-to-the-minute feels and also classic vaudeville "shtick."

Jeff Krashin plays for the *King Arthur's Tournament* theme show at the Excalibur Hotel. The playing combines acoustic and electronic drumming with both live and sequenced keyboard and orchestral music to create atmo-



A cross-section of Las Vegas drummers: (from left, standing) James Leyba (a student of Irv Kluger), Mo Mahoney (owner of the Professional Music Center & Drum Shop), Mark Barnett, Mark Dalzell, Bob Bonora; (from left, kneeling) Irv Kluger, Santo Savino, Michael Parrot, Jim Shaw

spheric accompaniment for knights in combat, dancing gypsies, a wizard's magic, acrobats, trick riders, and other medieval entertainment. Jeff worked closely with the show's musical director to create and program his drum parts and sounds.

Gary Olds subs for Jeff Krashin at the Excalibur, and also plays a variety of other shows, including top lounge acts like Denise Clemente.

Stu Sacco plays for *Legends In Concert*, a name-artist recreation show at the Imperial Palace. The all-live music is performed by a seven-piece pop/rock band. The focus here is on creating an authentic sound behind each of the performers who imitate a given star, including Elton John, Madonna, Roy Orbison, Bobby Darin, Neil Diamond, and Elvis.

John Abraham (*Rich Little's Copycats—Sahara*) and Mark Dalzell (*Comedy Cabaret—Maxim*) play for comedy/musical revue shows. (John also does studio work, convention calls, and jazz gigs; Mark also works with a C&W show.) Mark's group consists of keyboards, drums, and trumpet, combined with sequenced tracks; John's five-piece band also works with taped material. In both cases, the challenge is to add a live, spontaneous feel to what is essentially pre-recorded music—and to be ready for anything if there is a mistake on stage.

Santo Savino is currently playing at the Desert Inn behind lounge entertainers, headline acts, and whatever else is called for. Santo has been one of Las Vegas's top drummers for over twenty-five years.

Mark Barnett is another Las Vegas veteran. While he plays drums for local jazz and big band gigs, his primary job is playing percussion on tour with Frank Sinatra.

Jay Reithel is a member of Step Up, a successful pop/rock band that performs in top lounges like Cleopatra's Barge at Caesar's Palace. Performing live music in a dance/lounge format, Jay's playing has to be contemporary, entertaining, and exciting.



Clyde Duell in the pit for Jeff Kutash's Splash!—the quintessential Las Vegas revue

continued on page 112

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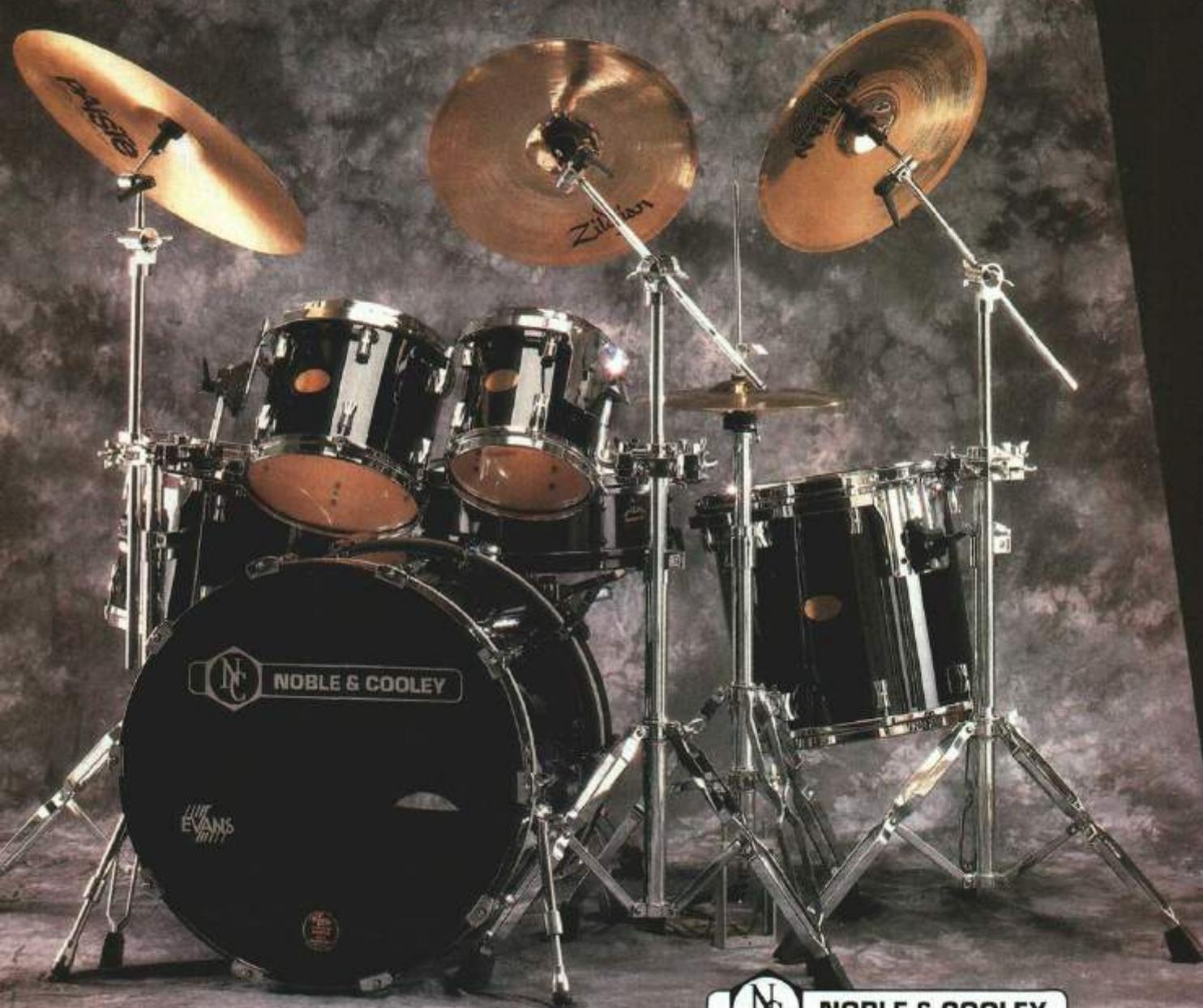
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UFIP Cymbals

■ by Rick Van Horn

Italian cymbals have been around for years—but not like these babies. They're all-new, they're for real, and here's why you should check 'em out.

The last time UFIP cymbals were reviewed in *MD* was in the October '87 issue. They were being imported and marketed in the U.S. under the Atlas brand, and we were only able to try a ride, a crash, and a pair of hi-hats. While they had their good points, overall they were not remarkable cymbals.

Well, a lot can happen in six years. The UFIP company has undergone some management changes and a subsequent change of direction in design and marketing. They've expanded their lines in response to contemporary musical needs, and they now feel ready to enter the world cymbal market as a significant contender under their own brand name.

Background

UFIP cymbals are made in Italy, according to a combination of centuries-old techniques and fairly modern industrial methods. The fundamental difference between UFIP cymbals and those of other brands is that UFIPs are "rotocast." In this process, molten metal is poured into a rotating mold—after which pressure is applied to give the cymbals their basic shape. Hammering and lathing techniques are then used to finish the cymbals—in much the same way that those of other companies are finished.

The rotocasting process gives UFIP cymbals acoustic characteristics that really do differentiate them from any other

cymbals on the market. Of course, whether that difference is positive or negative is in the ear of the beholder, but it at least gives the company something viable to talk about in their marketing efforts.

One general characteristic of UFIP cymbals that is worthy of particular note is that they seem a little bit thinner—model for model—than comparable cymbals from any other manufacturer. That is to say, even the heaviest crash cymbal in their *Rough* series (specifically targeted at hard rock players) would be thinner than the average rock crash from any other brand. I questioned the folks at UFIP as to whether this tendency toward thinness in their cymbals might compromise the cymbals' durability. Alex Mühlbauer, one of the managing directors of the company, responded by saying that "the rotocasting process allows us to make some of the strongest cymbals in the world. We can make [them] thinner than anybody else, and still they will last longer."

That's a lofty claim, but the company backs it up with one of the most liberal return policies in the industry. And I'm told that in Europe, where UFIP cymbals currently have their largest market, the return rate is extremely low. (Alex goes on to point out, quite rightly, that *any* brand of cymbal is subject to breakage if the cymbal is abused—or improperly selected in the first place. He believes that many drummers tend to buy thinner cymbals than they really need, based on the mystique regarding certain cymbals created by advertising, and the unwillingness or inability of dealers to steer the customer toward more appropriate models.)

Another design aspect that sets UFIP cymbals apart from other brands is their profile. A quick look at the hole in any UFIP cymbal reveals that the cymbal is much thicker at the top of the bell than at the edge. According to the company, their cymbal profile tapers evenly to the rim, in order to maintain a "truly symmetrical curvature, perfect balance, and, consequently, phenomenal sound quality." Another lofty claim. But the concept of starting out thick at the top and thinning out toward the edge is historic; it goes

along with the design of church bells—which are certainly known for their power, sustain, and sonority.

Classification

UFIP has a very unique attitude toward classifying their cymbals as to model types: They don't like to do it. Since each of their cymbals is hand-made (by the same craftsman, from start to finish, rather than on any sort of assembly line), they feel that each one is individual, and must be listened to in order to be evaluated as to its appropriate use. To quote from their flyer: "We believe that the labeling of a cymbal such as "thin crash" or "medium crash" to be both limiting and misleading. For us, a crash is a crash and a ride is a ride, regardless of whether it sounds short, long, high, low, light, or dark. Drummers should decide for themselves, free of the influences by a subjective classification from the manufacturer."

With this in mind, UFIP employs only the most rudimentary classifications: ride, crash, hi-hats, splash, and special effects. And within these, they use what they call their Sound Character System to help the drummer sort things out just a bit more. They imprint the size and weight (in grams) on the underside of each cymbal. So if you're looking for a heavy crash cymbal, you can quickly sort through the selection of crashes to find the weight range you're looking for. Generally speaking, heavier crash cymbals will sound louder and harder, with a higher pitch than their lighter counterparts. Lighter crashes will be quieter and softer, and will often possess a faster crash response. With rides, heavier cymbals generally offer drier sounds, with more "ping" and less "ring" and "wash," while lighter rides reverse that. (UFIP's *Class* series takes the sorting process one step further, which I'll explain a bit later.)

At the moment, UFIP offers three production series—*Class*, *Natural*, and *Rough*—and one esoteric one: *Experience*. This last series isn't really a regular series at all. When UFIP works with an artist or other customer to produce a cus-

tom-made cymbal, a few prototypes and a few finished models are produced. These become available to the public under the *Experience* series label, but only as long as those few individual cymbals last. This being the case, we did not receive any *Experience* cymbals to review, since any that we might try could very well be off the market tomorrow. On the other hand, UFIP generously provided us with one of *every other cymbal they make!* So we had over 120 cymbals to test.

Class Series

You might say that the *Class* series is UFIP's "basic" series, in that it should offer something to just about everybody, and is the most versatile of the production series. The cymbals are lathed top and bottom—with minimal hammer marks—and feature a gleaming natural finish. They are given no wax or lacquer coating.

The additional classification system I mentioned earlier comes into play with the *Class* series, due to the fact that it offers the widest frequency range. In addition to the size and weight marking, *Class* series crash cymbals also receive a mark defining their pitch as H (high), M (medium), or L (low). Ride cymbals receive the same marks, but in this case they mean heavy, medium, or light weight.

The size range in this series is quite extensive: splashes run in one-inch increments from 8" up to 12" (with China splashes from 10" to 13"), crashes run from 12" up to 20" (no 19"), a sub-line of Fast Crashes runs from 13" to 18", rides are 18", 20", and 22", Fast Chinas are 16", 18", and 20", and hi-hats are available in a variety of models from 12" to 15".

If you like thin splash cymbals, you'll love UFIP's *Class* splashes and China



splashes. Just don't plan on whacking them on an arena stage with the butt end of a *2B* stick. I could bend the 8" splash between my thumb and forefinger with no problem. But oh, what a lovely, delicate sound it created! Naturally, a cymbal this small and thin has a volume threshold; that's why UFIP makes them up to 12" in diameter. If you need more splash projection, get a bigger cymbal. The China splashes feature very deep, flat-topped cups and give a trashy, throaty splash character quite different from the traditional splash cymbals.

The standard *Class* crashes were clear, crisp, and clean—with a respectable amount of body underneath. With three thickness ranges to choose from, I didn't have any problem finding cymbals to fit almost any pitch or volume requirements. I did find, however, that inch for inch, they didn't have quite as much sustain as some other brands I've tried. Some drummers might appreciate this reasonably quick decay; others who wouldn't could deal with this characteristic by going up one inch in diameter over what they would normally use in any given situation. All in all, the crashes were quite

musical and versatile.

The *Class* Fast Crashes were especially nice. These are extremely thin cymbals formed with a slightly flanged edge. They really fill the gap between splash and crash cymbals, giving incredibly sensitive "crash response" even at low impact. If you've ever tried to get a "crash" sound out of a 16" thin crash with a brush, you know that you just can't set the metal into enough motion for the cymbal to open up. But the *Class* Fast Crashes respond fully if you *breathe* on them! And yet, their volume is completely controlled. They'll go only so loud and no louder—making them excellent choices for low-volume live gigs, or for studio work where you want the benefit of a full-sounding crash without too loud an explosion or a lasting ring. The Fast Chinas offered essentially the same performance characteristics, but with the deeper, trashier tonality you'd expect from a China cymbal.

The *Class* rides tended to fall into a position between the glassy shimmer of some Paiste cymbals and the full-bodied range of Zildjian or Sabian cymbals. I found them just a little dry for my per-

sonal taste, but I like a little more "shimmer" (some call it "wash" on a lower-pitched cymbal) than most people do these days. Stick definition was very clear and precise—more so on the heavier cymbals, naturally. But at no time did even the light ride begin to "get away from me" or develop a roar. Projection was excellent, yet there was a certain "controlled bigness" that prevented the sound from overpowering the music. My band members commented on how much they liked this feature.

I think UFIP's hi-hats are among their best cymbals, and the *Class* series hi-hats really illustrate this. They are extremely crisp and cutting, and offer excellent stick sound along with a good, strong "chick." They're offered in Regular, Heavy, Wave, and *Natural/Class* mix versions, and their range of sizes should provide plenty of sound choices for both primary and remote hi-hat applications. My personal favorite was the 13" Wave set; it was quick, solid, and very musical.

Natural Series

The dark surface of UFIP's *Natural* series cymbals might lead you to think that they were heavy, rock cymbals. And while they do bear a certain resemblance to Paiste's *Rude* line or Zildjian's *Earth* ride, you'd actually be off the mark. The cymbals are not heavy, they are lathed top and bottom, and the dark surface is only on the top. It's the result of a special tempering process that, according to UFIP, "succeeds in reducing surface tension in a way that naturally occurs over a period of some ten years." In other words, these cymbals are designed to sound—today—as though they had been mellowed by use for a decade. As a result, they sound darker, dryer, and warmer than their counterparts in the *Class* series. But they don't lack for strength or projection. As a matter of fact, they pretty much parallel the performance of the *Class* cymbals in that regard—albeit in a different tonality range. So although one might think *Natural* cymbals would appeal mostly to jazz drummers, they really would be appropriate for anyone who appreciates the char-

acter inherent in a "vintage-style" cymbal.

A good deal more limited than the *Class* series, the *Natural* series includes 10" and 12" splashes, 12", 14", 15", 16", 18", and 20" crashes, 18" and 20" standard and flat rides (and an additional 22" standard ride), 16", 18", and 20" Fast Chinas, and 12", 13", and 14" hi-hats in Regular, Heavy, and *Natural/Class* mix versions.

Rough Series

Rough cymbals are UFIP's rock series. They're specifically designed to concentrate their frequency response in the mid range for maximum cutting power. This is achieved by giving the cymbals "a microfine fluting process that is almost invisible on the cymbal." The cymbals also are "dressed with an unusually large hammer and a specified strengthened hammering procedure to control the fundamental tones." All this highfalutin' terminology means that UFIP's object is to create a powerful cymbal that is still musical.

I think that object has been achieved—particularly with the crash cymbals. When my band got up into the higher volume range in the third and fourth sets of a high-energy club gig, I swapped the *Class* crashes for *Rough* models in the same sizes. I was impressed at how much more explosive and penetrating they were—without losing the spread and shimmer that I like in a crash. In other words, they weren't "plate-y," "gong-y," or one-dimensional, as some rock crashes can be. And they were unusually responsive for rock cymbals; I didn't have to beat them to death

to get them to speak out. Similarly, the *Rough* ride cymbals produced a very clear and distinct stick attack, but were not as dry as some other heavy rides I've tried; there was still a bit of silvery "shimmer" produced by the lathing. Bell sounds were strong and melodic.

Hi-hats, splashes, and Chinas in this series all bore out the basic premise: They sounded clear, powerful, and musical—and were eminently playable, even at high volumes. Kudos once again to the hi-hats in particular; UFIP seems to have a real knack for creating excellent cymbals for this purpose.

The *Rough* series includes 10" and 12" splashes, 12", 14", 15", 16", 18", and 20" crashes, 18" and 20" standard and flat rides (and an additional 22" standard ride), 16", 18", and 20" Chinas, and 12", 13", and 14" hi-hats in Heavy, Wave, and *Natural/Rough* mix versions.

Prices

UFIP cymbals are a pro-quality line, and they're imported from Italy—so they're not cheap. But they are priced competitively, and—since they offer a legitimate acoustic alternative to anything on the market—they are worthy of your consideration. We reviewed too many cymbals to price them all here, so the prices for representative models are shown below (Prices were accurate at press time; a 5% increase may go into effect January 1, 1993). For further information, contact the U.S. distributor, Drum Partner, at 7722 Talbert Ave., Unit A, Huntington Beach, CA 92648, tel: (714) 848-4364, fax: (714) 848-0674.

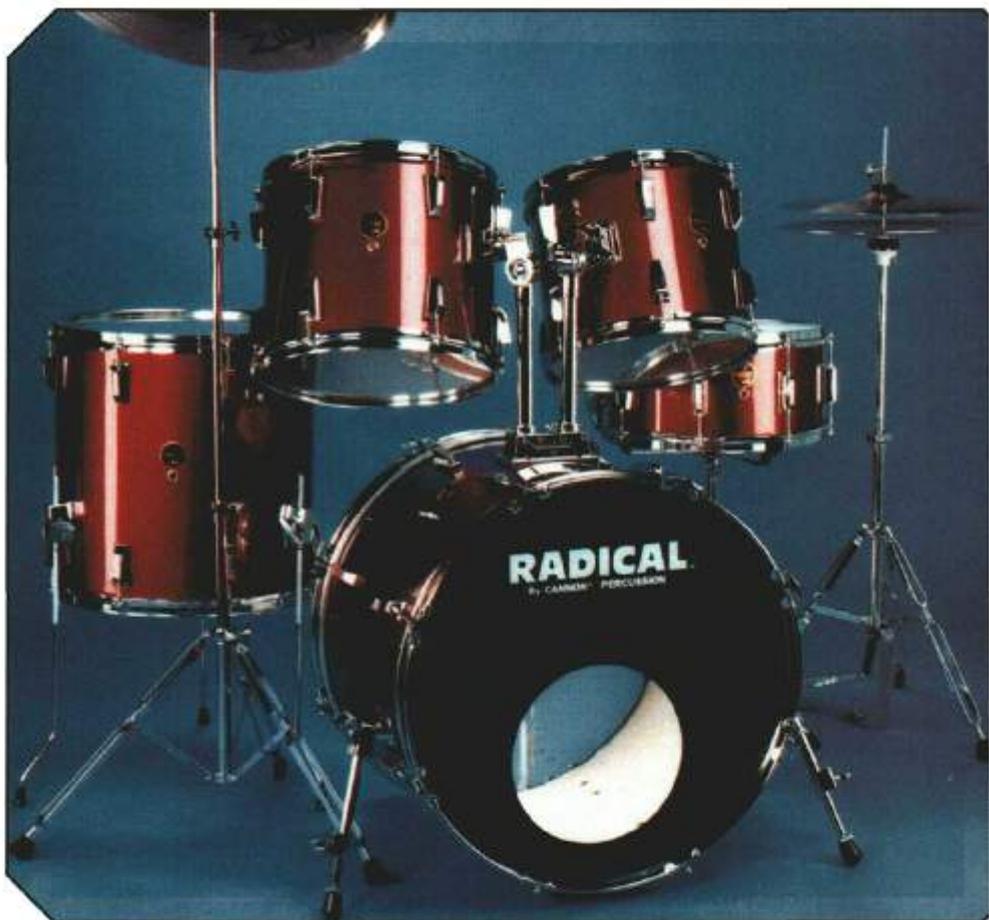
Model	Class Series	Natural and Rough Series
10" Splash	\$117	\$108
12" Splash or Crash	\$143	\$135
14" Crash	\$188	\$186
16" Crash	\$230	\$226
18" Crash or Ride	\$262	\$256
20" Crash or Ride	\$317	\$309
18" China	\$314	\$306
20" China	\$381	\$371
13" Regular or Heavy Hi-hats	\$335	\$325
13" Wave Hi-hats	\$380	\$358
14" Regular or Heavy Hi-hats	\$345	\$370
14" Wave Hi-hats	\$412	\$408

Cannon Radical Drumkit

■ by Brian Alpert

Budget drumsets have come and gone over the years. Although some manufacturers have gone on to produce world-class drums, most are in business to provide an inexpensive alternative to people who don't need an expensive instrument or who are unable to afford one. Cannon Percussion's *Radical* kit is an attempt to transcend the notion of the cheap, "disposable" drumkit. Supposedly designed "by drummers for drummers," Cannon claims that the *Radical* kit offers quite a bit more—of everything—for quite a bit less money. Some of these claims hold water, others don't. In saying this, it is important to emphasize that beneath its expensive-looking, glossy exterior, the *Radical* is still a budget kit. One should not purchase it with the expectation that one has outwitted the local Sonor salesman.

Of course, the kit's most appealing feature is its cost. The suggested retail price for a five-piece set (with limited hardware, and no cymbals, throne, or cases) is around \$700. Given the competitive nature of instrument retailing, it should be available for significantly less. One item worth mentioning: Cannon's distributor, Universal Percussion, claims that the *Radical* kit is "specially packed to prevent damage in shipping." Apparently, shipping damage is a big problem with inexpensive drums. The entire kit came in two medium-large boxes, and was, indeed, very intelligently packed; no damaged items were found. That said, let's consider the instrument in the context of the manufacturer's other claims, starting with the shells.



Design

All five shells are covered with glossy plastic. The review set was black, and looked fine; the drums are also available in red. The manufacturer describes the shells as being made of "9-ply hardwood," coated on the inside with a "special tone coating" that "keeps out moisture and provides excellent tone." The coating is a brown/black/white fibrous substance. I was puzzled by the fact that the shells don't *look* like hardwood shells. And if they *are* actual 9-ply hardwood shells, why is it necessary to add a synthetic coating to the insides of the shells?

A check with Tom Shelley of Universal Percussion revealed that these shells are identical to those supplied to many other brand names in this market. They are described by their Taiwanese manufacturer as being "nine-ply mahogany hardwood." Because Tom found the shells lacking in projection and cosmetically

unattractive (due to the vertical grain structure and dull finish of the inner ply), he opted to add the "tone coating" to improve both the sound and look of the drums.

As far as their being "nine-ply hardwood," it's possible that the definition of "plywood" allows for the use of filler plies made of other materials without having to change the basic name of the plywood. So even though my close examination of the shells indicated that they were made of alternating layers of thin wood and a sawdust/resin composite material, if the wood itself was, in fact, mahogany, then I suppose calling the shells "9-ply hardwood" is at least justifiable—if not scientifically accurate. (I'm not faulting Universal Percussion here; none of the other companies who import these shells go out of their way to describe them in exact detail, either.)

Regardless of one's feelings towards

truth in advertising, the bottom line is that *whatever* these drums are made of, they are solidly constructed and reasonably round (I did have a hard time getting one floor tom head on), and they sound...okay. They're not the most resonant, powerful, richly toned drums on the market, but they met my expectations; I was able to tension them to sound good. I have no reason to believe that the cost-conscious drum consumer would be disappointed.

All *Radical* drums come with clear heads (not Remo or Evans, but of reasonable quality), except for the snare, which came with a coated batter head, and the kick drum, which has a very nice, opaque front head with a 10" pre-cut hole. In keeping with modern tastes, the drums are dimensioned as "power" shells: The kick is 16x22, rack toms are 10x12 and 12x13, the floor tom is 16x16, and the 8-lug wood snare drum is a slightly deep 6½x14. Concert toms (8" and 10" diameters) are available, as well as a 16x18 floor tom. (This is *not* the case with many other kits in this price range.) The lug casings are attractive and sufficiently strong—if not the heaviest on the market. They have a Ludwig-like striped design, and many of them needed a bit of tightening up against the shell. The rims are pressed steel and functional. Their fairly light weight is consistent with the cost-limiting nature of the whole kit design.

All the drums have air holes, finished with lightweight grommets that don't reach all the way through the shell to fasten on the other side. They go about half way, and it's hard to say how long they will stay in place. The Cannon nameplate is black and gold, and each is stamped with a serial number. This is part of the "designed by drummers" package, ostensibly for insurance purposes, and it's a thoughtful detail. Personally, I'd trade the serial numbers for a full grommet, but a salesman can proudly point out the "professional" serial number, while no one is likely to notice the halfway grommet.

The snare drum is single-lugged, and has an attractive *Radio King* look. The

strainer mechanism is a simple arrangement—again, not the heaviest, but functional and sufficient. The snare butt is lightweight; it should be tightened carefully. The drum comes with standard, 16-wire snares. I had some difficulty getting it to sound "alive," but ultimately it produced a decent sound. It was nice to see a wood-shell drum, instead of the untunable metal snare drum usually found on budget kits. Thankfully, there are no internal mufflers on any of the drums. Instead, the set comes with five externally attached ones of good quality. Perhaps this is another reflection of the assertion that the kit was designed by drummers.

Hardware

The *Radical* hardware has a sort of split personality. It must be separated into two categories: heavy and light. Heavy items include the tom-tom mounts and bass drum spurs. Traditionally, this is where inexpensive drumsets fail. But these pieces are quite good, and should do the job for a long time. The rack-tom mounts are a standard design—two ratchet-adjustable L-bars. The two separate bars are less convenient than single-post designs, but they are sturdy and they work. I don't love the fact that they must be tightened with a drum key (rather than by means of heavy wing nuts); perhaps this is another cost-cutting measure. The floor tom leg mounts and bass drum spurs are in the "heavy" category, and do have wing nuts. The spurs are actually very nice, and did a good job holding the kit in place on a tile floor with no rug. (*Don't* try this if you [or your parents!] care about the tile floor.)

The bass drum pedal is in the middle of the hardware "split." It's not very heavy, but it is functional. It has a short chain linkage, and the angle of the stroke is non-adjustable, therefore, it isn't a good pedal for a powerful, experienced, player. But it should do fine for someone who is more concerned with learning than with extreme power-playing.

The "light" hardware includes the snare and cymbal stands, and the hi-hat

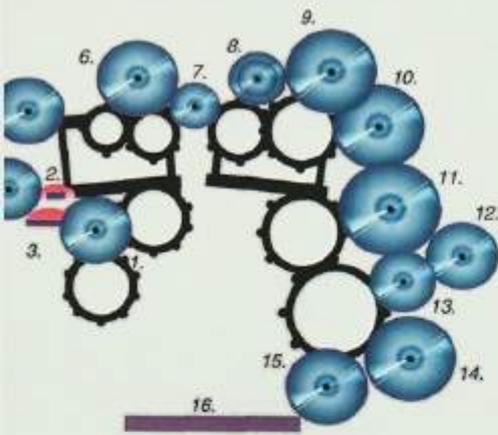
stand. The snare and cymbal stands are lightweight, but not too light to work. The hi-hat stand, however, was too light for me to use—although it would probably be fine for a beginner, or for someone who has a very light foot. Some annoying aspects of these stands include very thin rubber where the snare drum rests on that stand, a cymbal tilter that is a very cheap, non-ratcheted, sliding type, and the fact that a bottom hi-hat cymbal wouldn't fit on the hi-hat stand with the felt washer provided. (It was too thick). The hi-hat tended to slide (even on a rug), and although the clutch held its position on the post, it has no ability to "lock" a cymbal; the cymbal will always shake loose eventually. Also, Cannon might have spent a few extra cents on a clamp for the hi-hat height adjustment (there was none), which is *always* necessary, even for beginners.

Most of the problems I've mentioned are fairly typical of hardware on budget kits, and Tom Shelley is the first to admit that he had to make some compromises in this area in order to keep the quality of the drums as high as possible and still maintain his price point. The stands do have the stability advantage provided by double bracing, which is not common on kits of this nature. In addition, Cannon offers several other lines of affordable hardware that the consumer might employ to upgrade the stuff on this kit—eventually. But there's no reason why a beginner couldn't get by quite well with the *Radical* hardware to start with.

Conclusion

The *Radical* drumset is, by and large, a good effort. Cannon set themselves a very difficult task in attempting to provide a functional, good-sounding, modern-looking, cost-effective instrument, and in many ways, they have succeeded. The verdict on the drums themselves is "thumbs up." The hardware is functional and can be expected to last until it's time to upgrade. Overall, the *Radical* kit is a solid, useful instrument at a reasonable price.





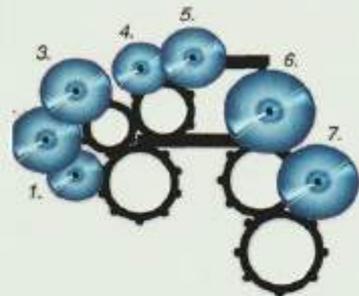
DOANE PERRY

"Strong as a hurricane and light as a feather... like crystal shattering, they cut through electric music like a lathe and acoustic music like a paint-brush. Musical and dynamic, sensual and deep..... Paiste, the heaviest metal."

Favorite recordings

Doane has played on:

- "Farm On The Freeway"
Jethro Tull
- "Rock Island"
Jethro Tull
- "Live At Hammersmith"
Jethro Tull
- "Illustrated Man"; "Theirin Lies
The Dilemma"
Doane Perry
- "The Blue Mask"
Lou Reed



TONY MORALES

"I'm constantly impressed by their crystalline timbre, their euphonious articulation, their ability to vanquish all other frequencies in their path in the quest to reach Homo Sapiens... and boy, are they shiny!"

Favorite recordings

Tony has played on:

- "Weekend In Monaco"
The Rippingtons
- "This Side Up"
David Benoit
- "Snapshots"
Grant Geissman

Cymbal Set-Up:

- 1) 12" Paiste Line Heavy Hi-Hats
- 2) 16" 2002 China
- 3) 16" Paiste Line Mellow Crash
- 4) 12" Paiste Line Splash
- 5) 14" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 6) 20" Paiste Line Dry Ride
- 7) 18" Paiste Line Fast Crash

Cymbal Set-Up:

- 1) 15" Paiste Line Power Hi-Hats
- 2) No.2 Cup Chime-Bottom/No.5 Cup Chime-Top(Upside Down)
- 3) No.4 Cup Chime-Bottom/No.7 Cup Chime-Top(Upside Down)
- 4) 14" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 5) 16" Paiste Line Thin China
- 6) 18" Paiste Line Power Crash
- 7) 10" Paiste Line Splash
- 8) 12" Paiste Line Splash/8" Paiste Line Splash on top(Upside Down)
- 9) 20" Paiste Line Power Crash
- 10) 20" Paiste Line Thin China
- 11) 22" Paiste Line Power Ride
- 12) 16" Paiste Line Power Crash
- 13) 14" Paiste Line Power Hi-Hats
- 14) 20" Paiste Line Flatride
- 15) 18" Paiste Line Thin China
- 16) 36" Paiste Symphonic Gong

STU NEVITT

"Cymbals play a very important role in both my personal sound and that of Shadowfax. Paiste cymbals offer a great diversity of sounds and respond exceptionally well over a broad range of dynamics."

Favorite recordings

Stu has played on:

- "The Dreams Of Children"
Shadowfax
- "Shadowdance"
Shadowfax
- "Mistreated Woman"
Margie Evans

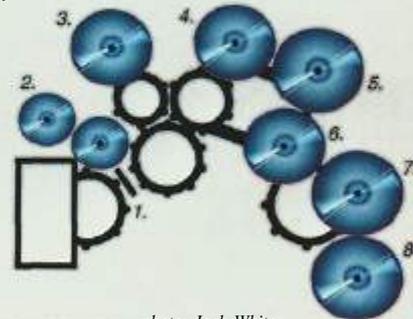


photo: Jack White



Steve, Doane, Stu, Tony

Los Angeles

Artist Series

STEVE REID

"Paiste Cymbals and Gongs have always been an integral part of my musical expression. Paiste's dedication to the needs of the total percussionist sets them far above the competition."

Favorite recordings

Steve has played on:

- "Tourist In Paradise"
The Rippingtons
- "Tutu"
Miles Davis
- "Free As A Bird"
Supertramp

Favorite tours:

- Supertramp 1988
- Dave Koz
- The Rippingtons



Cymbal Set-Up:

- 1) 26" Sound Creation #3 Gong
- 2) 10" Paiste Line Splash
- 3) 12" Paiste Line Splash
- 4) 14" Sound Formula Thin Crash
- 5) 16" Sound Formula Thin Crash
- 6) 16" 2000 Mellow China
- 7) Finger Cymbal Row

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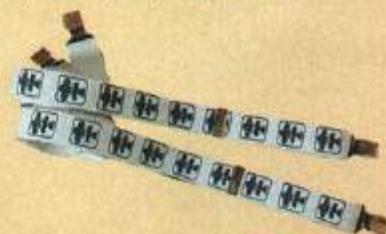
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Kaman Intruder Bass Pedals



According to the makers, Kaman's new *Intruder* single and double bass drum pedals were designed for the touring professional drummer. The new pedals feature an easy-change, dual-chain sprocket system, Kaman's new dual-surface (wood and felt) beater, an adjustable beater shaft weight, a new spring with an S-hook clip and an independent bearing mechanism (as opposed to a fixed pin), stabilizer plates said to eliminate heel "hop," hardened steel beater shafts, and a smaller and lighter pedal board. *Intruder* single pedals also feature adjustable pedal board height and beater swing adjustments that don't affect spring tension. Kaman has also updated its 7200 and 9200 pedals, including the introduction of their new 9511DBL left-play double pedal. **Kaman Music Corporation, Attn: Gibraltar Hardware, P.O. Box 507, Bloomfield, CT 06002.**

Remo Correction

In the November '92 *New And Notable* entry for *Remo Paddle* and *Ocean* drums, we incorrectly listed their toll-free phone number. The actual number is **(800) S52-DRUM**. Strangely enough, those who called the incorrect number *were* connected with a drum-making company. Unfortunately, *that* company's drums—55-gallon steel drums used for industrial liquid storage—proved a bit impractical for most of our readers to lug from gig to gig.

Regal Tip Clayton Cameron Drumbrush



New to Calato's Regal Tip line, the *Clayton Cameron Drumbrush* features a rubber handle, a non-telescoping wire brush, a nylon cap, and a stainless-steel rivet on the butt end. Calato says that these new additions provide a hard surface that enables the Drumbrush to be used for backbeats, tom fills, cymbal crashes, and cross-stick sounds. Cameron says that this new brush will enable drummers to change from brush to stick sounds more quickly. **J.D. Calato/Regal Tip, 4501 Hyde Park Blvd., Niagara Falls, NY 14305, tel: (716) 285-3546, fax: (716) 285-2710.**

GripStix

GripStix are hickory drumsticks that come with a wrapping of *polyolefin* heat-shrunk onto the sticks' grip area. According to the makers, GripStix improve stick control, absorb shock, and provide a non-slip grip, and the grips themselves will not come off under normal playing conditions. Each pair is hand-matched, and the butt end of the sticks is exposed.

GripStix are available in 5A, 5B, 2B, and 3A sizes, with grip colors available in red, black, blue, and clear. **GripStix, P.O. Box 2186, Spartanburg, SC 29304, (800) 743-2638.**



Mapex Lacquered Mars Drumsets



Mapex's new *M5XMars Professional* drumkit features lacquered shells, which, the company claims, offer the projection and tone of "the natural sound of wood" at a low cost. Drum sizes include a 16x22 bass drum, 10x12 and 11x13 toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 6½x14 seamless chrome snare drum. All shells are equipped with two-point contact, full-length lugs and are made of 9-ply mahogany with an inner maple ply. Standard single-braced hardware includes a hi-hat and bass drum pedal with smaller, smoother links than those found on previous *Mars* kits. Double-braced hardware is also available, and kits now come in candy apple red, cobalt candy blue, slate blue, "pearlescent" white, and jet black lacquer colors. **Mapex Percussion, c/o the Gibson Guitar Company, 1818 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210.**

Expanded Zildjian K Dark Crashes

Zildjian has expanded their line of K Dark Crashes, now offering them in thin and medium thin weights. The K Dark Crash Thin is available in 14" through 20" sizes, and the K Dark Crash Medium Thin comes 16" to 19" in size. According to Zildjian, their new rotary hearth has enabled the line to be made thinner without losing its characteristic dark, warm "K" sound. Zildjian describes the K Dark Crash Thin line as producing a bright initial attack, low-pitched overtones, and mellow sustain. The Medium Thins are slightly heavier, providing more high-end response in the initial attack. **Avedis Zildjian Company, Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA 02061.**

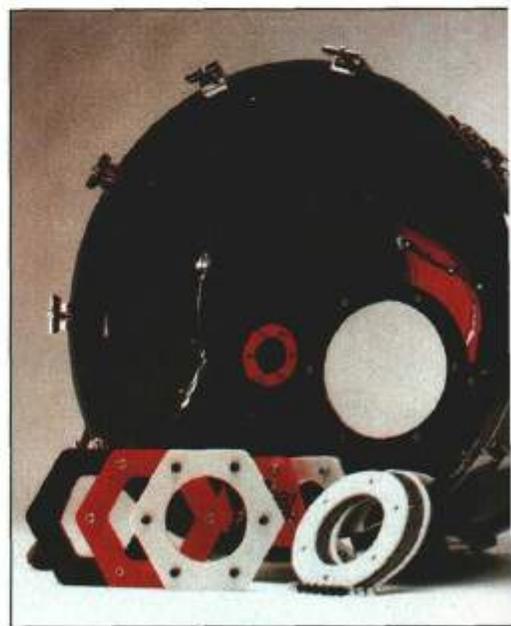
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In addition to their traditional vulcanized fibreboard construction, PRO TEC's new *Deluxe PRO PAC* drum cases also feature interiors lined with tough black *ozite* carpeting and exteriors covered with water-resistant nylon MATT fabric. In addition, the new *Deluxe PRO PAC* cases include "easy" clip buckles and padded carrying handles. **PRO TEC, (800) 325-3455 (nationwide), (800) 523-3555 (in California).**

Prime Design Porthole Systems

Prime Design's acrylic *Porthole System* is designed to protect the vent holes on bass drum heads. The system, which comes in red, white, and black (custom colors are also available), is offered with two hardware styles, stainless steel and black. The *Porthole System* consists of two acrylic rings, one felt muffling gasket, six alien head bolts, and six torque-retaining nylon lock nuts and is reusable. According to the makers, the system's heavy-duty design makes it inexpensive in the long term. **Prime Design, P.O. Box 126, Groveland, IL 61535, (800) 832-4833.**



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continued from page 25

sense for a member of Steps Ahead to go out with his own group.

The other thing that made a difference was the personnel. Frank Gambale has been touring with Chick Corea for the last six years, Tom Coster toured with Santana, and Jeff Andrews had been touring with Mike Brecker, Mike Stern, Bob Berg, and Steps Ahead. So as a quartet, we have a lot of name recognition.

RF: You said your playing has improved. How so?

SS: In every way imaginable. My time has gotten a lot better, my understanding of what each type of music needs in order to work, how to play behind a soloist....

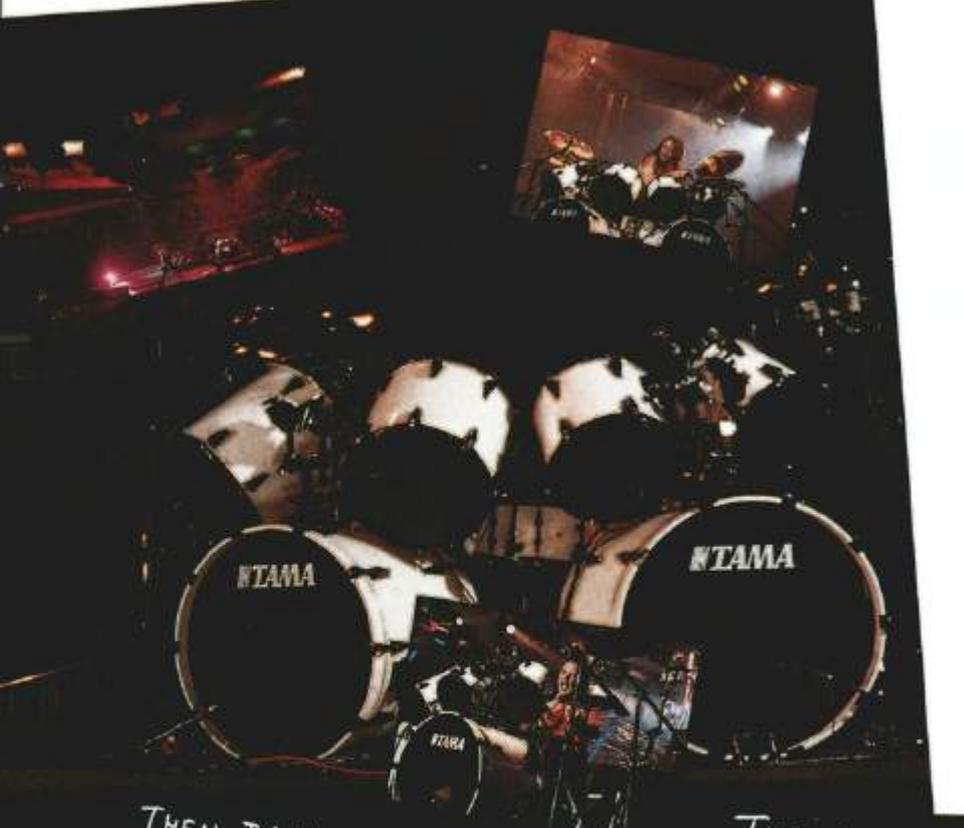
RF: That's an interesting topic. Can you give us some pointers?

SS: There are general rules for playing behind a soloist, and then there are specific ones that depend on each individual that I'm playing with. Basically, it's important to make the time feel as silky smooth as possible, to outline the form, and to listen.

The level of interaction and contribution differs from person to person. Some people just like a smooth time feel without a lot of interplay. There are other people who like a lot of back-and-forth action. That knowledge has to come from playing experience with that person, from finding out where they're at.

RF: Could you get specific about the musicians you are currently working with?

SS: Jeff, for example, enjoys my laying down a good, solid groove. In certain tunes, he likes to have the snares off so the bass doesn't resonate the snares while he's soloing. As the solo builds, he likes more interaction. Tom, for the straight-ahead swing, likes a very loose rhythm section at the beginning—not a lot of stated time, more of a loose, implied time—and as the solo builds, then you come in with straight-ahead locking. He really enjoys a lot of interaction as it develops. With Frank, I notice that my role is a little more supportive throughout. There is some interaction, but I think he sounds best when I'm playing real solid time behind him. It lets



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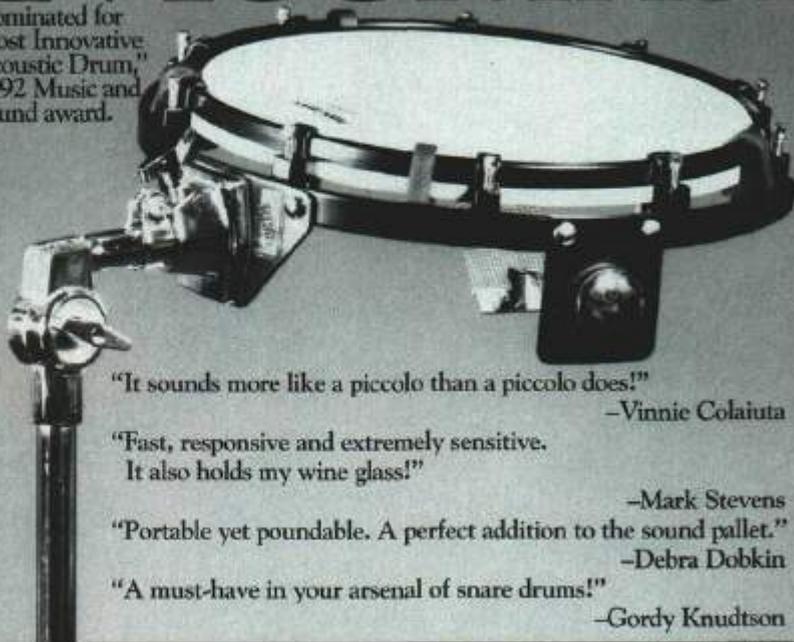
his playing flow over the top. A lot of what he does flows all over the bar line, so I need to be pretty solid.

In Steps, Bendik [Hofseth] likes lots of space behind his soloing. I can actually sometimes lay out at the beginning of his solos or play just a spacious cymbal thing. All of the players like some interaction, obviously, but some more than others. Rachel Z likes a lot of interaction from beginning to end. Mike Mainieri really likes a nice cushion. In fact, Mike got me to change ride cymbals. I had been using a K Custom, and he found it to be too dry for his taste. One day, we were rehearsing in New York, and Colin Schofield from Zildjian happened to be in town. He brought me several ride cymbals and I tried all of them. Mike picked the 20" Pre-Aged K.

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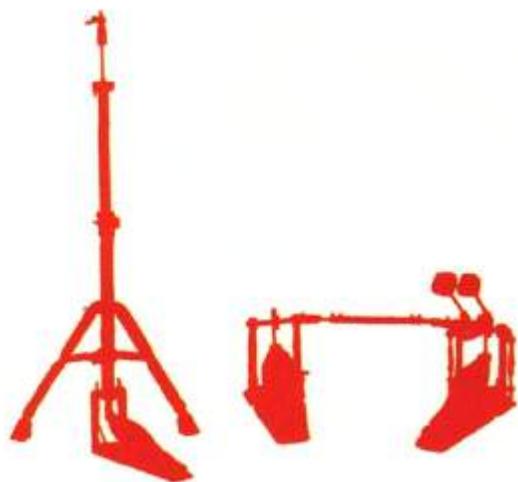
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ple can hear the beat. It has a lot of sustain between the notes. And Mike really likes that sound.

Mike also likes the flat ride with rivets in it, which has the same kind of effect. He likes that seamless, straight-ahead swinging feel. The interaction is there, but it's understated. It's more of just a pulse, which I find is very common with the players from his generation. Most of the great players of that time were less of the highly interactive players, which developed later with Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Jack DeJohnette, and Billy Cobham. But before that, with Buddy Rich and Philly Joe Jones and Papa Jo Jones, the tradition was more solid undertone. I especially enjoy Mike's input, because he is the player with the most experience. Now I use that Pre-Aged K cymbal in most of what I do, and I've developed the touch to play it.

RF: You have to develop a touch to play it?

SS: Yes. What I've noticed is, over the years, the ride cymbal became thicker and less sustained as a reaction to people playing with less touch. They try to find

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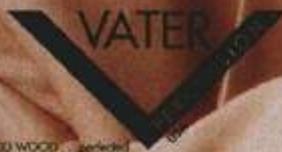
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a cymbal with that clarity built into it, so they don't necessarily have to develop the finesse to get a nice pingy sound. But to get a nice sound like that on a cymbal that has a lot of wash, you have to play it with a lot of touch. So that's been developing in my playing. Zildjian has also come out with the A Custom line, which has much lighter cymbals that sound a lot like the A cymbals that were made twenty or thirty years ago. I've been using them lately, and most people in the studio comment on how great they sound because they're so light and have so much tone to them. It's different from a lot of the heavier cymbals today.

RF: Back to improving yourself. I know you attribute some of it to playing with Steps, but some of it must be because of your own personal woodshedding.

SS: In everything I get involved in—whether it's a recording session or a tour—I find that there are things I need to work on. I'll spend my practice time working on those ideas. Another way is opening myself up to ideas from mentor-type people. I have noticed that throughout my development as a musician, from



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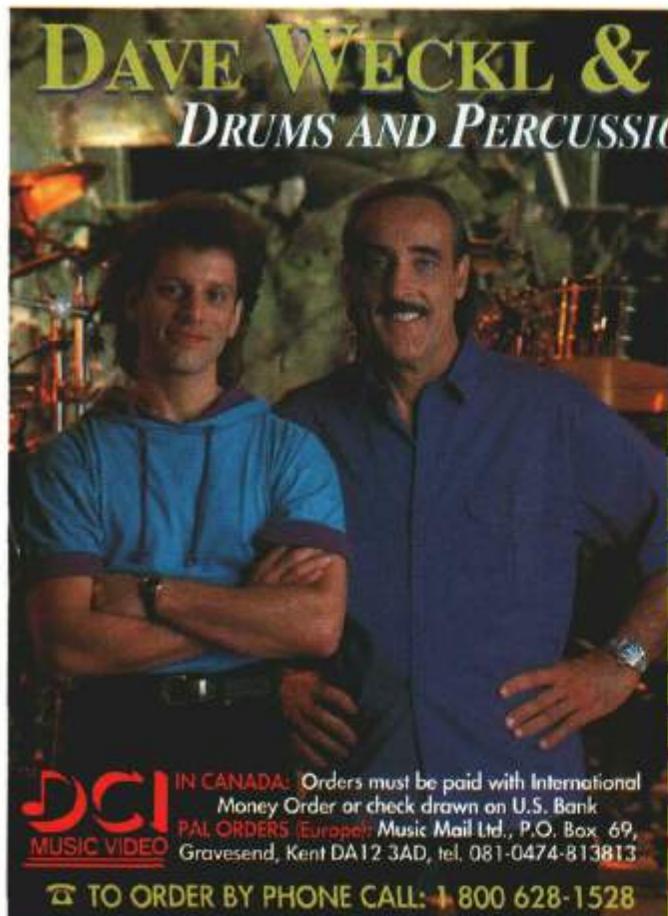
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the time I was nine years old, I've always had people who were mentors, people who really gave me a lot of inspiration—and also, people who really believed in my talent. I find that to be a really important aspect in the development of a player, especially regarding confidence. I notice that people who don't grow up with a mentor-type person sometimes struggle with a level of confidence. I was very lucky that my first drum teacher, Bill Flannigan—an older guy, maybe in

his 60's—gave me the feeling that I was a good drummer and that I had a lot of potential. It was a very fortunate gift that, at nine years old, I had somebody giving me that kind of feedback. It really gave me the inspiration to move forward. So I've noticed that I've been open to that kind of input throughout my life.

One person who has helped me a lot is Jim Chapin. He shows up at a lot of NAMM shows, and every time I see him, we spend hours together talking about

technique. He shows me what he does, and I'll learn that and try to incorporate it into what I'm doing.

Another guy is someone I began studying with two years ago, Fred Gruber. Fred has such an amazing insight into what happens physically and emotionally to a person when they're playing the drums, and how to get the most out of your body—your hands, your arms, your feet—the whole thing. He showed me where, if I continue to use the same technique that I was using in certain areas of my playing, I would run into a stone wall. I could only go so far and then I would stop, because physically I would get in my own way.

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sense, though it seems to have been overlooked through the years.

My wife, Susan, is involved in martial arts and body building. Both of those areas are very codified; they have a lot of organization when it comes to body motion. There are ways of doing things so you don't hurt yourself. You have to understand the way your body moves most efficiently and naturally, and then align with it; you don't want to fight it. I've been reading some of the books she's been reading. She's been studying Kenpo karate at Marin Kenpo, and the father of Kenpo, Ed Parker, has written volumes about that; one's called *Infinite Insights*. It could easily be about drumming instead of karate. I found another great book, *The Warrior Athlete*, by Dan Millman. He's written it to apply to everything physical. It's really improved my drumming to study it and think along these lines.

Another thing about Freddie is, while a lot of teachers have one technique that they've developed to a very high degree, he has the insight to understand that there are so many drum techniques available—more than I know. First, he helped me develop and make more efficient the particular principles I was using. After being with him for a while with that coming together, he opened me up to different techniques that I wasn't using. I've developed a more encyclopedic knowledge of techniques that I can choose from. And it's not that you have to give up one to do another; I just keep adding them all up. Here's a really basic version of that: Some people play matched grip, others play traditional, and other people play *both*. If you ever watch Tony Williams play, he'll switch between the two techniques.

RF: Every time we talk, I am hit with an overwhelming observation. What is it inside of you that makes you constantly motivated to go further?

SS: For one thing, I love the process. One of the things I enjoy about being a drummer is just the process of improving and practicing. I really enjoy practicing.

RF: You're good at what you do. You could just go on doing what you do.

SS: I don't look at it that way. It doesn't feel like that to me. I feel like something

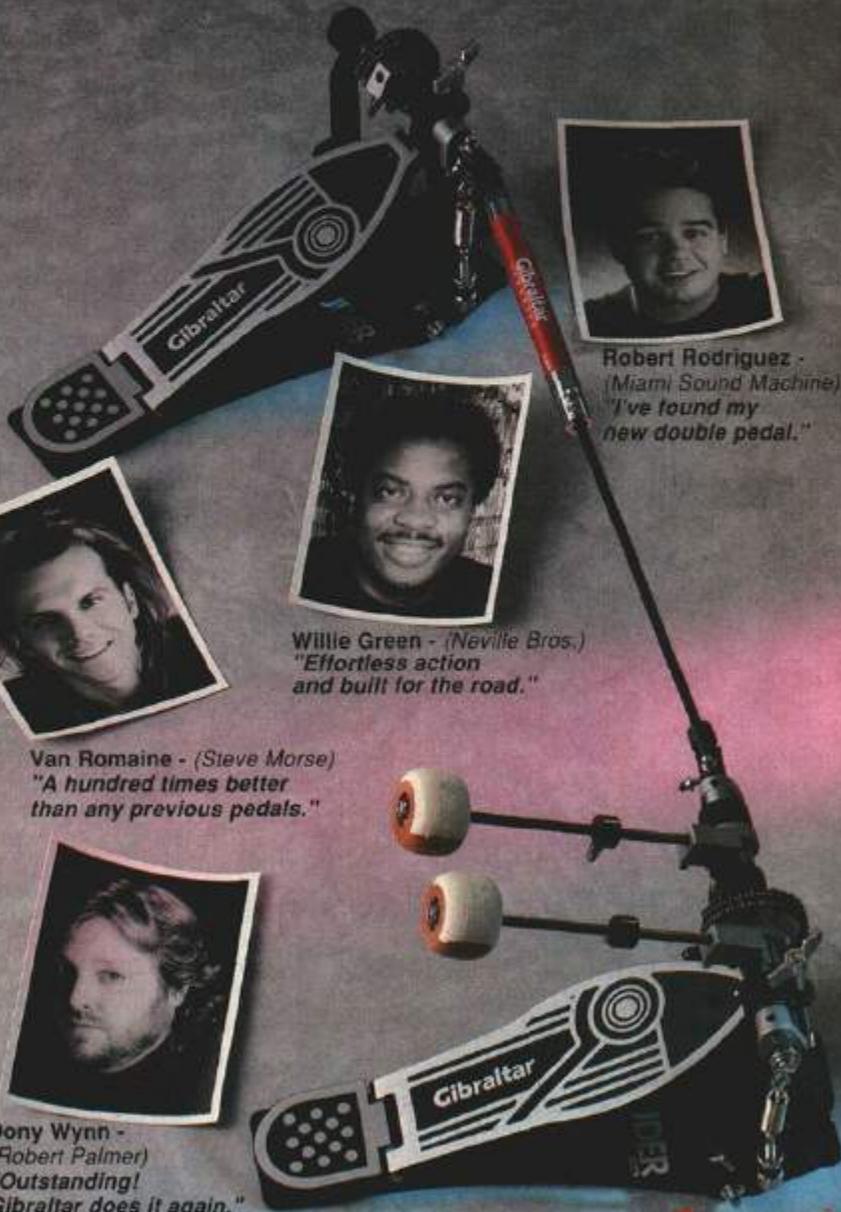
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could definitely be done to make it easier to do what I'm doing. The more that I work on these ideas, the easier it will get, which makes it more enjoyable. And I can play more interesting things. I like that feeling, and I enjoy the process of getting there.

RF: I know so many people who have trouble practicing.

SS: It's not for everybody. It's my way of doing it. And I don't want it to look like all I do is practice. I do the other stuff too, which is play the music. But off stage, I do a lot of work on it as well, just because I like it. It feels good.

RF: Do you ever get practice burnout?

SS: Sometimes, but not very often, because it's not like I practice every single day. There are days where I can't fit it in. I try to do it for a few hours every day, but I have so many ideas in my head that I can't seem to get to them all. But I am aware of practicing past the point of getting any result, too. Just like with weightlifting, you can only do so many reps before lactic acid builds up and you can't lift a thing anymore. You're not going to get anything out of it after that.

It's not that drastic or noticeable with drumming, but there is a point where my control is really diminished and I feel like I'm playing incorrectly. I'm pushing too much, hitting too hard—or I'm just totally fatigued. I'm really just practicing mistakes and it's actually going to keep me from improving. There is a point where the number of hours isn't always the point. It's how efficiently you use your time and how disciplined your practice is so that you get the most out of it.

RF: How *can* you efficiently use your time to practice?

SS: You have to be organized and know what you're going to do, so you're actually building, day to day, on similar ideas. Things don't happen in one-day intervals. They happen over months and years, so there has to be some kind of consistency in your practicing concept so things can develop logically and slowly, and you're giving them the space to do that. One of the things I like to do is practice in front of a mirror so I can always examine the motions and make sure they're efficient. I've been doing that forever.

As far as staying motivated, I've found it very important to find a good teacher. That's what really worked for me. I've always had good teachers, from my original teacher, Bill Flannigan, to Gary Chaffee, Alan Dawson, and now Fred Gruber. And someone who recently re-inspired me was Ed Thigpen. He helped me quite a few years ago, and then recently I spent a week with him over in Germany when I did a one-week artist-in-residence teaching situation with Ed, Terry Bozzio, and Joey Heredia. It was really great and very inspiring. Ed is a master. Terry and I hung out with him quite a bit, and he gave us a lot of insight into the history of drumming, especially about Jo Jones, who was Ed's mentor. That was really educational. And Ed himself is so open. He was asking the three of us all kinds of questions about what we do.

RF: Who were the people you came up emulating?

SS: There wasn't really any one person, which is something I feel good about. I think that's one of the reasons I don't sound like anybody else in particular. I've



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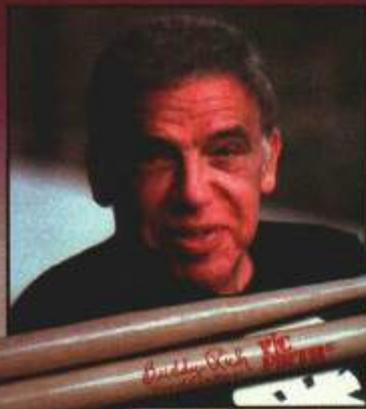


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always been a combination of people, but that list would take up the whole magazine. I've gotten something from everybody I've ever heard. Of course in particular there was Buddy Rich, and the rock drummers of the time—Mitch Mitchell, Ginger Baker, John Bonham. And later I discovered Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes, and Jack DeJohnette. But there are *hundreds* of drummers I've heard who have had an impact on me. Even if I learned what *not* to do from them, it still had an impact on me. I'll pick up little things from someone, and it'll spark something in me that I can develop and make my own.

RF: Why do you think that this is the music that makes your heart beat?

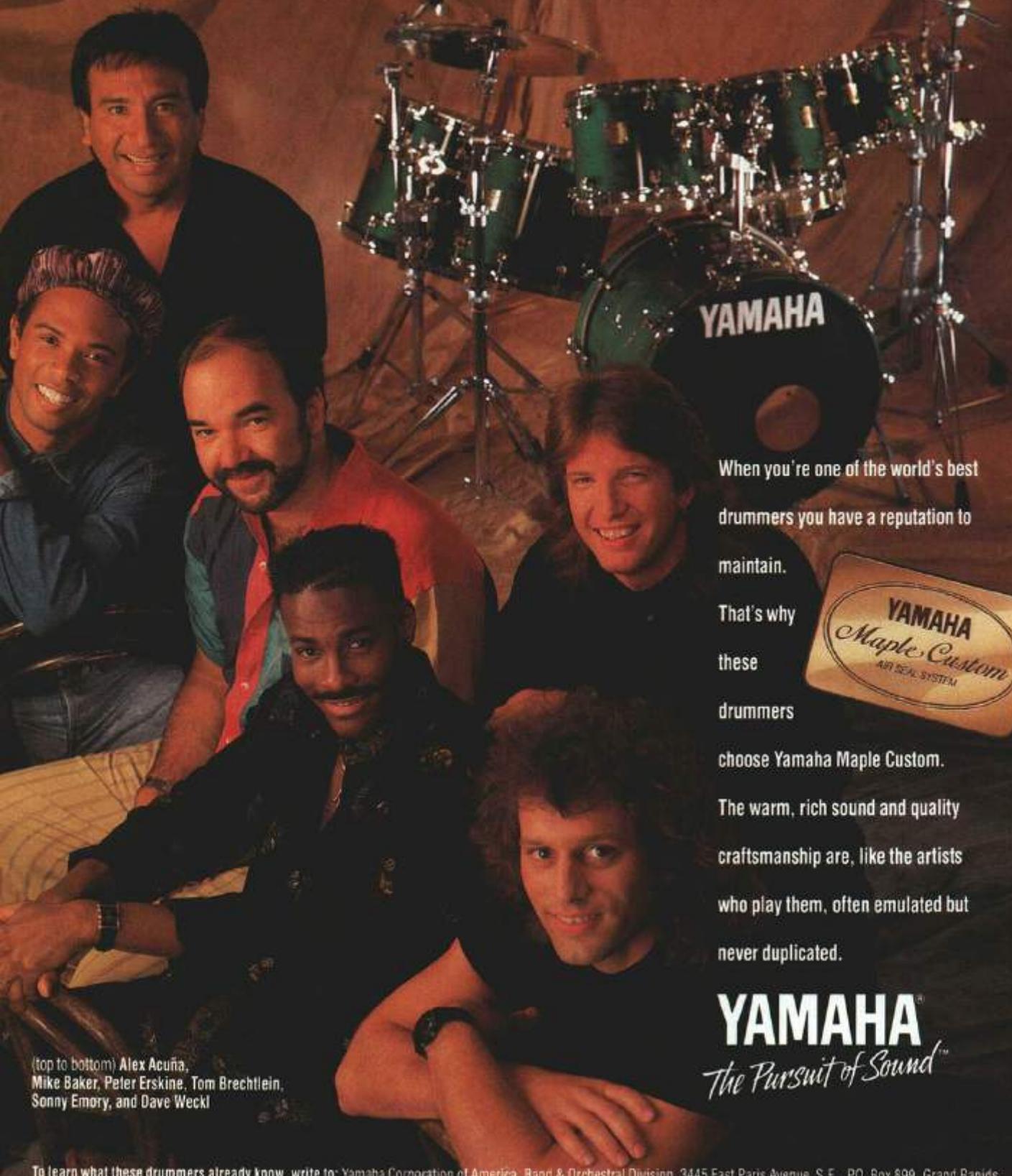
SS: The type of music I've been involved with in the last few years—Vital Information and Steps Ahead—allows me to express a very complete picture of myself. It has elements of rock, funk, electric jazz, and straight-ahead jazz in it, so it is made up of all the things that I enjoy playing.

RF: What do you think your own strengths are?

SS: I'm very consistent from night to night. When I was with Ponty, I was fresh out of Berklee, and I had a very young jazz-student attitude. Ponty was somewhere between rock, jazz, and classical, but I was trying to play the tunes completely different every night. I didn't have the vocabulary or experience to successfully do that, and it wasn't the best thing for the music. I realized that the other guys who were consistent from night to night didn't necessarily play completely different solos each night. In a particular tune, certain licks, certain concepts would work, so they would keep that. I realized that was something I needed to work on, and it was actually with Journey—where the music was so part-oriented—that I developed the ability to play a part, lock into it, and make it happen night after night.

As I got in other groups like Steps Ahead and my own band, that music was in-between again, similar to the Ponty material. The jazz part of the music was the looser, freer part, and the rock part was the more composed part. By really locking in on the composed parts, and by being aware of how far I could go on the

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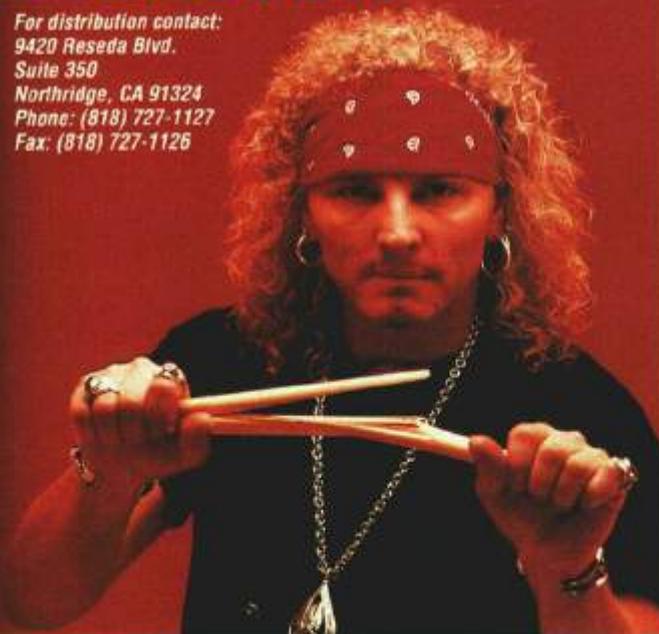
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loose parts before I lost it, I developed the ability to be consistent from night to night, which I realized when Mike Mainieri commented on it.

Another strength is my time. That's something I'm always working on, and now it's at the point where it's very comfortable live, without a click. And with a click or sequencers it also feels very comfortable. It's taken a lot of work, and I've gotten a lot of input from different people, but I can really say it's a strength now.

RF: Does that just come from doing it?

SS: Yes, and I got a lot of help from producer/composer/engineer/keyboard player Jay Oliver. He produced one of my Vital Information records, and he really helped me become aware of how to use dynamics and make the drumming flow easier when playing with a sequencer.

RF: How did he help you?

SS: Jay has such a keen awareness of the technical makeup of a good drum performance. He's aware of the relationship dynamically of each limb. He was able to point out to me what I was doing wrong in a very technical sense, which I appreciated, because I worked with so many producers who would say, "It just doesn't feel right," "It's not rockin' enough," "It isn't swampy enough." But what does that mean? Jay is able to articulate it in technical terms: "You played that ghost note a little too loud before the backbeat, so the backbeat was just a hair late. Then when you came down on the cymbal, it was a little bit in front of your kick drum, so I heard a little flam there, and it made it sound loose next to the machine."

RF: We never finished your strengths.

SS: I learn music quickly. I think that developed through years of being a music reader, for one. That really helps because it allows me to get a mental picture of what the tune is about. And having experience at different types of music, I can learn something quickly. A lot of times I'll write out my own chart so I don't have to spend a lot of time trying to memorize. I'm also good at coming up with parts. That probably was also helped by Journey and working so much on songs. I was always trying to be as creative as I could be in that environment, so I'd always try to come up with signature parts if it would work. I've

learned to use that concept with whatever I'm called on to do.

RF: What would you say are your weaknesses?

SS: The things that I have worked on lately feel more like subtleties than weaknesses, things I'm interested in developing. My inspiration for doing it isn't because I feel inadequate, it's because I have an interest in developing something to a higher degree. It sounds like I'm saying I don't have any weaknesses, which I don't think is true, but there isn't anything staring me in the face.

There are things that I'm developing, and one of the things I'm doing is reading books like Mickey Hart's *Drumming On The Edge Of Magic*, which gives a great history of drumming. I also read the Mel Tormé biography of Buddy Rich, which was very inspiring. Both of those have lead me to spend time in used record stores and to talk to people who have videos of a lot of the older drummers who were the predecessors, people I never got to see live. I'm trying to get a picture of what their contributions were. I'm sort of going *back to move forward*. I don't want to sound like I'm just a product of the last twenty years. I want my playing to sound like I'm rooted in the entire history of drumming in the United States.

The concept of what I am doing is something I call—for lack of a better name—"U.S. ethnic drumming." A couple of things inspired my thinking about that. One was noticing how many American musicians are interested in studying Brazilian and Cuban music. As great as a lot of these players are, I think the ones who are really the best at that are the people who *are from* Brazil or Cuba. It's not just about studying the music, it's an entire cultural thing. You have to live in the environment. I live in the United States, so I really understand *this* music.

Another thing that brought it on was talking with the sax player in Steps, Bendik. There is sometimes a dispute about the music we do. Bendik, being from Norway, has roots in classical music and Norwegian folk music. He really doesn't have jazz roots. It becomes obvious when we play American jazz. But instead of it being a problem, he's just strong in where he's coming from. He's

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a Norwegian. He *sounds* like a Norwegian. And that makes a lot of sense. He uses that background in his compositions and in his playing, and it sounds great. He has a unique approach. And that got me to start looking at what I do. Yes, I play some Latin and Brazilian stuff, but really what I do is the Latin, Brazilian things that have filtered into the United States.

As a drummer, I belong to a family that spans every country in the world, which dates back in history to the origins of civilization. In time, I might be able to shed some boundaries that I feel now and be a true world-beat drummer. But I'm overwhelmed by the richness of the American tradition, let alone Indian, Afro-Cuban, Brazilian, Middle Eastern.... My background is more in the history of drums as it has evolved here in this country—the marching drums, Dixieland, swing, big band, bebop, rock, blues, R&B, avant-garde, heavy metal, and fusion. One of the reasons I feel comfortable playing a lot of different styles is because I don't quite *see* it as a lot of different styles. It's all part of the U.S. style to me.

RF: You actually get to explore many

facets of that "U.S." style with Vital Information. Can we briefly talk about each album?

SS: I like each of them for different reasons. They are all a personal documentation of where I was at that moment. On the first one, *Vital Information*, I used the same drumset—although I had different cymbals—as I had been using in Journey, and I was still in the band at the time. It had kind of the same big Journey sound, so I had yet to develop a different sound drum-wise. We did everything as a group live in the studio, with first and second takes. I was really craving that experience.

The second record, *Orion*, was kind of a transition, where half the record was with the rock drumset—even incorporating some Simmons drums with it—and the other half was on a little jazz set. I still hadn't come up with a new drum configuration to incorporate both worlds. It was like black and white. Most of it was also done with live tracking.

On the third record, *Global Beat*, I really started developing a new sound and identity for myself. I used a new configuration drum-wise, with smaller bass drums and generally a smaller drumset.

It focused on the world beat rhythm thing I was really into at the time.

The *Fiafiaga (Celebration)* record was the one co-produced by Jay Oliver, and it has a lot of computer technology and more funk- and jazz-oriented music with some world-beat music. It's more of a produced record.

The *Vitalive!* record was purely to document the live performance. We were constantly hearing, "We like your records, but it's nothing like the live experience."

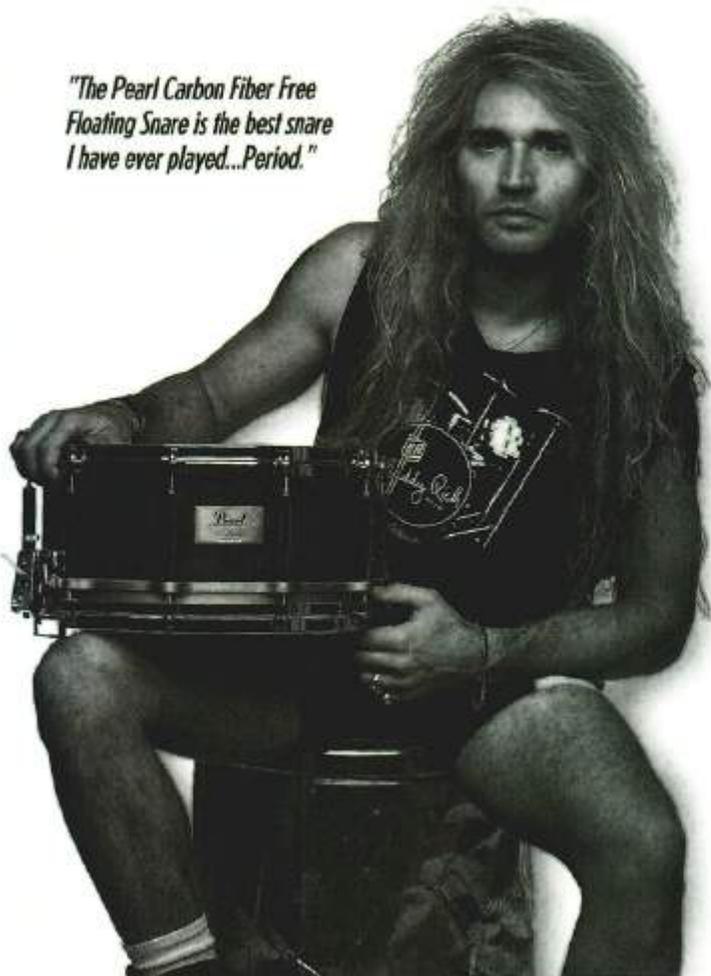
RF: Let's talk about this current album, *Easier Done Than Said*. There's one song that knocks me out every time I hear it. It's the one where you just play brushes.

SS: That's "I Remember." It's the only tune on the record that I completely wrote. I'm playing what I feel is the right thing for that tune, which has a kind of Brazilian feeling. To me, the writing style has a lot of Tom Coster's personality on it. It was a great vehicle for him to play and improvise.

RF: Tell us more about the tracks.

SS: The idea behind the first one, "Snap Out Of It," was from the very first Billy Cobham record, *Spectrum*, which I

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always loved. He had a tune called "Quadrant 4" that had that kind of real fast double bass drum shuffle. I always wanted to play that, and I had never actually recorded anything with that feel. I sat down with Tim Landers and Bob Marlette, and we came up with that tune in about an hour. That's a great opening tune live. It's really exciting.

RF: You do a couple of solos on the record.

SS: There's one unaccompanied solo on the second side, on the title track. That's an excerpt of a piece of music Gary Chaffee and I recorded called "Seventh Heaven," which Gary wrote for two drumsets. It was very challenging music. It's rhythmically very difficult, with a lot of odd groupings and metric modulations. He wrote out each drum part—tom-tom, snare drum, bass drum—and there are improvised sections as well. That's one of the drum solos in the piece. I extracted it because I really liked how it worked as a segue between two of the tunes. The Gary Chaffee thing is available from CPP Belwin. The package has two copies of the sheet music and a cassette of our performance.

The only other drum solo is on the tune "Step Aside." That's a great tune that Tim Landers wrote, and the ending has a drum solo. I was sort of thinking a bit in terms of a Tony Williams concept on that. That's another great tune to play live.

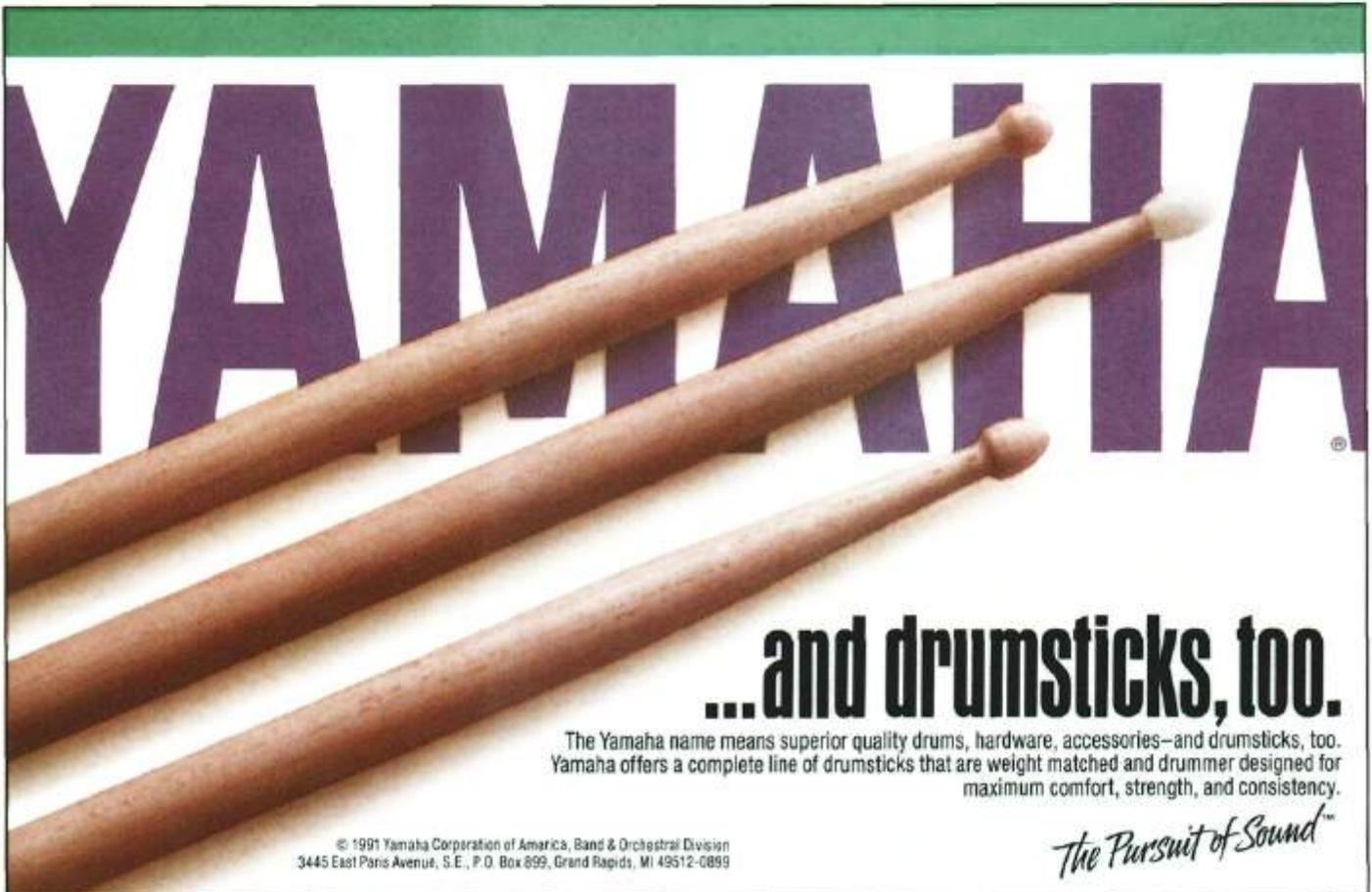
The second and third tunes, "Necessary Autumn" and "Chimes," were a little more highly produced, mellower tunes that are aimed at getting some airplay. "Mr. Man" was something that Jeff Andrews wrote, which is a great showcase for him. Then "Catch 22" was very much a collaborative effort between Jeff Andrews, Frank Gambale, Kit Walker, and myself. There are great guitar and bass solos on that tune. "W.B.J." ("We Be Jammin'") is Tom Coster's tune, which was basically written for the Korg booth at the NAMM show. "New Boots" is a tune from Frank Gambale, which is a real uptempo swing tune that we've been playing live. "Night Dive" is one that I wrote with a friend of mine named Marco Zonka, who was my tabla teacher years ago. That one features Andy Narell on steel drums. The last piece, "Church Of Milan," was written by Tom Coster,

Jr., Tom's son, and it's a great showcase for Frank. It's something very different for him.

On this album, as producer, I was trying to showcase my own drumming in a way that would excite me to hear. Hopefully in doing that, it will also be exciting and interesting for others to hear. I didn't want to overdo it, though. I wanted to leave the space so the other musicians could shine as well. I was also using that concept on the other players so that they're satisfied with their performances and their fans are also excited.

RF: What about the new Steps record?

SS: We recently recorded a new one called *Yin Yang*. Mike Mainieri called it that because it goes in so many directions. It's a great representation of the current band, which has been touring for the last few years. Bendik does a lot of the writing, and his style is what I would call the "Norwegian-folk-ECM style." Mike's writing is all over the place. He writes New York street hip-hop sounding things and great straight-ahead jazz tunes—and ballads, as well. Rachel did some writing, a straight-ahead bebop tune, a little more of a radio commercial-



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sounding tune.... The record really goes in a lot of different directions, but to me, it all makes sense. It has some really nice playing on it and a great documentation of my straight-ahead playing.

RF: For fans looking at you from the outside, sometimes it seems that things always come easy to someone of your stature. Have there ever been gigs that you couldn't cut? Did anything ever happen to you that was a trauma?

SS: I've been fired from a lot of gigs. And I learned a lot from those situations. My first one was when I played with Lin Biviano. It was a big band, and I worked with him for about a year when I was nineteen. I didn't have a lot of experience, but I did have a good concept of big band. After a year, I wasn't doing the job he wanted to hear. It really devastated me. I thought I was doing a good job. He thought my time could be better, and I was crushed. That was my first one. Then I got fired from Jean-Luc Ponty. I was guilty of being a bad sideman at that point. I had a bad attitude. I was in cahoots with the two guitar players—Jamie Glaser and Daryl Stuermer—and

we developed our own little clique. We would talk about how we didn't like this and that about the gig. We got off into our little trip, which is a real typical sideman thing to do. And we'd complain how the money wasn't good enough, how he was making all the money. Now when I look back on it, I realize I didn't understand the sideman contract. We all got the axe simultaneously. He ended up calling all three of us back to work at some point, though. It was a good lesson.

Then there was the Journey one, which we all know about.

One of the last ones that happened was with Bryan Adams' *Reckless* record. It was the one I played the track "Heaven" on. Initially he had me playing on the whole record, but I just could *not* play with the click track. So I ended up getting fired off the record. I just hadn't played with many click tracks before that. I grew up in a time when the click track wasn't what time was judged by. That has been a relatively new development for the drumming world to be judged by. I grew up developing what I call "internal relative time," developing a

good feel and a good pulse—but it moves around. None of the Journey records were ever done with a click track, and nothing I had ever done *before* Journey was done with a click track. So I had never had any experience with it. Bryan wanted to do everything with a click track, so I was virtually trying to learn how to do it and do his record at the same time. I was disappointed, but I got to work on it. All those situations were hard for me to deal with, but I've gotten very focused because of them.

RF: What are your goals these days?

SS: You asked me why I practice and work so hard. What I hope to do in my lifetime is assimilate as much as I possibly can of this whole U.S. drumming concept. As a lot of the drum masters are getting old and passing on, they're taking a lot of secrets with them. There are some really great concepts, techniques, and approaches that are being lost. One of my goals is to integrate them into my playing so they will live on. Then I'll be able to pass that on when *I'm* an old guy.



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How One Player Covers Three Parts



by Emil Richards

When I played the Academy Awards show this year (March 31, 1992), we had Harvey Mason on drums and Larry Bunker on timps. I was the only percussionist playing, and they handed me "Overture '92," which is written for three players. When I mentioned it to Bill Conti, the orchestra leader, he said, "Do the best you can." So here's how I *tried* to handle it.

As I discuss what I had to do to cover the parts, please feel free to check out the music appearing below. I began by playing the triangle, trilling in one hand while playing bells in the other. I gave Harvey Mason the piatti hits to write in his part up to bar 10.

At bar 54 I played the xylophone (with grace notes) with two mallets in my right hand, while playing the ratchet (which was mounted) with my left hand. During rehearsal the dancers said the temple block part was more important than the ratchet part, so I switched to playing temple blocks.

Larry Bunker was free to play spoons from bars 138 to 161, so I played bells and wrote the spoon part on his music.

Bunker had timpani hits where the bass drum part came in at 216, so I played triangle and bells. I dropped the triangle at 239 and played only bells. From 245 I played suspended cymbal while Larry played timps and Harvey caught all of the bass drum hits. I played chimes and suspended cymbal from 253. We had an extra set of bells set up for Larry, so he played bells at 269 while I played bongos.

From 323 to the end, all the effects (hand-cranked siren, police whistle, siren whistle, coo coo whistle, klaxon horn, vibra slap, cymbal hits, blank gun, xylophone) were the most important to the piece, so we stayed for those, leaving out spoons and ratchet until the end.

It's chaotic and fun to play this kind of music, especially when having to cover many different parts. If you should find yourself in a similar situation, be sure to work closely with the conductor, and use your own best musical judgement to decide how best to cover the parts. It can be challenging, but also very rewarding.

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Musical score for Percussion 11, "Salute to Comedy".

Measures 235-246: (TUTTL CHAMO) 235, (DUCK CALL) 237, (POLICE WHISTLE) 238, (FIGHT BELL) 239, 240.

Measures 247-250: (Xylo) 247, (FIBBER BELL) 248, 249, 250.

Measures 251-254: (TO BELLS) 251, (TO TAMTAM) 252, (TO GONG CHAM) 253, 254.

Measures 255-258: (BELLS) 255, 256, 257, 258.

Measures 259-262: (TAM TAM) 259, (O.C. M) 260, (GONG) 261, 262.

Measures 263-266: 263, 264, 265, 266.

PERC. 12. SALUTE TO COMEDY

Musical score for Percussion 12, "Salute to Comedy".

Measures 267-270: (LOW BRANK GUN) 267, 268, 269, 270.

Measures 271-274: (P. WHISTLE) 271, (SIREN) 272, 273, 274.

Measures 275-278: (TO BELLS) 275, (TO SIREN WHISTLE) 276, 277, 278.

Measures 279-282: (PATTI) 279, 280, 281, 282.

Measures 283-286: (TO BRANK GUN) 283, 284, 285, 286.

Measures 287-290: (BLANK) 287, (SIREN) 288, (SIREN) 289, (TO BELLS) 290.

Measures 291-294: (TO PATTI) 291, 292, 293, 294.

Measures 295-298: (TO G.C.) 295, 296, 297, 298.

PERC. 13. SALUTE TO COMEDY

Musical score for Percussion 13, "Salute to Comedy".

Measures 299-302: (BELLS) 299, (TO XyLO) 300, (PATTI) 301, (TO GONG) 302.

Measures 303-306: (TO GONG) 303, (TO GONG) 304, (TO GONG) 305, (TO GONG) 306.

Measures 307-310: (TO GONG) 307, (TO GONG) 308, (TO GONG) 309, (TO GONG) 310.

Measures 311-314: (TO GONG) 311, (TO GONG) 312, (TO GONG) 313, (TO GONG) 314.

Measures 315-318: (TO GONG) 315, (TO GONG) 316, (TO GONG) 317, (TO GONG) 318.

Measures 319-322: (TO GONG) 319, (TO GONG) 320, (TO GONG) 321, (TO GONG) 322.

PERC. 14. SALUTE TO COMEDY

Musical score for Percussion 14, "Salute to Comedy".

Measures 323-326: (XyLO) 323, (SIREN WHISTLE) 324, (FIGHT BELL) 325, 326.

Measures 327-330: 327, 328, 329, 330.

Measures 331-334: (TO BRANK GUN) 331, (RICHET) 332, (COO-COO) 333, 334.

Measures 335-338: 335, 336, 337, 338.

Measures 339-342: (FIGHT BELL) 339, 340, 341, 342.



Richie Hayward
(Little Feat)

Photo: Kristen Dahlin

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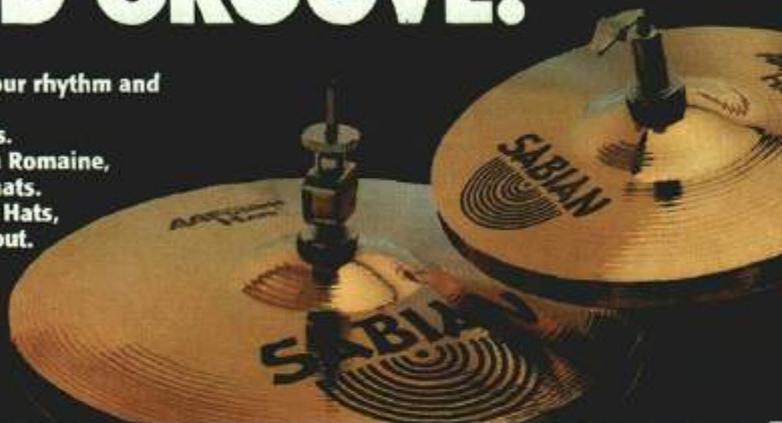
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ED THIGPEN

continued from page 31

rhythmic melody—maybe not a pentatonic scale, per se, but giving the impression of melody through the rhythm that you're playing. It's a touch-texture thing. That's what I'm into. And if you tune your drums right, you can find notes by damping and doing different things, and the overtones will fill.

BM: Your bass drum seems to play a particularly important role on your original bossa nova, "Denise," and your other original, "Jamaican Baion." Your stick work is very slick, but it's the bass drum that grounds the piece.

ET: Yeah, that's the whole idea. Jack DeJohnette also has that concept. He's been a big help to me in that regard.

BM: I saw Elvin Jones recently, and his bass drum was tuned so high it sounded like a tom. He used his bass drum foot like an invisible third arm playing tom fills.

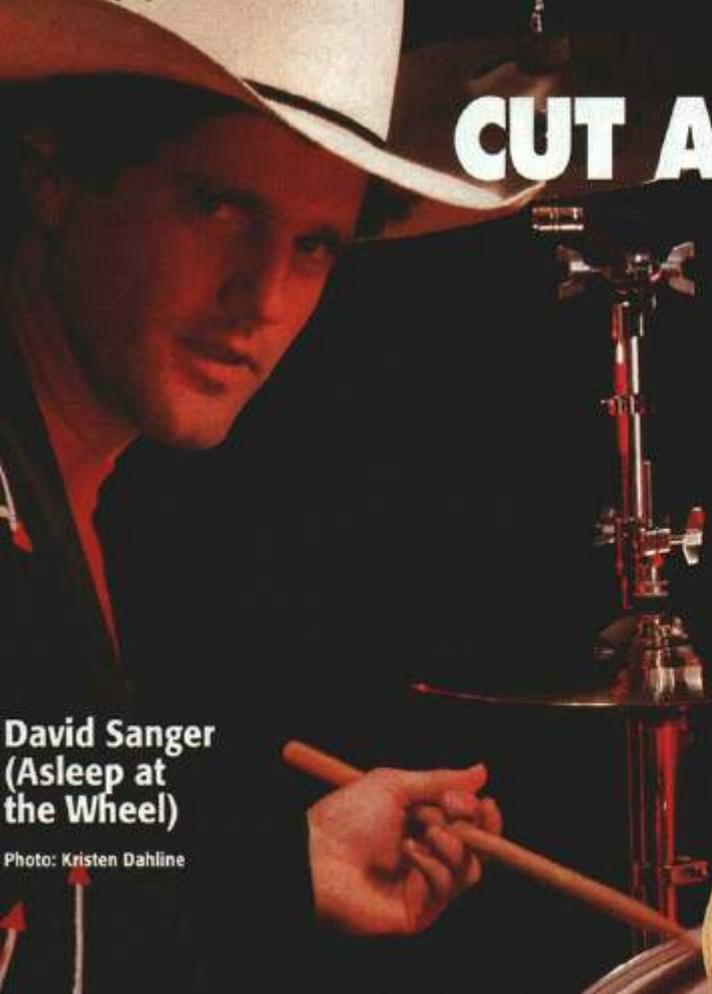
ET: Well, his concept is quite melodic as well as rhythmic. He was always so advanced, and so was Roy [Haynes]. I think we're all going to be trying to catch up with Roy from now to eternity. But Elvin's got some special things happening, and he's always dared to be adventuresome. So he's led the pack in many ways. I think Tony Williams is also marvelous in that way. He can do anything he wants to do. He's paid his price, too, daring to be himself. He's been slammed around by critics, which is silly, because he's a great artist. He's not abusing anyone, no one's twisting any arms, forcing people to listen to him. He's contributing all the time. He's daring to make it happen, to take a chance. That's what it's all about. And I admire him for that.

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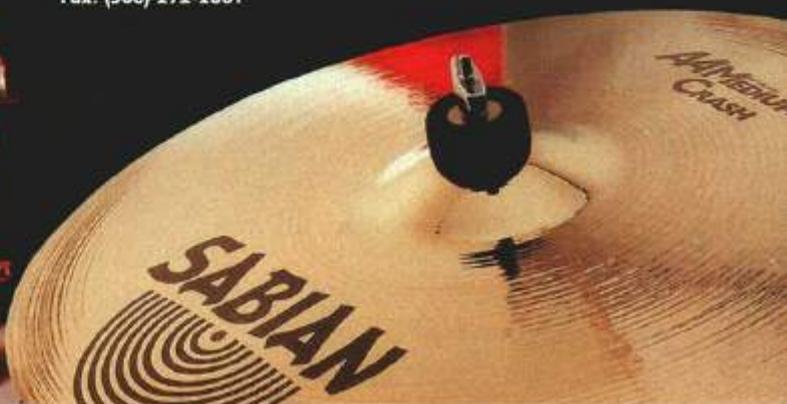
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David Sanger
 (Asleep at the Wheel)

Photo: Kristen Dahline



BM: Chico Hamilton is another guy who's never been afraid to take chances.

ET: He was one of my early mentors. I was raised in Los Angeles and used to see him a lot out there. He was very popular in the late '40s. He comes out of Jo Jones too. He was the first one I ever saw who had only one head on the drum. Chico's the one who taught me how to play a paradiddle. He was always open to teach you. He was very instrumental. I loved his touch when he was with Gerry Mulligan and the things he did with his own first group. His touch and his melodic playing, his use of mallets was very inspiring. Chico has always been adventuresome, and he's had a subtle musicality. He's very musical and shows a very gentle strength when he plays.

BM: You two have a lot in common. You both have trios, and you both think melodically behind the kit, filling out the music rather than just supporting it.

ET: Well, I've always had this approach toward the drums. When I used to sit in my room and practice, I'd play a lot with classical music, whether it was Chopin or Bartok or Beethoven. I didn't know who the composers were, but I liked the music, so I would try to simulate all these sounds on my drums. I'd listen to the sound of water and try to simulate that. I'd watch trees moving in the wind and try to simulate that quality on the drums. I liked ballet very much, I liked theater. And all those things influenced my approach to the drums to a certain degree.

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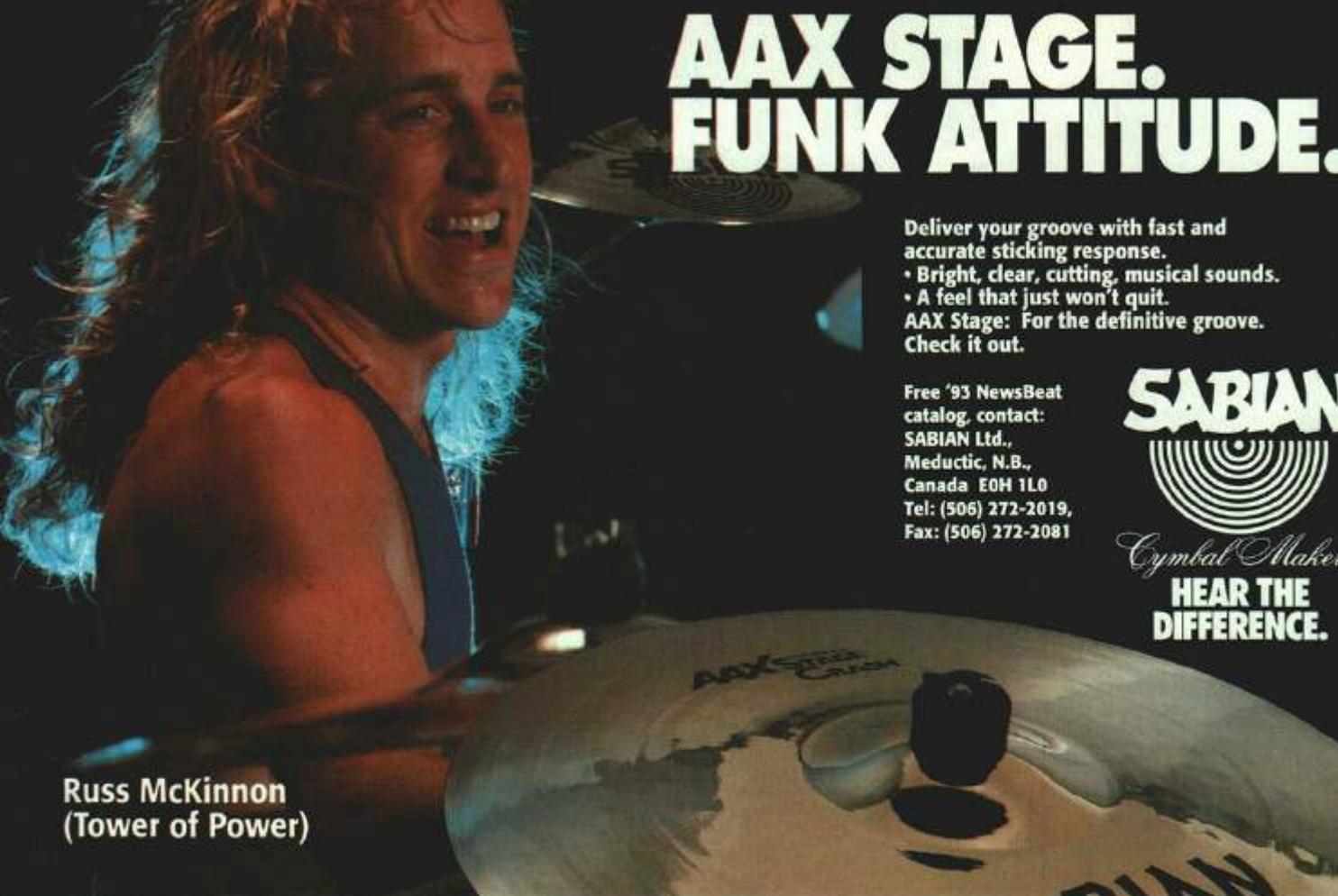
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in some ways we had more things for life-sustaining force—talking about family values—than you've got now. Music appreciation was straight across the board—classical, country and western, jazz. Our teacher, Mr. Brown, was always giving us the broader spectrum to draw from. We weren't relegated to hearing one type of thing all the time like kids are today with MTV I really believe there needs to be an alternative. I look at MTV, and there are a lot of things that I like. But we're not one-dimensional entities. I don't believe we should be limited to one thing. I think that's very unhealthy.

BM: That's why it's important that Wynton Marsalis is going into the schools in New York and teaching kids about jazz as part of a Lincoln Center Jazz outreach program.

ET: Well, we've been doing that all along, even though it hasn't always gotten media attention. Jazz camps and jazz education didn't start with Stan Kenton. It was part of our heritage. We grew up with it. The black institutions around America always had it. Mind you, some didn't because they were trying to be European and assimilate into the culture. But in general, jazz was a part of your life in those institutions. But as it moves on, the industry comes in and gains control, which has nothing to do with music. Some kid walked up to me and said, "They're taking our music." No, no, no. Nobody's taking anything. It's like your soul—nobody takes that from you. Conditions can make you sell out or compromise—even Duke Ellington made certain compromises, though never musically. But music is a God-given gift that you must respect and nurture.

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David Abbruzzese
(Pearl Jam)

ming project organized by Mickey Hart. I'm on the board of advisors for that. The idea is to get drumsets and percussion instruments into the schools. See, the drum is an important communicative instrument. It's a unifying force. It's the heart-beat, the soul, the earth—and people communicate this way. Everything is based on rhythm: walking, sleeping, eating. So I say, let everybody play percussion. It always has been a key factor in unifying. Look at Brazil. I still believe there would have been revolution after revolution down there if it hadn't been for the samba.

BM: Talk about your ongoing infatuation with Brazilian music.

ET: I encountered Brazilian music as a child. It might've initially been through Carmen Miranda, but there was a guy down the street who taught me how to play a samba rhythm. And that actually got me in the Army band. I knew how to do an authentic samba with a brush and a stick. The sergeant in the Army band saw I could do that, and he said, "Man, you're good. You're gonna become an instructor." So I became a marching band instructor because I could play a samba.

I really got open again to samba music in the early '60s. I was working with Oscar Peterson in Las Vegas, and Dizzy was in town. He had just come back from Brazil and was talking about this bossa nova and samba stuff. He was showing us some of the rhythms, man, talking about the clave and how them cats were playing these 8th notes on the hi-hat. Then Sergio Mendes came out with his Brasil '66, and that turned me on again. And the one who pulled my coat to that was a lady in Chicago named Foots Higgins, Eddie Higgins' first wife. She

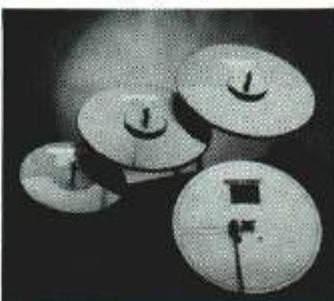
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was one of these hip jazz fans who knew everybody on the scene before anybody else. She was the one who first told me about Tony Williams. I remember saying to her, "Nobody seventeen years old could be that bad." But I was wrong. I went to see him.... That boy scared me to death.

Anyway, Foots brought us this record of Sergio Mendes, and that really opened me up. Later I went to Mexico with Ella Fitzgerald a few times and met some people who played the stuff for real. They really hipped me to the bass drum function in samba music. When I first did it, it was stiff. But they told me, "No, you must float like a butterfly." I worked on that for years, and I think I'm getting it together now. It's something you have to live with. You need the opportunity to have the living experience of playing with people...it's their music. You rub shoulders and mix it up. And I had a chance to do that back in '73-'74 with a group I had called Action Reaction, which did a lot of Brazilian music. The percussionist in that band was Carlinhos Bandetto Diorio, and he really showed me a lot about the samba.

BM: Who are some of the younger jazz drummers today that you admire?

ET: There are some talented young cats out there now playing great brushes...Kenny Washington, Tony Reedus, Carl Allen, Smitty Smith, Winard Harper, Lewis Nash, Greg Hutchinson. Dennis Chambers is incredible and has also been very encouraging to me. They all play so much drums it makes you cry. But Peter Erskine, to me, is one of the most rounded players on the scene. Everything he plays works and feels good. Dave Weckl,

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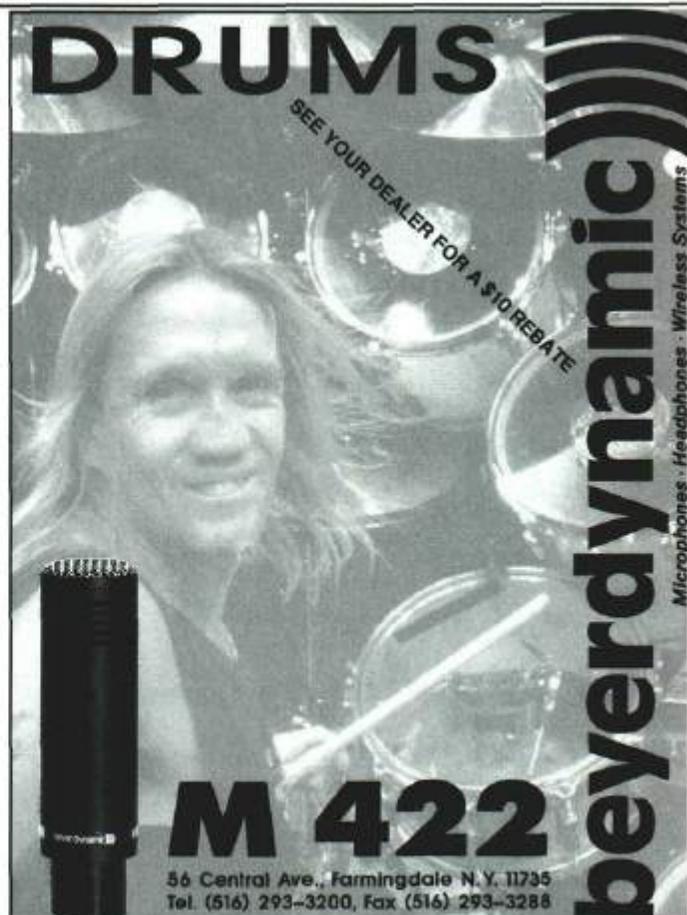
as bad as he is, is still developing his jazz chops. And I like the fact that everybody's trying to grow. That's what it's all about.

The state of jazz today is healthy compared to a few years back. Ten or fifteen years ago, a couple of my colleagues had great concerns about what was happening to the music. Guys weren't interested, particularly among the black youth, in playing jazz. But I told them not to worry about it. And sure enough, along came the Marsalis brothers and Terence Blanchard and Mulgrew Miller and Victor Lewis, followed by a whole new generation of great jazz players. But I always felt that it would survive, because it's too good not to.

BM: Do you get a chance to play much with other drummers?

ET: I just did an International Drumset Seminar in Germany with Terry Bozzio, Steve Smith, and Joey Heredia, along with some wonderful percussionists. We each took a solo turn. Terry opened up this thing—so fierce. This cat plays so much drums. Then Joey came out and did the Latin thing. Then Steve came out. I finished each night, and I rose to the occasion. But it was a week of comradeship, man. Drums, hand drums, drumset, all getting together and playing, complementing each other, challenging each other, setting up choirs—nothing was pre-arranged, sort of in the tradition of Max Roach's group M'Boom. Max is the master of that.

Another time at a jazz party in Oregon we had Jeff Hamilton, Alan Dawson, Billy Higgins, and myself all playing nothing but brushes. It was me and Alan on snare drums, Billy had a floor tom, and Jeff had a drum case. We played "Salt Peanuts," and it was a love affair—full of healthy challenge, just like tap dancers



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used to do. It was big fun. That idea of getting together, the comradeship of playing...there's a very spiritual thing that happens when people get together to play rhythms. Every family should have percussion instruments in the home. The family that jams together stays together.

BM: Did you ever work with tap dancers?

ET: I did some work with Gregory Hines when he was part of Hines, Hines & Dad. I always wanted to do something with Sammy Davis, but that never came about. If you look back into African drumming, the dance and the drum are the same. It was all integrated. Movement—when you look back into the swing era, it was always integrated into the music. Now I see kids today, and I think the dance has out-stripped the music as far as creativity goes. Music has become bland rhythmically. Everything today is more regimented. I would like to see a little more improvisation happening in the music, a kind of healthy give and take with the dancers. And that's gonna be happening. Anything good, you can suppress it for a while, but it'll pop back up. We have to get back to the joy and life-sustaining qualities in the music.

BM: Were your first public performances in jazz bands?

ET: Yeah, that was the pop music of my time. I was born, in a sense, hearing jazz.

My father was a drummer with Andy Kirk. I wasn't raised with him, though. I was born in Chicago [December 28, 1930] and raised in a boarding home in Los Angeles. Wynonie Harris, the great blues singer, lived across the street from me. And I grew up in the church. Melba Liston went to the same church I did. She played trombone in the choir, I sang in the junior choir. The gospel, singing spirituals, was just all a part of it. Then in grade school we had rhythm classes and dances where we'd put together a little school band and play for the kids. It's the same today. But instead of having little rock bands, we had little jazz bands.

BM: What kind of early reinforcement did you get for playing drums?

ET: When I was in junior high school I was in a drum contest. I came in third place, but this cute girl came up to me afterwards and said, "Thiggy, you didn't win, but I liked what you did." And I always remembered that.

BM: Did you see your father perform much?

ET: Oh, yes. After my father and mother separated, she took me to California when I was four. She didn't want me to be raised in Kansas City, where Andy Kirk's band was stationed. But I was proud of my dad. He's in the jazz history books. Great drummer. Great man. Ask anybody who knew Andy Kirk's band—they all had great respect for Ben Thigpen. He was with that band seventeen

years.

BM: Was he a mentor at all? Did you hang with him much?

ET: No. After my mother died around 1950, I moved in with my dad in St. Louis. He had a new family by this time. I stayed with him for a year, worked in local things, then went on the road with a guy named Candy Johnson, who had worked with him. I wound up in New York in the summer of 1951 and joined Cootie Williams at the Savoy Ballroom. It was a quintet. Anyway, we'd travel with rhythm and blues groups, the first doo-wop groups like the Ravens, the Orioles, the Platters. We'd do the tobacco warehouses down South, the Regal in Chicago—we'd travel all over the country. I went into the Army after that. When I came out, I joined Dinah Washington.

BM: But you didn't actually study with your father?

ET: No, not per se. By the time I got with my dad, I had already been playing. The advice he gave me was mostly living advice. From a playing standpoint, though, I had a time problem. I was trying to get into bebop and was having a problem with independence. And my father was known for being steady as a rock. They used to say, "Start Ben on a tempo this week, you come back two weeks later and that tempo will be right there." Fast or slow, he was steady as a rock. But he told me about how to keep a steady pulse. He had a small group in

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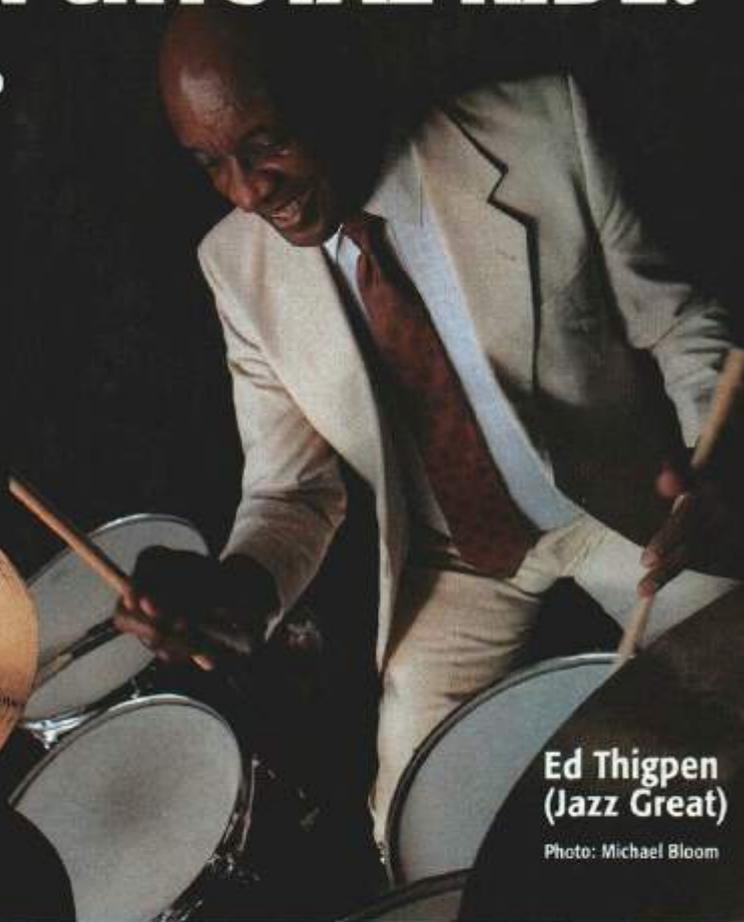
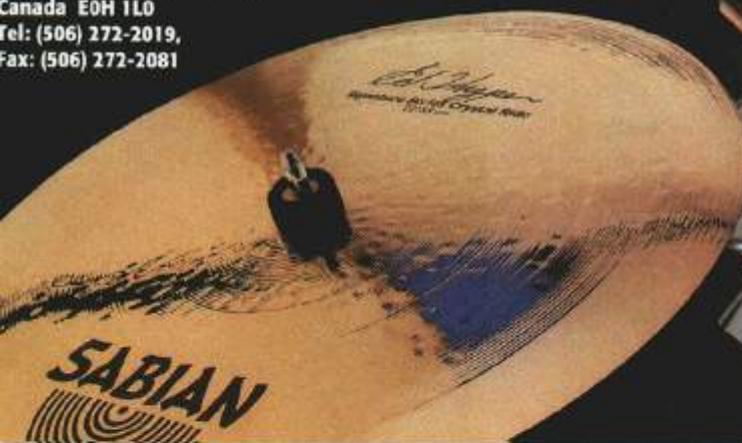
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Ed Thigpen
(Jazz Great)

Photo: Michael Bloom

East St. Louis, and after he got the report about his son fluctuating with the time, he said, "Oh, no, you better come over here with me." So he had me sit in with his band at this after-hours club and conducted up front by just popping his fingers. I did that for three nights. Then what he said to me was, "You are concentrating on your hands, but you've let the bottom go. All I can tell you about keeping steady time is that when the tempo is kicked off, you have to lock that tempo with your feet and your hands coordinated. So the biggest thing I can tell you about keeping steady time is concentration—total concentration."

At that time, there wasn't too much independence happening—Max, Kenny Clarke, Roy Haynes, and maybe a few others. But it hadn't reached the point it's at today. And the one who really showed me about it, after getting that advice from my dad, was Jo Jones. My main function was still to swing, because we were playing rhythm and blues and advancing it by trying to throw in a little bebop here and there. But they require you to swing first. They're not interested

in how many licks you can put in. First of all, you don't wanna get in the soloist's way. He's still concerned about you putting a good groove down. Bebop was a new music, but the first rule for the drummer was still to swing and keep good time. Otherwise, you didn't work. You gotta swing and keep good time because the band is gonna be built on that. They're depending on you for that. You don't keep good time, they're not gonna blame the bass player—and they're *sure* not gonna blame the horn player or piano player. They'll look at the drummer. So your first job is to swing and keep good time and punctuate where possible. After that, if you can get more stuff in, fine. And isn't that the same with good rock drummers? Get in the pocket, get in the groove first and foremost.

BM: Who hipped you to the art of playing the bass drum?

ET: My father. I used to have arguments in school with guys about Max Roach and Kenny Clarke. Guys would say, "Man, they're just dropping bombs, they're not playing down on the bass

drum anymore." And I'd say, "No, I feel a pulse down there." So when I got to St. Louis and asked my dad about it, he said the idea was touch. He knew how to feather a bass drum. The idea was to keep the bass drum volume below the acoustic bass. The acoustic bass was carrying the harmonic note, but the bass drum carried the punch of that note—the pulse, the earth.

Now, if you need more, you just raise the volume, but you never play louder than the bass. The idea was to make the bass drum felt rather than heard. Max and them started doing other things—substituting, raising the pitch. But everybody in those bands had good time. Bird and Diz had perfect time. Thelonious Monk had perfect time. Ben Riley told me something Monk said to him once. He said, "Just because you're the drummer don't mean you have the best time in the band." And that's true. Harry "Sweets" Edison had perfect time. Roy Eldridge had perfect time. Sam Jones—like a metronome with flexibility. It's perfect, man. You don't have to worry about nothing. It's great to play with

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musicians like that.

BM: Who else gave you helpful hints along the way?

ET: Max. When I got to New York in 1951, the first person I looked up was Max Roach. He was playing a place called Palm Cafe, down the street from the Apollo Theater. He had Richie Powell with him. The guest artist was Henry "Red" Allen, the great Dixieland player. Max and them were playing bebop, but when Red Allen came out, Max played a backbeat all the way through his set. I introduced myself to Max after the set—"Oh, you're Ben's son"—and the first thing I asked him was, "I noticed that behind Henry you were playing backbeat." He said, "That's what was called for. You play what's required for the music that you're playing." And that made a big impression on me. I later had experiences of my own playing backbeat with T-Bone Walker and Eddie "Clean-head" Vinson. Red Prysock used to demand a backbeat. He used to say, "Gimme the butt! Gimme the butt!" meaning that he wanted me to slam with the back end of the stick. "Turn the stick around and let me have it!" So backbeat has always been a part of my playing, through rhythm and blues.

The bottom line, as Max said, is that you play what the music calls for. If you're gonna play Basie-style big band, you better know how to play the bass drum to make it effective. Same thing if you play Ellington, Lunceford—any of these other big bands. This is our art form, our classical art form. That music has a certain feel to it. If you play "A Train," there's a certain feeling you must convey. When you hear an A train go down the subway here, it rumbles. It doesn't fly on air. So you try to capture that quality when you play it. And it must inevitably swing. There must be some element of popping your finger and patting your foot. It's communal music. Jazz, to me, must have that element of swing.

BM: You made what I consider to be an important album in 1989, *Young Men And Olds*, on the Timeless label. What was the premise of that project?

ET: I was concerned about the separation of young players and older players that seemed to be going on. I always

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wanted to see more mingling there, having the generations play side-by-side to exchange ideas. So we did a live recording from the Village Vanguard with me, Branford Marsalis on tenor sax, Terence Blanchard on trumpet, Rufus Reid on bass, Sir Roland Hanna on piano, and Robert Thomas, Jr. on percussion. It was a great gig, a chance for the Young and Olds to mix it up—"olds" meaning the

wise ones. And I believe we must keep doing that.

BM: On your version of "Round Midnight" from *Mr. Taste*, you play what sounds like a talking drum or some kind of moveable-pitch drum.

ET: That's my pedal tom-tom, made by the Meazzi company many years ago. They've since gone out of business. I used it extensively on an album I did in

1966, *Out Of The Storm* [MGM/Verve]. It basically has miniature timpani machinery inside, which means that when you push down on the pedal, the tension on the head changes. Little rods come from the center as you push down on the pedal, which tightens the head and raises the pitch. And it has a range of an octave. I have a 16" pedal tom-tom at home that gives me more than an octave. Yamaha had one out for a while, but they discontinued it. The first company to come out with one, years ago, was Ludwig. It's a slick idea. It's new and ancient at the same time. It's like my mentor said, "Edmund, there's nothing new under the sun. You just rearrange it."

BM: Tell us about your mentor. How did you meet Jo Jones?

ET: I think it was on the tennis court. When I was a kid I used to play a lot of tennis. Jo Jones lived down the street from us in Los Angeles. I think I first saw him there on his porch. Then later in high school I used to go to the park and play tennis and he would be out there playing. That's where I met him. I



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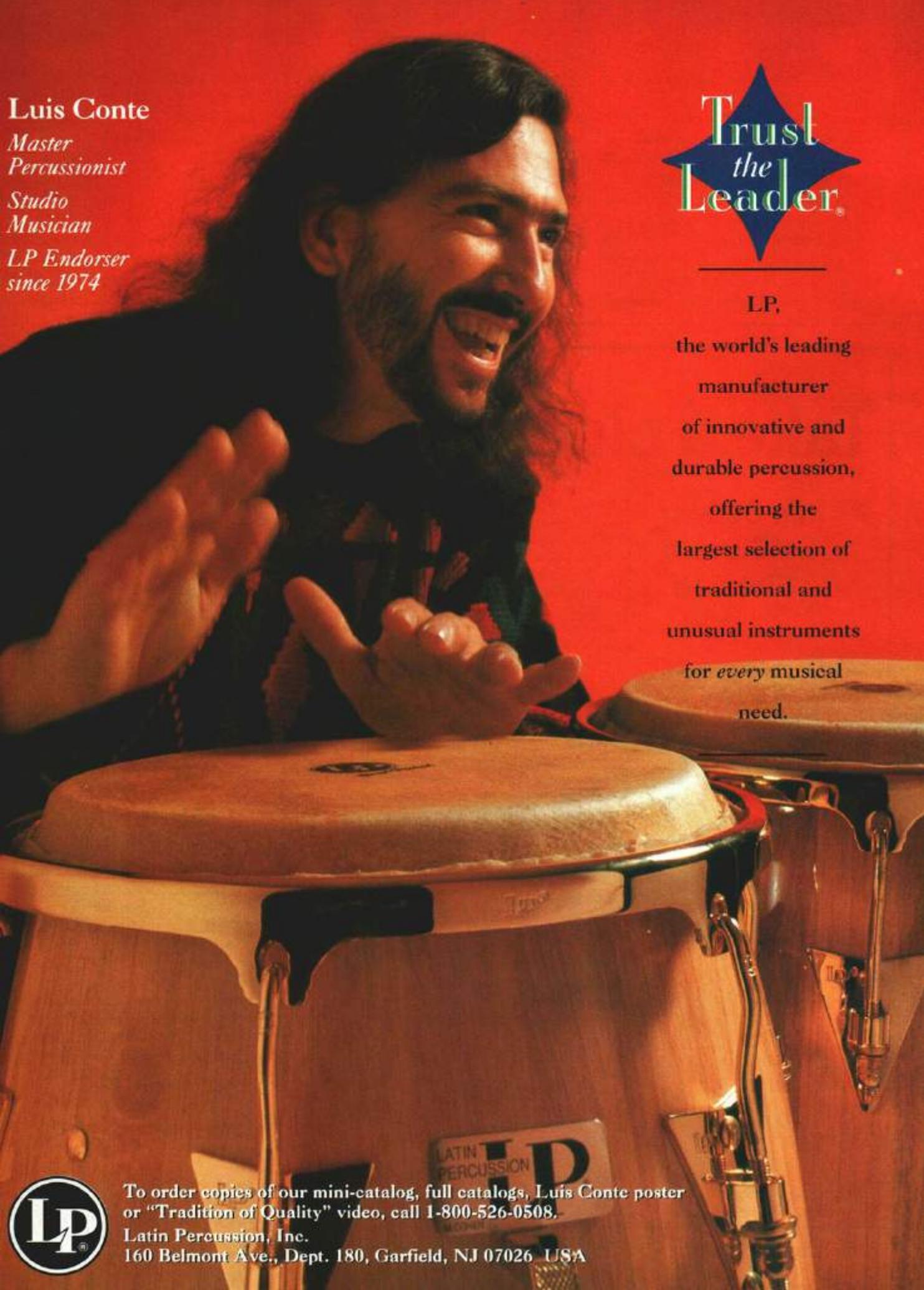


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introduced myself, and we just became friends.

I used to work as a porter in a theater chain in Los Angeles, and one time Jo asked me what I was doing with my life. I told him I was just a porter. And he said, "Say it like you have some pride." And that made an impression on me.

When I got to St. Louis and moved in with my father, I got to see him play when Jazz At The Philharmonic came through town. Buddy Rich was supposed

to be on the gig, so my father arranged for some tickets. I went down to see Buddy, but Jo Jones was on the gig instead. He came out and played, and I had never seen anything like this in my life. He played a solo where he used sticks, mallets, brushes, hands, everything—and that changed my life. I heard a symphony on drums that evening—musicality, textures, swing. I had heard him on record but never saw him in person. I used to practice his ride cymbal

patterns on the pillow, trying to get that feel. Anyway, I went backstage to talk to him after that concert, and from that point on I idolized him.

When I finally got to New York, I looked him up. He always left his door open, you could just go in. And he was always eager to share knowledge with the young cats. The new guys on the scene at the time were me, Paul Chambers, Charlie Persip, Louis Hayes...it's like it is today with Carl Allen, Kenny Washington, Lewis Nash, Tony Reedus, and Smitty Smith. We were the bunch then, and they are the bunch now, all coming to Mecca to find their place.

BM: In these hard economic times, what advice do you have for young aspiring musicians?

ET: Generally, musicians have to supplement their income with teaching or another job, but I don't think you should ever give up the instrument. I always tell the kids, "Don't give up your instrument. It'll keep you healthy, keep you alive." Play good, that's the bottom line. That's where it's at. Do your best and play from the heart.



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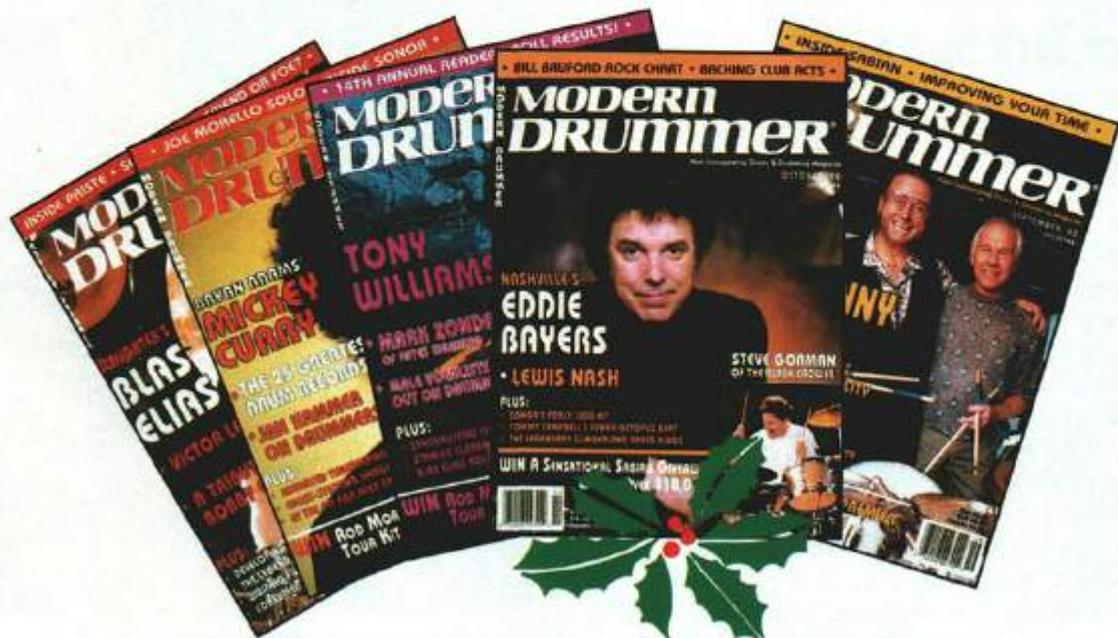
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Sherrie Maricle

On The New York Scene

■ by Robert Santelli

All New York drummers should be as focused and as busy as Sherrie Maricle is. Ever since arriving in the Big Apple in the mid-'80s, Sherrie's stature as a drummer has grown large enough for her to be literally consumed with music.

Some of her accomplishments include being awarded the Eubie Blake Jazz Scholarship, a doctoral fellowship from New York University, and the Kennedy Center Alliance Award for outstanding contributions and achievements in the arts. Sherrie has performed and recorded with Slam Stewart, Bucky Pizzarelli, Jay Leonhart, Roger Kellaway, Major Holley, Peter Appleyard, Michael Moore, Don Thompson, Oliver Jones, and many others. She's also performed in the Broadway production of *Cabaret* and has played in the Ice Capades orchestra, the Shriner's Circus, and the Washington Square Chamber Orchestra.

Then there's Sherrie's own group, her work as a free-lance drummer, and her playing for the New York Pops. Her 1989 *Stash* release, *Cookin' On All Burners*, was critically praised, and new recordings are in the works. To say that Sherrie Maricle has made her mark on the New York City music scene would not be stretching things.

"I've tried my best to become established," Sherrie explains. "At times it's been frustrating, mostly because I'm a woman and most drummers are men. But I've endured. I stayed with it, and I'm happy I did."

RS: As a female drummer, you must have run into some obstacles while performing what is viewed—wrongly, of course—as a man's job in music on a man's instrument.

SM: There definitely were problems. My goal was always to be judged by my ability to play, as opposed to by my gender. As a woman drummer, I met with a lot of skepticism right off the bat, which made it difficult just to get the chance to prove myself. Fortunately, I'm finally at the point where being a woman who plays drums is no longer a disadvantage for me.

RS: Can you recall any specific incidents that might illustrate the problems women face when they enter into a music market dominated by men?

SM: When I first began to play, male musicians would make comments like, "Step aside, little girl!" or "This is a fast chart; you better let me handle this one." It just made me want to



prove myself even more.

RS: Where did you get the strength to be so persistent?

SM: When I was very young, I went from instrument to instrument. Finally, I found the drums, and they felt very natural to me. Once I started playing drums, I knew I really didn't want to play anything else. I took snare drum lessons when I was in eighth or ninth grade. When I went to high school and got into the jazz band, I began taking lessons on a full kit.

RS: Was jazz always your first choice in terms of music?

SM: When I began playing on a drumset, the music I learned to play was jazz—particularly big band jazz. I remember my first job, when I was sixteen. It paid \$50, and it was with a country band. Along the way I also played in wedding bands. But where I grew up—in Binghamton, New York—there were a few working big bands, and they gave me the opportunity to go deeper into jazz.

RS: Did you always plan on coming to New York City to live and work?

SM: I think so. I figured I'd save a little money, move down here, and see what happened. Then I got an offer to go to New York University, so that's what I did. I went down in the fall of 1985 and got a master's degree in jazz studies. I was ready to leave when they offered me a fellowship to pursue my doctorate. So now I'm one of those people who got all the way through the courses, but hasn't finished the dissertation. I've been at N.Y.U. pretty much ever since.

RS: Are you a student or a member of the faculty these days?

SM: I'm what they call an adjunct director. Sometimes adjunct directors are called "super" adjuncts. Whatever you want to call me, I'm head of the Percussion Department. I teach a conduct-

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RS: Is teaching really what you want to do, or is it a means to an end?

SM: I certainly enjoy parts of the teaching profession, but I wouldn't say that it's what I want to do all the time. I really enjoy working with and writing music for the percussion ensemble. It's a large group with about twenty percussionists in it.

RS: What else comprises your professional life these days?

SM: I recently started writing music for symphony orchestras. I have my first premiere of an original piece this spring. It's a tone poem based on an American Indian theme. I also play drums for the New York Pops. I do some Broadway shows as a sub or fill-in, and on rare occasions, I do club gigs.

RS: You're walking a number of musical paths. Is this the way a drummer who lives in New York City in the '90s has to make a living?

SM: Not necessarily, but given my tastes in music, it's probably the thing I should be doing. A rock drummer could play clubs and weddings and make a fantastic living. But that doesn't do anything for me. I don't like the sameness of that life. I love doing different things and playing different kinds of music. For instance, Stanley Kaye, who was Buddy Rich's manager for about thirty years, has put together an all-women big band—called Diva—with writer John La Barbara here in New York. I'm playing in that band, and it's been just great. I have to admit I'm not a big fan of the *concept* of an all-women group. I think a lot of female musicians feel that way; no one really wants to be segregated like that. But this is a real fine band, made up of women from all over the country. It's been built in the style of the Count Basie band. We rehearsed for a month and did a recording; now we're putting the financial things together. When that's done we'll probably be doing a lot of work together.

RS: Do you have any other recording projects in the works?

SM: I just did a record with a female jazz quartet called Unpredictable Nature, on LRC Records. I have another record called *Four Of A Kind* that was done with my own quartet, and that features a lot of original material. It's on the Jazz Alliance label. We have a live record that will be coming out soon, as well.

RS: What noted drummers have influenced you the most?

SM: Like a lot of drummers, the first drummer who probably caught my attention was Buddy Rich. When I was young, I got to see him live with his Killer Force Orchestra. I had never seen anything like what I saw Rich do. It gave me a brand-new insight on what the drums could do. I also liked all the Basie

drummers. And as I matured as a drummer, Mel Lewis became a big favorite.

RS: Can you detect the influences of these drummers in your playing style?

SM: I hope so. I always think it's a big compliment when someone says, "I hear a little Mel Lewis in your playing." When I was fine-tuning my approach to the drums, I used to listen to Mel a lot because he played with such wonderful finesse and subtlety. I always lean more toward the mainstream progressive players than I do the fusion-oriented drummers. Guys like Dave Weckl and Dennis Chambers are great drummers, but I don't focus on them the way I do more mainstream players.

RS: Do you approach a jazz gig differently than a symphonic orchestra gig?

SM: I think the conductors that I've worked with like the looseness of my style, which comes from playing jazz.

RS: What do you mean by "loose"?

SM: Just that I don't always feel compelled to go with the part as precisely as some other drummers would in a certain situation.

RS: Do you change the size of your drums when you play with an orchestra?

SM: I change the size of my bass drum—I use an 18" when I play with small groups, and a 20" with the New York Pops or a big band. I'll usually use two or three cymbals; actually I'm trying out a lot of new cymbals because I recently got an endorsement deal with Zildjian. Currently I'm using a 20" ride, anywhere from a 16" to an 18" crash, 13" or 14" hi-hats, and usually some kind of swish or trashcan cymbal. As far as heads go, I use calfskin on my snare because I like the way it sounds when I use my brushes. I have two tom-toms: a 12" and a 14". It's a Gretsch kit.

RS: What kind of music do you enjoy playing the most?

SM: I like doing it all. I can't see myself not doing any of the things I'm doing—except that I wouldn't mind giving up the wedding gigs, [laughs] I can give those up any time, believe me.

RS: When you look back at the last few years and the effort it took to get where you are now, was there ever a time when

the pressure or the frustration got so bad that you thought about doing something else?

SM: I don't think so. I've always loved music so much that if I got knocked down, it would make me work harder to pull myself up. I remember one thing that happened to me when I was living up in Binghamton. Someone suggested that I play with Rodney Dangerfield, who was in town for a show. When I got to the audition, his manager came out and shook his finger and said, "No, no, Rodney won't work with a woman." Well,

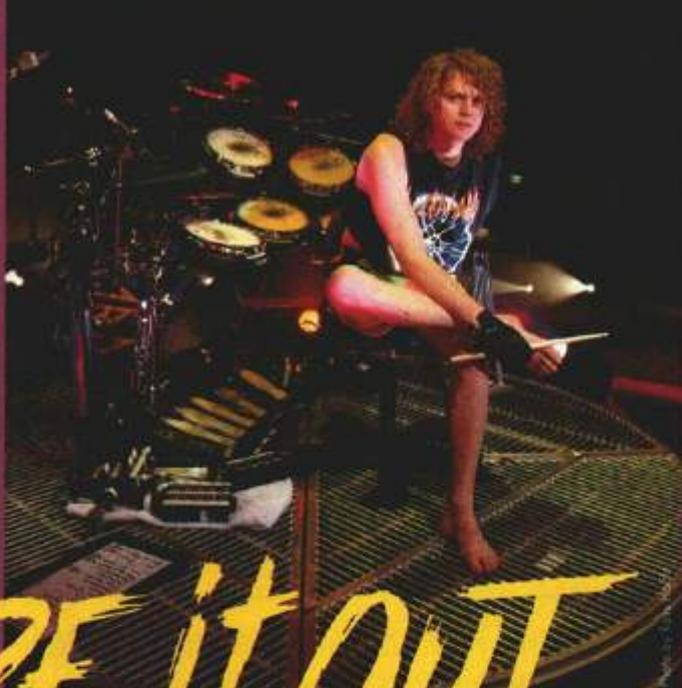
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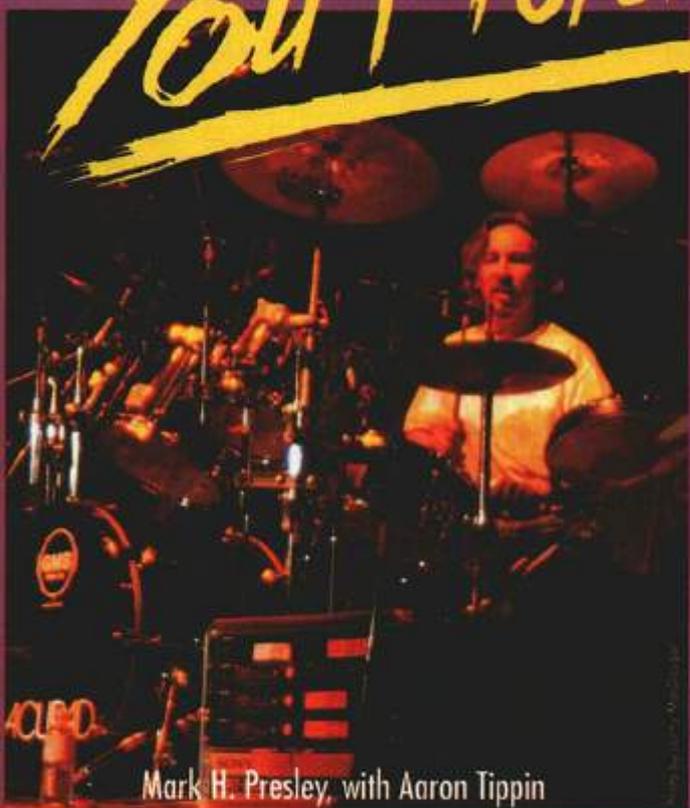
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that turned into a big scandal in Binghamton. It hit the papers and was in the news. The union wouldn't send any musicians. It was only a trio job, but it did say "three male musicians" in his contract. The reason was that part of his show was to make fun of the musicians, like "I've been on the road with these guys for twenty years...." Looking back, I can understand the show-business aspects of the incident, but at the time I was very upset. I went around telling everyone, "I can play this job, I can do it!"

RS: What advice would you give to an aspiring female drummer?

SM: I'd say don't let your gender influence you one way or the other. Once I had a teacher yell out, "Stop playing like a girl!" He yelled at the whole band, but I was the only female in it. I just started laughing. I started to use that line with my own students—who are mostly guys. I'll say something like, "Hey, you're playing like a girl." It's funny; for the longest time I wanted to be one of the guys. I'd wear a tuxedo, and I had real short hair. I did everything I could think of to make everyone forget I was a woman. Now I don't do that.

RS: Do you regret having done that?

SM: No. I felt like I needed to do it, because it was the only way into the circle.



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RS: Do you think that the scene has opened up for female drummers in the last few years?

SM: Yes—but it's opening slowly. One of the things that I'm most excited about concerning this all-women big band is that it is really *good*. No one wanted it to be a "tits-and-ass" band—and it's not, thank God.

RS: I've always thought that by virtue of being women, female musicians had the potential of bringing new insight to the instruments or to the music they played.

SM: That's really true. Frank Morgan, the saxophone player, called me up one time and said, "Sherrie, I'm thinking of putting together an all-female rhythm section, because women are so much more sensitive than men." I don't know if that's true, but I do think women can bring in new ideas and new approaches to playing the drums—and to jazz in general.

RS: Where do you see yourself in, say, five years?

SM: I'd really like the chance to record some of my percussion ensemble music. I'd also like the chance to play with great musicians and see how far I can go in this business. I couldn't ask for more than that.



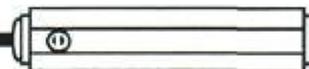
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Sandy Gennaro



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As a long time DC faculty member, Michael has been instrumental in helping establish the current DC curriculum. His performance credits include Chuck Berry, Jerry Jemmott, and numerous Broadway shows. He is the author of *Welcome to Odd Times* and *Understanding Rhythms*.

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Para-Triplets

by Stanley Ellis



The single paradiddle is most often found in groups of four simply because of its sticking—RLRR or LLLL—a natural grouping of four. When these stickings are used with groups of six or three (sextuplets or triplets), some extremely interesting rhythms occur. Below is the paradiddle in its most common 8th-note form, and then in sextuplets, 8th-note triplets, and quarter-note triplets.



The following examples use an 8th-note triplet paradiddle figure. They are to be played at the drumset. Work at them slowly until the sticking and hand movements feel comfortable, then increase the speed. You might want to try playing the hi-hat with your left foot, pulsing beats on 2 and 4.



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⁽¹⁾ Music & Sound Retailer, Volume 8, No. 11, November 15, 1991. Hands On: by Billy Messinelli.

⁽²⁾ Modern Drummer Magazine, July 1992. Electronic Review, Boom Theory Spacemuffins™ by Richard Watson.

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FRISELL, MARC RIBOT, GERI ALLEN, DON
BYRON, LEONARD COHEN, ELVIS
COSTELLO, DR. JOHN, VERNON REID,
ROBERT QUINE, ROBBIE ROBERTSON,
GARY LUCAS, and others
Canon (Part 1); Meditations On
Integration; Canon (Part 2); Jump
Monk; Weird Nightmare; Work Song;
Self Portrait In 3 Colors; Purple Heart;
Tonight At Noon; Gunslinging Bird;
Weird Nightmare (Interlude); Another
Weird Nightmare Interlude (Part 2);
Reincarnation Of A Love Bird/Haitian
Fight Song Montage; Open Letter To
Duke; The Shoes Of The Fisherman's
Wife Are Some Jive Ass Slippers; Oh
Lord Don't Let Them Drop That
Atomic Bomb On Me; Eclipse;
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ed combinations, the artists
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breadth of Mingus, man and
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bop, and atonal elements
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you feel his anger, paranoia,
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Touch Me There; No More Mr. Nice
Girl; Love Gone Away; Darlene;
Windy Morning; Knee-Deep In
Heaters



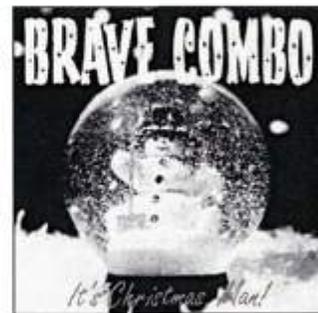
Here's a re-released disc
that was out of print for some
time. Recorded in 1979, this
Frank Zappa-produced gem
features some over-the-top
playing by one of drum-dom's
favorites, Simon Phillips. The

music sounds a bit like the
Dregs, a bit like Ponty, and of
course a bit like Zappa's late
'70s bands. It's fun to hear
Simon stretch out in this style
on his old single-headed
Ludwig kit. (You'll recognize
the sound from Pete Town-
shend's *Empty Glass* and
some of Simon's other early
efforts.) With plenty of double
bass, unique time patterns,
sweeping tom fills, and
Simon's youthful exuberance,
this is one of those discs
you're glad to have in your col-
lection. (*Barfko-Swill, Box*
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• **William F. Miller**

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JEFFREY BARNES: sx, clr, gtr, org, vcl
MITCH MARINE: dr, perc, vcl
Must Be Santa; O, Christmas Tree;
It's Christmas; Corrida Navideno;
The Christmas Song (Chestnuts);
Christmas In July; Please Come
Home For Christmas; Hanukkah, Oh
Hanukkah; Frosty The Snowman;
The Little Drummer Boy; Santa's
Polka; Feliz Navidad; Ave Maria;
Buon Natale; Jingle Bells



This might be the first
Christmas album you could
listen to year 'round without a
second thought. Each and
every Brave Combo album has
been a virtual study-book in

world music styles, and *It's Christmas, Man!* is no exception. Leader Carl Finch has always insisted, though, in keeping the rock 'n' roll spirit very alive, so if you think that you're too hip to listen to polka (a Brave Combo staple), think again.

As usual, drummer Mitch Marine covers transcontinental styles with flair and fire, whether it's "Santa's Polka," the guaguanco of "The Little Drummer Boy," or the hora of "Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah." This is actually Marine's final album with the band, after nine years of impeccable service. Mitch is one of those rare drummers who masters many styles without sounding "studied"; he simply rips through whatever style the Combo appropriates with the spirit of a master polka, klezmer, Latin, or whatever kind of drummer. Move over, Bing—it's Christmas, man!

• Adam Budofsky

sounds like one of the most promising new bands nobody's ever heard of—kissing the ear with delicate trimmings, then slapping you in the face with heavy riffs.

Drummer Ken Coomer takes advantage of the band's intra-song stylistic changes to show off his ride hand and his feel for dynamics. Clockhammer seems to relish the rock jams most, where guitarist Bailey cuts loose—for instance, on "Next Month," where Coomer's deceptively intricate beat helps punctuate Bailey's solo. But the drummer is at his best during the slower, jazzier passages. And his quick but loose ride work helps bridge the gaps during the band's abrupt mood swings, such as on "Standing By," where a heavy-handed riff gives way to a double-time chorus.

Clockhammer goes out of its way to avoid falling into a particular niche, but carries that same diversity within each song—which, ironically, results in their unpredictability becoming *predictable*. With a little more direction, though, Clockhammer could be a real up-and-comer on the alternative circuit. (*First Warning*, 594 Broadway, Suite 1104, New York, NY 10012)

• Matt Peiken

STEVE KHAN

Headline

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STEVE KHAN: gtr

RON CARTER: ac bs

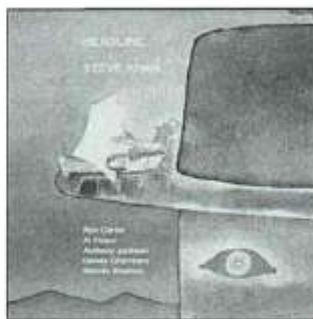
AL FOSTER,

DENNIS CHAMBERS: dr

ANTHONY JACKSON: bs

MANOLO BADRENA: perc

Tyrone; The Blessing; Autumn In Rome; Turnaround; Ontem A Noite; Water Babies; All Or Nothing At All; Hackensack; Caribbean Fire Dance



Steve Khan has high standards when it comes to drummers. His complex and intricate instrumental music has challenged some of our masters, including Gadd, Cobham, Weckl, and Jordan. With *Headline*, Al Foster (picking up where he left off on Khan's 1991 release, *Let's Call This*) and Dennis Chambers leave their own individual marks on the guitarist's music.

Foster and bassist Carter accompany Khan on six tracks, *Al once again* demonstrating why he is clearly one of the best jazz drummers working today. With great touch and sensitivity, Al swings hard, and within the trio format he mixes it up admirably. (Check out "Water Babies.") I'd buy the disc for his six tracks alone, but there's also Dennis.... Yes, the "chopsmeister" himself appears on three tracks with Khan, bassist Jackson, and percussionist Badrena. Dennis's presence is strongly felt, most notably on "Caribbean Fire Dance." It's classic Chambers: a powerful funk/fusion groove, lots of doubles between the hi-hat and ride, some beat displacement, a little double-pedal action, and a solo that has the drums screaming for mercy. The "headline" for this disc should read: "Drummers Must Buy!"

• William F. Miller

ANDY NARELL

Down The Road

Windham Hill 101392

ANDY NARELL: steel pans, pno, kybd

STEVE ERQUIAGA: gtr

KEITH JONES: bs

PAUL VAN WAGENINGEN: dr

KARL PERAZZO, Luis CONTE: perc

Out Of The Blue; Kalimba; Sea Of Stories; Green Ballet; Sugar Street; One Last Goodbye; Down De Road



As with his six previous releases, on *Down The Road* steel pan drummer Andy Narell mixes stylized music forms (jazz, funk, and Latin folk) with lush, bittersweet melodies performed by top-notch session players. Narell's gift for pulling a beautiful sound out of the steel pan drum is matched by compositional ability, a rare combination at a time when technically astounding players abound but those who can write memorable tunes are rare.

Narell's sound is warm and evocative, so wet and resonant, it can mirror a church organ for depth or a simple kalimba (thumb piano) for pristine directness. He plays the melodies with such grace, it's easy to get lost in the music, so cohesive is the sound.

Down The Road hints at many rhythms and styles—soca, guaracha, songó, baião, rumba, calypso, merengue—and drummer van Wageningen is a firecracker, buoyantly snapping the music ahead with

CLOCKHAMMER

Klinefelter

First Warning 72705-72705-2

Byron Bailey: vcl, gtr

Ken Coomer: dr

Matt Swanson: bs

Greying Out; Bluest Eyes; Standing By; Nullify; Away; Hollows; Years Of Days; Destination; Next Month; Drone; Mitch's Theme



Pick one song, almost any on this record, and Clockhammer

sparse counter-rhythms. His approach is similar to that of William Kennedy, but with a lighter touch, brisker time feel, and generally higher-tuned drums.

A staunch advocate of expanding the steel drum's role in modern music as well as documenting its history, on *Down The Road* Andy Narell connects with his roots—and continues to push the boundaries of his instrument.

• **Ken Micallef**

VIDEO

THE POLYRHYTHM VIDEO

by Peter Magadini

P.O. Box 1818
Champlain NY 12919

Time: 40 minutes

Price: \$24.95

Respected drum educator Peter Magadini addresses a topic many of us are secretly or openly afraid of: polyrhythms. Magadini demonstrates how polyrhythms can be analyzed in terms of mathematical ratios, and the importance of perceiving them holistically, so that, for instance, seven over four is equally and simultaneously four over seven.

The video provides a basic understanding of, respectively, three, five, six, and seven over four, and their subdivisions. Although not an end in themselves, sound patterns created when unequal ratios are played together provide another way of conceiving "odd" pulse relationships. Magadini applies the rhythms around the kit, and, in a single lengthy improvisation, demonstrates metric modulation, the mental re-definition of the overlaid pulse in a polyrhythm—such as the five in five against four—as the "primary" pulse.

The Polyrhythm Video is not

without its shortcomings. Grasping some of the concepts can be challenging because Magadini maintains the pulse of four on the bass drum and hi-hat, yet the bass drum is almost inaudible in the mix. The hi-hat only sounding on the upbeats on all but the first example only adds to the challenge. Also, I believe most students would have benefited from examples of sound patterns for each of the polyrhythms covered; only the first is performed. And in the improv section, since Magadini offers no explanation of the rhythmic links or how they are approached, the viewer may be left more impressed than enlightened.

Despite its faults, though, *The Polyrhythm Video* does clarify the basics and promote an open-minded awareness of polyrhythms, which will help us integrate them unmechanically into our playing.

• **Richard Watson**

BOOKS

THE BABY DODDS STORY

As Told To Lam Gara

Louisiana State University Press
Baton Rouge LA 70893

Price: \$9.95

First published in 1959 and revised for this new edition, *The Baby Dodds Story* traces the life of Warren "Baby" Dodds, one of the most influential drummers in jazz. The story is told entirely through his reminiscences, which Larry Gara collected during a series of interviews in 1953. The musicians he worked with through the years—in the Storyville district of New Orleans, on Mississippi riverboats, and at Chicago and New York jazz clubs—include all the great names of early jazz: King Oliver, Louis

Armstrong, Bunk Johnson, Kid Ory, Jelly Roll Morton, and many others.

Dodds did not go into great technical detail about his drumming, but little tidbits turn up here and there, such as the time Gene Krupa asked Dodds how he could play so softly using sticks (Dodds detested brushes), an explanation of why he played bass drum with the then-unheard-of "heel up" technique, and the reason he preferred playing on the shells of his drums rather than using woodblocks. There are also references to the importance of drummers coming up with gimmicks, such as Dodds' "shimmy" beat, which involved frantic shaking of the body.

In this revised edition, Gara has provided an updated discography that includes currently available CD reissues of Dodds' work. Whether listening to Dodds on recordings or reading this book, one may be surprised at how relevant much of his playing and philosophies still are.

• **Rick Mattingly**

RHYTHMS AND TECHNIQUES FOR LATIN TIMBALES

by Victor Rendon
VR Publications
327 12th Street
Brooklyn NY 11215
Price: \$12.00

This is an 80-page, spiral-bound book with clear, easy to read notation. The author begins by acquainting the reader with timbale terms and a key for the musical notation. There is also a short but informative "History Of The Timbales." Following is an explanation of the timbale setup, stick types and sizes, and the variety of sounds that

can be produced from the timbale setup.

The timbale rhythms covered are afro, bolero, cha cha cha, cumbia, charanga, danzon, guaguanco, guaracha, and many more. Some of these are actually adaptations for the timbales. The merengue, for example, does not use timbales in the traditional form, but the author has adapted the tambora part to the timbales, which is common practice in bands that play a variety of Latin music. The son clave and rumba clave are covered with notation and with text.

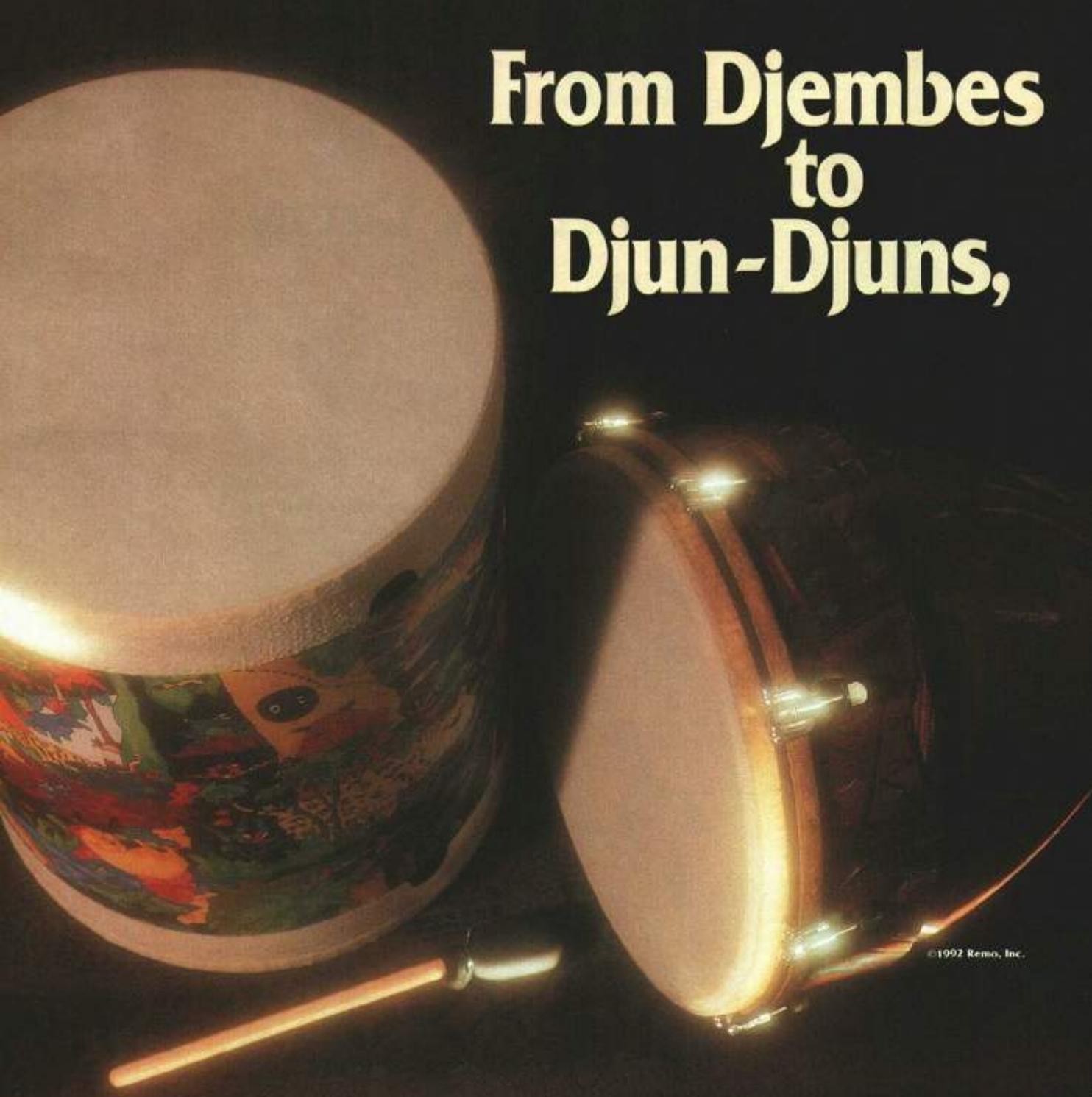
Accompanying each rhythm is a short description of its roots, evolution, the tempo at which it is played, and any pertinent facts that would help with interpretation. The book also contains 31 very challenging and fun bell patterns to which five independence exercises are added.

In the "90s And Forward" section, Rendon discusses the changes in musical styles and the effect on the timbales. Two songo rhythms are illustrated and credited to Jose Luis Quintana (Changuito), along with some additional "Grooves By Changuito," including a guaracha paila pattern, a double bell pattern, and a groove with one hand playing two bells while the other hand is keeping a steady pulse. The book concludes with more independence exercises in cut time and 6/8, using the clave as an ostinato.

Rhythm And Techniques is very well-written and supplies much-needed information about timbales and Latin music—a must for every Latin percussionist's library.

• **Glenn Weber**





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REMO USA



Mickey Curry: "Papa"

■ Transcribed by Jeff Wald

This month's *Rock Charts* features Mickey Curry on a record by a relatively new artist, David Mullen. On "Papa," from the *Faded Blues* disc (Warner Bros. 26591-2), Mickey plays solid time, and does a lot of things with his left foot on the hi-hat and with ghost notes on the snare. (All unaccented snare notes in this chart are ghosted.) There are also some great fills here, which are all in the pocket. And, you might notice that Curry frequently leaves out the hi-hat on 2 and 4 when he plays the backbeat on the snare, a la Charlie Watts. It's a fine performance from Mickey.

MUSIC KEY

Open	O	CC	Closed
Hi-Hat	X	Snare	TT
TT	TT	TT	TT
TT	TT	TT	TT
TT	TT	TT	TT
TT	TT	TT	TT
TT	TT	TT	TT
TT	TT	TT	TT

The image displays ten staves of drum notation. Each staff is composed of two lines: the upper line contains rhythmic notation with notes, rests, and accents, while the lower line contains bass drum notation with 'x' marks and stems. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Specific rhythmic features include a sixteenth-note triplet in the first staff and several triplet markings throughout the piece. The music is presented in a clear, professional layout with consistent spacing and notation.

This page contains ten staves of musical notation for a drum set. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The notation is primarily composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together in groups. Many notes are marked with an accent (>) above them. Some notes have an 'x' above them, indicating a specific drum sound. There are several triplet markings (a '3' above a group of three notes) and some notes with a circled 'o' above them. The bottom staff of each system is often a continuation of the rhythm from the staff above, with some notes beamed across the bar line. The overall style is that of a contemporary drumming exercise or a short piece of music.

This page contains ten staves of drum notation. The notation is written on a single-line staff with a clef and a key signature of one flat. The music consists of various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Accents (>) and articulation marks (x) are used throughout. Specific patterns are labeled with numbers: a triplet of eighth notes is labeled '3' on the third staff; a sixteenth-note run is labeled '6' on the fourth staff; and another triplet of eighth notes is labeled '3' on the seventh staff. The notation is organized into measures, with some measures containing rests.



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When Calfskin Was King: Part 1

■ by Woody Thompson

Throughout human history, man has used animal hide to create the vibrating membrane that produces the unique sound of a drum. In the majority of the world's cultures today this continues to be true. However, since the introduction of the *Mylar* drumhead in the late 1950s, the natural skin head has become almost completely obsolete among Western-style percussionists. In fact, many drummers who started playing within the

slaughtered for the veal market. In the trade these are known as "skins"—as opposed to "kips" or "hides," which come from more mature animals. The skin of younger cows is thinner and possesses a tighter fiber than that of older animals, making it more suitable for musical applications. Snare-side heads were made from "slunks," the skin of unborn calves. These were extremely thin and very responsive heads, usually no more than 15" or 16" in diameter, due to the small size of the unborn animal. The skins used in head-making are also known as "rawhide," since the process used to manufacture them stops short of the more involved tanning process used in the creation of shoe and garment leather. The hide is thus in a more "raw" state.

Calfskin head-makers were able to offer a variety of head weights and thicknesses, based on the maturity of the cows from which they came. Calfskin was used to make heads up to about 32" in diameter; larger heads had to come from kips or hides. (A 98"-diameter bass drum head made in the 1970s for



Trimming the hide



The hair was removed from the hide by machine.



The hide was shaved to an even thickness.

last thirty years are not even aware that drums were ever fitted with anything other than synthetic, weatherproof, pre-mounted, factory-tested drumheads. But indeed, prior to the late 1950s, the drumming world was blessed/cursed with the beautiful but temperamental material for drumheads known as calfskin.

It was an era when American drumming was more in touch with its organic antecedents, when drum sounds were truly produced by wood and skin, when drumhead-makers were closer to tanners than to chemists, and when being a serious drummer meant being versed in the skills of head-tucking and head-conditioning. Today, calfskin head-making and maintenance are nearly lost arts in this country, but from the 1920s through most of the '50s, the calfskin head business thrived, hand-in-hand with the commercial drum industry.

The Process

Snare drum, tom-tom, marching drum, and timpani heads were made from the hides of yearling cows—most of them

the University of Michigan by United Rawhide was created from the hide of a large, mature bull. It was thicker and less resonant than calfskin but was the only kind of hide big enough for the job.)

The manufacture of calfskin drumheads required great care in order to ensure that drummers were offered a quality product. The major drumhead manufacturers in the U.S. used essentially the same basic process: First, the skins of young cows were removed from the animals at the slaughterhouses. The skinners had to be extremely careful not to mar the skins. This operation was carried on at the meat company plants—out of the direct control of the head-makers. As a result, the drumhead manufacturers would often pay a premium price for their skins to ensure that they were carefully removed from the animals. The newly flayed skins were then dried and salted, in order to preserve them, and delivered to the head-makers.

At the head-making plants the skins were soaked in water to rehydrate them, and put through a machine that removed the flesh from the inside of the skin. This was a crucial step in the

process, so fleshing machines had to be watched closely to ensure that their razor-sharp knives did not scratch or damage the skins. Next a "pack" of fleshed skins was immersed in vats containing water, lime, and sulfhydrate, which would loosen the hair from the skins. The skins were then put on a machine that would remove the loosened hair from the hide. This step—especially in the early years—was often done by hand by skilled "skivers" or "scudders" using double-handled knives. The skins would be draped over a large wooden work surface known as a "beam" and shaved with a knife to remove impurities like hair, lime deposits, and oil. Such an operation would ensure a blemish-free head (particularly important for timpani) and was the first step in creating uniform thickness—a crucial feature of a quality head. Even when hairing machines were in widespread use, a skilled workman with his knife and beam could touch up imperfections in the skin that the machine might have missed.

Next, the skins were washed with an enzyme solution in a

heads of various sizes. Any remaining imperfections had to be located and cut around. The final cutting of heads was often done by hand, but in later years Howard Emory, of American Rawhide, designed a machine to do the cutting automatically. The smaller pieces left over after the cutting operation were often used for smaller instruments, such as tambourines.

Slunk and timpani heads underwent an additional step before they were cut out. During drying they were stored in a smoking room, where sulphur was burned in a pot. The sulphur smoke created a sulfuric acid wash on the surface of the head, which would result in greater head transparency.

Once the heads had been dried and cut to size, they were given a final buffing or sanding to ensure that they were even in thickness. The sensitive hands of a skilled craftsman were necessary at this point to feel out spots in the head that needed attention. Sorters would then go through the finished heads and select the proper thicknesses for marching drums, orchestral drums, or bass drums. Some of the finished heads would



Stretching and tacking a hide



Cut heads were sorted for size and quality prior to tucking.



Tucking a head

Photos courtesy of Sis LoCombe

process known as "bating" in order to remove remaining impurities—particularly lime deposits. They were also bleached with hydrogen peroxide to remove any pigmentation that would color the finished product. The wet skins were then tacked onto boards with large spiked nails and allowed to dry.

It was at this point that unmarred high-quality skins were selected for use as timpani heads. Skins destined to be snare, bass, or tom heads would be stretched tightly on the drying boards and allowed to "break white" during the drying process. As the head dried, it would contract on the board, resulting in stress that would fracture the fibers of the skin. This would cause the skin to turn white, resulting in the durable, all-white material used for most drumheads. Timpani heads and slunk heads, however, were tacked loosely to the drying boards so that the skin fibers would not be stressed and the head would emerge from the drying process as a honey-colored, translucent material. A translucent head was considered more responsive and capable of a greater range of tuning—important factors in snare-side and timpani heads.

The skins were now ready to be untacked and cut into round

be kept in the plant for mounting. Others would go out to the drum manufacturers. Drum-makers like the William F. Ludwigs (Sr. and Jr.) and H.H. Slingerland and his son Bud would select their own heads and mount them in their own facilities.

Calfskin heads were mounted on wooden hoops (often cut from drum shells). These were called "flesh hoops" because the edges of the underside (or flesh side) of the skin were wrapped around the wooden hoop while wet. When allowed to dry on the hoop, there was sufficient natural glue in the flesh side of the skin (furniture glue is a by-product of cow flesh) to adhere to the wood and keep its shape around the hoop. This formed a strong bond between hoop and skin, allowing the head to be tightened down on a drum without pulling out. Mounting or "tucking" was a task usually performed by women at both the head-making plants and the drum companies.

Any newly mounted head that was not immediately put on a drum was put on a "retainer" in order to keep the now-wet flesh hoop from warping. Retainers were 3"-deep sections cut from drum shells of different diameters, equipped with single-tension claw-hooks and wooden counterhoops. The still-wet

heads were placed on each side of the retainer (as they would be on a drum) and allowed to dry for at least three days. Under the pressure of the counterhoop, the flesh hoop would then dry without warping. Thus a proper "collar" (the part of the head extending over the bearing edge) could be set and maintained. The retainers were stored vertically in racks or stacked pyramid-style so that air could circulate over the drying heads. Drying slunk heads were covered with newspaper to prevent them from drying too fast and breaking white. Retainers were regularly offered for sale in the Ludwig catalog and were often purchased by music retailers for use in their own in-store mounting services.

Unlike the *Mylar* heads of today, finished calfskin heads varied in sound quality from one head to the next. As a result, equipping a drum with a proper head was crucial to creating a first-class instrument. The Ludwig company in particular took a great deal of interest in selecting heads for their regular customers. Bill Ludwig, Jr. says: "The fact that drummers trusted us to select the proper weights of heads for their drums was the single greatest reason for our early expansion. According to my father, in the 1910-1919 period, many drummers would write on the order, 'Bill, pick me out a good one.' He would pick out the head, see that it was properly assembled, tune it up himself, and autograph it. Later, in the '20s, this became the *William F. Ludwig Select* stamp. I did the same thing in the '30s, '40s, and '50s. It was like magic. People wouldn't relate to the price as much as to the fact that one of the Ludwigs, who were drummers, could be trusted to know what heads should go for various uses. Whether it was concert, musical shows, circus, or marching, we knew."

The Companies

During the heyday of calfskin drumheads—the 1920s through the 1950s—there were three major independent manufacturers in the U.S.: American Rawhide Manufacturing Corp. (Amrawco), White Eagle Rawhide (Werco), and Oremus Rawhide. Two other companies, United Rawhide and National Rawhide, came on the scene in the early 1950s. All five were based in the Chicago area in order to be close to the cow-slaughtering industry—and, not incidentally, to two of the major U.S. drum companies: Ludwig and Slingerland. All were relatively small, family-owned operations. With the exception of the Emory family of Amrawco (who brought their tradition of leather-work from New England), each of these companies was founded by immigrants from Eastern Europe. In fact, George Durkovic of White Eagle, John Surak of National Rawhide, and Steve Palansky of United Rawhide were all from Brezova, Czechoslovakia—a well-known European leather-making center. Many of the workers in the

plants were Poles, Czechs, and Croations. Bill Ludwig, Jr. remembers them as big, mustachioed men who were equal to the physical demands of the job and seemingly undaunted by the smell, heat, and uncomfortable dampness of their work.

Among anyone associated with the calfskin head industry, the smell remains a vivid memory. Judith Janac, daughter of White Eagle's George Durkovic, recalls, "My father used to come home on the streetcar and, *boy*, people sure gave him plenty of room. He always had a seat! I used to complain about the smell to my father and he'd say, 'Oh, but the money doesn't smell, does it?' Later they were able to use some sort of chemical to counteract the smell."

Oremus, Werco, and Amrawco—each started in the late 1920s—found an expanding market for their products through the 1930s and '40s, particularly as band programs began to take hold in public schools. In the early years, companies like Ludwig, Leedy, and Slingerland manufactured their own heads, but by the 1940s they had increasingly begun to buy from the independent manufacturers. World War II created a very strong market, and the head-makers were kept busy filling government contracts for the military bands.

By the 1950s, the post-war baby boom had set up the beginnings of a huge market for drums and drumheads. In Cleveland, Ohio, the Grossman Music Co. was reviving Rogers Drums, and in New Orleans, Bill Hall was starting to import Premier Drums—adding two new, major players to the drum market already occupied by Ludwig, Slingerland, and Gretsch. The head-makers were working hard to meet the demand. John Emory of Amrawco estimates that his company was turning out three hundred heads a day during their peak years in the 1950s. Steve Palansky and John Surak, whose family businesses in Czechoslovakia had been usurped by the Communists, started their own calfskin head companies in this country. Chicago-made calfskin drumheads were the envy of the world, and the future looked bright. European percussionists had difficulty obtaining quality calf heads in their own countries, due to regulations prohibiting the slaughter of calves. Bill Ludwig, Jr. recalls them flocking to Chicago while on tour in America in order to stock up on American-made drumheads.

Unfortunately, for the calfskin head manufacturers, these peak years were about to come to an abrupt close. Progress was being made in the development of synthetic heads, and a new era in music was also dawning. In our next installment, we'll see what repercussions these changes had on the calf head industry.



Developing The Baião Pattern

by Mark Feldman

MUSIC KEY



The baião is a rhythm commonly found in contemporary Latin/jazz music. The following rhythm, which is the essence of the pattern, is played on the bass drum. It's the basic ingredient for this type of feel, just as the samba bass drum pattern locks in the

samba feel.

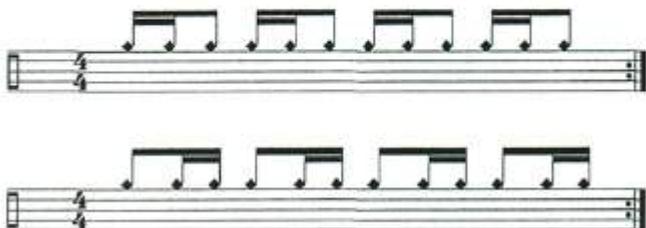


Since this type of rhythm is often played as an ostinato by the bassist, it is important to be able to play freely (independently) with the hands while maintaining the baião pattern with the bass drum. The following set of exercises will help you to develop independence with your hands against this foot pattern.



Once you have mastered the above exercises as written, go through them again, adding the hi-hat on the upbeats with your left foot. This should be a part of your basic foot pattern from now on.

Next, try playing different cymbal rhythms with your right hand, instead of quarter notes. Try the following:



Finally, play the exercises with both hands simultaneously, playing the rhythms written on the snare drum line (right hand on ride, left hand on snare).



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DRUMMING IN LAS VEGAS

continued from page 39

Bob Bonora plays with Jerry Tiffe, a classic Sinatra-style lounge singer. Bob's is a low-key, black-tie gig in a group tailored for entertaining high-rollers.

Mike Parrot drums for Hamilton, Joe Frank & Reynolds, a '60s/'70s rock 'n' roll act playing off-strip "local casino" showrooms such as Arizona Charlie's.

Jack Cenna is a classically trained percussionist who works in several of the major showrooms and also for convention contractors. Jack also leads the Las Vegas Marimba Quartet, for which Bob Bonora plays drums.

Jim Shaw is a member of Axis, a hard-rock band currently under development for major label exposure. The group also performs at local rock concert venues as part of an expanding rock/metal scene in town.

Job Requirements

The drummers listed above have the skills necessary to play any or all of the gigs to be found in Las Vegas. Most of those skills are musical, but other talents

are important, as well. Just what *are* the overall job requirements of a drummer working the Vegas scene?

First and foremost comes stylistic versatility. "Las Vegas is an entertainment town," says John Abraham. "It's not the place to say, 'I want to play rock...or jazz...or C&W.' You have to be able to do *all* those things—as well as to play for animal acts, comedians, jugglers—that side of things. A lot of hotels are going toward theme formats, and many musicians have marketed themselves that way: marimba quartets in the Caribbean-theme hotel, a Latin band in the Brazilian-theme hotel, etc. You have to be resourceful, rather than wait for work to come to you. Versatility is the key."

Gary Olds adds, "Anyone who comes here should have all their styles down—Latin, jazz, rock, and big band. And you should really be able to play with a click, because a lot of times some or all of the show material is sequenced. You also have to be relaxed enough to work with the click and still be able to catch

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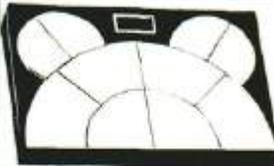
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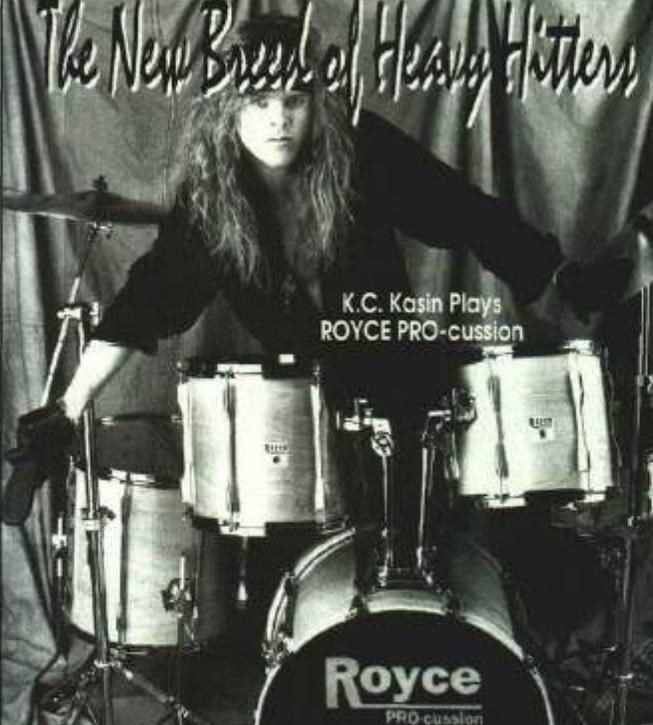
According to Tim Cooper, musical director for the Excalibur, a drummer must know how to read drum charts and conventional notation in order to work the main shows. "A lot of the time," says Tim, "I just throw Jeff Krashin a chart that I've scribbled for my own use." Jeff adds, "I like that, because then I know what instrument is playing what, and I can relate my part to that. Based on this experience, I'd say that interpretive skills would be an asset for any show drummer."

Clyde Duell offers a pragmatic suggestion: "Many times, the budget of the hotel won't allow for both a drummer and a percussionist, so an aspiring drummer coming here should be prepared to play percussion as well. You might play one or the other—or both at the same time." In fact, a player might actually approach Vegas from the percus-

sion side entirely, as Jack Cenna decided to do. Jack points out that the well-rounded Vegas percussionist needs to have skills on all members of the percussion family, including mallet keyboards, timpani, chimes, bongos, congas, and sound effects. "All the percussionists have great stories about playing juggling acts or animal acts and the sound cues involved," says Jack. "We can make or break an act."

Adam Shendal raises the issue of approaching Las Vegas drumming in a contemporary manner. "Some of the 'old guys' have fallen by the way," he says, "because they haven't kept up with the influence of fusion, R&B, rock, and electronic sounds. Drummers today have to be well-versed in all kinds of music and be able to make it *all* feel good—including the older, big band style." Joe Guerzio, Musical Director for the Mirage, the Nugget, and Arizona Charlie's, elaborates on this point, saying, "Musical progress is a fact of life, and stylistic changes happen. Drummers who are more knowledgeable and into all the

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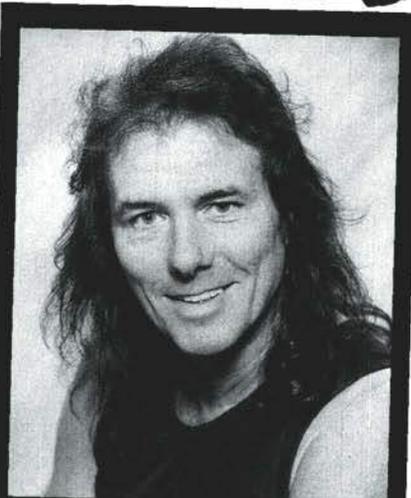


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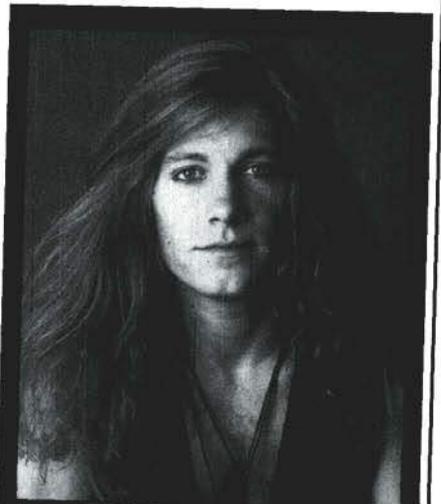


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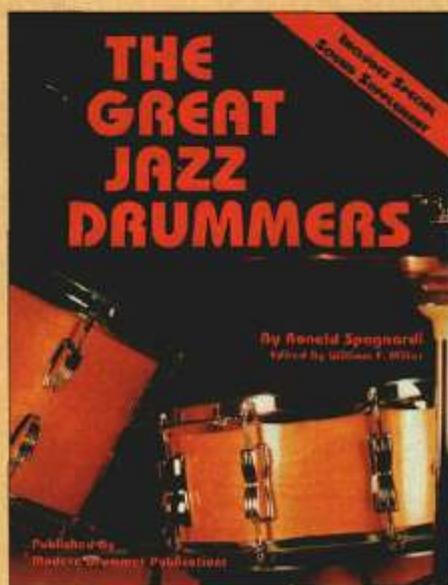
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contemporary styles are going to have the advantage."

Thom Pastor, secretary/treasurer of Local 369 of the American Federation of Musicians, points out the importance of technological awareness. "A lot of electronics are being used in the bigger showrooms," says Thom, "and it's trickling down to the lounges. The better players are absorbing and embracing the new aspects of the industry, and not being turned off by it." Joe Guercio puts even more emphasis on this point: "The drummers who are hip today are triggering electronics with their acoustic sets. Today's music just doesn't feature an acoustic kick drum flat-on; that's not what's happening. The successful guys know that and have the gear they need to provide contemporary sounds—and an electronic feed that I and my sound techs can work with."

Being able to adjust to the special requirements of a given act is also high on the requirements list for Vegas drummers. This may take the form of varying one's equipment choices, or adapting

one's actual playing style, as Michael Parrot explains. "The equipment requirements go from bringing in a complicated electronic setup to a simple acoustic set. You find yourself changing cymbal setups, head types, stick sizes—anything necessary to get the job done. In terms of playing, with Denise Clemente I have to be able to read well and play every note as written; Hamilton, Joe Frank & Reynolds just want a rock-solid '70s rock beat—otherwise I'm free to improvise. You have to be a real jack-of-all-trades to keep working here."

Sometimes the key to being successful is knowing what *not* to play. Bob Bono's work with Jerry Tiffe requires the most basic, simplistic drumming imaginable—at extremely low volume for a contemporary musical act. Bob's task is to meet Jerry's needs, provide appropriate support for the music, and still be creative and tasteful. Says Bob, "You have to let the artist's personality dictate what you play. If you don't have 'round shoulders' to let him tell you what to do, you won't survive."

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Which brings us to the subject of "attitude." Having the proper attitude toward a Vegas gig is as important as having the necessary musical abilities. "You could be the greatest player in the

world," says Adam Shendal, "but if people don't like working with you, they aren't going to hire you. You have to be flexible." Foster Wilson, musical director for the Las Vegas Hilton, adds, "I really

think more musicians have lost their jobs with their mouths than through lack of musical talent."

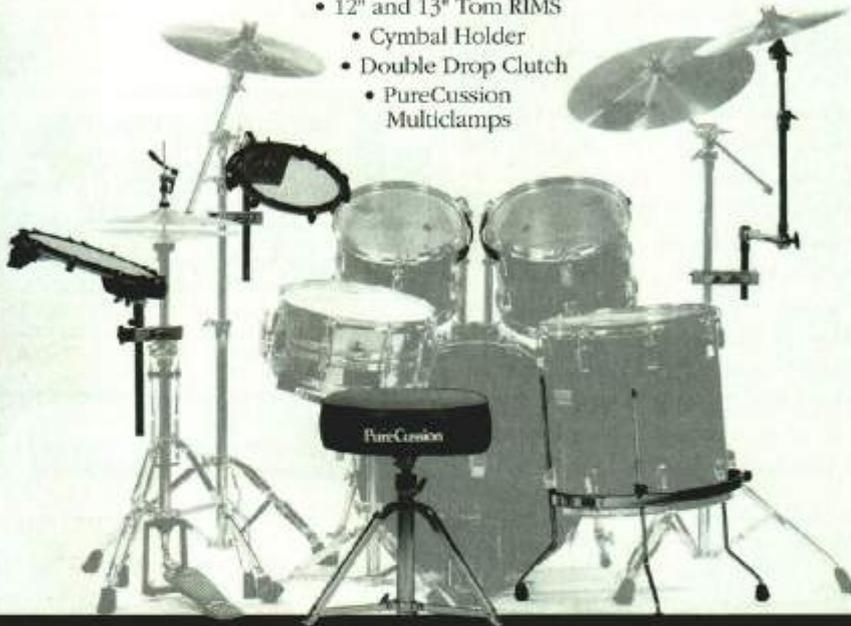
Dick Palombi, musical director for the Riviera hotel and *Jeff Kutash's Splash!*, illustrates the typical showroom situation: "We come in and do the same show, night after night, for six nights a week. We get lax, at times—and that's okay; I'll snap rubber bands with the best of 'em. But my band also knows that when it comes time to sharpen it back up, that's what we do. There are boundaries. I need a drummer who can maintain a professional attitude while having fun."

"You can't let your head go berserk if you *do* get an exciting gig," adds Gary Olds, "because things change very quickly around here. I know what it's like to play on the Arsenio Hall show and then fly back here and play with a lounge act in front of three people that same night."

Mike Parrot advises drummers to be prepared for the fact that some Vegas drumming can be downright menial. "You have to have patience," says Mike, "and the ability to take a second seat. In the casinos, gaming is number one, food and beverage is number two, janitors are number three...and musicians are somewhere further down the line. You're frequently stuck playing in a place with poor acoustics, you often can't use your

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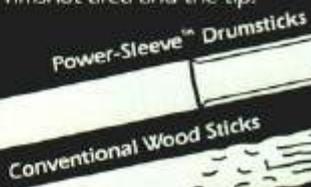
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high-tech gear, and half the time they bitch and moan about your volume. You still have to be able to groove and cook under these suppressive circumstances."

Being a successful Las Vegas drummer means more than meeting the requirements; it also means *maintaining* one's skills, as Clyde Duell explains. "You have to keep yourself alive, musically. If you get buried in a show, it's easy to go right into the toilet, playing-wise. I'm going to be 53 soon, and I've been doing this a long time. But I still want to stay out there and sound as good as I can. Just because I've got a steady job doesn't mean I'm going to play well every night. You have to practice *harder* and keep yourself *more* alert, because the job could end tomorrow and you might not be up to the requirements necessary to find a new one. You have to be very careful not to get dated or pigeonholed in a style.

"The young guys who can cut every-

thing are hungry," Clyde continues, "and it's getting worse. And some of them are willing to take lower-paying gigs in order to break into the scene—to get their turn. They're just waiting for someone in a position like mine to make a false move."

Business Skills

Even if a drummer is talented and has a good attitude, one more element is needed for success: business savvy. Marty Mahoney, who combines his work at the Professional Music Center and Drum Shop with playing and contracting a variety of casuals and special events, puts it bluntly: "I hate to say it, but 90% of the musicians I know aren't very good businessmen. They don't put the effort into developing a network, or keeping potential employers aware of their availability. I wind up working with—and hiring—the 10% who do. And there's plenty of work out there, if you make the effort

to go after it."

Speaking from the perspective of an employer, Foster Wilson comments, "Being on time...preparedness...these are the *business* aspects of the music business. A lot of musicians don't approach their craft as a profession. It's not all art; it's also a business—especially in this town."

Making and keeping the right contacts is critical, as Jack Cenna explains. "I don't know any successful musician who doesn't carry a datebook and/or have a cellular phone or check their answering machine or spend some time on the phone every day hustling jobs and staying in touch with contacts. That's what you have to do."

Conventions

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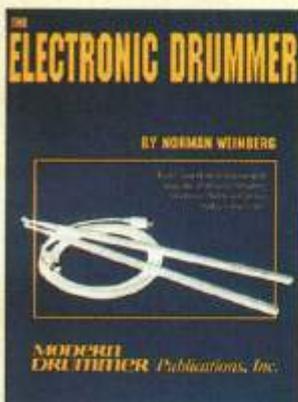
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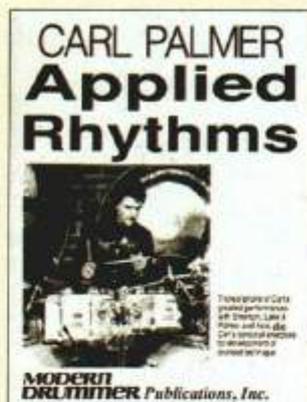
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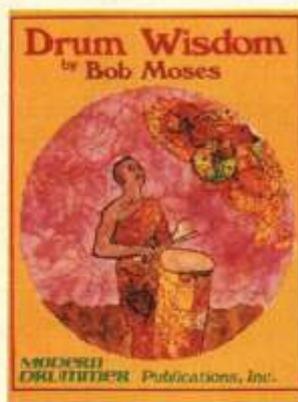
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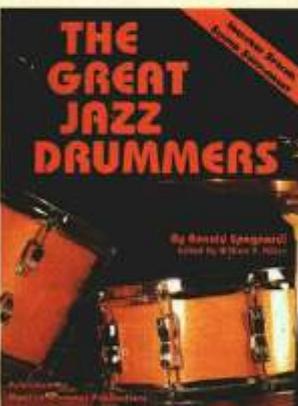
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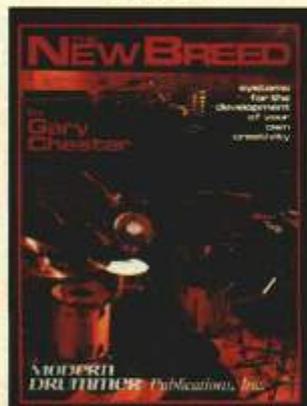
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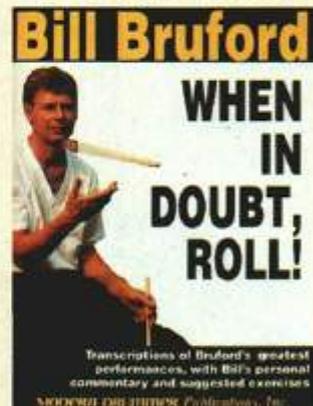
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fourth now. "It's not unusual to have a major industry take a whole week of convention dates here," says the union's Thom Pastor. "And while it may not show up on any marquee, that represents significant employment for musicians all over town. You might have a little cocktail party for 100 people with a jazz trio one night, a C&W theme party with 1,500 people and a couple of country bands the next night, a '50s/'60s sock-

hop the next night, and finally a black-tie awards dinner for 3,500 people with Wayne Newton in concert with a 35-piece orchestra. We have a lot of that taking place from October through May, because the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority engineers things to make the room rates very attractive."

The talents required in this market are much the same as for the hotels: reading, stylistic versatility, etc. But the

key is getting the call from the booking contractor, which takes networking effort. "You have to know the leaders/contractors doing the booking," says Gary Olds, "and you have to know which hotel entertainment directors are involved with *those* people. If you happen to be in a lounge act playing the Hilton, for instance, you might catch an influx of their convention work. But if you don't know the hierarchy, you won't know who to talk to to get that work."

Breaking In

Breaking into the Las Vegas scene isn't easy. An aspiring drummer would have to be very certain that attempting to enter this highly competitive market is what he or she really wanted to do. And even then, according to Jack Cenna, the best way would probably be to start somewhere else.

"One mistake a lot of people make is that they get out of school and come straight here," says Jack. "A player should get some experience first. Playing a marimba etude or a snare drum roll does not prepare a person for what's required here. When you start watching cues on stage for a juggler or an animal act, you need skills that you can't learn from a book. You can only learn it by doing it. And you have to get that experience first, because if you come here and are given a chance—and then make a major mistake—you're history. But if you come here prepared—in terms of technical abilities *and* experience—then you'll succeed."

Once a drummer does come to town—what then? How does a qualified player make his or her presence known to potential employers in order to land that first all-important gig? "You pound the pavement," answers Mark Dalzell. "Put notices up in Mahoney's store, call anybody you might know, and go to gigs and talk to people. It's good to have a demo tape that you can offer, because not all of the situations lend themselves to sitting in. Do anything you can to help get your reputation going."

Reputation is a key factor toward entering the Las Vegas work pool, because no musical director or band leader is going to hire anyone "sight-

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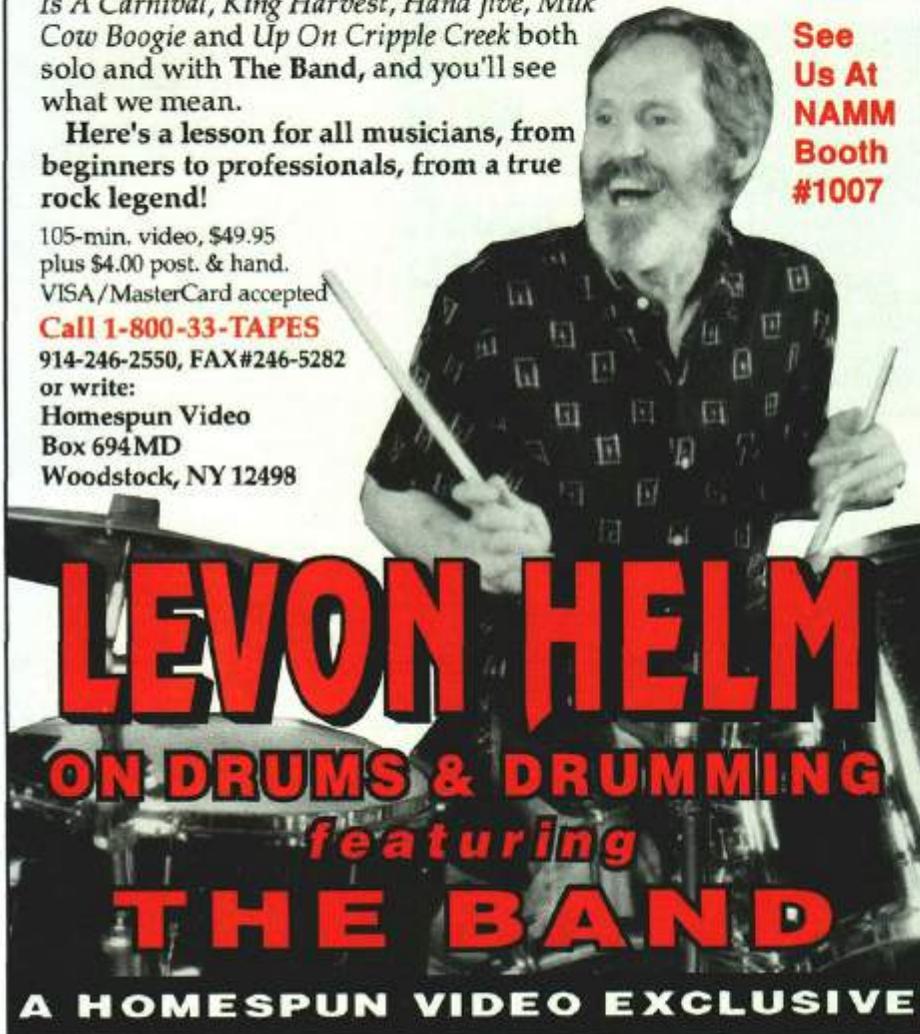
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unseen." As Foster Wilson puts it, "Suppose Adam Shendal were to give Wayne Newton his notice. What would be Wayne's procedure to replace Adam? He's not going to put an ad in the paper for auditions. Most likely, since he trusts Adam implicitly, he would ask him for recommendations. That's why it's so important to get your name and abilities out on the grapevine."

The most effective way for an individual drummer to get his or her name "out on the grapevine" is subbing. "A good sub is worth his weight in gold," says John Abraham, "because he allows you to take time off to do other things. But a lot of the shows involve intricate charts and electronics. If a drummer were to come to town with abilities in those areas, there's a good possibility he'd get a chance at subbing fairly quickly. Word gets out, and the steady players would want to use somebody like that."

Subbing arrangements are usually made between the drummer and the sub. "If you're the steady drummer,"

explains Clyde Duell, "you're personally responsible for obtaining and paying your sub. And he has to be as good as you are—or better—because if *he* screws up, it's *your* ass!"

Yet another vehicle for obtaining work is referral services. There are several in town, operated by contractors whose business it is to keep up on who's in town, who's got what skills, and who can cover what gigs. Many employers rely on these referral services to provide musicians to fill special needs. You'd have to take the initiative to contact these services and make your abilities known to them. But it's a way to get your name into the marketplace without having to do it all yourself.

Coming to Las Vegas on a booking of some sort gives you the enviable opportunity to "audition" while making a salary at the same time. But you still need to be heard by the *right* people. Luckily, that all-important Las Vegas "grapevine" can work to your advantage here, because when someone talented

comes into town with any act, the word gets out pretty quickly. For example, Clyde Duell played a two-week engagement at the Riviera with Totie Fields in 1972. Four days after the engagement closed, he was offered the position of house drummer.

When a particularly talented lounge group hits town, sometimes the word gets out on the group as a whole—and a Las Vegas career is born. "Quite a few successful lounge acts first came here as traveling acts," says Thom Pastor. "They met with success and decided to move here. We have local bands that work our casino lounges thirty to forty weeks per year."

The bottom line on "breaking in" in Las Vegas is that talent, dedication, ambition, and no small amount of chutzpah are all required. Irv Kluger, a long-time Las Vegas drummer and former staff drummer for movies and television, illustrates this by saying, "Everybody should come to town. See if you can compete. If you can't, you'll wind up

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going home. If you can, then knock somebody out of a gig! That's what I did. You don't want to; you don't feel good about it. But if the money is good, you take it. Competition is healthy; it makes everybody better players."

Clyde Duell adds a combination of pragmatic advice and encouragement: "If you're a young drummer coming to this town, you should have a few bucks in your pocket to make sure you can get back home. But come out and give it a shot; don't be bashful. You may get lucky. I'm getting old...you may get very lucky!"

Living Conditions

One appealing aspect of being a drummer in Las Vegas is the city itself. "It's a great place to work," says Tim Cooper. "The logistics of getting around here are very simple compared to New York or LA, and twenty minutes outside of this city you can sit in crystal-clear silence out in the desert. The cost of living here is low enough that a musician can buy a

house on what he makes. In fact, this is one place where a musician can get a mortgage for a house; it's a recognized and respected profession here."

"The quality of life here is better than in LA," adds Gary Olds. "You can send your child to school down the street without fear. The people here are very friendly."

The community spirit among drummers in Las Vegas is another plus, according to Mark Dalzell. "There's a lot of drummers in this town," says Mark, "and ninety percent of them help each other. It's a pretty close-knit family, and when a guy's been in town struggling for a while, some friends will call each other and try to get some work thrown his way."

"This town has been good to me," Mark continues. "I grew up here, and my wife and I just bought a house—something I don't think I would ever have been able to attain living in L.A. or New York. Despite the hard times, if you can keep your sanity with the role of sideman, there's a living to be made."

Outlook For The Future

While the employment scene in Las Vegas today isn't what it was ten years ago, it's still very attractive when compared to the rest of the country—and there is the possibility that it may get even better. Several new hotel/casino properties are under construction; their completion will increase the number of showrooms and lounges in town. At the same time, efforts to legalize gambling in other locations around the country present an intriguing possibility: that this competition might be an incentive for Las Vegas to re-emphasize its other attractions—particularly live entertainment.

"Entertainment is what brought people to this town in the first place," says John Abraham emphatically, "and it's what's going to keep them coming back—especially if gambling starts up in other parts of the country. It already exists in Atlantic City, Connecticut, and

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Mark Barnett offers a philosophical conclusion to our examination of the Las Vegas scene: "Las Vegas is built on the precept of people looking for excitement. It's a primordial desire. In the old days, the basic precept was: *Give the public a dream!* Today's economy may have caused management to take a change of attitude—temporarily. But they'll have to get back to selling the dream if they want to compete with other attractions around the country. And drummers will be an important part of that."

I'd like to offer my appreciation to the following people, who, although not represented in the above story, provided assis-

tance that was instrumental in the preparation of this report: Dan Trinter, president, Local 369, Musicians Union of Las Vegas; Mo Mahoney, owner of the Professional Music Center and Drum Shop; Barbara Hayes, director of entertainment, Riviera Hotel & Casino; Laura Dorman, publicist, Excalibur Hotel & Casino; Pete Peters, advertising and publicity, Imperial Palace Hotel & Casino; and Mike Weatherford, entertainment reporter, Las Vegas Review Journal.



I'd like to express my particular thanks to Rob Van Horn, of the Professional Music Center and Drum Shop. Without his help, guidance, and extra efforts on my behalf, this entire story would have been impossible. We may not really be cousins, but I couldn't wish for a better one.

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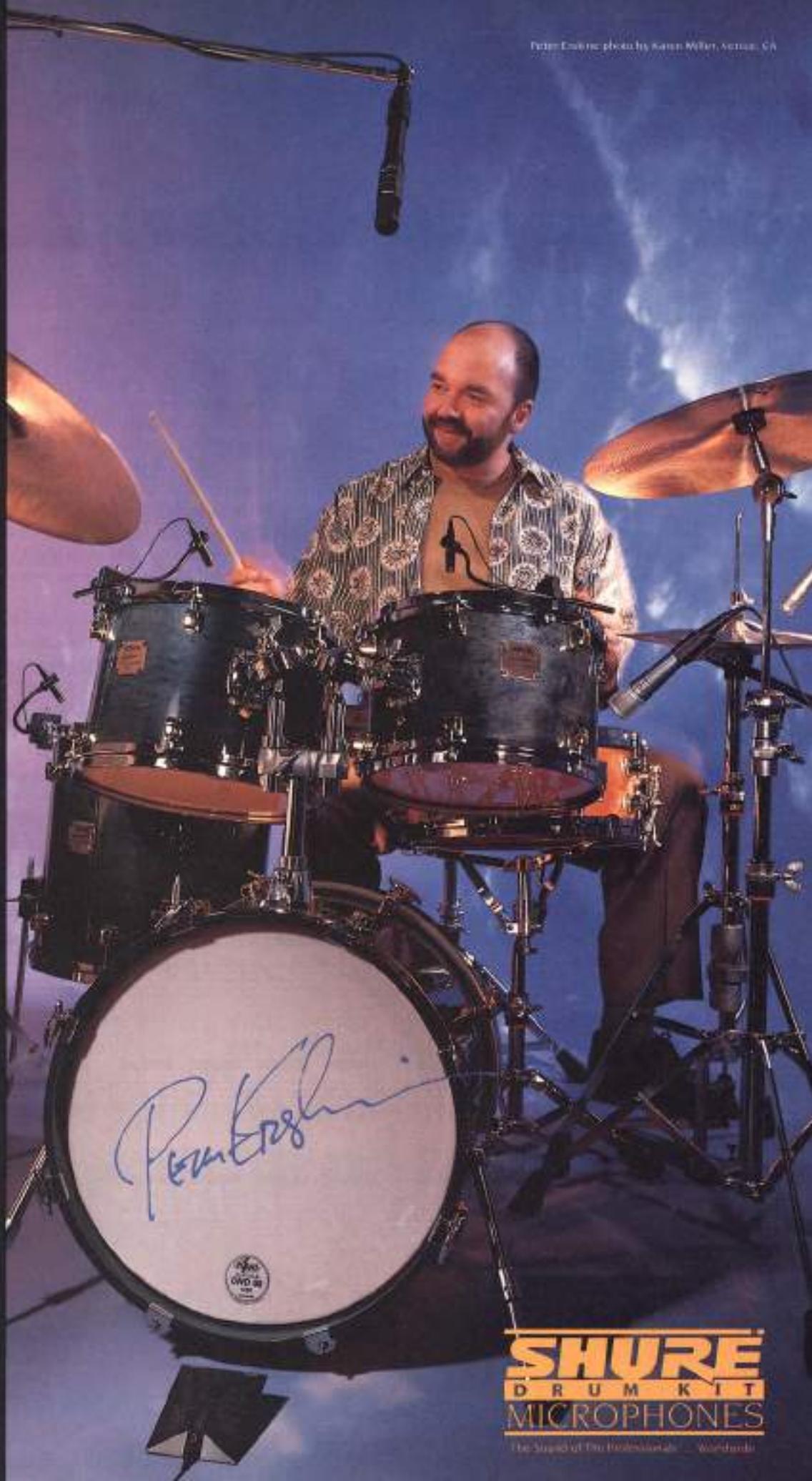


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Sideways 4/4: Part 2



by David Garibaldi



In Part 1 of this series (May '92 *MD*), I covered an 11/8 groove that had a feel that sounded similar to 4/4, hence the title "Sideways 4/4." Part 2 will cover the same groove, but in a much different application—this time we'll *really* make it feel

"sideways."

Just as a reminder, here's the groove from part 1:



Now let's take this pattern and play it as consecutive 16ths

over 4/4. That means you'll be playing 11/16 over 4/4. Take a look at the following example, which is one long exercise of 11 measures. The reason for this is that the original 11/16 pattern, repeated 16 times, returns to where it started after 11 measures, or 44 beats. Read through the exercise and you'll see how the pattern keeps going over the barlines until it

resolves back to measure one. Once you're able to do this comfortably, you'll notice that it is very easy to keep track of the 4/4.

The first step is to thoroughly learn the 11/8 pattern. When this is accomplished, go to the next exercise and begin working on it, one measure at a time, then put the measures together. The important key to this process is to count *aloud* while you are performing the individual measures and piecing them together. This is a difficult concept to master, but it will help you get to a place where you can play this exercise without sounding mechanical. The same approach can be taken with grooves in five, seven, nine, or any other odd time. So in this exercise you are actually playing the odd time within the context of 4/4. All of the individual measures can also be numbered and played as separate grooves.

Much of this process is a matter of ear training. You're teaching your ear to "hear" the basic time while the odd meter is being played within it. The individual measures have a unique sound because they are based upon 11 notes, but "feel good" because they're in 4/4. See you next time!



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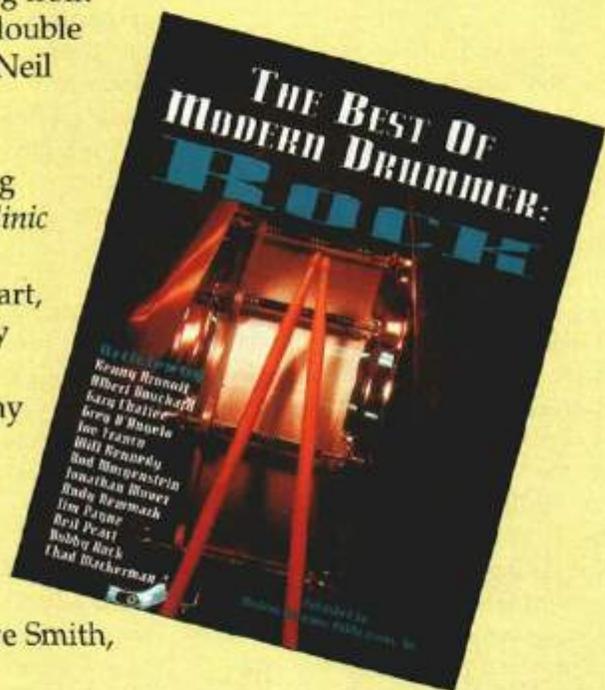
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And be sure to check out the many revealing *Style & Analysis* articles that offer a close-up, inside look at the unique styles of drummers like Bill Bruford, Steve Gadd, Omar Hakim, Larry Mullen, Simon Phillips, Steve Smith, Neil Peart, Alan White, and Terry Bozzio.

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Word Painting

by J.W. Brady

On Sting's album *The Soul Cages*, the song "Jeremiah Blues Part I" exemplifies an interesting musical concept. When Sting sings "Can't hear the rhythm for the drum," drummer Manu Katché emphasizes the line with a fill on the drums. By accentuating the word "drum" with a fill, Katché does what is called "word painting."

"Word painting" is performing, acting out, or making the sound of a word, line, or phrase that appears in the lyrics. A typical example of this is when a vocalist sings the words "high" or "low," and on those words hits a note higher or lower than those previously used. Thus the singer "paints" the lyric, giving it greater artistic expression.

The technique of word painting lends itself especially well to drums and percussion. Drummers can take advantage of words or phrases that have a percussive nature. We constantly hear lyrics that contain words such as "knock," "crash," "crack," "splash," "rap," and "tap." All these words can be painted with accents on the snare drum, cymbals, toms, and/or various percussion instruments. Other words that could merit attention from percussionists are "thunder," "rumble," "bang," "shoot," "boom," "bump," "beat," "drum," "bell," and "chime." Some phrases that can be made vivid with percussion are "knock on wood," "knocking on the (your) door," "the beat of your heart," or "tap of your footsteps." Such phrases can be painted with rimshots,

tom rolls, buzz rolls, and other appropriate rolls and/or hits on the drums, as well as with percussion devices such as cowbells, woodblocks, and a variety of noisemakers. A samba-type bass drum pattern is excellent for painting a heartbeat.

Verbs such as "running," "walking," and "marching" can also be painted with their respective phrasings or beats on the drums. For example, while playing a rock or funk groove, one might go into a march feel for a couple of measures when crossing the word "march" in the lyrics. If a song has a lyric such as "running to you," one might emphasize this with a roll on the snare and/or toms. The age of electronics makes word painting even more expressive; drum machines, triggers, and samplers can be used to custom-tailor sounds to specific words and phrases in the lyrics.

There are many examples of word painting by drummers in all styles of music. On the live version of Rod Stewart's "Hot Legs," the drummer accentuates the line "Who's that knockin' on my door?" with strong hits on the snare. Charlie Watts does something similar with the Stones' line "Can you hear me knockin'?" Billie Holiday opens "Polka Dots And Moonbeams" with the

line, "I hear a bump," and Roy Haynes paints "bump" with a bump on the bass drum. Russ Kunkel paints Jackson Browne's line "We got disco" in the tune "Stay" with a switch from a slow rock

beat to a disco groove for a few measures. And the B-52's accentuate "Bang, bang" in their song "Loveshack" with strong hits by the whole band.

The Beatles used word painting quite often. "Bang, bang" is emphasized with hits on a bell in "Maxwell's Silver Hammer." In "Penny Lane" the "clean machine (fire engine)" is illustrated with hits on a bell. One of the Beatles' most famous word paintings occurs in "Yellow Submarine" on the line "And the band begins to play." In this instance, a marching-band feel is introduced, along with full horns and drums of a marching band.

So keep your eyes and ears peeled for words of a percussive nature that can be painted with the drums. Word painting is a great technique that gives the drummer a chance to not only break out of the "groove," but to also show that he or she contributes to the musicality of the lyrics, and the overall expression of the idea in song.

"The technique of word painting lends itself especially well to drums and percussion. Drummers can take advantage of words or phrases that have a percussive nature."



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Louie Bellson Honored



Louie pictured with former teacher Tommy Thomas

The Vista International Hotel in New York City was the site of "A Night For Louie," a tribute honoring Louie Bellson's 62 years of drumming accomplishments. Sponsored by the National Drum Association and held on October 8, 1992, the evening featured several top drummers performing with Louie's Big Band Explosion, along with notable individuals from Louie's past.

Hosted by NDA director Jerry Ricci—and loosely structured on a *This Is Your Life* format—the event came as a complete surprise to Louie, who thought he was coming to give a drum clinic. When he walked in the door, he was met by the cheers of those assembled, and the strains of his famous "Skin Deep."

Drummers who performed with the band in Louie's honor were Al Miller, Les DeMerle, Dom Famularo, Charlie Persip, Butch Miles, and Steve Gadd. Each added words of tribute to their musical performance. Louie was also surprised by the appearance of his former teachers, Murray Spivak and Tommy Thomas—both in their 90's—who were on hand to pay their respects and offer some humorous anecdotes about the young Louie Bellson. Also on hand were *MD*'s Rick and Crystal Van Horn. Rick offered congratulations to Louie on behalf of the editors, staff, and readers of *Modern Drummer*.

Among the dozens of letters and mementos given to Louie during the evening was a certificate of appreciation from the City of New York, presented by a

commissioner from the office of mayor David Dinkins. Video greetings were sent by jazz great Phil Woods, and by Pro-Mark president Herb Brochstein. The evening closed with Steve Gadd presenting Louie with the National Drum Association's first "Lifetime Achievement Award," recognizing his contribution as a drummer, composer, arranger, bandleader, and remarkable human being.

MD Trivia Winner

The winner of a gold-plated Premier drumkit (offered in *MD*'s July, August, and September issues) is **Kathy Burkly**, of Roslindale, Massachusetts. Kathy knew that 1) Premier endorser Rod Morgenstein regularly contributes to *MD*'s *Rock 'N' Jazz Clinic* department; 2) *Resonator*, *Signia*, and *Projector* are three current series of Premier drums; and 3) the July '85 and July '90 issues of *MD* feature Rod on the cover. Those answers earned Kathy a duplicate of Rod's very special *Resonator* drumset, which was used on Winger's last tour and is worth \$14,000.

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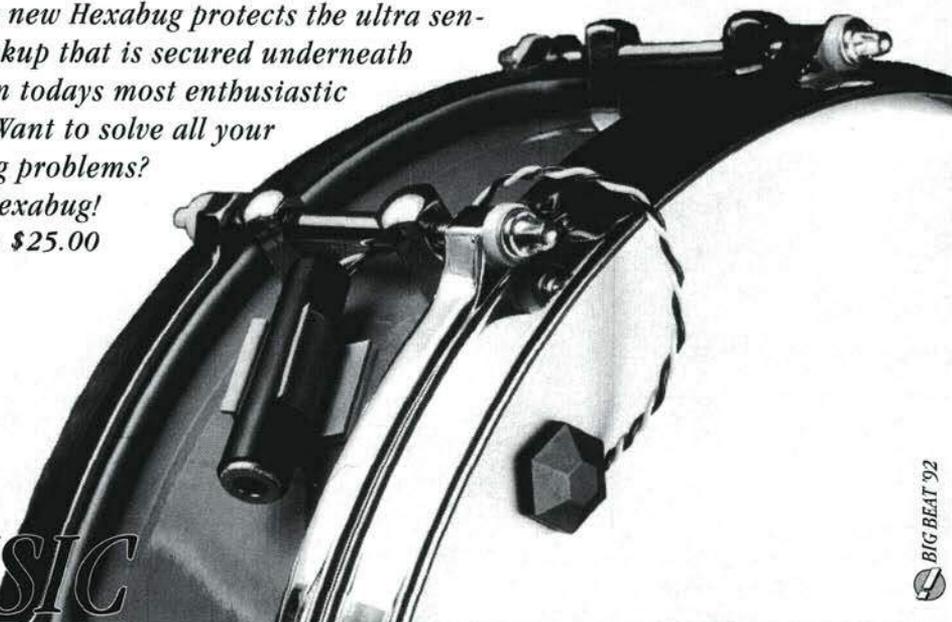
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International Drum Month Activities

According to its organizers, International Drum Month proved to be a success, with many facets of the promotion working in accordance to help spread the word. In New York, for instance, Robert Rosenblatt Associates organized HMV record outlets to promote free lessons by bag-stuffer promotional flyers supplied by IDM, CPP/Belwin, and Sam Ash Stores. And in Los Angeles, KNAC radio promoted the industry giveaway products along with free introductory lessons at various area drumshops.

The highlight of the IDM was top-seeded tennis champ/drummer Jim Courier, who acted as honorary chairman. Nearly two hundred other celebrity drummers also added their support by allowing the use of their names, likeness-

es, and quotes. In addition, many supplied T-shirts, CDs, cassettes, autographed photos, programs, and posters of the various groups with whom they are associated. The autographed material in particular was very useful to the various radio networks for drumming up interest in their IDM program.

IDM organizers say that, upon piggy-backing the success of International Guitar Month, IDM actually leaped ahead of its model. They hope such success will continue in future years, creating even more interest in getting involved with drumming.

Texas Recognizes IDM

In addition to extensive artist and industry participation in November 1992's celebration of International Drum Month, the state of Texas also recognized the importance of drumming to its past and present culture with the following proclamation:

"Drummers, other musicians, and music fans around the world will recognize International Drum Month in November, 1992.

"The drum is the world's oldest instrument. Percussion instrumentation has been crucial to the musical tradition of every continent throughout human history.

"In the United States, drums are central to every native musical tradition as well as those brought here from other countries. It is impossible to imagine American music without the influence of the drum.

"The state of Texas has been the home of many prominent drummers. These include Frank Beard, Bobby Rock, Ronald Shannon Jackson, Jerry Gaskill, George Honea, Sebastian Whittaker, Smokey Dacus, Herman Matthews, Jerry I. Allison, Pam Antonio, John Douglas, Land Richards, and Dick Gay.

"The people of Texas are proud to join this international celebration of the influence of the drum in the music of our world.

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"Therefore, I, Ann W. Richards, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim the month of November, 1992 as International Drum Month in Texas and urge the appropriate recognition thereof."

Camps & Clinics

This past September 19, Zildjian sponsored a **Performance Showcase** at the University of North Texas in Denton, featuring **Louie Bellson, Gregg Bissonette, Thorn Hannum, and Steve Houghton**. The event, which was co-sponsored by Remo, Inc., Pearl International, and the Yamaha Corp., included Hannum coaching the UNT drumline outdoors, indoor clinics and performances by the other three drummers, and a round table discussion involving all the drummers as well as Zildjian's Lennie DiMuzio.

The week-long, annual **Stephen F. Austin University/Yamaha Percussion Symposium** was held this past June at SFAU in Nacogdoches, Texas. In various settings, ISO students witnessed Yamaha artist/clinicians **William Moersch,**

Steve Houghton, and Tony Verderosa delving into various topics, including concert and marching percussion and electronics.

In other Yamaha news, clinician **Dave Weckl** went coast-to-coast on his most recent clinic tour, giving a dozen clinics in two weeks, with one stop attracting over five hundred drummers. In addition, Yamaha endorses **Russ Miller, Tony Verderosa, and Matt Sorum** have also been busy on the clinic trail. Miller covered acoustic and electronic drumming in the southeast, Verderosa mixed MIDI and acoustics as well in the deep south, and Sorum took his hard rock approach from Colorado to New York and then to California, with a total of fourteen clinics in sixteen days. Finally, Yamaha's **Sonny Emory** spent some time with the **Madison Scouts** drum & bugle corps at a recent DCI East competition.

This past July 5 through 11, the sixth **United States Percussion Camp** was held at Eastern Illinois University. Over two hundred participants attended courses on marching, electronic, small, mallet, and Latin percussion, snare drum, tim-

pani, and drumset, as well as nightly master classes. In addition, many companies contributed to the over two hundred door prizes awarded at the camp's banquet, which was hosted by speaker **Ndugu Chancier**. Next year's camp will be held July 11 through 17, again at Eastern Illinois University. For more information, contact professor Johnny Lee Lane at (217) 581-3817.

The week-long **1992 Bands of America Summer Band Symposium** was held at Illinois State University in Normal this past summer, offering the opportunity for band directors and students from over 35 states, as well as from Australia and Canada, to participate in performance groups, master class sessions, and workshops taught by top artists in the field. The '92 Symposium also included the premiere of the **BOA World Percussion Symposium**, which focused on marching, drumset, and comprehensive percussion.

Artists involved in the Symposium include Yamaha clinician **Jim Campbell**, conductors and composers **Francis McBeth and John Paynter**, Pearl clini-



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bals), and **Casey Scheuerell**, the
Bergen County Cadets drum & bugle
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ensemble, Yamaha clinicians **Ralph
Humphrey** and **Tony Verderosa**,
Ludwig representatives **Michael
Burritt**, **David Collier**, and **William F.
Ludwig, Jr.**, and Sabian clinicians **Gary
Cook** and **James Ross**. Sponsoring
drum and cymbal companies also con-
tributed many instruments to be used in
performance and as giveaways.

Endorser News

Vinnie Colaiuta is now using Zildjian sticks. (A Vinnie signature stick is on its way.)

Will Kennedy is endorsing Evans drumheads.

Walfredo Reyes, **Raul Rekow**, **Karl Perazzo**, **Sammy Figueroa**, and **Robby Ameen** are using Fredrico Percussion products.

Paul Geary, **Charlie Adams**, **Mike Shotton**, **Muzz**, **David Uosikkinen**,

Tom Harden, **Rick Steel**, and **Joe Pet** are endorsing Sapphire Percussions products.

Greg Fletcher is playing Mapex drums.

Bobby Rondinelli, **Bobby Chouinard**, **Louie Appel**, **Kenny Holton**, **Lenny White**, **James Harris**, **Lez Warner**, and **Michael Sciotto** are endorsing Hands On Percussion products.

Recent Sabian endorsers include **Anastasios "Toss" Panos**, **Billy Kilson**, **Art "Buster" Marbury**, **Lewis Nash**, and **Robert Magruder**. Sabian was also the official cymbal of the 1992 New Orleans Jazz Heritage Festival, and **Pat O'Donnell** has recently become a Sabian Associate Artist.

Tony Mason is playing Meinl cymbals.

Dave Grohl is using Calato Regal Tip sticks.

Michael Blakey is playing Stingray Percussion drums.

Chris Sutherland, **Bruce Rutherford**, and **Abbey Rader** are playing Slingerland drums.

Jim Sheppard, **Marty Bender**, and **Dick Gail** are using DuraTech products.

Indy Quickies

At the Avedis Zildjian company, **Jerry Donnegan** has been promoted to director of sales in North America, and **Colin Schofield** has been named director of marketing.

Bob Saydlowski, Jr. has been promoted to marketing manager for Sonor Drums. In other Sonor news, anyone who purchases a *Force 1000* drumkit will now receive a free Sonor tour jacket.

Drum Workshop has relocated its manufacturing, sales, marketing, and management operations to a new facility, at 101 Bernoulli Circle, Oxnard, California 93030. Their new phone number is (805) 485-6999, fax, (805) 485-1334.

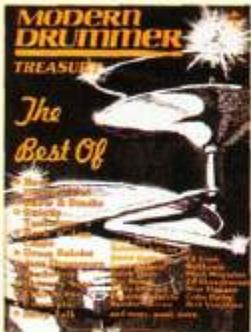
GMS Drums has moved as well. Their new address is 855 Conklin St., Farmingdale, NY 11735. Paiste America will remain GMS's distributor, and can be reached by calling (800) 4PAISTE or by writing to the company at 460 Atlas St., Brea, CA 92621.



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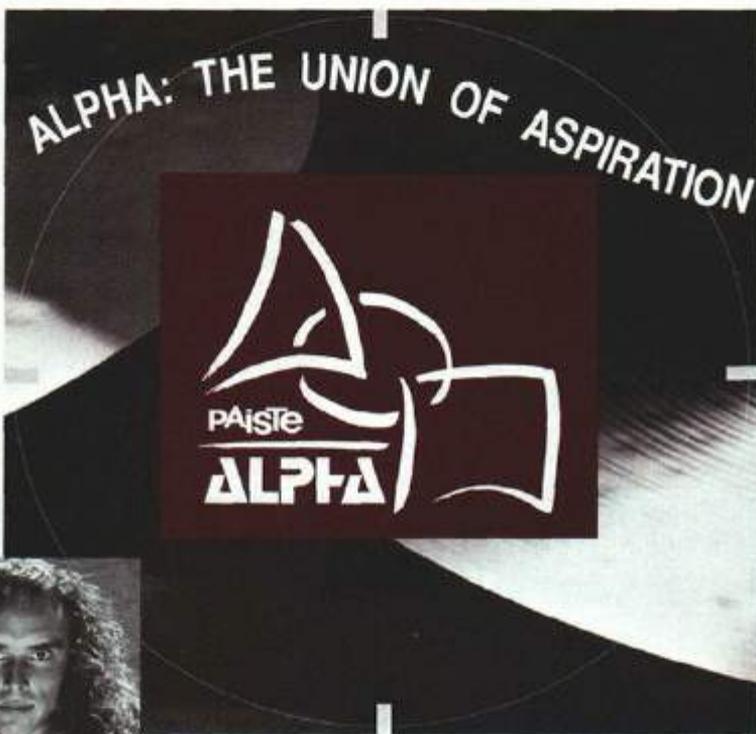
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1993 Lionel Hampton/Chevron Jazz Festival

Come and Celebrate Lionel Hampton's 65 Year's of Devotion to the World of Jazz!

Concert Schedule

Wednesday, February 24, 1993 7:00 PM
PEPSI International World Jazz Night

featuring: **Lionel Hampton**, vibes;
The Gene Harris Quartet: **Arturo Sandoval**,
trumpet; **Claudio Roditi**, trumpet;
Brian Bromberg, bass; **Andrei Kitaev**, piano;
Igor Butman, tenor saxophone;
Dee Daniels, vocals; **The Lionel Hampton Quartet**

Thursday, February 25, 1993 7:00 PM
DELTA AIR LINES Special Guest Night

featuring: **Lionel Hampton**, vibes; **One of the Most**
Renowned Jazz Vocalists - TBA; **Marian McPartland**, piano;
Herb Ellis, guitar; **Ray Brown Trio**; **Vanessa Rubin**, vocals;
Brian Bromberg, bass; **Straight Ahead**;
The Lionel Hampton Quartet



Friday, February 26, 1993

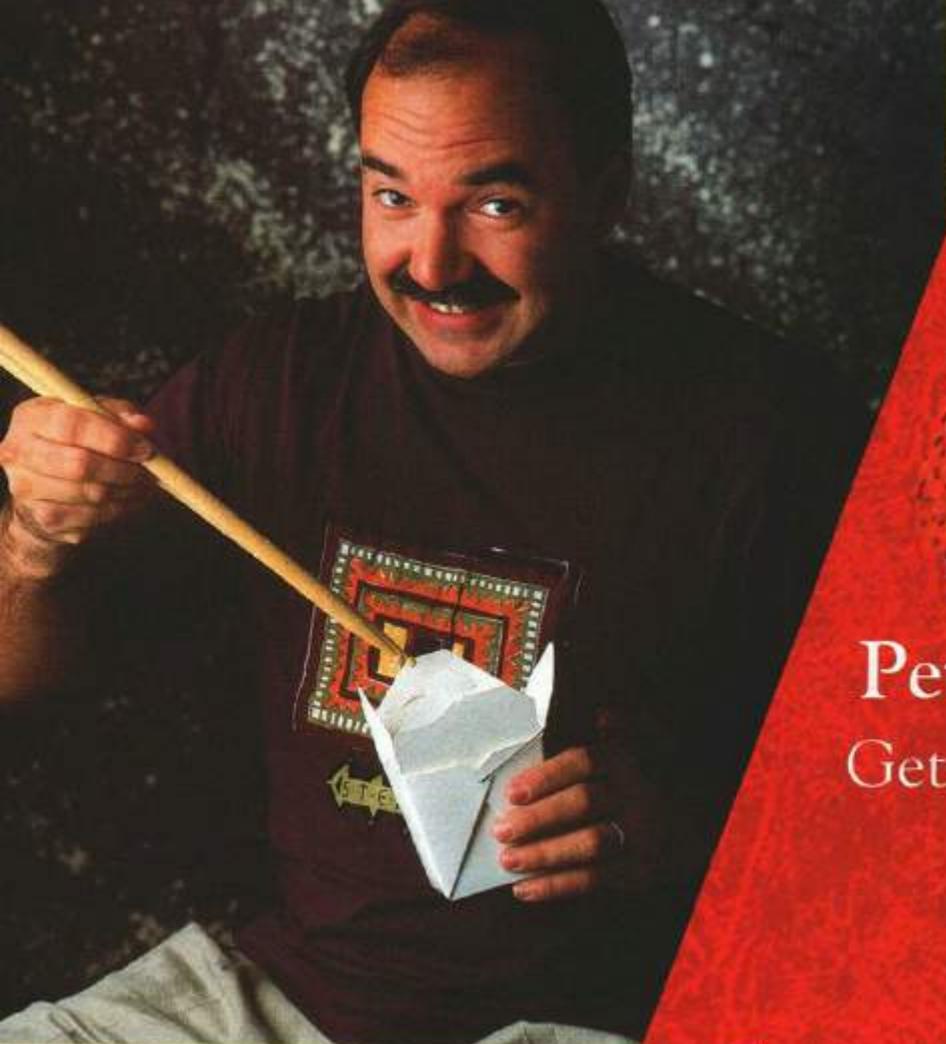
4:45 PM Vocal Winners Concert featuring
Winning Groups & the Lionel Hampton School of
Music Jazz Choir with Guest Artist - TBA
8:00 PM All-Star Concert featuring:
Lionel Hampton, vibes; **Lou Rawls**, vocals;
Clark Terry, trumpet; **Harry "Sweets" Edison**,
trumpet; **James Moody**, tenor saxophone; **Al Grey**,
trombone; **Slide Hampton**, trombone; **Benny Powell**,
trombone; **Herb Ellis**, guitar; **Milt Hinton**, bass;
Junior Mance, piano; **Grady Tate**, drums

Saturday, February 27, 1993

4:45 PM Instrumental Winners Concert featuring
Winning Groups & the Lionel Hampton School of Music
Jazz Band I with Guest Artist - TBA
8:00 PM GTE Giants of Jazz Night featuring
Lionel Hampton and his New York Big Band with special
Giants of Jazz

Festival Information: contact Dr. Lynn J. Skinner, Executive Director, Lionel Hampton/Chevron Jazz Festival,
Lionel Hampton School of Music, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83843 **208/885-6765**.

Tickets: SUB Ticket Express at 1-800-345-7402. **Festival Housing:** 208/882-9220



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This month's entry comes from the electronic side of drumming. Dexter Vivaldi's custom-built, rack-mounted kit is made of wood and fiberglass, and consists of three five-pad modules for the drums and four individual trigger pads for the cymbals.

If you think that your kit is unique in its look, arrangement, finish, or construction, *MD* invites you to send us a photo. Our criteria for selecting photos that appear in this department will be kits that are visually interesting and/or musically unusual.

Photo Requirements

1. Photos must be in color and of high quality. (35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered. Polaroids cannot be accepted.)
2. You may send more than one view of the kit, but only one photo will be published.
3. Photos should be of drums only; no people should be in the shot.
4. Drums should be photographed against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds such as in your basement, garage, or bedroom.
5. Be sure that those attributes of your kit that make it special are clearly visible in the photo.

Send your photo(s) to:
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 Modern Drummer
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 Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288

Please note that photos cannot be returned, so don't send any originals you can't bear to part with.

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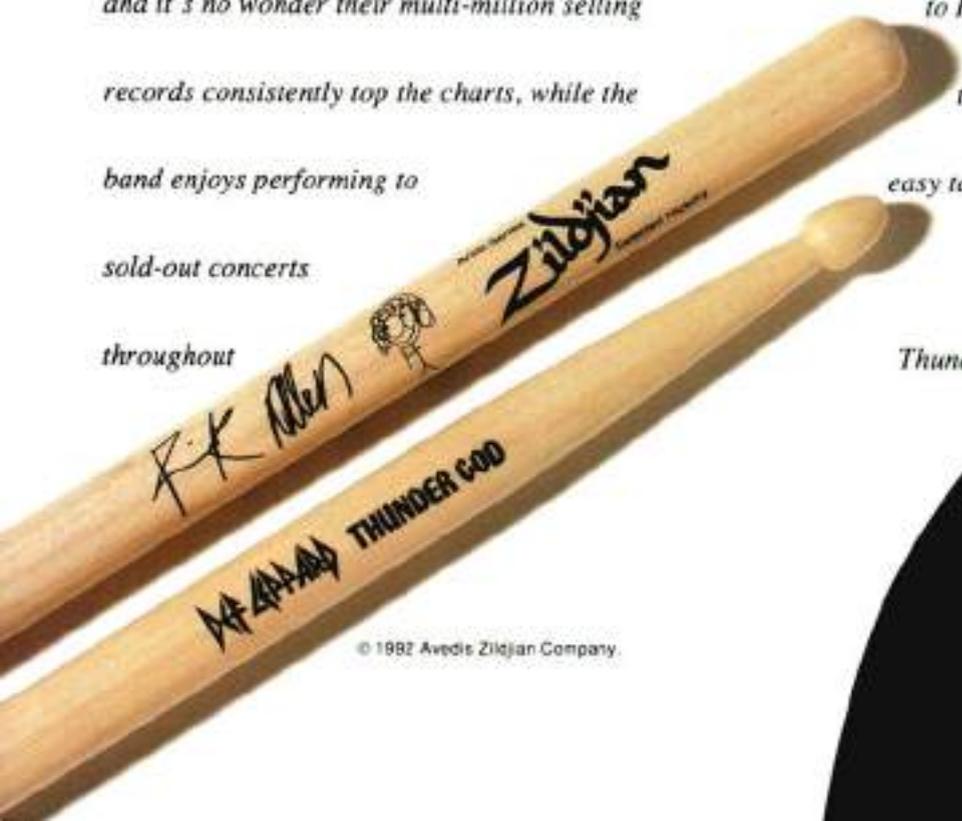


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