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AHMIR THOMPSON
ROOTS EXPERIMENT

TERRY BOZZIO
REFLECTIONS

LENNY KRAVITZ
OFF THE RECORD

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KODO DRUMMERS OF JAPAN
Dedicated to the drum, body and soul.
by Ted Bonar
I distinctly recall the day, way back when I was a ten-year-old wailing away in the basement on my hand-me-down Ludwigs, that my dad came home with a new set of drumheads so that we could tune up the four-piece. Black dots! I thought they were just the greatest thing since...silver dots.

Ah, yes, those were simple times. No longer. The pages of Modern Drummer feature an incredible number of companies advertising their new products. Today, companies big and small—and with and without big marketing budgets—are making gear that is far superior to that made during any previous generation. (I can already hear the screams from the vintage folks—I’m talking about all of the gear in this day and age as a whole.) The choices available just in drumheads and sticks are intimidating. The number of cymbal types and lines is staggering. And drums? There have never been more quality instruments made by so many manufacturers at one time.

Despite the fact that I have a constant fear that I will look like a dope in the drum department when I don’t know about some hot new piece of gear, I feel the amount of options available to us is a good thing. So I’m going to come out of the Editor’s Closet and announce my own endorsement: I endorse everybody.

The fact is, throughout my years as a drummer, I have purchased and played gear—set it on a stand, hit it with a stick, put it in a case—made by virtually every manufacturer in the industry. I’ve bought equipment by the biggest manufacturers, and I’ve bought instruments made by one-man-show custom drum makers. Of the companies whose gear that I haven’t owned, I truly believe that it’s due to the fact that it just wasn’t in front of me when I was in the shop. Or maybe I just didn’t have the cash at the time.

Your options as a drummer are limitless, and virtually every company out there is offering something special. Major corporations with household names and one-man operations with nary an ad budget actually do have something in common: They both create equipment that drummers want or need. You can find reputable pro players using almost everyone’s gear.

Endorsements are cool and important to the industry. That’s fine with me, I have checked out—and often purchased—lots of equipment after seeing my favorite players using it. Who hasn’t? But in my perfect world, it doesn’t matter to me what the badge or stamp says.

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CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

In the May, 2001 issue Joey Waronker lists various recordings that he has found especially inspirational over the years. These include Curtis Mayfield's *Curtis Live*, which was recorded in 1971 at the Bitter End in NYC, and is surely one of the best live recordings ever made. Since the drummer is listed as unidentified, I thought you might like to know that his name is Tyrone McMullen.

McMullen's performance is among the finest R&B drumming ever recorded. Yet his name seems to have escaped the drum history books completely—possibly because his recorded output was very limited. Besides *Curtis Live*, there is only an uncredited performance on a Mayfield compilation called *Love, Peace And Understanding* issued in the UK by Sequel Records.

Paul Siegel
Co-President, Hudson Music
New York, NY

INFLUENCES AND INSPIRATION

Hats off to Rick Mattingly for his great "Influences And Inspiration" article in your May issue. I remember being inspired to pick up the sticks back in 1978 by none other than Peter Criss. He played for the music and opened up a whole new world for me. From there I discovered other bands like Aerosmith, Queen, Sweet, ELP, Rush, Led Zeppelin, etc. I went through a "snob" phase a few years later, when I wouldn't even acknowledge a drummer who couldn't play "The Black Page" or "La Villa Strangiato." Looking back, that foolish attitude closed more doors than opened up musical opportunities.

The two most valuable lessons I've learned from *MD* are to keep an open mind and to play for the music. Try not to impress the audience with your chops. Instead, inspire them with your enthusiasm and professionalism. Thanks, *MD*, for keeping it in perspective.

Randy Omdahl
via Internet

Rick Mattingly's "Influences And Inspiration" was dead on. I'm a relative beginner at the drums, and my influences tend to be drummers who play for a band that I like—and, more importantly, drummers whose style I have some chance of understanding. Yet I have a nagging desire to be a better player. Here is the formula I've come up with for learning to play: start with a simple exercise in *MD*, then look on the internet for similar exercises, perhaps with a video. Then find the instructor who'll teach you and make you learn new exercises. It really works. Just remember, the answer is always "More Practice!"

Randy Taylor
Los Angeles, CA

SHEILA E

Thank you so much for your May story on the amazing Sheila E. I have been a fan for a very long time, and I'm glad to know that she not only survived the '80s but apparently is all the better for it. People credit Ricky Martin for the recent Latin explosion, but I have to give props to Miss E for making me aware of Latin music very early on. She is the one who opened my eyes to Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, and Santana. She is the one who ignited my fondness for the conga, the timbale, and the drumkit. She is the one who made me wish I hadn't let my shyness in high school overcome my dream to be on stage. Sheila E is my drumming inspiration.

Harold Proctor
via Internet

EDITOR'S NOTE: Among the other mysteries in Joey Waronker's listeners' guide was the drummer on Serge Gainsbourg's Comic Strip album. We've since learned from a close associate and Francophile that the drummer in question was in all likelihood Doogie Wright. And if anyone out there happens to know who played drums on Jorge Ben's Africa Brasil album, please drop us a line and complete the puzzle.

James Buckley
via Internet

As office manager of an LA cartage/rental company, I recently had the pleasure of working with Joey Waronker. Joey had these zany kit conglomerations he would call "scenarios." It became quite hilarious wondering which "scenario" he might choose next. But what impressed me most about Joey was not only his illustrious career, but also his amazing humility. He never once failed to personally thank the delivery crew for their hard work. He always took the time to let the "little guys" know they were appreciated. His thoughtfulness put smiles on the guys' faces, and really made their days. In a business where there are few kind gestures, Joey stands out as a true gentleman. He shares this quality with Jim Keltner, Peter Erskine, and Abe Laboriel Jr. It's easy to see why artists enjoy working with such considerate and genuine people.

Randy Taylor
Los Angeles, CA
being able to emulate. Similarly, I’m more likely to pick up a copy of MD that features a drummer who I’m familiar with than one with a story on some great studio drummer I’ve never heard of.

On the other hand, by reading Modern Drummer I’m exposed to other drummers I otherwise would never have heard of. For example, because Joey Waronker listed “The Drum Also Waltzes” by Max Roach (who I basically knew nothing about) as an influence, I downloaded it and checked it out. Wow! Now I’m looking into some of the other music Max Roach is associated with.

Mark Foley
Doylestown, PA

HEALTH ISSUES
In the May 2001 Readers’ Platform, audiologist Marshall Chasin highlights not only an obvious danger of being a drummer (hearing loss), but also the potential peripheral dangers that stem from it (carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, strains, and even stress fractures). Although not specifically mentioned in the letter, these are all physical maladies that we are susceptible to as drummers, and Mr. Chasin brings to light the fact that if we are not hearing right, then we are likely not playing right.

Hats off to MD for also including Jennie Hoeft’s article on “Protecting Your Body” in the May Health & Science section. These two pieces go hand in hand, and prove that in order to achieve longevity in today’s market you need to think about more than your chops.

Rich Haberkern
via Internet

BUYER BEWARE
I enjoyed your recent article about buying and selling drum equipment on eBay. I have in fact used eBay to buy and sell old K Zildjian cymbals. But last month I committed the cardinal sin: I trusted someone through the email. I thought I had taken the proper precautions in checking out the seller (asking for references and speaking with them on the phone), so I sent him my money. Needless to say, I was ripped off. I’m not faulting eBay, I merely want to warn others so they don’t make the mistake I made. Please print this so your readers will be made aware of potential frauds, so that they can avoid my stupid mistake.

Renny
via Internet

IT’S NEVER TOO LATE
I’d like to share a life-long dream that I have finally come to experience. From the time I was in junior high I wanted to really understand music. In high school, I learned to listen enough to discern simple patterns in most popular rock ‘n’ roll songs. Never having a drumset—nor even sticks—for years I simply paddled the steering wheels and dashboards in countless cars. Finally, a friend gave me a Christmas gift certificate for drum lessons. So at the age of forty-five I started drum lessons with Michael Lawson at Skip’s Music in Sacramento, California.

I’m now fifty-four, and I’ve spent the past five years studying with Steve Smith of The Seattle Drum School. I finally became a professional musician last year, performing in a local blues/rock band. Realistically, I won’t be leaving my day job any time soon. Still, I would not have been able to share my love of music with others at all without the training and encouragement of Steve Smith. I simply want to acknowledge Steve’s tremendous teaching, along with the inspiration that I derive from your fine publication. I also want to assure others that it is never too
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late to start studying music. The joy I have finally experienced is grander than I ever imagined, and worth every moment of practice. Thank you all!

Skip McDonald
via Internet

GRADY TATE CORRECTIONS

I wish to point out two errors in the Grady Tate feature (June 2001 MD) that were not part of the manuscript that I submitted. First, Grady Tate did not play on Bobby Darin’s hit song “Mack The Knife.” The version that I wrote about was Ella Fitzgerald’s performance of that same song on Live At The Cote D’Azur. The second error is a misquote. Grady did not say that drummers rely too heavily on books and videos. I said that, not Grady. Thanks for the opportunity to set the record straight.

Mike DeSimone
via Internet

HOW TO REACH US

Correspondence to MD’s Readers’ Platform may be sent by mail:
12 Old Bridge Road,
Cedar Grove, NJ 07009,
fax: (973) 239-7139, or
email: rvh@moderndrummer.com.

We Want Your Licks!

Introducing Chop Shop

Modern Drummer is launching a brand-new column featuring readers’ favorite licks. That means you! To have your “chops” featured, simply send us a transcription of your favorite lick or pattern (limited to four bars), preferably with an accompanying cassette tape. Include a brief note to say what makes the lick hip, and include some tips on how to play it (including sticking, tempo, and dynamics if not shown on the music). And so the world will know who sent such a musical gem, toss in a good, clear photo of yourself. If we choose your submission, we’ll send you an MD T-shirt in return for your efforts!

Mail your entry to Chop Shop, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Include your name, address, and phone number on all items you send. Materials will not be returned, so don’t send originals you can’t part with.
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Masters Studio BRX, 6 ply Premium Birch. naturally equalized, attack, punch.
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Practice Tips From

Q Like many other drummers, I don’t have much time during the day to spend practicing. In a recent article, you mentioned learning to practice more efficiently. Can you give me some ideas regarding what I should practice to make the most of what little time I have?

Jason Graves
Kittery, ME

A Practicing efficiently is very important, especially if you don’t have a lot of time. These days, there’s so much information to learn on the drumset, you could easily spend twenty hours a day practicing and still not accomplish it all. So it’s a good idea to pinpoint exactly what you want to work on before you begin your practice.

Whether you have thirty minutes or four hours to practice, organize your time. For example, if you have an hour, spend ten minutes on warmups, twenty working on technique, fifteen on important grooves, and fifteen on fills that work with those grooves.

Instead of trying to do fifty things at C-minus level, try to do three or four things at A-plus level. Figure out what it is that you want to work on, and commit to doing that for six months to a year. Stay focused on those things until you get them to the level of A-plus. That doesn’t mean you can’t also practice other things, but stay committed to the main three or four ideas in order to achieve perfection. You can’t be a master of all things, so prioritize what it is that you want to be great at.

Abe Cunningham’s Snare Sounds

Q I know that you used various snare drums to record Around The Fur. But which did you use for each song? The snare sound on the song "Headup" epitomizes what I want out of a snare drum. Also, for the more delicate 32nd-note stuff on the hi-hat, like in "Nosebleed" from Adrenaline or "Digital Bath" from White Pony, what stickings did you use? Thanks for being my biggest influence.

Scott Eubanks
via Internet

A Thanks for all the kind words. The main snares I used to record Around The Fur were a 5x13 10-ply maple DW snare, a 6x14 20-ply maple Orange County Drum & Percussion drum with holes in the shell, and a 5x14 Pearl Chad Smith Signature snare, which has a steel shell.

We switched snares for the different songs, depending on what sound we wanted for each one. A lot of the choices had to do with Terry Date, our producer. He likes to swap snare drums but
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keep the main kit as is. To the best of my recollection, "My Own Summer" featured the OCDP, which is a drum designed to be cranked up tight for a snappy crack. On "Ihabia" and "Die TH Flu" I used the Chad Smith. And I used the DW drum for "Mascara," "Rickets," "Be Quiet And Drive," "Around The Fur," "Lotion," "Headup," and "MX."

As far as stickings go, that isn't something I think about too much. It mainly had to do with what felt good to play at the time. I wish I could get more into it for you, but some of these things you just can't analyze. It's all about what hits you at the moment.

I totally appreciate your being into our music and your interest in my playing. That's very cool!

Brushing Up With Clayton Cameron

Q I'm enjoying your Living Art Of Brushes video immensely. I also have Ed Thigpen's video. I only wish the camera had been on you all the time during the performances at the end of the tape so I could have seen more of your comping techniques in action. You're a genius with brushes.

I'm a lefty, so in watching your instructions, I'm always flipping hands and reversing directions on sweeps. It starts to get confusing when I get to the "counter-clockwise" strokes. For me that becomes my right hand going clockwise.

My standard pattern is the right hand circling counter-clockwise and the left hand playing 2 and 4 at the 3:00 position. My version of the "counter-clockwise" pattern described above involves circling clockwise and playing 2 and 4 at the 9:00 position. In the latter pattern I hear a stronger accent on 1 and 3 from the right hand as it starts to pull the brush back in. The normal sweep is smoother, with a less pronounced pulse on 1 and 3.

Is this as it should be? Or should I take Ed Thigpen's advice and reverse the sweep direction of my normal pattern to clockwise? Joe Duffus via Internet

A Joe, thanks for checking out The Living Art Of Brushes. As a lefty, try watching the video using a mirror. You'd be surprised how that might "uncomplicate" things for you.

To answer your question on sonic differences: When you're sweeping with your right hand (or your left hand, for that matter), there is a sound change that occurs with the direction change. In other words, if you play an oval pattern, the top of the oval produces one sound and the bottom produces another. Why? From a purely unscientific analysis, when changing directions the wire sweeps across the head at a noticeably different angle and direction, creating varying degrees of resistance. The more resistance, the more sound or volume. So with that said, if you want beats 1 and 3 to sound smoother or unaccented, make sure you play using the tip of the brush, with as little pressure as possible. If you want a sweeping accent, lay more wire on the head of the drum.

Thanks for your questions. Feel free to ask more, at adrumsite.com. And look for my new book, Brushworks, which is scheduled for release this winter.

Would you like to ask your favorite drummer a question? Send it to Ask A Pro, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Or you may email rvh@moderndrummer.com. We will do our best to pursue every inquiry.

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"Some road things are rough, but there are studio things that are rough, too. You have to try to stay up for whatever you're doing. One of the challenges when you're playing live and doing the same show every night is to stay inspired to go out there and do the show the best you can. That's part of the gig, and it's a challenge that has to be met."

—Steve Gadd, April 1996
Some get their names on Grammys.
Some get their names on these.
Some get them on both.
**Interpreting Charlie**

**Q** I'm stumped over a rhythmic figure from Charlie Wilcoxin's famous method book, *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos For The Advanced Drummer*. Could you please interpret the first measure of the fourth line (page 29) in Wilcoxin's "Heating The Rudiments" solo?

**A** Though the measure appears somewhat confusing as written, it's actually quite simple when you analyze it more closely. Since it's the three individual 16th notes in the middle of the measure that tend to confuse, try rewriting the pattern in your mind's eye as two groups of 32nd notes, with the three accented 16th notes within the two groupings.

```
R R L R L L R R L R L R L R
```

If you're still confused, you may want to think of the measure in 4/4—while maintaining the double sticking—to get a better feel for the sound of the rhythmic pattern.

```
R R L R L L R R R L R L L
```

**Paiste 404s And 505s**

**Q** I recently acquired a set of Paiste 14" hi-hats and a 20" ride. I loved these cymbals the minute I laid a stick to them. But I'm curious as to their age and history. They had no inked logos, but did have a small imprint saying "Paiste 404." I'd love to get some background info on these cymbals.

**Chris G.**

via Internet

**A** Paiste product specialist Paul Presson replies, "I'm glad to hear you're both pleased with the sound of your Paiste cymbals. The 505 and 404 series were the high- and mid-level series, respectively, of the value-class lines Paiste made between 1974 and 1986. (The other series was the lower-priced 101.) The 505 and 404 lines were entirely hand-manufactured of CuSnS bronze, similar to our current 2002, Dimensions, and Alpha lines. As such, they featured many high-end sonic characteristics at a mid-level price category. The fact that Chris's 404 cymbals have no ink on them at all leads me to believe that they are from the mid-1970s."

**Where Have All The Cymbal Arms Gone?**

**Q** I recently found a cymbal arm for my 1965 Ludwig set, and I've placed my 22" ride on it. I love the placement of the cymbal on the bass drum, as opposed to placing it on a stand. I'd love to mount a manufacturer from the early part of the twentieth century who listed such drums in their catalogs. Most of those references describe the drums as having plied shells, however, so if your drum is really a single-ply model, that adds to the mystery. The manufacturers I know of include Bergeron, Duplex, Wm. Charles L. Evans, J.G. Richards, and George B. Stone. (Okay, class, how many names did you recognize?) "The red cord is standard, but the variations are in the tensioning design and the finish. Drums of this design were considered low-cost alternatives to standard, double-headed snare drums. I think your drum is worth about twice what you paid for it, but there is no well-defined market at this time."

**A** MD drum historian Harry Cangany replies: "Some mysteries remain mysteries, yet to be solved. I have a drum that's similar, with some slight differences. But there are at least five manu-
**Tama Pro Custom**

I recently bought a used Tama 6 1/2x14 snare drum. The shell looks like maple, with an outer ply of bird's-eye maple. The badge reads "Pro Custom, Made In Japan" and shows a serial number of 000217.

What is remarkable about this drum is that the rims are similar to the ones that come on Tama's current bell-brass models. Can you provide any information about this drum?

Steve T.
Lynn, MA

Tama's Paul Specht replies: "This beautiful snare drum was made around 1987/88, when Tama seriously began expanding its pro snare drum selection. Three series were offered: Pro Custom, Artwood, and Powermetal. The latter two are still current.

"The Pro Custom series contained all kinds of interesting combinations of materials and specifications. Wood and metal drums were offered, including solid maple, copper, bell brass, bird's-eye maple, and rosewood. Your drum is the Pro Custom Bird's-Eye Maple version, model number PB3246G. It has an 8-ply, 7-mm-thick maple shell with an outer ply of bird's-eye maple finished in antique brown lacquer. It's fitted with Tama's Freedom lugs, Cam-Lever strainer, Bell Brass hoops, and Steel Sensitive Snappy Snare. I hope this information proves helpful to you."

---

similar cymbal arm on a Slingerland set that I'm restoring. Yet I rarely see ride cymbals attached to the bass drum, as was so common years ago. So my question is twofold. One, who can I contact for a new cymbal arm and mount? And two, what was the reason for abandoning this style of cymbal mount in the first place? A fellow drummer stated that it would put too much stress on the bass-drum shell, but I can't see how this would be any worse than the common practice of suspending "floor toms" on tom stands using mounts that attach to the shells. Any insight would be appreciated.

Jim Davis
via Internet

A Moving cymbal arms off of bass drum shells came about mainly when the "standard" tom configuration became two rack toms instead of just one. This happened in the mid-1960s, when the ride cymbal became less important than the hi-hat for ride patterns in pop music, and drummers wanted more toms for melodic fills. The twin-rack setup eliminated the space in which a ride cymbal arm could go.

Ludwig and Universal Percussion (in their Cannon line of accessories) each offer a shell-mount cymbal holder in their catalog. Check with your local dealer to place an order with one of these companies.
American Hi-Fi's Dynamic Duo

B rian Nolan supplies the beats for Island Records' incredibly hot new band, American Hi-Fi. But Stacy Jones, who used to play drums for Letters to Cleo and the high-energy Veruca Salt, is leading the group. This is great fun for Nolan, who has known Jones for eleven years. According to Jones, "Somewhere around the last Veruca Salt tour I did, Brian and I were on tour together. [Nolan was in Fig Dish then.] And at that time we said, We should be in a band together. We thought for a second about having two drummers in a band, but then decided we didn't like that idea. So we figured, Well, one of us has got to play something else. I said, 'I'll do it,' never having thought about it before."

Jones had never sung in a band before, but decided to give it a try—and it worked. "I didn't know if I had any skills at all at that," he says. "I'm still not convinced that I do."

Coming up front from behind the drums didn't scare Stacy, as other drummers in similar circumstances have said. "Whether I'm behind the drums or in front, I'm still invested in the song," he says. "My whole approach is the same. It feels pretty good. I've always been a very physical drummer, so it's really not that different for me. But I still consider myself a drummer, and I do miss it."

Jones says that it would be strange having anyone other than Nolan playing drums with him. "When I bring in a song," he says, "Brian starts playing exactly what I would want. We come from the same background, we enjoy the same bands, and we liked the same drummers as we were growing up. We're cut from the same cloth. He's one of my best friends, and he's totally open to any of my ideas. Sometimes I'll get behind the kit to give him my idea, and he's totally cool with that. And then sometimes he'll take that idea somewhere further, so we'll have the best of both worlds."

As for Nolan, he says he loves the fact that his lead singer is a drummer. "We kinda learned how to play drums together," he says. "We have a similar style, and our ideas are similar. And it's great to have a singer who can get his drum ideas across. The drum parts are particularly important in this band, although anytime I'm in a band, I listen to the songwriter and singer to get ideas on how they would like the songs to be played."

Nolan says that having Bob Rock produce their debut album was a little intimidating at the beginning, but a great learning experience nonetheless. "Bob pushed me as far as I could go to get the best drum track," Brian relates. "He comes up with great arrangement ideas too."

Nolan says his favorite track on the album is "Wall Of Sound." "It was the last song we recorded, which sometimes automatically makes it the one you're most excited about. But I love the feel of the song. It's a little different from the rest of the record. We weren't focusing on writing a hit, it was just the band playing, which made it a lot of fun to record."

"I also really like 'Surround,'" Nolan continues, "especially how the drum part fits the song. And 'Scar' is cool because it's a little different stylistically from the rest of the songs."
Of course, there were challenges. Nolan admits that some of the slower songs were a little harder to track, like "Safer On The Outside." "Those songs were hard to nail because we were playing along to a click track. It took a little longer than I would have liked. We originally played it a little faster, but we decided to slow it down."

And what about the first hit off the album, "Flavor Of The Weak"? In the band's bio they described its verses as having "a sentimental feel straight from the sweetest '70s AM pop radio." This is clearly evident in the song's video. Nolan chose a classic-looking fiberglass double bass kit to fit the period—even though he doesn't normally play double bass. "It was a combination of old Ludwig Vistalites and Fibes," he explains. "They had clear shells, but we put yellow cellophane in them [to make them look like the original amber]."

Nolan hopes to purchase an authentic set for the band's shows. In the meantime, he's playing some of Jones' old drums—some '70s Gretsch toms, a silver sparkle Ludwig snare, and a DW kick. "I don't even own a decent drumset," Brian admits. "But Stacy had all these great drums, so I'm just using his." American Hi-Fi is touring throughout the summer, including a leg with Everclear.

Robyn Flans
Liberty DeVitto says he's totally enjoying the current Billy Joel/Elton John Face To Face tour, gushing, "It's based around two of the greatest singer/songwriter/piano players of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries."

The show's format opens with the two piano men performing together. Elton's band then takes the stage, with Joel remaining on stage for one more song. Then Joel exits and Elton does an hour-plus set with his band, followed by an hour-plus set from Joel and his band. For the two encores, both bands play together for more than thirty minutes. DeVitto jokes, "If you haven't heard a song you love or that takes you back to another time in your life, then someone better take your pulse because, man, you must be dead!"

DeVitto says that just looking over and realizing he's on the same stage with Elton John gets his pulse to quicken. But the biggest rush for him is playing with Elton's legendary drummer, Nigel Olsson. Liberty recalls that years ago, when he was first approached by a then unknown artist named Billy Joel to play in his band, Joel told him to get Elton John's Captain Fantastic album. "I learned all of Nigel's stuff," Liberty admits. "You can hear it on the early Billy records I did. So when I play 'Bennie And The Jets' or The Bitch Is Back' on this tour together with Nigel, it's amazing. I know nobody plays it like Nigel, but I try to get close."

Another reason this tour has been a hit for DeVitto is that he's discovered in-ear monitors. "For every action there is a reaction," Liberty says. "And if you're going to beat drums to death, you're eventually going to lose your hearing. And that's what's happening to me. My onstage monitors were getting so loud that, even with sound gates, our engineer was having a hard time mixing the drums, because the sound coming through the monitors was being picked up by my microphones. So he recommended in-ear monitors. I feel as though I've added another twenty years to my career. It makes it so much easier to play. I can hear everything."

Elton John fans have been waiting since 1985 for drummer Nigel Olsson to return to the road with the superstar. After being invited to sing background on Elton's Road To El Dorado in 1999, Nigel was asked if he'd be willing to do some promotional dates as a vocalist, while Curt Bisquera played drums. Then, for the Madison Square Garden concert that was recorded for the One Night Only album, Olsson was asked if he'd like to play drums on half of the set. Consequently, the record features both drummers. But for the new tour, long-time Elton guitarist and band-leader Davey Johnstone called Nigel and asked if he'd be interested in going out as the drummer.

"It's pretty amazing," Olsson says. "Obviously, it can't be the way it was, because [late bassist] Dee Murray is no longer here. But it is magical being back. And Davey and I have been in the studio doing Elton's next record, which is very
reminiscent of how it sounded in the early days." (That album is due out in the fall.) In the meantime, they're currently on the second leg of the Face To Face tour.

And fans are loving it. "The reactions are overwhelming to me," Nigel says. "I didn't realize what it would be like. When Elton says, 'Welcome back, Nigel,' the audience goes nuts. It brings a tear to my eye every night just knowing how much they want me to be there."

Aside from the fans, Olsson says the highlight of the concert is "just seeing the pure joy on Elton and Davey's faces. Elton will look over at me and just smile a big cheesy grin. It's so fantastic to play these songs with him again."

DW built Olsson a special kit for this tour. "It's made out of Zebra wood," he explains, "which is from Ghana. When I went to the factory, I saw this piece of wood and said, 'What is that?' They said, 'It's wood from Ghana.' I almost flipped, because I used to live in Ghana. These drums are so beautiful."

As far as being back with Elton after fifteen years, Nigel says, "It still feels the same, I'm just a little bit older. I love playing the songs. People keep commenting that now the songs feel right again. I guess it's because I have a certain way of playing Elton's material. The other drummers Elton has used have been great players, but I'm not sure if they laid back on the songs the way I did. The reason I can do it is, I was there in the beginning!"

And even though he's a little older, Olsson says being on the road isn't too hard. "It's actually very relaxing," he said on a break between tour legs. "Obviously we're not doing what we used to—staying up all night and partying. We go to bed and rest. We exercise during the day, eat correctly, and generally have a good time. I can't wait to get back out there."

The drummer also has a new solo album out, Move The Universe: Nigel Olsson's Drum Orchestra And Chorus, Volume 2. Besides drumming on it, Nigel sings four songs; guest artists handle the others. Although the album has only been released in Japan, Nigel says he hopes it will be available in the States in the near future. At the moment, Nigel is concentrating on the tour at hand. To keep up on all of Nigel's activities, surf to www.angelfire.com/ca/nigelfanclub.

Robyn Flans
When Days Of The New vocalist Travis Meeks fired his band, the ousted members—drummer Matt Taul, bassist Jesse Vest, and guitarist Todd Whitener—christened themselves with the spiritually connotative moniker Tantric and looked for a new singer. In Hugo Ferreira, they found a charismatic frontman whose deep, soulful voice (think Eddie Vedder or Layne Staley) is perfectly matched to the atmosphere of melodic resonance created by Taul’s heavy yet remarkably laid-back approach to drumming.

At twenty-two, Taul has enjoyed the unique opportunity to take his drumming through a stylistic evolution while playing pretty much with the same guys since early adolescence. He and bassist Vest started playing together around age thirteen, recruiting Meeks for their Pantera-influenced heavy metal outfit Dead Reckoning. “Our sound was hard, raunchy heavy metal,” Taul recalls. “I would sit behind my dad’s kit and watch him play, and I just thought he was God.” By the time Matt was six or seven, he was on his dad’s drums, “giving him a headache,” he laughs. Taul actually used his father’s set—“a huge, vintage Ludwig kit with a 24” kick drum and top heads only”—to record DOTN’s first hit, “Touch, Peel, And Stain.” “They didn’t really sound that great,” he recalls. “But the song was good, and it was fun to have those drums there in the studio.”

When it came time to choose his equipment for the recording of Tantric’s self-titled debut (on Madonna-owned Maverick records), Taul had the assistance of his drum tech. Max Maxwell, a collector who owns two music stores in the band’s hometown of Louisville, Kentucky. “I had three trucks full of drums to choose from,” Matt says with a laugh. “And that really helped me put it all together.”

Tantric was enjoying big success at the moment, with their tune “Breakdown” recently reaching number 1 on Billboard’s Mainstream Rock chart. But to Taul, it’s the music that counts most. “Ultimately, Tantric seeks to capture a musical moment,” he says. “I think about how I can set up my kit differently to perform better licks and fills. Overall I just lay back and let things happen so that everybody can sound good and have moments. I play with my heart. That’s the way we approach everything.”

Gail Worley
Not many drummers dictated the sound of the ’80s like Tony Thompson. That huge drum sound was all over the airwaves, on classic recordings like Power Station’s “Some Like It Hot,” David Bowie’s “Let’s Dance,” Madonna’s “Like A Virgin,” and Robert Palmer’s “Addicted To Love.” And let’s not forget his outstanding work with ’70s super-group Chic.

“All these years people have been sampling me,” Thompson says, “because they want that big sound. But nobody could figure out how we got it. Everyone had all these ideas—that we had all sorts of tricks going on, or that there was some kind of special knobs turned when we did that first Power Station record.

“All it basically was,” Tony chuckles, “was a brand-new Yamaha kit in a live, brick room at a studio in London called Mason Rouge. That’s it. Same thing with ‘Let’s Dance.’ Oh, and I hit the drums very hard. I really put an emphasis on that when I was growing up.”

As a kid, Thompson was a big fan of Ginger Baker and John Bonham. He got the opportunity of a lifetime to play with his childhood heroes Led Zeppelin at the legendary Live Aid concert. “I grew up listening to Zeppelin,” Tony says. “They were my bible when I was growing up. I was also heavy into fusion from day one. I can remember seeing Billy Cobham for the first time. I saw God. It was the most awesome performance I’ve ever seen in my life. It’s still embedded in my soul.” In fact, Tony furthered his fusion playing by studying with another Mahavishnu Orchestra alumnus, Narada Michael Walden. “Narada was a great teacher and friend,” Tony insists. “Still is.”

So what’s Tony been up to lately? “I’ve been critiquing songwriters for a company called Taxi,” he answers. “I’m basically a screenie. If I find someone who’s happening I pass it on to the A&R people. Before that I

was living in England for a while. I also lived in Spain. I did the last Power Station record, Living In Fear, with Bernard Edwards before he passed away. I recorded eight tracks for the Nine Inch Nails record The Fragile, as well as Under The One Sky by Distance. I’ve also been working with former KISS guitarist Bruce Kulick on tribute records he’s producing on bands like Metallica and Aerosmith. And I recently got married.”

For more on Tony, including his work with Zeppelin and Chic, and his recording of “Addicted To Love,” go to www.moderndrummer.com.

Billy Amendola
Who the heck is Stephen Chopek? Where did this guy come from? Just ask Charlie Hunter. You know, that famous guy on Blue Note who plays the eight-string guitar. A couple of years ago Chopek was studying with New York jazzman Leon Parker. When it came time for Charlie Hunter to start recording his next CD, Parker was asked to step up to the plate.

Knowing that Hunter is open to new ideas, Parker decided to bring in a couple of guys to help handle the percussive duties. Lucky for Chopek, he was one of those guys. "Leon invited me and another one of his students to play in this percussion ensemble idea he had for Hunter's record. The ensemble was basically a broken-up drumset." As a result of that meeting, Chopek landed the gig as the touring drummer in Hunter's trio.

Chopek's lifelong study of rock and jazz has paid off. "I grew up listening to early-'80s alternative rock and playing in original bands," he says, "as well as playing in the high school jazz band. This diversity helped me to focus more on the structure of the song and then orchestrate it on the drums, which is what I do with Charlie. It's not just about 2 and 4. I need to internalize the groove and communicate my ideas through whatever the song calls for."

You guessed it; this style of music requires a special kit. Right now Chopek is playing a Pearl Masters Series 14x18 kick and 5 1/2x14 snare, a cowbell, an 18" Sabian Flat Top ride cymbal, caxixis, agogos, tambourines, and an assortment of shakers. According to the drummer, "This type of kit forces you to create a whole new vocabulary." Chopek also uses Vic Firth sticks, mallets, and brushes, as he says, "to get the most out of my minimal set."

By the way, before the Hunter gig came along, Chopek was busy recording and promoting his own self-titled percussion CD and playing in post-rock groups like The Fireworks Collage Project (Perhaps Transparent Records).

What's on the horizon for this up & coming groove enthusiast? "I just finished recording the latest Charlie Hunter CD in New Jersey, which is due out in the fall of 2001. I'm also working on a recording with Chris Lovejoy [percussionist on the current Hunter tour and CD] as well as playing in a lot of bands in the New York area." No rest for this young timekeeper!

Fran Azzarto
As an original member of Crazy Horse, Ralph Molina has been providing the backbone for Neil Young’s musical journeys since 1969’s Everyone Knows This Is Nowhere. Ralph is once again locked away in a northern California studio recording tracks for an upcoming Young release.

Frank Colon recently returned from conducting a series of workshops in Rio de Janeiro to join a tour with Michael Wolff’s Impure Thoughts group. Frank and the band will be performing in a few cities before heading to Los Angeles to record.

Mickey Curry has been working on the new Ian Hunter album and completing tracks for Bryan Adams. Mickey hit the road in April for a Bryan Adams tour. In May the band went to India for several dates.

Simon Phillips produced and played on Derek Sherinian’s new solo disc, *Inertia*.

Gerry Brown recently finished up a Showtime film project with Stanley Clarke. The film, *The Red Shoes*, is directed by Gregory Hines and features cues written by Gerry. The drummer is also about to embark on a series of drum clinics to promote his video release, *R&B Drumming*.


Ron Thaler has been busy working on several projects, including Jazzed And Confused: Exploring The Music Of Led Zeppelin. The album features Dweezil Zappa, Mike Stern, and DJ Logic, and is slated for release in September. Ron also completed the soundtrack for the movie Tilt, produced by The X-Files’ Patrick Stark. It will be in theaters this summer.

Mike Spears is on Spine’s Non-Violent Offender, exploring all the ins and outs of loud.

Sheila E is on tour with Ringo Starr’s All-Starr Band.

Ricky Lawson is on Lionel Richie’s newest, *Renaissance*. Lula Conte is on percussion.

Neil Primrose is on tour with Travis in support of their third album, *The Invisible Band*.

Christian Eigner is on the road with Depeche Mode, supporting *Exciter*.

Charlee Johnson is on Halfcocked But Loaded’s major-label debut, *The Last Star*.

Don Poncher (drums) and Joe Lala (percussion) are on Wendy Wall’s recently released Two Birds.

Steve Brown, who has been nominated for a British jazz award, recently recorded two new CDs for the jazz label Concord, *Jazz Signatures*, with tenor saxophonist Scott Hamilton, and *Manhattan*, with jazz trumpeter Conte Candoli.

Rick Latham can be heard on new releases from War and Edgar Winter.

Eric Singer was recently on tour in Japan and Australia with KISS.

Tom Roady is on the road filling the drum chair for the one and only Engelbert Humperdink.

Alexis Fleisig is on Girls Against Boys’ soundtrack to the film Series 7.

Shawn Pelton is on Shawn Colvin’s latest, *Whole New You*.

Darren Thiboutot is on The Hoodoo Kings’ self-titled album.

Joel Suarez is on Endo’s *Evolve*.

LA. Guns returns with drummer Steve Riley at the helm. *Man In The Moon* is their new one.

Ryan Macmillan is on tour promoting the new Push Stars CD, *Opening Time*.

Brian Tichy, who has been touring with Glen Hughes and Ozzy Osbourne, is fronting his own band, Ball. Along with sharing drum duties with Joe Travers (Duran Duran), Brian also plays guitar and sings on the self-titled CD. (For more info on Brian, surf to www.briantichy.com.)

Tucker Rule is on the road with Thursday promoting their new CD, *Full Collapse*.

Rhino has reissued *Forever Changes*, the 1967 psychedelic masterpiece by Love, featuring Michael Stuart on drums. One of the most inventive albums of rock’s golden age, *Forever Changes* influenced generations of rock gods, from The Doors to Led Zeppelin to The Damned.

Grady Tate and Clarence Penn epitomize taste on Jimmy Scott’s *Over The Rainbow*. Grady is also on Jimmy Smith’s *Fourmost Return*.

Matt Wilson is his usual busy self. Two of his more recent recordings are The Bill Mays Trio’s *Summer Sketches* and Michael Blake’s *Drift*.

Peter Enskie is on Chris Dundas’ self-titled album. (Surf to www.chrisdundas.com for more on the disc.)

Drummer/singer/songwriter Richard Burr has released his contemporary country/rock album *Let It Rain* (available at www.richardburr.com).

Dave Reinhardt is on the road with saxman Richard Elliot.

John A. Martinez is currently working on new albums by Bill Tillman (of Blood, Sweat & Tears fame) and Bernard Wright (Marcus Miller, Miles Davis).
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Terry Bozzio first came to prominence with Frank Zappa's band in the late 1970s and quickly became recognized for his ability to play metrically complex music with demonic aggression. After leaving Zappa, he proved his versatility with a wide range of artists and groups including UK, The Brecker Brothers, Missing Persons, David Tom, and Jell Beck. In the mid-'80s, Bozzio began creating solo drum compositions that were built over ostinato patterns, using a huge setup that allowed him to play melodic and harmonic patterns.

Bozzio recently did a series of clinic/concert performances with fellow Zappa alumnus Chad Wackerman, and CDs and videos featuring Bozzio and Wackerman in solo and duel settings are currently being prepared for release. Recent recording projects for Bozzio include a new prog-rock album by Explorer's Club, a solo project by keyboardist Jordan Rudess, and several tracks on bassist Billy Sheehan's forthcoming release.

Bozzio was happy to discuss jazz and rock drummers who were prominent when he was coming up in the 1960s, as well as the "Zappa fraternity" and several of today's rising drum stars.
...Tony Williams

He’s the number-one drum influence for me, and I think for most of the Western world. When he picked up the sticks, drumming changed. To me, that’s the definition of an artist.

One reason I stopped using a traditional ride cymbal was that I figured Tony Williams had said it all on the ride cymbal. I don’t mean to belittle anybody else's ride-cymbal playing, because I really appreciate the nuances of touch and approaches to playing that people can draw from a single instrument, like the way Glen Velez can get so many sounds from a hand drum. But with my kit, it’s more like “one from the many” instead of “many from the one.” So I felt there was no way I could compete with that and I’d be better off developing my own approach and sonic identity rather than emulating my heroes.

...Jack DeJohnette

I think the best concert I ever saw was the first time I saw Miles Davis at the Fillmore West. They’ve just released those live CDs, so I can relive it. But Jack had incredible four-way coordination going, and he was playing in motorcycle boots with phenomenal foot speed. He had this technique that I stole, which involved playing two, three, or four 8th notes with the hi-hat pedal while playing everything else between kick, snare, and ride cymbal.

I actually got to play with Jack on my first recording session, for a trumpet player named Luis Gasca. Gasca had hired Jack to do most of the album, but Jack wanted to play piano on one track. So on my first-ever recording session I played "A Love Supreme" behind George Duke, Eddie Henderson, Joe Henderson, Luis Gasca, and Jack DeJohnette. Two takes and it was done. Talk about being thrown in at the deep end!

...Max Roach

When he did "The Drum Also Waltzes," that was the first time I heard someone play a melodic, singable drum composition while accompanying himself with an ostinato. And it made sense. He took the drums in a whole new direction, and I’ve tried to expand on that. So where would I be without him?

...Ginger Baker

Ginger was a major influence on me when I was in high school and heard Cream. To this day, along with Led Zeppelin, Jeff Beck, and Jimi Hendrix, nothing in rock ‘n’ roll has moved me and had as much staying power as that. Ginger was a jazz drummer playing rock, and he had this incredible sonic personality. His double bass playing was amazing. His feel is incredible, and his touch, tone, sense of space in fills, African influence, and the number of drums he played were a huge influence on me.

...Mitch Mitchell

When I was in high school and would play gigs with blues bands, I would take a nap in the afternoon and go to sleep listening to Mitch on Jimi Hendrix records to prepare myself for how I wanted to play that night. And when I got with Zappa, I knew how to play like Billy Cobham and Tony Williams, but that was too fusion for Frank. Mitch’s approach was rock ‘n’ roll enough, but also had the jazz influence, chops, musicality, and rudimental edge that opened the door for me into Frank’s music.

Mitch had an amazing scope of styles and influences, and he had a broadness of expression that you didn’t find in other rock drummers. He would use brushes on a song, and he could also really slam.

His approach to playing texturally was a major influence on me. He would do things like play paradiddles or five-stroke rolls in a sort of polyrhythmic, free, textural way over the time. There are still licks of his that I can hear and sing, but I don't know how he articulated them and got the sound. His feel and touch just can’t be duplicated.

...Carmine Appice

One of the first rock concerts I ever attended was when my father and uncle took me to the Avalon Ballroom and I heard Carmine Appice with Vanilla Fudge. I couldn’t believe it, and he became a major influence. He was an incredible showman, had incredible chops, and had the fastest right foot I’d ever heard.
...John Bonham

At the time Led Zeppelin first came out, Mitch Mitchell and Ginger Baker were more to my taste. But when I got with Zappa in the late '70s, I went back and bought all the Led Zeppelin albums. I was amazed at how Bonham could leave spaces in the time and drag things in a way that felt so incredible but was impossible to duplicate. I also liked his sense of orchestration—the choices he made in terms of how to accent those syncopated guitar riffs with a snare drum accent or a bass drum/cymbal combination. The way he articulated those riffs is sheer genius.

...Michael Shrieve

Michael’s girlfriend was the lead singer in Azteca when I was in that band, so he came to all the shows and we became friends. I had seen him in the Woodstock movie when I was young, and I remember being astounded at how fast he was doing triplets around the toms. I’ve been a fan of his ever since. Michael has a lot of heart and honesty and integrity, and he’s really pursuing an artistic goal.

...Bill Bruford

I credit him with making me look inside myself and say, “There must be another way.” Before I heard Bruford, my influences were all jazz-fusion, chops-oriented drumming. When I heard Bruford with early King Crimson and UK, I was floored by his sound and approach, and the UK album he did is one of my favorite drum records of all time.

I don’t think I would have become the person I became in terms of developing my own sonic personality if it wasn’t for hearing someone like Bill Bruford, who showed me that you don’t have
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to sound like Billy Cobham or Tony Williams. I know he loves those guys too, but neither he nor I have those kinds of chops, so we have to find another way to express ourselves.

...Billy Cobham

I heard Spectrum and went, "Oh my God!" Then I heard Cobham’s next couple of albums, and they were even more musical and complex. Then I went to see him play at the Great American Music Hall. I have to rate that as one of the greatest drum performances I’ve ever seen. It was everything you could imagine that could be played at that time, which was about 1972, but done like Superman. He did the most amazing solos over odd times, had the most amazing chops, had incredible Latin-influenced stuff, played incredible beats and fills, and had incredible precision and time.

On a slow tune he did a 64th-note roll solely on the snare drum for a whole bar, bringing his arms and fists up above his head, and it was superhuman and perfect. I thought to myself, "Even if I practice ten hours a day for the next ten years, I’m not going to get to that place." So that was another memory that influenced me to find my own way.

...Alphonse Mouzon

Before Alphonse Mouzon got really popular with the fusion stuff in the ’70s, what really moved me was the work he did before that with McCoy Tyner and on the first Weather Report album, which he played incredibly well on. His floating polyrhythmic triplets were something I took from him, and I still use them.

...Eric Gravatt

One of the reasons people think I am as unique as I am is because Eric is so unknown. I owe so much to him. He didn’t record very much, but he did a couple of records with Weather Report: I Sing The Body Electric and half of Sweetnighter. And I’ve got a live tape of him playing with Weather Report that’s just phenomenal. I’ve listened to, transcribed, practiced, and incorporated his licks and approaches time and time again, and they still show up in my playing.

He had a kind of primitive, ethnic, African approach. He was a conga player to begin with, and you can hear how he incorporates into his kick and snare work the way a conga drummer alternates...
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between the open and slap sounds. He would play these fills and phrases that were really out, but the time would always be there in his ride or with straight 8ths on the hi-hat.

I was very lucky to get to play with him in the early '70s. I had auditioned for Azteca, and saxophonist Eddie Henderson—who was in Azteca then—invited me to play a concert he was doing with a bunch of San Francisco jazz musicians. He wanted to use two drummers, and the other drummer was going to be Eric Gravatt. My chin hit the floor. It was the most money I had ever been paid for a gig at that point, and I got to play with a hero!

...Aynsley Dunbar

I saw him with David Bowie on The Midnight Special TV show, and he was laying it down like I had never seen it laid down. This was the guy who taught me how to beat the hell out of the drums. He did some amazing stuff with Zappa. Some of those hand-and-foot figures that were scored out for 200 Motels were really difficult, and this guy read that stuff off the chart and played the hell out of it. I think Aynsley was one of Frank's favorites.

...Ralph Humphrey and Chester Thompson

When I first heard Zappa's Live At The Roxy And Elsewhere, I was totally blown away by the difficulty of the music, the sheer amount of memorization involved, and how hip Chester and Ralph were. I thought, "What can I possibly offer Zappa that these guys didn't do five times better?" I still feel that band Frank had with Ralph and Chester right before the group I was in was one of his best.

...Narada Michael Walden

When Narada joined Mahavishnu, he didn't have the same strength and chops as Billy, but he had this unbelievable musicality. His touch was a little softer and more double-stroke-roll oriented. But he was equally riveting technically, especially in terms of this over-the-top odd-meter stuff they were doing. He played some stuff that really influenced me.

We did a conceit in Connecticut where Mahavishnu opened for Zappa, and I was petrified to play in front of Narada. Afterwards he came up to me and said I was a kickass motherf***er, but he was always such a sweet, generous person that I put it down to his kindness rather than his being honest with me. [laughs]

...Ruth Underwood

I got to play with Ruth on Saturday Night Live and on the shows for Zappa's Live In New York album. She played "The Black...
"Even though no two drummers are the same, any two drumsticks should be."

- Stewart Copeland

Stewart Copeland is not only one of the most influential drummers of the century but also one of the top film, television, symphony, opera, world music and ballet composers/producers. Stewart has been an inspiration to musicians since he began creating his often imitated (but never duplicated) sounds and rhythms with The Police. Stewart's cracking snare drum and mastery of cymbal and hi-hat techniques introduced the world to a whole new style of pop drumming.

"The perfect stick for traps is neither long nor short nor heavy nor light nor fat nor thin. The perfect stick is standard. EVERY stick should be standard."

Vater is very pleased to introduce The Stewart Copeland Standard. The Stewart Copeland Standard, made from the finest American Hickory available, is 16 inches in length and .555" in diameter. Stewart's stick features a rounded oval style bead that provides crisp, clear, articulate tones on cymbals and full-body tones from drums combined with superb balance and rebound, making it a great feeling stick. Like all Vater sticks, The Stewart Copeland Standard is tone matched by computer analysis, assuring a perfectly pitched pair every time.

Vater and Stewart Copeland... setting a new Standard in drumsticks.

VATER USA

www.vater.com
Page" with us. I had this sort of "round it off into something familiar" approach when I was learning "The Black Page." There were things like the three notes of a quarter-note triplet subdivided into two groups of five and a group of six. That added up to sixteen, so I was just playing it as sixteen 32nd notes. Ruth immediately spotted that and helped me phrase the groupings over the triplets correctly.

Frank said he never played with anyone who came close to her in terms of really nailing it. Whatever he would write, no matter how inhumanly fast or stupid it was, she had the attitude, "I can do this and I will do this." And she did.

I feel very grateful and lucky to have gotten to play with Ruth on those few occasions. She has retired from the music business, but I would love to play something with her again someday if she would grace me with her presence.

...Ed Mann
A wonderful friend with a great heart, and a wonderful musician. Thank God he came along. You don't find guys like him with a sense of humor who are willing to put on a Superman outfit and jump around and be able to commit to memory all this hella-

uously difficult music Zappa would write. Ed is one of the great percussionists of our age. He was always there for you musically and every other way.

...Vinnie Colaiuta
Vinnie was probably the best drummer Zappa ever had. He's probably the best drummer alive right now.

In his early days with Zappa, he was kind of getting his feet wet and rushing his tail off, just as I did. It was like trying to grab onto a wild stallion and hold on for dear life. But around the time we were starting Missing Persons I heard Vinnie play with Zappa in London after he had his feet wet and was confident, and he played with Frank better than any drummer I've ever seen. The time was incredible, and his polyrhythms...! still don't know what superimpositions he was playing over the meter. Frank would yell at drummers if they didn't do that stuff right. If he couldn't tap his
Still holding out for an Ayotte kit? Get our lowest prices ever at ayottedrums.com.
foot to it, then it wasn’t correct.

The things Vinnie read were very difficult, like "Moe And Herb’s Vacation," and he nailed it. One of my favorite drum pieces is "Lucille" on Joe’s Garage. It’s a reggae tune, and the feel, the choice of instruments—the splash cymbals and high RotoToms—the licks he played on hi-hat...everything about the way Vinnie played that piece is sheer genius.

...Chad Wackerman
Chad is one of the most musical and underrated drummers who ever played with Zappa. People have no idea how good he is. For some reason, Vinnie and I got a lot of popularity out of being with Frank, but Chad played with him the longest and played some of the most difficult stuff Frank ever wrote.

His chops are just incredible. His rolls are seamless and breathtaking. His solo drum pieces are innovative and unique, with incredible melodic and harmonic depth. There’s no one I would rather play or hang with.

...Steve Smith
I spent a week with Steve doing a drum seminar at a Bavarian drum festival, and we hit it off really well. I love his playing, and he is always searching, learning, and growing. He’s a great student of the drums in terms of going back and learning the styles of big band and authentic jazz guys. He’s a very musical drummer with excellent technique, a wonderful person, and a great educator as well.

...Dennis Chambers
Dennis left a message on my answering machine recently: "Hey man, I just heard this Explorers Club Age Of Impact thing, and all I have to say is, you are insane!" [laughs] I talked to him later and explained that everyone overdubbed and took their time on that, and I punched in about every two bars. So I hope that takes away any myth that might arise from that thing, 'cause it ain’t real.

Dennis is a wonderful guy and one of the greats. He’s totally intuitive, has amazing ears, amazing talent, incredible feel, and great beats and fills, is incredibly funky, and has chops for days. He’s definitely wired for 240 rather than 120, and he’s one of the nicest guys you’d ever want to meet.
...Virgil Donati
Obviously he has the fastest feet right now, and he’s another dedicated student of the drumset. There are only a handful of guys right now who can do clinics effectively when their band has a hit record, and he’s definitely one of them. I’ve played with him several times, and he has great technique and is a wonderful person.

...Danny Carey
I'm not a big fan of popular music, but I've heard some of the Tool stuff that I think is great, and I've seen him play live and he's an excellent drummer. I also had the opportunity to work with him at a couple of drum festivals, and the guy can really solo well. He's really musical, has a lot of chops, and is another student of the drums.

...Matt Cameron
I'm a big fan of his drumming because you don't hear many guys with a Tony Williams influence in rock 'n' roll. I met him and he's a great guy, and I'm really glad he had that success with Soundgarden.

...Josh Freese
Someone who worked at Remo called me several years ago and told me that there was this kid who was a fan of mine, and asked if this kid could get a lesson with me sometime. So I said sure, and it was Josh, who I already knew. Josh was playing six or eight shows a day at Disneyland and had some great chops. I've been following him ever since. We got together recently in Austin when he came through with A Perfect Circle.
The Secret Is Out!

SONOR drums are perfect for today’s rock drummer. Just ask Mötley Crüe’s Samantha Maloney!

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MSRP $1349

THREE DISTINCT SETUPS
- Fusion 1 — 22”x16” bass drum, 14”x5½” snare drum, 10”x9”, 12”x10” and 14”x12” mounted toms
- Fusion 2 — 20”x16” bass drum, 14”x5½” snare drum, 10”x9”, 12”x10” and 14”x12” mounted toms
- Stage Set — 22”x16” bass drum, 14”x5½” snare drum, 12”x10”, 13”x11” mounted toms and 16”x16” floor tom

Nine-ply maple and basswood shells • Lacquer finished shells • CLIF Cross Laminated Tension Free shell compression system • Force lug with Tune Safe • Force ball and clamp tom mounting system • Color matching wood bass drum hoops • Pre-muffled bass drum head • Force prism mounting system • Sonor 400 Series hardware pack included

SABIAN

Cymbals not included. See your authorized SONOR dealer for special SABIAN cymbal incentives offered with the purchase of Sonor Force drums.

Visit www.hohnerusa.com to find a Sonor dealer near you.
Fat Can Be Phat
Whitney Penguin Series Drums

Sometimes somebody breaks all the rules and comes up with something that's really different. J.T. Whitney drew on his background as a master woodworker for the design of his Penguin Series drums.

The drums feature birch and maple Maxi-Shells with increased interior volume but lower overall size and weight than conventional drums, lug-free shells, ISIS (Internal Suspension and Isolation System) mounting, and white stain, black stain, and natural finishes. The Egg Basket mount holds five drums and up to four cymbals on one wooden assembly. Retail price (five-piece kit with Egg Basket system): $2,995.

The Frankfurt Musikmesse is the world’s largest musical-instrument trade show. Each spring, major manufacturers and backyard craftsmen from around the globe gather in the German city to display their wares.

Many of the products shown in Frankfurt this year actually debuted in January at the NAMM Winter Market in Anaheim, California. Those products were showcased in MD’s July 2001 Product Extravaganza. But there’s always a variety of fascinating musical gear that doesn’t get shown or released in the US market.

Our German correspondent, drummer/journalist Heinz Kronberger, walked the massive halls of the Frankfurt Messe to track down that gear. Here are his observations, along with contact information to help you check out anything that catches your interest.

David Roman Drums has created a pneumatic pitch control system for frame drums, darbukas, and tombeks. Instead of tuning rods, the heads are tensioned by air pressure using a normal bicycle pump. The system is designed to change the pitch of drums in seconds. David Roman Drums, Revaler Strasse 99, 10245 Berlin, Germany, tel: (011) 49 30 29367555, info@davidromandrums.com, www.davidromandrums.com.

Olaf Handschuh makes 8” to 24” solid drumshells out of maple, beech, or other woods. He then fits them with his own lugs, suspension system, and snare throw-off. His finishes are striking. (Legendary drum builder Johnny Craviotto bought a kit right out of his booth.) Olaf Handschuh, Gartenstrasse 12, 46419 Isselburg, tel/fax: (011) 49 2874 45299, handschuh.solid.drums@t-online.de.

From Italy comes a new drum brand called Drum Sound. The company makes only custom drums according to the customer’s specific request, and they offer a wide range of colors and finishes, with hardware reminiscent of DW’s. Jurgen Mader’s Drums Only, Andernacher Strasse 90, 56070 Koblenz, Germany, tel: (011) 49 261 83011, fax: (011) 49 261 83020, info@drumsonly.de, www.drumsound.it or www.drumsonly.de.

Although Sonor is a familiar name in the US, the German manufacturer waited until they were on their home turf to introduce a new range of pedals dubbed Giant Step. The top model, called Twin Effect, has two independent working mechanisms for virtually unlimited adjustment possibilities. A regular single pedal is also available; double pedals and hi-hats will be presented next year. Sonor Drums, www.sonor.de.

Percussion from Denmark showed their new Uno line of bongos and congas. The drums feature a fat body shape, comfort rims, and adjustable stands, and come in eye-catching finishes like amber, ash, and dark walnut. PJ Drums & Percussion, Frederiksberg Bredegade 1, 2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark, tel: (011) 45 38105710, fax: (011) 45 3832442, pjperc@slagtojctr.dk, www.pjperc.dk.

Invented by Patrick Studer and shown by Marc Sentenac, this prototype pedal is playable with the knee, so that it is possible to play doubles with one motion: the downstroke with the foot and the upstroke with the knee. Marc Sentenac, 14 Rue de la Maletiere, 69670 Vaugneray, France, tel: (011) 33 478347878, fax: (011) 33 4 78341724.
Practice Makes Perfect
Pro-Mark X-Pad Practice Pads And Mallet Bag

Pro-Mark has re-introduced their X-Pad practice pads, which are available in three diameters and with a variety of surfaces. One model provides a quiet snare sound. Stand-mounting is also an option. Retail prices are $32 to $59.95, depending on size and model.

And when you're finished practicing, toss your sticks (and maybe even your pad, too) into Pro-Mark's new jumbo-sized stick and mallet bag. It's constructed of cordura-type material, with multiple pockets, carrying handles, and a shoulder strap, at a retail price of $89.95.

Call (713) 666-2525 or visit www.promark-stix.com.

No Chips Off The Old Block
Grover Pro Percussion Wood Block Mounting System And Custom Dry Tambourine

As you add more and more percussion instruments to your drumkit, the last thing you need to worry about is whether those instruments are secure. With this in mind, Grover's Rock Maple Wood Blocks now feature an internal mounting system that facilitates clamping the blocks to any cymbal stand, l-rod, or multi-percussion rack. Retail prices range from $36 to $39, depending on size.

And for hand percussionists looking for a new sound, Grover's Custom Dry tambourine is crafted to achieve the driest sound possible. It's a concert tambourine with a solid, steam-bent shell, a natural skin head, hand-hammered, heat-treated copper alloy jingles, dual-sized staggered jingle slots, and 100% captive jingle pins. It's priced at $140.

Call (781) 935-6200, or visit www.groverpro.com.
Generation X—also called the Rabb Pack—is a new cymbal set designed by Johnny Rabb and Meinl for house or hip-hop music. The set includes an 18" JR Safari Ride, a 16" JR Safari Crash, and 12" JR Safari Hi-hats, and also comes with a free JR 8" Drumbal and a free cymbal bag. Meinl's Byzance line marks a new era in Meinl cymbal production. A new Meinl facility in Turkey exclusively handcrafts these cymbals out of B20 alloy. The cymbals get their surface finish at the cymbal factory in Germany. The complete range includes rides, crashes, hi-hats, Chinas, and splashes in different sound colors. MEINL USA L.C., 8400 N.W. 30th Terrace, Miami, FL 33122, tel: (877) 88 MEINL, e-mail goMeinl@aol.com.

DDT is a new electronic drumset designed by the German Axis company. Pads and triggers, as well as DDT trigger heads, are available in different sizes and colors. Axis Sound Equipment, Maurerstrasse 9, 89542 Herbrechtingen, Germany, tel: (011) 49 7324 969990, fax: (011) 497324982090.

Hanus & Hert Drums are produced in Prague. The stave shells feature different woods for different sound variations, and are fitted with wood hoops. Hanus & Hert Drums, Belohorská 167, 16900 Prague, Czechoslovakia, tel/fax: (011) 42 23352707, hanushertdrums@volny.cz.

KTE Musical Instruments, inventors of the Sabian Triple Hi-Hat, now have their own line of hi-hats. Triple, Speed, or Remote hi-hats are available with specially made Tosco cymbals. KTE also offers a new line of drum mic's in a license agreement with Beyerdynamic, as well as a new clamp system for drum-hoop mounting. KTE musical instruments GmbH, Luxemburger Strasse 10, 48452 Bad Bentheim, tel: (011) 49 5924 788114, fax: (011) 49 5924 788129, THH@KTE-GRUPPE.de.

Stagg cymbals are made in China. The company's Dragon series cymbals (in brilliant or regular finish) are made out of B20 alloy and look very much like cymbals from Turkey or the US. They offer a good sound range and nearly unbeatable prices. EMD, 16a Boulevard General Wahis, 1030 Brussels, Belgium, tel: (011) 32 27450970, fax: (011) 32 27450999, emd@emdmusic.be, www.emdmusic.be.

MCDrums from Italy presented a new entry in the compact kit genre. All the small drums fit into each other and pack into the bass drum, so you only have one case, a hardware bag, and a cymbal bag to carry to the gig. A nice concept, and good-sounding maple drums to boot! MCDrums, Via E. Guzzocres 12A, Reggio Calabria, tel/fax: (011) 39 986 27737, mcdrums@tiscalinet.it, www.mcdrums.it.
Take That Noise Inside!
Vic Firth Indoor Marching Sticks

To meet the needs generated by the ever-increasing popularity of indoor Drum Corps events, Vic Firth offers two new "indoor marching" stick models. The Thom Hannum Indoor stick is a scaled-down version of Thom's original model, designed to play very fast at low dynamic levels. The Scott Johnson "Scooters" Indoor stick is a full-sized stick with a half-tip, designed to create a quicker drumhead response while reducing the volume. Both sticks are available in hickory only.

Vic Firth is also offering a special Artist Series CD prepackaged with specially wrapped four-packs of American Classic 5A or 5B sticks. The CD features Gregg Bissonette, Peter Erskine, Rod Morgenstein, Tommy Igoe, Steve Smith, Chad Wackerman, and Zoro. It also contains music without the drumming performances so that you can play along. Charts and audio clips for the CD are available at the company's Web site.


Mixing Tradition With Technology
Precision Beats Drums Maple/Carbon Fiber Kits

Maple drums have a time-tested sound. Carbon Fiber drums have unique, high-tech properties. According to Precision Beats Drums, if you put them together you get some pretty impressive results.

PBD drums feature 8- and 10-ply maple shells with carbon fiber vacuum-formed over their exteriors, precision-cut bearing edges, and solid aluminum lugs with stainless-steel threads guaranteed never to strip. Optional stainless-steel lugs are available on snare drums for a dryer sound.

According to PBD, the maple/carbon fiber construction produces "an explosive sound that requires no dampening devices to remove unwanted ring," "shells that will stay concentric due to the pressure applied during the covering process," and "an outside finish that is impenetrable to moisture, and will not crack, chip, peel, or fade." List price for the six-piece kit shown is $10,650 (plus shipping).

Ayotte Custom Drums had a small display with WoodHoop drums, Keplinger snares, the new WoodHoop Travel Kit and Ayotte drumsticks. Ayotte drums, 2060 Pine Street, Vancouver BC V6J 4P8, Canada, tel: (604) 736-5411, fax: (604) 736-9411, ayotte@ayottedrums.com, www.ayottedrums.com.

Santa Fe Drums and Cajons, made in Spain, were shown at the Liderduc S.L. booth. The drums feature a satin finish, a good sound, and high-quality workmanship at a mid-price range. Liderduc S.L., Pol. Industrial La Cava s/n, 46892 Montaverne, Valencia, Spain, tel: (011) 34 962297714, fax/(011)349622297715.

Bauer Percussion & Drums from Sao Paulo, Brazil showed their new congas and their first-ever drumset. The new Lite Conga line came with an old Cuban-style body shape and a striking bright pink color. The drums are distributed by Altmann Musik-Instrumente, Viktoriastrasse 33, 41464 Neuss, Germany, altmann@altmann-for-music.de, www.altmann-for-music.de.

Italy's UFIP offers a great variety of cymbals, sounds, chimes, and gongs. Their Natural and Bionic Series have particularly excellent sounds, and UFIP splashes are regarded as some of the best on the world market. In America contact UFIP America, PO Box 96, Highgate Springs, VT, 05460, tel: (514) 488-9564, fax: (413) 521-6373, info@ufip.com, www.ufip.com.

Yamaha came to Frankfurt having completely re-designed their entry-level Stage Custom series. The line now includes Standard and Advantage models, with attractive finishes and lots of features from Yamaha's top lines. Also new are two different hi-hat models with adjustable legs and newly designed footboards. These products should be available on the US market very soon. Yamaha Corporation of America, 6600 Orangethorpe Ave., Buena Park, CA 90620, tel: (714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.cora.

The Hang is a completely new percussion instrument that combines elements of a regular steel drum and an udu. The instrument is playable by hand and has a tone range from C4 to E5. Played by musicians like Mustahfa Teddey Addy and Reto Weber, The Hang opens a new world of sounds and percussion. PanArt Musikinstrumentenbau, Engehaldenstrasse 131, 3012 Bern, Switzerland, tel/fax: (011) 41 313013332, postmaster@panart.ch, www.panart.ch.

Italy's LE Soprano drums are beautifully hand-crafted in natural finishes with brass and bronze hardware. Marco di Gambirasio is one of the masters in his field, with a genuine passion for building drums. S.T.E.D. di Gambirasio, via Donizetti, 70-24030 Brembate Sopra (BG) Italy, tel/fax: (011) 39 572 400285, antichimestieri@tin.it.

Roberto Spizzichino hand-makes his own cymbals and snare drums in Italy. His hand-hammered copper snares are inexpensive given their sound and quality. Roberto Spizzichino, Via Comunale Val Di Torbola 24B, 51010 S. Quirico Pescia (PT) Italy, tel: (011) 39 572 400045, fax: (011) 39 572 400285, antichimestieri@tin.it.
Goodies For The Other Guys

Yamaha Marching And Concert Accessories

There's more to drumming than grooving on a kit. Marching, symphonic, and mallet percussionists need innovative gear, too. Recognizing this fact, Yamaha has recently introduced a bevy of percussion accessories.

The Rim Saver is an aluminum shield that helps protect bass drum rims from mallet hits and clicks, and also provides an immediate repair solution for broken or fractured rims incurred during performances.

The Marching Bass Mallet Holder is a lightweight, plastic holder that mounts to the top of a bass drum and holds three extra pairs of mallets for fast, quiet switching during performance.

Portable Bass Stands are lighter and more stable than previous versions. The BS-125 aluminum folding stand adjusts to six playing heights. The BS-425 rolling bass stand features four large, locking wheels and a three-position height adjustment system. Both stands can accommodate 22" to 42" drums.

Professional Series Mallets (MP-01 through MP-05) have semi-flexible Birch handles and mushroom-shape yarn heads, and are recommended for use with Yamaha's Rosewood Series marimbas. The Two-Tone Mallet series replaces two Virtuoso Series models. The new mallets come with either a birch handle (MTB-10) or a thicker rattan handle (MTR-10). The Clipper mounts a triangle directly to the front of a music stand, and is short enough not to interfere with page turns.

On The Bookshelf

When you get a moment in your hectic schedule, you might want to peruse some of these recent book releases. Some will take you into the woodshed, others will tell you how to get OUT of the woodshed. And one or two might help you build your woodshed. Check 'em out!

Phil Maturano's Latin Soloing For Drumset received a very positive review in MD as an independent release some time back. Now it's widely available through Hal Leonard Publications, and augmented with a CD!

A new play-along CD is also a feature of Rhythm Section Drumming by Frank Corniola. The book is described as "a workbook for musical togetherness between drums and bass."

Hal Galper's The Touring Musician is intended to guide musicians in applying sound business practices to band travel, including booking and routing tours, budgeting, handling legal matters, and negotiating contracts and fees. It's published by Billboard Books.

Drummers interested in expanding their careers might want to check out two books from Allworth Press. Creative Careers In Music by Josquin des Pres and Mark Landsman "answers complex questions about the music business and its inner workings." Moving Up In The Music Business by Jodi Summers "offers surefire plans for gaining more power, responsibility, control, and security in this exciting field."

Self-healing and self-improvement is the goal of The Way Of The Pulse: Drumming With Spirit by Dr. John Diamond (Enhancement Books). In it, Dr. Diamond encourages drumming as a way to enhance The Pulse: the movement of life from which all things flow.

If your goal is to improve on every aspect of your life, you might benefit from the motivational words of drumming's ambassador to the world, Dom Famularo. His Cycle Of Self Empowerment "takes readers on a journey of self-discovery," and is described as "a cookbook for success." It's published by WizDom Enterprises.

Home recording is becoming a major focus of all musicians, including drummers. If you're into tinkering with music on computers, then The Sound On Sound Book Of Desktop Digital Studio might be a good guide. Written by Paul White, editor of England's Sound On Sound magazine, it's a practical guide to setting up a digital studio—at home or elsewhere—and using it effectively. It's published by Sanctuary Publishing.

Paul White also has a nifty little collection of pocket-sized books in his Basic series. Titles include Digital Recording, Effects & Processors, Mixing Techniques, Mastering, Live Sound, and Home Studio Design. The latter offers much-needed information on converting and soundproofing residential spaces for practice and/or recording purposes.

www.yamaha.com/band.
Drum Workshop is offering a heavy-duty double pedal carrying bag with the purchase of Delta and Delta II Accelerator, Turbo, and Nylon Strap bass drum pedals. The bags are valued at $72 and are available at participating US DW dealers while supplies last. Or buy a DW7000PX single or 7002PX double-bass drum pedal during June or July and get a free DW baseball hat.

In addition, DW's all-maple Collector's Series drums are now offered with or without reinforcing hoops. The "straight-shell" design is said to offer a darker, lower-pitched sound than that of drums with reinforcing hoops.

Clavia offers ddrum4 Mega Drumkits Signature Series for free download from their Web site. Simon Phillips, Dennis Chambers, Kenny Aronoff, and Mel Gaynor have all recorded their own sounds, and the resulting samples can be acquired for the ddrum4 brain at the Web site.

Pace Technology's DrumWipes are pre-treated, reusable cloths designed to clean drum finishes and hardware. (They're not recommended for cymbals.)

Schalloch Percussion offers 10" and 11" Linea 100 fiberglass congas. The drums feature black hardware on black fiberglass shells, and are fitted with curved rims and buffalo-skin heads. The set comes with adjustable three-leg stands.

Drummer/author/clinician Rick Latham now has two interactive teaching Web sites. LessonsOnDemand.com offers streaming slide shows and movies, with artist instructors and monthly lessons. And 1on1Music.com features live real-time lessons with Rick.

Sabian has expanded their line of Groove Hats to include 13" and 15" sizes. The 13" is said to give a tighter, slightly higher-pitched version of the original 14" model's "mid-pitched and funky '60s soul sound." The 15" is said to offer "a warmer, bigger, looser sound."

Ace Products Group now offers a KASES 46" hardware bag that can accommodate an extended hi-hat stand. The bag includes heavy-duty wheels and thick plastic protection strips at the bottom, and features zippered pockets, padded straps, and a rigid bottom section.

Sonor has added tom sizes to its ultra-thin-shelled Delite Series. The new sizes are 8x10, 9x12, 10x13, 11x14, and 13x16. In addition, the AX (axial) tom mounting system from Sonor's 3000 Series hardware is now available as an option on Designer Series drumkits.
Help us celebrate the world debut of 3 new series of Gretsch Drums!

We’re giving away three complete drumset prize packages with products from Gretsch, Paiste, Gibraltar, Toca, Impact, and Vater.

1st prize

A seven-piece set of Gretsch Renown Maple Series drums in Deep Blue, plus a 5x12 auxiliary snare. This prize package also includes a set of Paiste Signature Series cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Traditional Series Natural Bongos and Conga, thirty-six pairs of Vater Sticks, and a complete set of Impact hard-shell cases!
A five-piece set of Gretsch Catalina Elite drums in Ruby Red, plus a 5x10 auxiliary snare. This prize package also includes a set of Paiste Dimensions cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Elite Series Natural Bongos, twenty-four pairs of Vater sticks, and a complete set of Impact Signature drum bags.

A five-piece set of Gretsch Catalina Stage Series drums in Silver Frost, a set of Paiste Alpha cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Players Series Black Fiberglass Bongos with stand and a 10” mini timbale, twelve pairs of Vater sticks, and a complete set of Impact Gray Vinyl drum bags.

Consumer Disclosure

1. Two ways to enter: (a) call (900) 786-3786. Cost: 99¢ per call. You must call from the number where you wish to be notified. Or (b) send a 3.5” x 5.5” or 4” x 6” postcard with your name, address, and telephone number to: Modern Drummer/Gretsch/Paiste Contest, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

2. Enter as often as you wish, but each entry must be phoned or mailed separately. 3. ODDS OF WINNING EACH PRIZE DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 4. CONTEST BEGINS 5/1/01 AND ENDS 7/31/01. PHONE CALLS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL 11:59 PM EDT 7/31/01. POSTCARDS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 7/31/01 AND RECEIVED BY 8/3/01. 5. Winners will be selected by random drawing on August 13, 2001 and notified by phone or by mail. Prize: From Gretsch: Remo Maple Series seven-piece set in Deep Blue that includes: (1) 7x8 tom, (1) 8x10 tom, (1) 10x14 tom, (1) 12x16 tom, (1) 16x20 bass drum, (1) 5x14 snare, and (1) 5x12 auxiliary snare. From Paiste: Paiste Signature Series cymbals include: (1) pair 13” hi-hats, (1) 14” crash, (1) 16” crash, (1) 18” crash, (1) 20” ride, (1) 16” China, and (1) 10” splash. From Gibraltar: (2) 506C Low Rider Side Racks, (1) 9707010000 Dual Leg Hi-hat stand, (1) 8200 Ultra Adjust Snare stand, (1) Intruder II Double Pedal, and a full assortment of Gibraltar rack accessories. From Toca Percussion: (1) set of Traditional series Natural Bongos and a Traditional series Natural Conga with stand. From Vater Percussion: Twenty-four pairs of the Vater drumsticks of your choice. From Impact: A complete set of Impact hard-shell cases, including seven drum cases, a 30” hardware case, and a 22” cymbal case. (No foam included in any of the cases.)

Suggested retail value of such prize: $3,267. 11. Second Prize: One (1) winner will receive a Gretsch Catalina Elite drumset in Ruby Red that includes: (1) 8x10 tom, (1) 10x12 tom, (1) 14x14 floor tom, (1) 16x20 bass drum, (1) 5x14 snare, and (1) 5x10 auxiliary snare. From Paiste: a set of Dimensions cymbals that includes: (1) pair of 14” hi-hats, (1) 16” crash, (1) 18” crash, (1) 20” ride, and (1) 10” splash. From Gibraltar Hardware: A complete set of Gibraltar 9500 series double-braced hardware. From Toca Percussion: (1) set of Elite Series natural bongos with stand. From Vater Percussion: Twenty-four pairs of the Vater sticks of your choice. From Impact: A complete set of Impact Gray Vinyl drum bags. Total value of such prize: $4,766. 3rd Prize: Gretsch Catalina Stage Series Set. Set includes: (1) 9x12 tom, (1) 10x12 tom, (1) 16x16 floor tom, (1) 16x20 bass drum, and (1) 5x14 snare drum. A set of Paiste Alpha cymbals that includes: (1) pair of 14” hi-hats, (1) 16” crash, (1) 18” crash, (1) 20” ride, and (1) 10” splash. From Gibraltar Hardware: A complete set of Rock Series double-braced hardware. From Toca Percussion: (1) set of Players Series Black Fiberglass Bongos with stand and (1) 10” mini timbale. From Vater Percussion: Twelve pairs of the Vater drumsticks of your choice. From Impact: A complete set of Impact Gray Vinyl Drum bags. Total value of such prize: $3,211.


Total value of this contest: $17,150.
Mapex Deep Forest Walnut Drumkit
Special Woods Create Special Sounds

HITS
deep, warm sound
distinctive hardware, lugs, and memory locks

by Chap Ostrander

What does a drum company do after they go exploring in the woods? They come out with a new series of kits, of course. The Limited Edition Deep Forest Collector Series from Mapex offers hand-crafted drumkits with shells of walnut or cherry and the same quality fittings and hardware as on the high-end Orion series. The review kit sent to us was the walnut. Let's take a look.

Made One Tree At A Time

The novel approach about these drums is that they are made of plies taken from the same tree. All the drums feature 6-ply shells, with the thickness of the individual plies determining the thickness of the shells. Toms and snares are 5.1 mm thick, while the bass drum is 7.2 mm thick. This makes the drums light and easy to move around. The shells have double 45° bearing edges and no reinforcing rings.

Mapex gives the shells a natural wax finish, which they say will allow the drums to mature and deepen in sound and look. The beauty of the wood is showcased in a subtle way, with the grain pattern showing through clearly. The insides of the shells are very lightly finished for moisture protection. A gold Deep Forest badge is fastened to each drum. The air hole on the toms is placed behind the isolation mount. On the walnut kit, the lugs and hoops are finished in black chrome, which complements the look of the shells.
The Deep Forest Walnut kit includes the 6 1/2x14 snare at left. A 5 1/2x10 snare is available at extra cost.

All of the drums, snare included, are fitted with 2.3-mm steel Powerhoops. (Cherry drumkits feature gold-plated lugs and Powerhoops, with die-cast hoops on the snares for more volume and bite.) Low-mass lugs maximize shell visibility, and also allow the resonance of the shells to sing out. I also liked the die-cast claws on the bass drum. They feature rubber inserts where contact would be made with the wood, and the key-operated tension rod is encased in a shroud at the end of the claw, which helps you retain your tuning. Very thoughtful.

The drums all feature Remo heads, with clear Ambassador heads on the toms and Powerstroke 3 heads on the bass drum. The snare was fitted with a coated Ambassador batter and a clear Ambassador snare-side head.

If You Hit A Drum In The Forest...
Each of the woods in the Deep Forest series has its own characteristic sound. Where the cherry drums are said to be “bright and cutting,” the walnut drums I played were warm, rich, and deep. I tried tuning the 16” suspended tom to a very low pitch. (The head was just making contact with the rims.) It sounded almost like a timpani, with a rich tone that resonated forever. Both of the largest toms had this quality. Personally, I would have preferred floor toms with legs rather than suspended toms, because I like to be able to position the drums individually without the hindrance of a double stand. But I certainly had no complaints in the sound-production department.

The rack toms had distinct tones that were also full and rich. I’m not sure I would call them “dark,” but they had much more depth and warmth than maple shells. Make no mistake, you could tune them up into jazz range, but once you experience the fullness of the toms, you’d probably want to stay in the mid to low range, just for the satisfaction of their sound.

The front head on the bass drum was a black Powerstroke 3. It came with instructions on how to cut a hole, plus a template and a plastic reinforcing ring. However, given the characteristics of the PS3 heads, I wouldn’t want to cut such a hole. I’d rather let the resonance build up inside the drum and come booming out.

And, oh man, did it ever! I could tell I was tuning the drum in the right direction when the windows of my house began to rattle. The attack was there, but the tone was also deep and warm. This was an extremely satisfying drum to play.

Now for the snare drum. The snare response was excellent, from the lightest touch to the hardest hit. Needless to say, brushwork was fun as well. This is not a bright drum, but there’s a lot of “snare” in the sound, as well as the deep and full voice of the walnut shell. I was able to use the drum for a local show, on music ranging from rock to jazz, with various dynamics. The drum always sounded full and warm. And I applaud Mapex’s decision to use steel hoops rather than die-cast. They helped make the overall sound very open and cutting.

Standing Out
With their distinct, rounded lines, Mapex stands, pedals, and memory locks stand apart from the crowd. The Deep Forest setup includes two TS960 cymbal/tom stands, which serve to keep the toms off the bass drum. Each stand is basically a tripod with a three-hole multi-clamp attached to the top. The multi-clamp holds a tom arm and a small boom cymbal arm. The hardware is so integrated with the memory locks that this component assembly actually looks like a dedicated tom/cymbal stand.

The H950 hi-hat and the P950 bass pedal have been updated, with a new design set into the footboards, plus an attractive yellow base for the bass pedal. An interesting feature of the S950 snare stand is that the central shaft can move inside the base. This allows you to drop the snare 3” lower than the initial setting.

To Everything There Is A Purpose
Mapex says that the Deep Forest drums are best suited for recording and for mid-sized live gigs. I think they’d kill in the studio. I also think that the depth of the sound would carry in most live gigs, but miking would probably bring it out to everyone. (This is a sound you’d absolutely want to share.) If your gigs require more volume and brightness, you might want to consider the cherry kit. Cherry and walnut snares are available individually, including 5 1/2x10 models. (I’d love to try one of those!) If you’re in the market for a genuinely original-sounding drumkit, check out a Mapex Deep Forest model. You’re not out of the woods yet!


THE NUMBERS

| Configuration: | 61/2x14 snare, 8x10 and 9x12 rack toms, 11x14 and 14x16 suspended “floor” toms, 18x22 bass drum |
| Shell material: | 6-ply walnut |
| Hardware: | S950 snare stand, H950 hi-hat, P950 bass pedal, two TS960 cymbal/tom stands, TS950 double tom stand, DS787 telescoping spurs |
| List price: | $5,299 |

Other components available by special order only.
Yamaha John "JR" Robinson Signature "Nail" Snare Drum

Want To REALLY Nail A Track?

**HITS**

- Versatile tuning capabilities; performs well at high, medium, and deep tuning ranges.
- Larger than normal snare bed and snares, along with dual adjustable strainer design, produce articulate and sensitive response.
- Copper pins embedded into the 51/2x14 birch shell add brightness while maintaining the wood sound.

**MISSES**

- On the pricey side.

by Mike Haid

When a veteran studio session drummer with the credentials of John "JR" Robinson is asked to put his John "JH" Hancock on a snare drum, you can bet he's going to make sure it's "A list" quality. With as many sessions as JR has recorded, it's a good bet that he's dealt with every snare drum sound imaginable (for better or worse). Taking advantage of these years of experience in drum sounds, JR has teamed up with Yamaha to create two fairly unusual signature snare drums.

Chap Ostrander reviewed JR's massive 5x15 signature drum in detail in the February 2001 *MD*. I was also sent one, in addition to the drum we're reviewing here. This turned out to be a good thing, since it gave me a point of reference against which to evaluate the 51/2x14 Nail drum. So to reiterate, the 5x15 drum's 4-ply shell produces a wide-open, woody tone and a fat sound. The tuning range is excellent, and the coated Emperor/dot-type batter head keeps the overtones to a minimum. The drum's sheer size may be its one downside. You may find it difficult to place a 15" snare in a position that is comfortable relative to what you're accustomed to with a 13" or 14" drum.

**Nailing The Sound**

The most notable aspect of the 51/2x14 Nail snare is the superior stick definition and articulation of every stroke, no matter what the tuning. Whether I played accented ghost-note combination patterns or a pianissimo press roll, the clarity was outstanding. Give credit here to the increased width of the snare bed (2.7 mm as opposed to the typical 1.8 mm) and the extra-wide, 25-strand, hi-carbon steel snares. Combine these features with a dual-strainer setup (butt and release sides are both adjustable), and you've got unmatched definition.

When tuned down to a loose, deep pitch, the drum is very loud and fat. Even with a muffling ring, it punches with a thick, heavy sound that carries. The zinc die-cast hoops make the drum heavy, but they also add to its bright tone and solid rimshot crack. They give the drum an exceptionally solid cross-stick tone as well.

When it's time to crank up the tension for funk or jazz, the crack can be
heard for miles. It's a sweet-pitched sound that has just the right amount of open-tone ring without dampening. The brightness of the sound is increased by a unique aspect of the drum's design: Twenty copper pins are driven into the edge of the shell to add a mild metallic characteristic.

The Remo coated Emperor batter head that comes on the JR drum has a coated double dot center and a clear border. This gives the drum a thicker sound and helps keep unwanted overtones from developing. The drum produces almost no overtones when strokes are played in the dot area. A much louder, more open tone is produced when the off-center area is played. The coated head also helps with the articulation of the strokes.

A Pleasant Choice
Many of the physical features of JR's 15” drum are also found on the Nail drum, including the attractive White Gold Pearl finish, the snares, the dual adjustable strainers, and small chrome-plated lugs. The Nail drum also shares minimal hardware-to-shell contact in order to increase resonance. But from a sound standpoint, I'd say that the 5 1/2x14 is a more versatile drum, with more high-end clarity and snap. (You really can't go wrong with either drum, though, as both have the advanced features to facilitate most musical situations.) JR knew exactly what he was doing when he created the Nail drum, just as he does when he's called to do a session.

THE NUMBERS
Shell: 7-ply birch, with twenty copper pins inserted in the shell's edges, and a 2.7-mm wide snare bed.
Hardware: 3-mm zinc die-cast hoops, ten small chrome-plated lugs, 25-strand high-carbon steel snares, H-type strainer (throw-off) with G-type butt-side mechanism that also provides snare tension adjustment.
Finish: Polymer White Gold Pearl
List Price: $820

DW 5520 Dual Accessory/Hi-Hat And 5530 Double/Accessory Hi-Hat
Prepare Your Feet For Some Serious Fun

D W's new Accessory/Hi-Hat pedals are loaded with options to fit all sorts of playing situations. Each of two models features a percussion pedal added to the base, allowing for easy placement of a cowbell, a block, or perhaps a tambourine. These pedals contain some fascinating new ideas and innovative designs.

5520 Dual Accessory/Hi-Hat Pedal
Responding to the relatively recent use of foot-operated bells and blocks on drumkits, DW has combined their high-end hi-hat with an accessory pedal to create a very convenient setup. Basically you've got an excellent, smooth-playing hi-hat, with two-leg construction for flexible positioning, and a wider-than-usual base-plate. A bass-drum-style pedal is mounted to the left of the hi-hat footboard on this same baseplate. A percussion post built off the stand can easily accommodate a cowbell or block, with enough flexibility for just about any size of bell. A "stock" drumset tambourine might be a little wide for the space available, but an enterprising drummer could probably find a way to make one fit. The beater is DW's standard Two-Way nylon/felt model, which provides some nice sound alternatives.
Playing with this stand was a lot of fun. The accessory pedal operated smoothly and efficiently. And with everything together as one unit, I always knew where my foot was going when changing pedals. Releasing the pedal or playing into the bell created nice open and closed tones. I noticed that a cowbell played in the floor position tends to cause some sympathetic ring in the hi-hat cymbals, but this is a negligible concern. For me the convenient option of having another voice for my foot was a thrill.

5530 Double/Accessory Hi-Hat Pedal

As if adding an accessory pedal to the hi-hat wasn't enough, DW has also created a variation merging the accessory pedal and a double bass pedal. In this case, the accessory pedal is to the right of the hi-hat footboard. Directly above your toe is a toggle that switches between two chain-driven cams: one for the bell or block, and the other operating the remote bass drum beater. (A complete double bass pedal is included in this model. If you already have a double pedal, DW offers the 5525 model that serves as an add-on.)

Setting this pedal up was tricky. The two cams need to line up perfectly in order to allow the smoothest transition. To do this I had to fiddle with the tensions of the accessory and bass pedals more than I would have thought. But once the transition was smooth and the feel satisfactory, I had a blast. The toggle locked into either cam nicely, and I noticed no difference in feel from more conventional pedals. The act of switching between accessory mode and bass-drum mode took some practice, but once I got used to it, it was no harder than moving my foot between separate pedals.

With the advent of the accessory pedal, we've watched the drumset evolve yet again. DW has come up with some neat ways of incorporating this new tool into the kit. Whether your cowbell gets hit with a 5530 on the right or a 5520 on the left is up to you. But either way, these pedals won't disappoint. ☑ (805) 485-6999, ☑ www.dwdrums.com.

<table>
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<th>THE NUMBERS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DW 5520 Dual/Accessory Hi-Hat: $398</td>
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<tr>
<td>DW 5530 Double/Accessory Hi-Hat: $779</td>
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<tr>
<td>(includes complete 5002AH double pedal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DW5525 Double/Accessory Hi-Hat: $439</td>
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<td>(requires primary side of double pedal)</td>
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Unigrip 2000 Drumsticks And Accessories

Drumsticks
As their name might imply, the folks at Unigrip 2000 figure that enough attention has been paid to the tip and contour of a drumstick, but not to the grip area. And after all, what does it matter how a drumstick is balanced or what sort of tip it has, if you can't hold on to it comfortably?

Unigrip's special grip designs include (from top) the Round (on a hickory 5B), the L-Groover Dipstick (on a maple 2B), the regular Dipstick (on a hickory 5A), and the L-Groover with Round sleeve (on a maple 5A).

So Unigrip 2000 offers a line of high-quality hickory, maple, and even bamboo sticks (more about them later) with a variety of grip options. These range from designs intended purely to improve grip to designs intended to help you hold your stick "correctly" for improved performance.

The Unigrip Round is a soft neoprene rubber sleeve, sanded smooth and molded to the stick for durability. It provides an excellent gripping surface without affecting the balance of the stick to any great degree, and it can be played with equal comfort using traditional or matched grip. This was my favorite among all the special grips. It's available on Jazz, 5A, 5B, and 2B sticks at $11.95 per pair.

The Dipstick has a coating of soft plastic that actually dries into the grain of the wood. Much thinner than the Round model's rubber sleeve, it provides a playing balance identical to that of a natural wood stick, but with improved gripping comfort. Dipstick models are priced at $11.95 per pair.

L-Groovers are sticks with five finger-sized grooves cut directly into the wood, then covered with the Round rubber sleeve. This combination of physical contour and rubber grip surface offers exceptional gripping security. L-Groovers are available in 5A, 5B, and 2B sizes at $12.95 per pair. They're also available in a "dipped" version at the same price.

The 6-2000 grip is a hexagonal rubber sleeve. Its six-sided pattern is intended to fit into the grooves of a player's index finger and thumb, thus "creating a perfect fulcrum and improving technique and stamina." However, I was taught to allow a stick to rotate in my hand as I play, in order to maintain a relaxed grip and promote even stick wear. Trying to hold on to the 6-2000's flatted surfaces without rotating the stick made my playing feel awkward. Allowing the stick to rotate seemed to defeat the purpose of the design. (And for me, constant contact with the ridges between the flat surfaces was uncomfortable. You may feel otherwise.) The 6-2000 comes on Jazz, 5A, 5B, and 2B models at $12.95 per pair.

Bamboo Sticks
In addition to traditional hickory and maple sticks, Unigrip offers bamboo sticks. Bamboo isn't a wood; it's actually a grass—but it's stronger than oak, while being lighter than hickory. I really enjoyed playing the bamboo models I tested. They fairly flew on the drums, yet gave me a solid, secure feeling in my hands. They're currently available in a 5B size with natural or nylon tips at $12.95. Bamboo sticks with Round and Dipstick grips list for $14.95, and with 6-2000 hex grips at $15.95. Bamboo timbale Dipsticks are also available, at $16.95.

Brushes
Retractable rubber-handled wire brushes are nothing new. But have you ever tried to reverse such brushes and play a pattern on a ride cymbal with the other end? You generally have either a steel ring or a rubber ball—neither of which sounds much like a drumstick tip. Unigrip's solution is so obvious that one wonders why nobody thought of it before: Put a nylon drumstick tip on the end of the retracting handle, where the metal ring or rubber ball would normally be.

When the brushes are fully extended in playing mode, the nylon tip sits firmly against the butt end of the brush handle. It's a simple matter to flip the brush over and use that tip on a cymbal. No, it doesn't sound exactly like the tip of a wood drumstick—but at the low volume you'd be playing if you were using brushes to begin with, it comes pretty close. It's a nifty idea. The tipped brushes are priced at $27.95.

Kicksticks
See the photo above? See the things that look just like multi-rods, only bigger? Well, if multi-rods are good for special situations on toms and snare drums, wouldn't equivalent beater units be good for those situations on bass drums? Maybe all night on a low-volume jazz date or "unplugged" pop gig, or maybe just one song in a studio session.

With two different sizes available, the Kicksticks can adapt to different-sized bass drums (or just different impact points on the same drum). They take a little getting used to in terms of playing feel, but it doesn't take long. And after all, why should the top of the kit get all the options? Kicksticks are priced at $25.95.

Unigrip's Kicksticks are the bass-drum-beater version of multi-rods. And their wire brushes feature nylon drumstick tips on the retractor handles. The tips can be used on ride cymbals when the brushes are fully or partly open.

Rick Van Horn

Unigrip 2000	1646 N. Lincoln St., Burbank, CA 91506
www.unigrip2000.com
(800) 474-7068, info@unigrip2000.com,
"THE MORE OPTIONS I HAVE THE BETTER"

There are drummers who like to dabble with different drum sounds, and there are drummers who REALLY like to experiment. And then there's Dean Butterworth. "The more options I have the better. When I go into the studio, I take five different ride cymbals, four or five pairs of hi-hats and at least five different snares."

Which is why Dean was the perfect candidate to test drive a set of birch Starclassic Performers. Dean was more than up for it. "The timing was great. A lot of my heroes played different birch kits, and for the last six months or so I kept thinking about what it would be like to have a birch kit with the same dimensions as my Starclassic Maple kit."

"As it turned out, I fell in love with the Performers. The drums sounded really warm, they were just singing really nicely. The kick sounded great and the snare sounded great. The toms seemed like they had more sustain. The overall response was wonderful, really fluent. It was very easy to do a 16th note fill around the toms. It didn't hurt that the tom mounting system was the same as my Starclassic Maple kit. I've played other drums in the past and they all use designs that go off the tuning lugs. The Star-Cast system doesn't mess with the tuning. I like that. And I like the die-cast hoops on the birch kit for the same reasons I like them on my maple kit—they lock in the tuning a lot better than a flanged hoop."

"I wished I could have taken the kit with me. But I'm not going to tell you that I'm going to switch from maple over to birch. What I am going to do is get a birch kit after our current tour is over so I can do things like use birch toms with a maple kick or vice versa. And not just in the studio—I'd even like to experiment on tour and see what the house guy can do with the sounds of different drums in those big, boomy rooms."

"This opens up a whole new door."

DEAN BUTTERWORTH  
(Ben Harper & The Innocent Criminals)

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I'm not just a punk drummer!

Most of our favorite drummers could go days, weeks, or months without being stopped and recognized in public. Often, they sit behind the kit, shielded by cymbals and toms, barely making themselves visible to any camera lens. Such is not the case with Blink-182's Travis Barker.

Alongside bandmates Tom DeLonge (guitar/vocals) and Mark Hoppus (bass/vocals), Barker's heavily tattoo-covered, boxer shorts-clad body (a spoof of the controversial Calvin Klein underwear ad campaign) was featured in advertisements, posters, and magazines around the world, largely in promotion of the band's huge 1999 MCA Records release, Enema Of The State. Suddenly, people began to recognize Barker's appearance, and connected his image with the massive airplay from the album's pop-punk singles "Adam's Song" and "What's My Age Again?" Life was great for the drummer, yet also disturbingly difficult.

"I had stalkers," Barker explains. "I had people climbing up on my balcony and leaving me flowers. These people climbed two stories high and had to get past my two rottweilers! I really don't go anywhere anymore. I don't go to the mall, I don't go out to eat. I only go to drive-thrus and use Homegrocer.com."

Barker is the drummer for an unusual band, as Blink-182's subject matter and demeanor are rarely serious and their fanbase consists primarily of kids in their early to late teens. Tom and Mark are notorious for being the kings of potty humor during their live sets. Barker, however, doesn't join the zany circus of which his bandmates share ringmaster duty. "When I was in high school I was exactly like Mark and Tom," Barker points out, "with the same kind of jokes, except ten times worse. But I just kind of snapped out of it."

And be careful about how you label Barker. Although he's best known for his work with Blink-182, he's quick to shoot down the tag of being strictly a punk rock drummer. "Someone just sent me something in the mail that said I was the best punk drummer of the year—and I scraped the word 'punk' off," he laughs. "Don't you dare put punk right next to my name! I don't think of myself as a punk drummer."

Story by Waleed Rashidi ★ Photos by Alex Solca
Yet it's hard to look past those loose, carefree attitudes, especially through the jokes, laughs, and snotty music. Still, the band realized they had a serious matter at hand—following up the huge success of *Enema Of The State*. At the time of this interview, Barker had just finished tracking their new album, *Take Off Your Pants And Jacket* and recently moved into a brand-new home in Corona, California. Based on Blink-182's previous success, the insanity that began a couple of years ago is poised to strike all over again.

MD: What kind of studio prep did you have for the new Blink album?
TB: We wrote it exactly the same way we did the last time. We tour throughout the year, and about two weeks before we record, we start writing.
MD: So this album was written quickly.
TB: Yeah. We had bundled up all of our ideas for the past year, and when it came time to write, we just did it. And I recorded all of my drum tracks—eighteen songs—in two days. I also did some percussion tracks.
MD: This is your second time working with producer Jerry Finn, right?
TB: Yeah, we've worked with Jerry before. Jerry is doing all of the production and Tom Lord-Alge is doing the mixing. Jerry is easy to work with. He's a musician, and he plays every instrument, so he's cool. He came into pre-production about a week before we recorded the record—we had half the album written—and he was cool with everything.
MD: He didn't make many changes, suggestions, or ideas?
TB: Not as far as my drum parts go. He was in love with my drum parts, but I wasn't sure with some of the stuff. I came up with a lot of little breaks and interludes between verses and choruses that the other guys thought were too "algebra-ish"—but Jerry loved 'em, so most of everything stuck. At first he was like, "Man, this is algebra, what in the hell is going on?" But then I explained them to him and he understood. Most of everything I did
was pretty easy, but I did get to draw from some of my furthest influences on this album. It's cool, because I got to use stuff I don't usually get to do.

MD: Such as?

TB: There's one song that has that beat from James Brown's "Funky Drummer." People may not realize it, but I'm heavily influenced by that. It's pretty cool because it has all these syncopated breaks like open hi-hats, chokes, and ghost notes. And there's actually another tune on the record with an Afro-Cuban bass drum and hi-hat thing I do, with a rock beat over the top of it.

MD: Getting back to the production of the album, how long was the actual setup as far as getting your drum sounds dialed in?

TB: I didn't go to the studio on the day we got sounds because I hate doing it. I get burned out just hitting a drum a thousand times while the engineers tweak. So I have a guy by the name of Mike Fasano do it, who did most of the drum tuning for the record as
These are the albums that Travis says best represent his playing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blink-182</td>
<td>Take Off Your Pants And Jacket</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blink-182</td>
<td>The Mark, Tom &amp; Travis Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blink-182</td>
<td>Enema Of The State</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Aquabats</td>
<td>The Fury Of The Aquabats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeble</td>
<td>All Dressed Up And Nowhere To Go</td>
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...and these are the ones he listens to for inspiration.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Drummer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King Diamond</td>
<td>Them</td>
<td>Mikkey Dee</td>
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<td>The Police</td>
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<td>Stewart Copeland</td>
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<td>Faith No More</td>
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<td>Mike Bordin</td>
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<td>DJ Shadow</td>
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well. And Daniel Jensen of Orange County Drum And Percussion came in with a lot of different snare drums. So they spent a day getting sounds and then I recorded my parts over a period of two days. Actually, most of it was recorded without Mark and Tom too. I just turned on a click track and did it.

MD: You tracked without any scratch tracks?
TB: No scratch.
MD: You just had the song in your head and laid it down with nothing but your memory and a click behind you?
TB: I did most everything that way, except for two songs we wrote at the last minute in the studio. We had no idea what the song was going to be like, no lyrics. We just had ideas for cool beats and we looped some drums in one song just to make them sound more "dancy," more drum 'n' bass sounding. That was real cool.

For Enema, we did fifteen songs in three and a half days, but for this one we did eighteen songs in two days. I'm just trying to beat my record! [laughs] I wouldn't tell Jerry that or else he'd get mad. But the process happened fast.

MD: So you must be a one-take drummer.
TB: Yeah, most of everything was one take. Some of the new stuff was done with a loop, and then we mixed in real drums later. So I got to play around a little too.

MD: You mentioned the time taken to get drum sounds. But do you trigger sounds as well?
TB: That doesn't happen until mixdown. For Enema, as far as I know, Tom Lord-Alge did trigger some stuff. But this time we mixed in LA, because I didn't want to let him touch
any of my drums. I know Tom thinks my snare drums sound weird because they're so cracky and high.

MD: You like to crank your snare drums?

TB: Yeah, they're tuned pretty tight. I don't crank them nearly as much as I do live, but they are cranked, because I don't play with monitors live. I want to hear all of my snare drum. I use 6 1/2" OCDP snares with the holes in the side, and those drums are loud. But I like to tune them up so I can hear every little ghost note no matter how loud the band is playing. But in the studio, we used a variety of snare drums—everything from some of the OCDP snares with the big holes to the 1" holes. We also rented an old Guns N' Roses snare drum that they recorded "November Rain" with.

MD: What kind of snare was that?

TB: It's called "Big Red," and I believe it's an old Tama snare. It's pretty amazing. We also used some old Ludwig Coliseum snares, and we used a Brady snare. I personally don't like to hear the same snare drum on every song. I think it's cool to match the snare drum to the tune.

MD: And was the rest of the kit your standard setup?

TB: I used a 20" kick instead of a 22". The 20" sounds like a cannon, especially in the studio. It's an amazing bass drum. My toms were the same Orange County sizes I always use, 12" and 16". I also used a splash and a China in the studio, but I refuse to set up those cymbals live. They get buried live and then they crack. Plus I don't want to bring extra stuff on tour. I just play the same thing with a crash that I would play on a splash because it'll produce the same effect on stage.

MD: Blink is known for its incredible tour schedule. And you've gone out with some different bands. But who are some artists you'd like to tour with?

TB: Last year we tried to get Eminem—before this whole "Eminem taking over the world" thing happened—but it didn't happen. If it was my choice, we wouldn't tour with other punk bands. We'd tour with other kinds of groups. I just hate going to a show and seeing an opening punk rock band, a middle punk rock band, and then a headliner punk band. I like seeing different bands, and that's why I like playing radio festivals. There's such a variety.

MD: What kinds of pre-show warm-ups do you do?
TB: I do a bunch of rudimental marching exercises, stuff I learned when I was in drum line. I’m still super into that stuff. I love working on the rudiments—the crazy flams, drags, rolls, single strokes. I’m really into that stuff. It’s what I do.

MD: Is marching band how you got your start?

TB: I studied jazz for years when I was young, but when I got into marching band, that’s when my chops really got better. I took all of the knowledge I got from marching band and applied it to the drumset. Now I make up my own exercises and crazy chops-builders. When we’re on the road I practice every day. And then right before I go on, I run through all of my marching stuff to make sure my hands are loose.

MD: Do you work out while you’re on the road to keep yourself in good physical shape?

TB: I use a pull-up bar, and I skateboard sometimes. We’re very lucky, because I have my own little drum room set up for me backstage at all of the venues we play. I do get to play a lot, which does a lot for my playing and my body.

MD: Is there much partying on the road?

TB: If there’s something good going on, I’ll go out and party. But I won’t hang out on the bus and get drunk. I don’t drink, I’m just not into it. I smoke cigarettes, but that’s about it. I don’t understand how you can get drunk and then go out and play. But if I was in a band that was a little more mellow, I could pull it off. All of our songs have tempos that are like 224 bpm. And on the few songs that are mid-tempo, I overplay them live.

MD: What’s your reasoning behind overplaying?

TB: Tom doesn’t do guitar fills or anything, so I think a little busier drumming works for this band live. There’s only three of us, so I feel there’s room. In the studio, we just play our core parts. But live, I get to stretch, which is cool. Mark and Tom’s deal is to mess around on stage and be funny, like just go running around dropping their instruments, so I have to hold it all together.

MD: You’re obviously stuck behind the drums, so you can’t do too much as far as putting on a theatrical event for the crowd. You’re really stuck with laying the foundation.

TB: It works good too, because I don’t have monitors, so we kind of work like a jazz band where they all follow me, and they’re
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I feel that I don’t have bad shows anymore. I play like someone’s always recording me. I don’t want anyone to ever see me and think I sucked. So, between practicing and being on tour—and teaching a bunch of students—I’m always up on my instrument.

MD: What about stamina? As you mentioned, Blink has some fast-paced material. Do you ever reach a breaking point?

TB: Unless it’s real humid and hard to breathe on stage, the tempos don’t get to me. I pretty much just pull through. I’ve never been at the point where I can’t play one more song because I feel like I’m dying. I pace myself pretty well. I do hit hard, probably a lot harder than I should. But at the same time, I still play with dynamics. On verses I’m pretty mellow, but on choruses I’m really loud. I always weigh everything out so I can have something for the end.

MD: You mentioned that you studied jazz and marching drums in your earlier years. How did you start playing in the first place?

TB: When I was four, I started taking drum lessons from a jazz teacher. I started going through Jim Chapin’s Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer. My teacher really got me into jazz, and I became a bit of a bookworm as far as studying drums. But when I got a little older, I really lost interest in jazz drumming. In fact, I stopped playing my drums altogether. But when I got to be around sixteen, I started seeing friends playing guitar and bass, so I got back into the drums. I started really playing seriously, and in my junior year of high school I started a band. I was also in the men’s choir, I played in the jazz ensemble, and I performed at competitions and festivals. And as I mentioned, I was doing marching band the whole time.

After my senior year, I was going to try out for drum corps, something I really wanted to do. But then I started touring with a rock band.

MD: Which band was that?

TB: That was my first band, Feeble. We played shows every weekend, and I didn’t want to go back to school since I was doing that. And from there I started playing in other bands, eventually going out with The Aquabats.

MD: How did you hook up with Blink?

TB: From The Aquabats, I hooked up with The Suicide Machines. Everything was cool with the music, but I hated Detroit, where they were based out of. I lived out there for a couple of weeks, and I still love their band to this day, but I couldn’t stay locked down in Detroit. So I came back home.

The Aquabats were touring with Blink at the time, and at one of the shows, Scott [Raynor, original Blink-182 drummer] bailed out for some reason. Crazy stuff was going on inside the band. So they came to me and asked if I could learn twenty songs in a couple of hours. I said, "Well, I guess so!" So I told Tom, "Let’s just go in this room and play every song right now. Show me all the parts right now."

Well, that night, we played the show and it was amazing. Afterwards Tom and Mark came up to me and said, "Man, we’ve never sounded better, this was amazing. I can’t believe you did this!" And the next night they told me, "We want you to play in our band!" But Scott was still officially in the band at the time, and it’s like you meet this girl, and she totally likes you, but she’s got some boyfriend, and you’re like, "If anything ever happens, call me." Sure enough, a month later they called me and told me they wanted me in the band.

MD: Did you find it difficult adapting to Blink’s material?

TB: The Suicide Machines and Aquabats were more detailed and complex. In The Aquabats, we were playing sambas and crazy marching things, and different time signatures too. It was really Devo-esque.

MD: You also have some outside interests aside from drumming.

TB: I used to have a rehearsal studio where we would throw free shows for kids. But the city didn’t like it because they had to close down the street due to the fact that there were so many people there. Hell, they weren’t on the streets shooting each other, you know? But we ended up closing that down.

Now I have a distribution warehouse where Famous Stars And Straps, my clothing company, operates out of. I started the company because I didn’t like what everybody else was making. We make clothing and big belt buckles. It’s also the place where I keep my collection of old Cadillacs. I also have my own little studio in there where I teach students.

MD: You obviously don’t need to teach for
TB: I have thirty-six that I try to meet with one weekend a month. That's about all I have time for. But I really enjoy teaching. It's very rewarding.

MD: You must have a pretty good perspective on the development and performance of novice percussionists these days.

TB: Most of my students want me to teach them because they know I'm not just some punk rock drummer who can only teach them a fill or the latest Blink-182 song. Honestly, I wouldn't be interested in doing that. My students know I have more of a background than what Blink-182 offers.

I have a twelve-year-old student that's just ridiculous. He can play anything. He plays jazz, funk, reggae, ska, and all the Latin stuff. When he came to me, he couldn't read music very well, so now I'm turning him into a bookworm. He can sit there and sightread things. I have older students in their thirties who are doing the same thing.

If a beginner student comes in just to hang out or creep out and look at me, I tell him, "It's a waste of your time and money." I don't sign autographs or take pictures during drum lessons.

MD: It's obvious that many young ears are growing up on your playing. Who did you grow up on?

TB: I grew up on Stewart Copeland, Steve Gadd, Mikkey Dee of Motorhead, Dennis Chambers, and Rod Morgenstein.

MD: A few fusion drummers.

TB: Yeah, the only metal drummer I liked was Mikkey Dee, because he had style. He incorporated flams and odd time signatures. I liked Steve Gadd because he danced behind his drumkit.
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he melted right into it. And Stewart Copeland had his own style, which was amazing.

MD: What about some of the punk drummers?
TB: I didn't like any of them. Nowadays, Brooks Wackerman is good. He kicks ass. I filled in for him with The Vandals one time, and I was stoked. Listening to his drum parts that he played on The Vandals records, man, he's pretty much the only young punk drummer I like. But then again, he's not a punk drummer. He's a great drummer playing in a punk rock band.

MD: Do you feel what you play in Blink-182 limits your real playing potential?
TB: Definitely. That's why I do a drum solo every night, although I didn't come up with the idea. On the first show of our first US tour, Tom and Mark yelled, "Give it up for Travis!" and they walked off the stage. I just said, "Oh no, I can't believe they're doing this to me!" I wasn't prepared! But now I really enjoy soloing.

MD: You don't want to be tagged as a punk drummer. But what's your criticism of punk drumming?
TB: Every punk rock band sounds recycled. It just gets old. It's the same recycled beats. Believe me, I know where you took that fill from.

I'm trying to bring more to the table. I like all kinds of music. And if you're gonna make yourself stick out, you have to investigate other kinds of music in order to bring something fresh to what you do. Come up with your own thing. Do something differ-
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Will Lee.
THE ROOTS' ASHISH THOMPSON

QUEST
Ahmir Thompson is a musical chameleon with the fattest of grooves. He's been the heartbeat of the Philadelphia-based hip-hop group The Roots since the early '90s, blending down-home funk, East and West Coast rap styles, and on their latest release, Things Fall Apart, some dynamic drum 'n' bass licks. He's also been the trusted rhythmic right-hand man of soul crooner D'Angelo, in the studio (Voodoo) and on tour. And he's now part of fusion's latest power trio, The Philadelphia Experiment, with bassist Christian McBride and pianist Uri Caine.

Thompson is the first to cop to his spot-changing ways. "I have various drumming personalities in different situations," says the thirty-year-old, who also goes by the name ?uestlove. "I grew up shedding to funk records since I was like two. But because of the line of work that I'm in, I have to show different sides from that.

"When I first started in The Roots," Ahmir continues, "hip-hop really hadn't seen a drummer who had mastered the art of playing break beats that sound like they're hip-hop records. That's a science that's hard to achieve, as easy as it sounds. Cats will say, 'Well, you're just playing a repetitive four-bar groove.' But it's all about the quality of the drum, how I have it miked, how I EQ it when I put it down, the type of sticks I'm using, the type of skins I use, and, of course, the particular groove I play. I've tested many a drummer: 'Can you play this totally fill-free, no toms?'"

Thompson has long been a fan of Average White Band drummer Steve Ferrone. "AWB's Person To Person was probably the album that I shedded to the most as a kid," Ahmir says. "The tie would probably go to Tower Of Power's live album from San Francisco, Live And In Living Color [with drummer David Garibaldi]. I'm now working with Macy Gray, and we're doing a song that's very similar to Tower Of Power's 'You're Still A Young Man.' We almost have to refer to it to get the true feeling of the waltz of it.

"When I got a little older, around twelve or thirteen," Ahmir recalls, "I discovered my father's serious James Brown record collection. So basically I developed my left hand just listening to Clyde Stubblefield. He had the fastest left hand ever—the most perfectly syncopated left hand known to man. Then as I got in my teens, all those funk records that I grew up practicing to were now being utilized in a different way, which was in sampling. So naturally I became attracted to hip-hop, because it was a 'name that tune' thing for me—'Oh, I know that tune, oh yeah!' So that would cause me to look further into my father's collection. He had like three thousand records. It was my mission to collect more and learn more."

Ahmir's father, who was a doo-wop singer in the 1950s and '60s, introduced his son to legendary soul/funk drummer Bernard Purdie when he was four. "I'll never forget it," Thompson says. "My dad turns to Bernard and says, 'Bernard, how do you keep food on the table?' Bernard says, 'The 2 and the 4.' And I never got it, even as I started playing for my father's show. When I was twelve, he would always say to me, 'Keep it in the pocket, 2 and 4. That'll put your kids through college—2 and 4.' Back then it was all about trying to outdo Stewart Copeland, Neil Peart, or whoever. Whose fills are the fastest? That's what all the other kids were doing. But I kind of wanted to stand out. How could I stand out being a funk drummer and be as effective as I would be as a jazz musician?"

"In 1992," Ahmir continues, "when The
Roots released their first album, my goal was to be a human drum machine and just duplicate the break beats that I grew up playing that were now getting sampled in hip-hop. I wanted to basically fool cats into not knowing whether or not that was a machine or an actual beat being played by a drummer. I was a little loose on the first two records, but then I really mastered it. And once I found the proper engineer, Bob Power [A Tribe Called Quest, D’Angelo, Me’Shell Ndegeocello, Erykah Badu], I really had it. Bob was instrumental in me finding my sound. Once he taught me how to really master the mixing board, I was invincible. I was really sounding like a drum machine. I would have arguments with people: ’No, that’s me playing.’"

It wasn’t until they started working on D’Angelo’s Voodoo record that Thompson’s style became less, uh, perfect. “D’Angelo sort of showed me a world in which flaws are good,” he explains. “So I took my theory of quantized funk, and tried to make it flawed—almost. If you listen to a lot of the Voodoo record, we do a lot of funk improvisation based on stuff that sounds like it’s not quantized, offbeat almost.”

Voodoo consciously toys with time, with vocals sometimes lagging behind or speeding ahead. Detroit producer Jaydee opened their minds to that sound. “Basically he would program stuff that just sounded so anti-beat,” says Ahmir, “almost like an effect. And here was a person who was programming drums that sounded like a real person, even down to the fill—the most perfect I’ve ever heard it. D [D’Angelo] and I didn’t really want to do that. People are expecting us to do the retro thing, because it’s easy. Everyone’s crying that D’s the next Marvin Gaye or whoever. But we wanted to push the arrow forward, rather than backward. We just wanted to make an art out of sloppy playing. It took us five years to do it.”

Some drummers can simmer at a low volume with great power, and Thompson has that type of intensity—big, soft, but with precise hands. “Dynamics are very important to me,” he says. “Too many drummers can’t be disciplined to hold the dynamic and then kick it up a notch. But I was able to master that. Through a lot of my hip-hop work, I kind of mastered the art of discipline, just staying at one dynamic level. That was a very hard thing to master.”

No doubt, Thompson is the king of the

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<td>D’Angelo</td>
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<td>The Roots</td>
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<td>James Brown</td>
<td>Funky Drummer</td>
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cross-stick, not relegated to using it in breakdown situations. He throws it in anytime, in the heaviest of jams. "That's my Memphis tribute," he smiles. "I listened a lot to Al Green records—any Willie Mitchell production for Hi Records. A lot of his production, that's the stuff. There's a whole art to just playing cross-stick. I try to go places that other drummers don't go. There's a whole other world of cross-stick playing that people haven't touched on yet. I did that a lot on Voodoo. I think I'm playing cross-stick more than I'm playing snare."

The cross-stick is like a gavel at the beginning of Voodoo, like Ahmir's bringing the whole thing to order. "I have to. I'm still in command, and I've got to let people know," Thompson laughs. "By that time we were three years into making the record. I had gotten one of those [Yamaha] Steve Jordan cocktail kits and wanted to do something with it. So I got an old cymbal and put a bunch of duct tape on it. I was just thinking about the old Fat Albert/Bill Cosby drumset, how he played drums. And basically I just use those three drums, with a broken cymbal with a lot of tape on it, my rimshot, and that big-ass cocktail kit for a kick drum—just trying to make something real dirty, very juke-joint sounding. I think we succeeded."

On the song "Africa," Thompson says he turned the snares off and laid magazines on the drums. "I wanted to treat the drums as if they were bongos, just something with a different sound and style. I kind of stole that idea from Prince. Prince did a couple of songs on the Parade album that sounded like the drums were being muffled, so that's the route we wanted to go. And we opened up D'Angelo's Rhodes and played the bells inside. We wanted to give it a pure sound. When you've got a lot of time on your hands you can experiment with anything."

The Philadelphia Experiment didn't have the same luxury in terms of recording time. Thompson was rehearsing to go on tour with D'Angelo, and to accommodate the drummer, The Philadelphia Experiment recorded in the building where the rehearsal studio was. On D'Angelo's breaks, the drummer would go kindle another musical fire. "I'd run down the hall, 'Okay, let's knock it out.' We'd knock out one song. Sometimes Chris [bassist Christian McBride] and I would start first, and Uri [Caine, keyboardist] would rehearse, go back, and do some overdubs. Two hours later, I'd take another break and school. Q-Tip would come down with a record to play for us, or other cats would come and we'd jam with them. Making a record sort of became an afterthought."

Meanwhile, Virgin [Records] was like, 'Give us the damn tapes now.'"

On "Chicken Grease," Thompson plays a straight-8th-note pattern on top, and a more funky half-time on the bottom. "By that time we were three years into making the record. I had gotten one of those [Yamaha] Steve Jordan cocktail kits and wanted to do something with it. So I got an old cymbal and put a bunch of duct tape on it. I was just thinking about the old Fat Albert/Bill Cosby drumset, how he played drums. And basically I just use those three drums, with a broken cymbal with a lot of tape on it, my rimshot, and that big-ass cocktail kit for a kick drum—just trying to make something real dirty, very juke-joint sounding. I think we succeeded."

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Drums: Yamaha Maple Custom Absolute in silver sparkle finish
A. 5 1/2x14 Maple Custom Absolute snare
B. 3 1/2x14 David Garibaldi signature piccolo snare
C. 16x18 floor tom
D. 18x20 floor tom
E. 16x26 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian (vintage)
1. 13" Amir hi-hats
2. 24" Amir ride

Hardware: All Yamaha, including a chain-drive pedal (loose spring tension) with a felt beater

Heads: Remo Fiberskyn on 5" snare ("donut" and five pieces of duct tape for muffling), Pinstripes on floor tom batters (with eight pieces of tape for muffling), Pinstripe on bass drum batter, various front heads (pillow for muffling)

Sticks: Vic Firth 7A wood tip

Microphones: Shure

Thompson is doing some tasty drum 'n' bass double stickings with The Experiment, elaborating on some things he did recently with The Roots. The Roots had moved to London at about the time that jungle music was being born, and Thompson got to witness it in the beginning stages. "Drum 'n' bass is basically just speeding up these break beats. And at the time, the two break beats that they used for the rhythm tracks for at least eighty percent of the stuff between '94 and '97 was either the Bongo Rock Band's "Apache" break or JB's "Soul Pride," where Clyde Stubblefield took like a minute-long solo. That became the basis. Since I already had some sort of understanding of those records—the ingredients that went into the break-beat pie—it was easy for me just to duplicate it.

"I first started experimenting with live drum 'n' bass on The Roots' last album, Things Fall Apart, on the song we do with Erykah Badu, 'You Got Me,'" Ahmir says. "It kind of caught on, much to the record label's chagrin. They were like, 'You're going to ruin a perfectly good hit. Take it off, it's too confusing.' But I stuck to my guns, and as a result people come to me all the time. 'Oh man, the drum 'n' bass song with Erykah Badu, I love it.' So for this next album I'm really going to go berserk.

"I just hear those rhythmic patterns in my head," he continues. "You can master any type of art form if you just know the basis from which it came. And again, because Clyde Stubblefield doing 'd-do doo whack, d-do doo whack' has been stamped on my brain like a tattoo for fifteen years, it's just me doing that pattern, but twelve times as fast, and with a great deal of wrist work. The faster you play, the less arm you use. So I just sing patterns to myself all the time."

On "The Miles Shit" (from The Philadelphia Experiment), Thompson turns the beat inside out, clearly feeling at ease.
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Ahmir Thompson

with bassist McBride. "I could only do that stuff with Christian," he explains. "With most bass players I play with, my job as a drummer is to lay out the red carpet. I felt secure enough to start messing around with the beats and doing polyrhythms, knowing that he knew exactly where to fall back in. It was a conversation. The funny thing was, we couldn't see each other. The room is so big that he was in an isolated room in the back and I was in an isolated room on the other side. There was no microphone for us to speak through, so we basically just had to communicate musically. I really did feel like I was having a conversation with him."

In a playful mood during the keyboard solo, Thompson kicks it up a notch and gets into some good dialog with Caine. "Uri is full of colors, man, a very colorful player. So it was definitely a conversation between three cats, sometimes four. Pat Martino sat in with us, and that was an incredible experience."

On "Grover," their tribute to the late Philadelphia saxman Grover Washington Jr., Thompson drives The Experiment with a pattern of snare work switching from crossstick to skin. "That's to give some space so

Uri could do his thing," Ahmir says. "Usually if Uri is painting something quiet, then I'll settle down and give him more space. But we did a few takes where he said, 'I want you to go with me.' During the first part of the recording, any time he played I'd just bring it right down. But there are some songs where you want it to go somewhere where you engage in a conversation with him. It was loose, and it definitely felt like a band. I welcome the opportunity to do it again."

Thompson notes that The Philadelphia Experiment sessions may be the first he's ever done with a mounted tom. He usually prefers not to throw one up there. "I use a 26" kick," he reveals. "I like shit big. I use a 20" floor tom. Yamaha custom-made it for me. And I use a 5 1/2" brass snare and a piccolo, which I'll go back and forth
The Secret Is Out!

ENDURO

by HUMES & BERG

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Ahmir Thompson

between. I'm a proud Yamaha user. I'm also a fan of vintage gear. But I keep my set simple. I've just got kick, snare, one or two floor toms, one hi-hat, one ride, and that's it. My cymbals are Zildjian, and because my proper name is Ahmir, they found some of the old vintage Amir cymbals. Actually, I'm quite attached to the Amirs, so I've been using them. Thompson also uses Vic Firth 7A sticks and a Yamaha chain-drive kick pedal. He likes to use Remo Fiberskyn heads, saying, "Just duct-tape the hell out of them so you get that tight tuning."

Besides working on tracks for D'Angelo, Common, and the seventh album by The Roots, Thompson's recently been recording with Macy Gray and Zap Mama, co-producing several songs on the new Zack De La Rocha (Rage Against The Machine) solo CD, and working with singer Nikka Costa. "Her album's very rock-oriented," Ahmir explains. "I definitely stepped out of character and got into some Bonham territory."

Thompson also played on "Water Get No Enemy" from the all-star AIDS relief album, Red Hot & Riot, which is a collection of tunes by Nigerian Afrobeat star and social voice Fela Anikulapo Kuti, played by an all-star cast of contemporary musicians. The cut features D'Angelo's band, the Soultronics, along with Nile Rodgers, Roy Hargrove, and Fela's son Femi Kuti. "That was the best twelve minutes I've ever spent in my life," Ahmir says with pride. "I've long been obsessed with Tony Allen, the drummer with Fela, who mixes the best of the African music and funk worlds. And the whole art of it is sort of not noticing it. The whole spirit of Afrobeat drumming is such an afterthought that you almost don't even hear it. It's not like I'm being drowned out by a whole bunch of percussion—I'm the anchor. But I tuned my drums so low, and put two blankets on top of them. When you're a kid playing drums, you're always dreaming about other drummers or band-leaders. My dream has always been to play with Fela, just to be Tony Allen. I was lucky to be able to do that."
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ean Butterworth leans forward, nearly running his shirt into the plate of Chinese food sitting in front of him. "Here's a story," he starts. "When I first got here from Northern England, I loved The Beatles. In fact, in sixth grade, I went to the principal of my elementary school and requested to sign all of my homework 'Ringo, Starr'—and they let me do it," he exclaims with a laugh. "So for that whole year, everything I turned in was signed Ringo Starr."

Not a shabby start for a drummer who has gone from jazz snobbery to big band elegance, funk, R&B, rock—whatever mood is moving Ben Harper that day. Indeed, Harper's scattershot approach to music plays into Butterworth's talents just fine. In fact, it's the drummer's mastery of different styles that makes him the perfect man for this gig.
One day, much like everything else in this fine world, they’ll prove that musical ability has just as much to do with environment as it does natural talent. When that day rolls around, Dean Butterworth will have to get in line with those inspired by people around him. Dean’s stepfather, Patrick Shanahan, who drummed for such bands as Rick Nelson & The Stone Canyon Band and New Riders Of The Purple Sage, was the one who first taught him to play. It was somewhere after he started penning his name as one of The Fab Four that young Dean picked up the sticks. In seventh grade he played in a school ensemble, jammed to albums in the garage, and learned the rudiments of drumming by practicing a ton.

At the age of sixteen, Butterworth enrolled in the advanced drum course at the now defunct Dick Grove School of Music in Los Angeles, studying with legendary Tower Of Power funkmaster David Garibaldi. "That was a major turnaround for me," Dean recalls. "Up to that point I was turned on to fusion, especially things like Return To Forever. That was the stuff I was into when I was a kid. My experience at that school helped open me up to other things."

Butterworth’s jazz passion soon spread to Chick Corea, especially the pianist’s influential Three Quartets record. "Jazz became my thing," he says. "I played big band in high school, plus I had a combo that played standards and did gigs. When I was a kid, I was the kind of drummer who thought, if you couldn’t play jazz, you weren’t a musician. Yes, I was a jazz snob. It was all about, Oh, you just play rock? You don’t know how to swing? You ain’t nothin’.

Butterworth’s viewpoint changed, however, when he realized he could make money playing cover tunes in clubs. "So in order to work," Dean says, "I took some rock gigs. But I’m glad I did, because I learned there was some cool stuff happening in the genre. I was seventeen and still totally into jazz. But I got into Paul Simon, James Taylor, and John Lennon, and I heard players like Steve Gadd and Andy Newmark. Then I heard The Police, Bob Marley, and Steel Pulse."

Butterworth had a bit of a realization after high school graduation. He had received a music scholarship to attend the University of La Verne, but dropped out after one semester because he wanted to play drums. "My whole thought process was, If I get a degree in music, I’m going to be teaching in schools," he explains. So Dean spent a couple of years playing around Orange County (just south of Los Angeles) and teaching privately.

When he was twenty-three, Butterworth moved to Los Angeles and joined a funk band called Slapbak, who had a deal with Warner Bros. "We were a musician’s band," he says. "That really helped me out, because through that band I got to meet producers who hired me for session work. And I learned a lot about how great record companies are—just kidding. All those false promises. When I got in that band, I definitely thought I’d have a house in Laurel Canyon and a Mercedes. Three years later, I was still driving a Gremlin."

And six months later, Dean quit Slapbak to join a club band. "I did it because I needed to make a living," he admits. Nevertheless, Dean’s major-label band days weren’t over. Instead, he joined IV Xample, who in 1995 had a top-10 hit with "I’d Rather Be Alone." In 1996, he left them to join a rock band called Novocaine. Then in October of 1996 Butterworth’s phone rang. "I got a message from Ben Harper on a Friday asking me to be at Leeds Rehearsal Studio in North Hollywood to meet him and Juan [Nelson,
bassist] to play. My first thought was that Ben's drummer Oliver Charles had broken his arm or something. That wasn't the case. They were auditioning drummers, and they knew me, so I went in and played. It turned out Juan was a fan of my old band, Slapbak, and we ended up playing some of that stuff."

Butterworth had picked up Fight For Your Mind, the 1996 Ben Harper release, but hadn't had a chance to practice any of the songs. "I went in and brailed my way through it," he remembers. 'They said, 'Look, we love the way you play. We'll call you tomorrow. We've got to check another guy out.' The next day Ben called and said, 'How you doin', bro? Do you want to make a record?' The following day we ended up in pre-production and did two weeks of recording for the Will To Live record. That was the beginning."

Butterworth joined Harper's band, dubbed The Innocent Criminals, at a crucial time. Fight For Your Mind, Harper's sophomore release, had introduced him to legions of new fans via an extensive world tour. To follow up on that record, the band set up shop at Grandmaster Recording in Hollywood. And Butterworth got right to work learning the material from the group's two previous albums. 'I would practice along to the records and try to cop what those guys [Charles on Fight For Your Mind and Rock Deadrick on the debut, Welcome To The Cruel World] were doing,' he says. Perhaps 'cop' isn't the right word, though Dean did pay special attention to the band's groove and foundation. 'Rock Deadrick has a completely different feel from Oliver Charles—and I have a completely different feel from both of them,' Butterworth states. "Both of those guys are great drummers, but Rock wouldn't be the kind of drummer that would play 'Forgiven' [off the band's 1999 release Burn To Shine]. He's simpler, but he's got a good feel, a solid pocket that's really cool. Oliver's got his own thing. But Ben was looking for somebody who was more diverse. With my background, I was able to be the chameleon he was looking for. And even though I'm never going to be Rock or Oliver, well, I don't want to be them. I want to embrace my own thing yet play with a good groove foundation like they did."

That attitude became clear during the recording of The Will To Live, Butterworth's first studio work with The Innocent Criminals, and continued during Burn To Shine. Butterworth admits to listening back to those performances and wishing he could change some of his parts, especially during the Burn To Shine sessions. "There's a fill on the title track that I kept asking to fix. Ben and JP [Plumer, the band's producer] were saying that nobody was going to hear it," he says. "But every time I hear it, it bothers me. I'm a perfectionist about that stuff." Dean got some relief after he went back and listened to a Michael McDonald song where Steve Gadd rushed a cymbal part. "I was running around telling people, 'Steve Gadd rushed on a record!' I like to bust my favorite players. It's just good to know my heroes are human."

That said, Dean does have some favorite album moments. From The Will To Live he likes "Mama's Trippin'," "Faded," the title...
track, "Jah Work," and "I Want To Be Ready." "Faded," one of the songs that has had a lot of radio airplay, provided him an opportunity to be creative. The cool thing about that song is that I play two different snare drums on it," he says. "I have a 10" snare to my left, and I play back and forth between it and my regular 14". It's very simple, but it's so effective."

On Burn To Shine Butterworth points to "Alone" and "Forgiven" as two examples of songs he's proud of. On "Forgiven" he gets a chance to play with a double bass pedal. "You hear a lot of heavy metal guys doing double bass, but it's usually played fast and loud," he explains. "But this is more of a medium-tempo tune. I set up a four-bar phrase with the pedal, which creates a nice effect."

An interesting point about The Innocent Criminals (Harper, Nelson, and percussionist David Leach) is how they improvise live, always expanding on the parts they originally recorded on their albums. That freedom to experiment starts during the pre-production dates, where each bandmember offers suggestions for parts. "We'll just throw ideas at each other," Dean says. "The cool thing about our band is that we all come from different backgrounds. Juan is a funk guy; I grew up playing jazz and swing—not that you would know that from this gig. Everybody thinks I'm some rock dude, just because I'm the token white guy," he says, laughing. "But we all have completely different backgrounds, and we all contribute
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different things. I think that's what makes our sound so different."

Another contributor to that "different" sound is Dean's willingness to experiment with his drumkit. Though his setup is based around Tama Starclassic drums and Paiste cymbals, he occasionally accessorizes with vintage bass drums, toms, and snares. Butterworth has a collection of seventeen snare drums and about thirty ride cymbals. During the recording of Burn To Shine, Dean borrowed another ten snares from Tama. "It was ridiculous," he says. "I think we used five. I should have just packed it all in, moved down to Mexico, and opened a drumshop. We laughed about all of the gear; one day we spent five hours talking about whether we should use a Black Beauty or a Slingerland."

During the Will To Live sessions, things were even more drastic. "I had a Ludwig kit, a Slingerland kit, a DW kit, and the Tama," Dean admits. "I played on four different drumsets for that record. It was crazy." Then again, Dean enjoyed the ability to create a unique sound for each song. "That's another thing that makes our records different. If you listen to a typical pop record, everything is the same across the board. They're safe. Well, the last thing we are is safe."

In addition to his Innocent Criminals status, Butterworth has continued to play a number of studio dates and has put together a jazz combo to play with when the band isn't on the road. "I love recording with other people," he says, "because it's always something different and it's more of that chameleon thing that I like." It also gives him the opportunity to embrace different grooves and feels outside of any one genre. As an example, Dean points to a Stewart Copeland vibe that he brought into one session, or a Jeff Porcaro on another. "I'm not trying to copy those drummers," he explains. "I'm trying to mix their vibe with my own sense."

Over the past year Butterworth has played on sessions for a handful of artists in different styles, including Tanya Mitchell (pop), Citrus (rock), Angela Amons (alternative), Nedeidros (a blend of R&B, pop, and Brazilian), and Andre Allen, where he got to play with A-list bassist Nathan East, percussionist Sheila E, and guitarist Michael Thompson. "Those are great, great players," Dean says, "and I just feel so proud to have
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been involved with them. "I learn a lot on the session scene," he continues, "because you have to be creative right away. There's no pre-production. And I'm always inspired by the legendary session guys. Steve Gadd and Jeff Porcaro—nobody played like Jeff. He was so smooth. But those are the guys. I can't put my name next to theirs, but I try to think the way they did. I'm passionate about it."

Butterworth is so passionate about it, in fact, that he's very proactive once he gets a call, making sure he knows exactly what kind of drums, sticks, heads, and, most importantly, feel the producer and artist are looking for. "I want to make them happy," he says. "My number-one goal is to cater to the artist."

That attitude has helped Butterworth both as a session player and bandmember, since it's always a challenge to gel in either situation. With The Innocent Criminals, Dean admits there are good nights and some not so good nights. "We gel more and more with every show," he says. "Sometimes we'll play venues where it's so boomy that it's hard to hear. But with every tour that we go on, we get better." For an example of just how amazing the band is, check out their just-released double live CD, Live From Mars.

The incredibly diverse nature of Ben Harper's writing, as well as the talents of the band, have kept Butterworth on his toes. "This is definitely the most challenging gig I've ever done," he says. "You have to be attentive the whole time. We're not the kind of band that does the same set every night. We have a list of fifty tunes that we pick from now. I've learned a lot, especially through touring, not only as a player but also as a man. Going from a club to a stadium, and trying to adjust as a player to make it consistent every night and be emotionally balanced, really tests you."

To be sure, things have changed for Dean Butterworth over a short five-year span. "It's a different thing," he says, "going out and playing in front of two hundred people at a local club, and the next thing you know you're playing for twenty thousand people. But let's say one day you get famous. So what? Hey, we're drummers, man, and that's the bottom line."
Story by Robyn Flans

John Molo
jam-band journeyman

Photos by Alex Solca
John Molo first came to the attention of the drumming public in the mid-'80s through his work with Bruce Hornsby & The Range, particularly their break-out album, *The Way It Is*. The record featured amazing compositions such as "Western Skyline," "Mandolin Rain," "The Way It Is," and "Down The Road Tonight." Each song was better than the last. And Molo was the drummer who helped his Virginia buddy bring his musical vision to fruition throughout the decade and much of the next.

But it turned out to only be the beginning of Molo's strange and wonderful musical journey. In 1998, John toured with Grateful Dead spin-off group The Other Ones. The following year, Dead drummer Mickey Hart asked Molo to join his all-star percussion group, Planet Drum. And a year later he began working with Dead bassist Phil Lesh.

These days, when he's not working with Lesh, Molo's leading his own group, ModeReko (whose new, self-titled release is just out on Verve), playing music that bears little resemblance to his old Hornsby gig. In fact, ModeReko's eclectic sound has been described as Frank Zappa and James Brown meet Phish. For Molo, it's all about finding his own way and developing his own style.

With the same eloquence that John Molo has on his instrument, the drummer speaks about life after Hornsby, music vs. trap-pings, and the road that led him to his own self-discovery.

MD: As I was preparing for this interview, my sense became that you've entered Chapter Two of your musical life. You've become unleashed.

John: I had been bound and shackled to a musical sequence that I developed. It's hard for people to just *play music*, to get together intimately with another person and play. But when I really started doing that, going deep into my soul, people wanted to play with me.

I've gotten to play with some amazing people—Albert Lee, John Scofield, Branford Marsalis, Greg Osby, Michael Rhodes, Wynonna Judd, Jerry Garcia...it's just bizarre how it's taken off. I started to wonder why. What is it that I bring to the table? And I came to the conclusion that part of it is because I really love a lot of different kinds of music. I never shut anything out. Also, the less I thought about making money or being successful in the world of pop music, the better I did. I didn't get a wig, even though I lived in Los Angeles. I thought, "There's got to be a way to be myself."

MD: Can you address the issue of being trapped and not knowing how to be you?

John: One of the reasons I moved to Los Angeles was that I wanted to be Jeff Porcaro. I wanted to do records, and I loved Jeff. And when I met him, he was the
greatest guy. But I realized that he was Jeff. There are people in the NBA who want to be Michael Jordan. Man, just be yourself and you’ll be fine.

When I played with Robben Ford last summer, he gave me the greatest compliment. He came off the bandstand and said, "John, I don't think anybody's doing what you're doing." It wasn’t because I had developed a new style. It was because of all the styles I had incorporated into my playing and everything I had embraced.

MD: So how did you realize that being a studio drummer wouldn't be right for you?

John: I ended up making records with Bruce Hornsby at a really intense level. Bruce was very ambitious in his record-making, always looking for extraordinary performances. It was a very challenging situation. I was making records and touring with Bruce, and when I’d come back to LA, I’d do a few records here and there, but it really turned out that it wasn’t as fulfilling for me as making records with an artist. I began to develop my own sort of style. Unfortunately, I don't know that there's any call for that in the record-making industry. And the other part of it is I'm really happy doing what I'm doing, so I didn't pursue the studio scene.

MD: Tell us about the Bruce Hornsby chapter of your life and the wonderful records you made with him.

John: We were so excited to make that first album. That first band really had a lot of character to it, and what Bruce put together writing-wise was really great. The first song, "Western Skyline," is a ball to play. Bruce basically came up with that drum part, and I embellished it a little bit. That first record was a blast to make.

The next record, Scenes From The Southside, was really tough. We worked with a producer named Neil Dorfsman, who probably had about as much respect for me as I had for him. He was very condescending to the musicians, and it was hard for me to be civil to him. Consequently, I’m on about two tracks of that record and the rest is a drum machine. It was really too bad, because Bruce wrote some great stuff and I felt it was very disappointing. When I listen to it now the production sounds dated.

We used a guy named Don Gehman on the third record, Night On The Town, but for me, it was a weird album because I felt...
"Some musicians get addicted to drugs, some get addicted to women, and others get addicted to fame. But you always know the ones who are addicted to the music."

like the whole time he was trying to get me to play like Kenny Aronoff. That's when I really realized that trying to play like someone else wasn't what I wanted to do. On the fourth album, *Harbor Lights*, [bassist] George Marinelli just called up and quit. We were in Williamsburg, Virginia, breaking in Bruce's new studio. Jimmy Haslip played bass on the record, and there were some other great musicians
on it too. I felt like on that record I was starting to sound like myself. But by the end of the fifth album, *Hot House* ['95], it felt like Bruce and I weren't on the same wavelength.

**MD:** Are you still connected with him musically, or was there closure?

**John:** I have total closure with the performance aspect, although the musical connection is ongoing. He still calls me up and talks to me about music, even plays me songs over the phone. He can call me and breathe into the receiver and I know it's him. We're really deep. But it got to where we'd be on the bandstand and I could look at him and see he was not digging it.

There are so many moments I love remembering, though. I can remember walking on stage with him in Paris, where they cheered so loudly that he walked over to me and said, "They must think we're someone else." The Grammy wins, the sold-out tours, the standing ovations—I loved all of it. Of course, we had some other moments where we wanted to kill each other. But having said that, I must say that I wouldn't be where I am right now if it wasn't for Bruce.

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These are the albums that John says best represent his playing.

**Artist** | **Album**
--- | ---
ModeReko | ModeReko
Bruce Hornsby | Harbor Lights
Bruce Hornsby | Hot House
Phil Lesh & Friends | 2001 Theater Tour (available on Napster)
Paul Kelly | Wanted Man
Mike Watt | Ball Hog Or Tug Boat?

And these are the ones he listens to for inspiration.

**Artist** | **Album** | **Drummer**
--- | --- | ---
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John Molo

MD: When you stopped performing with him, what was your game plan?
John: I knew Bruce well enough that, at a certain point, I knew I should start thinking about other gigs. One of the things I learned along the way is to look for work while you’re working. Don’t look for work while you’re out of work. So I was transitioning in my mind and thinking about other gigs I could do. I had said to Bruce a couple of times, “Man, you should get somebody you really like playing with all the time, because we’re not doing great.” I don’t think he heard it the first couple of times, but about the third or fourth time I think he did hear it.

We were playing with the band The Other Ones—with Mickey Hart, Phil Lesh, Bobby Weir, and Mark Karan—and Bruce and I were showing up early, playing duets together, stuff we hadn’t done in years. That’s when he realized it wasn’t like it used to be. When we were young guys hanging out, we played duets all the time—we were brothers in arms. That whole vibe had passed.

After that, Bruce and I were out having sushi one night and he said, “Molo, I think you’re right. We need to take a break for a while.” And I said, “Yeah, you’re right.” This was in ’98. The next morning I showed up for The Other Ones, and Mickey asked me, “John, you ever play with other people?” I said yes, and he asked if I would join Planet Drum. Either the stars were really aligned for John Molo, or Bruce and Mickey had been rapping. But that started another chapter, and I was off and running with some great musicians. MD: Planet Drum is a left turn from Bruce Hornsby. How did Mickey have the vision that you would be right for it?
John: I think he had an idea of what I was doing, which was American sit-down drums—he had everything else covered with all of the incredible percussionists in the band. When I would play with them, my goal was to make the music sound good. I wasn’t thinking about how John Molo was going to sound; I was thinking about how Mickey and the group were going to sound together. I think that’s what he was looking for in this new version of Planet Drum.

I did that gig for about a year and a half, and then I started playing with Phil Lesh. I think Mickey got a little bummed that I was playing with Phil. Bandleaders feel a personal abandonment when players go off to other things. I know that because I’m a bandleader now, too.

MD: You mentioned your rock style, but you’re also comfortable with other things. Where did all of your odd-time/improvisational knowledge come from? Is that from the time you spent at The University of Miami?
John: It was before that. The folkloric hymn element is from my Catholic background. A lot of kids had bad experiences with nuns. I had great experiences with nuns. I had hip, musical, singing nuns. We sang every day. I went to Catholic school from grades one through five in Washington, DC, and then we moved to the suburbs in McLean, Virginia, where the nuns were more academic-focused. But then I lucked out and got into a great high school called Langley with a music director named George Horan. The principal at the high school wanted to de-emphasize athletics and emphasize arts and drama and academics.

George Horan had a stage band after...
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school that became a class called Jazz Lab. For an hour a day, we’d go in there and read charts just like the bands at North Texas and Berklee, but this was my junior and senior years of high school. He would get charts performed by Buddy Rich, Thad Jones, and Mel Lewis, so I was playing all sorts of stuff in high school.

Then I had a big moment. I was around the DC area, so there was the Army band, the Navy band, and the Marine band, and my high school director would have them perform at the school. One time he said, “John, there are going to be two drummers with the Army band today. They’re both really good, but I want you to listen to one in particular; he has a great sound.” The first drummer came in, sat down at the kit, and he was a really great player. But then the next drummer sat down, and all of a sudden the drums sounded like they had been miked and EQ’d. I particularly noticed the hi-hat and snare sound this guy got. It was so good. It was Steve Gadd. It wasn’t better playing, it was a better sound.

Interestingly enough, Steve had done his time in the service and was about to leave. They had heard me play, so I went up to audition for the Army band. I was seventeen. We played a Freddie Hubbard big band arrangement, something I called bossa-rock, and then a medium-swing tune that I got through okay. Then they pulled up “Yankee Doodle Dandy” in 7/4. Steve could see that I had the "deer in the headlights" look on my face. They started playing it, and I was lost. Steve looked up and could see I was in trouble. He said, "Think 1, 3, and 5 on the bass drum and you'll be able to get through it." I had no idea, but I went for it. Well, it fell apart. That type of experience might cause some people to go home with their tails between their legs and never come back. I went home—with my tail between my

### Planet Talk

**Mickey Hart On John Molo**

**MD:** You worked with John Molo in The Other Ones and Planet Drum. What did he bring to those situations?

**Mickey:** First of all, Molo plays with the feeling I like and puts it where I like it. He's such a comfortable player to play with, and he makes you feel secure.

**MD:** Did you discuss the roles of how you would work together in the unit?

**Mickey:** Never. With the better players, you usually have non-verbal communication. Besides, I hate to talk about drumming, interviews not included. Drumming is a non-verbal communication, which is what makes it so special. It goes beyond the spoken word and moves into the spirit, and John has the right spirit. It makes you feel good to play with him.

Molo’s also versed in the clave, which is very important. Most rock ´n’ roll drummers wouldn't know the clave if it hit them over the head and assaulted them on the street.

**MD:** In retrospect, when you look back on how you two worked together, could you describe the roles you played?

**Mickey:** He was the groove player. His job was to anchor the band. I added the ornaments. That's what I like to do.

**MD:** Did you know he could do what you needed him to do by listening to his work with Hornsby?

**Mickey:** When we started playing together, I think it freed John from the box. With Bruce, he was playing inside the box. When he started playing with Planet Drum, his potential was realized. With Bruce, he was fulfilling a role. The piano takes up a lot of room, so he didn't have much room to maneuver.

**MD:** So how did you know he'd be right for your situation?

**Mickey:** Because I knew he had a good feeling, he had a good spirit, and he wanted to play with me badly. If you put those things together, it has to work. And we like each other. A lot of this music stuff is about chemistry, and we had chemistry. It was cool while it lasted.

Robyn Flans
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legs—and I learned 7/4, 9/4, and all sorts of time signatures, so if it ever came up again I would get through it.

**MD:** You mastered it but then you really didn’t do a lot with it.

**John:** No I didn’t, until I started writing music in odd times and doing loops in odd times. I remember being in my practice room back in 1994, thinking, If a huge gig ever came up for me, what would it be? The Grateful Dead. There’s jamming, improv, odd meters—perfect for me. But the only way that’s going to happen is if Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart don’t want to play anymore.

Well, sure enough, by 1998, Garcia had passed away and Kreutzmann didn’t want to play that music. But boom, there I was, all ready to go. I had heard Bruce Hornsby with The Dead, and I was really familiar with them. So when the chair opened, I was the guy, and I knew it. I was never a Deadhead, but weirdly enough, I knew back there in my practice room that if ever there was a gig I could do, it was The Grateful Dead.

I can play American folk music, I can play country, I can play jazz—which I only say because other people have told me so. When I do a jazz gig, I have to practice for a long time, probably about a month. I’m scared to death. But playing rock in front of 10,000 or 20,000 people is different from playing in a club at a whisper level. It’s a different technique.

**MD:** What do you do to prepare for a jazz gig as opposed to a stadium gig?

**John:** I shrink down my stroke. If you look at rock drummers, the stroke is pretty long, pretty big—think of Tommy Lee at his best, with a big, massive stroke. When you watch the great jazz players, that stroke is smaller and quicker. For playing jazz, I switch from matched grip to traditional, and it’s because of the sound. I can’t play nearly as well with traditional grip, but it changes the way the drums sound. And I always joke about how it just looks right.

**MD:** People say it gives you the right attitude.

**John:** It does, totally. The way you look on the drums—that Ed Thigpen flat ride or that Jack DeJohnette mini-bell, the Gretsch drums tuned so high they’re in the stratosphere—you’ve got to go there to really play that music. And the way I play rock...
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John Molo
drums and how I play with Phil are totally different. I honor each genre I play. The way I play with Albert Lee is different from those two things.

It's like Steve Gadd has said: "I don't think of how I'm going to sound, I think of how the band is going to sound." You have to connect with the audience and make the musicians around you sound good, and you have to make the songwriter's music sound good. That's what I get from Steve Gadd and Jeff Porcaro. Jeff was a great player, but man, he made the players around him sound great. I'd ask players, "What's so special about Jeff?" They were excited to play with Jeff because he was going to make them sound awesome.

MD: What's the biggest challenge of the Phil Lesh gig?
John: Aside from the music, just the physical part of it is a challenge. When Robben Ford started playing with us, he and I would talk about the endurance that's required. Sometimes this music is continuous for maybe an hour and a half.

MD: What do you do to make that happen?
John: I really try to be prepared physically so that when I'm playing, I don't even have to go there. Mentally I'm engaged and in it, and I'm not thinking about the physical aspect. I walk hills, I ride bikes, I still play basketball—but by myself, not competitively anymore.

MD: What's the biggest challenge of the Phil Lesh gig?
John: There is a sequence of events of preparation for going into a gig, and usually I'm there with a practice pad. But more importantly, I'm there, hanging out with the guys and talking about the music. I probably have sticks in my hand, but it's more important for me to be mentally engaged before going on.

MD: Is the music almost completely improvisational?
John: Yes. Before the set, Phil will come over and talk to the guys. Phil is a musical communist—real communal—so everybody has to pull their weight even though he's the leader. He'll come over and say, "To start with, let's jam in A flat. John, do you have an idea for a feel?" I can say anything from "Let's play a pseudo Afro-Cuban thing" to "Let's play full-out grunge rock." It's an option I can call. He'll say, "Do you have a tempo?" I'll say, "About 108 beats per minute." We'll get that in our
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head and he’ll say, “Okay, we’ll do that for a while.” That can be five minutes or fifteen—when you’re playing music and you’re really engaged, it transcends time— and we’ll sort of morph into the next song.”

You really have to use your ears on this gig. In that opening part when we’re in A flat and playing in 4, Phil may look at me and say, “Seven!” and we’ll immediately change to 7/4. The rest of the band will get it within a bar. So it’s a bizarre gig with a lot of interesting things, as well as shtick that The Grateful Dead developed over the years. Phil tries to incorporate that as well.

MD: It’s an interesting variety of music.

John: Yes. If you detach all the extras of The Grateful Dead—the partying, the parking lot scene, the lifestyle, Volkswagen vans and tie-dye—and look at Garcia’s writing, there are probably forty to fifty great songs. How the guys performed it from night to night changed, but the songs remained solid. It’s real Americana jamming.

MD: How did your group come about?

John: Well, the first thing was I gave myself permission to do it. And the other thing was when I started playing with Phil Lesh. His musical, conceptual thing is so communal. There’s never a moment of subservience like, “Oh, there’s a guitar solo now, so I’ll close the hat.”

I don’t listen to myself very often, but this morning I put on a live CD of ModeReko from New Year’s, and I don’t remember playing fifty percent of that music. Midway into the fourth set, I had an out-of-body experience. The music was playing me. I can’t believe it when I hear it.

It’s amazing to be playing this music, playing in odd times, playing one chord, and then looking at the band and going, “Okay, we’re going from E to A, we’d better use our ears here.” The crowd doesn’t know that—all they know is the band has been jamming on one chord for twenty-four bars, and then we go to the next one. And you can go to a different chord, but you can also make a metric modulation from four to seven all of a sudden, and then the band is really challenged, and then go into three, then go into six, then go into the blues....

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to that original feel. That's the hard part. A lot of musicians don't realize that not only do you have to take it out, you've got to get back. That's one of the things I've learned with Phil.

We play this tune called "Viola Lee Blues." It's one chord for half an hour, but I've played it with guys who play it and I've played with other guys who give up on it. You can't give up on it. I've learned along the way that boring people get bored and boring musicians get bored. If it's boring to the person who is playing it, you'd better believe that the crowd is bored.

**MD:** I've always said I could listen to guitarist Albert Lee play one note for an entire evening.

**John:** And why is that? Why is it that when Albert plays an E chord, it's hymnal? My favorite thing about Albert is that when he warms up he plays four chords. I think, Why do those four chords sound beautiful and hymnal? It's the commitment. Some of my favorite guitar players to play with are Albert, Jimmy Herring, Robben Ford, Buzzy Feiten, John Scofield, Pat Metheny, John Bigham from Fishbone, Steve Morse, and Warren Haynes. And of course Jerry Garcia was incredible. With a great player, the beauty of their soul comes through their playing.

Some musicians get addicted to drugs, some get addicted to women, and others get addicted to fame—which is a scary one, too. But you always know the ones who are addicted to the music. So I've played with guys who connect with the audience, and that's something I want to do.

**MD:** When did you come up with the idea for your own unit?

**John:** Like many musicians, we'd see each other and say, "Hey, let's get together and write." What I started to do was, instead of going inside my practice room, shutting the door, and turning on my drum machine, I'd run into musicians and say, "Hey, you wanna play?" Usually they'd go, "Yeah!" So I started having players over, we taped some of the stuff, and it was pretty cool. Tim Kobza, a guitar player I had met at a funeral, brought his micro-cassette and started taping stuff, and then he'd go home and write songs around the grooves we had recorded. Then he got into Pro Tools, and the next thing I knew we had about fifteen songs.

My father was passing away from cancer around '97-'98, and I started going back to DC a lot. It was hard to just sit and watch the demise. But I had this music. I thought about my old buddies from Hornsby's band, John D'earth [trumpet] and Bobby Read [sax], who were down in Charlottesville. I thought I needed to get rejuvenated from sitting and watching my dad, so I took the tapes and drove the two hours down to Charlottesville, Virginia and put horns on these tracks I had been writing with Tim Kobza. Before we knew it, we had a CD, mixed and done.

Then the idea was to get some really young, good-looking guys in the band and rent Third Encore in LA to do a showcase for Verve. I hired my old buddy Hal Muskat, a liquid lighting guy from San Francisco, to come down to LA to light the show. I hung up some tie-dye banners, had the liquid light show, lit up all sorts of incense, and invited every Dead-head, Phish-head, jam-band-head I could find. As soon as the A&R guys walked in, I knew we were in. They just went, "Great!"
I really felt if we got dressed up in jazz suits and played the jazz sequence, it would never work. I love bebop—if you look at my record collection you’ll see that Coltrane and Miles dominate—but at the same time I’m not that person. I not only had a plan musically with the guys, but I had a vision of where the music should be.

When you hear ModeReko, yes, you’re going to hear some Blue Note sounds, but you’re not going to hear the jazz sequence. You’re going to hear more vignettes with a little soloing. The whole project has been amazing. It tapped me on the shoulder and I followed that path, but it wasn’t like I was just sitting on the couch every day waiting for it to happen. I was active.

**MD:** Let’s touch on your equipment these days.

**John:** I started jamming with Stephen Perkins a few years ago and I noticed his setup was kick, snare, timpani, bongos, timbale, and floor tom, so I started looking at my drumkit thinking, "I'm not bound and shackled to one way of doing it." So I started setting up different drums around the kit—a mini djembe, bongos, a bell cymbal, a couple of toms, a kick drum. With Sabian cymbals, there’s just a plethora of stuff to choose from, and John Good at DW not only gives me great drums, but every once in a while he’ll give me a kick in the butt mentally. And I love LP and Pro-Mark; they’re so nice to me.

Then there are the extra products that really help me with my feet, elbows, and hands. There’s a guy named Steve Adams, who makes a thing called the Grip Peddler, which is a little rubber surface that goes on the pedalboard. He’s a surfer guy from Orange County who got this idea thinking it would be great for guys who wanted to play barefoot. He asked me to check it out and I said, "Buddy, you’re the Doctor Scholls of foot pads." I put them on my pedals, and my feet feel so much better. I also play with two foot pads in my shoes because of the extended playing I do.

Another thing I use is Pro-Mark’s Stick Wrap, because my elbows are killing me. You gotta understand, I’m forty-seven, and not only have I been playing for a long time, but I’ve been playing basketball and hiking and all these things, so the Stick Wrap really helps my elbows.

I’m also digging the E-Pad practice pad because it’s got a bit of a shock-absorber feel to it and it really helps develop endurance. On the Phil Lesh gig, we play three to four hours a night, so that pad is perfect for me to help develop the endurance to play for that sustained period of time.

**MD:** You’re actually doing some clinics and teaching these days.

**John:** When I do clinics I don’t talk much about technique, I talk about playing music. What I try to impress upon the audience is the idea that there’s room to be yourself, to be creative, and to make a living in the music business.

There are a couple of things I could have done in my life, but I’m a drummer and I love music. I was built for this instrument. And I’ll be happy if, when I get to the pearly gates, St. Peter looks at me and says, "John, you figured out you were a drummer, you discovered your gift in life, and you acted on it." That’s what it’s about—working at your gift in life.
Drumset Warm-Ups

by Rod Morgenstein

A couple of years back, while warming up on my practice pad, I was struck by a funny thought. I imagined a guitarist, pianist, or sax player warming up on something other than their actual instrument—playing imaginary scales on a broomstick, a slab of wood, or a kazoo. It was at that moment that I realized 1) the drumset, for some unexplainable reason, is perhaps the only instrument that you don’t actually warm up on, and 2) there was an absence of a warm-up book in drumset literature. It was then and there that I set out to write Drum Set Warm-Ups, a book specifically designed to improve all aspects of technical facility on the drumset.

That said, there’s no substitute for a drum-pad warm-up, as it’s the definitive way to focus on finger, wrist, and hand development. But playing the drumset requires a much greater range of motion, moving from drum to drum, lunging for a crash cymbal, or playing a complex pattern between the hands and feet. And with drumsets being so individual these days, ranging from a small, two-piece cocktail kit to a monster set with unlimited bass drums, snares, toms, and cymbals, the ability to move around unhindered and full of confidence is a must.

Many exercises in Drum Set Warm-Ups are not intended as cool or practical beats or fills (although they may spur the imagination with new ways to be creative). Rather, they’ve been designed to put your arms, body, and feet through a series of motions—up, down, clockwise, counter-clockwise, crisscross, and side-to-side. This is all in an attempt to achieve greater technical facility, much like athletes who go through all kinds of unorthodox workout routines that don’t necessarily reflect the sport they play—for example, a football player running through a maze of tires to improve agility and response time.

In the ongoing quest to be musical, practice the following exercises at different tempos and dynamic levels. And for accuracy, try to hit each drum towards the center of the head.

Exercises 1-4 consist of focusing on one limb at a time. Almost everyone has a strong side and a weak side, and a great deal can be accomplished by isolating one body part.

Exercises 5-8, one hand either repeats what the other hand plays or moves in a “mirror” image.
Exercises 9-12 are alternating single-stroke exercises with one stroke played per surface.

Exercises 13-16 consist of double strokes. Doubles can be applied to the drumset in unusual ways. Exercises 15 and 16 are very challenging, with one stroke per surface.

I consider drumset warm-ups to be a natural extension of a pad warm-up, beginning first with the fingers, wrists, and hands, and then moving on to a full body workout. Spend the first few minutes behind your drumset limbering up your body, putting it through all of the motions listed above. A real sense of improved technical facility and confidence will result.

Article excerpted from Drum Set Warm-Ups by Rod Morgenstein (Berklee Press, distributed by Hal Leonard). Used by permission.
Lenny Kravitz
Greatest Hits

by Ed Breckenfeld
This multi-platinum CD covers over ten years of retro funk/rock hits from Lenny's first five albums. The one new track included, "Again," has also become a major smash. While his live show features the terrific Cindy Blackman on drums, in the studio Lenny lays down his own grooves. And who can blame him? This stuff has got to be fun to play.

"Are You Gonna Go My Way"
Here's the fill and beat coming out of the guitar solo in this driving riff rocker.

"Fly Away"
Lenny loves slow, funky grooves. A slight accent in the 16th-note hi-hat pattern punctuates the end of each guitar riff.

"Rock And Roll Is Dead"
Here's a wonderful four-bar sequence from the verse of this tune. Notice how the snare drum ghost notes in bars three and four add depth to the groove.

"Again"
A slap echo on the drum track enhances the slow, heavy feel of this tune. Lenny plays it simple and powerful, with the song's only fill kicking things off.

"It Ain't Over Till It's Over"
Another 16th-note funk groove, with an occasional fill to spice things up.

"American Woman"
Lenny keeps the tension up in this track by never bringing in a snare drum backbeat.

"Always On The Run"
Here's the opening fill and groove from this guitar-driven cut, as well as its chorus pattern.
The Baiao
Brazilian Solo Fun

by Rob Leytham

This month we'll create a solo using a popular rhythm from Brazil called the baiao (pronounced "bye-own"). We'll also brush up on a couple of rudiments by applying paradiddle-diddles and flamadiddles to a solo based on the baiao.

Before we get to the hand patterns, we have to learn the baiao's foot ostinato. In 4/4 time, your left foot plays quarter notes on the hi-hat (counted "1, 2, 3, 4") while the bass drum plays a rhythm that hints at a quarter-note triplet. (That's the proper Latin feel.) To get started with this feel, play the following pattern. (The bass drum rhythm is counted "1, ah, &, 3, ah, &").

Now let's add the hands to the previous foot ostinato. On this first beat, your right hand plays the same rhythm on the ride cymbal (or cowbell) that your right foot is playing on the bass drum. Your left hand fills in the space on the snare drum by playing 16th notes between the ride/bass pattern. Once you're comfortable with it, try playing the snare drum notes as ghost strokes (very quietly).

The next few baiao rhythms have the same foot ostinato, but the hands play a different pattern. Keep your right hand on the ride cymbal (or cowbell) and your left on the snare drum, and play this sticking:

Now practice the flamadiddle on the snare drum. Get comfortable with this one, because the flamadiddles used in the solo are "supercharged," meaning they're all played among different voices of the drumset.

This time, play the same sticking pattern, but move your left hand around the drumset. (The second pattern has the right hand striking the floor tom on the "&" of beats 2 and 4.)

Baião Solo

Now that you have a few groove options for the baiao, let's take the next step and work on ways to solo over it. Rudiments work great for this. In fact, I've written a solo (which we'll get to shortly) that features the paradiddle-diddle and the flamadiddle. But before we get to the solo, play the paradiddle-diddle on the snare drum as sextuplets. (For the purpose of the solo, you'll be starting with your right hand, but you should also practice it starting with your left.)

Now practice the flamadiddle on the snare drum. Get comfortable with this one, because the flamadiddles used in the solo are "supercharged," meaning they're all played among different voices of the drumset.
Now you're ready for the solo. Have fun with it!
Travis Barker
"Adam's Song"
Blink-182's drummer not only has plenty of chops, but a handle on the rudiments and some really cool ideas as well. "Adam's Song," from 1999's huge hit *Enema Of The State*, illustrates all of the above.

The main groove of the tune creatively uses the whole kit, integrating crash, China, ride, and splash cymbals in an extremely musical groove. Travis then shapes the rest of the song just as creatively, choosing the rim, floor tom, and roaring crash cymbal for riding surfaces in the remaining sections.

In another creative touch, the breakdown section of the song features Travis using some five- and nine-stroke rolls in a medium-soft snare drum section that builds into the last chorus. (Pay close attention to the dynamics. They are crucial to this song.)

Blink is often a funny band, but this drumming is serious.
"Adam's Song"
"Adam's Song"
Put Your Foot Down.
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The most important thing you possess in a recording session is your ears. As a producer, I can assure you that you've been hired because of your ears, not your hands or feet. Of course, hopefully your hands and feet are your obedient servants.

You should have in your hands, feet, and ears all kinds of grooves to call on for whatever particular session you're doing. I'm not talking about exactly copying what other drummers have played, because that's impossible. We are all unique. But trying to "get in the head" of some of the great players of the past will help you in your quest for a career as a session drummer. (Feel free to imitate from the great performances of the past. When you do it, it'll be yours and will automatically come out your way.)

Who should you copy? How about Bernard Purdie? When it comes to session drumming—and playing with feel—he's a big one. You should be able to do a serious Purdie impression. I'm always working on mine, because his grooves are sexy. And little bits of Purdie will help your feel in many ways.

Who else do you need in your musical suitcase? Keith Moon! Can you play "My Generation" or "Substitute" with his wild abandon? How about Charlie Watts' "I don't really care" feel? Have you explored drummers like Ringo Starr and Jim Keltner—how they ride on a tom-tom instead of a cymbal? Do you try that at your rehearsals in the verse, pre-chorus, or chorus of a song?

Knowing different styles is important. Knowing extreme styles is like spices in cooking.

With the recent (and very controversial) Ken Burns TV series, this is a good time to study the art of jazz and get as much of it into your heart as you can. Buy some records. It's like studying with the best! Do you know Art Blakey and the finality and commitment of his grooves? Do you hear Elvin Jones? Genius. He's a dragon back there; he flies and spits fire benevolently. Tony Williams? More fire—and colors. Max Roach? He played songs on his drums with his hands...brushes...whatever! Go way back and check out Baby Dodds. If Baby Dodds had been around in the '70s, I think he'd have been John Bonham! (To help you get started, notice that in jazz the ride cymbal pattern and hi-hat are what the snare and bass drum are in rock.)

My point is this: To have a successful career as a session player, knowing different players and styles is important. And knowing extreme styles can be like spices in cooking. A little turmeric can go a long way, but it's great when you're making an Indian curry. This knowledge can add a subtle undertow to your groove.
Fills
Each of us has our favorite drummers' performances. For me, these performances are attached to the songs they played. I always loved Nigel Olsson's rock-ballad fills—but how can I separate those fills from the great Elton John songs in which they appeared? To love a drum fill without understanding why it works so well in that particular song is missing the lesson. Let me put it this way: Fills are to drummers what guitar solos can be to guitar players. How many times have you wished your guitar player would just shut up and play rhythm? We drummers can be just as hurtful.

At a session for an album that I played on by a wonderful songwriter named Marc Jordan (Cow, on RCA), producer Kim Bullard took me aside and told me he had a specific rule about drum fills as a result of years he'd spent programming drums: "Always flow out of the fill into the next section unless there's a specific musical reason not to."

I was totally not ready to listen to a keyboard-playing producer tell me what to play, but this made sense. I had always thought of fills as my moment, the time to prove that I'm a good drummer. ("This one'll kill 'em. Hah!") Obviously, I really had no clue. Since then, I've learned that fills are no different from anything else in music—just another moment in time (pun intended). No more, no less.

What does it mean to flow into the next section? To help explain what a "flowing fill" is, I need to first show a non-flowing fill. First the time pattern, and then the fill:

This fill could work, and does work in certain situations. But it does create a sort of stopping point in the music. It's kind of like a diver jumping on a diving board on beat "4."

Now let's slightly change the fill and make it flow to the next section. Here are a few ideas:

In example 2c, the cymbals are playing the same rhythm that the drums played in 2b, with a little bass drum support added to help go to the next section. (Yes, we can use our cymbals in a fill just as we use the toms. The cymbals simply take up less space, but still move things along.)

The possibilities are endless in how we fill. I hope that the fills you choose to play have something to do with the vocal rhythm, the bass line, the melody—something that already exists in the song.

Is a fill's purpose to lift smoothly, even invisibly, into the next section of the song? If so, then sometimes just an accent will do the job perfectly.

Just adding that accent on the hat at the end can be all that's necessary. Can you say "Charlie Watts"?

You can remove something—even from this simple beat—and it will serve as a fill. (Notice the omitted bass drum note on beat 3.)

Ah, subtlety.

Here are a few more examples based on the previous, simple Charlie Watts-like fill. This is actually more what Charlie would really do:

I play fills like these next two all the time, because they don't use a lot of notes, they feel great, and they flow.

The above two fills could be used in a softer song by substituting the hi-hat (closed or open) for snare or tom hits.

Do I play a flowing fill every time I fill? Heck no! Sometimes we need to put a stop on things—a button. And some fills are big dramatic "sign posts" that announce boldly, "Here it comes, fasten your seat belts!" Some music calls for this kind of drama. Film scores are where you might find these. When the bad guy is finally getting killed: "I hate you, I hate you, I hate you!" Or heart-wrenching ballads: "I love you so much I'm gonna diiiiiiee!"

Examples of these types of dramatic fills are hardly necessary, because we all play them easily. But here's one that we all probably know: Phil Collins' tom fill in "In The Air Tonight." Now
there’s a musical announcement.

Determining the nature of a song is a distinction that we, as drummers, need to make to play the song at all. This totally affects our fills. What is the essence of the song? When in doubt, I always automatically default to smooth, flowing fills.

Finally, the thing that needs to be repeated over and over again is, if you want to be a great musician and have a career as a session drummer, listen to music. Listen to a whole bunch of it and understand what you’re hearing. Know a song’s form: the verse, the pre-chorus, the chorus, the second verse, the bridge. Tape yourself as often as possible, and make yourself listen to it as critically as possible. (Put yourself through what you’re putting your bandmates through!) Also, listen to non-drummers, great musicians like George Shearing, John Lennon, Glenn Gould, Patsy Cline. Even if it’s music you don’t dig, things can be learned.

One more thing: I work hard at keeping my ears open. The great composer and musical philosopher John Cage said, “If you want to listen to some music, open your window and listen.” This is very, very true. When I’m driving down a street, I hear rhythms in all the objects that go past my vision. Especially telephone poles. I love telephone poles. I’ve sped up or slowed down the car just to keep a groove going!

Most importantly, we drummers should think about music in a non-drumming way. This will make us all better musicians!

Billy Ward is a successful session and touring drummer who has worked with a long list of major-league talent, including Carly Simon, Robbie Robertson, Richard Marx, Yoko Ono, Ace Frehley, John Patitucci, and Bill Champlin. He is currently on tour with Joan Osborne. Billy can be reached at his Web site, www.billyward.com.
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Don't Be "Set" In Your Ways
Different Approaches To The Drumset

by Paul D'Angelo

So you've been playing drums for a while now and you're finally getting really comfortable with your drumset. You can actually play it with your eyes closed! Now, if your future turns out to be so stable that you never have to play any other drumset, all power to you. You'll have found a sense of stability that's quite rare. On the other hand, if you're living in the real world, where every gig, tour, and recording project brings its own unique demands, you're going to have to learn to deal with diversity.

Striking up a good relationship with another drummer is always a rewarding experience. But you have to be ready not to be affected if the other player throws some negative vibes your way.

Scenario 1: You Can't Bring Your Own Set

Be aware. If you're opening for another band, there's a good chance that you may have to use the set that belongs to the drummer in that band. This experience can be positive or negative, depending on your attitude, the attitude of the drummer whose set you'll be using, and your reaction to each other.

An important fact to remember is that playing drums is an artistic endeavor, and you need to be in a certain frame of mind to be able to perform at your best. I mention attitude first because it's a factor you'll be dealing with before you ever sit down to play. Striking up a good relationship with another drummer is always a rewarding experience. But you have to be ready not to be affected if the other player throws some negative vibes your way.

Here are some important things to remember when playing someone else's set:

1. Bring your own snare drum. You don't want to risk breaking a head on someone else's drum. You also may simply not like the way it sounds or plays.
2. Bring your own cymbals. Lots of drummers don't like someone else using their cymbals. Since cymbals are expensive enough to be called "an investment," you certainly can't blame them.
3. Bring your own kick pedal. You'll have no idea how the pedal on the set you'll be using will feel. It may be adjusted to a tension completely incompatible with your playing.
4. Bring your own sticks. It's highly unlikely that you and the other drummer will use the same—or even a similar—size and model of drumstick.
5. Expect certain positioning restrictions. Even with your own snare, cymbals, kick pedal, and sticks, you're still going to be playing someone else's set. Since each
drummer’s setup is as individual as a fingerprint, most other drummers won’t want you to be adjusting tom-toms and cymbal stand heights. You’ll just have to be ready to adapt.

**Getting Started**

On most of the occasions when I play in an opening act, I have between five and fifteen minutes to prepare. Once I’m ready to play, I still find myself sitting at a totally unfamiliar drum set, which can be musically and psychologically daunting. Yet I want to do the best job I can. Here are a few tips for this situation:

1. **Keep your fills simple, at least to start with.** Get a feel for the set and what parts of it you’ll be able to effectively utilize.

2. **Don’t be intimidated by an unusually large set.** If you’re sitting at a huge double-bass set with innumerable tom-toms, don’t worry about it. Within that configuration is a setup that’s closer to yours than you may think. You don’t have to utilize all of the drums on this mammoth set, just the ones you need.

3. **Don’t be obsessed with trying to play your parts exactly the way you normally do.** If the drums are really different from your normal setup, you’re going to have to adjust your playing to a certain extent. Rather than panicking, though, think of this as an exercise in improvisation. Maybe after a few minutes go by, you’ll find that you can actually play this new set. This will include making adjustments for cymbal heights, drum placement, stand placements, and so forth.

4. **Oh, no, he’s a lefty!** Hope and pray that the other drummer doesn’t set his or her drums up "backwards" from what you are used to. Happily, this has not happened to me yet. I’m waiting.

This scenario can obviously have its ups and downs. But the really rewarding part is when the drummer from the other band tells you that watching you play his or her drums was a pleasure.

**Scenario 2: You Can’t Use Your Whole Set**

About thirty years ago I played a reception in the main gallery of the State Department in Washington, DC. Being seventeen—and heavily influenced by Ginger Baker—I brought my entire double-bass drum set to the gig. Well, we basically wound up playing "Girl From Ipanema" over and over for about an hour and a half. Obviously, I only needed to bring four pieces of equipment instead of twelve. I also looked a little silly in the main gallery of the State Department with a double-bass set, playing light songs with a flute as the lead instrument. Don’t do this!

Fast forward to today. My "normal" set is a five-piece (kick, snare, two mounted toms, one floor tom) with double bass pedal, hi-hat, and seven cymbals. (Well, I like cymbals.) It’s a great set to play, and it sounds really big.

Recently, my band had the opportunity to perform for an open mic’ night for the Songwriter’s Association of Washington, DC. We knew that this was not going to be the place to blast rock music really loud. Luckily, I’ve been playing drums long enough to have a couple of extra sets around, so I don’t have to break down the set I regularly play at home. But I still didn’t want to bring a “big” set. So I brought a bass drum, a snare drum, a hi-hat, a ride cymbal, a kick pedal, a throne, and a selection of multi-rod sticks. The bass drum was fitted with a small cymbal stand right on the drum, which eliminated the need for an extra stand.

Using basically only bass and snare was a challenge. I had to modify my drum parts for the songs we were playing, so they would be appropriate with the acoustic guitars (instead of electric) that we were using. You might think that playing on such a small set would be frustrating. But it turned out to be just the opposite: It was a blast! Knowing that you can play well, even on very minimal equipment, is a totally gratifying experience. It gets you back to playing what sounds good fundamentally. And that certainly doesn’t have to mean boring.

Just remember that the set on which you are playing is actually a number of different sets—each of which can be used in a number of different situations. Try it out some time. I think you’ll discover how fun it can be to not be "set" in your ways.
This is a band of virtuosos, but they play together; their obvious respect for the music demands as much. "El Negro" delivers inspired readings on drumset, throwing his knowledge of clave, funk, and jazz into landmark tunes like Mongo Santamaria's "Besame Mama" and the still-lively "I Love Lucy" theme. "Soul Sauce" is given a rousing, not-by-the-book rendition. And Ed Calle's arrangement of Dizzy Gillespie's "Night In Tunisia" is a fast-roasting percussive delight, with Poncho Sanchez and Pete Escovedo making much musical hay alongside Hernandez. On Chick Corea's Latin-fusion excursion "Wigwam," Horacio slides over to congas while Jeff Ballard drives the traps. Eddie Cano's "Ican" features Sanchez displacing beats and shifting his weight within the groove, while Escovedo fires off salvos from timbale to bell to cymbal and Hernandez loses himself in a barrage of toms and dishes. On Sandoval's magnificent flamenco-flavored "A Mis Abuelos," Hernandez leads, throwing in syncopations under the current, breathing with the music under Corea's exotic chords, driving that thing hard into the night. (Concord)

Robin Tolleson

Though he eventually immersed himself in studio work and production duties for Don Henley and others, Stan Lynch cut his teeth on Tom Petty's bristling, Byrdsian '80s rock. The reissued early Heartbreakers albums Long After Dark, Damn The Torpedoes, and Hard Promises show Lynch's strengths: solid time, imaginative drum figures, and creative interplay. But lacking extra tracks or insightful liner notes, these re-releases seem half-baked. (MCA)

Much better are three splendid Traffic reissues from the '60s/'70s, their self-titled second album, John Barleycorn Must Die, and Last Exit. Perhaps the band that most successfully combined R&B, jazz, rock, and British folk, Traffic benefited greatly from the lithe and propulsive drumming of Jim Capaldi, who also wrote the bulk of the band's articulate and imaginative lyrics. Though Stevie Winwood was Traffic's star, Capaldi is the force in the shadows. His off-time snare drum accents on "Empty Pages," Latin flavors on "Freedom Rider," seamless, pumping hi-hat work, and grand tom rolls throughout are the perfect complement to Traffic's majestic genre-bending. Liner notes, lyrics, and recording info included. (Island)

Ken Micallef
Nothing is stronger than the glue of "coming up" together. Although these trio members have shone individually as sidemen to jazz mega-stars, there's an uncanny personal give & take intimacy between these three that only comes from going way back together to the trenches of the small clubs. The group effortlessly drives, whispers, breathes, and draws you in with a deceptively cool ease. The writing is smart, the soloing rich with ideas. Goldings continues his trajectory as a spearhead for redefining the jazz organ-trio format. Bill Stewart confirms once again that he's one of the most accomplished kit players in contemporary jazz. But here's where the magic really lies: Bill's challenging, intuitive drumming, whether he's playing the "head" or improvising, seems inseparable from the composition. It's as if no other part would ever do. (Palmetto)

Holt, who alternately croons angelically and roars like a caged madman. Whether Nothingface are brutally heavy, complex, or extremely melodic—like on "Bleeder"—Houck excels with cymbals. And because of crisp chops and crafty miking, you can really detect which cymbals are which—a rarity in ultra-heavy music. It's a shame Violence is Houck's final Nothingface record, though I for one look forward to hearing newie Tommy Sickles. (TV)

Some people say you should always be able to identify particular drummers by "their sound." Balderdash. Drum sounds, just like drum parts, should ultimately serve the song—whatever it takes. "Whatever it takes" is surely Brian Reitzell's motto, as he approaches Air's new psychedelic masterstroke with the whimsy of a science-fiction writer. Imagine the progeny of a three-way blend stunningly with scorching guitar riffs and the vocals of Matt "Make Your Own Bones," increments on the hi-hat and snare and a warp-speed kick blend stunningly with scorching guitar riffs and the vocals of Matt Houck, who alternately croons angelically and roars like a caged madman. Whether Nothingface are brutally heavy, complex, or extremely melodic—like on "Bleeder"—Houck excels with cymbals. And because of crisp chops and crafty miking, you can really detect which cymbals are which—a rarity in ultra-heavy music. It's a shame Violence is Houck's final Nothingface record, though I for one look forward to hearing newie Tommy Sickles. (TV)

Several years now, and their chemistry rings clear. Although these trio members have shone individually as sidemen to jazz mega-stars, there's an uncanny personal give & take intimacy between these three that only comes from going way back together to the trenches of the small clubs. The group effortlessly drives, whispers, breathes, and draws you in with a deceptively cool ease. The writing is smart, the soloing rich with ideas. Goldings continues his trajectory as a spearhead for redefining the jazz organ-trio format. Bill Stewart confirms once again that he's one of the most accomplished kit players in contemporary jazz. But here's where the magic really lies: Bill's challenging, intuitive drumming, whether he's playing the "head" or improvising, seems inseparable from the composition. It's as if no other part would ever do. (Palmetto)

Jae Sinnett continues to grow as a player and a writer. His compositions here explore various time signatures, challenging and uncommon, as well as a handful of rhythmic styles, all kept together by the leader's sure-handed drumming touch. The album-opening "Twist And Jarrett" juxtaposes 7/4 phrases on top of a '70s-style funk brew bringing to mind Its name sake. "Snake Charmer" slithers by in 11/4, with Jae playing mallets on the drums a la Max Roach. Sinnett's kept the same rhythm section together for several years now, and their chemistry rings clear. (www.jaesinnett.com)

Nothing is stronger than the glue of "coming up" together. Although these trio members have shone individually as sidemen to jazz mega-stars, there's an uncanny personal give & take intimacy between these three that only comes from going way back together to the trenches of the small clubs. The group effortlessly drives, whispers, breathes, and draws you in with a deceptively cool ease. The writing is smart, the soloing rich with ideas. Goldings continues his trajectory as a spearhead for redefining the jazz organ-trio format. Bill Stewart confirms once again that he's one of the most accomplished kit players in contemporary jazz. But here's where the magic really lies: Bill's challenging, intuitive drumming, whether he's playing the "head" or improvising, seems inseparable from the composition. It's as if no other part would ever do. (Palmetto)

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**Buckcherry Time Bomb**

Devon Glenn (dr), Joshua Todd (td), Yogi, Keith Nelson (gtr), Jonathan Bightman (bs)

*Time Bomb* is the reason they put mega-bass on portable stereos. You'll need it for the raucous opener "Frontside" to get the full Guns N' Roses effect. Devon Glenn is a fine straight-up rock drummer who doesn't resort to cliché double bass pedal. In fact, his single kick work on "Porno Star," smack on the money, is right out of John Bonham. Throughout *Time Bomb*, Glenn's many tom fills are well placed and thundering. Buckcherry has good attitude and strong songs. "Whiskey In The Morning" holds a message of rocks of all ages ought to heed. "Without You" is a classic rock ballad on which Glenn holds the back-of-the-beat feel with authority. And "Helpless" would fire up any arena. Reach for your pocket lighter!

(Dreamworks)

T. Bruce Wittet

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**Hanuman Pedalhorse**

Jarrod Kaplan (dr, perc), Paul Benoit (gtr, sid gtr, lap-steel), Tige DeCoster (ac h), Scott Law (mndln, ac gtr), Damien Aitken (sx)

Taking its name from a Hindu monkey god, Hanuman fuses jazz and a variety of other genres into its own brand of global improv roots music. As the band lays down a kind of European-American Gypsy vibe in "Pushkar," displaying a high level of musical interplay, drummer Jarrod Kaplan pops off melodic and churning beats on his African djembe. He slinks his way through the funk-jazz numbers "Carrot Soup" and "Tiger's Funk" and counters the biting clarity of acoustic guitar and mandolin in the title track with an authoritative yet understated groove. Kaplan is not showy, but he is very capable. He's part of a team that, more often than not, performs as a cohesive whole that spins intricate phrasings and interesting counter-melodies. (www.omnivine.com)

Will Romano

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**VFX Volume 1: Live Electronic Music by Tony Verderosa**

level: all, 65 minutes (each), $19.95 (each)

These two videos are the most comprehensive, fully explained instructional tools for the drummer wanting to design sound and create loops and breakbeats. Verderosa discusses his concept as a dj/drummer, as well as the tools you need to put together a live triggering system, and to do what has traditionally been done by djs. Vol. 1 covers the nature of jungle grooves, Verderosa's musical inspirations—primarily dj/producer-type performers like Cold Cut, Photek, and Talvin Singh—and setting up pads for various effects. In Vol. 2 he demonstrates more advanced drumkits with loop fragments, reverse drums, and triggering bass synth patterns with a bass drum. This is the place to go to learn how to reproduce all your drum 'n' bass and jungle ideas on the drumkit. (Oh, yeah, and Verderosa can play too.) (Hal Leonard)

Robin Tolleson

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**Classic Jazz Drummers: Swing And Beyond**

level: all, 60 minutes, $24.95

Jazz history buffs will strike buried treasure with this follow-up to *Classic Drum Solos And Drum Battles*. The focus here is on drummers in their band settings, from clips spanning the '40s through the '80s. Several masters are captured in peak form: Joe Morello with Brubeck, Frankie Dunlop with Monk, and an astonishing clip from Papa Jo Jones with the JATP All Stars. Also featured are Sid Catlett, Buddy Rich, Panama Francis, Stan Levey, Kenny Clarke, Louis Bellson, Harold Jones, Don Lamond, Philly Joe Jones, Gus Johnson, Ray Bauduc, and Gene Krupa. The final surprising gold nugget is an extremely rare clip from Warren "Baby" Dodds, thought to be the only existing moving images of the master. The other-worldly sight of Dodds behind the kit brings a founding father to life from the history pages. Quite a buzz! Ken Burns, eat your heart out.

(Mike Haid)

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**Mathieson, Landau, Colaiuta**

Live At The Baked Potato

Vinnie Colaiuta (dr), Abe Laboriel (bs), Greg Mathieson (kybd), Mike Landau (gtr)

Vinnie Colaiuta is having the time of his life. Shortly after the amazing live fusion release from his LA-based band Karizma, Vinnie shows up on yet another sensational live performance featuring some of the city's longtime studio giants. Maybe Vinnie is rediscovering the simple joy of having fun playing drums with his friends, since he's no longer with Sting. Whatever the reason, Vinnie displays his unsurpassed groove playing throughout this double-disc of smooth instrumental fusion. Not surprisingly, there's a heavy dose of improvisation here, which allows Vinnie to take us through more uncharted drumming territory. With unending enthusiasm and legendary chops, Vinnie continues to expand his art and more fully express himself. (Available from Audiophile Imports or at www.Gregmathieson.com)

Mike Haid
Morgenstein makes a good case with this book. Most drum warm-up books are written to be played on one surface, like a practice pad. But that doesn't warm a drummer up for the actual physical nature of playing the entire drumset. A whole-body warm-up is what the MD Hall of Famer and Berklee College associate professor sets out to accomplish here. Many of the exercises aren't intended as musical pieces, or even as cool beats. Rather, they're meant to be a workout. Morgenstein calls them "patterns of movement," and when practiced repeatedly, they become as natural as jumping jacks.

Rod makes use of double strokes, paradiddles, triplets, cymbal crashes, foot warm-ups, and more, all in the service of improving speed, power, control, and dexterity. The exercises are designed for a five-piece drumkit, but they can be applied with imagination to any setup. Drummers will find that they're much more limber and ready for the odd stretches that occur on the gig. You'll cut down on those embarrassing cymbal misses, and be much more aggressive right out of the gate. (BerkleePress)  
Robin Tolleson

Is drumming easy? For those with a natural gift, perhaps it is. For the rest of us, there's Tom Hapke's new book. The "Various Principles" introduction gives the student/teacher immediate and appreciated insight into what's forthcoming. The lessons start off with simple quarter notes on the pad/snare. But before moving forward, you have to break it down and simplify. (Don't worry, you'll be playing the kit within the next couple of pages.) The intermingling of this pad/snare work, grooves on the kit, and useful fills throughout make this book a rare breed. Lots of drumming basics are presented within 88 extremely easy-to-read pages, the most difficult being the dotted 8ths and 16th-note-triplet combinations. Hapke has definitely made my drumming/teaching easier. (Verity Lane)

Fran Azzarto

How can you go wrong with The Beatles and Nirvana? They're two great bands with excellent songs as well as drum parts that are simple yet interesting and well thought out. Scott Schroedl has done an excellent job transcribing twenty-five of Ringo's and seventeen of Dave Grohl's classic drum charts. Because of the familiarity of both groups and their songs, you can look over the charts and almost hear the drum parts as you follow along with the lyrics. It's nice to see Ringo's chart for "I Feel Fine," with his half-time cha-cha rhythm, or his swinging 16th-note hi-hat pattern for "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window." In the Nirvana book for "Drown You" could be used as a great bass drum exercise. Break out these classic recordings and have fun reading and playing along. (Hal Leonard)  
Billy Amendola

To order any of the books or videos reviewed in this month's Critique, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, call Books Now at (800) BOOKS-NOW (266-5766) or surf to www.clicksmart.com/moderndrummer. (A handling charge may be added, according to product availability.)
Ramon Angel-Rey

Music is international, and jazz is especially so. Ramon Angel-Rey is a perfect example. Ramon was born in Spain in 1970, and came to the US in 1996 to study at Berklee College of Music in Boston. There he impressed Berklee instructors and private teachers alike, including Jon Hazilla, Gary Chaffee, Bob Moses, Jamey Haddad, Kenwood Dennard, and Skip Hadden. He earned the Max Roach award from Berklee and Zildjian Cymbals, and he hooked up with two fellow Spaniards (also studying at Berklee) to form the Abe Rabade Trio.

The Trio plays original compositions in the hard bop tradition. Performing regularly at festivals and clubs in the US and Europe since 1997, they took second prize at Spain’s prestigious Getxo International Jazz Festival last year. Their CD, *Babel De Sons*, is a live recording of that prize-winning performance. It clearly demonstrates Ramon’s expressive technique, as well as the influence of Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Max Roach, Bill Stewart, and Duduka da Fonseca.

Ramon has also recorded with Charles Neville (saxophonist of The Neville Brothers), and he gigs regularly around the Boston area. He plays a Yamaha kit with Zildjian cymbals and Remo percussion instruments. "My goal," he says, "is to achieve my own voice as an artist, and to collaborate with good musicians seeking to do the same."

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Hamboussi

Hamboussi was born in Cairo, Egypt, but now resides in Brooklyn, New York. The twenty-nine-year-old has nineteen years of drumming experience under his belt, including some serious study at Drummers Collective. He also has an intense drumming style that lends itself perfectly to his current band, a hip-hop rock quartet called Clyde (www.ClydeOnline.com).

Three years into his stint with Clyde, things look good for Hamboussi and the band. Their self-titled debut CD on Baby Julius Records has been getting heavy airplay on college radio. They were named "best indie band" by New York’s 92.3 K-Rock radio, and they’ve performed with Buckcherry, Staind, DDT, and Black Label Society. Their special brand of melodic high-energy hip/rock has been licensed for use on TV’s *Dawson’s Creek,* they’ve recently signed to appear in three national TV spots for Rolling Rock beer, and their first video, for the single "Leaving," has received critical praise.

Hamboussi plays DW drums, Pearl snares, Zildjian cymbals, and Tama pedals—all mounted on a Tama rack—and cites influences as diverse as Tommy Aldridge, Jeremy Taggert, Chad Smith, Kevin Miller...and Bruce Lee! He and the band are currently gearing up for a regional tour in support of their album.

Justin Hess

Paonia, Colorado’s Justin Hess is the kind of drummer who can legitimately say, "Been there, done that." The forty-two-year-old drummer started playing at the age of ten, and hasn’t been idle since.

Drumming has taken Justin through dozens of musical situations—and almost as many addresses. He played with a Grateful Dead cover band in the San Francisco Bay Area out of high school, then moved to Oklahoma City in the early 1980s. He moved again, to Austin, Texas in 1986, where he played "at every club in the city," and toured North America with Zydeco Ranch. Over the years since, Justin has played, recorded, and toured with Apaches Of Paris, Pat O’Bryan, Erik Moll, Prairie Fire, Andres Cantisani, Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones, R.C. Banks, Thicker Than Thieves, and dozens of other acts.

"I’ve opened shows for everyone from Sheryl Crow to Bachman Turner Overdrive," says Justin, "and from Joe Ely to Buckwheat Zydeco." Since moving to Colorado, Justin has recorded four CDs with local singer/songwriters, and is on a new MP3 sampler with a Celtic band called Beat Smash Square. As you might surmise, his playing style is versatile, supportable, and tasteful.

Justin performs on a late-’70s Gretsch kit or a 1960 Slingerland "with a bass drum tone from Hell." His influences include Ringo, Charlie Watts, John Bonham, Levon Helm, and Stan Lynch. As for goals, he says, "I’d like to keep making records forever."

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If you’d like to appear in *On The Move,* send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for or credited.) The bio sketch should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material cannot be returned, so please do not send original tapes or photos.
Rock drumming turned a corner in 1981 with the release of Rush's milestone, *Moving Pictures*. Neil Peart was already a drummer's hero as a result of his playing on a half-dozen previous Rush records. But he topped them all with this performance. *Moving Pictures* is one of those records where it all came together—the odd-times, the big fills, the instrumental track, the concept pieces.... The band flat-out nailed it on this one.

"Tom Sawyer," the opening track, sounds different from anything before or since. It has everything: a signature beat, energy, unbelievable fills, and, above all, imagination. "Red Barchetta" and "Limelight" are damn fun tracks to play along to. And the "YYZ" Morse-code riff is known by, well, everybody. Oh, yeah—and those little solos in the middle? They're real, real hard.

The second side (for those who can't imagine this album in any other format than vinyl) contains three quirky tracks that might have been overbearing if they'd been composed in another Rush era. In '81, though, they were in fact examples of Rush's musical instincts and restraint. Indeed, Neil's performances lay to rest any criticisms that he overplayed. He consistently uses color and space, and when he lays into a powerhouse fill or a double-bass attack, it's done appropriately, creating tension and excitement. Witness the outro of "Vital Signs": Neil lays back during the vocals, and hammers it home in the spaces.

To most rock drummers, the pre- and post-*Moving Pictures* eras are considered distinct. We felt pretty good about drumming before this album...and we felt much, much better after it.

Ted Bonar
For years, Dave Krusen had been searching for a home. Before he comfortably slipped into the role as drummer for his current band, Unified Theory—the brainchild of Christopher Thorn and Brad Smith, both formerly of Blind Melon—Krusen had suffered some pretty hard knocks.

First, in the early '90s, the members of Pearl Jam asked him to exit prematurely due to alcohol problems. Then, in the late '90s, his band Candlebox dissolved into nothing, leaving the Washington native to seek his musical fortune.

Today, though, Krusen is sober, grounded, and in a really good place. Arguably the grunge veteran has never been exposed to an environment as fertile with sonic possibilities as he is with Unified Theory. One listen to his uncluttered, intelligent, and solid playing on the band's self-titled debut drives the point home: Krusen can easily navigate his way through ethereal vocals, edgy riff-driven rockers, and swelling guitar effects maelstroms. "I connect with these players on so many levels," he enthuses.

As if to reflect his musical growth, the thirty-four-year-old, his wife, Erica, and their children Jagger and Logan recently moved into the spacious confines of their new home in University Place, Washington. The three-story house has given Krusen the freedom to enjoy something he's been waiting his entire career to own: a private studio that isn't underground.

"In the past my practice spots were dark and dingy and in the basement of a house," the drummer explains. "This is on the first floor. It's my sanctuary."

As the accompanying photos point out, Krusen's inner sanctum—what was once part of the garage—is well-lit and chock-full of not only a variety of drums, but guitars, keyboards, and recording equipment. "I'll often have Bardi Martin [formerly of Candlebox] come over, and we'll just write material and jam," he says. "Everything we need is here."

There's plenty to choose from. The 16x11x10 room is stocked with a Fender Rhodes, a '60s-era Farfisa organ, a custom Ibanez electric bass, a tobacco sunburst Gibson Les Paul electric guitar, a Hohner acoustic guitar, and a series of amps including an Ampeg B-115, a Fender Champ, and a classic Peavey tweed tube.

"But the space isn't cramped," Dave explains. "It's open, airy."

Natural sunlight, lava lamps, fluorescent workshop bulbs, bright Oriental and area rugs, and vivid wall paintings keep the space vibrant. And being only a quarter of a mile from the Puget Sound,
Krusen peers through his window to soak up breathtaking vistas on a daily basis. "I'll look out at the water and see the Olympic Mountains and the Tacoma Narrows Bridge behind it," Dave gushes. "I've never had a studio with such a scenic view. The room is so calming."

It's easy to see why Krusen spends eight hours a day here when he's not touring. But, Dave, does the family mind when you disappear for so long? "Not at all," he insists. "In fact, my son, Jagger, even joins me sometimes. He sits at his mini Adam Percussion kit. It has a 16" kick drum, and he's just starting to learn how to use it."

Most of the time, however, Krusen practices solo. While he admits he doesn't pore over textbooks full of rudiments, he does set aside time to practice. "I'll put the CD player on and just play along," Krusen confides. "That's a good way to warm up and keep limber."

Krusen customarily bangs on Drum Workshop and Ayotte drums, and often a hybrid of the two. "My kit usually consists of a 5 1/2x13 DW snare, a 16x22 bass drum, and 8x12, 14x14, and 14x16 toms with white Remo coated Ambassador heads and DW hardware. I also mix and match those with Gretsch and/or the mini Adam drums."

Krusen also employs an impressive arsenal of snares. At his disposal: a 1960 5x14 wooden Camco, a '60s-era 6 1/2x14 metal Ludwig Supraphonic, a 70s 5x14 brass Ludwig, and a snare of origins unknown. And cymbals? "I use Sabian's raw-finish Duos," Dave explains. "I have a 20" ride, 14" hi-hats, an 18" crash-ride, and an 18" crash-ride with rivets. I love the way they sound—soft and smooth, with just the right amount of clarity. And no harsh overtones."

Those sounds suit Krusen's home recording setup. Instead of miking every drum, he opts for using two Shure 57s overhead and one ambient room mic, a Rode NT-2. He runs those through a recording chain consisting of a Mackie 1604-VLZ mixing console and a Tascam 80-8 8-track reel-to-reel.

"I use Alesis monitors, and I never use any outboard gear," Dave boasts. "I'll move the mic's into different positions to capture the sound I want." But with so much power, reverberation, and amplification, don't Dave's neighbors complain about the noise? "No," he adamantly retorts. "My brother, Jay, is a carpenter, and I helped him put up thick insulation and sheets of soundproof boards. Besides, the nearest neighbor is far enough away where they couldn't hear a thing. Like I said, it's really a private spot."
I was only twenty, and my drumming career was over. There was a reason I'd been running lopsided lately, and it wasn't because my kick-drum leg was stronger than the other. That's what I'd been telling myself: It must be that the strength of that leg is affecting the balance of muscle between one side and the other. After all, I was an athlete. Next to drums, football had been the passion of my young life. My speed and smoothness while running had been a pleasure to me. Now my stride was more like a shuffle beat than straight 8th notes. It didn't bother me much, though, because that lopsided lope was a result of playing drums—like a badge of honor. Or so I thought.

In The Beginning

At the age of eight I discovered drumming, and my life was then defined. I became a happy and focused little kid from that day on. Drumming made me the big fish in a very small pond. I loved the music, and I loved the ego boost that went with playing. I was also a fast runner, and everyone wanted me on their team—another ego boost! In my teens I was on top of the world. I knew for sure what I wanted to do with my life the day the football coach asked me, "Are you going to play ball or drums?"

I didn't have to think about it. "Drums," I blurted.

The wake-up call was brutal. One day, I realized that my kick-drum calf was a bit smaller than the other, not larger—which contradicted my original theory. I went to a doctor and he measured both calves. Sure enough, the right one was
First Person

half an inch smaller. I told my parents about the situation and was surprised to hear that my mom was having the same trouble. She went to a clinic specializing in neurological ailments. The diagnosis was muscular dystrophy, an incurable disease of muscle deterioration. And it had been genetically passed on to me.

I was crushed. Not only would I never have a complete, healthy adult body, but I had a serious problem with my future as a drummer. My disappointment was intense, and my playing became insecure and tentative. My confidence was shot. It’s hard for me to talk about that time, but maybe my story can help other drummers who are faced with a similar problem.

Moving On

The fact is, I did not give up. And twenty-six years later I still refuse to give up. Music was too important, too much a part of me to let it go without a fight. It’s always been pure joy to me to play with other musicians in the hope of creating a sound that is more than the sum of its parts.

I’ve been lucky in one way: I have the least-serious of the forty strains of muscular dystrophy. Slow, rather than rapid, weakening over the years has given me time to adapt my technique and keep on playing—not only in my basement, but doing gigs and recording. I guess my motto is: If there’s a way to keep on playing, find it. If you can play a beat, even with just one appendage, do it.

The right side of my body went first. I’m left-handed, yet I play right-handed, which turned out to be my second lucky break. This disease affects the biceps and shoulders as well as the ankles, but I found I could rest my hand on the floor tom to play the ride. I can conserve strength so that when a fill is needed I can pull it off. When playing the hi-hat, I rest my hand on the rim of the snare. It works. At least it did until my left biceps said good-bye, and I could no longer keep the snare at the height I needed to be able to reach the hi-hat. I solved that problem by getting a remote hi-hat for the right side, so I could lower the snare to the point at which I could rest my left hand on my thigh. I could then rest my right hand on the floor tom to play both the ride and the hi-hat.

My kick-drum leg lost some of its speed, too. The solution for that turned out to be a double pedal. I use it to do fast doubles and triples so it sounds like a normal single pedal. The remote hi-hat allows me to play both pedals and the hat instead of being stuck with the ride as my only option. My goal has been to play the double pedal in a jazz or funk situation without sounding like a metal drummer. (Not that that’s bad in itself, but it would be inappropriate.) I developed this double-pedal technique to suit my particular needs; you’ll find your own ways to keep on working. I was inspired by a story about Ray Levier that I read in the May 1995 issue of Modern Drummer. Ray fashioned gloves with sticks attached because his hands had been so damaged in a fire that holding sticks was impossible. Amazing!

No Limits

I’ve found that as long as the end result is a good execution of the music, most
musicians ignore—or don’t even notice—my unusual technique. In fact, I think that in some ways my limitations have forced me to play with more thought and strategy—resulting, I hope, in a more musical performance that supports both the piece and my fellow musicians. Drumming should be a catalyst that moves a song along from point A to point B. It should feel like you are listening to someone telling a story that progresses. If I can achieve something close to that, I’ve transcended my physical limitations.

Actually, we are really limited only by our imaginations. To have sensitivity to music and the ability to make it is a gift not to be wasted. It’s also a powerful motivation to stay involved in the creative process. Whether or not we realize it, that is the reason we play. It’s the ultimate natural high!

I’m not saying it’s easy. I’ve given up more than once, and then have come up with a new idea that made it possible to try again. Maybe someday you’ll walk into a place and see the drummer reclining behind his drumset, yet somehow still playing. Maybe it will be me. If we can move any part of our body, we can play a beat. It doesn’t matter what we hit, or what we use to hit with. Anything that makes a sound is percussion. To a certain extent, technology can help us here. There are machines we can use to create some amazing music in a less physical way. We should have an open mind about this route as well.

And it can’t hurt to keep what we have left in the best possible condition. I’ve found that keeping my weight and diet under control helps me to move better.

Sometimes I wonder whether those of us who are not in perfect shape, but can still pull off a good performance, might actually be some of the best drummers in the world. Just imagine what we could do with a fully capable body! Such speculation is good for the self-esteem. Just to keep playing is good for the soul.

So it wasn’t over for me after all. And it’s not over for many other drummers who have a physical limitation to deal with. Don’t give up. Find a way to go on enjoying what you’ve been given, and use it to make yourself and others happy.

Play on, brothers and sisters.
Kodo Drummers Of Japan
One Earth, One Heartbeat

Story by Ted Bonar
Photos by Chris Lee
A lithe Japanese man dressed only in a loincloth appears before an eight-hundred-pound drum that rests on a platform five feet above the stage. With a preparatory grunt, the man assumes a ready position that focuses his entire mind and body on the massive drum before him. He raises two huge clubs above his head and attacks the drum with every fiber of his being. Sweat soon pours down his back. For the next fifteen minutes the thunder from the drum envelops the room. The shock waves from the enormous O-daiko drum provide a unified heartbeat for those in its circle. We are all children of this drum.

The Kodo drummers offer a performance that can not easily be matched by any other group of musicians. The power of these performances is indisputable, and the grace with which they strike their taiko drums is to be envied—and must be seen to be truly believed.

Formed in 1981, Kodo creates Japanese folk-drumming for the modern world. The group has a resolute sense of their history, and their home base of Sado Island is in a location renowned for its artistic culture. A mountainous landscape surrounded by the sea, Sado has been referred to as a "floating treasure chest" due to the wealth of theatre groups, festivals, and musical folklore based there.

Kodo consists of approximately twenty performers, with twenty more individuals dedicated to production and administration. All members live together in the communal setting of Sado Island, where the ensemble lives, eats, runs, and plays together, allowing the drumming to evolve as a life of its own. Performers are nurtured through a two-year apprentice program and a one-year probationary membership before becoming full-fledged members of the group. The apprentice program is open to anyone who is over eighteen and healthy, but only two or three performers graduate from the program. Of those few, even fewer (sometimes none) are asked to become full-fledged members of Kodo.

Whereas Stomp or Blue Man Group—worthy percussive experiences in their own right—rely on humor, high-tech visuals, or camp to entertain audiences, the Kodo drummers do not approach performance simply with the intention to amuse. Rather, a Kodo performance is a visceral experience, and one that is prepared with reverence, ritual, and tradition. By dedicating their entire lives to this ensemble, Kodo is able to offer a drumming experience that is rich in history, contemporary
The Kodo drummers use a bamboo xylophone that they designed themselves. They are handmade. The bachi, or sticks used in performance, are handmade during apprenticeship, and many er learns how to make his or her own sticks. Each play...

The Kodo drummers don’t use drumsticks...they use bachi sticks. Each player learns how to make his or her own sticks during apprenticeship, and many of the bachi sticks used in performance are handmade.

The Kodo Instruments And Accessories

The Miya-daiko comprise a family of drums carved out of a tree trunk, and are the drums most often associated with taiko drumming. The word Miya means shrine, and these “shrine drums” have traditionally been used during rituals and festivals. The Kodo drummers use these traditional drums in contemporary musical settings.

The O-daiko is the largest of the Miya-daiko drums, measuring four feet in diameter and weighing eight hundred pounds. All Miya-daikos are fitted with tacked-on leather drumheads, and cannot be retuned without changing the entire head. Heads usually last two to three years before they wear out or split.

Chu-daiko drums (above right) are medium-sized Miya-daikos that are played from a standing, crouching, or half-sitting position.

Shime-daiko drums (right) are the snare drums of taiko drumming. These solid-shell instruments are rope-tuned to a very high pitch. They have to be de-tuned after each performance and re-tuned in a fifteen- to twenty-minute process before the next show. Due to the enormous tension required, it takes two people to tune these drums properly.

Okedo drums (below left) are barrel-type instruments. They have a stave-shell construction and are rope-tuned. These drums either hang from a sling across the player’s shoulder or rest on a stand.

Chappa (right) are small polished-brass hand cymbals that add color and texture to the drumming ensemble. They are struck together like two mini marching cymbals, or in a manner similar to a pair of hand-held hi-hats, where the player utilizes the vibrations of two cymbals pressed together to create “sizzling” effects. They are clapped, tapped, and muted for various effects.

The Atari-gane is a hand-held bell that is struck with a mallet made from a deer antler. This instrument is utilized to create a background rhythm during ensemble pieces.

During performances, audiences will notice the drummers shouting and grunting to one another in encouragement. This is referred to as Kakegoe. Due to the enormous effort required to play the O-daiko or Chu-daiko drums, the ensemble literally roots for each other during the pieces, and non-performing members will even shout encouragement from backstage during a piece. These grunts have evolved into a musical aspect of the performance.

The Kodo drummers use a bamboo xylophone that they designed themselves. The bars and resonators are carved from the same piece of wood, and the instrument is based on a gegog, an Indonesian instrument.

Shinobue is a bamboo flute used in traditional Japanese folk pieces.

Kodo drummers don’t use drumsticks...they use bachi sticks. Each player learns how to make his or her own sticks during apprenticeship, and many of the bachi sticks used in performance are handmade.
tension and energy.

The rope-tuned Shime-daiko drums are tuned very tightly and provide the most versatile sound in the Kodo arsenal. These drums are struck from a kneeling position and are played both in solo and ensemble pieces. Shime-daiko can be played whisper-quiet—the sound of shuffling feet can literally overpower the sound from the stage—and also build to an ear-splitting roar as loud as any modern snare drum. The Shime-daiko is capable of providing colors and textures that the larger drums cannot. This is most evident in the piece "Monochrome," a modern composition written by Maki Ishii. In it, seven drums, tuned in an ascending scale, offer a striking illusion of drizzling rain developing into cathartic thunder crashes...and back again.

On their recent tour, Kodo segued three pieces in a ritualistic fashion. The first, "Kiyari," is a traditional vocal piece used to help coordinate the efforts of woodsmen as they haul trees. During an extended call-and-response, members of the troupe wheel out the massive O-daiko drum on a huge platform adorned with lanterns and surrounded by wooden guardrails. Two drummers sit motionless at either end. There is an indisputable aura that surrounds this drum. The work-song entrance, the special staging, the lighting, and the sheer grand scale of the instrument only magnify this feeling. And the performance is no less awesome than the drum itself.

It is at this point that drummer Yoshikazu Fujimoto begins a fifteen-minute improvisation aptly named "O-daiko." (Fujimoto is a founding member of Kodo and is a living legend in the world of taiko, as he holds the honored role of O-daiko drummer.) The energy expended during this performance is truly a marvel of stamina, strength, and power. As the player in back provides a steady pulse, Fujimoto improvises. His accented patterns are lengthy single-stroke affairs, with only a few Western-style rudiments thrown in. For the most part, the drumming is fairly straightforward from a rudimental perspective. But the performance is far from ordinary. Playing this drum in
A Kodo member performs the physically challenging show finale, "Yatai-bayashi.

This manner can only be done by a person who has dedicated everything to this one act.

The finale, "Yatai-bayashi," features three Chu-daiko drums set toward the front of the stage. The drums are positioned on their sides and propped up slightly on one end. This piece is performed by Fujimoto and two other men in
Kodo In Your House

**Tatakku: Best Of Kodo II 1994 - 1999**

This US release contains eleven tracks from various recordings released in Japan. (RED Ink)

**Ibuki**

Produced by Bill Laswell, *Ibuki* is a studio CD released in 1997 that features new arrangements of original Kodo compositions. (RED Ink)

**Live At Acropolis**

This seventy-minute video contains footage from a concert in Athens, Greece, as well as one extended studio performance and interviews conducted by Mickey Hart. (RED Ink)

Extensive information on Kodo—including tour dates, Earth Celebration festival information, workshops, merchandise, and a quarterly newsletter—can be found at [www.kodo.or.jp](http://www.kodo.or.jp).

There are loincloths and headbands. (It is said that wrapping one’s head helps to focus the mind and spirit.) The men straddle the drums with their legs, in sort of a semi-crunch position. They prepare to strike the drums in a series of motions from this position. (Try to imagine yourself in that position—for fifteen minutes, while playing with huge sticks above your head!) The players slam away at the drums in perfect unison, while extended accent-laden patterns run over phrases, and rhythms last for minutes on end.

The *Chu-daikos* are then accompanied by *Shime-daikos*, as well as by a number of medium-sized, barrel-shaped *Okedo* drums. A large kettle-drum-sized *taiko* drum—a huge drum mounted face-up and played with a *bachi* (stick) the size of a baseball bat—also becomes part of the performance.

Through the entire concert, the Kodo drummers provide delicate dance accompaniment, bamboo-flute melodies, intricate ensemble interplay, improvisation, and precision that can only be achieved by living this art form every single day. The combination of athletic prowess with mystical grace is something not often seen in Western styles of music.

For those who have dedicated parts of their lives to drumming, watching those who have dedicated their entire lives to the art is nothing less than awesome.
The name George Way is held in great esteem in American drum history. The late Mr. Way started his career as a player and as an office boy for George B. Stone in Boston, and finished it as the proprietor of GHW, a manufacturer’s rep for percussion-related items. In between those two points George did an incredible number of things: He worked retail in Canada, he was the sales manager at Leedy in Indianapolis and Elkhart, he worked for Slingerland and Rogers, and he founded his own George Way Drum Company—which evolved into Camco, which evolved into DW.

This month’s featured snare is owned by Barry and Ian Frydrych, a father & son team from northern Indiana. When Ian’s not out playing his Gretsch drums, he’s out looking for treasures. Barry and Ian found this one and contacted me.

When Leedy & Ludwig was closed by Conn, three things happened almost simultaneously. The Ludwig family bought back their name, dies, and patents. Bud Slingerland bought the Leedy name, dies, and patents. And George Way took over the factory. Some of the employees started making new drums featuring a distinctive round lug, which is also known as the “turtle lug.” George called them Aristocrat lugs. The shells were definitely Leedy-ish: three plies from Jasper, Indiana. The hoops had the same ear design, but now they were triple-flanged. The drums also featured new strainer and butt-plate designs.

The George Way Drum Company officially opened in 1957. Drums were offered in white marine, black diamond, and red and blue sparkle. (Back then, the sparkle covering material came to the factory with red sparkle on one side of the plastic and blue sparkle on the other. That certainly has
There are also examples of lacquer finishes, along with 6-lug drums and 8-lug drums with single-flanged hoops and clips.

The George Way Company existed until 1961, when the owners of the Camco Drum Accessory Company gained control of the stock and moved the factory to Oaklawn, Illinois. At that time, Camco became a full drum manufacturer and dropped the "Accessory" from their name. There is still a lot of speculation on how and why the takeover happened.

Most George Way drums that have surfaced in recent years are 5 1/2x14 and 6 1/2x14 8-lug snares with the distinctive black-and-gold winged badges. When the email from Ian Frydrych came in, I wrote him back with a catalog shot of a circa-1960 Casino. Back then, no one kept records. We don't know how many 4 1/2x14s are out there, but this is the only one that I have ever seen.

How do you value a George Way? Half the readers will see it as a DW ancestor. (Read: "old drum.") The other half will see more than heritage. They'll see the Casino as a practical drum born in the pre-rock era, when Gretsch was selling the Max Roach and Progressive Jazz snares, and when Ludwig had the Downbeat.

A 5 1/2x14 pearl-covered George Way is worth about $650. For the elusive 4 1/2x14, I would add 25% for rarity, and say that the Frydrych boys found an $800 snare drum.

Be on the lookout for what George himself called "Waybest"—the George Way snare drums, proudly built in Elkhart, Indiana. In fact, let George say it in his own words from the 1960 catalog: "The neatest and best looking 'narrow' drum ever made...no staggered rods. The very 'tops' for jobbing and combo work, and the very 'end' in snappy sounds and sturdiness. Made with the same care as a Rolls Royce, and will take all you can give it. The double-edge/double-flange counterhoops are the strongest made, and they greatly lessen stick damage when playing rimshots." Forty years later, he's still right!

For more on George Way—a truly fascinating man—you can read George Way's Little Black Book and The Leedy Book, both by Rob Cook. There are also references in Rob's Slingerland Book and Rogers Book, and my Great American Drums.
As we went to press for this issue, we were saddened to learn of the passing of jazz legend Billy Higgins. While awaiting his third liver transplant at his home in Los Angeles, California, Billy developed pneumonia. On April 16 he entered Daniel Freeman Hospital in Inglewood, where his condition deteriorated into liver and lung failure. He died on May 3, at the age of sixty-five.

Billy was born and raised in Los Angeles, and began his career playing in R&B bands on the West Coast. As a teen, he played with Bo Diddley and with best-selling writer Maya Angelou, who was then a singer. But it is as a jazz drummer that Billy earned his fame. In his fifty-year career he appeared on over five hundred albums, performing with such legendary players as Dexter Gordon, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane, Jackie McLean, Hank Mobley, Sonny Rollins, and Lee Morgan.

In 1959, at the age of twenty-two, Billy went to New York as a charter member of the Ornette Coleman group, whose live performances and recordings had a profound effect on the jazz world. "We didn't have any music on the bandstand," Billy said of those performances. "Ornette was composing a lot, but he never said anything but, 'Play your heart out.' He left it up to us. When somebody has that much confidence in you, you have to come up with something." Billy continued to work with Coleman on and off for many years, while he toured Europe and Japan in trios and quartets with Cedar Walton and Clifford Jordan.

Higgins was equally at home with traditional boppers and modernists, and he was prized by bandleaders for his highly individualistic yet tasteful style. In 1997 a who's-who of West Coast jazz turned out in force to honor him at a tribute benefit concert. In that year he also received the National Endowment For The Arts' most prestigious jazz award, the American Jazz Master's Fellowship, in recognition of his "lifetime contributions, artistic excellence, and overall impact on jazz." In 1998 Billy was honored by Modern Drummer as a recipient of MD's Editors' Achievement Award.

Commenting on his role in the evolution of jazz drumming, Billy once said, "I'm glad to be able to play music and be a link in the chain. Jazz is a family. It's a blessing just to be a part of it, because there are so many and it's a big family."

Billy will be sorely missed by that family.

An expanded tribute feature on Billy Higgins will appear in the October 2001 issue of Modern Drummer.
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Futureman's Drums, Music, Arts & Evolution Camp

Story by Robin Tolleson • Photos by Greg Kessler

The coldest spring weather in eighty years couldn't dampen the spirits of those attending Futureman's first annual drum camp, held March 24 through 28 at Camp Garner Creek in Dickson, Tennessee. The event drew sixty students from as far away as Venezuela and from all parts of North America to the rolling hills just outside Nashville. Instructors, including drumset artists Kenwood Dennard, Will Calhoun, Will Kennedy, and J.D. Blair, percussionists Jim Roberts, Joe Craven, Tom Roady, and Gordon Gottlieb, Senegalese drummer Youssou Sidibe, tabla player Aloke Outta, percussion educator Dr. Wayne Kirby, and dancer Zuleikha presented workshops during the day and performances at night. "Bernard Purdie sat in with Will Calhoun, and he just killed," smiles event host Futureman (aka Roy Wooten), best known for his work with Grammy winners Bela Fleck & The Flecktones. "At night I would interview these guys on my couch, like I was Johnny Carson or somebody. My 'Ed McMahon' was our guest host, Dom Famularo." Futureman's mom also imparted some of her wisdom and kindhearted exhortations to the campers.

Will Kennedy comments, "What made this camp unique was the world influence, the variety of cultures represented."
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World percussion was a major focus of the camp, with classes on African djembe and (inset) Afro-Cuban bata techniques.

and the information being presented. I felt as much like a student as anyone there. I had an opportunity to fellowship with Bernard Purdie, to be able to pick his brain and hear some things he had to say. Then at my clinics I shared how the emotional side of playing is a big part—tapping into the spirit behind the music, and speaking the very language of each style. I encouraged people to really spend some time getting inside of that spirit, to understand the experience. I played along with some recorded music and used that as an example of how to make the drums speak. Even though I was playing with a band-in-a-box, I wanted to demonstrate how I draw on my vocabulary to make my spirit come out."

Campers began their days with “body awakening” classes, then a pre-breakfast walk and talk with Futureman, who discussed his concepts of the rhythms of Phi and Pi, the harmony of rhythm, and the relationship of percussion to all of life. Will DeYoung, a forty-two-year-old drummer and massage therapist from Carmel, California, says it was a week he will long remember. “Every day totally blew me away,” says Will. “The teachers and seminar leaders all offered more than just information about drumming. They all seemed to have meaningful things to say about living life to its fullest and pursuing your
literally steaming after a high-energy performance. will kennedy shared his feelings about the spirit of drumming with the students.

"roy is such an energized person, with such a genuine enthusiastic love and desire to share and to elevate people," deyoung continues. "that energy just reverberated with the people who were there. they were so intent on giving of themselves and offering every conceivable concept and bit of information, so that we could become not only better and happier as drummers and percussion players, but better and happier as people."

futureman concludes, "we were able to express a lot of new concepts...a lot of different directions. we had moostafa and dr. arvin scott leading drum circles and teaching rhythms during the day. then at night, boom, showtime. the students actually performed, opening the show, and they were just slammin'. i always talked about this camp like it would be a survivor camp. but at the end no one got voted out; we voted everybody in, to join the circle. this is the concept of sharing ideas like we share fire. i give it to you and there's more fire. you give it to the next person...more fire. nobody loses anything. it was that kind of sharing."

the camp provided students the opportunity to commune with nature and the percussive muse at the same time.
**In Memoriam**

**Ellis Tolin**

Ellis Tolin, who played with Benny Goodman, Stan Kenton, and numerous other jazz giants, died on March 30, 2001. In addition to his jazz and big band career, Tolin also recorded with many of Philadelphia’s pop idols of the 1950s. He is the drummer of record on Chubby Checker's "The Twist" and "Let's Twist Again."

Tolin was also the founder of Music City, a well-known store in Philadelphia. There he became friends with Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Roy Haynes, Max Roach, and many other notable drummers. An inventive craftsman as well as a drummer, Ellis is credited by some as being the actual creator of the Rogers Dyna-Sonic snare drum. He was also instrumental in putting together the deal between Henry Grossman and Buddy Rich for Buddy to endorse Rogers drums.

At the time of his passing, Ellis was residing in Tamarac, Florida. He is survived by his wife, Jeanette, sons Robert and Don, and five grandchildren.

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**QUICK BEATS**

**JOHNNY RABB**

(DRUMMER/CLINICIAN/JOHNNYRABB DRUMSTICKS)

What are some of your favorite grooves?
Phil Collins on “Woman In Chains” (Tears For Fears), Vinne Colaiuta on “Wang Chung” (Wang Chung) and “Snake Dance” (Robbie Robertson), Manu Katche on “Somewhere Down That Crazy River” (Robbie Robertson), Steve Smith on “The Perfect Date” (Vital Information), Gregg Bissonette on “Fire-Shaker” (Maynard Ferguson), Kenwood Dennard on all the tunes from Maceo Parker’s Life On Planet Groove.

What is some of the best advice you’ve learned from your drum teachers?
Mike Lawson, my most influential teacher, offered some great advice. The one thing I always remember is, when you’re asked to play a gig, make sure to find out when it is, where it is, how much money it pays, and what attire is to be worn.

What records or books did you study and play along to when you first started drumming?
I used to play along to Devo, The Cars, Rush, Kraftwerk, Yes, and Rick Springfield albums, to name a few. Later on, after working with my teacher Mike Lawson, I was introduced to Chick Corea, Tony Williams, Steve Gadd, and other great jazz-fusion drummers. My first book was Realistic Rock by Carmine Appice, and then it was on to Jim Chapin’s book and then Rick Latham’s Advanced Funk Studies.
Pro-Mark recently broke ground for its new 30,000-square-foot manufacturing and office complex. When completed in January of next year, the building will more than double the company’s current size, and will provide room for additional expansion.

Pro-Mark president Maury Brochstein turns the first shovel full of dirt at the company’s groundbreaking ceremony.

Drum Workshop has entered into an agreement to become the official drumkit supplier to the House Of Blues chain. DW will provide custom kits and hardware for HOB clubs throughout the US in return for access to the clubs for exclusive drumming events and expanded educational activities. The kits will be raffled off each year to raise money for the International House Of Blues Foundation’s efforts to bring music and art programs into schools.

J. D’Addario & Company, Inc., parent company of Evans Drumheads, is a sponsor of the 2001 USA Songwriting Competition. Entrants stand to win a grand prize of more than $50,000 in cash, merchandise, and exposure, making this the largest prize package in any annual songwriting competition. Winners’ songs will be featured on Acoustic Cafe, a nationally syndicated radio program serving more than sixty cities in the United States and Canada. Judges of the songwriting competition include representatives from record labels and music publishers including Warner/Reprise Records, Sony Music, Epic Records, Mars Music Records, and Peer Music. Many past contest winners have received recording and publishing contracts, and have had their songs placed in films and television shows. For more information call (877) USA-SONG. (Outside US, call [954] 776-1577.)

Zildjian has established their Educational Web site, www.zildjian.com/edu, dedicated to becoming “the ultimate resource on the Web for percussion education.” The site includes a news & events section, a teaching aids section, in-depth educator profiles, a calendar of clinics and camps, an extensive instrument guide, and a comprehensive guide to continuing percussion education.

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QUICK BEATS

SHAWN PELTON
(SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE, SESSIONS)

What are some of your favorite grooves?
Roger Hawkins on "I'll Take You There" (The Staple Singers), Levon Helm on "Cripple Creek" (The Band), Bernard Purdie on "Rock Steady" (Aretha Franklin), Al Jackson on "Anything" (Al Green & Howard Grimes).

What are some of your favorite grooves that you've recorded?
Shawn Colvin's album A Few Small Repairs and "Sunny Came Home," Bruce Springsteen's "Seven Angels" from the Tracks box set, Odetta's "Blues Everywhere I Go," and Peter Wolf's "Fools Parade."

What books or records did you study or play along to when you first started drumming?
I was very fortunate to have incredible teachers in Alan Dawson and Kenny Aronoff. They got me off to a good start.

What's the best advice you received from your drum teachers?
Play from your heart, and make the music feel really good.
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very so often a submission to this department just makes us stop and say, "Whoa! What's that?"

Chicago drummer Joe Babiak's setup includes GMS drums, Zildjian, Sabian, and Paiste cymbals, LP percussion, and a Gibraltar rack. Although varied and interesting the configuration isn't really radical. We've seen similar setups in the past. But you have to give Joe credit for the nerve to put such a, shall we say, distinctive finish on his kit.

"When I ordered the drums, I wanted a unique-looking set," says Joe. "I chose lime green because it's my favorite color. And rather than making the whole shell green, I chose a very specific shade of purple to go with the green. I think the two colors make a great combination. Then, to top it all off, I requested that the hardware on the shells be powder-coated in black.

"GMS did an incredible job of matching the exact shades that I requested," Joe concludes. "They're great at what they do. And the sound of the drums is as striking as their looks!"
Introducing Pearl's all new Roadster Throne line. They're the most roadready, sit down, buckle up, rock solid drum thrones available today. Five different models are available, including three standard height Thrones, one lower stance Throne, and one Throne with four legs for the ultimate in stability. Choose between our new Velvet feel padded round seat, or our new AirFlo vented vinyl covering in both a round and motorcycle style. The best part of all is Pearl's new PanHead base design, that lowers the center of gravity for a much sturdier stance, and its all metal pan construction and solid die-cast post clamp, can take all the road has to offer, and then some. Check out any of our new Roadster Thrones at your local dealer... and then get ready for the ride of your life.

New Velvet feel or AirFlo covered highly padded seat tops.

All new PanHead seat base with super strong die-cast pipe clamp system.

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