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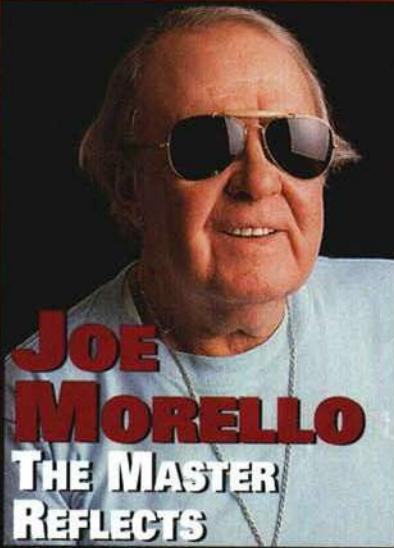
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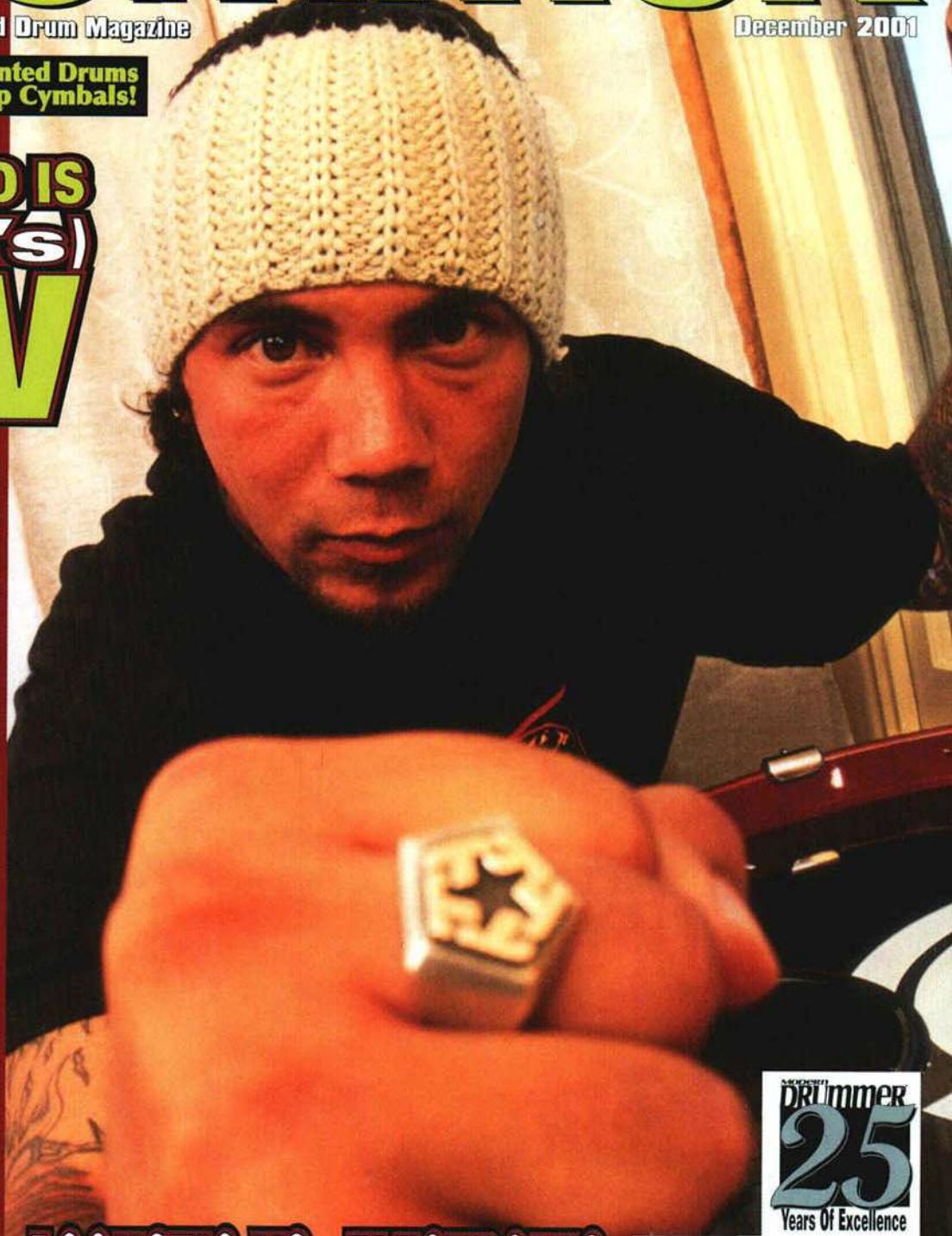


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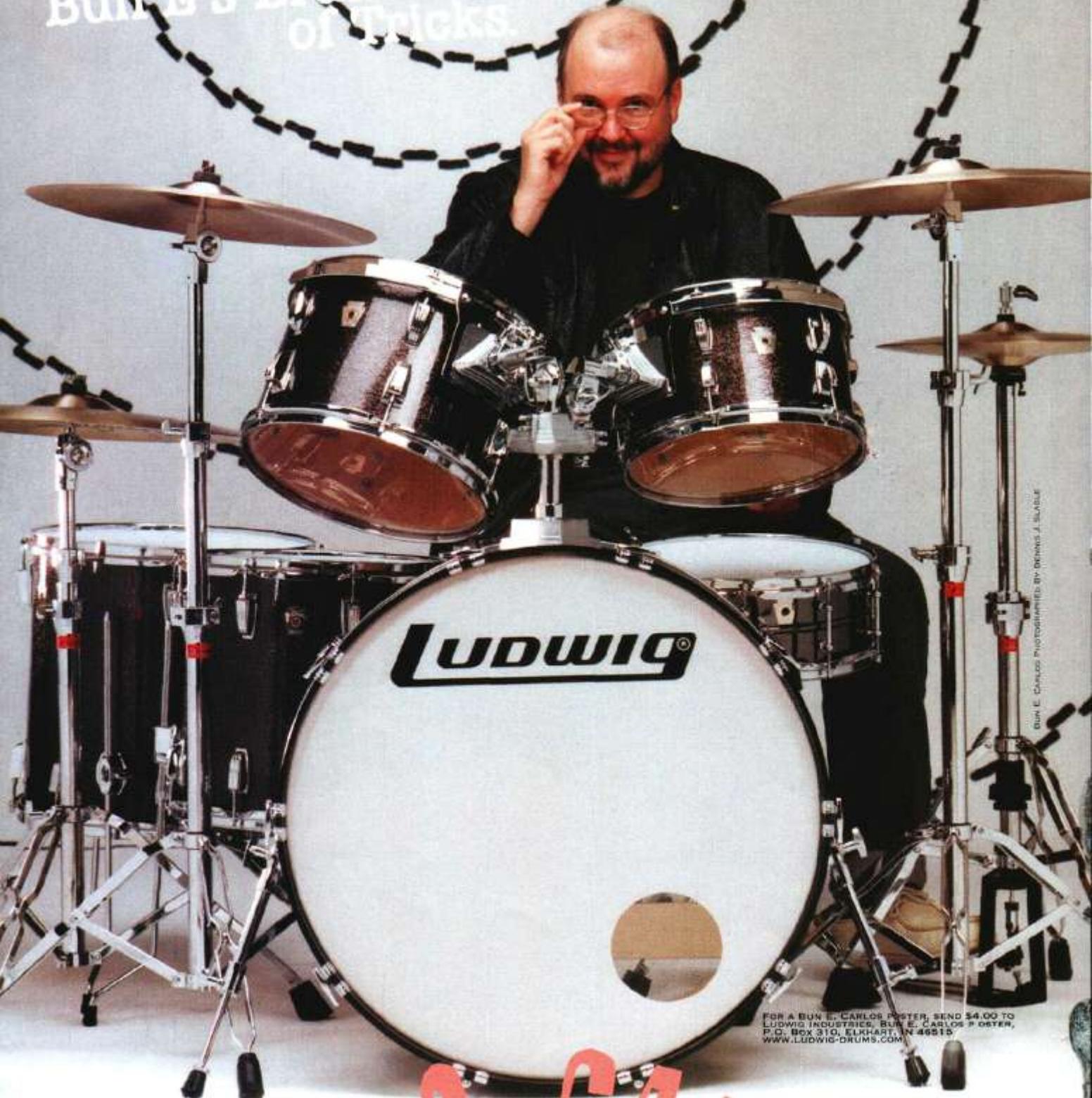
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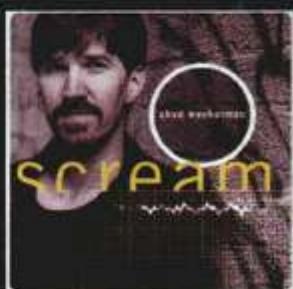
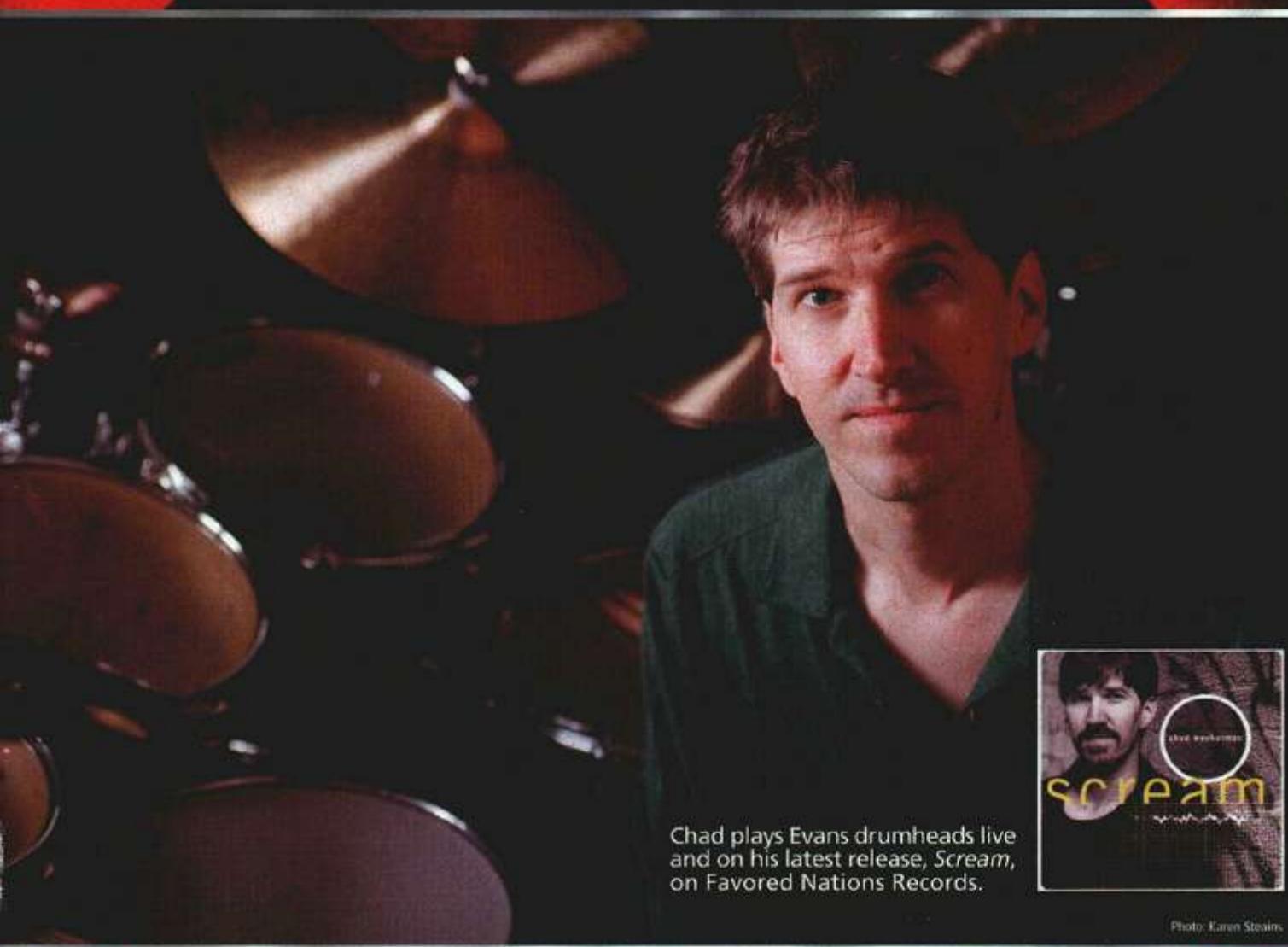
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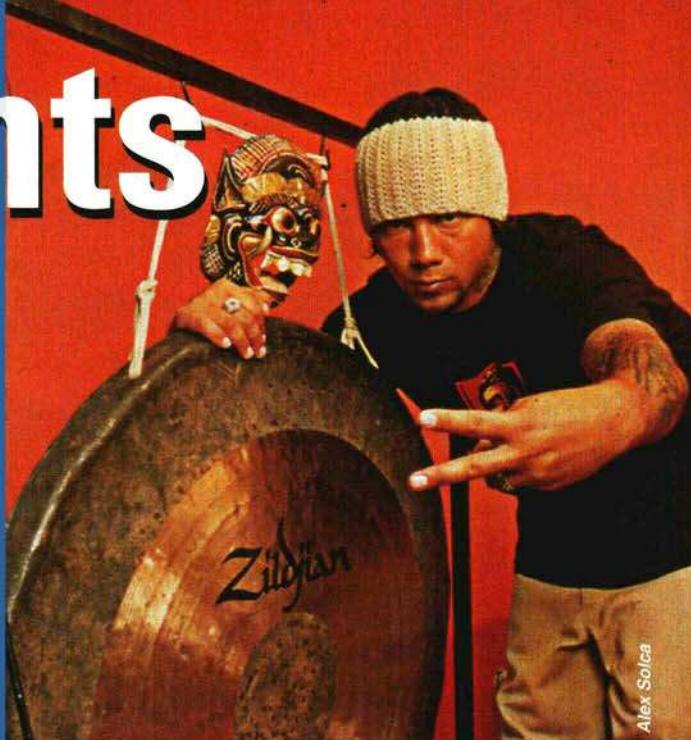
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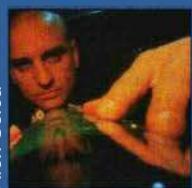


Alex Solca

Blue Man Group's **Tim Alexander**

Even drum stars get the blues. Ex-Primus groundbreaker Tim Alexander shifts gears and joins the coolest show off Broadway.

by Mike Haid

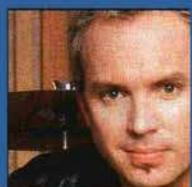


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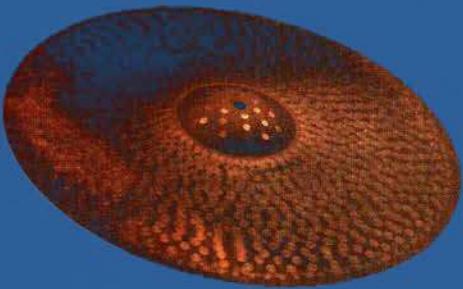
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A Happy Camper

This past August I spent a week at the KoSA Percussion Workshop at Castleton State College in Vermont. It was my second year as a member of the faculty, and I came away having learned as much or more information than I presented to my classes. The old adage is true: By your pupils you'll be taught.

What I enjoyed most about the drum camp experience was the diversity that existed in every aspect. The faculty included top drummers, percussionists, and other instrumentalists from a wide range of musical styles. The curriculum offered everything from tips for beginners to challenges for more advanced players. And the student body varied widely in terms of age, instrumental focus, and experience level.

But amid all this diversity, what everyone at the camp—students and faculty alike—had in common was a love for the creation of rhythm. Impromptu jam sessions were common throughout the week. Lunch-table conversations regularly turned into seminars, as world-class drummers fielded questions from students in a casual, "we're all in this together" atmosphere. When it came time for the student recital at the end of the week, the faculty was there to cheer the performers on; just as the students were there the next evening for the faculty recital. It was one big, happy drumming family.

Jazz and marching camps have been around for many years, and they offer excellent instruction within those idioms. But percussion-specific camps like the KoSA Workshop and the recent Futureman's Drum Camp offer drummers and percussionists unique opportunities for musical and personal growth. I urge every *MD* reader to look into camps like these. Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned veteran, you won't come home the same.

MD's report on the 2001 KoSA Percussion Workshop appears in this issue's Backbeats.

MODERN DRUMMER

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Mike Mangini (Steve Vai)

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Jimmy DeGrasso (Megadeth)

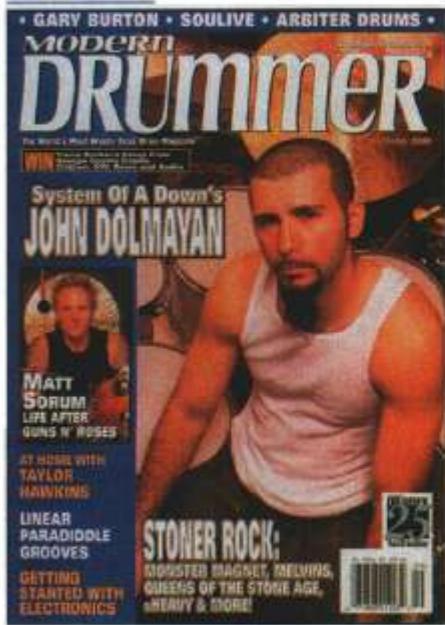
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JOHN DOLMAYAN



It's good to see a drummer in a new and exciting band take his playing as seriously as John Dolmayan does. Okay, he's into toys, and he's popular with beautiful young women (which is difficult not to envy). But anybody who lives under the creed of "Discipline, Work, Faith, Solitude" and who says that his main goal as a drummer is to make the *songs* (as opposed to the drums) sound as good as possible has my respect. Thanks for the story.

Maurice LeDoux
New Orleans, LA

STONER ROCK

I dug your September story on the drummers of Stoner Rock. Power, groove, and feel...that's what counts. Not flailing prog-rock chops or angry, violence-inducing double-bass thrash. Give me a heavy 1 & 3 kick and a fat 2 & 4 backbeat, and I'm ready to rock. Thanks for the great story.

Tom Kinsella
via Internet

I darn near had to fight my mother to get my *MD* back after she saw "Stoner Rock" on the cover. She thought the story was advocating drug-oriented music. Luckily, she was just open-minded enough to take my suggestion that she *read* the story. At that point, she asked the same question I

COVER VERSIONS

I'm disturbed by what I see as a shift in *Modern Drummer*'s editorial emphasis. You seem to be getting away from players of established credibility and influence, in exchange for those who may be currently trendy but have little to talk about besides their most recent album or tour.

Using the past six months' (April through September) issues as examples, and referring only to the cover artists, you've featured Billy Martin, Joey Waronker, Danny Carey, Joey Kramer, Travis Barker, and John Dolmayan. Kramer is a veteran rocker, but hardly a major drumming innovator. Martin, Waronker, and Carey have had success with high-profile groups, and I admit that they had a few insights to offer. But between the three of them they total less than ten years in the drumming spotlight. Barker and Dolmayan are definitely in "flavor of the month" bands, and while I don't disparage either of them personally, I question whether their careers will sustain past that of their bands' popularity.

You have to go back a full seven months to the March issue, with Dave Weckl on the cover, to find a legitimate superstar with years of experience to his credit and plenty of information to share. From there it's back all the way to December of 2000 and the Will Kennedy cover.

ask you: Couldn't these drummers and the bands they play in have come up with a better name for their style?

Julie Spencer
via Internet

MYSTERY MARCHER

I'd like to offer some information about the "Mystery Marcher" drum shown on page 20 of your October issue. We are a vintage restoration business specializing in rope-tensioned drums from the 18th and 19th centuries. We've done considerable research on drums and drum builders from that era.

I have nothing against younger players, and I believe that *MD* should include them in its pages. But I feel that the cover story should be reserved for drummers who have made, and who continue to make, a genuine difference to the art form.

William Francis
Los Angeles, CA

It's really great to see *MD* finally loosening up and featuring some hot new players on the cover, instead of burying them inside. John Dolmayan, Travis Barker, and Danny Carey are all making new statements in drumming, and they're the kinds of guys who the next generation of drummers will call influences. Let's have more of these fresh faces.

Paul O'Rourke
Boston, MA



The drum's maker, William Kilbourn, was in business at 7 Clinton Avenue, Albany, New York in the 1850s. The 11x16 drum is typical of their militia snare drums. The drums generally had red wooden rims with a natural-finish maple shell. The exterior seam was glued and reinforced with a row of small nails. Kilbourn also offered hand-painted regimental or state seals. It's very likely that the drum in question is a Civil War drum made during the 1860s. I hope this information proves helpful.

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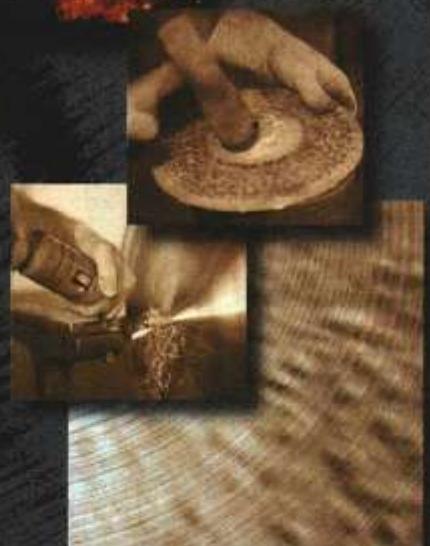
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LIGHTENING THE LOAD

I've played on and off for various periods of time for the past forty years. I'm now playing frequently, and I just bought a second set to use on the road. It was a "shell pack," so my next step is searching for new stands and a throne that are sturdy, that set up and break down easily and reliably, and are *lightweight*. All the gigs I play now are one-niters requiring lots of equipment hauling, and I'm just plain tired of the weight of today's hardware.

I remember hauling a five-piece Ludwig kit around Vietnam almost every day for half of 1970. The high-end hardware then was *lightweight*. Granted, it was not as sturdy as the double-braced equipment I have now, but it did the job. Given today's modern engineering, manufacturing, and materials technology, why are we not seeing alternatives to the heavy low-grade steel stands offered by virtually all of the big drum makers? Advanced designs using properly chosen alloys, fabrication methods, and assembly fasteners could easily result in significant weight reduction without sacrificing any strength or stability.

I'd be very willing to pay for lightening my load, and I venture to say that lots of working/traveling drummers out there share this view. During my search for new hardware, I've noted that not one hardware ad or catalog listing (printed or online) lists the weight of the item. Perhaps encouraging manufacturers and retailers to list weights (even shipping weights) in their ads would result in a good tool for those of us who are interested in such specifications.

Skip Metheny
Asheville, NC

FUTUREMAN'S DRUM CAMP

Robin Tolleson's otherwise fine report on Futureman's Drum Camp in your August issue omitted the names of several instructors at the camp. These included Agustin Diaz Cano (from Los Munequitos de Matanzas), the Count Mbutu, and myself. Agustin and I are shown in the photo on page 158, playing bata. Agustin is at center on the iya, I'm at right playing the itotele, and Luis Gonzalez is at left on the okonkolo. I just wanted to set the record straight.

Louis Carreras
via Internet

A LIFE SAVED

Two years ago I had to have my right leg amputated. Needless to say, this was a very traumatic experience. Six months later I was fitted for a prosthesis, after which I was taught to walk again. Unfortunately, three months ago I had to have my other leg amputated. This surgery left me in deep depression and feeling very sorry for myself. In short, I gave up.

I was sent to a rehabilitation center, where my night nurse mentioned that he was a drummer and drum builder. I told him that I had been a drummer too—a very long time ago. The next night he brought me a pair of drumsticks. I picked them up, and they felt wonderful in my hands. I started beating on my mattress with those sticks, and that started me on the road back to real drumming.

Not long after that, my nurse/drum-builder friend made me a beautiful snare drum, and I started playing for real. Then I bought a used Pearl set with a foot pedal, a hi-hat, and a cymbal stand. I added one of Sabian's economy packs of cymbals: a ride, a crash, and a pair of hi-hats.

I have the kit set up in my basement, and I'm in there every day playing away. I only have one prosthesis so far, so I can't operate the bass drum and the hi-hat together. But time will fix that. In the meantime my whole attitude has changed. I can't describe the pleasure I get. No more depression, no more bad (and dangerous) thoughts. Drumming has literally saved my life.

By the way, I'm seventy-one years old. But I feel reborn with my drums.

Ed Verduin
Wayne, NJ

How To Reach Us

Correspondence to MD's Readers'
Platform may be sent by mail:
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OOPS!

Our November *Backbeats* report on the 2001 Berklee Percussion Week incorrectly identified Dave DiCenso as Larry Finn, and referred to the Beachmont Junior High School (Revere, MA) as the Rosemont Junior High School. We apologize for the errors.



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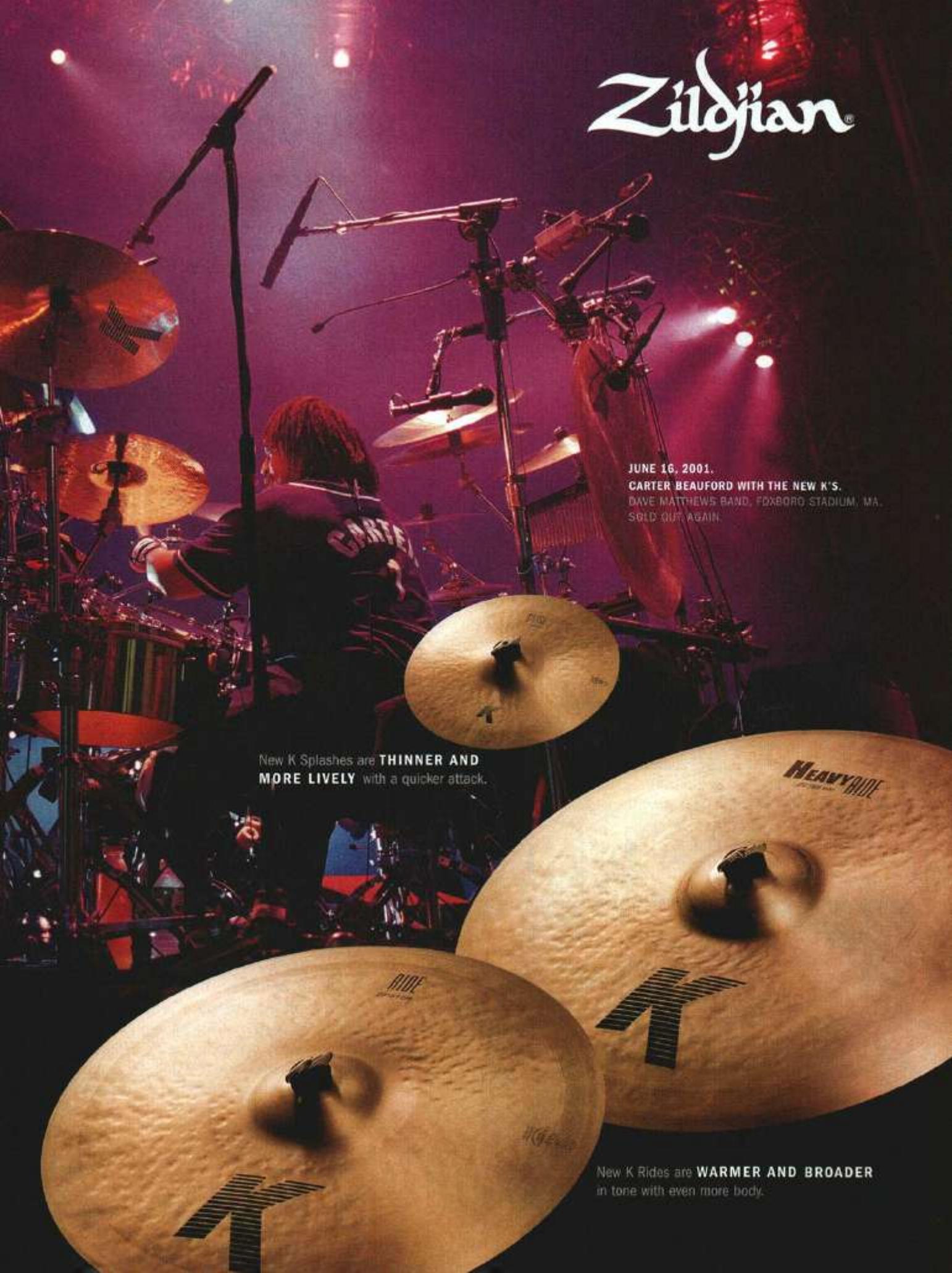
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Improvement Tips From Danny Gottlieb

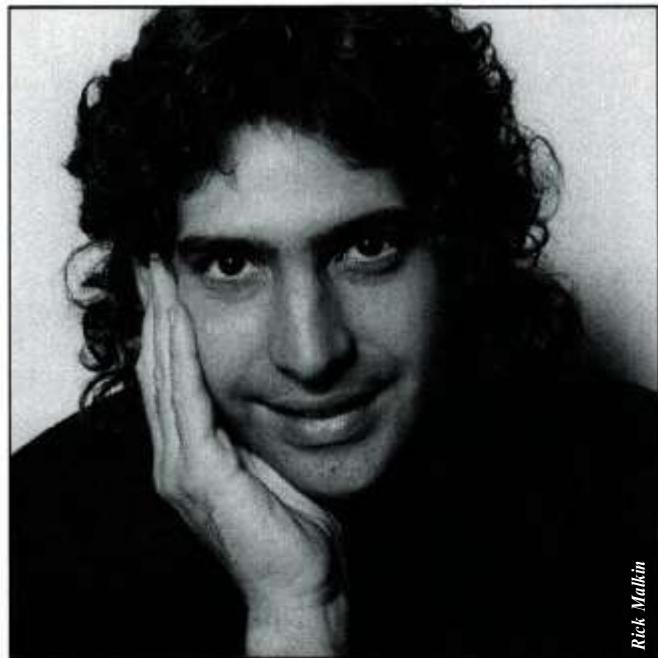
QI recently saw your drum video, *The Complete All-Around Drummer #1*. Your playing and soloing were great! I picked up a few licks from your duet with Joe Morello as well. I was most impressed with the single strokes and single-stroke rolls you played on the pad during your warm-up segment. How did you achieve such speed and endurance? How long do you practice singles each day? Do you have any tips to help a thirteen-year-old drummer like me get better?

Mike Mahoney
Wallingford, PA

AI've been studying with Joe Morello on and off for thirty years. Joe has a very specific routine for developing each hand individually, so there is no weak hand. For single strokes specifically, one of his devices is to practice the exercise called the "Stone Killer" in his *Master Studies* book (available from Modern Drummer Publications).

The main part of this exercise consists of four strokes on the left hand, and then the right, played fifty times; then eight on each hand fifty times; then sixteen on each hand fifty times. You start slowly, then work up to a good, controlled speed. I've been playing this exercise for years, usually thirty to sixty minutes each day as a warm-up. I'm at the point now where I usually start with the sixteen-beat patterns, and I extend the number of measures to between twenty and twenty-five measures on each hand. Once I'm warmed up, I move the metronome up to a faster tempo. When I'm in shape, I can usually play a measure of 16th notes on one hand at 170 bpm. (But remember: The key here is to do it evenly and musically, not just in a flurry of notes.) After you feel comfortable with this exercise and in control of each hand, combine the hands together, and there you'll have your good, controlled single stroke.

As for tips to get better, here are my thoughts: a) Listen to as



Rick Matkin

much music and as many drummers in all styles as you can. Ask your teachers, local musicians, and friends to recommend records and drummers. Then try to analyze their playing, b) Play as much as you can with other musicians. e) Find the best teacher in your area and practice as much as you can. d) Check out as many videos and *Modern Drummer* back issues as you can. e) Get the best grades in school as possible, and if you do consider a career in music, apply to the best colleges as you can. I went to the University of Miami, where I received a bachelor of music degree, which was the best thing I ever did.

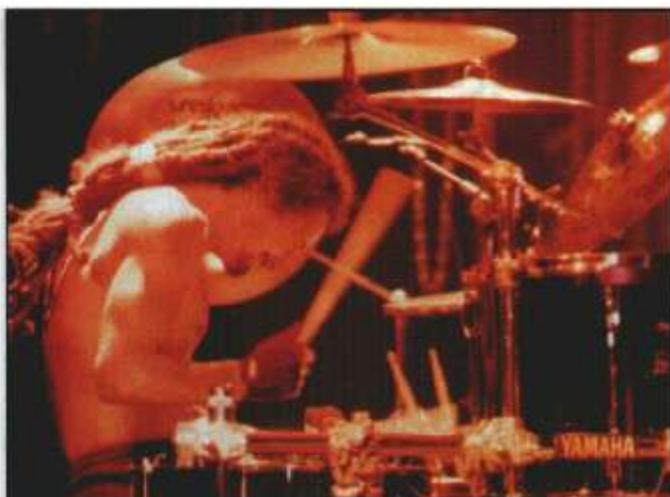
And most importantly, have fun, and good luck!

Mike Bordin Tells All

QYour contribution to hard rock and metal drumming has been and continues to be enormous, and you've been a major inspiration to me. So I have quite a few questions for you.

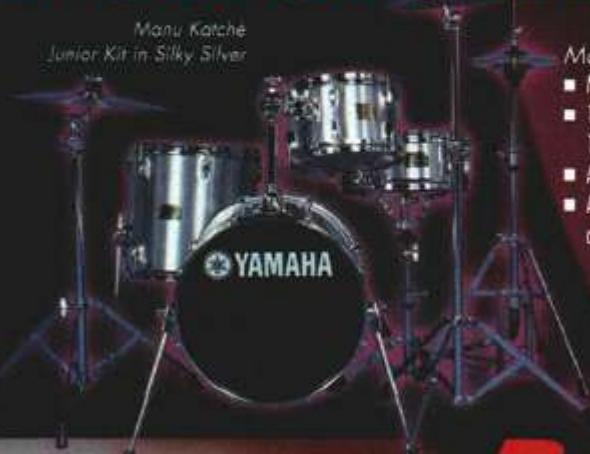
Are there any recordings of your performances on the 1997 Ozzfest or the 2000 Korn tours? How about any new studio recordings? Do you still use the butt of your sticks to hit your drums and cymbals? What effect does that have on your arms and wrists? What size stick are you currently using? What type of bass pedal are you currently using: chain or nylon strap? What exercises do you recommend to increase foot speed and control? What sizes and series of Zildjian cymbals are you using? What factors do you consider when selecting cymbals? What weights or type of drumheads do you use? What are your tuning preferences or tips?

Scott Roddick
via Internet



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Manu Katché Junior Kit —

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"True power is not always revealed visually."

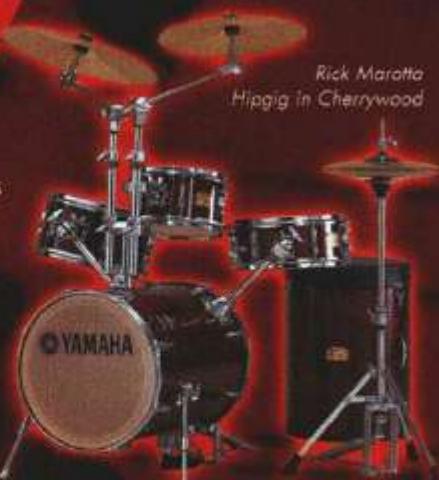
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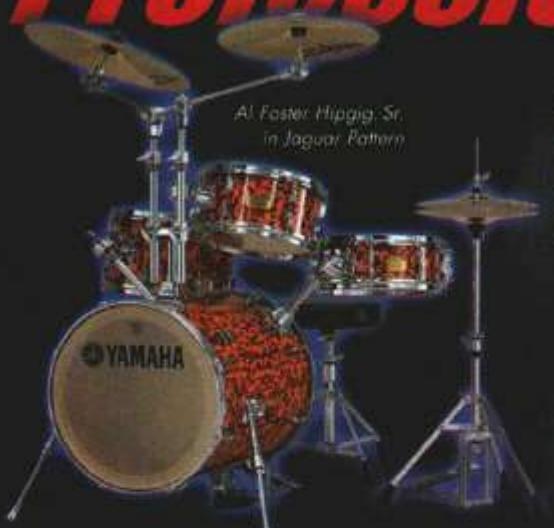


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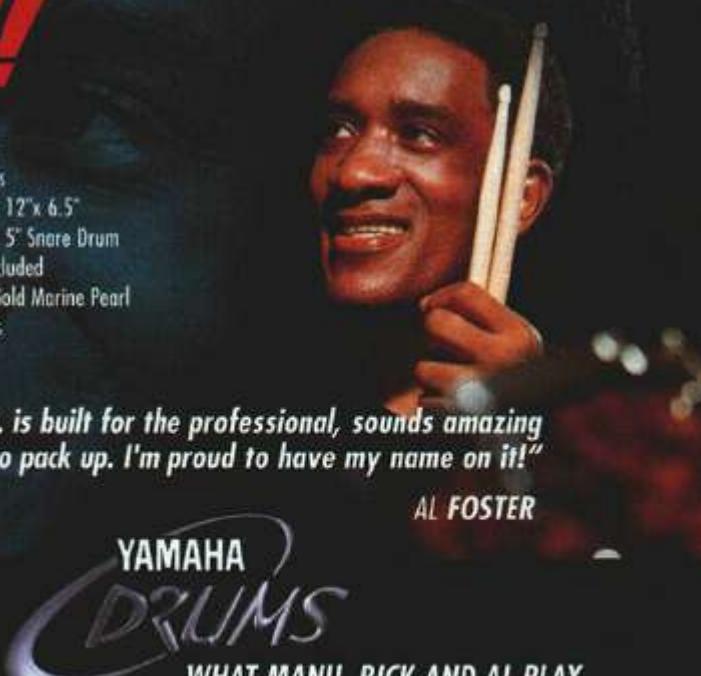
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Al Foster Hippig Sr.
in Jaguar Pattern

Al Foster Hippig Sr. —

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DRUMS

WHAT MANU, RICK AND AL PLAY

Mike Bordin

A Your words are so complimentary that I had to make sure I hadn't checked out and you were talking about me in the past tense. Thanks. But what a laundry list of questions! I'll try to hit the high points.

The Ozzy and Sabbath shows were recorded, but I don't know of any release plans. Playing with Korn was so much fun I can't even tell you. I've heard rumors of a video that will include some of those shows, but again, nothing definite.

I have three different recordings in the can: One is a Jerry Cantrell album that is dark, dark, dark. Another is a record for my old bass player, B. Gould, along with Faith No More's last guitarist, John Hudson. It needs a singer as yet, but it carries on in the old style. Finally, the new Ozzy CD is slated for release just about now. I'm told it includes tracks with Zakk and Trujillo.

My sticking style has changed slightly, in that I no longer hit with the butt end of my left stick. I get a little more dynamic control on the hi-hat and ride by playing with the tip. My arms and wrists are in good shape, thanks. To keep yours that way, you should loosen up every time you play. Stretch your arms, and do some exercises to build up strength. As for my sticks, I've been using Vic Firth

American Classic Rock wood-tip models for the longest time.

When it comes to pedals, I use *only* strap-drive models. I don't get much feel from a chain pedal. I use a DW 5000 strap model, and we double the strap for extra strength. For speed and control I use an exercise in which I keep my heel down and tap quarter notes on the floor—moving evenly from very soft to as hard as I can. This crescendo is important for control and power. My pattern has always been eight beats long.

My preference in cymbals is Zildjian's K Dark series. (However, I am also using a 21" A Brilliant ride.) I try to find crashes that are neither too big nor too small, and I tend to use medium weights. As far as heads and tuning goes, my toms get coated Remo Emperors, while the kick gets a Pinstripe. The drums themselves are kind of big, so we can tune them a little higher for resonance and penetration.

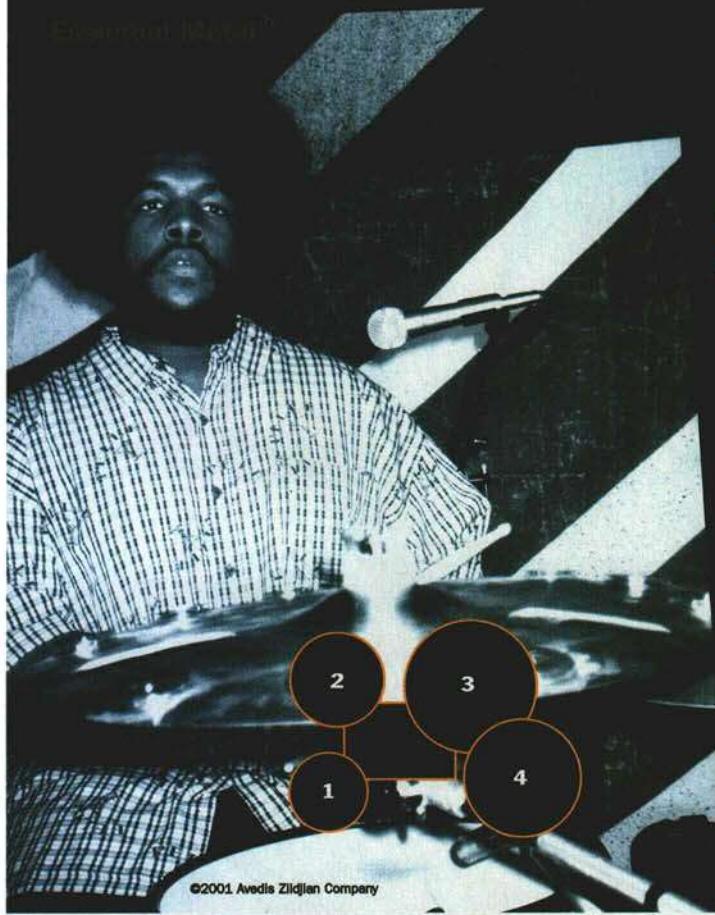
Would you like to ask your favorite drummer a question? Send it to Ask A Pro, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Or you may email rvh@moderndrummer.com. We will do our best to pursue every inquiry.



Repeat Bar A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"Playing too hard in the studio will make you tense up, and when that happens the feel goes. If you listen to my playing on a record, it might sound like I'm really whacking the drums. But actually I'm playing relaxed, hitting them lightly and letting the drums do the work."

Simon Phillips, February 1996



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Re-Covering Rockers

QI recently bought an old set of Ludwig Rockers from my high school. The percussion section used to light smoke bombs as they played cadences and generally made a big noise at the football games, causing a couple of the drums to get sulfur burned into the finish. I'd like to remove the plastic wrap and apply a stain to the shells to clean them up and make them presentable.

What is the best way to remove the plastic wrap, and is there a specific kind of stain that I should use?

Nathan Shirai
Chattanooga, TN

A Removing the covering shouldn't be a major project, as long as it isn't attached with too much glue. Most import kits (like the Rockers) use double-sided tape or a line of glue at the beginning of the wrap (attaching it to the shell), and then again where the seam is formed. This makes removing the covering fairly easy. However, some older kits did use glue (usually contact cement) across the whole surface of the shell. This makes the covering harder to remove.

Most drum companies suggest using a heat gun (or even a good hair dryer) to soften the glue while you just peel the covering off. In some stubborn cases you might need some solvent, like acetone, to help dissolve the glue. But you don't want to overdo this, because the solvent can also dissolve the glue within the drumshell plies.

Once you get the covering off, take a good hard look at the quality of the wood underneath. Most low-end drumkits use a wood generically called "luan." It has a rough, porous surface that doesn't lend itself to staining and refinishing. The amount of work you'd likely need to do to seal, smooth, and sand the surface enough to take stain or paint would be significant—and you still might not get the results you'd like.

Instead, we suggest you consider re-

Where's The Rattle?

QI have a three-year-old Premier XPK kit that I absolutely love. But I recently noticed a rattle in the 13" rack tom. I've tried everything to try to stop this rattle. I've tightened all of the screws and bolts inside the drum—although nothing was loose to begin with. I've tightened the tuning bolts a little tighter than usual, and I've even changed the heads. None of this stopped the rattle. Even when I hold the drum by the mounting bracket, it still rattles when struck. This is starting to get very frustrating. Do you have any ideas on how I might stop this rattling?

Brad Dood
via Internet

AHere are some diagnostic tests to help you locate the source of the rattle, along with some tips on how to eliminate it.

1. Remove the heads, rims, and tension rods completely, leaving you with just the shell and the attached lugs. Hold the drum by an edge, and bang firmly on the shell with your fist. If you hear the rattle, it's either coming from a loose ply in the shell, from a loose section of the plastic covering, or from inside a lug or the tom-mounting bracket.
2. Examine the edges of the drum very carefully, to see if the plies have separated. If this is the case, take the drum to a qualified repair technician to have the plies glued back together.
3. Examine the edges of the drum to see if the plastic covering has pulled away from the edge anywhere. If this is the case, use a bit of contact cement and some C-clamps (available in any hardware store) to reattach the covering. Be sparing with the glue; you want the covering to lay flat against the shell so that the drum rim will sit properly on the bearing edge.
4. If the plies and the covering seem fine, remove the lugs and the tom-mounting bracket, and pack the empty spaces within them with cotton balls. (You might want to do this in any case, just as a preventive measure.) Re-attach them carefully, making sure to seat all the screws properly. If those screws didn't come with lock washers, it would be a good idea to add them now, to help prevent them from backing out in the future.
5. If you hear no rattle with the heads off, re-install the heads and rims, making sure to tension the tension rods evenly. Try the same test again. If you now hear the rattle, double-check to make sure none of the tension rods has somehow loosened up. If they're all in place firmly, it's likely that the rattle is coming from the collar of the drumhead moving between the bearing edge of the drum and the rim. This may be the result of a poor drumhead collar or an untrue bearing edge on the drum.
6. In some cases you can simply rotate the drumhead to a point where it "seats" better on the drum, eliminating the rattle. In other cases, replacing the head entirely is required. If the problem is the bearing edge of the drum, you should take it to a drum repair technician to be re-trued.

covering the drums with a new wrap. It's a much easier job, and you can select from literally hundreds of available finishes. Several companies that offer such materials advertise in *MD*.

Rick's Funky Tapes

QI've practiced from Rick Latham's great *Advanced Funk Studies* book for a few years. Regrettably, when I bought the book I didn't purchase the

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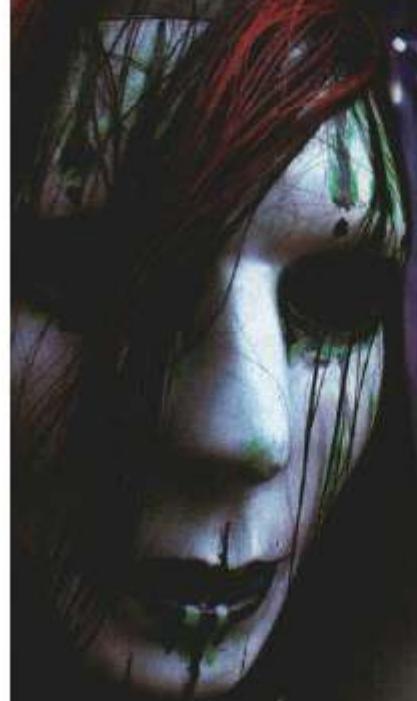
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For an entry form and contest rules, please visit your
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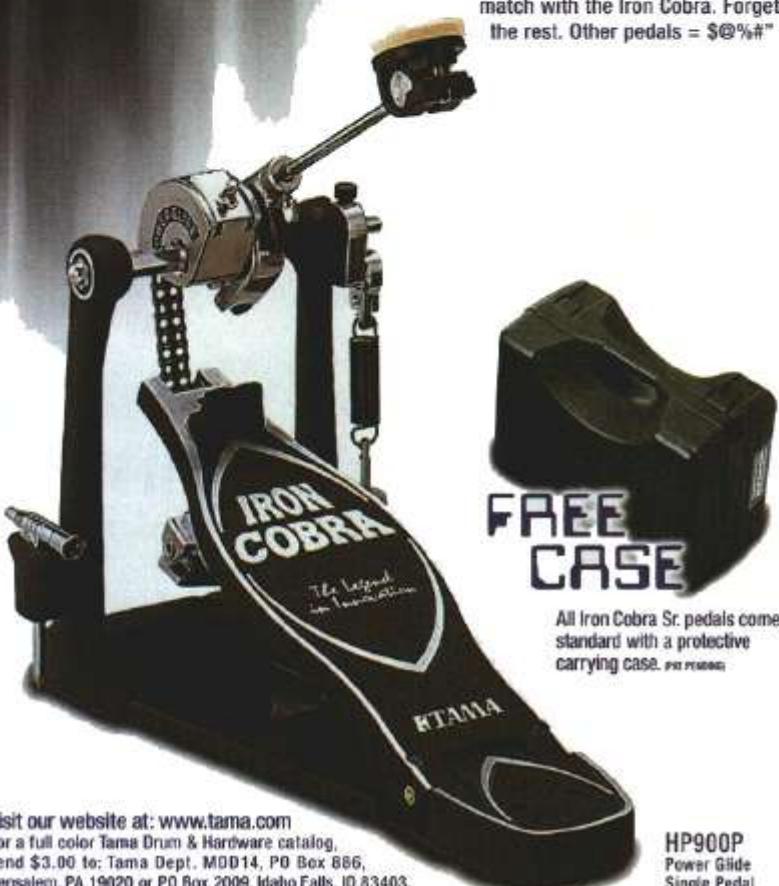


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accompanying cassettes, which were sold separately. All of the exercises and examples from the book are on those tapes, and it would be nice to hear the feel, dynamics, and tempo at which Rick thinks they should be played. It seems like the cassettes aren't being made any more. Do you know where I can obtain copies?

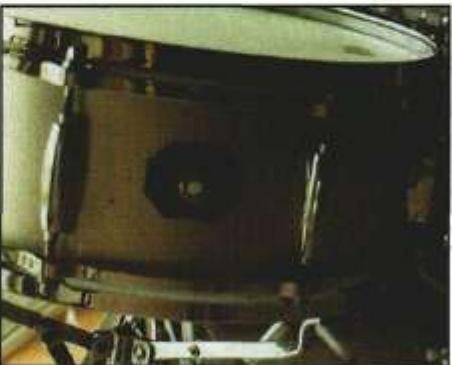
Tyler Thorburn
via Internet

A We checked with Rick Latham, who told us that his books are now being distributed by Carl Fischer Publications, (212) 777-0900 or (800) 762-2328. They should have tapes on hand for both of Rick's books, and CDs should be available soon.

An Aluminum Gretsch Snare?

Q I have a Gretsch snare drum that features the hex badge and a brushed-aluminum metal shell. It is designated as model 9108, and carries the serial #44496. Could you give me its age and possible value?

Gordon Drinkwater
via Internet



A Our drum historian, Harry Cangany, replies, "Gretsch made lots of aluminum-shell student models to compete with the Ludwig and Slingerland aluminum-shell snares. Odds are all three were made at the same suburban Chicago plant (Dahlen Mfg.) that always made Ludwig's metal-shell snare, the Aerolite. I've seen quite a few of these 1970s-era snares. Their street value is about \$150."

...and

EQ-ing Drums

Q My band is getting ready to record our first demo. We've purchased a lot of the necessary equipment for a rough home studio, and we're going to be doing the entire recording ourselves. I'd be grateful for any tips that can shed some light on the subject of proper EQ settings for drums.

Brian McGill
Omaha, NE

A There are no "proper" ways to set the EQs for drum recording. This is simply because every drum is different, every recording is different, and what every drummer (and/or producer) wants to hear is different.

Your best bet is to discuss among yourselves what drum sound you think will best serve each song. Big and boomy? Tight and punchy? Lots of attack? More warmth and roundness?

Once you have your acoustic goals set, you need to experiment with your gear in order to learn how to achieve specific types of sounds. You'll need to learn to balance the lows, mids, and highs, in order to get the nuances you seek. This will also depend on the mic's you're using. There's definitely a learning curve involved.

Here are some general parameters to work within:

1. Boosting low frequencies won't give you a big drum sound by itself. A great kick sound is usually a blend of low end (for boom) and a little high end (for attack). Generally the mids are pulled down pretty low.

2. Conversely, you don't want all high end on your snare, either. High mids and highs give you the crack and attack sound, but you'll need some low mids and even a touch of lows to "fatten up" the sound.

3. Toms are always problematic, since they range from high to low pitches. What you do to a rack tom usually will be different from what you do to a floor tom. Again, lows work for depth, and highs work for attack. But with toms you may want to play games with the mids, to give the drums character.

4. The cardinal rule is: Make all changes gradually. Listen to the subtle differences that each change achieves. Make notes so

that you really get to know your equipment and how to utilize it to your best advantage.

For more detailed info, we suggest you pick up a copy of Mark Parsons' book, *The Drummer's Studio Survival Guide*. It's available in most drumshops and music stores, in some bookstores, and through the Modern Drummer Library.

Tom Kostka
Lombard, IL

A The life span for bottom heads (and top heads, too!) mostly depends upon the amount of impact that the heads receive. This impact is what causes them to stretch and wear out. Top heads obviously get that impact from sticks, and can wear out very quickly if they are frequently played very hard.

Bottom heads get their impact when air inside the drum is set into motion by the top head and then forced down against the bottom head. Again, the harder and more frequently this occurs, the greater the wear factor. Obviously it isn't as dramatic as drumstick wear, so bottom heads should last quite a while. The key to determining when to change them is when you notice that they can no longer be tuned easily to the tonality that you want, or that they lose their tuning very quickly. (You can usually determine this when the drum sound becomes "sour," and tuning the top head doesn't solve the problem.)

We've known drummers who have successfully used the same bottom heads on their drums literally for years. Others like to change them frequently, such as every other time they change top heads. The determining factor is performance, and only you can be the judge of that, based on the sound of the heads on *your* drums under *your* playing style.

Oiles' Bearing Hinges = Frictionless smooth action

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Vari-Pitch Beater Holder (US PAT NO.5297467) = Independent beater angle changes

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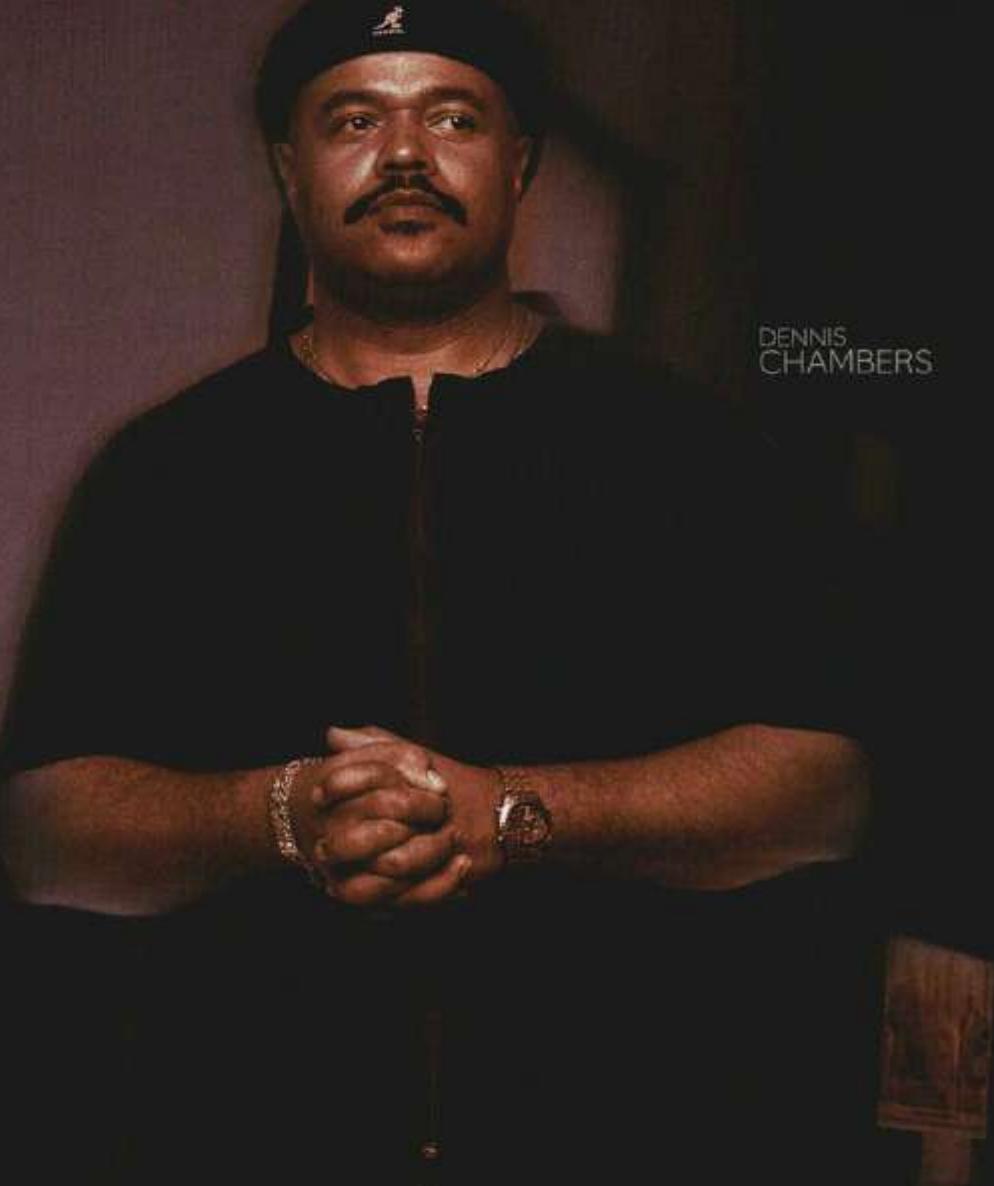
Masters Custom MRX 6-ply aged Maple, powerful, well rounded, focused.

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Jonathan Mannion

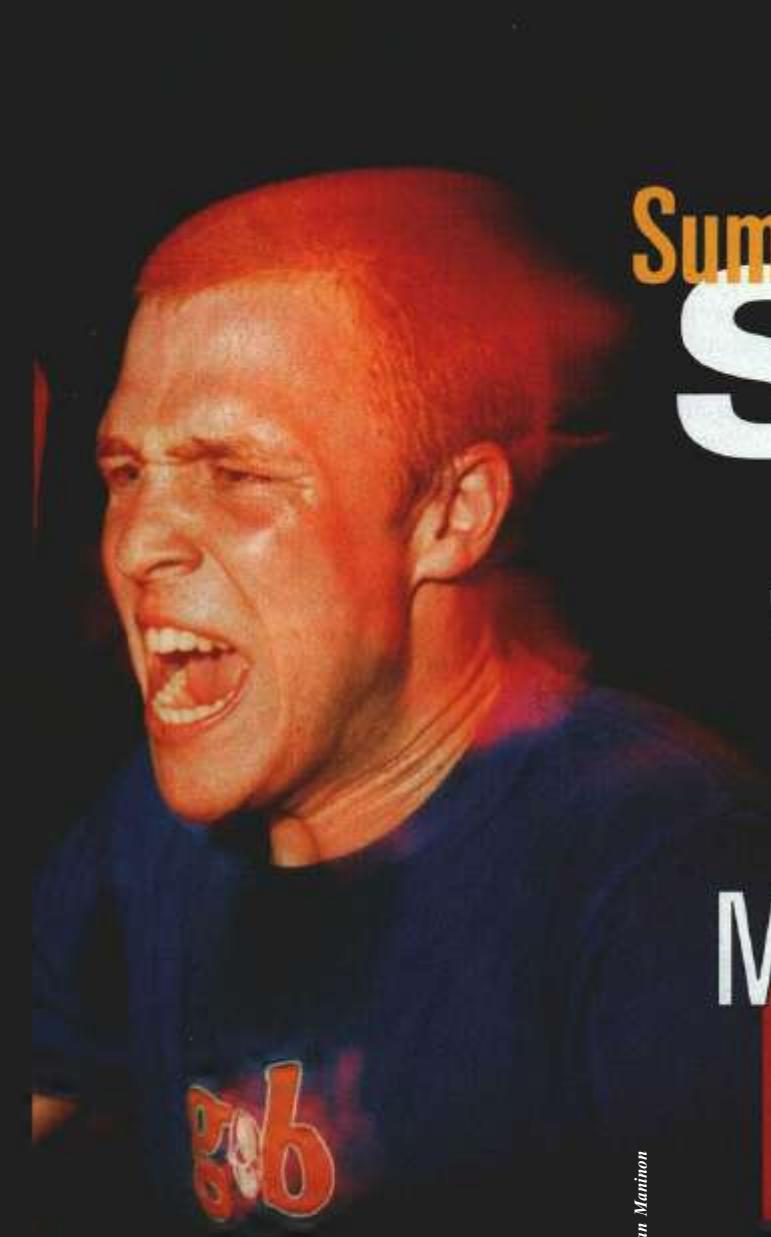
Yet another steaming summer brought yet another installment of the Vans Warped Tour to cities across North America. This year Sum 41 drummer Steve Jocz (a.k.a. Stevo 32) got a good idea what it's like to play to fifteen, twenty, or even thirty thousand concert-goers on a daily basis. Yet his fans may not realize that Jocz is just as familiar with the crowd as he is with the stage. After all, the youthful, energetic punk rock drummer started his band after seeing his first Warped concert.

"Deryck Whibley [Sum 41 lead vocalist/guitarist] and I started the band after going to a Warped Tour show six years ago," Jocz recalls, phoning in from the Buffalo, New York Warped Tour stop.

"We went to Warped in Toronto, and the next day we were like, We gotta have a band like that! I knew how to play drums—barely—and Deryck barely knew how to play guitar."

Although Jocz credits the entire tour as inspiration for forming a band, there were a couple of artists on the bill who he fondly remembers as key sources of inspiration. "Mainly, it was NOFX," he says. "They were our favorite band at the time, and they played that year—and Pennywise too."

With the fast success of their latest creation, *All Killer, No Filler* (Island), Jocz went from being a fan to a Warped all-star seemingly overnight. "It's weird that we were hanging out with these guys,"

A close-up photograph of Steve Jocz, a member of the band Sum 41. He is laughing heartily, showing his teeth. He has short, light-colored hair and is wearing a dark t-shirt with the word "Bob" printed on it in a stylized font.

Sum 41's Steve Jocz

Making It **BIG**

Jonathan Maninon

Jocz says of his Warped Tour comrades. "Damon from FenixTX is amazing, the best drummer on the tour. He's one of my favorite drummers, and he's my pal now. And Josh Freese from The Vandals is just incredible. I watched both of them every day, and I sort of stole their moves."

The sudden boom with Sum 41's single "Fat Lip" sparked the MTV folks into giving the band the opening slot at the network's 20th-anniversary special—a slot that eventually became much more than just the four boys jumping around to their latest hit.

"We practiced for three days before that," Jocz reveals, "and the first day was just us. By the end of the day, we met [former Judas Priest vocalist] Rob Halford at the dress rehearsal. The next day Tommy Lee showed up, and we rehearsed with him for like five hours. He was just the coolest guy in the world. He was doing all those signature Tommy Lee moves, and he gave me this total

drum lesson on how to do all these moves. Even when he's not playing anything particularly cool, he just *looks* cool."

Apparently Jocz has taken the whole metal image to heart, even incorporating it into a new kit he's planning to use. "Orange County Drum & Percussion are making a custom set for me," Steve says, clearly excited by the idea. "Everyone seems to be using these little jazz kits, like a kick, floor tom, and rack tom. Well, I'm getting double kicks, two racks, and two floors, 'cause I want it to be *big*. And when I do my drum solo, we're going to hook up triggered strobe lights to the kit so they light up with the kicks."

Steve's also itching to add the keystone to his masterpiece. "Well, I'm sponsored by Zildjian," he explains. "I'm trying to get a big, flaming gong. It would work perfectly for our band. We're bringing back the rock."

Waleed Rashidi

Cyrus Bolooki Fan Turned Drummer

Florida's New Found Glory has been rocketing in popularity over the past few months, thanks in part to their hit, "Hit Or Miss," which hails from the band's self-titled MCA debut. The song has earned heavy radio and video rotation, and in conjunction with constant touring, New Found Glory's fan base has been swelling rapidly.

Ironically, it was one of their fans, Cyrus Bolooki, who stepped in and helped make the band a success in the first place. "I was a big fan of this band," Bolooki explains. "They had recorded a five-song EP with another drummer, and I heard that tape before it came out. I freaked out. I thought it was the best band I'd ever heard."

Shortly thereafter, the original New Found Glory drummer was axed. Bolooki had made friends with one of the bandmembers, who then suggested him to the rest of the band as a replacement. They agreed, and Bolooki was in.

"It was kind of like a dream come true back then," Bolooki remarks. "Right now, even bigger dreams are com-

ing true." Bolooki still hasn't adjusted to his—pardon the pun—new-found glory. "I don't know if everything's sunk in yet," he says. "We're just writing songs, playing shows, and working with amazing people."

Bolooki says that he was quite focused when tracking their recent release. "I began to compromise more and stop worrying about having cool fills on the record," he admits. "This time around I wanted to make the guitar and rhythm section as tight as it could be. I listen to what I did on our last two records, and I cringe sometimes. But I'm quite proud of what I did this time around."

Waleed Rashidi



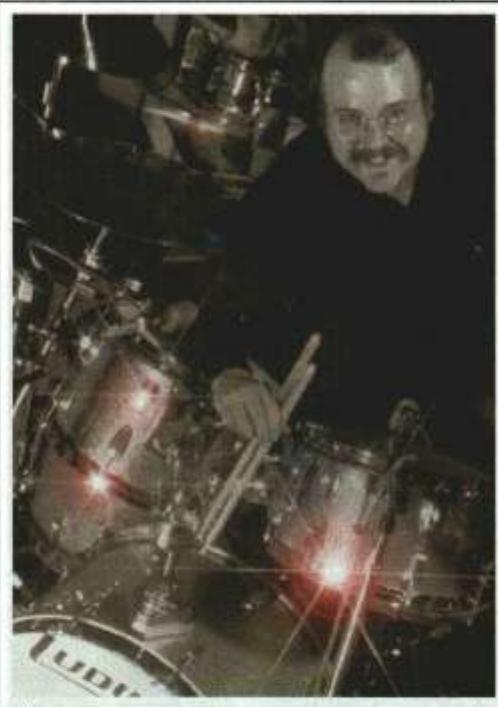
Justin Stephens

Cheap Trick's **Bun E. Carlos**

Cheap Trick recently celebrated twenty-five years together with the release of the appropriately titled *Silver*, a two-disc collection of hits and best-loved tunes recorded live in the band's hometown of Rockford, Illinois. *Silver* is an endearing scrapbook anthology of memories from a band whose music has invaded pop culture to the point of near ubiquity.

But drummer Bun E. Carlos warns fans not to hold their breath waiting for a new album of original tunes. "We're still getting the songs together," Carlos admits. "Over the winter we had a couple months off. Instead of starting the new album in January, we decided to finish these new songs and then figure out what we wanted to do with them. Then we're going to send the tape out to some different producers. It's just been going on forever."

In between scattered gigs and demoing the new Cheap Trick material, Carlos completed a project with engineer Steve Albini. That project,



Bun E. In A Box, should pique the interest of any drummer who learned while playing along to Carlos's signature grooves. "We decided that would be a good name for it," Bun E. laughs.

So just what is *Bun E. In A Box*? Carlos gave *Modern Drummer* the

BACK IN BOX

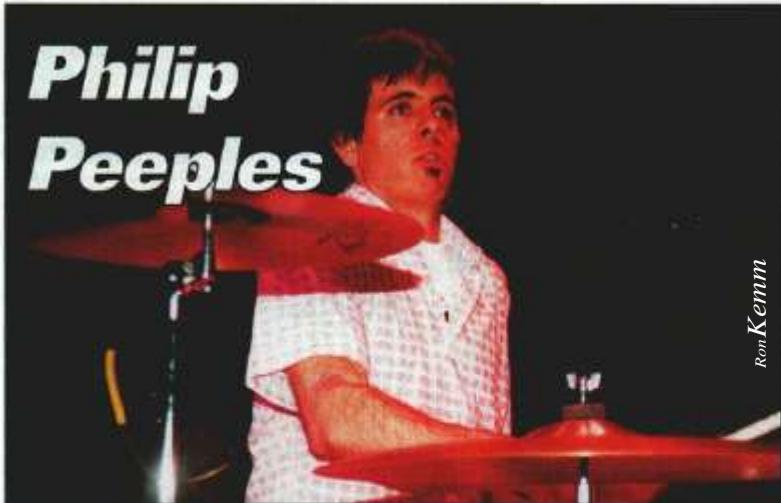
lowdown. "I went into Steve Albini's studio last fall, and we recorded four or five days of loops, snare drum sounds, cymbal hits, brush strokes, patterns, and chops for a software program. That way, you can put me in your studio. You can cut a track with your drum machine, then sync it up and put my drum sounds on the track."

Carlos thinks that *Bun E. In A Box* will provide a unique product to the marketplace. "Some of these jazz guys, like Bill Bruford, have done this, but no real rock guys have done it yet."

Unfortunately, things haven't been *all* rosey for Bun E. lately, who recently underwent back surgery. (Apparently he's had trouble with his back for a number of years.) But we're happy to report that things have turned out well. The surgery was a success, and Bun E. says he's playing better than ever and plans to be back on the road with Cheap Trick by the time you read this.

Gail Worley

Philip Peeples



Keeping The Old 97's On Track

Philip Peeples was once known locally as the guy who loaned his drums to The Old 97's drummer. But after demonstrating a tasteful blend of shuffle, rockabilly, and rock rhythms, Philip became The Old 97's drummer.

That was 1993. Today, the band has a loyal fan base, they're igniting new audiences with their fifth album, *Satellite Rides*, and they're touring the US to promote it. But had Peeples not loaned a snare and floor tom to an ex-bandmate eight years ago. The Old 97's might be much different today. Back then, the original drummer—a former lead singer—was providing limited drumming for The Old 97's. Curious, one night Peeples checked out the group using his drums.

"I was blown away by the material," he says. "I told myself, I've got to be this band's drummer." So Peeples approached guitarist Ken Bethea and said, "Listen, if you guys are looking for a real drummer...HELLO."

Peeples got an audition. He brought in solid shuffle beats and explosive rockabilly rhythms he honed in a previous band and from studying Johnny Burnette, Mac Curtis, and Johnny Horton albums. It proved a perfect match for the twangy, rockin' energy of The Old 97's, and the band was sold.

"They needed a guy who would listen to the songs and play *into* the band, not all over it," Peeples explains. "Early on, the band would play a lot of train-chuggin' songs. When I started playing those shuffle beats, they were like, That's the kind of drummer we've been looking for!"

All this couldn't have come at a better time. "I was at a low point," Peeples recalls. "Basically, I was putting my drums in a closet, telling myself, That's it, the dream's over. Thank God I heard about The Old 97's."

These days the band have left much of their country-tinged roots in the dust. On *Satellite Rides*, the flavor leans more toward pop-rock. To Peeples, it's the group's best work. "We spent almost three months in pre-production really learning songs," he notes. "We had it completely ironed out when we went into the studio, which was a first for us."

Ron Kemm



BOBBY CALDWELL Beyond And Back

Bobby Caldwell was one of the most respected rock drummers of the '70s. He performed on Johnny Winter's *Saints & Sinners* and *Johnny Winter And...Live*. And that's Caldwell on Rick Derringer's *All American Boy* album, which includes the classic "Rock And Roll Hoochie Koo." His own band, Captain Beyond, which included ex-Deep Purple and Iron Butterfly members, recorded three albums. Bobby also appeared on Armageddon's self-titled album with ex-Yardbirds singer Keith Relf.

Asked about his roles as drummer, percussionist, singer, and composer, Bobby explains, "I've always loved music, and I hear *everything*. Music was something that was God-given. I just happened to have picked up the drums, but my love of *all* the instruments has always been there. I got into music for the magic of doing it; I never got into it to get chicks."

Caldwell now plays Pearl drums, including a 24" kick. Back in the '70s, his drums were Ludwig black oyster pearl, "Like Ringo played," Bobby recalls. "But I added another floor tom. So I had a 9x13 mounted tom, with 14x14 and 16x16 floortoms."

Bobby has recently reunited with former Captain Beyond and Iron Butterfly guitarist Rhino. The new Captain Beyond has already performed gigs in Bobby's native Florida, as well as at a major festival in Sweden, with Deep Purple. Look for a new studio/live offering soon. If the finished album bears any resemblance to its demo, it should be *hot*. But don't expect a retro-fest from these vets. Bobby assures us, "We're going to make this the 2001 version of Captain Beyond."

Lome Kelly



Local H's

Brian St. Clair

Zoo Drumming

Local H guitarist Scott Lucas and new drummer Brian St. Clair are not about trend following. In fact, the Chicago-based duo are bringing back some good ol' raw-energy rock on their new record. *Here Comes The Zoo*, produced by the legendary Jack Douglas.

"I think the kids will appreciate it," Brian quips. "We didn't want the record to sound like any of the current rap/rock. We recorded live in a big open room. The whole idea for the drum sound was to be like *Back In Black*—you know, how on the whole album, the drums have one basic sound, not different kits or drums. I think it will be refreshing for people who want to hear a rock record."

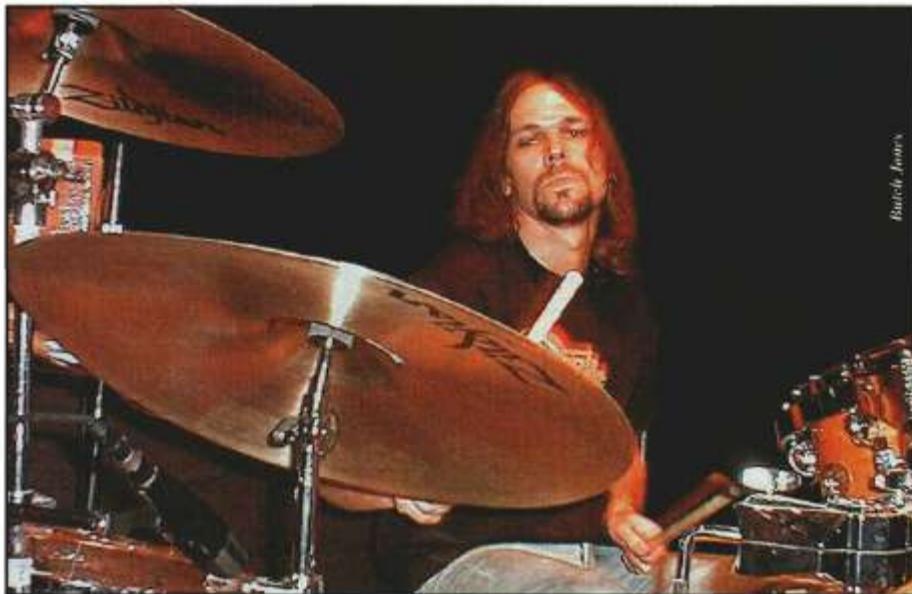
The two musicians (who take advantage of their roadies to bolster live performances) had known each other for years before re-joining in Local H. "Scott and I go way back," Brian explains. "We played together in a band called Triple Fast Action, so we knew how one another worked. It was a comfortable transition. Scott called at the right time. I wouldn't have joined just anyone's band. It had to be the *right* band."

Prior to getting back together with Scott, Brian took a break from playing, explaining, "I was looking to do something new, but still stay in the business." Moving from Chicago to New York, he went out on the road as a tour manager for Liz Phair, and then as a drum tech for Cheap Trick's Bun E. Carlos. "I learned a lot from Bun E. on the road, just watching him play every night," Brian insists. "For instance, he likes to change around his kick drum a lot, which opened my mind to new approaches."

Growing up, Brian honed his craft playing along to his favorite records. "I'd sit there with my headphones and whatever punk rock album I was into that day," Brian remembers. "I'd play all these hardcore beats. But one day my brother turned me on to a Beatles record as a learning experience. I didn't even know who they were back then! It helped me out a lot in terms of my time. So that's how I learned: listening to The Beatles and hardcore punk."

For more on Local H, surf to: www.localh.com.

Billy Amendola



DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Billy Gladstone was born on December 15, 1892.

Tony Williams was born on December 12, 1945.

Cozy Powell was born on December 29, 1947.



Dennis Wilson died on December 28, 1983.

Five months after entering the charts, Iron Butterfly (with **Ron Bushy** on drums) goes gold on December 3, 1968 with the drum classic, "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida."



On December 10, 1976, Paul McCartney's Wings (with **Joe English** in the lineup) hit number-1 with a three-record live set, *Wings Over America*.

Happy Birthday!

Ed Thigpen (December 28, 1930)

Maurice White (December 19, 1941)

Dave Clark (December 15, 1942)

Allan Schwartzberg (December 28, 1942)

Alex Acuna (December 12, 1944)

Bobby Colomby (December 20, 1944)

John Densmore (December 1, 1945)

Clive Bunker (December 12, 1946)

Carmino Appice (December 15, 1946)

Peter Criss (December 20, 1947)

Jim Bonfanti (December 17, 1948)

Lenny White (December 19, 1949)

Buddy Williams (December 17, 1952)

John "JR" Robinson (December 29, 1954)

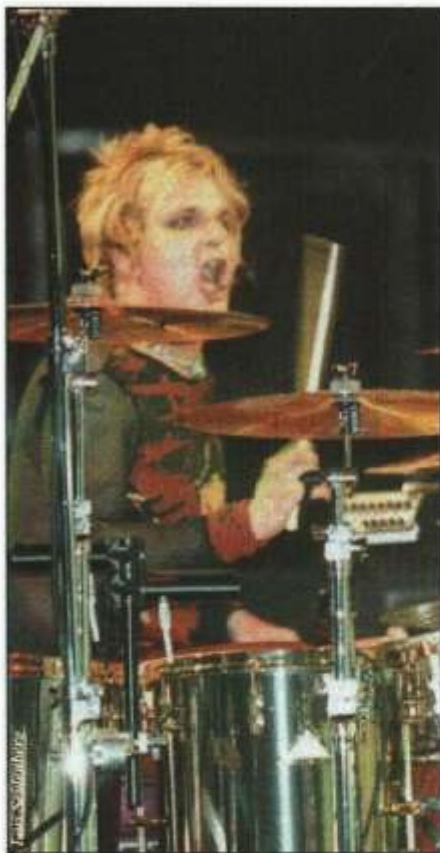
Sheila E (December 12, 1957)

Lars Ulrich (December 26, 1963)

Marco Minnemann (December 24, 1970)

Tre Cool (December 9, 1972)

Rikki Rockett *Poison Drums*



It's become an annual summer outing for LA's most enduring glam metal band. Poison: touring the country with a hand-picked selection of groups who, like them, enjoyed huge success in the late '80s. Drummer Rikki Rockett says this approach to touring makes it fun not only for the bands, but for the audience. "With the groups that we've chosen to take out, the audience gets to pretty much hear familiar hits the whole night." This year's *Glam Slam Metal Jam* featured E'Nuff Z'Nuff, Warrant, and a reunited Quiet Riot.

This summer Rikki was especially excited, because he was playing a titanium kit custom designed for him by Innovation Drums. At first Rikki was unsure the unique kit could turn in the performance he needed. "I was afraid that it would sound like a steel drumkit or that it would have uncontrollable overtones. But all the

drums are very sensitive, and the bass drum is amazing. You don't have to hit them hard to sound good, but if you do, they respond."

One thing's for sure: With its titanium shells and 24-karat gold hard-

ware, Rikki's found a kit worthy of Poison's glitzy image. "It looks like a Rolex watch," Rockett offers. All the better for keeping good time.

Gail Worley

pro-files

Stan Frazier.



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Greg Upchurch.



He's in Control. That's the single from Puddle of Mudd's debut CD, *Come Clean*. And the Kansas City band's played it live on tour with Godsmack and the Deftones this past summer. But the former Eleven and Chris Cornell drummer is in Control on every tune, since he's using our 720 Intruder in American Hickory.

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NEWS

It's official: **Dave Weckl** recently became a Sabian cymbal endorser.

Antonio Sanchez is the new drummer in The Pat Metheny Group. The thirty-year-old has worked with Paquito D'Rivera, Danilo Perez, David Sanchez, Avashai Cohen, John Patitucci, Dave Liebman, and Gary Burton, among many others.

Danny Sullivan is on Beulah's latest, *The Coast Is Never Clear*.

Jeff Brockman is on Cairo's *Time Of Legends*.

Matt Chamberlain is on dc talk singer Kevin Max's *Stereotype Be*. Adrian Belew produced.

Ryan Moore's Twilight Circus Dub Sound System has bestowed upon us another big, hot, gooey slab of *Volcanic Dub*.

Glen Sobel (Gary Hoey, *Straight Out Of Cypress*) makes good on Beautiful Creatures' promise to rock on the band's self-titled debut.

The luxurious and decadent Tindersticks' new one, *Can Our Love...*, features drummer **Alasdair Macaulay**.

Long-time Sun Ra drummer **Robert Barry** is on *Duets 2001* with saxophonist and AACM founder Fred Anderson.



Puddle of Mudd's debut is also the first release for Limp Bizkit honcho Fred Durst's Flawless Records. **Greg Upchurch** (*Eleven*, Chris Cornell) thumps the tubs.



Gerry Brown is touring with bassist Marcus Miller to support Marcus's CD, *M2*.

King Coffey is on the new Butthole Surfers CD, *The Shame Of Life*.

Josh Cedar is in the studio with Isle Of Q, recording their new CD. In the meantime check out their debut on Universal Records.

Ringo Starr probably didn't have any idea when he started the first incarnation of his Ali Starr band in 1989 that he would still be out there rocking in 2001. Now in its seventh incarnation—Ringo, along with Greg Lake (King Crimson, ELP), Ian Hunter (Mott The Hoople), Roger Hodgson (Supertramp), Howard Jones ('80s solo star), Mark Rivera (multi-instrumentalist), and the incredible **Sheila E**—the supergroup recently completed a very successful US tour. "It's always been fun [touring with old friends]," Ringo says. "But it's all about the music."



Chris Amendola

And check out *The Anthology...So Far* (also featuring Zak Starkey, Jim Keltner, Levon Helm, and Simon Kirke on drums), the new All-Starr band three-CD live set, as well as the group's new DVD.

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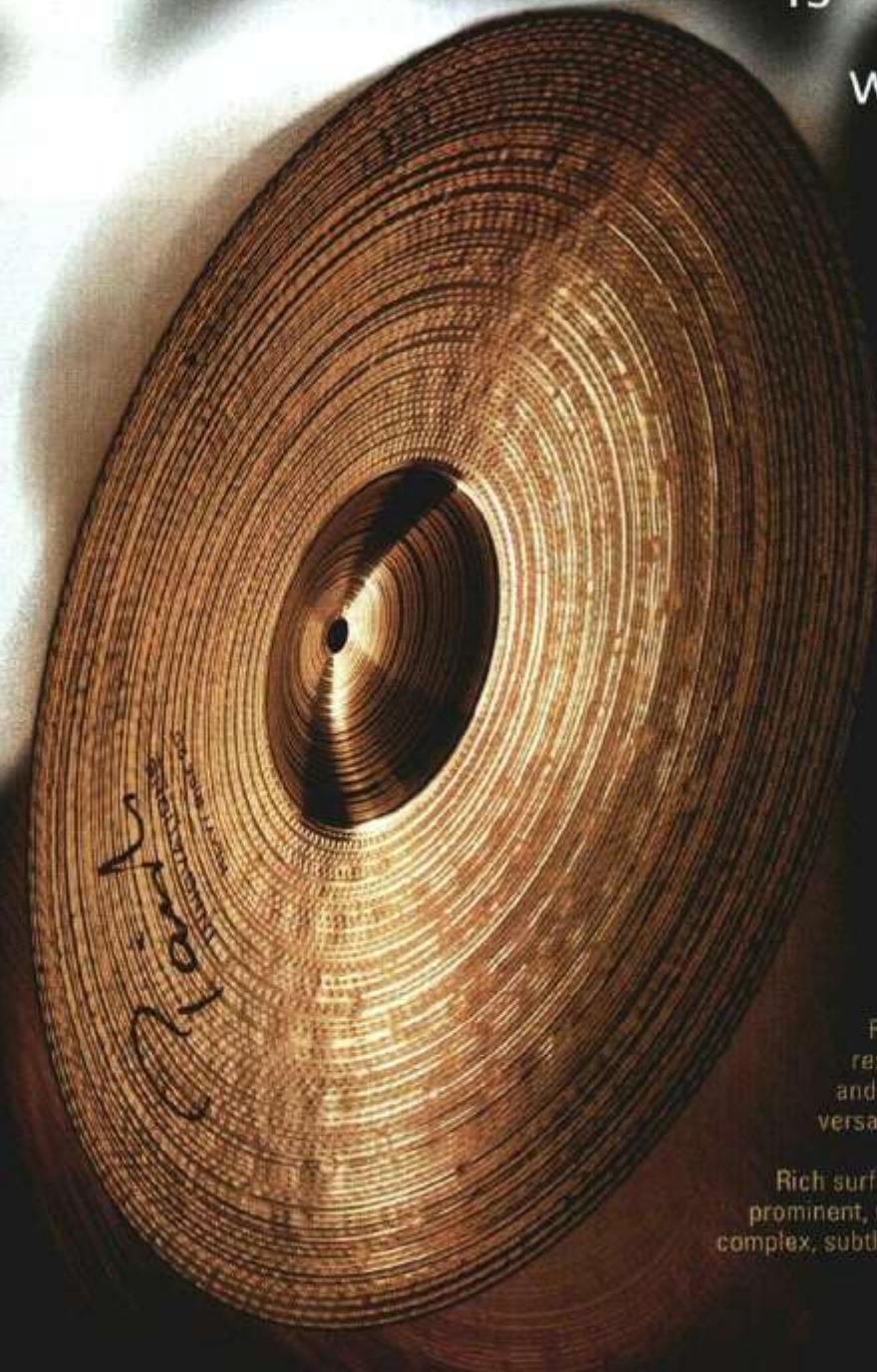
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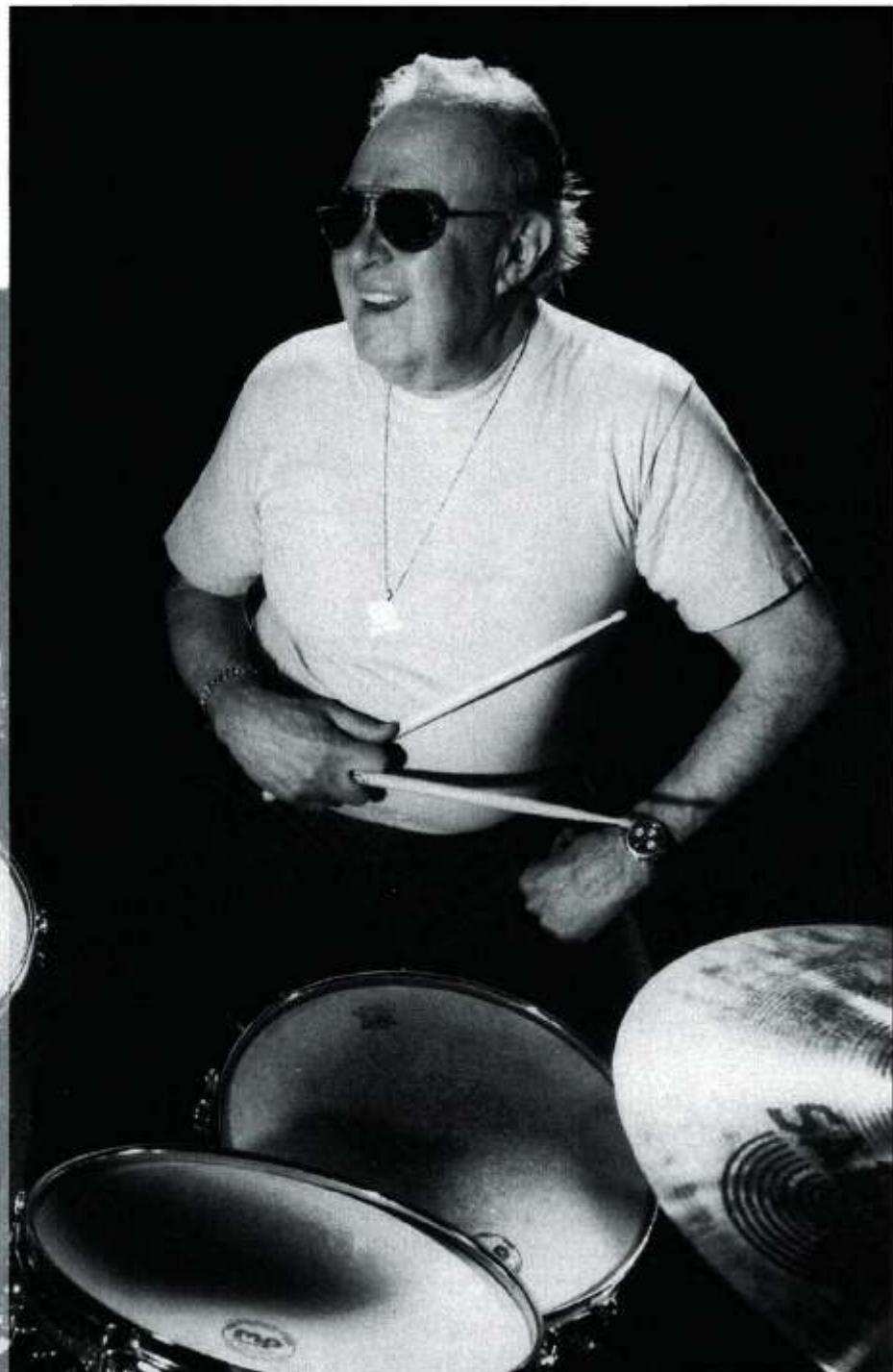
Joe Morello On...

by Rick Mattingly

Joe Morello is one of the most admired jazz drummers in history. His solo on The Dave Brubeck Quartet's "Take Five" is considered a milestone in modern music. During his years playing with pianist Marian McPartland on New York's famed 52nd Street in the early 1950s, and then while touring the world with The Dave Brubeck Quartet from 1956 to 1968, Morello met and became friends with many legends of jazz drumming. These included pioneers of big band swing to the innovators of bebop. Joe's own approach encompassed both styles, combining the technical facility of players such as Buddy Rich with a bop sensibility reminiscent of Max Roach.

Morello loves to tell stories about the times he spent with the legendary drummers he's known, and there is obvious affection in his voice when he speaks of those he felt especially close to. But that doesn't stop him from poking fun at them now and then. His impersonations of their vocal mannerisms—especially those with deep, distinctive voices such as Jo Jones, Art Blakey, and Elvin Jones—are funny and dead-on.

We began our chat by talking about two legendary teachers and players Joe worked with early in his life, and then discussed several of the drummers who were prominent during Morello's most active years as a player.



...George Lawrence Stone

Mr. Stone was a great teacher, and he had incredible facility. He was a classical player—he wouldn't swing if you hung him off a building—but that was what I wanted. I was more familiar with classical music in those days, but Stone told me that I would have trouble reading music and watching a conductor because of my eyesight, and he suggested that I go into jazz drumming. I went home and cried because I wanted to be a classical player. I didn't want to play that "whorehouse" music.

Stone never taught me how to play "ding ding-ding." He taught me how to get a musical sound out of the drum. To me, that was very important. He made his points strongly, but not in a harsh way. He was a kind gentleman. He used to say, "Call me Larry," but I could never do that. I always called him Mr. Stone. I was brought up in an era where you showed respect for people.



...Jo Jones

Jonathan! I could talk about him for three hours! He's one of the daddies, that cat. He played such good brushes; I sort of stole my brush talents from him. We became close friends. He is a real legend.

I'll never forget being in the Berlin airport with him. We were on a Norman Granz tour with Miles Davis and Coleman Hawkins and about thirty other musicians. The plane was late and the airport was fogged in, and it looked like we were going to be stuck there for a while. Jo was sitting at the end of this bench, my wife was sitting on his left, I was sitting next to her, and Tony Williams was sitting next to me.

Everyone was hungry, but there was no restaurant open. So Jo opens his trap case, which is sitting right next to him, takes out the tray on the top, and reaches down next to his bass drum pedal and pulls out a can of Schlitz beer and this package that's wrapped in wax paper. He's saying, "I've got my shit together. I'm going to eat my food." He opens up the wax paper, and there are several pieces of fried chicken in it. Everybody runs over and asks him where he got the chicken, and he said he brought it from home. So my wife said, "You've been on the road for three weeks! There will be worms in that chicken." And Jo said, "I put plenty of salt and pepper on it. Ain't no worms going in there." So he sat there eating that three-week-old chicken and drinking warm beer.

...Billy Gladstone



My first teacher, Joe Sefcik, gave me the basics. Stone took it a little further, and then when I met Billy, he put it together so it all made sense.

I went to my first lesson with him at his home in Newark. His wife had just died, and he sat there with tears in his eyes, telling me how she had died in his arms. But after that he worked with me and brought me to a higher level.

Technically, the man was incredible. I could never play a drum the way he played it.

*"Stone suggested I go
into jazz drumming. I
went home and cried."*



...Buddy Rich

He was one of a kind. Technically, he was probably the only one who could equal Billy Gladstone, but he used the technique in a different way. That bit that he never practiced was a bunch of foolishness. Of course he practiced. You don't come out of the womb doing this. Our paths would cross on the road and we'd hang out and trade fours on a hotel room bed.

I remember being in San Francisco with the Brubeck Quartet, and Buddy was in Oakland with Harry James. We were going to be finished about eleven, but Buddy was going to be working until one in the morning. So he sent me a note that said, "Come on over when you're finished and we'll hang." So I went over there, and when he finished we drove back to San Francisco in his Jaguar.

As we were riding along I said, "You're really sounding good," and he said, "I'm doing the same stuff I did with Dorsey." But then five minutes later he said, "You really think so?" So I said, "Yeah,

Buddy. You really sound great," and he said, "Aw, you can play everything I can play." I said, "Don't give me that humble shit. I can't play like you," and Buddy said, "If I say you can play, you can play!" So I said, "Naw, I'm not like you at all." Buddy said, "Whaddya mean?" I said, "You're a lot shorter than I am." Buddy nearly drove off the road he was laughing so hard. All you saw was teeth.

There are all these stories about how Buddy was a jerk, but I don't have any stories like that. He was always a real sweet guy with me and my wife. I did a week with my quintet in Boston at a club called Lennie's On The Turnpike once, and Buddy's big band was there the week before. He told everybody who came to see him to be sure to come back next week and see my group. That was so nice of him. When Buddy was in the hospital we called him, and he told my wife, "Make sure Joe keeps playing. He's one of the only guys left who can play."



*"That bit that Buddy never practiced was a bunch of foolishness.
Of course he practiced. You don't come out of the womb doing this."*

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...Gene Krupa

When I was studying with Sefcik, he told me one day, "Gene Krupa will really like you." I thought, "You've got to be kidding." Krupa was a star and I was just this kid from Springfield. But I actually became friends with Gene. He was a very nice man.

He called me once and said, "Would you come over and help me with my technique?" I said, "You wrote the book on this stuff." But I went over there. I got there about two in the afternoon and we hung out until three in the morning.

Gene really opened things up for all drummers. Before Gene, drums were kept in the back. People always ask me about the difference between Gene and Buddy. Buddy had all that sensational technique, but I think Gene was more musical. He would be playing time,

and he would just go "bop" with one hand, and it would fit perfectly like it was always meant to be there.



...Louie Bellson

Louie is a sweetheart and one of my best friends. He's a great musician and composer. Louie doesn't take many chances; everything is worked out, and that's one way of doing it. But he is very technically proficient and he can read anything.



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Morello on...

...Max Roach

He was one of my biggest influences. Buddy had the chops, and he could scare you to death. But I really enjoyed Max because he was so musical and had that melodic thing. Then Roy [Haynes] took it further, which is the way it should be. And then Jack DeJohnette came along, and he has the chops plus the musicality. Max had the musicality but not as many chops.

When I was about sixteen I



went down to New York from my home in Springfield, Massachusetts, and we went to hear Max. I was just this green kid. Afterwards, I went back and said, "Mr. Roach, I really love your playing."

And Max said, "I don't do this full time; I'm a mechanic." [laughs] At the time it kind of hurt my feelings, but Max and I became great friends, and now whenever I see him I ask him, "Have you fixed any engines lately?"

...Shelly Manne

There's another guy who was a very musical drummer. What's amazing when you think of Shelly is that there are people who say that only black drummers can play jazz. That's a bunch of shit. Shelly could play with big bands and with small groups and was always a tasteful player. He didn't play the bebop thing the way Max did; he just went straight-ahead, and boy he played some beautiful things.

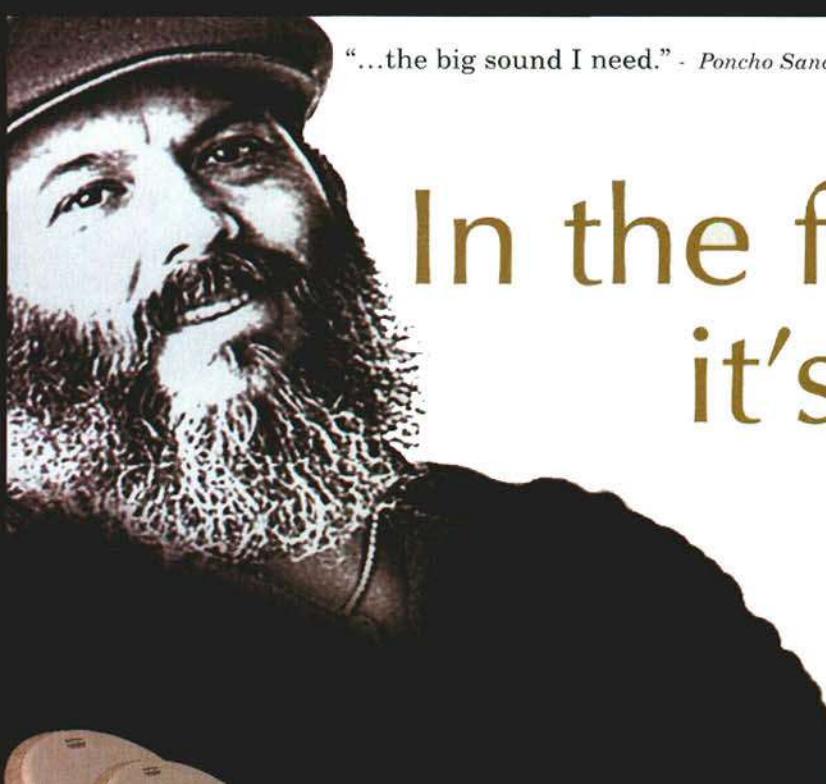


...Roy Haynes

Roy is the most creative guy I've ever seen. I love that guy. We used to do a lot of clinics together for Ludwig, and we'd hang out together all the time. He'd come to my class and I'd go to his, and we'd play together. We didn't do any of that machine-gun crap. It wasn't a contest; that's stupid. Playing music is what it's about. You can always tell when some guys run out of ideas because they do a fast single-stroke roll. But Roy is one of the most creative drummers that ever came on the scene.



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A large, close-up black and white photograph of Poncho Sanchez, a man with a thick beard and mustache, wearing a hat and a necklace.

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*"I don't care who's
the fastest or
slowest; I
like drummers
who play
musically."*

...Mel Lewis

Mel was one of the great big band drummers. He had limited technique, but he had enough to play any tempo you wanted. He did what needed to be done without exaggeration. He played incredibly well with the Terry Gibbs big band. He had a lot of bebop influence in his big band drumming, but he still played four on the floor. Mel was a musical player, and that's where it's at.



...Alan Dawson

He played with Brubeck after I left. It wasn't the easiest band to play with because Dave's time wasn't very good. But Alan was a damn good drummer. He had

tremendous facility and great coordination. He could play all the bop things and also play straight-ahead. I can't just put him in one category; he could do any-

thing, and he would play with just about anybody when different cats came to Boston. He was a very schooled drummer, but he could also play as funky as you want.



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Morello on...

...Jim Chapin

When I first met Jim, he said, "You must have studied with Moeller." I didn't know who Moeller was; I thought Chapin was talking about a tooth.

Jimmy is a real sweetheart. He's a nervous wreck, but a nice guy. [laughs] There's an example of a guy who has all the technique, but he never made a name for himself as a player. But he's a great teacher and he's very knowledgeable about drum history.



Paul Jonson

"Blakey said he was going to study with Henry Adler. But he didn't need to; he had his own thing going."



...Art Blakey

Buhaina! [Blakey's African name] Blakey was an individual. We got together a couple of times when I was with Marian McPartland, and he said he was going to study with Henry Adler. But he didn't need to study with anyone; he had his own thing going. The last time I had the pleasure of working with him was at the Bottom Line in New York. I had a quintet and he had his band with Wynton Marsalis and his brother [Branford]. Blakey gave a lot of young players a chance.

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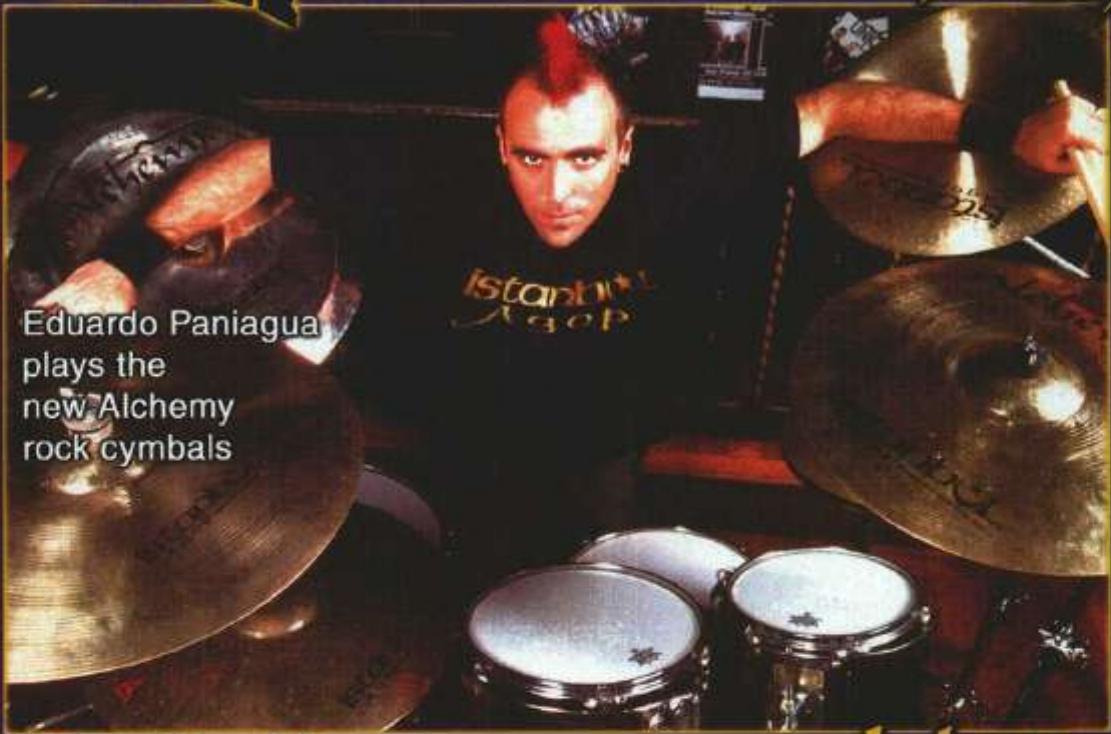
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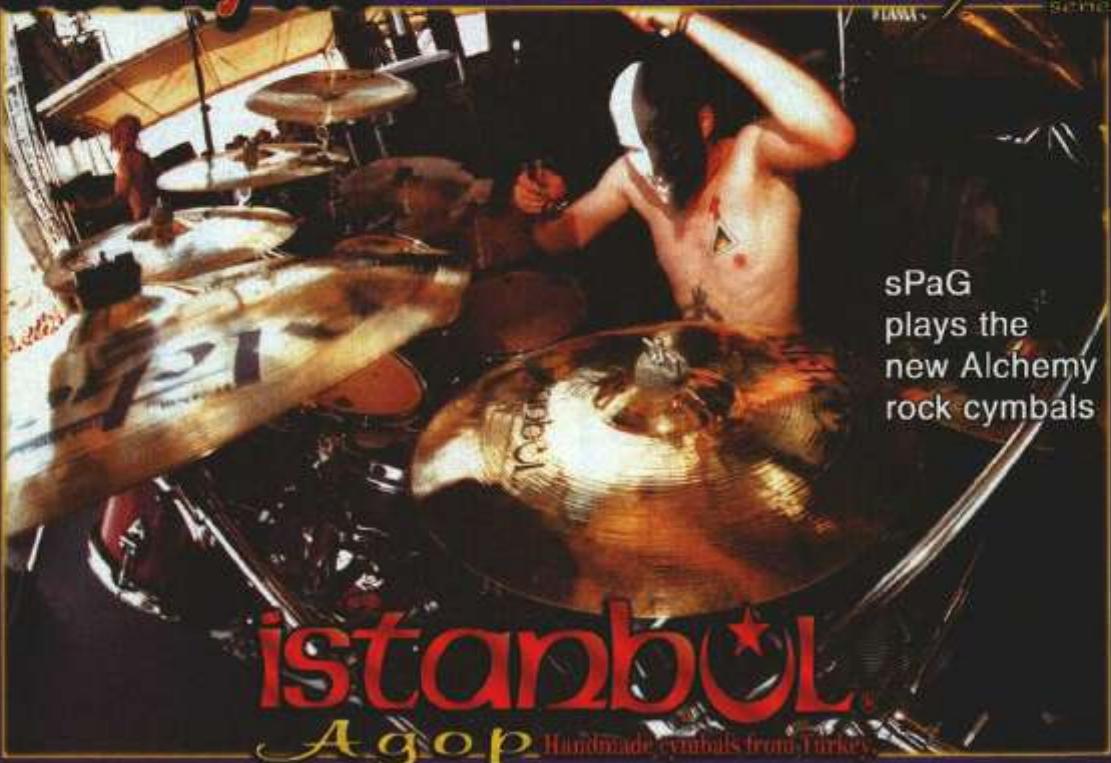


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...Cozy Cole

I met him way back when I was studying with Sefcik in Springfield. Sefcik taught in the basement of a theater, and in those days there would be a movie and then a stage show with a six-piece band in the pit. They would play an overture or something and then play for the show—singers, dancers, a dog jumping through a hoop and all that crap. It was basically vaudeville.

So Cozy came through with a group and played at the theater. He came downstairs, and I was working out of the Ed Straight book. There was this thing in 2/4



with 16th-note triplets, and Cozy played it. Then I picked up the sticks and played it about twice as fast. After Cozy went back upstairs, Sefcik chewed me out: "You should never have done that. Show some respect for the man."

I met Cozy several times after that. He was a sweet man and a gentleman. One thing that was different about him was that he played the jazz ride cymbal pattern like a quarter note and two straight 8th notes. He didn't use the triplet feel.

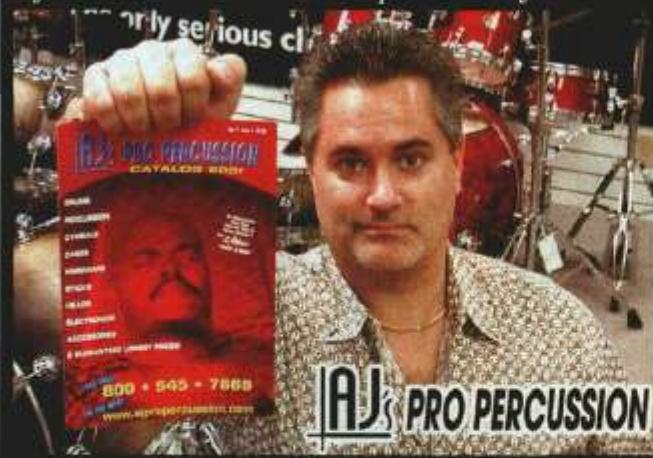
...Don Lamond

What he did with Woody Herman's band changed big band drumming in terms of the way he'd set up the horns and make the hits. Listen to "Four Brothers." He was a very creative player. I thought he played with that band better than Buddy or Gene. Everybody does their own thing, and his approach was different from anybody else. It was very explosive.



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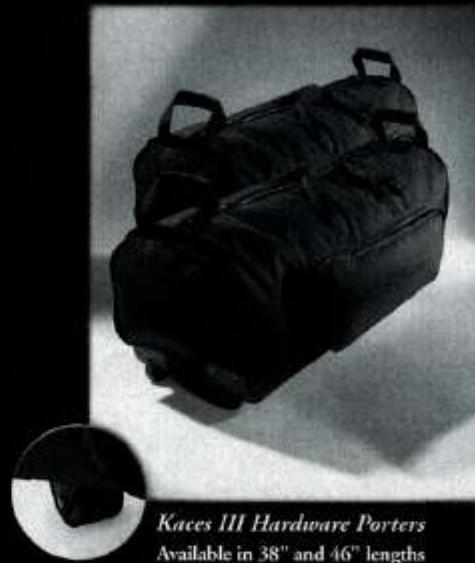
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Morello on...



...Tony Williams

Another great drummer, no question about it. It's very rare that a player like that comes along. He died too damn soon. I first saw him with Miles at the Monterey Jazz Festival. He was a young boy then, but he played his can off. I was really impressed. This kid had the talent and he could play. Dawson used to tell me, "I'm trying to teach Tony to read but he won't do it." I said, "Alan, he doesn't have to read. Let him play." Some people say he was rude, but he was always nice to me.

"Elvin doesn't play like anybody but Elvin. That's the way it should be."



...Elvin Jones

Elvin doesn't play like anybody but Elvin, and that's the way it should be. He's got time down and he can play over the barline. Sometimes you think he's not going to

come out right, but BAM, he's there. It's like he's walking on a plank and with every step you think he's going to fall off, but he always comes down right on it. It's incredible. That's creativity. He's a very fine drummer.

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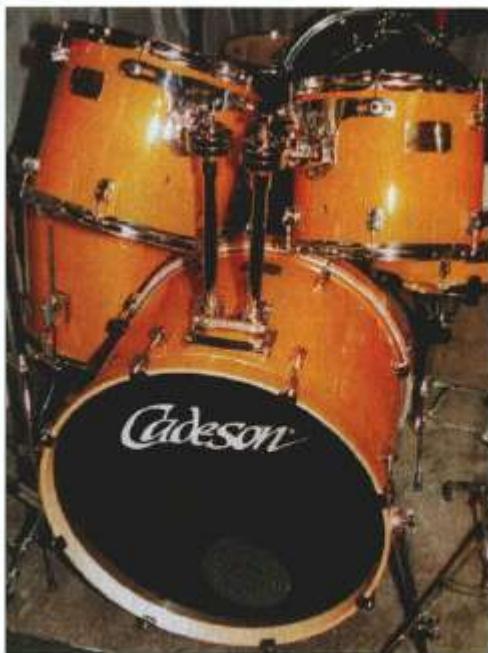
ALL VATER STICKS ARE TONE MATCHED BY COMPUTER ANALYSIS

Highlights Of Summer NAMM 2001

Text and photos by Rick Mattingly

"Hot town...summer in the city...."The city of Nashville, Tennessee, to be exact, where some of the high temperature is the result of hot products displayed at the NAMM (National Association Of Music Merchants) Summer Session.

While most manufacturers tend to offer their splashiest debuts at the Winter Market (held each January in California), there was no shortage of exciting goodies to ogle at the summer show. Here's an overview of this year's highlights.



Cadeson's new intermediate kit (top) has maple inner and outer plies with pressed wood in between. New tom holders were also introduced. (626)286-6866, www.cadesonmusic.com.

Ddrum's System SE (Signature Edition) (bottom) features a ddrum 4 SE drum brain with sampled kits from Kenny Aronoff, Dennis Chambers, Mel Gaynor, and Simon Phillips. Cymbals are mounted on an Aquarian Cymbal Spring for better playing action, and the drum pads feature mesh heads and rubber rims that make the kit quieter. (727)519-9669, www.clavia.com.

AHA (top left) is a new custom manufacturer offering drums with all-maple shells. (770) 533-9331, www.ahadrums.com.

The D-Vice clamp from Audix (bottom left) allows close miking for drums, and the SCX-25 overhead mic' features built-in shock mounting. (800) 966-8261, www.audixusa.com.

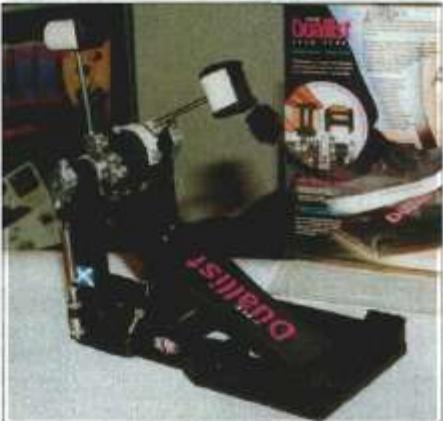
Bernard Purdie tried out new Basix drums (top right), which feature birch shells. (847)498-9850.

The frequency response of Audio-Technica's new AT3031 cardioid condenser mic' (bottom right) makes it especially good for hi-hats. (330)686-2600, www.audio-technica.com.





The focus of the **Fibes** display was their new green Crystalite kit. (512) 416-9955,
www.fibes.com.



The innovative **Dualist** pedal now features an enlarged beater surface, an improved heel hinge, and a redesigned strap for faster response. (800)979-7799, www.thedualist.com.

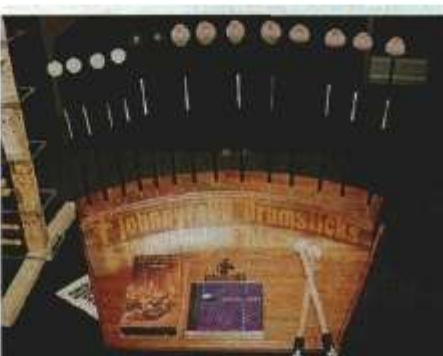
Evans' Magnetic-Head Drumset Torque key can be set to a desired tension for accurate tuning of drumheads. Evans also introduced Tri-Center bongo heads as well as new timbale heads with a non-coated etched texture. (800) 323-2746, www.evansdrumheads.com.

Vic Firth's new Blades are spatula-shaped plastic devices that create a variety of timbres on drums. (781)326-3455, www.vicfirth.com.

New products from **johnnyraBB** include a line of marching mallets, a new video explaining RhythmSaw technique, and a new Johnny Rabb solo CD. (800) 341-7222, www.johnnyraBB.com.



The Mel Lewis signature line from **Istanbul Agop** has been expanded with new 1982 model 13" hi-hats, and 18" and 20 1/2" rides, based on Mel's road cymbals. Istanbul also debuted a new set of Alchemy Custom hi-hats with an extra-heavy bottom cymbal. (201)599-0100, www.istanbulcymbals.com.





Meinl's Byzance cymbals (top) are cast from 80/20 bronze in Turkey, then sent to the Meinl factory in Germany for finishing. (305) 418-4520, goMeinl@aol.com.

Mel Bay introduced several new books geared for hand drumming: *Secrets Of The Hand*, *Hip Grooves For Hand Drums*, *Darbuka Method*, and *Rumba Guaguancó*. (636)257-3970, www.melbay.com.



New **Meinl** percussion products include Luis Conte chimes, Mini Bongos, a Kenny Aronoff cowbell series, and Conga Savers. (305)418-4520, goMeinl@aol.com.

The new **Maryland Drum Co.** (top right) evolved from the Baltimore Drum Co. They offer drums with 100% maple shells. (410) 584-2539, www.marylanddrum.com.



Summer NAMM saw the reintroduction of **Ludwig's** late-'60s era Psych Red finish (right). Also shown was the new Pro Drum Pedal. (219)522-1675, www.ludwig-drums.com.



Kaman displayed the Gretsch USA Maple Series, a combination of American-made Gretsch shells with Gibraltar Taiwanese hardware. (860) 509-8888, www.kamanmusic.com.



New from **Mountain Rythym** is a djembe stand (top) that tilts to several angles. (705)657-7089, www.mountainrythym.com.

Nady's new DMX-7 Drum Mic' kit (middle) has four DM70s, one DM80, and two CM85s. (510)652-2411, www.nadywireless.com.

New **Paiste** Dimensions models (bottom) include a range of medium-heavy crashes and an 18" Dry Ride that features a sandblasted finish. New Innovations models include 17" and 18" medium crashes and 16" and 18" thin crashes. (800)472-4783, www.paiste.com.



The Babylon kit from **Peace** (top) features maple/mahogany/maple shells, RIMS mounts, Remo heads, and four available finishes. Peace also debuted Slim Jim's Phantom Beauty model snare drum.

(877)999-4327,
www.peacemusic.com.tw.

This **Pearl** Limited Edition Masters kit (middle) features 4-ply maple shells, a Purple Storm finish, and satin-chrome hardware. Also new is an innovative Cymbal Stacker.

(615)833-4477,
www.pearldrums.com.



Pintech's Vision electronic percussion system (bottom) features real maple shells in a variety of finishes and sizes.

(864)288-1500,
www.edrums.com.



The UFO effects cymbal from **Rhythm Tech** offers a dry, "techno" splash sound. (914)636-6900,
www.rhythmttech.com.



The V-Club is **Roland's** most user-friendly and affordable electronic kit. It includes the TD-6 Percussion Sound Module (which has 1,024 drum sounds), upgraded rubber drum pads, and new dual-trigger cymbal pads with choke capability. (800)386-7575, www.rolandus.com.



Premier now offers the Gen-X kit in several new colors. They've also upgraded several features and lowered the price on their Cabria kit. (800)4864424, www.premier-percussion.com.



Remo's Airto drumkit (top) is designed to offer a big sound in a compact package. Also recently released are NuSkyn conga heads, as well as djembe and drum bags. (661)294-5600, www.remo.com.

In addition to Sonically Matched cymbal sets that come with a cymbal bag, **Sabian** now offers sets with a hard-shell cymbal case(bottom). (506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com.

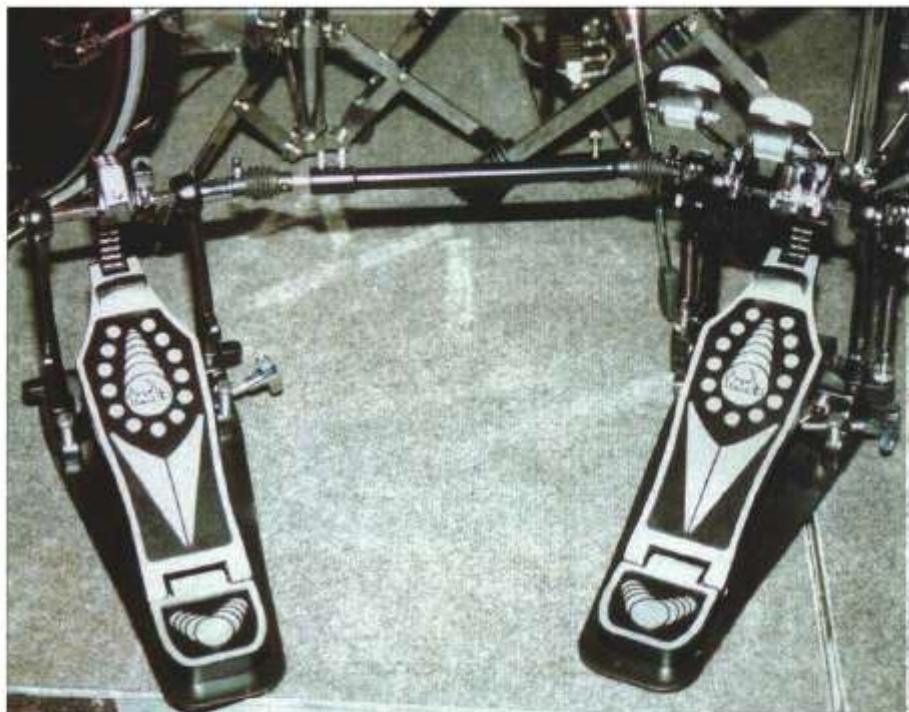


Roc-N-Soc's Tower stools feature metal legs and two different heights (27" and 30"), making them especially appropriate for conga players. (828) 452-1736, www.rocnsoc.com.



SKB's Cymbal Vault (top) holds up to eight cymbals and has layers of protective padding. Its molded surface has a design that allows interlocking stability with SKB Roto-X drum cases. www.skbcases.com.

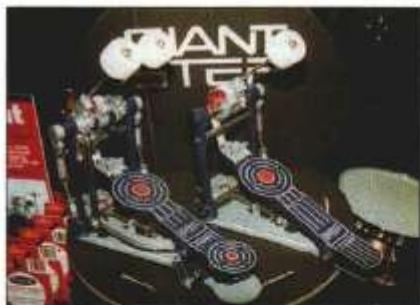
Tama's Limited Edition Hot Seat II has an embroidered "tattoo" pattern. New Dark Cherry Fade and Sterling Sparkle finishes for Starclassic Performer kits were also introduced. (215)638-8670, www.tama.com.



Taye sells a complete range of drumkits, and now offers a double pedal. (909)628-9589, www.taye.com.



Spanway imports authentic Brazilian percussion instruments manufactured by Contemporanea. (940)380-0424, www.brazildrums.com.



Giant Step Twin Effect and Single pedals from **Sonor** feature a variety of adjustments for player comfort and response. (804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com.



Spaun debuted a new line of drums that feature 100% birch shells. (909)971-7761, www.spaundrums.com.



Zildjian's redesigned K cymbals are made with modern hammering methods. Also new are Azuka Sombrero hi-hats specifically designed for percussionists; K Custom Special Dry hi-hats; re-introduced classic A Zildjian 20" and 22" Deep Rides; and ZBT Plus Max Hats with a specially hammered bottom cymbal that produces a louder "chick."

(781)871-2200, www.zildjian.com.



Warner Bros.



Treeworks

New books from **Warner Bros.**, include *Transitions* by Russ Miller and *Rudimental Workshop* by Matt Savage. Also new is a Bobby Rock video called *The Zen Of Drumming*.

(800)327-7643 www.warnerbrospublications.com.



3C Innovations

This chime tree from **Treeworks** includes a Per-Del triangle and an antique cymbal. (977)372-1601, www.treeworkschimes.com.

3C Innovations makes Stealth microphones (for snare drums, kick drums, and toms) that feature easy-to-reach threshold and decay parameter controls. The snare unit has an optional bottom-head condenser mic so that the drum can be simultaneously mixed from top and bottom.

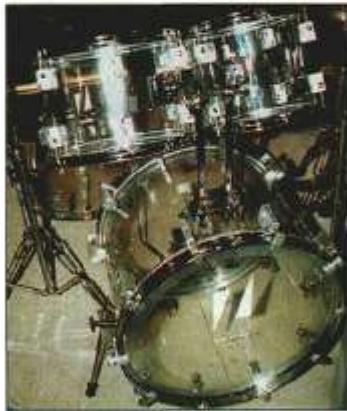
(615)429-7495, www.3cinnovations.com.

Timba offers exotic hand percussion instruments, like these cherry wood bongos. (877)926-9865, www.timbapercussion.com.



Timba

Stealth drums from **Zickos** (right) feature aircraft-grade aluminum lugs with end slots that allow for fast drumhead changing. (816) 363-0100, www.zickosdrums.com.



Along with the Stage Custom Advantage kit shown below, **Yamaha** displayed their redesigned hardware, including a pair of unique two-legged hi-hats. Also new is a Steve Jordan signature snare made of wood certified to be from replanted forests. (714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.



Also Appearing



Arbiter's Flats kit now has ABS bearing edges for more consistency, as well as a thicker snare drum with a throw-off. (877) 553-5596, www.arbiterdrums.com.



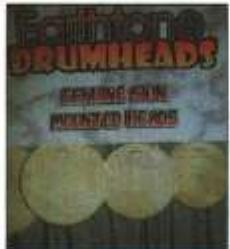
New products from **Big Bang** include RIMS Alloy Series aluminum drum mounts, which are lightweight, have adjustable sliding flanges, and come in several colors. Big Bang also introduced the Moongel snare pad and the Target Practice Pad by HQ Percussion Products. (800) 547-6401, www.bigbangdist.com.



Stanton Moore checked out new **Bosphorus** cymbal models prior to giving an informative clinic at the Nashville Jazz Workshop. (770) 662-3002, www.bosphoruscymbal.com.



Drum Workshop debuted new FinishPly finishes reminiscent of the West Coast style of the 1950s and '60s. DW also showed its new Steel Piccolo Toms, developed with Terry Bozzio. (805) 485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.



Discrete Drums offers CD sets with drum samples and grooves recorded by Greg Morrow. (800) 387-5720.



EarthTone made its NAMM debut with a selection of natural skin heads intended for drumkit use. (800) 826-5842.

The Conga Metro Pad from **Educational Music Accessories** is a practice pad designed for hand drumming. (949) 481-5873, www.educationalmusicaccessories.com.



New drum books from **Hal Leonard** include Ron Spagnardi's *Accent Control* and *Building Bass Drum Technique*, as well as *Drum Standards*, which features transcriptions of classic jazz solos by Elvin Jones, Joe Morello, Art Blakey, Max Roach, and others, with text by Rick Mattingly. (414) 774-3630, www.halleonard.com.



The Hart Dynamics ECYMBAL II electronic cymbal physically resembles acoustic cymbals for a more familiar playing feel. (850) 654-1455, www.hartdynamics.com.



Impact Industries has expanded its line of snare drum bags to include models that fit fifty-one different sizes of drums. (715) 842-1651, www.impactind.com.



Along with their new Aspire Supreme bongos and congas, **Latin Percussion** introduced RhythMix instruments for young percussionists. (888) LP-MUSIC, www.lpmusic.com.

Also Appearing (continued)



MBT offers Enforcer entry-level drumkits and accessories.
(843)763-9083, www.mbtinternational.com.



Music Link has a new line of Coda drum bags made of Cordura nylon. (650)615-8991, www.themusiclink.net.



The International Series II kit from Peavey is targeted at the entry-level market. In addition, add-on toms are now available for Radial Pro 751 and 501 series kits. (601)483-5365, www.peavey.com.



Pork Pie introduced a delicious-looking Creamsicle finish on their custom drums. (818)992-0783, www.pork piedrums.com.



Pro-Tech has redesigned its backpack carrier for snare drum, stand, sticks, and book. The company has also expanded its line of drum bags. (800)325-3455.



Signature drumsticks recently released by Pro-Mark include Ian Paice, Tony Verderosa, and Jimmy DeGrasso models. (800) 233-5250, www.promark-stix.com.



Colored grips have been added to Unigrip's Dipsticks series. Also new are Flipsticks, which have bamboo dowels or nylon brushes on one end and a drumstick tip on the other. (800)474-7068, www.unigrip2000.com.



Waltons debuted a new beveled-edge bodhran. (914)375-4309, www.waltonsrishmusic.com.



XL Specialty's Stik Stadium Stand has been redesigned for better support and adjustability. (219) 637-5684, www.xlspec.com.



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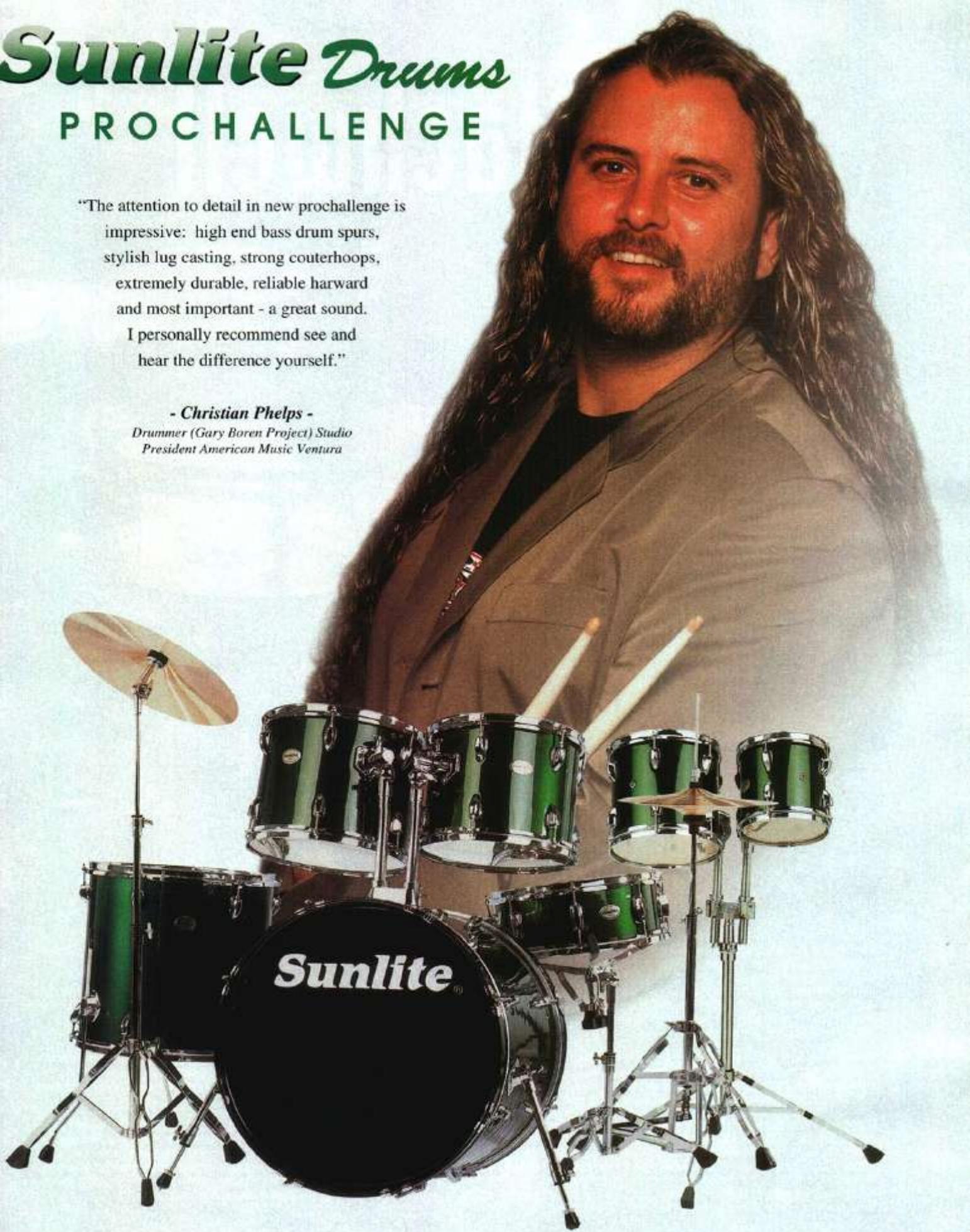
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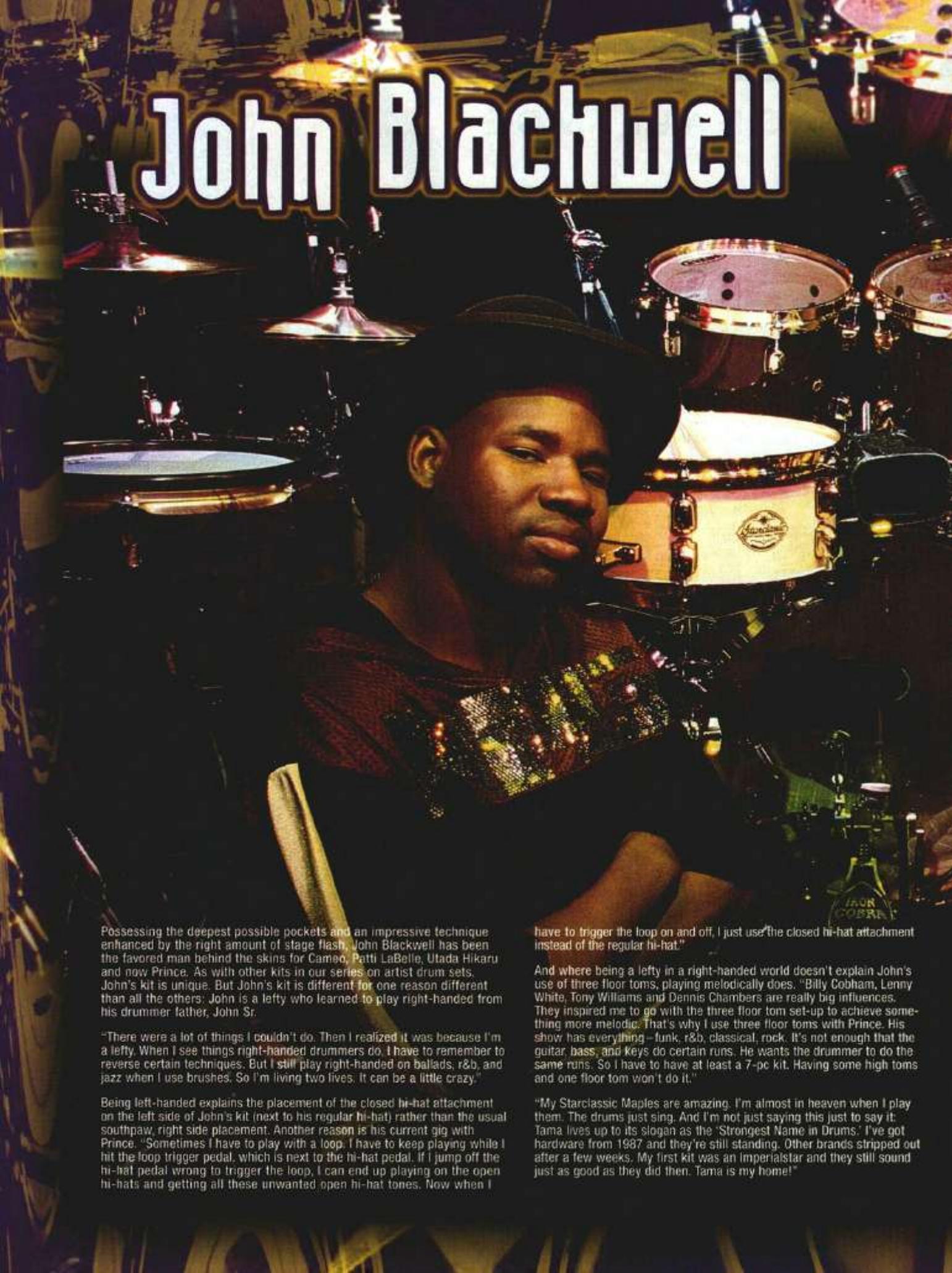
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- Christian Phelps -

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John Blackwell



Possessing the deepest possible pockets and an impressive technique enhanced by the right amount of stage flash, John Blackwell has been the favored man behind the skins for Cameo, Patti LaBelle, Utada Hikaru and now Prince. As with other kits in our series on artist drum sets, John's kit is unique. But John's kit is different for one reason different than all the others: John is a lefty who learned to play right-handed from his drummer father, John Sr.

"There were a lot of things I couldn't do. Then I realized it was because I'm a lefty. When I see things right-handed drummers do, I have to remember to reverse certain techniques. But I still play right-handed on ballads, R&B, and jazz when I use brushes. So I'm living two lives. It can be a little crazy."

Being left-handed explains the placement of the closed hi-hat attachment on the left side of John's kit (next to his regular hi-hat) rather than the usual southpaw, right side placement. Another reason is his current gig with Prince. "Sometimes I have to play with a loop. I have to keep playing while I hit the loop trigger pedal, which is next to the hi-hat pedal. If I jump off the hi-hat pedal wrong to trigger the loop, I can end up playing on the open hi-hats and getting all these unwanted open hi-hat tones. Now when I

have to trigger the loop on and off, I just use the closed hi-hat attachment instead of the regular hi-hat."

And where being a lefty in a right-handed world doesn't explain John's use of three floor toms, playing melodically does. "Billy Cobham, Lenny White, Tony Williams and Dennis Chambers are really big influences. They inspired me to go with the three floor tom set-up to achieve something more melodic. That's why I use three floor toms with Prince. His show has everything—funk, R&B, classical, rock. It's not enough that the guitar, bass, and keys do certain runs. He wants the drummer to do the same runs. So I have to have at least a 7-pc kit. Having some high toms and one floor tom won't do it."

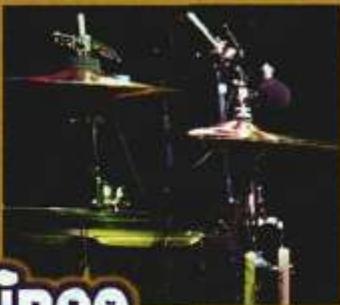
"My Starclassic Maples are amazing. I'm almost in heaven when I play them. The drums just sing. And I'm not just saying this just to say it: Tama lives up to its slogan as the 'Strongest Name in Drums.' I've got hardware from 1987 and they're still standing. Other brands stripped out after a few weeks. My first kit was an Imperialstar and they still sound just as good as they did then. Tama is my home!"



ON playing with Prince, Starclassic Maple drums, and being a lefty in a right handed world

1. MXA63 Closed Hi-Hat Attachment

"On tunes that require triggering a loop, I play the closed hi-hat attachment while my foot controls the loop trigger."



2. Three Floor Tom SetUp

"With three small floor toms, you can go back and forth between them and start making melodies. I find myself telling my friends that if they use two floor toms, they should add one."



3. HP900PTW Iron Cobra Double Pedal

"Marcus Williams of Atlanta (he's the baddest drummer around!) taught me how to do double pedal techniques on a single pedal. So actually, I only use the left pedal on the ends of songs. That's something I started with Patti LaBelle. You know Patti can hold a note for two hours and one song can have five, six, seven endings. I wanted to have some kind of roll going behind her... almost like a tympani or a big concert bass drum."



4. The Hat

"My lucky hat. When you're with Prince, you've got to look cool. He personally gave me that hat right off of his head. Now it's my trademark."



Drums: 7-pc Starclassic Maple
Color: Violet Shade
Sizes: 18x22 bass drum
8x10, 8x12 mounted toms
14x13, 14x14, 16x16 floor toms
5.5x13 Starclassic Maple snare
Throne: HT510
Pedal: HP900PTW
Hi Hat Stand: HH905

Visit our website at www.tama.com

For more information on Tama Drums and Hardware, send \$3.00 to: Tama, Dept. MDD08, P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020, or P.O. Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403.

To contact John Blackwell, check out his website, www.johnblackwell.net



Tama Starclassic Performer Drumkit

Beauty And Bombast At A Reasonable Price

HITS

lightweight drums project well and are easy to transport

Star-Cast mounting system and die-cast hoops

killer bass drum sound

MISSES

diagonal seam in shell is visible in the wood finish

snare is ringy and somewhat lacking in depth

by Robin Tolleson

Tama's Starclassic Performer line frankly belies its market position as a "mid-price" kit. In construction quality, appearance, and acoustic performance, it offers attributes that rival those of kits costing much more.

Appearance

The five-piece Royal Walnut kit we tested definitely had a top-of-the-line, almost vintage look, with bronze faceplates, stubby lugs on the toms, and a beautiful walnut-stained high-gloss finish. Deep and rich, the finish made the drums look as deep and warm as they sounded. My only criticism about their look is that the diagonal seams where the plies meet on the shells were distinctly visible. This might not be the case with a lighter or different-color finish, but it was quite noticeable in this case.

Ingredients

Performer Series shells are 100% birch, which is a relatively lightweight wood. I found it quite practical to lift the kick drum with the mounted toms in place—something I *can't* do with a lot of other kits. In addition, the thin shell construction allows for a trueness of tone, along with plenty of warmth.



The Performer Birch kit is also available in a new Dark Cherry Fade finish.



We were sent one of Tama's basic set configurations, designated model number SP522EAF. It features 8x10 and 9x12 mounted toms and an 11x14 "floor" tom, which is actually mounted on the ride cymbal stand. I enjoy those almost undersized tom sizes, in combination with a booming 18x22 kick drum. The high, projecting toms provide the flexibility of a jazz/fusion kit, yet the big bass drum allows for playing authentic funk, blues, and rock.

The Sound

The 8x10 was a fun drum to hit right off the bat. It sang! I never touched the batter head when tuning the drum; just bringing the resonant head up a pinch put the drum into fine voice. It had the power and pitch to start a big coliseum fill, as well as the crispness to snap off some rimshots—almost like a timbale.

The 9x12 was also easy to work with. A few quick adjustments brought it into a sympathetic interval with the smaller tom. This drum was powerful, and the harder I hit it, the truer it sounded.

The 11x14 is an unorthodox size. When I first played it, it was a little waffly—as though the drum didn't know whether it was a mounted tom or a floor tom. But it took only a couple minutes for me to get it sounding like a good floor tom. Again, I started by tightening up the bottom head about half a turn. This immediately brought the drum into better tune with itself. When I moved on to fine-tuning it, this drum, like the other toms, quickly became very warm, with good projection.

I will refer to the kick drum as "His Lowness." Tama has combined an extra 2" of depth on the 7-ply birch shell with an Evans EQ1 batter head, and the result is a drum with a clean attack, big body, righteous low end, and about a three-second decay. This drum has that subsonic quality that I hate so much when I hear it from the car next to me (but that I *really want* to be able to sound like myself). Of course I'd have to muffle the kick a bit more to play a straight-ahead jazz gig, but that's easy enough to accomplish. In the meantime, this baby moves serious air.

The all-birch snare drum, with its 6-mm-thick shell and die-cast hoops, provided a crisp attack. But it was a little ringy and metallic-sounding for my taste. To be honest, I'm still working on the tuning. At the time of this writing I'm happy with the

basic sound I'm getting, and I'm learning the nuances of the drum. But there's still an annoying ring to it that I haven't solved. Maybe I'm looking for it to do something it can't, but so far I haven't gotten it to sound as warm as I'd like.

Functional Features

Performer drums feature no internal or external muffling system. The toms come with the Star-Cast mounting system installed—which I like. It has a bit more rubber padding for support of the drum than some other "suspension" systems, and it seems to spread the weight of the drum evenly without strain on the shell or the lugs.

Tama's Omni-Sphere tom holder bracket allows you to pretty much put your toms anywhere you want over the kick drum. I must admit to fumbling around a bit with the tom-tom memory locking system at first. But incorporating the locks into the drum mount makes sense and looks good.

The rest of the hardware is sturdy, and it offers a couple of nifty features, like a boom stand that telescopes back into the stand for storage. All stands have double-braced legs, and the bass drum and hi-hat pedals are built to take a kicking.

Conclusion

No kit can be all things to all drummers. But if you're looking for a kit that looks professional, sounds great (especially at the bottom end), and is easy to carry, you might not need to look any further than Tama's Performer Birch. And when you consider the price, the view gets even more appealing!

(215)638-8670, www.tama.com.

THE NUMBERS

Configuration: 5 1/2x14 snare drum, 8x10 and 9x12 mounted toms, 11x14 suspended "floor" tom, and 18x22 bass drum

Shells: snare and toms are 6-ply birch, 6-mm thick; bass drum is 7-ply, 7-mm thick

Drumheads: Clear Evans Genera G1 batters on all toms, coated Genera G1 batter on snare, Tama Hazy 200s on bottom of toms and Evans Resonant Snare 300 on bottom of snare. Evans EQ1 batter on bass drum.

Finish: Walnut (Other finishes include Dark Cherry Fade, Natural Birch, Transparent Black, Amber Gold, Indigo Blue, Burnt Orange, Gloss Black, Transparent Green, and Violet.)

List price: \$2,199.99 as shell pack, \$2,599.99 with hardware



New Paiste Dimensions Models

More Of A Good Thing

HITS

tonalities combine traits
of several Paiste lines

crashes can double as rides

Chinas offer player-friendly design
and excellent performance

by Rick Long

Paiste introduced their Dimensions line in 1999 in an effort "to develop modern, multifunctional cymbals with extremely versatile sound and function." To accomplish this, they applied the manufacturing techniques used to create the acoustically sophisticated "Signature" and "Traditionals" lines to their classic "2002 Bronze" (CuSN8) alloy. Developed in the late 1950s as a way to create cymbals that could compete with the ever-increasing volume of electric guitar amplifiers, the alloy was first used to make cymbals in 1963, then was chosen for the Giant Beat series introduced in 1967. By 1971 that line had evolved into the now-legendary 2002 series played by such rock luminaries as John Bonham, Ian Paice, and Bill Bruford.

Dimensions cymbals have the power and penetration of their 2002 ancestors, but they're mellowed by the manner in which they're crafted. It's a good combination, as reflected by the very positive review that the debut models received in MD's April 2000 issue.

Now Paiste has "beefed up" the Dimensions series with some additional crash and China models, along with a unique ride cymbal. Let's check 'em out.

19" Medium-Thin Crash

Although the Dimensions series already includes several medium-thin crashes, the new 19" model adds a bigger voice to the chorus. It has a bright, full crash with a slow decay. In addition, riding on the bow of the cymbal produced a defined ping with a minimal amount of overtone buildup. Given this cymbal's size, it could easily (and effectively) be used as a crash/ride, thus making it extremely versatile.

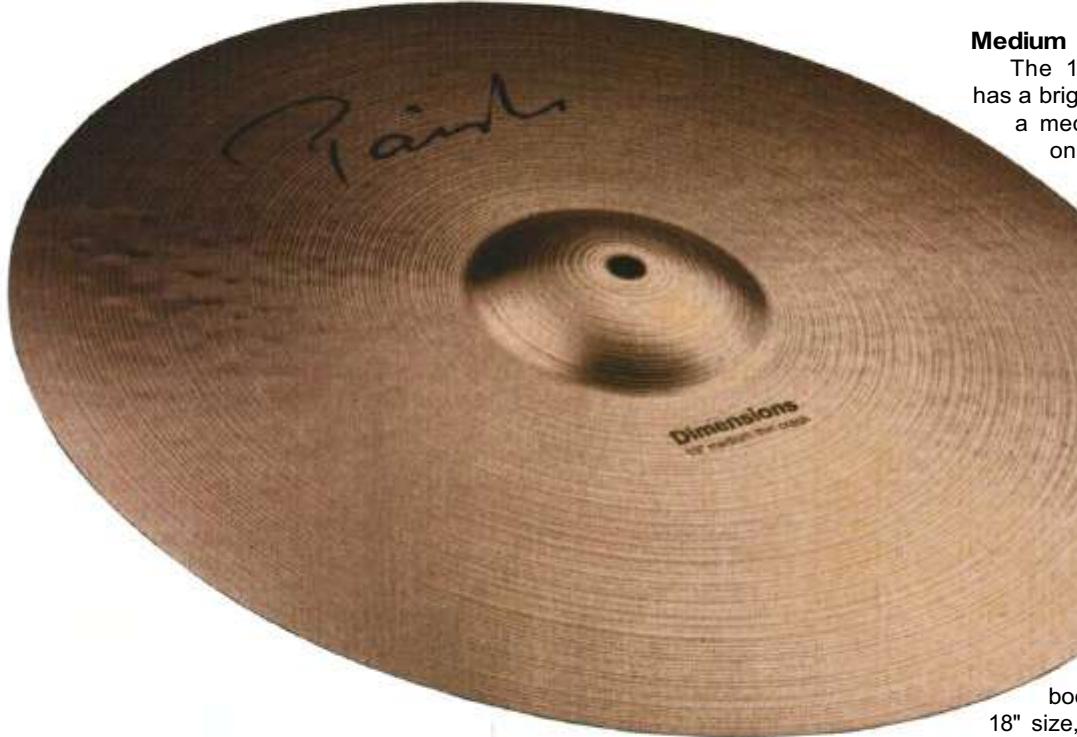
Medium Heavy Crashes

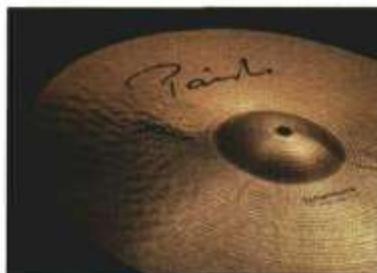
The 16" medium heavy crash has a bright, shimmering crash with a medium-length decay. Riding on the bow produces a high-pitched ping sound that would cut through a small ensemble very well as a small ride or effect cymbal.

At the same time, its bright, cutting, full crash sound would be appropriate for rock or big band situations.

The 17" medium heavy crash sounds similar to the 16", but has a touch more depth and body. When you move to the 18" size, the sound begins to take on a bit more of a "band cymbal" sound.

The crash is lower in pitch and more "bell-like." This characteristic is even more pronounced in the 20" model, where the crash sound is long and low.





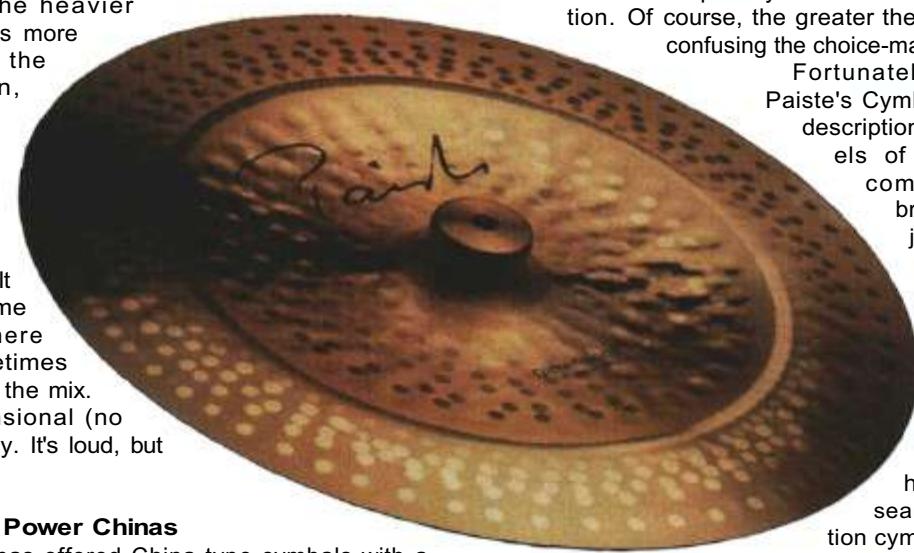
Paiste Dimensions models reviewed include an 18" Dry ride, an 18" medium crash, and a 19" power crash.

(For a beautiful musical experience, roll on this cymbal with a pair of mallets. The full-bodied sound will put this cymbal over the top of an orchestra any day.)

The 19" medium heavy crash has some of the same characteristics as its medium thin counterpart. But it also has a slightly brighter initial crash, as well as significantly brighter overtones in its *long* decay phase. This cymbal could also double as a ride cymbal. When ridden on its bow, the cymbal's ping sound is higher in pitch (as you would expect with the heavier weight). But it also has more overtone wash than the medium thin version, which I *didn't* expect.

19" Power Crash

This baby is a full, powerful crash that will cut through the loudest metal band. It would be right at home on large stages, where lesser cymbals sometimes find themselves lost in the mix. Yet it isn't one-dimensional (no pun intended) or gongy. It's loud, but still musical.



Power Chinas

Since 1983, Paiste has offered China-type cymbals with a downward-turned edge. (The original version was the 2002 Novo China.) This design makes the cymbal easier to mount on a stand, since you don't have to turn it upside-down to get the edge in a playable position. This also keeps the bell in a playable position, should you decide to use it for a special-effect sound.

Three Power China cymbals are included in the Dimensions lineup. The 18" model gives a trashy crash with a quick decay. The 20" model has a similar character but is much brighter in tone. The 22" model retains the brightness of the 20", but adds dark overtones as well. This cymbal produces a wide tonal palette and could take the place of a small gong. This is particularly true when it's played with mallets in a single-strike or rolling manner. Playing on the downward-turned edge of the cymbal produces the best example of this sound.

But don't forget about the "power" in Power Chinas. They're big cymbals, with plenty of explosive volume and penetration. And although they're by no means thin, you don't have to slam them to get them to speak out forcefully. It's in their nature to do so.

18" Dry Ride

This is an unlathed cymbal with a sand-blasted finish. Its sound is dark and definitely dry, but not so dry as to sound dead. It still has plenty of cut, and its bell is bright without being too piercing. I could imagine this cymbal fitting equally well into rock or jazz setups.

Wrap-Up

Today's cymbal manufacturers offer pretty diverse model lines. But Paiste is especially famous for their extensive selection. Of course, the greater the selection, the more confusing the choice-making process.

Fortunately for consumers, Paiste's Cymbal Guide offers full descriptions of the many models of cymbals that the company offers. This brochure does a good job of describing the sounds and physical characteristics of the cymbals. If you're shopping for new cymbal sounds, I strongly suggest that you use this guide to help you narrow your search before you audition cymbals at the store.

That being said, I was particularly impressed by the versatility of the Dimensions cymbals. According to Paiste, the line was designed to have a very controllable dynamic range, even within the context of "power" models. It's this characteristic that lets virtually all of the crashes double as rides, and makes the Power crashes useful in lower volume settings. This versatility increases the cymbals' musical (and economic) value. Such a deal!

By the way, at the same time these new Dimensions models were released, Paiste also introduced 17" and 19" Rude crash/rides, along with a 20" Flanger ride from their Exotic/Percussion series. We'll take a look at them in an upcoming issue. Stay tuned.

(800)472-4783, www.paiste.com.

THE NUMBERS

19" medium thin crash	\$348
16" medium heavy crash	\$268
17" medium heavy crash	\$292
18" medium heavy crash	\$326
19" medium heavy crash	\$348
20" medium heavy crash	\$378
19" Power crash	\$348
18" Power China	\$326
20" Power China	\$378
22" Power China	\$442
18" Dry ride	\$326



D'Amico Adjustable Bass Drum Cradle

HITS

allows more comfortable access
to smaller drums' sweet spot

facilitates new sound possibilities

MISSES

not particularly portable

by Adam Budofsky

D'Amico's Bass Drum Cradle is one of several similar items you might have seen advertised in *MD* recently. The basic concept is to create a stand that supports a relatively small drum on its side, allowing it to be used in conjunction with a standard bass drum pedal. The Cradle will accommodate drums from 16" to 22" in diameter, and from 8 1/2" to 20 1/2" in depth.

Now, before we get into the merits of D'Amico's particular design, a word about the general premise of such gear. Recently we've seen many drum companies offering professional mini-sized drumkits, largely on the merits of portability. As a drummer who has to deal with the hell that is the Manhattan club scene, I totally dig the idea of using drum sizes that are easy to move and fit on tiny stages. But two things should be kept in mind: 1) Small drums generally make small sounds. Show me a 16" tom that sounds remotely close to the bass drum on "Kashmir," and I'll show you some expensive outboard gear. 2) Though a 16" "bass drum" is easier to schlep than a 24", the tom converter required for the little drum is now another piece of gear you must tote around.

That said, D'Amico's Bass Drum Cradle is an excellent tool for drummers who want more sonic options. Rather than being some magic bullet against bass drum hernia syndrome, its real power lies in giving us the ability to play previously unattainable sounds and patterns. So rather than replacing your bass drum, think about adding *another* one to your kit, but make it something wacky like an old marching snare or a Taiko drum. Get crazy!

The D'Amico Bass Drum Cradle sets up in no time, and it holds drums



firmly without the need to drill new holes in your pretty shells, add clamps, or do any such silliness. It also adjusts easily to accommodate different drum sizes. Hook-and-loop strips keep the Cradle from sliding on carpeting, and its steel construction makes it extremely sturdy. The downside to that construction is that the Cradle isn't light, and breaking it down completely for gigs would be inefficient and dangerous. (Many tiny screws.) On the other hand, it'll surely last for years, and no matter how hard you play, you'll not likely propel your drum off your riser, taking out your lead singer in the process. (Hmmm....)

Cradle maker Gene D'Amico reports that top drummers like Matt Chamberlain have been experimenting with drums as



groove on all the new sounds you can make. D'Amico's Bass Drum Cradle will help you get there. It's available directly from D'Amico for \$199.

(510) 226-8700, www.damicodrums.com

QUICK LOOKS

Treeworks Hand Crafted Chimes

I've recorded a lot of pop and dance music over the years, and I've applied the beautiful, sweet color of chimes to many of those recordings. There's no better way to bring in the chorus of a ballad than with a lush glissando on a set of chimes. Treeworks Chimes, headed by Mitch McMichen, was founded in 1996 in Nashville, Tennessee. A drummer and percussionist himself, Mitch takes pride in the manufacture of this fine percussion instrument. "Some people may think we take things a little *too* far in order to create the perfect chime," he says. "We say, *listen*. It matters."

The mantles (wooded holding bars) on Treeworks chimes are of rare, sixty- to eighty-year-old, hand-picked black walnut wood, chosen for its rich color and grain. A clear oil finish is applied to each one by hand. The cords holding the chimes are braided and individually hand-tied to each bar, then locked and sealed to make them virtually indestructible.

What I really like about the way Treeworks chimes are constructed is the separation

between the chime bars and the mantle—leaving just the right amount of space for when you only want to hit certain notes. The chimes themselves are tuned by ear with a gradual pitch change bar by bar. There's no assembly-line cutting.

The Tre 35 model comes in a double-row version that allows you to play each row together or separately. And talk about volume! When you play both of the rows, this baby will give you a long, loud crystalline sweep that

will be heard with no problem. It's perfect for drumset playing. For softer applications, you can use just one row.

If you're looking to add some pretty colors to your music, check out Treeworks chimes. They don't disappoint. The single-row Tre 35 lists for \$120. The Tre 35db (double-row) is priced at \$210.

(877)372-1601 www.treeworkschimes.com

Billy Amendola



CuStOm showcase

Whitney Penguin Drums

How "Different" Are You
Willing To Get?

by Will Romano

After watching dozens of drummers lug their equipment, setting up, and breaking down, JT. Whitney became fascinated with drumset design. A skilled woodworker, he experimented until he created his Penguin drums—so named because "they're fat in the middle." They're also designed to be lug-free, lightweight, generous in volume, and hassle-free for gigging drummers.

Appearance And Construction

Perhaps appropriately, the 3-ply birch outer shells of Penguin drums give the impression of an igloo. These outer shells are attached to nine-ply birch "tension rings" that also receive the tension rods. The drumheads sit on a ring (1"-2" tall, depending on the drum) made of 6-ply maple. A thin (3-mm) collar surrounds the bottom head inside each shell, and there's a nicely designed wooden reinforcement system for the tom arm. Our review models had a clear satin finish called Classic. The shells' natural appearance added to the organic, warm feel.

While the "fat" Penguin drums look heavy, they were actually very easy to manage. In fact, they made for one of the easiest load-ups that I've ever experienced.

All In One Basket

Whitney's Egg Basket stand is fundamentally a sculpted wooden plank attached to two support feet. It props up the bass drum and also holds mounts for the toms and cymbals. Everything is interconnected.

HITS ■■■

unique design makes drums light
and easy to carry

ISIS mounting/suspension system
provides mobility

drums have thick, dry sound

MISSES ■■■

mounting system can cause
major headaches



Even though JT. Whitney gave me handwritten instructions and a photo showing how the kit should be set up, assembling the Egg Basket became a job in itself. To attach the 18x20 bass drum, I tightened two special lugs equipped with springs. These lugs pass through a groove at the top of the Basket plank, and enter the bass drum on both sides. The springs attached to the lugs interfered somewhat with the nuts entering the portal. I found myself thinking that if the drum simply had two metal spurs, it would've made the set-up easier. And, in fact, Whitney does offer all its bass drums with spurs. But that negates the use of the Egg Basket system, which Whitney feels is a major improvement in overall drum-set design.

When I first erected the Basket, it appeared warped and a little wobbly. But when I added the toms and cymbals, it leveled off. Those items, by the way, are held via a hybrid system of metal and wood. Vertical metal tubes attach to the foot plank on each side of the bass drum, secured by two wing nuts. On each tube are fitted three maple "Grabbers" that can swing around nearly 360°. Gibraltar tom arms and cymbal booms are secured at the other end of these Grabbers.

This system was handy when it came to attaching or removing the drums, but it didn't allow very much horizontal positioning flexibility. Also, the toms didn't always have enough room to clear the bass drum. Though the Grabbers can be lowered or raised along the vertical tubes, tom arms with longer horizontal reach would be necessary to ensure that drums don't touch.

Toms are installed on their arms by means of Whitney's Internal Suspension & Isolation System (ISIS). Each drum has a 7/8" clamp on the side of its shell, secured by a special lug. The hardware fits snugly inside the drums, creating the surreal impression that the toms are floating on air. The snare drum is also connected this way—which is a good thing, since using a traditional snare stand completely killed the resonance of the 13" snare when I mounted it that way at a rehearsal. (Even so, if you would prefer stand mounting, the snares are available for \$40 less without the ISIS clamp.)

Since everything is mounted together in one assembly, a drummer actually has less positioning flexibility around the kit than separate stands would provide. That being said, however, the entire assembly held its place and rarely drifted when I was kicking and punching.

What Sounds Do Penguins Make?

Having worked hard on setting the Penguins up, I was more than ready to start banging away. The fact that there is virtually nothing of significance on the outer shell of the drums, combined with the free-floating mounts, created a thick, unhindered tone. The Aquarian heads on the drums (coated on top, clear on bottom) enhanced this effect.

I first set up a five-piece configuration with a 13" snare and

10", 12", and 16" toms. The 8x10 tom had a great dry, high pitch, but its tone was too stratospheric for my liking. So I swapped it for the 12" tom, added the 11x14, and dialed down the 13x16 so the head was slightly slack. The drums—especially the 16"—sounded as they looked: heavy, dry, and warm, emphasizing pitch.

The toms needed little or no dampening. I did, however, use Styrofoam dampening for the bass drums. I started with the 20", which had a solid front head (no hole) and an Aquarian kick pad against the clear batter head. The drum produced a nice thud, with just a hint of tone.

The 16x22 only comes with traditional bass drum spurs, because the Egg Basket system can only accommodate drums from 16" to 20". Whitney provides this size for drummers who feel that they need a bigger drum. But the truth is, both the 22" and the 20" produced a full-bodied slap and a characteristic, non-overbearing overtone. I think the smaller drum was able to make these nice sounds at least partially due to the Egg Basket and the wood hardware.

Small Heads, Big Volume

Each of the three snare drums we received was better than the next. All had a nice crack and good-to-excellent snare response. Putting a coated Remo Ambassador on the 14" drum made the sound a bit more full.

The snares came fitted with Whitney's own throw-off, which sits on the shell's collar rather than on its side. When the ball knob is flicked, a lever pulls the snare strap up and down. Nothing runs outside the drum; the string runs *inside* the shell.

The 6x10 snare seemed to have the greatest range. True, it was a small target. But even when I didn't hit it dead center, the tiny shell gave out an amazing rimshot. I managed to get a quick, chatty response when the head was tightened up, and a prickly feel when it was slack. A definite favorite.

Conclusion

Neither Whitney's drums nor their unique Egg Basket system have been around long enough to support comment about their durability. And the unusual mounting system will definitely not appeal to everyone. However, the tone, power, and appearance of these drums are enough to make you forget the setup headache and just enjoy playing.

THE NUMBERS

Drums Reviewed: 6x10, 6x13, and 5x14 snares, 8x10, 9x12, 11x14, and 13x16 toms, 18x20 and 16x22 bass drums. (Drums are available in additional diameters and virtually any depth.)

Shell Construction: 3-ply birch outer shells, with reinforcing rings and other elements of birch and maple

Finish: Classic (natural satin finish)

List Price: \$3,050 for a five-piece configuration, with tom and cymbal mounts (no pedal).

Individual drums and custom finishes are available.



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5 Piece Kit MSRP \$1349



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Rhythm Masters - Santa Rosa, CA
Runzo's Music World - Dublin, CA
Sound Source - Chico, CA
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Zion World Music - Westmead, CA

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Drum City/Guitar Land - Wheat Ridge, CO
JB. Han - Grand Junction, CO
Mars - Aurora, CO
Mars - SW, Denver, CO
Rupp's Used Drums - Denver, CO
Universal Music Co. - Thornton, CO

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Funky Music - Naples, FL
Funky Music - Ocala, FL
Funky Music - Port Richey, FL
Harris Music & Sound - Pensacola, FL
Mars - Coral Springs, FL
Mars - Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Mars #25 - Miami, FL
Mars #32 - Miami, FL
Mars #3000 - Miami, FL
Mars - Orlando, FL
Mars - Tampa, FL
Mars - West Palm Beach, FL
Pro Music - Jacksonville, FL

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Drazen Edwards Music Center - Marietta, GA
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Earth Shaking Music - Atlanta, GA
Krazy A's - Commerce, GA
Mars - Atlanta, GA
Mars - Lawrenceville, GA
Mars - Minnetonka, GA
Musician's Warehouse - Athens, GA
Peachtree Music - Stockbridge, GA
The Music Room - Rome, GA

HAWAII

Ceilo's Drum Closet - Honolulu, HI

IDAH0

Idaho Percussion - Boise, ID
Music Center Inc - Twin Falls, ID

ILLINOIS

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Drum Pad - Palosine, IL
EF Production Music - Pana, IL
Flores Music - Peoria, IL
Hix Music - Alton, IL
Linda's Music - Decatur, IL
Midwest Percussion - Chicago Ridge, IL
Modern Music - Joliet, IL
Music Galaxy - Highland Park, IL
Music Lab - Lincoln, IL
Sax & Bass - Champaign, IL
Stage Door Music - Chicago, IL
Suburban Music Co. - Wheaton, IL
The Music Store - Chicago, IL
Walko Music - Springfield, IL

INDIANA

Mars - Indianapolis, IN
Rubino's Music - Merrillville, IN
The Woodwind & Brasswind - South Bend, IN
Tri-State Music - Ft. Wayne, IN

IOWA

LidgeMusic - Council Bluffs, IA
Rockwell Music - Dubuque, IA
West Music Co. - Coralville, IA

KANSAS

Mars - Olathe, KS
Midwest Drum & Percussion - Wichita, KS
Music Go Round - Shawnee, KS

KENTUCKY

Carl's Music - Lexington, KY
Moen's Music Center - Louisville, KY

LOUISIANA

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MAINE

The Drum Shop - Portland, ME
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Man - Parkville, MD
Washington Music Co. - Wheaton, MD
Wheaton Music - Wheaton, MD

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Conne Street Drums - Brockton, MA
The Gig Stop - N. Woburn, MA
Mars - Natick, MA
Mars - Somerville, MA
Music Major - Marpole, MA
Tewksbury Music Center - Tewksbury, MA
Tap Music - Fairhaven, MA

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Big Music Company - Saginaw, MI
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Mars - Grand Rapids, MI
Mars - Southfield, MI
Mike Carey Music - Wyandotte, MI
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Music Stand - Berkley, MI

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Mars - Roseville, MN
Water Music - Stillwater, MN

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Glory Days Music - Webb City, MO
Hayes, The Music Store - Poplar Bluff, MO
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Mars - Holland, OH
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Mars - Oklahoma City, OK

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Drum Shop of Portland - Portland, OR
Latoya Music West - Gorge Pass, OR
Morrison Bridge Music - Portland, OR
Newberg Music Center - Newberg, OR
The Drum Shop - McMinn, OR

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A.M. Music - Lower Burrell, PA
California Drum Shop - Bethlehem, PA
Critch's Pro Line Music - Fairless Hills, PA
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Drums Etc. - Lansdale, PA
Kings Music - Shamokin, PA
Medley Music - Bryn Mawr, PA
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Jent's House of Music - Lubbock, TX
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Mars - Austin, TX
Mars - Dallas, TX
Mars #14 - Houston, TX
Mars #15 - Houston, TX
Mars - Plano, TX
Mars - San Antonio, TX
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Montgomery County Music - Conroe, TX
Music Go Round - Conroe, TX
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TEXAS (continued)

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Sound of Houston - Houston, TX
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Bill Harris Music - Provo, UT
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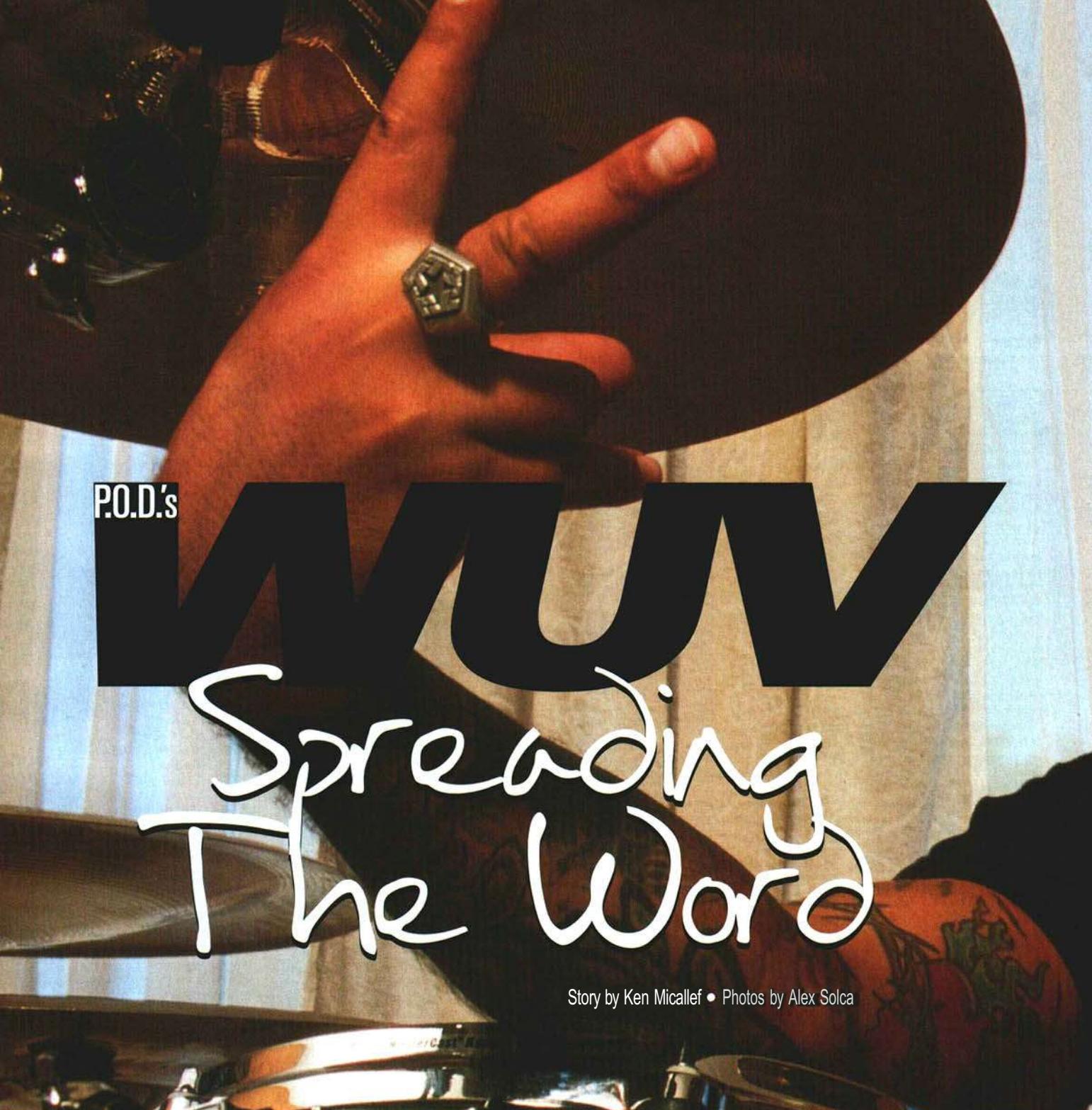
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P.O.D.'s

MUV

Spreading The Word

Story by Ken Micallef • Photos by Alex Solca

If your idea of Christian rock is sappy N'Sync clones or lame hard-rock poseurs, you might want to consider San Diego foursome P.O.D. P.O.D.'s Ozzfest-worthy metal missives are as hard and

heavy as it gets. What helps to separate P.O.D. from the earsplitting crowd is their hardcore message of faith in Jesus Christ. But don't expect P.O.D. to show up on some cheesy TV preacher's program or a traveling Christian



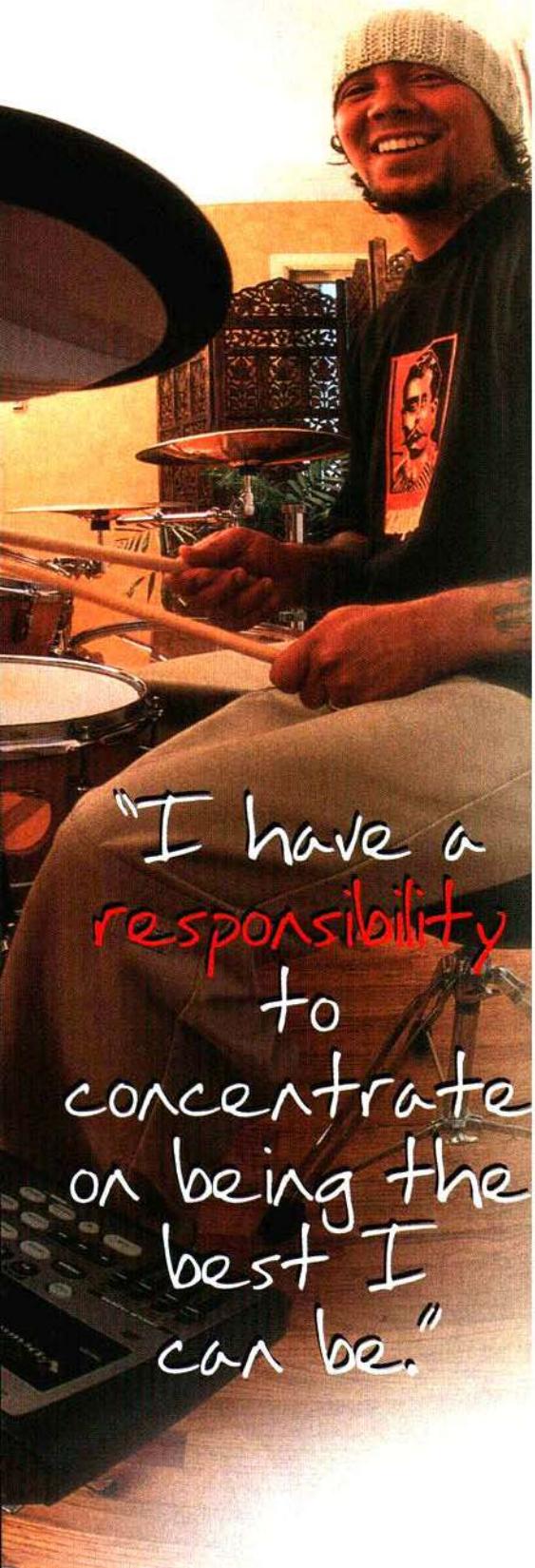


hard-rock tour. These guys are down in the trenches, headlining with every band from Tool to Cypress Hill to KoRN.

P.O.D.'s major-label debut, *The Fundamental Elements Of Southtown*, sold a million copies—with practically no radio

support. This only solidifies P.O.D.'s standing as metal heads who make a difference.

But if faith were their only asset, no one would care much about P.O.D. Their new album, *Satellite*, shows a



maturing band that incorporates reggae, hardcore, metal, and pop into a sound that is both mosh-worthy and as tuneful as the classic rock of yesteryear. Singer Sonny Sandoval, guitarist Marcos Curiel, bassist Traa, and drummer Wuv have been together for ten years, and their organic grooves and rage-against-the-devil message have found a giant and still-growing audience.

Even if you were a fan of *Fundamental*, you might not be prepared for the songwriting growth and instrumental prowess of *Satellite*. Sonny both sings and raps, while guitarist Curiel uses the new album to reference everyone from The Cars' Elliot Easton to Boston's Tom Scholz and BTO's Randy Bachman. And beneath the sonic stew, Traa and Wuv make up one of the most flexible and creative rhythm sections in heavy music today. Not content to simply reference a blitzkrieg of styles and race through beats, the Traa/Wuv rhythm-meld sees each player locking into the beat and exploring the ample nuances within the groove.

Wuv's love of reggae infuses much of the album, and his off-kilter hi-hat and cymbal maneuvers transport straight beats into colorful drum commentary. Wuv pummels hard enough to constantly break heads and sticks, but he also understands the subtleties of such drummers as his childhood heroes Alex Acuna and Stewart Copeland.

Sitting in a Manhattan hotel lobby, drinking a Corona and greeting friends, Wuv looks more like a heavy metal roadie than an upright Christian. But closer inspection of his densely tattooed arms reveals his beliefs. His right arm bears a Jesus head, the sign of the trinity (which appears on the cover of *Fundamental*), two fists in a handshake, the names of his sons, Noah and Joshua, and a sacred heart. His left arm is just as dense: A crown of thorns, three performing jazz musicians, a Hebrew phrase meaning "God-fearing," and his sons' names over a dragon. A Japanese character on his neck means "eternity."

This twenty-eight-year-old drummer is soft-spoken, but he carries a big message. A self-described musician from the street, Wuv has weathered many hard times and bleak situations to see his dreams come true. But he says it would be okay if tomorrow it all ended and P.O.D. was back on the streets playing spoons to help the cause.

MD: *Satellite* really puts P.O.D. on the map as one of the top bands around. But before we get to it, let's talk about your breakout record. What are some of your favorite tracks from *Fundamental*?

Wuv: I like "Hollywood." It highlights what Traa and I do. We're very tight as a rhythm section in a heavy band. Most of the bands that play heavy don't do what we do, but Traa and I play really funky together. On "Hollywood," we blend Traa's funk roots with a heavy kind of sound.

MD: Your groove is funky and loose, especially the way you break up the groove between the bell of the ride cymbal and the hi-hat.

Wuv: I think it's very different from most drummers in bands who play our style of music. It's looser, more relaxed. My style blends hip-hop, reggae, Latin music, and heavy music, but it's all about making it flow. A lot of bands just go "boom," going from one extreme to the next. We've been doing it for so long that you don't hear the seams.

MD: Not many drummers in the style do that kind of Stewart Copeland bell and hi-hat sticking that you seem to favor. It sounds like you're using the left hand on the hi-hat and ride hand on the bell.

Wuv: Yes, I do a lot of that. The Police were one of my favorite bands. I saw them when Steel Pulse opened for them back in 1980. I was way into reggae back then, and Steel Pulse was one of my favorites.

MD: What else do you like to play from *Fundamental*?

Wuv: "Southtown." It's a high-energy track, and it also has some beautiful breakdowns—not too long or short, just enough to capture the crowd. The reaction we get from that song live is instantaneous. The crowd gets off on it.

MD: Why has radio, up to this point, not warmed to P.O.D.?

Wuv: I don't know. That's a game we're just learning about. We got zilch radio support on the last album. But for some reason we did have MTV. They climbed onboard and hooked us up. People knew who we were, but they didn't hear us on the radio. It usually works the other way around. For this new record, we're already getting a good buzz at radio.

MD: To what do you attribute the growth

of P.O.D.'s songwriting on the new album? It's much more melodic and catchy.

Wuv: Time. We've been putting out albums since 1991, and even back in the day there was a lot of stuff that we didn't include. When we got signed to Atlantic for *Fundamental*, the process was more rushed and chaotic. But for this new one, we took some time off to write. It was like when we were kids when we just had fun and didn't worry about the time it might take. It all happened naturally.

MD: There are a lot of classic, almost '80s-styled choruses on *Satellite*. Tracks like "Alive," "Satellite," and "Boom" are like Boston meets Metallica.

Wuv: You're right. We dug back to the old days to have that straight rock 'n' roll style. There are a lot of mid-tempo grooves grinding through. We put a lot of melodic guitar solos on the album too.

MD: Do P.O.D. write on the road?

Wuv: Last year we did two hundred fifty shows, so it's hard for us to write on the road. But we did have the opportunity to work on some soundtracks, including *Any Given Sunday* and *Little Nicky*. Those songs were exceptions. When we're home we jam on rhythms we like, and then structure them the best we can for Sonny to write lyrics to.

Satellite was the album we had to make. In the past we've made more jazzy-sounding or more Latin-sounding records. *Fundamental* was made fast. We were under the gun to get it out there. But we had more time to structure the music this time around.

MD: Did you take more time with your drum parts as well?

Wuv: Yeah. In the past I would spend a week recording. But this time I had three weeks for the drum tracks alone. I had a drum tech named Gersh who owns Drum Fetish in LA; he supplied me with all the drums. So we attacked each song in its own right. If it was a slow song and we wanted a fat snare, he had twelve snares to choose from. He would demo all of these different snares until I found the one I liked for the tune. That was a whole new experience for me.

MD: What was the process for laying down the tracks?

P.O.D. Percussion



Drumset: Pearl Masters Custom series in gold finish

- A. 5x13 Omar Hakim signature snare
- B. 8x8 tom
- C. 8x10 tom
- D. 8x12 tom
- E. 16x16 floor tom
- F. 16x20 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" Z hi-hats
- 2. 12" Oriental Trash splash
- 3. 17"K crash
- 4. 20" Z crash (doubles as ride)
- 5. 12" China Boy
- 6. 17" China Boy

Electronics: Roland
aa. 6" pad (connected to a TD-10 sound module)

Hardware: All Pearl

Sticks: Vic Firth 7A model



Wuv: We all laid down scratch tracks. I played to a drum machine for the tempo. And then the others would redo their parts. In the past we'd record the bass second after the drums, but our engineer wanted to lay down the guitars second, then the bass, and then the vocals. The whole process took three months.

MD: As far as writing some of the material,

like the reggae tracks, did they begin with you playing a groove?

Wuv: Most of the reggae stuff worked that way. Like on "Ridiculous," I came up with the drum rhythm first and the song came from there.

We share the songwriting credits across the board. We've been doing this since we were kids—we all began together. We've all

Wuv

put an equal amount of work toward our success.

MD: And as far as the overall approach of the record, did you consciously draw on the '70s and '80s styles?

Wuv: As a unit we were feeling medium-tempo grooves a bit more this time, and after writing seven or eight songs we realized that we were headed in more of a classic rock 'n' roll direction. It was surprising, but that was what we were feeling, so we didn't fight it. We didn't want to stop the natural progression.

MD: There are patterns on songs like "Youth Of A Nation," big tom/bass drum combinations, that really push the song.

Wuv: I overdubbed timpani over my toms on that track. I played mallets, doubling the toms. It made that song sound huge. I tuned the three timpani to the pitches of the toms.

MD: There's a Latin percussion section in "Masterpiece Conspiracy."

Wuv: That just happened in the studio. I did the drums first, then laid down some timbales and other percussion. Often, the guitar parts will be influenced by the accents I play,

so I'll purposely throw in certain accents that I know the guitar will follow. And the percussion helped me to add all sorts of accent patterns over the drums.

MD: How do you think your drumming has changed since *Fundamental*?

Wuv: I've gotten sharper, and I'm doing things now very naturally that five years ago I could only try to do. Things seem to flow out of my playing now. Things aren't so forced.

I used to watch Bill Maxwell and Alex Acuna with Koinonia. They used to boggle my mind, they were so smooth and clean. And Will Kennedy with The Yellowjackets and Joel Rosenblatt with Spyro Gyra—I love all those drummers and that music. I used to go to all the jazz concerts in San Diego just to watch their hi-hat work. I was used to pounding as hard as I could, but I loved the graceful way they all played. I think some of that has come into my drumming.

MD: It must be harder to do that at the volume levels P.O.D. plays at.

Wuv: Everything is harder when you're pounding.

MD: Do you use a click?

Wuv: For this album I recorded every single song with a click. I was scared about it beforehand. But we used a click for the singles on the last album for remix purposes. For *Satellite*, the producer asked me to do it for every song. I was like, "Dang, dude, I don't play to clicks. It's not fun." And that's especially true when you've just learned the songs. To go in the studio and try to play the songs with a click and put your feel on top of it is hard.

MD: How did you get that nice loose feel with the click?

Wuv: Thankfully I didn't have a problem with it, although I thought I would. During pre-production our producer pre-tempoed the songs, so I got used to the patterns. I didn't use a quarter-note click. Things worked better for me with 8th-note patterns.

MD: Did you do any triggering?

Wuv: No. They're all natural drum sounds. I did do a couple of overdubs with my Roland V-Drum kit. I used it on "Boom" for a more industrial snare drum sound, because the snare pattern is straight all the way through.

MD: Do you come up with your drum parts quickly?

Wuv: I try to never over-think a part. I know some people analyze things, but for us, once Triaa and Marcos start jamming, I go for the

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Wuv

obvious beat. They might have a suggestion for a drum pattern, which I feel I have to be open to. And I give a lot of input on their guitar and bass lines, and they're open to that as well. That's how we keep having fun and why we don't fight.

We've made decisions that have benefited us in ways that go beyond the desire to be famous. We were independent for eight years before this, putting out four records. We've learned a lot. But if it all ended tomorrow, it wouldn't matter. God has blessed us.

MD: What do you listen to for fun?

Wuv: Steel Pulse, Black Uhuru, Bad Brains, 24-7 Spyz, and some good acid jazz.

MD: What are your long-term goals?

Wuv: A couple of months ago it started to hit me that I make my living playing the drums. Somehow it struck me that I have a responsibility to concentrate on being the best I can be.

As far as what I want to work on, I want to hone my technique so I can play jazz. That's really what I want to do. I want to take lessons, maybe even study at a place like Drummer's Collective in New York. I was there once and had never seen anything

like it—all these drummers teaching each other how to play. I could hang in that place all day long.

MD: Switching gears to equipment for a second, you now endorse Pearl drums. What was it about them that excited you?

Wuv: I do a lot of fly-out shows, where I can't use my regular kit. Pearl has the means to supply me with drums wherever I am. Plus they were willing to really get behind me, and they gave me the impression that they believed in me. And their Masters Custom series drums are amazing.

MD: Do you go through a lot of heads?

Wuv: I go through heads all the time. And it was worse when I used 2B sticks. But now I play with smaller sticks. I was using Peter Erskine sticks for a while—real small jazz sticks. That got me to the Vic Firth 7As. I love the way they feel, but I go through a lot of them.

MD: You've been playing at this level of intensity for ten years. Are you tired at the end of a show?

Wuv: It depends. First, I try to get a lot of sleep. When I'm on tour and we're doing it every day, I don't feel as tired. But lately we've had a break and are mostly doing

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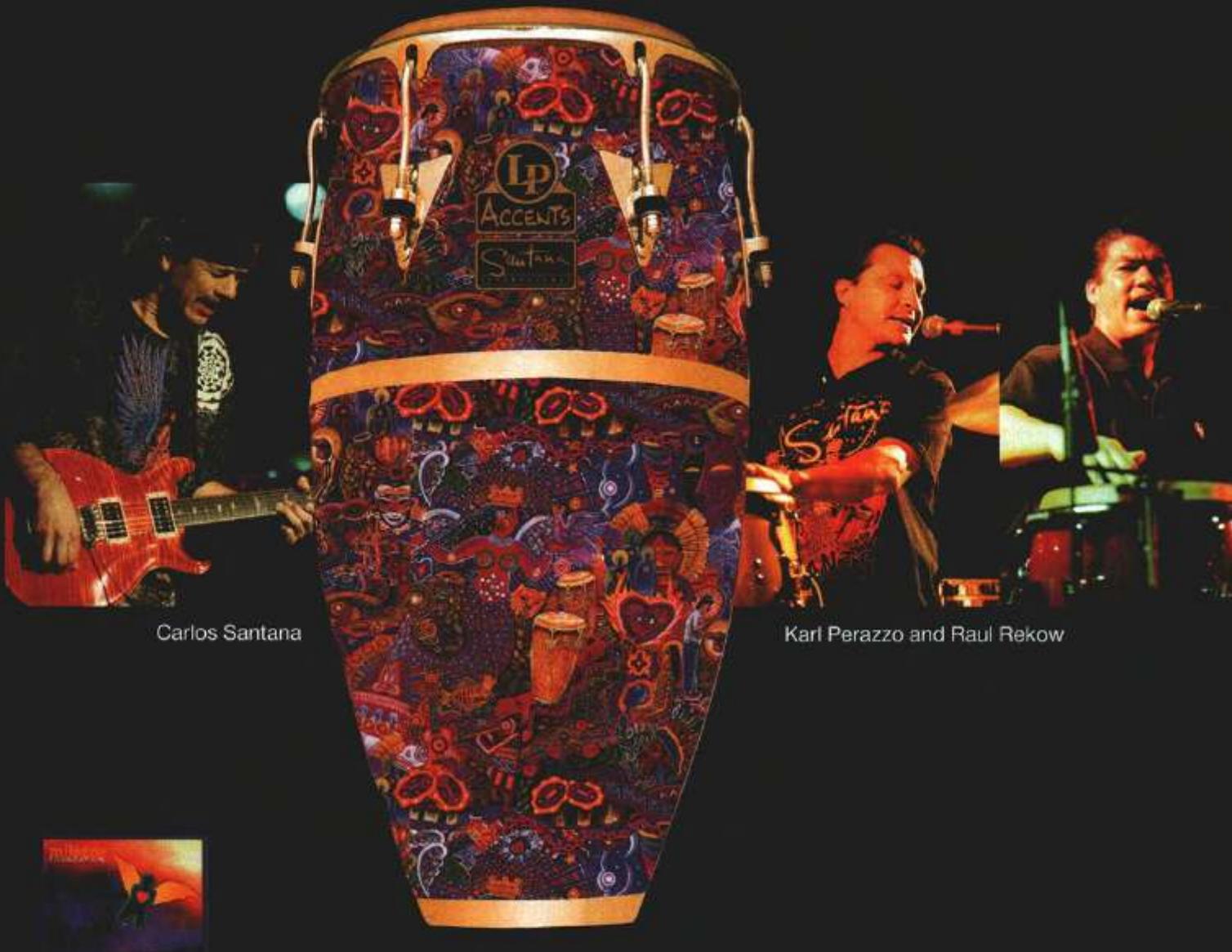
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Wuv

those fly-out shows. At the end of those, I'm absolutely spent. When you're constantly on the road, you build up strength.

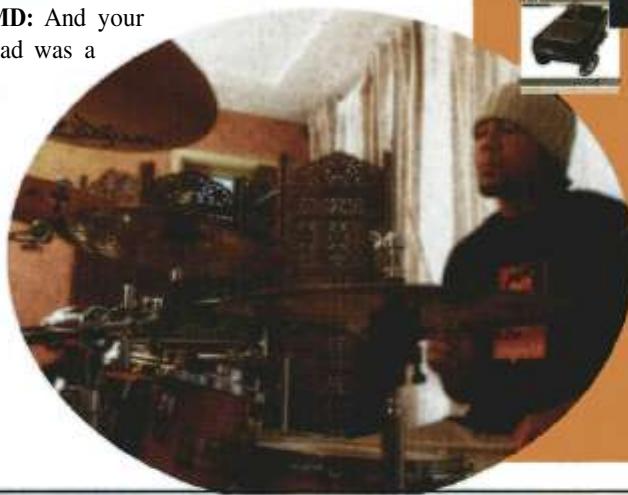
MD: Do you use any ear protection?

Wuv: I use in-ear monitors, which are not earplugs, but they cut down the high frequencies. And I pray a lot, too!

MD: By the way, how did you get the name "Wuv"?

Wuv: My Italian grandmother has a really heavy accent, and when I was born she called me "love," but it sounded a lot like Wuv. And it stuck.

MD: And your dad was a



drummer as well?

Wuv: Yes, he was a straight ghetto rock drummer. He played since he was in high school, and he was a hippie. My dad is forty-two now; my mom had me when she

was fifteen. So they're not that far from me in age. My dad was into stoner rock—Black Sabbath, AC/DC—and that's what I heard him play all day, every day. He was in local bands in San Diego, and he played with one

Wuv Notes

Here are the recordings that Wuv says best represent his playing.



Artist
P.O.D.
P.O.D.
P.O.D.
P.O.D.
P.O.D.

Recording
Satellite
The Fundamental Elements Of Southtown
Live In Tomfest
Snuff The Punk
Brown

And these are the ones he listens to for inspiration.

Artist
AC/DC
The Cars
Steel Pulse
Koinonia
Rush
The Police
The Police
The Police
Cozy Powell

Recording
Hell's Bells
The Cars
Earth Crisis
Celebration
2112
Zenyatta Mondatta
Outlandos D'Amour
Regatta De Blanc
Over The Top

Drummer
Phil Rudd
David Robinson
Steve "Grizzly" Nisbett
Bill Maxwell, Alex Acuna
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Wuv

of Ozzy Osbourne's guitar players. I went to all the garage parties with my dad, setting up his drums.

I could play a strong, solid beat when I was six or seven. There was always a drum-set around, so when I was young I just experimented with them and really didn't take it that seriously. I would play for my friends.

MD: So what did your dad show you?

Wuv: He taught me different beats, but I never took lessons from him, per se. I tried in junior high, but by then I was already somewhat advanced. So it was boring for me. I didn't want to sit there and learn rudiments.

My dad would sit on his set of drums and I would be on mine, and he would explain beats to me. I learned a lot from him and having him right there for me to watch. And when I was a kid I loved to play along to records by The Cars and AC/DC.

MD: Were you always into hard rock?

Wuv: Yes, and it allowed my dad and me to get together over something. He would come home from work and we would jam out. At one point he bought a used Rogers drumset. It was missing hardware, so that



became our project. We cleaned up the kit, tracked down the missing parts, oiled it, and got rid of the rust, and when that bad boy was set up, to me, it was the baddest drumset ever.

At that point I was coming home from school every day and practicing. But what frustrated me was that I never really honed my reading skills or my technical stuff. For me, it was more like learning a ghetto style of drumming first, and once I could do what I needed to do, I concentrated on technique.

MD: What was that?

Wuv: When you're a kid it's all about double bass. After AC/DC and The Cars, I got into Metallica. In fact, that's who P.O.D. wanted to be when we first got together. We were into Bad Brains, too. Oh, and I was also way into reggae. My uncle was a reggae DJ in San Diego. Through him I'd get free tickets to all the reggae shows that came through town. There was a time when reggae was all I listened to. That obviously affected my playing.

MD: How did P.O.D. come together?

Wuv: I played in one band before P.O.D. It

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Wuv

was called Poetic Justice. But then Marcos and I met through another musician. He asked if I liked Slayer and Metallica, I said "Yeah," and we jammed. We've been together ever since 1990. It was that simple. We started practicing in my house. We knew Sonny 'cause he's my cousin. And the friend who introduced me to Marcos had met him through church, which was good. I didn't want to jam with some guy who was talking about Satan.

MD: How does early P.O.D. compare to today?

Wuv: We've learned how to structure songs a lot better. Some of the earlier albums had ten-minute songs. They would go on for days and days. We'd find a groove and stick with it. Now we've learned how to write songs a little better, as far as keeping everything we like but also having a tighter arrangement. It's hard for me to see the exact transition, though, because I've been with these guys for ten years.

MD: But how about your transition as a drummer? You have a very powerful bass drum foot.

Wuv: That just comes from hard playing. I'm also lucky to be working with Traa on

bass, because a lot of what he plays helps me to develop my busier bass drum work. I try to sync up with what he plays, and that can be a workout. And I do it all with a single foot.

MD: You're a very powerful and concise drummer.

Wuv: I don't go off. I'm not a shredding drummer like Danny [Carey] from Tool. We have so much guitar and bass happening that if I tried to throw in my stuff too, we'd be walking all over each other. I need to stick to more groove drumming like AC/DC and Zeppelin—solid backbone, but with fla-

MD: But you do play more exotically than some drummers in this style

Wuv: I feel a lot of freedom to do little things within the groove. I was way into this jazz band, Koinonia, a group of studio musicians that included Alex Acuna and bassist Abraham Laboriel. One of their albums that I loved was called *Friendship*. I bought that for my dad, but we both became fans.

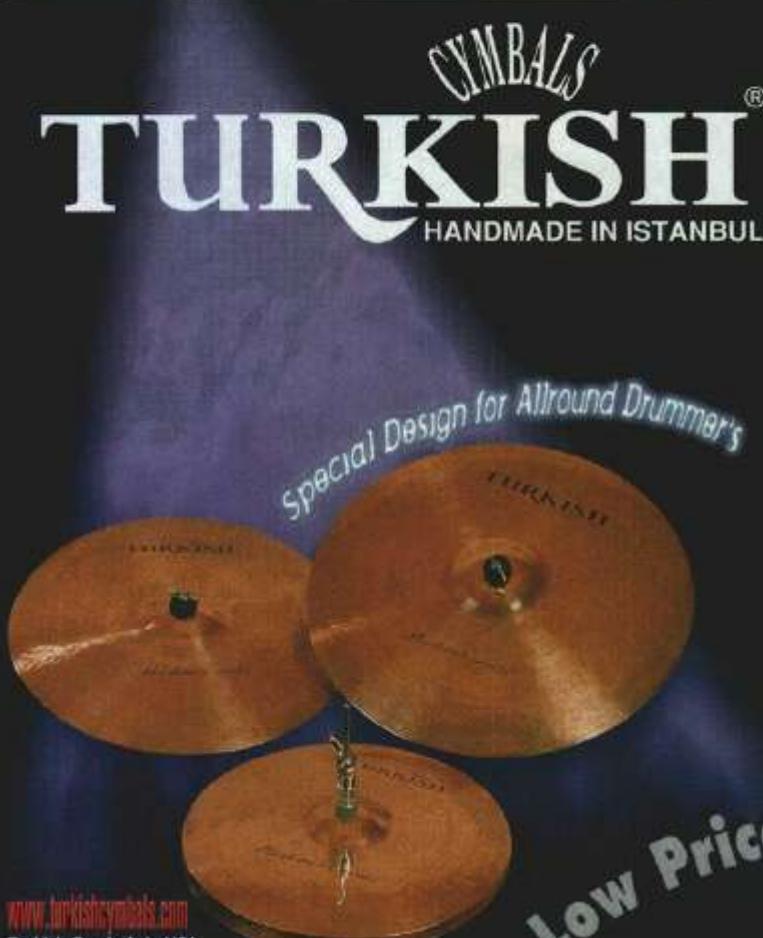
I'm way into Alex Acuna. On the other end of the spectrum, I was also way into Cozy Powell, especially his *Over The Top* record. I liked his fills. I would listen to him for days. Carmine Appice, too. He's just so

solid. I've always been a fan of Neil Peart. And I can't forget the drummers for Bad Brains—Mackie Jayson and Earl Hudson.

MD: Regarding your faith, I read in one clipping where you said that faith saved your parents' marriage.

Wuv: My parents were just two young kids trying to handle marriage and kids of their own. They were so young and trying to deal with it all. It was tough for all of us. I saw what partying did to my family, to where my dad was living in the street and my mom, sister, and I lived in a bedroom in our cousin's house. My dad was spiraling downward. But then, after he gave his life to God and Jesus, he was able to turn his life around. I saw that as a child, and I saw the restoration of my family.

I gave my life to God to make me a better person. I know what He has done in my family and with our band. P.O.D. is a band who loves the Lord. He's put us in a position where we're reaching kids every night with a positive message and doing it in a non-cheesy way. We're thankful for that.



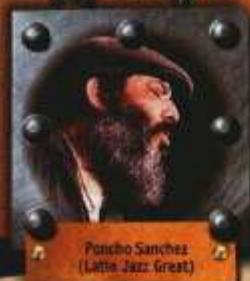


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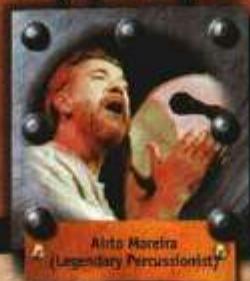
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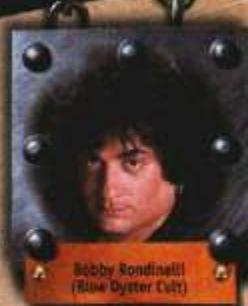
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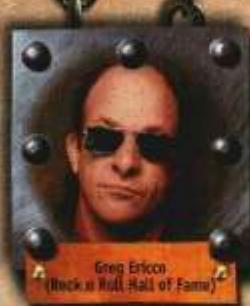
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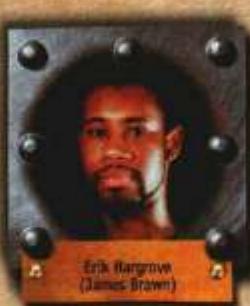
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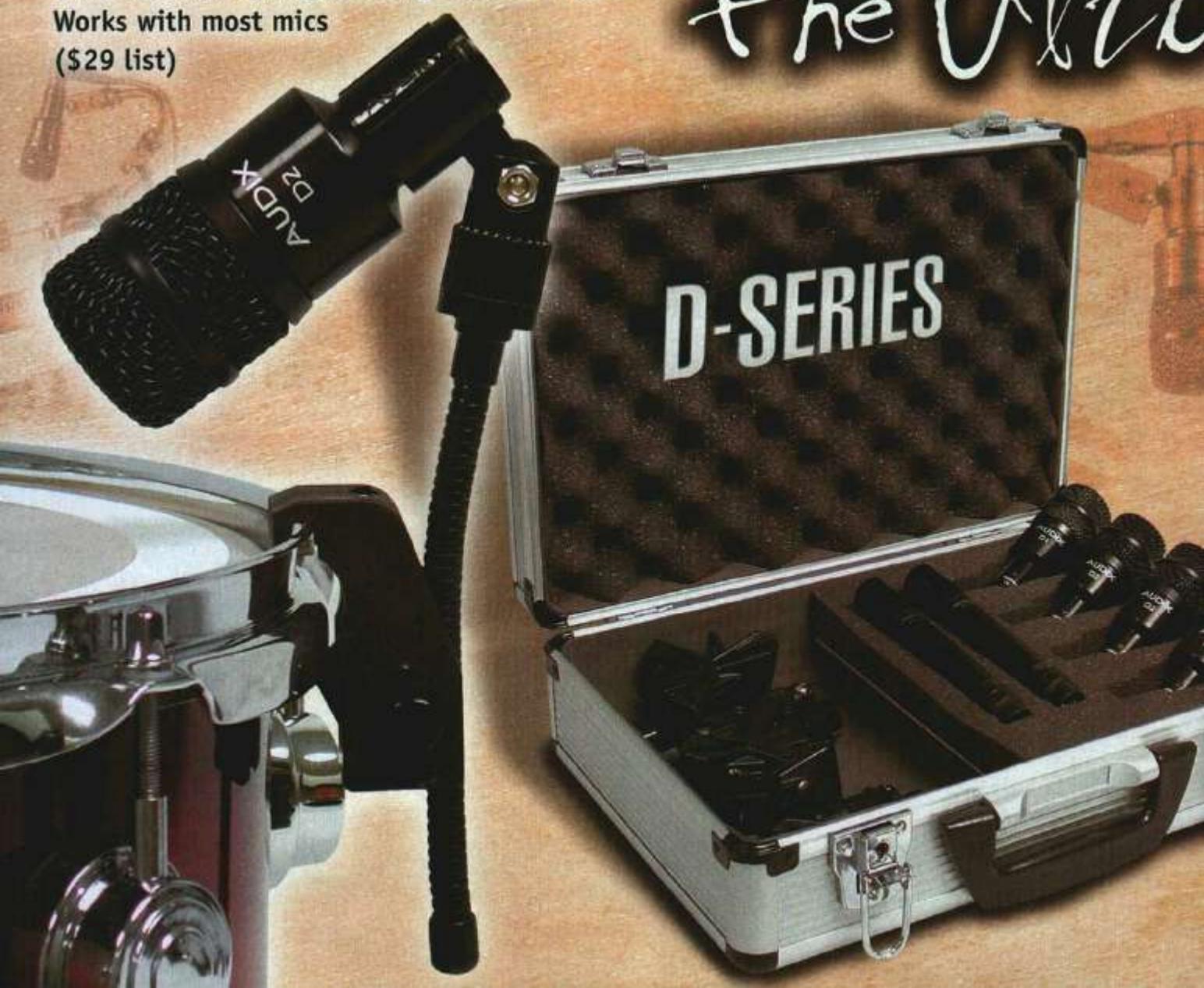
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ATIM ALEXANDER

Prime Mover

Story by Mike Haid
Photos by Alex Solca



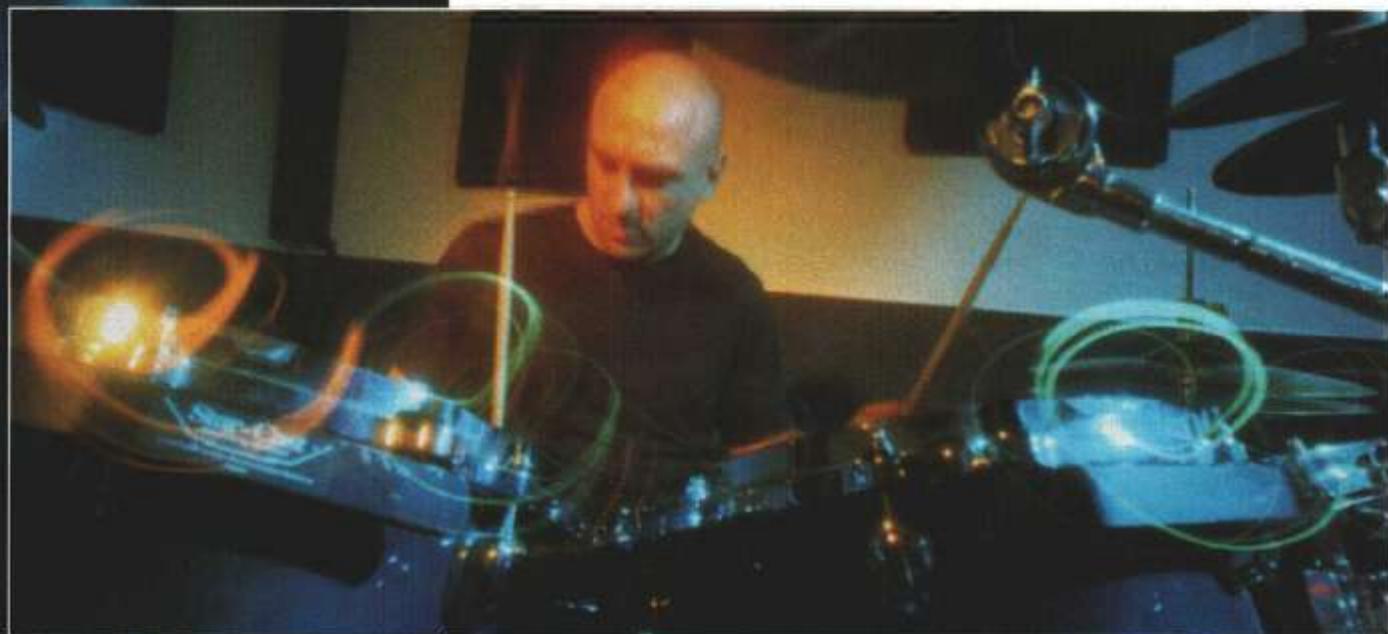


When Tim Alexander left Primus in 1996, he was ready to move from the wacky, experimental frenzy of rhythms that had made the band a household name to a more structured rock format. He started his band Laundry to be able to do just that. Little did Alexander realize that trying to get a rock band off the ground in today's "do it yourself" music business is not quite as easy as sailing the seas of cheese.

In Primus, Tim had laid down some unique and groundbreaking drumming, helping to launch the underground Bay Area post-punk progressive band into stardom. Two gold records (1991's *Sailing The Seas Of Cheese* and 1995's *Tales From The Punch Bowl*) and their hugely successful 1993 release, *Pork Soda* (which debuted in *Billboard's* Top-10), established the quirky trio as a pop act with a twist.

But Primus became too *much* of a musical twist for Alexander. After leaving Primus, the labor of his band Laundry again became too much for Tim to deal with. (He had taken on the chores of drummer and lead vocalist.) At that point it seemed that Tim had all but disappeared, until he emerged in 1998 with an improvisational project called Attention Deficit on the progressive Magna Carta label. (The group features bassist Michael Manring and former Testament guitarist Alex Skolnick.) This instrumental trio proved interesting and experimental, though in a different format from Primus. But it still gave Tim the freedom to challenge his considerable drumming skills.

Attention Deficit has recently released its second adventure in heavy instrumental rock explorations, *The Idiot King*. Tim's drum sound is massive, and his attitude shines through with aggression on the somewhat structured odd-meter pieces. This record, in particular, proves Tim is still haunted by the spirit of Primus. But don't look for him on the road or hanging out in the city by the bay. He's packed his drum cases for yet another adventure, this time in the city of Lost Wages.



MD: So, what are you doing in Las Vegas?

Tim: I'm working as a percussionist in The Blue Man Group.

MD: How did that gig come about?

Tim: I went to the show and really dug it. So when I got home after the show, I went on the Internet to check it out and see what it was all about. I wasn't doing much at the time professionally, because my group Laundry wasn't working. So I thought I'd see if the Blue Man show was auditioning players. I found out they were, so I went for an audition. About a month later I was in the group.

MD: What was the audition like?

Tim: The first thing they did was play about fifteen seconds of one of their songs. They wanted to hear me play it to find out if I could learn the parts quickly. They also wanted to see if I could pick up on the feel and play it back. It was one of their more rocking tunes. Then they showed me some of the other rhythms that they use, and I had to play them. The interesting thing for me was that I had to learn to play other people's parts, as opposed to creating my own parts, which is pretty much all I've done with the bands I've played in.

MD: What's your role in the show?

Tim: It's really cool. We get to dress up in glow-in-the-dark paint and do all kinds of crazy stuff. There's a huge wall of drums, and we get to leave our positions on stage and go up on this wall and play all these weird drums. It's about thirty feet high, and we're up there doing crazy things. I don't want to give away the whole show, but it's really cool.

MD: How many percussionists are in the show?

Tim: There are four drummers; two play drumset and two play percussion. But it's not traditional percussion. We also play toms and snares, and we're not sitting down. We all play our parts together to sound as one.

MD: It sounds as if you're really digging the gig.

Tim: Yeah, it's great for now. I was at a point in my career where I wanted to play but wasn't interested in joining a band. It pays the bills, and it's a good place for me right now.

I had reached a point in my group Laundry where it was getting difficult to agree on anything. That's when the Blue Man show came about, and it just felt right to step into it. I like it because there's not a

Attention Getters



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- B. four Octobans (low)
- C. 5 1/2x14 metal snare
- D. 8x10 concert tom (no bottom head)
- E. 8x12 concert tom
- F. 10x14 concert tom
- G. 16x16 concert floor tom
- H. 18x18 concert floor tom
- I. 18x22 bass drum (no front head)

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 13" hi-hats (Z top, Quick Beat bottom)
- 2. 14" K crash
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- 4. 8" K splash
- 5. 16" A Rock crash
- 6. 22" Impulse ride
- 7. 13" remote hi-hat (Z top, New Beat bottom)
- 8. 16" China Trash

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Heads: Remo coated Ambassadors on snare batters, Pinstripes on toms, Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter

Sticks: Zildjian Tim Alexander signature model



lot of stress and I don't have to be in the spotlight. I can just be one of the drummers and play the parts that are given to me. It's a respectable gig, and I'm getting paid to have fun. It also allows me the time to work on my own music. I don't know what's going to happen with Laundry, I just needed a break from it.

MD: Were you feeling the burnout stage coming before you left Primus, or did it

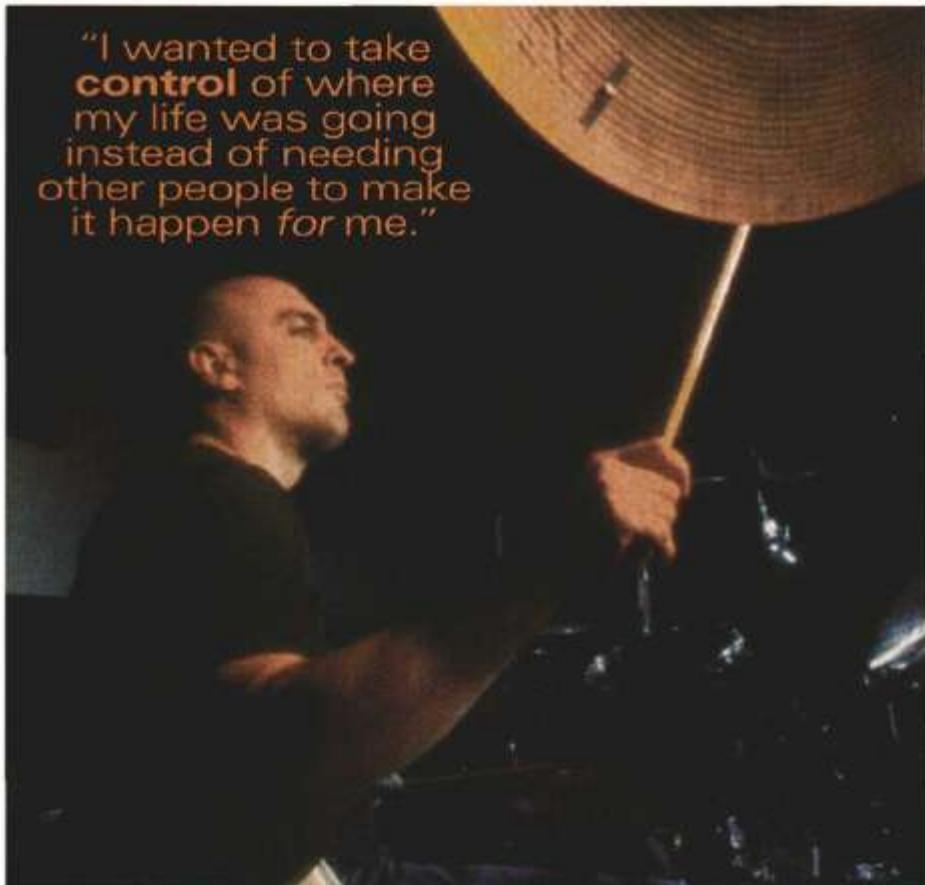
begin with Laundry?

Tim: It was happening with Primus. Then I immediately jumped from Primus into the Laundry project and it continued to wear on me. So I had to just get away from all of it.

MD: Did you have to relocate to Las Vegas to join the show?

Tim: Yeah, I had to move here from the San Francisco area. It's really different here. It's a city that goes twenty-four hours non-stop. I

"I wanted to take control of where my life was going instead of needing other people to make it happen for me."



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don't really have much to worry about here except going to work, which is a welcome break that I needed. For the last five years I've been pushing to get Laundry happening, and it was really stressing me out. So this gig came along at just the right time.

MD: So what type of music was Laundry doing?

Tim: It's heavy rock that's kind of trippy and psychedelic. It's very textural music with lots of good drumming and lots of odd meters. I'm doing all the vocals and playing drums. That's part of the problem we're having right now: I'm not really enjoying playing drums and singing anymore. It's getting to be too difficult.

MD: Is this the first band you've been in as a singing drummer?

Tim: Yeah, it was something new for me. We had a singer, but it really wasn't working out, so I thought I'd give it a try. It's been a very hard thing to do and it's taken a long time to get it going.

I felt like it was up to me to make things happen. I really wanted to take control of my career a little more. Sometimes being "just" a drummer in a band situation, you have to

Tim Alexander

sit around and wait for a singer or a songwriter to come along and make something happen. I wanted to take control of where my life was going instead of needing other people to make it happen for me.

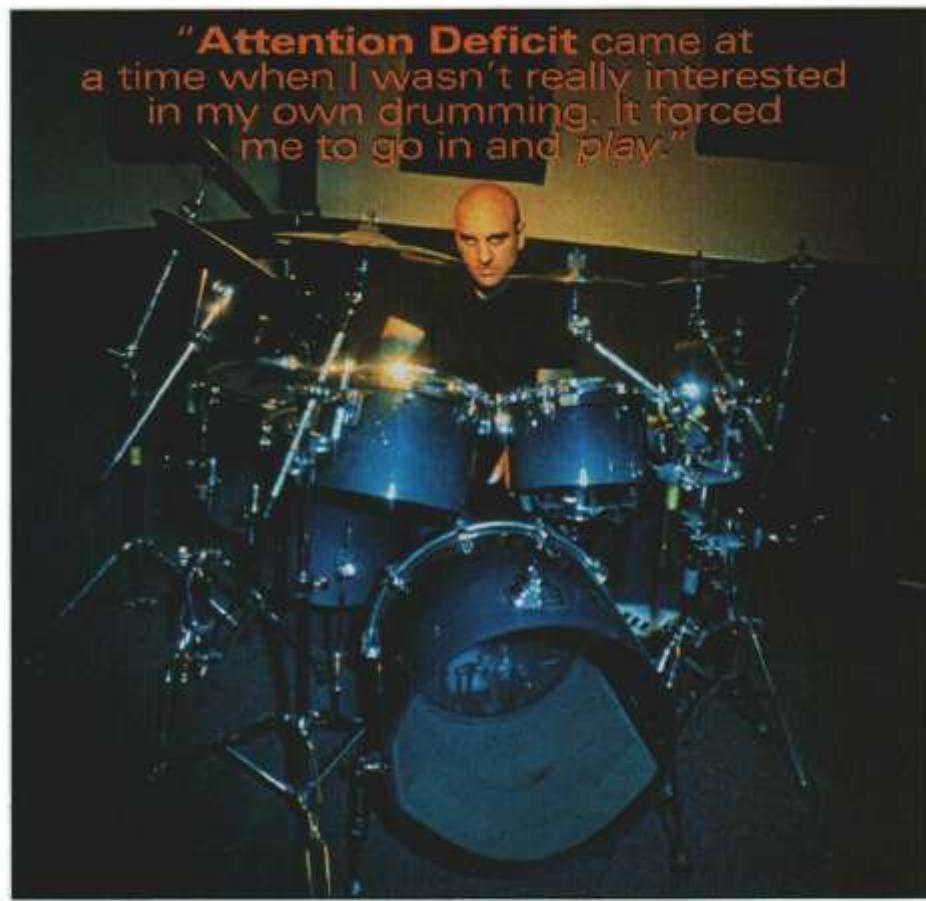
We have a record out and we're working on getting airplay. We have it for sale on the Internet and we also have some distribution. But I really don't want to play drums and sing. I might like to play guitar and sing or something like that, but when I'm playing drums, I just want to concentrate on the drums.

MD: So you're working on your own music now?

Tim: Yeah, but it's a slow process. I'm trying to keep it going. It's a sound that's more in the Led Zeppelin, Soundgarden style of rock, but I'm also trying to be as melodic as possible.

MD: With Laundry, and also with your own material, are you trying to push your drumming limits and create new rhythmic ideas?

Tim: I do sometimes with my music, but with Laundry I really wasn't trying to push the drumming because the bass and guitar were so busy. I needed to keep it simple. I did a lot of that type of limit-pushing in



"Attention Deficit came at a time when I wasn't really interested in my own drumming. It forced me to go in and play."

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MD: Are there any skills that you developed during your time with Primus that have helped you in your current projects?

Tim: Yeah, just about every aspect of what I do—recording, writing—all the experiences of playing with Primus have been a great learning tool for me.

MD: Has your playing changed much since leaving Primus?

Tim: Oh yeah. I haven't had the desire to come up with crazy parts all the time. In Primus, we always tried to create new and different rhythmic ideas. Now I listen to the music and come up with parts that fit yet make it sound like me.

MD: How did Attention Deficit come about?

Tim: Bassist Michael Manring invited me to play on one of his solo records a few years ago. Guitarist Alex Skolnick also played on it, but we didn't play together. I came in and played my parts at a separate time from Alex, so we never met. Then Alex and Michael approached me when they were contacted by Magna Carta to do an improv record. On the first record, I just showed up with my drums, not knowing what we were

going to play. The new record was a little more organized, but not really rehearsed.

MD: So how does Attention Deficit fit into your style of drumming? It's pretty creative instrumental music that must stretch you as a player.

Tim: It was hard for me to do this project because I've been going through a period of not being too interested in the drums. I've been trying to find other things that interest me, like writing tunes and playing guitar. Attention Deficit forced me to go in and play, but I really didn't feel at my best as a drummer.

Doing those records put the pressure on me to play more and show off a little. I'm just not one of those Dennis Chambers kind of drummers. With the new disc, *Idiot King*, we wanted to make a record that was cool musically but had a little more organization and planning—like some of the older fusion records that were still rockin'.

We got together once beforehand to run over some ideas, but everybody was busy. So Michael Manring, Alex Skolnick, and I put together some tunes individually, and we created parts to each other's tunes. I actually have tunes where I'm playing guitar parts as

well. I wrote my tunes at home and played guitar on them. So when we got together, we kept some of my guitar parts and replaced the rest.

MD: How long have you played guitar?

Tim: I've played since I was a kid, but not until recently have I taken it seriously.

MD: Let's do a track-by-track rundown of *The Idiot King*. On the opening track, "American Jingo," it sounds like you pulled out the old Octobans.

Tim: Yeah, those are Octobans. I was trying to create a little bit of a twisted part that didn't sound too expected by placing the accents in weird spots. I didn't want to rip off Bill Bruford too much by using that sound, but I love Octobans for that kind of groove.

MD: A lot of this record sounds very King Crimson influenced. Is Bruford a big inspiration of yours?

Tim: Oh yeah, I dig Crimson. I haven't listened to them much lately, but a few years ago I was way into them. I was into Bruford pretty heavy back then too. I was into him earlier in Yes too. The way he would groove while playing odd time, he made the music less chaotic so that you didn't really notice

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Tim Alexander

that the time was changing. I also liked the way he played across the changes and played through 1, not landing where you would expect. I really dug his sound and his rhythmic concept, which wasn't always a basic backbeat.

MD: There's a section in "American Jingo" where you and Manring go off together. That's rhythmically intense.

Tim: It was Michael's idea to totally break away from the groove and have me "freak out." Then he came up with a bass part over the top of my chaotic solo. I just played some crazy fills that made it sound like someone falling down stairs or something. We also recorded another crazy drum part and then played the tape backwards to give it that cool sound.

MD: The next tune, "Any Unforeseen Event," sounds a bit like an Allan Holdsworth track.

Tim: *Totally.* I was into Holdsworth several years ago, and his drummer, Gary Husband, was a big part of what I loved about Holdsworth's music. Husband blew my mind. I was trying to keep his vibe in mind on this tune. I can't touch what Gary does, but that's what I was thinking.

I like the randomness in Gary's playing. I like how he mixes things up and doesn't play standard stuff. That's what really caught my ear. He sounded like a rock drummer with amazing chops and ideas.

MD: The next track, "The Risk Of Failure," has a dark, early fusion vibe with odd meters.

Tim: Yeah, that's one of my tunes. I tried to create a vibe in 5/4 and then groove into a straight rock thing. I tried to make it as musical as possible. We really didn't want this record to turn into a big "wank fest" of soloing. And on my tunes, I really wanted to create a cool Zappa or King Crimson kind of vibe, where we created parts instead of just jammed. I wanted that *Zappa* kind of hypnotic groove that went on as long as it felt good. It was cool because we weren't pressured to make a three-minute song.

MD: Who are your biggest odd-meter influences?

Tim: King Crimson, Yes, and Rush. Those are the big three.

MD: The next tune, "Low Voter Turnout," has an interesting section of 4/4 time that has odd phrases over 4/4, making it sound like it's in an odd meter.

Tim: I'm doing some ghost notes and buzz

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Tim Alexander

rolls with my left hand on the snare in between the bass drum pattern, though that's hard to hear. I'm playing a groove that follows the bass line phrasing, which is odd groupings of notes over 4/4.

MD: Are these the same type of rhythmic ideas that you and Les Claypool would create in Primus?

Tim: It was rare that we did odd-time stuff in Primus. That's not something that we were aiming to do. But when we did, it was because it was something that one of us came up with that just felt good and grooved. We never created an odd-meter part just for the sake of doing odd time signatures. I don't want to play anything if it doesn't feel good or make sense.

MD: The next tune, "Unclear, Inarticulate Things," is another uptempo Holdsworth-sounding piece.

Tim: I don't really enjoy playing fast, jazzy things, so I played the groove in half time to what the other guys were playing. If I played fast with them we could have easily standardized the sound that way. But I did what I enjoy, which is groove while *they* played all that fast stuff. In my head I could hear Dennis

Chambers play that tune really fast and just kill it, but playing that way isn't my thing.

MD: Let's talk about your incredible drum sounds on this record.

Tim: One of the things that I made sure of before we made this record was that there was no way I was going to do a digital recording. We did that on the first record and I wasn't pleased with the sound at all. This record was recorded all analog, with great-sounding vintage recording gear to give the drums some meat and power. This really is a great-sounding record, and I'm very pleased with the drum sounds.

Digital recording is okay for certain things, but with this project we really needed a big rock sound with that thick '70s vibe, which back then was all analog. There really is a huge difference in the drum sounds between analog and digital recording. And as far as the budget, it costs the same, so why not go for the best sound possible.

MD: Since we're on the subject of recording your drums for this record, let's talk about your kit.

Tim: It's a Starclassic kit that Tama made

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Tim Alexander

for me with 10", 12", 14", 16", and 18" concert toms, meaning there are no bottom heads on the toms and no front head on the 18x22 bass drum. I like that sound because it makes for a lot of attack. The snare is a standard metal 5 1/2x14. I went in without changing the heads on my drums, which I believe were all Pinstripes. I just had a pillow in the bass drum.

MD: How about cymbals?

Tim: They're all Zildjians. My hi-hats are 13" with a Z on top and a Quick Beat on the bottom. My ride is a Zildjian Impulse that I've been using forever. I use the China Trash cymbal, a couple of bells, and some basic rock crashes.

MD: Are you into the engineering of your drum sounds?

Tim: Yeah, I was heavily involved in the mixing of this record along with Ralph Patlan at Prairie Sun Recording. I was right there with him for the mix.

MD: Getting back to some of the other songs on the disc, did you write "My Fellow Astronauts"?

Tim: No, that's Michael's tune. But I remember doing something on it that I used to do a lot with Primus, which is playing

quarter notes on the hi-hat to keep the time steady and simple. Then you make the kick and snare cover the accents to create the groove. So it's not just a straight backbeat, because you're playing around with the groove. But the hi-hat never changes.

Michael really wanted me to screw up the groove on this one. He didn't want just a straight backbeat. So I created a groove on the toms that cycle some kind of rhythm that's not in 4/4, but the music is in 4/4. I think in this type of situation I usually tend to play a five- or six-beat cycle over four. I keep track of where 1 is in my head, but I don't count. I just listen and feel the music.

MD: The next track is "Dubyah."

Tim: This is another one of my tunes. I had originally written two guitar parts on this song. One of my favorite records of all time is Frank Zappa's *Shut Up 'N Play Yer Guitar*. That was the vibe I was going for on this tune. I wanted it to drift for a while, so I wrote it in odd time so it would hopefully sound like more than just a jam. When we deleted my guitar parts, it was a lot harder for me to play because I was used to hearing those parts that helped me catch the odd-time phrases.

MD: You've mentioned Frank Zappa several times.

Tim: Yeah, he's another big inspiration to me, especially his guitar playing. His sound and technique were amazing. Larry, from Primus, was a big Zappa head; he turned me on to Zappa. *Shut Up 'N Play Yer Guitar* was such a huge influence on my whole concept of drumming and guitar. It's mostly all guitar and drum solos, with Vinnie Colaiuta. I've still never heard anyone come close to playing like that.

MD: Are you a Vinnie fan?

Tim: After I heard that record I was. I don't think many drummers realize how amazing the stuff was that Vinnie played at that time. It's heavy, aggressive, and has more chops than you can imagine. It opened up a whole new world and defined what fusion was for me.

MD: Back to Attention Deficit. "The Killers Are To Blame" features some serious tom work.

Tim: This is my song. I'm playing guitar and drums on it. It's kind of a drum solo tune that we added towards the end of the session. When I was recording my drum parts I was hearing this sound that reminded

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Tim Alexander

me of Scottish bagpipe music. I tried to create a vibe that sounded like a bunch of Scottish drummers out in the field.

MD: It sounds like you're doing a series of tom and double bass combination patterns in your solo. Are you using a double pedal?

Tim: Yes.

MD: Who's influenced your double bass technique?

Tim: Neil Peart is probably my biggest influence for double bass. He was really the first guy I listened to who was doing more than just straight 16th notes with his feet. He was using his bass drums and toms together to create cool fills.

MD: Are you into drum solos?

Tim: Not really. It depends on the drummer. I can listen to Vinnie or Dennis Chambers solo, but I'm not really into listening to a lot of solos unless they have a lot of dynamics and a lot of interesting chops.

MD: Do you enjoy playing them?

Tim: No. I'm not that kind of a player.

MD: The next tune, "Nightmare On 48th Street," is the major chops fest of the album.

Tim: Yeah, that's also one of my songs. I created the main rhythm guitar pattern,

and Alex came up with the crazy fast pattern on top of that, which is actually a specific part that he played a harmony guitar part over. It's *insane*. It's major musical chaos, just being stupid and going over the edge. It's like the noise you hear when you walk into Guitar Center on a Saturday afternoon and there are drummers playing in the drum department and guitar players going crazy trying out guitars. That's the vibe of that song.

MD: The last tune, "Public Speaking Is Very Easy," has a funky drum 'n' bass groove happening.

Tim: That's a crazy thing that Michael wanted to do. I laid some cymbals on my drums—like practice pads—and played them like that to create something different.

MD: Do you spend much time practicing drums?

Tim: No. Right now I'm just doing the Blue Man gig, and most of my practicing has been just learning the show. There's no reading on the gig, so I have to memorize my parts.

MD: I noticed on your Web site (www.timalexander.org) that you're selling

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Tim Alexander

some of your drumsets.

Tim: Yeah, I have too many drumkits and no place to really keep them. I have the set that was on the cover of *Modern Drummer* and the other sets that I used with Primus.

MD: I also read on your Web site that you're doing a DVD.

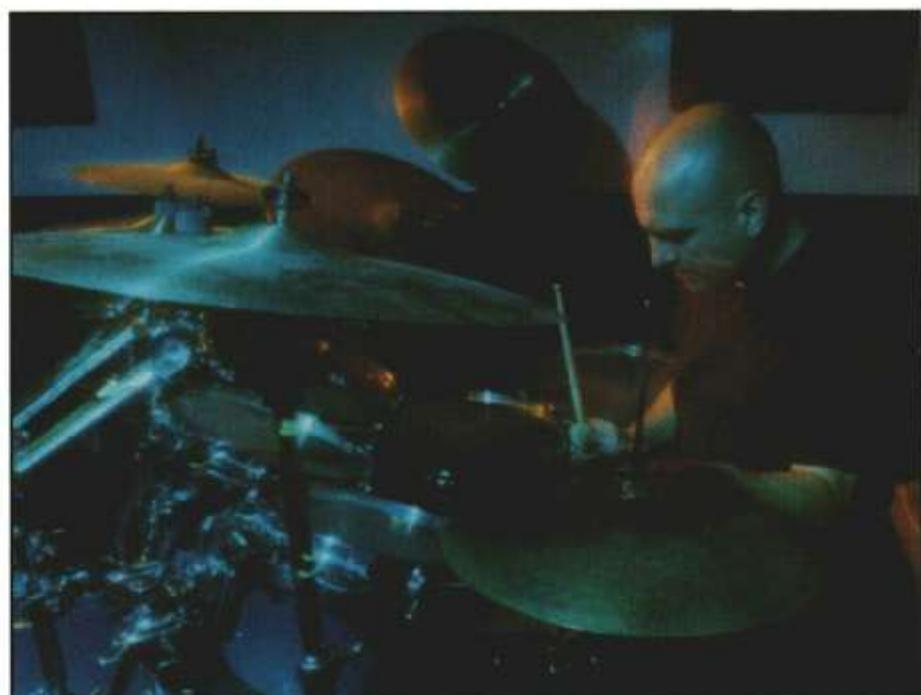
Tim: I was trying to put that together about six months ago, but it turned out not to be a good time to do it. It's still something that I plan to do, hopefully soon.

I'm thinking of making it more of a performance video rather than an instructional video. It'll focus on stuff I played with Primus and some other things so that people can see what I was doing and how I played some of that crazy stuff. I like the DVD format because of the surround sound. I want the listener to be surrounded by the drums.

MD: By the way, where did the nickname "Herb" come from, and is it still standing?

Tim: I would like it to be gone! It was just a stupid thing that I got stuck with in Primus because I was taking natural herbs.

MD: Finally, since leaving Primus you've done a fair number of drum clinics. What



have you learned from the experience?

Tim: It's reinforced the idea that clinics should and can be a learning experience and not just a show of chops. I like to focus my clinics on playing and writing music. Of course, people ask me to play

some of the parts I've recorded. But as I've said before, I'm not really into soloing. I leave that to the professionals. The bottom line to me is, it's all about creating music.



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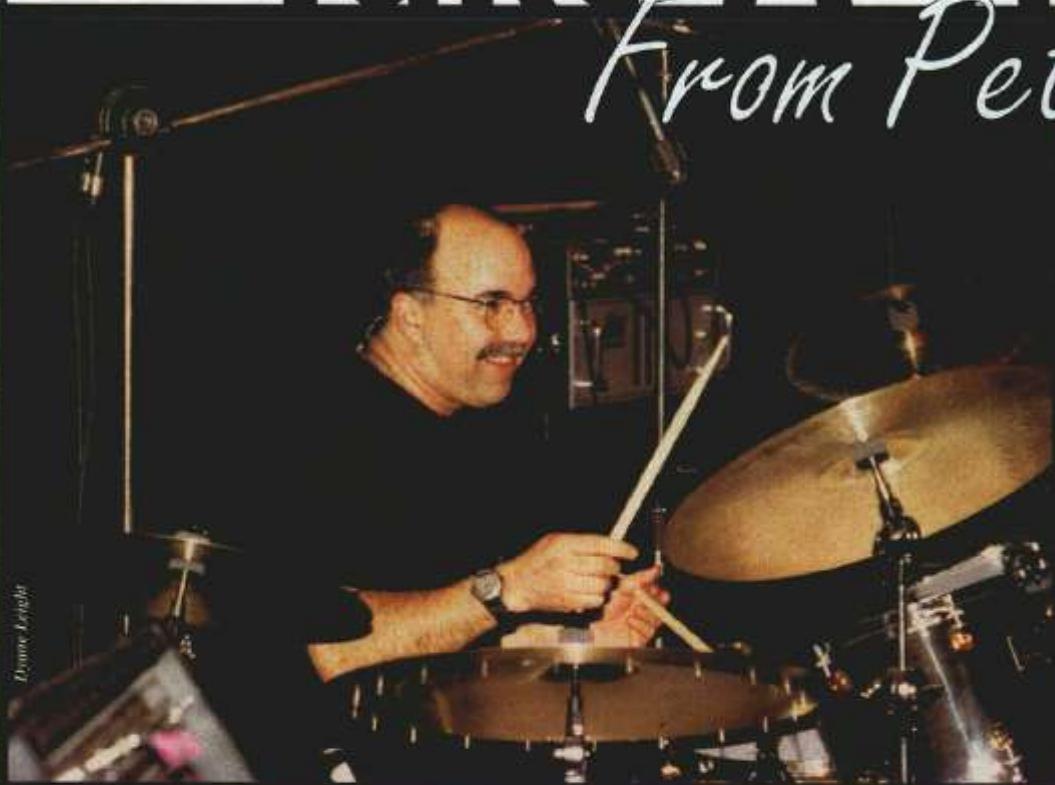


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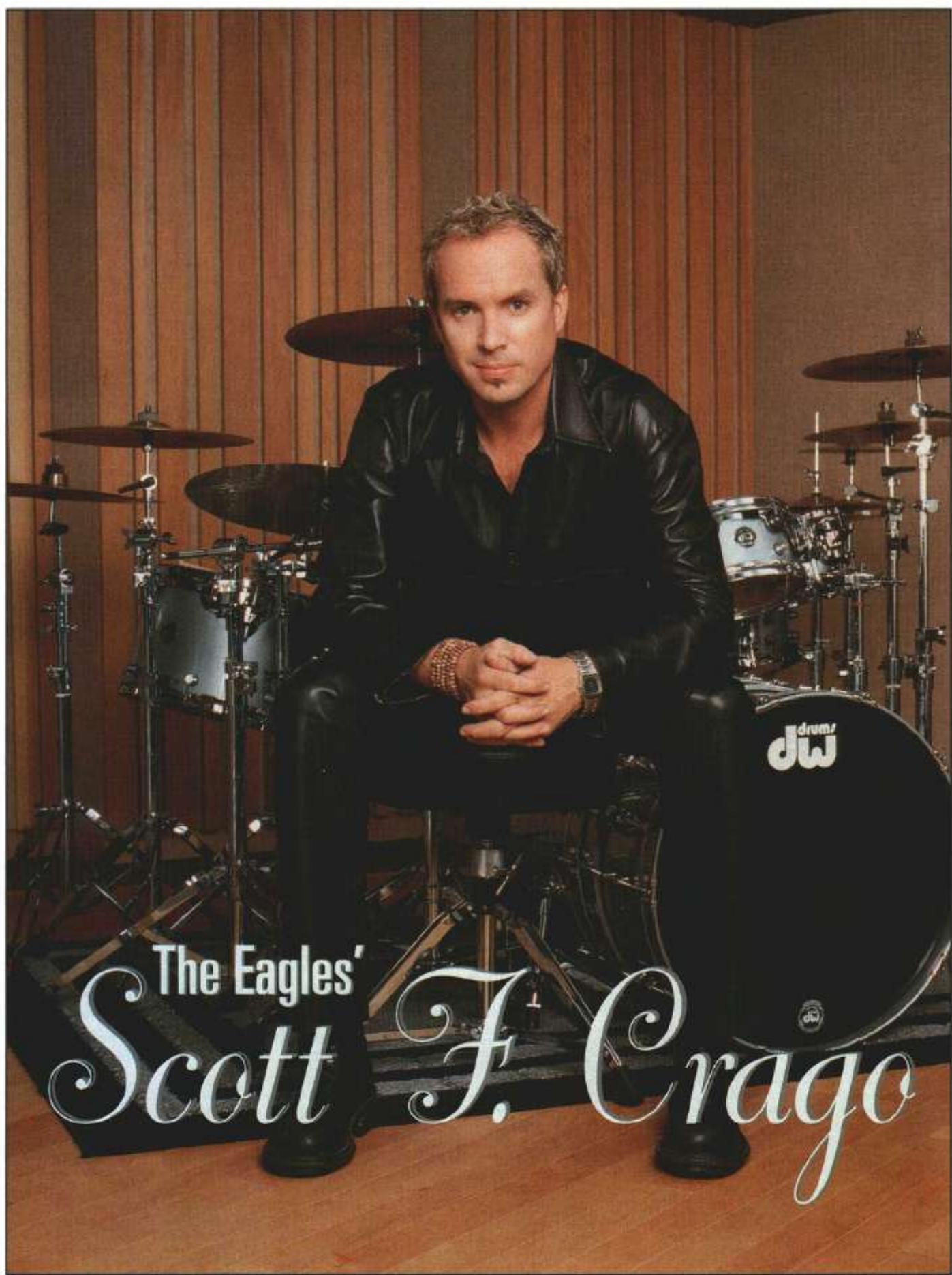
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The Eagles'
Scott F. Crago

Staying Focused

Story by Robyn Flans
Photos by Alex Solca

A large, ornate, cursive-style letter 'J' with decorative flourishes on both ends.

here they were, The Eagles, together for the first time since their official breakup in 1982. It was 1994, and the legendary group was beginning the rehearsal with "New York Minute" when, six bars into the song, Don Henley stopped the players with a wave of his hand. He turned around to drummer Scott F. Crago and said, "I think you need to go back and listen to this song one more time."

"I turned white," Crago recalls. "I had an immediate stomachache, diarrhea, throwing up—well, not really, but almost. It felt like a failure, and it took more than just a moment to get past it. When the rehearsal ended, I walked out, breathed deep, and thought, Okay, they've got me here for a reason. I must have blown that song, but I need to do what the boss said—I need to go back and listen to the record one more time. Well, I went back and listened to it about six hundred times that night to make sure I didn't do it wrong again."

Obviously Crago got it right. It's now seven years later, and he's been working with the group (and the individual members on their projects) ever since. In fact, he's now in the midst of a world tour with The Eagles.

And Crago couldn't be more thrilled. He's still blown away thinking about how he came to LA in '85 from Greenfield, Massachusetts, where instead of playing football he found Led Zeppelin. The drummer had little formal training outside of the school environment, but played in the junior high and high school jazz bands and grew up with a great appreciation for classical music due to his violinist mother. "She was the most powerful person in my life," Scott says. "She's taught me so much about strength, which you need to have in this industry." Scott's father, a trumpet player, passed away when he and his twin brother were just thirteen.

Crago attended a community college for two years, working in local bands, and then applied to Berklee College of Music. But fate ended his schooling after two years, and Crago took that opportunity to relocate to Los Angeles, where, after a couple of false starts, he hooked up with a band called Venice. Seven years and two albums with that band gave him enough experience to lend his skills to others. Scott played on a Don Henley/Patty Smyth session, toured with Stevie Nicks, and recorded with Infectious Grooves, Toni Childs, Divinyls, Jars Of Clay (for *The Prince Of Egypt* soundtrack), Albert Lee, and the various members of The Eagles. And that's just the playing end of things.

Crago has always looked for new challenges, and aside from his gig as a touring and recording drummer, he's been producing a band called The Clear, as well as helping to develop country artist Eric Heller. He's had several successes as a songwriter too. Henley covered his "Everything Is Different Now." And Stevie Nicks recorded "Listen To The Rain" on her *Street Angel* album and "That Made Me Stronger" on her recently released *Trouble In Shangri-La*. Crago even developed a product for dampening bass drums called a Pro-Cushion, which DW manufactures and on which he owns the patent. No doubt about it, Scott F. Crago loves experiencing all facets of the music business.

MD: For a kid who didn't take any formal lessons outside of school, why were you interested in going to Berklee?

Scott: I was nineteen and didn't know what I wanted to do. I just felt I needed more of an education to see if this was what I really wanted to do, instead of forming a garage band with my buddies.

Berklee was a good opportunity for me to try to survive in a total musician's community and to really understand and relate to other musicians. It was positive. One guy would go, "Have you heard this new record? Come on over." And he'd turn me on to one style of music. And then a Brazilian guy would say, "Hey, listen to this." It was a great experience to be around all those styles, although it was a very traditional jazz school. But that has done amazing things for me in my career.

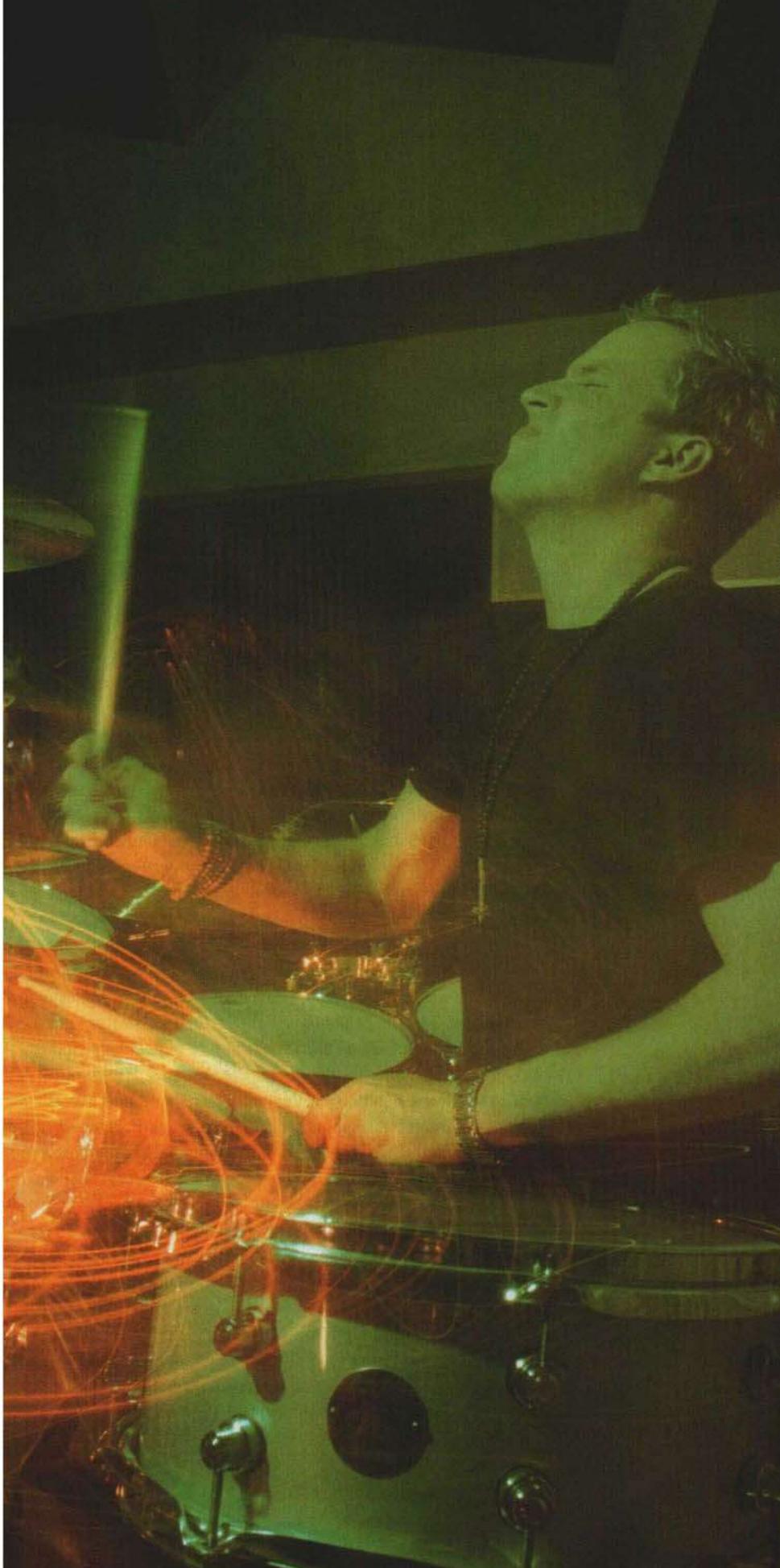
MD: How so?

Scott: I've ended up being somebody who has covered everything from hard rock and metal with acts like Suicidal Tendencies to jazz stuff. Honestly, I don't do one thing really well. I think I do a bunch of stuff pretty well. But it's because of this range that I've gotten the call to do so many different things. I haven't had to say no to a lot of sessions.

I thought the jazz thing was always helpful, especially because it taught me how to listen. I keep going back to that idea of listening and using your ears. Jazz is so much about listening to what the rest of the guys are doing in the band. If there's a trumpet solo, you're listening to what he's doing. If he's bringing it up, you're going up with him. That's helped me with music and the musicians I've worked with. Listening is everything. In the music I play, I'm the first one to tell you it's not about me up there on that stage. It's definitely about what the *other* people are doing.

MD: How long were you at Berklee?

Scott: I was there for two years. My room burned down just before finals. Everything burned, including my books, so I couldn't even take the last test. But at that point I figured I had learned what I needed to learn there anyway. Besides, I was eager to start my career. Obviously, I wanted to be in LA by the beach and the warm weather. So in '85 I moved with the band I was playing around Boston with to LA. We had some investors who brought



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G. 10x16 tom
H. 18x22 bass drum (with 6x22 Woofer)

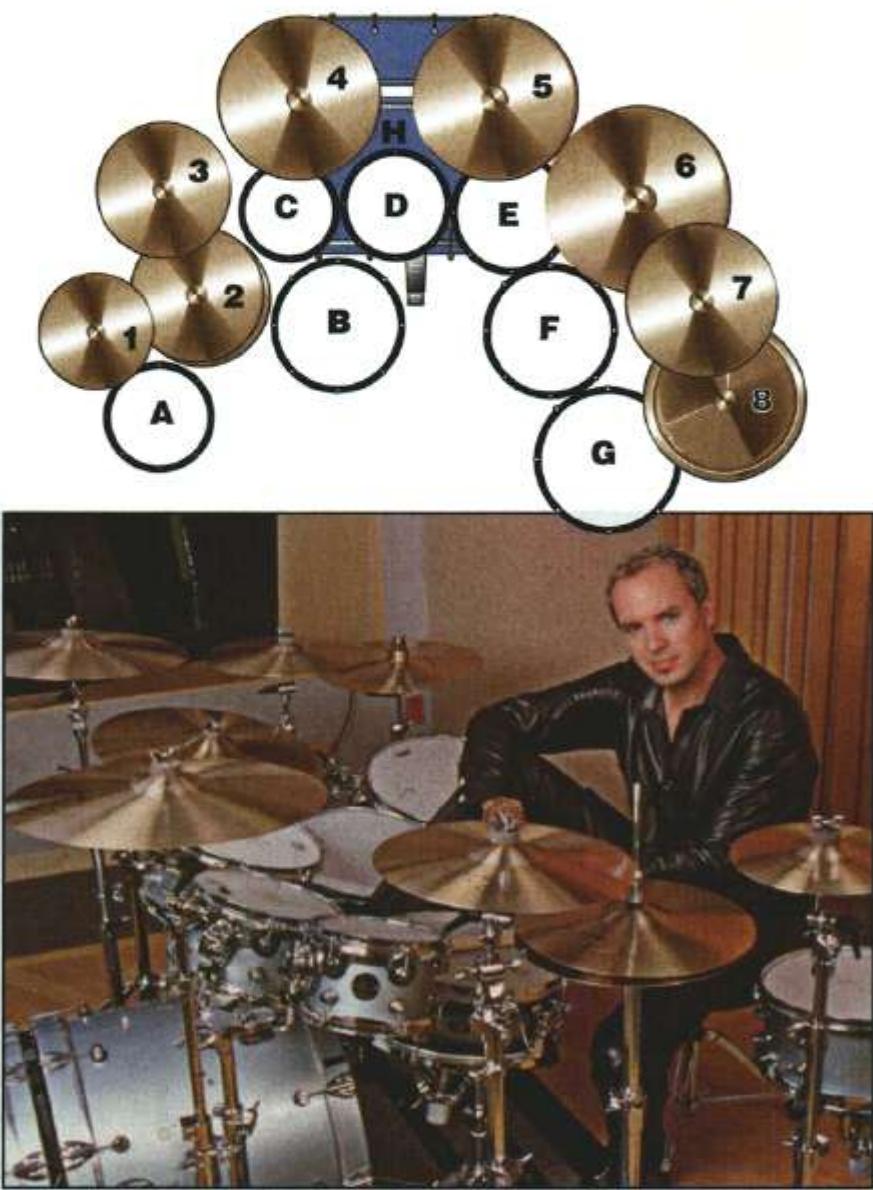
Cymbals: Paiste Dimensions
1. 12" splash
2. 14" Light hi-hats
3. 14" Short crash
4. 17" medium-thin crash
5. 18" medium-thin crash
6. 20" Light ride
7. 16" medium-thin crash
8. 18" thin China

Hardware: All DW, including a 5002 AD double pedal with tight spring tension

Heads: Remo coated Powerstroke 3 on snare batter (with Moon Gel for muffling), coated Ambassadors on tops of toms with clear Ambassadors underneath, coated Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter with ebony Ambassador on front with 16" hole (DW Pro-Cushion used for muffling)

Sticks: Vic Firth SD1 General model (maple)

Microphones: AKG



us out here and gave us a car, a place to live, and a rehearsal studio.

Within two weeks of being here, the lead vocalist got nodes on his vocal chords, and I couldn't hang. I started going down to our rehearsal place in East LA, which was a real dumpy place, and there was a band next door who needed a drummer. I played with them and said, "Okay, this is cool." So I went back to the house, packed up my one box of belongings, and moved to Venice Beach with this other band. I wanted out of that other situation, but I didn't want to go home. I knew if I went home, I'd probably be giving up my musical dreams.

I worked for that second band for about five months, but then the singer walked me out to the beach one day and said, "You know, you're not quite cutting it. We're going to have to let you go." Some things work and some things don't, and mind you, I was very young in my career. But that day I vowed that I would never be fired from a band again.

MD: Why do you think that happened?

Scott: I wasn't ready. I also don't think I was prepared to live with five people in a single-bed apartment. It was rough. But you've got to give things up to be in this business. It's not just going to happen for anybody—you don't get to be born into it. Musically, they were getting really into the heavy metal thing and it wasn't me. I wasn't a "spinning sticks" kind of guy. I didn't fit.

MD: It didn't devastate you, obviously.

Scott: No. Actually, it motivated me in a good way. All the crossroads for me have been motivational. They're hard, but you go. What do I do now, give up? So I moved into a hotel and lived there for two months. I didn't have a car. I had a skateboard and took the bus everywhere I needed to go. I got a job at a moving company and drove a truck delivering furniture for about a year. I put my drums in a closet at a friend's house. Honestly, during that time I grew up a little and learned about myself. I just tried to survive and figure out how to stay in California, first and foremost.

Then the next funny thing happened: I was living on Venice Beach again and this guy with long blond hair came up to me and said, "Hey man, I always see you down here. Are you a drummer? We

might be looking for a drummer sometime. I'll let you know." Well, that led to my being in the band Venice. And once the core group was together, we began to delve into what we wanted to do and got deeper into who we were trying to be. There was a period where we were really a great rock band, and we got signed by Atlantic Records. I was beginning to write for the band, and they allowed me to experiment a lot with some cool beats. It was lots of fun.

MD: Were you at all intimidated by the fact that, when you signed your deal with Atlantic, you were a novice at recording?

Scott: No. I've rarely felt intimidated. I've always had a lot of confidence. I did feel intimidated once or twice with that little band The Eagles. But that kind of intimidation can be good; it keeps you on your toes. But confidence is good, which is different from being cocky. Confidence is what most musicians and people I work with want you to have. That first record on Atlantic was with producer Danny Kortchmar, which was a great experience for me at age twenty-six.

MD: What were you learning about drum



sounds in the studio?

Scott: That was right when I hooked up with Drum Workshop, and they were kind enough to bring a kit down for me to try, and that changed the sound of our songs. It really helped us to develop our sound. They brought in Jamo [drum tech Paul

Jamieson], and it was the first time someone was tuning a drum for me. He also brought ten snare drums down that were incredible. And now I have twenty-two snare drums of my own.

Unfortunately, I think the album may have sold seventeen or eighteen copies.

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Scott F. Crago

But we did a little touring on it and we did the best we could. Our career wasn't over just because the record didn't sell a lot.

MD: Was Kortchmar the connection for your later career?

Scott: Yes. Now listen up, kids: This is how it works. Somehow on that record I impressed Rob Jacobs, who engineered it. He went on to produce all of Don Henley's big records. And Kortchmar liked what I did too. So they called me two or three months later when they were working on a record by an Australian band. They asked me if I want-

ed to come in and replace all the drums on that record. And from that point on, Rob Jacobs would call me or recommend me for a lot of work.

If you work well in the studio, people are going to want to use you. If you're quick, sober, clean, and on time, and you have a good attitude and play to the songs, you start getting called. And that's what happened. They really helped me move my career along.

MD: It's said that it takes a different talent to be a studio player than a live player. And

you just sort of walked into it.

Scott: That's true. I've heard that too. I don't know why it happened that way for me. Maybe it was that confidence thing. I just felt comfortable sitting in a studio with the headphones on, playing to the music, and playing with the musicians.

Performing live is wonderful, but how many challenges are really there? Maybe the first few weeks of a tour is challenging. But on a long tour, the challenge is trying to get yourself up and make it an enjoyable evening for the crowd. I find that studio work demands the most focus and is the most musically rewarding situation for me.

I remember leaving some of those early sessions I did and feeling great. That Stevie Nicks record or the thing I did with Patty Smyth and Don Henley ("Sometimes Love Just Ain't Enough") was so exciting and challenging. There was Danny Kortchmar and The Heartbreakers' Mike Campbell on guitar, Benmont Tench on keys, and a little dweeby guy on drums—"Scott who?" But I did a good job, and then went out to my car, shut the door, and said, Yeah! Killer, man!

MD: How did The Eagles come about for you?

Scott: I guess Don remembered me from that duet he did with Patty Smyth in '92. It's funny, but that tune ended up having Kenny Aronoff on drums because they redid the entire tune. But I must have made some sort of impression on Don because he remembered me.

MD: What were The Eagles looking for in a drummer?

Scott: They weren't looking for a name drummer, because I heard there were about ten guys interested in the gig. That band doesn't require a drummer who needs to step up and step out front. The band needs someone to fit in, someone who is quiet but confident. But it's a challenging gig in lots of different ways other than the playing. It's emotionally challenging. It takes a lot to hold on to a gig like this.

MD: Everyone knows that the individual members of The Eagles all have very strong personalities with a lot of history between them—and some baggage. So it must take a certain kind of person to step into a dynamic like that.

Scott: It's a no-ego gig for the drummer, too. Some people can't survive in a situation like that. But I respect these guys so much. Look what they've done. They've made

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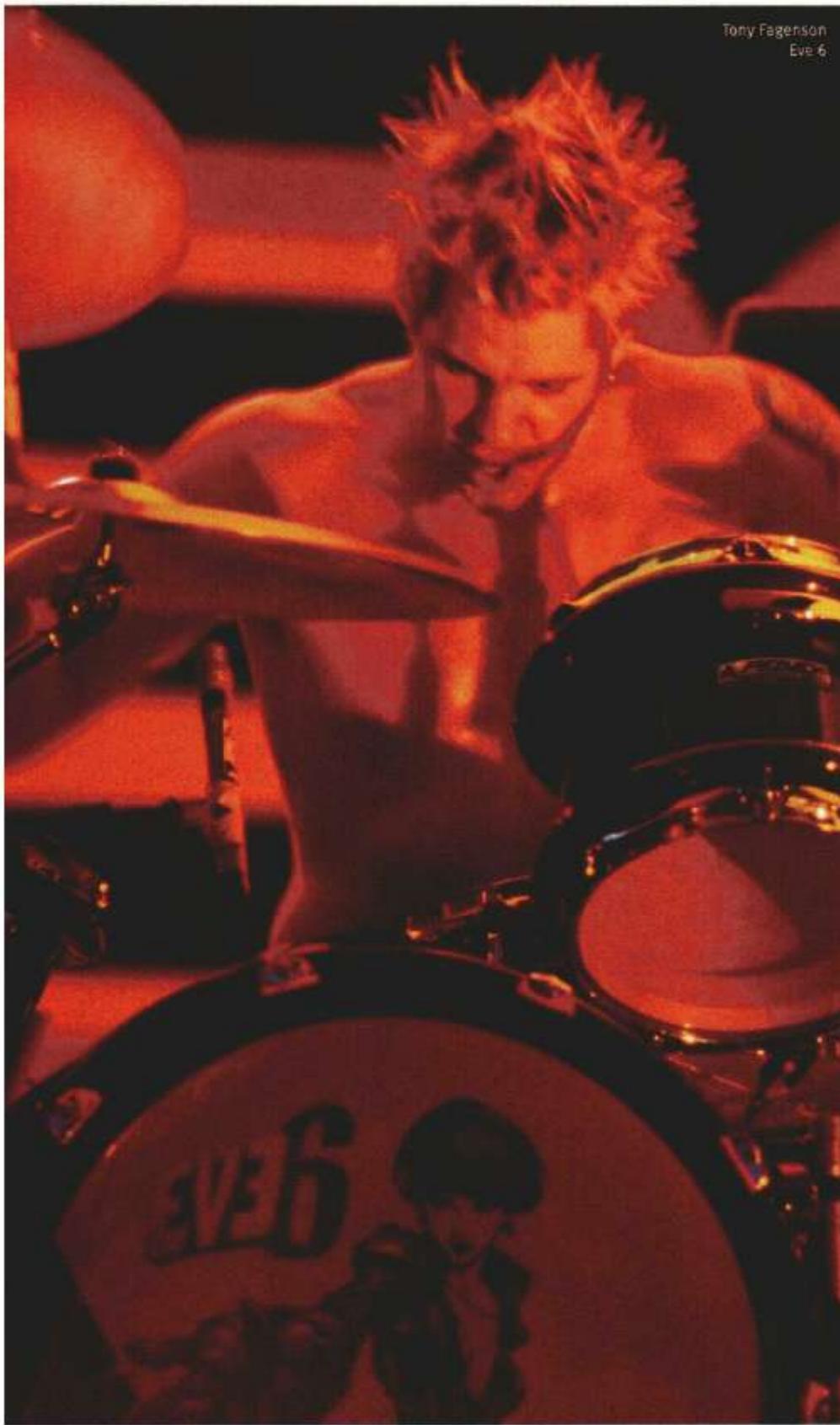
Hilary Jones.



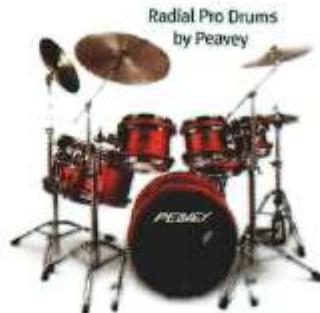
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Scott F. Crago

such an impression on most of our lives with their music. They know what they want to hear and how they like things to be done, and that's to be respected. I'd rather be in an organization like that than one that doesn't know what they're doing or what they want it to sound like. They're really focused, and that's what makes it a good machine. And that's why every show is sold out.

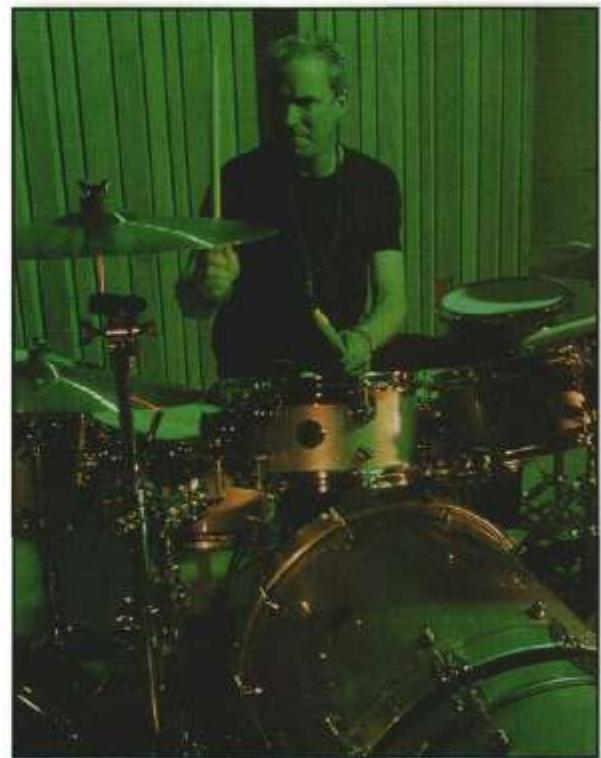
MD: What was your audition for The Eagles like?

Scott: There really wasn't one. I was in the studio doing a record with a guy named Steve Lowe from South Africa, and the phone rang. We were all under headphones, we had just finished a take, and I could see the engineer's head pop up, looking in the studio like there was a fire or something. He hit the button and said, "Uh, Scott, Don Henley's on the phone for you." "Uh huh, sure." "No, really. Don Henley's on the phone." I scrambled, dropped all my sticks, knocked all the drum mic's off, and ran in. "Oh, hey Don. What's going on?" trying to be all cool, while at the same time I was the most excited kid on the planet.

To back up three weeks, Don Henley had

just finished singing on Sheryl Crow's first record, and she was going to be at the Troubadour. I thought, "I betcha Don is going to be there. I should go just to say hello. Maybe he's looking for a drummer." I had met him on that session a year and a half earlier and just wanted him to remember me. Sure enough, he was there with Stan Lynch, and they came over to say hello to me. I ended up hanging out a little with them after the show, and I left there that night going, "Yeah, that was a good thing to do politically."

So three weeks later, he called while I was doing that record and he said, "I'm just seeing what's up. How've you been? What are you up to?" This was January of '94. Then he said, "Okay, I was just checking in. I'll get back to you." Three weeks later he called again,



"Just calling to see what's up. Do you work with electronics at all? What kind of kit do you play?" Now I was starting to get suspicious.

Well, three weeks later I heard from him again. "Okay, here's the deal. The Eagles are getting back together. What are you doing for the summer?" And I said, "Anything you want." I couldn't believe they were even considering me. I figured they were checking with eight or nine guys and that I was one of many. About two weeks later, he asked me to come down to a rehearsal studio. I walked in and there they were, sitting in a circle, working on vocal parts. They all turned to look at me like, "Who's the long-haired guy in cowboy boots and ripped jeans?"

I sat for three days with a shaker, keeping tempos while they sang "Peaceful Easy Feeling" and "Take It To The Limit" and worked on vocal parts, which was a thrill in itself. I didn't really know what was going on and why I was there. Then out of nowhere, Don walked up to me and said, "Congratulations, you're in." I said, "I'm in what?" He said, "You're in the band." "You're kidding." He gave me a hug, and walked away. Then Timothy B. Schmit did the same. Then the third person who walked up was the accountant, who asked, "How much do you want?" And that's how it happened.

Apparently my audition was during those

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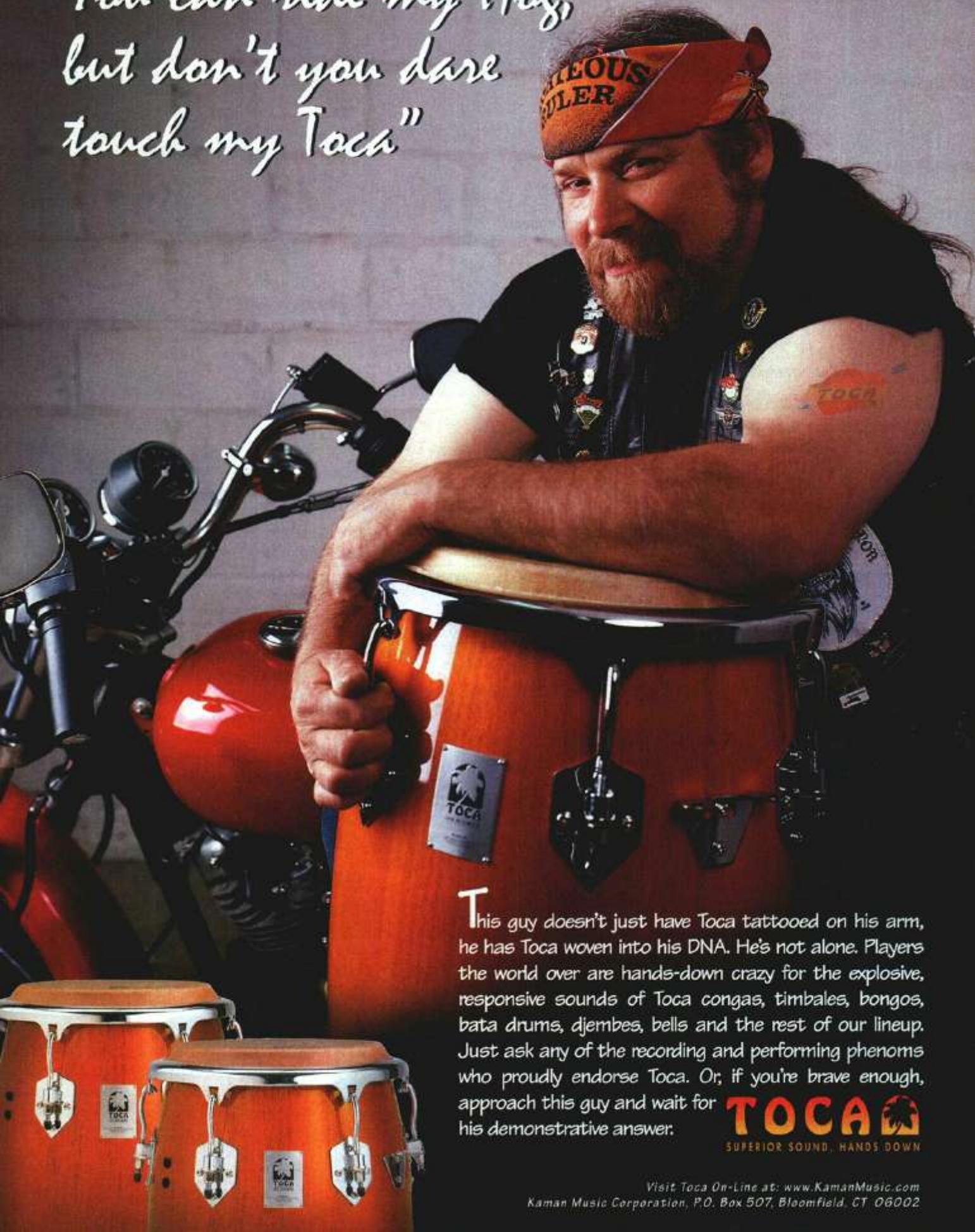
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Scott F. Crago

Crago Cuts

These are the recordings that Scott says best represent his playing.

Artist	Recording
Eagles	Selected Works 1972-1999
Eagles	Hell Freezes Over
Max Carl	Planet Groove
Don Henley	Inside Job
Infectious Grooves	The Plague That Makes Your Booty Move
The Clear	Living At The Movies
Timothy B. Schmit	Feel The Fire
Ricky Ross	What You Are



And these are the ones he listens to for inspiration.

Artist	Recording
Robbie Robertson	Contact From The Underworld Of Redboy
Bob Marley	Legend: The Best Of Bob Marley And The Wailers
Macy Gray	On How Life Is
U2	All That You Can't Leave Behind
AC/DC	Back In Black
Cowboy Mouth	Easy
various	Chess Blues 1947-1967 (box set)

Drummer
various
Carlton Barrett
Matt Chamberlain
Larry Mullen
Phil Rudd
Fred LeBlanc
various

three days. It wasn't about how I played. It was to see if I fit in personality-wise. They were looking for someone they could hang with for a year or two or five, someone who was normal. I just fit the part in many different ways. It was amazing. I'm just happy I'm still here with them. It's been a wonderful

ride.

MD: Besides the drumming, you've been doing quite a bit of writing with these guys.

Scott: I've worked with them for a long time now and understand their personalities. I knew when it would be a good time to mention that I would like to write with them or

submit some stuff. When Don was starting to do his new solo record and looking for material, I asked if I could send him some stuff. That's an opportunity I have that not many people have. He doesn't say yes to everybody or take stuff from anybody. I guess I impressed him on "Everything Is Different Now," which was on his *Inside Job* record.

MD: What prepared you for the writing?

Scott: That band Venice. I had always messed around on the keyboards and I knew there was something inside of me that I wanted to express. I write on piano and also build ideas from drum grooves. I wake up every morning with ideas. I think it goes back to listening to records with headphones and trying to break the music apart. I'll wake up in the morning and imagine a five-piece band playing a tune, with two guitar players, bass, and drums, and I can pick apart what they're doing.

MD: How did the Stevie Nicks connection develop?

Scott: When I was in Venice, we eventually signed to Modern Records, where she was the main artist. When our record didn't do well, Stevie's record came out and they asked if I'd be interested in playing drums for her. So in '91 I did her tour, which was the first major tour I ever did. It was amazing. We had a private sixteen-person plane, and we traveled everywhere with Stevie. It was a great experience. I had to do a drum solo too, which I dreaded. I'm not a drum solo guy, but I got through it.

Stevie is so warm. She's such a great



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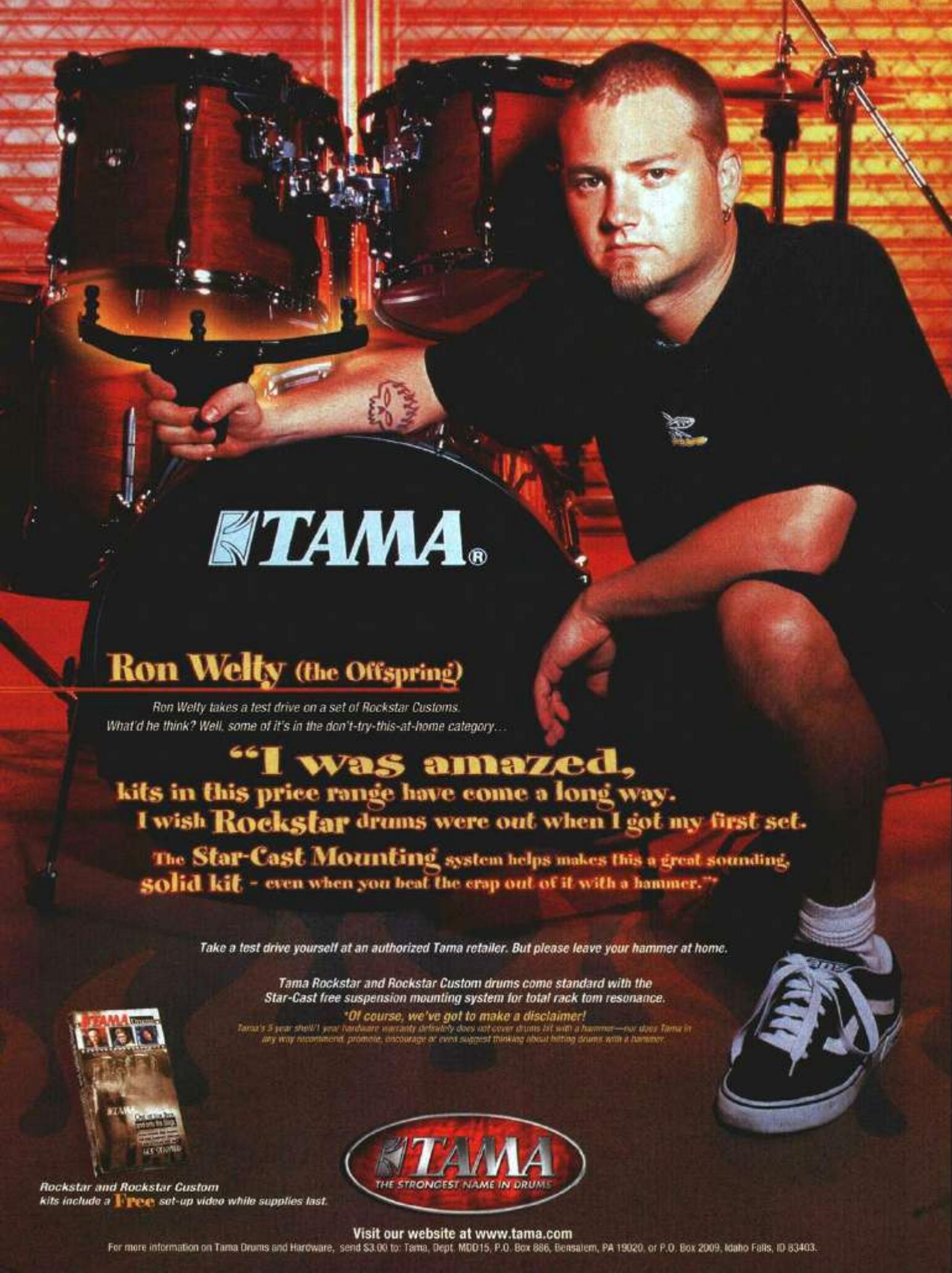
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Scott F. Crago

human being. And talk about some great songs to play. Playing some of her songs isn't easy, especially any of the stuff that Mick Fleetwood recorded. He's a fantastically talented drummer. It's the kind of stuff you just can't sit down and play, because it has a completely unconventional approach.

MD: Which of The Eagles' tunes are particularly challenging to play?

chotic and loose, just the opposite of "Boys Of Summer."

The challenge is providing the right feel for all of the different music the band plays. I have to be the right drummer for Joe Walsh, Glenn Frey, Don Henley, and Timothy B. Schmit. Plus they have songs from the '70s that have a completely different vibe to those in the '90s. It's an amaz-

"Don Henley walked up to me and said, 'Congratulations, you're in,' and gave me a hug. Timothy B. Schmit did the same. Then the next person to walk up was the accountant who asked, 'How much do you want?!"

Scott: They're all challenging. Take a song like "Boys Of Summer," which is a Don Henley solo song. It's very mechanical, almost drum machine-esque. And then the next song we'll play is "Funk 49," that Joe Walsh classic. The song is completely psy-

ing—and very challenging—gig.

MD: Does Don still play drums?

Scott: Yes, although he's out front more on this tour than on the last one. The band wants him to be more of a focal point, but there are songs he's got to play drums on.

"Hotel California" just doesn't sound the same with me playing it, I'm sorry. That's a classic drum feel and I challenge any drummer out there to try to play it like Don does. And people want to see him play it. I want to see Don play drums on "Hotel California."

We have a big percussion rig set up next to the drums. So when he's on drums, I'm playing percussion. I enjoy triggering different funky sounds and fun stuff, just adding different textures.

MD: Are the drums set up for Henley, and you have to adapt?

Scott: When we first started in '94, I asked basically the same question: "What's the deal going to be with the drums?" And he said, "I don't know, what do you think?" And that was a nice moment because it made me feel as if he trusted me and wanted to be a team player. So we went to Drum Workshop and asked them if they would build a kit that would fit both of us. I always played a simple setup of two rack toms and two floors. Again, it's not about me, it's about The Eagles, so I prefer to set up the kit a little closer to the way Don wants it in terms of tom heights, some tensions on foot pedals, and things like that. I can slide into those kinds of things and play.

I do change snare drums and the drum throne, and I adjust the hi-hat to where it fits me. But those are quick changes we make. Don has his own snare drum sound—that big, fat, dry '70s sound, which sounds great when he's playing "Hotel California." But when I'm playing a song like "Boys Of Summer," I need a different snare drum, which adds a different texture.

This year I'm using a DW Edge snare, which is pretty tight and snappy. I mute it a little so it gives it a little bit of snap. Don has always trusted me in the tuning of the drums, and I automatically know if a drum is tuned too low or too high.

MD: The Eagles have dominated your life for quite a while, but at some point you'll probably want to do other things. Who else do you see yourself playing with?

Scott: I'd love to play with Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers or with The Wallflowers, and I'd work with Sheryl Crow any time. I'm open to anything and everything. I love new challenges.

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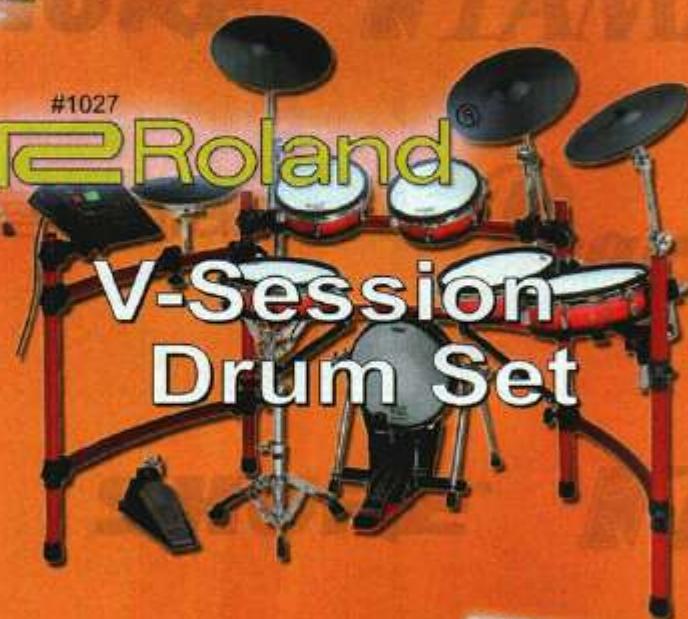
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Rick Matkin

Acoustic Vs. Electronic

For many years since the inception of studio recording sessions, the status quo for a successful session drummer has been to have exceptional time, great-sounding drums, qualified reading skills, and an approachable personality. But during the past couple of decades the role of session drummer has changed. The late 70s saw the rise of drum machines and electronic drums. In

the '80s, more and more drummers began to trigger sounds electronically from their acoustic kits. And with the '90s came the flood of loop machines and computer technology. The result of all this technical advancement is that, in addition to getting along well with producers, musicians, and his own instruments (no small task in itself), today's session drummer has to court a working

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In The Studio

IN THE LOOP WITH THE PROS

relationship with all manner of electronic rhythm production.

How have things changed in the new millennium? Simply put, the advent of digital recording technology using hard disk recorders and computer programs like Pro Tools is completely changing the way a large amount of contemporary music is being recorded and edited. These days many producers

and contractors are hiring "sound programmers," along with drummers, to enhance the groove.

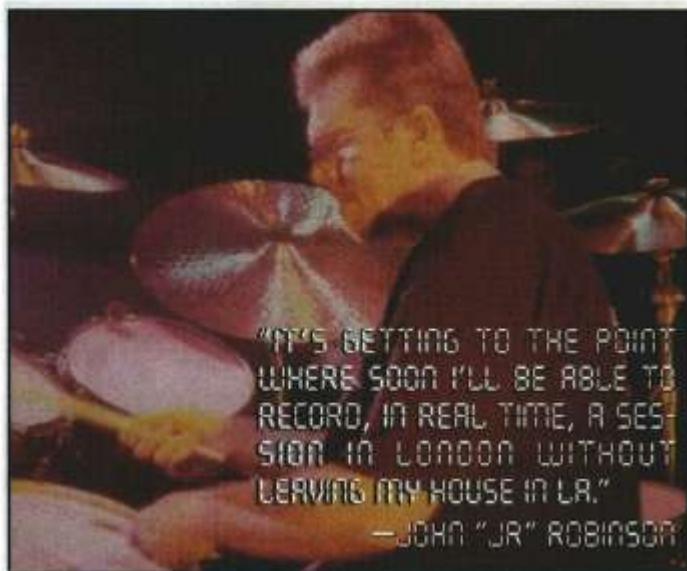
With all of the samplers, prerecorded loops, and programmers in the studio, how much of what we hear today from a drummer is actual acoustic drums or electronics? *MD* asked some of the best "hired guns" in the business to comment on their current role and gear requirements in the studio.

by Mike Haid

Above: Battery is one of several powerful new drum-editing software packages that are changing the role of the drummer on today's studio scene.

JOHN "JR" ROBINSON

Michael Jackson, Barbra Streisand, Rufus



"IT'S GETTING TO THE POINT WHERE SOON I'LL BE ABLE TO RECORD, IN REAL TIME, A SESSION IN LONDON WITHOUT LEAVING MY HOUSE IN LA."

—JOHN "JR" ROBINSON

I prefer to use acoustic drums. Since I've come back to Yamaha, they've made the Birch Custom Absolute drumset for me and also the two new JR Robinson custom snare drums that really cover all the bases. Nothing [electronic] sounds like acoustic attack—*nothing*.

Back in the '80s, I was one of the first session drummers to develop a triggering system, and I used to carry mixing boards and all this stupid crap so I could blend my sound between acoustic and electric. But there was always latency coming from the electronic side. We would try to dial it in as much as possible, but it was a challenge.

Then I went through the "Forat F16" world, which was really quite innovative for its time. It was an old mono triggering sampler, which would trigger faster than anything. Next, I went through the Simmons phase of combining acoustic snare and kick with Simmons toms, which gave the tom sound a lot of length and attack and really jumped out in the mix. At that time I also worked with Yamaha in developing the PMC electronic drumset using FM digital synthesis. But that didn't really work either.

Despite all this, I've always been a purist. It's always been about acoustic drums for me. I worked with Quincy Jones, and on some of the Michael Jackson records we did, Quincy would want all these different clap sounds and things like that. So I would manufacture that sort of thing. Then he would want me to bring in the pads and trigger samples to make it sound "machine-like." Back in the '80s there was a trend to make acoustic drums sound like machines.

Then the '90s came along and Roland came out with the V-Drums. And now Yamaha has come out with the DTXTREME, which is amazing. So the V-Drums have sort of become the standard for studio electronics in recent times, but the Yamaha DT electronics are a whole new animal because they do many things differently from the V-Drums. So they've each become unique and separate tools.

All that said, today I don't combine acoustic and electronics at all. I absolutely hate it! What I do is isolate them and use one or

the other. With the cooperation of Yamaha, I can have the JR Custom acoustic set, and right next to it, the DTXTREME setup. So if I need to roll from acoustic to electronic, I can do that. I also have a full recording studio in my house, so if people want me to program and do electronic things, I have them send me tapes and we do it on hard disk.

At this point, I would describe electronics as a carpenter would describe his tools. It's one of the tools that you need as a drummer. Now, this leads into situations of using Pro Tools. A guy who's a "C" level drummer can record into Pro Tools, and they can make him sound like an "A" level player. That's not good. Where's the style in doing that?

On the other side of that coin, you have engineers who will take things that I've done and add the same kick and snare triggers on top. In fact, the engineers are usually the culprits of what ends up being layers of junk on top of the original acoustic sounds. They like to come in and trigger snare sounds in the mix to add what they think is something that the song needs, just because they're *programmed* to think that it needs more than it really does.

Over the past couple of years I've done about thirty percent of my work at home. The studio scene has changed tremendously. It's not like it used to be, where you'd be locked in a studio for a week at a time. Today, if you don't put together your own home studio, you're going to lose work. It's even getting to the point where soon I'll be able to record, in real time, a session in London without leaving my house in LA, all through the phone line.

The trend lately has been all acoustic drums. And you've really got to give credit to a lot of the young bands with the "garage band" sound, because they've repopularized real sounds—because they're real bands!

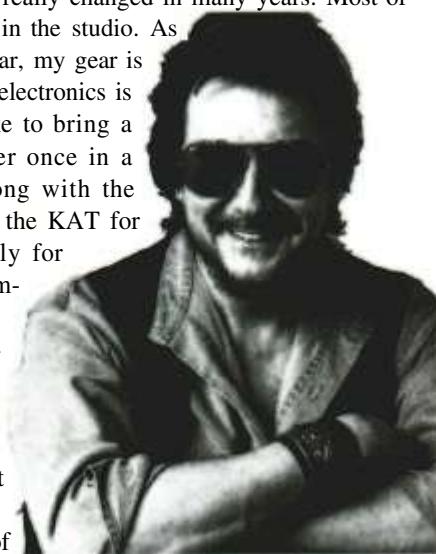
Most of what I've been doing is acoustic. Eric Clapton's "Change The World" was all acoustic. All the Clint Black stuff I've done is all acoustic. I just got back from Nashville from working with Toby Keith, and the acoustic drum sounds we got were *huge*. So at this point I'm actually working on improving the sound of my acoustic drums more than anything else, which is great. I feel like a real drummer again!

JIM KELTNER

John Lennon, Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton

My session work hasn't really changed in many years. Most of the sessions I do are live in the studio. As far as requirements for gear, my gear is acoustic drums. Bringing electronics is basically up to me. I like to bring a drumKAT and a sampler once in a while to add sounds along with the drumset. But I don't use the KAT for drum sounds, just usually for odd sounds that I've sampled myself.

The majority of electronic drum sounds in the studios here in LA in the '80s were horrible. We were all searching for just the right triggers and pads and spending a lot of



money on certain gear that didn't really live up to its promise. But what got me through that period was, instead of expecting to reproduce great drum sounds, I was enjoying—and getting a lot of use out of—the cheesy little samples that I made by blowing my own chips [creating original sounds].

"I DON'T LIKE LOOPS BECAUSE THEY'RE TOO STATIC. IF I'M GOING TO DO ANY PROGRAMMING, I'LL USUALLY PROGRAM THE ENTIRE FORM OF A SONG."

—JIM KELTONER

I think the worst part of a lot of sessions back then was having to hit the bass drum as hard as you could to get the triggers in the booth to respond. All musicality went out the window. Nowadays I may sequence something, but I don't like loops because they're too static. If I'm going to do any programming, I'll usually program the entire form of a song.

A lot of people think of me as a session musician, and I am, in that I've played sessions most of my life. That's where I came into the business. But I've never been one who works in the studio every day like a real session guy. The closest I came to that was in the mid-'70s, because there was such a huge volume of recording sessions going on. For many years, I've played on albums where I only played a few of the songs. It's kind of rare that I do an entire album. I've been fortunate to have worked with great songwriters who want me to interpret their music the best that I can on acoustic drums. I continue to do that kind of work—and probably will until I drop!

RICKY LAWSON

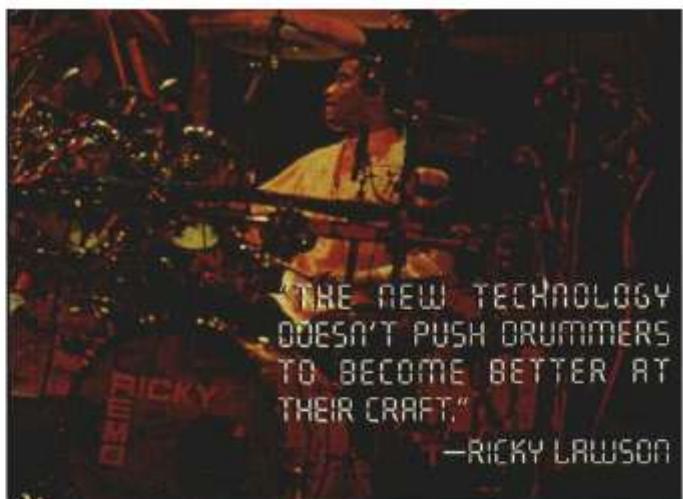
Phil Collins, Steely Dan, Whitney Houston

Today most of my sessions are about eighty percent acoustic drums and twenty percent electronic. I'll use either Roland V-Drums or program the Akai MPC 3000. I'm also asked to bring many different snare drums, because a lot of today's music doesn't use real drummers, meaning that someone has programmed sampled sounds trying to *emulate* a drummer. It's not a real drummer playing. So I'm hired to record live snare drums over the loops. They usually ask me to bring a nice array of cymbals as well to add cymbal swells.

There's not a lot of triggering going on any more from the acoustic set, because they can do that later with computer technology. Most of the sessions I do are recorded to digital tape, except for producers like Babyface, who will record me to 2" analog as well as digital. Then they take the analog performance and save it so that when they get ready for the final mix, that's the performance they'll use because it's a warmer sound.

I've recently been working with George Duke, and he has a couple of hard-disk systems. I also use a hard-disk system in my home studio. I use the Akai DR16 Pro, which is 24-bit, 96k, 16-track hard-disk recorder. My tape format is the Tascam DA format. Over the past few months I've probably done about seventy percent of my recording at my home studio, Ahhsum Lawson.

Most of the sound manipulation that's added once my tracks are recorded is done after the fact. Once the producer has what he wants from me, I'm gone. The next time I hear the track is on the radio. The drag is that the technology can manipulate the information to change the performance completely. For a singer, you don't



"THE NEW TECHNOLOGY DOESN'T PUSH DRUMMERS TO BECOME BETTER AT THEIR CRAFT."

—RICKY LAWSON

even have to sing on pitch. The computer will correct all of your weaknesses. What happens then is the public isn't getting an accurate representation of that person's abilities, yet that singer may end up getting a multi-million-dollar contract.

The new technology doesn't push drummers to become better at their craft. Don't get me wrong, it's incredible technology. But it just doesn't push a lot of young musicians to become better players. There are times when they'll take my tracks and stretch the time, or cut out a section and put it somewhere else. It ends up sounding great, but it's not really what I played.

A lot of times they'll ask me to play more like a machine because most of what they're programming is from machines. Even though I've got a pretty good handle on what they want, it can still be intimidating. But it's a job, and you know what the job is, so you go in and make it happen. Don't complain, just do your job. And when it's done, you'll actually be better off knowing that you accomplished what you were asked to do.

EDDIE BAYERS

Alan Jackson, Wynonna, Brian Wilson

Combining electronics and acoustic drums for today's recording sessions is much less prevalent than it was two years ago. Most of the producers I work for now don't really care. It's usually more between the engineers and us now.

When I'm called, the production coordinator tells me who's engineering, and from that I'll know whether or not I'll need electronics. Sometimes we'll agree to record triggered sounds [as well as acoustic], and he can decide later which, if any, he wants to use.

Engineers I work with who also produce several acts, such as John Kelton, bring their own computer. I'll send John MIDI info triggered from my toms. He can either use them to control his gates or add to the tom sound from his own samples during the mix. He doesn't need to worry about kick and snare, because he can use the Pro Tools sound replacement plug-in. But this isn't usually necessary. The song tells you what you need to do. If it's a song that's more in a pop vein, then we consider sound-casting—more than likely loops—for that effort.

Being that samples today aren't "electronic" sounds and are real drum samples, it would be hard to say how much of what we hear in the final mix is electronics and/or real drums. An engineer can replace or add another drum sample to the existing kick, snare, cross-

Acoustic Vs. Electronic



Rick Mankin

replace or add another drum sample to the existing kick, snare, cross-stick, etc. It'll just be something that will sound great in the mix and maybe not so detectable to us.

You can add reverb—gated, reverse, echo, etc.—to a snare, kick, or toms, and it greatly enhances the drums. A lot of times I'll hear the record, and when I see the engineer later I'll comment on the great mix and ask what he did to the drums. In

most cases he replies, "I didn't have to do anything." I think most of us know better. We greatly depend on the talent of our engineers for the way we sound on recordings, regardless of whether we trigger sounds or not.

I realize that most drummers reading this are thinking that it takes

"YOU CAN STILL MAKE YOUR WAY INTO THE STUDIO SCENE WITH ONLY YOUR ACOUSTIC DRUMS. TODAY THERE ARE A LOT OF ENGINEERS AND PRODUCERS WHO ONLY WANT THAT."

—EDDIE BAYERS

a lot of money to have all this gear we've been talking about, and that's true. So let me inspire you and say that you can still make your way into the studio scene with only your acoustic drums. Today there are a lot of engineers and producers who only want that. *They* have the gear to change whatever they want later, if they decide to change anything at all.

As you work more and are able to acquire some of the gear you're reading about, it would be a good idea to consider purchasing a few things. Obviously, by having more gear, you'd be able to handle those projects that would require more than just acoustic drums. I feel you should eventually have a rack with sound sources, a sampler, a sequencer, and a mixer capable of triggering sounds, and your sound sources should certainly be diverse and up-to-date.

All in all, the standard for me is set by the accounts I work for. It's a different story for each one of us.

VINNIE COLAIUTA

Frank Zappa, Sting, Joni Mitchell

All I do is play acoustic drums on sessions. I don't bring electronic drums. I don't get called for that. However, I am quite active in the recording industry, in fact in several different factions of it, not only a narrow idiomatic segment. So I have a good idea of the modus operandi at this time.

What I've seen lately is that I'm called to either replace loops that exist on tracks or play along with them. Most of the "electronic" segments of pre-existing tracks are already programmed or have been done in "pre-production."

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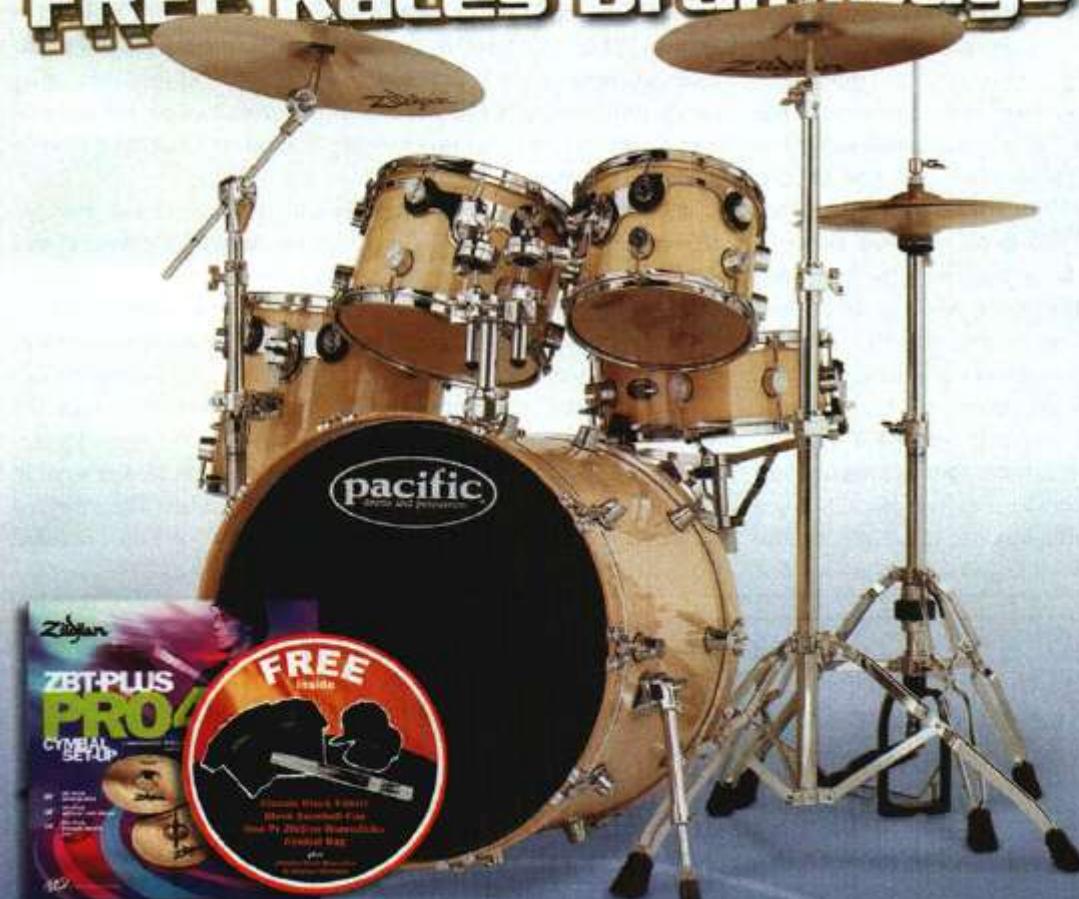
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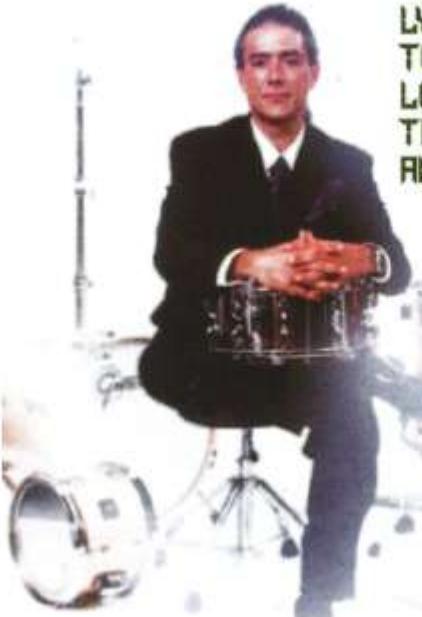


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Acoustic Vs. Electronic

"WHAT I'VE SEEN LATELY IS THAT I'M CALLED TO EITHER REPLACE LOOPS THAT EXIST ON TRACKS OR PLAY ALONG WITH THEM."

—Vinnie Colaiuta



Sometimes if I replace a loop, I may be asked to approximate the loop as closely as possible. Sometimes they want me to play somewhat closely to the loop, or not at all. Sometimes I'm given free rein to play as I see fit, or in accordance with the interpretation of the producer, and sometimes the artist as well.

Obviously, with the array of electronic devices at a musician's disposal today, one could assume that the drummer could bring devices that could enable him to trigger or even create somewhat unusual-sounding rhythmic performances, meaning pads with samplers and/or synths and filters and effects devices. However, what I see happening today is that all of that is usually done in pre-production. If the artist/producer wants effected-sounding drums, then they can

create and program that very thing and do it according to their musical vision.

KENNY ARONOFF

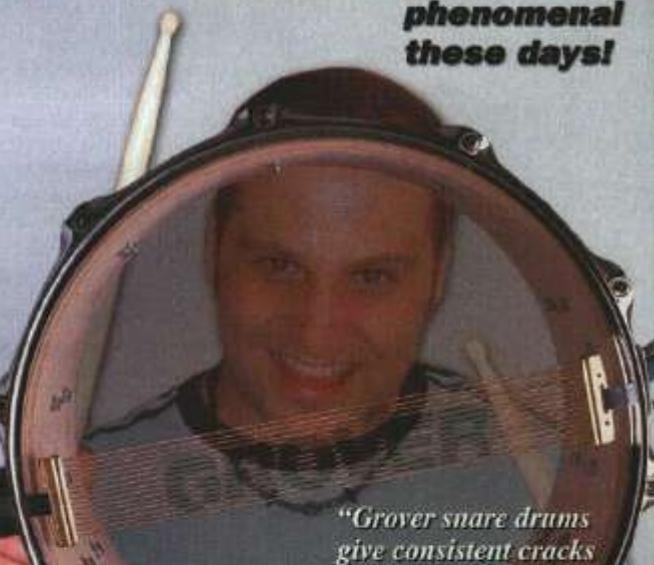
John Mellencamp, Melissa Etheridge, John Fogerty

So far this year I've done ten albums, and the biggest thing I've noticed—which is something I've never done before—is that suddenly I've become the "overdub guy." Because of Pro Tools, a lot of today's producers, and especially producers who are songwriters, can demo up all their songs in their home studio, which saves them the cost of going into the big expensive studio with a full band. They create the loops or have a programmer come in and create grooves. Then they bring in the vocalist and the other players to the point where the track is basically finished. After all this, they bring *me* in, move into a big room, and in two days I crank out eight or nine songs. So they end up spending a minimal amount of time in the large, expensive studio.

It used to be where you'd walk in with a full band and work on arrangements and discuss the music. Now the way it's done is that the rest of the band has already played their parts, so they're not going to be able to react to what I play. It ends up being me trying to create a vibe with the tracks that are finished. The artist and producer save money that way.

For instance, I've done two records with Melissa Etheridge. On the first record, we went in with a full band, arranged the songs together, and did about two songs a day. For her latest record, she went in with one guy who is a producer/engineer/programmer. They worked on the record for a couple of months, and at that point they decided that a live feel was missing.

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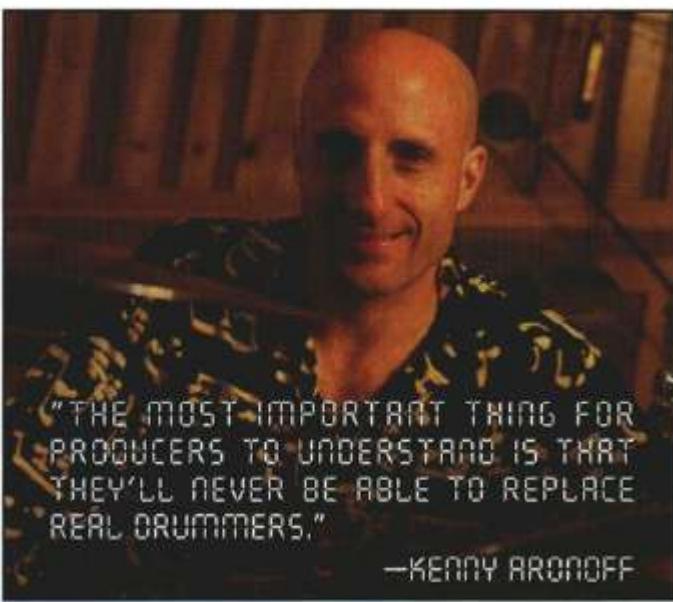
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"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR PRODUCERS TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT THEY'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO REPLACE REAL DRUMMERS."

—KENNY ARONOFF

stayed in the same dynamic and it was missing the passion. So they had me come in and overdub, which provided the live excitement in the groove that was missing.

On Alice Cooper's new record, the producer, who was also the songwriter/engineer, wrote all the songs and created some very involved drum programming with loops. They had the guitar, bass, and vocal tracks done. They weren't the keeper tracks, but they created them so I could hear the song. So I came in and we worked hard to get the keeper drum tracks with the feel and the

vibe. Then they replaced everything else and built the tracks around what I had played.

Another aspect of Pro Tools—which is involved in every session now—is that after a couple of takes the producer will say, "That's good enough. We'll fix it." I don't have a problem with producers fixing a minor thing like one bass drum kick in the bridge that's a little late, or maybe out of five tracks the bridge in the third track is better than the track you're keeping, so they move that bridge into the song. But when they sit there after a certain number of takes and say, "That's good enough, we'll fix it," my thought is, No, it's *not* good enough, especially if they haven't gotten the best, most creative track out of me yet.

As a session player, sometimes the second take is the best, but sometimes it might be the seventh or eighth take, because I'm developing ideas and I'm developing a feel for the song, just as an actor gets into his character. Sometimes it takes a while to really get into the whole vibe of the song. So if producers are starting to shut that down, then they're missing out on the really good stuff that Pro Tools can never replace.

The electronic side of my session work is different too. A lot of times when I come in with loops to add to the tracks, the producer already has a programmer there, or the engineer has a ton of loops.

The most important thing for producers to understand is that they'll never be able to replace real drummers. It's impossible! It's like trying to take a five-year-old bottle of wine and forcing it to become a thirty-year-old bottle of wine. You can get close, but anybody who's got real ears knows it's just not the same.

continued on page 125

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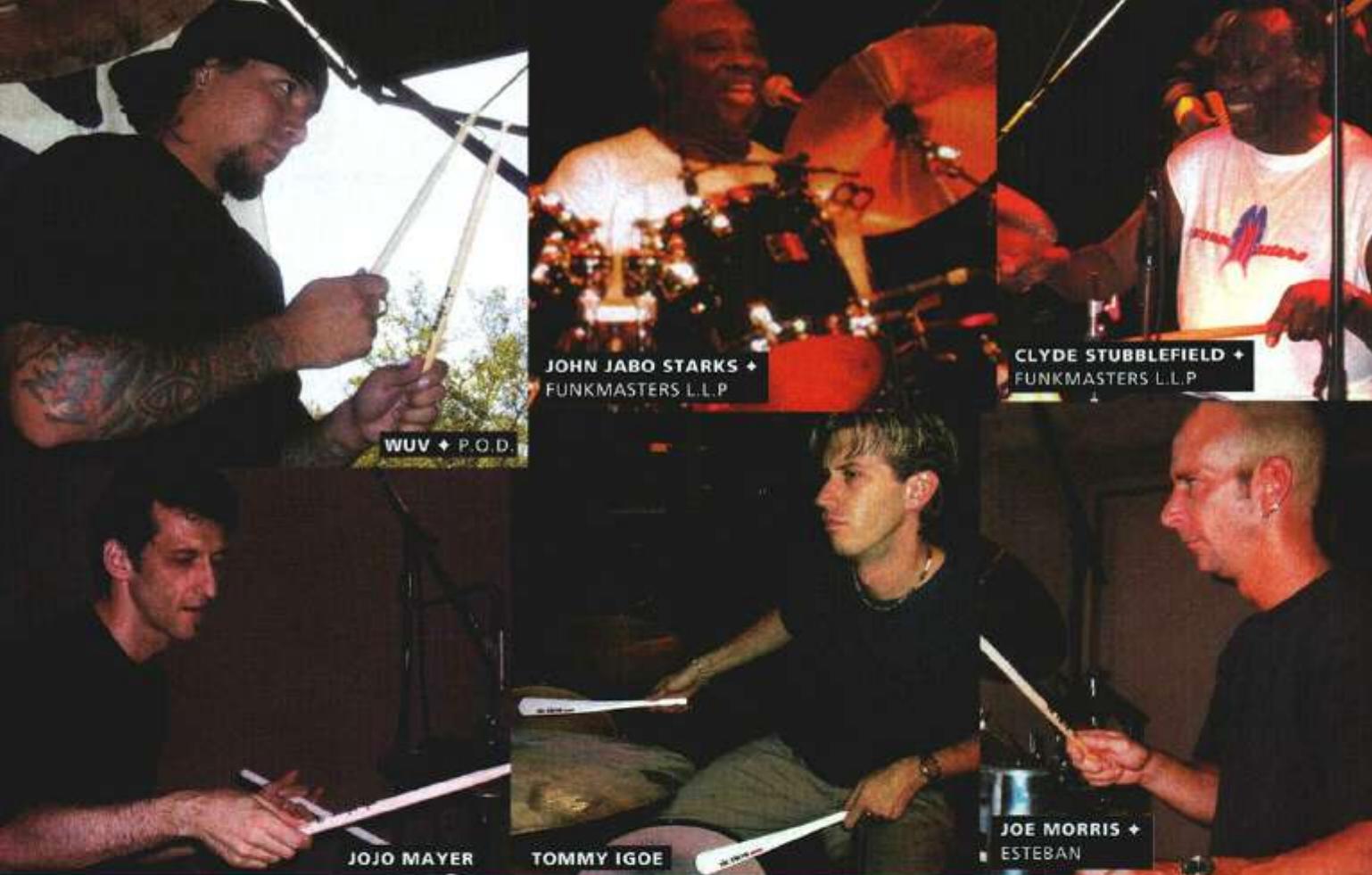
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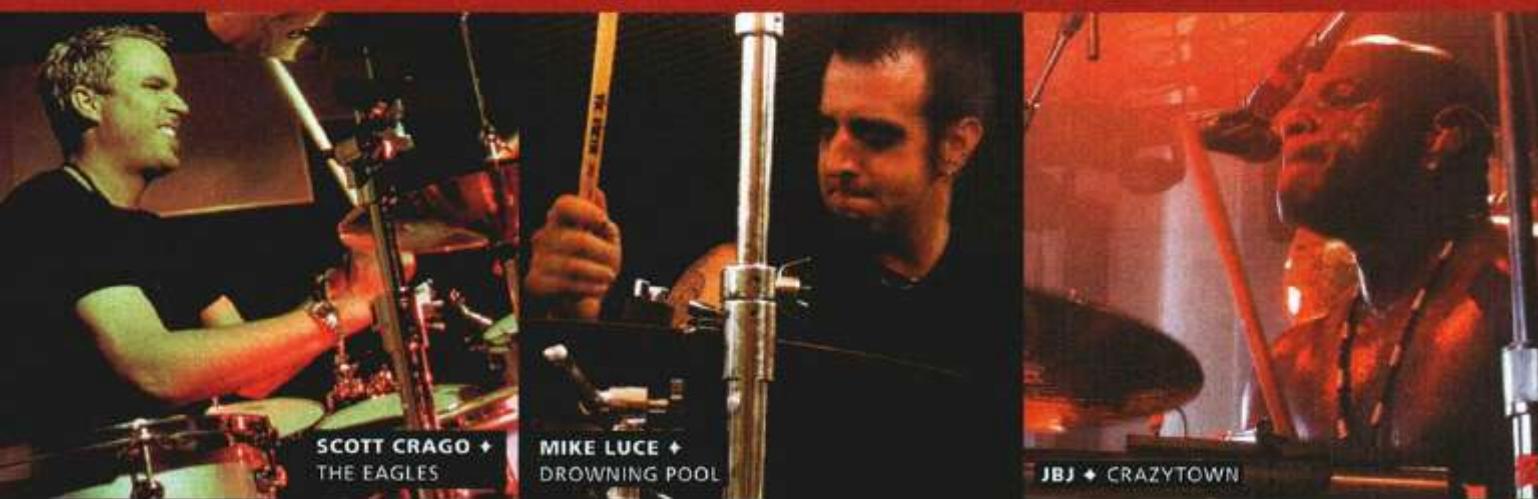
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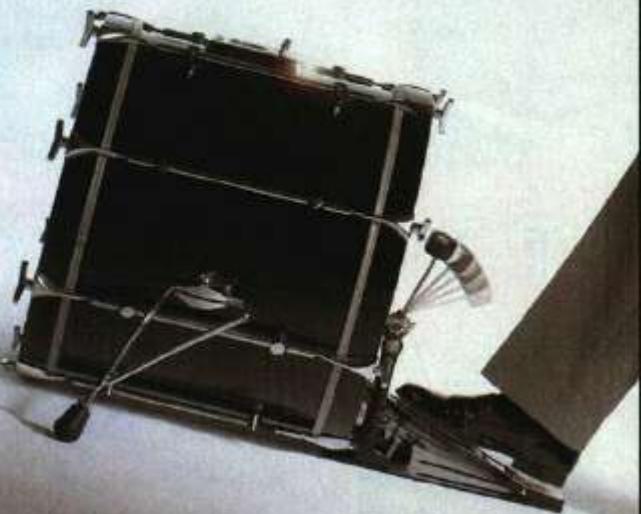
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Acoustic Vs. Electronic

become a thirty-year-old bottle of wine. You can get close, but anybody who's got real ears knows it's just not the same.

MATT CHAMBERLAIN

Tori Amos, Wallflowers, Macy Gray

On the most recent record with Tori Amos, and generally when recording with her, it's "bring everything and do anything." That's great. It's like, bring everything you have and "freak out."

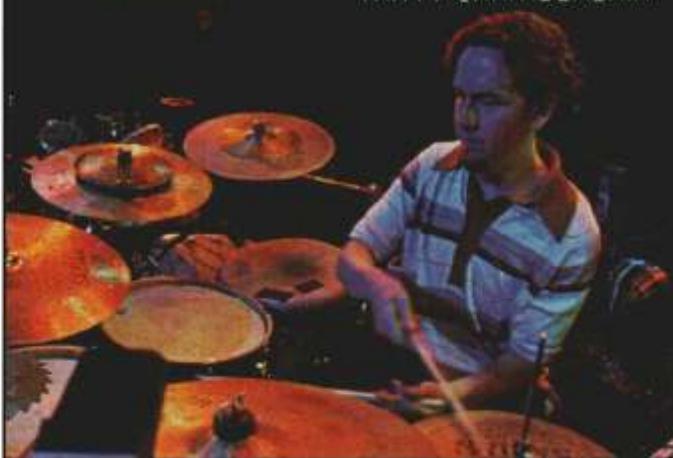
Generally what I do with most people is have three rigs set up: a traditional drumkit, an electronics rig, and a percussion kit. With my electronic rig I have Roland V-Drums, which I tend to run through guitar amps using various stomp boxes. V-Drums don't work for me as an acoustic drum instrument, so I'll try to destroy the original sound as much as possible. It's a lot of fun to turn the knobs and see what happens.

My percussion rig is basically a drumkit created from various percussion instruments. My kick drum is a Native American drum made by Taos. I'll use a headed tambourine on a snare stand, a bongo, and a timpani. I also have these pieces of metal that I hammered out with Greg Keplinger, who makes the Keplinger snare drums here in Seattle. We got together and took these round pieces of metal and hammered them into cymbals. I've been using those a lot lately for that kit. And I have finger cymbals I use for hi-hats.

So a lot of times in the studio, along with the obvious drumset part, they'll want some type of loop or filtered-out kit effect. If there's not a programmer there to create it, I'll set up this percussion kit and mic' it with my own microphones. I have a set of these really crappy mic's, like a taxi radio dispatch mic' and other cheap mic's

"IF YOU'RE A DRUMMER, YOU WANT TO PLAY DRUMS. YOU DON'T WANT TO SIT THERE AND TWEAK A COMPUTER FOR HOURS."

-MATT CHAMBERLAIN



with really limited frequency response. I'll plug those into this thing called a Sherman analog filter, which is basically a synthesizer filter that you can run audio through and make filter sweeps and distortion. So it's basically like running your sounds through a guitar pedal. Believe it or not, you can actually create that type of thing faster than you can program a pattern or use a loop, and it sounds more unusual. It sounds programmed, but it's got more life and it's moving around a little more and changing around and doing things

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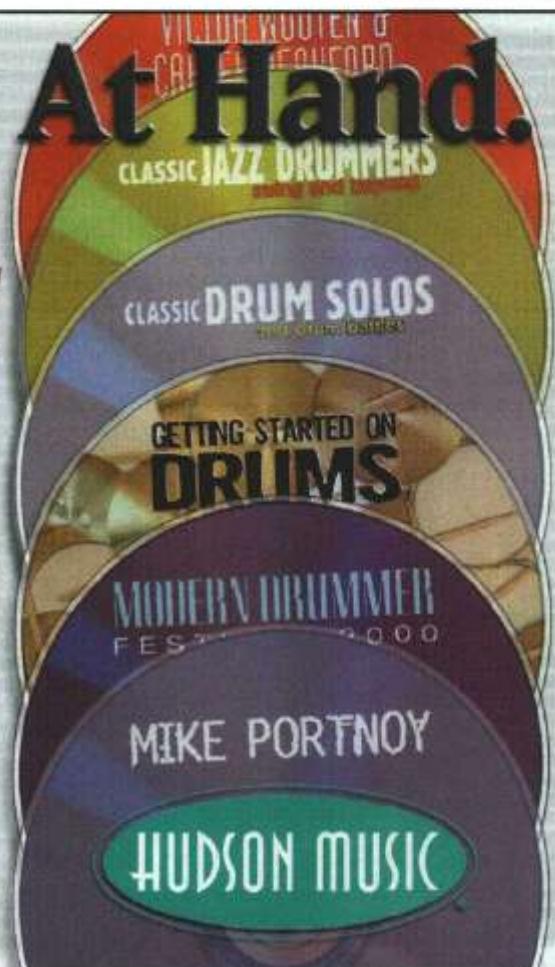


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Tetsuo Sakurai-Gentle Hearts; Front Page (w/Dominique Di Piazza & Bireli Lagrene); Bill Evans-Let The Juice Loose/Live At The Blue Note Tokyo, Petite Blonde; Donald Blackman-Yehba Dabba Doo; Bernard Wright-Hard; Garsel/Helmerich-Uncle Moe's Space Ranch; Victor Wooten/Steve Bailey-Bass Extremes-Just Add Water; John Scofield-Pick Hits Live (2 CD Japanese edition); Gonzalo Rubalcaba-The Trio (w/Brian Bromberg); Thierry Maillard-Trio-Paris New York (w/John Patitucci); Niobe-Live; Kamikawa-Uganda Live In Japan; CAB-s/t, CAS 2; P-Funk All Stars-Live At The Beverly Theatre (2 CDs); Victor Bailey-Low Blow; Tom Coster-The Forbidden Zone, From The Street, Let's Set The Record Straight; Carl Filipiak-Blue Entrance; Hotel Real, Peripheral Vision, Right On Time; Stuert Hart-Inner Voice; Gary Willis-Bent, No Sweat; Graffiti-Good Groove; Berg/Brecker/Chambers/DeFrancesco-JazzTimes Superband

BILLY COBHAM

A Funky Thide Of Sings, Crosswinds, Flight Time (live), Inner Conflicts, Life & Times, Live On Tour In Europe (w/George Duke), Magic/Simplicity Of Expression-Depth Of Thought (2 on 1); Rudiments (2 disc anthology w/ 2 unreleased tracks), Shebazz, Spectrum, Stratos, Total Eclipse; Nordic-Off Color; Paradox-s/t, The First Second (live); Dean Brown-Here

VINNIE COLAIUTA

Greg Mathieson-Live At The Baked Potato 2000 (2 CDs w/Michael Landau); Chick Corea Akoustic Band-Live From The Blue Note Tokyo; Karizma-Document; Masanori Sasaji-Birdland; Aydin Esen-Living (w/Miroslav Vitous); Randy Waldman-Unreal, Wigged Out; John Beasley-Surfacing; Bunny Brunel-Dedication; Los Lobos-Lobomys-s/t (w/Jeff Porcaro & Carlos Vega); Joe Diorio-20th Century Impressions (w/ Jeff Berlin); Steve Tavaglione-Blue Toy; Warren Cuccurullo-Thanks To Frank; Jeff Richman-The Way In, Live At The Baked Potato Volume One & Two (w/ Phillips, Weckl, Wackerman, Bissonette, Gottlieb etc.); Buell Neidlinger Quartet-Big Drum; Michael Landau-Tales From The Bulge; Lothar Kosse-Krainmaker; Allan Holdsworth-Secret; Quincy Jones/Sammy Nestico-Orchestra-Basic & Beyond; T-Square-Friendship; Mike Stern-Voices; Pages-s/t (w/ Jeff Porcaro); Kimo Williams/Kimotion-Tracking; Vinnie Colaiuta-s/t (Japanese edition w/bonus track)

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Acoustic Vs. Electronic

that a programmer can't do.

I do the same thing with my acoustic drums. I've got this cheapo tube mic' pre-amp that I bought off eBay, and when you plug a mic' into it, it distorts, because it can't handle the level of drums. So what will happen is the engineer will set up his mic's around the drumkit in typical fashion. Then I'll feed him a couple of mic's, one with distortion, one with some hideous compression, and then another using the taxi cab mic' over my right shoulder. I'll give him the lines to those mic's and have him plug them into the board. That way, if he wants to get a different drum sound for the verse of a song or something, he can just solo one of those cheesy mic's—and there you go!

Having all those kits set up makes it very easy to go from one sound to another. Most of what I'm doing in the studio is not just playing drums in a traditional studio drummer sense. They'll say, "Okay, we need a vibe for this section of the song." What are you going to do? You can't just play your regular drumkit, because it will sound the same. I need definite drum sound changes, just like a guitar player will change from a dry sound to a distorted sound. I think that drums are starting to go in that direction for recording because of all the hip-hop and DJ stuff that's so popular, where the sounds are changing constantly on the records.

For me, the standard is to have everything available to create strange things quickly. Because if you're a drummer, you want to play drums, you don't want to sit there and tweak a computer for hours.

The environment of today's session is that if you can get the trust of the engineer and producer to let you try some stuff, and you're knowledgeable about how to record things, you can create some

great stuff. The most important thing for drummers is to know how to fit the vibe of the song. It's not just about style anymore—it's about styles and *sound*. You have to know how a '70s-era David Bowie drum sound was created, or how a Stewart Copeland drum sound was created, or a James Brown or Elvin Jones sound. You may be the best jazz drummer in the world playing on a straight-ahead jazz tune, but if your kit is miked up and tuned to sound like a T. Rex drum sound, you're going to sound like an *idiot*. It's very important to know how to tune your drums to get the right vibe.

CURT BISQUERA

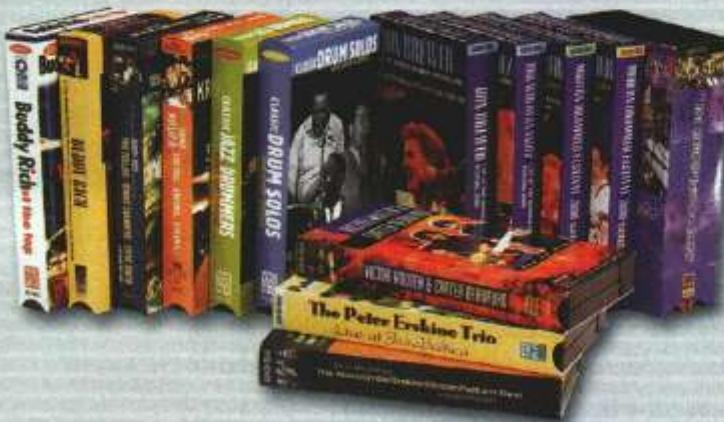
Elton John, Celine Dion, Ricky Martin

Most of my session work involves either replacing a loop or playing along with a loop. It's really about fifty percent each way. I also enhance loops at times. A lot of that is done in Pro Tools or in a program called Logic Audio. Much of that involves playing along with the rhythm stuff that they've already programmed, which is usually a two- or four-bar loop, or some sort of machine-generated rhythm.

Not only do you have to play along with a loop in time and *groove*, but it really helps to know Pro Tools or Logic formats. I know both programs really well, so if a producer or engineer wants to hear a different take of what



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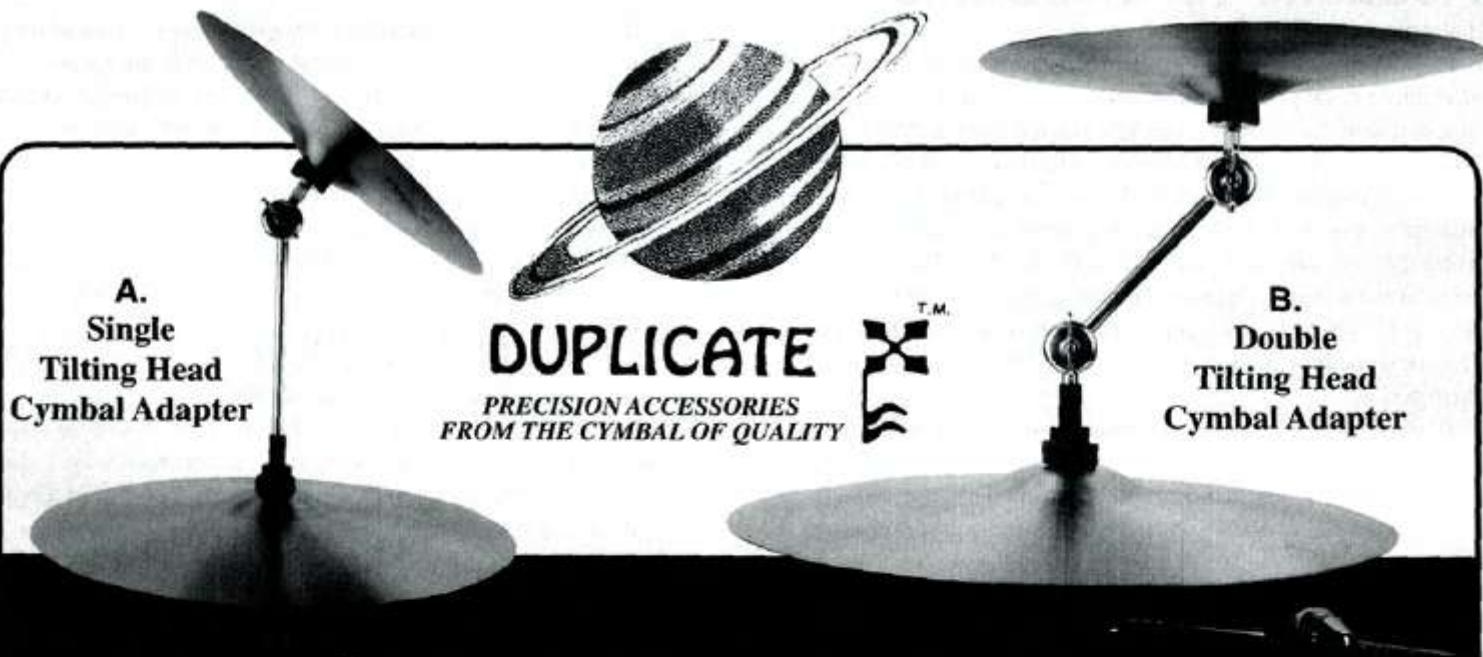
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I've done, I can go into the control room and start tweaking in either format and add different electronic elements along with it.

I've found that today it's not really about playing electronic drums along with acoustic drums. That's done more by enhancing acoustic drums with samplers, machines, or synthesizers. I can even change the drum's sound with a program called Sound Replacer in

"I THINK WE'RE GOING TO FIND SOME AMAZING YOUNG DRUMMERS COMING UP THAT ARE BEING INFLUENCED BY THE WHOLE COMPUTER, INTERNET, DRUM-LOOP TYPE WORLD. THAT'S THE NEXT WAVE."

—CURT BISQUERRA

Pro Tools.

In the new 5.1 Pro Tools, there's a thing called "beat detective," which I love. A lot of drummers hate it because it replaces them in terms of time feel. But I love it because I have fairly good time, so I can mess around with my time to make myself feel differently via an audio file. It's actually a very cool thing.

So in the game of recording at this point, it's all about manipulation of what you've recorded. There are two schools of thought on whether or not you've given your best performance. There are producers who say, "That's good enough, we'll fix it." Then there are producers who still want you to play it until you get it right, which is what I prefer. Right now, it's about a fifty/fifty situation.

I think we're going to find some amazing young drummers coming up who are being influenced by the whole computer, Internet, drum-loop world. That's the next wave. We're going to see a differ-

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Acoustic Vs. Electronic

ent kind of drummer who will be a hybrid of traditional drumming with the new technology. Young drummers are influenced by what they hear, and today, everything is loops. It's not like in the '80s, when you had guys like Gadd, Weckl, Vinnie, and the whole fusion

thing. Kids are more into the hip-hop, rock, and electronica stuff.

Today's technology is not going to make you a better player on its own. The computer is my best friend, because I can use it as a tool to enhance what I do as a drummer. But we can't let ourselves get

TECHNOLOGY VS. THE GREAT PLAYER

Are you a drummer thinking of entering into the session scene, but worried that technology is going to take over the studio world and destroy the role of the session player? With today's technology, when every aspect of your performance can be altered, is it still important to have great time, great-sounding drums, reading skills, and a friendly, positive attitude, even when you're being asked to simply replace pre-recorded parts? We presented these concerns to Vinnie Colaiuta, one of the top session drummers on the planet, to help set the record straight.

MD: Is it as important for a drummer to have great time in today's studio recording scene when the engineer can easily "fix it" with Pro Tools?

Vinnie: I think so. You should at least have "manageable" time! In sessions, my experience tells me that "my" time and feel are what is desired, notwithstanding the results of a Pro Tools "fix" can make it

MD: Does a drummer still need great-sounding drums when the engineer can easily replace the sounds of the original tracks?

Vinnie: "Need"? Well, what is really "needed" anyway? It's better from the start if the drums sound good. There's a principle at work here: "Garbage in, garbage out." If the sounds are going to be sampled or triggered, well, then that opens up a whole other situation. Your imagination can tell you the rest.

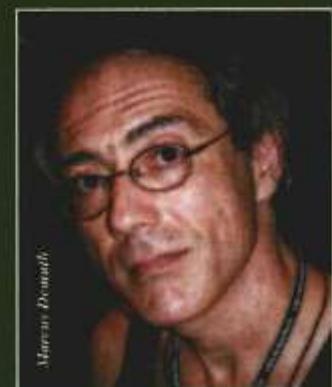
MD: How important are reading skills

when a song can be sliced, diced, looped, and rearranged quickly with computer technology?

Vinnie: That's not what reading skills are for. For example, I could have been on a live big band session "reading" the gig, and then in post production someone could decide to dice, slice, or chop up the form. What does that have to do with my reading? Answer: Nothing.

MD: How important is it for a drummer to have a friendly, positive attitude when he's the only musician in the studio playing his tracks along with a computer and an engineer?

Vinnie: It's probably just as important as when you're calling a telephone operator who either is or is not abrasive when you really need some assistance.



Markus Drumm

MD: In many situations, has the role of the studio drummer been reduced to simply the "overdub guy" replacing pre-recorded parts?

Vinnie: Yes—and just why should that be considered a "reduction"? What kind of attitude is that? It's still a job to be done, and either you do it or you don't. Duh. What's the big whoop?!

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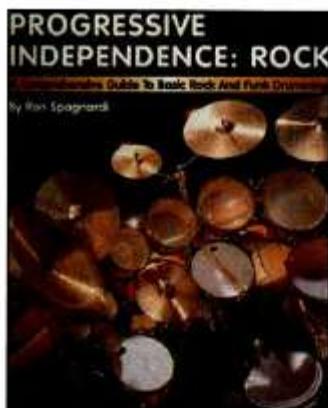
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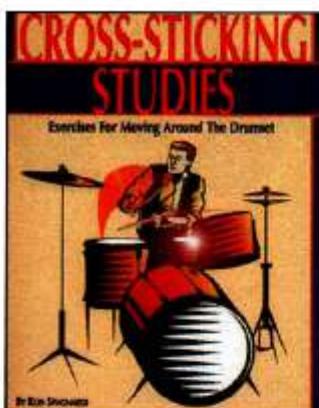
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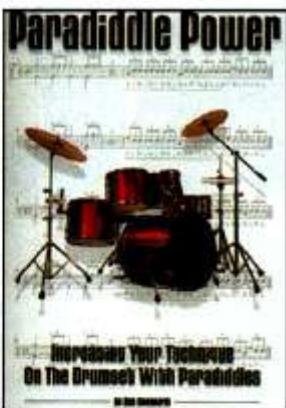
By MD Editor Ron Spagnardi



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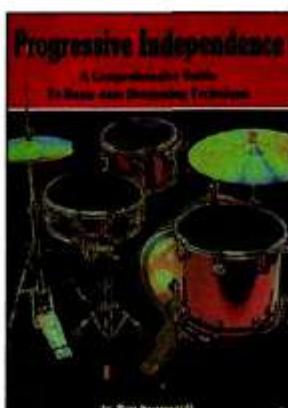


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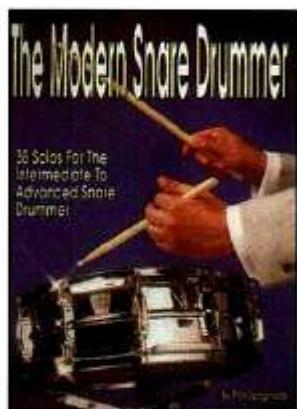


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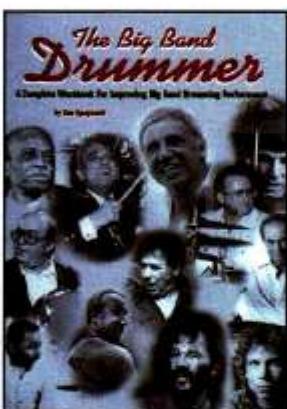
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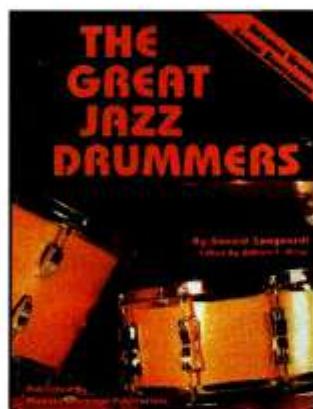


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Golf ROCKS!

Story by Ted Bonar Photos by Alex Solca

I've had a secret. For years. It's been building up, and although a few of my fellow musicians have found me out, they have respected my wishes to remain discreet about the fact that I am.. a golfer.

Horrors! Can it be? There is possibly nothing more offensive to a fellow musician than when you have to skip out of a gig as fast as you can at 1:00 A.M.—*because you have to get up early to make your 7:00 A.M. tee time*. And when someone calls for a Sunday afternoon rehearsal, and you say, "Gee, that would be inconvenient. I'll be on the back nine around that time," well, your fellow bandmates just don't want to hear it. "Golf? You're going to cancel our rehearsal because of what?"

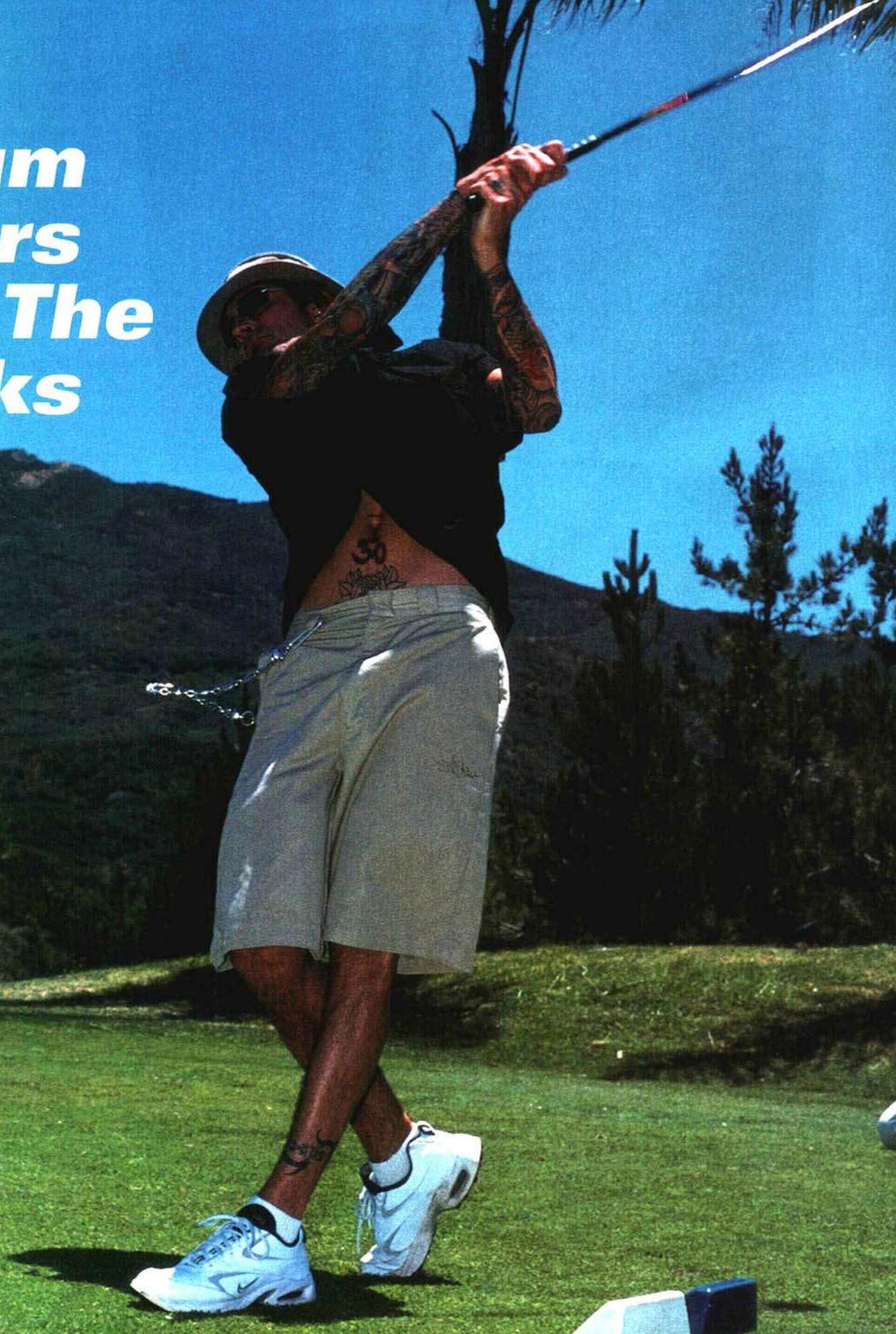
I will no longer be ashamed. I will not skirt the subject or distort the truth—or hide the fact that I will be attempting to break 95 on Sunday. If you want to rehearse, we can do it on Monday night, when the course is closed.

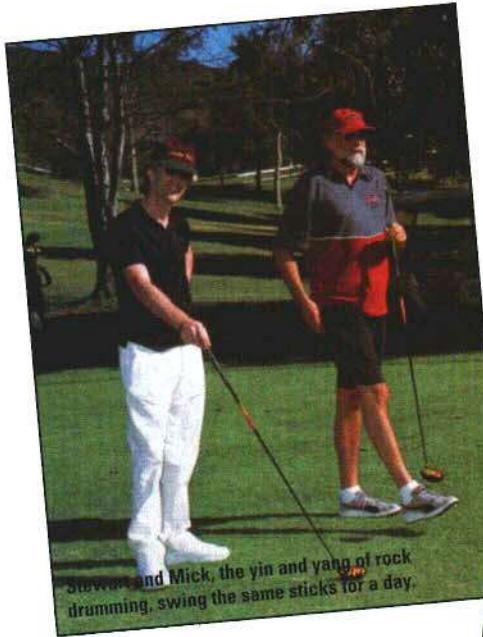
Why the change of heart? *Because golfing is cool*, and I now have the photos to prove it.



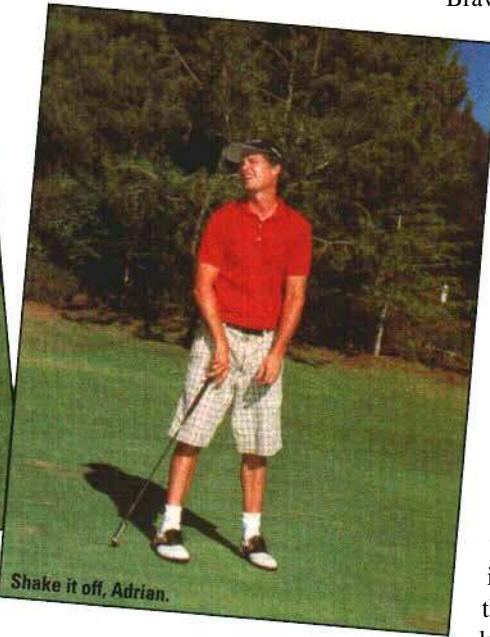
Back row, left to right:
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Seiwell, Mitch Marine,
Stan Frazier, Tama's
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Dean Butterworth.
Middle row: Hilary Jones,
John "JR" Robinson, Butch,
Joe "The Kid" Sirois,
Adrian Young, Eric Sandin.
Front row: Bud Gaugh,
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Tommy Lee, Bobby Hewitt,
Mike Malinin.

Drum Stars Hit The Links

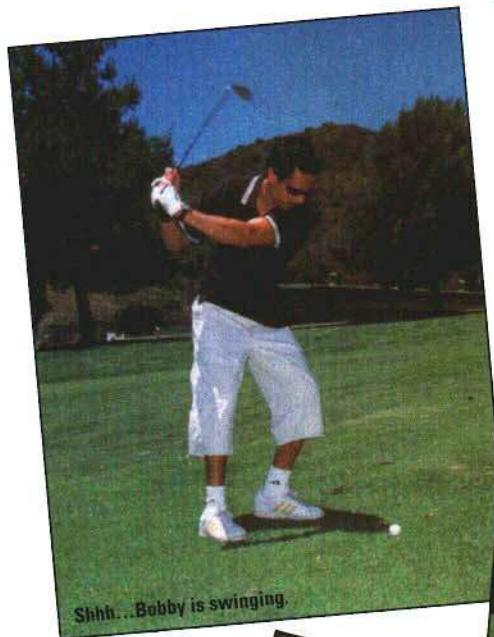




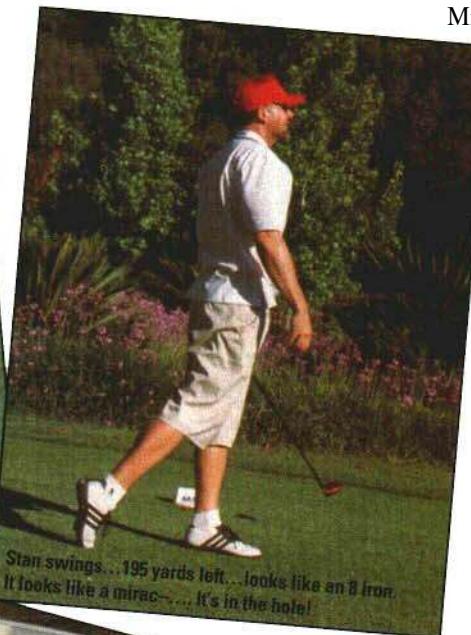
Stan Lee and Mick, the yin and yang of rock drumming, swing the same sticks for a day.



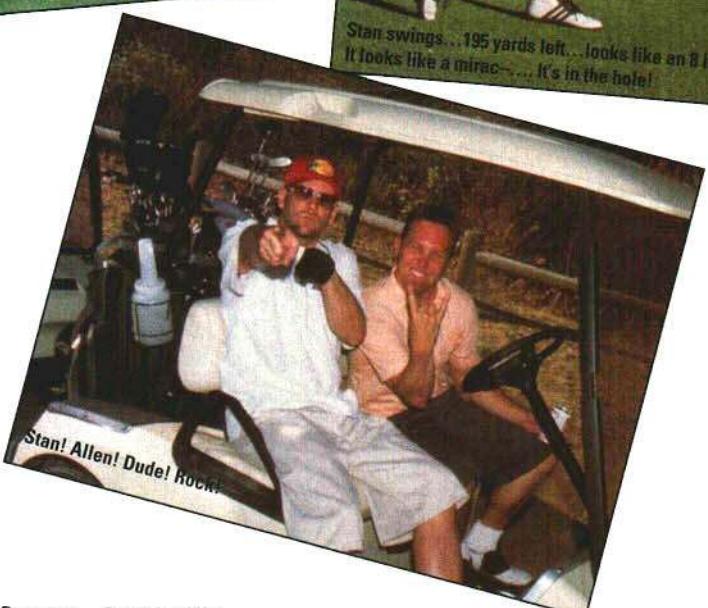
Shake it off, Adrian.



Shhh...Bobby is swinging.



Stan swings...195 yards left...looks like an 8 iron.
It looks like a miracle...It's in the hole!



Stan! Allen! Dude! Rock!

In early April, we at *MD* were approached by Mitch Marine—badass drummer of Brave Combo, Tripping Daisy, and Smash Mouth fame—about doing a story on golf and drums. He had become a golf addict while on tour with Smash Mouth, and he was positively *stoked* about the connection between golfing and drums. Recently Mitch had become involved with Mars Golf, a new golf club manufacturer. (Mars Golf is not associated with MARS Music.)

Mars Golf, run by thirty-one-year-old Wayne Lin, himself a drummer, is a company that reaches out to a "younger" generation than your average golfer. In other words, it isn't a company that gets its golf knickers in a twist if your hair is over your ears—or if it's spiked, colored, or shaved into little zeroes for that matter. If you have any kind of metal sticking out of your face, they like you that much more. As such, with Mitch Marine's rock-world contacts, Mars

Golf had created their own golf team consisting of rock musicians, skateboarders, race car drivers, and surfers. Pretty much the only people not on Team Mars are actual golf professionals. Cool.

The *MD* editorial staff discussed Mitch's idea. He had a good angle about a story, and the names of the drummers on Team Mars were pretty impressive, with Tommy Lee, Adrian Young, and a few others. We decided that we wanted to pursue the story, which meant we had to pick a writer. Who plays golf? Anyone? Anyone? Bueller? Anyone?

Sheepishly, not wanting to make eye contact with my fellow editors, drummers, and work-mates, I raised my hand and said, meekly, "I play." There I was. Out in the open. A *golfer*. They all looked at me as if I was a Martian.

But then I got on the phone with Mitch, who was just jumping up and down about how cool golf is. "Drummers and golfers have so much in common!" the excitable Marine shouted. Indeed, they both like to hit things with sticks. It takes lots of meticulous, detailed practice to play well. You have to have a proper, relaxed, functional grip in order to swing the sticks. There are multiple grips from which to choose. We



Bobby, Stewart, Tommy, and Hilary throw it down.

count our strokes. You need power as well as finesse. You need...hello...TEMPO. It's all about the timing. How's your swing? Are you in a groove? Mitch Marine was absolutely, positively right.

His plan was to get a golf game together with Team Mars and to have it be a drummer's golf outing. "Uh, okay, that sounds great, Mitch. Who can you get?" The better question would have been, "Who can't you get," because the story then took on a life of its own.

On June 27, 2001, Mitch Marine, Wayne Lin, and I arrived at the Malibu Country Club prepared to play a round of golf with an absolutely ridiculous cast of sixteen drumming characters. As the writer for the piece, I was to play with each group in this best-ball team competition.

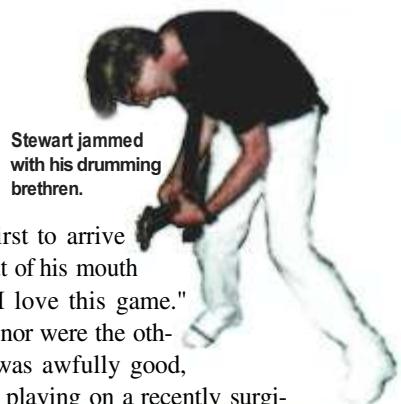
Foursome Number One included Mitch Marine, the official master of ceremonies, as well as Tommy Lee and Bobby Hewitt from Orgy. Chad Smith from Red Hot Chili Peppers, scheduled to be in the first group, couldn't make it at the last minute. This was probably a good thing, because otherwise it may have ended up being The Mars *Golf/Modern Drummer* Naked Golf Outing. With Tommy Lee and Adrian Young from No Doubt already playing, we were definitely at risk for such an event, but we were pretty sure that Chad would have put it over the top. Unfortunately—or mercifully—Chad had a last-minute obligation.

This first group was serious about their game. They played the course in a heartbeat, nearly running to their shots (and always running to the beverage cart). Marine pulled out his Mars Golf GT Racing Driver and clocked his tee shots nearly three hundred yards down the fairway, and Tommy pulled out his Burnt Driver (complete with painted flame finish) and hit it nearly as far. Long and straight, anyone?

Foursome Number Two consisted of studio-giant John "JR" Robinson, Denny Seiwell (Paul McCartney), Mike Malinin from The Goo Goo Dolls, and Dean Butterworth, recently of



The caffeinated Mitch Marine obviously appreciated the host of the twentieth hole.



Stewart jammed with his drumming brethren.

Ben Harper. JR was one of the first to arrive that morning, and the first thing out of his mouth was, "I'm an absolute hack, but I love this game." Well, he wasn't an absolute hack, nor were the others in his group. Denny Seiwell was awfully good, especially considering that he was playing on a recently surgi-

You guys RULE!

A black and white photograph of a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a patterned vest over a dark shirt and pants. He is in a dynamic, wide-legged pose, suggesting movement or dancing. The background is a plain, light color.

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Golf

cally repaired left knee. Seiwell says that he started playing golf in 1981 during the LA musicians' strike, when he went "...from drumsticks, to Thai sticks, to golf sticks!" At least two of those are good for you, Denny.

Foursome Number Three included fusion-great Hilary Jones, Joe "The Kid" Sirois from the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Bud Gaugh from Sublime/Long Beach Dub Allstars, and Eric Sandin of NOFX. Hilary was into golf because she had played with her dad, and Bud and Eric have been into it for a while. (There seems to be a decidedly "Orange County / LA" golfer vibe happening.) Joe "The Kid," however, was so into the event that he got on a plane from Boston to make the day, even though he had only played a handful of times previously. But Joe, I am here to document to the world that you hit a picture-perfect 160-yard six-iron over water and junk to about ten feet on a par three. Hilary sank the putt. *Birdie*. Team golf? You bet.

Foursome Number Four featured Mick Fleetwood, Stewart Copeland, and Adrian Young. Did you get that? Gene Provencio from Tama filled the remaining spot in this silly-big group. Let's pause and reflect on how many albums were sold by this group alone...wait, I'm not done counting yet...still not done....

Mick Fleetwood is one mellow dude. He moves slowly—almost backwards. And why not? He's *Mick Fleetwood*. He has earned the right to pick his own tempo. Can we all agree that he's got a pretty good feel for that sort of thing? What do you want him to do, *rush*?

Adrian Young, while being a very talented drummer with No Doubt, is also one hell of an unbelievable golfer. (He's a seven handicap.) By far the best golfer of the day, Adrian plays a game with which I am unfamiliar. He hits long, high, straight shots, and can draw or fade the ball at will or spin it back on the greens. Adrian was obviously jazzed about playing with Stewart, exclaiming, "I'm playing with my idol. It's amazing." Of course, this didn't stop Young from making our photographer follow him into the woods "to find some relief on the 15th hole. His idol was pleased.

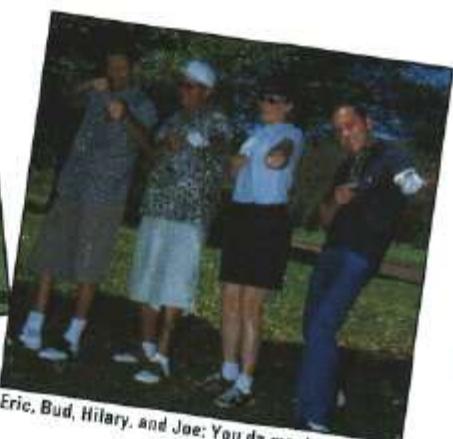
Stewart was in the cart with Mick, and while I could only hear bits and pieces of their conversation, they were pretty much telling war stories all day long. They were



"Tommy, are you sure you want Bobby to tape this?"



JR, Mike, Denny and Dean shed their studio tans.



Eric, Bud, Hilary, and Joe: You da man!

talking about preparing their drumsticks before playing shows. They were talking about drummer gloves and gaffer's tape and *playing stadiums* and other stuff we don't even discuss unless we're among drummers. Two rock drumming legends, discussing how they used to shred their sticks—in between golf shots. Again: *very cool*.

And Stewart on the course? He was a first-timer, and at one point mentioned that he might be more comfortable with a polo mallet in his hand than a golf club. But Stewart was very into being, "In the Company of my Colleagues and Brothers, surrounded in the Warm Embrace of the Fraternity of the Stick." (When Stewart speaks, you actually can hear capital letters

in his voice.) Well said, Stewart. After I left several putts short of the hole while playing with this group, Stewart demanded that I "Get In Touch with my Inner Heavy Metal Drummer." Yes. I shall hit it a little harder with that in my swing-thought from now on.

The final group really epitomized the dude-ness of the whole day. Stan Frazier from Sugar Ray, Allen Shellenberger from Lit, Butch from Rufus Wainwright and The Eels (who did everything but my laundry to get a spot in the event), and Wayne from Mars brought it home in style late in the day. While they were fine golfers, the lasting memory of this group has to be the fact that they were pretty much just laughing at

everything. As Allen said succinctly, "It's a beautiful thing. It's a great way to make rad new friends." Right on. Stan Frazier remarked, "We've got to do this again, and it's got to be two or three times this big next time." Rad, indeed.

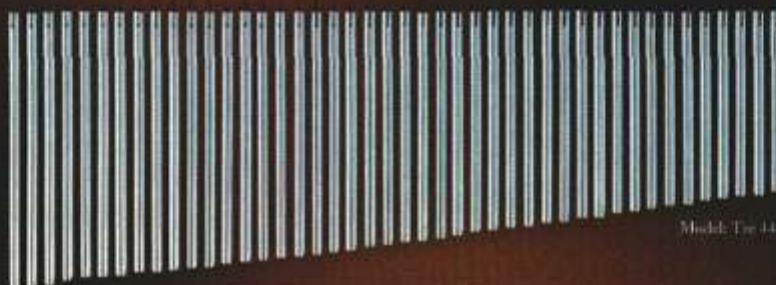
As I was coming up the eighteenth hole with this group, we started having a discussion about how many albums had been sold with the drummers who were at this event. We decided that you could get to a half billion (yes, billion with a "B") pretty quickly. Fleetwood Mac, Motley Crue, and The Police sold tens of millions of albums each. No Doubt, Lit, Sugar Ray, and The Goo Goo

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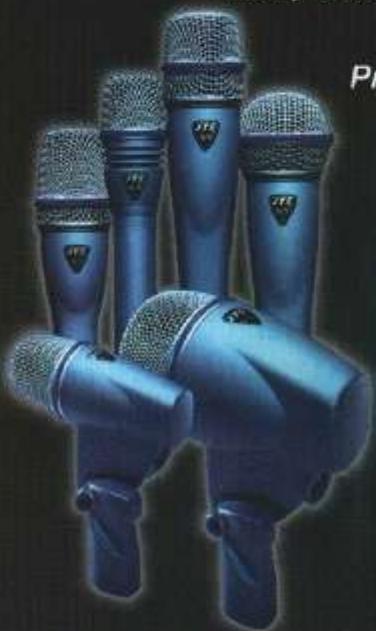


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Golf

Dolls have all sold stratospheric numbers of records. All JR did was play on Michael Jackson, Steve Winwood, Barbra Streisand, and Celine Dion records. JR alone gets you pretty close to five hundred million records. This is scary stuff.

The round ended, as most golf outings do, at the nineteenth hole for a few *refreshing beverages* and a bite to eat. When the last group joined the first four at the clubhouse, we found Stewart holding court with Tommy, JR, Hilary, Mick, Bobby, Adrian, and Denny. Stewart, you see, had a difficult choice to make over which green sparkle finish to choose for his new drumset, and he wanted some rock star opinions to help him decide. Claiming to be "out of practice" at being a rock star, he was really hoping to get Tommy's blessing on the most over-the-top finish. We all weighed in on the subject, picking the most rad finish of the two. Wayne from Mars was so into that process that he announced plans to offer a line of drummer's golf clubs: the Stewart Copeland Sparkle, the Tommy Lee Methods Of Mayhem Driver, the Fleetwood, and a Club Named Goo for Mike Malinin. (But Wayne, how will they fit in a stick bag?)

Not being like any other golf group in the history of the world, this gathering could not have its communal needs satisfied by the nineteenth hole. A twentieth hole was needed, so we all headed over to drummer-golf HQ: Tommy Lee's house.

Five minutes away, tucked in the hills of Malibu, Tommy's house became the location of the post-golf drummer throw-down. We walked in to find a drumkit set up in Tommy's living room, and we pretty much all made a B-line for it. Stewart was the first one on the kit, and within seconds he was jamming on drums, Tommy Lee was playing a big hand drum, Bobby Hewitt was playing the floor tom, and Hilary was slamming out a pattern on a spare bass drum.

Stewart then picked up a guitar and started jamming, and pretty much everyone got to sit at the kit and lay down a few backbeats. Guys like Adrian and Allen were just staring wide-eyed at the whole thing. (Adrian to Allen: "Dude, that's *Stewart* jamming over there." Allen to Adrian: "Yeah, Dude, yeah. Rad!") Mick Fleetwood was just hanging in the back, our anchor, keeping us all together. He didn't even need to play. It's just what he does.

As the night progressed, Tommy was

playing DJ on a sound system that sonically pummeled everyone in the house. He would throw on a Zeppelin tune, and whoever was nearest the drumkit would immediately sit down and start jamming along just like they did way back when. Hilary Jones was the star of that show by a longshot, with Joe "The Kid" and Stan Frazier cheering her on. Both Adrian and Allen called her The Bomb. (Allen to Hilary: "Dude, you're so rad!" Hilary to Allen: "Uh, thanks?") Rock 'N' Roll Jones, in the house.

Stan Frazier easily won the unofficial Air Guitar Competition when Tommy put on The Cars. Everyone enjoyed diving around Tommy's Purple Pillow Room, as well as spending some time in his Yellow Fuzzy Room. (It's good to be a rock star.) Stewart Copeland remarked, "It's Refreshing and Inspiring to see So Many drummers Doing it Right. I'm Glad to see that My Brothers are Still Keeping the Spirit Alive." He was referring, of course, to the madness that had unfolded before his eyes.

And all of this happened because of golf



*Gene, Stewart, Adrian, and Mick,
Adrian is the one in plaid.*

*Wayne, Allen, Stan, and Butch play...
leapfrog?*

and drumming. There is no other event or activity—or source of personalities—that could draw this group of legends and/or legends-in-the-making together for that many hours for that much fun. Softball? No, because whoever is in right field gets left out, and you only get four at-bats. (You get a hundred in golf! Unless you're Adrian.) Jamming? They do that for a living. I'm willing to bet that you *couldn't* pay these drummers to hang for this long at most events.

That may be the greatest attribute of golf. The fact is, all of these drummers

now have one extra thing in common. No matter what anyone's background, social scene, or lifestyle, if you play golf, you can hang. You can sell fifty million records or five, and it just doesn't matter when you're out in the sunshine knocking the little white ball around. The Bretheren Of The Stick, as Stewart Copeland repeatedly stated, is alive and well, and can get together *during the daytime* to chill and have a few laughs. And to tell a few stories about playing in the biggest bands in the world while they're at it.

Am I a golfer now? You bet. When do we tee it up next?

Go to www.moderndrummer.com for a slide show presentation on the day of golf and the night at Tommy's. Special thanks to drummer Mitch Marine and Wayne Lin from Mars Golffor their help in setting up this event. Mars Golfcans be found at www.mars-golf.com.



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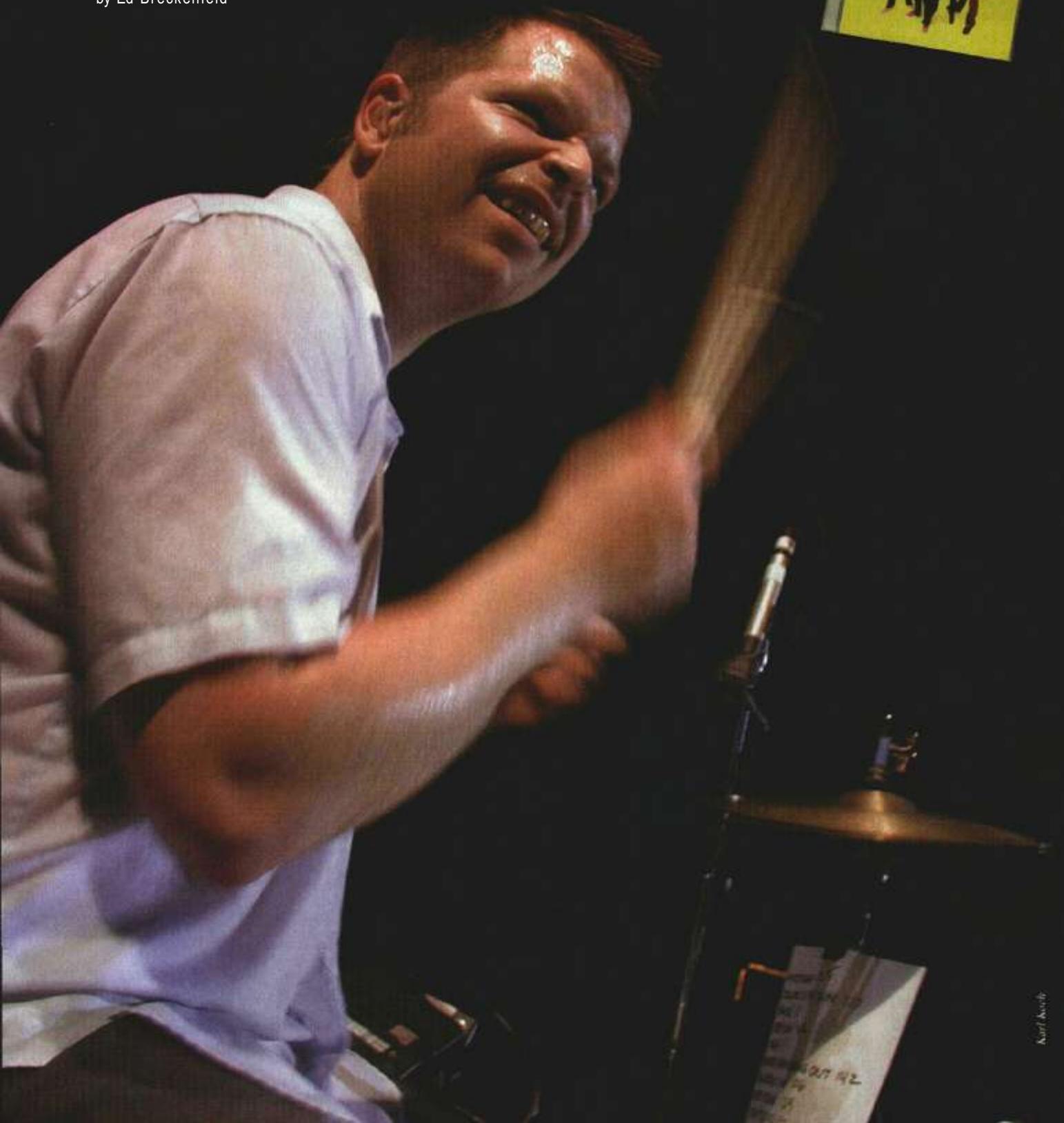
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Weezer's
Patrick Wilson

by Ed Breckenfeld



MUSIC KEY	
Half Open	ø
H.H.	X
T.T.	X
S.D.	●
T.T.	●
B.D.	●
H.H. w/foot	X
Ghost Note	

The king nerds of punk/pop are back with their first album in five years. *Weezer* (called "the green album" by fans) contains ten two- to three-minute pop tunes that recall the big hits of the band's first CD. Gone is the loose, raw approach to the drum tracks used on Weezer's last release, *Pinkerton*. Instead, Patrick Wilson's drumming here is as direct, economical, and energetic as the songs themselves.

"Don't Let Go"

Here's a cool little chorus setup coming out of the song's guitar solo.

1

"Photograph"

Patrick uses a classic surf-style beat on this one, updated by riding on the crash cymbal.

2

"Hash Pipe"

The first single contains some of the best drumming on the album, including this Bonham-esque sequence from the pre-choruses.

3

Patrick then switches to a dance groove on the ride cymbal for the chorus.

4

"Crab"

This song features several hi-hat/bass drum breakdowns, creating tension and then releasing into long drum fills.

5

"Simple Pages"

Even short fills are infused with Patrick's personal style.

6

"Glorious Day"

Another great short fill. Check out the bass drum note at the end of the measure. It serves as a pick-up to the next measure.

7



Bar Hopping

Phrasing With Threes In Four

by John Riley



Since the publication of my two books, *The Art Of Bop Drumming* and *Beyond Bop Drumming*, my students and I have been finding new, fun, creative, challenging, and musical ways to expand the material in them. I'd like to share one of those ideas with you.

A cornerstone of hip musical phrasing involves taking singable ideas and repeating them in surprising, "bar hopping" ways. As an example, take the first comping idea from page 18 of *The Art Of Bop Drumming* (example 1 below). This is a two-measure, Charleston-type phrase. It should be played on the snare drum, along with the swing pattern on the ride cymbal, quarter notes on the bass drum, and 2 and 4 on the hi-hat.



The next step involves reorganizing this basic phrase into a hip four-bar phrase. We'll do this by taking the first three beats of the first measure (the three-beat loop) and repeating them four times, then playing the second measure of the original phrase to complete the four-bar idea. The resulting phrase has two critical elements of music: familiarity, yet surprise.

1

Three-Beat Loop:

2

1 2 3 4 2 3 4 3 2 3 4 4 2 3 4

Be sure to count in 4/4 while you feel the 3/4 comping phrase against it. Don't let your ride cymbal, bass drum, or hi-hat stray from their prescribed duties.

Here is the same treatment on the next phrase.

3

Three-Beat Loop:

4

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

The same concept can be applied to all the comping exercises in the book. Here's the first phrase from Comp 2, page 22:

5

Three-Beat Loop:
1 2 3

This musical score shows a single measure of a three-beat loop. The measure begins with a bass drum (B) followed by a snare note (S). The next two measures show a repeating pattern of a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure ends with a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure is divided into three beats by vertical bar lines.

6

Three-Beat Loop:
1 2 3

This musical score shows a single measure of a three-beat loop. The measure begins with a bass drum (B) followed by a snare note (S). The next two measures show a repeating pattern of a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure ends with a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure is divided into three beats by vertical bar lines.

When you move to Comp 3, pages 26-27, your bass drum will stop feathering to play the written part.

7

Three-Beat Loop:
1 2 3

This musical score shows a single measure of a three-beat loop. The measure begins with a bass drum (B) followed by a snare note (S). The next two measures show a repeating pattern of a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure ends with a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure is divided into three beats by vertical bar lines.

8

Three-Beat Loop:
1 2 3

This musical score shows a single measure of a three-beat loop. The measure begins with a bass drum (B) followed by a snare note (S). The next two measures show a repeating pattern of a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure ends with a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure is divided into three beats by vertical bar lines.

In Comp 4, pages 28-29, the bass drum plays the written part.

9

Three-Beat Loop:
1 2 3

This musical score shows a single measure of a three-beat loop. The measure begins with a bass drum (B) followed by a snare note (S). The next two measures show a repeating pattern of a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure ends with a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure is divided into three beats by vertical bar lines.

10

Three-Beat Loop:
1 2 3

This musical score shows a single measure of a three-beat loop. The measure begins with a bass drum (B) followed by a snare note (S). The next two measures show a repeating pattern of a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure ends with a bass note (B), a snare note (S), and a bass note (B). The measure is divided into three beats by vertical bar lines.

As I mentioned, counting is critical. If you consistently count, you'll develop a feeling for this type of phrasing, and you'll be able to "hear" how the phrases unfold over the four-bar structure. Also, experiment with moving some of the snare notes onto the toms.

Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, Bill Stewart, and many others create musical intrigue and excitement by deploying ideas like those above. However, this material will be of absolutely no use to you if it throws off your flow through the

time. I recommend practicing with a metronome first. Then put on one of your favorite medium-tempo recordings and practice these phrases while playing along. Good luck, and have fun.

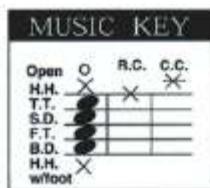
John Riley's career includes work with such artists as John Scofield, Mike Stern, Woody Herman, and Stan Getz. He has also written two critically acclaimed books, The Art Of Bop Drumming and Beyond Bop Drumming, published by Manhattan Music.



Bill Stewart

"Everybody's Party"

Transcribed by Jeremy Brown



This month's *Drum Soloist* features the creative mind and tasteful touch of master jazz drummer Bill Stewart. This particular solo is featured on guitar giants John Scofield and Pat Metheny's 1993 teaming, *I Can See Your House From Here* (Blue Note).

While there are a lot of fun points about this solo (Stewart's beautiful sound and delivery among them), probably the most interesting aspect here is the drummer's use of phrasing. You can hear the "conversation" that he sets up within the framework of the solo, eventually building to a dense and fiery intensity. Another fine performance from Bill Stewart.

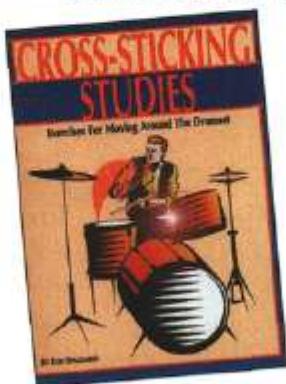


Jay Gullixson

The page contains five staves of drum sheet music. The first four staves are standard 4/4 time with a bass drum on the first beat of each measure. The first staff uses a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff includes rests and 'x' marks. The third staff features '3' and 'o' symbols above the notes. The fourth staff has '3' and 'x' symbols. The fifth staff concludes with a '3' symbol. The last measure of the fifth staff ends with a small logo consisting of a stylized 'M' and 'D' intertwined.

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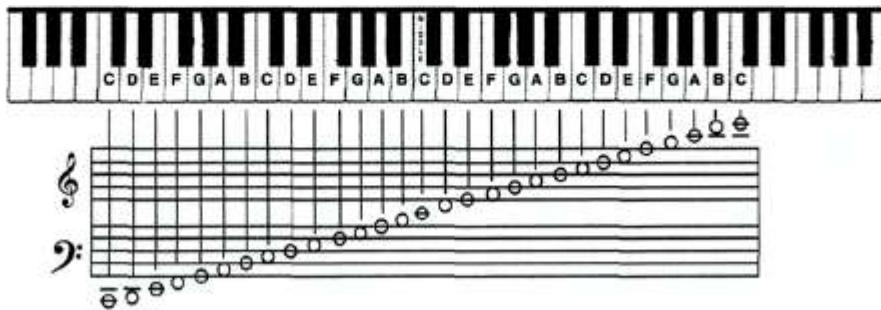
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Understanding The Language Of Music

Part 3: Accidentals And Intervals

by Ron Spagnardi

Last month we learned the letter names of the white notes on the keyboard. We also discussed the notes on the staff and how those notes correspond with the keyboard. Here's a quick review.



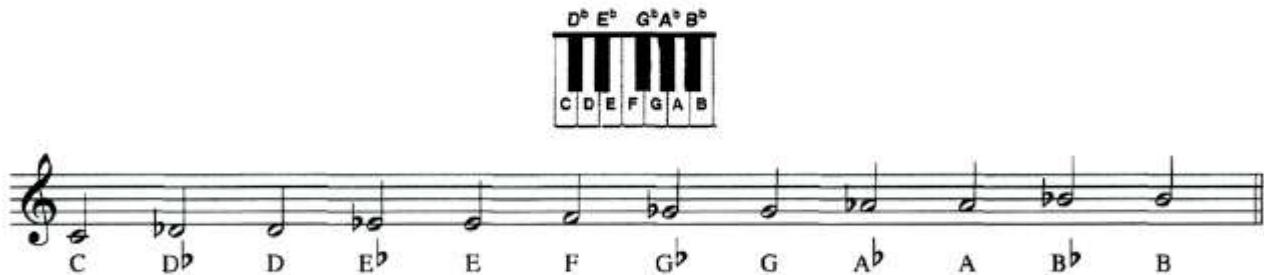
Accidentals

Accidentals are the black notes on your keyboard. An accidental is a symbol that alters the pitch of a note by a half step (to the next available note to the right or left). A **sharp sign** (#) raises the pitch of

a note by a half step. Here are the sharp names for the notes on the keyboard and how they would appear on the staff.



A **flat sign** (b) lowers the pitch of a note by a half step. The following example shows the flat letter names for the black notes and how they would appear on the staff.



Notice that the black keys have two names and can be called either sharp or flat. C# and D b are the same notes on the keyboard. F# and G b are also the same notes on the keyboard. Notes that are the same, but have two different names, are called **enharmonics**.

The accidentals in a measure continue to apply until the very end of the measure. A **natural sign** (n) cancels a sharp or flat. The slate is wiped clean at the beginning of the next measure.

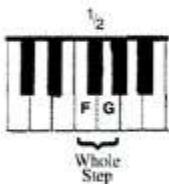
Look at the example below. The flat sign on the B line indicates that all B's are flattened (beats 1 and 2). The natural sign on the

fourth beat *cancels* the B? and returns it to a B natural. At the start of the second measure, all Bs revert back to **Bb** again.

Intervals

An interval is the distance between two notes. Intervals are made up of **half steps** and **whole steps**, a half step being the shortest dis-

tance between two notes. On the keyboard, a half step is the very next note to the right or left. Two half steps equal one whole step.



Let's observe how whole steps and half steps apply to major scales. The formula for any major scale is as follows (W = whole step, H = half step): W, W, H, W, W, W, H.

The example below shows the **C major scale** (C to C, all white

keys). Notice how the whole step/half step formula gives us the notes of the C major scale. Try the scale on your keyboard and count the whole steps and half steps as you go. Keep in mind that the same formula works for *every* major scale.

Here's the **G major scale**. Note how the same formula applies, making the next-to-last note an F#.

Once we have a grasp of half steps and whole steps, we can progress to the name of each interval on the keyboard. Below you'll find all the interval names starting from middle C.

Notice how the whole and half steps increase as you move from one interval to the next.

Minor 2nd (1/2 Step)	Major 2nd (1 Whole Step)	Minor 3rd (1 1/2 Steps)	Major 3rd (2 Whole Steps)	Perfect 4th (2 1/2 Steps)	Tritone (3 Whole Steps)
Perfect 5th (3 1/2 Steps)	Minor 6th (4 Whole Steps)	Major 6th (4 1/2 Steps)	Minor 7th (5 Whole Steps)	Major 7th (5 1/2 Steps)	Octave (6 Whole Steps)

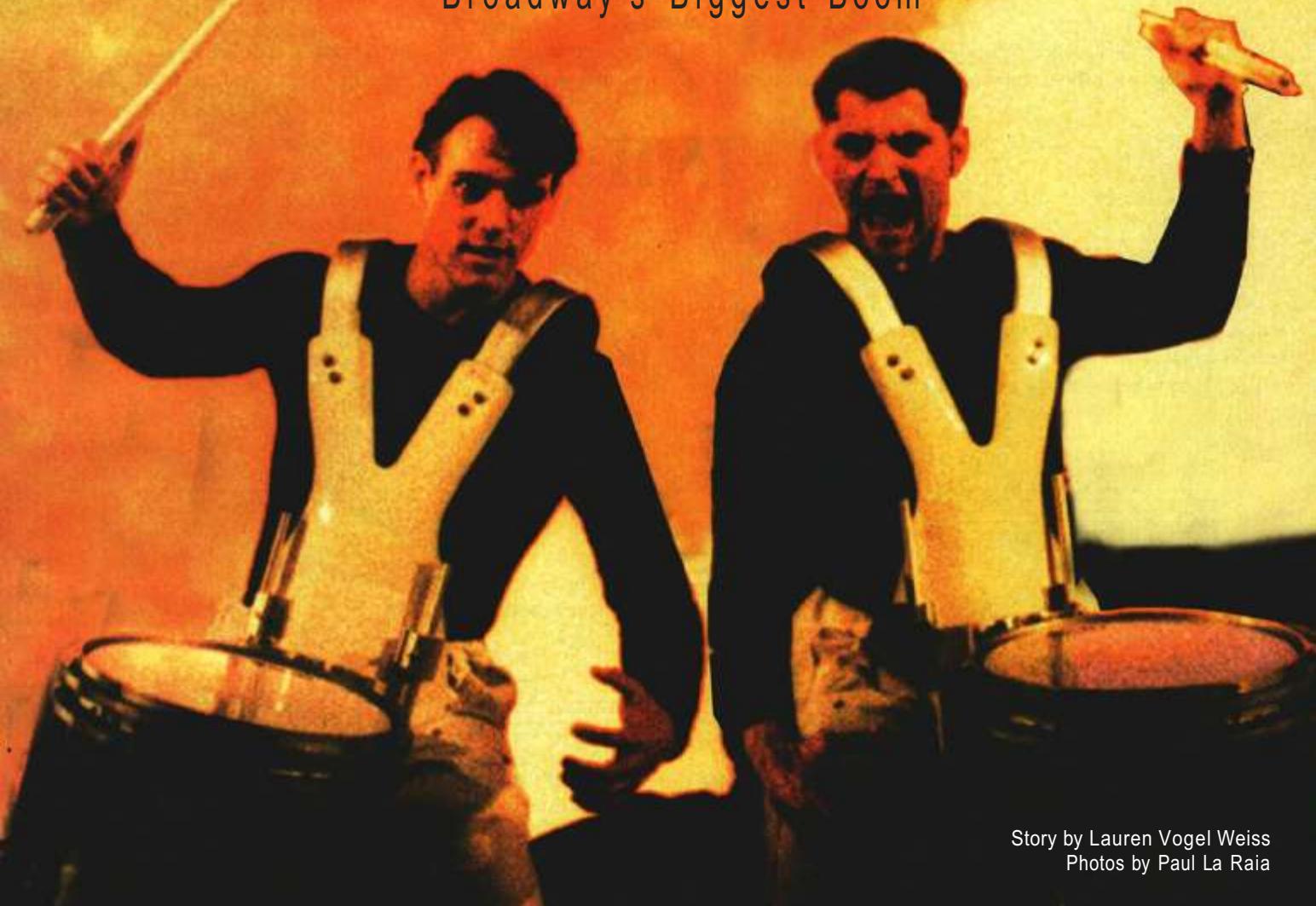
Take this month to review sharps and flats on the keyboard and the staff. Also, memorize the major scale formula and the names of all the intervals in the example above.

Next month, in Part 4, we'll cover key signatures along with all the major scales—the building blocks of *everything* that will follow in this series.



Blast!

Broadway's Biggest Boom



Story by Lauren Vogel Weiss
Photos by Paul La Raia

Following a recent performance of *Blast!*, the audience acted as if it didn't want to leave. Comments overheard included. "I've never seen anything like this before." "Absolutely phenomenal." "Amazing."

"The fact that we get to play a rudimental snare drum for a living is absurd, but beautiful."

"Let's come back to see it again." and even "An awesome show, more interesting than *Stomp*."

Fans flocked to the performers to have their photos snapped. Four street-side

screens replayed what the audience had just seen. People were dressed in everything from city chic to drum corps jackets. Was this a rock concert? A marching band exhibition? No...this is *Blast!* And make that "Tony-Award-winning *Blast!*" as the production was recognized in the "special event" category (as well as nominated for "best choreography") at the annual ceremony at Radio City Music Hall on June 3, 2001.

Although it's playing on Broadway—at the Broadway Theatre at the corner of Broadway and 53rd. to be exact—*Blast!* is not your typical musical production. More along the lines of *Stomp* or *Riverdance*, which entertain with music and dance and

little (if any) spoken dialog, it is described by the producers as "an explosive musical celebration." And one of the things it celebrates is the music and movement based in the drum & bugle corps activity, bringing the pulsating rhythms and spectacular pageantry from the outdoor football fields to the indoor theater. "I have yet to meet anybody who has come to the show and not left with a smile," grins Paul Rennick, one of the show's percussion arrangers and consultants.

To understand *Blast!*, one needs a brief history of The Star Of Indiana drum & bugle corps (which was featured on the cover of MD's sister publication *Modern Percussionist* in March 1986). Founded in 1984 in Bloomington, Indiana by businessman Bill Cook, the fledgling corps broke new ground and quickly rose to the top of the field, winning the coveted Drum Corps International (DCI) World Championship in 1991. A few years later, Star left the DCI circuit to bring their version of the activity's showmanship indoors. They began with their 1994 tour of *Brass Theatre*, a predecessor of *Blast!*, which also played for an extended run in Branson, Missouri in 1997 and 1998. The current version of *Blast!* opened in London's West End in December 1999 and closed there in April 2000. PBS viewers may have seen a broadcast of the British performance. The show then toured the US, playing in Boston, Milwaukee, Detroit, Chicago, and Washington, DC's Kennedy Center before opening on Broadway on April 17, 2001.

Blast!'s percussion arranger and consultant, Thom Hannum, also serves as the associate band director and percussion instructor at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. "I've been involved with *Blast!* since the inception of the program in 1999," Hannum explains, "especially from a design standpoint. I originally became a consultant to Star in 1990, and by 1993 I was responsible for running their percussion program. We retained much of the same percussion staff in 1994, '95, and '96 as we transitioned away from the competitive drum corps circuit into *Brass Theatre*." Hannum's involvement in the drum & bugle corps activity includes stints with The Garfield Cadets (now known as The Cadets Of Bergen County) and The Crossmen, and he was recently inducted into the DCI Hall Of Fame.

Hannum is not the only person with *Blast!* who was also involved in the drum & bugle corps activity: Fifty-four of the fifty-five cast members marched in a corps, and twenty-five of them were members of a World Champion unit. The performers range in age from nineteen to thirty-two years old, with the average age being twenty-four.

A "Typical" Day With Blast!

What is life like for these young musicians "on Broadway"? First of all, the players live in apartments in West New York, New Jersey—a short ferry ride across the Hudson River and then a quick ten-minute walk to the theater. On most Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, they have to be at the theater by 6:00 P.M. for stretching and warm-up exercises before the show starts at 8:00. On most Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays they have to be there around noon for the afternoon matinee, followed by a short dinner break and then another show that night (except on Sundays).

"Since we're dealing with unions, we can only be on stage to 'make noise' for a certain amount of time," explains Jack Mansager. "Most of our instruments are on stage, so we only get about fifteen minutes of actual playing time to make sure they're in tune and sound good."

How do you keep your chops up with such a busy performance schedule? "There's a certain amount of maintenance that goes into doing what we do," Nick Angelis answers. "I might not have the chops that I had when I was twenty-one, but I've developed a higher level of maturity to go with my technique. I might spend twenty to thirty minutes on the drum before the show, working fingers one day, fulcrum the next, or a little bit of a wrist and forearm technique—whatever seems to

be tight or not quite as responsive as the way I need it to be. You have to keep everything at a certain level to be able to go out there and perform at a high level every day."

Greg Seale has found a "secret way" to practice. "I'm one of the luckiest guys in the city because our stage manager and one of the prop guys found me a room downstairs at our theater where I can keep my drums. So I have a 'free' practice room in New York City—if you can believe that! I try to practice about two hours each day. When you're doing the same thing every night, you have to find little outlets to maintain your sanity. I even bought a guitar as a new musical challenge. When I can work on other things, it keeps the stuff I do every day a little bit fresher."

"Maintenance for the show is actually pretty low," adds Jeff Queen. "We rehearse as needed—to add a new cast member or to fix something—an average of twice a month. Generally our schedules are pretty decent."

Doing eight shows a week can take its toll. That's eight snare drum solos a week for Angelis and Queen—something that's usually performed once a year at DCI. "You can stress your muscles out," warns Angelis.

But the drummers know that living and working in New York City has other benefits, too: proximity to the Blue Note, the Virgin Records Megastore, and, of course, Manhattan delis!



Jeff Queen, Nick Angelis, and Jack Mansager

"Mainin' their sanity" practicing wherever they can.

Although this is truly an ensemble cast of thirty-one brass players, ten percussionists, and fourteen dancers—there are not even any pictures in the Playbill to help you identify which performer is which—there are two stars of the show: percussionists Nick Angelis and Jeff Queen. Between the two, they have won three of the prestigious DCI Individual Snare Drum titles—Angelis in 1992 (along with the Drum Corps Midwest crown in 1993) and Queen in 1994 and 1995 (plus two PAS awards those same years).

"Nick had been in The Star Of Indiana in 1993 and 1994," explains Hannum. "He played a snare drum solo based on his DCI Championship solo as part of *Brass Theatre*, and it was spectacular. Almost without fail, he got a spontaneous ovation at each performance. When we began planning for *Blast!*, we wanted to involve Nick. Since he and Jeff have always been good buddies and had

Blast!



Greg Seale

played together at The Vanguard and Blue Knights [drum & bugle corps], we wanted to incorporate him, too. They were the first two people we targeted, and we began to build the percussion aspect around them. Another guy we targeted was Jack Mansager, who was a student of mine at UMass and who played in The Cadets. And there are so many others—people like Chris Rasmussen, who was involved with *Brass Theatre* from 1994 to 1996."

Jeff Queen is the soloist who opens *Blast!* by playing the famous snare drum part to "Bolero" at center stage. Jeff began playing drums in fifth grade and saw his first drum corps show during his freshman year at Mount Vernon High School in Alexandria, Virginia. Jeff joined The Canton (Ohio) Bluecoats after his sopho-

more year in 1989, and then moved out to California, where he marched with The Velvet Knights in 1990 and 1991. The following summer he marched with The Santa Clara (California) Vanguard, and he spent the last three years of his junior drum & bugle corps career (1993-1995) with The Blue Knights from Denver, Colorado. In 1993, Queen also received a scholarship to the University of North Texas in Denton, where he was a member of their championship drumline and began pursuing a business/marketing degree.

Nick Angelis is the other featured snare drummer in the show. His drum corps experience began in 1979 at the age of four and a half when he joined The Satellites in Leicester, Massachusetts near his hometown of Worcester. Following nine seasons there, he marched for two years with The Spartans from Nashua (New Hampshire) and then two more with The Boston Crusaders. In 1992, Nick moved out to California, where he spent a year with The Santa Clara Vanguard and met Jeff Queen. Angelis marched with The Star Of Indiana in 1993 and then continued as a featured rudimental snare drum soloist with *Brass Theatre* the following year. He marched his "age out" year together with Queen at The Blue Knights. During this time, he was also working on a music education degree at the University of Massachusetts, where he studied with Hannum.

"I was about to become a band director," Angelis recalls with a grin. "Being invited to join *Blast!* was a life-changing situation. I always knew that I would rather perform. I had outlets in school—I sang in vocal jazz ensembles, I played in symphonic band, wind ensemble, and brass choir—but there was something missing as far as the energy level that you get when you march in drum & bugle corps. This is more theatrical. It allows you to incorporate facial expression, body movement, and gesture as opposed to being in a sit-down group, where it's more internalized. I have many moments where the diversity of my character allows me to go through different aspects of role playing through the use of percussive instruments, my body, singing, or dancing. That's why this opportunity was hard to pass up."

Angelis and Queen are featured in the "Battery Battle" towards the end of the first act. "I like to refer to it as the 'dueling banjos' portion," laughs Queen. "Nick comes out and plays his solo, and then I play my solo. We try to top each other, and then we stage a mock fight with fake punches! It turns out in the end that we become friends, just like in real life.

"I do a lot of stick tosses and juggling-type tricks with the sticks," continues Queen, "plus a few backsticking things." Does he ever worry about dropping his sticks during a performance? "I've been doing pretty well in New York so far, and I only had three drops in London. When that happens, you learn to recover. When a stick goes down, I actually get a better reaction from the audience for pulling out another stick than I do for *not* dropping a stick! The problem is that with all the movement that goes on onstage, you've got to get rid of the stick—not to mention that it's painted glow-in-the-dark. As soon as the duel sequence is over, we have blacklights that come on for the drum-to-drum backsticking part. So not only is this stick lying there, but it's glowing!"

Nick Angelis tries to describe more of their "duet"—or "duel." "There's one point when we cross over and play a single-stroke roll on each other's drum—my right hand crossing over his left hand to play on his drum, his left hand going under mine to play on my drum. It's a neat effect as we each kneel down on to one knee. We also do a split

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roll where we grab our hands and rotate in a circular fashion while we both play off the left hand—Jeff plays the downbeat and I play the upbeat of a triplet roll. It's truly something to see!"

While Queen thrills the audience with his stick tosses, Angelis has a few tricks of his own. "At one point, I put the stick on my tongue and I bounce the stick off the drumhead," Nick says with a shrug that makes it seem easy. "It's kind of a physics technique where you find the balance point of the stick, place it on your tongue, and play the right stick on the left. But I have to give credit to my buddies Rich Viano for showing me the trick and Paul [Rudy] Gowern for helping me to implement it into my solo. My solo is designed to excite people, whether they know what a rudimental snare drum is or not."

The percussion showcase in the second act is an arrangement of Minuro Miki's "Marimba Spiritual" and features Jack Mansager on the marimba. Jack marched with The Connecticut Hurricanes Senior Corps while he was in high school and joined The Cadets Of Bergen County (New Jersey) in 1991, where he stayed for four years, primarily in the "pit" at the front of the field. Jack graduated from the University of Massachusetts (where he studied with Hannum and Peter Tanner) in 1995 with a bachelor of music degree in percussion performance. After "aging out," Mansager taught the Crossmen pit for four years while he obtained his master's degree from the University of South Carolina in Columbia.

"Chris Lee hooked me into the symphony scene in Columbia," Mansager explains, "and I played in Savannah, Charleston, Augusta—all over the place. I got a lot of experience playing—kind of 'on-the-job training.' Thom [Hannum] told me about *Blast!*, and I thought it was a good opportunity as the next step in my musical career."

In addition to his marimba solo, Mansager also plays marching bells, a quick "Sabre Dance" quote on a xylophone being rolled across the stage, marching snare drum, timpani.... "I basically play every percussion instrument you can think of!" he laughs. "I even do some 'hand farting' in 'Officer Krupke'!"

Mansager recalls the audition videotape he made in 1999 to join the original London cast. "Thom selected some excerpts from standards, like the xylophone part to 'Porgy And Bess,' some Tony Cirone snare drum pieces, and a couple of timpani etudes, and we could select some things, too. Since they were only taking twelve percussionists at that time—now it's down to ten—versatility was one of the key factors."

Another important member of the percussion cast is Greg Seale, who primarily plays drumset during the show. "I did my audition tape in a band hall," remembers Seale. "I played xylophone, marimba,

Blast! Gear

The percussionists in *Blast!* use a total of 234 pieces of percussion equipment—from twelve marching snare drums to fourteen marching bass drums...from sixty-five cymbals to one bell tree...from three marimbas to nine timpani. The majority of the instruments are placed in six "cubes" at the back of the stage, stacked three cubes across and two cubes high.

Paul Rennick, director of percussion, points out that the drumset is in the upper center cube. "From a timing standpoint, the drumset holds a lot of things together. And from an energy standpoint, sometimes I think it runs the show!"

bell, rudimental snare drum, concert snare drum, some hand percussion, and drumset. I also had to act out some silent scenes—like boxing with an imaginary opponent or cheering up a crying child—as well as sing and march."

Seale grew up in Plano, Texas, where he started playing at the age of three. He participated in the middle school and high school programs and then entered the University of North Texas, where he played snare drum in the UNT drumline for three years. Greg's drum & bugle corps experience was a single year (1992) with The Blue Knights. "I decided that I wanted to focus more on drumset and marimba rather than rudimental snare drum," he explains. "I started doing various styles of ensembles—the whole gamut at North Texas. I'm very lucky to have the parents I do, who were patient enough to

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Blast!

let me take my time and do drumline, orchestra, and lab band."

Greg graduated from UNT in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in percussion performance. After that, he freelanced around town and taught at various local schools until fellow UNT student Jeff Queen suggested he audition for *Blast!* after their return from London in the spring of 2000.

Did he ever imagine he'd be on Broadway? "Not in my wildest dreams!" exclaims Seale. "I always figured I would play in bands and be one of a group of four or five guys. I never had much of a desire to be in an orchestra pit. The best thing about this show is that I get to play drumset—which is my favorite thing in the world—but I also get to play keyboard and snare drum and tons of different other instruments. And I never forget our sole purpose: to make sure the people in front are entertained."

How does one prepare for a performance like this? "I was ready for anything they could throw at me when I walked in the door," Seale says with a smile. "I was really lucky that I had so many opportunities to play in different situations with so many different styles of groups, especially at North Texas and around Dallas. I can't put a value on everything that I learned—from the tiniest wedding gig to a big festival. That's one thing that Doc [Dr. Robert Schietroma] taught me at North Texas: He showed me not only how to play drumset in a group and make the group sound good, but he had the same attitude with his band [The Panhandlers] outside of school or in lessons where I was preparing a marimba piece for a recital. It was all the same intensity. Every playing situation required the same attitude, quality of performance, and professionalism."

With so much drum corps experience among the drummers, is

Blast! just an indoor version of the popular summer musical activity? Greg Seale says no. "The fact that we move and play at the same time is similar, but our show makes every person a unique character. That's the reason I didn't do more than one summer of drum corps—I didn't feel like I was able to express myself as an individual. Everything that we do here is by our own design. We're allowed to act goofy or serious, or whatever the piece dictates. Even though we wear the same costumes, we each have personality. That's what makes the show."

Jeff Queen agrees. "You don't have to stand rigid and look straight ahead. You get to perform with your body the whole time. That's probably the biggest difference from drum corps. Not to take anything away from drum corps—but there's more at risk here because there's more of you exposed."

"The similarity is that the skills involved are those that are taught or used in the drum corps idiom. And both schedules are brutal—I guess that's kind of similar," quips Queen before continuing. "This is more professional. We're paid. We have health insurance. We live in apartments instead of sleeping on gym floors. In drum corps, everything was very intense, testosterone-oriented, and regimented. Here, you stand out wherever you go. We've developed our own characters on stage."

Nick Angelis also weighs in on the comparisons between *Blast!* and drum corps. "The main similarity is the level of intensity you need every night to perform at a high level. In corps, these techniques are taught to you—how to be consistent, how to perform. But as a professional, you have to find ways to do that yourself. This is a professional job where I'm required to make people happy every day. It's just like Dennis Chambers or Vinnie Colaiuta going to a gig. I'm paid to do a job—to make people excited about our show. It helps if you love what you do, but the success of *Blast!* is determined by our performance. If we're not selling people on our product, then they don't come."

"We don't have to deal with the elements as you do in drum corps," adds Jack Mansager. "We don't have to deal with rain, heat, or playing in a stadium, where you're hundreds of feet away from your audience. All those things make drum corps very difficult. The nice thing about *Blast!* is that we still maintain the high energy levels of a drum corps performance but we can produce better sounds. When people come to this show, they're not necessarily coming to hear a concert. They're coming to see what *Blast!* is and if the show lives up to its name."

Audiences and more than a few critics have become hooked on *Blast!* And so are the performers. Everyone has a different favorite part of the show—and some say the whole show is their favorite. But how about a memorable performance? Greg Seale recalls the "drummers only" performance at the Kennedy Center Honors back in December. "We played for President Clinton. First and foremost, that's huge. And there were so many celebrities there. We were walking backstage and saw Donald Sutherland, Goldie Hawn, Kurt Russell, Don Rickies, Glenn Close.... And Walter Cronkite introduced us! It was my most exciting and most memorable performance—almost beyond description!"

It is hard to describe everything about *Blast!* The show needs to be seen and heard to be truly appreciated. But the spirit of the performers is more easily captured in words. "The fact that we get to play a rudimental snare drum for a living is absurd, but beautiful," laughs Jeff Queen. "Stick to your guns, whatever you believe in, and just go

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The Blast! Cast

Nicholas E. Angelis (age twenty-seven)
Worcester, MA
University of Massachusetts, music education

Alan "Otto" Compton (twenty-seven)
Memphis, TN
University of Memphis, percussion performance

Benjamin Raymond Handel (twenty-one)
Warsaw, IN
Indiana University, history/music

Darren W.L. Hazlett (twenty-three)
Aston, PA
University of Massachusetts, B.M. music education

Naoki Ishikawa (twenty-five)
Tokyo, Japan
University of Tennessee, B.M. instrumental performance

Jack Manger (twenty-eight)
Norwalk, CT
University of Massachusetts, B.M.
University of South Carolina, M.M.

David Nash (twenty-six)
Munfordville, KY
University of Kentucky, B.M.M.E.

Jeffrey A. Queen (twenty-seven)
Euless, TX
University of North Texas, business/marketing

Douglas Raines (twenty-two)
Fairfax, VA
East Carolina University, music education/music performance

Chris Rasmussen (twenty-six)
Slidell, LA
University of Southern Mississippi, B.M. performance & music management and M.B.A.
University of North Texas, masters of music

Andrew Schnieders (twenty-nine)
Lexington, KY
Eastern Kentucky University, music performance

Greg Seale (twenty-seven)
Plano, TX
B.M. percussion performance, University of North Texas

Note: Although only ten percussionists perform at one time, all twelve of these performers have played percussion in the Broadway cast. The show's full cast also includes thirty-three brass players and sixteen visual ensemble players.

after it. If you do what you love, usually the rest pans out."

Thom Hannum is glad that the success of *Blast!* lends a type of professional credibility to the drum corps activity. "We spend so many hours learning our craft at drum corps," he says with a sigh. "This has created a place for some of those musicians to use their skills. It allows people who have been in the activity the chance to continue on with some form of legitimate performance art." Where else could you see a marching snare drum and a five-octave marimba have a solo on any stage, let alone one on The Great White Way?

Seeing The Show

If you'd like to see *Blast!*, the show is booked on Broadway through January 2002. There will also be a second cast touring the country beginning in September 2001 through June 2002. For more details on dates and locations of the US tour, please check out their Web site at www.blast-theshow.com.



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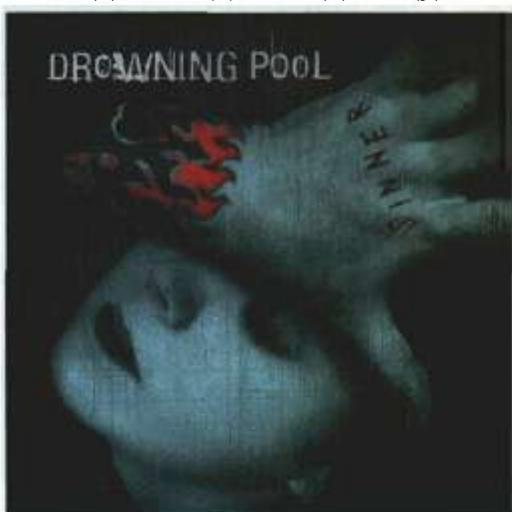
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RECORDINGS

8 Drowning Pool Sinner

Mike Luce (dr), Dave Williams (vcl), Stevie Benton (bs), C.J. Pierce (gtr)

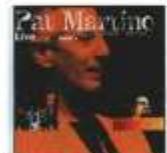


a catchy chord progression. On this song in particular, Luce seems to have been given free rein, and his snare and tom fills are magnificent. (Wind-Up)

T. Bruce Wittet

9 Pat Martino Live At Yoshi's

Billy Hart (dr), Pat Martino (gtr), Joey DeFrancesco (Hammond B-3)



Hand me a hammer. I've got to chisel this disc on the stone tablet of "Guitar God Great Albums." Here's the magic that live club albums strive for; the air is crackling, the band is in the zone, and they know it. It's no secret that these three players are jazz monsters, but this hard-swinging combination ups the ante. Martino's fat popping guitar and DeFrancesco's harrowing acrobatic runs juice each other as Billy Hart drives his ride and finds the perfect moments for cracking fills and setups, kicking the band to further peaks. Combining finesse and charged energy, Hart's commanding pulse warns, "Stragglers beware!" The veteran still sounds young and hungry. For Martino, the organ trio format is a return to roots. His long journey of growth makes for a startling homecoming. Exciting, white-knuckled listening. (BlueNote)

Jeff Potter

8 Cindy Blackman Someday...

Cindy Blackman (dr), J.D. Allen (tn sx), Carlton Holmes (pno, org), George Mitchell (bs)



From the opening strains of "My Funny Valentine," Cindy Blackman's surging pulse once again demands attention as she accents and prods the tune along. Throughout this album, the follow-up to her brilliant *Works On Canvas*, Blackman lays down a rhythmic cushion to support her group. Check out "Eternal Justice," where a flowing cymbal canvas drops into halftime midway through the head, only to build to new levels while pushing the soloists. "Paradise Island" stands out near the end of the album, as Cindy simmers along to a deep bass line before boiling over the edge. Blackman is an exciting drummer, with her fantastic sense of swing and syncopated juggling. And using Tony Williams' work with Miles Davis as a starting point, her group has created another solid album. (HighNote)

Martin Patmos

SIGNIFICANT REISSUES

A legendary pop/rock session drummer of the '60s and '70s, Hal Blaine had the sound and feel everybody wanted. Yet few artists excel both as leaders and sidemen, as recent reissues remind us.



Blaine's 1963 leader debut, *Deuces, "Ts," Roadsters, & Drums*, rallies his famous Wrecking Crew mates for an instrumental set celebrating the '60s fun-in-the-sun West Coast vibe. Hastily scribed tunes wed surfin' beats and cheesy fuzz guitar with the sounds of revving hot rods.



The novelty dates badly, but the playing is solid, and it's fun in a retro-cool way. And dig the cover: A Brilli-Creamed Blaine behind blue sparkle Ludwigs, encircled by souped-up hot rods! (Sundazed)

As sideman, however, Blaine was Midas, as heard in the remastered five-disc box containing Simon & Garfunkel's complete catalog. Blaine once expressed that he strove to be a strong yet "unnoticed" influence in a song. This is increasingly apparent as S&G progress from spare folkie beginnings to their masterpiece final releases, *Bookends* and *Bridge Over Troubled Water*. On earlier hits, such as "I Am A Rock" and "Homeward Bound," Blaine used his kit more traditionally. But with the elegant *Bridge*, the percussion "orchestrates" the forms. His textural choices, combining minimal bits of traps with percussion, predate later "singer/songwriter" production aesthetics. From the bouncy "Why Don't You Write Me," featuring reggae-tinged kit work, to the pseudo-orchestral majesty of the title track, Blaine heightens each song with individuality. (Columbia/Legacy)



Jeff Potter

rating scale



6 Vision Of Disorder From Bliss To Devastation

Brendon Cohen (dr), Tim Williams (vc). Man Baumbach. Mike Kennedy (gtr), Mike Fleischmann (bs)



I Guarantee, the singer's going to have nodes within five years. It sounds as if he's squeezing his larynx tight enough to expel a golf ball. Drummer Brendon Cohen handles the whole kit with aplomb, not just kick and snare. He incorporates lower and upper toms into his fills and seems to have command of the drumset as an *instrument*. But I let's not get too academic about VOD. After all, the title track, "From Bliss To Devastation," is as direct an ode to Black Sabbath's "Iron Man" as it gets. Conversely, on the ballad "Pretty Hate," Cohen is riding his cymbal softly, showing an admirable ability to suppress unnecessary commentary. "Southbound" would be a good radio song. It expresses the dilemma of a band balancing pop melodies with a heavier payload. Lyrics? Well, nobody promised us Dylan. (www.tntrecords.com)

T. Bruce Wittet

7 Converge Jane Doe

Ben Keller (dr), Jacob Bannon (vc). Kurt Ballou. Aaron Dalbec (gtr). Nate Newton (bs)



Let's be honest: Most people probably won't care much for *Jane Doe*. This is exactly the kind of stuff tender-eared listeners term "noise." Well, it certainly is noisy, thanks largely to Jacob Bannon's raspy, distorted vocal shrieking. But an examination of Converge's musical core reveals strong neo-punk-metal songcraft beneath the screaming guitars and relentlessly pounding drums. There's also a welcome balance between dizzying odd-metered sections and good ol'-fashioned 2 and 4 bashing. Drummer Ben Koller specializes in furious single-stroke rolls that start on the snare and growl their way around deepening tom-toms. Like a growing number of players these days, he's equally at home with over-the-top metal orchestration and stripped-down punk aggression. Koller sees no need to take sides—as long as it's heavy. (www.equalvision.com)

Michael Parillo

8 Randy Hoexter Radiant

Dave Weckl, Tom Knight, Chip Lunsford, Keith Runfola (dr), Randy Hoexter (kybd), Mike Stern, Carl Culpepper (gtr), Adam Nitti, Dennis Caiizza, Joe Reda (bs), Sam Skelton, Eric South (sx), Bob Lewis (tbn), Mike Barry, Gordon Vernick (trp, flghn)



Composer/keyboardist Randy Hoexter gathers an all-star lineup of Atlanta musicians, along with a couple of household fusion names (Weckl and Stern), to create an outstanding collection of tastefully composed electric and acoustic jazz fusion material. The well-structured arrangements give the drummers specific guidelines to follow most of the time. Each drummer displays taste, subtlety, and discretion in their choice of chops. In the recent trend to "jam," this is a welcome breath of fresh air. (www.randyhoexter.com)

Mike Haid

7 Leroy S/T

Matt Sherrod, Vinnie Colaiuta (dr), Luis Conte (perc), Leroy (gtr, vcl, kybd, programming), Chris Chaney, Tal Herzberg (bs), Jamie Muoberac, Ed Roth (kybd), Joel Shearer, Randy Jacobs (gtr)



You can tell by listening to Leroy's debut that his parents must have had a great record collection. Leroy's sound is a hip mixture of the past and the future. Vinnie Colaiuta makes a guest appearance on the last track, "Make It Hot," and that he does. It's nice to hear Vinnie rocking out in a contemporary setting. Drummer Matt Sherrod does an excellent job making the rest of the twelve songs funky rock-solid. Throughout this record Matt makes every song feel great by grooving over or in place of loops. This record has it all—elements of old school funk, hip-hop, rock, gospel, and blues—and it all works. Check it out. ([Hollywood](http://www.hollywoodrecords.com))

Billy Amendola

GOING UNDERGROUND

5 Toby Dammit Top Dollar



Well this is a unique recording. Loud, dancey, and sonically rich, *Top Dollar* is the work of a drummer disinterested in hearing about the limitations of "drum music." Employing all sorts of effects and samples, *Toby Dammit* seems to value musical high jinks above compositional structure. (Think of this music as the polar opposite of a Max Roach solo.) The repetition gets a little tiresome on some tracks. But Dammit scatters about so many fun and odd sounds, you'll likely get pretty far into *Top Dollar* before bailing. In small doses this is pretty powerful stuff, from the adrenalized techno-ish opening track to the soundtracky "Malmo Nocturne." There are enough cool ideas here to suggest *Top Dollar*'s sequel will be quite interesting. (www.omplatten.com)

7 Rovo Imago



Japanese group Rovo call their music "man-driven trance," and the label seems appropriate. This band certainly wouldn't exist as such without extensive MIDI implementation, but wouldn't be nearly as effective without the beautiful humanity weaving through its grooves. Opener "N'Dam" seamlessly morphs from an ambient floater to an energetic hand-drum workout. The very next track, "Horses," is a great drum 'n' bassy dub trip that'll give your speakers (and practice session) a workout. Drummers Okabe Yoichi and Yoshigaki Yasuhiro are center stage much of the time here, and to good effect. It's not always clear how and when the percussives are electronically treated, and the acoustic/electronic balance is always very artfully achieved. I'd be fascinated to see how they do this stuff live. Readers unafraid of words like "chill out" and "remix" should definitely check this out. (www.inidentalmusic.com)

Adam Budofsky



RxBandits Progress

Chris Tsagakis (dr), Rich Balling (tbn, vcl), Matt Embree (vcl, gtr), James Salomons (bs)



For the Southern California-based band whose repertoire held a number of catchy, happy-go-lucky poppy ska-punk tunes just a few years back, the term "progress" can definitely be applied to RxBandits. The band has smartly reshaped itself into a ska/reggae-vibed quartet with a more serious tone and outlook, accomplished via rock-edged choruses, like on the album-opener, "VCG3." *Progress* also showcases the Bandits' musicianship quite nicely, which has grown exponentially over their previous album, *Halfway Between Here And There*. Drummer Chris Tsagakis' aim is for feel rather than technique, and he nails the bulls-eye. Plenty of hi-hat 16ths and timbale accents plus the occasional hard-rock half-time breakdown keep interest levels high without sounding overbearing. And the rapid-fire tom fills during the bridge of "Get" are a fine example of Tsagakis' stickwork. *Progress* is a fine effort created mostly from maturity. (Drive-Thru)

Waleed Rashidi



Chrome Yellow itswhatsnext

Warpath (dr), Charlie Gardner (vcl), Stayne, Jack Bergen (gtr), Mark Karbowski (bs)



Modern rock with a good dose of '70s-flavored funky soul and a taste of Texas blues is what Florida's up-and-coming Chrome Yellow is all about. Composing a solid album, these tracks are littered with Warpath's crisp, syncopated snare and elaborate hi-hat playing. Check out their cover of "All Along The Watchtower" for an example. After laying out for the opening, Warpath kicks "Triple Zeroes" into a mid-tempo groove, working his way towards a tom-filled bridge. Throughout the album, the drummer's laid-back yet grounded groove sets up the rest of the band. This looks like a good start for the group; hopefully we'll hear more from them in the future. (www.itswhatsnext.com)

Martin Patmos



Klobas/Storrs Pursue

Mike Klobas (dr, perc), Dave Storrs (dr, perc)



What a tall order to fill: two guys jamming the length of a CD on drumsets and percussion. It's always pleasant to hear unfettered drums and cymbals ring out, their special harmonics and transients unclouded by some windmill guitarist. No question, it's a joyous thing the way Klobas and Storrs get around the kits. Nothing pretentious here, to be sure—no world music agenda—although the rhythms hail from points east and west. To be honest, though, with the absence of melodic instruments, it gets a little tedious midway through. It's not that these two drummers can't generate dynamic contrast or suggest melody; it's just that, well, they're no Jack DeJohnette. Still, *Pursue* is plenty inventive. Check out the cool brush and rim work on "Sweep And Shake" for proof. (www.peak.org/~louierec)

T. Bruce Wittet



Big Dumb Face Duke Lion Fights The Terror

Wes Borland (all instruments)



Big Dumb Face is Limp Bizkit guitarist Wes Borland's entertaining side project, offering truly bizarre fare that sounds like the soundtrack to an evil cartoon. Wes plays everything here—guitars, drums, programming, whatever—supporting warped songs with warped humor and warped vocals that often sound like a gang of munchkins. But a big part of the weirdness here is the frequently amusing grooves (often delightfully playing off cliché) that support these songs. Whether it's the chugging onslaught of "Blood Red Head," the laid-back electro loops of "Space Adventure," or a posturing cowboy beat, Borland's approach on this album results in a CD unlike most others in your collection. While it might not be for everyone, be careful, it just might grow on you. (Flawless/Geffen)

Martin Patmos

LIGHTING THE FUSE



Scott McGill/Michael Manring/Vic Stevens Addition By Subtraction

Vic Stevens (dr), Scott McGill (gtr), Michael Manring (bs), Jordan Rudess (kybd)



Electric jazz/rock fusion music has traveled many roads over its thirty-some years of existence. One of those roads was solidly paved by guitarist Allan Holdsworth. *Addition By Subtraction* brings to mind the musical flavors of Holdsworth and his adventurous instrumental guitar trio projects. Although the musicianship on this release is outstanding, the originality and new musical direction is what's truly unique. Drummer Vic Stevens shows creative response to the many droning loops of chordal backdrops. His dynamic touch adds an interesting texture to the often drifting material. And his soloing over odd-metered ostinato segments is more musical than muscular. Followers of Holdsworth will delight in this effort to continue in the direction of one of fusion's true masters. (www.lasercd.com)



Jeff Berlin In Harmony's Way

Danny Gottlieb (dr), Jeff Berlin (bs), Richard Drexler (kybd), Mike Stern (gtr), Dave Liebman (sx), Gary Burton (vbs)



Electric bass master Jeff Berlin spent many years in the world of fusion music. This release shows a fresh direction for Jeff, as he explores a variety of musical possibilities including bebop, swing, and blues. The well-written and melodic Berlin compositions give renowned drummer Danny Gottlieb an excellent canvas to work on. Danny is tastefully discreet, and his ideas flow effortlessly. He falls in line with the likes of Peter Erskine and Bill Stewart in the area of sensitivity and dynamics. The beautiful ballads and seriously swinging pieces on this release do well to show off Gottlieb's masterful fluidity. (www.jeffberlinmusic.com)

Mike Haid

BOOKS

7 Funk And Fusion Concepts by Glenn W. Meyer

level: advanced, \$24.95 (with CD)



Are you ready to get funky? Glenn Meyer goes deep into funk technique for drumset in a very organized and easy-to-follow format. Beginning with quarter-note ride independence, Meyer quickly moves into advanced syncopation that he calls "two sound level" development, which is actually the development of accented notes within a rhythmic pattern with the underlying concept of ghost notes. To illustrate, Meyer includes excellent written examples from many of the great funky rock and fusion drummers, including Jeff Porcaro, Billy Cobham, Steve Gadd, Mike Clark, Dave Weckl, Harvey Mason, and David Garibaldi. Meyer also touches on some basic hip-hop and reggae grooves, as well as several Latin, African, Afro-Cuban, and Brazilian grooves. The selected listening discography is minimal, and the electronic drum solos on the audio CD are less than inspirational. But the education in funk patterns is well worth checking out. There are enough funky grooves in this book to keep you busy for a lifetime of studies into this advanced form of drumming. (MelBay)

Mike Haid

9 Syncopated Rolls For The Modern Drummer by Jim Blackley

level: all, \$25



8 The Essence Of Jazz Drumming by Jim Blackley

level: all, \$50

Teacher/guru Jim Blackley first issued *Syncopated Rolls* forty years ago, and it has endured as a classic along with companion Volume 2. The two books are now combined, and their disciplined, laser-focused lessons are helpful at any level. Blackley takes the holistic route, warning that drummers should employ rolls not as "gymnastic" rudiments, but rather as an expression of musical phrasing. With an emphasis on jazz usage, the author offers a regimen of playing rolls around accented figures. With dogged thoroughness, the book visits endless permutations, ultimately setting the hands free for creative roll-painting.

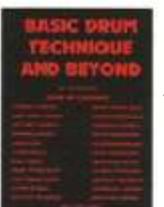
The author's new release, *Essence*, is a thick tome with an equally hefty price. Once again, the big picture is foremost, as Blackley stresses phrasing and musicality in jazz drumset patterns. "Articulation" is his key word, meaning an emphasis on "strong and weak pulses." Or, as put in his new-agey yet accurate guru-speak: "Developing a feeling for the phrase is a most important quality...but if each note within that phrase is not nourished with its special degree of light and shade, then the phrase will not dance its special dance."

The sole disappointment with both books is the lack of a CD demo, a standard today even for indies. Students would surely have benefited from hearing the "light and shade." Nevertheless, Blackley deserves high kudos. He offers a clear concept and delivers the goods for students to realize it. Grab his hand and, with work, he'll take you there. (Paper Giant)

Jeff Potter

8 Basic Drum Technique And Beyond by Joel Rothman

level: advanced, \$19.95



Rothman's *Basic Drumming* book has been a staple for drum instructors for many years. *Basic Drum Technique And Beyond* is its follow-up, with the focus on the advanced drummer. The idea of this book is to take basic rudimental sticking techniques and develop a deeper understanding and facility of these rudiments with variations of stickings and new rhythmic ideas. Rothman takes many of the rudiments through endless possibilities, alternating left- and right-hand techniques. A very challenging section on rhythmic modulation and developing up to six strokes on each hand is included. Dynamics are also covered, as well as what Rothman calls "artificial technique," which deals with groups of fives and sevens and combining these groups with threes, fours, and sixes to a beat. The final section pushes your technique to the limit by doubling combinations of fours, fives, sixes, and sevens. Ouch! (J.R.Publications)

Mike Haid

VIDEOS

7 Licksamples: Rock Drum Fills by Mansaku Kimura

levels: all, \$19.95



The first thing that becomes obvious about this video, and its greatest strength, is that host drummer/narrator Mansaku Kimura intends to seat each lick in a musical context. To that end, he's brought along his band, the hit Japanese fusion

act Prism. There's sparse banter from Kimura, voiced over in English. The problem—and I'll bet Mansaku felt this way when he first screened the finished product—is that the toms are back in the mix. Sure, you can hear them, but with nowhere near the clarity or presence of his cymbals. Who knows, maybe it's just the way Kimura tunes. Either way, it makes it difficult to catch his fingering, as in, *were those doubles or sing/ees that just went by?* No worries, though. Everything is charted out in an included booklet and cross-referenced numerically on screen. Foolproof.

Kimura takes us through two hundred thirty fills for rock, Motown, funk, blues, and Latin, barely drawing a bead of sweat. You get to see fills you already toss off in your sleep neatly written out and executed. At the same time, there's stuff here you can't play, and you'll gather many ideas. If you miss something because you were concentrating on the guitarist (no slouch he), then pause and rewind. A drummer playing songs with a band. What a concept! (Ritor Music)

T. Bruce Wittet

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Drummer: Eduardo "Eddie" Paniagua

Studio: Cherokee, LA

Producer: Andrew "Mudrock" Murdock

Artist: Puya: Ramon Ortiz (gtr, vcl), Harold Hopkins (bs, vcl), Sergio Curbelo (vcl)

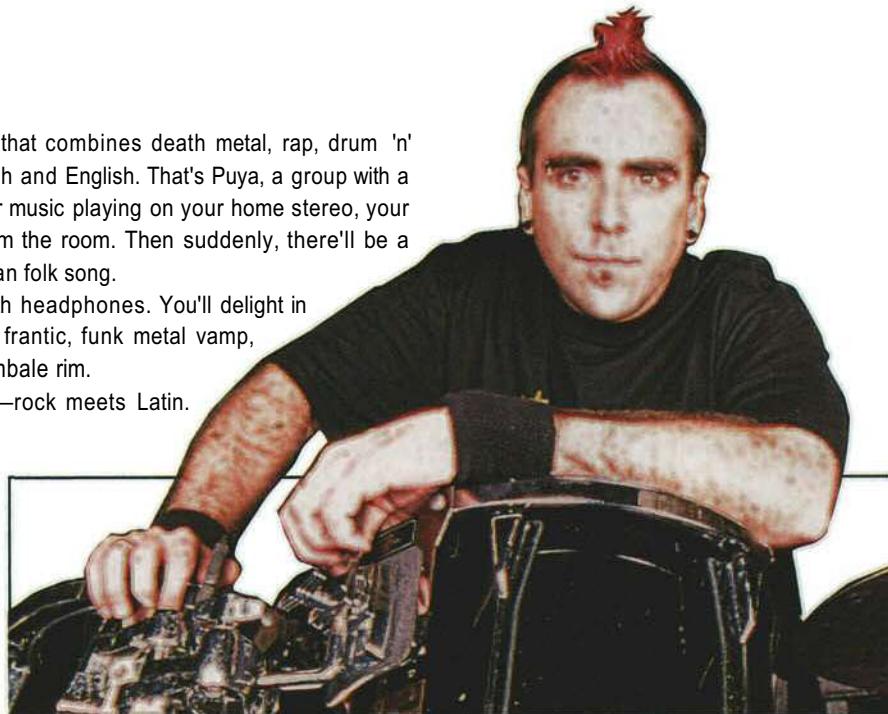
Suspend disbelief for a moment. Imagine a band that combines death metal, rap, drum 'n' bass, and arena rock, and delivers it all in Spanish and English. That's Puya, a group with a brute attack calculated to numb the senses. With their music playing on your home stereo, your speaker coils will move so quickly that they'll vacuum the room. Then suddenly, there'll be a hush and you'll hear the gentle strains of a Puerto Rican folk song.

Be sure to check out Puya's new album, *Union*, with headphones. You'll delight in the many intricacies. For example, in the midst of a frantic, funk metal vamp, you'll detect an insistent *cascara* clicking against a timbale rim.

Big deal, you're thinking. Been there, done that—rock meets Latin.

Wrong! Emphatically, Puya is *not* Santana. Perhaps it goes back to the name. "Puya" is slang for pungent black coffee. It also denotes a sharpened stick....

Drummer Eduardo Paniagua is all over the place in his influences. Mitch Mitchell vies with John Fishman. Pantera ranks with Pink Floyd. Eddie agrees with the observation that this diversity may be the reason for his pleasantly loose style. "I don't



Drums: Tama Starclassic. Rack toms were 9x10 and 11x12. Floor toms were 14x14 and 16x16. The bass drum was a 16x24. The snare was either a Ludwig Black Beauty or Supraphonic 400, both 5x14.

Cymbals: Istanbul Alchemy series. From Ed's left to right: 14" Rock hi-hats, 18" China, 20" Rock crashes (2), 19" Rock crash, 21" Rock ride, 20" Heavy China.

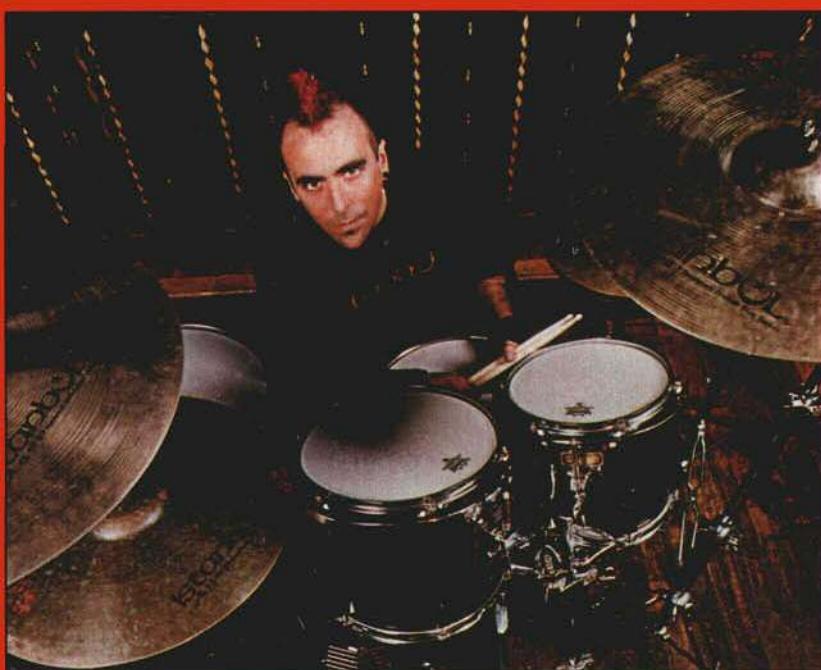
"Since I started using Istanbul," Ed enthuses, "I can now use the same cymbals live as in the studio. The Alchemy series features heavier, cleaner-sounding cymbals—and they're harder to break."

Heads: Remo coated Emperor on snare. Coated Ambassadors on tops and bottoms of toms. Clear Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter, with Tama logo on front.

Pedal: DW 5000 double pedal

Sticks: Vic Firth 5B wood tip

Tuning & Approach: Eddie cranked his snare high and timbale-like. He got his floor toms and bass



just listen to heavy music," he says. "Everything comes together at some point."

For Puya's first single, "Ride," producer Mudrock assembled the whole band in the same room, leaving the amps in booths to reduce leakage. While recording "beds" (basic tracks), Eddie rubbed shoulders with Cachete Maldonado, of the great Puerto Rican group Batucumbele. "I had baffles around me," Eddie says, "and Cachete was playing congas and small percussion behind baffles. When I play with a guy like Cachete, it's important that I have a great headphone mix and hear what he's doing. I don't want to clutter everything with too many hits."

Inside Scoop

Even when Puya gets thrashing, amazingly, they play in *clave*, referring to the pivotal two-bar rhythm that underpins Afro-Cuban music. "In most of our songs," says Eddie, "you can clap a *clave*—either the two/three or the three/two."

Ordinarily a fan of 22" kicks, Eddie decided to go with a 24" with a small pillow and a hole for the mic'. The beater was a DW reversible, hard side forward. "That gives more punch," Eddie explains, "and with a 24" kick drum, I needed that to cut through."

drum as low as he could without the heads rippling. He tuned his 10" tom exactly an octave above the 14" floor tom and his 12" tom an octave above the 16" floor tom.

Microphones: Kick: Audio Technica ATM 25 inside, FET 47 outside. Snare: Shure SM57 top and bottom. Toms: SM57 top and Sennheiser 421 bottom. Overheads: Neumann KM 84. Hi-hat and ride: AKG 451. Room: Neumann U87. Tile room: RCA 44 ribbon.

Producer's Tips: "Cherokee Studios has a great drum room," Mudrock says. "Off to the side is a smaller room that is completely tiled, floor to ceiling. I had a stereo pair of ribbon mic's in there with the door barely cracked to control it a little. I mike the toms top and bottom with an out-of-phase Y cord to send them to one mic' preamp. The kick was miked in and out, with baffling around the outer mic' to control bleed."

T. Bruce Wittet

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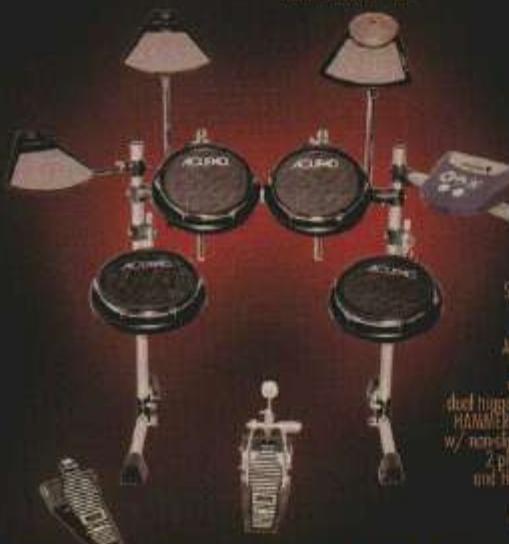


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The Comfort Factor

Experimenting With Alternate Setups

by Rick Long

Have you ever stopped to think about why acoustic drumsets are configured the way they are? If you have, then you probably realize that "traditional" drum and cymbal placement is largely the result of physical and engineering limitations.

The hi-hat was developed with a pedal connected to a spring-tensioned rod that pulled on the top cymbal. Stepping on the pedal closed the cymbals; releasing it opened them again. This system worked well with the "spang-a-lang" open/closed hi-hat patterns of the jazz and swing eras. Today, when we tend to play the hi-hats closed most of the time, it might make more sense if the pedal-up position actually held the cymbals closed, so we could use the hi-hat foot for other things. This could be done, but it's cheaper to make a hi-hat in the original manner, so that's the way hi-hats are still built.

The hi-hat also poses a second problem. Since we need our most powerful foot to play the bass drum, most of us put the hi-hat on the opposite side—even though we have to cross our arms to ride on it. This is not very ergonomic. Cable hi-hats can solve this problem, but they're expensive and can be tricky to mount.

We use our snare drum most, so we put it right in front of us. Likewise, the bass drum is in a pretty logical position. But if we attach other items to the bass drum, we often run into conflicts between where we want those items and where we want the bass drum.

The traditional ride cymbal position is usually just to our right (if we are right-handed). The "Buddy Rich placement" mounts the cymbal on the bass drum: low and flat, and straight ahead of the right elbow. If you need to put a rack tom in that particular spot, you must either raise the ride above the tom, or keep it at its current height and move it further to the right (over

the floor tom).

Crash cymbals are up in the air partly because we hit them less frequently than other parts of the kit, so they can be a bit further away. But they also need to be up high in order to project their high-frequency sounds. Drums project well enough from lower positions because their lower-frequency sound waves are longer and will travel more easily through obstacles (like guitarists standing on stage).

So What's The Point?

The point is simply that the typical acoustic drumset is configured the way it is because of engineering and physical realities. On the other hand, when we consider the capabilities of electronic drums, all of those constraints go out the window.

First, let's tackle that pesky hi-hat. On e-drums, any pad can be the hi-hat, and that pad can be placed anywhere on the kit without regard to the pedal placement. In fact, with rubber-pad-based e-drums, you can assign the hi-hat to different pads on different kit presets. Try putting the hi-hats in the Buddy Rich ride position. Or assign hi-hat sounds to two pads for that wonderful Jeff Porcaro stereo hi-hat sound (made famous on "Low Down" from Boz Skaggs' *Silk Degrees* album).

Here's a tip: If you step on the e-drum hi-hat pedal and hold it down while you turn on the sound module, the action of the pedal will be reversed. Now, "pedal-up" can create the *closed* hi-hat sound, while "pedal down" can be used for the less frequently played open sound. (You may want to turn off the hi-hat "splash" sound if you find that you're triggering that sound inadvertently.) This configuration takes a little getting used to, but it's a welcome advantage for double-bass players.

The main snare and the bass drum on your e-drum kit are probably going to stay where they are. But who says you're limited to one snare drum? If you move the hi-hats

With electronic drums, all positioning
constraints go out the window.

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over to the right, you might want to program a kit with a snare drum assigned to a pad next to the hi-hat pad (for tunes with a 16th-note hi-hat pattern and a heavy backbeat). The e-drum advantage for bass drums is that you can move the pad or trigger pedal into the most comfortable position for your foot without affecting the placement of anything else on the kit.

You'll probably keep your crash-cymbal pads up higher than the drums because that's how you learned to play crash cymbals. But sonically speaking, they could be anywhere. On rubber-pad kits, I program cymbals onto the rims of my tom pads in order to increase the number of available cymbal sounds. Again, it takes a bit of adjustment in one's playing style. But after a while you find that you miss the ergonomic advantage when you're playing an acoustic set.

Conservative Alternatives

Even if you keep your pads in a "traditional" placement, try programming non-traditional sounds onto them. Add a gong

drum to your setup by programming it onto one of the tom pads. I've put a second snare in the first rack-tom position, or on the rim trigger of a two-zone pad in the floor-tom position. Remember, with e-drums, *any* sound can be placed wherever it's most convenient for you to play it.

If you often switch between acoustic and electronic drums, you'll probably want your electronic kit to be configured much like your acoustic kit. This way, the feel between the two will be as similar as possible. In that case, try combining your electronics with your acoustics for some great mixed setups. Want that gong drum on your acoustic kit? Or how about a second hi-hat with a radical new sound? Put up a pad and dial 'em in.

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Filippo Mignatti

At thirty-two, Bologna, Italy's Filippo Mignatti has a world of experience behind him. He's played everything from Italian music festivals to his latest gig with Tullio Ferro. In between, he's played with some of the world's top jazz and fusion artists. He has great things to say about all his fellow drummers, and acknowledges many who have influenced him. But he cites Vinnie Colaiuta as being the single drummer whose work "has made all the difference."

Filippo tours with Grazia Verasani; with his own latin-jazz trio, the Latin Tremors; and with Brazilian artist Zeduardo Martins. Most recently he acted as drummer, composer, and producer for Amarcord, and as the house session drummer for every Irma Records production recorded at The Groove Factory in Bologna. He currently endorses UFIP cymbals, and he plays on a variety of kits, including a Gretsch "stop-sign badge" jazz kit, a DW multi-tom kit, and a Ludwig Rocker. Not surprisingly, his snare drum collection is highlighted by a Vinnie Colaiuta signature snare, along with a Ludwig Supraphonic.

In stating what may be the most eclectic goal ever put forth in this department, Filippo says that his dream is "to play in the USA, and to record with Madonna, Chick Corea, and Michael Jackson."



The Chaz Man

A twenty-six-year-old drummer/percussionist who calls himself The Chaz Man is determined to make a name for himself in the music industry. And he's made a pretty good start, having performed in Ricky Martin's *Livin' La Vida Loca* video and in several TV commercials. He's toured the US, South America, and Japan, along with appearing at the Latin Grammys' *Person Of The Year* event and on commercials for MTV, Emusic, Sony, and Wendy's.



Chaz grew up playing church music in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He went on to study rock, funk, and Latin music at Berklee College Of Music, and cites conga master Giovanni Hidalgo, Karl Perazzo and Raul Rekow of Santana, Sheila E, and Tito Puente as percussion influences.

Now based in Los Angeles, Chaz already has three solo recordings to his credit. Each displays his talents as a drummer, percussionist, vocalist, and composer, primarily in a pop/R&B vein. His most recent CD, *Exotic*, features a steamy blend of solid groove drumming and colorful acoustic and electronic percussion (www.thechazman.com).

Not one to hide his light under a bushel, Chaz says, "I think I have the potential for a solid career. I believe in myself, I'm creative, and I never take a step backward."

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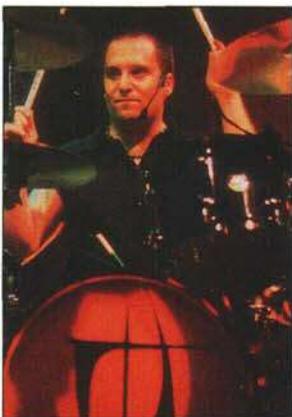
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Jeff Consi

Boston-based trio The Mourning Widows are certainly not mourning the talents of their vivacious drummer, Jeff Consi. After a year and half of sifting through tapes from around the world, the Widows (led by former Extreme guitarist Nuno Bettencourt) found their prize in this talented drummer from Amityville, New York. As a bonus, they discovered that Jeff was an equally skilled singer.

Jeff began playing drums at the age of five, taught by his father and brother. "I



played the same beat for four years before I discovered Mitch Mitchell and John Bonham," Jeff recalls. By the age of sixteen Jeff was studying with double-bass master Joe Franco. Today he fuses rock, funk, and jazz into his own heavy brand of bashing.

His father was also a recording engineer, so Jeff was exposed to the studio environment at an early age. He cut his first 24-track recording when he was only twelve, and he's been involved

with various recording projects since the mid-1980s. He also worked on commercial spots for Comedy Central and Ferrari.

When it comes to live gigs, Jeff has performed everywhere from Japan to the bright lights of Broadway. Besides working in several bands, he's done stage performances with artists ranging from Cory Glover to actor/singer John Goodman. He joined Mourning Widows in 2000, helped record their self-produced *Furnished Souls For Rent* CD, and has toured with the group in the Orient, Europe, and across the US. Jeff currently endorses Rhythm Tech products, Grover Pro Percussion, and Vic Firth drumsticks.

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.



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A Practical Guide To Noise Reduction

Part 1: Welcome To The Real World

by Mark Parsons

This is the first in a series of *Shop Talk* articles dealing with a subject near and dear to the hearts of drummers around the world: How to create a viable space in which to practice—comfortably and quietly—at home. It's an important topic, and in examining it we're going to cover a lot of ground over the next several months.

Before we get started, I'd like you to answer the following questions: 1) Would you like to be able to practice your drums *and* get along with your neighbors? 2) Would you like to avoid driving those who share your home (spouse, children, parents, roommates) absolutely crazy every time you get the urge to pound the skins? 3) Would you like to tame your unmusical practice space so that your ears don't bleed every time

you smack your brass picc with your 5Bs? 4) Do you hold the expectation of being able to completely soundproof your practice room?

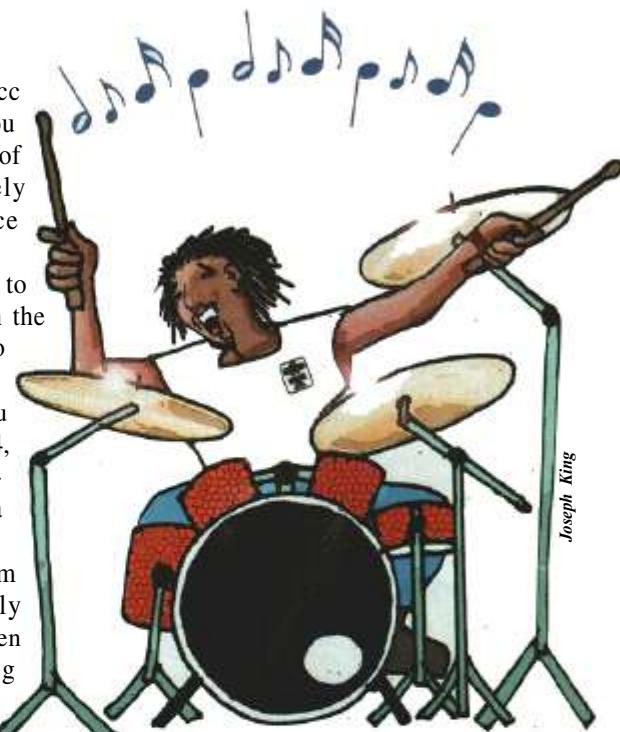
If you answered "yes" to questions 1, 2, or 3, then the information we're going to discuss will be of interest to you. However, if you answered yes to number 4, then I have some ocean-front property in Arizona for you. Cash only, please.

Why? Because the term "soundproof" is largely mythical—especially when it comes to retrofitting a residential space. Companies that manufacture noise-abatement or acoustic materials use terms like "STC" (Sound Transmission Class) and "NRC" (Noise Reduction Coefficient) to rate the efficiency of their products. The numbers that describe these ratings are finite values—never infinity.

This leads us to our first Reality Rule: *You cannot completely eliminate all sound.* What you can do is reduce it to a greater or

lesser degree, depending on the construction methods and materials you use. Reality Rule #2 is: *There is no single solution or easy answer.* Every case is unique, although the same physical laws apply to all. Let's look at a couple of scenarios relating to this.

Scenario #1. Our practice-deprived hero lives in a budget apartment complex built in the 1960s, using typical low-cost construction methods of that time. Directly below him lives a welder who



works the night shift at a local refinery. He stands 6' 6", weighs 300 lbs., is short-tempered, and really likes his sleep. Above our drummer is a young couple with a baby who naps every afternoon. On either side are families with school-age children (homework and early bedtimes). To make things worse, he has a roommate in med school who has tons of studying to do in the evenings.

Scenario #2. This lucky guy lives in a farmhouse in the country. The nearest neighbor is half a mile away. He has no kids, and his wife adores the primal sound of his nine-piece drumset.

Reality check: The guy in #2 can just set up his kit and wail. If it's nice out, he can open the windows for some fresh air. Total cost: a few bucks for a rug under his kit to protect the hardwood floor. On the other hand, the guy in #1 has no chance. If you're in this situation, I've got



three words for you: *electronic drums* and *headphones*. Otherwise, rent a rehearsal space somewhere. It'll be far cheaper than trying to retrofit this apartment to acceptable sound levels.

Scenario #3. Imagine a room that is a cube, 10' on each side, with walls made of 12"-thick concrete. Further imagine that you can teleport yourself and your kit into the room to play.

Scenario #4. Imagine a large room with a high, vaulted ceiling and lots of windows. It features typical residential construction: drywall over studs on the inside, wood siding or stucco on the exterior, and both hardwood and carpeted floors. There's some overstuffed furniture in the room, as well as acoustic foam strategically placed on the walls.

Room #3, while being close to the mythical soundproof room, would sound awful to play in. My ears hurt just thinking about it. Room #4, on the other hand, could sound wonderful. The trouble is, you'd spend all your time on the phone listening to your neighbors critique your double strokes, because they could hear

every note.

This brings us to Reality Rule #3: *Don't confuse "noise abatement" with "room treatment."* They're both important, but vastly different. We'll cover both in this series. And we'll begin with what is unquestionably "Problem One" for most drummers. And that is...

Noise Control

What we're talking about here is lowering the amount of noise that gets out of your practice space (as well as lowering the external noise that gets in, which is important if you're recording). This is what people mean when they talk about "soundproofing," and it has little to do with how the room itself sounds to those inside it.

Reality Rule #4: *There are only three ways to stop sound from getting out of (or into) a room: mass, dead air, and mechanical isolation.*

Reality Rule #5: *The enemy of the three principles in RR#4 is leakage.* Your sound-control efforts should aim for virtually airtight construction. Otherwise you

won't get good results for your investment.

In the following installments of this series we'll discuss some practical ways to apply these principles to your situation. For each aspect we'll discuss different levels of modification, allowing you to pick and choose according to your budget. Also, while most of us will be retrofitting an existing room, some will be undertaking new construction. For these lucky folks we'll talk about the best approach when starting from the ground up.

The majority of the building materials you'll need can be found at lumberyards and home-improvement centers. The more specialized acoustic materials are available from several manufacturers, such as Auralex, NetWell, and ASC. (These generally apply more to room treatment than to noise control.)

Okay, now we've got the basics of sound-reduction theory under our belts. Starting next time we'll strap tool pouches to those belts and get to work!

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Summer NAMM Show Drumming Events

Pearl/Modern Drummer Percussion Party

The joint was jumping and the music was hot at the second annual Pearl Percussion Party, held July 20 as an after-hours event at the Nashville Summer NAMM show. This year's event was also sponsored by *Modern Drummer*.

Opening the show was Lalo Davila and his exciting Orkesta Mongo Pingus. Along with leader/vocalist Davila on timbales, the group featured a blazing horn section, three backup vocalists, and a rhythm section anchored

by Andy Smith on drumkit and Pearl's Glen Caruba on congas.

The excitement was taken several notches higher when the evening's guest artists joined the band. Conga master Richie Flores and timbalero Archie Pena kicked the music into high gear, trading solos and adding spice to the already fiery compositions. The appreciative audience cheered, danced, sweated, and generally reveled in the high-energy Latin groove. A good time was had by all.



Orkesta Mongo Pingus



Andy Smith



Conga master Richie Flores and Pearl percussion specialist Glen Caruba



Bandleader/percussionist Lalo Davila



Timbalero Archie Pena

Also on July 20 was johnnyraBB Drumsticks' "Sounds Of The Future" gathering. In addition to some tasty hors d'oeuvres, the event offered some tasty—and impressive—drum and percussion performances.

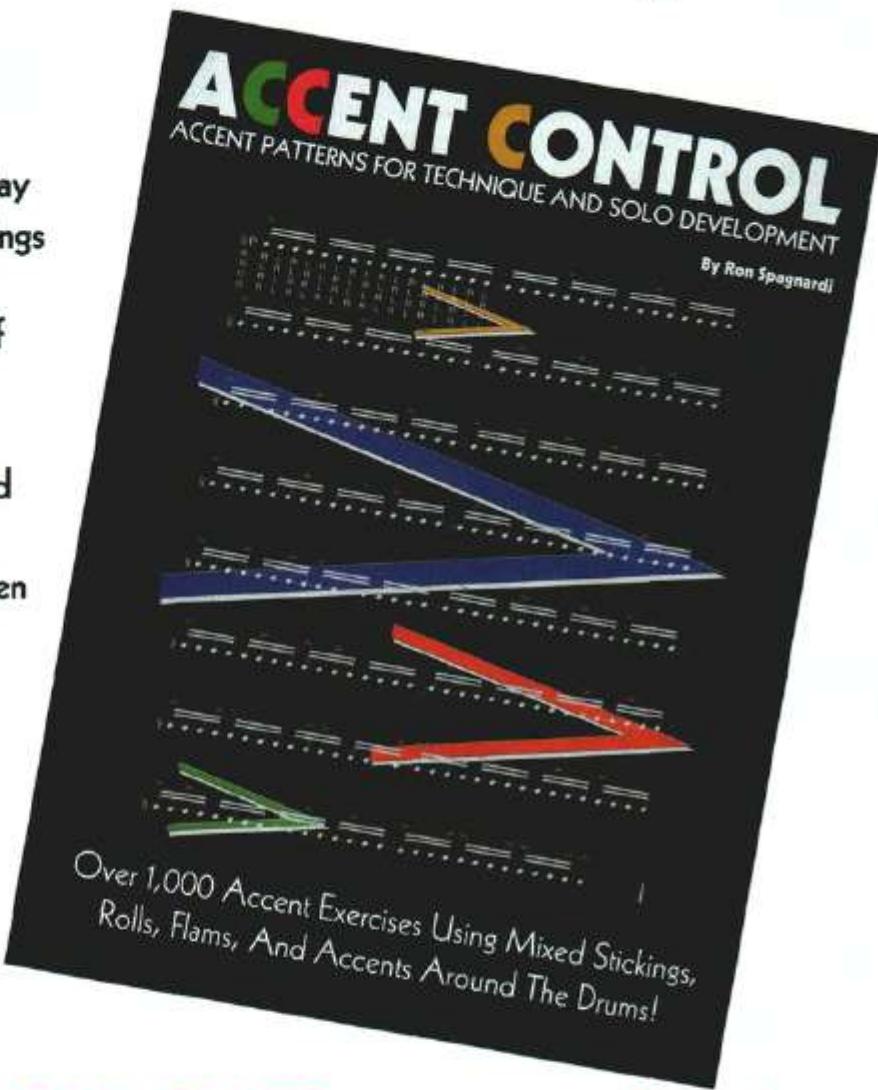
Attendees were met by the sounds of a Latin jazz quartet that featured drummer Scott Savage (ex-Jars Of Clay) and percussionist Javier Solis. The band relinquished the stage to up-and-coming drummer Tobias Ralph, who impressed the audience with blazing hand speed as he

johnnyraBB's Sounds Of The Future



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played intricate patterns to a techno track.

JohnnyraBB marching percussion consultant Matt Savage also demonstrated hand speed and intricacy—but in a totally different vein. Matt performed several rudimental snare drum solos from his new Warner Bros. book, *Savage Rudimental Workshop*. Playing to some entertaining tracks, Matt demonstrated that highly technical playing can also sound musical.

Yugoslavian drummer Marco Djordjevic delighted the crowd by playing first with Dusters (ultra-flexible nylon brushes of his own design) and then with small Oriental hair skewers in lieu of sticks. When he did pick up regular sticks, his power, speed, and melodic use of toms left the crowd cheering.

Next up was Johnny Rabb himself, with his Techno Trio. Featuring percussionist Chris Patterson and bassist Jerry Navarro, the trio performed a series of drum 'n' bass compositions. Johnny and Chris employed Johnny's unique "Freehand Technique" on drums and congas, and Johnny demonstrated his new Meinl Rabb Pack techno cymbals. The trio was tight, the sounds were fascinating, and the performance was humorous and entertaining.

In addition to johnnyraBB Drumsticks, the event was co-sponsored by Drum Workshop, Meinl Cymbals and Percussion, Audix Microphones, Evans Drumheads, Warner Bros. Publications, and Nashville's Drum Paradise.



Johnny Rabb's techno trio featured percussionist Chris Patterson and bassist Jerry Navarro.

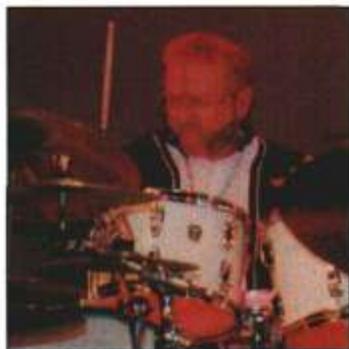


Tobias Ralph



Marco Djordjevic

KoSA International Percussion Workshop



In addition to his drumset classes, Ed Shaughnessy performed as part of the KoSA Music Festival.

The Green Mountains of Vermont were the setting for the sixth annual KoSA International Percussion Workshop, held July 30 through August 5 at Castleton State College. The event brought one hundred fifty drummers and percussionists together with a teaching faculty made up of some of today's pre-

mier artists and educators.

Participants came from all over North America and several foreign countries to share in the learning experience offered by this unique "drum camp." Each day began with a master class, followed by three individual class tracks. Class sizes were kept small so students and instructors could interact on a personal basis.

The KoSA "curriculum" exposed students to all facets of contemporary percussion. Led by KoSA artistic director Aldo Mazza, the faculty featured drumset artists of all descriptions, including Walfredo Reyes Jr., Ed Shaughnessy, Marco Minnemann, Johnny Rabb, Dom Famularo, Zoro, Adam Nussbaum, Jeff Salisbury, and *MD* senior editor Rick Van

Horn. Ethnic percussion was represented by Latin percussion specialist Richie "Gajate" Garcia, frame drumming master Glen Velez, Broadway and world percussionist Memo Acevedo, taiko authority Marco Lienhard, Brazilian and studio percussionist Gordon Gottlieb, Montreal drummer/percussionist Paul Picard, and Canadian percussion stars Repercussion. Mario DeCiutiis and Allan Molnar offered classes on electronic percussion and computer music technology. New York Philharmonic veteran Morris "Arnie" Lang represented symphonic percussion, while Karen Ervin Pershing and Beverly Johnston focused on



Richie "Gajate" Garcia conducted Latin percussion ensemble workshops.

marimba techniques. And the earthy, spiritual nature of the digeridoo was revealed by Lou Robinson.

This year's program also included the KoSA Music Festival. Open to the local community as well as to KoSA participants, the Festival presented various faculty members in nightly performances throughout the week. Friday's student recital gave many of the seminar's participants the opportunity to demonstrate what they had learned. The entire week was capped by a faculty recital on Saturday.

A black and white photograph showing Marco Minnemann, a man with long hair, playing a drum set. He is wearing a dark t-shirt and is captured in the middle of a performance, with his hands on the drums and cymbals.

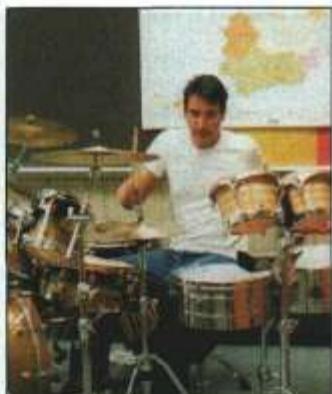
The KoSA International Percussion Workshop offers an unparalleled educational experience to drummers and percussionists. For information about the 2002 program, contact KoSA USA at PO Box 332, Hyde Park, VT 05655, (800) 541-8401, or KoSA Canada at PO Box 333, Station A, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 2S1, tel: (514) 934-5540, email: kosa@istar.ca, Web: www.kosamusic.com.



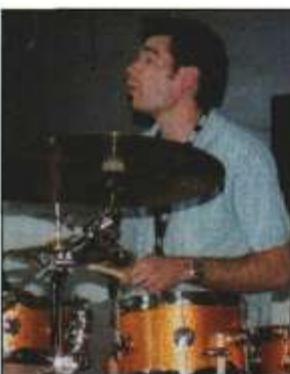
Marco Minnemann took a light-hearted approach to teaching odd time signatures.



Adam Nussbaum focused on brush technique.



Walfredo Reyes Jr. demonstrated how Latin percussion instruments and rhythms can be incorporated into drumset playing.



Johnny Rabb focused on the creation of unique sounds and rhythmic patterns.



Faculty members who performed during the week-long KoSA Music Festival included artistic director Aldo Mazza.



Canada's Repercussion served as instructors and performers.

An advertisement for a Berklee recommended play-along CD. The top half features a dark background with the title 'TURN UP & LAY IT DOWN' in large, stylized, semi-transparent letters. Below this, the text 'A Berklee recommended play-along CD for drummers & percussionists available at...' is displayed. The bottom half shows a CD cover with a blue and white design, and the website 'DrumFor.com' in large, colorful, bubbly letters. A small tagline 'Seriously, just for the beat' is visible to the right.

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An advertisement for DrumPerfect. It features a black digital tempo tachometer with a digital display showing '0250' and various buttons. Below the device, the text 'DIGITAL TEMPO TACHOMETER' is printed. To the right, there is a large headline 'GROOVE GUIDE' and text about Gina Schock. At the bottom, there is a photo of Gina Schock, the text 'Timing is EVERYTHING!', a 'toll free' phone number, and the website 'www.DrumPerfect.com'. A red banner across the bottom left says 'DRUMPERFECT'.

QUICK BEATS

CARMINE APPICE (ROCK GREAT)

What are some of your favorite grooves?

Stewart Copeland on "Walking On The Moon," all tracks on Jeff Beck's *Guitar Shop* (featuring Terry Bozzio), and Billy Cobham on *Spectrum* and the Mahavishnu Orchestra's *Vital Transformation*.

How about some favorite grooves that you played?

"You're Insane" and "Hot Legs" (Rod Stewart), "Parchment Farm" (Cactus), "Lady" (Beck, Bogert & Appice), "Blue Murder" and "Billy" (Blue Murder), "Days Are Nites" (Guitar Zeus), "Stash" (Guitar Zeus II), "The Edge" (new King Kobra), and "Everybody's Comin'" (Derringer, Bogert & Appice).

Pick one song you would like to have played on.

"Kashmir" by Led Zeppelin.

What records and/or books did you study or play along to when you first started drumming?

I played to the Krupa & Rich album, "Take Five" by The Dave Brubeck Quartet (Joe Morello), "Let There Be Drums" by Sandy Nelson, "Topsy, Part 2" by Cozy Cole, Jimmy Smith trio albums, and most jazz albums of the early '60s. Books were *Syncopation* and *Stick Control*, as well as Jim Chapin's, Buddy Rich's, and Charley Wilcoxon's books.

What were some of your most memorable gigs as a player and a listener?

As a listener it was Mahavishnu Orchestra with Billy Cobham. They performed at a college on Long Island, New York. It was a tremendous gig.

As a player, there were so many. One that comes to



Alex Solca
mind was when Vanilla Fudge played the Felt Forum in New York and Buddy Rich opened for us. Another great show would have been any of the six nights we played at the LA Forum, with 20,000 people there each night and the audience going mad. People like Gregory Peck, Fred Astaire, and Tony Curtis were in the audience. In fact, Gregory Peck told me that Fred Astaire told him, "This is the best drum solo I've seen since Gene Krupa." Wow! Gene was my idol, and to have Gregory Peck tell me this, well, it was a pretty cool gig!

MD Giveaway Winners

The winners of the *Mu* giveaway featured in the June, July, and August 2001 issues have been chosen. The contest offered prizes from Gretsch, Paiste, Gibraltar, Toca, Vater, and Impact valued at over \$16,000.

First prize—a Gretsch Renown drumset, Paiste Signature cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, a Toca conga and bongos, Vater sticks, and Impact hard-shell cases—went to Lionel Callies of Andover, Minnesota. Michael Boyer of Hedgesville, West Virginia took second prize: a Gretsch Catalina Elite drumset,

Paiste Dimensions cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Elite natural bongos, Vater sticks, and Impact Signature drum bags. And Holtsville, New York's Charles Schwarz received a Gretsch Catalina Stage drumset. Paiste Alpha cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Players Series fiberglass bongos and mini timbales. Vater sticks, and Impact gray vinyl drum bags for his third-prize win.

Congratulations to all the winners from Gretsch, Paiste, Gibraltar, Toca, Vater, Impact, and *Modern Drummer*.

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A black and white photograph of a marching band. In the foreground, a drummer plays a snare drum with drumsticks. Behind him, another drummer is visible, also playing. In the background, a brass player is seen from behind, holding a long brass instrument like a tuba or trumpet. The band members are wearing dark uniforms with light-colored belts and sashes. The background is a bright, overexposed sky.

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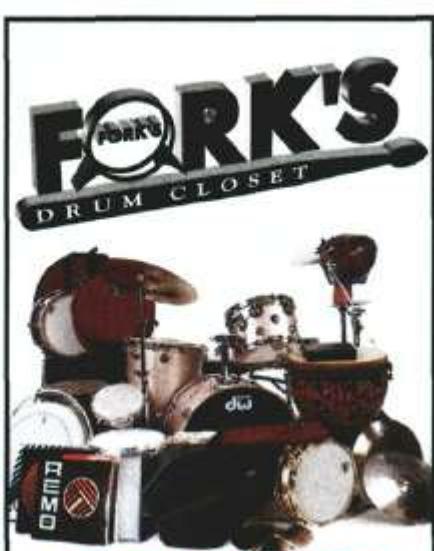
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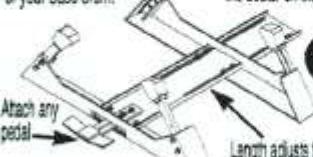
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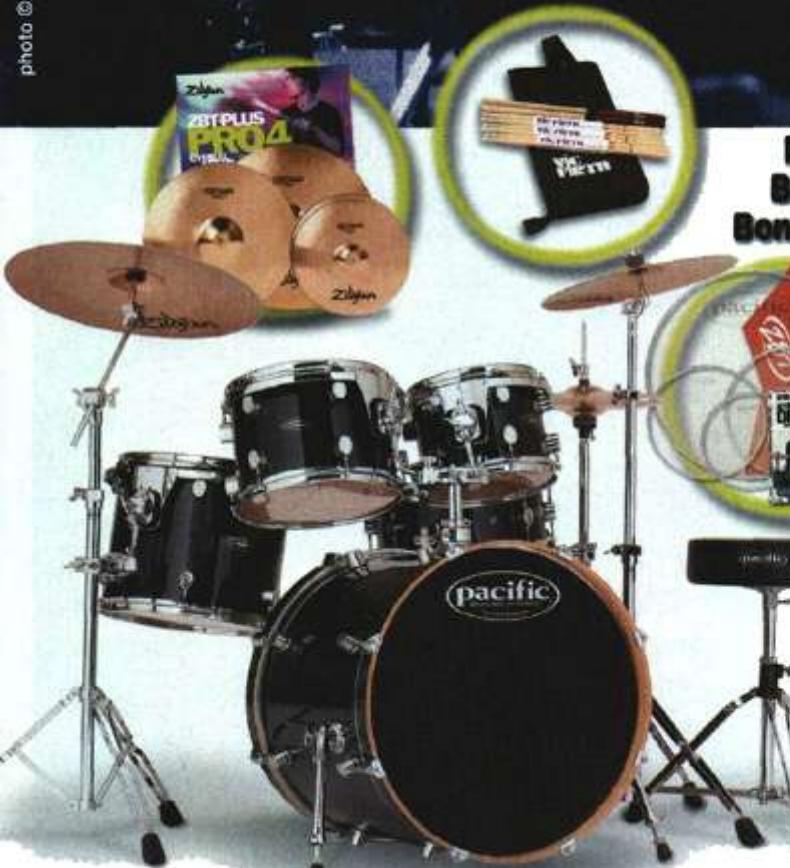
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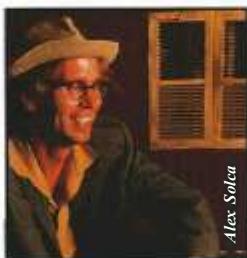
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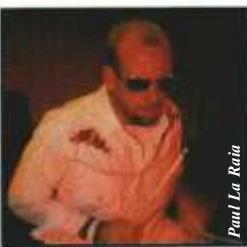
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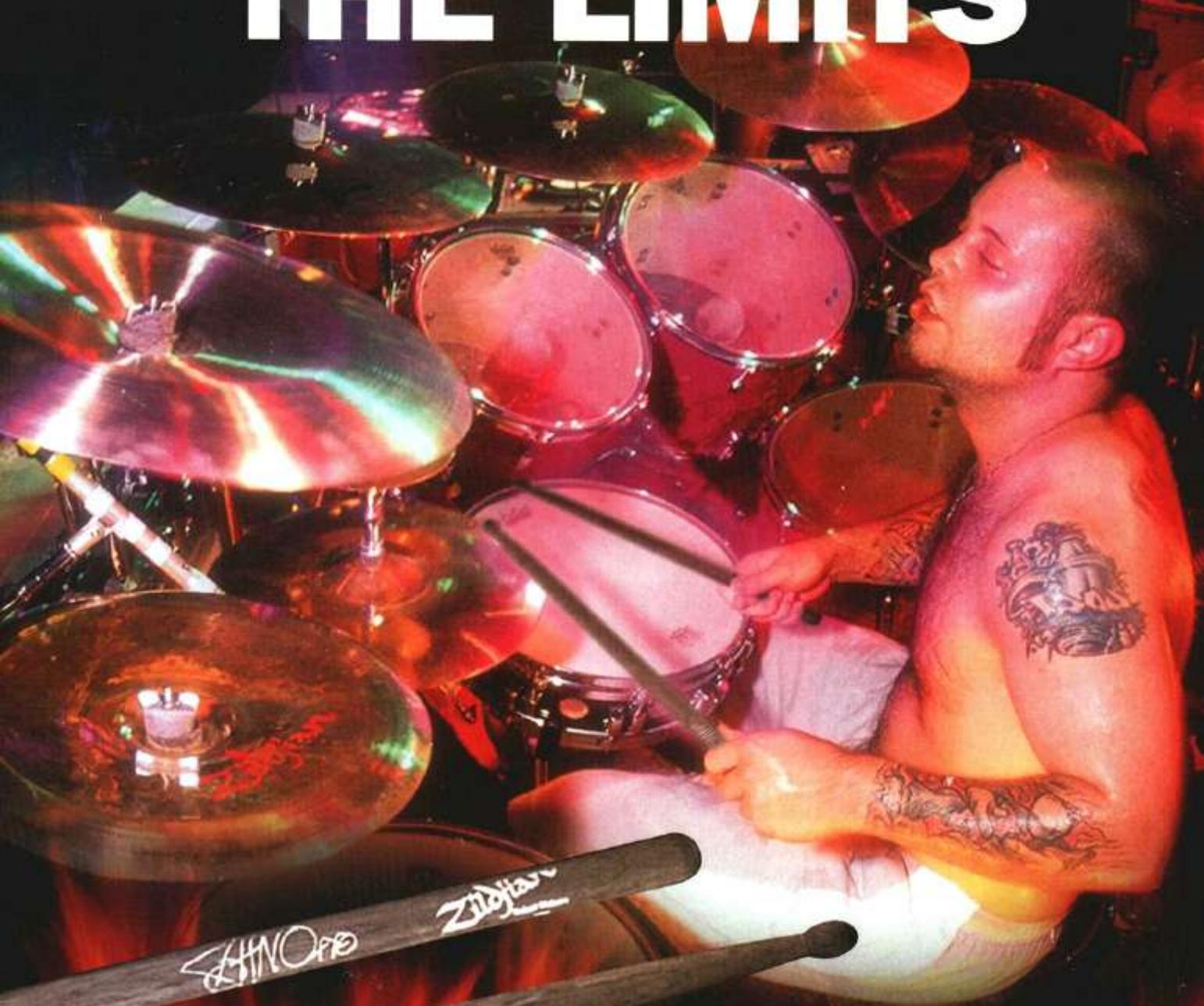
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