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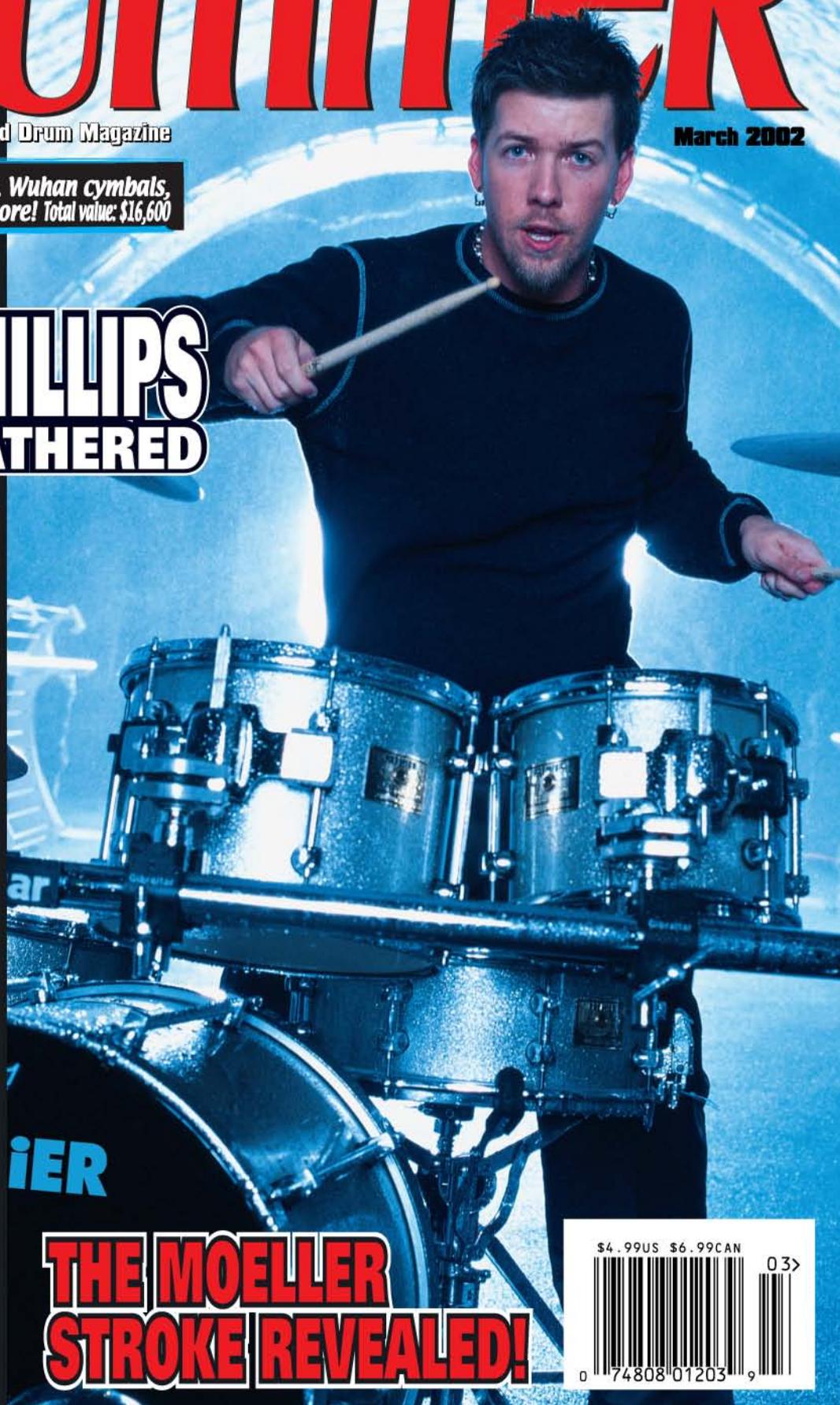
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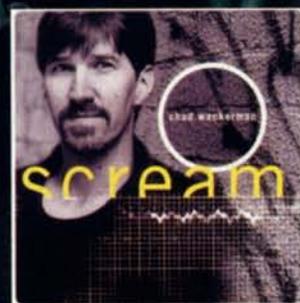
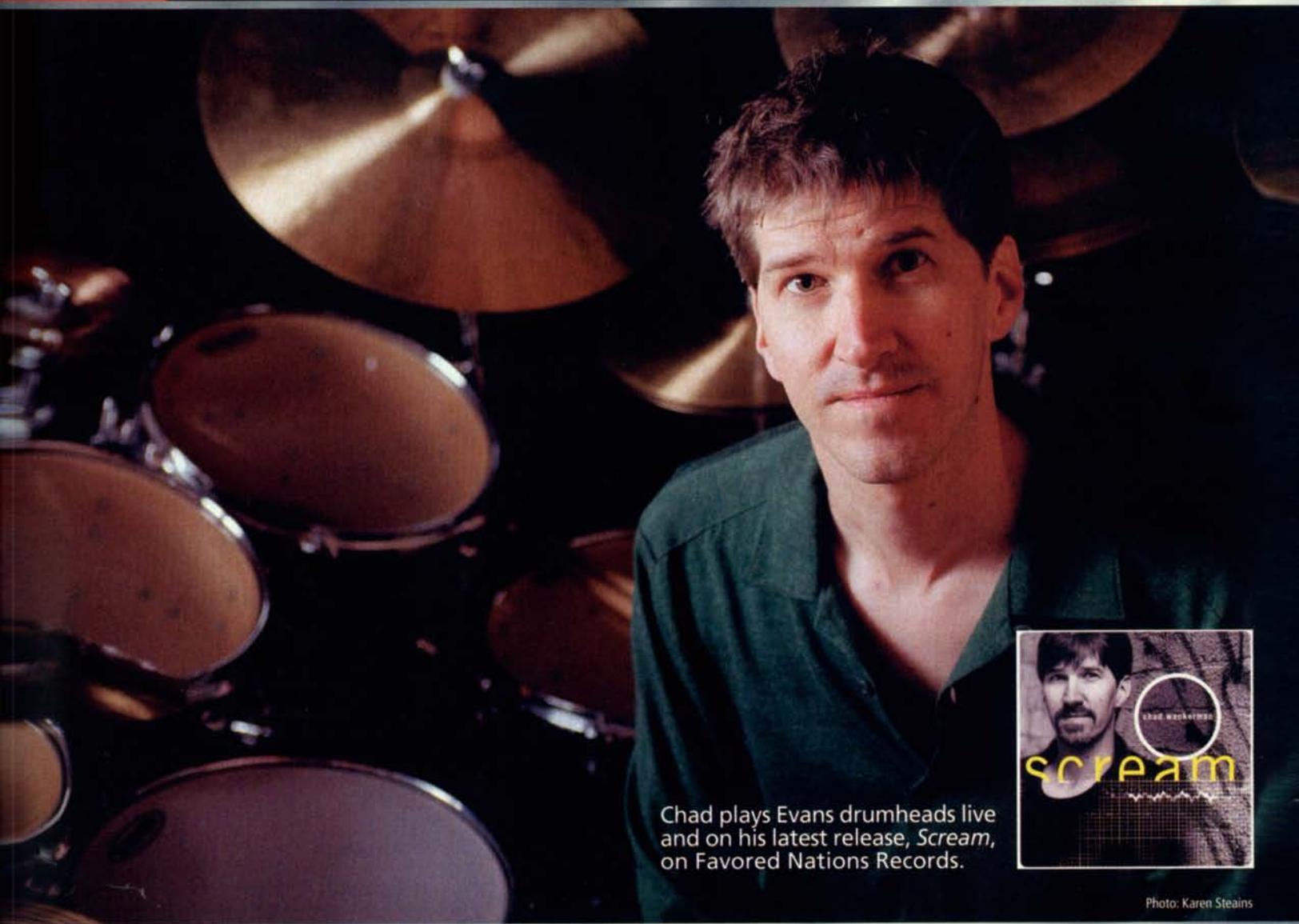
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Photo: Karen Steains



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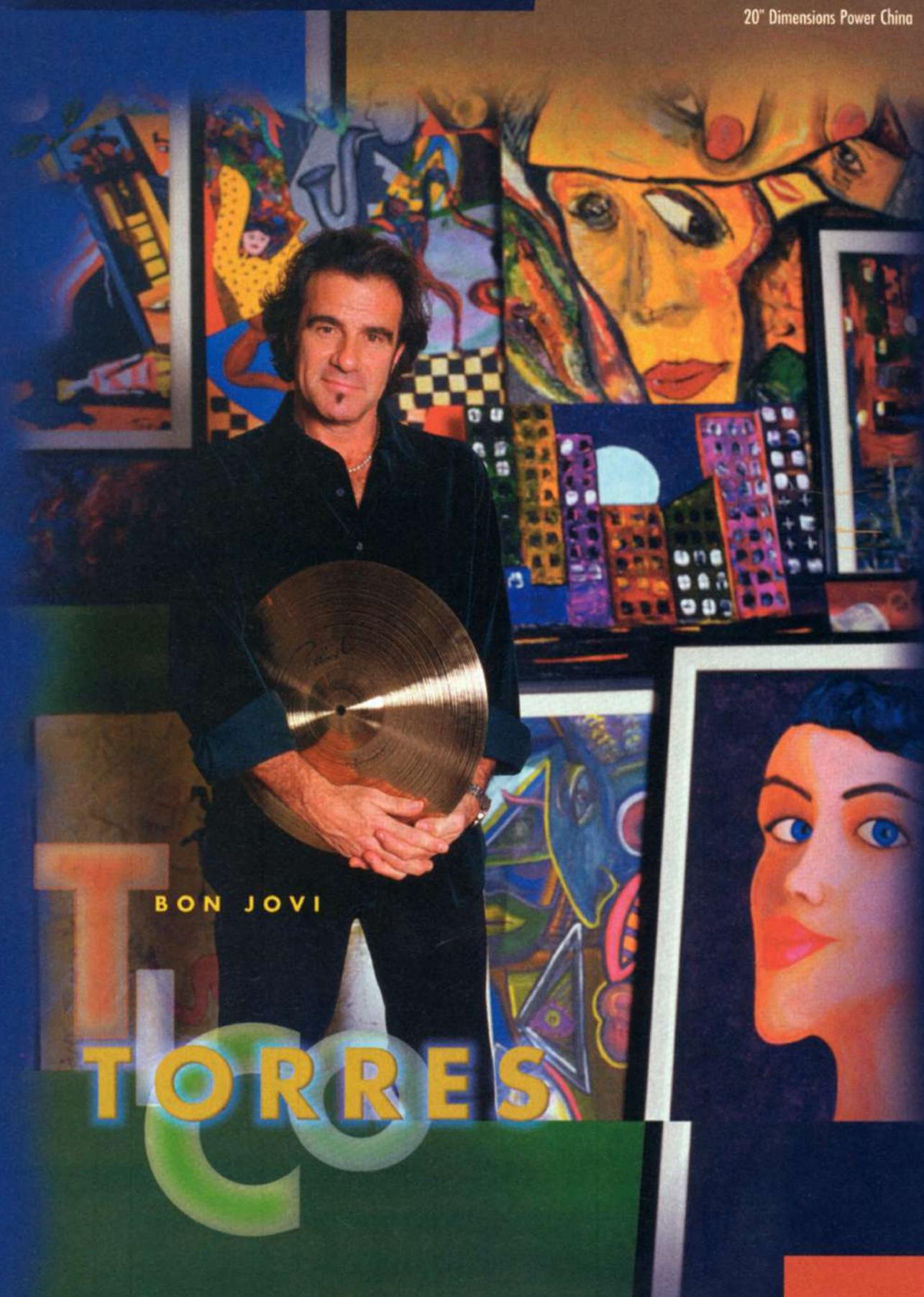
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Jan's choice is
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London, 4:30 p.m., the band is jetting out in
just a few hours for yet another tour.

Just enough time for one last call,
one last loose end to handle.

This could have been just another day at the
office, just another tour. But not this time.

The new kit was burning at rehearsals...
and it's gonna sound incredible on stage.





That Day

Tuesday, September 11 began much like any other day at *Modern Drummer*. That is until *MD*'s Bill Miller rushed into my office at 8:55 A.M. to tell me that a plane had accidentally crashed into the World Trade Center in New York. Less than fifteen minutes later we all learned that a second plane had hit. Clearly, this was *no* accident. Something truly horrible was happening.

The next few hours were among the most disturbing I can remember at *MD*. With work at a standstill, we huddled around a TV screen to watch the horror that was occurring not all that far from our office. By noontime I officially closed the place down. There was no logical reason to stay. Anything anyone had to do that day suddenly seemed *totally* unimportant in comparison to what was going on a few miles away. In truth, we all just needed to be with our families.

Late that evening I drove to a hilltop near my home with its inspiring view of the city at night. I sat there in silence watching black smoke still rising from where those landmark buildings had proudly stood just twenty-four hours earlier. The reality of the day's events was an indescribable feeling. "How *dare* anyone do this to our country?" was the only thought I had.

We returned to the office the following morning still reeling from the previous day, but we attempted to get back to the business of *Modern Drummer*. It was an extremely difficult task. No one was thinking clearly.

Over the next three days, scores of emails and calls poured in from drum industry people, readers, and friends of *MD* around the world. All of them expressed concern for our well-being. We did our best to respond to everyone. With the exception of two staffers who couldn't get back home for several days due to closed highways, bridges, and tunnels, we were all okay.

It's been several months since that tragic day. And while the initial shock has diminished somewhat, we'll never forget what happened on the morning that began like every other. But, as usual, the spirit inherent in all Americans will *always* prevail. Though fanatical madmen may play havoc with our landscape, they can't extinguish our *spirit*. It's something those who attempt to disrupt our way of life will never fully understand. Rest assured, we're moving forward uninterrupted at *Modern Drummer*, and we intend to keep the music playing. I encourage you *all* to do the same.

My sincere thanks to everyone who wrote and called to express their concern for us that week. We appreciate it.

MODERN DRUMMER®

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The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

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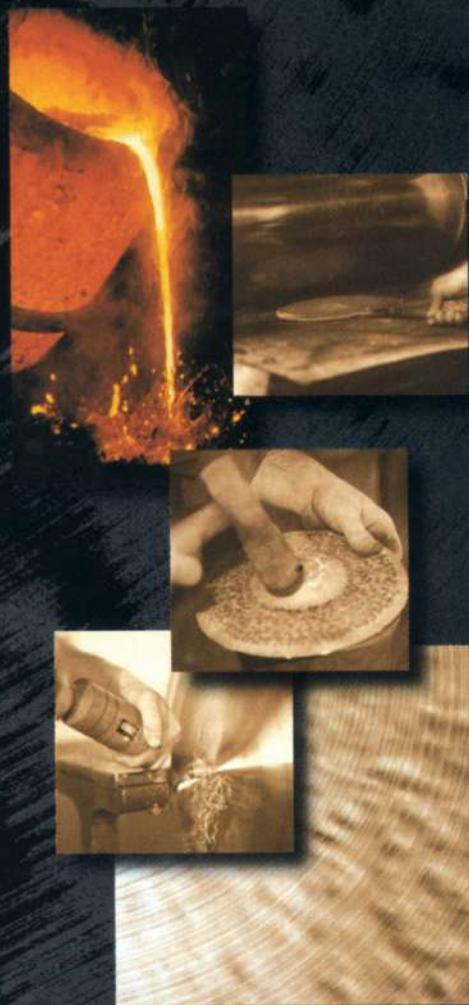
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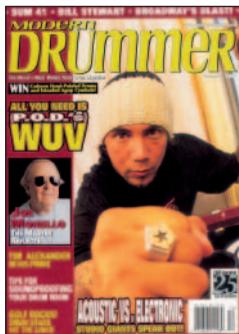
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ALL YOU NEED IS WUV

I just received my December 2001 issue. All I can say is *Wow*. I'm a drummer in a Christian rock band, and P.O.D.'s *Wuv* is a major inspiration to me. Thank you for being so diverse, and for meeting the needs of *all* drummers. Most of all, thanks for giving Christian drummers a chance. Some magazines would be scared to publish anything that is related to anything Christian.

As long as I play drums (which will be until I die) I will be an *MD* subscriber.

David
via Internet



TIM ALEXANDER

I'm eighteen, and I've been drumming for about nine years. Ever since I first heard Tim Alexander in Primus, I was hooked. Tim's creativity and grooving ability have been major influences on my playing. I don't think Tim gets enough credit for his drumming, but after reading your interview I was more than satisfied. I learned a lot about a drummer I thought I knew everything about.

It's a shame that so many of today's drummers haven't come to appreciate Tim yet. If it weren't for him and Primus, I wouldn't be half the musician I am now. I can't wait to hear his new stuff. Thanks for the article!

Greg Frassetto
via Internet

JOE MORELLO REFLECTIONS

After reading December's *Reflections* with Joe Morello, I was taken back to the brief period during which I studied with Joe. His lessons would stretch far beyond discussions of technique or style. Much like your article, they were riddled with stories about great artists as *people*. These stories provide us with a fascinating first-hand glimpse into the lives of those whose music we admire. Thanks!

Forest Muther
New York, NY

RATTLE SOLUTION

In the December 2001 *It's Questionable*, Brad Dood wrote about trying to get rid of a rattle in one of his toms. I had the same problem a few years back with a Yamaha tom. It turned out that the metal grommet surrounding the air hole had worked its way loose, creating a buzzing rattle. Here's how I fixed the problem.

First I removed one of the drumheads. Next, I found a bolt that was a little smaller in diameter than the air hole. I inserted this bolt through the hole and threaded a nut onto the other side. Gently tightening the nut created a sort of vise, which pinched the grommet tight again. The drum hasn't rattled since.

Brian Mikulich
Denver, CO

COVER VERSIONS REDUX

Your December issue, with *Wuv* on the cover, was excellent as always. But I'm concerned by the letter from William Francis in *Readers' Platform*. Mr. Francis complains that your covers have featured drummers who "may be currently trendy but have little to talk about besides their most recent album tour."

The truth of the matter is, we *need* popular drummers. For one thing, they are the future. For another, they are the reason I listen to Weckl, Gadd, and other giants. Drummers like John Dolmayan and Danny Carey are the ones who inspire us to dive into the art and *discover* other great players.

All the drummers who appear on *MD*'s cover—as well as those inside—deserve to be there. They inspire me every single day!

GOLF ROCKS

Your "Golf Rocks" story in the December issue was a nice break from your normal interview format. It's refreshing to see drummers portrayed as individuals with other interests, not just as fanatics immersed in drumming itself.

Of course, it was also cool to read about the jam session following the day on the links. They couldn't stay away from the skins for long, could they?

Peter Espinoza
San Antonio, TX



When I opened the December 2001 issue and found Ted Bonar's "Golf Rocks" story, I figured that it must be about a golf tournament organized to raise funds for a non-profit organization. Imagine my surprise when I learned that this was not the case. Instead, a story that should have been given three column inches in the *Backbeats* section was treated as a feature, complete with full-color photos and a mention on the cover.

This story offered no news that could be construed as relevant to the readers of

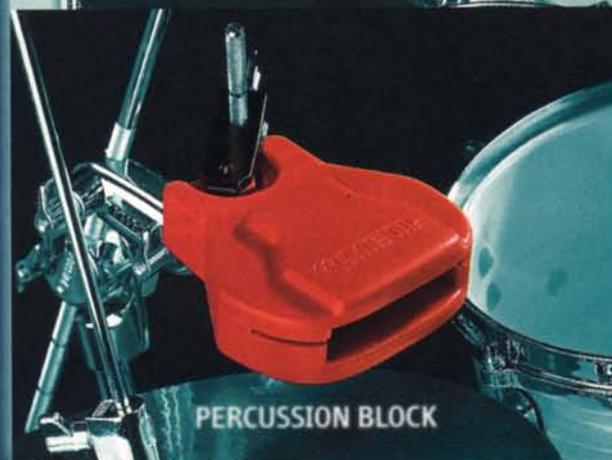
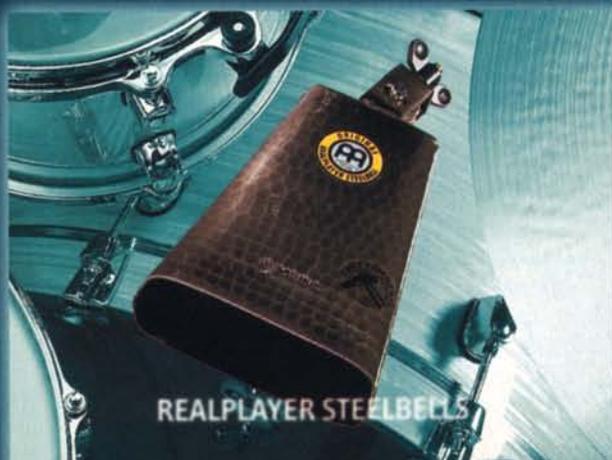
Modern Drummer or to golfers. Granted, there are a few parallels between golf and drumming, but you barely touched upon them.

Bruce Trimble
Sherwood, AR

The "Golf Rocks" piece was a stunning waste of eight pages.

Paul Corio
via Internet

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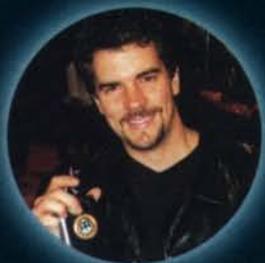
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Pay no attention to people like William Francis, who believe that only the legends deserve to be on the cover. I guarantee that the legends themselves don't feel that way.

ComfortZone
via Internet

I've been an avid *Modern Drummer* reader for about ten years. I love all kinds of music, but I'm first and foremost a rock 'n' roll junkie. Lately you folks have been featuring more rock and metal drummers, and for this I thank you. It's great to be able to read about my favorite drummers without having to suffer through stupid questions like "What kind of girls turn you on?" Keep up the great work.

Steve Iannelli
via Internet

HOW TO REACH US

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Gary Novak On Choosing Gear

Q Your drumming is a constant source of inspiration to me. I saw you with The Chick Corea Elektric Band II in 1994, and you're definitely one of the most technically gifted, versatile, and powerful players I've ever witnessed. I'm always thrilled to learn who you're going to be playing or recording with in the future.

Recently I've been going back and studying your past work, including Chick Corea's *Paint The World and Time Warp*, Bob Berg's *Another Standard*, Allan Holdsworth's *The Sixteen Men Of Tain*, and Alanis Morissette's *MTV Unplugged and Supposed Former Infatuation Junkie*. Those recordings cover a wide spectrum of musical styles. How and why do you choose the drums and cymbals you use for any particular gig? What goes into the sound of your drums (heads, tuning, and so forth)—especially that "signature" snare sound of yours?

Enrique González
Monterrey, Mexico

A Thanks for the props, Enrique! When it comes to drum sounds, the music will definitely dictate what gear I use. When I'm in an acoustic setting, I like an 18" bass drum with a clear or coated Remo Emperor batter. The 10" (rack) and 14" (floor) toms are topped with coated Ambassadors. When a bigger sound is needed, I usually move up to a 24" kick, a 10x12 rack tom, and 16x16 and 18x18 floor toms. Either clear or coated heads work well live, but I prefer coated for recording. My snare drums are always topped with coated Ambassadors.

As for my snare drum sound, the jazz stuff is fairly straight-



ahead. The top head is usually tuned a half step below the bottom. I have a myriad of different snare drums that I record with, but I really like deep wood drums. I've fallen in love with the Craviatto drums that I recently picked up.

My only advice on tuning is to listen to the people you're playing with. What *they* like says something. Chick Corea wanted a lighter jazz sound, with a smaller kit. Considering that he has played with Roy Haynes, Tony Williams, Steve Gadd, and Philly Joe Jones, I decided to tune *any way he wanted*. The same goes for the producers I work for: What they hear in their heads, they should get!

John Blackwell's Video Pick

Q In your October 2001 *MD* cover story, you mention watching video footage of Sonny Payne playing. Sonny is a big influ-



ence of mine, and yet I've never actually *seen* him play. All I have are his recordings with Count Basie. (*Live at Newport '57* is a particular favorite.) What video were you referring to, and how can I find it?

Larry Paschall
Upland, CA

A The video is called *Classic Drum Solos And Drum Battles*. It's from Hudson Music, and I'm sure you can get it wherever instructional music videos are sold. Besides Sonny's great playing, it includes clips of most of the great big band and jazz drummers of history, including Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Joe Morello, Louie Bellson, and more. The same title is also out on DVD. Make an effort to find it, because the whole thing is mind-blowing.



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Double Bass Tips From **Bobby Rondinelli**

Q I'm sixteen, and I've been playing for five years. I've developed pretty good technique with my right foot. Is it too early for me to start playing double bass? Do you think I'm ready to cope with the exercises in your *Encyclopedia Of Double Bass* book, or will I have difficulty developing my skills on my left foot? How long should it take for me to develop good double-bass skills?

John Avgerinos
from Greece, via Internet

Q All of the beat exercises in your book require us to play time on the closed hi-hat with our right hand. I'm finding it difficult to keep switching my left foot between the left bass drum pedal and the hi-hat in order to keep a consistent closed hi-hat sound. Should I put my right hand on a ride cymbal instead and keep my left foot only on the bass drum pedal?

Larry Chung
via Internet

A Thanks for your questions, guys. I appreciate your interest in the book.

John: There's no right age to begin playing double bass. If you're interested in doing it, that's the time to do it. In the same way, there's no way to tell how long it will take to develop your left foot. Everyone is different. Make sure you take time to work out the warm-ups; they'll help you develop your coordination more quickly than if you go right to the beats.

A great deal depends on whether you're used to really using your hi-hat. With some young drummers, the hi-hat is just a place to rest their left foot in order to hold the cymbals closed. If you use your hi-hat open *and* closed—playing quarter notes and 8th notes, putting accents on the “&s” of beats—then playing double bass becomes much easier. But if your hi-hat foot is just a static limb, then you really have to play catch-up to develop double-bass coordination and power.

Larry: What Michael Lauren and I meant was to play the right hand on a closed or remote hi-hat. That way, you can keep your

left foot on the left bass drum pedal. (This can be facilitated very easily by the use of a drop clutch on your hi-hat.) However, in two- or four-bar phrases, where the double-bass pattern comes in and out, it would be a good idea not to lock the hi-hat cymbals closed, and to move the left foot back and forth between the two pedals.

You certainly could use your ride cymbal when playing all the beats. But we suggest playing them first on the closed hi-hat because it's a tighter, quieter sound, making it easier to hear whether your snare, bass drum, and hi-hat are really locking in and not flammng.



Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote
From MD's Past

“Occasionally, someone will ask me about ‘making it.’ What I realize about the people who actually do make it is this: It’s not always their expertise that brings them success as much as it is their *commitment*.”

Omar Hakim, May 2000

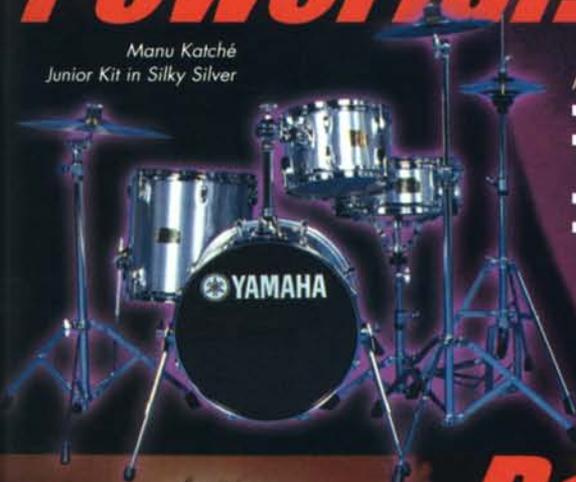


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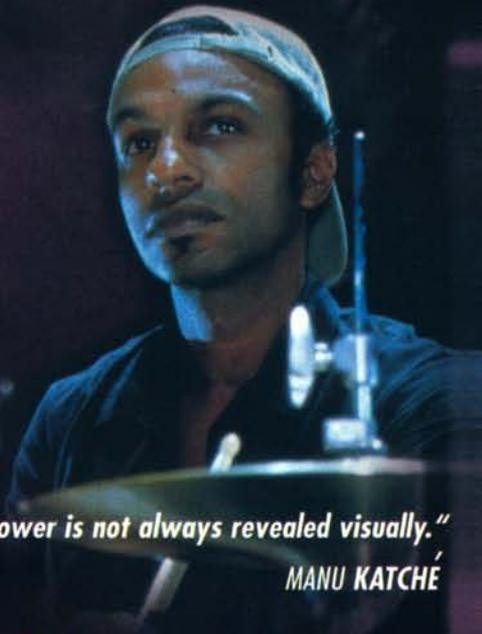
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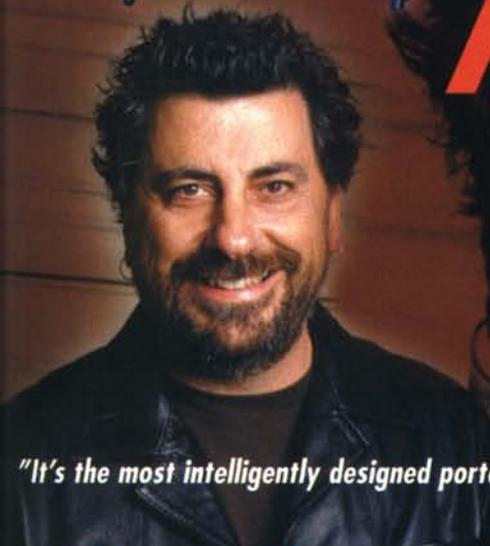
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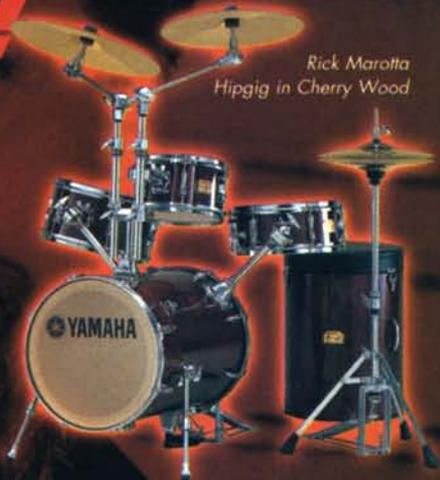
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Rick Marotta
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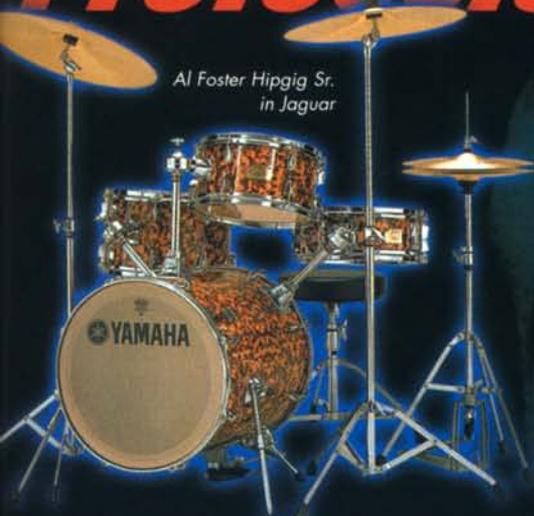


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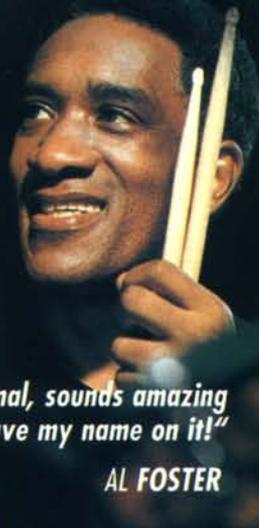
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WHAT MANU, RICK AND AL PLAY

Zildjian Platinum Hi-Hats

Q What is the difference between Zildjian's regular New Beat hi-hats and the Platinum versions? Also, what type of cleaner can I use to clean Platinum cymbals?

Chris Potter
via Internet

A Zildjian education director John King replies, "A Zildjian Platinum New Beat hi-hats were made using a unique electro-plating process. This process required the use of brilliant-finished cast cymbals as a starting point. There is a slight attenuation of the high-end overtones with cymbals that have been buffed to a high luster—as compared to traditionally finished cymbals. The Platinum cymbals had that same attenuation, but

otherwise the plating process had no effect whatsoever on the sound properties of the cymbals.

"Also as with brilliant cymbals, Platinum models are very easy to clean due to their smooth surface area. They require only minor periodic cleaning with a mild cymbal cleaner. Naturally, we recommend Zildjian Liquid Cymbal Cleaner for this purpose. I've used a pair of Platinum Quick Beats for ten years. Other than some slight wearing of the plating at the edges where the cymbals close together, those hi-hats continue to look great and perform beautifully.

"Zildjian had to discontinue the Platinum series in 1995 due to the increasing demands of the Massachusetts Environmental Agency. But drummers who still

own Platinum cymbals can expect the unique appearance of those cymbals to last well into the next millennium."

Roland Kit Upgrade

Q I own a Roland TD-7 kit and would like to upgrade my pads. Can I use the nylon V-series pads and cymbals with my TD-7 brain? If so, how much do they cost?

Dave Mentkowski
via Internet

A Roland percussion product manager Steve Fisher replies, "You can use any of Roland's mesh pads, gum-rubber pads, and even the new V-Cymbals with a TD-7 module. We have designed our percussion components so you can use just about any pad with any percussion sound module we make—including previous modules like the TD-7 or TD-5. This makes for easy custom kit configurations and future upgradability.

"The only limitation in your particular situation is that the dual-trigger mesh pads (PD-80R and PD-120) will not work as dual-trigger pads with the TD-7 module. That module's pad inputs are only looking for the piezo/FSR trigger combination used in the TD-7 kit, as opposed to the mesh pads' piezo/piezo configuration. Otherwise, all the other components are compatible. Simply read the included instruction guide in each of the pad/cymbal boxes to set the optimum triggering settings in your module for that particular pad.

"Prices for our full line of pads and pedals range from \$99 to \$495. Please see your authorized Roland dealer for details or visit our Web site at www.RolandUS.com."

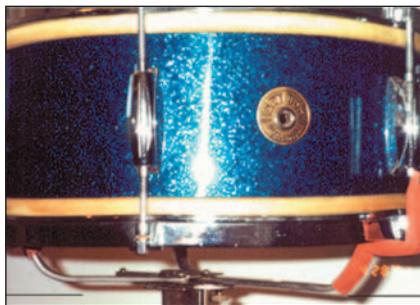
Gretsch Gem

Q I recently acquired an "experienced" Gretsch snare drum with a blue sparkle finish. It was owned and played by a great aunt, and my own estimate is that it was made around the mid-1960s. The condition of the drum and the stand is good to excellent. The only flaws I can see are the aging of the heads, some rust on a few of the washers on the lug bolts, and the deterioration of the rubber feet on the stand.

Should I just add new heads to the snare, tune it, and use it as a backup working drum? Or is it worth attempting to sell as a vintage piece?

Stuart Williams
via Internet

A MD's drum historian, Harry Cangany, responds, "You have a Gretsch Dixieland model. The outside of that drum looked the same from the 1950s through the mid-'60s. To pinpoint its age, you need to look at the edges and the inside of the shell. If the drum has a 3-ply shell



with no silver paint inside, it's a mid-'50s model. If the shell is 6-ply with silver paint inside, the drum dates from the late '50s to mid-'60s. By the late '60s, the drums had die-cast, six-hole hoops instead of the single-flange-and-clips model that you have.

"Knowing how many of these drums from each era are out there, my guess is that you'll find silver paint inside your drum, and that it hails from 1958 to 1963 or so. But that's *just* a guess. In any event, your drum is still beautiful, and it would likely appeal to collectors of Gretsch drums.

Installing Rivets In A Ride Cymbal

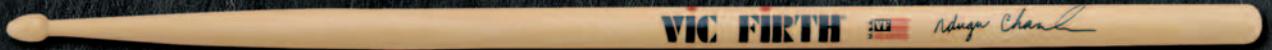
Q I have an old 24" ride cymbal that I would like to add rivets to. I'd just like to give it more of a sizzle and a quicker



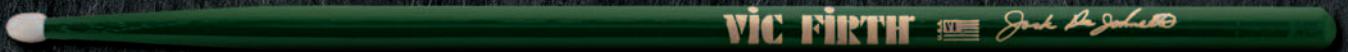
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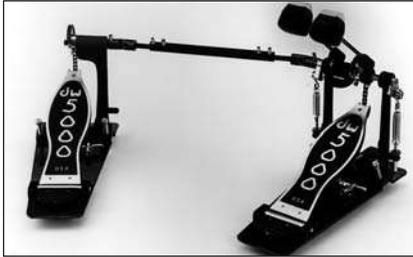
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Chain Vs. Strap Drive

Several models of bass drum pedals give you the option of chain or strap drive. On some brands the chain drive hooks into a sprocket, while the strap drive lays in a felt-lined channel. But on other brands, both drive systems use the channel. If the pedal does not have a



A chain-drive double pedal

sprocket for the chain to hook onto, what would be the benefits of the chain over the strap?

Andrew Mark
via Internet

All other factors being equal, a chain linkage is generally accepted to be stronger than a strap, and thus less likely

to break under hard use. Also, it cannot stretch, so its action will always be the same. These factors don't change, whether the chain engages a sprocket or lays in a track.

A nylon or other strap is generally a little more flexible than a chain, providing a lighter, faster response. However, some straps can stretch under hard use, thus affecting the stroke length and overall feel of the pedal. Also, under extreme circumstances, even a nylon web strap can break. In a recent *Ask A Pro* response,



A strap-drive double pedal

Mike Bordin mentioned that he prefers the feel of a strap-drive pedal, so he doubles the strap to increase durability.

response to a lighter touch. My question is, what should I use? Where can I get the rivets? What type of configuration would you recommend for a bigger cymbal?

Adam
via Internet

Most of the major cymbal manufacturers offer rivets to be installed into cymbals. Some offer more than one type, which provide different amounts of brightness in the response. Check with your drum dealer for availability and ordering information.

Many drummers utilize other readily available items in place of actual rivets. For example, the wire brads designed to bind together sheets of punched paper make excellent cymbal rivets. They have large, mushroom-shaped brass heads and long, bendable "stems." They cost about three dollars for a box of a hundred at the local office-supply store.

Whether you use actual rivets or substitutes, you want to install them where they will best respond to the vibration of the cymbal. Especially on a larger and/or

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thicker ride, this means just inside of the edge, where vibration is greatest (as opposed to further up on the shoulder of the cymbal).

As far as configuration goes, that's generally a matter of personal preference and/or experimentation. The beauty is, you can begin with one rivet, then add more rivets one at a time until you achieve the sound you seek. Generally, rivets are placed symmetrically around the cymbal to maintain the balance of weight. In other words, if you use three rivets, they would be placed in a triangular pattern, equidistant from each other.

However, some drummers prefer to put two or three rivets fairly close together in one spot, to maximize their response to vibration at that point. In some cases, they've done this after determining that the cymbal is a little heavier on one side than another. They put the rivets into the lighter side, which maximizes the amount of vibration the rivets receive and helps to balance the cymbal at the same time.

The September 1989 *MD* carried an excellent article on the subject of cymbal rivets, written by Zildjian's Colin Schofield. Contact our back-issue department at sueh@modern drummer.com for ordering information.

Cleaning Vistalite Drums

Q I have a set of vintage Ludwig Vistalite drums. I want to clean them, but I don't want to risk damaging them. What cleaning products are recommended for this purpose?

Georgio Spelvino
New York, NY

A Ludwig recommends the use of an everyday, over-the-counter spray window cleaner, such as Windex. Further, they suggest that when you're doing a touch-up cleaning you should spray the cloth and not the surface of the shells. This avoids build-up in the crevices in or near hardware. For more thorough cleaning, remove all the lugs and other hardware from the shells so you have an unobstructed surface.



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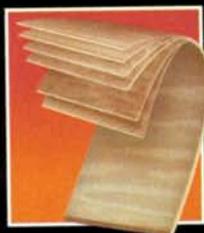
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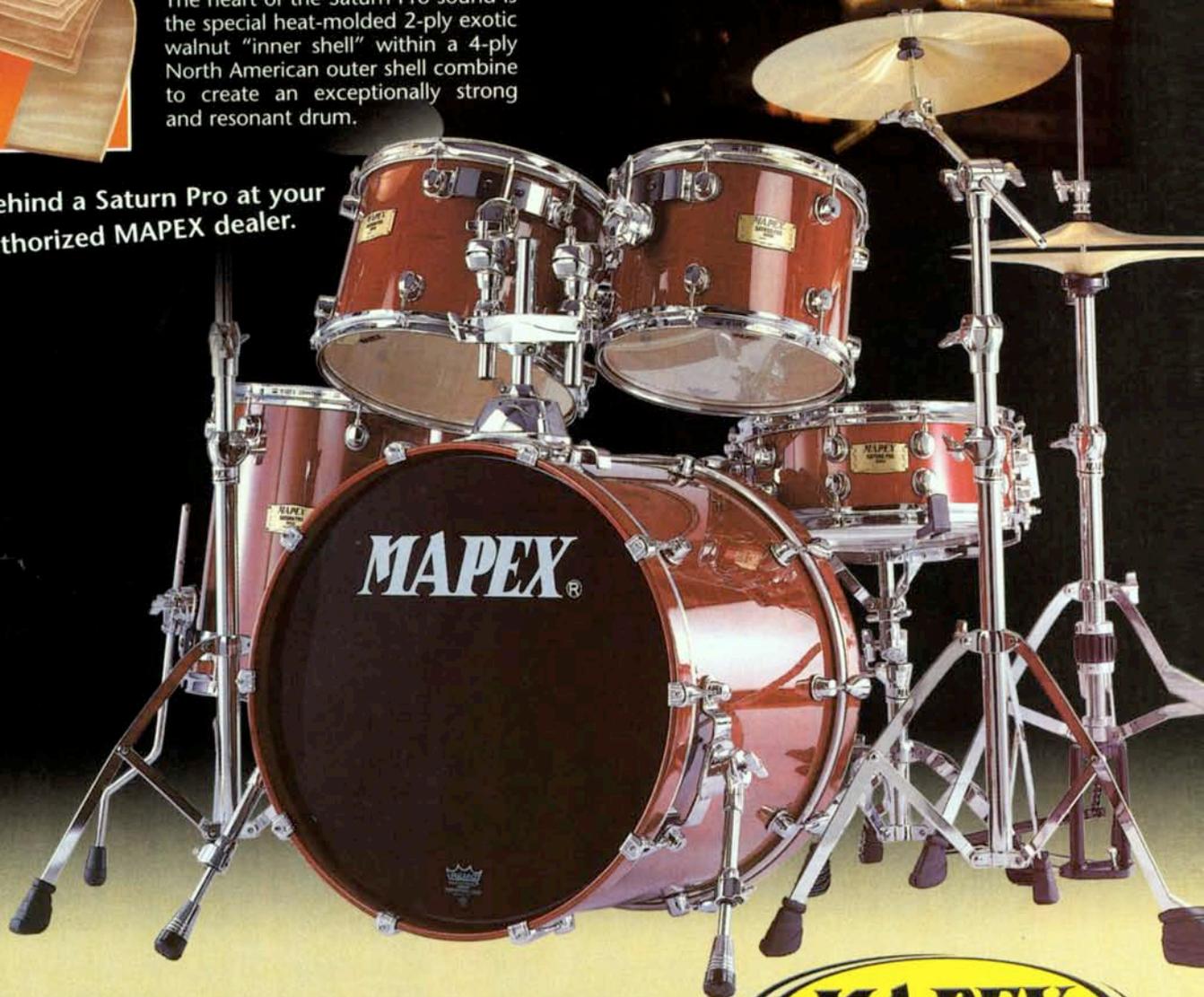
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RYAN VIKEDAL

Nickelback's Silver Lining



Steve Boniface

You'd have to be living under a rock to be unfamiliar with Nickelback's brooding rock ballad, "How You Remind Me." The ubiquitous hit single from their sophomore CD, *Silver Side Up*, has reached the number-1 position on several pop charts, both here and in the band's home country of Canada. According to drummer Ryan Vikedal, the wild success of "How You Remind Me" means the band now has the opportunity to tour extensively with high-profile acts like Three Doors Down, Staind, and Lit. "It's been cool to finally have that happen," Ryan reports from a festival gig in Arizona. "There's more respect for the band."

The sessions for *Silver Side Up* threw Ryan a huge learning curve, as producer Rick Parashar (Pearl Jam, Alice In Chains) told the drummer right off whenever something he played wasn't working. "I wanted to play what was right for the music," Ryan urges. "Rick made me listen to the song and realize where I had to either be a little more musical or go further with it." Parashar also taught Ryan to analyze his playing from the feet up. "He'd say, Let's start with the kick pattern, then work on the backbeat, then look at the ghost notes and decide whether or not you need them."

The road has perhaps been Vikedal's best teacher, though. The drummer says he's been drawing priceless inspiration from drummers he's fortunate enough to share a bill with. "One band that I was absolutely blown away by was The Cult. As a kid, I was a *big* fan of them. We played a show with them, so I got to see Matt Sorum play. *Man*, he schooled everybody there. Players like him, who you can instantly identify just by the way they play a simple rock beat...well, that's the kind of drummer I'd love to be some day."

Gail Worley



Lissa Wales

'N Sync's
Billy Ashbaugh
Gettin' Down... To Business

Now you can play along with 'N Sync's monster drummer Billy Ashbaugh on Warner Bros.' first instructional DVD, *Takin' Care Of Business* (also available in video/CD format). While on the road with 'N Sync, Ashbaugh and cohort/producer Bob Gatzen came up with the idea of incorporating exclusive 'N Sync footage, as well as existing material. To their surprise, the group was way into the idea.

"When I went to them to ask to use their live tracks, they were so cool," Ashbaugh says. "I explained that this project was strictly drumming-oriented, and meant to inspire drummers, and they were great about it."

After obtaining seven tracks—five from 'N Sync's *No Strings* album and two from their HBO special, Gatzen and Ashbaugh worked on incorporating them into a video, which includes Ashbaugh's performance as well as interviews with 'N Sync members. It also follows the drummer through the course of a day on the road.

"We showed how I set up my practice kit," Ashbaugh says, "and we gave a tour of our bus. And then we interviewed Justin [Timberlake] and Joey [Fatone]. We talked to Justin because of his whole "beat box and drum battle" that was on the HBO special (a duet between Timberlake and Ashbaugh), and Joey because he's an aspiring drummer. They discussed what they expect from a drummer and how the drums affect their live sound. Hopefully we're answering all the questions aspiring drummers would want to know about a gig of this nature."

Gatzen also staged a drum clinic for Ashbaugh in Connecticut for middle and high school students, and that was recorded for use on the project as well. This section features Billy answering questions and playing to 'N Sync songs, plus a few tunes written by Gatzen that further showcase Ashbaugh's drumming talents. Clearly evident are the reasons this man has one of the biggest gigs on the planet.

Robyn Flans

A degree in business from the University of Arkansas and a diploma from the school of hard knocks on the nightclub circuit couldn't prepare Dave Dunseath for the education he received when he arrived in Nashville in 1986. "I came from a jazz, rock, and pop background—an ensemble mentality," he explains. "But in Nashville there's a separation between who writes, who sings, who produces, who plays on the tracks, and who plays live. It was a real eye-opener."

Dunseath is a quick study, though, and today he's got the best of all worlds. When not on tour, he's in demand as a session player. He's building his repertoire as a songwriter. And for the past three years he's settled in behind his drums as a member of Lee Ann Womack's band, 911.

Dunseath has called the road home since he graduated from college. His move to Nashville saw him playing in a Ramada Inn house band at night, while doing studio work and teaching by day. It didn't take long for word of his chops to get out. Soon he was touring with Dan Seals, T. Graham Brown, and Billy Dean—and still doing sessions and house gigs on days off.

Three years ago, Dunseath decided to quit the road. Once again, his phone rang: Lee Ann Womack needed a drummer. "First I said no," Dave recalls. "But I got another call and decided to check it out. I liked the band; they're wonderful players, and Lee Ann has a great voice. She'd only had two or three hits at the time and was playing fifty to sixty shows a year—weekend work—so I took it. Then 'I Hope You Dance' became a hit, and the work increased. It's been an amazing year."

Onstage, Dunseath cherishes the creative freedom this gig affords him. "I get to play exactly what I like," he insists. "I enjoy the consistency of playing these songs over and over. Doing it the same way night after night is a challenge. Country music is a blend of many different styles. When you come from another area, your initial thought is, *This is easy*. The irony is that the simplicity of the music is what makes it difficult."

Elaine Hall

Lee Ann Womack's Dave Dunseath Country Understanding

Not long ago I had the pleasure of experiencing Brian Tichy's powerful drumming, when he was performing with former Deep Purple bassist Glenn Hughes. I shouldn't have been surprised at how good a drummer Brian is, especially when you consider his track record.

Who else has he worked with? Brian runs down the list for us: "Zakk Wylde in 1993 and '94, Sass Jordan, a world tour with Slash's Snakepit in 1995, Foreigner in '98 and '99, Ozzy Osbourne in 2000... and now Billy Idol."

As we spoke more, what *really* caught me by surprise was that Tichy also plays guitar and sings, fronting his own band called Ball, with Joe Travers [Duran Duran] sharing drum duties. "Joe and I have been friends since we met at Berklee," Tichy explains. "He would come over with his bass player, Fingers, and we'd jam."

Those jam sessions, with Brian mostly playing guitar, led him to begin writing material. And now he has a CD of his tunes, *American Aggression*. "The music is a reflection of '70s rock," Tichy says. "It took me a whole year to convince myself that I could do it and be a front man."

In 1997, while

Brian was preparing to get Ball off the ground, he landed a two-year tour with Foreigner. "I was almost sorry to get the gig," he admits. "I had to put Ball on hold. But I couldn't turn down a dream gig like Foreigner."

Still wanting to get Ball off the ground, after the tour

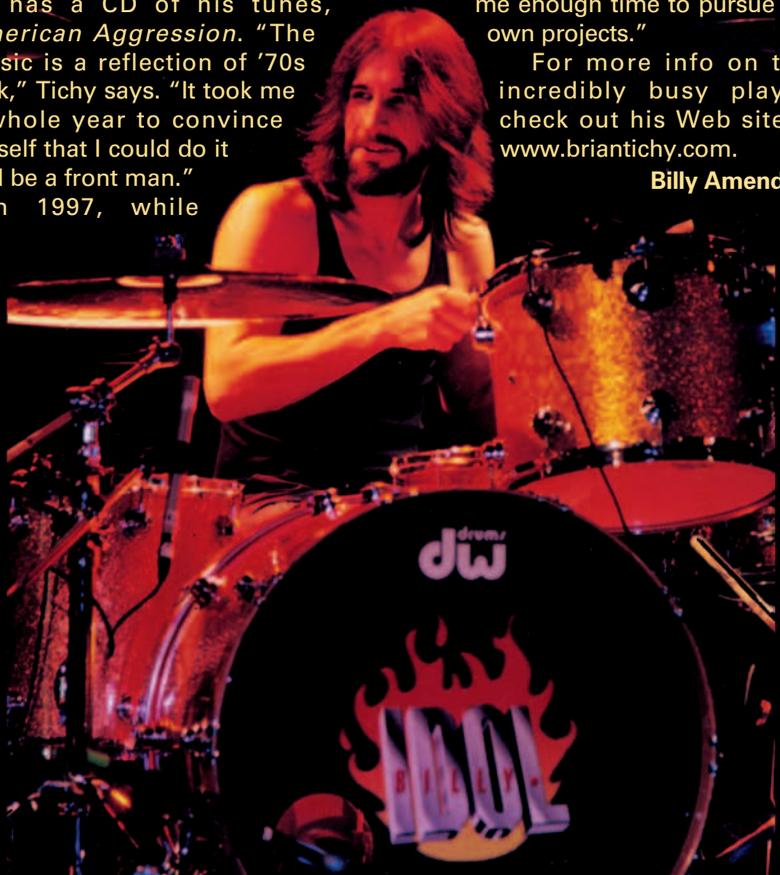
Tichy immediately went back to the project. "I had literally just finished recording when I got the call from Ozzy's people," Brian recalls. "So before leaving for the Ozzfest tour in the summer of 2000, I rehearsed in the daytime with Ozzy and mixed my CD at night. As a drummer, what more could I ask for?"

But once again, Ball was put on hold. Luckily the project was finally completed, but not before Tichy landed *another* high-profile gig—with '80s superstar Billy Idol. This gig seems to work perfectly for Tichy's other plans, though. "The touring schedule with Billy is three weeks out, three weeks off, so it gives me enough time to pursue my own projects."

For more info on this incredibly busy player, check out his Web site at www.briantichy.com.

Billy Amendola

Billy Idol's
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Having A Ball!



Jimmy Robinson

Killing Heidi's **ADAM PEDRETTI**

Big Down Under
Big Down Under

For Killing Heidi drummer Adam Pedretti, the common link between his former band, hardcore rockers NIL, and his present group, the teen-appeal rock band fronted by seventeen-year-old bombshell Ella Hooper, was producer Paul Kosky. "Paul had worked with NIL as producer, so he knew I could play a little bit off-the-wall," says Pedretti from his home in Melbourne, Australia.

When Killing Heidi (which also includes bassist Warren Jenkin and Hooper's brother, Jesse, on guitar) needed to add a full-time drummer for touring, Kosky immediately thought of Pedretti. "Paul dropped off a Killing Heidi demo and I started learning the songs," the drummer explains. "It just took off from there. I've been in the band almost three years."

While Killing Heidi have played only a handful of club showcases in the States, they regularly draw crowds in the tens of thousands at huge Australian music festivals like The Big Day Out. They also do in-store record signings that routinely attract up to three thousand fans. "It can get a little bit nuts," Pedretti laughs.

Killing Heidi's debut, *Reflector*, was recorded entirely on Pro Tools, giving Pedretti and Kosky a lot of freedom. "We could play over parts on songs like 'Mascara' or 'Superman/Supergirl' [which feature abrupt time changes], where I could be riding a double kick drum all the way through. By the end of recording we were tracking over drums and doing all this weird stuff. It was a compromise of what Paul wanted, what I wanted, and stuff we made up along the way."

Pedretti reckons that *Reflector* provided him with the ability to grow artistically. "I feel I'm a much better player now because of it," he insists. "Now I can jump into any kind of situation. Whatever we do, it's no problem."

Gail Worley

Gov't Mule's

Matt Abts

Bass Resurrection

Jack Bruce, Larry Graham, John Entwistle, Chris Squire, Bootsy Collins, Les Claypool, Phil Lesh—is there a drummer among us who hasn't fantasized about playing with these and other giants of the bass guitar? Matt Abts of Gov't Mule recently got the chance to do just that, albeit under the saddest of circumstances.

Last August, the hard-rocking trio's bassist, Alan Woody, was found dead at the age of forty-four in a New York hotel room, the victim of a heart attack. After several months of mourning and indecision, Abts and guitarist Warren Haynes decided to continue as a band, and they conceived a unique tribute featuring Woody's idols in his stead.

"We started making a list and getting in touch with bassists he admired," Abts explains, "and nobody said no. It did turn into a scheduling nightmare, but once we got past that, it was just an amazing event."

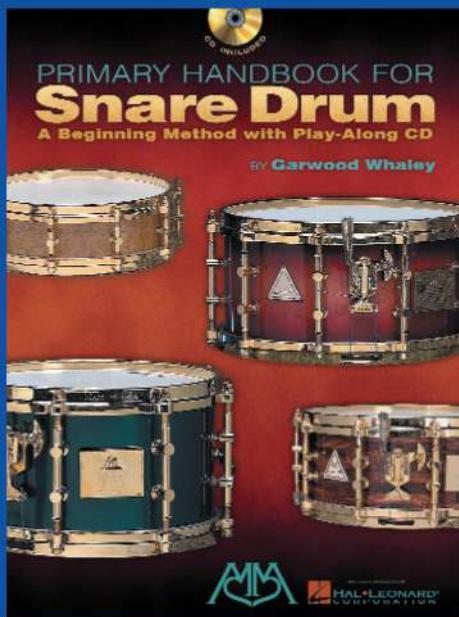
As always, the emphasis was on improvisation. When the sessions were done, Gov't Mule wound up with two albums, *The Deep End, Volume 1* and *2*, plus a documentary filmed by Mike Gordon of Phish. All of these are released by ATO, the new label founded by Dave Matthews.

Was it daunting to play with such legends? "All you gotta do is think about it for two seconds, and it either scares the hell out of you—or you embrace it," Abts says. "Meeting all these bass players for the first time, I wanted to do my thing, and of course I wanted to make myself look good. But that wasn't the main concern. The *main* concern was the recording.

"From a drummer's perspective it was more fun than anything," Abts enthuses. "It was kind of a dream come true. But you've got to respect how we got there: This would never have come up if Woody's death hadn't preceded it."

As it turned out, most of the bassists wound up playing through Woody's SVT amplifier—assuring that a bit of Gov't Mule's departed member is present on every track.

Jim DeRogatis



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NEWS

Matt Sorum, Gregg Bissonette, Eric Singer, Aynsley Dunbar, Pat Torpey, Tony Thompson, Carmine Appice, Steve Ferrone, Vinny Appice, Frankie Banali, and Mickey Dee all take a crack at the Queen/Roger Taylor oeuvre on *Stone Cold Queen: A Tribute*.



George France is on *Pyramid Technology* by The Convocation Of...

Steve Smith is on Tony MacAlpine's *Chromaticity* and Vinnie Moore's *Defying Gravity*.

Mike Mangini is on James LaBrie's *MullMuzzler 2*.

Steve Jordan is on Craig Schoedler's *By The Water*.

Allan Schwartzberg and **John Guerin** are on Steve Tyrell's *Standard Time*.

Ventor is on Kreator's *Violent Revolution*.

Dennis Chambers, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Arto Tunçboyacıyan are on Mike Stern's latest, *Voices*. Dennis also appears on *Uncle Moe's Space Ranch*, featuring Brett Garsed, Gary Willis, TJ Helmerich, and Scott Kinsey, as well as *Just Add Water* by Victor Wooten & Steve Bailey's Bass Extremes.

Speaking of **Dennis Chambers**, he has finished tracks for the upcoming Santana album. He's also scheduled to start touring with the group in March.



After working with Christina Aguilera and then Jill Scott, **Brian Frasier Moore** is now out with pop diva Janet Jackson.

Michael Cartellone (Lynyrd Skynyrd) and **Todd Sucherman** (Styx) took part in the Volunteers For America concerts in an effort to raise money for New York charities.

Jarrold Barnes is currently out with The Isley Brothers.

Harry Connick Jr.'s recently released *Songs I Heard* features drummers **Keith "Bass Drum Shorty" Frazier, Arthur Latin, and Ajay Mallery**.

A special thanks to **Tico Torres** for taking part in the VH1 auction of his Pearl American Flag kit, which raised \$29,700 for the New York Robin Hood Relief Fund.

Country studio legend **Buddy Harman** has released his first solo effort, *Buddy Harman Plays The Songs From Yesteryear*.

Terence Higgins is currently out with The Dirty Dozen Brass Band.

Rene Martinez is on the road with Intocable.

After eleven years with Powerman 5000, **AL3** has left to pursue other musical adventures. He can be heard on an upcoming album by Perry Tell.

Tom Schofield is touring with SOiL.

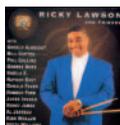
Dominic Weir is on tour with Flickerstick in support of their recently released *Welcoming Home The Astronauts*.

Peter Donald and **Scott Meeder** are on Toni Braxton's *Snowflakes*.

Dane Clark is on John Cougar Mellencamp's newest, *Cuttin' Heads*.

Scott Rockenfield appears on two new live Queensryche releases, *Operation: Live Crime* and *Live Evolution*.

Ricky Lawson And Friends features the drumming giant joined by such high-profile guests as **Phil Collins, Sheila E, Robben Ford, Donald Fagen, and George Duke**.



Percussionist **Norman Hedman** is on Alicia Keys' *Songs In A Minor*.

Matt Hickenbotham is on Colony's *Who I Wanted To Be*.

Rich Pagano has been busy playing with The Fab Faux, (widely considered the top Beatle tribute band, and featuring *Late Night* bassist Will Lee). The group is currently recording original material. Rich is also on Ian Hunter's latest CD, *Rant*, which he co-produced.

Jimmy Chamberlin has a new project that has just released a self-titled CD, *The Last Hard Men*.

Terry Bozzio is on Jordan Rudess's solo disc, *Feeding The Wheel*.

Danny Gottlieb is on Steve Shapiro's



DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Karen Carpenter was born on March 2, 1950.



Genesis release their debut, *From Genesis To Revelation*, with **Chris Stewart** and **John Silver**, in March 1969.

On March 13, 1971, The Allman Brothers record their breakthrough record *Live At Fillmore East*, with double drummers **Jaimoe Johanson** and **Butch Trucks**.

Earl Young is at the top of the charts with The O'Jays the week of March 23, 1973 with "Love Train."



Sheila E is on Prince's *Sign O' The Times*, released on March 31, 1987.

Soundgarden's *Superunknown*, with **Matt Cameron** on drums, hits number-1 on the charts the week of March 26, 1994.

Happy Birthday!

Roy Haynes
(March 13, 1925)

Graeme Edge
(March 30, 1942)

Ralph MacDonald
(March 15, 1944)

Micky Dolenz
(March 8, 1945)

Carl Palmer
(March 20, 1947)

John Hartman
(March 18, 1950)

Kenny Aronoff
(March 7, 1953)

Tony Brock
(March 31, 1954)

Slim Jim Phantom
(March 20, 1961)

Rob Affuso
(March 1, 1963)

Caroline Corr
(March 17, 1973)



love may be blind



that great gretsch sound

but it's not deaf



Less Is More Arbiter Percussion Flats "Lite"

Arbiter's new Flats "Lite" kit is designed to sell for less than their original portable Flats sets (which are now marketed as Flats "Pro"). The new sets are available with 10", 12", and 14" toms, a 12" snare drum, and a 20" bass. The package also includes three holders that attach the toms directly to cymbal stands.

The "Lite" model still features Arbiter's single-screw tuning mechanism, as well as innovations like black ABS shells and glass-filled nylon V-Clamps. Glass-filled nylon is also used to construct the plates that connect the tom and bass receiver blocks to the drums. In addition, these molded plates accept the legs and tom holders to support the drums. According to Arbiter, they help create an instrument that is "lighter than its predecessors, yet still sounds and plays like a drumset, stands still when you hit it, and fits neatly into a single, easily manageable bag."

☎ (877) 553-5596, 🌐 www.arbiterdrums.com.

From The Rainforest Ayotte's ProMaple Drums

Ayotte's ProMaple drums are now available in a Rainforest Green lacquer finish. The ProMaple line is hand-made by the same craftsmen who create Ayotte Custom Drums. It's a professional series made more affordable by limiting sizes and colors. The line offers 16x22 and 16x20 bass drums, 8x8, 9x10, 10x12, 13x14, and 14x16 toms, and a 6x14 snare drum. WoodHoop upgrade kits are available. Additional finishes available include Cabernet, Slate, Maple, and Walnut.

☎ (877) 736-5111, 🌐 www.ayottedrums.com.

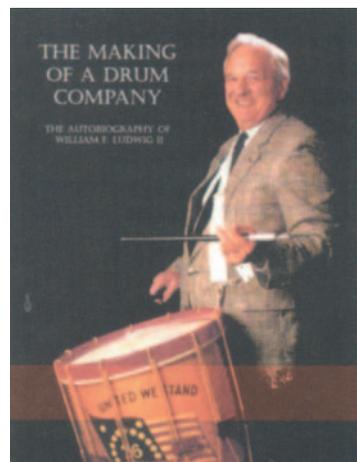


Read All About It

The Making Of A Drum Company: The Autobiography Of William F. Ludwig II

Over the span of 128 pages, and featuring 160 pictures, *The Making Of A Drum Company* is the story of the most enduring name in the American percussion industry. The story begins with the author's childhood recollections of home life and his father's drum factory, which the family was forced to sell in 1930. Mr. Ludwig goes on to describe how he later helped his father start a second drum company (WFL), and how the family name was ultimately restored to the business. Additional commentary covers the concept of Total Percussion, The Beatles, N.A.R.D., selling the company to Selmer, and Mr. Ludwig's active lecture career since. For information contact Rob Cook at Rebeats Publications.

☎ (989) 463-4757, ✉ rebeats@rebeats.com.



New Gear From An Old Pro

Hart Dynamics Professional and Prodigy Series Electronic Drums

Hart Dynamics has been making “electracoustic” percussion products for over a decade. Now they’ve released two completely new lines. Their Professional series drums feature double-ply Kontrol Screen “mesh” heads, anti-resonant hand-hammered chrome steel Norez alloy shells, and heavy-duty mounts. According to the company, the new drums “achieve a level of triggering performance, quality, durability, and aesthetics previously unavailable in an electronic drumset, while maintaining affordability.” Pro drums will be available individually and in set configurations with Hart Dynamics ECYMBAL II electronic cymbals and Hartware Stainless Steel racks. List prices start at \$2,995 for a five-piece set including cymbals, hi-hat pedal, rack, and cables.

For e-drum beginners, basement practicers, and others looking for performance features in a low-cost electronic kit,

Hart’s Prodigy set features double-ply Kontrol Screen heads, a rubber hi-hat trigger pad, and rubber-covered cymbals for extremely quiet playing. List price is \$599.

☎ (800) 769-5335, ✉ www.hartdynamics.com.



For A Special Flavor

Headliner Darbukas

The unique metal-and-skin percussive sounds offered by Middle Eastern-style darbukas are now available in affordable models from Headliner percussion. Aluminum models feature plain, hand-hammered, or colored shells with white plastic heads and optional tambourine jingles. Copper models come in copper finish, covered in black vinyl, or hand-engraved. Egypt darbukas feature a rounded rim for greater playing comfort and are available in aluminum or copper. A Turkish darbuka and bongo complete the range.

☎ (877) 88-MEINL, ✉ goMeinl@aol.com.



Headliner hand-engraved aluminum darbukas

Joining Forces

Dunnett-Lang Stainless Steel Gladstone Snare



The latest collaboration between Ronn Dunnett of Dunnett Classic Drums and Arnie Lang of Lang Percussion has resulted in the Stainless Steel Gladstone snare drum. The new drum is based on the success of the Titanium Gladstone drum, which the pair introduced in January of 2001.

Stainless Steel Gladstone drums are made to order in virtually any size. Like all other Dunnett Classic Stainless Steel snare drums, they are available in a number of unique finishes including #4 (Kitchen Sink), Mirror, and Electro. They also feature the

Gladstone three-way tuning system, a flip-out throw-off with integral dial-in internal muffler, die-cast hoops, and a badge that bears the name of the owner.

Dunnett states the drum's most important feature is its versatility, claiming that it is ideal for virtually any type of music, from orchestral to aggressive rock to subtle jazz. Street price is around \$1,200. Lead times on orders are running at six to eight weeks.

☎ (604) 643-9939, ✉ www.dunnett.com.

Lightening The Load

Carbonlite Carbon Fiber Percussion Racks

Drumset players aren't the only ones who have to lug around a lot of gear. Pity the poor hand percussionists with their collections of hand drums, cymbals, blocks, bells, chimes, and toys.

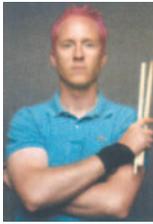
Carbonlite Products is doing their bit to make things easier by introducing a light-weight carbon fiber rack system designed specifically for percussion players. Its 1½"-diameter tubing is claimed to be as strong as steel, but with significant weight savings

for greater portability. The percussion rack comes complete with rack tubes, "T" legs, memory locks, and tube clamps for rack assembly. Vertical and side extension tubes can be positioned in a variety of configurations. All standard 1½"-diameter rack clamps and mounting brackets can be used to mount cymbal booms, bar chimes, wood blocks, cowbells, accessory trays, or other percussion items.

☎ (727) 742-2263, ✉ www.carbonlite.com.



And What's More



◀ **VATER** now offers the Josh Freese H-220 Player's Design drumstick. The hickory stick measures .580" at the grip (between a 5A and 5B) and 16" in length, with a quick taper and heavy shoulder. It's designed to provide a bit more weight in front "for a solid feel, great response, and durability," while remaining sensitive enough for lighter playing. The tip is a slightly enlarged version of Vater's 5A tip for more volume and attack from drums and cymbals. The wood-tip-only model is priced at \$12.45 per pair. 📞 (781) 767-1877, 🌐 www.vater.com.

Every **ROCKWOOD BY HOHNER** entry-level drumset now comes with *Getting Started*, a demonstration video featuring Johnny Rabb. The tape offers step-by-step instructions on setting up the kit, from assembly through tuning. 📞 (804) 515-1900, 🌐 www.hohnerusa.com.



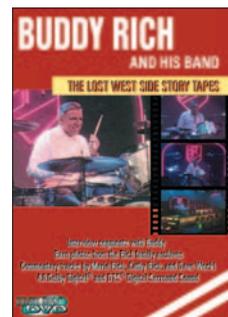
◀ For those who don't own a metronome but do own a CD player, **MAKIN' MUSIC** offers *Mr. Click* and *Mr. Click II*, CDs that offer click tracks at a variety of tempos. *Mr. Click* has twenty-nine tracks ranging from 40 bpm through 180 bpm in increments of 5 bpm. Slower-tempo tracks are longer. *Mr. Click II* is a two-CD package, including tempos from 40 to 100 bpm (each five minutes long) and from 105 to 180 bpm (each six minutes long). The longer tracks can be used when reading complete song charts or for practicing an extended groove. 📞 (513) 528-3786.

SLUG PERCUSSION PRODUCTS' new BB-675-F Batter Badge is designed for use with toms and marching bass drum heads. Its flame graphics make the drum visually more exciting to play while protecting the "sweet spot" on the drumhead where it's placed. The Badge is made of .010" high-strength clear polycarbonate film, which improves strike articulation while it protects the drumhead to extend its playing life. A special graphic process prevents the design from being scuffed or rubbed off from stick or mallet strikes. Retail Price is \$8.95. 📞 (312) 432-0553, 🌐 www.slugdrums.com.



◀ The Janus 950 Universal Trani-Hat from **MAPEX** allows drummers to take advantage of the Janus combination hi-hat/double-bass slave pedal system without having to replace their existing primary double pedal. The new system connects to the universal joint on double pedals from most major brands. 📞 (615) 793-2050, 🌐 www.mapexdrums.com.

HUDSON MUSIC has released a new concert DVD titled *Buddy Rich & His Band—The Lost West Side Story Tapes*. The concert was recorded live in 1985, and the master tapes were thought to have been lost shortly thereafter in a fire. But they were discovered (along with the original "surround sound" digital master) last year, and extensive work has been done since to create a state-of-the-art audio mix. Special DVD features include: 4.0 Channel Dolby Digital and DTS Digital Surround tracks, solos of selected performers, and additional commentary by Marie and Cathy Rich, renowned drummer Dave Weckl, and Gary Reber (producer of the original recording). The package also includes interview segments, behind-the-scenes footage of Buddy, and rare photos from the Rich family archives. The DVD is priced at \$39.95. 📞 (888) 796-2992, 🌐 www.hudsonmusic.com.



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But you really only need to know two things:

No. 1. No other bass pedal has Iron Cobra's supernatural smoothness and sensitivity.

No. 2. No other pedal has Iron Cobra's legendary reliability and durability.

Well, actually there's a third item you might like to know:

No other pedal comes with a free hardshell carrying case.

And if you want to know all the Iron Cobra features (such as the new Iron Cobra improvements, for instance), why not visit our website at www.tama.com?



Free Case

Precision instruments should be treated like precision instruments. Only Iron Cobra comes with a free hardshell carrying case.



Plenty!

JOEL ROSENBLATT
(SPYRO GYRA)

DAVE LOMBARDO
(FANTAMOS)

"I wear huge boots when I play and I've actually broken footboards. But I beat the %\$#& out of the Iron Cobra night after night and I've had no problems at all."

AL PAHANISH

KENNY ARONOFF

JOEY WARONKER
(REM)

JOHN TEMPESTA
(ROB ZOMBIE)

TAYLOR HAWKINS
(FOO FIGHTERS)

"With other double pedals I've always had a problem balancing the left foot with the right—they never quite feel the same. But the balance on the Iron Cobra is just really nice."

DEAN BUTTERWORTH

FRANK BEARD
(ZZ TOP)

RODNEY HOLMES

STEWART COPELAND
(OYSTERHEAD)

MIKE MALININ
(GOO GOO DOLLS)

"This is a very precise pedal with an action that is light as well as very smooth. The Iron Cobra splendidly combines the durability of a heavy pedal with a light pedal's feel and finesse."

SIMON PHILLIPS

RICHARD LILES
(3 DOORS DOWN)

MORGAN ROSE
(SEVENDUST)

STEFANIE EULINBERG
(KID ROCK)

DAVID SILVERIA
(KORN)

"Other pedals sometimes stumble. They're not always able to articulate what you want to play. But whether I'm using Iron Cobra single or double pedals, every beat I play comes across exactly as I intended."

JOHN BLACKWELL (PRINCE)

TIM ALEXANDER

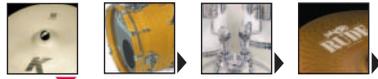
RAYFORD GRIFFIN

PAUL BOSTAPH
(SLAYER)

JOHN DOLMAYAN
(SYSTEM OF A DOWN)

"They're the only pedals that handle the speed I play and take my punishment night after night. You can get Iron Cobra to conform to any playing style whether it's heel up or heel down."

JOEY JORDISON (SLIPKNOT)



New K Zildjian Cymbals

Myth Meets Reality...Almost

HITS

brilliant finish adds to the ping of attack and warmth of cymbals

Mastersound hi-hat edges give a clean and crisp chick

crash/ride offers good versatility

MISSES

splashes lack characteristic K tone

medium rides have a beginner-cymbal tonal quality

increased number and depth of hammer marks is not apparent in the rides

by Robin Tolleason

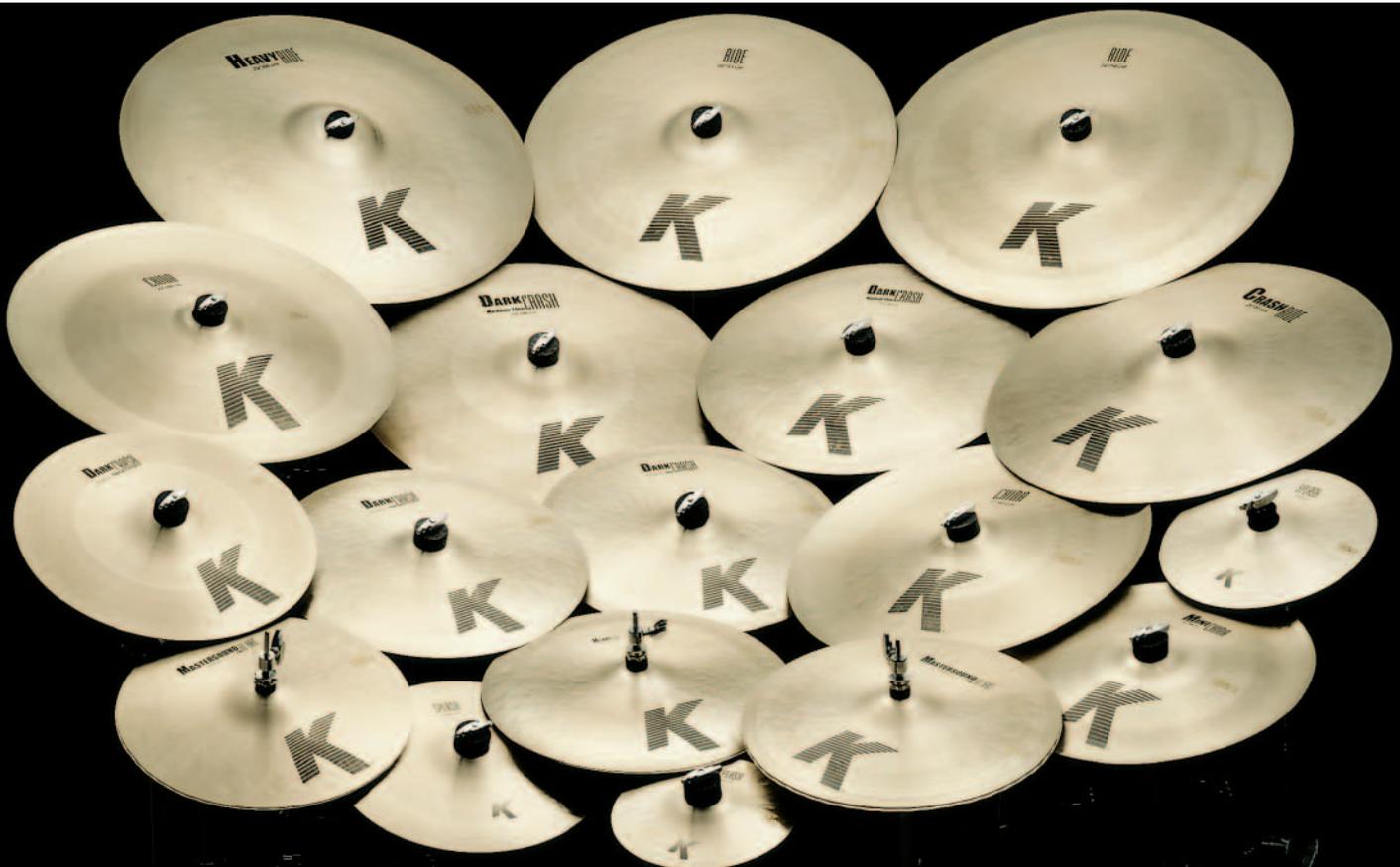
Zildjian has revamped the manufacturing process for their K series, and they've made some pretty lofty claims for the resulting cymbals. These include "increased depth and sheer number of hammer marks"... "redesigned model name graphics"...and "an improved, more stylish and contemporary look."

Progress and improvement is generally a good thing. And many drummers—especially younger ones who aren't wrapped up in the mystique of K Zildjian cymbals—are likely to appreciate Zildjian's new approach. On the other hand, some purists might take these "new and improved" claims as an insult to a proud line of "historic" cymbals.

We were sent fifteen cymbals for review. Zildjian recommends the brilliant, buffed-finish models for a slightly warmer, smoother sound. Regrettably, only two out of the fifteen review cymbals came with that finish. But those two did possess the touted characteristics. Let's look at all the cymbals individually.

Hi-Hats

The 14" Mastersound hats had one of the most articulate chick sounds I've heard, with a quick cutoff and no spill. The overall sound was a bit drier than that produced by the Z series hats I'm playing at the moment, but it's a *great* jazz sound. The bottom cymbal has a beveled sound edge to prevent airlock, along with a rough hand-hammered-looking finish on the first 1½" in from the edge.



There's no "sound edge" on the 13" hats, but they closed with a resounding crispness. When played closed, they lacked the fullness of the 14s. This became more apparent when they were ridden open: They sounded a little thin and weak. Although heavier 13" hats (like the K/Z combination) are very popular for pop and fusion playing due to their quickness, thinner "jazz" cymbals don't seem to work as well in the 13" size. I've often flipped what the factory calls "top" and "bottom" cymbals and gotten more satisfactory results riding the slightly heavier one on top. Employing that trick gave the 13s a bit more body.

Crashes

The 15" Dark crash creates a bright explosion that dissipates quickly. It almost has the "quick draw" of a splash, yet you still might consider riding on it for a few bars, picking up steam for a big crash.

If I were alone on a desert island, I think the 16" brilliant medium thin Dark crash is the one I would want out of all the cymbals Zildjian sent for review. It sounded great whether I was crashing or riding it—or doing a combination of both—with either wood-tip or nylon-tip sticks. The brilliant finish seemed to add to the crisp, immediate ping and hearty fullness of this cymbal.

The 17" thin Dark crash is another winner. It has a lot of body, with a big, classy roar that could prove very versatile within a small jazz-cymbal setup. Besides enjoying its full, rich crash sound, you'll be tempted to ride it—and you can. It'll build up a sweet swell pretty fast, but it still sounds great.

The 18" medium-thin Dark crash is an interesting cymbal. It had a warm crash tone, definite rideability, and a good bell. Its overall shape included a slightly flanged edge—not as pronounced as on some "control-oriented" models offered by a couple of other brands, but noticeable nonetheless.

Splashes

I couldn't really hear the "K" character in the splashes—at least not in the non-brilliant models we tested. The 10" is a nice splash, but nothing out of the ordinary for Zildjian. It produced a consistent medium decay, with a bit of an upturn to the end of the tone. The 8" splash sounded like a top-flight A model to me, and was a good complement to the 10". Both cymbals were nice splashes, but they just didn't have that "million-dollar sound."

Chinas

Making a brilliant China cymbal is revenge on loud guitarists everywhere. The 17" brilliant K China is *mucho* souped-up. When smacked as a crash, this baby's a firecracker...no, a cherry bomb. When I played the cymbal right-side-up in a ride position, I achieved some control by playing it in the wide curve of the flange. It was a bit more reserved that way.

The 19" China is another cymbal that's loaded for bear. I pity the guitarist who turns up too loud near this baby, because it can *compete*. Extra-turned-up edges may give it more of a gong-ish sound than other Chinas. This cymbal bows out from the bell down to a wide flange that starts a couple of inches from the edge. There's a bigger playing surface when the cymbal is flipped over, providing more sound options and more control over the roar.

Rides

I found the 20" K crash/ride very appealing because of its versatility. It has a darker attack than the dedicated rides, and it holds its tone well on long ride patterns. The crash sound is that of a true crash. When I got a ride pattern going and then put the stick shaft into the edge of the cymbal, the result was a distinct, medium-range crash that dissipated quickly enough that the ride momentum was never lost. Somehow Zildjian has engineered control into the crash of a crash/ride. It also has a nice, in-between bell sound. This is an impressive cymbal.

Unfortunately, I was not impressed with the 20" ride. I found it to have a bit of a "beginner-level" sound, not the sweet or dark K tone we've come to expect. And I didn't see the "extra hammer marks" supposedly intended to give added depth of tone. In fact, the cymbal produced an annoying overtone at a bothersome frequency, after only about four bars of riding.

The 22" heavy ride, on the other hand, offered a very dry, appealing ping sound. But man, the overtones built *fast*, whether I was riding heavy or light on it. Maybe I'm just used to my twenty-seven-year-old A Zildjian ride that's held in check by all the green stuff growing on it.

Bottom Line

Generally speaking, the redesigned K cymbals sound good. Several sound *very* good. And their prices are within reason. As for agreeing that Zildjian has "radically updated and improved their legendary range of K Zildjian cymbals," I can't go quite that far. However, I do think drummers are going to

find individual cymbals among the new K line that appeal to them personally. And personality is what K Zildjian cymbals have always been

about. ☎ (781) 871-2200,
🌐 www.zildjian.com.

THE NUMBERS

8" splash	\$143
10" splash	\$161
13" hi-hats (pair)	\$436
14" Mastersound hi-hats (pair)	\$490
15" Dark crash	\$268
16" brilliant medium thin Dark crash	\$296
17" thin Dark crash	\$325
18" medium thin Dark crash	\$349
20" crash ride	\$400
20" ride	\$400
22" heavy ride	\$478
17" brilliant China	\$338
19" China	\$390

Other new Ks not reviewed include the Pre-aged Dry light ride, 13" Special K/Z hi-hats, and the 14" Mini China.



Airto World Drumset

Something Different On The Mini-Kit Market

HITS

short snare and tom shells make for easy moving and storage

comes standard with Remo Suspended Mounting System

MISSES

toms have limited tuning range
hardware had several flaws

by Mike Haid

Remo claims that their new Airto World Kit is designed as “the ultimate percussionist’s tool.” With the great percussionist/drummer Airto’s name associated with this kit, it’s obviously going to represent a more percussive approach than that taken by some other “compact” kits.

The World Kit features shallow, “timbale-like” toms that make for easy



cartage. You could probably fit all three toms into a standard-sized floor tom case. The finish on our review set was an eye-catching rainbow-colored glitter covering that Remo calls Brilliant Burst Yellow. This covering wraps around a Remo Acousticon (laminated wood-fiber) shell, which is roughly equivalent to a 5-ply wood shell. Remo touts the fact that Acousticon shells don't contain any of the "eccentricities" of wood, like knots or grain variation. The company believes that this creates a shell that's much more consistent in terms of density and resulting sound.

Short Shells

The toms are sized 5½x10, 5½x12, and 6½x13. They're supported by the Remo Suspended Mounting System, which holds them in a free-floating fashion from the nearby stands. Although the short shell design is unique, it also limits the tuning range of the toms.

The toms came equipped with Remo's Pinstripes on top and clear Diplomats on bottom. The Pinstripes seemed a bit too thick to allow the drums to project well when tuned to a low pitch. But the toms came alive when tuned up high. In fact, a tight "timbale" sound works best with this shell/head combination. Given its size, the 6½x13 "floor" tom couldn't really give a powerful performance in a tuning register that typically would be associated with a floor tom. But it was consistent with the other toms when brought up a bit.

The bearing edges on all of the World Kit drums seemed a bit thick and rounded, which is uncharacteristic of edges found on most contemporary kits. However, it's very common on Brazilian drums, like surdos and pandeiros. I'm not sure if Airtro (who is, after all, Brazilian) specified such edges, but I do think they contribute to the tonal characteristics of the drums.

Snare Drum

The 3½x14 snare sounded great out of the box. As with the toms, the snare sounded best when tuned high. The drum came equipped with an Ambassador batter and a Renaissance snare-side head, and it rang true, with minimal harsh overtones.

The weak point of this snare is its throw-off lever. In the "snares-off" position, the switch (which is designed like a metal tongue flap) hangs loose. This presented a problem when I played loudly with the snares off. The lever didn't have enough weight to keep the snares from bouncing loosely and making contact with the bottom head, producing an unwanted "snare" sound. A little more mass on the throw-off would probably correct this problem.

Bass Drum

The 14x20 bass drum also sounded great with no alterations. It was equipped with a clear, twin-ply PowerStroke 4 on the batter side and an Ebony PowerStroke 3 on the front, and had plenty of tone and punch.

The drum was supplied with the new Remo Dave Weckl Signature Series muffling system. The muffles, which are based on the rolled-towel principal, don't sit on the bearing edge, so they don't interfere with tuning or the full vibration of the head. Instead, thin, circular aluminum brackets attach to the inside of the shell just behind the reinforcement ring. These brackets hold the cylindrical felt muffles against the inside of the batter and front heads, leaving the rest of the shell untouched for optimum resonance. This system seems to work well, as long as the adhesive tapes don't come loose in transport and cause the muffles to come out of their brackets.

Hardware

The kit comes with Remo mounting hardware that includes a center post, tom arms, and a low tom stand from the company's new 6300 series. (Snare, cymbal, and hi-hat stands and a bass drum pedal must be purchased separately.) The hardware was the weak spot on the kit. Although created to be heavy-duty and durable, almost every piece had a flaw that was detrimental to the quality of the workmanship or design. (See the separate review on page 40.)

Final Rap

Remo's Airtro World Kit has its faults—especially in the hardware department. Still, with proper head selection and tuning, it could work well for the busy, traveling drummer. It isn't designed to produce the range of tuning that most standardized drumkits provide. It isn't really even in the same ballpark as other "mini-kits" currently available. Instead, its focus is on a more percussive, high-pitched tonality. If that sound suits your musical applications, you'll likely be pleased with the

performance potential this kit provides. [\(661\) 294-5600](tel:6612945600), www.remo.com.

THE NUMBERS

Configuration: 14x20 bass drum, 3½x14 snare drum, 5½x10, 5½x12, and 6½x13 toms. Acousticon shells. Review kit finished in Brilliant Burst Yellow. Standard hardware package offers Remo mounting hardware only, including center post, tom arms, and low tom stand.

List Price:

\$1,770



Remo 6300 Series Hardware

A Worthy Effort With A Ways To Go

HITS

innovative ideas
sturdy construction

MISSES

awkward height adjustment on
some stands
quality control needs improvement

by Mike Haid

Remo's new 6300 Series hardware represents a total revamp of the company's high-end line of stands and pedals. The new series introduces some innovative design ideas and user-friendly features, but there are still a few bugs to be worked out. Let's take a look at each piece in detail.

Cymbal Boom Stands

The cymbal boom stands are probably the most structurally sound of all the 6300 hardware. They feature industry-standard double-braced legs and heavy-duty construction. The only complaint I have is with the wing screws that adjust the leg position of the stand. The "wing" portion of the screw comes dangerously close to the body of the stand. Persons with long fingernails are bound to break a nail. And while that might sound a little petty, playing a gig after ripping a nail while setting up is not one of drumming's more pleasant experiences.

Snare Stand

The snare stand has the same dangerously close wing screw to adjust the height of the stand. On the other hand, clamping the snare drum into the stand basket is made very convenient by means of a round plastic handle.

The next step is to adjust the angle of the drum, which is accomplished by means of a "ball joint" adjustment with a plastic handle that locks into position. Unfortunately, on our review stand the ball joint remained loose, allowing the drum to slip out of position. I had to use a socket wrench to tighten one side of the ball joint casing, which, in turn, put enough pressure on the plastic handle side for it to tighten the "ball joint" securely.

Hi-Hat Stand

With its double-braced legs and rotating leg base, the hi-hat stand is quite stable. Its fine-tune spring adjustment and ball-bearing footboard hinge give it a very smooth playing feel.

The only funky feature is the "quick lock" hi-hat clutch. Actually, it works quite well—once you figure out that the bottom of the clutch pushes up and twists off, instead of unscrewing from the clutch. The top of the clutch is spring-loaded to keep pressure on the top of the cymbal. This makes for easy changing of cymbals.



Tom Holders



Floor Tom Brackets



Tom Stand

Tom Stand And Holders

The 6300 series low tom floor stand (used on the Remo Airtro World Kit reviewed on page 38) features double-braced legs and two adjustable slots for tom or cymbal arms. As far as I could tell, the stand itself has no height adjustment. The only way that tom height is adjustable is by how the tom arms are fitted into the slots.

As I tried to figure out how to position the tom arms into the adjustable slots, I rotated the bottom half of the slot section—at which point a small piece of flat metal fell out from underneath the slot area. I had no idea what it was for, and I couldn't see where any part appeared to be missing from the tom holder. So although I found the situation a bit disconcerting, I continued to place the tom arms into the slots. They seemed to hold firmly in place.

The multi-clamp tom arm that mounts into the bass drum comes with a memory-lock feature. But because it doesn't lock into the mount of the bass drum, it still has play in it, even when the wing screw is tightened securely. This means the toms can easily move out of position. On a positive note, the tom arms are equipped with wing screws, memory-locks, and versatile ball-joint adjustments. Positioning the toms is easy, and the arms hold the toms securely in place.



Bass Drum Pedal

The double chain-drive bass drum pedal has several features that I found to be innovative and easy to use. These include a footboard that can be adjusted to any degree of throw, in conjunction with a cam that features ball-bearing linkage to the spring. The spring adjustment locks into place with a small tension screw that Remo claims cannot loosen during play. Other nice features include an adjustable disc-shaped felt beater head and an adjustable counterweight on the beater shaft.

Bottom Line

Remo's hardware offers several innovative ideas and user-friendly options that could make life easier for drummers. All they need to do now is improve on a couple of design shortcomings, and watch their quality control. If they do that, they'll be on track to compete with the major hardware compa-

nies. [☎ \(661\) 294-5600](tel:6612945600), www.remo.com.

Quick Looks

Paiste Flanger Ride And Rude Crash/Rides

When I reviewed the new Paiste Dimensions models in the December 2001 issue, I mentioned that Paiste had also introduced a few other new models. It's time to catch up on those items.

20" Flanger Ride



The 20" Flanger ride is part of Paiste's Exotic/Perussion series. It's very thin for its size and consequently has a dark, low-pitched sound with equally dark overtones. It's a fairly washy cymbal, with a long and low crash. But it also has a bright, cutting bell sound. The bow seems very flat and

has a consistent response across its full width. I can imagine this cymbal being loved by a drummer playing avant-garde tunes in a jazz trio at 1:45 A.M.—in Paris. It's priced at \$438.

17" And 19" Rude Crash/Rides



On the extreme other end of the musical spectrum are the new 17" and 19" Rude crash/rides. The Rude line, made from Paiste's CuSn8 "2002 bronze," was introduced in 1980 as a response to heavy metal and punk music requiring extreme cutting power and volume. The hand-hammered

cymbals are completely unthatched for a dry, clanging tonality.

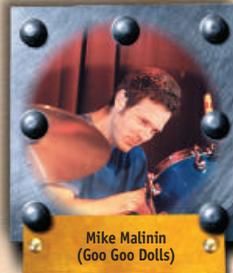
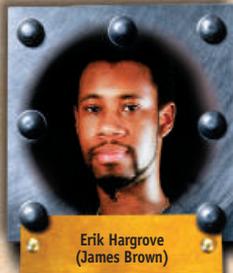
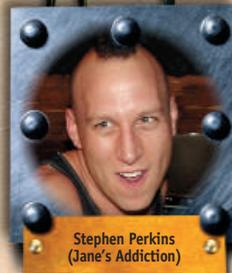
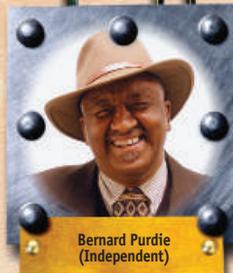
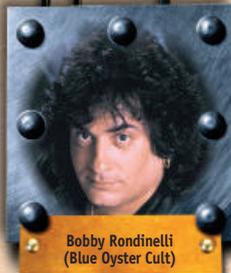
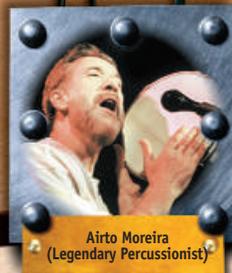
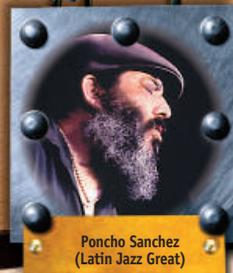
The 17" and 19" crash/rides have all of the crash characteristics of the Rude line—in spades. They're big, loud crash cymbals with *lots* of penetration. But when used as rides, they also offer good stick response, a definite ping for clear patterns, and a loud, penetrating bell sound. The 19" model has a bit more overtone wash than the 17".

While the Rude series is intended for loud situations, I believe either of these two models would make a good ride cymbal for just about any musical genre. Their unthatched design does make them bright and cutting, but they're not so overpowering that they'd be out of place when used in a quieter setting. Of course, that's assuming that they're played with the right amount of finesse. The 17" cymbal lists for \$292; the 19" version goes for \$348.

[☎ \(800\) 472-4783](tel:8004724783), www.paiste.com.



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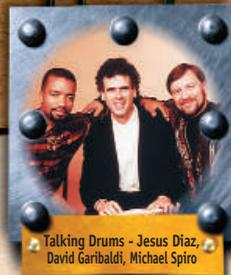
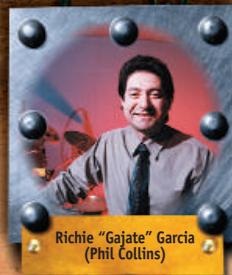
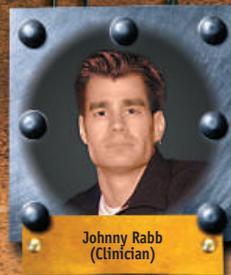
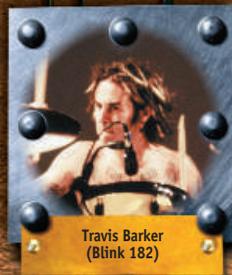
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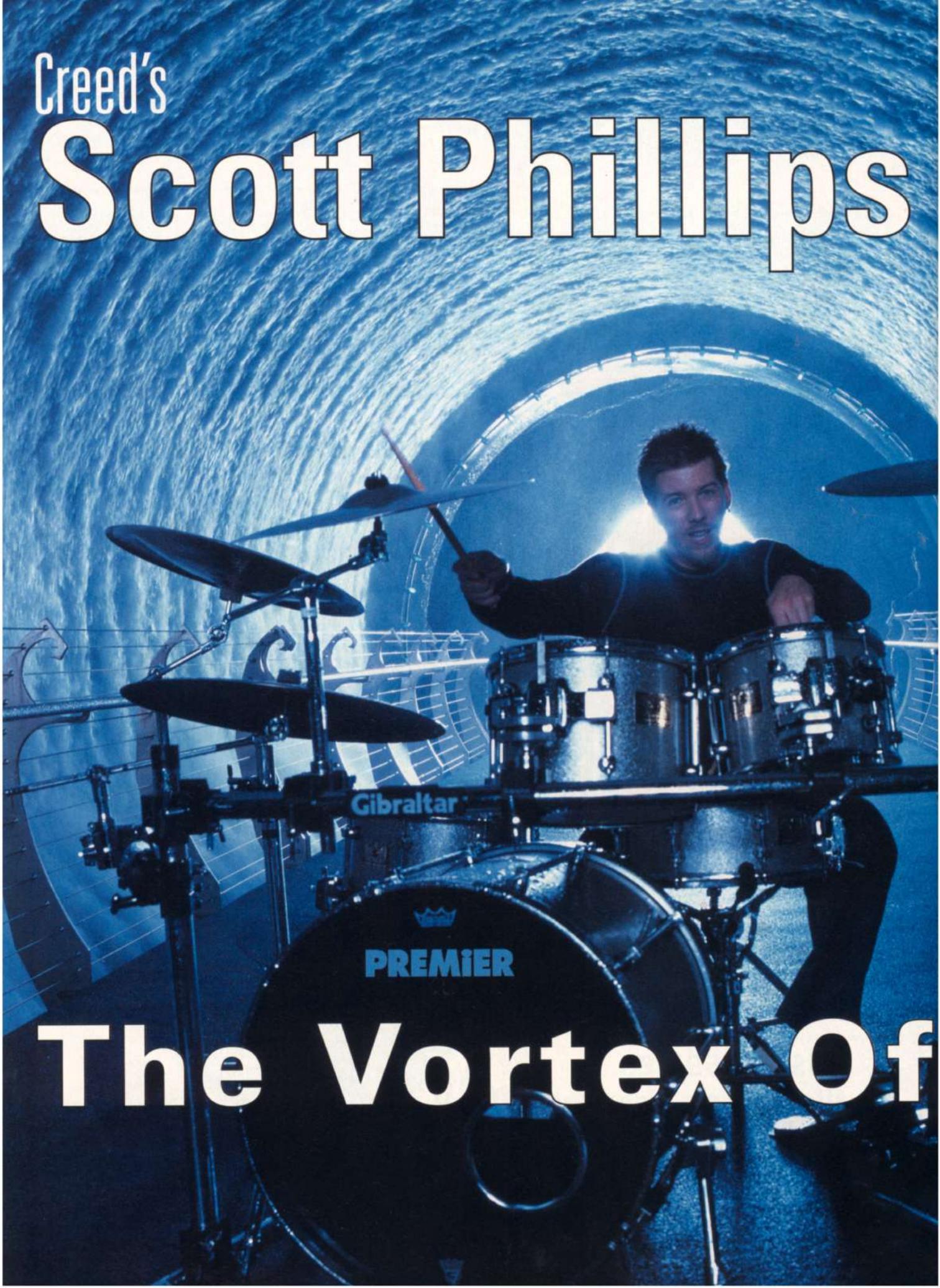
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AUDIX
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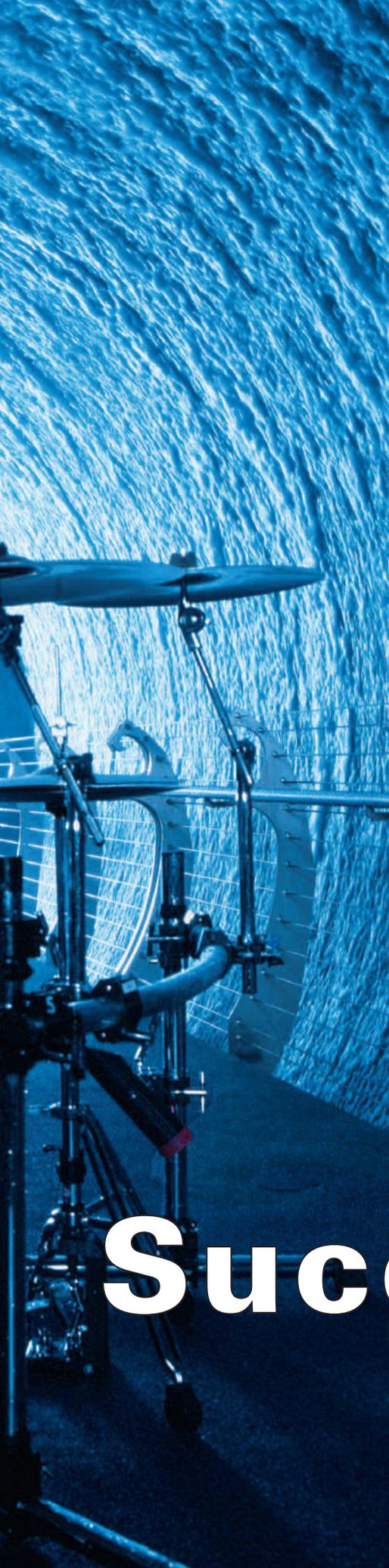
FOR A DEALER NEAR YOU CALL:

Creed's

Scott Phillips



The Vortex Of



Creed is a phenomenon. They're the first band in history to have four number-1 rock radio singles from a debut album. (By the way, that album, *My Own Prison*, went on to have a remarkable *seven* consecutive number-1 rock radio singles.) Their second album, *Human Clay*, entered the *Billboard* charts at number-1 and has since sold over ten million copies.

In 1998, Creed's first full year out, they took *Billboard* Music Award's Rock Group Of The Year, Song Of The Year ("Higher"), Welcome To The Big Time, and 2 For 2 awards. Last year they won a Grammy for Best Rock Song ("With Arms Wide Open"), as well as American Music Awards for favorite alternative artist and favorite pop/rock album (*Human Clay*).

Creed's newly released album, *Weathered*, will undoubtedly attain similar heights. What makes this all the more amazing is that Creed is the band in which Scott Phillips basically cut his drumming teeth.

Phillips didn't start playing drums until he was eighteen. Although he wanted to play the instrument in the sixth grade, when he first got into marching band, Phillips' parents encouraged him to begin his musical journey on a melodic instrument. So he took piano lessons for about four years and then played saxophone throughout middle school, until his senior year of high school. That's when Scott finally put his foot down: "I'm either playing drums or I'm not playing at all!"

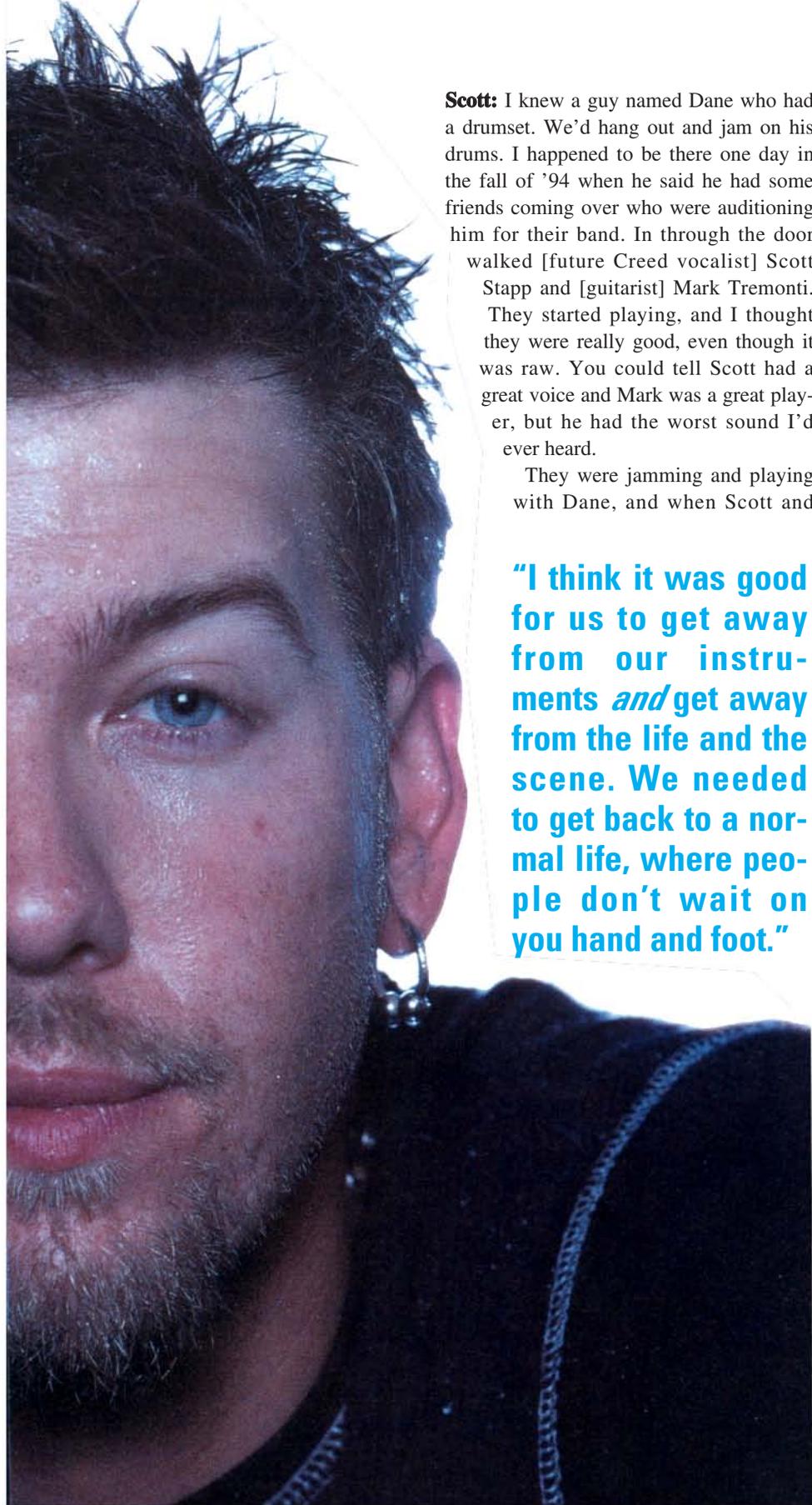
In his ongoing battle to become a drummer, when he was in high school Phillips borrowed kits to play with a local cover band, until his grandfather eventually bought him a used set. Then he went about absorbing everything musical he could at the junior college in Madison, Florida where his dad was a physiology professor. Although heavily influenced by Living Colour's Will Calhoun ("I really dug his hi-hat work"), Soundgarden's Matt Cameron and Metallica's Lars Ulrich were also early inspirations. Phillips *consumed* the rock music of the day, in addition to the standards that he played in his college jazz band.

After junior college, Phillips transferred to Florida State University in Tallahassee—as a business major. For the first year, he hardly touched the drums. But Scott remained obsessed with finding a new drumset, even though he didn't have any money. In the summer of '94, Phillips moved into a house with two other guys, one of whom turned him on to the classic rock of The Doors, Led Zeppelin, and Pink Floyd. Phillips began to jam with that roommate, which ultimately motivated the drummer to get back to his first love and find a band.

Enter Creed.

Success

by Robyn Flans



Scott: I knew a guy named Dane who had a drumset. We'd hang out and jam on his drums. I happened to be there one day in the fall of '94 when he said he had some friends coming over who were auditioning him for their band. In through the door walked [future Creed vocalist] Scott Stapp and [guitarist] Mark Tremonti. They started playing, and I thought they were really good, even though it was raw. You could tell Scott had a great voice and Mark was a great player, but he had the worst sound I'd ever heard.

They were jamming and playing with Dane, and when Scott and

"I think it was good for us to get away from our instruments and get away from the life and the scene. We needed to get back to a normal life, where people don't wait on you hand and foot."

Dane went outside to the car to listen to a CD, Mark was messing around playing a Living Colour song on guitar. I knew the whole Living Colour catalog, so I jumped up on the drums and...

MD: ...you stole the gig from Dane.

Scott: Yeah, I basically stole the gig. [laughs] And later that afternoon, I jumped on the guitar. I'm not great, but rhythmically I can make it sound like I know what I'm doing. Scott came back in and said, "You're an awesome guitar player. We're going to practice next week and you gotta come over."

That next week I borrowed my roommate's guitar and amp and went over to Scott's apartment, where they were set up in his living room. The same thing happened then that had happened at the previous rehearsal—they would get up and take a break and I'd sit down at the drums and play. Apparently they liked the way I played, because at the end of that rehearsal they asked me to join the band. I haven't talked to Dane since.

MD: What were the subsequent rehearsals like?

Scott: We were playing two or three originals right off the bat because Scott and Mark had been together for a couple of months before that. Mark had a lot of material and Scott had a ton of lyrics that he had written as poetry, and they put it all together.

We also had a rhythm guitar player for about a year who had a drumset at his house, so we'd practice there three to four days a week. We all had day jobs, so we'd get together at night. We found a bass player, and right about November or December of '94 my dad co-signed a loan so I could get a real kit. I went out and bought a Premier Genista kit with a Gibraltar rack and Zildjian cymbals. It was everything I'd been reading about my entire life. And then in January of '95, we had our first gig at an open-mic' night at a bar called Yianni's.

MD: When you went into the studio for the first time with these guys, what did you know about recording?

Scott: Nothin' at all. I knew how the process worked, but I had never played with a click track. I had only read about it. We were working with producer John Kurzweg for the first time, and I came in with all these preconceived notions about how I wanted my drums recorded and how I

thought things should sound. Now I realize I was really naive and immature, thinking I knew what was going to be best.

MD: Be specific about what you were naive about.

Scott: I told them I didn't want my drums gated and I wanted them to sound as natural as possible. When you're in a multi-million-dollar studio, you might be able to get away with that, but when you're in a guy's living room who's working with ADATS, it just doesn't fly. We talked about it, and John helped me understand what would work and what wouldn't. I'm glad I had that attitude going into it because I think anything different would have made the album different. That was *My Own Prison*, the one that ended up getting released nationally, and it was the first time I ever set foot in a studio.

MD: What did you do with the click track?

Scott: I fought it every day, all day long, until I finally realized that the click track can be your friend. I just let it go.

MD: How long did it take you to figure that out?

Scott: The first song we recorded was "My Own Prison," and I was okay with it. I took a couple of shots at it before I got the take, but the more I did it, the more I felt myself rushing or dragging. Finally I got in sync with it well enough to get by. It wasn't until this last album that I really felt confident with the click.

On some of the songs on the first album, we didn't use a click track. It felt better to do it the way we were doing it, which was starting off at whatever tempo and by the end be three or four beats ahead.

MD: Did you feel that album was going to do anything?

Scott: Yeah, I felt we really had something. But the people I had to convince the most were my folks. I had been kicked out of school because of bad grades. I was working at a store in the mall, just making ends meet.

I had breakfast with my parents one morning at a Cracker Barrel. We sat there for two hours and had a huge talk. They were trying to convince me to go back to school, and I was trying to convince them that this was going to work. "If I pass this up now, I'll always regret it because I *know* something's going to happen." I think that day was the turning point for my dad, when he saw how passionate I was about it. I didn't have to have their blessing, but I did want their support and I wanted to be able to

Weathered Report

MD: Let's talk about the new album, *Weathered*, starting with the pre-production process.

Scott: It was awesome. It was the first time we actually did any kind of pre-production. Before that we would just test stuff out live. This time we took the extra time in the studio to try a lot of different options and ideas, experimenting with melodies, guitar parts, drum grooves, and drum sounds.

MD: Talk about the first single, "My Sacrifice."

Scott: That was a guitar riff that Mark had been messing around with for a long time, probably for all of the *Human Clay* tour. Everybody finally got around to digging it and chipping in.

The one thing that stands out on this single as opposed to other radio singles is that this is the first one I've played with a fairly open hi-hat through all the verses. Normally it would be a big intro on the ride cymbal, crash cymbal, or open hi-hat, and then I'd go to a tight, closed hi-hat for the verse. But for "My Sacrifice," I left the hats open for a raucous, sloshy vibe. Then, through the bridge and to the end of the song, instead of going to a ride cymbal or hi-hat, I rode on a loud crash cymbal. I hadn't done that before.

MD: What else is different on this album?

Scott: We've written some songs in 3/4, which we've never done before. That gives me a chance to do some completely different things. "Freedom Fighter" has a really cool 3/4 tom pattern. The other tune in three is called "Bullets," and it's the first song on the album. It's also the first song where I've got a constant double kick pattern running through the choruses and part of the bridge. It's a chance for me to show off the chops a little without going overboard.

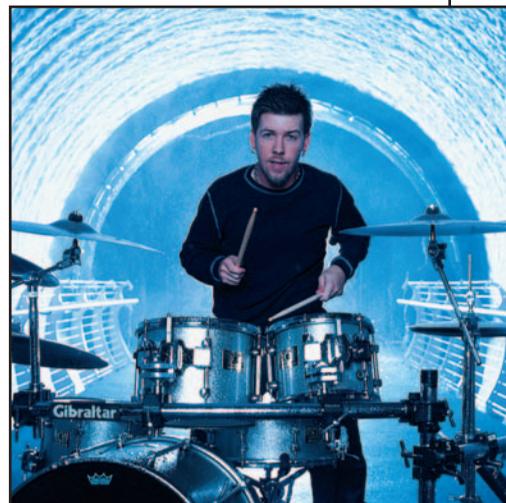
The third song on the album is called "Who's Got My Back," which is an eight-minute song, so it's not hitting radio any time soon. It's probably the most epic song we've done. We brought in a member of the Cherokee nation to cut some vocals on it. He opens and closes the song. The tune has a dark, eerie feeling, kind of Zeppelin-y in a way, like "Kashmir," with big drum sounds. I did a little bit of percussion work on congas in the early part of the bridge. It's one of those songs you'll have to listen to two or three times to digest everything that's going on. It's probably one of the greatest songs we've ever done.

MD: What about equipment in the recording process?

Scott: I used a Premier Signia kit—my touring kit—for about half of the album. You can hear it on "My Sacrifice," "Freedom Fighter," and "Who's Got My Back." I used the new Premier Gen-X, a maple/birch hybrid kit, for "Bullets" and a few other tunes. It sounded phenomenal.

I worked with Tony Adams, the studio drum ninja, who knows things about drums I will never know. It was a pleasure to work with someone who has such a vast knowledge of equipment and tuning. When we did the first two albums, it wasn't, "What are you feeling here? What kind of cymbals do you want, dark or bright?" It was, "What can I afford to buy?" This time we really were able to focus on using the gear that was right for the song.

I used a couple of different snare drums, but for the most part it was a 6 1/2 x 14 Ludwig Black Beauty. Tony brought in three or four snares. One was a 5x14 Black Beauty, which I used on "Signs." I also used a Jeff Ocheltree snare on "One Last Breath," which sounded really cool. And the only other snare I used was an old steel-shelled Pearl snare that Jeff found at a pawnshop. It fit perfectly on "Weathered."



I used a bunch of different Zildjian hi-hat combinations—K/Z, A/Z, A Custom, A—and tried things like using two top cymbals, or the bottom cymbal on top. We tried anything we could think of to get a different sound from song to song.

Higher Drums



Drums: Premier Signia in silver sparkle finish

- A. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 Ludwig Black Beauty snare
- B. 8 x 10 tom
- C. 9 x 12 tom
- D. 16 x 16 floor tom
- E. 18 x 22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" A Custom hi-hats
- 2. 16" A Custom crash
- 3. 18" Z Custom medium crash
- 4. 10" K splash
- 5. 18" Z Custom Rock crash
- 6. 22" A Custom Ping ride
- 7. 18" China Trash

Hardware: Gibraltar rack, DW 5000 series hi-hat stand, DW 5002 AT double bass pedal (fairly tight spring tension) with plastic beaters

Sticks: Kit Tools Scott Phillips model (hickory with wood tip)

Microphones: Audio-Technica

share it with them when good things happened.

I think the turning point for my mom was the first time she heard us on the radio,

which I think was even before we had a record deal. My mom and brother were traveling somewhere when he heard "My Own Prison" on the radio. He cranked it up, and

she said, "What is this?" And he said, "It's your son."

MD: At this point, there wasn't a record company?

Scott: It was just us. We had borrowed money from one of our manager's friends and from Brian's dad. We made the record for \$6,000. I think John was charging something like \$35 an hour. Everybody was still working day jobs, but in our spare time we'd go in the studio.

MD: What happened after you cut the record?

Scott: We shopped it around to a lot of people and it sat on a bunch of desks. In January of '97, a radio station added "My Own Prison" and another added "Pity For A Dime." Our manager helped out a lot. He was one of the owners of Floyd's Music Store in Tallahassee, which was the only bar in our area that had any kind of national acts playing there. So playing at Floyd's is like the big time. It only held about seven to eight hundred people, but through him, we got some opening gigs and then some headlining gigs. Eventually our crowds were getting up to maybe five hundred people on a good night. Then a week or two after the

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Scott Phillips

singles were released, the club immediately sold out.

MD: Moving forward a bit, what changed on the second album? Surely the recording circumstances were different.

Scott: Absolutely. We did it with the same producer, but we rented a house, as opposed to doing it at his house. The house was about ten miles out of town, so we could record as late as we wanted and not bug anybody.

I think the thing that was really different was the amount of time we could afford to spend in the studio. We had a lot of time. That can be a bad thing, but we managed to stay focused through it. We were really excited to get out another album. We wanted to show everybody that we weren't a one-hit wonder.

MD: What did you learn from the first recording that you were able to take into the second, and what do you feel you did better?

Scott: My time was much better. Right off the bat, I felt more comfortable with the click track.

MD: Had you practiced that at all?

Scott: No. I think it came from my finding my own pocket. We played out so much between records that my time really improved. It's funny, though, because right before we went in to record, I was kind of dreading the whole click thing. But when I started playing with it I knew immediately that I had improved because it was so easy to lock in with.

Although there was pressure on us to try to achieve what we had on the first album, there wasn't any pressure during the recording process. We weren't worrying about it. In fact, overall, the second time in the studio was a lot easier than the first.

MD: Looking at *My Own Prison* and *Human Clay*, which are the most representative tracks?

Scott: I think we all feel that each song is unique. But I'd have to pick "One," which is track 10 on the first album, because of the groove. It's sort of an uptempo, funky beat. Rather than play a straight 2/4-rock thing, I tried to jazz it up as much as I could. "Torn" would be another I'd choose, because of the mood that the song creates.

On *Human Clay*, one track I'd pick

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would be "Are You Ready," because being the first song on the album, it was like, "Hey, listen to me, I'm better than I was on the first album, so dig it." And then I'd pick "Faceless Man," because it was our epic, over-the-top tune. I really like the way the whole song turned out and what I played on it.

MD: How are songs presented to you?

Scott: I'd say that about fifty percent of the time Scott and Mark have worked on an idea for a verse, chorus, and bridge.

"It's important for me to sit back and listen to a whole song, with or without drums, and be able to add to it without my ego getting in the way."

Normally I'll base my beat on what Mark is playing, and then go from there as far as getting more creative with it.

For the other fifty percent, it was Brian [Marshall, bassist], who was with us until the middle of 2000, along with the rest of us just jamming on ideas. Then Scott would

come in and help organize the jams into songs.

MD: How did Brian's leaving affect you?

Scott: I was horrified at first. The four of us had grown from guys playing in a living room to musicians playing in arenas. It felt like we were losing an appendage. Plus I felt like Brian and I really locked in well. When he split I felt, "What are we going to do now?"

When they mentioned they wanted Brett [Hestla] to replace Brian, I was concerned. He was a singer/guitar player in his band, Virgos, and I thought, "We're bringing in a singer/guitarist to play bass?" I love him to death and he's been a good friend for a long time, but I was nervous. But from the first song we played together, it felt like we had never skipped a beat. He did an awesome job. And while Brett and I had been friends

up to that point, we quickly became *best* friends.

MD: What is the bass player plan now?

Scott: It's very tentative. Brett's album is coming out, so we're most likely going to lose him. Worst-case scenario, we'll just find a touring pro until something else

comes up. For the recording process, Mark recorded the bass tracks and did an awesome job.

MD: So now that you're in the biggest band in the land, how does a rock star find time to keep his chops up?

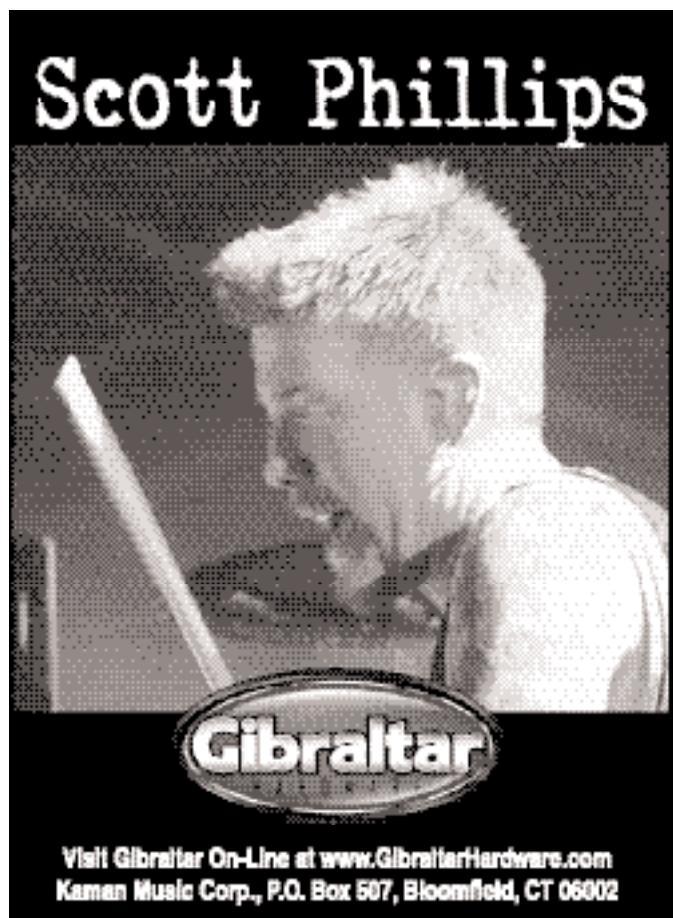
Scott: Whenever you're on tour, there's no problem keeping your chops up because you're doing it all the time. But before we made *Weathered*, we needed the downtime, because we were exhausted. I think it was good for us to get away from our instruments, and get away from the life and the scene. We needed to get back to a normal life, where people don't wait on you hand and foot. I must say I think we've all stayed pretty levelheaded considering the amount of success we've had.

MD: How will you get back into shape after being on vacation?

Scott: I think the pre-production process has helped a lot, working on the chops to get back into the studio. Then before we go out on tour, we'll do a week or two of pre-production with full energy, full sets, full pyro—all of it.

MD: How does the music differ between live and the studio for you?

Scott: It's four times more intense live than

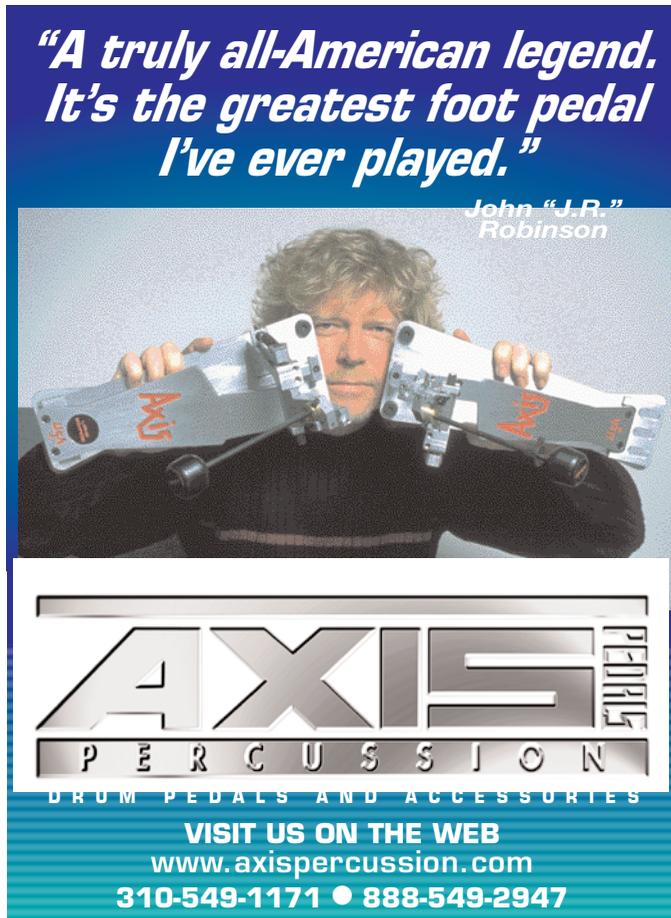


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it is in the studio. There's no break after you do a song. There's no ten-minute breather to go drink a bottle of water. I think the thing that makes it easier to endure, though, is the crowd. They keep the adrenaline on full throughout the show, and that helps.

MD: Does the adrenaline make you push your tempos?

Scott: A little bit. Mark starts about sixty percent of the songs on guitar and then the drums come in after that. Sometimes he's right on and sometimes he's racing. He's an awesome guitar player, but sometimes adrenaline can speed you up.

MD: Aside from keeping the tempo, what does this band need from you?

Scott: I think my openness to their ideas, as well as having ideas of my own, are what's needed in this band. There are some drummers I've come across who are pretty headstrong and feel that what they come up with is the only way to do it. But I've always been very receptive to the other bandmembers' suggestions. I think it's important for me to sit back and listen to a whole song, with or without drums, and be able to add to it without my ego getting in the way.

MD: You and Scott are golfers. Do you feel it helps alleviate stress or keep you in shape on the road?

Scott: Scott and I started golfing during a break after the first tour, and we became totally addicted to it. We spent our days off centered around finding the nicest golf courses in whatever region of the country we were in. [laughs] It got ridiculous after a while, but it's a good escape for us.

On the first tour, our days consisted of waking up on the bus at the venue and staying there the entire day, except for going to radio stations to do interviews, and then coming back to the gig. We were living at the venues, and there was no recreation. The only pleasure was the hour and a half on stage. We were starting to look forward more to our days off than the days we were performing.

Having golf has been an escape to get outdoors for three or four hours and not think about the business. But during our time off, we played so much we started to need a release from golf. It got to the point where that was all I was thinking about: "I can play the drums, but why am I hooking the ball?"



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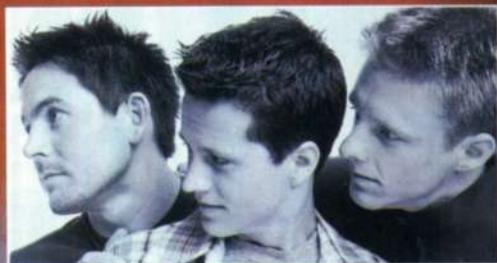
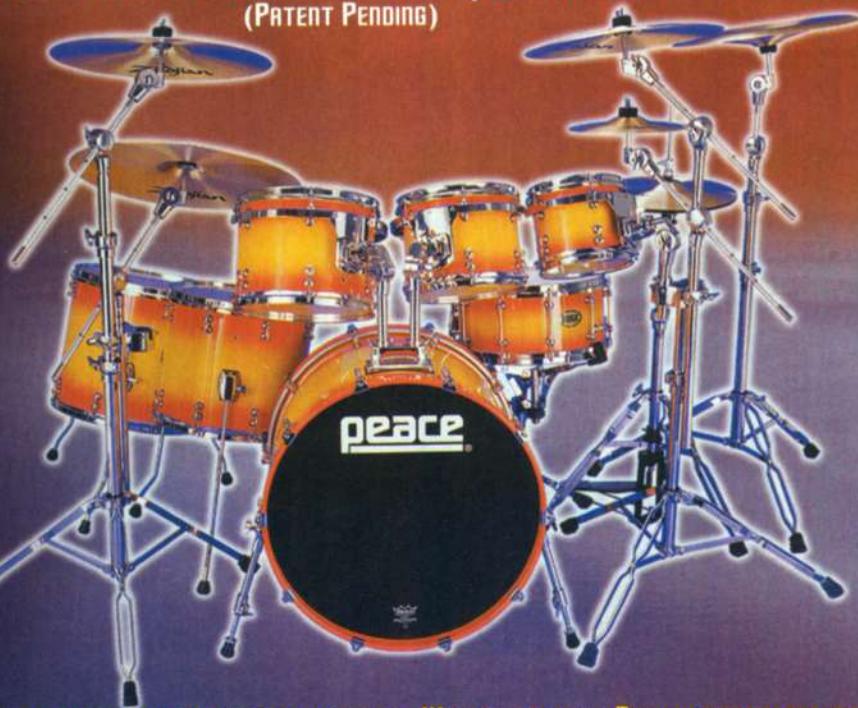
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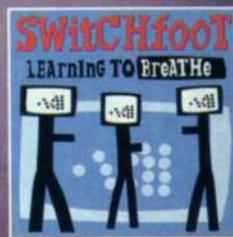
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A close-up photograph of a drummer wearing a black turtleneck sweater. The drummer is captured in the middle of a performance, with multiple drumsticks held in both hands, creating a sense of motion and speed. The focus is on the hands and the drumsticks, with the background being a dark, solid color. In the foreground, a portion of a snare drum is visible, featuring a light-colored wood shell and chrome hardware. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

The Moeller Stroke **Revealed!**

Speed, Endurance...And Drumming's Fountain Of Youth?



by John Riley

Jim Chapin and Joe Morello are among the elder statesman of drumming, yet few players of any age have their technical finesse, power, endurance, or speed. Chapin and Morello have developed and maintained their chops by incorporating the “Fountain Of Youth” of drumming, a technique promoted by legendary performer and educator Sanford A. Moeller.

Jim Chapin was a student of Moeller and is a magnificent teacher and tireless “giver” of Moeller’s concepts. If you’ve ever attended a Percussive Arts Society International Convention or a *Modern Drummer* festival, you’ve surely seen Jim generously sharing his knowledge with any eager student of drumming. In his video *Speed, Power, Control, Endurance*, Jim clearly demonstrates Moeller’s methods, making it a must-have for any drummer seeking to improve his facility.

Another must-have is Joe Morello’s video *The Natural Approach To Technique*. When I was in high school I had the good fortune to study with Joe. He taught me that drummers use three groups of muscles: the arm, the wrist, and the fingers. Most playing is done with the wrist, the arm is used for power, while the fingers are used for low-volume speed. Each of the three muscle groups is trained separately, and each hand is trained individually. Eventually everything is integrated. The key was, and still is, to allow the sticks to rebound naturally.

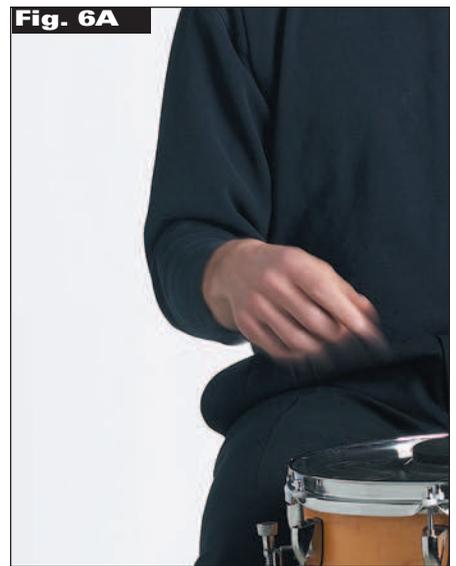
Repetitive actions like a single-stroke roll—played loudly using the arms, at a medium volume using the wrists, or softly using the fingers—naturally cause fatigue. To combat fatigue, drummers “press”: We tighten up. This allows us to temporarily persevere by increasing the tension in our grip; we squeeze it out. But in short order, all control breaks down.

Joe developed his “natural” technical concepts by studying with the great old masters of drumming, George L. Stone and Billy Gladstone, and he learned Sanford Moeller’s concepts from his first teacher, Joe Sefcik. These masters agreed on the fundamentals of good technique, but zeroed in on different areas: Stone’s approach focused mainly on wrist development, Gladstone was more finger-oriented, and Moeller employed a tension-breaking combination stroke. Joe demonstrates the attributes of each of these approaches on his video.

Early in the 1900s, Sanford Moeller realized that one reduces and ultimately eliminates tension by distributing the “load” of repetitive motions among several muscle groups. The Moeller stroke incorporates the arm, wrist, and fingers into one flowing action, and is perfect for playing flowing accents within a single-stroke roll. Once you’ve mastered the Moeller stroke, you make the motion and the stick almost plays by itself.

To learn this motion, we’ll go through the mechanics of the Moeller stroke in slow motion, step-by-step. The more thoroughly you understand these fundamental principles, the easier it will be to make the motion flow at faster tempos. Let’s start by putting our sticks down and sitting in front of a large mirror.

Photos by Jim Esposito



Right Hand

Begin by resting your right forearm on your floor tom or on a table (Figure 1A). Put your wrist joint exactly at the edge, relax, and let your hand hang limply over the side towards the floor. This is a neutral position.

Now, while maintaining your relaxed wrist, slide your arm off the surface. Let your upper arm hang down from the shoulder; don't hold it into or away from your torso (Figure 2A). Allow your forearm to relax in a position parallel to the floor, and let your hand continue to hang towards the floor in a neutral position, with your palm facing down. From this position we can begin to explore the Moeller motion. (Because it accommodates a greater range of motion, the Moeller stroke works much better with a German-type "palms down" grip than it does with the French-type "thumbs up" grip.)

Gently swing your upper arm six inches away from your torso, and allow it to fall naturally back into your body. This action should cause your limp hand to wiggle a bit (Figure 3A).

Increase the swing to a foot or more, and be sure that your hand remains relaxed.

As your upper arm moves away from the torso, the limp hand stays down (Figure 4A). Now, instead of allowing your arm to simply fall back into your body as before, accelerate towards your body. The instant you change direction and accelerate back towards the torso, the hand is forced to flop up (Figure 5A).

Allow your rapidly moving elbow to bang into your ribs. If you've maintained that limp wrist/hand combination, this acceleration and "pop" into your ribs will snap the hand back to its starting position towards the floor (Figure 6A).

Observe how your hand is "following" the movements of your elbow; try thinking of your arm as a whip and your hand as the tip of the whip. This snapping action is exactly

Fig. 7A**Fig. 8A**

what breaks the tension.

Now put a stick in your relaxed, “hanging” right hand. Your grip should be as loose and as minimal as possible, but each finger should be in contact with the stick. Your fingers should simply drape around the stick. Now try the motion. Don’t worry about the sound, speed, or anything else. Just observe how the movement of your arm controls the action of your hand and the reaction of the stick. Set your metronome at 60 bpm and perform one arm move per beat. If your wrist is supple and “light,” the result will most likely be three notes. The first note is loud, and it’s the result of your elbow popping into your ribs and snapping your hand back down. Subsequent notes are softer-volume bounces where the hand “rides” the natural motion of the stick.

As you repeat the motion in rhythm, the unaccented notes will occur as a result of your elbow moving away from the torso. (Tip: make your elbow pop into your ribs just before the “click” so that your accented note is synched with the metronome.) Even though your arm has a large range of motion, the stick should play in a small area in the center of the drum.

As you become more comfortable and the motion becomes more fluid, gradually increase the tempo. The three notes will begin to more accurately resemble a triplet. At this early stage of mastery the triplet is perfectly balanced for the Moeller motion. When used for groups of two notes, the arm pumps too fast. When trying to make four notes between whips, your stick runs out of momentum. Figure 7A shows the motion at a moderate speed and catches the action just as the elbow is about to change direction and accelerate back towards the torso. (In the photo, the motion “shadowing” shows the “future”—the direction my hand will be going.)

Figure 8A catches the motion a fraction of a second later, just as the elbow pops into the torso and snaps the wrist back towards the drum. (The “shadowing” shows where the hand is going.)

Now that you have an idea about the motion, let’s check it in the mirror one more time. Put your stick down and make the motion. Though your elbow is moving quite a distance from side-to-side, your hand should have less side-to-side movement.

When you get above 120 bpm, the motion shrinks and has much less of an elbow swing. (This makes it difficult to capture on film.) The wrist snap, which is crucial to breaking the tension of repeated actions, is accomplished in a slightly different, more compact fashion: With the wrist limp, raise the forearm four inches while allowing your hand to hang down like before. Now snap your forearm down. Use a force similar to when you snapped your elbow into your torso, so that your wrist flops up and is whipped back down. Try visualizing a cobra recoiling and then striking a target on the ground. Your forearm is the body of the snake, and your hand is the snake’s head. This should produce a faster version of the original motion. If you have further questions about this, refer to the videos mentioned above.

If you play matched grip, use your right hand and the directions above as a guide for the left hand. Everything works the same way. If you play traditional grip, the fundamentals for

Sanford A. Moeller (1879–1961) was born in Albany, New York and lived in the New York City area. Moeller began playing the drums as a teenager (though his first instrument was the piano), studying with August Helmicke of John Phillip Sousa’s band.

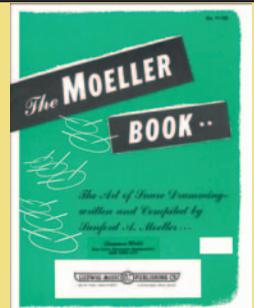
It’s said that Moeller was so curious about the old ways of drumming that, as a young man, he sought out the surviving Civil War drummers and picked their brains about how, why, and what they played. In fact, a publisher’s note on page 1 of the *Moeller Book* states that Sanford’s teaching style and concepts were based on George B. Bruce’s 1862 US Army prescribed drum methods.

Moeller was a renowned maker of Colonial-style rope-tension parade drums. He also coached bugle, fife, and drum corps. Moeller became a sought-after teacher, with Gene Krupa, Jim Chapin, and Frank Ippolito among his many students.

The *Moeller Book* was originally published in 1925 and is still in print. I had a copy of it as a kid, and the photographs of his motion intrigued me. But something about them also confused me. I was relieved when Jim Chapin told me that Moeller himself was unhappy with the way his concepts came across in the photos. Regardless of that, his teaching and those motions became a prime part of two other very popular early drum books—*The Gene Krupa Drum Method* and *The Ludwig Drum Method*.

Sanford, known as “Gus” to his friends, was a cantankerous senior citizen by the time Joe Morello approached him for lessons. Joe told me Moeller took one look at him and, before Joe even played a note, said, “You don’t really want to be a drummer—go home!” Thankfully Joe didn’t heed Moeller’s advice. And, fortunately for us, through the teaching of Joe and people like Jim Chapin, we can all better understand and utilize the Moeller stroke.

Thanks to Derrick Logozzo and the PAS Archives for biographical information.



John Riley



Left Hand

the left hand are exactly the same, but the starting position is a little different.

Rest your left hand as figure 1B above, and let your wrist hang.

Now move your left forearm off the surface and rest it in a position with your wrist, hand, and fingers relaxed (Figure 2B). Your forearm should be parallel to the floor. Rotate your forearm counter-clockwise so that the palm of your hand is perpendicular to the floor. The back of your hand should be in line with, and an extension of, your forearm. This is the left-hand traditional-grip starting position.

Gently swing your upper arm about six inches away from your torso, and allow it to fall naturally back into your body (Figure 3B). This action should cause your limp hand to wiggle. Increase the swing to a foot or more, and notice that your left hand remains relaxed (Figure 4B).

Now, instead of allowing your arm to simply fall back into your body, accelerate. The instant you change direction and accelerate back towards your torso, the left hand is forced to flop up (Figure 5B).

Allow your rapidly moving elbow to bang into your ribs. If you've maintained that limp wrist/hand combination, this acceleration and "pop" into your ribs will snap the hand back to its starting position (Figure 6B).

Again, observe how your hand is "following" the movements of your elbow; think of your left arm as a whip and your hand as the tip of the whip. Check the flow of the motion in a mirror.

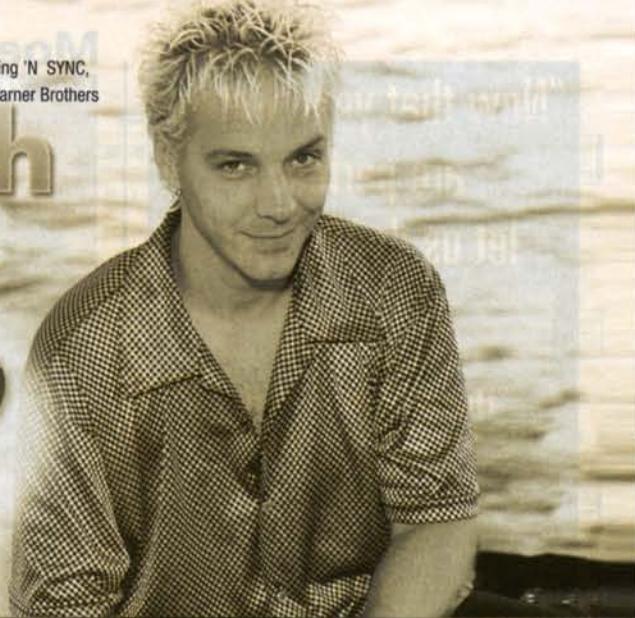
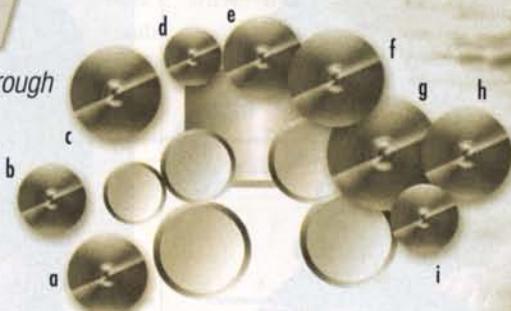
Now put the stick in your relaxed, traditional-grip left hand. Let the stick "sit" in the fleshy web between your thumb and first finger. Bring the index finger over the stick. Don't clamp your thumb down on the stick. Allow your middle finger to "ride" alongside the stick, while gently curling your fourth finger and pinky under the stick

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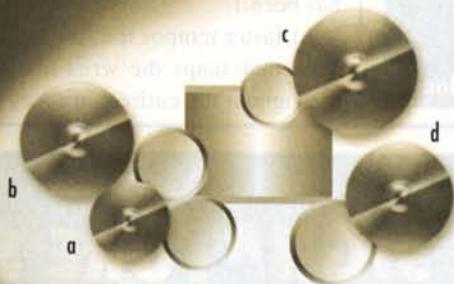


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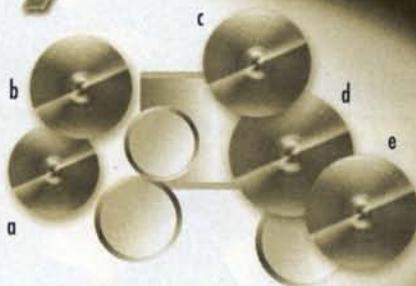
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Fig. 7B



Fig. 8B



towards the palm. Repeat the process as described above to get the feel of how the stick responds to the movements of the arm.

Figure 7B catches the left-hand motion at a moderate tempo, just as the elbow is about to change direction and accelerate towards the torso. (The motion "shadowing" shows where my hand is headed.)

Figure 8B is a fraction of a second later, just as the elbow pops into the torso and snaps the wrist back towards the drum. (Here the shadowing shows where my hand has been.)

At faster tempos the left hand motion shrinks too. It becomes a side-to-side forearm flick that snaps the wrist and breaks the tension. Be sure to maintain a loose wrist throughout the entire motion cycle.

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To help you develop this concept, practice the following exercises to reinforce and master the motion. Remember, the whipping motion generates the accented notes.

Eventually you'll be able to employ a more random and less-accented "mini" whipping motion to produce "wave"-like single-stroke rolls at fast tempos. In time, it's possible to work this "stress free" motion to speeds in excess of triplets at 200 bpm.

1

R R R R R R R R R R R R

L L L L L L L L L L L L

2

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

3

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

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

4

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

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

Danny Gottlieb, JoJo Mayer, Ed Soph, Dom Famularo, Vinnie Colaiuta, and many others can all be seen capitalizing on the mechanical advantages of the Moeller motion. Dom's book *It's Your Move* includes very good information on the stroke.

Be patient and relaxed as you go about perfecting the Moeller motion. Use this text and photos as your guide. Develop the whip slowly in front of a mirror, and refer to the videos mentioned above. But start working on it today!



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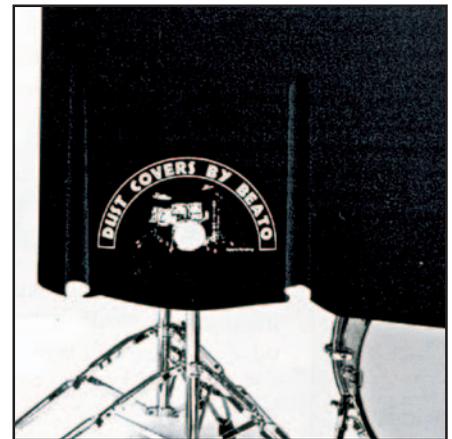
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Virgil Donati &



Simon Phillips

Space Boogie To Planet X

Story and photos by Mike Haid

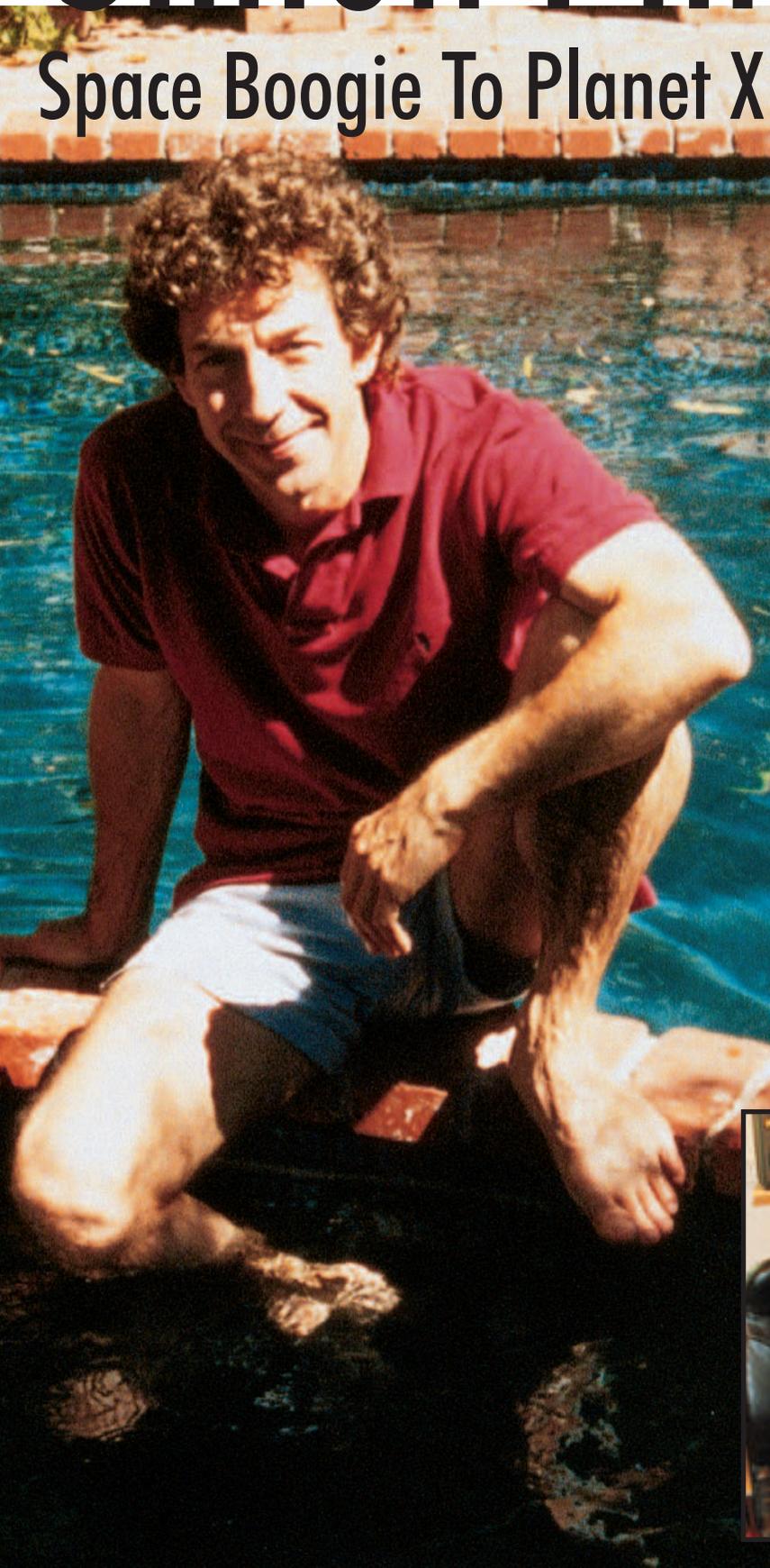
It was a typically sunny southern California day as I drove the winding hills of west Los Angeles en route to the home studio of drum legend Simon Phillips. Many thoughts entered my mind as I approached the beautifully landscaped hillside home of Mr. Phillips. I was thinking of how this British studio drumming phenom, in his *teenage* years, performed on countless top recordings. Simon had a bold new style that added a spark of drumming genius to rock, pop, metal, and fusion music of the '70s and '80s. Without a doubt, Simon brought a fresh new approach to the groove—and to double bass drumming—that fit perfectly into every style of music he performed.

Simon's success continued with his amazing "Space Boogie" track on Jeff Beck's classic recording *There And Back*, a performance that secured Phillips' already firm place in drumming history. Simon's work with other greats, such as Stanley Clarke, Jack Bruce, Pete Townshend, and The Who, only added to his legend. Not to slow the pace, the drummer started a successful solo career with 1989's *Protocol*, and began to get heavily involved in the recording of his own music. In fact, Simon's been engineering and producing music since the early '80s.

Currently Phillips continues his nearly decade-long drumming role in Toto. He also has a retro-fusion project, Doves Of Fire (covering Mahavishnu Orchestra tunes), as well as an acoustic jazz group. That band's recent release, *Vantage Point*, was mixed and produced by Simon at this home studio. With all of this to keep him busy, Simon still finds time to produce and engineer outside projects—which brings us back to our story.

When you think of the new generation of double bass drummers who are pushing the limits of their abilities—and drumming in general—one name stands out: Virgil Donati. Virgil, known as "the thunder from down under" due to his being from Australia, has taken double bass drumming to heights never thought possible. If you've ever seen Donati perform, you know that not only has he taken double bass drumming to amazing new places, but he's pushed over-the-top drumming to a level that seems unreachable to the rest of us.

Donati is able to subdivide 4/4 and odd-time signatures with flawless (and at times visually entertaining) technique and create intense musical passages that strain the brain of even the most knowledgeable player. His current band, Planet X, is spearheading a new generation of progressive fusion music that is pushing the boundaries of this already complex genre.



So who better to produce and record the current king of progressive fusion drumming than one of the greatest double bass fusion drummers in history, someone who is *also* an experienced and proven recording engineer and producer? The idea made so much sense it was scary. So the date was set. Simon Phillips would engineer the Virgil Donati drum tracks for the new Planet X recording.

In many ways, this was a historic moment. It's the first time Simon and Virgil have worked together. In fact, it's probably the first time two drummers of this caliber have collaborated in such a harmonious way to create the best possible drum recording.

As I made my way to the front door of Simon's house, I heard the rumbling of

drums emanating from inside. From a distance, it sounded like your typical neighborhood garage band. But with a closer listen, it became clear that this clearly *wasn't* your neighbor's kid practicing his rock beats. I waited for the drumming to stop and then rang the doorbell. Simon answered with a smile, commenting on my impeccable tim-

ing of ringing the bell precisely after the last measure ended.

Simon, the consummate recording engineer, turns his entire home into a recording studio when he's working on a project. This includes placing ambient microphones in the kitchen and main hallway. The hardwood floors throughout the house supply the perfect acoustics for recording drums. And his control room is well stocked with all the right stuff for achieving the best drum sounds possible.

The day began with Virgil recording the complex track "Ground Zero," which he wrote on September 11, 2001, the day of the terrorist attacks. The song will be on the new Planet X release, *Moon Babies* (Inside Out Music). As Virgil began practicing the tune, Simon was already hearing ideas for the groove, in the way of using different sound sources for certain sections.

Simon had placed clear Remo Ambassador heads (single-ply) on Virgil's toms, where Virgil would normally have used Emperors (two-ply). Simon was also suggesting other tuning techniques for the snare to give it just the right sound for the song. Another suggestion that Simon made



was for Virgil to add a cowbell to his setup, to be used in a particular section of the tune. Simon also encouraged Virgil to move a snare accent to a tom in one section, to give it a bit of variation.

The most interesting suggestion Simon had for Virgil on the tune was to play a repeating 4/4 pattern *over* a 5/8 section, because it created some cool phrasing and tension between the drums and what the other instruments were playing. This was an immediate challenge for Virgil, but he was ready to give it his all. After a few minutes of practicing and feeling out the new changes, Virgil had the complex variation under control, and he nailed the track. All Simon could do was shake his head and laugh in astonishment.

Throughout the course of the day, Simon asked Virgil to try several other changes in song arrangement, cymbal selection, and drum tuning. Virgil graciously obliged all of Simon's requests. In all of the complexities that Virgil had to rearrange on the spot, there was no task he couldn't pull off within a few takes.

Watching the meticulous veteran coaching the young gun, using all of his years of experience to guide the eager, well-prepared player to push his remarkable abilities, was a sight to behold. This was truly an amazing moment in drumming history.

As the two masters settled in for a well-deserved lunch break, we discussed this historic collaboration.

MD: Virgil, what's it been like working with Simon as a producer/engineer?

Virgil: It's the first time I've ever worked with a drummer in the producer/engineer chair, and it's been a great experience for me. Having Simon here has made my life a lot easier, because I know he has great ears and he understands what I'm trying to do. He understands the music, the time signatures, and all of the complexities of this type of project. Simon also has the insight and experience in regards to what will and will not work. So I know that any suggestion I get from the control room is going to be totally valid and worth trying.

I think Simon and I have good chemistry. It really helps to have a drummer like Simon who can make suggestions with a lot of these drum parts, which are under-rehearsed to begin with. We're really creating new drum parts together, and it's challenging,

but a lot of fun.

MD: Simon, what's it like recording Virgil?

Simon: It's always a pleasure to work with someone who can really play. Probably the hardest and most frightening thing about being in the engineer/producer chair is the fact that there are so many people who just don't have experience playing in the studio. It's like pulling teeth sometimes. So to work



with a musician like Virgil is wonderful.

Dealing with this kind of music is also

going on.

In general I'm trying to listen from a dif-

"Two contemporary drumset players working together in the studio is really a great experiment—especially in this genre of music. It's really never been done before."—Virgil Donati

refreshing. I hadn't had a chance to listen to it before the sessions, so I'm learning as I go. When I'm setting up the monitor mix, I'm actually listening and learning the songs.

With this type of complex music, when I'm first hearing it, I'm almost lost as to what's going on. But as the day goes on it makes a lot more sense, especially after I hear what Virgil is playing to it. When listening to music, every musician hears it from a different perspective. So when I hear what Virgil is playing to each track, it puts the music in perspective for me. Then I simply take what I'm hearing and approach it based on what the music is suggesting to me.

If I hear a keyboard part doing something interesting, I'll say, Why don't we try putting something to this? And with Virgil it's great, because I'll suggest playing some-

ferent point of view, listening to what's going to work sonically in the overall picture. When I'm thinking that some parts are going to be hard to make sound good in the mix, I'll make suggestions from there as well. But then suddenly I'll realize what Virgil's playing and think, Wow, I'm so glad I don't have to play that right now, because I couldn't. [laughs] This experience has been very educational for me, and a lot of fun.

Virgil: I would have to say that what makes this really special for me is that something like this has really never been done before. The fact that two contemporary drumset players are working together in the studio, with one doing the recording and the other doing the playing, is really a great experiment—especially in this genre of music, where there are so many subtleties and complexities going on. To have two drummers

working together and creating interesting parts on the spot is a unique situation.

MD: Simon, what's driven you to become so adept at writing, engineering, and producing?

Simon: If you believe in something, do it well. Otherwise you might as well go do something else. As for my drumming, though, I've found it very difficult to dedicate serious amounts of practice time to it. I did it a lot when I was a kid, but when I got out on my own, living in a London apartment, I couldn't practice all the time. I still had to show up for sessions and be spot on. So you just get used to doing that. I found that as long as I was working continuously, it was okay not to practice as much.

I'm not saying one doesn't have to practice, because I really should practice more than I do. But I also enjoy writing music, and that takes up a lot of time. I also enjoy the technical side of recording. If a project comes along that I would like to be involved with, I'll bring them up to my studio for a day. Then that day turns into a week. So there goes the time that I was going to write music or play. But it's still all about creating something.

You have to remember that I got into engineering, professionally, in 1983 with mixing the Mike Oldfield album *Crises*. Working with him was great because he really gave me the opportunity to step from being a musician who grew up with tape



machines and microphones and who *wanted* to do it, to actually being there and operating recording equipment like a Neve 8108 and an Ampex 124. That was a wonderful opportunity that not many people are able to have, unless you're prepared to go to a stu-

dio and sign on as a poorly paid beginning assistant. So in a roundabout way, what I'm saying is it's all about what you want to achieve.

MD: Your playing was so radical from what most rock drummers were playing in the '70s and early '80s. How did you create your drumming approach to the music?

Simon: Back then I was doing two or three sessions a day playing rock, progressive, or metal music. From what I recall, most of that music didn't have much of a groove, and the time was dreadful. On the other hand, you had R&B music, like all of the wonderful Earth, Wind & Fire records, but the drum sounds weren't that good. The drums sounded dead and the recording quality wasn't that good. So I would try to cross over.

When I did Judas Priest, Michael Schenker, and the other rock stuff back then, I would think about the R&B players. One thing about doing sessions that I feel is very good to do is to think of a particular player and emulate them, in terms of approaching a song. So I would think, This song needs a Bernard Purdie approach, or, This song would sound cool with a Grady Tate approach, or maybe even an Ian Paice approach. So when I played the Judas Priest stuff, I thought, How would Bernard Purdie play this song? How would Paul Humphrey play "Into The Arena" by Michael Schenker?

What I've always tried to do with rock music is have a serious groove—a strong kick and snare relationship. That's where I was coming from. And vice versa when I did R&B stuff. I would try to be a lot splashier with it. I would think in terms of a

Mitch Mitchell or even Tony Williams kind of approach to an R&B thing. You would never really hear specific licks in the music, but that's where my head was at. That's how I made things work and developed my own style of drumming.

MD: Virgil, what is it that drives *you* to push your talents to the amazing heights that you've achieved?

Virgil: That's a question that has several different answers to it. There's a philosophical side to it, a genetic side, and a personal side. I think that all of these aspects coexist in the answer. The genetic side is that some people are more driven than others and have the need to push themselves as hard as possible and see things all the way through.

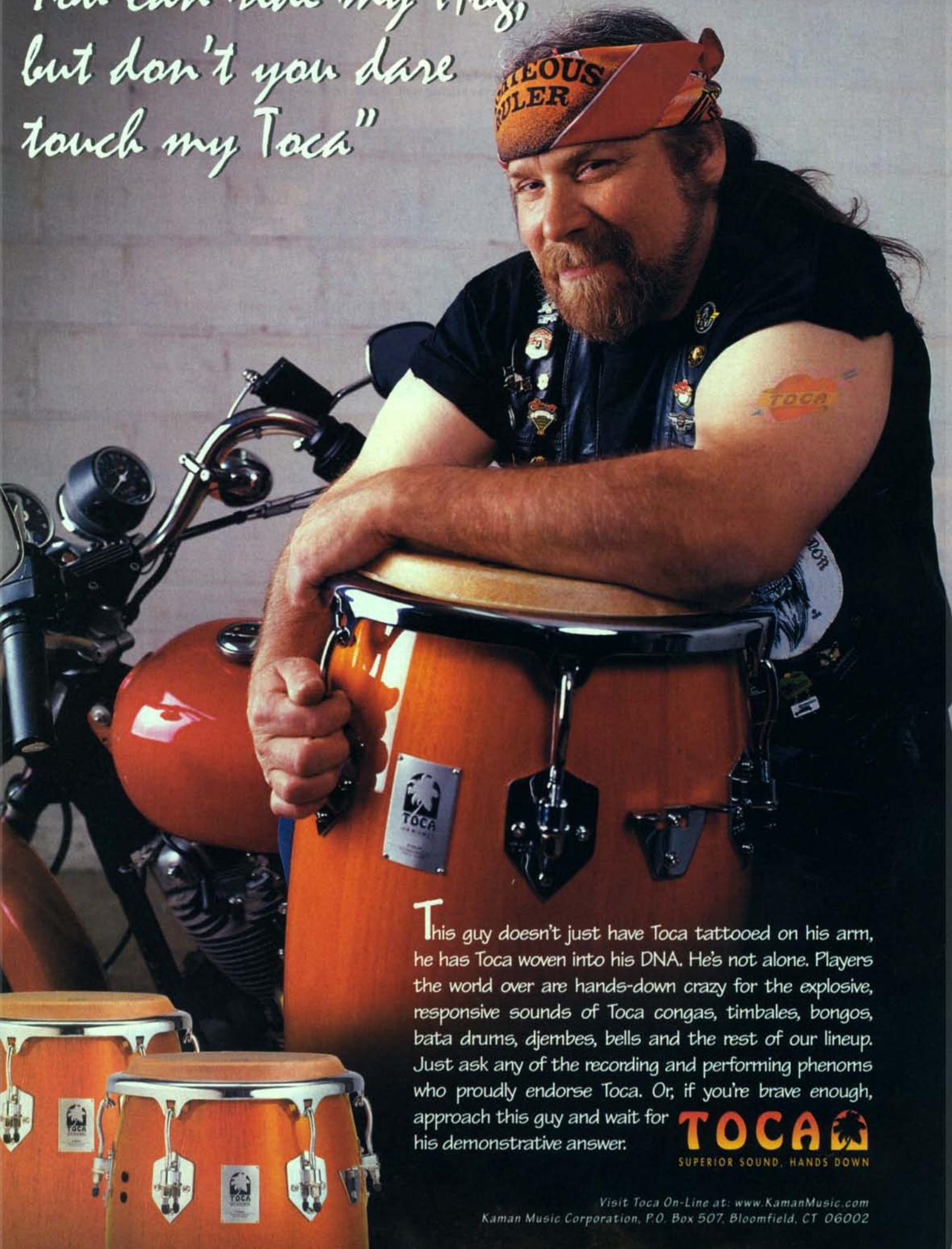
I get asked a lot at clinics about how I stay motivated, if I ever get into a rut, and if I get sick of practicing. The honest answer is that it's hard, and it takes a lot of effort, but I never really get sick of it. I've always had a burning desire to sound better and play better. I never feel comfortable with where I am as a player. I always feel that there's something there to uncover. Then all of a sudden it's been thirty years and you realize that, as time goes by, that way of working has become part of your makeup, and you don't know any other way. You have to keep at it. I've realized that the energy is given to you and if you really want it bad enough you'll get it.

I do think a lot of it comes down to your personality. Some people don't have the same ambition or drive. Some people are happy to play club gigs, have a family, and have other things to consider, and they get satisfaction out of those things. That's really what it's all about. But there's a lot of sacrifice to do what we do. Simon and I both had to leave our homelands and move to America to try to get to the next level.

MD: Did you both come to Los Angeles because you felt that this is where the great players are located and you wanted to be a part of that environment?

Virgil: Definitely. This is the land of opportunity. There are great players and great opportunities here. Not only that, it's the center of the music world. When you do something here, the world is your stage. When you do something in Australia, no one is really listening to what's going on, unless you're playing in a famous pop band. It's very isolated. It's like that a lot in Europe too. There's a lot of great music

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Simon & Virgil

going on over there, but the world doesn't really hear about it.

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Simon: And you've got sunshine all the time. [laughs] But really, I said to Virgil yesterday as we were working and I was looking out the window, wearing shorts and recording at home, that we are so lucky to be sitting here in a beautiful place making the music that we want to make. I actually wanted to move to Los Angeles when I was eight years old. I knew that's where I want-

my parents bought me a model of an American Airlines jet because all I wanted to do was go to America.

Simon: It's really a dream come true to be here. I had actually forgotten that dream until I had gone through a big divorce and wanted to move. So I walked out of my house in England with two suitcases and came to Los Angeles.

Virgil: Getting back to motivation, another thing about being motivated is that you've got to look at history. People will ask me how I keep inspired and what I listen to. Sometimes I don't listen to anything. I get inspiration from visual stimulation. There are so many great museums here. You walk

ing to see a great painting, sculpture, or building. When you get a chance to tour the world and you see all of the great things that artistic masters have created, it's so humbling and inspiring.

These are people, just like us, who put their whole lives into creating one thing that meant something to them. You can actually feel the energy from these great creations. When you walk into the Sistine Chapel you just start crying because you can feel the pain that Michelangelo went through to paint that. So to put one day into recording a track seems trivial to me. At the time it's stressful, and you feel that it's incredibly hard. But when you look at it from a bigger perspective, it's not that big of a deal.

MD: But it's also the discipline and the training that you guys have put into being able to do that track in one day. That's the level that most drummers don't ever reach. In watching the two of you work on this complex music, I was overwhelmed just trying to hear the time changes and follow the song.

Simon: You just get used to doing it. If you have the talent and you start doing record dates, you just learn to get it done. Back in

"If you believe in something, do it well. Otherwise you might as well go do something else."—Simon Phillips

ed to be. I had no idea where it was, but I knew that Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson lived here.

Virgil: That was *exactly* how it was for me too. When I was seven or eight years old,

into a museum and you look at some of the great art that man has created. That makes what I'm doing seem trivial. There have been so many great people who have walked this planet, and it can be very inspir-

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the early '70s, we used to do radio dates where you had to record twelve tracks in three hours. That included the rehearsal. It all comes down to experience. And when the tracks are complex you have to go for it. Your hands just start moving and somehow you get it done. It also helps to work with great musicians. Just by listening to what they're playing can help you out and make it easier to hear things.

Virgil: I did a record last year with guitarist Joel Hoekstra that was incredibly difficult music, and we did it in one day. All he sent me was a rough guitar part and charts with sections and bars with certain feels written above each song. It was just one or two run-throughs and then we recorded it. But I love the energy and excitement of having to create something on the spot like that.

Simon: Yeah, there's just something really cool about being under the gun. The other thing about that situation is that sonically it works well, because the sound of the drums doesn't change that much. When you spend a long time on a track, like an entire day, the sound of the drums change between when you begin the track and the time you finish. The sound of the toms changes drastically.

That's something that you've got to keep in mind all the time when you're recording.

MD: Let's talk about the tracks that you two are working on right now for this Planet X recording. What are the time signatures in the ultra-complex drumming tune "Ground Zero"?

Virgil: The A and B sections are in 5/8, the chorus is in 4/4—although, apart from the drums, the other instruments are still playing in 5/8 over the 4/4. The bridge section is also in 5/8, and the solos are in 4/4.

As for the drums, the song starts with the left hand on a 10" snare and the left foot on hi-hat playing a 5/8 pattern. The right hand and foot improvise against this. When the piano enters, the 5/8 pattern switches to the right hand on cowbell and right foot on bass drum. The left foot follows the bass and guitar riff, which is 7/8 superimposed over the 5/8. The left hand plays snare backbeats in the 5/8 time. It's actually playing beat 1 of every other 5/8 bar. There's also a loop I'm playing over, which changes at the end of each phrase in the A section. I mark this change by following the feel of the loop with the left hand/left foot part while still maintaining the 5/8 pattern with the right

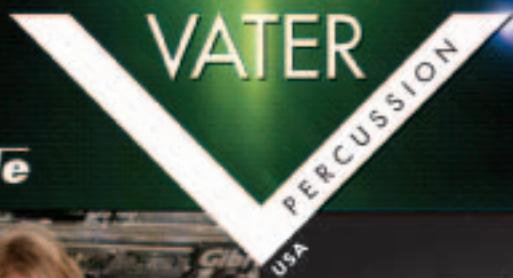
side. This was one of Simon's suggestions. The transitions are quite difficult to execute, but the effect is very interesting.

MD: What were the time signatures in the tune you recorded after "Ground Zero"? It sounded like it started in 11/8.

Virgil: That was "Moon Babies," the title track. Yes, it starts out in 11/8 and goes through a few changes throughout the tune. One of the major lines leading into the chorus section is in 15/16. It goes to 7/8, then 11/16. It's a very high-energy tune with some exciting riffs.

MD: How much time did you put into practicing these tunes before coming to Simon's house to record?

Virgil: Unfortunately not enough! I wrote many of the tunes on the record, and I didn't finish them until the night before I came in to cut the drums. Because of the difficult nature of the material, I had to get up early and go to my rehearsal space at 7:00 A.M., work on one or two of the tunes, and then come to Simon's at 11:00 A.M. to start recording. This was the routine for about a week and a half. That was a real pressure situation, but sometimes that can bring out the best. Ideally, I would love to have spent about two weeks with the material



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Simon & Virgil

to really shed it and feel comfortable with it. But nevertheless, I'm quite happy with the result.

MD: You said in the past that you mostly practice working in 4/4 and subdividing within 4/4, and that you don't really work on odd meters very much.

Virgil: Growing up, I worked with odd times until I got to a point where I felt quite comfortable with them. Now I find it interesting to manipulate rhythms in 4/4. It's a matter of feeling the meter—the pulse—so strongly that you can superimpose odd groupings or displace beats and still have a hold on the groove and the time. There's lots of that throughout the new Planet X record, and also on some of my past recordings, like OTV.

MD: What are some of your practice techniques in subdividing 4/4, and how does that relate to coming up with ideas for new material?

Virgil: Just as an example of a possible exercise to understand what I'm talking about, start by playing 16th-note quintuplets on the snare drum. Play quarter notes on the bass drum, and accent every fourth note on the snare. You'll notice that the accent always falls on the right hand. It's important to count

in 4/4 while doing this. You really need to feel and hear the four; I can't stress that enough.

Now let's take it a step further. Playing the same parts, move your right hand to the hi-hat. Add another accent on beats 2 and 4. These will fall on the left hand on the snare. Now you have created a very interesting groove, and you're still in 4/4. You can then manipulate it further by altering the bass drum beats.

When I sit at the piano to write music, I like to exploit my highly developed rhythmic sense. Planet X is the perfect musical situation for this. Because of the genre of music, I can approach my writing without inhibitions. Of course, melody and harmony are also important components in achieving a desired effect. I find it exciting to be able to transfer my rhythmic knowledge from the drums and create music that has interesting rhythms as a major component.

MD: Are there any new drumming techniques that you've been experimenting with, and did you use any of them on this recording?

Virgil: I've been working more with polyrhythms over the past three to four years, and I'm hearing them more and more in my

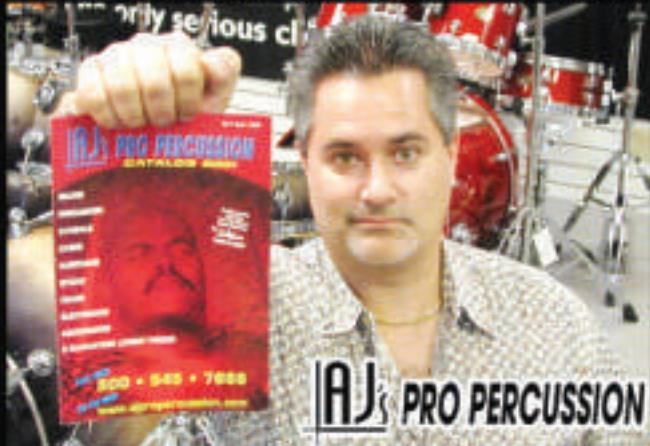
playing. I just like to let these types of ideas develop and mature slowly over a period of time, and then without thinking about it too much they tend to surface without warning. It's like a natural evolution of my playing. I'm sure there are moments on the new Planet X disc where some of these ideas come through.

MD: Simon, what new technologies have made it easier for you to get great drum sounds from your home studio setup?

Simon: There's not much really in the way of new technology—it's more in the way that we record. Being in the digital domain and, more importantly, in a virtual mix domain, where everything in a session can be recalled, one can now save any EQ or dynamics associated with any session. Hence my modus operandi is to record any instrument flat—no EQ. Sometimes I'll use some compression on record—bass, guitar, overheads, voice—but I love the thought of being able to get back to the original sound when I mix. The advent of systems such as Pro Tools has opened the way for an assortment of new high-quality mic' preamps. My selection includes Grace, Focusrite, and PreSonus.

MD: Simon, switching to your playing for a

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Simon & Virgil

moment, your Doves Of Fire project, covering the material of the Mahavishnu Orchestra, sounds like fun. Word is you're trying to recreate that '70s sound by using all vintage drum gear.

Simon: Well, the *concept* is '70s, but I'm using today's equipment. The kit is based around what was available in 1974. It's kind of what I used back then. The kit is a Tama Starclassic and has two 24" bass drums, 12", 13", and 14" rack toms, and 14", 16", and 18" floor toms. I'm using my old 1939 Leedy snare drum that I used with Jeff Beck around

1980. As for cymbals, I'm using a specially selected set of Avedis Zildjians—14" New Beat hi-hats, a 22" ride, 17", 18", and 19" crashes, and my old 24" Swish Knocker that I also used with Jeff. And I'm using mostly straight cymbal stands. Remember, the first boom stand made by Tama didn't come out until 1975.

MD: You obviously have strong opinions about the sound of drums and how they're recorded. As a producer/engineer, what are you listening for in the sound of the drums you're recording? And what are you listening

for performance-wise from a drummer?

Simon: Sound-wise, I'm looking for a clear transient sound with lots of good ring, but also isolation—a very difficult task to achieve if the kit is not tuned well. And I *never* use gates. But then one has to make sure that the sound fits the song in question, which is very important.

All I want from a drummer is that he plays sympathetically for the song. Of course, I do look for consistency. For example, snare hits must be consistent in level. It's a nightmare to mix if they're not. And most importantly, it has to feel good.

MD: Do you have any specific miking techniques that you feel are sure-fire for getting great drum sounds?

Simon: I do place mic's a certain way,

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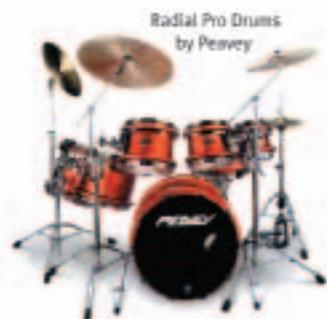
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Simon & Virgil

which may or may not be different from other engineers' methods. But the only sure-fire way to get a good sound is to have a good player who knows how to strike the drums, and good tuning. But the *biggest* part of the sound is in the playing.

MD: Simon, did you come up with the "rolled up towel taped to the bass drum" muffling idea? Dave Weckl mentioned it in one of his new videos. He said that he got the idea from you.

Simon: I got the original idea from Ken Scott, the engineer/producer from Trident

Studios in London in the early '70s. Ken engineered The Mahavishnu Orchestra, Billy Cobham's first few solo albums, Stanley Clarke, Supertramp, Dixie Dregs, and many more. He thought of it when recording Tony Williams on Stanley's first solo album, because Tony didn't want to play his kick drum with the front head off. So Ken devised a way of mounting the microphone inside the drum and dampening the batter head with a towel taped to it. I have slowly modified this method over the past twenty years or so.

MD: Simon, what did you come away with from your experience of working with Virgil?

Simon: Virgil has the most amazing facility I have ever heard in a player. Sometimes I'll be sitting there listening and can't figure out what on earth he's doing.

I would say that the *most* impressive part has been that he can change or adapt a part that was already difficult to any suggestion I may have. It's amazing how many players have difficulty with this. Once they get locked in they just can't hear it any other way. Overall, it's been a great experience and very inspiring.

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Simon & Virgil

hear it any other way. Overall, it's been a great experience and very inspiring.

MD: Virgil, what have you come away with from working with Simon?

Virgil: I have so much respect for Simon. He has a great musical mind, and his attention to detail in both the recording process and the musical domain is both inspiring and reassuring.

Having a drummer of Simon's ability and experience sitting in the engineer/co-producer's chair made my job a lot easier—especially in this genre of music. Simon understands what I'm trying to do. We've been able to bounce ideas off of each other with total understanding and empathy. There's been a great rapport between us. I think this record is going to be special because of it.

For more info on the new Planet X record, as well as what Virgil and Simon are up to, check out these Web sites: www.xplanetx.com, www.virgildonati.com,



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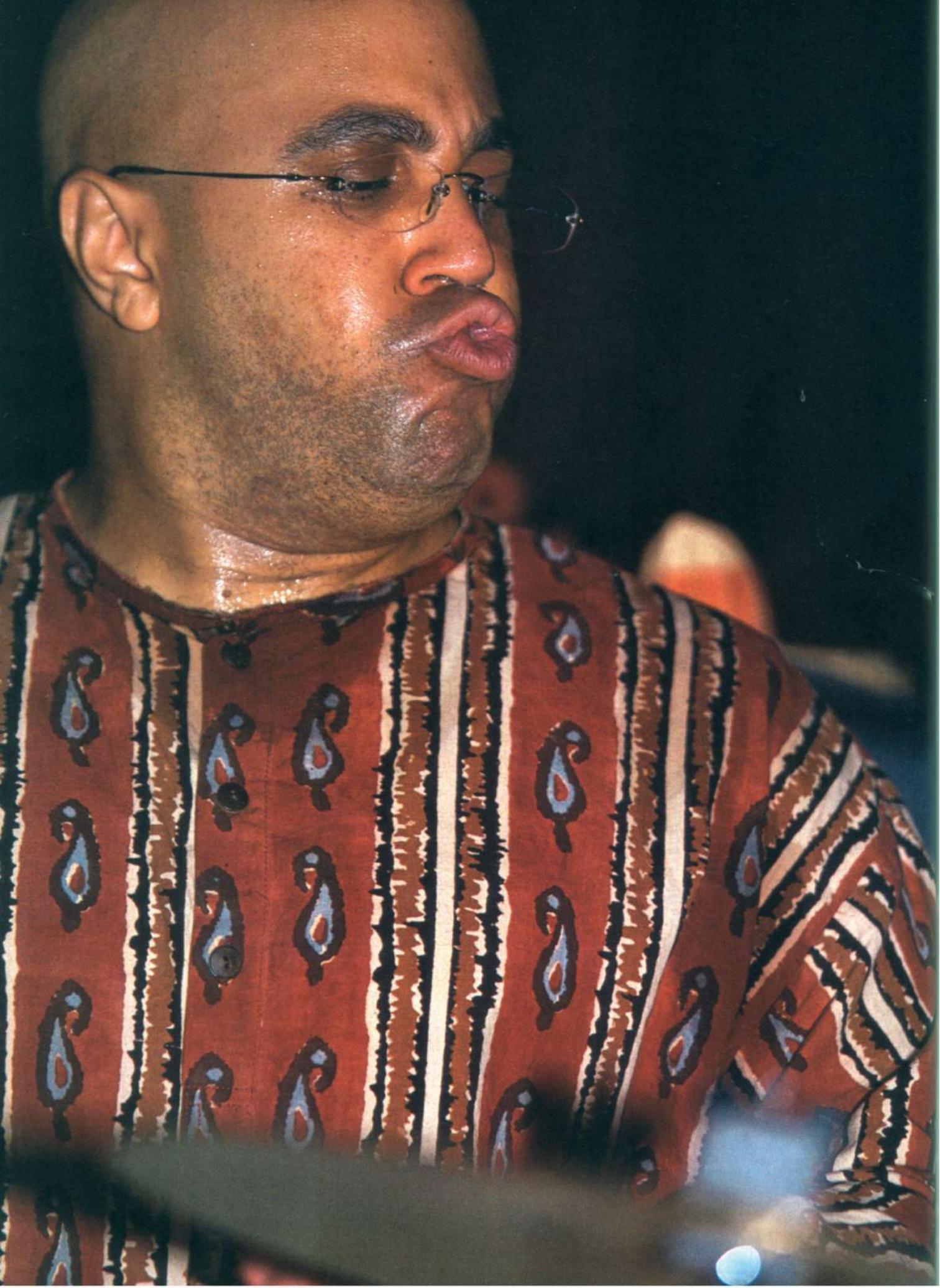
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Leon Parker

Minimal Approach, Maximum Music

Story by Fran Azzarto • Photos by Paul La Raia

Tucked away in a small coffeehouse in the middle of Manhattan's Greenwich Village is a man whose drumming is truly an art form. From the moment Leon Parker drew his first breath, it seems he dedicated his every moment to exploring his place within the vast world of music.

A colorful jazz drummer, Parker is known for a minimalist style that has evolved out of a lifetime of playing drums and percussion. Often he's shown up at gigs with just a cymbal. Seriously. Leon Parker has taken each instrument and dug deep into its soul.

Outspoken and conscious of his

every move, Parker approaches each musical experience as if he was Christopher Columbus searching for the new world. Nothing is ordinary or laden with rules. Every gig is a new land of unexplored territory.

Parker was born in White Plains, New York, and from an early age seemed destined for a musician's life. He began playing the drums at the age of three, and by the time he was fifteen he had a regular gig in a local youth jazz band. Studies in classical percussion soon followed. And not long after leaving high school, the young and talented Leon was ready to tackle New York City.

Soon after arriving in Manhattan's late-'80s jazz scene, Parker signed on to play with local notables such as Tom Harrell, Dewey Redman, and Kenny Barron. As the '90s came into view, the drummer started leading his own groups and making records of his own, such as *Above And Below* (Epicure), *Belief*, and *Awakenings* (both Columbia). Before, during, and after these recordings Parker collaborated with the likes of Charlie Hunter, David Sanchez, Joshua Redman, and many other contemporary jazz giants.

Leon Parker's unique perspective on rhythm and equally fascinating opinions on life blend into a wholly original style. It's mathematical and musical, minimal and melodic. His sound is *who* he is both personally and artistically. His technique is impressive, but his musical *choices* are what make his talent astounding.

On a recent afternoon, we met at Leon's favorite hang to discuss music, life, keeping it simple, and his latest album, *The Simple Life* (Label M).

"To me, *everything* is an instrument."

MD: The word on you around the musical community is that you have a talent for a minimalist approach to drumming. You've said that it's about music and helping you find your "voice." But how does this minimalist approach to drumming help you do that, and how do you decide which percussion instrument you'll use on a gig?

Leon: I don't see any instrument as having a defined role. It limits the discovery. I also don't see any instrument as coming from any specific place. In other words, to me, *everything* is an instrument. [Parker picks up two spoons and starts tapping out rhythms on a tabletop.] That's not what these spoons are supposed to be used for. So if I have a drum, I don't ask, What should I do with this? I see an instrument and the first thing I ask myself is, "What does this instrument sound like?"

I don't want to be limited. I want to explore each instrument, which means I've spent time playing different setups, like a three-piece drumset. That consisted of a cymbal, a bass drum, and a snare. I've used that setup in every situation you can imagine.



If I had to take a Latin solo and only had that small setup, I'd have to make believe that I had two timbales or two conga drums all within that one snare drum. I think about a color, and I use what I have in front of me to get that color or sound.

MD: If you wanted to get a Latin sound, why wouldn't you use a Latin instrument?

Leon: At certain points I've focused on one instrument at a time. So if I'm playing just a cymbal during a gig, I'll make it work for that situation. My playing one instrument is about freeing myself and not being limited with that instrument.

MD: Why do you play drums?

Leon: I didn't choose them, they chose me. To me it's about making art to make a better humanity. I can do that by learning about myself through learning my instrument. But my objective is not self-serving; it's about serving the music. I set out to be an artist *who plays drums*.

MD: All life lives in some type of rhythm. Where or how do you find your rhythmic ideas?

Leon: I am rhythm. You attract that which you are. And rhythm is everywhere.

MD: Throughout your life as a musician, what have been the gigs, musicians, or people who have inspired you to do what you're doing now?



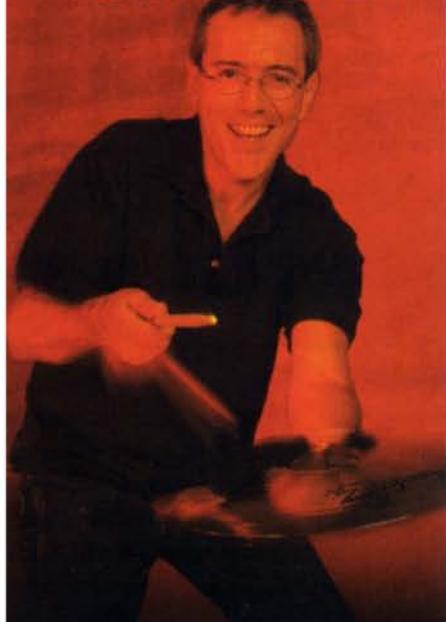
Leon: Well, many things. I was in a youth jazz ensemble at the age of fifteen. Then I played classical percussion when I was sixteen and seventeen in my church and at SUNY Purchase. I also have to mention my boyhood friend, Scott Latzky. We jammed together all the time when we were kids.

When I was seventeen I was in a group called The Mighty Zippers. It was an all-black band in Westchester, New York run by a guy named Kenny Lee, who was

an army sergeant. He taught me how to be a drummer. In other words, he taught me how to keep time, because we were playing stuff that people had to dance to. He taught me discipline. We played everything.

Some of the guys I played with that inspired me early on include Carmen Leggio [saxophone], Melvin Sparks [guitar], and this singer's gig I did with Joe Thomas in Newark, New Jersey. That was a real gig. You had to interact. The audience was a bunch of people who busted their butt all week, and you had to make them feel good. You had to really play.

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After that I was hanging at the New School and the Manhattan School of Music, even though I wasn't a student. But I met Sean Smith, Bill Charlep, and Allen Mezquida, and we formed a band called Square Root. We were playing in New York City at Auggie's in '87 and '88 and then the Village Gate from '89 to '94. That led me to guys like Harvie Swartz and Dewey Redman. All of these guys introduced me to a lot of different people who I ended up playing with.

Leon: No, it's not just African. It's everything from classical to contemporary, and every creed and nationality. If you take people and tell them, "Come as you are and let's share," you come up with this. [Parker holds up his new CD.]

MD: On *The Simple Life* you have this technique where you're playing your body while vocalizing. What made you start doing this?

Leon: When you're walking, you start feeling rhythms. You don't wait till you get

"You can't compose on a computer. You end up just cutting and pasting sounds."

Probably the most influential guy for me was Ray White. He took me under his wing and encouraged me to play. It was like having "the source" talk to you. After that it was Joel Dorn at Sony Records. He believed in me and invited me to be myself. The exposure with Sony helped me a lot. It got my music out there in record stores.

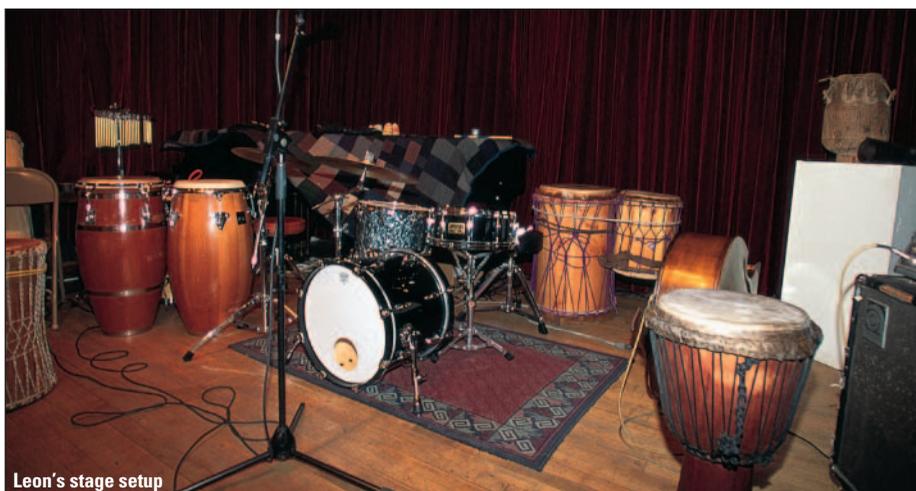
MD: Speaking of records, where did the title of your new record, *The Simple Life*, come from?

Leon: You can't compose from a computer. You end up just cutting and pasting

to your instrument; you just start. [Parker sings and taps on his chest.] Also, I started getting into the world of dance. Catherine Mapp is a dancer/choreographer and a very good friend of mine. She introduced me to the idea of performing without any instruments, doing movement and vocal body percussion. Also, this dance group I worked with, Urban Bush Women, led me to doing a vocal body ensemble of my own at the local summer stage.

MD: What's next for you?

Leon: To keep my way of life simple. In order to create and live simply, it takes a



Leon's stage setup

sounds. That's what it seems today's music is all about. If you have fewer colors and sounds, if you have space and time, then you'll hear the real voices—the inner voice...the simple life.

MD: When listening to your music I hear some African influences. Where do these influences come from?

hell of a lot more work than to live like everyone else. It takes a long time. I have to spend a year or two building new relationships and strengthening the positive relationships I already have. That will dictate what's next.



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Loud And Fast

A Punk Drumming Primer

by Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY

Semi-Open	∅	c.c.
H.H.	X	X
T.T.	●	●
S.D.	○	○
F.T.	○	○
B.D.	○	○
Add'l		T.T.

Angry, aggressive, sometimes political, occasionally humorous, and always intense, punk music's various qualities attract loyal followers left uninspired by the rock mainstream. For their part, punk drummers provide much of the energy and excitement of

the music's number-one rule: Play it *loud* and *fast*.

The quick tempos, however, can seem unreachable for many players. High-speed drumming requires great stamina and control, plus the ability to edit your playing creatively. Let's take a look at how some of the pros have handled the punk challenge.

Speed and stark simplicity formed the punk-drumming prototype on the first Ramones album in 1976. The rallying cry "Hey-Ho, Let's Go!" from "Blitzkrieg Bop" is underscored by Tommy Ramone's straightforward 8th-note approach.

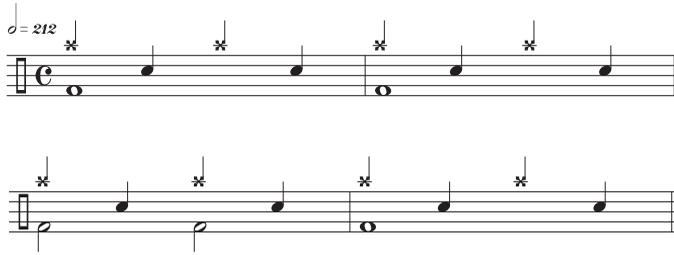
Over the years, schooled players like Tré Cool from Green Day entered the fray, adding complexity to the grooves while also throwing in blazing 16th-note fills. Here's a well-known sequence from "Basket Case" off the *Dookie* album from 1993.

What about when tempos get too fast for 8th-note cymbal patterns and 16th-note fills? One approach is to shift to quarter-note grooves with 8th-note fills. Adam Carson does this on the track "Smile," from AFI's *The Art Of Drowning* album. Since most metronomes can't go higher than 250 bpm, I've set the metronome mark in half notes, which in this case is the equivalent of 296 beats per minute (!) in quarter notes.

Some drummers have refined the quarter-note approach to reach amazing speeds. This example is from Eric Ghint of NOFX. The album is *Pump Up The Valuum*, the song is "Total Bummer." And the tempo in quarter notes is 408 bpm!

At these speeds, a more practical alternative to quarter-note grooves is to lock the cymbal pattern to the snare drum backbeat. This in effect has both hands answering the bass drum part. Here's Brett Reed using this technique on "Disgruntled," from Rancid's self-titled album (2000).

Other players achieve their speed by putting the cymbal on the first and third beat in each measure. Combined with a typical 2 and 4 snare pattern, the sticks simply alternate through the drumbeat. This approach gets Stevo 32 up to 424 bpm (in quarter



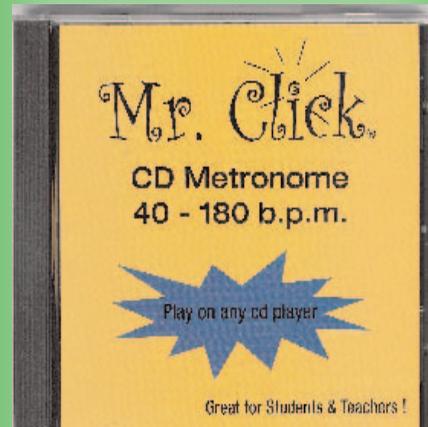
notes) on "Never Wake Up," from Sum 41's *All Killer No Filler*.

The speeds of modern punk music can be astonishing. When trying to tackle these tempos, the best approach is to start slowly and *gradually* increase your speed. Despite the energy required to play this fast, try to remain relaxed at all times. Straining may give you a momentary burst of speed, but you'll never be able to maintain it for a whole song. And prolonged straining risks muscle or tendon damage. Consistent practice, patience, and the inspiration from your favorite players can help you reach the upper speeds of punk drumming.



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Tool's Danny Carey "The Grudge"

Transcribed by David Latour



MUSIC KEY

H.H.	R.C.	R.C. Bell	C.C.	China
T.S.D.	X	X	X	X
F.T.				
B.D.				
	2nd	B.D.		

This month's *Drum Soloist* features a slammin' performance by Danny Carey from Tool's most recent disc, *Lateralus*. This solo, which Danny performs at the end of "The Grudge," has

some fun, over-the-top playing. Check out how easily he navigates the changing meters (from 5/8 to 5/4), as well as how he creates some interesting phrases over that shifting framework. And dig the Carey trademarks: some very cool fills and blistering double bass work.

A five-staff musical score for a drum set. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings like accents (>) and a triplet (3).



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Drumming And Sound

Part 2: The Good, The Bad, And The Local Sound Tech

by Pat Danz

You've spent hours practicing every day. Your band rehearses four times a week. Your equipment is in top-notch shape. Now you've finally scored a gig playing at a local club.

You arrive at the gig to set up. Suddenly, you're confronted with a screaming, purple-faced freak! What have you done wrong? You just got here, and your kit isn't even out of its cases.

You've just met your local sound technician.

Of course, this is an exaggeration (usually). Most likely, you just caught the sound tech on a bad day—probably following an even worse night. The fact is, there are just as many polite and cooperative sound

If you *really* want to impress your local sound tech and venue staff, show them how professional you are. In fact, you can remedy most negative encounters with an *un*professional sound engineer by conducting yourself in a professional manner.

Start by visiting the venue a few weeks before the show. Try to get there early—before the staff is involved in a setup or soundcheck—so that they'll have the time and patience to talk to you. *Do not* try to have a conversation while a band is playing. How can the sound tech listen to the band that he or she is mixing if you are drawing his or her attention elsewhere?

Ask about the preferred procedure for load-in and set-up. Should the amps be lined up on stage in front of each other, or does each band get the whole stage? Will the headlining act remove their drumkit from the riser, or should you set up in front of the riser? Most clubs don't have room for multiple bands to set up at once. You may be asked to assemble your kit and stick the pieces into a corner until your performance time.

You can offer a recent recording of your group to the sound tech as a reference to work from. But don't be offended if your offer is refused. Remember, sound techs deal with hundreds of bands per year, and in many cases several per night. It's usually best if you just describe your musical style and how you like your drums to sound.

This is also a good time to ask about the house PA and monitor system. Are the mains full-range (covering the entire frequency spectrum) or will they only handle guitar and vocals? How many monitor mixes are available, and where are the standard locations on stage? Will the monitors handle kick drum and bass? (Many small monitor systems are not capable of handling extreme low frequencies.)

After you've played a few shows, you'll quickly learn what questions to ask, when

An engineer may or may not be friendly, skilled, cooperative, or creative. But it's a sure bet that he or she will have an established way of doing things.

engineers out there as there are belligerent know-it-alls. But as your career progresses, there's no doubt that you'll encounter both types. The question is, what can you do to make your gigging a pleasure no matter *which* type of sound tech you encounter? Let's start with ethics and etiquette.

Respect The Tech

Most sound engineers—especially those who work the local clubs—have done quite a few shows. They've seen and heard every band in the area at least ten times. They've heard every cover song and original act known to man. They've heard thousands of stories that go, "We're the next big thing and we expect to get signed to a huge record deal any day now." Their reaction is usually pretty predictable: Hum.

to ask them, and who to direct them to. Having this information in advance should help smooth things out when it comes time for your show-day soundcheck. In most clubs, this usually takes place just before the doors open, or during daytime business hours. Be prepared, and *always* be prompt. Every minute you're late is one less for a good soundcheck.

The Dreaded Soundcheck

Soundcheck is where diplomacy really comes into play. Naturally, you want to get the best sound you can, and you need the sound engineer's help to achieve that goal. That engineer may or may not be friendly, skilled, cooperative, or creative. But it's a sure bet that he or she will have an established way of doing things. Be prepared to work within those parameters if at all possible.

Following are a few examples of requests/demands/comments that an engineer might make, and some suggestions on how to deal with them.

1. There aren't enough mic's or channels for the whole kit. This situation is very common, especially in small clubs. But it isn't as much of a problem as it would seem. In an ideal situation I generally mike a standard five-piece drumkit as follows: kick, snare top, snare bottom, hi-hat, rack tom 1, rack tom 2, and floor tom, for a total of seven mic's. An acceptable alternative would be: kick, snare, rack toms, and floor tom, using only four mic's. Depending on the size of the venue, I may add overheads to cover the cymbals.

If there is an acute shortage of mic's or console inputs, you can 1) mike adjacent toms with just one mic' placed in between, 2) mike just the kick and snare and use one or two overhead mic's to pick up the rest of the kit, 3) mike just the kick and use overheads for the rest of the kit. Two overhead mic's, placed properly, can give surprisingly good results!

2. I can't mike your kick drum unless you: a) take the front head off, b) cut a hole in the front head, c) use more muffling than you already have, d) use a wooden beater instead of felt.

To me, this attitude is a sign of how little the engineer knows. I will admit that it is *faster* and *easier* to get a tight kick sound with the mic' inside of the drum. But good results can still be achieved when miking from *outside* the drum—assuming proper

mic' selection and placement. John Bonham of Led Zeppelin didn't cut a hole in his bass-drum head, he used very little muffling—and his kick drum sound is legendary!

As far as muffling goes, a "dead" drum is easier to put into the mix—but I don't think it sounds very good. Drums were designed to resonate, and your kick drum should project a bit of tone instead of just *whump*. Beater selection, the use of impact pads, and other playing-related considerations are pretty much up to you, the drummer. But it's true that most rock-oriented sound techs prefer hard beaters to accentuate the "click" when the beater strikes the head.

All of these requests can usually be handled with courtesy and diplomacy on your part—even if the sound tech is not courteous in return. If you don't object to taking the front head off or cutting a hole in the head, go ahead and do it. If you *do* object, politely state that you are against damaging your equipment, but you would be happy to cut a hole in the head if the sound tech or the club will pay for a replacement.

3. I want you to set up behind an acrylic screen. This is a legit request. Isolating the projection of the drums behind a screen is very helpful to a sound engineer—especially in smaller venues where "bleed" into stage mic's is a major problem. If you've never played in this situation before, the first thing you'll notice is how much louder your drums sound to you. This is because all of the sound is being reflected back at you. On the other hand, your band may complain that they can't hear the drums as well as usual. It takes some getting used to by all concerned.

If a venue has gone to the trouble and expense of buying an isolation system, I recommend not resisting its use. Even though *you* may not be used to the way things sound from behind the kit, the total band sound that reaches the audience will most likely benefit.

4. You're not hitting hard enough for me to get a good sound. This is another sign of an engineer's lack of talent. If this situation arises, your best bet is to try to strike harder at first (to appease the engineer) and then gradually back your playing down to your normal comfortable level. If the engineer is worth his salt, he'll be able

to assemble his mix no matter how hard the drums are played.

I usually run into just the opposite problem when I play out. I'm a very loud drummer, and I tend to overpower many PA systems. I've tried using thinner sticks, but that usually means spending my night's income on replacements. It's not easy to play at a level that's not comfortable to your style—whether it's soft or loud. Adjust as much as you can without affecting your performance.

5. Don't tell me what your drums should sound like. I know how to get a good drum sound in this room. Walk away from the engineer, making a mental note not to work with this person again. There's nothing to be gained from starting an argument. Play your show, collect your pay, and pack up your gear. As you depart, casually mention to the club owner that the evening might have gone much better had the engineer been more professional.

Being both a drummer *and* an engineer, I make it my business to ensure that the drums sound good whenever I'm at the console. When a drummer takes the time to discuss a specific drum sound with me, I do the best I can to convey that sound to the audience—whether I agree with it or not.

I've been in situations where honoring a drummer's request made the band sound better. I've also been in situations where the sound was much worse (and audience members made it a point to tell me so). All I can do at that point is say, "The band asked me to use these tones," and continue to do as the band wishes. At the first opportunity, I'll suggest that maybe their preferred drum sound isn't working very well, and I'll offer an alternative.

Competent engineers will not only know their equipment and how to operate it properly, they will also know how to conduct themselves professionally. You'll most likely run into an "evil" engineer at some point in your career. How you deal with that situation will determine how much of a professional you are.

Pat Danz is an entertainment services manager for Acme Global Logistics, a major production company. He is also a veteran drummer and sound engineer with thousands of shows to his credit.





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MODERN DRUMMER'S 24th ANNUAL READERS POLL

Here we go again! For the twenty-fourth straight year, *MD's* Readers Poll gives you, the *MD* reader, the opportunity to voice *your* opinion about the leading lights of drumming. Remember, the intention of the poll has never been to suggest that one drummer is "better" than another. Music is an art form, not a competition. On the other hand, there's nothing wrong with giving due recognition to those drummers, percussionists, authors, and educators whose efforts have been particularly outstanding in the past year.

All it takes is a stroke of your pen (or a click of your mouse) to show support for your personal faves. So get out there and vote!

MAIL-IN INSTRUCTIONS

1. You must use the official *MD* ballot—no photocopies.
2. Please print or type your selection in the corresponding box.
3. Make only one selection in each category. Leave blank any category for which you do not have a firm opinion.
4. Affix appropriate postage and mail the ballot to *Modern Drummer's* offices at the address shown on the reverse of the ballot card.
5. Ballots must be postmarked no later than **March 1, 2002**. Results will be announced in the July 2002 issue of *MD*.
6. **Return Address/Prize Drawing:** Fill in the return address lines on the address side of the ballot to be eligible for *MD's* voter-appreciation drawing. Three ballots will be drawn at random; each winner will receive a free one-year subscription to *Modern Drummer*.

CAST YOUR VOTE ONLINE!

1. Go to: www.modrndrummer.com.
2. Click on the ballot button located on the home page.
3. Fill in your selections in the appropriate fields on the ballot.
4. After you have entered your selections, press the "Submit" button. (Note: Your browser must accept cookies in order for your vote to count.)

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Hall Of Fame

Vote for the artist, living or dead, who you feel has made a historic contribution to the art of drumming. Current members of the Hall of Fame are not eligible for this category. They are:

Gene Krupa
Buddy Rich
John Bonham
Keith Moon
Neil Peart
Steve Gadd
Louie Bellson
Tony Williams

Billy Cobham
Joe Morello
Carl Palmer
Bill Bruford
Art Blakey
Max Roach
Jeff Porcaro
Larrie Londin

Elvin Jones
Vinnie Colaiuta
Terry Bozzio
Ringo Starr
Roy Haynes
Dave Weckl
Dennis Chambers

All-Around

Not intended to indicate the "overall best" drummer, but to recognize drummers noted for performing in a variety of musical styles and applications.

Studio

Drummers who record with many different artists and/or on jingles, TV, and film scores.

Mainstream Jazz

Drummers performing in small acoustic jazz groups, in styles such as bop, avant-garde, etc.

Contemporary

Drummers performing fusion, jazz-rock, drum 'n' bass, etc.

Big Band

Drummers performing regularly in traditional big bands, stage bands, etc.

Up & Coming

The most promising drummer brought to the public's attention within the past twelve months.

Percussionist

Hand and specialty percussionists (as opposed to drum-set players).

R&B

Drummers performing funk, rap, hip-hop, blues, etc.

Clinician

Name the drummer or percussionist you found most inspiring and educational in a live clinic presentation.

Educational Book

Your favorite educational drum book released within the past twelve months. Please name the book, the author, and the publisher.

Educational Video

Your favorite educational video released within the past twelve months. Please name the video, the artist, and the video production company.

Recorded Performance

Your favorite recording released within the past twelve months. Please name the artist, the drummer, the song, and the album.

Understanding The Language Of Music

Part 6: Chord Inversions

by Ron Spagnardi

Last month we learned about the four triads: Major, minor, augmented, and diminished. This month we'll look at how triads can be inverted (played in different positions) on the keyboard.

An inversion is a chord with a note *other* than the root note on the bottom. Root position is when the note name of the chord is on the bottom. (C is the bottom note of a C triad in root position.)

In the first inversion of a C triad, the 3rd (E) of the chord is placed on the bottom. The 5th and root of the chord move above the 3rd. In the second inversion of a C triad, the 5th (G) becomes the lowest note. Now the root and 3rd move above the 5th.

The diagram illustrates the C major triad in three positions: Root Position (C, E, G), First Inversion (E, G, C), and Second Inversion (G, C, E). Each position is shown with a treble clef staff and a keyboard diagram. The root note is labeled 'Root' and the other notes are labeled '3' and '5'. Below this, the B^bm triad in root position is shown with a treble clef staff and a keyboard diagram, with the root note labeled 'Root'.

Minor, Augmented, And Diminished Inversions

The minor, augmented, and diminished triads that we learned about last month can also be inverted. The following example shows a C minor (notated as Cm), C augmented (C⁺), and C diminished (C^o) triad in root position, first inversion, and second inversion. Try them all on your keyboard.

The diagram shows three triads: Cm, C⁺, and C^o. Each triad is shown in three positions: Root Position, First Inversion, and Second Inversion. Each position is shown with a treble clef staff and a keyboard diagram. The root note is labeled 'Root' and the other notes are labeled '3' and '5'. The Cm triad has a flat sign on the root note. The C⁺ triad has a sharp sign on the root note. The C^o triad has a flat sign on the root note.

Next you'll find the inversions of the major, minor, augmented, and diminished triads in the remaining eleven keys.

F Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

Fm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

F+ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

F° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

B^b Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

B^bm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

B^b+ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

B^b° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

E^b Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

E^bm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

E^b+ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

E^b° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

A^b Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

A^bm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

A^b+ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

A^b° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root 3 5

D^b Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: D^b, F, A^b
First Inversion: F, A^b, D^b
Second Inversion: A^b, D^b, F

D^bm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: D^b, F^b, A^b
First Inversion: F^b, A^b, D^b
Second Inversion: A^b, D^b, F^b

D^{b+} Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: D^b, F, A^b
First Inversion: F, A^b, D^b
Second Inversion: A^b, D^b, F

D^b° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: D^b, F^b, A^b
First Inversion: F^b, A^b, D^b
Second Inversion: A^b, D^b, F^b

F[#] Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: F[#], A, C[#]
First Inversion: A, C[#], F[#]
Second Inversion: C[#], F[#], A

F[#]m Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: F[#], A^b, C[#]
First Inversion: A^b, C[#], F[#]
Second Inversion: C[#], F[#], A^b

F^{#+} Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: F[#], A, C[#]
First Inversion: A, C[#], F[#]
Second Inversion: C[#], F[#], A

F[#]° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: F[#], A^b, C[#]
First Inversion: A^b, C[#], F[#]
Second Inversion: C[#], F[#], A^b

B Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: B, D[#], F[#]
First Inversion: D[#], F[#], B
Second Inversion: F[#], B, D[#]

Bm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: B, D, F[#]
First Inversion: D, F[#], B
Second Inversion: F[#], B, D

B⁺ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: B, D, F[#]
First Inversion: D, F[#], B
Second Inversion: F[#], B, D

B° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: B, D^b, F[#]
First Inversion: D^b, F[#], B
Second Inversion: F[#], B, D^b

E Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: E, G[#], B
First Inversion: G[#], B, E
Second Inversion: B, E, G[#]

Em Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: E, G, B
First Inversion: G, B, E
Second Inversion: B, E, G

E⁺ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: E, G, B
First Inversion: G, B, E
Second Inversion: B, E, G

E° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: E, G^b, B
First Inversion: G^b, B, E
Second Inversion: B, E, G^b

A Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: A, C[#], E
First Inversion: C[#], E, A
Second Inversion: E, A, C[#]

Am Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: A, C, E
First Inversion: C, E, A
Second Inversion: E, A, C

A⁺ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: A, C, E
First Inversion: C, E, A
Second Inversion: E, A, C

A° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Root Position: A, C^b, E
First Inversion: C^b, E, A
Second Inversion: E, A, C^b

D Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Dm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

D+ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

D° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

G Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

Gm Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

G+ Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

G° Root Position First Inversion Second Inversion

There's a lot to absorb in this installment of our series, so spend sufficient time familiarizing yourself with everything presented here. Next month we'll move on to 7th chords.



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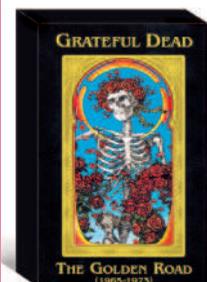


Lissa Wales

RECORDINGS

SIGNIFICANT REISSUES

The Grateful Dead and Velvet Underground



It would seem you couldn't find two more diverse representatives of radical '60s rock music. The Dead: West Coast, hippie-aligned, jam-defined, multi-colored tripping. VU: New York—heroin ravaged, Andy Warhol art-damaged, black & white pop scavengers. But as two recent box sets dramatically show, both bands' ceaseless search for truth through sonic exploration proves them birds of the same feather.

The Golden Road (1965-1973) presents newly remastered editions of the Dead's first nine albums, plus a two-disc set of extremely rare demo and live material. Each album is presented in its original form, appended with a wealth of previously unreleased songs. Never have the original recordings sounded so pristine, giving us a neat excuse to re-evaluate the drumming of **Bill Kreutzmann** and **Mickey Hart**. The live show may have been legendary, but one listen to, say, the crystalline "St. Stephen" should convince you the Dead had some

pretty amazing ideas in the studio as well.



VU, on the other hand, largely sought salvation through meditation and distortion. "Getting" the band was more about being consumed by the rush, rather than digging individual elements. Drummer

Maureen Tucker, then, was required to be some kind of avant-garde shamanistic rhythm painter, and her unique tribal beating makes her a more important figure in modern drumming than many admit. The three-disc live *Bootleg Series Volume 1: The Quine Tapes*, though a wonderful edition to the band's catalog, is not the best place to start your study of the lady. Go straight to *The Velvet Underground & Nico* for VU 101; save this lo-fi package for after you're hooked.

Adam Budofsky

Live V (Radioactive)

Chad Gracey (dr), Ed Kowalczyk (gtr, vcl), Chad Taylor (gtr), Patrick Dahlheimer (bs)

With their fifth full-length, the simply and aptly titled *V*, Live grinds ahead with the no-nonsense rock approach they're so well known for. Chad Gracey's uncluttered drive complements guitarist/vocalist Ed Kowalczyk's moody and dynamic songwriting quite nicely, walking the fine line between a solid yet open and airy drum feel. ("Transmit Your Love" provides a sharp example of Gracey's quick mode-switch abilities.) Dropping into a mellow Beatlesque vibe on "Call Me A Fool," Gracey trades the sticks for brushes, tickling the snare with delicate yet precise patterns. Just one song later, on "Flow," he's bashing the crash on all fours on the chorus. Chad might not be *the* most inventive drummer out there today, but he always plays for the song, rather than just along with it—and that makes quite a noticeable difference.

Waleed Rashidi

Days Of The New (Outpost/Geffen)

Ray Rizzo (dr, perc), Travis Meeks (vcl, gtr, bs, dr, perc, kybd), Rob Edwards (perc), Ron Aniello (kybd), Burning River Symphony Orchestra

Like an unruly yet fertile sound garden, DOTN's third consecutive self-titled release (a.k.a. the "Red" album) sprouts patches of gothic choir voices, string and horn interludes, cathartic acoustic guitar riffs, and a variety of percussive tones. Backed by a new band, Travis Meeks—dubbed a bona fide teenaged talent when he arrived on the scene in 1997—continues to successfully build a bridge between symphonic and modern rock. Despite Meeks' much-heralded musical vision, it's the drums that often power the engine for such high-octane numbers as "Words" and "Where Are You?" The drumming arsenal of Ray Rizzo, Rob Edwards, and Meeks himself makes this record compelling with the injection of percussion flourishes into steady, heavy grooves. Couple that with catchy melodies, and you have a killer sound that's at times derivative, but nonetheless hard-driving, multi-layered, and rock-radio friendly.

Will Romano

Roy Haynes Birds Of A Feather (A Tribute To Charlie Parker) (Dreyfus Jazz)

Roy Haynes (dr), Dave Holland (bs), Dave Kikoski (pno), Roy Hargrove (trp), Kenny Garrett (sx)

Birds Of A Feather finds veteran jazz great Haynes revisiting the material of one of his former employers with a lineup of present-day jazz monsters. It's astonishing to think that Haynes, who helped shape the drumming of bebop from its inception, continues to develop the style with players generations younger than its innovators. Haynes' solos are musical and thoughtful, and, as on "Bird," he always treats complex melodies with a loose yet forceful drive. Throughout Haynes shows an uncanny ability to kick each tune like a big band player yet dance around the melodies and soloists with an instinctive bop sensibility. At seventy-six years of age, this jazz giant continues to grow larger than life.

Mike Heid

rating scale

poor



classic

The Standard (Barbaric)

Rob Duncan (dr), Tim Putnam (gtr, bs, vcl), Rob Oberdorfer (bs, gtr), Jay Clark (kybd)



The Standard's debut album kicks off into modern rock territory reminiscent of the days when "alternative" actually meant something. (Think The Pixies.) Drummer Rob Duncan definitely contributes to this, with his raw, energetic drum sound, use of dynamics, and knack for delineating moods. Check out "Static," where direct rock playing contrasts with a syncopated bridge. Or take the spacious power drive of "Queen And Subject," where Duncan rides on crash cymbal, later quieting things down for the song's close. Halfway through "Expressway" things drop down to a half-time feel, gradually building back up through some moody playing to a short driving close. Having set their standard with a solid first album, it will be interesting to see where The Standard goes from here.

Martin Patmos

Satoko Fujii Quartet Vulcan (Libra)

Tatsuya Yoshida (dr, vcl), Satoko Fujii (pno), Natsuki Tamura (trp, toys), Takeharu Hayakawa (bs)



Satoko Fujii Trio Junction (Ewe)

Jim Black (dr, pianica), Satoko Fujii (pno), Mark Dresser (bs)



Japanese pianist Satoko Fujii is busy on both sides of the Pacific, putting her considerable piano chops and challenging compositions out there for fans of all-things-abstract to hear. Her quartet on *Vulcan*, the first of two very live new recordings, features Tatsuya Yoshida playing some huge-sounding drums. Yoshida's ears and sound are as big as they come, making up for his less than imaginative solo chops. But that's okay; this music is about interplay, and Yoshida looms large. (www.2s.biglobe.ne.jp/~Libra/)

On *Junction*, Fujii employs the always frenetic, usually clackitty Jim Black in her US trio. Black is as lively as ever, and like Yoshida, has amazing ears for such complicated interplay. Jim consistently shows invention to complement considerable technique, which explains why he is seemingly on every other "out" recording these days. The reason Black stays busy is simple: He has something to say, and he knows how to say it on the drums. Unique voices do

rise to the top sometimes. (www.ewe.co.jp/)

Ted Bonar

Tenacious D (Epic)

Dave Grohl (dr, gtr), Jack Black and Kyle Gass (vcl, gtr), Page McConnell (kybd), others



Wisecracking folk-metal duo Tenacious D is a riot, but their debut LP is no joke. Jack Black's got a wicked set of pipes, and Kyle Gass can blast thrash-worthy trills on his steel-string acoustic. But here the D has juiced up its unplugged format by enlisting a full band of seasoned vets like Dave Grohl and Phish's Page McConnell. The result is a hilariously silly batch of songs that make fun of "big, dumb" arena rock while kneeling at its altar. There's even the offer to pick up where Ronnie James Dio left off ("You must give your cape and scepter/To me"). Grohl's presence lends the project a precious bit of rock 'n' roll authenticity, and he bashes royally throughout. Dave's fat, streamlined beats burst with energy without trampling on the vocals. Wisely, he never gets in the way of a good laugh.

Michael Parillo

Long Beach Dub Allstars Wonders Of The World (Dreamworks)

Bud Gaugh (dr), **Marshall Goodman** (tnbts, dr, perc), Eric Wilson (bs), RAS 1 (gtr, vcl), Opie Ortiz (vcl), Jack Maness (kybd, vcl), Tim Wu (sx, flt)



Long Beach Dub Allstars sound like the kings of garage-dubbers to my ears. Born from '80s punk and '90s ska-core, LBDA's SoCal members stick to their roots by laying down pop-inflected reggae-punk. They aren't from Jamaica in the '60s, nor are they from London or New York in the '70s—but they do have the American pop sensibility that adds an extra element to those influences. Bud Gaugh's backbeat is absolutely killer, whether he's punk-slamming or dub-drumming, and Marshall Goodman's percussion and turntable-scratching is subtle and seamless. "Sunny Hours" has a hook that lasts for days, "Every Mothers Dream" is burning punk, and Mr. Gaugh was *feeling it* the day he recorded "Lies."

Ted Bonar

KICKIN' OUT THE NEW

Butterfly Jones Napalm Springs (Vanguard)



The only way to stand up to big guitars is to bring in the big drums. Butterfly Jones drummer **Phil Leavitt** balances the well-orchestrated dramatic guitar sounds crammed into "Napalm Springs" with a powerful, well-recorded kit. Leavitt sticks close to a simple 2/4 beat on the kick, snare, and hi-hat, but does so with an assurance that is impressive without being flashy.

Sugarcult Start Static (Artemis)



At what point will punk nouveau peak? When the genre can no longer come up with drummers of **Ben Davis's** caliber, that's when. On *Start Static* Sugarcult's drummer has the beat handcuffed, cymbal crashes yoked to the guitar accents, and 32nd-note-triplet fills that strafe your brain. Is it nuanced? Not really. Do we like it? Yes we do.

Jimmy Eat World Bleed American (Dreamworks)



An unfortunate title for unfortunate days, but Jimmy Eat World's *Bleed American* is red, white, and blue rock 'n' roll. **Zach Lind** is never at rest, pushing the band forward with great tom beats, pounding kick drums, and free-ranging open hi-hats and tambourine. Solid, simple fills add the bigness the choruses crave, but Lind can break it down to brushes and shakers when needed.

Fran Azzarto and Lisa Crouch

ROOTS ROUNDUP

King Johnson *Luck So Strange*



Greg Baba gets to have fun with a lot of different grooves here, in a band that covers roots, rock, and funk, and even throws in the occasional jazzy aside. On this indie CD's opener, "Mountain," Greg's funky, shuffling, swinging, and doing it all with a hell of a punch. His timing and licks are reminiscent of a young David Garibaldi, an image helped no doubt by the so-tight horns (Marcus James, Adam Mewherter), syncopated bass, and plenty of space. This drummer has learned some great lessons, and on *Luck So Strange* he shows what he knows. (www.Kingjohnson.com)

Jackshit



Pete Thomas, known for his work with Elvis Costello & The Attractions, drives this roots-rock trio's self-released debut with authority. The band sounds like an extra-pumped Austin Lounge Lizards on "Ugly And Slouchy," then takes a strong, subtle tack on "Down In The Middle Garden." Davey Faragher (bass and vocals) and Val McCallum (guitar on vocals) have a great time selling this stuff. On the opening Gram Parsons tune "Devil In Disguise," for instance, they swing and rock like mad, then get a bit dark with some heartfelt Hendrixian jamming in the middle. Powerful stuff. (jackshish@aol.com)

Kelly Richey *Sending Me Angels* (Sweet Lucy)



Richey really digs into her own composition, "Sisters Gotta Problem," and drummer **Steve Potts** does a fine job nailing all the kicks as well as laying down simmering blues-rock grooves. Potts busts out the big funk on "Nothin' To Do With Love," then offers a more subtle groove on Nina Simone's "Nobody's Fault But Mine." Later Potts convincingly does up some New Orleans street funk and bashes out a strong slow shuffle. This record might boast some crossover appeal, though it does suffer from sounding a bit clean and predictable. (PO Box 20084, Cincinnati, OH 45220)

Robin Tolleson

Randy Waldman *UnReel* (Concord Jazz)

Vinnie Colaiuta (dr), Randy Waldman (pno, trp), John Patitucci, Dave Carpenter (bs), Michael Brecker, Branford Marsalis, Tom Scott, Ernie Watts (sx), Dave Boruff, Randy Brecker, Gary Grant, Lew Soloff (trp), Bob McChesney (tbn), Kevin Clark, Michael O'Neil, Michael Sembello (gtr), Gary Burton (vbs)

Sometimes an all-star cast can make up for poor production, lack of quality material, and a cheesy concept. So what happens when the production is top-notch, the material is superbly arranged, and the concept focuses on cool TV and movie themes? The all-star cast digs in, the killer charts come alive, and the listener is blessed. From the quirky opening intro of "The Jetsons Theme," you get the feeling you're in for a wild ride. And, with Vinnie at the helm, you'd better hold on for dear life! With such classic TV themes as "Leave It To Beaver," "Hawaii Five-O," "Mannix," and "Ben Casey," Vinnie shows his usual superb taste, finesse, and originality. His interpretation of each piece is captivating. Whether you're a baby-boomer TV enthusiast, jazz lover, or Vinnie fan, you're in for an enjoyable treat.



Mike Haid

Hot Water Music *A Flight And A Crash* (Epitaph)

George Rebelo (dr), Chuck Ragan (vcl, gtr), Chris Wollard (vcl, gtr), Jason Black (bs)

Hands down, Hot Water Music wins the award for Most Obscure and Cryptic Lyrics. And that's not a bad thing in the genre of straight-ahead rock. Nor are tightly edited songs and loud guitars that drop in when necessary, then disappear. What makes it feel as if the project is barely hanging on, like James Bond to the top of a moving train, is George Rebelo's drumming. Sometimes he goes for a fill, and something's not quite right. Perfect! Lord knows, if he wanted to clean up the occasional glitch he could have done so with today's technology. Instead he obviously hits hard off the floor and goes for it each pass around the kit. Rebelo's tom work is integral to many of the grooves, especially the track "Instrumental." It's not tribal; it's more punk—which is not to say HWM is a punk outfit. In fact, the vocal influence is as much Charlie Sexton as John Lydon, and many of the grooves more southern than northern.



T. Bruce Wittet

Sugarbomb Bully (RCA)

Michael Harville (dr, vcl), Les Farrington (vcl, kybd), Daniel Harville, Greg Bagby (gtr, vcl), Kelly Riley, Sean Hurley (bs)

I have to admit it. I'm a pop head. I appreciate well-written, melodic pop music flavored with pretty harmonies and tasty drumming—that *rocks*. Sugarbomb's debut, *Bully*, satisfies my every need. Michael Harville faces up to the challenge of keeping it simple by locking into some straight-ahead pop/rock grooves on the tracks "What A Drag," "Hello" (a blueprint for a number-1 hit), and the title track. On "Waiting," "Clover," and "Gone," Michael gets to rock out with the best of them. And on the ballad "Posterchild For Tragedy," Michael blends a perfect Ringo/Bonham feel. While the drumming on this record won't change the world, it's perfect for this setting, and that says a lot. Fans of The Beatles, Squeeze, ELO, and Jellyfish will love the influences Sugarbomb stirs up on *Bully*. Give it a listen.



Billy Amendola

Default *The Fallout* (TVT)

Danny Craig (dr), Dallas Smith (vcl), Jeremy Hora (gtr), Dave Benedict (bs)

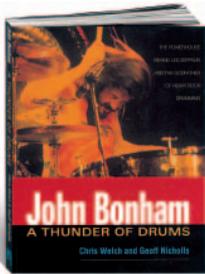
Rock on Vancouver! From that western Canadian city hails Default. The sound is huge, particularly the drums, with the lead and harmony vocals similarly proud in the mix. It's an appealing combination—a sort of '80s Loverboy (to keep it in the Canadian family) meets '90s Pearl Jam. The production is for the most part blessedly sparse, and the songs are clipped off the moment they make the point. Danny Craig has the contemporary rock-drumming thing sewn up tight. His snare sound and hi-hat work hearken to Dave Abbruzzese for the most part, and he enjoys one of the cleanest recordings going in which to display his considerable finesse. Craig's ruffs and ghost notes are a study in themselves. The band gives him plenty of opportunities to stretch out, often in a loose '60s way, as in the romantic "Live A Lie."



T. Bruce Wittet

BOOKS

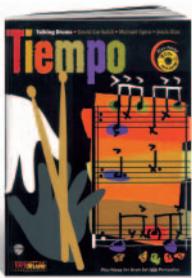
 **John Bonham: A Thunder Of Drums** by Chris Welch and Geoff Nicholls (Backbeat Books)
level: all, \$19.95



Drummers everywhere, rejoice: We finally have an in-depth look at our beloved Bonzo, arguably the most influential rock drummer of all time. Unlike many musician bios, which tend to be either sordid tales of excess or impersonal technical analyses, this one gives equal billing to the anecdotal and the musical. It's a feast for fans who've long been starved for new information about the late Led Zeppelin timekeeper. Sure, the book contains a few fresh cautionary tales of debauchery. But thanks largely to Nicholls (who was the drummer on the BBC's *Rockschool* series), *A Thunder Of Drums* is also the most detailed look yet at Bonzo's craft, complete with new revelations that will have drummers greedily tearing through its pages—then circling back to savor favorite passages. There are meaty paragraphs about each of the kits Bonham used during the Zeppelin years. There's a description—at last!—of his drum-tuning philosophy. And there's an informed analysis of many of his great recorded tracks, including the exact location of noteworthy licks in a given song. Get ready to pull out your Zeppelin discs and listen for the gems Nicholls points out. How much more fun can a drummer have away from the kit?

Michael Parillo

 **Tempo by Talking Drums** (Manhattan)
level: all, \$24.95 (with 2 CDs)



Fans of Talking Drums' interdisciplinary Afro-funk will have to have this book, which features play-along for drumset and percussion. The percussion trio—David Garibaldi, Michael Spiro, and Jesus Diaz—continues its adventurous groove-making, augmented by piano, bass, and horns. The epitome of their grooves=music=inspiration equation, *Tempo* gives the fullest picture yet of the history and tradition of the music that Talking Drums borrows from and breathes life into. They explain the traditional forms, the history of the different grooves—son, for example—and then detail how they translate the original to their instruments today. Of high interest is Talking Drums' tribute to Jose Luis Quintana ("Changuito") based on one of the master's own rhythmic ideas, how they experimented with it, and how it became a catalyst for the rest of the composition.

Robin Tolleson

 **The Drummer's Guide To Shuffles**
by Dee Potter (Hal Leonard)
level: beginner to intermediate, \$12.95 (with CD)



The shuffle is the beat that all drummers think they can play, no sweat. Consequently many drummers never want to practice the shuffle—that is until they're called on to play one, and, holy cow...it's not as easy as it seems! Potter does much to shed light on the shuffle feel (the broken triplet pattern), examine its use in many different types of music, and detail different examples of the beat. With the right hand playing the same "broken triplet" pattern, Potter has the bass drum or snare changing ever so slightly, illustrating how minor changes in the groove make the feel totally different. He then spices up shuffles with ghost notes played in strategic places and on different instruments—snare, kick, toms, cowbell. He also talks about double-bass shuffles, letting your feet do the shuffling while your hands are freed up to play "everything a triplet will allow." Potter's book is timely, and his approach is educational, enthusiastic, and even humorous.

Robin Tolleson

VIDEOS

 **Bobby Rock The Zen Of Drumming** (Cinema One Productions)
level: intermediate to advanced, \$39.95



In his first instructional video in eleven years, Rock attempts to explore both the concrete and spiritual elements behind solid drumming. Rock is a very capable technician who demonstrates incredible dexterity and four-way independence. His performances—and his words of advice—are inspiring, giving drummers raw material to become better soloists and groovesmiths. Rock applies basic rudimentary patterns such as inverted paradiddles, and he splits these sticking ideas across different sound sources. His multi-voiced "Octopus" pattern offers drummers a fresh approach to fills.

Given the title, however, one would expect a little more Zen and a lot less adrenaline in this video. While Rock gives a good crash course in eating healthy and describing some "Zen" concepts, for the most part, the bridge between pumping up your drum muscles and stretching your gray matter often falls apart or is never constructed. As it stands, this three-hour, two-cassette package knocks the ball out of the park as an instructional video. But as a complete "mind, body, and soul" guide, it could do with a little more meat. Still, since Rock gets drummers to think musically and creatively, it's worth checking out.

Will Romano

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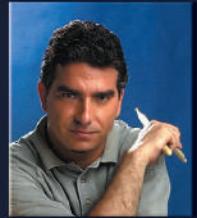
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Bigger And Better
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Than Ever

by Rick Van Horn

When we last visited with the folks at Pro-Mark, in November 1997, they were a company in transition. Founder Herb Brochstein had gone into “semi-retirement” in 1995, at which point his son Maury became company president. Maury purchased the company outright in 1997.

Of course, it isn’t as though Maury jumped into the president’s chair with no previous experience. On the contrary. He’s been with the company for twenty-two years, working closely alongside his father. As a result, Maury has been a major factor in Pro-Mark’s ongoing development.

This year is Pro-Mark’s forty-fifth anniversary. As it celebrates this milestone, the company’s focus is on new-product development, education, customer service, and overall expansion.

According to Maury, “We’ve expanded our vision over the past several years, in terms of our product line. We’ve also expanded our market, selling sticks and other products to more and more countries around the world. The only place we hadn’t expanded was in our factory, and the need to do that became more critical as time

went on. So last year we broke ground for a new factory, which is slated for completion in April of this year.”

Bari Brochstein-Ruggeri, Pro-Mark’s director of special projects, is heading up the building effort. Says Bari, “Our new building will be double the size of our previous location, with additional land attached for even more expansion in the future. We’ve experienced terrific growth over the past several years, and we expect that growth to continue. So we want to be prepared for it. We don’t want to be looking at the need to build *another* new facility in just a few years.”

Of course, adding space alone wouldn’t do all that much to help meet the needs of expanding sales and new-product development. So the new building will be equipped with equally new production machinery. Says Maury Brochstein, “My dad has always maintained that in the race for quality, there is no finish line. I subscribe to that philosophy. So when our building is completed and the new machinery is installed, we’ll employ several new processes currently under development to further improve our product quality.”

Sticks And Stuff

Pro-Mark's latest catalog is a forty-five-page volume, featuring more products than we'd ever be able to detail in these pages. Here's a handy breakdown of the major stick lines and accessories the company offers.

Hickory Drumsticks

Pro-Mark's "meat and potatoes" line. Fifty-five wood-tip and twenty-seven nylon-tip models, ranging from a 7A jazz stick (15 $\frac{3}{8}$ " long by $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter) to the DC3S marching stick (17" x $\frac{47}{64}$ "). Includes more than twenty-five Autograph models designed in conjunction with top drumset, marching, and concert drummers.

The Natural

5A, 5B, 747 Rock, and 2B hickory sticks with no finish over the wood. Said to offer a more textured, "natural" feel that's easy to hold on to. Available in wood or nylon tip.

Maple Sticks

Maple is popular for its light weight and responsiveness. Pro-Mark offers SD1 and SD2 concert models, the SD4 Bill Bruford Autograph model, the SD9 all-purpose stick, and the nylon-tipped SD-20 Super Bounce. It features a 2B-sized shaft for comfortable grip and a 7A taper for quick rebound.

Shira Kashi Oak Sticks

Made in Japan of Japanese white oak, known for its strength and durability. Available in seventeen wood-tip and ten nylon-tip models, many of which duplicate their hickory counterparts in specs. Artists with oak Autograph models include Neil Peart, Tommy Aldridge, Ed Shaughnessy, and Stephen Perkins.

Rods

Created of dowels wrapped by a plastic sleeve, Rods established the concept of "alternative" drumsticks. Today they come in four versions for different musical applications. From lightest to heaviest they are: Cool Rods, Hot Rods (the original size), Lightning Rods, and Thunder Rods.

Brushes

One retractable nylon and four telescoping wire models are available. Each features a slightly different handle and/or grip design for personalized playing comfort, along with different gauges of wire for a variety of sounds.

Specialty Sticks

This line includes combination mallet/sticks for multi-percussion use. Also available are Tubz (stick-like hollow plastic tubes designed by top drummer Paul Wertico), multi-purpose felt mallets, and Click Sticks (small sticks held together at one end by a plastic sleeve, able to be clicked together at the other).

World Percussion Beaters

Includes Mino Cinelu Timbale and Sabar models. The latter can be used on traditional hand drums, timbales, bells, congas, and drumset. Also available are Babatunde Olatunji Bell Sticks (for cowbells, agogos, and other metallic instruments) and Djun-Djun mallets. Each features a brightly colored African-style finish.

Future Pro and Discovery

The Future Pro and Discovery lines offer sticks, drum and keyboard mallets, Kidz Tubz, Wrist Jingles, and several stick-bag pre-packs. The focus is on young players with smaller hands. Sticks include a 13"-long Junior model.

Marching Products

Several of Pro-Mark's hickory models are marching designs, including Autograph models from Jeff Moore and Lee Beddis, as well as two models dedicated to indoor marching (DC12i Kwikstik and DC14i).

Then there's the Americorps line, featuring eight aluminum-handle multi-tom mallets and seven wood-handled bass-drum beaters with a variety of nylon, felt, and acrylic heads. Also in the line are four keyboard mallets and four timpani mallets for indoor or outdoor use. Six models of affordable Traditional marching mallets are also offered.

Orchestral and Jazz Products

The Performer Series includes seven Jonathan Haas timpani mallets, six drumstick models including the Tom Freer General Orchestral stick, and five models of yarn marimba mallets. Also available are three Evelyn Glennie keyboard mallets, as well as Lionel Hampton and Milt Jackson Autograph vibes mallets. Affordable bell and keyboard mallets are also offered in fourteen versions.

Accessories

Along with a variety of X-Pad practice pads, Pro-Mark offers a cymbal bag, marching drumstick Quivers, and seven different sizes and styles of drumstick-mallet bags. Other accessories include Stick Rapp grip tape, The Rattler cymbal sizzler, Stick Depot drumset stick holders, bass drum beaters, tuning and cleaning aids, and wearables.



Meeting The Needs Of All Drummers

Developing new products has been the key activity at Pro-Mark over the past seven to eight years. They've long been known as a producer of top-quality drumsticks, brushes, Rods, and other accessories for drum-set players. And in the past few years they've expanded that part of their product line with many new Autograph stick models, along with a bevy of accessory items to make a drummer's life easier and more musical. A partial list of the names on Pro-Mark models reads like a who's who of drumming: Neil Peart, Simon Phillips, Carter Beauford, Elvin Jones, Mike Portnoy, Marco Minnemann, Hilary Jones, and many more. (See the sidebar for a complete breakdown of the Pro-Mark product line.)

But Herb and Maury Brochstein knew that in order to keep pace with the ever-expanding scope of worldwide percussion activities, they needed to create products that served all sorts of percussionists. This effort began with a small selection of marching bass and tenor drum mallets, followed by student mallets for mallet-percussion instruments. Success in these areas gave them the confidence to get into the drum corps field in a big way, resulting in the launch of the Americorps series of marching sticks and mallets. Pro-Mark also introduced the first-ever line of sticks and mallets specifically for use in

indoor marching activities.

To meet the needs of concert percussionists, Pro-Mark created their Performer series of sticks and drum and keyboard mallets. The line includes several Autograph models designed in conjunction with top classical



Herb and Maury Brochstein, two generations of Pro-Mark leadership

percussionists. That line also includes several series of jazz vibraphone mallets. World percussion has also been addressed, with Mino Cinelu timbale sticks, along with Autograph bell sticks and a djun-djun mallet designed with African percussion legend Babatunde Olatunji.

For The New Players

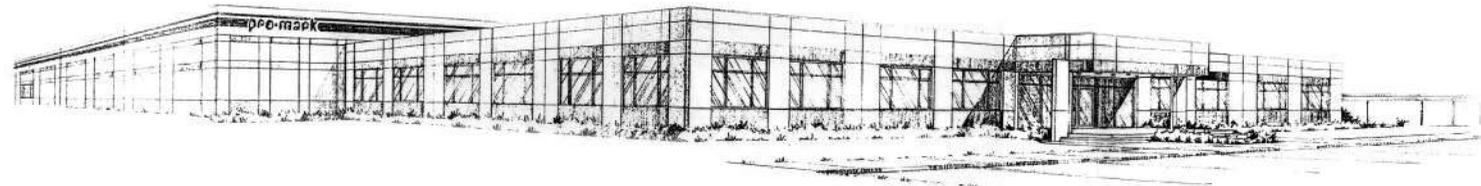
Pro-Mark has long recognized the need to encourage and support young, aspiring drummers and percussionists. After all, they will be the working players—and customers—of the future. Taking this need very seriously, the company has established what they term their educational mission. Outlined in the Pro-Mark catalog, it says, "Our educational mission is to directly affect percussion education, regardless of playing level, ability, or instruction. It is our goal to provide all students with the knowledge they desire, using written materials and products designed by some of the most experienced and knowledgeable educators in the field. We are committed to using our resources to contribute significantly to this very important cause."

In support of their expressed goal, Pro-Mark offers a complete line of Future Pro products, scaled for smaller hands and priced for beginning budgets. Also targeted at the educational market is the Discovery series of mallets and triangle beaters. These are extra-durable products intended for use on Orff and other instruments in elementary school classrooms. They help to give very young students the opportunity to experience the joys of percussion first-hand.

Future Pro and Discovery series products are designed in cooperation with Pro-Mark's Educational Advisory Board. That board, featuring educators at the elementary, secondary, and college levels, is the first of

How to make the World's Finest Sticks in 45 years or less.





An artist's rendition of Pro-Mark's new production facility, slated for completion in April of this year.

its kind ever established by a drumstick company. Pro-Mark also has a full-time educational coordinator on its staff, whose sole job is to oversee the support and expansion of the company's educational efforts.

Pro-Mark's most recent educational effort is the publication of *Ziggadabuzz*, a book of drum solos authored by some of the country's top percussion educators. Written specifically for students to use in University Interscholastic League competitions, auditions, and performance situations, the book received high marks when reviewed in *Modern Drummer's* January issue.

Keeping The Customer Satisfied

Over the years, Pro-Mark has been highly regarded for their customer service. They've won awards repeatedly in *MD's* Consumer Polls in that category. And way back when, they were the first drumstick company to establish a toll-free customer "hot line." That number, (800) 233-5250, is still in effect today. Drummers are welcome to call not only for information on Pro-Mark products and artists, but also on drumming in general. Says Maury, "I'm an experienced drummer, as is my dad. We have several other drummers on the staff. Our customers are often surprised when they call with a

question, and suddenly find themselves talking to the president of the company. But if I'm the one who has the answer, I'm happy to provide it. It's all part of the service that we think is critical to maintain our relationship with the drumming public."

Of course, this is the age of cyberspace. Almost immediately upon assuming the presidency of Pro-Mark, Maury made sure that the company was online with its own Web site—the first drumstick company to do so. Since that time, www.promarkstix.com has been the address for instant info on everything new from the company. And to make things even more personal, internet chats with top Pro-Mark artists began in 1996.

Perhaps most important when it comes to customer satisfaction is the quality of the product itself. Like every stick manufacturer, Pro-Mark is confident that their products are of the highest possible quality. But unlike some other manufacturers, Pro-Mark puts it in writing. Their catalog carries a Performance Guarantee that clearly warrants all their products to be free of defects in material and workmanship. (*No* manufacturer can guarantee that their sticks won't break.) In addition, nylon tips are guaranteed not to crack,

chip, break, or fall off for the life of the stick.

A Family Affair

Herb Brochstein founded Pro-Mark in 1957, and although he's retired, he's still very much a presence within the company. The fact that Herb's son now owns the company, while his daughter is its director of special projects, may make the operation sound like some sort of dynasty. But the fact is that *everyone* working at Pro-Mark is considered part of the family. Like his father before him, Maury Brochstein refers to his staff not as "employees," but as "Pro-Markers." And the feeling of family extends even further: to the company's customers, and to the drumming world at large.

"We're all together in this activity we call 'drumming,'" says Maury. "Pro-Mark certainly couldn't exist without the drummers who buy our products. And we like to think that our products help those drummers to play better and enjoy themselves more. That's what motivates us to keep looking forward, and to constantly strive to improve our products and our service. Our relationship with drummers is the reason we're here."



Pro-Mark
Herb imports the first 1200 pair of Japanese Oak sticks to America and Pro-Mark is born.

1955: Studio drummer Herb Brochstein discovers Japanese Oak drumsticks.

1957: Pro-Mark drumsticks are sold for only \$1.50 per pair. (Image: A pair of drumsticks with a price tag that says "Retail price \$1.50 the pair")

1958: "Open" packaging is introduced so drummers can touch and feel the stick before purchasing. (Image: A pair of drumsticks in their original open packaging)

1959: Billy Gladstone, staff drummer at New York's Radio City Music Hall, becomes Pro-Mark's first official endorser. (Image: A record sleeve for Billy Gladstone's "My Fair Lady" featuring a metronome)

Karsh Kale

Tabla Scientist

by T. Bruce Wittet

Karsh Kale is smack in the middle of a musical/cultural force that has been dubbed the Asian Massive movement. Originating in South London, England, it's a phenomenon that now embraces club, dance, and electronic music scenes world-wide. Perhaps most significant for *MD* readers is that Kale, a twenty-seven-year-old Brooklyn-er of Indian heritage,

You can hear evidence of Karsh's skills on Herbie Hancock's recent *Future2Future* CD, on which he shares drumming duties with no less than Jack DeJohnette and the late Tony Williams. Kale is also a noted composer/producer working in Indian folk, classical, and electronic genres. His fanatical attention to detail has attracted several collaborations with fellow renegade Bill Laswell, including Kale's new CD, *Realize*.

"You have artists who only perform at Asian functions, and artists who only perform on the electronic scene. I'm trying to blow those lines apart."

Which brings me to a complaint with Kale and his album. I'm convinced that they're responsible for blowing out the left stereo speaker in my Buick. Of course, I'm not without fault in the matter. I kept playing the compelling disc—with its tricky rhythms, enchanting musical textures, and lush sub-lows—even after I heard the first telltale rattle. Over a long drive, I came to the realization that Kale's way of stringing melody, harmony, and rhythm is unique in the club/electronic scene. His are memorable *compositions*, not just clever vamps.

makes his way in this new scene as a *player* as opposed to a programmer. He does this on tablas and drumset.

®

A registered trademark in the U.S. and major foreign countries is awarded on the Pro-Mark name.

1960
Louie Bellson endorses Pro-Mark sticks.

1963
Buddy Harman/Nashville Studio Legend endorses Pro-Mark.

1964
Future endorser Ringo Starr and The Beatles play The Ed Sullivan Show and Beatlemania sweeps the world.

Buddy Rich endorses Pro-Mark.

Ultimate Lows

That blown speaker may have been caused by something Karsh terms “low end.” This doesn’t refer to dollops of rumbling 15 Hz ladled into the mix. Rather, it refers to an *arrangement* in which low frequencies find their own little “windows” through which to escape. You see, although *time* is Karsh’s vocation, *space* is his passion. That space provides an ideal portal for the emergence of deep frequencies from the tablas.

I speculated to Karsh that despite its obvious Indian heritage, *Realize* had a Euro tinge. I also mentioned that there are hints of the trance scene. “That’s one part of it,” he suggested. “There’s the drum ‘n’ bass scene, the electro scene—all these scenes that don’t have much to do with each other. The Asian Massive scene encompasses a lot of that. You have artists who only perform at Asian functions, and artists who only perform on the electronic scene. I’m trying to blow those lines apart. The thing is that I’m a live musician as well. I play drumkit and electronic tabla, and I have a band.”

Reinventing An Ancient Instrument

For someone who has studied tabla since grade school—first with his father and then with Samir Chatterjee in Queens—Kale is not a purist. In fact, he considers the instrument ideally suited to contemporary music. “I think it’s the drum ‘n’ bass aspect,” he reflects. “The tablas are two drums that



represent two different frequencies, and they have a vocal nature.

“As a kid,” Karsh continues, “I was especially attracted to musicians who balanced style, attitude, and technique. I was impressed by drummers like John Bonham and Neil Peart. In their precision and ability to be universal in their delivery, I found their techniques akin to those of tabla master Zakir Hussain. Zakir was the reason I started playing tablas. It was his energy and his ability to translate so much onto these drums. I think the tablas lend them-

selves to different styles of music because of their ability to be melodic and rhythmic and to project attitude from the modulation of the low end.”

With Band Or Without

When on tour with his band (as opposed to DJ’ing in Manhattan clubs), Kale exposes the audience to an amalgam of traditional instruments. “They’ve been reinvented to perform this way,” he says. “Before we even get on stage, you’ll see my tablas, harmonium, and keyboards set up in such a



*Herb and Ed
in a jam session
circa 1993.
But we’re getting
ahead of ourselves.*

pro-mark.

A new logo is introduced
which is still in use today.

Woodstock is held in New York State,
featuring Pro-Mark drummers
Levon Helm from The Band
and Alan Malarowitz of Sweetwater.

1965

Ed Shaughnessy
of “The Tonight Show” band
endorses Pro-Mark.

Shelley Manne
endorses Pro-Mark.

Dennis Wilson
of The Beach Boys
endorses Pro-Mark.

1966

Nick Mason
of Pink Floyd
endorses Pro-Mark.

1969

way that an Indian musician could play them. But they've been electronically modified.

"When we perform, you get to see two different types of communication," Karsh continues. "There's the thing that comes with a band playing live drum 'n' bass, electronic, reggae, and ska. There's also classical repertoire being passed back and forth among the musicians." Karsh's band includes Damon Banks on bass, Brad Vereby on keyboards, Vishal Vaid on lead vocal, harmonium, vocoder, and tabla, and

Falguni Shah on vocals.

When Karsh plays solo in Manhattan clubs, he DJ's *and* plays electronic tablas at the same time. He'll spin tracks off his album, or remixes of them, adjusting EQ and effects as he goes.

Tailoring The Drums

"I play a kit that consists of an 18" kick, a piccolo snare, a hi-hat, and a lot of splashes and crashes," Kale says. "Then I have my electronic tablas, which I play simultaneously with the kit. I think the

sounds of acoustic and electronic drums work great with tablas. What I try to do with acoustic drums is match the electronic sounds, many of which are old drum loops that are sped up. What you get is a tight, higher-pitched kick and snare drum, which lend themselves really well to the tabla.

"I try to get a low mid tone from the kick drum. And I like to tune the snare for three different sounds: a roll sound off to the side, a nice ring if I'm playing a half rimshot, and a tight, ring-less sound if I'm playing in the center. I leave the top a little looser so that when I'm smacking the drum in the center I can make use of the sound you get from a loosely tuned drum."

Tweaking Tablas

Karsh designed his electronic tablas using the May miking system. "The drums are basically traditional, acoustic tablas," he explains. "But they're modified—like what you'd do with an acoustic guitar to make it an electric guitar. I'm using two Sennheiser 604 microphones inside the drums. I plug them into a mixer and play them through all kinds of effects.

"Getting the low end from tablas," says Karsh, "is in the EQ and the filtering, not in the actual sound. It's what you *do* to the sound. For example, those little Boss octave pedals are great for adding bottom end. That's one aspect of it. The other is finding the space in the arrangement so that it will be heard."



Pro-Mark's first building.

Pro-Mark exhibits for the first time at the Frankfurt Music Fair, Frankfurt, Germany.



Pro-Mark sets a world record with the largest shipment of drumsticks ever.



1970

Carl Palmer of Emerson, Lake & Palmer endorses Pro-Mark.

1971

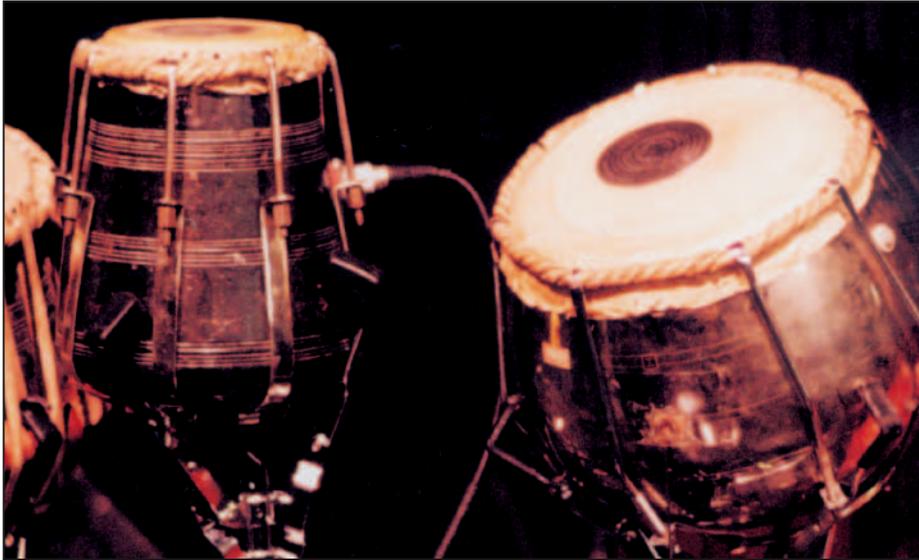
Don Brewer of Grand Funk Railroad endorses Pro-Mark.

1972

Roger Earl of Foghat endorses Pro-Mark.

Danny Seraphine of Chicago endorses Pro-Mark.

Michael Hossack and John Hartman of The Doobie Brothers endorse Pro-Mark.



Zakir meets Bonham: Karsh's electronically modified tablas

The Producer As Musician

"I think a lot of producers who don't necessarily play instruments tend to start with a sample or loop," says Karsh. "I like to start with a melody and the texture and rhythm cycle and build it from there."

The song "Tour Guide" reveals Kale's programming sensibility, with tight little trills on closed hi-hat that are playful yet obviously machine-driven. Explains Karsh, "This style of programming was coined by a producer named Timbaland and is prominent in the R&B/hip-hop scene. I wanted to superimpose that attitude with the Shenai (Indian reed instru-

ment) to reflect the tongue-in-cheekiness of an Indian tour guide taking you on these majestic journeys. After coming back from India, I tried to evoke a little Brooklyn attitude!"

Listening to "Saajana," I was surprised to see Karsh credited on drumset. To my mind, there was *no way* he played such a wacky groove in real time. But I was mistaken. "I played the whole part on drumset," Karsh says, smiling. "That's what I *do* live. I've been concentrating on reproducing programmed beats on drumkit. A player would throw in a drum fill every sixteen bars. A live musician tends to

'say' a little bit more."

Karsh's music also features a strong influence from various Afro-Caribbean styles. "There's something similar in simple Indian folk music and reggae music," he says. "It's how the low end plays *off* the one. And a lot of electronic styles, hip hop, R&B, drum 'n' bass, and UK garage stuff come from reggae and dub music. What differentiates a drum 'n' bass song going at 160 bpm from a punk song at that tempo is the downbeat, along with where the bass and low end are coming in. Punk music is hitting you on the 1, whereas reggae music is hitting you on the 3."

Ultimately, Kale's mandate is to surrender to the music. "What I want to create," he says, "is a beautiful repertoire to perform live. It's *not* about being the drummer who played the part. It's important for me to keep to what I'm trying to say and not get caught up in technique. The statement of the album is that we have to acknowledge the past, present, and future at the same time. These are sentiments about being true to one's self, and a lot of them are devotional songs. As a producer and artist, I want to express an emotion or story. That doesn't necessarily require me to be flashy on the drumkit."

Check out Karsh's Web site (www.karshkale.com), or search him out in the Manhattan DJ scene. In addition, he'll be touring with his band early this year.



Patent is awarded on the nylon-tip installation process.

1973

Richie Hayward of Little Feat endorses Pro-Mark.

Frank Beard of ZZ Top and Simon Kirke of Bad Company endorse Pro-Mark.

U.S. Trademark is awarded on 707, 727, 909 and "Rock Knocker."

1978

U.S. Trademark is awarded on Rock-747 sticks.

1979

© 2002 Pro-Mark Corporation.

Phil Ramone

Trusting The Drummer

by Billy Amendola

If we were to talk to Phil Ramone about all of the drummers he's worked with over the years as both an engineer and a hit-making record producer, it would take up all the pages of *MD* and *then* some. Phil's ears as an engineer were critical to so many classic recordings: Procol

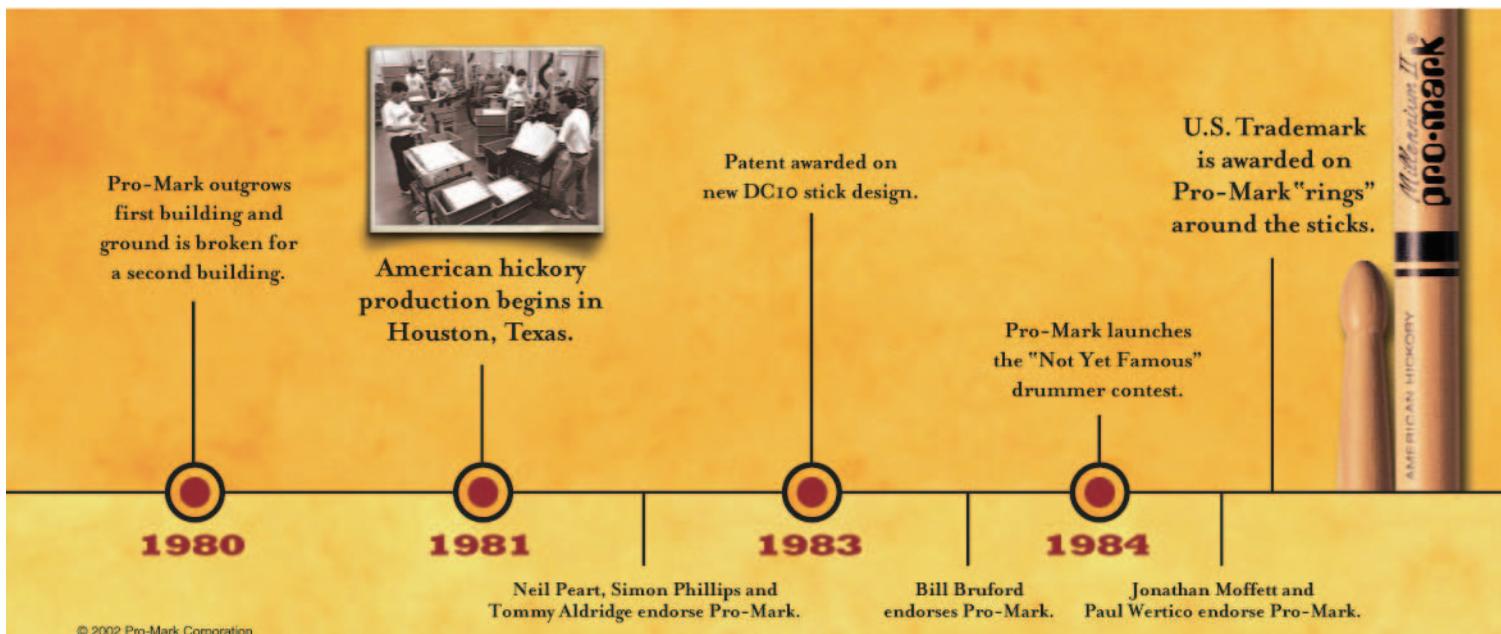
Space will not allow for the literally hundreds more to follow.

In 1961 Phil opened his own recording studio, A&R Recording in New York City. By 1975, after winning the Album Of The Year Grammy for Paul Simon's *Still Crazy After All These Years*, Phil was becoming one of the most important and influential record producers in the world. He began producing records for Kenny Loggins, Phoebe Snow, The Carpenters, Barbra Streisand, Carly Simon, Quincy Jones, Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, Elton John, and Billy Joel. Phil's work with Joel alone helped lift them both to super-stardom. So it's only natural for us to start our conversation by talking about Billy's long-time drummer, Liberty DeVitto.

Phil: The first time I saw Liberty was at a record company preview, many years ago, where they showcased some of the artists. I saw Liberty play with Billy Joel, and I went crazy. I just thought, "What a great, musical animal." I met him about a year

Almost every drummer's name has a star next to it with me. I pivot everything, musically, around them.

Harum's "A Whiter Shade Of Pale," Bob Dylan's *Blood On The Tracks*, The Band's *Rock Of Ages*, Alice Cooper's *Welcome To My Nightmare*, and to records by Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, John Coltrane, BB King, Aretha Franklin, Neil Diamond, Peter Paul & Mary, James Taylor, and Stan Getz. (The *Getz/Gilberto* record earned Phil his first of eight Grammy awards, for Best Engineered Recording in 1964.)



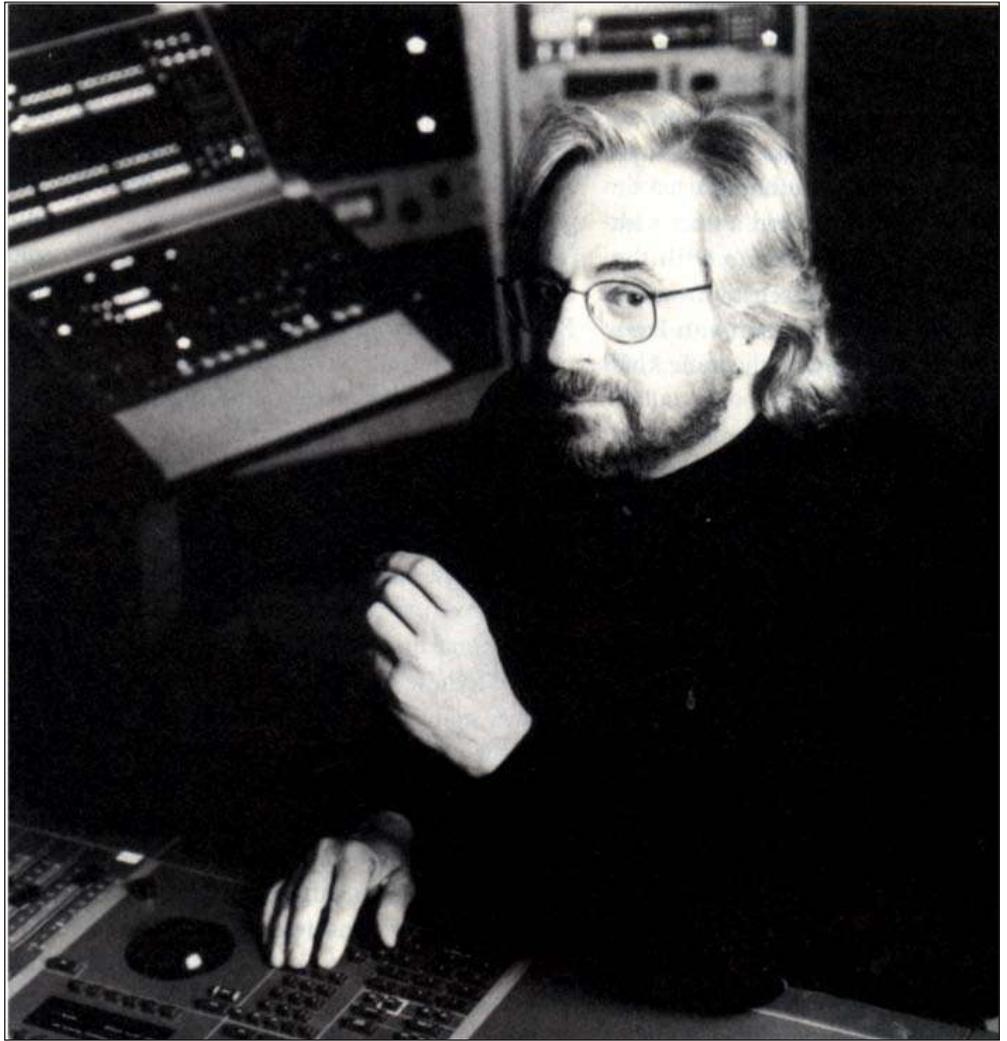
later when Billy and I talked about making music together. I said to Billy, "You know, I'd really love to have your band. I think it's got a driving energy that I haven't heard in the studio in a long time." Liberty brought something to the sessions. He could play heavy-duty, straight rock 'n' roll, and he could play very sensitively. I call him a "song drummer." He knows when to stay out of the way of the lyric and yet keep the beat hard and heavy. He's not just hacking away.

MD: It's challenging for drummers to play tasty and play *just* for the song.

Phil: It defines the guys who've made great records. With all the drummers, whoever you mention, one of the keys for me is how they approach the song. Almost every drummer's name has a star next to it with me. I pivot everything, musically, around them.

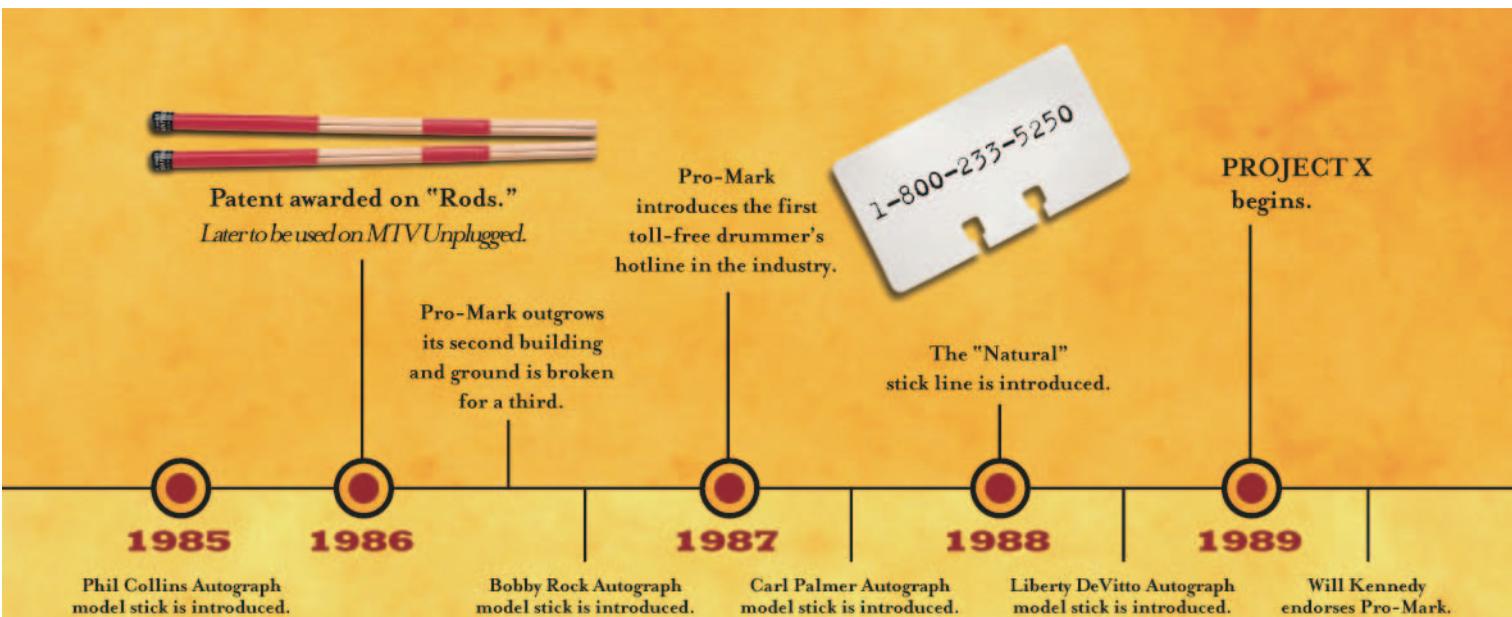
MD: How about Steve Gadd on Paul Simon's "50 Ways To Leave Your Lover"?

Phil: That was an incredible moment. That song is the warm-up for almost every drummer. Every time I walk into a studio, the drummer will play that beat to let me know he knows the record. [laughs] To Steve's credit, he *was* warming up and



playing that riff when Paul said, "That's a great feel." The original feel for "50

Ways..." was more like a bossa nova. Paul would play down the tune many



Phil Ramone

times with the musicians around in a circle, till they got the feel. Steve was in that circle listening closely and hitting his hands against his legs. Then he walked over to the drums, and two takes later he was into it. Paul is uniquely diligent about what he wants or doesn't want. He had a trust with Steve that became almost one with the music. And I enjoyed his sense of humor while we were touring together with Paul. Steve performs on stage with the same kind of energy he does in the studio.

MD: You've worked with so many great drummers. Bernard Purdie comes to mind.

Phil: When we were both kids he started bringing that sign to put in front of his drums, you know, "Have no fear, Purdie is here. The Hit Maker." At the time, people actually loved the fact that the drummer was the center post. I think Bernard is one of the great characters of all time.

MD: You worked with Elvin Jones and Billy Cobham on a Chick Corea/Herbie Hancock record.

Phil: Yeah, as an engineer. Elvin and Billy are also characters—along with being great drummers. People become great within the genre that they're living in at the time. Back then the cockiness of drummers was pretty much a common thing. I used that to build all my engineering stuff around the drummer. I placed people around them so *they* were the center of the focus, the strength of the record.

MD: How was it working with Ringo?

Phil: Ringo is great. You have to admire

him. People have said a lot of things about him and the simplistic way he treats the drums. But he does things his own way. Working with him was very satisfying for me, because he was a songwriter's dream. After all, he worked with a couple of really good songwriters. [laughs]

MD: Which leads me to ask what you think of Paul McCartney as a drummer.

Phil: I think he plays really well. When he made his first solo record, *McCartney*, and he did all of the instruments himself, I thought that was great. "Junk" is one of my favorite songs! It almost has a theater drummer style to it. It's kind of a 2/4 feel, which you don't hear a lot of.

MD: Songwriters who play drums often don't play like an ordinary drummer, so they'll come up with different parts.

Phil: Definitely. But I think you'll hear that in many good drummers, whether they're songwriters or not. They never get out of the groove. Sometimes they'll sacrifice a lick just to keep the groove going. That's the difference in the subtlety of pop songs. By contrast, big band writing was all about accents and lots of good fills. If you go back over the years to some of the great big band drummers, you'll hear some incredible feel. It's *all* about the feel. When I was growing up I heard Sonny Payne playing with Count Basie. He played some *incredible* explosions. I just cut a record with Dianne Schurr and Maynard Ferguson. The young drummer on that session kicked some ass.

MD: What's his name?

Phil: Brian Wolf. I don't know what he's like in any other circumstances, but in a big band, he's incredible. And he's a quick study. He was marking his sheets all the time in the control room. And there were some subtle changes. I looked at him and said, "Man, you are a mother."

MD: In our business that's one of the best compliments you can get.

Phil: If the camaraderie is in the room, you can smell when it's right. You don't have to keep hawking on a guy.

MD: Did you work with Jeff Porcaro?

Phil: I worked with Jeff in the early '70s. Everyone loved Jeff. He was a wonderful character and a great, great player. Jeff could keep the humor in the room. There were a lot of fussy producers and artists then who could give a player the boredom check, which is like, "I'm doing thirty more takes." But to keep a drummer like Jeff up and running was part of the fun. Porcaro was great. *Everybody* misses him.

MD: Your thoughts on working with Jim Keltner?

Phil: Jim is one of those guys who'll have these sounds come right at you. He's got such an approach to his instrument. He's in *total* command. He sits down and that kit just sounds incredible. It's easy to come up with great grooves with guys like Jim because they're *already* there. They're on top of it before you say, "Can we try this?"

MD: Do you give advice or suggest drum parts?

Pro-Mark teams with Don Henley on the Eagles' "Hell Freezes Over" tour to benefit Walden Woods project.



Pro-Mark introduces the drumstick industry's first and only written Performance Guarantee.



Phoenix drummer, Dan Jewell, wins a Pro-Mark sponsored visit by Pearl Jam's Dave Abbruzzese.

1990

Steve Ferrone Autograph model stick is introduced.

1992

1993

Carter Beauford endorses Pro-Mark.

Elvin Jones Autograph model stick is introduced.

Phil: Oh yeah, but only from a musical point of view. How a producer speaks to a musician is the key to how a great record is made. There are a lot of producers who are not musically trained, so they'll speak from their heart. Eventually you get pretty efficient at how you say the words, "You know, that backbeat doesn't really need to be there for the first verse...."

MD: Do you record everything? Sometimes the best ideas happen when you're just getting ready to do the take. Someone says, "Play that again!" and you say, "Play what?"

Phil: Exactly. I'm sort of well known for rolling tape. I'll roll a cassette or something so we keep a record of what's going on as we're learning ideas. Lots of times there could be a jam, and things just start to happen. You're not under the gun. The red light isn't on, as I put it. I removed the red light from recording many, many years ago.

MD: What are *too* many takes for a drummer?

Phil: More than five. If you rehearse or if you create in the studio, the first two takes are the freshest. The third take is about where people feel confident. After the fourth or fifth take, I think you start to *think*. Music should be *felt*.

MD: Do you have any drums or cymbals that you particularly like, or do you leave that up to the drummer?

Phil: I leave it up to the drummer. I think it's so personal. Kenny Aronoff, Shawn

Phil's Phaves

A "tip of the iceberg" list of drummers with whom Phil Ramone has worked includes:

Liberty DeVitto
Shawn Pelton
Ringo Starr
Billy Cobham
Kenny Aronoff
Steve Gadd
Elvin Jones
Jim Keltner
Bernard Purdie
Jeff Porcaro

Pelton, and all the guys who play on what I call Top 100 recordings will bring a variety pack. I remember years ago, when Burt Bacharach was making records and I was engineering. To get a high-pitched effect on the snare, sometimes we'd flip it over. People thought we were insane. It's common practice now to have a piccolo snare. We had one back then, we just didn't know it. [laughs]

MD: So, you're saying back in the day, to get that sound, that pitch, you would just play on the strainer side.

Phil: Yeah. Till we got hip to the fact that

obviously marching bands had all kinds of snares. But I think in the pop world that's also when we not only started putting wallets on the snare to change the sound, but also changed how we used it and how we miked it. Finding drummers who really know about their drumkit and how to tune it is half the battle.

MD: Do you have any favorite mic's that you use on the drums?

Phil: I use a combination of Audio-Technicas with some of their clip-ons on the tom-toms. On overheads I switch around with A-T mic's or some old Neumanns. Sometimes I'll use a mic' called the 251, which is hard to find. I'm very fussy about what kind of pre-amps we use for the drums so they don't overload. For me, that's half the battle. If I stand up on a small ladder behind the drummer, I start to hear what he's hearing. That's critical for me. I used to mike the drums, sometimes with overheads, right behind the drummer's ears, but up about three feet. You'd be amazed at how the instrument develops its own quality. If you listen up there, there's a sweet spot where you're hearing the full kit.

It's the same with strings or horns. There's a sweet place where all that develops. It's usually up higher than you think, depending on the room. Low ceilings in the room present other acoustical problems. Still, if a drum booth has an 8' ceiling, and you treat the room right—get rid of some of the stuffiness and don't have it all blan-

First company ever to win *Modern Drummer* Consumer Poll in all 5 categories in which eligible.



1994

Ringo Starr and Dave Abbruzzese Autograph model sticks are introduced.

Millennium II manufacturing process to strengthen drumsticks begins.

Pro-Mark becomes the first drumstick maker on the world wide web.

www.promark-stix.com

1995

Charlie Adams and Milt Jackson Autograph models are introduced.

DC12i stick is introduced. *FIRST* stick designed especially for *INDOOR* use.



First drumstick company to host live monthly internet chats with major drumming personalities.

1996

Evelyn Glennie Performer Series drumsticks, vibes and marimba mallets introduced.

Introduction of Future Pro line. *First complete line of sticks and mallets designed for the smaller hands of students.*



Michael Carvin and Joe Morello Autograph model sticks are introduced.

Phil Ramone

keted up—you can get some “room sound” in there. Otherwise, you’re tuning drums to something that is like a dead blanket.

I had a drum booth for years, because one of the things that made all of the explosions and all the things happen is that I never had to go out to the drummer and say, “Can you cool it at letter C? The guitar player is trying to play an acoustic lick.” A lot of things became better for me by having control of the room. But I’d want to be next to the drummer. I want to get a sound like he does. If it doesn’t sound right where he is, then we discuss it. Sometimes the snare may be brilliant, but it’s not being picked up by the overheads. Engineers tend to hold that back, because they only want the snare to be picked up by the over-and-under-the-snare mic’s—the two mic’s they’ll use for snares.

MD: Do you always use two mic’s on a snare?

Phil: Yes, top and bottom. I found that if we got the top right, it was usually a bit dark. And people using condenser mic’s to capture more highs really have to be careful not to overload the pre-amp; it’s such a hard whack the guy gives the snare.

When you mike from underneath the snare, of course you’re going to get some of the kick. But you’ve got to make a marriage somewhere. That’s why I’m saying that if you have a great drummer, take ten minutes and just stand next to him and move around. Take a ladder and move

around and find out where the sound is moving. I don’t think people spend enough time getting the right drum sound. You need to find out what it is and what the guy thinks.

MD: How do you like to record percussion?

Phil: I usually isolate the percussionist. Otherwise I don’t get enough conga sound unless I do it as an overdub. A lot of times I’ll do the basic track with a guy just to make sure that he and the drummer are playing in the same field. A tambourine and a shaker are plenty for that. A percussionist who is playing conga licks intimidates the drums, unless it’s pure Latin music. But then you’ve got three or four drummers. In pop, a lot of times we’re playing to some kind of shaker click. Then I’ll do the congas to get the sound. It’s hard to capture congas in a booth; they just don’t sound right.

MD: What advice do you have for our readers who are looking to become studio drummers?

Phil: In this day and age, it’s all about knowing what to do to get your sounds good instantly. But also, pay attention to the way the record has to groove and swing. Showing off doesn’t help. Play where you are supposed to play, and swing your ass off. That’s what everybody gets excited about. Whether you’re playing just straight rock ‘n’ roll or heavy metal, it all has to do with the same thing. Of course,

there *is* more technology in your favor than there used to be, and there’s more time spent to make it great. But you become the producer’s friend if you’re analytical and you get to the point about what you are trying to achieve.

MD: What’s the *worst* thing a drummer can do in the studio?

Phil: Argue with the other musicians. [laughs] That puts a damper on it. Or have a fight with his girlfriend. You may get a very hard-sounding drummer, or one with a very pissed-off attitude. The drummer is *so* important to the date. I know that sounds silly, but....

MD: I understand what you’re saying. You want his heart and head there, doing what he’s supposed to be doing.

Phil: Exactly. Musicians go to a unique place when they make a record. And they *can’t* be distracted. I shut off everything from the outside, unless it’s a family emergency. You’d be amazed how much better the day goes when everybody is tuned into the same point of view. If the drummer is not concentrating, it’s very difficult. And it’s distracting to the other musicians, because they’re really looking towards the drummer all the time.

I’m a big groove maker. I stand in the middle of the room and say, “Let me hear this thing,” so I know we’re on the right path. If I’m wrong, I’ve got to change direction. I need the drummer—and everybody else—to pay attention.



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Good-Time Sessions

Play Well And Have Fun In The Studio

by Billy Ward

This month we're going to get into the realities of studio recording. We'll focus on methods you can employ to help you play with good time—and *have* a good time—in session situations.

Of course, all recording sessions are different. But for the sake of this article I'm going to talk about doing a popular music session where a lot of overdubbing will be done after the so-called "basic" drum track is recorded. This is a more common practice than having everyone "pouring cement" together, live, in the studio.

A Bring-Along List

As a starting point, here's a quick list of extra things to bring to a session:

An extra snare drum. It's amazing how changing a snare drum can make the whole drumset sound different.

Extra cymbals. You never know which of your cymbals might be more "mic'-friendly."

Headphones. Bring the headphones that



you're used to and comfortable with. Some demo-type studios don't have closed-cup headphones, because they cost more. But we drummers prefer closed-cup headphones, so if you have a set, bring it!

Headphone amp or mixer. A weak power amp can be helped with a small Mackie-type mixer, or by a smaller headphone amp. Peavey makes a reliable and inexpensive headphone amp. Also bring all necessary cables. Don't count on the studio to

have the cables you need.

Percussion. I always bring some percussion toys, shaker sticks, Rods and other alternative sticks, brushes...all that kind of stuff. Even on basic tracks the percussion or shaker sticks might be needed to make the track feel better or enable you to play the basic track better.

Water, towel, and an extra shirt—for obvious reasons. Maybe deodorant for later, too!

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It's All In The Mix

When it comes to playing successfully in a studio, one of the most important things to know about is the mix. I don't mean the sound of the drums in the control room. I'm talking about what we drummers have in our headphone mix. Knowing what kind of mix we need during a session is an important aspect of successful recording. I suspect these choices are different for each person.

I'm going to assume (hope) that you are

out the other non-percussion instruments in terms of what *they* are doing for the drummer's groove. In James Brown's music, *everybody's* a drummer. The guitar players are conga players! It's important for you to train your ears to notice these kinds of things.

Great producers know how the right timing from a guitar—or even from a singer—can make or break a groove. If these separate items are mixed wrong, the groove is

When I'm in the studio, half the time I have the drums out of my headphone mix entirely. If I have myself in the mix, it's just a feather of me—just enough to let me be in the same room as everyone else. After all, I'm playing the drums, I've tuned them, and I know how they sound. For several years I've been using headphones that cut out 24 dB or so, and I'm used to them. I know that the drums will sound good if my physical and emotional habits (my mechanics) are in place. So I don't concern myself with how I sound. Instead, I try to swim inside the song.

Who gets into my mix? Anyone who will help me play a great take. Listen to what everyone is playing, and figure out if they're aiding you. Sometimes the guitarist is playing a pattern in each chorus that really helps me sit inside the groove. So he gets to stay in my mix. In fact, that guitar will be a mechanism to help me groove during the choruses!

In popular music, the vocal is crucial to my playing. It will be the loudest item in the mix at the end, so I have to hear it—and understand the words. The drum track has to complement the vocal. On the other hand, if the singer's time isn't incredible, I learn the song as soon as possible (during run-through) and then have the vocals turned way down. This way I *feel* the vocal, but the attacks of the consonants won't disrupt my flow.

When you're working at a studio where the engineer controls your mix, ask the engineer (quietly and confidentially) to

If they don't get a great drum track—meaning a great performance from *you*—then the record is going nowhere!

not cursed with a studio that has no flexibility in its headphone cue mix. Unfortunately, many “starter” studios have a very bad headphone cue system, because they've put their investment into their microphones and mixing board. This is too bad, because when musicians can't hear, they can't play very well, no matter what. If you're shopping for a studio to record your band's demo in, check the headphone cue system. Does it have enough power? Are there enough separate cue “sends” available?

The mix, or volume, of different instruments *totally* affects a groove. Listen to your favorite grooves from records. Check

also killed. That's why people who mix records are so important to their success that they get their own credit (not to mention payment). Obviously, if the mix is important for the song, it's also important for us drummers in order for us to give a great performance.

Tricks Of The Trade

Here are some rules that work for me, and that you might try next time you're wearing a set of headphones in a studio. We'll start with a quote from Bruce Gaitsch, one of the best rhythm guitar players I've ever played with: “Want to groove more? Listen to everybody but yourself!”



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Billy Ward

remove some of the bandmates that are not helping you. Just walk into the booth and ask if the talkback mic' is off. (Always be aware of the many mic's around you that might possibly be on.) Then have the engineer remove the offenders from your mix. He or she will do this because *you, as the drummer, are all that counts right now* to everybody in the recording process. If they don't get a great drum track—meaning a great performance from *you*—then the record is going nowhere!

By the way, it's also permissible to ask a guitar player or keyboardist to change a phrase so you can play your track better. He's going to replace his track later anyway, right? So make him your ally. In fact, get the whole band on your side! Remember my previous articles about mechanisms? The parts that your band plays can be mechanisms for your drumming, just as much as your physical body can.

I should mention the "dark side" before we leave this section. What if *everybody* stinks? What if there are *no* allies to have in the mix? It happens. Under those circumstances, the click certainly becomes

more important! I'll add to the click by playing a tambourine part that "signals" the choruses and bridge.

What about out-of-time bandmates? See if the engineer can compress their parts with a fast attack to lesson the volume of their downbeats. Or try taking the treble off their sounds to ease their attack. If their volume is right (just barely loud enough for you to hear), you'll be able to play while you sort of "imagine" that they are all there with you.

Click track volume? I like the click to be loud enough that it's kind of like a neighbor next door just hammering away while I'm playing. I *hear* it, but I'm not really *listening* to it. Maybe a better way to put it is this: While drumming, we're driving the car. (Obviously I like this car-analogy stuff.) When we're heading down the perfectly in-time highway, there are telephone poles flying past, just outside our field of vision. Those telephone poles are the click track. The click is an impartial witness to (and participant in) the music. It's just there, like oxygen in the air. If I have to strain to hear the click in my headphone mix, then it isn't loud enough, or my mix is

wrong. If I'm listening for the click, then I'm not in the moment of playing. Doh! I've become a carpenter, not a musician.

What The Pros Say

I recently sent out a questionnaire on this elusive subject of keeping time to some pro drummer friends. Here are a few relevant answers about click tracks:

Q. Do you prefer a regular click, or some other timekeeper?

A. From Pat Mastelotto (King Crimson): "It depends on the feel of the song. For most shuffles, fast tempos, or if I'm tracking with a rhythm section and sharing one cue mix, I use a quarter-or 8th-note click. But most often I write a pattern in a beatbox. Usually my pattern is busy: shaker 16ths, hi-hat 8ths, sidestick or cowbell quarter notes, and a percolating rhythm on congas or ethnic drums."

The following additional statement shows Pat's maturity as a musician: "It's also important to know what the end result will be. If I know they're not keeping any machine tracks, I can bend time. My fills can rush. But if they plan to keep elements from a sequencer, loop, or beatbox, I have



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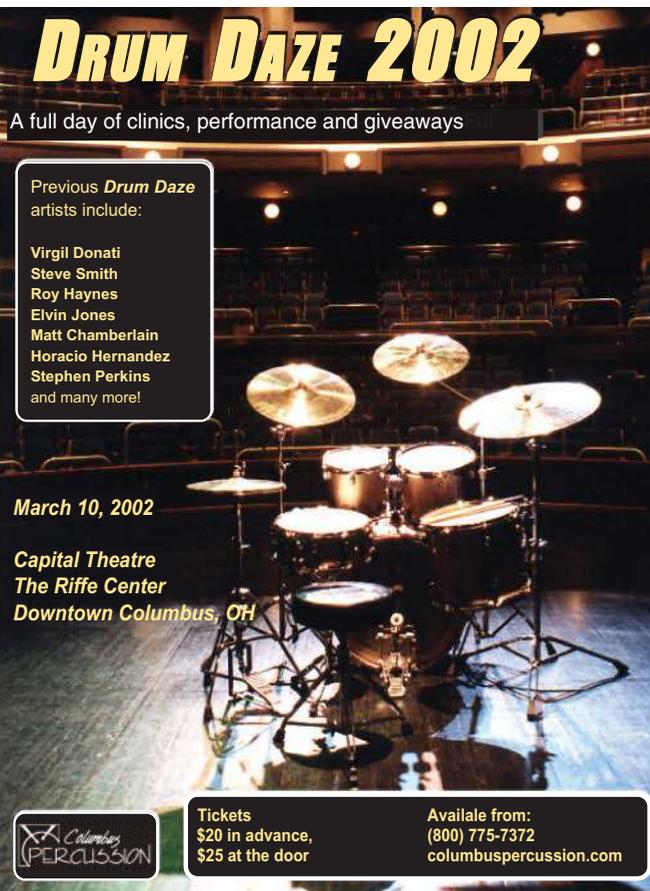
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A Practical Guide To Noise Reduction

Part 4: Windows, Doors, And Ventilation

by Mark Parsons

In previous installments we've discussed theories of noise reduction, and we've applied those theories to the construction of walls, floors, and ceilings. This time we'll examine how best to deal with doors and windows in our practice space, as well as how to keep ourselves comfortable.

Windows

Let's assume the worst—that the window in your drum room is an old, single-glazed (one thickness of glass) sliding model. (See photo 1.) If it's possible for you to make modifications to your space, the minimum you should consider is replacing the existing window with a modern, dual-glazed design. Even better would be to install two such windows in the same opening, with a couple of inches of space between them. (And of course, you should caulk the window frames tightly before adding trim or molding.)

If the window is just for light and is not your only supply of fresh air (or your only emergency fire exit) then you're better off

using a pair of fixed dual-glazed windows instead of sliders. This automatically eliminates one potential source of "sound leak."

The next step up would be to go with what you see in studios: a pair of heavy glass plates ($\frac{3}{8}$ " or thicker) set several inches apart. But think carefully before you do this. Reality rule #6 states that improving one component of your room far beyond the others is throwing money away. If your walls are a single layer of $\frac{3}{4}$ " sheetrock on top of R-11 insulation, then a studio-grade window isn't going to save your bacon.

Another answer for those to whom the window is not a necessity (and who have the right to make modifications) is to simply remove the window and frame over it, making it part of the existing wall.

Now, suppose you're not permitted to make any of these permanent changes to your practice space. There's still hope. When I was in that situation several years ago, I made a hinged shutter out of plywood. I lined the sealing edge with weath-

er stripping, and I added some latches that made it seal tight against the window frame. (Think of a storm shutter, only on the *inside* of the room.)

Even better for some situations—because it involves no modification to the building—is a removable window baffle. Start with a thin piece of plywood or Masonite the same size as your window. Get a piece of heavy-duty, 4"-thick foam and trim it so it's slightly larger than the window opening. Glue the foam to the plywood backing, and add a couple of handles to the back so the baffle can be easily installed or removed. In use, you simply push the foam into the window opening. It will compress a bit to make a tight seal (which is why you left it slightly oversized), but the rigid backing will keep the foam from buckling. If you rely on the



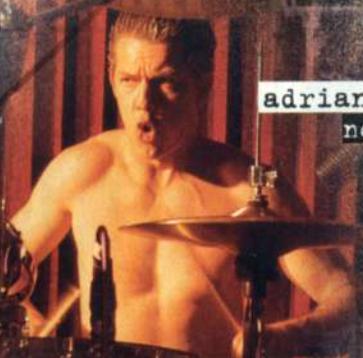
1 A single-glazed sliding window in an otherwise well-insulated room poses a serious sound-leakage problem.



3 A portable baffle made to fit the window opening can be easily installed during playing, then removed for ventilation during breaks.

the cutting edge

Photo by Alex Soica



adrian young
no doubt



scott phillips
creed

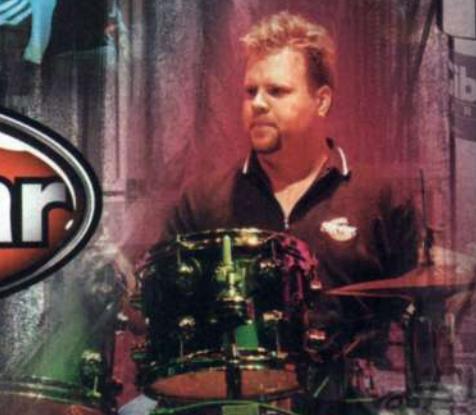
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Soundproofing

window for ventilation, one of the benefits of such a baffle is that you can easily remove it during breaks to let in fresh air. (See photos 2 and 3.)

Whichever method you use, remember that a heavy curtain over your window will add a small amount of additional isolation, and will also help reduce sound reflection inside the room.

Doors

Doors are a biggie when it comes to reducing the escape of sound. At the bare minimum you should carefully weather-strip your existing door, using the thickest foam tape that will fit. (See photo 4.) Don't



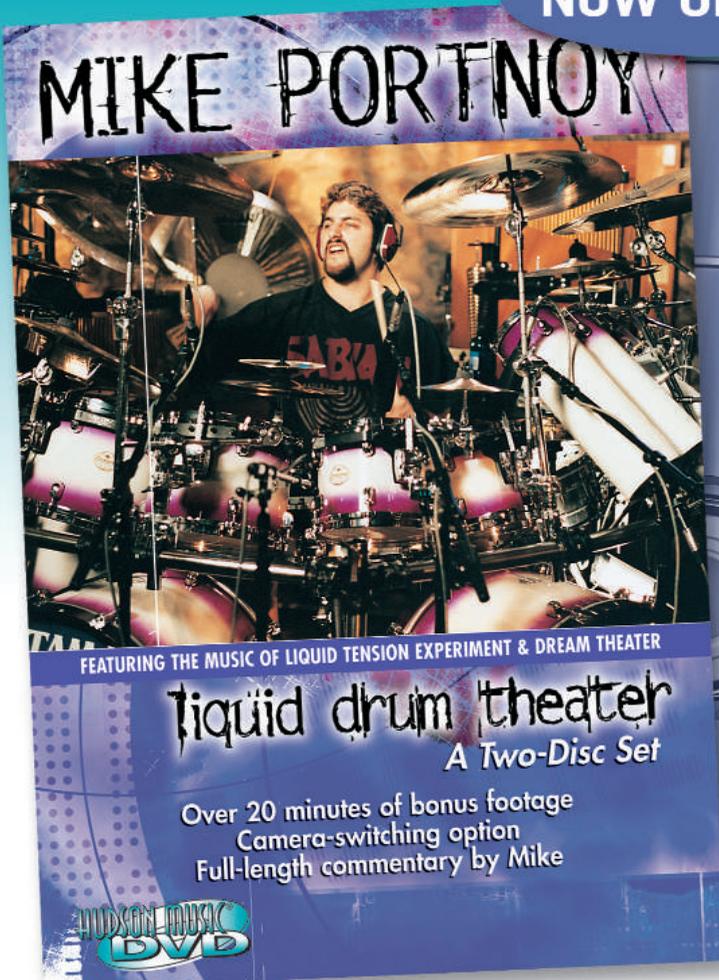
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Soundproofing

forget that doors have four sides, with the most neglected one usually being the bottom. You'll want a threshold with a compressible rubber seal that will seal tightly across the entire width of the door. If you can't install such a threshold, an alternative is a door purposely cut long to be in snug contact with the carpet. (A small piece of wood added to an existing door yields a similar effect.) If you go this route, at least add an inexpensive peel-and-stick "draft dodger" to the bottom of your door.

A better method is to start with a new, 1½" (exterior grade) solid-core door. Weatherstrip it tightly, and install a good threshold. For extra isolation, consider using two such doors. The easiest way to do this is to hang both doors on opposite sides of the same jamb (making sure you stagger the doorknob height so they don't hit back to back). This will give you two solid, sealed barriers with an inch and a half of dead air between them. For even more isolation, you can line one or both sides of the doors with limp-mass vinyl for increased non-resonant mass.

What pro studios use are pairs of commercial sound-resistant doors with a small hallway or anteroom in between—which combine to create a "soundlock." Of course, this is only worth doing if the rest of your room is soundproofed up to the same level. (Remember Reality Rule #6.) But if you've got the budget for it, this is the "A" answer. (See photo 5.)

Heating, Ventilation, And Air Conditioning (HVAC)

Okay, you've got your room insulated and sealed, with good windows and doors installed, and you can now play your drums without annoying the neighbors. There's only one minor problem: You've got to breathe. This means getting fresh air *in* without letting sound *out*.

The no-cost, low-tech answer involves doing both of the above—just not at the same time. In short, seal the room up when you play, then open it up during breaks (using fans to increase the air exchange). Obviously this system only works in a moderate climate.

If the ambient temperature is such that you absolutely require air conditioning within your practice space while you're practicing, the budget method is to simply install a small air conditioning unit in the

window. Depending on the construction of the AC model, the direction that the window faces, and the location of your neighbors, you may be able to run the AC while you're practicing. Typical portable AC units aren't soundproof by any means, but they are better than an open window. As usual, one of the key issues here is good weatherstripping at the juncture of the window frame and the AC unit. If your AC unit lets too much sound through, you can build a baffle to hang over it when you're making some serious noise, then let it run during breaks to remove the excess heat.

Here's an important tip: If you start with a pre-chilled room—and use a small fan directed at you during practice—you can play for quite a while before things get uncomfortable. But things will quickly get unbearable if you have several people in a small space (band practice) and/or start playing in a room that's already warm. Such situations require active AC or ventilation during use.

Another option I've seen is to have a small AC unit in an adjoining room, with the cool air carried into the "soundproof" room via insulated ducting. This may be a little too industrial-looking for some, but it works.

If your home already has central AC, you may be in luck—try it and see how much sound is carried into nearby spaces via the ducting. Remember that much of the leakage here happens directly through the sheet metal walls of the ducting, so make sure the ducts are insulated if leakage becomes a problem. This is a situation where a NetWell product called NetLag is worth its (considerable) weight in gold. It will insulate, isolate, and add non-resonant mass all at once.

Another possible option is to seal off the HVAC registers in your room during practice. Close the louvers if possible, then cover them with flexible magnetic flaps that are available specifically for this purpose.

If you're undertaking new construction, keep in mind that the length and the number of angles in the ducting have a direct effect on how much sound travels through the ducts into other spaces. Unfortunately, since these same factors contribute to air-flow inefficiency, they tend to be avoided by heating contractors. So talk to your HVAC supplier or contractor and let him

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know your priorities. There are special components available for commercial studios that lessen sound transmission and air-flow-induced noise. All of this also applies to heating ducts (which, if you have central AC, will be one and the same) as well as to your cold-air-return ducting.

I've rarely seen a residential situation where a drummer actually wants more heat, but you may be using an unheated basement, garage, or outbuilding. Regardless of the reason, if you're looking

for supplemental heat, you have two priorities: safety and comfort. For both of these reasons I'm partial to portable oil-filled electric heaters. They don't get hot enough to start a fire, and they gently radiate heat throughout the space instead of creating one hot spot in the middle of an otherwise frigid room. Also, they're dead quiet in use (which is a big bonus if you're doing any recording in your room).

So far we've pretty much focused on what to do to reduce noise escaping from

an existing space. Next time we'll go for the big project: the room-within-a-room. See you then!

Resources

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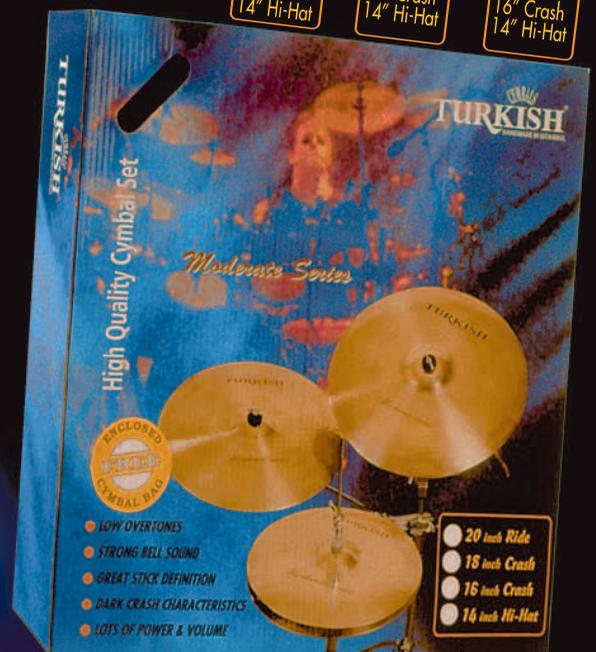
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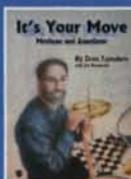
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Montreal Drum Fest

The 2001 Montreal Drum Fest was held from Friday, November 2 through Sunday, November 4. The ninth annual event drew drum enthusiasts from across Canada and the northeast US to Pierre Mercure Hall in downtown Montreal, Quebec. Many of those in attendance spoke French, while others spoke English. But the universal language of the weekend was rhythm.

Friday's concert was opened by a unique percussion ensemble called **Scrap**. Their name refers to their amalgam of drums, percussion, and mallet instruments created from found materials. One such instrument is a xylophone made from hockey sticks cut to precise lengths. The talented quartet features Marc Bonneau, Magella Cormier, Patrice Béland, and group founder Sylvain Grenier.



The star attractions of Friday's show were Chad Wackerman (left) and Terry Bozzio. The two Zappa alumni played individually and together, including a mind-blowing duet rendition of Zappa's legendary "Black Page." Jaws were seen dropping around the hall.

Frank Bellucci, the ultimate New York drummer, got Saturday's show started with a blend of energy, humor, and *serious* chops. While keeping his audience thoroughly entertained, Frank also shared tips on rebound, wrist action, relaxation, and other methods he uses to achieve his blazing hand and foot speed. Later he played with a guitarist, demonstrating odd meters and deep groove patterns.



Up next was another New Yorker, **Camille Gainer**. Camille surprised the audience when she came out *slammin'* with her own jazz trio (Marc Cary on keyboards and John Ormond on bass). Varying her numbers between funk-tinged bop, bop-tinged funk, and full-out swing, Camille gave new meaning to the term "fusion."



Canadian drummer **Mitch Dorge** took an interactive approach to his set. Stressing the need for focused energy, he brought audience members on stage to participate in a variety of verbal and drumming exercises. He was aided by bassist Gilles Fournier and guitarist

Joe Curtis, who helped keep the spirit light. Later the trio performed musical numbers to help demonstrate the fine art of listening and grooving between musicians in a band.

A lesson in Afro-Cuban stylings was the order of the day from noted performer/educator **Bobby Sanabria**. Among other topics, Bobby demonstrated hand and sticking techniques that can help to achieve authentic sounds on congas, timbales, and bells. He



also focused on how these same techniques can apply to drumset playing, noting that "Subtleties and accents are what give the true quality to *any* style of music."

the full dynamic range of the drumset. Later he was joined by a talented pair of local jazz players for a set that was refreshing and delightful for its sheer musicality.



"There are two kinds of drummers," said **Robin DiMaggio** in his opening remarks. "Those who work, and those who don't." The touring and session veteran went on to display the deep pocket and powerful sense of groove that have placed him firmly in the former group. Addressing the crowd mainly in French (one of his three "native tongues,") Robin enjoined the audience to "Remember what drumming is about: playing music, and having fun."



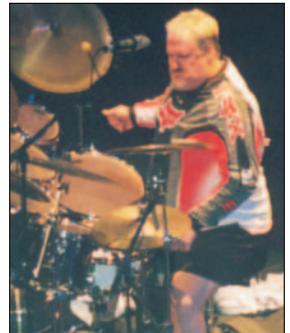
Few drummers can play with the combination of blazing speed and surgical precision of **Gene Lake**. Whether executing a deft odd-time pattern or laying down a mean groove, Gene's every note comes across clear and clean. He demonstrated this ability while soloing and while performing with a skillful multi-keyboardist.

The two played a series of challenging pieces, on which Gene's inimitable touch and creative imagination combined in a crowd-stunning performance.

After a day of wicked grooves and blazing notes, drumming's full range was personified by **Ed Thigpen**. "Mr. Taste" brought the volume level down to a whisper—with no loss of intensity—as he pursued the themes of his presentation: "The Element Of Swing" and "Alternative Sounds For Drumset." Using his fabled skill with brushes (along with sticks, mallets, and his bare hands), Ed explored



Kirk Covington is all about energy and expression. Alternating between sticks, mallets, rods, brushes, and who knows what else, Kirk attacked his kit with abandon as he navigated complex musical compositions. That complex music was ably provided by Tribal Tech bassist Gary Willis, along with Canadian keyboardist Daniel Thouin. But all eyes were on the big man behind the drums.

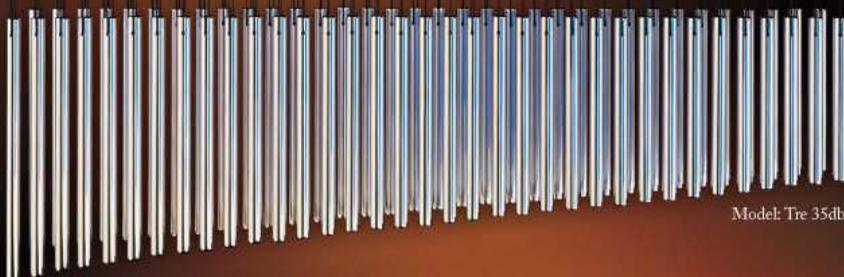


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In what has become a popular tradition at the Drum Fest, Sunday's show began with performances by three talented college drummers, selected for Yamaha's "Rising Star" Showcase. This year's drummers included **Pascal Lepage**, **Hugo Veilleux**, and **Jeremy MacCuish**. Each played with a quartet of talented Montreal musicians.

Taking the age, but not the talent, down a few notches was thirteen-year-old **Aaron Kimmel**. Also performing with the Montreal quartet, Aaron wowed the crowd with a high-energy, big band-style performance on tunes like "Cherokee" and Dizzy Gillespie's "Manteca." And he had them on their feet following his drum solo, which featured percussive homages to Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson while demonstrating his own impressive skills.



Things got high-tech when DJ/electronic percussionist **Alan Rhéaume** hit the stage. In tandem with demonstrations and performances by two skillful Roland reps (fine players in their own right), Alan explored the sonic territory made available by today's electronic instruments. Using a

variety of Roland gear, Alan created everything from house beats to thunderstorms, in a creative display of contemporary urban percussion.

Vancouver, Canada's **Randall Stoll** epitomizes versatility. With credits ranging from k.d. lang to Tom Cochrane, and from Nashville sessions to Cubano band Alma Libre, Randall is a guy who takes a very open approach to his craft. He demonstrated that approach by performing a wide variety of grooves, stressing the need to be musically flexible in order to be optimally employable.



Down-to-earth, old-fashioned hard rock—that's what **Troy Lucketta** plays for a living. And that's what he played at the Drum Fest. Using tracks of old and new Tesla songs, Troy impressed the audi-

ence with his way of laying down a solid foundation for the band, while still sneaking in just the right sort of tasty fill at select moments in the song. He also demonstrated how a powerful groove can be achieved by playing in a relaxed manner, instead of bludgeoning the drumkit into submission.

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LA session and touring ace **Bob Harsen** was supposed to appear in tandem with percussion star Luis Conte. When Luis had to cancel on short notice, Bob went on alone—and proceeded to floor the crowd with his fast-yet-fluid playing style and his musicality around the kit. Not a household name—yet—Bob laid claim to a whole new level of drum notoriety with this performance. And when he brought out Kirk Covington (who plays a *mean* B3 organ groove) to accompany him on keyboards, Bob added deep feel and musical taste to the list of his attributes. Watch out for this guy.



Dave DiCenso made quite a splash a couple of years ago when he opened the Drum Fest. This year he came back as the closer with his Boston-based band Two Ton Shoe. Offering a concert set combining elements of jazz, funk, and dance-oriented pop, the band gave a real kick to the Drum Fest's conclusion. And along the way, Dave had ample opportunity to display his amazing chops, power, and showmanship.



Modern Drummer senior editor **Rick Van Horn** was on hand to receive a presentation from the Drum Fest's Serge Gamache (left) and Ralph Angelillo (right), recognizing *MD's* twenty-five years of publication. Presentations were also made to Dom Famularo, Ed

Thigpen, and Ndugu Chancler.

Ndugu Chancler has seemingly done it all: jazz with Bobby Hutcherson and Miles Davis, fusion with Herbie Hancock and George Duke, and groove/pop with George Benson, Carlos Santana, and, of course, Michael Jackson. And he brought it all to Montreal.



Playing to an extensive and varied track, Ndugu alternated between drumset, congas, and timbales. At each station he captured the essence of the music—and the hearts of the audience—with his joyful, totally into-the-moment performance. The audience rewarded him with an unprecedented demand for an encore!

Sponsors for the Montreal Drum Fest included AKG, Attack Drumheads, Drum Workshop, Evans, Gibraltar, GMS Drums, Latin Percussion, Meinl, Paiste, Pearl, Premier, Pro-Mark, Regal Tip, Remo, Roland, Sabian, Shure, Tama, Taya Drums, Toca, Vater, Vic Firth, Yamaha, and Zildjian Cymbals & Sticks.

Celebrating With Louie

Louie Bellson has a lot to celebrate lately. To begin with, he's made a full recovery after being struck by a car in January of 2001. He's back on the road, performing and participating in clinics.

Louie is also celebrating his fourth honorary degree—an honorary doctorate in humane letters recently presented by DePaul University. This follows earlier honorary degrees from Augustana College (Rock Island, Illinois), Dennison University (Ohio), and Northern Illinois University (DeKalb)—making Louie one of the most academically recognized



Louie Bellson celebrates his seventy-seventh birthday.

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Finally, on a recent visit to the Remo factory in Valencia, California, Louie was presented with a cake to commemorate another cause for celebration: his seventy-seventh birthday.

Hip Pickles And Shawn Pelton In Red Cross Benefit



Saturday Night Live drummer Shawn Pelton (second from left) with Hip Pickles members (from left) Chris Scherer, Chet Doboie, and Jeremy Fischer backstage at the Webster Hall Red Cross benefit concert

“Like most Americans, we wanted to do something after the World Trade Center attack of September 11,” says Chet Doboie, leader of the drum corps trio known as Hip Pickles. “This past October 18 we were given an opportunity to contribute a little of our time to help raise some much-needed funds.”

The opportunity Chet refers to was a concert held at New York City’s Webster Hall nightclub to benefit the Red Cross and the Robinhood Fund. Besides Hip Pickles, the show featured a band consisting of Shawn Pelton on drums, Leon Pendarvis on organ, Katsresse Barnes on piano, Neil Jason on bass, and Ira Siegel on guitar. The band backed up performers including Duncan Sheik, The Bacon Brothers, and Jeffrey Gaines. “Shawn played great,” says Chet. “He always sounds like he attaches his DNA to every note. Good guy too!

“We felt honored to be part of such an effort to help out,” Chet continues. “After the show, the three of us went down to ‘Ground Zero.’ It was a very emotional night for us, to say the least.”

In Memoriam Howie Mann

Veteran big band and show drummer Howie Mann passed away on September 25, 2001. After a long road career beginning in the 1940s, Howie returned to New York, where he played for the New York Jets Stage Band at Shea Stadium for fourteen years. He also led his own big band for twenty-four years, during which time he was active in the Jazz Nexus series, bringing jazz into the NYC schools.



Also one of New York’s most revered drum teachers, Howie taught for almost forty years. His students included Rod Morgenstein, who says, “I owe much of my success to Howie. I took my first lesson with him at the age of ten. He taught me everything from how to hold the sticks to how to interpret big band charts. His teaching technique was practical, thorough, and most importantly, musical. He was a genuinely sweet, compassionate man, and I will miss him dearly.”

Smoky Dacus

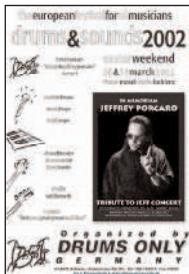
On October 9, 2001, only a couple of months after celebrating his ninetieth birthday with family, drumming friends, and admirers, W.E. “Smoky” Dacus passed away. Dacus was an original member of Bob Wills & The Texas Playboys, who popularized Western swing music in the late 1930s. Smoky is credited with being the first drummer to be heard from the stage of the Grand Ole Opry—one of the earliest instances of drums included in any form of country music.

Percussive Arts Society Scholarships

Student scholarships have been endowed by the Percussive Arts Society in the names of Cloyd Duff and Steve Ettleson. The scholarships are a tribute to the memory of two special men in the percussion world. Cloyd Duff is regarded as one of the finest timpanists of the twentieth century, while Steve Ettleson was both a performer and a key figure in the drum and percussion industry.

To apply for the scholarships, a student must submit an application form with the required information and materials. The deadline is in June each year. For applications and additional information contact: Percussive Arts Society, 701 NW Ferris Avenue, Lawton, OK 73507, tel: (580) 353-1455, fax: (580) 353-1456, percarts@pas.org, www.pas.org.

Drums & Sounds Weekend



The 2002 Drums & Sounds Weekend will be held March 30 and 31 at the Rhein Mosel Hall in Koblenz, Germany. Organized by Drums Only of Koblenz, it's one of Europe's largest and longest-running drum-related events. The weekend will include master classes, clinics, and

performances by a variety of top drumming personalities. A special feature this year will be a tribute concert to Jeff Porcaro. For more information, surf to www.drumsonly.de and www.drums-and-sounds.de.

Who's Using What

For his return to drumming with Oysterhead, **Stewart Copeland** is using Shure studio and live drum mic's. Studio and touring ace (and *MD* columnist) **Billy Ward** is also endorsing Shure's drum mic's, along with their PSM 600 personal monitor system.



On the jazz side, drummer/educator **Yoron Israel** is a new Regal Tip drumstick artist. Yoron leads his own groups—Connection and Organic—and performs regularly with Vanessa Rubin, Chico Freeman, and Pharoah Sanders. He is also the assistant chairman of percussion at Berklee College of Music.

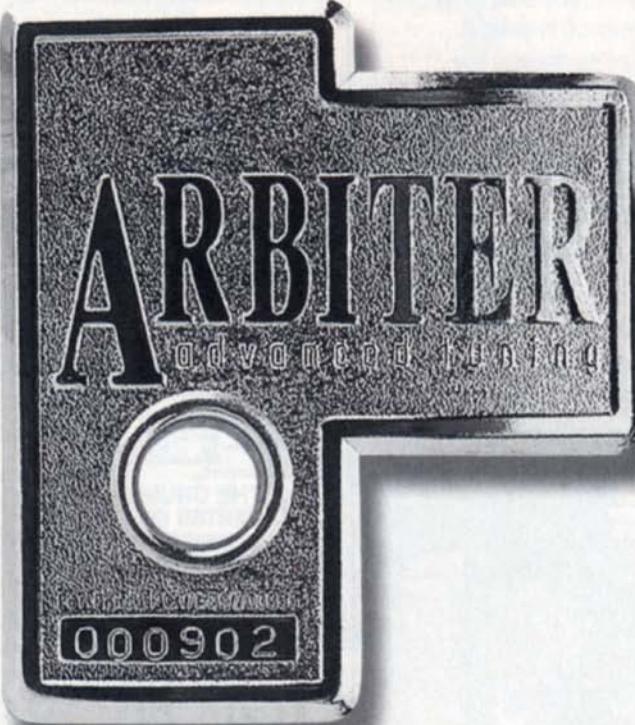


Funk/pop/fusion monster **Gene Lake** is touring with Me'shell NdegéOcello on Premier Gen-X drums.



Finally, rockers **Mike Luce** (The Drowning Pool, right) and **Steve 32** (Sum 41) are new Vic Firth artists.





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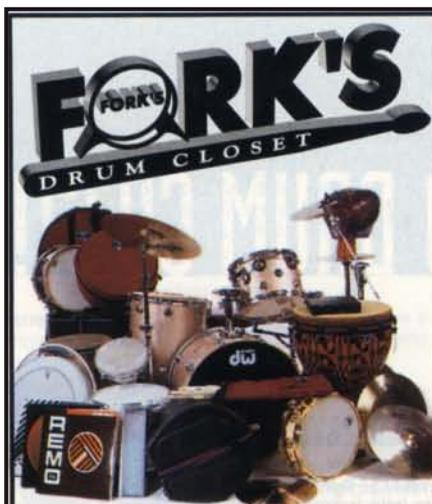
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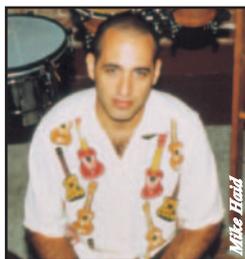
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Vater Percussion	www.vater.com	2,75,142
VeriSonic	www.4ddai.com/vs	144
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Virtual Drummer School	www.virtualdrummerschool.com	108
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Wuhan	www.universalpercussion.com	76
Yamaha	www.yamahadrums.com	17
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This "Native American" kit was designed by independent drummer Paul Angers, along with Blake Himm of the Taos Drum Company. It's a fully functional, one-of-a-kind set that Paul has used on various recordings. In fact, it can be heard throughout the jungle sequences in the animated film version of *King Kong*.

The kit consists of 3x12, 3x14, and 3x16 deer-skin-headed Shaman drums, a 3x12 deerskin-headed snare drum, a 14x24 calfskin-headed bass drum, and 10x26 and 13x26 calfskin-headed "long toms." The special weave used to mount the bass drum head was the creation of Blake Himm.

The kit is played with Vic Firth 7A sticks fitted with $\frac{3}{8}$ " removable soft rubber tips. Bells may be fastened to the player's left leg to add additional power and acoustic variety to the kit.

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.



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