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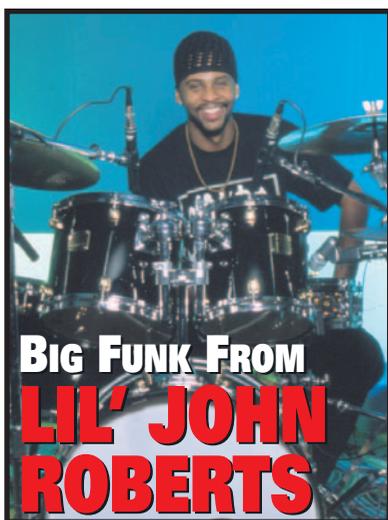
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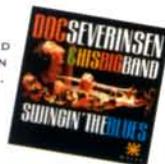


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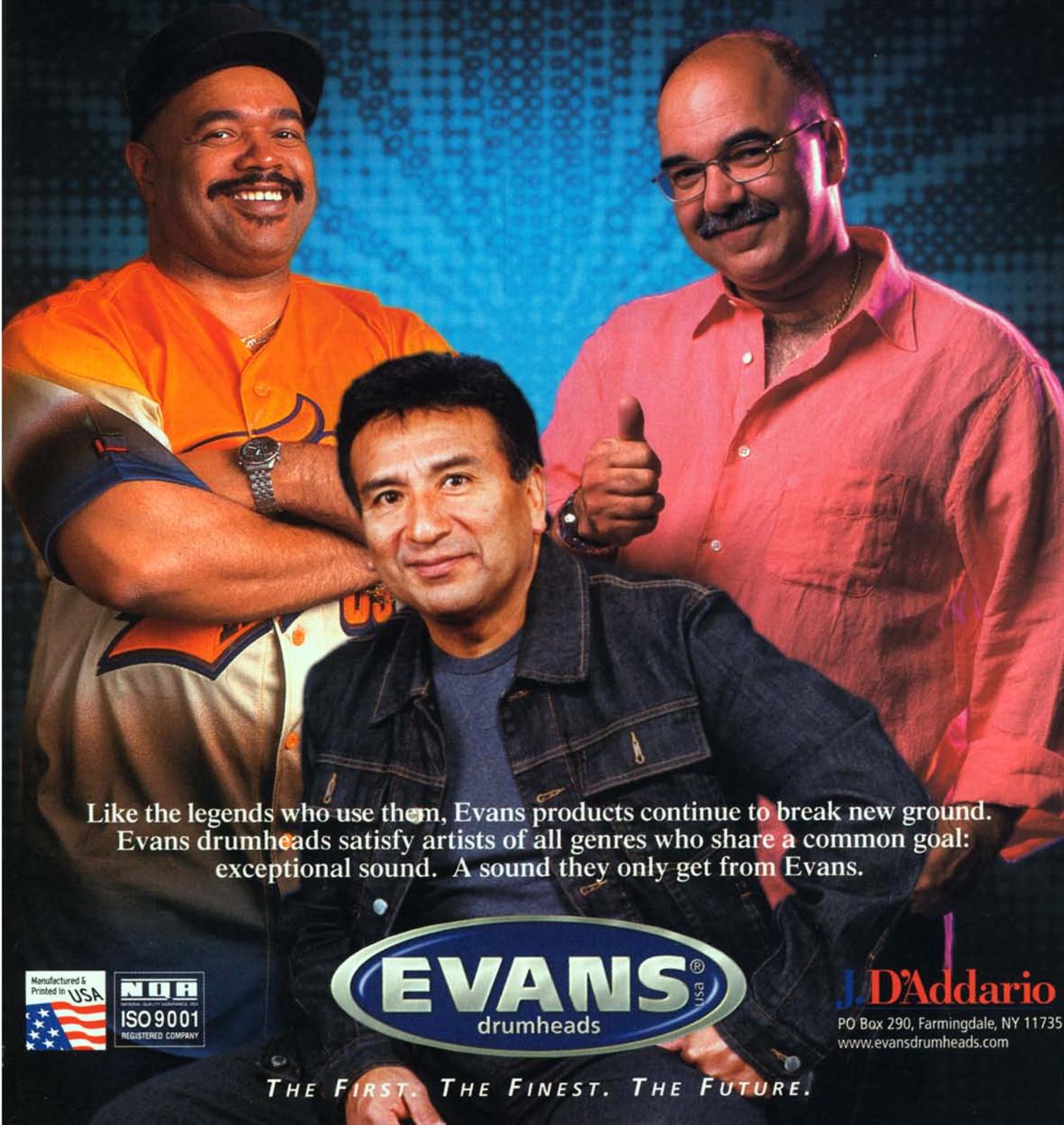
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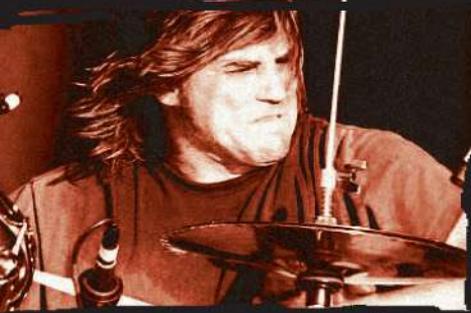
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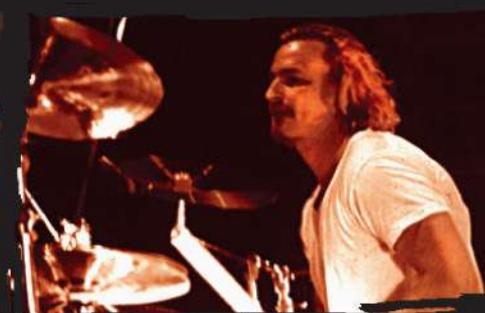
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Alex Solca



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Here We Go Again!

On page 46 of this issue you'll find the roster of artists appearing at this year's MD Festival Weekend. Believe it or not, it's our *fifteenth* Festival. It's been my honor to coordinate each year's show, and I'm looking forward to the 2002 edition with great anticipation.

The MD Festival is the longest-running such event in drumming history, and we like to think it has become the most prestigious. We at *MD* take a lot of pride in the quality of the show and the stature of the artists who appear on it. Early ticket requests and constant sellouts repeatedly demonstrate how special the Festival is to those who come to enjoy it.

As we approach our fifteenth Festival, I thought it might be fun to look back at the fourteen that have gone before, and take note of a few statistics.

The Festival has been presented every year but one since 1987. We had to skip 1992, when we switched from autumn to a spring date and needed the additional months to adjust to the new schedule.

The first two Festivals (1987 and 1988) were one-day events, held on a Saturday. Since 1989 the shows have taken place on a Saturday *and* a Sunday, earning the name Festival Weekend.

Approximately 24,000 tickets have been sold over the fourteen years of the Festival. Almost 75% of each year's audience are repeat attendees. And we know of at least ten individuals who have attended every single show!

Ticket holders come from every state in the US and dozens of foreign countries. The record for the longest distance traveled to attend the show is held by a drummer from Australia. (And he came *twice*.)

Eighty-five stellar drummers and eleven world-class percussionists have graced the Festival stage. Also appearing have been eight specialty acts representing many ethnic and musical styles. One percussionist, two specialty acts, and eleven drummers have appeared twice—often with a band on their return performance. And speaking of bands, a list of musicians who've accompanied Festival drummers over the years reads like a who's who of jazz, pop, and rock.

Three drummers share the record for Festival appearances. Dave Weckl was the opener on the first show in 1987. He returned as a headliner (with Eyewitness) in 1989, and again leading his own band in 1998. Rod Morgenstein was also on the inaugural show, then returned to headline with The Dixie Dregs in 1994 and with The Rudess/Morgenstein Project in 1998. Steve Smith headlined the 1988 show with his Vital Information band, returned in a memorable solo spot in 1995, and appeared with the 1999 edition of V.I. to headline that year's show.

We can only guess what new records will be set and what memorable moments will occur at the 2002 Festival. Let's share them together. See you there!

MODERN DRUMMER®

Volume 26, Number 5

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

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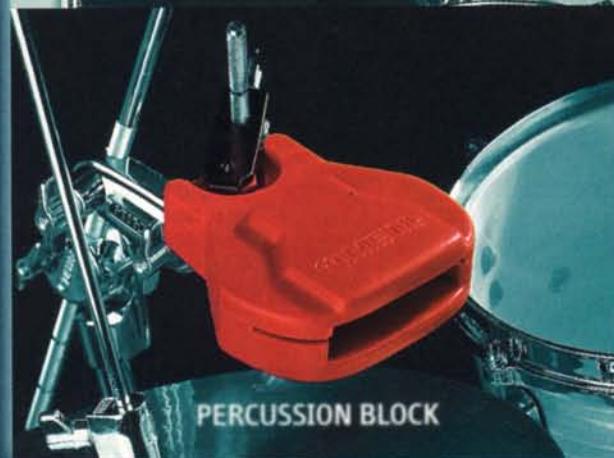
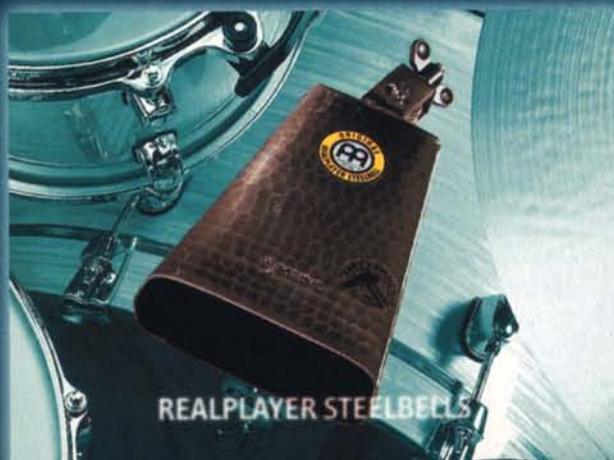
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Kenny Aronoff



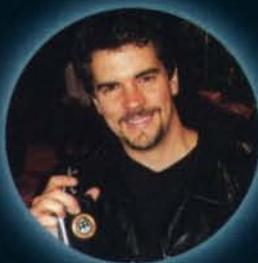
Paul Wertico



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GETTING IT RIGHT



I've been a semi-professional drummer for thirty-seven of my forty-seven years. Your February 2002 issue contained the essence of what my creative drumming life has been: the

technical, in "Understanding The Language Of Music," the scientific, in "It May Not Be Carpal Tunnel Syndrome," the enjoyment of a neighbor's success, in the cover feature on Jose Pasillas of Incubus, and the spiritual fulfillment of "The Healing Power Of Music."

Damn, I love you guys!

D.K.
via Internet

THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC

Congratulations on having the heart-sense to print Matthew Sumera's article "The Healing Power Of Music" in your February issue. In the liner notes to *A Love Supreme*, John Coltrane asks to be granted "the means and privilege to make other people happy through music." As drummers we've been given the means; now it's time to exercise the privilege.

I firmly believe that because drums are so elemental, the *intent* with which we play can be transmitted vibrationally. As long as I remember that, even the simplest standard tune played in the crappiest little gin mill can be (and has been) a vehicle for social, emotional, spiritual, and physical healing. A great horror demands that we create a greater beauty.

Leo LaBarge
Newton, NJ

DON'T MISS WHAT'S INSIDE

MD has been getting a lot of flak recently about the number of cover stories featuring young drummers in bands with heavy rotation on MTV and rock radio. Although some of these drummers have surprised me with their dedication and thoughtfulness (John Otto from Limp Bizkit comes to mind), it's pretty obvious that they're on

the cover primarily to sell magazines.

But recent issues have shown me that this is not necessarily a bad thing. The more magazines *MD* can sell to teenagers at the newsstand rate, the more they can pack the rest of the issue with material geared towards us drummers *over* the age of seventeen. In other words, the January 2002 cover story on Joey Jordison facilitated the incredibly educational interview with Brian Reitzell. Similar covers have facilitated the brilliant columns by Billy Ward and John Riley, among others. So I say to *MD*: Please keep it up. We're all winners.

Paul Wells
Queens, NY

LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

Bill Miller's February 2002 editorial made me realize just how much drumming is an intrinsic part of my life.

As a newspaper reporter, I was working hard from September 11 through the next several days. It wasn't until the following Saturday that I allowed myself to slow down a bit. When I did, I didn't want to reflect much on what had happened, for fear of my own feelings. So I retreated to my sanctuary: the drumkit.

After woodshedding for a short time, I started to think about the magnitude of the attacks' effect. I thought about the victims, their families, the rescuers, and the city. I thought about us as a country—how we would respond, how we would react.

In an unusual move for me, I sought out a power ballad to play to—Queensryche's "Silent Lucidity." The song allowed me to pound the skins, releasing suppressed tension. But it also triggered a flood of emotions: anger, sadness, regret, patriotic pride, and helplessness. Tears poured down my face as I played my heart out on that song, pretending that my drumming was somehow helping to mend the hearts of those who had been directly affected.

I thought about promoting a benefit show to help the victims' families. In the end, I decided to direct my energy into my work, to give people the most accu-

NEVER GIVE UP

I've been playing percussion since I was three. About six years ago I got caught up in the turmoil of life and decided that I needed to get a "real job." My drumming activity dwindled until it finally stopped. I got caught up in the reasoning that money is everything, and that we need to work as much as possible in order to make enough money to retire on. I'm here to tell you *now* that that reasoning was—and is—truly ridiculous.

People used to ask me to play with them all the time. Everyone I met would tell me that I was "going somewhere." I felt so proud. Only now do I realize that that was

rate information about what had happened, why it happened, and what people in our area were doing to help and cope. That's what I continue to do. But my drums remain not only a source of creative enjoyment, but also a therapeutic release for my stress and emotions.

Chris Krepich
via Internet

Like Bill Miller, I've had a hard time sitting behind my kit since 9/11. But I found inspiration from my one-year-old grandson, Dylan. When my daughter drops Dylan off at our house, he goes right to my drums and looks at us with a huge smile. One of us sits on the throne, with Dylan on a knee. He picks up the sticks and strikes each drum and cymbal around the kit. He's gotten to where he keeps a good beat with his right hand. (His left is a little weak, but I know a lot of drummers with that problem.)

Dylan is too young to understand what's going on in the world. But he understands perfectly the joy that making music brings to him. Music is a gift that has been given to us, and I think that now is a good time to use it to soothe ourselves, and to share with others so that they might also take solace from it.

Joe Ryan
Tucson, AZ

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the happiest time of my life.

My point is this: Never give up. There is nothing better than doing what you love to do. If you can't get past worrying about money, try a little harder with your drumming. Maybe you'll be able to make a great living from it. But even if you don't, who cares?

Kids: Continue to play. It'll be the best thing you can do for yourselves. Nothing in life will ever compare to the satisfaction of jamming with your band and finishing a song. Nothing will ever be better than hearing people tell you how good you are or how much they enjoy your playing.

Parents: Let your kids play whenever they wish. You'll have better kids for it—kids that could go somewhere and really do something for the world.

Nothing is better than the contribution of music. Nothing.

George R. Waterman
Fryeburg, ME

HONORING MARK



I want to commend you for honoring the memory of Mark Bingham, one of the passengers who fought the hijackers on United Flight 93—and a fellow drummer. After reading your "In Memoriam" article in the January issue's *Readers' Platform*, I cut out Mark's picture and attached it to my drum rack. Even though Mark can no longer play drums, his picture—and thus, I hope, his spirit—will always be behind a drumset. Peace to him and his family.

Jimbo McAllister
via Internet

HOW TO REACH US

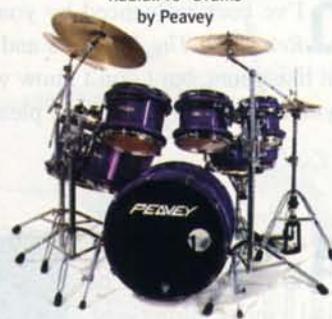
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Charlie Benante's Personal Sound

Q I've been influenced by your playing since Anthrax released *Return Of The Killer As* and *Bigger Than The Devil*. I want a kit like yours, but I don't know what kind of drumheads, sticks, or cymbals you use. Could you please give me the layout?

Jon
via Internet

A Thanks for your kind words. I'm glad you're impressed with my sound, but I have to say that since *Return Of The Killer As* was a greatest-hits album, you're probably hearing kits recorded over a span of fifteen years! *Bigger Than The Devil* is our most recent album.

Honestly, though, I haven't made any major changes in my sound over the years. I stay with the sound that I've always liked, trying to improve on it as new heads and tuning techniques become available.

I'm currently using clear Remo Emperors on the tops of my toms, with clear Ambassadors on the bottoms. On the kick drum I'm using a PowerStroke 3 batter. On the snare I've been using the coated CS reverse dot (with the dot on the underside of the head) for so long that I can't remember using anything else.

Besides my choice of heads, tuning makes a big difference in my sound. My three rack toms are 10", 12", and 13". I have 14"



Lasse Walker

and 18" floor toms on my right, and a 16" on my left. We recently played a benefit show in New York City, and one of the other drummers on that show mentioned that I tuned my toms pretty high. I never considered them "high." I just go for the right sound that should come out of that size tom. If you de-tune a 10" tom for depth, it won't resonate. A 10" tom should *sound* like a 10" tom.

I do crank up my snare drum pretty tight. I like to get a nice crack out of that drum just to wake everybody up. But it's still not as tight as a lot of snares I've been hearing recently. A lot of drummers today take a 13" drum and crank it till it sounds like a coffee can. I don't go *that* tight. I keep my snare somewhere between an "Alex Van Halen sound" and a "Stewart Copeland sound."

In the past few years I've gone to putting less muffling in my kick drums, relying more on the heads themselves for dampening. I used to use black dot heads, but now I use the PowerStroke 3. All I do is fold up a towel and tape it against the front head, just to give me the nice "thud" that I need. Otherwise I'm going for a more open bass drum sound. Even so, sound tends to change from hall to hall, and it seems that the kick will sound bigger in certain places than others.

I sometimes use a Tama Tension Watch to help me keep everything where it should be. That's especially helpful in noisy environments or where I have to tune very quickly.

My sticks are Vic Firth American Classic Rock models, and all my cymbals are Paistes. The setup (from left to right, as if you're sitting behind the kit) is as follows: a 16" Rude crash, an 18" Dimensions Power crash (which I sometimes swap for an 18" 2002 Power crash), a Signature 8" splash, a Rude 20" crash/ride, an 18" Rude crash/ride, an 18" 2002 Novo China, a 20" 2002 Novo China with a Signature 8" bell on top, and a 20" Signature Dark Full ride (which I sometimes switch with a 2002 ride). On my left I use a pair of Signature 14" Dark Crisp hi-hats, and on my right I have a pair of 15" 2002 Sound Edge hats.

In The Pocket With Russ Miller

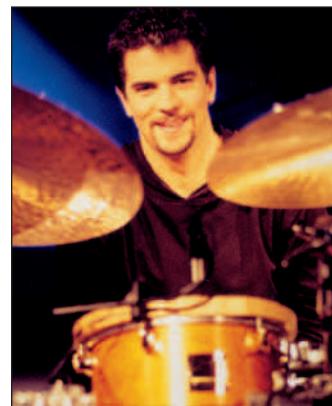
Q You're a great inspiration to my playing. I heard you on a Paulo Otavio album recently, and your feel was incredible in each of many different grooves. I also heard you live with The Fifth Dimension. I was surprised to see you playing with them, but again you sounded great—especially given the many medleys, tempos, and music styles. How did you develop such a great "pocket" in so many different styles? And how do you recommend I work on this?

Shawn Michaels
North Hollywood, CA

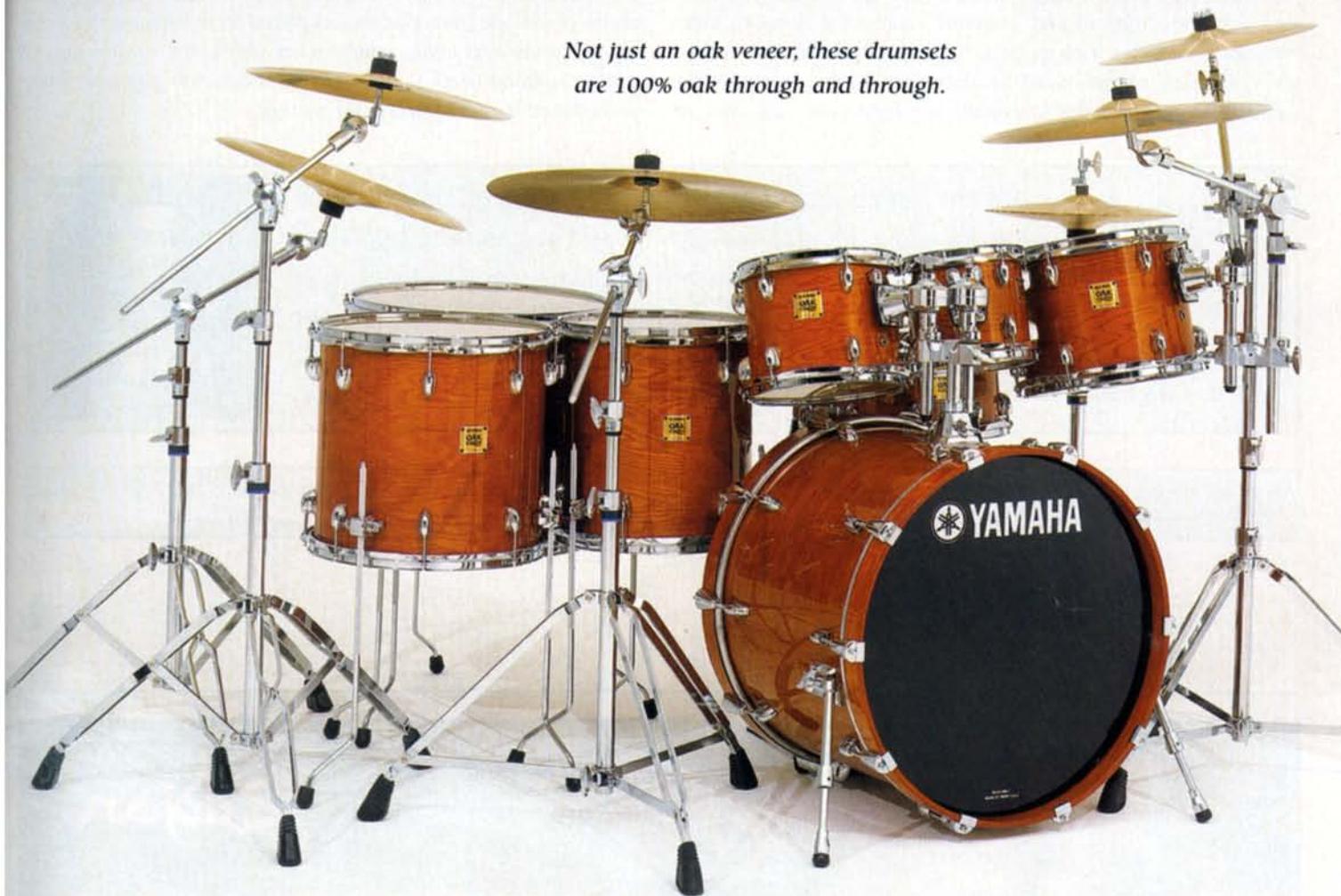
A Thanks for your kind comments. I had a great time doing that Paulo Otavio album. As for the Fifth Dimension gig, I

enjoyed it for several reasons. First, it *did* have a very challenging drum chair. Second, from a business standpoint, they didn't tour for extended periods of time. This allowed me to "sneak away" from LA and do some road gigs without missing calls from the producers and contractors who call me for sessions in town.

As for your main question: I consider a "pocket" to be the



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CREATING TOGETHER

Russ Miller

ability to create a great-feeling pulse in a given musical style. All of the parts of the main groove must feel good, along with all of the fills. That consistent and relaxed feeling is what *defines* the pocket.

As I've mentioned in my books, video, and clinics, you must start with the ability to play extremely consistent flows of notes (straight 8ths, 16ths, triplets, etc.). Nothing can disturb that consistency. Physical barriers must be eliminated so that you have the facility and independence to execute any figure that can come up

in the song.

I always approach the "feel" in three parts: 1) solid timekeeping, 2) good use of dynamics, and 3) the placement of notes in time. By combining a solid pulse with dynamic contrasts and the application of attitude (note placement) gained from listening to recordings of a musical style, your pocket will begin to develop. Of course, nothing beats a lot of trial and error on gigs over many years. Good luck, and thanks for writing.

Repeat

Bar

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Tony Williams, January 1978



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Metal Bass Drum Hoops

Q What do metal bass drum hoops do to the sound of the bass drum? Do they increase projection (compared to wood hoops)? I would imagine the tone of the drum is better with wood, but is much of it sacrificed by switching to metal hoops?

Adam
via Internet

A When it comes to original-equipment hoops on drumkits, the choice of metal hoops over wood is generally one of economics, rather than acoustics. Metal hoops cost much less to manufacture, and thus are often used on entry-level and other lower-cost drumkits. They can also be more durable, and are thus appealing to drummers who can't afford to protect their

kits with cases.

All other factors being equal, metal hoops will cause a bass drum to project a slightly higher pitch, and perhaps a slightly brighter tone than the same drum would project if fitted with wood hoops. However, this effect is pretty subtle, given the fact that the hoops are on the outside of the drumheads and thus have minimal involvement with the sound waves that are created when the drum is played.

Drummer's Block

Q I've been drumming for five years. Through my first four years I enjoyed a prolific increase in technique and speed with my hands and feet. However, in

recent months I seem to have "peaked." No matter how hard I practice or how long I do single-stroke rolls, I don't seem to be making any progress at all.

I've been practicing for at least two hours a day for almost three months, yet my rolls still seem to flam at a certain speed, and my coordination keeps losing the rhythm. Is there anything I can do to fix this problem, or am I doomed to a life of mediocre speed and lackluster control?

Chris Holmes
via Internet

A We've all experienced this "no progress" phenomenon from time to time. Remember: When you first begin to play—starting from "zero," as it were—your initial progress naturally seems dramatic. When you start from a point of *having* a certain level of skill and technique, your progress naturally proceeds at a different rate.

Sometimes the best thing to do—as suggested by several authorities—is to just pull back. Take a break from the two-hour-a-day treadmill. Stop pushing so hard, and just play for the fun of it. A little later, when you go back to practicing seriously, you're much more liable to get "over the hump," so that further progress can be made.

Zildjian Impulse Ride

Q I used to have a 20" Zildjian Impulse ride cymbal. Unfortunately, it was lost in a fire. They're out of production now, but I just found one on eBay. I'm considering purchasing it to replace the one I lost. Any info about Impulse cymbals would be greatly appreciated.

Peter Schwartz
via Internet

A Zildjian's Colin Schofield replies: "The Impulse range was introduced in 1984. It was the company's first line of cymbals designed specifically for heavy rock/heavy metal music. At the time, Zildjian offered several Rock models within its A Zildjian series. But heavy players, like Tommy Aldridge, were looking for

Drum Notation

Q I recently saw some drum notation for the first time. I understand regular musical notation, but I'm wondering what the various notes on the drum music represent. Also, what do abbreviations like T.T. or H.H. mean?

Jerry Dearborn
via Internet

A The lines and spaces in regular musical notation have fixed meanings. That is, each line or space always represents the same note (within a given clef). The notes may be *played* sharp or flat as indicated by the key signature and/or accidentals on the staff itself, but the identification of the notes remain constant.

Drum notation is not so universal. Over the years, drummers have tried to find ways of indicating the various parts of the drumset on the musical staff. The problem is that drumsets can be very different in terms of the number of drums and cymbals that need to be represented. When you add in variations like open and closed hi-hats, ride cymbal and bell, and open or choked crashes, Chinas, and splash cymbals, even more difficulties arise.

A compromise has been reached by

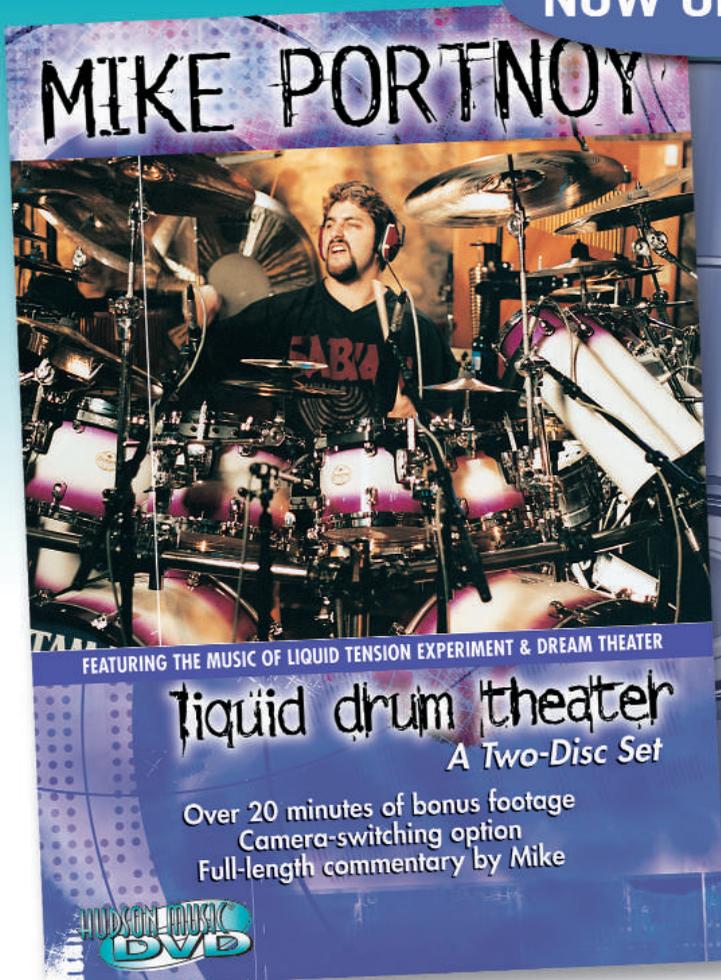
placing "basic" components of the kit on specific lines and spaces, and indicating variations by using different symbols on those lines and spaces. Thus a hi-hat (indicated by an abbreviation like "H.H.") will usually be indicated in the same place, but the symbol will vary to indicate closed, half-open, or open. Ditto for a ride cymbal ("R.C.") and the bell of that cymbal. Drums are indicated by abbreviations like "T.T." for tom-tom, "F.T." for floor tom, "S.D." for snare drum, and "B.D." for bass drum.

As an illustration of how this works, here's the music key for the transcription of Mike Cosgrove's performance on Alien Ant Farm's "Smooth Criminal," which appeared in the February 2002 issue of *Modern Drummer*.

MUSIC KEY			
	Open	R.C.	China Splash
H.H.	⊗	⊗	⊗
T.T.	●	●	
S.D.	●		
F.T.	●		
B.D.	●		
H.H. w/ foot	⊗	Add'l T.T.	

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even rawer, higher-pitched sounds.

"Impulse models were an extension of the company's first sheet bronze range, called Amir, which used B8 alloy (92% copper and 8% tin) and special manufacturing techniques. In order to be exceptionally bright, loud, and penetrating, Impulse models were completely un-lathed. They also featured a unique hammering approach and generally heavier weights across the range.

"By 1985, Zildjian had perfected its first computer-driven hammering machine. This new hammering technology facilitated the creation of the original Z Series cymbals. They were un-lathed cast cymbals that were heavier, louder, and more powerful than ever before. These qualities, along with the musical properties and greater durability of the Zildjian alloy, rapidly

made the Impulse range obsolete. It was therefore withdrawn in November of 1985 at the same time as the Z Series was introduced.

"Although short-lived, Impulse cymbals had many excellent sonic characteristics. The rides, in particular, were popular with many players. Even though they were created with heavy rock in mind, it is always 'the exception that proves the rule.' For example, believe it or not, Buddy Rich used a 20" Impulse ride for a while. And to this day Tim Alexander has a 22" Impulse ride that he plays regularly."

Sequencing On A D4

Q I'm interested in being able to sequence my Alesis D4 electronic drums. I'd like to be able to play a pattern on my D4 setup, then play along on my acoustic drums. Is this possible within the D4 itself? If not, what do you recommend I do to be able to accomplish my goal?

Pete Dunphy
via Internet

A MD electronic percussion writer Rick Long replies: "According to the Alesis D4's online manual (www.alesis.com/downloads/manuals/dm4_man.pdf), the unit does not have an internal sequencer. This means that you'll need some sort of external sequencer to achieve your goal. You probably already own the best one, which is your personal computer.

"Do you use computer recording software such as Cakewalk or Pro Tools? These programs are also sequencing programs that will accept data from the MIDI IN port on your computer or a MIDI IN/OUT cable that can be attached to the computer's joystick port. These cables are inexpensive and available at most electronics stores.

"With the sequencer program running, look on the menus and find where to select the 'MIDI Device' so that your computer knows where to look for the incoming data. You'll basically run the software like an audio recorder, except that you have to set your tempo prior to starting to record. You'll also need to make sure that the computer's click track is loud enough for you to hear while you're playing the drumkit.

"To connect everything together, run a MIDI cable from the Alesis D4 MIDI OUT

to the MIDI IN on the computer. To play back, go from the computer's MIDI OUT to the Alesis MIDI IN. If these connections are made at the same time, you may find that when you play the D4, it double triggers. This is because the module is playing the notes as you hit the pads, and the MIDI signals are circling through the computer and back to the module. This can be avoided on most modules by setting the 'local' setting to 'off.' This means that the pads will no longer play the module directly. But you'll still hear drum sounds, because the trigger signals will be routed through the computer and back to the module. Just remember to turn 'local' back to 'on' prior to any gigs so your drums will work the way you expect.

Another possibility is to get a stand-alone sequencer, like a Yamaha MIDI Data Filer. These are available for around \$350. But if you already own a computer, the software required to turn it into a sequencer will cost less. The computer/software combination also gives you more flexibility for editing your sequences."

Protecting Cymbals Between Uses

Q I'm thirteen, and I only get to play my drums on weekends. I have a nice set of cymbals on some very nice stands, but they sit on those stands from Monday through Thursday. Could leaving them hanging like that damage them?

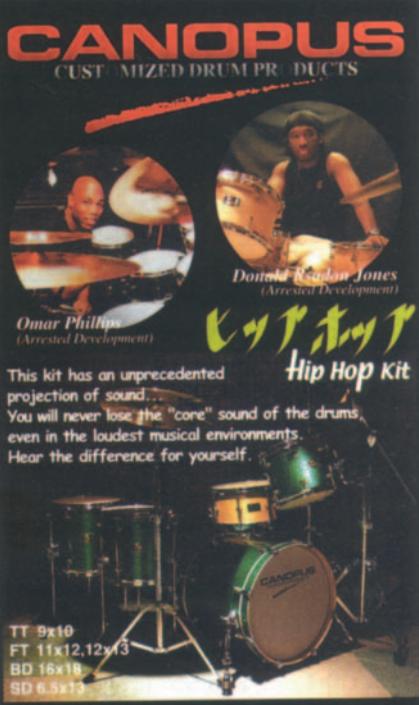
James
via Internet

A As long as your cymbal tilters (the tops of the stands) are equipped with felts, rubber supports, or other protective devices, and the threads on the bolts are covered by plastic sleeves to protect the holes in the cymbals, there should be no problem with leaving the cymbals set up. They actually undergo much less stress "hanging on the stands" between playing sessions than they do when you play them.

However, you might want to consider putting your cymbals in a bag or other protected area between playing sessions, for a totally different reason. Exposure to the air (and whatever is in it: humidity, dust, pollutants, etc.) can cause cymbals to tarnish. There's no reason to expose your cymbals to this risk when you're not using them.



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Dave Lombardo

Back In Slayer!



Just as *Modern Drummer* went to press with the Update on Slayer drummer Paul Bostaph (February 2002 issue), word came in that Bostaph had to forfeit the gig due to a chronic elbow injury that could worsen if he continued to perform with the act. Slayer's management looked no further than a man of the past for a temporary tour replacement, legendary Slayer skinsman Dave Lombardo.

Though Lombardo has prior commitments to his current projects, *Fantomas* (featuring Buzz Osbourne of The Melvins and Mr. Bungle's Mike Patton and Trevor Dunn) and *Grip Inc.*, downtime in both projects created a window of opportunity large enough to accept the temporary position.

"Slayer's manager called me up and told me about Paul's condition, and he asked me if I was willing to do a short tour," Lombardo says. "I told him I would think about it. Well, it only took me twenty-four hours. I called back and said, 'Sure, why not?' It's been ten years since I last played in the group, and at this point I didn't see anything wrong with accepting the chance to do it again."

Though Lombardo's tenure with Slayer was marred by an ugly breakup, he says the vibes this time around are more positive. After the hugs and re-acquainting were over, Lombardo had to catch up musically with his old crew.

"They sent me a fax with a list of the new and old tunes," Dave says, "and I immediately went to work analyzing and making notes of the new material so I'd be prepared when I showed up at rehearsal. As for the old tunes, well, I didn't touch them. In fact, I didn't even listen to them. I was curious to see how my memory had stored that info for the past ten years. I have to admit, when we got down to playing some of those tunes, I was just plain clueless. We'd be playing and I'd have to stop and say, 'I've gotta do my homework on this one. This is just not going to work right now.'"

As for adapting to Bostaph's playing on the more recent material, Lombardo says, "He rolls in different places from where I would, so basically what I did was go by the structure of the guitar parts and put my own thing into it. I didn't bother copying every single note Paul played."

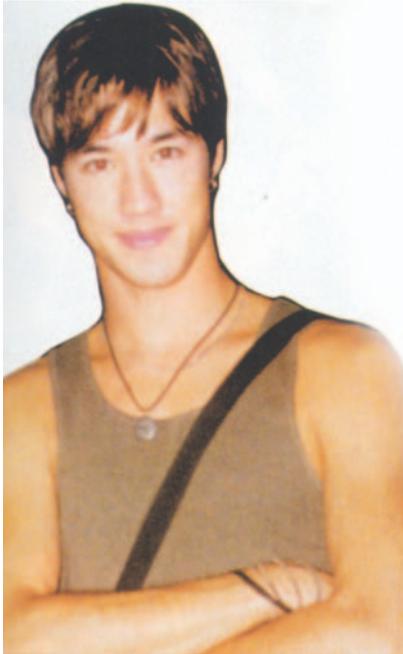
And what about the future for Lombardo and Slayer past this tour? "As far as I know, it's just this tour. But I think it's been a treat for the band's long-time fans. I'm glad to be doing it."

Waleed Rashidi

Shakira's

Brendan Buckley

READY FOR THE GOOD TIMES



Brendan Buckley is on a roll. Besides touring and recording with South American superstar Shakira, he's been involved with co-writing and producing her Pepsi commercial and the track "Fool" off her multi-platinum English debut, *Laundry Service*.

"One of the cool things about Shakira is that *she* wanted live drums on every cut of her new record," Brendan says. Before Shakira, the drummer made the rounds with Latin superstars Julio Iglesias, Fulano de Tal, Pedro Suarez, and Alejandra Guzman.

So how did a twenty-seven-year-old of Korean/Irish descent from Mt. Arlington, New Jersey become so heavily involved in the Latin music scene? "I moved down to Miami after high school to attend the University Of Miami," he says. "Fortunately, the work has been plentiful.

"School was a great experience," Brendan continues. "I got the chance to play with a lot of musicians and in different styles, like orchestral, jazz, and fusion. And just being in Miami exposed me to the whole Latin scene. That's when I really started to focus on playing Latin grooves."

Buckley says he likes playing all styles. "When I was in high school I was playing in the jazz band," he recalls. "Tony Williams was a big influence. Later on I was playing in a rock band, and I was a huge Stewart Copeland/Police fan. I have a lot of influences. To this day, Steve Gadd is the biggest one."

Brendan's style-hopping even includes performing on a Number-1 rap record, DMX's *Great Depression*. "DMX was recording down at The Hit Factory in Miami, and he decided that he wanted to use a live band on the track 'Blood Line Anthem.' So the producer called me in to play drums over an MPC loop. DMX was a very cool guy and great to work with."

So what's next? Brendan hardly seems able to control his enthusiasm. "We're getting ready to go on a world tour with Shakira."

Billy Amendola

Alan White

Yes Magnified

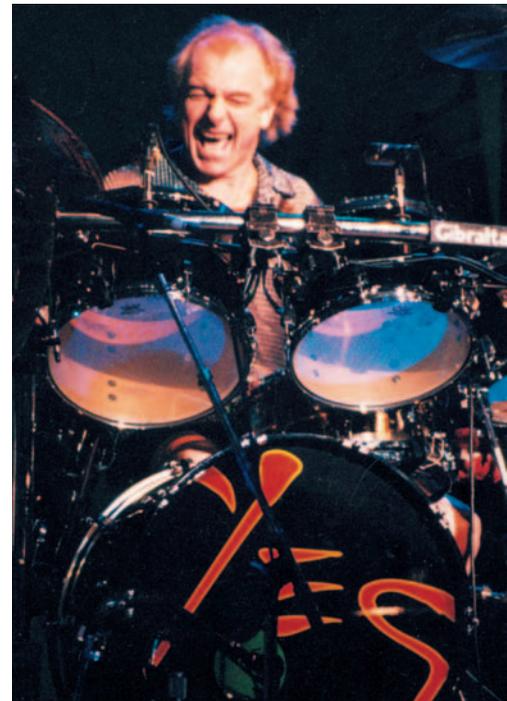
"Chris Squire, Jon Anderson, Steve Howe, and I wrote all of the material in the studio," explains drummer Alan White of Yes about their recent album, *Magnification*. With a rare keyboardist-free Yes lineup, the band decided to utilize a symphony orchestra as an integral part of its compositions.

According to White, "We were in Santa Barbara for a couple of months making the album. Then our arranger, Emmy Award-winning composer Larry Groupé, would come into the studio every week and summarize what we'd done. He'd do orchestral arrangements on keyboards and bring them back the following week. We'd either sanction them or ask for revisions." Once Yes had okayed his backing tracks, Groupé scored the compositions using the San Diego Symphony Orchestra.

Yes was very conscious to leave spaces for the orchestral arrangements. As far as White's specific contributions, "Most of the parts I wrote were on keyboards. So we started that way, then I played the drums, and then later I redid the keyboards for the final mix." "In The Presence Of" particularly shows White's ability as a composer. In fact, it's a little-known fact that his keyboard contributions have been a mainstay of Yes's music ever since he joined the group in the early '70s, just prior to *Tales From Topographic Oceans*.

As Groupé was scoring the album, some bandmembers suggested he take his cue from composers like Sibelius or Ravel. "But I wanted more extreme types of arrangements," White chuckles. "I kept suggesting Stravinsky and Wagner." Alan's long been fond of symphonic music. "When you play forty shows in a row of progressive rock, you tend to want to listen to something completely different."

Robert Kaye



Paul Wertico

Cutting Loose

“I’m forty-eight now, and I feel great. I’ve been working out, and I feel energized and liberated.” So says Paul Wertico, who left The Pat Metheny Group in 2001 after eighteen years.

“When you’re with a band for a long time,” Wertico explains, “everything else is a side project, including your own band. Pat was a great gig and a wonderful career opportunity. But I have a lot of things happening, and I thought it was time to see where my stuff could go. So far it’s been pretty cool. There’s more joy in what I’m doing because I’m in the present. I played a gig with singer Kurt Elling, and he said I played ‘like a completely different person.’ I *feel* different.”

Paul’s latest trio CD, *Don’t Be Scared Anymore* (Premonition Records) is doing great. “The reviews have been unbelievable, and it’s selling consistently,” he says. “Now we have an agent and are trying to book some short tours. We had a weekly gig here in Chicago where we packed the place. People were coming back every week because we played differently each night. Then I had to cut it loose because I went on tour in Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic with a band called SBB. They’re one of the most famous groups in Eastern Europe from the ‘70s and ‘80s, and they’re making a comeback. The tour was great. We were on all these MTV-type shows, we did radio-station performances, and we had sold-out gigs. I was playing like John Bonham. Their music is heavy, really bass-drum oriented. I feel like I’m twenty!”

Besides teaching at Northwestern University, Paul keeps a full schedule. “I did an Irish music recording yesterday,” he says. “I have a bunch of students today, and tomorrow I have a gig with my own band. This weekend I fly to North Texas State for a clinic and then to Spain for a two-week tour with French pianist Neils Lan Doky. Touring for two or three weeks at a time is much different from going away for two or three months, which is what I did with Metheny. I have a five-and-a-half-year-old daughter, and my family is really tight. I love Pat’s group, but I just couldn’t see going out for a whole year again. I love touring, but in moderation.”

You can keep up with Paul’s activities at www.paulwertico.com.

Michael Bettine



CHAD GRACEY

Not Quite As Live As Usual

“The thing I’m most particular about is the snare drum,” Live’s Chad Gracey says during a recent interview, answering a question about his drum sounds. “Right now I’m using a... God, I knew this was going to leave me.... Oh, man, I’ll think of it!”

Though Gracey’s memory is apparently on the fritz at the moment, his performance sure isn’t, as best evidenced on Live’s recently released *V*. Gracey banged out all his drum parts in a couple of weeks, and contrary to the band’s moniker, the recording session for *V* was anything *but* live. (Basic tracking sessions for the band’s earlier releases were always recorded with the full band.)

“This time Ed [Kowalczyk, singer/songwriter] went in with his ideas and laid down scratch tracks with a click track,” Gracey explains. “Then I went in and laid down the drum parts afterwards by myself. That was amazing for me. It freed me up from having to try to play the whole song all the way through. I could do everything I wanted to do and not worry about messing up.”

This was also Gracey’s first time working with a click track and some new technology, namely Pro Tools. “It was all done with Pro Tools,” he says. “I thought it was great. I had reservations recording with a click track before, but I didn’t end up having a problem.”

As for the snare drum Gracey couldn’t remember? Thanks to the latest in technology, he was able to fire off an email message a few minutes later: “I just called my tech and found out the name,” he says. “It’s a Keplinger snare. So there you have it.”

Waleed Rashidi





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Stabbing Westward's

Andy Kubiszewski

A NATURAL
DIRECTION

Andy Kubiszewski knows the best-formulated plans often fall by the wayside when opportunity comes knocking. "Originally when I got into playing the drums, my goal was to get a job in an orchestra," says the drummer for Chicago's post-industrial hard rockers Stabbing Westward.

Curiously, Andy's first foray into the rock realm wasn't even as a drummer, but as a vocalist for Exotic Birds, an '80s band whose name may be familiar due to the high profile of their former keyboard player, Trent Reznor. In 1993, Andy got a pivotal gig playing drums for Matt Johnson's The The. "That was really the first time I had done anything worthwhile as a drummer," he admits. From there, Andy recorded with Reznor's Nine Inch Nails and toured with Crowded House. He joined his current band in 1994.

Stabbing Westward's self-titled fourth album represents a profound departure for a band notorious for recording songs dense with playing and programming. Andy explains the group's prime objective upon entering the studio: "Musically, we decided there were two choices: follow the current trend of really heavy music—the genre that we had been in forever—or make a complete break and do something no one expected, which was to go a lot poppier."

To make their sound more accessible, while still creating melodically inventive hard rock, the band went back to basics. "We didn't want to use any programming or click tracks," the drummer says, "and we didn't use a computer, which was completely alien to us. We wanted to do it like bands used to—just sit down and play your part."

"I'm the kind of drummer who just likes to play within the song," Andy continues. "I'm not interested in putting out a record that drummers listen to and go, 'Oh, that guy's got chops, man.' That's not my vibe. My interest was trying to capture the sound of my drumkit in a very natural, organic way—the way it sounds when I sit behind it. I just went in and cut all the drum tracks live, with our bass player."

Andy's very happy with the way his drums sound on the finished record. "It's been hard for us to capture Stabbing Westward in a live environment. This is the closest that we've come."

Gail Worley



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FABRIZIO MORETTI

Driving The Strokes

For Fabrizio Moretti, the twenty-year-old drummer with The Strokes, his role in the New York buzz band is all about propulsion: Watch him pound out 32nd-note-ride patterns in perfect sync with the group's two frantically strumming guitarists and you can't help but think of a subway train hurtling full-speed down the tracks.

"There's something about the driving force of the drums," Moretti says. "I don't mean to belittle anyone or say anything bad about any drummer, but sometimes I feel like some people just want to put the spotlight on themselves and fill as much as they possibly can. But it doesn't help the rhythm and the drive of the song. I feel that a steady beat—or even a consciously *///*steady beat—is more important than all those fills."

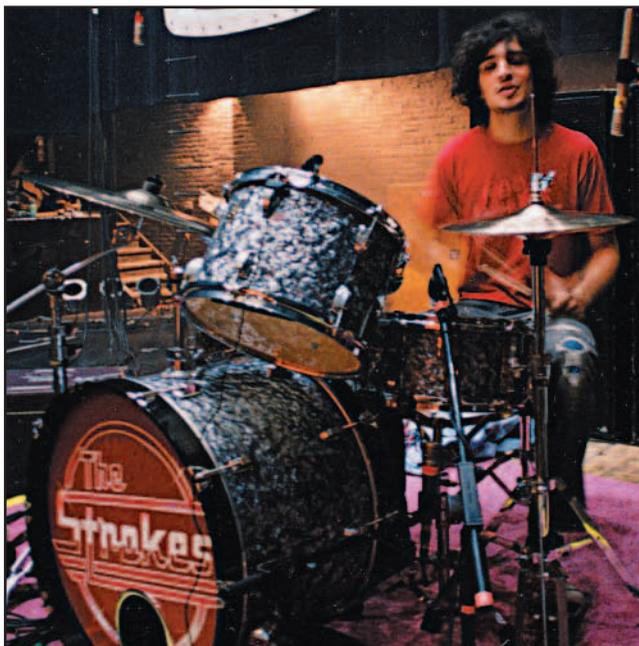
Raised in midtown Manhattan, Moretti started playing drums by soundproofing a closet in his mom's apartment so he could bash along with albums featuring his favorite players, Dave Grohl of Nirvana and Maureen Tucker of The Velvet Underground. He also studied for a

year in his mid-teens at the prestigious Turtle Bay Music School. "I guess it's like when you do art: You can't break away with your own style unless you know the fundamentals," he says. "All those rudiments really help you to keep your left hand very steady and bring it up to par with your right

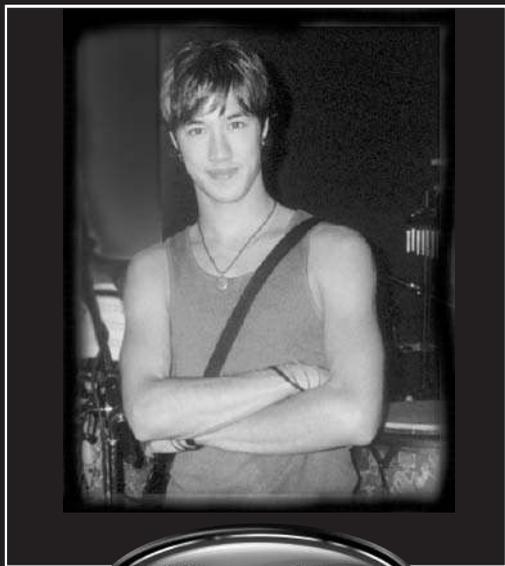
hand. And it stabilizes your body, because while you're doing stick control with your hands, you have to keep a beat with your foot. Later, you can strip all that away and just play the simplest beat, but play it steadier than you would have had you not learned that."

This devotion to steady time finds Moretti limiting himself to a simple four-piece Ludwig set with one 22" Zildjian ride, and rehearsing along with a drum machine as a click track. The woodshedding pays off with the spartan economy and irresistible drive of The Strokes' hard-rocking, critically hailed RCA debut, *Is This It*. Moretti's credo? "If it's not super-steady and complementing the guitars, it's not good enough."

Jim DeRogatis



Brendan Buckley



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NEWS

Steve Smith is touring the states with Vital Information.

Rayford Griffin is working with a variety of artists, including Stanley Clarke and Rick Braun.

Warren G is listed as drummer, producer, and executive producer of his newest release, *Return Of The Regulator*.



Adrian Passarelli is on tour with Nelly Furtado.

Joe Franco is on Magellan's new Magna Carta disc, and he also just completed a CD-ROM compilation of multi-tracked drum loops called *Reeldrums*. (Check out www.reeldrums.com.) The main focus of Joe's time now is playing drums and composing segue music for the Emmy-nominated children's TV show *Between The Lions*.

D.J. Fontana is on Ron Wood's new album, *Not For Beginners*.

Michael Urbano is on SmashMouth's self-titled third CD and is touring with the band.

Paul John (right) is touring with Alicia Keys.



Omar Phillips has been recording with Speech and The Tony Rich Project (which also features **Victor Alexander** on drums). He played percussion on the all-star tribute recording of "What's Going On?," with **Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson** and **John Otto** on drums. Omar is also sharing drum duties with **Lil' John Roberts** for U.K. soul-queen Julie Dexter's US dates.

Brian Tichy, Clem Burke, and Eric Singer are on former Guns 'N Roses guitarist Gilby Clarke's new CD, *Swag*.

Update correction: In the March 2002 issue we reported that **Jimmy Chamberlin** has a new project that just released a self-titled CD, *The Last Hard Men*. The CD is just out, but it was actually recorded in 1996. Jimmy's new project is called Zwan, and features former Pumpkin leader Billy Corgan along with Matt Sweeney and David Pajo.

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

John Bonham was born on May 31, 1948.

Jazz great **Billy Higgins** passed away on May 4, 2001.

The Beach Boys release *Pet Sounds* on May 6, 1966 with session drummer **Hal Blaine** laying down the drum tracks.

The Who (with **Keith Moon**) go into the *Guinness Book Of Records* when they are proclaimed "The Loudest Band In The World" on May 31, 1976.

Jason Bonham fills in for his dad when Led Zeppelin reunites at Atlantic Records' 40th Anniversary concert on May 14, 1988.

Happy Birthday!

- Freddie Gruber** (May 27, 1927)
- Levon Helm** (May 26, 1942)
- Billy Cobham** (May 16, 1944)
- Bill Kreutzmann** (May 7, 1946)
- Butch Trucks** (May 11, 1947)
- Bill Ward** (May 5, 1948)
- Bill Bruford** (May 17, 1948)
- Paulinho Da Costa** (May 31, 1948)
- Prairie Prince** (May 7, 1950)
- Sly Dunbar** (May 10, 1952)
- Alex Van Halen** (May 8, 1955)
- Mark Herndon** (May 11, 1955)
- Stan Lynch** (May 21, 1955)
- Mel Gaynor** (May 29, 1959)
- Dave Abbruzzese** (May 17, 1964)



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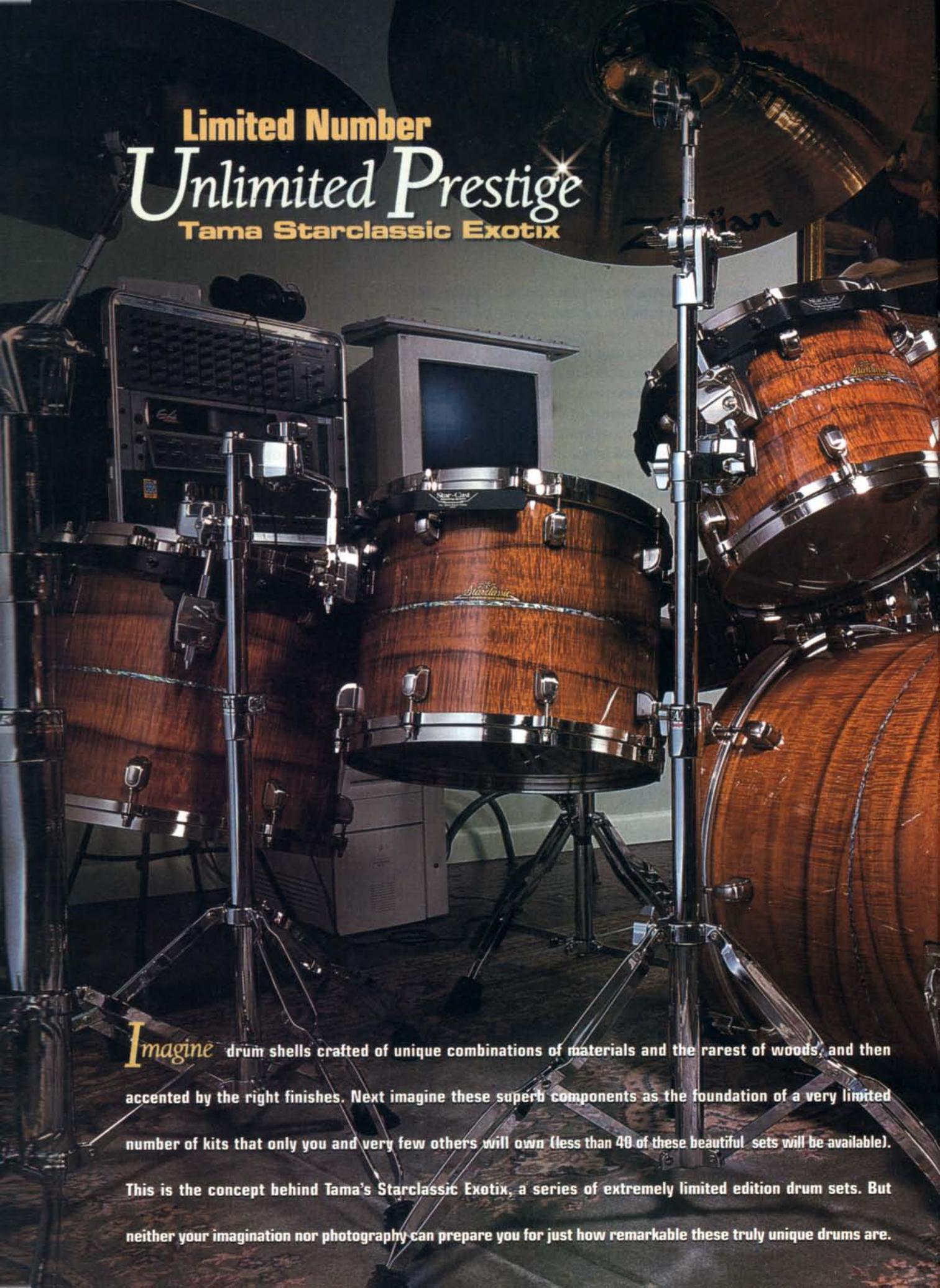
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Our second offering of Starclassic Exotix drums features shells with an outer ply of very rare Hawaiian Koa and eight plies of select Bubinga.



Each drum is fitted with brushed nickel plated hardware and is inlaid with genuine abalone.



Completing the vintage vibe, the front bass drum head is made of stretched natural goatskin with a special Star insignia.



www.tama.com

For more detailed information about the limited 7pc. Koa/Bubinga kit, please visit our website. The Starclassic Hawaiian Koa/Bubinga set is Tama's second Exotix offering. The first of these limited edition kits debuted at the Winter 2001 NAMM show and featured shells of Chestnut finished in Sierra Gold Burst. Only 49 of those kits were available worldwide.

Anniversary Customs New Zildjian A Custom Models

Zildjian is celebrating the tenth anniversary of their A Custom series. The company figures that when you've got a good thing, you stick with it, so they've just released several new A Custom models.

The line now includes 14", 15", 16", 17", and 18" Fast crashes (\$212-\$302), designed to provide "a bright, responsive crash sound with a short decay." Also new are 12" Mastersound models (\$340 per pair), the first 12" hats to feature the Mastersound hammering technology and sculpted edge for "an extremely focused, bold, and crisp sound."

New A Custom rides include 20", 21", and 22" medium models (\$346-\$414). They're designed for versatility, with "clear

stick definition, shimmering spread, and a bell with cutting power that won't overpower the band." Also available is a 20" sizzle ride (\$346). Medium-thin and fitted with six rivets, it's designed to create "the crisp, sweet shimmer of an A custom combined with the added twist of the 'sizzle' sound."

All of the new models were developed in conjunction with Vinnie Colaiuta, with an eye to versatility for live and studio applications. The A Custom range utilizes rotary hammering techniques, thin weights, and a brilliant finish to create "a sweet, sophisticated sound."

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Available in several popular configurations and ten hand-rubbed lacquer finishes, Saturn Pro drumkits feature 750 Performing Artist Series stands and pedals. Toms come with the Mapex Isolated Tom System (I.T.S.) to maximize each drum's acoustic characteristics.

The shells of the affordable Pro M series have also been upgraded. The new 6.1-mm thin shells feature alternating maple/basswood/maple layers, said to provide a focused sound with superior tuning range and resonance. The sets are equipped with 550 series stands and 750 series bass drum pedals and hi-hats. Kits and component drums are available in a wide range of hand-rubbed lacquer finishes, including Benchmark, Crystal, Ice, and transparent gloss.

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Something For The Little Folks

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Remo's existing Kid's Percussion line has won numerous parenting awards, including the Oppenheim Toy Portfolio's "Best Toy" award five times. Now a new line of children's instruments called Rhythm Club has been released at an affordable price point to reach an even larger portion of this important market. The line includes a four-jingled, single-headed tambourine, a 6x12 Konga with strap, 5x5/5x6 children's bongos, and a 6x10 floor tom. The drums feature a vibrant, multicultural-themed covering. Bright blue molded feet and bottoms (except on the tambourine) elevate the drums from the ground so that even the smallest percussionist can make great sounds. The drums are finished with matching blue web piping, and come standard with Remo's Renaissance heads.

☎ (661) 294-5600, 🌐 www.remo.com.

Hot Stuff

Trick Flame Model Snare Drums

Looking for something a little exotic in a metal snare drum? This new Trick model features a "flame" design that's machined completely through the all-aluminum shell in four places. This not only looks exotic, but helps produce the powerful, dry crack of a vented snare. The drums feature new logo badges and Nickel Drumworks strainers.

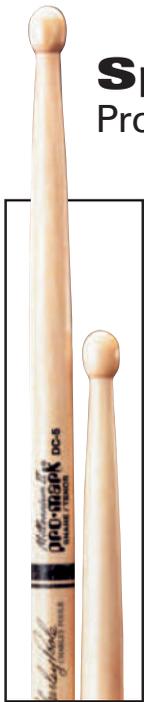
☎ (847) 519-9911,

🌐 www.trickdrums.com.



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To carry your big sticks (and mallets, and brushes, and...), there's Pro-Mark's new and improved JMB2 Jumbo Mallet bag. It features a large outside pocket for books, deep inside pockets, and additional storage areas. Made of a cordura-type material, the bag comes with heavy-duty handles and a shoulder strap, at a list price of \$99.95.

Y (800) 233-5250, www.promark-stix.com.

Earthy Percussion

Toca Ceramic Drums

Toca's Earthenware Ceramic Drums produce a unique sound when slapped and muffled. They're designed to be as attractive as they are interesting to listen to. Three models are available: the Mini (small single-hole) at \$59.50, the Mombo (large single-hole) at \$89.50, and the Mombo with head (large single-hole with drumhead) at \$105.50. Each drum is hand-made and features a one-of-a-kind design. Y (860) 509-8888, www.kamanmusic.com.



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If you have trouble getting or keeping your drums in tune, you might want to try DW's new Tunerz. Developed in conjunction with master-drummer Terry Bozzio, Tunerz combine tension rods with notched heads and interlocking flex receivers. This creates a system said to prevent de-tuning during playing while also providing a method for even, incremental tuning of any drum. The rods are available in 10-packs in a choice of DW's True-Pitch (5 mm) or standard (10-24) threads to replace conventional $1\frac{3}{8}$ ", $1\frac{5}{8}$ ", $2\frac{1}{4}$ ", and $2\frac{3}{4}$ " tension rods. Packs are priced at \$19.95.

Y (805) 485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.



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GIBRALTAR's new Rack Factory instructional book shows over thirty ways to increase the efficiency and set-up of a rack system. Rack options are pictured in full setups and then broken down into individual options and part models. The book can be obtained through Kaman Music. ☎ (860) 509-8888, 🌐 www.kamanmusic.com.

DRUMS AROUND THE WORLD is offering the Zulu Drum, a 20x10 lightweight metal hand drum with suede heads and monofilament polymer lacing. Each drum comes with an adjustable shoulder strap. Drums are available in solid colors (\$199.95) or hand-painted custom finishes (\$275). Carrying bags are available at \$49.95. ☎ (830) 792-5273.

The **PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY (PAS)** now offers its entire collection of research publications in pdf format on a single compact disk. (The disk includes an enhanced version of Adobe Acrobat Reader with a search function.) The publications contain a wealth of information on all areas of percussion, including symphonic, marching and rudimental, drumset, mallet-keyboard, and world percussion. Prices are \$19.95 for PAS members and \$24.95 for non-members.

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The Tote "Stick It" kit from **EZ PERCUSSION PRODUCTS** is designed to make any flat-bottomed single-sided practice pad a portable unit. The kit includes a leg strap equipped with one side of a hook-and-loop fastener system, along with an adhesive pad (with the other side of the fastener) that attaches to the bottom of your practice pad. List price is \$12.95. EZ Percussion also sells a 6" pad that works well with the Tote "Stick It."

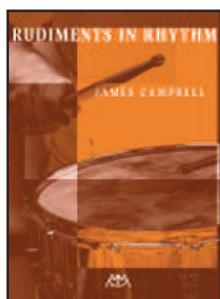
☎ (805) 643-7500, 🌐 www.ezpercussion.com.

The **ZICKOS DRUM COMPANY** has moved to a larger facility. New contact information for the company is: Zickos Drum Company, 2540 W. Pennway, Kansas City, MO 64108, ☎ (816) 474-7474, 🌐 www.zickosdrums.com.

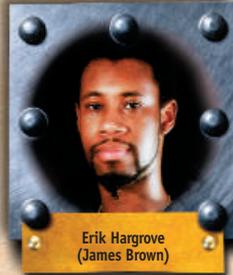
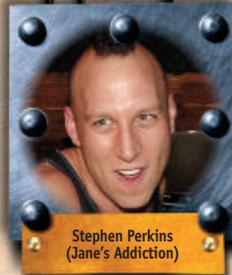
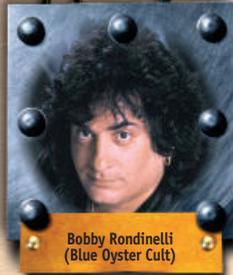
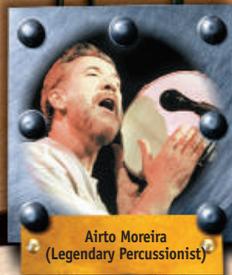
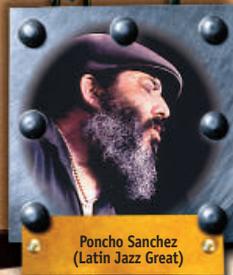
SIBELIUS 2 music-notation software is now available in the US. The program integrates more than two hundred new features and enhancements, making it more applicable to everyone from professional composers and publishers to students. The initial version is for Windows; a Macintosh OS X version is scheduled for release in the first quarter of 2002. ☎ (925) 280-0600, 🌐 www.sibelius.com.

MEREDITH MUSIC PUBLICATIONS has released *Rudiments In Rhythm* by James Campbell. Campbell is president of the Percussive Arts Society and is a well-known teacher as well as a clinician for Zildjian Cymbals and Yamaha Percussion. Inspired by Charley Wilcoxon's *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos*, the book offers twenty-two original solos written for developing students as well as advanced drummers. The solos make use of the forty PAS International Drum Rudiments and many contemporary hybrid rudiments. ☎ (301) 261-5015, 🌐 www.meredithmusic.com.

SENNHEISER ELECTRONIC CORPORATION has extended the warranty on their affordable Evolution wired microphone series from one year to ten years. The new warranty applies to all Evolution wired mic's sold since January 1, 2002. The move underscores the company's confidence in the ruggedness and reliability of the Evolution line. ☎ (860) 434-9190, 🌐 www.sennheiserusa.com.



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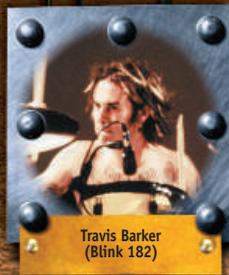
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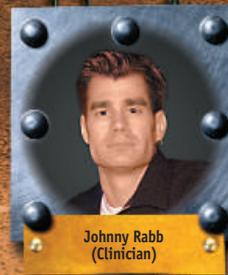
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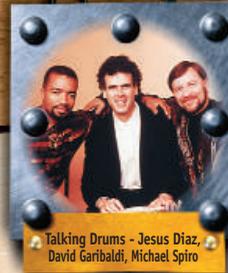
Vicki Randle
(Tonight Show Band)



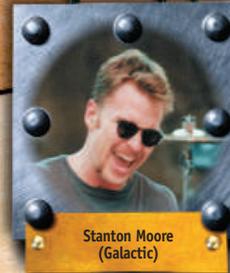
Herman Matthews III
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MISSES

could do with warmer heads

by Chap Ostrander

In the late 1960s and early '70s a select group of artists played clear drumsets made by Ludwig and a few other companies. (*MD* featured a story on such sets only last month.) I was impressed with those kits then, and I still am today.

To my mind, Ludwig's Vistalite series offered the most creative use of acrylics. The original line of clear drums came out in 1969, and they became instant classics. Later came colors, stripes, built-in lights—lots of cool stuff. Unfortunately, the oil embargo of the early '70s sounded the death knell of these unique drums.

Until now, that is. After over twenty years off the market, Ludwig has brought back Vistalite drums. Let's check them out.

Design And Construction

The kit is fitted with Ludwig's Mini-Classic lugs. The snare features nice, cushiony rubber gaskets under the lugs, while the toms and bass drum have



fiber gaskets that perfectly match the size of the lugs. You almost can't see them. The overall weight of the drums is comparable to that of wood-shelled drums—neither heavier nor lighter.

One criticism of the original acrylic shells of the '60s was that they were prone to cracking at major stress points. I mentioned these concerns to Ludwig marketing manager Jim Catalano. He assured me that plastics technology has improved over the years, and that the new shells are significantly stronger. Ludwig has also added a clear 1/4" reinforcement strip along the inside of every seam. On top of that, Ludwig's use of Vibra-Band suspension mounts to hold the rack toms takes that pressure off the shells completely. There is also plenty of reinforcement where the tom mount goes through the bass drum shell.

The Vistalite shells are beautifully finished, with almost indiscernible seams. I found all our review drums to be perfectly round, with flawless double 45° bearing edges. Blue/green logo badges complement the shells. The black wood bass drum hoops inlaid with silver sparkle also looked good against the chrome hardware and clear shells.

As you might expect with a clear drumkit, the Vistalite set comes with mostly clear drumheads—all of Ludwig's own brand. The bass drum is fitted with a clear Power Collar batter, which has an internal muffling ring. The front head is a clear single-ply logo head. The toms come standard with clear WeatherMaster Heavy heads. The snare has a coated white medium batter and a clear snare-side head.

Hardware

The hardware package with the kit features Ludwig's single-braced 800 series cymbal and hi-hat stands. I like these stands; they all do the job in a solid way without being too heavy. The snare stand's infinitely adjustable tilter is mounted right underneath the snare basket, allowing the stand to go rather low. A double tom holder is mounted on the bass drum shell.

Another historic element of the Vistalite kit is the inclusion of a Speed King bass pedal. The current model looks, plays, and feels pretty much the same as the one I owned thirty years ago, except that it now has black finished posts and highlights on the footboard. Drummers seem to love or hate the Speed King, owing to the unique playing action created by its footboard linkage design. For those who like that action, it can be very fast and smooth. (It also seems that Ludwig has excised the Speed King's trademark "unfindable" squeak. Ah, progress!)

Sound

I think we can agree that the Vistalites look cool. But how do they sound? Let's work up from the bottom.

I was not impressed with the sound of the bass drum with its original Ludwig heads. It was too boomy and unfocused. After trying different configurations, I kept the clear Ludwig head on the front of the drum and used an Evans EMAD batter. The best way to describe the sound is *whoomp*. I had to add a felt strip across the lower portion of the front head to cut the still-boomy nature of the drum. It's possible that a front head with internal muffling would work better in tandem with the Evans batter head. I have to admit, it can be tough to get the exact sound you want if your head choices are limited to clear models in order to maintain the look of the kit.

Contrary to what you might expect of acrylic shells, there is no brittleness to the sound of Vistalite drums. They're not as warm as wood shells, but neither are they as bright as metal or composites. Their primary characteristic is a centered, focused sound (with the exception of the bass drum, as described above). I'm of the opinion that the toms would sound warmer with a different set of heads. I think the Ludwig heads are a bit stiff for these drums. Still, the two rack toms and the floor tom all had clear tones that blended well together.

The snare drum performed well over a wide range of tuning, from a high, piercing crack to a fat, full-bodied sound. Like the other drums, it was very focused, and it had plenty of projection and cut without sounding brittle.

Clearly A Good Idea

Vistalites are part of drumming's history. But that doesn't make them any less contemporary. Personally, I find them visually striking. They certainly stand apart from wood and composite shells that come in a million different finishes. At the same time, they produce a distinctive and consistent sound. Good looks *and* performance—who wouldn't go for that?

THE NUMBERS

Configuration: 8x12 and 9x13 rack toms, 16x16 floor tom, 16x22 bass drum, and 5x14 snare drum. Clear acrylic shells. Ludwig 800 Series single-braced stands, Speed King bass drum pedal, Vibra-Band suspension mounts on rack toms, and LR2980MT tom mount. Drums equipped with Ludwig Weather Master heads.

List Price: **\$3,945**

P (219) 522-1675.

www.ludwig-drums.com.



Zildjian Mixed Bag

A Little Something For Everyone

HITS

A Zildjian Deep ride offers classic '70s fusion sound

K Custom Dark splashes are subtle and sensitive

ZBT-Plus Max hi-hats offer maximum volume at minimal price

by Mike Haid

Over the past few months Zildjian has released a mixed bag of new models that run the gamut of musical applications, acoustic performance, and price range. Let's take a look at each new offering individually.

20" And 22" A Zildjian Deep Rides

The A Zildjian Deep ride was a favorite of jazz-rock fusion drummers in the 1970s. (Peter Erskine used a 22" model on all of his recordings with the legendary Weather Report.) The newly reintroduced Deep rides feature a very simple design, with no fancy hammering, lathing, or coatings. Their overall tone is thick and clean, with excellent stick definition. The buildup of overtones is minimal. The bell is loud and solid.

These are heavy cymbals that produce a low-end sustain when played with a heavy hand. The 20" Deep ride also works well as a crash/ride, but the 22" is a bit too heavy to create any type of substantial crash effect. If you're looking for a ride cymbal with plenty of "ping" and not a lot of "wash," you should give the Deep ride a try.

8", 10", And 12" K Custom Dark Splashes

If you're already accustomed to the dark tones of Zildjian's K Custom series, you'll have no problem relating to the beautiful sounds produced by this new line of splashes. The sweet sounds of the K Custom Dark splashes offer the perfect complement to the subtle dark wash that the K Custom series is known for.

The cymbals look like they've been used for target practice with a BB gun. But those small hammering marks help spread the sound and give the cymbals a warmer tone. All three sizes produce a more subtle tone than that offered by splashes that are typically bright and abrasive. If you're looking for warmth and subtlety in a splash, look no further.



20" and 22" A Zildjian Deep Rides



8", 10", and 12" K Custom Dark Splashes



14" K Custom Special Dry Hi-Hats



14" ZBT-Plus Max Hi-Hats



14" Azuka Sombrero Hi-Hats

14" K Custom Special Dry Hi-Hats

These hi-hat cymbals are sure to attract visual attention. They look like small, circular shields that were abused in battle during a medieval war! But when it comes to cymbals, beauty is in the ear of the beholder, and these are some of the sweetest-sounding 14" hi-hats you're likely to find. Their hammering is the same as is used on the K Custom Special Dry ride: a combination of K Custom and Re-Mix hammering processes. The cymbals are fully lathed underneath but "scored" on top, using a new lathing tool and technique.

These "ugly ducklings" were developed with the help of jazz drummer Greg Hutchinson (Joshua Redman). They produce a deep, full-bodied sound, and they have a dark, warm tone that gives a fat "chick" sound when they're played with the foot pedal. The initial tone quality reminded me of the classic Steve Gadd hi-hat sound. It's a dry tone that allows for solid stick articulation when the hats are played closed. This is a highly versatile pair of hi-hats with superior sound qualities that will work well for many musical styles.

14" ZBT-Plus Max Hi-Hats

Simply put, these hi-hats are loud as hell. The ZBT-Plus design features a bottom cymbal with a "wrinkled" edge. This allows for rapid air release, creating a quick, bright "chick" sound.

The ZBT-Plus Max hi-hats aren't intended for "tasty" playing applications. In fact, when they're played closed with a stick, the cymbals have a thin, hollow sound without much of a full-bodied response. But when you play these babies half-opened (in rock-ride fashion), they kill. If you're looking for a bright, sharp hi-hat sound that cuts through high-volume music, these reasonably priced cymbals are a great choice.

14" Azuka Sombrero Hi-Hats

These hombres are mucho innovative! The 13³/₄" bottom cymbal has a "wrinkled" edge, along with six rivets with tambourine jingles dangling from them. The 14" top cymbal features the Azuka Multi-Crash design with a flanged edge that turns downward, overhanging the edge of the smaller bottom cymbal.

This design was conceived by Latin drummer/percussionist Efrain Toro to offer drummers and percussionists a variety of tonal colors. The bottom hi-hat jingles help enhance the "chick" sound when the hats are closed with the foot. The top cymbal sounds best when played on the lathed portion near the edge.

This cymbal combo creates a full-bodied open hi-hat sound. When played closed with the hands (no sticks), the jingle sound is a bit more noticeable, but not overstated. In fact, in a live or studio situation the jingle sound might not be obvious at all unless the bottom cymbal were sonically supported by a microphone. This is a fun design that offers lots of acoustic possibilities—and in a reasonable price range.

THE NUMBERS

A Zildjian Deep Rides	
20"	\$320
22"	\$382
K Custom Dark Splashes	
8"	\$148
10"	\$168
12"	\$196
K Custom Special Dry Hi-Hats	
14"	\$520 (pair)
ZBT-Plus Max Hi-Hats	
14"	\$206 (pair)
Azuka Sombrero Hi-Hats	
14"	\$392 (pair)

☎ (781) 871-2200,

🌐 www.zildjian.com.



Yamaha Steve Jordan Maple Signature Snare Drum

Great Sound, With A Conscience

HITS

lots of sound for a 13" drum

great snare response

environmentally friendly materials and construction

by Kevin D. Osborne

When Yamaha and Steve Jordan (Keith Richards, Blues Brothers, *Saturday Night Live*) began discussing the design for a signature snare, Steve wanted the drum to be created in a way that would ensure that our timber resources were preserved. The result is a 6½x13 snare made from maple that's harvested exclusively from reforested areas. The adhesive used between the plies is environmentally friendly, as is the finish used on the shell. Even the snare wires are non-plated to avoid the chemicals used in the plating process.

The drum features a thin, 4-ply shell with 6-ply reinforcement rings. According to Yamaha, this design allows the drum to resonate longer and yield a louder sound. The drum also has a 35° bearing edge. This supposedly retains the energy on the head longer before transmitting it to the shell, resulting in a faster, sharper sound. The Jordan Signature snare is the only Yamaha drum constructed in this manner.

One Drum To Another

As part of my review process I took the Jordan snare to a local percussion shop, where I compared it to two drums of similar construction that were fitted with similar heads. Of course, I knew that even under these circumstances the drums wouldn't sound the same. But that's the point: It's the differences that are worth noting. A signature snare should have its own unique sound. I was using the other drums mainly as points of reference against which to define the unique sound of the Jordan drum.

I tuned all the drums into a middle range—neither fat and deep nor high and cracking. When compared to a 5x14 snare, the Yamaha had more of an open sound, and more depth. My teenage drummer son said it had "panache," meaning style and class. When compared to a 5x13 drum, the



Yamaha produced a rounder tone that was more melodic. The shallower drum had a bit more crack, but not the same tonal personality.

Time To Face The Music

My next step was to hear the drum in a musical setting. Since my son is in the local high school jazz band, we took it to a rehearsal.

The evening started with a lively Latin piece featuring a lot of percussion. With the snares off, the Jordan snare produced a good, chunky timbale sound with an appreciable ring—holding its own against the background of timbales and congas. The rim-click sound was solid and full. The fact that the drum is one inch smaller than a standard snare didn't diminish its sound in the least.

The next tune was a full-out swing piece, featuring the entire twenty-piece band. The Jordan drum really woke up (and woke *me* up as well). It wasn't behind the band, it was in the middle of it. It sounded great along with all those horns blaring away. Beats and accents were pronounced, and the occasional fills stood out as prominently as those played on any big snare I've heard.

Gettin' Cranky

If this snare can sing with swing, it also can ring through loud and clear in the range it was built for. I generally don't like a high-pitched snare, but when I cranked the Jordan snare up to near-piccolo tension, it retained all of its musicality. It wasn't necessary to play rimshots in order to make the drum heard. It still had plenty of snare sound that didn't get lost when the heads were tightened.

Steve Jordan's signature playing style requires a strong snare voice that stands out and cuts through the music. His Signature model is certainly a drum that can meet those requirements. It's a little powerhouse that really sings when there's lots of music around it. Whether you want a primary or secondary snare, you should give this drum some serious consideration.

THE NUMBERS

Description: 6½x13 snare drum with 4-ply all-maple shell and 6-ply reinforcing hoops, 20-strand non-plated wire snares, and environmentally friendly clear natural finish.

List price:\$495

☎ (714) 522-9011, 🌐 www.yamahadrums.com.

Quick Looks

Remo NuSkyn Conga And Bongo Heads

Remo's NuSkyn synthetic heads signal a shift in the company's focus away from their FiberSkyn and Mondo lines for hand-percussion instruments. In the near future, we can expect NuSkyn, in various weights, to



adorn many a Remo conga, bongo, or world drum—along with drums from other manufacturers. For now, they're available "off the rack" in one medium weight.

In a first for Remo, the heads are tucked into a metal ring in the same fashion as traditional animal skins. Conga heads are designed to fit on drums of all brands that feature "comfort curve"-style counterhoops. Bongo heads will fit all brands. The company advises players to heed the

instructions supplied with the heads, noting that the lack of consistency in various manufacturers' counterhoops might prevent perfect seating.

With the assistance of percussionist Alvaro DeMinaya, I A/B'd two similar congas, one equipped with NuSkyn and the other with "old skin"—real cowhide. Although NuSkyn heads are thicker than Remo's Mondo heads (a fact that will likely appeal to animal-hide advocates), they tracked both the softest strokes and the heaviest slaps without sacrificing what I pegged as authentic Afro-Cuban tone.

Playing with the palm of the hand generated a deeper fundamental on the animal-skin head—but not by much. In addition, we occasionally noticed curious upper harmon-



ics on open strokes that might be distracting in close-miked situations.

Cosmetically, NuSkyn heads are less obvious copies of veiny animal skin than are Remo's FiberSkyn and Mondo heads. Still, I noticed that some of the heads were creamy white, while others had a gray tinge. When I inquired about this, Remo's Tim Ridgway responded, "Because there's no such thing as uniform animal skin, we thought we shouldn't be too exacting on this specific point—especially since there's no difference in sound or feel."

Alvaro and I came to the conclusion that a player accustomed to animal-skin heads would experience minimal "culture shock" when switching to NuSkyn heads. The calf-like *texture* of the NuSkyn heads felt good to play on, and we both enjoyed their sound on congas. I prefer a brighter-sounding, more resonant head on bongos, but Alvaro found the NuSkyns ideal for that instrument. His assessment was blunt: "These heads are perfect."

☎ (661) 294-5600, 🌐 www.remo.com.

T. Bruce Wittet



Remo Tuff-E-Nuff Congas And Bongos

These Rough-Looking Characters Have Warm Dispositions

HITS

rough-textured finish makes gripping a cinch

appealing dark tone is decidedly non-synthetic

congas sound consistent, drum-to-drum

MISSES

palm tones with raised conga not as deep as on traditional drums

bongos may lack brightness and sustain for some tastes

by T. Bruce Wittet

Remo's Tuff-E-Nuff congas and bongos provide a new alternative to traditional wood drums with animal-skin heads. They're targeted at professionals yet are priced in the upper mid-range, and come fitted with the company's NuSkyn synthetic heads. The combination results in acoustic performance that, at times, defies comparison with traditional counterparts.

The shells of Tuff-E-Nuff congas and bongos are molded from Remo's patented Acousticon material, a composite of wood fibers and resins. Remo's director of communications, Tim Ridgway, makes the point that this type of shell "is more consistent in terms of density than a traditional wood shell."

I reviewed a full set of Tuff-E-Nuff drums: quinto, conga, tumba, super tumba, and bongos. In the testing room and at rehearsals I placed them alongside pro wood drums from other companies. (Remo invites such comparisons.) I also brought in an expert, percussionist Alvaro DeMinaya, to help me conduct my tests. Alvaro attained a music degree in percussion in his native Chile before moving to America. Equally comfortable in an orchestra pit or on a street corner, Alvaro was the ideal accomplice. We clashed on a few points, but we agreed that the Remo drums were not obviously *synthetic* in sound or feel. In fact, the slightly darker timbre of the Remo drums grew on us.

Now, about that name: Tuff-E-Nuff. It reflects Remo's design collaboration with the great conguero and recording artist Poncho Sanchez, who is a man



of substantial...er...girth and power. Tough enough for Sanchez would be *plenty* tough.

Look Tuff, Feel Tuff

Most companies take pride in the deep, glossy finish on their drums. But Remo's Tuff-E-Nuff finish—jet black and spackled—is more akin to freshly laid asphalt. But I have to say that the look grew on me, especially under bright lights.

The merits of the finish go beyond aesthetics. When you're laying your palm to a conga, going for that deep "duumm" tone, you have to lift one side of the drum off the ground with your legs, otherwise the sound stays trapped. The problem with glossy finishes is that the drum slips through your legs. The grainy Tuff-E-Nuff finish solves that problem. But it's not *too* grainy. As Tim Ridgway told me, "We were looking for a finish that would help you hold the drum with your legs, but wouldn't cause chafing if you're wearing shorts." Very considerate.

Design Features

Tuff-E-Nuff drums are designed like most congas out there—with two exceptions. The first is that the drums have a noticeably wide belly. The second is that they feature traditional "strip style" metal counterhoops. If you're a fan of rounded "comfort curve" counterhoops, you might want to spend some time with the Tuff-E-Nuffs before purchasing. That said, neither Alvaro nor I experienced any hand trauma, possibly because Remo has sufficiently recessed the metal hoop from the playing surface.

The well-machined tuning rods thread into lugs backed by chromed triangular plates inside *and* outside the drum. Each rod came fitted with a very generous rubber cushion to prevent drums from bumping together.

Acoustic Performance

To begin our evaluation of the drums' sound, we first tuned the congas as an ensemble. We immediately noticed weird harmonics in the Super Tumba when it was played in "slap mode" on a carpet. Placing a two-foot square of plywood underneath the drum cleaned up the tone. Loosening the drumhead tension also did wonders. In fact, while you can certainly crank up the Tuff-E-Nuffs, they seemed to like low tensions.

I compared open slaps (played with the heel of the palm) on the Remo quinto with the same technique played on another manufacturer's high-end wood quinto fitted with a skin head.

Alvaro and I both felt that the wood drum won, but that the Remo drum still delivered a robust and very respectable sound. All other strokes, whether open or muted, were articulate and rich in tone. What's more, Alvaro and I couldn't get over the defined pitches produced by this "mini orchestra." From quinto to super tumba, there was tonal consistency down the line—something that added credence to Tim Ridgway's assertion about the consistency of Acousticon shells.

Verdict's In On The Congas

The large bellies of the Tuff-E-Nuff drums seemed to add body and mitigate any tendency towards a "synthetic" sound. The congas worked equally well tuned tight or loose, and the sustain was just right. If anything, we felt that the drums were slightly darker than your average conga.

Quinto and conga slaps tended to produce generous amounts of upper harmonics. For this reason Alvaro felt that the drums would be especially good for live performances. The inherent stability of synthetic heads under changes of weather and stage lighting score big points here, too. Alvaro felt that for studio congas he'd probably stay with a wooden shell/skin head combination.

Jury's Still Out On The Bongos

I'll stand by my opinion that the bongos lacked sustain and brightness. Alvaro, however, found them more musical than many bongos he'd owned. He praised the very qualities that I saw as detriments. "I'd use these drums in the studio," he told me. "It's easy to get a crisp sound from them, but they have more *body*. And I *like* what you perceive as a 'muted' effect. To me, that's desirable."

Alvaro also pointed out that with bongos, more so than congas, the finish is critical. (After all, most players hold the things between their legs.) For this reason he gave high marks to the black Tuff-E-Nuff finish.

THE NUMBERS	
List price:	
11" Quinto	\$489
11¾" Conga	\$519
12½" Tumba	\$549
13" Super Tumba	\$579
7¼" Bongo	\$48
8½" Bongo	\$50
9" Bongo	\$50

All drums fitted with Remo NuSkyn synthetic heads and traditional-style rims.

P (661) 294-5600, www.remo.com.



Modern Drummer Magazine

is pleased to present these outstanding artists at



SATURDAY, MAY 18

**Memorial Auditorium
Montclair State University
Upper Montclair, New Jersey**

**Doors open 12:30 P.M.
Show begins 1:00 P.M.**



Eclectic Drum Legend
SIMON PHILLIPS
and Vantage Point

(Courtesy of Tama Drums, Zildjian Cymbals,
Pro-Mark Drumsticks, Remo, Inc.,
and Shure Microphones)



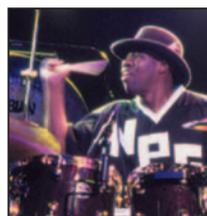
NYC Studio Star And *Lion King* Drummer
TOMMY IGOE

(Courtesy of Drum Workshop, Zildjian Cymbals,
Vic Firth Drumsticks, and Attack Drumheads)



N' Sync's Pop Powerhouse
BILLY ASHBAUGH

(Courtesy of Drum Workshop, Paiste Cymbals,
Vic Firth Drumsticks, Evans Drumheads,
and Shure Microphones)



Prince's Dynamic Funkster
JOHN BLACKWELL

(Courtesy of Tama Drums, Sabian Cymbals,
Vater Drumsticks, and Evans Drumheads)



Fiery Percussion Trio
**RICHIE FLORES, ROBBY
AMEEN, AND ROB VILERA**

(Courtesy of Pearl Drums & Percussion.
Additional support for Richie Flores from Evans Drumheads.
Additional support for Robby Ameen from Sabian Cymbals,
Vater Drumsticks, and Remo, Inc.
Additional support for Rob Vilera from Vic Firth Drumsticks.)

Artists scheduled to appear are subject to change without notice.

Interest in *MD's* 2002 Festival Weekend exceeded our already high expectations. Due to the unprecedented number of online, phone, fax, and mail-in orders, the show is

SOLD OUT.

We thank everyone who placed ticket orders, and we look forward to seeing you at the Festival.

SUNDAY, MAY 19

Groove Master

RICK MAROTTA

with Will Lee & Ross Bolton

(Courtesy of Yamaha Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Regal Tip Drumsticks, and Remo, Inc.)



Jazz/Rock Pioneer

BILLY COBHAM

(Courtesy of Yamaha Drums, Sabian Cymbals, Vic Firth Drumsticks, Remo, Inc., and Shure Microphones)

Megadeth's Driving Force

JIMMY DEGRASSO

(Courtesy of Pearl Drums, Paiste Cymbals, Pro-Mark Drumsticks, Remo, Inc., and Shure Microphones)



Percussive Dynasty

THE REYES FAMILY

(Courtesy of Latin Percussion, Mapex Drums, Sabian Cymbals, Regal Tip Drumsticks, and Remo, Inc.)

New This Year: MD's International Showcase, featuring

Austrian Chopsmaster

THOMAS LANG

(Courtesy of Sonor Drums, Meinl Cymbals, Vater Drumsticks, and Remo, Inc.)



Italian Pop/Fusion Star

FURIO CHIRICO

(Courtesy of Tama Drums, Sabian Cymbals, Vater Drumsticks, and Evans Drumheads.)

Attention long-distance travelers.

When booking air travel, inform your travel agent that Newark International Airport is the point of arrival nearest to the Festival.

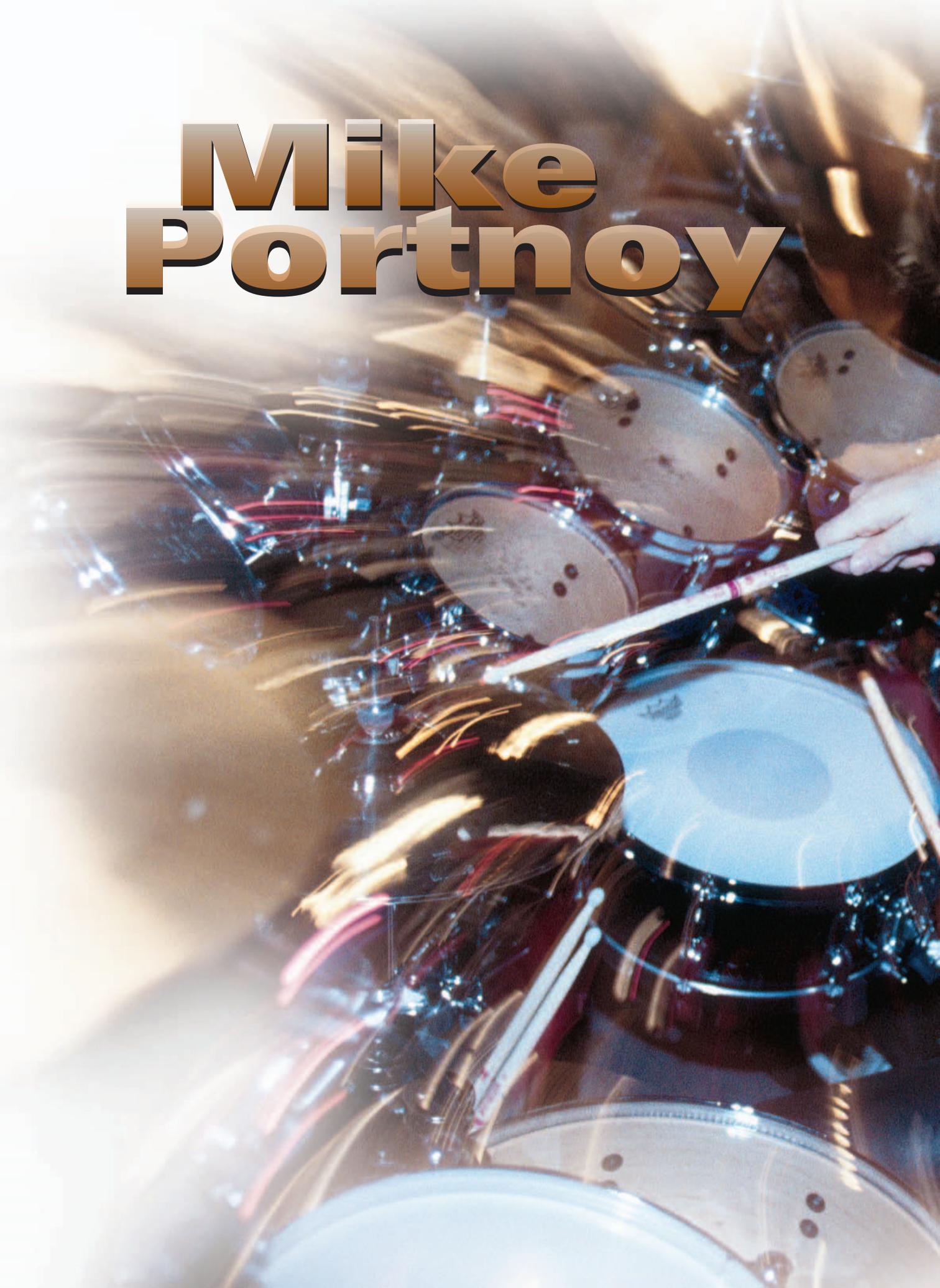
The following hotel chains have locations near Montclair State University. Be sure to book your accommodations early for the best possible rate.

- Ramada Inn (locations in Clifton and Fairfield): (800) 228-3838
- Howard Johnson's (location in Clifton): (800) 654-4656
- Holiday Inn (locations in Totowa and Wayne): (800) 465-4329

PLEASE NOTE:

If you sent us an order by mail and we received that order after tickets were no longer available, your money will be refunded as promptly as possible.

Mike Portnoy





Living In A Theater Of Dreams

Story by Mike Haid

Photos by Paul La Raia



Mike Portnoy is no longer the new kid on the progressive-rock block. The once-proclaimed “next Neil Peart” has proven himself many times over to be worthy of acknowledgement. This isn’t so much for the commercial success of his band Dream Theater. Rather, it’s for his consistent progression of new and exciting ideas in sights and sounds throughout his musical adventures and drumming innovations. As an international clinician, Portnoy has also gained a wider acceptance for his talents and achievements.

Mike’s high-profile career has not been without its setbacks and downfalls. Amidst his many *MD* awards and accolades, Mighty Mike has spent time reassessing his priorities and has come to a new juncture in his busy life. He is healthy, clean, and sober, and his priorities are family first, then music and film. His skills as a producer and director have proven suc-

The Siamese Monster

Drums: Tama Maple Starclassic

- A. 18x22 kick drum
- B. 18x20 kick drum
- C. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x14 Melody Master snare drum
- D. 5x12 Melody Master snare drum
- E. four Octobans
- F. 8x8 rack tom
- G. 9x10 rack tom
- H. 10x12 rack tom
- I. 11x13 rack tom
- J. 10x10 rack tom
- K. two Octobans
- L. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ " LP steel timbalito
- M. 16x16 floor tom
- N. 5x10 timp-tom (wood)
- O. 14x20 gong bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 14" HHX Studio crash
- 2. 18" HHX Chinese

- 3. 18" HHX Studio crash
- 4. 18" AA medium-thin crash
- 5. 20" HHX Chinese
- 6. 19" HH Fierce crash
- 7. 17" HH thin crash
- 8. 20" HH Chinese
- 9. 16" HH Xtreme crash
- 10. 14" AAX Stage Hats
- 11. 7" MAX splash
- 12. 9" MAX splash
- 13. medium MAX STAX (w/ 7" Radia bell on top)
- 14. 22" HH Rock ride
- 15. 13" HHX Groove Hats
- 16. low MAX STAX
- 17. 7" MAX splash
- 18. 11" MAX splash
- 19. 12" Ice Bell over high MAX STAX
- 20. 8" hi-hat (two MAX STAX bottoms)
- 21. Triple Hi-Hat
- 22. 28" Zodiac gong



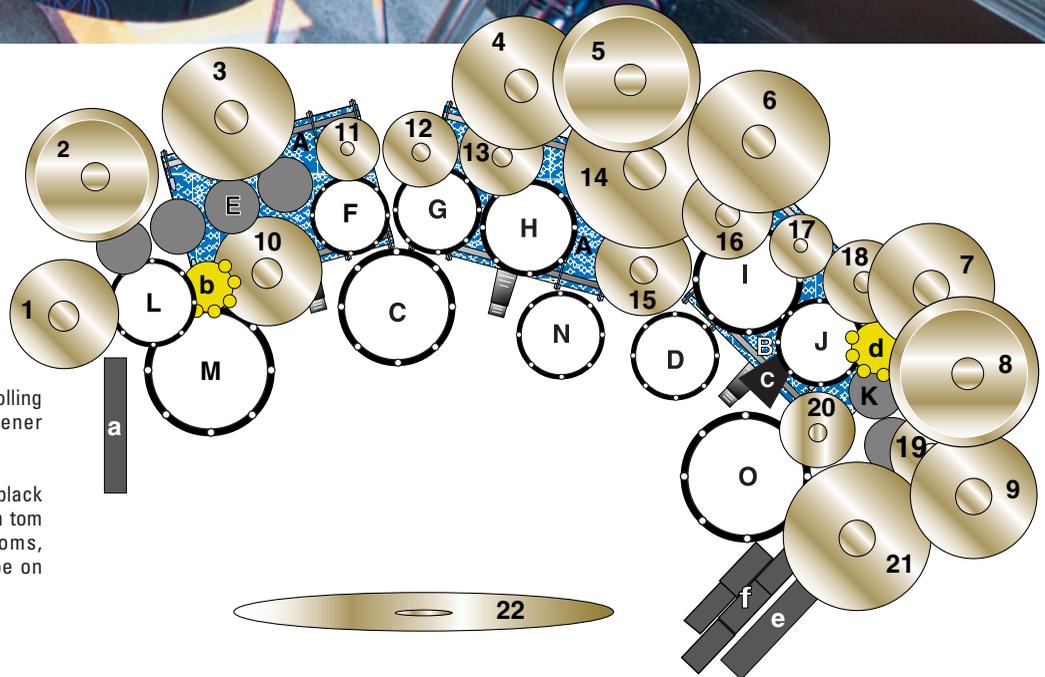
Percussion: Latin Percussion

- a. wind chimes (single row)
- b. Cyclops tambourine
- c. Ridge Rider Rock cowbell
- d. Cyclops tambourine
- e. wind chimes (double row)
- f. Granite Block set

Hardware: Tama, including Iron Cobra Rolling Glide pedals and hi-hats, Slicknut fastener locks on all cymbal stands

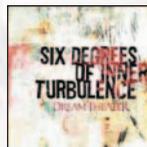
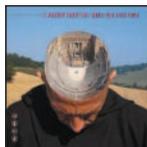
Heads: Remo coated Ambassadors (with black dots) on snare batters, clear Emperors on tom batters with clear Diplomats on bottoms, PowerStroke 3s on bass drums, Pinstripe on timp-tom

Sticks: Pro-Mark Mike Portnoy 420 model



Portnoy On Record

Artist	Recording
Dream Theater	When Dream And Day Unite
Dream Theater	Images & Words
Dream Theater	Awake
Dream Theater	A Change Of Seasons
Dream Theater	Falling Into Infinity
Dream Theater	Once In A Livetime
Dream Theater	Scenes From A Memory
Dream Theater	Live Scenes From New York
Dream Theater	Six Degrees Of Inner Turbulence
Liquid Tension Experiment	Liquid Tension Experiment
Liquid Tension Experiment	Liquid Tension Experiment 2
Transatlantic	SMPTe
Transatlantic	Live In America
Transatlantic	Bridge Across Forever



Portnoy On Video

Artist	Video
Dream Theater	Images And Words: Live In Tokyo
Dream Theater	5 Years In A Livetime
Dream Theater	Metropolis 2000: Scenes From New York
Mike Portnoy	Progressive Drum Concepts
Mike Portnoy	Liquid Drum Theater

successful with the last couple of self-produced Dream Theater recordings, as well as their videos and the recent *Metropolis 2000: Scenes From New York* DVD, which Mike directed.

In keeping with his “more is more” philosophy, Portnoy’s new touring kit (which he also used on the new Dream Theater double CD, *Six Degrees Of Inner Turbulence*) is practically the size of a small drum shop. What Portnoy calls “The Siamese Monster” is a combination of his large traditional kit coupled with a smaller setup that he has grown accustomed to in many of his clinics and the other side projects he has done. Some of those projects include the instrumental fusion group Liquid Tension Experiment, his old-school prog band Transatlantic, and a short trio tour with the G3 guitar show.

The current Dream Theater lineup finds Portnoy in a happy place as well. He has a deep appreciation for his newfound musical and creative freedom. With his *Liquid Drum Theater* video and DVD instructional packages, successful side project Transatlantic, drum clinic tours, Tama Melody Master Signature snare drums, Sabian signature

Max Stax cymbals, and his wonderful family life, it’s easy to see that the star drummer has accomplished a lot in relatively little time. And now Mike is fully energized and ready to hit the road again to tour the world with Dream Theater. Persistence has certainly paid off for Mike Portnoy.

MD: How long has Dream Theater been together?

Mike: The three core members, which include myself, John Petrucci, and John Myung, have been together for over sixteen years. We formed the band at Berklee during our first month of school. We met when we were all about seventeen years old, so it’s pretty amazing to think that the three of us have been together nearly half of our lives.

MD: What’s your overview of the band’s development to this point?

Mike: I couldn’t have dreamt of a better scenario for the path that we’ve traveled. When we put the band together at Berklee, we just wanted to make music for the fun of it. We weren’t thinking about record contracts, tours, videos, marketing, or radio airplay. We were just three college kids

who were into Iron Maiden and Rush and who wanted to make some cool, heavy progressive music.

We became so immersed in the music that it became our lifeblood, and we decided to pursue it as a career. Between then and now it’s been a dream come true. And although we’re not as commercial as Metallica or U2, in the world that we exist in, we pretty much sit on top of the hill. It’s a great feeling to know that all the hard work has paid off. We’re very proud of what we’ve accomplished.

MD: There have been a lot of ups and downs in the band’s history, and at one point it was rumored that you were even thinking of leaving the band. Are you satisfied with all aspects of the band, and do you feel that the “Behind The Music” years have come and gone?

Mike: I think so. The mistakes we’ve made and the lessons we’ve learned have taught us how to be a stronger unit, and what not to do in the future. The period that was the roughest for me was shortly after my last cover story with *Modern Drummer* [December ’97]. We had just released the *Falling Into Infinity* record,





Mike's Inspiration

The Beatles, Frank Zappa, Stanley Kubrick, David Lynch, Woody Allen, Pink Floyd, John Bonham and Led Zeppelin, Radiohead, Oliver Stone, Paul Thomas Anderson, Alfred Hitchcock, Rod Serling and *The Twilight Zone*, *The X-Files*, Pantera, Metallica, Anthrax, Mike Patton and Mr. Bungle, Tool, *Seinfeld*, *Twin Peaks*, *South Park*, Kevin Smith, Genesis, Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, Yes, Neil Peart and Rush, Terry Bozzio, Steve Vai, Billy Sheehan, Queen, Ben Folds Five, King Crimson, King Diamond, King's X, *The Sopranos*, *The Simpsons*, *Spinal Tap*, Tenacious D, Jellyfish, The Beastie Boys, Spock's Beard, Kevin Gilbert, Brian DePalma, Steven Spielberg, Steven Soderbergh, Howard Stern, Larry David, Andy Dick, Tom Green, Meshuggah, Mudvayne, Slipknot, Keith Moon and The Who, Simon Phillips, Stewart Copeland and The Police, Bill Bruford, UK, U2, Lars Von Trier, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Darren Aronofsky, Phish, Jane's Addiction, Weezer, Joel and Ethan Coen, Quentin Tarantino, David Fincher, System Of A Down, Elton John, David Bowie, Peter Gabriel, Vinnie Colaiuta, Carter Beauford, Steve Morse and The Dixie Dregs—and that's just for starters!

and we were feeling a lot of pressure from the powers that be. I felt that a lot of control was slipping out of our hands—not only my control within the band, but also control of the band by management and the record company.

So we played their game for a little while, because you start to wonder, Maybe they do know better. I tried to have an open mind and be as objective as possible, because at a certain point in your career you've got to open up and trust other people. But when no new ground was broken, and we felt that we were compromising our integrity, it became very frustrating. It got to a point where, if the band was going to continue, we would have to completely gain back our own control.

So when faced with that ultimatum, everything started to turn around. The ball went back into our court—and back into my corner—and it's been an uphill ride ever since. John Petrucci and I have been able to self-produce our last couple of records, and we've also gone on to do several side projects, which has been a healthy thing for us as well. We now have the freedom with the record company that we

wanted. If I go to them with the idea of doing a live album or a DVD or letting them know that the new Dream Theater record is a double CD, they're supporting us and letting us do our thing. They know that the only way the band will survive is on our own terms.

MD: On *Six Degrees Of Inner Turbulence*, the band sounds more relaxed. One can almost sense that you guys are having more fun than ever before.

Mike: It's a direct result of what I was just talking about. We're feeling good about our full control. When we were making *Scenes From A Memory*, we had regained control but there was an uncertainty about how it was going to be received both artistically and commercially. So there was a bit of fear in the back of our minds when we made that album, whether it was going to succeed or be the final nail in our coffin. But once the fans embraced it the way that they did—commercially it did well, and it was the biggest tour we'd ever done—it was a major step forward for us.

So going in to record *Six Degrees*, we knew that we had succeeded, and we had that pressure off of us. The biggest pres-

sure for us in recording the new record was figuring out how we were going to outdo the last record because of its major acceptance by the fans.

MD: The new record offers a variety of styles, like metal, prog, pop, and fusion, on the five tracks on disc one, and then unleashes the forty-two-minute epic progressive piece on disc two. Especially on "Six Degrees Of Inner Turbulence," it seems as though keyboardist Jordan Rudess has added more of a classical influence into the band. How has that affected your playing?

Mike: Jordan's presence is felt most on that song. For us as a band, it was a whole new way of writing and recording. We approached the "Overture" as if we were scoring a movie or writing a piece of classical music. Jordan was the instigator and motivator for most of those sections. We wrote the sections around his keyboard parts since his parts were recorded first. My drumming approach for that was not that of a rock drummer, but rather more like that of an orchestral player. I wanted to avoid playing drumset grooves and focus more on the classical orchestration by

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doing things like multiple marching snare drum overdubs and bass drum and tom patterns with orchestra cymbals. Once we recorded the "Overture," that laid the groundwork for the rest of the piece.

MD: There's quite a bit of the traditional prog vibe going on throughout that piece.

Mike: Yeah, but when we decide to bring in the old-school element of progressive music it always gets twisted around and reshaped. That's kind of a trademark of Dream Theater, to add the old-school elements but reshape them with a more modern metal sound. In my side project, Transatlantic, when old-school prog ele-

ments are brought in, we tap directly into that vibe without much alteration.

MD: Another of the more progressive tunes on the new record is "The Great Debate." This track brings to mind classic Rush.

Mike: Yeah, that song reminds me of Rush meets Tool. It's definitely got that vibe.

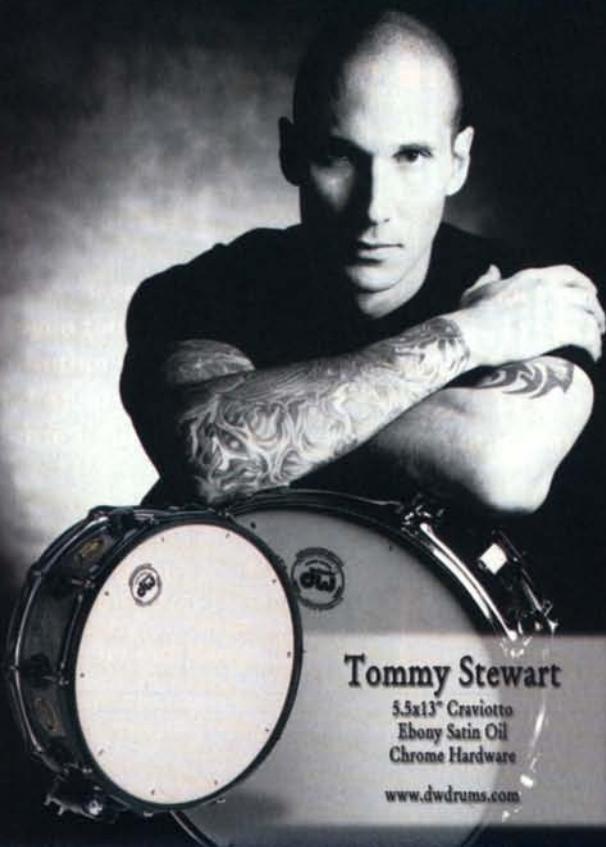
MD: Does the band still use comparisons to other bands in your writing process?

Mike: Yeah! We'll come up with a crazy idea and say, "Hey, that sounds like The Beach Boys meets Slayer." [laughs] A lot of that has to do with the fact that I'm a walking library of music. I'm very obses-

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"The Drummer's Choice"

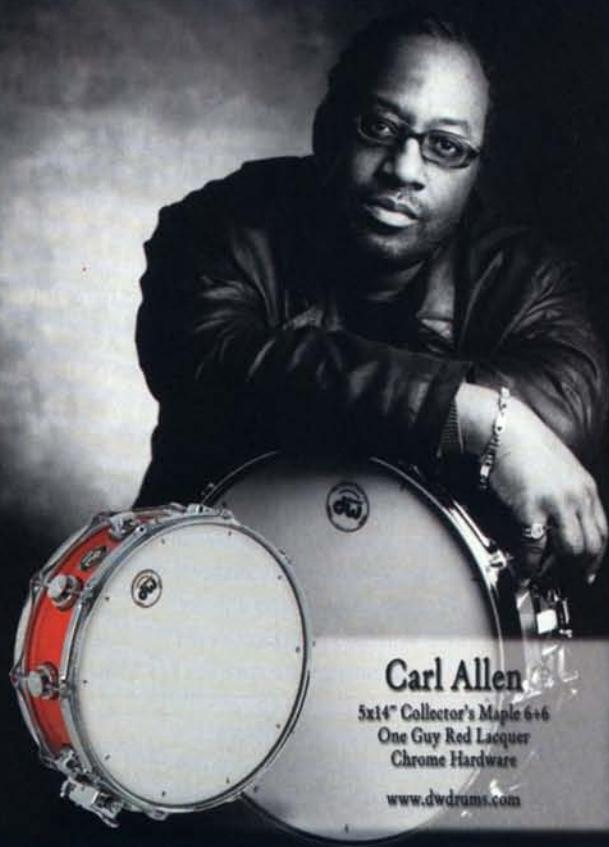
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Mike Portnoy

sive/compulsive, and I have a collection of thousands of CDs. I have a huge list of references that I can draw from. So no matter what I play or hear, whether it's a riff, or a melody, or a fill, it always reminds me of something I've heard somewhere. The important thing is that even though we incorporate elements of many bands, it never ends up sounding exactly like something that those other bands would do, because we always put our own twist to that style.

MD: The opening track, "The Glass Prison," is a lengthy, burning metal piece that jumps out with all guns blazing. You're digging in and letting your chops fly.

Mike: It's going to either blow you away—or scare you away! It's fourteen minutes of relentless metal mayhem.

MD: Is it true that you and Petrucci went to see Pantera the night before the first ses-

sion, and that's what inspired you to write "The Glass Prison"?

Mike: It's true. When we go into the studio we never know where it's gonna go. It can really be something as simple as hearing a Radiohead song on the way to the studio that can spark the direction of that day's work. The Pantera show inspired us to start

think that will ever change. It's the way I've always played, with two bass drums. There's really no other way I know how to play. Even when I'm playing with one bass drum, I use a double pedal.

MD: I can remember you stating that one of the reasons you enjoyed playing in Transatlantic was so you could just groove and get into a Ringo vibe. But in listening to the recent Transatlantic CD, *Live In America* [InsideOut Music], you just can't seem to resist throwing in the double bass chops when things get intense.

Mike: As much as I try to be Ringo, or Nick Mason, it still

turns out sounding like Lars Ulrich or Charlie Benante, no matter how hard I try to hold back. [laughs]

MD: Getting back to the new album, you put together a new drumkit for this record that you'll be using on tour. I think your philoso-

"I remember when Neil Peart scaled down to a single bass drum. As a fan, I was disappointed. So I came up with the idea of putting together a huge kit."

off heavy, but we've always had that heavy element in our music.

MD: Your double bass chops are in full swing on that tune. Is double bass still a major part of your vocabulary?

Mike: Totally. That's my style, and I don't



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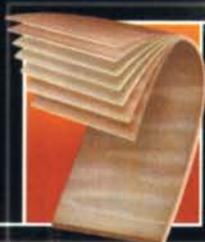
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Mike Portnoy

phy of "more is more" has finally come to a climax. This "Siamese Monster" kit is *huge*.

Mike: Yeah! I had been using my last setup for the last two albums and tours, and I felt that it was time for a new kit. When I started to put it together I was faced with the decision of going bigger or smaller. I had been using smaller kits on the Transatlantic and Liquid Tension Experiment albums. Most of the clinics I had done were also on a smaller kit, and I was really starting to enjoy it. But the more I thought about it, I felt that going smaller with Dream Theater just wouldn't be appropriate. I didn't think the fans would accept seeing me perform on a smaller kit.

I can remember when Neil Peart scaled down to a single bass drum. As a fan, I was disappointed. So I came up with the idea of putting together the small kit with the big kit and incorporating it all into one *huge* kit. It's set up so that I can play certain songs with one kit and then move over to the other kit for a different sound.

MD: What drums are featured on each side of the kit?

Mike: I'm using all Tama maple Starclassic drums. The left side is pretty much the same as my older large kits, with 8", 10", and 12"

rack toms, four Octobans, an LP steel timbalito, and two 22" kick drums. I'm using both of my Tama Melody Master Signature snare drums, one for each side of the kit. The smaller kit on the right side has 10" and 13" rack toms, two Octobans, a gong bass drum, and a 20" kick.

MD: What are the features of the Tama Melody Master Signature snare drums?

Mike: They have a three-way adjustment so you can easily switch your snare sound from full-on, to half-on, to full-off without having to turn any knobs or make any other adjustments.

MD: I noticed you're also using clear Remo Emperor heads on your toms instead of your traditional Pinstripes.

Mike: I wanted to go for a different sound with the new kit, and the Emperors gave me a little more tone and sustain.

MD: What is your cymbal setup?

Mike: I've got a million cymbals. [laughs] Sabian basically sent me their whole line to choose from. When designing my new setup, I handpicked the ones that I liked. Most of my crashes are HHX and HH models. I've got splashes, Chinas, ice bells, and my signature Max Stax cymbals. I'm using the 14"

AAX Stage hats for my big kit and 13" Groove hats, which I really like, for my small kit. I also have a pair of 8" Max splashes combined to make a hi-hat, and the Sabian triple hi-hat set up to the right of my small kit. I've got my old faithful 22" HH Rock Ride in the middle of both sets so I can play it with either kit.

Tama is also making me a custom floor tom that I can mount between both kits. It's shallow, so I can use it as a regular floor tom on the right of my big kit or as a deep tom on the left of my small kit. The reason I have to mount it is because I've got so many pedals on the floor that there's no room for stands.

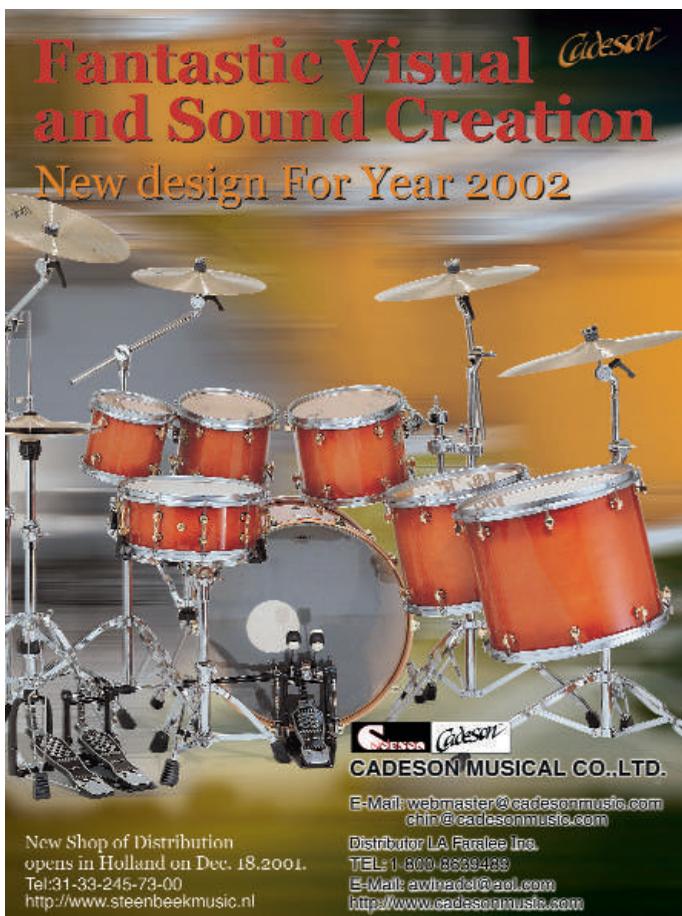
MD: How does the triple hi-hat setup work?

Mike: It's like a regular pair of hi-hats with a flat cymbal in between—kind of like a Big Mac with the cymbals as the buns! It gives you a real open, trashy sound—very cool.

MD: How did you decide which side of the kit to use on the new album for each song?

Mike: I used the big side for the more busy, progressive tracks and the small side for the more groove-oriented or experimental tunes. The small side also has a lot of unique sounds that enhance the music.

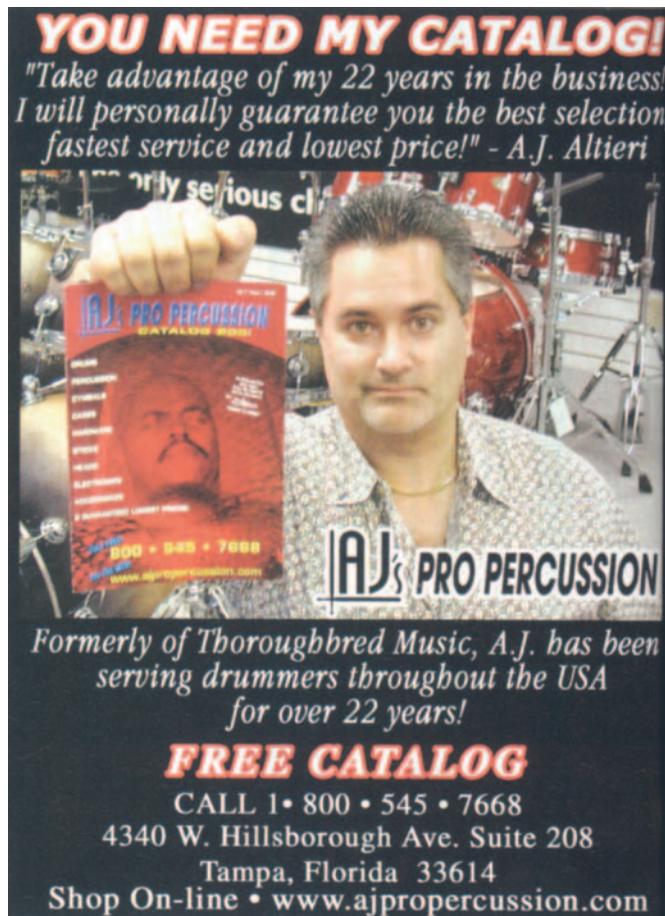
MD: Does the massive size and drum place-



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Mike Portnoy

ment of “The Siamese Monster” throw new challenges into your technique or approach to playing?

Mike: I’ve always enjoyed playing on different kits. It’s one of the challenges that I’ve become accustomed to over the past few years, with all of the clinics I’ve done. You never know what you’re going to have to play at some of these clinics. The left side of “The Siamese Monster” is really more like my traditional setup in regards to the Octobans, rack toms, and two kick drums, so that wasn’t too much of an adjustment. The right side of the kit was a little more experimental, with the toms going backwards, the Octobans, the smaller single bass drum, and the triple hi-hat.

That side of the kit took some getting used to, which is why I took it out on the G3 tour last year. I didn’t have any trouble adapting the kit to the new Dream Theater music because it was all part of the compositions. The parts of the songs were being created on each side of the kit, so I didn’t really have to adapt the music, or my technique, to the kit since it was all created at the same time. It’s probably going to be harder for me to adapt the older Dream Theater catalog to this setup. It will be challenging to decide which side of the kit to use to reproduce the original parts on the older material.

MD: In your last *MD* interview you stated that you had back and neck pain problems. Have you been able to correct them?

Mike: Yeah, a lot of it was my lifestyle. I’m a lot healthier now, and I try to take better care of myself than I used to. I’m also sitting

lower, which helps take some of the strain off my back.

MD: Do you feel like you’ve reached a point in your career with Dream Theater where you have developed your own sound as a drummer?

Mike: I think so. I feel that we’ve established a certain genre, or style, that is definitely “our” sound and style, and my drumming style is a big part of that sound.

MD: I think it’s safe to say that Dream Theater has spawned a new generation of progressive metal bands that are emulating the Dream Theater style and sound.

Mike: Yeah, for better or worse. [laughs]

MD: It sounds as though you’re the type of player who will feed off of the other players and listen to the melodies of your fill ideas instead of sitting down and working out technical fill ideas to fill in the cracks.

Mike: We do feed off each other, and it’s not a formula in which you can say it’s always this or that way. It changes from section to section and song to song. We’re very drum- and guitar-based in most of our sections. John [Petrucci] and I tap into each other for ideas that would traditionally be created by the drummer and bass player. Now with Jordan in the band, he is also very in sync with the complex rhythmic ideas, and he adds to that madness.

MD: What did Liquid Tension Experiment do for you musically, and did it help change the direction of Dream Theater by adding Jordan Rudess?

Mike: The importance of LTE to Dream Theater’s history is obvious in the fact that it

brought Jordan into the band. John and I felt a really strong writing chemistry with Jordan and decided that it would really benefit Dream Theater to be utilizing that chemistry full time. I really liked Derek Sherinian, our former keyboardist, and I think he’s a great player. But I think Jordan was leaning more in our direction, both musically and personally.

Liquid Tension Experiment allowed me the opportunity to do something outside of Dream Theater, and it was the first side project for me. It gave me the opportunity to experiment in more improvisational music. I love jamming and improvising, and at least fifty percent of the LTE music was totally improvised. It was really fun to do that project and especially to work in that environment with bass legend Tony Levin.

MD: Then came your old-school prog project, Transatlantic. Were you the mastermind behind that group?

Mike: Yes, Transatlantic was my idea. It came about as a direct result of wanting to work with Neal Morse of Spock’s Beard. I’m a big fan of Spock’s Beard, and I’ve always admired Neal as a writer and a player. So I approached Neal with the idea of putting together an all-star prog band made up of the leaders of various prog bands. So we recruited Roine Stolt, who is the main writer of The Flower Kings, and Pete Trewavas of Marillion, who I was a big fan of for many years. It was really interesting for me to have a meeting of the minds with all of these real prog guys and see what we could come up with.



MD: What is the status of Transatlantic at this point?

Mike: We released a second studio album, *Bridge Across Forever*, and *Live In America* recently came out. We just finished up a European tour, which went really well. The response was amazing. The four of us really enjoy making this music together, and we feel a special chemistry between us. As a listener and fan of prog music, I really enjoy listening to what we have created. I consider it more than just a side project. It's more like a part-time band. But it's still not a full-time thing and can only exist when each of us is available and not busy with our real bands. Dream Theater will be keeping me busy for the next couple years, so we'll see what happens after that.

MD: Has working in Transatlantic helped strengthen your groove?

Mike: I don't know. I know it's definitely strengthening my interest in groove-oriented playing. I have really enjoyed touring with Transatlantic, mainly because, as a drummer, it's much more relaxing than Dream Theater. When I play with Dream Theater it's very high-octane, and demands technique, power, and heavy drumming. It's a real adrenaline experience. Touring with Transatlantic was enjoyable because I could relax and play in a more subtle way.

For instance, we covered side two of The Beatles' *Abbey Road* album, and when it came to the Ringo drum solo section, the guys wanted me to go crazy and do what the Mike Portnoy fans would want to hear. I told them that I would really rather do the Ringo

thing because, to me, the whole purpose of this project was so I didn't have to do the "Mike Portnoy over-the-top solos." Even in the studio, the guys were pushing me to do more, but I really wanted to just lay back and groove.

MD: Let's talk about your other talents beyond drumming. You directed the Dream Theater DVD, *Metropolis 2000: Scenes From New York*. What did that entail?

Mike: It was a big job, and it took a lot of time and energy. But at the same time it was one of the most satisfying projects I've ever worked on. I'm a huge film fanatic, and my love for film—and directors in particular—is something that's a big part of my artistic drive. I get as much influence and inspiration when I watch a film by David Lynch, Stanley Kubrick, or Paul Thomas Anderson as I do by listening to great music.

Whether it's the acting, the way the camera is utilized, the screen writing, or the sound effects, when I watch a film I'm watching from all of those angles. It's the same for me when I'm listening to or making music. I'm concentrating on all the angles.

When it came time to direct the DVD, I had to put all of the elements of music and film together. The director of a film is very similar to the producer of a record. You're overseeing every element of the project. I had a vision for the project. I knew how I wanted it to look and how every shot would be shown. In terms of which bandmember would be shown on screen at a certain time, who's going to know better

than one of the bandmembers who wrote and played the music? I know exactly which instrument needed to be highlighted at what point, and I used a lot of split screens to highlight doubling and unison lines and harmonies.

MD: You have also produced the last several Dream Theater releases. What does it mean to "produce" a musical recording?

Mike: It's basically the same as what a film director does—oversee every element in the production of that project, especially in the creative aspects.

John Petrucci and I have really always directed the band, even when we had producers. John and I have always had the final say. We've always had a great relationship in terms of direction and vision for the band. It's kind of like the James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich relationship of Metallica.

MD: How involved were you in the making of your *Liquid Drum Theater* video and DVD instructional drum packages?

Mike: Not as involved, but still quite involved. They were produced and directed by Rob Wallis and Paul Siegel of Hudson Music. But Rob and Paul were very open to my direction. They allowed me to come in and oversee every area, from content to sequence to editing. They were great to work with and were totally open-minded and easy to get along with.

MD: One of the cool features of the *Liquid Drum Theater* DVD is the "after the fact" commentary, where you offer in-depth info on the making of the package along with

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Mike: I feel that DVD is such a natural format for drum instructional videos, and I feel proud to be one of the first to include optional commentary and multi-camera angles in this package. Typically the format is for the drummer to talk about what he's going to play and then play it after the fact. With this commentary option you can listen to the drummer talk about what he's playing while he's playing it in real time. The other cool option is the various camera angles that

you can move between and also the chapter search, so that you can jump to whatever section you want to check out at any given time.

MD: Are you still doing clinics?

Mike: Yes, but I've slowed down a little in the past year because I've been busy with so many other projects. I did a few in Europe and Southeast Asia. I'll continue to do about forty a year, which is still a lot for me.

MD: What do you enjoy about doing clinics, and what have you learned that helps

keep them fresh and enjoyable?

Mike: Clinics have become a big part of my life. They've also become a big part of my identity in the drum world. Eight years ago I did an interview with *MD* regarding clinics, and at that time I hadn't done any. I was petrified back then. Since then I've done hundreds of them all over the world. The ironic thing is that I even won "best clinician" the year that award was introduced to the poll. So it was a strange twist of fate for me to end up on the clinic path when I had no intention of going there.

I think the largest benefit for me in doing clinics is that it's helped me establish an identity as an individual outside of Dream Theater. I love going to the drum festivals and seeing and hearing all the great drummers. When I see all the drummers that you read about in the pages of *Modern Drummer*, people like Virgil Donati, Mike Mangini, and Marco Minnemann, they just blow my mind. These guys aren't in bands that are topping the charts, and they're virtually unknown by the general public. But within the drum community they are gods.

When I watch these guys perform, I just walk away with my tail between my legs. But being in the clinic world has opened my eyes to so many great drummers who I've become friends with, learned so much from, and been inspired by.

MD: Have you spent much time furthering your technique?

Mike: I spend a lot of time behind the drumset, because this is what I do for a living. When you play drums for a living, and you find yourself constantly having to play drums, you find that you have less free time. So after spending so much time recording with all of the various projects and doing videos and clinics and touring all year 'round, when I finally come home at the end of the day, the last thing I want to do is play drums.

I'm thirty-five years old, and my priorities are much different now. If I have the choice of spending four hours in the basement working on double bass chops and fine-tuning my technique, or spending some time with my kids—which I don't get to do very often because I've been touring all year—I'm going to choose my kids. They are my priority. But maybe someday I'll be able to focus on advancing my technique, when my life slows down a little bit—ha, ha, ha!

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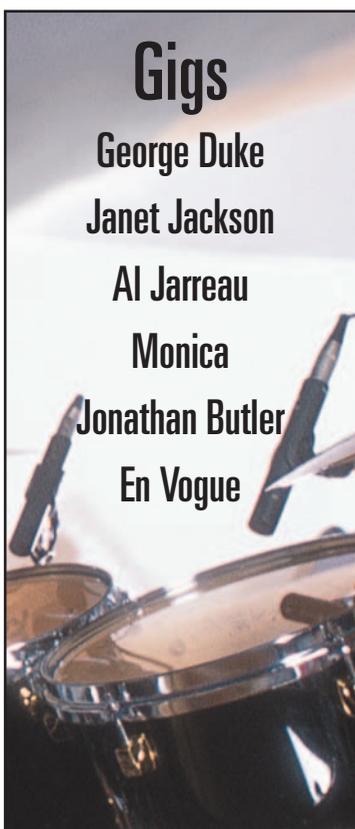




Lil' John Roberts

Funkin' It Up

Story by Billy Amendola
Photos by Alex Solca



Gigs

George Duke

Janet Jackson

Al Jarreau

Monica

Jonathan Butler

En Vogue

Lil' John Roberts' name has been popping up more and more here at *MD* in interviews with artists, talks with industry personnel, and in mail from fans. It seems that *everyone* is talking about Lil' John.

And the buzz is all good for this twenty-nine-year-old from Philadelphia (now living in Atlanta), who studied at Berklee College Of Music before heading out on the road with some of today's hottest jazz and R&B acts.

Here at *MD*, we were very familiar with John's work. I had the pleasure of seeing him share the stage with Lenny White for a stunning performance with bassist Marcus Miller. I witnessed his impressive talent from the side of the stage while standing next to another pretty talented drummer, Dennis Chambers. Watching Dennis's enthusiasm for this hot drummer was like watching a proud coach cheering on a player. "I'm flattered," Lil' John says when told about it. "Dennis is one of my

biggest influences. He definitely opened up my head about fusion on a more funky level."

And funky it is, as Lil' John has made the transition from jazz to R&B. In fact, not long after moving to Atlanta, Lil' John became a favorite among the hottest producers on the R&B scene. Before touring with Janet Jackson on her *Velvet Rope* tour, Lil' John funkied it up with Monica, En Vogue, Xscape, Goodie Mob, and, more recently, with George Duke and Al Jarreau.

We caught up with Lil' John while he was in the studio finishing up a new George Duke recording and just before he was to start a new recording with Jonathan Butler. It seems this young funkmeister's career continues to be on the upswing.

MD: Let's start at the beginning. Why drums?

Lil' John: I have five uncles who play drums, so it basically fell into my lap. My dad is a pastor, and I would play in his church when I was growing up. He basically got me started on the jazz scene. By the time I was fifteen, I started getting into a lot of straight-ahead jazz.

MD: Did your dad play drums?

Lil' John: No, he was a bass player and my mom was a classical pianist.

MD: Did you take lessons?

Lil' John: Not really. I was more self-taught—up until Berklee. I would learn from hanging out with cats I admired. I got to hang with Omar Hakim and Dennis Chambers and people of that caliber. John Ramsey was teaching over at Berklee, and I had the chance to hang out with him and listen to Art Blakey recordings. John played a *lot* of Blakey. The rest of my education came from just being at Berklee, hanging out and sharing chops with the drummers who were at the school.

MD: When did you learn to read music?

Lil' John: I was reading a little bit in high school, but I really got into it when I attended Berklee. That took it to a whole new level.

MD: What made you choose Berklee?

Lil' John: I learned about the school while I was traveling with the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

MD: How did you get that gig?

Lil' John: Wynton Marsalis hand-picked twenty high school students from the New York, D.C., and Philly areas to do a short tour in the Ellington band. When the band performed up at Berklee, they were so impressed that they offered each of us scholarships to the school when we finished high school. So I decided to go there.

MD: What year did you graduate from Berklee?

Lil' John: I didn't graduate, actually. I studied there for two years, but in the third

"A lot of cats need to realize that it's more about feel than licks. Knowing that helps keep you employed."

year I decided I was ready to go on the road. I don't want to discourage anybody from going to school, but the whole time I was there I was thinking, School is cool, but I'm ready to travel, play, and make some money. So I made the decision to leave Boston and go down south.

I was playing with Eric Essix at the time, and he's the reason I moved to Atlanta. I was traveling with him and doing some records. Then I moved to Atlanta to stay near his home base, but that's when things

really got started. As a matter of fact, that's what got me into the R&B scene.

The first person who got me into that scene was Jermaine Dupri, one of Atlanta's biggest producers. He called me to play with one of his double-platinum groups that was out at the time, Xscape. This was their first time out, and their records were selling big-time. So I went out and did some touring with them. My next gig was with R&B star Monica. Dallas Austin, who is another Atlanta producer, called me to

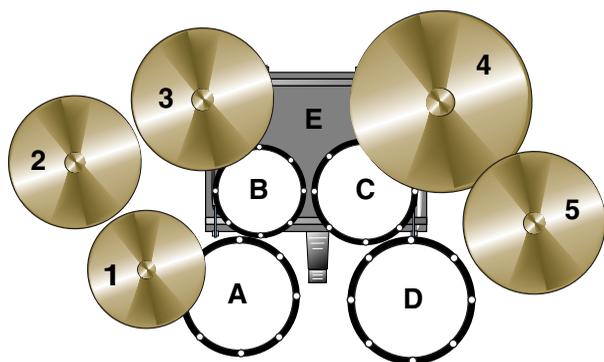
put a band together for her. So one thing led to another, and the R&B thing started getting really big for me. I started becoming the music director for these groups and putting the bands together.

MD: So most of those R&B gigs came from record producers.

Lil' John: Exactly. And word of mouth. It just started building up. The next thing I did was the rap group Goodie Mob, who are also from Atlanta. I guess you could say that a lot of it came to me because I



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Lil' John Roberts

was in town, so they were like, "Well, if you're trying to put a live band together, call Lil' John." So Goodie Mob called me at that time, after Xscape and Monica. That was the first live band for a rap group in Atlanta.

The combination of the live band mixed with southern rappers was a cool thing. We were out with The Fugees, who had just blown up. That was their first time out on a huge tour. It was the Fugees, The Roots, and Goodie Mob, all out together for a few months that summer and fall.

MD: Getting back to your early years, who were some of your influences?

Lil' John: Like everybody else, I listened to Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, and Max Roach. There was a certain caliber of cats that you *had* to listen to. And then I met Jeff "Tain" Watts around the time I was with Wynton Marsalis. I went to see him play as many times as I could, and I'd talk to him and just do the hang. It taught me a lot. Tommy Campbell was another influence in my life. He's from Philadelphia as well. I listened

to him play and hung out with him. Sonny Emory was a big influence too. And I never had a chance to have a lesson with Alan Dawson in Boston, but just going to see him play was a lesson in itself.

MD: What was your practice routine like growing up?

Lil' John: I used to play along to records that I liked. I'd put on headphones and play along to whatever drummer I admired at the time. I liked bass players too, so I'd play to their discs. That really helped when it came down to playing on stage with other people. It wasn't like you were trying out licks on your own and just practicing for yourself. You were practicing things you would use when you got on stage with other musicians.

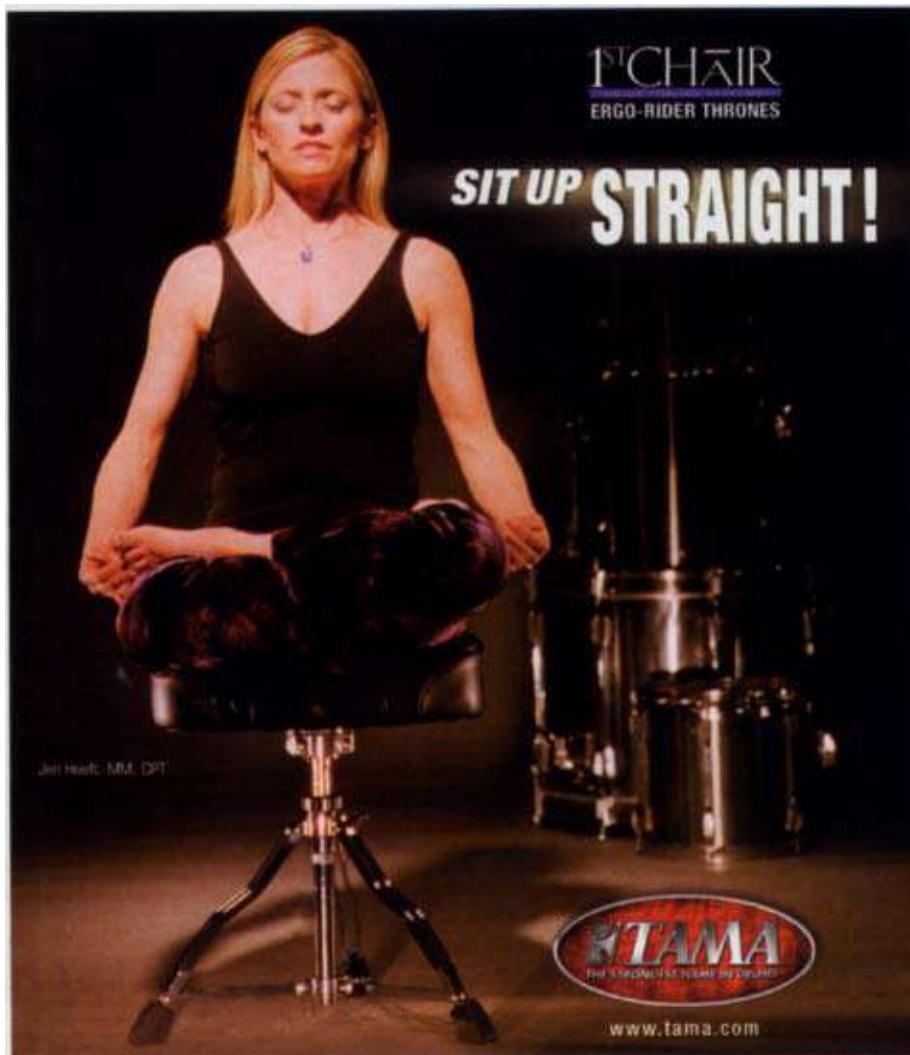
MD: Did you work on certain things for independence or technique?

Lil' John: I wasn't big on technique. I was more into feel and knowing where to place things. I got technical for a minute, but for some reason I didn't care much about it. The rawest stuff to me was the funkier. It could even be a little off the bar, as long as you landed on the 1. We're human, and we're not going to play like computers. I like someone who gives a raw approach to playing and makes whatever they play funky.

MD: When did you start your band The Chronicle?

Lil' John: I started that band when I first moved to Atlanta, about eight years ago. That band was funk-jazz. That was my experimental project. The direction was inspired by how Miles did his live electric jazz stuff. I fused a lot of those things with hip-hop, because hip-hop was starting to get huge. I was really into mixing it up.

As a matter of fact, I was doing that back in college. I would try to flip things and see



Jen Hoelt, MEd, DPT

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George Duke	(new for 2002, not yet titled)
Janet Jackson	Live DVD (Velvet Rope Tour)
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Lil' John Roberts

what it would be like to bring jazz into hip-hop. I can honestly say I had a hand in helping develop that sound, especially in Atlanta. I don't think it was heard of before I came here. It was a fresh new idea to try. Later on you had The Roots and a lot of other bands that were doing those things. After a while it became a movement.

The Roots' Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson and I used to play in an all-high-school jazz band together. We kid each other to this day, because he always said, "Man, you had first chair." [laughs]

He would always hold that over my head, but we're cool now.

MD: So you were experimenting with adding live jazz elements to programmed hip-hop beats. Did you use electronics?

Lil' John: Yeah, I was doing the ddrum thing with triggers, and the drumKAT. That was pretty much it. I had the ddrum trigger on the snare and kick. I had extra pads on the side to play the samples and whatever other percussion things the percussionist couldn't do. Once I would find the meat of the song, I'd have them take

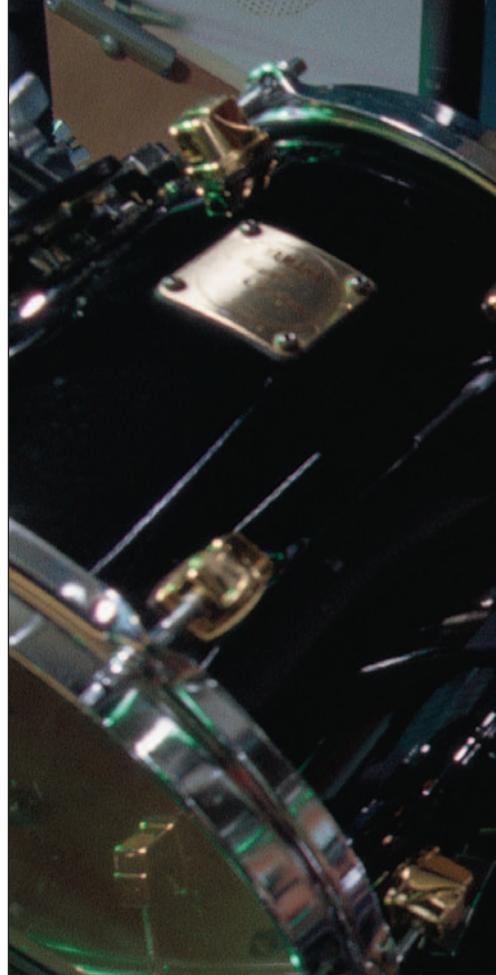


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out the loop because I could play it live.

With some of the bits that Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis programmed for Janet Jackson's records, there might be three or four loops going on at the same time. I might take one of those and just concentrate on playing it. That turned out to be a really cool thing because the audience couldn't tell exactly what was programmed and what was live.

MD: How did you hook up with Janet?

Lil' John: A lot of the guys who were playing with her were in the contemporary jazz scene as well. Sam Simms, the bass player, was very big in getting me the Janet gig. We were both playing with George Howard, and Sam was also playing with everybody under the sun. He put my name in the pot, and some of the other cats on the Janet gig knew who I was. When they needed someone to fill in for Jonathan Moffett, I popped right in.

I came in halfway through Janet's tour, the one before the *Velvet Rope* tour. That was in '95. They had already done the States when they called and said they needed someone to go overseas, because Jonathan was ready to move on to something else.

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Lil' John Roberts

MD: Was that your first major tour?

Lil' John: That was my first major gig. I was twenty-two, and I was riding high. [laughs] It was great. That's what got me to a whole other area of playing music. It was a bigger scene, with so many more people. And it taught me another approach to playing that kind of music. It wasn't all about chops on that gig. It was about sticking to the click. That's the main thing, knowing how to play to a click.

MD: Were you playing along to sequences?

Lil' John: Lots of sequences.

MD: How did you prepare? Had you done it before?

Lil' John: No, not with sequences. I've always practiced with clicks and drum machines, so when it came time for me to do it, it was pretty easy. Once they showed me what I was supposed to do, I was like, "Oh, okay." It was about finding out where to fit in between the loops and sequences, which is an art in itself. It can be very intimidating. The key is to play around the click.

MD: Was it harder to play fewer notes?

Lil' John: At one point in my life all I wanted was to play as many notes as possi-

ble. That was when I was very young. But after a while I was like, You know, it's not just about me, it's about the other cats in the band too. I need to try to make the whole *band* sound good.

A lot of times now I like to sit on a groove for however long and not play *any* fills—just groove. Dennis definitely opened my head up to that. And the way Omar Hakim plays, it's like he's flying. I love that about him. I always wanted to be that free on the instrument.

A lot of cats need to realize that it's more about feel than licks. Knowing that helps keep you employed. Nobody wants to hear a bunch of drum fills in a song. They want to hear the meat of the song with some icing on the cake.

MD: What are some of your favorite recordings that you've done?

Lil' John: There was a song "Don't Let Go," which I did with En Vogue. It was for the *Set It Off* soundtrack. It was kind of like an R&B rock song. I had fun doing that. A lot of the recordings I've done in the past five years have been more on the contemporary R&B/jazz side—Boney James, Richie Elliott, Kirk Whalum, George

Benson, George Duke, and George Howard. I like doing those records. It's not that difficult as far as the drum parts are concerned. They want the groove and the feel that I play.

MD: What's next for you?

Lil' John: I'm starting the new Jonathan Butler record. And I just finished recording the new George Duke record. It was George, Christian McBride on bass, and me, along with a phenomenal guitar player named Jeff Lee Johnson. The music is like the old George Duke records—the instrumental stuff—not as much singing, but more of him playing the Wurlitzer and Rhodes. He told us to go all-out. It might not be a radio-friendly album, but it will be the truth. That's what we're about.

MD: So far you've been blessed with a pretty diverse career.

Lil' John: Yeah, I like to do it all, man. I don't like to be considered just a one-style drummer. I like to play *everything*.

For more on Lil' John, check out www.moderndrummer.com.



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BOBBY RONDINELLI

Ultimate Metal

Story by William F. Miller

Photos by Paul La Raia

Gigs

Blue Öyster Cult

Rainbow

Black Sabbath

Aerosmith

The Scorpions



PAiSte

fibes

Some drummers just seem to be blessed with that certain something extra.

You can't put your finger on exactly what it is, but you know when you hear them that there's a little magic in their playing. Bobby Rondinelli is one of those drummers. And that at least partly explains why he's been able to carve out a truly impressive twenty-plus-year career in the hard-rock genre.

Emerging on the international scene in 1980 with Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow (following in the footsteps of the late, great Cozy Powell), Rondinelli showed a sense of style that cemented his reputation as a top arena-rock performer. His exposure on that gig led to work with some of the big boys of the genre—Black Sabbath and Aerosmith. In fact, Rondinelli has become a sort of ultimate metal sideman, brought in to spark a recording session or tour.

With 50" gong in tow (of course), Bobby has added his magic to a list of other heavy acts, like The Scorpions, Quiet Riot, Zebra, Doro Pesch, and Riot. Currently in his fifth year of touring (averaging well over one hundred dates per year) and recording with eclectic rockers Blue Öyster Cult (of "Don't Fear The Reaper" fame), Bobby shows no sign of a career slowdown. The guy even has a

new solo album due out shortly.

So what is it about Rondinelli's playing that makes him so sought after? Part of it is his time feel, a swaggering forward propulsion that brings to mind none other than Bonzo at his grooviest. But there's also a deep well of chops at Rondinelli's disposal, one that he dips into only when the music calls for it—or when he's in the midst of one of his blistering solos.

And we can't forget Rondinelli's mastery of double bass, an ability the drummer showcases during his nightly solo spot with BÖC. (The man plays some of the fastest singles you'll ever see.) Speaking of double bass, Bobby revealed the mysteries of the subject in his critically acclaimed 2000 book, *The Encyclopedia Of Double Bass* (co-authored with drummer/educator Michael Lauren).

The final component in Rondinelli's secret to success must be his attitude. A tough New York exterior—with the voice of ten thousand cigarettes—hides a heart of gold. Bobby may well be one of the warmest, most sharing drummers on the planet. It's no wonder this guy is always working.



MD: A lot of drummers who came up around the same time as you have essentially disappeared. But you've continued to work. What is it that keeps you so in demand?

Bobby: Well, I think I've continued to grow. I'm never satisfied, and I always want to get better. The bottom line is, I love to play. Some guys burn out on the road and lose the fire, but I still love it.

MD: So even after all this time you still practice?

Bobby: Absolutely. One thing that has kept playing fresh for me over the years is teaching. In fact, teaching is the best thing I ever decided to do, because in essence you're being paid to practice. I have some

pretty good students, and they keep me sharp. I don't want to mess up in front of them, so I'm always practicing and developing new ideas.

Teaching also puts me behind the kit for a lot of hours during the week, where if I wasn't teaching I might not be playing as much. I might not have the motivation to sit down and practice that many hours. I think teaching is a healthy thing to do, not only for yourself, but also for the students you're trying to inspire.

Speaking of education, I'm really hoping to make time in my schedule to do some drum clinics. I'm kind of inspired to do them, because too many of the clinics I see these days are about the "drum show" and

overwhelming the audience, and not *enough* about education. Years ago you'd go to a clinic and the drummer would impress you but also give you some tips or ideas for things to work on. That's what I would try to do.

MD: How are you able to fit students into your schedule now with all of the touring you do?

Bobby: With some bands you go out for four months at a stretch. In those situations I have to take a break from teaching. But with Blue Öyster Cult, we go out three to four days a week. So I teach on Tuesdays and Wednesdays because those are the days we're usually home.

MD: Getting back to your playing, what do

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- 6. 22" Traditional ride
- 7. 18" Signature crash
- 8. 20" Novo China
- 9. 16" Trash Set
- 10. 20" Dimensions China
- 11. 50" Symphonic gong

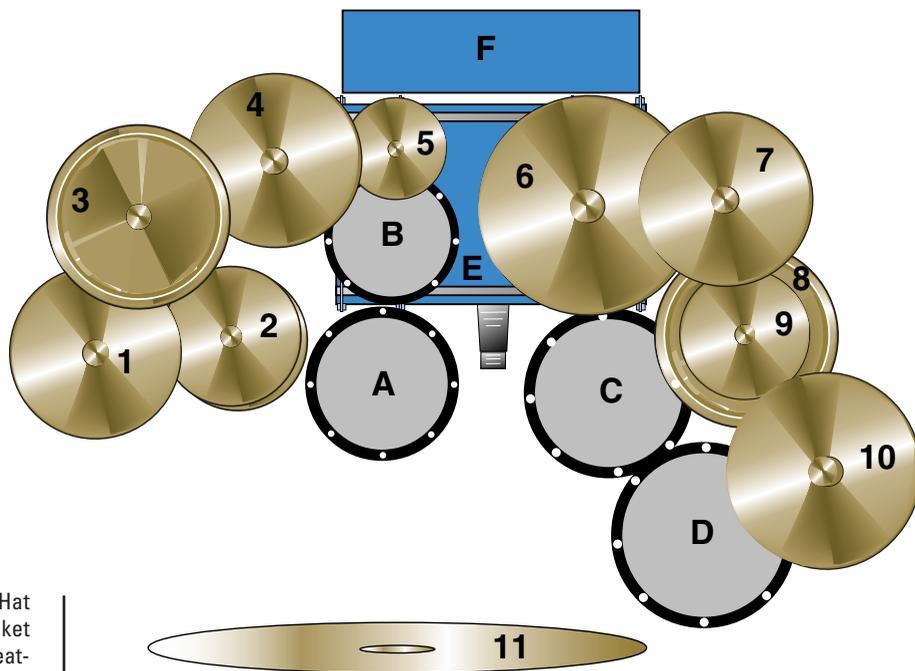
Hardware: Gibraltar, including their Liquid Hat hi-hat pedal (9707 DL) and Intruder II sprocket double pedal (SC-DSAB) with hard plastic beaters, Roc-N-Soc throne, Latin Percussion Ridge Rider cowbell, PureSound snare wires on all snare drums

Heads: Attack 2-ply Aerator series (see "Kit Chat") on snare and tom batters (tensioned medium-tight on snare, bottom head higher than top on toms), No Overtone on bass drum batter with 1-ply medium on front (felt strip for muffling on both heads and on resonator)

Sticks: Vater 1A model (hickory with wood tip)

Monitors: Community Cabinets (two XTL-47Es)

Microphones: All Audix, including D2s on snare and rack tom (with a D1 underneath snare), D4s on floor toms, bass drum, resonator, and gong (using May internal miking system for toms and bass drum), ADX50 on hi-hat, ride cymbal, and overheads



Kit Chat

"I've been using Paiste cymbals for a long time," Rondinelli says. "I think the problem with some cymbals is they're too loud. I use a nice combination of models from a few different Paiste lines, some that might even be considered only for softer music, like the Traditionals. But I don't know what a jazz cymbal or a rock cymbal is. I only know what I like, and the Paistes are *very* musical."

"Regarding my drums, a lot of people have asked me about my switching to Fibes last year. But all you have to do is play a set to know why I switched. They sound amazing. They're so easy to play *and* to tune. And they're consistent from drum to drum. The toms are focused and have good attack. When you play fast they're very articulate, but when you play nice and slow they sound like thunder. And the floor toms? Forget it, they sound like earthquakes. I'm telling you, these are really great drums."

In other equipment news, Rondinelli has come up with a new drumhead design for Attack. "Ya know how two-ply heads are very inconsistent?" Bobby asks. "That's because sometimes air pockets form between the plies when they're being manufactured. My design has a vented bottom ply, which allows the air to escape. The two plies then seat together perfectly, making the heads very consistent. They're called Aerator, and will be available from Attack shortly."

you think are your strong points?

Bobby: I play for the song, but within that I try to get in some cool drumming stuff that I hope inspires the other musicians I'm playing with. When I was coming up, the drummers who played that way were always my favorites—strong rock drummers who also had chops.

MD: The first thing that comes to mind when hearing you play is your feel, which to my ear harks back to the greatest era in rock drumming—John Bonham, Carmine Appice, Ian Paice. You have that unrushed, pumping rock feel.

Bobby: That's nice of you to say. That's the way I *try* to play. All the guys you just mentioned have been major influences on me. I actually took lessons from Carmine when I was a kid. Ginger Baker was another big influence. He was the guy who inspired me to start playing double bass. And, of course, Bonham was huge to me. He was like the governor, the master at what he did.

I saw Zeppelin when I was a kid. My father took my brother and me to the Fillmore to see Iron Butterfly. I was really into "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida." But this new

band from England, Led Zeppelin, opened for them. And believe me, I was like, *Oh my God*. After Zeppelin finished I said, "You know, dad, not for nothing, but I think that guy is a lot better than the guy we came to see." [laughs]

I remember it like it was yesterday. Bonham was unbelievable. He was a hard hitter, but he wasn't a pounder. He had technique. He had a good left hand, a lot of grace notes, and a lot of syncopated rolls. It showed me that a great rock drummer is more than just a basher. A great rock drummer is a great *drummer* who knows how to play the instrument.

Like a lot of other guys, I was also a big Buddy Rich fan. Even though I'm not a jazz drummer, I always loved Buddy for his incredible technique and also for his confidence. That's the way a drummer should play—with confidence.

MD: Do you have any tips for developing that confident, great-feeling groove playing you do?

Bobby: I would say that the best way to start is to really go back and digest all of the guys we've been talking about. They all had it. I think a lot of the young guys

Rondinelli On Record

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

Artist	Recording
Bobby Rondinelli	Rondinelli (new solo record)
Black Sabbath	Cross Purposes
Blue Öyster Cult	Curse Of The Hidden Mirror
Riot	(new for 2002, not titled yet)
Scorpions	Love At First Sting
Rainbow	Difficult To Cure
Rainbow	Straight Between The Eyes
Black Sabbath	Cross Purposes Live



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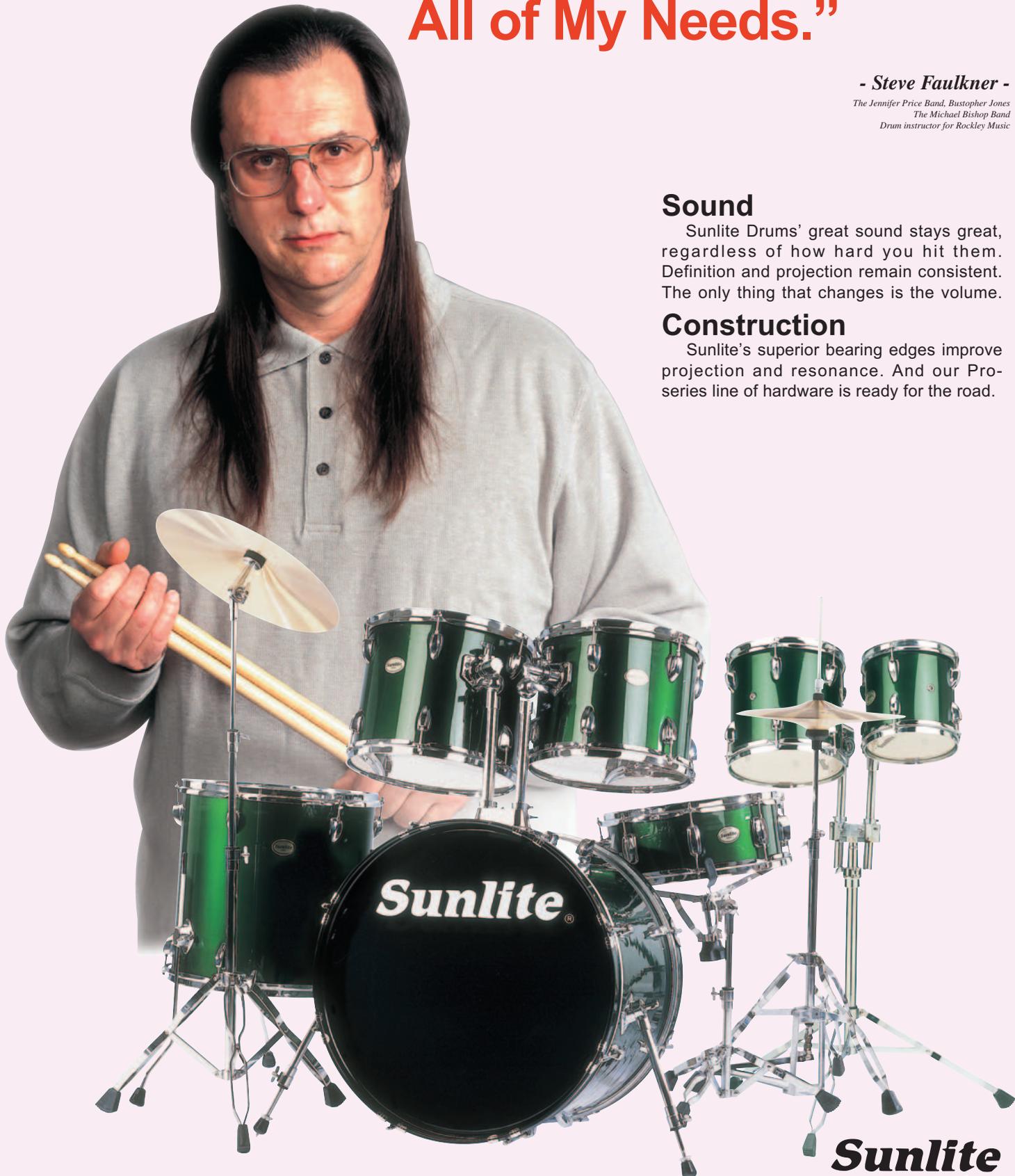
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The Michael Bishop Band
Drum instructor for Rockley Music*

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Bobby Rondinelli

coming up today kind of missed out on some real cool rock drummers. Go back to the archives and check out what these guys had. It'll do wonders for your playing. And one other tip I can offer, which we've all heard before, is practice with a click.

MD: Not to make you sound ancient, but back when guys your age were coming up, they didn't really practice to clicks.

Bobby: Well, I didn't then, but I've since spent a lot of time with them. Today you have to be able to play to a click and make it feel good. If you go into a studio, there's no question that you'll be playing to a click.

I use a click when practicing everything. It's so important. I also use a click at rehearsals just to keep the band in line, so they get used to not rushing or dragging certain parts of a song.

I stress the importance of mastering the click to my students. Some young guys go out and buy the biggest, fanciest drumkit on the planet, but they don't own a metronome. That's something I straighten out right away.

MD: Another area of expertise that you're known for is your double bass playing.

What's your philosophy of applying double bass?

Bobby: Although some guys like to play them a lot, I like being able to use the bass drums to *enhance* beats and fills. For example, I'll take a repeating two-measure beat and just add one or two extra notes with the double bass to add a cool flavor to the groove. I love doing that.

I try to be subtle—almost sneaky—about how I apply double bass in a musical setting. It's so easy to overplay it and ruin a moment. Too many drummers just play constant 16ths *and* play them too loud. It gives the rest of us a bad name! [laughs] Hey, what about dynamics? What about being musical? You can't forget that stuff just because you have a second bass drum or a double pedal.

MD: What suggestions do you have for drummers wanting to learn double bass?

Bobby: The first thing I ask people interested in playing double bass is how developed their left foot is on the hi-hat. If you don't play your hi-hat with your foot, you've got no business worrying about double bass. I feel you have to be able to comfortably play quarter notes, 8ths, and

the upbeat “&s” with your left foot on the hi-hat before playing double bass. If you have that together, it makes starting double bass a whole lot easier.

I lead with my left foot most of the time when I'm doing any sort of 16th-note pattern, which is how Ginger Baker plays. That comes directly from left-foot hi-hat technique. That's a good place to start. I've since worked on being able to lead with either foot, because it opens me up to all kinds of patterns. The learning never stops.

MD: You have an interesting heel-up approach, which looks incredibly relaxed and allows you to play very fast singles.

Bobby: That's an important point. I think some people hear about playing “heel up” and think that you need to raise your heels way up in the air for power or something. A lot of guys play that way. But you don't want your heels up that high, because it really stresses your calf muscles.

When I play, my heel is actually lower than the ball of my foot. It's almost touching the pedal board, kind of floating under the ball of my foot. When my feet aren't moving, my heels are resting. I also don't keep the beater planted in the head, because

Bobby Rondinelli



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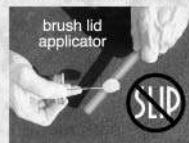
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that causes tension. Whenever my feet aren't hitting, they're resting. You can't groove—and you'll wear yourself out—if you have a lot of tension in your body.

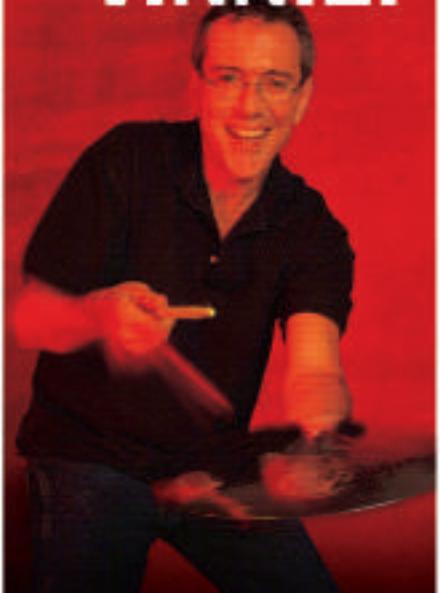
MD: Why did you decide to write *The Encyclopedia Of Double Bass*?

Bobby: I thought it needed to be written. It was probably the coolest subject with the

fewest books written about it. And even though some of the books on double bass were good, they really only touched on certain areas. I wanted a book that covered a lot of ground.

Encyclopedia starts out simply, slowly adding double bass to basic grooves. I feel it's the best way to develop the technique,

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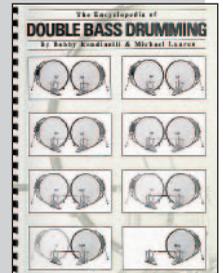
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Double Bass Starters

The image displays 12 numbered musical exercises for double bass drumming, arranged vertically. Each exercise is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. Exercise 1 is a simple quarter-note pattern. Exercises 2 through 10 are more complex, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes, often with accents and slurs. Exercises 11 and 12 are triplets, with exercise 11 being a triplet of eighth notes and exercise 12 being a triplet of sixteenth notes. Each exercise is followed by a double bar line and repeat dots.

Bobby Rondinelli and Michael Lauren's innovative work, *The Encyclopedia Of Double Bass Drumming* (published by *Modern Drummer* and available online at www.modrndrummer.com), is considered to be one of the best books on the subject. It contains hundreds of warm-up, beat, and fill exercises, tips on how to get started on double bass, the pros and cons of two bass drums versus a double pedal, a discography of important double bass recordings, and a timeline of the most important double bass drummers in history, including photos of their setups.

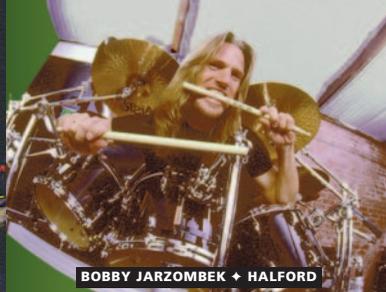


One of the other sections of *Encyclopedia*, "Starters," offers some simple but effective ways to get your feet moving without worrying about your hands. These preliminary exercises isolate and help develop your weak foot, and should be played at controlled tempos for long periods of time in order to develop stamina. (Play each for at least one minute without stopping. Use a metronome or drum machine.)

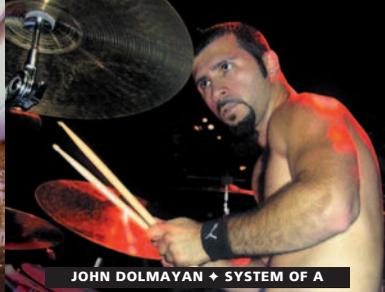
These exercises can be played on and off the kit. According to the authors, tapping your feet on the floor *is* practicing and *is* beneficial.



TOMMY STEWART + GODSMACK



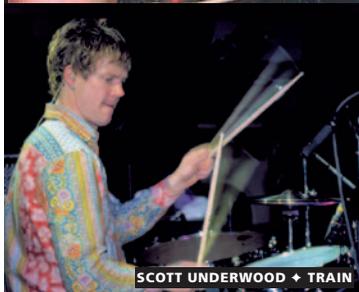
BOBBY JARZOMBEK + HALFORD



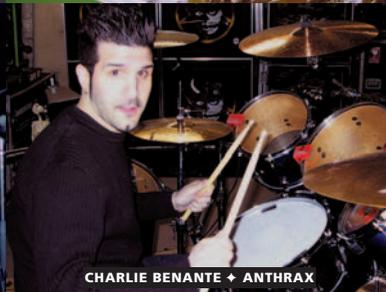
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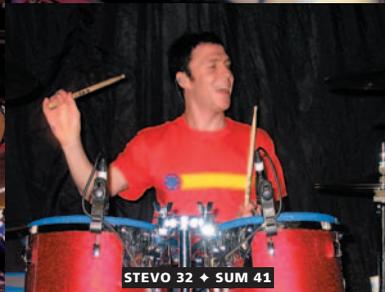
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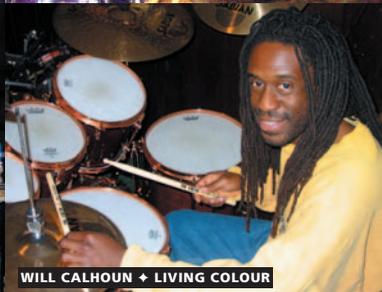
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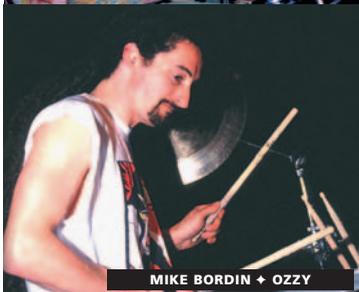
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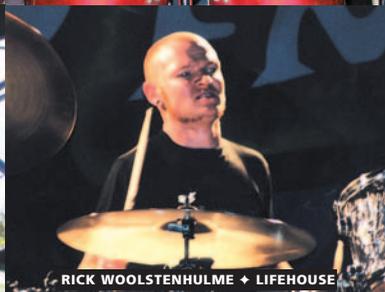
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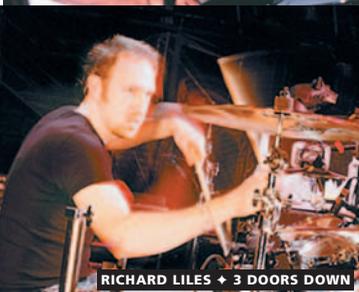
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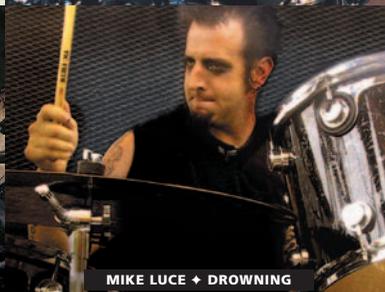
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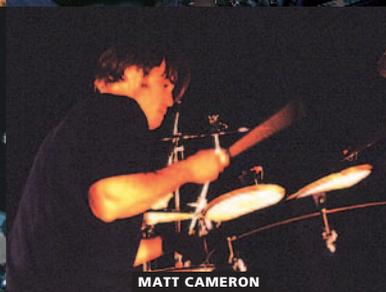
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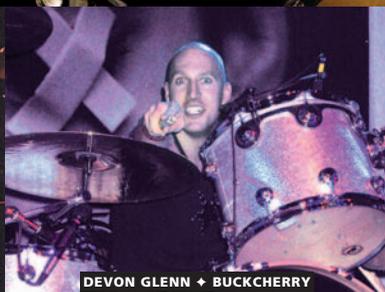
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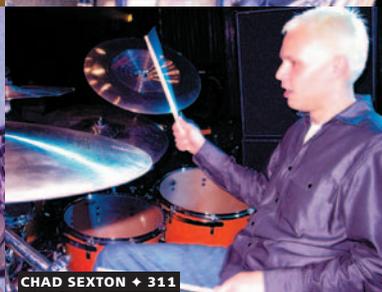
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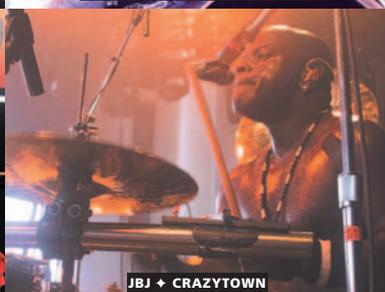
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Bobby Rondinelli

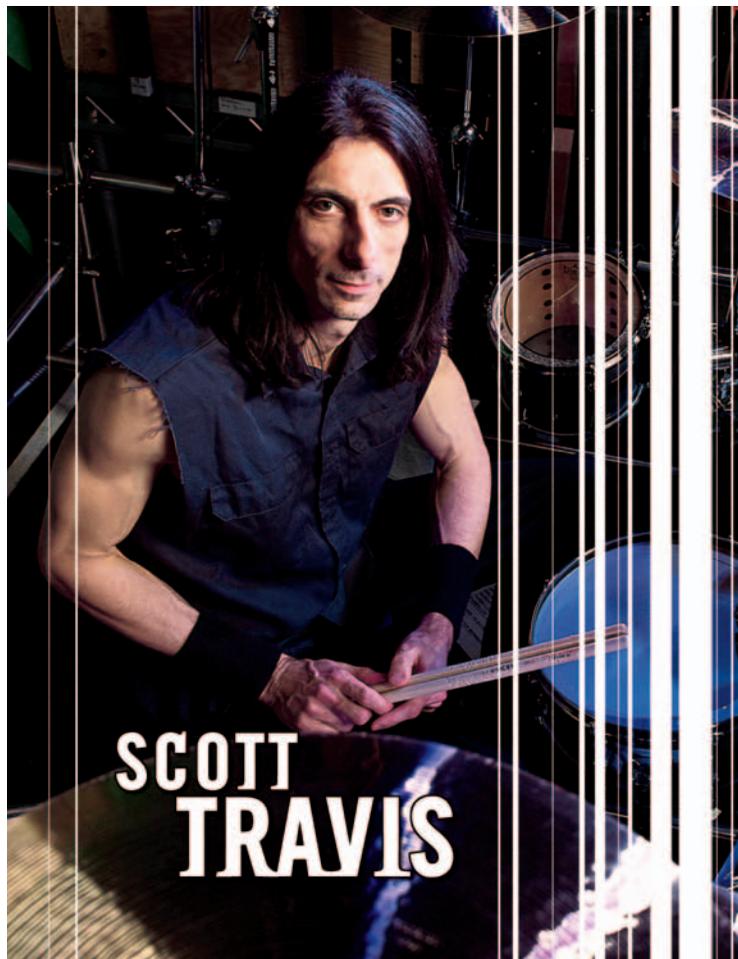
as opposed to the common practice of starting with constant alternating 16ths.

I was also proud of the different concepts we came up with, including specific warm-up exercises for each chapter. Plus there's so much else in there to inspire you to play double bass. I'm very happy with the way it turned out.

MD: How did you end up collaborating with Michael Lauren on the book?

Bobby: We were both teaching at the Long Island Drum Center in Medford, New York, and Mike Joos, the owner of the store, suggested that Michael and I get together because he knew that Michael was writing a book about double bass. So Michael played some of the exercises for me. "What do you think of this beat?" Then I played it and said, "It's okay, but I think a double bass guy would approach it more like this...." And Michael was like, "Oh, I like that." Then he showed me another beat, and the same thing happened. Well, it happened a few more times, and then he ripped up his manuscript and said, "We should write a double bass book together."

It turned out to be a great collaboration,



I was completely satisfied with the first generation silver footboard Iron Cobras. So when the Tama people told me about the newer incarnations, I thought it was probably like the old detergent/new detergent gimmick. I mean, how much better could they be? But I was surprised and very impressed with the new designs. The new Iron Cobra's are definitely smoother and faster. As a matter of fact, the new models are so smooth and fast I can play my trademark Priest tune, 'Painkiller,' with just one pedal...just kidding."

"I've used Tama pedals since the 1980's. As a matter of fact I still have my old Pro-Beats somewhere. Those were super durable pedals and I never broke a thing on them. And I've never broken anything on my Iron Cobras either, not even a spring. Between Judas Priest and Racer X—especially Racer X—the Iron Cobras have certainly withstood a lot of notes."

Besides "smooth" and "durable" are there any other reasons Scott Travis likes Iron Cobras? As a matter of fact, there is: "Since they're black, they go nicely with whatever you're wearing."



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because Michael had some great ideas, and he was the organizer. I'd play something and work with him on a concept, and he'd notate it. And Michael came up with a lot of the coolest beats in the book, too. He's a great drummer.

MD: Let's talk about your current gig with Blue Öyster Cult. On the band's most recent disk, *Curse Of The Hidden Mirror*, the music seems to suit your style, although it's not as heavy as some stuff you've played.

Bobby: Blue Öyster Cult isn't your typical rock gig. It has some lighter moments, some heavier stuff, and a few downright weird bits, which is great because I get to play a lot of different ways. I really love playing with these guys.

MD: You also get to play a drum solo.

Bobby: Yeah, I solo every night, which is fun. I love solos.

MD: What do you try to accomplish with them?

Bobby: I try to entertain. I want to get the crowd going, so I try to show that I can play, but I *also* try to get the crowd involved and have a good time. It's called "show business" for a reason.

MD: You have one move that really gets the crowd going, where you're playing a fast roll with your feet and moving your hands all over the kit.

Bobby: I know the move you're talking about. I'm playing 32nd-note triplets with my feet while doing a figure-eight pattern with my arms crossing and moving around the kit. It creates a *lot* of motion. You can see me do it on the Rainbow concert video *Live Between The Eyes*.

MD: Thinking back to your Rainbow days, your setup was a lot bigger back then, what with the two bass drums and multiple toms. You've scaled back a bit.

Bobby: The reason I decided to go to a smaller kit is because a lot of Blue Öyster Cult's gigs are fly-out shows, where we have to use rental gear. We'll be playing in Texas one night and New Jersey the next. Our gear can't possibly get from one venue to the next that quickly, so we occasionally have to use rental stuff. I just got tired of trying to get a massive rental kit in the sizes I needed.

The funny thing is, when I switched to a smaller kit it felt great immediately. I've always found that smaller kits were more

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Pictured: Scott Travis' actual touring set featuring two Iron Cobra Power Glide single pedals.

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Bobby Rondinelli

comfortable to play. One rack tom, two floor toms, and one bass drum is the classic setup. The only thing that didn't feel good about it back in the old days was it didn't have a second bass drum. But now with a double pedal you can have that comfort and still get in your booga-booga. [laughs]

MD: Do you prefer a double pedal to two bass drums?

Bobby: I really do. I've found that it's easier to do an even-sounding single-stroke roll with a double pedal than it is with two bass drums. The feel of the head takes some getting used to, but the sound is a lot more consistent than two bass drums, no matter how carefully you tune the drums. Plus the double pedal allows you to set up a little tighter than with a second bass drum, which makes the setup a lot more comfortable.

MD: Another interesting project you have in the works is your first solo album. What's it going to be called?

Bobby: *Rondinelli*, of course. [laughs] The material is hard rock with a bluesy vibe. But there are spots where it gets a little progressive. There's odd-time stuff here and there. And I play a lot of double bass on it as well. I think it's some of the best drumming I've done on record.

The album features my brother Teddy on guitar—he and I wrote all of the material—and Neil Murray on bass. I played with Neil in Black Sabbath, and he's worked with everybody, from Whitesnake and Gary Moore to Brian May and Peter Green. Tony Martin is doing the vocals on the disc. He

was the singer in Black Sabbath when I was in the band. So it's a great group of musicians. The record is being released by a European company called MTM. I hope to have a US deal for it shortly.

MD: You've been involved with so many big-name situations in your career.

Bobby: Well, Rainbow was the first, so that one is always going to be special to me. And playing with Ritchie Blackmore and Roger Glover in Rainbow—I mean, Deep Purple was one of my favorite bands. When I actually got to play with those guys and take the place of an influential drummer like Cozy Powell, well, it was a dream come true.

MD: What about when you were with Black Sabbath?

Bobby: That was really a lot of fun because it was *heavy*. [laughs] If you want to play heavy music, join Black Sabbath. There's nothing heavier.

MD: Was that a challenge for you?

Bobby: No. That was right up my alley. I love that stuff. And playing with Tony Iommi was fun. He loves to jam. We would do long soundchecks and just go.

MD: What about your time with Aerosmith?

Bobby: That was in '83 and '84. They called me to fill in for Joey Kramer when he was ill. That was a fun band to play with. And Steven Tyler is probably the single most entertaining guy I've ever been on stage with. It's a pleasure to watch him work.

MD: I get the impression he can be pretty tough on drummers.

Bobby: Honestly, he was very nice to me. He liked the way I played and he let me do my thing. We would solo together every night, with him on timbales and me on drums. And one night I actually stood up and got him to play the set, which he did pretty well.

MD: A littler earlier you mentioned Cozy Powell. I know you were asked to perform at his tribute show in England after he passed away.

Bobby: What a *great* drummer. Man, when I followed Cozy in Rainbow it put a ton of pressure on me. But it also gave me a lot of attention. If you can play with Ritchie Blackmore and take Cozy's place, you must be doing something right.

Cozy called me when I joined Sabbath, because he had been in that band as well as Rainbow. He said, "Bobby, Cozy here. I'm going to give you my girlfriend's number, mate. You've done just about everything else I've done, so you might as well do her too!" [laughs] I really dug Cozy. He had a sound and a style all his own.

MD: Do you think you have a sound and a style?

Bobby: That's a hard one for me to answer. People I work with tell me I do. But I guess *everybody* in their own way has a style, and it either works or it doesn't.

MD: After twenty years in this business, apparently yours works.

Bobby: Yeah, I guess it does.



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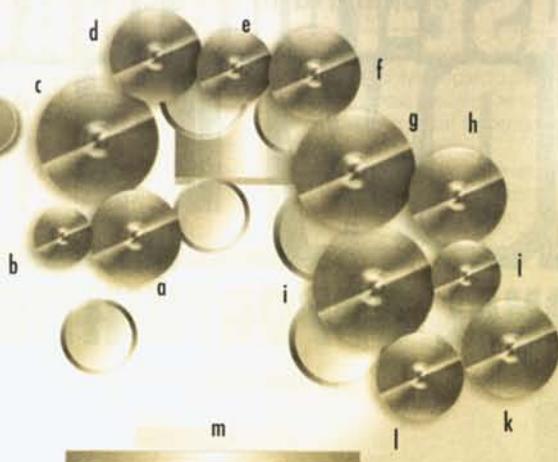
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- i - 12" Signature Splash
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- m - Paiste Percussion Set

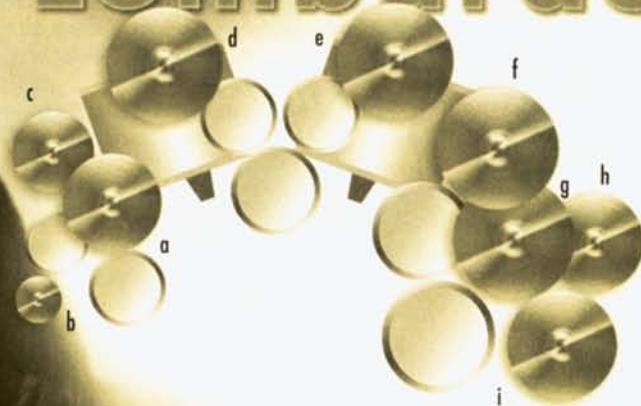


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- d - 16" Dimensions Power Crash
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- f - 18" Dimensions Power Crash
- g - 22" Signature Dry Dark Ride
- h - 16" 2002 China
- i - 18" 2002 Novo China



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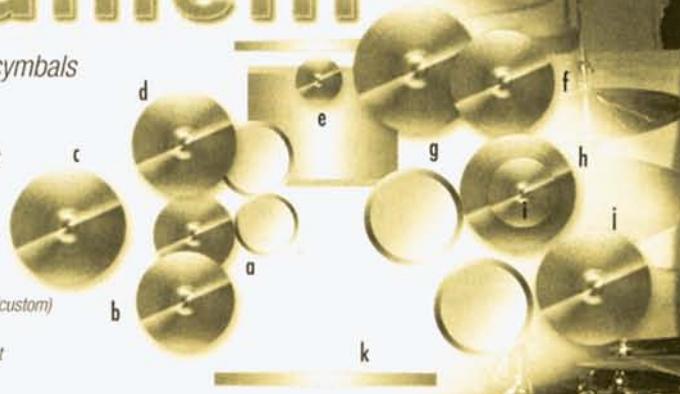
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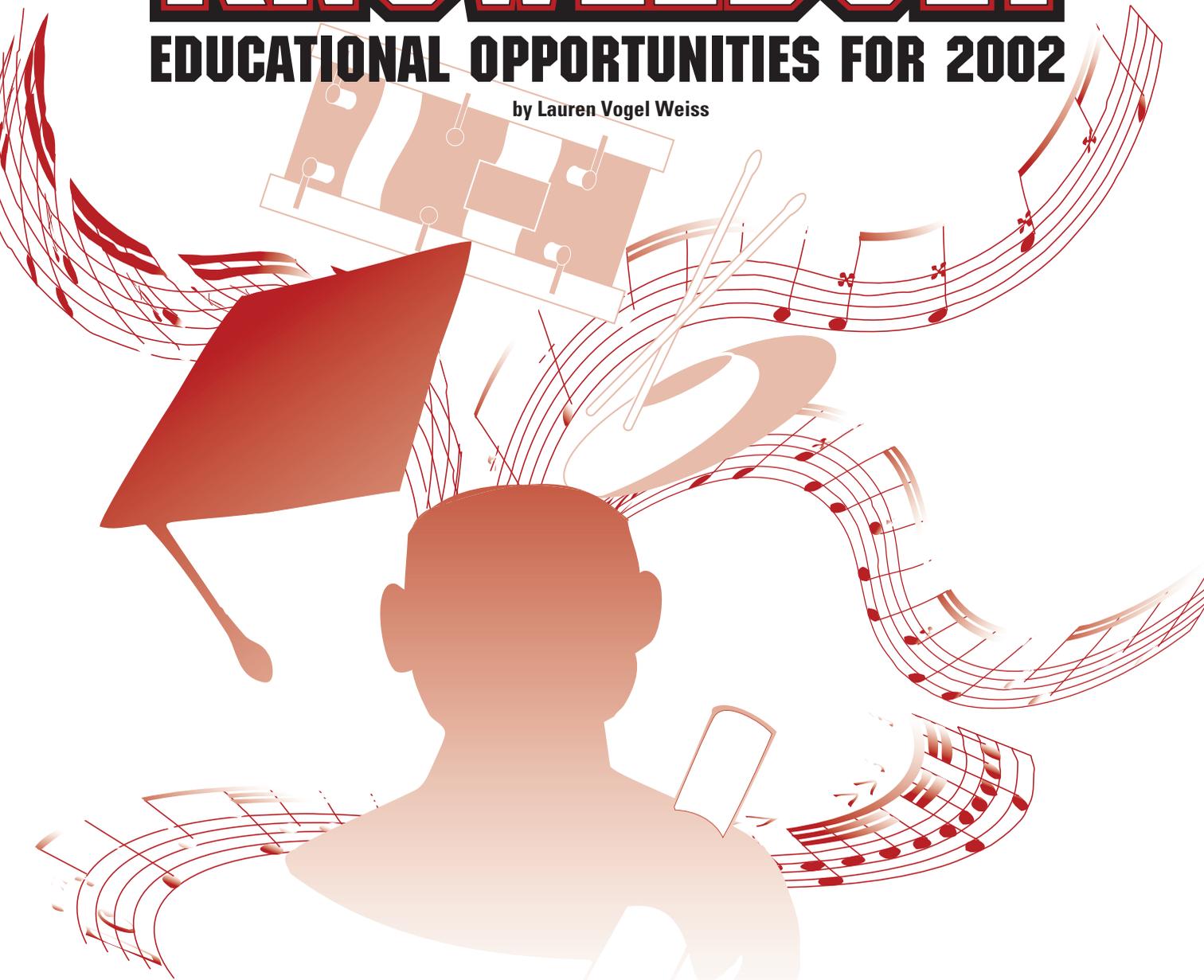
- a - 14" Traditional Medium Light Hi-Hat
- b - 17" 2002 Crash
- c - 20" Signature Thin China
- d - 18" Dimensions Medium Thin Crash
- e - 8" Signature Splash
- f - 18" Signature Full Crash
- g - 22" Traditional Medium Heavy Ride (custom)
- h - 20" 2002 Novo China
- i - 12" - 16" Exotic Percussion Trash Set
- j - 20" Dimensions Power China
- k - 50" Symphonic Gong



INCREASE YOUR DRUMMING KNOWLEDGE!

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2002

by Lauren Vogel Weiss



In the spring, a young person's thoughts turn to love. Wait! Wrong magazine!

In the spring, a young drummer's thoughts turn to...*school*. It's a given that drummers—young and old—constantly strive to improve their playing skills and learn more about the music business. Beyond taking private lessons, subscribing to *Modern Drummer*, and attending drum clinics, many players come to the point where they want to take the next step—drum school. But where to go—and why?

What follows is a peek into the world of higher learning, “drum-set style.” From colleges and universities to trade and vocational

schools, today's drummers have more choices than ever in their pursuit of knowledge. There are even several options for those who have to schedule their drumming education around a day job.

Thanks to the Internet, detailed information—about faculty, performing ensembles, tuition, financial aid, and audition procedures—is just a click away. Aspiring students can also learn more at their local library or by contacting schools via mail or phone to receive the most current catalogs and course descriptions. What follows is not intended to be a definitive list of your drum-school options, but rather a starting point to put you on the road to the ultimate drumming education.

The Best Drumset Colleges And Universities For Drummers

The “traditional” means of higher education are the hundreds of colleges and universities across the country. These institutions offer a total educational experience, including subjects like math and history, in addition to a heavy dose of music classes.

There are those who feel that choosing the right school can be the best of both worlds: an enriching musical experience, as well as a balanced academic education (with that all-important bachelor’s or master’s degree). In the sobering reality of today’s economy, a college degree may make the difference between minimum wage and a decent salary if, at some point in the future, one is forced to find a job in the “real world.”

So, how does one “rank” a music program? “It’s easy,” top clinician/independent

drummer Gregg Bissonette answers with a laugh. “It’s the right combination of teachers, students, playing opportunities, and location!”

Sounds simple enough. The operative word here is “right,” though. What’s right for one drummer might not be perfect for another. There will always be unique aspects to every school.

Still, during a poll of top drumset educators, three schools kept appearing on everyone’s list as the best in contemporary higher drumset learning: Berklee College Of Music, the University Of Miami, and the University Of North Texas. Let’s look closely at what each has to offer.

Berklee College Of Music

1140 Boylston Street

Boston, MA 02215-3693

(617) 266-1400

Admission office: (800) 421-0084—toll-free within the US and Canada

www.berklee.edu

SNAPSHOT:

College Of Music enrollment:	3,400 total, 500 percussion
Percussion Faculty:	35
Tuition (per semester):	\$8,695
Student Profile:	18 to 24 (average age), approximately 40% international

Years ago, Berklee may have been thought of as a “trade school,” but their comprehensive program offers a bachelor of music degree, with a choice of majors including performance, music education, film scoring, and jazz composition or songwriting (just to name a few), all of which may include drumset as the principal instrument. Over two-thirds of the Berklee student body is enrolled in the degree program. Other students earn a diploma (focusing exclusively on their music studies while foregoing the general education courses), or even a certificate, earned after a minimum of 48 credits of required music classes.

Located in downtown Boston, Berklee has approximately 3,400 students, with roughly 500 students studying percussion, 90% of whom are drumset majors. With almost three dozen percussion teachers on staff (27 specializing in drumset!), students can learn about different drumset styles, as well as vibraphone, hand percussion, and total percussion. The faculty is literally an “A to Z” of top teachers—Dean Anderson to Nancy Zeitsman—as well as internationally acclaimed performers/teachers such as Jamey Haddad, Mike Mangini, and Rod Morgenstein. Drumset labs usually have 6 to 8 students in them while ensembles can range anywhere from 3 to 20 members. The majority of classes teach 10 to 20 students, although some of the more popular survey classes can be much larger.

Dean Anderson is the chair of the percussion department and oversees all of the percussion activities for the school. “We offer 80 multi-section courses related to percussion. This includes everything from funk drumming and brush techniques to polyrhythms, acoustic characteristics for the drumset, styles/labs for jazz, fusion, rock, funk, world drumset... [Dean pauses for breath] ...lead sheet interpretation, electronic percussion, advanced chart reading, fusion lab, African rhythms for drumset, alternative setups for drumset and percussion, double bass studies, Afro-Cuban/Brazilian rhythms for drumset, singing and drumming coordination, rudimental applications for drumset, solo construction for drumset, advanced jazz drumming, and solo transcription performance for drumset. And that’s just a partial list! All drumset students are required to take drumset courses in four different levels, going from basic hand technique and reading all the way up to advanced chart reading.”

Classes are usually taught between 9:00 in the morning and 9:00 at night, but the practice rooms are open until 2:00 A.M. Drummers sign up to use 50 fully equipped practice rooms, plus there are 20 more without equipment so people can use their own drumsets if they prefer. There are also over 300 performing ensembles to choose from—everything from the Buddy Rich Big Band to the John Coltrane Ensemble, along with a Jazz/Rock Ensemble and the Berklee Recording Orchestra.

“An important difference between our program and those of many other colleges,” elaborates Anderson, “is that Berklee is a very multicultural environment musically.” Indeed, over 40% of Berklee’s students come from overseas—the majority from Japan, Europe, and South America. The average age is also slightly older than the typical US college because so many of the European students are a few years older than their American counterparts.

All students go through a screening process for admission, but only those applying for scholarships need to audition.

“Berklee is a composite of the whole music industry in one place,” summarizes Anderson. “It’s a great jumpstart to a career in music, not just in performance. While they’re here, students can find out about all aspects of the music industry. They can also link into our career resources center, which will assist them with job placement into virtually any aspect of the music world. Our alumni network is unbelievable, too.”



University Of Miami

School of Music
PO Box 248165
Coral Gables, FL 33124-7610
(305) 284-2241
www.music.miami.edu

SNAPSHOT:

Jazz Department enrollment: 150 total, 20 drumset (16 to 18 majors, 1 to 2 grad students)
Percussion Faculty: 4
Tuition (per semester): \$11,800

Combining one of the most comprehensive musical programs in American higher education with a year-round warm and sunny climate, the University of Miami is a very appealing choice for aspiring students. U of M aims to prepare its students for the broad spectrum of music and music-related fields, and even features a top-notch music engineering school. The school offers a bachelor of music degree in studio music & jazz (comparable to a performance degree on drumset), music business, music education, and music engineering, as well as a master's and even doctor of music arts degrees in jazz percussion.

Dr. Ney G. Rosauero, internationally acclaimed performer and composer from Brazil, is the director of the percussion department, and Steve Rucker, who earned his master's at UM, is the director of the drumset program. Other percussion faculty members include Steve Aho, Harry Hawthorne, and Martin Galagarza.

More than 50 ensembles are available at the UM School Of Music, offering undergraduate and graduate students a wide variety of performance opportunities. Their Concert Jazz Band, Jazz Vocal Ensemble I, and The Bop Brothers have been featured at recent IAJE (International Association of Jazz Educators) conventions. Other groups that utilize drumset players include the Art Blakey, Miles Davis, Monk/Mingus, and Fusion ensembles, and the Salsa Orchestra, just to name a few.

"Miami was one of the first schools in the country to offer drumset as part of their curriculum," explains Steve Rucker. "More than 30 years ago, Fred Wickstrom [former professor of percussion at UM] helped to make drumset a respected instrument at the university level. We've had a pretty comprehensive drumset program here for the last 20 years."

Rucker, who began teaching at Miami in 1979, teaches a drumset curriculum that is unique to the university. "It's a program in which the students take drumset classes for two years, in addition to their private lessons. The first year is a class in basic drumset that covers all styles, reading, technique, playing with a rhythm section—there's even a rhythm section assigned to the class.

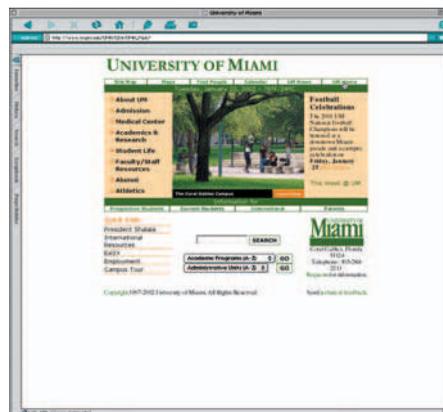
"The second year," Rucker continues, "is an improv course that begins with a very specialized style study. It goes from Max Roach to Art Blakey to Philly Joe Jones on up through Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, and beyond. We get into all those styles—transcribing and analyzing them as well as playing with a rhythm section. Then the second semester, we begin to work on each student's individual style. It's more creative, and we talk about playing over song form and developing a motive. Since we only accept four to five new drumset students each year, those students form a bond that lasts years after they graduate."

Although the practice facilities may be more state-of-the-art at some other schools, the students at Miami make it work. "We've got a number of practice rooms," comments Rucker. "We also have enough lockers where students can keep their drums, and there's not a time schedule for practicing. You can set up your drums and leave them set up for a long period of time, so it really has worked out fine for the students—especially because I require a lot of practice!

"Our typical drumset student can play everything," Rucker goes on. "They can play studio music, jazz—they're creative. There was a time when we had drummers who came and specialized in one area. But today that might be a detriment after they get out of school. The ones who can do it all are the best students."

Although the private school is expensive to attend, music scholarships are available for qualified students. There are also many playing opportunities in the Miami area, so students can work while they are in school, or even earn a living there after graduation.

Rucker advises drumset students to surround themselves not only with other good drummers but with other talented musicians. "We had Pat Metheny and Bruce Hornsby go to school here," he smiles. "When our drummers play in ensembles, they play with some awesome rhythm section players as well as saxophone and horn players, too. That's part of the University Of Miami experience."



University Of North Texas

College Of Music
PO Box 311367
Denton, TX 76203-1367
(940) 565-2791
www.music.unt.edu

SNAPSHOT:

College Of Music enrollment: 1,500 total, 150 percussion (60 to 70 drumset)
Percussion Faculty: 12
Tuition (per semester, based on 15 hours): \$2,060 (Texas residents)
\$5,225 (non-residents)

Who in music hasn't heard of the famed North Texas Lab Bands, especially the Grammy-winning One O'Clock Lab Band? They are one of the crown jewels in the world-renowned University Of North Texas College Of Music, also home to one of the largest percussion programs in the country. The school offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees (bachelor of music, master of music, and doctor of musical arts) in music performance, composition, jazz studies, music education, music history and literature, and music theory.

Denton is located about an hour north of Dallas and Fort Worth, offering students performing opportunities across the DFW metroplex. The College of Music has over 1,500 students. Ten percent of those are percussionists, 65 to 70 of whom are jazz studies majors with a drumset concentration. There are four drumset teachers—Ed Soph, who is associate professor of music and coordinator of drumset studies, as well as three adjunct drumset teachers, Harrell Bosarge, Henry Okstel, and Dan Robins. Eight other full-time percussion faculty fill out the staff, including Gideon Alorwoye (African percussion) and Poovalur Srinivasan (Indian percussion).

"A drumset player would be taking jazz courses," explains Ed Soph. Entry-level courses, like jazz fundamentals or jazz aural skills, are fairly large classes with 40 to 50 people in them. "As the studies become more specialized, like improvisation, the classes become much smaller, because they're geared for playing situations rather than lecturing situations."

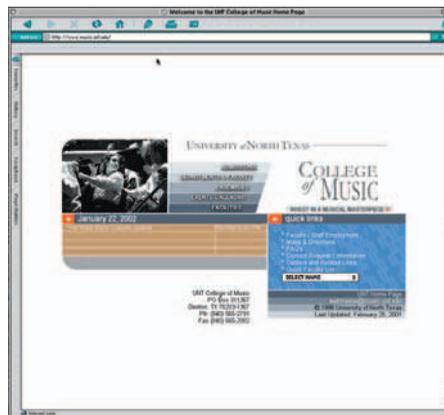
Drumset players are also required to take their last two semesters of improv on either piano or vibes, which greatly enhances their music development. "As far as drumset goes," Soph says, "we're referred to as a jazz school. But I prefer to call what we do in the drumset area 'improvisation studies.' That means that a student learns how to improvise in all styles."

There are over 40 musical ensembles to choose from at North Texas, including nine lab bands, named for the hour the band rehearses. The One and Two O'Clock Bands each have one drummer, and the Three through Nine each have two. There are also The Zebras—a commercially oriented pop ensemble—The Jazz Singers, and many percussion ensembles, from African to South Indian to steel bands. "All of the ensembles for which one can get credit towards a degree are only available through audition, which is part of the process," Soph adds. "If you're good enough to make a band, you'll make it. If you don't have basic reading skills or the ability to make a good sound on your instrument, then you won't get in a band. That might be an indicator of which direction a person should go—maybe thinking about making music a secondary part of their education and getting their degree in something else."

The UNT facilities include over 300 practice rooms, which are open 24 hours a day. Each drummer is assigned a practice room (complete with a lock and key) to keep his or her drumset in without having to move equipment across campus or having to reserve a specific practice time. The College also has six performance halls, numerous class and rehearsal rooms, several computer labs, a distributive learning center, and one of the most extensive music libraries in the United States.

North Texas students come from all over, with very few coming from Texas. Last fall, the drummer in the One O'Clock Lab Band was from British Columbia (by way of New Zealand), and the young man in the Two O'Clock was from South Carolina. Ed Soph describes some of the top students: "They're all very focused on what they want to do. They have goals. They have good time-management skills. They have the ability to say no, which is a very important skill to learn early on; you have to make yourself a wanted commodity, which you don't do by making yourself available to every Tom, Dick, and Harry who wants to play with you. They are intelligent, well-spoken...like any successful student in other fields.

"In this day and age," Soph continues, "the most important thing is to go somewhere where you get maximum performance experience. It's also extremely important to go to a place where the other instrumentalists—the non-drummers—are of an extremely high caliber, because if you play with them at a school like North Texas, those are the same people you will network with when you go out and start your career."



The Greater New York Area

John Riley, the well-known drummer who has performed with jazz greats such as Dizzy Gillespie and Mike Stern, as well as The John Scofield Quartet, The Woody Herman Big Band, and The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, is also on the faculty of three New York-area colleges known for their drumset and jazz programs: Manhattan School Of Music, The New School, and the State University Of New York (SUNY) at Purchase. He also taught at William Paterson University in New Jersey between 1987 and 1999. (For the record, Riley received his B.M. degree from the University Of North Texas and his M.M. from Manhattan.)

Riley has been the primary drumset teacher in the Manhattan School Of Music since 1988. "We focus mainly on jazz playing because that's the curriculum demanded of all the other instrumentalists, so we have to prepare the drummers to perform in those ensembles. But all styles are addressed," John explains. "Our students are fairly diverse, from people right out of high school to professional players in their forties who are returning to school. We usually have at least one foreign student per year as well."

Why would Riley recommend someone study at Manhattan? "It's got a lot of things going for it," he replies. "One is that the caliber of the other students is very high. Students need to be surrounded by other young musicians of similar ambition. Another is the strength of the faculty and ensembles. Also, because it's in New York City, MSM attracts returning professionals. Playing with the returning pros gives the younger students perspective and a real boost. And being in New York, students have the fantastic opportunity to see and hear masters of every idiom of music perform on any night of the week. Finally, if one is planning on a playing career in NYC, there are advantages to laying the groundwork for that career while still in school."

SUNY Purchase, which is about 45 minutes from Manhattan, is similar to the Manhattan School Of Music in that it's a conservatory that has a jazz division. Purchase has approximately 400 classical musical students, slightly more than half of Manhattan's. The school's jazz divisions are about the same size (100 to 120 students) and each has approximately 15 drumset players.

"Since it's a state school, Purchase is much less expensive," explains Riley. "If a student can't afford Manhattan—or The New School, the other great private-university jazz music program in New York City—they can take advantage of the musical opportunities there." A student can receive the same instruction from John Riley as well as comparable musical performing experiences in school ensembles and still be less than an hour's drive from the heart of the city. "The ensemble situation and practice-room facilities are similar to Manhattan, although Purchase has more practice rooms," adds Riley.

Across the river, in New Jersey, William Paterson University provides a slightly smaller jazz program (with approximately 60 undergrads and 10 grads, around 10 of whom are drummers). Drumset instructors there include Horacee Arnold and Bill Goodwin.

"It seems students who come to any of the schools around New York that we've been talking about are very serious about trying to develop the skills to have a career in music," summarizes Riley. "Students often have a choice of these four schools—they may be accepted at more than one of them—but financial concerns dictate which one they go to. If they get some scholarship at an expensive school, they might go there. If they don't, they'll go to one of the lower-cost schools. The bottom line is, if someone is inspired and dedicated, they're going to find a way to succeed regardless of where they go to school. But a good school and a good teacher can take some of the 'bends' out of the road by helping students solve musical issues in the most straightforward fashion."

Other colleges and universities with outstanding drumset programs

Capital University

Conservatory Of Music
2199 East Main Street
Columbus, OH 43209-2394
(614) 236-6411
Admission office: (800) 289-6289
www.capital.edu



SNAPSHOT:

Percussion Faculty: Bob Breithaupt (drumset, chair of jazz studies department), Rick Brunetto (percussion, recording techniques), Jim Ed Cobbs (percussion), Eric Patton (ethnic percussion)

Tuition (per semester): \$9,000
Degrees: bachelor of music degrees (performance, jazz studies, music industry, music technology), bachelor of arts

Eastman School Of Music

26 Gibbs Street
Rochester, NY 14604-2599
(585) 274-1430
Admissions office: (800) 388-9695
www.rochester.edu/Eastman/



SNAPSHOT:

Percussion Faculty: John Beck (percussion), Rich Thompson (drumset)
Tuition (per semester): \$10,900
Degrees: bachelor of music, master of music, doctor of musical arts (all available in jazz studies & contemporary music as well as performance, music education, etc.)

Indiana University

School Of Music
Bloomington, IN 47405-2200
(812) 855-1583
www.music.indiana.edu



SNAPSHOT:

School Of Music enrollment: 1,400 total, 15 to 20 percussion
Percussion Faculty: Gerald Carlyss (percussion), Anthony J. Cirone (percussion), Wilber T. England (percussion), Steve Houghton (drumset, percussion)

Tuition (per semester): \$2,000 (Indiana residents), \$6,000 (non-residents)
Student Profile: mostly from the Midwest
Degrees: bachelor of music degrees (performance, composition, jazz studies), bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, master of music, doctor of music

Auditioning Tips

Part of the application procedure to most music schools is the infamous "audition." Colleges and universities will also require SAT scores or other pre-college-level test scores, in addition to grade transcripts and letters of reference. But in the world of drumming, it all comes down to how you play.

The Eastman School Of Music Web site (www.rochester.edu/Eastman) outlines some considerations they recommend for high school students planning to audition for their bachelor of music degree program in jazz studies and contemporary media. Many of their suggestions would apply to other schools and other styles.

Study with a jazz teacher during your high school years.

Once you know that you want to pursue a jazz degree in college, work closely with your school jazz teacher or locate a private jazz instructor. Find a drumset teacher who can teach you jazz improvisation, theory, and aural training. Attend clinics and workshops; summer jazz camps are highly recommended.

Establish a daily listening regimen.

Expose yourself to the broadest spectrum of live performances and recordings as you increase your general music and jazz language and vocabulary.

Maintain solid high school grades.

It sounds stock, but it's true. Your transcripts and academic records will be carefully examined. Standardized test scores can also play significant roles in the process.

Assemble strong recommendations.

The school will need to check you out musically *and* personally. They'll want to know what your major teachers think about your artistry, commitment, and character. Secure reference letters from people who know you best and can articulate your strengths in writing.

Visit the school of your choice during your junior year.

Speak with admissions representatives and jazz faculty members to see if the school's program is right for you. Find out what your respective studio professor will want to hear in the audition process. Get a sense of what this place is about *before* you audition in your senior year.

Don't ignore your classical studies.

A well-balanced high school music background will set the stage for a successful collegiate music school experience. Many schools require jazz *and* classical auditions for prospective jazz majors; jazz applicants with weak classical backgrounds or inadequately prepared classical audition components are often rejected.

Thoughtfully choose your audition repertoire.

Select three or four tunes that represent a varied mix of styles, display your musicianship, showcase your conceptual and technical skills, and, most importantly, demonstrate your improvisational prowess. Pick your tunes with imagination. We enjoy hearing student compositions, non-traditional materials, and lesser-known jazz standards. Don't start your audition by asking, "So, what do you want to hear?"

Carefully prepare for your audition.

Know the materials cold; commit melodies and chord changes to memory. Students attempting to "wing it" typically fall short.

Be able to articulate your musical interests and aspirations.

Prospective faculty members want to know what your influences have been, what compels and motivates you artistically, and what paths you are hoping to travel as a musician.

Manhattan School Of Music

120 Claremont Avenue
New York, NY 10027-4698
(212) 749-2802
www.msmnyc.edu



SNAPSHOT:

School Of Music
enrollment:
Percussion Faculty:

900 total (150 in jazz/commercial music), 12 to 15 drumset
Erik Charlston (percussion), Justin DiCioccio (drumset), Claire
Heldrich (percussion ensemble), Christopher Lamb (percussion),
Joseph Locke (vibes), Duncan Patton (percussion), James Preiss
(percussion), John Riley (drumset), Steven Schick (percussion)
\$21,000
bachelor of music degrees (majors in classical performance,
composition and jazz/commercial music), professional studies
certificate, master of music and doctor of musical arts

Tuition (per year):
Degrees:

The New School

Jazz & Contemporary Music Program
55 West 13th Street
New York, NY 10011
(212) 229-5896
www.newschool.edu/jazz



SNAPSHOT:

Jazz program enrollment: 250
Percussion Faculty:

Joe Chambers (drumset, vibes), Andrew Cyrille (drummer/composer), R. David Goodman (drummer/composer), Jamey Haddad (percussionist/drummer), Chico Hamilton (drummer/composer/bandleader/producer), Kristina Kanders (percussionist/drummer), Charlie Persip (drummer), John Riley (drumset), Bobby Sanabria (percussionist/drummer)

Tuition (per semester): \$9,925
Degrees: bachelor of fine arts

Northern Illinois University

School Of Music
DeKalb, IL 60115
(815) 753-1551
www.niu.edu



SNAPSHOT:

School Of Music enrollment: 350 total, 24 percussion
Percussion Faculty:

Clifford Alexis (steel pans), Robert Chappell (percussion, jazz, ensembles, world music), Orlando Cotto (percussion), Kuo-Huang Han (world music), Richard Holly (percussion, jazz, ensembles), G. Allan O'Connor (percussion, steel pans, world music), Liam Teague (steel pan)

Tuition (per semester): \$1,720 (Illinois residents), \$3,440 (non-residents)
Degrees: bachelor of music (performance, music education, performance/jazz studies), bachelor of arts (arts management, performance), master of music (performance, world music, jazz studies), performer's certificate

Northwestern University

633 Clark Street
Evanston, IL 60208
(847) 491-3741
www.northwestern.edu



NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

SNAPSHOT:

School Of Music
enrollment:
Percussion Faculty:

550
Ruben Alvarez (Latin percussion), Michael J. Burritt (percussion),
Jim Ross (percussion), Paul Wertico (drumset)

Tuition (per semester): \$13,900
Degrees: bachelor of music, bachelor of arts in music, master of music,
doctor of music, bachelor of music in jazz studies, bachelor of
music in jazz studies certificate, double-degree program, master
of music in jazz pedagogy

Purchase College, State University Of New York (SUNY)

Conservatory Of Music
735 Anderson Hill Road
Purchase, NY 10577-1400
(914) 251-6700
www.purchase.edu

Purchase College
State University of New York

SNAPSHOT:

College Of Music
enrollment:
Percussion Faculty:

400 (classical), 100 (jazz), 15 drumset
Ray DesRoches (percussion), Dominic Donato (percussion),
Arthur Lipner (vibes), Richie Morales (drumset), Ted Piltzecker
(vibes, studio composition), Kim Plainfield (drumset), John Riley
(drumset)

Tuition (per semester): \$1,700 (NY residents), \$4,400 (non-residents)
Degrees: bachelor of music degrees (performance, composition, jazz
studies and studio composition), bachelor of arts, bachelor of
science, master of music, artist diploma, performers certificate,
doctor of music

University Of Southern California

Thornton School Of Music
840 West 34th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0851
(213) 740-5389
www.usc.edu



SNAPSHOT:

Percussion Faculty:

Dale Anderson (percussion), Ndugu Chancler (drumset), Peter
Erskine (drumset), Gregg Field (drumset, percussion), Angel
Figueroa (percussion), Erik Forrester (percussion), Jeff Hamilton
(drumset), Aaron Serfaty (drumset, percussion)

Tuition (per semester): \$12,500
Degrees: jazz studies—bachelor of music, masters of music, doctor of
musical arts, advanced studies certificate

Formulate meaningful questions for your interviewers and auditioning faculty members.

Don't forget that you are essentially auditioning the school, too. Probing questions help you get to know them better. Don't waste time with stock questions that can be answered by reading the school's catalogs, and make certain that your major questions are answered before the audition experience is completed.

Remember that large pools of applicants means tough decisions for the faculty.

Sometimes as few as 10% of applicants are admitted to the program. Schools will do everything they can to make the experience fair, thorough, and comfortable, but inevitably, many outstanding candidates cannot be accepted.

"During an audition," states Ed Soph, associate professor of music and coordinator of drumset studies at the University Of North Texas in Denton, adds, "emphasis is put upon asking a student to play some tunes they know in various styles and with different approaches to the drumset. They're also run through basic coordination drills and asked to sightread. In fact, sightreading is one of the most important factors on all the instruments—mallets, snare drum, and drumset—because that truly indicates how well a person knows the instrument.

"With drumset," Soph continues, "we ask them to read a lead sheet, such as they would be given in a small group. Or we may have them read a generic big band chart, to see how they would interpret the big band figures. Sightreading is what separates the men from the boys.

"If a person can't come to Denton to audition," Ed summarizes, "they can submit videotapes. But we strongly suggest that people try to audition in person. That gives us a chance to meet them. And anybody who auditions in person is automatically in consideration for a scholarship."

Over at the Percussion Institute Of Technology (PIT), a division of the Musicians Institute in Los Angeles, they prefer an audition videotape. "The main thing we're looking for is that the student is not a beginner," explains Steve Lunn, director of admissions at PIT. "We prefer that our students have some experience. They should be able to demonstrate some rudiments, play rhythms with a drum machine or metronome—like a one- or two-minute

groove—and also play at least two complete songs that best represent their ability. We want to hear their overall playing ability on the drums. If we can tell that a person has the motor skills to play their instrument and is very comfortable with it, then they should be able to come into our certificate program.

"Our degree program is quite a bit more extensive than that," Lunn continues. "Students have to submit SAT scores, letters of recommendation, a 250-word essay, and a few other items. Those items are reviewed by the dean of the program. If he feels that a person is a good candidate for the degree program, he sends them an entrance exam. That exam is very detailed to see where a student is at in their reading ability, harmony theory, ear training, and playing ability in different styles. They then have to videotape themselves playing all these requirements on their drumset. All of these factors determine whether or not they will be accepted for the degree program."

Last year PIT accepted about half of the students who applied for this program, but we hope to increase the number of students who can be accepted next year from 30 to 50.

The University Of Miami requires at least four criteria during a drumset audition:

- One swing jazz piece in a trio or quartet setting with a walking bass line; short solos ("fours") should be included.
- One contemporary fusion or rock piece, played with an appropriate rhythm section.
- One piece with Afro-Caribbean or Brazilian rhythm.
- One big band excerpt.

"Personally, I look for the kinds of things that are hard to teach," adds Steve Rucker, director of the UM drumset program, "things like an innate sense of music, a good groove and time feel, being able to blend, and the ability to intuitively play what needs to be played. Of course, we ask for reading and technique, but I can teach those kinds of things. The intangible qualities are more important."

Drumset performer and educator John Riley agrees. "All of those factors are considered in an audition, but the way a musician plays is definitely the first criteria."

William Paterson University Of New Jersey

School Of Music
300 Pompton Road
Wayne, NJ 07470
(973) 720-2315
www2.wjunj.edu/coac/music



SNAPSHOT:

Percussion Faculty: Horacee Arnold (drumset), Raymond DesRoches (percussion), Bill Goodwin (drumset), Peter Jarvis (percussion), Kevin Norton (vibes), Gary Van Dyke (percussion)

Tuition (per semester): \$2,850 (NJ residents), \$4,440 (out-of-state residents)
Degrees: bachelor of music (performance, jazz studies, music education, music management, sound engineering arts), master of music (jazz studies, music education, music management)

Please remember that this list is just the tip of the "education iceberg." Tuition costs were based on the most up-to-date information available, but may be subject to change. For that matter, faculty members teaching during the 2001-2002 school year may or may not be on staff for 2002-2003. It's always a good idea to check directly with the schools you're interested in for the most up-to-date information.

Alternative Music Schools

Perhaps better known as vocational or trade schools, these institutions offer a different atmosphere for learning, with an emphasis on the main subject—sometimes to the exclusion of other subjects. However, many of these non-traditional music schools have also started offering complete degree programs. As the line between categories sometimes

blurs, the educational opportunities are clearly defined.

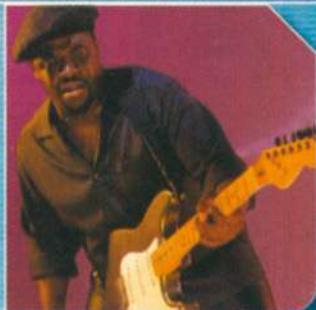
During another informal poll of top drumset educators, five schools were mentioned the most: Drummers Collective in New York City, Atlanta Institute Of Music, Musictech College in St. Paul, Minnesota, Los Angeles Music Academy, and Musicians Institute in Hollywood.



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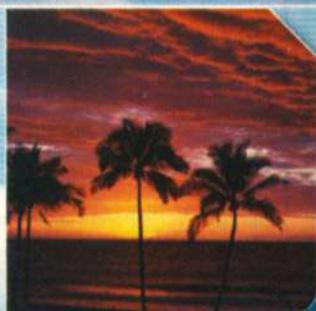
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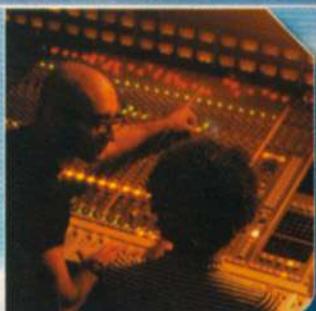
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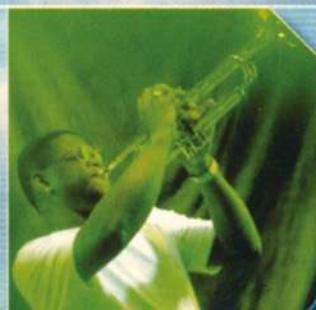
Summer Songwriting Workshop



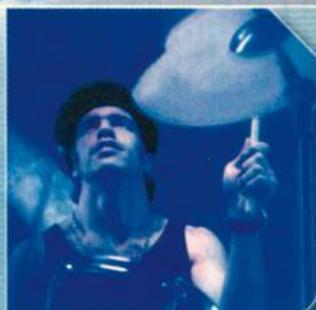
Berklee in L.A.



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Educational Opportunities

The Collective

541 Avenue Of The Americas
New York, NY 10011
(212) 741-0091
www.thecoll.com

SNAPSHOT:

Enrollment: 200 to 250 (Drum program)
Faculty: 20, including Memo Acevedo, Jim Chapin, Sandy Gennaro, Kim Plainfield, and Mark Walker
Class size: 6 students (average)
Degrees: prep program, certificate program, advanced program (DC is a non-accredited school that offers its own diploma)
Tuition (per semester): \$3,000 to \$4,000 (four semesters per year)
Student Profile: 18 to 25 (average age); as young as 14, as old as 60

Founded in 1977, and originally called Drummers Collective, The Collective was conceived as a learning center for drummers and percussionists of all levels. Today the school includes programs for *all* the rhythm section instruments, including guitar, bass, and keyboards. The Collective offers several different curriculums designed to suit different schedules, budgets, and levels of experience. Regular programs include a five-day intensive, five-week certificate prep, ten-week certificate, six-week advanced certificate, and ten-week full-time private study, as well as other programs offered by the week, semester, or year.

John Castellano, director of The Collective, explains some of the classes offered. "We break them down into three general categories: professional studies, musicianship classes, and style classes. Professional studies consist of what we call 'real deal rehearsals,' where students work in an actual rehearsal setting. There are also recording studio classes. In the musicianship category, students work on reading, rudimental work, and even ear training and music theory. And in our style classes, there are Afro-Caribbean and Brazilian rhythms, or contemporary rhythms. The former includes Afro-Cuban, contemporary Afro-Cuban, Brazilian, Caribbean, Afro-Pop, and New Orleans, while the latter includes rock, jazz, funk, and odd meters."

The majority of classes are taught between 10:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M., and every student is assigned three hours of practice time each day in one of the school's individual practice rooms. And, of course, the students are in New York City—full of incredible opportunities to hear the best live music performed by musicians from around the world.

Since the school added the other components of the rhythm section, drummers have more of an opportunity to play in the "real deal rehearsals." Although the school does not provide performing ensembles, every course either ends with or includes rhythm-section work as part of its structure. The jazz division also offers SOJ jazz workshops and has a large sheet-music library of standard jazz repertoire available to students.

"The difference between our school and others is that the students are playing in all their classes," Castellano emphasizes. "The aspect of studying in a complete rhythm section situation is one of the most important elements out there."

Special Educational Events

It's wonderful if you can afford to study drums full time. But not everyone can take one to four years of their life to fulfill their passion for percussion education. What if you have a day job and a family to support? Well, there are still plenty of opportunities to learn, from percussion conventions to drumset festivals—and more. Below is a list of some of the more popular percussion events that occur in North America throughout the year.

Modern Drummer Festival

Where: Montclair State University—Upper Montclair, NJ
When: May 18 and 19, 2002
Cost: \$32 for single day, \$60 for two-day package

MD brings in over a half dozen outstanding drummers to give clinics in front of a sold-out crowd of 1,000 drummers. There are also performances by at least two drummers with their bands, as well as a few percussion surprises. Manufacturers donate door prizes, which are distributed throughout the day.
More info: Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grover, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140, www.moderndrummer.com.

Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC)

Where: Columbus, Ohio (PASIC 2002)
When: November 13-16, 2002
Cost: \$65 (one day), \$145 (four days), student discounts available, \$10 (admission to exhibit hall and marching percussion festival only)

PAS brings together literally hundreds of the top percussionists from around the world in a variety of clinic, concert, and master-class settings. The exhibit area is one of the largest displays of percussion equipment in the world, from the large manufacturers to individual craftsmen.
More info: Percussive Arts Society, 701 NW Ferris Ave., Lawton, OK 73507-5442, (580) 353-1455, www.pas.org.

Bands Of America Summer Symposium

Where: Illinois State University, Bloomington, Illinois
When: June 24-29, 2002
Cost: \$425 (tuition only)

BOA hosts a jazz band workshop, available to high school students, during their annual Summer Symposium. Drumset instructors in the past have included Bob Breithaupt and Steve Houghton.
More info: Bands Of America, (800) 848-BAND or (847) 891-2263, www.bands.org.

Berklee World Percussion Festival

Where: Berklee College Of Music, Boston, Massachusetts
When: June 24-29, 2002
Cost: \$575 (tuition), \$275 (housing)

Drumset is a big part of this annual festival, which brings together dozens of drummers and percussionists in a variety of styles.
More info: Berklee World Percussion Festival, 1140 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215, (617) 266-1400, www.berklee.edu.

Columbus Percussion Drum Daze

Where: Columbus Percussion, Columbus, Ohio
When: spring
Cost: \$50 for two days

Columbus Percussion organizes this annual event showcasing several top drumset artists. Last year's performers included Mike Mangini and Jeff Hamilton.
More info: Columbus Percussion, (800) 775-PERC, www.columbuspercussion.com.

Drummers Collective Five Day Intensive Workshop

Where: Drummers Collective, New York City
When: March 18-22, 2002, August 26-30, 2002, and November 18-22, 2002
Cost: \$650

A combination of class work, private study, and practice time, the Five Day Intensive is designed for the serious student who wants a short but intense period of quality instruction. This program offers an overview of styles and concepts relevant to today's music. Included are daily classes Monday through Friday, one private lesson, and practice time. This program requires intermediate-level skills and rudimentary reading ability. The curriculum for drumset includes: reading & musicianship, rudiments, rock drumming, jazz drumming, funk drumming, Afro-Cuban drumming, Brazilian drumming, rhythm section, private lesson practice time (two hours daily)
More info: Drummers Collective, 541 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10011, (212) 741-0091, www.thecoll.com.

KoSA 2002 Drum & Percussion Camp

Where: Castleton State College, Castleton, Vermont

When: August 5-11, 2002

Cost: \$500 (tuition only), \$795 (tuition plus housing)

Artistic director Also Mazza gathers specialists from all areas of percussion for an intense week of discovery, learning, and music at the picturesque Castleton campus in New England. Some of the faculty at the 6th annual Festival in 2001 included Ed Shaughnessy, Dom Famularo, and Walfredo Reyes Jr.

More info: KoSA Communications, PO Box 332, Hyde Park, VT 05655, (800) 541-8401 or (514) 990-2284, www.kosamusic.com.

Los Angeles Music Academy Summer Course

Where: Los Angeles Music Academy, Pasadena, California

When: July 22-26, 2002

Cost: \$325 (tuition only)

Five days of instruction will include classes on technique, ear training, reading, composition, improvisation, rhythm and syncopation, instrumental and ensemble workshops, music listening, music theory, and music business master classes with visiting artists.

More info: Los Angeles Music Academy, 370 South Fair Oaks Ave., Pasadena, CA 91105, (626) 568-8850, www.lamusicacademy.com.

Mancini Institute

Where: University Of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)

When: July 20-August 18, 2002

Cost: All musicians accepted receive a full scholarship that covers all tuition, room, and board

The Henry Mancini Institute is designed for college- and post-college-aged musicians pursuing a career in music. Applications are limited to those between the ages of 18 and 30. The intensive four-week summer program offers performance experience with the 80-piece Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra, as well as big band, chamber orchestra, combos, and small chamber ensembles. Concerts are held weekly along with various performance opportunities for the smaller ensembles. Special guest artists work with the Institute's ensembles and perform as soloists in concert. In addition, there are panel discussions and master classes with the participants. Resident (drumset) artists scheduled to appear during 2002 include Peter Erskine, Gregg Field, Steve Houghton, and Harold Jones.

More info: www.manciniinstitute.org.

Montreal Drum Fest

Where: Montreal, Quebec, Canada

When: November 8-10, 2002

Cost: \$80 Canadian (about \$65 US) for three days

This year will be the tenth year that the folks at Music Etc. magazine gather together some of the top drummers and percussionists from around the world to perform in Montreal.

More info: Music Etc., 439, Ste-Hélène, Longueuil, QUEBEC J4K 3R3, Canada, (450) 928-1726, www.montrealdrumfest.com.

Summer Drumset Workshop

Where: Capital University, Columbus, Ohio

When: June 9-14, 2002

Cost: \$395 commuter, \$525 resident (based on 2001 fees)

The Summer Drumset Workshop is designed for all drummers regardless of ability level or style interest. All aspects of drumset performance are discussed. Faculty members for the 2001 workshop included Bob Breithaupt, Jim Ed Cobbs, Guy Remonko, and Ed Soph.

More info: Capital University, Conservatory Of Music, 2199 East Main St., Columbus, OH 43209-2394, (614) 236-6411.

Summer Drumset Workshop

Where: University of North Texas, Denton, Texas

When: July 6-11, 2003 (the workshop will not be held in 2002)

Cost: approximately \$500 (includes tuition and dorm housing)

This workshop has been held at UNT for thirteen years. It teaches drummers of all ages and levels how to improvise in various styles, as well as musical vocabulary and drumset techniques. There are three curriculum tracks—beginner, intermediate, and advanced.

More info: Ed Soph, UNT College of Music, PO Box 311367, Denton, TX 76203-3887, (940) 369-7536.

Atlanta Institute Of Music

5985 Financial Drive

Norcross, GA 30071

(770) 242-7717 or (800) 886-6874

www.aim-music.com

SNAPSHOT:

Enrollment: 15 to 25

Class size: 5 (average)

Faculty: 2 drumset: Creig Harber, Tom Knight

Degrees: vocational certificate

Tuition: \$10,000/year or \$2,500/quarter (full-time)

\$5,000 per year for two years (part-time)

Developed in 1985, the Atlanta Institute Of Music (AIM) offers non-beginning students an instructional environment to acquire the necessary skills and develop the music talents required to be a professional musician in today's market. It is a state-certified, nationally accredited school recognized by the Department of Education, which also means that students are eligible for financial aid.

A full-scale music school offering classes in guitar, bass, and keyboard, in addition to drums, AIM is located in a suburb approximately ten miles from downtown Atlanta. The drum classes are subdivided into quarters, with each quarter containing around 100 hours of instruction.

During the first quarter, drummers study theory, ear training, reading, rock performance, styles, and technique. The second quarter involves classes in funk, MIDI, jazz, rhythmic dictation, and private lessons, as well as more study in ear training, reading, rock, and technique. During the third quarter, students add chart writing, Latin/fusion, recording, and soloing classes to continuing sessions in reading and rock, plus private lessons. The fourth and final quarter includes advanced studies in jazz, reading, recording, and rock, as well as classes in music business, odd-meter performance, programming, and studio, plus another quarter of private lessons. There are also performance classes for all four levels.

Musictech College

19 Exchange Street East

St. Paul, MN 55101

(651) 291-0177 or (800) 594-9500

www.musictech.com

SNAPSHOT:

Enrollment: 270, 15 to 20 drumset

Faculty: Gordy Knudtson, Marv Dahlgren, Dave Hanzel, Dave Stanoch, Mark O'Day, Mark Rio, Paul Stueber

Class size: 3 to 4

Degrees: associate of applied science degree, artist diploma featuring the "experimental music mentoring education" (EMME)

Tuition: \$22,390 (two-year degree in sixteen months), \$18,060 (one year)

Student Profile: 18 to 25 (average age); all ages accepted

In January 2002, Musictech College moved from its home in downtown Minneapolis's warehouse district to a new state-of-the-art facility in the Capital District of neighboring St. Paul. The college originally opened as a guitar school in 1985, and the percussion program

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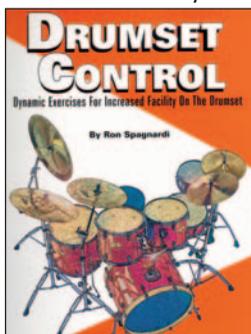
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Educational Opportunities

was developed two years later by Gordy Knudtson, head of Musictech's percussion department, along with the help of Marv Dahlgren, principal percussionist with the Minnesota Orchestra. By 1990, the school added vocal and keyboard divisions and changed its name from the original Guitar Center to Musictech.

Musictech offers a choice of a one-year artist diploma or two-year associate of applied science degree in performance, music business, or recording arts. It is an accredited institutional member of the National Association Of Schools Of Music (NASM), and is licensed by the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office.

The school offers percussion courses in applied music, reading/aural skill development, theory and drum technique, jazz/popular harmony, and music history and literature, as well as a variety of ensembles to play in. Students also work from several textbooks authored by Knudtson that are available only to Musictech attendees.

Los Angeles Music Academy

370 South Fair Oaks Avenue

Pasadena, CA 91105

(626) 568-8850

www.lamusicacademy.com

SNAPSHOT:

Enrollment: 150 total, 50 drumset

Faculty: 12 drumset—drumset department heads: Ralph Humphrey, Joe Porcaro. Other instructors include Michael Shapiro, Sherman Ferguson, Mike Packer, Mark Schulman, Aaron Serfaty, Tony Inzalaco, J.R. Robinson, Florian Reinert, Dave Beyer, Jason Sutter. 7 percussion—percussion department heads: Emil Richards, Jerry Steinholtz. Other instructors include Billy Hulting, Michito Sanchez, Leonice Shinneman, Raynor Carroll, Michael Faue

Class size: 20 (average)

Degrees: certificate program

Tuition

(per semester): \$12,000 (one-year program), \$6,700 (six-month program), \$3,900 (three-month program)

Student Profile: early twenties, 80% international

Founded five years ago, the Los Angeles Music Academy (LAMA) has assembled an impressive staff during its short existence. With its drumset department headed by Ralph Humphrey and Joe Porcaro, while Emil Richards and Jerry Steinholtz head up the percussion program, LAMA offers drum students of all kinds the school's well of experience and expertise.

During the one-year program, drumset students will take courses in playing techniques, rhythm studies, hand percussion for drummers, mallet techniques for drummers, ensemble reading and technique, and ensemble workshops, as well as funk, rock, Latin, and jazz drums, harmony and theory, big band/three-horn band ensemble, music history, music listening, business for musicians, studio techniques, and, of course, private lessons. The percussion program is a modified version of the drumset program.

Percussion Institute Of Technology

Division of Musicians Institute

1655 McCadden Place

Hollywood, CA 90028

(323) 462-1384

www.mi.edu

SNAPSHOT:

Enrollment: 600 to 700 (MI), 90 to 100 (PIT)

Faculty: 20 full time, plus celebrity teachers

Class size: 15 to 25 (average)

Degrees: bachelor of music degree in commercial music (in partnership with Los Angeles City College), professional certificate (one-and-a-half-year program), journeyman's certificate (one-year program)

Tuition: \$13,000 per year for certificate program; \$10,000 to 12,000 per year (for four years) for degree program

Student Profile: 18 to 40, majority in early twenties, 40% international

The Percussion Institute Of Technology (PIT) was founded in 1979, joining the Guitar Institute (founded in 1976) and the Bass Institute (1978) under the umbrella of the Musicians Institute (MI). Since then, the school has added a Vocal Institute (1987), Keyboard Institute (1991), and Recording Institute (1993) to offer musicians an alternative to a traditional college or university.

Classes cover a variety of topics, from playing techniques to reading. All drummers have the opportunity to take a basic keyboard class to learn the harmonic aspect of music. There are also theory and ear-training classes available. Some of the more popular drum classes include the "rhythm section workshop," where each student gets to play with a guitar and bass player who are either instructors or teacher's assistants. "Styles primer" is where the drummers study rock, jazz, Latin, and funk/R&B, and the "drum styles workshop" is where they perform the different styles with a rhythm section.

Steve Lunn serves as MI's director of admissions and is also a graduate of PIT. "One of the things that sets MI apart from most other schools is the opportunity for performance," he explains. "We have 'live playing workshops' between one and three times each weekday, so there are plenty of chances to get on stage with other students and instructors to perform in different styles. We also encourage the students to form groups to create their own original music."

Classes are generally taught during the day, but the facility is open 24 hours, seven days a week. Drummers share a practice lab with one to two others (for a maximum of three), and each of these labs comes with a five-piece drumset, hardware, and throne. Classrooms are fully equipped with pianos, P.A. systems, and amplifiers so that after-hours students can practice there.

"Another unique aspect of PIT is our open counseling classes," Lunn continues. "Each of our instructors is in a classroom or lab, and any student can come in and ask any questions he or she wants. It's great, because we have so many faculty members who specialize in different styles."

"MI is geared for today's industry," Lunn adds. "We are preparing musicians for being successful in today's musical environment. There are also amazing networking opportunities."

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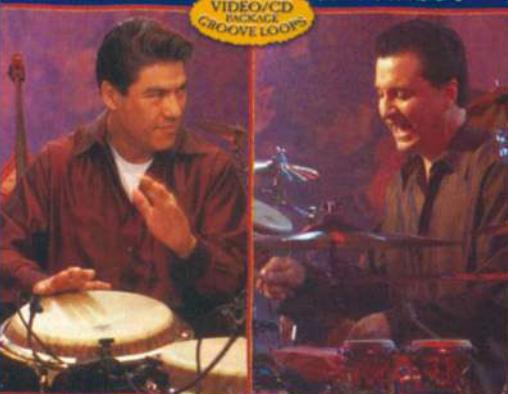
SUPERNATURAL

Rhythm & Grooves



Raul Rekow

Karl Perazzo



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Educational Opportunities

25 More To Choose From

For those of you who can't pick up and move to attend one of the educational institutions mentioned in the previous sections, we've compiled a list of other highly recommended universities from around the country. Hopefully one of these will be located near you.

California State University

Music Department
 18111 Nordhoff St.
 Northridge, CA 91330

California Institute Of The Arts

School Of Music
 24700 McBean Pkwy.
 Valencia, CA 91355

Colorado State University

Department Of Music
 Ft. Collins, CO 80523

University Of Hartford

Hartt School Of Music
 200 Bloomfield Ave.
 W. Hartford, CT 06117

University Of Florida

Department Of Music
 Gainesville, FL 32611

University Of Georgia

School Of Music
 Athens, GA 30602

Boise State University

Department Of Music
 Boise, ID 83725

DePaul University

School Of Music
 804 W. Belden
 Chicago, IL 60614

University Of Iowa

School Of Music
 Iowa City, IA 52242

Kansas State University

Department Of Music
 109 McCain
 Manhattan, KS 66506

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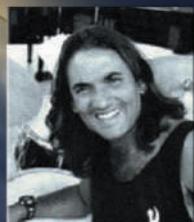
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Go-Go Grooves

A Four-Way Coordination Challenge

by Anthony Allen

MUSIC KEY

		High Bell	Low Bell
H.H.	X	▲	▲
S.D.	●	▼	▼
B.D.	○	●	●
H.H. w/foot	X	▲	▲
		Bongo (S.D. Rim)	

Go-go is a style of music that has its strongest roots in the mid-'80s Washington, DC R&B/rap scene, with bands like EU and Troublefunk being its most visible exponents. The most defining feature of go-go is the percus-

sion. There are often multiple players on congas, bongos, cowbells, timbales, and Roto-Toms, as well as drumset.

The first time I saw a go-go band play, I was blown away. They were more synchronized than an orchestra playing Bach. When I got home I was disappointed that I couldn't have my own percussion section to recreate some of those beats. So I wrote down a few single-player beats that attempt to capture the feel of the entire go-go rhythm section.

Go-go is generally played between 80 and 100 bpm, with a swung 16th-note feel. It's approximated as:

1

The drumset generally lays down this beat as a foundation.

2

The timbales, Roto-Toms, or (most commonly) cowbells add a second layer on top.

3

Finally, a high-pitched bongo adds a third layer on the offbeats.

4

To incorporate some of the percussion parts on the kit, you need to free up your hands. First, let's take the 8th-note hi-hat part played with the right hand and transfer it to the left foot.

5

Now, with your free hand, add the second layer from example 3. The transcription is for two cowbells, but you can also use the rack tom and floor tom of your drumset, or any two similar "high" or "low" surfaces that you have available. Keep your left hand on the snare. Remember to keep that swung 16th-note feel.

6

One thing that helps my students grasp this beat faster is to remember that the first time you go down to the low tom (on beat 2), the first of the two consecutive 16th notes is coordinated with the snare drum. The second time you go down to the low tom (on the "&" of beat 3), the first of the two consecutive 16th notes is coordinated with the bass drum.

Here are some fun variations to the basic beat. They can be a little challenging, so take your time.

7

8

9

The final step is to add in the third layer (example 4) with your left hand. Play the rhythm on the rim of the snare drum.

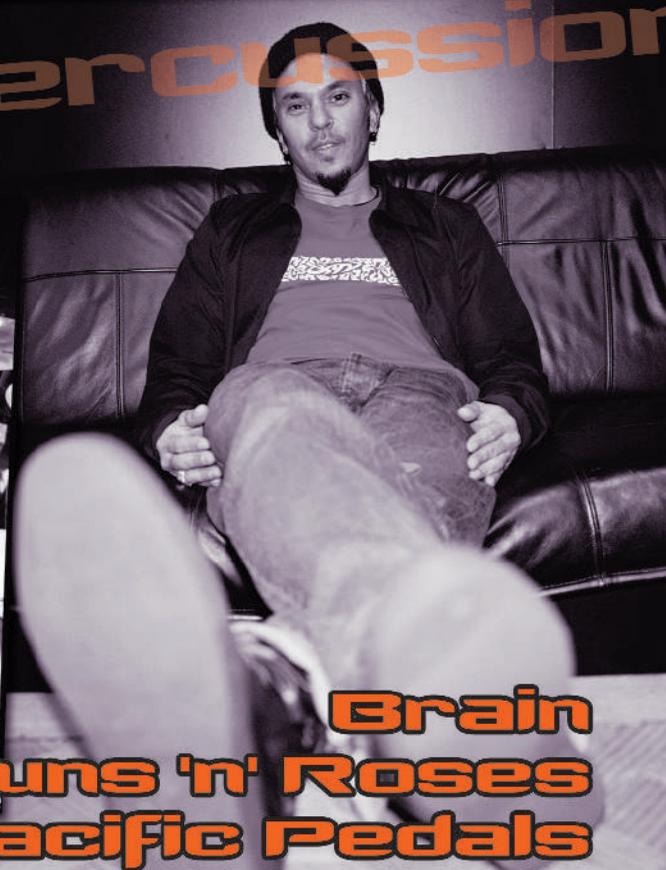
10

Get a feel for each of the three individual layers before putting them all together. Remember to keep the swung 16th-note feel. And to *really* get the feel for this great and often overlooked musical style, listen to the music. Besides Troublefunk and EU, make sure to check out Chuck Brown, Junkyard Band, Backyard Band, and Rare Essence.

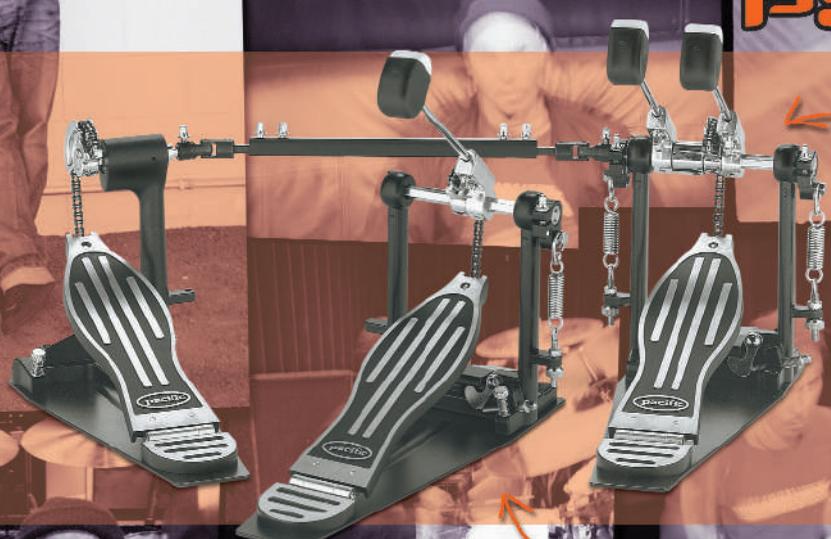




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Monk And Roy

Roy Haynes Solo Style & Analysis

by Drori Mondlak

MUSIC KEY			
Open	○	Cym	⊕
H.H.	⊗		
T.T.	⊗		
S.D.	⊗		
F.T.	⊗		
B.D.	⊗		
H.H. w/foot	⊗	stick on stick	buzz on stick

In my last article, “Monk And You” (September '01 *MD*), we examined the concept of orchestrating Monk’s melodies on the drumset and using these orchestrations as a foundation for further melodic improvisation. The ability to hear a melody

internally and improvise over it without losing your connection to it is an important skill for the improvising melodic drummer to develop.

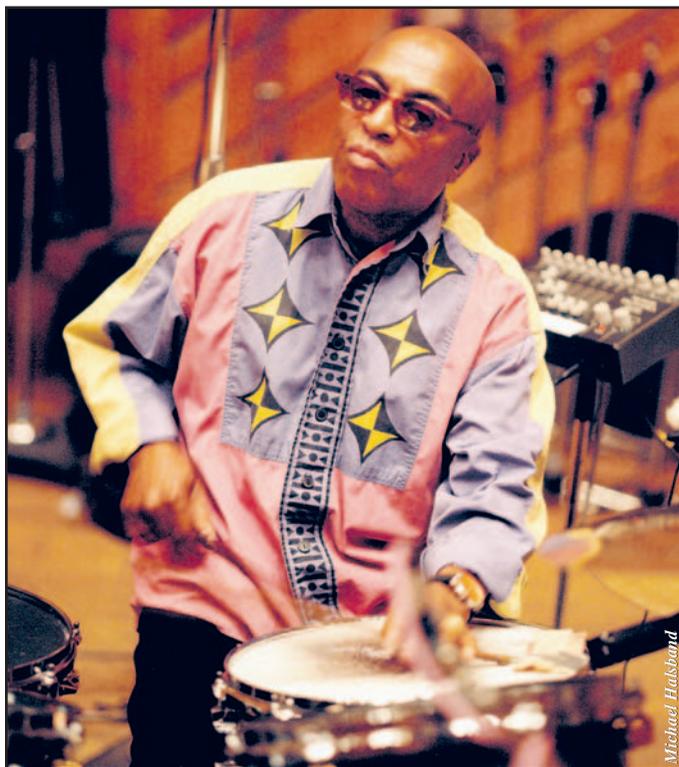
Time spent working on strengthening internal hearing is well worth the effort. You’ll be rewarded for your efforts in various ways. For instance, your ability to hear a melody internally while playing over it will deepen your connection to the music and your own playing. A sense of structure and logic will move through your solos. You’ll feel greater value in what you play, because you’ll be playing off the melody, truly improvising, and not just playing licks and patterns. Hearing a solo that uses elements of the song will also reward the listener.

As your internal hearing strengthens, your ability to play more complex ideas over the melody will also increase. You’ll gradually gain more freedom to be able to play anything over the melody and not lose your place or connection to it.

Roy Haynes is one of the great drummers in improvised music. He has performed and recorded with virtually every important innovator in modern jazz during a career that spans over half a century—and is *still* going strong. Roy has been called “the father of modern drumming” and has been credited with being tremendously influential in the development of the concepts of modern jazz drumming.

There are many recordings of Roy’s dynamic soloing and accompaniment of great musicians such as Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane, Booker Little, Eric Dolphy, and Chick Corea, among many others. He also recorded as a leader of his own groups, starting in the early 1960s. These early ensembles included notable musicians such as Phineas Newborn, Roland Kirk, Booker Ervin, Tommy Flanagan, Richard Wyands, Paul Chambers, and Henry Grimes.

Roy’s association with the great pianist and composer Thelonious Monk can be heard on a recording from a live performance at the Five Spot in New York City in August of 1958. He was the drummer in Monk’s working quartet at that time. There are two recordings from the gig at the Five Spot, *Thelonious In Action* and *Misterioso*, both on the Riverside label. What follows is a transcription of Roy’s solo on one of Monk’s compositions, “In Walked Bud,” from the *Misterioso* CD. The song structure is a thirty-two-measure AABA song form. Roy’s solo is two choruses



Michael Haltsband

long. It plainly illustrates him playing off the melody.

In the first chorus, Roy virtually plays Monk’s melody verbatim, with some slight variations. His intent here is obviously to state the melody of the tune. In the next chorus, he takes off and plays a passionate statement departing from the original melody but still staying connected to it. He has set up himself (as well as the listener) by playing the melody in the first chorus and then improvising off of it in the second and final chorus of his solo. This is a great example of Roy’s melodic soloing.

I suggest you get the CD, learn to sing the melody to “In Walked Bud,” and then sing it along with the drum solo. Learn to play the solo slowly at first, then bring it up to tempo. Take note of how closely Roy stays with the melody in the first chorus and then departs into his improvisation but still remains connected to the original melody in a more abstract fashion—theme & variation!

I’ve included stickings to help you with the flow, but feel free to experiment with your own. After you learn the solo, work on coming up with your own theme & variation two-chorus solo over “In Walked Bud” and other Monk melodies. Remember to think musically, using space, dynamics, and phrasing in order to create a solo that tells a story with passion.

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Roy Haynes' "In Walked Bud" Solo

A $\text{♩} = 214$

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

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

A

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

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

B

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

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

A

L R L R R L R L R R

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

A (second chorus)

R R L RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL R

RLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL

R R R R L x R x R x L RLRL R RL RL R

RLRLRLRLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL

R R L RLRLRLRLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL L

RR R RR RR L R RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL

RR RR R R R L L RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL

R R R L R L R RLRLRLRLRL RLRLRLRLRLRL





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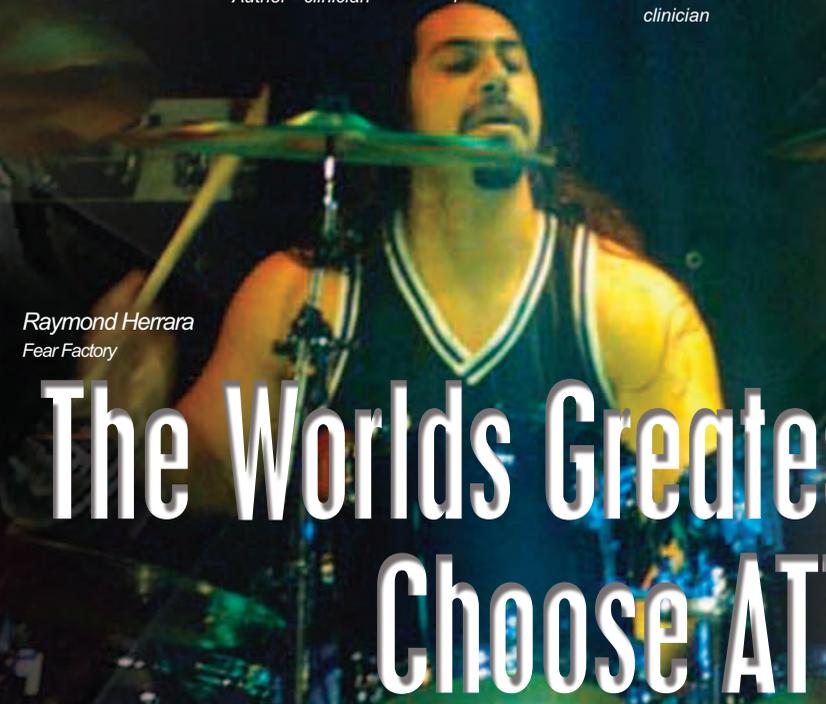
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Understanding The Language Of Music

Part 8: Form And Structure

by Ron Spagnardi

This month we'll take a short break from scales and chords to examine another essential aspect of the language of music, known as form and structure. Along with melody, harmony, and rhythm, a musical composition generally fits into a pre-determined form of some sort. Most popular music is written in phrases, and the manner in which those phrases are assembled determines the structure of the piece.

The phrases, most often presented in units of eight bars (though longer and shorter units are also common), are assigned a letter name. The initial eight-bar phrase of a composition is designated as letter A. Other phrases that differ from the A phrase are called B, C, and D respectively. Let's look at some of the more common musical forms.

The AABA Form

The AABA form is one of the most common in music. Here the opening eight-bar phrase is presented in the first A. The same

phrase is then repeated (the second A). The following eight-bar phrase is quite different melodically and harmonically from the first two, and is called the B section (also referred to as the bridge or release). Finally, the original eight-bar A section is repeated once again. All four eight-bar phrases equal a common thirty-two-bar, AABA composition.

There are literally hundreds of thirty-two-bar AABA tunes. Duke Ellington's "Satin Doll," Johnny Green's "Body And Soul," Herbie Hancock's "Maiden Voyage," Thelonious Monk's "In Walked Bud" (examined in this month's *Jazz Drummers' Workshop*), and Billy Strayhorn's "Take The A Train" are just a few based on this form.

Here's a basic outline of a thirty-two-bar, AABA form. Note the repetition of the three A sections (with the exception of a few chord alterations at the conclusion of phrases), and the new harmonic structure of the B phrase.

A

Cm7 Fm7 B^b7 E^bΔ7 D^b7 C7 F^ø B^b7 E^b Dm7 G7

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8)

A

Cm7 Fm7 B^b7 E^bΔ7 D^b7 C7 F^ø B^b7 E^b7 A[°] D7

(9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16)

B

Gm A[°] D7 Gm Cm7 F7 B^b Fm7 D[°] G7

(17) (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24)

A

Cm7 Fm7 B^b7 E^bΔ7 D^b7 C7 F^ø B^b7 E^bΔ7 A[°] D7

(25) (26) (27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32)

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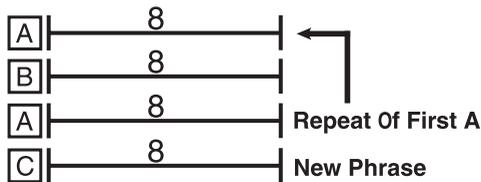
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The AABA form can also be an extended version, where each phrase is sixteen bars or longer. Cole Porter's "Love For Sale" is a good example of an extended AABA. Occasionally unorthodox combinations like 8-8-8-12, 12-12-12-12, or 12-12-8-4, as in Richard Rodgers' "Little Girl Blue," are used.

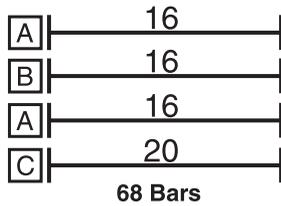
Be aware that not all tunes follow the AABA format. When further phrases are incorporated into the tune, those are generally designated as the C and D sections. Let's examine a few of these.

The ABAC Form

The ABAC structure has *three* distinctly different sections (A, B, and C). Frank Loesser's "If I Were A Bell" and Horace Silver's "Strollin'" are two good examples of ABAC tunes. Here's a sample:



Interestingly enough, ABAC tunes aren't always thirty-two bars. Jobim's "Desafinado" is written as an ABAC, but with its sixteen-bar A and B sections and twenty-bar C phrase, it has a grand total of sixty-eight bars.



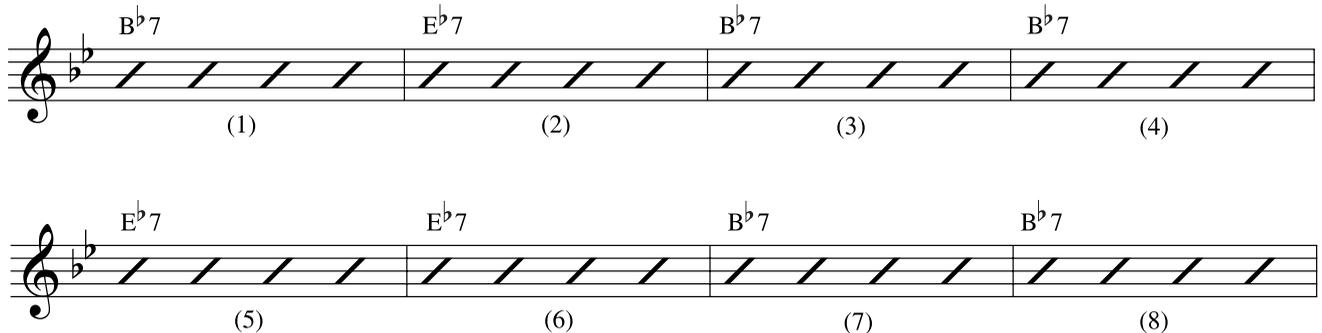
The ABCD Form

Another popular form that uses four totally different sections of melodic and harmonic material is the ABCD structure. A few good examples are Harold Arlen's "Come Rain Or Come Shine" and Ray Henderson's "Bye Bye Blackbird."

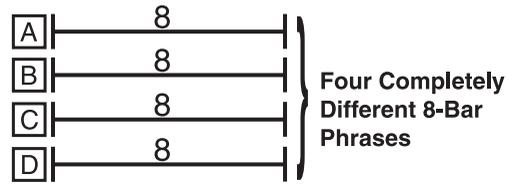
The Twelve-Bar Blues

Another common form in both rock and jazz is the twelve-bar blues. The blues format consists of three four-bar phrases with a common harmonic structure (generally all dominant 7th chords).

When a rock or jazz player improvises on a blues chorus, he or

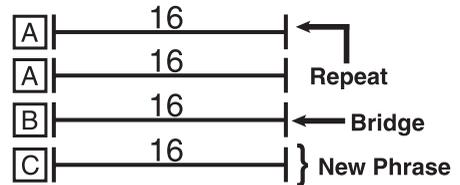


she is carefully following a specific chord progression throughout the twelve-bar structure. See the basic twelve-bar blues format below. (We'll be examining blues progressions in greater detail in a future column.)



The AABC Form

This structure is unique in that the C phrase, which follows the bridge, is totally different from the previous two As. Cole Porter's "I Concentrate On You" is a good example of an extended AABC format (16-16-16-16).

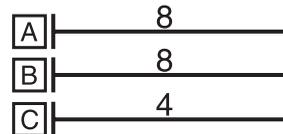


The AAB And ABC Forms

Two other commonly used forms are the AAB (Cole Porter's "Night And Day") and the ABC structure (Joe Zawinul's "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy"). Here again, each phrase may vary in length. Note the extended sixteen-bar structure of Cole Porter's "Night And Day."



Compare the previous example with Joe Zawinul's "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy," a very concise 8-8-4 within an ABC structure.





Verse/Chorus Form

The verse/chorus form has been used extensively for years on hundreds of popular hits. Lyrically speaking, the verse conveys the basic information of the song and serves as a setup to the chorus. The chorus, which is generally the strong, memorable section of the song both lyrically and melodically, focuses on the meaning and essence of the song.

There are many variations of the verse/chorus form, and bar lengths can vary greatly. A few examples are shown below:

1	2	3
A—Verse	A—Chorus	A—Verse
B—Chorus	B—Verse	A—Verse
A—Verse	A—Chorus	B—Chorus
B—Chorus	B—Verse	A—Verse
A—Verse	A—Chorus	B—Chorus
B—Chorus		B—Chorus

As you can see, there are numerous musical forms and form lengths utilized by composers. As a drummer, it's important to always be fully aware of the structure of the tune you're playing and to know where you are within that structure.

Listen carefully to the solos of some of the great drummers, and you'll very often hear the form being stated within the solo. In many cases, you'll even hear the melody of the tune presented rhythmically. Max Roach, Roy Haynes, Joe Morello, and Jack DeJohnette are among the masters at this.

Take this month to *really* listen to different types of music, and try to determine the structure of tunes you enjoy. Begin to analyze tunes from song folios, sheet music, and fake books. This is an excellent way to improve your understanding of form and structure. In essence, develop your ability to listen analytically.

Next month we'll delve back into theory and harmony, as we examine the Roman-numeral chord system and the Circle Of 5ths.



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Buzzits And Diddle-Its

Two Slick Rudiments For Soloing

by Chet Doboe

Buzzits and diddle-its are fun, hybrid rudiments that provide us with a basic means for building cool solo passages. These two rudiments are interchangeable and versatile, and they're effective for corps percussion and drumset.

Buzzits are one-handed, accented buzzes combined with one or more taps performed by the second hand. Diddle-its are the same as buzzits, however the buzz is replaced with two accented 32nd notes.

Experiment with different treatments of the buzz technique. The buzz can be staccato or legato, and stick heights can be executed from as high as 10" to 12" or as low as 1" to 4". These buzzes, as well as the diddles in the diddle-its, can be played aggressively or laid back. Experiment with all these elements to explore your creative options.

Note: In addition to the written stickings, you can play all musical examples with reversed sticking.

The three buzzit themes:

Buzzit Couplets

Buzzit Tri Groups

Buzzit Quad Groups

The notation shows three musical examples on a single staff. The first is in 2/4 time with four accented eighth notes. The second is in 3/4 time with three accented eighth notes. The third is in common time with four accented eighth notes. Each example is followed by its corresponding sticking pattern.

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

The three diddle-it themes:

Diddle-it Couplets

Diddle-it Tri Group

Diddle-it Quad Groups

The notation shows three musical examples on a single staff. The first is in 2/4 time with four accented eighth notes. The second is in 3/4 time with three accented eighth notes. The third is in common time with four accented eighth notes. Each example is followed by its corresponding sticking pattern.

RR L RR L RR L RR L RR L L RR L L RR L L RR L L RR L L L RR L L L RR L L L RR L L L

The following four exercises are examples of just some of the possibilities for combining buzzit and diddle-it themes. Experiment with your own combinations.

Phrased as four 3 groups and a 4 grouping.

The notation shows a single musical example on a single staff in common time, consisting of four groups of three accented eighth notes followed by a group of four accented eighth notes. The sticking pattern is: R L L R L L R L L R L L R L L L RR L L L

Phrased as 5-5-6 groupings.

The notation shows a single musical example on a single staff in common time, consisting of two groups of five accented eighth notes followed by a group of six accented eighth notes. The sticking pattern is: R L R L L R L R L L R L R L L L RR L RR L L RR L RR L L RR L RR L L L

Phrased as 7-7-2 groupings.

Musical notation for a drum solo in common time, consisting of 16 bars. The first two bars are grouped as 7, the next two as 7, and the final two as 2. Each note has an accent (>). The notation is as follows:

R L R L R L L R L R L R L L R L RR L RR L RR L L RR L RR L RR L L RR L

Phrased as 9-7 groupings.

Musical notation for a drum solo in common time, consisting of 16 bars. The first four bars are grouped as 9, and the last two bars as 7. Each note has an accent (>). The notation is as follows:

R L R L R L R L L R L R L R L L RR L RR L RR L RR L L RR L RR L RR L L

Here's an eight-bar solo that showcases the application of buzzits and diddle-its. Take it slowly at first. Be certain to be crisp in contrasting the buzzes and diddles. And it's a good idea to be able to count a quarter-note pulse throughout your performance.

Musical notation for an eight-bar solo in common time. The first four bars are marked *p* and the last four bars are marked *f*. The eighth bar includes a rimshot. Each note has an accent (>). The notation is as follows:

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

p *f*

Musical notation for a drum solo in common time, consisting of 16 bars. Each note has an accent (>). The notation is as follows:

R L L L R L L R L L R L L R L L RR L RR L L RR L RR L L RR L RR L L L

Musical notation for a drum solo in common time, consisting of 16 bars. The first four bars are marked *fp* and the last four bars are marked *cresc.*. Each note has an accent (>). The notation is as follows:

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

fp *cresc.*

Musical notation for a drum solo in common time, consisting of 16 bars. The first four bars are marked *f* and the last four bars are marked *ff*. Each note has an accent (>). The notation is as follows:

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

f *ff*



Smashing Pumpkins'
Jimmy Chamberlin
Greatest Hits



by Ed Breckenfeld



Gene Ambo

MUSIC KEY

Open	○	R.C. bell	c.c.
H.H.	×		
T.T.	●		
S.D.	●		
F.T.	●		
B.D.	●		
H.H. w/foot	×	Ghost Note	Add'l Tom

This month we take a look at one of the most important drummers to come out of the alt-rock movement. Jimmy Chamberlin had the perfect blend of technique and song sense to embellish Billy Corgan's tough/bittersweet sound. Jimmy could thrash it out one moment and display the finesse of a jazz drummer the next. The Smashing Pumpkins' *Greatest Hits* showcases some of his best work.

“Siva”

From the start, Jimmy whipped up the band's intensity with his fiery fills. This one comes out of a breakdown section.

1

Musical notation for the first exercise, labeled '1'. It consists of two staves of music in common time (C). The tempo is marked as 113. The notation includes various drum symbols as defined in the music key, such as snare (x), hi-hat (o), and tom (●). The first staff shows a series of eighth notes with snare accents, and the second staff continues with similar patterns.

“Rhinoceus”

Here's a dose of chops, with a jazz/fusion influence.

2

Musical notation for the second exercise, labeled '2'. It consists of two staves of music in common time (C). The tempo is marked as 77. The notation features complex rhythmic patterns with many accents (>) and triplets (3). It includes snare (x) and hi-hat (o) symbols.

“Cherub Rock”

This well-known sequence from the song's intro is pure Jimmy Chamberlin.

3

Musical notation for the third exercise, labeled '3'. It consists of two staves of music in common time (C). The tempo is marked as 87. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes with snare accents (x) and hi-hat accents (o), characteristic of the 'Cherub Rock' intro.

“Today”

In the second measure of this verse pattern, notice the ghosted snare drag, followed immediately by an offbeat open hi-hat accent that punctuates the lyric "...greatest day I've ever known."

JIMMY CHAMBERLIN
and Yamaha Drums

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4

Musical notation for the first two staves of 'Bullet With Butterfly Wings'. The first staff is a treble clef with a tempo marking of quarter note = 83. The second staff is a bass clef. Both staves show a series of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them, indicating a specific drum pattern.

“Bullet With Butterfly Wings”

The chorus of this tune shows how Jimmy would often play off vocals *and* guitar accents at the same time.

5

Musical notation for the next three staves of 'Bullet With Butterfly Wings'. The first staff is a treble clef with a tempo marking of quarter note = 126. The second and third staves are bass clefs. The notation continues with eighth notes and includes a triplet of eighth notes in the third staff.

“Tonight, Tonight”

In an intro heavy with strings, Jimmy takes an orchestral approach.

6

Musical notation for the first two staves of 'Tonight, Tonight'. The first staff is a treble clef with a tempo marking of quarter note = 76. The second staff is a bass clef. The notation features eighth notes with accents and rests.

“The Everlasting Gaze”

After being out of the Pumpkins for a while, Jimmy returned as strong as ever. Here’s a great snare drum lick from this song’s choruses.

7

Musical notation for the snare drum lick in 'The Everlasting Gaze'. It is a single staff in a bass clef with a tempo marking of quarter note = 147. The notation shows a complex snare drum pattern with sixteenth notes and sixteenth rests.

By the end of the tune, the groove is absolutely *cranking*.

8

Musical notation for the final staff of the snare drum lick in 'The Everlasting Gaze'. It continues the complex snare drum pattern from the previous staff.



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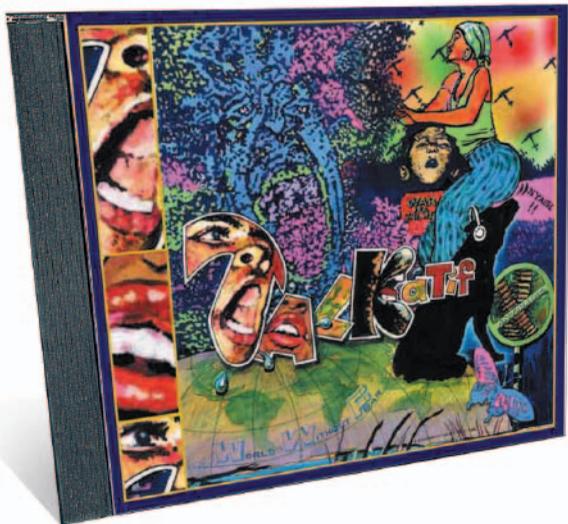
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RECORDINGS

8 Antibalas Afrobeat Orchestra Talkatif (Ninjatune)



Antibalas are a fifteen-member collective from New York City whose recreations of Fela Anikulapo-Kuti's original jazz/high-life/funk brew (dubbed "Afrobeat") are extraordinary—non-stop and self-perpetuating. Drummers **PHIL BALLMAN** and **DYLAN FUSILLO** lock together seamlessly, with barely a sliver of air between their close-knit, syncopated 16th-note grooves. On "Hypocrite" they churn on a serious Zigaboo Modeliste/Clyde Stubblefield pattern, while "World Without Fear"'s airy groove recalls Herbie Hancock's *Mwandishi*. Time stands still when listening to Antibalas, a sign of Fela's timeless appeal to musicians and civilians alike.

Ken Micallef

8 Clinic Walking With Thee (Domino)

Clinic spins on an atomic sonic carousel that would make most bands explode. On *Walking With Thee* slices of such diverse genres as punk, psychedelia, frosty electronica, and violent garage rock come together to create an amusing, sick-
p h o n i c
Frankenstein. The band also seems to be running on its own intangible meter. **CARL TURNEY**'s big, lusty beats are merely one ingredient driving the pulsating rhythms. To dissect his clanking and sometimes hypnotic grooves would be missing the point, if not futile. That's the greatest compliment we can give: The Liverpoolian quartet interconnects dissimilar elements and mashes it into a single melodious ball.

Will Romano



6 Funky Butt Whoopin' (Sonor Records)

Like British Invasion bands feverishly studying early American rock 'n' roll, the Norwegian band Funky Butt has done its homework. The sextet's jazzy take on the groove-heavy New Orleans style hits the mark; it's always welcome to hear bass lines come from a tuba. The authenticity of **KNUT LOTHE**'s second-line drumming accounts for much of *Whoopin's* success. He could sometimes stand to loosen up, but his beats hold the proper bounce. Like any good New Orleans drummer, Lothe does most of his work—ride patterns included—on the snare, reserving the toms for occasional embellishment. (sonoras@online.no)

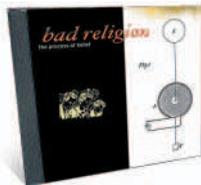
Michael Parillo



7 Bad Religion The Process Of Belief (Epitaph)

The Process Of Belief sees LA punk veterans Bad Religion back with Epitaph Records, reuniting with guitarist Brett Gurewitz, and replacing injured drummer **Bobby Schayer** with the young blood of **BROOKS WACKERMAN**. A slight regression in sound will please the punk purists who treasured the band's early releases. Though substantially younger than his bandmates, Wackerman has years of professional experience. With his fierce, driving double-kick patterns, it's clearly evident Wackerman never sought to emulate the former skinsman. And while Schayer's reserve is missed on certain points, Wackerman's consistency and solid skills more than make up for that.

Waleed Rashidi



KICKIN' OUT THE NEW

Late-'70s quirky new wave/punk is the sound on **The Seconds'** debut release, *Y (SRC)*, and drummer **BRIAN CHASE** has the chops to handle this extremely physical gig. You're not going to get too many snare/kick grooves here. Chase is riding the floor toms, slamming the crash, beating the snare, and never straying from the tight, syncopated guitars and vocals. I miss this stuff.

When it's more about the song than the groove, a drummer has to think creatively as well as hold down the time. **EDDIE GORMLEY**'s mind is never at rest on **VPN's** sophomore release, *For Nearby Stars* (Evil Teen). These tunes go from soft vocal moments to in-your-face rock within a split second, and Gormley is the rhythmic glue that bonds VPN's melodic tunes into a seamless recording.

Endearing vocals and precision harmonies reign on **Mates Of State's** *Our Constant Concern* (Polyvinyl), so besides laying down a solid 2/4 beat, **JASON HAMMEL**'s kit plays a kind of third-harmony role as well when needed. His sound is warm and big, yet never steps on these uplifting indie-pop tunes. Hammel may move the time around a bit, but who cares, when the performance is coming so directly from the heart.

Fran Azzarto



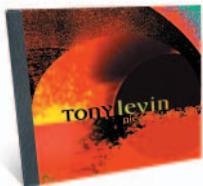
rating scale classic

7 Femi Kuti Fight To Win (MCA)



Nigerian Afrobeat star Femi Kuti and his sixteen-member band, The Positive Force, have emerged from working in the shadow of Femi's legendary father, the late Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti. This new recording is political activism in musical form, borrowing the best elements from Fela's exciting jazz-funk prototype and infusing it with the eldest son's penchant for R&B, hip-hop, and dance music of the West. Though drummer **MARLON** is not one to flash pyrotechnics, this music is all about the whole being greater than the sum of the parts, and these grooves are lead-heavy. **Bill Kiely**

7 Tony Levin Pieces Of The Sun (Narada)



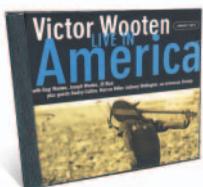
This solo effort from bassist Tony Levin (King Crimson, Peter Dinklage) covers a lot of textural ground. From acoustic material that recalls early Genesis to modern heavy-fusion sounds, Levin never loses sight of melody. Longtime comrade **JERRY MAROTTA** snakes deep inside the bassist's typically spare, pulsating grooves. Marotta's clever orchestration finds him folding huge-sounding toms into the usual kick-snare base. There's a lot going on beneath the surface too, be it fluttering ghost notes or crisp brushwork. Unfortunately, over-slick guitar tones and faux-orchestral synth lines often overwhelm the rhythm section's tasty foundation. The simplest tunes are the best ones here. **Michael Parillo**

7 The Sound Of Urchin You Are The Best (RCA)



Stretching from late '70s funk-pop to present-day hardcore punk, and hitting just about every contemporary style in between, the impromptu randomness of The Sound Of Urchin's debut sparks a fun unpredictability that's almost become a lost art. Whether it's the dissonant, double-timed metal/punk of "The Millipede/Who'll Stop The Beggar," the Jackson 5-grooving snare of "Scary Skull Eyes," or the loose cross-stick, cranked snare, and legitimate reggae hi-hat accents of "Alligator Swamp," drummer **TOMATO 11** displays versatility, authenticity, and flair. **Waleed Rashidi**

8 Victor Wooten Live In America (Compass)



In most cases, two CDs' worth of live fusion would be draining. Not this show. Bassist-brothers Victor, Regi, and Joseph Wooten are ultra-talented players and excellent vocalists, and they never forget about pure entertainment value. Even legend **Marcus Miller** makes a guest appearance, on an instrumental tribute to the great fusion bassists. Yet even with all this heavy talent on stage, it's never about showing off, but about groove and soul. Don't get me wrong, there's chops flying all over the place. But the *focus* here is on the soulful lyrics and the funky, *funky* grooves provided by "The Groove Regulator," drummer **JD BLAIR**. (www.compassrecords.com) **Mike Haid**

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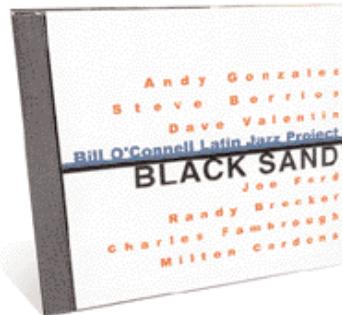
Drummer **DAVE HASSELL** and horn man **Andy Scott** are as comfortable and fearless as a duo can get on *Sand Dancer* (PSCD). Hassell in particular offers something of a percussion lesson. On "Jelly Belly" the trap set and bass clarinet deliver tight second-line funk, with all the requisite kicks and stops. "The Light That Falls" features some precise rhythmic tabla work clicking alongside rainsticks. Throughout, Hassell expertly takes it from light to might. (postmaster@hassellfree.demon.co.uk)



THOM GOSSAGE is another fine textural player, and he displays many colors on *Other Voices* (Effendi). The lovely "Half-Full" features the drummer laying into a surdu to produce a subsonic bang; he then shifts gears abruptly into some funky grooving. Gossage succeeds in playing the beat as backwards as he can, creating some very street-wise chamber jazz. Later, the Zappa-esque "Parade" fills a joyful couple of minutes with Gossage clanging some nice metal and skins. (www.effendirecords.qc.ca) **Robin Tolleson**

8 Bill O'Connell Latin Jazz Project Black Sand (Random Chance)

Though Horacio Hernandez and Antonio Sanchez get all the Latin-jazz props, **STEVE BERRIOS** has been a Latin master longer, and he still burns with a spacious groove and perfect articulation. Steve's extensive work with The Fort Apache Band should be required listening for every drummer. *Black Sand* is a must-have as well. With pianist O'Connell's broad rhythmic panorama, Berrios authentically plays bossa,



Micallef

montuno, rumba, 6/4 and 6/8 Afro-Cuban, and swing with the exacting confidence that comes from playing in the Latin trenches. And Steve's groove is so airy, it's almost easy to ignore. But he holds *Black Sand* together like a Cuban charm. **Ken**

8 Shiner *The Egg* (DeSoto)

Possibly the best compliment one can offer Shiner is that they sound like a *band*—a quality largely eluding the charts these days. *The Egg* is full of earnest songs and slippery grooves from drummer **JASON GERKEN**. Jason's well-integrated drum parts ably support Allen Epley's vocals and lyrics throughout. From the four-on-the-floor grooving of "Play Dead"



to the more demanding precision of the title track, all tasks are met beautifully. Shiner not only play their instruments blisteringly well, they give *life* to the songs and feelings they transmit. **Sean Enright**

7 Student Rick *Soundtrack For A Generation* (Victory)

While Student Rick's debut CD will immediately remind you of mainstream pop-punk bands like Green Day, Blink 182, and Sum 41, what separates them are highly melodic vocals, and—dare I say it—a fondness for love songs. Throughout *Soundtrack For A Generation*, drummer **ZACK DAVIS** knows just what to play—and more importantly, what *not* to play. Standout drum tracks include "Yesterday" (not the Beatles song), "October Skies," "In The Cold," "Monday Morning," "Please Forgive Me," and "Falling For You." If you dig emotional, commercial pop-punk with an edge, check out Student Rick.



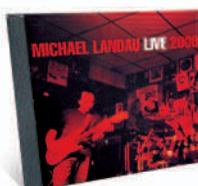
Billy Amendola

7 Michael Landau *Live 2000* (independent)

7 Blue Horn *Noise For Neighbors* (Sunsoul)

Two new releases from the LA jazz/studio/players circle feature the outstanding **TOSS PANOS** on drums. Guitarist Michael Landau's *Live 2000* was recorded at chops-central, LA's Baked Potato. But while many Baked Potato gigs can be over-cluttered with force-fed blowing and needless stretching, this double CD contains some wonderfully subtle grooves and unobtrusive, ear-catching moments.

(www.michael-landau.com) Blue Horn is an organ trio (again featuring Landau), and the result is some great swing blues on *Noise For Neighbors*. Panos clearly has all the chops in the world, but he has such a unique pocket, you could listen to him all day and just get lost in his feel. (www.noiseforneighbors.com)



Ted Bonar

7 Vera Figueiredo *Vera Cruz Island* (Rainbow)

A virtual drumming ambassador of limitless energy, **VERA FIGUEIREDO** performs with top Brazilian artists, runs a drum school, and is also a busy festival producer and clinician. Her third solo CD features a chops summit of guest superstar drummers including **DAVE WECKL**, **DENNIS CHAMBERS**, and **VIRGIL DONATI**. Vera's Brazil-jazz compositions vary in success, working best on roots-inspired tunes, while other tracks like "Reaching Another Day" regress into power-fusion clichés. But Vera's tremendous, grooving, crisp kit work is winning throughout. Her double drumming with the stars is exciting, but in truth, she doesn't need the stellar guests to succeed. (www.brazilianrainbowrecords.com)



Jeff Potter

6 Maya Soleil *Dance Of The New Sun* (Paradise Road Music)

Zambian singer and dancer **Moye Kashimbi** has performed worldwide, and this recording finds her in the very capable company of Seattle-based musicians who work under the name of Maya Soleil. Drummer/producer **T.J. MORRIS** drives the septet from behind his hybrid "world drumkit" (full drumset plus congas, djembe, and gourd), which proves to be an ideal motor for this energetic Afro-fusion band. Moye sings in several African languages, and her group here is capable of stretching from Nigerian Afrobeat to Afro-Brazilian funk to rootsy Zambian traditional tunes. (www.mayasoleil.home.mindspring.com)



Bill Kiely

D V D S

8 U2 *Elevation 2001: Live From Boston* (Interscope)

level: all, \$32.98 (two-DVD set)



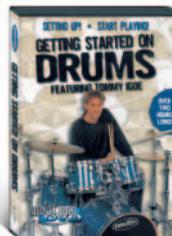
This DVD is most certainly the Bono show—and in fairness, it must be, in order to capture what U2 does in an arena. But as **LARRY MULLEN JR.** and Adam Clayton comprise the best rhythm section of the last two decades, even witnessing a relatively small amount of them playing live is a profound experience. Mullen is so relaxed when he *is* on screen, it's hard to believe that the success of the entire event rests on his shoulders. The sound quality is great, and the DVD extras (footage from past tours, alternate camera angles, time-lapse of the arena setup) are cool, though none are centered on the drummer. But Larry is the strongest backbone in rock, and whether you see him or not, you feel him. All the way through.

Ted Bonar

7 Getting Started On Drums with Tommy Igoe (Hudson Music)

level: beginner, \$29.95 (two-DVD set)

Getting Started comprises Tommy Igoe's educational package previously released as two separate videocassettes. In part one, Tommy shares helpful hints about setting up and tuning your drumkit right out of the box. (This will help you and/or your parents tremendously.) Part two, "Start Playing," does exactly that. Tommy is very comfortable in front of the camera, and he does a great job by making the lessons fun, enlisting the help of three aspiring students to demonstrate technique, stick selection, grip, the importance of time, and playing fills. If you recently got your first drumkit, or if you're just learning how to play, this is a great place to start your journey.

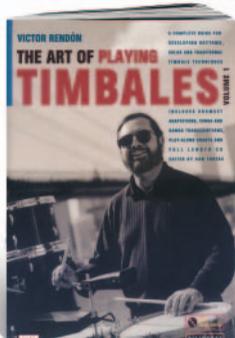


Billy Amendola

BOOKS

The Art of Playing Timbales by Victor Rendón (Music In Motion Films)

level: all, \$24.95 (Bilingual: English/Espanol) (with CD)



Victor Rendón has done the improbable: He has made it possible for a wide range of drummer/percussionists to approach the art of timbales without fear of failure. Rendón breaks down the daunting clave structure so that we all can relate, and demonstrates how the instruments of the Afro-Cuban percussion section (timbales, congas, bongos, and sometimes drumset) function as a unit. Learning to play timbales (or to emulate their rhythms on drumset) makes any drummer more valuable on the bandstand, and Rendón's instructional method is as clear as it's going to get. The author's clarity in presentation is further enriched by his discussion of the evolution of Latin rhythms and instruments, and by his richly detailed inter-

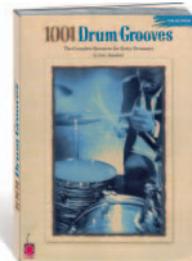
views with master timbaleros. Victor Rendón has worked with giants like Mongo Santamaria and Patato Valdes, and has taught music for years within the New York community. And now he's authored the most authoritative book on the "original" Latin drumkit. Viva timbales!

Bill Kiely

1,001 Drum Grooves by Steve Mansfield

(Cherry Lane)

level: beginner to intermediate, \$12.95



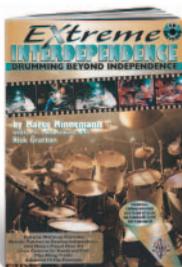
This is a fun one-stop for casual-gig ethnic rhythm needs. Subtitled it "The Complete Resource For Every Drummer" may be a stretch, but the 1,001 grooves here (literally) do cover quite a variety of styles, from punk and speed metal (there are 266 slight permutations of the 8th-note rock feel) to Irish polkas, Klezmer bulgars, and tangos, boleros, and sambas. The author offers various hand patterns to apply to each bass drum groove, progressively increasing the coordination required for each. Mansfield has done his homework, and most drummers will find *something* here they've yet to master.

Robin Tolleson

Extreme Interdependence by Marco Minnemann

(Warner Bros.)

level: advanced, \$24.95 (with CD)



In this well-laid-out and smoothly progressive book, German drumming sensation Marco Minnemann (aided by veteran drummer Rick Gratton) takes a lighthearted look at a very heavy method for mastering four-limb independence—what he calls "extreme interdependence." This advanced technique can certainly reveal a plethora of new and exciting ideas—if you can master it. The basic concept is to break down all four limbs into manageable parts, and then combine them to form complex custom patterns. The concept is simple; the *execution* is what will take time. Marco also includes extreme warm-ups, creative rudimental applications, visualization concepts, and solo transcriptions. The well-

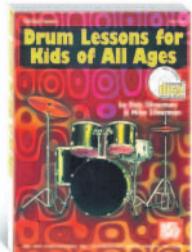
recorded accompanying CD features exciting musical passages from Marco and benefits from an easy-to-follow format.

Mike Haid

Drum Lessons For Kids Of All Ages

by Rob & Mike Silverman (Mel Bay)

level: beginner, \$17.95 (book and CD)



Finally, the book I've been waiting for! As many of you know, teaching very young students can be a daunting task. Rob and Mike Silverman have changed all that with *Drum Lessons For Kids Of All Ages*. These 112 glue-

bound pages comprise the most comprehensive and beautifully illustrated method book for children this writer has ever seen. Students start out with two pages of very basic musical notation and the proper playing position, and on the following page apply what they've learned. (One of the difficulties when teaching youngsters is their short attention span, so quick application of a learned method is extremely important.) Another nicety is the presentation of lessons as songs, since singing as a way to internalize rhythms is a great learning tool for young students. Covering everything from basic rudiments to drumset notation, this book doesn't miss a beat. Watch out, Harry Potter!

Fran Azzarto

Mike Portnoy Liquid Drum Theater

(Hudson Music)

level: intermediate to advanced, \$49.95 (two-DVD set)

Progressive rock icon Mike Portnoy is back with a two-disc DVD version of his original *Liquid Drum Theater* instructional videos. The majority of the content is identical to the videos, with disc one featuring the music from Portnoy's instrumental rock project Liquid Tension Experiment, and disc two focusing on the music of his progressive group Dream Theater. Mike performs selections from both bands and then discusses their conception as well as his technique and approach to each track. The DVD package is much more versatile than the video package, allowing the viewer to switch camera angles during Mike's performances. It also allows for an optional audio track with commentary from Portnoy throughout the entire set. There's also over twenty minutes of bonus footage, including performances by Dream Theater and by Liquid Tension Experiment. If you're a Portnoy fan and haven't purchased the video package, the DVD set is a much better option.

Mike Haid



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



Michael D'Agostino



Michael D'Agostino is a percussionist and composer who has worked with such diverse artists as Herbie Hancock, Yoko Ono, and KISS, composed for TV (including *The X-Files*), and scored for movies. He plays acoustic and electronic drums, balafon, marimba, djembe, dumbek, and keyboards, and also sings.

Michael's drumming style has been shaped by African, Indian, and Native American rhythms, as well as by jazz and rock. He studied big band drumming with Jack Snyder (from Les Brown's band), "legit" percussion with Jim Peterczak at the Crane School Of Music, marimba with Leigh Howard Stevens, vocals with Janice Pendarvis (of Sting's band), and the Indian rhythmic system with Jamie Haddad.

Michael's versatility is demonstrated on his current CD, *Future Reflections* (zoe2@optonline.net). Also to his credit is the only CD we know of performed exclusively on five cymbals and a gong. He normally performs on a four-piece 1965 Ludwig kit or a Yamaha Recording Custom set equipped with Paiste, Zildjian, and Bosphorous cymbals.

Michael records his own drums, percussion, and keyboards. He also creates custom loops on a Macintosh G4. "The process is extremely fluid," explains Michael. "I can grab a few bars and send them to the sampler or Bias Peaks editing program, or I can work with the sounds inside of Digital Performer—applying plug-ins or outboard processing. Manipulating the pitch and timbre of the original source will sometimes inspire me to compose a new piece and play drums to that. All of the equipment winds up as tools to serve the music and sculpt the sound."

Jerry Vidal



Thirty-year-old Los Angeles drummer Jerry Vidal is the type of working drummer whose business card reads: "plays all styles." Rock, funk, jazz, straight or odd times, simple or complex, acoustic or electronic...Jerry has it covered. He's been a professional for fourteen years, following

study at the Dick Grove School Of Music and with such noted drummers as David Garibaldi, Peter Erskine, and Chuck Silverman.

Jerry's diverse musical outlook is shaped by influences including Buddy Rich, John Bonham, Tony Williams, Eric Kretz, Josh Freese, Carter Beauford, Neil Peart, and Ahmir Thompson. Not surprisingly, this artistic diversity is reflected in Jerry's multiple gigs. After recording and touring with Chrysalis/EMI artists Butt Trumpet, Jerry now performs regularly at LA clubs like The Roxy and House Of Blues with Psykick Girl, Fontaine, and Krystal Lake. These groups run the gamut from techno to punk.

Jerry performs regularly on a Pearl kit with Zildjian cymbals, but also is experienced on a variety of electronic kits. He has access to virtually anything he might need for any given project through his "day job" at a major LA drum cartage company.

"Everything I've done is on my Web site at www.geocities.com/tunetime.rm," says Jerry. "What I try to represent is a combination of versatility, flexibility, knowledge, and professionalism. Hopefully, those attributes will help me as I keep plugging away at my drumming career."

Jennifer O'Hara

No doubt about it, Jennifer O'Hara is the artistic type. She's pursuing a PhD in music history. She's a published writer specializing in poetry. She's studying piano, marimba, harmonica, bass, and saxophone.

Oh...and Jennifer is also a solid rock drummer. She's currently providing the foundation for Kudra, a four-piece band that combines progressive musical elements, odd times, and exotic modes (www.kudraband.com). One review men-

tions how the band moves from King Crimson-esque sounds one moment to Metallica the next.

Jennifer cites drumming influences such as Carter Beauford, Danny Carey, and Vinnie Paul, and blends that eclectic sensibility with a deep groove that allows the rest of the band the freedom to explore and expand on their ideas. This combination of solidity and expressiveness has made the group a popular club attraction in its Connecticut home area.

Jennifer performs on a Pearl Masters Custom kit with Paiste cymbals and Tama Iron Cobra pedals. Her ambitious career goals include becoming a touring and studio drummer, teaching, writing music columns, becoming involved in studio engineering, and participating in musical theater.



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and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment

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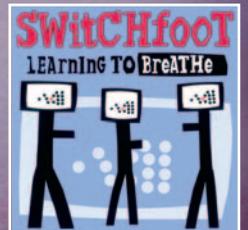
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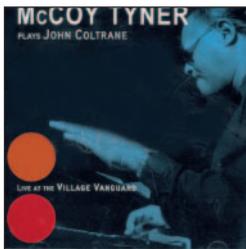
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McCoy Tyner

Jazz Piano Giant Talks Drummers

by Ken Micallef



Jazz legend McCoy Tyner has probably heard more than his share of Elvin Jones clones. After all, the pianist worked extensively with Elvin in John Coltrane's Quartet, one of the most influential and awe-inspiring musical forums ever. But Tyner has also played with every jazz drumming great you can name, from Tony Williams to Brian Blade. His experience demands high standards from any drummer.

“I like a drummer who listens and goes on a trip with me. If he listens, then we’ll go together and have fun.”

“First of all,” says Tyner from his New York home, “a drummer has to understand dynamics. You don’t start out at ten decibels above me, you build! That’s what jazz is about. And the drummer also has to be musical. It’s easy to concentrate

on playing your instrument and forget that you’re playing music. I like a guy who understands that we’re playing a *song*, and that every song has its own character. What are you going to do with this particular character?”

A drummer’s sound is as important to Tyner as that drummer’s playing. “I used to go with Elvin when he would pick out cymbals,” McCoy recalls. “He would play ‘ping ping’ on the bell, and on the edge of the cymbal, too. He’d listen to the whole dimension of the cymbal. There are so many colors there to deal with.”

Tyner’s latest recording, *Plays John Coltrane: Live At The Village Vanguard*, finds him covering the legendary saxophonist’s music with drummer Al Foster and bassist George Mraz. “It was originally just supposed to be a live simulcast in Japan and Europe,” says Tyner. “We were honoring John that week, on a bill with other artists. But when I heard the tape afterwards, I really liked it. So we decided

to put it out. That was my night at the Vanguard.”

Tyner speaks of the cathartic 1960s as a magical time. But it was in the 1970s, when he went solo after Coltrane’s death, that the adventurous pianist ultimately proved his mettle. “When I left John in the late ’60s, fusion was coming in,” he recalls. “We acoustic players had a real tough time getting work. I formed a trio with [bassist] Walter Booker and [drummer] Mickey Roker. And then I got Freddie Waits on drums. It was slow, but things picked up.”

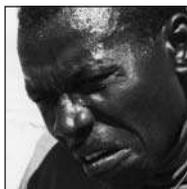
Did Tyner’s style change after he left Coltrane? “Well, changing for the

sake of changing doesn’t mean anything,” he replies. “But if you’re growing, that’s good. John never told us what to do, so my sound came through in his band. But I wanted to do something that had my signature on it. I still had another side.”

Tyner is renowned for his brilliant chord clusters and rhythmically supercharged solos, so it might seem that drumming with him would prove daunting. Not necessarily, says McCoy. “I like a drummer who listens and goes on a trip with me, rather than someone who sets the dynamics and expects me to comply with that. If he listens, then we’ll go together and have fun. A guy with an ego can destroy you. But I’ve played with some beautiful guys.”

ELVIN JONES

(*Inception, Today And Tomorrow, The Real McCoy, Extensions, Trident*, and many recordings with The John Coltrane Quartet featuring Tyner)



At one time Elvin and I were very close musically. We still are today, but it’s different. We don’t play together that much, but we still have certain things in common.

Elvin was one of my teachers, even though he was the baby of the band. A lot of people think he is bombastic. He could get

McCoy’s Men

A short list of drummers with whom McCoy Tyner has performed and/or recorded

- Brian Blade
- Billy Cobham
- Jack DeJohnette
- Al Foster
- Eric Harland
- Louis Hayes
- Roy Haynes
- Billy Higgins
- Lex Humphries
- Elvin Jones
- Philly Joe Jones
- Alphonse Mouzon
- Aaron Scott
- Freddie Waits
- Tony Williams

like that, but the guy is very sensitive. He could lift a band up with just the brushes. Philly Joe Jones and Buddy Rich were like that, too. They all came from that generation, though Buddy was a little older. It was the kind of training that those guys had: They had to play with singers, orchestras, everything.

Coltrane’s band had a broad base of influences. As a leader he was very sincere and very serious about the music. He picked just the right people to deliver his message. Elvin was the perfect drummer for that band, though we had different drummers before him. It was all about his sensitivity and how he utilized his dynamic intelligence. He knew when to come up, and he knew when to lay that carpet out. Those are very important elements when you’re playing creative improvised music.

Elvin and I were well matched polyrhythmically, which I really liked. We did a lot of gigs outside of Coltrane’s band. But it all had a lot to do with Coltrane. Sometimes I will hear Elvin’s influence in other drummers who play with me, and that is okay, as long as they are not a carbon copy. A guy can open the door for you, but you have to walk in.

ROY HAYNES

(*Reaching Forth*)

Roy has a different time conception from Elvin, but he was definitely one of the fore-runners of loose time. He was polyrhythmic as well. Roy always has that taste happening. He’s always floating. It’s not that I intentionally played differently with Roy, but *every* time you’re on stage with somebody it will be something different. You hear what the guy is playing, and you respond to it. Roy is a great percussionist. He has played with a lot of people, so you respect that. He brings a lot to the table.

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JACK DEJOHNETTE

(*Supertrios, Inner Voices, Together, Thirteenth House*)

TONY WILLIAMS

(*Supertrios, Passion Dance*)

Tony had a compositional mind; he looked at the total picture. He was very rhythmic and very accurate with his breaks. He also had a very good sense of dynamics. He could get powerful, but at the same time he was very sensitive.

Jack is very musical. He plays piano and he knows how to put pieces together. He has a nice groove, and a nice swing.

Their placing of the time feel was different. Jack had a wider swing. I could hear a little Elvin in him, although it wasn't *exactly* like Elvin. Jack is a mixture of things. Tony was right on it: You knew where "1" was with Tony. He had a strong personality and it came out in his music. Tony was the louder of the two, but his dynamics were very good on *Supertrios*.

Drummers of that caliber don't ask a lot of questions. If something comes up, we'll discuss it. But guys like that play so

well, most of the time you don't have to say anything, it just happens. It's intuitive, they pick it up right away.

BILLY HIGGINS

(John Coltrane's *Like Sonny*)

A great, great drummer. We recorded together when Billy was with Coltrane for a little while before Elvin joined the band. Billy also played with me at Yoshi's in Oakland about a year before he died.

LOUIS HAYES

(*Doubletrios, What's New, Bon Voyage, Uptown/Downtown*)

Louis was with me a long time. I really liked his drumming; he listened and he played well. Louis was nice. He wasn't on an ego trip. He was a team player, kind of like Al Foster.

FREDDIE WAITS

(*Expansions, Cosmos*)

Playing with someone on my level was kind of new to Freddie at the time. But he

had tremendous potential, and his technique was phenomenal. He's another guy who had great technique and a nice sound on the instrument. Everybody has different things. Freddie created a very clean sound, and his punctuations were very precise.

BILLY COBHAM

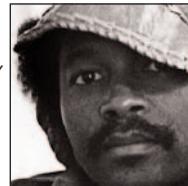
(*Fly Like The Wind*)

Some people—including Billy, I've heard—think he overplayed on *Fly Like The Wind*. But I think he was masterful on it. He read the score and he knew where all the hits were. What he played was correct. We kept his level down a little bit in the studio, and we had him isolated in the drum booth. But when we listened to the playback, I really enjoyed what he was doing. Billy is the consummate musician. He didn't have the kind of ego that some guys have.

ALPHONSE MOUZON

(*Sahara, Song Of The New World, Enlightenment*)

Alphonse used to come out in a cape back in



ETB - 15

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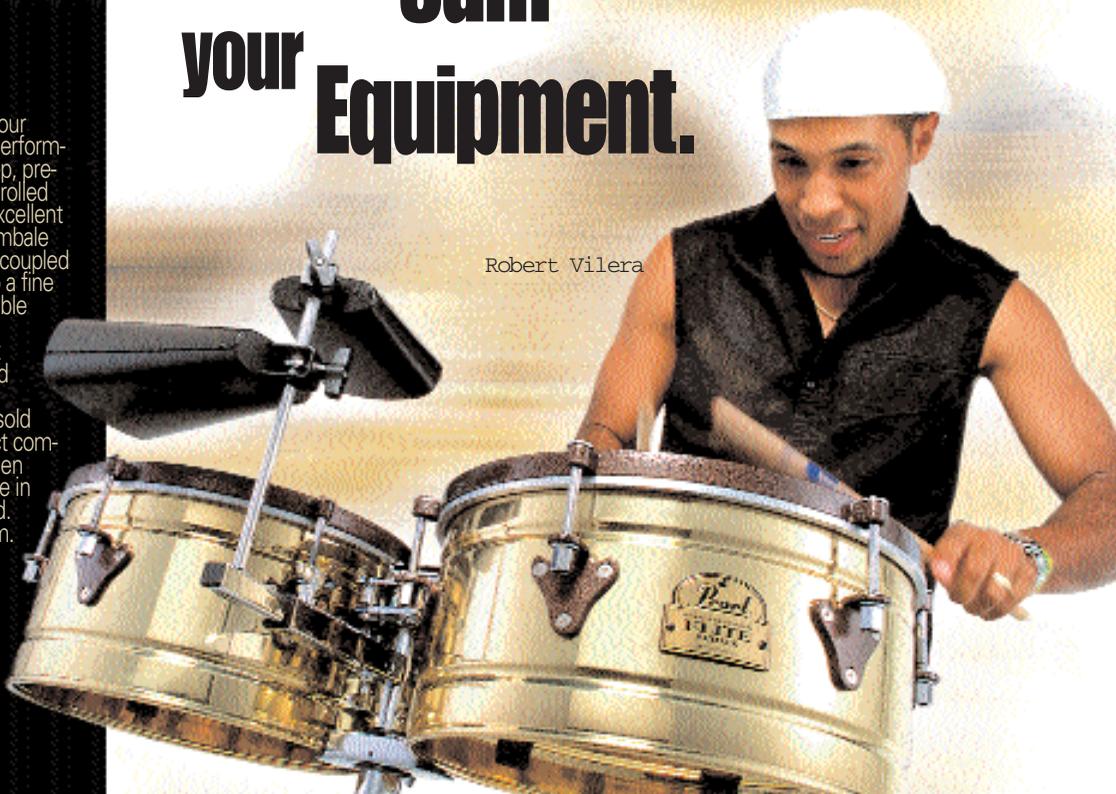
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Robert Vilera



the '70s. That really got me. He thought he was James Brown: *Good God!* [laughs] That is a very talented guy. Very talented.

ERIC HARLAND

Eric is a young drummer who has an approach like a more experienced player. I played with him once, and I was impressed by his good time and good sound. Of course, he worked with Betty Carter, and she knew what to do with drummers. Once she got through with them they were really groomed.

When you compare the young cats to a guy like Elvin, you hear the difference in time conception. That's because Elvin's playing reflects such a broad range of experience. But the young guys are enthusiastic. Some of them think everything is easy, but Eric is not that kind of guy. Guys like him really want to learn. I like Eric a lot.

BRIAN BLADE

Brian worked with me a couple times at Yoshi's. I do a hosting thing out there

with different bands. Brian is an exciting, interesting guy. He has a little bit of Roy Haynes and Elvin in him. He listens, and he "tips" real good. That's an old expression, referring to when a drummer hits the cymbal at a certain place and it gets that real "ping ping ping." It sounds like a jazz stripper. [laughs]

LEX HUMPHRIES

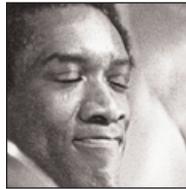
(Nights Of Ballads And Blues)

Lex came more out of a traditional thing. He had an older style of playing, but it was good. He could play.

AL FOSTER

(Four Times Four, It's About Time, New York Reunion)

Al is soft-spoken as a person, and he doesn't overwhelm you as a drummer. He is very sensitive, and his sense of dynamics is great. Al comes up when he is supposed to and he comes right back down. He listens, he has good time and good feel, and he swings like mad.



AARON SCOTT

(Turning Point, Journey, Infinity, Solar, Autumn Mood)

Aaron's been with me a long time. I chose him because he had a loose feel. His solo work is very good, and he has grown as a drummer in terms of sensitivity. He's open with the time, so he can do a lot of things rhythmically. A drummer has to be versatile. I like straight-ahead playing, but sometimes I like to deviate from the time and do different things. It's nice to have a drummer who can roll with all of that. Aaron was able to loosen the time up so it wasn't restrictive, and that let me do my polyrhythmic thing. He's a great supporter.



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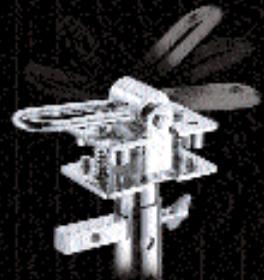


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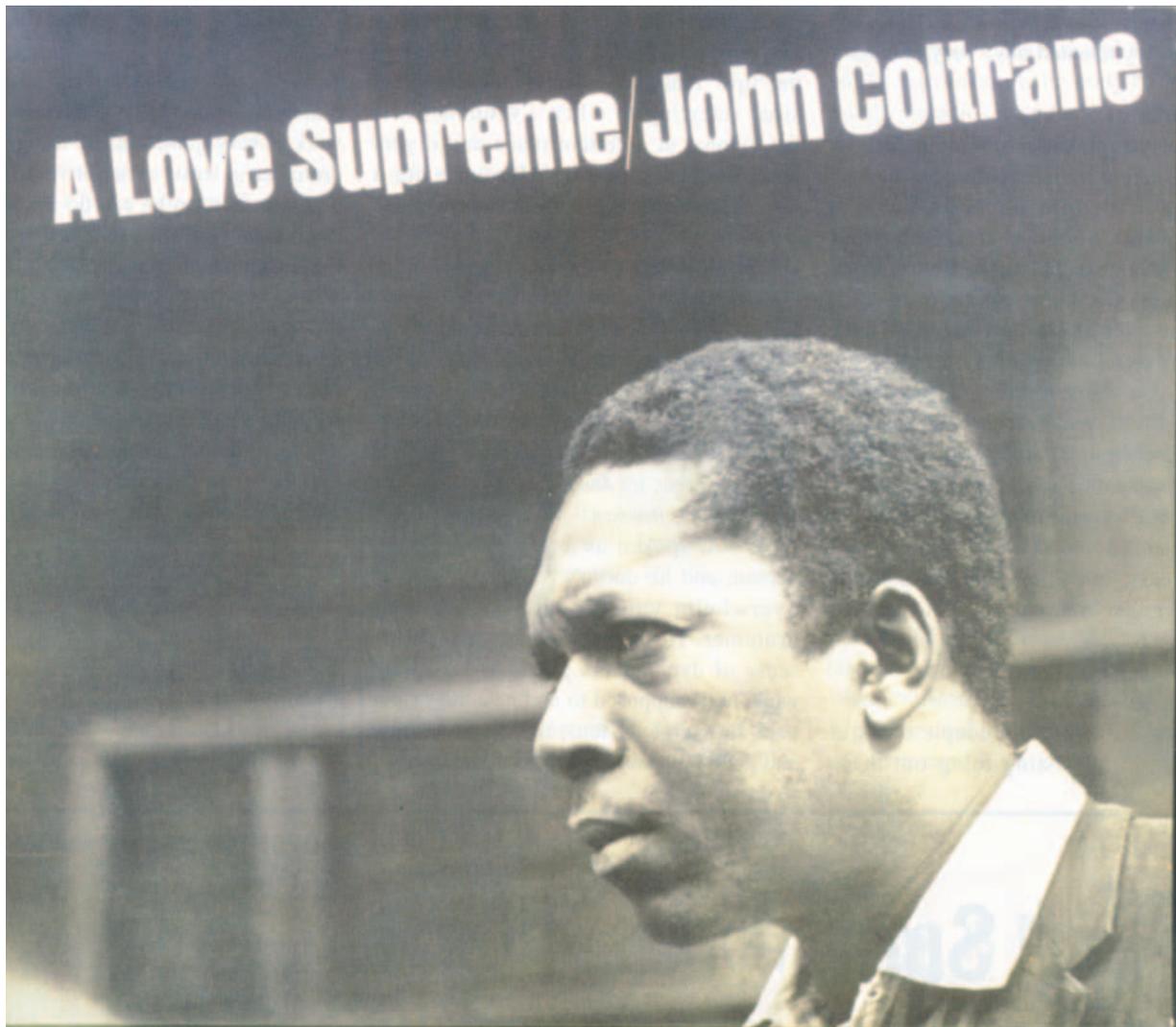
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John Coltrane *A Love Supreme*

Elvin Jones (dr), John Coltrane (tn sx), McCoy Tyner (pno), Jimmy Garrison (bs)

Part I—Acknowledgement • Part II—Resolution • Part III—Pursuance • Part IV—Psalm

The history and significance of this album are extensively documented, and it is generally accepted that *A Love Supreme* is one of the most important albums of all time. Recorded in 1964, this album marked the zenith of a ten-year span in which Coltrane was the most prolific and profound musician of the twentieth century. Diz and Bird invented the wheel, and Miles drove it longer and down a few more roads. But the depth and invention of Trane's output between 1957 and 1967 (the year of his death) remains unsurpassed.

Elvin Jones was John Coltrane's kindred spirit. Without Elvin, Trane's vigilant musical search (a common theme throughout his canon) would have included a search for a worthy drummer. As it was,

Elvin provided the Earth from which Trane's music took flight.

For the uninitiated, this is an extraordinarily challenging album. In fact, it may not be a good place to begin your Coltrane/Jones education. However, if you go through Coltrane's repertoire of standards from the mid- to late-'50s and work through his quartet recordings of the early '60s, you can hear the progression of his search. Elvin was with Coltrane for nearly the entirety of this period.

Elvin's performance on *A Love Supreme* is a long way from the drums played on most jazz recordings. Elvin went so far past *spang-a-lang* that when he does play traditional swing patterns, they are more individual and emotive than any other drummer's.

Elvin's performance on "Pursuance" is the most passionate ten minutes in drumming history—the outro solo of this section is wrenching and beautiful. Is there another drummer who can evoke such feeling on the instrument?

The album ends on timpani and suspended cymbals, with the musicians positively *in* the music. This album—and Elvin's drumming—is not about jazz, rules, genres, chops, or record sales. This is music in search of a higher place, and that search is conducted by way of the instruments in the hands of the musicians. Art, music, and drumming at its absolute best.

Ted Bonar



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Jingle Recording

Everything You Ever Wanted To Know But Were Afraid To Ask

by Jason Gianni

I remember my first time like it was yesterday. I was lying in bed with the lights turned down low and the television setting a quiet atmosphere. Suddenly, a familiar song cut through my still and peaceful bedroom. As I reached for the remote to turn up the volume, I attempted to wake my sleeping wife. The Isuzu Amigo television commercial that I had recorded two weeks earlier was finally airing on a national channel!

A mix of emotions came over me. I was exhilarated to finally hear my work on TV, but I was distressed that I wasn't able to awaken my spouse to share in this joyous occasion. Regardless, I had finally made my first step toward a professional life as a musician. I was officially a studio drummer. Six years and almost seventy-five commercials later, I still feel elated every time I recognize my work on TV.

Recording commercials or spots for tele-

Six years and almost seventy-five commercials later, I still feel elated every time I recognize my work on TV.

vision and radio (commonly referred to as “jingles”) has been a lucrative part of the entertainment business for many years. Unfortunately, there are no information hotlines to call and no journals written on how to achieve success in this field. Much like attempting to get “signed” or “discovered” as a performer, persistence and the necessary contacts are the keys to attaining your goals as a studio musician. Based on numerous questions I've received from private students and other musicians, I

thought it would be helpful to shed some light on the “hows,” “wheres,” and “whats” of jingle recording.

Finding Work

The question I'm asked most frequently is, “How do you actually get involved in recording sessions?” There's no set way for a musician to find his or her way into this field. And it's certainly more of a challenge to find this type of work if you haven't yet achieved a name for yourself in the music business. However, by understanding some basic marketing/promotion strategies, you may find that the path is somewhat easier than you originally imagined.

The first step is to find the people and businesses that specialize in jingle recordings. Usually, advertising agencies contract jingle sessions with multi-media studios. In addition, some individuals who run their own studios may hire musicians to record commercial sessions, which they then submit to agencies or clients.

There are a few reliable sources to direct you towards the right destinations. For example, many studios, composers, and musicians list their contact information in The Yellow Pages. Call or visit places and people listed. Ask permission to present them with your work (in a press kit, covered later in this section), to meet with them to discuss your musical background, or maybe even to audition for them (depending, of course, on their availability).

The Musicians Union is another dependable source, although this varies with how much recording activity there is in your area. In a city that has significant recording activity, there is usually a “recording services” department at the Musicians Union office. If you are a member, they can usual-

ly provide you with accurate contact names and locations.

Lastly, continuing to better yourself as a performing musician helps you meet other performers who may already be involved in studio recordings. Studio owners often request referrals from the musicians they are currently employing.

Document Yourself

One of the more useful tools for obtaining work as a professional drummer is an up-to-date press kit. This should include a current résumé and/or bio, a recording (preferably CD) of some of your playing, and a business card with all appropriate contact information. A photo is optional.

If you've already had some jingle experience, it's very important to keep an ongoing videotape of your television work. This is often referred to as a "demo reel." You want to be able to display your reel of work in the same way that a studio would display their demo reel to a client. The ideal method for creating your demo reel is to have the studio dub each jingle you do onto your videotape when the jingle



Illustration by Joe King

is originally mastered. This is much easier than attempting to track it down later on an unpredictable TV schedule. The quality is also better.

The Writers, The Music, And Creativity

When an ad agency creates a campaign for a product, they will hire a studio's staff or a single writer to compose a jingle for them. Usually, the advertising folks have specific ideas of how they want a piece of music to sound ahead of time. If the studio owners are musicians themselves, they'll write a framework of the jingle. Otherwise they may hire an outside composer to construct the music. When the ad clients approve the musical idea, musicians are then hired to record the final tracks.

Jingle music is generally composed in a style that's consistent with the tone of the commercial or the product itself. For instance, a comical jingle may suggest a polka style, while a more serious campaign may call for a driving rock beat. The composer may also be hired to arrange a piece of music that is similar to a popular song. However, since copyright laws are strict, this usually requires a slight change in the arrangement. The idea is to "suggest" the tune rather than to duplicate it completely.



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Jingle Recording

Creativity is a common subject on everyone's mind. Some commercial spots are written with precise, specific drum parts. Others specify a certain consistent beat to accompany the music or the speaking portion of the commercial (known as the "voice-overs"). While it's good to keep things interesting if you can, it's not always good to be too creative. Jingles can often be very short in duration—usually 15-, 30-, and 60-second time slots. This calls for precise execution rather than a busy performance.

So How Do I Get Paid?

Payments for jingle work fit into two separate categories: residuals and buy-outs. Residuals work like this: Musicians ordinarily receive a check for the initial session. The amount may vary depending on the product/client and your time spent. When an ad is successfully aired on television or radio, it generally works on a thirteen-week schedule. Depending on the ad's success, at the end of the initial period the campaign could be aired for another thirteen weeks. If it's very successful, this process may con-

tinue for some time. Each time a campaign is renewed for another cycle, the musicians, composers, actors, etc. get an additional payment called a "residual." Residuals are paid through the recording services department at the local Musicians Union office, which further suggests the importance of being a member of the Union. (Non-union musicians used on sessions receive only the initial payment for that session through the studio, and are unable to receive residuals.)

Buy-outs work like this: A company makes a decision to air a commercial for an extended period of time, even before the campaign officially begins. In such cases, the musicians (and others) get paid a larger sum of money initially, in exchange for the recurring use of their services and creativity. No residuals are paid after the fact.

Just like residual payments, a buy-out can benefit the musicians or work against them, depending on the circumstances. Some campaigns may pay a great sum of money up front, and wind up airing for a shorter time than originally anticipated. Others could pay moderately, and end up airing for years!

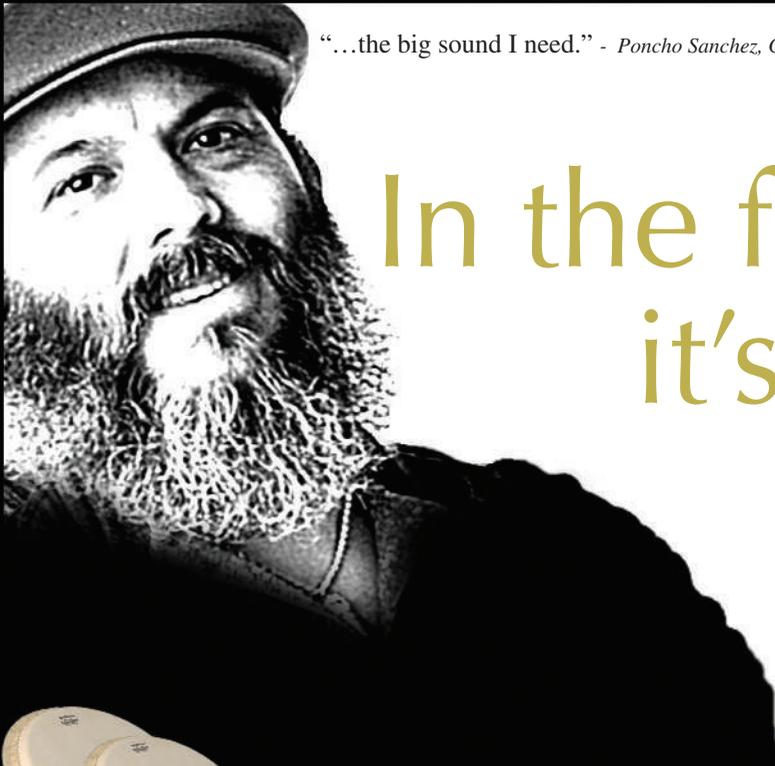
Are Jingles Enough?

Another frequent query I get is whether or not a musician can make a comfortable living solely by recording jingles. To be honest, although commercial recording can contribute sizably to your income, the ability to make a living off of jingle recording alone is uncommon. Recording opportunities are often unpredictable. Still, the very inconsistency of the work is what some musicians find challenging. And if you can become the "first call" drummer for a studio or a composer who receives an abundant workload, you can generate a reasonable income.

Campaign Details

As a jingle session player, you can be called for a wide variety of recording possibilities. I've personally recorded drum tracks for cartoon theme songs, standard product commercials, corporate videos, and even a session for the sounds in a specific slot machine line.

Unfortunately, it's not always possible to observe your work after you've com-



"...the big sound I need." - Poncho Sanchez, Grammy® Award Winner, on NuSkyn™

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pleted your individual tracks. Drummers are usually the first musicians to lay down studio tracks, making it tough to hear the finished product right away. Additionally, jingle sessions often face a specific deadline for the advertisement firm, which could put time constraints on everyone involved in the creative process. Studios may not have the time to play back or line up your work before the product is completely finished and ready to air.

Airing location is another factor that determines whether or not you can see or hear your work. Based on the popularity of a certain product, ad campaigns are chosen to air regionally, nationally, or internationally. Depending on your location versus where the campaign has been directed, it's not always possible to see or hear the finished commercial once it has aired.

Finally, not all ad campaigns are approved as a finished product. Often, a musician is hired for a session that could initially be considered a "demo" version but is subsequently dropped before the final product is approved.

Tools Of The Trade

If I had to sum up how to be a successful studio and jingle drummer in one sentence, it would be, "Honesty is the best policy." Being earnest about your talent and not wasting other people's time is the most significant approach to acquiring studio jobs. Getting your first chance to record is only half the battle. Being asked back is unquestionably the more rewarding opportunity.

Make sure you're well up on your reading skills, because studio sessions are often based on reading charts. In addition, studying a wide range of styles and musical genres will make you more versatile, which significantly increases your chances. Sessions also usually require musicians to play along with a click track. This, in turn, magnifies the importance of practicing regularly with a metronome.

Having a wide assortment of cymbals—especially rides—along with a few different snare drums will allow you to bring and play what is suitable for whatever styles might be called for in each

recording session. In addition, always pay close attention to the consistency of your foot and hand strokes (in terms of where and how you hit the drums), because any irregularities clearly stand out on a recording.

It would be advantageous to do some research on session playing, contracts, and general recording information before attempting to jump into the field unprepared. A book called *This Business Of Music* (by M. William Krasilovsky and Sidney Shemel) has a highly informative chapter on jingle recording, as well as endless information on the entire music business.

Finally, if you do get the opportunity, do the best job that you possibly can to achieve a successful final product. As you probably know, drummers are often replaced by electronics on sessions due to limitations in versatility, performance inconsistencies, or lack of reading skills. The more we drummers educate ourselves, the better chance we have to succeed in this field of music.



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Getting The Sound Right

(For You And Your Audience)

by Rick Long

When I'm discussing electronic drums with other drummers, they often comment that electronic drums don't sound like *real* drums. Yet the voices on many electronic drumkits are digital samplings of real acoustic drums and cymbals. In such cases, I think the real problem is that the sound isn't being conveyed in an appropriate manner.

The quality of the sounds within most of today's pro-level (and even some semi-pro) electronic kits is quite remarkable—if you're listening to them through headphones. If that isn't the sound that you're hearing in a performance situation, the fault may not lie with the sounds themselves. In this case, you just might want to blame the messenger.

Any e-drum amp had better have a great slew rate, because a drumset is *full* of transient sounds. Almost every sound we produce as drummers is a dynamic, quick-response, quick-decay type of sound. A realistic sample of an acoustic snare drum smacked with a 5B stick produces a complex sound wave that goes from 0 dB to 110-115 dB in a few milliseconds. To do that and still produce a full-range sound with no distortion is a mighty task for most amplifiers.

The drumset is also known for its full range of frequencies. The low frequencies produced by the bass drum are as low as or lower than anything else in the band. The high frequencies of a splash cymbal are as high as or higher than anything else in the band. This means that we need the range of frequencies produced by a bass amp, a guitar amp, and a keyboard amp all wrapped into one. Given this situation, is it any surprise that when you go to the music store and play an e-drumset through a 10-watt amplifier with an 8" speaker (with the volume set on 2), the drums don't sound right?

Is it any surprise that when you go to the music store and play an e-drumset through a 10-watt amplifier with an 8" speaker (with the volume set on 2), the drums don't sound right?

Drumkit Sounds

Acoustic drums are the most dynamic instrument that exists. To my ear, a soft brush stroke on a cymbal is the quietest, most beautiful sound a musician can produce. That same cymbal can also produce a sound so loud that it can be heard over the largest orchestra or rock band. In order for e-drums to match this dynamic range realistically, whatever amplifier you intend to use with them will also have to be capable of reproducing that dynamic range.

Amps have a specification called "slew rate," which indicates how quickly the amplifier can respond to transient sounds.

Getting Those Sounds Out There

What type of amplification will produce a good e-drum sound? The optimum answer so far has been to run the e-drums through the band's P.A. system. Most musicians like e-drums because they don't produce any "live" sound on stage. Thus, the amount of on-stage drum sound can be completely controlled via the monitor mix. I've worked many gigs where we ran my e-drums through the P.A. and had just enough drums dialed into the monitor mix so that the musicians could hear them. More drum sound can be dialed into the mix of the *drum* monitors if necessary, provided you're in a situation where separate monitor mixes are possible.

Sounds great, doesn't it? The problem is,

this system only works well if you have a professional-level P.A. Most of the time you won't. Either you'll be playing in a club with an inadequate house system, or your band owns a P.A. that's unsuitable for e-drum applications. This leaves you, the drummer, with two choices: Convince the band to upgrade the P.A., or bring your own amplification.

Let's look at what type of P.A. your band would need in order to handle e-drums. I gig regularly with a blues band that plays small venues. The amplifier section of their P.A. has less than 500 watts per side. This isn't much power. But then again, the band doesn't have to play very loudly because of the small venues and the fact that they aren't trying to compete with acoustic drums. The key element that helps e-drums sound great through their P.A. is that the speaker columns have two 15" woofers per side. These do a good job of handling the low end that e-drums seem to eat for lunch. The horn-type high-frequency driver handles the upper end well enough.

Another band I've worked with in larger venues decided to go with 18" woofers and 1,500 watts of power. When I played the kick drum for soundcheck, believe me, it *sounded* like a kick drum. I can't stress enough that large woofers and large amounts of power are needed in order to get a good sound from e-drums in moderate to large venues. It isn't a matter of *volume*, it's a matter of *fidelity* and *acoustic accuracy*.

In this same band, the singer complained that having the drums in the monitor mix made it hard to hear the vocals. In cases like this, where it's desirable (or necessary) to keep the e-drums out of the monitors, you'll need to have your own on-stage amplification, just as the guitar and keyboard players do. At this time, no one manufactures an amplifier just for electronic drums. Roland makes the PM-3 Personal Monitor System, which produces a good sound for at-home practice purposes. But it's not meant to act as stage amplification for live gigs.

What Are The Choices?

Don't waste your time trying guitar amplifiers. They're designed to sound good in the mid to high frequencies produced by

an electric guitar. They won't produce acceptable low-end frequencies. Conversely, bass amps have lots of low end, but they may not be able to produce mid and high frequencies adequately. (To be fair, though, some recent bass amps do have mid- and high-frequency drivers. So they might be acceptable for e-drums. Use your ears and decide what sounds good to you.)

Actually, the greatest problem you're likely to have with bass amps will be size and volume—too much of each. Remember, everyone likes your e-drums because they are quiet on stage. You'll want your stage amplification to provide just enough sound so that you and the other musicians can hear the drums. Your audience should hear the drums through the P.A. speakers, not from the stage amplification. Besides, if your stage amp is too loud, the other players will turn up to try to compete with you. Pretty soon the entire band is too loud, and the whole purpose of using e-drums for good tone and controlled volume is lost.

At this point in time, the best compromise for e-drum stage amplification is probably a keyboard amplifier. These amps are designed to produce a wide range of frequencies, yet they're still small enough to be portable and not add tremendously to the backline volume.

Several reputable manufacturers offer a selection of keyboard amps, with list prices ranging from around \$400 to around \$800, depending on power and features. (These prices are usually discounted quite a bit by the major dealers). You should try as many as you can. And of course, you should test them by playing your e-drums through them—not just by playing a few keyboard notes in the store. This doesn't mean schlepping your entire e-kit into the store. You can just bring in your sound module and one or two pads to trigger some "test samples," like ultra-low kick drums, high-impact snare drums, and high-frequency cymbals. That should give you a pretty good idea of the performance range of each amp you test.

You know how you want your drums to sound. Listen for that sound, and go with the type of amplification that best reproduces and projects it.

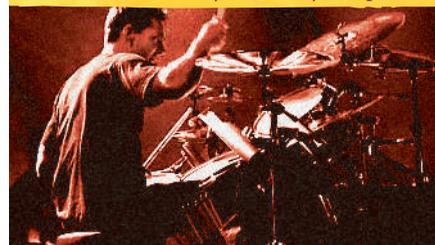


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Teaching Special-Needs Students

by Joe Nevolo

I've been teaching drums for thirty years. I've taught at Drummers Collective in New York City, and at the Long Island Drum Center. In 1982 I started my own teaching studio, Big Beat Music, in Neptune, New Jersey.

Shortly after I started teaching, I began to encounter special-needs students: children who had disabilities such as Down's syndrome, autism, dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, and even blindness. It became obvious that traditional instructional methods were not going to be the most practical approach to teaching these children how to play drums. I needed to develop some special techniques.

Getting Graphic

Many years ago, when I was teaching at the Long Island Drum Center, the drum instructors there would draw a circle, a square, or a triangle on each of the different drums on a kit. Then they'd write out different sticking patterns using the geometric symbols instead of actual notes on staff paper. They found this to be a quicker route to help beginning students find their way around the drumkit.

I expanded this technique in order to accommodate my special-needs students. I cut geometric shapes out of fluorescent paper and taped them onto the drums. I also taped numbers painted in fluorescent orange onto the cymbals. I then positioned black lights overhead so the shapes and numbers would be highly visible, and I utilized glow-in-the-dark sticks to make things more fun. I turned the regular lights off to maximize the glowing effect, and also to help eliminate external distractions within the studio.

I also made use of sound-activated lights that would flash to the pulse of music. This enabled the students to actually "see the beat" and play along with it.

I've developed this audio-visual approach further by adding an overhead projector and a screen positioned in front of the drums. I use transparent overlays with a diagram of the drums and cymbals to be struck (each in a different color). I position myself behind the student, between the projector and the screen and behind a set of electronic pads mounted on cymbal stands. With sticks in my



Special-needs students benefit from the use of graphic aids on the kit.

hands, I strike the pads, creating a shadow effect that looks as if I'm actually striking the diagram on the screen (while sounding the pattern at the same time). The students can follow along with me on the drumset.

The Video Age

Many drum instructors have found a video camera to be an excellent teaching aid. I also use a camcorder, but in a slightly different manner than most teachers do. I have two drumkits set up side-by-side, with a camcorder focused on me. That camera is monitored on a TV screen set up in front of the student's kit. I sometimes place transparencies over the TV

screen and write different sticking patterns or geometric symbols on them to further aid in the learning process. This dual imagery enables the student to see a mirrored image on the TV screen, as well as a side-by-side view of what is to be played on the kit. This process has especially aided students with learning-retention difficulties.

Laser pointers have come in handy when I'm illustrating sticking patterns on the kit. I position myself behind the student and

Every student has a different learning style. What works for one student won't necessarily work for another.

direct the pointers at the actual drums to be struck. The students learn the patterns while having fun “chasing the light.”

Speak And Play

Phonetics can be combined with visual aids. An example would be a rhythm that everyone loves and can identify with—a rhythm I like to call “the conga roll.” (See the example below.)

△ = T.T. 1

○ = T.T. 2



Corresponds To:

Using two mounted toms tuned approximately a fourth apart, the students play the pattern with sticks while I sound out the tom melody over a microphone. To get the students verbally involved, I have them say names that they can readily associate with. For example, if the student’s name is Bobby, I’ll have him say, “Mommy, Daddy, Bob-BEE,” while looking at a poster with the pattern written in large yellow fluorescent marker. Meanwhile I’ll play the pattern through a speaker connected to my drum machine.

A Success Story

Recently I began teaching a young girl with autism. I utilized many of the techniques already mentioned, then progressed to playing along with songs on CDs. Through the use of the camcorder, geometric symbols on the drums, and numbers on the cymbals, the student was able to quickly pick up the rhythms of songs. One song in particular that we play to is the “Mission Impossible Theme.” Even though the song is in 5/4 time, she was able to find the main accents. She’d play the pattern while listening to me sound it out over the microphone, emulating the sound of the drum or cymbal to be played. I then focused the laser pointers at the voicings to be played, not counting the five beats per bar, but instead emphasizing the four strong accents implied by the song’s rhythmic phrasing. At each successive lesson we rhythmically and melodically embellished this process a little more, using different tunes. After several months of instruction, the student could play Santana’s “Smooth” in its entirety.

Staying Open To New Ideas

The instructional techniques I employ are a culmination of the many years I’ve been teaching, as well as staying open to the fact that there are no “right” or “wrong” methods. Many of us get locked into the same routine, teaching the way *we* were taught because we think that’s the only way. I like to think that my success with special-needs students is partly because of my own constant desire to learn.



A Practical Guide To Noise Reduction

Part 6: A Do-It-Yourself Project

by Steven Buckingham

Editor's note: Previous installments of this series offered optimum methods for creating a sound-controlled practice space. This month, British drummer Steve Buckingham describes how he undertook such a project, incorporating some of our tips and some of his own ideas.

I wanted to create a drum room at my parents' home in London. The only space available was an 8'x10' dirt-floored basement storeroom, with a small, barred hole for ventilation. My dad, my wife, Heidi, and I cleared the junk out of the room. Then we gathered our materials: sand and cement, plastic sheeting, used 2x4 timbers, an old window and door, plasterboard, and loft insulation. Carpet would come later.

The Floor

We laid the plastic sheeting on the dirt floor and about 12" up along the walls for

damp-proofing. Then we placed bricks of different sizes at points where a spirit level showed they were at the same height. Starting at the far corner, we spread concrete to just above the height of the bricks. (Photo 1.) A board fitted into the doorway stopped the cement from coming out. We let the finished floor dry for two days.

Preparing The Walls

I fit a used double-glazed window into the barred ventilation hole in the basement wall, then bricked in the gap below. (Photo 2.) The window opened onto the bars, so the room could be aired without a security risk.

We repaired the doorframe, which was coming away from the wall. Then we repaired the walls by removing all flaking plaster, filling all gaps with cement, and re-pointing any crumbling masonry.

We drilled holes in the wall next to the

door to accommodate lighting and power cables. This would allow us to mount the light switch on the outside, so it could be flashed on and off to get my attention.

The Framework

The framework for the internal wall was made of old 2x4s from a warehouse we cleared. We cut the lengths to start just off the floor and finish 4" from the ceiling. They were spaced at the width of the plasterboards we'd be installing later (120 mm to the center of the next upright), in order to minimize cutting the boards. (Photo 2.)

We ran ceiling beams from each upright to the one on the opposite wall, making sure that the beams were also 120 mm apart. Since we'd need to hammer into these beams later, we jammed wedges of wood between them and the existing ceiling for added support. (Photos 2 and 3.)

After the wall and ceiling supports were



1 Laying the concrete floor



2 Framing the walls and ceiling. The replacement window is also shown.



3 Installing and taping the wall board

in place, we made frames for the “new” room’s window and door, using the same 2x4 timber.

Insulation

We filled the gaps between the uprights

on the walls with standard loft insulation. (Photo 2.) We started with solid squares of insulation, but had to finish with rolls, which are harder to work with. (If you can, get the solid type, at least for the ceiling.)



4 The double-door assembly

Don’t use material that’s thicker than the space between the original wall and the plasterboard you’ll be installing, because if the material is compressed too tightly the insulation effect will be reduced.

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Soundproofing

Make sure every gap is filled, even if it means cutting small pieces and stuffing them in. Since the insulation material expands, it's fairly easy to get it to stay between the timbers (as long as it's cut accurately). We installed a piece of PVC tubing where the electric cables would come through, in order to keep them from being surrounded by insulation (in case the cables got hot).

We made diagrams showing the position of the 2x4 frames so we could locate them once the walls were up. This proved very useful later, when we wanted to attach shelving and brackets.

Wall Boards

Putting up the plasterboard over the framework and insulation was relatively easy; we just had to saw the boards to the height of the room. Then we nailed the boards to the uprights, working in the same direction as the timbers were put up and using large-headed nails. (Small heads tear through plasterboard.)

The timbers couldn't be spaced at 120 mm at the corners, so the last plasterboards on each wall required a bit more measuring

and cutting to fit to the frames. Similarly, we needed to custom-cut around the door and window. (Photo 3.)

As a last step we cut a small hole in the plasterboard (and the wall) near the ceiling and passed some lengths of cable through. We made sure there was plenty on the inside to go around the room, and enough on the outside to connect to the existing main electrical panel.

The Ceiling

The insulation had a tendency to fall out of the gaps between the frames on the ceiling. So we had to do the insulation for each piece of plasterboard separately, and then put the board up to hold it. This is easier if you saw the boards into smaller pieces. Remember, though, that the joints between pieces of plasterboard should always have timber behind them, so you need to have supports to nail into wherever you cut the boards.

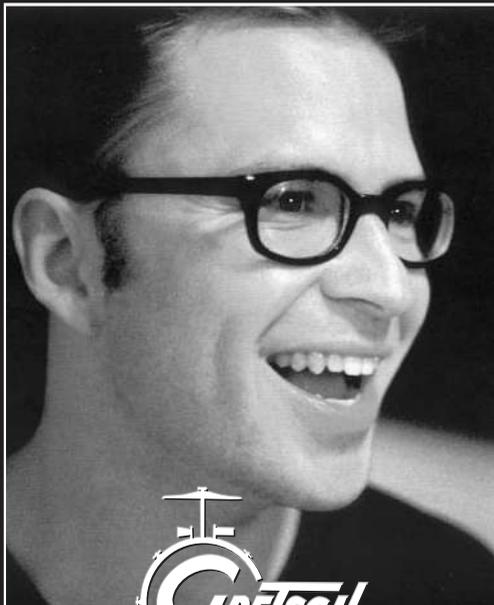
We arranged for the room lighting before completing the ceiling. We turned off the circuit breaker for the existing light fixture, then disconnected that fixture. Working with a lamp connected to a differ-



The second window

ent power circuit, we determined a point at which the wire could come through the ceiling plasterboard near a beam on which a new light could be attached. We cut a hole in the plasterboard at that point *before*

Stanton Moore



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filling the gap with insulation. (We kept the hole as small as possible in order to prevent sound leakage.) We pushed the light wire through the hole and *then* nailed the ceiling board into place.

Fitting The Doors

We re-hung the original single-ply basement door, which opened outwards, making sure it worked well and closed tightly. For the inner door we used a door from a dividing wall that had been knocked down. It was a hollow-core door, which is ideal because it's light and has an "airlock" built in. We cut it to size, fitted it with new hinges, and installed it into the inside frame, opening inwards—again making sure it closed tightly.

Finishing The Walls And Ceiling

If the wallboards have been cut and nailed properly, there should be no large gaps. Any gaps at all should be above beams or uprights, with no space behind them for sound to get through. We had a few such gaps of up to 1 cm wide, which we just stuffed with small bits of insulation. Then we used gaffer's tape to seal over all the joins in the boards.

Once the walls were sealed, we covered everything with carpet. This was the most expensive part of the whole project, even

though we found two remnants that were each big enough to cover two walls. Thinner, lighter, and less expensive carpet went on the ceiling. We cut the carpet roughly to size, putting the factory-cut straight edge at the top, where it was most visible, and leaving a little to be trimmed at the bottom. We attached it with spray adhesive, along with some large-headed nails in corners just to be sure. A thicker, dark blue carpet was used over the concrete floor.

We covered the inside door with the same carpet as the wall. We used leftover bits to cover the other sides of the doors, leaving the outside uncovered so it didn't look out of place in the basement. (Photo 4.)

The Second Window

To add more soundproofing over the double-glazed window, I created a second window out of an old office-partition screen with tinted Perspex in it. At the local do-it-yourself store I bought a length of decorative wood that had a curved edge with a step, which I thought would go over the edge of the Perspex. I also bought a length of plain wood the same width, some L-shaped metal brackets, clips, and a piano hinge.

Using a mitre saw, I cut the framework to go around my piece of Perspex, with the decorative wood on the outside and the plain

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wood on the back. I glued the wood to the Perspex and screwed the metal brackets on the back to strengthen the corners. I cut the piano hinge to length and screwed it to the frame, then used long screws to attach the whole unit to the wall over the window opening. I then fixed the two rotating clips to pieces of wood on the other side of the window, so that it pulled tight into the carpet when the window was shut. (Photo 5.)

Electricity

I attached an adjustable halogen spotlight to the ceiling, using the wiring that we had positioned earlier. Then we ran electrical cable around the top of the room (using cable clips) into three double sockets placed on different walls. Then we turned off the main power to the house, tapped into the basement power circuit, switched on again, and tested all the sockets.

Finishing Touches

Once all the major work was done, we nailed thin strips of wood to the tops and sides of the doors to seal up any gaps. Self-adhesive weatherstripping went on the outside door so that it shut tight onto the frame. I covered the gap in the hinge side of the door with tape: two widths with half the sticky side showing and one width the other way round, joining the other two. This sealed that side of the door but remained

flexible so the door could open. Old drumsticks served as handles to pull the doors shut from inside.

Using our diagram to locate 2x4 frames, I attached speaker brackets and shelves to the wall for my sound system. I added a double halogen spotlight on the wall for more light, along with a fan and a heater. A three-drawer filing cabinet holds practice materials, spare stands, heads, and sticks to keep the place tidy.

I decorated the room with album covers and inspirational pictures, like *MD's* Top 25 Drummers poster. I pinned two flags on the ceiling—partly to decorate and partly to add more acoustic layers above me. I also put long nails into the wall (where I knew there was framework) and covered them with rubber to hang spare cymbals on. (Photo 6.)

The Results

To be accurate, the room is not soundproof. But I can practice at night at full volume, as long as my parents on the first floor aren't trying to sleep. You can barely hear the sound from the second floor, and on the ground floor it sounds like a stereo in the next room. My sister tells me it's very quiet right outside the window. In fact, my nearest neighbor didn't even realize I was playing!

6



The finished room



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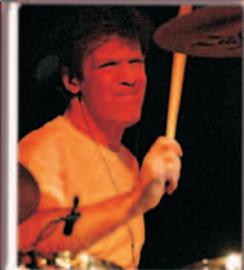


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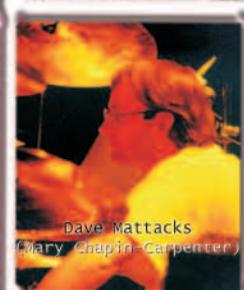
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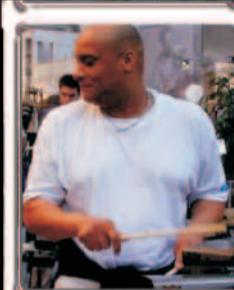
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Travis And Josh Make An Impression

On Saturday, December 8, 2001, **Travis Barker** and **Josh Freese** helped launch the International House Of Blues Foundations “Make An Impression” drum program. The two spoke with students from Wilson High School in East Los Angeles, then presented a new Pacific drumkit to the school’s music department.

The “Make An Impression” program supports participation in the arts by providing resources to underserved youth populations in IHOBFF locations. Students get hands-on opportunities to learn to play musical instruments, and are encouraged to express themselves in positive ways on those instruments. “I was fortunate

enough to be exposed to music at an early age,” said Josh. “I think it’s important for all young people to have that same opportunity.”

Following the instrument contribution, Travis and Josh performed a drum duet as part of the annual Drum Day LA (produced by DW Drums and Guitar Center). The event is a fundraiser for the International House Of Blues Foundation, and this year featured a silent auction of instruments donated by DW, LP, Paiste, Pork Pie, Pro-Mark, Remo, Roland, Sabian, Tama, Zildjian, and Guitar Center. The Foundation seeks to promote creative expression and cultural understanding through music and art. For more information, call (323) 848-5111 or visit www.ihobf.org.



Top: Travis Barker (left) and Josh Freese at Wilson High School in Los Angeles. Above and right: Travis and Josh also performed at Drum Day LA.

Autograph Auction For Cancer Charity

Top UK studio and touring drummer Steve White (Paul Weller, Ocean Colour Scene, Oasis) is the motivating force behind a unique auction. The featured item is of a collection of drumheads autographed by some of the world's top percussion artists. Money raised from the auction will go to a cancer charity in memory of British rock icon Ian Dury, who died of the disease in March of 2000. It's perhaps especially appropriate for drummers to be involved in this effort, since Dury's biggest hit was the 1979 song "Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick."

The collection features fifty-one signatures on six drumheads mounted in an attractive display. "The project has been very well received," Steve explained. "I've had a lot of help from some very kind people in the drum business. All the drummers involved have been fantastic in their contribution and support. And to get



legends like Charlie Watts, Kenny Jones, and Ringo Starr to put pen to skin was way beyond my wildest expectations."

Other players who have signed the heads include such luminaries as Alex Acuña, Kenny Aronoff, Terry Bozzio, Bill Bruford, Mark Brzezicki, Dennis Chambers, Billy Cobham, Vinnie Colaiuta, Luis Conte, Peter Erskine, Steve Ferrone, Steve Gadd, Andy Gangadeen, Mel Gaynor, Phil Gould, Dave Grohl, Taylor Hawkins, Gary Husband, Nicko McBrain, Marco Minnemann, Mark Mondesir, Adam Nussbaum, Ian Paice, Simon Phillips, Bernard Purdie, Chad Smith, Steve Smith, Roger Taylor, Dave Weckl, Alan White (Oasis), and Steve White himself. A date for the auction has yet to be confirmed. Further details can be obtained by surfing to www.freddiegee.com.

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Cascio Music DrummerFest

Milwaukee's Cascio Interstate Music celebrated International Drum Month this past November with their first annual "DrummerFest." Over five hundred drummers, non-drummers, parents, teachers, and hobbyists were able to hear five amazing drummers play, share ideas, have access to the clinicians on a one-to-one basis, and revel in the joy that is drumming.

Charlie Adams' Buddy Rich-influenced chops were amazing, highlighted by some of the fastest single-stroke rolls in the business. He also played along with an audio/visual presentation of live Yanni footage.

Fusing rock and jazz, Hilary Jones performed selections from her new solo CD, *Soaring*. Hilary displayed some incredible patterns and grooves.

Zoro took the audience through many different styles from



Hilary Jones



Horacio, Hilary, and Charlie

Motown and R&B to funk and shuffles. He grooved along with selections from his CD, *The Funky Drummer*, and shared insights from his *Commandments Of R&B Drumming* video series.

Following Zoro was the ceaselessly positive, enthusiastic, and inspirational Dom Famularo. Dom's drumming combined smooth textures with explosive lightning bolts, delicate taps with unrelenting smashes, and seriousness with comedy.

Last up was Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez. His solo featured a combination of Latin grooves, power rock fills, and intricate patterns combining cowbells and drums. Horacio's words were deep and sincere, enlightening the audience to the contrasts between an artistically oppressed life and a free and open society.

The highlight of the day was the jam at the end, with all five drummers locking into a groove and trading solos. The event was sponsored by Attack, DW, Evans, Pearl, Premier, Pro-Mark, Remo, Sabian, Vic Firth, and Zildjian.



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During their recent enrollment workshop, California's Pacific Crest Drum & Bugle Corps was treated to a clinic on drumset technique by LA studio drummer Albe Bonacci.



Albe Bonacci in clinic with The Pacific Crest Drum & Bugle Corps

Remo and E-pads sponsored Bonacci's appearance. Drumkit is not typically covered in the corp's workshop program, but the coordinators

thought it would be an enjoyable departure for the Corps members and hopefuls attending.

Participants played along to pre-recorded tracks specifically intended to work on timekeeping, technique, and style choices. Bonacci also offered advice on building a career in the music business. "Everything I know about studio work I learned in kindergarten," he says. "Show up early, look presentable, do your homework, and play nice with the other musicians."

The Pacific Crest Drum & Bugle Corps was DCI Pacific Region Division II Champion in 1998 and 1999. In 2001, Pacific Crest was granted Division I status. They are recognized in the top 25 drum corps in the nation. Potential applicants can contact the Corps at www.pacific-crest.org, by phone at (888) 727-4697, or by mail at 21231 Fountain Springs, Diamond Bar, CA 91765.

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What are some of your favorite grooves?

John Bonham on "When The Levee Breaks" (Led Zeppelin), Alex Van Halen on "Hot For Teacher" (Van Halen), Tommy Ramone on "Blitzkrieg Bop" (The Ramones), Morris Day on "Let's Work" (Prince), and Maurice White on any song from *All 'N All* (Earth, Wind & Fire).

What are some of your favorite grooves that you've recorded?

All the tracks on Mick Jagger's *Wandering Spirit* CD, Seal's first record, and the new Bisquera Bros. disc.

What books did you study when you first started playing?

Joe Porcaro's *Drumset Method*. It showed where Jeff got his fundamentals together.

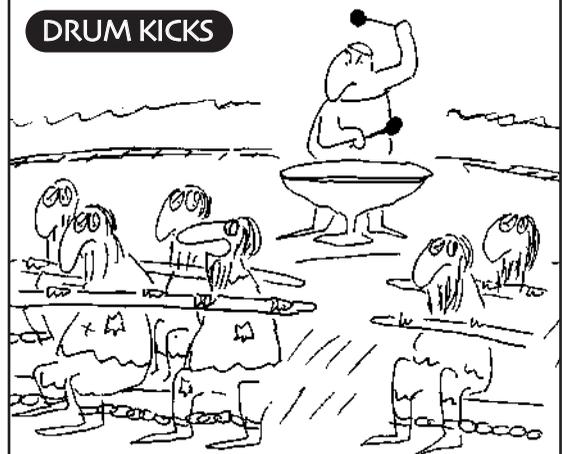


I also studied Ralph Humphrey's *Even In The Odds*. It gave me the keys to counting and playing odd meters without having to count on my fingers and toes.

Pick a tune you would like to have played on.

Any song recorded by the "godfather of soul," James Brown!

DRUM KICKS



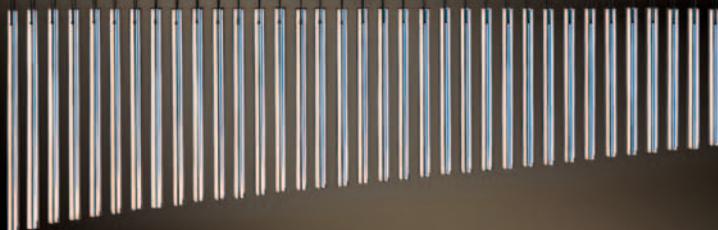
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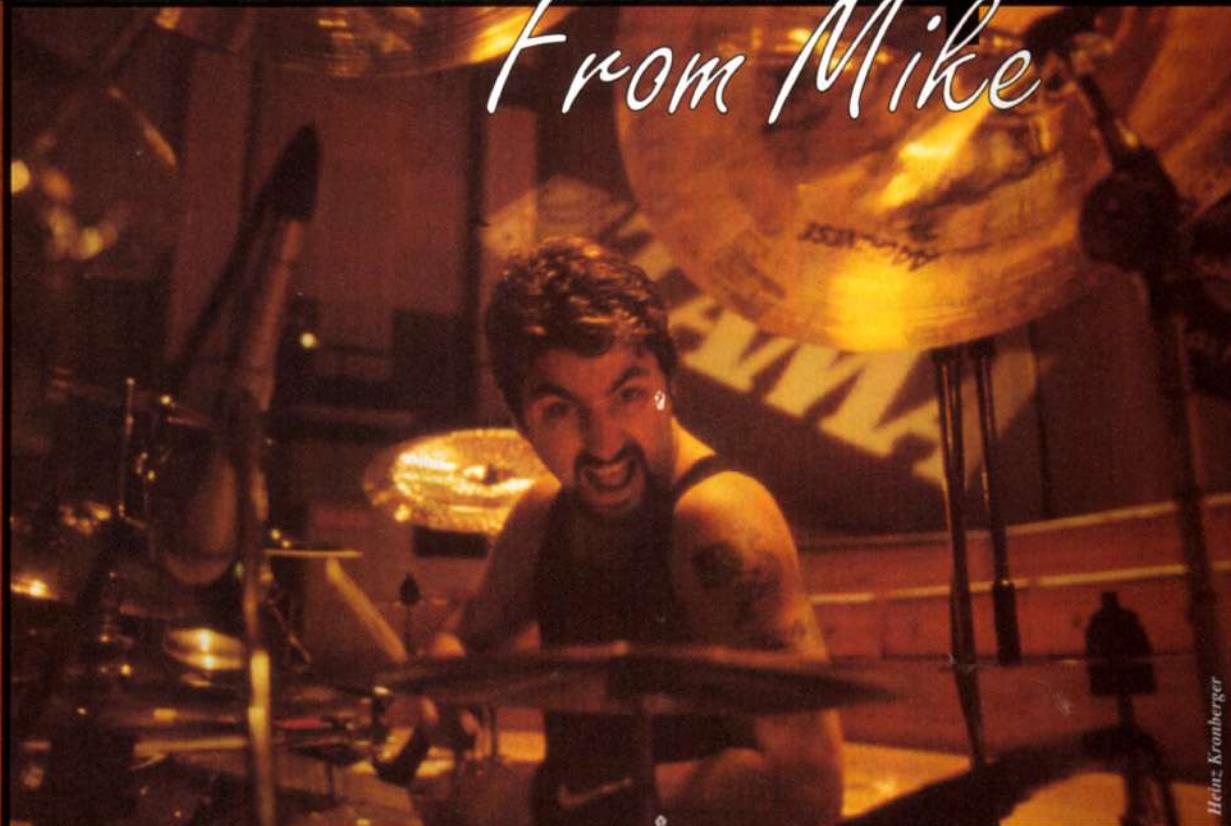
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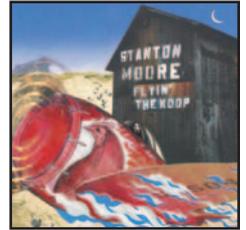
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Producer: Nick Sansano and Stanton Moore

Artist: Stanton Moore, Karl Denson (sx, fl), Skerik (sx), Chris Wood (bs), Brian Seeger (gtr)



Ba-boom! In the history of recording, few bass drums have thundered like the monster that kicks off Stanton Moore's new solo disc, *Flyin' The Koop*. Hmmm, could it be the same garage-sale 26" kick that Stanton debuted at last year's Modern Drummer Festival Weekend, the one that dwarfed Stanton's 18" vintage Gretsch?

Yep, it's the same tattered marching drum, and it cuts a *swath* through this album. "It's the first thing you hear on the record," exclaims Stanton. "And it sounds so good through subwoofers! For the recording, I left the 26" set up all the time, and I'd go back and forth between it and the 18". The 26" didn't have a *stitch* of muffling, except for maybe a piece of tape on the head."

To capture the 26", Nick Sansano placed his mic' a foot away from the front head, pointing it dead center. The amazing thing is that, long overtones and all, the drum works well for Stanton's intricate street beats.

Moore's new album is primarily instrumental, with the exception of a cameo appearance by the Wild Magnolia Mardi Gras Indians, whose chanted refrains Stanton sampled. Ultimately, what distinguishes Stanton's first release on Verve and his last album on Fog City, *All Kooked Out*, is the intensity. For *Flyin' The Koop*, Stanton seems to be probing more and exploring longer, more intricate fills.

The studio was a lot smaller than the Prairie Sun Web site would have you believe. Still, they made it *sound* big. Says Stanton, "I set up the drums on my regular old rug in the main room. The two horn players were in the main room facing me with baffles around them. We put Chris Wood in an iso booth. And Brian was in the main room behind a baffle."

Sansano adds, "I really didn't care about leakage. Everyone was in

the same undersized room, and through good mic' placement and thinking globally, it seemed to work. In theory, we wanted to capture everything with a mic' or two. But in the end, I don't believe in being a slave to an ideal that isn't giving you what you need."

Inside Scoop

Knowing a little bit of New Orleans drum lore helps to demystify the curious title of the opening track, "Tang The Hump." According to Stanton, "When the guys in the juke joints want you to play the bell of the cymbal, they say, "*tang the hump*...tang the hump of the cymbal!"



Michael Piazza

Drums: Gretsch vintage round-badge in champagne sparkle. The bass drum was a 14x18, the rack an 8x12, and the floor tom a 14x14. This basic jazz setup was augmented by a 14x26 bass drum in orange/red lacquer. "There's no logo, but there's a guy's name stamped inside it," Stanton says. "Next time I change heads I'll check." The main snare drum was an early '90s Slingerland Radio King reissue. A Ludwig Acrolite also makes an appearance.

Cymbals: Bosphorus 22" Traditional series ride, 19" Masters, and 14" Traditional hi-hats.

Percussion: To the left of his hi-hat, Stanton plays a detuned LP pandeiro, miked from underneath. And an LP cowbell is integral.

Heads: Remo coated Ambassadors all around, except for the 26" kick, which had a calfskin

resonant head. The LP pandeiro took an Emperor, tuned *way* loose.

Pedal: Stanton used a DW double pedal, playing the 26" kick with his right foot on the second pedal.

Sticks: Vic Firth Sheila E model

Tuning & Approach: Stanton adopts a jazz tuning with snug heads, except on the pandeiro and the Acrolite. No muffling and a light touch adds up to sustaining rimshots and bright, full toms.

Microphones: Kick (18"): Sennheiser 421. Kick (26"): AKG C12A, with an FET 47 as a

medium-distance kick mic'. Snare: Shure SM57 on top with a Sennheiser 441 on the bottom, out of phase. Toms: Sennheiser 421s. Overheads: Shure stereo SM 69. Royer ribbon mic's were employed as "drummer's ear-level ambiance mic's". Pandeiro: miked from bottom with a Sennheiser 451. Room/ambient mic's: several AKG C12As.

T. Bruce Wittet

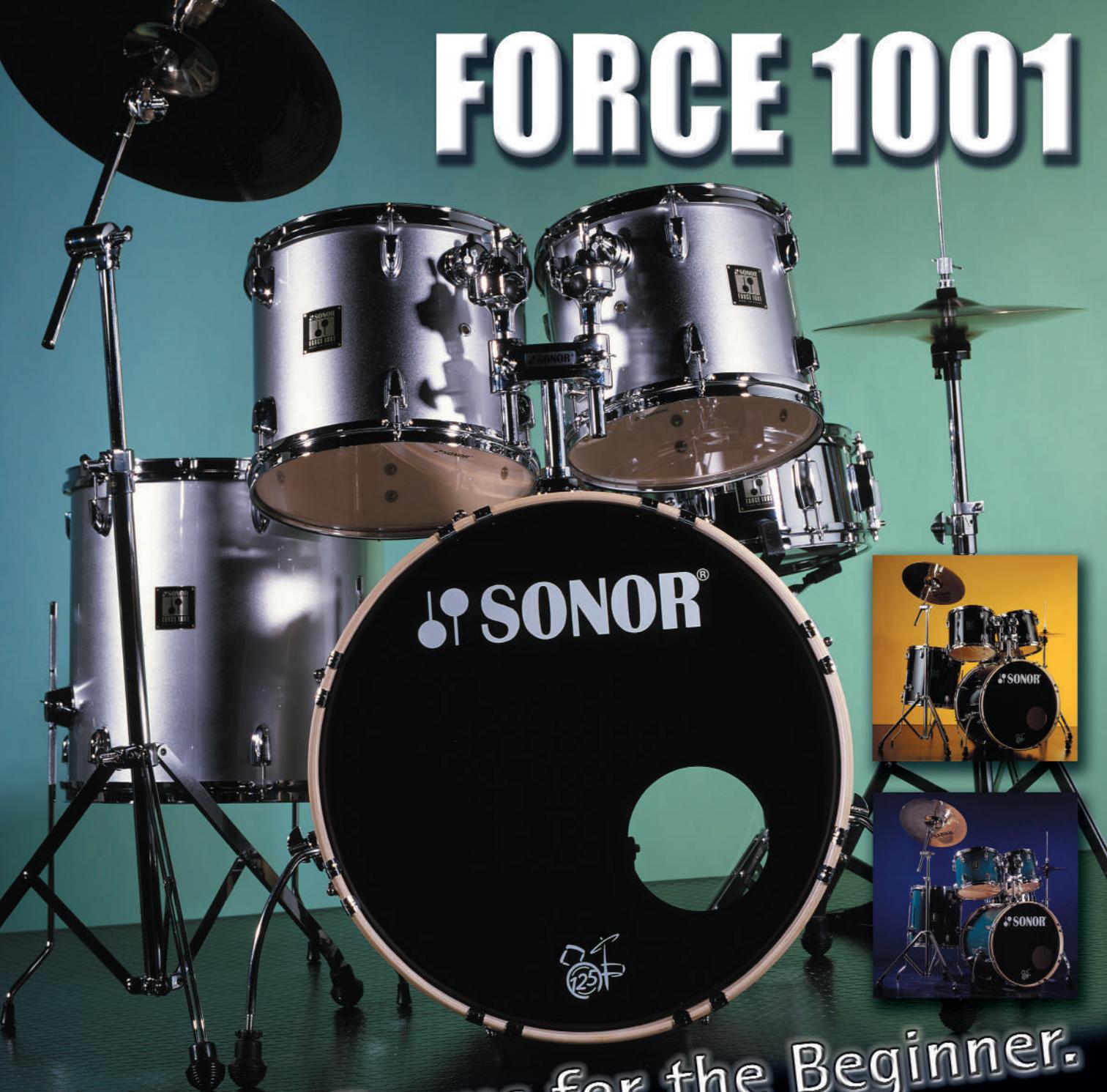


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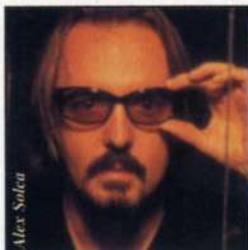
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