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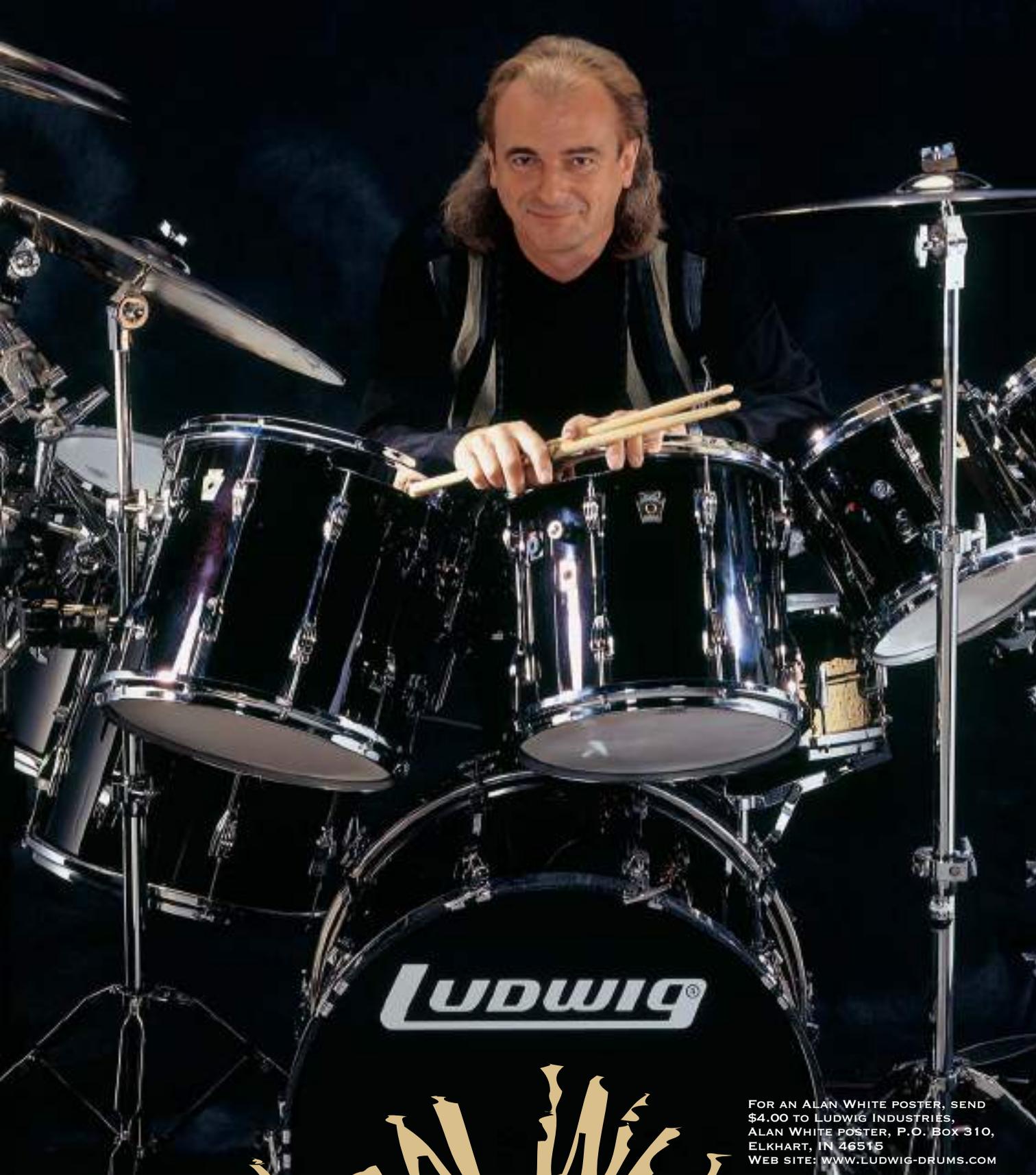
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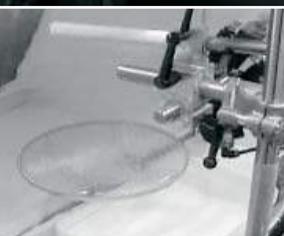
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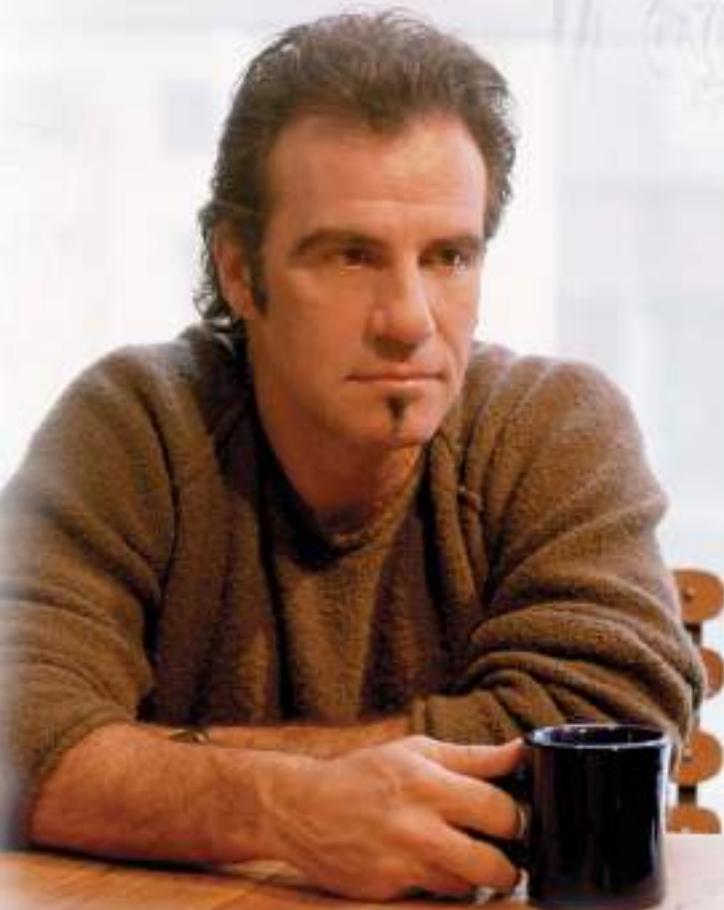
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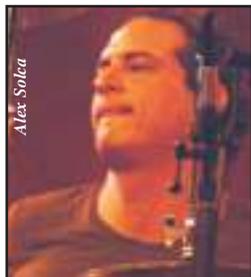
PAUL MCCARTNEY'S ABE LABORIEL JR.

One of drumming's hottest stars of the studio *and* stage, Abe Laboriel Jr. seems to be everywhere these days—Paul McCartney, Vanessa Carlton, Sting.... One good listen, and you'll know why.

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As good a tutorial as *Funkifying The Clave* is, it gives little indication of how powerful a drummer its author is. A killer new album with the equally gifted Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez gives us ample reason to pick this guy's brain.
by Ken Micallef



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When John Coltrane asks a drummer to join his band—with Elvin Jones—it should come as no surprise when he's soon acknowledged as a player of enormous talent and influence. Freedom never sounded so good.
by Bob Moses



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Before he joined one of the blazingest progressive bands ever, dynamic Yes stick man Alan White worked with British rock's royalty. *MD* tracks music history, album by album.
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Lionel Hampton may have been known primarily as a vibes master, but with his passing, the fraternity of drummers has lost one of its own. *MD* remembers the beloved "Hamp."

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The Teacher/Player Myth

I'm sure we've all heard the old saying, "Those who can, *do*; those who can't, *teach*." It's a phrase that's been tossed around for years and applied to many types of artists, not only musicians. However, within the drumming community, I honestly feel it's a myth that should be put to rest. Consider the following list of names:

Joe Morello, Ed Shaughnessy, Jim Chapin, Gary Chaffee, Alan Dawson, Sonny Igoe, Billy Gladstone, Gary Chester, Freddie Gruber, Cozy Cole, Max Roach, Don Lamond, Philly Joe Jones, Ed Thigpen, Bob Moses, Peter Erskine, Ed Blackwell, Tommy Igoe, Elvin Jones, and Tony Williams. Though the list could easily be expanded, I think it's sufficient enough to make the point. Among the names above are drummers who either *now* teach part- or full-time, or who *have* taught at some point during their illustrious careers. I think it's obvious that each of these individuals has also certainly made significant contributions to our artform as *players*.

Sure, it's true that not every great player will be successful in the teaching field. Many outstanding performers don't have the time, the patience, or the organizational skills required of those dedicated to the teaching profession. Others simply find it too difficult to put what they do into words and examples, and impart that information on to students. But many *can* and *do* handle both tasks equally well, as evidenced by the list of gentlemen above.

Don't ever assume that just because a musician has established an excellent reputation as a teacher, he or she couldn't make the grade as a player. Nonsense. Many years ago I had the privilege of studying with teaching masters Sonny Igoe, Ed Shaughnessy, and the inimitable Alan Dawson at Berklee. Each has been well-recognized both as a great teacher *and* as a player.

On the other hand, in your quest for a qualified teacher, don't be led to believe that a top-flight player might not be an equally fine teacher. Tony Williams, one of the greatest drummers who ever lived, could function in both capacities. The late Gary Chester, probably one of the most recorded drummers in the history of popular music, was also greatly respected as one of our most knowledgeable and inspirational teachers.

In our little corner of the world, "Those who can, *do*; those who can't, *teach*," doesn't cut it. In no way does it equate with the evidence we've seen and heard over the years.

MODERN DRUMMER

Volume 27, Number 1

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

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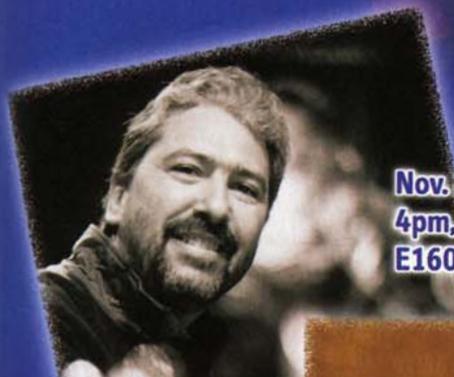
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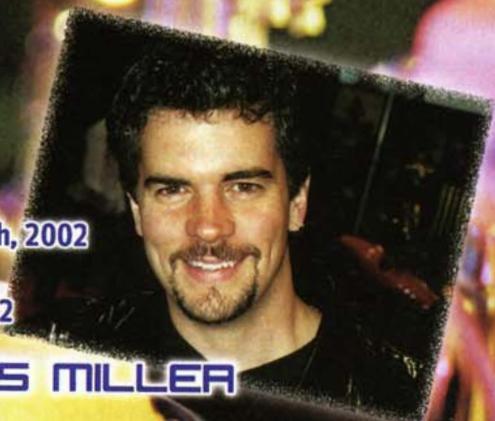
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MIKE BORDIN



I really appreciated your October cover story on Mike Bordin. His career seems to have followed the path most of us dream about: Local band works hard, eventually makes good, and enjoys chart success. Drummer then evolves musically and professionally, gets some even more high-profile gigs, and convinces the

MD FESTIVAL REPORT ERROR

My report on *MD's* Festival Weekend 2002 appeared in the October issue. In the heat of the action—and, believe me, it was a hot show—there was a slip of the pen, attributing the studio drumming on the song “Josie” to Festival closer Rick Marotta. To be sure, the way Steely Dan worked, it’s quite possible that Rick played takes of “Josie.” However, the version that made the album features drumming by Jim Keltner. Rick played on “Peg.” Apologies to both of these fine players for confusing their roles on two popular songs that are must-learns for any aspiring groove drummer.

While we’re at it, on those two tracks, listen to the two totally distinct ways of approaching the hi-hat. One is a relentless ostinato, the other is more varied and broken up. Both are equally nimble.

T. Bruce Wittet
Gloucester, Ontario, Canada

music world of his value as an individual performer and as a major contributor to any act. And he stays a fairly normal, down-to-earth guy through it all.

As far as I’m concerned, we should all “be like Mike.”

Frank Alonzo
San Antonio, TX

KENNETH SCHALK

Over the past few months I have been resolving to write *MD* and inquire as to why I hadn’t read anything about Candiria’s Kenneth Schalk. This morning, as I was making my way to the computer to email you folks, I grabbed the newest issue out of my mailbox, and lo and behold, within the hallowed pages of the world’s finest drum publication was an interview with Kenneth.

Having seen Candiria perform several times, I can attest to Mr. Schalk’s uncanny ability to blend seemingly conflicting genres. His over-the-barline fill phrasing and odd-meter groupings leave the audience practically unable to move. (It’s tough to get around when your jaw is on the floor.)

As primarily a jazz drummer, I find myself listening mostly to jazz-based music. Candiria, however, has found its way into heavy rotation and serves as both an inspiration and an eye-opener to hardcore’s creative (and progressive) potential. Thanks, *MD*, for highlighting such an exciting player. And thanks to Kenneth Schalk for raising the bar for hardcore—and thus for inspiring younger players to raise the bar for themselves.

Benjamin Grotto
Pittsburgh, PA

Putting Kenneth Schalk in your October issue was a great move. Being the backbone of an unstoppable rhythm machine like Candiria is not an easy task, and Ken pulls it off, and then some. No other band out there is so fluently mixing genres. Keep up the Candiria coverage. Their drummer is going down in history.

Adam
Seattle, WA

BUILD YOUR OWN DRUMSET

In Part 3 of the “Building Your Own Drumset” series (October, 2002 *MD*) I stated that the adhesive used most often for attaching plastic wrap to a bare shell is Dap Weldwood Contact Cement. I have since learned that certain drum manufacturers, including Precision Drum Company, no longer recommend that particular product for use with certain types of wrap. There are concerns that the solvents in the contact cement can react negatively with the chemicals in the plastic wrap, causing the wrap to shrink, crack, or wrinkle.

I’d like to clarify my statement by saying that while Weldwood Cement was the adhesive I chose (as recommended to me by the supplier of the wrap), it may not be the best choice for use with whatever wrap you apply to your own drums. It is always best to check with the supplier of your wrap for their recommendations before using any product that may adversely affect the sound, appearance, or longevity of your drums.

Paul Bielewicz
Rochester, NY

Paul Bielewicz’s series of articles on building your own drumset is very informative, and for that I think he should be applauded. I would like to offer a little additional information, based on my experience refinishing kits since the mid-’70s.

I find it best to dry-fit the wrap to the shell before gluing. At a point opposite where the wrap overlaps, secure it to the shell, using either light clamps or tape. Choose one side of the clamp or tape, and start applying the glue from there to the end of that side of the wrap. After gluing the wrap on that side, remove the securing device and continue gluing out to the other side. This will put the seam of the wrap exactly where you want it.

Hank Hooker
Memphis, TN

DON'T SWEAT IT

In response to Charles Woods’ query concerning sweaty hands in your October *It’s Questionable*: I’ve noticed that the more “high-stakes” a gig is, the wetter my hands

TRIO DRUMMING

I thoroughly enjoyed Rick Mattingly's article on trio drumming, which is one of my favorite (and most challenging?) types of drumming. I play professionally in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, including gigging since 1993 with the Joe Alan Jazz Trio. In my never-ending search for musical information (especially about piano/jazz trios) I've come across some inspiring CDs that were not mentioned in the article, most likely due to space constraints. I'd like to share them in the hope that they can be of some help to other drummers who are interested in great trio recordings.



Jim Parsons
Dallas, TX

Ray Brown Trio (with Elvin Jones and Cedar Walton), *Something For Lester*, June '77, OJC 412-2.

Phineas Newborn Jr. (with Elvin Jones and Ray Brown), *Back Home*, Sept. '76, OJC 971-2.

Wynton Kelly (with Philly Joe Jones and Paul Chambers), *Kelly At Midnight*, April '60, VeeJay 006.

Sonny Clark Trio (with Philly Joe Jones and Paul Chambers), *Sonny Clark Trio*, Nov. '57, Blue Note CDP7465472.

Kenny Drew Trio (with Philly Joe Jones and Paul Chambers), *Kenny Drew Trio*, Sept. '56, Riverside-OJC CD 065-2.

Red Garland/Ron Carter/Philly Joe Jones, *Crossings*, Dec. '77, Galaxy-OJC CD 472-2.

Tommy Flanagan Trio (with Art Taylor and George Mraz), *Thelonica*, Nov/Dec '82, Enja CD 4052-2.

Hank Jones Trio (with Ben Riley and George Duvivier), *Bop Redux*, Jan '77, Muse 5444.

Duke Jordan Trio (with Ed Thigpen and Mads Vinding), *Two Loves*, Nov-Dec '73, Steeplechase SCCD 31024.

Ray Brown Trio (with Jeff Hamilton and Gene Harris), *Bam Bam Bam*, Dec '88, Concord CCD 4375.

Michael Wolf Trio (with Tony Williams and Christian McBride), *2 A.M.* (1994) and *Jumpstart* (1996), Cabana Boy 9604 & 9605.

Gonzalo Rubalcaba (with Jack DeJohnette and Charley Haden), *The Blessing*, 1991, Blue Note CDP 7971972.

get. (Five thousand or more people out there...tape rolling...big bucks...etc.) I've made some headway on this with yoga and other relaxation/visualization techniques. But I also went to the sporting goods store and got a pitcher's/bowler's rosin bag, which I keep in my stick bag. I wipe my hands and then grab the bag, after which I'm good for at least one more tune. It's quicker and cheaper than tape and other stick treatments, and it keeps me "in touch" with the stick for a more natural feel.

Richard Cesani
Memphis, TN

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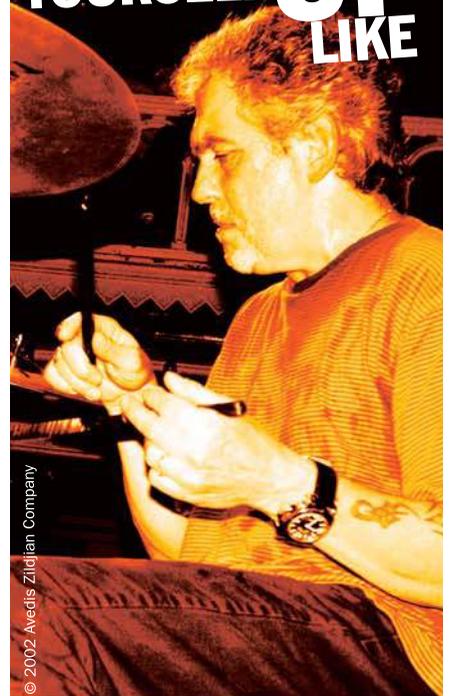


In response to Joshua Parker's review of the Six Drumsets disc *Simmer* [Critique, Sep. '02 MD], I think Mr. Parker is gravely mistaken in his assessment that the disc "lacks direction." *Simmer* is the next

logical step in the evolution of this group. Their first disc, released in 1997, could be considered more of a "concept album." It was

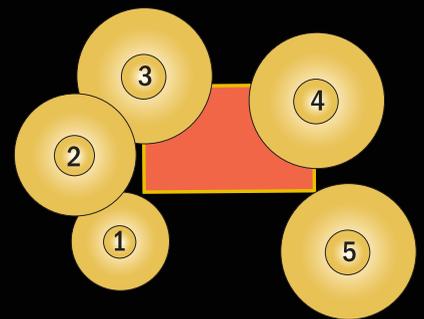
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Readers' Platform

a particular track ("Transition") on that disc that helped to pique Steve Wilkes' interest in stretching the parameters of space, time, and mood in drumset music. Each piece on *Simmer* represents a separate "ambient" musical statement performed on six drumsets. As such, the disc is an in-depth study into a field of research not yet charted in our craft. It could be easy to misconstrue this separatism as a lack of direction.

It is most upsetting to see a drummer (Mr. Parker) miss the point so badly. Steve Wilkes has given the percussion world a tremendous gift by undertaking the daunting task of creating music for six complete drumsets. It would have been better to have *Simmer* reviewed by someone more on the level of understanding...perhaps Terry Bozzio.

Wayne B. Marek
via Internet

In regard to Ken Micallef's review of the recent Weather Report reissues in your September '02 issue: What, exactly, is Ken's definition of the word "sloppy," which he uses to describe Ndugu Chancler's drumming on the *Tale Spinnin'* album? "Sloppy" is definitely the *last* word I'd use to describe Ndugu's performance on "Man In The

Green Shirt," "Badia," or "Freezing Fire." I've played bass for fifteen years, working with many different drummers. To me, the drumming on *Tale Spinnin'* is fantastic—by the standards of its day, or those of *any* day.

And just for the record, Jaco Pastorius only played two tracks on the *Black Market* album: the passionate "Cannonball" and the funky "Barbary Coast." The bulk of the album featured the playing of the vastly underrated but nonetheless stellar Alfonso Johnson.

Jonathan Lee
Atlanta, GA

OOPS!

Our November-issue coverage of the 2002 Summer NAMM show incorrectly stated that Zildjian's new ZXT cymbals replaced their ZBT line. In fact, it is the ZBT-Plus series, not the ZBT, that is being discontinued. We apologize for the error. And the ZXT is a totally new series that does not "replace" any previous line.

How To Reach Us

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Tool's **Danny Carey** On Double Bass Technique

QI saw you play at the 2001 Ozzfest in the UK, and I was enthralled. In particular, some of your double bass parts absolutely blew me away. They were fast, yet so tasteful.

I've been playing with a double pedal for years, but I just can't seem to get the fluidity I want. Does the movement of your feet change depending on the speed at which you're playing? That is, does it change from a full "stamping" movement to a sort of "wobbling" in the ankles for really fast playing? If so, how do you get the force behind the ankle? And how do you develop control over your speed transition?

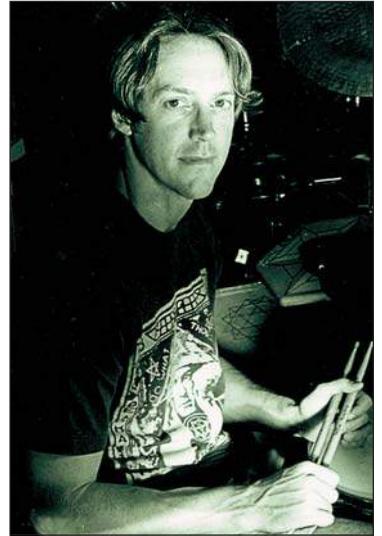
I'd be grateful if you could describe how you developed your speed, and if you could suggest any exercises that you found effective when you were learning.

Chris Curme
UK, via Internet

ADouble bass technique is one of the most difficult skills to develop. I've never felt that it was one of my specialties, but somehow I've obtained results that work within the framework of

Tool's music. As with any technique, the key to development is repetition. So I recommend finding a method that feels comfortable to you and sticking with it at all dynamic levels.

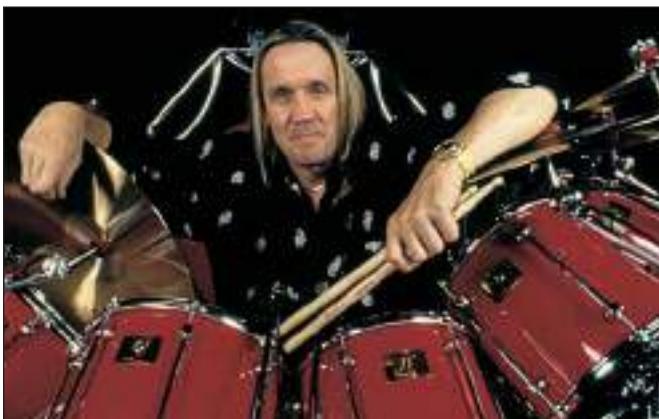
For developing speed specifically, the most important factor is relaxation. This applies to the hands as much as to the feet. The books I found most helpful to work out of in this area have been *New Breed* by Gary Chester and *Four-Way Coordination* by Elliot Fine and Marvin Dahlgren. Good luck, and remember: There's no substitute for hard work.



A Little Of Everything From Iron Maiden's **Nicko McBrain**

QI've enjoyed your playing for many years. I have several questions I'd like to ask. Who are some of your drumming influences? What do you think of the drummers of today? What are some of your favorite tracks that you played? And what is your current setup?

J.C. Hendricks
via Internet



AThanks for your kind words. Like many drummers my age, my first influences were Ringo Starr and Charlie Watts. Any of the early Beatles or Stones albums will give you an idea of what made an impression on me.

Of course, there were the great players from the jazz and swing era, like Gene Krupa, Louie Bellson, Buddy Rich, and Joe Morello. They were all fantastic players who helped shape my style. Some of the early pop and rock drummers, like Sandy

Nelson, Dino Danelli, and Carmine Appice, were great as well.

But unquestionably my two greatest influences were Keith Moon and John Bonham. John for his awesome power and feel (as evident on Led Zeppelin's first two albums), and Keith for his wild and unbelievable chops. When I first heard "My Generation" by The Who, it blew me away.

I think many of today's drummers are very cool. I like Mike Terrana and Mike Mangini, and I think Virgil Donati is a great player with an incredibly fast pair of feet.

Some of my favorite tracks that I played are "Hallowed Be Thy Name," "Number Of The Beast," "Sign Of The Cross," and "Alexander The Great."

I play a Premier Signia series maple kit, with 6", 8", 10", 12", 13", 14", 15", and 16" "square-sized" hanging toms, a 16x18 floor tom, an 18x24 bass drum, and a 5½x14 Genista series birch snare drum. It all lives on a Tom Falicon custom drum rack. I use a DW hi-hat, as well as a DW 5000 Turbo bass drum pedal with a specially adapted chain cam with an extra adjustment hole.

My cymbals are Paistes. Most of them are from the Dimensions series, except those indicated in parentheses below. Working from left to right, they are: (14" Sound Edge hi-hats), 17", 19", 16", and (18" Rude) Power crashes, a 13" heavy bell on top of the bass drum, a 22" Power Bell ride, (17" Rude), 20" medium, and (24" 2002) crashes, and a 22" Power China. I also use a 40" symphonic gong behind the kit.

I use ShawStix drumsticks custom-made in England. My Remo drumheads include coated Ambassadors on the tops and Ebony Ambassadors on the bottoms of the toms, and a FiberSkyn 3 PowerStroke 3 batter on the bass drum.

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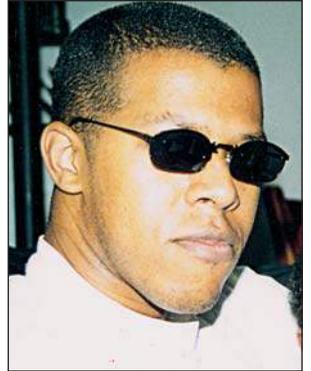


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Des'ree's **Rocky Bryant** And His Crazy Maze Snare

Q Your playing on Des'ree's "Crazy Maze" (from her 1994 album *I Ain't Movin'*) is some of the tastiest drumming I've ever heard. Your snare drum, particularly, sounded amazingly deep and dark. Were you playing with the snares off? And what was that drum?

Roy Flores
Jacksonville, FL



A Thank you for your kind and supportive comments. I believe the snare sound you mention was in part a result of the heavy Evans Hydraulic heads I was using, along with the thickness of the snare drum shell. I was using a Sonor drum from the early 1980s. The combination of those factors produced a very dark sound, even though I did, in fact, have the snares on.

Repeat Bar

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Virgil Donati, June 1999



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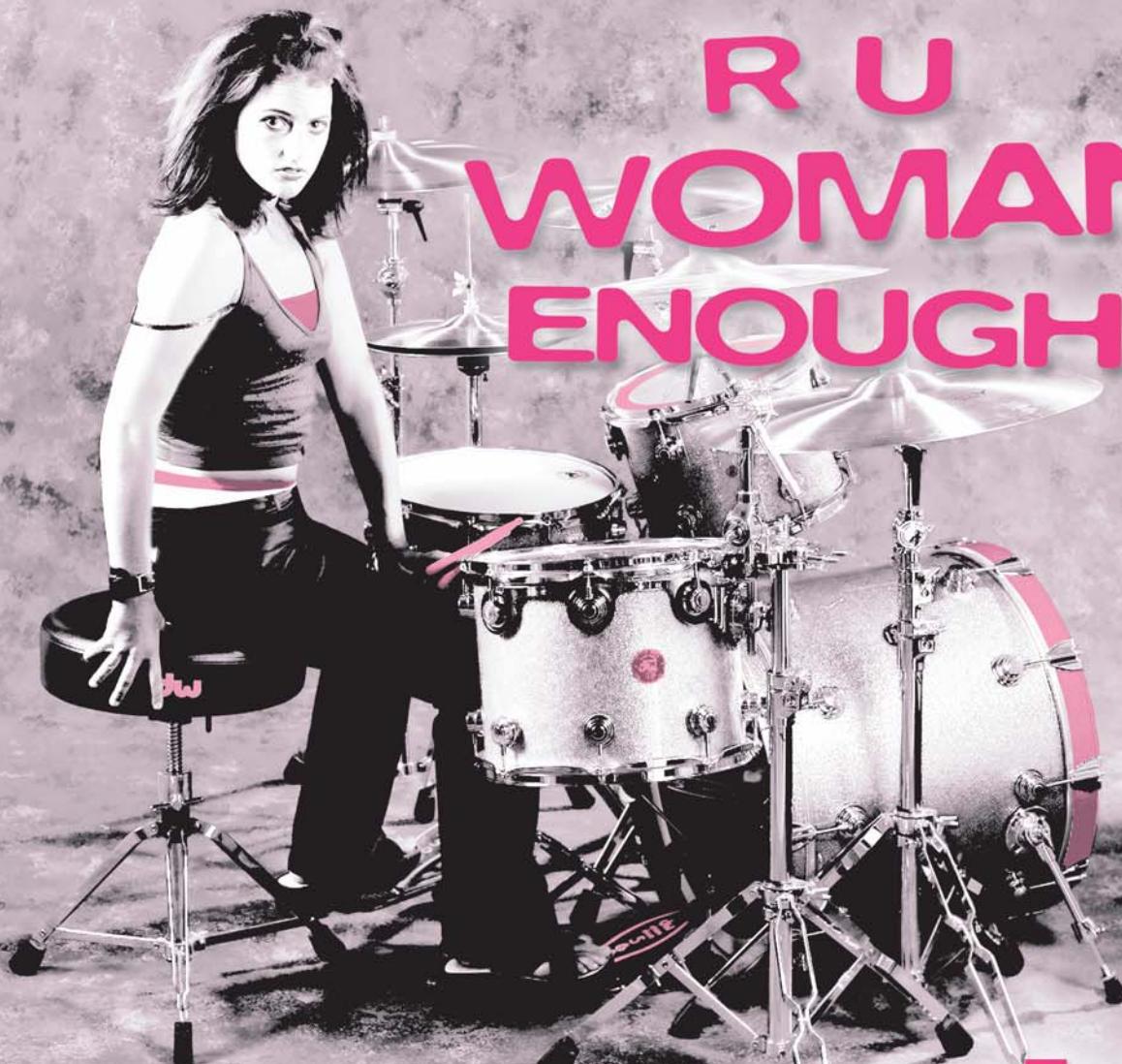
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Zilco Cymbals

Q I have an old set of hi-hat cymbals that are 13" in diameter and very heavy. The stamp on them has a sword and reads "Zilco of Constantinople." Any information would be appreciated.

Stan
via Internet

A Zildjian director of education John King responds, "The 'Zilco' trademark refers to a 'second line' of cymbals made by the Avedis Zildjian Company starting back in 1937. These cymbals were slightly below the quality standard of A Zildjian cymbals at that time. They were offered at prices that were more affordable to con-

sumers who wanted to acquire cast instruments with the Zildjian name but could not justify the cost of our premium models. The same cymbals were distributed by the Leedy Drum Company using the 'Zenjian' trademark, and by Slingerland using the 'Alegian' trademark.

Shortly after World War II, interest in Zilco cymbals waned to the point where they were taken off the market. But the high demand for Zildjian cymbals in the mid-1960s (as a result of the 'British invasion') led to the resurfacing of the Zilco trademark. These cymbals continued to be made available in rather small quantities until the mid-1970s. By then, improve-

ments in our manufacturing processes and the employment of far more stringent quality controls resulted in significantly increased quality and consistency across the board. This, in turn, resulted in fewer cymbals that could be sold as 'seconds.' Since that time, the Zilco name has only been used in conjunction with our line of finger cymbals, in order for Zildjian to maintain the registration of the trademark.

"Considering the time frame in which Zilco cymbals were produced, chances are your 13" heavy cymbals are actually band cymbals. They were produced in abundance during the Second World War. I hope you find this information helpful. We appreciate your interest in Zildjian instruments."

Pearl Vari-Pitch

Q I have a 1978 Pearl Vari-Pitch drumset. To describe it, the drums look like RotoToms with shells. It's a chrome-covered model. I hope you can give me some background information on it.

Brady Skjervem
via Internet

A Pearl's Gene Okamoto replies, "The Vari-Pitch snare drum and Cannons (toms) featured Remo RotoToms mated to phenolic (synthetic) shells. They were invented by Randy May (the same gentleman known for his May Miking System, marching carriers, and Stadium Hardware). Vari-Pitch kits were available from 1978 to 1981. They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Here are some scans that I hope will answer most of your questions."



Tibetan Tom-Tom

Q I live overseas, and I recently ran across what an antique shop owner said was a Tibetan drum. It has a red-painted wood shell, with calfskin heads that are also painted with designs. The head diameter is 15"-16", and the shell is approximately 12" deep. The shopkeeper says the drum is over a hundred years old, and he's asking \$400 for it. Can you provide any details on such a drum, and let me know if the price is justified?

Paul Kerr
Taegu, South Korea

A Our answer comes from John Aldridge, editor/publisher of *Not So Modern Drummer* magazine (www.notso-moderndrummer.com). "Your description fits to a 'T' the traditional drums made by cottage craftsmen in China during the early part of the 20th Century. Although most of the ones imported into the US in the 1920s and '30s were smaller than the one you describe, there were a significant number of drums in that size imported by Ludwig, Leedy, and Slingerland to be sold through their retail outlets.

"These drums were the immediate predecessors to modern 'rack' toms, which first appeared around 1935. \$400 may be a little high for the drum in question. If it's what I think it is, \$200-\$250 would be a

Setting Up A Pedal Snare Drum

Q After reading the short write-up on Grant Collins in the October 2002 issue, I've decided to expand the tonal range of my kit with a pedal-operated snare drum. I already have an extra 5½x14 snare and a Tama Iron Cobra double pedal, but I'm not sure how to go about setting them up.

I have two main questions. First, how would I go about bracing the drum upright? Are there special legs or brackets available for this purpose? Second, how can I attach the pedal securely to the rim of the drum? Obviously the rim of a snare is significantly smaller than the rim of a kick drum, so I'm guessing an addition to the rim is needed.

Andrew Dickman
via Internet

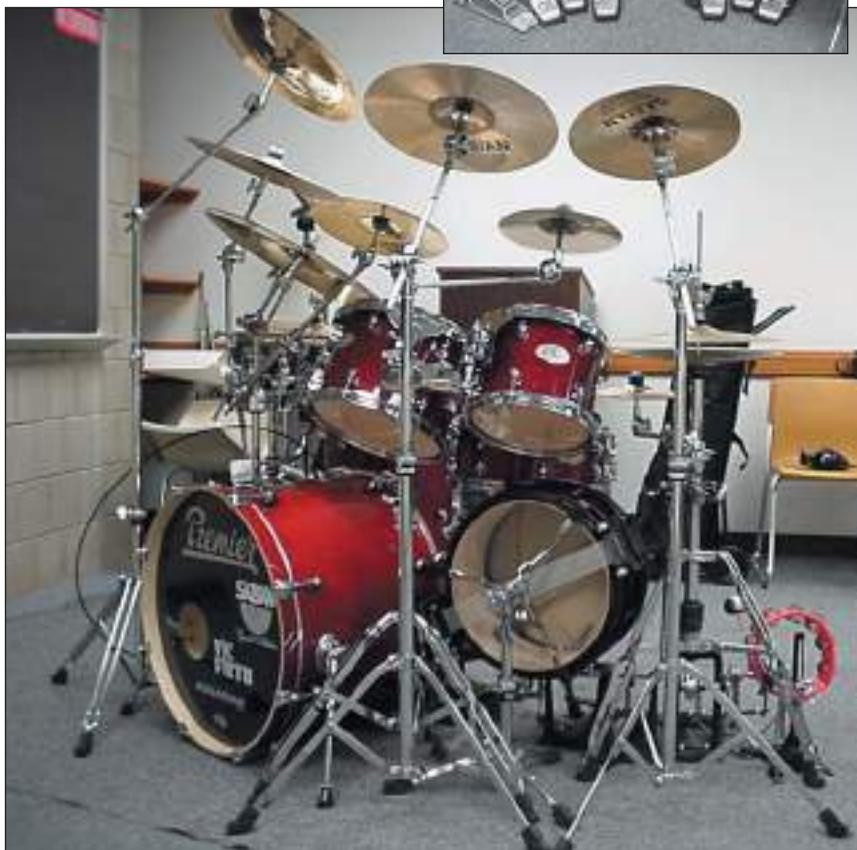
A Drummer/educator Neil Garthly (owner of the Academy Of Drums in Toms River, New Jersey, www.academyofdrums.com) uses just the sort of setup you describe. We asked him to explain how he created that setup.

"To configure the drum upright," says Neil, "I found that mounting it on a heavy-duty snare stand and turning the basket at a 90° angle

worked best. The basket is strong enough to hold the snare, and the stand allows me to adjust the height of the drum.

"As far as the problem of attaching the pedal to the drum rim goes, I suggest using a pedal with a plate on the bottom. This will help with the stability of the pedal, and at the same time allow you to play it without attaching it to the drum. Put hook-&-loop fastener strips (using the 'hook' side) on the bottom of the plate to stop the pedal from sliding.

"I use a Premier pipe band drum for an added effect. I also use a left Pearl Eliminator double pedal on the snare. I had to customize the center rod to make it fit in between my bass drum double pedal. I've provided some pictures of my setup so you can get a better idea of how it looks. The sound textures that can be created are out of this world!"



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Black Beauty Shell Codes

QI recently purchased a new Ludwig Black Beauty snare drum. Upon closer inspection I found a machine stamp with the letters “BR” on the shell, just under the snare strainer. Can you tell me what these letters stand for?

Chris Gordon
Chattanooga, TN

A Current Ludwig Black Beauties feature shells made of brass and then plated in black antique nickel. The “BR” stamp indicates the brass shell. In the 1970s and '80s Black Beauties were made of bronze. These shells were marked “B” or “BZ.”

The Vistalite Situation

QI grew up playing Ludwig drums—especially their Vistalite kits. When they were discontinued, I thought I'd never again find a kit like mine (which I sold after ten years in exchange for a maple Ludwig kit). My original kit was a

blue, clear, and amber Vistalite, with a 26" bass drum, 11", 16", and 18" toms, and a 5" snare.

When I heard that Ludwig was bringing the Vistas back a year or so ago, I was overjoyed. But I was disappointed to learn that they are only offering limited sizes, and only in clear. I'd like to know if Ludwig will accept custom orders, including colors.

J.C.H.
via Internet

A Ludwig marketing manager Jim Catalano responds, “We appreciate your dedication to Ludwig drums, and we're sorry that our limited edition of Vistalite drums has been less than you expected. We are not offering custom orders at this time.

“The Vistalite Series was discontinued in 1980 because the cost of making the shells from a petroleum base priced the drums out of the market. In the mid to late 1990s, however, the Internet was crowded with messages from Ludwig loyalists wishing that Vistalite would return.



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Vintage dealers were having a field day selling good-condition Vistalites, and I received hundreds of emails saying that if Ludwig only brought back Vistalite, we would sell millions.

"In 2000 we investigated what it would take to bring back Vistalite. We no longer had our original manufacturing equipment. Besides that, the original Ludwig Vistalite had a poor reputation for durability. We knew that if we *did* reintroduce Vistalites, the quality would have to be much better.

"We contacted other manufacturers of acrylic drums, like Fibes and Zickos, to see if we could buy raw shells from them. Unfortunately, our production requirements were too large for them to handle and still make drums themselves. Ultimately, we found a supplier in another industry that could manufacture high-quality shells for us.

"Now came the hard part. We needed several drum sizes (diameters & depths) for bass drums, rack and floor toms, and snares. We also initially sought shells in several colors, including blue, amber, and red. The new supplier could produce all these, but a fairly sizeable minimum order of each size drum in each color was required. And colored shells would cost about 50% more than clear shells.

"The minimum orders required by the supplier for every size we needed in every color totaled more than our estimated market potential. We had to limit our choices in order to make the project cost-effective. Remember, we had no idea how well the market would take to the new Vistalites. They're expensive drums targeted at the pro market, which is a lot smaller than most people think. So we experimented by introducing the original Ludwig 'Big Beat' outfit in clear Vistalite. We decided that if it showed significant market appeal, we would explore expanding to other sizes, colors, and treatments of the Plexiglas.

"At the moment, the jury is still out. *Modern Drummer* did a nice review of the outfit, and we have sold a reasonable quantity. But the market has not yet proven that the line can or should be expanded to multiple sizes and colors."



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Def Leppard's

Rick Allen

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Rick Allen has been playing drums all his life, and nothing was going to stop him from doing what he loves to do. *Nothing*. By now we all know the story of Rick's terrible car accident on December 31, 1984, which resulted in the drummer losing his left arm when he was twenty-one. One could only imagine the horror.

Amazingly, within a few short months after his accident, Rick began a whole new approach to playing, with the help of family, friends, and a special electronic kit made for him by Simmons.

"The way that I play is pretty alternative," Rick says. "I can't really consult with the book of one-arm drummers. What I do is develop, or adapt, certain exercise routines to the way that I do it. It's like they said in the *Stick Control* book: You can try different combinations, and that's what I do. Just because it's a left-hand part in the book doesn't mean I can't play it with a different limb, like my right foot. I like to challenge myself."

With determination and dedication, within two years of the accident Rick was back out playing live shows with the band. Def Leppard returned even bigger than before, producing hit after hit and going on to sell well over forty-five million records. Their record-breaking album, *Hysteria*, sold

over seventeen million records alone, becoming the thirty-ninth best-selling album of all time. (Check out the DVD *Classic Albums—Def Leppard's Hysteria* for more on the album.)

Def Leppard recently released its tenth studio record, simply titled *X*. "We took a different approach with this record," Rick explains. "We decided it would be good to collaborate on certain songs with different songwriters and producers." *X* contains the same radio-friendly appeal that you'd expect from the hard-working band. In fact, as we speak, Rick, Joe Elliott, Rick Savage, Phil Collen, and Vivian Campbell are preparing for yet another tour. According to Rick, "We're planning on touring Japan, England, and then the States."

And now, even after twenty-five years, does Rick still look forward to performing? "You know, I realize how blessed I am, *especially* being able to play drums. It really charges up the spirit. It's a great way to transfer that energy to people—to be able to play drums and really enjoy it. It's *very* powerful."

Billy Amendola





Paul La Rosa

Adema's Kris Kohls Serious Road Chops

A musical education can be had from a variety of sources. You could rent how-to instructional videos for just about every style and genre you're trying to master. You could sit for hours with headphones and over-analyze every fill and lick from your favorite drummer's performances. You could pony up the bucks and sign up for private lessons. Or you could attempt to do what Kris Kohls from Adema has done—hit the road for thirteen months straight with some of hard rock's finest.

Let's preface all this by mentioning the fact that the thirty-year-old Kohls has been playing drums for over twenty years (but has never received any formal percussion instruction). Yet, even two decades of sweating it out in the garage, on stage, and in the studio couldn't compare to the crash course he's received in the past year, since his band's self-titled Arista debut hit the streets.

According to Kohls, it's been one mighty lesson in building stamina, being efficient with his energy, and simply putting some serious brains behind Adema's show.

"I think my drumming has changed drastically," Kohls reports. "As far as technique,

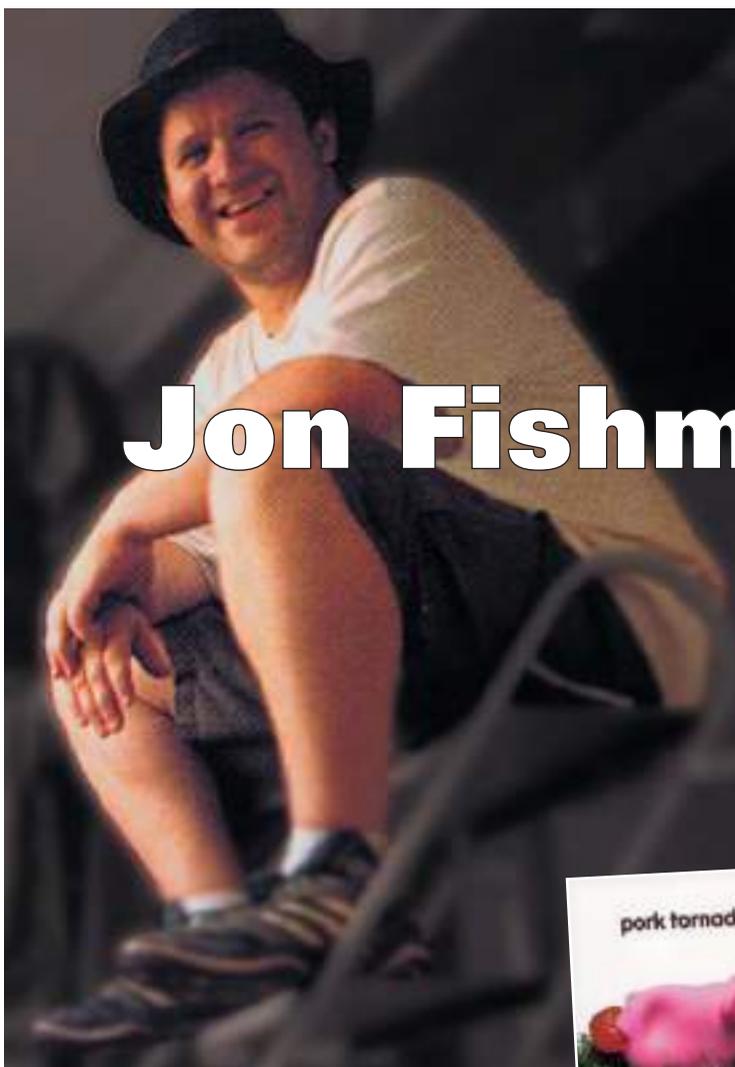
I'm pretty much a basher. Instead of paradiddle-diddles and stuff like that, I just hit 'em as hard as I can. But over the last year, I've definitely developed a lot more technique as far as being controlled, pacing myself, and not gripping the sticks so tight—little things you learn from playing so much."

Still, Kohls' newfound theories don't mean he's toned down his live show. "I like guys like Tommy Lee and Chad Smith," he admits, "drummers who get their elbows up in the air and scream and spit, with blood flying off their hands. I've always been into the physical aspect of drumming, and I've always been a pretty aggressive player."

Kohls brings his stage approach with him into the studio, slamming hard, all the while playing to a click and utilizing electronics to trigger bits and loops through V-Drums. Kohls actually

played a full V-Drum setup in his previous techno/metal gig, Videodrone. But entering Adema, Kohls says, he "just wanted to get back to real drums."

Waleed Rashidi



Jon Fishman Pork Evolution

"If someone had told me all the things that would happen in my life in 2001, I wouldn't have believed them," says Jon Fishman, the famed Phish stickman. After the band's 1999 New Year's concert, where tens of thousands of fans spent the weekend listening to the band play for hours at a time, then their summer and fall 2000 tours, Jon and his partners in improv decided to take a break. They had been touring and recording for seventeen years and "found it difficult to top themselves," according to the drummer. The hiatus has opened up time for him to play with two bands that pull his playing in two directions.

The Jazz Mandolin Project gave Jon the opportunity to build his jazz chops. "This band magnifies the open improvisation of Phish," the drummer says. "I had to use most everything in my bag of tricks. Soloing and filling space is more important with these guys than with Phish."

Jon is also the "defacto leader" of Pork Tornado, a funk and R&B band that recently released its first CD (Ryko). According to Jon, "In contrast to JMP, with Pork Tornado, creating space is the priority. Besides, I feel that playing a straight backbeat groove is just as valid as any other style. It's harder than it looks." To make his point, Jon says, "Out of all the drummers who must have auditioned for James Brown, there's a good reason why Clyde Stubblefield got the job. If you want to know how it's supposed to be done, he's the man to listen to."

Two of the biggest changes of 2001 were the passing of Jon's mother and his starting a family of his own. "To not take this time to enjoy my family and build a stable home life would be foolish," he says. The drummer says he wants his family and home to be more than just a pit stop between tours. "I'm using the studio I built in my house as a scratch pad for my writing. Maybe I'll do a solo album some day. If I do that, I want to play everything, making it a true solo recording."

It looks like it may take a while before we see a solo effort from Jon. His schedule is heating up, as tour dates for the re-formed Phish have recently begun.

Doug Pomeroy



Counting Crows'

Ben Mize

Playing So Sweet



Most rock drummers hit hard and play loud. But Counting Crows drummer Ben Mize prefers a different approach. "I love to play quietly, with brushes," he explains. "It seems to be more musical for me. I enjoy the ability to be understated in a song."

As examples, Mize refers to "Goodnight LA," a song on the band's latest album. Discussing the new record, Mize points to the title track. "I have to give our keyboard player, Charles Gillingham, credit for having the concept on that song. The piano is like The E Street Band, but the drums are more like The Replacements—more straight-ahead—and that gives the song more edge."

Mize's grasp of the subtle elements of rock drumming serve him well. "In this band, there is an emphasis on listening," he insists. "With seven people in the group, you must be in tune and know where the others are. I can't just hit a cymbal any time; I need to be more conscious of where everyone else is. It's a big team, and there's a lot to listen to."

"A producer once told me he likes that I'm aware of everything that is going on, and what every instrument is doing," Ben continues. "But sometimes that can be a shortcoming. Sometimes the drummer needs to just play the track, lead the song, and be more bombastic."

Mize believes that another one of his strengths is his ability to give and offer feedback with other members of the band. He says that Counting Crows, more than any other band he's played with, spends significant time talking about the music. "The ability to take criticism comes from self-confidence," he says. "Don't take it personally when someone has suggestions and ideas. Growth will come from that."

Along with his continued enthusiasm for Counting Crows' music and longevity, Ben also takes great pride in his work with Nuci's Space, an organization that serves musicians in his hometown of Athens, Georgia. "It's a musician's resource center, a non-profit practice facility," he says. "All of the proceeds go to providing counseling for young musicians. And we try to counter the stigma some people have about seeking treatment for mental illness."

Harriet Schwartz

Steve Houghton's Fascinating Rhythm Redux

Many Musicians Institute alumni know Steve Houghton as one of the most passionate and challenging instructors in P.I.T.'s history. But Steve is also an accomplished player, earning performing and recording credits with Woody Herman, Billy Childs, Freddie Hubbard, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Diana Krall, Scott Henderson, Gary Burton, and Arturo Sandoval. MD snagged Steve between teaching gigs at UCLA's Mancini Institute, the University of Indiana (where he is an associate professor), and a two-week percussion camp in Taiwan to discuss a recent project that is especially near to his heart.

One reason Steve is so respected as a teacher is that he remains an insatiable student of drumming, always seeking new challenges and greater understanding of the craft. An admirer of West Coast jazz pioneer Shelly Manne, Houghton searched for the arrangements on one of his favorite albums, *Manne—That's Gershwin!* Penned by none other than John Williams, composer of themes to such movies as *Star Wars* and *E.T.*, the charts eluded Steve for over a year. But one day while Steve was helping Flip Manne, Shelly's widow, distribute a biography on her husband to jazz schools, she not only presented the charts, but endorsed Steve's proposal to re-record the album.

To navigate the dense, highly textured arrangements, Houghton employed his own top-flight quintet, rounded out by the Two O'Clock Lab Band from his alma mater, the University of North Texas. And with characteristic drive, he produced and recorded *The Manne We Love: Gershwin Revisited* in less than a year.

"It was Shelly's versatility that really amazed me," Steve explains. "He did

studio work, played percussion, and composed; he could play small group and big band. I really liked his jazz playing, especially his work with Bill Evans. It was so musical, and it was always a bit understated. Yet it had a cool humor."

Making a tribute album always poses the questions What to copy and What to improvise. For Steve, *Gershwin Revisited* was no exception. "Maybe this isn't a great analogy," he observes, "but if you were to play 'Love For Sale' on a Buddy Rich tribute and you didn't include those classic two-bar breaks, you'd sound like an idiot. There were certain things Shelly did in this material that were so perfect, I wanted to honor his interpretation. Some of the playfulness isn't verbatim, but I tried to capture the character of his playing."

In addition to recording *Gershwin Revisited*, Houghton was inspired to establish a permanent Shelly Manne scholarship at UNT that would help keep the drummer's memory and legacy alive through future generations of music students. Proceeds from sales of the album, as well as donations from Zildjian, Remo, and numerous individuals, are endowing the scholarship.

About to release a new CD, *Live At The Senator*, and planning a recording project with Billy Childs' Chamber Jazz Band, Houghton reflects on *The Manne We Love* (available at www.houghtonmusic.com) and the scholarship project fondly. "It was a way for me to give something back to UNT, a school that did a lot for me," he says. "But mostly I wanted to pay tribute to Shelly and to thank Flip for allowing me and others to enjoy this great music."

Rich Watson





Rob Mazzella

Louie Appel Havin' A Party With The Jukes

Feel-good party music is what Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes have *always* been about. And for the past two years, Louie Appel has been a very big part of bringing that feel-good groove to audiences around the world. "The gig's a lot of fun," Appel says. "Plus these guys are great. It's been a cool gig. Last year we toured Europe opening for Bon Jovi, and we're going back again this year. And Johnny amazes me; he's been doing this since 1974."

Recently the revised Jukes recorded the CD *Going To Jukesville*. "This new recording was very old-school, very traditional," Louie explains. "We cut all the tracks live with the rhythm section, without a click track, with Johnny right there in the middle singing. The horns were overdubbed later. We recorded all the songs in about a week and a half."

When Louie's not touring with Southside Johnny, you can find him recording and playing with The Demolition String Band. "Their CD, *Pulling Up Atlantis*, was a little different for me. It's a rock-n-blue-grass record."

It seems things are falling nicely into place for Louie, and deservedly so. Besides touring and recording with The Jukes and The Demolition String Band, you can catch him in the new Willie Nelson video, "Maria (Shut Up And Kiss Me)," with Matchbox Twenty's Rob Thomas and *The Royal Tannenbaums'* Luke Wilson. Recently Louie recorded a Christmas instrumental CD, *For Christ's Sake*, by artist Jon Graboff, which also features Smithereens drummer Dennis Diken. "Dennis and I played live drums and percussion. It was a rare experience. We both had a great time."

For more about Louie, check out his Web site: www.louieappel.com.

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NEWS

Mark Schulman is on another world tour with Cher. Mark's also producing new artists Stone Taylor, Joel Ceballos, and rapper KL-Kid Lyrical. Schulman still teaches at LAMA when he's not traveling, and he's doing clinics on days off from touring.

Liberty DeVitto is on tour with Billy Joel.

Joel Rosenblatt is on the road with Spyro Gyra.

Jota Morelli is on tour with Al Jarreau.

Percussionist **Cyro Baptista** is working with Sting.

Brady Blade is on drums and percussion on the Indigo Girls' latest, *Become You*. He's also on tour with the duo.

Matt Chamberlain is on Tori Amos's latest release, *Scarlet's Walk*.

K i r k Covington is on Scott Henderson's *Well To The Bone*.



Ed Eblen is on a Middle East USO tour with Ashley Jay.

Andre Ceccarelli is on DeeDee Bridgewater's *This Is New*.



David Northrup is currently on tour with Travis Tritt and can be seen on Tritt's new DVD. In addition, David recently recorded tracks for Neville Brothers guitarist Shane Theriot's new CD, *The Grease Factor*, which features drummers **Johnny Vidacovich**, **Russell Batiste**, **Jeff Sipe**, and **Adam Nitti**.

Blair Cunningham, former drummer with Paul McCartney, was one of the featured players at the Estrel Hotel & Convention Centre Beatles Festival, which was recently held in Berlin.

John Blackwell is touring with Prince.

Johnny Dee is on the new Doro record, *Fight*. The band is currently in the midst of a European/North American tour.

Mike Portnoy is on the debut album from a new project called OSI. The album is called *Orchestra Of Strategic Influence*.



John Riley is on several recent recordings, including Bob Mintzer's Grammy-winning CD *Homage To Basie*, The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra's *Can I Persuade You?*, Hubert Nuss's *The Underwater Poet*, and music for the upcoming season of *Sex In The City*.

Pat Petrillo is currently touring with singer Gloria Gaynor in support of her new release, *I Wish You Love*. Pat's new video, *Complete Drum Workout*, as well as his book/CD package *Complete Workout Workbook*, has recently been released.

Terry Bozzio is on *Nine Short Films*, a collaboration with Billy Sheehan. Terry also sings on the album.

Andy Newmark and **D.J. Fontana** are on Ron Wood's *Not For Beginners*.

Nasheet Waits is on Andrew Hill's *Beautiful Day*.

Walfredo Reyes Jr. recently did shows in Holland with Chaka Khan, Shaggy, and Elvis Crespo. He also just wrapped up a Mapex drum clinic tour that covered Mexico, Santo Domingo, Peru, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Indonesia. And check out Wally's drumming and percussion craziness on the movie *Spy Kids 2*.



Bud Gaugh from Long Beach Dub All Stars is on Eyes Adrift's self-titled debut. The band also features Krist Novoselic of Nirvana and Curt Kirkwood of The Meat Puppets.

Drummer **Vince Cherico** (Ray Barretto) and percussionist **Frank Valdes** (Machito Orchestra) are on *Just For Tonight* by The Dalton Gang.

Drummer **Desi Jones** and percussionist **Bobby Thomas Jr.** are on Monty Alexander's *My America*.

Vincent Davis and **Gerald Cleaver** are on Roscoe Mitchell & The Note Factory's *Song For My Sister*.

Andy Duncan, **Ged Lynch**, **Chris Sharrock**, **Ashley Soan**, and **Gary Novak** are on the new BBMAK CD, *Into Your Head*.

Congratulations to Moon Zappa and Matchbox Twenty's **Paul Doucette** on their recent wedding.

Drummer **Ken Schalk** and members of Candiria escaped life-threatening injury after their tour van was rear-ended in New York State.

Ween drummer **Claude Coleman** is recovering from severe injuries to his pelvis and spine from a recent car crash. Benefit concerts are being put together to help the uninsured Claude and his wife Ila through this tragic time. Donations or get-well cards can be sent to: Create!, 138 Court Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. (Please make any checks payable to Create!)

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Gene Krupa was born on January 15, 1909.

Cozy Cole passed away on January 29, 1981.

In January of 1972, **Andy Newmark** replaced **Greg Errico** in Sly & The Family Stone.

Multi-instrumentalist **Stevie Wonder** laid down the groove for his number-1 hit, "Superstition," the week of January 27, 1973.

Drummer's Collective was founded in January of 1977.

In January of 1984, **Carmine Appice** began a US tour with Ozzy Osbourne.

On January 12, 1993, the original members of Cream—Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce, and **Ginger Baker**—reunited in Los Angeles to perform at the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame induction ceremony.

Happy Birthday!

Max Roach (January 10, 1924)

Jimmy Cobb (January 20, 1929)

Ed Shaughnessy (January 29, 1929)

Grady Tate (January 14, 1932)

Nick Mason (January 27, 1945)

Aynsley Dunbar (January 10, 1946)

Corky Laing (January 28, 1948)

Eddie Bayers (January 28, 1949)

Phil Collins (January 31, 1951)

Paul Wertico (January 5, 1953)

Dave Weckl (January 8, 1960)

Steve Adler (January 22, 1965)

Dave Grohl (January 14, 1969)



Fly



Flying Dragon



The Fury

The new Yamaha Flying Dragon pedals deliver aggressive speed, frightening power and rock solid stability. They are adjustable and adaptable to your style of playing. The Flying Dragon is everything you need and demand in a foot pedal.

The Heat

Born to take punishment, Flying Dragons emerge from the

foundry within the Yamaha motorcycle factory. Built to engine grade tolerances, with a heavily designed aluminum die-cast frame, they will outlive all others.

The Power

Control is power. Secure the pedal to bass drum hoop with a simple one-touch clamp. Set footboard, beater angle and spring tension and lock your settings with confidence. Lean

with the Dragon



with solid felt beaters that will take years of punishment. Collapse the frame and store it in the compact nylon gig bag.

The Drive

Pick your drive. Direct Drive: aluminum die-cast link with aggressive throw. Double Chain Drive: smooth action, converts easily to strap drive (strap included).

Single Chain Drive: quick and solid. Strap Drive: classic feel. Double pedals: fly as fast as singles.

**The Yamaha Flying Dragon.
A new legend is forged.**

YAMAHA
DRUMS

Drums From All Shores

Pacific CX, LX, And FS Series Drumkits

Pacific Drum & Percussion's upgraded CX and LX kits are the first drumsets to be made in the company's new factory in Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico. The drums feature North American rock-maple shells, premium drumheads, new bass drum and tom-tom mounts, bass drum pillows, suspension-style tom mounts, matching wood snare drums, wood bass drum hoops, and numerous other DW-designed upgrades.

CX and LX kits are the only midrange drumkits that include all-maple shells and a heavy-duty 800 Series hardware pack with either single or double bass drum pedals. CX five-piece kits are available in Black Diamond, White Onyx, and Blue Onyx covered finishes, at \$1,299. LX five-piece kits come in high-gloss Crimson Red, Ultra Violet, Laser Blue, and Piano Black lacquers, at \$1,599.

From the other side of the Pacific—mainland China—comes Pacific's entry-level FS Series. The drums feature all-birch shells with a choice of Ebony Satin or Red Satin Matte Lacquer finishes. Kits include an 18x22 bass drum, a 5½x14 snare drum, 8x10, 9x12, and 12x14 suspended toms, a bass drum pillow, premium drumheads, and 700 Series hardware. Retail price is \$989.

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



Pacific CX drumset in Blue Onyx finish



Pacific FS drumset in Red Satin finish

Keeping In Step

New Marching Sticks And Mallets From Pro-Mark

Pro-Mark's new Matt Savage DC-2S is made of American hickory with a modified acorn-shaped wood tip. It's 17" (432 mm) long and 1 1/16" (17.6 mm) in diameter. Savage, a respected writer, teacher, and adjudicator, designed the DC-2S for indoor and outdoor use. The sticks are priced at \$14.50 per pair.

The new Americorps series AM 5 keyboard mallet has a yarn-wrapped head on a birch handle. Designed specifically for playing on the lower register of the marimba, it's slightly heavier than "standard" mallets, and is extra soft for a fuller, richer sound. The mallets are priced at \$45.50 per pair. ☎ (800) 233-5250, 🌐 www.promarkdrumsticks.com.



Wanna Get Really Wired?

Puresound Blasters Snare Wires

Puresound has developed Blasters snare wires for high-volume, high-intensity playing. They feature specially formulated, premium-grade steel-alloy wires on angled, copper-colored end clips. According to Puresound, the clips create greater wire contact across the entire surface of the drumhead for increased response and projection. Blasters are currently available in a 20-strand configuration to fit most 14" snare drums, at \$24.95.

☎ (310) 966-1176, 🌐 www.puresoundpercussion.com.

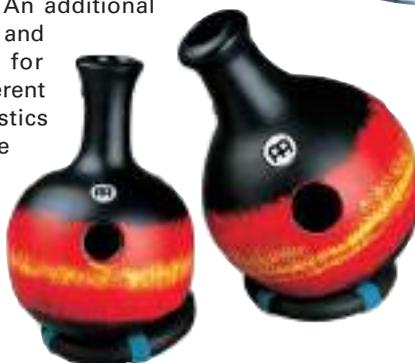
Bang Away On Chrome And Clay...Er, Fiberglass

Meinl Drummer Timbale And Fiberglass Ibos

Meinl's 4x13 Drummer Timbale features a chrome-plated steel shell that provides a characteristic timbale sound. It's claimed to project enough to cut through any band setting. A mounting clamp attaches firmly to common tom holders or L-rods. The drum is priced at \$139.

Meinl ibo (Nigerian for "pottery") drums combine innovation with tradition. Traditional ibos are made of clay, but Meinl's are made from fiberglass to be virtually unbreakable. An additional microphone hole has been built into the shell, and every drum includes a foam-padded base for comfortable placement of the drum. Two different body shapes for different sound characteristics and three finish designs are available. Ibos are priced at \$149 and \$159, depending on model and finish.

☎ (615) 227 5090, 🌐 www.meinl.de.



Birch Beat

DW Craviotto Limited Edition Lake Superior Birch Solid-Shell Snare Drums

Drum Workshop is offering 100 Craviotto Solid-Shell snare drums made from centuries-old birch retrieved from the bottom of Lake Superior. The drums feature a one-piece shell with matching reinforcing hoops, precision sound edges and snare beds, nickel-plated engraved brass counterhoops, vintage-style tube lugs, Remo Renaissance drumheads, and Puresound snare wires. Upon registration, owners will receive a certificate of authenticity signed by Johnny Craviotto, as well as a personalized/serialized badge.

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



The Reference Shelf

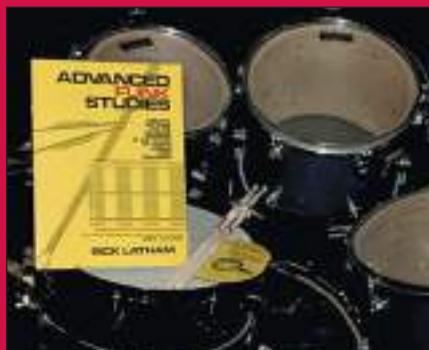
Ignacio Berroa: *A New Way Of Groovin'* (Carl Fischer) Published in the wake of Ignacio's highly



successful *Grooving In Clave*, his latest book combines jazz and rumba clave for a new sound on the drumset. The object is to integrate aspects of the Afro Cuban-inflected rock and funk rhythms

explored in the first work into jazz-style drumming "in a way that enriches the player's musical options." The book/CD package sells for \$24.95. (800) 762-2328, www.carlfischer.com.

Rick Latham: *Advanced Funk Studies 2002 Edition* (Carl Fischer) The 2002 Edition of Rick Latham's *Advanced Funk Studies* features audio CDs instead of the well-known cassette tapes that have been available during the book's twenty-two-year history. Named by *MD* as among "The



25 Greatest Drum Books," *Advanced Funk Studies* was one of the first drum books to feature a recording of all exercises performed by the author. The new CDs will also be available separately for those who already own the book and wish to upgrade from cassettes. (800) 762-2328, www.carlfischer.com.

Steve Smith: *Drumset Technique/History Of The U.S. Beat* (Hudson Music) *Drumset Technique/History Of The U.S. Beat* is a double DVD by Steve Smith that serves as a virtual encyclopedia of drumming techniques and concepts. It features state-of-the-art audio and video, as well as special features, including a camera-switching option, alternate takes, listening and reading lists, and commentary tracks by "professor" Smith.

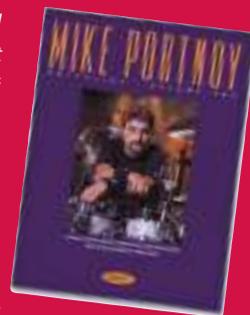


The *Drumset Technique* disc (155 minutes) focuses on technique and feel. Chapters include: Hand Technique, Foot Technique, The Art Of Practice, Exercises, Licks and Phrases, Independence/Interdependence, Implied Metric Modulations, and Four Solo Drum Pieces.

On the *History Of The U.S. Beat* disc (90 minutes), Steve explains the origins and evolution of the "U.S. Beat," demonstrates its connection to contemporary music, and performs

a 70-minute set with Vital Information and an all-star band (while explaining many of the complex rhythmic concepts that he uses in the music). Chapters include Ragtime, Blues, Early New Orleans Jazz, Big Band, Bebop, Gospel, R&B, Rock, Funk, Country, and Jazz/Rock. Retail price is \$49.95. (914) 762-5663, www.hudsonmusic.com.

Mike Portnoy Anthology I Volume One (Hudson Music) *Mike Portnoy Anthology | Volume One* contains note-for-note transcriptions of nine drum performances hand-picked by Dream Theater drummer Mike Portnoy. The book spans the period from DT's 1992 release *Images And Words* through their 1999 opus, *Scenes From A Memory*, and includes Mike's drum performances from compositions such as "Metropolis Part 1," "6:00," and "Hell's Kitchen." Also included in its entirety is a transcription of the 17-minute "When The Water Breaks," from *Liquid Tension Experiment 2*, and every note of the drum part to the 31-minute epic "All Of The Above," from Transatlantic's *SMPTe* album. Additional features include performance notes by Mike, detailed transcription notes for each song, handwritten charts used by Mike in the studio, and drumset diagrams of the kits that Mike used



More Than Looks Alone

Mayer Bros. Drums In Exotic Wood

Mayer Bros. Drums has added curly maple, bird's-eye maple, and cherry to their line of steam-bent, solid-shell snare drums. Sizes range from 4" to 7" depths in 13" and 14" diameters. Features include brass tube lugs or machined MBD lugs available in chrome, brass, or brass nickel. Unlimited finish options include stains, candy colors, and fades, with satin or high-gloss lacquers. Drums are fitted with Nickel Piston Strainers, Puresound snare wires, Aquarian heads, and the buyer's choice of triple-flange, single-flange, or die-cast hoops. Prices vary with wood type and feature options.

Y (310) 649-5271, www.mbd drums.com.



Bill Ballerini

on each recording. Retail price is \$24.95. (914) 762-5663, www.hudsonmusic.com.

Ian Paice: *Not For The Pros* (Shock Export) Deep Purple drummer Ian Paice has just released a DVD called *Not For The Pros*. The 120-minute program features a 50-minute documentary with Ian taking the viewer through drum and cymbal manufacturing plants around the world, offering drumming tips that'll



save prospective drummers "plenty of angst," and providing never-before-seen live onstage footage. Also offered is a TV-style presentation of a drum clinic, and plenty of music tracks. Those tracks include six different mixes of two tracks from Ian's Abbey Road Studio sessions: "Paicesetters" and "Dustbins." Also featured are four full-length live tracks from Deep Purple's 2001 American tour, and a host of short segments giving the viewer a "roadie bird's-eye" view of monitor problems, dropped drumsticks, and things that happen during drum solos. The DVD is in both PAL and NTSC (all regions) formats and thus is available for all worldwide DVD formats. It's available in retail outlets and through the Deep Purple Online store via www.deeppurple.com.au. Retail price will be comparable to standard local DVD prices.

Mark Mondesir: *The Mystery Unfolds* and Paul Elliott: *Technically Speaking* (RSJ Groove Productions) Videos featuring two of the UK's top

drummers are being offered by RSJ Groove Productions. *The Mystery Unfolds* showcases touring and recording drummer Mark Mondesir. Although many of the world's top drummers have been talking about Mark for years, there hasn't really been a way to check him out, until now. In this video, Mark reveals the amazingly simplistic approach he used to develop his mind-blowing technique.

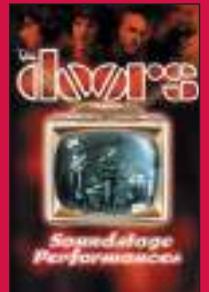
Technically Speaking features Paul Elliott, principle instructor at Drum Tech, Europe's leading drum academy. In his video, Paul covers the complete subject of drum technique. After a section on a practice pad summarizing hand-development techniques, Paul shows you how to apply what you've just learned to the kit. He demonstrates many of the common problems associated with bass drum and hi-hat technique, how to pull different sounds out of the kit, and how technique affects groove. In a musical section (with bass player Terry Gregory), Paul demonstrates how technique affects musicality, then performs some blistering solos.

Both videos are available on VHS tape (NTSC or PAL) and DVD. *The Mystery Unfolds* sells for \$39; *Technically Speaking* (double video) is priced at \$55. *Modern Drummer* readers are offered a special holiday discount price for the two-video package: \$79. RSJ Groove Productions, PO Box 240, Ashford, Kent TN27 9ZB England. You



can also buy online (for the full price) at www.rsj-groove.co.uk.

The Doors Soundstage Performances (Eagle Vision) Eagle Vision, a division of London-based Eagle Rock Entertainment Ltd., offers *The Doors Soundstage Performances* on VHS and DVD. These live performances, taken from three rare TV appearances (US Public Television, CBC, and Danish Television), chronicle the stages of the band's career. The Doors appear in the springtime of their youth, performing "The End" on a Toronto Soundstage in 1967. They're shown on Danish TV while on their ascent, during their only European tour in 1968. And they're depicted in their maturity on a Public Television performance on a Soundstage in New York in 1969.



All three remaining Doors—Ray Manzarek, John Densmore, and Robby Krieger—provide commentary on *The Doors Soundstage Performances*. The program is in full screen, and bonus features include an extensive photo gallery. Stereo and Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound are offered as audio format options. Retail prices are \$14.98 for VHS and \$19.98 for DVD. (212) 354-1040, zooney@eaglevisionusa.com.

Good Can Get Better

Dunnett Classic Snare Line Upgrades

Dunnett Classic Standard Utility snare drums are now fitted with version 6 of the R class tube lug (previously available only as an option on Standard Classic models at additional cost). The machined brass lugs are designed to work with the smaller outside diameter of Dunnett Classic metal and solid-wood drumshells. In addition, all R class drums now feature a redesigned buckle plate to fit the Nickel Piston Drive throw-off and butt end. The plates are offered as a retrofit part for all models of Dunnett Classic drums that are fitted with the Nickel Piston Drive throw-off. They can be ordered directly from the Dunnett Classic Web site.

Also available are the first in an ongoing series of limited-edition drums (meaning no more than ten of each) called the J class. These models feature ultra-thin, one-piece, steam-bent African mahogany shells with maple reinforcement hoops, and are being offered in 4x14, 5½x14, and 6½x14 sizes. According to company president Ronn Dunnett, "These drums redefine the single-ply snare drum sound." Retail prices range from \$950 to \$1,200.

☎ (604) 643-9939, 🌐 www.dunnett.com.



Marching Percussion Gets Heavy

Silver Fox Field Series Mallets

With up to 10 grams of weight strategically placed in the core, Silver Fox's new Field Series mallets have increased projection to cut through the thickest brass and heaviest orchestrations. The mallet heads feature unbreakable monofilament micro windings. (Similar technology is used in golf-ball manufacture.)

The mallets are said to be impervious to humidity and water and to last five times longer than other "field" mallets. In addition, all Silver Fox mallets feature crown encapsulation technology, which means that the complete crown is coated and sealed for permanent stability and durability, and cannot unwind. Four vibes models (\$50) and three marimba models (\$42) are available. ☎ (781) 935-6200, 🌐 www.silverfoxpercussion.com.



Getting Better At The Bottom

CODA Generation Beta DS-200 Drumkit

The CODA Generation Beta DS-200 five-piece drumkit (from Music Link) is said to be "perfect for beginning and intermediate drummers" because of its solid construction and low price. The 9-ply eastern mahogany shells are claimed to be expertly shaped, with tight seams and accurately cut bearing edges. The 12-lug rack toms come with triple-flanged hoops and upgraded mounts "so they can take a beating and always stay put." The deep 16-lug bass drum features telescopic bass drum spurs, and gives "a thick and punchy sound." The 8-lug steel snare drum delivers "a bright and snappy tone," atop an upgraded offset basket snare stand.

Generation Beta kits come with double-braced hardware for stability and durability. Cymbals, sticks, and a drum throne are included, providing everything a student needs to get started. Retail price is \$499.

☎ (650) 615-8991, 🌐 www.themusiclink.net.





LP Bronze Shell Tito Puente Tribute Edition Timbales

It's Good To Be The King

HITS

wide sonic range between sizes

bronze shells create unique timbre

distinctive appearance

by Norman Arnold

Oyé Como Va! Ay Caramba! And just about every other exclamation I can think of. These timbales are *muy caliente*, mis amigos.

First things first: I did what I'm sure each one of you would have done if the *entire* series of Tito Puente Tribute Edition timbales was shipped to you: set them up in a semi-circle and commence to wail away, using the quintessential "stick around the head" move of the late, great El Rey del Timbale. I might have even stuck out my tongue. I soon pulled out a couple of Tito CDs and jammed the night away. Tito would have been proud. Okay, more likely mortified. But what a *blast*.

These new bronze drums are sensational. They're really bright and ringy, with lots of overtones and a super-solid crack when you connect with the rims. And between the Timbalitos at one end of the scale and the Thunder Timbs at the other, there's just about everything you could ask for in a set of timbales. Tito would *definitely* be proud.



The Drums

There are obvious reasons LP has been around for so long: consistency and quality. From the tiniest Timbalito to the largest Thunder Timb, the drums are solidly manufactured. The phosphor bronze alloy shell is a heavier and thicker than the brass or stainless steel normally used for timbales. It makes the cascara sound much more defined. When you lay into the sides of these drums, the beat really projects.

The drums themselves are very ringy with a complex series of overtones. If you go by your local store to check them out, just grab a stick and hit a drum once. Don't wail away just yet. Hit it once, and check out the sound. It's really active and vibrant—and noticeably different from the sound of brass or stainless steel.

The high Timbalito is surprisingly heavy for such a small drum. Rimshots sound amazing, and when the drum is hit dead center, it gives it that old Esquivel dry sound. A solid abanico on the little Timbalito is something to behold as well, very sharp and pronounced. The Timbalitos are a great addition to a "standard" set of timbales for a high-pitched sound. Or they can add a cool new color to a drumset as stand-alone drums.

The Thunder Timbs occupy the other end of the sound spectrum. It's obvious how they came up with the name. When you really lay into them, the Thunder Timbs...well...*thunder*. I tuned the low one down about as far as I could, and the house was a-shakin'. The bronze shell resonates with a *huge* sound that would be great in many areas apart from traditional timbale use. From rock bands to film score sessions, players could get a lot of miles from these drums.

Of course, it may not be practical to buy the entire Tito Tribute line right off. It might be musically (or economically) necessary to choose from among the "standard" timbale sizes in the middle. Then again, if you *did* get the entire line, one of two things might happen the minute you set up all those timbales on stage. 1) You will be instantly attacked by sex-crazed groupies because you are so cool. 2) You will be instantly fired because there is no more room for anyone else in the band. Hmm....

I think one of the hardest things will be picking which size you like best from the three "standard" timbale sets: 12"/13", 13"/14", or 14"/15". The 12" sounds tight and bright, with a lot of punch. This helps make the 12"/13" pair a great studio set with an aggressive sound. The 13"/14" drums are versatile, and would sound great in any salsa band. The 14"/15" drums sound extra-solid, and might be better if you're in more of a rock or pop group and need to get a lower sound.

When I was touring, I used to tune my smaller timbale very high and use the larger drum for a lower sound, so I tended to use larger timbales overall. Now that I'm not touring anymore, I think I'd favor the smaller sizes. Check them out for yourself to see what works best in your situation.



The Hardware

The stands that come with the Tito timbales are heavy-duty, double-braced models. They're fully height adjustable, and feature a tilter and a standard LP cowbell mount. The design is well thought-out, practical, and functional. A pair of sticks and a tuning wrench are also standard.

Conclusion

These are obviously top-shelf drums, and they carry an equally top-shelf price. You'll want to spend some time kicking the tires a bit before you decide if they're the right drums for you. But in terms of quality and sound, there's no doubt that the Bronze Shell Tito Puente Tribute Timbales are a great tribute to a great percussionist. And, like their namesake, they all bring something unique to the table. In this case, getting the bronze is as good as getting the gold.

THE NUMBERS

9 ¹ / ₄ " & 10 ¹ / ₄ " Timbalitos	\$675
12" & 13" Timbales.	\$725
13" & 14" Timbales	\$735
14" & 15" Timbales.	\$745
15" & 16" Thunder Timbs.	\$795
Y (973) 478-6903, www.LPmusic.com .	

And What's More



▶ The Paul Leim 5B-117 model is the “icing on the cake” of one of **REGAL TIP**'s most consistently popular models. It's their traditional 5B nylon-tip hickory stick, manufactured and selected to meet Paul's specific weight requirements: 117 grams per pair, with only a plus or minus 2.5-gram variance. According to the company, “Straight out of the package, matched and rolled, stick after stick will feel virtually the same.”

Y (716) 285-3546, ☎ www.regaltip.com.

▶ **MOUNTAIN RHYTHM** offers two new finishes to their Circle Series of affordable pine djembes. The drums are now available in natural, cherry, and walnut finishes. According to the company, “These superior light-weight djembes add sound and color to any store display.” Retail prices range from \$273.99 to \$388.99, depending on size and finish.

Y (705) 657-7089, ☎ www.mountainrhythm.com.



▶ **VATER**'s new 28-page catalog—the largest in the company's history—features 172 products (24 of which are new to the Vater line). It comes with pictures and descriptions for each Vater product, along with artist photos, stick selection hints, retail info, and Vater history. Also included is a unique “Drum Tech” section, which showcases some of the Vater artists' drum techs, including pictures and quotes.

Y (781) 767-1877, ☎ www.vater.com.

▶ **PACIFIC**'s new Blue-Line drumbags feature tear-resistant nylon and vinyl exteriors, scratch-resistant cloth interiors, thick foam padding, and heavy-duty zippers, straps, and handles at an attractive price. They're available in a drumset prepack (\$249), with separate stick, cymbal, and hardware bags (\$19, \$49, and \$99 respectively).

Y (805) 485-6999, ☎ www.pacificdrums.com.



▶ **OctaStix**, from **MARCAT MACHINING**, is designed to hold up to eight sticks. Each stick “tube” can be adjusted forward or backward so the drummer can have any size stick or mallet in a ready-to-grab position. The machined-aluminum unit has a full tilt mechanism. It fits on any cymbal stand up to 1.25" in diameter, or it can be mounted on top of a short mic stand. OctaStix is available in black, blue, red, silver, and gold finishes. Custom engraving is also available. Price is \$128, directly from the factory.

Y (603) 578-0493.

▶ **PRO-MARK** has obtained worldwide marketing rights to Stickweights by Diggitt. Stickweights can be attached directly to any stick, mallet, or pedal beater during warm-ups. They're said to help develop strength, speed, endurance, agility, control, and confidence. Suggested retail price is \$23.95 per pair. Y (800) 233-5250, ☎ www.promarkdrumsticks.com.



▶ **STUDIOPHONIC** Hearos are high-fidelity in-ear speakers that simultaneously deliver audiophile-level sound with superior noise reduction. They feature a unique “direct to brain” connection for accurate sound, along with soft, noise-reducing ear tips for comfort and maximum ambient noise reduction. The Platinum 25 models reduce noise up to 25 dB and are priced at \$299. Gold 20 models reduce noise up to 20 dB and are priced at \$139. Each model comes with a carrying case, travel pouch, replacement ear tips and filters, and filter changers.

Y (773) 477-0525, ☎ www.hearos.com.

▶ Built to withstand “torturous live sound applications” and engineered “to be a drummer's best friend in the studio and on stage,” **MB QUART**'s 805HS professional closed-back headphones have gained the praise of drummers like Anthrax's Charlie Benante for being “able to take almost anything professional use can dish out.” They feature a steel bow and foam-filled cushioning (around the ears and on the head) for long wear, and a gold-plated 1/4" stereo plug. Performance features include a frequency response of 10–33,400 Hz, 2x300 ohms nominal impedance, an SPL rating greater than 98 dB, and a continuous power rating of 100 mW. Retail price is \$149. Y (800) 962-4412, ☎ www.mbquart.com.





Canopus Steel, Hammered Bronze, And Maple Snare Drums, And Accessories

Orient Expressive

HITS

steel drum possesses exceptional sensitivity with a crisp, dry sound

hammered bronze drum offers nice overtones

maple drum has a throaty sound and a vintage-style lacquer finish

Vintage Snare Wire replicates 1960s-era models

Canopus is a Japanese custom drum manufacturer that has been active in the US market for a few years now. They offer several stunning snare drums built from varying materials, all at realistic prices. Exceptional sound and design make these snares contenders for practically any situation.

All the drums reviewed were crisp, clean, and clear in sound, with excellent sensitivity and dynamics. Listening to the acoustic characteristics of each individual drum is akin to tasting different varieties of good wine. Subtleties in tone and color make each drum a special instrument in its own right.

5x14 Steel

I absolutely loved this drum. It was the first one I played, and right out of the box its sensitivity caught my ear. Outfitted with Remo Ambassador heads, the drum's response was instant, crisp, and clean. It also possessed an exceptional dynamic range, from extremely loud to incredibly quiet. Its tone was open yet controlled, metallic but warm, and pleasantly dry. The drum's capacity for a crackling backbeat would make it ideal for playing chatter. Yet with its outstanding sensitivity it would also do well in orchestral settings. (It would be ideal for executing Ravel's "Bolero.")

The drum's construction is simple and effective. Its mirror-smooth surface is complemented by eight straight brass tube lugs. According to the manufacturer, the use of brass lugs helps to temper the potentially wild



5x14 Steel



5 1/2 x 14 Hammered Bronze



6 1/2 x 14 Maple

sound a steel shell might otherwise produce. Rubber washers keep tension screws and other fittings isolated, while a classic-looking snare throw-off quietly snaps the snares in place. A medium-size rectangular badge is the only adornment on the drum, allowing the polished steel to show itself off dramatically.

5½x14 Hammered Bronze

Although it features hardware and construction identical to that of the steel drum, the 5½x14 Hammered Bronze snare offered a crisp sound that was a bit “wetter.” Again, there was surprising warmth, even while it maintained the characteristics of a metal drum. Exceptional dynamics and sensitivity were equally present in this snare. Bright ringing overtones and a wide frequency range contributed to its character, adding to its powerful rimshot. The bronze shell’s attractive coppery color is brought out by the hammered finish.

6½x14 Maple

The maple snare really sang. Somewhat surprisingly, it boasted a slightly longer decay than its metal counterparts. This decay combined with a wide range of pleasant harmonics to create the drum’s resonant sound. Yet the drum remained clear, without any loss of articulation in playing. The warm, throaty crack that came forth was everything you’d expect from a good wood snare. And building up the roar of a triple-forte buzz roll with this drum was something I could happily do all day.

With hardware matching the other snares, the 7-ply maple shell had a distinctive, natural look. A clear finish brought out the light-colored grain of the maple, while the hair-thin seam of the outer ply was discretely placed behind the snare throw-off. The high-purity nitrocellulose lacquer used by the manufacturer is comparable to the finish found on vintage guitars. After years of use, surface cracks will appear on the lacquer, just as the sound of the drum will mature as the wood itself ages. Considering how good this drum sounds now, I’d love to hear it again in twenty years or so.

Vintage Snare Wire And New Wire Belt

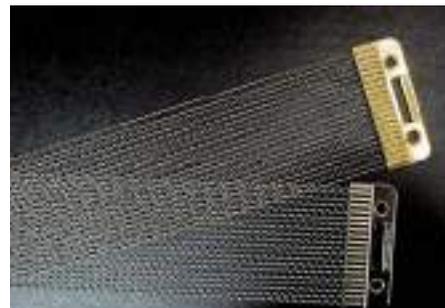
All of the Canopus snares came fitted with the company’s Vintage Snare Wires (which are also available separately). This snare set stems from years of researching snare wires available from companies like Ludwig and Slingerland, circa 1960. Looking at factors such as materials, spiral diameter, and pitch, Canopus determined that a core thickness of .5 mm, a spiral diameter of 1.35 mm, and pitch of 3.4 mm accurately replicated the characteristics of such vintage wire. A snare wire’s sensitivity is also affected by

the end plates, and experiments with thickness, shape, and contact with the snare head led to the final Vintage Snare Wire design.

I compared the Canopus wire with the original snare wire from my own old Slingerland snare drum. The spiral frequency was a bit different, but otherwise they were a very close match. On the other hand, the Canopus wire was obviously different when placed against a Ludwig snare wire from the late 1980s. I’m not familiar with every snare wire available on the market, but these comparisons did intrigue me. More importantly, the crisp uncluttered sound these snares produced was noticeable—not just on the Canopus drums, but when I put them on my own drums as well.

Canopus Vintage Snare Wires are available with end plates in two versions: gold and silver. Canopus generally recommends using the gold one on wood snares for crispness, and the silver one on metal drums for brilliance.

Also available separately is the New Snare Wire Belt. If the film tape or string holding your snares in place has ever broken on you while you were slamming the skins, this product is for you. Knitted from nylon fiber, the belt is stronger than film, doesn’t choke the drum, and maintains the natural reaction of string.



Wrap-Up

Altogether, by looking to solve a potential problem, bringing a vintage sound to the future, and crafting a series of superb snare drums, Canopus Drums comes across as a company offering excellent ideas and products.

THE NUMBERS	
5x14 Steel Snare Drum	\$490
5½x14 Hammered Bronze Snare Drum	\$660
6½x14 Maple Snare Drum	\$635
Vintage Snare Wire	\$ 33
New Snare Wire Belt	\$ 4
Y 011-81-35376-7367, www.canopusdrums.com	



Meinl Generation X Thomas Lang Signature Cymbals

Becken They're Called, And Beckon They Do

HITS

pitch-matched cymbals
work well together

cymbals can be applied
to different settings

attractive look and design

by Chap Ostrander

Meinl initiated their Generation X line with the Rabb Pack, designed by Johnny Rabb for styles of music like drum 'n' bass, jungle, techno, and house. When Meinl decided to further expand the range of the Generation X line, they sought out European studio maven (and chopsmeister) Thomas Lang. Anyone who attended the last *Modern Drummer* Festival couldn't help but be knocked out by Thomas's performance. (In my case, he single-handedly redefined the realm of stuff that I can't do. Grrr.)

Gen-X Properties

Thomas's signature line (officially designated "Tom's Becken," which is German for "Tom's cymbals") represents a range of contemporary crashes matched in pitch to work well together. Their design gives drummers acoustic sounds that resemble samples of cymbals that have been electronically filtered. The nature of the FX9 alloy from which they're made gives them quick voices that work within new music yet can be incorporated with other styles.

The cymbals also have a "soft" feel to them that gives an interesting physical quality. I felt like I was playing into them, rather than just striking them. Meinl also designed the Lang cymbals to be "dB compressed" so they'd work well in rehearsal rooms and small venues. As a result, the company recommends that the cymbals be close-miked for recording.



This complete line includes a 16" Synthetik Crash, a 17" Kompressor Crash, an 18" Signal Crash/Klub Ride, an 18" Kinetik Crash, and a 14" Filter China. All but the Filter China have a laser pattern printed around the body below the bell. The China has two concentric sets of eight holes drilled in the body. Let's take a closer look at each model.

16" Synthetik Crash

The Synthetik Crash has a very quick voice that speaks and then disappears like a flash of lightning. There are lots of highs...and then it's gone. This would naturally work very well in the type of music that it's designed for. I also tried it in more "traditional" drumset applications, and found it best suited for very quick accents.

17" Kompressor Crash

The 17" Kompressor Crash moves up the scale as a crash. It's a great in-between voice when paired with either the 16" or 18" crashes. It has the quick response and decay characteristic of the line, with just a little extra "meat" to its sound.

18" Signal Crash/Klub Ride

This model is aptly named. Its nature allows you to play patterns that possess ride or crash qualities. Its weight promotes a very satisfying ride sound, with lots of stick definition and response. It has a very low profile and a tiny bell, so when I played it as a ride there was very little build-up underneath. Yet when I used it as a crash it spoke quickly and fiercely.

18" Kinetik Crash

The Kinetik Crash features trash-crash qualities combined with moderate sustain. It was like the Signal Crash in volume, but with a higher voice. I found that it could also be used as a ride, due to its size and weight. But it was less forgiving if I overplayed it.



14" Filter China

The Filter China is a *great* accent cymbal. It has a smaller, quieter voice than a "traditional" China of even the same size would have. Yet it retains all the features that make you want a China cymbal in the first place. You can drop in a trashy accent and be gone in a flash. This cymbal was my favorite in the bunch. Of course, I'm more of a traditional player and would find more use for it than I might have for some of the other Lang models.

(In what I think is a wise move, Meinl has included the Filter China in each of the two Tom's Beckens pre-packs.)

Final Notes

On a hunch, I tried mallets on the Thomas Lang cymbals, and they all responded beautifully. They spoke quickly and the response was smooth and pretty much without limits. The cymbals gave back whatever I put into them, and they gave me lots of control while doing so. As such, they might make excellent symphonic or "pit percussion" cymbals where control and acoustic character are more desirable than volume.

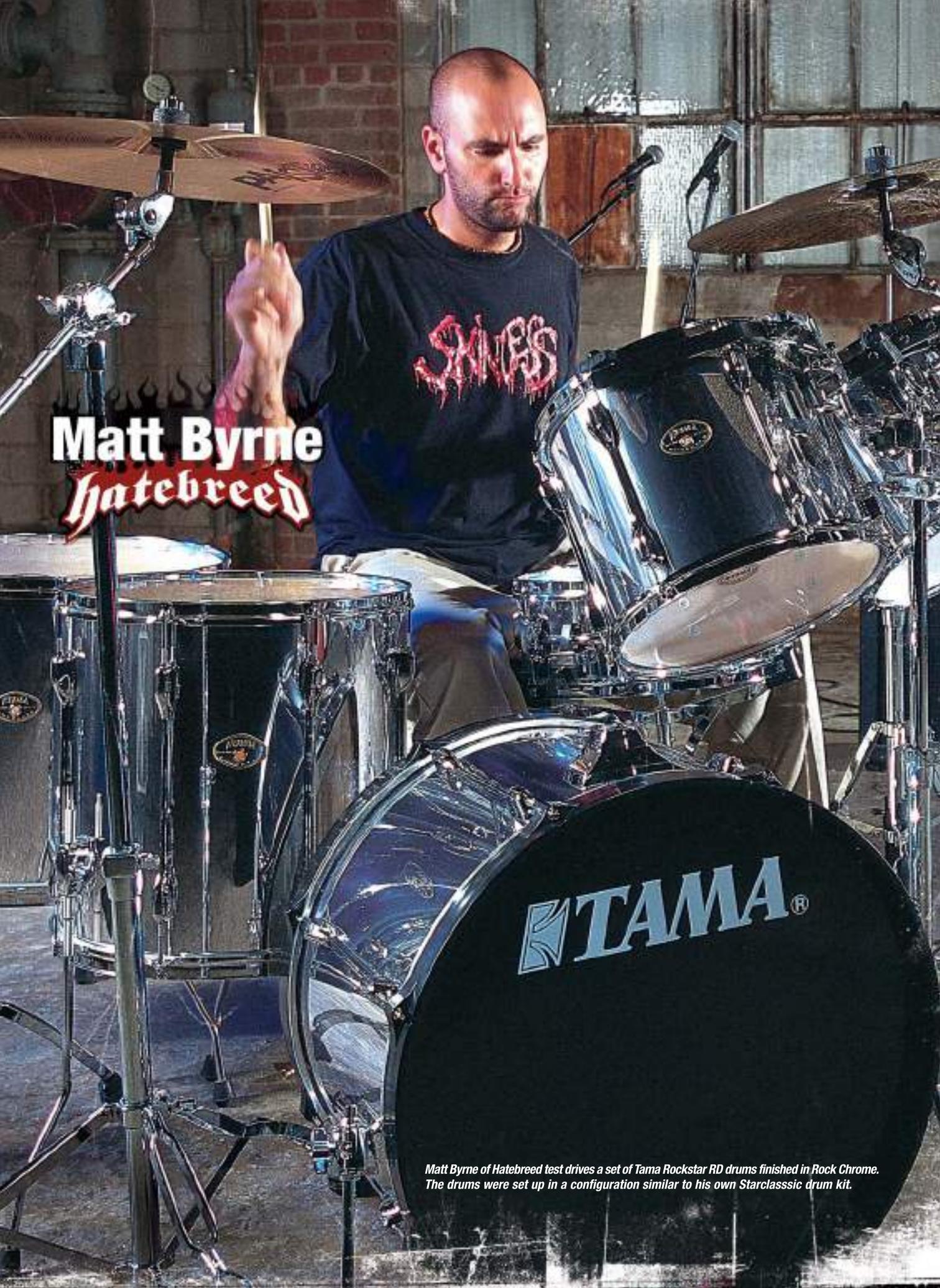
Meinl did exactly what they set out to do with the Thomas Lang signature cymbals. Their voices reflect the type of music they were designed for. But they can be applied to other uses as well. Their particular benefit is that they allow *live* drummers to play on *live* instruments, and still sound contemporary. They sound great, in and out of their context, and they give live feedback to the player. Check them out; you may want to have them at your Becken call.

THE NUMBERS

GX-TB14/16/18 Cymbal Set \$449
(includes 16" Synthetik Crash,
18" Signal Crash/Klub Ride, and 14" Filter China)

GX-TB14/17/18 Cymbal Set \$469
(includes 17" Kompressor Crash,
18" Kinetik Crash, and 14" Filter China)

☎ (877) 886-3465, 🌐 www.meinl.de

A photograph of Matt Byrne, a drummer for the band Hatebreed, playing a Tama drum kit. He is wearing a black t-shirt with the word "SAVES" in red, stylized lettering. The drum kit is finished in Rock Chrome and features the TAMA logo on the bass drum head. The background is a brick wall with a window.

Matt Byrne
Hatebreed

Matt Byrne of Hatebreed test drives a set of Tama Rockstar RD drums finished in Rock Chrome. The drums were set up in a configuration similar to his own Starclassic drum kit.

"This is the first time I've played Rockstars. This is your standard line of drums, right? I've owned and played other brands of standard kits. They sounded great in the store, but when I tweaked them at home or took them on gigs, they sound boxy, way too boxy. But I spent time tweaking and playing the Rockstars here and they have tone and volume. I was really surprised at the sound of the bass drum and the snare—the stock snare sounds great! Usually when you buy a kit, the bass and toms are okay, but you have to go out and replace the snare. This snare not only has a nice crack, it's fat. There's lots of body."

"I have Star-Cast tom mounting on my Starclassics, so I'm already familiar with that. I like my drums in close, especially in Hatebreed where everything is fast paced and you have to move around quickly. With other tom systems, the mounting gets in the way and the drums have to be spread out, but with the Star-Cast system, I can get the drums in nice and tight."

"I'm impressed—these drums can really take a beating. They make you feel like you're playing the professional line."

— Matt Byrne (Hatebreed)

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— Matt Byrne



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1. One new Tama Rockstar RD (covered finish) 5 pc (or more) drum set must be purchased between October 1, 2002 and December 31, 2002 at an authorized United States Tama retailer (to find the authorized Tama retailer nearest you, use the USA dealer locator at www.tama.com).

2. This coupon (which can also be downloaded at www.tama.com) must be filled out completely and sent to: Tama, Dept. RW100 Offer, Box 886, Bensalem PA 19020. The coupon must be accompanied by a valid receipt for one Tama Rockstar RD 5 pc drum set. For the purpose of this offer a 5 pc kit must include at least one (1) new Rockstar RD snare drum, one (1) new Rockstar RD bass drum and any three (3) other new Rockstar RD drums. Tama Rockstar Custom RP (painted finish) drums do NOT qualify for this promotion. Envelope containing coupon and receipt copy must be postmarked no later than January 15, 2003. Only one RW100 Rhythm Watch metronome to a customer.

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For the new Tama Drum & Hardware catalog, send \$3.00 to: Tama Dept. MDD21, PO Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020 or PO Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403.



African American Drum Company Signature Series Do-Bop Kit

Small Custom Set Boasts Big Sound

HITS

big-time sound from small-sized drums

natural finish is beautiful, highlighting the rich wood grain

custom-made hardware contributes to striking look and sound

by Robin Tolleson

The African American Drum Company of Eureka, California offers high-quality maple drums—snares, toms, and kicks—in standard sizes. But they also feature smallish “fusion” kits, like the Do-Bop kit they sent for review. Large or small, AADC drums have a lot to offer sonically and visually.

The Signature Series kit that we tested features 7-ply maple shells with 4-ply reinforcement hoops. The shells have a clear urethane finish with just enough stain to bring out the bold highlights in the wood. The drums have 2.3-mm steel hoops, and handsome, handcrafted bronze tuning lugs that could very well be adding to the rich tones the drums produce. The kick drum has handcrafted bronze T-hooks. The toms on our review kit were fitted with generic suspension mounts based on the RIMS design. Future kits will be shipped with Gary Gauger’s new Aluminum Alloy RIMS mounts.





The small-sized drums have great response. The “handling” is so sensitive, it feels like you’re behind the wheel of a fine sports car. The drums sound great at soft volume, and they really shout when revved up. I did some recording with these drums, and there is nothing “small” about the sound they produce. Let’s check ‘em out drum by drum.

Bass Drum

AADC offers bass drums in 18", 20", 22", and 24" diameters. In keeping with the compact size of our review kit, it came with a 16x18 bass drum. Despite its diminutive size, the drum had a deep, musical tone, with a nice, medium decay. It also had a quick response and a powerful punch to match. When playing it in tandem with the toms, it rang like another mounted drum, with a distinct note. I’ve played some sweet 20" kicks before, but never an 18". This one really sold me on “less is more.”

The drum comes with a mount to lift it off the floor a couple inches, allowing a normally positioned bass drum pedal to strike in the middle of the head. Despite its small size, I can’t think of a setting this kick wouldn’t work for.

Rack Tom

The 10x10 mounted tom had great attack and a very true tone. It had a reliable sustain at soft and loud levels—kind of like a mini power tom. The single-ply, clear Attack heads it was fitted with delivered the sound cleanly. This drum makes you look forward to every fill, knowing the powerful, commanding punch it’s going to deliver.

Floor Tom

The 11x13 floor tom was the toughest of the drums to get a handle on. It was a little pingy at first, but after tuning the batter head down a pinch and tightening the bottom head up some, the drum began to produce a powerful, clean, low sound. After a little bit



more fine-tuning, it became as much fun to play as the small tom. Its relatively small size kept its sound from being super-low, but it was a rich sound nonetheless. The drum also benefited from a muffling ring, whereas I wouldn’t dream of putting one on the 10x10.

Snare Drum

The 6½x12 snare looks a little bit like a toy, but it’s totally pro, with several excellent striking points. Playing near the edge produced a great rimshot, with a timbale-like quality. When the drum was smacked right in the center, it delivered remarkable depth. The white-coated Attack Terry Bozzio head is a perfect choice to maximize the sonic output.

Steve Jordan and Bill Bruford would both love this drum. It’s a great funk snare. It could be used as an auxiliary snare for jungle stuff. *And* it could be used in rock settings. And just as a cosmetic note: The snare throw-off lever is a handmade brass lion’s head. Very distinctive.

Conclusion

AADC offers custom-designed kits with stained and lacquered finishes, and a choice of 2.3-mil steel, 2-mil brass, or die-cast hoops in black or chrome finishes. Between their sonic performance and their unique appearance, the drums are as enticing as any kit I’ve sat behind. And they are a pure pleasure to play—true-toned and responsive.

THE NUMBERS

16x18 bass drum	\$900
6½x12 snare drum	\$570
10x10 rack tom	\$360
11x13 floor tom	\$655

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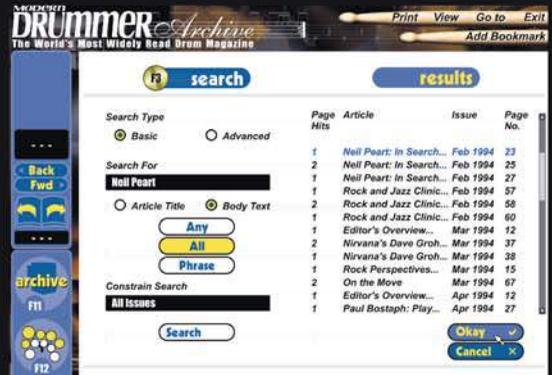
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Drum Solo Snare Drums A Natural Choice

HITS

excellent sound,
sensitivity, and response

environmentally friendly
exotic hardwood shells

outstanding custom craftsmanship

MISSES

brass tension rods have a tendency to
squeak until fully "broken in"

by Phil Ferraro

Today, environmental issues are having an increasingly direct affect on our lives. As a result, many industries have been trying to portray themselves, deservedly or not, in a more eco-friendly light. Unfortunately, the percussion industry has largely chosen to ignore these increasingly important issues. As is often the case, change rarely starts at the established "top." It's at the grass-roots level, where the entrepreneurial spirit abides, that catalysts for real change take hold and grab the public's consciousness.

In 1991, Novato, California drummer/craftsman Greg Gaylord decided to start his own company, Drum Solo. His goal was "to work with each drummer one-on-one to design the ultimate solution in terms of custom drums" while addressing environmental concerns in the process. Greg's "solution" lay in employing his own hand-crafted hardware and unconventional shell construction methods, using exotic hardwoods acquired through environmentally responsible sources.

Shell Construction And Hardware

At the heart of a Drum Solo drum is the construction method known as segmenting, which holds a number of advantages over multi-ply or even single-piece designs. The concept is similar to masonry construction of a brick wall. Structural strength is imbued block upon block. The shell is comprised of six individual pieces butted and joined in a butcher-block fashion. The shells don't need the reinforcing

3½x14 Cherry



6½x14 Spalted Maple



4½x14 Chokte Kok



rings required for strength in a single-ply shell. They also need much less adhesive, which Greg believes is an impediment to vibrations and resonance. To be exact, Drum Solo segment shells require *only 22 square inches total of adhesive area*, compared to *1,960 square inches* in a conventional $\frac{3}{16}$ "-thick multi-ply drum. This results in a shell of exceptional strength with even greater tonality and resonance.

Segmenting also allows for the use of many different types of hardwood, as well as reclaimed and salvaged woods that would otherwise be considered "unusable" because they couldn't be "worked" into malleable plies. Such exotic names as granadillo, jatoba, bubinga, and cancharana (to name a few) read like a travelog of Earth's arboricultural biodiversity. Using segmented construction, the choice of unusual hardwoods—with their distinctive sound properties and eye-catching appearances—is limited only by your creativity and imagination. To ensure that all wood selected has been harvested and processed employing environmentally responsible standards and practices, Greg only uses wood that is Forest Stewardship Council certified, purchased through EarthSource in Berkeley, California.

Each shell utilizes a 45° bearing edge, a $\frac{1}{8}$ "-deep snare bed, and a single vent hole for maximum sensitivity and resonance. Then it's finished with high-gloss polyester for moisture protection and beauty.

To accentuate sound quality, Greg handcrafts his own low-mass, retro-style chrome-plated tubular lugs (and engraved logo plate) from solid brass. Other noteworthy components include the acclaimed Nickel Drumworks strainer, PureSound snares, Aquarian heads, 2.3-mm steel triple-flanged hoops, and tension rod washers made from Delrin, a material said to be self-lubricating and more durable than nylon.

3½x14 Cherry

According to Greg, this is Drum Solo's most popular snare model. It's also a favorite of studio engineers, and I can certainly see (and hear) why. The light shade of cherry wood is visually striking. Acoustically, the drum is a little "powerhouse," with a sound that's far bigger than its shell depth might imply. Unlike many piccolos that have a limited tuning range (becoming "thin and boxy" under high tensioning), this drum *would not* choke. Over the entire tuning spectrum, it maintained a sensitive, resonant, and rich tone, with excellent "crack" when required. This drum deserves to be considered more than "just a piccolo."

4½x14 Chokte Kok

Greg refers to this Mexican hardwood as one of his "Dr. Seuss woods," because the colors seem a little odd and unnatural, like something found in a Dr. Seuss book. To my eye, it's similar to a vibrant shade of redwood. Of the drums sent for review, this one was my favorite. From the moment it started to "sing" on a open-

jam gig, I could see heads turn...musicians and audience alike! This drum had a projection, depth, and resonance like few I've experienced in thirty years of playing. (I own twenty snares, and it kind of reminded me of the biblical admonition to "sell all that you have to acquire the one prized pearl.")

The chokte drum could go from a *ppp* buzz stroke, through a rhythmically accented "whipped cream" roll, to a crisp rudimental pattern, and finally to a howitzer-blast rimshot with the greatest of ease. The action, sensitivity, response, and resonance was, as we used to say in the service, *outstanding*.

6½x14 Spalted Maple

This specially commissioned "one of a kind" drum comes with a unique history. The wood was harvested from The Hermitage, the estate of former US president Andrew Jackson. As Greg explained, "Spalting is a rare occurrence that's part of the decay process. Under the right conditions the wood begins to break down and get a marbled look. The black streaking is a fungus that enters the wood, occurring in a random pattern. Kiln drying kills the fungus and stops the decay process. The key is to find wood that has the look we want, but is still solid. It's rare and difficult to find."

Like its two siblings, this drum had excellent sensitivity, response, and resonance. It also had a uniquely warm quality that would make it an excellent choice for those looking for a deeper, more full-bodied sound. It would be ideal for "unplugged" or strictly acoustic settings.

Conclusions

In light of all this praise, two relevant points should be made. When I first tuned these drums, there was a noticeable squeak coming from the tension rods and lugs. At first, I attributed this to the Delrin washers. But Greg assured me that this was caused by a slight plating residue on the threads. After some lubrication and a short break-in period, this would pass. No further problems!

The next point of relevance is price. *These drums don't come cheap*, which will put them out of reach for most drummers. An argument can be made that the major manufacturers produce a good instrument. Why spend the extra money? My answer is that when one considers the quality and exotic nature of the materials used, the additional cost of environmentally responsible business practices, and the level of custom craftsmanship and attention to detail exhibited by Drum Solo drums, there really is no comparison. These exquisite-sounding drums are of heirloom quality, worthy of being passed down from generation to generation.

THE NUMBERS	
3½x14 Cherry Piccolo	\$1,500
4½x14 Chokte Kok	\$1,800
6½x14 Custom Spalted Maple (priced individually by special order)	approx. \$1,200
☎ (415) 898-2647, 🌐 www.drumsolo.cc	

Pro-Mark Broom Sticks, Accent Brushes, And Skid-Proof Mat

Pro-Mark's Broom Sticks represent a totally new sort of tool for bridging the gap between sticks and brushes. They're made for Pro-Mark (out of 100% natural broomcorn) by Jack Martin, a third-generation broom maker.

The first thing you notice about Broom Sticks is their light weight and excellent balance, which makes them very easy to manage. I could do double strokes, singles, and just about anything I would do with rod-type sticks. Two rubber O-rings allow you to adjust the spread of the material. When they are

brought up toward the tip of the Broom Sticks, the sound is contained and short, useful for ballads and soft rock beats. Move the rings down, and you come closer to the spread and feel of a traditional brush.

The sound of the Broom Sticks is what's really different. They sound softer and lighter than any other product out there. It's not metallic like a brush, nor is it sharp like wooden or plastic rods. It's a soft-yet-thick and solid sound that should prove useful in a variety of situations. Broomcorn is by nature a rugged material, sug-

gesting that the Broom Sticks will hold up to repeated use. At a retail price of \$24.95 per pair, you'll clean up.

Pro-Mark's Accent brushes feature wires that are set into Japanese white oak wood handles, with a preset, non-retractable spread. That spread was wider than what I usually use, but I found the brushes easy to play with nonetheless. The wires are slightly heavier than those found on standard brushes, so you get a louder, more distinct sound. There is also a small metal cap on the end of the wood handle, allowing for accents and glisses on cymbals. Suggested list price is \$29.95 per pair.

The Skid-Proof Drum Set Mat is a 5'x5' square pad that goes under your kit. It's neither a carpet nor a heavy, doormat-style rubber mat. It's made of a spongy rubber material that's very light. This allows it to fold easily, so you can put it in a trap or cymbal case. On the other hand, although the mat is made to be tear- and rip-resistant, it has some restrictions. Pro-Mark stipulates that you can't use spikes of any kind, otherwise the mat will develop tears or holes. This includes making sure that the rubber feet on stands, thrones, and floor tom legs are in good shape. Pro-

Mark also suggests that you use a magic marker (no tape!) to mark where your equipment goes.

The feel of the mat was almost tacky, but in a good way. Walking across the mat left footprints, and when I placed my kit on it, it felt like my stuff sank into it. The material proved to be very resilient and tough, though. Whatever marks were made in it disappeared right away. In situations where I wasn't able to lay it out perfectly flat, it still worked fine, and nothing moved while I played.

A friend of mine who is a front performer commented that the mat would also be good to put underneath his mike stand to reduce footstep sounds transmitted from the floor to the mike. You can trim the mat if needed; there is no hem. It comes come with a one-year guarantee and lists for \$54.95.

Chap Ostrander

Cappella Cocobolo Cowbell Beater

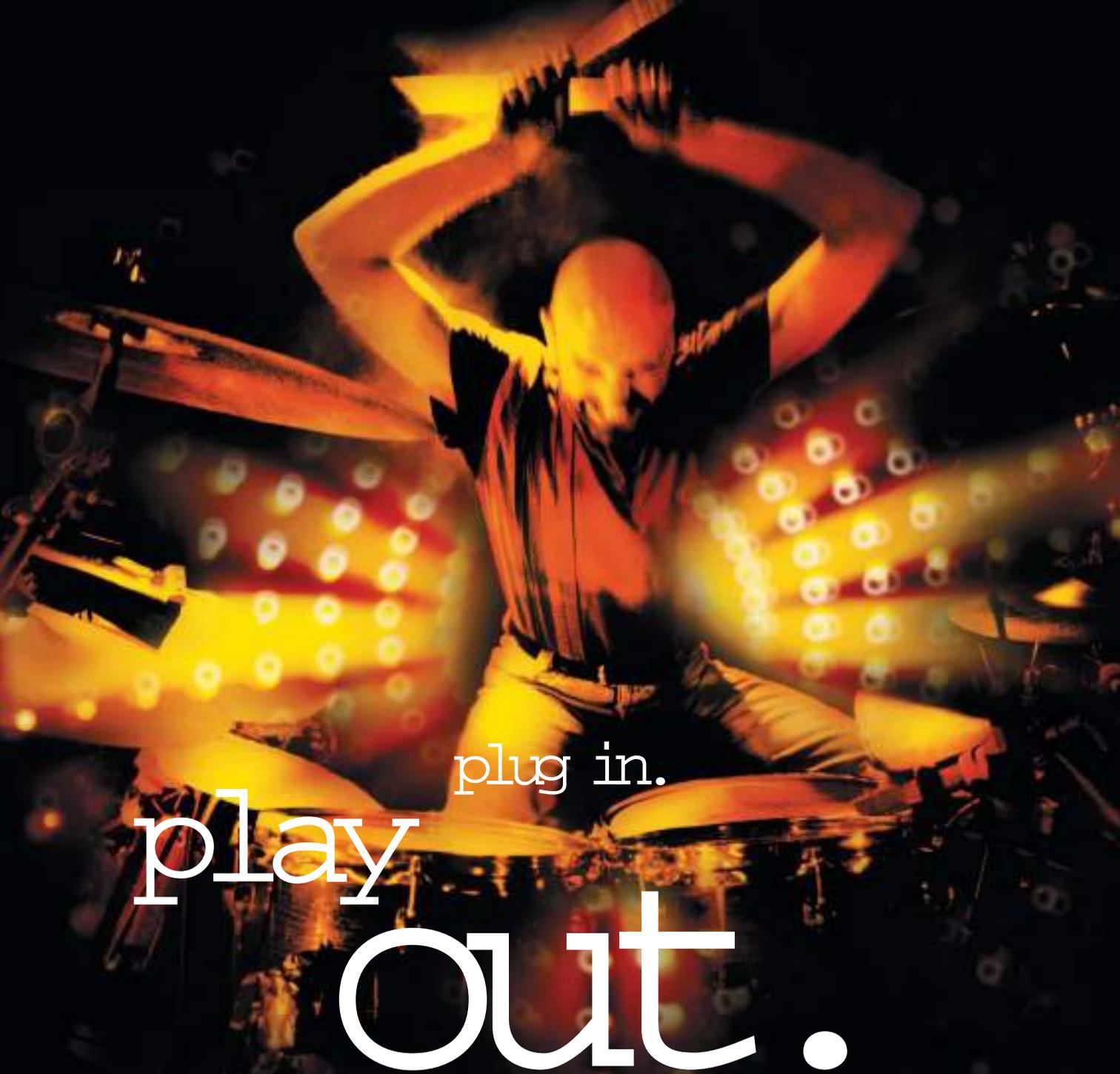
I'm pretty much a timbale-stick kind of guy when it comes to beating on a cowbell, so Cappella's cocobolo beater was great to use for a change-up. It's pretty much the exact opposite of a timbale stick. It's short and fat—the Danny Devito of cowbell beaters, if you will.

The beater is made of high-gloss-finished cocobolo wood, which is well known for its durability, tone, and pitch. The sound it creates is solid and deep. I played a bunch of cowbells with timbale sticks, drumsticks, and then the Cappella beater. It makes quite a difference. I also recorded a couple of passes of cowbell on a track with a timbale stick, then played the same passage again with the Cappella beater. Again, there was a *big* difference in the overall weight and depth to the tone. The beater warmed up the bell's tone considerably, making it great for the studio.

I've always seen bongo players in salsa bands use these kinds of beaters, and now I know why. They're solid, durable, and have a great feel when playing. At a list price of only \$9.95, it makes sense to have at least one in your bag.

Norman Arnold





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Abe Laboriel Jr.

Riding A Wave Of Success

When you meet Abe Laboriel Jr., you can't help but smile the entire time. And it's not just from hearing about his success stories. It's because his presence exudes a glow and inner kindness that is both spiritual and contagious. This comes from more than the happiness of a successful career, one that's found the drummer employed by such artists as Paul McCartney, Sting, Chris Isaak, Melissa Etheridge, Jennifer Love Hewitt, k.d. lang, Manhattan Transfer, Natalie Cole, Duran Duran, Dianne Reeves, Justo Almarino, Jonatha Brooke, and his father, Abraham Laboriel. No, *this* kind of contentment comes from upbringing and an inner peace.

Laboriel is a self-admitted workaholic. But when you ask him what the downsides to that disease are, he says with a laugh and a sparkle in his eyes, "I haven't found any yet." Abe does concede that he could use a vacation, since he hasn't taken one in about five years. But a career in music is what he's chosen, and it seems that it all just gets better and better.

Abe's enthusiasm and excitement is never-ending. And why shouldn't it be? He's found himself in some cool situations. With a huge smile on his face, Laboriel recalls the night the band spent at McCartney's guest barn, awakening to the smell of bacon and eggs (probably veggie), then stumbling into the main kitchen to see Paul and his wife,

Heather, cooking breakfast for the band.

Abe is currently in the midst of a tour with the former Beatle, and he can barely contain his excitement about the nearly three-hour set. What tunes does he get to play? Twenty-two Beatle songs, ten Wings classics, five McCartney solo selections, and a thirty-minute acoustic segment during which Abe gets to sing background vocals on "Eleanor Rigby" alongside his hero.

"Right before we're going to play, we huddle behind the curtain and pray," Laboriel reveals, "which is something Paul said he's never done before. He leads us in prayer and says something like, 'God, we want you to take over. Let us have a good time, and let everybody out there have a good time. Thank you for letting us be here to do this.' Wow! What beautiful humility, handing it over that way. My dad has always said that music is all around us, and it visits us. To be with someone who lives that same philosophy is beautiful."

Laboriel grew up with that philosophy in his household. Music was in abundance. His father, master session bassist Abraham Laboriel Sr., has worked with a mind-blowing list of artists, and has accompanied most of the great drummers of the past several decades. In turn, he infused his son with a respect and love for music—not to mention opportunities that could not be bought.

Abe Jr. began messing around on the drums at age four, and by ten he was taking lessons from drumming great Alex Acuña. Naturally, Abe was also able to watch his father's sessions in action. During his junior year in high school, he attended the now defunct Dick Grove School of Music, where he studied with Peter Donald. In 1989, his last year of high

school, Abe had progressed to such a degree that he was honored by the National Foundation For The Advancement Of The Arts and *Down Beat* magazine. Shortly thereafter, again following in his father's footsteps, Laboriel enrolled at the Berklee College of Music.

MD: Why did you feel school was important? You could easily have gone off with

an artist—and you in fact almost did, with Barry Manilow, except he cancelled on you. As I recall you said that was a blessing in disguise. Why was that?

Abe: I think there's such an eagerness to want to get out there and apply your craft as soon as possible. But I think as far as future longevity and versatility, it's important to be patient. That's a tough concept when you're eighteen or nineteen years old, thinking, "I can do it *now*," and when you're also dealing with other things like independence.

My family is awesome, but at that age it was, I need to get out of here and be on my own. But I'm grateful my folks encouraged me to stick it out and that I found another avenue to channel learning through. I have to admit, I was really frustrated with the system at Berklee, because there was definitely a cookie-cutter mentality at the school. They train you so you can play Holiday Inns on the weekend with no problem. You have to fight hard to keep your personality. Don't get me wrong, the opportunity they provide is awesome. They have the environment to do anything and everything. But if you don't have a strong enough personality, you can be turned into part of the machine, another cog in the wheel.

MD: What was your solution?

Abe: To change my major to computer synthesis.

MD: Why?

Abe: They wanted me to start studying vibes and other classical percussion. They wanted to train drummers to be able to play a Broadway show like *The Lion King*, which some of us really don't have the desire to do. For me, that approach had nothing to do with what music meant to me.

I was about to leave school, but then I realized, "If I'm going to learn something that has absolutely nothing to do with me as a drummer, then why don't I really go learn something completely different?" So I switched to computer synthesis and started learning about that. Pro Tools wasn't fully up and running then. The course work was about Digital Performer, programming, how to work a sampler, how to build sounds from scratch, and analog synthesis. It opened my ears. I enjoyed being around it.

My dad always had a working project

"Paul's energy in both his vocals and bass playing had such intensity that he inspired me to play things that I've never done before."





studio, so I enjoyed tweaking the knobs and working in that setting. I thought this course of study would be a good way to develop that craft. I thought about taking songwriting courses, but again, I felt that Berklee didn't allow your personality to come through. I felt the computer synthesis program was so new with cutting edge technology that they wouldn't have the rules for it yet, so it could be explored.

MD: By the time you went to college, were you pretty clear about what path you wanted to take for your career?

Abe: I went through every phase. I wanted to be a studio musician, then I just wanted to be in a band. It's a confusing time in one's life.

MD: So how did you decide on your goal? Did you pick it, or did it pick you?

Abe: It totally picked me. It was mainly life affecting me. I fell in love, and my love was out here in LA. I was going to stay in Boston, because I was in a band called Letters To Cleo and they got a record deal. But I fell in love with a girl out here, Suzanne, and followed my heart. And it's a

Big Drums!

Abe's McCartney Tour Kit

Drums: Drum Workshop in tamo ash/lime green to blue fade finish

- A.** 5x14 snare (aluminum)
- B.** 12x15 rack tom
- C.** 14x18 floor tom
- D.** 20x28 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste

- 1.** 18" Dimensions medium-heavy crash
- 2.** 15" Traditional medium-light hi-hats
- 3.** 20" Signature Full crash
- 4.** 22" Dimensions medium ride
- 5.** 19" Signature Power crash
- 6.** 20" Signature Dry Crisp ride (with rivets)

Hardware: DW, including a double pedal (Accelerator, felt-side beater, tight spring tension), two-legged hi-hat stand, plus a few pieces of Gibraltar's rack system for cleanliness and mic' mounting

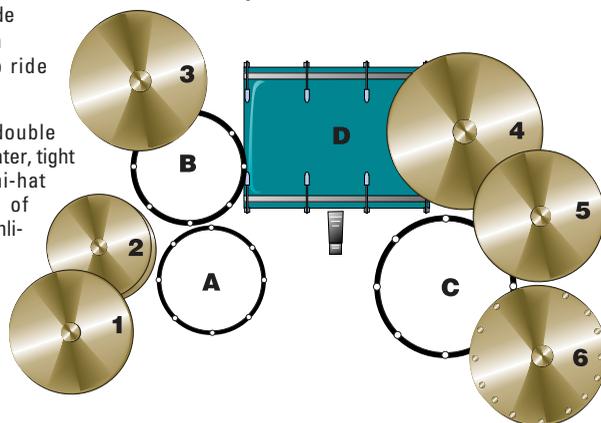
Heads: Remo coated CS white dot on snare batter with Ambassador snare-side head, clear Emperors on tops of toms with clear Ambassadors

on bottoms (bottom heads tighter than tops on snare and toms), clear Ambassador on bass drum batter with Ebony Ambassador on front (bass drum batter tuned loose with DW pillow inside, turned sideways)

Sticks: Vic Firth American Classic Metal model with wood tip

Cases: Robles Road Cases

Microphones: Shure



Paul McCartney

MD Meets A Beatle

by Robyn Flans

When an artist who's as big a star as Paul McCartney is eager to do an interview about his drummer, you know he appreciates what his band-member brings to the table. McCartney gladly gave of his time to talk about Abe Laboriel. And of course, how could we have him on the phone and not ask about Ringo?

So here's Sir Paul, an extremely warm, willing, and charming participant, who even shared one of those bad drummer jokes: "If there's a knock at the door, how do you know it's a drummer? Because the knock speeds up. That's a bad one!"

MD: Needless to say, you've worked with some awesome drummers. And you yourself can do a capable job at the kit.

Paul: I can thrash a bit.

MD: What is it about Abe as a drummer that serves your music?

Paul: He's just a monster. There are a lot of good things about him. First of all, he's a great drummer—and all those little indefinable things that go into making that. He's got incredible time, and he's very musical. He's also got a really great attitude. When you're working with people, it's so cool when you get on well. Abe's a real sweetheart. I've met his mum and dad, and you can see where it came from.

MD: You're playing some Beatles songs now that you've never performed live before. When you worked those up, what kind of direction did you give the boys in the band?

Paul: I don't really do too much of that, strangely. You

would think I would say, "It's got to be like this." But with this band, I pretty much let them listen to the records. I say, "We're going to do it sort of like the record," and leave it at that. Then I see what happens in rehearsal. I normally don't change much at all. They come prepared. They just say, "George did this on the solo," or "Ringo played it like this. What do you think?" They've got it down by the time we come to play together.

MD: Were there songs that you wanted played more like the record?

Paul: My feeling is to start off there and try to get things true to the record. But of course, by the time you've gone through a huge PA and a big arena.... The drums today are much bigger-sounding than Ringo's drums ever were, because we didn't have the same technology. All of the sounds are bigger now, so it's like The Beatles on heat. It's a really pumped up version of the song. But we start basically trying to get it like the record, arrangement-wise, and then sonically it's juiced up by the PA. I like that combination really. There's a lot of power in it.

MD: Put yourself on stage for a second and think about the times you might turn around and look at Abe and go, "Yeah!" Are there songs where his playing along with what you're doing on bass particularly does it for you?



Paul: Definitely. Certain songs just come alive, like "Back In The USSR." That one just seems to storm. It's a pretty free band. Yes, we're trying to get it like the record, but if we think of an idea that we feel is a bit better, we'll put it in. If I don't really like it, I'll say to Abe afterwards, "I wasn't too keen on that," and he'll say, "Fine." But I think that's only happened once. But that last verse in "USSR" really kicks ass. He throws in a couple more bass

drum bits that aren't on the record. There are moments where it just takes off.

MD: Speaking of "USSR," you played that track originally.

Paul: Well, no wonder it's better.

MD: I would be remiss if I didn't ask you what other Beatles tracks you played drums on.

Paul: I think there might be a couple of others, but I don't really remember. If I played on them, it was either because I was trying to get a feel thing Ringo might have been having a bit of difficulty getting, or just because I fancied thrashing around and he said it was okay.

MD: You don't remember specifics?

Paul: I know I played guitar on "Taxman," and I did the guitar riff on "Paperback Writer," and you just reminded me I played drums on "USSR." I don't think there is too much more drumming. That might well be the only

good thing I did. It's been ten years and I'm still with her.

So it came down to trust, because as much as I've tried to control things, the opportunities have come from outside of what I'm trying to control. The career I've had so far has been so varied and all over the place. It's not at all what I would have planned.

MD: What would you have planned?

Abe: My master plan was to mainly be part of a band or to be a studio guy who stayed in town all the time. The concept of being able to do both didn't occur to me. I've been lucky that, for the last seven years, I've spent six months on the road and six months in the studio. Now I've even gotten to do some producing and songwriting. I'm starting to feel that I *can* do all of this stuff, I have fun doing it all, and don't feel I have to commit to only one thing to work. And I'm not worrying so much anymore, because I've done the groundwork.

MD: What do you consider your first

break?

Abe: The Steve Vai gig. It wasn't the greatest experience, but it was the break. It was one of the first things I really did on my own, strictly on my own merit, and I can pretty much trace everything I've done back to that gig. Steve Vai led to Seal, which led to every producer in town seeing me play. From there I started doing lots of recording, eventually winding up with k.d. lang, doing her tours for a while. I got the gig with Sting because he saw me play with her. And the producer who hired me for Paul's record was the head of A&R at k.d.'s label. We hadn't worked together, but we met, so he said, "I really thought you were a nice guy. Do you feel like making a record with Paul McCartney?"

MD: Personality is a major piece of a successful career.

Abe: Absolutely. Attitude is ninety percent of it.

MD: Where do you think your inner glow comes from?

Abe: Definitely from my family and being loved.

MD: For all those parents of musicians out there, what was the best thing your parents ever did for you?

Abe: They gave me really great guidance, but allowed me to still be a goof-off and an individual. They helped me have confidence in being myself, not worrying what everybody else might think. All that matters is what you feel about yourself. Watching my father and the joy he has was always encouraging. To see somebody who was fully in love with what he does and fully in love with every moment was a great example and something to strive for. What I love about music, and specifically playing live, is that you get to see that instant reaction of somebody getting to let go of their day and feel uplifted.

MD: Speaking of playing live, tell us about the Sting experience.

Abe: K.d. had opened about ten shows on Sting's last tour. We got to hang out with

drum track, although there were a few demo-type things that found their way onto the *Anthology*, like "Come And Get It," which I played drums on. But generally, it was all Ringo, contrary to anything else you might have heard.

People used to ask me, "Didn't Bernard Purdie play on the songs?" I would say, "Get out of here, man. What are you talking about?" This amazing rumor started flying around, and I still meet people who ask me that. I can't believe that Bernard said that, mind you. All I know is, I was there, and Ringo did pretty much all of it.

MD: Well, the story is that they flew these tracks to New York where overdubs were done. Of course, you were only working in 4-track at the time, so how were they going to replace Ringo?

Paul: Exactly, and if they did, then they must have removed me too, because Ringo and I were glued together on one track. I don't think it's true because I think it's something one of us would have spotted. We were pretty hip, George particularly, because Capitol would sometimes re-EQ things and George would go, "That sounds bloody horrible. It's got all treble on there." So we'd shout at them and they'd put it back to how it was.

MD: What was it about Ringo that was perfect for The Beatles?

Paul: He was the final part of the jigsaw puzzle. Pete Best was a lovely drummer, and we loved him. He was great and we got on well in Hamburg. It's difficult to explain, because I don't want to sound like I'm putting him down, but he wasn't quite the same type of guy

that we three were. We were sort of slightly studenty, slightly artsy, and Pete wasn't quite like that. He was different from us personality-wise. He was a real good drummer, but we thought that Ringo, who was in Rory Storme And The Hurricanes, was the god of Merseyside. We'd go, "He's so cool. He sounds so cool. He looks so cool." When we had the opportunity to play with Ringo, we thought, "Ah God, it's just so right, we've got to do it."

It was a very painful time for all of us, particularly Pete, obviously. It had to be one of the worst moments in his life. And the way it happens is something you regret, but these things have to happen. If you imagine The Beatles without Ringo, it's just not right. And once we got him in the group, it just felt so right. We used to turn around and grin at him like, "Yes! You are our drummer!"

MD: He was completely unorthodox and unschooled, but perfect for the situation.

Paul: Absolutely. Beautiful. He looks like he's sweeping up when he plays his hi-hat. He's such a great drummer, and we learned how to flow from him. If he sped up a little bit, we sped up a little bit, so you never noticed any of that. I'm sure if you stuck a time clock on it, we're all a bit out, but we knew each other so well and played so long together that it flowed.

MD: Ringo has called it telepathy. In that light, I'd like to touch on the bass/drums relationship. You're the vocalist, but you're also the bass player.

Paul: I love the bass and drums thing. It's very simple, what I used to do with Ringo. I just used to listen to whatever pattern he was playing on the bass drum and

put a bass note wherever he played it. It was as simple as that, really. That was the basic rule, and then we could go off from there. That was always most effective for us.

MD: You've said that you give your musicians freedom to do as they wish, but let's face it, you're the boss.

Paul: That's cool after all these years. [laughs] I get to be boss. In The Beatles, the unwritten rule was whoever wrote the song got to tell the others how he wanted it, so you became the boss for your song. John would tell us what he wanted for "I Am The Walrus," he would tell George Martin how to orchestrate it, so he was the governor of that song. Now all the material we do is mine, so that's the rule that still applies.

MD: On your latest album, what are your favorite bass/drum moments?

Paul: The big "Rinse The Raindrops" track, which is like a big festival jam thing that goes on for about nine or ten minutes. There are some really cool bass and drum moments in that, where we're just thrashing away. It sounds like a sort of hippie festival to me. There's also a song called "I Do," which has some nice bass and drum moments in it. We had a lot of fun making the album.

MD: You recently decided to endorse a product for the first time.

Paul: Rob Robles is a drummer friend of mine who makes these wonderful stick and guitar cases that are really cool. They look great and come in a very snazzy electric blue color. Sorry for the plug, but I have to mention to *Modern Drummer* readers that they should check out these cases.

the guys in his band. Manu Katché was Sting's drummer at the time, and he's an amazing guy and an amazing drummer. But there were definitely moments where it looked like he was almost disinterested in the gig. He didn't look like he was passionate about the music he was playing, which is too bad. But you never know what's going on in someone's life.

Anyway, Kipper, the synth/keyboard player and producer of the last k.d. record, was producing trumpet player Chris Botti, so they called me to play on half of his record. Vinnie [Colaiuta] played on the other half. And we got on great. I guess Sting heard the record and they told him we had fun in the studio, so when Manu decided to leave the gig, I was the guy Sting thought of.

I had just finished recording Paul's record when Sting called, and I didn't know when the record was going to be out or if there was going to be a tour. But I knew the Sting tour would only be two or

three months. As it turned out, I was able to do the tour. I did the Concert For New York with Sting and Paul, and then the Sting tour started the following Monday. I went from the biggest experience of my life to the next biggest experience of my life.

MD: What did Sting need from you?

Abe: I don't necessarily know what he was thinking, but I wrote an email to him that said, "I'm so excited to be doing this. Please know that I'll bring a joy to your music." What I felt I could bring was an enthusiasm to his music. He's one of my heroes. I grew up first with The Beatles and then The Police. I love Sting's music.

MD: Some of his tunes can get a little complicated.

Abe: Definitely, but to make them feel natural is the trick, so that it doesn't feel like, "Oh, that's really complicated." You have to realize that while complexity is cool, the melody is imperative. And you *always* support the melody.

MD: What was the most interesting tune to play?

Abe: "Seven Days" is in five, and it's such a joy to play. It's weird, but it flows so comfortably. And the way Sting sings on top of it, well, it doesn't feel like an odd time. So I felt it was important to flow with the rhythm just like he did. That's the main thing to me about all music: The melody and vocalist are the most important things.

MD: That gig lasted how long?

Abe: That ended mid-December '01. We were mostly promoting Sting's live record. It was a large band—three keyboard players, at times six horn players, percussion, and upright bass, as well as Sting playing electric bass. It was a really big jam party fiasco, and it was a lot of fun.

MD: Speaking of bass, your last two gigs have been with two of the most famous bass players in the world.

Abe: I guess I know how to play with bass players. [laughs]

MD: That must be true, you grew up with



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one of the best. You said your top priorities are to listen to the vocals and the melody, but the bass player is the foundation along with the drums. Can you give us tips on locking with a bass player?

Abe: It's an unspoken communication. It's a lot of give and take. I tend to set the tone and dictate where the feel is, and for the most part, the bass player listens and goes with me. There are some players who can

be rigid and don't want to move, and you have to comply. Of course, there are some instances where the tension actually works, because I definitely have a laid-back feel.

This is something Sting and I talked about. He liked the fact that the bass was pushing and on top, but the drums didn't go with him. There were times we were trying to gauge ourselves, and I would go with him, and he'd say, "No, no, no, I want

"You have to realize that while complexity is cool, the melody is imperative. And you always support the melody."



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you to be back there,” which created a really cool tension.

MD: But there’s a fine line between tension and not locking.

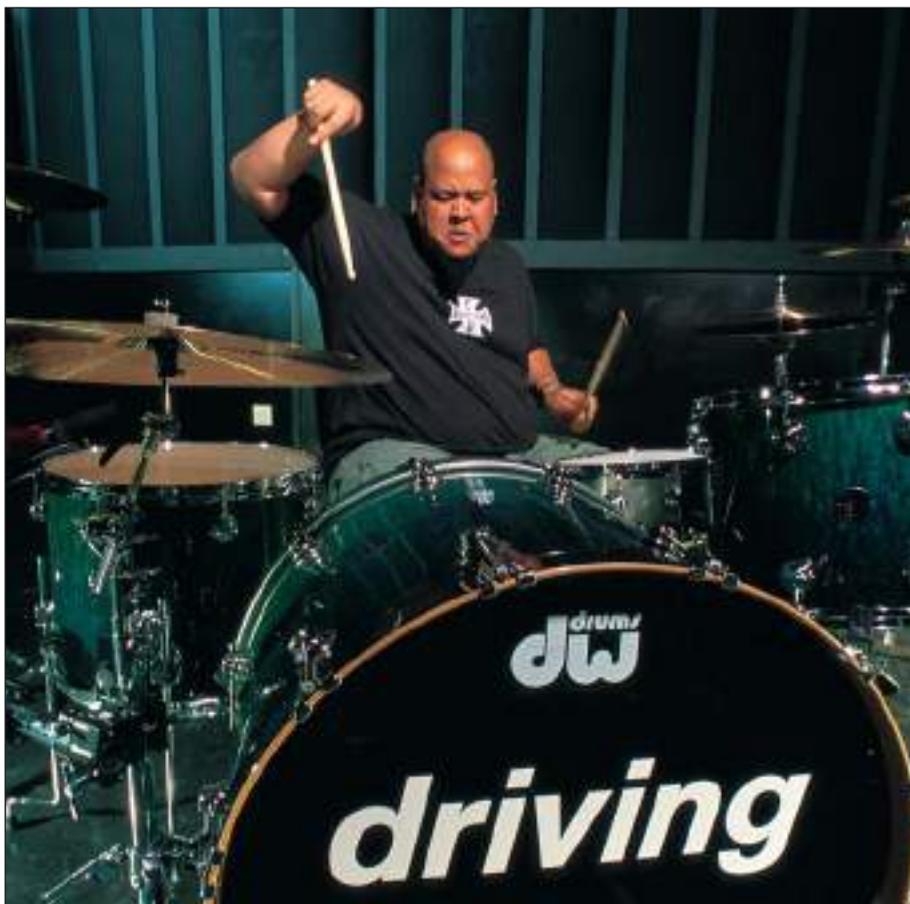
Abe: Right, but there are so many variables. Sometimes his tone can be piercing, which doesn’t compete with the kick drum. They sound like two different instruments. So it depends on the bass player and the approach. If it’s really supposed to be a marriage, then usually the bass player will come join me. But there are definitely times I have to join the bass player to make things work.

MD: Did your dad work with you on that relationship when you were young?

Abe: Absolutely. I’d be practicing and he’d walk in and say, “Keep playing,” so I’d keep playing a simple groove, and ten minutes would go by and he’d say, “That was a good bar.” “Oh, okay.”

MD: And how would he explain what he thought was a good bar?

Abe: Consistency of feel throughout. He would tell me stories about talking with Steve Gadd, who said that a lot of people count to four and end on four and kind of wait for the next one, as opposed to really



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feeling that four to its fullest extent. So as much as you're going from beats 1 to 2, you have to think consistently from 4 to 1, and a lot of people don't do that. They think because it's the end of a bar and they're going to do a fill or something, there's a tendency to be ahead of the next downbeat or a little too laid back on the next downbeat.

So many people have different ways of feeling 2 and 4. There's the machine kind of approach of being right on the beat, some people feel it a little ahead, or my preferred feeling is to lay back the 2 and 4 a little bit, which creates a hump within the bar, but not at the end of the bar.

MD: Would you jam with your dad?

Abe: All the time.

MD: Would you analyze it while you were jamming?

Abe: Absolutely. We'd talk about it, try to understand it, and try to manipulate it and find where the proper manipulation of it was. When we play together now, our heartbeats are the same.

MD: Do you get to work together much?

Abe: Besides doing his records, we did stuff for the *Moulin Rouge* soundtrack

together—the Christina Aguilera/Stevie Wonder thing. We recently did a song on Will Smith's latest record and something for LeAnn Rimes. We've been doing quite a bit. It's a blast to get to play with him.

MD: Now tell us what it's like to work with the other major bass player, Paul McCartney.

Abe: His internal clock is unbelievable. It's amazing to watch him play by himself, because there's such a solidity. What's cool is that he was so natural to play along

“This is how that was played, so you have to do it this way.” He came in with little two-track demos of him singing and playing guitar on a cassette and said, “Here, let's try this song. I need to write a bridge. I'll be right back.” He'd then go upstairs and come back down fifteen minutes later. Literally, within twenty minutes of meeting each other, we were recording the first song, smiling, and laughing. It was a great experience getting to explore and create together in an unspoken way, letting it hap-

“The drums today are much bigger-sounding than Ringo's drums ever were, because we didn't have the same technology. All of the sounds are bigger now, so it's like The Beatles on heat.”

—Paul McCartney

with. There was no guessing or wondering if I was in the right spot with him, probably because I grew up on his heartbeat. Those are records I studied.

The other thing that was great was that our first situation playing together was a creative one, in the studio, discovering something new. There weren't any rules of,

pen naturally. He's singing so beautifully now, and he's in good form. He's like a seventeen-year-old right now.

MD: What's your favorite stuff to play with him?

Abe: Everything. It's been amazing to have the opportunity to really learn these songs and get into them. This is the first



Listen. It

time he's ever performed "Getting Better," for example. When the Beatles recorded it they had already stopped touring. So for all of us getting to sit there and go, Wow, so that's what you guys did, has been unbelievable. We've always listened to and loved those songs, but to get into the intricacies of what the parts are and what makes four guys sound that full is so cool.

MD: Can you elaborate?

Abe: There are so many textures going on. Each part is really simple, but when they're all put together, it's almost classical in how rich it sounds, which is something that is lacking today in music. People think the way you get something to sound full is to throw a lot of things on top of a foundation, so you have the drums and the bass and then you track ten guitars, keyboards, and backgrounds. People do way too much, trying to compensate for an inability to actually write.

I think people have forgotten that one guitar sound coming through a speaker sounds so much fuller and richer than twenty, because technically you get phasing and all these different tonalities that take away from each other. So you've just

made something that could be big sound so small.

To go back and listen to those Beatles records in that frame of mind is incredible. And now playing those songs live—there are only five of us on stage, two guitars, bass, keyboards, and drums—is amazing. We're all singing backgrounds, too. There are no samples of backgrounds or anything, except of maybe a string section that was part of the record. It's amazing to get to do that, and people have been commenting on how clear it all sounds in the house. That's because we're performing the songs that way and not playing to sequences and things that are a safety net, which I feel really detract.

I'm working on a record right now that we're recording the same way. It's Sting's son, Joe Sumner, whose band is called Fiction Plane. Joe plays guitar and sings, and the record will be out soon on MCA. He has his father's charm and voice, but with a wider range of emotion. Sometimes within the same bar, he'll hit a high note in a full voice and in falsetto. He's very intense, and there are always two guitar parts, which work amazingly well together.

We're recording the entire record on 8-track 2-inch tape. I'm taking up four tracks—kick, snare, hi-hat, and overhead—a whole inch of tape, which is so huge-sounding. The other main thing is it's not being filtered by a MacIntosh computer, which is a rare thing these days. It's being produced by David Kahne, who did Paul's recent record and has done records for Tony Bennett, Sugar Ray, Fishbone, The Bangles—a huge variety.

MD: This is a very different experience for you.

Abe: It's different for me on so many levels. It's probably the first time in months that I've been with other musicians in the studio. For the most part, I go in and it's me and a computer and the producer, and either it's the beginning of the recording process or the end, which is very strange. It's amazing to be in with a group of people who know these songs and love them.

When I first saw this group at a pub with Sting, I felt an intense energy I hadn't felt in a long time. I was absolutely floored and knew right then and there that I wanted to do something with these guys. I told David Kahne about them, and he had actually

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heard some of their earlier demos and liked them. He was asked to do the record, and at about that same time the group parted ways with their drummer, so I got the call.

MD: What do you see as your strengths and weaknesses?

Abe: I think they're one and the same—it's my versatility, the ability to wear lots of different hats, be lots of different people, and be in lots of different situations. That becomes a weakness when I get stretched pretty thin and want to do everything, which I can't always do. And sometimes people can get upset by my not being available, because I'm off doing other things.

MD: Have you ever bombed on a gig?

Abe: Definitely. There have been sessions where I didn't feel I was adding anything to the material. I think a lot of it has to do with my feeling about the music. I try really hard, no matter what, to find something to either love about it or learn from it. I try to find something that makes it worthwhile and emphasize that. But there have been some records where that's been hard to do.

MD: Can you be specific?

Abe: I did the last Shakira record, which was probably one of the most painful expe-

riences of my life. It was mainly because she was producing. She doesn't have the experience to say what it is she wants, but she has the confidence to let you know that unless you do what she wants, it's not right. And until she feels it's right, it

doesn't matter what you say or what you feel about it.

We'd record a take, and then she'd listen to it and say, "I think it might be the wrong tempo," after five hours of playing it in that tempo. Or "I think it might be

Abe's Finest

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

Artist	Recording
Paul McCartney	Driving Rain
Chocolate Genius	God Music
Vanessa Carlton	Be Not Nobody
Meshell Ndegéocello	Bitter
Dana Glover	Testimony
Manhattan Transfer	Spirit Of St. Louis
k.d. lang	Invincible Summer
Jonatha Brooke	10¢ Wings

And these are the ones he listens to for inspiration.

Artist	Recording	Drummer
Tool	Lateralus	Danny Carey
Komeda	What Makes It Go	Jonas Holmberg
Beck	Mutations	Joey Waronker
The Shaggs	The Shaggs	Helen Wiggins
D'Angelo	Voodoo	Ahmir Thompson
Radiohead	anything	Phil Selway
The Police	anything	Stewart Copeland
The Beatles	anything	Ringo Starr

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the wrong key," after she had been singing along every time we played it for five hours. We'd literally work sixteen-to eighteen-hour days and maybe get one song done. I think we all felt completely unappreciated.

We also felt trapped. We were in Miami, and all our stuff was there. If it had been in LA, we would have all walked off the session and lovingly said, "We're not the right people for this. It's obvious that you want to go through a process that most people would call pre-production. Good luck, we've gotta go." But we were trapped there. I felt if I had left, I wouldn't have gotten my snare drums back.

That was a difficult experience. I understand why she did it, though. There are so many manufactured artists out there right now that I think she wanted the credibility of being able to say, "I did it all myself."

MD: Maybe a co-producer would have been a healthy compromise.

Abe: Exactly. It wasn't fair putting people through that. It's not the way you treat human beings. It's very draining

when you try to find the good and try to help someone who is inexperienced but refuses to be helped. That's probably been the only situation where I've wanted to leave.

MD: On the more positive end of things, could you pick five of your favorite tracks that you've played on and detail what you did on them?

Abe: "Umm" on Scritti Politti's *Anomie & Bonhomie*: Scritti Politti made records that were very important to me in my formative years. The thing that I love about them is their attention to detail and their ability to make machines groove. I played along with their records all the time because I knew the time and the feel was exact and I knew it would help me notice my imperfections.

Recording with them was amazing. I used a DW 22" kick with 12", 14", and 16" toms and a 5x14 Edge snare. I also used Paiste 14" Vision hats, a 20" Signature full crash, a 22" 2002 ride, and a 19" Signature power crash.

We started with the idea that we would record as a band. There were three guitars, bass, vocals, and drums. After each

take they would take one instrument away because it was pretty cacophonous. Before I knew it, I was recording by myself with a click track. There wasn't even a guide track. I proceeded to record the rest of the songs by myself over two days. Luckily, being a fan, I understood how they thought and I knew their writing style intimately, so the final product is something that I'm proud of.

"Wasted Time" on Meshell Ndegeocello's *Bitter*: This album was such an organic experience. Four musicians, in a room, playing off of one another. This particular song has many interesting drum textures. It starts with a drum loop that I created using maracas, a tambourine, a kick, and a cross-stick, then running that through various guitar pedals. The chorus groove is a simple brush pattern. Then in the verse, I double the loop with live drums.

I used a DW 26" bass drum with Remo FiberSkyn heads, a DW Craviotto snare with die-cast hoops for a thick cross-stick sound, and Paiste 15" traditional hats. We used ribbon mic's, which have a very warm way of capturing sound. I also manipulated a cymbal crash through delay

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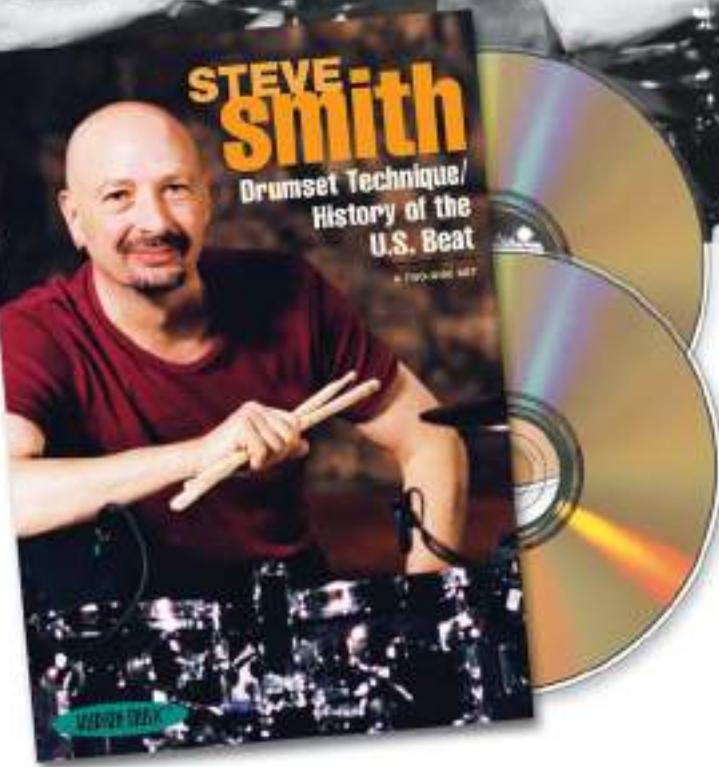
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Abe Laboriel Jr.

and phasing pedals to get that backwards crash sound. I love exploring songs sonically.

"It All Kept Startin' Over Again" on Fishbone's & *The Familyhood Nextperience Present The Pyscotic Friends Nuttwerx*: This was another of my favorite bands in my formative years. Their original drummer, Fish, has the best combination of over-the-top energy and solid groove. It was such an intense learning experience jumping into a situation where the band was used to a particular feel and I had to do my best to assimilate that history in a single day's rehearsal. They taught me so much about incorporating ska rhythms into funk and R&B settings.

This song had about five different sections with different feels and intensities. The unison intro figure led to a four-on-the-floor groove with skank upbeats, continuing to a quarter-note backbeat with complex kick pushes, followed by a double-time ska groove interrupted by a tribal tom ride. Those guys rock!

"Rinse The Raindrops" on Paul McCartney's *Driving Rain*: I'm still pinching myself over this one. I got to

play with a *Beatle*. This was a simple song that Paul had played for us in the studio. There were only two sections, but there was something very addictive about the repetitive vibe of the song.

I was playing Paul's Ludwig kit, which is an exact copy of Ringo's classic setup. We started by just jamming to see if there was a particular groove or style that would suit the song best. We played for about two hours, unaware that the tape was rolling. While we were blissfully lost in pushing simplicity to its most complex edge, the engineers were frantically changing tape every fifteen minutes so as to not miss a note. Even after running out of tape, they ran a DAT machine for about twenty minutes before finally saying that they had everything they needed.

Paul's energy in both his vocals and bass playing had such intensity that he inspired me to play things that I've never done before. We really just played whatever came to mind, and there ended up being a playful quality that is missing in so much of today's music. David Kahne told us to go home. He then spent the evening picking the best moments and constructing the ten-

minute abridged opus that concludes the record. I wish I had the entire two hours on tape.

"Prince," on Vanessa Carlton's *Be Not Nobody*: Vanessa is a great new singer/songwriter, who trusted and allowed us to shape her music. We made very sure that every note played on that record accentuated her piano and voice. I'm so happy to see that an actual musician is getting positive public attention.

This was the last song recorded for the album and the first time that anyone had recorded live drums at Interscope's project studio. I used a DW 20" kick on a D'Amico cradle, Gretsch 12" and 14" toms, a DW 6x10 snare, and a Dunnett 5x15 Titanium snare. I also used Paiste 15" Traditional hi-hats, a 20" Traditional crash, a 22" Traditional medium-heavy ride, and an 18" Traditional crash. To enhance the groove, we put a dotted-8th-note delay on the hi-hat track, which gives the track a great gallop.

It was a live drum take, except for the bridge, which we inserted because we wanted to get a very close brush sound. On the breakdown chorus section, the producer, Ron Fair, helped to create a dramatic growth

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in the drums. I also really enjoyed playing a drum 'n' bass style that sounded and felt like a human being rather than a machine.

MD: You've been doing some producing too?

Abe: A little. I've done this side project called Chocolate Genius, which includes me and a singer back east named Marc Thompson. Our second record, *Godmusic*, came out about a year ago, and we're currently working on our third. I would describe it as vocal-based, folk-ambient R&B. It's all over the map.

MD: Obviously you work a lot, and you seem to love to be busy. But can that kind of schedule be a problem at times?

Abe: I still find my moments of peace, and I give myself time to zone out. I have some hobbies. I enjoy cooking and I like good wine. And when I'm not on the road I turn the phone off around 8:00 at night, just to have reasonable hours.

The main thing is, music doesn't seem like work to me, and I'm lucky for that. I've done sessions and tours that have great environments and that feel joyful. They're as if I'm hanging out with friends.



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by Ken Micallef

The first thing you notice when entering Robby Ameen’s Manhattan apartment is the rich aroma of Cuban cigars, stroking your nose hairs like a dark breeze from an illicit island. Ameen’s walls are covered with cigar-box covers from Habana’s finest: Cohiba, Montecristo, and Bolivar.

The next thing you notice in Ameen’s abode is the cavalcade of percussion filling the room, including an odd-looking cone that has mysterious engravings, a set of vibes, a frame drum, a gamelan gong, a bell wheel, cowbells, woodblocks, panpipes, congas, doumbeks, bata drums, Indonesian drums, a Brazilian repinique, bongos, guiros, shekeres, turtle shells, chimes—and a doorbell from Spain with a rusted wheel that holds little bells that ring like a waterfall when you turn its crank. Oh, and a shrunk-

en iguana holds court near the fireplace.

Cigars, percussion, old land animals: Robbie Ameen’s world mirrors things of the earth, things primitive, percussive, and surreal.

A native of Manhattan by way of New Haven, Connecticut, Robby Ameen’s Lebanese heritage gives him a dark Latin

look, but the guy is pure American. Intense studies with teachers as diverse as Ed Blackwell, Fred Hinger, and Bill Fitch, along with hours of jam sessions and summers at Berklee, prepared Ameen for his current



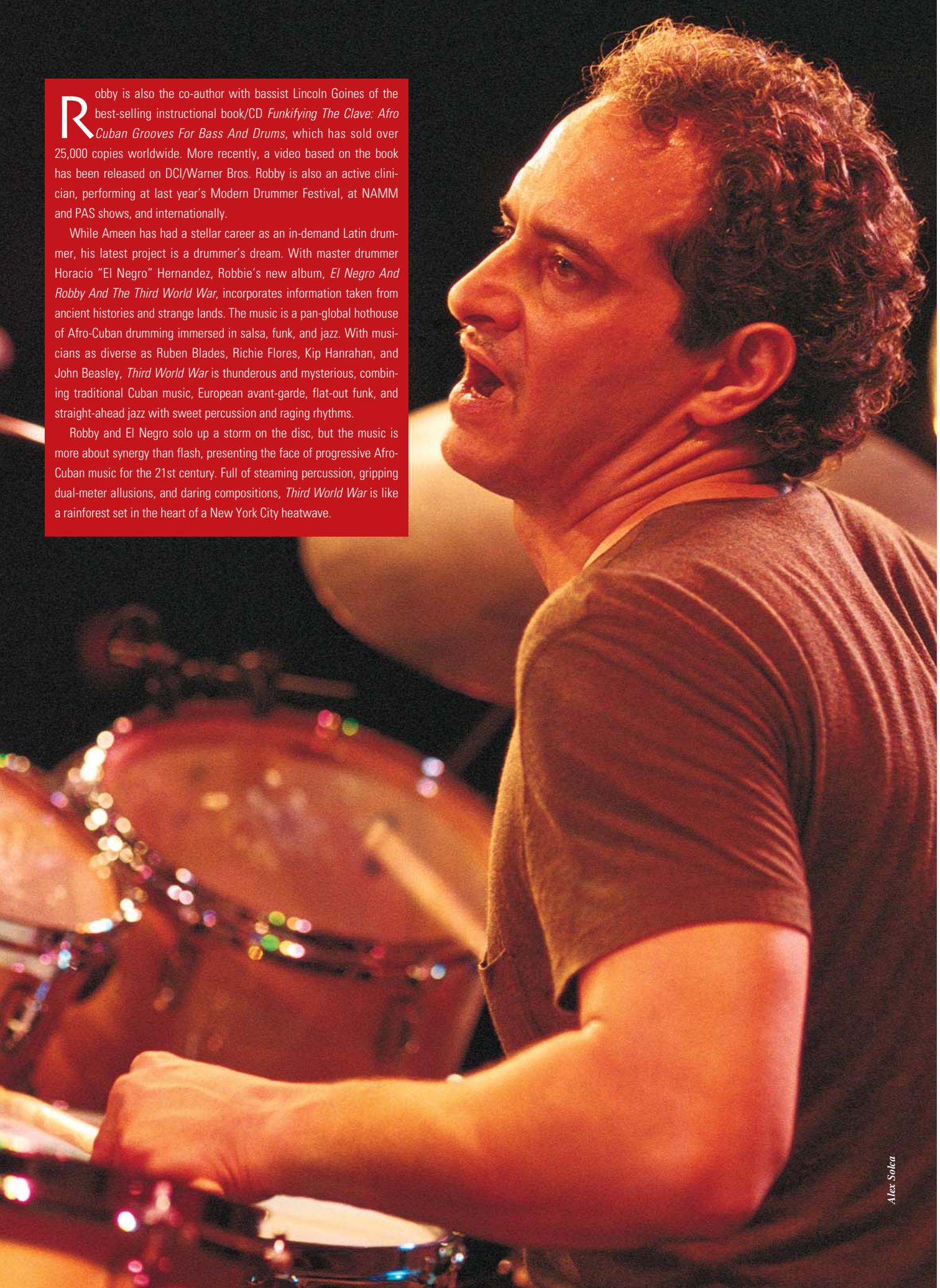
role as a funky drummer who can rip on guaguancos, jazz, and salsa alike. Employers have included Eddie Palmieri, Dave Valentin, Jack Bruce, Dizzy Gillespie, Paul Simon, Mongo Santamaria, Hilton Ruiz, Gato Barbieri, and Marc Anthony.

“I have a theory that drums are meant to be played in a group. Drummers should hang out and play together.”

Robby is also the co-author with bassist Lincoln Goines of the best-selling instructional book/CD *Funkifying The Clave: Afro Cuban Grooves For Bass And Drums*, which has sold over 25,000 copies worldwide. More recently, a video based on the book has been released on DCI/Warner Bros. Robby is also an active clinician, performing at last year's Modern Drummer Festival, at NAMM and PAS shows, and internationally.

While Ameen has had a stellar career as an in-demand Latin drummer, his latest project is a drummer's dream. With master drummer Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, Robby's new album, *El Negro And Robby And The Third World War*, incorporates information taken from ancient histories and strange lands. The music is a pan-global hothouse of Afro-Cuban drumming immersed in salsa, funk, and jazz. With musicians as diverse as Ruben Blades, Richie Flores, Kip Hanrahan, and John Beasley, *Third World War* is thunderous and mysterious, combining traditional Cuban music, European avant-garde, flat-out funk, and straight-ahead jazz with sweet percussion and raging rhythms.

Robby and El Negro solo up a storm on the disc, but the music is more about synergy than flash, presenting the face of progressive Afro-Cuban music for the 21st century. Full of steaming percussion, gripping dual-meter allusions, and daring compositions, *Third World War* is like a rainforest set in the heart of a New York City heatwave.



MD: How did you and Negro meet?

Robby: We met at the Jazz Plaza festival in Cuba in '84. I was there with Dave Valentin; Negro had just begun with Gonzalo Rubalcaba. We heard each other play and became best friends. We went down there with Valentin doing our take on Afro-Cuban—we didn't try to play traditional Afro-Cuban music. We wanted to mix Afro-Cuban with funk and jazz. We weren't trying to play their music. But Rubalcaba was carving out a whole new thing, rich in tradition but in its own category. A lot of it was the way Negro was playing and how he mixed with the percussionist. I was blown away. He and I became like brothers.

MD: Did you start jamming together?

Robby: We kept in touch for nine years, just seeing each other in Europe. Then he moved to Italy, and when I was there with Ruben Blades, Negro came to the gig. Eventually he did get to the States and when he did we hung out all the time.

MD: What did you actually play together? How did you find your roles?

Robby: I have a theory that drums are meant to be played in a group. Drummers should hang out and play together. If someone like Dennis Chambers is playing in town, a bunch of drummers will go and we'll all sit at the same table. Guitar and keyboard players don't do

that. With drummers, there's a competition, but it's to take the music to another level. Negro has some unbelievable stuff he plays, so he would call me up and share it. I wasn't playing left-foot clave at all until I saw him doing it. When I saw Negro in Italy, he had taken that to another level.

MD: Was he the first to do it?

Robby: I don't know, there were some percussionists that did it when they played congas. I believe Walfredo Reyes Sr. had done it. But as far as I'm concerned,

Negro was the first guy to take it to the level where it wasn't just a novelty. It's a challenging thing to develop. It's about being able to play anything you want with your hands over the left-foot clave, then freeing up the bass drum. Negro does all that. But with Negro and I, it's all about sharing. If I come up with something, or if he comes up with something, we share it with each other.

MD: You two have shared gigs too, playing together with Jack Bruce, like on his recent disc, *Shadows In The Air*. Did you

the Latin cats and Afro-Cuban playing. No matter how big the percussion section gets—congas, timbales, bongos, and drums—you never double each other. If a rhythm section doesn't have a bongo player, the timbale player can play the timbale bell ride and the bongo bell ride simultaneously. Otherwise, his left hand does something else. Same thing with drums in the band. I wouldn't double the timbale player. I might play a pattern off the clave.

So it was natural when Negro and I did

it. If one guy is playing 2 and 4, then the other guy isn't. And it depends on the music. Groove-wise, we try not to get in each other's way, but still find a groove where we're both playing different things—and we try not to be too busy.

MD: When you're surrounded by percussionists in a band setting, is your drumming more simplified?

Robby: There's a timbale player who plays with me in Eddie Palmieri's band, and in that setting I would still play on the bell of the cymbal, but I would find something else to play. I don't want to clash. When I first joined Dave Valentin, there was no percussionist. I was covering all the parts. There are different kinds of freedom. I enjoy playing alone and with a section.

MD: Do you react any differently with a percussion section from the way you do with Negro?

Robby: It's not a different head. Negro's approach is so percussion-oriented. We both know the parts that are played in a percussion section. Some of it comes down to who is going to cover what. We can intuitively sense what the other is going to do. We've been doing this for eight years.

MD: Can you sense each other's moods?

Robby: I think so. When we did Jack Bruce's record, we didn't even rehearse

Robby's Setup

Drums: Pearl Masters Series
A. 5½x14 Custom Bronze snare
B. 10x10 rack tom
C. 10x12 rack tom
D. 14x14 floor tom
E. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian
1. 12" AA Mini Hats
2. 15" AAX Studio crash
3. 13" AA El Sabor Salsa splash
4. 20" HH Manhattan ride
5. 13" AA Regular Hats
6. 14" AA Mini Chinese

Percussion: LP
aa. Rock cowbell
bb. Black Beauty cowbell
cc. Salsa Timbale cowbell
dd. Jam Block
ee. Black Beauty Sr. cowbell (on Gajate Bracket)

Heads: Remo Pinstripes on tops of toms and clear Ambassadors on bottoms, coated Ambassador on snare, and PowerStroke 3 batter on bass drum

Sticks: Vater Session model

instantly find that space that we hear on that record and on *Third World War*?

Robby: It happened naturally, we never really talked about it. It all started with Kip Hanrahan. I was used to playing double drums on his gig, first with Ignacio Berroa, then with Smitty Smith, and then with JT Lewis. I always dreamed of having Negro in the band.

When Negro and I get together, we really don't talk about it. We don't like to double each other like a lot of guys do in that situation. That probably comes from

the songs. We would run it in the studio and start recording. We never really said what we were going to do, unless Jack had a part in mind. Then we would play around it.

Jack's thing was very different. I played a regular drumset, and Negro had this drumset with an 18" bass drum, a small hip-hop snare drum, and djembes. Sonically, it was really different. We're both playing somewhat conventional kits on *Third World War*, with bells and stuff. On Jack's record we each had a different sound. A lot of times it's hard to tell what is what, but that was the idea.

MD: Why?

Robby: We still want it to sound like one drummer with a band. We don't want to sound like it's obviously two drummers. That could become cluttered. The music is still the main thing. There's no reason two or even three drummers can't play together. What's funny is, we're already thinking about our next record and doing it with a third drummer. We're thinking

about bringing in Jeff Watts.

On *Third World War*, we didn't have the same formula for every song. One has a heavy double bass thing that is unison drumming. But there's a difference sonically and feel-wise. Negro and I are very different drummers, which is the cool thing. There's a lot of overlap, but approach-wise and in tuning, we're very different. If anything, Negro is more on the beat to slightly behind the beat, and I'm more on top of the beat.

MD: The first thing I noticed about your early records with Dave Valentin was your bass drum. It's so weighty. That really makes the music groove. It sounds like that on every record you play on.

Robby: I hit harder than Negro. But to me, when we play together, it doesn't seem like a volume thing, because Negro gets a big sound out of the drums. Also, I've always been more of a groove guy than a solo/fill guy. I'm attracted to the groove in music.

MD: Is it predetermined that you'll play

the bottom groove and Negro will play more on the top?

Robby: Sometimes. But it's hard to say that, because Negro has a really deep groove. The main thing for us is knowing when to step back and give each other space. We focus on coming up with hip grooves before thinking about fills. We want grooves that stand on their own and support the music.

MD: I learned a lot early on from a conguero in New Haven, Bill Fitch. I would go to this jam session on Sunday afternoons and hang out, and they would let me play a couple tunes. I was thirteen or fourteen. Bill would play the rhythm all night and at the end of the night he'd play a solo that would be ridiculous. I became really good friends with him.

Fitch went to Berklee in the '50s and taught Don Alias. He was Cal Tjader's conguero. His first band in LA had Chick Corea on piano. Fitch studied composition, too. Giovanni Hidalgo has all of Fitch's solos memorized. He would play

Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez

Robby's Partner In Rhythm

Since arriving in the US in the early '90s as a member of pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba's touring band, Cuban native Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez has achieved fame as a conceptually brilliant and technically gifted musician. Negro often builds his solos around a clave pattern performed on a left-foot pedal, but can also swing straight-ahead jazz like nobody's business. And his stylization of traditional Cuban rhythms for the drumset is without parallel.

Negro played various drumsets and percussion on *Third World War*, the groundbreaking new record he's created with rhythm partner Robby Ameen. The drumset work by both men is incredible. But Negro insists that the main focus was the music, not the drumming.

MD: How did you and Robby set up in the studio?

Negro: We used three or four different setups. For the most part I used the set I played with Michel Camilo, which has bongos, a flat timbale, bass drum, two floor toms, and a bunch of bells and cymbals.

MD: Do you change your drum tuning for double drumming?

Negro: Not really. Robby has his way of tuning and I have mine. We play very differently, so there's no clash. Robby uses different heads than I do, and he hits harder.

MD: Your roles are very defined.

Negro: It's something that happens after playing together for years. Our playing is related a lot to percussion. You can play with a thousand percussionists and they all know how to talk to each other. They don't all say the same thing. They know how to listen and respond. Percussionists develop a different kind of hearing. You can play with more people.

MD: Are you trying to play where Robby is not?

Negro: Sometimes. We're just listening and interacting. He's doing the same right on the spot.

MD: Did this happen quickly?

Negro: Yes, and it could happen quickly because we're familiar with so many different rhythms. We grew up with everyone knowing everyone else's part. There were seven or eight people in every band.

MD: What goal or sound did you and Robby have in mind when you began the album?

Negro: I wanted to have a lot of music, not a lot of drumming. Make it from a drummer's viewpoint, but be more than just a drum beat or solo. It took a long time to put it all together. Just to have Robby and me together in New York at the same time was tough.

MD: Robby is a harder hitter, so are you more aware of volume level when you play live?

Negro: When we work together with Jack Bruce, we're usually playing outdoor festivals where you can hit as loud as you want, as long as it sounds good with the music. But it wasn't loud in the studio.

MD: What are the different rhythms that you played on the album?

Negro: "Sympathy For The Devil" is salsa or timba. "3 For Africa" reminds me of Weather Report. It's like a bembe. "Un Golpecito Na'Mas" is guaguanco, but in 5/4. It is a real guaguanco, not a fusion one. "Richie's Brain" is a drum duet written by Richie Flores. "Hit This, Split This" is hip-hop with a splash of Afro-Cuban. "All Jazz Era" is straight-ahead jazz. "The Moon Shows Red" is a new format—string quartet, two drummers, and trumpet. "La Timba Francesa" is timba. "Far From Beirut" is another 5/4 with a mix of many cultural things—a little Arabic world music. The hand clapping is on 1, 3, 5, 2, 4, 1, 3...you understand?

MD: What was the ultimate goal for this collaboration?

Negro: We wanted to transmit how we were feeling at that moment.



Ken Micallef

in seven, shaker in one hand, conga in the other.

MD: You and Negro must discuss some of the rhythmic allusions that occur on the *Third World War* album.

Robby: A couple tunes happened by accident. For instance, on the first day of recording we were getting drum sounds, but Negro had to split. It was John Beasley, Negro, and me. So before he left we quickly put down some tracks for sound, just falling into a groove. It was a slow 6/4, but I was inverting the backbeat, displacing it. Well, those tracks became the basis for "3 For Africa." We recorded the track and Negro was hearing the "1" in a different spot, and we thought that was great.

There are a couple tunes where I put down the first drum track and Negro overdubbed. I would have some idea of what he would do. That said, most of the drum stuff was laid down at the same time. On the bebop tune we played together, "All Jazz Era," Negro took a chorus with one

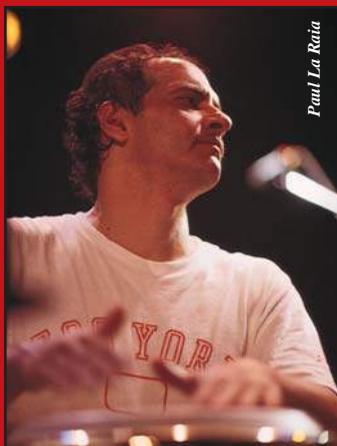
bass player and I took a couple choruses with another. But seventy-five percent of the time we're playing at the same time.

MD: Where did the title of the record come from?

Robby: The *Third World War* title came about because of 9/11. We were going to record "Sympathy For The Devil," a song we had planned on doing, on September 11, 2001. The guy with Negro's gear got stuck in the Holland Tunnel on the way to the studio just as it was happening. We were recording on Canal Street, just a few blocks from where the World Trade Center stood. We had to postpone the session for two days. Canal was the boundary. Everything was going on there, all of the sadness and destruction, and that's why we called the record *Third World War*.

MD: You're so busy all over the world. It's amazing you found the time for a duo record.

Robby: I play in five different groups. But most working musicians play in sev-



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Robby Ameen

eral groups, unless you're in a rock band. Even when I was in Ruben Blades' band, I was doing other projects. But the last seven years have been crazy for me. The most recent things I've been in have been Jack Bruce, Deep Rhumba, Negro, and Michael Reissler.

I like being involved in many different projects because I like playing a lot of different music. I think both Negro and I are like that, and that's why this record covers so much territory. Negro plays awesome straight-ahead jazz, even though he grew up in Cuba. I feel that we're all products not just of where we grew up but what we listened to. Joe Zawinul is from Austria, but I've heard him take the most perfect, short three-chorus blues solo that I've ever heard on Fender Rhodes. Where you go from your environment can be anywhere.

The positive side of "globalism" is that things are not so localized in terms of music scenes. I was a judge at a drummer's contest in Sao Paulo, Brazil put on by Vera Figueiredo. All of the contestants had that Brazilian thing down, but one cat was all pierced, was way into metal, and

played great. Another cat had an older Weckl style, another was total R&B. It's no longer the case that you're going to go to Brazil and just hear the real stuff. You'll hear that, but you'll also hear so much more.

It's the same in Cuba. They're into everything there. In the timba scene, it's salsa-based, but within it they might go into "Oleo," and people will be dancing! Then it might go into rap. They're breaking all forms. They'll start with the chorus and then go to the intro. It's all inverted.

MD: Wild.

Robby: In America, Latin music is all rule-based, all about the clave. But in Cuba, it's what you can put into it. To me, that's how the music gets deeper. There's no "commercial music" in Cuba. Their pop music is a good thing. It's people-driven, not market-driven.

MD: Are you playing mostly traditional rhythms on *Third World War*?

Robby: They're based on tradition. Negro and I are both influenced by Afro-Cuban music, but we didn't try to make an Afro-Cuban record by any means. There are two timba songs, "Sympathy For The

Devil" and "La Timba Francesa." They are salsa-esque. "3 For Africa" has that six, triplet feel. We weren't thinking clave on that. There are rumbas, yamburas, guaguancos. There is a string quartet on "The Moon Shows Red." That tune has a couple of different time feels. It goes into a rumba during the solo while the strings play a pizzicato part. We overdubbed the drums on that. Then there's other stuff that you can't pin down. There are very few bass players on the album. We just didn't need it. And we played double bass drums on "Blue, Red & White."

MD: How did you plan the record?

Robby: It took a long time. It was hard to schedule everything. Half of the record—the basic tracks for five or six tunes—was done in three days. We had some ideas worked out, and we generated them in the studio between John Beasley, Negro, and me. It took forever to complete, but the recording happened quickly.

MD: Did you use a lot of the percussion I see here in your home?

Robby: I brought a lot to the studio, and Negro has a warehouse full of stuff. He even brought a gong. On "Far From Beirut,"

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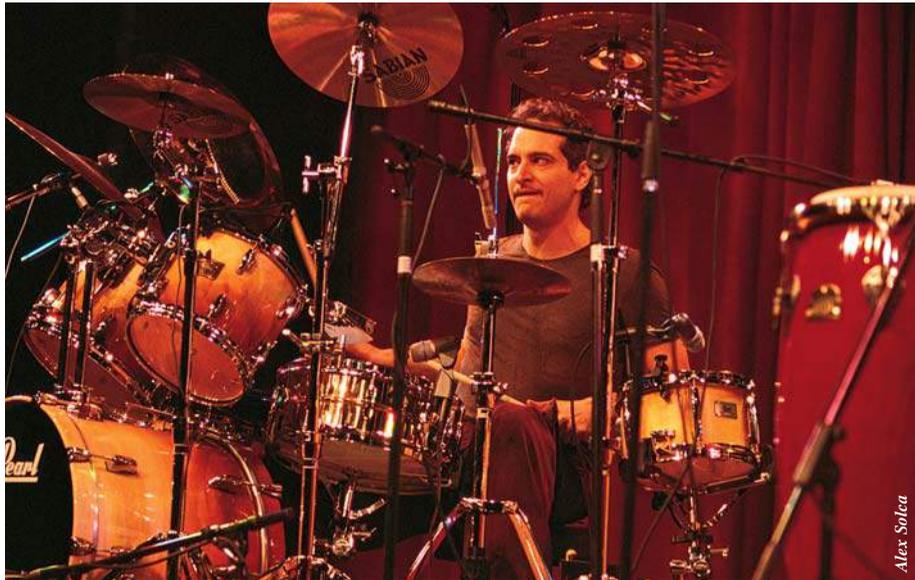
it was in five, but with a slow 6/8 imposed over it. We played five snare drums, kept doubling floor toms, doubling everything. We even used his gong.

MD: What's the meter of the hand claps at the end of that tune?

Robby: The pattern is in five. If you're thinking triplets, the pattern accents around the five. You accent every fourth triplet. Then we doubled that to make it big. Over that we added the bell part, as if that was the pulse.

To me, that tune always sounded like some *Last Temptation Of Christ* [Peter Gabriel] composition. Negro had a lot to do with that one. We just kept adding stuff in the studio.

MD: Talking about some of your other



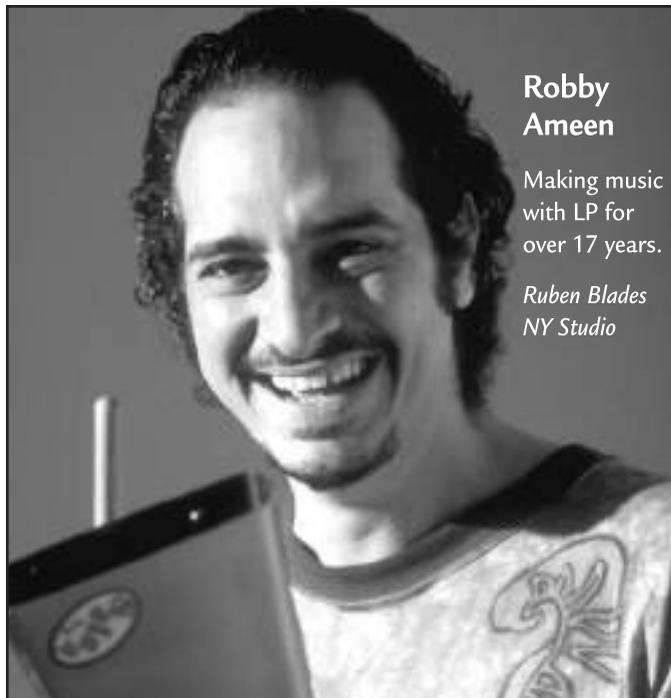
work, when you're playing with a percussion section, as on Eddie Palmieri's *Palmas*, is your role more about support? In that setting do you play a more solid and singular bass drum groove? Is it subordinate?

Robby: It is more supportive, as is the conga's role, as is the timbale. Everybody has a part to play. We're all cogs in a wheel. If you only have a conguero and a drummer,

but you're playing salsa, the drummer will cover all the timbale and bongo stuff. If there's a timbale player but no bongo player, then you cover those parts. But no matter how many people there are, that doesn't make your part any less interesting.

MD: It seems that the timbale and bongo players are soloing more in that style.

Robby: You don't have drums in a Latin salsa band. When I joined Ruben Blades, that was the first time that style had drums. In a typical Latin rhythm section, those guys are playing their parts. I found some other parts to play. In the verse of a song, the bongo player is soloing more than anybody. He'll play a basic pattern, but he'll also be riffing all the time. The conga



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Robby Ameen

drummer is basically straight, as is the timbale player. If anyone throws in licks, they're going to be very sparse. When the bongo player goes to the bell in the chorus, then he's playing the least. At that point the timbale player might get busier. The bottom line is, everybody has their spot.

MD: You had to find a new spot?

Robby: That band was about trying to do something new. We recorded tunes that weren't traditional salsa. I would play a backbeat without the usual 2 and 4. I would play the snare on the two side of the clave. It was about finding a place for the snare to sit. If you think in clave, what you play is less likely to clash.

MD: Do you cover all of this in your book, *Funkifying The Clave*?

Robby: I do cover a lot of it. But that book is ten years old. I play differently now. That book was about presenting traditional Afro-Cuban rhythms and applying them to the drumset. But that's only one way. The idea is to take it and apply it your own way. But you have to know the basic rhythms.

MD: Is there a misconception that drummers have about Afro-Cuban music?

Robby: If you want to get into it, you absolutely have to listen to the music itself and what all of the instruments are playing. Guys will learn a pattern on the drums, and the first time they have to do it with a bass

player, if they don't know the pattern, the bass player can't help them. The whole thing is meant to be played together. No one is playing quarter notes except the bongo player. There isn't anything to latch

Deep Grooves

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

Artist	Recording
Deep Rhumba	A Calm In The Fire Of Dances
Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez & Robby Ameen	El Negro And Robby At The Third World War
Ruben Blades & Son Del Sol	Live
Dave Valentin	Primitive Passion
Kip Hanrahan	Tenderness
Michael Reissler	Honey & Ash
Jack Bruce	Shadows In The Air

And these are the ones he listens to for inspiration.

Artist	Recording	Drummer
John Coltrane	Live At Birdland	Elvin Jones
John Scofield	Who's Who	Steve Jordan
Luther Vandross	Forever For Always	Yogi Horton
Miles Davis	Miles Smiles	Tony Williams
Hubert Laws	In The Beginning	Steve Gadd

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Robby Ameen

on to. The bass is the most important instrument. The music is from the ground up.

MD: What attracted you to Latin music?

Robby: It was on the side for me. I was really into straight-ahead jazz. I was into Trane and Miles in high school. But I was always around congueros and good percussionists. I would buy salsa records. But I was studying jazz. Being around guys like Bill Fitch helped me focus on Latin music.

I went to Berklee for two summers when I was sixteen. Guys would jam, and everybody was into Billy Cobham and fusion. I played jazz every night, but I started getting into fusion. I returned my drums and played some of that stuff. But when I came to New York in 1980 I started out playing bebop on the street. I would play standards with other musicians all day long—Penn Station at noon, Columbus Circle at rush hour.

MD: What do you tell people who want to learn Latin music?

Robby: Check out the *Music Minus One* records, the salsa records with no drums. That helps you figure out how

to groove with all this stuff and how not to clash. Also, for groove, Yogi Horton was one of the main cats for me. Yogi took the hi-hat somewhere else. He would

play guitar lines on the hi-hat. It was about approaching the hi-hat with sparse lines. Not a linear thing either, but a separate rhythm, which is like the Latin thing.

Yogi's pocket was deep. A lot of my funk stuff comes from him, and Steve Jordan.

MD: You also studied with Ed Blackwell. How long did you study with him?

Robby: Two years. I would play for him and we would listen to stuff. Plus he had exercises for soloing based on unorthodox sticking patterns. He was into movement and dance on the drums. Instead of playing hand-to-hand between rack tom and snare, for instance, he would do it the other way, doing doubles between tom and snare with one hand. He wanted you to move differently to see how that would affect the swing of a series of triplets. Ed's ride cymbal feel was closer to an 8th-note vibe.

MD: How did your career develop from the street to playing with the cats?

Robby: I played around town a lot.



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There was a lot happening in New York then, a lot of free stuff. I also played in a rock band. Then I got called to go to Mexico with a band led by Panamanian flute/sax player Mauricio Smith, who was in the original SNL band. He started calling me for Latin-market jingles. I was still playing on the street a lot, but I got to play jingles. Then I met Lincoln Goines, and we started a band called Future Paradise, which mixed funk and salsa. Dave Valentin came down to hear us, and he hired me. After that I joined Ruben Blades' band.

MD: Jazz, funk, Latin, even classical—what ties it all together for you?

Robby: I've always liked playing a lot of different styles, though inevitably you get pegged. But I am grateful that I get to do a lot of different projects. Yes, I'm best known for the Latin stuff, but I wouldn't only want to play one kind of music. I love to bash and I love to play the rumba.

MD: How do you keep your chops up?

Robby: I practice and I just play. Some things need constant work, like left-foot clave. I'm trying to get my bass drum freer against it. Negro can do anything over left-foot clave. I want that total freedom. When you really have left-foot clave together, it becomes like automatic pilot, where you can play out of time or over the time on top of it, which is really fun for soloing. It's like having somebody else there playing with you. There's always so much to work on. And in New York, there's always somebody coming up who will blow your mind, like Dafnis Prieto or Eric Harland. That keeps you motivated.

MD: You've mentioned possibly bringing Jeff Watts into a three-drummer setup. Any other plans?

Robby: As I mentioned, Negro and I are already working on a second album, and we just recorded four new tunes with Jack Bruce for his next record. There is so much stuff to do.

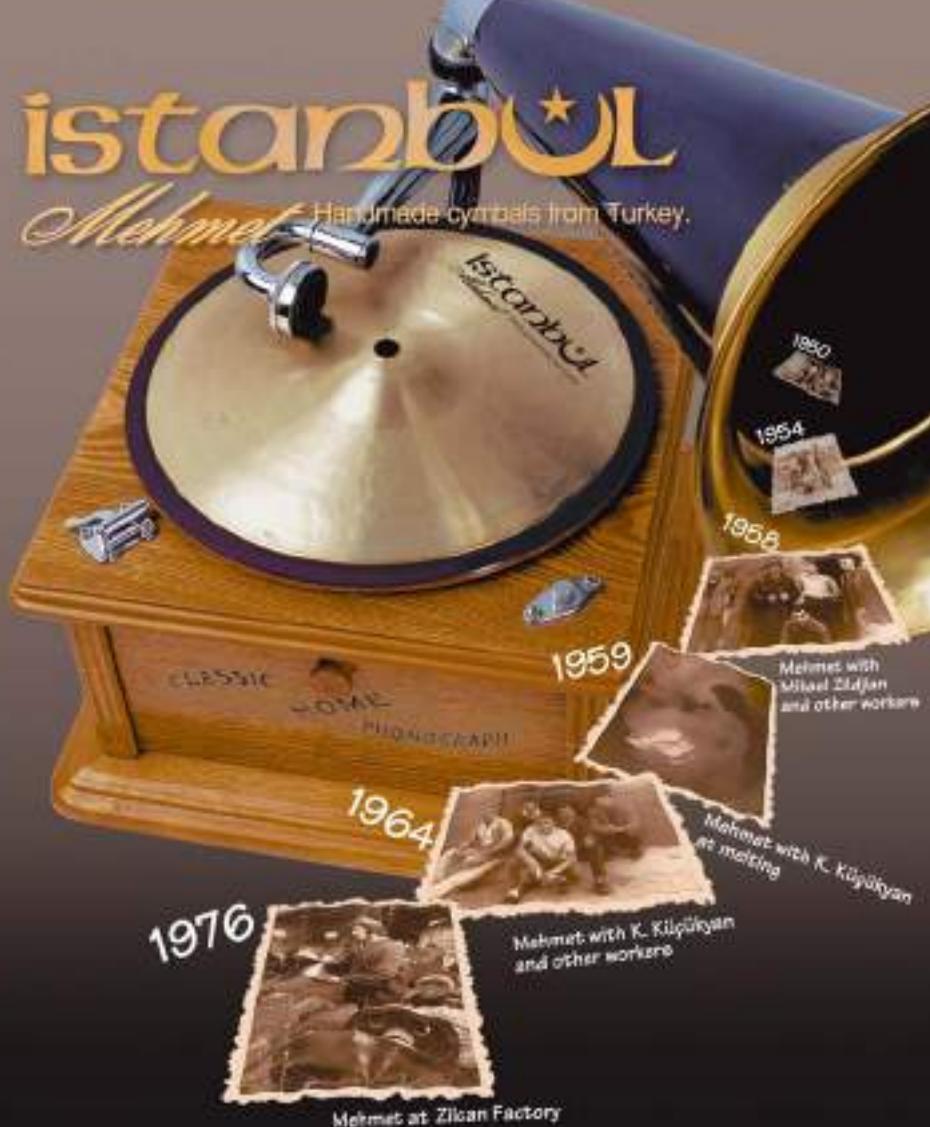
MD: Is there a common thread running through all of the different work you do?

Robby: Making it all groove, but still keeping it open, is what ties everything together for me. It really dawned on me that you want the music to be as open as it can be, but the groove has to be there. That's not a revelation, it's just common sense.



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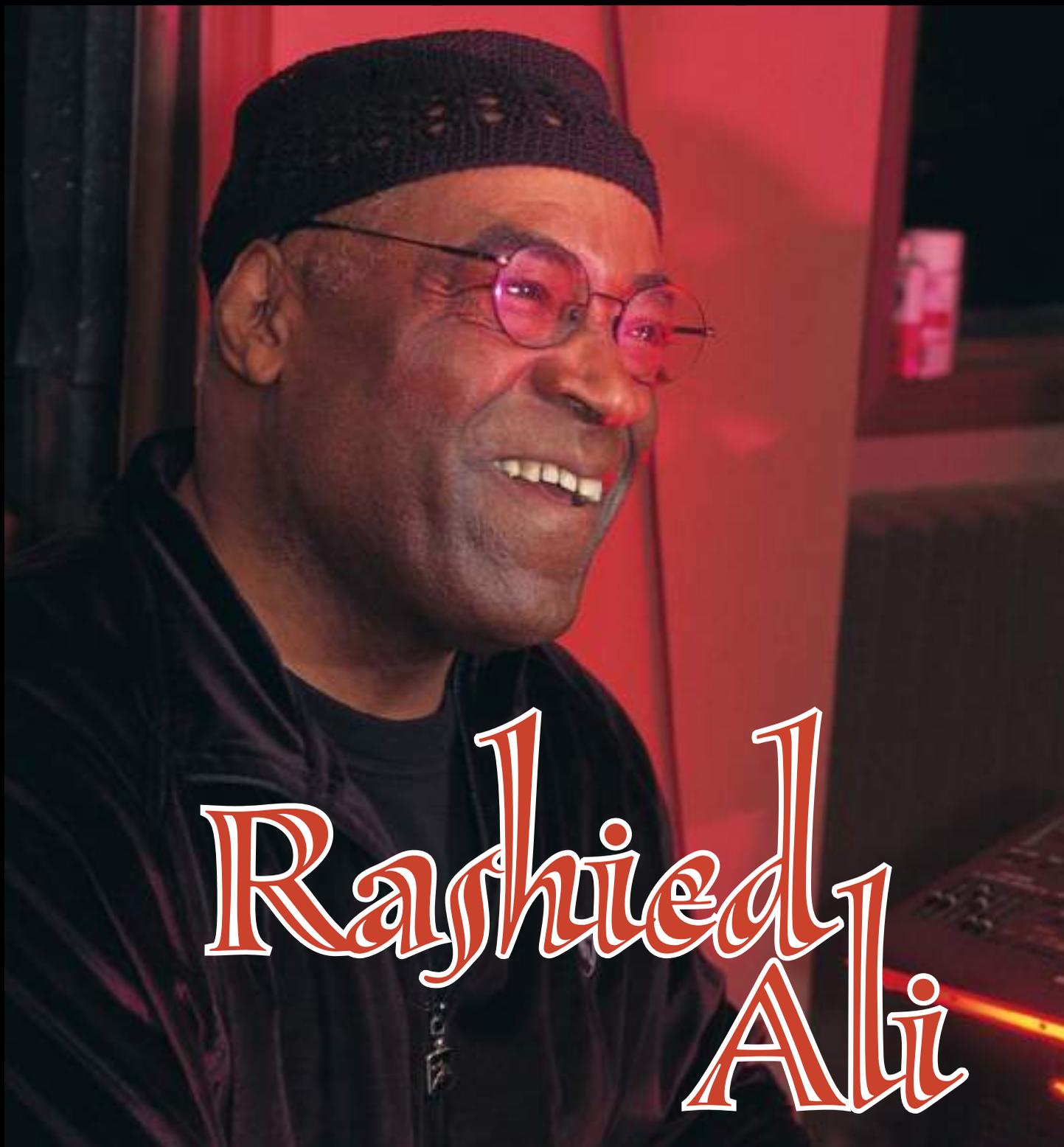
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Rashied Ali





“Every person had to be influenced by somebody, but the greatness comes when you go for yourself.”

Rashied Ali is inspiring to me both as a great, unique drummer and as a person who has steadfastly remained focused, fearless, and committed to the principles of excellence, artistic freedom, constant growth, and spirit in music. I first heard him play when I was a teenager in the mid-'60s at the Half Note in New York City, sitting in with John Coltrane. His playing was far different from anything I had ever heard. I intuitively realized his depth, though I won't pretend I understood what he was playing. Now, nearly forty years later, I have no doubt Rashied Ali is one of the great drum masters of all time, and his playing remains as mysterious and elusive to me as ever, which is one of many reasons I still enjoy listening to him.

Rashied's drumming suggests an entire ecosystem, the sound of the whole forest or the powerful rhythmic waves of the ocean. He plays with great force, and can burn and blaze like a volcano, yet his drumming has a tenderness, delicacy, and lightness to it and is *always* at selfless non-egoic service to the music.

Rashied is known to many as a “free” player, but he is certainly rooted in the jazz tradition and can swing like crazy when the music calls for it. However, he never seems creatively limited by these traditions or bound to any mechanical pattern-oriented repetitious way of playing. Two great examples of the swinging side of Rashied are his own date, *No One In Particular* on Survival Records, and one with spiritual master and guitar genius Tisziji Munoz, *Parallel Reality*,

on Anami Music. Both discs feature the wonderful saxophonist Ravi Coltrane, who Rashied has known since he was an infant.

Rashied's open way of playing was undoubtedly important in the musical and spiritual evolution of the great and always seeking John Coltrane. Certainly the duo album *Interstellar Space* is among the most powerful music ever recorded by two humans on acoustic instruments. And *Meditations*, featuring both Rashied and Elvin Jones together, could be the greatest example of two master drummers blending and merging to become one massive organic bed of sound and color. I saw that band play live at the Village Gate, and it was one of the most transcendental musical events of my life.

If Rashied had stopped there after his work with John Coltrane, he would have left us a great musical legacy. But of late he has done some of his most brilliant work, and at age sixty-seven is still growing, changing, trying new things, and playing better than ever. Rashied remains at the cutting edge of modern yet timeless music.

Visiting Rashied Ali for the purpose of this interview at his studio on Greene Street in New York City with my son Rafael on a lovely spring day was a beautiful experience. Rashied is a serious artist and powerful presence, but also a warm, funny cat and a gracious, generous host. I hope this article and the music of Rashied Ali inspires more young players to find their own visionary voices, go deeper, and be fearless and open to the infinite possibilities in life and music.

Mastery And Mystery

a conversation with Rakalam Bob Moses • photos by Paul La Raia



Bob: Maestro, it's a great honor to be here. You've been inspiring me for many, many years.

Rashied: Oh, man, that's beautiful.

Bob: Well, perhaps we should start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

Rashied: I was born in Philadelphia in 1935.

Bob: How early on did you realize that you loved drums?

Rashied: I've loved the drums ever since I can remember. I had a drum fixation. I also had some second cousins who played the drums professionally in Philadelphia. They played with Bird [Charlie Parker] for a while. My cousin Charlie Rice played with Chet Baker, John Coltrane, and different people back then in Philly. I also had an aunt who was an incredible piano player. In fact, Count Basie wanted to take her on the road when she was fourteen years old, but my grandmother nixed it.

Bob: What was her name?

Rashied: Esther. We used to call her Queen Esther. They used to have sessions in the living room where the piano was. The drummer who came to play was going with my aunt. I was about five years old when I was listening to all this. So that's when it first jumped on me.

I had a great childhood because music didn't take over my life. That was pretty cool. I went through childhood enjoying music and all that, but I did all my regular things too, like the boxing team....

Bob: Isn't Philly a big boxing town?

Rashied: It was. All the kids wanted to learn to box. But that really wasn't my thing. It was something I liked to do until I saw how ruthless it really is. So that kind of brought me back to playing music in my teens.

Bob: What were some of the first gigs you had?

Rashied: Some of my very first playing experiences were when I enlisted in the US Army. I got into the Second Army Band on a fluke, playing snare drum. I sort of weaseled myself in. I couldn't read a lick, not one note, when I auditioned.

Bob: Well, I'm sure you had great ears. How old were you then, eighteen?

Rashied: No, I was sixteen. My mom signed me in to get me off the street. She said it was better than being in jail. But she was brave because that was when the Korean War was going on. I could have been sent there, but I was lucky, I was sent to Germany.

The situation was really cool. I couldn't read, but the band was good. The cat would tell me to play a march, and I would know how it went after hearing it once. And then later on, right before they were getting ready to send me into active duty, this same cat got me into the Second Army Band, playing snare drum.

I stayed in the band for two years. I was also taking outside gigs with German musicians in the coffeehouses around Nuremberg, Germany. So I started moving

into the music while still in the service.

Bob: Then after the army you came back to Philly?

Rashied: Yeah. I was nineteen years old when I got out of the army. I was going to stay, but musically, I wasn't getting what I was really after. At that point I wasn't all that sure if I wanted to play music professionally or not. Bird died just when I got out of the service. I saw him play with Clifford Brown. There was a club in Philadelphia called the Blue Note; it was the original Blue Note, at 15th and South. I saw Bird there a couple times.

I befriended this cat at the Blue Note who had a little towel concession in the bathroom. He would let me come in, I would help him with his chores, and I would get to hear people like Bird, Diz, Clifford Brown, and Stan Getz. I felt right at home with that music at a really early age. I really felt like I wanted to do it, so I started playing drums with bands around town with cats my own age and equal, doing sessions and hanging out.

John Coltrane only lived four blocks from us when I was a kid. He was from North Carolina, but at the time he lived in Philly. He sort of kept his musical stuff in Philly because he came there as a teenager and was hanging out with people like Jimmy Heath, my cousin Charlie Rice, and all those cats. I probably saw him more than a dozen times. I just didn't know who he was.

Bob: In the neighborhood?

Stellar Tracks

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

ARTIST	RECORDING
Prima Materia	Bells
Prima Materia	Meditations
Rashied Ali Quintet	No One In Particular
Rashied Ali/Louie Belogenis	Rings Of Saturn
The Trio With Peter Kowald & Assif Tsahar	Deals, Ideas And Ideals
John Coltrane	Interstellar Space
John Coltrane	Live At The Village Vanguard Again
John Coltrane	Stellar Regions
John Coltrane	Meditations
John Coltrane	The Olatunji Concerts: The Last Live Recordings
Tisziji Munoz	Present Without A Trace
Tisziji Munoz	Spirit World (with Pharaoh Sanders)
Tisziji Munoz	Presence Of Truth (Dharma-Kaya) (with Hilton Ruiz)
Tisziji Munoz	Presence Of Joy (Samboga-Kaya) (with Dave Liebman & Cecil McBee)
Tisziji Munoz	Presence Of Mastery (Nirman-Kaya) (with Paul Shaffer)
Tisziji Munoz	Parallel Reality (with Ravi Coltrane)
Tisziji Munoz	Hu-Man Spirit (with Dave Liebman)

Rashied: No, they used to rehearse at my grandmother's house. I probably saw him rehearse at Charlie's house too and didn't know who he was because I was around twelve when those cats used to play.

I probably didn't recognize Trane until he was with Miles Davis, when he was living on 33rd Street in the house that he bought his mom. That's when it came to me who he was and how bad he had become. He was playing with Miles Davis and Philly Joe Jones, who was my idol.

Bob: Fill in the years before you got with Trane as a player.

Rashied: I worked in Philadelphia in a lot of different groups. I worked with Dick Heart & The Heartaches and Big Maybelle. Then I had a band with Mohammed Habibala, who was a tenor saxophonist. I heard Trane play with him too. I was doing a lot of bebop gigs. I was playing with Lynn Bailey, who played baritone saxophone. Then I played with Hassan Ibn Ali, who was a piano player.

Bob: I know him. He did a record with Max Roach.

Rashied: Yeah. I played with Hassan for a long time. Hassan is the cat who got me

into playing outside.

Bob: Really? I was wondering about that.

Rashied: He was completely nuts, and I was really listening to the stuff he was playing. When Hassan came on the scene, he was a young kid. They used to call him

Little Count because he was a Count Basie freak. But he just got into playing all kinds of stuff. He would go buy a brand new tie, ask the salesman for scissors, and then cut a piece off and just have a little stub hanging there.

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Rashied Ali

Bob: My kind of guy.

Rashied: He was an eccentric cat. And he played piano like that. I worked with him in some coffee shops in the late '50s. But anyway, I played with just about everybody you can think of around Philadelphia. Then I moved to New York.

Bob: What year was that?

Rashied: This was 1963. And after three days of being here I was working with Don Cherry. Pharoah Sanders got here about two days before me. So did bassist Gene Perla and pianist Jane Getz. We all played for about three months straight at this club down on MacDougal Street. And then they started changing up. Paul Bley took the gig and I played there for about a month with Paul and Gary Peacock.

Bob: Who were some of the drummers that you were enjoying then?

Rashied: At that time it was Sunny Murray, of course. I knew him in Philly, so we kind of came up together. He came to New York around '61. And the next time I saw him he was back in town playing with Cecil Taylor in Philly. That was in '62, and I was thinking to myself, Man, I better get out of here and go to New York. There's some cool stuff going on. But it was beautiful because Sunny really moved us in a whole other direction.

I'll tell you, when I got to New York I heard a lot of great drummers, but I was so into wanting to play avant-garde. So I was just practicing as hard as I could, playing with everybody I could. Archie Shepp and I would play all day every day, from morning 'til night. I was playing with all the

cats. I also did some stuff with Albert Ayler and Marion Brown.

Bob: So is it fair to say that you had a need for a more liberated style of drumming?

Rashied: I wanted to play anything *except* ding-ding-da-ding. I would do anything I could to stop from doing that—not that I'm putting that down.

Bob: I understand.

Rashied: I came from that. I learned it thoroughly. I knew how to ding-ding-da-ding, but I also knew that it would bug me to death if I had to keep doing that for my whole life. I had to do something different. I had to find something else to play. The music called for that. The music was moving on.

I was listening before I was a musician, before I was a player, and I heard stuff that Philly Joe Jones would play where he

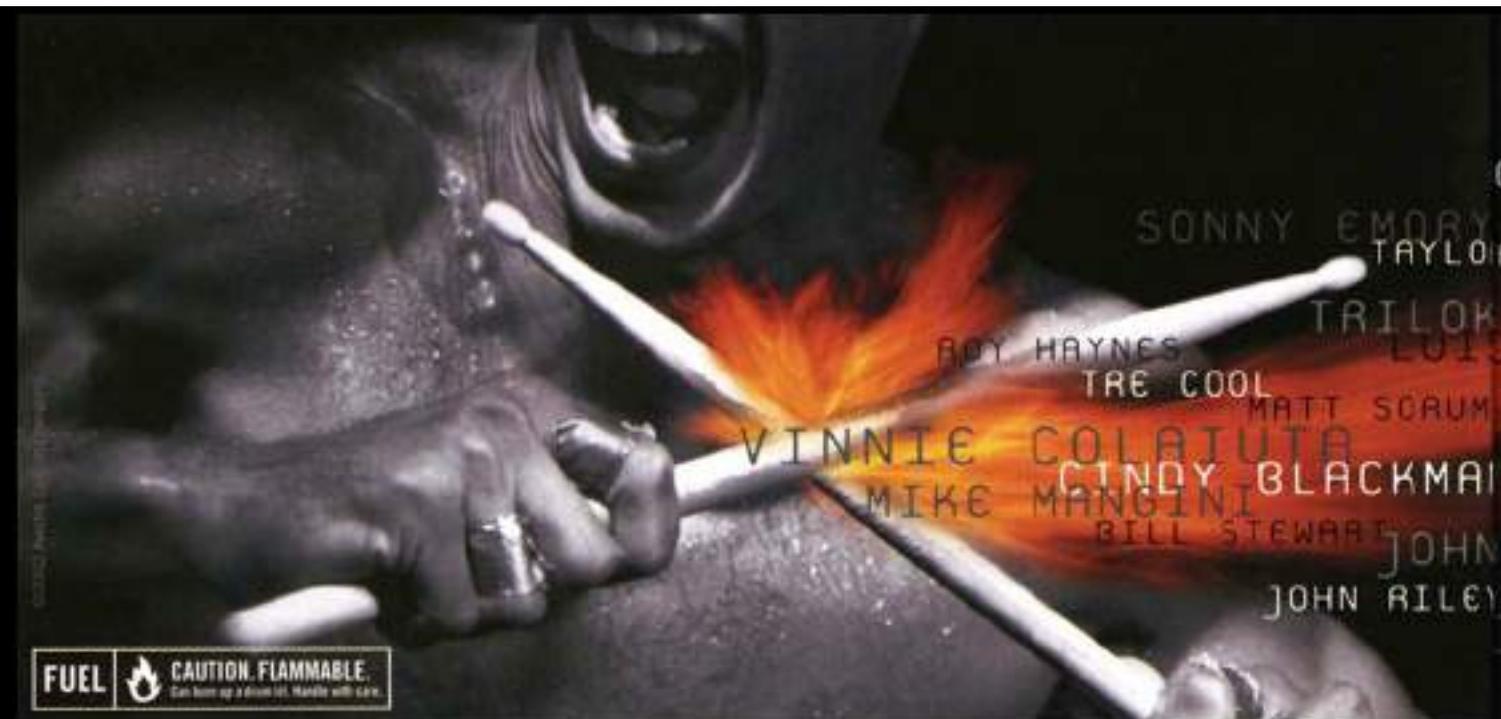
would extend the phrase. He would do it for just a short time. But I was thinking, What if he could keep extending it and keep it out there like that, but keep in mind where everything else is? Don't forget where the 1 or the 2 is, but just keep stretching it out."

And then Elvin Jones and Trane blew my mind because they started doing that in a way where it was elastic. The stuff just kept going and going, and it wasn't that 1, 2, ding-ding-da-ding stuff. And when I heard that, I was thinking, I wonder how far you could stretch that out? So I started practicing hard, playing with everybody, trying to get this kind of a sound together. And around that time in Philadelphia, I tried to sit in with Coltrane because I knew he was playing that kind of music.

Bob: So this was when you still lived in



Two masters meet: Moses and Ali



"I knew how to ding-ding-da-ding, but I also knew that it would bug me to death if I had to keep doing that for my whole life."



Philly?

Rashied: Yeah. That was the early '60s, about a year before I decided to move to New York. I was trying to play with Trane then. He had just gotten the band together at that time. He told me, "Not right now. I'm trying to get a sound." So I just kept on, running around Philly listening to Ornette Coleman, Eric Dolphy, and all these people.

Bob: Visionaries.

Rashied: Right. I put bands together with double drums and double basses, doing stuff like that in the clubs. We were getting gigs, but not really the best gigs. Sometimes we'd make it all the way through a night without being fired, sometimes we didn't. But we were at least trying to play like that in Philly. When I came to New York, I felt right at home musically. It

was really great because I met people like Milford Graves and Andrew Cyrille. So I was now around people who I could communicate with musically.

Bob: How did you get the gig with Trane? And what year was that?

Rashied: I was playing with Albert Ayler and Archie Shepp, and Trane would come to a lot of our gigs just to listen to us play. He was checking us out. He would be playing at the Half Note and then come down.

Bob: That was the first place I saw you play with him.

Rashied: I used to go down there too and just sit on the steps and watch. Then one night I was sitting there and Elvin didn't show. John said, "You want to play?" But Jimmy [Garrison] said, "Hey man, there's Roy Haynes over there." But John said, "Come on, Rashied. Come up and play."

And that was my first time. It was so beautiful.

Bob: So that was with McCoy Tyner and Jimmy Garrison?

Rashied: It was the regular Coltrane quartet. I then went back the next day and played with them again without any problem. I was going, "Wow, this is heavy." I knew there was something that I was doing that made sense. It was about being able to play with another musician and play whatever he's playing but play it more open than before. Just elongate those stretches. I was really trying to find that. It worked with everyone else I was playing with, and I thought it would work with Coltrane—and it did.

Bob: Definitely. I remember hearing you there with him. The thing that struck me was that even though you were playing some radically new stuff, sonically you reminded me of some of the bebop drummers in the way you provided a circular cushion of sound to play over.

Rashied: My first love was Max Roach. My second was Art Blakey. And then I fell madly in love with Philly Joe Jones. I had to get away from Blakey, though, because he had some stuff that I thought was humanly impossible to play. I just left his style alone because his snare drum rolls alone scared me to death.

Bob: They were a force of nature.

Rashied: Max Roach was the most melodic drummer I ever heard in my life, and I think that's what got me up on trying to play drums.

Bob: For me too. I remember how beauti-

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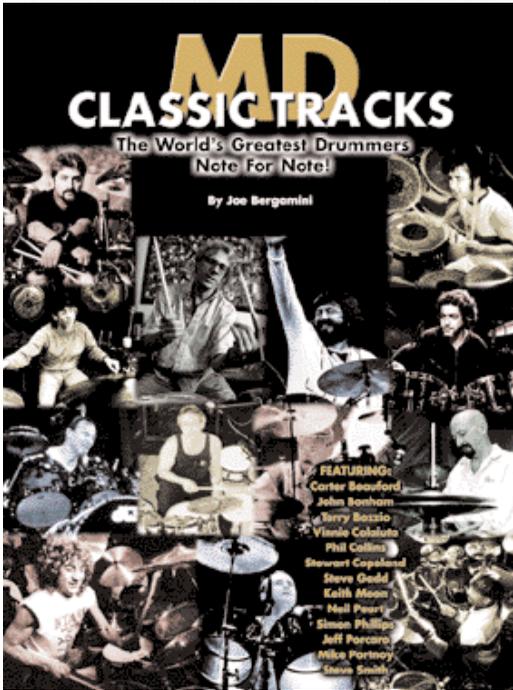
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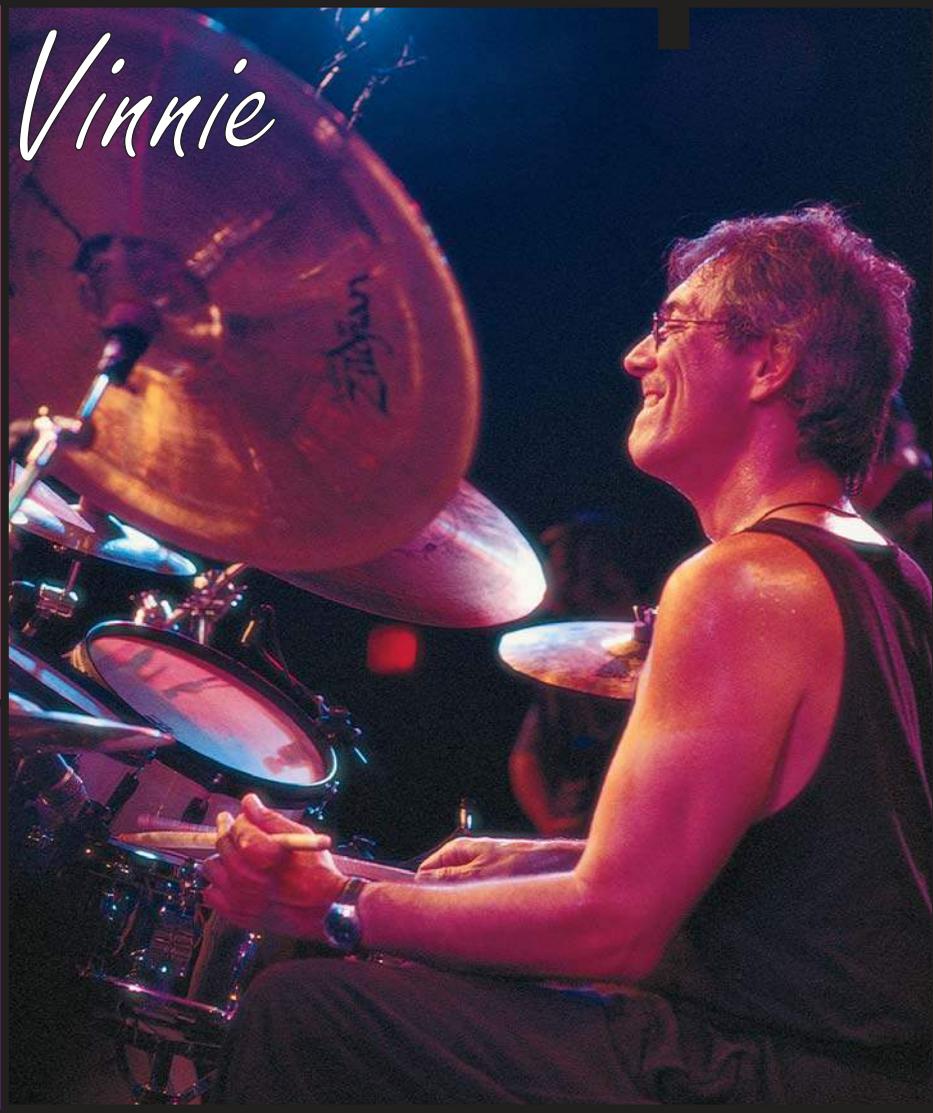
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Rashied Ali

fully he tuned his drums.

Rashied: Like a melody. And that helps in all music, to learn melodies. So that's where I was coming from.

Bob: When I first heard you at the Half Note with Coltrane, your playing was so free *and* so swinging. How do you do that?

Rashied: I'm dealing with the time in my head and trying to play against what I'm thinking. It's definitely a time thing, and you can hear it, especially a musician. A layman might not be able to hear it because they're not related to the time value. I'm definitely in the mode where the time is, but I'm playing everything I can against the time, which makes it multi-directional.

"Multi-directional" is a term that John came up with. One time we were in Japan sitting on a train, and he said, "You know that stuff you play, those multi-layers and stuff? It's multi-directional. I can play anything I want while you're playing that. I can play a ballad, I can play fast, I can play slow, I can play anything."

Bob: It's flexible. It's letting the universe into your groove.

Rashied: But it all comes back to the low-down dirty blues. That's where it all came from. You just embellish it more, deal

more with the overtones or the freedom of it. It's like a revelation. You just listen to Trane, listen to Eric, listen to people who are playing—Art Tatum even. There were some cats who just played it differently.

Bob: I think that the great swing or time players always have an element of freedom in their playing.

Rashied: Bird was a free player. I heard Bird play live, so I know. I mean, on those records, he was only playing two or three choruses, but live.... You know, Bird played at my high school dance, which was incredible. My cousin Bernie was playing drums with him, and I was there watching these cats. He would solo for twenty minutes, something you wouldn't hear any cat do on a record. Bird was an open player when you really think about it. He played all kinds of stuff on those changes.

Bob: I think horn players like Bird and Trane were a bit ahead of their rhythm sections. They were going for something more organic, yet the drummers and bassists were locked into the time. I couldn't wait to hear a drummer who was going to go out there with them.

Rashied: Charlie Mingus and Max Roach were that kind of rhythm section for Bird,

because they were really trying to play something different for that time. When the music moves, for it to be successful, the rhythm section has to move too. Like you said, the stuff Bird was playing was so ahead of the rhythm section that the cats had to move up to him. So he wound up with a group with Bud Powell, Max Roach, and Charlie Mingus, which was the avant-garde of those days. Bird couldn't have used Louis Armstrong's rhythm section. There's no way that would have worked.

Bob: I think many musicians master a style and certain structures, and then it can become mechanical. They feel safe in doing that, and they know it's going to sound good. But to play open, free, rubato, from zero, like you were playing with Coltrane, requires a certain fearlessness, which I think is beautiful. You always sound perfect playing free. I also love to play free, so I know how difficult it is to try to sound good when there's nothing to lean on. A lot of people are afraid of that much freedom. They don't know what to play.

Rashied: I think it's the hardest music to play because you've got to make something out of nothing. You've got to bring

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Rashied Ali

something out of nowhere. It's much harder to play like that.

When you're playing that music and you really get it going, man, it's beautiful because everything starts falling into place. Sometimes two people can do it, like a saxophonist and a drummer. But when you get a whole *band* to play like that, it's some of the most beautiful music you can ever have in the world.

If you could sit down and write stuff like that out.... Well, some people do, like George Russell. He wrote stuff like that and it was incredible. In fact, Max Roach did an album of George Russell's music, and it's amazing.

Bob: George is a great man, and he loves the drums.

Rashied: I know he does. You can tell.

Bob: Let me ask you about when you first joined Trane. He had a transitional group for a while. I saw one performance at the Village Gate with Elvin Jones and you on drums, along with Jimmy Garrison, McCoy Tyner, and Pharoah Sanders. The album *Meditations* came out of that. When I heard that band it was some of the most powerful music I had ever heard. You and Elvin together were like a great ocean of rhythm.

I loved that sound. To me, that was an incredible combination.

Rashied: I remember that gig. Trane had asked me to do some recording with him, and I went like, "Yeah, I would love to do a tape with you. Am I the only drummer playing?" He said, "No, Elvin is going to play." I said, "Oh, man, I just want to play by myself." He said, "Well, let me know if you change your mind." And they went to the studio and made *Ascension*.

Archie Shepp called me and said, "Hey man, we've been in the studio. How come you weren't there?" I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "I didn't want to ask anybody, but I thought you were going to be there. Freddie Hubbard was there, Dewey Johnson, John Tchicai, Marion Brown. They were all there." Aw, shit, me and my big ego blew that gig.

After that the group went out to California to perform. When they got back, Pharoah called and said, "You know, John is supposed to open at the Village Gate tomorrow night." I said, "Oh, yeah?" He said, "He's been talking about you. You ought to give him a call." So I called him and said, "Hey, John, how are you doing? You're playing a gig tomorrow?" He said,

"Yeah." I said, "Can I bring my drums up? I'd love to play with you." He said, "Sure, you can bring your drums, but Elvin's going to be playing." I said, "That's fine with me, man." So that's the way it went down. I had to bite my ego in half, get rid of that nonsense, and go play some music, and that's what I did. That was my first gig with Trane.

Bob: I remember that your vibe was beautiful. You were extremely focused, as always, and you looked so happy playing. But I got the feeling Elvin wasn't too pleased about it. How did he seem to you?

Rashied: It was just kind of weird, you know, especially coming into a situation that's been existing for many years. But that just goes to show you how great an artist John Coltrane was, because he was only concerned with the music. He was in pursuance, he was trying to find it, and it didn't matter about who didn't feel what. That's not what he was about.

Bob: You've been able to lend your playing to great spiritual players like Coltrane and others. You're one of the most creative yet non-ego-driven drummers. I don't ever feel you trying to take attention. All your creativity is at the service of the vibe of the music.

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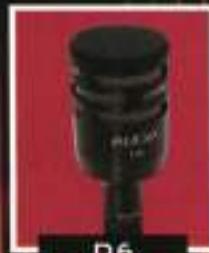
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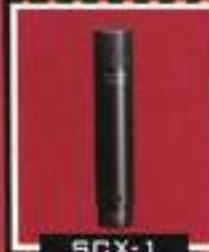
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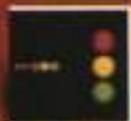
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Rashied Ali

Rashied: That's what I'm going for. I'm out to enhance the music and make the music work. If everybody comes together well, the reward is incredible. It's just like a rush that you get when it really pops, when everything is really going good. And when you hear it back you're going to say, "Wow, this is really the way it should be going."

Bob: I recently got the recording of you with Trane live at the Olatunji Center, which just came out. It's a raw recording but very powerful music. You sound like a firestorm on that. Hearing that recording, it seems to me that the direction the music was going wasn't really appropriate for jazz clubs. Do you agree that this kind of music is less about entertainment and more about spiritual healing?

Rashied: Yes, but that's also entertaining in itself.

Bob: For those who are ready.

Rashied: What you're saying is ironic, because John was saying at the time that he was playing this music and trying to put it into some kind of perspective. I really feel that the music he was creating—after time with our help, of course—was toning down to be able to be played in clubs. Because if you notice...what was the record that came

out right before that?

Bob: *Stellar Regions*.

Rashied: There were a bunch of tunes that John started writing at the time that were tailor-made for quartet. I think on that record it was all quartet.

Bob: That's right: John, Alice, Jimmy, and you.

Rashied: Right. He was scaling his music down to tunes that were lasting six, seven, eight minutes. He was styling that music down to be able to play in the clubs.

Bob: Interesting.

Rashied: It was. I started doing that myself. In fact, I recently recorded that whole record over again because I felt that I could play it better now than I did when I played with Trane. So I re-recorded it using a group I was going to start working with. Allan Chase and Louis Belogenis play saxes on it, Wilbur Morris plays bass, and Greg Murphy is on piano. The group is called Prima Materia.

Bob: When did you record it?

Rashied: We did it over two years ago, but it should be coming out shortly. I just wanted to play those tunes again, and I was lucky enough to have someone like Allan who was able to transcribe all the music on the

record so that we could play it. He wrote all that stuff out for the two horns. We call it *Configurations*. We also recorded *Meditations* with that band. And we recorded an album dedicated to Albert Ayler, doing all his music. We play a lot of different kinds of things with that band.

I really do believe that right now this music is ready for that kind of acceptance, because we have an audience for it now, we really do. We could get beboppers to listen to this music the way we play it now. But I remember when we were with Trane, it was crazy, it would take no time for us to empty out a place. When I say, "empty it out," I mean *empty it out*.

Bob: I remember going to some gigs with Trane and seeing many people walking out in the middle.

Rashied: One time we played in New Jersey and Trane was doing what he was doing, beating on his chest and screaming into the microphone and all this stuff. He told me he couldn't find anything to play on his horn so he just started screaming.

Bob: One of the reasons I admire you is that you've kept on that forward tip and didn't dumb down your music in any way. You've kept the integrity and somehow managed to

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Rashied Ali

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Rashied: I think the '90s were good years for avant-garde music. I played a lot of major clubs, and I'm now actually getting more gigs playing just what I want to play. I don't have to bring in the bebop band or the funk band or something like that. I feel like the scene is now a little better. Of course I don't think it's ever going to be like popular music. But it's respected. As long as it's respected, that's the bottom line.

Bob: When I first came in, you were talking about passing the music on to the next gen-

eration. Do you have any word for young musicians, young people about life and music?

Rashied: That's really hard to answer, because everybody's got to go through this thing at his or her own pace. I'm rooting for the young musicians, I'm rooting for the future, because I think this music has a future and it's about finding it.

I can say, keep trying to be yourself, whatever you do. Every person had to be influenced by somebody, but the greatness comes when you go for yourself. I think that's what we all need to do. That's what

Trane did. He was always in pursuance. Think of what he accomplished from 1955, when he joined Miles Davis, to '67, when he died. Amazing. The man had a mission. He was in pursuance of something. You just have to be after something, and if it's music, that's what it is. Allah has kept me alive, he's kept me good, and all I had to do was play music. That's a blessing in itself.

Bob: Your playing is highly concentrated and focused. You seem to be that way as a person. What is it about how you live that enables you to play that way? I'm sure you agree that how you live is how you play.

Rashied: That's a fact. I've been blessed to have a wonderful wife, Patricia, who has given me the freedom I need in order to exist to play music. She wasn't demanding about it. And that helped me be more assured of what being a family man and a musician is about. My wife is the one who motivates me to be the very best that I can be.

I also think I'm playing better now because I've gained a lot of wisdom over the years. When I was younger, I played with a lot of energy, but I wasn't playing anywhere near the shit I'm playing now. The older I am, the slicker and wiser I am, and I can get what I want out of the drums without frustration or brute force.

Bob: We never sat down and talked like this up close before, but I've seen you through the years and I must say that you seem happier, stronger, and more centered than ever.

Rashied: And musically too. I feel like what I'm doing right now is some of the best stuff of my whole life.

Bob: Well, you are a tremendous source of light and truth, and I'm glad you're passing that on to the young ones. I look forward to hearing your new projects with some of these great young players.

Rashied: You'll be hearing them.

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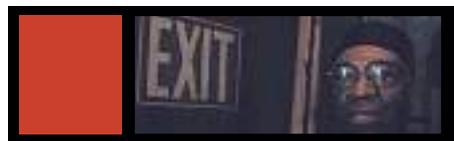
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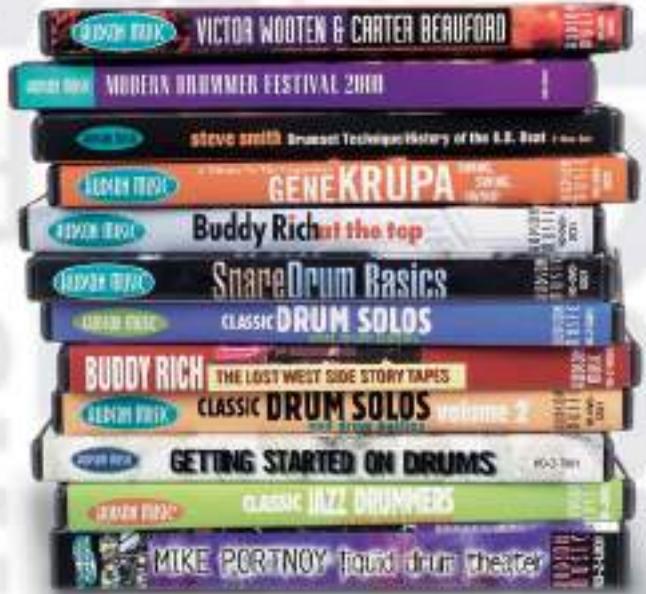
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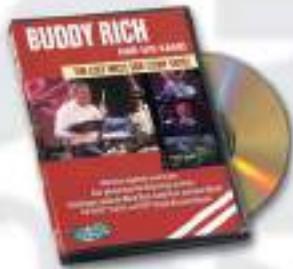
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different rhythmic configurations. The first half of each example presents a paradiddle stroke variation, which is followed by the corresponding paradiddle stroke invert (which can be referred to as a stroke paradiddle).

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All of the following examples lay out the paradiddle stroke in

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8a

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

8b

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

9

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

10

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

11

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

12a

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

12b

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

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Understanding The Language Of Music

Part 16: Putting It All Together

by Ron Spagnardi

In this, the final installment of our series, we present three standard tunes so that you can test your understanding of everything you've learned, and apply some of your newfound

keyboard skills. Each tune is notated in standard "lead sheet" format (melody and chord symbols).

"Time After Time" (Jule Styne)

Key Signature: C. Time Signature: 4/4. Form: Thirty-two-bar ABAC

What To Watch For: Note the I, vi, ii, V7 progression in the first four bars, and the use of half-diminished (measure seven) and full-diminished chords (measure twenty-eight). Be sure to always correctly distinguish between the two: \emptyset = half-diminished ($\flat 7$), \circ = full-diminished ($\flat \flat 7$).

Notice the $\flat 9$ th extension (a $B\flat$) on the A7 chord in measure twelve. Do you also notice that the $B\flat$ on the third beat is the melody note? Composers often make the extension a part of the chord symbol, even though the extension occurs within the melody. A similar thing occurs in measure fifteen, where the D in the melody is actually the $\#11$ th of the $A\flat 7\#11$ chord.

The musical score for "Time After Time" is presented in a lead sheet format. It consists of 20 measures of music in the key of C major and 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in the treble clef. Chord symbols are placed above the staff, and Roman numerals are placed below the staff to indicate the harmonic structure. The score is divided into four systems of five measures each. The chord symbols are: (1) CMaj7, (2) Am7, (3) Dm7, (4) G7, (5) CMaj7, (6) Am7, (7) Dm7, (8) G7, (9) CMaj7, (10) Am7, (11) B \emptyset 7, (12) E7, (13) Am7, (14) F $\#$ \emptyset 7, (15) B7, (16) Em7, (17) A7 \flat 9, (18) Dm7, (19) Dm7, (20) A \flat 7 $\#$ 11, (21) G7, (22) CMaj7, (23) Am7, (24) Dm7, (25) G7, (26) CMaj7, (27) Am7, (28) Dm7, (29) G7.

(21) CMaj7 (22) Gm7 (23) C7 FMaj7 (24) B^b7

(25) F[#]7 (26) Fm7 (27) Em7 (28) E^b7

(29) Dm7 (30) Dm7 D^b9 (31) CMaj7 (32)

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“It Could Happen To You” (Jimmy Van Heusen)

Key Signature: G. Time Signature: 4/4. Form: Thirty-two-bar ABAC

What To Watch For: Lots of major 7ths and dominant 7ths. Also,

notice the D7^b9 in measure sixteen, the E+7 in bar 24 (a 7th chord that requires a #5th), and the C-Maj7th in measures ten and twenty-six (a C minor triad with a major 7th: C, E^b, G, B).

(1) GMaj7 (2) B⁷ E7 (3) Am7 (4) C[#]7 F#7

(5) GMaj7 (6) CMaj7 (7) B7 (8) E7

(9) Am9 (10) C-Maj7 (11) GMaj7 (12) F[#]7 B7

(13) Em7 (14) A7 (15) Am7 (16) D9 (17) D7^b9

(17) GMaj7 (18) B⁷ E7 (19) Am7 (20) C[#]7 F#7

(21) GMaj7 (22) CMaj7 (23) B7 (24) E+7 E7

(25) Am7 (26) C-Maj7 (27) GMaj7 (28) B°7 E7

(29) Am7 (30) D9 (31) D7^b9 G (32)

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“Come Rain Or Come Shine” (Harold Arlen)

Key Signature: F. Time Signature: 4/4. Form: Thirty-two-bar ABCD

What To Watch For: This great old Harold Arlen standard is the most complex of the three tunes presented. Many non-chord tones are cleverly woven throughout the melody. The chord progression includes a number of dominant 7ths, major 7ths, 9th extensions, and diminished chords.

Finally, notice the smooth movement of the ascending bass line in measures twenty-five through twenty-eight (D, E, F, F#, G, A, B^b). Note how the line gives a strong sense of forward momentum and intensity that builds to the end of the tune.

In case you’ve forgotten, the D/F# in measure twenty-six is a slash chord (discussed in Part 14), indicating a D chord with the 3rd (F#) in the bass.

(1) FMaj7 (2) Em7 A7 (3) Dm7 Eb9 (4) Dm7

(5) G7 (6) C9 C7^b9 (7) F7 (8) Cm7 F7

(9) B^bm7 (10) Fm7 (11) B^bm7 A^b7 (12) Gm7 C7

(13) Fm6 (14) E^bm6 (15) A^o7 D+7 (16) G7 C7 C7^b9

(17) FMaj7 (18) Em7 A7 (19) Dm7 Eb9 Dm7 (20)

(21) F#m7 (22) B7 (23) A7 (24) Em7 Eb9

(25) D7 Em7 F°7 (26) D/F# G (27) Am7 BbMaj7 (28) A7

(29) Dm7 (30) G7 Eb7 A7 (31) Dm7 (32)

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Moving Forward From Here

We've come a long way in this sixteen-part series. Now it's up to you to continue to study, improve your keyboard skills, and further your understanding of the language of music.

Though a great deal of information has been presented in this series of articles, we've only scratched the surface on the subject of theory and harmony. However, there are dozens of great books on the market that go into much greater depth than what we've been able to do in this series. You can also find a wide selection of song books, artist folios, sheet music, and fake books at most large music shops. This is a great way to analyze the music of many major recording artists, composers, and rock and jazz performers. Don't overlook the opportunity.

If you've followed this series from the onset, you've certainly taken a major step towards better understanding the language of music. Be sure to go back and review anything you're still unsure

of, and continue to improve your keyboard skills with daily practice. (If you missed any part of this series, all sixteen installments will soon be available in book form through the *MD* Library.)

As you continue to expand your skills and knowledge, make a conscious effort to listen to as many different types of music as possible. With so much great music out there, avoid getting trapped in just one genre, thereby limiting your understanding and appreciation of so many other styles. As you widen the scope of your listening habits, make it a point to always listen analytically, and do your best to apply what you learn.

Your ultimate goal should be continual growth, not only as a fine drummer, but as a *total musician* with an above-average understanding of the music you're required to perform. The more you know about the complete musical picture, the better drummer you're apt to become. Good luck.



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Dave Weckl

Latin Style & Analysis

by David Latour

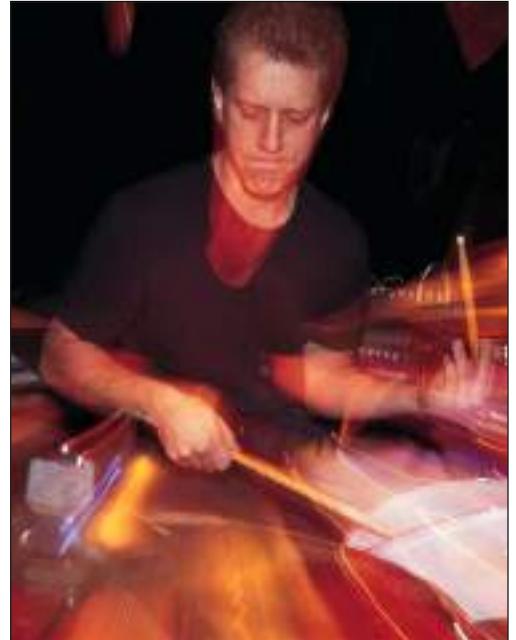
MUSIC KEY

There's no doubt that Dave Weckl has changed the face of drumming. His groundbreaking performances with The Chick Corea Elektric Band and now with his own band have left drummers mesmerized by his chops and creative approach.

My approach to drumming was certainly changed when I heard Weckl's first solo album, *Master Plan*. I was excited by what I was hearing and just sat there listening, wondering how he was playing what I was hearing. One song that stands out is "Festival De Ritmo," a Latin-flavored tune with lots of horn pops and vamps to solo over. A few months ago I started analyzing this track and little by little came up with the following transcriptions.

First let's go over a few things that Dave discusses in his second instructional video, *The Next Step*. Dave is a master with triplet figures between his hands and feet, and in his video he goes over several exercises to develop these fills. His ability to combine the following patterns in any order, on any part of the beat, and with light-speed and accuracy, makes these fills *sound* more complex than they really are.

The following examples show a one-beat figure and then a repetitive one-measure figure to practice continuously. Having these hand and foot combinations under control will help you execute the fills in the transcription. (I've numbered the examples to correspond to the numbers in the transcriptions, so you can see how Dave applies each fill.)



1 LF RF R

2 L R RF

3 L RF R

4 RF RF R

5 R L RF

6

7

8

9

10

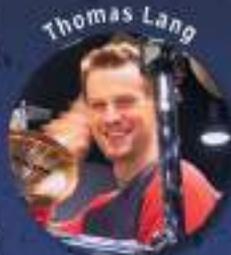
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Improv Playhouse 2

Destination Ostinato

by Matt Wilson

In this month's fun-filled installment of "Improv Playhouse," we'll explore the ostinato. What is an ostinato? A 1960s European sports car that earned a solid reputation for its sleek styling, exceptional handling, and impressive acceleration? A short tubular pasta usually served with a hearty shellfish sauce? A small felt hat worn by Canadians on Arbor Day?

Actually, the ostinato, or the vamp, is a repeating rhythmic or melodic figure. Actually, the ostinato, or the vamp, is a repeating rhythmic or melodic figure. Actually, the ostinato, or the vamp, is a repeating rhythmic or melodic figure. (I couldn't resist.)

In many forms of music worldwide, the ostinato is a very effective foundation on which to base a composition or improvisation. I am captivated by the exuberance found in a Cuban montuno, the funky energy in a thirty-minute James Brown vamp jam, the soulful expression of a Robert Johnson vamp blues, the life force of a Brazilian batucada, or the passionate intensity of John Coltrane exploring over a



melodically as well as sonically and texturally. When we play, we should treat the ostinato as our supportive friend that is our partner in the music. In addition, you don't need a permit from most local gov-

Oftentimes, when we put ourselves into unfamiliar territory, we emerge with amazing results. We rely more on our natural instincts than on our intellect.

vamp. In addition, Indian, African, Scottish, Bulgarian, Indonesian, Korean, and numerous other cultures employ the ostinato in their music.

Improvising over vamps is cool for many reasons. Because a vamp is repetitive, it gives us the opportunity to hear and absorb the feeling it creates. We then can shape what we play rhythmically and

erning agencies to improvise over a vamp.

Sit down at your drumset, relax, and let us begin. Greet your drums and take a few quality deep breaths. Play quarter notes with your bass drum at a slow tempo. Begin to compose over the vamp with the remaining limbs. Go for it, have fun. *Smile.* Try not to think, just play. Record it if you have a device.

When you've completed your improv odyssey, relax. Now let me ask you a few personal questions. Obviously I am not in your present company, so it's your choice whether to respond aloud.

1. Did you play *every* part of the set during the improvisation? Every cymbal, drum, cowbell, etc.?
2. Did you play continuously with little or no space?
3. Did you play with dynamics?
4. Did you feel you played what you always play (your *Book Of Licks For All Occasions*)?
5. Where were you on the night of February 23, 2002?

Okay, enough of the interrogation. Before I continue, please remember that everything you played was valid, because you were improvising. You composed something that was your own. Let's discuss before we give it another try and see if we can open up some new avenues to explore.

Did you answer affirmatively to question 1? Please don't feel the need to play everything on the set all of the time just because it's there or because you've bought it. I once saw the great Al Foster play two amazing sets of music with Steve Kuhn and Ron Carter. He never played his beautiful China cymbal perched so elegantly in front of him. Perhaps he wasn't hearing it as part of the evening of music's vibe. Cool!

As far as question 2, what do horn players have to do that we don't have to do? They must stop making sound, and breathe. When they breathe they leave space. "The notes I handle no better than most pianists. But the pauses between the notes, *ah*, that is where the art resides!"—Artur Schnabel. (Thank you, Peter Erskine!)

Question 3: Was it loud, then louder? I remember a great circa-1970s television ad that stated, "If you want to get someone's attention...whisper." Give that ol' *pp* (very soft) to *p* (soft) a whirl sometime.

If you feel trapped by your own vocabulary of ideas (as in question 4), you're not alone. You can open new worlds right now. Let's take a step back and simplify what we do. Instead of adding, let's reduce. Imposing limitations allows us to explore with patience, clarity, and freedom.

Perhaps try these few suggestions/limitations.

Example 1: Improvise between your smallest tom and largest cymbal.

Example 2: Improvise by only playing whole notes with your left foot and left hand.

Example 3: Improvise at a *pp* dynamic level, leaving absolutely no space.

Example 4: Improvise with a mallet in one hand and a plastic bag in the other.

Example 5: Play twelve short notes total for the complete improvisation.

Now try composing over the bass drum vamp again. Give yourself *no more than two* limitations (regions of the set, dynamics, limb choice, note values, stick choice, length of solo, etc.).

How did it feel this time? Did you feel the song you created had a flow and that you were truly improvising? Were you able to make the most of your limitations? My father likes to use the term "field experience," making the most with what you have. Oftentimes, when we put ourselves into unfamiliar territory, we emerge with amazing results. We rely more on our natural instincts than on our intellect.

Also remember the ostinato figure can be in any limb(s) and played at any tempo and dynamic level. Avoid the urge to make the vamp complicated. A simple idea is fine, for it allows us to explore, learn, hear, feel, and gain confidence.

"When you understand one thing through and through, you understand everything."—Shunryu Suzuki.

Have a fun time trying out these concepts. Apply them in a variety of musical settings. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at matwiljazz@aol.com. Oh yeah, where *were* you on the night of February 23, 2002?

Matt Wilson currently leads three projects, The Matt Wilson Quartet, Arts & Crafts, and The Carl Sandburg Project. In addition, he is a sideman in a bunch of diverse musical units, including those led by Dewey Redman, Bill Mays, Jane Ira Bloom, Denny Zeitlin, and Ray Anderson. Matt is also a Zildjian and Pearl artist/clinician.



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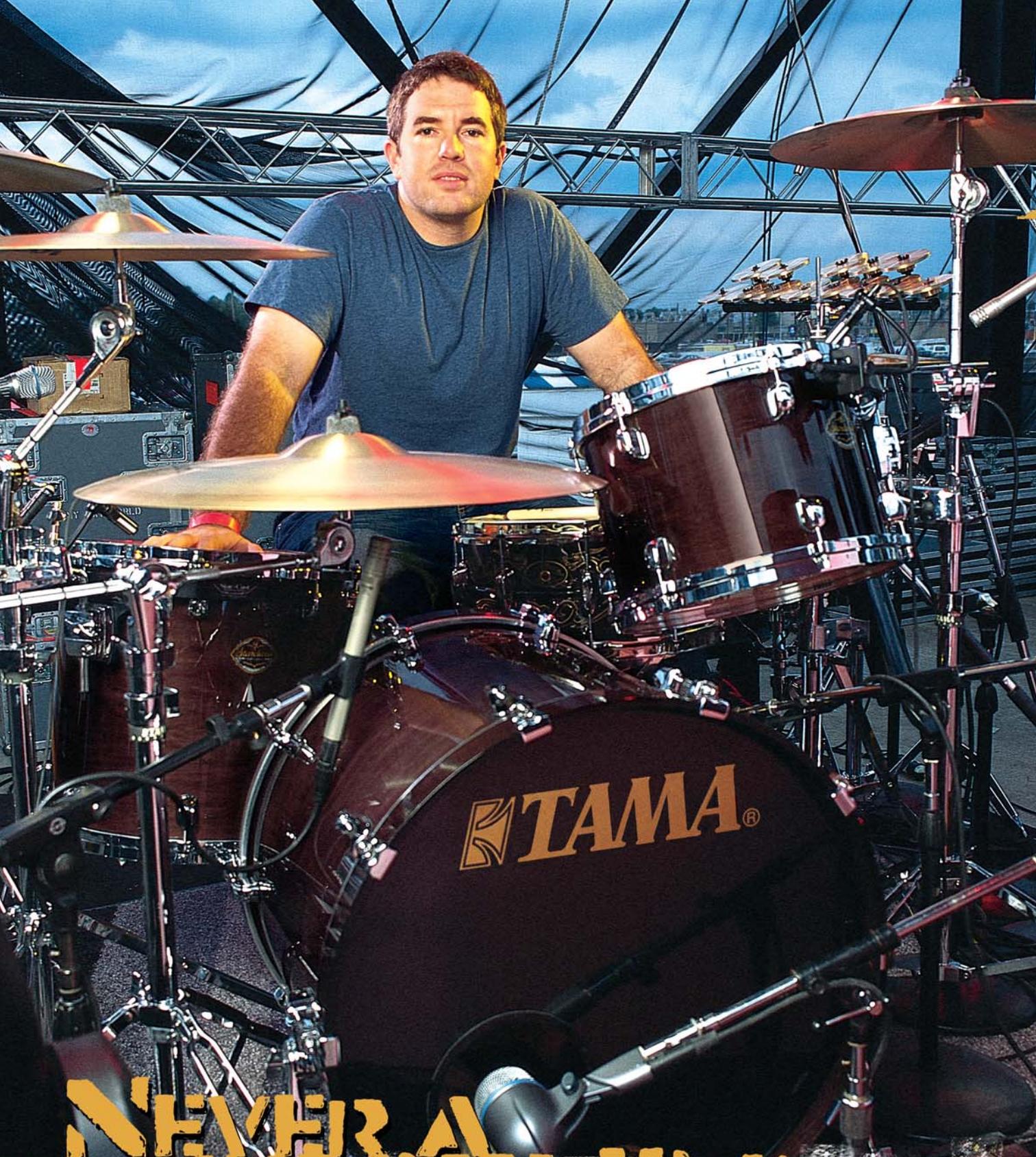
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"Like most people, I came up with my set-up gradually. It's still pretty simple, just two toms, but they're versatile and they sound really big. I like to tune my toms very low, so a really large tom like an 18" wouldn't work. But with the 14 x 15" you can still tune it low so it sounds close to a 16 and the same thing works with the 13".

"Live, I only use the 18 x 22" although I'm thinking of adding a second kick. In the studio, we usually build some kind of an extension on the bass drum; we've even put several bass drums together just to give a drum tunnel effect. The long 18" depth gives me that kind of sound live. Plus the 22" diameter lets you bring the toms in closer than a 24". I like to have things pretty close to each other. I don't like to be reaching out.

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Ringo's Top-15

A Listener's Guide To His Classic Tracks

by Jim Duffy



Is it possible to quantify the influence the Beatles have had on pop culture? The release of *One*, coupled with other post-breakup releases from the Fab Four (*Anthology*, *Live At The BBC*), has people taking a second look at the incredible impact the Liverpudlians made on the music scene of the 20th and 21st Centuries.

Understandably, the songs themselves are the strongest legacy, with the brilliant writing talents of Lennon, McCartney, and Harrison being the focus of attention. As musicians, McCartney delivered some of the most melodic and innovative bass lines in popular music, while Harrison's simple yet wonderfully appropriate solos and Lennon's aggressive, almost percussive rhythm guitar work rounded out the front-line. But often, too little credit is given to the backbeat generator of the group, whose contribution was an essential part of that distinct "Beatle sound."

It seems that too few modern drummers view Mr. Starkey as a cutting-edge percussionist. While Ringo himself has often stated that he is not a technician, he was unquestionably an innovator and a distinct influence on thousands of drummers who've picked up sticks since the early '60s. This, among his many other contributions, has earned him a recent induction to the Percussive Arts Society's Hall Of Fame.

Many drummers have been surprised at Ringo's performances in early Beatles concert footage. From 1962 to '64, Ringo was a powerful stage drummer. A good example of this is the footage of their first American concert at The Coliseum in Washington, DC on February 11, 1964, just two days after their debut on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Ringo plays with an aggressiveness that's not evident in most television appearances or in his studio work. Although this was partly to compensate for little or no amplification of

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the drums on stage, it also reflects the raw energy and enthusiasm that carried the Beatles through the most demanding period of their lives.

But Ringo's real impact came in the studio, for it was here that he helped create the Beatles' vast musical legacy. These are the performances on which we will focus.

As a drummer with thirty-six years of experience—with many of my earliest patterns and breaks learned from playing along with Beatle vinyl—I've compiled what I feel are "The Top-15" Ringo Starr studio performances. I should state up front that, although I am an avid Beatlemaniac, I take a down-to-earth view of the group not as pop gods, but as innovative musicmakers who managed to stay three steps ahead of audience expectations and other bands throughout their career.

You may agree or disagree with the selections. But hopefully they will entice you to dust off your vinyl records, pull out your CDs (or go out and buy them for the first time) and take a close listen.

15. "The End" (*Abbey Road*) This track

belongs in the lineup simply because it was Ringo's only true drum solo, albeit only sixteen seconds long. Ringo has often said he never felt comfortable performing drum solos. This is most likely due to his lack of formal training, as he never acquired the stick control needed for truly impressive solo work. According to Beatles chronologist Mark Lewisohn, "The End" was the only Beatles song to have the drums occupy two of the eight available recording tracks. Ringo recorded seven versions of the solo,

While Ringo himself has often stated that he is not a technician, he was unquestionably an innovator and a distinct influence on thousands of drummers.

each one completely different. The released version (take #7) borrows heavily from Ron Bushy's Iron Butterfly drum epic, "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida." But this is not to take away from Ringo's spirited performance. His powerful strokes nail the solo with

authority. His simple, open hi-hat pattern, following the solo, drives the Harrison/Lennon/McCartney guitar duel without stepping on the blazing licks (which are some of the best ever laid down in a Beatles tune).

14. "In My Life" (*Rubber Soul*) "Elegant simplicity" best describes the drum work on this classic, one of Lennon's most beautiful and personal songs. Ringo had used a similar pattern on "All I've Got To Do" (*With The Beatles*) and "It's Only

Love" (*Help!*), but it seems more at home here guiding the intricate vocal harmonies and George Martin's piano solo. The simultaneous cymbal bell/snare break going into each chorus is another unique touch. A perfect example of how, quite



often, the best drumming is the simplest.

13. "I Feel Fine" (Past Masters, Vol. 1) Ringo shows good independence here with a Calypso-type pattern. Notice how he adds some 16th notes on the bell of his ride cymbal, while working his tom with a double strike in between the downbeat snare hits. As tricky as this pattern is to master, he appears to play it with ease in the *Beatles At Shea Stadium* film.

Also listen for the break coming out of the guitar solo, where his upbeat double-stick strikes on the snare are countered with a pulsing kick drum. The song is also noteworthy as the first popular rock record to incorporate a deliberate guitar feedback effect.

12. "Wait" (Rubber Soul) This song features some nice percussion work, with Ringo supplementing his drumkit with tambourine and maracas. He doesn't deliver a regular drum pattern until the fourth measure of each verse, allowing the tambourine to launch each stanza alone. His cymbal crash and fast tom break leading into the chorus work exceptionally well as a separator, and his soft-to-loud dynamics on the bridge help drive that segment to a hard conclusion. This song was originally intended for the *Help!* album but was shelved, then resurrected near the end of the *Rubber*

Soul sessions.

11. "Hello Goodbye" (Magical Mystery Tour) Here's another tune where Ringo avoids the standard hi-hat/snare routine and opts for a pounding tom-tom rhythm through each chorus. His simple hi-hat closures at the beginning of the second verse are a nice touch, and the lengthy four-measure break at the head of



the third verse would qualify as a decent solo if it weren't for the chugging violins. This upbeat number is ripe with fun fills that are a blast to play along with.

10. "Help!" (Help!) This is another good example of "less is more." Ringo's clean playing through this Lennon rocker can best be described as calculated restraint. I've heard countless Beatle cover bands do this song, yet I've never heard any drummer nail the break going into the chorus as smoothly as Ringo. Everyone tends to overplay it. Watch the opening sequence to the movie *Help!* where the group performs the title track, and notice how simply and effortlessly Ringo performs this fill by simultaneously bouncing his sticks on snare and floor tom. With his matched-grip technique, it's a thing of beauty, which he makes look deceptively easy. Ringo used this type of simultaneous double-stick fill often, where most drummers would opt for the more conventional R-L-R-L figure. Besides "Help!," this is most noticeable in the break coming out of the bridge in "Tell Me Why" and the intro and outro to "Eight Days A Week."

9. "Yer Blues" (The Beatles/"The White Album") Besides being a solid rock drummer, Ringo also distinguished himself as an excellent blues drummer. From early tunes like "Baby's In Black," to this classic Lennon blues parody from *The White*



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Album, to "Oh! Darling" on *Abbey Road*, he consistently drives a solid beat to Lennon and McCartney's soulful vocals. On "Yer Blues," he punctuates the end of each measure with a tasteful break. But the best part of the song comes just before the "Wanna die" choruses as he punctuates Lennon's guitar riff with a beautiful half-measure of 16ths on the snare. He performs a similar break going into the bridge of "Oh! Darling," but to my ears this one simply works better. Incidentally, the unique "hollow" sound to this song was accomplished by recording the band in a small storage closet adjacent to the studio.

8. "A Day In The Life" (*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*) This haunting masterpiece, considered by many fans to be the ultimate Beatle song, is made all the more poignant by Ringo's percussion work. His dramatic fills throughout the song, beginning with the second verse, complement the powerful images of Lennon's lyrics. (Ringo used similar fills the following year in Harrison's "Long Long Long" on *The White Album*.) His switch to double time for the final verse also works well coming out of McCartney's middle bridge segment. The initial track was recorded with bongos and maracas only, the drum parts being added during an overdub session the following day.

Much of the credit for the success of this song goes to George Martin and engineer Geoff Emerick, who ushered in a new standard of recording rhythm tracks with *Sgt. Pepper* and *Revolver*. Emerick has said that he was often reprimanded by Abbey Road Studio's conservative chief technicians for placing his mic's too close to Ringo's drums in order to capture the impact of stick on skin. But with the clout of the Beatles behind him, he and Martin were soon given free rein to experiment. The results are obvious.

7. "She Said, She Said" (*Revolver*) This under-appreciated track features heavy cymbals and loads of fills, similar in feel to "Rain." Notice how Starr keeps the kick drum pounding out 8th notes during each break, which adds a sense of continuity to the fills and helps create that distinctive "Ringo sound." In the bridge, as the timing switches from 4/4 to 3/4, then back again, he holds to steady snare strikes on each downbeat, providing a simple yet effective way to hold the song together. Also notice

how he adds a sense of urgency during the fade by switching to a double-time pattern.

6. "Come Together" (Abbey Road) A perfect example of Ringo's performance serving the music so well. He creates a heavy, driving beat behind this strange Lennon composition, with lyrics nicked partially from the old Chuck Berry tune, "You Can't Catch Me." This is one of Ringo's more unusual patterns. He starts with a few strikes on the cymbal bell, then four on the closed hi-hat, and completes the measure with a muffled tom-tom break moving from mounted toms to floor tom. By this time, he was playing his new five-piece Ludwig set that gave him more range on the tom-toms. Their flat sound was probably achieved with towels laid over the heads, as can be seen on his snare in the movie *Let It Be* during the "Get Back" rooftop performance. Notice too how the pounding kick drum adds a sense of tension to the last line of each verse. The signature drum pattern of "Come Together" has become as recognizable as "Ticket To Ride" and "Get Back."

5. "Here Comes The Sun" (Abbey Road) Another excellent example of

Ringo's understated percussion work. He successfully keeps the song from dragging, yet never rushes the tune or steps on any vocals or instrumental breaks. Unhindered by the unusual time signature during the "Sun, sun, sun; Here it comes" bridge, he wisely chooses to stay off the crash cymbals and punches up the acoustic guitar notes with simple snare and tom fills. Two interesting recording notes: First, the song was recorded on Ringo's twenty-ninth birthday. Second, only three Beatles play on the song. Lennon was in the hospital after being injured a few days earlier in a car accident in Scotland.

4. "Rain" (Past Masters, Vol. 2) Ringo is often quoted as saying this is his favorite performance of all the Beatle tracks. I would go a step further and say the always-tight McCartney/Starr rhythm section works together better in this tune than any other. Right from the unorthodox snare break that opens the song, the profusion of fills is delivered with commanding power. His matching of McCartney's bass break near the end of the song adds an extra punch to the closing sequence, which incidentally includes one of the first uses of

backwards tape vocals on a Beatles record. Listen for the fill that unexpectedly runs two beats into the next measure at the :44-second mark.

3. "Ticket To Ride" (Help!) Beatle legend has it that it was actually McCartney who came up with the idea for this pattern, but it has become one of Starr's most famous pieces of work. There is little of the standard hi-hat/snare combo in this tune. The forceful double-stick hits on the snare are followed by the hesitant snare-tom combination that drives the song forward. The rudiment was a prelude to rock drumming patterns that would not hit the scene for another two years with Mitch Mitchell's work on Jimi Hendrix's 1967 debut, *Are You Experienced*.

2. "Sit Right Down & Cry Over You" (Live At The BBC) Lennon often said that some of the Beatles' best performances were in their earliest days at the Cavern and in Hamburg. This track, recorded live at the BBC Paris Theatre in London on July 16, 1963, hints at those early frenzied club performances. Starr blasts through the intro and abundant fills like a speeding freight train. Listen carefully to hear him mix a few cym-

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bal crashes into the middle of his breakneck snare rolls. This is the fastest Ringo performance on record and a far cry from the more familiar laid-back style he adopted from '64 onward. But this one clearly shows that the young, savage Ringo could kick ass with the best of them.

1. "Long Tall Sally" (*Past Masters, Volume 1*) For my money, this is Ringo Starr's greatest performance on record. Amazingly, the song was recorded in one take on March 1, 1964. From the opening intro, where his smooth, fast snare break segues the song into one of the group's wildest rockers, his drumming can be described as a controlled frenzy. The snare and tom breaks that cleanly separate each verse and chorus are a study in rock perfection, as is his following of Harrison's lead guitar climb during the solo break. But the last reading of the "Gonna have some fun tonight" ending chorus is the coup-de-gras. Ringo comes off his steady rock pattern to deliver a wild twelve-bar triplet pattern, alternating between snare, crash, and ride cymbals for a suitably furious end to this rock 'n' roll classic. It's a rudiment seldom,

if ever, performed by early rock drummers, especially in 1961/62, when this song was first introduced to the group's repertoire.

As an interesting aside, watch Ringo's performance of this song in the 1964 TV show *Around The Beatles* (available on VHS). If you can take your eyes off him for a moment, catch the guy in the rafters right over him who is obviously awestruck by Starr's drumming on this song, quite like many of us were in 1964—and still are, thirty-eight years later.

Honorable Mentions

There are certainly numerous songs that rate an Honorable Mention as being among Ringo's best performances. From the early years, "I Saw Her Standing There," "There's A Place," and "She Loves You" all feature that distinctive "early Ringo" skip-beat snare break that he used so much in 1963 and '64. The two lengthy breaks at the end of "Thank You Girl" also deserve a mention. "Drive My Car," "Taxman," and "Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except For Me And My Monkey" all feature a driving beat and tight interplay with

McCartney's bass line.

Ringo Starr will always be known for his rock-solid beat. McCartney has often said that Ringo rarely made mistakes in the studio, even on unusual Lennon compositions like "Good Morning, Good Morning," with its awkward time signature. Keep in mind that Ringo often heard the songs for the first time right there in the studio, just minutes before they were recorded. And since he didn't read or write drum notation, he had to rely strictly on memory for the time shifts and breaks. Yet there was never any hesitation or uncertainty in his playing. He always performed like he had known the songs all his life.

Drumming legends were born in the 1960s—the first decade to truly focus on strong drummers since swing emerged in the 1930s. While some icons like Cream's Ginger Baker, The Experience's Mitch Mitchell, Zeppelin's John Bonham, and BS&T's Bobby Colomby brought a technical proficiency that soared high above the crowd, Ringo Starr brought innovation, a distinctively solid backbeat, and an understated elegance to his studio playing that



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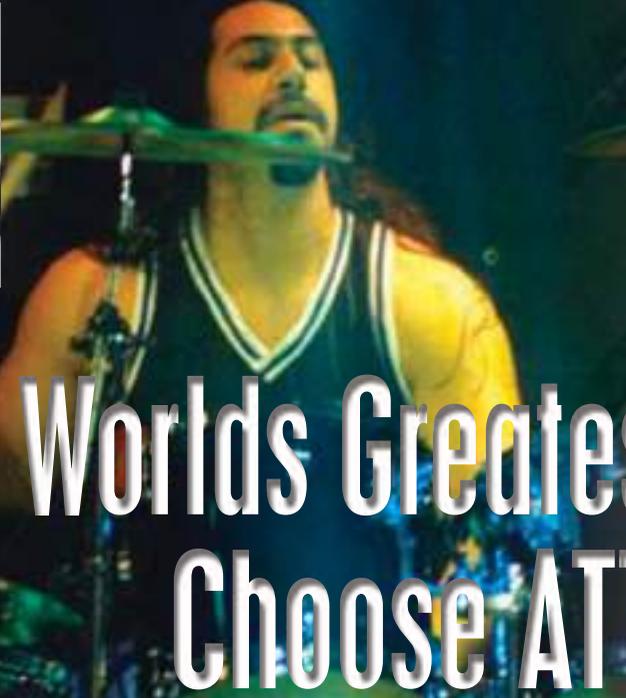
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Travis Barker

Box Car Racer



by Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY

Open	○	R.C.	×	C.C.	×
H.H.	○				
T.T.	○				
S.D.	●				
F.T.	●				
B.D.	●				
H.H.	○				
w/foot	×				

Ghost Note

Box Car Racer is a side project for one of the brightest lights of the early 21st-century drumming world: Blink-182's Travis Barker. Forgoing Blink's juvenile humor for a more sober vision, BCR allows ample room for Travis to explore the creative art of the drumbeat. Mixed in with his unusual grooves is an obvious love for drum corps-style snare technique. It's an impressive combination.

"I Feel So"

The intro beat for the album's lead track imparts a revolving, circular feel to the song.

Travis's chorus pattern locks rhythmically to the vocal line, "I Feel...So...Mad.... I Feel...So...Angry." Not even a *hint* of traditional snare drum here!

"Watch The World"

This beat is simply indescribable. Travis seems to be painting rhythmic impressions of the song's lyrics.

"Tiny Voices"

Here's another quirky, compelling groove, with Travis riding 16th notes on a rim while dropping in offbeats on the bass and snare.

Ride On Rim:

"Cat Like Thief"

This song opens with a beat that sounds like a conversation between the kick/snare pattern and the hi-hat. The alternating effect is completely cool.

"And I"

Here's a little of that Barker snare technique, sprinkled with some well-placed tom and hi-hat accents to make yet another outstanding groove.

"There Is"

This smooth little drum corps figure sits nicely under the acoustic guitars in this track.



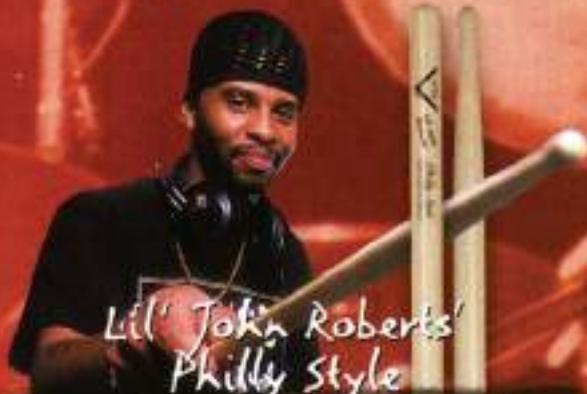


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Joey Heredia's Lowrider

*Sergio Mendez, Stevie Wonder, Tania Maria,
Mendoza/Heredia/Nota Trio*

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L. 16 1/8" D. .580" VMJHLR



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Patti LaBelle, Utada Hikaru,
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L. 16 1/8" D. .570" VHJBLKW



Michael White's Rocket Monster

*Steely Dan, Maze, Earth, Wind and Fire,
Luther Vandross, Whitney Houston*

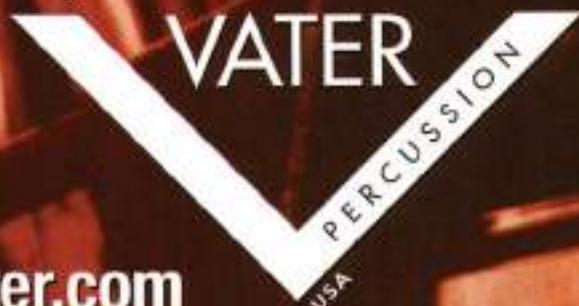
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Martial Arts For Today's Drummer

Part 4: Harmony Of Mind, Body, Drumming, And Life

Story by Dave Fusco
Photos by Steve Adams

Several weeks ago I ran into an old friend I hadn't seen in a long time. My friend asked if I was still doing "that karate stuff" and if I still found time to practice.

"Yes," I replied. "I practice every day."

My friend then asked, "How do you find time to fit it all in—career, family, home, hobbies, and sports like karate?"

"It's simple," I said. "Martial arts is not a sport, it's a lifestyle."

My friend and I went on to discuss how a passionate pursuit that provides you with genuine enjoyment—while at the same time requires practice and dedication—*can* become an integral part of your life.

The experiences and knowledge I've gained through practice of the martial arts, along with the variety of people I've met (many from cultures much different from my own), have contributed to my life experience. Conversely, the experiences and opportunities that life offers have helped me to pursue my goals in the martial arts. In many ways, just being out there and involved in life is a type of training. Life challenges your mind and body, and affords opportunities to apply elements of one's entire educational experience. To put a Zen spin on an old saying, "The whole is made up of the sum of its parts, yet each part is only as complete as the whole."

For that other passion—drumming—the communication of emotion, the fury of physical expression, the people we meet and influence through our music, and the smiles that grace our faces every time we sit behind a drumkit all contribute to our lives. In return, we can take parts of our lives and apply them to our growth as drummers. Just by listening, watching, and experiencing—by being *aware*—we can absorb information and ideas that will contribute to the passionate pursuit of our music.

I was listening to my car radio on the way to

work recently. An advertisement came on the radio that was targeted at both English- and Spanish-speaking customers. The driving Latin rhythm in the background caught my attention. It was a beat I hadn't tried before. I quickly tapped it out on the steering wheel so I wouldn't forget it. Later that evening, in the privacy of my drum room, I worked it out on cowbell, floor toms, and bass drum. It was really cool, and it made me smile. A sixty-second experience in my car had enriched my life.

The martial arts teach you to be aware of your ever-changing environment, and to be prepared. This concept of awareness and preparation applies not only to physical readiness and potentially dangerous situations, but also to life's opportunities and the readiness to capitalize on them when they present themselves.

Dedicated martial arts practitioners condition their bodies with exercise for strength and good health. They practice the physical rudiments of their art with exuberant repetition in order to apply techniques instinctively. They apply breathing and meditation to make their minds clear, quick, and open. And they seek knowledge to improve themselves and to share with others.

As drummers, we can follow similar processes to improve ourselves and to share the beauty of our music. We can apply physical conditioning, mental exercise, and rudimentary practice to grow as players. And we can be aware and prepared to take advantage of life's positive opportunities.

In this series of articles I've presented some basic concepts of the martial arts that I thought would make a positive contribution to drummers and drumming. We've discussed balance, power, and flow, the philosophy of "the center," and more. In this final piece, I want to present some ideas about conditioning the mind and body. Hopefully these ideas will help you be better prepared to take advantage of all the wonderful opportunities that music and drumming have to offer.



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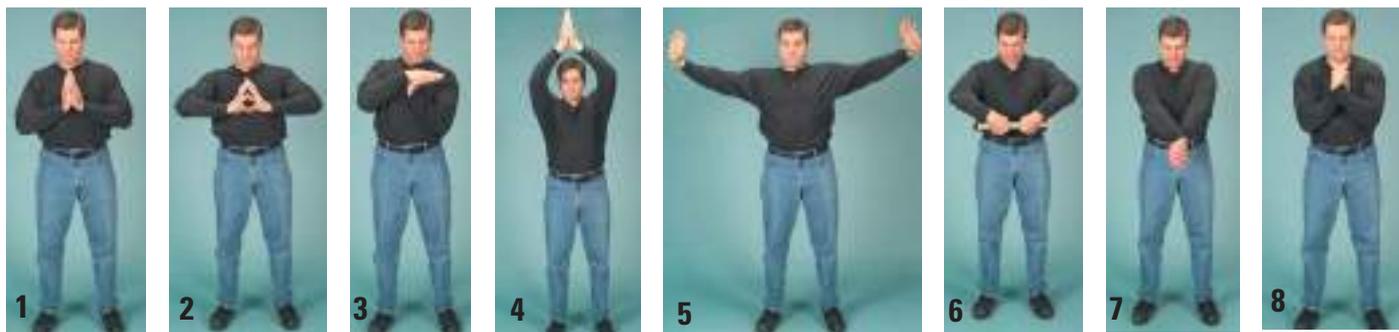
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Martial Arts



Physical Conditioning And Exercise

Martial arts are athletic. Drumming is athletic. Like all athletes, martial artists and drummers can benefit from supplemental exercise. That is, exercise designed to support and grow the whole body, so that the parts can perform at their optimum capacity individually and in coordinated unison. To this end, I can't stress enough the benefits of a balanced program of resistance training, aerobic exercise, and flexibility training. If you're working out now, great. If not, give it a try. Go down to the local gym, talk to people you know who work out, check out your local library or bookstore, or search the Web for information on the subject, and go for it. It will make a difference in your playing.

Here are a few simple exercises you can use to loosen up your forearms and wrists, and to build strength and coordination in your hands and fingers. Similar exercises are employed in martial arts training in preparation for technique practice involving joint locks and empty-hand strikes. Take it slow to start, and have fun.

Wrist And Finger Stretch

Stand in a comfortable, relaxed posture:

back straight, feet shoulder-width apart, head up, eyes front, and shoulders relaxed. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Raise your forearms and bring your hands together in a praying position at the center of your chest (Photo 1). With your fingertips touching, spread your fingers. Inhale deeply through your nose, as you raise your elbows. Exhale in a slow, controlled manner through your mouth as you press your hands together. Apply considerable pressure, but avoid pain (Photo 2).

Maintaining the tension in your hands, inhale as you close your fingers back to the praying posture. Next, exhale slowly as you press your right hand over your left, bending your left hand backward at the wrist. Hold for ten seconds (Photo 3). Inhale and return to the center position. Exhale and go the other way, pressing your left hand over your right. Again, hold for ten seconds (opposite side of Photo 3).

To complete the exercise, return to the center position. Inhaling deeply through your nose, press your hands upward toward the ceiling (Photo 4). When you reach the top, exhale through your mouth and circle your arms outward to arrive at the rest position at

your sides (Photo 5). Maintain some tension in your arms as they describe an arc in the air. You should feel a stretch in your shoulders and arms as you move.

This exercise combines elements of physical stretching and mental meditation. To enhance the mental aspects, concentrate on your breathing and try to clear your mind of all thought. Run through the entire cycle three times.

Double Wrist Stretch

For this exercise we'll do the "drummer's version" and employ a pair of drumsticks. Hold the drumsticks together in front of you with both hands, palms down. Roll your wrists and hands down and back toward your body as if you were trying to thread the sticks back through your arms (Photo 6). Go slow! Exhale as you stretch. Feel the stretched position and hold it. Repeat.

Interlocking Wrist Stretch

Starting in the relaxed standing posture, cross your right arm over your left and interlock your fingers (Photo 7). Inhale as you rotate your hands back toward your body, bringing them up through your arms to the

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Martial Arts

center of your chest (Photo 8). Exhale as you begin to feel the stretch in your wrists. Hold for a few seconds, and then roll back to the start position.

Next, cross your left arm over your right. Interlock your fingers and repeat the rolling motion up through your arms to your chest (opposite side of Photos 7 and 8). Remember to breathe. Unroll and relax. On all stretching exercises you should proceed slowly, and stop if you feel pain. This exercise can be particularly taxing, so use extra care.

Hand Strength, Coordination, And Independence

This is an exercise used in martial arts to develop the ways that the hand can be used as a weapon. For drumming, it strengthens the fingers for improved stick control. With a little variation, it can also be a great way to practice dexterity and independence.

Starting with your strong hand, form each of the hand-weapons below in sequence. The transition between positions should be quick and relaxed. When you arrive at a new position, apply tension to your hand to make the weapon strong.

Hold it for a second or two, then move to the next. Try to apply tension in your hand and forearm only, rather than tensing your whole arm. Apply some mental imagery and picture each weapon as being made of stone or steel. Try this exercise with each hand separately, alternating between hands and with both hands simultaneously. The positions are as follows:

Knife hand or spear hand. Hand open, fingers together and extended. Thumb tucked in along the palm.



Two-finger spear or dart. Hand partially open, index and middle finger extended and overlapping, middle finger on top. The lower two fingers and thumb are tucked tightly to the palm.



Half fist or leopard fist. All four fingers bent tightly to the palm at the middle knuckles.



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Thumb tucked in tight along side.

Full fist or hammer fist.

From the half-fist position, curl your fingers in tight to the palm.

Fold your thumb over the first two fingers. Squeeze tightly.



Fore-knuckle fist or phoenix eye.

From the full fist, push the index finger out so its mid-knuckle is protruding. Brace it by pressing the thumb down on top.



Mid-knuckle fist.

From the full fist, push the middle finger out so its mid-knuckle is extended. Brace it by placing the thumb tightly behind the end knuckle.



Chicken beak or shape of the crane.

Bring your fingertips and fingernails



together as if forming the beak of a bird. Keep your knuckles bent slightly and press tight.

Four fingers thrust.

Tuck your thumb against your palm and extend all four fingers. Spread your fingers apart and apply tension. Do not lock your knuckles.



Run through this sequence several times. By alternating hands and working with a variety of combinations and sequences, you can challenge yourself to become stronger and more independent. Best of all, you can do this exercise anywhere. Remember to move smoothly, apply tension when you arrive at the correct position, and keep breathing.

Mental Conditioning

Meditation and visualization are two of the greatest tools that the martial arts provide for personal development. They're also the hardest to master. In the martial arts we strive to balance mind and body. We condition the body to optimum levels

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Martial Arts

so that the mind can employ the body's tools. The body then supports the mind to process thought.

Whether we're striving to master a martial arts technique or a new drum groove, we're employing this mind/body relationship. If we've trained our bodies to be physically competent, then our minds can apply the patterns through the body. Repetitive practice stimulates what is often referred to as "muscle memory" (a term that certainly refers to the mind and body in balance), so that the new movement becomes second nature.

To enhance this outcome, you can employ visualization to practice a technique in your mind, without actually moving. Of course you have to practice physically too, but repetitious visualization will contribute to a better flow and feel for the technique the next time you actually try to apply it.

Visualization, like other forms of practice, does take time. To apply this exercise successfully, set aside fifteen to twenty minutes in a quiet, comfortable place. Start

by clearing your mind with some simple meditation. You can kneel in a traditional meditative posture (Photo 9), sit cross-legged, sit in a comfortable chair, or even lie down. Close your eyes and relax your muscles. Try to free your body of all unnecessary tension. Breathe deeply and slowly, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Concentrate on your breathing. Try to "open" and clear your mind.

While the ultimate goal

is to have no thought at all, that's a very difficult state to achieve and takes years of practice in its own right. For this exercise, a simple state of relaxed clear-headedness will suffice.

Next, picture yourself executing the desired technique with exquisite perfec-

tion. See yourself move. Hear the sounds. Feel the rhythm. Feel the emotion. Record these experiences like a mini-movie in your mind, and run it over and over. Slow it down, and speed it up. Try to apply what you see in your mind to your senses. Live the visualized experience. Finish your visualization with some more relaxed breathing. Later, practice the technique, and repeat the visualization. If you apply this process throughout your learning curve, I think you'll be pleasantly surprised with the results.

Indomitable Spirit

The last bit of martial arts philosophy I'll share with you is the concept of Indomitable Spirit—the unconquerable life force. In the martial arts, Indomitable Spirit is an idea that includes hard work, passion, honor, loyalty, determination, and dedication. It's a concept that encapsulates and defines the ideals of the martial arts way of life. It embodies following one's dreams and sharing the positive benefits of this pursuit with the people we care about most. To work creatively, love and play passionately, act honorably, and live peacefully. Indomitable Spirit is a concept that musicians and martial art



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Everybody Auditions

An Old Pro Offers A Few Tips

by Billy Ward



Maybe it's your band playing a twenty-minute set for free at a club's audition night. Or maybe it's an audition as a drummer—could be for a local band or a huge global tour. But no matter what the situation, *everybody* auditions.

I'm hopeful that some of my experiences and ideas will help you when you get the next big call. What follows is a list of things that I do to be prepared for an audition. If you follow these ideas, you'll gain a quiet confidence, because you'll be well prepared. At the very least, you'll become a better drummer. You never know, you may even get the gig!

Really and truly believe that you want the gig—or else you'll play badly. I don't prepare well unless I really want a gig. Let's

say that for a certain band I'm auditioning for, during their tour I'll have to set a pig's head on my bass drum. I'll still try to convince myself that I truly want that gig. Bring on the pig's head! (So obviously, a "Well, they won't offer it to me anyway" attitude is not allowed. No personal sabotage.)

Be yourself at the audition. When I first moved to New York, I found myself playing my first jingles. Back then, most of the other musicians on the jingle dates were mellow. They'd talk about their summer home, or kids—very pedestrian stuff. I tried to fit in by acting quiet and thoughtful. I figured I should keep a low profile. Then I realized that however I behaved wasn't going to change my amount of work. I realized that I should simply be myself and relax at these sessions. This was a major lesson for me. Behave as you normally do. *Be yourself.*

When the phone call comes, ask questions about the audition. "What songs will be played at the audition?" In pop music, there are usually two to six songs that they want to hear you play. Ask the question, and then go learn the stuff.

Also ask, "What can I bring to the audition?" A snare drum and bass pedal? An

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entire kit? Or nothing? Find out. Only ask the most important questions, and keep the discussion brief. The person who is talking to you may have to call ten or more other drummers who'll have the same questions, so be considerate. Humor, or at least a good nature, is always appreciated when discussing business on the phone.

So, only if time permits, ask when the tour is and how long it is. Money is always the tricky issue, isn't it? In my opinion, it's not appropriate to talk about money until after they want you. However, if you truly don't think they'll pay you enough even if they want you (and you don't want to do the audition without this information), bring up the money in a non-threatening way. For example, "What's the range of pay for other bands at this club?" Or if it's a touring gig, find out the ballpark salaries. Once I said, "I don't think I should audition. What if your artist wants me and you have to tell him that he can't afford me?" I ended up getting the gig, but to this day, I think it was rude of me to say that. Like I said, if it's a tour, don't talk dough until you've been asked to do the gig.

Know the audition songs as if you've been playing them for a year. My "quickie chart" really comes through for me here. (See my July 1999 *MD* feature story for a full explanation.) I haven't checked around much, but I'd venture to say that all pro drummers use some kind of system like mine to quickly learn and be able to remember songs. The process of writing everything down helps me to remember them. I first write out every important fill exactly as it appears on the record or audition tape, note for note. My quickie charts go through several "drafts" as I progress in learning the songs, so that by the time of the audition, it's a pretty darned small piece of paper.

Now we're into the debate of whether to play "your personal part" to the songs, or to play what you think they want. If there's a record of the song by the group you are auditioning for, learn that drum part *note for note*. Even if the band didn't like the drumming on the record at the time it was done (the take was kept because of the evil producer), that part is by now *very* familiar to the band and they're used to it. Furthermore, it's probably exactly what they're looking for from their next drummer as a gauge. So

stick with the original vibe. Play the part as best you can and as close to the original feel as the recording or reference tape. That means details, details, details. Sure, the hi-hat is playing 8th notes, but what are the dynamics of the hat? Is it tough and even? Loud? What's the attitude? Kind of like Kenny Aronoff would play, or Mick Fleetwood, or Manu Katché? Dig in and study it closely and put it into your ears and hands.

Tape yourself playing to the audition material to make sure you sound perfect. As I've said before, you'll never lose your uniqueness no matter how much you submit to the old/original drum part. You'll shine through no matter what you do. On the other hand, if you choose to display your obsession with the South Indian mrdangam music you've recently been listening to, cool. Just don't expect to get the gig.

Wear the right color clothing to the audition. In LA, this usually means bright colors or pastels. In New York, it's black, black, black. If you're bringing gear to the audition, make sure it fits the sonic color of the music you're going to play. Loud rock band? Bring some loud rock band cymbals,

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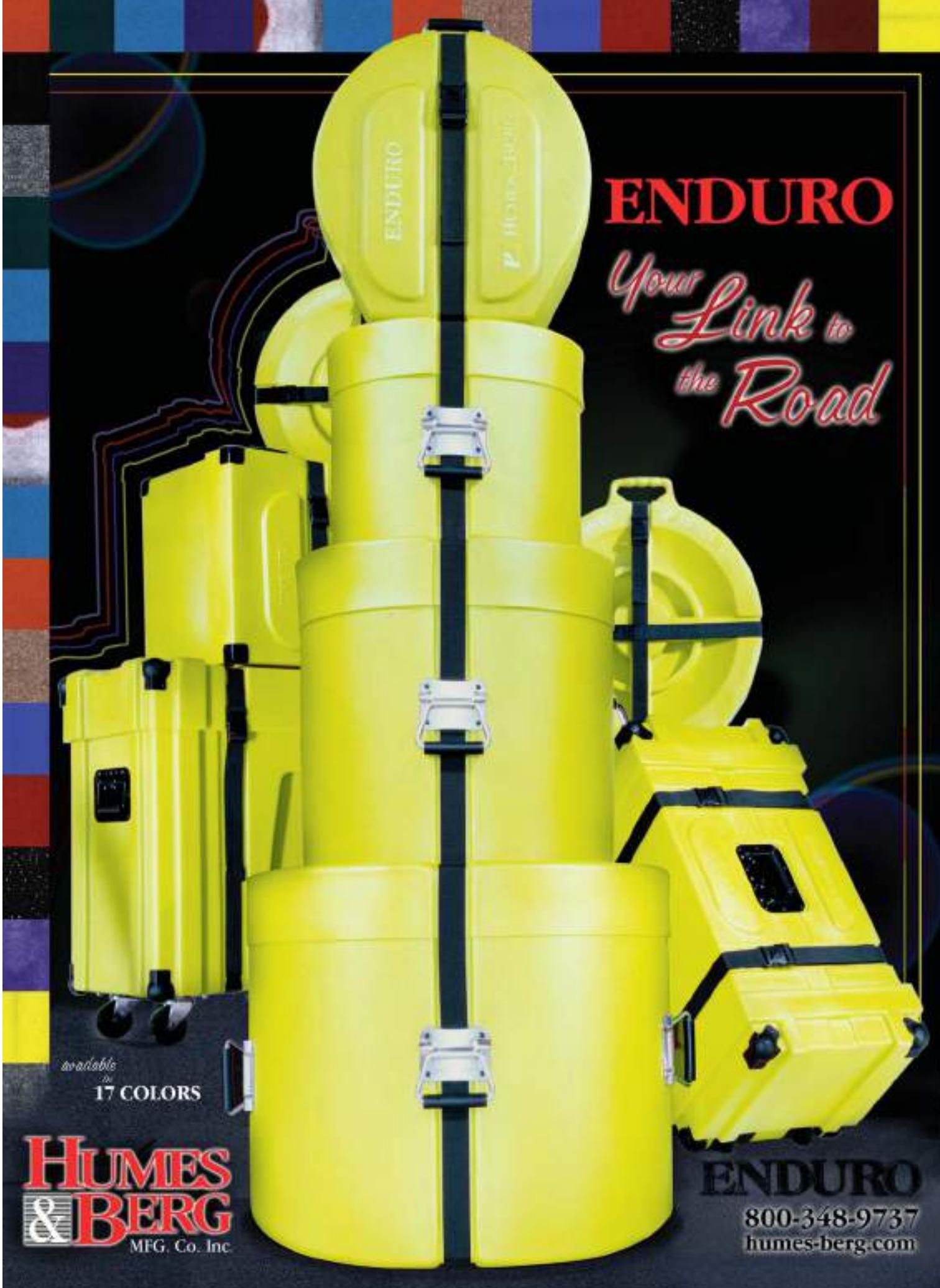
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not those vintage Ks. If you're playing on equipment that is supplied by the club, church, band, or rehearsal studio, then quickly try to adjust the tone of the drums to what you've been hearing on the audition tape or CD.

Time wars. This one's a bit tricky. Let's say you're auditioning, but the bass player is *slowing down*. He's already got the gig, you don't. Are you supposed to allow that to happen? To what degree do you keep the time? This scenario actually happened to me last week. Well, in this case, I just played

the darned music. I gently kept the tempo where I thought it should be and hoped that they were taping the audition. (I'm hoping they later said, "Wow, Billy really held it together, didn't he?" Ha!)

By the way, I didn't get this particular gig. But I believe it happened because I hadn't convinced myself that I truly wanted the gig. (See above.) It wasn't a style of music that I could love. (Next week I'm going to hate myself for this.) But play the best you can—*period*. That includes nailing the time, dynamics, and groove as best you

can, no matter who else is in the room.

Ooh, ooh, ooh...fashion! (I'm talking about hair, pants size, and even your *race*.) A guitarist friend of mine couldn't audition with a popular singer/actress until a picture was taken, to make sure that his hair was long enough. I think this used to be more common in the '70s and '80s. Hair and pants size were very important factors in getting a gig back then.

I don't frown on the fact that some music is sold with help from what's considered good looks. At least it's getting sold. For all I know, Mozart had all kinds of weird problems with his kings or benefactors like we have with clubs and record labels.

Lately, I'm happy to see some interesting looking people of more diverse shapes and sizes on album covers and in videos. There will always be some people that just won't hire you because they don't like the way you look. We rejected ones just have to get over it.

There will always be bad audition experiences. Some things are never going to change. Don't make the mistake of thinking that your own personal bad audition stories are unique to you. And don't ever imagine that there will be a day when you don't have to go through this kind of horror.

Now it's *payback time*. The following story is from my own personal experience. The names have been changed to protect the guilty. But hopefully, they'll know who they are!

A few years back, I auditioned for a big pop star, "Benny Woodens" I'll call him. Well, at my audition, a chiropractor came in and set up a portable table and proceeded to work on "Benny" right in front of my *!@% bass drum—*while* I was playing. Then, at the end of my audition, Benny was too busy to talk to me because he was concentrating on his plate of sushi. Yes, it was in LA. No, I didn't get the gig. But that's auditioning for ya!

Billy Ward is a successful session and touring drummer who has worked with Carly Simon, Robbie Robertson, Richard Marx, Ace Frehley, John Patitucci, Bill Champlin, and Joan Osborne. Billy can be reached at his Web site, www.billyward.com.



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The Drummers Of Mamma Mia!

Gary Tillman And David Nyberg Reproduce ABBA's Golden Hits

by Ken Ross and Victor Rendón



Mamma Mia!'s Gary Tillman (left) and David Nyberg

Mamma Mia! is the hit Broadway musical featuring the music of pop supergroup ABBA. The Swedish quartet enjoyed enormous popularity through the 1970s, producing many hit recordings. Over twenty of those hits are featured in the show now playing at the Winter Garden theater in New York City.

Unlike most shows, *Mamma Mia!*'s storyline is built around the music. Painstaking effort was made to reproduce

the sound of the original recordings. The nine-piece band includes four keyboards, two guitars, bass, drumset, and percussion.

Playing drums for *Mamma Mia!* is Gary Tillman. Gary's Broadway credits include *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Cabaret*, and *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. On percussion is David Nyberg, who has played for such shows as *Cats*, *Seussical The Musical*, *Phantom Of The Opera*, and *The Lion King*. The two

veteran musicians had lots of information to share about their positions in the *Mamma Mia!* band.

MD: What is unique about this show from your perspectives?

Gary: Well, to begin with, unlike most Broadway shows, 95% of the tunes in this show are on a click track. I'm responsible for starting the clicks.

MD: How do you start the click at the proper moment within the action of the show?



Gary says that with the entire band using headphones, playing the show is like doing a studio session.



David uses a special wrist-worn microphone to pick up tambourines and other hand percussion instruments.

Gary: The conductor cues me, either with a head nod or a count-off. I use my Yamaha DTX drum trigger module and hit a pad.

MD: What if that fails during a performance?

Gary: That happened one night. I almost always check everything before each performance, but of course *that* night I didn't. I figured it was ready to go. On the first tune I hit the pad and some click from

another planet came in! I panicked and tried to press the click button, but it did the same thing. Then I called in the sound man. We turned the machine off and when it came back on, it fixed itself. There is a backup machine just in case this one fails. Technically, of course, we could play without it.

MD: If it poses a risk to the continuity of the show, why have a click at all?

Gary: I think it was to try to re-create the

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Mamma Mia!

David: The composers wanted specific tempos for different songs that might differentiate only between 96 and 98, or between 105 and 106. I think they wanted the precision of having exactly the same tempo that each song was written in twenty-five years ago.

Gary: Yeah! In other words, the drummer can't keep time! [laughter]

MD: What's unique about this show for you, David?

David: One thing that's very different from the norm is that everyone in the band has a 16-channel mixer. Everything is sent through headphones that we all wear, so it's like being in a studio. I'm still playing around with my mix. The weirdest thing for me personally is the wrist microphone I wear. It's actually a body mic' attached to a wristwatch band. A mini-cable runs from my wrist to a connection pack that I wear on my belt, along with a headphone jack. That mic' picks up all the tambourines, sleigh bells, and shakers that I play. I have to be careful to position it so I don't smash it when I'm playing the conga drums.

MD: What do you each find challenging about this show?

Gary: As the drummer, my parts look

deceptively easy. It's actually hard to play it that simple. Yet it's *so* important to the feel of the music. I mean, I feel like I'm really getting down to quarter notes. It's challenging to make it sound exciting and musical, and still be with the click track. I have to be ready *before* the music starts, and make sure the correct tempo is dialed in.

David: It can be difficult to adjust to the sound. For example, the timpani sounds a lot hotter to me in the mix because of the mic' placement. If I pull one side of my headphones off to hear my natural sound, it sounds like I'm playing by myself, because everyone in the band is going through the house system.

Before the first rehearsal, I researched the music of ABBA. I even went out and bought a live video of them so I could see what their percussionist was playing at the time. I spent a lot of time looking for the right sounds. I went to drum shops and tried out all kinds of tambourines. Same thing with the shakers. I brought a bunch to the rehearsal, and we went through six before the conductor picked out the one he liked. So although the notes on the page are not difficult to play, making each song sound the way it was intended is the chal-

lenge for me.

MD: David, can you give us a description of your setup?

David: There are two timpani, a xylophone, orchestra bells, two conga drums, two timbales, six tambourines, sleigh bells, a cabasa, shakers, a wind chime, a bell tree, a wind gong, and a crotale.

MD: Why do you have six tambourines?

David: [Smiling] I play so much tambourine in the show, having only one sound just didn't make sense to me. The songs all have different styles and feels to them, and I felt they needed to have different timbres. An example is the song "Chiquitita," where I play sleigh bells and tambourine at the same time. I needed to have a contrasting sound from the sleigh bells to hear both of them clearly. So I ended up with this rattan tambourine, which sounds very dry.

MD: Were these your own choices?

David: These were all my choices. I spoke to the musical director and the supervisor, and they liked all the choices. *Some* people gave me a hard time to see how many tambourines I would wind up using. [Gary is laughing.]

MD: You're using what looks like the world's largest wind chime.

David: Yeah, it's about three and a half

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feet long. About a month ago I walked into a drum shop just to look at chimes, and I saw this one sitting there. I thought it would sound great in the show, because there are a couple of very long chime cues. So I bought it, and again I took some ribbing about it....

Gary: Yeah. It sounds great. Size matters! [laughter]

MD: David, you explained the different tambourines. But why do you have two bell trees?

David: The music indicates which direction in which to play the bell tree, up or down. When I first played the show I used one bell tree, but I found that I chewed up my mallets when I played them up, and the sound wasn't as smooth as I wanted. A friend of mine suggested that I get another set and reverse the bells so that the small bell is on top and the largest is on the bottom. By playing both at the same time I found that I could get great combinations of sound.

Gary: If you didn't know David, you might think he is anal. [laughs] But details like that make a big difference. That's why people hire him, because he pays so much

attention to sound.

David: I think the same thing about Gary, because of his choices with heads, drums, cymbals, and his approach to playing the music. He's not just hitting the drums. He's always thinking about getting the right sound and feel.

MD: Do the acoustics of this theatre influence your choice of instruments and mallet and stick selection?

David: I had the opportunity to sit in the house on two separate occasions when I had a sub in. I was able to listen to the mix and hear what was coming out. You only have a certain amount of control in the pit once the sound staff mixes things the way they want them to come out in the house. There were a lot of things that I wanted to sound real "round," and I found out that they weren't coming out that way at all. The sound was getting lost. I needed a brighter sound, so I changed mallets on all the mallet instruments and the timpani. I experimented with plastic heads on the conga drums. But I wasn't satisfied with the results, so I ended up back with the skin heads.

I'm also on my third set of timpani heads

for the same reason. I was going for a certain sound, but at certain volume levels one kind of head didn't work. When I listened in the house, there wasn't as much bottom as I wanted. I'm very happy with the heads I have on now, because they give me enough fullness, but they also provide the flavor needed for pop music.

MD: Gary, tell us about your setup.

Gary: I listened to the music, got the part ahead of time, and decided on a traditional setup with four toms. I use 10", 12", 14", and 16" toms, and a 22" bass drum, all from Ayotte. I was looking for a full sound because there's a lot of disco-esque stuff.

After listening to all of the music, I realized that there was no ride cymbal in any of the original recordings. And there isn't one written in the show music. So I don't use one. It's interesting playing without the ride cymbal there. I have an extra hi-hat that I occasionally play, but I mainly use it when I practice.

MD: You went through quite a few snare drums looking for the right sound.

Gary: Oh, *yeah*. I needed a full sound. A lot of times when you play rock- or pop-oriented stuff, the backbeats will always be

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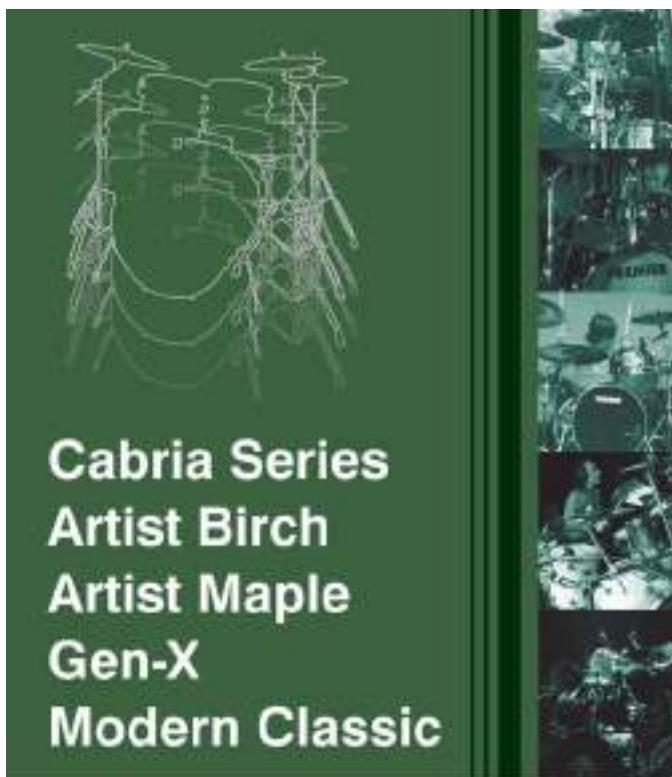
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Mamma Mia!

rimshots. The producers of *Mamma Mia!* were looking for more of a disco sound. I realized that in this music, you want to save the rimshots for endings or accents, and basically stay in the middle of the drum the rest of the time. The snare drums I usually use sounded a little thin, so I looked for a drum that would give me a fatter backbeat when played in the center. I eventually found "the" drum for this gig. It's a 6x14 maple DW.

MD: What about electronics?

Gary: On my left I have a Yamaha DTX that I use to trigger the click. I also have a video monitor that allows me to see the conductor. I can't see him directly, because I'm set up virtually under his stand.

MD: You're also enclosed in a glass booth.

Gary: If I wasn't, I'd obliterate the whole band. This works out much better sound-wise.

MD: Do you guys find it challenging to play the same show night after night?

Gary: One thing I've worked on as a musician is to have a level of consistency. It's not just your sound. It's also good time-keeping, and it's having a consistently

good attitude.

David: That's true of playing on Broadway in general. Being consistent in all of those areas makes you a more valuable asset to the production. The last thing the conductor or the producers want are surprises.

Gary: I've been on other shows where I've been there two years, and you go through a phase where you almost can't hear the music because you've heard it so many times. I've always been one to check myself on that. I think it's important to come to work with the attitude that I am going to play better than my last performance.

David: Gary hit the nail right on the head. If you come in every night and try to make it better, you grow as a musician. You hear new things and find new ways of doing things. Maybe you try a different mallet or sticking—something nobody might notice except you. But that's okay, because you're trying to improve your performance.

Gary: And at the end of the day, that's what you're going to take out of here



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by Adam Budofsky

Alan White has occupied the drum throne in Yes for nearly thirty years. Taking the reins from Bill Bruford in 1973, White had a trial by fire, learning the band's deeply complex catalog in record time. He's powered them through every album and tour since. Tellingly, White has been the most consistent member of this progressive rock institution, who through multiple lineup changes have retained an enormous diehard audience, despite major changes in the musical environment.



Last year, White and all the members of Yes's "classic lineup"—vocalist Jon Anderson, bassist Chris Squire, guitarist Steve Howe, and keyboardist Rick Wakeman—reconvened for an international tour, amazing concert-goers young and old with otherworldly epics spanning their entire career.

White is a true drumming giant, but it's surprising how many fans are unaware of his important work prior to Yes, including albums and tours with John Lennon and George Harrison. Next time you hear those timeless, tumbling drum fills on Lennon's "Instant Karma," try wrapping your brain around the fact that it's the same drummer who later maneuvered architectural Yes wonders like "Parallels," "Ritual," and "The Gates Of Delirium."

With Rhino Records' fabulous career-spanning box-set *In A Word* hot off the press, it's a perfect time to reflect with Alan White on his more than three decades behind the kit, backing some of the world's most revolutionary musicians.

John Lennon Live Peace In Toronto (1969)

I still have the drumkit I used at that show, a 1966 silver sparkle Ludwig. Back then we painted the bass drums white on the inside because we thought it made them sound louder. "I've got a cool kit because I've painted it white on the inside." [laughs] But that kit still sounds good today. I recently did an interview for the BBC in London, and we set it up in a drum store in Seattle owned by a friend of mine, and they filmed me playing on it along to "Imagine." It was really nice. I just love the equipment I used then. I've always been a stalwart Ludwig guy.



The Toronto concert was thrown together really quickly. I was very young, and that seemed like a dream to me. I

was in my own band, and we were playing clubs in London when I got this call. I thought it was a friend of mine playing around with me, so I put the phone down. Then I picked it up again and John said, "No, it's really me." At the airport he said, "Oh, by the way, Eric Clapton is playing guitar." I was only twenty years old, and all of a sudden I'm being whisked to Toronto. We actually rehearsed on the plane. I was just playing with a pair of drumsticks on the back of the airplane seat. Years later I look back at it like, "Did I really do that?"

George Harrison All Things Must Pass (1970)

We recorded that at Abbey Road studios in about three weeks, and the same group of people would turn up every day. George

Alan

was at the helm with [producer] Phil Spector. Every day would be a different song. Jim Gordon was there; he was playing drums with Delaney & Bonnie at the time. We'd play on different tracks. It was recorded pretty much live; at any given time there were eight or ten people playing. It was like being in an orchestra pit. By the way, George

was one of the most wonderful guys ever—just a sweetheart, the guy who would shake your hand and give you a hug.



And he knew exactly what he wanted in the studio. Eric Clapton was a real good friend of his, and Eric was there every day, which was a great thing to be around. Those people are just magic.

John Lennon Imagine (1971)

The *Imagine* sessions were fantastic. I spent a whole bunch of time at John's house, and we became like a family. John kind of took me under his wing. He always liked what I did and listened to



what I had to say. He never told me what to do. It was a real special time, John playing an upright piano, showing us the

lyrics, saying, "This is what I'm trying to say." I even got to play vibraphone on "Jealous Guy," so he wrote "Alan White: good vibes" in the credits.

John always had strange rhythmic tendencies. It's evident in a bunch of Beatles stuff; even his choice to do Carl Perkins'

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"Blue Suede Shoes," which had an extra beat in it. "It's one for the money...ba-dum bum...Two for the show..." etc. He had that in his head, and I think that's what he understood in some of my playing.

Eddie Harris In The UK (1973)



Around then I was in the studio most of the time. There's a bunch of great players on that album: Steve Winwood, Tony Kaye.... It was a very interesting album. It was done in Morgan Studios in London, and I think I was there for two or three days. Eddie invited all kinds of people from the industry to play. I remember on this one track, Eddie sat in the middle of the studio, playing his saxophone, and he said, "When I point at you, you do a solo." That resulted in some bizarre stuff, I'll tell you. But I enjoyed it. I still listen to that record today.

Yes Tales From Topographic Oceans (1974)



That album was a total experiment, led mostly by Jon. He liked the sound of his voice when he sang in the morning in the shower, so they built a shower room in the studio so his voice sounded just like it did in the shower. I remember the road guys tiling the whole thing; it was a riot. Then Rick decided the album was a fairytale sort of thing, so he brought these cardboard cows and huge palm trees into the studio. And here we are trying to play stuff in seven.... So that's kind of what you hear on the album.

Yes Relayer (1975)

Relayer was very adventurous, especially for Chris and me. At one point in "Sound Chaser" I said to Chris, "Imagine we are driving in a car, changing gears, shifting to third gear and then fourth, and then just flying off. Then when we pull the tempo back, or downshift, it goes yeowwwww." We did that all live. By that time we knew how to play with each other and shift tempos on a dime.



We did that album in Chris's studio at his house, in his basement. He had a garage we used to walk through, and I had this huge African drum built—it must have been five feet tall, with skin on the top. It was called the Thunder Drum. I still have it somewhere. But we had mic's underneath and on top, and you'd hit that thing in the garage and it sounded amazing. Better than any sampler you could find.

There's a point in "Gates Of Delirium" where the drums and the keyboards kind of have a battle. Jon and I used to drive down to London to Chris's house every day, and on the way there was a scrap yard. We used to go in there and run around hitting pieces of metal and stuff—hubcaps, springs. Then we'd take the stuff we liked to the studio. We had the road guys build a frame, and we hung the stuff off of it and just banged on it. At the end of that section, we had this backwards drum kind of thing going, and I rushed into the studio and pushed the whole thing over. You can't really hear it that well, but it gave it a really nice ending. [laughs]

Alan White Ramshackled (1976)



Around that time, the guys in the band decided to do solo stuff, all of which reflected sort of a Yes influence. I decided to go back to the band I had before I joined Yes. We had had a house in the countryside, and

I'd come into London, do sessions, and make enough money to keep us alive.

Later, when I was asked to do a solo album, I decided to pull those guys back in. So basically we re-created what we had before I joined Yes.

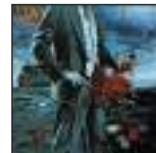
Yes Going For The One (1977)

What was good about that album—which is like the



period we're in now—is that Rick had gone away from the band for a while and then came back, and that reinvigorated us. That album was recorded in Switzerland, and we had a lot of fun times together then. So when I listen to those songs I hear a lot of happiness in the music. On the track "Parallels," Rick was playing the organ in a church in Lucerne, ten miles away from the studio in Montreaux. I remember they had these telephones that you'd have to wind up, and we'd communicate with him from the studio that way. We played it live, using the phone as a monitor.

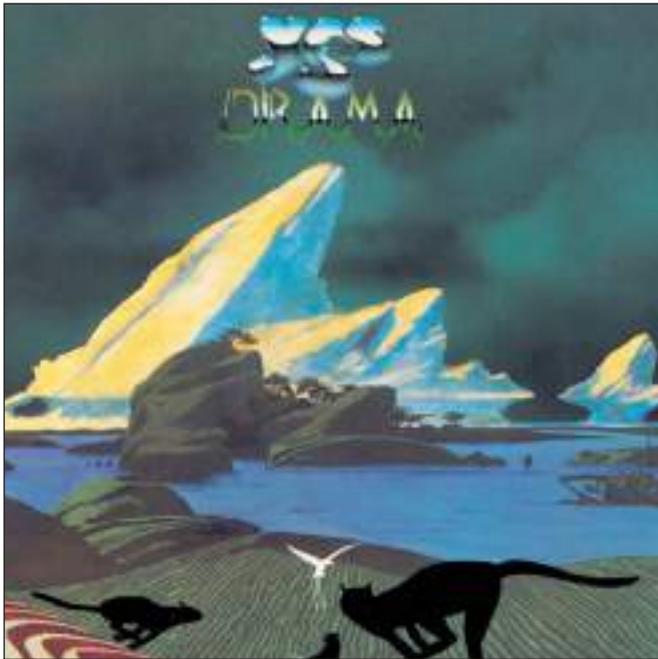
Yes Tormato (1978)



Around that time I had this electronic drum thing built by a company I had in London called Survival Projects. This unit was like four feet high, and it was full of electronics. It would basically do two or three sounds, and that's what you hear on "Arriving UFO." By today's standards it was archaic. I think that unit is still in Chris's garden somewhere; we left it there and I think something grew over it.

Yes Drama (1980)

At first everything was kind of in disarray. Jon and Rick went to do some solo stuff, which left Chris and Steve and myself. Basically, I called everybody up and said, "I've booked a rehearsal studio. Whoever turns up on Monday is in the band." So Steve and Chris and I turned up and started working. It happened that Geoff Downes and Trevor Horn were working in the studio next to us, and they were big fans of the band. We were writing some really good stuff, and all of a sudden Trevor popped his



head in the door and said, "I've got a good song that would go with that." The next week we rehearsed together, and that became *Drama*.

Yes 90125 (1983)



For the track "Changes," I think I woke up in the middle of the night singing the part. I went down to my piano and tried to do it with

one hand, and then I started doing it with my other hand, sort of shadowing it going the other way. I played it for Trevor Horn [no longer a bandmember, but producer of the album] and he was like, "Keep playing that!" Then he came up with the melody line. But then I had to put the drums to it. I find that when I write stuff on piano, the most difficult thing is to put drums to it. It drives me crazy.

Yes The Ladder (1999)

That was a wonderful time. "Lightening Strikes" is a particularly energetic track from that record. Producer Bruce Fairbairn



put his heart into it and really got the band into shape. Sadly, he died while we were mixing. But we'd rehearse in the south of

Vancouver while he was finishing up another album, and he'd come in occasionally and listen to what we were writing. And Bruce really knew how to mike a drumkit. We had a tunnel positioned in front of the bass drum, and we had like five mic's on it.

Yes Magnification (2001)

I had this song in my head, so I sat down with Jon and we kind of worked it out, and that's basically how

"In The Presence Of" developed. Since we decided that this album would be done with an orchestra, I thought it was the right time to do it. I've played piano since I was six, before I played drums. But when I was about twelve, my uncle, who was a drummer, said, "You

know, you're pounding on those keys pretty hard, very percussively." So my parents and my uncle chipped in and bought me a drumkit. But I kept playing piano.

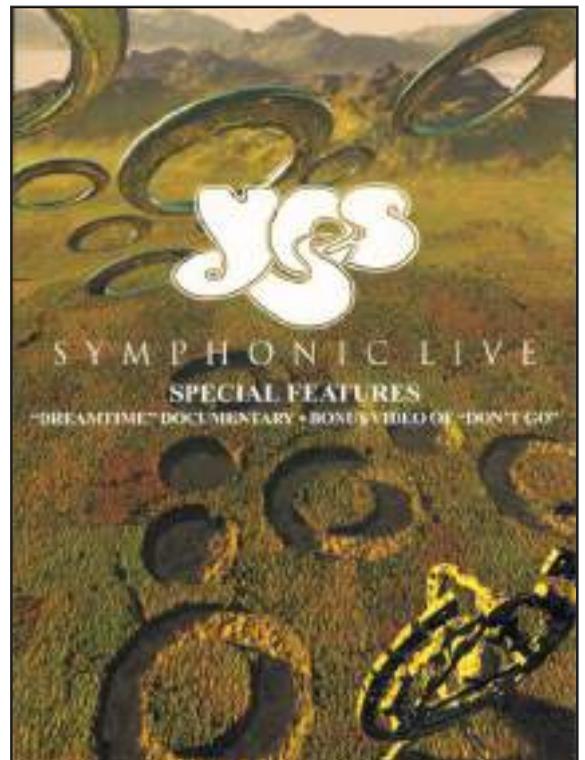
I find piano a great outlet for expression, and I feel it's a good thing for drummers to develop a melodic sense with, because you can adapt that to the drums. And that gives you insight: I can react to the guitarist if I want to—the bass player can fend for himself. [laughs] But, you know, you can kind of divide your body and head to a certain extent and play along with the guitarist on one side, but always keep that fundamental thing with the rhythm section happening. When I was a kid I used to practice independence between all four limbs, which is very important for this type of thing.

Yes Symphonic Live DVD (2002)

We were out in Europe, on a very grueling tour—wintertime in Russia and places like that. The orchestra, which was mostly women between twenty-five and thirty-five, was from Poland. We had rehearsed in Venice for three days, and they were just great after that. There were only about three or four of them who spoke English, but they were great players. They were young and they knew the music, which was great. We used that orchestra right through Amsterdam, which is where the DVD was filmed. After Amsterdam we used an orchestra from Belarus. They were a bit older, and there were more men in it, but they were also very good players.

In the States it was the same conductor but a different orchestra every night. We'd get onstage and turn around, and there'd be a whole bunch of new faces! But we'd come off stage and people in the orchestra would come up to us and say, "Wow! This is the dream of my life to play your music," because they'd been listening to us for so many years. They'd come up and be totally blown away.

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MD Looks At Stick Twirlin

Adding Some Flash To Your Performance

You've just come from your favorite band's concert at the local theater or arena. The tunes are still running through your head, along with the visual images—the lights, the staging, the choreography, the costuming...all the elements that made the concert perfect. You can still see the drummer moving effortlessly around the toms during his drum solo. You also remember something else about the drummer's performance: the nifty visual effect he achieved by twirling his sticks.

Stick twirling isn't anything new. Such legends as Sonny Greer, Gene Krupa, Cozy Cole, and Lionel Hampton wowed their audiences with stick tricks (along with some pretty impressive drumming). But it was later, in the burgeoning years of pop and rock music, that stick twirling and other visual effects became much more prevalent. Using such devices, drummers could draw almost as much attention to themselves as lead guitarists or singers could—even though they were at the back of the band, behind a kit. In addition to how well they played, drummers began to earn regard for their pure showmanship.

Tips And Stories From The Pros

by Billy Amendola

MD recently spoke to several drummers known for their flashy stick tricks. While most agreed that stick twirling won't make you a better drummer, they also agreed that adding a little visual excitement can't help but benefit a drummer's entertainment value. Here are their tips and stories about the fine art of stick twirling.

Dino Danelli (The Rascals)

The first person I ever saw twirl was Gene Krupa. Gene's technique would be to twirl between his fingers. I started practicing it like he'd do it, but I was dropping the sticks too much. [laughs] Then I started working at the Metropole club in New York City. One of the first drummers I saw there was Lionel Hampton, who unfortunately passed away just recently. Lionel not only twirled, he spun sticks in between his first two fingers. This looked much more effective to me, and it was faster and easier to do. I had the pleasure of meeting him not long after, and he was kind enough to show me how he did it. So I learned my technique from Lionel. It's just putting the stick between my first and second finger and spinning it around.

The Metropole was where I would practice my stick twirling. The club had mirrors all around the stage, so I'd watch myself from all angles to see what worked and what didn't. I'd try different ways to hold the stick or position my arm—and I could see how it looked in the same way the audience would be seeing it.

Another club in New York, Birdland, was where I saw Sonny Payne, who was another huge influence on my stick twirling. Sonny did things with the sticks *no one* was doing. He would do the same twirl as Lionel, but he would also throw his sticks in the air, put them behind his neck, and spin them around his body—all while doing his solo. I started throwing my sticks trying to copy him.

Gerry Brown (Stevie Wonder)

The first drummer I saw twirling sticks was the great Lionel Hampton. I was about five years old. The next drummers who made an impression on me were Sonny Greer and Philly Joe Jones. Later, my dad would take me to Philadelphia Eagles football games, and during the halftime show there was always a great drum & bugle corps. I'd watch the baton twirlers and the drummers who'd occasionally twirl their sticks. This sent my head spinning. As I got older, Keith Moon really did the trick for me. He'd spin his sticks and play his butt off at the same time.

I wanted to figure out how to add twirling to my playing. So I asked the baton twirlers in school to teach me the basics. Then I'd practice my rudiments on a practice pad in front of a mirror, working twirls into the patterns. After a few years of that, I took those exercises to the drumset—and practiced a *lot*.

Twirling was a great thing to learn. But I also had to learn that timing is most important. I had to learn not to rush. Being relaxed, where you're not thinking about what you want to do, is what makes it work. It manifests within the music. My goal in whatever I play and how I present myself—whether spinning sticks or not—is to *serve the music*.

Rikki Rockett (Poison)

I can still hear the echo of my drum teacher's voice when I asked him about stick twirling. "Twirling on the trap kit is just B.S. That energy would be better spent practicing drumming." I might have thought he was right, except that twirling didn't seem to hurt Gene Krupa. Who would have thought that years later I would be known for my onstage spinning and throwing antics?

The first time I saw any kind of stick twirling/stick spinning was at a Christmas parade in my hometown of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, with a high school band that had won several regional titles. I was flabbergasted by the display of thunderous drumming and the visual impact that the twirling and stick handling added. Years later, I saw a performance of the band Sparks.

Dino Danelli



Rikki Rockett



Gerry Brown

Their drummer, Dinky Diamond, gave new meaning to stick twirling. Keith Moon and Carl Palmer weren't exactly stick-twirling slouches either. If it was good enough for them, it would certainly be good enough for me.

There are many twirling, throwing, and stick-handling techniques. Some work better for rock than others, and I've narrowed a few down that work consistently for me. Just keep in mind that twirling is best practiced *way* before you try it out live.

Like any technique in drumming, twirling is all about timing and taste. It will not make you sound better. In fact, when wrongly placed, it can *hurt* your playing. It's simply live show material. Is it really important? That depends on the type of music that you play and how important the visual aspect is to your band and your audience. As always, it's a personal preference and should be treated in the same regard that you place on any aspect of your image. All that being said, here are a few twirling tricks that I use.

1. The "Bowl Of Soup" Spin. Similar to spinning a baton, this technique is a bit of a fake because the stick isn't actually going through the fingers. It's a spin, not a twirl. Now that those semantics are cleared up, the actual technique consists of moving the stick between the first finger and the thumb in either direction and then stopping it with the palm of the hand. Start by holding the stick about halfway down the shaft, and begin turning it just like a majorette would twirl a baton—kind of like stirring a bowl of soup. Begin to increase the diameter of the spin until it becomes a full spin. *Voila!* The "Bowl Of Soup" spin. This is a nice one, because you retain control of the stick through the whole spin. You can do this in either direction, and when done with both hands, different directional combinations are possible.

I use this spin the most with my left hand, usually between backbeats on the snare. It looks nice during cymbal washes as well. It's also great to come off this spin into a downbeat.

2. The Blotz Palm Spin. The Blotz—Bobby Blotzer of Ratt—showed me this spin years ago. It's a simple idea, but it's a bit tricky to master. Holding the stick in the palm of your hand, facing up, you start the spin with momentum from all four fingers. The

stick actually makes a full 180° spin, flat in the palm of your hand. People who carry billy clubs, flashlights, and similar devices usually learn this one. It's quick, flashy, and tough. Learn it, but use it wisely.

Throws, snare-air pops, backsticking, and one-handed juggling are additional effects that are probably beyond the scope of a "twirling" article. And since I'm not the only one writing about this subject, I'll leave the good ol'-fashioned, through-the-fingers twirl to someone else. But here are a few final thoughts.

Whether you just want to add a twirl or two at the end of a song or you want to toss sticks to the ceiling like Ken Mary, remember that this stuff is supposed to be *fun*. Make it smooth, and look for the right time. (Stick juggling might be inappropriate during a ballad, for instance.) Develop a sense for the amount of time that you have for flashy stuff on a particular song. Drummers often count in the air during certain passes. You may as well use the time for a spin or twirl to add to your overall showmanship. Again, don't let it get in the way of your playing. Twirling is like anything else in drumming: It takes practice.

Daniel de los Reyes (Earth Wind & Fire, Don Henley)

Ever since I can remember I've had sticks in my hands. If I wasn't doing some rudimentary exercise, I was most likely twirling or throwing the sticks around. When I was growing up, my father, Walfredo de los Reyes Sr., my brother, Walfredo Jr., and their drummer friends were constantly playing and jamming in my house. How could I grow up to be anything *but* a drummer/percussionist?

When I was a teenager trying to twirl the sticks, my father would tell me about drummers who were incredible technicians as well as great twirlers. These included Sonny Payne, Sonny Greer, Ray McKinley, and the great female drummer Viola Smith, who played with Phil Spitalny. But it wasn't until I saw a video with Gene Krupa and Chick Webb that I realized I wanted to incorporate twirling into my playing.

Once I made that decision, a great drummer friend of mine named Ronnie Gutierrez gave me some practical tips. I was also greatly influenced when I attended a Lionel Richie concert back in the 1980s and saw Gerry Brown not only twirling, but keeping a serious groove happening at the same time. Another great influence was Sonny Emory with Earth Wind & Fire.

Today I'm constantly twirling when I'm playing. I find that it helps keep my fingers loose. I came up with certain twirling patterns that I use as I play on my percussion kit. But I also like to creatively improvise my twirls and see what happens. Earth Wind & Fire is a very energetic and theatrical type of band, so twirling fits right in with the show—as long as the twirl *does not* jeopardize the groove.

Tommy Lee

Stick twirling was something I was fascinated with from the first time I stole my sister's cheerleader baton. Then, when I was in sixth grade, the school drum corps I was in had a guy who knew how to twirl the sticks. I sat in my bedroom for hours, learning different ways to do it. Then one day—bam! I seamlessly pulled it off. From there it was off to the races for me. I taught myself how to incorporate twirling in between each beat on the kit.



One of my tricks was created accidentally when I was hitting my snare drum. The stick slipped from my hand, bounced off the drumhead, and flew straight into the air. I freaked! I took my snare drum and stool outside to the backyard and started slamming the stick into the snare and letting it go—bouncing it off the drum into the air. It took me forever to perfect this. I can't tell you how many sticks flew over the fence into the neighbor's yard.

Carmine Appice (Vanilla Fudge)

I do two twirls. The first one is pretty common, but I'm flattered to say that many drummers refer to it as "The Carmine Twirl" because I'm the first guy they saw doing it.

Hold the stick between your index and middle fingers, with the tip pointing straight up. Then gently move your wrist forward in a circular position, allowing the stick to "fall" forward. Control the movement of the stick with your two fingers, while you turn your wrist left and right slightly to motivate it.

Get more vigorous as the stick gets moving. You can keep this spin going for quite a while, which helps fill empty spaces in the music. I also use the same technique to give the stick one 360° spin in between backbeats. It looks great and you never break the groove. I've been known to hold my right stick like this all the time, so that stick is *always* ready to twirl. But I do the twirl with both hands for effects. (It can also be done backwards, but learn it forward first.)

I also use the technique that Rikki Rockett described as the "Bowl Of Soup" spin. I like it because it gives the illusion of the stick twirling like one would twirl a baton. I'll use this twirl when I'm playing a groove or in a solo. (I *never* stop playing to do a twirl.) Using this technique, with one spin in between beats, looks great when it's done with both hands—especially with the right hand on the cymbals and the left hand spinning into the backbeat on the snare. Or mix it up using the Carmine Twirl on the right hand up high on a cymbal. Try different combinations. (Both

hands high on a crash or China always look great.)

My biggest influence when it comes to twirling was Gene Krupa. Like Gene, I love being a good showman, and I believe that stick spinning is an important part of a drummer's show. So keep rockin' and keep twirling.

John Blackwell (Prince)

My way of stick twirling came from wondering how I could apply Kung Fu (nun-chuks) to the kit. Also, I was in a marching band, where stick twirling was a must. I would hear stories about other drummers who twirled, but I never saw them in action until *after* I came up with my own way. After seeing Sonny Emory and many others, that furthered my way of thinking.

Seeing a lot of rock groups also had an influence on me. When I was thirteen I saw a video for Cinderella's "Nobody's Fool" on MTV. There was a clear shot of Fred Coury twirling one stick while he was playing—and being very showy about it. After I saw that video, it confirmed my pursuit of stick twirling.

[To learn more about John's stick twirling tips and technique, check out his DVD from Hudson Music.]

Samantha Maloney (Mötley Crüe)

Stick twirling is a funny subject. I mean, it makes me laugh. I believe it originated one day when some fool lost his grip and tried to catch the stick back in his hand—then realized that that was the only time the audience ever looked at him. So this drummer incorporated a methodical way to "twirl" a stick in his hand without losing a beat. Then one day he stopped playing completely during a break in the song, and just twirled away as the crowd cheered for more.

Twirling is the poor man's drum solo. I love twirling sticks. Whenever I think the singer of my band is getting too much attention, I give a little twirl and the crowd is right back where I want them—staring at *me*.



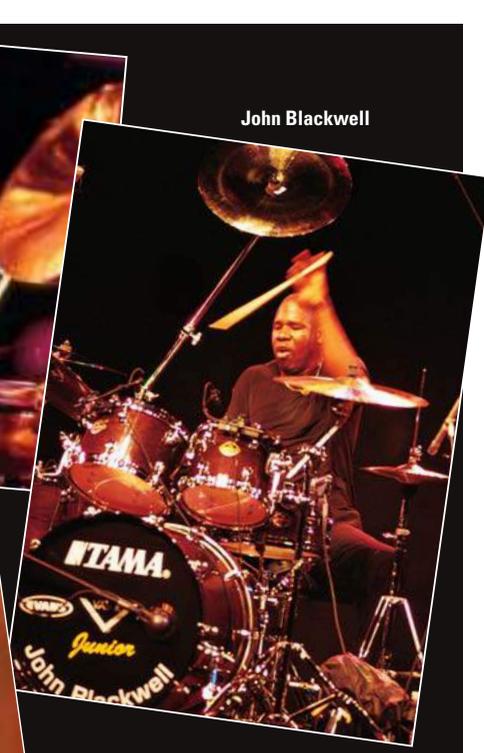
Tommy Lee



Carmine Appice



Samantha Maloney



John Blackwell

A Marching Drummer's Point Of View

by Lauren Vogel Weiss

Pop and rock drumming isn't the only percussion area heavily dependent on the visual element. Stick twirls and other special effects (stick tossing, drumming on one another's drums, and backsticking) have been integral parts of marching-band and drum & bugle corps drumming since the early days of the activity.

To get the marching drummer's take on stick effects, *Modern Drummer* consulted with Patrick Fitz-Gibbon, reigning Drum Corps International (DCI) Snare Drum Champion for the past three years. (See our *Backbeats* report on the 2002 DCI Championships in this issue.) Pat is twenty-two years old and a six-year veteran of the Madison Scouts Drum & Bugle Corps from Madison, Wisconsin. He was kind enough to attempt the near-impossible for us: verbally describing a few of his favorite stick twirls, while also trying to do them in "slow motion" for the photographers.

Standard Right-Hand Stick Twirl

On a standard right-hand stick twirl, the stick is held between the thumb and index finger. It moves outward from the standard playing position so that the tip of the stick traces an imaginary circle, winding up back at the original hand position. "It's important to keep the stick in one plane," says Pat, as his wrist pivots on the end of his forearm. "I use this on the end of notes for an elaborate



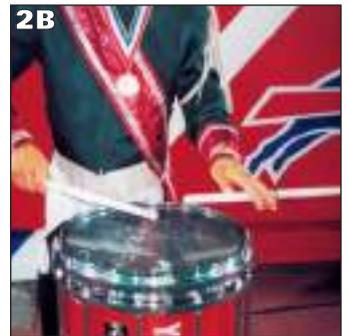
release." This stick twirl will also work for the left hand when matched grip is used.

Left-Hand Vertical Stick Twirl

For those drummers playing traditional grip, this left-hand twirl is visually effective. But it should only be done if there are two to three beats of "right hand only" rhythms being played, in order to allow time for the left hand twirl to be completed.

The stick starts in the standard "palm up" position of the traditional grip (photo 2A). To create the twirl, the left hand rotates inward so that the palm faces downward. At the same time, the stick is squeezed between the second (middle) and third (ring) fingers. The tip of the stick spins outward while it traces a "vertical circle" (photo 2B). The stick continues to rotate upward to a vertical position (photo 2C) before the "ring" finger forces the tip of the stick onto the drumhead (photo 2D).

"The stick pretty much travels 360°," says Pat, as he effortlessly spins the stick with his left hand. "Not only have I used this move in playing my snare drum solo, I've also used it while playing drumset—especially when I'm moving to the hi-hat or a splash cymbal."



Left-Hand Flip

Another visual effect using the left hand is one that begins with the traditional grip and ends in an inverted matched grip. It's commonly known as a left-hand flip.

Beginning with the basic traditional grip in the left hand (photo 3A), the stick is twirled outward (similar to the left-hand twirl, Photo 3B) but it's grasped by the first and second fingers while the third (ring) and fourth (pinky) fingers come from below the stick to curl on top of it (photo 3C). The left hand then continues to rotate inward so the palm faces down. The butt end of the stick is now in a position to strike the drumhead (photo 3D).

"This works well for rimshots on the snare drum," says Pat. "It also gives you more power than the traditional grip, so I've used it



The right palm rotates outward in a twirling motion so the butt end of the drumstick can hit the drumhead as the palm faces up. Then the right palm rotates back in so the bead of the stick hits the head as the palm faces down again.

“This move can be incorporated into a double-stroke roll,” com-



ments Pat. “The roll would be played: butt-bead with your right hand, then two taps with your left hand—RR-LL. I’ve used this on tom-toms as well as on the snare drum.”

These are just a few of the stick twirls that Patrick Fitz-Gibbon used during his award-winning snare drum solos at the 2000 through 2002 DCI World Championships. They can be applied to drumset, as well as to many other percussion instruments. Hopefully they’ll give you some ideas on how to create your own unique stick twirls to add a special visual effect to your drumming performance.

for accents on cymbals and things like that.”

Casey Claw

“I can’t take credit for this one,” Pat grins. “The Cavaliers [Drum & Bugle Corps from Rosemont, Illinois] began using this in 1994. It’s a pretty basic stick twirl.”

The right stick is held closer to its center than in a normal grip.

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Approaches To Drumstick Spinology

by Steve Stockmal

Editor's note: Steve Stockmal is the author of Drumstick Spinology, as well as the creator of a video by the same title. (Both are available at www.drstix.com.) They contain detailed instructions for creating a wide variety of drumstick spins and twirls. Here is Steve's description of what he calls The Forward Spin, along with some of his thoughts on the technical and performance aspects of stick twirling.

In order to diagram the movements involved in stick spinning, I found it necessary to re-name the parts of the hand. So we have Fingers 1, 2, 3, and 4 (index, middle, ring, and pinky, respectively), and Slots A, B, and C between the fingers. Slot A is between fingers 1 and 2, Slot B is between fingers 2 and 3, and Slot C is between fingers 3 and 4.

The Forward Spin begins with the stick held in what I call the Fake Grip. Slide your first finger over the stick so that you're holding the stick in Slot A between Fingers 1 and 2. (You can still play from this position.)

From Slot A, spin the stick forward (photo 1) over Finger 2, grabbing it with Finger 3 (photo 2). Let go with Finger 1. The stick is now in Slot B (photo 3). Continue over Finger 3, and grab the stick with Finger 4 (photo 4). Let go with Finger 2. The stick is now in Slot C (photo 5). Continue forward under Fingers



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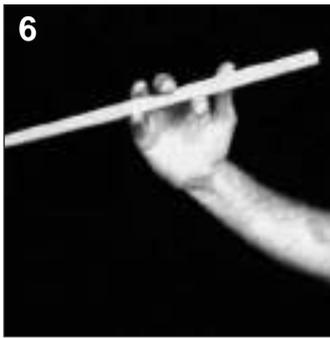
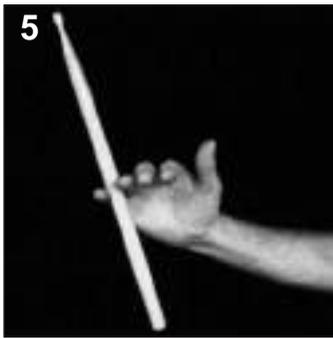
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3 and 2, grabbing with Finger 1 again (photo 6). Let go with Finger 4, and you're back in Slot A, with the butt end of the stick now up. Repeat the A-B-C pattern once, and the tip will be up.

When you're first learning to spin, you might want to practice while sitting on a carpet or grass. That way, if you drop the sticks, they won't roll away. You can use your other hand to "walk" the stick through certain spins to help get the flow happening.

I've been playing drums for over twenty years, and I've been spinning my sticks most of that time. For me, it's my "Zen" practice. The fluidity, precision, flow, and feel of the sticks spinning around my fingers makes it a great way to relax, as well as to feel in contact with my drumming (even if my drums are packed away). Other drummers have told me that spinning has increased their drumming speed and control by relaxing and

strengthening their fingers.

Spinning the sticks enhances what the audience experiences by creating an added dimension—the visual aspect of performing music. It also helps you to expand your style by adding to your live repertoire. I love seeing a great drummer occasionally throw in a killer stick spin, thus enhancing climactic moments in the show. It's a way to stand out, show a touch of class, and add a bit of "daredevil" quality by risking a dropped stick. We are performers, and when we outdo ourselves in any endeavor, people respond enthusiastically.

I always emphasize *musicality* in drumming, so don't go wild and think that you are there *just* to spin your sticks. Be tasteful, and use spins during times that don't detract from other action happening on stage. Don't steal the show, add to it. Your drum solo is the perfect place to include some eye-catching spins.

One more word of advice: You'll no doubt drop your sticks from time to time. That happens to all of us. But the professional drummer is the one who has a new stick in his or her hand before the next beat, without missing a note. There are several places around the drumset where extra sticks can be placed for easy access.

To master anything in life takes dedication, inspiration...and time. This is true of drumstick spinning. On the other hand, it's fun, it's relaxing, and it can enhance your value as a performer. So why not spin?



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Bass Drum Ensemble: Madison Scouts, Bronze Medal

CHAMPIONSHIPS:

Seattle Cascades: 12th place, Division I

Madison Scouts: Semi-finalist, Division I

Southwind: Quarter-finalist, Division I

Capital Sound: Semi-finalist, Division II

Teal Sound: Division III

Royal Aires Alumni Corps

RECORDINGS

rating scale  classic

9 **The Vandals** *Internet Dating Super Studs* (Kung Fu)

JOSH FREESE's work can be spotted on literally hundreds of releases, making him one of the most prolific, in-demand drummers of late. Yet, out of all his recordings, Freese typically appears in best form with The Vandals. Arguably his finest release since 1996's *Live Fast, Diarrhea*, Freese drops his exacting session guard, converting into a loosey-goose, carefree slammer for *Internet Dating Super Studs*. Up-tempo tracks like "My Brain Tells My Body" divulge a youthful, unpolished side that's consistent with the band. Sloppy hats and washy crashes may not gel with Freese's other endeavors, but for The Vandals, they couldn't be more welcome.

Waleed Rashidi



7 **Steve Tibbetts** *A Man*

About A Horse (ECM)

If you've never heard a **STEVE TIBBETTS** album, it's something to consider, since there's nothing else quite like it. A guitarist and percussionist, Tibbetts creates dense soundworlds that feature layers of exotic percussion surging around his distinctive guitar. These pieces can be introspective and moody, as on the opener, where acoustic guitars intertwine with **MARCUS WISE**'s tabla. Or they can be filled with Tibbetts' unique percussion samples and tape manipulation; here distorted lines and textures morph around the battery of hand drums played by Tibbetts and **MARC ANDERSON**. Fusing percussion, improvisation, and technology, Steve Tibbetts is a musician with a singular vision.



7 **Pleasure** *Dust Yourself Off/Accept No Substitutes* (Fantasy)

6 **Side Effect** *Side Effect/What You Need* (Fantasy)

Part of the mid-'70s pre-disco R&B movement that included Earth, Wind & Fire and Tower Of Power, these two little-known West Coast bands prove that much great music remains buried in record company vaults. Both produced by The Crusaders' Wayne Henderson, these acts epitomize a pre-drum machine era when music swayed with changing tempos but never faltered from lack of soul or invention. With fifteen-year-old drummer

BRUCE CARTER providing a nail-hard beat, Portland's Pleasure is a groove monster of a band. Subsequently sampled by Public Enemy, Jazzy Jeff, and Rakim, Pleasure tackled funk, fusion, and cosmic love jazz with great authority. Side Effect is a vocal group who combined '40s flair with '70s R&B and had a hit with Ronnie Laws' "Always There." Whippersnapper Carter is featured here again, as well **SPIDER WEBB**, **LEONARD STRETCHING**, and **ROBERT "THE POPPER" GRIFFIN**. Check Side Effect, but don't miss Pleasure.

Ken Micallef



8 **In Flames** *Reroute To Remain* (Nuclear Blast)

On *Reroute To Remain*, In Flames' sixth studio album, the Swedish metal band's songwriting and arrangements show massive depth. The title track features wonderfully familiar In Flames elements: fluent yet propulsive guitar riffs reminiscent of Priest and Maiden, roaring death metal vocals, and the precise, powerhouse drumming of **DANIEL SVENSSON**. Yet other tunes are mighty surprising. "Trigger" offers dark, murky melodies that would give Marilyn Manson a run for his money, and "Cloud Connected" is a futuristic über tune Kraut-rock devotees would dig. All along, Svensson handles the rerouting with grace and madness, while In Flames burn brighter than ever.

Jeff Perlah



8 **Uri Caine** *Bedrock* (Winter & Winter)

Edgy and fizzling with bad-boy tension, this trio mixes retro with modern to cool results. **Uri Caine** overflows with great ideas. His Rhodes piano, **Tim Lefebvre**'s electric bass, and **ZACH DANZIGER**'s air-tight aggressive drumming are well matched in their choppy, mischievous approach. Featured is a funky jazz sound echoing electric Herbie circa '70s, now informed by the "live drum 'n' bass" grooves Zach has championed. It's breathtaking kit work. Zach also inserts samples that add hip texture, while other shots are just plain wacky. Whether it's urgent jazz or complex funk, the groove is throttling from start to finish.

Jeff Potter



THE KNOT SLIPS

7 **Murderdolls** *Beyond The Valley Of The Murderdolls*

7 **Stone Sour** *Stone Sour*

In the nine-member Slipknot, drummer **Joey Jordison**, singer **Corey Taylor**, and guitarist **James Root** pack quite a wallop. These side projects, however, aren't as effective. In Murderdolls, Jordison steps out from behind his drums (and mask) to share guitar and backup vocals with Static-X's Tripp Eisen. Tackling the skins is **BEN GRAVES**, whose raucous attack isn't as dazzling as Jordison's approach. It does complement "197666" and other cheesy yet hummable tunes. Still, Murderdolls are less vibrant than their glam-metal/cock-rock/punk influences.

In Stone Sour, which predates Slipknot, Taylor and Root also reveal their mugs. They show a bit of an identity crisis too, as the Alice In Chains meets Metallica crunch of "Get Inside" and "Monolith," and the Staind-ish nu-metal of "Orchids" and "Cold Reader" prove. But these tunes crank hard and melodically, and the band, featuring the hefty, tasteful timekeeping of **JOEL EKMAN**, hardly sounds sour.

Jeff Perlah



INDEPENDENT GROOVE

DEL BENNETT certainly has chops. But more importantly, he puts them to good use on *Full Circle*. With a solid supporting cast featuring guitarist **Mark Woerpel**, Bennett injects life and a sense of freedom into this set, becoming small during ambient sections, and rising with the tide on the big grooves. This is intelligent fusion-making, rewarding for the players and listeners. (www.delbennett.com)



Chuck's *The Conference* is an energetic, ambitious instrumental offering that simmers with techno and progressive rock overtones. **RYAN CHARLES KOZAR** deftly navigates the changes of these dramatic mini-musicals from the drumkit. This band's mastery of the bizarre changes of "Mom" proves that they've done their King Crimson homework and more. (www.mp3.com/chuckmusic)

Jon Cleary & The Absolute Monster Gentlemen is a savvy New Orleans outfit, raw rather than slick. And forceful drummer **JEFFREY "JELLYBEAN" ALEXANDER** goes to great lengths here to lay back. "More Hipper" is one of several absolute monster grooves, and nothing is ever rushed. "Just Kissed My Baby" is a simple marvel, drums and bass leaning back in the pocket just right. (Basin Street, [888] 45-BASIN, 4151 Canal St., Ste. C, New Orleans, LA 70119)

Robin Tolleson

6 Radford University Percussion Ensemble By Departing Light (Highlander)

The Radford (Virginia) University Percussion Ensemble, under the direction of Al Wojtera for the past fourteen years, has released a listenable CD featuring a variety of percussion music. From "Samba Macabre" (a Latin version of the Saint-Saens classic) to David Gillingham's "Stained Glass" (a percussion ensemble staple for the past decade), Radford's percussionists show their skills on traditional as well as world percussion instruments. **B. MICHAEL WILLIAMS** plays djembe and mbira in two African songs. The title track features instruments from indefinite to definite pitch (cymbals to crotales). (Radford University Department of Music, hirecords@radford.edu)

Andrea Byrd

9 Dave Holland Big Band What Goes Around (ECM)



Bassist **Dave Holland** continues his award-winning streak with drummer **BILLY KILSON** at the helm. A top candidate for drummers to watch this decade, Kilson is blooming under Holland's umbrella. This time, the quintet adds four reeds and four brass for a "small big band" excursion. Ensemble parts mix with loose, improvisational allowances. The results feel more like an organic small group bolstered by broader, richer sonorities. Kilson pulls it off beautifully: Juggling power with finesse, he molds the ensemble while encouraging interplay. Eschewing typical "set-up and hit" figures, he avoids big band chart cliches. Adventurous writing, arranging, and playing throughout. **Jeff**

Potter

8 Meshuggah Nothing (Nuclear Blast)

Though Sweden's notoriety as of late has arrived in the form of garage punk acts like The Hives, black metal bands like Meshuggah have been keeping the nation on the rock map since the '80s, garnering rousing international accolades in the underground circuit. *Nothing* features **TOMAS HAAKE**'s exemplary, near-mechanical double kick technique (fused with his trademark quarter-note China crashes). Haake's stickwork deftly nails the instrumental bridge on "Spasm"; those accented kicks juxtaposed against the slamming snare rudiments are downright impeccable. Far from the popular punk hailing from his nation lately, Haake confirms that Scandinavian metal is still of paramount importance.

Waleed Rashidi



7 Time Travil Time Travil (Independent)

Recorded in two continents, this Indo-jazz indie release exudes authenticity, acidity, and spiritual atmospherics. Drummer **RYAN SHAH** and percussionist **MAYOOKH BHAUMIK** improvise using traditional Indian tabla patterns such as the chakradar and the tee haie (an improvisational cadence phrase that begins at any point in a time cycle, repeats three times, and ends on "1"). In "I Could Drive To New York Right Now," the percussion ensemble employs these techniques as they exchange licks in a spiraling 16-, then 8-, then 4-bar cycle (eventually whittling the measure down to a single beat). While this music could be more intense in spots, the band's brand of world-psychedelia often spins like a whirling dervish. (www.timetravil.com)

Will Romano

7 Twinemen Twinemen (Hi-N-Dry)

Morphine drummer **BILLY CONWAY** and saxman **Dana Colley** explore a dark and engaging crop of acid-jazz/rock on the debut of Twinemen. Conway thinks groove and color, driving it hard with creative built-in dynamics. The large-room drum sound on "Spinner" is reminiscent of Bill Laswell's production on Public Image Ltd.'s *Album* (featuring Ginger Baker and Tony Williams). Conway likes it minimal, laying a subtle beat under Colley's loop on "Little By Little" as the saxman riffs on bari. Check out the attention to cymbals on "Golden Hour" and the sure-handed piloting of **Laurie Sargent**'s vocal maze on "Learn To Fly." (www.twinemen.com)

Robin Tolleson



8 Daniel Glass Trio Something Colorful (Very Tall Music)

Though best known for his gig with rat-pack swingers Royal Crown Revue, **DANIEL GLASS** is a highly skilled musician who has also recorded with pop stars Bette Midler and Jeffrey Gaines, noise-punk Mike Ness, and grizzled jazzbo Vinnie Santoro. On his leader debut, Glass's trio creates sophisticated west coast swing. Covering Bud Powell's "Dance Of The Infidels," Kenny Dorham's "Lotus Blossom," and a handful of originals, the trio craft a detailed panorama full of fire, finesse, and articulation. Glass drums with a solid sense of history throughout, paying respect to Philly Joe and Billy Higgins, but tempered by the fusion styles of the '90s when the mood moves him. Sweet swing from a post-rat pack artisan.

Ken Micallef



BOOKS

ON THE MARCH

8 A History Of Drum & Bugle Corps (Sights & Sounds, Inc.)

level: all, \$85 (plus \$10 S&H in US)

You really have to be a full-on drum & bugle corps fanatic to appreciate the comprehensive detail of this 424-page tome. But if you *are*, what a time you'll have with it. Eight decades of the activity are covered, with chapters dedicated to the history of instruments, the evolution of visual design, recordings, scores, alumni corps, modern corps, and much more. There are even two chapters devoted to Canadian corps. This encyclopaedic volume, halfway between a "coffee-table book" (with lots of great photos) and a textbook (with a complete bibliography and a master list of North American corps), was produced as a limited edition of only 2,000 copies.



Rick Van Horn

9 Row-Loff Marching Features

level: see review, prices unavailable

The "Row-Loff boys" are at it again, releasing eleven new features for marching percussion. Generally scored for snare, tenors, cymbals, bass drums, mallet instruments, and timpani, some features include instruments from cowbells to flexitones, while others have optional guitar or band parts (to be performed by a pep band in the stands). As usual, each arrangement is well-written, entertaining for the listener, and fun to play for the percussionist.

Shoe Bop by Chris Crockarell, **Space Mambo** by Chris Brooks, **Shimi, Shami, Shang!** by Chris Crockarell, and **Fun** by Michael Cooper (arrangement by Brooks/Wallace) are between one and two minutes long each and are written for beginners. Playing something simple that sounds so good is a great motivator for young drum lines.

Siesta by Chris Brooks, **Tho'down At The Ho'down** by Brian S. Mason, **Coolyata!** by Thom Hannum, **Sahara Dream** by Chris Crockarell, and **Rhythm Is Gonna Get You** by Gloria Estefan & E. E. Garcia (arr. Crockarell/Dawson)—written by some of the leading names in drum corps today—challenge players a bit more. Also less than two minutes each, these arrangements feature more multi-meters and complex rhythms (16th notes in one measure, triplets in the next). And you've gotta' love the horses' hooves in the *Ho'down*.

The final two features, **Neptune** by Kennan Wylie and **Hungarian Dance** by Tchaikovsky, will challenge the best high school or even college-level drum lines. *Neptune* begins and ends in 7/8, with a 4/4 section in between, and utilizes a lot of dynamics. Marty Hurley's arrangement of the classical *Hungarian Dance* includes some eye-catching visuals and tosses in the snare line, as well as a busy mallet part.

Drum line instructors will appreciate the new literature to educate their students. And even drumset players could challenge their chops by trying to play various combinations of the parts on their set.

Andrea Byrd

8 Conga Cookbook by Poncho Sanchez with Chuck Silverman (Cherry Lane) level: all, \$16.95 (with CD)



West Coast conguero/bandleader Poncho Sanchez has done the impossible: He's written a book on playing congas that is nearly as much fun as seeing his live performances. Along with vital notation on how to improve your playing, this upbeat book doubles as a "family album," containing great photos of Poncho's musical mentors, including Mongo Santamaria, Clare Fisher, Cal Tjader, and Francisco Aguabella. Poncho (along with co-author Chuck Silverman) conveys the essentials on playing the cha cha cha, mambo, 6/8, merengue, and solos. And just for fun, along with each rhythm chapter he includes a recipe for an essential Latin soul food dish. Add to this package a brief but thorough history of the conga drum and a well-designed play-along CD, and you have the whole enchilada. The musical notation may be biased toward right-handed players, but southpaws can easily translate...and the recipes are certainly two-fisted. Who says music and food aren't related?

Bill Kiely

7 Rumba: Afro-Cuban Conga Drum Improvisation by Cliff Brooks (Mel Bay) level: intermediate to advanced, \$22.95 (with 2 CDs)

Cliff Brooks has invented "a revolutionary self-teaching method" that aims to demystify one of the most challenging aspects of Afro-Cuban drumming—soloing on the lead drum (quinto). Though the notation in this book may at first resemble Egyptian hieroglyphics, the author's method is sound, and a serious student will discover new skills right away. Newcomers to Afro-Cuban rumba will benefit immediately from the introductory syncopation exercises, and experienced players will learn to articulately "speak" with their phrasing rather than "invent" a solo. Afro-Caribbean rhythms are an unbelievably rich treasure trove, and they deserve a serious, focused study. Although it may be challenging for conventional notation readers, Mr. Brooks' new instructional approach might just represent one of the keys to unlock this vault.

Bill Kiely



8 Ultimate Play-Along Conundrum by Billy Cobham (Wamer Bros.) level: intermediate to advanced, \$19.95 (with two CDs)



Legendary jazz fusion drummer/composer Billy Cobham continues to expand his prolific catalog of music while rekindling some old gems from his first solo recording (*Spectrum*) in this challenging yet enjoyable play-along package. The music on the CD was recorded with the London Jazz Orchestra, which adds a jazzier, big band sound to the classic electric fusion tunes "Stratus" and "Red Baron." Cobham includes insightful performance notes before each chart by discussing the music from musical and drumistic points of view. The charts highlight the accents or "kicks" of the melodies. There are no written drum parts to follow; rather, Cobham's drum parts are used more as a guide to the groove for the drummer to establish his/her own patterns. The two CDs feature all six tracks with and without drums. Cobham's effortless drumming is inspiring and a total challenge to emulate in this reasonably priced package.

Mike Haid

5 Blues Drumming by Ed Roscetti (Hal Leonard) level: beginner to intermediate, \$14.95 (with CD)

Blues Drumming explains the musical form of the blues as we know it in the Western world—the shuffle feel, slow 6/8 blues, triplets and 12/8, and straight 8th-note blues. The CD concentrates on six different blues grooves, and points out drummers like Steve Gadd, Steve Jordan, and Jeff Porcaro to listen to for tips. There's certainly nothing wrong with those jack-of-all-trade drummers, but from a historical musical perspective, I wish Roscetti had mentioned and possibly included examples from some of the "real" blues drummers that played with Howlin' Wolf, John Lee Hooker, and others. There's a lot more to authentic blues drumming than what we get here, including the subtleties and oddly accented phrases of delta blues, as well as some inverted beats that are fun to work out and play.



Robin Tolleson

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.

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Congratulations...

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Blue Devils

The Cadets

**DCI Division I
High Percussion**

Santa Clara Vanguard

Phantom Regiment

Boston Crusaders

Crossmen

Magic of Orlando

**DCI Division II World
Champions & High
Percussion**

**We also commend the following corps
for another great year:**

Blue Knights

Colts

Capital Regiment

Mandarins

Kiwanis Cavaliers

Troopers

Santa Clara Vanguard Cadets

Revolution

**DCI Division III World Champions
& High Percussion**

Blue Stars

Patriots

East Coast Jazz

Jersey Surf

Yamato

Marion Glory Cadets

Americanos

Allegiance Elite

Impulse

Lehigh Valley Knights

Cadets of New York

Phoenix

Lake Erie Regiment

Les Stentor

Spirit of Newark

Kingsmen

Pacific Crest

A special congratulations to the following:

Santa Clara Vanguard **Mixed Percussion Ensemble Champions**

Scott Simon of the Phantom Regiment **Multi-Tenor Champion**

Justin Truitt of the Phantom Regiment **Multi-Percussion Champion**



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2002 DCI World Championship Results

by Lauren Vogel Weiss

Drum Corps International (DCI) celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in grand style this past August, during a week of festivities at Camp Randall Stadium at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Capping off an undefeated season, the Cavaliers from Rosemont, Illinois were named "World Champion" for the third year in a row.

An underlying patriotic theme was prominent in this post-September 11th summer. Many of the corps played music by American composers, and featured red, white, and blue colors and the American flag in their visual programs. The audience of over 20,000 was treated to entertaining shows from all of the corps.

Claiming its fifth DCI title since 1992, the **Cavaliers** scored an all-time high mark of 99.15 (with a 9.65 out of 10.0 in drums), breaking the previous high score of 99.05 they earned the night before. The Cavies also won "Best General Effect," "Best Visual Ensemble," and the Jim Ott Brass Caption Award. For the second year in a row, the corps performed an original piece composed by brass arranger Richard Saucedo and percussion arrangers Bret Kuhn (battery) and Erik Johnson (pit). "Frameworks"

featured four movements: "Melody," "Harmony," "Rhythm," and "Resolution." "It was based on the basic elements of music," explains Mike McIntosh, percussion caption head and snare technician. "We took the main melody from the first movement, harmonized it in the second tune, added rhythm in the third, and brought it all together for a sense of resolution at the end."

There were several drum features throughout the program, the most prominent being in the third movement, "Rhythm." (Obviously!) "That was based on different styles of drumming and different types of percussion effects," McIntosh describes. "There was a small snare break, complete with backsticking, followed by a tenor break and a bass break. One of the coolest things we did was use snare units in the bass drums and on the lower two drums of the tenors to create a texture during the second movement."

Moving up from third place in Quarterfinals to second place in Semifinals, the **Blue Devils** won the "silver medal" overall with a score of 97.30 (9.40 in drums). Their program, "Jazz—Music Made in America,"

opened with a medley of ragtime music: Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" and the musical *Ragtime* by Stephen Flaherty, complete with ratchet, splash cymbal effects, and flying keyboard notes in the pit. Next came a production of George Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm" and "Fascinatin' Rhythm" based on the Rob McConnell big band arrangement, followed by "The House Of The Rising Sun." The corps closed with "Channel One Suite," originally written for The Buddy Rich Band by Bill Reddie.

Blue Devils director of percussion Scott Johnson defines the drum solo as "the first note to the last note of the show." Still, there was a drum feature during the Gershwin production. "One of the biggest highlights was a rack with five psuedo-drumsets. Each 'set' on the rack consisted of a 10" snare drum, a 16" floor tom, a hi-hat operated by a remote pedal, a 20" Zildjian K Dark ride, a 17" crash, and a 12" splash," says Johnson. "Every section of the drumline played on this rack at one time during the show. One of my favorite parts of the summer was trying to figure out that rack rotation."

The **Cadets Of Bergen County** are the only other corps ever to win three



The Cavaliers from Rosemont, Illinois were named "World Champion" for the third year in a row.

championships in a row (in 1983, '84, and '85). Their final score of 96.75 earned them a bronze medal, while their percussion score of 19.70 (out of 20, then divided by two to create a "real score" of 9.85) gave them their second Fred Sanford Award for best percussion performance. They also won the "Spirit Of Disney" award recognizing showmanship, creativity, and entertainment.

The Cadets' 2002 repertoire for "An American Revival" looked back on New York City during World War II. They opened with music from Leonard Bernstein's ballets *On The Town* and *Fancy Free*. This was followed by "The Place Where Dreams Come True," a haunting ballad from *Field Of Dreams* by John Horner. The Andrews Sisters' popular "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" got the audience on their feet before the closer of "American Tribute," a medley of "New York Memories" and "America The Beautiful" by the Cadets' brass arranger, Don Hill.

Highlights of the show included the corps reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and a recreation of the raising of the flag at Iwo Jima—echoed by a recreation of the Ground Zero flag raising on the back sideline. This was punctu-



The second-place Blue Devils from Concord, California employed a rack with five pseudo-drumsets. Every section of the drumline played on this rack at some point during the show.



Placing third overall, the Cadets Of Bergen County (New Jersey) won the Fred Sanford Award for Best Percussion Performance for the second straight year.

ated by a cacophony of sirens and lights on the fire trucks and ambulances at the fire station across the street from the stadium, as Madison firemen saluted their brothers in New York City.

The **Santa Clara Vanguard** from Santa Clara, California scored a 95.65 (9.75 in drums) to finish fourth for the third year in a row. Their program "Sound, Shape, And Color" opened with an original composition "Trivandrum" by percussion arranger and caption head Jim Casella and brass arranger Gordon Henderson. "The whole piece is based on triangles and figures of three," explains Casella. "Three-note themes, three geometric shapes on the field, a triangle on a flag, and groupings of three in the musical rhythms and melodic shapes." The Vanguard's program included the "Andante" movement from Howard Hanson's "Symphony No. 2," and the "Scherzo" and "Finale" movements of "Symphony For Organ And Orchestra" by Aaron Copland.

"The drum feature was based on original music from the 'Organ Symphony,'" Casella elaborates. "We took a melodic approach with the battery to accompany the original organ and orchestral parts heard in the pit. The battery added some 'razzle dazzle' and phrasing that complemented the front ensemble. We also used Vic Firth Dreadlocks in all sections of the battery to create a different color in the drumline."

The **Phantom Regiment**, from Rockford/Loves Park, Illinois, tied for fifth place with a Finals score of 92.40 (9.05 in drums). "Heroic Sketches: The Passion Of Shostakovich" featured music by the famous Russian composer, along with the fourth movement from Dmitri Shostakovich's "Symphony No. 7" (known as the "Leningrad" symphony).

Says percussion designer Brian Mason, "We had four different styles of music for the battery and pit to play. The drum feature was in the opener, which was very aggressive. It was layered with bass drums and sopranos going into a 'monster' section—half time, three versus two." The snare line

pounded out the fast-paced 16th notes of the original orchestral snare drum part. "In the third sketch, the tenors played an extended three-mallet section using the Stevens grip in their left hands while playing a lot of double strokes, flam figures, and crossovers."

The **Boston Crusaders** scored a 92.40 (9.3 in drums) to tie for fifth place. The show "You Are My Star" was based on famous American quotes. The program's underlying motif was "Appalachian Spring" by Aaron Copland, mixed with a little bit of Gershwin. There was also music from the film score to *The American President* by Marc Shaiman and Robert Seeley's "You Are My Star," as well as music by Artie Shaw, including his "Concerto For Clarinet." That piece featured two racks of drums for the percussionists to play on, one with drumset-style snare drums and one with surdos. Says percussion designer and caption head Rich Viano, "We used the surdos like 20" kick drums, something that would blend with a string bass. Our hand cymbals were 18" drumset cymbals, because that's the sound we were trying to re-create. This style allowed me to reach our kids with something completely unorthodox from a drum corps standpoint."

Scoring a 91.50 (9.25 in drums) were the **Bluecoats** from Canton, Ohio. Their "Urban Dances" program—designed to interpret one day in the life of a city dweller—was comprised of "Paradise Utopia" from Christopher Brubeck's "Concerto For Bass Trombone" (representing the sunrise and morning traffic), Bjork's "New World" from the soundtrack to *Dancer In The Dark* (representing an afternoon in the park), and "Pedal To The Metal" by Michael Daugherty (capturing the party atmosphere of the night life).

The 33-member drumline—the largest of the evening—used world percussion instruments throughout the show. Dan DeLong, director of percussion and percussion (battery) arranger for the Bluecoats, explains, "We used those instruments to create the traffic jam in the hustle and bustle of the morning. During the ballad, the keyboard players rolled on vibra-

phones with one hand while bowing the keys with the other, creating yet another unique sound."

The **Glassmen** from Toledo, Ohio scored a 91.00 (9.45 in drums). Their production "Odyssey" showcased music from Michael Kamen's "Millennium Symphony" and Michael Torke's "Javelin." The show opened with a solo timpanist in the left end-zone and two other sets of timpani in the pit. Several drummers "floated" on the field playing djembes, mounted double toms, and big surdo drums. Each of the eight snare drummers also had a doumbek mounted on the same

different types of things from an arranging standpoint. Snares, tenors, and bass drums went to a 'pocket' kind of feel, to get more of a jazz feeling behind the tune."

Spirit of JSU (formerly Spirit of Atlanta) made a triumphant return to the "Top 12" with a score of 85.45 (9.10 in drums) to secure tenth place. In their second year based at Jacksonville (Alabama) State University, the corps continues to prosper. Their program focused on David Holsinger's "Easter Symphony" titled "Symphonia Resurrectus," along with original music by percussion

with a score of 84.05 (8.45 in drums). Their "City Riffs" show focused on the music of Leonard Bernstein.

Finishing 13th were the **Blue Knights** from Denver, Colorado, who scored an 85.50. Rounding out the Semifinal line-up were the hometown **Madison Scouts** (84.85), the **Colts** from Dubuque, Iowa (83.90), and **Carolina Crown** from Fort Mill, South Carolina (81.80), along with the **Capital Regiment** from Columbus, Ohio (77.35), members of DCI's Division II.

Magic of Orlando won the Division II (corps with 61-135 members) Finals with a score of 99.05 (9.85 in drums). The Division III title (corps with up to 60 members) went to **Revolution** from San Antonio, Texas, who scored a 90.50 (9.25 in drums) in only its second year of competition.

Pre-show festivities included the Santa Clara Vanguard Alumni Corps, performing some of the

corps' greatest hits. The United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps—the "Commandant's Own"—presented their full field show, and also played the DCI corps on to the field for finale.

Individual And Ensemble Winners

On Wednesday, August 7, hundreds of young musicians competed in the Individual And Ensemble contest held at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in downtown Madison. Most of the winners performed in exhibition during the Division II/III Championship held later that evening.

For the third year in a row, the individual snare drum award went to **Patrick Fitz-Gibbon**, who "aged out" of the Madison Scouts at 22 after six years as a member. His score of 98.50 was the highest percussion score of the day, earning him a \$500 scholarship from the Avante Garde Foundation. "It was nice to be recognized," he states modestly. "There was a lot of emotion in the room when I won. I just want to thank all of my private teachers, the Madison Scouts,



From left to right: For the third year in a row, the Individual Snare Drum award went to Patrick Fitz-Gibbon of the Madison Scouts. Justin Stolarik, also of the Scouts, won the Individual Timpani award for the second year in a row. Scott Simon of the Phantom Regiment won the Individual Multi-Tenor award. Another member of the Phantom Regiment drumline, Justin Truitt, won the Individual Multi-Percussion category. Ray Lafoon of the Cavaliers earned the title of Best Individual Keyboard.

carrier. Explains Colin McNutt, the Glassmen's percussion arranger, designer, and caption head, "We also used hand drums played with yarn mallets, doubling melodies and ostinatos in the marimba and woods. We tried to create new sonorities for percussion by blending different timbres."

The **Crossmen**, from Newark, Delaware and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, scored an 89.10 (9.35 in drums). Their program consisted of several swinging, modern jazz pieces: Pat Metheny's "Heat Of The Day," "Candle In The Window" by Linda Eder, and "Strawberry Soup" by Don Ellis, which features several different time signatures.

"My original idea was to have elements of a drumset," says Lee Beddis, percussion caption head and arranger for the Crossmen. "We started with hi-hats in a three-over-two section that's going on with the tenors and basses, followed up with interplay between the pit and the battery. We had incredible four-mallet orchestration in our pit throughout the show. We also tried

arranger and caption head Clint Gillespie and brass arranger Mark Fifer. Spirit titled its movements "Darkness," "Passion," and "Glory."

"We're very happy with the progress the corps has made this year," says Gillespie. "We're glad that the vets stayed with us for a couple of years when they could have gone someplace else while we were trying to build a program."

Another "new" member of DCI's "Top 12" was **Magic of Orlando**, whose last appearance in DCI's Finals was a tenth place finish in 1997. Their score of 84.85 (8.65 in drums) catapulted this "Division II" corps back into the Saturday night show, finishing in 11th place. Their program was based on music from the film *The Wind And The Lion* by Jerry Goldsmith.

The true newcomer to the Saturday night competition was a corps celebrating its forty-fifth anniversary in 2002: the **Seattle Cascades**. Their rapid rise from Division III Champions in 2000 to 17th place in DCI Division I last year culminated in a 12th place finish this year



The Best Percussion Ensemble award went to nine members of the Santa Clara Vanguard's pit. Back row, from left: Aimee Lallana, Nate Bourg, Katie Hurst, Tom Gierke, Andrea Venet, and Trabronco Wills. Front row, from left: Rob Keedy, Cory Evan Beers, and Travis Watson.



The Vanguard also fielded the Best Cymbal Ensemble, including (back row, from left) Mike Sargent, Billy Urman, and Nick Braasch, and (front row, from left) Chris Turner, Brandon Houlette, and Patrick Haedtler.



The Best Bass Drum Ensemble award went to members of the Carolina Crown bass drum line, including (from left) Butch Smith, Jon Bunner, Adam Patrey, Matt Ehlers, and Joshua Love.

and, of course, my mom."

One of Fitz-Gibbon's fellow "age out" corps members from the Scouts, **Justin Stolarik**, won the individual timpani award for the second year in a row. Scoring a 90, the 21-year-old also won the Drum Corps Midwest (DCM) timpani title for the second year in a row. His solo was an original composition called "Shenanigans," which featured him singing the corps' signature song, "You'll Never Walk Alone," while harmonizing the melody with timpani rolls.

Scott Simon (20) of the Phantom Regiment won the individual multi-tenor award with a score of 97.80. Simon's original solo "Bottleneck Don" featured passages using the Stevens grip (two mallets) in his left hand while doing behind-his-back sweeps with his right.

Another member of the Phantom Regiment drumline, 21-year-old **Justin Truitt**, won the multi-percussion category with a score of 97. Justin's original composition "Dream Wave" was written for vibraphone with a small drumset positioned to his left. He played the bass drum (set up behind him) with the heel of his left foot.

The final individual percussion award went to **Ray Lafoon**, a 20-year-old rookie with the Cavaliers. His arrangement of Joseph Schwantner's marimba solo "Velocities" earned him a score of 98 and the title of Best Individual Keyboard.

The best percussion ensemble award (with a score of 97.75) went to nine members of the **Santa Clara**

Vanguard's pit: Cory Evan Beers (18), **Nate Bourg** (22), **Tom Gierke** (20), **Katie Hurst** (20), **Rob Keedy** (20), **Aimee Lallana** (21), **Andrea Venet** (19), **Travis Watson** (21), and **Trabronco Wills** (19). Runners-up the previous two years, SCV won their title with James P. Ancona's arrangement of "The Masque" from Leonard Bernstein's *Age Of Anxiety*.

Santa Clara Vanguard also won the award for best cymbal ensemble with a score of 94.25. **Nick Braasch** (20), **Patrick Haedtler** (20), **Brandon Houlette** (18), **Mike Sargent** (21), **Chris Turner** (19), and **Billy Urman** (19) performed an original composition called "Feelin' The Spirit." It featured Haedtler on a "drumset" of cym-

bals and the other five on pairs of crash cymbals. Their coach was SCV cymbal tech Armando Olivares.

Carolina Crown scored a 96.50 to win the best bass drum ensemble award for their performance of "DNFWU," an original composition by bass drum instructor Teddy Holcomb. Members of the bass drum line included **Jon Bunner** (20), **Matt Ehlers** (19), **Joshua Love** (18), **Adam Patrey** (21), and **Butch Smith** (20).

The 2003 World Championships return to the Citrus Bowl in Orlando, Florida August 4-9, 2003. For more information on drum & bugle corps, write to DCI at 470 South Irmen Drive, Addison, IL 60101, call (800) 495-7469, or surf to www.dci.org.

Championship Stats

Drum Corps	Snares	Tenors	Basses	Cymbals	Total Battery	Pit	Total Drum Line	Drum Company	Cymbal Company	Stick/Mallet Company	Drumhead Company
Bluecoats	8	5*	5	6	24	9	33	Pearl	Sabian	Innovative	Evans
Blue Devils	9	5**	5	0	19	8	27	Dynasty	Zildjian	Vic Firth	Remo
Boston Crusaders	8	5*	5	0	18	11	29	Dynasty	Sabian	Vic Firth	Remo
Cadets Of Bergen Cty.	9	6**	5	0	20	12	32	Yamaha	Zildjian	Vic Firth	Evans
Cavaliers	10	4**	5	0	19	9	28	Yamaha	Zildjian	Innovative	Remo
Crossmen	9	4**	5	5	23	9	32	Yamaha	Zildjian	Vic Firth	Evans
Glassmen	8	3**	5	5	21	11	32	Pearl	Zildjian	Innovative	Remo
Magic Of Orlando	9	4*	5	0	18	10	28	Dynasty [^]	Zildjian	Vic Firth	Remo
Phantom Regiment	8	3*	5	0	16	10	26	Pearl	Zildjian	Vic Firth	Evans
Santa Clara Vanguard	8	5*	5	5	23	9	32	Pearl	Zildjian	Vic Firth/ Innovative	Remo
Seattle Cascades	8	5*	5	0	18	14	32	Pearl	Sabian	Pro-Mark	Remo
Spirit Of JSU	7	4*	5	5	21	11	32	Yamaha	Zildjian	Innovative	Remo

* 5-drum tenor (quint) ** 6-drum tenor ^Musser pit instruments
Note: Sticks and mallets from same company except where specifically indicated

In Memoriam

Chuch Magee

Royden W. "Chuch" Magee passed away on July 19, 2002, the victim of a heart attack. He had been the drum tech for Rolling Stones drummer Charlie Watts for more than thirty years.



Chuch's passing leaves a void in the hearts of everyone who knew and loved him. We spoke just a few days before he passed away, when he called to give me his numbers in Toronto, where the Stones were rehearsing. He also asked me to wish our mutual friend Vic Firth well on his final concert with the BSO, which was happening later that day. That's just one example of how thoughtful Chuch was.

Of course, I had *heard* of Chuch Magee long before I met him. Everyone in the industry knew about Chuch, based on his long tenure with the Stones. I remember seeing his name in the liner notes of their records, which made him "mythical" in a sense. But I never realized that he took care of Charlie Watts *and* Ronnie Wood, which is unheard of in this industry.

The first time I met Chuch (in New York in 1997), he and the rest of the Stones crew welcomed me as if I had known them for years. When the band came to Boston a few days later, Charlie Watts, Chuch, and I went to see Brian Blade play with Joshua Redman, and had a great time. When Charlie was at the Blue Note in New York with his own band in November of 2001, I dropped by SIR on 25th Street, where the Stones store some of their equipment. Chuch was busy working on Ronnie Woods' gear. You could tell he really loved his job. You could also see how much Charlie and Ronnie (and everyone) loved him.

One of the things that impressed me most about Chuch was his sincerity. You might think that someone who'd been with The Rolling Stones for thirty years might have a little bit of an ego, but not Chuch. He took it all in stride, never taking anything for granted, and always appreciating the smallest thing you did for him.

I recently had the privilege of attending a Boston rehearsal for the Stones' *40 Licks* tour. Chuch's friends and fellow crew members—Pierre DeBeauport, Mike Cormier, Johnny Starbuck, Peter Wiltz, Dave Rouze, and Russ Schlagbaum—had a big picture of Chuch hanging behind the stage in the crew area. A fitting tribute indeed.

Like so many others, I will miss Chuch very much.

John P. DeChristopher
Avedis Zildjian Company

Francofolies De Montreal

In Montreal, Quebec, Canada, they know how to *party*. In late July, right on the heels of that city's prestigious jazz festival, falls Les Francofolies de Montreal, a two-week celebration of French-speaking culture from around the world.

Modern Drummer ventured north for a day to witness a piece of this proud event and discovered that percussion was very much alive. Drums of all shapes and drummers of all sorts poked out of every nook—rooftops, alleyways, and balconies—reflecting international musical traditions.

By 7:00 P.M. on the day we attended, several streets were impassable. A staggering crowd of over 95,000 people had gathered. Night fell and fire dancers sprung up on scaffolding and high terraces. Atop a hotel roof, a drum circle thundered enthusiastically, raucously out of synch with the main stage performance below, where legions of performers

joined in a special tribute to African music, playing everything from Quebecois spoons to bodhrans and djembes.

One block down, the band Convoy Cubano had them dancing. *MD* spoke with drummer and timbalero Osmondo Calzado, a Montrealer with a wicked right foot who has roots in a prominent Havana musical family. "This is an exciting city," he exclaimed between sets. "There is so much music that I often work five nights a week."

Clearly, Montreal has found a way of promoting the city's dominant language and culture while embracing many others. *MD* salutes Les Francofolies for throwing a party to remember.

Story and photos
by T. Bruce Wittet



Drummers of every musical style and ethnicity performed in abundance throughout the two-week-long Francofolies De Montreal.



Osmondo Calzado is a Montreal-based Latin drummer playing with a band called Convoy Cubano. How's that for cross-culturalism?



Lionel Hampton

Jazz Percussion Giant

by Rick Van Horn

Lionel Hampton, legendary vibraphonist and drummer, died August 31, 2002, at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Manhattan. His death was reportedly due to complications of old age and a recent heart attack. Hampton was ninety-four.

Although “Hamp” (as Hampton was known throughout his career) was most familiar to the public as a vibraphonist, he was also an accomplished drumset player. In the 1930s and ’40s he was highly regarded for his driving beat and flamboyant drumming style, which included bouncing his sticks off of his drums and catching them in mid-air. Well into his later career, Hamp would include at least a couple of songs on drumset within his performance sets. He was also a skilled pianist.

But it was on vibes that Hampton made his most lasting contribution to music. In fact, he was one of the first musicians to play the vibraphone in jazz, on seminal recordings with Louis Armstrong, Benny Carter, and Benny Goodman made during the 1920s and ’30s. As such, he set the standard for all jazz vibists that followed, including stellar names like Milt Jackson, Bobby Hutcherson, and Terry Gibbs.

Hampton’s entire life was dedicated to musical performance. He was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1908, and began playing drums in a fife-and-drum band as an elementary school student. After moving to Chicago and receiving a set of drums from his grandparents at the age of fourteen, Lionel hit the road with Detroit Shannon’s band...and never looked back.

After relocating to Los Angeles in 1927, Lionel became the drummer in the house band at the Cotton Club in Culver City. Louis Armstrong also played in that band



when he was on the West Coast. It was Armstrong who suggested in 1930 that Lionel should take up the vibraphone, which was a relatively new mallet keyboard instrument with metal bars and electronically operated resonators. Hampton played his first recorded vibraphone solo that same year on Armstrong’s recording of “Memories Of You.”

It wasn’t long before Hamp formed his own band and began entertaining crowds at an LA club called the Paradise. It was there, in 1936, that Benny Goodman, along with Gene Krupa and pianist Teddy Wilson, heard Hamp perform. Goodman was impressed, and he invited Hampton to record with his band. Not long after, Hamp was asked to join the Goodman band.

While appearing with Benny Goodman, Lionel also helped to break color barriers within jazz performances. Studio sessions and small-club performances had been

integrated for some years, but Hampton’s membership in the Goodman band (along with Teddy Wilson) brought black musicians on stage as soloists with one of the era’s most important bands, performing across America.

Within a year, Hampton was established as one of the leading musical innovators of his day. For RCA Victor he recorded a collection of small-group dates featuring swing-era stars like Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins, Charlie Christian, Ben Webster, and Chu Berry. These recordings, along with those he made with Goodman, displayed Hamp’s swinging style and distinctive pointillistic riffs.

Hampton formed his first big band in 1940. He stressed high-energy arrangements, along with brassy and bluesy charts that

some music scholars believe helped set the stage for the rock era to come. For example, his 1942 recording of “Flying Home”—with its raucous tenor sax solo by Illinois Jacquet—had a rawness and dynamic energy that would not be matched until the appearance of Chuck Berry and Bill Haley over a decade later.

Hamp was also a showman who understood the importance of reaching out to an expanded audience—especially in the waning days of the big band/swing era. As such, he combined his swing tunes with boogie-woogie, R&B, light classical, and even early bebop pieces.

Hamp also applied his entertainment philosophy to his own solo spots. With eyes wide, mouth agape, hands flying above the keyboard, and sweat streaming from his brow, he embodied the concept of “giving it all” to his performance. He lived to play, and he continued to do so



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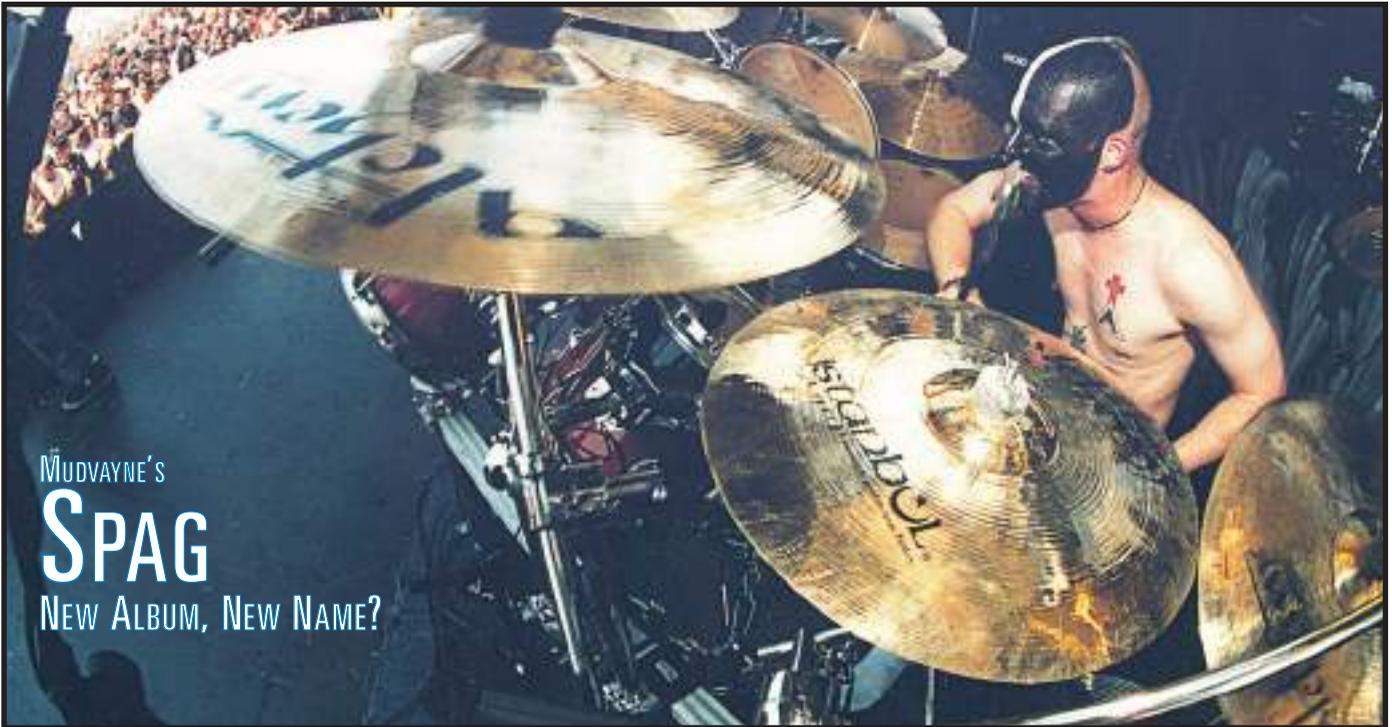
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Jungle Beat

P.J. Lanigan of Portland, Maine created this kit along with her boyfriend. "We're both drummers," says P.J., "and we play together and separately in different bands in the area. A friend gave us some crappy old drumshells with no lugs, and we decided to use them to make a practice set, just as a hoot.

"We filled in all the holes, gouges, and nicks with wood filler, then wrapped the shells in leopard-print fabric. We used $\frac{1}{4}$ " carriage bolts, couplers, and eyebolts (and some nylon spacers) that can be obtained from any local hardware store to make a set of single-tension drums. The major drum manufacturers might hate us for it, but the kit sounds really good. And it has that '60s retro, Austin Powers look."



PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.



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