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October 2003

JACK DEJOHNETTE

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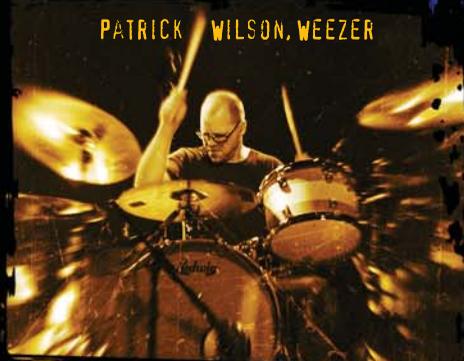


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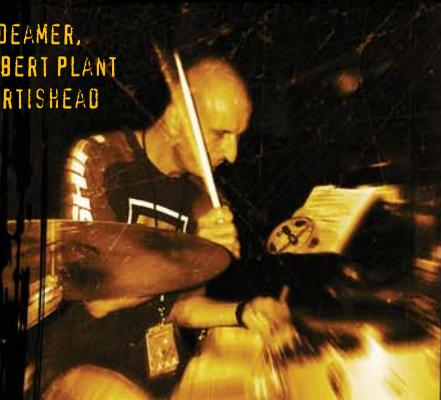
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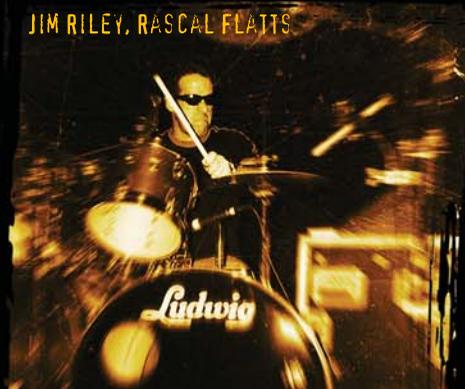
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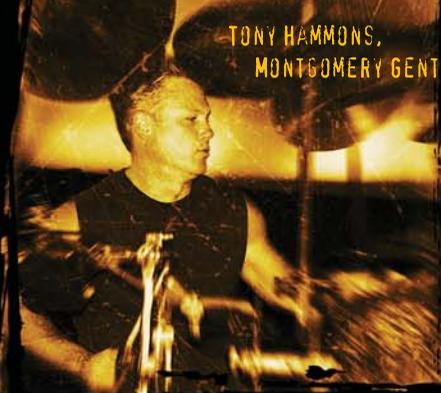


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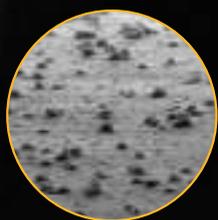
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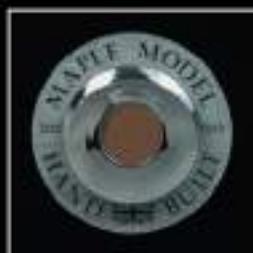


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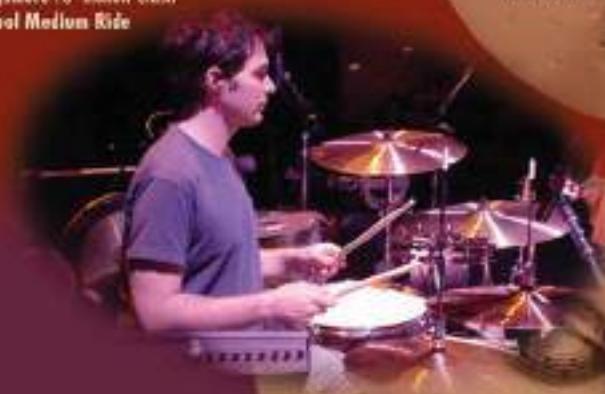
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Jack DeJohnette has remained one of the world's premier drummers by always looking forward, and never losing the passion. Oh, and by playing some of the most uniquely beautiful music on the drums ever.

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Paul La Roca



Paul La Roca

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by Billy Amendola

WIN! WIN! WIN!

A Custom Kit From Smith Drums,
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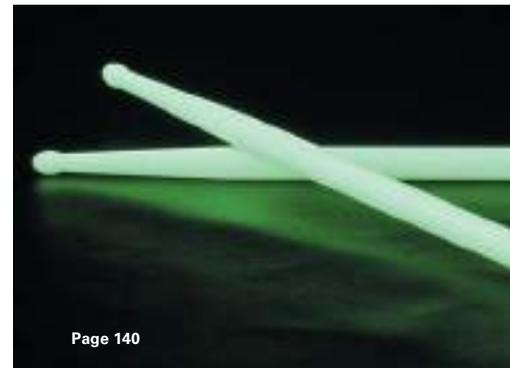
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Speaking Softly, Saying A Lot

Clearly, Jack DeJohnette does not play games—at least in the negative sense of the term. In the *positive* sense, that's actually what he does a lot: turns music over, reveals what it looks like from the other side, bounces it off the wall, sees what it'll do.

The games Jack *doesn't* play are those with rules set in stone. This year's Montreal Jazz Festival honored DeJohnette by arranging part of its Invitation Series around him, and on four consecutive nights, audience members were reminded of how Jack sees music, particularly jazz. DeJohnette believes jazz is a palette on which to create and trade fresh ideas, not a historically preserved format that demands that certain things be played at certain times.

After reading this month's cover story with DeJohnette, I was particularly psyched to see his performances in Montreal, and he didn't disappoint. Whether in a trio format with Herbie Hancock and Dave Holland, in duets with Gambian kora master Foday Musa Suso and vocalist Bobby McFerrin, or amid a multi-percussion fabric with Luisito Quintero and Giovanni Hidalgo, Jack answered to the demands of invention, not repetition. The audiences were, without exception, ecstatic.

Though all the shows were intense, particularly opening night with Hancock and Holland, Jack's duet with Foday Musa Suso knocked me out the most. As Foday set up mesmerizing harp-like arpeggios and loops, DeJohnette accompanied with what writer Ken Micallef accurately describes as a complete lack of cliché, not to mention a huge amount of restraint and taste. I mean, seeing the sets of his new Sabian Resonating Bells perched upon his kit like tiny metallic Christmas trees, I was struck by "the drummer's urge" to sneak on stage and wail away. Jack, however, made sweet refined music on them, often ignoring them completely until he chose to punctuate the very end of a long piece—with one or two simple strikes.

Often it takes very few sentences, a quiet voice, and a sense of mystery to communicate a meaningful tale. True musical masters like Jack DeJohnette know this very well.

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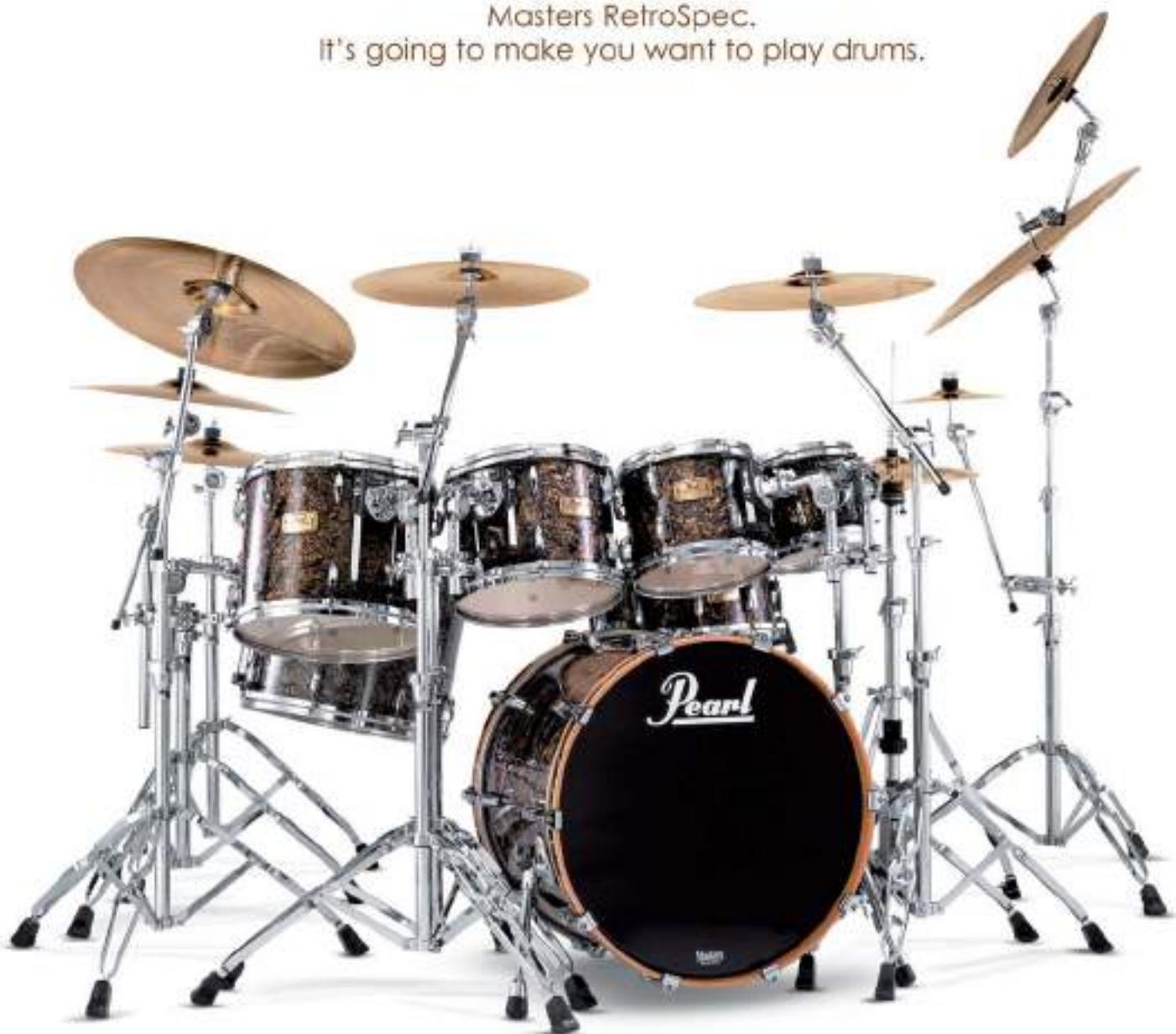
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GENE KRUPA

Thank you for Burt Korall's July '03 feature on Gene Krupa. I'm from the era in which Krupa was the inspiration to take up

drumming. He seems to me, in some way, the Ringo Starr of the swing era. They are both monumentally influential, forever underestimated, still controversial, much studied, and subsequently revered.

The thing that drew me and millions of others to Gene's playing was his surrender to the event. This ability to abandon himself completely within the music is foreign and somehow embarrassing to most people, yet it compels relentlessly. Gene played bravely, from the heart—without regard for critics or detractors. This is the essence of a real artist. He had great time and feel. He also had a selfless sense that his role was to make everybody else in the band sound good, despite his ability to rise above and kick it harder than most.

Krupa is one of the giants—Buddy, Tony, Louie, Papa Jo, Philly Joe, Bonham, Ringo, Max, Elvin—who changed everything forever. I still listen to Gene and to all the others. They keep me honest.

Rich Cesani
Memphis, TN

It's always fun reading about Gene. However, Burt Korall's comment about Gene being self-taught gives the impression that he had no formal training until he met the great Gus Moeller in New York. According to Maurie Lishon's *Franks For The Memories*, in 1926 a then-sixteen-year-old Gene took lessons with Roy C. Knapp in Chicago. (When Krupa went to New York, it was Knapp who hooked him up with Moeller.) The gigs that Krupa landed with Pollack, Goodman, and the Gershwin shows that were mentioned in the article required a high level of reading skill that would have been tough to pull off by a self-taught player.

For the record, the legendary Knapp also taught Sid Catlett, Baby Dodds, Louie Bellson, Mel Tormé, Ray Bauduc, Davey Tough, George Wettling, and Ben Pollack—all influential drummers from that seminal era. "Uncle Roy" was a Chicago institution.

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MD FESTIVAL WEEKEND

Congrats on yet another super Festival Weekend. It has become a finely tuned machine, and this show was easily the best of all the rest.

You can set your watch to an always great Steve Smith performance. Hip Pickles were super, and Louis Santiago's emotional response to the crowd's enthusiastic appreciation had my eyes welling up in a big way. (What a beautiful moment.)

Having said all of that, one artist stood out for me. Nathaniel Townsley's deep pocket, surrounded by some very tasty music from his trio, was nothing short of awe-inspiring. I was smiling from ear to ear during his whole performance because his playing and depth of soul went right through me.

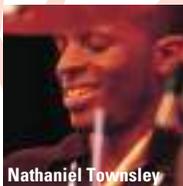
Thanks for giving drummers a favorite place to be each and every May.

Artists, MD personnel, and sponsors should all be commended on the phenomenal accomplishment of this year's MD Festival. From a spectator standpoint, it appeared as though you had a bigger project on your hands than in past years. The way you pulled it off proved that you are true professionals.

Hats off to Steve Smith, Mike Portnoy (cool move with his kits), Airtro, Nick D'Virgilio, and all the other amazing perform-

ers. And extra props for Antonio Sanchez, who came up with such a stellar impromptu clinic performance following the meltdown of his computer. The MD Festival is truly an amazing event.

Michael Black
via Internet



Nathaniel Townsley



Mike Portnoy

Year after year you continue to put on an outstanding Festival, and this year was no exception. I particularly enjoyed watching Mike Portnoy live out his dream of playing in a Beatles tribute band. You presented him with that opportunity, and Sabian was proud to be a part of it. Congratulations on another job well done!

Stacey Montgomery-Clark
International Artist Relations & Events Manager
Sabian Ltd.
Meductic, NB, Canada

Scott Lewis
via Internet



Antonio Sanchez

I'm extremely grateful to you for giving my quartet the opportunity to perform at the MD Festival. What a delight it was to walk out there and express ourselves. The response was inspirational. We could definitely feel the love in that auditorium. My wig will never be the same after that day. It was also quite nice to have my drums and hardware polished by your attentive crew. A very nice touch!

My band also wanted to express their thanks for the attention that was given to their needs. We do festivals often, and your well-organized and hospitable staff was exceptional.



Matt Wilson

STEVEN DROZD

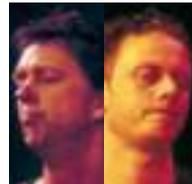
Thanks for covering The Flaming Lips' Steven Drozd in the July 2003 issue. Ever since I saw Steven's 26" bass drum and 24" crash-rides on the *Transmissions From The Satellite Heart* tour, I've been inspired by his drumming, as well as his guitar and keyboard playing on subsequent Lips releases. Steven is one of the most dynamic drummers in rock 'n' roll today. Shoot, I wouldn't have a Bonham-sized kit myself if it wasn't for him!



Matthew Payne
Seattle, WA

Thank you again for including me in your spectacular event and for the support of your wonderful publication. I was honored to be part of such an amazing lineup of performers.

Thank you for bringing The Drumbassadors to *Modern Drummer's* Festival. It was a big success for us, and everybody was very kind and helpful and made us feel comfortable. We are very pleased with the enthusiasm of the American audience, and we hope to get some more opportunities to do Drumbassadors concerts in the US.



René Creemers & Wim DeVries
The Drumbassadors
Holland

I want to thank everyone at *Modern Drummer* for producing a weekend that makes us drummers forget about our problems, and brings happiness and enjoyment to our lives. I was deeply honored to be a part of it. Thank you for making me feel at home!

To the audience: Thanks for accepting me the way you all did. I was nervous before walking on stage, but hearing you cheer me on made me forget about my nervousness, and made me ready to perform.

Along with my lord and savior, Jesus Christ, I want to thank my father, Louis, my mother, Nelly, my sister, Jackie, and my brother, Michael, along with their families, for their prayers and support. Thanks to my brother Eli for inspiring me to become a better musician, and to my best friend, Melissa Pinero, for her support and confidence. Finally, thanks to all my classmates and to the faculty at Drummers Collective for inspiring me and sharing their knowledge and experience.

God bless you all.



NEAL SMITH UPDATE

Thanks for the short but enjoyable piece on Neal Smith in the July 2003 issue. Neal has always been one of my favorite drummers, and is far too underrated. As a "forty-ish" guy re-establishing my chops from my high school days, Neal's work is indispensable to me in my retraining. Rediscovering the great work he did with the Alice Cooper band is a pure joy, especially on such tracks as "Generation Landslide," "Halo Of Flies," "Blue Turk," and "Billion Dollar Babies." Hopefully in the future you can catch up with him for a longer and more detailed interview about his technique and preferred equipment. Thanks again.

Jim Coyle
Oakwood, Ontario, Canada

MD READERS POLL RESULTS

Brian Blade is one of the best drummers out there today, and he needs to be recognized as such. He has chops, feel, and a groove that can't be denied. Check

out his playing on Joshua Redman's *Elastic* CD to hear some of the best electric funk drumming of your life.



Contemporary Jazz, All-Around, and Studio categories. If more of the drumming community does some listening research on Mr. Blade, he will undoubtedly figure prominently in the next Readers Poll.

Brian Presson
Olathe, KS

The fact that Neil Peart wasn't at the top of your poll for his outstanding *Vapor Trails* performance seems extraordinary to me. *MD* has done some terrific interviews with Neil, but I find it odd how many *other* drummers are interviewed and rarely mention him as any kind of influence. Are today's younger drummers *that* badly informed?

I am, obviously, a huge fan of Neil, and my style is without doubt the better for his influence. To my mind he is the most talented and extraordinary drummer of all time—and that includes the iconic Buddy and Gene, great as they were. Maybe your readers have some thoughts on this.

Mark Barrett
via Internet

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OOPS!

Our August '03 *Spotlight* piece on Premier Percussion mistakenly referred to Colin Schofield as vice president of sales in the US. Colin's correct title is vice president of marketing USA.



Miking Jazz Bass Drums

Q Andy James' series of articles on 'Drum Mic' Technology [July, August, and September '03 *MD*] is timely and of interest to individuals playing all styles of music. I'd like to ask Andy a miking question to which I've never received a clear answer.

The component that most clearly distinguishes an acoustic jazz kit from kits designed to play other styles is the bass drum. Certain jazz drummers, such as Bill Stewart, tune their bass drum as if it was simply another tom, with a pitched sound instead of a thud. Should a bass drum with this tuning be miked with a microphone designed for open toms, or one designed more specifically for bass drums, which usually have the "thud" sound?

Tom Brown
Detroit, Michigan

A Andy James replies: "I agree that the most distinguishable sound of a typical jazz kit is the bass drum. This distinctive sound, being somewhat different from a 'standard' bass drum sound, can create some confusion when it comes to picking the appropriate bass drum microphone.

"There are several 'application specific' bass drum microphones, meaning that the microphone capsule itself has been electronically tuned to give you a really good bass drum sound for typical applications. I would suggest staying away from these microphones for a jazz bass drum, for the simple reason that they are engineered more for the 'standard' bass drum with lots of thud and high-end attack. Microphones that are *very* application specific include the AKG D112 and Sennheiser E602. The Shure Beta 52 is also somewhat in this category. So although these are great mic's for their intended purposes, I wouldn't rec-

ommend them for jazz.

"Microphones that I would suggest include the AKG D12E, Sennheiser MD421, and Electro-Voice RE20. Each of these models should capture what you're looking for. Even a jazz bass drum tuned very high still moves a lot of air, due to the size of the drum. This is why, more often than not, you'll see some sort of large-diaphragm microphone (such as those mentioned above) on a jazz bass drum.

"However, the most important thing is, How does it sound to *you*? If a Shure SM57 gives you the sound you want, then who's to say you shouldn't use an SM57 to mike your bass drum? I've been in enough studio situations to learn that in order to get 'the sound,' you often have to break the rules."

Rare Zildjian Hi-Hats

Q I recently acquired a pair of Zildjian hi-hats that I've never seen before. The top cymbal is 12" in diameter, while the bottom cymbal measures just 11⁵/₈" in diameter. The stampings on both cymbals include what appears to be a logo (moon shape with a star at the top) with what looks like "Made in Turkey" underneath it. There is some type of Arabic-looking writing under that. Following that is "K. Zildjian & Co" (the K is bigger than the rest of the writing), then "Istanbul" under that, then "Zildjian" under that.

When were these cymbals made? Why is the bottom hi-hat cymbal smaller than the top cymbal? Are they from an older K series? What would they be valued at? And are they worth keeping as collectibles?

Ian Drent
Queensland, Australia

A Zildjian director of education John King responds, "It sounds like you possess cymbals that were made in Istanbul prior to the 1940s. Chances are that the trade-

Aluminum Panther

Q I have a 5¹/₂×14 Mapex aluminum snare drum, in black finish. It has the Black Panther logo on a paper tag inside the drum (along with the number 97), but not on the golden badge of the drum. There it just says "Mapex" and "Aluminum" (plus a serial number). The Mapex Web site does not mention this model at all. I'd like to know if the aluminum model has been discontinued, and, if so, when this happened. The only information I have been able to find indicates that this drum might be some kind of prototype or limited edition. In that case, it would be interesting to know how many of these drums were made, and what they might be worth.

Arne Forsgren
Oslo, Norway

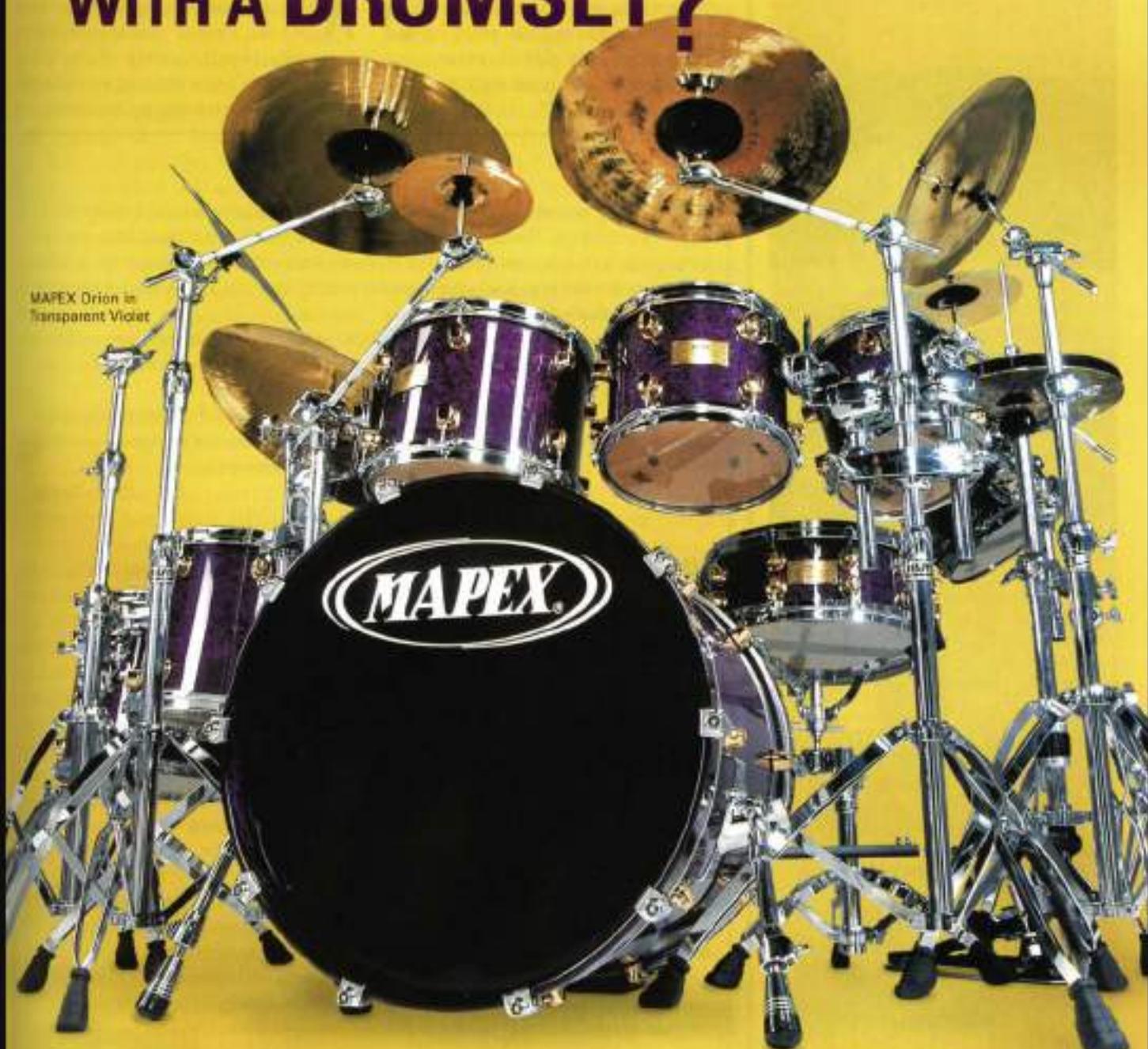
A We sent your question to Mapex product specialist Maxwell Schauff, who responds, "Your drum is a model AL4551 aluminum-shell snare drum produced from 1997 through 1999. The original retail price in 1999 was \$465. The model was discontinued in 2000. The accompanying photo shows a 6¹/₂×14 version.

"Aluminum has never been in high demand as a shell material, even though it has a unique sound—like a great steel shell, but drier, with a little more mellow tone. If you save your old *Modern Drummer* magazines (like I do), you can find a review of the Aluminum Black Panthers on page 42 of the August 1997 issue."



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It's Questionable

mark indentations were composed of three or four different stamps rather than the one die-stamping that was done later on. Varying sizes were not uncommon, due to the fact that very early cymbals were used for many applications, and were not necessarily considered specifically for hi-hat or band pairings. Cymbal 'blanks' were rolled to particular 'pulling thickness,' after which the cymbals were simply made as large as the blank would allow.

"The value of these cymbals would probably not exceed the price of new cymbals in a similar size. However, a collector might be intrigued with them due

to their advanced age."

Refinishing A Pearl Rhythm Traveler

QI recently purchased a Pearl Rhythm Traveler drumset. I'd like to know if it's possible to remove the black plastic covering and paint the shells. How would this be done, and what kinds of paint would you recommend?

Nathan Chronister

via Internet

AWe forwarded your question to Tony LeCroix, a repair specialist in Pearl's warranty repair/custom shop. Tony replies, "It is possible to remove the

Slingerland Or Leedy?

QI bought this drumkit a little over a year ago. It's a 1980s Slingerland, finished in Tony Williams Yellow. The toms are 10x14, 16x16, and 16x18, with a 14x24 bass drum and a matching 7x14, 8-lug snare drum. The shells are 5-ply with no reinforcing rings, and their insides are finished in a clear sealant over the natural wood. The kit has a Set-O-Matic tom mount and a Zoomatic strainer.

The really cool catch is, the drums are all fitted with Leedy badges and hardware. This is definitely a factory-made kit, because there are no extra or patched holes in the shells, even though the Leedy lugs are a different pattern from Slingerland lugs.

The person I bought the set from said that it was ordered for a drummer with some connection to The Pat Travers Band, but I don't know how accurate that information is. I'd love to find out who ordered this kit and what the story to its existence is.

Craig Spaeth

via Internet

AWe turned this mystery over to our drum historian, Harry Cangany. He came up with the following information: "At the time the Leedy manufacturing operation was shut



down in 1966, it was owned by Bud Slingerland, and the drums had been made in the same factory as Slingerland drums. Bud sold the Slingerland operation three years later, in 1969. It's entirely possible that leftover Leedy lugs and badges remained in the Slingerland warehouse/factory. The yellow finish was definitely in the Slingerland line, and the drum sizes are certainly from the 1980s. I suppose that a Slingerland endorser could have had a set

drilled and assembled using other lugs—like the Leedys. This possibility is supported by the presence of what appear to be 'factory installed' Leedy badges.

"I would only ask about the state of the lugs compared to that of the hoops. If the lugs are not in as good shape as the hoops and the strainer, it would lead me to believe that used Leedy parts were mixed in with new Slingerland parts. If that were the case, then I'd have to believe that the drums were assembled by someone other than Slingerland."



black plastic covering by loosening the glue with a heat gun and then carefully peeling the covering off with a razor knife.

"It is also possible to paint the shells. However, from your questions of 'How would this be done and what kinds of paint...', I take it that you are not a wood refinisher. Therefore I recommend that you have a professional refinisher do the work, so that you get a professional look. Be aware, however, that this refinishing will most likely cost more than what you paid for the kit.

"If cost is an issue, you could go to your local hardware store, buy a couple cans of your favorite color spray paint, and spray the shells. But be prepared for the results to *look* like someone spray-painted your kit. It will not look as good as what a professional would do.

"As a professional instrument repairman for over twenty-five years, I have to think back to the old saying, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' I hope this advice will help you in your decision."

Headphones For A TD-8

Q I have a Roland TD-8 electronic drumkit. After using various budget hi-fi headphones for two years, I recently upgraded to Sennheiser HD 250 headphones. I was very happy with the comfort, closed design, and sound. However, after three months of use they seem to have blown. The kick drum sound in the right earphone is now a crack. By checking through a monitor speaker, I've confirmed that this problem is not within the drumkit's sounds. I'd be grateful for a recommendation of the headphones (or minimum headphone specifications) most suitable for these drums.

Harvey Chamberlain
Jakarta, Indonesia

A Roland electronic percussion specialist Steve Fisher replies: "Headphone choice is a very subjective matter. If you ask ten drummers for a recommendation, you'll more than likely get ten different answers. I suggest that you log on to www.VDrums.com (which is not an official Roland Web site) for advice. You

can perform a search on 'headphones' that will lead you to previous discussion threads you can read on the topic. If you're not a current member (and I suggest that you join if you own a Roland set), sign up and post your question. The members are all very knowledgeable and friendly, and they'll offer some great advice."

Drum Sizes

Q I've decided to get back into drumming after being without a drumkit for several years. My interest lies in jazz, bop, and big band music. I've been reading a lot about drummers using 18"-diameter bass drums for small trio or quartet settings, but using 20"-plus drums for larger band settings. I can't afford two bass drums. Is there a compromise?

And when it comes to snare drums, what is the best depth for stick *and* brush articulation in jazz? I get a lot of opinions, but no one can explain what I am gaining or losing by altering the depth in terms of power, projection, and articulation.

Jeff Raines
via Internet

A Our feeling is that if your choice is between 18" and 20" bass drums, the 20" is the more versatile of the two. A 20" bass drum can certainly be played quietly enough for small-group jazz. In fact, many small-group drummers use that size exclusively. But it's tough to get an 18" drum to work for anything *other* than small-group playing, while the 20" can serve in big band, pop, and even some rock applications.

As for a jazz-oriented snare drum, the vast majority of jazz drummers play 5" or 5½"-deep drums. These sizes offer the best compromise between low-volume articulation and higher-volume projection when called for. Shallower drums tend to be limited in their depth of tone; deeper drums can be harder to control in terms of volume, and may lose some snare sensitivity, especially for brush work.

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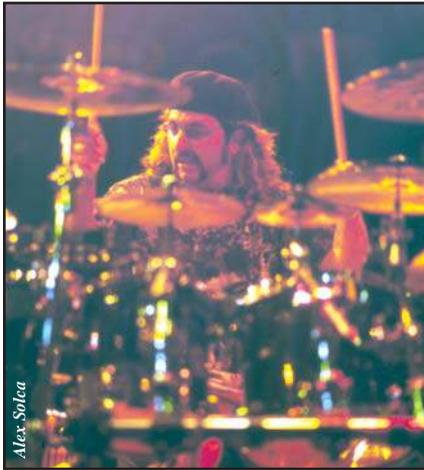
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Mike Portnoy's Learning Process

Q You are a great inspiration to me. Being an aspiring drummer, I plan to continue my learning process by attending Berklee. How many years of drumming experience did you have before you went there? What were your practice habits? And what was your experience at Berklee like?

Dan
via Internet

A Thanks for writing, Dan. When I started playing drums in elementary and junior high school, I spent much of my practice time playing along with records (those 12" black plastic things that we used to use before CDs). I'd spend hours playing along with Beatles, Led Zeppelin, KISS, and



Who records. A few years later it was Rush, Yes, and Zappa.

In addition to learning the physical coordination necessary to play the songs, I'd spend time analyzing the arrangement of the drum parts and how the drummers were developing their parts stylistically within the context of the music.

In high school I joined the marching and stage bands, which helped me learn a bit about reading and writing drum parts. I then became very interested in music theory and harmony, so I took those courses that my high school offered. I was eager to learn as much as I could about music beyond the drums: key signatures, scales, modes, and so forth. I then began applying this information to learning my way around the guitar and piano.

By the time I got to Berklee in 1985, my focus extended way beyond the drums. I was taking music theory, harmony, arranging, sight singing, and ear training courses. These helped develop me as an all-around musician. They also contributed to my ability to write and communicate with other musicians.

Berklee provided me with the ultimate environment in which to surround myself with information and inspiration. The teachers and the classes gave me the tools necessary to learn so much about music. The students provided me with the inspiration to keep sharpening those tools. The talent surrounding me was always a source of motivation to be the best I could be.

My drumming skills were further honed by the constant practicing I was doing with the band I had formed at Berklee with John Petrucci and John Myung (Dream Theater circa 1985). I truly believe that the best practice a drummer can have is playing with other musicians as often as possible. It's one thing to practice by yourself. But your development is taken to an entirely different level when you apply your skills in the context of music with other players. This kind of experience is invaluable to the learning process.

Danny Carey On Understanding Odd Times

Q I'm interested in how you became so comfortable with odd times. All of your fills flow very well in odd times, and I wondered where your roots were. Does it come from a variety of styles, or do you rely on your bassist and guitarist to feel your way through odd-metered songs?

Bill Lipstreu
Hudson, OH

A The easiest way to approach odd time signatures (for me) is to treat them like a clave in Latin music or a tal in Indian music. Through many repetitions of listening, counting, and eventually absorption, a dominant pulse will stand out to you in that particular time signature. From there, you simply try to internalize this pulse and make it the home or starting point from which to depart on your journey. Once this solid base has been established, you're free to go wherever your inspiration takes you. You can explore the nuances and other claves that present themselves to you within the time framework. Happy trails!



Setting Up With Terry Bozzio

Q I've always been intrigued by your extensive drumkit. The kit appears as intimidating as it is fascinating. I'd like to know how long it takes you and/or your drum technician to set the whole thing up and to disassemble it. I'd guess three hours.

Tosin Arib
Laurel, MD



Alex Solca

A My kit and my drum carpet are extensively marked and labeled. And though the kit seems overwhelmingly large, DW's memory locks make it very simple to set up the same way every time (once you know the system). I recently got all new Protecator cases, which are lightweight and have wheels, so I can do the set-up by myself when I have to. It usually takes only an hour or so, if we have help with the load-in and unpacking. I like to help set up because I can tweak and tune as the kit goes up. It can take longer if I have to change heads or have problems with the P.A. and sound, so usually I allow two to three hours, just in case.

It takes an hour or less for the breakdown and load out (once again, depending on whether there is help). This part I leave to my tech, since I'm usually pretty worn out after playing!

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote From MD's Past

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Slipknot's **Joey Jordison**, January 2002



Paul La Roca

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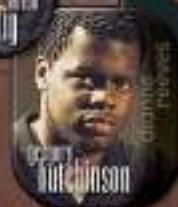
Nouveau Lug Casing

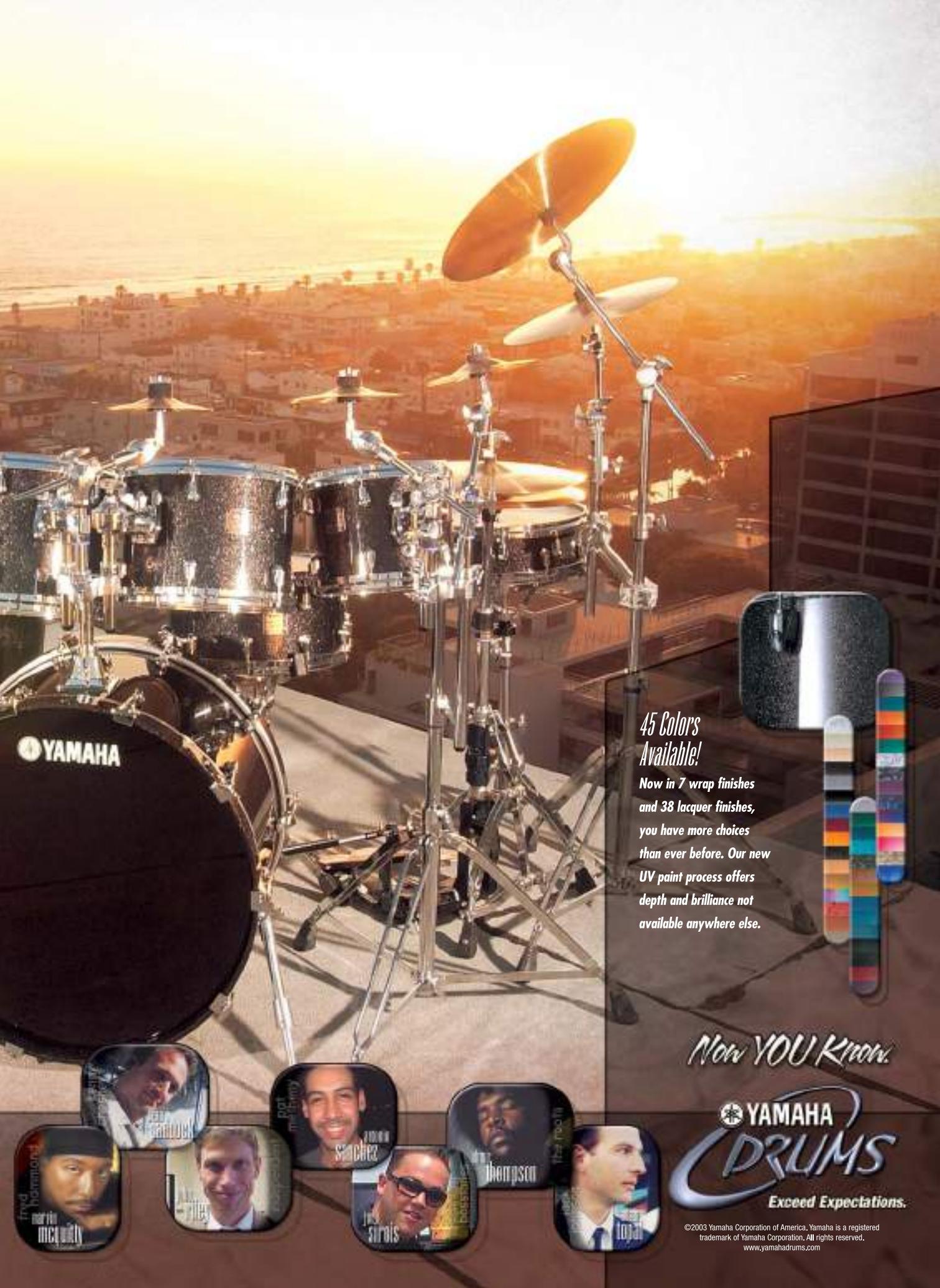
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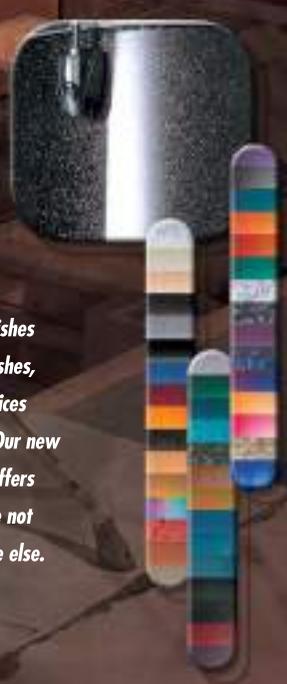




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Rodolphe Baras

Anthrax's Charlie Benante Comin' For You

"I think I understand guitar more than most guitar players do," says Anthrax drummer Charlie Benante. "I come at it from two different ways—the guitar rhythm perspective *and* the drum perspective." You see, the New York-based thrash metal drummer isn't just about getting behind his Tamas and churning out blast beats to whatever material is present. Benante's service in Anthrax plays a much larger role than what's typically expected of a metal drummer.

Benante's other tasks include being the primary songwriter in Anthrax. In fact, he wrote all of the material on their latest release, *We've Come For You All*. Even more interestingly, Benante is practically the band's second guitarist—at least on record. "I've played guitar on every release since *Sound Of White Noise*," he states. "Scott [Ian] plays a certain way, where he throws down all the rhythms and foundations of the songs. Then I go in and add my thing, like textured or doubled guitar parts."

In another unusual move, Benante tracked some of the material on *We've Come For You All* wholly on his own, with nothing but a click track to keep his meter in check. "I knew the songs so well in my head," Benante says, "I figured, Let me just go for it."

Working with the production team of Scrap60, Benante set up two drumkits in the tracking room. One was his main live kit, an eight-piece double-kick setup.

The other, a five-piece, allowed for greater versatility and enhanced comfort. "Sometimes when you simplify your setup," Benante explains, "it makes things a lot easier. I really like the way different setups affect my approach to playing the drums."

Benante is quick to point out that the extra drums haven't gone into storage. "I haven't felt the need to downsize live," Charlie insists. "I do a lot of stuff on the drums that a small kit just wouldn't cover." As for working with a monster kit, it means having to implement quite a pre-show work regimen. Benante says he typically spends forty-five minutes warming up before hitting the stage. "On the first leg of this recent tour," he says, "I played along to Rush tunes every night before I went on. It was a great way to get things flowing. I'd start off with 'Tom Sawyer,' and then go to older stuff. One of the reasons I love playing drums is that it helps me remember that feeling I had when I was younger, when I'd sit in my room and play along to records. Those were the best times for me."

So what kind of advice does this former bedroom drummer have for those wanting to play along to *his* parts? "I get lots of emails from kids asking me how I played this or that, but I don't really tell them," he says. "Instead, I give them the best advice I possibly can, which is that they need to find their *own* sense of style."

Waleed Rashidi

Cold's Sam McCandless Turning Up The Heat

In 1998, Florida-based metal band Cold released its self-titled debut album, a dark, intensely brooding musical vision. But the band's strong songwriting, combined with impressive musicianship, allowed them to avoid being lumped in with bands treading similar ground. Drummer Sam McCandless will tell you straight, Cold was never part of the nü-metal thing. "We always thought we were more of an alternative band, like Jane's Addiction," he explains. The drummer's powerful yet intricate and tribal drumming, which permeates the band's latest release, *Year Of The Spider*, certainly supports that view.

Between 2000 and 2001, Cold spent eighteen months on the road with bands like Marilyn Manson, Godsmack, and Staind in support of their gold-selling sophomore release, *13 Ways To Bleed On Stage*. But Sam believes the cumulative experience of touring with such seasoned acts helped prepare the band for recording *Year Of The Spider*. "We're all influenced by '70s bands like AC/DC and Led Zeppelin," the drummer notes. "We wanted to make a classic-sounding record of thirteen really great songs. I can do the programming thing, but this album is more

natural—more rock 'n' roll—so we didn't do a lot of that this time."

McCandless's main objective for *Year Of The Spider* was to "go big" with his drum sound. "I wanted to sound bigger than Bonham," he jokes. "Bay 7 Studio, where we recorded, is really dialed-in, so the drum sounds on this album are really insane—especially the toms. The drum sound is the best I've had on any of our records."

"Since we made our first album," Sam continues, "I've become more professional and a better musician. I'm definitely more of a song-oriented drummer, because in Cold the song is the most important thing. No one will be remembered for a drum solo unless they're John Bonham or Neil Peart. I think it's better to be a songwriting drummer than a soloist."

Sam, who also does the artwork for Cold's albums, feels fortunate to find his band's hard work paying off. "We're gradually making our way forward," he says, "and that's given us longevity, which is nice. Everything is starting to look better for us. Hopefully 2003 will really be 'The Year Of The Spider.'"

Gail Worley

The Crusaders' Stix Hooper Groove Renewal

MD caught up with legendary drummer/producer Stix Hooper as he was in session producing and playing with The Gerald Wilson Orchestra. As a founding member of '60s/'70s soul-jazz kings The Crusaders, Hooper was responsible for such deep-groove hits as "Keep That Same Old Feeling" and "Street Life."

The Crusaders changed personnel during the '80s, but the original lineup (sans trombonist Wayne Henderson) returns with *Rural Renewal* (not to be confused with Tower Of Power's classic *Urban Renewal*). Hooper, who now runs Mac Avenue Records, says the album is a return to The Crusaders' roots.

"Joe [Sample, Crusader's keyboardist and leader] pulled the band back together and wrote the songs," Hooper explains. "We started out playing some grooves that were challenging, but eventually we realized that this record is about roots. That's why we ended up calling it *Rural Renewal*. To use today's vernacular, that aspect of music has been dissed. So we threw some curves into the music and we improvised, but we also took it back to the woods."

Hooper's drumming on *Rural Renewal* is as feisty as ever, equal parts sprightly jazz attitude and simmering, no-nonsense groove. His dance-like pulse is all about the feeling. "The blues music we heard coming up had so much emotion and feeling," he says. "You focused on that more than if you could execute flams and paradiddles. If it didn't feel good, you weren't going to work."

After departing The Crusaders in 1983, Hooper released solo records, produced artists for Mac Avenue, and drummed with Freddie Hubbard, B.B. King, The Legacy Band, and Vernell Brown. His latest project is called Viewpoint, an international band that represents the Hooper ideology. "I think there's a new interest in honesty and purity," says Stix. "The longevity of any artist is based on their honesty,

conviction, and sincerity. Unfortunately, marketing is what Americans respond to. But maybe now people are seeking out something a bit more real."

Ken Micallef



Stix back in his big-kit days

Cave In's J.R. Connors

"I'd always heard Phil Collins was a good drummer, but I never really believed it," admits Cave In drummer J.R. Connors. "But Taylor Hawkins of The Foo Fighters turned me on to Phil, and now he's become one of my favorites. He could pull off all sorts of amazing things that were so creative."

No disrespect to Collins, but rarely these days do young punk drummers cite him as a primary influence. After shedding most of their hardcore persona a few years back, however, Cave In set out to redefine themselves, morphing into more of a prog-rock act,

complete with epic compositions. *Jupiter*, released on Hydrahead Records in 2000, saw them embracing the technicality of Rush and the experimentalism of post-punk futurists Fugazi, with Connors' drumming following suit.

With this year's RCA debut, *Antenna*, fans are experiencing yet another shift in Cave In's gears. This time the direction is more accessible and melodic. The band also attempted to create songs that were more concise. "Short and sweet instead of long and drawn out," is how Connors explains the direction. "I decided

to make my drums the backbone of the song instead of trying to outdo everyone else."

Antenna also marks the spot where Connors has been afforded the freedom (plus the time and budget) to experiment a little in the studio—several months, in fact, as opposed to the two-week sessions of yore. "What we wanted to do with *Antenna* was play with the sounds," Connors says. "So I used three different drumsets and eight different snares, and we recorded in three different rooms, just to get a nice variety."

Waleed Rashidi



Tony Woolliscroft

Sugar Ray's Stan Frazier

A Little Bit Of Everything

When Stan Frazier isn't in the drum seat, you can find him playing guitar, singing, and co-writing tunes, as he did on Sugar Ray's latest disc, *In The Pursuit Of Leisure*. "I love to do it all," Stan relates.

Frazier must be happy about the band's success these days. Together for over a decade, Sugar Ray has sold a remarkable seven million records, they've scored a few top-10 hits including two number-1s ("Fly" and "Every Morning"), and they've performed for millions of fans around the world.

"We love playing live," Frazier says. "That's what this band is all about. And we stretch out the songs according to the crowd reaction. I have to really stay sharp when I'm behind the kit." Stan does get to take a breather from playing drums when he steps out to play guitar. "I love to come up front," he laughs. "I get to see the audience."

When Stan's up front, DJ Homicide holds down the grooves from his turntables, which is a big part of the Sugar Ray sound. "We've always been a montage of live drums, programmed drums, and loops," Stan states. "I like the flexibility that gives us."

Speaking of being flexible, Stan says it doesn't bother him at all that two tracks on the new disc feature loops laid down by another drummer, session great Joey Waronker. "I thought it was cool," he says, "because it gave me more time to concentrate on writing. In recording, it's all about doing whatever it takes to make the best possible record you can."

So will drumming take a back seat for Stan? "Never," he insists. "Please don't get me wrong, I love playing the drums. It's just that it's great to be able to do a little bit of everything."



Billy Amendola

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Cozy Cole was born on October 17, 1906.

Papa Jo Jones was born on October 7, 1911.

Art Blakey was born on October 11, 1919. He passed away in October of 1990.

Ed Blackwell was born on October 10, 1929. He passed away on October 7, 1992.

Al Jackson died on October 1, 1975.

Billy Gladstone passed away in October of 1961.

Gene Krupa passed away on October 16, 1973.

Billy Higgins was born on October 11, 1936.

Led Zeppelin II (with **John Bonham**) is released in October of 1969. On October 20, 1976, Zeppelin's film, *The Song Remains The Same*, premieres in London.

The Concert For New York, which supported victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks, was held at New York's Madison



Square Garden on October 20, 2001. Some of the drummers involved included **Tico Torres** (who donated his custom Pearl kit), **Zak Starkey** (The Who), and

Happy Birthday!

- Earl Palmer** (studio legend): October 25, 1924
- John "Jabo" Starks** (James Brown): October 26, 1938
- John Guerin** (LA studio): October 31, 1939
- Roger Hawkins** (Muscle Shoals): October 16, 1945
- Mike Clark** (Headhunters): October 3, 1946
- Triok Gurtu** (Indian master): October 30, 1951
- Keith Knudsen** (Dobbie Brothers): October 18, 1952
- Tico Torres** (Bon Jovi): October 7, 1953
- AJ Pero** (Twisted Sister): October 14, 1959
- Larry Mullen Jr.** (U2): October 31, 1961
- Tommy Lee** (Mötley Crüe): October 3, 1962
- Chad Smith** (Red Hot Chili Peppers): October 25, 1962

NEWS

David Garibaldi is back in the saddle with his neighborhood boys on Tower Of Power's *Oakland Zone*, the drummer's first set of new studio tunes with the group since '79.

Matt Cameron is on the new Wellwater Conspiracy disc.

Drummer/educator/author **Jim Payne**'s first "Week On The Scene" in New York City was a great success. After studying and practicing during the day, Jim took students on the town to see some great drummers in action, including John Riley, Mike Clark, Ari Hoenig, Bill Stewart, Adam Weber, Don Alias, and Keith Carlock. (For more information on this program, check out Jim's Web site, www.funkydrummer.com.)



Now a Savant Records recording artist, Jim just got back from a tour with his organ trio, HOP, and was part of the American JamStand at the New Orleans Jazz Fest, where he did a double drum concert with Mike Clark. Jim is now playing Taye drums.

David Piribauer is on tour with Revis.

Luis Conte is on tour with James Taylor.

Joe Morris appears on Esteban's *Magic Moments*. He also appears on Greg Koch's new album, *Radio Free Gristle*, which was produced by Steve Vai.

Steve Negus is on Saga's latest, *Marathon*.

Lenny White gets old-school funky on Javon Jackson's latest, *Easy Does It*.

Bruce Aitken is touring Canada with Jason Williams in support of Jason's debut, *It's What I Do*. Aitken will also be touring Canada this fall with award-winning blues guitarist John Campbelljohn.

Erik Smith has been very active doing recordings and live performances in all styles, as well as clinics for Yamaha, Zildjian, and Pro-Mark. This fall he will be playing with the European Broadcasting Union Jazz Orchestra in Istanbul, Turkey, as well as recording with his trio.

Steve Hass recently released his debut album, *Traveler*. For more info, check out his Web site at www.stevhass-traveler.com.

Teacher/player **Jack Scarangella's** CD *The Hero In Us All* features appearances by famous sports figures and musicians. For more info, check out www.theheroinusall.com.

The great **Robert Wyatt** is on two new releases on Cuneiform, Soft Machine's *Backwards*, featuring performances from between 1968 and 1970, and Matching Mole's *March*, a live date from '72.

Jay Bellerose is on Shane Fontayne's *What Nature Intended*.

Prefer your Bach with a groove? "Bach's Drum Band" is a 22-minute CD featuring **Eric Kivnick** performing Bach's "G Major Cello Suite" on the marimba. Kivnick and **Michael Lauren** supply backing percussion (bachdrumband@yahoo.com).

Chris Wabich, **Souhael Kaspar**, and **Brad Dutz** are on *View From Afar* by The Larry Steen World Jazz Ensemble.

Congratulations to **David Northrup** and his wife Sandy on the birth of their second child, Miles Christopher. On the professional side, David has been touring with Travis Tritt.



Kim Urhahn has joined the band Lillix, and will be touring with them to promote their debut album on Maverick records, *Falling Uphill*.



That's **Tony Verderosa** in the Twix TV commercial "It's In The Mix." For more on Tony, go to www.tonyverderosa.com.





SAM LOEFFLER
Chevelle

Chad Smith's
Funk Blaster
Splashstick
Acoustick



SAM MCCANDLESS
Cold

5B Nylon
3A Nylon



KEVIN SOFFERA
Seether

5A Wood
Splashstick



HAMISH ROSSER
The Vines

Power 5A Wood



NED BROWER
Rooney

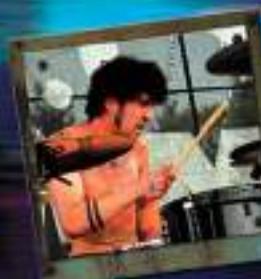
5A Wood



BRANDEN STEINKERT
The Used

Power 5B Nylon

PLAY WATER.
GET HOOKED.
THEY DID.



ALEX PAPPAS
Finch

Rock Wood
Morgan Rose's
Alien Freak



KIM URHAHN
Lillix

7A Wood



MIKE FROEDGE
doubleDrive

5B Wood
Poly Beater



PETE NAVARRETE
UnLoco

Universal



CHRIS GAYLOR
All-American Rejects

Smitty Smith's
Power Fusion



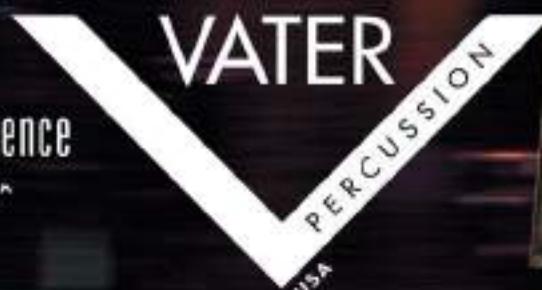
ADAM CARSON
AFI

Power 5B
Wood



ROCKY GRAY
Evanescence

Fusion Nylon



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Yamaha Maple Absolute Nouveau Kit

Just One Great Choice Among Many

HITS

Nouveau lug design is a winner

sound is deep and clear

finishes are plentiful and varied

by Chap Ostrander

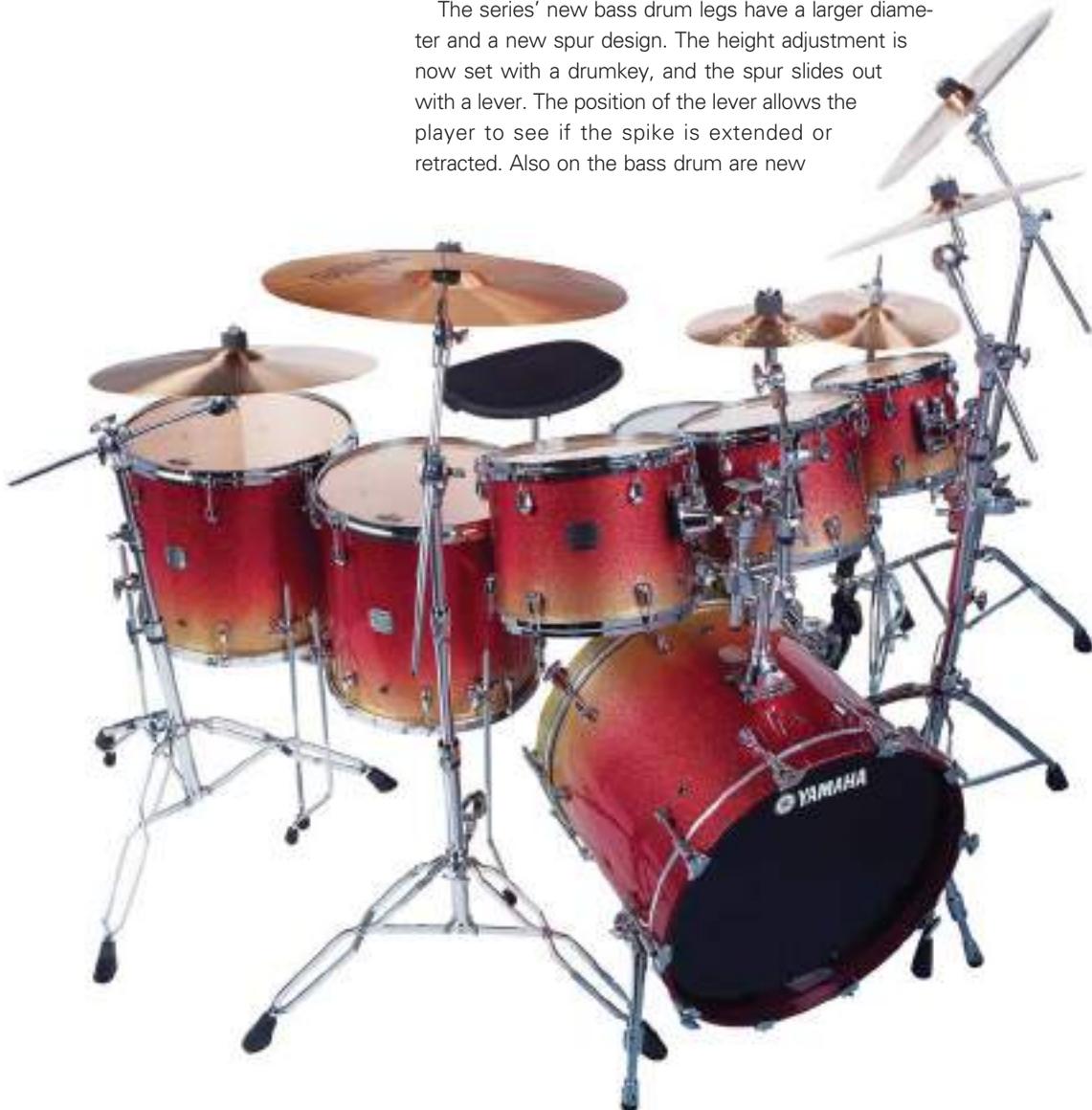
Since the introduction of the Absolute series five years ago, Yamaha has enjoyed the continued popularity of a concept that allows players to mix and match wood types so that they can tailor the sounds to suit their gig. The Absolute series offers shells in maple, birch, and beech. You can choose different types of wood for the snare, toms, and bass. You can also get a rainbow of finishes. The best thing is that you get a custom kit that is of full professional quality at a decent price.

Taking a good thing and making it better, Yamaha has upgraded the Absolute series, calling it the Absolute Nouveau. Let's look at what's new.

What's Nouveau?

One of the striking new features of the Absolute Nouveau line is chromed aluminum die-cast hoops on the snare and toms. Light and stiff, they don't seem to choke the sound of the drums as some zinc die-cast hoops are thought to. But the consistent tuning they offer really focuses the sound of the drums.

The series' new bass drum legs have a larger diameter and a new spur design. The height adjustment is now set with a drumkey, and the spur slides out with a lever. The position of the lever allows the player to see if the spike is extended or retracted. Also on the bass drum are new



tension-rod claws that feature several improvements. The casing is made of die-cast zinc, and is lined in plastic to cut down on noise and keep from marring the hoop. There is also a plastic ring inside the casing that retains the tension rod and keeps it from loosening.

Still another new feature on the bass drums is the addition of four more air holes around the front of the shell. The theory is that this additional venting will relieve pressure against the batter head. The venting is a feature on all bass drums throughout the line.

Similarly, 16" and 18" floor tom models fitted with Nouveau lugs now have three air holes instead of one. Each air hole comes with a plug that you can open or close in order to tailor the sound and feel to your personal taste. When I asked Joe Testa of Yamaha about this, he told me that many players preferred the unplugged version during fast rolls between the toms. They said that the vent provided reduced rebound when left open.



Nouveau Lugs

I'm not sure whether the new series gets its name from Yamaha's Nouveau lug design, or the lug is named for the series. Whichever is the case, the lug is a *big* innovation. It embraces the spirit of the compact lug found on the existing Absolute series, with a major exception. A single bolt mounted at the shell's nodal point is the foundation for the lug. Its design has a die-cast, quick-release casing at the end of the tension rod hooking *over* the bolt, rather than the rod screwing into it. Thus, the lug assembly "floats" on the shell. This eliminates direct contact with the shell, and reduces the amount of hardware touching it. A plastic ring inside the casing (as in the bass drum claw) prevents the tension rod from loosening. It's like having a lug lock built in.

Another plus for this system is that changing a head becomes a much faster process. You loosen the tension rod about halfway, and the lug casing disengages from the bolt. It's a smooth and clean design that works well. Still, in the spirit of offering choices, Yamaha has kept the original Absolute lug available for those who prefer it.

Our Review Kit

The original Absolute series was offered in eleven "core" colors. Yamaha has added thirty-four custom finishes to those, all UV-cured to avoid discoloration. One of those was on our review kit. It's called Apple Sparkle Fade, and it is simply one of the most beautiful finishes I have ever seen. I would have sworn that the sparkle over the fade was a covered finish, but it was all lacquer. I took the drums on a gig, and people couldn't tear their eyes off them. Neither could I.

It's one thing to have great looks, but when you're shelling out (so to speak) for a pro kit, you want them to sing for you as well. These puppies didn't disappoint. Each drum was full of the tone and warmth you'd expect from thin maple drums. From the smallest to the largest tom, there was body and depth. And the bass drum was simply a joy to play, with tremendous response and power.

A side benefit of the Maple Absolute's thin shells is that the drums are light and easy to move. Note, too, that the drum sizes on our review set are right between those that Yamaha has previously offered in their Standard and Power ranges. The new Universal sizes cover the middle ground, and are available for Absolute and Absolute

Nouveau models.

I have to add a special word for the snare. It features a 6-ply, 6-mm thick maple shell, with ten lugs. Like the rest of the kit, it came fitted with Remo Ambassador heads. The new "H"-type strainer was smooth and quiet, and it matched the rest of the hardware in design. The same can be said for the new "DC"-type butt.

Rarely have I heard a drum with such a voice and such great sensitivity. As part of my review process, I loaned it to Bill Strauss, the percussionist playing *Camelot* at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey. I figured that the drum would get a good workout in a show situation, where sensitivity and response are demanded. Bill fell in love with the drum right away, and was very sorry to have to return it. There were parts of the show where he had to play the snare with timp mallets since there was no time to switch between them and sticks. He found that the drum responded with a clean snare sound, and not with the "thump" you might expect from any other snare played in that manner. The drum sang out at all dynamic ranges. I took it on quite a few gigs myself, and in each situation I was thrilled by the sound.

The hardware that was supplied with our review kit was from Yamaha's double-braced 800 series, which is manufactured and plated in Yamaha's Indonesian motorcycle facility. It was all very solid and well designed. Since I previously mentioned nodal points, I should point out that *everything* on the Absolute Series is located at the nodal points. This includes lugs, the YESS (Yamaha Enhanced Sustain System) mounts for rack toms and floor tom legs, the bass drum legs, and the air holes.

Not Just New...Better

Yamaha has taken a winning product and done all the right things with it. I applaud their courage in introducing a quick-release lug. We've seen these come and go over the years (and mostly go). But the Nouveau design seems so well thought out and sensible that I can't imagine anyone *not* being drawn to it immediately.

With the Absolute Nouveau series, you get to choose between three types of wood, two lug designs, a variety of shell depths, and a veritable rainbow of finishes. The drums are light, powerful, and beautiful. Are they worth a serious look? Absolutely!

THE NUMBERS

Drums	
5½x14 snare drum	\$ 595
18x22 bass drum	\$1,695
8x10 rack tom	\$ 525
9x12 rack tom	\$ 540
10x13 rack tom	\$ 555
16x16 floor tom	\$ 815
16x18 floor tom	\$ 875

Hardware	
CS-845 boom	\$ 140
SS-840 snare	\$ 115
HS-1100 hi-hat	\$ 270
DFP-9310 pedal	\$ 550
CSAT-924 clamp	\$ 25
CL945 tom ball clamp	\$ 40

Note: The review kit does not represent a "packaged" kit with pre-determined shell sizes and hardware. The drums are available as a shell pack or with hardware.

(714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrum.com.

Sabian AA Metal-X Series Cymbals

Heavy Metal? Not Necessarily!

HITS

pro line of cymbals designed to take heavy punishment

rides offer precision stick definition that cuts

explosive crashes

versatile splashes

by Mike Haid

One of the current marketing trends of the major cymbal manufacturers focuses on the loud, heavy-handed player. In keeping with that trend, Sabian says that their new line of AA Metal-X cymbals are for drummers who play with a hard-hitting conviction that would typically destroy other cymbals. However, one of the selling points of the new line is that it's not the heaviness of the metal but the innovative design that gives the cymbals the strength and durability to take a beating.

To create cymbals that can withstand the abuse of today's volume levels, Sabian starts with their secret-process B20 bronze alloy. Once formed and hammered, the cymbals are lathed, polished to a brilliant finish, and then lathed again. The circular lathing (on top and bottom) looks like a bronzed vinyl LP record. The bells are left raw and unlathed.

Sabian claims that the pressure of the second lathing "tunes" each cymbal's sound and increases its cutting tones. So let's beat them up a bit and see what rings true.

Rides

Of the four ride sizes, the huge 24" was my favorite. It had the outstanding stick definition and heavy tonal qualities of a rock ride. When played with the tip of the stick, it never generated unwanted overtones, which is amazing for a cymbal this size. If you want a full-bodied wash, just lay into the body of this cymbal with the shaft of a stick, and you've got wash for days. The unlathed bell was cutting, but it's interesting that the large, unlathed bells of the crashes are louder and just as defined as the ride bells.

After enjoying the beautiful wide tone of the 24" ride, I found the 20" a bit too high-pitched, with a dry, plate-like tone that didn't sit well with my ears. But what a difference an inch makes! The 21" ride had a little more wash, a solid ping, and a much larger sound than the 20", making it feel more like a ride should. The 22" ride offered a nice even balance of ping and wash. But the 21" seemed to offer the best overall ride characteristics of the "standard" 20", 21", and 22" sizes.

Crashes

You can't go wrong here. All of the crashes had solid attack that gained sharpness and definition when they were struck heavily. Their thickness made me confident that they could take abuse. In fact, I beat the living day-lights out of them, and they just laughed at me. Yet they still had sweet tones when struck at medium volume—with excellent tonal variation between each size.

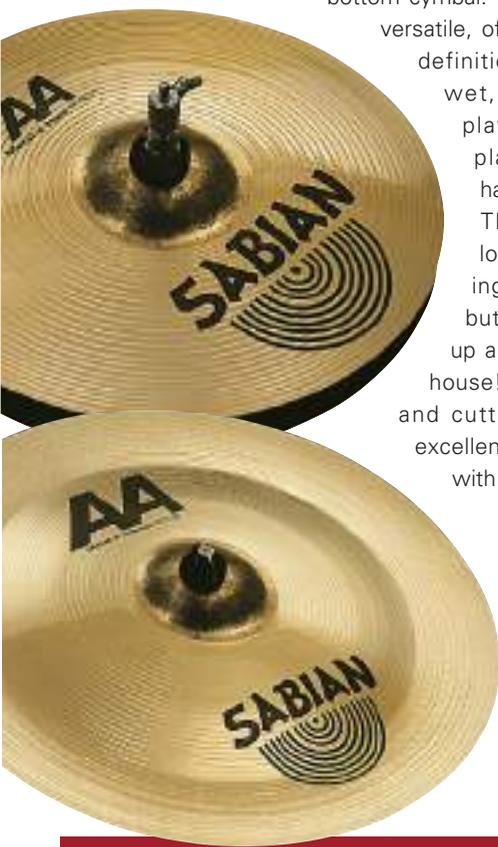
Splashes

The splashes had a versatile, full-bodied tone that created a rich, punchy attack with a consistent pitch whether struck gently or smacked hard. They weren't piercing or brittle, and they had a quick decay and just enough bite to cut through the noise. Somewhat surprisingly, the 12" had a brighter, higher-pitched attack than that of the 10" size.



Hi-Hats

Both hi-hat models consist of a medium-heavy top and a heavy bottom cymbal. The 14" set is the more versatile, offering tight, clean stick definition with an underlying wet, textured tone when played closed. When played half open, they have a bright, full spread. The 15" hats are a bit loose and sloppy-sounding when played closed, but open these bad boys up a little and they rock the house! Big, bright, powerful, and cutting. Both sizes offer excellent "chick" when played with the foot.



one of the Chinese cymbals and have at it! Fat, trashy, and extremely loud, both sizes explode with washed-out yet piercing clarity that is guaranteed to cut through anything on stage.

Summary

Most of the AA Metal-X models are best suited for loud musical situations, just as Sabian promotes them. However, I found that several individual cymbals—including the 21" and 24" rides, the 14" hats, and the 10" and 12" splashes—worked well in virtually any musical situation, at any volume. The crashes are definitely designed to be walloped to achieve their full potential of sonic clarity.

Chinese

Want to wake up the neighborhood at midnight, let the band know *exactly* where "1" is, or simply be the loudest thing on stage? Grab

This is a sonically well-balanced line that can take the punishment of heavy hitters and still produce a rich, brilliant sound. The angst of your aggressions can now be delivered in shimmering tonal quality.

THE NUMBERS

Rides	
20"	\$283
21"	\$308
22"	\$335
24"	\$363
Crashes	
16"	\$206
17"	\$221
18"	\$241
19"	\$257
20"	\$283
Splashes	
10"	\$125
12"	\$142
Hi-Hats	
14"	\$340
15"	\$374
Chinese	
18"	\$241
20"	\$283
A "Sonically Matched" Performance Set (20" ride, 16" crash, 14" hats) is also available, at \$787.	
(506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com .	

Quick Looks

Yamaha DSM100 Mesh Drum Throne

Yamaha's new DSM100 Mesh Drum Throne was quite a nice surprise. I've been using a bicycle-style throne for the past few years and have gotten used to that shape, which doesn't bind on your legs while you're playing double pedals. The DSM100 has rounded edges, but is rectangular in shape, measuring 13" deep by 19" wide.

It's hard to see while looking at the seat, but there's a definite front and back to it, with a natural "slope" that provides the feeling of a forward tilt. You don't feel like you're going to slide off, but the slope does hold you comfortably in place—so much so that you can lean back to relax. The effect makes for a very stable ride for all types of playing situations.

The mesh fabric is stretched over a heavy

steel frame. The seat felt solid and supportive, but retained a springy feel that made it comfortable. I spent a lot of time on it without feeling any back fatigue. Another advantage of the mesh is that it allows air to pass through, giving ventilation where it would be most appreciated. Let's face it, a sweaty butt is no fun on a long gig.

The DSM100 seat features a large die-cast aluminum mount underneath that makes a solid connection to the stand. It's compatible with Yamaha's DS1100, DS950, and DS840 tripod stands (and those of several other brands), so you can upgrade your throne with the mesh seat if you wish.

The mesh throne retails for \$360 with the



Jim Exposito Studios/Bernie Doyle

DS840 base. The seat is available separately at \$280. That's not cheap, but how much is your playing comfort worth?

(714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrum.com.

Chap Ostrander

Pearl FireCracker Snare Drums

Tiny Cans Of Whoopass!

HITS

versatile enough for main or accessory use

lightweight and easy to transport

very affordable

by Will Romano

For years, star drummers have been using two snares in order to achieve more musical phrasing and unique sonic coloring. But for gigging drummers on a budget, a second snare has often languished on the top of their "someday" list. Well, someday may be sooner than you think, thanks to Pearl's new FireCracker snare series.

We were shipped all four FireCrackers: two 8-ply poplar models with an Ebony Mist finish, and two steel-shell drums outfitted with Pearl's own ProTone coated top heads and SS bottom heads. Would these drums do the job as accessories, fall flat, or exceed expectations? Let's find out.

Small Miracles

One of the obvious advantages of using these drums is their weight: They are feather-light. Transporting them was a snap because they could fit in the nooks and crannies of my car trunk. I could fit two of them in a medium-sized gig bag or even a padded backpack. Thank goodness for small miracles.

All the drums featured 45° bearing edges with a 45° back cut over the second ply on the wood shells. While the drums might have benefited from free-floating shells, that would surely have sent production costs surging. So Pearl compromised by providing slightly cut-away tension-rod studs. The crevice between the studs and the body of the snare seemed to offer a little more vibrancy than if there was no space at all.

Poplar Snares

I first placed the 5x12 poplar snare on the right side of my kit, at a good striking distance. I played with one stick on my main snare and the other on the 12" drum, just to get a reading on the difference. The 12" was a little more sensitive, and my ghost strokes were heard very clearly. The drum also had a nice pop, and its sonic characteristics—clarity, bright tone, and projection—really helped when I wanted to add color accents during a roll.

Generally, this snare complemented, rather than competed with, my primary snare drum. It could be tightened to a hyper-piccolo brightness, or finely tuned to nearly duplicate the depth of my main kit snare.

The term "firecracker" was an appropriate title for the 5x10 drum. After tuning it to my taste, each stroke I played exploded with sound. While it was hard to hear many multi-layered pitches, the dry tones were very inviting.

Initially, I used this drum as a kit snare, much in the same way I did the 12". I discovered quickly that with a playing field so tiny, making sure that I hit the drum in the sweet spot consistently took most of my concentration. When I used this drum as an accessory, I never got the sense that it overpowered the music or the rest of

my kit. Tuning down and/or loosening the tension on the wire strainer gave the drum an appealing, slightly bongo-esque sound.

The compact size of the 5x10 allowed me to place it in a variety of locations, including to my left under the hi-hat, and to my right (where my floor tom would be). At no time was the striking surface obstructed.



Steel Snares

I didn't switch top heads on any of the FireCracker drums except on the 5x12 steel model. It wasn't that the head needed to be changed; I was just curious to hear how the drum would perform with a different hitting surface. While the sound seemed a bit fatter when I changed the top head to a clear Remo Ambassador, the difference was slight. A thicker, two-ply head might affect the sound further, positively or negatively. Like the 12" poplar drum, this snare can more than cover the bases for you and be your main lap dog.

I honestly didn't think there would be much of a difference between the 10" steel and poplar drums, owing to their virtually identical size and weight. I was taken aback when I discovered that the bite of the steel was harder, and the ring much more harsh, than that of its wood sister. When I played a rimshot, the steel drum let out a piercing "dink." I loosened the tension rods (top and bottom) and garnered a meaty, über-tone. I was convinced that the drum had the ability to be far more than just a cosmetic add-on: It had the "umph" I expected from a deep 14" or 15" snare.



The Explosive Conclusion

While an accessory snare drum should offer a slightly different shade of color from your primary drumkit snare, the FireCracker drums, in most cases, were more versatile than I would have thought. These tiny—and ultra-affordable—cans of explosives could very easily stand in for your main snare. Perhaps Pearl's intention all along was to provide drummers with a secret weapon:

THE NUMBERS	
Poplar FireCracker Snare Drums	
5x10	\$189
5x12	\$199
Steel FireCracker Snare Drums	
5x10	\$179
5x12	\$189
(615) 833-4477, www.pearldrums.com .	

Quick Looks

Thumpers Bass Drum Pillows

The Thumpers brand bass drum resonance control system consists of satin-covered pillows made of polyfoam. These pillows are designed to be semi-permanently attached to the inside of your bass drum using adhesive-backed hook & loop fastener strips.

Thumpers pillows are offered in two styles: Live and Recording. The Live set features small, contoured pillows shaped like crescent moons. You can use from one to four of these pillows to muffle the front and/or back heads of the drum and still retain the punch and projection needed for live work.

The Recording pillow is a larger, wedge-shaped design, with a large vertical flat surface that can be pushed up against the batter head. It's designed to completely kill overtones and ring in order to get complete bass-drum control in the studio.

I tested the Live sets in 20" and 24" drums. The installation process involves removing one drum-head, cleaning the inside of the shell with alcohol (at the points where the fastener strips attach), and then attaching the strips. You wait for half an hour to make sure the strips are securely adhered, and then attach the pillow or pillows to the

shell.

In actual use you can vary the sound by simply moving the pillow forward or backward in relation to the head. Placing it right against the batter head gives a lot of damping, which is desirable in smaller venues or quiet situations. For that Ringo Starr "thump" sound, try using two against each head. If you need more volume, you just move the pillow(s) closer to the front of the drum. For even more volume, just take them out altogether. They're easily removable and just as easy to re-install the next time you need them. (Longer adhesive strips would be a benefit in terms of moving the drum and experimenting with different pillow positions.)

The crescent-shaped Live pillows are available in sizes to fit drums of 16", 18", 20", and 22" diameters (each priced at \$49.95), and for 24" (\$59.95) and 26" (\$69.95) diameters. The one-size Recording pillow is priced at \$98.95. All of the pillows come in white, black, red, blue, and purple, with custom colors available as special orders. The colors might add pizzazz to your kit if you play with a clear front bass drum head, or with no front head at all.

Thumpers warrants their pillows to be free of manufacturing defects for sixty days, with a money-back guaran-



Live series pillows in place



Recording pillow

Evans J1 Drumhead And Min-EMAD Damping System

J1 Drumheads

The newest head from Evans is the J1 etched model. The "J" designation stands for jazz, referring to jazz drummers' loyalty to sound in its purest form. Many such players—who still yearn for the warmth of calf heads—don't like coated or "prepared" heads because they're not pure (and because they can have some functional problems). With input from top jazz drummers Peter Erskine and Adam Nussbaum, Evans has overcome these issues by etching the surface of a 10-mil, single-ply head in a process similar to sandblasting.

The etching process creates a textured surface that can take anything brushes can throw at it, and can't be worn off by sticks (as a coating will be over time). The etched surface is much smoother and more consistent than most coated surfaces, making brush playing feel as smooth as butter.

In terms of acoustic performance, the etched heads have the resonance and response of clear, uncoated heads on snare

drums and toms alike. They were very easy to tune, with the tone ringing out clearly as I adjusted the tension. The sound was

warm, and the playing feel was soft and comfortable. I felt like I was playing into the drums rather than on top of them.

The J1 heads are certainly applicable to styles other than jazz. But the jazz purists will definitely want to check them out. They're currently offered in 6" through 16" sizes, at prices ranging from \$21.50 to \$30.

Min-EMAD

The J1 heads had so much response, in fact, that I found myself starting to think of ways to curb it in case I needed to. Well, Evans thought of that too, with the introduction of Min-EMADs. Building on the success of their EMAD (Externally Mounted Adjustable Damping) bass drum head, Evans has designed a system that attaches to the rim and head of a snare drum or tom and allows you to tailor the amount of damping.

Hook-and-loop fasteners hold one end of a fabric/rubber "bridge" to the hoop. The other end of the bridge attaches to a fabric dot glued to the drumhead, providing the damping effect. The directions suggest placing the dot on the head at varying distances from the hoop to find the optimum point. But to make my testing process a little easier, I fixed the dot at a point a little more than an inch from the hoop, and then attached different parts of the bridge to it. I found that even a small bit of

contact had a significant effect on a drum's ring, while more contact dampened it dramatically. Overall, the system was very sensitive to slight changes in contact. I also tried the Min-EMAD on a snare-side head, where it reduced the amount of sympathetic snare buzz.

The Min-EMAD's bridge is designed so that it can be attached to itself while in the "off" position. Thanks to the hook-and-loop fastener, it can also be removed completely and reattached later. This system is the perfect complement to heads that don't have self-muffling designs, because it gives you pinpoint control over their output.

The Min-EMADs are packaged in sets of six, containing two each of small, medium, and large sizes. As you work with the different sizes, you get the knack of which one to use and where to place the dot. This is a thoughtfully put together system that sells for \$9.99 per package.

(800) 323-2746, www.evansdrumheads.com.

Chap Ostrander



797 Zildjian. 561 Sabian. 419 Paiste, Wuhan, Istanbul, Bosphorus and Meinl. All in stock, right now.

"We have 'em"

"Want help picking a cymbal, or a set of cymbals that match perfectly? We can do it. Just ask. Call me on this free number and ask for our free Cymbal Sale Flyer: 800.55.FORKS"

Gary Forkum, Owner *Gary*

FORK'S

DRUM CLOSET

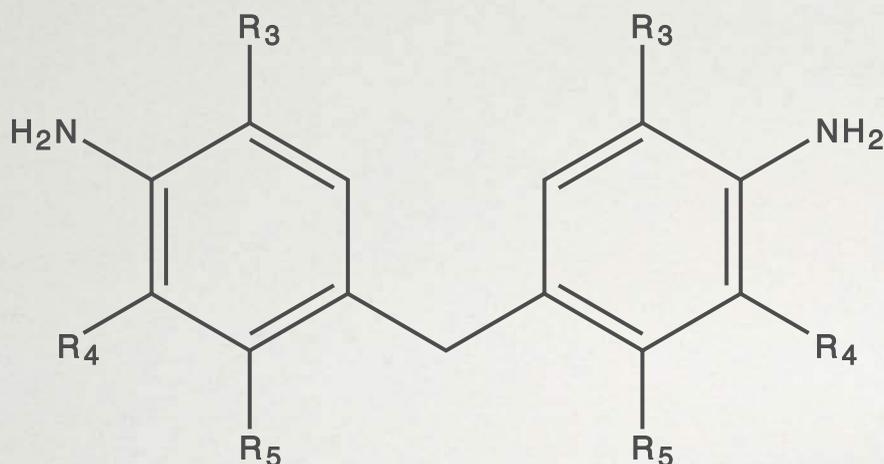
For Free Cymbal Sale Flyer - Call now: 800.55.FORKS or www.forksdrumcloset.com

Another insight from those



obsessive sound freaks at Remo®

Sounds like a PINSTRIPE™ to us.



∞ TO FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT GOES into a REMO® drumhead, you may want to don a lab coat. At a molecular level, the casting and stretching of our polymer is crucial for particular sound properties. We use a 2-ply film that actually acts, and reacts, like one single and seamless layer of film, but is stronger and more durable. The net results of all this alchemy are surface molecules

that are loosely bonded to each other giving a more open sound and a tighter internal molecular bond for added strength and resonance. And, unlike our competitors, we employ films that have been designed specifically for our drumheads. Ultimately what you'll hear are audible nuances and projection quality so enhanced, you don't need to be a rocket scientist to know it's a REMO®.



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Roland SPD-S Sampling Pad

Electronic Percussion Made Personal

HITS

compact layout for live or studio use

sampling capability allows personal creativity

replaces outboard gear for greater economy

by Rick Long

At first glance, Roland's new SPD-S Sampling Pad may not appear all that different from their successful SPD-20 trigger pad model. But the SPD-S takes the drum pad concept into a new generation by adding the ability to sample your own sounds into the unit.

It used to require a trigger pad, a sampler, an effects unit—and an equipment rack to mount them all in—in order for drummers to have sampling capabilities. Now all you need is the SPD-S.

A Brief Explanation

For those of you who are new to the concept of sampling, it simply means that you can record stereo or mono sounds into the SPD-S

unit, then assign those sounds to pads that play the sound back when struck. "Sample" is a term loosely used to describe a sound that has been obtained (sampled) from another source. Samples are often taken from a pre-recorded sound source, like a CD. But the term is also used for snippets of acoustic sounds, such as your snare drum or your barking

dog. Much of the music heard on the radio today is made up of sampled phrases. Almost all rap music is created in this way. Many drummers in the pop music field are playing sampled phrases to set the groove and enhance the sound of the band.

Physical Description

The SPD-S includes nine pads in a new con-

figuration: two rows of three square pads, with three narrow, raised pads across the top of the unit. The raised pads are shaped something like those found on a percussion bar-type pad. The rubber pads all provide good stick response, and their arrangement makes it easy to play patterns between them.

Percussionists take note: The velocity-sensitive pads can be played with the hands. In fact, for patches that vary the sound according to velocity, I found it easier to get the low-velocity sounds by using my hands.

It would be easy to set up the SPD-S as a compact electronic drumset for triggering MIDI setups in small home studios or on live gigs. Jacks on the back panel allow you to connect an optional expression pedal, a hi-hat controller or footswitch, and two extra trigger pads. You'll need Roland's APC-33 Drum Pad Clamp to mount the unit.

The SPD-S offers 128 patches, capability for 899 sounds (181 pre-loaded at the factory, 218 user-programmable, and 500 more user-programmable via an optional CompactFlash card), eight-voice polyphony (meaning that eight sounds can play at one time), and 30 internal multi-effects as well as overall ambience.

The pre-recorded sounds included with the SPD-S are stunning. Drum and percussion sounds are full-bodied, while chimes and cymbals are crystal clear. Musical phrase samples also have excellent tone quality, since they're recorded at a CD-level sampling rate of 44.1 kHz.

Patches

The unit comes with 47 factory-programmed patches. A "patch" is a group of settings that creates the current sound and response setup for the unit. For example, you might set up the unit with percussion sounds assigned to every pad, and with increased sensitivity for playing the pads with your hands. This group of settings would have a number associated with it, and you might even name it "percussion patch." The term "patch" harkens back to the days when keyboard synthesizers



were just groups of sound modules sitting side-by-side in a rack. Patch cords were strung between the various modules to create the sounds. Once a player obtained the desired sound, the cord connections were written down—and that connection arrangement was referred to as a “patch.” Technology has eliminated the need for patch cords, but the name for the setup information has stuck.

Patch numbers 48 through 128 are open for your own creations. The original 47 patches are repeated at numbers 82 through 128. This makes it easy to experiment with one of the original patches that’s almost what you want without losing the original patch. The best way to do this type of editing is to copy the original patch to an open spot.

All the dynamic and MIDI settings for pads common to other electronic drum modules can be manipulated here. When programming the patches, you can assign two sounds to each pad, set up your pad parameters, and then copy the settings to another pad or exchange them between two pads.

Recording Samples

To create your own samples, all you need is a microphone, a CD player, or any audio source with a line-level output. Jacks on the back panel let you input your stereo or mono signal using standard 1/4" phone plugs. A switch selects between mic or line input signal levels.

The procedure for recording samples is similar to running a tape recorder. Three quality levels can be selected: Long, Standard, and Fine. Long has a lower sound quality than Standard, but uses half the memory. Standard provides acceptable sound quality for most uses. Fine allows the highest sound quality, but takes twice the memory of Standard and uses two voices to recreate the sound.

The SPD-S comes with enough memory to record approximately twelve minutes’ worth of samples (total) in Long mode, six in Standard mode, and three in Fine mode. This might not sound like much memory, until you consider that a typical snare or bass drum hit is about one



second. A four-bar phrase at 120 bpm would only be eight seconds.

A slot on the side of the SPD-S allows for the insertion of a CompactFlash card to increase the available memory. Not all CompactFlash cards are compatible with the system, however. See the insert to the manual called “Added Information” for a list of CompactFlash cards that will work.

A CompactFlash card and a card reader for your computer are useful additions to the SPD-S. For example, a 16-MByte card will double the available recording time, while a 512-MByte card gives you one hour and thirty-six minutes of sampling time in Fine mode. Using this size card, you could sample your entire show in real time, with the highest quality mode, in stereo!

The card reader connects to your home computer and allows you to use the included CD to reinstall the factory waves, should the need arise. It also allows you to use your computer to create .wav or .aif files with audio editing software like ProTools or Cakewalk. An “Audio Information File,” with the “.aif” extension on its name, is a format used by Apple computers. You may hear .aif files referred to as waves, in the same way that people refer to all facial tissues as “Kleenex.”

The .wav or .aif files can be put in the root directory of the CompactFlash card and used with the SPD-S. While the SPD-S does have wave editing built in, this work is easier when you can see the wave on a computer screen.

Playing Back Your Samples

Once you have the sample recorded, it is generally referred to as a “wave.” This comes from Microsoft’s “Windows Audio Video” files, which originally had the “.wav” extension on the end of their file names. Waves make audio easy to work with. You can edit a wave’s start and stop points, truncate it to conserve memory, change its pitch, chop it into multiple waves, resample it into another wave, or

combine it with other waves to make a more complicated phrase.

A function called “Tempo Sync” lets you set the tempo at which you want your wave to play back. The available tempo range is 20 to 260 beats per minute. This can be set as part of the patch assignments, or it can be varied by striking a pad in the tempo you desire.

The original wave can be moved from 50% to 130% of its original value. For example, a wave that you record at 60 bpm can be played as low as 30 bpm or as high as 80 bpm. This is a handy feature for those times when you’ve been recording waves at home, then get to rehearsal and find that the groove needs to be a bit faster. Before tempo sync, you’d have to re-record every wave associated with that tune. Now, a simple tweak of a setting and you’re good to go.

A Little Light Reading

The SPD-S is easy to use, but you’ll need to read the manual in order to understand how to properly record and edit your samples and get the most out of the unit. Step-by-step instructions necessary to carry out a task are in bold print that makes them stand out on the page. Details are in regular print, while hints are in a gray bar off to the right. There are also references to related topics so that if you are reading along and find that the info isn’t quite what you were looking for, you will be referred to other pages that will likely hold the information you seek.

Bottom Line

The SPD-S is chock-full of useful sampling and performance features. It’s easy to understand and utilize. Best of all, when you consider the amount of equipment it replaces, it’s a bargain. Looks like Roland has a winner.



THE NUMBERS	
SPD-S Sampling Pad	\$595
APC-33 Drum Pad Clamp	\$ 65
(800) 386-7575, www.rolandus.com .	



one **ANGRY** summer

The boys are ready. A brand new bassist, Robert Trujillo, brings Metallica back to full unit status. A new album, *St. Anger*, is on deck, and a new European tour starts right after the album release. Plus there's the insanity of the Summer Sanitarium tour. And Lars has a new drum set—make that sets plural. Bringing the right amount of calm, sanity and order to it all is Metallica's Master of Drum Logistics, Flemming Larsen.

"Lars' new Starclassic Maple kit is pretty much the same as the old one," says Ulrich's drum technician of over 17 years, "except I think it sounds a lot better. The Silver Sparkle kit had a covered finish; the new green one has a painted one, and I can definitely hear the difference. The sustain is the same—that's always been good with the Star-Cast mounting system—but the dynamic range is bigger. It's not just brighter, it's fuller at both ends of the spectrum."

"There is a difference in the floor toms. There's still the 16 x 16, but we now have a 14 x 16 instead of the 16 x 18. A 16 x 18 is really more like a coffee table, but you still have to do a soundcheck with it. It's my opinion that it's too big to get a good sound. However, I think it was more for my sake that Lars changed it."

"Lars has been using his bell brass signature snare in the studio, but the plan is to go on the road with the diamond plate model. The diamond plate was a big shock to me because I was so tuned into the bell brass. I didn't like the diamond plate at first—I think it was the looks that threw me off—but it grows on you. It's very good, actually, very easy to work with, consistent from venue to venue and VERY loud."

"The Tama hardware just keeps getting better. That's all I can say. We've broken a beater shaft once or twice. But one or two in seventeen years isn't bad. Lars can hit so hard he can bend a die-cast hoop with his aluminum sticks. Of course, I have spares."

"We need two main kits for the tour: one where we're playing and one for getting ready at the next venue. We also need kits for radio and club shows and practice kits for the dressing rooms. All together there will be seven drum kits running around. I have to figure how much hardware and cymbals I need and all the little stupid stuff like felt washers."

"I've been doing this since 1985. This is the best job in the world and I wouldn't give it up for anything."

new kit(s)

lars

new album

ulrich

new tours

metallica

new bass player



Flemming Larsen

lars' starclassic maple kit



color: green sparkle

sizes: (2) 16 x 22 bd, 8 x 10mt, 10 x 12mt

14 x 16ft (not pictured), 16 x 16ft

lut465 6.5 x 14 diamond plate steel signature snare

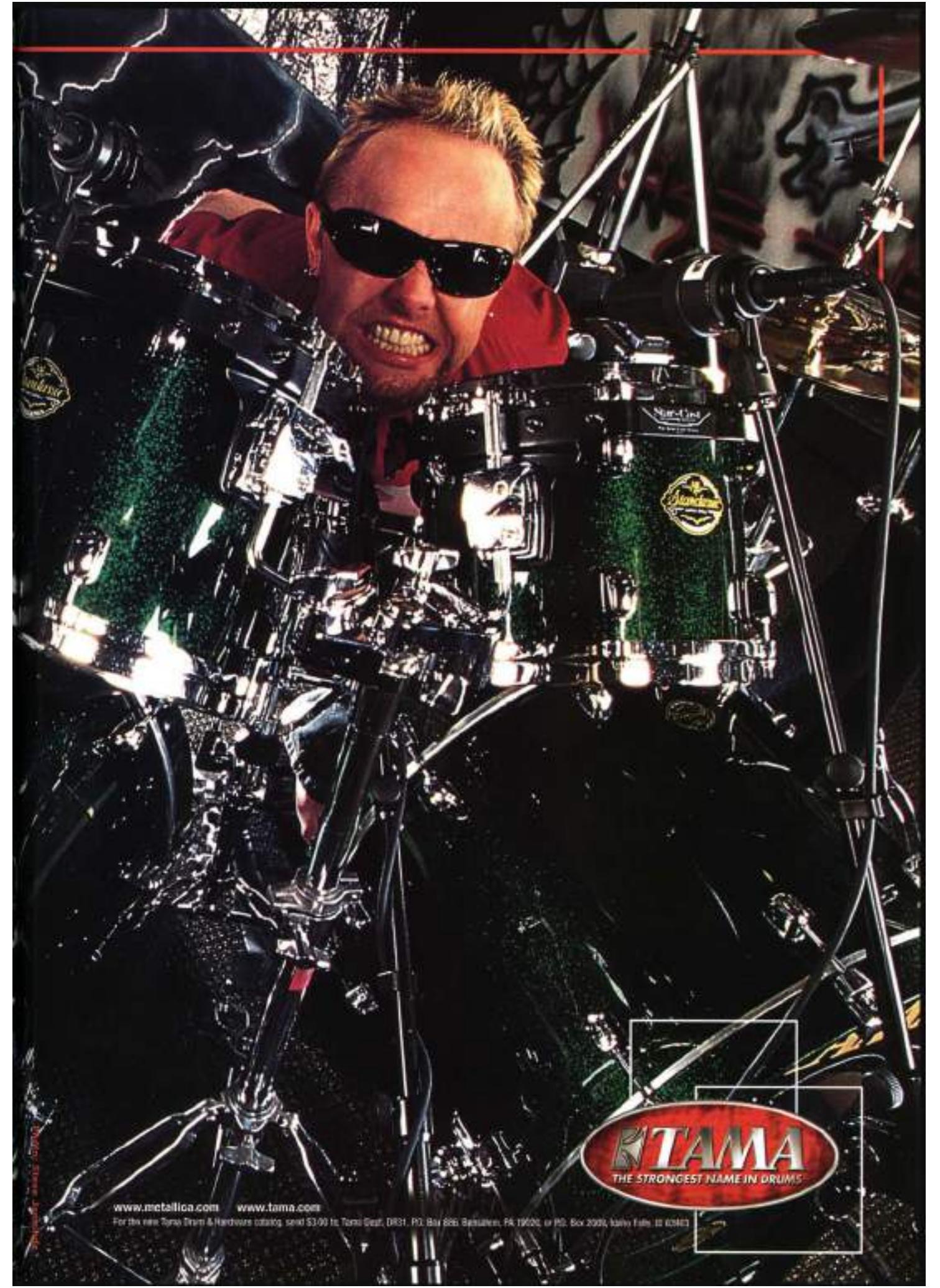
hardware: hc104b, hs700w

throne: ht73d

pedal: (2) hp900P

hi-hat stand: ht905





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by Ken Micallef

“**T**he sound of my music was changing as fast as I was changing musicians,” jazz legend Miles Davis recalled in his 1990 autobiography. “I was looking for the combination that could give me the sound. I wanted a drummer to play certain funk rhythms. Jack DeJohnette could play drums like a mother, and he gave me a certain deep groove that I just loved to play over. But he wanted to do other things, like play a little freer, be a leader, and do things his own way, so he left the band.”

“In that group with Keith Jarrett and Jack,” Miles continued, “they dictated where the sound went and what they played, the rhythms they laid down. They altered the music, and then the music pushed itself out into something else. Can’t anybody else play music like that.”

For more than thirty-five years, Jack DeJohnette has played drums just like Miles described it, and then some. The greatest living jazz drummer after Max Roach, Elvin Jones, and Roy Haynes, Jack DeJohnette is a titanic figure about whose actual drumming very little has been documented. Jack has recorded various videos and hundreds of records as drummer, pianist, and leader. But in all the interviews he has conducted, the master drummer has revealed scant detail about such topics as his elastic cymbal beat, cathartic soloing concepts, singular sticking technique, and innovative drumset approach.





“When I play, I go into an altered state, a different headspace. I plug into my higher self, into the cosmic library of ideas.”



DeJohnette's majestic style—freedom-loving technique, explosive swing feel, and remarkable soloing—is practically without parallel. Extending beyond established methods, he seems to play the music of the spheres, like a savant channeling the rhythm gods from on high.

Of course, this belies DeJohnette's years of playing in blues and R&B bands, which led to formative work with Jackie McLean, Betty Carter, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, and Chick Corea. His breakthrough gig came with Charles Lloyd, which led to even greater exposure when, in 1969, DeJohnette followed Tony Williams into Miles Davis's band for the *Bitches Brew* sessions.

In the '70s, ECM Records provided a fer-

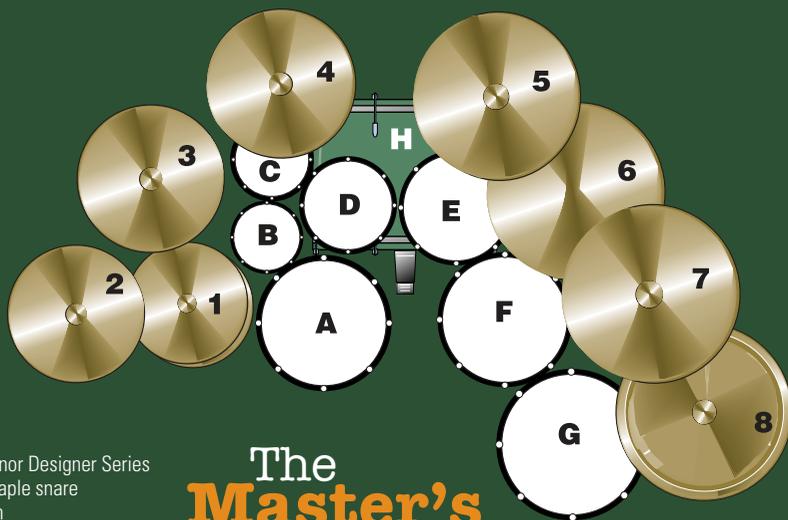
tile platform for Jack's atmospheric drumming and challenging compositions, resulting in tremendous sideman dates and highly regarded leader recordings with his own bands Special Edition and New Directions. To celebrate his twenty-five-plus years with the label, ECM is about to release *Rarum: Jack DeJohnette's Selected Recordings*.

All told, DeJohnette has recorded twenty-eight albums as a leader, and his compositions have been recorded by the likes of Stan Getz, Keith Jarrett, Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny—and even Bernard “Pretty” Purdie. Among his major recordings is *Music For The Fifth World*, inspired by Jack's studies with Seneca native elder “Grandmother” Twylah Nitsch. This album brought

together Vernon Reid, Will Calhoun, John Scofield, and traditional Native American singers.

DeJohnette has been brilliant in so many settings, whether it's his records as a leader with New Directions or Special Edition, his molten groove work with Miles Davis, his immaculate swing playing with The Keith Jarrett Trio, his daring improvisation with John Surman and Gateway, or his magical recordings as a sideman with artists like Joe Henderson, Freddie Hubbard, George Benson, Sun Ra, Michael Brecker, Bill Evans, Danilo Perez, and Ornette Coleman.

Even with all he's accomplished, Jack continues to move forward. Currently he's in the middle of a *very* creative period, having recently established his own record label,



The Master's Palette

Drums: Sonor Designer Series

- A. 7x14 maple snare
- B. 8x6 tom
- C. 8x8 tom
- D. 8x10 tom
- E. 10x12 tom
- F. 14x14 floor tom
- G. 16x16 floor tom
- H. 16x18 bass drum

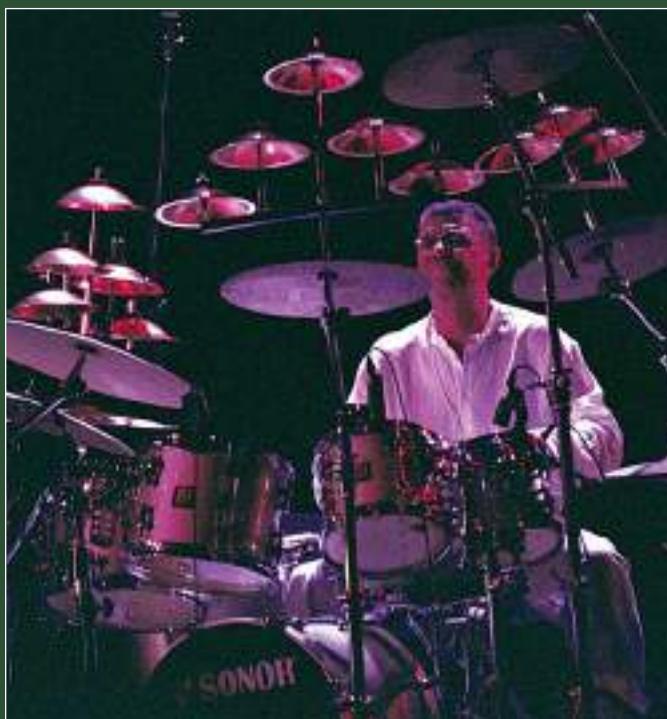
Cymbals: Sabian Jack DeJohnette Encore Series

- 1. 14" hats
- 2. 16" crash
- 3. 17" crash
- 4. 18" crash
- 5. 20" ride
- 6. 21" flat ride
- 7. 21" ride
- 8. 20" Chinese

Percussion: Sabian Golden Vibrations Resonating Bells

Heads: Aquarian Jack DeJohnette series (single-ply with special black coating). Gives the snare drum a warm sound, very much like calfskin. Tom sound is full, responsive, and articulate. Bass drum has a wide-open and resonant sound.

Sticks: Vic Firth Jack DeJohnette model (a "stretched" 5A, white coating, made of hickory, with a wood tip), various mallets and brushes



The diagram above is Jack's usual setup. The photo shows the variation on that setup that he used at this year's Montreal Jazz Fest. Note the Sabian Resonating Bells.

Montreal International Jazz Festival / Jean-François LeBlanc

Golden Beams Productions, to present projects close to his heart. Among them is a recording featuring bassist Matthew Garrison, laying down grooves for electronica and drum 'n' bass. Through this label Jack will also release music for meditation and healing practitioners, beginning with the CD *Music In The Key Of OM*.

Other new projects for DeJohnette include a duet with Foday Musa Suso titled *From The Hearts Of The Masters*. Suso is a world-renown kora player and griot, a musician/oral historian of the Mandingo people of Gambia. In addition, Jack and percussionist Don Alias are recording a percussion duo record. And the drummer has been touring this year in a few settings, including

with Keith Jarrett and Herbie Hancock. What's more, later this year he will record with John Scofield and Larry Goldings for *Celebrating Tony Williams*, an endeavor that will include versions of Williams' *Emergency* material. Without question, DeJohnette is in the midst of one of his most creative periods.

MD caught up with Jack at his A-frame log cabin deep in the woods near

Woodstock, New York. (Thanks to Jack's wife Lydia and daughter Minya for their assistance and hospitality.)

Beyond Technique

MD: Your technique is practically beyond technique. You never play licks, you have such a strong voice on the instrument, and you play with such command and commitment.

In Praise Of Jack

It's safe to say that practically *all* of today's top jazz drummers have been inspired by Jack DeJohnette's musical gifts. Here are some comments on Jack's genius from just a few.

Bill Stewart

Pat Metheny, John Scofield, Maceo Parker

I don't think there has been a more innovative drummer to come along in jazz since Jack became well known in the late '60s. He's a true improviser. Jack doesn't rely on pet phrases or worked-out ideas. He resolves phrases and tension in places that are sometimes surprising, and always musically uplifting.

Jack is a very interactive musician. He's always listening, and he has great timing. Beneath that is his great groove, which comes across in many types of rhythmic feels. He might play with a feel that's in between different genres, and sometimes with a feeling that I've never heard before.

Some things about Jack's playing are very personal and unorthodox, such as the way he fills and plays around the drums. Because of this, I think you hear fewer imitators than you do with other influential players.

The Keith Jarrett Trio recording *Standards Live* is one of my favorites. That recording captured the trio during what seems to be a magical concert. Jack is swinging in a euphoric way, and the interactive chemistry with Keith is very apparent. I just love hearing Jack play.



Billy Drummond

Carla Bley, Steve Kuhn Trio, Eddie Henderson, Charles Tolliver

If there's one guy I listen to every day, in some way, it's Jack. I've got pretty much his whole career on record, from Jackie McLean to Leo Smith. I'm particularly fascinated with that late-'60s period, when Jack was with Bill Evans and Stan Getz, right before Miles. With McLean, you can really hear the influence of Elvin and Tony on Jack's drumming.

Jack has never been one of those guys who plays patterns. When he solos, it's totally fresh and in the moment. He squeezes stuff out, and you wonder how he's doing it. Nothing Jack plays is stock.

I once saw Jack play a solo with his group Directions. The drumkey was on the floor tom, and it fell off onto the head of the drum. He created this whole theme and variation based on the rattle of the drumkey on the head. It was so creative, musical, and intelligent.



Bob Moses

New England Conservatory, The Free Spirits

Jack is a natural. When I first heard him, he'd only been playing a few years, but he was already a powerhouse. Jack is one of those cats who is instantly recognizable. He plays like the wind—very organic. And he's one of the cats who made that way of playing acceptable. People got used to hearing drums played more organically and free because of Jack.

You can't really transcribe or break down what Jack does. He can play every style, and he's into all kinds of music. He has that wide range of interests, which helps make him sound very different from the pure jazz or bebop drummer.

I first met Jack when I was in The Free Spirits. Later we were in the group Compost together. Jack is an elder statesman now and he has this kind of quiet, dignified persona. But I remember Jack when he was younger. He was wild and crazy. He would wear a Zorro hat with a cape on stage. Or he would play with no shirt and wear a shark-tooth necklace. It was some serious juju.



Nasheet Waits

Jason Moran, Andrew Hill, Stanley Cowell

My father [Freddie Waits] and Jack were close friends. So my first introduction to him was as a family friend. The musical thing came later. I knew he was a great musician, but I wasn't as aware of him as I am now.

Jack's drumming always has a serious touch and personality to it. You know it's him playing. What's also so striking is Jack's phrasing and coloring. He is very gentle and kind, but when he has an opinion about something, he is emphatic about it.

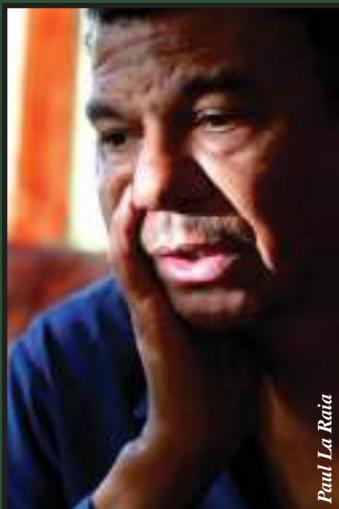
Rodney Green

Diana Krall, Greg Osby, Christian McBride

Jack exemplifies that Miles Davis mentality of, just because you've created something that works, it doesn't mean you are stuck with it forever. Jack left Miles after being with him for three years to form his own band. Today that is unheard of. If you're with a good band you don't split. But Jack is always developing and changing.



Jack is not afraid to take chances. He is a product of that era when creativity ruled. And he's still changing and finding new ways to play. How many drummers would have the guts and information to make an album like *Pictures?* It's solo drums with some chords—just Jack being Jack—and it's so compositional. It helped me understand his solos and the way he hears the set.



Billy Kilson

Ahmad Jamal, Dave Holland, Walter Davis Jr.

The thing that influenced me the most about Jack is his diversity. In fact, years ago, when I first heard him, I thought he was a funk drummer. I had no idea he was such a monumental jazz drummer. I didn't know that he had replaced Tony with Miles or that he had played with Charles Lloyd.

Jack's plate is so full with his own personal style. It seems as if there are no limits to what he can play. That inspired me to be objective about music. If it's musical, then just play. Yeah, I don't think there's anyone who can play different styles more authentically than Jack.



Matt Wilson

Dewey Redman, Lee Konitz, Danny Zeitlin Trio

One of the reasons I became a bandleader was because of *Album, Album*. That was one of the best records of the '80s. I learned the lineage of drummers from Jack. He also has an amazing and unique ride cymbal feel that seems to cascade. It really dances around the music. It doesn't sound static. It's always very interactive and dancing. And Jack translates that to the drumset itself. His whole kit has a ride cymbal feel. And I also love his funk playing. It's really round and not so vertical, like a big wave.

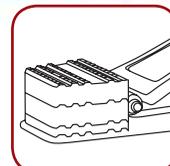
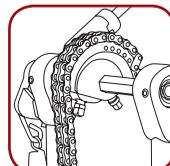
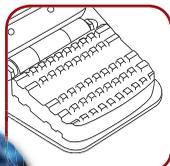


Jack has a lot of humor in his playing, too. And he still has that enthusiasm about playing music. That is very inspiring.



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Jack DeJohnette

Jack: The other thing I play with is a lot of restraint, especially with the Jarrett Trio. In my younger years the music was more demanding and high-velocity. But it's much more difficult to play delicately.

With the Jarrett Trio—by the way, we're celebrating our twentieth year—it's a real challenge to play with the subtlety that the music requires. Plus [bassist] Gary Peacock has a hearing problem. He has problems with midrange, so he doesn't like to hear his bass coming back at him. I have to play in such a way so that he can hear, and yet still generate enough propulsion for the music. That's a challenge for my touch.

MD: You've always had a beautiful touch on the drums.

Jack: It's more refined now. I'm in my sixties, so I want to refine what I play, make it smoother, and make it freer in an architectural music setting.

MD: How did you begin developing a drumming language that's beyond stock phrases and licks?

Jack: You have to look at the music, drummers, and other musicians that were around when I was coming up in the '50s and '60s. Art Blakey, Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones, Max

Roach, Cecil Taylor, Ornette Coleman, Miles Davis, John Coltrane—these people were pushing the envelope. It was an environment that encouraged you to explore and try new things. You had artists like Jimi Hendrix, The Free Spirits—the experimental band with Bob Moses and Larry Coryell—and Native American musician Jim Pepper. It seemed as if everyone was pushing the boundaries.

I was fortunate to work with Miles, McCoy Tyner, Jackie McLean, Art Farmer, and Freddie Hubbard, and it seemed that they all wanted to think outside the box and tell a story. I was encouraged to explore the boundaries. And the bottom line is, this music is about creating an individual language that can work in a collective setting.

MD: Was there a time when you sounded just like one of your heroes?

Jack: There were points early on where I probably sounded a little like Max, Tony, and Elvin. But you work through that. The intention wasn't to stay there. You take certain things that you like from your favorite drummers and then turn it around. Young players have to study the veterans to figure out what they do. But then they have to

transform that into the way *they* hear things.

Elvin has that loose but precise way of playing, extending and propelling the time. He's beyond rudiments. Elvin is more of a storyteller on the instrument. But he also has enough technique to say what he needs to say. That's what I wanted, to develop my technique to where I could play something that was technically challenging but not let the technique rule my ideas. You have to find a balance.

MD: Where does one get these ideas?

Jack: From within. You have to go inside. It's about listening and just experimenting around the set. Try recording yourself, listening back, and then picking out ideas that work and developing them.

Golden Vibrations

MD: You have some small, bell-like cymbals on your kit here.

Jack: I'm the co-creator with Sabian of these new Golden Vibration Resonating Bells. They're like Tibetan bells. I was looking for a musical instrument that could be used within the drumset harmonically and melodically. They're a set of thirteen bells



Signature

JACK DEJOHNETTE ENCORE

FROM A MUSICAL MIND.

Like the Sahara sands shifting under the hot desert sun, Jack DeJohnette's Signature Encore cymbals simmer with a dry, defined heat that lets him push, pull and punctuate with total creativity. They're darkly musical, with sounds that thrill the senses. Jack wouldn't have it any other way. That's why he came to SABIAN and collaborated with our team, who crafted ideas from his musical mind into our magical metal.

Encore!



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Sonix

Xs

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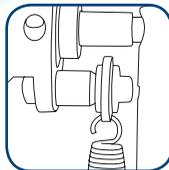
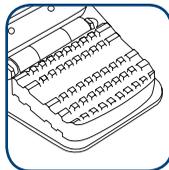
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Jack DeJohnette

tuned to A442, which is in between the European and American scales. I told Sabian what I was looking for, and they had some bells that were similar. But I wanted some that were tuned differently.

All things in the physical and non-physical world vibrate at a certain frequency. They appear to be solid, but they're actually darting in and out at such a fast frequency, they only *appear* to be solid. It's just like when you see a propeller on a fan: The faster it goes the more you see through it.

MD: I see a lot of books on metaphysics around your home. How do those concepts affect your drumming, and how you relate to

Miles And More

MD: Can you describe the experience of playing and recording with Miles?

Jack: I first played with Miles a couple of times when Tony Williams wasn't available. People like Miles, Sonny Rollins, and Coltrane didn't explain a lot. Miles would speak in metaphors, but there would be a lot of substance in what he said. If he didn't say anything, then you were okay. And most of the time he didn't say anything.

On "What I Say," from *Live-Evil*, I'm playing this nonstop beat. Miles sang it to me just before we recorded it. I did the rest. That was the setup. Just lay down the beat.



Montreal International Jazz Festival / Jean François LeBlanc

"I don't ever think about how fast I can play. It's about sound, it's about music."

other musicians?

Jack: Drums, and all music, should create healing energy. In fact, in Africa or indigenous societies, the drums are very respected. They're used to assist healing. Why not relate that to the music you create?

And then it was up to me to read between the lines and make permutations. But I stayed close to the essence of that groove.

I love playing grooves. I like to sit on them, and then, eventually, maybe change them in subtle ways and add my thing to

them. When I record with other leaders, most will suggest something, but they'll want me to put my stamp on the music.

MD: On some recordings you'll be laying down an undeniable groove. And then on another, you'll be playing free. Your range is incredible. And as for your free playing, you and Paul Motian share a similar quality. It's almost like a child playing the drums at times. There's that freedom and naturalness.

Jack: That is really hard to do, and Paul does it better than anyone I've heard. You just throw all the rules out the window. You go for sound rather than something technical.

In all of these settings, I want to get a voice out of the instrument. In fact, sometimes I sing along when I'm playing, like a piano player might. It's about making connections out of phrases and tonalities. Sometimes I hear chords or orchestral sounds out of the drumset, and that inspires me.

Woodshedding And Cymbals

MD: Did you spend a lot of time woodshedding?

Jack: I did some of that. I used to play with records, and I practiced rudiments while watching television. Frankly, I thought they were kind of boring. I would practice on my thighs, books, pillows, foam rubber, hard surfaces, soft surfaces.... Practicing on different surfaces is very important.

When I was coming up, I would go to jam sessions, and drummers would have very different head tunings. And because of this some drummers didn't feel comfortable. But

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Jack DeJohnette

if you practice on many different surfaces you won't have that problem.

MD: Speaking of making music on other people's gear, it seemed that many drummers found your original cymbal designs for Sabian to be quite dead, very different from the norm.

Jack: My first Sabian Signature Series

cymbals were like Earth cymbals—dark and not hammered. It's amazing they sold as well as they did. They were the antithesis of most other cymbals. But I really loved their dark, dry sound.

With my Signature Series, I wanted a cymbal that was user-friendly to the ear. I think all drummers have suffered some

level of hearing loss. I lost twenty-five percent of the highs in my left ear, which is the side my crash cymbals have always been on. By the way, I highly recommend that drummers use earplugs, even when they're not playing loud music.

My current cymbals, the Encore Series, look and sound just a bit more traditional.

The high pitch is there, but it's slightly muted due to the satin finish. That helps cut down on the frequencies that can damage your hearing. I also wanted a crash cymbal that you can hit hard but that speaks quickly.

MD: Do you play differently when using different cymbals?

Jack: Absolutely. Sound is *everything*. Sound inspires you to be more creative, or less creative, depending on whether it turns you on or not.

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John Surman	Invisible Nature
John Surman	Free And Equal
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Commitment

MD: Your drumming is always so bold and has such forward momentum. How did you develop that level of commitment in your playing? It seems to be almost a spiritual thing.

Jack: My drumming is more about that attitude than any defined academic approach. When I play, I go into an altered state, a different headspace. I plug into my higher self, into the cosmic library of ideas.

MD: And you never seem to lose that commitment.

Jack: That comes from being inspired by people like Miles, Herbie Hancock, and Wayne Shorter. They have that commitment. I worked with Thelonious Monk—talk about commitment! And you were expected to know his music. He didn't ask if you knew the music, you *had* to know it. It was an unspoken understanding that you were supposed to come prepared.

Time Feel

MD: Drummers always mention your cymbal beat, that loose, open vibe you create.

Jack: The amount of "looseness" I play with is based on the music. I don't apply the same feel to everything. As for my approach to cymbals, I like to get the most out of the least. I try to get the most effort out of the least motion. Sometimes, depending on the tempo, I like to push the time ahead or go back and forth a bit.

Billy Higgins had a wide way of playing the cymbal beat—very inspiring. But what approach you take is affected by so many things, like who the bass player is. If I'm playing with somebody like Ron Carter, I may tighten up my cymbal beat. But if I play with Gary Peacock, I may loosen up a little more.

MD: Did you ever practice your ride cymbal to develop speed?

Jack: I don't even know what that is. I don't ever think about how fast I can play. It's about sound, it's about *music*. I'm trying to create motion as opposed to showing off technique.

Don Byron calls what I do a "rolling kind of drumming." I think of it as a liquid sound. When I'm playing I'm thinking about motion. Whether it's forward or backward I leave to the listener to decide. I try to create energy, movement, feeling, and emotion.

Soloing

MD: Can you discuss some of your thoughts on soloing?

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Jack DeJohnette

Jack: It's hard to pin me down on specifics, because I don't think that way. I know people want to get that concrete thing, but I'm an abstract thinker. I put more weight on the abstract than, "What were you thinking in bar 33?" I don't like to think that way. I can do it, but I like to be more in the flow.

MD: When you're soloing, do you have certain guideposts?

Jack: No. It all starts from a sound. One sound leads to another. I follow the sound with an idea, and that feeds something else. It develops and takes shape. I might put it into a form, or develop an idea until I'm tired of it. Then I move on to something else.

MD: You seem to downplay your technique, but you're able to play incredibly fast tempos.

Jack: You need a lot of experience for that. Plus I do a lot of visualization. I recommend that drummers meditate, seeing themselves on the drums and thinking about their playing. It's also important for drummers to keep fit and to learn how to relax when they play. Drumming is a balance of tension and relaxation.

MD: Years ago, in an old *Downbeat* article, you talked about making mistakes as

opposed to playing perfectly, and how that is the essence of jazz.

Jack: Perfection is how it all comes out when you play things you didn't intend to play. Miles explained that he would be going for three or four different ideas, and if he could play at least one of them, he would be happy. It's that idea of going for something. When you get that flow, the ideas just come out.

For me, the process is about getting into a situation, challenging myself, and then figuring out how I'm going to get out of it or how I'm going to resolve it. I want to communicate with the listener, but still keep it as abstract as I like it to be.

MD: Is there some drumming essence that you can share from all of your experience?

Jack: I think that's an individual quest. I don't have any great wisdom except to tell drummers to love what they're doing, have fun with it, and take it as far as they can. Also, they should listen to *everything*, not just drummers. I get ideas from everywhere. There's rhythm and sound all around us. Everything is a rhythm—if you can key in to it.



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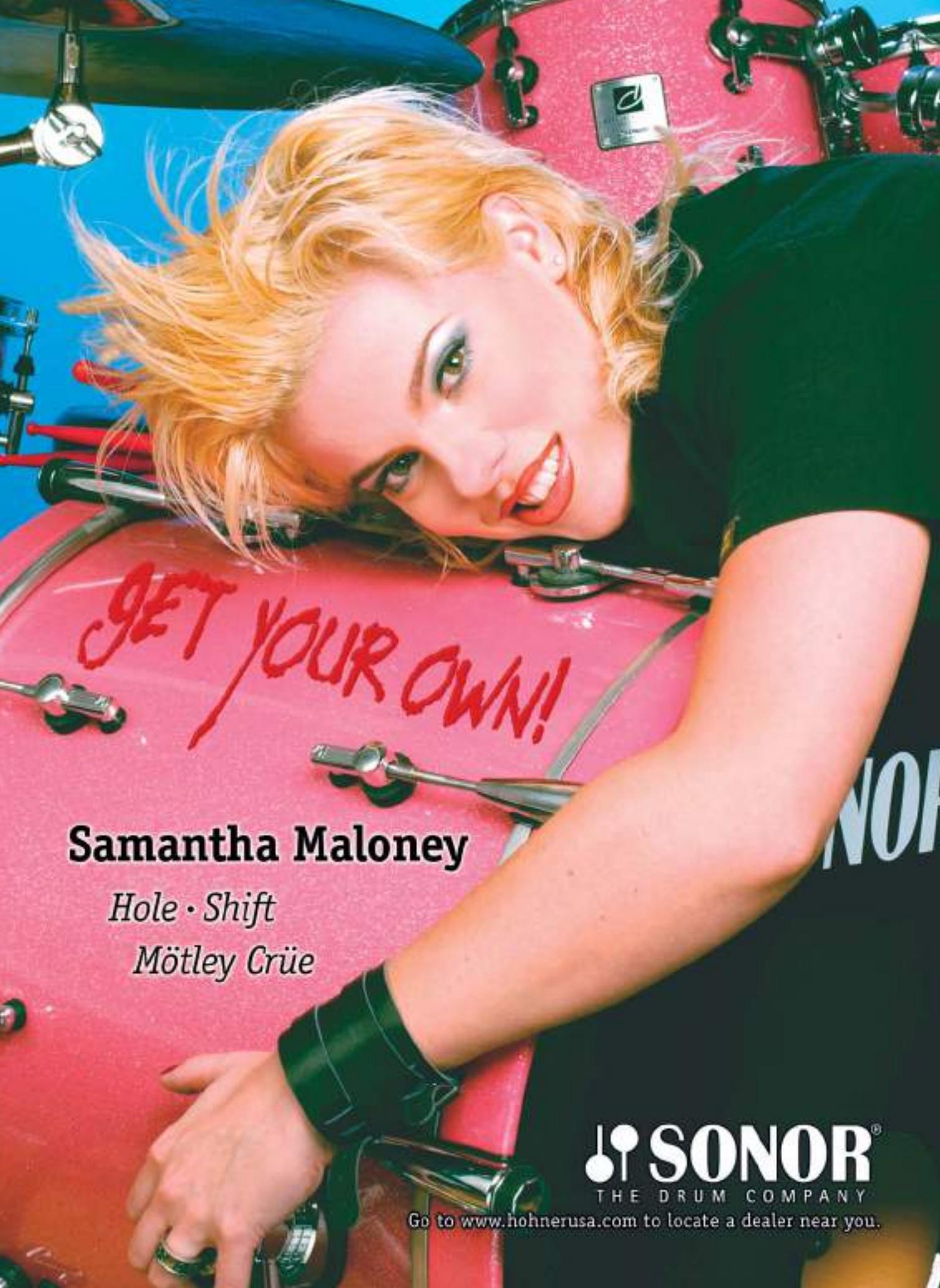
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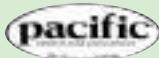
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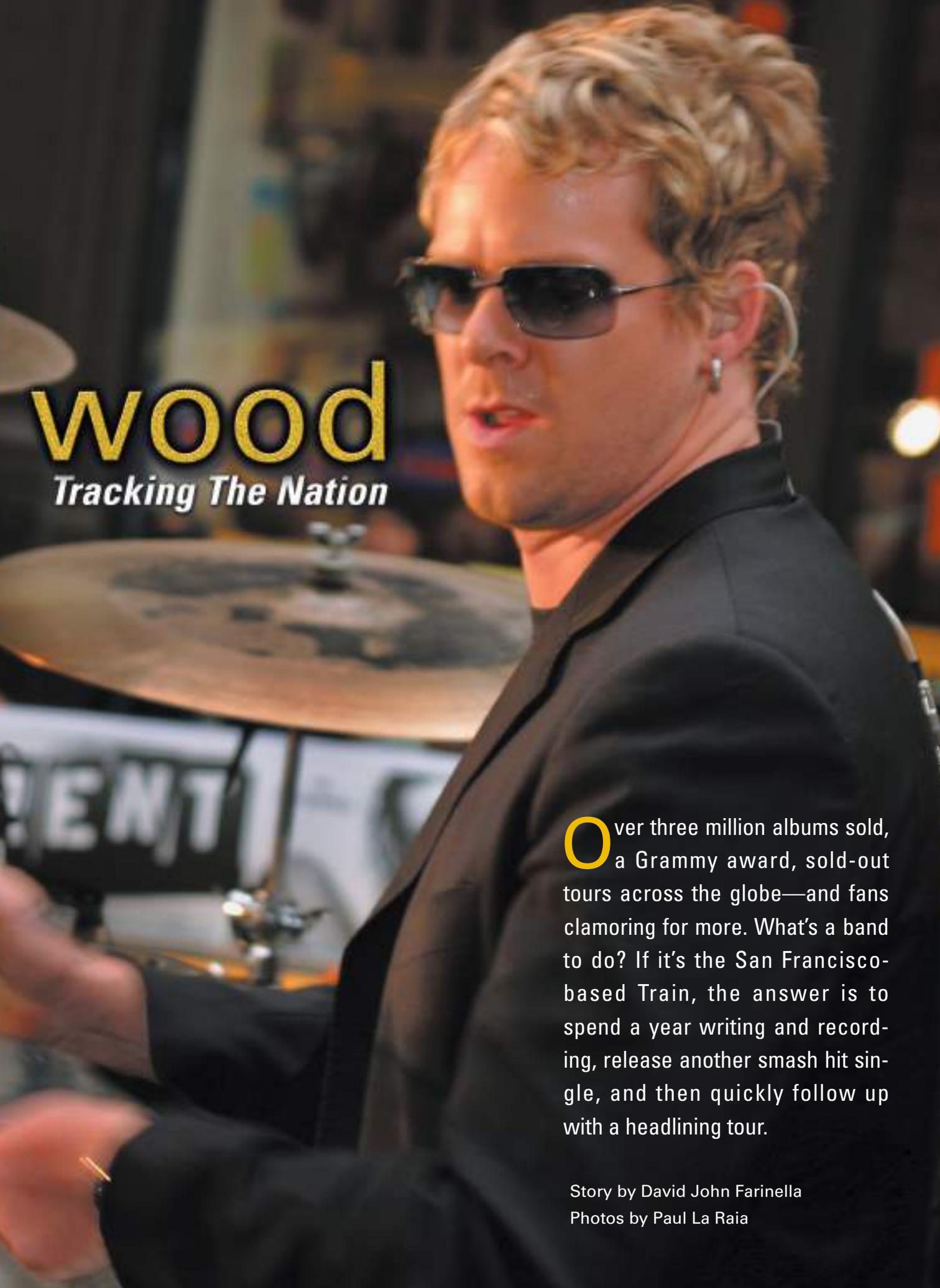
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Train's
Scott Under



wood

Tracking The Nation

Over three million albums sold, a Grammy award, sold-out tours across the globe—and fans clamoring for more. What's a band to do? If it's the San Francisco-based Train, the answer is to spend a year writing and recording, release another smash hit single, and then quickly follow up with a headlining tour.

Story by David John Farinella

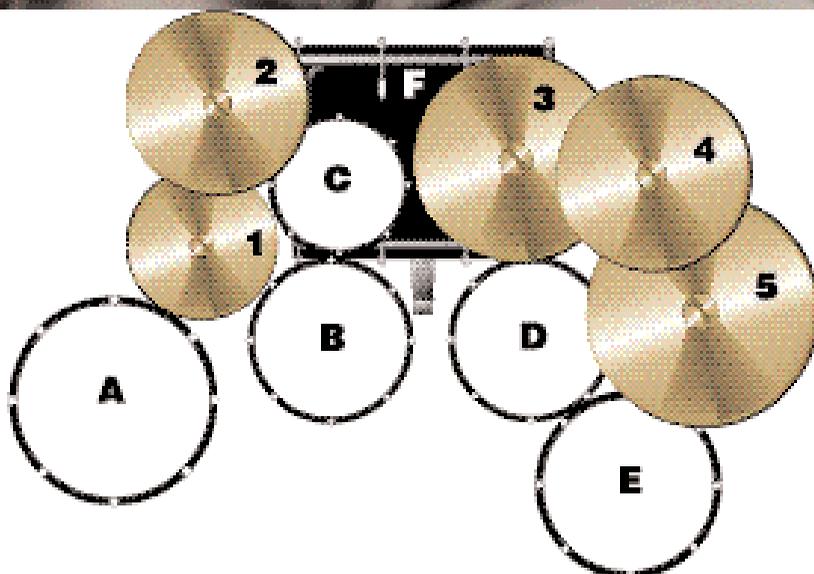
Photos by Paul La Raia

But to hear drummer Scott Underwood tell it, the members of Train were not immune to the pressure of following up their mega-hit album, 2001's *Drops Of Jupiter*. "It was self-imposed pressure," he says. "We feel like the public is expecting a lot from us right now. Plus we don't want to be a band that puts out one great record and then nothing after that. So we really were concerned, and it took us a year to come up with eleven songs that we thought were good enough." Those eleven songs make up the band's third Columbia release, *My Private Nation*.

Sitting at an outdoor coffee shop in the tiny Northern California hamlet of Mill Valley, Underwood thinks about whether or not the band overcame the pressure. "Well, there are a couple of ways it will be seen," Underwood states. "Our record company loves it. They're putting a lot of energy behind it. But most importantly, we love it, and that's an accomplishment.

"The thing that sucks is when people say, 'You're not Train anymore,' because the new music is so different from our first record," Scott admits. "I don't hear that, but I'm worried about it. Our friends have said, 'You're going to lose fans with this record because it sounds different.' But it sounds like Train to me."

To this writer, *My Private Nation* picks up right where *Drops Of Jupiter* left off. The album is full of catchy pop songs with moments of experimentation—both organic and electronic. Frankly, it's more of a logical extension of the band's sound than a derivation of anything they could have done. Indeed, at times these songs hearken back to their self-titled debut, with each of the band members carefully laying down taut musical beds. As for the drumming, it's totally grooving and in the pocket, but with Underwood also adding his own personal vibe to the performances.



Playing for the song was part of the challenge for Underwood when he joined Train in 1995. Years earlier, after getting his first kit at age eleven, the young drummer learned to play by jamming with other aspiring musicians who were learning their instruments at The Guitar Workshop in his hometown of Saratoga Springs, New York. “They didn’t offer drum lessons,” Scott recalls. “But they needed drummers because they would create ensembles for their guitar, piano, vocal, and bass students. I was one of only three drummers in the area, so I got to play in six ensembles. It was great experience for me. We learned everything from Creedence Clearwater Revival and

Doors tunes to Rush. I was playing ‘Subdivisions’ when I was in eighth grade.”

In high school Underwood was part of a jazz band that won a regional championship. But then he started listening to James Brown. “That’s when I lost interest in playing a lot of notes,” he says. “I started gaining more interest in groove, feel, and supporting the soul of the song. I fell in love with funk and started playing in funk bands.”

The bands that dotted Scott’s inspiration list at that time included Red Hot Chili Peppers, Living Colour, and, of course, the hardest working man in show business. Oddly enough, after high school, he moved to Colorado and hooked up with an art-rock band, Lyme Harrick. “They played all odd-time signatures and radical fifteen-minute songs that went into space jams,” Scott reports with a laugh. “It wasn’t exactly what I wanted to be doing, but it was a good experience.”

limited in scope,” he says. “It just wasn’t that interesting to play the beat to ‘I Am.’ But I wanted to have a career. The art-rock thing was fun, but I knew it wasn’t going to go anywhere professionally. So this was a good direction for me to go in.”

Underwood started to appreciate great pop drumming. “At first I had to search to find beauty within that stuff,” he admits. “It was a whole new world. I was playing stuff that was so light and simple that I was like, ‘Where’s the beauty in this?’ So I had to figure out what was great about it and then add it. What I love to play are the subtleties, like ghost notes, slightly odd fills, or fills that make the perfect statement for that moment of the song, instead of fills that are technically profound.”

As an example, Underwood points to the song “Lincoln Avenue” on Train’s latest release. “There’s a guitar solo section where I do these fills that are something you’d hear Ringo Starr or John

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Microphones: Audio-Technica 2500 (kick), Shure 98s (snare and toms), Neumann KM-184s (overheads)

“I love hearing someone play perfectly in support of a great song. When a drummer is pulling that off, I think he’s got maturity and style.”

Lyme Harrick was Underwood’s last band before joining Train. “Obviously that was a huge change,” he says, “because I went from odd meters and really flashy drumming—you know, a huge drumset with all sorts of stuff—to a four-piece approach and just keeping a backbeat. That was awkward at first. I felt like I was limiting my playing, but I liked the songs. I could feel my flashy chops going away, and I wasn’t getting much attention anymore. But then, within the confines of the music, I found ways to express myself. It’s all about the subtlety, and I totally got into it. I think it takes a drummer’s ear to hear what I’m doing, but for me it’s really satisfying.”

Sure, there was a trade-off from being able to show off, but today Underwood sees joining Train as a maturing process that he’s grateful for. “At first it did feel

Bonham do,” he says. “They’re almost clichéd, but they’re something I really love. It was just fun playing them on this record, whereas before in my older bands everything I played would be about speed and technique. Now when I listen to music like that, it doesn’t impact me at all. I’ve always been a Bonham and Ringo fan, but now I appreciate them more than ever.”

And what about the jazz-fusion cats like Carter Beauford and Dave Weckl? “They’re obviously super talents, way beyond me,” Scott admits. “But man, that approach just doesn’t turn me on anymore. I love hearing someone play perfectly in support of a great song. When a drummer is pulling that off, I think he’s got maturity and style.”

All that said, Underwood struggled with that approach during the recording

Scott Underwood

sessions for Train's self-titled debut, which came out in 1998. Those were Underwood's first proper studio dates, and he admits, "I'm not really proud of that record. I think there are good songs, but as far as the drumming is concerned, it's kind of an embarrassment. I have drummers come up to me who say they like what I played on that one, but I think I did too much. Oh well, that's the way it goes."

When *Drops Of Jupiter* was released in 2001, Underwood felt that his drumming turned a corner. Not only had he started feeling comfortable with the pop music genre (after a few years of constant touring), he had started to incorporate a Roland 505 Groovebox into his tracks. "I brought the 505 on the tour bus and figured out how to use it," he says. "I fell in love with figuring it all out. I also had a small keyboard setup.

"When we set up to write *Drops*," Scott continues, "I had keyboards, a Macintosh with ProTools, and this Groovebox set up all around me. It was kind of a strange addition for the band. They're all classic songwriters, and I'm the one who listens to more experimental music. So I brought in some of these ideas—live drums working with drum machine grooves, loops, and such—and the guys loved them. Now it's kind of a staple of our sound."

The band—and producer Brendan O'Brien—liked how the 505 tracks were influencing the songs. "So we recorded all of the tracks combining live drums with the 505," Scott says. "But after a while I started thinking that maybe the Groovebox wasn't the way to go. I started thinking that we should make our *own* loops, where I would do something different like play a bass drum part with a mallet, or tap on the snare with my fingers. So we started experimenting with those kinds of ideas for the loops."

Perhaps one of the most dynamic examples of Underwood's belief in the combination of loops and kit



Train Tracks

Recordings

Artist Album

Train	<i>Drops Of Jupiter</i>
Train	<i>My Private Nation</i>
Train	<i>Train</i>

Favorites

Artist	Album	Drummer
Weather Report	<i>Heavy Weather</i>	Alex Acuña
Steely Dan	<i>Aja</i>	Steve Gadd, Ed Greene, Bernard Purdie, Rick Marotta, Jim Keltner, Paul Humphrey
Keith Jarrett	any	Jack DeJohnette
Led Zeppelin	<i>Physical Graffiti</i>	John Bonham
The Beatles	<i>Revolver</i>	Ringo Starr

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Scott Underwood

can be seen on the band's *Midnight Moon* DVD. During the song "It's About You," which can also be found on *Drops Of Jupiter*, Underwood triggers a minidisc that engages the loops, and then he plays perfectly over them. Totally pro, the groove is undeniable. While the kit wins out volume-wise, the underlying vibe of the loop nicely rounds out the song.

In fact, when Underwood watched that DVD for the first time, he was pleasantly surprised at his playing. And while that might sound a tad narcissistic, he explains, "When I'm performing live, I can't objectively hear what I'm doing. So I was worried that when I saw the DVD I would think I was overplaying. But it really came out great."

During the song "Getaway," the band broke into a bit of a jazz-influenced improv. "We didn't indulge too much, though," Scott says. "It wasn't a Phish jam, but it was cool and kind of spaced out." And then, of course, there's the drum solo, which Underwood gets to do every night. "That's always fun," he admits with a sly smile. "That's when I

get to air out some of the old chops."

In the midst of the *Drops* tour, Underwood began playing with clicks. It surprised him that he came to like it. "I think some people have trouble playing to a click," he says. "At first I didn't know how I was going to react to it on stage. But it actually works really well for me. It helps me find those subtle micro beats in the time to either push a groove or really lay it back. And playing with a click so much has done wonders for my time. Now when I play, it seems like I have an internal click going in the back of my head. I highly recommend drummers spend time working with a click."

So with the years of touring and all the confidence that comes from huge success, last year Train pulled into Brendan O'Brien's Southern Tracks recording studio in Atlanta, Georgia to record *My Private Nation*. Underwood came into these sessions with a different mindset than with previous albums. "I wasn't as concerned with making the drumming stand out," he admits. "I'm really into songwriting now, so when I'm writing

music I'll start with a simple drum loop. And that leads me to playing simpler grooves and fills."

The drummer that influenced Underwood the most this time out was Beck/R.E.M./session master Joey Waronker. "I love that dude's approach," Scott admits. "He epitomizes what I've found to be really beautiful in straight-ahead drumming. He's just a classic."

Many of the album's eleven songs feature loops that Underwood created electronically and then played organically. "Calling All Angels" is a simple drum machine with an echo effect," Scott explains. "'I'm About To Come Alive' is pure drum machine until the last two choruses, where I played a quiet kit part. And 'Get To Me' has a drum machine playing under the drum tracks. We kept the machine things way in the background, and they add some weird nuance."

The song "Save The Day" is a source of pride for Underwood. He played a snare and hi-hat pattern using brushes and then added two different-sounding kick drums underneath. One was a tight sound

that great gretsch snare drum sound

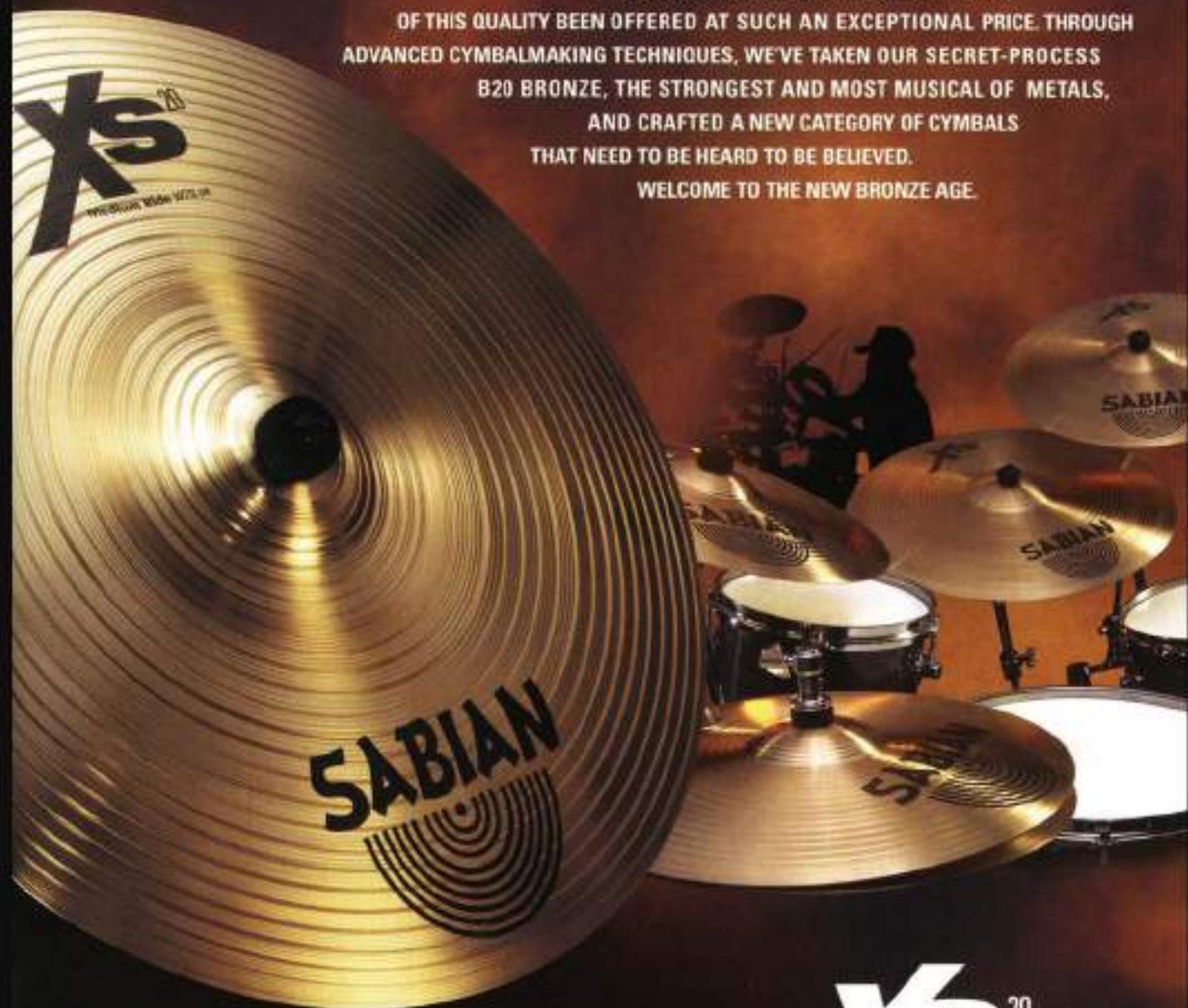
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Scott Underwood

and the other was a large, marching sound. "It really added a nice texture," Underwood explains. "It's like when Ringo recorded some of the later stuff with The Beatles, where one tom would have tons of reverb and another would be muffled. I always loved that effect. I used to think it was a mistake when I was a kid, but now I get it."

There's also a part in the song "I'm About To Come Alive" that gave Scott a feeling of accomplishment. "I played this

extra snare pattern with brushes that sits right on top of the loop," he explains. "The layman wouldn't notice, but drummers will. I love the subtlety of it. Every time I hear that song I think, 'Ah, success.'"

Recording the drum parts was easier for Underwood this time around because he was familiar with all of O'Brien's extensive drum collection and preferred room sounds. According to Scott, "I would say, 'For this song let's put the

drums in the small booth and get the big Gretsch snare and put some tape on it.' Or, 'Let's set up that huge marching bass drum in the large room.'"

Likewise, O'Brien was familiar with the drummer's preferences. "Brendan knows I love to play shuffles," Scott says. "I don't know how that happened, but I always tend to 'swing' the groove a bit. It just feels good to me. And Brendan is cool about it, too. He's like, 'You do that well, so do it again.'"

Besides his usual Drum Workshop kit, Underwood used some other drums, including a Noble & Cooley kit and Gretsch and Ludwig drums. Scott also experimented with snares, including a Ludwig Black Beauty and a Noble & Cooley maple. In the cymbal department, Underwood turned to a few of O'Brien's vintage Zildjians as well as his own Sabians.

Stick-wise, Underwood uses the Vic Firth 5A Extreme model (with nylon tip) because of its added length. "I hold the stick down near the butt end with my thumb and first finger," he explains. "It's a very loose grip, and I create sort of a whipping motion when I play." Underwood didn't even realize how unique-looking his approach was until Conan O'Brien pointed it out to him after Train performed on *Late Night*. "After we played," Scott says, "Conan came up to me and asked, 'Are you playing with extra long sticks? You crack 'em like a whip.' When I saw the show, I could see the motion he was talking about."

After twenty-one years of drumming, Underwood has the hindsight to be able to offer some advice to up-and-coming drummers. "First of all," Scott says, "play along to songs. Get a speaker by your drumset, or some headphones, and play along to great songs. Start with the classics and *then* play some new stuff.

"Also, the thing that I learned later on in life that I had to make up for is how important rudiments are," Underwood states. "They can be boring to work on, but man, when you have them together they'll change your life. When your chops are up, it helps your playing so much and gives you confidence, no matter what kind of music you're playing."

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Modern Drummer Festival Weekend 2003

Making History...Again

Saturday, May 17 and Sunday, May 18, 2003
Montclair State University, Upper Montclair, New Jersey

by T. Bruce Wittet

It was the quickest sellout in the MD Festival's sixteen-year history. And no wonder. The 2003 edition of the world's longest-running gathering of drummers featured true stars—icons of today and of yesteryear—proving their relevance to the contemporary scene. We also got the scoop on a couple of guaranteed drumming stars of tomorrow.

At this year's Fest we saw expansive kits and tiny four-pieces—in one instance played by the same drummer. We witnessed drum duets and trios working in frightening sync. And we gazed at one of the largest, most fascinating percussion setups ever to grace a stage. Drummers grooved through gospel, contemporary jazz, prog rock, and world beat. And throughout each day's show there were significant surprises. (For those who couldn't make it, fortunately Hudson Music was on site documenting the event for a DVD release.)



SATURDAY

"I'm somewhat nervous," admitted **Mike Orris Jr.**, winner of MD's undiscovered drummer contest in the under-eighteen category. Speaking backstage before his performance, Mike said, "I'm a little unsure about what I'm going to do." The Reno/Sparks, Nevada native intended to go out and wing it.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the curtain the show had begun and MD publisher Ron Spagnardi was at the mic', describing a father and son from Portland, Maine who had arrived at 11:00 the previous night to camp out, effectively securing first pick at seats and putting a new spin on the notion of "early birds."

Mike Orris heard Ron call his name and took a deep breath. Ten minutes later, Orris had succeeded in bringing the crowd to its feet with a performance summoned from the depths. Mike's solo had it all—energy, dynamics, clean chops, a fluid time feel, and a tight ending.

Next up were **Hip Pickles**. Seven years had passed since their last festival appearance, and the Pickles were obviously chomping at the bit. They burst onto the stage with an act that embraced theatrics and precision stick work rivalling that of any championship marching line. Singing joyful multi-part harmonies and cycling down rows of drums like a wave of hands at a baseball game, the Pickles pulled out every trick in the book, including some tomfoolery that saw leader Chet Doboie chasing his comrades for a swipe at their instruments. After a fanfare in honor of the late master drummer Babatunde Olatunji, the Pickles went into their finale, a mighty barrage on jet-black marching drums.

Two generations of Festival fans



Nathaniel Townsley slid into his set playing to a Manhattan Transfer-style track on DAT, his high-pitched snare cracking with the authority of his gospel mentors. He exhibited a graceful motion around his toms, all the while sitting firmly on a lazy half-time

shuffle. As the backing music became more complex, Nathaniel got more and more frisky. Things jumped into fourth gear when the Brooklyn-based drummer brought out bassist Ron Long and organist Shedrick Mitchell. Nathaniel's tom work became even more melodic, while his "nail it" ethic stepped even more to the fore. Ex-Morphine drummer Jerome Deupree, who watched from the back of the theater, remarked, "Nathaniel did some really subtle stuff you don't usually see. And I liked the way the three guys played together, loose but tight at the same time."

And now for something *completely* different: The **Matt Wilson Quartet**. Andrew D'Angelo (sax), Jeff Lederer (sax), and Martin Wind (bass)—cloaked in colorful jump suits and other bits of theatricality—joined Matt in an impressive set of modern, angular jazz. And what a contrast in drum sounds! We're talking extremely high-tensioned toms and bass that clanged joyously through the P.A. Later, Wilson de-tuned his kick, covered his ride with a blanket, and rested Tibetan opera gongs on his drums. Imagine a cross between a sample gone awry and a Roland TR-808, and you've got the picture.

Wilson's Savoy Ballroom tribute, executed with brushes at the front of the stage on a single brass snare drum, was pure dance-hall rumba (as opposed to *rumba*). Otherwise, Matt dealt out delightful bits of shtick that were greeted with applause, particularly when he donned a dark wig and obligatory drum gloves, and then shed his shirt for a heavy metal tribute.

"Somebody once asked me how I learned to play melodically," Wilson intimated to the crowd. "I played the *drums* to play melodically."

How is it that so many of us come to a standstill chops-wise, whereas **Steve Smith** jumps forward in leaps and bounds? The answer: practice, practice, practice! Making his fourth Festival Weekend appearance, Steve seemed to have increased his technical prowess four fold, if that were possible.

After a brief demo on hand technique (with brushes and sticks), Steve and his band Vital Information led off with an R&B kicker that featured a stunning drum solo over an ostinato band figure. Steve executed tricky fills that lunged from the floor toms to the mounted toms, while he showed a knack for "parachuting" clumps of 16ths on double pedal where we least expected them. One jazz technique Steve put to good use was "feathering" the bass drum—playing straight quarter notes lightly to generate a subtle rumble underneath the band.

On his final tune, Steve employed his auxiliary snare in a quasi drum 'n' bass groove. Meanwhile, guitarist Frank Gambale and saxophonist Bill Evans frantically traded riffs, prodded along by Tom Coster's imaginative keyboard lines. At one point, Steve shadowed Baron Browne's jittery bass with the fastest bass drum work of the festival.

And *now* we get to the part about why it's not over until the rotund person sings. **Mike Portnoy** strode on stage, ready to perform on a diminutive four-piece drumset, finished Ringo-style in oyster pearl. He admitted to the audience that although his reputation was founded on "more is more" (referring to his curiously absent mammoth drumset), Portnoy felt it important that people consider the virtue of simplicity. To that end, he kicked into a Beatles set, accompanied by Yellow Matter Custard (a name taken from The Beatles' "I Am The Walrus"), featuring Paul Gilbert (guitar/vocals), Matt Bissonette (bass/vocals), and Neal Morse (keyboards/guitar/vocals).

Cycling through Fab Four tunes, including "Magical Mystery Tour" and "Ticket To Ride," Portnoy was obviously happy as a clam—and won the applause of an audience that clearly had been caught unawares. That applause grew, thanks to a monumental guitar solo by Gilbert on "While My Guitar Gently Weeps."

Then, as the dying strains of "A Day In The Life" hung in the air, ostensibly ending the show, there was a surprise in store for the faithful. Slowly a black curtain lifted, and there, in the dim blue light, sat Portnoy's "Siamese Monster" kit, set up backwards to the audience. Accompanied by surprise guests John Myung, John Petrucci, and Jordan Rudess of Dream Theater, Mike performed a set of those "more is more" tracks to an ecstatic audience.

Next time, read between the lines of the program: "Sit tight and be ready for anything."



MD founders Ron and Isabel Spagnardi greet the audience

the last Metheny album," he said. "So I brought the same drums and cymbals."

Alas, Antonio's plans were dashed (or perhaps crashed is the better word) by the failure of his laptop computer. Displaying remarkable grace under pressure, Sanchez extracted bright, musical phrases from his tightly tensioned kit, accompanying himself with left-foot cowbell clave. Beating all odds, he improvised several solos and experimented in various odd meters, stopping only to patiently field questions. Antonio's wise words of counsel were not wasted on the crowd, who got a good glimpse of a true professional handling adversity. We may have missed out on the

Metheny songs, but we certainly heard plenty of melody!

Airto, the legendary drummer/percussionist with so many credits, including Chick Corea's *Light As A Feather*, was clearly in his element. "We create energy that changes people's states of mind," Airto told the crowd. "People forget about themselves, feel good, and feel united."

"Thirty years ago," Airto continued, "there was plenty of musical sharing. Today, it's all about competing." Seeking to right the balance, Airto shared with us an entire stage full of percussion, creating an atmosphere where good was bound to emerge.

Vocalizing at first in a plaintive cry, then branching into guttural low tones and eerie throat singing, Airto explored indigenous percussion and metal percussive objects, interspersed with workouts on a massive world percussion rig and a Western-style drumset. Airto's kit work revealed that he has kept up his chops since his deft work with Chick Corea.

There have been times, Airto confided, when he felt embarrassed at owning such an extensive percussion collection as filled the stage. Yet each time he moved to a new instrument, he displayed child-like glee at discovering some unexpected tonality among his "old friends." While Airto's excursions across the stage might have appeared arbitrary, there was *intent* at work. At each stop along the way, he gave a mini-master class on some percussive device, be it a skinned instrument, a tambourine, a pandeiro, a metal sculpture, or even a ride cymbal.

Although most of the audience had seen **Shawn Pelton** on *Saturday Night Live*, and many had heard him on disc, few had come face to face with such a dude. Dressed *cool* with jaunty, billowing hat, and swaggering with a shaker strapped to one leg, Shawn spoke engagingly to the crowd, striking a nerve with anecdotes about the realities of making a living in music. One such reality is embracing electronics, which Shawn demonstrated with a laptop loaded with various overdubs/tracks that comprise a Sheryl Crow song he had originally recorded.

From the opening strains of Pelton's band, House Of Diablo (guitarist Jeff Golub, keyboardist Brian Mitchell, bassist Conrad Korsch, and Clark Gayton on trombone), it was obvious why people seek out the drummer. Shawn embodies the phrase "playing for keeps." He coaxed various rimshot tones out of his snare, worked his floor tom and cymbals to the bone, and drove the groove with ambitious fills that smacked of jazz—yet with the volume and solidity of a rock drummer. Never be afraid to take chances, he seemed to be saying, providing you nail the pulse down dirty. Let the song live a new life, with alternate striking implements and novel approaches—such as rendering "I Feel Good" as a slow shuffle and sung through a megaphone.

When it came time to vacate the hall until next year, the infectious Pelton left us with several messages. These included "Take charge of situations" and "Keep the energy percolating from start to finish." To which we add our hard-learned lesson that in drumming, as in all things worthwhile, it ain't over 'til it's over.

Let's say *you* had just won MD's undiscovered drummer award in the over-eighteen category. How would you rid yourself of the anxiety of playing to a concert hall full of drummers? New Yorker **Louis Santiago Jr.** arrived long before doors opened and walked the lines of fans. Chatting to each person along the way, Louis dispersed a good portion of his nervousness. "It took an hour and twenty minutes," Louis told us backstage, "but it allowed me to share my story and feel one with them."

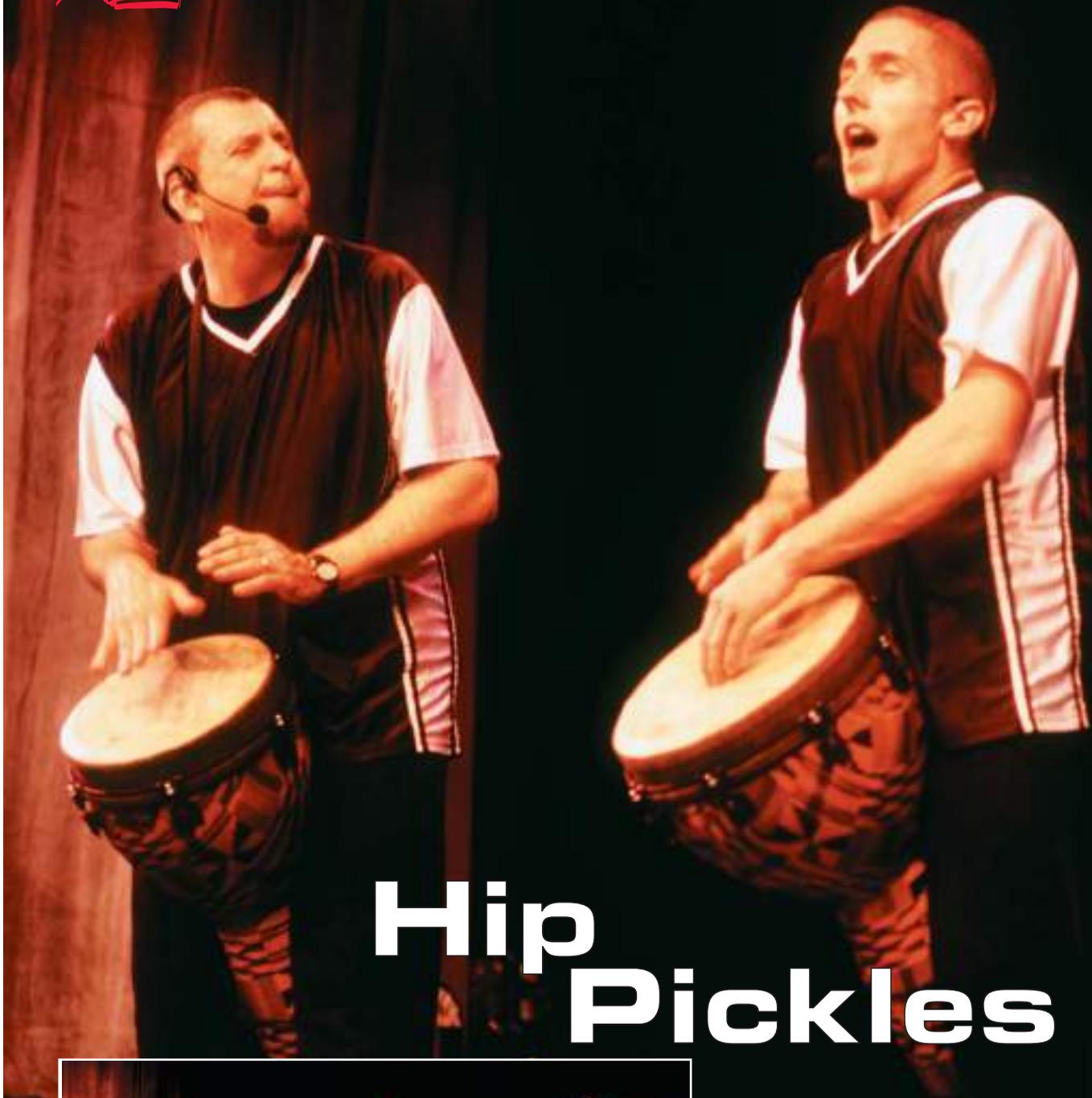
The twenty-six-year-old Drummers Collective student didn't let anybody down. He delivered a spirited solo, which included playing clave and cascara on two different pedals with his left foot *at the same time*. It elicited one of the longest and most enthusiastic ovations in Festival history.

Sparks flew with **The Drumbassadors**, the impressive Dutch duo of René Creemers and Wim DeVries. Already warmed up from an impromptu performance on the lawn outside, they endeared themselves to the crowd with their quirky sense of humor as they performed on two immaculately tuned kits. Their performance was pure teamwork. If, say, René's hands were in rapid motion on cymbals and toms, Wim would naturally be grooving on bass and snare. From their first number, which incorporated such subtleties as muting toms by pressing stick beads into the heads, the duo elicited standing ovations.

Nick D'Virgilio, drummer (and now lead vocalist) for Spock's Beard, treated the crowd to an enthusiastic performance, a full-bodied drum sound, and crystal-clear cymbal tones. It became obvious, as D'Virgilio tackled fill after complex fill, that he isn't one to let the time wander. No matter the challenge, he laid down a luxurious, ample groove. Performing to a DAT of Genesis-influenced compositions he penned himself, Nick played flawlessly, knocking off difficult polyrhythmic punches with machine-like precision.

Backstage before his performance, Pat Metheny drummer **Antonio Sanchez** explained why he had brought along an elaborate kit instead of his usual four-drums-and-two-cymbals setup. "I'm going to play three tracks we recorded on

SUNDAY



Hip Pickles



Chris Scherer

Chet Doboie

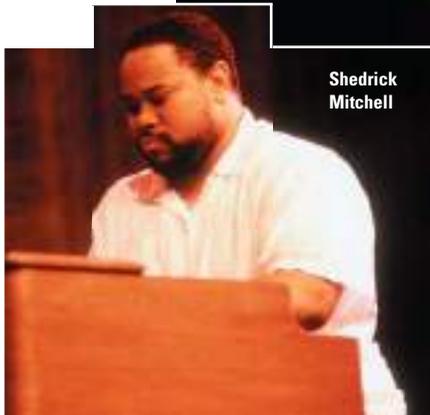
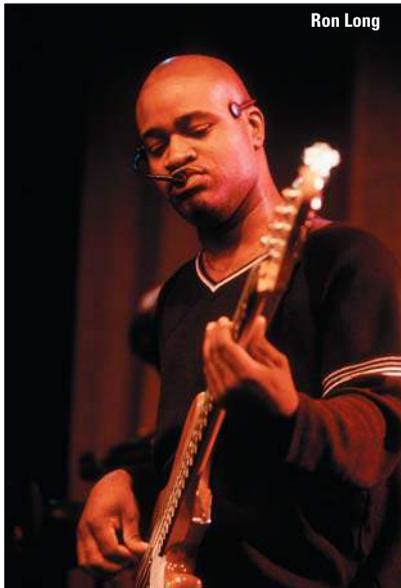
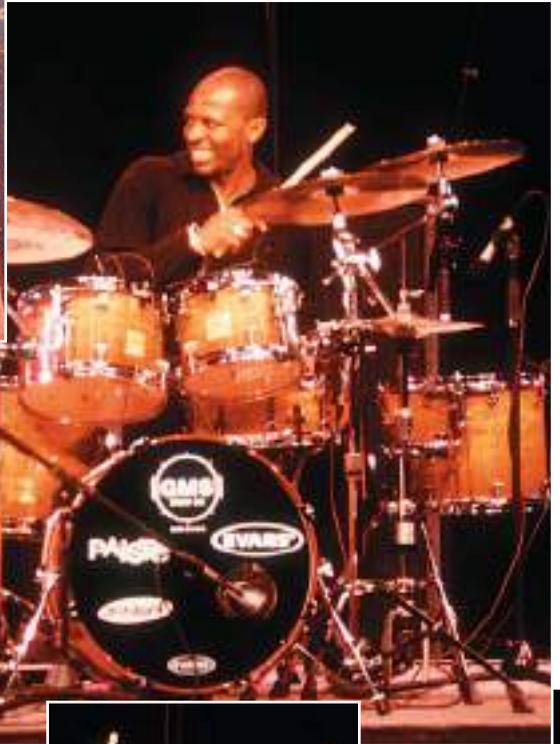
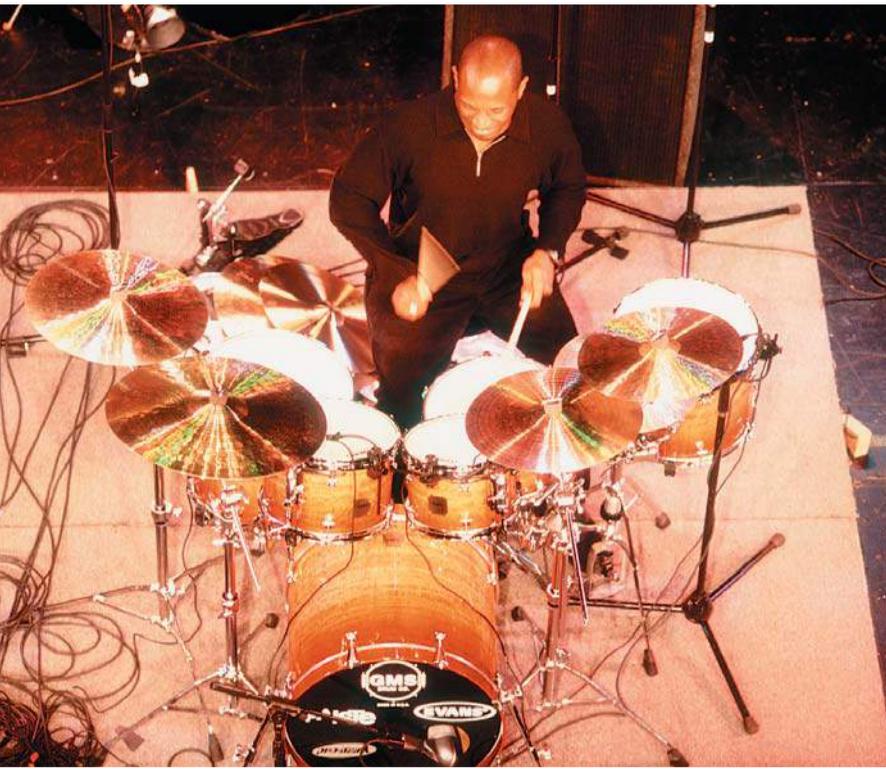
Jeremy Fischer



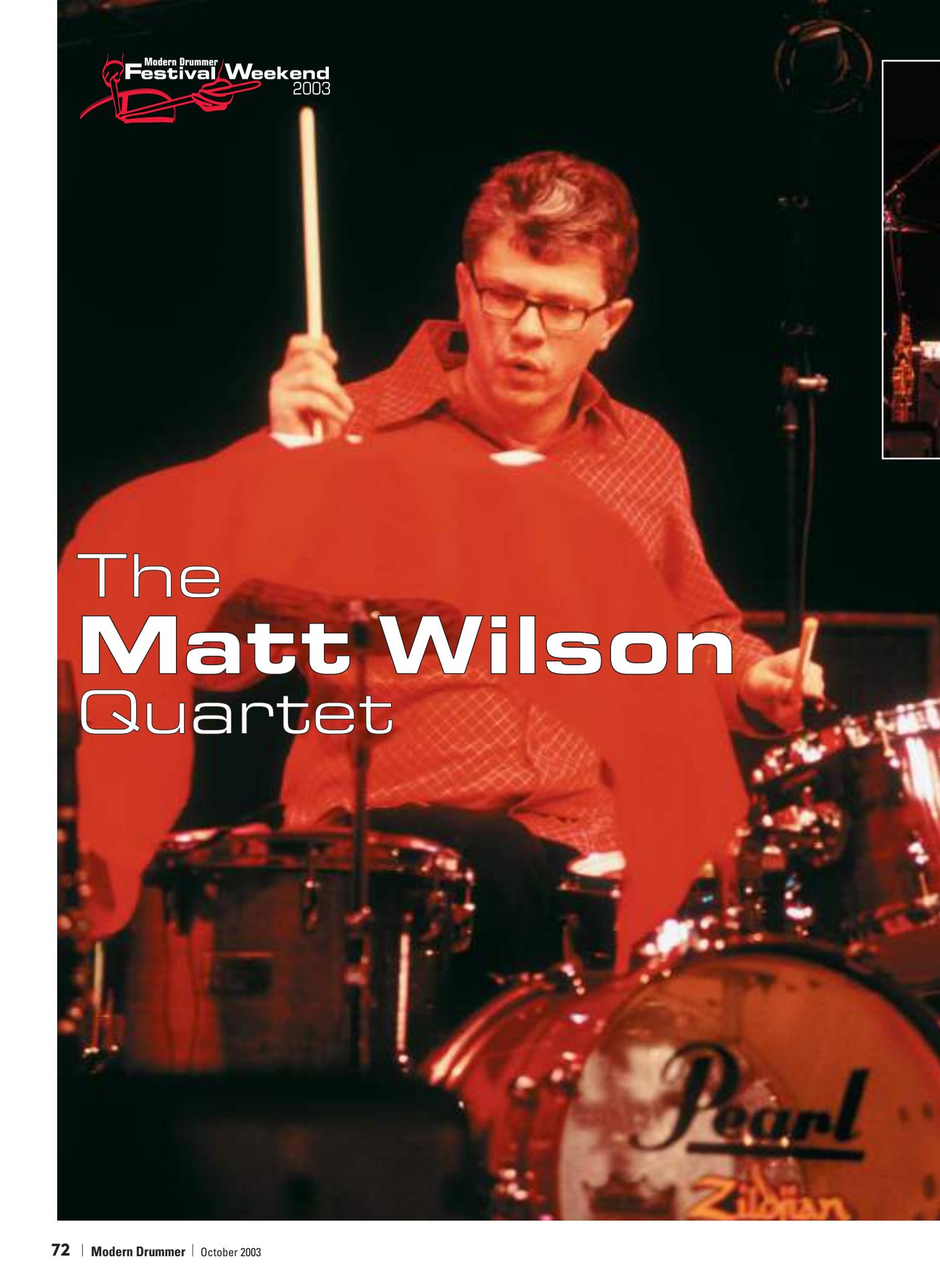


Hip Pickles were sponsored by Sabian Cymbals, Pro-Mark Drumsticks, Remo Drumheads, and Gibraltar Hardware.

Nathaniel Townasley



**Nathaniel was sponsored by
GMS Drums, Paiste Cymbals,
Pro-Mark Drumsticks, and Evans Drumheads.**



The
Matt Wilson
Quartet



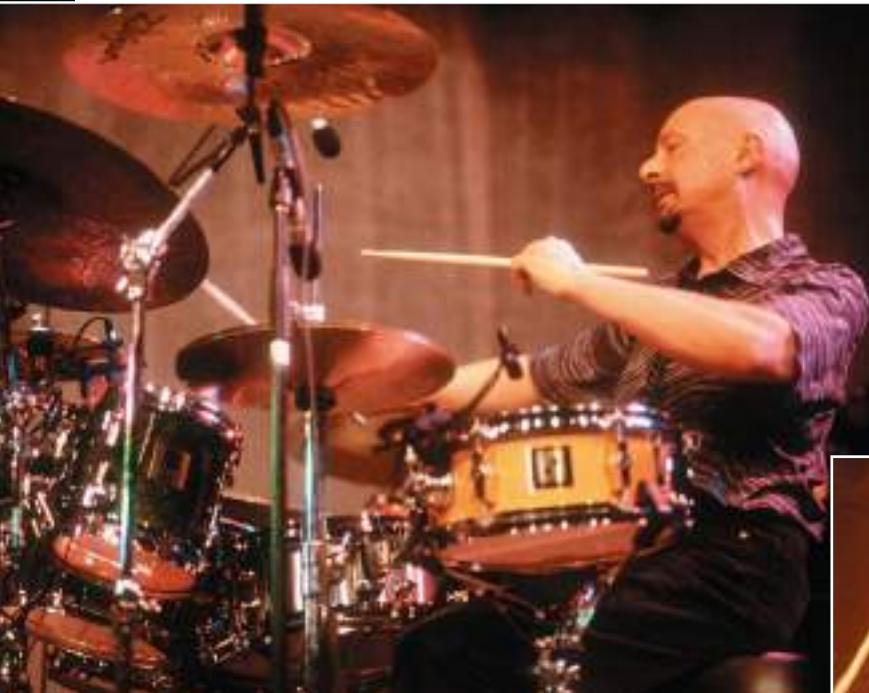
From left: Martin Wind, Jeff Lederer, Andrew D'Angelo



**Matt was sponsored by
Zildjian Cymbals
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Remo Drumheads.**

Steve Smith

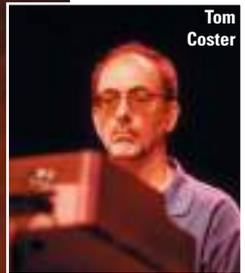




Baron Browne



Frank Gambale



Tom Coster



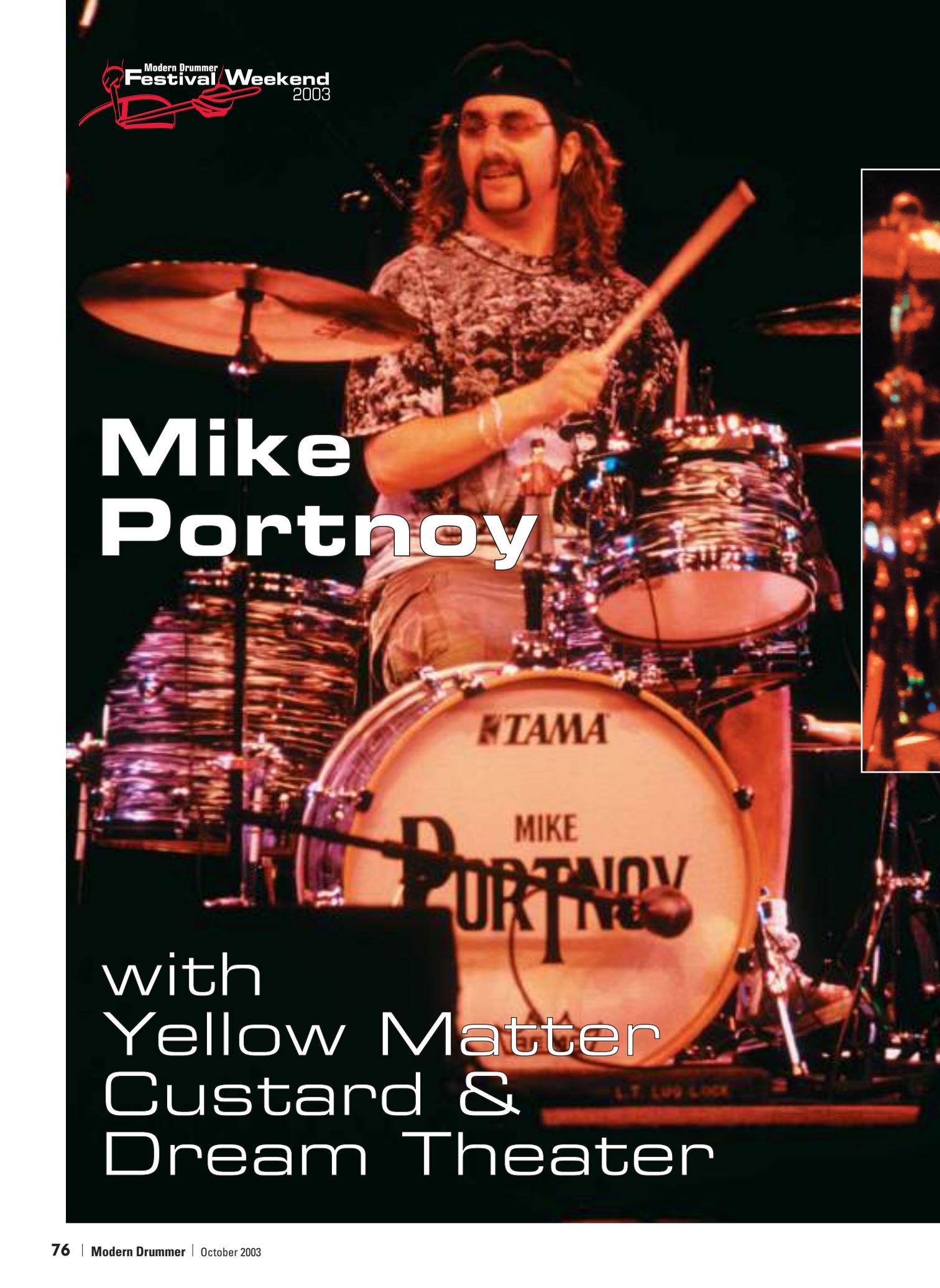
Bill Evans



Marcus Demuth



Steve was sponsored by Sonor Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Vic Firth Drumsticks, Remo Drumheads, and DW Pedals.

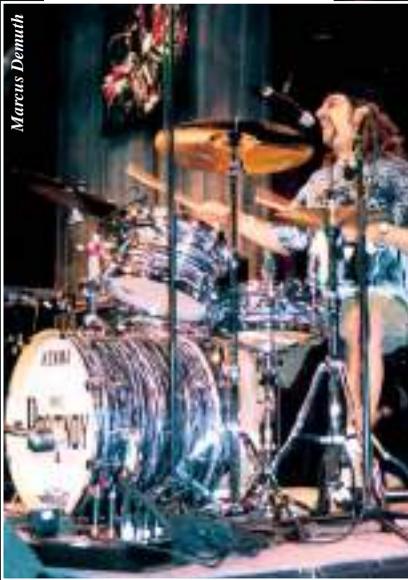


Mike Portnoy

with
Yellow Matter
Custard &
Dream Theater



Marcus Demath



Dream Theater's John Petrucci



Matt Bissonette



Paul Gilbert



Neal Morse

Not shown: Dream Theater's John Myung and Jordan Rudess

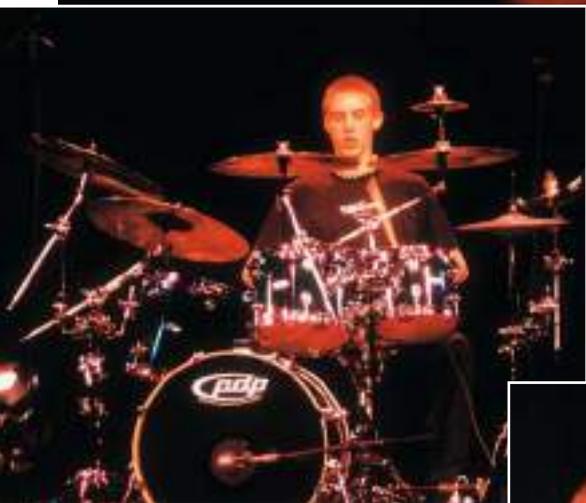
Mike was sponsored by Tama Drums, Sabian Cymbals, Pro-Mark Drumsticks, and Remo Drumheads.

Newly

DISCOVERED



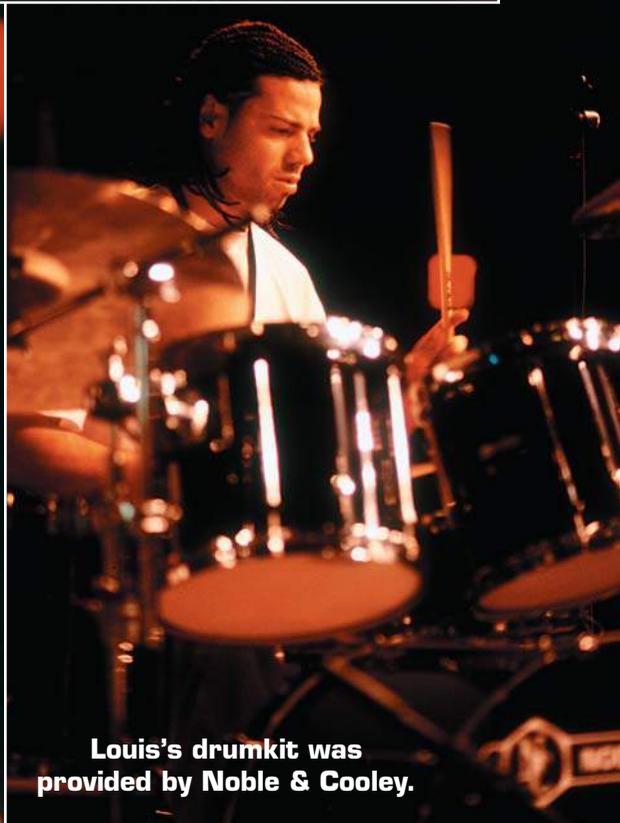
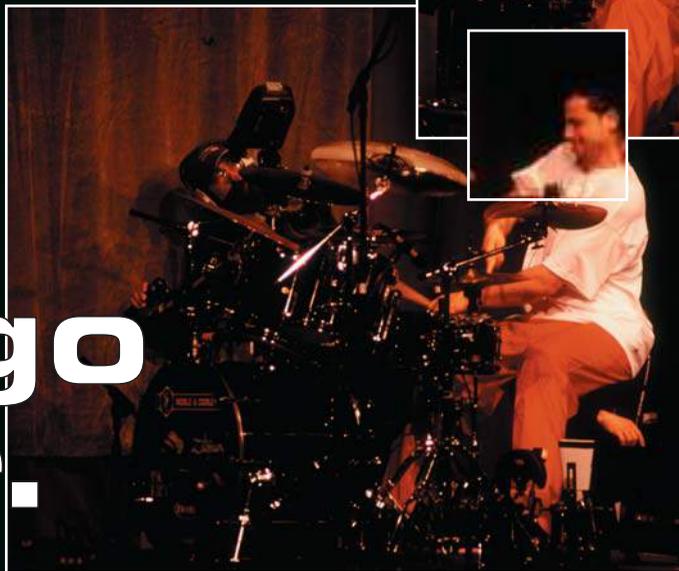
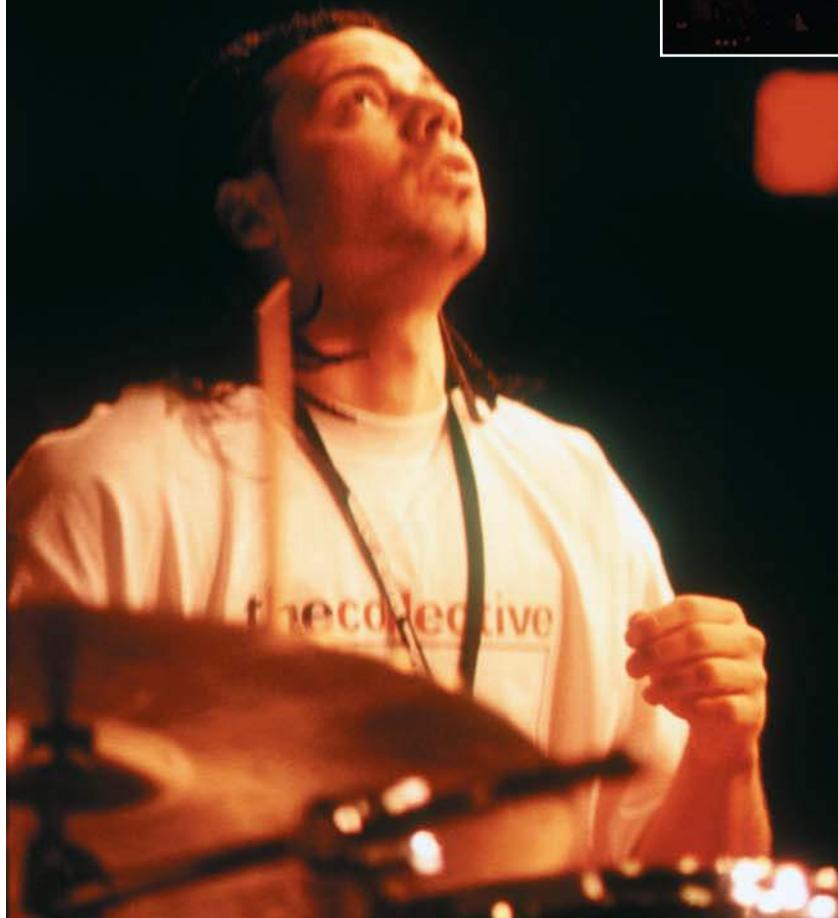
Mike Orris Jr.



Mike's drumkit was provided by Pacific Drums And Percussion.

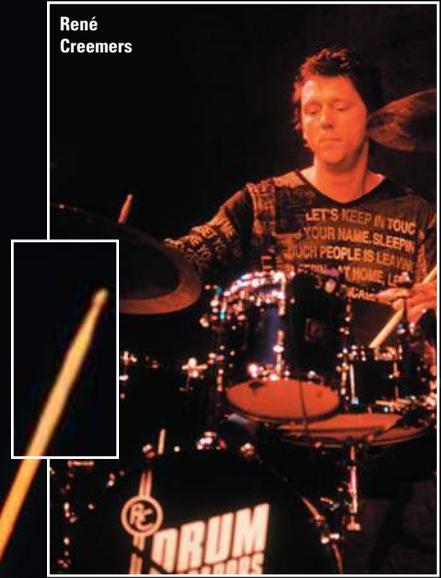
DRUMMERS

Louis Santiago Jr.



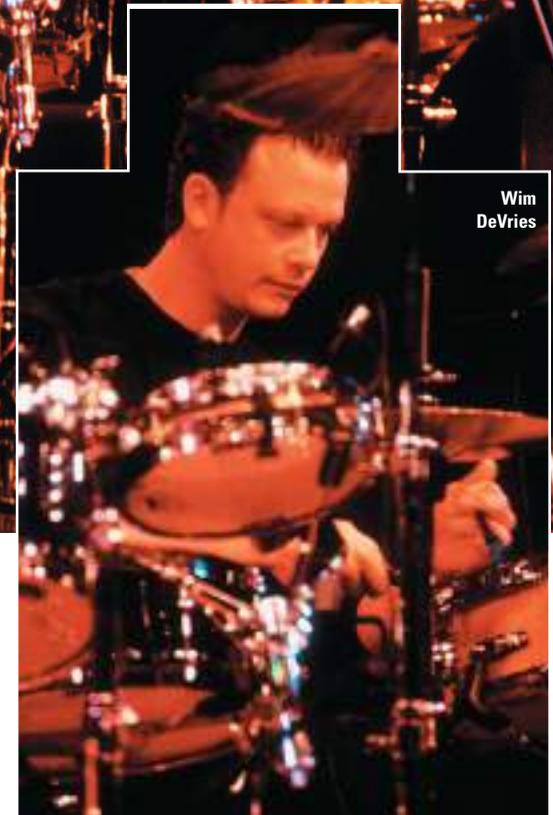
Louis's drumkit was provided by Noble & Cooley.

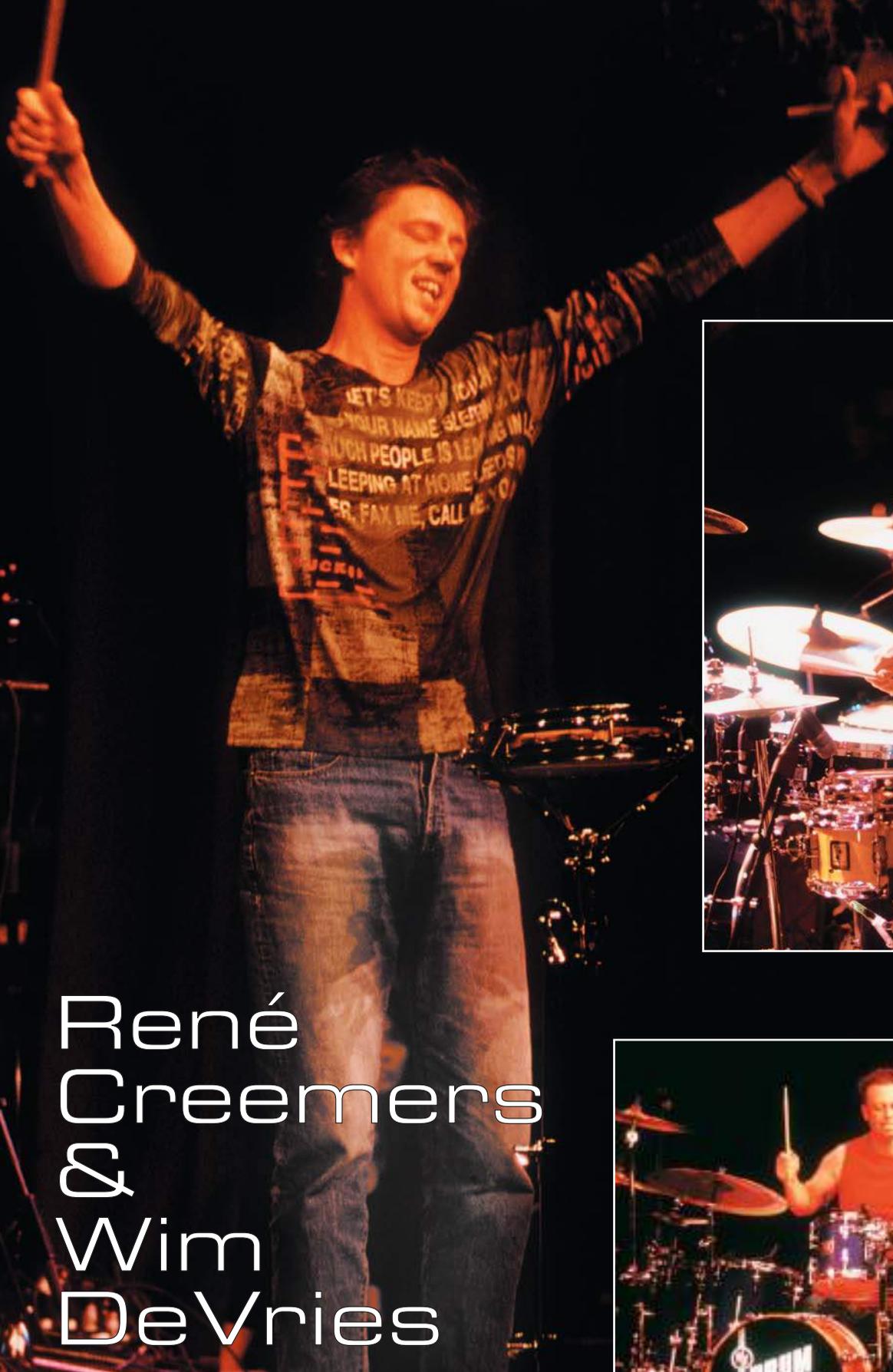
René
Creemers



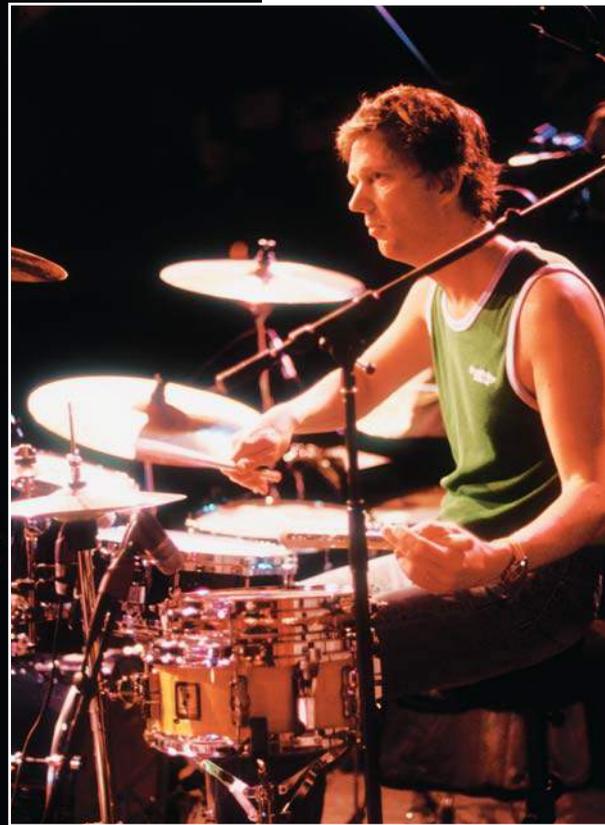
The Drumbassadors:

Wim
DeVries

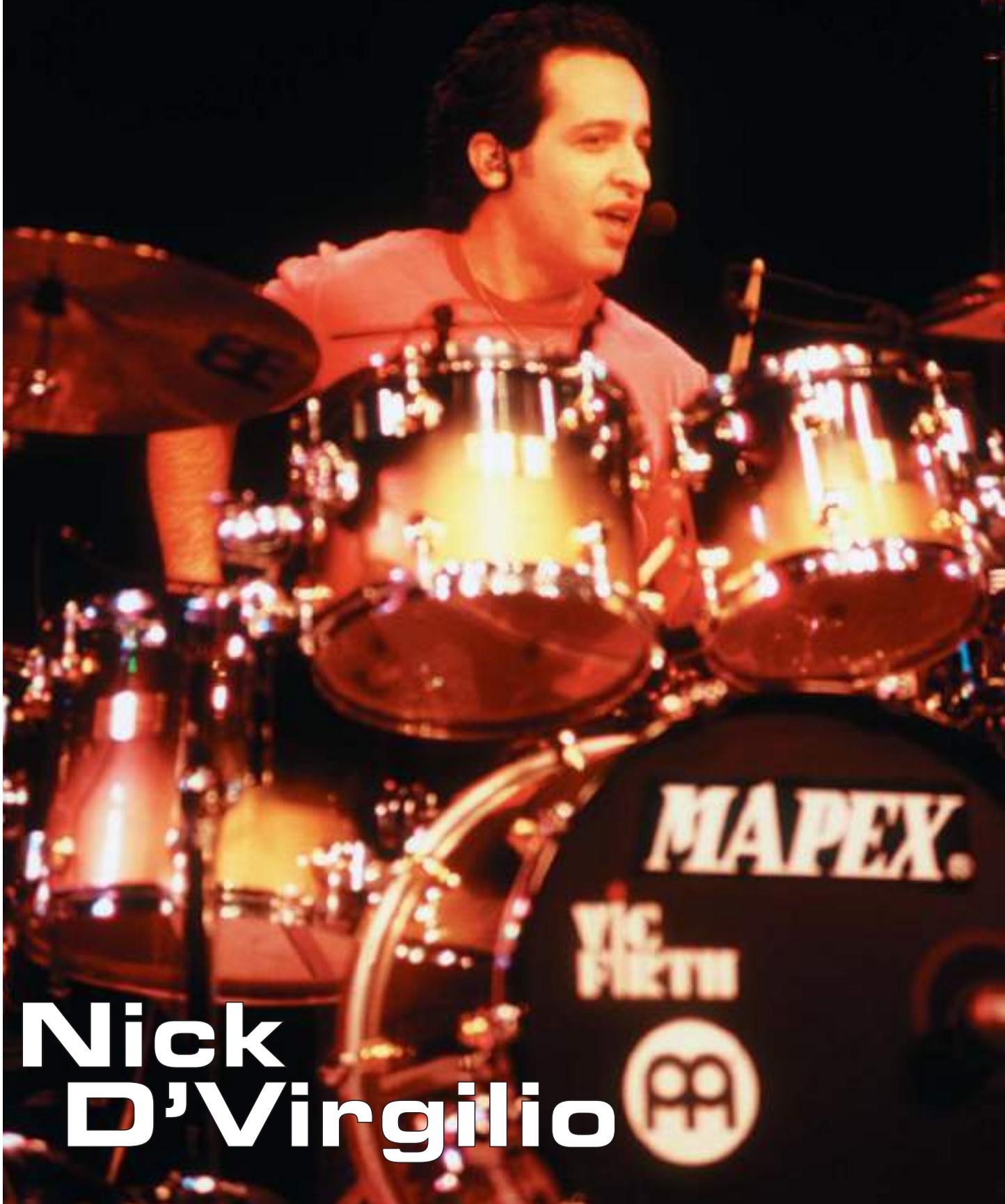




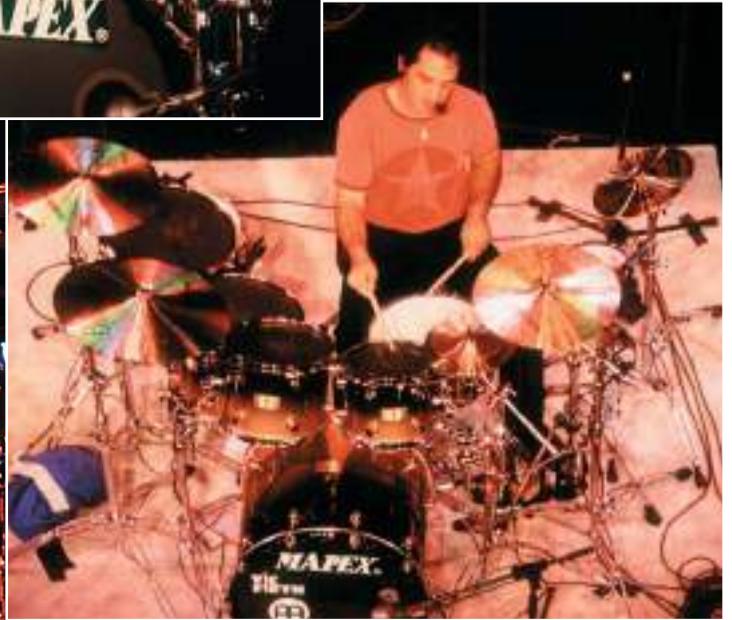
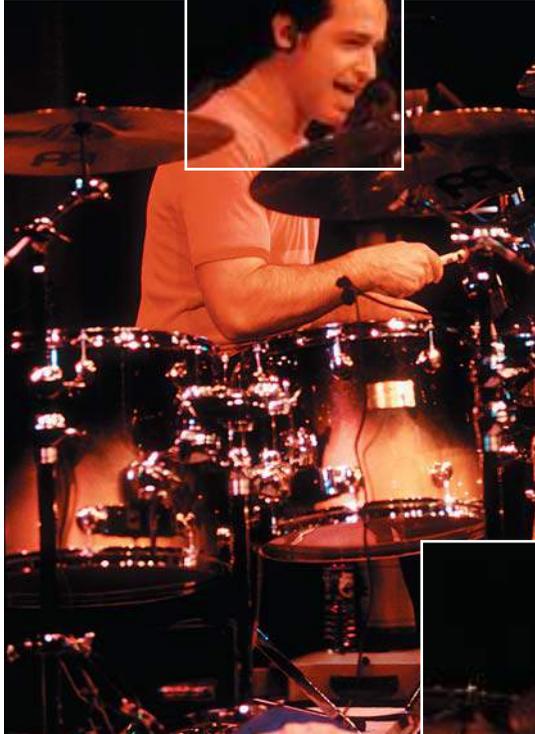
René Creemers & Wim DeVries



The Drumbassadors were sponsored by
Sonor Drums, Paiste Cymbals, Meinl
Percussion, and Regal Tip Drumsticks.



Nick D'Virgilio

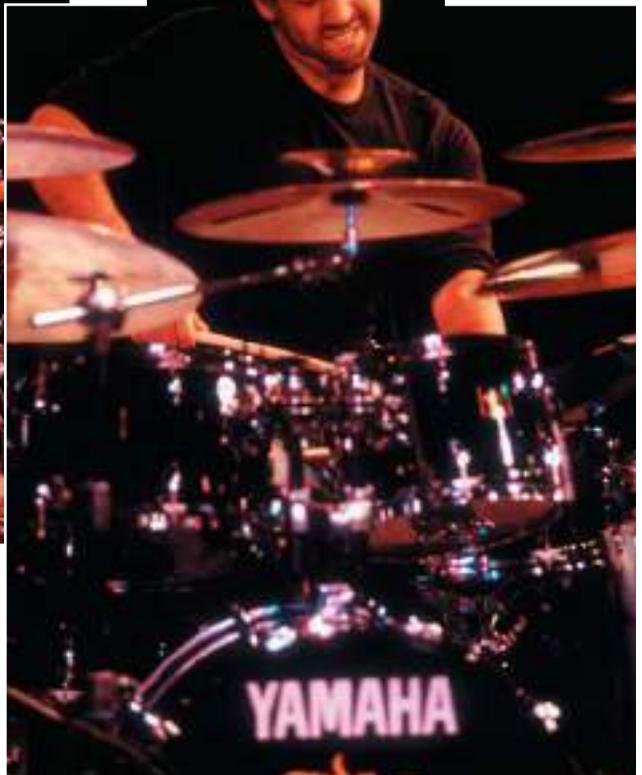


**Nick was sponsored
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and Aquarian
Drumheads.**



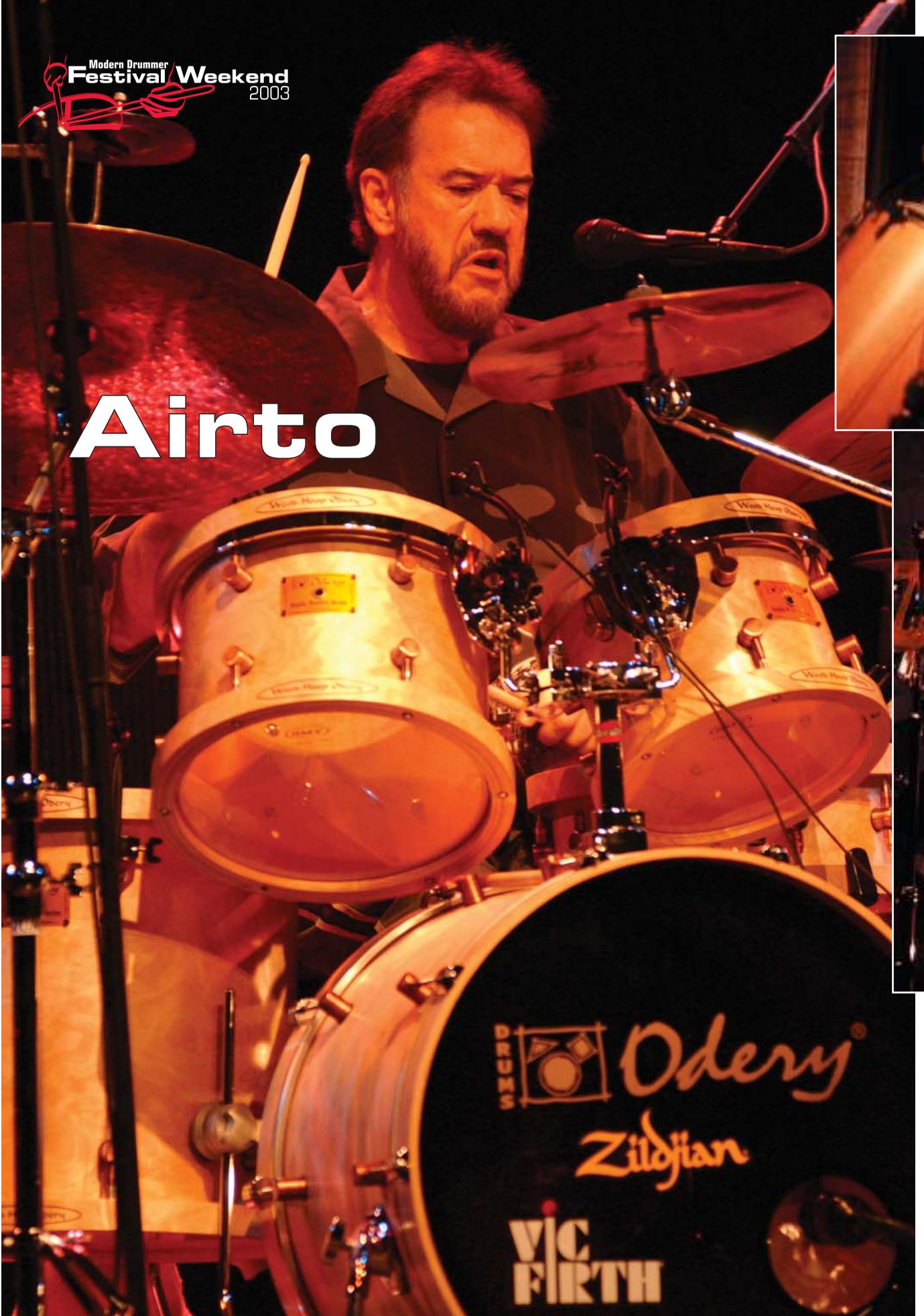
Marcus Demuth

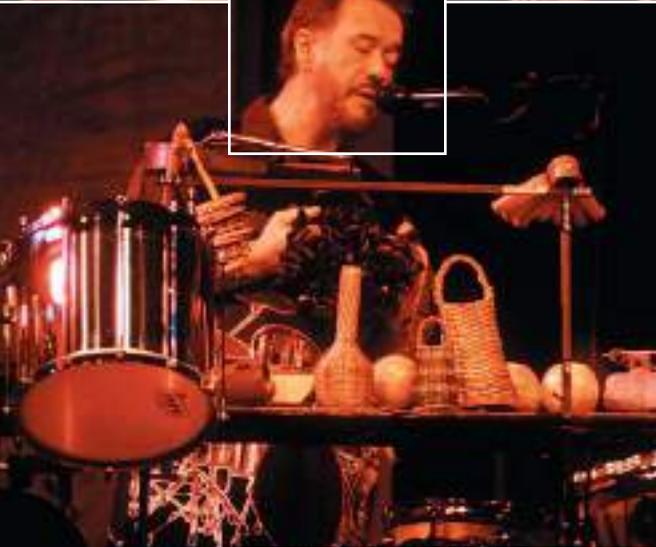
Antonio Sanchez



**Antonio was sponsored by
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Drumsticks, and Evans Drumheads.**

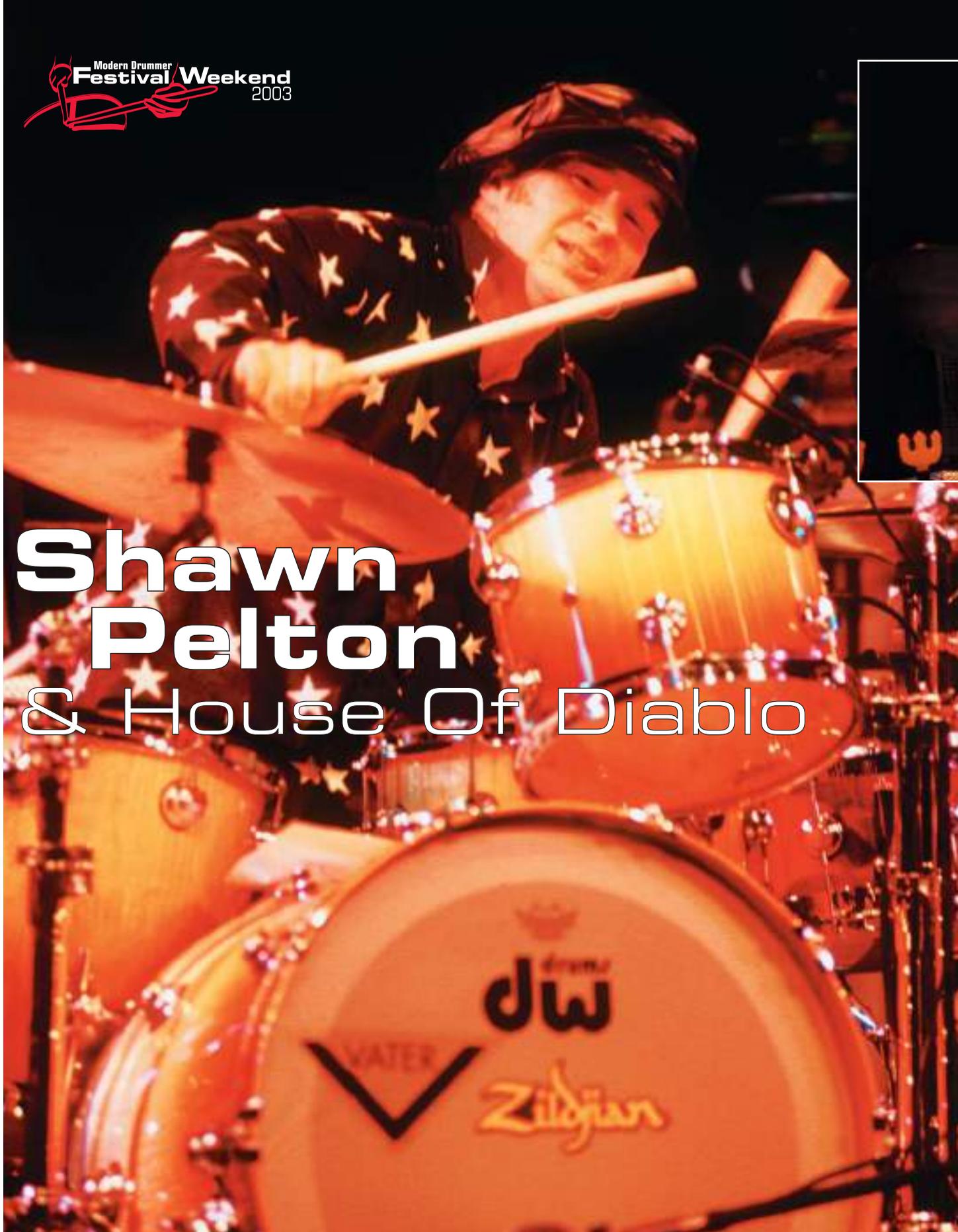
Airto





Airtó was sponsored by Latin Percussion, RMV Percussion, Zildjian Cymbals, Vic Firth Drumsticks, and Audix Microphones.

Airtó's drumkit was provided by Odery Custom Drums and MRP Hardware.



Shawn Pelton & House Of Diablo

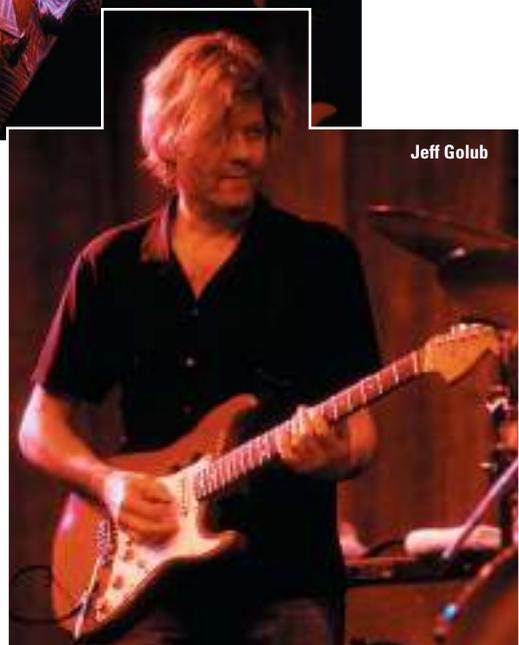


Conrad Korsch

Brian Mitchell



Clark Gayton



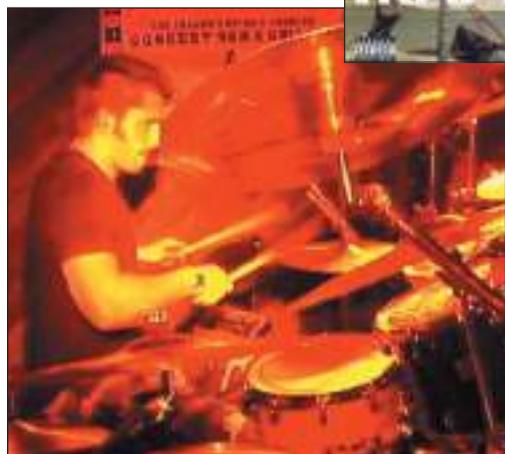
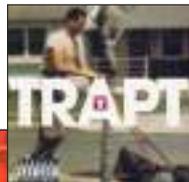
Jeff Golub

Shawn was sponsored by Drum Workshop Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Vater Drumsticks, and Remo Drumheads.



Trapt's Aaron Montgomery

by Ed Breckenfeld



MUSIC KEY

Open	O	R.C.	C.C.
H.H.	X	X	X
T.T.	•	•	•
S.D.	•	•	•
T.T.	•	•	•
B.D.	•	•	•
H.H.	•	•	•
w/foot	•	B.D.2	Add'l Toms

Here's the debut album from another talented young nu-metal band out of Southern California. Trapt takes the organic approach, preferring the time-tested combination of guitars, bass, and drums instead of loops and samples. And the band's tough, melodic sound is winning them widespread radio play. Good drumming is always crucial to this genre, and Aaron Montgomery delivers, laying down grooves with enough firepower to keep things exciting. Let's take a look.

"Headstrong"

This hit single contains a two-part chorus linked together by the following sequence, which features some of Aaron's slick bass drum work.

"Made Of Glass"

The middle of this song's bridge is highlighted by this explosive 32nd-note fill, which ends in a sweep around the drumkit.

"Hollowman"

Aaron's clever beat for the bridge of this track uses three-against-two polyrhythms to give the groove a near quarter-note-triplet feel.

"Still Frame"

This intro pattern is played on low toms and bass drum for a maximum powerful effect.

With all the syncopation in this drumbeat from the song's verse, the quarter-note accents on the hi-hat provide the driving momentum to keep the groove moving forward.

"The Game"

Aaron handles fast 12/8 time with assurance and ease. Check out this groove and wonderful fill from the end of this tune's

instrumental section.

The climax near the end of the song features this rousing fill

sequence.

"New Beginning"

Double bass provides the heavy groove in this 12/8 pattern

based on the guitar riff from this song's intro.

You can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site 

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Andy Mendoza plays Pacific and DW Drums.



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ANDY MENDOZA
OZOMATLI

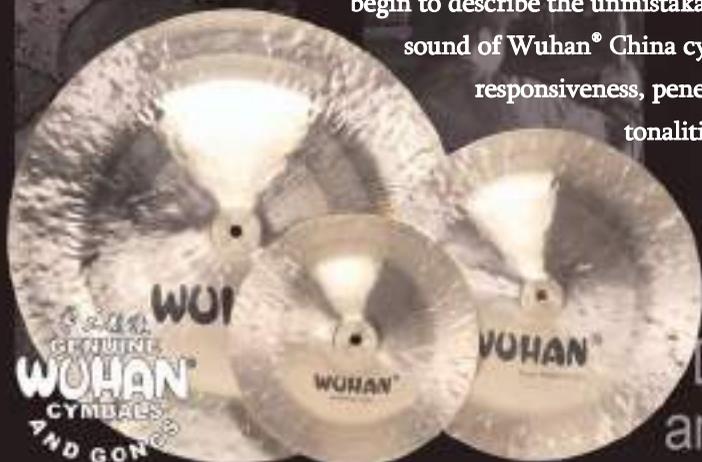
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The new patent pending design was tested and perfected by Terry himself. A more bongo-like collar fits perfectly over the bearing edge without forced tension and stretching, resulting in no dead spots, even when you first put them on. The heads are easier to tune and stay in tune much better. And a special bonus, because of the perfect fit, the heads can last up to twice as long! We think you'll like this new design as much as Terry does.

Designed by Terry Bozzio



ATTACK
drumheads

Mambo #1

Afro-Cuban Coordination For Drumset



by Maria Martinez



The mambo style is derived from the traditional Cuban son and danzon musical styles. Big band leader Perez Prado contributed to the mambo sensation in Mexico City in the 1940s, and then later throughout the United States and the rest of world. Other musicians credited with the development of the mambo style include Arsenio Rodriguez, Bebo Valdes, Orestes Lopez, and Israel Lopez, better known by his nickname, “Cachao.”

The traditional ensemble generally utilizes congas, timbales, guiro, claves, bongo/bell, bass, piano, horns, and vocals. Contemporary drummers have adapted the rhythms played on the traditional percussion instruments to the drumset.

Mambo Lesson

First let me point out that the term “mambo” loosely describes the style we are referring to in this lesson. In Cuban music, the tempo can sometimes distinguish one particular style from another, and the mambo style is generally played at fast tempos. The information in this lesson is based on a hybrid of rhythms from Afro-Cuban styles as applied to the drumset.

Mambo Ostinatos In 3+2 Son Clave

The ostinatos in this lesson contain the cascara pattern played on the ride cymbal, the 3+2 son clave pattern played by a cross-stick on the snare drum, the tumbao figure played on the bass drum, and variations for the left foot on hi-hat. Begin by practicing the first ostinato written below until you’re comfortable with it. If it’s too difficult to coordinate all the parts at once, you can separate the ostinato by playing only with the hands and then adding the feet.

Bell Variations In 3+2 Son Clave

The following patterns are ride cymbal (or mambo bell) variations. Practice the previous mambo ostinatos, and then substitute the following cascara patterns on the ride cymbal. Alternate between the patterns. Play four bars of the mambo ostinato followed by four bars of the ride cymbal variation. Then repeat the ostinato before playing the next ride cymbal variation.

By the way, to play the examples shown above in 2+3 son clave, simply reverse the two bars.

Because there are so many ways to play and interpret Afro-Cuban music, I encourage you to listen to and analyze the traditional and contemporary Cuban music styles. To learn the musical “language” of the Afro-Cuban style and its drumming, familiarize yourself with the feel of the music, the traditional percussion instruments used in the music, and the traditional parts played on those instruments. One of the most informative collections of traditional and contemporary Cuban music is the *Cuba, I Am Time* CD box set on Blue Jackel Entertainment.

Maria Martinez is a drummer/educator and the author of several educational publications, including *Brazilian Coordination For Drumset (book/CD and video)*, *Afro-Cuban Coordination For Drumset (book/CD and video)*, and *The Instant Guide To Drum Grooves (book/CD package)*, all published by Hal Leonard. Maria has worked with such artists as Barry White, Angela Bofill, El Chicano, and Rita Coolidge.





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Sully
Erna
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Linkin Park's Rob Bourdon "Somewhere I Belong"

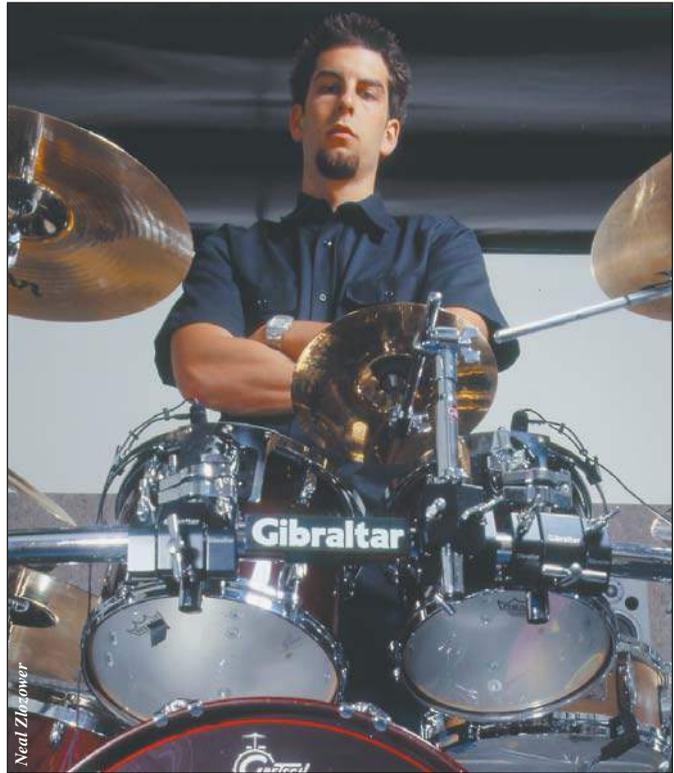
Transcribed by Joe Bergamini

MUSIC KEY

Open	O	C.C.	Splash
H.H.	X	X	X
T.T.			
S.D.			
F.T.			
B.D.			

This single from Linkin Park's *Meteora* disc contrasts a funky, grooving verse with a heavy chorus. Drummer Rob Bourdon pushes the energy and grooves the whole way through. At the beginning of the song, you'll notice a drum loop that reappears throughout the tune. Playing with a loop requires the drummer to really lock in the time. Practice with a metronome or drum machine to develop this skill.

If you're going to play along to this track, be sure to accent all snare notes. And pay close attention to the hi-hat. It's played very loose during the intro and choruses, while in the verse it's played tightly. The verse pattern is a 16th-note funk groove, but the 8th notes are heavily accented. As the chorus approaches, the hi-hat is gradually loosened to build the dynamics. Also watch for the 32nd-note embellishments on the hi-hat.



$\bullet = 78$ Loose, sloppy hi-hats:

(Time starts at loop entrance)

Gradually loosen hats:

f

mf

f

Chokes:

Rob Bourdon

Musical score for Rob Bourdon's 'Blasters' snare wire. The score is written on four staves. The first staff begins with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The second staff contains two first endings, marked '1' and '2'. The third staff continues the rhythmic patterns. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line and repeat signs. A small logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the score area.

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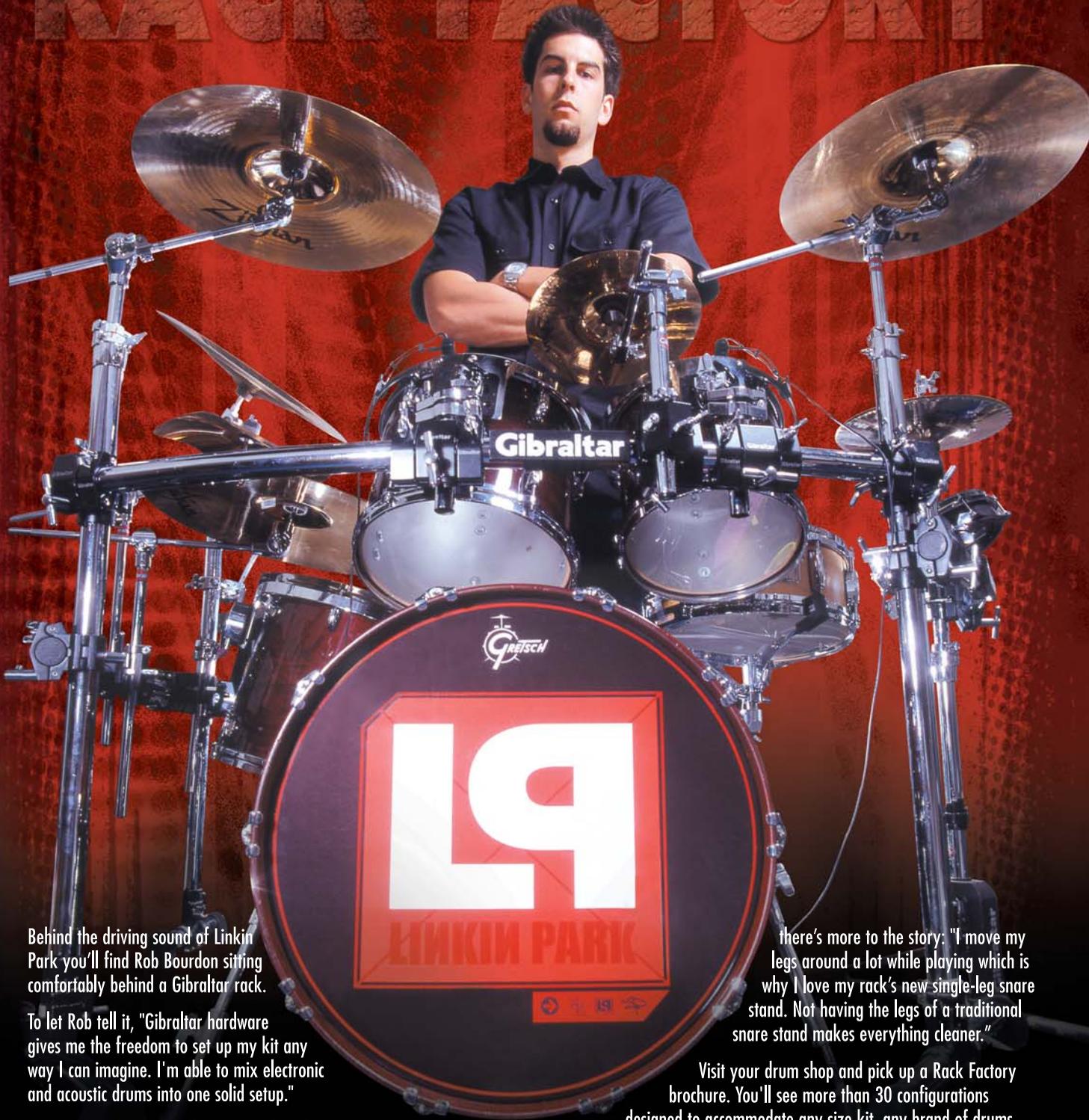


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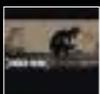
Behind the driving sound of Linkin Park you'll find Rob Bourdon sitting comfortably behind a Gibraltar rack.

To let Rob tell it, "Gibraltar hardware gives me the freedom to set up my kit any way I can imagine. I'm able to mix electronic and acoustic drums into one solid setup."

Having gear that's securely positioned is of prime importance for a drummer who gigs all over the world. But

there's more to the story: "I move my legs around a lot while playing which is why I love my rack's new single-leg snare stand. Not having the legs of a traditional snare stand makes everything cleaner."

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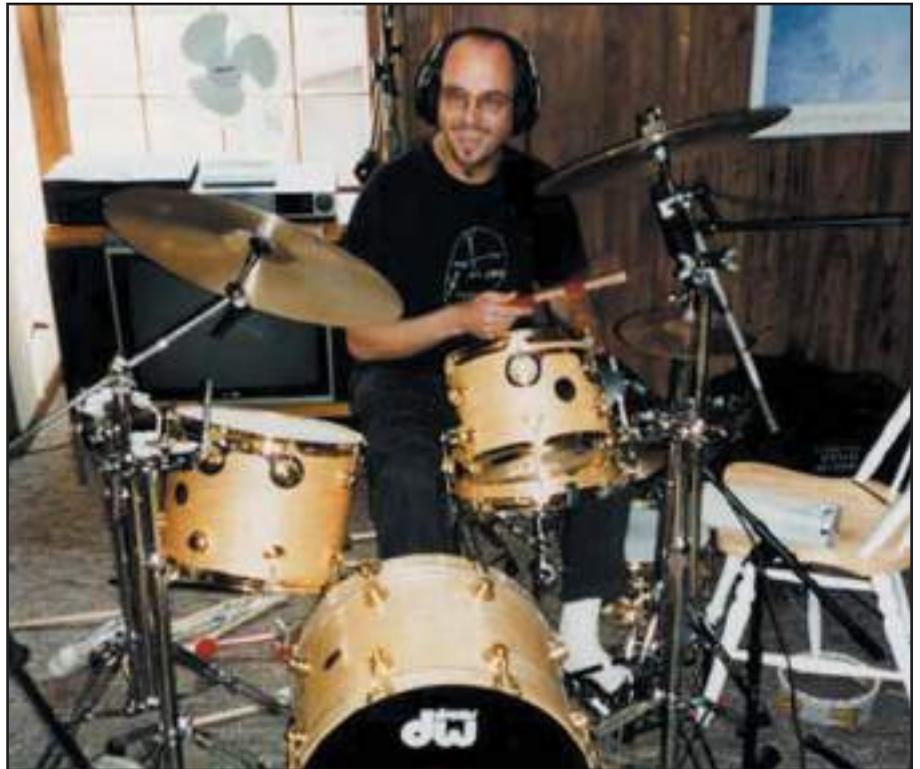
Check out Linkin Park's latest album "Metemora"
Visit Linkin Park on-line at: www.linkinpark.com

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Fundamentals

The Lowest Common Denominator

by Billy Ward



My last article (August '03 *MD*) was about having all sorts of allies. But there's another ally that I didn't mention: Having faith in your fundamental drumming skills. Believe me, this is an *important* ally. My fundamentals are always with me. On my worst day—if I'm tired, extra clumsy, or not "into it"—my fundamentals are still there, helping me through.

The same goes for the feeling of the tension in my feet as they play the pedals. I rely on these fundamentals.

The basics of drumming (such as how to hold the sticks) become *so* important as your drumming career evolves. This is because an improper grip might eventually limit your technique, and perhaps even cause you physical pain and damage to your hands or wrists. This is one reason that having a teacher is so crucial.

When I was teaching actor Tom Everett Scott for the film *That Thing You Do*, I had three weeks to turn him into a drummer. We spent the entire first week (eight hours a day, seven days) on grip and simple motions. This shows how much importance I place in proper stick grip.

Studying with a teacher also enables us to learn how to read music. I realize that rock bands don't usually write

"I believe that if you're a pro, you should be able to perform fundamentally well under any circumstances."

I love my grip and the motions of playing drums. The feeling of the stick in my hand, and the way that feeling changes at different tempos, are dear old friends that I can count on to settle me into the music.

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Contest begins August 1, 2003 and ends October 1, 2003. Contestants must be 18 years or older and residents of the U.S.A. or Canada. Winners will be selected and announced by October 3, 2003. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. DW, House of Blues and Sirius Satellite Radio employees and their families are ineligible. One entry per household. Multiple entries will be disqualified. No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited by law. For a complete copy of the official rules and a list of prizes send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Pick Your Kit" c/o Drum Workshop, 3450 Lunar Ct., Oxnard, CA 93030.

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Concepts

things out, but being able to read allows us to easily see the visual grid of the beats. It shows where the beats intersect with each other.

I really lucked out with Tom, because while he hadn't ever played the drums, he had played trumpet in grade school and still remembered how to read rhythms. So I wrote out each beat of every song for him, and he "got it" through his eyes. Reading music has helped me enormously in my bands and sessions. Even when simply listening to music, I visualize the rhythms and the number of measures in each section.

Shifting over to a somewhat different subject, I get many emails asking what was the turning point of my career. In my opinion, the real world isn't like the movies, where characters get "discovered" and their entire careers change for the better. I mistakenly thought when I worked with Robbie Robertson that my professional life would immediately become more successful, that it would—Bam!—"kick up a notch." I thought I now knew the "secret handshake." But when my gigs didn't significantly improve, I was disappointed.

Gary Chang, a wonderful film composer, set me straight: "Hey, Billy, it's not the top number of the fraction that you should watch for success. It's the bottom one—the lowest common denominator." I think Gary was suggesting to not measure my success by that one special gig, but rather by the *worst* ones. For instance, it was a big marker for me when I realized that I didn't have to play in wedding bands anymore for income. Sometimes I even get to choose between two different gigs. I get to pick the one I'm more interested in—what a luxury!

When you look at your own career, see if this is the case for you. Maybe you're still slugging it out with gigs that don't even pay for transportation. But perhaps you can take heart in the fact that you're playing with good musicians—whereas a year before, you were dying to get in *any* band with some decent players.

Another question that I'm frequently asked is, "Should I move to a big city to get bigger gigs?" If you seek bigger and better work, you should consider moving to where the bigger gigs and the better musicians live. But please understand that

moving to the big city and giving up being the big fish in the small pond can be quite a sacrifice.

The competition in larger cities like New York, Nashville, LA, and London is fierce. And on arrival, you might suffer greatly in terms of how much you get to make a living playing music. Simply making ends meet can be hard. But hopefully you'll learn by listening to great musicians. In time, things will improve automatically if you're working hard and are worthy. On the other hand, even in your current, smaller area, if you're in a band that you truly believe in, maybe you should stay with it. It might be worth it. I don't mean "worth it" income-wise, I mean in terms of education. Things that we learn are the fundamentals that go with us no matter *where* we are.

I had the honor of performing a clinic at last year's Percussive Arts Society convention in Columbus, Ohio. At one point I was sharing a private discussion with drummers Hilary Jones and Gary Novak. We were talking about how odd it is that we usually don't play as well as we know we can at these important, big-audience clinic events. (I was relieved to hear that it wasn't only me this happens to.) But my solution to this predicament of playing badly when under stress is to trust my fundamentals.

I judge my own playing by again looking at the "common denominator." That gig where everything went perfectly doesn't mean as much to me as the one where I overcame many obstacles. I believe that if you're a pro, you should be able to perform fundamentally well under *any* circumstances. For me, this relieves the nervousness or anxiety that I might otherwise have before playing.

One last thought about fundamentals: Physical and emotional fundamentals (even our fundamental aesthetics) will not only help us in our drumming. They'll carry us through our lives.

Billy Ward is a successful session and touring drummer who has worked with Carly Simon, Robbie Robertson, Richard Marx, Ace Frehley, John Patitucci, and Bill Champlin. He's currently a member of Joan Osborne's band. Billy can be reached at his Web site, www.billyward.com.



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What Makes A Drummer Good?

by Robert E. Beasley

A while ago, a contributor to forum.drumcenter.com asked this question: “In your opinion, what makes a drummer *good*?” Interestingly, the many responses focused much more on fundamental issues and character traits than on things like chops, rudimental facility, album credits, band affiliations, and status. In this article, I’d like to examine some of the answers proposed by our forum members. These ideas can be used to help anyone become a good drum-

mer—even if he or she is not, or does not aspire to be, a full-time professional musician.

Time

First of all, a good drummer possesses a good sense of time. One forum member put it this way: “[A good drummer is] one who keeps solid, steady time that other bandmembers can rely upon.” In the March 2001 issue of *MD*, John Patitucci, one of today’s most respected bassists, maintains that a drummer’s time feel is everything. He believes that what makes the great drummers of our time so good is that they have great internal clocks.

The good news is this: Good time can be developed. Practicing with a metronome or along with professionally produced CDs is a good way to become a solid and reliable timekeeper.

Appropriateness

A good drummer plays for the song. That is, he or she can “feel” the music in order to generate a part that fits. Another forum member used the phrases “big ears” and “being versatile.” In other words, we should listen carefully to what the music calls for, and then create an appropriate part—one that enhances the music by its contribution.

Restraint

One of our forum members had this to say about “chops”: “Just because a car can do 180 mph doesn’t mean that it should all the time.” I remember going to a friend’s gig, and feeling like the whole band sounded amateurish because the drum-

Being a good drummer is not just about great chops and star status. It goes much deeper than that.



mer placed a fill at the end of every four bars. He simply overplayed.

During an interview a few years back, Keith Richards talked about how the white space on an artist's canvas was as important to a painting as his brush strokes were. "In the same way," he said, "what we don't play is as important as what we do."

Self-Awareness

Good drummers know their limitations, and they play within their abilities. You don't have to know everything (or even a lot) to be a good drummer. But you should be clear about what you do and don't know. In the March 2001 issue of *MD*, Dave Weckl mentioned that there are things he is uncomfortable with—or cannot do at all—on the drumset. So he doesn't attempt those things during a performance. He plays what is within his ability at the time, and then works on the other stuff during practice. Play what you *can* play, and play it well.

Dynamics

A good drummer possesses a sense of dynamics. He or she knows when to play softly and when to play with more power. The tasteful and artistic use of dynamics can make the difference between a mediocre-sounding band and a good one. On a New Year's Eve special, I watched Creed perform "Higher" on the top of a Las Vegas hotel. Their ability to vary the dynamics of that song from medium-soft and flowing to loud and edgy made the song artistically pleasing. Experiment with dynamics, and encourage your band to do the same.

Respect

Good drummers respect their musical peers. During rehearsal, they don't practice when other bandmembers are tuning their instruments or discussing a vocal arrangement. During a gig, they respect the bandmembers' solo breaks. One forum member was very critical of one of drumming's most famous superstars, citing his bombastic style. "Playing all over someone's sax or trumpet solo is disrespectful and distasteful," was his comment. Be sensitive to your bandmembers'

"moments in the sun."

Preparation

Few things are more frustrating than when a bandmember doesn't practice before coming to rehearsal, and instead tries to learn his or her part on everyone else's time. Not only does this contribute to an inefficient rehearsal, it makes everyone else in the band question that person's dedication and desire to improve. Practice at home, and come to rehearsals prepared.

Punctuality

A good drummer arrives on time for rehearsals, gigs, and other engagements. I was once in a band with a guy who was frequently late to gigs. Not only did I have my drums to set up and mike, I usually got stuck with setting up his stuff, too. This, coupled with the anxiety that he might not be there at showtime, did a wonderful job of wearing me out before the show.

Being Straight

Finally, a good drummer is, as one forum member put it, "together—personally speaking." We owe it to our bands, to the people who employ us, and to ourselves to have our heads on straight (especially in terms of drugs and alcohol), so that we can be the best musicians we can be and produce the best music possible.

There are thousands of very good drummers in the world who will never grace the pages of a magazine like this one. Instead, like most of us, they look forward to their weekly or monthly gig, while going about their regular lives and doing their regular jobs. Being a good drummer is not just about great chops and star status. It goes much deeper than that. By following some of the tips outlined in this article, you too can become a good drummer in your own little corner of the world.

Robert E. Beasley is a professor of computer science at Franklin College of Indiana. Over the past twenty years he has drummed in everything from college athletic and symphonic bands to rock and blues bands.



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Insurance "In The Pocket"

Part 1: Considering Your Coverage

by Bruce Hicks

Your drumset is properly set up, tuned, and glimmering under the cool lighting of your in-home studio, looking like any minute it'll rip off a flourish and ease into a seamless beat. When you take it out on a gig, you can pack and unpack everything blindfolded. You can move into and out of a club, gym, or private residence without so much as brushing against a doorjamb. You know the songs, you feel loose, and you have the chops...everything is under control.

Hold on! There may be a part of your drumming world that's a little behind the count.

How often do you think of insurance policies as you count off? Do you spend any time considering the chances of loss

that are related to your passionate hobby? If not, you might want to hold onto your sticks, because they may be all you have left if something serious happens to your drums.

Like what? Well, suppose you're rear-ended while driving to a jam session. You're fine, but your drumset is now cordwood. Or suppose there's a short circuit in the wiring of your soundproofed practice room, and the fire reduces your kit to maple ash. Of course, insurance may ease the blow. But do you *know* that—or have you just assumed that things would be fine? Your actual coverage—or lack of it—might come as a shock.

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What A Policy Is...And Isn't

Let's assume that you are, in fact, insured. You have a homeowners policy and an auto policy. Okay, now comes the tough part: You're going to have to actually look at your policies. So go pull them out.

A typical homeowners (HO) policy has different coverage sections (or parts). Coverage is structured to protect against loss to tangible items (property) and against the legal consequences of your actions or activities (liability). Your policy may vary, but most have the following parts:

- A. dwelling
- B. other structures (separate garage, utility sheds, barns, etc.)
- C. personal property (drums and equipment fall under this part)
- D. loss of use
- E. liability
- F. medical payments

You have to be concerned with every part because of their impact on a loss involving your drums or your drumming.

Your home's insured value (coverage limit) controls the amount of basic coverage available for your drums. This is because the limits for parts B, C, and D are percentages (10%, 50%, and 20% respectively) of part A. For instance, if your home is insured for \$150,000, you normally would have \$15,000 for other structures, \$75,000 for personal property, and \$30,000 for loss of use.

While in many cases this automatic coverage is enough, it's based on the assumption that no special circumstances exist. This assumption, while making perfect sense for the insurance industry, can be a drummer's nightmare. A serious loss to your home and possessions can easily use up your protection. Look at your policy and think. What will be left for your drums and equipment after you've had to replace washers, PCs, stereos, dryers, refrigerators, beds, dining sets, sofas, chairs, rugs, clothing, bikes, sports equipment, DVDs, TVs, drapes, and so on? Your drumkit could be a loser (especially if your spouse gives it a low priority).



Property Issues

If you haven't bought any special coverage for your drums, your first priority is to make sure that your home is covered at its full replacement value. The full value for the home will increase the automatic limits available for your other property, including your drums. For example, if you find out that you need to add \$20,000 more coverage to properly protect your home, that means your personal property (including your drums) will have another \$10,000 (50% of \$20,000) available.

The available coverage for your drums and equipment may be fine as long as there are no special circumstances. In other words, you're probably all set if:

1. you own newer drums and equipment,
2. your property has a modest value (say \$1,500 or less),
3. you only use the drums in your home, and
4. the drums are never used for "business."

If your situation falls outside of this simple setting, you should take a closer look at your coverage. Let's consider the four points just mentioned.

1. Do you own a newer set? If so, then it can be replaced rather easily. If

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Insurance

you read your policy, you'll discover that a company has several options for taking care of a loss. They can pay you to replace the drums, repair the drums, or find a comparable replacement themselves, whichever is the cheapest option for them. These options may be fine for a newer set, but would you be happy if your vintage, professional-level drumset were replaced by a new beginner's model? How about if your stolen lacquered solid-shell maple snare were replaced with a wrapped-finish plywood student snare?

2. Modestly valued equipment? Again, there's not a problem if your drums don't represent a huge financial investment. However, if your set passes much beyond a mid-range value, replacement becomes complicated if there's a loss that involves a lot of your personal property. If there's serious damage to a

significant amount of other personal property, you'll have to prioritize what will be replaced. If your coverage limit is

days after a jam, or at your kids' school for use in their spring musical).

Other circumstances may affect coverage. If your drums are usually kept at a secondary or seasonal home, less coverage is available because most policies severely reduce coverage for property at other residences you own. Generally, instead of having 50% of your home's limit available, only 10% applies to property that belongs to another residence that you own.

If your drums are damaged while being transported in a car, there could be a problem. Coverage for homeowner property in a car is usually covered the same way as property in the home. Drums in a car that are stolen or burned in a fire...fine. Drums destroyed in an intersection collision is a headache, because most policies assume that property in a home is not endangered by an SUV.

Suppose a fire in your practice room reduces your kit to maple ash. Your actual coverage—or lack of it—might come as a shock.

inadequate, your drum equipment may be too far back in line to benefit from an insurer's settlement check.

3. Used outside your home? This reference to "home" means your residence (including an attached garage) or any related building that shares the same legal address as your home, such as a utility shed or detached garage. You still may be okay if your drums are located elsewhere. For instance, there's no problem with equipment at a storage facility or at a different, temporary location (such as a drumset left at a friend's house for a few

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Insurance

Oops, there's another item that hasn't been mentioned. Have you altered your home to accommodate the drums? If you've spent some significant dollars in soundproofing a room or basement area, you should make sure that your residence limits account for the increased value of the alterations. Be especially careful if you've transformed or built another building on your property to use for your drums. Some insurance companies require you to specifically list such a building on your policy, and—depending on circumstances—charge you more for covering it.

4. Is your drumming a "business"? This is a *big* question. Nothing complicates a drummer's insurance life more than playing for pay. Don't make assumptions here. Insurance companies go through great lengths to make sure that they limit their vulnerability to business exposures. You must keep in mind that it is the policy that defines the term. Scour your policy and find every men-

tion of the word "business," starting with the definition. The definition controls exactly what is covered, which is usually precious little.

Most policies consider "business" to mean any activity that is connected to a financial benefit. One standard policy (used by *many* different companies) classifies any activity that results in \$2,000 annual compensation as a business. The same policy can stretch back to the twelve months prior to the beginning date of your policy to see if the activity qualifies. Therefore, income from gigs, band competition prize money, drum lesson fees, and even profit from drum sales and trades can make you a business drummer.

When this happens, the amount of coverage provided by your policy becomes severely limited. Typically you may have well under \$2,000 of coverage available—and even less if your drums are lost or damaged while they're away from your home. In that case, perhaps as little as

\$1,000 is available. Your life is also complicated when you use electronic drums. You may face some additional coverage hurdles if your insurer considers them to be electronic equipment rather than drums.

So far we've only considered coverage for your drums and equipment in case of loss or damage. But what about coverage for *you*, in relation to your activities as a drummer? If you don't think drumming is all that risky, think again. And then hold that thought, because that's where we'll pick up in Part 2 of this series. And then we'll discuss what you can do to improve your insurance coverage and keep yourself protected. See you next time!

Bruce Hicks has been in the insurance industry since 1981, and is a freelance writer on consumer and technical insurance issues. Bruce has also been a drummer since the age of eleven. He currently accompanies his church choir, plays at community events, and instructs sev-



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Drumming For God

Playing In A Church Band

by Philip J. Hendrickson

At 9:30 on a Sunday morning, most clubbing drummers are still asleep. A church drummer, however, is already pouring his soul into the skins, carefully selecting just the right emotion to encourage hundreds of singers to rejoice, mourn, or contemplate. Overplay and you disrupt the worship setting. Underplay and you might as well still be asleep.

Every town has a church. More and more churches now feature contemporary worship services with live bands. For drummers, the church can provide a good opportunity to gain playing experience. And drumming for God presents some interesting challenges and rewards.

We perform in a spacious sanctuary with stained-glass windows, beautiful woodwork, and fine gold and brass appointments. Few club gigs offer that kind of setting.

I'm the regular drummer for a traditional Protestant church in the Midwest. Years ago, I didn't give drumming in church a second thought. I equated church music with the pipe organ and an occasional brass ensemble. When I took up the drums in grade school, our church music director invited me to play drumset with the brass and organ on Easter Sunday. This ill-conceived event convinced me that Bach organ suites had no need for a drummer, and that the church was no place for my sticks. I turned my musical attention to more typical pursuits of rock, jazz, and blues.

Fifteen years later, I started playing in church at a monthly folk music service. But it still felt uncomfortable. A few more years passed. Different town, same traditional church. Now every week our large

congregation offers contemporary music—songs written in the past few years instead of centuries ago. Church drumming has now become a steady gig for me.

What It's About

Our congregation offers five weekly services, each in a different musical style. Our band usually plays the 9:30 and 11:00 A.M. Sunday services. (The sleepy attendees of the traditional 8:00 A.M. service have been nicknamed "deer in the headlights" for their lack of response.) The 9:30 service blends traditional and contemporary music in a setting called the liturgy. Liturgy consists of songs, readings, and short spoken and music responses, all surrounding a message from the preacher. The challenge for musicians is to stay focused while playing short bits of music between speaking parts. With just a head bob the band jumps in, plays four or eight measures, and stops. This kind of start-and-stop playing lacks the continuity and flow that gives feeling to a musical performance. In the liturgical service, even complete songs can seem isolated and stiff due to the disjointed musical setting.

A different approach is required for the 11:00 contemporary praise service. We begin with a band-only number, telling people that the time has come to find a seat. After a short introduction, we launch into a medley of three or four consecutive songs, on which the congregation joins in. Musical flow is crucial, and segues between the songs keep the flow intact.

Here's a tip for all drummers. You can develop the ability to play segues by practicing with a radio. As the DJ fades one song into another, continue playing cymbal swells, buzz rolls, and wind chimes to provide a smooth transition over changes in key, tempo, or time signature.

After the opening medley and a pause

for prayer, the service continues with a song, a Bible reading, and then another song. Less stop-and-go than the liturgy, this is similar to being on stage with a singer who gives lengthy song introductions. Next comes the sermon, which can completely dissolve the musical flow, depending on the pastor's style of delivery. This twenty-minute message is the focal point of the service and is worth our attention. After all, there are a few things in life more important than drumming. The hour-long service concludes with

more songs and spoken parts.

What It Takes

The role of a worship band is to coordinate the singing of several hundred people, so the drummer must remain in the groove. This is no time to show off with a polyrhythmic double-bass pattern or twirling sticks. The songs we play are seldom complicated. And the congregation, different from a concert audience, expects to sing along a majority of the time.

Our music changes every week, and

rehearsing two services would require a lot of time. To shorten rehearsals, our worship leader selects familiar songs for the 9:30 service. Our weekly band rehearsal is spent only on material for the 11:00 service—especially any new songs or arrangements. (See the sidebar on my notation shorthand.) That's another reason my playing has to be in the pocket. If I change my part, the other musicians may think I've forgotten the arrangement and pull me back. Rarely do we go someplace new with a familiar piece.

Shorthand Notation A Quick Code For Drum Parts

Detailed drum charts are seldom available for the music we play. In addition, we may only rehearse a song once or twice and not see it again until our performance. Since I'm constantly creating drum parts on the fly, I've developed a shorthand system to remember them. To avoid paging through music while playing, I make notes on a copy of the lyric sheet printed for the congregation. At the top of each piece I note the basic style, such as gospel, swing, calypso, or jazz waltz. Using the initials "V" for verse, "C" for chorus, "B" for bridge, and "T" for turnaround, I outline each song's structure. VCVCT2 translates into verse, chorus, verse, chorus, chorus, and two turnarounds. (A turnaround is a repeat of the last phrase of the lyric.)

Next to each lyric section, I note the basic drum pattern using

more initials: "H" for hi-hat, "R" for ride, "S" for snare drum, "B" for bass drum, "T" for tom-tom, and "X" for cross-stick on snare drum. I was taught to count 16th notes "One, e, &, ah," which I have shortened to "1e+a." A straight ride pattern of quarter or 8th notes is written as a 4 or 8 with a circle around it. The notation H@X2S4B13+ translates into a pattern of straight 8th notes on the hi-hat, cross-stick on 2, snare drum on 4, and bass drum played on 1, 3, and the "&" of 3.

This is easier and faster than scratching out staff lines and drawing notes. My shorthand takes less room on the page, is easy to read, and helps me to quickly recall the drum parts I made up during rehearsal.



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Drumming For God

Speaking of someplace new, the designers of our building did not adequately plan for the space needs of a worship band. We removed the front row of seating from the choir loft to provide floor space for our six musicians and two to five vocalists. This area is seven feet deep by thirty feet wide, and contains an organ console, a drumset, guitar and bass amps, a concert grand piano, and an electronic keyboard. The singers navigate around monitors, amps, guitar stands, and music stands. It's a good thing we're all friends, because closeness is mandatory.

The church drumming experience is also a little different because the worship leader is focused on the flow of the service, not the individual parts. Our leader seldom provides input to my drum parts, save for simple instructions like "play more," "quiet here," or "faster." His strength is writing and selecting the songs. He expects the band to bring the songs to life, and we do.

What It Offers

Is playing unchallenging, start-and-stop music in a cramped space on Sunday

mornings really worth it? The pay varies widely between churches. At our church, only the worship leader is paid. The band consists entirely of volunteers. So why donate my time?

First and foremost is the opportunity to use my musical talents for a cause in which I believe. Our band's music conveys a message of the hope God offers to all people. Since the bandmembers consider this the most important thing in life, we rehearse and perform with dedication. Also, the band has a wonderful chemistry that's better than that of any other group I've played with. Playing in a group in which every member knows they're doing the right thing for the right reasons is a feeling beyond description.

Another benefit is the high value our listeners place on our performance. They literally contribute to our success. Last year, two members of our congregation became aware of the need to upgrade our drum equipment. They donated a complete set of high-end, professional drums and cymbals. It's fun to use great gear, especially when you don't have to pay for it!

The playing conditions are also quite nice—limited space notwithstanding. Instead of a dark, smoky room, we perform in a spacious sanctuary with stained-glass windows, beautiful woodwork, and fine gold and brass appointments. Few club gigs offer that kind of setting. And while limited rehearsal time may challenge our musicianship, it also leaves us more time with our families. That's a real bonus, since we all work full-time jobs.

Though our band does not seek personal glory, playing in church *can* lead to other work. Besides playing in front of five hundred to a thousand worshippers each Sunday, we've recorded an original CD, provided two nights of music for an international church gathering of seventy-five hundred, and are making plans to record another CD, this time with our congregation's sixty-voice choir.

Church drumming may not be the quick path to fame and fortune. But any chance to play is an opportunity to improve your skills and stay sharp. And if playing music is a spiritual experience for you, drumming for God could be the ultimate thrill!



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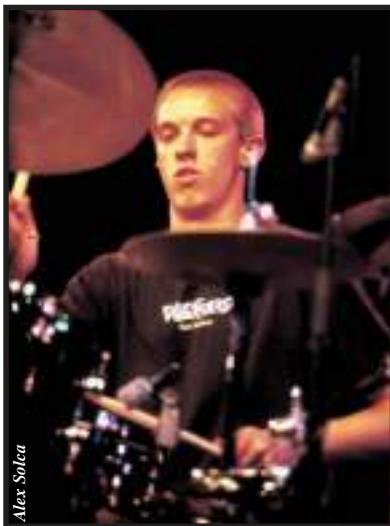
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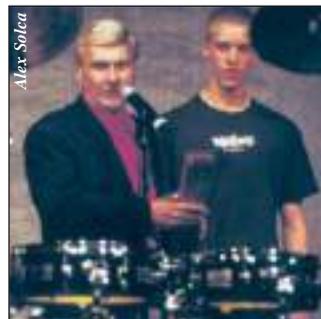
Sparks, Nevada's Mike Orris Jr. is now a ripe old eighteen years of age. But he was seventeen when he entered *MD's* Undiscovered Drummer Contest—and won in the under-eighteen division. Mike's win is all the more remarkable, considering that, in his words, "I didn't really get serious with drumming until about five years ago, when I was in the eighth grade. Since then I've been playing on a regular basis."

Apparently Mike did a lot of playing in those five years, because his impressive

technical skill and performance abilities earned him not only the contest title, but also the opening spot at this year's Festival Weekend.

Mike's current projects involve two bands—Existence (www.existenceband.com) and Eightimesover (www.eightimesover.cjb.net). He wrote and recorded all of the instruments (drums, guitars, and bass) on the upcoming full-length Eightimesover album. The lyrics were written and recorded by Mike's brother (and vocalist for Existence), Jake Norris.

The equipment Mike plays currently includes DW drums, hardware, and pedals, Sabian cymbals, Vater Fatback 3A sticks, and Remo heads. His goals for the future are to continue to play and record with both of his existing projects. "A spot in a big-name touring act would be nice as well," he adds. "I definitely want to continue to strive to be the best player I can be, and to have as much fun as I can in the process."

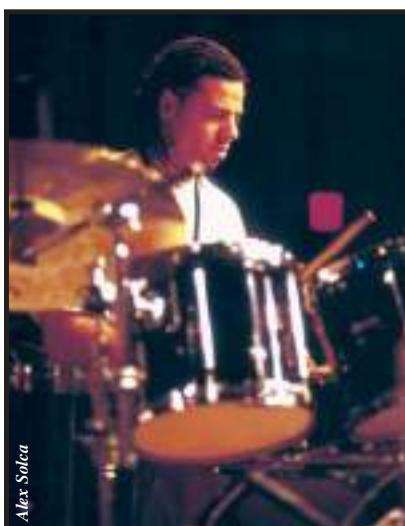


MD editor/publisher Ron Spagnardi presented Mike Orris and Lou Santiago with their Undiscovered Drummer Contest trophies following their performances at MD's Festival Weekend. The trophies consisted of a pair of drumsticks laser-engraved with each drummer's name and contest category, contained in a presentation box engraved with the name and date of the contest. The trophies were custom-created for the occasion by Timbyrwood & Laser. Mike and Louis were also awarded cash prizes, along with MD merchandise and subscriptions.

Modern Drummer's 2003 Undiscovered Drummer Contest drew hundreds of entrants—many of whom displayed outstanding abilities. In addition to the two winners, drummers worthy of honorable mention include **David Cifelli** (Stockton, New Jersey) and **Justin LeDuc** (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) in the under-eighteen division, and **Brian Dillon** (Denver, Colorado) and **Issah Contractor** (Richmond, BC, Canada) in the over-eighteen division.

Louis Santiago Jr.

It's hard to believe that Louis Santiago Jr. has been playing drums for only five years. Anyone who witnessed his absolutely riveting performance at *MD's* 2003 Festival Weekend would swear that Louis has to be a veteran player. The poise, technique, and musical creativity that earned him *Modern Drummer's* Undiscovered Drummer Contest win in the over-eighteen division were abundantly displayed.



After buying his first drumset on his eighteenth birthday, Louis practiced eight hours every day but Sunday. At nineteen he enlisted in the navy, specifically to earn tuition money to attend Drummers Collective in New York City. A four-year hitch became six, five of which were spent essentially off the drums. When Louis eventually did get back on a drumset, he again practiced daily for hours. After several months, he began to enter local music store competitions—never placing below second. In 2001 he was a regional finalist in the Guitar Center Drum-Off, ultimately placing seventh nationally.

After leaving the navy, Louis pursued his dream of becoming a successful musician. He joined a hard funk/rock band signed to an independent label—but the band lasted only five months. Louis's marriage ended at the same time, leaving him in an emotional vacuum. "I put my focus on God and my drumming," he says.

Louis is now the drummer and assistant music director at Calvary Spanish Pentecostal Church Of God in New York. He freelances with R&B hip-hop artist Nicee "D," saxophonist Eli Correa, All In Christ (an R&B Latin jazz band), and Ezekiel Ch 2 (a contemporary gospel band). But his main focus is school. He's attending The Collective, following a year's worth of paperwork getting the school accepted for funding by the Veterans Administration. In the meantime, his current abilities have earned him endorsements with Sonor drums, Evans heads, Vic Firth drumsticks, Zildjian cymbals, and C*shirtz cymbal wear. His Web site is www.lousantiagojr.com.

As for a goal, Louis says that his is "To become a better person and drummer than I was yesterday. I sincerely believe that music both inspires and speaks to people. I pray that my drumming does the same."

If you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for or credited.) The bio sketch should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material **cannot** be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.



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There's no doubt about it, Aerosmith and drummer Joey Kramer are rock 'n' roll legends. Not many bands have achieved what Aerosmith has in the thirty-some-odd years of their career. And one of the greatest things about this band is, they show no signs of slowing down. This June Joey was honored in his hometown with The Bronx Walk Of Fame Award, an honor the New York native tells us he holds very close to his heart.

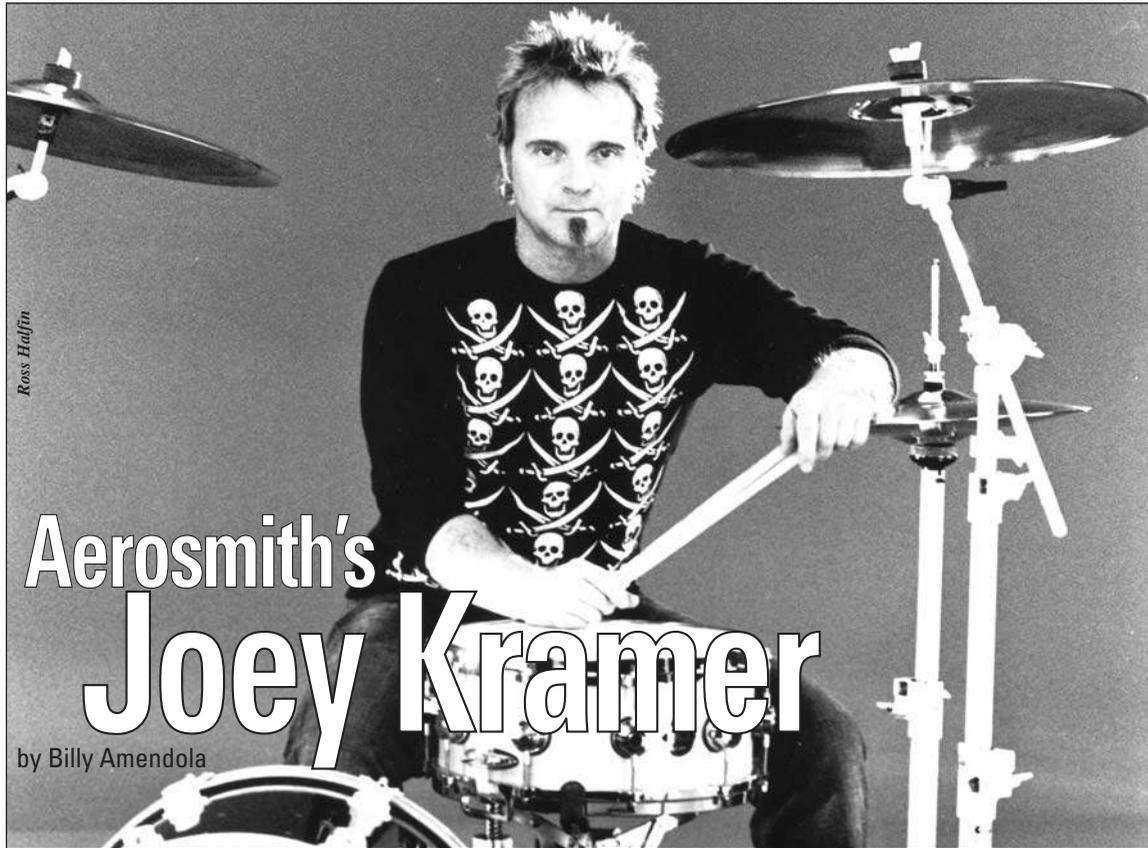
We recently spoke to Joey as Aerosmith was in the midst of recording their new album, which Joey says includes versions of blues songs from the '30s and '40s, including tunes popularized by Willie Dixon, Aretha Franklin, and Van Morrison's '60s band, Them. "There are also some originals," Joey explains. "It's a really nice cross-section. And it's been great working with [producer] Jack Douglas again.

"Over the years we've gotten feedback from fans and

from our record company to do an album like we used to do, like *Toys In The Attic* and *Rocks*," Joey adds. "So we're cutting all the tracks live in the studio. It's been a lot of fun to do it that way—and it shows in

the tracks. It's really bringing us back to our roots. That's what this band is all about."

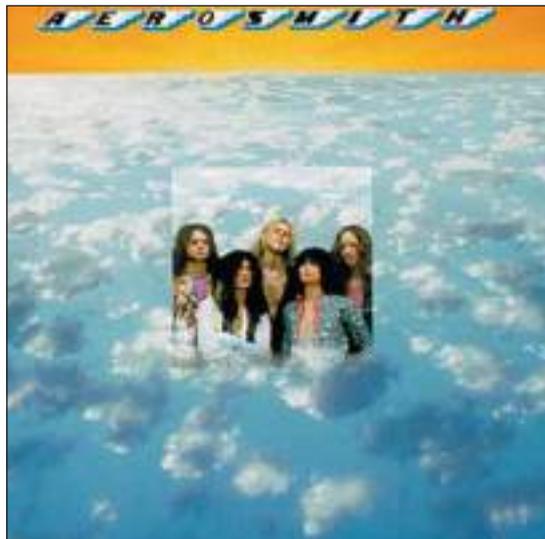
Well, while we're on the subject, let's get Joey's take on some of those classic Aerosmith albums.



Aerosmith (1973)

("Dream On," "Mama Kin")

I was twenty-two years old, and it was the first time I was in the studio to record. We rehearsed those songs for a couple of



years while we were putting them together, so by the time we got to record them, we were as ready as we were going to be. It was all recorded live in the studio, with mic's in front of the drums and the amps, and we just went for it. We recorded it in a little studio in Boston called Intermedia Sound. I think it took us all of three weeks to do it.

Toys In The Attic (1975)

("Walk This Way," "Sweet Emotion")

Toys In The Attic was our second record with producer Jack Douglas, and Jack became like the sixth member of the band. There are funny stories I could tell you about this album, but it's nothing you want to put in the magazine. [laughs] We had such a good time. We did so much joking around, I

can remember literally being on my back on the floor, laughing. Jack and engineer Jay Messina were big into practical jokes.



We recorded a lot of this stuff without vocals. Steven would go in later. Nowadays you wouldn't think of doing it that way. I would do things in certain places where it would give Steven a place to vocally "hang his hat." On our last record, *Just Push Play*, we did the drums last, so the vocals were already on there. That was a lot more fun for me, because Steven gave me the places to hang *my* hat. Before, no one was cued into the fact that the drummer would be affected by the vocals. It was like, "Just give me the drum beat and we'll play the song to it."

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Rocks (1976)

("Back In The Saddle," "Last Child")



Rocks is one of my all-time favorite records. I'm still pretty happy with the playing and the songwriting. We parked the Record Plant truck right inside a warehouse, and we played in another room. Everything was live, and we recorded the drums in a big gigantic room where we used to rehearse, which had a big set of double doors. When the doors were closed we got one sound, when they were open we got an even bigger room sound because we had mic's out in the room behind it. And Jack built a tunnel for the bass drum.

Permanent Vacation (1987)

("Rag Doll," "Dude Looks Like A Lady")

That was our "comeback" record. There were some good songs on there—and some that weren't so good. [laughs] But it was the first time I was really happy with the drum sound; they were big and present in the mix. Previously, it wasn't so much Jack's fault as it was the sound of the times. *Permanent Vacation* was the

first time we did a record where the producer—Bruce Fairbairn, in this case—was really into "the big drum sound." Bruce was very much a get-down-to-business guy. That was a crucial time in our careers, because we were all in the midst of getting sober. It was kind of a strange time, too, because some of us



had gotten sober, some of us hadn't yet, and one of us was on the way there.

Pump (1989)

("Janie's Got A Gun," "Love In An Elevator")

Pump was another record with Bruce Fairbairn, and that's also one of my favorites, if not my absolute favorite. It sounds a little "wet" today. But I think the songwriting and the playing were really good, and we had a fair amount of fun doing that. We all moved up to Vancouver, as we had for *Permanent Vacation*,



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because that's where Bruce worked, at Little Mountain. A lot of hard work went into that record. It was really an accomplishment.

Get A Grip (1993)

("Livin' On The Edge," "Cryin'," "Crazy")



Get A Grip was also with Bruce. I remember that a lot of the songs on that record came very naturally. Certain songs are a labor of love. But I

remember the first time I heard "Eat The Rich"; I couldn't wait to get behind it. And there were a lot of songs like that on the album. I remember spending a lot of time in my hotel room schooling those songs, and then going into the studio and just blasting them out.

Nine Lives (1997) ("Pink")

Nine Lives was very difficult for me because during pre-production I had a breakdown and went into treatment. When I came out, I wasn't really ready to do the record. They went in and did it anyway, and

we had a problem with management and this and that, and Steve Ferrone had done tracks and they wanted me to come

back and just replace his stuff...it was just...it wasn't working. It was a very strange time. Then we were out on the road touring behind that record, and I had the fire in my car. I was on a roll there for a while where stuff just *wasn't* going my way.

Just Push Play (2001)

On *Just Push Play* Joe and Steven were writing with producer Marti Frederiksen. Marti is a very prolific guy who writes songs, sings, plays bass, drums, and guitar, and runs ProTools. So as they were writing songs, Steven would put his vocal down and Joe would put his guitar down and Marti would put a drum track down. So even though it was a scratch drum track, they would have the basis of what they wanted. I'd come in and mostly just put my stink on what it was that was on there to begin with, and I'd change things around here and there. I actually learned a lot from



Marti, because he plays with a very different style from me. I'd learn what he did and then dissect it and put it back together with a different feel. Had I been closed-minded about this method, the album would have gone in a different direction.

It's interesting, because just this morning someone asked me, "Do you still learn from people?" And I said, "Absolutely!" I'll listen to the new guys, like Tré Cool from Green Day, and Adrian Young from No Doubt. Now, learning from Marti was a difficult thing for me at first. But I've been able to incorporate a lot of the stuff I learned from him. And because he's a bass player and guitar player and songwriter, he has a much fuller perspective. I have tremendous respect for him.



For more information about Aerosmith, please visit www.aerosmith.com or their official fan club at www.aeroforceone.com.



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"The first time I put the D6 in our drummer's (Rickie Paton) kick drum was in sound check at one of our gigs. We didn't even get through the first 2 bars when he asked what I did to the kick drum sound. He said it was missing the whole stage and that he could really feel the improved low end. The D6 is now part of our sound."

*Paul Middleton,
Front of House, Bonnie Raitt*

"Love the D6-sounds so natural and does not color the sound at all. It literally took me 2 minutes on the first day of tour to get Matt Cameron's kick drum sound and I have not messed with it since."

*Karrie Keyes, Monitor Engineer
Pearl Jam*

"In my 18 years of doing this, I have never received more compliments on my kick drum sound than I do now. I only know with three things: two pieces of Hinky English outdoor gear and an Audix D6!"

*Chris "Sully" Sullivan,
Front of House, Javi Wassenaar*

"I like the fact that the D6 has all the bass and can handle the SPL of large, low frequency drums, but still allows the drum to sound the same as it does acoustically. At Blue Men Group, we use many drums with frequency ranges that go even lower than average kick drums...the D6 does a great job of reproducing them accurately."

*Ross Humphrey,
Sound Supervisor
Blue Men Productions*

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Slingerland Jet Outfit

by Harry Cangany

Normally this column focuses on a vintage snare drum. But this time I'm inviting you to hop on our time machine and go back to 1969, when the Slingerland craftsmen in Niles, Illinois built the drumkit featured here.

O-Matics were made of aluminum, like the one on this set. Later they were die-cast and chromed.

Ad copy for the Jet drumkit read, "The new Jet Outfit originated in California and is becoming very popular. The chrome

popularized by Gene Krupa. Also, back in the 1950s, Slingerland offered a Combo set with an 18x20 bass/tom and a matching 4x13 snare. That bass drum had a wooden hoop on one side and a metal hoop on the other.

The Slingerland pedal in the late '60s was the Tempo King. The Snap-On version mentioned here had a special clamp that attached to a metal tongue that was bolted to the metal hoop on the drum.

As I look at the set, I can see one non-original stand, and a replaced strap on the pedal. The logo bass drum head is black, and therefore is also not original. The common problem of missing rubber tips on the stand legs is a minor concern.

I've seen only three Jet sets in the past thirty years. Is it a rare outfit? Sure. How many are out there? Nobody knows.



The 1969 Slingerland catalog described the kit this way: "A real modern outfit. Chrome hoops on the bass drum. Snap-On pedal. Set-O-Matic tom holder and flush base stands are featured." The price was \$490. Our featured kit is finished in Slingerland's light blue pearl.

The Jet model existed before the Set-O-Matic tom holder came out. In the 1967 catalog, for example, a customer could order either a rail consolette or a second snare stand to hold the 8x12 rack tom. The invention of the Set-O-Matic holder made the kit work much better. The earliest Set-

hoops on the base [sic] drum look great." (I had to read that twice!) I suppose the appeal of the chrome bass drum hoop is that it makes all the drums match. Slingerland certainly had 20" hoops laying around, because of the 18x20 floor toms



"Tongue" for Snap-On bass drum pedal

Perhaps this article will smoke a few more out. I'd value this Jet Outfit—catalog number 20N, with its original hardware and Gene Krupa Sound King snare drum—at \$1,000.

My thanks to Michael Gross, director of public affairs and marketing for Cape Cod Community College, for sending us pictures of his treasure. It's a beautiful example of a drumset

built by a great manufacturer, and then lovingly preserved thereafter.

Fixing Bent Rims by Ned Ingberman

Of the many shapes and forms that rim damage can take, the most common is the inward bend. This occurs in the upper area of the rim—above the bearing edge of the drum—and protrudes toward the drumhead. In this article, we'll focus on how to restore this particular kind of rim bend in non-cast, flange-style vintage rims.

Note: Some rims have an inherent irregularity in the shape of their joint. This irregularity can be distinguished from a dent by its rippled or wavy appearance, which may extend into the rim flange. In such cases, it's best to leave it as is. Any repair attempt can crack the weld of the joint.

Getting Started

Here's a list of tools and supplies you'll need to fix a bent rim: an 8" adjustable open-end ("crescent") wrench, a 1¼"x½" metal shim plate (⅛" thick), a 1½"x1½" piece of non-corrugated cardboard (⅛" thick), and a roll of masking tape.

The first step is to customize your wrench.

Cut a piece of cardboard the size of the contact surface of the adjustable lower jaw of the wrench. Then use the masking tape to secure the cardboard tightly to the lower jaw's surface. The cardboard prevents metal-to-metal contact between the lower jaw and the rim, which could otherwise mar the rim.

The metal shim plate also buffers the rim from being damaged by the wrench, and helps to realign the rim's vertical profile. If you don't have a ready-made shim plate, cut a 1¼" section of metal from a ½" strip of ⅛"-thick stock. An excellent source of metal stock is a leg or leg support section of a defunct flat-base vintage Ludwig hi-hat, cymbal, or snare stand. Metal stock can also be found at a good hardware store. After the shim is cut, file away any



sharp edges or burrs and be sure all surfaces of the shim are perfectly smooth.

Lining Things Up

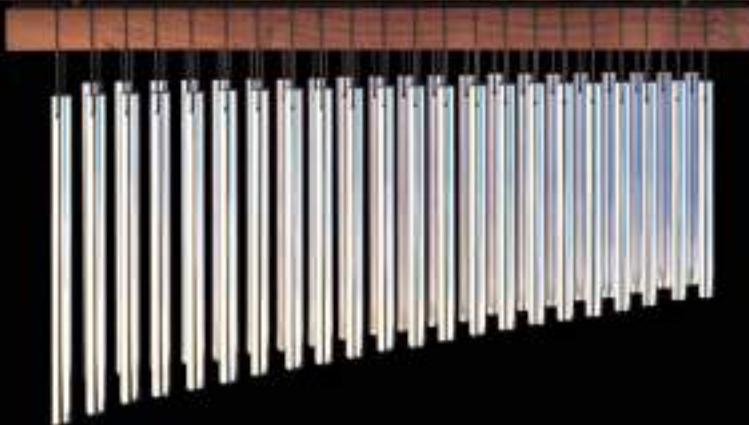
A bent rim is best left mounted on the drum. This anchors and stabilizes the rim to prevent it from shifting or flexing as pressure is applied by the wrench. Be sure all tension rods are snug. Then position the drum horizontally on a table so that you're facing the inside wall of the bend.

Next, position the broadside of the shim horizontally alongside the outside wall of the bend. (See Figure 1.) Line up the midpoint of the shim with the point at which the bend protrudes inward the most. Be sure the long edge of the shim is resting on the rim flange below it. Holding the shim in place, position the fixed upper jaw of the wrench flush against the midpoint of the shim and tighten the adjustment knurl so that the lower jaw is squeezing the extremity of the bend. Adjust the position of the wrench so the lower jaw is close to or touching the drumhead. To firm up the grip of the wrench, gently jiggle the handle forward and backward while simultaneously tight-

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Fixing Bent Rims continued

ening the knurl.

If you have a Ludwig-type triple-flange rim, and the drumhead is either stretched out or has a deep collar—causing the drumhead hoop to extend fairly low over the edge of the drum—you may need to replace the head with one that has a shallower collar. This will bring the rim up higher above the drumhead, allowing the wrench to get a better grip on the rim. Otherwise the wrench can slip due to the curved edge of the rim's upper flange.

Removing The Bend

Slowly apply forward pressure on the wrench handle while anchoring the drum with your alternate hand. As the wrench handle moves forward, the section of the rim between the jaws will straighten up. To gauge how far forward to move the wrench in order to restore perfect perpendicularity, adjust your line of vision so your view is from above. (See Figure 2.) From this van-



Figure 2

tage point it will be easy to assess the vertical profile of the rim.

Most bends span a width greater than the jaws of the wrench, so multiple wrench applications are usually needed. For best results when re-applying the wrench, position the lower jaw at the periphery of the section of the bend previously straightened. Continue to monitor the perpendicularity of the rim between wrench applications.

If the wrench is extended too far forward, it will misshape the rim, causing it to bend outward. This can easily be rectified. First, using the remainder of your cardboard supply, create another shim by folding the cardboard three layers thick. Then position the broadside of the shim horizontally against the bend on the inside wall of the rim with the shim's long edge against the drumhead. (See Figure 3.)

Holding the shim in place, position the lower jaw against the extremity of the bend and tighten the adjustment knurl until the upper jaw is squeezing the shim. Firm up

the grip of the wrench as described earlier, and be sure there is clearance space of about 1/8" between the tip of the upper jaw and the drumhead. Then slowly move the wrench handle inward until the rim is perfectly perpendicular.

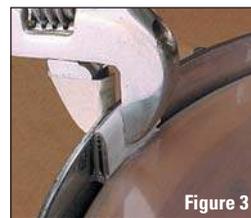


Figure 3

Checking For Straightness

The last step is a touch test to confirm the rim's straightness. Place your fingertip against the inside wall of the rim at a point two inches away from the repaired area. In a continuous motion, slowly rub your finger into, across, and two inches beyond the repaired zone. As your finger moves across the rim, you should feel a smooth continuity in its curvature.

Restoring the original contour of a rim is not likely to improve the sound of your drum, but it will certainly enhance its beauty. It will also improve the drum's value as a collectible item. ●



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AHEAD



Nothingface Tommy Sickles

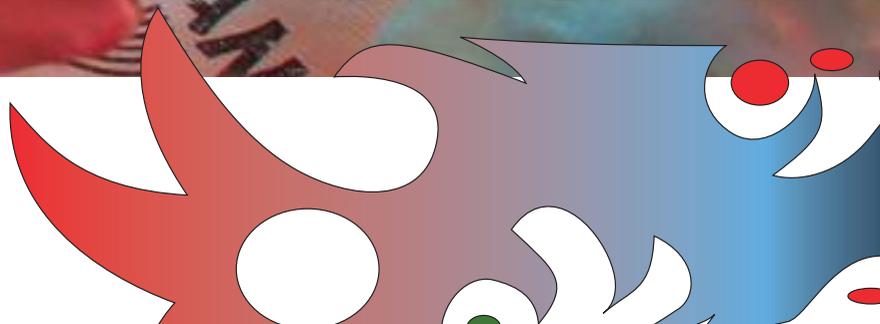
Screaming

Story by Waleed Hashidi

On
Photos by Paul LaTala



Adding drummers constantly day-dream of someday playing like their mentors and idols. But how many actually get to have one of their faves playing *alongside* them? "It was incredible," recalls Nothingface drummer Tommy Sickles, just after a performance at the Anaheim, California House Of Blues. "To help make the changeover between acts, everybody's drumsets were on rolling risers just off the stage. When we were on, all of a sudden Pantera's Vinnie Paul walks over to the side of the stage and starts playing the drummer from Morbid Angel's kit. And he was *jamming* with me. I was like, Man, I can't believe this!"



"My first show with the band was in front of 15,000 people. In the middle of the set, I was so excited that I jumped out from



If having your idol shadow your every move isn't enough, what about *replacing* another one of your mentors? "I started out working for Nothingface doing lights and merchandise before I played with the band," Sickles admits. "I idolized [former Nothingface drummer] Chris Houck. He was one of the best drummers I'd ever seen. And then, just as *Violence* was being tracked, I got the call. Chris was leaving the band and I was being offered the gig."

And though it's true that lady luck had befallen Sickles twice, his performance on Nothingface's latest disc, *Skeletons*, proves that the drummer didn't depend on good fortune when it came time to fire the big guns. Although admittedly short on professional recording or touring experience, Sickles stepped up to the plate and hit hard.

From the hi-hat shuffling of the disc's launcher, "Machination," to the furious, no-frills drive of "Here Come The Butchers," Sickles showcases his systemic approach to the kit—one that's logical, deliberate, and disciplined. And yet, at the drop of a hat, he can turn an about-face, piling into sheer chaotic punishment. It's this explosive nature that keeps Nothingface's dynamic reputation—both on stage and on disc—at the top of many a hard rock list.

MD: The sound of your kit on *Skeletons* is impressive. What drums did you use to track the record?

Tommy: I used Ayottes in the studio. They were great. I used a couple of different kick drums—a 24" and a 26". And I used a 30-ply snare drum. The snare was thick as hell but sounded amazing.

MD: Was there any studio trickery involved?

Tommy: We did a few things, like on one song we sped the tape up to twice the normal speed to get a certain effect for the guitars. But

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*It's More Than a Sound,
it's an Attitude.*

Tommy Sickles

that meant I then had to play the drum part twice as fast. When we brought the tune back to the original tempo, it sounded strange—and cool.

There was a lot of experimentation going on. At one point we were up at 2:00 in the morning when producer Bill Kennedy took a razorblade, slit my snare drum head open, and poured nuts and bolts in the drum. He then duct-taped his wallet to the head. When I did a snare roll, all of the nuts and bolts bounced

around inside the drum. It sounded crazy.

MD: A number of hard rock drummers use triggers to support their sound, but I notice you don't incorporate them. Why's that?

Tommy: I never really liked the sound of triggered drums from the front of house. It's a preference, obviously. Besides, having a straight rock sound is what our band is about.

MD: So does that mean you're specific about your drum miking?

Tommy: Well, we had a tour manager/sound guy who had been in the business for thirty years, and he had a full Audix endorsement. When he miked up my kit, I had nothing but compliments about how my drums sounded. So we're using all Audix mic's, and I firmly believe that they are the best available.

MD: You're becoming known for your fine bass drum work. What's your pedal setup like?

Tommy: I use a Drum Workshop 5000 chain-drive double pedal. It has the best response of any pedal I've tried. I use maple beaters, which beat the hell out of my skins. But I love the attack sound I get from them. The maple cuts through, and when I'm doing a lot of double bass work, it speaks very clearly off the drum.

MD: You seem to have your kit really dialed-in, as far as positioning and the gear you use. Is there a piece of equipment you'd like to try that you haven't worked with?

Tommy: I'm really interested in that external, resonating bass drum that goes in front of the kick. I heard that it adds a lot of low end. Ayotte says they'll custom-make one for me, so I just need to order it.

MD: You play pretty hard. Do you wrap your sticks or tape your fingers?

Tommy: Oh yeah. Before I came up with a system for protecting my hands, I would get huge blisters on my thumbs because I play so hard. What I do now is pour Super Glue on my fingers, wrap them in thin medical tape, and then wear Newman tack gloves on top of that. I know this sounds a bit extreme, but when you're in the middle of a tour, you don't want to be bothered with blisters. It can be torture.

MD: For the sake of the Nothingface fans who still might not be familiar with you, let's hear a little about your past.

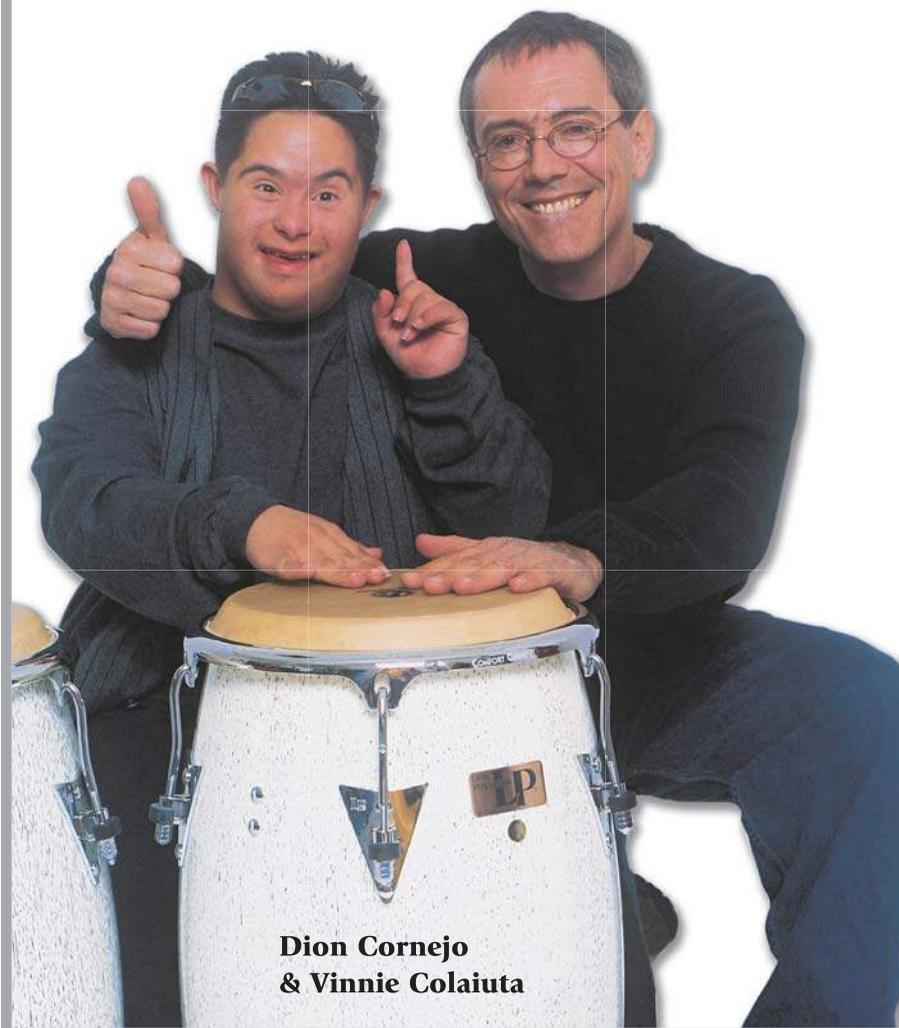
Tommy: I'm twenty-six now. I started playing a bit late, when I was sixteen. When I was seventeen, I was in a band with [Nothingface vocalist] Matt Holt called Ingredient 17, and we played a show with Nothingface back home in Rockville, Maryland. Then I started teching for them, which was actually one of the best times of my life. I had a ball doing lights, merch, and helping out with

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the driving. Plus I learned a lot from being on the road with them.

Then I joined a group called Deep S.A., which was a really cool band with a lot of reggae, funk, and spoken-word influences. I loved that band, and it brought out the ladies, man, I tell you. But then one day I got the call from Nothingface right when they were tracking *Violence*, their first record. Chris Houck was leaving and they wanted me to join.

Just to make it clear, I didn't track *Violence*. It's a big misperception for a lot of the fans. That was in June of 2001. Nothingface gave me a month to prepare, so I spent the time working like crazy in the practice room, making sure my chops were up to speed.

My first show with the band was at

Rockfest in Portland, Oregon, with Slipknot and Stone Temple Pilots. There were 15,000 people in the audience. In the middle of the set, I was so excited that I jumped out

Sickles'

Drums: Ayotte Pro Maple in gunmetal sparkle finish

- A.** 16x16 floor tom
- B.** 6 1/2"x14 Keplinger stainless steel snare (30-ply shell, wood hoops)
- C.** 9x13 tom
- D.** 16x18 floor tom
- E.** 17x24 kick

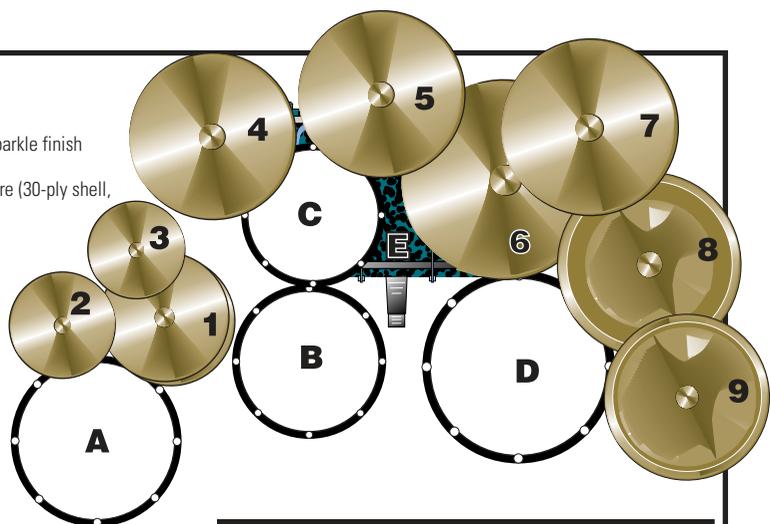
Cymbals: Sabian

- 1.** 14" AA Sizzle hats
- 2.** 10" HH Duo splash
- 3.** 8" AA Max splash
- 4.** 18" HH Dark crash
- 5.** 18" HH Rock crash
- 6.** 21" HH Raw Bell Dry ride
- 7.** 19" AAXplosion crash
- 8.** 20" HHX Chinese
- 9.** 17" Carmine Apiece Devastation Chinese

Hardware: DW, including a DW5000 double pedal (medium spring tension) with maple beaters

Heads: Evans coated G2 Power Dot on snare batter (tuned high, no muffling), clear G2s on tops of toms with clear G1s on bottoms, EQ3 on kick batter with EQ1 on front (small hospital pillow for muffling)

Sticks: Vic Firth 5A (hickory) with wood tip



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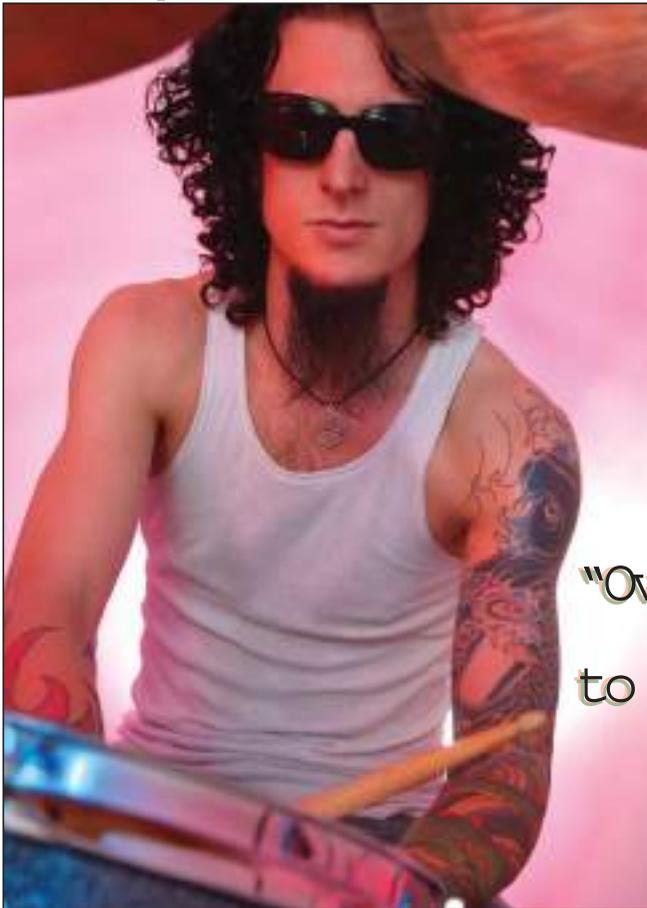
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Tommy Sickles



“Overall, I’m trying
to

from behind my drums—“Yeah!”

MD: Let’s talk about your tracking sessions for the new record, *Skeletons*.

Tommy: We went into pre-production in Maryland for two weeks with our producer, Bill Kennedy, and we hammered out the demos. So we had an idea of the structure of the songs

month and a half recording. It was a beautiful time. I think we really came up with some innovative sounds, especially for the drums and the guitars.

MD: Why did you select Kennedy to produce?

Tommy: He was actually our second choice. We wanted to go in with Garth Richardson, but we didn’t have the budget for him. We then received a demo reel from Bill Kennedy, and we really dug what he was about. So we flew him out and it was cool. He had a lot of great ideas, and he just pushed us.

MD: In what ways?

Tommy: With me, there were times when I thought I played the best I could. But he was like, “Do it again.” He really pushed me beyond what I

before we went into the studio. We then went to a studio in Vancouver called the Armory, and spent a

thought I was capable of.

MD: But that seems kind of intimidating.

Tommy: Not the way Bill does it. He’s smart, down to earth, and a really good person. He didn’t make me feel uncomfortable in the studio, considering it was my first time ever in a professional studio.

When we went to the Armory, I found out that we were going to record everything to a click. So there I was, on the click, ten hours a day. Bill was trying to push me to complete three songs a day. Luckily, I was on fire. I was really nervous before we went up there, so I practiced my butt off.

MD: How has your live performance changed throughout the years, if at all?

Tommy: I used to speed up a bit, just because I was overly excited. But now I’m more focused. Plus I’m learning how to conserve my power. Overall, I’m trying to play as solidly as I can.

MD: What specific aspects have you changed in your drumming since joining Nothingface?

Tommy: The recording process made me a better drummer, that’s for sure. There I was, working with a producer who was finding these little things in my playing and pointing them out to me. That’s a real lesson, I’ll tell you.



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Zildjian's new ZXT Titanium Sheet Bronze cymbals are said to offer "a comprehensive range of professional, high-quality sounds with a mirror-like titanium finish." The titanium coating is applied using a vapor deposition process that allows the cymbals to be coated evenly, which the makers claim enhances their sonic properties. Known for its corrosion resistance, light weight, and durability, titanium is commonly used on sports equipment, aerospace structures, and in the manufacture of compact discs.

Although they feature the same hammering and lathing techniques as ZXT models, ZXT Titanium cymbals have a brighter and more powerful sound. Ride cymbals are available in Pro and Rock weights, and are said to have a clear "ping" sound and strong projection, while hi-hats are designed to produce a bright and defined "chick." Crashes are available in a variety of sizes and weights for use in any application. The line also includes a China and a splash cymbal said to have unique and colorful sonic qualities.

The cymbals' logos are laser-engraved into the titanium finish, which, according to Zildjian, makes it nearly impossible for them to wear off and gives the cymbals "a unique and upscale appearance."

ZXT Titanium cymbals can be purchased separately or in box sets. Prices range from \$126 for a 10" Flash Splash to \$280 for a 20" ride and \$312 for a pair of 14" hi-hats. The ZXT Titanium Pro 4 Pack provides a versatile setup for all-around usage, while the ZXT Titanium Rock 4 Pack contains a selection of models applicable for louder, heavier music. The 10" ZXT Titanium Flash Splash is included in both sets. Each is priced at \$718.

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



Affordable Thunder Yamaha Rydeen Drumkit

Yamaha's new entry-level Rydeen kit is named after the Japanese god of thunder, and according to Yamaha signifies "professional sound, construction, and playability at a very attractive price."

Rydeen drums feature 6-ply Philippine mahogany shells with a high-impact PVC outer covering. They're made using the same proprietary Air-Seal System used on Yamaha's high-end models, promoting shell roundness. Kits are available in three five-piece configurations, each

priced at \$849. They feature bass drums with Remo PowerStroke 3-type heads and wood hoops, triple-flanged steel tom hoops, and a separate lug design. Hardware includes double-braced straight cymbal, hi-hat stand, and snare stands, a bass drum pedal, and ball clamp mounts and tom hardware. Finishes offered are Rydeen Ash, Night Black, Garnet Red, Racing Green, and Royal Blue.

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Vintage Looks, Modern Performance Pearl SensiTone Classic II Snare Drum

According to Pearl, their new SensiTone Classic II snare drum features the cutting brilliance of a beaded brass shell combined with the solid rigidity of Pearl's MasterCast Hoops. Tuning integrity is assured via stainless-steel tension rods, while the vintage look is maintained by the use of tube lugs. The smoky black nickel finish is intended to give the drum state-of-the-art functionality with classic styling. The 5x14 model is priced at \$499.

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Premier's Cabria ranges are designed to offer "exceptional quality and performance for the entry-level player." The new Cabria Lite now makes those characteristics available at an even more affordable price, especially for beginners and young students.

The drums feature 7-ply mahogany shells said to produce rich, powerful tones, along with individual tension lugs that promote resonance. A 5½x14 wood-shell snare drum offers "crisp, clean articulation and a loud, distinctive backbeat." Premier's new Rok Lok tom holder allows mounted toms to be set in various positions securely and speedily, as well as hold a small cymbal boom arm. Double-braced hardware includes a snare stand, a hi-hat stand, a cymbal boom stand, and a bass drum pedal. Wrap finishes include Black, Metallic Blue, Metallic Silver, and Wine Red.

Premier's new Synergy Pack is available as an add-on to the Cabria Lite for "ready-to-play" convenience. It consists of a high-quality drum throne with double-braced legs, 18" crash-ride and 14" hi-hat cymbals, and a pair of 5A drumsticks—everything a drummer needs to get started right out of the box.

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Zehner Drums offers three 6½x10 models that are filled with peacock feathers, seeds, and beef—yes, beef—although the possible fillings are endless. Drums of 12", 13", and 14" diameters will be available shortly.

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Hands On

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Mountain Rythm's 3x14 and 3x18 frame drums and 4x14 and 4x18 bodhrans are made of block-laminated butternut wood, forming a solid yet lightweight shell said to be more stable and less likely to go out of round than traditional laminated shells. The "simple, effective, and invisible" tuning system on both styles of drums allows for quick, accurate tuning. It also allows drummers to quickly reduce the tension of the head between playing periods, which is said to extend head life considerably.

The shell depths for the drums have been chosen to provide optimal sound, a broad tuning range, and easy handling. The cutout on the frame drum allows for improved two-hand, multiple-finger Middle Eastern playing techniques. Crossbars in the bodhran have been eliminated, allowing for the "holding" hand to execute the pitch variations common in contemporary playing styles. High-quality heads are carefully selected to provide the best feel and response.

The bodhran is available with "double" heads. Tucking two separate skins onto the drum has become common to allow players to achieve a dryer, more contemporary sound. List price for 14" drums is \$259; 18" drums list for \$299.

(905) 764-6543, www.mountainrythm.com.



A Light In The Darkness

HipTrix World's Brightest Glow-In-The-Dark Drumsticks



Well, it may be the longest product name we've heard recently, but it certainly says it all. HipTrix World's Brightest Glow-In-The-Dark Drumsticks are not meant to replace wood drumsticks, but to offer an intense visual effect for special events, solos, teaching, learning, and most of all, fun.

HipTrix is a small drumstick company whose goal is to provide drummers with new visual options in a visually limited, audio-based medium. Their drumsticks are claimed to glow for hours and to be highly durable. The sticks are currently available in 5A size. They can be purchased on the company's Web site and in selected drumshops, at \$24.99 per pair.

(847) 710-2292, www.hiptrix.com.

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Sabian 14" And 15" AAXplosion And HHXplosion Crashes

Sabian has introduced 14" and 15" sizes to its popular AAXplosion and HHXplosion crash lineups. AAX cymbals offer bright, contemporary sounds and what Sabian terms "Auto-Focus Response." This means that the cymbals have the ability to respond accurately at all volume levels, from quiet to loud. The new 14" and 15" sizes are intended to cater to players seeking a smaller, splashier version of the AAX sound, while retaining its penetrating power.



The HHX series combines traditional dark tone with modern projection. Super-sized "Tone Projector" hammering, a raw bell, narrow pin-lathing, and other techniques are said to give HHXplosion crashes full, rapid response that "explodes" with warm yet penetrating sounds. The new, smaller-sized crashes offer the "simmering sounds" of the HHX series in models that are fast and splashy.

AAX and HHX cymbals are available exclusively in Brilliant finish. The cymbals are warranted against faults attributable to materials and craftsmanship.

(506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com.

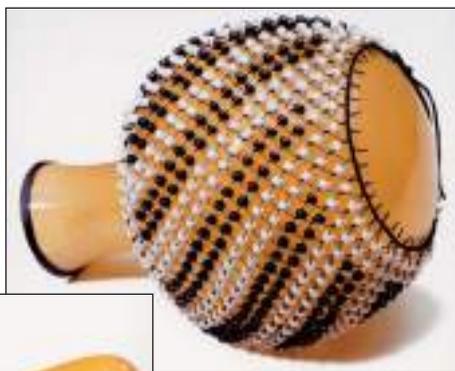


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Sonor Fibre Shekere And Guiro

Sonor's new Fibre Shekere and Fibre Guiro are constructed from a mix of fiberglass and bamboo—a combination said to enhance the visual appearance and sonic quality of the instruments. The shekere features a beaded cover that's adjustable, allowing the player to produce the appropriate sound for any musical application. The guiro is designed to produce a full, cutting sound while sitting firmly and comfortably in the player's hand.

(804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com, www.sonor.de.



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Beauty And A Bargain

Ludwig Accent Combo Outfit And Brass-On-Brass Black Beauty Snare



For entry-level players, Ludwig's Accent Combo outfit is offered in Black, Blue, and Wine wrapped finishes. Drums feature Philippine mahogany/juniper shells. The five-piece kits come with a matching wood snare drum, double-braced stands, a free drum throne, drumsticks, and a set-up video, at a suggested list price of \$530.



The newest entry in Ludwig's historic Black Beauty snare drum series is the Brass-On-Brass model. The drums feature a beaded brass shell with the classic Black Beauty finish. Contrasting brass die-cast hoops, tube lugs, and recently designed P86 Millennium snare strainers provide a striking visual appearance. Drums are available in 5x14 and 6½x14 sizes, at \$920 and \$945, respectively.

(574) 522-1675, www.ludwig-drums.com.

New Tools Of The Trade

Carbosticks Composite Drumsticks

Carbosticks are composite drumsticks designed to maintain wood stick advantages while eliminating the natural disadvantages of wood. During manufacturing, their weight can be controlled to the fraction of a gram, and the balance point, rebound, vibration, and overall control levels of each model can be individually adjusted. The special porous material from which the sticks are molded is said to wick away perspiration to prevent slipping, resist abrasion and indentation, and offer stable performance in any temperature or humidity.

Normal Carbostick lifespan is said to be three to eight times longer than that of a typical wood stick. After this, they will break due to material fatigue. In fact, they are designed to break



before damage can be done to cymbals, drumheads, or rims. Sticks are presently available in 7A, 5A, and 5B sizes, with two different tip designs and two balance-point weights for each model.

(804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com.

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Pretender To The Jazz Throne

Remo Metalized Gold Crown Drumsets



Remo has upgraded the Gold Crown jazz drumsets introduced earlier this year by adding Metalized bronze, nickel/silver, and brass finishes, along with 6300 Series hardware.

The Bronze Metalized finish appears similar to a vintage hand-hammered finish. The Nickel/Silver finish appears as textured silver, while the Brass appears as a warm contoured brass finish. All three finishes are said to be very durable.

The kits' Advanced Acousticon shells are said to have a hardness and pitch falling between maple and birch. Their 45° bearing edges are designed to promote range and projection, while the shells' moderate thickness creates a more "centered" tone.

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

What A Party!

Drummers Collective 25th Anniversary Concert DVD From Hudson Music



Hudson Music has just released a two-disc DVD that features performances and backstage interviews from Drummers Collective's 25th Anniversary Concert, held last November in New York City. The show included appearances by some of the most creative and influential musicians in the world.

Disc One includes performances by Steve Gadd & The Gadd Gang, Dave Weckl & The Dave Weckl Band, Steve Smith, Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez with bassist John Patitucci and keyboardist Oriente Lopez, Victor Wooten, special guests Felix Pastorius and Kenwood Dennard, and Collective faculty ensembles featuring Memo Acevedo, Louis Bauzo, Fernando Hernandez, Cliff Korman, Michael Lauren, Irio O'Farrill, Tim Quimette, Kim Plainfield, Leo Traversa, and Bob Quaranta.

The second disc offers special features including 5.1 Surround Sound mixes on four tunes mixed from the drum chair, artist interviews, alternate edits that include FootCam footage, bonus footage of rehearsals and soundchecks, Web links, and a photo gallery. The double DVD has a total running time of nearly five and a half hours and a suggested retail price of \$49.95.

(888) 796-2992, www.hudsonmusic.com.

Brave New World Percussion

Remo In-Line Tuned Paulo Mattioli Djembe

Remo's Paulo Mattioli Djembe features the company's new In-Line Tuning System. The System has a much larger tuning ratio (approximately 3 to 1) compared to standard drum tension rods. This provides the advantage of a smaller turning radius being required to tension each drum rod. The result is faster and easier tuning, along with greater tension stability.

The new djembe also features Remo's NuSkyn Vintage Wrap tucked head, said to produce "a warm, full bodied tone" with "a natural feel and sound performance never before achieved by a synthetic drumhead." The djembe is available in 13" and 14" diameters and comes equipped with Remo's curved counterhoop for added tuning stability, comfort, and playability. The Advanced Acousticon shell is finished in Remo's Metalized Bronze plating process. Its carved texture and elegant metallic patina creates a visually striking drum said to have "superior strength and durability, and enhanced low-end response."

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Spanning The Globe...Er...Kit

Carbonlite Lightweight Spanner Rack

Carbonlite's new Spanner Rack is designed to be clamped between two cymbal stands for mounting additional cymbals, toms, or percussion accessories. A 42" carbon fiber tube, two heavy-duty multiclamps (for attaching the tube to existing cymbal stands), and two standard multiclamps (to hold cymbal booms or tom arms) are included. The Spanner Rack—with clamps—weighs only 4.3 lbs., which is less than half the weight of a single conventional cymbal boom stand.

Carbonlite rack tubing features pressure-molded construction with a high-tech, carbon-fiber weave finish. The non-slip surface will not dent or rust. The tubing is compatible with all standard 1½"-diameter rack clamps and hardware. Suggested list price of the Spanner Rack system is \$248.

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



Best Of Both Worlds?

Canopus "The Aluminum" Snare Drum



Canopus North America (a division of Soundbrands) now offers The Aluminum snare drum. It's said to meld "all of the best characteristics and qualities of wood and metal shells, producing a sound that's tasteful and warm like wood, but achieving the exceptional projection of a metal drum."

The 5-mm-thick aluminum shell is carefully cut to achieve an unconventional bearing-edge design. The drum is claimed to offer comfortable response and natural stick rebound regardless of the musician's dynamic approach. The Aluminum is designed to deliver "an ideal recording tone—with controlled overtones and balance—without dampening or electronic EQ." Suggested retail price is \$1,120.

(888) 860-1668, www.canopusdrum.com.

Need A Lift?

Drum Workshop 9909 Drum Lifter



Drum Workshop's new 9909 Drum Lifter has been developed to easily and securely support a variety of drums and percussion instruments in a horizontal position, so that they can be played with a standard bass drum pedal. The device features four angle- and position-adjustable, rubber-tipped supports attached to four stainless-steel arms, which are themselves connected to a pedal-adaptor base. The lifter's design allows tom-toms, djembes, congas, and other instruments to be used as a bass drum, without any modification to the drums themselves. It also accommodates most major manufacturers' single and double bass drum pedals. It's priced at \$165.

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



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▶ **YAMAHA's** Clickstation programmable metronome features a small vibrating pad that pulsates with the beat. Drummers are provided with time reference through the sense of feel, eliminating the need for audible or visual cues. Individual volume controls for half, quarter, 8th, and 16th notes, plus 8th-note triplets and accompaniment, allow you to fine-tune the volume for beat subdivisions. Up to eighty-six tempo settings can be saved as songs and preset into a chain for quick recall and consecutive playback. The unit also includes a MIDI In jack for syncing with a sequencer or other MIDI device, as well as a trigger input jack for remote start/stop of playback or tap tempo functions. Other features include a backlit LCD display and a ten-key pad for tempo input and quick access to functions. Retail price is \$179. (714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.

▶ **WESTONE's** UM56 is a canal-style custom sleeve designed to replace the eartips of many universal in-ear monitors. Such an upgrade provides improved fit, comfort, and fidelity to in-ear monitors such as Westone's UM1 and UM2, and Shure's E1 and E5. A modified version is now available to fit Shure's E2 diaphragm-driver model.

The UM56 is a custom product, requiring that ear impressions be made by a hearing healthcare professional. Westone provides a searchable list of such professionals on the company's Web site. Retail price for a pair of UM56 sleeves is around \$100. (800) 525-5071, www.westone.com/music.



SABIAN now offers their HHX cymbal series in a brilliant finish. Until now the line was available exclusively in natural finish (except for the brilliant-finish HHX Evolution range). This highly buffed and glossy finish is said to give the heavily hammered surface a smoother, brighter look, while also smoothing and brightening the sound of the cymbal. HHX cymbals are available individually or in pre-packaged sets that are 'Sonically Matched' by the selection specialists in the Sabian vault. (506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com.

▶ **CLEARSONIC's** IsoFloor is a modular floor de-coupling system designed to reduce sound and vibration transfer by about 6 dB. Using supplied hook-and-loop fastener strips, several 2'x2' IF2 and/or 1'x1' IF1 baffles can be quickly assembled into a custom platform. Stacking them increases their effectiveness. Vinyl-loaded commercial carpet squares can top it all off to further increase performance while protecting the IF baffles from sharp, heavy objects like kick spurs. (800) 888-6360, www.clearsonic.com.



▶ The Marimbata and Maribantu from **RHYTHMS EXOTIC AFRO PERCUSSION** certainly live up to the "exotic" part of their maker's name. They are essentially cajons—but they're both fitted with large "thumb pianos." The Marimbata is also equipped with two drumheads fitted over rims mounted in the boxes. Not only can the musician sit on top of the instrument and pluck the thumb keys, but he or she can also produce multiple drumming sounds—from slaps to mid and deep tones—using many hand drumming techniques. (888) 838-4426, www.aforrhythms.com.

EVANS Tri-Center conga heads are now fitted as standard equipment on LP's Giovanni Compact Congas. Giovanni Hidalgo, an endorser both of LP and Evans products, helped in the design of the Compact Conga that bears his name and was chosen Most Innovative Percussion product at the prestigious MIPA Awards in 2002. The Evans Tri-Center conga heads were chosen to provide stability of tuning and resistance to adverse weather. (800) 323-2746, www.evansdrumheads.com.

▶ **UNIVERSAL PERCUSSION** now offers the Nee Pad, a portable practice pad that attaches to the drummer's knee. The pad features a gum-rubber playing surface, and is available in red and black, at \$27.50. (800) 282-0110, www.universalpercussion.com.



▶ **GATOR CASES** offers two new, affordable five-piece drum bag sets. The GP-Fusion-100 (\$114.99) is for "fusion-sized" drumsets; the GP-Standard-100 (\$119.99) is for kits with standard-size drums. The bags are constructed of durable 600-denier nylon. The interiors are lined and padded to protect drum finishes and hardware. (813) 221-4191, www.gatorcases.com.



▶ **PACIFIC DRUMS AND PERCUSSION** has added Amber, Natural, and Charcoal transparent lacquer finishes to its LX Series all-maple drums. The new colors complement the series' current Crimson Red and Ultraviolet color options and are available on the LX five-piece kit and the matching 7x8 and 14x16 add-on toms. (805) 485-6999, www.pacificdrums.com.



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RECORDINGS

9 David Fiuczynski & Rufus Cappadocia *KiF* (Fuze)

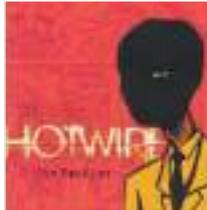
KiF is one of the most twisted, fascinating releases of the past couple of years. Fiuczynski on fretless, fretted, and 12-string quartertone guitars, and cellist Cappadocia, are joined by Screaming Headless Torsos drummers **Gene Lake** and **Tobias Ralph**, as well as percussionist **Daniel Sadownick**, for some mind-blowing, globetrotting, other-

worldly music that sounds at times like Loony Tunes gone amuck. Highlights include Lake's stickwork on the Robert Fripp-ish "Mektaub" and the manic Middle Eastern-sounding "Phrygianade." Ralph supplies the solid drum 'n' bass groove of "Roxy Migraine" and the light touch on brushes on "Lullaby For Che." (www.torsos.com) **Robin Tolleson**



7 Hotwire *The Routine* (RCA)

Although Hotwire have been lumped into the nü-metal circuit, are touring on this year's OzzFest, and have shared stages with (hed)pe and Spineshank, it'd be a crime to typecast the LA-based act into such a defined, often myopic genre. On their RCA debut, drummer **BRIAN BORG** and bandmates explore much more terrain than that of your typical drop-tuned guitar outfit. See the Rye Coalition-on-steroids of "Magazine" or the swingin' bashed crash of "Nice Profile" for prime examples of Borg's out-of-the-box maneuvers. You'll find the rest *The Routine* as impervious to pigeon-holing. **Waleed Rashidi**



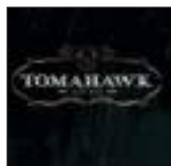
8 Hiromi *Another Mind* (Telarc)

Keyboardist Hiromi proves that the Yamaha Music School turns out more than just classical players. Here the twenty-three-year-old sounds like a cross between Chick Corea, Michel Camilo, and Keith Emerson. (Yes, she's *that* good.) Drummer **DAVE DICENSO** delivers the goods on this high-energy instrumental material. Opening track "XYZ" unleashes DiCenso in a chops-filled solo inside an odd-metered frenzy, reminiscent of Dave Weckl's work with Camilo. (Former Camilo bassist Anthony Jackson is also featured on this release.) In fact, Dave displays impressive swing, funk, blues, Latin, and rock chops throughout this recording, which is sure to draw attention his way. **Mike Haid**



7 Tomahawk *Mit Gas* (Ipecac)

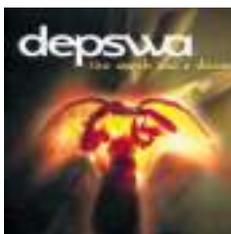
Tomahawk may be one of singer **Mike Patton**'s more accessible projects, but things can still get pretty strange. Thank goodness. With ex-Helmet drummer **JOHN STANIER** holding down the fort, the fearless, peerless Patton croons, shrieks, growls, and moans his way through Tomahawk's hypnotic, off-kilter hard rock. Despite the music's weight—sometimes it's downright scary—a sinister sense of humor shines through. Stanier's muscular beats are the first thing the listener grabs on to, making him straight man to Patton's cut-up. The drum tone says metal, but the feel is right in the pocket, even as Stanier navigates sudden metric and dynamic shifts. **Michael Parillo**



5 Shaun Guerin *By The Dark Of Light* (Clearlight Music)

Multi-instrumentalist Shaun Guerin (son of drum great John Guerin) shows his affinity for classic prog rock with a collection of original material in the mold of early Genesis and Yes. Guerin plays keys, bass, and guitar—and sings—but his forte is his drumming, which has soul, chops, and a deep pocket. The problem with this type of one-man-band release is that the weakest elements (in this case, the heavily layered and sequenced-sounding keyboards) tend to bring the production quality and overall feel down a bit. But there's enough good stuff here to warrant close inspection. (Clearlight888music.com) **Mike Haid**

KICKIN' OUT THE NEW Depswa, Diffuser, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy



LA's **Depswa** have a solid foundation to build upon, with drummer **GORDON HECKAMAN** laying down in-your-face, monster 2/4 beats.

On *Two Angels And A Dream*, Heckaman syncs up with the metal-ish guitars like a machine. The trick to this style of drumming is not to miss a beat, vocal scream, or guitar lick, and Heckaman is cued into every bandmember's

feel and energy. (Geffen Records)

There may be a lot of bands out there doing what **Diffuser** is doing—but who cares! On *Making The Grade*, drummer **DAN LEO** is having pure California pop-punk fun. There's nothing fancy here, but each fill is placed just right, and the beats are quick and slick. Big toms, a huge kick drum sound, and a massively compressed snare, coupled up with Leo's talent, give each song a level of energy only achieved if the drummer really loves what he is doing. This guy's in love. (Hollywood Records)

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy is swinging hard and sweet on their newest, *Save My Soul*, with the help of some of the finest big band/New Orleans-style drumming **KURT SODERGREN** has done to date. When the tempos get slow and heavy, Sodergren moves to the low toms and big crashes. When the Daddys kick it up a few bpm, Sodergren is right there as well, pushing and pulling just enough not to step on any of his mates' musical toes. This cat has got it in spades. (Big Bad Records)

Fran Azzarto



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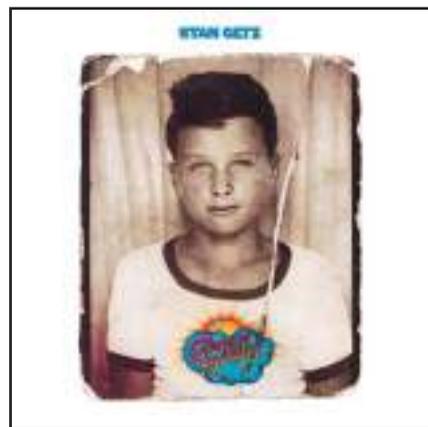


HARVEY MASON plays seminal fusion drums on the mid-'70s **Lee Ritenour** albums *Captain Fingers* and *First Course*, here reissued as the single disc *The Best Of Lee Ritenour*. The guitarist's music soon devolved into smooth jazz, but this release chronicles his early unison note-fests infused with California calm. Mason's drumming is fantastic, his flapping toms and tart snare popping with agile accents layered over gracefully complex full-set rhythms. (Columbia Legacy)

On 1974's *Chameleon*, trumpeter **Maynard Ferguson** fronts an excellent big band that includes sadly ignored drummer **DANNY D'IMPERIO**. The still gigging D'Imperio is a pure jazz animal, prodding the soloists with a unique, pointed style, which also drives his tumbling funk beats. DD's killer-thriller persona is show-

cased on Chick Corea's "La Fiesta," Stevie Wonder's "Livin' For The City," and Hancock's "Chameleon." Less impressive is *Conquistador*, a miserable disco charade that even **PETER ERSKINE** and **HARVEY MASON** can't save. (Columbia Legacy)

TONY WILLIAMS is in transitional form on **Stan Getz'** 1972 release *Captain Marvel*. Post uneven solo efforts like *Ego*, but predating his landmark *Believe It!* album, Williams explores a style that he would elaborate on with his '80s/'90s Blue Note records. Tony's massive cymbal beat is a roaring constant, underpinning daring rock-oriented tom fills and chunky bass drum cross-rhythms. He plays a raucous funk calypso on the title track, mutant rock samba on "Five Hundred Miles High," and uptempo Latin phrases on "Day Waves." **AIRTO**, **Chick Corea**,



and **Stanley Clarke** round out this epic jazz-fusion meeting. (Columbia Legacy)

Ken Micallef

7

Chimaira *The Impossibility Of Reason* (Roadrunner)

As its mythical name implies, this Cleveland sextet is a raging beast, blending monstrous extreme metal with various melodic stylings. The aural chaos on this, their third album, is expertly held together by **ANDOLS HERRICK's** drumming. Herrick takes the spotlight on occasion, as his tribal toms prove on the Soufly-like "Pure Hatred." Following the eerie sound effects and

military-style drum roll of opener "Cleansation," Herrick's speedy footwork and crisp command of his kit give **Mark Hunter's** madman vocals something to chomp on. Sometimes, Chimaira harks back to the days of long, bluesy guitar solos. But *Reason* ultimately sounds fresh. **Jeff Perlah**



7

The Coral (Columbia)

It's one thing crossing acid-rock Klezmer with funky bossa nova, sea shanties, and reggae. It's another to do it in head-spinningly good songs. Drummer **IAN SKELLY** rides over The Coral's Captain Beefheart/Yardbirds merriment with agile technique and soulful interpretive flair. When the band rages on "I Remember When," he plays it simple. But when the hidden track appears, Skelly finds Latin figures and a fat Ringo groove. This drummer always plays for the song, but The Coral's traffic-jam approach allows for equal parts Levon Helm and Bill Bruford. Skelly plays the dual roles with style. **Ken Micallef**



5

Ian Wallace *Happiness With Minimal Side*

Effects (Labmix Music)

On *Happiness*, former King Crimson drummer Ian Wallace displays his vocal, keyboard, and drumming talents with a bit of tongue-in-cheek social, political, and religious lyrical content, resulting in a somewhat disjointed collection. Wallace uses the gritty John Lennon effect to enhance his naturally thin-sounding

voice, but his drumming adds a smooth, loose feel to the sometimes Crimson-sounding, sometimes jazzy, sometimes pop-ish stylings. Though the material and production occasionally sound dated and not as spirited



7

Sense Field *Living Outside* (Nettwerk)

LA's pop-rockers Sense Field earn beaucoup points for overall presentation with their second Nettwerk installment, *Living Outside*. **ROB PFEIFFER** demonstrates his outstandingly versatile drumming skill, performing perfectly in step with the rest of the ensemble, yet without feeling stodgy or conservative. Whether it's the graceful, mid-paced Coldplay-esque drive of "On Your Own" or the frenzied snare drum hustle of album opener "Burn," Pfeiffer never relinquishes his cool. **Waleed Rashidi**



8

Yellowjackets *Time Squared* (Heads Up)

Time Squared is one of the most diverse and organic releases from The Yellowjackets, and drummer **MARCUS BAYLOR** seems to be finding a comfortable home within their jazz-funk-Latin amalgam. Baylor's time and feel are mercifully "imperfect"; although there are structured patterns, the drummer plays them with an openness that allows the groove to breathe and change colors. He also

reveals a strong swing pulse and musical approach on the more traditional up-tempo pieces. And there's a good dose of funky fusion here, which Baylor feels most comfortable stretching out on. To top it off, the very live-sounding drums are beautifully recorded. (www.headsup.com) **Mike Haid**



8

Buzzcocks *Inventory* (EMI/Capitol)

They're less nihilistic than the Sex Pistols and not as sociopolitical as The Clash. But the Buzzcocks are the catchiest of the original British punk bands. The fourteen CDs in this box set replicate each 7" EP the still-going band released between 1977 and 1981. The bristling earliest numbers like "Breakdown," "Orgasm Addict," and "What Do I Get" are some of the finest pop-punk numbers to date. Hooks continue to abound—while vocalist **Pete Shelley's** lyrics stay uniquely vulnerable—on "Autonomy," "Just Lust," and the mesmerizing "I Believe." Amidst all the wonderful melodies is **JOHN MAHER's** captivating and powerful drumming. Note his opening mini-solo on "Moving Away From The Pulse Beat." Without Maher, this *Inventory* wouldn't be nearly as infectious. **Jeff Perlah**





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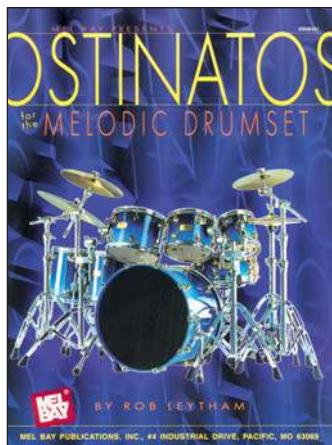
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BOOKS

8 Ostinatos For The Melodic Drumset by Rob Leytham (Mel Bay)

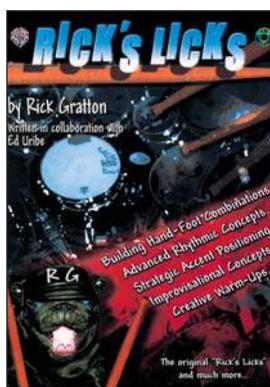
level: intermediate to advanced, \$12.95



Leytham's book directly addresses the concept of ostinatos—setting up a repeated pattern with one or two limbs and then developing a melodic and rhythmic solo on top with the available hands and feet. In addition to recognizing the top drummers who utilize ostinatos (Bozzio, Chambers, Smitty Smith, etc.), the author provides hand-foot and foot-foot ostinatos for study. Leytham suggests becoming comfortable with those before playing the solos he's written, which stress the melodic potential of the kit. Man, some people make this look so easy. Back to the woodshed. (www.melbay.com) **Robin Tolleson**

9 Rick's Licks by Rick Gratton with Ed Uribe (Warner Bros.)

level: intermediate to advanced, \$24.95 (with CD)

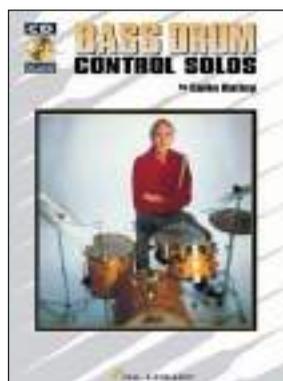


Long considered one of the top drum books, and endorsed by many serious pros, *Rick's Licks* has now been expanded and reissued. My guess is that a whole new generation of drummers will come away from this book appreciating the joys of displacement. The concept that simple patterns, when applied and accented different ways on the drumkit, can sound so awesome, has great appeal, and *Rick's Licks* is an eye- and ear-opener to those horizons. Simply, it demystifies odd times and polyrhythms. Drummers working in any style can use this book to expand their personal bag of tricks. (www.warnerbrospublications.com)

Robin Tolleson

7 Bass Drum Control Solos by Colin Bailey (Hal Leonard)

level: advanced, \$17.95 with CD



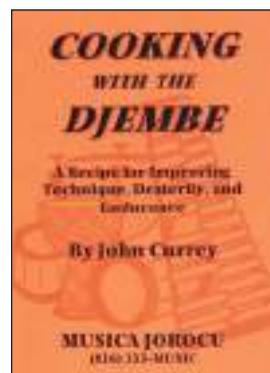
A follow-up to the famed *Bass Drum Control* book, *Solos* ratchets it up for those desiring the winged feet of Mercury. It's a workout of four-bar linear "solos" in 16th-note (and some triplet) patterns. The goal is expanded use of the foot in solo licks as well as control and endurance. Bass notes are grouped in increasing numbers from one to four, placed in varying beats between hand strokes. Bailey impressively

demonstrates on a four-piece jazz kit. Those preferring groove applications may lose patience and look elsewhere. But players dreaming of fleet feet will find shedding heaven for their next prog-rock solo. (www.halleonard.com) **Jeff Potter**

8 Cooking With The Djembe by John Currey (Musica Jorocu)

level: intermediate to advanced, \$14.95

For those of us who weren't plucked from a rockin' gene pool of *djembefolas*, John Currey's *Cooking With The Djembe* just might help facilitate the learning process. The book offers a novel approach to djembe study, chock-full of the notes you need to get your basic coordination, endurance, and calluses on point in no time. (Authentic feel and self-expression come later.) Material is presented in a clear, logical, and challenging fashion, progressing page by page through exercises of 8ths, 16ths, and triplets in various—sometimes *really* odd—combinations of the three principle strokes. The level of difficulty increases gradually, but trust me, it gets hairy. So, get cooking! One caveat, though: Know those strokes first, as the text assumes you've got them down already. (www.geocities.com/MUSICAJOROCU) [816] 333-6874, www.geocities.com/MUSICAJOROCU)



(Musica Jorocu, Seth Cashman)

VIDEOS

8 The Drumset Crash Course, Tuning Edition

by Russ Miller (Warner Bros.)

level: all, \$19.95



A clear speaker and player, Russ Miller explores the all-important topic of drum tuning as a "compound problem" involving multiple facets. The novice will appreciate his patience in dealing with topics such as raising the front of the bass drum, tuning to pitches (hint: he *hums* into the drum), banishing dreaded snare buzz, adjusting snare wire sustain according to tempo, and the fallacy of tensioning snares too high. Although Russ favors a deeply tuned drum, he doesn't let his druthers get in the way of suggesting alternatives when musically appropriate.

(www.warnerbrospublications.com)

T. Bruce Wittet

7 Just Another Day In The Park (Warner Bros.)

level: all, \$12.95



Despite the puzzling sales pitch that *Park* rekindles "the lost art of jamming and improvisation," Santana percussionists **RAUL REKOW** (congas) and **KARL PERAZZO** (timbales/percussion), with guest drummer **HORACIO "EL NEGRO" HERNANDEZ**, do deliver knock-out Latin groove power here, in trio and solo settings. And all-star full-band segments, despite a disappointing mix, are scorching. The centerpiece trio numbers highlight Rekow's muscular, "melodic" five-conga setup, Perazzo's riveting precision percussion, and Hernandez' astonishing four-limb independence. Rekow's seductive, conversational bongo solo is an unexpected delight. With these talents teamed up, it's certainly *not* just another day in the park. (www.warnerbrospublications.com)

Jeff Potter



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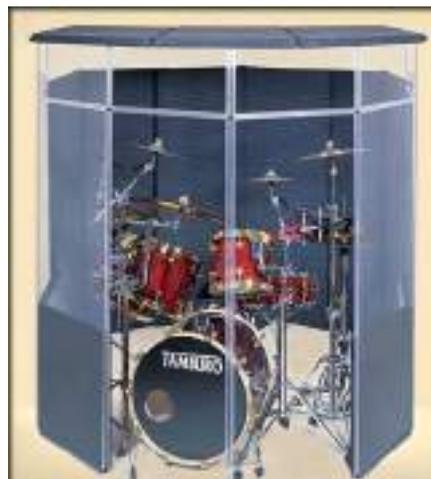


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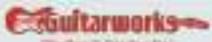


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Berklee Percussion Week



From left: Berklee faculty members and star vibists Victor Mendoza, Ed Saindon, Gary Burton, and Dave Samuels perform "Four By Four: A Tribute To Lionel Hampton, Red Norvo, Milt Jackson, and Cal Tjader."



Eguie Castrillo

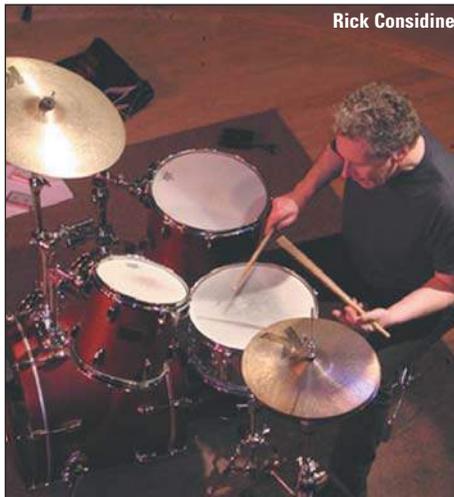
Berklee College Of Music's Percussion Department presented its annual Percussion Week this past April 2-5. A stellar group of visiting artists joined members of Berklee's world-renowned percussion faculty to present daily clinics and concerts.

Percussion Week '03 kicked off on Tuesday with a drumset workshop by professor **John Ramsay** and a solo marimba concert by assistant professor **Nanae Mimura**. Associate professor **Rod Morgenstein** performed with the Rudess Morgenstein Project, a power duo that also features Dream Theater keyboardist Jordan Rudess. Associate professors **Ian Froman** and **Kim Plainfield** shared the bill on a contemporary jazz concert.

On Wednesday, assistant professor **Francisco Mela** presented a drumset concert, accompanied by Berklee alums Leo Blanco on piano and Peter Slavov on bass. Professor **Skip Hadden** followed with a drumset workshop, and **Eguie**

Castrillo offered a dynamic Latin percussion clinic. Renowned vibist **Jay Hoggard** presented a clinic (sponsored by Ludwig/Musser) focusing on African and American musical idioms. Hoggard then joined percussion assistant chair **Yoron Israel** and his group, Organic, featuring Sam Yahel (organ) and Ed Cherry (guitar), in a concert of works associated with the soulful organ legacy. Later that evening, Berklee's World Music Night featured associate professors **Jamey Haddad** and **Joe Galeota**.

Thursday featured a concert by percussion instructor **Dave Cowan** and a demonstration of contemporary drumming styles by associate profes-



Rick Considine



Guest artist Jay Hoggard

David Cowan



sor **Rick Considine**. Percussion department chair **Dean Anderson** directed the **Berklee College Of Music Percussion Ensemble** in a program that featured marimba soloist **Martha Cipolla**. The evening was capped when four faculty vibists—five-time Grammy winner **Gary Burton**, 2003 Grammy winner **Dave Samuels**, and internationally renowned recording artists **Victor Mendoza** and **Ed Saindon**—honored four great vibraphone pioneers in a program titled “Four By Four: A Tribute To Lionel Hampton, Red Norvo, Milt Jackson, And Cal Tjader.”

Saturday, April 5 was designated Massachusetts Percussive Arts Society Day of Percussion. Presentations showcased students from Cabot Elementary School, Abundant Life, and Fayerweather Elementary School, led respectively by Berklee faculty members **Casey Scheuerell**, **Ron Savage**, and **Angelamia Bachemin**. Visiting artists **The Pendulum Percussion Duo** performed, assistant professor **Sa Davis** presented a hand-percussion clinic, and visiting artist **Mario DeCuiitis** (principal percussionist for Radio City Music Hall since 1979) presented an electronic percussion clinic sponsored by Alternate Mode.

Saturday’s events culminated with an exciting rock concert by faculty drummer **Mike Mangini** and his band Hypercane, held in the Berklee Performance Center. The concert was sponsored by Zildjian and Pearl. Information on Berklee can be obtained at (800) 421-0084, or at www.berklee.edu.

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Zildjian Honored On 380th Anniversary

This past May 9, on the occasion of its 380th anniversary, the Zildjian company was recognized as the oldest continually owned family business in the United States. Dignitaries and drummers alike celebrated the occasion at Zildjian headquarters in Norwell, Massachusetts.

Star power was provided by **Joey Kramer** (Aerosmith), **Cindy Blackman** (Lenny Kravitz), **Terri Lyne Carrington** (Herbie Hancock), and drum god **Elvin Jones**. Elvin made a typically warm and funny speech honoring the company whose cymbals he's played on countless classic recordings.

President Bush and Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney were represented at the event, during which May 9 was proclaimed as Zildjian Day in Massachusetts. The Boston Arts Academy chorus and percussion ensemble provided musical interludes between speeches, as did Massachusetts' "singing state trooper" Dan Clarke. After all the formalities, the real party began, as national recording artist Johnny A. provided some scorching rock 'n' blues under a party tent.



Among the well-wishers at Zildjian's 380th-anniversary celebration were Lt. Cmdr. William J. Marks of the U.S.S. Constitution, who delivered an official letter from President Bush. Pictured with him, from left, are Zildjian vice president—human resources Debbie Zildjian, director Rab Zildjian, and CEO Craigie Zildjian.

DW Drum Day 2003

Drum Workshop has unveiled plans for this year's DW Drum Day to be held on Saturday, October 25 at the House Of Blues in Anaheim, California. The annual event benefits the International House Of Blues Foundation. At press time, the lineup for the show includes **Marco Minnemann**, **Stephen Perkins** (Jane's Addiction), **José Pasillas** (Incubus), and **Tony Royster Jr.**, plus special guests. The show will be hosted by **John Hernandez** (Oingo Boingo) and **Zoro** (Bobby Brown, Lenny Kravitz). Artist appearances are subject to availability.

Every ticketholder who attends the event will be eligible to win one of the DW drumsets used on stage during the show, or one of many other prizes. In addition, free five-minute drum lessons will be sponsored by Roland Electronic Percussion.

Tickets are \$25 and are available at



From left: Tony Royster Jr., Stephen Perkins, José Pasillas, and Marco Minnemann

participating Southern California DW drum dealers, Ticketmaster, and the House Of Blues box office, and online at www.dwdrums.com, www.hob.com, and www.ticketmaster.com. Drum Day 2003 is sponsored by Drum Workshop, Evans, Meinl, Paiste, Pro-Mark, Remo, Roland, Sabian, Shure, Vic Firth, Zildjian, and Modern Drummer Publications. For additional details call (805) 485-6999, or go to www.dwdrums.com.

In related news, Drum Workshop has released its 30th Anniversary DVD. The limited-edition disc features a one-hour behind-the-scenes look at the history of the company, hosted by DW founder and president Don Lombardi and drum designer and vice-president John Good. Also included is extensive footage of the DW factory, testimonials and performances by nearly two dozen of DW's top endorsers, and separate bonus sections on DW drums, pedals, hardware, and exotic woods. The DVD is available at participating DW drum dealers.

Drum Workshop Presents

DRUM DAY 2003

- Live performances by:

Stephen Perkins

...plus special guests

Marco Minnemann

Tony Royster, Jr.

additional artists to be announced soon!

- Hosted by:

John Hernandez

Zoro

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- Guitar Center
- Drumworks (Las Vegas)
- Mike's Drum Shop (Santa Barbara)

- Sam Ash
- Drum Circuit (San Luis Obispo)
- Pro Drum (Hollywood)
- San Diego Drum (San Diego)

- Bentley's Drum Shop (Fresno)
- Ontario Music (Ontario)
- West Coast Drum (Santa Ana)

Tickets also available through Ticketmaster and the House of Blues box office.

Please note artist appearances are subject to availability.

Sabian Opens New West Coast Office And Welcomes DiMuzio

On Thursday, May 22 Sabian Cymbals celebrated the opening of a new artist relations/artist service center at 3412 West Burbank Boulevard, in Burbank, California. The building is located in the heart of the LA music scene, and also houses Drum Roll, a training facility for drummers recently founded by **Steve Ferrone**.

Several of LA's top drummers dropped by for the event, including **Matt Abts** (Gov't Mule), **Tom Brechtlein** (Robben Ford), **Virgil Donati** (Planet X/Steve Vai), **Robin DiMaggio**, **Richie "Gajate" Garcia**, **Dave Weckl**, and neighbor Steve Ferrone. Sabian officials on hand for the event included international artist relations and events manager **Stacey Montgomery-Clark** and North American artist relations manager **Bobby Boos** (who will operate from



From left: Sabian senior marketing manager Wayne Blanchard, international artist relations & events manager Stacey Montgomery-Clark, Lenny DiMuzio, sales & marketing operations manager Mardi Thornton, and company president Dan Barker

the new office).

Sabian's **Bill Zildjian** took the opportunity to announce the addition of legendary percussion industry figure **Lenny DiMuzio** as a consultant to the company's worldwide artist relations program and sales & marketing team. A lifelong drummer with over forty years of experience in the percussion industry, DiMuzio has been influential in shaping the careers of many of today's leading drummers and percussion-

ists. He is also acknowledged within the industry as the originator of "artist relations." DiMuzio will be based at Sabian's office in Marshfield, near Boston, Massachusetts. For more news and information about Sabian, visit their Web site at www.sabian.com.

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Indy Quickies

Custom drum maker **Johnny Craviotto** (below, left) recently presented **David Chase**, creator of HBO's hit show *The Sopranos* (and a drum hobbyist), with a 5½x12



solid-maple snare drum finished in a bright red transparent lacquer. The one-of-a-kind "Sopranos Soprano" drum was handcrafted and signed by the legendary drumsmith, who's a big fan of the show. It bears a badge reading "Custom made for David Chase, creator of *The Sopranos*, by Johnny Craviotto."

Diane Downs, director/teacher of The Fabulous Leopard Percussionists, has moved the program to new rehearsal facilities at the University Of Louisville. The move symbolizes the growth of Diane's progressive music education concept from an elementary school-based group into a community-based organization now



known as the Louisville Leopards. Since 1993, the Leopards program has involved school-age children in percussion performances at local schools and community locations. As their reputation spread, the group began to perform around the country with top professional drummers and percussionists. This fall, some of the Louisville Leopards are scheduled to appear with **Tommy Igoe** and **Valerie Naranjo** (the original drummer and percussionist for Broadway's *The Lion King*) at the Percussive Arts Society's International Convention in Louisville.

Studio drummer and electronic specialist **Mike Snyder** and drum 'n' bass practitioner **Johnny Rabb** recently completed the first West Coast Roland Drum Clinic tour. The tour, also sponsored by Drum Workshop, marks the first time an acoustic drum company and an electronic drum company have joined forces for an educational clinic series. Appearing at six different California drumshops, Mike and Johnny demonstrated how they integrate electronic drums and percussion into their setups for live performance and studio recording applications. For information regarding future clinics, log onto www.RolandUS.com.

Norbert Siegl's DRUMS drum school in Dachau, Germany recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary. The celebration

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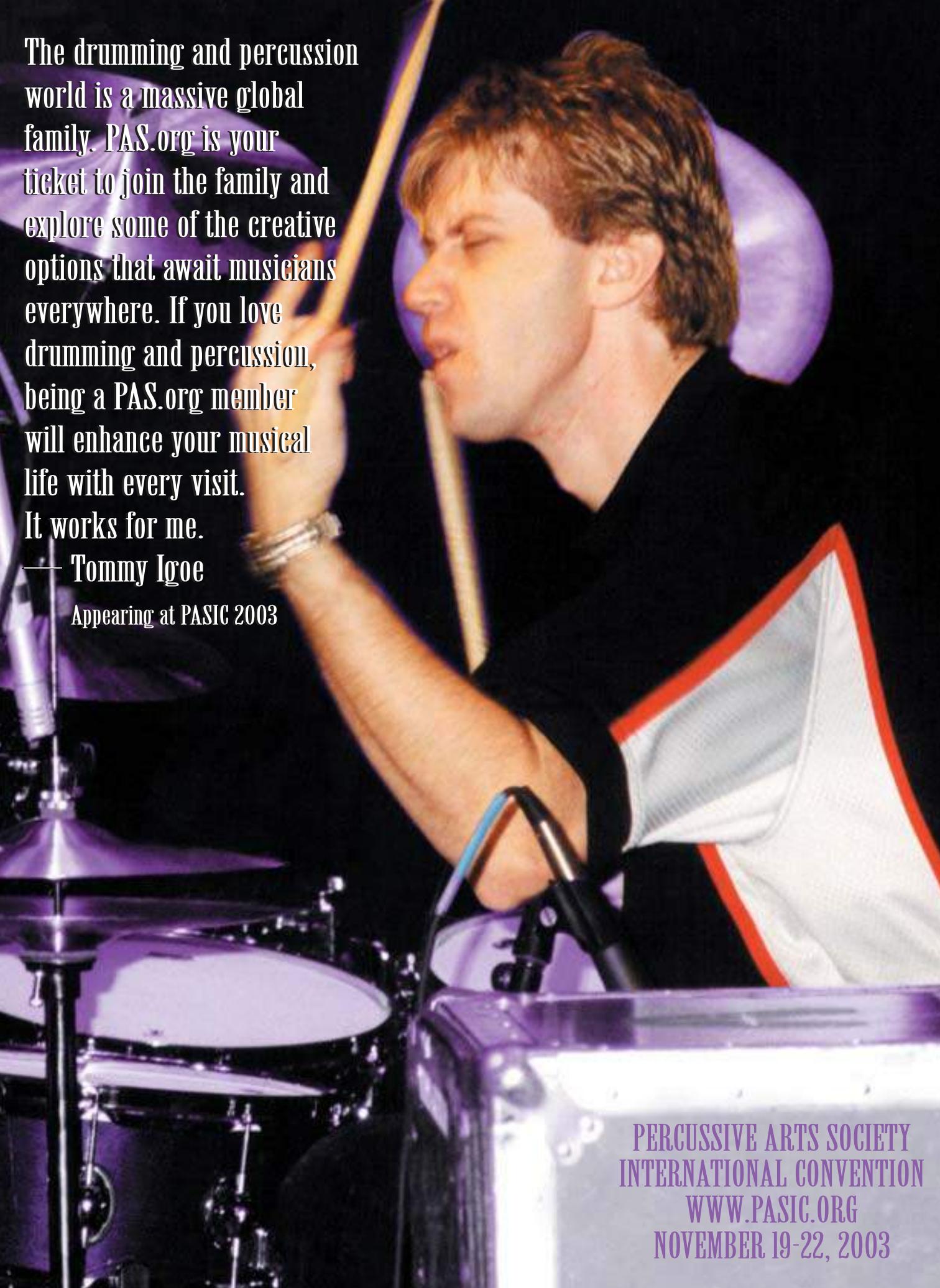


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A photograph of a male drummer, Tommy Igoe, in profile, playing a drum set. He is wearing a black t-shirt with a white and red design on the sleeve and a silver bracelet on his left wrist. He is holding a drumstick in his right hand, raised as if in the middle of a performance. The background is dark with some purple lighting. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

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— Tommy Igoe

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From left: DRUMS teacher Hans Trenker, Ed Thigpen, Jim Chapin, JoJo Mayer, DRUMS director Norbert Siegl, Julio Figueroa, and DRUMS teacher Stefan Kain.

featured performances by school students, along with Brazilian drum star **Julio Figueroa**, jazz great **Ed Thigpen**, and contemporary wizard **JoJo Mayer**. Guest of honor was teaching legend **Jim Chapin**. Information on the school may be obtained at www.drums-siegl.de.

Grover Pro Percussion now offers percussion “mini-lessons” on their Web site. Founder and president **Neil Grover** has been a leading music educator for over twenty-five years, serving on the faculties of both Boston Conservatory and The University Of Massachusetts, authoring two popular percussion books, and presenting clinics and masterclasses around the world.

The first lesson instructs percussionists on proper execution of the elusive tambourine “thumb roll.” For more info and to view Grover’s lessons, go to www.groverpro.com.

Dove Award—winning producer/recording artist **Alvaro Lopez** recently established a new Guinness world record for the longest drumming marathon performed by an individual. During the Expolit Convention in Miami, Florida, Lopez played for fifty-six hours and twenty-nine minutes, breaking the record of fifty hours and thirty minutes set in 2002 by South Africa’s Michael MacPherson. Lopez was allowed only one fifteen-minute break every eight hours.

Lopez has toured and recorded with many major Latin American artists. He also has a solo album, *The Alvaro Lopez Project* (Provident Music/Latin Door Distribution), and is an endorser for Meinl, Mapex, Regal Tip, and DW pedals. For further information, contact lynn@mccainpr.com.



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Who's Playing What

Meinl has added **Chris "The Jungledrummer" Polglase**



(London Elektriccity), **Barry Kerch** (Shinedown), **Brian Levine** (Radio Free America), **J.D. Romeo** (Spitalfield), and **Ludo Srnc** (Slovakian independent) to its roster of cymbal artists. In addition, **Tom Brechtlein** (Chick Corea, Robben Ford) is a new Meinl percussion endorser.

Percussion great **Marc Quiñones** is currently on tour with the Allman Brothers Band playing Pearl percussion. His signature line of timbales is slated for a fall release.



Meanwhile, the newest member of Pearl's drumset family is **Joey Jordison** of Slipknot and The Murder Dolls.

Vater Percussion's drumstick endorsers now include **Sam Loeffler** (Chevelle, right), **Kim Urhahn** (Lillix), **Adam Carson** (AFI), **Jeremy Colson** (Steve Vai), **Hamish Rosser** (The Vines), **Chris Gaylor** (All American Rejects), **Thomas Noonan** (36 Crazyfists), **Alex Pappas** (Finch, left), **Kevin Soffera** (Seether), **Pete Navarette** (UnLoco), **Darren Reynolds** (Homegrown), **Roger Comero** (No Motiv), and **Branden Steineckert** (The Used).



Dennis Poschwatta is touring with nü-metal favorites Guano Apes, using a new Sonor Designer kit featuring a 24-ply snare and matching bass drum and sandblasted hardware.



Prizes And Presentations

Between each artist's segment at this year's Modern Drummer Festival Weekend, thousands of dollars' worth of door prizes were given away. Snare drums, cymbals, Latin and Brazilian percussion instruments, heads, sticks, videos, and many other goodies went to lucky Festival-goers whose ticket numbers were called. Special prizes were also awarded to those who had traveled the farthest to attend the Festival.

Saturday's show saw a break from tradition, when instead of presenting an award, *MD* was given one. Sonor Drum Company sales & marketing manager Jerry Goldenson presented a custom-created Designer Series snare drum to *Modern Drummer* in recognition of the magazine's leadership in and contribution to the percussion industry.

Returning to tradition, Robert Zildjian of Sabian was presented with *Modern Drummer's* 2003 Editor's Achievement Award, recognizing Robert's achievement at bringing a totally new cymbal company to industry prominence. The award was accepted on Robert's behalf by his son Andy.

On Sunday the presentations continued with Editors Achievement Awards to Ralph Angelillo and Serge Gamache, the organizers of the Montreal Drum Fest. Their event just celebrated its tenth anniversary, making them the second-longest-running drum festival in the world.

A second award was given jointly to Robert Paiste and the late Toomas Paiste, in recognition of their creativity and leadership in cymbal manufacturing. Their plaques were accepted by Paiste's Ed Clift and Rich Mangicaro.

QUICK BEATS

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What are some of your favorite grooves?

Paul Humphrey on "Let's Get It On" (Marvin Gaye), Charlie Watts on "Under My Thumb" (Rolling Stones), and Dave Grohl on "Smells Like Teen Spirit" (Nirvana).

What's your favorite TV theme music?

Everybody Loves Raymond, by Rick Marotta.

If you could put together an imaginary superband, who would be in it?

John, George, Paul, and Ringo.



What song makes you say, "I wish I had played on that one"?

"Just A Little Lovin' Early In The Morning" by Dusty Springfield (Gene Chrisman on drums), "Can't Always Get What You Want" by the Rolling Stones (Jimmy Miller), and "Rip It Up" by Little Richard (Earl Palmer).

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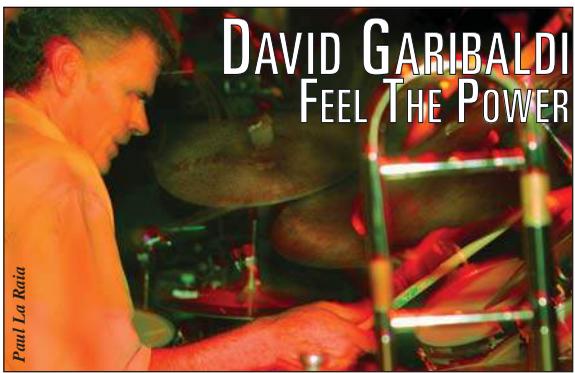
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The combined set consists of two 14x20 bass drums, 8x12 and 9x13 rack toms, 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms, and a 5x14 Micro-Sensitive snare drum. All toms have been updated with RIMS mounts. Bernard completes the set with Bosphorus, Istanbul, Paiste, Sabian, UFIP, and Zildjian cymbals.

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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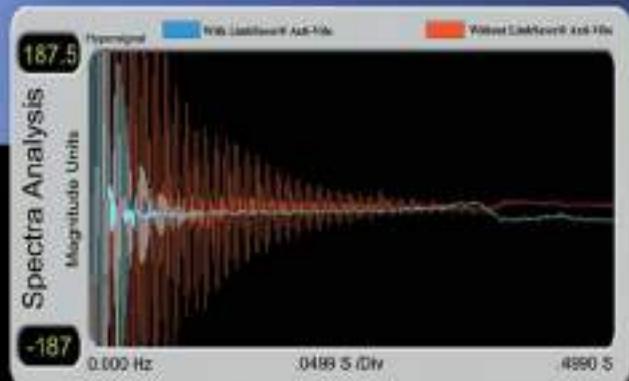
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