

MODERN DRUMMER

The World's #1 Drum Magazine

January 2005

John Blackwell

**Rising
Up From
Tragedy**

JASON BITTNER

**Of Shadows Fall—
Double Bass Dominance**

**VINNIE COLAIUTA &
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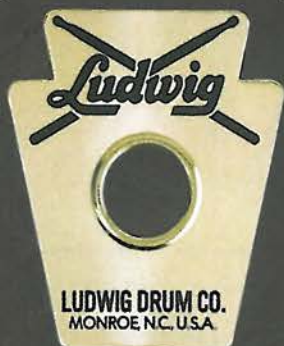
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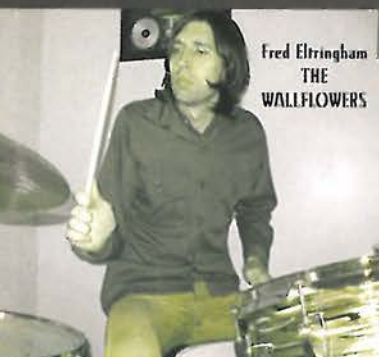
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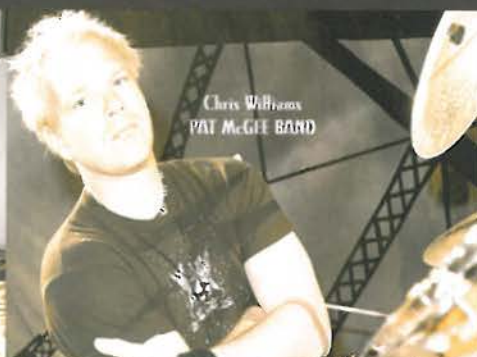


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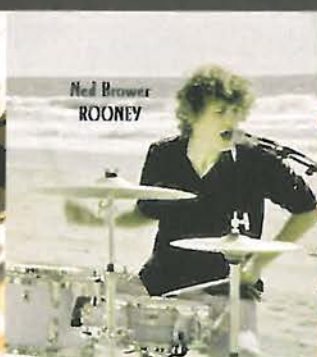
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THE
WALLFLOWERS



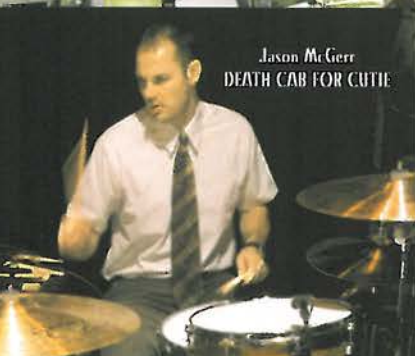
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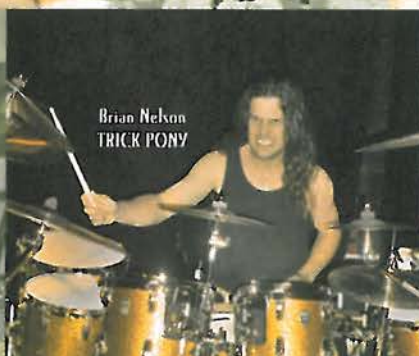
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Jason McCerr
DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE



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TRICK PONY



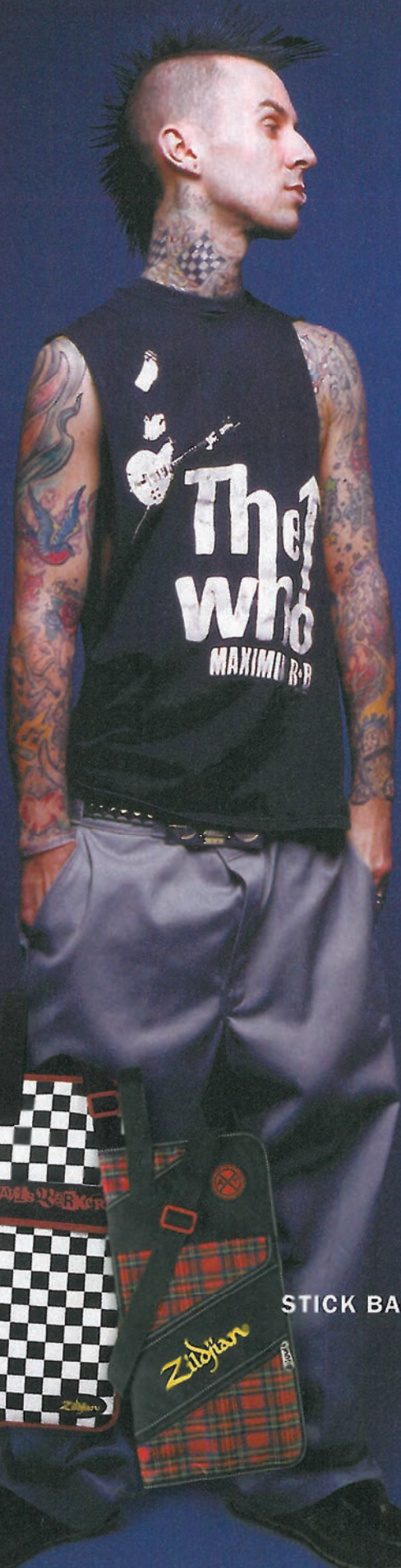
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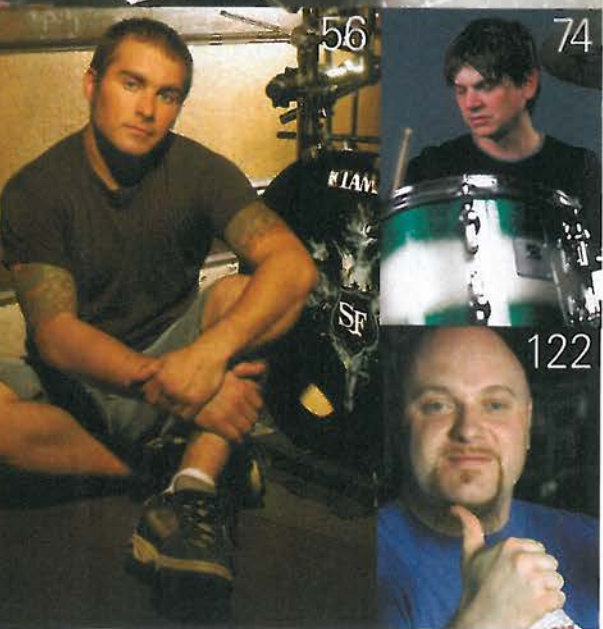
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Pearl

Our New Look...And Festival



Dear Readers:

When my late husband, Ron Spagnardi, and I started *Modern Drummer* magazine twenty-eight years ago, we stated that it would always be filled with the best information possible for drummers. As we begin our twenty-ninth year with this, the January 2005 issue, I want to assure you that this commitment continues.

I've never been prouder of *Modern Drummer* magazine than I am today. All of us here are very excited about the changes that have been taking place. You may have noticed how *MD* has continued to grow in recent months in terms of content and number of pages. We're also very excited about our new logo, which you saw on the front cover of this issue.

Anyone familiar with Ron knows what a forward thinker he was. He was *always* coming up with new ideas and planning something exciting for *MD*. It's our job to carry that attitude forward. And with this issue, and our new logo, we feel we're doing just that.

After several months of planning and poring over many different variations, we selected the logo you now see on the cover. While we were all very proud of our old logo, we felt it was time to "upgrade" it a bit. And we wanted a logo that placed an equal emphasis on "modern" as well as "drummer." *Modern Drummer* is all about looking forward and being cutting-edge, as well as embracing the rich history of the instrument. We feel our new logo reflects that attitude.

In other exciting news, I'm pleased to announce that *MD's* Festival Weekend is back, bigger and better, as promised. The 2005 Festival will be held May 28 and 29 at the beautiful New Jersey Performing Arts Center. Along with many other advantages, NJPAC's expansive seating capacity will allow us to accommodate *everyone* who wishes to attend the show. Information about NJPAC can be obtained from www.njpac.org. Our first announcement appears on page 164 of this issue. More details will follow in upcoming issues, and at www.modrndrummer.com.

Finally, I want to again say how grateful I am to everyone who works at *Modern Drummer*, the dedicated people who make this magazine the great publication that it is. And, of course, I want to thank *you* for your continued support of the work we do.

I hope you enjoy this issue!

MODERN DRUMMER

Volume 29 Number 1

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MODERN DRUMMER magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2005 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: MODERN DRUMMER Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: (973) 239-4140. Fax: (973) 239-7139. Email: mdinfo@modrndrummer.com.

MODERN DRUMMER welcomes manuscripts and photographic material, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Such items must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: US, Canada, and Mexico \$34.97 per year; \$56.97, two years. Other international \$41.97 per year, \$79.97, two years. Single copies \$4.99.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Modern Drummer, PO Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0480. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Call (800) 551-3786 or (815) 734-1170.

MUSIC DEALERS: Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer Retail Vision, 2 Maple Street, Suite 6, Middlebury, VT 05753, (800) 381-1288.

REPRINTS: Reprints of *Modern Drummer* articles can be supplied on request. Contact Tracy Kearns at MD for details: (973) 239-4140.

INTERNATIONAL LICENSING REPRESENTATIVE: Robert Abramson & Associates, Inc., Libby Abramson, President, PO Box 740346, Boynton Beach, FL 33474-0346, abramson@prodigy.net.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modern Drummer, PO Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

MEMBER: National Association of Music Merchants, American Music Conference, Percussive Arts Society, Music Educators National Conference, Percussion Marketing Council, Music Magazine Publishers Association.

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ELVIN JONES TRIBUTE ISSUE

Congratulations to all who were involved in *MD*'s October tribute issue to Elvin Jones. It was well balanced and presented, with not only the historical perspective but also excellent notated musical examples of Elvin's signature playing styles. (That is not easy to do.)

All in all, I felt it was a fitting exclamation point on the long and miraculous career of one of America's greatest master drummers.

Pete Magadini



Your October tribute to Elvin Jones did a marvelous job of catching the essence of the man. I have many memories of time spent with Elvin, but one in particular comes to mind.

Several years ago, I attended Thoroughbred Music's Drum Expo in Tampa, Florida. Elvin was there to give a master class, and those in attendance hung on his every word. Afterward, Elvin, his wife Keiko, *MD*'s Rick Van Horn, and I headed off for dinner at a local Italian restaurant. The wine flowed freely and the conversation covered just about everything except "business."

Later on in the evening I leaned over to Elvin and said, "Elvin, I love to listen to you play, but I don't understand jazz. Can you explain it to me?" He looked at me with that twinkle he always had in his eye and said very slowly, "Jazz is...uh...jazz is all about the changes." Elvin must have sensed that I was waiting for more, because he paused, then said, "I hire the best musicians I can find, and I trust that they know their instruments. It's all about the changes."

It occurred to me some time later that asking Elvin to explain jazz was akin to asking Edison to explain the light bulb. And today, while I'm not sure I understand jazz any better, I sure listen to it differently!

I miss you, Elvin.

Pat Brown

Director Of Sales And Marketing
Pro-Mark Corporation

I received my latest copy of *MD* in the mail and sat for a moment, staring at the photo of Elvin Jones on the cover. Rumors had been flying around about Elvin being sick. When he passed away, the drumming community was devastated. I stopped for a moment and said a short prayer for Elvin. Then I turned to my favorite part of *MD*: the back page that carries the *Drumkit Of The Month* column.

My jaw hit the floor as I looked at Elvin Jones' kit, empty and silent for evermore. Only one thought came to mind as I looked at Elvin's kit: Perfect.

Kudos to you and your staff for an outstanding issue—even as sad as most of the subject matter was. Well done.

Kevin James

Your Elvin tribute issue was excellent. I hope drummers of all ages will reflect on Elvin's choice to *stray* the course rather than stay the course when it came to exploring jazz drumming and its possibilities. I think a living tribute we can all pay him is to continue to take creative chances and break the rules now and then, in order to free up the artist too often trapped by the constraints of stereotypical expectation. Elvin's recognized genius now was ignited by his courage way back when.

David Aldridge

JEREMY HUMMEL

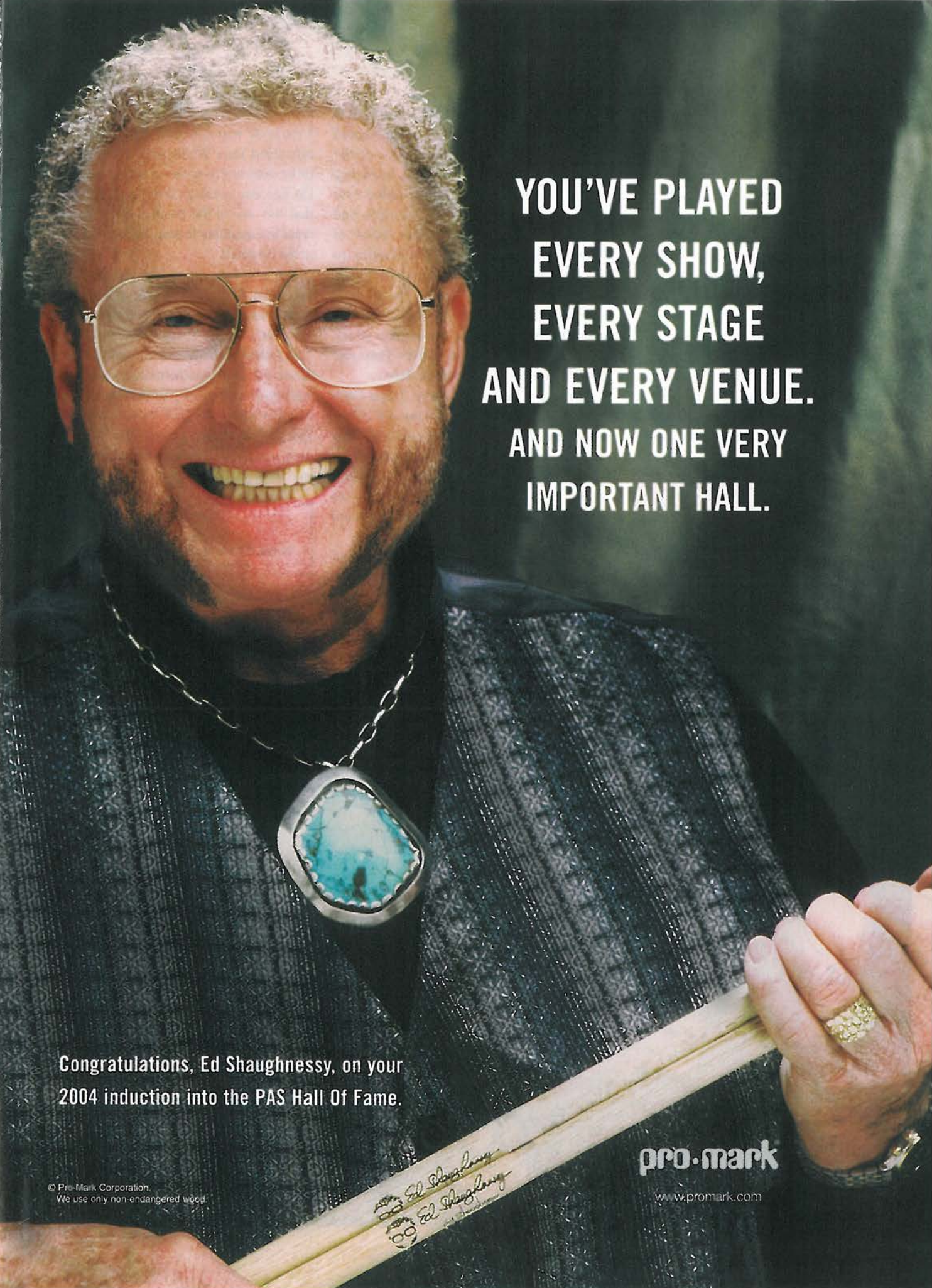
Thanks for the outstanding feature on Breaking Benjamin's Jeremy Hummel in your October issue. Being from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania myself, I've had the pleasure of watching the group go from being a small-club cover band to gaining national prominence. Since I first saw them in early 2000, I've been amazed by Jeremy Hummel's drumming skills. At first, it was all about how well he played the cover grooves: every part played perfectly, yet with his own style. Later, when they were playing their own material, Jeremy's talent *really* shined.

Not only is Jeremy an incredible drummer, he's also a very down-to-earth person. Over the years, he's spent many hours talking shop with me before and after shows.

I've waited a long time for a feature on Jeremy, and your interview was well worth the wait. Harriet Schwartz did an excellent job, hitting on all of the points that make Jeremy's style unique. Thank you for reminding me why *Modern Drummer* is, and always will be, my bible of drumming.

Brian Jezuit



A close-up portrait of Ed Shaughnessy, a man with curly grey hair, glasses, and a beard, smiling broadly. He is wearing a dark, textured jacket over a black turtleneck and a necklace with a large, irregular turquoise pendant. He is holding two wooden drumsticks in his hands. The drumsticks have his signature 'Ed Shaughnessy' and the year '2004' written on them in black ink. The background is dark and out of focus.

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THICK AS A BRICK ENCORE

I just read Adam Budofsky's October *Encore* recollection of Jethro Tull's prog rock milestone *Thick As A Brick*. I don't think Barriemore Barlow ever really got the respect he deserves. His drumming was always so fluid and inspiring—almost as though he were playing a song within a song. Thank you for spotlighting this great work from the past.

Wayne

KUDOS TO TAMA AND HARRY

A few months ago I ordered from The Drum Center of Indianapolis a 10" tom to complement the toms on my six-year-old Tama Starclassic Performer kit. I was sur-

prised when the drum arrived a mere three weeks later. However, I was disappointed when I opened the box. The color of the new drum did not match my existing drums. Whether my drums had faded over the years, or Tama's color formula had changed, is unknown. But what *is* known—at least now—is the lengths to which Tama will go to make a customer happy.

I emailed Drum Center owner (and *MD* historian) Harry Cangany to apprise him of my dilemma. He said he would call his Tama rep, Rob Wood, to see what could be done.

To make a long story short, Tama USA shipped the new drum and my 14" floor tom to the Tama factory in Japan so that the new drum could be color-matched to my kit. When I got the drums back eight weeks later, they matched perfectly. Not only that, but Tama put new hardware and heads on my six-year-old floor tom.

The extremes to which Harry, Rob, and Tama went to make this weekend warrior happy are rare in today's times. They have made a lifetime customer out of me.

Stephen Brown

FATHER FIGURE

I recently had a lesson with Jim Chapin scheduled for a Wednesday evening. It was to be held at the home of Jim's son David. On Tuesday evening, David called to tell me that Jim was in the hospital. But Jim didn't want to cancel the lesson. He wanted to do it at the hospital!

Jim's insistence on conducting my lesson illustrated his devotion and dedication to drumming. His introduction at this past summer's KoSA Percussion Workshop as "the father of modern drumming" was well deserved. Jim's performance there, at age eighty-five, speaks volumes about the Moeller technique that he has been teaching for so many years. We drummers owe so much to Jim for what he has given us.

Dave Riecken

OOPS!

The photo of Richie Hayward on page 26 of our October '04 issue was inadvertently uncredited. It was taken by Ron Gerber.

The review of Hossam Ramzy's *Sabla Tolo II* CD in the October *Critique* listed an incorrect Web address. The correct address is www.arcmusic.co.uk.

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Flying With A Drumkit

I'm going on tour in a few weeks and need to get a small kit from Atlanta to Oregon. I've determined that I can travel with two carry-ons and an instrument. That would cover my laptop, my overnight bag, and my snare drum, which is in a hard case with a handle.

I figure I can check all of my hardware as baggage, in a hard-case box (like a golf bag hard case). But then comes the problem of checking my drums. I don't have hard cases for them; I normally carry them myself in bags.

Would you suggest building a large case made of hard plastic to put my kick drum, rack tom, and floor tom in—with my cymbals in the kick drum? That would get the drums and the hardware on the plane as only two items of checked baggage. What are your thoughts?

Joel D. Seawell

A golf bag case—or even a closable golf bag—will work well for drum stands, if it isn't overloaded. Most airlines handle golf bags as normal baggage; a few consider them "oversize" baggage and charge a small fee. Call your airline for details.

We do not recommend combining your drums into one package to save on excess baggage charges. Overweight packages have a tendency to get dropped and/or damaged. Sometimes the weight of the contents themselves bursts the package, even under normal handling.

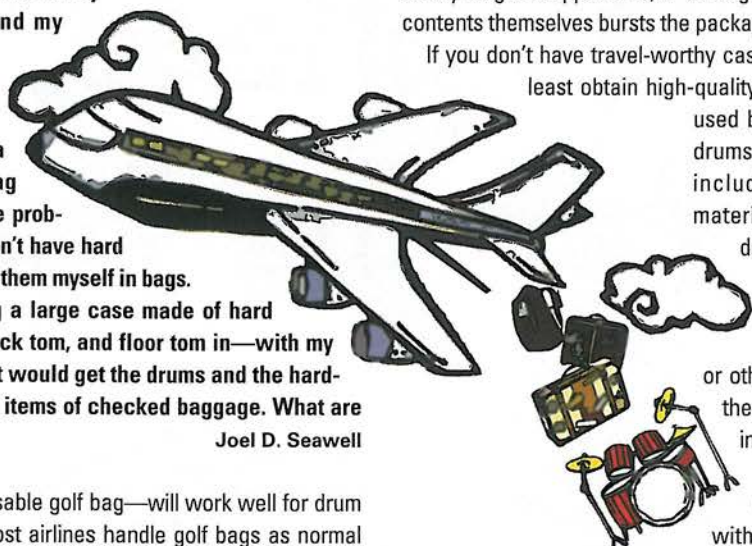
If you don't have travel-worthy cases for your drums, you should at

least obtain high-quality cardboard boxes, like the ones used by the manufacturers to ship the drums in the first place. These should include room for plenty of packing material to protect the contents. The drums should be packed in individual boxes, and those boxes should be sealed with tape, so as to have no snag-able string or other material on them. Check with the airline for their specific packing instructions.

You should absolutely *not* put cymbals in the same container with drums. Since you have a hard case for your snare drum, we suggest packing the drum carefully inside it and checking it, leaving your carry-on option for your cymbals in a

cymbal bag. If you can't carry the cymbals on, you may be able to "gate check" them in their bag. Again, call the airline to get details. If you can't take the cymbals on board with you in any fashion, pack them in a sturdy box of their own, with padding all around their edges, and check them.

Excess baggage charges may be determined by calling the airline ahead of time. Believe us when we say that they are likely to be much less than the potential cost of damage by overpacking. Also, remember that the cost of shipping your gear (like excess baggage charges) is a deductible expense come tax time. So keep receipts.



WFL Drums

I recently purchased a vintage WFL snare and bass drum set. I'd like to know the approximate age of the drums, as well as what the finish is called.

I believe that the drums are from the 1950s. The bass drum has hoop-mounted spurs. The 24" shell seems to be mahogany, with maple reinforcing hoops. The drum has ten lugs in the center of the shell that accept long T-rods from the resonant and batter heads. The snare drum is an 8-lug, 5x14 model. It also has lugs in the center that accept tension rods from the top and bottom heads.

The shells are painted, with a band of gold in the center of the shell, which fades to black near the edges. The finish on the drums is cracked and peeling, with a light-colored wood veneer showing under the paint. I want to refinish the drums with a covering material, and I'd like to use something historically authentic. Any information would be greatly appreciated.

James Evangelos

MD drum historian Harry Cangany replies, "Your kit is definitely pre-1955, and it could go back as far as the late '40s. The bass drum is a separate-tension model using a center-mount lug system. The WFL hoop-mount spurs are correct for the time period. The drum was called a 'dance style concert bass drum,' but it was also the bass for the popular Club Date series, which is perhaps what your two drums were part of. That outfit included a 5x14 Swingster snare drum like yours (which is missing the P83 strainer), a 9x13 rack tom, a 12x15 floor tom, and normally a 14x22 bass drum. Your 24" drum may have been a substitution, even though the catalogs say no substitutions were allowed.

"The black and gold Duco painted finish was less expensive than pearl covering. The color you see under the Duco is the primer used after a wood filler was put on the shells to make them 'perfect.' If you wish to cover the shells with an authentic wrap, WFL used white marine and black diamond pearl wraps, as well as silver, gold, red, green, and blue glitters (not sparkles)."



Mystery Percussion Instrument

Many years ago, I remember seeing an instrument that I believe was called a "cro-toli." It was a tuned instrument with a small keyboard layout, but the "keys" were small metal disks a little larger than finger cymbals. It was played with a mallet and had a bell-like sound, but with little sustain. I can't find any reference to this instrument anywhere. Perhaps I don't have the correct name. Any help would be appreciated.

J Tobey

You have the name correct, but not the spelling. Each individual disk is called a "crotales" (pronounced cro-TAHL-ee), and the musical "keyboard" you refer to would be a set of crotales.

Crotales produce clear, precise notes with definite pitches. For this reason they are frequently called for in orchestral works, and they are the traditional "Cymbales Antiques" utilized by composers in the 19th century. They have also become increasingly popular in contemporary music, especially film scores.

Most of the major cymbal manufacturers offer crotales. Check their Web sites for further information.



Wilco's Glenn Kotche incorporates crotales in his setup.

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Santana's **Dennis Chambers** On Rudiments And Practicing

Q I think you're one of the best drummers on the scene today. I'm impressed with your strong groove and quick hands. Did you (and do you) practice rudiments to develop hand speed? Do you prefer to practice on a pad or a drum? And can you offer any tips for developing hand speed and fluidity?

Bernard Artis

A Thanks for the kind words. Yes, I did practice rudiments quite a bit. And I prefer to practice on a drum when I can. Otherwise, I use a pillow. As for suggestions for increasing your speed, I would recommend practicing all of the rudiments very slowly on a pillow. Try to play them as evenly as possible. Don't worry about speed at first. Work on control. Then begin playing the rudiments faster—*gradually*. Also, don't just work on the fastest tempo you can play. Practice at many different tempos.

When you're practicing your speed and trying to go as fast as you can, you'll get to a point where you can't take it any faster and your playing will fall apart. When I would get to that point, I'd back off from that tempo just a little bit. When I would go back to it the next day, I'd be able to play at that faster tempo. But it's all



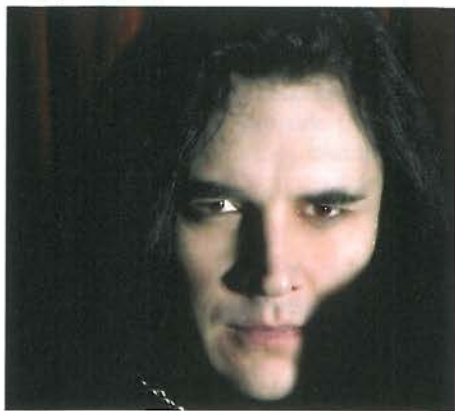
about doing these things consistently on a daily basis.

One other thing that I used to do (and still do when I have time) is hold a phone book under each arm while I'm practicing on a pillow. I've found that this helps your arm and hand strength as well as your posture. It also gives you good arm positioning for when you're actually playing the kit. By the way, I didn't come up with this. I learned it from Buddy Rich and Billy Cobham. Hey, if it worked for those guys....

Speed Tips From **Cradle Of Filth's Adrian Erlandsson**

Q I'm a big fan of your drumming; it's powerful, quick, and precise. I'd like to know how you developed your speed. Do you use a metronome? Can you offer some exercises to help me develop and execute the almighty blast beat? And finally, would you outline your current setup?

Dale Van Haltren



A Thanks for your kind words and your interest in my playing. I never had a solid, worked-out practice routine until about five years ago, when I joined Cradle Of Filth. Prior to that I just "went for it" during band rehearsals, without paying much attention to what I could do to make it easier for myself in terms of technique.

I started playing along to a click track, which I had never done before. I'd start at around 170 bpm. (You should experiment to find your own most comfortable tempo; don't worry if it's slower than you want to go.) I'd hold down the same beat until my body said stop, then rest and repeat that cycle over and over again. Eventually I'd start turning the tempo up—gradually—always keeping it where the beat sounded good. There's no point in playing fast and sloppy. Playing to a click track will really tighten up your playing after a while—and

that will reflect throughout your style.

Keeping fit and doing some sort of cardiovascular exercise regularly (apart from playing drums) will also help. Remember to listen to your body. If you are experiencing any sensations other than normal fatigue, rest.

There are many different kinds of blast beats at the moment, referred to by different names. The one I use the most is a 16th-note roll with the hands (right hand on the ride, left on the snare): just RLRL RLRL. Under that I play alternating 8th notes on the feet (RLRL), so the beats fall on the ride-cymbal hits. To practice that beat, just set the metronome to a comfortable tempo—where you don't seize up after three seconds—and keep at it. Remember to stay relaxed, and don't play any sloppy notes. I play that beat on the opening track "The Promise Of Fever" on Cradle Of Filth's *Damnation And A Day*. On that track the tempo is 210 bpm,

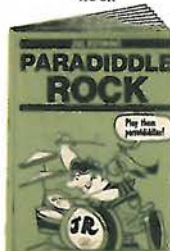
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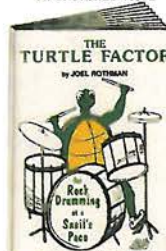
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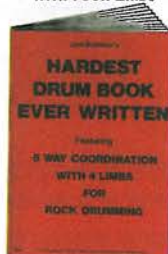
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so staying relaxed is the key for me.

Another thing that can help you play faster is to review your setup in terms of the angle and the height of the drums and cymbals, so that you can play without straining and stretching. Also check the height of your seat and its distance to the kit. Pretty soon you'll be flying.

As far as my kit goes, I'm endorsing Pearl

drums, Sabian cymbals, Vic Firth sticks, Remo heads, and Roland electronics. Please see the accompanying setup.

I hope my answers will help you along the way. Remember that working speed alone is futile. I've seen drummers who can blast at 270 bpm without effort but can't play a good solid rock 4/4.

Thanks again, and best of luck!

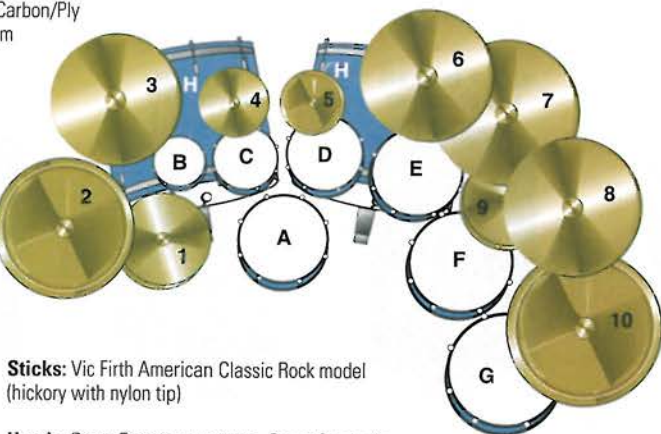
Adrian's Setup

Drums: Pearl Masterworks Carbon/Ply

- A. 5x14 Ultracast snare drum
- B. 8" rack tom
- C. 10" rack tom
- D. 12" rack tom
- E. 14" rack tom
- F. 16" floor tom
- G. 18" floor tom
- H. 24" bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 14" Metal X hi-hats
- 2. 18" Metal X China
- 3. 19" Metal X crash
- 4. 10" Metal X splash
- 5. 10" HH China Kang
- 6. 19" AAXplosion crash
- 7. 21" prototype ride
- 8. 20" Metal X crash
- 9. 14" AAX Stage Hats
- 10. 20" Metal X China



Sticks: Vic Firth American Classic Rock model (hickory with nylon tip)

Heads: Remo Emperors on toms, PowerStroke 3s on the kick drums, and Ambassador batter on the snare.

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A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"I try to leave my mind open enough to think I'm still growing. But I don't really change, I add to what I already know. That old-time swing stays in. That doesn't change."

Jazz great Roy Haynes,
January 1997

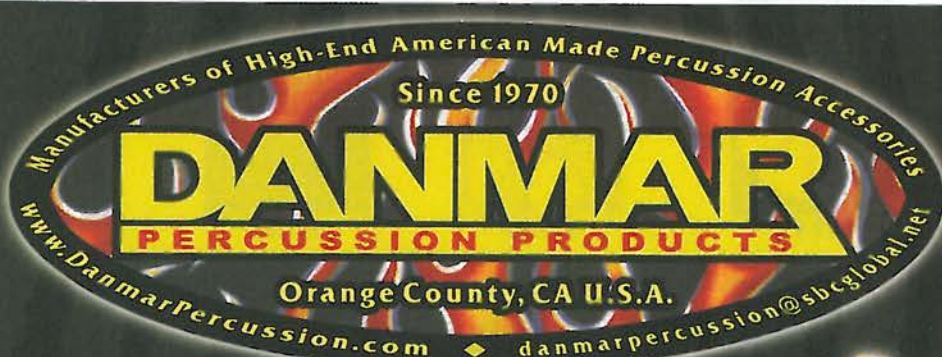


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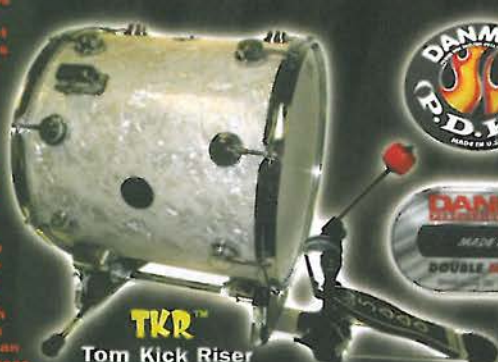
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Jack Irons

Redefining And Reintroducing Himself

Having conquered crippling anxiety disorders that forced him off the drum throne of superstar rock bands like The Red Hot Chili Peppers and Pearl Jam, drummer Jack Irons is back with his first solo album, *Attention Dimension*. Jack, who recorded in various home studios over the course of five years, says, "The whole process of making this record allowed me to begin to be healthy again."

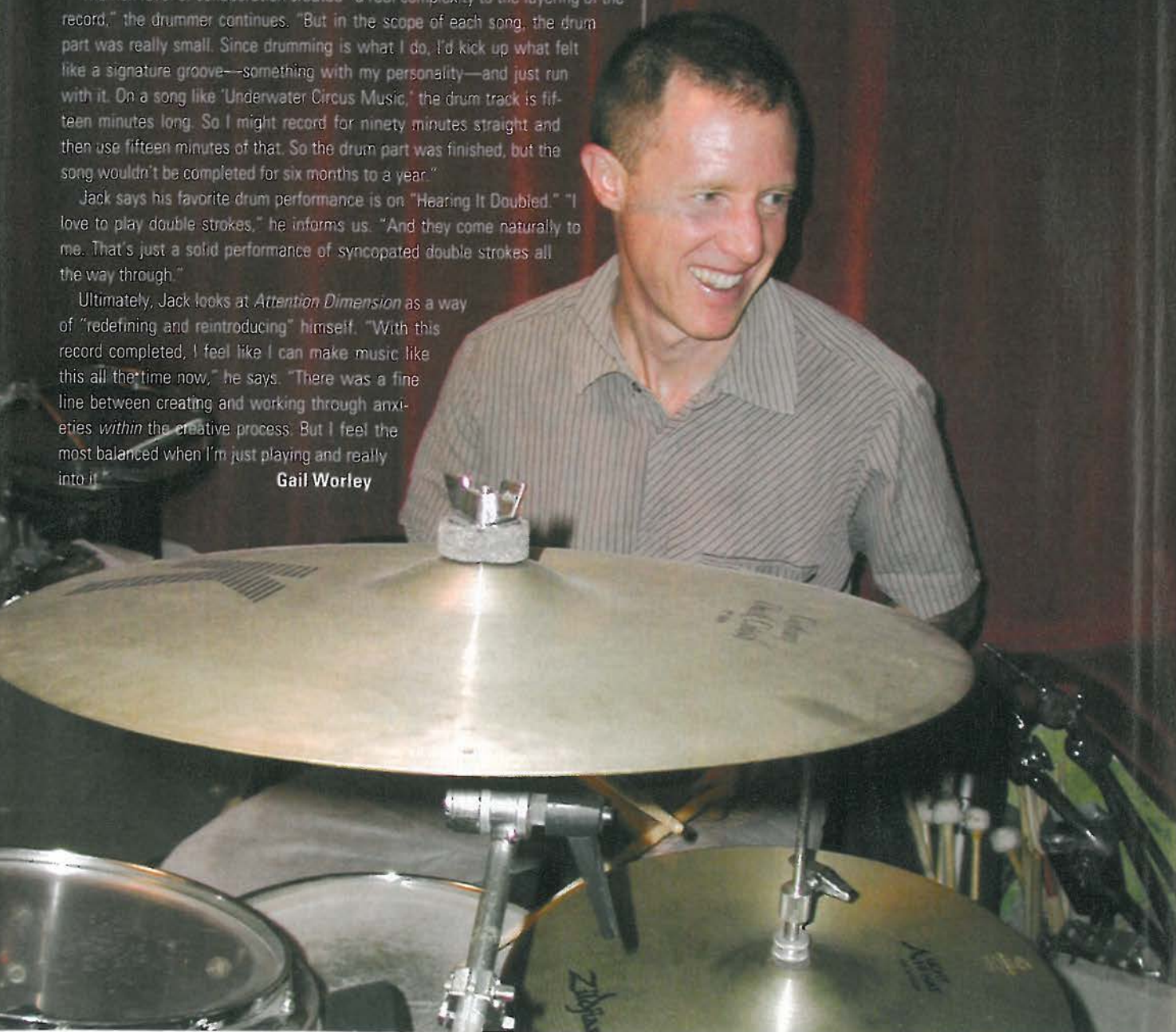
A highlight of the extremely eclectic album is a steel drum arrangement of Pink Floyd's "Shine On You Crazy Diamond," featuring Les Claypool on bass and vocals by Eddie Vedder. Other former bandmates putting their imprint on the album include Pearl Jam's Stone Gossard and Jeff Ament, Chili Peppers bassist Flea, and Eleven's Alain Johannes (who mixed the album) and Natasha Shneider. "Having my friends' support helped me feel like I could pursue a career again," Irons says. "I was very isolated for a long time. To reconnect with all of these people was a huge thrill."

The rich level of collaboration created "a real complexity to the layering of the record," the drummer continues. "But in the scope of each song, the drum part was really small. Since drumming is what I do, I'd kick up what felt like a signature groove—something with my personality—and just run with it. On a song like 'Underwater Circus Music,' the drum track is fifteen minutes long. So I might record for ninety minutes straight and then use fifteen minutes of that. So the drum part was finished, but the song wouldn't be completed for six months to a year."

Jack says his favorite drum performance is on "Hearing It Doubled." "I love to play double strokes," he informs us. "And they come naturally to me. That's just a solid performance of syncopated double strokes all the way through."

Ultimately, Jack looks at *Attention Dimension* as a way of "redefining and reintroducing" himself. "With this record completed, I feel like I can make music like this all the time now," he says. "There was a fine line between creating and working through anxieties *within* the creative process. But I feel the most balanced when I'm just playing and really into it."

Gail Worley



BAD RELIGION'S **Brooks Wackerman** First-Strike Drumming

On *Empire Strikes First*, Brooks Wackerman's second album with LA punk legends Bad Religion, the drummer says he finally had the chance to throw his band "some curve balls." According to Wackerman, "For *Process Of Belief*, my first Bad Religion record, they'd

already written the material, and most of the ideas were blueprinted. I felt somewhat restrained in the studio because I wasn't there for the evolution of the songs. With



Empire I felt more like a member of the band. I also co-wrote three songs, each based on a drumbeat. By bringing a fresh element to the table, I feel like I'm doing my job.

"The style of punk that Bad Religion created is a kind of protest rock," the drummer continues. "But there's also melody and great harmonies. I think that differentiates us from the more straight-ahead punk bands."

What also distinguishes Bad Religion's sound is Wackerman's insane double bass drumming—highlighted by 32nd notes that continue for sixteen bars on the album's opener, "Sinister Rouge." Frankly, that style of drumming has more to do with speed metal than modern punk rock. Wackerman admits the comparison is valid. "My inspiration for playing double bass comes from metal guys. Joey Jordison from Slipknot is amazing. But my first hero on double bass was Tommy Aldridge of Whitesnake. I bought his *Double Bass Workout* video and learned every lick on it."

Brooks is also the first drummer to use a double pedal on a Bad Religion album. "I wasn't sure how the fans were going to accept it," he says. "Luckily the feedback has been positive, because a double pedal is always a part of my artillery."

When Bad Religion takes a break, Brooks stays busy performing and recording with his band Hot Potty (in which he plays guitar and sings) and doing sessions for albums like multi-platinum-selling pop singer Avril Lavigne's latest, *Under My Skin*. Says Brooks, "Josh Freese, who played on Avril's first record, recommended me for that gig, because he was touring with A Perfect Circle. I enjoy doing sessions like that, and it went really smoothly. That was also the first really commercially successful album I've played on. I hope Josh tours more," he laughs, "because that's how I get more work!"

Gail Worley

THE MAHAVISHNU PROJECT'S **Gregg Bendian** Rekindling The Inner Mounting Flame

"Obviously everybody wants to have their work known, but it's a question of accessibility," admits New Jersey-based drummer/percussionist/composer Gregg Bendian. The drummer's extensive discography features only a couple of major-label recordings, one with Cecil Taylor and another with Pat Metheny. So despite the long, quality list of credits, Bendian has yet to become a familiar name outside of certain circles. ("Generally, my fans are aficionados of certain kinds of creative instrumental music.") But Bendian cuts a wide swath through different styles, many of which incorporate modern, classical, avant-garde, and free-form jazz.

One of Bendian's latest ventures, The Mahavishnu Project, pays tribute to the music of the groundbreaking Mahavishnu Orchestra. The buzz about the group is building. "I get emails about it every day," Bendian says. "It's refreshing to discover how many people are still into this music." None other than the group's venerated founder, guitarist John McLaughlin, has given Bendian's band his enthusiastic endorsement.

"The original Mahavishnu Orchestra was ground zero for the jazz/rock fusion genre," Bendian asserts. "It was my awakening into that whole genre." Bendian was only ten years old and already taking drum lessons when his uncle introduced him to the classic M.O. album, *Birds Of Fire*. "It just blew my mind."

Before Bendian would even consider starting such a band, he says he had to be confident in his playing skills to do it justice. No problem there. In 2000, Bendian and several like-minded compatriots gigged at New York's Knitting Factory, performing and reinterpreting songs from The Mahavishnu Orchestra's original repertoire. "People came out of the woodwork to see the group," Bendian says. "We love playing live, because the music is so open and free, and we can put our own stamp on it."

This, Bendian does with aplomb. Not only is he *all over* Billy Cobham's original drum tracks, he imaginatively adds his own stellar chops and advanced polyrhythmic concepts as well.

The Mahavishnu Project has two recordings, *Live Bootleg* and *Phase 2*, both recorded in concert. Check out www.mahavishnuproject.com and www.greggbendian.com for more info.

Robert Kaye



Peter Gravina/Lipstick Graphics

Michael Brueggen

Solid With Supagroup

New Orleans-based rock 'n' roll traditionalists Supagroup spent half of 2003 and most of 2004 on the road with bands like Queens Of The Stone Age, Fu Manchu, and Drive By Truckers, touring in relentless support of its much praised, self-titled fourth album. On *Supagroup*, the high-energy quartet mix the classic blues rock of early Rolling Stones and Humble Pie with the guitar ferocity of AC/DC, the Supersuckers' sly humor, and a prevalent "drink and rock" good-time vibe.

"It's only rock 'n' roll," says drummer Michael Brueggen. "That's the music I grew up on and still love. I learned to drum by playing along to records by Van Halen and Led Zeppelin." Along with influences like John Bonham, Alex Van Halen, and Frank Beard of ZZ Top, Michael credits Matt Walker (Smashing Pumpkins, Garbage) as a serious source of inspiration. "I grew up knowing Matt, and I tried to copy everything he did," he says.

Brueggen was playing with hard rock act Syrup and doing occasional gigs with Rock City Morgue when he got a call from his friend Chris Lee,

Supagroup's lead singer and guitarist. Lee asked Brueggen to immediately step in for Supagroup's recently departed drummer when the band was due to record its next album. He was up for it. "When I went in to do the record," Michael explains, "I had played those songs for *maybe* fifteen days. Then when we recorded, a lot of the songs were captured on the second take. It was more important for me to land the changes than to add frills."

After touring behind the record for a solid year, the drummer says his live performances are definitely more exciting than what went down in the studio.



"Now I know where the changes are without thinking about it," he laughs. "And I have a *much* better feel." **Gail Worley**

Oliver Charles

As Soulful As Possible...With Ben Harper

It wasn't the Gospel songs that Oliver Charles was asked to play during The Blind Boys Of Alabama and Ben Harper sessions last spring that knocked him for a loop. It was the singers themselves. "The music fit in with what Ben has always done," Charles says. "So the songs weren't really different, and I was prepared for them. But I *wasn't* prepared for sitting in with The Blind Boys. They don't speak much, but when they do it shakes the walls."

"It was a huge honor to be a part of this record," Charles says of his work on *There Will Be A Light*. "Once I got my head around being in there with them, it was cool and everything went like clockwork."

Charles has played on and off with Harper since the singer's 1995 offering *Fight For Your Mind*. For the new album, Oliver plays on four of the album's eleven tracks—"Take My Hand," "Wicked Man," "Where Could I Go?," and a cover of Jeff Buckley's "Satisfied Mind." Two of the other songs are performed a cappella,

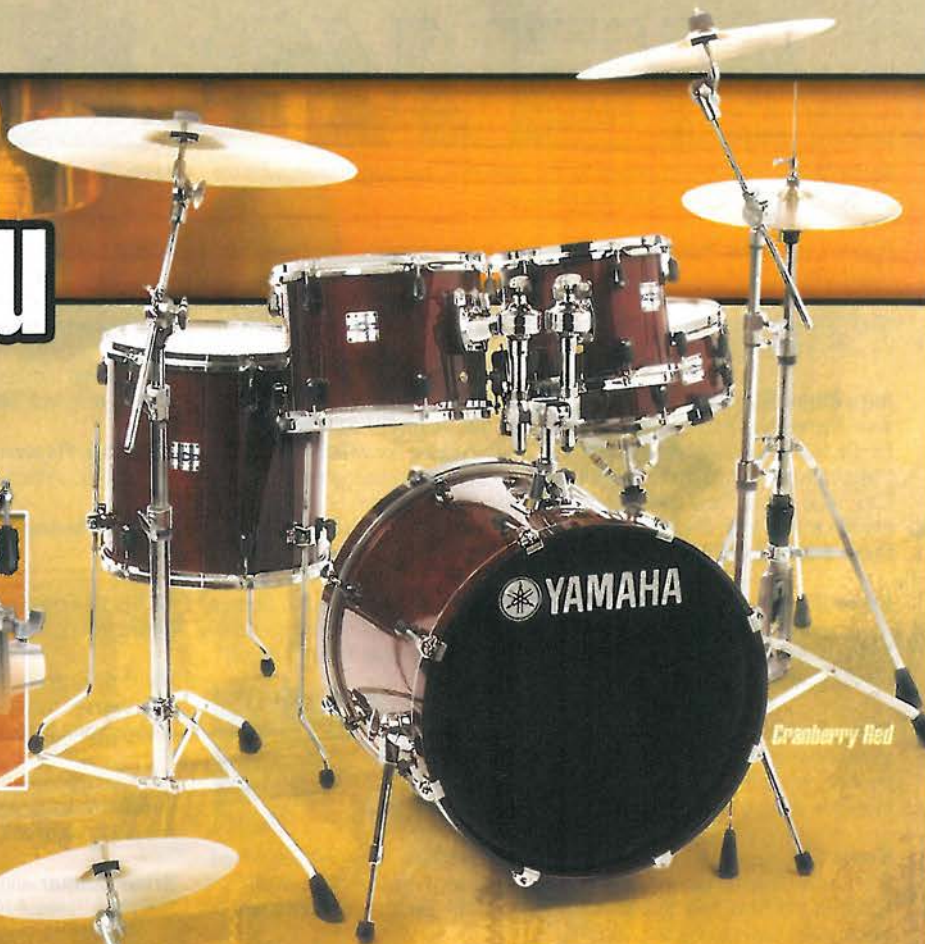


with drummer Rock Deadrick playing on the balance.

The sessions went quickly. According to Charles, "I went in, played through a song for about fifteen minutes, and then we recorded it." "Wicked Man," with its syncopated emphasis and turnaround, was one of the most involved on the album. "It's like one big drum fill," Charles says with a laugh. "It's got a definite old-school funk groove, and I had to work it out in my head first, because there are a lot of changes. It was a lot of fun, and I got to throw in a lot of stuff."

Charles' years of playing live and in the studio with Harper, including tracking 2003's *Diamonds On The Inside*, helped prepare the drummer for these latest sessions. "Ben's music is eclectic," Charles states, "and some of his songs have a Gospel feel to them, so I didn't have to change my approach this time. Ben's a very soulful cat, and this is very soulful stuff. It's about laying down the best groove and being as soulful as possible." **David John Farinella**

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NEWS

Kevin Miller, long-time drummer for the band Fuel, has parted ways with the group, citing creative and personal differences.

Percussionist **John Mahon** is on Elton John's new release, *Peachtree Road*. **Nigel Olsson** is on drums.

Nick D'Virgilio has been on the road with Tears For Fears. He's also on Mike Keneally's latest CD/DVD, *Dog*.

Russ Miller appears on recently released albums by Hilary Duff (as well as on tracks for her two DVDs) and Nelly Furtado. He can be heard on the soundtracks for the movies *Garfield* and *Resident Evil 2: Apocalypse*, for which he co-wrote two of the soundtrack cues. He can also be heard on upcoming recordings by Cher, Tina Turner, and Meredith Brooks. And Russ was one of the featured artists at the Marktobendorf's Rhythms camp in Germany, which also included **Steve Smith**, **Jeff Hamilton**, **Johnny Rabb**, and **Thomas Lang**.

Steve Hass is on new releases by Kelly Lee Evans, Miri Ben Ari, George Colligan, and The Manhattan Transfer. He'll be dividing his touring schedule between Janis Siegel, Christos Rafalides, and The Manhattan Transfer throughout the year.

Danny Frankel and **Kenny Wollesen** perform several fun and interesting percussion pieces on their new release, *Balloon Drum Duets*. For more info check out www.balloondrums.com.



Bruce Cox has been busy with Dee Dee Bridgewater, Fred Wesley's Funk Band, and Fabio Morgeras. He's also been teaching and directing small jazz bands in the New York public school system, the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, Long Island University, and NYU.

Former Dimmu Borgir drummer **Nick Barker** can be found in Brujeria, the extreme metal project featuring ex-Fear Factory guitarist Dino Cazares and Napalm Death bassist Shane Embury.

Wuv and P.O.D. are in the studio working on the follow-up to *Payable On Death*.

Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez can be heard on Kazumi Watanabe's new fusion release, *Mo' Bop II*.

Tom Hurst is on the road with Amy Dally.

Jaska Raatikainen is on tour with Children Of Bodom.

Blue Öyster Cult drummer **Bobby Rondinelli** has officially quit the group in order to pursue his work with hard rock ensemble The Lizards. For more information check out www.thelizardswebsite.com.



Joe Franco has been touring with Van Helsing's Curse. He also just finished another prog-rock album with Magellan.

The **Mick Fleetwood** Band recently released a new CD, *Something Big*. There's also a Fleetwood Mac DVD, *Destiny Rules*, just out.

Todd Sucherman (Styx) is on the new Brian Wilson record, *Gettin' In Over My Head*.

KISS (with **Eric Singer**) donated a portion of ticket sales from their shows in Florida to help feed the hungry in conjunction with the Manna Food Bank.

The Dirty Dozen Brass Band's **Terence Higgins** breaks out on his own with his debut Swamp Grease release, *In The Bywater*. Check out www.swampgrease.com.

The soundtrack to the film *Resident Evil 2: Apocalypse* features Slipknot's **Joey Jordison**, Lacuna Coil's **Criz**, DevilDriver's **John B**, and Cradle Of Filth's **Adrian Erlandsson**.

Brian Geltner and **Fred Eltringham** are on the latest Tears For Fear CD, *Everybody Loves A Happy Ending*.

Bobby Jarzombek has been keeping busy touring with Iced Earth.

Ed Mann recently returned from playing festivals in Europe. He's been playing with various bands, including Mats Morgan.

Doug Tann is on the road with Lorna Luft.

Matt Wilson is back with his Arts & Crafts band for their new release, *Wake Up! (To What's Happening)* on Palmetto Records.

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Happy Birthday!

Max Roach
(jazz legend): 1/10/24

Jimmy Cobb
(Miles Davis): 1/20/29

Ed Shaughnessy
(*The Tonight Show*): 1/29/29

Grady Tate
(soul/jazz great): 1/14/32

Nick Mason
(Pink Floyd): 1/27/45

Aynsley Dunbar
(rock giant): 1/10/46

Corky Laing
(Mountain): 1/28/48

George Brown
(Kool & The Gang): 1/15/49

Eddie Bayers
(Nashville studio): 1/28/49

Phil Collins
(Genesis/solo artist): 1/31/51

Paul Wertico
(Pat Metheny): 1/5/53

Dave Weckl
(solo artist): 1/8/60

Steven Adler
(Guns N' Roses): 1/22/65

Dave Grohl
(Foo Fighters): 1/14/69

Jon Wysocki
(Staind): 1/17/71



Gene Krupa was born on 1/15/09.

Cozy Cole passed away on 1/29/81. **John Guerin** on 1/5/04.

Nirvana (with **Dave Grohl** on drums) performs their last US show at the Seattle Arena on 1/7/94.

In January of 2001, *Modern Drummer* celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary.



To hear some of the artists mentioned in this month's *Update*, go to MD Radio at www.modrdrummer.com.



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Stanton Moore of Galactic

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Yamaha DTXTREME IIS Electronic Drumkit

Better And Easier At The Same Time

HITS

more comfortable
pad playing surfaces

convenient controller
knobs on pads themselves

onboard sampling

MISSSES

hi-hat controller may take
some time to get used to

by Rick Long

If it ain't broke, don't fix it" is a philosophy that works well just about everywhere *except* in the field of electronics. There, it's more like "What have you done for me lately?" Electronic instruments are constantly evolving in order to offer new and exciting technological advances. And electronic drumkits are no exception.

With this in mind, Yamaha has completed a major redesign of their DTXTREME electronic kit. The new IIS version has many useful upgrades in the pads and sound module. But the big news is the addition of sampling capabilities and sounds from the Motif keyboard series. Also new is a controller knob on the pads that can be assigned to various functions that alter the sound, such as pitch or snare tension.



The kit as tested includes the DXT2SU Sampling Module, one TP120SD snare pad, four TP100 tom pads, one PCY130S two-zone crash cymbal pad, one PCY130 single-zone crash cymbal pad, one PCY150S ride cymbal pad, one RHH130 hi-hat pad, and a KP5 Kick Tower. All this is mounted on a rack that includes Yamaha tom ball clamps and cymbal booms, along with a snare stand and a hi-hat stand. The MS-100DR Electronic Drum Personal Monitoring System is used for amplification. (See the sidebar on page 30.) Let's take a look at all this upgraded gear.



The TP100S and TP120SD pads feature controller knobs on the pads themselves.

Tom And Snare Pads

One of the goals of any electronic drumset is to provide a quiet way for drummers to rehearse. According to Jim Haler, product specialist for Yamaha Percussion, part of the reason for the redesign of the DTX-TREME pads was that the Real Head Pads included with the original DTX-TREME were simply too loud. The new tom and snare drum pads have a gum rubber compound on the playing surface that's softer than Yamaha's early DTX pads were. They also now feature three trigger zones: a main playing surface in the center, a rim trigger that extends approximately two-thirds around the pad's edge, and a second rim trigger that completes the remaining one-third of the rim.

Stick rebound on the new pads is noticeably precise and quite consistent—even on the cymbal pads. Using this type of surface on the snare and tom pads eliminates the need for re-tensioning a stretched out head.

The new third triggering surface adds a lot of functionality to the drum pads. Any sound can be programmed onto the second rim trigger. A cowbell sound comes to mind, but the possibilities are endless. This area of the pad is best accessed with the left hand, given its curved nature and its position in the upper right-hand quadrant.

New Pad Controls

The presence of controller knobs right on the tom and snare pads adds a real convenience factor to the DTX-TREME IIS. The most common assignment for these controller knobs is pitch adjustment, and the toms on the kit come programmed this way right out of the box. This means that you can play the tom pads while you adjust the knob, thus setting up any pitch interval you desire without having to touch the sound module.

The DTX-TREME IIS sound module has adjustable parameters that allow you to vary the sound of the snare drum, just as though you were twisting the knob on an acoustic snare's throw-off mechanism. This parameter can be mapped to the controller knob on the snare pad. The variation in sound necessary to accomplish this is achieved through control of patch and voice parameters. The effect is quite realistic.

Of course, the pad controller knobs can be assigned to adjust many different parameters besides pitch and snare tension. These include volume, voice, pan, layer, filter, filter bandwidth, attack, decay, and balance between two wave sounds. In addition, this feature is part of the trigger settings for any given electronically programmed "drumkit." This means that with each kit you set up, the pad controller can perform a different

function. The possibilities for many control variations will open doors to capabilities that have never before been so easily accessible.

Cymbal Pads

The new DTX-TREME cymbal pads have a shape that's similar to acoustic cymbals. The playing surface is the same gum rubber as is on the drum pads, and it provides nice stick response in this application as well. The cymbals are mounted on regular cymbal stand hardware, so their action when played is very much like that of an acoustic cymbal. Single- and two-zone

crashes are included (one each), along with a three-zone ride that includes a bell trigger integrated into the natural bell area. This is an improvement over previous versions that had a separate bell pad. (Hint: Connect that old bell pad to any of the inputs numbered 11 to 16, and program it as a splash cymbal.)

Hi-Hat Pad And Controller

The RHH130 does not require a hi-hat controller pedal. Instead, it uses a device in the place of the standard hi-hat clutch that reads the pedal position, thus allowing a regular hi-hat stand to function as the controller. The device is weighted so that the pedal responds as if you had an acoustic cymbal on the rod. Since you vary the open/close sensing with the clutch-like unit, there's only one pad (a two-zone model), which rests on the bottom cymbal support. This means that you can vary the open/closed sound or splash the hi-hat without changing the playing position. This might feel a bit different at first. But I predict that you'll soon realize how "floppy" acoustic hi-hats are, and you'll come to appreciate the accuracy available to you with a non-moving hi-hat pad.

Kick Tower

The KP65 kick tower was originally introduced with the popular DTX-PRESS kit. The tower base is configured in such a way that it will not scoot when played hard. The surface of the pad has a rebound similar to that of an acoustic bass drum head, so it isn't likely to stress your ankle or knee like some harder pads can. The pad is comfortable to play, and it triggers well.

DTX-TREME IIS Sound Module

With each new upgrade of the DTX series, the numbers keep getting better. In this case, those numbers include 2,171 drum voices, 130 drumkits (90 factory-programmed and 40 user-programmed), 101 preset songs to rehearse with, a 16-bit tone generator, and 64-note polyphony. And as if the 2,174 sounds built in to the module aren't enough, Yamaha is including a CD-ROM that includes more sounds that can be loaded into the module via the new USB port.

To the above numbers, add six faders for individual volume control of snare, kick, toms, hi-hat, cymbals, and other voices, linked to six individual outputs. There are four additional volume faders for main output, headphone, click track, and accompaniment (the songs). All these numbers add up to a drum module that offers powerful capabilities. And that's before we even *begin* the discussion of the internal sampler.

Sampling With The DTXEXTREME IIS

As I mentioned earlier, the big news with the DTXEXTREME IIS is its internal sampler. For those new to the concept of sampling, the term simply means that you are taking a "sample" or short recording of a live or recorded sound. A mini stereo jack conveniently located on the front of the module will accept line-level signals from CD players, audio mixers, or any other audio source. The setup required to record and edit the sample is simple to accomplish and is explained in plain language in the DTXEXTREME IIS manual. Up to 95

seconds of mono sound can be recorded into the 8-MB onboard memory using the CD audio standard sampling frequency of 44.1 kHz.

Samples can be saved to a SmartMedia card in AIFF format and linked to pads in drumkits you set up. This means that you could sample drum sounds from your acoustic equipment and use those sounds in the electronic kits you create. In fact, you can sample *any* sound—musical or not—and have that sound accessible from a drum pad. (The module saves sampling data in AIFF format, but it can load either AIFF or WAV files.)

More About The Sound Module

Many features found in the previous DTX modules are retained in the new unit. Some, including the Groove Check timing analysis function, have been improved. Extensive effect capabilities allow four separate effects to be applied, including 44 types of insertion effects. Extensive MIDI control functions are also available with this unit.

The capabilities of the DTX module are so extensive that it will be extremely important to spend some time really studying the manual. Doing so will answer most questions and provide a deeper understanding of the capabilities and possibilities of the kit. *Not* doing so might result in your missing some really useful features that you never knew existed.

For example, you can easily reverse the panning of the drumkit voices. This is called



Front and rear views of the DTXEXTREME IIS sound module



Tough Enough for Lars



//////AHEAD DRUMSTICKS



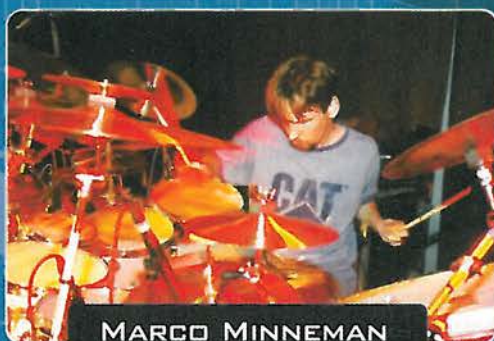
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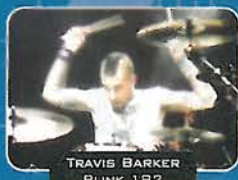
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Review Kit Amplification

The amplification system we used for this review was Yamaha's MS-100DR Electronic Drum Personal Monitoring System. The system includes a sub-woofer box that houses a 10" bass-reflex subwoofer and the main electronics. Two satellite speaker boxes (each with a 4" woofer, 2" midrange, and 1" tweeter) attach to the DTXTREME IIS rack using included speaker mounts.

A 100-watt amp drives the sub-woofer, while the satellite speakers receive 40 watts. Stereo inputs and outputs let you run audio sources like CD players or monitor mixes into the system while sending only the signal from your kit out to the main PA.

During the review, the sub-woofer sounded much more like a 15" than a 10", and there was more than enough volume to handle any stage situation. In order to produce the sounds they were designed to replicate, electronic drums require amplification systems that have a wide frequency range and a wide dynamic range. The MS-100DR meets this challenge well.

The best part of this system may be the price: \$799. If you don't need quite as much power, you can get the 50-watt MS-50DR for \$399.



The MS-100DR Electronic Drum Personal Monitoring System

Swap L/R and is found by pressing the Utility button and scrolling to the Tone Generator page. Why would you want to swap the left and right panning? One example would be when you record with your kit. Drummers tend to set up the panning so that it sounds correct from their perspective sitting behind the kit. People who listen to live music are used to hearing the drumkit from the front, where panning is the reverse of what you as the drummer expect. When you record with your kit, you can use the Swap L/R function to change the panning and avoid having to reprogram the individual panning of each voice in each kit.

Even if you are very familiar with electronic drum sound modules, you will still want to explore the nuances of the DTXTREME IIS. Many parameters have "fine tuning" capabilities of which you may not be

aware. And you don't have to be afraid to experiment, because you can easily go back to the default factory settings.

Conclusion

Whether you're considering purchasing your first electronic drumkit or upgrading your current kit to a newer model, the DTXTREME IIS is worth serious consideration. It offers ease of use to those new to working with electronic drums, yet it has features that will satisfy working professionals. And its list price—especially when discounted to "street price"—puts a full-featured electronic kit within the reach of more players.

THE NUMBERS
DTXTREME IIS Electronic Drumkit \$3,195
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July 2004

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-Jim Batcho - DRUM! June 2004

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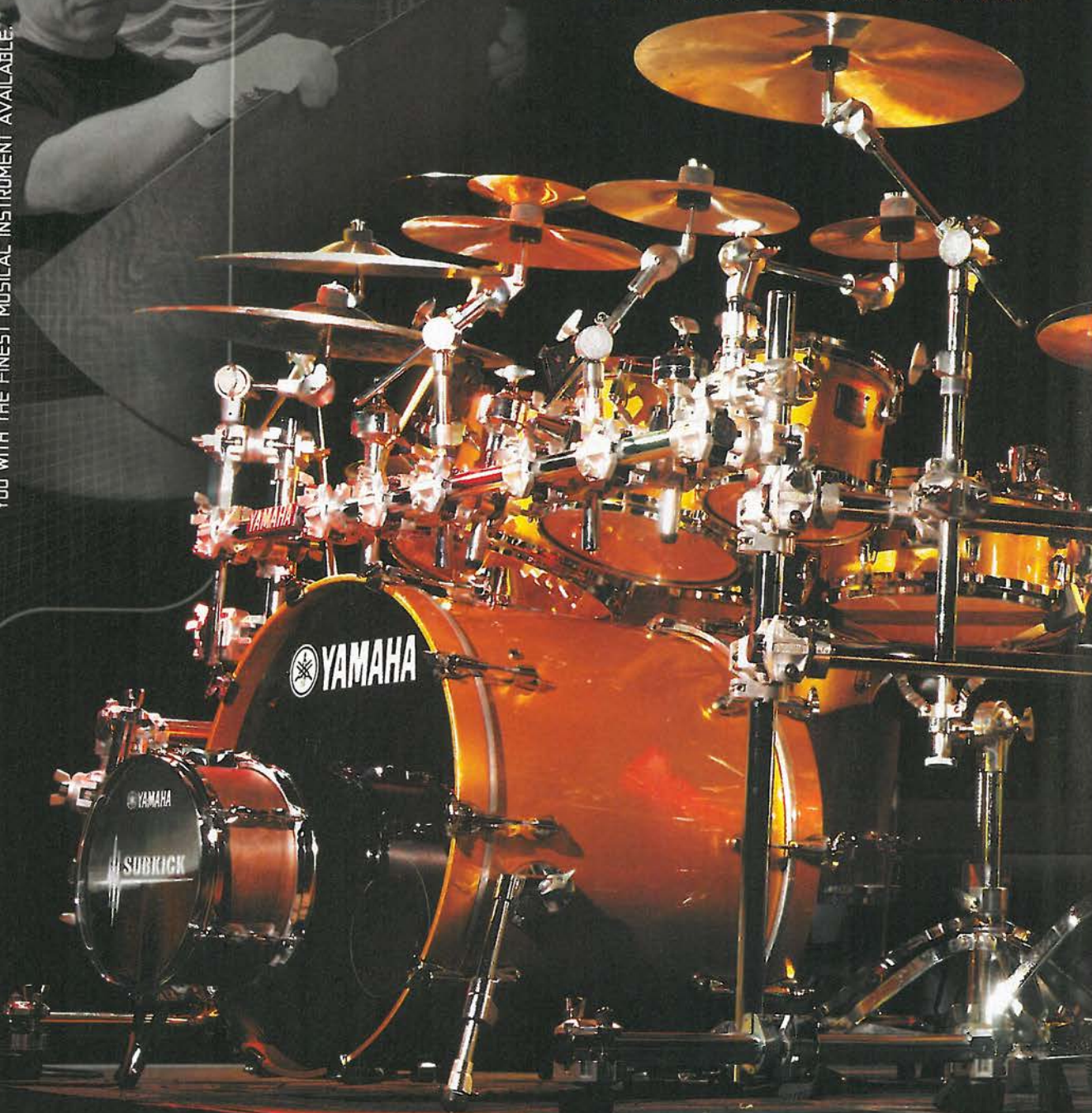
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Pearl Export EXR Drumkit

Radical, Man!

HITS

loud, crisp sound

beautiful finish and
excellent construction

high-quality hardware included

by Billy Amendola

Pearl has been doing an excellent job at providing players around the world with entry-level kits since the company introduced their Export series back in 1983. Upgrades and changes have been made regularly over the years, but none have been as drastic as those that have resulted in the new Export Radical model, designated EXR.

To be honest, I haven't been playing acoustic drums all that much lately. I've been spending more of my time behind an electronic kit and a mixing board. So I really didn't know quite what to expect from the EXR kit. In a nutshell, I was blown away!

Out Of The Box

The kit we were sent for review consisted of an 18x22 bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12 rack toms, a suspended 11x14 floor tom, and a matching 5½x14 snare. (Additional drums are available for upgrade.) The 7.5 mm-thick 6-ply shells are made of 100% poplar.

Setting up the EXR was a quick and easy process. As I set up the drums, I noticed the new low-mass bridge lugs and I.S.S. tom mounting system, which have been brought to the Export EXR from Pearl's higher-priced lines. Very nice.



Our review kit was the EXR-825H configuration, as shown here.



In addition to an 18"-deep bass drum, the EXR came equipped with I.S.S. tom-suspension mounts for added resonance and projection.

This EXR-825 model features an available floor tom with legs, as well as the Blue Prizm finish of our review kit.

The new hardware that's included with the EXR is strong and reliable. The hardware package includes TH-88I and TH-88S tom holders, one BC-800W boom cymbal stand, one C-800W cymbal stand, the new P-120P bass drum pedal, the new H-820W hi-hat, and an S-800W snare stand.

Looks Aren't Everything, But...

EXR kits come in four beautiful covered finishes: Prizm Blue, Prizm Purple, Strata Black, and Strata White. Our review kit had the Prizm Blue finish, which to me looked sort of "retro hip." The visual impact was stunning for a kit in this price range.

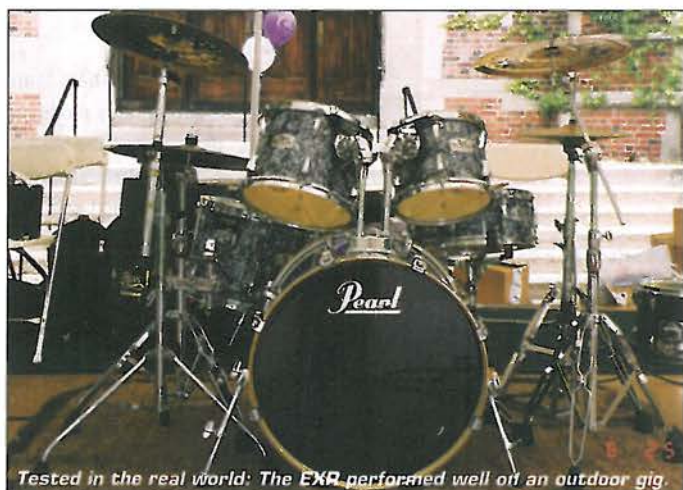
First Impressions

From the minute I started playing the EXR kit, I loved the way the drums sounded. They were crisp, with a wide-open sound and more volume and projection than I expected. But I was skeptical of my own impressions. Like I said, I thought it was just me missing playing on acoustic drums. Could a kit in this price range sound this awesome? So after I played the drums for a few days, I really put them to the test.

I set up the EXR kit in my studio next to an acoustic kit that was already there for use by my students. That way, when the students came for lessons, I could monitor their reaction. The feedback was phenomenal. Every student who walked by commented on how cool the EXR kit looked. And of course they all wanted to check it out.

Next test: my son Matthew, who is sixteen and plays in a rock band. He's the quintessential target customer for this particular kit model, and a perfect candidate for my experiment. I figured, "Let's see his reaction."

I observed as Matthew jammed with friends, rehearsed, recorded, and played with his band at an outdoor gig. My studio setup is geared mainly for direct recording—it's just much easier. Matthew prefers to record more acoustically. So he recorded a few tracks with just one overhead mic, and the kit sounded full and well balanced. When he played at the outdoor show, the only drum that was miked was the



Tested in the real world: The EXR performed well off an outdoor gig.

bass drum. The rest of the kit projected over the amps with no problem at all. After a few days, Matthew was *digging* this kit. So it wasn't just me.

Wrap-Up

Pearl has been marketing the Export EXR as a "rock" kit, largely because of the musical preferences of young drummers likely to be attracted to it. That's a sensible approach, and it is a great rock kit. But it also worked well in a funk groove, as one of my very funky drummer friends proved when he came by to jam. If you're looking for an affordable kit that you're not going to outgrow any time soon in terms of performance quality or visual appeal, you'll want to check out the EXR.

THE NUMBERS

Export EXR-825H **\$1,249**
Includes an 18x22 bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12 rack toms, a suspended 11x14 floor tom, and a 5½x14 snare, all featuring 6-ply poplar shells.

Istanbul Mehmet Samatya Cymbals

Good Things Come In New Packages

HITS

high-quality cymbal set at a low price

cymbal bag included

brilliant finish is attractive

MISSES

16" crash lacks the subtlety of the other cymbals

brilliant finish may discourage jazz drummers from discovering the dark tones of the cymbals

by Chap Ostrander

I've reviewed other cymbal lines from Istanbul Mehmet, and they were all interesting and innovative. The Samatya line is the first offered by the Turkish manufacturer in a pre-packaged set.

The set consists of a 20" ride, a 16" crash, and 14" hi-hats. The cymbals are cast of B20 alloy, and are hand-hammered and lathed. (The bells are not hammered.) Then they're given a brilliant finish. They come in a cymbal bag that features a stick pouch on the outside, plus a small pocket for a cell phone.

The box containing the Samatya set is printed with the suggestion that buyers should take their own cymbals along when shopping for new ones. This ensures the musical compatibility of the final mix of cymbals, and is always good advice.

A Surprising Ride

Playing on the 20" ride was like playing on silk: smooth and darkly hot at the same time. A complex mix of undertones came into play right away. But they were never overpowering.

The ride had more depth and a much darker tone than I expected to hear from a cymbal with a brilliant finish. (It would be a shame if jazz drummers stayed away from this ride on the assumption that a shiny cymbal can't have a dark tonality.) The bell's sound was very strong and could be piercing if needed, and stick definition was exceptionally clean and defined.

The Matching Hi-Hats

The 14" hi-hats featured a heavy bottom cymbal matched to a lighter top cymbal. When played together, they produced a very pleasing wash of sound. It was a rich mix, but the weight of the cymbals allowed the stick definition to come through.

The hi-hats also proved to be a perfect match for the ride. I played a jazz ride pattern of just ride and hats, and I was very pleased by the sonic consistency.

From left: 20" ride, 16" crash, and 14" hi-hats.



The Odd Crash Out

The 16" crash started out as a bit of a puzzle. The sonic nature of the ride and hi-hats in the Samatya package gave me the impression that it was set of cymbals designed for big band or jazz situations. And, in fact, that's what we were told by Istanbul Mehmet. The crash, on the other hand, seemed much more appropriate for rock or loud pop situations. It spoke quickly, with a high voice that had plenty of cut from the crash or bell. Its sound was brash and up-front, with less refinement than that of the ride and hats.

To be fair, when I played the whole Samatya set at a higher volume, the crash was right in line, and the ride and hi-hats were certainly up to the challenge. So if you generally play in fairly high-volume situations but still want the overall acoustic character of darker-sounding cymbals, the Samatyas would be a good choice. (I also found that the crash settled down and smoothed out when I played it with mallets.)

Conclusions

The manufacturing quality of the Samatya cymbals is excellent, and they possessed clean sounds that were easy to work with. I only had one set to review, so it's hard to comment on the consistency of the cymbals from package to package. But considering Istanbul Mehmet's attention to detail with the cymbals I've already seen, it's a good bet that the Samatyas will be as close as they can make them.

THE NUMBERS

Samatya pre-packaged set \$399
Includes a 20" ride, a 16" crash, 14" hi-hats, and a cymbal bag.
(800) 282-0110, www.universalpercussion.com,
www.istanbulmehmet.com.



Quick Looks

Vater Vintage Bomber Bass Drum Beater



When I was interviewing jazz great Joe La Barbera for an *MD* story a couple of years ago, the subject of playing a soft "four-on-the-floor" bass drum pattern came up. Joe confirmed that he had seen many legendary jazz drummers play quarter notes on the bass drum so softly that one could barely hear them, except when they played accents. This led to the mistaken assumption that those drummers *only* played accents.

But Joe also pointed out that the equipment was different in those days. "A lamb's-wool beater is going to sound a lot softer and be a lot easier to control than a wooden beater," he explained.

Shortly after that, I attempted to find a big, soft lamb's-wool beater, but to no avail. So I was delighted when Vater introduced their Vintage Bomber beater. It's specifically designed to recreate the soft, controllable bass drum sound from the 1920s and '30s.

Like the beaters of yore, the Vintage Bomber has a cork core. However, instead of that core being covered in genuine lamb's wool as the old beaters were, Vater's reproduction uses a synthetic material. But it has the same sound and texture, and I'm willing to bet that it will hold up better.

Educator and clinician Ed Thigpen often talks of "feathering" the bass drum. Although I learned to play a bass drum softly, it never sounded very "feathery" to me—until I replaced my felt beater with the Vintage Bomber. Wow! That's the sound I've heard Thigpen get.

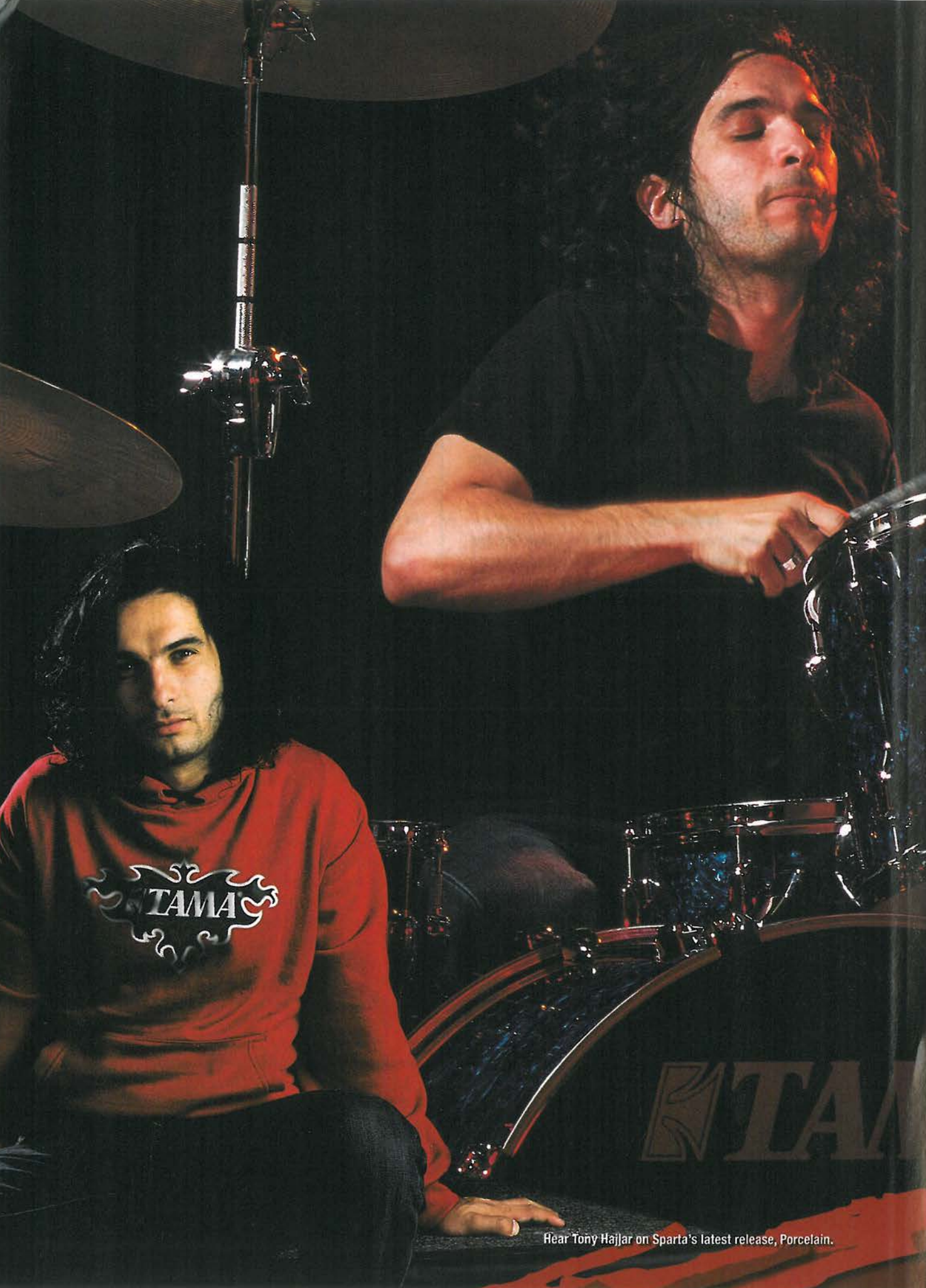
So is the Vintage Bomber *just* for playing soft? Hardly. The word "Bomber" is appropriate, because when you lay into a drum with this beater, you get the big sound that the bebop pioneers referred to as "dropping bombs."

If you need to get an attacky "click" from your bass drum in order for it to project through extreme volumes, then the Vintage Bomber is *not* the beater for you. But if you're looking for a fat sound that maximizes the low end while minimizing the impact sound, check it out. It packs quite a punch, yet it's easier to control in terms of getting a fuller range of dynamics from feathers to bombs. List price is \$28.50.

(781) 767-1877, www.vater.com.

Rick Mattingly





Hear Tony Hajjar on Sparta's latest release, Porcelain.

"LOUD & POWERFUL."

Tony Hajjar Reviews Rockstar

"Except for one mounted tom, they set the Rockstar kit up almost exactly like my own Starclassic. Actually, I never played a Rockstar kit before this one—I used to dream about the old Tama Rockstar and Granstar drums when I was a kid, but I never got a chance to use either one. The first thing I realized about the Rockstar kit was how loud and powerful the drums were—I loved that—it's why I use a Tama bell brass snare—and the tones were really good. Plus the whole kit just felt very sturdy and durable. I just didn't expect that kind of strength and power in drums in this range."



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Prince

School Of Funk



Twenty thousand people are on their feet, cheering and singing along as Prince and his band rip through hit after hit at New York City's Madison Square Garden for one of the purple one's many sold-out *Musicology* tour dates. "No lip-syncing here," Prince states. "This is real music played by real musicians."

Performing on stage twenty years after releasing his classic semi-autobiographical film and soundtrack, *Purple Rain*, Prince doesn't look like he's aged a bit. In fact, it looks and sounds like he has more energy now than ever—and he seems to be enjoying it all a lot more this time around. And rightfully so, because Prince is having a very good year.

Before leaving for his worldwide *Musicology* tour, which started back in April, Prince came up with a bril-



liant idea that would change the way we look at CD distribution forever. He decided to give his new *Musicology* CD free to every person who attended his shows. The ensuing buzz immediately took the CD to the top of the charts and well past platinum status.

Prince then opened this year's Grammy Awards broadcast with a breathtaking performance. And 2004 saw Prince inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame.

Now, you may be wondering why one of the greatest performers and guitarists in the world is being featured in a drumming magazine. Well, he's *celebrating* drumming. You may or may not know this, but Prince loves playing drums—and he's very good at it. It's just one of the many facets of music he's studied—along with singing, songwriting, and dancing. Signed to a major record deal at the age of nineteen, Prince wrote, engineered, and played every instrument on his first few recordings. "I had to audition on every instrument for the record company before they signed me," he says, "because they didn't believe it was all me."

Through the many years of his recording career, Prince has continued to play most, if not *all* of the instruments on his albums—and that includes drums. And if there was a guest drummer, Prince would be right there showing or directing what was to be played.

As in the past, on *Musicology*, Prince plays drums on several tracks. In fact, without a scorecard, it's almost impossible to tell if it's Prince or his regular drummer John Blackwell playing. That's pretty impressive, considering what a monstrous drummer Blackwell is.

MD sat down with the musical genius before the soundcheck for his recent performance in Hartford, Connecticut. Prince was relaxed, thoughtful, and happy to talk drums.

by Billy Amendola

"I started on drums when I was thirteen years old. Where I come from, if your beat was wack, you'd be made fun of."

MD: When did you first start playing drums?

Prince: I started when I was thirteen years old. I would play on cardboard boxes. I'd use the flaps for dexterity and different sounds. I wouldn't play drums in front of anyone until I felt I was good enough.

In school, everyone always wanted to play the drums. As soon as the drum chair was empty, someone would get behind the kit and play. Where I come from, if your beat was wack, you'd be made fun of. [laughs]

MD: Who were some of your drumming influences growing up?

Prince: I've never patterned myself after anyone. But my biggest influence was Morris Day [of The Time]. Morris is a good drummer—you should interview him. [See sidebar.] Besides Morris, I'd watch local musicians. I never went to a concert until I was older. I saw James Brown and loved him as an entertainer. I saw the whole package.

MD: Did you ever take lessons?

Prince: No.

MD: What would you practice? Would you play along to records?

Prince: No. I'd play while singing songs in

my head, or I'd put on the radio and play along to anything that came on. I would go from one end of the dial to the other. I'd play all kinds of music. When you're thirteen years old, you don't know about any formats. That's something society teaches you as you get older.

MD: What makes a drummer funky to you?

Prince: Their sense of timing and spirit—and when their ego doesn't ruin their playing. I don't like it when a drummer plays too much and he or she isn't listening.

Some guys can have a great foot but no hands—or great hands but no foot. Listen to the song “Funky Drummer.” The drummer plays the same thing over and over, and that groove just locks you in.

MD: What qualities do you look for in a drummer when you're playing bass?

Prince: As a bassist, I listen closely to the hi-hat. I don't necessarily follow the kick. I like to create the pulse of the foot with my bass.

MD: How about as a producer?

Prince: As a producer, song arrangement is very important. Some drummers can play *anything*, some can't. Some can play different styles but not *all* well. It helps for the drummer to have a wide vocabulary in the studio.

MD: How important are the drum sounds when you're writing a song?

Prince: Sometimes not at all. I always record the drums first—that's real important. I like to record fast. Sometimes the mic's aren't perfectly placed or the tuning isn't right. It's just a feel thing. One of my strengths is, when I'm playing it all myself, I can make it sound like a total band when I'm done.

Some of the greatest records have horrible drum sounds. Listen to “Brickhouse.” The toms sound horrible. Or Stevie Wonder, who's a *great* drummer! His drums sound terrible. [laughs] But when he plays.... I watched him record drums on his latest record, and his internal rhythm is

Afshin Shahidi



“I don't like a drum machine pattern by itself. I play whatever I have to on top to get it to groove and feel alive.”

impeccable. It's something you can't buy or be taught.

MD: Do you prefer certain drum gear?

Prince: No. The Linn drum machine is my favorite, when used with a real drummer. I don't like a drum machine pattern by itself, playing the same thing over and over. It's not human, and we're human beings. What happens with a drum machine is, after a certain point you stop listening to it. You don't hear it, because there's no emotion. It's too perfect, and in reality, nothing is perfect. I play whatever I have to on top, to get it to groove and feel alive.

MD: Are there any songs from the new record that were written around a beat or groove?

Prince: "Cinnamon Girl," "Musicology," and "Million Days."

MD: Do you and John discuss drumming?

Prince: [Looks at Blackwell, who has been listening in.] Not really. I just try to stop him from listening to other drummers. [laughs] Actually, I think John is one of the greatest.

MD: What is it you like about his playing?

Prince: His personality. John's humble enough to take direction. His ego never gets in the way of his playing. When John first started with me, he was the student and I was the teacher. I had the blessing of being able to show him things. I think it's time for John's rite of passage. It's time for him to go out and be the teacher. John and I studied the Bible together, and one thing I think is important as I watch his spiritual development is I see him growing as an individual. I see it in him, and that will affect his music.

MD: Any favorite tracks of John's?

Prince: Not any one song. It's a full body of his recorded work.

MD: Any of yours?

Prince: I remember the experience more than any particular track. I do recall that I liked the drumming on "Let's Work," the long version that's never been released. I was playing drums, and in the middle where it's straight foot, Morris and I switched right in the middle of the recording, and he finished out the track.

MD: How was it decided who would play drums on what tracks on *Musicology*?

Prince: Availability. The business has taught us to disperse and move. It's hard to keep your band in your hometown. If John lived closer, I'd have him on a lot more. ●

Morris Day

Funky Time On Drums

If you're only familiar with Morris Day from seeing and hearing him perform "Jungle Love" in Kevin Smith's movie *Jay And Silent Bob Strike Back*, please go back and do your homework. "It was amazing being in that movie," Day says. "I have a couple of teenagers. I went from being Evan and Darrin's dad to being, 'Hey, it's Morris Day!' It was cool."

Not exactly new to the movie screen, Morris starred and performed with Prince in his 1984 blockbuster movie *Purple Rain*. Growing up with Prince in Minneapolis and fronting the band Prince helped form back in 1981, The Time (which also featured famed producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis) created new sounds for the dance clubs of the '80s by mixing funk, rock, and urban dance music.

Morris, the charismatic lead singer and frontman of the group, continues to captivate audiences with his confident, playful swagger. But in the *studio*, Morris is quite the funky drummer, as we surprisingly found out when *MD* spoke with Prince, who listed Morris as his biggest drumming influence. So what better way to start our conversation...

MD: How do you feel about being Prince's biggest drumming influence?

Morris: Oh, man, I'm flattered by it. That was very cool of him. We played in a band together back in high school. I was the drummer and he was the keyboard and guitar player.

Growing up, I got a lot of ideas from the drummers I listened to, and Prince just grew to like the way I played. He would have me come by and play tracks, and then eventually we started working on the Time material together. Matter of fact, when The Time got started, I wanted to be the drummer. I didn't want to sing. But we had problems with the vocalist at the time and they pushed me out front. Drums have always been my first love.

MD: When did you start playing?

Morris: My mom bought me my first drumset from Sears, back in the day, when I was about twelve. I was in love with the instrument prior



"When The Time got started, I wanted to be the drummer. I didn't want to sing. Drums have always been my first love."

to that, but once I got my set that was just it.

MD: Did you take formal lessons?

Morris: I basically taught myself. I took a few lessons, but I never stuck with the formal training.

MD: Would you play along to records?

Morris: Oh, yeah. I'd always jam in front of this speaker cabinet that I had, which was about five feet tall. I'd plug that into my stereo system and it was like being in a band. I listened to a lot of Tower Of Power—Dave Garibaldi was one of my biggest influences. I liked some fusion, too. I used to listen to Billy Cobham. And I liked all of the old James Brown records.

MD: What is it you like about John Blackwell's playing?

Morris: John is an incredible drummer. I think he's the hottest drummer out there right now. I really do. Whenever we open for Prince, I stay and watch the show to see John do his thing. And when they turn him loose and spotlight him, it's one of my favorite parts of the show. John plays better than most cats I've ever seen, and then he spins his sticks while he's doing it. [laughs]

MD: Summing it up, give us a few words about Prince's drumming.

Morris: He's a very funky drummer. As a lead guitarist he does all that incredible soloing, but funk is his strong point, and he's got that mastered on the drums.

Billy Amendola

Blackwell

Heavy Heart, Strong Soul

by Billy Amendola

The beginning of 2004 saw John Blackwell at the top of the world. He was proudly enjoying the success of his *Technique, Grooving & Showmanship* DVD.

He performed at the Grammy Awards with Prince, his superstar boss of the last five years. He was on the pop icon's latest top-selling CD, *Musicology*. And Blackwell was gearing up for the biggest tour of his life. With sold-out shows, a platinum record, and universal respect for his playing, John Blackwell had everything a drummer could ever wish for.

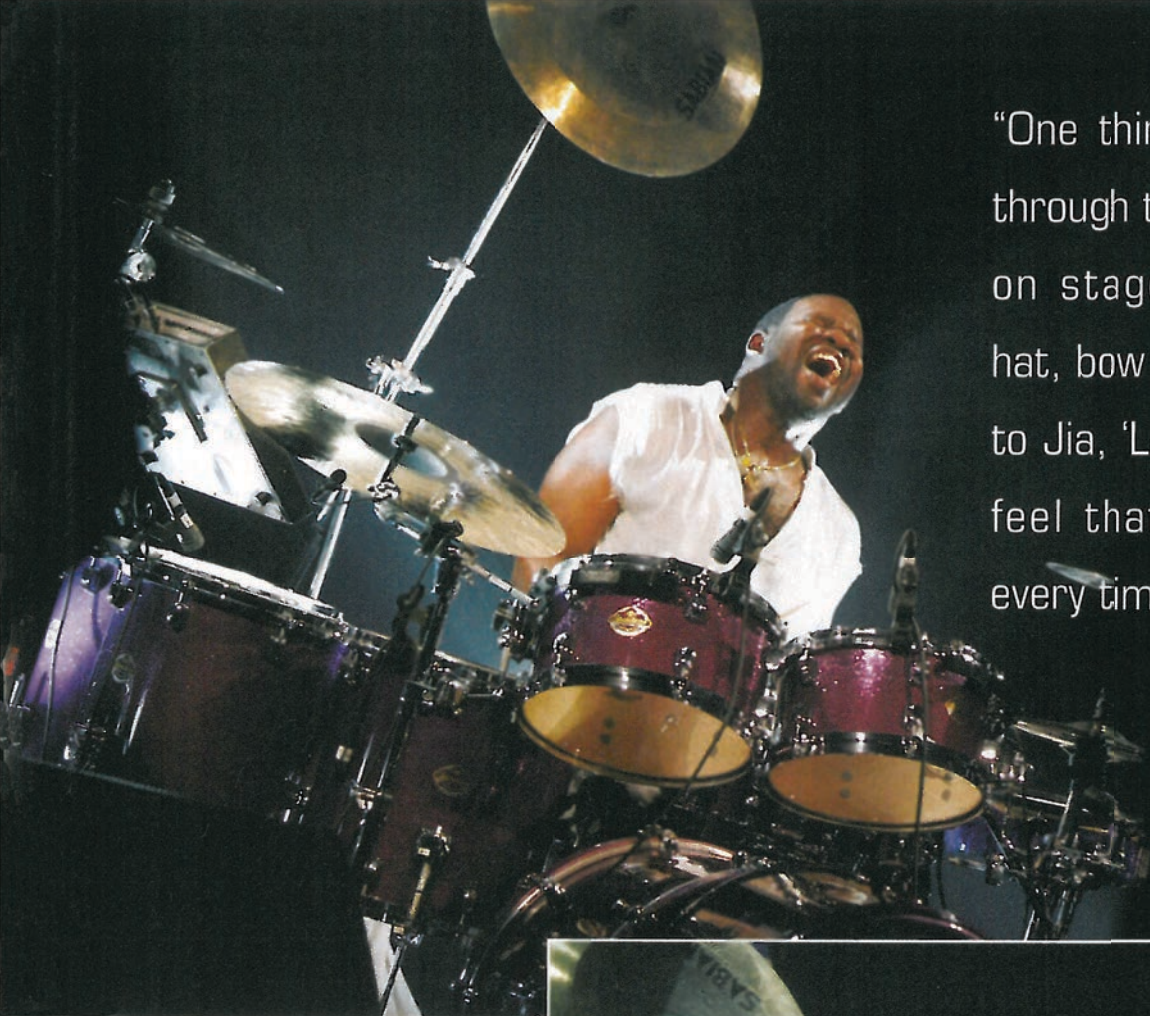
And then in a blink of an eye everything changed....

On June 27, 2004, three months into Prince's *Musicology* tour, John received a phone call from his wife, Joann. Their beautiful twenty-seven-month-old daughter Jia had accidentally drowned in the pool at their home in California. Nothing can prepare you for news like this. It's the worst thing that could happen to a parent. And to hear that John, one of the sweetest, gentlest persons on the planet would have to go through this tragic nightmare was unthinkable.

John and Joann's world would never be the same. In fact, John wasn't sure he could carry on. But with a strong belief in God, and being the true professional that he is, John somehow summoned the strength to move forward as best he could.

God bless you John, Joann, son Jaiven, and the entire Blackwell family—and God bless Jia.





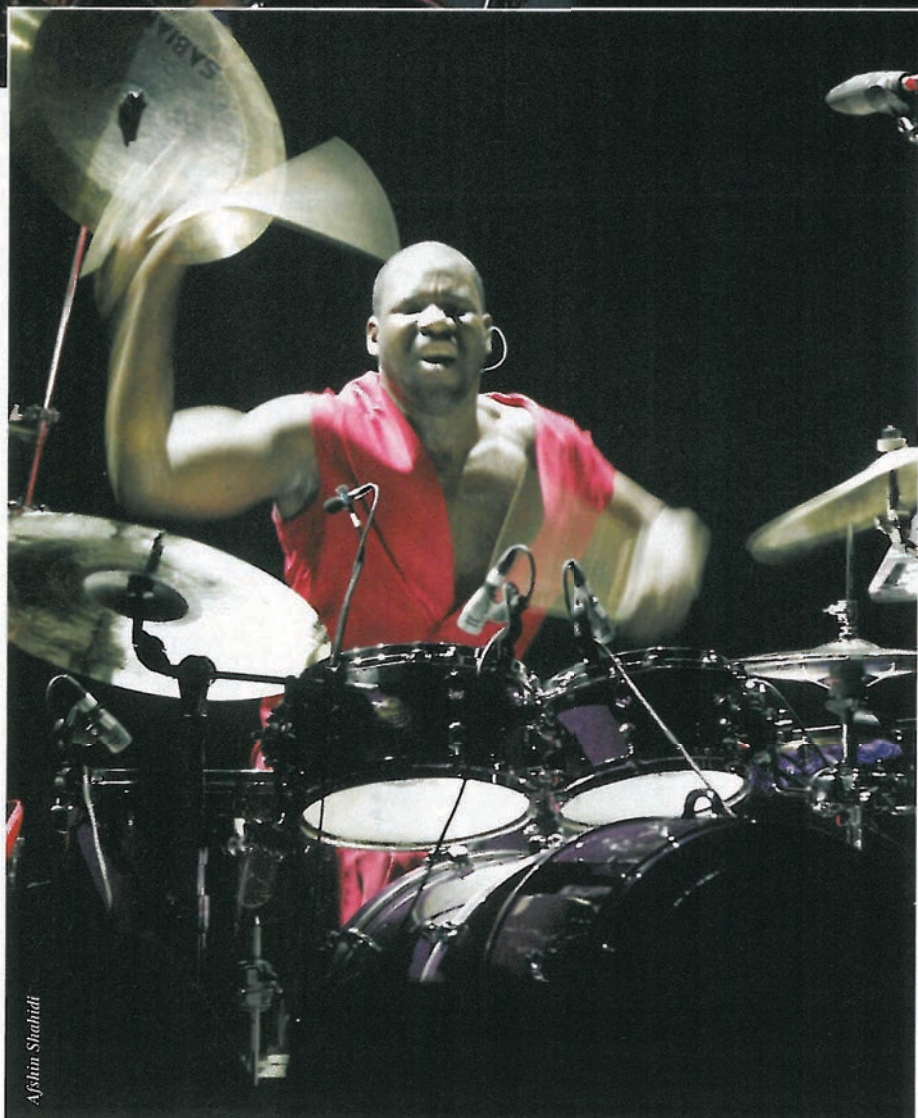
"One thing that helps me through this is, before I go on stage, I take off my hat, bow my head, and say to Jia, 'Let's go get 'em.' I feel that she's with me every time I play."

MD: John, the first question on everyone's mind is, how are you doing?

John: It's still hard.... I do accept it spiritually in an overall way, because Jia is an angel and she was an angel from God. She's gone back home to him. I'm a strong believer, and I know God called her home, so I accept that.

Joann and I truly miss her. It's hard for us every day, and it will be hard for the rest of our lives. There was a close bond between Jia and me, and now there's a big hole in my life. I feel that a piece of me is gone. But I take it one day at a time. There are days on this tour where I just sit in my hotel room and cry almost all day. I cry for many reasons. I cry because I'm happy she's back home with God and that she doesn't have to deal with the craziness of the world. But I also cry because I miss her and it's hard to imagine life without her.

One thing that helps me through this is, before I go on stage and before I play the first beat, I take off my hat, bow my head,





and say to her, "Let's go get 'em, Jia." I feel that she's with me every time I play. And I just give the best show I can every night, like it's the last time I'll ever play—all in her honor.

Before we laid Jia to rest, I made a promise to her that I would give one million percent every time I played, no matter what style of music and no matter who I'm playing with. Every night is for her. Even if I'm playing by myself, or if I'm just practicing at home, everything I do on the drums—everything I do in *life*—is going to be for her.

MD: You once mentioned how Jia loved to watch you play drums.

John: Yeah, whenever I was home and playing, Jia would come upstairs and watch me. She didn't like to watch too long before she would want to

JOHN BLACKWELL

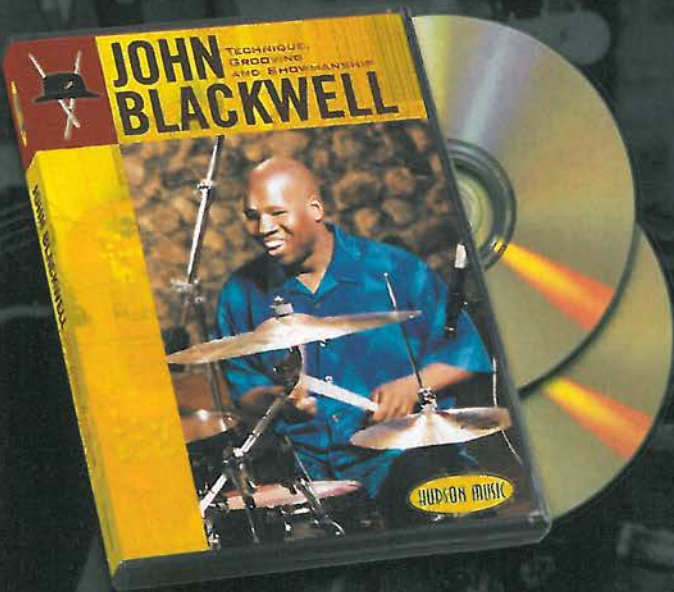
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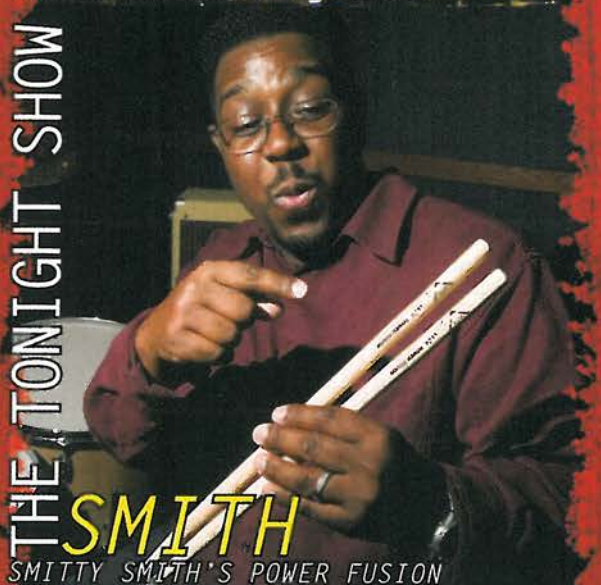
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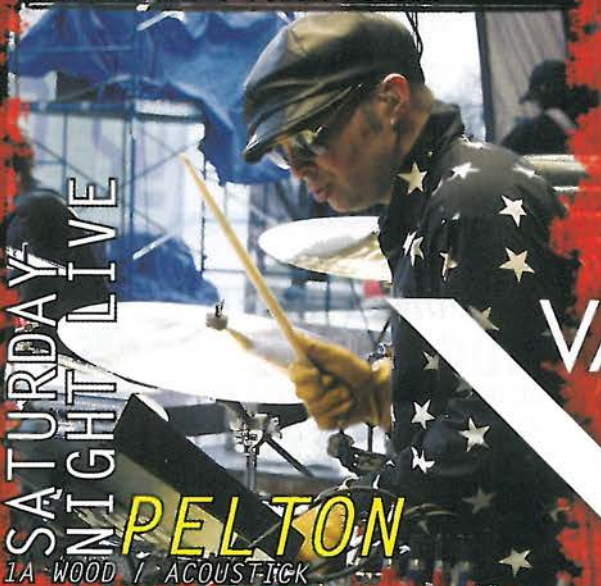
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JOHN BLACKWELL'S JIA ANGEL



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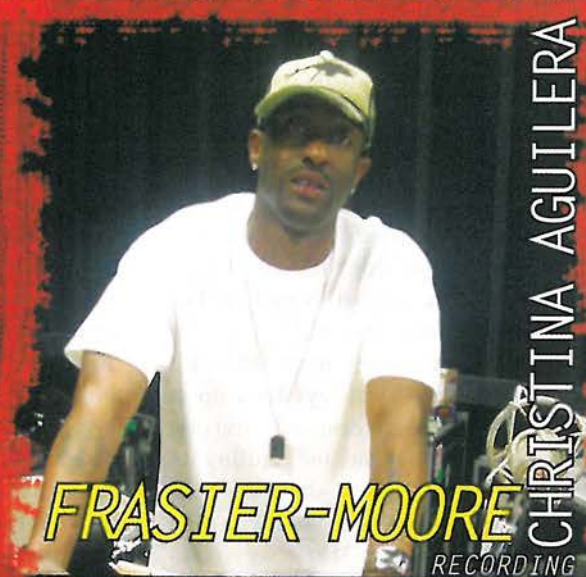
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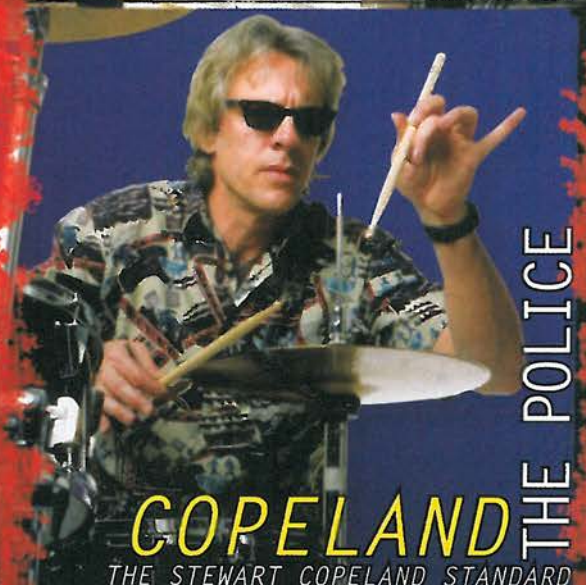
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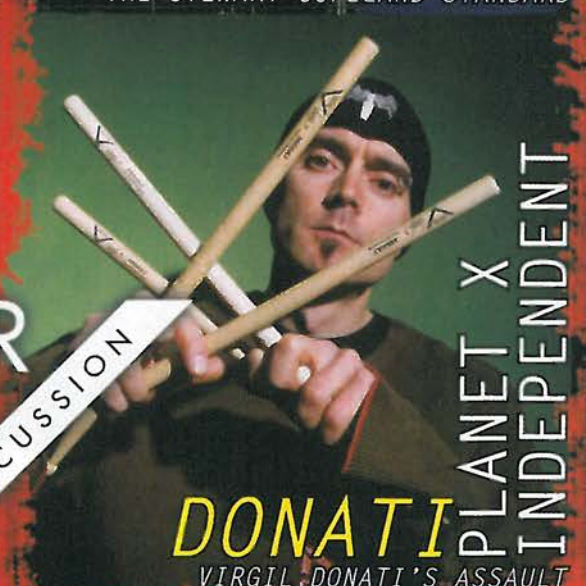
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John Blackwell

take over. She would grab the drumsticks from me and start playing herself, because *she* wanted to play.

One thing I'll never forget, Jia loved singing "Purple Rain." She really loved that song. One day I was on my computer doing some work, and Jia was sitting on my lap. I had a Prince concert video on, and as soon as "Purple Rain" came on, she started trying to sing the song. I used to laugh when she did that. Now I kind of tear up when I think about it.

But I'll tell you, every night when we play "Purple Rain," I always look up at the top of the arena, because I envision her looking down at me and smiling an angelic smile. It's as if she's looking down and she's happy that she's with God and she's proud of me. That's very comforting. I also envision her dancing to a lot of the songs, especially "Take Me With You." I always feel like I can see her up there dancing. These are things that keep me strong and keep me going. If I didn't have them, I don't think I could still be out doing this.

MD: Did you think about stopping?

John: Yes. A lot of people were very sup-

portive. Prince and the other bandmembers were *very* supportive. They respected my time. They wanted me to take my time about coming back. Larry Graham also talked a lot to me and my dad. And my fans were also very kind throughout.

I had to make the decision myself about coming back. I thought about it and decided to do it, because I felt that's what Jia would want me to do. She wouldn't want me to stop. But I could never do it without God, I have to say that.

I'm still numb. I think it's God carrying me through all this right now, and the feeling of Jia and God's love flowing through me. I feel like there's a higher power that is channeling through me that's making me play the way I do. That's the bottom line. There's nothing else but that. And that's the way it's going to be for the rest of my life.

MD: When I spoke with Joann, she told me about the scholarship you set up at the Berklee College Of Music in honor of Jia. She said, "I always prayed that Jia would grow up and appreciate what she had and that she would help those less fortunate than her. And now it's comforting to me

to know that she will."

John: Right. The scholarship is going to be for female musicians—young female musicians who need money to go to Berklee, or for students who need money to continue their studies at Berklee. I'd like to give out the contact info for that. If anyone is interested in the scholarship, contact Berklee at (617) 747-2236.

MD: We've talked about Jia. Do you feel comfortable switching gears to talk about drums?

John: Yes, I'm okay.

MD: I understand that Prince has really inspired you with his drumming. If you had to pick your favorite tracks that Prince played drums on, what would they be?

John: There are quite a few—"Musicology," "A Million Days," "Bambi," "I'm Yours," and "Controversy."

MD: What is it that you like about his drumming on those particular cuts?

John: I love what Prince played on "Musicology." He came in with a James Brown approach to the drums, which, in any drummer's eyes, never fails, because almost everyone loves James Brown's



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drummers and drumming. And there's just something about the sound of the drums and the way Prince tuned them for that recording that really stands out for me. It comes with a solid punch, especially the way he used the bass drum and the accents he used with the toms and the kick. It kind of gives the song that extra additive it needed to get the groove in the ear of the listener.

MD: How about "A Million Days"?

John: "A Million Days" really reminds me of Prince's former drummer, Michael Bland, and his style of playing. It starts out mellow, a real slow kind of rockish song that gradually grows and grows to the end. Prince gets more aggressive as the song builds, adding chops and technical things that really make it stand out.

With all of the drummers that Prince has ever encountered—Sheila E, Michael Bland, Kirk Johnson, me—his ears are wide open to what we do and the style that we have. I think he absorbs a little bit of everybody into his own drumming style, as we all do. I've absorbed a little bit of their drumming into my style as well.

MD: What about the tune "Bambi"?

John: That song, to me, sounds like "I'm Yours," which is the first song on his first record, *For You*. Prince once told me that when he did "I'm Yours," it was around the time he was listening to Billy Cobham's *Total Eclipse*. That record inspired him to play and write that song. I feel that's the same thing with "Bambi."

MD: "Controversy."

Taking Care Of Business

Stephane Hamel, Drum Tech And Programmer For John Blackwell

MD: What's your responsibility on the Prince tour?

Stephane: I'm responsible for setting up and tuning the drums, along with any maintenance the equipment needs, as well as programming all of the loops and sounds that John uses for the show.

MD: What is John's setup?

Stephane: John changes his setup often. Sometimes he'll use three floor toms and two rack toms, or one floor and three rack toms. John also likes to switch the order of the toms. They don't always go from highest to lowest. Because of the changes, there are no marks or memory locks for the setup. With other drummers there would be marks all over the place. So in order to set the kit up properly, I really need to know John's way of drumming.

MD: What kit is he currently using?

Stephane: John uses a Tama Starclassic both for the arena and the club shows. The basic arena setup has 5x10, 6x12, and 6 1/2x13 rack toms, 14x14, 15x15, and 15x16 floor toms, a 20" gong drum, a 17x22 bass drum, and two Starclassic snares: 5x14 and 6x14. For the club shows, John uses 5x10 and 6x12 toms, a 14x14 floor tom, and a 17x20 bass drum. The cymbals are Sabian: a 22" hand-hammered prototype ride, a 20" Jia Chinese signature, an 18" AA thin crash, a 17" HHX Evolution crash, and a 14" AAX X-Celerator hi-hat.

MD: John is known for having an incredibly fast right foot. What bass drum pedal does he use, and does he use a double pedal?

Stephane: John uses a Tama Camco double pedal with the spring tension set as tight as possible. When there's an opening act for Prince, many times they will have to use John's kit



because of the way the stage is set up. However, they always have to change the bass drum pedal because John's is set so tight.

MD: Any electronics?

Stephane: There's a Roland SPD-S pad next to John's hi-hat and a drumKAT next to his ride cymbal. They control the sounds and the loops of the Akai Z-4 sampler; the left and right out of the Z-4 goes through a Mackie 1202 board, and the mix left and right goes to two direct boxes. I change the sound patches from the drum station for every song, because John is too busy playing.

MD: Sticks and skins?

Stephane: John uses Vater drumsticks, the Jia Angel model, named for his daughter. He uses clear Remo Powerstroke 4 heads on his rack toms and bass drum, coated Powerstroke 4s on his floor toms, and an Emperor X on the snare.

NPG's Rhonda Smith

Bass Perspective



Without a doubt the sexiest, funkier bass player around today, Rhonda Smith has been providing the foundation as a member of Prince's New Power Generation for the past eight years. **MD** spoke to Rhonda about her boss, what she looks for in a drummer, and her NPG rhythm-section partner, John Blackwell.

On Prince as a drummer:

As a drummer, Prince is tight. He has a feel that's all his own. His attack on the snare is different, his emphasis on the kick is different... I like it. He's got some real feel, and it comes through, whatever instrument he's playing.

On John Blackwell's drumming:

John is also tight, and very powerful. He's a great drummer. There's no stopping him. There's a lot to be said for people who really have presence through their instrument—like Prince—and John has that.

John is a perfect match for Prince, because like Prince he knows so much material. John is like a walking, talking back catalog. [laughs] You can name a song and he'll play you the beat...and it's the right beat, and it's solid and kicking. That's Johnny. He loves music and he loves what he does, and you can tell. He brings something a little extra special to the table that not all drummers do, and he looks real natural when he does it. It blows people's minds.

Playing with John:

Generally I let John lead the way. I try to go for solidity first, especially because the majority of the time we're reproducing pop classics. A large majority of the fans know the parts already, so we try to respect the music and definitely be tight—that's always the number-one priority, to make a bottom for everyone else to go crazy on top of.

Qualities Rhonda looks for in a drummer:

Number-one, he or she must be solid—no question about it. Tempo is everything. It drives me crazy if the tempo fluctuates. As a bass player, when you have to fight tempo all the time, it's a problem. So I would say that's my biggest bug. Number-two, don't overplay. That's another great thing about playing with John. He knows where the spots are. He knows when and where to do his thing.

For more on Rhonda, check out her Web site: www.rhondasmith.com.

John Blackwell

John: There's something about the sound of Prince's drums on "Controversy" and the way he mixed the drums in the studio that really stands out to me. I think the drums are the main focal point besides the synthy sound he got on the keyboards. It was so strong. For me, it was a turning point in Prince's drum sounds, and the beat itself. He had other songs that were similar—like "Uptown" from *Dirty Mind* or the title track from that record—strong beats. But on "Controversy," he changed the way drums sounded. That's also when he was experimenting with the Linn LM1 drum machine. He played live drums but added some percussive

sounds from the LM1 on top of what he played.

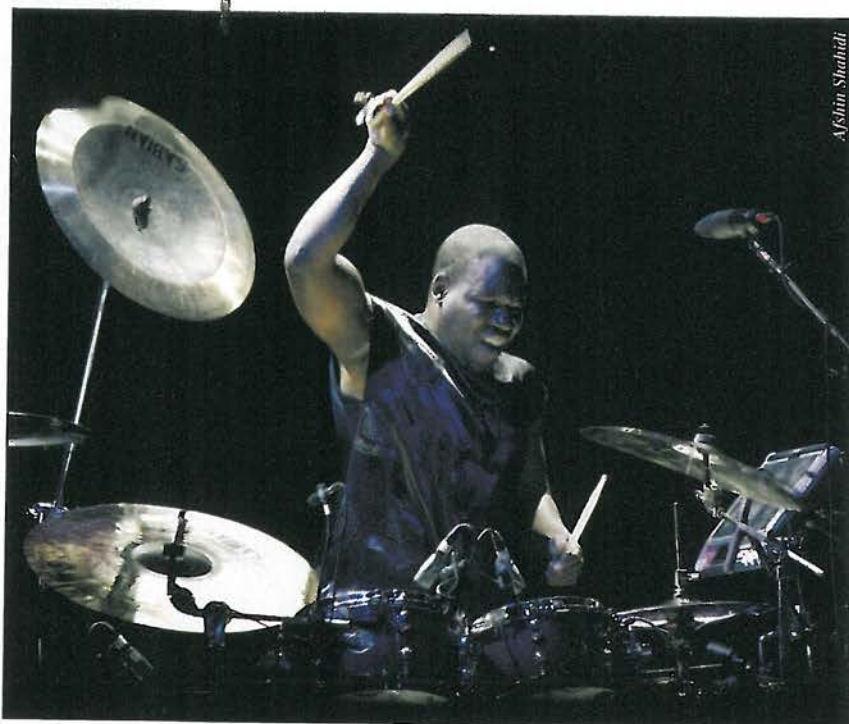
There's something about "Controversy" that I still love to this day. Every night when I play it with him, I try to stay as

close as possible to the original beat. There's just something about playing that beat. I have to really lock in with Rhonda [Smith, bassist] because the bass part is very simple—it's just straight quarter

notes. For the drummer to lock in with the bass player on that groove is very important.

MD: Have there been any musical challenges you've faced working with Prince?

John: The only thing that sometimes gives me a problem is understanding where he's going with some of the arrangements. Prince likes to connect songs and bits of songs together. And sometimes when he tries to explain to the band what he's trying to do, I rush to understand



Afshin Shahidi

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and I don't take the time to see the big picture. That's something he is always trying to teach me. Prince always tries to get me to envision a finished project even before I start it.

MD: Anything else?

John: Prince's and my drum tuning preferences are totally different. He likes that studio drum sound, where the snare is tuned so low that all you can play on it is 2 and 4.

MD: That big, fatback kind of sound....

John: Yeah, and there's nothing wrong with that when you're in the studio. But he likes that for live concerts too. Live, he's always looking for that sound. I find that challenging.

MD: Does he ever sit down at the kit to show you what to play?

John: Oh, yeah. He'll sit down to show me exactly where he's trying to go with the groove.

MD: When he does that, is he on the money?

John: Oh, *yeah*. He knows what he wants. And then sometimes after I see what he's trying to do, I go, "Oh, *that*. That's easy." [laughs]

MD: What would you say you've learned from Prince over the years drum-wise?

John: Drum-wise I've learned that less is more. And also, musically and instrumentally, it doesn't take that many drums to do what you need to do.

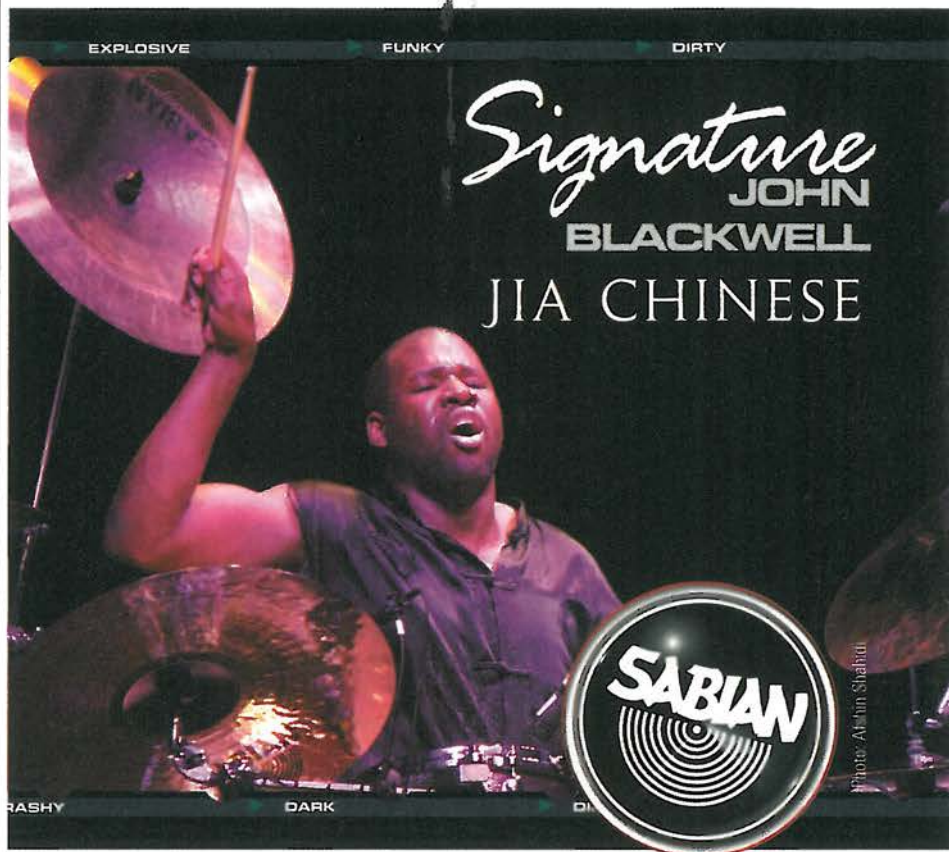
MD: You mean setup-wise?

John: Right. I find it easier to deal with things when I don't have twenty drums on stage. You can make things happen much easier with just a little four- or five-piece kit. In this style of music it's much better to do things with fewer drums.

I've also learned that playing as simply as possible in the studio is important. Save the technical stuff for the live show—and even then it might not be necessary.

MD: With all of the live performing you do, what's your practice routine like? What do you feel you need to work on?

John: I'm working more on practicing, period. I guess right now I'm in the mode of keeping my other styles of music together and my technical chops up, because I'm playing in the pocket so much on the road every day. I don't want to get rusty with traditional jazz and



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Pumping out grooves with Prince is all about getting down with sounds that are dark, dirty and cutting. For John Blackwell it's cymbals like his Signature Jia Chinese. This Chinese model is different from the rest. It has no bell, the bow area is raw, and the flange is lathed. This is a cymbal that delivers dry, dark and solid stick definition as a ride, or barks out with controlled trashiness that is hot, dark and dirty when accented on its edge. Fast, funky and trashy, that's the Signature John Blackwell Jia Chinese.

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John Blackwell

fusion. I want to make sure that I keep those up to par, so I'm always trying to find time to mess around with it—either before soundcheck or by watching videos. I've got so many videos that I carry on the road with me: Tony Williams, Billy Cobham, Art Blakey, Carl Palmer, Dennis Chambers.

I watch videos to keep myself enthused and also to keep myself aware of those styles of music and those kinds of technical skills. I keep myself really in tune with that. Plus the music I have on my iPod is inspiring. When I get time to jump on the kit—without being bothered or having to deal with soundcheck—I'll play along with a lot of that music. Of course, I'm always messing around with rudiments. I'm always trying to do something to keep my chops up with single strokes

and other rudiments.

MD: Speaking of chops, are there any young guns coming up today that you've got your eye on?

John: Yeah, actually. One guy who comes to mind is Les Cleveland. He's at Berklee now, but I started teaching him when he was twelve or thirteen years old. He's now the first-call guy for Larry Graham, and Roberta Flack is starting to use him a lot. He's played with Sheila, he's dabbled with Prince a little bit. He's from my hometown in South Carolina, and he's a bad young drummer.

MD: Anyone else?

John: There are a few. There's a new youngblood out in LA. Her name is Cora Coleman. Then there's Ron Brunnell, who played with Kenny Garrett for a little while. There's another bad kid out of Columbia, South Carolina named Jakobi Gunter. The boy is *amazing*. He's going to be a force to be reckoned with.

MD: Where would you like to be musically in a few years?

John: I'd like to be writing my own music, have had a couple of CDs out, and be touring with my own fusion group. Those are the things I would like to do. But right now, I'm just taking one day at a time.

Twenty years ago, looking at how big Prince was with *Purple Rain*, and now, twenty years later witnessing the recognition he's receiving again...well, it's an honor to be working with him. For me, it's really a dream come true, because when I was growing up, I really wanted to be a part of it. I would watch the *Purple Rain* video and think, "Man, if I could only be up there." It was like I really wanted to snatch the sticks from Bobby Z. [laughs] So it's truly been a dream come true for me. As for the future, I've learned that anything can happen. So like I've said, I'm taking one day at a time.

You can send John a message via his Web site, www.johnblackwell.net.



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Jason Bittner

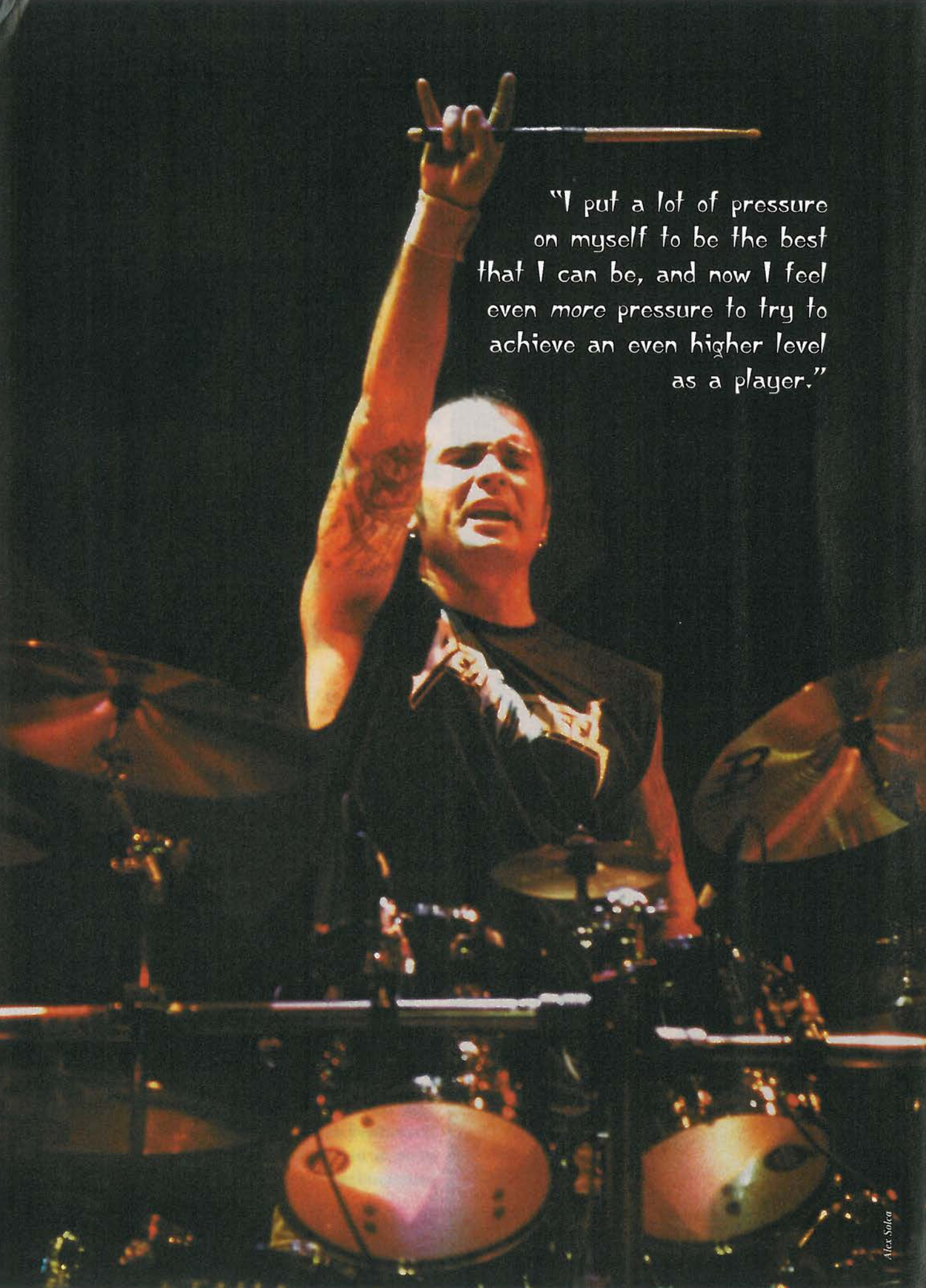
Of Shadows Fall

Proving Speed, Power, And Musicality Can Go Hand In Hand

by Mike Haid

I first met metal drummer Jason Bittner on a sweltering 90-plus-degree morning in Atlanta. It was Ozzfest 2003, and Bittner's Boston-based group, Shadows Fall, was scheduled to open the second-stage festivities. When I arrived, I was surprised at the already gathering crowds that were swarming the stage. Expecting to find Bittner enjoying a morning cup of coffee and a box of Krispy Kremes in his air-conditioned tour bus, I was impressed when I was led to the back of a U-Haul trailer (no air conditioning), where Bittner was feverishly warming up for the band's upcoming set on a set of practice pads. Drenched with sweat, Bittner went on to give a masterful performance, totally impressing the throngs.

Will Liam Hawkins



"I put a lot of pressure
on myself to be the best
that I can be, and now I feel
even more pressure to try to
achieve an even higher level
as a player."

Bittner's hard work and dedication has paid off, perhaps most obviously by his being voted best up & coming drummer for 2004 by the readers of *Modern Drummer*. It's no wonder why. Just check out his drumming on any of the band's discs, especially their latest, *The War Within*. We're talking some of the most impressive double bass drumming ever laid down. (FYI, the first pressing of the new CD includes a twenty-minute DVD drum lesson!)

Refreshingly, Bittner seems humbled by his success. He says he feels that his band's popularity stems from the fact that they combine a fresh taste of melodic old-school rock with nu metal. The formula must be working: Shadows Fall is currently on its first headlining tour of the US.

Bittner's powerful drumming approach combines blinding speed with double bass intricacies that bring to mind greats like Bozzio, Portnoy, Benante, and Lombardo. His double bass drumming is inspiring technically, but also musically. No question, Jason Bittner has found his unique voice on the instrument.

MD: Has the success of Ozzfest made a significant difference in the popularity of the band?

Jason: Totally. Eight out of ten weeks on the tour, we sold more CDs than any other band. That increased our fan base immensely. Then we played the MTV2 Headbangers Ball in the fall of 2003, which was another great high-profile tour. After that we took six months off to write and record the new CD, and then

we headed to Europe for a tour. Our current tour of the States has been mostly sold-out, and I know that a big part of that success stems from our exposure from Ozzfest and Headbangers Ball.

MD: Not bad for a band on an independent label.

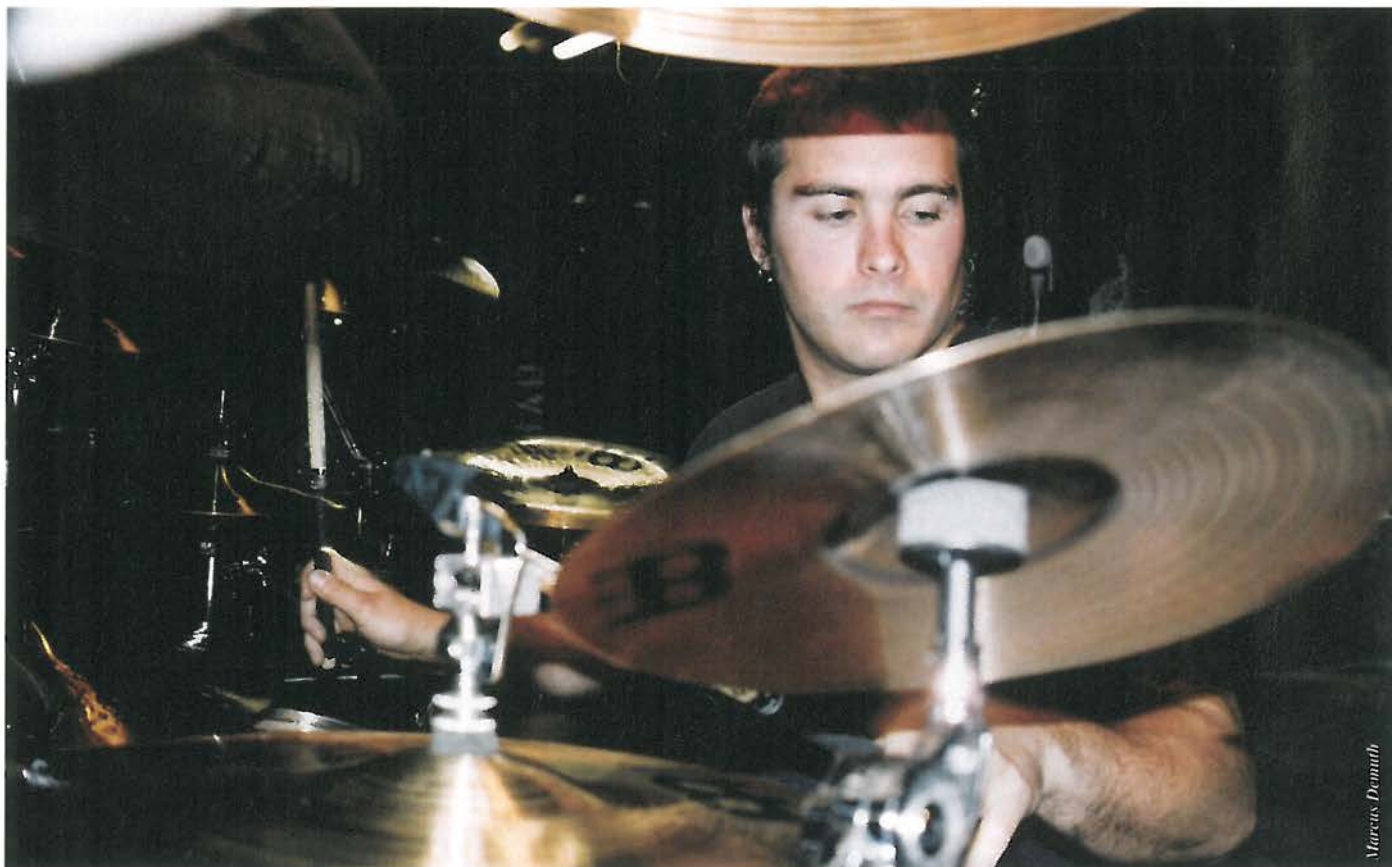
Jason: Yeah, we were the only band at Ozzfest on an indie. But Century Media has been behind us one hundred percent. We're getting ready to shoot a video for a

song off *The War Within* called "What Drives The Weak." That should go into rotation on MTV2, and I believe it will be the first song that the label will push to commercial radio.

MD: *The War Within* shows the band's outstanding ability to blend several generations of metal styles in a fresh way. And your drumming concepts continue to grow, not to mention that the drums are well recorded and "in your face" in the mix.

Jason: I put a lot of time into this recording. I was so intense about doing a solid job that I was having anxiety attacks and chest pains from the stress of performing to the best of my abilities. I really wanted to raise the bar with my drumming, much higher than the last recording.

So I went into the recording as prepared as I could be, down to knowing the exact fills that I would play for each song. Since we had some time off, we spent a lot of time rehearsing for the recording, which really helped us focus. I recorded all of my parts in two days. I tracked seven songs the first day and three the second. I'm very happy with the outcome, in fact I feel it's the best



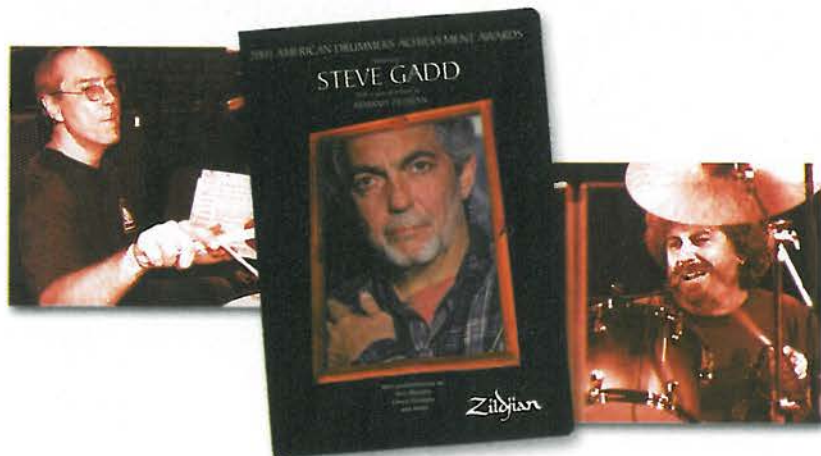
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STEVE GADD

photo by Andrew Lepley

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In recognition of Steve Gadd's incredible impact on the art of drumming and music, on September 13, 2003, the Avedis Zildjian company presented Steve with an American Drummers Achievement Award (ADAA) at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston, MA—an historic evening that also included a special tribute to the late Armand Zildjian.

This once-in-a-lifetime event was hosted by Mr. Bill Cosby and featured an all-star band that included Vinnie Colaiuta and Rick Marotta on drums, Michael Landau, Jimmy Johnson, Larry Goldings and special guest appearances by Will Lee and Tom Scott. The evening culminated in an incredible performance by Steve with James Taylor.

The double-disc DVD features over six hours of footage, including the evening's great performances, exclusive rehearsal footage; a 20-minute documentary on Steve's career, backstage interviews, rare, early film footage of Steve and more.

Special DVD features include: Rehearsal Footage • Interviews with Eric Clapton, Chick Corea, Vinnie Colaiuta, Rick Marotta, Will Lee and Tom Scott • 5.1 Surround Sound mixes of all of the performances mixed from the drum chair • 35-minute interview with Steve • Rare video footage of Steve, circa 1970 with the U.S. Army Band, and footage from 1977 of the band, L'image, featuring Steve and Mike Mainieri • Photo Gallery

Total Running Time: Six Hours and Ten Minutes

Presented in association with **Zildjian**

Zildjian's net proceeds from the sale of this DVD will go to the Armand Zildjian Percussion Scholarship at the Berklee College of Music.

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Jason's Kit

Drums: Tama Starclassic Maple in custom diamond mist finish

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- B. 4x14 snare
- C. 9x10 tom
- D. 10x12 tom
- E. 12x14 tom
- F. 13x16 tom
- G. 18x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Meinl

- 1. 14" Soundcaster Soundwave Powerful hi-hats
- 2. 18" Byzance brilliant medium crash (or 19" Amun Powerful crash)
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- 4. 10" Raker splash

- 5. 20" Amun China (or 18" Byzance China)
- 6. 17" Soundcaster Powerful crash
- 7. 8" Raker splash
- 8. 18" Soundcaster Powerful crash
- 9. 20" Amun Big Bell Powerful ride
- 10. 17" Amun Powerful crash
- 11. 18" Amun China
- 12. 13" Amun medium Soundwave hi-hats (closed)
- 13. 8" Classics Ice Bell
- 14. 16" Soundcaster China

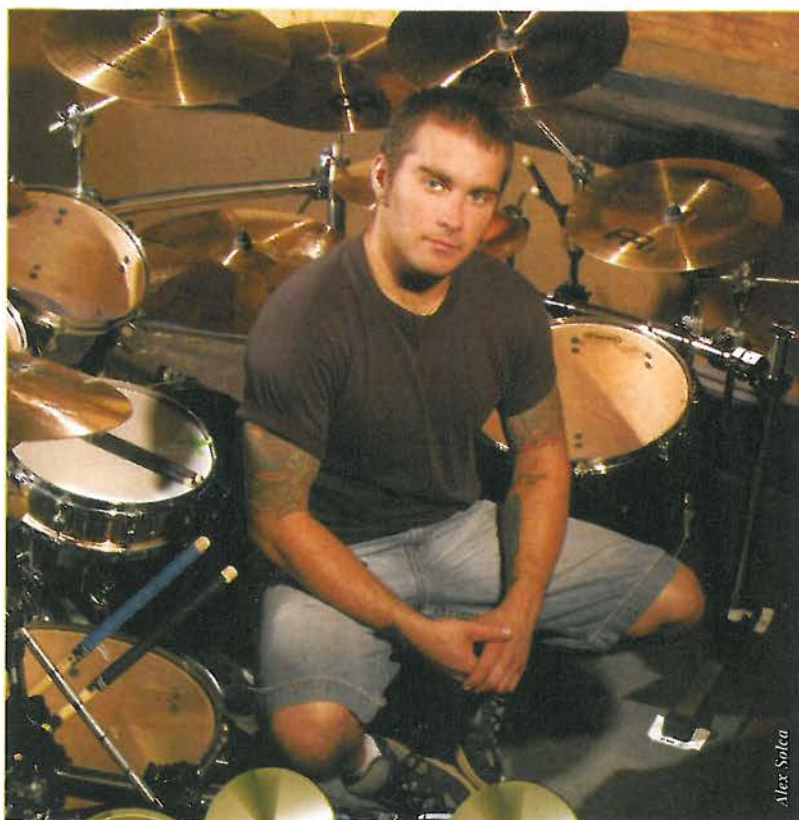
Hardware: Tama rack, Iron Cobra hi-hat stand, Tama HP35 (Carnico) bass drum pedals with

wood beaters (loose spring tension), Danmar wood beaters

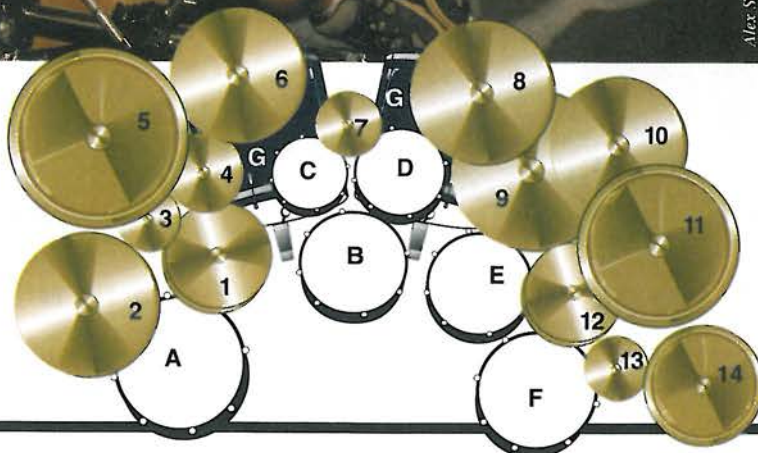
Heads: Evans Reverse Dot Power Center on snare drum batter with Hazy 300 underneath (tight bottom head, semi-tight top), clear G2s on tops of toms with clear G1s underneath (top head loose but with no rippling, bottom slightly tighter), EQ3 on bass drum batter with HeadFirst logo head on front (both heads loose, two EQ Pads inside each drum for muffling)

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Jason Bittner

recorded performance I've ever done.

MD: In preparation, what did you work on to fine-tune your technique?

Jason: There were certain things that I had to practice. Some of the ideas that I heard in my head, I was having trouble creating on the drums. Since I was giving drum lessons two to three days a week during that time, I was already strengthening my chops. Then I put in extra practice for the recording. So overall I was practicing five days a week.

MD: It certainly shows on the new recording. Your double bass chops are blazing, and your 16th- and 32nd-note phrasing ideas on the bass drums are inspiring.

Jason: I've been working out of *The Encyclopedia Of Double Bass Drumming* by Bobby Rondinelli for a while, and it's been a great help to my chops. I also use it with my students.

MD: Do you feel comfortable with the technique you've developed to this point, or are there things you'd still like to learn?

Jason: I feel confident with the technique I've developed so far. I'm happy with my foot technique, but there are other areas I'd like to improve. I would like to be able to play like Virgil Donati—but I don't have the patience or the time to

practice eight hours a day. [laughs]

One thing that I've heard from other drummers who have heard me play over the years is that I'm consistent. Once I create a part, I don't change or deviate.

One of my heroes, who I've learned that concept from, is Neil Peart. He's one of the most consistent drummers I've ever seen in my life. Every time I see him play, he's flawless, and he knows exactly what he's going to play. I'm not the fastest double bass drummer, and I'm not the most intricate double bass drummer. But I try to develop parts that fit the music and that will create excitement.

MD: What other drummers inspire you?

Jason: A lot of the guys I admire are my friends now, but I still look up to them and wish that I could do what they do. Charlie Benante and Dave Lombardo are major influences on me. The guys who I get all my tasty licks from are Neil Peart, Stewart Copeland, and Mark Zonder of Fates Warning. When people compliment me on my drumming, I tell them that if they like what I'm doing, they should listen to these guys to hear where it all came from.

MD: Let's talk about your drumming on the new album, *The War Within*.

Jason: The opening track, "The Light That Blinds," is basically a lesson in

Bites of Bittner

Recordings

Artist	Album
Shadows Fall	The War Within
Shadows Fall	Live In Anaheim 2004 (DVD)
Shadows Fall	The Art Of Balance
Various	Within The Mind: A Tribute To Death
Stigmata	Hymns For An Unknown God
Stigmata	Do Unto Others
Stigmata	Pain Has No Boundaries

Favorites

Artist	Album	Drummer
Rush	all (but especially Exit Stage Left)	Neil Peart
The Police	Ghost In The Machine	Stewart Copeland
Iron Maiden	Number Of The Beast	Clive Burr
Slayer	all	Dave Lombardo, Paul Bostaph
Anthrax	Among The Living	Charlie Benante
Anthrax	Persistence Of Time	Charlie Benante
Fates Warning	Perfect Symmetry	Mark Zonder
Fates Warning	Parallels	Mark Zonder
Missing Persons	Spring Session M	Terry Bozzio
Death	Symbolic	Gene Hoglan
Led Zeppelin	all	John Bonham
Wrathchild America	3-D	Shannon Larkin



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17" Medium Crash
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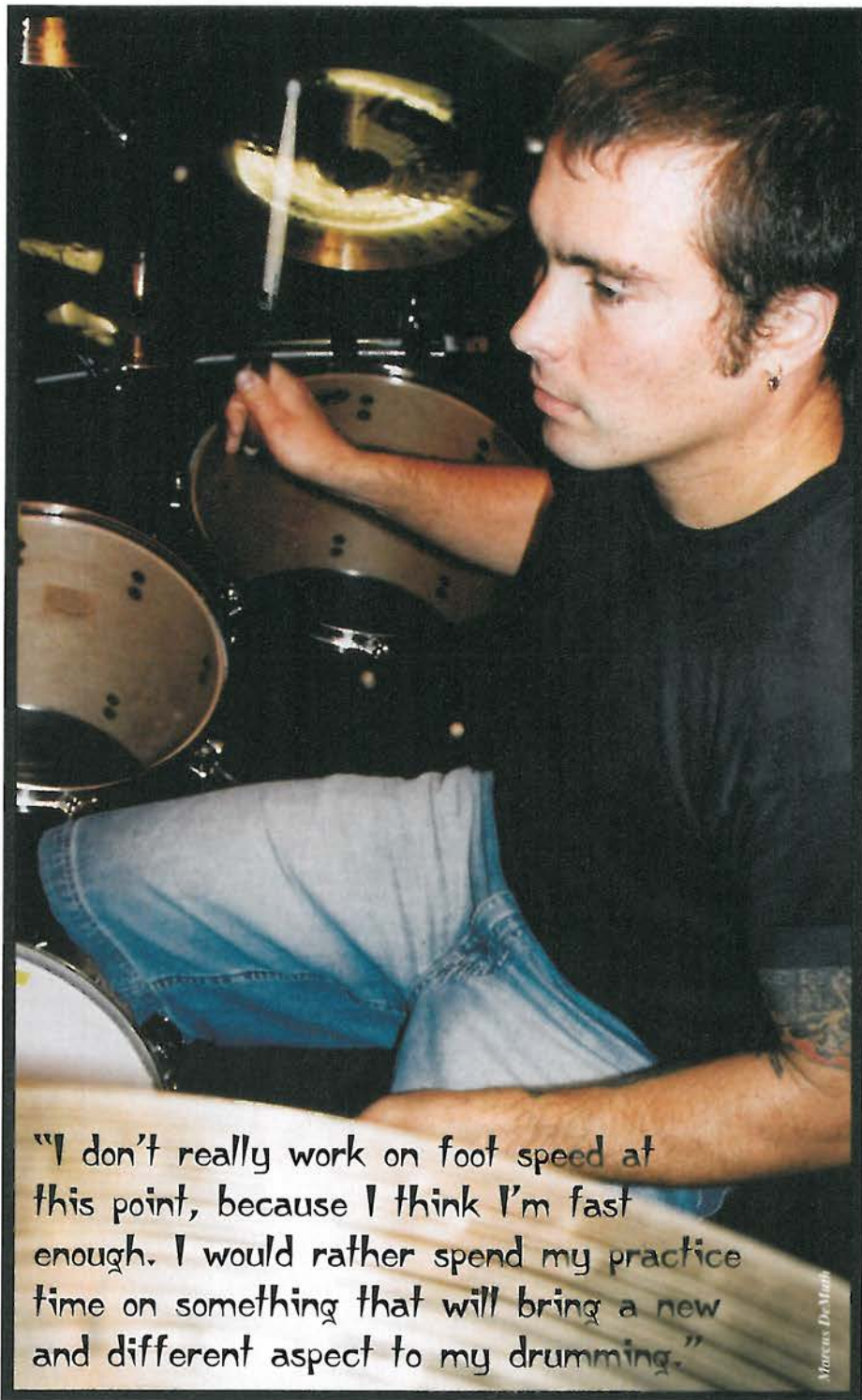
Jason Bittner

endurance. It's a challenge for me to get through that song. I open with blazing double bass for the first minute or so. But my favorite part is the drum break in the middle. They gave me a spot for a drum break, so this is my Neil Peart "Tom Sawyer" section. In the DVD portion of our new recording, I use this song as an example to show how I draw from my early drumming influences, like Neil and

Terry Bozzio, to create interesting parts and fills.

MD: There are several times on the CD, including this track, where you intermittently play quick triplet or 32nd-note flurries on the bass drums. How did you develop that technique?

Jason: Those bass drum flurries are an unconscious part of my playing that have become my signature style. I don't inten-



"I don't really work on foot speed at this point, because I think I'm fast enough. I would rather spend my practice time on something that will bring a new and different aspect to my drumming."

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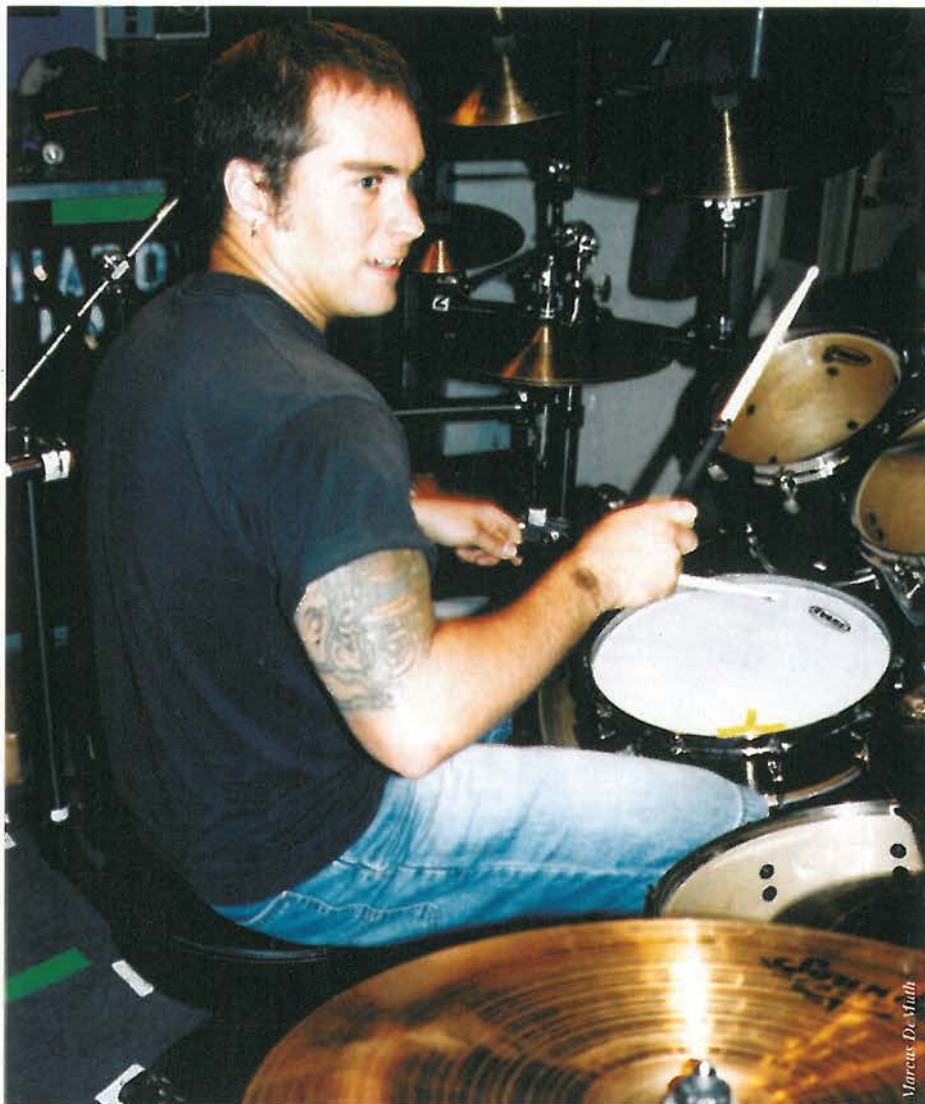


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Jason Bittner



tionally play them, they just happen at random when it feels right.

MD: Describe your double bass technique and how you have developed such a strong, smooth approach.

Jason: I play heel up, with the balls of my feet. I started playing double bass when I was fifteen years old. The first song I tried to learn with two bass drums was "Red Hot" by Mötley Crüe. That was the ultimate challenge for me, so Tommy Lee was the first drummer to influence my double bass chops. From there, I played along with early Metallica records. That helped my foot speed a lot.

Things started to develop even more when I was eighteen and started getting into Slayer and Anthrax. That's when I really started taking double bass drumming seriously. I would play for hours every day, trying to learn Slayer and Anthrax tunes. Those early Bay Area

thrash bands were the biggest influence on my double bass drumming technique. When I eventually went to Berklee, I started working with Joe Franco's *Double Bass Drumming* book, which gave me more dexterity between my hands and feet.

MD: What was the most important thing you learned at Berklee?

Jason: How to play with a metronome! The metronome challenges you to increase your speed, but in perfect time, so you know that you are improving your accuracy—and you've got to be able to play with accuracy. Chances are, your chops will suffer if you don't practice with a metronome. My advice to anyone wanting to learn to play heavy thrash metal is to practice 16th-note, 32nd-note, and triplet patterns with a metronome. And try playing along to the first three or four Anthrax and Slayer recordings. It

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Jason Bittner

worked for me.

MD: What about your hand technique?

Jason: That's something I need to work on. I'm more of a wrist player at this point. When I watch videos of myself playing, it almost looks painful to me. This winter I'd like to take some lessons to develop better hand technique. I don't think that I have a tense grip, but I *would* like to learn to play with a more relaxed grip.

After doing so many shows, I've learned to pace myself so that I don't cramp up or lose any speed. We play an intense seventy-minute set, and I want to be able to maintain my technique throughout the show.

MD: Would you agree that it's your overall technique that makes you stand out from most metal drummers? You seem to incorporate so many intricate ideas.

Jason: I guess, but I owe that to my musical background. I grew up in the '80s, so I was influenced by groups like Rush and The Police, as well as by the metal bands. I'm a little older than a lot of the drummers in my genre of music, and I'm thankful that my musical influences have become an important part of my playing. Most of the cool ideas that I come up with for my hands come from my influences. I like doing splash cymbal accents, and those ideas come straight from Peart, Zonder, and Copeland. Mike Portnoy has always said that he wears his influences on his sleeve. I'm the same way.

MD: Do you play double strokes with both feet?

Jason: I don't do any double strokes with my left foot. But my double-stroke technique on my right foot is pretty strong. I used to practice paradiddles with my feet. I don't do it well, but it definitely helped strengthen my feet for quick double strokes. I also owe a lot of that development to listening to Dave Lombardo of Slayer. There were a lot of thrash bands that played straight 8th and 16th double bass patterns. But Lombardo also played double strokes and quick double beats, rather than just the typical single patterns of that era. That's what really helped me develop those double bass flurries, which have become a natural part of the way I play.

MD: Are you satisfied with your foot

speed?

Jason: I don't really work on foot speed at this point, because I think I'm fast enough for this style of music. The last song on the new record is 200 bpm. That's fast enough for me. [laughs] At this point in my life, I don't want to spend two hours of my day just trying to get to 210 bpm. I would rather spend my practice time on something that will bring a new and different aspect to my drumming.

MD: On the song "What Drives The Weak," the band captures that '80s metal sound, with melodic vocals and sweet guitar harmonies. You somehow find a way to incorporate that with the current sound. And your drumming shifts gears perfectly to accommodate these styles with a unique flair.

Jason: That's a popular song among our fans. Having grown up in the '80s, it's easy for me to capture that vibe. In this tune I also use the double ride technique to create an interesting feel, with one hand on the ride cymbal and the other on the hi-hat. In fact, I use this on several tunes on this recording, like "The Power Of I and I," where I play certain sections with both hands on the ride cymbal.

MD: You have a good sense of what to play to make the groove interesting and diverse, rather than just playing stereotypical repetitive double bass patterns.

Jason: Once again, having grown up in the '80s and being influenced by many types of metal drummers, I can hear what will make a particular section stand out. Sometimes the guys in the band want me to play the typical fast double bass thing throughout an entire section, and I'll argue that it just doesn't fit.

MD: Do you lead with your right foot on all of your double bass ideas?

Jason: Normally. The last song on the new CD, "Those Who Cannot Speak," has a section that only made sense to start with the left foot. But usually I lead with my right. By the way, I ripped off that pattern from Charlie Benante, from an old Anthrax record. "Those Who Cannot Speak" is sort of a landmark drumming piece for me. I spent a lot of time working on intricate parts to make it interesting, besides the fact that it's the *fastest* song I've ever played. I'm really proud of it.



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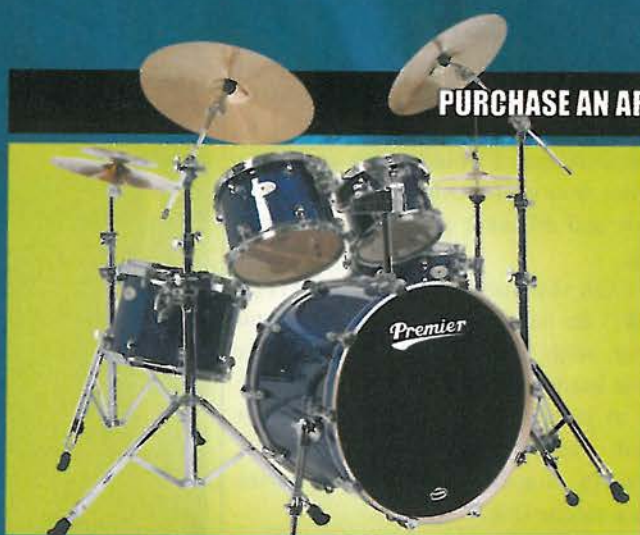
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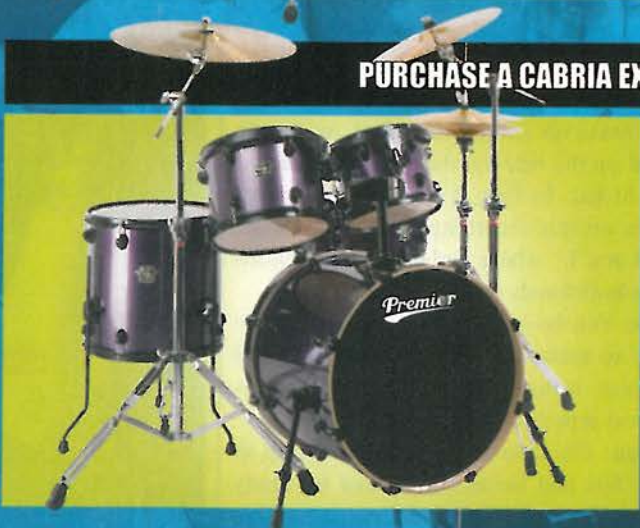
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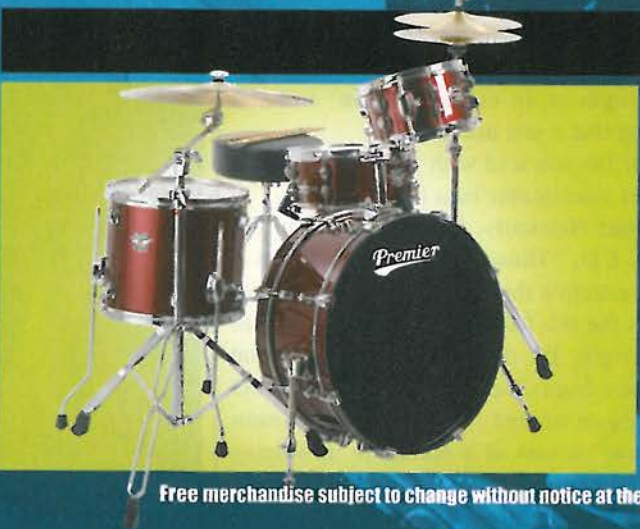
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Jason Bittner

MD: What gear are you using on the new record?

Jason: The drumkit is a blue sparkle Tama Starclassic kit. I have about seven different snare drums, but the one that ended up sounding best on the record was a 4x14 bronze piccolo. It had cut and high end, but it didn't sound like a small snare.

Most of my cymbals on the new record are from a new Meinl line called Soundcaster. They sound *amazing*. The rest of my cymbals are from the Meinl Amun series.

The kit that I'm using on tour now is a Tama Starclassic Maple in Diamond Mist, which is a beautiful black finish with silver sparkles. They're the same sizes as my old kit, but I've added an 18" floor tom to my left to bring more depth and life to my fills.

As for pedals, I still swear by the old Tama Camco model. I can't get used to

the Iron Cobras. I've tried several times, but I still keep going back to the Camcos. I like a very loose spring tension on my pedals, and the Camcos feel light and don't have a lot of adjustments. I like my beaters set pretty far back as well.

MD: Do you use any triggers?

Jason: There is no triggering going on when I play or record. Everything you hear from me is live acoustic drums.

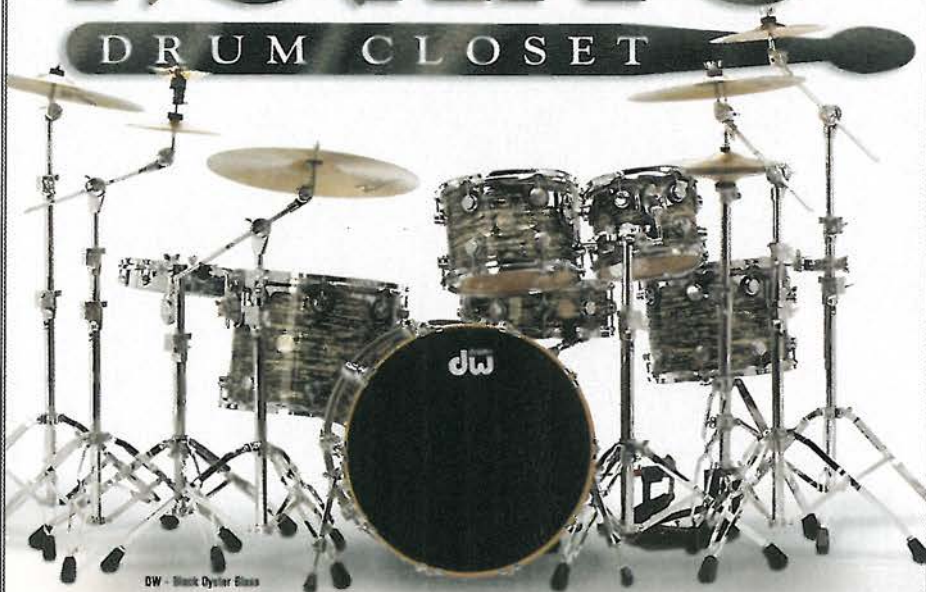
MD: How does it feel being voted top up & coming drummer by the readers of MD?

Jason: It makes me feel very good that my efforts are being recognized by the fans and by fellow drummers. But it also raises the bar for me as a player. I put a lot of pressure on myself to be the best that I can be, and now I feel even *more* pressure to try to achieve an even higher level as a player. I have to say, when I walk into my living room and see that plaque on the wall, it makes me feel like all the hard work over the past twenty years has paid off.



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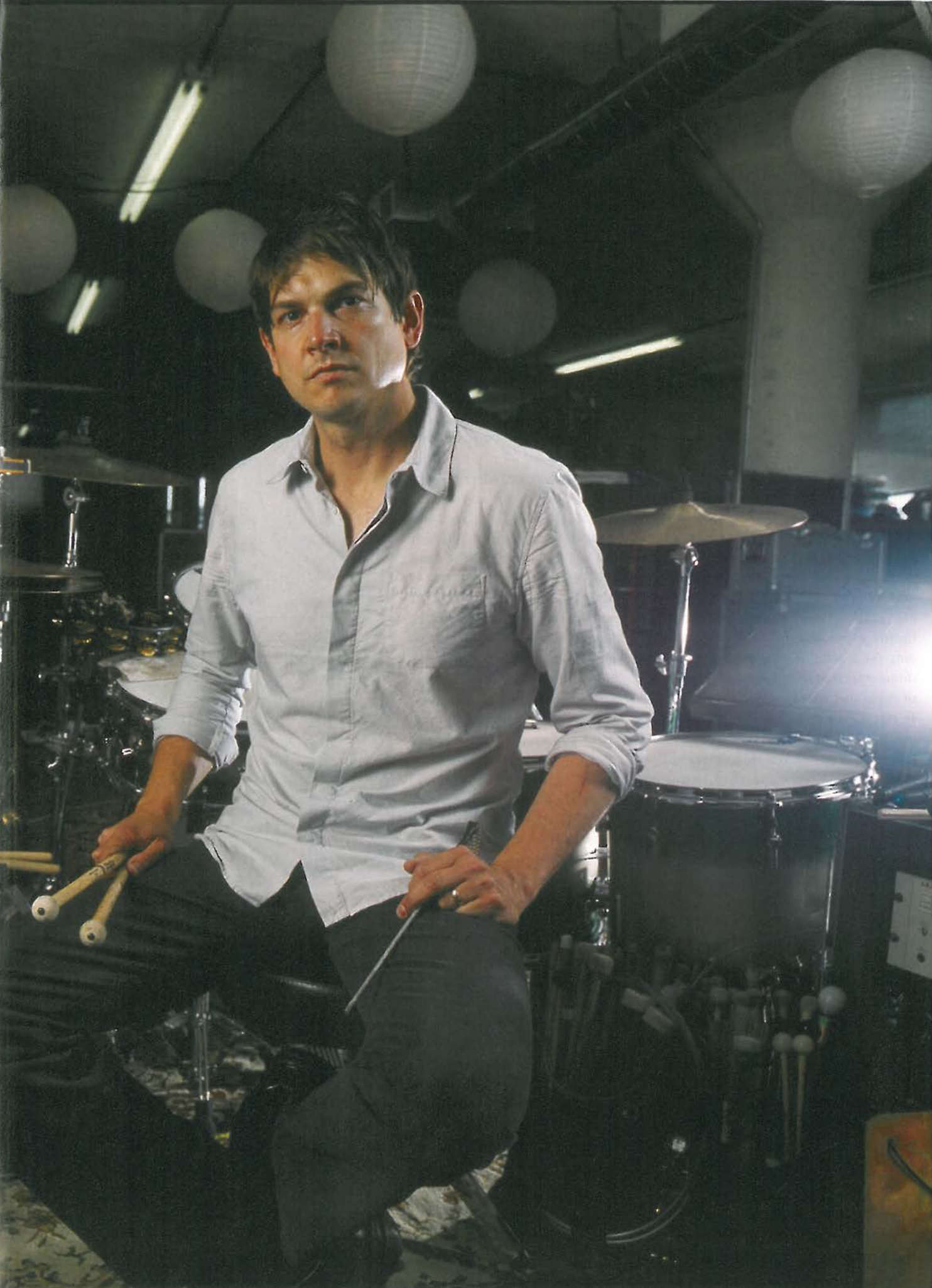
GLENN KOTCHE Wilco's Sonic Innovator

Story by Jim DeRogatis
Photos by Gene Ambo

As a musician, Glenn Kotche is devoted to playing exactly what the song needs—whether the rhythm is extremely complicated or supremely simple. And he'll do so using only one or two pieces of his drumset, or a vast array of percussive devices, at times providing a mind-blowing spectrum of sonic colors and textures.

This extremely musical approach to the drums has enabled Kotche to move effortlessly from playing with several well-respected indie-rock singers and songwriters, to gigging and recording with some of the most renowned improvisational and avant-garde musicians in the American rock underground, to claiming the drum throne for Chicago alternative rockers Wilco. You can hear his fine work on their two most successful albums, 2002's highly regarded *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot* and the recent *A Ghost Is Born*.





Still boyishly enthusiastic at age thirty-three, Kotche grew up in Roselle, Illinois, a half hour west of Chicago. He has been studying his instrument formally since grammar school, and he earned a B.M. in percussion from the University of Kentucky. But he has always opposed what he calls “the overly chopsy” approach to the drums, where players try to show off their skills by being needlessly complicated if a song doesn’t call for it.

Kotche is just as happy to hold a spare, steady groove for ten minutes—as he does with the Krautrock-inspired motorik rhythm of “Spiders (Kidsmoke)” on Wilco’s new album—or to turn to his impressive arsenal of percussion instruments in search of exactly the right musical shading. These old noisemakers range from his recently acquired three-octave set of almglocken (a form of brass chromatic tuned cowbells), to what Wilco singer and songwriter Jeff Tweedy calls Kotche’s “in-Glenn-tions.”

Climb behind the drumset in the loft on the northwest side of Chicago that Wilco uses as a studio and rehearsal space, and you’ll find not only the usual acoustic and electronic instruments, but a collection of bizarre sound makers. Floor tiles, hubcaps, ping-pong balls filled with shotgun pellets, drumheads that have been altered with bits of metal and wood, a collection of similarly rigged sticks and mallets with springs and wires attached, and a length of rubber tubing feeding into the air hole of the floor tom (so that Kotche can blow into it and change the pitch for a timpani effect) are all ready for use.

MD spoke with this versatile and virtuosic drummer in the midst of a busy touring schedule with Wilco, as he gears up for making his third solo album and pursuing several other improv-oriented projects during whatever downtime Glenn has away from the road.

MD: Let’s start with your schooling. You began taking lessons in the fourth grade?

Glenn: Yes, through school programs. But I’d really been playing since I was three or four. It’s the typical story: My sister got me a toy drum, and my parents got me one of those little toy kits at age six. My dad played organ, and he taught piano lessons his whole life. So there was always music around the house, and I’ve always identified myself as a drummer.

MD: Did the lessons help spur your interest

in drumming professionally?

Glenn: Yeah. I actually started taking private lessons a year before I started in school, so when band started, I kind of had an upper hand. There was a marching band in junior high, and then the high school marching band was really competitive—we would travel all over the country, competing nationwide. In high school, it also diversified into orchestra and concert band. I had some great private teachers through high school, Mike Chiodo and Kevin Lepper, and they’re both still teaching in the area. Those two guys really got me in tune with trying to be a musician and not just a drummer.

Lessons are definitely a confidence-builder for any kid: If you’re good at something, you want to do it more. I think that kind of fueled it, and the band stuff definitely helped.

MD: There was a time right after you got out of the University of Kentucky when you were teaching fifty high school kids a week. You still teach a few students now in between touring and recording commitments. It must drive you crazy to see schools shorting music education these days.

Glenn: Yeah, definitely, especially in Chicago. It kind of sucks, because in wealthy school districts, there’s a private teacher for every instrument, and the kids are awesome and they have all these opportunities. But in poorer districts—where it could be a kids’ chance for a scholarship, almost like sports—they don’t have the access to it at an early level.

MD: Did you enjoy teaching?

Glenn: Absolutely. It was definitely a day job, but for me it was the closest thing to playing, because I could try out ideas on students. I was playing all day long. You learn by watching other people do stuff, even watching people make mistakes. For someone like me, who has the training, it’s really important to see a rawer playing style. The mistakes remind you that there are so many other ways to think about things.

I think a lot of teachers teach what they



know instead of what’s best for the student. It took me a little while to figure that out. Every kid is not going to go on to college and major in percussion and do this for a living. You’ve got to teach what’s right for the kid.

MD: Why did you choose the University of Kentucky?

Glenn: There’s a professor there, James Campbell, who’s just a really happening teacher. There were a handful of places that I auditioned at in the Midwest—Michigan, Indiana, DePaul, and Kentucky—and I was most impressed by him. I knew he was recruiting from all over the country, and I got a scholarship. The caliber of the players there was also really good.



I was there for five years, and I got my bachelors degree in performance. Basically, college for me was being exposed to so many different types of music, and having to *play* so many different types of music—steel drums, vibes, marimba, timpani, everything. Professor Campbell's whole approach was multi-percussion, and that really sank in to me: the ideas of not treating the drumset like a drumset—incorporating all the stuff I learned, and not just thinking in terms of playing a beat but in terms of colors and textures as well as rhythm.

MD: Tell me about playing with The Cavaliers Drum & Bugle Corps.

Glenn: Well, high school marching band was

competitive, but The Cavaliers were even more competitive than that. That was ages eighteen to twenty-one. I started the summer after high school, and I had the experience of basically trying out against a couple hundred people. When it started, you'd do eight hours of rehearsals every day, and then do a show that night; drive to the next city, sleep on a gym floor, and shower in the locker room with a hundred twenty dudes after eating peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. It was pretty much boot camp, man!

MD: After that, touring in an indie-rock van must have seemed easy.

Glenn: Exactly! It really got my chops together, so that's why I liked it. But at the

same time, I could have kept doing it for a few more years, and I didn't, just because my rock band wouldn't put up with it during the summers. I guess I was always a rock drummer first.

MD: When did you discover rock 'n' roll?

Glenn: My parents had a bunch of Beatles records that I heard, and my older brother and sisters were always listening to stuff. Fifth grade was actually when I played in my first rock band. That was all metal—Judas Priest and Black Sabbath covers. When I got to high school, I fell into a band that was all classic rock, and that pretty much set the stage. I did my rock band in the summers and on the holidays, when I wasn't studying at

college or playing in marching band.

MD: When did you start gigging seriously on the rock scene?

Glenn: My last semester in college, after my senior recital, I was pretty much done with

most of my course work. That's when I started playing at the clubs in town, and that's when I met the bass player in Paul K.'s band. I started playing with him and some other folks. When I moved back to Chicago, I started teaching

right off the bat. I was playing with a band called Cross Cooks—guys I had known since I was a freshman in high school—but then also, right away, I started hooking up with some different musicians. Paul K. basically called me right after that, and I started touring with him.

MD: Paul K. is a sort of dark singer-songwriter in the Leonard Cohen/Lou Reed tradition, and he was based in Kentucky. You recorded two albums with him, right?

Glenn: Yes, *Now And At The Hour Of Our Death, Amen* [1995] and *Love Is A Gas* [1997], which was produced by Maureen Tucker. I was, at that point, removed enough from music school that I could truly appreciate The Velvet Underground. I don't think a lot of drummers—schooled drummers—can appreciate Tucker's drumming in The Velvet Underground, or punk rock in general. But sometimes that kind of simple, raw playing is just what a song needs. And that kind of playing reaches me on an emotional level more than a Mahavishnu Orchestra record or other chopsy kind of thing. Also, I think that coming from an orchestral background, where I had to count measures for fifteen minutes and then play five or six tambourine notes, it's like, "This is a simple part, but those notes were written for a reason, and they're important."

If you look at the first Velvet Underground record, there may be just a tambourine on one song, or a bass drum and a tambourine, but it's the perfect part. I respect not over-playing—not letting the ego get in the way—which, you know, is why all the old Muddy Waters or Bo Diddley records are perfect. Levon Helm, too. It's because he's writing


Glenn On Record

Recordings

Artist	Album
Wilco	Yankee Hotel Foxtrot
Wilco	A Ghost Is Born
Glenn Kotche	Introducing
Glenn Kotche	Next
Loose Fur	Loose Fur
On Fillmore	Sleeps With Fishes (vibraphone)
On Fillmore	On Fillmore
The Minus 5	Down With Wilco
Jim O'Rourke	Insignificance (double drumming with Tim Barnes)
Barnes/Kotche Duo	Domo Domo (double drumming with Tim Barnes)

Favorites

Artist	Album	Drummer
Paul Lytton	The Inclined Stick	Paul Lytton
Public Image Limited	The Flowers Of Romance	Martin Atkins
Captain Beefheart	Clear Spot	Ed Marimba
The Velvet Underground	any	Moe Tucker
The Band	Music From Big Pink	Levon Helm
Miles Davis	Live At The Fillmore East 1970	Jack DeJohnette, Airtio Moriera
Can	Tago Mago	Jaki Liebezeit
Neil Young	Harvest	Kenny Buttrey
Led Zeppelin	Presence	John Bonham
Keith Jarrett	Belonging	Jon Christiansen




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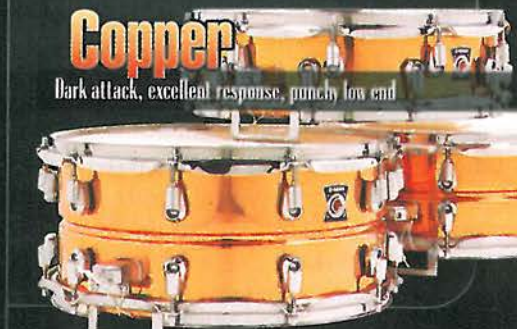
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the songs and singing them, so he knows, "This is here for a reason; this is to make the song better." It's not like, "I have to get my shots in while I can so people look at me."

MD: You've said Levon is one of your top three drumming heroes. Who are the others?

Glenn: Moe Tucker, Levon, and of course I think Bonham is just a given. Also, John French [a.k.a. Drumbo] and Art Tripp [Ed Marimba], who played with Captain Beefheart, and Kenny Buttrey, the Nashville session guy who played on Neil Young's *Harvest* and Bob Dylan's *John Wesley Harding*. It's just the simplest playing, but with little touches and accents and stuff that blow my mind.

I was reading one of those little pocket books about the making of *Harvest* when I was on tour, and on one song, Buttrey was sitting on his right hand, no hi-hat allowed. Just little things like that—you can do all this stuff, but you don't need to do all that stuff. You can limit yourself. A lot of times, it's going to make the music come across more.

MD: Did you and Moe Tucker talk about drumming?

Glenn: I learned tons of stuff, but it was more from observing. She's pretty cool. She might have been a little skeptical of me at the time, because I was fresh out of music school, and I was still overplaying a bit on some things. She definitely took the reins and was like, "No, you're not playing that anymore." She made me scratch all my parts in one song and build it up again one instrument at a time—"Just the bass drum. Okay, next track, just the snare drum. Next track, cowbell"—thinking about it the way she would think about it, which was really important.

MD: What did you do after Paul K.?

Glenn: Well, at the same time as Paul K., I played for a while with [Chicago alternative-country songwriter] Chris Mills. We recorded his first seven-inch in my apartment. I'd been with Paul for like three years, and then came Birdog [Bill Santen], a Portland-based singer-songwriter from Kentucky. Paul K. produced the record, and Elliot Smith plays on it. We toured with Elliot three or four times. At the same time, I toured with [Brooklyn singer-songwriter] Edith Frost, and I started getting really busy doing sessions with Jon Langford [of The Mekons and The Waco Brothers] and [Chicago avant-garde musicians] Charles Kim and Fred Lonberg-Holm. I was doing all the Truck Stop Records sessions, too, like Simon

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- 5. crotales (high octave)
- 6. crotales (low octave)
- 7. 20" gong sheet
- 8. Earth Plates (three, low)
- 9. Burma Bell

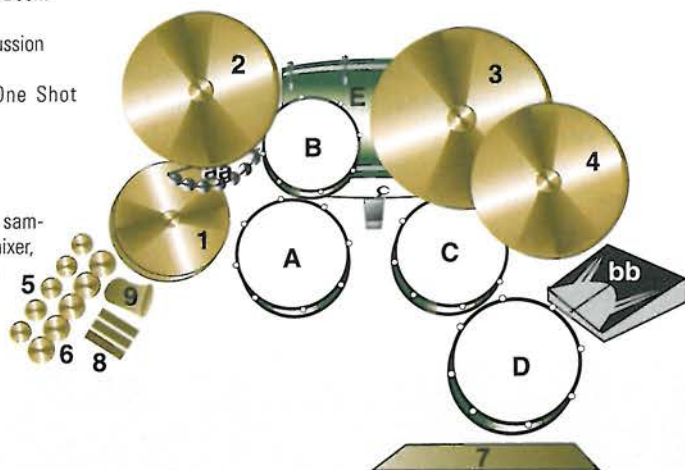
Other cymbals used in studio include 20" and 22" K Constantinople Light rides, 20" A Pang, 14" hi-hats (old), and a 20" Crash Of Doom

Percussion: Latin Percussion

aa. Cyclops tambourine
Also uses shakers, One Shot Shaker, and maracas

Electronics: various

bb. drumKAT
Also uses Akai S5000 sampler, Electro-Harmonix mixer, Boss Super Driver pedal

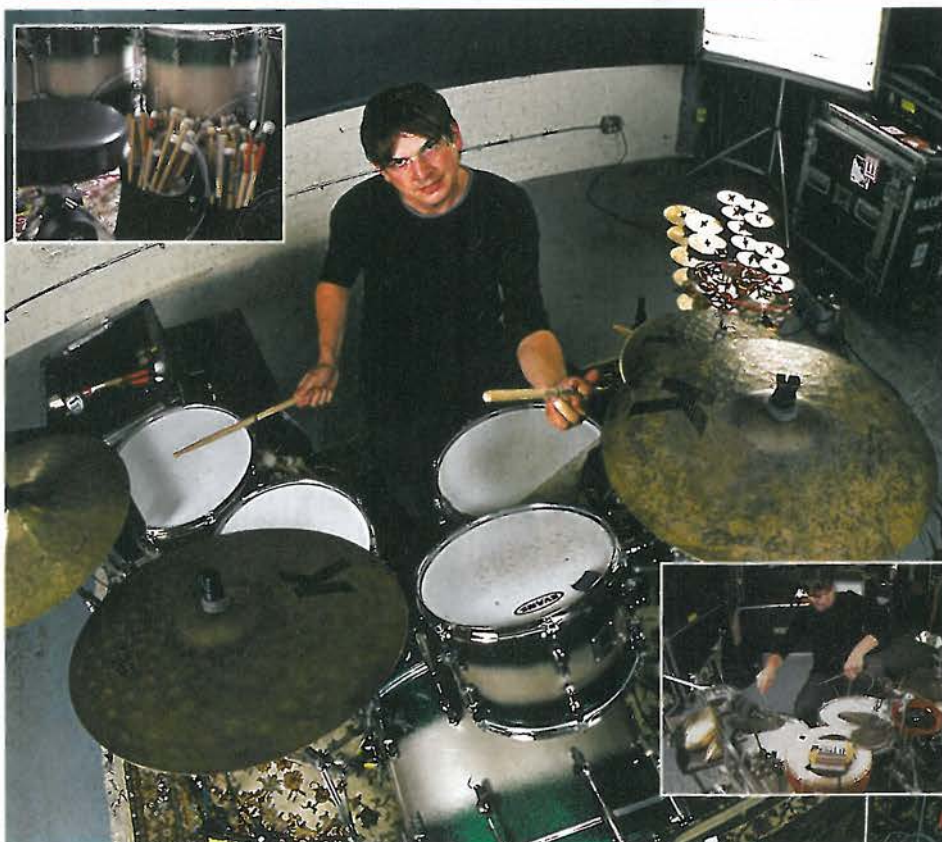


Hardware: Sonor 3000 series stands, Sonor 400 series bass drum pedal with hard felt beater (medium-loose spring tension)

Heads: Evans Genera HD Dry on snare drum batter with Hazy 300 underneath (medium tension with folded wedding hanky on 1"x6" area of top head), coated G2s on tops of toms with coated G1s underneath (medium tension with Moon Gel or Evans Min-EMAD for muffling), coated EQ3 batter on bass drum with frosted EQ3 Resonant on front (Evans patch on head and RGS pad for muffling)

Sticks: Pro-Mark 747B Super Rock (Japanese oak, wood tip) and SD5 (hickory with wood tip, hard felt beater on end), as well as Rods, brushes, crotales mallets, and Brooms

Microphones: various Shure models, Weisblatt contact mic's on shells



Glenn Kotche

Joyner and Lofty Pillars—just a lot of indie stuff. And that was kind of the point when I was just like, “I want to do my own thing,” and I quit everything. That’s when I started the duo and the improv stuff with [guitarist and producer] Jim O’Rourke.

MD: How did you hook up with O’Rourke?

Glenn: With Edith Frost, the last show we did was at Lounge Ax [in Chicago]. He’d produced her first record, and he sat in. I think I was using a metal sculpture and a two-piece drumkit, a snare and a floor tom with the pedal underneath. I think he liked that I could play quietly; I was playing with brushes most of the night. He asked me for my number that night, and called me two months later. We recorded some stuff on his *Eureka* record, which is when I met [bassist] Darin Gray and [drummer] Tim Barnes. Those three kind of formed the basis of my musical buddies for the next four years.

Jim was really important because he turned me on to so much new music. Paul K. did that for me to a degree, too—everyone you play with turns you on to new stuff—but especially Jim, and then through him, Darin and Tim. They’re walking

encyclopedias.

Then I started a duo with Darin, On Fillmore. We recorded the first [self-titled] album, and we have another record coming out. That’s pretty much my melodic outlet now. The new record is me just playing vibes, no drums. Darin play bass, and we both use mini discs of field recordings. We write everything together. Coincidentally, Darin has known Jeff [Tweedy] since they were kids, but it was through Jim that I met Jeff.

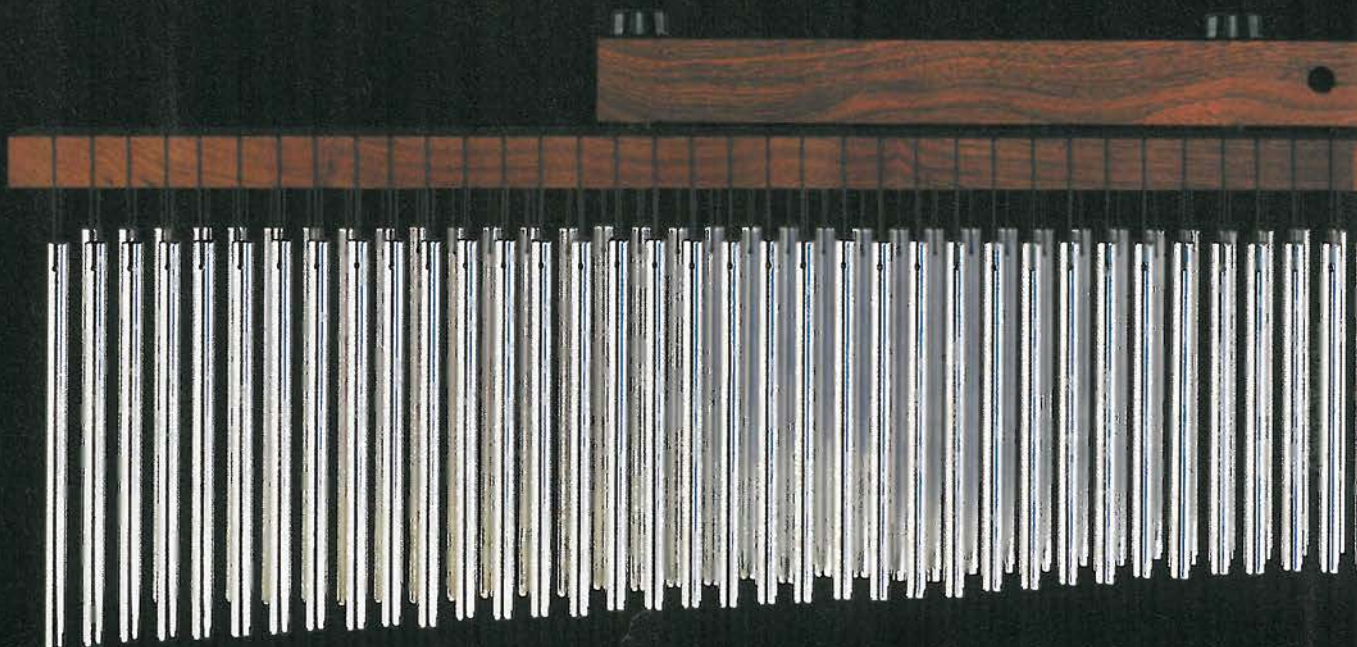
MD: You’ve also done two solo albums, *Introducing* and *Next*, and you’re working on a third. How do you look at those as opposed to what you do in a band situation?

Glenn: Those are basically just my own experiments, and I honestly only make one when I have a reason. There were things I wanted to explore with the first one, things I wanted to explore with the second one, and for me it was just like, “Well, I’m really into trying to check out this idea, and I’m going to make a record of it. If I like how it sounds I’ll put it out,” which is what’s happening with this new one also.

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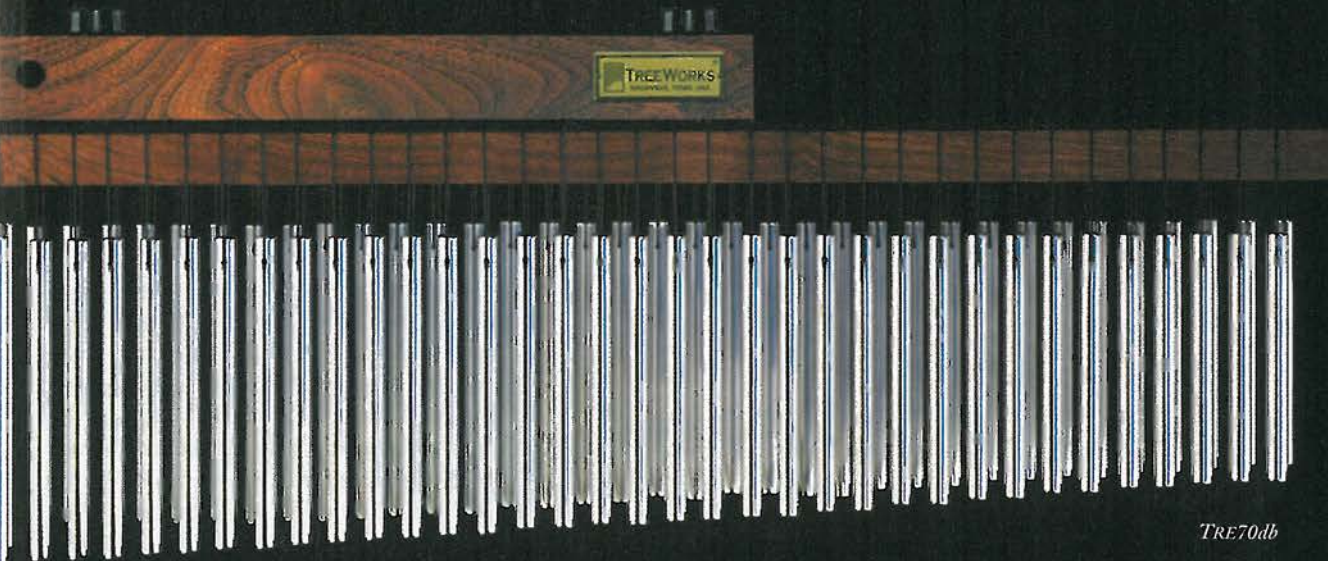


the whole idea was coincidental rhythm, which is what I got from reading a lot of John Cage. To me, it's just a more complex and elusive realm of polyrhythms. And since the melodic elements were on vibes and crotales—both of which have a great deal of sustain—they were included on the record as much for the rhythmic qualities of the sustain and oscillations as for the actual melodic content.


The second solo album [*Next*] is all complete "scuttle-prov"; that's a joke term from

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[Wilco guitarist] Nels Cline. The point of that one was the same thing: just chance rhythms. That's when I prepared the drumkit, so there were things all over the drums—chains, jingles, rivets.... I built all the spring mallets to just take all of my training out of the equation. That way, when you want to hit something, you don't know how it will react. I just really wanted to explore that aspect.

MD: You carry many of these avant-garde ideas into the more traditional rock songs that Wilco plays, and you use a pretty elab-

orate setup when you tour with the band. Tell us about that.

Glenn: It's a brand new custom-made Sonor kit in my junior high marching band finish, sparkle green with the champagne band. I added a second floor tom, so it's kick, snare, rack tom—which I kind of put more in the middle—and the two floors, 14" and 16". I do a lot of riding on the floor tom, so now I can mix it up between the two drums when chords change and stuff like that.

I still have the drumKAT with the sam-

pler and the drum brain, as well as Zildjian hand-hammered cymbals, acoustic jazz cymbals that are super dry so I can really beat them without taking over the band. I tape contact mic's on all the drums, then I run them through some effects to get distortion, because there are certain points in *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot* where the drums kind of fuzz out and distort. I use it on maybe a half dozen songs, where I kick on the volume pedal. It's all going through a mixer. The drum pad is triggering some of the timpani sounds from *Summerteeth* and the sound of my hand fans scraping the piano strings, the floor tiles, the little shaker things, and the hubcaps from *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*.

MD: So a lot of the things you played acoustically on the albums you now carry as electronic samples?

Glenn: Right. I used to play vibes on stage too, but now I'm just touring with the crotales in the place of the hammer dulcimer and the vibes. That was kind of the *Yankee* sound, and I wanted to try different sounds. And I have that tray of percussion—little Latin percussion things, noisemakers and shakers, and some homemade stuff, too. Plus the prepared heads that I set on the floor toms, like on "I Am Trying To Break Your Heart," to get that slappy sound.

MD: A lot has been written about the dramatic change in Wilco's sound that happened when you joined the band for *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*. It moved away from alternative country and orchestral pop toward much stranger terrain. To what extent do you feel you've been responsible for producing Jeff Tweedy in new directions?

Glenn: Well, I guess the biggest impact would be on *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*, but it was already starting to go that way. I think Jeff had it in his mind already, and I was just able to facilitate it by bringing a lot of that stuff to the table. That made it more evident—"Oh, this is the right way to go"—or at least it gave him the confidence to keep pursuing that direction and then let it expand into other areas, layering more and more stuff, and focusing on the difference in textures.

MD: The making of *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot* was filmed by Sam Jones for the documentary *I Am Trying To Break Your Heart*. Was the movie or any of the band's subsequent success an intrusion into your life?

Glenn: No, but I also didn't fall for it. How

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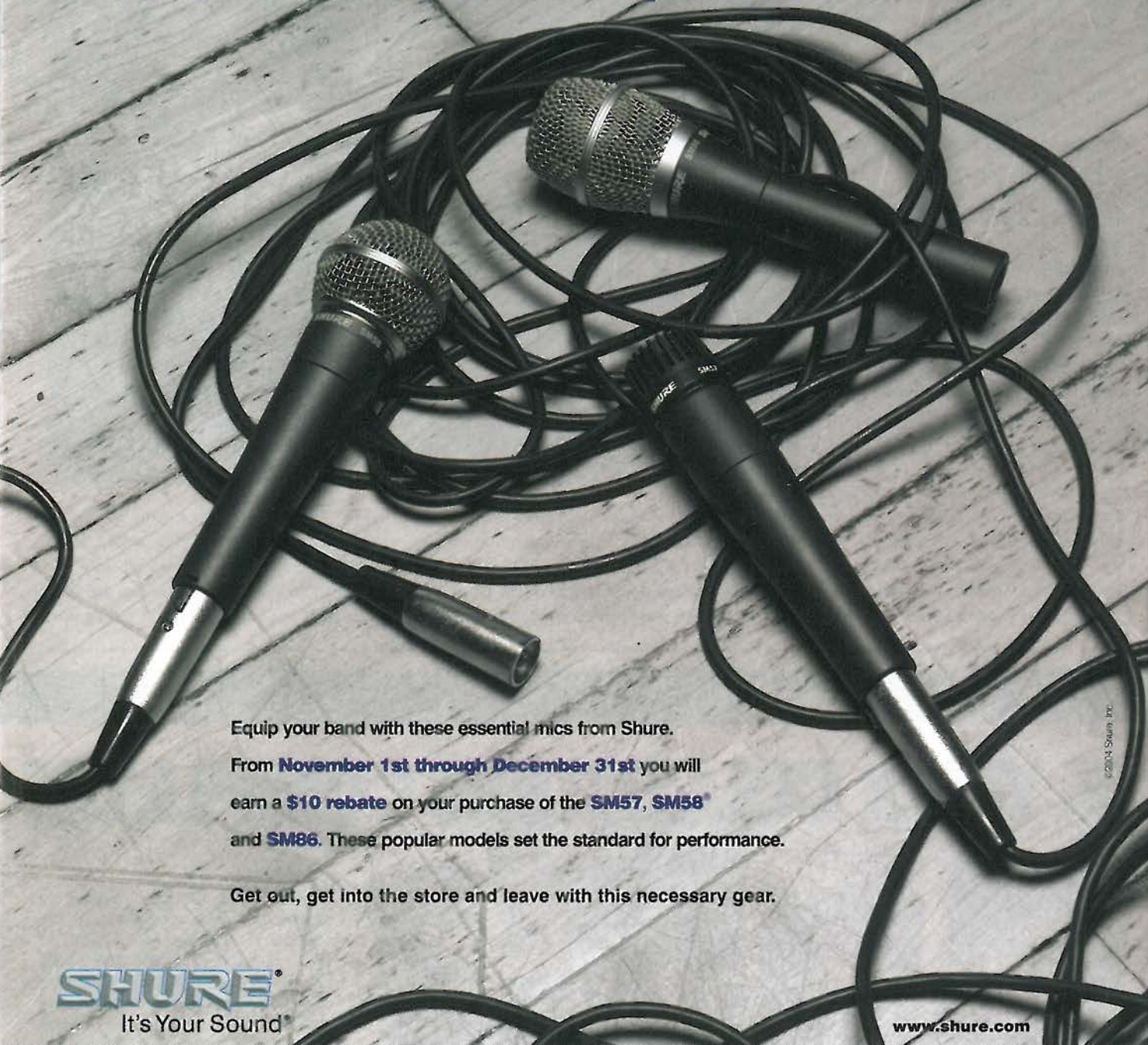
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Glenn Kotche

much did I say in that film? How much do you know about my personal life? And in the Wilco book [Greg Kot's recent biography, *Wilco: Learning How To Die*], there's one mention of my wife, Miiri. It gives history and stuff, but it doesn't get into my personal life. I think Jeff has the problem with that, because of his lyrics; people always want to know more about him. With me, when I'm not on tour, I'm just the dude out there in black socks and gym shoes raking in the backyard.

MD: Tweedy has said that he was going for more of a live band sound on *A Ghost Is Born*. The band played the songs for quite some time, taking them through several different incarnations, then recording the final versions as a group.

Glenn: *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot* was layers of sounds to get the landscapes for the lyrics to sit in; the new one was all musicianship and just trying to interact with the vocal and the other players. With *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*, I think we ended up playing those songs better live than they



were on the record, because maybe they just had a little more energy. With the songs on *A Ghost Is Born*, I think they just sound better as a six-piece live band, and the energy was there from the beginning.

We played the songs on the album all together. There were no click tracks, and I might have used headphones on only one or two songs. To have everyone in the same room with Jeff singing through a little amp

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in front of me and not worrying about click tracks and sequencers, Pro Tools, and all that stuff—just playing like we do at the loft—was the biggest difference between this record and the last one, trying to capture that live energy we have when we play together.

Jeff writes the lyrics and it's his band. But if he were that singular in his vision, it would be "The Jeff Tweedy Band." There is something he gets out of sharing that vision. There are definitely phases that are more collaborative than others, but we definitely feed off of each other and influence each other. We all really care about the songs and the music, and he sees that and welcomes our vision.

MD: Quite a few players have come and gone through Wilco. How do you feel about your relationship with Jeff and your position in the band?

Glenn: I feel really good about it. You know, if the band was going to end, it

would have ended at the beginning of this year, when Jeff had to go get help. [Tweedy entered rehab for an addiction to painkillers.] But the way things feel now—how healthy he is and how great everything is going and the level of communication—I honestly don't see it ending. Right now it's exciting. We all have similar directions we want to pursue, and there's definitely a respect for each other as musicians and people. I think there's a lot of music to be made with it. To be honest, if Wilco did end today, I'd probably still end up playing with Jeff in Loose Fur or a solo project.

MD: Loose Fur is the avant-garde collaboration with you, Tweedy, and O'Rourke. You made one album, a self-titled disc in 2003. Is the project still ongoing?

Glenn: It is, though if you ask Jim, he'll probably say no. [laughs] But we got together for a week last year and wrote an entire new album—it's total prog, which is great. I'm much more excited about it than the first one. It's written and ready to go. It's just a matter of when we're going to record it.



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Vinnie Colaiuta & Gregg Bissonette

“Crime for Tony”

Text by Robyn Flans
Transcriptions by Marc Atkinson

One night at LA's Café Cordiale, "Tune For Tony" was born.



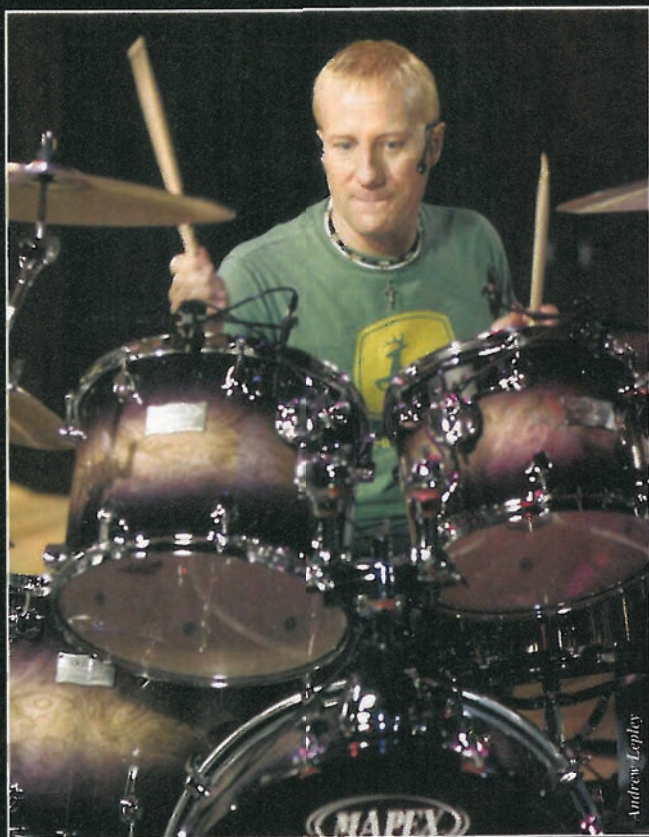
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As keyboardist David Garfield and drumming greats Gregg Bissonette and



David Garfield

Vinnie Colaiuta were sitting at the bar conversing, Garfield broached the topic of recording a tribute piece for Tony Williams for his next solo album. Vinnie and Gregg were so into it, the threesome started writing out ideas for it on the back of a napkin.



Andrew Lepley

"I knew Tony was important to both Vinnie and Gregg," Garfield recalls. "In fact, I had been rehearsing with Gregg when Tony passed away. When we got the news, Gregg was devastated. It drove home the point just how important Tony was to so many people."

"I've done a lot of double drum recordings over the years," Garfield says, "groove stuff with Carlos Vega and Jeff Porcaro, Vinnie and Carlos, Vinnie and Jeff, and Jim Keltner and Richie Hayward. But the drum parts were never written out or composed. This time we wanted to plan ahead."

Gregg Bissonette recalls, "David said, 'One guy could play this and one guy could play that,' and he put his fingers together like a puzzle and said, 'It would fit together like *this*,' and he sang a groove. Vinnie and I both said, 'Cool.' I was excited, especially since I'm the biggest Vinnie Colaiuta fan on the face of the planet."

"When we rehearsed the tune, we took what David had written on the napkin and talked about what part each of us would play," Gregg continues. "Once we started

working on it, the parts fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. We did a rehearsal first with Jimmy Johnson on bass and David playing keyboards, and the first time we did a run-through, there was a click going on. The first thing that struck me was how amazingly well Vinnie plays with a click—probably better than any other drummer. I've done certain albums where we've both played on individual tracks, and I've asked to hear Vinnie's tracks. Nowadays you can look on a computer and with Pro Tools see where the click is and where the recorded drum part is. Vinnie is always perfect and his time is so locked. That made it incredibly easy to play double drums with him. And, of course, it was so musical. It was like a drum duet as opposed to a drum duo. Also, like Tony Williams, Vinnie is very passionate when he sits down and plays. It was really inspiring."

Anyone who knows Gregg Bissonette knows how passionate and enthusiastic he is about music. Gregg's excitement about the project and his mentor, Tony Williams, was

contagious. "Tony was the king of the passionate aggressive flam," Bissonette says. "I had the honor of studying with him for about a year, off and on, before he passed away. I would fly from LA to San Francisco and go to his house. I feel so fortunate to have had that experience."

"Vinnie's time is so locked. That made it easy to play double drums with him." — Gregg Bissonette

When it came time to do the recording of "Tune For Tony" for Garfield's recently released album, *Giving Back*, the drummers brought their usual gear. Bissonette brought in his Mapex set and Colaiuta used his favorite Gretsch kit. Both used Zildjian cymbals. "I had a pair of Trash Hats that gave a real staccato sound," Gregg states. "I think they stand out on the track. We both had coated Ambassador heads on top of the toms, and our kicks were tuned similarly. But my snare was a little higher-pitched."

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Vinnie & Gregg

"We set up Vinnie and Gregg in two separate rooms," Garfield recalls. "But they could see each other. What was amazing was their precision. It almost sounds like one person playing, even though it would be impossible for one person to play such a part. They created the drum part, and I composed the tune. It was the most ambitious thing I've ever done, because the melody was ridiculously hard."

When asked to recall the session, Vinnie starts detailing the drum parts as he listens

was playing 8th-note hi-hat time and snare time and I was playing fill-ins.

"There were times when we weren't playing exactly the same thing," Vinnie goes on, "like during the intro. Gregg plays 8th notes, heavily accented on the downbeat, maybe even quarter notes. We split up the bass drum between the two of us, where he'd play the main beat and I'd play around it. I would fill in between the 8th notes he was playing with these little snare, hi-hat, and splash fills. The result was like one guy playing a pattern with a lot of embellishment."

"There's a sort of bridge section," Colaiuta continues, "where you can hear the drum part thicken with a bunch of tom-toms. I was augmenting the groove with toms, which was normally kick, snare,

and hat, while Gregg was playing more intricate stuff on the cymbals. Then when Jimmy took his bass solo, you can hear where my drums are panned because the other drumset comes out. And then when you hear the low piano octaves, that's Gregg playing. Then

there's another section after the bass solo that has a boogie woogie piano thing where it's Gregg. During Mike Brecker's solo, I hear my China playing time, and during the trumpet, Gregg is playing the upbeat of 2 on the snare. Then we've got a groove going together and he's augmenting the backbeat with an auxiliary snare. Then it's the two of us playing off each other. That solo section ends with trumpet, and you hear the groove get broken up, and that's me doing that."

"When the drum solo section starts," Vinnie continues, "it's Gregg and me playing the same groove. On the second half of the drum unison solo section, we displace the groove. At the end of the eighth bar, I shift the groove a 16th note behind and Gregg shifts a 16th note ahead. That goes on for two bars, and then I change it again and start blowing. Gregg stays on his displacement, and at the end of the phrase we play a Tony figure together—a flammed Tony-ism. It's like a series of flams in unison."

Bissonette describes it this way: "We played that loopy groove together in unison, then one guy started displacing it and then the other. I had a piccolo snare, which was tuned a little bit higher than Vinnie's. So

"There are moments where we tried to tip our hat to Tony. I think we played some things that were a part of his vocabulary." — Vinnie Colaiuta

back to the tune. "Some of my splash cymbal stuff is panned to the center," Colaiuta says. "A lot of Gregg's stuff is panned right and I'm panned left—a lot of the hi-hat and snare stuff. It sounds to me like the bass drum is two different drums split up. Gregg

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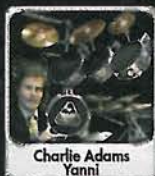
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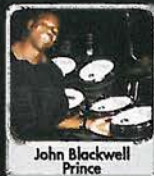
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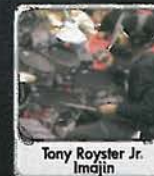
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Vinnie & Gregg

when we did things off each other, it sounded neat because of the way they were panned. After we displaced it off each other for quite a while, we did a unison lick that's very Tony inspired, but it's a lick I often attribute to Vinnie. I call it the 'brashta brashta brashta brat brat brat brat.' That's the lick that brings us out of the whole double drum jam thing."

"On the last melody," Vinnie explains, "Gregg is on the China and we're playing it louder and stronger because it's the last head. At the end of that last melodic phrase, it's a series of 16th-note triplets that we both play in unison with everybody else, and the song ends with this loud flurry. On the recording, an edit happens at the end. That edit sounds like it's in another time signature, but it's not. It's just an edit."

"The sixth take was an amazing one that I loved," explains Garfield of the edit. "In the solo section, Vinnie modulated the time, and I was so knocked out by that section that I was adamant about using that take. But Gregg pulled me aside and said, 'No, please don't. It's really hard to get these bass drum things and snare hits to sound exactly in the

pocket. We need to do it again.'

"They nailed the part on take nine," Garfield continues. "In fact, there was no digital reworking needed, so that's the one we went with. But I liked the bit from take six so much that we tacked it on the end of take nine. At the end, you hear this kind of big fermata, like an ending note, and out of that comes this other time signature. Then it comes out of that and goes back into the original groove. That's the solo section from take six. It was just a special moment. Vinnie did one of those things that only he can do, where he takes the time and messes with it."

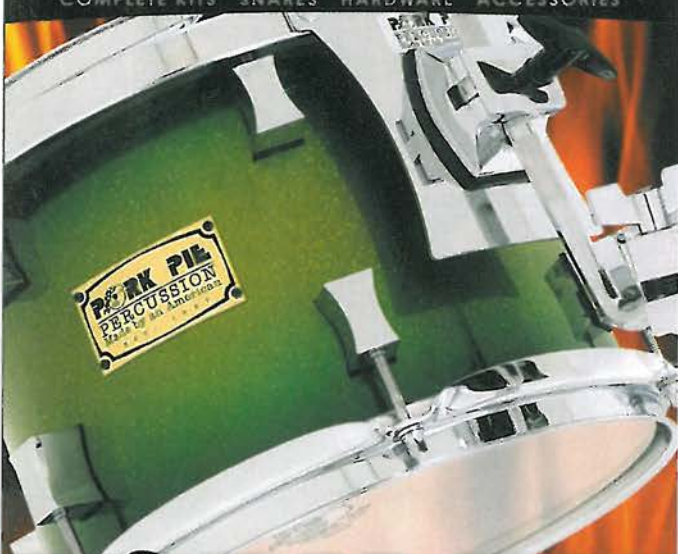
Of the overall project, Gregg states, "One of the things I remember most was that it really seemed musical. It wasn't like two drummers trying to have a battle. It was held together in a real musical way. For instance, I remember at the end of the song throwing out a lick that is a total Vinnie lick, a double pedal thing where you play the right hand on the floor tom, then the left foot with the left side of the double pedal, then a left hand on the floor tom, and then the right foot on the double pedal—and he answered that and the tune faded out. That

was just great. It was such a blast."

"What I was really impressed by was how well Gregg and I were mixed," Colaiuta says. "It was almost like a seamless drumset. We talked about it a little beforehand and then we just sat down and played. That's why I love playing with Gregg. Not only is he a great drummer, he's one of the very few people I can think of that when we play together, it's complete cooperation. And as a result of that, there's a synergy greater than the sum of its parts. With Gregg, the operative term is cooperation, not competition."

"Compositionally, the tune sounds like something Tony would have played on where his identity would shine through," Colaiuta concludes. "We played it in that spirit. Tony was always looking for new vistas to explore, and he went through several areas over the course of his career that he explored really well. On 'Tune For Tony,' there are moments where we tried to tip our hat to him. I think we played some things that were a part of the Tony vocabulary."

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Vinnie & Gregg

This musical score consists of two staves. The top staff features a series of eighth notes with accents and slurs, creating a rhythmic pattern. The bottom staff contains drum notation, including various note values and rests, with some notes marked with 'x' to indicate specific drum sounds. The notation is dense and complex, typical of advanced drumming exercises or a specific musical style.

Excerpt 2 (3:30 to 4:06)

This musical score is divided into two parts, Vinnie and Gregg, each with its own set of staves. The Vinnie part (top) and Gregg part (bottom) both feature complex rhythmic notation with eighth notes, accents, and slurs. The drum notation is also intricate, with various note values and rests. The score is presented in a clear, organized manner, with the Vinnie and Gregg parts clearly distinguished by their respective staves and labels.

This page contains ten systems of musical notation for a drum set. Each system is composed of two staves. The top staff of each system features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped with beams and slurs. The bottom staff features a rhythmic line with various drum symbols, including snare, tom, and cymbal, and rests. The notation is complex, with many notes and rests, and includes dynamic markings such as accents and slurs. The overall style is that of a professional music manuscript.

Vinnie & Gregg

Excerpt 3 (4:35 to end)

The musical score is written for two drummers, Vinnie and Gregg, in 4/4 time. The score is divided into five systems, each containing two staves. The first system is labeled 'VINNIE' and 'GREGG' on the left. The notation includes various drum symbols, including snare, tom, and cymbal, with specific rhythmic patterns and dynamics indicated by notes, rests, and slurs. The score is a complex, multi-measure piece, likely a drum solo or a highly technical section of a song. The notation is dense, with many notes and rests, and includes various musical symbols such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with a key signature of one flat and a time signature of 4/4. The notation is clear and easy to read, with a good use of space and alignment. The score is a high-quality musical transcription, suitable for use as a teaching tool or a reference for drummers.

This page contains ten systems of musical notation for a drum set. Each system consists of two staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, primarily using eighth and sixteenth notes, with frequent rests and dynamic markings such as accents (>) and slurs. The first system features a complex pattern of eighth notes with many slurs and accents. The second system includes some notes marked with an 'x' in a circle. The third system continues with eighth-note patterns and slurs. The fourth system shows a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes with accents. The fifth system has a more varied pattern with some longer note values. The sixth system returns to a pattern of eighth notes with slurs. The seventh system includes some notes marked with an 'x' in a circle. The eighth system features a pattern of eighth notes with slurs. The ninth system has a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes with accents. The tenth system includes some notes marked with an 'x' in a circle.

Vinnie & Gregg



To hear this track in its entirety, visit www.modrindrummer.com. You can hear Colaiuta and Bissonette's isolated drum tracks as well. For more on David Garfield and his *Giving Back* record, visit www.creatchy.com.



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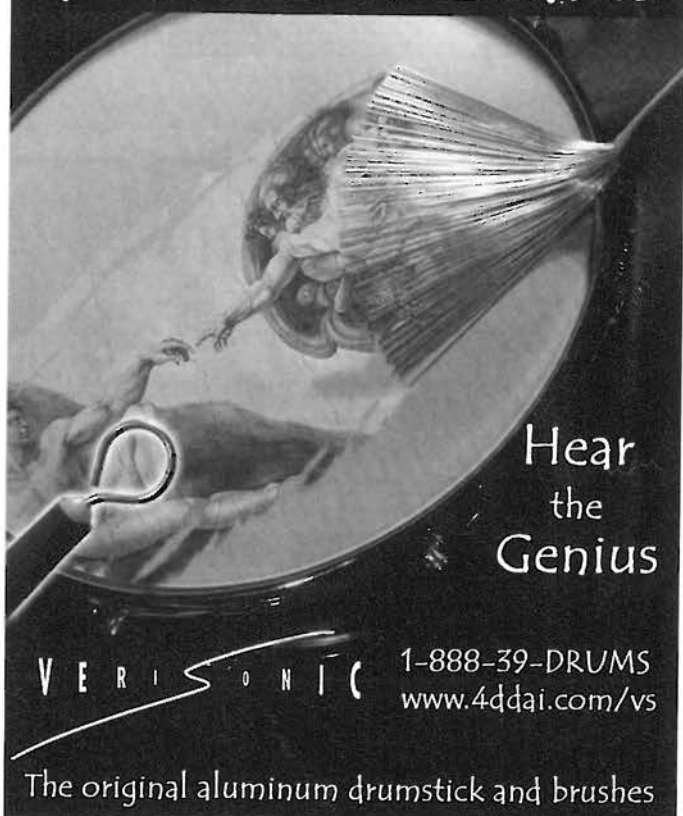
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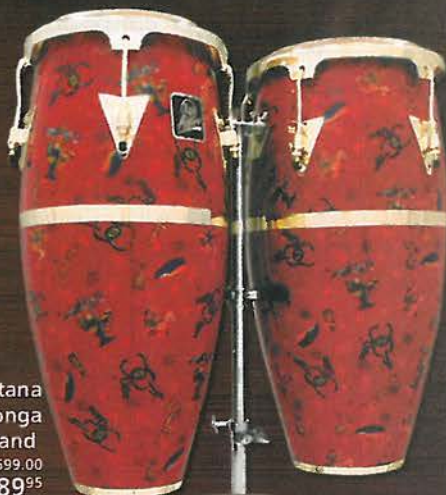


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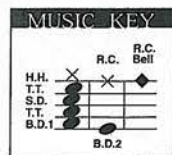
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Double Bass Beats

Part 2: Continuous Triplet/Sextuplet Patterns

by Rod Morgenstein



In last month's *Rock 'N' Jazz Clinic* we looked at playing continuous, alternating 16th notes on the bass drums with various hand patterns applied on top. Now let's focus on a few hand patterns played over continuous 8th-note triplets and sextuplets in the feet.



Playing triplets on two bass drums (or a double pedal) is a challenge in itself, as the downbeat of each quarter note shifts back and forth between the right and left foot: **RLR LRL RLR LRL**. You'll see what I mean in the examples that follow.

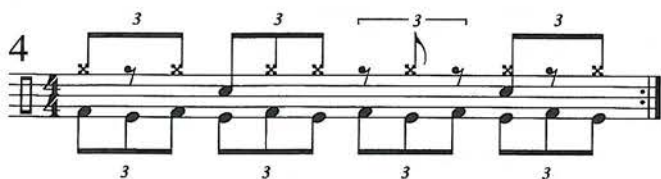
Example 1 is a standard, backbeat-oriented groove with a quarter-note ride pattern.



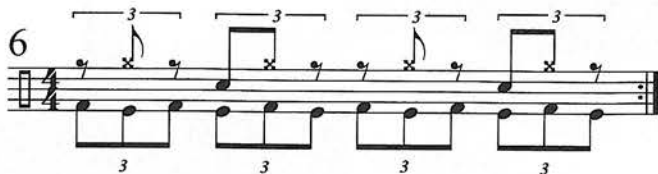
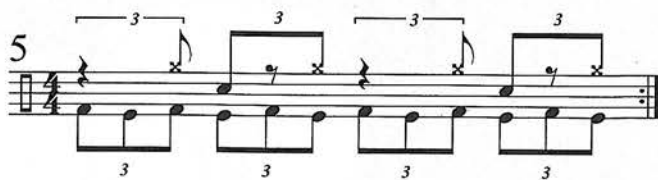
Example 2 has both hands playing all four quarter notes in unison. This pattern is especially useful in speed metal drumming. For an additional challenge, try alternating the hands, hitting the snare on beat 1 with your left hand while your right hand plays the ride cymbal. Then reverse the hands so beat 2 has your right hand hitting the snare and your left playing a crash cymbal.



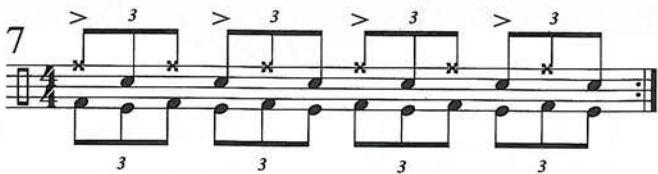
Example 3 is a fairly common pattern, and Example 4 is a slightly syncopated variation of it. Combine Examples 3 and 4 to make an interesting two-measure groove.



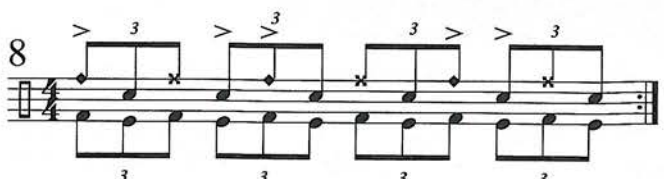
Examples 5 and 6 are terrific coordination exercises that isolate the two syncopated parts of the triplet. To help keep the time solid, put a slight accent on the quarter-note pulse in the bass drums. Then try playing these two examples back to back.



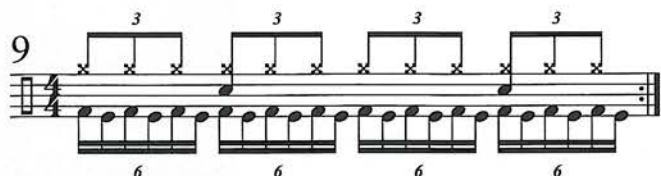
Example 7 is an alternating hand pattern played in sync with the feet. Once again, slightly accent the quarter-note pulse to keep the triplet feel of the groove.



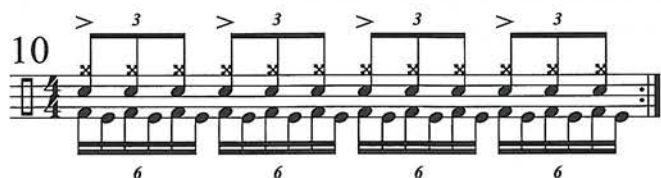
Example 8 contains accents on every other ride cymbal stroke (played on the bell), creating half-note triplets. The result is an interesting three-against-four polyrhythm. Play Examples 7 and 8 as a two-measure groove to hear how different these two patterns sound and feel.



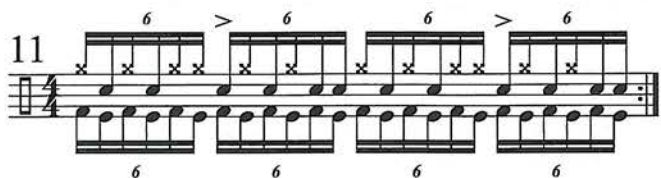
Examples 9 through 12 consist of sextuplets, which feel different from triplets. Example 9 is a basic 8th-note-triplet ride pattern with the snare playing the backbeats.



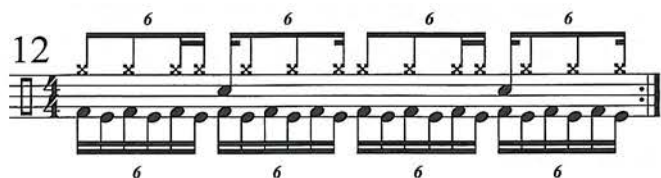
Example 10 has both hands playing triplets in unison. Unison patterns are very common in speed metal drumming, but mostly with 16th notes. Since this groove is based on triplets, try to emphasize the quarter-note pulse to differentiate this groove from a 16th-note groove. As an additional challenge, try alternating the hands as we did in Example 2.



Example 11 shows an effective way to apply rudiments to the drumset. Here, a double paradiddle is played in the hands, with accents on the backbeats.



Example 12 integrates an Afro-Cuban bell pattern into the world of double bass drumming.



Example 13 adds the toms to the mix for extra color and excitement.



The first two articles in our series on double bass beats have focused on continuous, alternating patterns. Next time, we'll take a look at non-continuous patterns. These have a very different flavor and can be quite syncopated and challenging. See you then!



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Modest Mouse's

Benjamin Weikel**Good News For People Who Love Bad News**

by Ed Breckenfeld



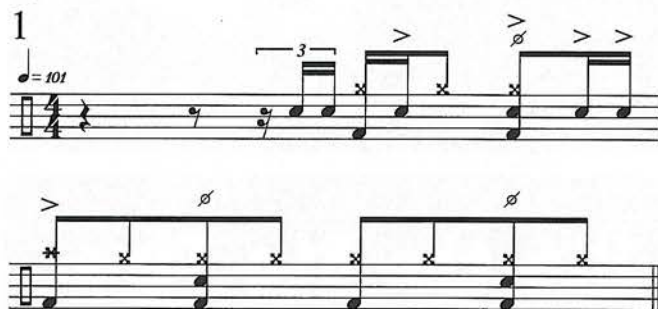
MUSIC KEY			
Open	O	R.C.	C.C.
H.H.	X		
S.D.			
B.D.			
H.H. w/foot	X		
			Ghost Note

It's good news for Modest Mouse these days, as the critically acclaimed band from Washington State find their latest release scurrying up the charts. A top-10 modern rock hit coupled with non-stop touring is always a formula for success. New drummer Benjamin Weikel displays a keen musical sense, with skillfully crafted drum parts that

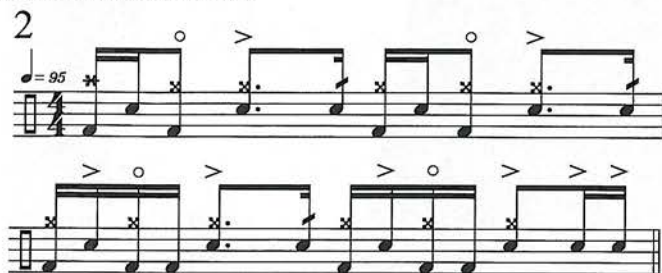
fit the band's quirky tunes like a glove. Here are some examples.

"Float On"

The breakthrough hit single from *Good News* opens with this catchy little fill, which reoccurs like a hook at various points in the song. (0:03)

**"Ocean Breathes Salty"**

Benjamin's start/stop hi-hat pattern adds interest to the chorus groove in this tune. (0:40)

**"Bury Me With It"**

This chorus pattern alternates between the crash cymbal and hi-hat for a cool effect. The 32nd-note flourish adds a nice touch. (0:23)

**"The View"**

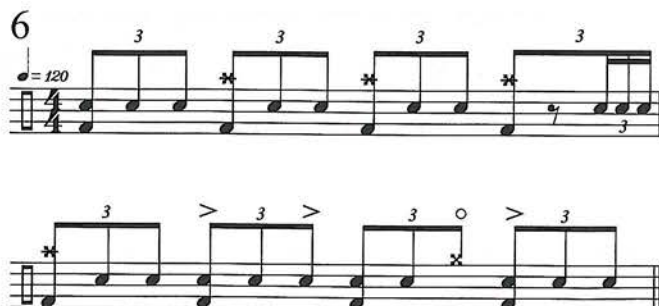
Here's a ska-type beat that propels the ending section of this track. (3:37)

**"Satin In A Coffin"**

Weikel's brushes sound like rattling bones in the chorus of this death-obsessed song. (0:22)

**"Black Cadillacs"**

This triplet sequence is from the bridge of the tune. A repeating RLL sticking would be useful in the first measure, while the second measure works best with an alternating sticking. (1:11)

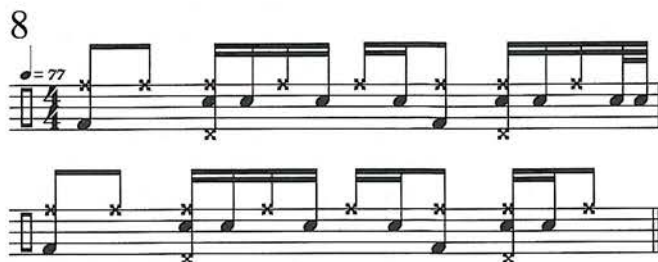


Benjamin works a little half-time magic in the song's second verse with a few double strokes on the snare. (1:37)



"Blame It On The Tetons"

Here's more brush work, this time combined with the ride cymbal on the ending section of this quiet track. (5:03)



You can contact Ed Breckenfeld at www.edbreckenfeld.com.



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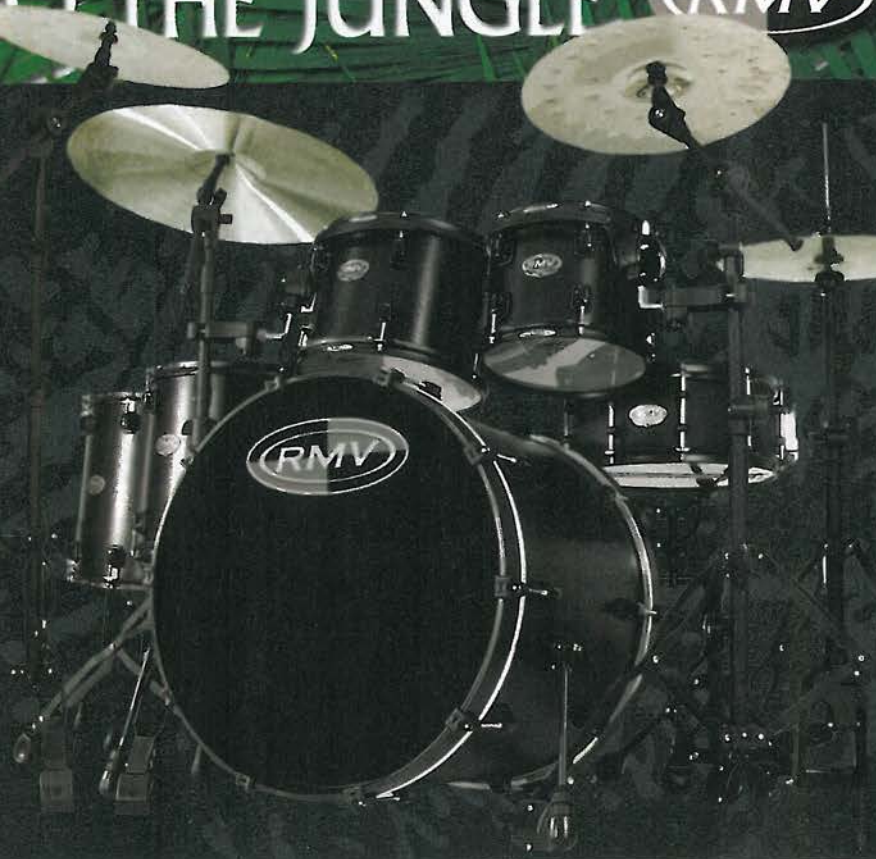
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Shelly Manne

A Man For All Reasons

by Burt Korall

Shelly Manne (1920-1984) was unquestionably one of the great drummers of the 20th century. He was original, he was versatile, and he was extraordinarily musical. He was also someone you liked immediately.



Veryl Oakland

Shelly would say, "What you play should be controlled by your heart and your head, and they should deliver the message to your hands."

Shelly was as funny and humane as he was talented. Pianist Russ Freeman, a longtime Manne associate and close friend, once told me, "Shelly was a special and unique person. I've never known anybody quite like him. He was successful in everything he did—playing jazz, doing studio work, having a band, and conducting his business, his life, and his marriage."

Although Shelly came from a family steeped in percussion—his father and two uncles were excellent drummers—he wasn't motivated to start playing until he was eighteen. It was Billy Gladstone, the genius drummer-inventor-teacher who played at New York's Radio City Music Hall for so many years, who got his young friend started.

Shelly once told me, "I'll never forget my first 'lesson' with Billy. He took me to the percussion room at the Music Hall and showed me how to set up the drums. He talked about playing the hi-hat, and he moved me into the right position. Finally, he put 'Topsy' by the Basie band on the phonograph, and then he walked out of the room. As he left, he said, 'Play!'"

A Musical Approach

Gladstone's "lesson" set the tone for Shelly's entire career. "The kid" was solely concerned with the sort of learning that would enable him to play well. He sat in all over town. He had little fear of putting himself on the line, regardless of how good the musicians were or the depth of their reputations.

Shelly had no great interest in developing his hands by studying and practicing endlessly. As far as he was concerned, being a whiz on a practice pad was pointless. He insisted that the only way to truly develop as a musician was to play all kinds of music with other people.

"I have my own view of technique," Shelly once told me. "It's only a means to an end, not an end in itself. I don't think your hands should have the final say in what you're going to do. What you play should be controlled by your heart and your head, and they should deliver the message to your hands. Some drummers become so techni-



A Select Shelly Manne Discography



Artist Album

Joe Marsala Small Band	Bull's Eye (with Manne solo and three other sides)
Coleman Hawkins Swing Four	The Man I Love
Stan Kenton Orchestra	Stan Kenton Retrospective
Shorty Rogers	Cool And Crazy
Woody Herman	The Complete Capitol Recordings Of Woody Herman
Shelly Manne, Jimmy Giuffre, Shorty Rogers	We Three
Shelly Manne And His Men	Swinging Sounds Vol. 4 ("Un Poco Loco")
Shelly Manne And His Friends (with Andre Previn)	My Fair Lady
Frank Sinatra	Come Dance With Me
Ornette Coleman	Tomorrow Is The Question
Shelly Manne	Shelly Manne—My Fair Lady With The UNoriginal Cast
Bill Evans Trio	A Matter Of Conviction
Shelly Manne And His Men	Live At San Francisco's Black Hawk
Coleman Hawkins	Coleman Hawkins Favorites
Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster	The Big Sounds Of Coleman Hawkins And Ben Webster

cally facile that their hands do their thinking for them. They automatically do things that they've been practicing. Consequently, their playing is somewhat on the cold side. I feel you have to let the music tell you what to do."

Shelly believed that great band drummers like Jo Jones and Dave Tough had the right idea. "A drummer should *enhance* what is played," he'd say. "Don't get in the way or be too loud or selfish. Be musical, and focus on time. Fit into the overall fabric of the music."

Getting Started

Shelly Manne's professional ambitions were launched one night in 1937, when Frank Siegfried and Gordon Pulis of the Radio City Orchestra took him to the Golden Gate Ballroom in Harlem to hear trumpeter Roy Eldridge's band. The youngster didn't quite know what was going on. All he was certain of was the *feeling* that the music and the environment brought to him. He *had* to be part of experiences like that.

After playing for a short while with small bands on New York's 52nd Street—often for free—Shelly got a gig on an ocean liner. He didn't know too much about the formal aspects of performance, but he managed.

Shelly was hired for his first big band job in 1940 by leader/trombonist Bobby Byrne. He had been recommended to Byrne by drum idol Ray McKinley, who had worked with the trombonist on the Jimmy Dorsey band. But a few months down the road,

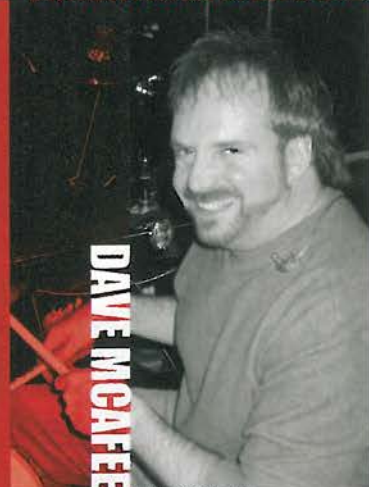
Shelly was fired because of inexperience. He was replaced by Dick Farrell, who knew the ropes and took flashy solos in the manner of Gene Krupa.

Abe Siegel, Shelly's roommate and the bass player in the Byrne band, kept the twenty-year-old drummer from quitting the business after the axe fell. He insisted that Shelly had the necessary talent, and he advised the young drummer to *get* the experience he lacked, as quickly as possible. So Shelly hung out at rehearsal studios and played as much big band music as he could. As he got more deeply into the music and learned his many jobs as a drummer, his talent became increasingly apparent.

Other drummers recognized Shelly's burgeoning ability. Veterans like Jimmie Lunceford timekeeper Jimmy Crawford asked Shelly how he did certain things, particularly with brushes. After Benny Goodman heard Shelly subbing for Dave Tough with Joe Marsala at the Hickory House, the clarinet star asked him to come on the band for a week and play the President's Ball in Washington DC. At that point Shelly had been a drummer for only a year and a half. He did well with Goodman on the small-band dates, which was the type of music he had played on 52nd Street. Reading music for big band arrangements, however, was still something of a mystery to him.

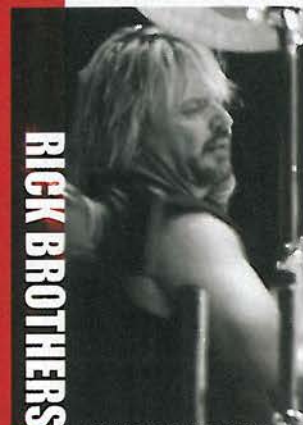
Working with Benny Goodman gave Shelly confidence. At that time Benny was at the absolute top of the band business. Ultimately, word started to spread about the young drummer. Bob Astor, who had a

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hip band that combined elements of Basie and Jimmie Lunceford, hired him in 1940. The band was notable for its charts and its excellent young musicians. It was a brief but memorable experience for all concerned. Other band gigs followed—Will Bradley, Les Brown, Raymond Scott—before Shelly went into the Coast Guard.

On The Cutting Edge

Shelly had the unusual benefit of remaining in New York during most of his military career, while playing with a Coast Guard band. Bebop, the new music, was taking shape at that time. Shelly played in Harlem and on 52nd Street, learning on the job. He was a part of history-making records like *Blue And Boogie* with jazz

innovator Dizzy Gillespie and tenorist Dexter Gordon.

As Shelly continued to evolve as a musician, he became an active participant in the development of modern jazz. He worked and recorded with Coleman Hawkins, Dizzy Gillespie, Oscar Pettiford, the Boyd Raeburn band, tenorist Allen Eager, and numerous others.

Stan Kenton heard Shelly on 52nd Street with Allen Eager, and promptly hired him. He hoped that the young drummer would cure his recurring rhythm section problems. Shelly joined the band at the Adams Theater in Newark, New Jersey on February 23, 1946. And indeed, he was just what was needed. Shelly's excellent instincts, innate ability, and experience were key to the Kenton band's success.

Shelly remained in Kenton's orbit until 1952. In the process he became one of the most widely admired drummers in the world. Musicians liked how he shaped music. Sax great Gerry Mulligan told me, "He was so thoughtful in a big band setting. What he did became an integral part of the music." Trombonist Eddie Bert, who sat beside Shelly in the Kenton colossus for a number of months, said, "He was very flexible and fantastic with rhythms." Bob Cooper, a tenor soloist in the Kenton band, insisted, "Shelly was an inspiration to me and everyone else in the band. He had

Shelly with the Stan Kenton big band in 1947 (left), and playing a trio session with Bill Evans and Eddie Gomez in Hollywood in the early '60s

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already done a lot and knew so much."

As the Kenton band changed, Manne had to call upon untapped capacities to make the music work. His humor and showmanship made him even more of a factor in the band's continuing upward climb.

Starting Anew

Shelly determined to get off the road in 1951, at which point his second career began. He broke into the Hollywood studios—becoming the first "jazzman" to be widely accepted in that very closed scene. In fact, Shelly opened the way for many others. He also laid the foundation for what has been described as West Coast jazz, in which emphasis was placed on experimentation, new forms of improvisation, and composition.

Shelly quickly became the busiest musician in Hollywood. There was little he didn't do. He worked in the recording, TV, and film studios with just about every instru-

mentalist and singer, regardless of style. He opened up the industry to jazz treatments of Broadway shows. He even opened his own club, the Manne Hole, so that he and the other jazz cats would have a comfortable place to work in Los Angeles.

Over the years, Shelly's playing retained a sense of timeliness, relevance, and vividness that it might have lacked had he become self-satisfied. The reasons for Shelly's enormous success? His widow, Flip Manne, says, "He was very quick, and he kept picking things up as he went along. Nobody taught him to read. He learned how to do it on his own, just like he learned how to play timpani. His natural talent and ambition made it possible for him to do a lot of things."

Shelly Manne's long and successful career is a testament to the fact that love and passion—combined with unusual ability—can pay an enormous dividend.



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Creating New Cymbal Sounds

Evolution, One Blow At A Time

by T. Bruce Wittet

Have you ever wondered how a cymbal model comes into being? How does a manufacturer take an idea expressed by an artist and turn it into reality as a unique model or a new line?

The folks at Zildjian have certainly created their share of special models. Just in the past couple of years they've introduced the Left Side Ride (developed with Peter Erskine), the K Custom Session Series (developed with Steve Gadd), and, most recently, the K Custom Dry Complex Ride (developed with Bill Stewart).

Recently I had the opportunity to visit the Zildjian plant in Norwell, Massachusetts to see just how the company's R&D team brings sounds to life—whether one-off cymbals for endorsers or full

lines that will ultimately hit the catalogs. In fact, I was given the opportunity to put that team to the test myself.

At the invitation of R&D specialist Paul Francis, I dug into my collection and chose a favorite old cymbal for Zildjian to replicate. The reason for such an effort is that copying cherished vintage cymbals is one of the ways that cymbal manufacturers create new models.

I sent my cymbal ahead for Paul to check out. It's an early '60s Turkish K Zildjian 21½" ride that's misshapen, tarnished green, and over eight



Zildjian cymbal designer Paul Francis in the company's vault. He's surrounded by new cymbals that started life as the raw "blanks" shown in the inset.



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Shop Talk

pounds in weight. It delivers a stinging ping and eerie dark undertones. I figured that this odd beast would be as good a test as any of Zildjian's creative skills.

Welcome To The Clickety-Clack

I arrived at Zildjian and, after pleasantries, donned a hard hat and entered the factory area. A piercing clattering was coming from Paul Francis's office adjacent to the factory floor. Perched with hammer in hand over an anvil mounted atop a tree stump, Paul was

beating a 12" disk of bronze into the shape of a cymbal. He was creating the entire shape, including the bell, from scratch.

Zildjian gave up the practice of hand hammering decades ago, choosing instead to recreate the effect with computer-controlled hammers. But the way Paul sees it, if you're going to program a computer to emulate human handwork, you'd better know the human side intimately. That way you know what sort of hammering pattern and how much pressure you need to program into the computer in order to arrive at a specific cym-

bal sound. Paul—a working drummer who holds Keith Moon in especially high esteem—has learned how to hand-hammer a cymbal for the same reason that he's completing an engineering degree. In exploring the intricacies of metal, he can call equally upon old-world chops and new-world science.

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1. Veteran cymbal tester Leon Chiappini has been with Zildjian for more than forty years. 2. Paul Francis hammers a "plateau" into a replica of the original K ride cymbal seen leaning against the wall to his right. 3. Careful hand lathing is used to get each prototype to just the right weight and thickness. 4. Paul plays a K Custom Session ride alongside Steve Gadd's original cracked cymbal in order to judge how well they match acoustically.

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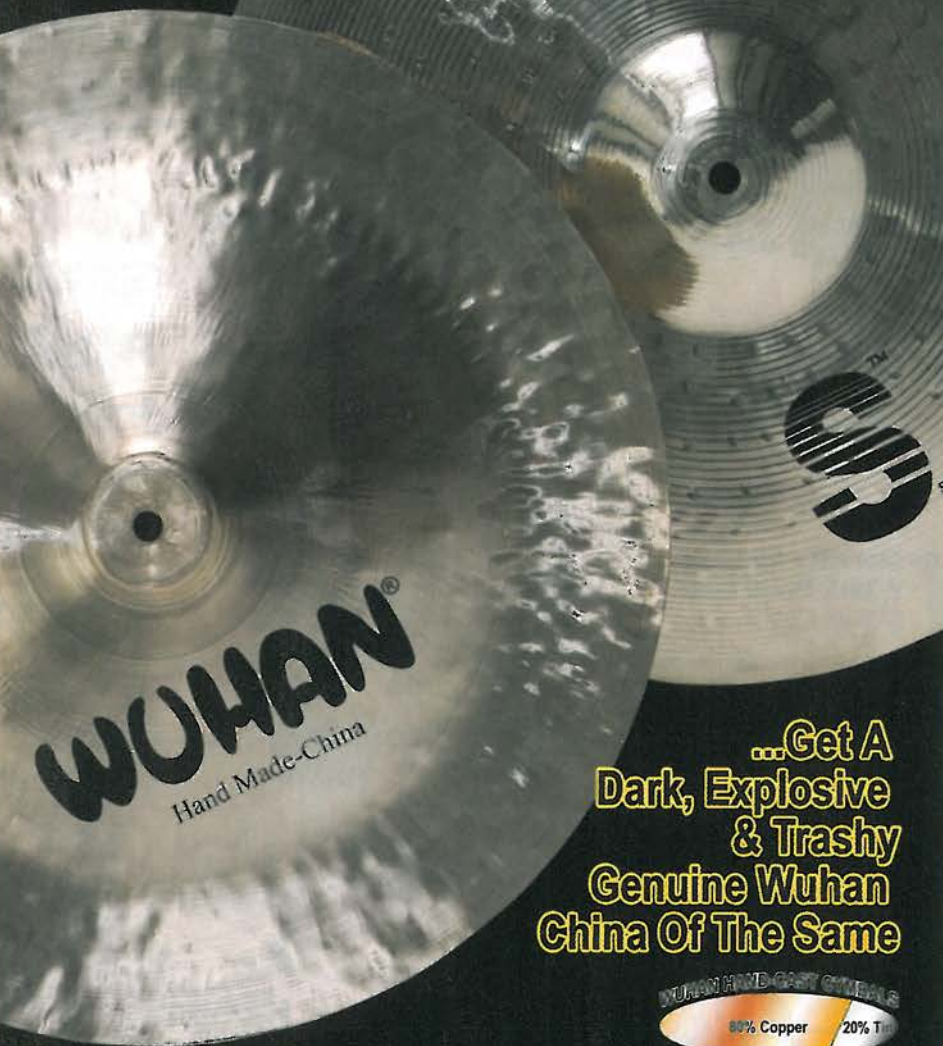
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Shop Talk

Paul's cymbalmaking "running mate" is sixty-five-year-old Leon Chiappini, who is Zildjian's head cymbal tester. Paul has been at Zildjian for fifteen years; Leon's been there for forty-four. A former pro drummer, Leon is living proof that music keeps you young. When he lifts a drumstick, you learn from watching him, just as *he* learned from watching Buddy Rich, Philly Joe Jones, Papa Jo Jones, and Gene Krupa. He's not just tapping a cymbal; he's making it speak, making it curse, and occasionally forcing it to do things it would rather not. Sometimes Leon is blunt in his criticism of Paul Francis's ideas. But the two always part friends, wiser for the collaboration.

Paul recalls, "I got a mandate from Armand Zildjian [the company's late patriarch] one day. He told me, 'Just go and play around with sounds. If you have ten ideas and we introduce one of them, you're successful at your job.'"

This freedom has led Paul and Leon to attack the creation of new cymbals with zeal. Says Leon, "As far as the mystique of the 'old Ks' goes, I love to look at them and hear them. But I'll tell you something: We can make them today better than they were then. *Fact.*"

Replicating A Monster

Prior to my arrival, Paul had set aside four 22" blanks—disks of B20 bronze—which he would use to copy my heavy Turkish K. To give our process a head start, he had given each disk a random computer hammering. The deep, funky-looking impressions that pock-marked the surface like craters were just the beginning.

Paul points to a flattened area around the bell of my old K. "I'd normally have that little plateau programmed," he says. "But since we're only doing a few cymbals, I'll put it in by hand." He encircles the bell with blow after blow until the metal gives way. After marking it as "prototype number one" on the bell with a felt-tip pen, he rides on it with a stick. The sound isn't there yet, of course. But it tells Paul that he's on the right track.

"Now take a look at the edge of your old cymbal," Paul instructs me. "There's a little 'lip' that goes all the way around." He then begins hammering such a lip into the new cymbal. Slowly, the edge of the bronze disk settles under his blows. The same arduous process unfolds for all four prototypes. Sometimes, re-creating the sound, behavior,

and feel of an old cymbal necessitates creating a mirror image—imperfections and all.

Then it's off to the lathe. Paul takes a few passes at the cymbals, each time sending golden metal streamers into the air. To check his progress, he detaches the cymbals from the lathe and weighs them.

Paul then notes another detail about my "master" cymbal. "Your old K has deep, sharply ridged grooves," he says. "These are critical to the sound." He takes another tool and scores the surface of the cymbal he's working on until more defined tonal grooves emerge.

After having excess metal trimmed from their edges, the cymbals get carted back into Paul's office. We both grab sticks and play them all. Slight weight differences aside, each new ride is remarkably similar in character to the original. Even those authentic Turkish "dark, trashy" undertones are apparent—which is no mean feat in an extremely heavy cymbal.

"Don't be too quick to judge," Paul advises me. "In twenty-four hours, the sound will change. In three months, it will *really* age in."

Replicating For The Masters

Essentially the same process went down when Steve Gadd asked Paul Francis to replace an 18" prototype ride that Armand Zildjian had given Steve in the '80s, and that Steve had recently cracked. One thing led to another, and the K Custom Session series hit the market.

Paul had retained the original Gadd ride for me to hear. He placed a new Session ride and the original cracked ride on adjacent stands, and handed me a stick. Allowing for the effects of fifteen years of hard playing, and an inch-long crack at the edge of the battle-worn original, the two were frighteningly close.

Sometimes Paul will know from the start that he's working on a catalog item. Other times, it's only as he's working on some prototype that he'll realize he's onto an idea that many drummers will appreciate. At that point, an R&D meeting will convene.

Stacked on Paul's file cabinet is a row of manila folders, each representing an artist's search for a cymbal sound. Cindy Blackman is there, as is Tony Williams. Chick Corea's file goes back to the time when he was looking for a flat ride for *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs*.

Paul shows me jazz drummer Bill Stewart's file, which bulges with diagrams,

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Shop Talk

notes, and specs generated over a two-year span. "When we set out, we were just going to make one 22" ride cymbal for Bill," he tells me. "But as we were working on prototypes, we went through quite a few weight variations. Eventually, Bill thought that two different weights might appeal to a broader audience. We talked about it internally and agreed that this would be an excellent idea to pursue."

I leaf through the file. Beside prototype #19, it reads, "scratch pass on the bottom." To Paul, that refers to a very light lathing.

"On number 21," notes Paul, "Bill was going for more than a quarter-pound difference. Even a drummer could hear that!" Then Francis flips forward through the pages to discussions about leaving a narrow unlathed ring on the bottom edge of the cymbal. Explains Paul, "That acts like a strip of tape, keeping the dry aspect that Bill was looking for."

Paul smiles at the recollection: "Bill used to play American K Jazz Rides, which we reintroduced in the early 1980s and which were 'ballooned up' in the middle. Sometimes he'd take Emory cloth and get rid of the tonal grooves. That's why we ended up with the smoother, pin type of lathing on his Dry Complex Ride. There are no deep 'hills and valleys' on the cymbal."

One more detail remains. Says Paul, "Bill requested that we put a 'hook' on the edge. He likes cymbals to have a high curvature, but hook down a little on the edges. I warned him that within a batch of cymbals, sometimes the lathing might reduce the hook. He said, 'That's even better, because the cymbals will be individual.'"

At The End Of The Day

I've now seen a new cymbal made from scratch in the image of a museum piece. Not only that, the replica sounds great. Of course, it's doubtful that my cymbal will find its way into production the way Bill Stewart's has. Still, the experience has been very instructive. Seeing Paul Francis and Leon Chiappini go about their work is fascinating. Seeing a carbon copy of an old, misshapen Turkish cymbal arise from a combination of traditional and modern techniques is reassuring. It means that a tradition of instrument crafting that goes back to The Bible and beyond is safe.



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Steve Barney

Hot UK Property

by Robyn Flans

At age five, Steve Barney received a toy set of drums for Christmas that had the name of England's music show *Top Of The Pops* on the bass drum. As a youngster, he hoped that one day he'd get to play on the show. Well, in 2001 Barney's dream finally came true—in startling fashion.

Steve Barney is one of the hottest up and coming players in England. Recently he's been touring with pop goddess Annie Lennox, but that's just one of *many* impressive and interesting credits on his résumé.

How did Barney develop such a solid career? Simply, he put in a lot of time and effort. From the time he got that first Christmas drumset, the drummer began playing along with his dad's record collection, which ran the gamut from Fats Domino to Genesis and Deep Purple. By nine, Steve's father signed him up for lessons with a local drummer named Slim Harris.

Gigs

Annie Lennox

Jeff Beck

Garth Gates

Atomic Kitten





"I clearly remember my first lesson," says Barney. "The teacher asked what I could do on the kit. And what does a nine-year-old do, but go as fast as he can on the kit like a lunatic. He said, 'Great. Here's a practice pad on a snare drum. We're going to be on this for the next year.'"

"My teacher taught me the basics and the rudiments, and he taught me how to read," Barney continues. "But I have to be honest, I found reading to be very difficult. In a way, what made it worse was that I had the ability to pick up what I heard almost immediately by ear. My teacher would often put a piece of music in front of me and play it, and I would simply reproduce what he did. So reading was a chore."

"I learned a lot about rudiments," Barney goes on, "how to hold the sticks, have good posture, and not go crazy on the kit. My teacher also introduced me to Buddy Rich's playing, and I was fortunate to see Buddy play about a year before he passed away."

Another concert that impacted the drummer was Genesis. Seeing Phil Collins and Chester Thompson made a huge impression on the ten-year-old. While his friends were wearing Adam & The Ants T-shirts in school, Barney was proud to display his Genesis *Duke* T-shirt. "I thought, *That's* what I want to do—lose my hair, wear Hawaiian shirts, and grow a beard," Steve laughs. "No, seriously, Phil and Chester's playing was a huge inspiration to me early on."





Rick Mullin

reading the British music paper *NME*. When Barney saw an ad that said there was a band looking for a drummer who “must be confident and happy,” he thought, “Well, I’m happy, and I can certainly pretend to be confident.”

Barney auditioned for the Liverpool-based band Bullyrag and got the gig. A year later, they were signed to Mercury Records. “Before we got the deal,” Steve says, “there was a year of rehearsing with this group, which was a ferocious rock/rap/reggae/soul crossover band. These guys were great musicians, so I really had to up my ability.

“When you’re in a situation with other musicians pushing

you,” Steve continues, “you have to find that extra something in your playing. Those guys played with such energy. When we got the deal, we were ready to go out and do stuff. We made an album called *Songs Of Praise*, and we toured the UK and Europe for about two years. At the time, UK radio wasn’t playing that kind of music. It wasn’t until The Red Hot Chili Peppers, Foo Fighters, Limp Bizkit, and Korn began to cross over that that kind of music was played in the UK.

By ten, Barney was playing in talent shows and at cabarets, and two years later he was playing at holiday camps during summer vacation. When he finally left school, he wasn’t quite sure how to get to the next level. But he kept playing in bands and

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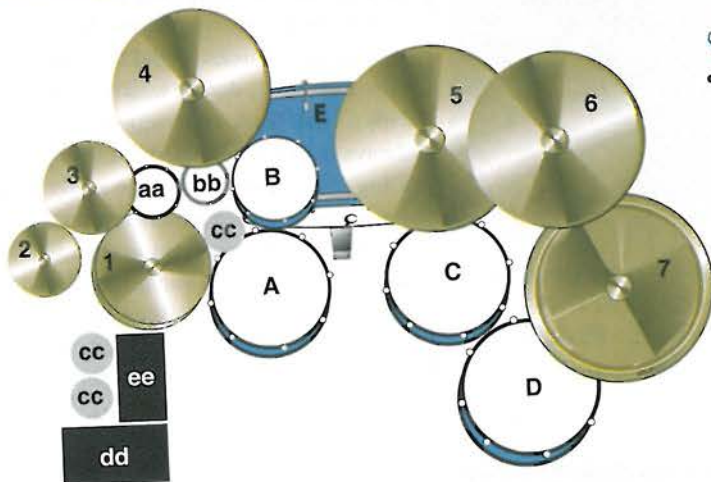
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Steve Barney

Unfortunately for us, we missed that by a year or so. Then when Mercury was bought out, we were dropped from the label.

"When you lose something like that, I guess you have to dig deep within yourself to find out if you really want to do this," Steve confesses. "My love for drumming is far greater than anything else in my life—other than my family, of course. I have a huge love for music, and I had to figure out what I wanted to do. We did try to continue with the band for a while, but things turned

sour and I realized I had to move on."

Barney began to call everyone he had met through the band's travels. "Some nights when the other members might have been partying too hard," he says, "I was busy getting phone numbers. One of the hardest things to do is ring up someone and say, 'Hey, I just thought I'd touch base to see how you're doing.' It's so hard because underneath, it's, 'Have you got any work? I'm really hungry!' But we all have to do that. And some of the producers were kind enough to remember me."

Barney also called Bullyrag's manager. At that point he was managing a female pop act called Atomic Kitten, who had a number-1 hit in the UK. The manager gave Barney his first big break. Lo and behold, Steve's dream to play on *Top Of The Pops* came true.

"Atomic Kitten was a big departure for me," Steve shares, "because I had been in a robust rock group. All of a sudden I was playing for a pop act, but I thought, 'At the end of the day, I want to play,' and I took a left turn to do the pop thing. But it taught me so much. Firstly, when you're given a record to learn—and most pop music is programmed these days—you have to learn how to reproduce those grooves. You have to honor what's been programmed on the record and still find the right amount of flair within yourself to take the music into a live situation and give it more energy."

"That was my first experience working with a musical director," Steve continues, "a great guy from London named Mike Stevens. Mike was only interested in using players he knew. But the manager said, 'Why don't you try this guy out. If he's not up to your standards, then bring in your own guys.' I was fortunate that the manager made the MD check me out. Mike heard me play, I kept the gig, and we got on really well."

Working with a musical director helped fine-tune Barney's playing. "Mike helped me to play more for the song," he says, "which is incredibly important. I think some musicians forget to be supportive of the song. Ringo was a great song drummer. Some people may not think certain drummers are great drummers, but if they support the song, they're doing their job."

"I learned a lot by playing for that pop act," Steve continues. "I did a couple of UK tours with them, during which I had to play with a click track and sequenced stuff. I'd always been comfortable with the click, but doing it consistently onstage really helped me. I find some drummers are afraid of it, because we all speed up and slow down. Some of the greatest drummers of our time did, like Keith Moon. But in this day and age it's important to get tight with the click."

During his time with Atomic Kitten, Barney became friends with musical director Mike Stevens. "He gave me an ear in London," Steve says. "I was living in Liverpool, which is where I still live. But

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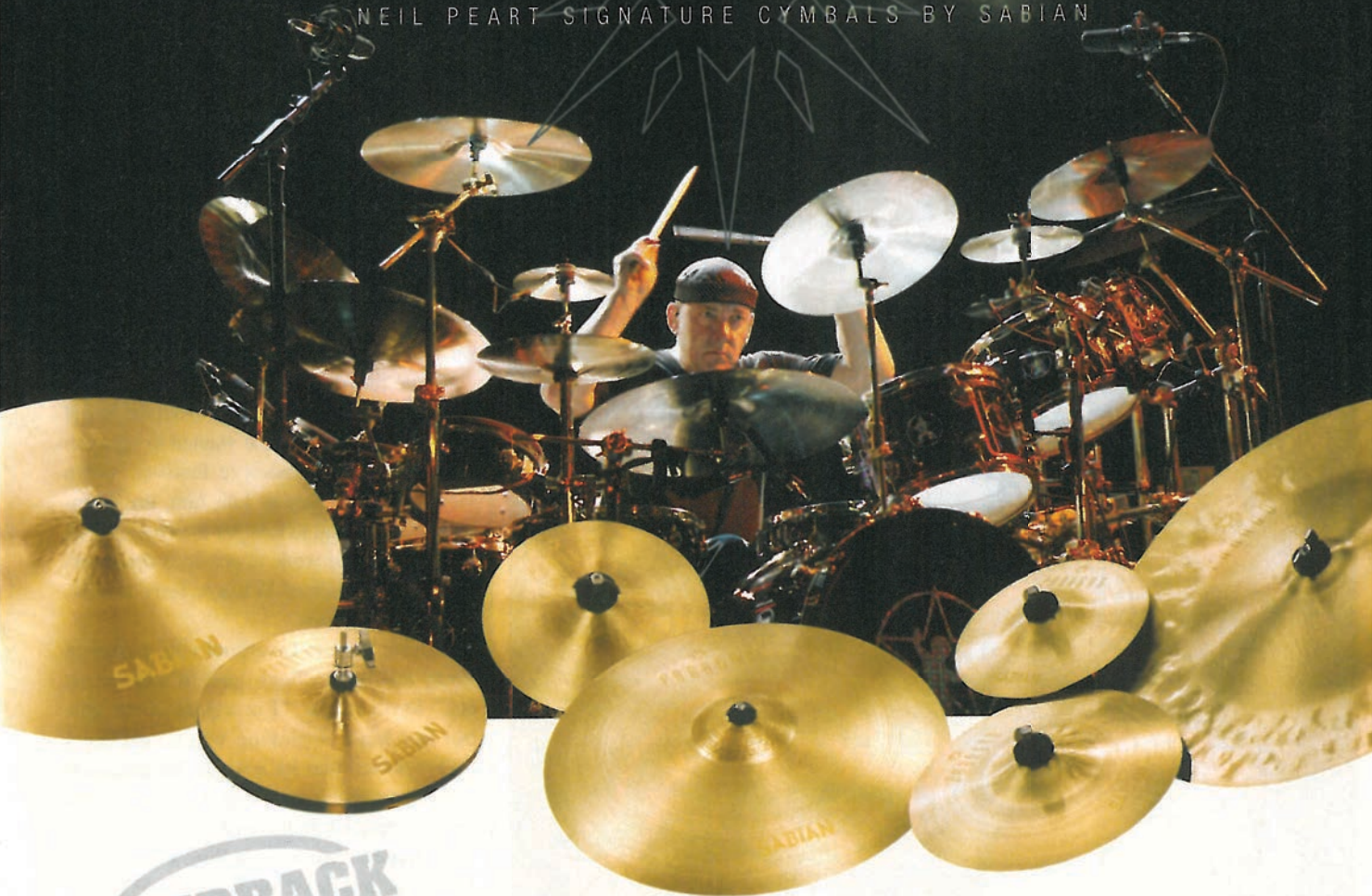
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Steve Barney

Liverpool doesn't have a big session scene. It's more band-oriented, and I really wanted to try the session thing. So Mike helped introduce me to the London scene."

When the last Atomic Kitten tour finished, Steve received a call from a producer named Andy Wright, with whom he had stayed in touch. Wright was producing guitar legend Jeff Beck and wondered if the drummer would like to come in and jam for a day to see if the combination was right. Indeed it was, and Steve took yet another left turn.

"I think Jeff draws a lot from musicians—and drummers especially," Steve figures. "He's a huge fan of drummers, and he's had a fantastic history with some of my favorites. Jeff seems to be inspired by the groove, energy, and X-factor magic that a drummer can bring. The record he was working on when I met him was not a fusion kind of project. It ended up sounding more like an alternative record. He had made an album with Andy before called *You Had It Coming*, where they used all programmed stuff. But I think Jeff wanted to

get back into incorporating live drums. Andy knew me as the type of drummer who plays with a lot of energy and is very comfortable with dance music. So I got the call.

"The songs weren't finished," Steve explains. "They were still being molded from jams, so I definitely had to dig deep within myself creatively. I think they were looking to be inspired by what I might do. There was a rough sketch of programmed ideas that Andy had done, but I tried to go a step further and give Jeff everything I thought would work from live drums. After that first day, I was called back two weeks later to do the rest of the album. Seven of the tracks I played on made it onto the record, which was called *Jeff*. How lucky to get that! One of the tracks, called 'Plan B,' won a Grammy for Best Instrumental Rock Performance. I couldn't believe I had played on a Grammy-winning record."

While Steve was in the studio with Beck, the guitarist got a phone call from the Royal Festival asking him if he wanted to organize a three-day retrospective festival. When Beck asked Barney to join him, the drummer knew he had to take on the challenge of reproducing the work of previous drummers like Narada Michael Walden, Terry Bozzio, and Simon Phillips.

"I went back to Liverpool with a copy of every Jeff Beck album—and in major anxiety," Steve laughs. "I'm a good chops guy, but this kind of playing was something I hadn't dived into for a while. We rehearsed in London, and it ended up being a fantastic show, where I was fortunate enough to play with Roger Waters from Pink Floyd. John McLaughlin played on a couple of tracks, Paul Rodgers came up, and Jennifer Batten was in the band as well. To top it off, Terry Bozzio got the call to come over and do a reunion of Jeff's *Guitar Shop* band. I was the house drummer for the majority of songs, and then Terry and I played about six songs together. That was *incredible*."

After seeing one of the Jeff Beck shows, former Atomic Kitten musical director Mike Stevens phoned Barney to see if he'd be interested in working with Annie Lennox. Upon meeting over a cup of tea that same night, the connection seemed immediate, and it wasn't long until Steve began rehearsals for the tour in support of the singer's latest release, *Bare*.

Barney says his first consideration when playing with Lennox is to be totally support-



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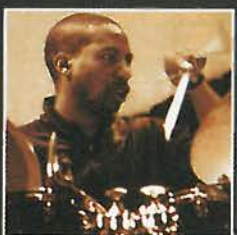
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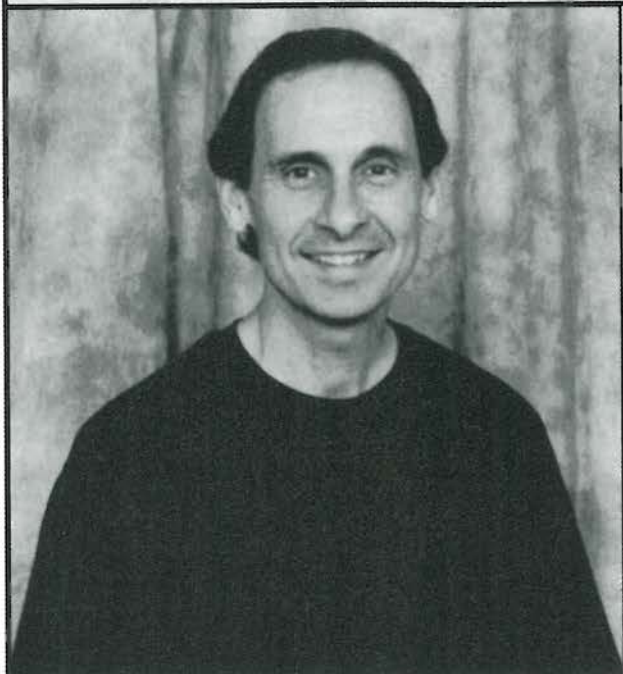
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Steve Barney



"I was the house drummer for Jeff Beck for the majority of the songs, and then Terry Bozzio and I played about six songs together. That was *incredible*."

ive of her distinctive vocals. "I wanted to honor her records," Steve insists. "But then it turned out that she wanted to re-approach some of the Eurythmics material to give it a fresh feel."

According to Steve, Annie pretty much gave everyone in the band free rein within the constraints of the song. "There's a massive dynamic with Annie's thing," the drummer relates. "We have rockin' tracks as well as heartfelt ballads. Annie sings about some pretty heavy subjects, and she wouldn't sing a song that didn't mean something to her. They're incredibly personal to her, and I want to support those emotions as best I can."

"Annie's gig is obviously not a technical thing like Jeff Beck, or a straight pop gig like Atomic Kitten," Steve points out. "It's an amalgamation of those things. I'm still able to give it a lot of energy and chops, but my pop experience has helped me to learn about supporting the songs."

Barney is grateful for the opportunities his diversity has presented him. Besides

almost constant touring with Lennox, the drummer has been working with Gareth Gates, star of *Pop Idol*, the UK's version of *American Idol*. "At the end of the day," Steve says, "I just appreciate the work. I know some drummers who, if they had gotten the Jeff Beck gig, wouldn't have taken the Gareth Gates gig. But I do this for a living, and I *like* playing music with different people."

"Of course, some gigs have more substance or are more enjoyable," the drummer admits. "But what I've tried to achieve is a strong pocket. Plus I want to play for the song, in whatever style it happens to be. You do have to be a chameleon in this business, but it's also important to bring a good feeling as a person to a project. When I go into a studio or onto a concert stage, I not only hope to play good drums, I hope to bring a bit of happiness to the room as well."

For more on Steve Barney, visit his Web site www.SteveBarney.com.



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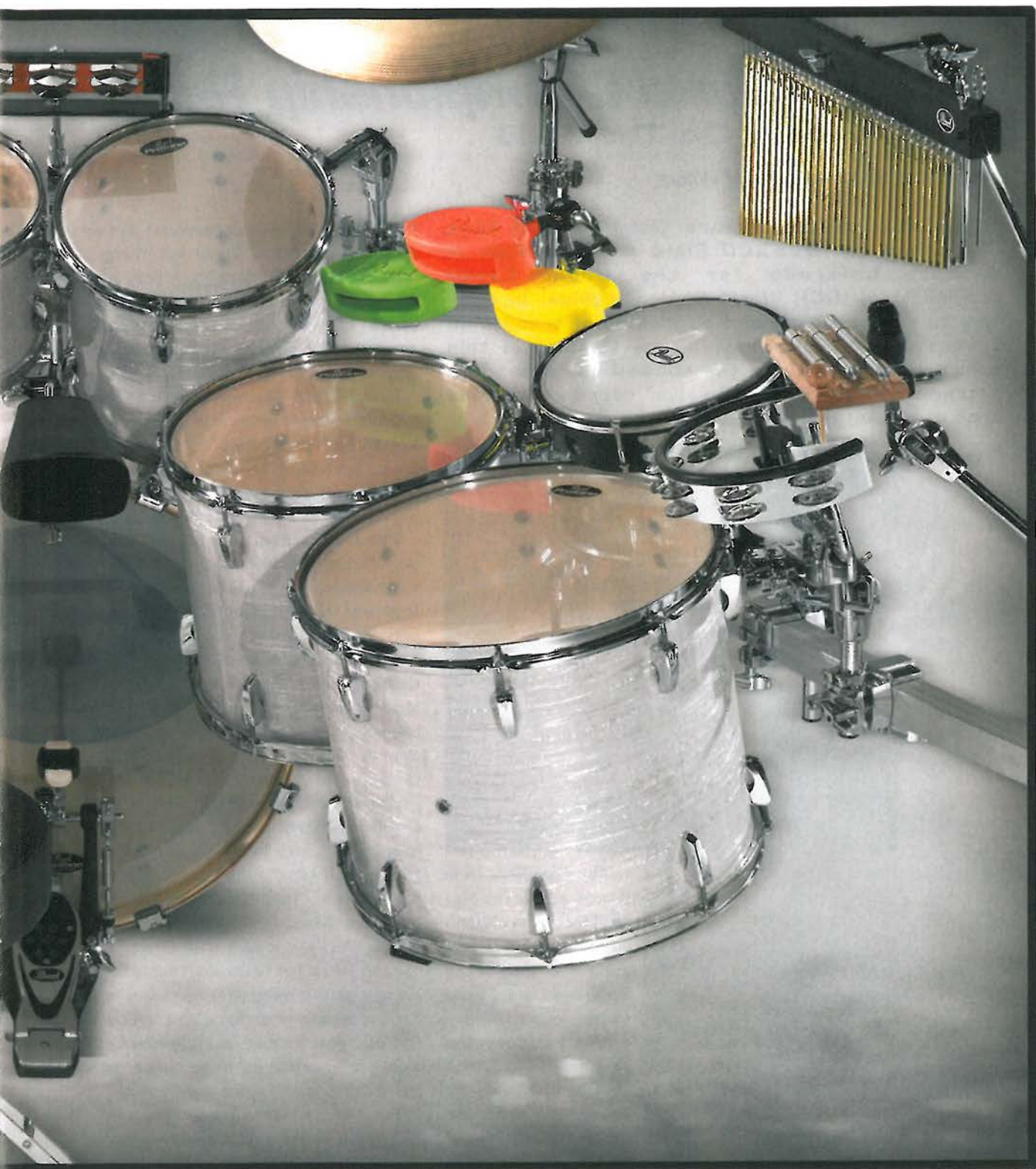
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2004 DCI World Championship Results

Fire And Fantasy On The Field

Story and photos by Lauren Vogel Weiss

This past August, more than 25,000 fans flocked to INVESCO Field At Mile High in Denver, Colorado for the Drum Corps International (DCI) World Championships. In addition to the precision and pageantry of traditional drum corps performance, a new element of this year's competition was the allowed use of amplification. Nine of the "top-twelve" corps used some type of miking and speakers in the pit.



from Concord, California performed *SummerTrain Blues Mix*, combining Gershwin's "Summertime" and Duke Ellington's "Take The A Train" with original music by David Glyde. "We used railroad ties," described director of percussion Scott Johnson, "and we scraped Vic Firth Dreadlocks across each other on a surdo drum to create another train sound."

Santa Clara Vanguard from Santa Clara, California brought the orchestral music of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Scheherazade" to the field, along with concert tambourines and triangles in the pit. In addition to taking third place, Vanguard won the Fred Sanford Award for Best Percussion Performance.

The Cadets from Bergenfield, New Jersey placed fourth with their *Living In The Past* program, which featured the music of Jethro Tull. **Phantom Regiment** from Rockford, Illinois took fifth place, playing music by Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla. A sixth-place finish put **The Bluecoats** of Canton, Ohio in the top six for the first time in their history. Their *Mood Swings* program—featuring Samuel Hazo's "Ride," the ballad from *Moulin Rouge*, and "Hunting Wabbits" by Gordon Goodwin—concluded with "In The Mood."

Carolina Crown from Fort Mill, South Carolina (seventh place) took advantage of the microphones down front to feature singers during "Seasons Of Love" from *Rent* in their *Bohemia!* production. **The Madison Scouts** from Madison, Wisconsin (eighth place) performed 1960s West Coast jazz with Oliver Nelson's "Sound Piece For Orchestra," including a bass clarinet part transferred to marimbas in the pit. And an original program called *The Composition Of Color* gave the ninth-place **Boston Crusaders** a chance to define the word "color" in sounds and textures as well as the visual aspect.

The stands thundered as Denver's own **Blue Knights** took the field. Their program, titled *A Knight's Tale*, consisted of original music by percussion arranger Michael Nevin, and earned them tenth place. **The Crossmen** from Newark, Delaware (eleventh place) used metallic effects like crashers mounted on the drums throughout their *Unity* program, which featured music by Wynton Marsalis, Joni Mitchell, and First Circle.

The Cavaliers from Rosemont, Illinois captured their sixth championship title with a program that showcased music from James Bond movies.

"We used a rhythm section in 'Welcome To Cuba,' from *Die Another Day*, to recreate a traditional salsa band," explained front ensemble arranger Erik Johnson.

"In addition to bongos, congas, and timbales in the pit, the snare drummers had sound plates mounted on their drums to capture the hoe-blade texture found in traditional salsa band music."

Finishing a close second place, **The Blue Devils**



At top: The world-champion Cavaliers' "rhythm section" during "Welcome To Cuba." Immediately above: Santa Clara Vanguard's drumline won the Fred Sanford Award for Best Percussion Performance.



1. The Blue Devils' Tim Jackson (left) won the Tenor category for the second year in a row, while Ivan Pacheco was named Best Individual Snare. 2. Spartans Matt Prendergast (left) and Anthony Prochilo won on Keyboard and Multi-Percussion, respectively. 3. The Cavaliers' Front Ensemble won the Best Percussion Ensemble division. Pictured are (back row, from left) Jon Corson, Travis Knapp, Huei-Yuan Pan, Garrett Scharton, Andrew Paul, and Matt Jordan; (front row, from left) Andrew Patun, Jimmy McDonald, Colin Campbell, John Louks, and Jeremy Logan. 4. Spirit Of JSU won the Best Cymbal Ensemble. Pictured are (back row, from left) Obed Resendez, Andrew Johannessen, and Mario Taylor, and (front row, from left) Colin Choat, Elanders Frasier, and Nigel Conton.

The program of the twelfth-place **Glassmen** from Toledo, Ohio, called *The Voice Of One*, paid tribute to Martha Graham with music by Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, and Christopher Rouse, combined with Graham-esque movements throughout the corps.

Other Corps Competitions

On August 5, nine Division II corps (61 to 135 members) and nine Division III corps (up to 60 members) competed in their Divisional Finals at All City Stadium. **The Spartans** from Nashua, New Hampshire won Division II with a performance of *The Medusa* (an original pro-

gram by Key Poulán) and a score of 96.325. **The Oregon Crusaders** from St. Helens, Oregon captured the Division III crown with a score of 86.575 for its program, *Metro Metal*.

Individual & Ensemble Competition

On August 4, the Individual & Ensemble competition allowed soloists and ensembles to compete independently from their corps. The Multi-Tenor award went to **Tim Jackson** of The Blue Devils, who earned the highest percussion score: 97. Fellow Blue Devil **Ivan Pacheco** scored a 96 to be named the Best Individual Snare. **Matt**

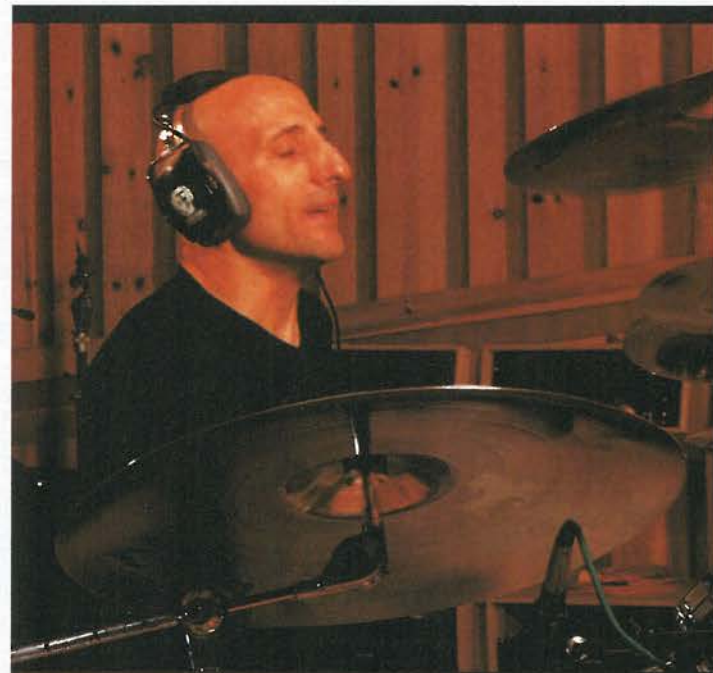


Randy Briggs was crowned the "World's Fastest Drummer" after playing 986 beats per minute.

Twenty-eight years after he won, former Blue Devil Rob McMillan finally received his award for Best Individual Tenor.



Prendergast of The Spartans won Best Individual Keyboard with a score of 96.5. Spartan **Anthony Prochilo** won the Multi-Percussion award (95.5), and **Matt Jordan** of The Cavaliers was named Best Individual Timpanist (93).



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Championship Stats

Drum Corps	Score (out of 100)	Drum Score (out of 10)	Snares	Tenors	Basses	Cymbals	Pit	Drum Company	Cymbal Company	Sticks/ Mallets	Drum Heads
1. Cavaliers	98.70	9.65 (3rd)	9	5**	5	0	11	Yamaha	Zildjian	Innovative	Remo
2. Blue Devils	98.525	9.725 (2nd)	8	4**	5	0	10	Dynasty	Zildjian	Firth	Remo
3. Santa Clara Vanguard	96.825	9.875 (1st)	8	5**	5	4	10	Pearl	Zildjian	Firth/Innovative	Remo
4. Cadets Of Bergen Cnty	95.6	9.60 (4th)	9	5**	5	0	12	Yamaha	Zildjian	Firth	Remo
5. Phantom Regiment	93.575	9.325 (5th)	9	4*	5	0	10	Pearl	Zildjian	Innovative	Remo
6. Bluecoats	92.125	9.225 (6th)	7	5**	5	4	10	Pearl	Zildjian	Innovative	Evans
7. Carolina Crown	91.225	8.975 (8th)	8	4*	5	0	11	Pearl	Zildjian	Innovative	Remo
8. Madison Scouts	91.175	8.825 (12th)	9	4*	5	4	11	Yamaha	Zildjian	Firth	Remo
9. Boston Crusaders	90.525	9.225 (6th)	8	4**	5	0	12	Dynasty	Sabian	Firth	Remo
10. Blue Knights	87.60	8.85 (10th)	6	4*	5	0	12	Pearl	Zildjian	Firth	Remo
11. Crossmen	87.425	8.925 (9th)	8	4**	5	5	11	Yamaha	Zildjian	Firth	Remo
12. Glassmen	85.95	8.85 (10th)	8	4*	5	0	11	Dynasty	Zildjian	Innovative	Remo

* = 5-Drum Tenor Setups (Quints), ** = 6-Drum Tenor Setups

The Cavaliers' pit won the Best Percussion Ensemble award, with a score of 97.5. The Santa Clara Vanguard Bass Drum Ensemble placed first with a score of 95, while The Cymbal Ensemble from The Spirit Of Jacksonville State University won their category with a 93.5 score.

The winner in the "unofficial" category of "World's Fastest Drummer" was Randy

Briggs, a sixteen-year-old rookie member of Memphis Sound, who played 986 beats per minute (as measured on a Drumometer). Another unusual winner was Rob McMillan. Rob had won the Tenor category when he marched with the Blue Devils in 1976. Unfortunately, his score was tabulated with the snares, so he was not recognized for his victory until twenty-eight years after it happened.

During pre-competition ceremonies on August 5, drumline instructor Tom Float was inducted into the DCI Hall Of Fame. Float was recognized for his work with the Blue Devils, Spirit Of Atlanta, and The Anaheim Kingsmen, among other corps.

The 2005 World Championships will be held at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, Massachusetts, August 11-13. For more information visit www.dci.org.

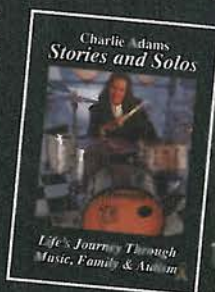


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Life's Journey Through Music, Family & Autism

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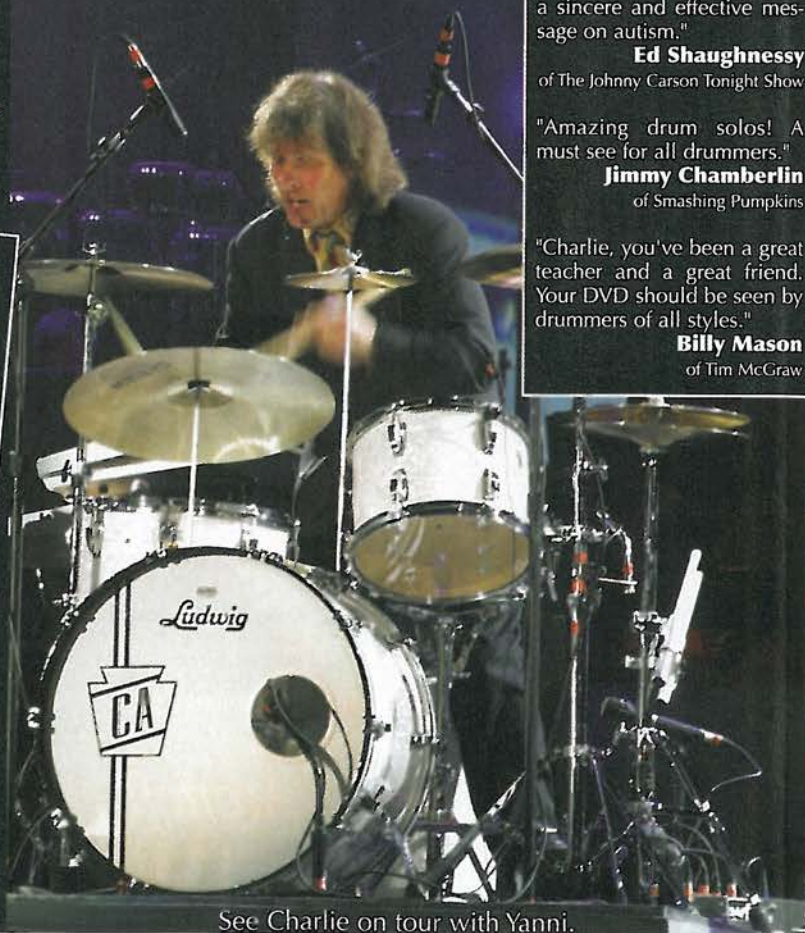
You'll see never before seen home videos, along with Charlie's revolving, upside down drum set and other video clips from Charlie's and Yanni's rock-n-roll band, Chameleon. There are many behind the scene stories never heard by the general public and footage from the making of *Live at the Acropolis* video. In addition to the incredible drum solos and other concert footage, Charlie shares his personal story of having four children, including two autistic young boys and his family's struggles and hope for them and the autism community.



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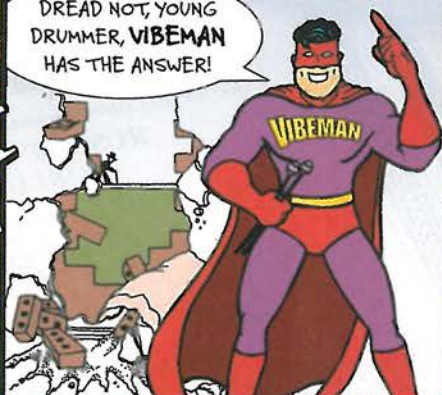
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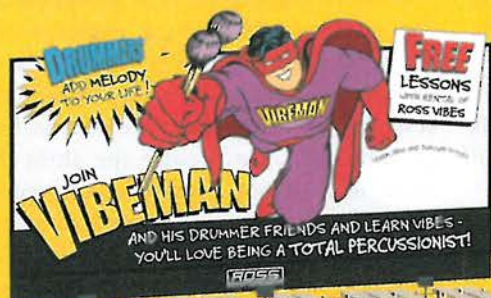
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Making It

What's It Really All About?

by Billy Ward



When I was twenty years old, I knew two things for certain: 1) I'm a genius drummer. 2) Teaching music is for losers—people who can't really play in the real world.

Today, both these thoughts are laughable to me.

As I get more and more familiar with middle age (yeah, I'm older than I look!), I realize that my twenty-year-old "truths" were as far off base as could be. While following those two old beliefs, I ended up attending two music schools and then dropping out of them both as soon as I thought my "education" was suffering. After all, Miles Davis never checked scholastic records before hiring, did he? James Brown never cared if you could pass the collegiate juries, right?

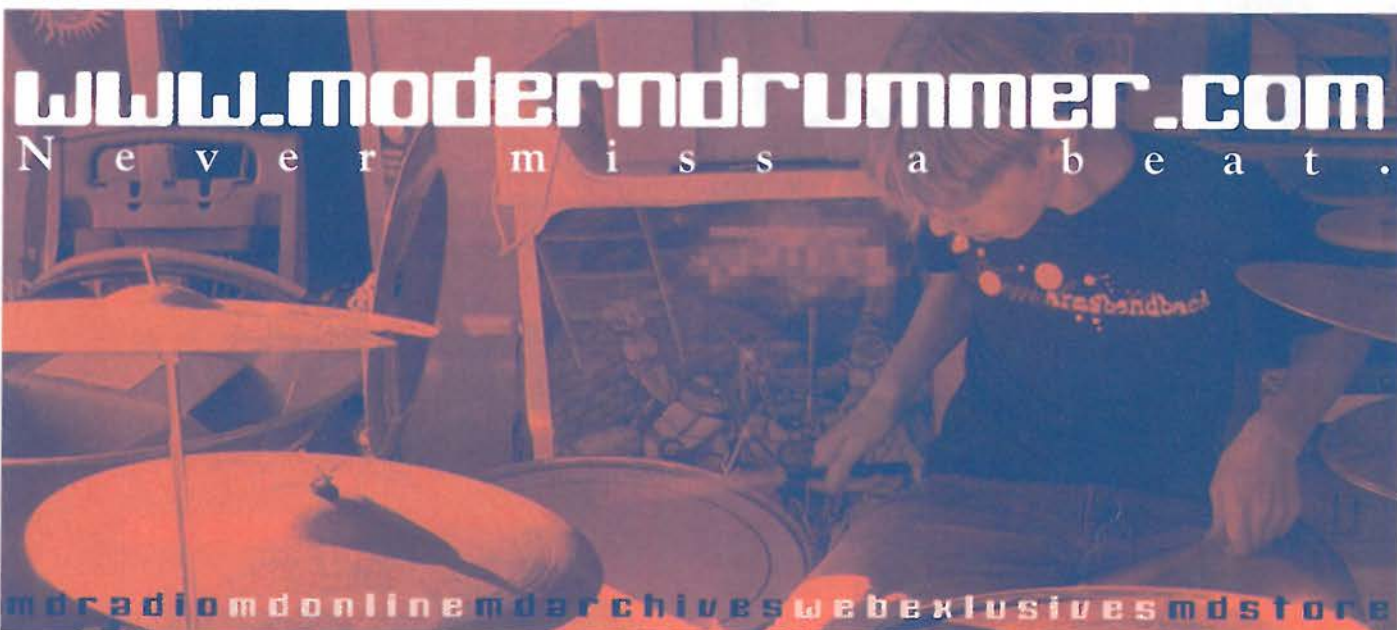
Fortunately, as far as I know, such recklessness never directly hurt my playing or my career. (I'll admit, my career didn't turn out as I wished, but it nonetheless is, as my wife points out to me, "notable"—whatever that means.)

As a young man, I believed that if I hung in there and persisted, my band would "make it." Many of you younger drummers in bands are per-

haps holding onto that same hope. I've since learned that you have better odds of winning the lottery than making money in the music business. So if you're interested in cash, I'd suggest that instead of buying that new snake for the band's P.A., go buy a couple hundred dollars' worth of lottery tickets! But I know you won't. Because we don't dream of making money, do we? We dream of *making it*.

What *is* making it? Is it performing on *The Tonight Show*? Certainly an appearance on a big TV show changes the way our parents see us. A *Tonight Show* appearance is the immediate formula for getting our parents off of our backs in terms of "success." We become the child they brag about to everyone, even total strangers! In my case, I think it helped my parents reconcile all those nights they drove at 2:00 A.M. to pick up me and my drums at yet another funky juke joint where I was playing with older musicians, when I wasn't yet old enough to drive a car.

Most young musicians would qualify the words "making it" to mean appearing on MTV, riding in a limo and tour bus, having lots of adoring fans,





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Billy Ward

and (oh yeah!) having lots of money. That last one is the hard one. My father-in-law was a great sculptor who became an influential art teacher. He once said, "In the arts, the money is the last thing to come." He was right.

You know the old joke...

Q: How do you make a million dollars in the music business?

A: Start with *two* million.

Personally, I translate "making it" into self-satisfaction. I would love to tour with a big act and play with some of the great musicians that I've not played with. Yet while that would be challenging musically, I know for a fact that in my case, traveling all over the world and playing constantly would be pretty miserable. One reason is that one hotel room looks just like another, and I *like* having my personal stuff around me—not to mention my family and friends.

How do touring drummers do it? How do they maintain a balanced life while on the road so much? Are they happy? A friend of mine once said, "You deserve a gig with so and so." My reply was, "Well,

that'd be great, but I'd hate to do all that traveling." Traveling is more for the young unmarried guys, right? But I hated traveling even as a young guy. To me, a Holiday Inn—private room, please—is as bad as camping out! (What's with that plastic cup in the bathroom? I'm not allowed to handle glass? Am I on a suicide watch?) And how do I get my laundry done before we have to leave at 6:00 A.M.?

I think the gist of this article is aimed at those of you who are hoping for that big ticket to fame. Please realize this: The only happiness that can be achieved will come from within. Some of today's young successful cover-story drummers that appear to be raking in the money will, in twenty years or less, have less

money and financial security than if they had worked at a hamburger joint all that time. The record business is a machine that eats up any money your band makes.

Right now, there are drummers in bands who have one or more gold records, yet they *owe* money to the record label. I think there are plenty of resources about this that explain it better than I could. (Plus I'd rather talk about success and my midlife crisis than why today's big record labels are folding up.)

So I've covered how to make our parents happy and proud and perhaps I've convinced you that there's not much money in the music business. So where is the success? I think it's in proving to yourself that you can play. I try to do this every day—maybe not actual playing, but

*Where is the success?
I think it's in proving to yourself
that you can play.*

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I do try to think as an artist every day. I try to think of ways to be creative on the drums, or, as a producer, new ways to mix instruments or styles of music together.

In my *Concepts* article from last September, I referred to heroes of mine such as Louie Bellson and Trilok Gurtu. But I also mentioned the nameless guy who works in a drum shop and then, after closing the store at the end of the day, goes into a practice room to play his drums. Could this guy be happier than me? Is it possible he is more successful than even the famous guys on the covers of the magazines? Yes to both questions. Do the stars have time to spend with their families? Do they even *have* families? Do they have job security? I don't know, but I know I don't have job security. Every time I finish a gig, I'm out of work until the next one. Do I worry that I might never get another call? Yes, sometimes. Health insurance? I could probably be driving a Lotus (and loving it) if I didn't have to pay for my family's individual health insurance.

We live our lives, and our path develops behind each step that we previously took. My path shows that I don't like that plastic cup at the Holiday Inn and I love being home at night with my family, even if it's simply snuggling up to the TV and watching a movie together. Maybe this makes me a lazy drummer, but I *like* it. I also hate having to re-prove myself to every new artist I work with. (Perhaps I've become more crotchety as I get older.)

My life is idyllic in many ways. I get to love music as well as the many personal relationships that have enriched me. I have an appreciation of my development through my years, even though the money, and most importantly the *music*, didn't always turn out the way I once imagined. Having now released a DVD as well as a book, I sometimes think about the old ideas of playing versus educating. The old axiom about those who do...do, and those who can't do...teach, has haunted me a bit. The inevitable ghosts of being a failed player, which I think must

be a part of any creative person's worries, sometimes take on power and must be dealt with. And the specter of failure, whether a playing or teaching failure, is admittedly sometimes a midnight visitor.

Okay. Calm down and *step away* from the self-judgement. Maybe there are actually no heroes. Maybe there are only people who are doing the best they can, and we can only see the outer layer of their success. But do we notice our *own* successes enough? If there's one thing I've really learned, it's that every day, I have a chance to find joy in playing music.

Billy Ward has worked with Carly Simon, Robbie Robertson, Ace Frehley, John Patitucci, and Joan Osborne. His book, Inside Out: Exploring The Mental Aspects Of Drumming, was recently released by Modern Drummer Publications. His DVD, Big Time, is also just out. Billy can be reached at his Web site, www.billyward.com.



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The Special Edition Jazz Ride—available in 19" through 22" sizes—features a slightly lathed bottom, a unique lathing pattern on top, and a special hand-finishing process. This design is said to produce a combination of the most sought-after elements in Istanbul Agop's Signature series cymbals.

The new Trash Hit utilizes many of the same construction elements as are used for the Special Edition Jazz Ride. But a unique shaping technique is applied to the outer edge of the cymbal, giving it a "distinct, powerful, and thoroughly musical 'trashy' character" that lends itself to many musical applications. The model is available in 20", 21", and 22" sizes.

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Five-Star Dealers Drum Buyer's Bill Of Rights And Drummers Guide

The Five-Star group of independent drumshops has created an exclusive list of services and support that is now included free with every drumset purchased from a participating Five-Star dealer. Called the Drum Buyer's Bill Of Rights and aimed primarily at younger players and their parents, these value-added bonuses include free assembly and tuning, a free pair of professional-quality drumsticks, and a free first drum lesson. Also included is free lifetime technical support and a free lifetime labor warranty on all repairs for as long as the original purchaser owns the drums. Some restrictions apply.

The Five-Star network has also released its *2004 Winter Drummer's Guide*. The 32-page, full-color booklet contains information on special products and pricing that are being offered at participating Five-Star drum shops throughout the United States and Canada. Included are drums, percussion, and accessories, along with many Five-Star discounted and free items from nearly three dozen of the world's instrument manufacturers. Copies are available at any participating Five-Star dealer.

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Adapter (MSA) system, sold separately, allows the Puresound wires to securely fit selected Pearl, Remo, and Yamaha marching snare drum models. Puresound 19-strand [#PBB-1419 (top)] and 21-strand [#PBB-1421 (bottom)] steel-alloy wires are also available for Pearl and Premier dual-snare pipe band drums.

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Entering The Bronze Age

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Australia's Mastro Drums, noted for custom snare drums, now offers a complete drumset crafted with phosphor bronze shells. According to the manufacturer, no other material offers the response, attack, and brightness of phosphor bronze. The 2 mm-thick shells are available in either clear or swirling brushed finishes.

The distinctive kit features an 18x20 bass drum (\$1,359) with solid brass single or double lugs, steel claws, and spurs attached to the shell using a special plate. Chrome, bronze, or wood hoops are available. Overtones are said to be reduced by the nature of the shell material.

The kit includes 10x8 (\$379), 10x10 (\$414), and 13x16 (\$560) toms, all fitted with 2.3-mm steel hoops and brass rods, and all featuring a free-floating system. Their sound is said to be bright, but with the warmth of wood.

The 6x14 snare (price variable depending on finish and features) is available with ten solid-brass double-ended lugs accommodating twenty claws and tension rods, which attach to Mastro's own 20-mm x 5-mm steel rims. A double-action strainer with a fully adjustable butt is mounted away from the shell, and custom snare wires are available.

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- Tommy thoroughly explains each groove breaking each down to its basic elements and performing each one with and without a live band rhythm track at two different tempos.

- As a special bonus a free *Groove Essentials* poster (courtesy of Vic Firth drum sticks), is included, containing fully-notated examples of each groove.

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Boom From Brazil

RMV Sonically-Optimized Drums And Eclipse Hardware

RMV's new Sonically-Optimized Stage (thin), Studio (reinforced), and Stadium (heavy) drumshells are made from 100% Brazilian maple, which is slightly harder and denser than North American maple. According to RMV, this allows full resonance, greater tone, an explosive attack, and a complete spectrum of performance options. The drums are available in stock as well as custom configurations. They feature hi-tech innovations like injection-molded low-mass lugs on toms and bass drums, newly designed tube lugs on all snare drums, suspension-style tom mounts, and RMV's own drum-heads, along with a wide selection of hand-painted laminate and satin oil finishes.

Also available is RMV's heavy-duty Eclipse series drum hardware, including a full range of cymbal, snare drum, and hi-hat stands and bass drum pedals. The hardware features steel

tubing and legs, oversized feet, composite-fiber fittings, and a black wrinkle finish. This exclusive combination of designs and materials provides solid, secure gripping power without the need for cumbersome memory locks.

RMV Brazilian-made drums are now distributed in North America and Canada by Drums For North America (DNA).

(818) 753-7811, www.rmvdrums.com.



Small Size, Big Beat

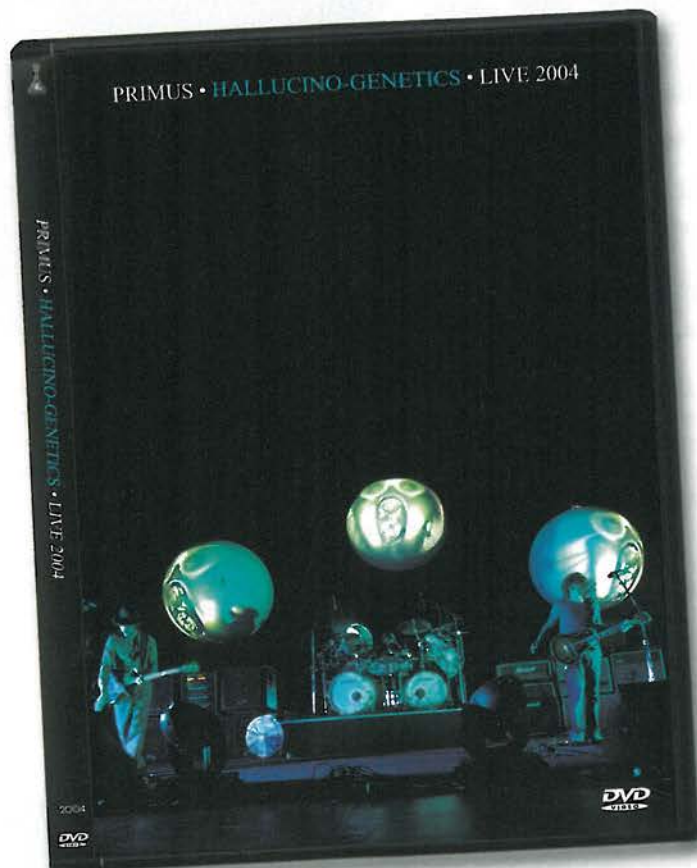
Toca Sheila E Little Hands Player's Series Congas And Bongos

Toca's new Sheila E Little Hands Player's Series congas and bongos are designed to be high-quality instruments scaled to younger performers and students. The 8" and 9" lightweight fiberglass congas boast an exclusive sparkle finish, attractive black powder-coated hardware, natural bison heads, Player's Series Easy Play hoops—designed to be gentle on small hands—and five lugs per conga for optimum tuning. The lugs are secured with Toca's exclusive four-bolt side plates. Matching 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "- and 6"-diameter bongos are similarly finished in sparkle wrap with contrasting black powder-coated traditional rims. All of the drums are said to produce a surprisingly full range of tones for their diminutive sizes.



List price for Sheila E Little Hands congas is \$399; list price for the bongos is \$79. A portion of all sales proceeds will go to the Lil' Angel Bunny Foundation (www.lilangelbunny.org), a California-based organization supported by Sheila E that works to bring harmony and music to the lives of vulnerable children.

(973) 478-6903, www.tocapercussion.com.



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The Reference Shelf

Rhythm Of The Head

by Georg Voros

(The Big Drum Publications)

This book, by a noted South African drummer, examines the connection between the physical, psychological and spiritual aspects of drumming. Drum legend Bill Bruford states that the book is "full of common sense and wisdom, dispensed in a positive and practical manner." Check the Web site for current pricing and ordering information.

www.georgvoros.com.

American Drummers Achievement Awards Honoring Steve Gadd

(Hudson Music)

This documentary two-DVD set captures the entertainment and excitement of the American Drummers Achievement Award event honoring Steve Gadd. The event, which was emceed by comedian Bill Cosby, was produced and presented by the Avedis Zildjian Company on September 13, 2003 at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston, Massachusetts. An all-star band featured Vinnie Colaiuta and Rick Marotta on drums. The evening culminated with a spectacular performance by Steve with James Taylor.

The DVD includes concert performances, the awards ceremony, backstage interviews with many of the musicians, rehearsal footage, and a twenty-minute documentary on Steve's career. The DVD also includes a special video tribute to the late cymbal innovator and head of the Zildjian company, Armand Zildjian, as well as information on the recently created Steve Gadd Scholarship Program at Berklee College Of Music. List price is \$49.95, with 100% of Zildjian's net proceeds going to the Steve Gadd scholarship.

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

Drum Solos Revisited

(LP/Congahead Productions)

This DVD is similar to earlier LP recordings that feature New York's finest percussion artists. It offers an exploration of beginning, intermediate, and advanced solos, including new stylistic developments decades in the making. A Real Video preview of the DVD may be viewed at http://www.lpmusic.com/Product_Showcase/Whats_New/streaming/preview.ram.

(888) LP-MUSIC, www.lpmusic.com.

Concert Solos For The Intermediate Snare Drummer

by Garwood Whaley (Meredith Music)

This book/CD package presents challenging yet practical solos for the mature beginner through intermediate levels. Left pages contain no rolls, while right pages do utilize them. This allows students to experience dynamically expressive playing before their rolls are fully developed. The collection features dynamics changes in each solo, a variety of meters, short rolls used to assist the developing drummer, and solos that are complete musical works. Each solo is suitable for contest, recital, or supplementary lesson material.

(301) 261-5015, www.meredithmusic.com.

2004-2005 Total Percussion CD

(Pearl)

This free disc is full of video information, rudimental techniques, and lessons for concert, drumset, marching, and hand percussion.

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

Xtreme Drums

by Mark Walker (Warner Bros.)

The Xtreme series provides "funky, fresh, and fun" teaching methods for beginners, using easy-to-follow lessons, exercises, stories, and superstar tips. Each book includes a free audio CD profiling ten of the greatest artists of each instrument, along with performance tracks and easy-to-follow guidelines.

In *Xtreme Drums*, resident sticksman Skins guides the reader through a ten-lesson program that covers everything from setting up a kit and holding the sticks correctly to fills, backbeats, and grace notes. List price is \$11.95.

www.warnerbrospublications.com.

New Orleans Drumming Boxed Set

(Warner Bros.)

This box set rolls three best-selling videos—*Street Beats: Modern Applications, Ragtime And Beyond: Evolution Of A Style*, and *From R&B To Funk*—into one DVD. The collection features Johnny Vidacovich, one of New Orleans' most well-known musicians who has played with John Scofield, James Booker, and more; Herlin Riley, a member of one of New Orleans' premier musical families and a touring musician for The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra; Earl Palmer, the legendary studio drummer who worked with Fats Domino, Little Richard, and other legendary performers; and Herman Ernest, known for his creative and syncopated funk playing with The Neville Brothers, Etta James, and Labelle. Special features include performance only, printable charts, and DVD-ROM functions. List price is \$39.95.

www.warnerbrospublications.com.

Portraits For Drum Set

by Anthony J. Cirone (Warner Bros.)

This new edition presents the drumset student with twelve classic etudes from the original well-known snare drum book *Portraits In Rhythm*. The etudes are intended to be challenging and stimulating for the intermediate and advanced player. List price is \$14.95.

www.warnerbrospublications.com.

Ultimate Play-Along Drum Trax: Carmine Appice—Guitar Zeus

by Rick Gratton with Carmine Appice

(Warner Bros.)

This play-along package includes Carmine's drum parts selected from the CDs *Guitar Zeus I* and *II*, which highlight the guitar talents of Ted Nugent, Paul Gilbert, Stevie Salas, Yngwie Malmsteen, Richie Sambora, Neal Schon, and Zakk Wylde. Included are full drumset transcriptions with Carmine's thoughts on how and why he played his drum grooves and fills, followed by play-along drum charts. List price is \$24.95.

www.warnerbrospublications.com.

Ultimate Play-Along Drum Trax: Marco Minnemann

by Rick Gratton with Marco Minnemann

(Warner Bros.)

In this play-along package, Marco Minnemann presents his interdependence, creativity, style, and groove techniques. Each note-for-note transcription is meticulously broken down and includes Marco's thoughts on his recorded performances. Also explained are Marco's personal practice exercises, which will aid in mastering the explosive compositions. Easy-to-follow charts are also included, along with many lessons on double bass drumming and odd-time playing. List price is \$24.95.

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Good Things Come In Threes

New Drumset Configurations From Taye

Ultimate Monster



Taye is offering three distinctly different drumkit configurations designed to appeal to a wide range of drummers. The Ultimate Monster fifteen-piece kit includes one kick drum, two floor toms, four rack toms, a matching wood snare drum, two additional Stainless Steel snare drums, two timbales, and three GoRack toms, along with all appropriate hardware.

Only slightly smaller is Taye's nine-piece RockPro 9 Double Kick setup, with two 22" kick drums, 8", 10", 12", and 13" rack toms, 14" and 16" floor toms, a 14" snare drum, and hardware.

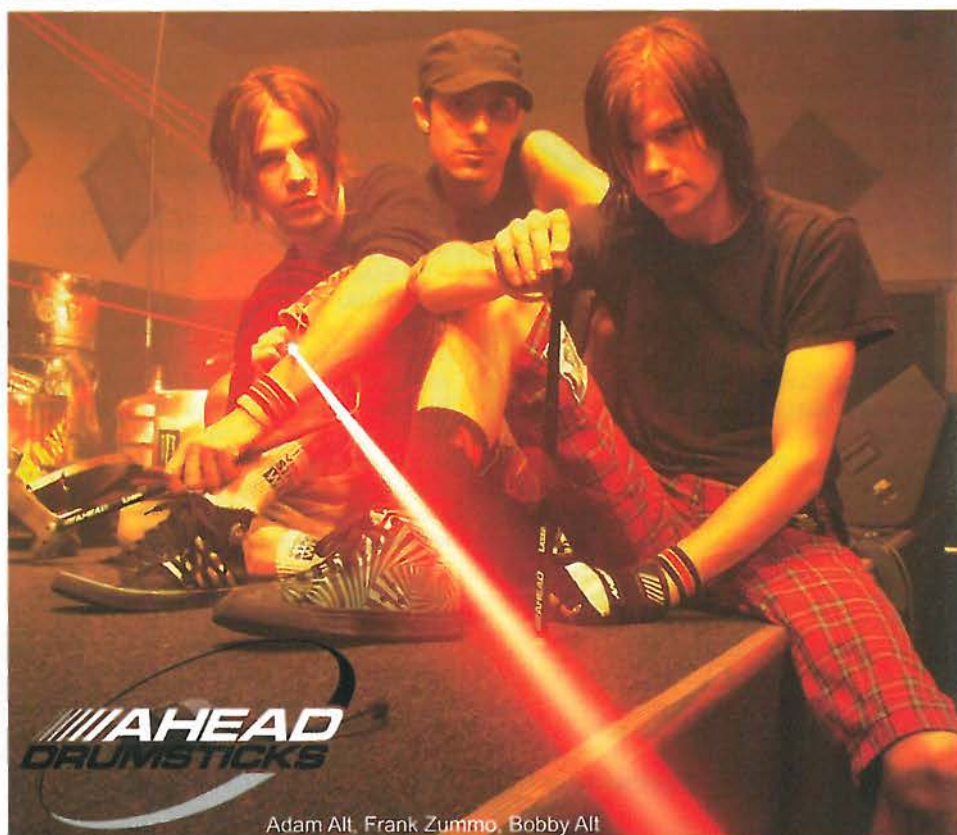
Smaller in number but larger in drum size is the Ultimate Classic Rock kit: a five-piece configuration that features a 24" kick drum, a 14" rack tom, 16" and 18" floor toms, a deep 14" snare drum, and hardware.

(909) 628-9589, www.tayedrums.com.

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A Boxing Match

Latin Percussion Mario Cortes Cajon And Mountable RMV Tamborim And Pandeiro

LP's new cajon, designed by percussionist Mario Cortes, is constructed from specially selected birch pieces. Birch is said to be admirably suited to cajons because of its emphasis on clean highs and natural low end—both obtainable without excessive player effort.

As their name suggests, RMV Mountable Micro Snare Tamborims and Pandeiros can be attached to stands or percussion tables, using the LP240 Percussion

Mount or the LP236C Mount All Bracket. This makes both instruments immediately accessible to stick players.

(888) LP-MUSIC,
www.lpmusic.com.



And What's More



SPAUN is now offering hybrid snare drums. The new design combines acrylic and wood in "an almost infinite variety" of designs and colors. The addition of acrylic to the shell design is said to bring in the bright, resonant qualities of acrylic while maintaining the warm sound of a wood-shell snare. Models are available in 12", 13", and 14" diameters with 5" to 8" depths.

(909) 971-7761, www.spaundrums.com.

REGAL TIP has re-introduced the Power Rock model. It's a double butt-end design with no taper, no shoulder, and no tip, for a loud, fat crack. Butt-end players no longer have to worry about uncomfortable gripping situations, while Regal Tip's special lacquer finish helps prevent slipping. The Power Rock has a diameter of .570" and a length of 16", and lists for \$12.

(800) 358-4590, www.regaltip.com.

ALTERNATE MODE's Digital Percussion Workstation is based on the company's popular 2U Music PC Rack, and is tailored for "the forward thinking drummer and percussionist." Consisting of a powerful 3.2 Pentium 4 processor and a gig of RAM, this 2-rack space XP computer fits into any standard rack case. Balanced 1/4" Audio and MIDI jacks are built into the computer, so no external devices are needed. The unit includes 24-bit/192 kHz ADAT In/Out, S/PDIF In/Out, and Firewire. The PowerRock comes with the Emulator X software sampler, along with gigabytes of drum, ethnic percussion, and mallet percussion sounds, loops, and more.

(413) 594-5190, www.alternatemode.com.

MAESTRO INNOVATIONS' HeadFX bass drum heads feature what the company terms "amazing graphics, each with a different genre of music in mind." All designs are original artwork. Some are edgy, some are funky, and some have a humorous twist, but all are intended to attract attention and complete your kit with style.

The heads are currently available in 22" models, with 18", 20", and 24" models to be available soon. HeadFX heads are available through music retailers and online. List price is \$89.99.

(888) 551-5595, www.headfx.com.

SUPERBEATERS rubber bass drum beaters now come in six sizes, each with the option of soft or firm rubber. This selection provides a wide range of playability and tonal response. According to the manufacturer, the properties of ultra-dense rubber are superior to traditional felt, plastic, or wood beaters in terms of action, shock reduction, and punch.

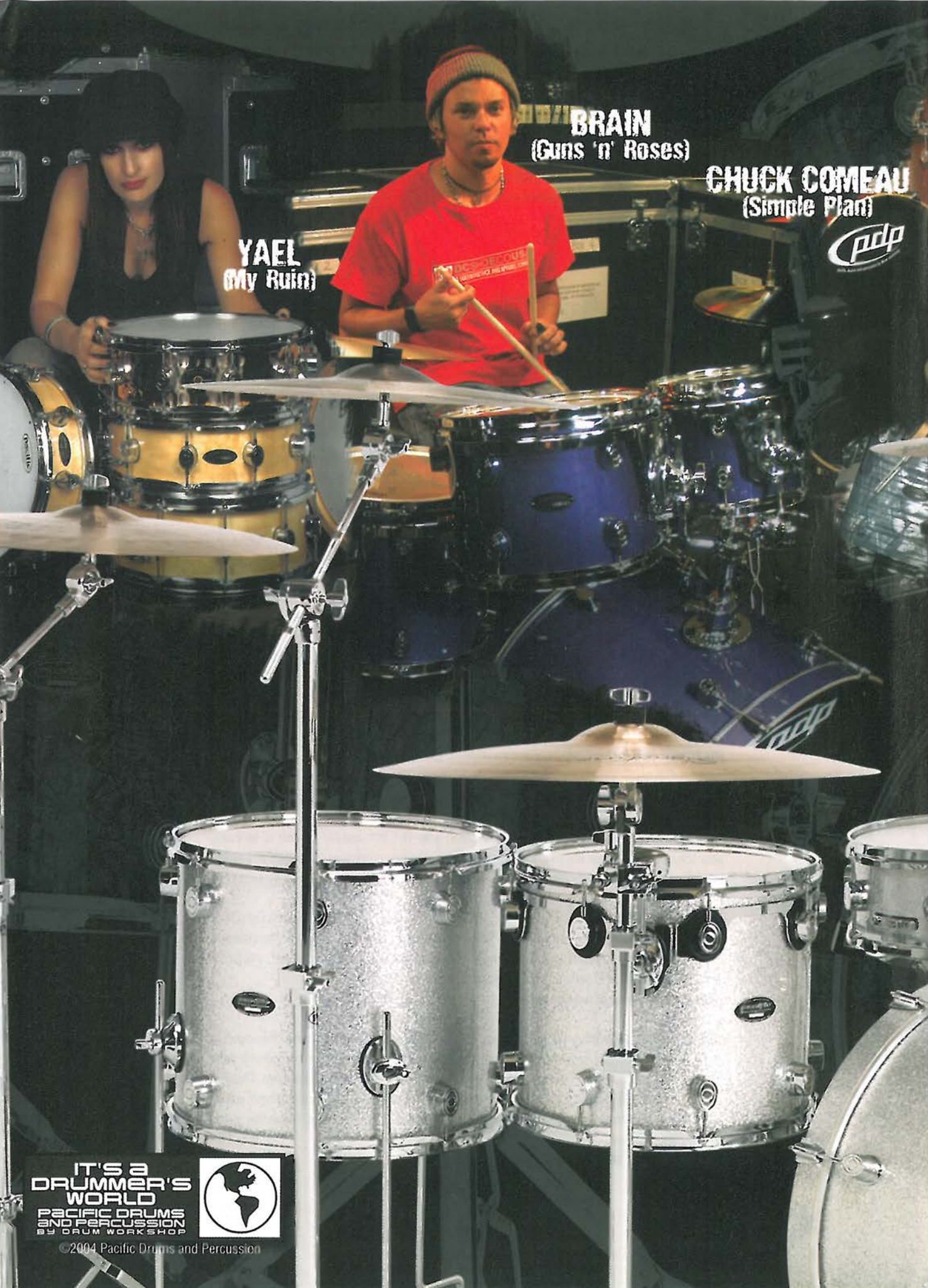
(720) 276-3948, www.superbeaters.com.

GHS CORPORATION offers the Handmaster Plus, developed by Dr. Terry Zachary. This exercise and warm-up/cool-down device is said to equally strengthen the nine muscles that open the hand

and the nine that close it, by providing resistance to flexion and extension. The goal is to achieve optimal musical performance through maximizing hand strength, speed, stamina, and range of motion, as well as reducing the risk of repetitive stress injuries.

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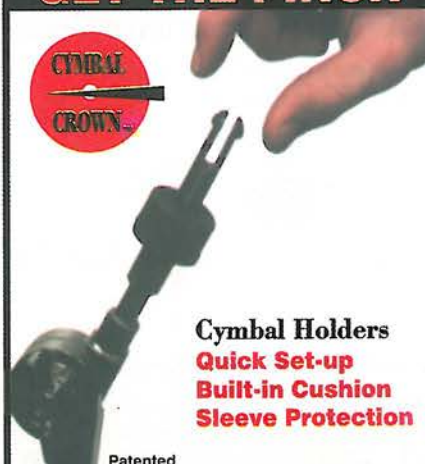
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cus • tom \kəs-təm\ adjective (1830)

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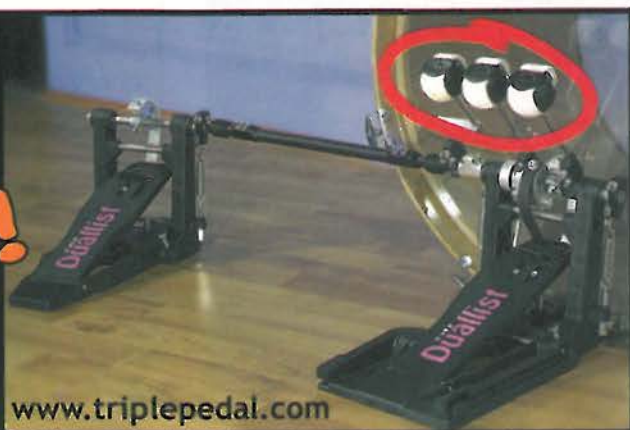


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Offering punishing metal with scattered hip-hop touches, Candiria's latest is a hefty cut above your average bombast in terms of both songwriting and musicianship.

KENNETH SCHALK bashes with a thin, diamond-hard tone, and really makes his double bass strokes count. In fine metal form, he rarely misses an opportunity to underscore a transition or reinforce a guitar accent—but he does so with clever orchestration and more finesse than most. Schalk shows his sensitive side on keys here and there, but his drumming is all about wielding the hammer of the gods.

Michael Parillo

Univers Zero Implosion (Cuneiform)



Often lambasted for their gloomier prog rock obsessions, Belgium tentet Univers Zero rend the veil with this all-acoustic circus that combines the fleshy, resonant drumming of **DANIEL DENIS** with percussion, woodwinds, accordion, stringed instruments, and "cheap guitar." This thoughtful prog revels in Irish jigs and medieval dances, and is a refreshing alternative to retro progsters intent on reliving 2112. With acoustic instruments replacing and expanding on the usual electric guitar and keyboards approach, Denis is free to address the music with appropriate sounds instead of brain-dead muscle. This approach helps make *Implosion* an unusually rich, if still ominous, folk-prog experience.

Ken Micallef

Shadows Fall The War Within (Century Media)



Combining elements of three generations of metal, Shadows Fall offers a refreshing blend of speed, thrash, and hardcore. Drummer **JASON BITTNER** proves solid and well schooled in '80s, '90s, and modern-day metal chops as he busts out of the gate on the opener, "The Light That Blinds," with scorching double bass chops and blistering hand speed. Throughout the disc, Bittner combines tasteful broken-16th and quick triplet bass drum grooves with scattered hand/foot combinations and hi-hat, splash, and ride patterns that add a sophisticated flair to a typically Neanderthal genre of drumming.

Mike Haid

Mylene (Fast Horse/Rykno)



Welcome a new voice from Brazil! On her debut release, Rio-based singer Mylene collaborates with Brazilian producer/percussionist **RAMIRO MUSOTTO** to explore "the themes of Afro-Brazil-ity, revealed in a digital way." Her velvet voice soars above the hypnotic techno-fusion laid down by her band, which is driven by Musotto's drum programming, berimbau, pandeiros, and surdo. Integrating drum 'n' bass sounds with samba-reggae and religious chants, this innovative recording combines urban sass with the ancient pulse of the Amazon, all in support of a new singer who is bound to turn heads.

Bill Kiely

Marah 20,000 Streets Under The Sky (Yep Roc)



Marah's latest is a slice of East Coast Americana sprinkled with Springsteen sensibilities: a kind of rock-aria that wraps the grime and humanity of city urchins and sinners in sweet melodies. **JON WURSTER** (Superchunk) performs both laid-back 2 and 4 backbeats and Max/Liberty-style straight-ahead banging, cementing a sturdy foundation for these gritty ditties. When nearly all else falls away (as in "Body") we get a better sense of Wurster's feel, depth, and craft.

Will Romano

Jeff Hamilton Trio

The Best Things Happen... (Azica)



It busts out of the gate with a deep, swinging shuffle, and Jeff Hamilton's feel-good drumming never lets up from there. The latest edition of Hamilton's trio, featuring **Tamir Hendelman** on piano and **Christoph Luty** on bass, shares their leader's love for crisp arrangements unfurled with elegance and superb taste. Hamilton's speedy bop chops on "Bennissimo" are surely impressive, but the real mark of rhythmic royalty is his wonderful brush solo on a slow, slow "C Jam Blues."

Jeff Potter

Significant
Reissues by Ken Micallef
'60s Blue Note

The incomparable jazz released by Blue Note during the 1960s unsurprisingly featured exceptional drummers. Among a new batch of reissues, icon **PHILLY JOE JONES** kicks the usual mighty butt on Freddie Hubbard's *Ready For Freddie*, Sonny Rollins' *Newk's Time*, and Hank Mobley's *The Flip*, while **BILLY HIGGINS** rolls his superior bounce on Donald Byrd's funky *Free Form*.

But what of Blue Note's less recognized but equally unforgettable drummers? Extensively documented, but little remarked on, these drummers also served, and well. **CLIFFORD JARVIS**'s cymbal is severe and edgy on Jackie McLean's *Right Now!*, his intricate combinations recalling Elvin but with a drier, more staccato edge. **AL HAREWOOD** is more traditional on Stanley Turrentine's *Never Let Me Go*, playing it smooth on standards and show tunes, with sure and svelte accompaniment. And though *Unity* may be his best known record, Larry Young's *Mother Ship* is equally explosive, a roaring, rattling furnace of an album with **EDDIE GLADDEN** smacking his drums like a man possessed. The lesson starts here.





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BOOKS

Traveling Music: The Soundtrack To My Life And Times

by Neil Peart (FWE Press)

level: all, \$34.95 (cloth), \$24.95 (paper)



In *Traveling Music*, legendary Rush drummer Neil Peart heads off toward Big Bend National Park in his BMW Z-8 to conceive a new writing project. What he finds along the way, by listening to a collection of CDs that includes Frank Sinatra, Linkin Park, The Tragically Hip, and The Who, are two inseparably constant themes in his life about which to write: music and motion. With an engagingly anecdotal style, Peart provides editorial snapshots of bicycle trips in West Africa, the "healing road" he traveled in "Ghost Rider," and years of endless touring and countless hotel rooms. By using his favorite songs and records to weave together the chronology from an inquisitive youth to the current Rush tour, Peart succeeds in delivering another thoughtful turn at prose.

David A. Brensilver



X-Treme Snare, Levels 2, 3, and 4

by Robert Keding (Digital DrumTech)

level: all, \$19.99 (each book, including 4 CDs)

Digital DrumTech's *X-Treme Snare* series bills itself as "the ultimate chop building program." Author Keding states that the books are "designed to enhance accuracy, control, and endurance for the contemporary rudimentary snare drummer." To that end, each book contains fourteen exercises that progress in difficulty from taps to rolls, flams, and drags. Each exercise is designed to be practiced at increasingly faster tempos.

The unique aspect of this series is that each book comes with four CDs; two are the snare drum part only and the other two are the same exercises with a "full drumline" (all MIDI-produced). Instead of practicing with a metronome, you play along with the CD, repeating each exercise four times at six or seven tempos. For those unable to play in a real drumline, the ensemble CDs create a similar experience.

One "not so good" facet of these books is that they are printed on individual loose-leaf pages, punched with three holes (ready for a notebook?). It could be confusing if pages of the various books are accidentally mixed up! Look for *X-Treme Tenors* and *X-Treme Bass* books soon. (www.digitaldrumtech.com)

Lauren Vogel Weiss



Groove Perspectives: Time-Playing Concepts For The Funk/Fusion Drummer

by Darryn Farrugia (Musictek)

level: intermediate to advanced, \$24.99

(includes 83-track CD)

Want to embellish your groove with a five-stroke roll? Having difficulty getting your 7/8 time to dance? Your hi-hat accent patterns tired and lame? How about applying paradiddles to the kit and making it funky? Aussie drummer Farrugia allays your fears and answers all of these questions, and turns you on to tons of examples and exercises that demonstrate how you can improve the orchestration of hi-hat, bass drum, and snare patterns. After mining the treasures of this book, you should become a better timekeeper, technician (by forcing you to focus on limb independence and all those subtle changes in accented linear grooves), and all-around musician. Though geared for the fusion drummer, this book has practical applications for a variety of musical settings.

(www.musictek.com.au)

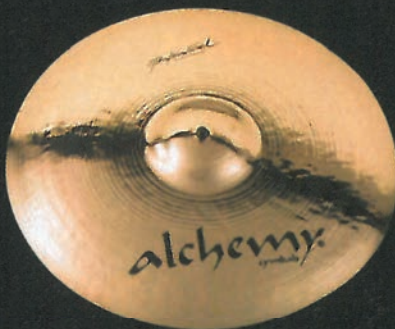
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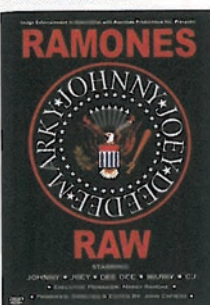
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DVDs

Ramones Raw (Image Entertainment)

level: all, \$19.99



This recently released DVD contains over five hours of concert footage, television appearances, and backstage antics, candidly documenting the now legendary career of America's original punk rock band. Loaded with all the typical DVD goodies (hidden tracks, audio commentary), *Raw* offers an inside view, mostly from drummer **MARKY RAMONE's** camcorder, of everything from pre-concert routines to tour bus garble to less-than-flattering toilet shots. While it surely won't be receiving any Academy nominations, *Ramones Raw* contains enough music and textbook punk rock drumming to make it worth checking out. **Michael Dawson**

Toto From Past To Present, 1977-1990 (Columbia)

level: all, \$11.98



JEFF PORCARO fans might enjoy these music videos, although the licks you'd love to see him play are probably not shown. Porcaro makes the most of his moments on camera, rising up into a big-time cymbal crash and smirk, grinning while grinding out a can't-miss hip-hop groove. When the band is just "lip syncing," he isn't concerned with matching up. He's leaning into it, looking tough, but also yucking it up and having fun. "Waiting For Your Love" and "Angel Don't Cry" are good studio takes, with an animated Porcaro playing hard and in sync. Included is a live performance of "Goodbye Eleanor" where you can actually see some of Jeff's licks and get a sense of his great drive.

Robin Tolleson

The Studio Percussionist, Vol. 1

featuring Luis Conte (LP)

level: intermediate to advanced, \$19.95



Veteran studio percussionist Luis Conte gives the viewer a valuable inside look at the world of the studio percussionist. Here are valuable tips on how a percussionist interacts with (rather than competes with) the trap drummer, how to move around on different instruments within a tune, and how to listen for what the recording calls for. Conte has endless chops, but what comes across here is not power but finesse. This video, which is rich in drum wisdom as well as technical savvy, is a must for anyone serious about properly playing percussion in the studio or on the stage.

Bill Kiely

Dream Theater

Live In Tokyo / 5 Years In A LIVetime (Rhino)

level: intermediate to advanced, \$19.99



The 1993 Tokyo concert footage on disc 1 of this double DVD features music from DT's most commercially successful recording to date, *Images And Words*. The band, with keyboardist **Kevin Moore**, is young, enthusiastic, and...very hairy. The audio is fairly clean, with drummer **MIKE PORTNOY's** progressive licks focused in the mix. Mike performs a visually captivating solo that brings the crowd to its feet. Disc 2 chronicles the band's musical and personal development from 1994 through 1998, with keyboardist **Derek Sherinian**. Both discs feature road escapades and music videos. A cool collection for fans of this technically challenging band. (Parental discretion is advised.)

Mike Haid

Tune in to hear many of the artists reviewed in this month's Critique.

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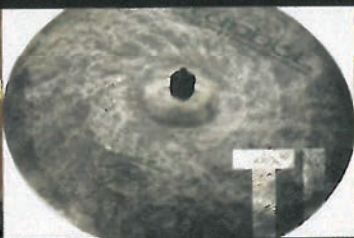
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A photograph of a large, ornate theater interior. The view is from the audience, looking towards the stage. The theater has multiple tiers of seating, with the front rows being a light brown color and the upper tiers being a darker wood. The stage is a light-colored, curved platform. On the stage, there is a drum set. The walls and ceiling are dark wood, and there are several balconies with ornate railings. The lighting is warm and focused on the stage.

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2004 University Of Maryland Drumset Symposium

The University of Maryland recently hosted its Third Annual Summer Drumset Symposium. The event attracted drummers and other musicians from up and down the East Coast.

Carl Allen, noted for his work with Freddie Hubbard, opened the day with a melodic drum solo. "My vision with respect to the drums," he told the crowd, "is to play as melodically as possible while maintaining a sense of tradition." Carl also stressed the importance of playing with attitude and authority.

Dennis Chambers began by playing a forty-five-minute drum solo that demonstrated his great technical ability and musical imagination, covering a wide range of dynamics, colors, and grooves. Dennis then shared his opinions on the present



From left: Dennis Chambers, Roy Haynes, and Carl Allen

state of the music business, and went on to explain the importance of studying many different drummers and styles of music. "Let's face it," he said, "all of us can play rudiments. But it's the way you use your

imagination around the kit that makes you different from anyone else."

Jazz drumming legend **Roy Haynes** closed the day's festivities. Haynes commanded everyone's attention with kind words and stories about his friendship with the late Elvin Jones. He also addressed the importance of continuing to learn new things and to develop a feel for the music you're playing. "Every moment is to be loved and lived," he stressed. "Every time you play, play like it's the last. Make it mean something."

The event was organized by Steve Fidyk and sponsored by Zildjian, Sabian, Pearl, Drum Workshop, Yamaha, Pro-Mark, and Evans.

In Memoriam Joe Raynor: Swing Veteran And Master Teacher

Joe Raynor, a drummer and teacher who performed with famous musicians and with Houston-area bands, died this past July 16 as the result of complications from a fall. He was eighty.

As a young drum student in Brooklyn during the 1930s, Raynor idolized Gene Krupa. In 1941 he entered the Slingerland/Gene Krupa national drum contest, surpassing 40,000 contestants to reach the finals. There he performed Krupa's famous "Drum Boogie" solo—with Krupa in the audience. Although Joe ultimately did not win the contest, for the rest of his life he regarded the experience as one of his greatest thrills.

During World War II, Joe played in the Army Air Corps music program. After the war, he toured with singer Ray Eberle, then



settled in Houston. There he performed with various bands, backing singers like Dinah Shore, Tony Martin, and Frank Sinatra.

Joe later dedicated himself to teaching, including ten years in the Houston public schools. He also taught privately, first at Brochstein's Music (owned by Herb Brochstein, who would go on to found Pro-Mark), and later for ten years at The Percussion Center. Mike Henry, co-owner of The Percussion Center, said Raynor remained a popular figure at the store even after he stopped teaching. "Practically every week we

get someone in here who asks about Joe," said Henry. "He was dedicated to the world of drums."



PAS Inducts Shaughnessy And Peters, Announces New Officers

Former *Tonight Show* drummer **Ed Shaughnessy** and longtime Chicago Symphony percussionist **Gordon Peters** were inducted into the **Percussive Arts Society (PAS) Hall Of Fame** at a ceremony held this past November 12, during the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Nashville, Tennessee.

In other PAS news, the organization recently announced its new executive committee officers for the 2005-06 term. Northern Illinois University College Of Visual And Performing Arts associate dean **Rich Holly** will become president of PAS in January, after



Ed Shaughnessy



Gordon Peters

serving a two-year term as president-elect. Holly succeeds **Mark Ford**, coordinator of percussion at the University Of North Texas College Of Music. Ford will serve on the executive committee as immediate past president.

Other officers, elected to two-year terms by the PAS board of directors, are president-elect **Gary Cook** (University of Arizona), vice president **Steve Houghton** (Indiana University and Henry Mancini Institute), secretary

Lisa Rogers (Texas Tech University), and treasurer **Michael Balter** (Chicago-area percussionist and owner of Mike Balter Mallets).

Pro-Mark Sponsors Rock Camp For Girls

Pro-Mark has teamed with the **Institute For Musical Arts** to sponsor a series of rock 'n' roll camps for girls. IMA's stated goal is to provide an environment where girls can express their creativity, improve their musicianship, develop their leadership qualities, and gain confidence in performance skills. Camp sessions began in the summer and are scheduled into the fall. Several curriculums are offered to serve all ages and ability levels.

Pro-Mark's Pat Brown says, "We are excited to partner with IMA in an effort to bring more girls and women into music in general, and into percussion specifically. IMA's programs are led by industry and performing professionals, so camp participants get a 'real world' experience." For more information, contact Pro-Mark at (877) PRO-MARK, www.promark.com.



IMA Rock 'N' Roll Girls campers surround staff member Loren "Pookie" Weisman

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Berklee's Online Extension School New Courses For College Credit

Berkleemusic.com, the online extension school of Berklee College Of Music, is now providing courses for college credit. Certificate programs include studio production, music theory, songwriting, arranging, electronic music production, and music business. These new offerings enable students worldwide to gain industry-recognized qualifications from Berklee College Of Music, earn credits that can supplement music programs offered by other institutions, and obtain financial aid.



Berkleemusic.com's seventeen certificates will be offered through three distinctive programs. Specialist Certificate Programs consist of three courses; Professional Certificate Programs include five courses over a one-year period; and Masters Certificate Programs consist of eight courses taken over a two-year period.

Musicians will also be able to take individual courses to complement degree programs at other institutions. By transferring college credits from Berkleemusic.com, students at various schools will have the opportunity to take advantage of Berklee's unique courses, time-tested teaching methods, and expertise, while moving toward a degree at another college. For complete information, visit www.berkleemusic.com.

FREE CD Reveals...

"Amazing 'Short-Cut' Speed Secrets That Turned a Poor, Frustrated, and Uncoordinated Drummer Into a Monster Player That Gigging Bands Compete To Hire and Crowds Scream For"

Struggling with my bass drum playing really sucks—I should know... For years I had horrible feet and my dream was to generate machine gun like speed & precision with my feet like Virgil Donati, but...

I Was Slow As A Snail AND Uncoordinated

After 9 years of playing I really didn't know if it was me or just my kick-pedals BUT as luck would have it, I saw an ad in *Modern Drummer* that was giving away a FREE 45-minute CD that would supposedly reveal the pro's inside secrets to playing your feet EXACTLY like your hands at any speed or time signature you desire. At first I thought it was a scam, but I was desperate. So I called, and a few days later the tape was in my mailbox.

I Was Blown Away When I Discovered...

- 7 "easy to learn" yet vicious exercises that can double your speed, coordination and endurance in days...
- A "legitimate," simple and easy way to dominate your bass drum playing WITHOUT blowing money on some ultra expensive pedal or gizmo. *I'm flying on my Gibraltar Intruder pedals.*
- Do you want your pedals to SMOKE? Then check out these 3 "key" adjustments to your pedal that are crucial, but ignored by nearly every drummer.
- A 3-week beginner from Boston set the world's fastest feet record by using just one secret talked about on this free CD.
- The real inside secrets to mind-numbing speed & coordination that pros keep hidden from you... AND more.

Finally, you can quickly become the kind of mega-skilled drummer that gigging bands compete to hire and crowds scream for... How do I know? I'm now tasting the sweet life by making crazy amounts of money playing out 3-4 nights a week, AND I was just featured at the recent Ballistic Drumming Festival in Pasadena CA.

FREE 45-Minute CD Can Change Your Double Bass Playing Forever!

Call for this FREE audio CD while it's fresh in your mind. It's normally \$10, but free for a very limited time to the first 300 *Modern Drummer* readers who call and listen to this Free Recorded Message 24hours/7days. So call the Free Recorded message at 1-626-683-1709 and ask for CD package JA05.

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Indy Quickies

Respected percussionist and educator **Memo Acevedo** has joined the artist relations department of Latin Percussion as the company's artist liaison and education coordinator. He will



be responsible for LP's worldwide educational affairs. Memo is fluent in English and Spanish, and will also be the liaison between LP's endorsers in Central and South America, as well as Puerto Rico.

MRP Custom Drums is celebrating their sixth year of operation, as well as a move

into a new production facility. The new shop is located at 3688 Illona Lane, Oceanside, New York 11572-5902. Their new contact information is (516) 766-1836, www.mrpdrums.com.

Chris Johnson of Colorado Springs, Colorado was named the grand-prize winner in the **Vater/Cyrus Bolooki** contest held at www.vater.com. Chris won a private drum lesson with Bolooki, drummer with New Found Glory, during the July 18

stop of the Van's Warped Tour. Chris and Cyrus spent a few hours going over technique, breaking down New Found Glory song parts, and checking out some of Chris's favorite Warped Tour drummers. Chris also won merchandise from Vater, Head First, and New Found Glory.



A concert in tribute to Jia Kennie Blackwell, late daughter of Prince drummer **John Blackwell**, will be held at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston on December 11. Proceeds will go to establish the Jia Blackwell Memorial Scholarship at Berklee College Of Music. Artists scheduled to appear include **Terri Lyne Carrington, Vinnie Colaiuta, Dom Famularo, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Marcus Williams**, and John Blackwell, with others to be announced. For further information go to www.johnblackwell.net.

Site-Seeing

Yamaha's www.dtxperience.com is a third-party support and forum Web site for users of the company's DTX electronic drums. The new site provides a personality-tuned look at the inner workings of DTX drums, and at their application in studios, live on stage, in worship, and in education. Included are discussion forums monitored by tech support specialists, extensive "behind the manual" information, downloads, a complete accessory store, and



"quick start" tutorials in sampling and sequencing. Visitors will also be able to view video clips, swap grooves and samples, locate dealers, and see how some top artists are incorporating Yamaha electronic drumkits into their work.

Mapex has recently launched new Web sites for all of their percussion brands. Each



site features product and artist news, as well as downloadable product catalogs. The new sites are www.mapexdrums.com, www.janushardware.com, www.blackpanthersnares.com, and www.chindal.com (for Chindal cymbals).

A new site called **handidrummed.com** has been established by drummer Rob Richard. It's intended to provide a resource where disabled drummers can learn what other disabled drummers are doing to work around their limitations, along with information that may provide inspiration



and direction in their playing. The site includes profile pages of disabled drummers, articles, information on

products that might be of use to a disabled drummer, discussion forums, and links to support groups, drum forums, and personal homepages of disabled drummers.

DrumTips.com

is a new site housing over 350 professionally written tips on everything from drum tuning to soloing. There's also a place for visitors to submit their own tips. The site's creators state that it's a great educational resource.



Meinl Percussion's new and improved Web site features information on products, artists, and other Meinl news. The address is www.meinlpercussion.com.



Who's Using What



Solo artist and clinician **Marco Minnemann** is now a Zildjian cymbal endorser. In addition, the percussion section of Holland's **Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra** is playing Zildjian cymbals exclusively.



Latin Percussion has added **Anton Fig** to its list of endorsers. Anton is familiar to millions as the drummer on *The Late Show With David Letterman*. Broadway drummer **Larry Lelli** (*Assassins*, *The Producers*) is also a new LP artist.



Jeff Olsen (David Benoit), **Tom Hoey** (Josh Turner), and **Andy Galeon** (Death Angel) are now playing D'Amico drums.

Chris Adler (Lamb Of God) is a new Meinl cymbal endorser, as are UK drummer **Alex Thomas** (Badly Drawn Boy, The Hiding Place) Belgian drummer **Kyo van Hoecke** (Roxane), **Bob Pantella** (Monster Magnet), **John Oreshnick** (Fireball Ministry), **Lee Agnew** (Nazareth), and **Jerry Roe** (Gretchen Wilson).

Now playing Meinl percussion are **Justin Poree** and **Jiro Yamaguchi** (Ozomatli).

New Pearl drum endorsers include **Mike Luce** (Drowning Pool), **Tim Perry** (DeSol), **Frank Basile** (developer of Smart Loops loop-based music content and creation tools), and **Criz Mozzati** (Lacuna Coil). In addition, **Nino Sanchez** is playing Pearl percussion on tour with Jessica Simpson.



Field Marshall Montgomery pipe band

The 2004 World Pipe Band Championships culminated with victories for several bands sponsored by Pearl's marching percussion division. **Field Marshall Montgomery** were overall Grade 1 winners, as well as taking first in Medley Drumming, Best Bass section, and the Overall Medley competition. **Simon Fraser University** took first in the Drumming prize, second overall in Grade 1, and first in the Overall MSR competition. **Strathclyde** took fourth Overall in the Grade 1 competition and first in the MSR Drumming category.

Premier Percussion has supplied sixty drums to the **British Royal Marines**. The 97S military snares, with regimental emblazoning, will be distributed throughout the regimental corps.



Recent Vater signings include **Chris Cester** (Jet), **Matt Frenette** (Loverboy), **Jeff Kummer** (The Early November), **Aaron Stern** (Matchbook Romance), **Scott Reeder** (Fu Manchu), **John Biondolillo** (Dakota), and **Billy Goodness** (independent).

New Vic Firth drumstick endorsers include **Tris Imboden** (Chicago), **Chris 3** and **Clown** (Slipknot), **Rick Brothers** (Gretchen Wilson), **Tim Horsley** (Keith Urban), **Ludwig Alfonso** (Spyro Gyra), **Fred Pelles** (Tiger Army), **Criz Mozzati** (Lacuna Coil), and **Ben Dussault** (Throwdown), as well as **Tito Puente Jr.**, **Mario "Machito" Grillo Jr.**, and **Tito Rodriguez Jr.** (all of The Big 3 Palladium Orchestra).

Taye Drums endorsers include **Yvette "Baby Girl" Preyer** (Michael McDonald), **David Rollins** (Pocket Full Of Rocks), **Byron Landham** (Joey DeFrancesco), **Tim Chewing** (Richard Marx), **Joe Morris** (Esteban), and **Matthew Stevens** (Paul Brandt, Nashville studio). Stevens is also a new endorser for Sabian cymbals, Pro-Mark sticks, Attack drumheads, and Quikstix holders.



Jason Marsalis recently joined with Ross Mallet Instruments to advocate the "Vibeman" program. It's an initiative to provide drummers the opportunity to play melody while maintaining the feel of a percussion instrument.

Jason Marsalis (left), with **Gabe Ireland** of Ross Mallet Instruments

Patrick Hallahan (My Morning Jacket), **Taylor Nogo** (The F-Ups), and **Adam Wade** (Jealous Sound, Shudder To Think, Jawbox) have all joined the Istanbul Agop/Alchemy Cymbals endorsement roster.

QUICK BEATS

ROB URBANI
(SLAVES ON DOPE)



Do you have any favorite grooves?

As far as a particular song, I can't really name any because my "favorite groove" goes with the mood I'm in. Right now I'm in a big band mood. Yesterday I was in the mood for playing some Latin beats. I like many grooves in all kinds of styles.

How did you learn to play drums?

The way I learned to play drums was by setting the radio dial to one end and playing my way through all the stations—everything from jazz, to rock, to classical, to Latin. I started taking lessons when I went to college, and that's when I started to get into jazz-fusion, odd meters, and basically more demanding drumming. My favorite drummer quickly became Dennis Chambers. I liked his funky beats, his mastery of odd time signatures, and his fast hands and feet.

What's your favorite TV theme music?

It has to be *Miami Vice*. That's a cool "drummer's" TV theme because it's all drum fills!



MODERN DRUMMER, EVANS, PRO-MARK, MEINL, & TAMA PRESENT

THE SILVER SILK SET GIVEAWAY



To help Jason Bittner and Shadows Fall celebrate their great new release, *The War Within*, some of the companies whose gear Jason plays and Modern Drummer magazine have joined in to give one very lucky winner a pile of great gear...cymbals from Meinl, sticks and accessories from Pro-Mark, heads from Evans, all accompanying a complete Tama Starclassic set finished in vintage Silver Silk. So why not join in the celebration? Read the rules, send in an entry and it could all be yours!

Evans

- Evans clear G2 and G1s: 10", 12", 14", 16"
- 22" Bass Drum and EQ3 Batter & Resonant heads
- 14" Snare - Power Center Reverse Dot and Hazy 300 heads

Meinl

- (1) Soundcaster 14" Powerful Hi-hats
- (1) Soundcaster 20" Powerful Ride
- (1) Soundcaster 18" Powerful Crash
- (1) Soundcaster 16" Powerful Crash
- (1) Soundcaster 18" China
- (1) Meinl 22" Cymbal Bag

Pro-Mark

- 12-pairs of Pro-Mark drumsticks (winner's choice of models), a Pro-Mark drumstick bag, a Pro-Mark cymbal bag, and a Pro-Mark hat and t-shirt.

Tama 6pc Kit Including:

Starclassic Maple EFX Drums in Silver Silk Finish

- (1) 18 x 22" Bass
- (1) 8 x 10" Rack Tom
- (1) 9 x 12" Rack Tom
- (1) 14 x 14" Floor Tom
- (1) 16 x 16" Floor Tom
- (1) Power Metal 5 1/2 x 14" Brass Snare Drum
- (2) HTC77W Tom/Cymbal Combination Stand
- (1) HH905 Hi-Hat Stand
- (1) HS700W Snare Stand
- (1) HC72W Straight Cymbal Stand
- (1) HC73BW Boom Cymbal Stand
- (1) HP900P Iron Cobra Bass Pedal

Hear drummer Jason Bittner on the new Shadows Fall release, *The War Within*, in stores now.



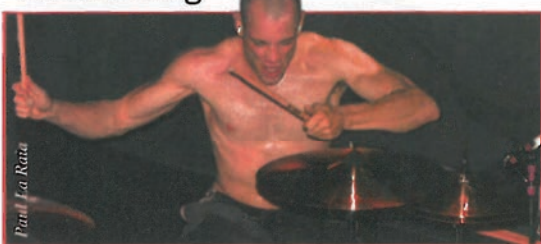


Contest prize drum set is different (more components) than drum set shown.

1. Send a 3.5" x 5.5" or 4" x 6" postcard with your Name, address, telephone number and email address to: MOD/Tama/Meinl Contest, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. 2. Enter as often as you wish, but each entry must be mailed separately. 3. ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 4. CONTEST BEGINS 1/1/05 AND ENDS 3/31/05. POSTCARDS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 3/31/05 AND RECEIVED BY 4/4/05. 5. Prize Drawing: Prize winner will be selected by random drawing on or about April 11, 2005. Prize winner will be notified by phone or email on or about April 13, 2005. 6. Employees and their immediate families of Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., Hoshino (USA), Inc., Meinl & Co., Inc., J. D'Addario, Pro-Mark, and their affiliates are ineligible. 7. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. 8. Open to residents of the US and Canada, 12 years of age or older, void in FL, Quebec, Canada, and where prohibited by law. 9. Prize: One (1) winner will win: From Hoshino (USA), Inc. one (1) Tama drum kit consisting of one (1) SCB2218HSSK bass drum, one (1) SCT1209HSSK rack tom, one (1) SCT1209HSSK rack tom, one (1) SCF1414HSSK floor tom, one (1) SCF1616HTSSK floor tom, one (1) PBS255 snare drum, two (2) HTC77W combination stands, one (1) HH905 hi-hat stand, one (1) HST700W snare stand, one (1) HC72W straight cymbal stand, one (1) HC73BW boom cymbal stand, one (1) HP900P bass drum pedal. Approximate retail value: \$5299.99. From J. D'Addario: Evans heads: toms: Clear G2 and G1; one (1) 10", one (1) 12", one (1) 14", one (1) 16"; bass drum: one (1) 22" E03 batter, one (1) 22" Resonant; snare: one (1) 14" Power Center Reverse Dot, one (1) 14" Hazy 300. Approximate retail value: \$371.50. From Meinl: Soundcaster Powerful cymbals: one (1) pair 14" hi-hats, one (1) 20" ride, one (1) 18" crash, one (1) 16" crash; one (1) Soundcaster 18" China; one (1) 22" cymbal bag. Approximate retail value: \$1,814.00. From Pro-Mark: Twelve (12) pairs of socks (winner's choice of models), one (1) drum stick bag, one (1) cymbal bag, one (1) hat, one (1) t-shirt. Approximate retail value: \$400.00.10. Approximate retail value of all prizes: \$7855.49. 11. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. 12. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or winner listing, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/Tama/Meinl/Pro-Mark/D'Addario Official Rules/Winners List, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

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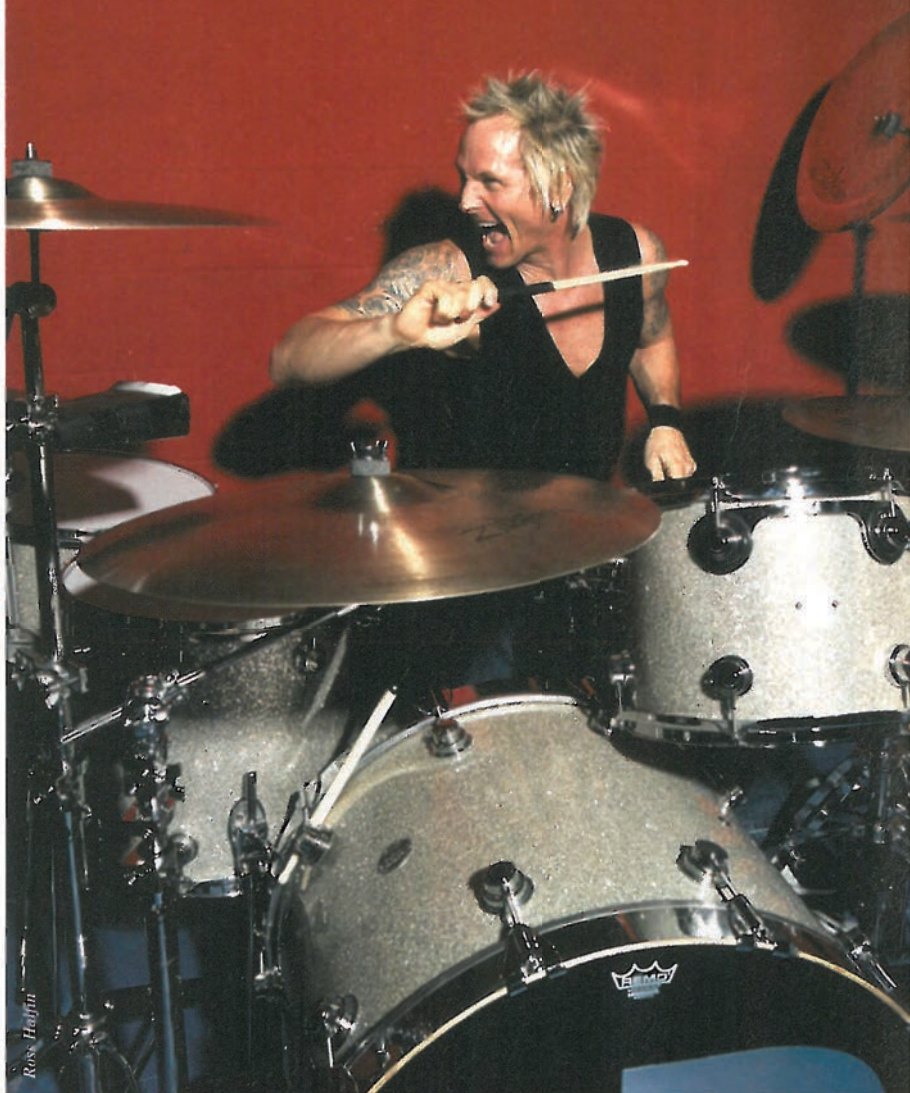


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Kevin Frank



Independent music stores and drum shops are being pushed out of business!

Do you care? Better yet SHOULD you care?

By: Dudley J. Taw, Jr. President & Founder of DUPLICATE X custom drum products NOTE: These are the sole opinions of the author as a paid advertisement and in NO WAY reflect the opinions of Modern Drummer.

I have sat back and watched the very people who built this industry be brought to their *knees*, if not driven completely out of business. It seems to me that if we, *the drummers* don't recognize and address this problem, the INDEPENDENT music store and all that it stands for will be a memory in history like the calf skin head.

As an AMERICAN manufacturer of quality custom drum accessories, I have watched over the past few years and have listened across this country to the horror stories of the fate these stores are meeting, one after another after another. I have asked myself, *why doesn't someone stand up and do something about it?* The answer is no one wants to take the gamble for fear of the backlash of the industry and the money behind these large corporations and foreign manufacturers. They can simply run you out of money and take away your livelihood.

Now let me introduce myself. My name is Dudley J. Taw, Jr. the president and founder of Duplicate X custom drum products and I AM A DRUMMER! Being a drummer, you know the creature. We are not afraid to state opinions or to stand up with all we have for something we believe in! Teachers like Gene Krupa taught me in no uncertain terms that this life is not for everyone. But obviously you have the same dream! WE NEED TO STAND TOGETHER!

Over the past 30 years or so, I have worked hard to provide you with quality, innovative drum products that work in any application, manufactured with the finest materials, and backed by my word. I have fought the predators copying my ideas and making a great deal of money doing it! What a shame! It would have been much easier to swallow if they would have built a better product! They could not stop me then nor will I allow them to stop me now! Little did I know then that over a period of years they would bring the industry to the edge of destruction, one by one the AMERICAN Manufacturer ceased to exist.

I am a stand in your face type of guy! Things are simple for me, just black and white. There is right and there is wrong. This is totally wrong. You decide what is right!

These big block stores go into an area where an independent has successfully developed his business over the years. They immediately cut prices until they drive that independent out of business or worse yet if they cannot do it by that method they put a dollar figure on the store and buy them out! Then the prices go up! You certainly cannot blame the independent for selling out! He is faced with closing the doors at a loss or getting something for the years of service he has provided! Which would you choose? By the way, do you have a job? Or did you lose your job too? Why is it no one gets it? Do you know that we import \$400 billion dollars more product than we export? This is more than China, Japan, Canada, Hong Kong, Mexico, and South Korea put together.

They say that the answer to our economic problems is in technology and service. That the small business creates more jobs than any other avenue. If all of this is true, why don't we get a CLUE! For our own sake we must protect these little independents—we need to spend our money where it counts—to support those that support us and not to fatten the wallets of those who will end up destroying the very people who gave us our starts in the first place.

JOIN ME! SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL MUSIC STORE! I DO!—SHOULD YOU ?

The Mothership Connection

Billy Coakley of Cleveland, Ohio holds a special distinction in *Drumkit Of The Month* history. A kit that he created—dubbed the “Psychedelic High-Pressure Anti-Nuclear Pneumatic Rhythm Machine”—was the subject of the department’s debut in the November 1992 issue of *MD*.

Over the ensuing twelve years Billy has been active as a player and teacher. He has also continued to construct highly original setups for his clinic and solo performances. He calls the kit shown here “The Mothership.”

The basic kit consists of Fortune custom drums with all-maple shells. These drums include two 16x22 bass drums, a 16x18 “floating” bass drum, an 8x16 mini bass drum, a 10” timbale/bass, 7x6, 7x8, 8x10, 9x12, and 15x15 toms, and a 5½x13 snare.

Additional drums include 10”, 12”, and 14” LP timbales, 6” and 8” LP bongos, four Tama Octobans with fabric coverings, an 8x14 Gretsch steel snare drum, and “an old, no-name” 20” bass drum (with fabric covering) used as a gong drum.



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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Deftones
Age 9
Playing his first gig



Mercedes Lander
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Age 14
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Adrian Young
No Doubt
Playing one of
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