

# MODERN DRUMMER

OCTOBER 2005

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page 92

# Steve Jordan

The Funkiest Drummer Alive

Alkaline Trio's  
**Derek Grant**

Shannon Larkin  
Slammin' Godsmack Chart

Remembering  
**Tito Puente**

Derrick Plourde  
His **9** Greatest Beats

Big Band Veteran  
**Jake Hanna**

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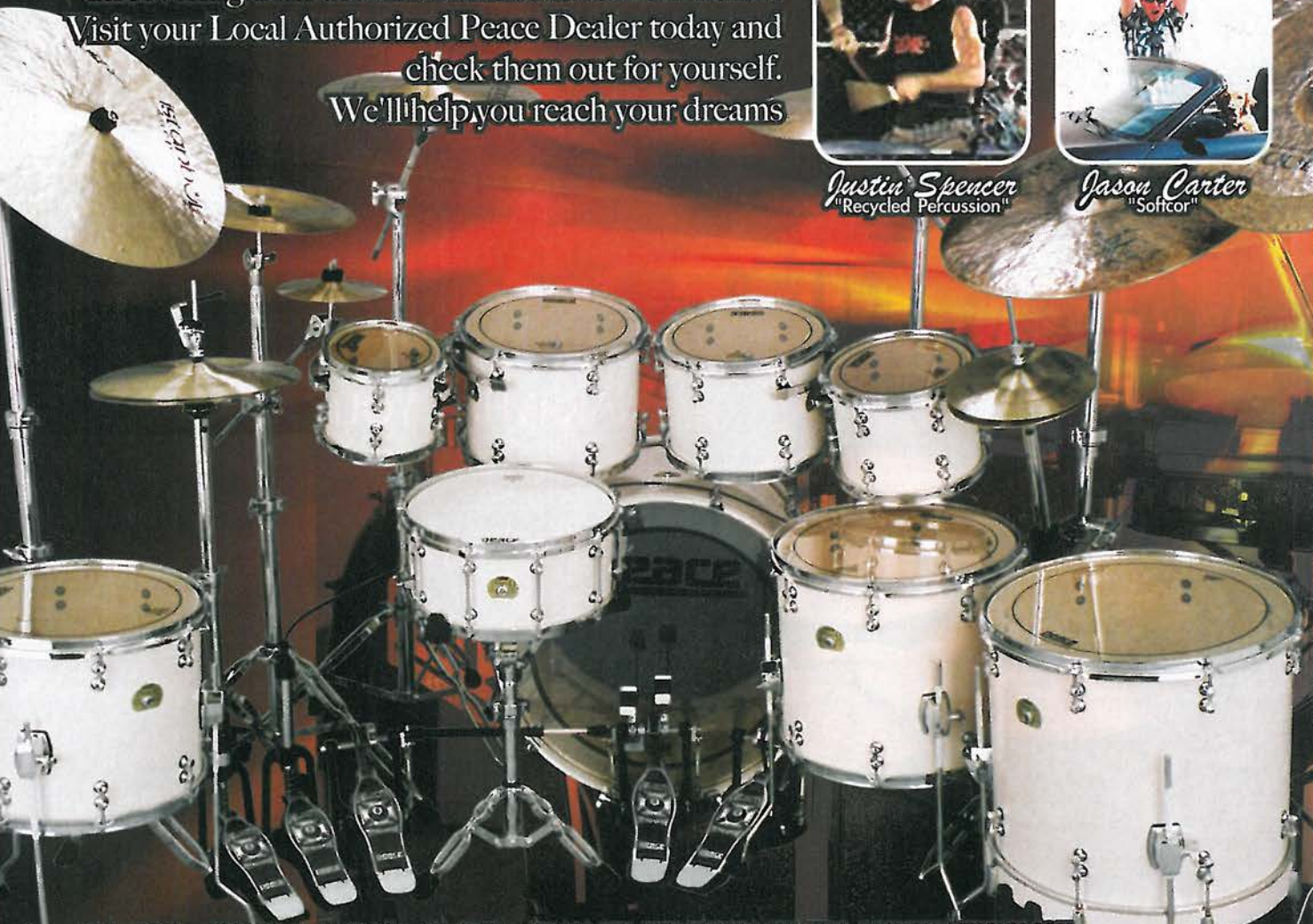
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Cover photo by Kate Simon

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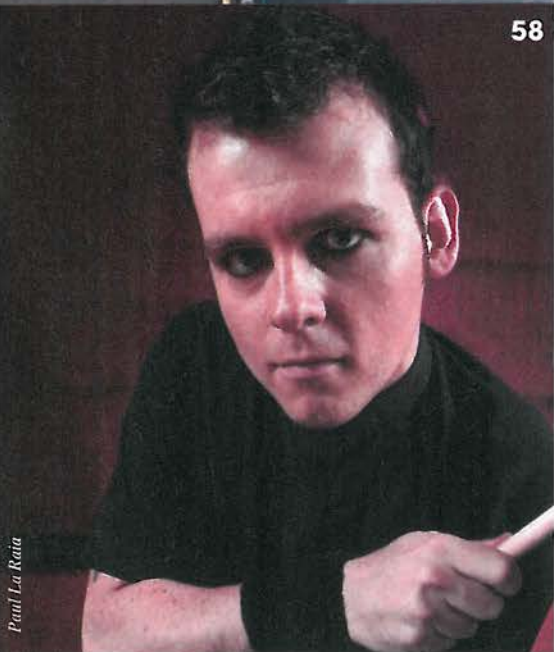
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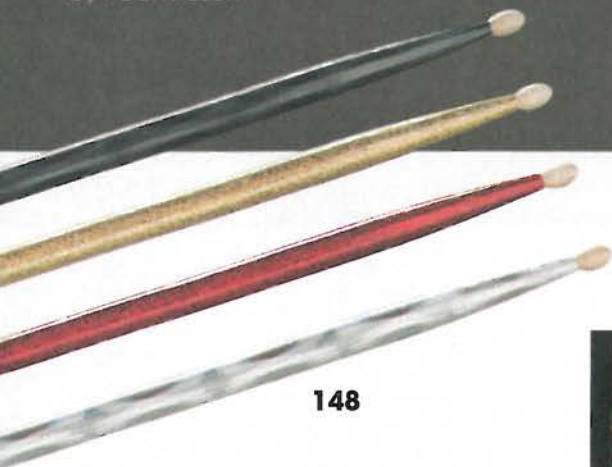
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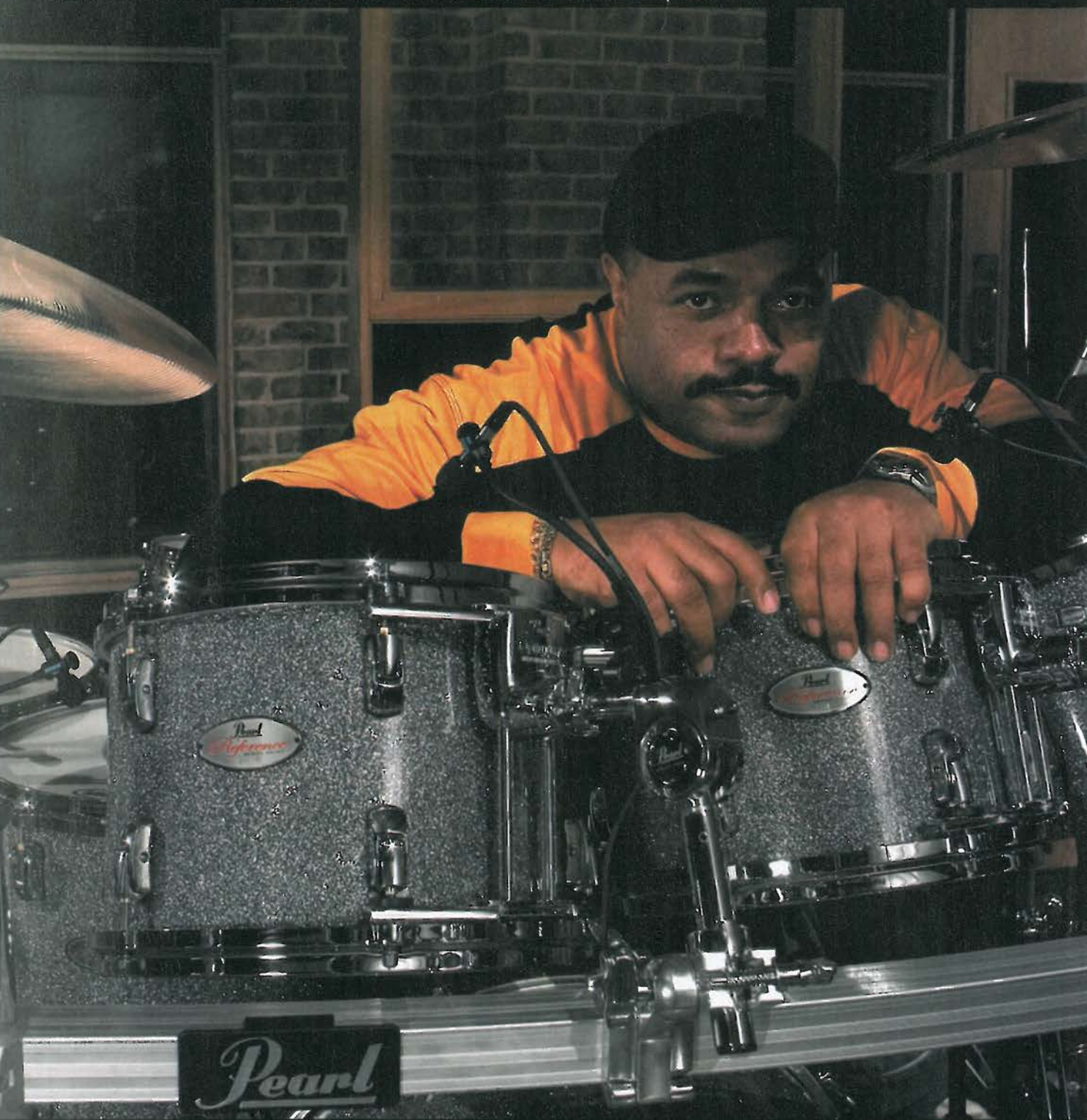
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## You Be The Judge

I don't want to come off like I'm complaining, but things are getting tough in the drum journalism world. Editing software like Pro Tools is everywhere, tempting music-makers to abuse the ability to fix unintentional performance defects in the name of creating a more "professional" sounding song. (Whatever *that* means.)

Problem is, when we hear a piece of music these days, how do we even know how to judge it? Is that drummer's time actually that solid? In the room, is his drum tone that sweet? Does he really have that much control over his dynamics? How are we supposed to tell who's actually any *good* anymore?

Your average listener doesn't care much about issues like these, if they're even aware of them. "I like the singer's voice" or "It's fast and loud and my parents hate it" are more likely their concerns. But as musicians, we're trained to become better at what we do, and this dictates that we learn how to tell what's accurately played, or swinging, or rocking—and what isn't. Now with so much electronic diddling going on, drummers all over can be heard muttering to themselves, "Does not compute...does not compute" when listening to modern recordings featuring seemingly superhuman performances.

Well, to take a page from the NRA handbook (probably the first and last time you'll see me do that), guns don't kill people, people kill people. Likewise, technology won't ruin music—but misguided producers, lazy engineers, and dishonest musicians might!

Technology, like guns, alcohol, and TV, is just a tool. Ultimately, it's how we use it, not *whether* we use it, that's important. So, continue to be judgmental about music. In fact, it's your duty as a musician to have an opinion. But don't waste too much time worrying about any of those bad people mentioned at the end of that last paragraph. Instead, keep developing your good taste. Realize that great music is about much more than a smooth performance; it's about passion, communication, freshness of ideas, and timelessness. And when you're in a position to use any of the amazing new digital tools that are just a mouse click away, have the good sense to use them artfully, not simply as aural airbrushing.

After all, the future of music—and drumming—is in your hands.

# MODERN DRUMMER

Volume 29 Number 10

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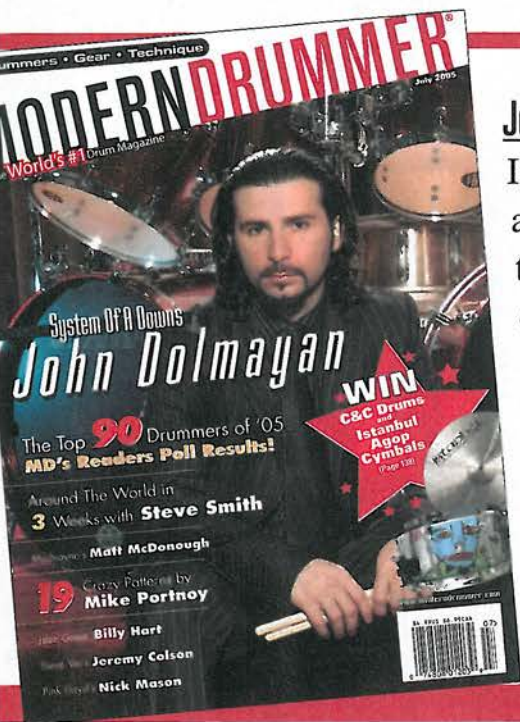
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## JOHN DOLMAYAN

In John Dolmayan's July cover story, he displays a balance of confidence, humility, enthusiasm, and dedication. It's nice to read about someone so obviously talented who has his priorities straight and his work ethic so firmly established.

Kudos, too, to photographer Alex Solca, for some of the classiest shots of a "rock drummer" I've seen in many years. If John Dolmayan ever decides to take a hiatus from System Of A Down, he could have a lucrative career as a *GQ* model.

Ralph Wasserman

## STEVE SMITH'S JOURNEYS



I just read Steve Smith's July 2005 travel diary. It brought tears to my eyes, just as Zakir Hussain's breathtaking solos

Steve Smith has more musicianship in his left thumb than I have in all four limbs, but even he was humbled and awed by the Indian maestros. Reading Steve's diary brought back to me how incredibly lucky I was to have been able to hang with Sivamani and the rest in their homeland, and, later, twice in New York state.

Thank you, *Modern Drummer*, for allowing Steve Smith to share his journal and his insights on the unbelievable Indian drummers.

Mark McKay

## NICK MASON PLAYBACK

Thank you for the very informative *Playback* article on Nick Mason and Pink Floyd. As a drummer for a Pink Floyd

tribute band, I can attest to the tasteful and subtle intricacies of Nick's drumming. I recently read his book, *Inside Out, A Personal History Of Pink Floyd*, and found the contents absolutely mesmerizing. All Floyd fans should read Mason's book and get the drummer's perspective on the history of one of the greatest rock bands of all time.

Mark S. Hangman

## DAN CARO

I recently moved out to LA to try my luck as a working drummer. Things have been moving slowly, money is tight, and I've been bitchin' and whining to myself. And then I picked up the July *MD* and came across the article about Dan Caro.

As soon as I started to read the article, I felt my heart sink and my eyes tear up. It wasn't because I felt sorry for Dan; I'm happy as can be for him. It's because I realized how much of a little b\*@!h I've been. Here I am, in perfect health, able to play whenever I feel like it, without even *thinking* about how I'm going to hold the sticks. I've even given some thought to putting the drums aside and trying some other job!

Sometimes we forget the original plan we started out with. We get distracted or lost, and it takes a story like Dan's to remind us of how insignificant our petty problems can be. I made copies of that story. One is at my desk at work, and the other is in my

## BILLY HART

Thank you for your outstanding article on Billy Hart in the July issue. It is gratifying to see such a respectable drummer's name on the cover of a contemporary magazine. Billy's work with Herbie Hancock and Miles Davis had an immense influence on my drumming, and his importance to the elevation of music today is just as vital as it was in the 1960s. Thank you for passing on a jazz legend's legacy to the next generation of drummers.

Nikita Ahmad



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rehearsal room to remind me of why I play the drums in the first place. Thanks to *MD* and to Dan for the inspiration. **B.M.**

## GEORGE GRANTHAM BENEFIT



It warmed my heart to see your June article about George Grantham. He was one of my early drumming influences, and I have had the daunting task of filling in for him since his stroke last year. Poco just finished a tour of Western Europe in May, and the fans there constantly asked how George was doing. His recovery is taking some time, and I know it's hard for him to not be with his band. Still, I'm looking forward to George's return to the Poco drum throne.

One thing that was not mentioned in the article is the fund that has been set up by George's friends to help with his medical expenses. Checks can be sent to: George Grantham Benefit Fund, Acct. #1000014261928, Suntrust Bank, 1026 17th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37212. Bank transfers can be done via routing #061000104.

**George Lawrence**  
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## BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

The beauty of music—and those who play it—is the diversity of talent, ideas, skill, and knowledge involved in the pursuit of making a beautiful work to be enjoyed by those who are interested. Having said that, there is a “beast” side to music. It sometimes creates musicians who are closed-minded, judgmental, and competitive.

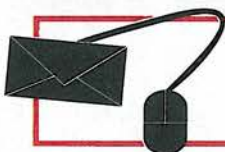
In your July issue, William MacPherson wrote a *Readers' Platform* letter about Tommy Lee that noted some of Tommy's personal issues, then ended with: “No amount of musical talent justifies putting such an individual on the cover of a respected magazine like *MD*.” Tommy Asten's following letter complained about Tommy getting the cover, while jazz great Paul Motian received a smaller feature.

Mr. McPherson: As far as Tommy Lee's “...jail time and marital misadventures...” go, nobody's life is free of bad decisions, and the only reason Tommy's life is public is because of our mainstream media. And to touch on your “raunchy image” comment, there is nothing wrong with individuality. One would be hard pressed to find another drummer in the past fifteen years who has influenced as many young players to pursue the beauty of drumming.

Mr. Asten: Please be assured that the fine staff at *MD* is giving everyone their due. A lot of *MD* readers like to read about the whole spectrum of drumming. Music is diverse, and if every issue had a drummer from the same genre of music—even if it was *your* music—you too would get bored.

Every successful drummer has something to offer, regardless of his or her musical genre, favored style of dress, or personal history. Stop feeding the beast, and cater to the beauty instead. We are all part of the drumming community, and *MD* keeps us together no matter who is on the cover.

Steven O'Reilly

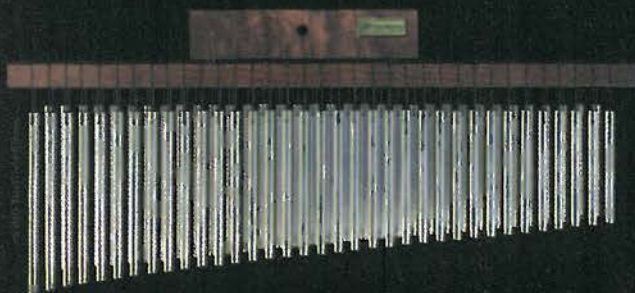


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# VAULT TOUR

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## John Grey Drumkit

I'm a drummer from Holland. I recently bought a vintage drumset, and nobody here seems to know what it is worth. It's a Broadway kit by John Grey & Sons, London, England. I think it's originally from the 1950s. The snare drum is a 5x14 with a wood shell. The bass drum is 11x24, with silk heads. Can you give me any information?

**Ulvrin Post**

MD drum historian Harry Cangany has this answer for you, Ulvrin: "John Grey & Sons was a drum manufacturer that started in Britain in 1832 and lasted into the late 1960s. There were two drumset series available: the high-end Autocrat, and the less expensive (and more popular) Broadway. The Broadway drums you have were made between 1955 and 1965.

"The snare is the model 516. It features die-cast hoops, self-aligning fittings (we'd say lugs), and a laminated ply shell—probably beech—finished in white enamel. The bass is the 5016 Broadway Separate Tension model. Both drums are fitted with internal tone controls. Vintage US drum enthusiasts can see design influences from L&S and early WFL (both by drum designer Cecil Strupe) in the Broadway snare's strainer, as well as Leedy influences in the style of the rods.

"We don't often see John Grey drums in the US vintage market. (Our UK counterparts can probably give you the best idea of value.) But I would speculate that here in the US, the snare and bass drums together would probably be valued at about \$300, with extra for the pedal, stands, and cymbals."



## Vocal Mic's For A Singing Drummer

I'm a kick-arse singer and a skin-slashingly good drummer, and I'm regularly doing the two at once. My question is: What's the best method for getting the mic' in front of my face with the least interference from the mic' stand? I'm sick of living in fear of smacking into the mic' and being forced to tip-toe around it. **Daryl Jones**

MD senior editor Rick Van Horn was a full-time drummer/vocalist for many years, and still performs in both capacities today. He replies, "Daryl, a long time ago I had the same problem that you're having now. I solved it in two ways.

"My first solution was a large Atlas studio boom stand, of the type used in film and recording studios. I put the base of the stand well outside my kit, then ran the 6'-long boom horizontally to a point directly above my head. Then I attached a 24" gooseneck to the end of the boom to drop the mic' down in front of my face. That way, there was absolutely nothing in the 'air space' around me. The big stand was a beast to carry, but it served my purposes for several years.

"My second solution, which I still employ today, was to eliminate the stand altogether by switching to a headset microphone. This proved extremely convenient once I got used to wearing the headset (which didn't take long). There are many good headset mic's on the market. Check with the pro-audio department of your local music store, or visit the Web sites of Shure, Sennheiser, Audio-Technica, BeyerDynamic, and other major microphone brands."



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## Do Old, Dirty Cymbals Sound Better?

I've been playing drums for about four years, and I've always had these questions about cymbals: Do cymbals sound better as they age over time? If so, why? Do clean cymbals sound better than dirty or stained ones? If it matters, I play A Zildjian cymbals. **Diego A. Bernal Rios**

The effect of time (and dirt) on cymbal sound is a matter of debate and personal preference. It also has to do with the fact that "back in the day," most cymbals were fairly generic. That is, they were sold by weight and size, but not for any specific musical application.

Drummers who played bebop and cool jazz tended to prefer warm, mellow-sounding cymbals. Such sounds were produced by cymbals that had accumulated a certain amount of dirt or tarnish over time, which mellowed their tonality. Some drummers would even bury their cymbals for a while to try to get this effect more quickly.

As rock music became more popular, drummers needed brighter, more penetrating cymbal sounds in order to cut through amplified music. So they tended to keep their cymbals clean in order to maximize those characteristics.

These days, cymbal manufacturers make many different models designed for specific musical applications. Many of these models have certain sonic characteristics already "built in." For example, you can buy new cymbals that come from the factory sounding aged and dirty, or you can select models specifically designed to cut through high volume levels.

If you own A Zildjian cymbals and you would like them to sound a little mellow, then it probably would be best not to clean them. If, on the other hand, you'd like them to sound as bright and penetrating as possible, then you should clean them regularly, using a professional-quality cymbal cleaner.



### QUESTIONS FOR MD'S DRUM EXPERTS?

Send them to It's Questionable, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, or [rvh@moderndrummer.com](mailto:rvh@moderndrummer.com). Please include your full name with your question.



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## Video Info From Tower Of Power's David Garibaldi

**Q** I really enjoy your original and ensemble playing with Tower Of Power and on your instructional videos. I listen to the instructional video music in my truck, which is a testament to the musicians and the music. Those are great *music* videos, not just great drum videos. Any plans for the instructional videos to go to DVD?

I was also wondering about the drum sound on the video, in terms of mic's, pre-amps, and other equipment. It's a killer sound, but I can't figure out what's being used on the toms, hi-hat, and overheads.

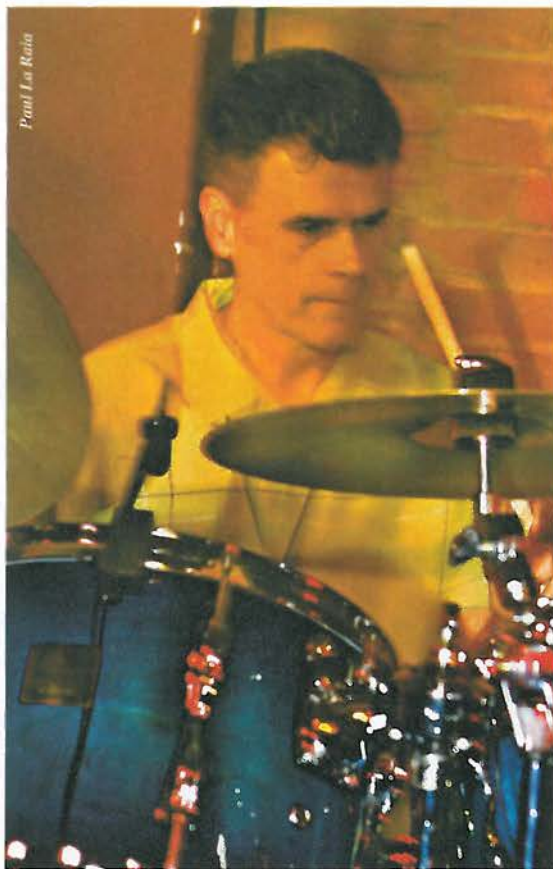
Kudos particularly on your snare sound. My guitar bud Mike was raving about the snare recently at the Rams Head Live! TOP show in Baltimore, Maryland.

I wish you health and a long life, and the continued inspiration to pull out those slick Oakland funk grooves until you're at least ninety!

Jeffrey Million

**A** Thanks so much for your kind words. At this writing, my videos are slated to be released on DVD sometime soon. (I know, I'm no help.) Warner Bros. Publications was recently purchased by Alfred Music. As soon as that's sorted out, you'll probably see the DG DVDs.

To be honest, I don't remember what type of mic's were used for the videos. Those videos were shot in November 1993, and that's a long time ago. I do remember that when we started mixing the CDs for *The Funky Beat*, we had to remix all the songs. The video mix is different from the CD mix. The reason for this is that we discovered that some of the mic's were actually off during the shoot, so we had to construct some tracks from leakage. I blame no one for



Paul La Rosa

this; we did three videos in two days and there was no time to check some of those details. You can thank Tom Size at Tomland Studios in the San Francisco Bay Area for the great CD mixes.

The snare drum on the videos is a Yamaha brass piccolo that was made especially for me. There's only one, and it's *very* good. It was the model for what eventually became the Yamaha David Garibaldi signature snare drum. The snare drum I used on the Tower show at the Rams Head Live! in Baltimore was one of those Yamaha DG signature snare drums. I'll tell our house engineer, Ace Baker, that your friend liked it.

I plan on doing what I do for as long as I can. This past August 13 was Tower's thirty-seventh birthday. As we say in TOP-land, "The first hundred years are the toughest!"

## Sevendust's Morgan Rose: "Broken Down" Cymbal

**Q** I've been a fan of your playing since *Waffle*. In the summer of 2004 I bought *Seasons*. I enjoyed listening to all the songs on it. However, on "Broken Down," I couldn't determine the cymbal hit. On the recording it sounded like a China, but in the video for that song it looks like you're hitting a hi-hat. What's the real story?

Juan

**A** Thanks for your kind words, Juan. The answer to your question is that videos are never perfect in the edit room. I'm actually riding a 19" crash, but on the video they show me hitting the hi-hat. I hate that.



Liz Jander



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Terry Bozzio

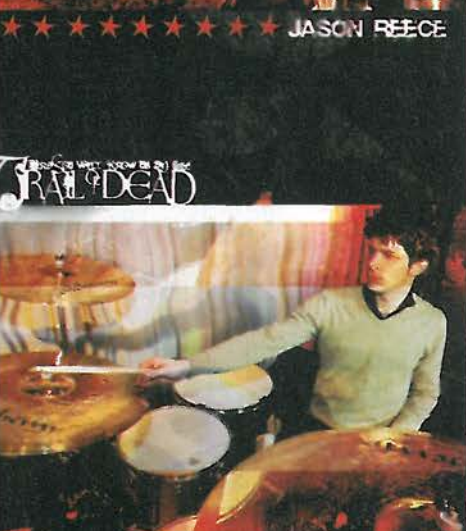
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## SNL's Shawn Pelton On Drumkit Size

**Q** You are my favorite drummer, because of your groove and your versatility. The question I'd like to ask is, do you *always* play a four-piece drumkit, or would you use a bigger set (with more cymbals) for certain performances? **David**

**A** David, thanks so much for the kind words. The harsh realities of being a drummer in New York City have had a lot to do with my choosing a four-piece—or sometimes even smaller—kit to do gigs with. Trying to fit everything in a cab, keeping track of it from the street to the club, dragging a full trapcase up four flights of stairs to your apartment at 4:00 A.M. after the gig...that kind of stuff can really put a damper on one's enthusiasm for a double-bass Octaplus kit with a 50" hanging gong.

A small kit can also force you to focus on grooving and getting inside the infinite colors within each drum and cymbal that you have in front of you. I've always loved jazz drummers who could get a universe of sounds out of minimal setups. I'm also a big fan of groove players like Steve Jordan and Amir "Questlove" Thompson—cats with minimal setups but huge personalities that seem to jump out *because* the setup is minimal.

All that being said, I shy away from having rules about a setup. When I'm recording, I always bring four toms and lots of extra cymbal stands so that I can construct a setup that's right for the music. If someone wants a bunch of toms, I'm prepared to give it to them. Having flexibility to do what's right for the gig is really what it's all about, whether that means fifteen toms or no toms, one ride or twelve cymbals...and the 50" gong!

Best of luck, and keep on groovin'.



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**Steve Gadd**, January 2004



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Soren McCarty

# William Ellis

## Blue Merle's Burning Drummer

When William Ellis and his Blue Merle bandmates began work on their debut album, *Burning In The Sun*, the biggest challenge was to hold back. "Working with our producer, Stephen Harris, it was all about restraint," Ellis says. "He knew what we were all capable of on our instruments, but his philosophy was to make a record, not just a few singles. So there's a lot of restraint from me on this record. But I'll do whatever a producer wants me to do, as soon as I understand his vision."

Perhaps Ellis's commitment to serve the song stems from his days as a session drummer in Nashville. "The first thing I think about is how I can play more musically to make a song happen," he says.

While Ellis was content to let the songs drive his playing, he is exceedingly excited about his band's first album. Blue Merle, a band based on mandolin, guitars, and keyboards, explores acoustic possibilities with rock energy and vibe. Ellis is impressive on *Burning*. He grooves on the Latin-influenced "Either Way It Goes" and the straight-8th feel of "Boxcar Racer." He also likes the improvisation that "Seeing Through You" allows in live shows, as well as the studio challenge of "Bittersweet Memory." "There's a darkness to that tune," Ellis says. "The mystique made me play differently from the way I previously had with the band."

Ellis's pre-Blue Merle résumé is impressive. He has had success as a session drummer, a performing and recording blues drummer, and along with his work in Blue Merle, is currently a driving force behind EMP Project, a jazz trio that has just completed its second album.

Harriet L. Schwartz



# John Macaluso

## Forging An Impressive Career

When your first major tour includes a make-believe club date performing for surrealist director David Lynch and actor Nicolas Cage, you know your career has taken an unorthodox turn. For unconventional drummer John Macaluso, his appearance with Powermad during Cage's volatile bar scene in the movie *Wild At Heart* (1989) couldn't have been a more appropriate forecast.

Frustrated with only playing rock's restrictive 2 and 4 around the world as a hired gun in bands like TNT, Macaluso broke away, forming Ark in 1998. Splattering a decade's worth of pent-up imagination onto their self-titled debut disk, Ark grabbed peers and prog fans. Their 2002 follow-up and final album, *Burn The Sun*, solidified their "no rules" reputation. Admirers like Joe Lynn Turner (Rainbow) likened Ark's heavy invention to "AC/DC playing prog rock." Ark also caught the ear of Dream Theater's Mike Portnoy, leading to Macaluso's placement on singer James LaBrie's recent solo tour.

"They were the first albums where I was the co-writer," says Macaluso of his time in Ark. "I wanted to make something where people would say, 'You can't do that.' Then I say, 'Who says we can't?' It

was a no-rules band. I think that's why musicians really dug it."

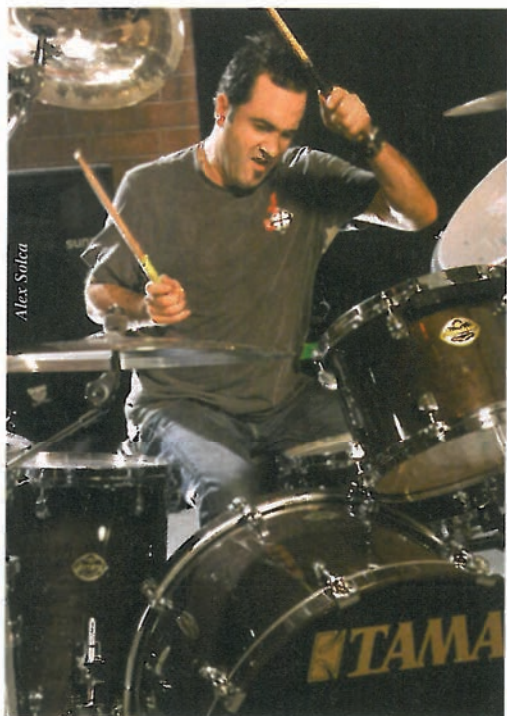
Notorious guitar virtuoso Yngwie Malmsteen tapped the wild-card player in 1999 for a three-year tour of duty, where Macaluso became the only drummer to ever solo on a Malmsteen album (*Alchemy*).

Now Macaluso reunites with TNT vocalist Tony Harnell for the drum-driven *Starbreaker* CD and early fall tour. "Usually drums are recorded first," says Macaluso. "Here, Tony's vocals were down already with a click, so I could play off his emotion and accent the phrasing."

In October, expect the debut CD from Macaluso's new band, Masterlast, where "techno/jungle meets double bass." And Macaluso's method book, *Repercussions*, is also readied at the gates. In it, mentor Joe Franco compliments Macaluso's creativity, while a grinning Nicko McBrain embraces its humor as it also reveals tested tricks of the trade.

"Every time I sit behind a drumset," Macaluso states, "I imagine I'm playing for the Wallace Hartley Band, the group that went down with the Titanic. Any performance could be your last. Every note should count."

**Tina Whelski**



# CASSANDRA WILSON'S Jeff Haynes

## Texture And Spirit

Through his work with jazz diva Cassandra Wilson, Jeff Haynes has evolved into more than "just" a percussionist. Stints with Pat Metheny, Peabo Bryson, Dionne Farris, Harry Belafonte, Lizz Wright, and others have left their mark on Haynes. But his hand drum/drumkit hybrid has evolved over the course of his long musical relationship with Wilson, where, as kit drummers have come and gone, Haynes has consistently been called on for rhythmic stimulation, support, and color. "I understand Cassandra's dynamic," he insists. "I've worked with a lot of vocalists, and you have to learn their body movements, how they feel, how they work onstage, and when they need the dynamic to go down."

Haynes met Wilson in the early '80s, soon after she'd moved to New York from New Orleans. The percussionist appears on eight of Wilson's CDs, beginning with 1991's *After The Beginning Again* and continuing through 2003's *Glamour*.

On tour, Wilson brings only an acoustic guitarist, a bassist, and Haynes. "I actually like that combination," he admits. "It means that I am the pulse, and I really feel comfortable in that chair. You can also get more dynamic with that kind of situation, and you can use more textures."

Haynes drives the groove with his right hand on a djembe, adding accents with his left foot on a kick drum. "With the djembe, it's like two different kinds of kicks," he explains. "The djembe has its own sound and the kick drum has its own sound. When I use the two together for accents, it creates this kind of texturized low-end atmosphere that works well."

Haynes has a Remo Mondo snare drum and a timbale off to the side for accents, and he positions congas and bongos directly in front. He also plays a selection of splash cymbals with his hands. "Some singers don't like a lot of cymbals," he says. "The tone just cuts right through their singing. So just accenting with the splashes is good enough, creating that dynamic." At times Haynes turns to his left and plays kick, snare, and hi-hat in a conventional manner, using Pro-Mark Broomsticks for texture and a metal tambourine on the hi-hat for a trashy sound.

Haynes' upcoming solo CD will showcase the variety of music he's played: African, Brazilian, Latin, Cuban, straight-ahead jazz, and smooth jazz. "I play from my heart and soul," he says. "I want to do whatever is necessary for the music. It's really a passionate feeling when you get to a level of playing by not playing so much. Sometimes that's more difficult than playing a lot of notes. Don't think of yourself, become one with the music, and you'll have more to contribute. Think of dynamics. That shows maturity and professionalism."

**Robin Tolleson**



# Dan Trapp Overpowering The Drums

Dan Trapp sure doesn't hold back on Senses Fail's latest record, *Let It Enfold You* (Vagrant/Drive-Thru). "Our producer, Steve Evetts, really taught me to lay into the drums and not be afraid to overpower them," Trapp recalls from Portland, Maine, where his screamo/hardcore group recently performed on the Taste Of Chaos tour.

Most of Trapp's drumming on *Let It Enfold You* relies on straightforward rock beats inspired somewhat by Tré Cool of Green Day. "Tré was a huge influence on me and a main reason I wanted to play seriously," Trapp says. "Yet I've never seen Green Day play live, which is kind of a bummer."

While Trapp likes to play hard, he does mix things up occasionally. "Slow Dance," from *Enfold*, has an intriguing off-tempo rhythm. "I use a 12" snare on that song," he says. "It's probably one of my favorite snare sounds on the whole CD, which is pretty ironic since it came from such a small drum."

In the studio, Trapp used an Orange County Drums & Percussion kit. Presently, though, he's using a five-piece C&C custom kit with a water finish. "It resembles swimming pool water," Trapp observes. "It almost seems as if the water is moving when the stage lights hit it at different angles. It's a great effect. Bill Cardwell at C&C said it's the first kit he ever made with that finish. It looks pretty cool."

**Jeff Perlah**



# Kyle Woodring Fanfare With Dennis DeYoung

Kyle Woodring's first gig was in the fourth grade with his older brother on guitar. They played Styx songs. Now the drummer finds himself playing with former Styx lead singer and writer Dennis DeYoung, a gig he's had since 2000. "I've always loved straight groove playing," Woodring says, "but this gig has brought me out of my element a little bit. It's taken me back to being a little kid again, using all the technique I learned growing up when I played

along to Neil Peart and Rush."

As for playing Styx material, Woodring says he definitely enjoys it. "It's so much fun to play the tunes I grew up with," he says. "My favorite is 'Come Sail Away,' because everyone digs it. We did a gig recently in Mexico where most of the audience didn't speak English, but they knew every word to that song. It's such a great feeling to connect with people through music."

Woodring, who lives in a suburb of Chicago (where all bandmembers, including DeYoung, live), says he loves working with Dennis. "He's got a great sense of humor, and he's just a great man." To see Kyle in action with DeYoung, check out the recently released DVD and CD, *Dennis DeYoung, The Music Of Styx Live: With Symphony Orchestra*.

One of the challenges of the DeYoung gig is working with a fifty-piece orchestra. According to Woodring, "Amie Roth, the conductor, is amazing. He and I are locked, and we're always watching each other. With fifty musicians, we have to make sure we have good monitors—I use in-ears—because the orchestra is spread out across the stage. Good monitors and a lot of eye contact are key in this situation."

When Woodring isn't on the road with DeYoung, he's in the studio doing jingles. He also works with Deanna Carter and on a project called Blanc Faces, which he describes as "'80s-type rock. It's really great music." With the variety he plays, Woodring says simply, "No matter what, you play for the song."

**Robyn Flans**



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**Ed Shaughnessy** recently recorded with Branford Marsalis for a new solo album by Delfeayo Marsalis as well as a score to a children's project called Jazz & Jazzmine. Oliver Lake, Terrell Stafford, and Ellis Marsalis were also involved.



**Marco Meneghin** is currently playing with Dave Stewart as well as touring with Aqualung.

**Mat Marucci** has joined the faculty of The Jazzschool in Berkeley, California. He will also be doing workshops based on his books, especially *Drumstick Finger Systems And Techniques*, as well as giving lessons when he's not on tour.

**John Santos** & The Machete Ensemble celebrate two decades of Latin jazz with the release of their double CD *20th Anniversary*, available at [www.JohnSantos.com](http://www.JohnSantos.com).



**Lonnie Wilson** was named top percussionist/drummer by the Academy of Country Music.

**Russ Kunkel** has been touring with Lyle Lovett.

**Omar Hakim** played to a packed house at the Osaka School of Music in Japan as part of Pearl's worldwide Reference Tour.



**Nate Morton** is the drummer in the house band for the TV show *Rockstar: INXS*. For more on Nate, go to [www.n8drums.com](http://www.n8drums.com).

**Ian Paice** has been in the studio with Deep Purple, recording their new studio album. He can also be heard on the expanded reissue of Deep Purple's classic album *Burn*.

**Igor Cavalera** is on the new 25th-anniversary edition of Sepultura's *Roots* CD. The first disc contains the original album, while the second includes various rarities, remixes, and demo recordings.

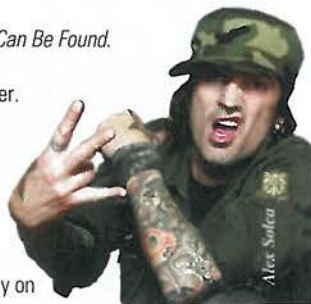
Summer Lawns recently released their debut effort, *First We Waited...Then It Started*, with **Kieran Kelly** on drums.

**Jess Margera** is on CKY's latest, *An Answer Can Be Found*.

**Jason Bonham** has been touring with Foreigner.

**Taku Hirano** is touring with Stevie Nicks.

**Tommy Lee** has a new solo CD, *Tommyland: The Ride*.



**Ed Toth** has left Vertical Horizon. He is currently on tour with The Doobie Brothers.



Nikka Costa's latest CD *Can't neveridnothin'* features **John Blackwell, Abe Laboriel Jr., Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, Brian Reitzell, Satnam Ramgotra, and Lenny Kravitz**.

**Steve Di Stanislao** has the drum chair for the Loggins & Messina reunion tour.

**Dave Weckl** has a new album out, *Multiplicity*.

## DRUM DATES This month's important events in drumming history

**Cozy Cole** was born on 10/17/06, **Papa Jo Jones** on 10/7/11, and **Art Blakey** on 10/11/19. (Art passed away in October of 1990.) **Ed Blackwell** was born on 10/10/29 and passed away on 10/7/92. **Billy Higgins** was born on 10/11/36, **John Guerin** on 10/31/39, and **Keith Knudsen** on 10/18/52.

**Billy Gladstone** passed away in October of '61, **Gene Krupa** on 10/16/73, and **Al Jackson** on 10/1/75.

On 10/17/63, The Beatles (with **Ringo Starr**) record "I Want To Hold Your Hand." It's the first four-track recording at London's Abbey Road Studios.

On 10/12/66, The Jimi Hendrix Experience is formed in London with **Mitch Mitchell** on drums.

On 10/6/79, Fleetwood Mac (with **Mick Fleetwood**) reaches number-8 on the charts with "Tusk," their single recorded with the University Of California Marching Band at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles.

### Happy Birthday!

**Earl Palmer**  
(studio legend): 10/25/24

**Chris Slade**  
(Manfred Mann): 10/30/46

**Tommy Lee**  
(Mötley Crüe): 10/3/62

**Paul Humphrey**  
(session great): 10/10/35

**Trilok Gurtu**  
(independent): 10/30/51

**Chad Smith**  
(Red Hot Chili Peppers): 10/25/62

**John "Jabo" Starks**  
(James Brown): 10/26/38

**Tico Torres**  
(Bon Jovi): 10/7/53

**Mike Malinin**  
(Goo Goo Dolls): 10/10/67

**Roger Hawkins**  
(Memphis legend): 10/16/45

**Troy Luccketta**  
(Tesla): 10/5/59

**Aaron Spears**  
(Usher): 10/26/76

**Mike Clark**  
(Headhunters): 10/3/46

**AJ Pero**  
(Twisted Sister): 10/14/59

**Tony Royster Jr.**  
(independent): 10/9/84

**Gary Mallaber**  
(Steve Miller/sessions): 10/11/46

**Larry Mullen Jr.**  
(U2): 10/31/61

**Zak Hanson**  
(Hanson): 10/22/85



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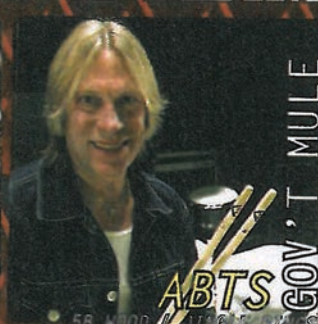
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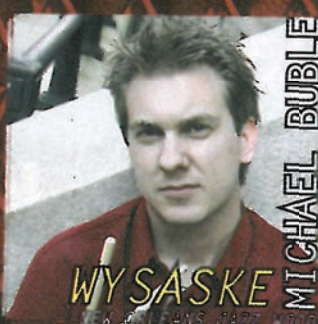
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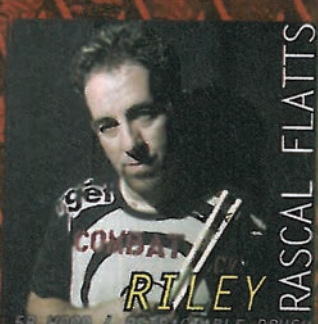
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SUGAR MAPLE CONCEPT WOOD



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NEW ORLEANS JAZZ WOOD



RASCAL FLATTS

5B WOOD / RETRACTABLE BRUSH



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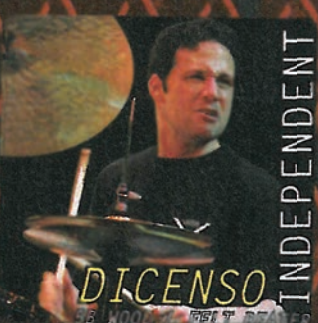
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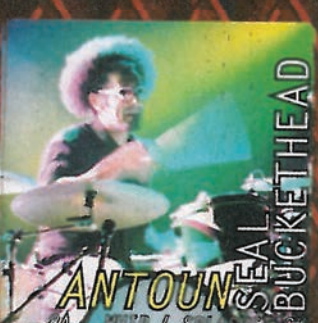
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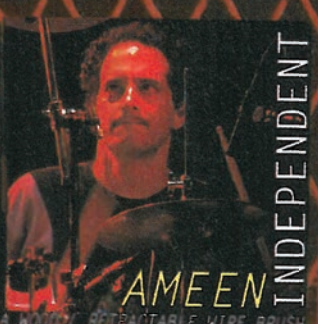
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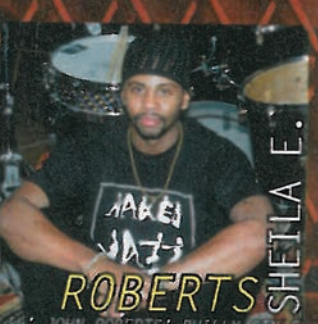
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5A WOOD / RETRACTABLE WIRE BRUSH



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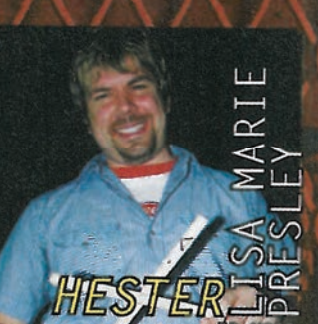
5B WOOD / JOHN ROBERTS' PHILLY STICK



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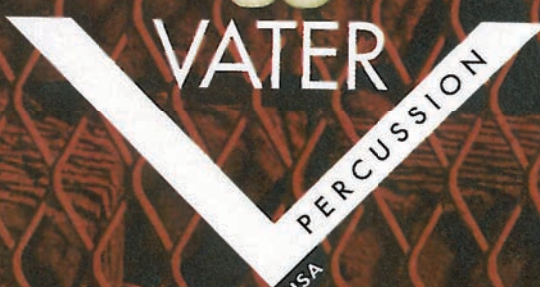
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5B WOOD / JINGLE RINGS / VINTAGE BOMBS BEATER



HESTER LISA MARIE PRESLEY

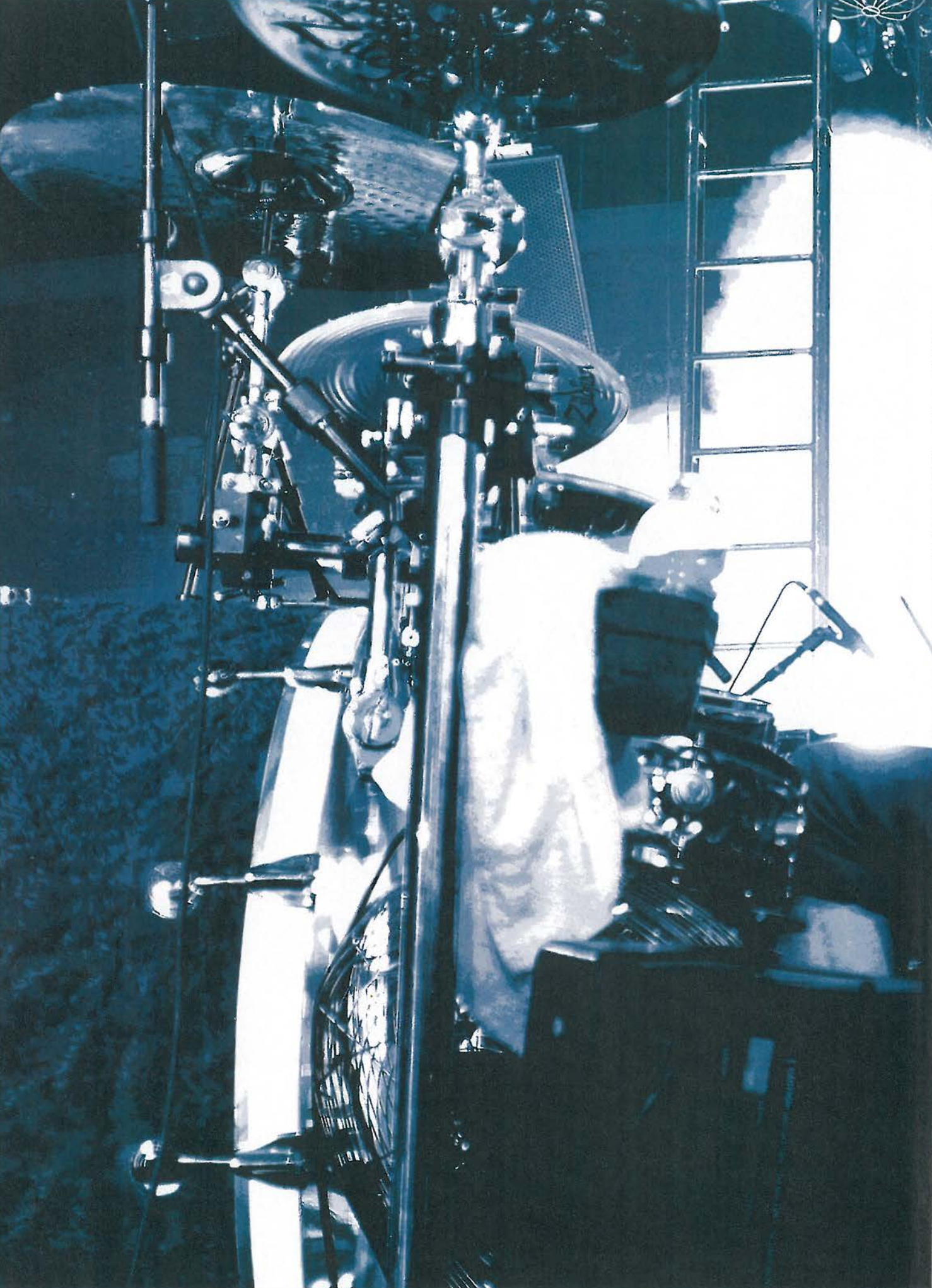
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# Pearl Reference Series Drums

## Taking An Individual Approach

by T. Bruce Wittet

### KEY NOTES

- Mixed wood formula creates satisfying warmth and resonance
- Projection is clean and "pitched"
- Floor toms and 18x22 bass drum sound massive
- 18x22 bass drum is a heavy lift

**D**rum companies have labored for almost a century in their search for the perfect-sounding instrument, with just the right shell materials, number of plies, bearing edges, and suspension system. Over the past two decades, it seemed that 100%-maple shells had reached a pinnacle of approval from manufacturers and consumers alike. That is, of course, until challenges came from birch, beech, mahogany, oak, and indigenous Asian woods. Still, no matter *what* the choice of wood might be, for high-end drumkits we've come to expect shells composed of a single variety of wood.

Pearl's new Reference Series flies in the face of this homogenous-shell notion. According to the thinking behind Reference, it's no longer a matter of all-maple or all-birch kits. It's a question of optimizing each individual drum—harnessing its inherent characteristics, *irrespective* of wood type or shell thickness. As Pearl's literature states, "The desired tonal characteristics of a 10" tom are completely different from those of a 22" bass drum." Consequently, each Pearl Reference Series drum is "an instrument unto itself" in terms of its shell composition, number of plies, and the shape of



Our review kit featured this Granite Sparkle finish.



its bearing edges. Not one, not even two, but *three* woods are used, according to the task at hand.

For our review, Pearl shipped a standard five-piece kit, including 8x10, 9x12, and 16x16 toms, an 18x22 bass drum, and a 5x14 snare drum. When they heard I was a jazz buff, they kindly included a 14x18 bass drum, a 14x14 floor tom, and an 8x12 tom.

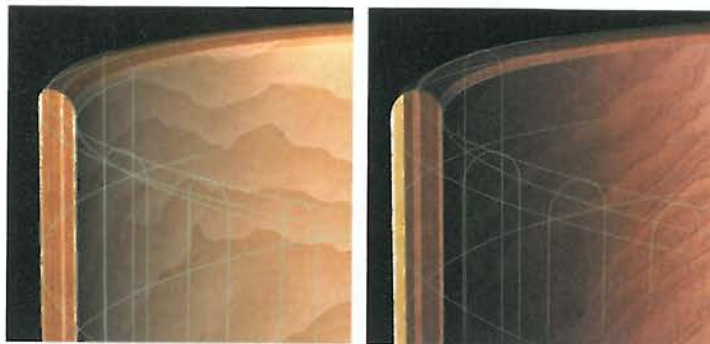
### Not Run Of The Mill

When the drums arrived for testing, my first impression was that they exuded quality. The Granite Sparkle lacquer finish and chrome plating were impeccable. The new hinged "pivot lugs," borrowed from Pearl's Masterworks series, were attractive in a sort of industrial sense. I uncrated the 18x22 bass drum and, on a whim, lightly tapped the batter head with one hand, while the other rested on the shell. An immediate rumble came up through my palm. To me, this uttered volumes about optimum resonance.

Getting that 22" bass drum down a flight of stairs to the testing room had me huffing and puffing. I feel obliged to advise back pain sufferers that *all* of the Reference Series drums are heavier than the thin-walled drums common today. Heavy lugs, spurs, and die-cast rims (on toms and snare), as well as Pearl's revised Optimount tom mount, do little to lighten your load. Speaking of that mount, I found its rounded pillars infinitely more attractive than those of its predecessors.

Each drum is different from its neighbor. How different? Well, the 8x10 tom features two outer plies of maple and four inner plies of birch, with rounded 45° bearing edges. The 8x12 and 9x12 toms are the only drums constructed from a single type of wood: six plies of maple, with rounded 45° bearing edges. Floor toms and bass drums up to 20" feature two outer plies of maple and four inner plies of mahogany. Bass drums 22" and larger feature six inner plies of mahogany. Floor toms and bass drums have fully rounded bearing edges for maximum head-to-shell contact.

As drums get larger, the mahogany component increases. Pearl product specialist Gene Okamoto explains, "We add African mahogany to add bass and warmth to the sound. The floor toms and bass drums are thick-shelled, with the intent to be loud. However, thicker shells are also higher pitched, so the



This sketch shows how different-size Reference Series drums feature different woods and different bearing edges. Smaller drums use maple and birch plies and 45° bearing edges; larger drums add mahogany plies and use more rounded bearing edges.



Our 5x14 review snare drum boasted a 20-ply shell: fourteen outer plies of maple and six inner plies of birch.



Reference Series lugs feature hinged sections that allow the tension rods extra travel in order to accommodate the various rims available from Pearl.

African mahogany allows them to be loud and deep-sounding."

Reference snare drums are veritable tree trunks! Our 5x14 review drum boasted a 20-ply shell: fourteen outer plies of maple and six inner plies of birch, constructed in an "inverse funnel" shape, thicker in the middle and progressively narrower at top and bottom, with 45° bearing edges.

### New Details

It took me a moment to learn how to use the newly designed strainer on the Reference Series snare drum. To get the lever moving, you depress a tiny button on the end of the arm, which prevents it from slipping (and the snares disengaging) under heavy bashing. I asked

Gene Okamoto why the fine adjustment knob (also featuring a button lock) was situated at the butt end rather than on the throw-off side, which is a little unusual. According to Gene, the adjuster was on the throw-off side originally, but it made the unit too thick.

The snare wires themselves are from Pearl's new UltraSound series. They feature tighter snare strands in the center and looser ones at the edges, the idea being to deliver a tight, bright sound while retaining a little spread.

All of the lugs on the Reference Series kit are of a swivel variety. They feature a hinged section that incorporates the brass receiver for the stainless-steel tension rods. That hinged section allows the tension rods extra travel in order to accommodate the various rims and hoops available from Pearl, thus relieving strain on the rods.

### The Drums Alone...

The 22" Reference bass drum was as powerful as any I've ever heard. It tuned up or down and drove a spike through any musical situation I threw at it. It's heavy, as I mentioned earlier, but it's worth the lift if you need to cut through a loud band unmiked. The combination of a mixed wood shell and Remo PowerStroke heads gave the drum a punch and undeniable low-end rumble. I didn't record the drum, but I had a distinct feeling that it would go to tape or Pro Tools flat—needing no EQ.

The 10" tom had ample presence but—true to the Reference literature—a nice bite. It segued nicely to the 12" tom, which seemed to work with limitless tuning combinations: tight batter/tight bottom, loose batter/tighter bottom, and so on. The

14x14 and 16x16 floor toms worked like a dream and also had wide tuning ranges. They really shone in the mid to low registers, thanks to the introduction of mahogany. I hate to use the cliché “thunderous,” but it applied here. And there was something more. With thin-shelled floor toms you often get a diffused effect, generating a sort of muddy tone. The Reference toms were clean and centered, even with the drumhead loosened to the point of flapping.

Speaking of drumheads, all heads except for those on the bass drums were Pearl JP coated heads made by Remo. As a typical drum nerd, I swapped several of these for different models. But I didn't arrive at anything more convincing than the standard-issue heads.

The 5x14 snare was loud and in your face—something you'd expect from such a thick-shelled drum. But it was also very well balanced in frequency output. Rimshots on the die-cast hoops (which can be boxy on certain drums) were full-bodied. At one end of the dynamic scale, the lightest of ghost notes came out clearly. At the other end, this drum simply *would not choke* when hit hard. Perhaps as a benefit of the unique snare-strand unit, I found that I could play the drum with the snares extremely tight or loose.



Reference snare drums feature a new snare strainer design with a button-locked throw-off.

### ...And Together

Given the sonic optimization of each drum, the obvious question is: How do they sound as an *ensemble*? And the answer is: *very good*. Each drum resonates in tandem with its neighbor, and there is a nice symmetry of pitches and timbres from high tom to bass drum.

Considering how much thought was put in to maximizing the acoustic potential of every Reference Series

drum, I was extremely surprised when the 18" “jazz” bass drum we were sent came fitted with Remo PowerStroke heads front and back, and with a hole in the front head. Anyone purchasing a traditional bop-style 14x18 bass drum will likely be aiming at a traditional bop sound—ambient, open, and full of overtones—which the ported 18" head did not produce.

I learned later, however, that the 18" drum had come directly from the NAMM show, where it had been “ported” at a specific artist's request. “Stock” Reference 18" drums are *not* ported in this fashion. With that in mind, I replaced the ported front head with a standard Ebony Ambassador with no hole, and—*presto!* I got a traditional jazz bass drum sound that was airy and full of overtones, with a solid cushion of low frequencies. When the sound of the bass drum was combined with the 8x12 and 14x14



toms, the result was a kit to rival those cherished early 1960s jazz kits. And, in common with the larger rock kit, the drums felt solid under my sticks. These weren't drums that groaned and bent in pitch. Rather, they fired off clean, rich tones, and responded as well to doubles as to singles.

Incidentally, changing the head on the 18" bass drum allowed me to appreciate a feature of the hinged lugs. Their design eliminates the need to completely detach the rods and claws, thus making head changes quick and easy. Gene Okamoto told me that this was a "happy accident" of the lug design.

#### The New Reference Standard?

The Pearl Reference Series genuinely impressed me—and I've played my share of drums in four decades. They were heavy drums with a commanding sound, but not a harsh one. In fact, the warmth was undeniable, increasing as you traveled from smallest to largest tom. In my opinion, Pearl's experiment with mixed wood shells is a success, and I commend their design team for daring to break away from the sacred pure-wood formula.

#### THE NUMBERS

RF-924XSP shell pack .....	\$4,399
Includes 8x10 and 9x12 toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and an 18x22 bass drum	
5x14 snare .....	\$899
8x12 tom .....	\$836
14x14 floor tom .....	\$1,128
14x18 bass drum .....	\$1,760
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# Zildjian ZBT Rock And New Z Custom Cymbals

For Those About To Rock

by Martin Patmos

## KEY NOTES

- Affordable ZBT Rock models offer a bold, integrated sound that cuts
- Z Custom 20" Projection crash is loud and penetrating
- 20" ZBT Rock ride seemed to require an initial strike to bring out its full sound
- Z Custom 19" Thrash Ride has an explosive response

Zildjian's latest releases are aimed at rock drummers of all levels. At one end of the spectrum are a bold set of sheet bronze cymbals, the ZBT Rock 20" ride, 14" hi-hats, and 16" and 18" crashes. At the other end are some intense new Z Customs: the 19" Thrash ride, 20" Projection crash, and 14" splash. While they address different price points in the market, these cymbals all share characteristics of excellent playability and craftsmanship.

### ZBT Rock Cymbals

The ZBT Rock series is a beefed-up addition to Zildjian's sheet-bronze ZBT series. The cymbals all have a deep bronze color and uniform lathing that spreads across the surface over large, even hammer marks. With their heavier weights, the ZBT Rock models offer power and volume at an affordable price.

### 20" Rock Ride

The 20" Rock ride lives up to its intended design, performing well at medium to loud volume levels. It seemed to require a pretty solid initial strike to get it warmed up, but from the second note on, the cymbal's response was immediate, with marked stick definition and full harmonics. The sound was bright and tight, with a clean, inviting cushion that spread but remained even and controllable.

The bell was fairly isolated, and it projected well when played with either the tip or the shoulder of the stick. The overall playing feel of the cymbal under the stick was very solid, due to its heavy weight.

### 14" Rock Hi-Hats

The Rock hi-hats are a slightly heavier pairing than the regular ZBT hats. Harmonically, they meshed perfectly with the Rock ride. When played with the foot, they had a solid "chick" and an effective, crystalline splash. Sticking on the top surface was distinct, while playing the edge with the shoulder of the stick brought forth an authoritative sound that would drive any band. From tight to open, the Rock hi-hats exhibited a nice gradation of white noise-like sound.

### 16" And 18" Crashes

The 16" and 18" ZBT Rock crashes created a complementary pair pitched approximately a minor third apart. Both crashes responded quickly with a full crash sound and a shimmering wash, followed by a gradual decay. Other than a difference in volume, their response held true regardless of whether they were struck with the tip of the stick on the surface or with the stick's shoulder on the edge.

The bells of both cymbals were playable, though not isolated, making them useful for effects but less so for ride patterns. Of the two crashes, I preferred the 18" due to its fuller, longer sound.





### The ZBTs Together

As a set, I found the ZBT Rock models very enjoyable to play. They had a bold, integrated sound that cut quite well. I appreciated the ride's defined cushion, as well as the strong sound of the hi-hats. Both offered plenty of volume, making them quite suitable for their intended environment.

The fullness of the crashes seemed to erupt from the ride pattern in an effective way, thanks again to the integrated sound of the series. I can easily hear these cymbals being effective in a wide range of rock styles. With their low price and surprisingly good sound, cymbals like these make the entry-level market an exciting place. I'd recommend them to any rock player or heavy hitter—especially one on a budget.

### Z Custom Cymbals

Moving up the Zildjian food chain, Z Customs are made from the secret Zildjian alloy, and are designed to combine volume with professional-level musicality. With a pale gold color offset by huge hammer-mark patterns, the Z Customs have a striking appearance. The 14" splash, 20" Projection crash, and 19" Thrash ride cymbals expand the line, adding unique voices with lots of character.

### A Big Splash

Hammer marks that fan outward from the bell give the 14" splash the formidable modern look of many Z Customs. And at 14" this cymbal makes a very *big* splash. In fact, this cymbal lies in the gray area between splashes and crashes, and could be used as a transition between them as well as standing alone.

When struck full on, the 14" splash produces a full-bodied response, without the papery thinness of smaller splashes. Yet its timbre is not quite as long and round as a crash. The cymbal speaks loudly, making its statement with rich, bright harmonics. Then it decays fairly quickly.

### 20" Projection Crash: More Than You'd Think

Like the 14" splash, the 20" Projection crash has large hammer marks fanning out from the bell. But what really catches one's eye is how huge the bell on this cymbal is. Measuring 6 1/2" in diameter, it is the largest on any Zildjian crash.

According to Zildjian, this formidable-looking cymbal is the loudest crash they make. As far as I'm concerned, it lived up to

expectations, with some interesting surprises. When struck, this cymbal seemingly explodes from out of nowhere with unexpected volume, a long initial sound, vivid but focused harmonics, and a long, gradual decay. It cut through *everything*, with a bright, clean sound (as opposed to the way a thinner crash covers with wash).

The Projection crash is heavy for a crash model. I needed to bring out the 2Bs to really get behind it the way I wanted to. Its size and mass made it feel somewhat like a heavy ride cymbal—which brings me to some other observations. The fact is, this cymbal has a lot to offer *beyond* its big crash sound.

First, a 6 1/2"-diameter bell on a cymbal is just begging to be hit, and this one totally delivered when it was. The killer bell produced an isolated, penetrating clang that was completely usable as a ride surface. The overall cymbal performed equally well as a ride, with excellent stick definition, a clean, chime-like tone, plenty of volume, and a controllable build-up. In terms of playability as a ride, it actually compared favorably with the ZBT 20" Rock ride. So with the Z Custom Projection crash, you not only get Zildjian's loudest crash, you also get a heavy ride and a power bell to boot.

### 19" Thrash Ride: Screaming

The 19" Thrash Ride, quite frankly, performed beyond its intended purpose. With hammer marks coming out from the bell like spokes on a wheel, thin, fine lathing, and a lighter weight, this ride had more "give" than I expected from a Z Custom model. And while it was high, bright, and cutting (which I expected), riding on it produced a dirtier harmonic spread than that produced by the other Z Customs (which I had *not* expected).

The cymbal's stick response was explosive, leading to a powerful cushion with plenty of volume. Yet it was controllable too. And as with the Projection crash, the Thrash Ride is playable in other ways. It made a great crash sound, but I especially liked hitting it as an accent, where it produced a splashy, aggressive sound.

With a name like Thrash Ride, the first thing that came to my mind was double bass riffs and blast beats. And while this model is certainly suitable for such playing, I found it to have potential beyond that. It could be a primary ride in certain rock applications, and a killer auxiliary ride for almost any.

### Z Custom-izing

Each of the new Z Customs had its own personality. The splash would do well for those seeking the middle ground between a big splash and a small crash. I especially liked using the Thrash Ride with the Projection crash, since the two complemented each other so well with their varied characteristics. I'll be curious to see how other drummers apply these sounds.

THE NUMBERS	
<b>ZBT Rock Cymbals</b>	
20" ride .....	\$148
14" hi-hats .....	\$160
16" crash .....	\$104
18" crash .....	\$121
Box set .....	\$371
(Ride, hi-hats, and 16" crash, plus cymbal bag)	
<b>Z Custom Cymbals</b>	
14" splash .....	\$208
19" Thrash Ride .....	\$320
20" Projection crash .....	\$339
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# Remo Crown Percussion

## A Great Place To Start

by Norman Arnold

### KEY NOTES

- Low-priced instruments offer surprising quality
- Guiro and Twin Shaker have professional-use potential
- Bongo performance doesn't match that of congas

Remo's new Crown Percussion series offers a wide variety of drums and hand percussion. While these entry-level instruments are targeted at the "beginner" and "education" markets, their quality and usefulness may help them appeal to a wide range of users.

### Congas

Crown Percussion congas are manufactured from Siam oak (as opposed to Remo's proprietary Acousticon material). They're relatively small in size, with 10" and 11" diameters and 28"-high shells. But they sound larger and have greater projection than one might think, with all the tones of larger drums.

The included double bracket stand helps the drums to project the bottom tones.

The black powder-coated rims have a curved design, and although they're on the thin side, they still make for comfortable playing. The drums come equipped with Remo's synthetic FiberSkyn 3 heads, which is a great choice. The heads permit a wide pitch range (although the small sizes of the drums do limit the options a bit).

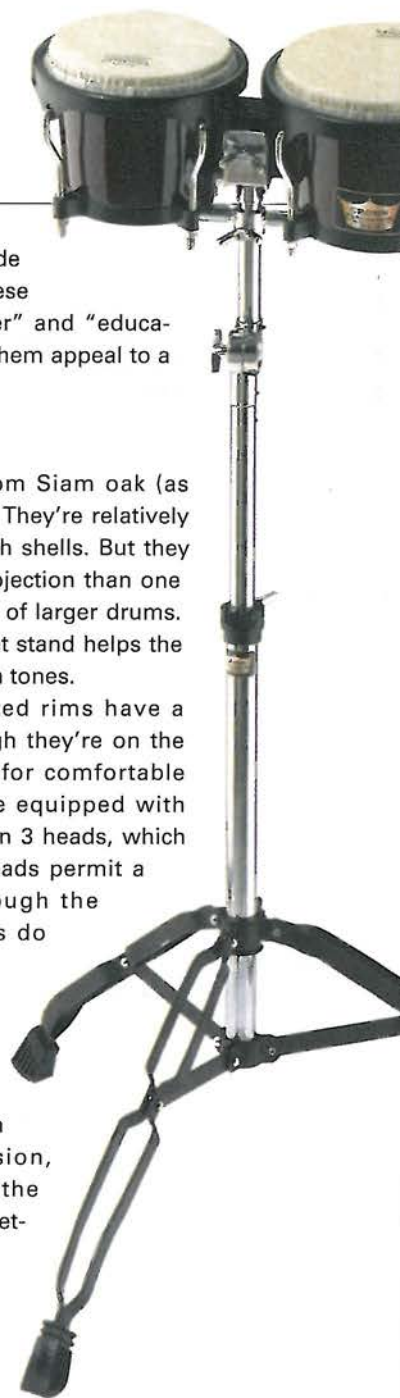
These drums would make an excellent set for beginning players. They'd also be a terrific option for a working singer or musician who doubles on percussion, because they're light on the back as well as on the pocket-book.

The stand is decently made considering the price range, but I did find it a tiny bit wobbly. Congueros who have a heavy hand when playing might want to set up the drums on the stand in the store and knock them around a bit before committing. Other than that, this is a great, inexpensive starter set. The drums are available in Natural Wood, Wine Red, and Black.

### Bongos

Crown Percussion bongos are made of the same wood as the congas are built from. They also feature FiberSkyn 3 heads and black powder-coated rims, and they're available in the same three finishes. A stand was not provided for this review.

While experimenting with the tuning, I discovered that the bongos have a good range. However, it was hard to achieve the sharp-but-





woody sound that really distinguishes a set of bongos. Considering the price of these drums and the market they're aimed at, I'd say that they would serve as a great learning tool. But I don't think they're as well suited to semi-pro uses as the congas are.

### Percussion Toys

The Crown Percussion line includes an extensive variety of what most percussionists call "toys." These are small hand-percussion instruments that include scrapers, shakers, and blocks.

Among my favorites was a guiro molded of bright red hard plastic. It had a pretty darn good sound in general—a nice middle ground between a wooden guiro and a metal one. But besides that, it has three different scraping surfaces, which allows it to produce a variety of *different* sounds. The holes for holding the guiro are lined with rubber, which makes it quite comfortable to play. And the fact that it's made of high-density plastic should make it very durable.



I was also sent the Crown Percussion Twin Shakers. These are two small plastic cylinders, each of which has sections with different diameters. This design presents more surfaces and edges for the shaker material inside to strike, offering different sonic options. The neat thing about the Twin Shakers is that they can either be played separately—one in each hand—or clipped together, forming a loud, bright-sounding double shaker that can be played in one hand.

Other Crown Percussion "toys" include large and mini maracas, large and small plastic Tempo Blocks, a Two Tone Wood Block Scraper, a cabasa with steel beaded chain, an agogo double bell, a Rattle Clap, a metal cylinder shaker, a 6" triangle, and bar chimes with twenty-four solid bars. These items round out a line of affordable and durable pieces of equipment that would get any beginner started off on the right foot...er, hand.

#### THE NUMBERS

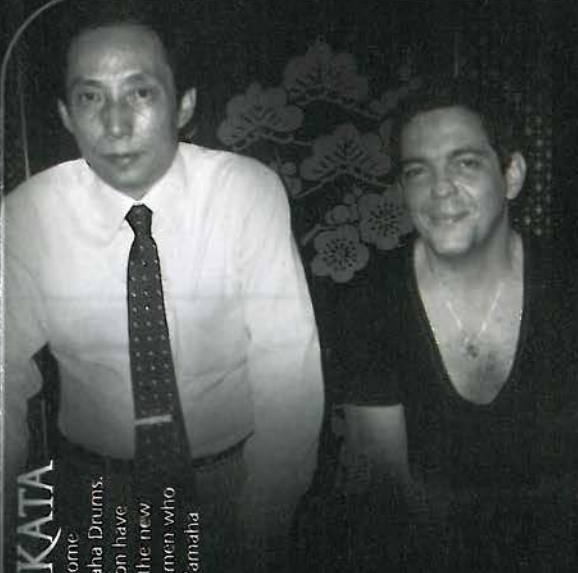
Bongos .....	\$149
10" & 11" conga set, with stand .....	\$449
Guiro .....	\$54
Twin Shakers .....	\$19
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A photograph of Steve Jordan, a Black man with dreadlocks, wearing a green t-shirt and dark jeans. He is standing on a rooftop with his arms crossed, looking slightly to the right. The background shows a city skyline with the Empire State Building prominently on the right under a blue sky with light clouds.

# Steve Jordan

Wonderlove Mascot To Master Musician

**R**ight Track Recording Studios sits near New York's Times Square amidst a throng of theme restaurants, towering billboards, and dazed tourists. Entering through the studio's nondescript doorway, you walk past a receptionist and into Studio A, where today bassist Pino Palladino and drummer Clayton Cameron are working alongside drummer/producer Steve Jordan on *Continuum*, the forthcoming album by baby-faced superstar John Mayer.

It's 10:00 A.M. and already the three principals are playing a funky groove that makes even the walls sweat. Cameron is whisking brushes over congas in one booth, Palladino gently strokes his four strings in the main room, all while Jordan is secluded in yet another booth, smacking a snare drum with his trademark atomic *thwack!* He's moving his entire body in service to the groove. So this is how a hit record gets made.

The trio plays the track twice and then heads into the control room for a playback. What appeared as a stealthy funk groove in the studio sounds like the end of the world blasting through the monitors, a gluey New Orleans tinged rock with a spidery web of brushwork complementing Jordan's cracking snare drum slice. Minutes later, John Mayer arrives, straps on a Stratocaster, and begins riffing and scatting over the prerecorded track. The band quickly heads back to their instruments and, together with the Grammy-winning pop star, jam in a zone of Meters-meets-Stevie Ray Vaughan bliss.

Throughout the session the mood is relaxed, productive, and as concentrated as a war room. That mood reflects the personality of Steve Jordan, the hardest working drummer/producer/bandleader in show biz.

by Ken Micallef



It's hard to remember when we first heard the drummer with the smoldering pocket and original groove conception. Like some Sufi savant, Steve Jordan perpetually showed up on the records with the best grooves. In the 1970s, he kicked it with The Blues Brothers, Spyro Gyra, The Brecker Brothers, and various New York R&B hustlers, culminating in two groundbreaking albums with guitarist John Scofield.

By 1982, most drummers would stay up to watch the opening of *Late Night With David Letterman* solely to hear what Jordan would blast over the show's percolating theme song. Every night was different, and not to be missed. Through the '80s and '90s Jordan rose to first-call status among rock's elite, appearing on records by Keith Richards, The Pretenders, Mick Jagger, Donald Fagen, Aretha Franklin, Neil Young, and Bob Dylan. Somehow Jordan also found time to work in looser ventures where he could stretch his chops with Sonny Rollins, Steve Khan, The Breckers, and Mike Stern.

Jordan's drumming on all these records was unpredictable but rock solid in that swampy, gritty, comfy-as-a-couch way that only he can conjure. His work with Steve Khan destroyed fusion clichés with cross-rhythmic patterns that were almost lopsided in their overt funkiness. Keith Richards brought out the beauty of Jordan's streamlined simplicity, while Steve's cymbal cyclones with Sonny Rollins showed he could be a swing-mad bopper when needed.

Come the '00s, and Steve Jordan is a highly respected producer, drummer, musical director, and songwriter. His recent recordings with Sheryl Crow, Alicia Keys, Bruce Springsteen, Patti Scialfa, and Buddy Guy all show how much he has changed—and how much he hasn't. Jordan's groove, musical consistency, and attention to the smallest detail remain his paramount concerns, and are what keep him booked for months at a time.

As a producer, Jordan picked up a Grammy, along with the artist, for Robert Cray's *Take Your Shoes Off*. Jordan was the musical director for two Kennedy Center Honors programs as well as for the 2004 Democratic National Convention. He's currently working on remix projects for Sly Stone and Herbie Hancock. His upcoming album with his own band, The Verbs (which includes

his wife, Meegan Voss), is set to be released on Sirius Satellite Records. Then there's Jordan's educational DVD, *The Groove Is Here* (Homespun). On it the drummer reveals the secrets of his trademark grooves.

His latest project finds Jordan hooking up with old pal Scofield for the landmark recording *That's What I Say, John Scofield Plays The Music Of Ray Charles*. Here, the funky drummer/producer teamed up with the bearded jazzbo for an R&B fest with guests like Aaron Neville, Mavis Staples, Warren Haynes, and Dr. John. Talk about a feel-good session.

"Steve Jordan is my co-conspirator in the whole thing," Scofield says of their collaboration. "Jordan is in increasing demand as a producer, and classic rootsy R&B productions are his trademark. I wanted to do an R&B kind of record, and Steve was the guy I immediately thought of to play drums. Having him produce as well was simply the right thing to do. Steve has remarkable musical taste, super studio savvy to get sounds, and tireless perfectionism. He's also done a number of projects with big casts—so he wasn't thrown by this record. It was Steve's comfort level that kept the sessions smooth."

Steve's smooth skills and battering-ram groove can be heard on the upcoming John Mayer Trio tour. Laying down their scronch and roll later this year, the trio will hit the States running with Joss Stone and The Rolling Stones. And Jordan will be touring with Eric Clapton throughout '06.

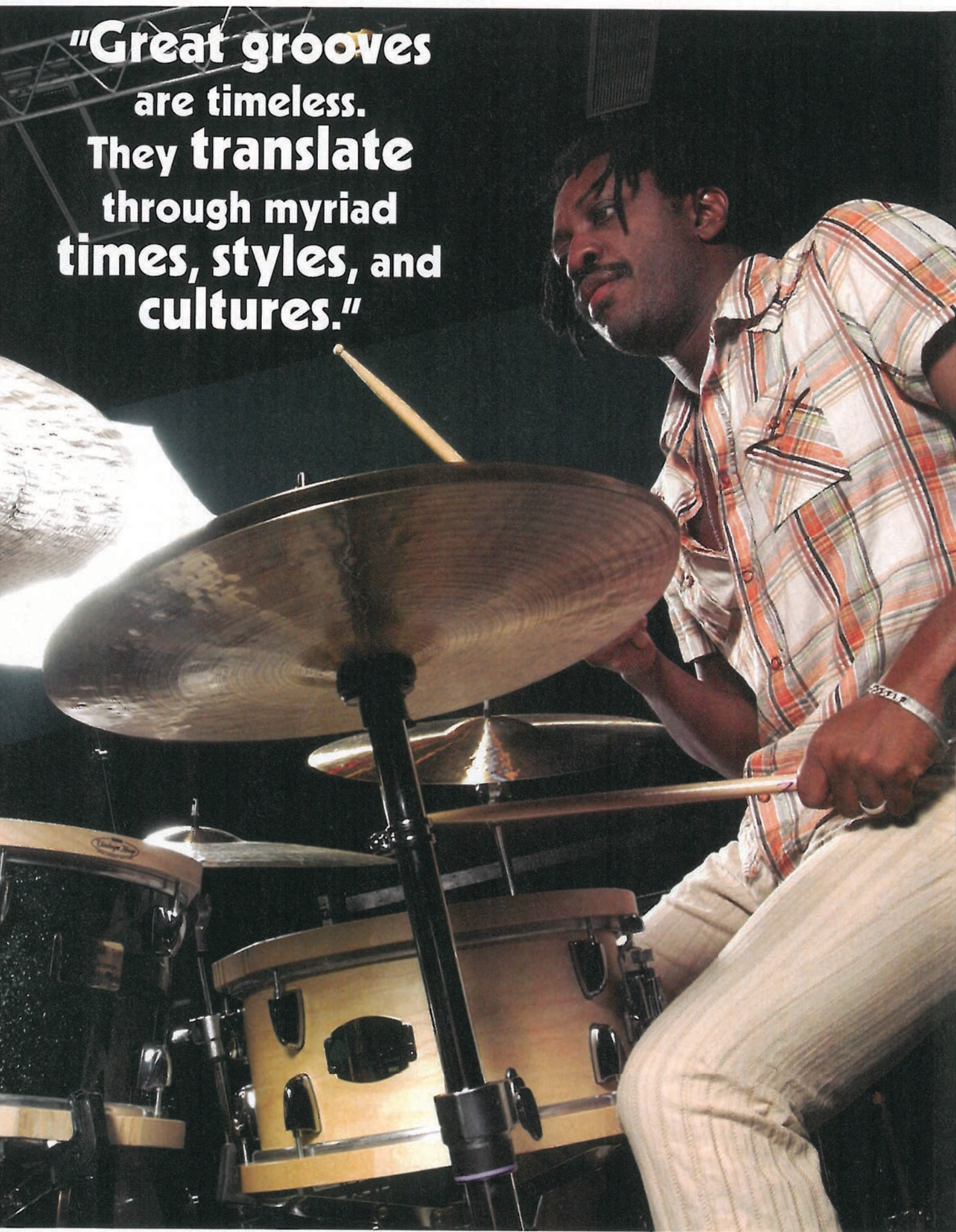
With so many accomplishments, the question is, just how old is Steve Jordan?

"Now?" The drummer replies, "I don't know. You have to look it up."

Steve Jordan's sense of humor and love of storytelling fills his drumming, which always tells a story. His drumming remains timeless, deep, and exquisitely funky.



**"Great grooves  
are timeless.  
They translate  
through myriad  
times, styles, and  
cultures."**



# The Groove Is Here

## Recordings

Artist	Album
Steve Khan	Casa Loco
Donald Fagan	The Nightfly
Alicia Keys	The Diary Of Alicia Keys
Sheryl Crow	C'mon C'mon
Neil Young	Landing On Water
Bruce Springsteen	Devils & Dust
Bracker Brothers	Détente
Keith Richards	Talk Is Cheap
Keith Richards	Main Offender
John Scofield	That's What I Say
John Scofield	Electric Outfit
Robert Cray	Take Your Shoes Off
John Mellencamp	Cuttin' Heads
Ziggy Marley	Dragonfly



## Inspirations

Artist	Album	Drummer
Miles Davis	Seven Steps To Heaven	Tony Williams
Motown Records	any	Benny Benjamin, Freddie Waits
Stax Records	any	Al Jackson, Howard Grimes
The Beatles	any	Ringo Starr
Dave Clark Five	any	Dave Clark (for snare drum sound)
James Brown	any	Clyde Stubblefield, Jabo Starks
Tower Of Power	any	David Garibaldi
The Band	any	Levon Helm
The Rolling Stones	"Brown Sugar," "Honky Tonk Women"	Charlie Watts
Sonny Rollins	Newk's Time	Philly Joe Jones
Stevie Wonder	any	Stevie Wonder, Raymond Pounds
Aretha Franklin	any	Roger Hawkins
Chess Records	any	Fred Below
Paul Simon	any	Steve Gadd
Boz Scaggs	Silk Degrees	Jeff Porcaro
The Meters	any	Zigaboo Modeliste
Sly & The Family Stone	any	Greg Errico, Andy Newmark

**MD:** You have worked with some of the greatest musicians and studied the greatest drummers. What separates the greats from the simply good?

**Steve:** Benny Benjamin, Al Jackson, Jim Gordon, all had the ability to play a lot of stuff, but they understood the essence of the music. Certain people know what their role is. It makes me feel *good* to lay down a groove that is infectious, that makes people move, that puts you in a trance.

When I put on a James Brown record with Clyde or Jabo or when Duck Dunn and Al Jackson are playing something, it makes me just flip out! If you're blessed to be in the recording field, you want to be involved in something that's going to be timeless. Great grooves are timeless. They translate through myriad times, styles, and cultures. You can take a groove that was created in Memphis, take it to China, and you'll have people grooving. That's why music is the universal language.

**MD:** That's why you're the first-call New York guy at a time when there aren't any New York guys anymore.

**Steve:** There's no real scene anymore. I learned very early that I had to follow my

**Drums:** Yamaha Maple Custom Absolute (using Smartwood Maple)

- A. 6 1/2 x 14 wood snare (or 6 1/2 x 13 Steve Jordan Signature)
- B. 8 x 12 rack tom
- C. 14 x 14 floor tom
- D. 16 x 18 floor tom
- E. 16 x 24 bass drum (18" for jazz) (Steve also uses Yamaha's Club Jordan Cocktail Drum System)

**Cymbals:** Paiste

- 1. 17" Signature hi-hats (prototype)
- 2. 20" Traditional crash (22" for jazz)
- 3. 22" Traditional ride

**Heads:** Remo coated Ambassadors

**Sticks:** Capella Steve Jordan model, Regal Tip Clayton Cameron brushes



## Steve's Kit

instincts and what was going to make me grow musically so that I would have a life in music. That meant doing some things that were unorthodox.

For instance, I left the Letterman show because it was starting to box me in with that schedule. I was absent from the show often to play on albums, which wasn't fair

to the Letterman band. We rehearsed and recorded the original theme in my loft. The band was very hot and we attracted a lot of guests, like Eric Clapton and Eddie Van Halen. We had a legendary performance with James Brown that rekindled his whole career. We played with Sly Stone, Tom Jones, B.B. King. It was fantastic. It was a

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## Steve Jordan

lot of fun...until it wasn't.

**MD:** Let's talk about drumming. You don't as much play the groove as *become* the groove. What's the secret to inhabiting a groove?

**Steve:** It's about putting yourself in a position to serve. The main thing is to play the song. We want to set up a hypnotic pulse so the lyric can live. I believe that even if it's a ballad, if it doesn't have a groove, something is missing. If you're affected from the very first note of the song, then you're open to listening to the lyrics. If it's not feeling too good, you might skip over the tune.

**MD:** On Bruce Springsteen's *Diamonds & Dust*, when you enter a song, your personality is so strong and *there*. Something is ignited. What kicks off that kind of drive?

**Steve:** Every beat counts. You don't have time to warm up into a thing. You've got to hit it and it has to be right. It's all about the sound. You could play something that might feel good, but if it's the wrong sound it's not going to be right.

When I get the right sound, it dictates how I play. For instance, I don't switch snare drums when I play live just for the sake of being different. The song dictates the sound. And then that is *the* sound for the tune.

I grew up listening to records where the snare drum and vocal sound identified the record. The snare gets you here, the vocal gets you there. That's why when you saw us at the session we were tweaking sounds before John [Mayer] got there, so when he arrived we had the bed for the tune. Then we could just play the song.

**MD:** What's the first step for zoning in on the sound?

**Steve:** The song will dictate what sounds we're going for. Sometimes we'll discuss the sound, sometimes I just know what we have to do. I'm in a production role, so I can do that. But if I'm a sideman, I'll ask, "What are you hearing?" With John Mayer, he's a very astute young man. He loves recording as much as I do, and he's very aware of different records and CDs. Everyone I'm privileged to work with is at a very high level. They are all songwriters and producers in their own right. The fat is already trimmed when they walk into the studio.

**MD:** In the studio, you played a groove with "&s" on the hi-hat on the first and





third beats. On the first “&,” you moved your shoulders up, and on the second “&” your shoulders moved down. Your whole body was moving.

**Steve:** I like to dance when I play. Some people aren't into that, like Tony Williams. He didn't like people dancing when they played. But I think if you're the drummer and it's not making you move, then there's a problem! I'm not trying to overemphasize something; I'm just trying to get that thing.

**MD:** When you play straight 8th-note grooves, you're not afraid to *play* the hi-hat. You accent the 8ths with the shank of the stick sometimes, but often engineers will ask for less hi-hat and more drums. That's almost the conventional wisdom, but you lean on the hi-hat.

**Steve:** The hi-hat can actually drive a record. Granted, sometimes you have to actually take the hi-hat fader down. There was a time

when I got tired of the hi-hat because it was too prevalent. I started to play that pulse on other things. It was just a phase. Then I fell back in love with the hi-hat.

I use bigger hi-hat cymbals. They're warmer and their frequency isn't as high. They're darker so their lower pitch can

will make the beat feel differently. If I'm not playing a cymbal, sometimes I'll go through the motions so that my body will feel the motion of the beat and keep it flowing.

**MD:** That's an instinctual thing, and often as drummers we're told not to do things

that come naturally.

**Steve:** That's the downfall of music, people telling you not to do things that come naturally.

I became an engineer because when I first started doing sessions they wanted me to tape up the drums and tune them down. I was

**"I don't like the way a snare drum sounds when it's hit in exactly the same place throughout a song. Sometimes a chorus needs a different sound than a verse."**

meld better into the drumset. You can lay into them like Al Jackson.

**MD:** I noticed that sometimes you'll play an imaginary cymbal in the studio, sort of air drumming with one limb while playing the rest of the kit.

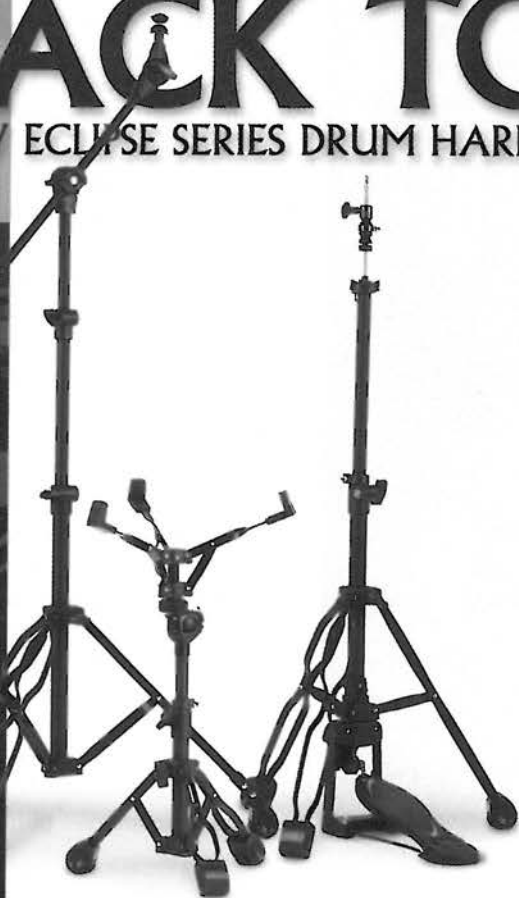
**Steve:** It can affect how you play your beat. If I'm playing 8ths, even in the air, it

thinking that all my favorite records with Benny Benjamin didn't have any tape on those drums. Ringo Starr didn't have any tape on his drums early on. The drums were ringing like mad. That's the sound of the kit!

**MD:** The first time I became aware of you was on the Blues Brothers album,

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## Steve Jordan

*Briefcase Full Of Blues.* Did they want you to tape up the drums there?

**Steve:** Oh yeah, it was the energy of the times. I would play everything on that record differently now. I was coming out of the fusion thing then.

I played fusion, but when something was in seven, for instance, I played four through it. It turns around every fourteen beats, so if I kept playing four it would eventually turn back around. That's how I played a lot of seven-oriented stuff, instead of marking the one, which most drummers seemed to do. That was completely boring to me. Oh God, gimme a break. The only person who I really enjoyed hearing play in seven was Steve Gadd. Billy Cobham, too. But Steve Gadd on Michael Urbaniak's *Fusion III* is fusion at its finest.

**MD:** You used to play a lot of fusion in the '70s, and then you stopped.

**Steve:** When I was playing that fusion stuff, I was the simplest of all the fusion drummers. I tried to get some feel into that music. I didn't think Steve Khan's *Eyewitness* was fusion. I consider that improvisational jazz-rock. Fusion usually meant more things that weren't based on music. It was about trying to show off one's dexterity and virtuosity, which is not what *Eyewitness* was based on. Everyone liked Billy Cobham back then, and *Spectrum* was funky. That was badass and the sound was beautiful, an amazing *sound* on that record. It was unbelievable.

**MD:** When people call Steve Jordan, the producer, what do they expect?

**Steve:** I love organic-sounding productions. I don't care if it's jungle, techno, whatever, as long as it sounds good. But it has to groove and sound great, something you want to listen to *a lot*. I look to capture the essence of the artist, and I want to satisfy the artist.

**MD:** Don't all producers want to do that?

**Steve:** No. A lot of producers just want to satisfy themselves. They want to put their stamp on the artist and the record. That's why a lot of things sound the same. With John Mayer's new album, John is discovering himself. I want to engage him in the discovery, and sometimes you have to be a musician to be able to go on that journey. Some producers can intellectualize the journey, but sometimes you just have to be a player.

**MD:** You're in a rare position where you

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often both produce and play on the same record.

**Steve:** I'm the cheapest drummer I know. It all comes under my production fee. "If I produce this you don't have to pay for a drummer." [laughs]

**MD:** How does your approach change from artist to artist?

**Steve:** We started a track for Patti Scialfa this weekend, and she wanted to create a natural loop. It wasn't the first thing I thought of, but it turned out great. When you're producing, you are a listener as well. You want to listen to what the artist has in mind. You can dictate a style to the artist, but when the artist is the songwriter, they have the song idea in their head. The producer is just trying to get it out.

A producer is the artist's friend, shrink, musicologist, musical director, tennis partner, whatever you have to be to get the best out of the artist. I've been blessed that everybody I've worked with I feel close to as a human being. I never have to fake it.

**MD:** What makes a session flow smoothly?

**Steve:** Create an environment that is tension-free. You want to make sure that everything is happening so when the artist comes in they know you'll capture their magic. Sometimes I'll have the artist in and he or she may have to wait an hour or two before playing because I don't want to waste a take. I don't want them to sing the most amazing thing ever and the sound not be right. We got John Mayer's sound together before he ever showed up, so when he came in he could just blow and start thinking, "We can do this, we can do that." He gets inspired.

**MD:** How does being a producer make you a better drummer?

**Steve:** You trim the fat. On the records I liked growing up, usually the whole record was based on the drum sound or the drum beat. Usually the snare drum was the most noticeable thing about the record. And then the vocal sound and whatever quirky sound would be the ear candy. Those were the ingredients of a hit record. So that's what I do. The snare drum and vocals dictate the sound of the record. I get them working in the mix. You get your bottom together, then the top.

**MD:** How do you get that almost atomic-sounding *cut* on the snare drum?

**Steve:** I used to practice that as a kid. I loved David Garibaldi. He got a rimshot

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## Steve Jordan

every time he hit the drum with Tower Of Power. Most of my favorite records by James Brown or The Beatles are rimshots. You hear that pop.

**MD:** Do you change your tuning for each session, or do you change the drum?

**Steve:** I try to change snares. I don't like to change tunings that much, mainly because if I get a drum in the right spot I like it to live there. I've got plenty of drums. If we're looking for a certain sound or tone, I just switch drums. I've tried thirty snares on the Mayer record. Same thing will happen live. During a gig I'll use up to ten snares.

**MD:** And as far as where you strike the snare?

**Steve:** I don't like the way a snare drum sounds when it's hit in exactly the same place throughout the song. Sometimes a chorus needs a different sound than a verse. And a bridge might need a different sound. I might switch from matched to traditional grip in the middle of a tune—whatever the song calls for.

**MD:** On your DVD you say, "If the beat

feels good, you can hear a song before another instrument is even played." Can you explain that?

**Steve:** This is what hip-hop is really good for. When Dr. Dre comes up with a beat, the whole song is in the beat. So when you hear the beat come in, you know what the song is. Some classic records start with a

make more out of it than what it is. That happens in life. They miss the point. What could possibly be better than a great-feeling groove?

**MD:** Also on your DVD you ask Levon Helm a question I'd like to ask you: What's the most important thing a drummer can contribute to a band in and out of the studio?

**Steve:** Playing the right stuff for the song. A lot of times a drummer will try to think up a beat to play. But you have to think about the song. What does the *song* say to play? The song will evoke some kind of imagery. Don't just bulldoze your way through the song. I play what the song is telling me.

**MD:** How did the Alicia Keys' single "If I Don't Have You" go down?

**Steve:** She asked me how they made the old Aretha Franklin records. I showed her the different drum miking used, and we used that more open approach to try to duplicate the sound of Studio A at Atlantic or down in Muscle Shoals. We also did close miking for a more hip-hop sound.

**"That's the downfall of music, people telling you not to do things that come naturally."**

beat and you know what the freaking song is.

**MD:** Can everyone learn to groove like that?

**Steve:** You have to want to do it. You have to not be afraid of the simplicity of the music. Sometimes people aren't satisfied with what they're given and they try to

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## Steve Jordan

Generally for miking, I'll use a Shure SM57. That's my main mic' for the snare drum. I use an AKG D30 for the bass drum, but you can use anything from an Electro-Voice RE20 to a Sennheiser 421 to an AKG D130—anything with a big diaphragm that sounds good.

As for what I played, for hip-hop, it's about playing a bass drum pattern that back in the day would have been considered too busy. Today it's the kind of pattern that you need to generate motion. I combined that with an old-school feel.

I grew up in the Bronx. Back then you'd see soul bands or reviews, and most of them were playing as busy as all get out—but busy in a funky way, not like a fusion way. It was popping. Hip-hop will take one of those busier beats and they'll loop the sucker. That is the freaking beat. In other words, I played a pattern that years ago I might have played at the end of a four-bar phrase, but I did it in a two-bar phrase.

**MD:** The record sounds like it's just you and her.

**Steve:** That's how we cut it. Everything else was overdubbed. She sang and played live. We did seven takes. I don't think there was a

click track. There isn't a click track on most of my sessions. Those days are over, actually. With Springsteen we overdubbed everything to his prerecorded tracks.

**MD:** Also on your DVD, you say that it can be hard to get used to playing with the click.

**Steve:** It can freak you out in the beginning, but it's something you should be able to do. That said, all of my favorite recordings were not done to a click track. The verse felt one way, and the chorus felt another. The verse is usually a little back, and then you'd kick up the chorus. That doesn't mean you speed up.

**MD:** You have said that Stevie Wonder's drummer back in the '70s, Raymond Pounds, was a big influence.

**Steve:** I met him while I was a mascot during the end of the recording sessions for Stevie's *Songs In The Key Of Life*. I hung around Wonderlove Studios, where Stevie rehearsed the band. The record was done at the Hit Factory. I was a high school student and I used to hang out at Bill's Rentals on 52nd Street across from what became SIR. I had a part-time job in the percussion cage, though I didn't get paid. That's where I first met the Brecker Brothers, David

Sanborn, and Idris Muhammad. I saw how people operated.

Anyway, during that time Stevie Wonder decided he was going to audition drummers, even though Raymond Pounds was still in the band. They were jamming, and I got to play some congas. The next thing you know, they started recording everything. For me, it was like being Cinderella.

Stevie wanted to check out other drummers, and if he didn't find another drummer Raymond would keep his job—a very strange situation. Raymond handled this with class and dignity. I never saw him freak out. During that process I met every drummer under the sun. And I wanted to audition, but at sixteen they said I was too young.

After the auditions were over I got to play with Stevie, who at the time was really into fusion. We played something off *Hymn Of The Seventh Galaxy*, and he couldn't believe I knew it all. So from then on they let me hang around and I became like a mascot. It was incredible. But Raymond handled it all so well. He played this beat [Steve plays RLL, RLL 16th-note triplets, accenting 2 and 4], which I had never seen before. I really dug that. I think

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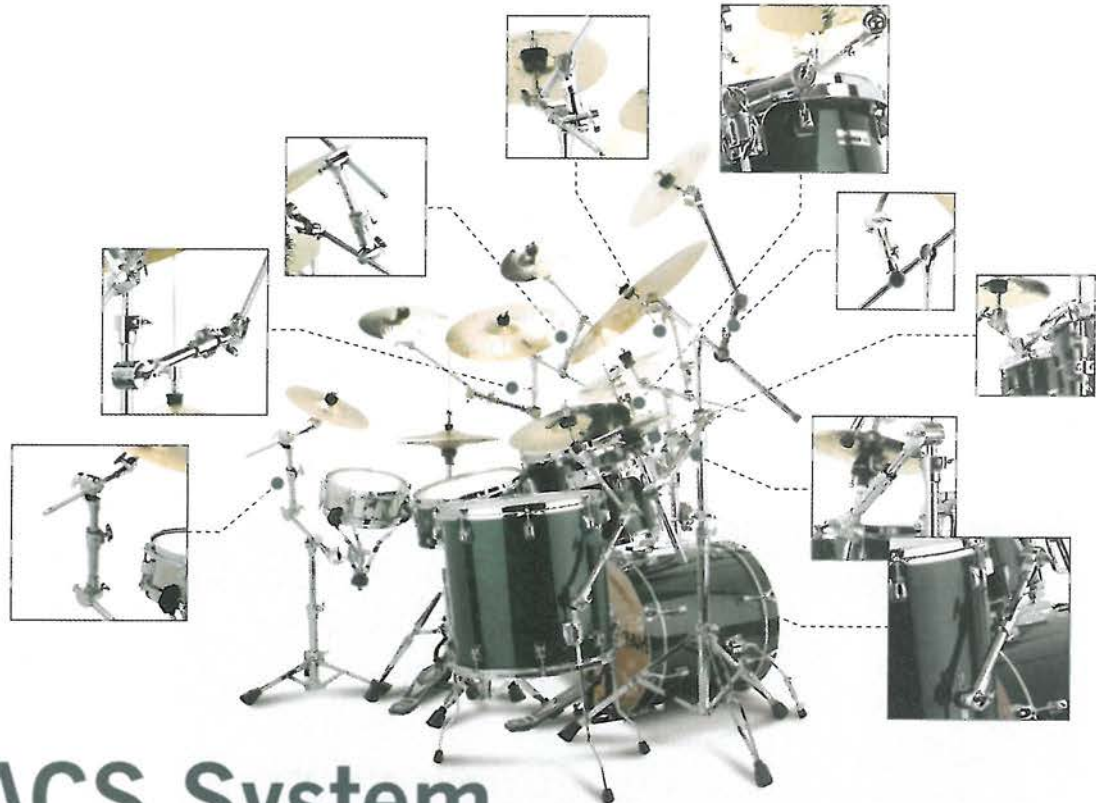
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05



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## Steve Jordan

he was the first guy to do that, the triplets on the left hand. I hit on that big time.

**MD:** In one section of your DVD you're playing different grooves, and on the Mellencamp track you play what is almost a second-line pattern. Your left hand is very high off the head, almost like exaggerated ghost notes.

**Steve:** I learned how to play James Brown's "Funky Drummer" beat with all of the ghost notes on the left hand. When you're doing that you can't have little grace notes. They have to be more distinct. That's

when I started experimenting with having them go beyond simple grace notes to becoming strong parts of the pattern. I thought that was the future.

**MD:** That speaks to how strong and clear sounding all of your limbs are when you play.

**Steve:** Leroy Clouden and I used to practice playing Ed Greene grooves, the types of things Ed used to play with Barry White. We would speed them up. We learned how to play 16th notes with one hand but not at the normal speed. We would speed up the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  album to 45. Leroy was very

advanced, and he spurred me on. He's leading a lot of drummers in the right way now that he's teaching at The Collective.

**MD:** Did you practice your rudiments for hours while you were at the High School of Music and Art in the Bronx?

**Steve:** No. I should have, but I didn't. I had technique, because I was playing classical percussion. But I knew people who had better technique than I did. I was never as confident in my hands as I wanted to be. I did have a faster single-stroke roll than a double-stroke roll because of my timpani playing. I used that in all my solos.

**MD:** Were your parents musical?

**Steve:** My mother was a singer at one point in her life. My father was an architect and a complete jazz buff. He turned me on to Miles and Art Blakey. In fact, my father played "Blues March" for me, and that was the first thing I learned to play on the drums. I also studied with Joey Cal and Freddie Waits.

**MD:** Do you still practice?

**Steve:** I play. If I'm not playing a lot, I'll try to get some hand work in. I try to keep myself in a musical frame of mind. I put myself in a place where I can communicate and make music. The rest of it will take care of itself. I leave it in the hands of God.

**MD:** What advice would you give to all those drummers who want to come to New York and take your gigs?

**Steve:** Well, they don't have to come to New York to take my gigs. I'm not always in New York. Sometimes I'm working in L.A.

**MD:** Your tools are elusive in some ways.

**Steve:** I think for me, it's more about having an overview of music. What does the song need? What skin does that drum need? What groove will work best here? It's also about the sound. You can have a whole bunch of great drumming going on, but if the drums sound terrible, nobody will want to listen to it.

Think about some of the greatest drum sounds you've ever heard. The drummers who played those tracks may not have been the most technically advanced. But their sound is so magnificent that what they did is all you want to listen to. That's it! That's what we're talking about here. A lot of people miss that.



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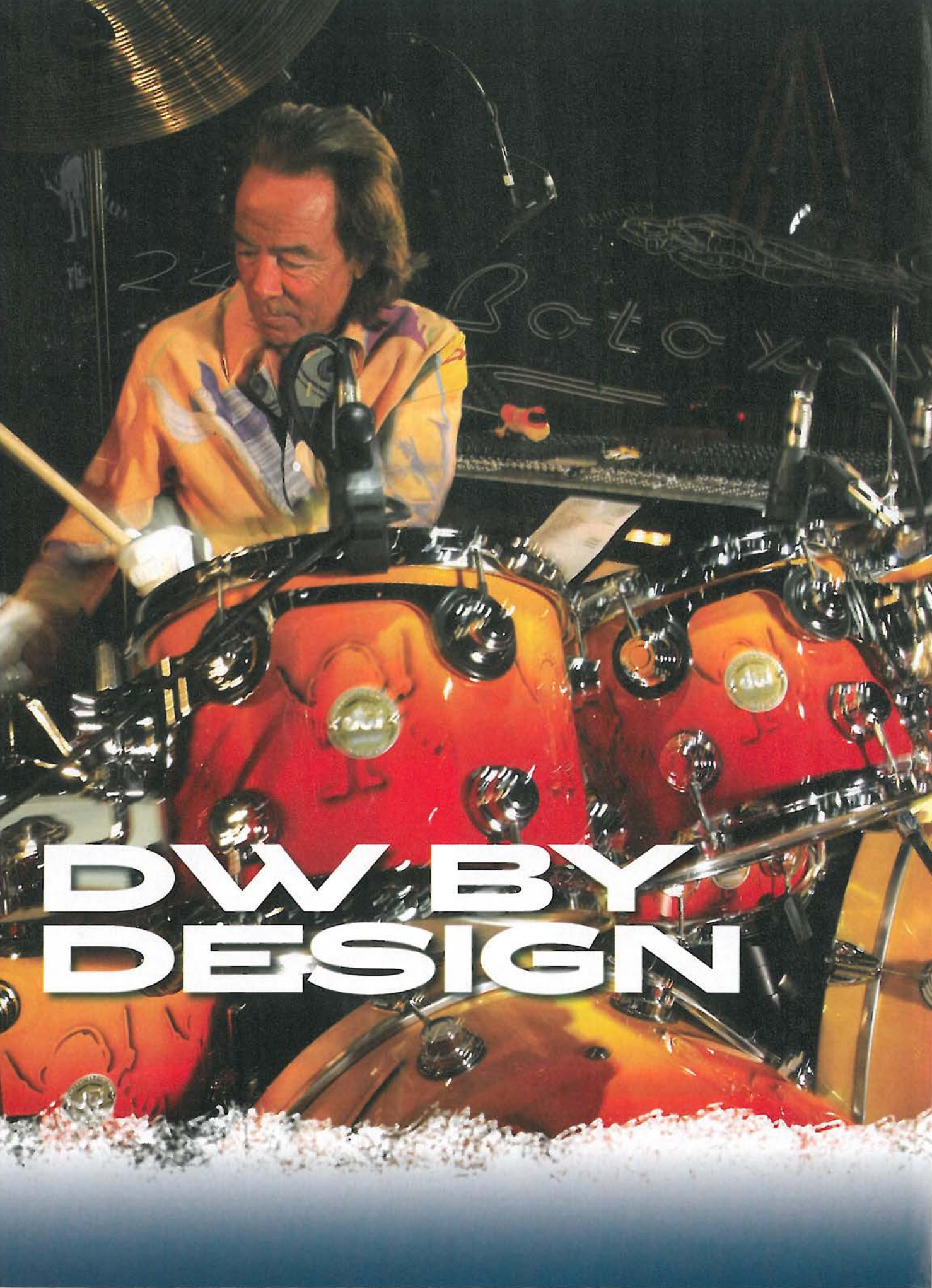


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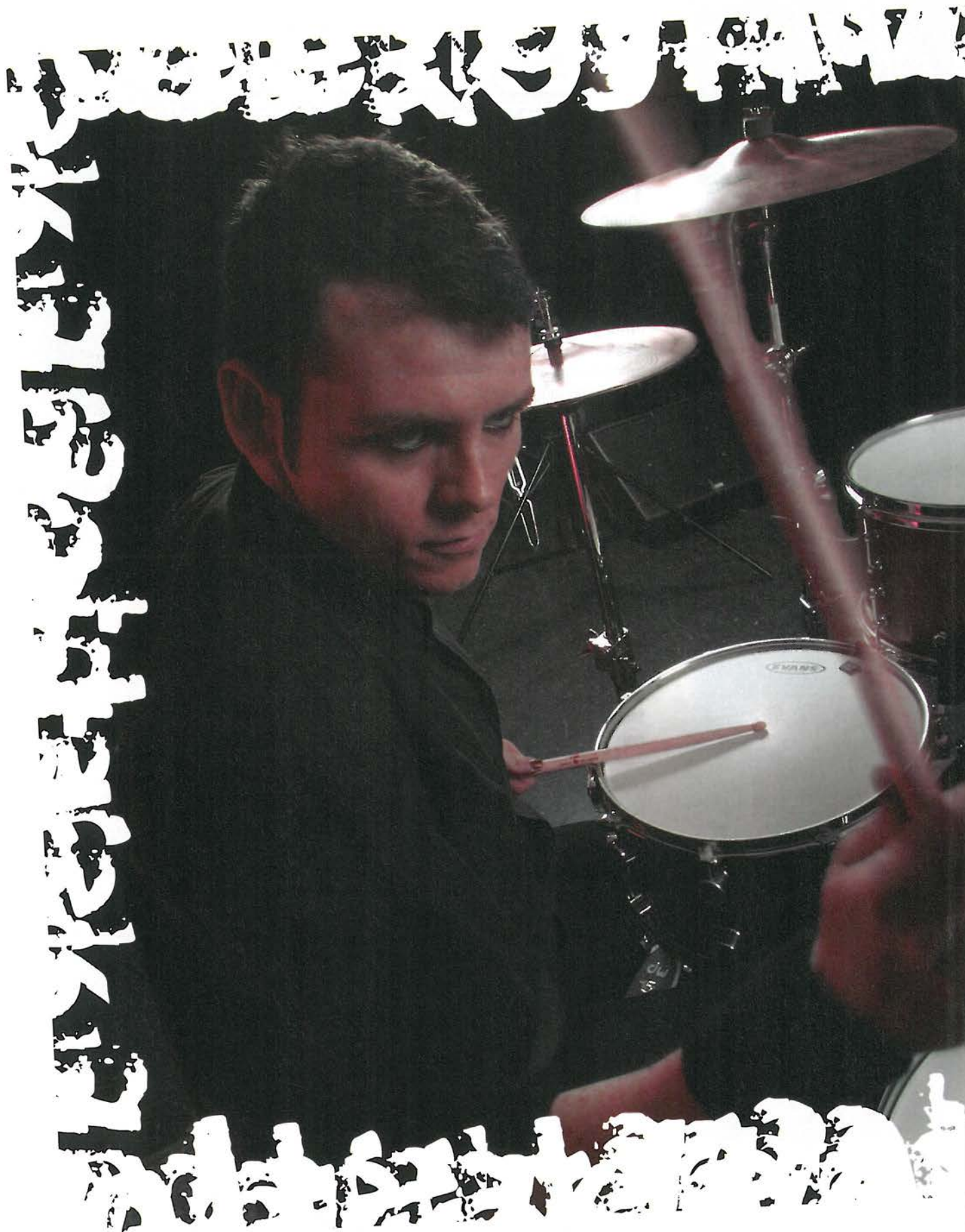
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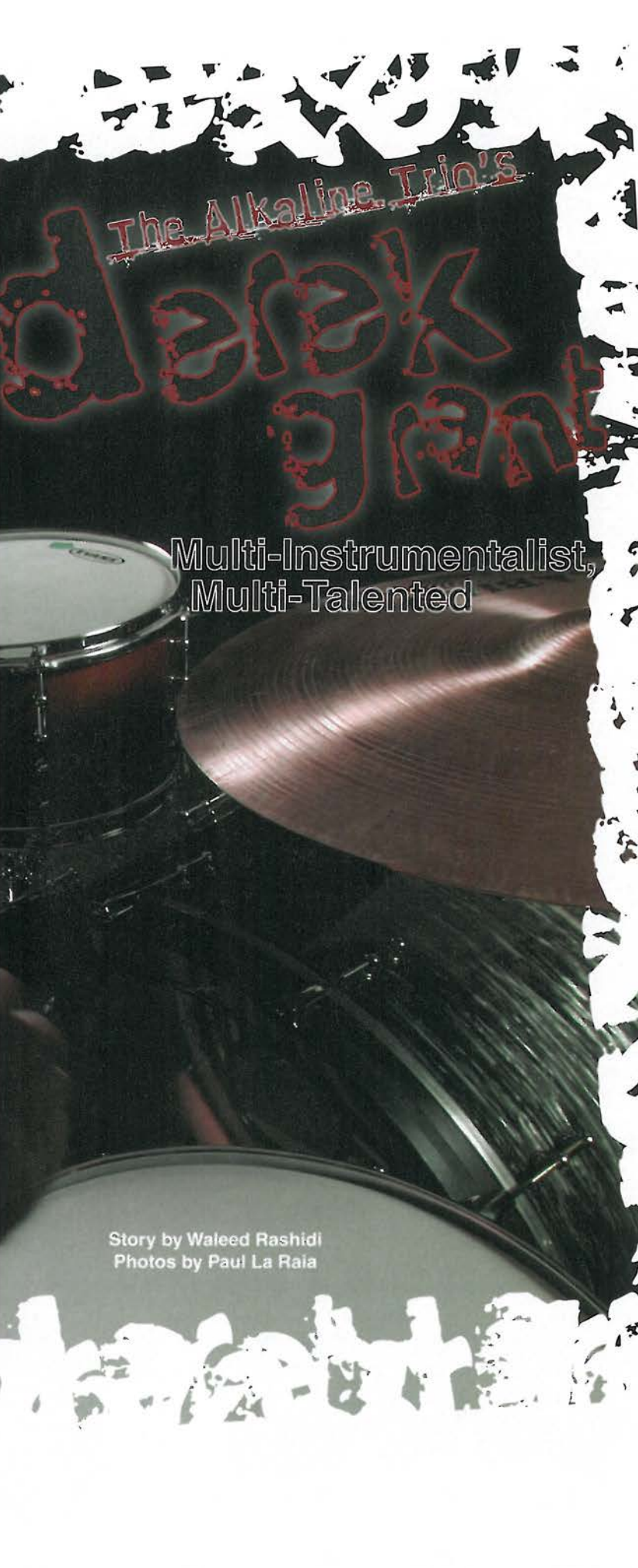
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**dw**





The Alkaline Trio's

Derek Grant

Multi-Instrumentalist,  
Multi-Talented

Story by Waleed Rashidi  
Photos by Paul La Raia

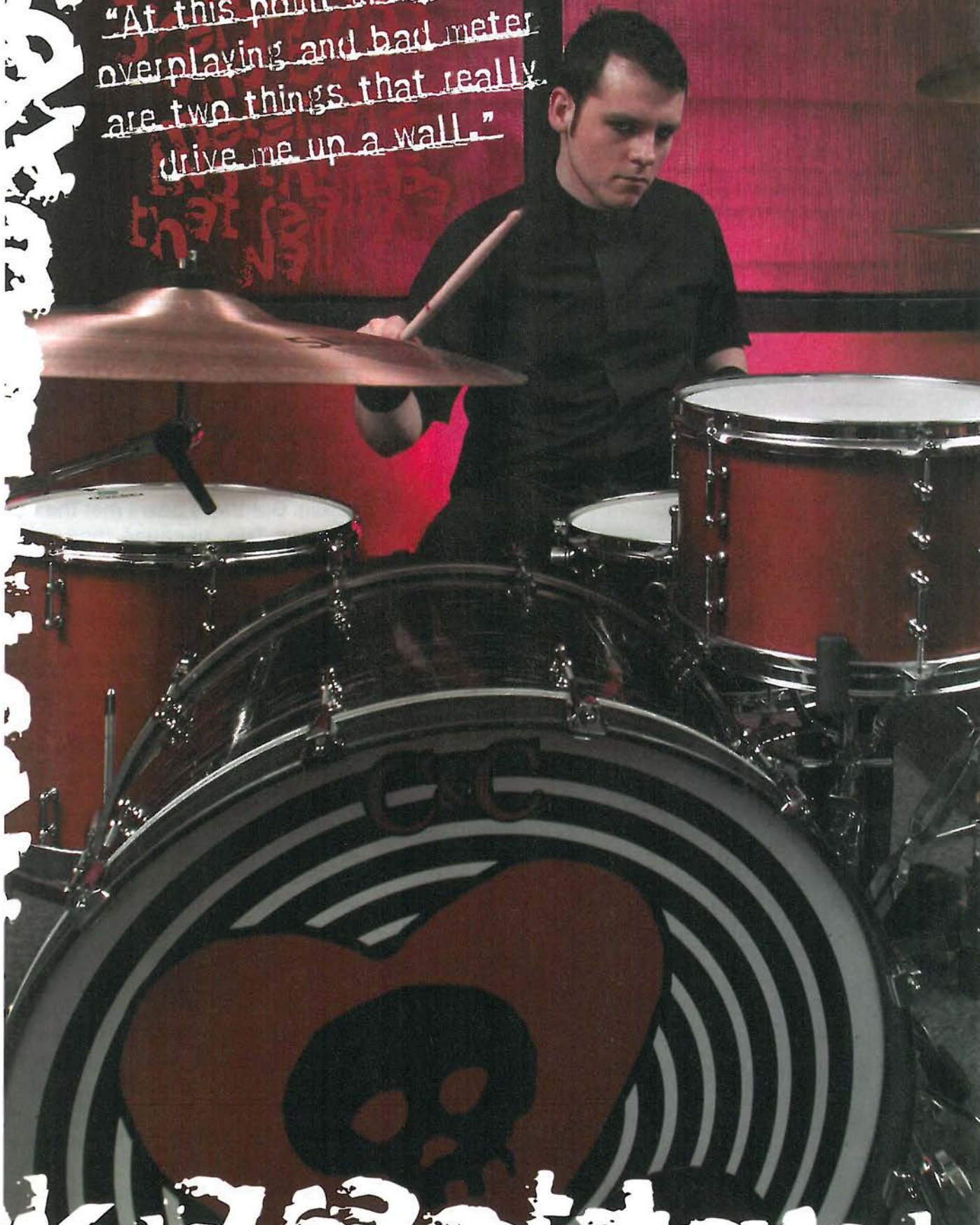
A few years ago, when Derek Grant received a call to do a Japanese tour with punk band Face To Face right after he'd left his gig as the drummer with The Suicide Machines, he assumed it was to perform behind the kit. But after a few conversations, he realized that the group wanted him as a *guitarist*. "I basically told them they had the wrong guy," Grant says. "I didn't even own a guitar at that time."

But the guys in Face To Face weren't mistaken. They'd heard from various sources that Grant, besides being a slammin' drummer, was also a talented multi-instrumentalist. In fact, the word got out about his axe talents after he played some amazing guitar licks during soundchecks with The Suicide Machines. "So Face To Face flew me out," Grant recalls. "I did two rehearsals with them and we went to Japan. But that's how I met the guys in Alkaline Trio, because they were the opening act on that tour."

After becoming acquainted with the Trio's material, Grant became a fan and kept in touch with the group. After some time, Grant received a phone call for another new gig. This time, it was for the drum seat in The Alkaline Trio. "I went down and rehearsed with them," he says. "We wrote a song within the first week and recorded it shortly thereafter, and that was that."

Two albums and several tours later, Grant's still the Trio's persistent pulse. Spin his debut with the band, 2003's *Good Mourning*, and you'll find a drummer who's blended the fury and recklessness of early punks with the grace and precision of more modern rockers. This year's *Crimson* is no exception, as the multi-instrumentalist contributes even more of his trademark talents to the imperative, dark-themed melodic punk music that's become the band's signature.

at this point in my life,  
overplaying and bad meter  
are two things that really  
drive me up a wall."



67 90 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100



**W**e caught the twenty-eight-year-old Grant while he was in Los Angeles to talk about things like his “mechanical” approach to the band’s latest release, developing his ambidexterity, and the importance of keeping good time. As you’ll read, the innovative and articulate Grant is much more than just “the drummer in the band.”

**MD:** How were the sessions for your latest album different from your previous one?

**Derek:** Well, we’ve had a little bit more time to work together as a band. When we did *Good Mourning*, I’d only been in the band for about a year and a half. So I was still trying to find my footing. I was trying to figure out where I fit both personally and musically, because I had such admiration for Matt [Skiba, guitarist/vocalist] and Dan [Andriano, bassist/vocalist] as songwriters. I was really hesitant to contribute too much on *Good Mourning* because I had just made the transition from being a fan of the band to being in the band, and I was really wary of messing with the formula. I wrote music for one of the songs that made it onto *Good Mourning*. But aside from that, I just kind of stood back and observed.

We got in the studio and had a pretty difficult time. I had some physical problems that I hadn’t anticipated. For the first time in my life, I kind of struggled with different forms of arthritis. I’d been playing drums for so long—since I was two years old, non-stop. It’s never been a hobby—it’s consumed my life. So many years of playing without warming up or doing any stretching just led to problems with my elbows and knees, primarily.

When we were doing *Good Mourning*, I started having trouble with my right leg. It was almost like muscle spasms were happening, where I had to concentrate so hard to just play the patterns I wanted to play with my right leg. It was definitely a pretty dark period, when I had to confront the possibility of not physically being able to do what I wanted to do.

For *Crimson*, I didn’t have any of those problems. I’m glad to say that I’m in much better health now. I also have a better understanding of my role in the group and my role as an individual. We wrote well together. It was more cohesive and collaborative. We had Jerry Finn producing for the first time. He was supposed to produce *Good Mourning*, but he

was tied up doing the last AFI album. So a combination of all of that, along with just being stronger songwriters and having that natural growth, made the whole process much more enjoyable. We really couldn’t be happier with the outcome.

**MD:** Did anything else change this time around?

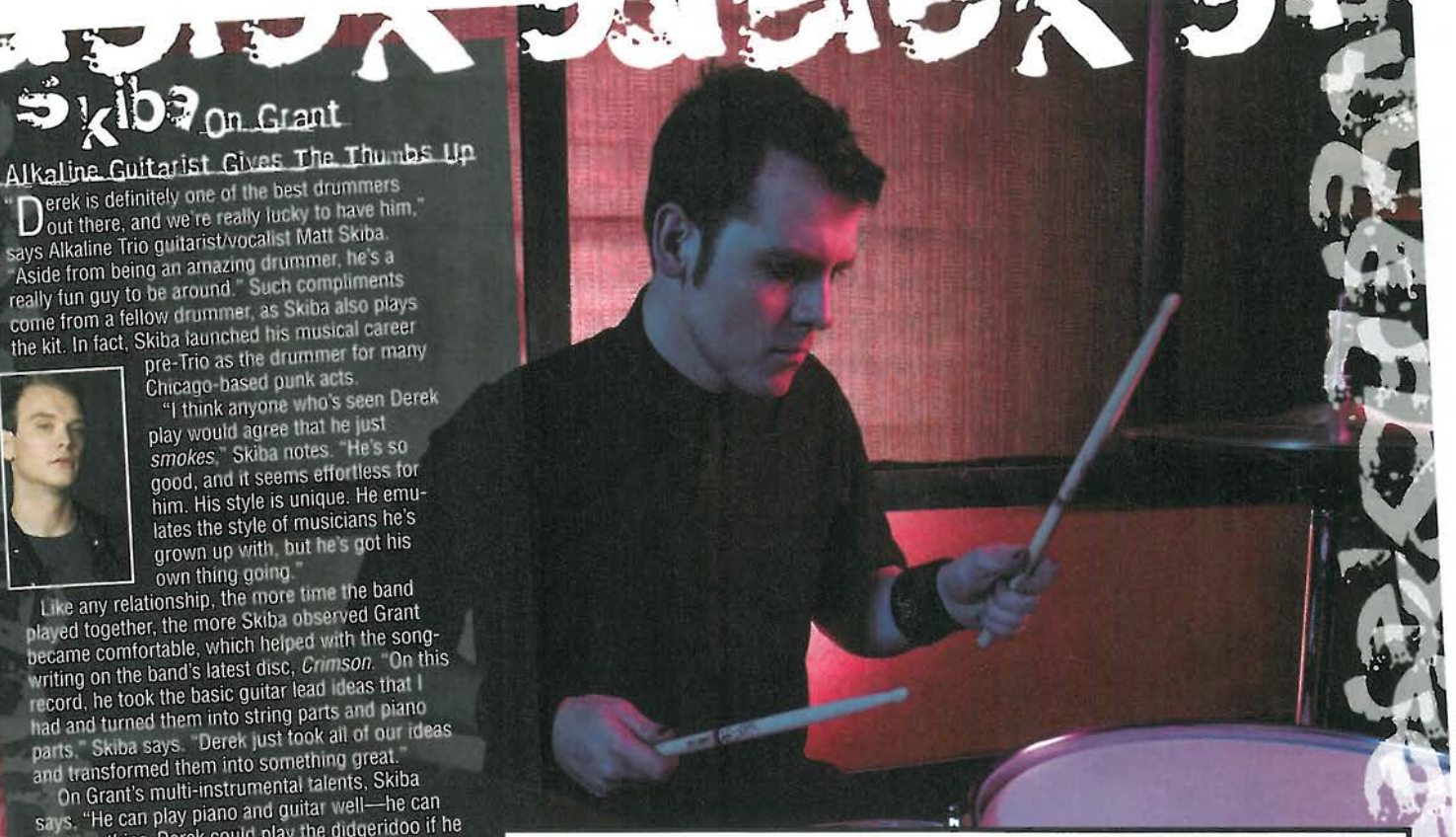
**Derek:** For me personally, it was just a matter of being a little bit more picky about certain takes, like what was good and what was bad. Jerry tried to the best of his ability to be in the studio as much as possible on *Good Mourning*, to help us get the sounds dialed in. But unfortunately he couldn’t be there for a lot of the tracking. This time, I had him around. And he’s a drummer himself, so I had another set of ears. Both of us have a shared love for Bill Stevenson’s playing, so we definitely have some common ground. And we were able to pick through stuff. I just felt a lot more confident having somebody else with that critical ear.

Aside from that, Jerry helped us with song arrangements and the selection of what songs should be on the album. We also did a lot more pre-production this time around. I had worked with Jerry on the first Suicide Machines album that I did, and I think it was relatively early in his career as a producer/engineer. And it was certainly early in my career, so I’m very familiar with Jerry and comfortable working with him.

**MD:** Sonically, what were you looking for out of your drums on *Crimson*?

**Derek:** This time around, I was really thinking of something that would be a cross between Mötley Crüe’s *Dr. Feelgood* and The Cure’s *Disintegration* or maybe their *The Head On The Door*. And likewise, I tried a couple of different approaches in playing on the album to achieve different sounds.

On about half the songs, I tried to play as if I was a drum machine. I tried to approach it in a mechanical way, even to the extent of not



# Skiba on Grant

**Alkaline Guitarist Gives The Thumbs Up**  
 "Derek is definitely one of the best drummers out there, and we're really lucky to have him," says Alkaline Trio guitarist/vocalist Matt Skiba. "Aside from being an amazing drummer, he's a really fun guy to be around." Such compliments come from a fellow drummer, as Skiba also plays the kit. In fact, Skiba launched his musical career pre-Trio as the drummer for many Chicago-based punk acts.



"I think anyone who's seen Derek play would agree that he just smokes," Skiba notes. "He's so good, and it seems effortless for him. His style is unique. He emulates the style of musicians he's grown up with, but he's got his own thing going."

Like any relationship, the more time the band played together, the more Skiba observed Grant became comfortable, which helped with the songwriting on the band's latest disc, *Crimson*. "On this record, he took the basic guitar lead ideas that I had and turned them into string parts and piano parts," Skiba says. "Derek just took all of our ideas and transformed them into something great."

On Grant's multi-instrumental talents, Skiba says, "He can play piano and guitar well—he can play anything. Derek could play the didgeridoo if he wanted to. Music is second-nature to him."

Skiba says that he'd record ideas and send them to Grant over the Internet. "Nine times out of ten, I'd just record a guitar track and let him run with it," Skiba admits. "He and I tend to think about things in similar ways, but sometimes he'd come up with something that I never would have thought of."  
**Waleed Rashidi**

recording the cymbals or toms live; just doing kick, snare, and hi-hat and overdubbing the rest. It really gave me the opportunity to play around with a lot of sounds and performances and to do certain things that just aren't humanly possible, like overlapping hi-hat with ride cymbal and overlapping toms with kick and snare—not the usual stuff. We also used a lot of different drum setups, as opposed to *Good Mourning*, where we only used one.

**MD:** How did you decide which setup to use?

**Derek:** We pretty much did it on a song-by-song basis. We didn't have all the time in the world, so what ended up happening is we had to kind of group songs together. There were two or three songs where I felt like one setup would be sufficient, and then we'd change the setup for another three songs. We started with the kit that I use live—which had a 24" kick. When we did *Good Mourning*, I used a 22". So I made the switch to a 24", a 13" rack, and a 16" floor, and I went through a bunch of different snares, including the one that was used on

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**Sticks:** Pro-Mark 5B (hickory with wood tip)

**Microphones:** Shure SM57 on snare, Audix D4 on toms, Audio-Technica AT2500 on kick





Nirvana's *Nevermind*.

We tried out a bunch of different things. C&C, the company that I work with, sent a couple of snares that sounded great. We used those quite a bit. We also rented quite a few snares to get some different flavors. We started off pretty basic, just using a four-piece, and then added a 12" tom for one song. I don't usually run two rack toms, but I thought the track could benefit from having a little more variety. And then we went to a 26" kick, which is what I'm using live now.

**MD:** That's a big drum.

**Derek:** It's amazing. Our front-of-house engineer said that my switching to a 26" is like somebody driving a pickup truck for their entire life and then driving a semi. It's just huge and feels unbelievable.

**MD:** I've played a 26" kick before; it takes a little getting used to.

**Derek:** Yeah, it takes a little bit more out of you. But there's just something about it that feels good to me. It's a very empowering kick drum. Plus, it just looks great.

Obviously, Alkaline Trio is a fairly visual band. When I was a kid, I'd watch Tommy Aldridge and Tommy Lee play with their

rack toms positioned flat, and all of their drums were huge. It all looked so cool to me, and that's all I wanted. And from a profile, having the kick drum be 14" deep and having a 13" rack tom, it just lines up so nicely and looks great. I guess I've got some sort of obsessive-compulsive complex, where everything's got to be perfect. [laughs]

**MD:** How easy was it overdubbing your parts?

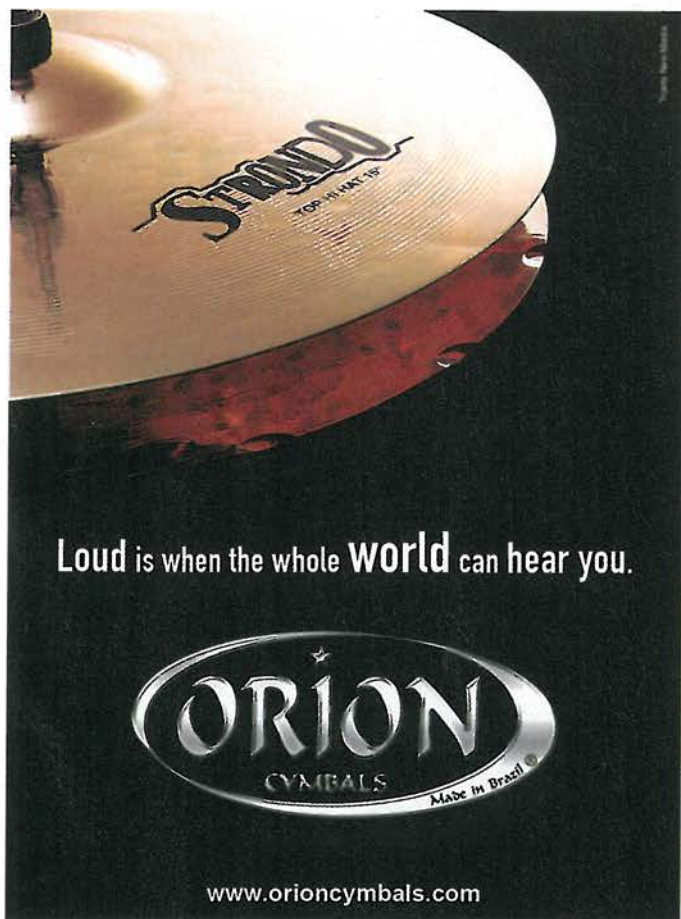
**Derek:** I'd concentrate on kick, snare, and hats, and once I had a solid take, I'd go back and do cymbal overdubs, which ended up being a little more difficult than I had anticipated. The challenge was trying to achieve a natural feel, because I think I was anticipating too much, sitting there with the headphones on and no drums, just a couple of crash cymbals and a ride cymbal. I think I was on top of the beat a little bit, whereas when I play normally, I'm a little more laid back.

The only song that was quite a bit different was "Burn," because it uses some drum loops. I recorded elements of the loop and then pieced it together. There are some live drums in the choruses and in the

bridge, which I did separately. I did the drum loop elements and before I did the composite of the loops, I went through and recorded the choruses and the bridge. I think due to time constraints, they ended up tracking guitar and bass to a click, because I still hadn't put the loops together. So everything happened in a really weird sequence. It definitely sounded a bit bizarre right up to when we mixed it.

There were some songs where I was trying to achieve as natural a feel as possible, so I wanted to leave pockets where toms or a crash could be overdubbed. In those cases, I was air-drumming where there would be cymbals. There's video of me doing that, which is actually up on our fan club site. I don't think anybody's actually caught on to the fact that there are no cymbals on the kit!

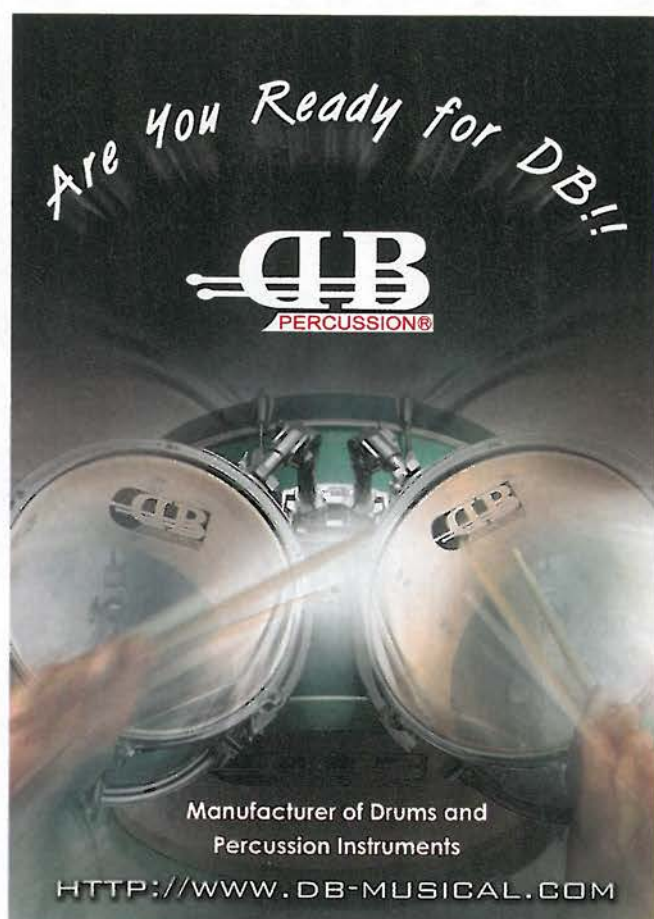
Part of my fascination with some of the Cure albums, especially *The Head On The Door*, is the fact that it seems as if the drum overdubs are obvious. The drummer might be playing quarter notes and then they'd overdub 16ths. I caught onto weird little things like that. It would sound very unnatural. Depending on what the desired effect



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## Derek Grant

was for our record, I'd approach it in different ways. All in all, I think the drums were done in nine days, and I had a blast doing them.

**MD:** How much interaction was there between you and your bandmates in constructing your drum parts?

**Derek:** Both Matt and Danny have a really good ear for drums. On this album, a good portion of the songs were demoed by Matt alone with a drum machine, and likewise with Dan. A lot of times, it would be one pattern throughout, and that's kind of where

the concept of my playing certain songs as if I were a drum machine came from. I heard these patterns that Matt had used on his demos and they sounded cool to me. The feel was really cool and it suited the song, so I tried to match it to a certain degree.

**MD:** You've got this really deliberate snap of the wrist with your right arm, particularly with your ride cymbal and hi-hat. How did this develop?

**Derek:** I really feel that my playing, my technique, has come a long way, just in the past five or six years. When I was a kid, all I

wanted to play was Led Zeppelin songs or speed metal and punk songs. I was focusing more on endurance—being able to hit hard and play fast.

I started to simplify what I was doing

around the time I was on the road with The Suicide Machines, opening for The Descendents on one of their reunion tours. I got to watch Bill Stevenson play every night. They'd play a song where the entire verse would be a simple beat, and Bill would be so reserved and look very relaxed. Then for the chorus, bridge, or anything that would take a little more energy, he had it. His pacing was amazing. And that was a turning point for me. I was like, Okay, I need to have a better understanding of this. I need to reserve and not be so concerned about being the fastest, loudest drummer.

It took me a while to integrate these concepts into my playing. A couple of years later I was turned onto the Mahavishnu Orchestra and some of the Miles Davis electric stuff. I started listening to a lot of different fusion drummers. I checked out Billy Cobham, which, oddly enough, figures into the whole Descendents thing.

**MD:** Yeah, Bill Stevenson is a big fan of fusion.

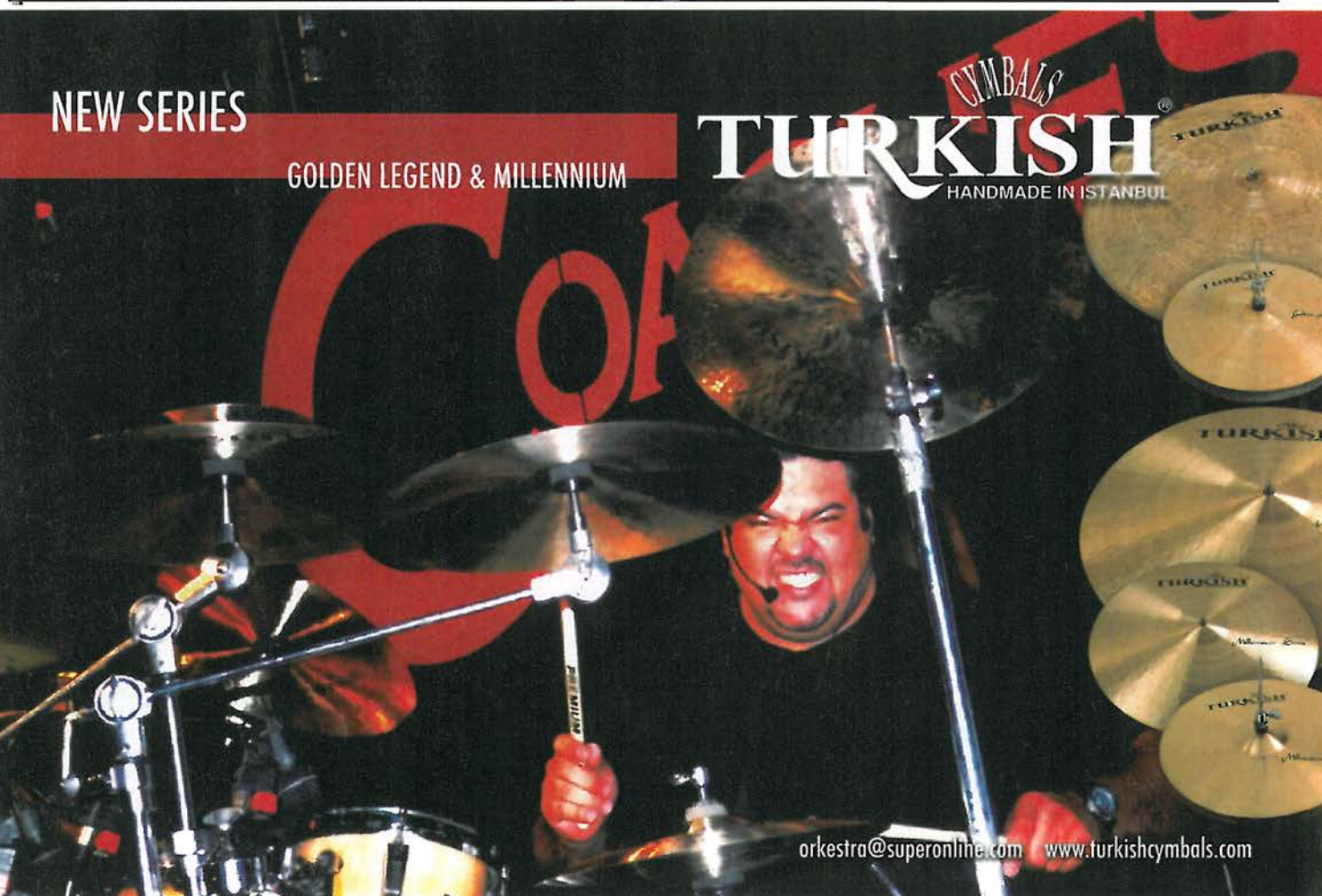
**Derek:** I wish I had known that when I was on that tour. It would probably have given Bill and me a whole new subject to talk



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about. But I just wasn't familiar with that music at the time and didn't draw that parallel until a couple years later.

So lately I've been listening to a lot of Mahavishnu stuff and watching videos of Cobham playing, and I've been impressed by his ambidexterity. I've been heading in that direction myself. I try to be as ambidextrous as possible. It allows me to do a lot more on the kit.

Of course, the old Derek—the showboat, the guy who wants to be noticed—is still a part of my playing. I always enjoyed the way someone like Chuck Biscuits plays. The guy wails on every drum he has, but he does it in an interesting way. He would hit the bell of his ride where he'd sweep across it with his entire body, horizontally. I guess that's probably where the seed for that kind of playing style came from.

**MD:** Working with The Alkaline Trio must be pretty physical. What do you do to handle that part of the gig?

**Derek:** I'm more physically active now. I'm taking more of an interest in my health and my wellbeing than ever before. I now run and I do some weight training, although I'm not trying to become muscle-bound. I also

do a lot more stretching prior to shows, which is very important.

**MD:** Your band appeals to plenty of younger musicians. What advice can you offer up-and-coming drummers?

**Derek:** I suggest that they play along with some sort of metronome. I think that's something that is too often overlooked. I know drummers, even at a very professional level, who are strongly opposed to playing with a metronome, and some of those guys could definitely benefit from it.

**MD:** Is that one of your biggest pet peeves?

**Derek:** At this point in my life, overplaying and bad meter are two things that really drive me up a wall. A lot of younger bands get into a studio to record a demo, and the drummer doesn't know how to play to a click—or doesn't want to play to a click—and you end up with a mess, a train wreck.

I think it's important to understand how to play to a metronome and to know where you



stand as far as your natural meter is concerned—to know whether or not you have a tendency to rush. Certainly there's a natural window of acceptability that exists. Some things need to fall into the pocket, and some things can be a little rushed. But you have to be able to control it.



Check out Derek and Alkaline Trio on MD Radio at [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).

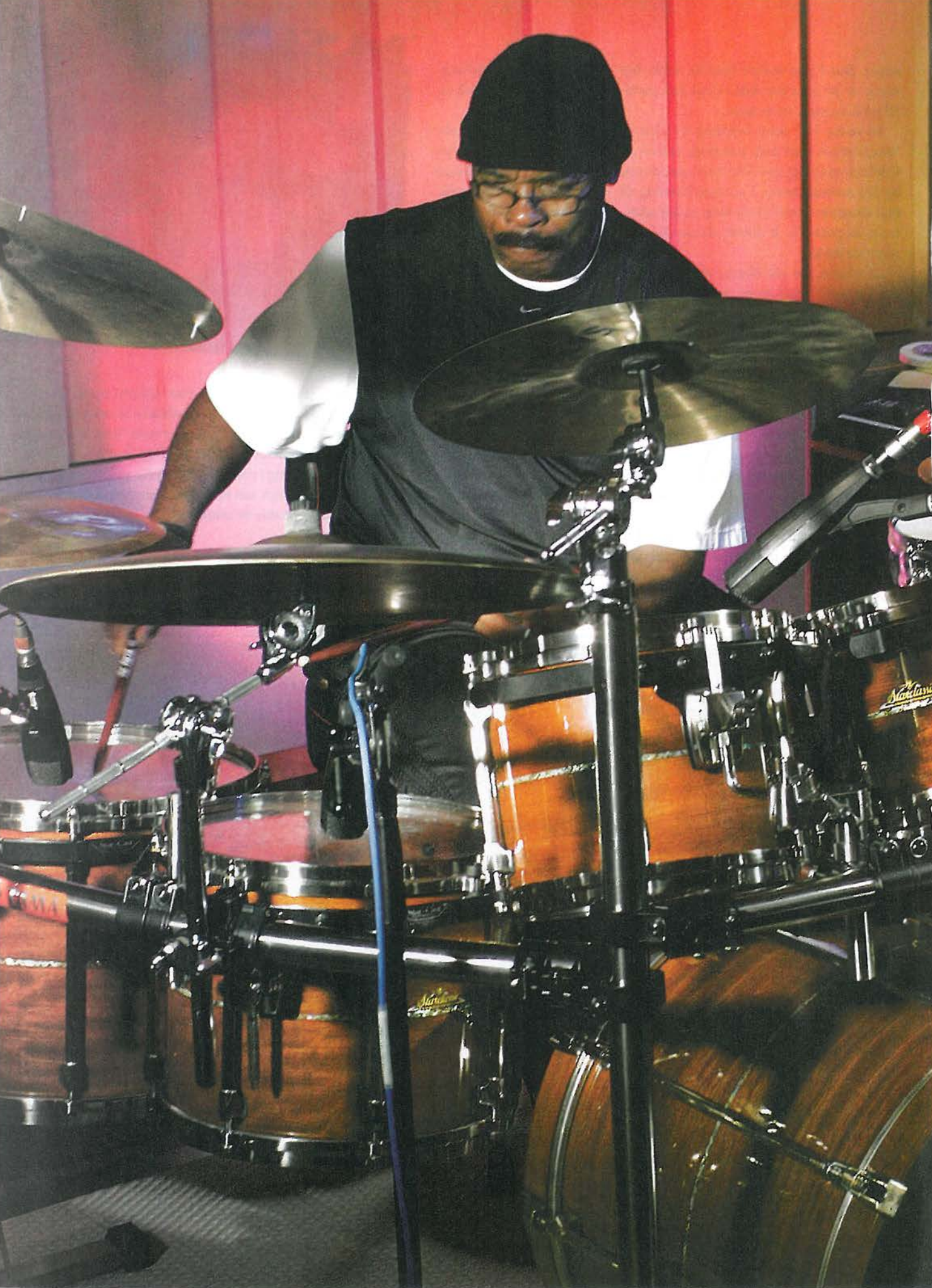


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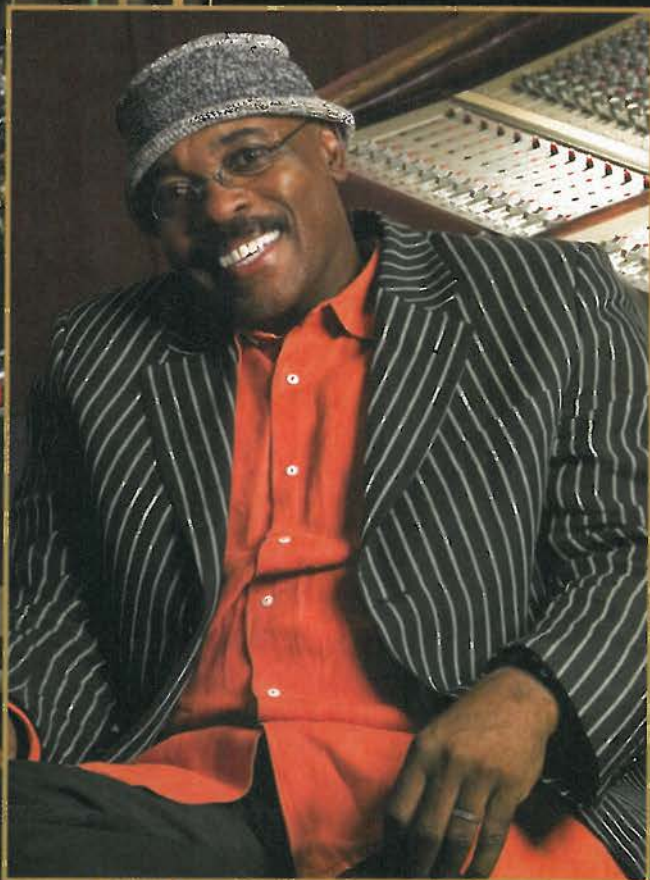
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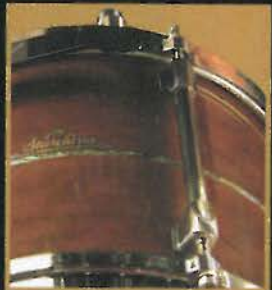
# harvey mason

## change is good

he's achieved the respect of both his peers and the public. He's played with everyone from Sinatra to Seal, and from Notorious BIG to Fourplay (his own band with Nathan East, Bob James and Larry Carlton). So when everything's good, why change anything? "Because sometimes change is good," replies drumming legend Harvey Mason explaining his move to TAMA's new Starclassic Bubinga Omni-Tune drums. "And I felt it was time for a change. For some time I wanted a newer, fresher sound and new energy. Then one day I was at Drum Paradise, where I keep my drums. They were going over the new Omni-Tunes. I heard the drums and I kind of fell in love." But Harvey didn't simply change right then and there. "I tried them for over a year before I made the commitment. I visited the TAMA factory. I saw how the drums were made, which was amazing. I conferred with TAMA's R&D department and saw how eager they were to treat things differently and create new products. And finally, the combination of the bubinga shells and the tuning system made making a change very easy and very natural."



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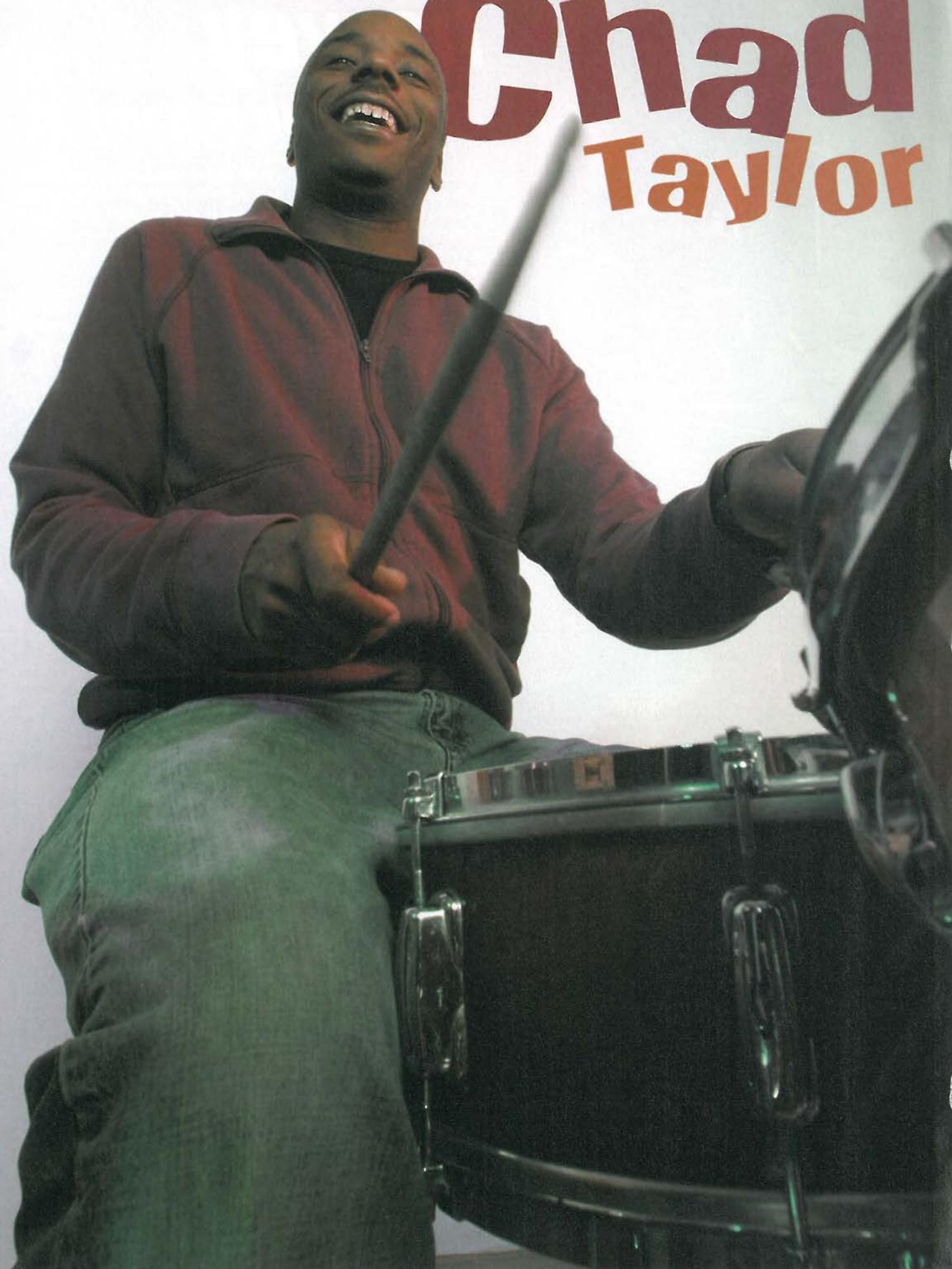
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# Chad Taylor



# Freedom in Diversity

Story by Michael Parillo

Photos by Paul La Raia

**F**ew musicians can move comfortably through as many worlds as thirty-two-year-old Chad Taylor. On different days, on different records, on different stages, Taylor can be a vastly different drummer. Take his work on a couple of recent releases. On guitarist Marc Ribot's *Spiritual Unity*, Taylor's patterns are an ever-shifting blur of rowdy abstraction. The drummer draws from his impressive pedigree as one of Chicago's free-jazz torchbearers, a new generation of players influenced by Hamid Drake, Don Moye, and one of Taylor's many collaborators, tenor great Fred Anderson. Here, when Taylor calms down a little, he swings—hard.

Then listen to *Who's Your New Professor*, the breezy sophomore release from singer/songwriter Sam Prekop. It's hard to recognize the same drummer from Ribot's band. On *Professor*, Taylor strings together airy, carefully measured backbeats, and though his patterns bounce, they hardly swing. Far from the cutting edge, Taylor is happy playing something you don't hear much from a jazz drummer: straight, slow 8th notes on the ride—for an entire song.

Taylor can operate under these extremes, and he can do just about everything in between. At a small club gig in Park Slope, Brooklyn, with bassist/composer Chris Lightcap (Regina Carter, Cecil Taylor), the drummer created a rumbling, tumbling, Elvinesque wave of rhythm that kept toes tapping even as the beat was being carved up in ever more complex ways. Taylor whipped his brushes into a fluttering swing pattern, and he laid down a wide, groovy beat, but he never quite moved into abstract territory. And no matter how frenetic his playing became, he looked like he was dealing a friendly hand of blackjack.

**T**aylor, who was born in Arizona but moved to Chicago at age eleven, may be best known as part of the famously experimental Chicago Underground, a group formed in the mid-'90s by cornetist Rob Mazurek and guitarist Jeff Parker. Mixing jazz and free-jazz with groove-based material and electronic experiments, the ever-mutating collective expands and contracts like an accordion and has released albums as a duo, trio, quartet, and orchestra. Taylor has been there for every one, including 2004's *Slon*. This latest CU trio album is the group's most fully realized effort, pulsating with deep, dark improvisations and remaining ear-friendly while still ushering the listener into new sonic territory.

But that's not all. Far from it. Taylor is also a member of Sticks And Stones, another mainstay of the Chicago free-jazz circuit. On the more straightforward side, he grooves mightily on *The Relatives*, the playful, boogaloo-tinged new record by Tortoise/CU guitarist Parker. And he does occasional gigs as the leader of a loose ensemble called Active Ingredients, which issued a rhythm-packed album, *Titration*, on Delmark Records in 2003. A prolific composer—the guitar is his primary song-writing tool—Taylor has contributed tracks to just about all of the albums he's played on recently. His tunes on *Titration* are moody and melodic, inspired not only by jazz but also by Latin and African music.

MD spoke with Chad, who's now based in New York City, a few days after he returned from a month-long European tour that found him playing with no fewer than four acts on different nights: Sticks And Stones, Spiritual Unity, Fred Anderson, and Sam Prekop. Now *that's* good planning.

**MD:** Years ago, you came from Chicago to study jazz at the New School in New York City. Were you able to support yourself after school as your career started rolling?

**Chad:** Yeah, and the funny thing was, after I was working with The Chicago Underground and I came back to New

York, everybody was like, "Oh, Chad from Chicago!" And people started calling me to do stuff. And then, when I was in Chicago, people were like, "Oh, Chad from New York!" [laughs]

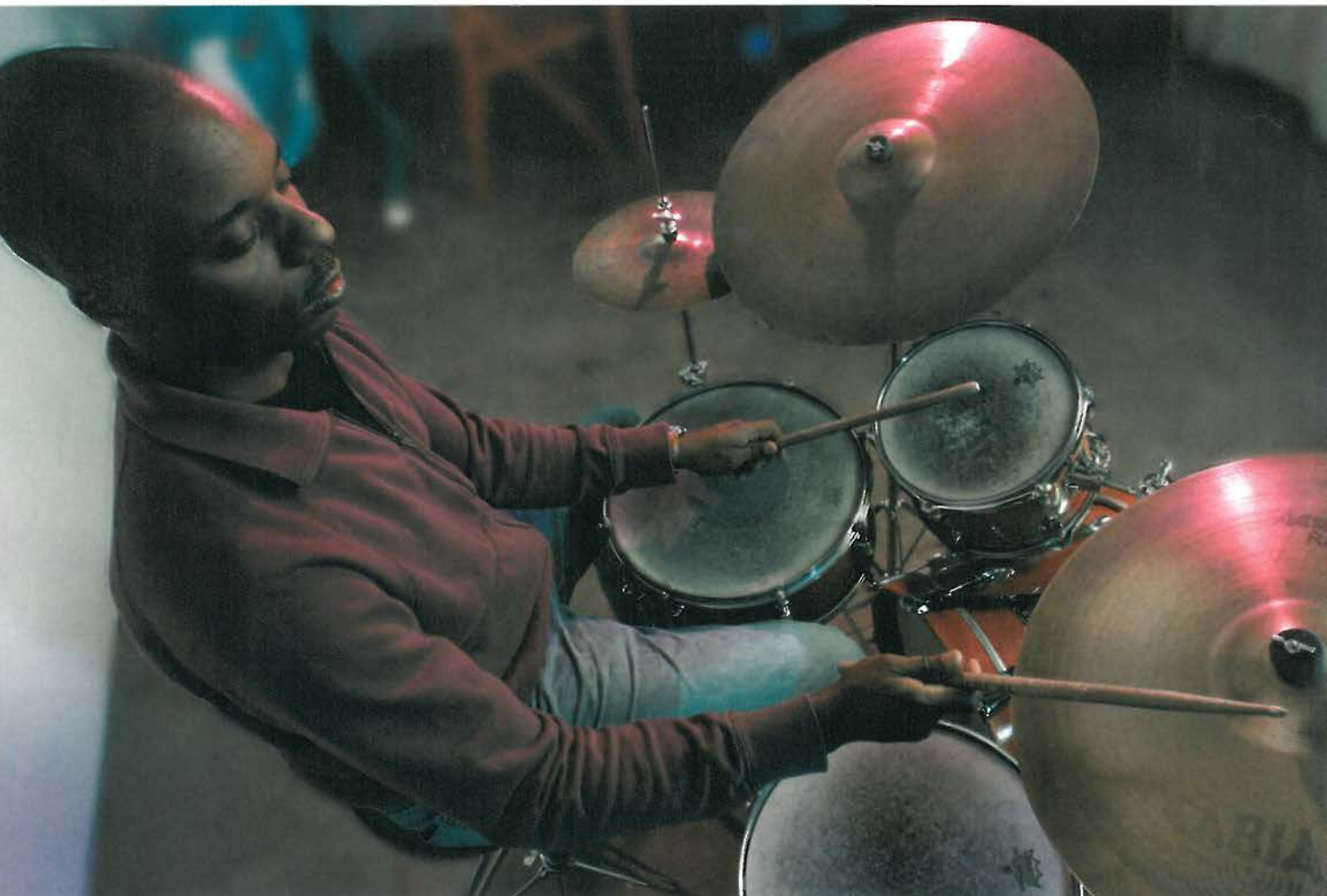
**MD:** How did The Chicago Underground come together?

**Chad:** Rob Mazurek and Jeff Parker had a workshop, an early three o'clock gig every Sunday, where they were able to do pretty much whatever they wanted. That developed into The Chicago Underground. I wasn't there at the very beginning of the workshops. But when I came into the picture the workshops were still going, and we did the first record, *Playground*, as The Chicago Underground Orchestra.

**MD:** Since that orchestra release, the group has put out albums as a duo, trio, and quartet. How does that work?

**Chad:** Sometimes it's just who's available. The duo [Taylor and Mazurek] started when our bass player wasn't able to play. It was sort of an accident, and it turned

out to be something we both enjoyed doing. But then the different groups developed their own personalities. If you add or take away one person, it's a totally different band. I see them as three completely different groups, although they have the same members.





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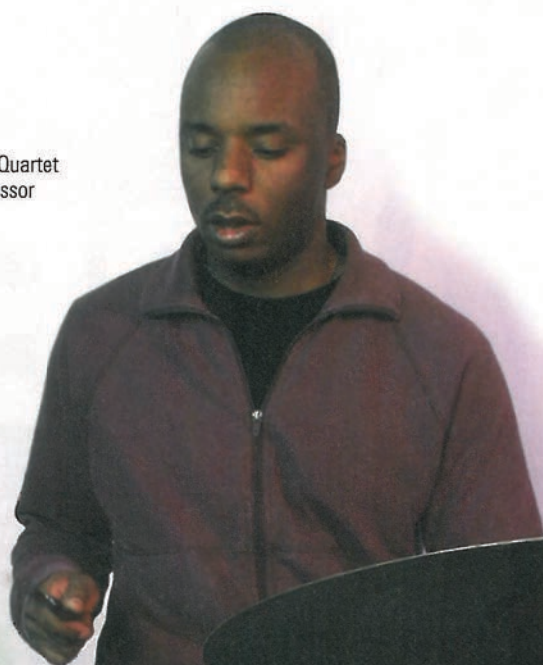


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# Taylor Tracks

Artist	Album
Chicago Underground Duo	Axis And Alignment
Chicago Underground Quartet	Chicago Underground Quartet
Sam Prekop	Who's Your New Professor
Chad Taylor	Titration
Jeff Parker	Like-Coping
Cooper-Moore	Triptych Myth
Brokeback	Looks At The Bird
Marc Ribot	Spiritual Unity



**Artist**  
Jerome Cooper  
Milford Graves  
Curtis Mayfield  
Elmo Hope  
Andrew Hill  
Tortoise  
Archie Shepp

## Chad's Faves

**Album**  
Unpredictability Of Predictability  
Grand Unification  
Curtis/Live!  
Elmo Hope Trio  
Compulsion  
Standards  
The Magic Of Ju-Ju

## Drummer

Jerome Cooper  
Milford Graves  
Tyronne McCutten  
Frank Butler  
Joe Chambers  
Dan Bitney, John Herndon, John McEntire  
Ed Blackwell, Dennis Chambers, Beaver Harris

## Chad Taylor

**MD:** How would you describe the New York vs. Chicago approach?

**Chad:** You have a history in Chicago of musicians playing all sorts of music, so to even say "I'm a jazz drummer" or "I'm a rock drummer" is sort of a weird thing. And that's just survival, because if you're playing one specific thing, you're not going to pay the bills. You listen to a drummer like Hamid Drake, who's one of my favorites, and he has all these different styles incorporated into his drumming.

In New York, it's the exact opposite. You have to choose. You have to say, "Okay, I'm gonna play post-bop from this certain year, or whatever, and that's my thing."

It's also where your placement is on the beat. On the East Coast a lot of music is on top of the beat, really pushing. And in Chicago you have a more laid-back style. That's just a generalization. And I'm not trying to say one is better than the other, it's just different ways of dealing with it.

**MD:** By this definition, would you say you're more of a Chicago drummer?

**Chad:** That's a good question. I would think so. I've been influenced a lot by Don Moye and Steve McCall, and these are drummers who have a very raw style. Don Moye is from the Art Ensemble Of Chicago, and Steve McCall was in the band Air with Henry Threadgill and Fred Hopkins. They're not afraid to hit the drums, and they're not afraid to really go for it. It's not all crisp and clean, and I like to have that approach too.

**MD:** When did you start working with Fred Anderson?

**Chad:** That happened when I came back to Chicago. My friend, the bass player Josh Abrams, put together a recording session, and I was nervous and terrified. I knew I was playing with one of the founders of Chicago-style free-jazz. And so I didn't

really play the way I play—I played the way I thought Fred wanted me to, which was a big mistake. The session turned out to be a disaster.

Weeks went by, and then I saw Fred playing with Hamid Drake. Hamid would go from one rhythm to another, and the one was always changing. He'd play a twelve-measure blues and it would be fourteen measures, or there'd be a measure of four and a measure of three. It was open, but in time. And these are things that I was dealing with too, and I was sort of like, "Wow, why wasn't I playing like that when I



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- C. 14x14 floor tom
- D. 16x20 bass drum

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- 3. 20" Sabian Sound Control ride
- 4. 18" Sabian crash

**Hardware:** various

**Heads:** Remo coated Ambassadors on all drums

**Sticks:** Vic Firth SD10 model

**Percussion:** Deagan vibraphone (on Chicago Underground gigs only)

played that session?"

Then I got the opportunity to play with Fred again, and I was able to play more the way that I hear that sort of music. And we've been playing together ever since.

**MD:** Some of your recordings are much more accessible. Are you still playing lots of free music?

**Chad:** I'm sort of upset by the fact that in New York you have to choose. I really think people look at me as this experimental Chicago guy. So most of the stuff I do is experimental music, free-jazz—whatever you want to call it. But I really like playing all sorts of music. I like structure, but I also like freedom.

**MD:** You have a well-rounded "world" background in terms of jazz, Latin, and African patterns. Do you think about what

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**"I'm sort of upset by the fact that in New York you have to choose. I like structure, but I also like freedom."**

you want to draw from a given piece?

**Chad:** I'm really into composition, and I think the piece dictates what will happen. There's not just one thing that can happen, there are different possibilities.

**MD:** Will you try totally different things?

**Chad:** Yeah. I'll try things that will sound terrible, just to see what'll happen. I try to play from a point where I act like I don't know what I'm doing. A lot of times I *don't* know what I'm doing, and I try to figure out what really works. It might take me a couple of passes to find the right thing.

**MD:** Just about every album you play on features music that you've written.

**Chad:** I think, "I'm a musician and I play the drums," rather than "I'm the drummer." Drummers are such great musicians, and the songs they write are incredible. Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Joe Chambers, Jeff "Tain" Watts—they're all great writers. I'm talking jazz drummers, but with rock drummers it's the same thing. I'm just trying to bring good songs to the table.

**MD:** Do drum parts tend to be the last thing on your mind when you write a tune?

**Chad:** Yeah, I think so. It's sort of like, that'll work itself out. [laughs]

**MD:** When you're the leader, do you let the group bring their own thing to your music?

**Chad:** For certain. But *Titration* was the first record I did as a leader, and I learned a lot, because I had this idea in my head of how I wanted everything to sound. And that's not what happened, not at all.

For the title song, "Titration," I tried to explain over and over how I wanted it to go. While we were playing, I was like, "Everyone, stop. This is not going the way I want it." So I explained it again, and we played it again. "Stop, this isn't it." And people kept playing it the exact same way. It's a long tune, like ten minutes. We finished, and I was so upset that I had to leave the studio. I walked around the block, just to calm down. And that tune wound up being my favorite tune on the record. [laughs] So things often work out in ways you can't really predict, and sometimes it's good, sometimes it's not.

**MD:** Do you think you'll make another album with that band?

**Chad:** I don't know. I've been thinking about it. Another project I've been thinking about is putting together a band to play old Gospel music from, like, the '20s and '30s, but in a more modern way.

**MD:** You're fond of rumbling around the toms and playing fast tom-based beats.

**Chad:** There was a period at the New School where I was really cymbal heavy. I hardly played any toms at all. Bass players loved to play with me, because there was nothing to interfere with their tones. And then over a period of time I started listening to a lot of Elvin and Milford Graves, and I was like, "I want to play some *drums*."

**MD:** When you're playing frenetic stuff on the toms, are you thinking slow and playing fast?

**Chad:** I approach each tune differently, but I like to subdivide and think of all the

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## Chad Taylor

spaces that you have in the beat. Some spaces you fill up and some you don't. That can evolve through the tune.

**MD:** Your *Titration* drum solo, "Dependent Origination," also includes the kind of tomtom thing that I'm talking about.

**Chad:** That's basically playing a lot of drums! [laughs] For that solo, I took some extra drums that were just lying around and put them in this weird configuration and tuned them in a very strange way. Then I

have influenced that side of your playing?

**Chad:** Of drummers playing now, I think the biggest influence has been the drummers in Tortoise and The Sea And Cake, John McEntire, Johnny Herndon, and Dan Bitney.

**MD:** How is playing with Prekop different from some of the more jazz-oriented things you do?

**Chad:** Playing with a backbeat is the biggest difference. It's also focusing more

on the groove and being part-oriented rather than improvising. And there are little differences, like instead of traditional I play matched grip. I approach the drums in a compositional way, so in a way it's not different from anything else I do—it's just playing what the song calls for. I don't really think, "Now I'm playing a rock gig."

**MD:** When you gig with Prekop, do you bring out different gear?

**Chad:** No. Same cymbals, same sticks.

**MD:** How did the recording work for *Professor*?

**Chad:** This record and the first record [Sam Prekop] were almost opposites. For the first one, everything came together in the studio. With this record, Sam had written all his parts and had come up with the lyrics ahead of time, and we played the songs over and over until the band came up with their parts.

**MD:** On Jeff Parker's latest, *The Relatives*, your work is stripped down, but in a different way than you play on the Prekop records. Was that conscious?

**Chad:** I'll put it like this: We wanted to make a record where people from the jazz world would be like, "Is this really jazz?" It's on the border of a lot of different things. It almost has that jam-band feel, like we're just gonna groove. It's also close to jazz-rock, but it's not really that either. There are sections of improvisation, but it's not like, "I'm taking a solo, check me out!"

**MD:** The album really gives you a chance to show off your brushwork.

**Chad:** There's such an art to brushes that



**"I'll try things that will sound terrible, just to see what'll happen."**

just went for it. It was an experiment to get in a space where nothing is preconceived, nothing is worked out, you just see what happens.

**MD:** The new Sam Prekop record is quite different for you.

**Chad:** I'll tell you, I've always been a jazz drummer. That's what people call me. But I love to rock out, man. And that's one of the few records where I got to do that on a few tunes.

**MD:** It doesn't sound like a jazz drummer playing pop.

**Chad:** Now, that's the best compliment. I really hope I get a chance to do some more stuff like that.

**MD:** Who are some of the drummers who

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## Chad Taylor

I'm still trying to figure out and get together. I really like Elvin's brushwork because he approaches it just like sticks: "Okay, I have brushes now, but I can do everything I do with sticks on brushes."

For "Beanstalk," which I played brushes on, I was playing a strict rhythm and repeating it over and over, but it wasn't working. It sounded corny. Then I started phrasing it so that it's completely different every time, and that gave it a flow and opened it up.

**MD:** Back on the "freer" side of things, how long have you been playing with Spiritual Unity?

**Chad:** It's about a year old. Playing with Marc Ribot, [bassist] Henry Grimes, and [trumpeter] Roy Campbell, I'm definitely the baby, the least experienced. It can be very intimidating, because they've been around the block a few times. And yet the nature of the band is that if I play in a timid way, it's all over. So the challenge for me right away was to get over the fact that I'm playing with some of my heroes. I think I've accomplished that. That record was done before a European tour, so I think the band sounds a lot better now.

**MD:** Your playing is a real melting pot. Many of your ride patterns sound Afro-Cuban, and the Prekop stuff has a Brazilian influence. Have you studied Afro-Cuban and Brazilian drumming?

**Chad:** I study it by listening. I listen to a lot of different music, and I'll play along with records or transcribe things.

I think there are a lot of possibilities in dealing with those rhythms, but not doing it in a traditional way. Think about the jazz cymbal rhythm, da dat-da-da. That's great. But instead of playing the typical ride pattern, I'll play some type of Afro-Cuban rhythm or something in a straight-8th feel, but I'll comp with my left hand as if I was playing a swing pattern. That can open up a lot of stuff.

**MD:** Do you practice much?

**Chad:** Now I do, and I'm really happy about that, because for the longest time I didn't have a studio. So every chance I had to play was like practicing. Now I've got a space right around the corner from my apartment.

Before this trip I had been practicing a lot but not warming up, and I actually got some tendinitis in my right hand. I wasn't taking care of myself. I was really pushing,

doing things I wasn't ready to do but just doing them anyway. The problems escalated right before the tour, and I was really nervous. I was even losing feeling in my fingers at times.

I saw a doctor about it, and when I started the tour I had to wear a wrist brace. I was in pain for about the first week, and then things just worked themselves out. Now I'm fine, but every time I get on the drums, whether I'm practicing or playing a gig, warming up is the first thing I do. You can't go from playing at one tempo to twice as fast. You've got to take your steps. I found that out the hard way. [laughs]

**MD:** What do you do to warm up?

**Chad:** I do a thing with single-stroke rolls for about ten minutes. I'll start with a five-stroke roll, then six-stroke, seven-stroke, eight-stroke, up to thirteen strokes. Then I go back down. That's pretty much my standard thing. It's really been good for me.

**MD:** Do you start out slow?

**Chad:** Yeah, I start off slow and get faster and faster.

**MD:** Do you use a metronome for this?

**Chad:** No.

**MD:** What kinds of things do you work on when you're practicing by yourself?

**Chad:** Sometimes I work on specific technical things. Like now I'm trying to really learn how to play with my fingers. Or I'll work on playing solos in different time signatures, or playing a certain form. I also have a book of rhythms that I've transcribed from different records, so I'll try to hit some of those. Lately I've been really into Roy Haynes and his comping, so I have a little section of stuff that I've transcribed from Roy. I just work on a part and try to develop my own language around it.

I like to work on things that I don't know how to play. It's taken me a long time to even learn how to practice. I think that's one of the reasons I hadn't done it in so long. Back in school you'd go by the drum rooms and everyone's playing all this stuff that sounds great. You'd be like, "I wish I could play like that." But, you know, practicing is about playing what you *don't* know how to play. You're not supposed to sound good when you're practicing! [laughs]

**MD:** How have you developed your endurance and ability to play fast ride patterns without petering out?

**Chad:** A lot of it is just learning how to

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## Chad Taylor

relax. I often find that my right hand will start to get tense after playing a really fast pattern, and I have to make a conscious effort to relax. Sometimes that happens by playing something different, or playing a feel with my right hand that gives it a break for a second. I switch it up and come back, and then I'm cool.

**MD:** Do you do independence exercises?

**Chad:** I've worked a lot on that, but I've also been working on the opposite. Of course it's great to have independence, but what I've been really working on late-

ly is playing rhythms with all four limbs at the same time. It sounds easy, but it can be very challenging.

In the free-jazz world, there are also times when you don't have a specific relationship between your different limbs. I've been working a lot on that too. You can be playing something with your left foot and something with your right foot, and there's no relationship that can be written out. That's coming from Sunny Murray or Milford Graves, drummers like that.

**MD:** I'm still trying to get a handle on the

philosophy behind free playing. What's going through your mind when you're in the middle of it? I know it's a pain-in-the-neck question....

**Chad:** I mean, you asked it. [laughs]

**MD:** I want to understand it!

**Chad:** I want to understand it too. Free-jazz comes from the tradition and the history of jazz, so having an understanding of that music definitely comes into play. But it depends on the situation.

I'll tell you about something that happened to me recently. I was playing with a new free-jazz band I've been working with, with a musician I really respect. And he sat me down one day and was like, "Chad, you sound good, but there's this one little problem that I have with your playing: You're a really good listener." [laughs]

It really took me for a spin. But in this particular situation, the improvisation that I'm doing has to be equal to everybody else's. I don't want to say as "aggressive," but as *dominant*. But then I'm in other situations where it really is about listening, where you're reacting to what's happening around you.

**MD:** Can you do the wrong thing in free-jazz?

**Chad:** Absolutely. The notion is, "It's free," so anything goes. But I've had experiences where I've done the wrong thing, and if anybody knows, it's musicians. I've come to realize that it's very easy to get trapped into playing free music in a way where you're just playing the same song over and over again and it sounds the same. You might as well be playing a Led Zeppelin cover or something.

You want to be in a place where the music is improvised on the spot. That's really the heart of it: being in a place where everything you practiced and worked out the day before—everything you *know* how to play—is out the window. That's where the freedom comes from. There's a way of being too comfortable, and you can get locked and miss what's happening around you.

Jeff Parker told me about this Sun Ra quote: If you play everything that you know how to play, you're dealing with finite possibilities, a very limited amount. But when you deal with what you *don't* know how to play, you're dealing with the infinite.

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Big Band Great

# Jake Hanna

Straight From The Heart

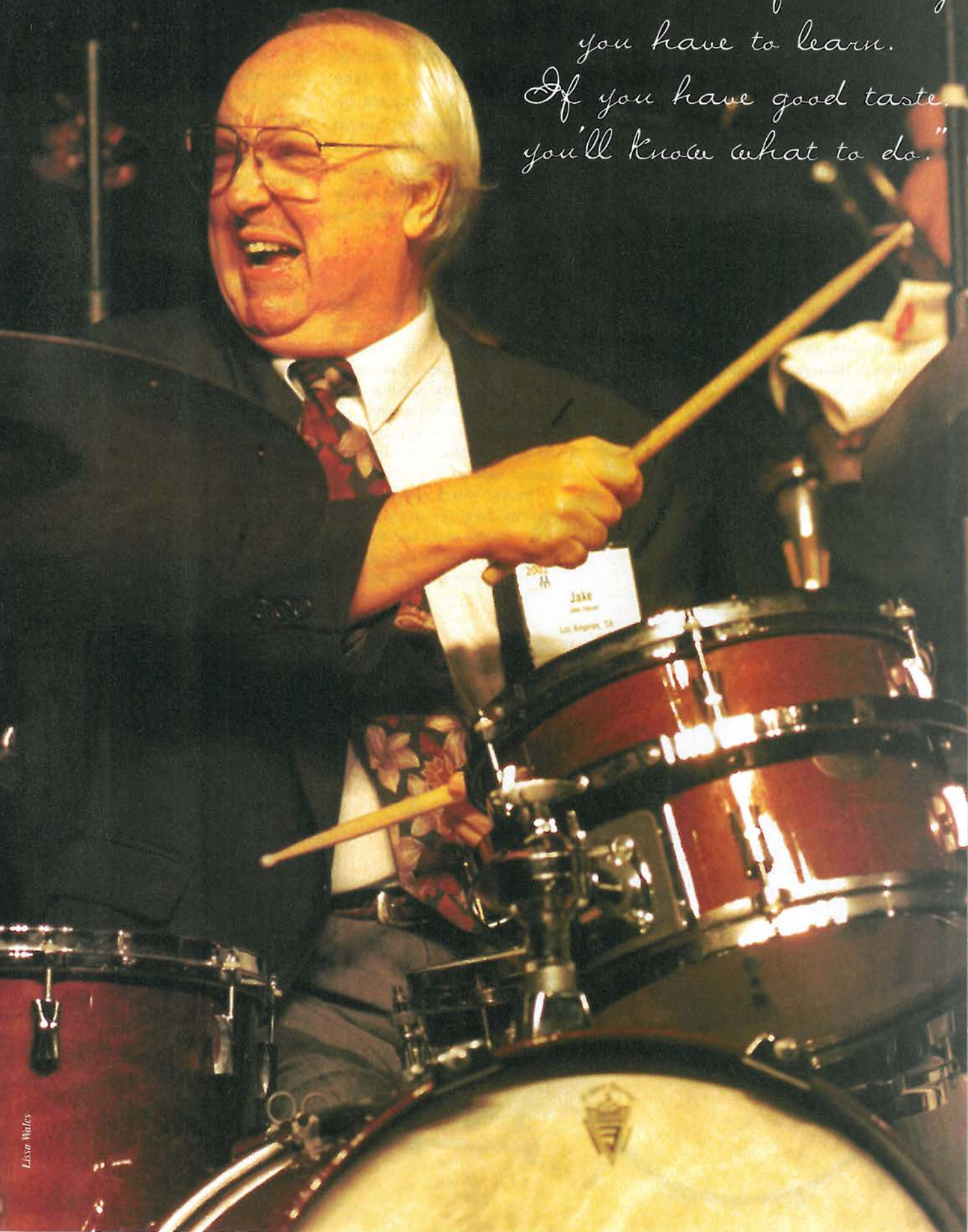
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Jake Hanna is what you call a purist. He believes in playing an acoustic instrument straight from the heart—no charts, no rehearsals, completely improvisational, and in the moment. For that reason, you won't see a lengthy discography from Hanna. Mostly what he's done was captured live, either on a gig or in the studio—live. And unfortunately there's very little of it available. You may have to raid some rare record stores or your dad's old LPs to find something he's on. But it's worth the search, because there are very few drummers as musical as Hanna.

---

by Robyn Flans

*"Taste is the first thing  
you have to learn.  
If you have good taste,  
you'll know what to do."*



As Jake and I were sitting in his kitchen for this interview, he began demonstrating some syncopated patterns on the table with his hands. It was more musical than most drummers I've heard.

Steve Smith agrees: "Jake is one of the best big band drummers of all time, and he's a fantastic all-around musician. I listened to Jake Hanna for hours when I was growing up. He made a big impact on me in my formative years, especially as a big band drummer. I used to practice along with Woody Herman's version of 'Caldonia' all the time. It was the fastest jazz tune ever, and Jake made it sound easy. I also saw him playing with a group at a NAMM show in the early '80s. He was only using a snare drum and a pair of brushes, and he sounded amazing. He was swinging hard."

Digby Fairweather, one of Britain's notable trumpeters, wrote about Jake Hanna in *The Rough Guide To Jazz* (co-written with Ian Carr and Brian Priestley): "Hanna's understanding of every area of jazz drums—from Baby Dodds to Ed Thigpen and beyond—makes him a riveting sight and sound. And like Louie Bellson, Hanna functions equally happily in a big band or small group. Although he emerged too late to achieve quite the reputation of Buddy Rich,

his talents are comparable."

"My parents first turned me on to Jake Hanna when he played with Maynard Ferguson in the late '50s," recalls Ferguson alum Gregg Bissonette, "although I'm most familiar with his work with Woody Herman.

"I remember years ago my friend Lenny DiMuzio giving me a cassette tape of one of Woody's 'Herds,' which was powered by Jake. The thing that hit me the most was the passion. I really love when a drummer kicks the heck

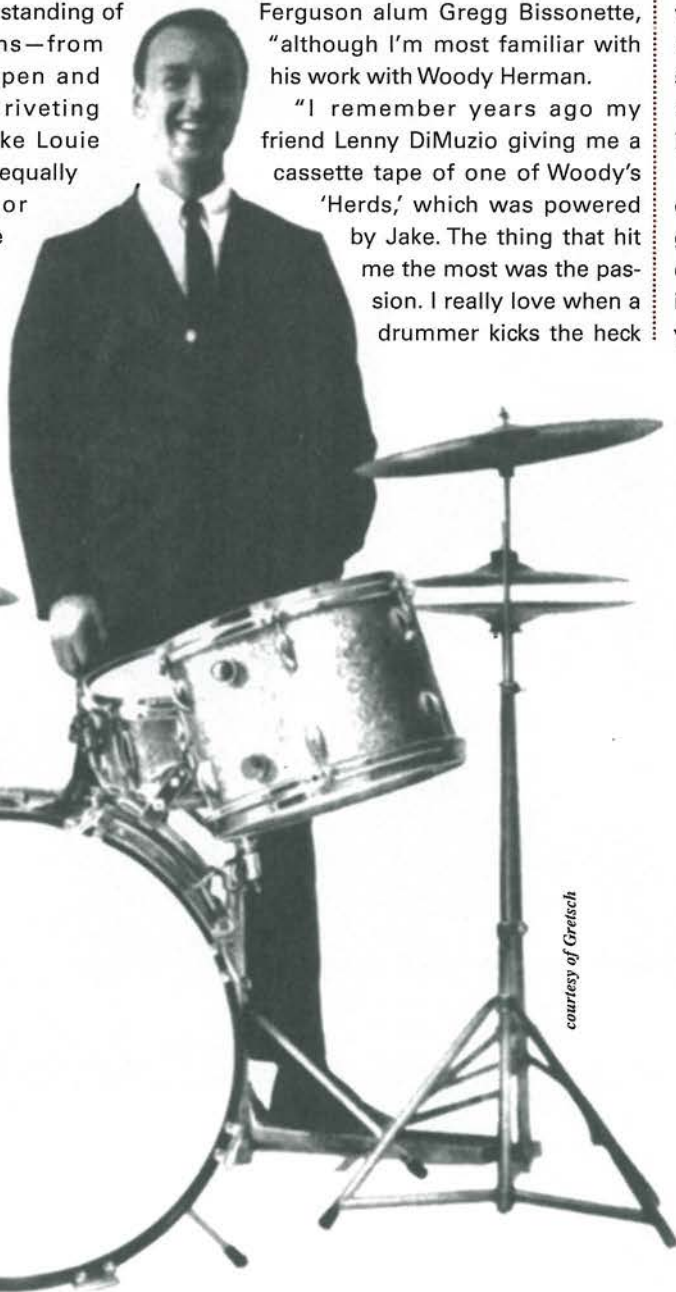
out of a big band, when there are figures that the horn section is playing and the drummer is setting them up with fire. Jake always impressed me with his ability to play a setup that made you go, *Wow*. He's great at kicking the band and being that spark, and then he can turn around and be an amazingly sensitive small-group drummer too.

"I was really into Jake's book, *Syncopated Big Band Figures & Solos—Vol. 1*," Gregg continues. "It's such a musical book and it shows you every different way you can write big band figures. Steve Houghton, probably the greatest teacher I've ever had, worked a lot with me in that book and taught me how to set up a big band, catch the figures, and really articulate with the band with long and short notes. That was the book we used primarily for big band shout choruses, like when the horns are really in full gear and the band is shouting. That book is so valuable."

Like Fairweather indicated, Hanna is one of our greatest unsung heroes. He grew up in Boston, playing local gigs, eventually working with Toshiko Akiyoshi in 1957, Maynard Ferguson the following year, and Marian McPartland the year after that. However, his career didn't really get going until he was thirty-two years old, when he joined up with The Woody Herman Orchestra. He was with the band only a couple of years, from 1962 to 1964, but the impact he made on the music and drumming community was huge.

Other noteworthy gigs followed, including long stretches with legends Rosemary Clooney and Bing Crosby. Then, in 1964, Hanna became a regular member of *The Merv Griffin Show's* big band. He moved to Los Angeles with the show in 1970 and stayed on until 1975. Although it was a very high-profile gig, it wasn't very musically satisfying for the drummer. Afterwards, he mostly enjoyed performing with such groups as the one he co-led with Carl Fontana and Supersax.

Today, at seventy-four, Jake Hanna still lives for the magic of pure music.



The driver's seat: Jake back in the early '60s

courtesy of Greisch

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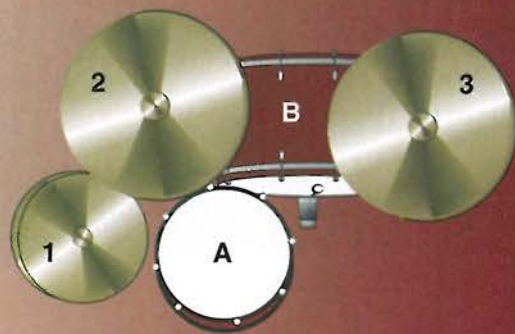
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# Jake's Place

**MD:** What was the most important musical lesson you learned as a kid? And who taught it to you?

**Jake:** I started in church bands and studied some from a trumpet player in the Bronx named Joe Donovan. But a guy by the name of Mel Braverman told me to never play above the level of the band, always keep the sound right in the middle.

**MD:** How do you know that's the most important thing you learned?

**Jake:** It got me through an awful lot. When I began playing with the professional guys, they'd say, "Very good—nice taste." Taste is the first thing you have to learn, never mind even swing. If you have good taste, you'll know what to do and what not to do. For some people, it's inborn. I designed my whole playing style to that—to be easy to play with.

**MD:** Who were your idols back then?

**Jake:** Gene Krupa, right away, in the '30s. Buddy Rich was out with Tommy Dorsey, and Buddy Schutz was with Jimmy Dorsey. It was all big band then. There were very few small combos. Later, Mel Braverman turned me on to Jo Jones and Dave Tough. I've been into them ever since.

I eventually met Jo and he became one of my best friends. Jo once sent me a tape of Dave Tough playing with Woody Herman's band, and man, was he swinging! I never heard a cat swing that hard. Years later I met George Wettling, who is probably my real idol. He was one of the best drummers I ever heard. I tried to

model my playing after his. He had the best sound; he was great at tuning drums. He had excellent taste and perfect time too. George was a superior player, very musical and artistic. He was also a very good artist. He painted beautifully, and *Esquire* magazine used to display his paintings.

**MD:** You keep mentioning the word "swing." How does one learn to swing?

**Jake:** You learn by ear. Then you have to watch how the hands work; you've got to get the mechanics down. But the basic idea comes from your ear. You just play, you look away, you hear the sound, you look down and see what you're doing, and that's what you do.

I had to play very fast with Woody Herman's band and with Toshiko Akiyoshi. They were the two fastest groups I played with. Toshiko was a trio and Woody's group was sixteen guys. With Toshiko I mostly used wire brushes, and with Woody, we played half-hour songs that were pretty fast. Anything you hear that I've done on record with Woody, well, those recorded tempos weren't anywhere near as fast as what we played later.

**MD:** How do you work on playing fast and keeping your time?

**Jake:** Practice, practice, practice. As a kid, I practiced on a pillow and on my mother's sewing machine. My brother and I would stand up and play on it. We didn't have drums.

**MD:** What were your beginnings?

**Jake:** I first played with Tommy Reed,

# Jake Hanna

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# Hanna's Hits

His Best Recordings

Artist	Album
Toshiko Akiyoshi	The Many Sides Of Toshiko
Maynard Ferguson	A Message From Newport
Woody Herman	Woody's Big Band Goodies
Scott Hamilton	2
The Hanna/Fontana Band	Live At Concord
Jake Hanna	Kansas City Express
Jake Hanna	Jake Takes Manhattan

### His Favorites

"Anything by Teddy Wilson (with Jo Jones on drums), Dave McKenna, Louis Armstrong, Bud Powell, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Scott Hamilton, and Harry Allen."



## SCOTT HAMILTON, 2



who had a steady job at a Hilton chain and then a hotel in Kansas City. When Ted Williams came through, I went with him in '55 and stayed with him for about a year. I wanted to be on the road. And on the road, you meet a lot of musicians—one guy refers you to this and another refers you to that, and you jump from one gig to another. I finally went with Buddy Morrow's band. He's a powerhouse player.

**MD:** When did you get with Woody?

**Jake:** I was about thirty-two, but the first time with him was a disaster. The band was lousy and he started adding guys. But by the time he was adding some good players, I had already given my notice. I went to Boston and bumped into Bill Chase, who

told me Maynard Ferguson was looking for a drummer. So I joined Maynard's band. Then Toshiko came by and she hired me for the Hickory House on my off nights, which was a whole summer. I got to meet so many musicians there.

**MD:** What were you learning as a musician?

**Jake:** Eventually I learned to like really good songs. Toshiko played material that was difficult for those times, and she was really good. I recently played with her at a Japanese temple in LA, and she sounds even better now. It was one of the best jobs I worked in thirty years. She played with no microphones, Dave Carpenter played with no amp for his bass, and I played with

no mic's on the drums. It was the most beautiful sound. The music was superb.

**MD:** What did you enjoy about the Maynard Ferguson gig?

**Jake:** The comradeship, especially. Everyone was really funny, we had a great time, and it was one of the best bands I ever played with.

**MD:** When did you write your method book?

**Jake:** In the '70s, when I had a broken shoulder. I had fallen off my bike.

**MD:** What should people listen to today to learn how to swing?

**Jake:** Count Basie. Strictly Count Basie, and you'll learn it. There are so few guys around now who still swing and who don't

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## Jake Hanna



Brush masters: Jake Hanna, Jeff Hamilton, and Ed Thigpen at a recent NAMM show

play too many notes. It's the excess notes that really drive me crazy. There's no room for anything else. That's why you have to listen to Count Basie. He knew how to utilize space. Make it simple. KISS—Keep It Simple, Stupid. Jack Tracy told me that one, and I always try to keep it in my head when I get up on the stand.

**MD:** Has it been difficult making a living playing jazz?

**Jake:** Yes, but it's all I've ever done. I made good money with Bing Crosby, which was a jazz job. I was with him for about two years.

**MD:** It was Merv Griffin who brought you out to L.A. What was good about the Merv days?

**Jake:** We had a really good band.

**MD:** Did it get boring?

**Jake:** Oh, yes. He had some terrible performers on the show that we had to play behind.

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**MD:** Who were some of the best and worst that you played with?

**Jake:** Julius LaRosa was one of the best singers, Eydie Gorme, of course, was also one of the best. And most of the others were awful. Charo—she was silly. But then Louie Armstrong would come on and be

“You’re not going to be playing any great music. You’re not going to be playing any *good* music. Most of it is going to be pretty stupid.” And it was. We’d get these arrangers coming in who didn’t know anything about anything and we’d have to keep fixing it up all the time. But when it was

to the show. Nick Ceroli called me and said, “They want me to take the job and I want you to know what’s happening.” I said, “Nick, take it with my condolences. Frankly, I wouldn’t take it if I were you.”

**MD:** When you came out to LA, were you doing sessions, too?

**Jake:** I didn’t want to come out here. I wanted to stay in New York, but Merv himself called me up and said, “This is the chief. Come on out. I’ll find you a place and the money will be three times as much.” So I went.

**MD:** So best and worst sessions?

**Jake:** I really haven’t done any bad ones, because I would refuse them. I ask who the players are upfront. And Dave Stone, a great bass player, gets me on ones I like. Yes, I’ve done some sessions that I’ve despised. One was for a commercial where they had me set up where I never saw anybody or heard anybody.

**MD:** What do you consider the hardest gig you ever had?

**Jake:** Woody’s job at the Metropole was hard physically. We’d play four one-hour sets a night there, very fast tempos, and we

*“There are so few guys around now who swing and who don’t play too many notes. It’s the excess notes that really drive me crazy.”*

sensational. Benny Goodman came on once and was great. I remember one show in particular, with Count Basie and a couple of his guys playing with our band. That was a snap.

**MD:** How do you get through it when it’s lousy?

**Jake:** When I got the gig, they said,

someone like Julius LaRosa or Eydie Gorme, the arrangements would be great. And during the commercials we’d play Count Basie music, which was fun. But I got out of there the minute Oscar Peterson called me. I went over to Russia with him in 1975.

I went on that tour and never went back

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## Jake Hanna

were set up single file. I never knew who was playing the trombones on the other end because they were way down there. The sound bounced off the mirrors, but you could look in the mirror to see who was doing what! He'd look at my hi-hat and I'd look at his trumpet, so it worked out okay.

Benny Goodman came in one night, thought we sounded good, and asked Woody, "How do you do it?" And Woody said, "It's all done with mirrors, Benny." The next day Benny raided the band. A couple of guys actually left us to rehearse with him.

Benny's manager called me up and said, "Jake, Benny would like you to go to Russia with him." I said, "Gee, I just got with Woody. Tell Benny no." The next day, he called again. "Benny still wants you to come to Russia." I said, "Tell Benny I died." Sure enough, the next day he called again. "He doesn't care if you died, he wants you to come to Russia." I said, "Tell him I'm still dead." I could hear Benny giggling, listening on the other end.

**MD:** When you think about the gigs you've done, what comes to mind as the most musical and incredible?

**Jake:** Woody Herman was the most musical job I ever had. I don't work any unmusical jobs. My favorites, though, are the Concord tour dates we did.

**MD:** Are there live recordings of those?

**Jake:** Oh, sure. And in the studio, too. I got Rosemary Clooney, Bing Crosby, Woody Herman, and Tony Bennett on them.

**MD:** What do you feel is your best recording?

**Jake:** I like my own, *Kansas City Express*, but you can't get it anymore because Cal Jefferson [the head of Concord Records] and I had a falling out. Rosemary Clooney did an interview where she was asked, "Is it true Cal Jefferson brought you out of retirement and got you into the jazz thing?" And she said, "No, actually it was Bing Crosby's drummer, Jake Hanna. As a matter of fact, he should really be running that record company." And that was the end of me. I got a call from Jefferson the very next day.... But that was a good record. The records I did with Scott Hamilton are good too. All the recordings I've done have had really good guys.

**MD:** When you think back, what were the highlights of your musical life?

**Jake:** Crosby. That was a highlight, and high class. Rosemary Clooney was in there too, so that was a double barrel. Crosby was just like you saw him in the movies. He wasn't acting. He was just walking through the role, a real nice guy.

**MD:** What did the gig require of you, musically?

**Jake:** Holding [pianist] Joe Bushkin in place. Joe would get right out there. He would rush off and go twice as fast as the rest of the band. Keeping the time steady was tough.

**MD:** Was it a set show?

**Jake:** Yes. But he did three hours, a forty-song medley.

**MD:** Were you able to be improvisational?

**Jake:** Sort of. Rosemary Clooney eventually started wanting everything the same. But I got her started in the jazz thing where everything was different all the time. She got a little frightened at the end. I like it right off the top of your head.

There's a great singer now, Rebecca Kilgore. She can do the top-of-your-head stuff. She's the best, as far as I'm concerned.

**MD:** What do you suggest for a young drummer interested in becoming an improvisational player like you?

**Jake:** You have to *listen*. To learn to improvise, you have to play. I was with Buck Clayton, Peter Russell, Dick Dickinson, and Bud Freeman, and I copied what they played. We'd play fours, and I'd play the rhythm they played on the melody. I always think like a horn player, like a Zoot Sims or a Buck Clayton. I don't think drum-wise.

I see drummers playing stuff that they worked out, but it doesn't have anything to do with what the other guy just finished playing. And that makes it tough for the next guy who is going to play. If it just keeps flowing, you can play for hours without stopping.

**MD:** Who do you work with most nowadays?

**Jake:** I do most of my work with Howard Alder and Harry Allen.

**MD:** And you still love what you do?

**Jake:** Oh, yeah, absolutely. Electronics and amplified instruments are what bug me mostly now. I recently played a luncheon down in Texas, and the guys got up to play and there wasn't a microphone in sight—no amp on the bass, nothing. You should

have heard the sound. We all said, "Too bad we can't do this in concerts." Danny Barrett once had them shut off all the mic's, and the people loved it.

Heifetz [legendary violinist] came out to California once to play the Hollywood Bowl. He was working up some tunes with his piano player in the afternoon, and he saw the guy at the end of the stage setting up microphones. He told him to take out the microphones and the man said, "But maestro, we have to have them." Heifetz packed up his violin and got on a plane back to New York City. The sound had to be pure. A \$400,000 violin becomes a \$400 amplifier.

**MD:** What about when you record?

**Jake:** The only sound I've ever been happy with was the live recording that we did with the Carl Fontana band, because they couldn't fool with it.

**MD:** So making records is not your favorite thing?

**Jake:** I won't make records. I say, "That's not my sound." They're saying, "That's what's coming through, believe me."

Ray Brown went into the booth one time and said, "Come out into the studio. Jake, play what you're playing on the drums for this engineer." I played. He said, "Do you hear that? I don't hear that on the playback. Why don't we hear that on the playback?" The engineer said, "Mr. Jefferson doesn't want too much drums. He likes bass." Ray said, "I like bass too. I'm a bass player. But we have to have the drums; it's out of balance." It made no difference. It came out just the way the engineer wanted it to come out.

The only record that the engineers couldn't ruin was the live one we did—*Hanna/Fontana, Live At Concord* (1975). I also like *Kansas City Express* and *Woody's Big Band Goodies*.

**MD:** I understand that you still enjoy playing festivals. At those kinds of events, don't you have to do a lot of reading?

**Jake:** No. It's strictly off the top of your head, no music. We discuss the key, beat the tempo, and that's it. No rehearsal. That's jazz music. If you rehearse it, it ain't jazz music. It's got to be a spontaneous reaction. If you start reading, it's not jazz music, not as far as I'm concerned. We don't want to have the slightest idea of what's going to happen.



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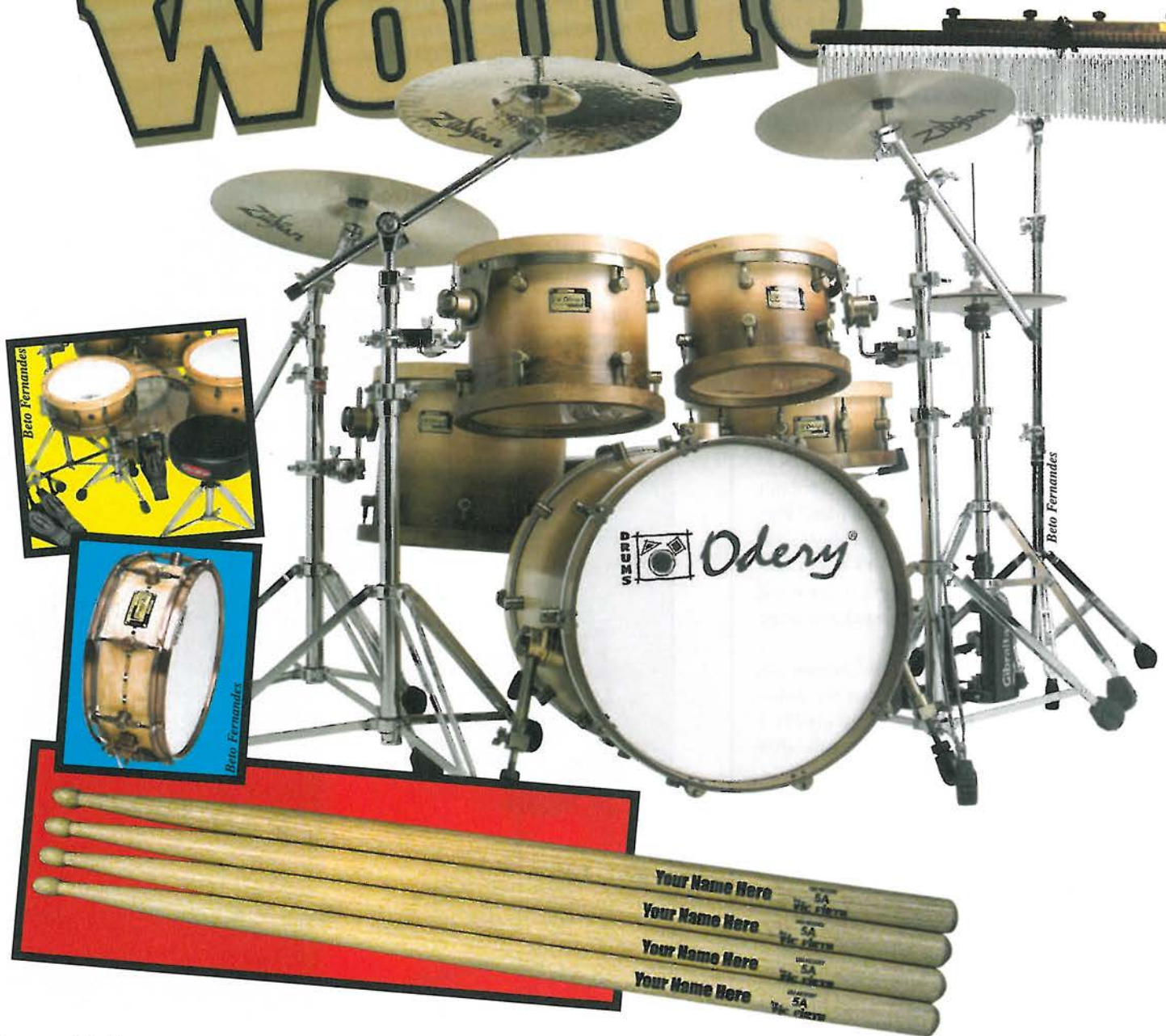
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## Grand Prize

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This is the actual kit reviewed and praised in the April issue of *Modern Drummer*. It's made from araucaria wood finished in imbuia fade, and features wooden hoops as well as hardware finished in antique bronze. Drums include a 16x20 bass drum, 8x10, 9x12, and 12x14 toms, and a 6x13 snare.

### Zildjian K Custom Cymbals

K Customs arm you with a collection of modern K voices like no other. Whether it's the warm shimmering tones of a ride cymbal, or the complex sizzle of a pair of hi-hats, these cymbals all create a uniquely beautiful sound. Your cymbal set includes 13" K Custom Dark hi-hats, a 16" K Custom Fast crash, an 18" K Custom Fast crash, and a 20" K Custom ride.

### Gibraltar Hardware

Gibraltar's 9600 Series Professional stands and pedals are designed to be heavy-duty, but not heavy. Cymbal stands feature smaller profiles, double-braced leg assemblies, cast hideaway booms with hinged boom memory locks, and Gibraltar's exclusive 360° tilters. All stands have Gibraltar's Super-Lock height adjustments with hinged memory locks and ABS inserts for no metal-to-metal contact. This month's prize package includes a 9607ML hi-hat, a 9606 Ultra Adjust snare stand, four 9609-BT boom cymbal stands with brake-style tilters, a 9611DB Intruder double bass drum pedal, a 9608 round throne, and three 10.5-mm SC-SLRM L rod mounts.

### A TreeWorks InfiniTree

The collapsible InfiniTree bar chime set is almost four feet long and features 140 bars that are made from chime-specific aluminum/titanium alloy and individually hand-tied with 50-pound braided CordLoc.

### Vic Firth Sticks

To play all this great gear, you'll also get three bricks (a dozen pairs each) of Vic Firth Player's Label sticks custom-printed with your name, plus a Vic Firth T-shirt.

### Evans Drumheads

Your Odery drums will be fitted with Evans Clear G2 tom heads, which offer an ideal blend of depth, sustain, and attack, making small toms sing and floor toms growl. Your snare will come with a single-ply Power Center head that offers durability and focus in the center via a 5-mil patch. And your bass drum will be fitted with a clear EMAD single-ply head with two interchangeable damping rings that maximize attack and low-end.

## 2nd Prize

### An Odery 5.5x14 Snare Drum

This snare is made from araucaria wood, and it's finished in Radica maple lacquer with an inlay. Evans drumheads, 2.3-mm power hoops, and hardware brushed in an old copper finish complete this beautiful drum.

### Vic Firth Player's Label Sticks

You'll also receive two dozen pairs of custom Vic Firth sticks with your name imprinted on them, plus a Vic Firth T-shirt.

## 3rd Prize

### Vic Firth Player's Label Sticks

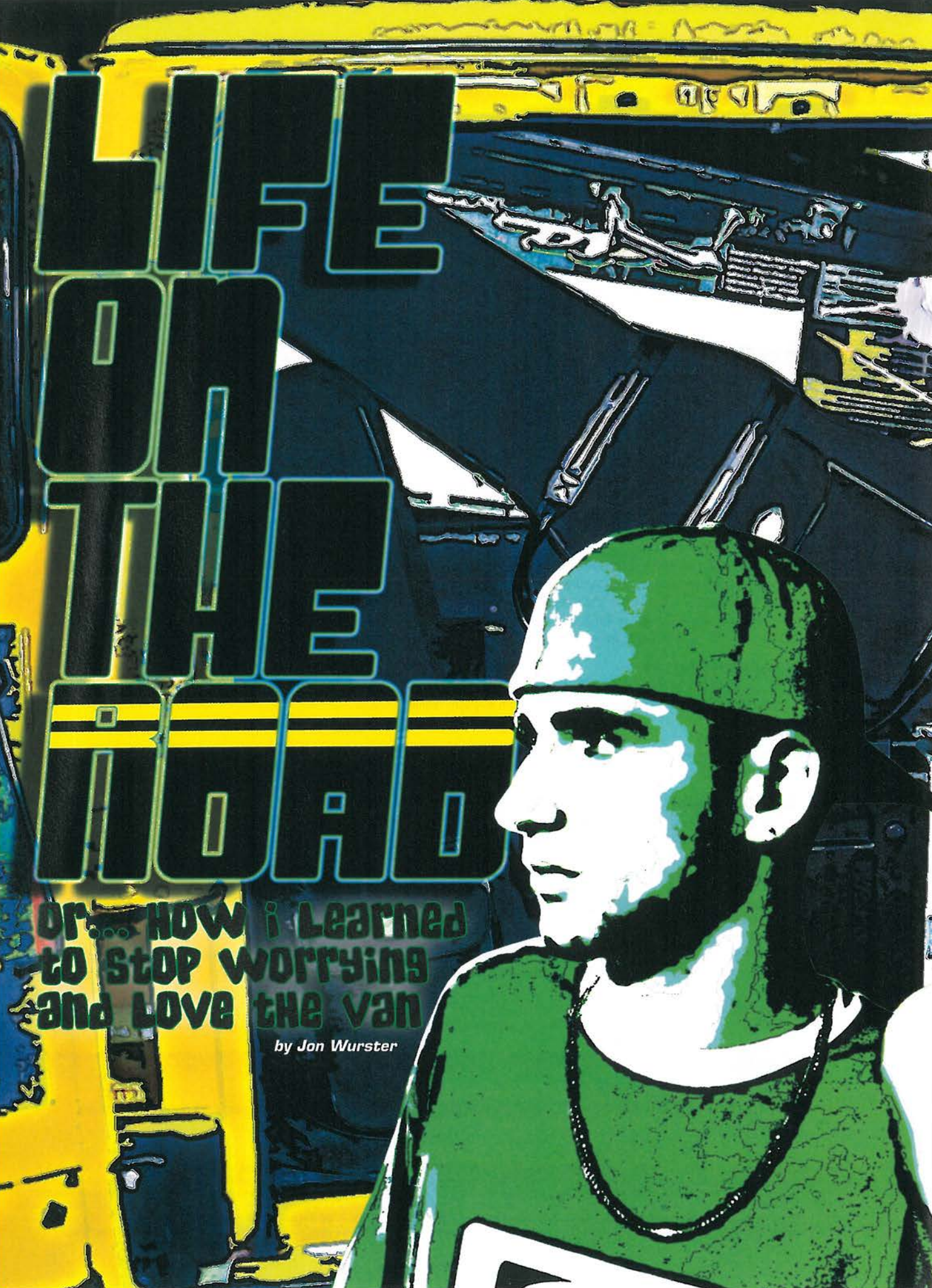
This month's third-prize winner will receive a dozen pairs of Vic Firth Player's Label Sticks with your name imprinted on them, as well as a Vic Firth T-shirt.

receive an Odery five-piece, wood-hoop, araucaria drumset, Zildjian K Custom cymbals including one (1) pair 13" K Custom hi-hats, one (1) 16" K Custom Fast crash, one (1) 18" K Custom Fast crash, and one (1) 20" K Custom ride, Gibraltar hardware, one (1) TreeWorks InfiniTree, three (3) dozen pairs of Vic Firth Player's Label drumsticks with the winner's name imprinted on each stick and one (1) T-shirt, and a set of Evans drumheads. Approximate retail value: \$9,650. Second prize: One (1) Odery 5 1/2 x 14 snare with brushed copper hardware finish, two (2) dozen pairs of Vic Firth Player's Label drumsticks with winner's name imprinted on each stick, and one (1) Vic Firth T-shirt. Approximate retail value: \$1,290. Third prize: one (1) dozen pairs of Vic Firth Player's Label drumsticks with winner's name imprinted on each stick, and one (1) Vic Firth T-shirt. Approximate retail price: \$160. 11. Approximate retail value of contest: \$11,100. 12. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. 13. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or a winners list, write to Modern Drummer Publications/Odery/Zildjian Official Rules:Winners List, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

# LIFE ON THE ROAD

OR... HOW I LEARNED  
TO STOP WORRYING  
AND LOVE THE VAN

by Jon Wurster





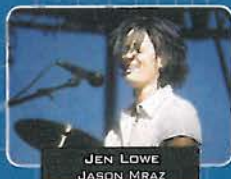
As I flailed away behind my drums that chilly London evening in the early spring of 1996, I tried to put the events of the previous month in perspective. The club was packed and the crowd was rocking; it was a nice way for Superchunk to end a grueling six-week European tour.

I was feeling pretty positive at that moment, but I sure hadn't been a few days earlier. In the tour's final week, our guitar tech punched out our soundman; the drummer for the band we were touring with punched a wall—shattering his hand—and I punched a meth-crazed Norwegian fan who tried to undo our bassist's tuning pegs mid-song. They say the road drives people to extremes...and we were living proof. Had these incidents occurred on my first tour

back in 1991, chances are I might have declined tour number two. But by this point my bandmates and I were hardened road warriors, unfazed by the dazzling highs and crushing lows that go hand in hand with touring.

I remember, as a teenager, reading an *MD* article written by then-Black Sabbath drummer Bev Bevan describing his typical day on the road. While Bevan's piece was a great glimpse into the life of a world-class, arena-rocking, limo-riding band, hardly anything in it prepared me for what I'd soon be experiencing on the road in my own much smaller-time rock combos. Hopefully this article will offer up-and-coming drummers a taste of what they can expect on their first low-budget tour. Hell, it might just dissuade you from doing it altogether!

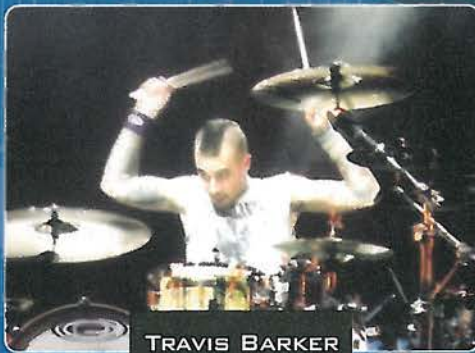




JEN LOWE  
JASON MRAZ



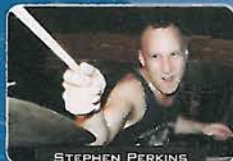
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BANYAN



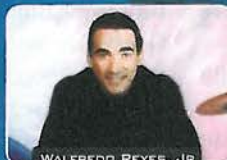
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The Offspring's  
Atom Willard

"Most people find out on their first tour whether or not it's something they enjoy," says Kevin March, drummer for the recently retired Guided By Voices and currently playing with the Bloodthirsty Lovers. "Either you can handle the ups and downs, or you can't."

Unlike your day job, touring is a 24-7 proposition. It requires a "go with the flow" attitude and strong coping skills. If you prepare yourself mentally and physically and have realistic expectations, you should have smooth sailing. "Expect the absolute worst set of circumstances in all areas: food, sleep, van trouble, band trouble, and sickness," says Atom Willard of The Offspring. "Then, when only *some* of that stuff happens, you'll be having the time of your life."

Although you'll be visiting a new city each day, your daily routine will remain pretty much the same. If your tour is anything like the ones I've been on, the day will unfold something like this:

### Arise

In a perfect world you would have been roused by the gentle ring of your hotel's prearranged wake-up call. But since your tour budget most likely precludes the possibility of hotel rooms, you slept on someone's floor and you're up because their cat is standing on your chest. It's a universal fact that 90% of the kind folks who put you up will have cats, and chances are at least one of your bandmates is allergic to them. Do that person a favor and make sure you ask your host if he or she has cats. (Luckily I'm not allergic to them. I am, however, allergic to overflowing litter boxes, having slept just feet away from them on several occasions.)

Hopefully you behaved yourself last night and are not hungover, or worse, sick. Unfortunately, if one bandmember gets a cold, most likely everyone else will catch it, too. Make sure you have a good supply of cold medicines, cough syrups, and pain relievers (and Band-Aids if you haven't yet developed a good set of calluses on your

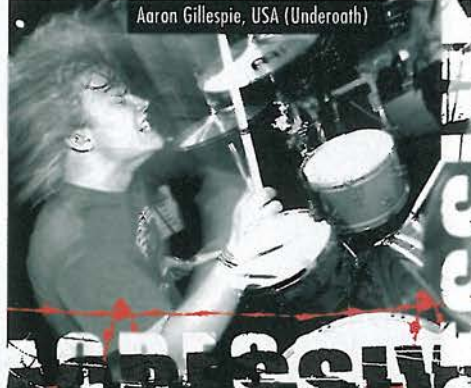
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Aaron Gillespie, USA (Underoath)

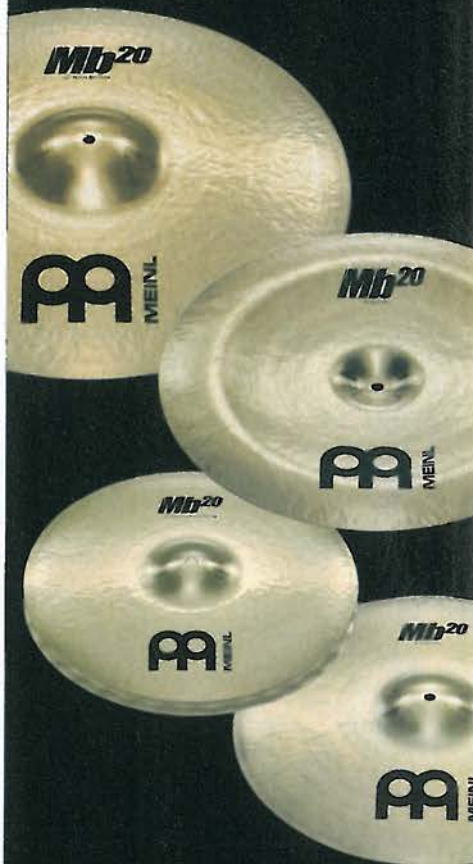


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## Wilco: Glenn Kotche



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fingers). Bring a bag of ear plugs as well. In addition to protecting your ears from high-end cymbal damage, they'll make your bass player's jackhammer snoring easier to deal with.

### Attempt Shower

Four band members + three housemates + one bathroom = a bunch of frustrated people sitting around waiting to take a shower. It might not be the most hygienic thing to do, but I always shower just before going to sleep. Sure, in the morning my hair looks like I just spent several hours in a cement mixer, but it's worth it to avoid getting involved in the inevitable "Hey, I was next in line!" arguments. If you're a morning-only bather, bring an alarm clock and set it so you can be the first one in the bathroom.

### Shove Off

If you're lucky, your host will be trusting and let you leave when you want. If you met him at closing time, chances are he doesn't have a job that demands an early punch-in. But it doesn't always work out that way. Once in Toronto, Superchunk stayed with a fan who was also an elementary school teacher. New levels of crankiness were reached when, at 7:00 A.M. after a measly four hours of sleep, our host informed us it was time to scam. Ouch.

Take a moment to go through your pockets before leaving the house, especially if you have a border crossing that day. I learned the importance of this the moment I reached into the pocket of a sweater I'd just worn on a flight from Sydney to Tokyo and discovered something suspicious. Turns out our Australian promoter's brother had been wearing my sweater while I'd been out and had forgotten he'd left something in the pocket. The gods were surely smiling on me that day as I went through notoriously tough Japanese customs.

### Food Search

It might not be as instantly gratifying as a Hardees Thick Burger, but try a salad or something comparable for

lunch; your body will thank you. "As drummers, we need to be in the best shape physically and mentally," explains March. "But on the road it's almost impossible, especially if you travel in a van and play late into the night. In an ideal touring world we could eat healthy food, but you're usually on a time



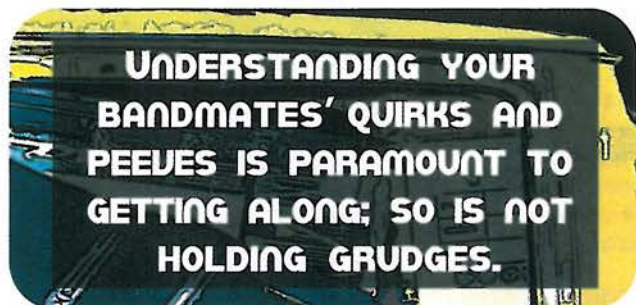
Atom Willard contemplates road cuisine.

constraint, and the only option is fast food."

Try your best not to partake of all of those deliciously enticing snacks at the convenience stores you'll be visiting during your haul. "The junk food in the gas stations and convenience stores can really wear you down," says Descendents/All/Only Crime drummer Bill Stevenson. That Peanut Buster Parfait you just inhaled may have tasted like heaven going down, but an hour later you'll most likely be wishing you had eaten a banana instead.

### Music Store Search

Your hi-hat clutch and your snare drum head went belly-up last night, so you need to get new ones. Since it's noon and you're in Columbus, Ohio, you can just drive over to Columbus Percussion and restock. If you had had to leave at 9:00 A.M. it would have been another story. I



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## Life On The Road

can't tell you how many times on early tours some crucial piece of gear would get broken and we'd have to leave the next day before the local music store opened. I'd spend a large portion of the day's drive fretting over whether there'd be a store near the club and if it would still be open when we got to town. Sure, I could probably borrow something from the guy/girl from the opening band, but what if they don't even *have* a drummer? It's happened.

Space is obviously limited in a van, but try to bring as many spare sticks, heads, and easily breakable/losable hardware parts (clutches, drum keys, felts, washers, wing nuts, etc.) as possible. A few years ago in Glasgow, Scotland I was caught with my pants down when the twine that held the snares to the strainer broke on both my main *and* spare snare drums. I made it through the show thanks to a huge roll of duct tape (make sure to bring at least one of these, too) but later realized I hadn't thought to bring any extra twine. Guess who was standing in the freezing rain at 9:45 the next morning waiting for an elderly man to open his drum & bugle shop? Guess who paid approximately \$10 for a couple strands of space-age super-strength twine that took three people thirty profanity-filled minutes to attach to his drum?

If you're in a band that's getting some decent press, it would behoove you to check into procuring an endorsement deal with stick, head, and cymbal companies. You'll still have to pay for your supplies (usually much less than retail), but as an endorser you'll benefit from one particularly handy perk: overnight shipping direct from the company's factory or headquarters.

### Get Lost On The Way Out Of Town

"Learn to read a map real well," says Stevenson when asked what key advice he would impart to a young touring band. Don't assume the guy with the Aqua Teen Hunger Force tattoo whom you met at the coffee shop this morning knows his ass from his elbow when it comes to the highways and byways of his burgh. If the person you're asking for directions ever uses the phrase "beyond the old water tower," thank him for his time and move on.

## Drive...And Drive ...And Drive...

If you don't like being behind the wheel, there will most likely be at least one member of your band who *needs* to. All the bands I've ever toured with had one person who did the bulk of the driving; it's one small way for them to be in control of a situation where nobody is *truly* in control due to the glut of unforeseen circumstances that can/will arise. One of those problems usually has to do with the van itself. "The van breaking down is the worst thing on any tour," says Stevenson. If you can swing it, take out a loan and buy a recent model. That's what Superchunk did, and from early '92 to 2000 we criss-crossed America countless times with only two breakdowns. Make sure you have AAA-Plus; with it you get up to a hundred miles free towing.

There's another kind of breakdown that you should be aware of: the kind that results from musicians sharing five- to eight-hour drives in extremely close quarters. Understanding your bandmates'



The author, four weeks into a six-week tour

quirks and peevs is paramount to getting along; so is not holding grudges. "If you've got three or more people crammed together in a van, everybody's going to piss somebody off sooner or later," says Dave Hartman, drummer for Southern Culture On The Skids. "If you take every slight—real or perceived—and make an issue of it, you're going to be fighting all the time."

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# RACK FACTORY



## Life On The Road

### Load-In/Soundcheck/Wait

If you're lucky, there will be someone from the club there to let you in. Often that isn't the case, though, and you'll find yourself twiddling your thumbs waiting for the white, dreadlocked sound guy (mark my words) to come riding up on his bike forty minutes later, cursing his roommate for not getting him up at 4:00 P.M. like he promised.

It's under these seemingly innocuous circumstances that one's mettle is truly tested. Three weeks into a six-week tour, something so small as a late sound person or the addition of a third band to your show can really seem huge. I'm ashamed to say that just last

ting up your kit and waiting for the sound person to get all the mic's and cables plugged in. You'll be surprised how excruciatingly long this can take. Since a person can only explore the dark, dank recesses of a rock club for so long, ask the engineer how long he'll be and go check out the neighborhood.

### But Be Careful

In these post 9/11 times, The Man is watching. My hobby of taking pictures of odd signs and buildings has been kyboshed because it now looks, well, very suspicious.

The traumatic event hinted at earlier occurred in London two days before I put my foot through that innocent wall in Nottingham. On the day of March's UK arrival, I made a pilgrimage to Essex Studios (*Never Mind The Bullocks, London Calling, Pretenders*) and began taking a few snapshots of the building, which was located directly across an alley from an elementary school playground that was teeming with curious kids.



October I put my foot through a wall in a club in Nottingham, England because of a series of minor annoyances (and one major traumatic event that I'll get to later).

"Let go of trying to control your experiences," says March. "The whole purpose of going on the road with your band is to play music for the fans, enrich your soul, and learn from the unexpected events." Be able to see the humor in all of it, as I struggled to when I received word that the uninvited Norse bass tech mentioned in paragraph one could not be ejected from the club because he actually *lived* in it.

Once inside and set up, give your gear a solid once-over, making sure that everything is in good working condition. I mentioned my spare snare earlier. If you're a hard hitter you *must* have one—no matter how crappy it sounds. You'll be glad you've got it when the bottom head on your main snare breaks during your second song. Same goes for bass drum pedals: Bring a backup.

This part of the day is where time really slows to a crawl. It's that period between set-

The children grilled me about what I was doing and where I was from, and I chatted amiably with them for a few minutes. One of the kids even asked me to take his picture. You can probably guess where this is headed. Minutes later I'm up against the wall, two cops grilling me on why I'm taking pictures of children. Turns out a concerned neighbor called the law on me. Luckily, I was able to explain what I was doing, and after a call to Interpol to check for priors and a quick look through my digital camera, I was let go. Scariest moment of my life, hands down.

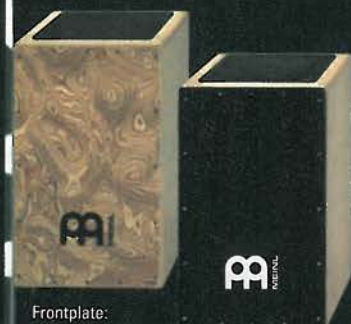
### Eat Dinner

Never, under any circumstances, agree to an all-you-can-eat shrimp-eating contest before a show. I made this mistake once just an hour and a half before a show in Phoenix and suffered the consequences during the gig. Talk about a lethargic performance. "Eat a light meal one to two hours before you're scheduled to play," says March. "You'll play better and have more energy."

Chad Wackerman, USA

NEW RELEASES

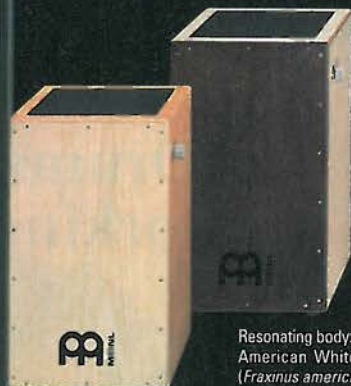
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## Life On The Road

### Prepare For Show

If you sweat a lot when you drum, make sure to bring a towel and a set of "gig clothes." I'm not talking about a sequined jumpsuit (unless that's what you're into), just some things you don't mind getting soaked every night. I played over a hundred shows last year—every one of them in the same white Levis and short-sleeved, button-down shirt. (Yes, I tried to rinse them out whenever possible.) I should point out, the fewer clothes you wear, the less stuff you'll have to worry about drying out over night. (If they don't dry out, you'll be taking the stage the next night in uncomfortably damp clothes—not fun.) In Superchunk I wear only pants, shirt, and sneakers—no socks, and (uh-oh) no underwear.

Stretch your legs, arms, hands, neck, etc. for ten minutes before playing, no matter how uncool you think it looks. Sometimes the size of the dressing room (or lack of one) makes warming up impossible. If so, go behind the club and do it; it'll save you the embarrassment of dropping a stick in mid-tune because your forearm cramped up. I took up yoga a couple of years ago and have found it very beneficial to my drumming. I bring my mat with me and do fifteen to twenty minutes each morning while my bandmates laugh at me.

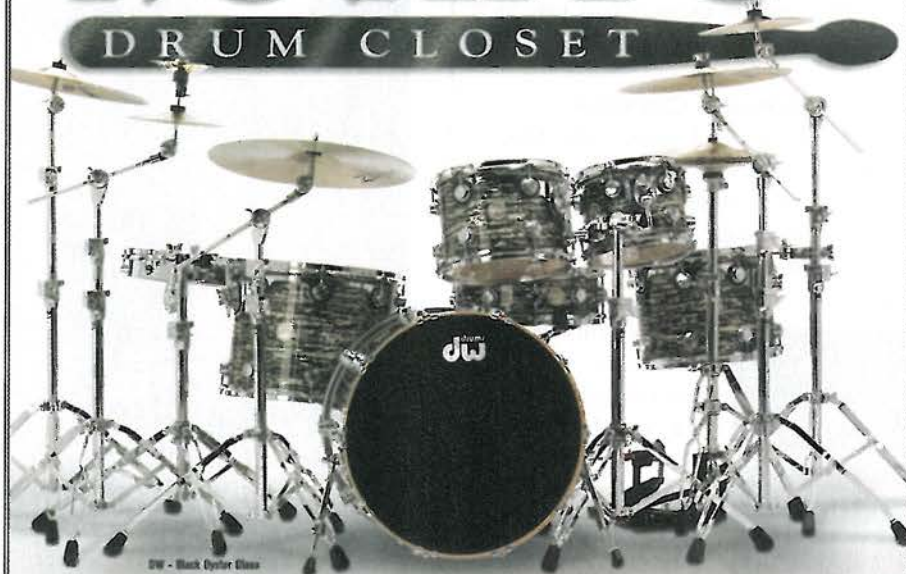
Easy on the hooch, Clyde. As drummer, your role is to provide the foundation upon which the rest of the band builds its house of rock. Your job is also to play in time. Drugs and drink can seriously mess with your ability to perform both of these tasks. "In general, I didn't consume very much alcohol because I liked to keep my wits about me," says March of his time with Guided By Voices, a band known almost as much for its love of beer as for its music. "I'd have a two-and-a-half- to three-hour show ahead of me, and the boys would be depending on me to hold it together."

### Play Show

There's an old adage that goes, "You play the show, not the crowd." Translated, that means, "Try not to get bummed because you drove eight hours to play for thirteen people...five days in a row." If your band is good, there's a decent chance you'll do better next time you come to town. "Those first tours we did, we were drawing generally no more than twenty people a night," says Hartman of his early days in SCOTS. "We

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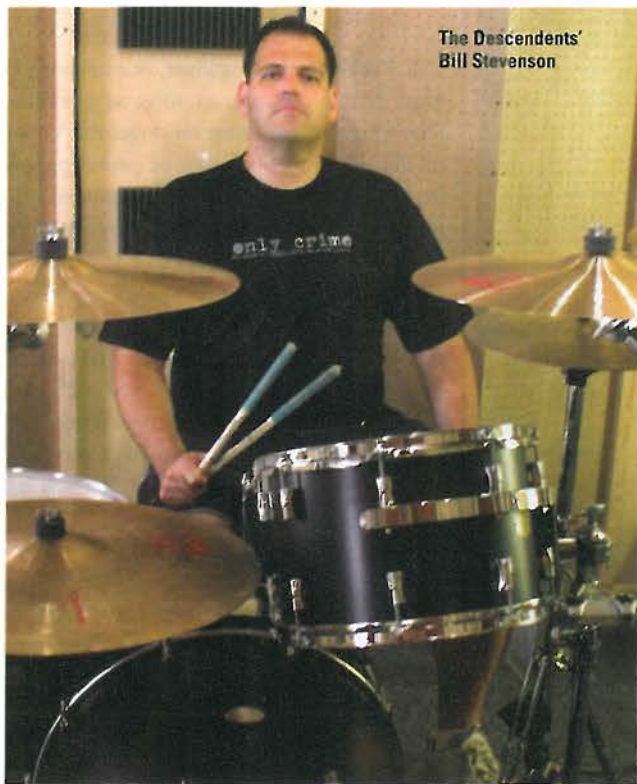
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found when we went back the next time, those people showed up and each one of them brought a couple friends.”

If you're doing a lot of shows in a row, be aware of the stress you're putting on your body. If you want to keep drumming and touring, don't feel like you've got to kill yourself up there every night. I've been fortunate to have had only a couple minor drum-related injuries over the past twenty years, but I know plenty of people who have suffered career-threatening hand, arm, leg, and back injuries from playing too hard too many nights in a row.

If you're feeling pain in your wrist or elbow, adjust your playing, back off a little bit, and try wearing a brace. If you're having trouble with stiffness or cramping, apply some Icy Hot or Bengay on your arms before you play. (Make sure you wash your hands thor-

The Descendents'  
Bill Stevenson



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## Life On The Road

oughly; that stuff is slippery.) Be sure to drink plenty of water before and during the show to avoid dehydration.

### Post Show

If you're not the headliner, be kind and get your drums offstage as soon as possible. Don't break them down on stage; this is one of the top ten grievances of sound people everywhere. If you're on a multi-band bill, make sure you put all your gear in one place after your set, making sure that nothing gets mixed up with the other bands' equipment. Another way to avoid this problem is to stencil your band's killer logo on your cases. (Yes, make sure you have drum cases.) Double-check that you got everything into that hardware case; it will suck mightily when you discover the next day that you left one of your floor tom legs behind.

You'll no doubt want to mingle with people at this point of the evening. Before you do that, do yourself a favor and get out of those sweaty duds and put your street clothes back on. Oh, the rashes I have gotten as a result of not adhering to this rule. Bring along some Gold Bond Body Powder and apply it before getting into your dry duds.

### Load Out

Make sure everyone helps. The person who makes himself scarce every night at load out will soon become something of a pariah. Don't be that guy/girl.

Don't wander away from the club at 2:00 A.M. Back in the pre-cell days of the mid-'90s, I went off looking for a pay phone after a show and was robbed at gunpoint by two young entrepreneurs. Now *that* was a nice way to start a month-long tour.

**DO NOT LEAVE YOUR GEAR IN THE CLUB OVERNIGHT.** One band I toured with wanted to do this frequently. Several members would be so wrapped up in the after-gig revelry at the bar that they couldn't tear themselves away long enough to pack up their instruments and load out. One of the other band members and I would pack up our gear and go back to the hotel, leaving the others to do their marathon hang session. In the morning we'd all have to trundle back to the club and wait for the bar manager to show up and let us in. Of course it was usually 50:50 as to whether or not he/she would even *remember* this little arrangement the next day. Annoying? You bet.



Southern Culture On The Skids  
Dave Hartman

### Bedtime (Hopefully)

Most bands only do the sleeping-on-someone's-floor thing on their first tour and then make it a point to stay in motels, if budget allows. The main reason for this is that while this may be just another night on tour for you, it can be somewhat of an event for your host. "That's the worst part about staying on floors," says Hartman. "When people bring you back to their house, they expect a party when you get there." More often than not you will come back to your lodgings, sleeping bag and pillow in hand, only to discover

that dude invited seven of his buddies to "chill with the band" until 6:00 A.M. This is where you'll be glad you brought those earplugs. Heck, go all out and buy a pair of those Vic Firth Isolation Headphones and experience the beauty of absolute silence.

### Rest Up; You've Got To Do It All Over Again Tomorrow

Hopefully I haven't painted too harsh a picture of what it's like traveling in a rock 'n' roll band. Just keep in mind that you're doing something you've always wanted to do: playing music and traveling. And while you may not make much (or any) money, I guarantee you will come away from this experience with memories that will last you a lifetime—and in the end, that's what it's all about.

Bon voyage. Take lots of pictures. (But not of kids, okay?)



Jon Wurster is the long-time drummer in the highly acclaimed band Superchunk. He recently completed a tour with Marah.



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# Derrick Plourde

## Celebrating A Pillar Of West Coast Punk

by Ed Breckenfeld



MUSIC KEY		
1/2	∅	C.C.
open	∅	R.C.
H.H.	∅	*
T.T.	∅	
S.D.	∅	
F.T.	∅	
B.D.	∅	
H.H.	∅	
W/foot	∅	

The Southern California punk scene was dealt a terrible blow with the recent untimely passing of one of its finest drummers, Derrick Plourde. While not the household name of someone like Tré Cool, Plourde was nevertheless an important and influential figure on the '90s punk scene. His playing mixed the drive and raw speed of the genre with a touch of sophistication and technique. This month we pay tribute to him by featuring drum grooves from some of his most popular recordings.

### “Island Of Shame” (from Lagwagon—*Trashed*, 1994)

Derrick first came to prominence in the Southern California skate punk scene in the mid-'90s with his band Lagwagon. This example shows a classic speed groove from the era, with a nice variation at the end of the pattern. (0:47)

1

$\text{♩} = 181$

### “Stokin’ The Neighbors” (*Trashed*)

This drum intro sets the tone for another of Lagwagon’s energetic romps. Check out the tempo on this one. (0:00)

2

$\text{♩} = 214$

### “Give It Back” (*Trashed*)

Plourde plants a cool triplet lick at the very end of this double-time track. (2:31)

3

$\text{♩} = 128$

### “Bite My Tongue” (from The Ataris—...*Anywhere But Here*, 1997)

Derrick was a member of The Ataris for their first release and tour in '97. Here he opens the album with a quick flourish, and then it’s off to the races. Note the turned-around drumbeat in measure four. (0:00)

4

$\text{♩} = 127$

### “Lately” (...Anywhere But Here)

One of the best drum licks on the disc opens and closes this track. With ideas like this, it's pretty clear that Plourde had more up his sleeve than just speed and energy. (0:00)

5

Musical notation for a drum lick in 2/4 time, tempo 144. The notation consists of two staves. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and triplets. The second staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and rests.

### “Alone In Santa Cruz” (...Anywhere But Here)

The Ataris afforded Derrick a chance to occasionally explore different grooves, as he does here with this interesting 12/8 pattern. (0:35)

6

Musical notation for a drum lick in 12/8 time, tempo 99. The notation consists of two staves. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks. The second staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks.

### “Clear Cutting” (from Bad Astronaut—Houston, We Have A Drinking Problem, 2002)

Bad Astronaut took Plourde in a slower-tempo alt/rock direction. Here he displays complete control in a relaxed ghost-note vein. (0:26)

7

Musical notation for a drum lick in 4/4 time, tempo 66. The notation consists of two staves. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks. The second staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks.

### “Not A Dull Moment” (Houston...)

This song ends with a half-time syncopated beat with intensity building right up to the tight ending. (2:21)

8

Musical notation for a drum lick in 4/4 time, tempo 86. The notation consists of two staves. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks. The second staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks.

Musical notation for a drum lick in 4/4 time. The notation consists of two staves. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks. The second staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks, ending with a 'choke' mark.

### “Solar Sister” (Houston...)

On Bad Astronaut's cover of The Posies' "Solar Sister," Derrick flashes great fills that leave his personal stamp on the drum part. Here's an example from the song's last verse. (2:39)

9

Musical notation for a drum lick in 4/4 time, tempo 167. The notation consists of two staves. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks. The second staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and asterisks.

You can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site [www.edbreckenfeld.com](http://www.edbreckenfeld.com).



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Alex Suleca

# Godsmack's Shannon Larkin

## "Straight Out Of Line"

Transcribed by Joe Bergamini

MUSIC KEY

Open	R.C.	C.C.	China
H.H.	Bell	*	⊗
T.T.			
S.D.			
FT.			
B.D.1	B.D.2	Add'l	
H.H. w/foot	T.T.		

This month's *Rock Charts* features Shannon Larkin's creative drumming on "Straight Out Of Line" from Godsmack's 2003 hit album, *Faceless*.

Larkin's drum parts are well thought-out and arranged. He uses the same basic rhythmic motif throughout the arrangement, but orchestrates each section of the song differently around the kit. There are tribal tom grooves for the intro and verses, ride cymbal bells in the choruses, heavy crashes during the bridge sections, and tight hi-hats in the breakdown.

The intro contains a powerful tom groove that throws in various flams and snare hits over an 8th-note left-foot hi-hat pattern. Larkin uses different endings for each two-bar phrase,

giving this section an interesting musical lift. The pre-verse section that appears next is also used after the choruses. It contains a heavy syncopated groove with a driving crash-cymbal pattern.

As the song progresses, check out how Shannon uses a variety of cymbal voices. The China, splash, ride cymbal bell, and open hi-hats are used frequently to spice up fills. Shannon also adds an extra punch in measures 36, 55-56, and 64 with a few quick 32nd-note double bass licks.



2 splash 4

6

1, 3 2 4

# Shannon Larkin

(36)

6

(55)

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# Flams And Flam Rudiments

## Part 2: Advanced Applications For Jazz

by Ari Hoenig

**MUSIC KEY**

- R.C. — X
- S.D. — ●
- B.D. — ●

Last month, in Part 1, we dealt with voicing straight flams, reverse flams, and flam taps between the bass and snare drum in a jazz-time context. This month we're going to deal with some more advanced flam rudiments—Swiss army triplets and single flammed mills.

In Part 1 we played the flams in an open fashion, but for this article we're going to play them exactly together. (Some refer to this as "flat flams.") That said, the following examples should be practiced both ways.

Examples 1–3 apply a left-hand-lead Swiss army triplet. Here's the basic rudiment played by the hands.

**A**

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

Now, as in Part 1, we'll apply the rudiment and its permutations to the drumkit. All notated rights should be voiced on the bass drum and all lefts on the snare.

1

2

3

Now let's apply the right-hand-lead Swiss army triplet in the same way. Here's the basic sticking:

**B**

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

And here it is applied to the kit.

4

5

6

Let's move on to another flam rudiment, the single flammed mill. Here's the basic rudiment.

**C**

R L L R L R R L R L R

Now let's apply this four-note rudiment to a jazz-triplet feel. This creates an interesting polyrhythmic effect.

7

If we displace it by one 8th-note triplet, we get a somewhat different feel.

8

LR R L LR R L LR R L R

R L L R rL L R rL L R L

Lastly, let's combine flammed mills and Swiss army triplets to form longer, more interesting phrases. Here are a couple possibilities of what you can do. First, the basic sticking:

D

LR R L LR R L R

R L L R rL L R L

Here it is applied to the kit.

9

LR R L LR R L LR R L R

R L L R rL L R L

Here's another basic sticking:

E

LR R L LR R L LR R L R

R L L R rL L R rL L R L

And here it is applied to the kit.

10

LR R L LR R L LR R L R

R L L R rL L R rL L R L

The flam rudiments are presented here in a jazz context. Although it's not written in, you should practice each example with the hi-hat playing on 2 and 4. You can also try the basic rudiments as part of a 16th-note feel. Use your imagination. Happy flammimg!

*Ari Hoenig is a top New York jazz drummer. He currently works with Kenny Werner, Wayne Krantz, Jean-Michel Pilc, Chris Potter, and Kurt Rosenwinkel. Ari also leads his own band on Monday nights at New York City jazz club Smalls.*



# Double Bass Drumming

## Part 11: Hand/Foot Combos

by Rod Morgenstein



MUSIC KEY



The past several articles in this series on double bass drumming have focused on perhaps the most commonly used double bass fill technique: playing constant 16th notes or triplets and dividing them between the hands and feet. Another very effective technique, which also works extremely well for drum solos, is to play constant notes with the hands while doubling some of those notes with the feet.

All of the examples that follow consist of constant 16th notes played on the snare with alternating (RLRL) single strokes. The bass drums simply double (and, in effect, accentuate) some of these notes. Each exercise is written with and without snare accents, as each creates a somewhat different feel. Try to match the right-hand snare accents with the right foot and the left-hand snare accents with the left foot, as it will help simplify the learning process.

After practicing each exercise individually, try playing the "A" and "B" examples back to back. This will create two-measure phrases.

1A *R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L*

1B

2A

2B

3A

3B

4A

4B

5A

5B

6A

6B

7A

7B

8A

8B

9A

9B

10A

10B

11A

11B

12A

12B

Next month we'll look at ways of expanding this powerful and exciting double bass fill/solo approach.

Drum on!



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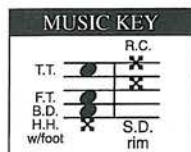
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# Afro-Cuban 6/8 Or 3/4?

by Michael Dawson



A few years ago, one of my students was struggling with an Afro-Cuban 6/8 groove. He could play the hands by themselves, with the bell pattern in the right and a conga-type figure in the left. But as soon as he added the pulse in the feet (which should've been dotted-quarter notes), things fell apart. At first, I thought it was a coordination problem. But I eventually realized that he wasn't making a mistake, he was simply feeling the groove in a different time signature.

Instead of phrasing the groove in 6/8 with a dotted quarter-note pulse, my student was hearing the pattern in 3/4 with a quarter-note pulse. Thanks to my student's "mistake," I discovered that shifting the basic pulse from three-note groupings (6/8) to four-note groupings (3/4) makes the same groove sound *completely* different. The following exercises are a result of this mind-expanding experience. They're designed to develop your ability to phrase a basic Afro-Cuban bell pattern in 6/8, 3/4, or both at once.

Here's a common Afro-Cuban bell pattern, played on the ride cymbal. You should also orchestrate the pattern on a variety of instruments, including cowbells, toms, rims, and cymbal bells.



Let's imply 6/8 by adding the feet on every third 8th note. This dotted quarter-note pulse creates a triplet feel.



Now, play every fourth 8th note with the feet. This four-note grouping feels like 16th notes in 3/4.



Here's how it looks written in 3/4.



After practicing Examples 2 and 3 individually, try alternating between the two until the transition is seamless. Use a metronome to make sure the bell pattern stays consistent.

Once you've internalized both feels, start adding the left hand. Here's the three-note grouping with the left hand imitating a typical conga pattern.



In Example 6, the same left-hand figures are played over the four-note grouping in the feet.



In the next group of exercises, both time signatures (6/8 and 3/4) are combined within the same foot pattern.

In Example 7, the hi-hat is phrased in 6/8 while the bass drum implies 3/4.



Now add the left-hand conga pattern.





In Example 9, the feet are reversed. The bass drum is in 6/8, and the hi-hat is in 3/4.



Here's the same pattern with the left hand added.



Mastering the previous examples is just the preliminary step. Once you can hear both time signatures individually and together, experiment with your own foot patterns and left-hand variations.

Here are a few alternate foot patterns that imply one or both time signatures. Practice these with the above bell pattern and left-hand figures, and with some of your own ideas. The possibilities are endless.



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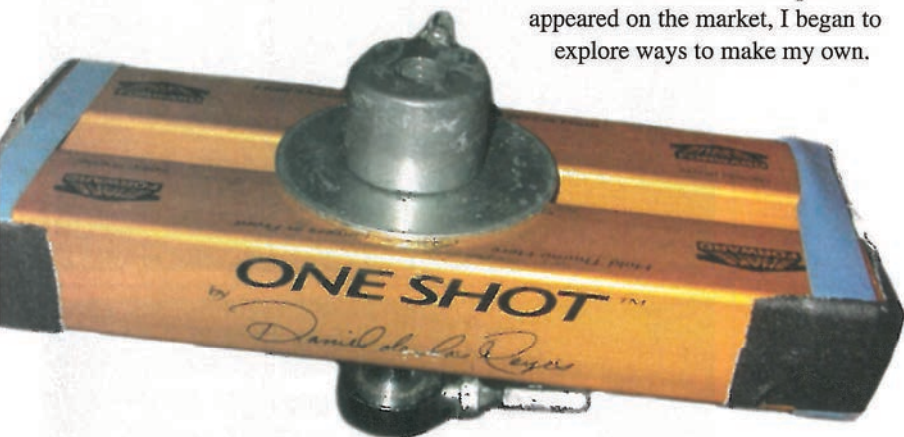
# Do-It-Yourself Percussion, Part 2

## The Hi-Hat Shaker

by Glenn Kotche

**T**his column is dedicated to providing drummers and percussionists with simple and inexpensive projects for creating instruments and accessories. This month's project is a hi-hat shaker.

As the name implies, a hi-hat shaker is a shaker that attaches to a hi-hat stand using a traditional hi-hat clutch. This device seemed to me to be the logical next step from the various commercially available tambourines/jingles that attach to the hi-hat. When no such product appeared on the market, I began to explore ways to make my own.



My exploration resulted in two approaches that both successfully fill this niche. One uses egg shakers; the other incorporates two small LP One Shot Shakers. Either design can be used in addition to the hi-hat, or exclusively (without the hi-hat sound) by loosening the top cymbal clutch so only the shaker is played.

Because a hi-hat shaker produces a quiet sound, it's ideal for use in the studio. It can sometimes eliminate the need for a shaker overdub, or (when used with the hi-hat) it can provide an enhanced hi-hat sound. However, for more than ten years I've also had great results using it in live situations, with a hi-hat microphone. Considering the success of commercially available brackets that enable cowbells and tambourines to be played with the feet, a shaker that's playable with the feet makes perfect sense.

### Take Your Shots

I opted for LP's One Shot shakers as one version of my hi-hat shaker because they offer a crisp, precise sound, with great response. For this design you'll need two small One Shot shakers, a regular hi-hat clutch, and either two rubber bands or some gaffer's tape.

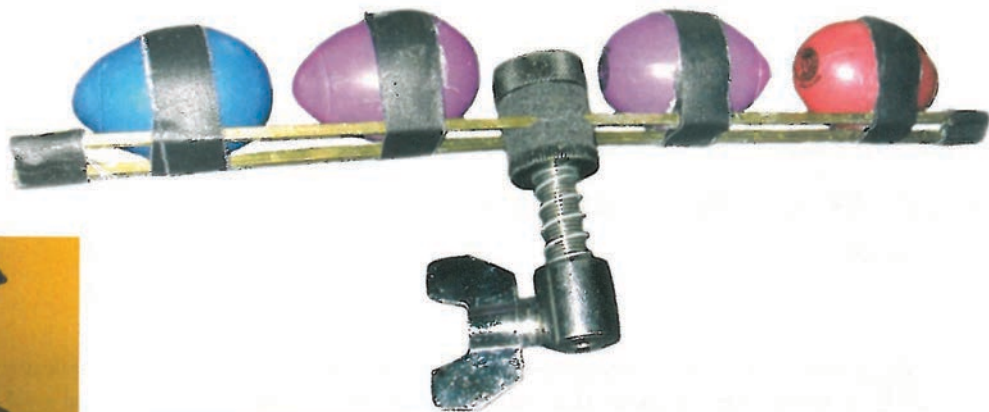
All you need to do is loosen the clutch, remove the felt washers and insert both shakers—parallel to each other—between the two nuts of the clutch. Then tighten the nuts so that the shakers are firmly held in the clutch. Fasten the two rubber bands (or tape) around the ends of each shaker so they are joined. This final step helps keep the shakers from slipping and moving around in the clutch.

Since the One Shots are designed to only sound when played in a forward motion, make sure that both of the shakers are placed the same way, in the position that allows them to sound with a downward motion. (This design can also be mounted upside down; resulting in easily executed up-beat only shaking.)

### The Good Eggs

The second design incorporates four egg shakers (of any brand), two metal dowels, a hi-hat clutch, and a fastener (rubber bands, tape, or hook-and-loop strips). The first step is to loosen the nuts of the clutch just enough to fit the two metal dowels (parallel to each other and horizontal to the floor) between the two felt washers. Then tighten the nuts and secure the dowels to each other with two rubber bands or with strips of tape. The dowels should form a "track" in which the egg shakers can easily rest.

I put two eggs on each side of the clutch, spacing them as evenly as possible. The eggs then need to be secured to the dowel track. I've had success with all of the aforementioned methods, but I prefer using four thick rubber bands, which are wrapped around each egg and dowel track. Using hook-and-loop fastener strips allows the eggs to move around a bit more than tape or rubber bands do. You should use the fastener that gives you the sound and action that you like.



This shaker design gives a rounder sound that's a bit less crisp and pointed than the One Shot design. But it's ideal for 8th-note patterns, which end up sounding like 16th notes due to residual vibrations.

### Cover Your Bases

Whichever hi-hat shaker design you select, I recommend that you add a pad for the hi-hat stand when using the shaker independent of the hi-hat cymbals. You can use a folded cloth, a towel, a piece of foam, or any soft material that can be placed between the floor and the hi-hat stand footboard. By doing this you'll cushion the impact of the footboard against the base of the hi-hat stand, thus preventing unwanted sound without affecting the normal function of the hi-hat.

As always, it's important to note that other designs for hi-hat shakers are possible. These two just proved to be the easiest and most effective in my own experiments. For an audio example of the hi-hat shaker, listen to "Jesus Etc." from Wilco's *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*, or "Muzzle Of Bees" from *A Ghost Is Born*.



Glenn Kotche is the drummer/percussionist for eclectic rock band Wilco. He was most recently featured in the January '05 issue of MD.



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# Building A Fan Base

## Part 2: Self-Promotion

by Darren Pujale

**A**s drummers, it's important to build a fan base in order to ensure the success of our band and our individual careers. Without an album in stores or songs on the radio, we must rely on a balanced combination of touring, promotion, and proper team building.

In last month's issue we discussed aspects of touring, including routing, goals, playing in front of people, target audience, paying for a tour, and the drummer's role. This time we'll focus on band promotion, including the benefits of planning that promotion strategically.

### Defining Terms And Establishing Goals

"Promotion" is just another word for advertising. The long-term goal of promotion is to increase your band's visibility in order to gain the

attention of industry people and potential fans. The short-term goal is to have people see your name as often and in as many places as possible. So your promotional strategy should focus on activities that gain rapid exposure as well as bookings for you and your band.

Effective promotion can increase the odds of long-term success in the music industry. Eventually, a band can move from touring regionally to touring nationally, from driving a van to riding in a tour bus, and from playing in small clubs to performing in large theaters. Hey, if you're fortunate, at some point you won't even have to load and set up your own drumkit! (That was a powerful incentive for me.)

### Start With A Press Kit

The first step to take is to put together a press kit that explains who you are and what you're about. This kit should include a group photo, a cover letter, some examples of your music, a brief bio on the band, and any press clippings or show reviews you might have. In addition, add a list of some of the unique qualities and accomplishments of the band.

Making your press kit attractive and concise will increase the chances of its being read by a promoter and/or members of the press. (If it looks like your dog ate half of it for dinner, odds are it won't get read.) Adding some sort of flash to the envelope, or putting on the band's sticker, will help it stand out and get noticed.

### Get Into Cyberspace

Running a Web site and maintaining an up-to-date database is one of the quickest and easiest ways to educate potential fans about your band. The site should include the band's latest news, tour dates, a biography, reviews of previous



Illustration by Joe King

*I write my band's name on all my old drumheads and toss them out into the crowd after the show. Fans love to take home souvenirs.*

shows, merchandise, and photos. It's also helpful to have samples of your music available for listening and downloading. Many drummers build their own Web sites to promote their individual drumming careers. (For example, check out [dennischambers.com](http://dennischambers.com) or [mickeyhart.com](http://mickeyhart.com)).

On [www.particlepeople.com](http://www.particlepeople.com), we've included recorded music and live shows that you can download, as well as a place to sign up for our mailing list. Having a mailing list and sending out batch emails is an excellent way to inform your current fans about recent news, tour dates, and other coming events. As a drummer, you may even want to add a section on the site to talk about the gear you use, or any drumming philosophy that you have, so fans or drummers you've inspired can find out what you're about. A basic Web site can be kept alive for \$50 per month. For more information, check out *Building A Website For Dummies* by David A. Crowder.

### **Sell More Than Music**

Band merchandise and swag (such as T-shirts, hats, music, and stickers) can be sold at your shows, on your Web site, in retail stores, or in online music stores like [musictoday.com](http://musictoday.com) or [rockmerch.com](http://rockmerch.com). And the beauty of this is, when your fans buy merchandise with your band's name on it, they are paying *you* to help promote your band. You gain promotional exposure while you earn extra income at the same time. Having a memorable name and logo really helps in this area.

### **Takin' It To The Streets**

Creating a "street team" can help you promote shows (or a record) before you actually come to town. Particle has built a team around the country by offering fans free admission to a show in exchange for putting up posters around town and hand-

ing out flyers on the street. They can hang posters and distribute flyers to music stores and restaurants, on campus, and at local concerts during the few weeks leading up to your show.

Here's how it works for us. A fan in Anytown, USA will receive a package from us with posters and flyers to distribute about three weeks before we come to town. In exchange, that fan gets a Particle T-shirt and two free tickets to the show. This is one of the most cost-effective ways to promote your band and your drumming career. We'll talk more about the importance of creating a street team in the next issue.

**FLIX**

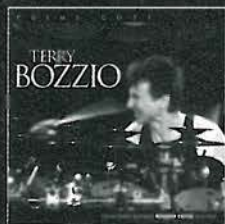
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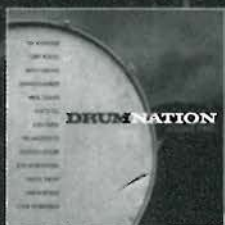
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### Just Spell Our Name Right

Another important aspect of promotion is getting your name in the press. This can happen in a variety of different ways. Some are free, while others cost money, money, money.

Local papers and industry magazines and Web sites have free music listings that promote upcoming shows. For more exclusive coverage, try to get a writer to review your show or do an interview on the band. This usually requires you to contact the publication and send in a press kit, since they may not even know who you are. You can also ask a street team fan to review a show and submit it to publications and music Web sites, like [jambase.com](http://jambase.com), [VH1.com](http://VH1.com), or [MTV.com](http://MTV.com).

### Get On The Air

Even in today's world of corporate radio, there are still some stations across the country that play music by unsigned bands. So having a CD available to send in helps.

Live appearances are also great promotional vehicles. Particle has done many on-air interviews and performances in the past. Of course, they were often at 8:00 A.M. after we'd played until 4:00 A.M., but they were worth it.

### Spread The Word Yourself

Getting your name out there can be done with little or no money. Remember that every concert you do is a platform from which you can promote yourself or your band. And the best part about that is, you're usually getting paid to do it.

Encourage your fans to spread the word about you. Good word-of-mouth promo-

tion can be priceless. Particle always allows fans to tape our live shows so that they can trade tapes and spread the word through music. As another promotional tool, I write my band's name on all my old drumheads and toss them out into the crowd after the show. Fans love to take home souvenirs.

### Every Little Thing Helps

Get creative with promotion. Start some hype about your band on Web site chat boards and discussion groups. Plaster a sticker in a high traffic area, or talk to someone next to you in line. When the money is available, hire a publicist. They'll have better chances of getting your name in the press since they usually have long-term relationships and connections with the media.

There are many directions from which you can approach promotion. Ask yourself what you're willing to do to build a fan base, and what it's worth. It takes time, but persistence pays off. See your name in lights!





*Darren Pujalet is the rhythmic pulse behind the band Particle. The pioneering electronic/jam-rock instrumental quartet has played over five hundred shows around the world, including some of the nation's biggest festivals. Their 2004 debut CD, Launchpad, was hailed by the Associated Press as one of that year's top-ten recordings. More information is available at [www.particlepeople.com](http://www.particlepeople.com).*



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# Home Recording For Drummers

## Part 5: Adding And Changing Sounds

by Chris Vrenna



**H**ello again. I hope you enjoyed the tweaker drum “slide show” in my last article. We’ve covered a lot of information so far, and I hope my real-world examples were helpful. This month we’ll have some fun adding more sounds, beats, and grooves to our live drum recordings through MIDI and editing.

### Curses! (Then Again...)

I must start off with what some drummers may see as a four-letter word: click track. If you know you want to add loops or MIDI later, it’s always best to start with a defined tempo in your DAW (digital audio workstation). I know, playing to a static click may take some of the feel out of things. But it will also make your life easier in the long run.

The only way the computer knows how fast or slow to go is by having a defined tempo grid. When I’m jamming with my band, I keep a Boss DB-66 electronic metronome with me and figure out where the natural tempo lies. When it comes time to record the drums into the computer, I first define that tempo into the DAW.

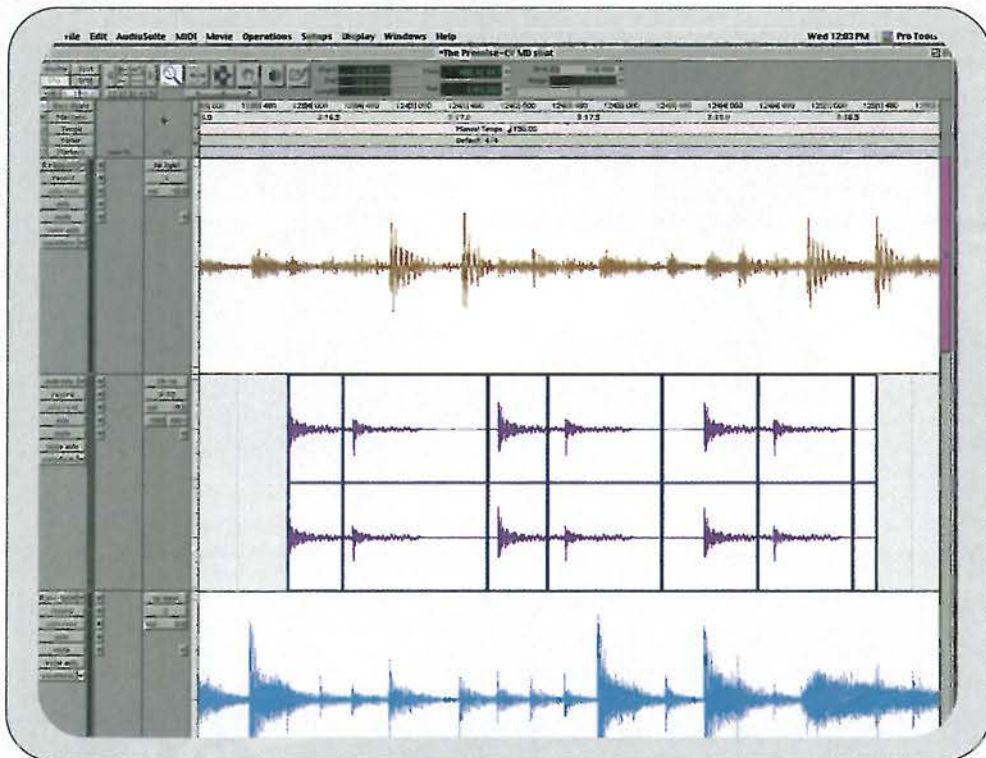
Most DAW applications have a click track plugin or a built-in metronome. Turn that feature on, count off, and record! Later, when you look for that perfect complementary loop, you’ll know exactly what tempo it needs to be. You will simply set the DAW to a grid mode and drag the loop to a bar line. It will be in sync and in time with your playing.

Now listen to the timing between the loops and yourself. You may hear some flammings. Loops don’t have the natural variations that we humans do. I like to keep all the natural feel, so what I do is zoom in on the loop, the kick mic’, and the snare mic’ simultaneously. Looking at the peaks of the audio file, I cut and slide the loops to line up tightly with the kick and snare. You won’t notice the slight hiccups in the loop you’ve created, but rather you’ll hear a tighter-sounding groove overall.

The only time-consuming thing is you’ll have to edit the loop on every kick and snare hit as needed for the entire duration that you want the loop to play. I do my editing first thing in the morning or very late at night, when I’m tired. I know I’m too tired to do anything creative anyway, so it becomes rather soothing.

Some of you may still be saying “No” to the click. There *is* another method you can try. I’ve been handed a band’s song in ProTools and asked to create programming over it, but they didn’t record to a click. ProTools has a feature called Beat Detective that examines a chunk of audio (like a multi-track drum performance) and will generate a tempo map based on the transient hits it finds.

If you don’t have Beat Detective, you can also put your cursor on the transient of your kick drum file on a beat one, manually define this point as, for example, “bar one, beat one.” Next place your cursor on the kick drum transient for the beginning of bar two. Manually define this point as “bar two, beat one.” Continue this procedure for the entire song, defining the beginning of each bar. The computer will generate a tempo map that follows the drums.



Drum tracks from tweaker’s “the promise.” Notice the center section showing the edited loop track.



You will need to do a little manual reading to see the specifics of how your chosen DAW software does this process. Though the practice will vary by DAW brand, the theory remains the same for all.

### Loops In A Box

Loops and samples can be found everywhere. Many manufacturers now sell sample CDs as plugins so they integrate directly into DAWs. One of my favorites is Stylus by Spectrasonics. This plugin has gigabytes of awesome-sounding loops as well as a huge library of single hits that you can program yourself. East West and Big Fish Audio also have terrific drum sample plugins.

Regardless of the technique you used to get here, the next step will be MIDI. Again, each DAW will have its own method, but you'll need to create a MIDI track, assign the MIDI output to a keyboard or plugin, and record from a MIDI keyboard. Any keyboard with a MIDI Out jack will work. You will also need an inexpensive MIDI interface for your computer. These can be simple 2 in/2 out boxes for \$50, like the M-Audio midisport. Some firewire audio interfaces we discussed earlier may actually have MIDI built in, so you don't need to buy a thing. The Digidesign 002 and MOTU Traveler are two examples of this. Now you can add some low 808 kick drums or any other cool sounds you may want to.

### Changing Sounds In A Second

Let's say that you don't want or need loops or MIDI, but your raw drum recordings aren't as professional-sounding as you'd like. Digidesign has a great plugin called Sound Replacer. This plugin will look for transients in an audio track (like a kick mic') and actually replace every hit with any sample you tell it to. It does this while keeping the naturally played velocities as well.

I have a collection of kick and snare drum samples that were made in different studios. If my kick mic' sound is too dry, I'll first duplicate the kick mic' track, and then use Sound Replacer on the dupe to



Among the many great sound libraries available are plugins like Stylus (above). Sound Replacer is a plugin that will automatically replace any sound transient you choose with any other sound.

add a bigger, roomier sample. I will ultimately mix the two tracks down into one final kick drum sound.

You can use samples you already have, or choose from the many great sample CDs out there. The options are endless. And for those of you who are thinking "I'll replace my kick drum with a dog bark," I've tried it and it's not as funny-sounding as you'd think. Trust me on this one.

I hope you'll have some fun experimenting with adding rhythmic elements to your drum recordings. Whether you're looking

for ethnic percussion or retro drum machine beats, you'll find many options to help you add a new level of production to your home recordings.

*Chris Vrenna is the former drummer with Nine Inch Nails. He has also produced and remixed tracks for many top acts, he's composed the music to the popular video game American McGee's Alice, and he leads his own critically acclaimed band, Tweaker.*



# Duplex

## The Second Life

by Harry Cangany

The Duplex name has figured twice in percussion history. The first time was in a fifty-year period from the 1880s through the 1930s, in conjunction with St. Louis drum builder/inventor Emile Boulanger. During that period, Duplex was the first brand to introduce a drum with a separate-tension tuning system. We'll save that story for another day.



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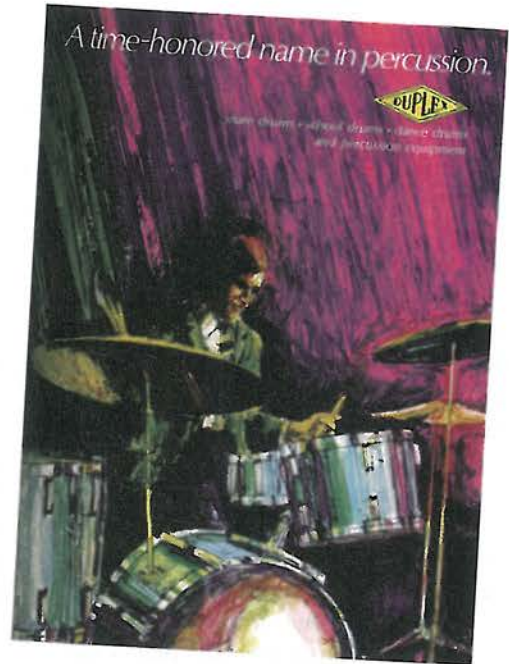
For Complete Cymbal Listing—See Pages 76 and 77

For now, let's focus on the *second* life of the Duplex name: its current use for a number of imported parts and accessories sold by Grover Trophy/Musical Products of Cleveland, Ohio (not to be confused with Grover Pro Percussion of Woburn, Massachusetts). Duplex is a division of Grover, as is Grossman Music Corporation. And Grossman should be a familiar name to regular readers of this column.

Grossman Music was founded in 1922 as a music wholesaler. The late Henry Grossman's company sold any number of items to music stores. Some of those musical instruments and accessory items were in the percussion area. And some of *those* items included Ludwig & Ludwig drums, which Grossman distributed for several years.

When Ludwig was merged into Leedy & Ludwig in 1950, Grossman Music found itself without a drum line. So in 1952 Henry Grossman purchased the Rogers Drum Company, in order for his salespeople to continue selling drums to stores across America. Grossman built Rogers into a world-class competitor before selling it to CBS in April of 1966.

What does this all have to do with Duplex, you ask? Well, when Grossman sold Rogers to CBS, the company once again had no drum line to sell to its customers. So the name Duplex was chosen,



and Henry Grossman had his next drum company.

No one really remembers quite how Henry Grossman acquired the Duplex name. Did he remember it and find it abandoned? Did he just choose it "out of the air," with no prior knowledge of its significance in drum history? The answer is lost in antiquity.

What *is* known is that Duplex drums featured what were clearly Rogers shells. The lugs were the same model that Rogers used for the Yamaha-built R360 series. Legend has it that veteran Rogers engineer Joe Thompson designed them. The finishes on the drums were clearly mid-'60s Rogers. The snare drums used the Bantam strainer, which was also used on the low-cost Rogers Luxor model. Stands and pedals were brought in from hardware maker Walberg & Auge.

I've seen two Duplex drumsets in my life. I also purchased an undated catalog (from which this month's illustrations are taken) in order to have proof of the existence of Duplex drums—however brief. If I were to guess, I'd say that Henry Grossman had some agreement for a limited time to provide drums to long-standing customers until he could get another drum line in place. Or perhaps he had a limited number of Rogers shells stored in Cleveland that were partially finished and were not considered part of the Rogers buyout. In any event, Duplex drums quickly and quietly disappeared, and Grossman started selling imported drums under the Dixie brand name.

As I said, the Duplex name lives on today on a wide range of accessories. But it's just possible that some readers may stumble across a Duplex Tonecraft snare drum, or a great-looking set that seems to stream out "Rogers," but is only a relative.



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# Karsh Kale

## Venice Beach Ventriloquist

by Ken Micallef

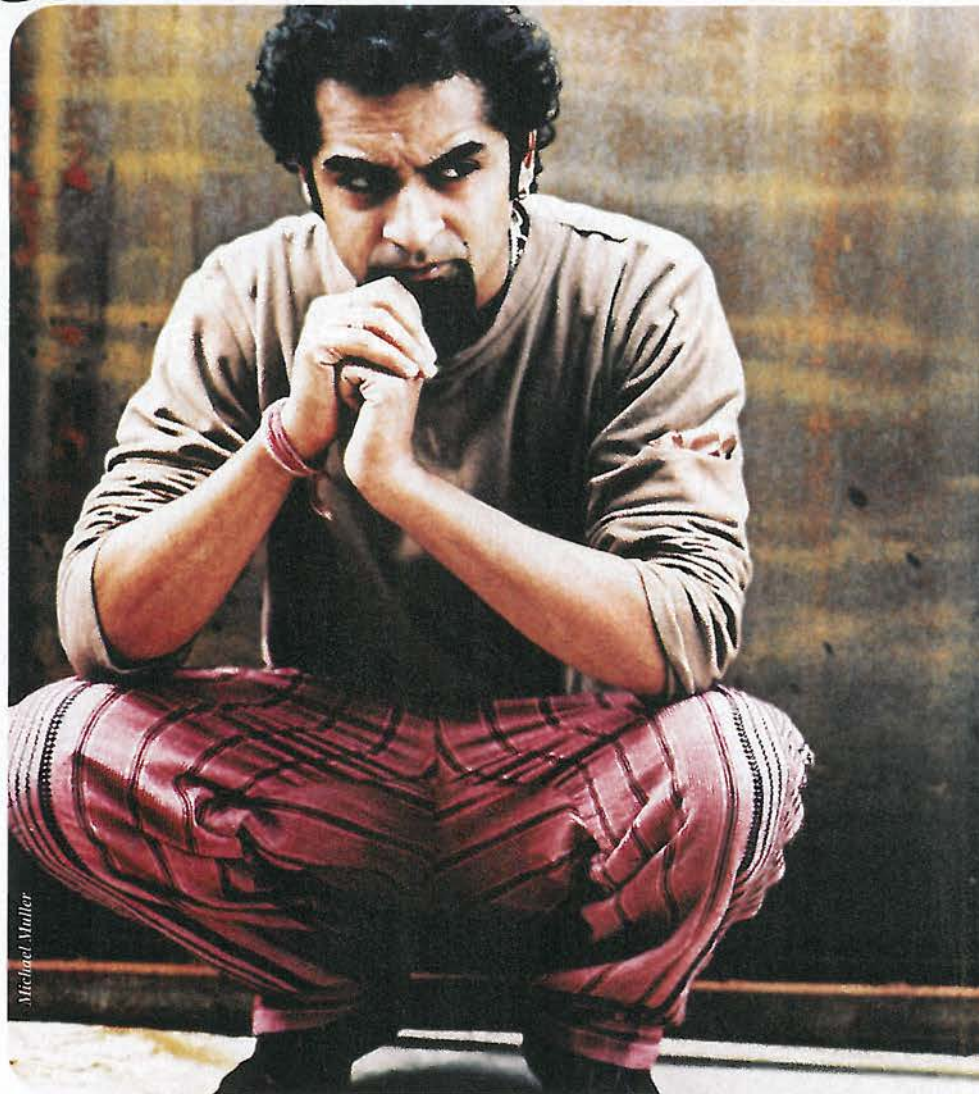
Seemingly half man and half machine, Karsh Kale (pronounced "Kurt Kahn-lay") works the leading rhythmic edge of world dance fusion. Merging the humid rhythms of his Indian heritage with the frenzied language of sampled atmospheres, breakbeats, and computer-designed arrangements, Kale has produced a pair of dizzying albums: *Redesign*, and most recently, *Liberation*.

Kale's music is based around his drumming on electric tabla and acoustic kit, programmed beats, and such Indian drums as the acoustic tabla, mridangam, pakhawaj, and dholak. In addition to his solo projects, Kale has recorded with DJ Logic, Bill Laswell, DJ Cheb I Sabbah, Herbie Hancock, Dave Douglas, Plastalina Mosh, and as a member of the East-West collective Tabla Beat Science.

A native of Queens, New York, Kale recently abandoned the East Coast for the sunny climes and feel-good vibes of California's Venice Beach, where his pre-production studio has room to breathe and grow. He is currently recording his next solo project, as well as the *Talisman Sound Clash* compilation (Palm Pictures) and another compilation of Asian electronic music. Kale's studio is spartan and small, but it allows him to plan his next move, which won't necessarily be another Indian dance fusion record.

"It is a departure from creating music that tends to become disposable," Kale explains. "When you get into the world of electronica you are making something that is hot for the moment and all over the clubs, but then disappears when the next big track appears. I want to make music that is a bit more timeless and composed. I still love making dance music, but nowadays it is more about creating tracks for compilations."

One of Kale's main tools in music-making is an intriguing item of his own design, the folk-meets-future electric tabla. "Playing the electric tabla is different from playing the acoustic tabla," Kale explains. "The electric tabla responds to your hand



in a different way. It is similar to the difference between electronic and acoustic drums. Electronically, it's about mic' placement and the balance between internal mic's and external mic's. The point of electronically enhancing the tabla is not only to sonically boost the level, but to be able to manipulate that. I use Sennheiser 606 and 604 mic's, which are designed to respond to frequencies found in triple toms and quad toms in marching bands. I did some research into mic's that had the right frequency response. Some mic's don't always pick up the nuance of the head, but those are the frequencies that get lost when you're play-

ing with a band. So, I use a Shure SM57 or 58 on top."

How does Kale specifically effect the tablas? "Any way that you can effect an electric guitar, I can do with tablas," he exclaims, "everything from throwing in delay and distortion and loops to different frequency manipulations."

But at the end of the day Kale says his goal is not really about electric or acoustic tabla, or even drums. A world musician with globe-trotting vision, Karsh Kale keeps an eye on the big picture while laying down blazing beats of finger fury and electronic assistance.



"I don't think of myself as a tabla player or a drummer or a programmer. I think of myself as a producer. I try to make decisions on what is best for the track. That inevitably becomes organic, because if you have a lot of elements within your palette to draw from, that allows you to think not too much like a drummer or a tabla player. I have worked with many drummers and tabla players, and they always want to hear themselves on top of the mix. I am not trying to hear myself, I'm trying to hear the bigger picture. That allows me to create something that is entirely quantized and totally free."

## Music Lab

Though Karsh Kale's Venice pre-production studio includes Drum Workshop drums, cymbals from Paiste and Zildjian, a Fender Rhodes electric piano, a Rickenbacker 4001 bass, and "a bunch of outboard and soft synths," what sets it apart is its acoustic/electronic scheme. Indian percussion such as mridangam, dholak, pakhawaj, dayan, and tabla sit patiently waiting for Kale to electrify them with his substantial arsenal of electronic effects. Then there are those hybrid instruments, like a Roland HPD-15 Handsonic and programmable and electric tabla—even a Fender Stratocaster guitar with Roland MIDI pickups. The number of ways that music can be created in this spartan space is mind-boggling.

Here's a look at the electronic heart of Karsh Kale's studio:

- Apple Mac G4 running Pro Tools LE
- Propellerheads Recycle and Reason software
- Two Mackie 1202 mixers
- Korg MS200, 01W, and Triton keyboards
- E-MU Xtreme Lead-1 rack synth
- Pioneer CDJ 1000 DJ deck
- Sennheiser 604 and 606, and Shure SM57 and 58 mic's
- Two Mackie 824 monitors
- Eventide Harmonizer effects processor
- Electro-Harmonix Big Muff pedal
- Line 6 DL4 Delay Modeler pedal



# Anthony Jackson

## Bassist Extraordinaire

by Billy Amendola

**A**nthony Jackson is a musical innovator who has taken bass playing into another world—not only in performance, but also in the design of the instrument itself. (He helped design the unique Fodera six-string electric contrabass upon which he performs.)

Anthony was born on June 23, 1952 in New York City, and got into music at the age of twelve, starting with piano and guitar. He switched to the bass at the age of sixteen, and began studying the playing of Motown great James Jamerson and Jefferson Airplane's Jack Casady, among many others. Anthony's first professional

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### Anthony's Allies

Here are some of the top drummers with whom Anthony Jackson has performed.

Dennis Chambers • Vinnie Colaiuta • Steve Ferrone  
Steve Gadd • Cliff Almond • Yogi Horton  
Earl Young • Buddy Rich • Dave Weckl • Simon Phillips

---



recording session was in 1970. It was for "Me And Mrs. Jones" by R&B singer Billy Paul, and it earned the young bassist a gold record. Three years later Anthony co-wrote one of the most memorable bass lines in popular music, for the O'Jays' hit "For The Love Of Money." From that point on Anthony has been one of the most in-demand session musicians in the world.

*"If you're not thoroughly committed, you simply can't compete, because there are people around you who are—and they will come and elbow you out of the way."*

Jackson has played with just about every great drummer on the studio scene, a fact supported by his recent induction into *Bass Player* magazine's Hall Of Fame. But our conversation begins with how he remembers his thirteen-month road gig with the legendary Buddy Rich.

**MD:** Let's talk about your experience with Buddy.

**Anthony:** He was the only...what I would call "transcended genius" that I've ever known and worked with. Buddy was like Heifetz or Casals. Once a century someone like that will come along. He was in a category completely apart from every other person I ever worked with. There was no one like Buddy. *No one.*

**MD:** Would you strictly follow him, or would he let you take the reins a bit?

**Anthony:** It was a real partnership. Of course, nobody grabbed Buddy by the nose and pulled him along, but he did listen to what I played. We had a spectacular communication, I think, because for him it was something new. It was the first time that he had played with a bass player so young—I was only twenty-one—from the generation

that had come up playing commercial music. Before that, everyone was a converted upright player. Most of those guys were older and they really didn't have grounding outside of the jazz world. Since I did, Buddy was really intrigued.

We had some spectacular nights communicating with each other, playing-wise. But there was never *any* question that he was the leader.

Sometimes, what he was playing was so intense that I had to concentrate on continuing to play. I wanted to stop and just listen to *him*. It would be like someone from the generation prior to mine getting to play with Charlie Parker. It was the single most intense experience I've ever had as a player.

**MD:** What qualities do you look for in a drummer?

**Anthony:** With anybody you work with, you look for the foundation to be there. Then, on top of the foundation, you look for the imagination, the vocabulary, and the inspiration. You look for that in yourself, and you certainly look for that in others. If I were a drummer, I'd be very touchy to any suggestion that I was not as much a musician as any other instrumentalist. So I treat drummers the same way I would treat pianists, violinists—anyone. There is no hierarchy here.

The worst thing a drummer can do is the same as any other person can do, which is basically not care. You *have* to care. You've got to radiate the sense that this is what you're put here to do. If you don't have that, you'll get run over, and I'm not the only one who would do it. Basically, musicians like



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## Anthony Jackson

that just don't survive. If you're not thoroughly committed, you simply can't compete, because there are people around you who are—and they will come and elbow you out of the way. And “knowing your stuff” is never an issue. I won't discuss that, like I won't discuss reading music. These are things that are *expected*. If you have to talk about them, then there's a problem.

Now of course, being a bass player, the most important person to form an intense relationship with quickly is the drummer.

When it comes to the groove, that's bass and drums. We've got the responsibility to hold that down. So clearly, a good relationship between the two is crucial.

**MD:** Will you follow the drummer? What do you listen for?

**Anthony:** You do what the music requires. Sometimes you listen more to this, sometimes you listen more to that. But you listen to *everything* all the time. The drums are an instrument with several components. Focusing on one element of the kit would be like playing with a

pianist but only focusing on the notes played with the right hand. You really can't do it.

Again, I'm treating drums as an instrument as valid as any other. Drummers get no free credits from me. And that's enabled me to have great relationships with so many of the great drummers.

**MD:** Would you ever change your bass style to accommodate the music or drummer you're playing with at that time?

**Anthony:** I won't say that I change my style to *accommodate*, because that implies a problem. I'll change according to the needs of the music. I'll change according to what the leader wants.

There's a secret to being a successful sideman. I learned the most about it from Steve Gadd. Some musicians raise issues about the tragedy of being a sideman: Leaders get respect, sidemen are just whores. Well, I don't think anyone would call Steve Gadd a whore.

When I was lecturing I would always tell my students not to get caught up in this issue of sideman-itis, like, “You've got to have a different mindset because you're taking orders and you want to get called back.” Just play the music. If you have doubts—and this is something that drummers can especially relate to—think of Steve Gadd, the ultimate sideman. There isn't any musician out there playing any instrument who wouldn't sell his kids to be in Steve “sideman” Gadd's position. And after reflecting on this fact, if you still have a problem being a sideman, you're in the wrong business.

**MD:** Let's talk a bit more about Gadd.

**Anthony:** Steve is one of the great artists of our time. Performance-wise, he's been my archetype, and he's a drummer, not a bass player. In terms of someone who has influenced the way that I hear the world of music, after Buddy Rich it would have to be Gadd. When it comes to the great drummers that I've worked with, there's always been a great hook-up. Steve and I have an *amazing* hook-up.

**MD:** Thoughts on Steve Ferrone?

**Anthony:** Playing with Ferrone was also exceptional. We've always had an *amazingly* tight groove. But that's also true for Dave Weckl and Dennis Chambers. When I played with all these guys, most of the time I could see a smile come to their face. When drummers hit a groove, and

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they're satisfied that it's working between the bass and drums, they smile. It's like, "Yeaaaaahhhhh." And that's true for any of the guys you're going to mention....

**MD:** Like Vinnie Colaiuta?

**Anthony:** If you've been called to work with someone like Vinnie, you know you've got a groove happening. Vinnie's one of those people who, if he doesn't like the groove, will tell you. We don't get to play together as often as we'd like, because we're on opposite coasts. These days, budgets don't allow players to swap coasts several times a year, as happened in the 1970s and early '80s. So I don't see Vinnie that often. But when I do it's always special. He doesn't play like anyone else I've worked with, and he has an abundance of all the qualities you'd hope to find in an artist. But at the root of it there is a magical groove.

**MD:** How do you usually record your bass tracks?

**Anthony:** Most of the time when I record, I'm playing along with a final drum track, and the drummer's not there. There's an advantage to that, because then I can have what I want again and

again and again. I can learn what the drummer played—every note in every bar, every phrase. I can zoom in or pull out, as the music requires.

**MD:** How do you feel about playing with a drum machine?

**Anthony:** Playing with a drum machine can be very challenging and inspiring when the part is well put together, particularly when a drummer gets to program the part. What you lack in feeling and breathing and interaction you gain in being able to go back and zero in on things. However, there can be a tendency to overplay, to over-lock, and to make it self-conscious. Every little lick the drummer plays, the bass player repeats or locks with. That can be a potential problem. But with experience, you learn to move the bass part *around* the drum part, which, of course, can't change. You have an interesting blend when it's done correctly. Although an experienced listener can tell that it's a drum machine, it doesn't sound like an overdub. It really does sound like there are two people playing together in the studio. The machines are here, they're not going away. They're becoming *more* entrenched.



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## Anthony Jackson

**MD:** Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

**Anthony:** Unfortunately, with the improvement in the technology, the creative side of things has been harmed by the fact that the entrance requirements to the club have been lowered. They'll let anybody in these days. And that isn't going to change for a while, because too much money is being made by too many people who are untrained. It's tempting to become a musician when you no longer have to practice, study, pass tests, or audition.

**MD:** Let's get back to live drummers.

**Anthony:** I would be saying the same thing about *all* the great ones...they all have "it." I played on a few tracks on Dennis Chambers' latest record, and listening back, I was thinking how amazing Dennis is. He's in the Pantheon, he's striding with the giants. Listening to some of the stuff that he played on some of these tracks, that's what they *all* would have played. Not because there isn't anything else to play, but because that particular kind of groove was the perfect

groove. Of course, each great drummer can embellish and shade. I hear differences in the way Dennis uses his hi-hat. I know that Simon Phillips would have done it differently. But the same basic conceptual direction would have been there. It *needed* to be there.

Dennis played the same thing that Gadd would have played, or that Weckl or Cliff Almond would have played. It was the best thing at that time. A little more garlic, a little less cilantro...but it's still the same recipe. Pizza sauce is going to be pizza sauce. You're not going to put mustard in the pizza sauce. So don't get uptight and say, "I'm not going to make pizza sauce like everybody else, I want to be different." Take it easy. Be different by degree. Be different by emphasis, by subtlety, by the little things. If you're going to play a groove in a song at this tempo with this basic feel, don't go in thinking you're going to play something that's never been heard before. Play what's required, and then bring your own individual style to the table. Any great drummer that you mention will have these qualities.

**MD:** You mentioned Cliff Almond.

**Anthony:** Yes, he's also one of the giants. I place him in the Pantheon. Cliff's one of the greatest drummers I've ever worked with.

**MD:** That list is unbelievable. Is there anyone that you haven't played with that you would like to?

**Anthony:** I'd like to play with Phil Collins. I saw him with his big band, and I was very surprised. He played his ass off. I knew that Phil was a great drummer, but I didn't know that he could do all *that*. It was very musical, and it seemed like he was having a ball.

I've always wondered what it would be like to play with Charlie Watts. He has a big band also, but I've never heard them. I would be curious and it would be fun to play. And I'd really like to play with Ringo Starr. Like many of my generation, I started playing after seeing The Beatles on The Ed Sullivan Show, February 9, 1964. The next day, in school, it felt like a riot. That's all *everyone* was talking about in the schoolyard. Even the stuffy teachers were talking about it. I'll never forget that.

**MD:** What do you think of Ringo's drumming?

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**Anthony:** No one could have done a better job playing drums for The Beatles than Ringo Starr could. He was perfect.

**MD:** Did you ever work with Jeff Porcaro?

**Anthony:** I only got to play with Jeff once, and that was on a track that you'll likely never hear. You remember Steely Dan's "Gaucho"? That's Jeff playing drums. I played the original bass part with Jeff, but for whatever reason they didn't use it. I'd love to get my hands on that someday.

**MD:** How about Yogi Horton?

**Anthony:** I played a lot with Yogi. We always had a great time. We had a good friendship and a great hook-up. He was gone all too soon. He wasn't around long enough to really grow to another level, but Yogi was a great drummer.

**MD:** Do you remember working with Earl Young?

**Anthony:** Yes, of course. That was back in the days when I was working with Gamble & Huff in Philadelphia. I didn't get to do too much with Earl because I was usually playing with Billy Paul's

band, and Norman Farrington was on drums. But as I continued working for Gamble & Huff, I did a few sessions with Earl. My big Earl project was the O'Jays' "For The Love Of Money." I was astounded by his power. It may not come through on the records, but he is an ass-kicker. Listen to a classic Earl Young track like Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes' "If You Don't Know Me By Now." There's *no* click track. Earl had the drummer's equivalent of perfect pitch. I only saw the term referred to once, and it's called "infallible rhythm." Nobody has absolutely perfect time, but you find people like Buddy Rich and Tony Williams who can play without the time drifting. I've also seen studio drumming great James Gadson demonstrate infallible rhythm. I've seen him overdub drums on a track without a click track, and it's just perfect.

I haven't spoken to Earl Young since we cut that record, but I've never forgotten those sessions. Earl stands as one of the great drummers. I'll never forget the impact that he made.



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# Remembering Tito Puente

by Paul Mason

**I**n 1987, on a recommendation from Alan Dawson, I got a chance to teach drumset at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. One of the fringe benefits of working at a prestigious institution like Brown is getting to meet some of the guest artists who come in to do workshops or perform with the band.

In 1989, Tito Puente was scheduled to perform with the band, and I was asked to fill out the percussion section. Now, my instrument is the drumset. I've played a little hand percussion here and there, but it's not my specialty. And my Latin concept comes more out of Art Blakey and Roy Haynes than Chano Pozo.

But I was not alone in this adventure. Also on the faculty at the time was noted ethnomusicologist and percussionist Andy Schloss. If you've read Mickey Hart's *Drumming At The Edge Of Magic*, you'll remember Andy as the

guy who introduced Mickey to the field of ethnomusicology and helped him get his "History Of Percussion" database up and running.

Tito had sent his charts in advance, and the Brown band was trying to get a handle on them by concert day. Andy and I came into the process a couple of rehearsals before the concert. Andy had studied this music, and I deferred to his judgement as to what parts I should cover. He asked me to play cowbell on the first tune, and showed me the standard mambo pattern, which I played with great relish: dang dang dit-dang dit-dang dit-dang dit-dang. On another tune, Andy handed me the guiro: dzzzz-dit-dit, dzzzz. I was ready. Andy was set to play congas, and of course, Tito would be on timbales.

## Final Dress Rehearsal

The concert was to be held at Providence's Performing Arts Center. It's a sold-out parents-weekend event, and we've gathered in the afternoon for the only rehearsal with Tito. When he arrives, he looks confused, and it becomes clear that he's expecting a workshop in a classroom, not a concert for 3,500 people! After a bit of a go-round, Tito gets down to the task at hand. Despite his obvious agitation a few moments earlier, he cracks a joke and puts the band—sixteen student players and two "ringers"—at ease. He calls the first chart and counts us in.

Before we've played four bars, he stops the band and comes over to me. "What are you playing?" he asks me, and I oblige by showing him the mambo pattern I've been working on. "Give me that!" he says, taking the bell from me. "Play this!" Whack, whack, whack, whack...four solid quarter notes.

Tito returns to his timbales and counts us in again. Humiliated, I keep time. Suddenly I realize that he's got three or four bells in his setup, and *he's* playing the mambo pattern. I had been stepping all over him. Then I realize that by laying down the straight pulse, I'm giving the kids in the band something to grab onto, helping the band to tighten up a bit. Hmmm.

We rehearse a few spots, and Tito seems satisfied. We take out the next piece and I grab the



*We join the band with Tito for the second set. He's as charming on stage as at dinner—telling stories, mugging, and, of course, playing his ass off.*

guiro. "1, 2, 3, 4..." and we're off. Again, we get four bars into the tune and he stops us. As before, Tito comes to me, and asks the same question. Now I'm completely embarrassed. I show him what I'm doing. It's the guiro after all, and as far as I know, there's only one pattern! Once again, he takes it from me and shows me what he wants. The only difference is that I've been alternating the strokes: DOWN, up down, UP, down up. Tito shows me that he wants the long stroke always in the same direction: DOWN, down up, DOWN. I'm dumbfounded that he's heard the difference in four bars, over seventeen other musicians, but I take every spare second to try to unlearn my sticking and get comfortable with his.

### Dinner For Three

Rehearsal ends and Matt McGarrell, who leads the band and runs the program, hands Andy and me a credit card and tells us to take Tito up to Hemenways, a terrific seafood restaurant in Providence. We head over and get seated. When the waitress arrives, Tito glances at the menu, then at her, and instructs her to "bring me something I've never had before!" Andy and I

chuckle, as the waitress has no idea who this charming older gentleman is, or how he's toured the world and dined on rare delicacies in exotic locations with famous and fascinating people.

But tonight, we have the pleasure of his company. Hemenways is famous for its great variety, and our server succeeds in finding something that Tito *hasn't* had before. Over the delicious meal, Tito regales us with stories. Andy has been to Puerto Rico and Cuba to study the roots of Afro-Cuban music. He asks probing questions about music, politics, and religion, and our guest is happy to oblige with meaningful answers.

### The Show Goes On

After desert and coffee, we head back. If the evening ended there, I would have been a happy man, but now I've got to play those charts, and I'm feeling like I'm headed for the hot seat. We join the band with Tito for the second set. He's as charming on stage as at dinner—telling stories, mugging, and, of course, playing his ass off. The crowd loves it, and the set comes off without a hitch.

Backstage afterwards is the usual pandemonium, as proud students want handshakes and autographs, beaming parents want to find their talented offspring, and the stage crew wants to clean up and get out. As I'm returning to collect the percussion instruments from the stage, I bump into Tito, and he shakes my hand.

"Where did you learn to play guiro like that?" he asks.

"Tito, you showed me three hours ago!" I reply, a bit incredulous.

He puts his hand on my arm. "Good job."



*Paul Mason is a Providence, RI, based drummer, teacher and vice president of North Star Records. He has produced and/or played on over twenty recordings for the label. He was a student of the late Alan Dawson, who recommended him to Brown University in 1987, where he continues to teach drumset and coach ensembles. He can be contacted at [pmaison@northstarmusic.com](mailto:pmaison@northstarmusic.com)*



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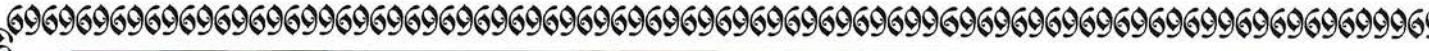
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**UP & COMING**



# DIECAST'S Jason Costa

A DEPARTURE FROM THE NORM

Jason Costa is the drummer for Boston's Diecast, a bolt-tight metal-core unit grounded by Costa's vicious drum assault. Their first album in more than three years, *Tearing Down Your Blue Skies* (Century Media), features new vocalist Paul Stoddard, as well as some of Jason's most accomplished drumming yet. On "Fire Damage," "Seize The Day," and "Rise And Oppose" the drummer combines massive power and surgical precision. (TV fans will surely have heard "Rise..." in the recent Volkswagen commercial featuring an eager-to-please young exec, whose stuffy new clients are shocked by the unexpected sounds of Diecast on his Jetta's car stereo).

Costa helped form Diecast in

1997. Since then, the group has undergone many personnel changes. In fact, they went through seventeen guitarists before arriving at the current lineup, which features original bassist Jeremy and guitarists Jonathon Kita and Kirk Kolatis. "When Jon first joined the band, he used to drive from Maine for rehearsals," says Costa. "It took him three hours to get there. And then he would drive back and go to school. We knew he was the guy when he was doing *that* every night."

In one regard, Costa is somewhat of an oddity in the extreme music world. While most of his fellow heavy hitters rely on matched grip, Jason chooses to hold his sticks in the traditional manner. His long-time drum

teacher, John Horrigan, showed him the ropes of traditional grip about fifteen years ago. Of course, Horrigan's focus often headed in a jazz direction, while Diecast, as its name aptly implies, specializes in metal-core—a raging blend of metal and hardcore. In a live setting, that could present problems for the traditional-grip drummer in terms of being heard. "Think about it," says Costa. "You're competing to get through the PA with guys who have double-stacked Mesa/Boogies.

"I'm constantly looking for other metal drummers who play with traditional grip," Jason continues, "especially those who've been doing it for a long time. I'm always searching for someone who wants to talk technique."

Story by Jeff Perlah  
Photos by Jason Joseph

**MD:** You're one of the few metal drummers who uses traditional grip. How does that benefit your drumming?

**Jason:** I find it easier to cross my hands to play the hi-hat. If you see me live, you'll notice that on a lot of beats I'm using the floor tom in the middle of the beats, or I'm double-riding on the ride cymbal. It makes things easier if the left stick is already pointed over to the right-hand side of the kit. Plus, from having a jazz-influenced teacher, my left hand is always working around the drums.

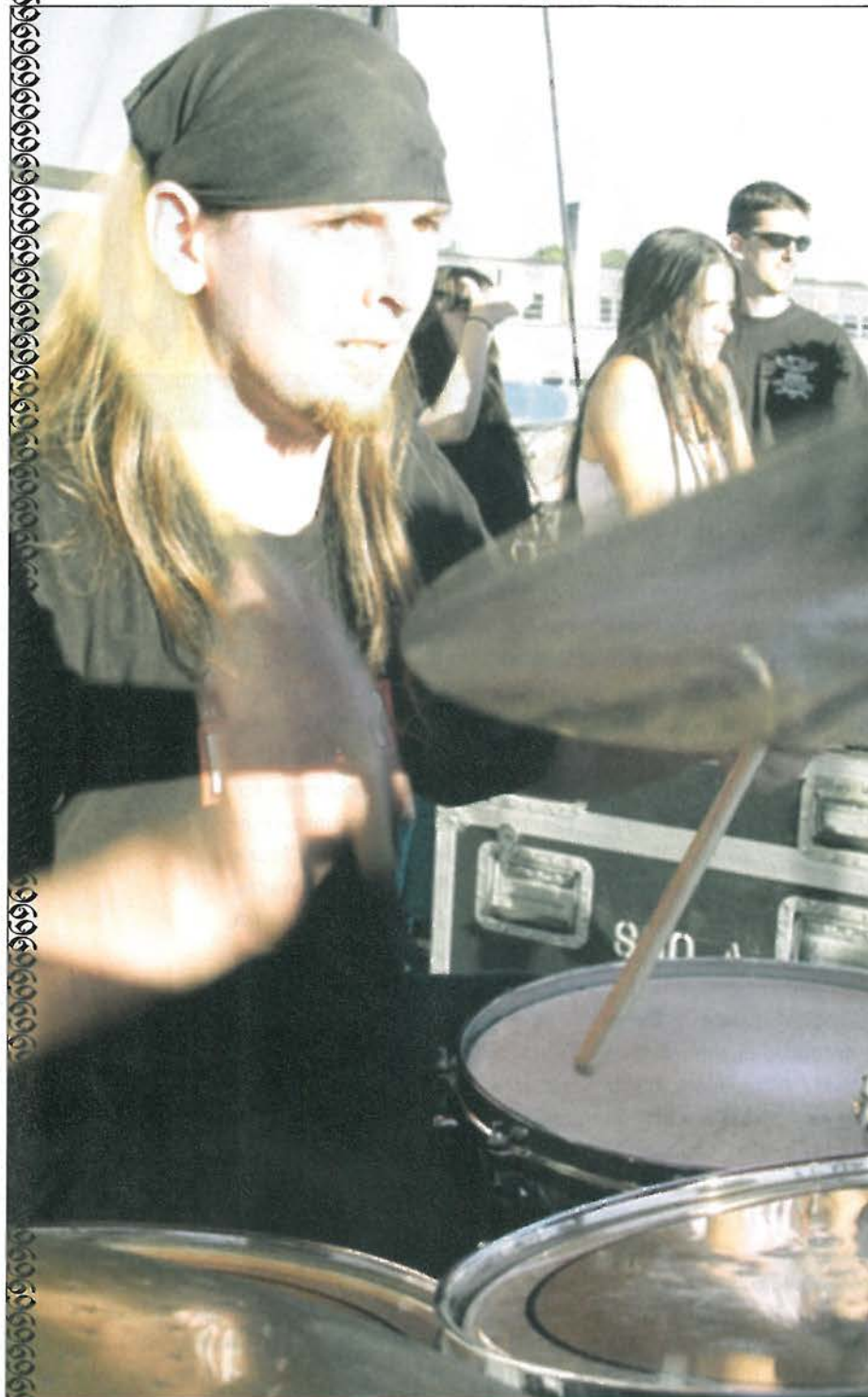
**MD:** Do you feel that your playing is

somewhat jazzy?

**Jason:** On the new album, there are approaches that you might hear in jazz, like certain fills and rudiments, using the snare as sort of the basis of the fill, and getting my hands around accents on the toms. On "Fire Damage" there's this quick little part that has a lot of jazz influence to it. And on "Pendulum" there are a few beats where I'm using the left hand a lot around the kit, with the right hand just holding down the beat.

**MD:** What other songs do you feel feature your drumming?

**Jason:** "Sacrifice," definitely. I worked really hard on its double bass beat. It's a straight 16th-note pattern, and I do three 32nd notes, which switches the lead foot from the right to the left foot. So for the second half of the beat, I'm playing with my left foot leading. Then my right foot starts leading again, and then I finish it out with 16th-note triplets. So the pattern is continuous; it never really stops. Also, "Rebirth" has this crazy ascending/descending linear crossing-arms beat. [laughs] That's pretty much the only way I can describe it!



"I'M CONSTANTLY  
LOOKING FOR OTHER METAL  
DRUMMERS WHO PLAY  
WITH TRADITIONAL GRIP."

**MD:** You mention that it can be hard for the traditional-grip drummer to be heard while playing with an extremely loud group. Do you do anything to help the cause?

**Jason:** I use double butt-ended sticks. A wood company—Kingfield Wood Products in Kingfield, Maine—makes them for me. I actually just called for another hundred pairs of sticks. I do break a lot of sticks, especially on the snare—playing rimshots. I smash the heck out of my sticks.

**MD:** Your playing involves another technique that differs from most heavy drummers. That is, you play barefoot.

**Jason:** I can feel the pedals better. If I play with shoes, I feel like there's an inch of rubber between me and the pedals. When I'm playing fast patterns, I have better control with bare feet. I can vary what part of my foot I'm using. I play heel-up, and I use the ball of my foot on certain parts and my toes on others.

At first, playing barefoot was tough. Before I joined Diecast I was in a band that practiced four or five nights a week. I was still kind of learning how to play double bass, and the guitarist, who was considerably older than me, would yell, "We're not leaving until you get this part down!" The next day I had to explain to my parents why I was limping around. I had quarter-sized blood blisters on my feet! But being in bands like that, where bandmates push you, is a great way to learn.

**MD:** What instrument do you follow the most when you play with Diecast?

**Jason:** I follow Jon's guitar more than anything else. If you were going to call either guitarist a lead guitarist, it would be him. He plays a lot of the overdub-type parts and small solo-y things. Live, Jon's in my monitor louder than anyone else. He and I work together a lot during the writing process. We have a really good connection. I never had vocals in my monitors before, because usually you can hear them loud enough without the monitors. But I have Paul in my monitors now because of how he phrases his vocals and because of his great sense of timing. I love hearing his voice in my monitors. I like listening to how long he's holding the notes out. I know the areas where he wants to breathe and the areas where his voice should really be holding a note out. It helps with tempos and things like that.

**MD:** How long did it take to complete



*Tearing Down Your Blue Skies?*

**Jason:** It took about two months to write the album and about a month and a half to record it. It was produced by Paul Trust [Endo, Sunday Driver]. The sessions went great, partly because Paul's a drummer. He really knew what was going on rhythmically. He had a great ear.

We were just in the recording studio again, with producer Zeuss [Hatebreed, Shadows Fall], to put a couple of new songs on a repackaging of the new album. We were furiously writing, as focused and as fast as possible. There's a cover of Slayer's "Reign In Blood" on there, too.

**MD:** Do you do anything to stay in shape for drumming?

**Jason:** Off and on. I wish I had the drive to do more. Every now and then I get on the stationary bike, which has helped immensely for playing double bass. I can

**Drums:** Yamaha Maple Custom in silver sparkle finish

- A. 6 1/2x14 snare
- B. 9x10 rack tom
- C. 10x12 rack tom
- D. 16x16 floor tom
- E. 16x20 kick drum

**Cymbals:** various

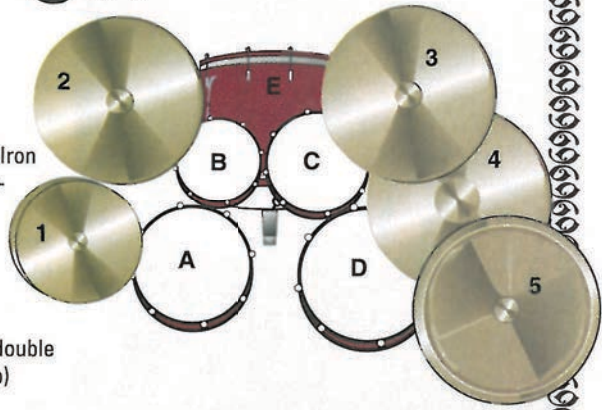
- 1. 14" Zildjian hi-hats
- 2. 18" Sabian AAXplosion crash
- 3. 19" Sabian AAXplosion crash
- 4. 20" Zildjian Mega-Bell ride
- 5. 20" Sabian AAX Chinese

**Hardware:** Yamaha stands, Tama Iron Cobra double pedal with felt beaters (very tight spring tension)

**Heads:** Remo Pinstripes on snare and toms, PowerStroke 3 on kick

**Sticks:** Kingfield Wood Products double butt-ended 2B (hickory with no tip)

## Costa's Kit



## Jason Costa

totally tell the difference when I'm on the bike for a week or so, in terms of my endurance and how hard I'm hitting. When I sit down on the stationary bike, I actually put my feet on the pedals as if I'm playing



bass drum pedals.

**MD:** You obviously enjoy talking about drumming.

**Jason:** Well, I took lessons from John Horrigan for a long time. I'm still studying with John, but now it's mostly for African drumming.

**MD:** Do you use any African drumming approaches in Diecast?

**Jason:** Not any of the traditional beats per se. But John once told me a really great thing: "Even if you're never going to use any of this stuff beat-for-beat, it's all going to filter down some day and you'll get various little techniques and ideas here and there." And it has definitely influenced me for a lot of beats, like in "Pendulum," "Rebirth," and "Medieval." I do practice African drumming pretty hard. And I usually sound-check with it. When the guy behind the board yells, "Snare drum, floor tom.... Okay, now the whole kit," you can usually catch me playing an African beat.

**MD:** Who are some of your drummer influences?

**Jason:** Well, first and foremost is John Horrigan. Then, as I was growing up, I

went from David Garibaldi to Nicko McBrain to Charlie Benante to Deen Castronovo. Then it all came crashing down when I heard Gene Hoglan with Dark Angel and Death. He was incorporating all these crazy techniques into metal, like double-surface riding and cool linear patterns, at speeds of 220 beats per minute. Oh my God! When I heard him, I really started to think about what I could put into the songs.

And, of course, there's Dave Lombardo of Slayer. It was a dream come true when Diecast toured with Slayer. I sat behind Dave every night. He is a force of nature in that band. He's playing thousands of notes, for like an hour and forty-five minutes, and he never makes a mistake. His drum riser is rocking back and forth with his incredible power, and he's not triggering anything. Dave Lombardo hits, man! Then he jumps off stage, takes a sip of Red Bull, and says, "Hey man, where's the party?" He's totally un-phased.

The other amazing thing about Dave is his groove. He plays metal, but just because you're playing metal doesn't mean you shouldn't have a groove.



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## Paul Goldberg

With only a casual glance at Paul Goldberg's extensive résumé, you might not think that "on the move" is the best way to describe this drummer's fruitful career. He's a graduate of the Philadelphia College For The Performing Arts, was featured in the 1985 *Modern Drummer* article "The Drummers Of Atlantic City," and has had several transcriptions published in *MD*. And since relocating to Los Angeles in 1987, Paul has performed and recorded with many highly acclaimed artists, including Tom Petty, The Manhattans, Bob Sheppard, Brandon Fields, and comedians Jerry Seinfeld and Rita Rudner. He has also recorded for a variety of films and television programs such as *The Last Samurai*, *Along Came Polly*, *Rush Hour II*, *The Nutty Professor*, *American Pie*, *American Dreams*, *Will And Grace*, *West Wing*, *Frasier*, and *Jag*.

However, Paul's impressive performance and recording credits are not what make him a perfect fit for this column. In addition to his successes as a sideman and as a top LA studio musician, Paul is currently forging new ground as a producer and bandleader with the release of his solo disc, *Whim Of The Current*. The album features Paul and other prominent LA musicians on a selection of jazz and fusion classics. With a successful CD release party at Studio City's LaVeLee earlier this year, Goldberg and his supporting cast ushered in the next phase of the drummer's career with a bang. To listen to tracks from *Whim Of The Current*, go to [www.paulgoldbergdrummer.com](http://www.paulgoldbergdrummer.com).



## Glenn Leonard

Philadelphia native Glenn Leonard was first inspired to pick up sticks forty-one years ago, after witnessing The Beatles' first appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show.

A year later, at age five, he received his first drumset.

In the ensuing years, Glenn has performed and recorded in a wide variety of settings, from industrial, to classical, to progressive

rock, to jazz. In 2000, Glenn appeared at the North East Art Rock Festival with the prog rock band North Star. He has also worked with Bon Lozaga and Hansford Rowe of the band Gongzilla.

Currently, Glenn is touring the US with Frank Zappa repertoire group Project Object. With this band, Glenn performs the challenging compositions of the legendary composer with various Zappa alumni, including long-time Zappa associates and regular Project Object members Ike Willis and Napoleon Murphy Brock. According to Glenn, "Playing with Project Object and Frank Zappa alum is the realization of a lifelong dream."

As Project Object travels from city to city, Glenn carts around a vintage Ludwig Octaplus drumset from the mid-'70s and a collection of cymbals from various brands. When he's not on the road, Glenn teaches piano and percussion near his home in the Philadelphia area. For more on Glenn and Project Object, visit [www.projectobject.com](http://www.projectobject.com).



## Dean Johnston



Thirty-six-year-old Dean Johnston is a founding member of one of Boston's largest-drawing original bands, Superhoney. Without the help of a record label, this rock/neo-soul ensemble has sold over 20,000 copies of their five CDs. Superhoney also won three straight Boston Music Awards for "Outstanding Funk Band" and have recently received their tenth BMA nomination. In the past year, Dean and his bandmates completed several international tours that included stops throughout Europe and China. They also opened for legendary bands Earth, Wind And Fire and Chicago at the Tweeter Center in Mansfield, Massachusetts.

In addition to Superhoney, Dean is a member of Gaffney, a modern groove band with jungle and drum 'n' bass influences. And he's in famed drummer/teacher Gary Chaffee's unique improvisational percussion ensemble Chomp.

But Dean is not only an in-demand performer. He's also very active as an educator. Applying the knowledge gained from his years at the Berklee College Of Music and from lessons with world-class drummers Tommy Campbell and Gary Chaffee, Dean teaches about fifty students a week, and he's written two instructional books. He's also a member of the Vic Firth Education Team.

For his various gigs, Dean uses a small drumset to keep himself locked into the groove. His current setup consists of a bass drum, snare, and floor tom from Maryland Drums, Zildjian A Custom hi-hats and crashes, and a Zildjian K Custom ride.

To see and hear Dean in action, check out [www.superhoney.com](http://www.superhoney.com) and [www.gaffneyband.net](http://www.gaffneyband.net).

## Are You On The Move?

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1. An audio or video recording of your best work (preferably with a band).
2. A high-quality photo of yourself (either close-up or behind the drums). High-resolution (300dpi) digital photos are preferred.
3. A list of your equipment.
4. A brief bio sketch including your name and age, your playing style, influences, current gigs, how often and where you're playing, what your goals are, and any special items of interest. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Materials cannot be returned.





## Hittin' It Big Premier Rock Legend 26 And Heavy Rock 24 Artist Series Kits

Premier Percussion now offers two "Super Heavy Rock" setups in their Artist Series drum range. The Rock Legend 26 kit features a 16x26 bass drum with no tom mount, a 9x13 tom with ISO suspension mount, multi-clamp, and L-arm, 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms, and a 6 1/2 x 14 brass snare. The Heavy Rock 24 set features an 18x24 bass drum with tom mount, a 10x13 tom with ISO mount and a single tom holder, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 6 1/2 x 14 brass snare.

Both sets are available in the Artist Maple and Artist Birch ranges. Available finishes include new Black Diamond and White Marine Pearl wrap, as well as Rosewood Lacquer and Sapphire Lacquer.

(781) 659-4969, [www.premier-percussion.com](http://www.premier-percussion.com).

## A Brand New Bag Ritter Drum And Percussion Bags

Ritter is a new name in drum and percussion bags. Their launch this summer introduced 350 different products in the RitterClassic range, from single drum bags to fit all standard and some not-so-standard sizes, to drumset options and bags for sticks and cymbals.

Bag features include water-repellent polyester material, reflective safety strips, shoulder straps and carry handles, pockets and pouches, and varying degrees of high-density foam protection. The line also offers bags for hardware, pedals, and ethnic percussion, as well as snare drum backpacks.

(866) 747-3043, [www.ritter-bags.com](http://www.ritter-bags.com).



## High-Fashion Beat Remo Valencia Designer Series Bongos

Valencia Series Bongos from Remo feature Designer's Touch finishes that complement Jimmie Morales Signature Series conga drums. The finishes are created by Remo's graphic artists, using state-of-the-art technology to transfer artwork directly onto fabric. This process enables the manufacturer to create rich, vibrant graphics with outstanding durability.

Valencia bongos are available in 7" & 8 1/2" and 7" & 9" sizes. Each set will be fitted with either NuSkyn or FiberSkyn 3 Type 9 tucked drumheads, as well as chrome hardware and curved counterhoops. The Type 9 heads represent Remo's most advanced technologies in the manufacturing of drumheads for world percussion instruments.

(661) 294-5600, [www.remo.com](http://www.remo.com).



Petrified Cave finish

Serpentine Day finish

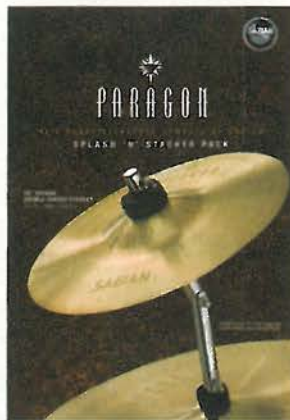
## Just Put That Anywhere... Sabian Paragon Splash 'N' Stacker Pack

The latest addition to Sabian's Signature Neil Peart Paragon range of cymbals is the Paragon Splash 'N' Stacker Pack. It combines a 10" Paragon splash with a Double-Hinged Cymbal Stacker that offers the flexibility to place the splash in virtually any position before locking tight to the top of a cymbal stand.

The splash features a natural finish and the subtle gold logo stamping that was pioneered with Paragon. The bell is hand hammered; the bow of the cymbal is given AA hammering and AAX lathing. The splash is said to be robust and penetrating while quickly responding with crisp and musical punches.

The Cymbal Stacker is included on the theory that players are more likely to purchase a splash if they don't need to invest in a stand to put it on. The Double-Hinged Stacker can be mounted atop any cymbal stand, so players can easily get creative with where they place the cymbal within their setup. List price for the Paragon Splash 'N' Stacker Pack is \$193.

(506) 272-2019, [www.sabian.com](http://www.sabian.com).



## Stack 'Em Up Guardian Drum Cases

Guardian drum cases are said to be "the ultra-portable solution for drum security and easy transport." The cases have tough roto-molded ABS exterior shells and 12 mm of padding, with a dark blue polytricot lining for snug, secure drum protection. Each case also features a wide, durable locking strap and a weight-tested, spring-loaded handle.



One of the most convenient features of the new cases is the "spin blade"—style exterior pattern, which interlocks any of the cases in a stackable form. This design is also featured on the available drum case dolly, which makes moving an entire set of drums much easier.

Guardian five-case drumkit sets are available in standard and fusion sizes. The sets begin with a list price of \$529.95. The case dolly lists at \$69.95.

(415) 570-0970, [www.guardiancases.com](http://www.guardiancases.com).

## Tuning In Pintech EZ-Tune Electronic Pad Control System

Pintech says that their EZ-Tune system "gives all of the gain with none of the pain" usually associated with mixing components in an electronic drumset. Onboard controls, available on the ConcertCast, Visual, and AcousTech series mesh drums, allow the player to adjust the *drum* to the *trigger input*, regardless of manufacturer.

Years of matching the input requirements of many different sound modules and trigger-to-MIDI interfaces led Pintech's engineering staff to develop an efficient means of building compatibility into the drum. Playing styles no longer need to adapt to the electronics, so drummers can spend more time playing and less time reading. The controls, which are available on the new series of drums and as an accessory item for retrofitting, can also give better definition between the "zones" on a dual-trigger input.

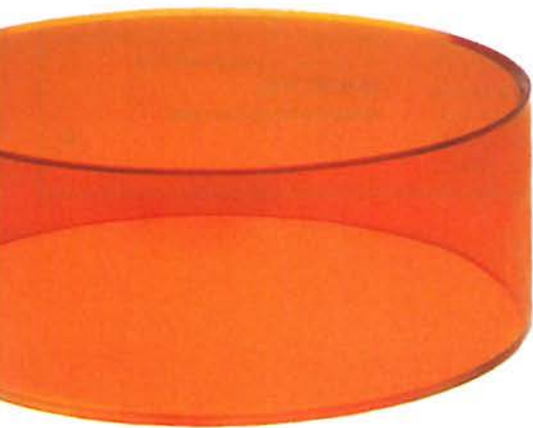
(864) 242-2150, [www.pintechusa.com](http://www.pintechusa.com).



## You're Out Of The Woods Keller Acrylic Snare Shells

After years of making wood drum shells for large and small drum manufacturers alike, Keller Products now also offers acrylic snare shells. Constructed from high-performance hardened acrylic polymer, and using thicker walls than vintage versions on the market today, these shells are said to provide clearly defined projection, with a punchy and bright yet full attack. They're available in clear, as well as amber, red, and blue tinted colors, in a single size of 5 1/2 x 14, with 45° polished bearing edges and acrylic-weld seams.

(603) 627-7887, [www.kellershells.com](http://www.kellershells.com).





## Look As Sharp As You Play

### Vater Color Wrap Series

Vater's new Color Wrap drumstick series has been developed for young drummers, drum lines, and theater/pit drummers looking to add an exciting visual aspect to their playing. The new series offers 5A, 5B, and Power 5B wood tip models with Blue Sparkle, Gold Sparkle, Red Sparkle, Black Optic, Silver Optic, and Purple Optic finishes. The high-density wraps are claimed to not compromise the feel, weight, and balance of the stick. All Color Wrap models list for \$13.95 per pair.

(781) 767-1877, [www.vater.com](http://www.vater.com).

## Two For The Price Of One

### Aquarian Power-Thin Series Drumheads



Aquarian states that their new Power-Thin heads combine the strength of twin-ply heads with the attack and resonance of single-ply heads. An ultra-thin layer of Aquarian's exclusive Power Dot material is laminated to the playing side of Power-Thin heads, covering the main playing area, not just the center. The Power Dot

material is said to be so thin and flexible that the heads have great resonance and projection. Heads are available in clear with white Power Dot. Tom sizes range from 6" to 18". Snare batters come in 13" and 14" sizes, with an additional Power Dot on the underside of the head for even greater strength.

(714) 632-0230, [www.aquariandrumheads.com](http://www.aquariandrumheads.com).

## The Reference Shelf

### The Art Of Digital Music

by David Battino & Kelli Richards  
(Backbeat Books)



This book/DVD package gathers input from fifty-six artists, producers, programmers, and industry insiders, who offer insights on how they use technology to create their music. The included DVD shows highlights from all the interviews. Subject matter covered includes studio set-up tips, sampling, quantization, ringtone tricks, production strategies, loops, software, and more. List price is \$27.95. (866) 222-5232, [www.backbeatbooks.com](http://www.backbeatbooks.com).

### Beginning Drums, Volume 1

by John Crispino (AKA "Mr. C.")  
(Studio 68)

This humorously illustrated self-produced beginners tutorial from "Mr. C." comes in



two forms: a book/audio CD, and an interactive CD-Rom. The book and audio CD introduces beginners to all the pieces of a drumset, as well as to percussion instruments likely to be encountered in school music programs.

The CD-Rom brings the computer into the process, allowing students to learn drums in the same way that they play computer games. Contact the author for price information.

(877) 687-4258,  
[www.mistercmusic.com](http://www.mistercmusic.com).

### Buddy Rich's Modern Interpretation Of Snare Drum Rudiments

by Henry Adler, revised by Ted Mackenzie (Amsco

Publications/Music Sales Group)

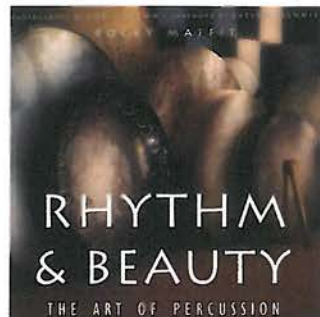


This classic text, first published in 1942, was written by Henry Adler in direct collaboration with Buddy Rich. The text is divided into non-bounce

exercises (beginner and intermediate) and bounce exercises (advanced). The revised version now features updated material by Ted Mackenzie, a long-time proponent of the Rich/Adler method. Mackenzie studied with Henry Adler in the late 1960s. Since then he has taught the method to hundreds of students. List price is \$19.95. [www.musicsales.com](http://www.musicsales.com).

### Rhythm & Beauty: The Art Of Percussion

by Rocky Maffitt (Billboard Books)



This book, now available in paperback, examines the sounds, shapes, and histories of more than fifty percussion instruments. In addition to the text, the book features evocative photographic images by Chris Brown, which portray the instruments as works of art as well as pieces of musical equipment. The book includes a forward by stellar percussionist Evelyn Glennie. List price is \$19.95.

(646) 654-5455, [www.wgpub.com](http://www.wgpub.com).

### Berklee Music Theory, Book 1

by Paul Schmeling (Berklee Press)



This book/CD package features practice exercises to help a beginner explore the inner workings of music. It presents notes, scales, and rhythms as they are heard in

pop, jazz, and blues music. Students will learn and build upon the basic concepts of music theory with written exercises, listening examples, and ear training exercises. The included CD reinforces the lessons. List price is \$24.95.

(617) 747-2146,  
[www.berkleeppress.com](http://www.berkleeppress.com).

## And What's More

◀ **PREMIER's** Cabria Standard wrapped kits are now available in premium Black Diamond and White Marine Pearl finishes. The new finishes are available on all Cabria Standard box-set configurations. (781) 659-4969, [www.premier-percussion.com](http://www.premier-percussion.com).

**AFRICAN AMERICAN DRUM COMPANY** now offers a handcrafted solid-maple, steam-bent snare drum. Custom features include original AADC bronze low-mass lugs, brass tube lugs, or limited-edition Lion Head lugs. AADC offers a choice of finishes, die-cast or steel hoops, and the Nickel throw-off. Models in 5 1/2x13 and 5 1/2x14 sizes range in price from \$800 to \$1,200. (707) 616-3904, [www.africanamericandrumcompany.com](http://www.africanamericandrumcompany.com).

◀ **ZILDJIAN's** new Cymbal Cleaning Polish replaces all previous Zildjian cymbal cleaners. It's formulated to clean, polish, and protect all Zildjian cast bronze and sheet bronze cymbals (except ZXT Titanium models). This formulation also adds a protective coating to keep cymbals shining brightly. The polish is offered in 8-oz. bottles at \$10.95 each.

Zildjian's Drumstick Wax is said to provide a comfortably tacky grip on sticks and mallets. It can be applied at any time and in any amount, and does not need to be reapplied since its tackiness reactivates with normal playing heat. The wax features a pleasant tropical scent. It comes in 2-oz. tins at \$8.95.

(781) 871-2200, [www.zildjian.com](http://www.zildjian.com).

**RHYTHM TECH's** redesigned 25th Anniversary Web site now features images, descriptions, and up-to-the-minute information on the company's innovative percussion instruments and accessories, as well as photos and bios of its world-class roster of endorsing drummers and percussionists. The site has been upgraded to incorporate a more user-friendly interface that makes it faster and easier to navigate, and to locate and access information. (914) 636-6900, [www.rhythmttech.com](http://www.rhythmttech.com).

**PURESOUND's** *Wired For Sound* DVD is a fifteen-minute tutorial that contains expert advice on snare wire selection, installation, and maintenance, and how those processes affect drum sounds. It includes commentary and suggestions from vintage drum specialist John Aldridge as well as top techs Gary Grimm (Steve Gadd, Peter Erskine, Jeff Porcaro), Bruce Jacoby (Ricky Lawson, Danny Carey, Tris Imboden), and Gersh (Dave Grohl, Taylor Hawkins, Brain).

The DVD is currently available free as part of specially packaged Puresound products. The digital content can also be viewed and downloaded as individual QuickTime movie clips from the Puresound Web site.

(818) 395-7680, [www.puresoundpercussion.com](http://www.puresoundpercussion.com).

**TOUGH TRAVELER's** EL cymbal bag features seven individual padded pockets to protect cymbals up to 24" from scratching, as well as to align the bells so they nest together for efficient packing. A large front pocket holds sticks; a small additional pocket holds accessories. The bag also features a contoured handle, cordura outer shell, large zipper, hide-away padded backpack straps, and reinforced bottom. The anatomically curved shoulder pad is fitted with 1/2"-thick EVA padding.

(518) 377-8526, [www.toughtraveler.com](http://www.toughtraveler.com).

◀ **TOCA's** 8"-diameter Jingle-Hit tambourine features a 6-ply wood shell fitted with six double rows of jingles that emit a bright, chime-y sound. The included Gibraltar mount attaches the Jingle-Hit to any standard 3/8" post within a drumset or multi-percussion setup. A special rubber cushion along the top edge of the Jingle-Hit allows it to be played effectively and safely with sticks or with hands.

(973) 478-6903, [www.tocapercussion.com](http://www.tocapercussion.com).



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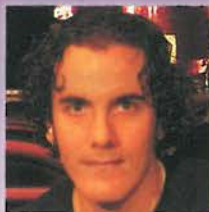
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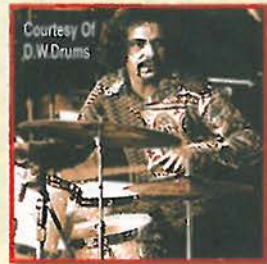
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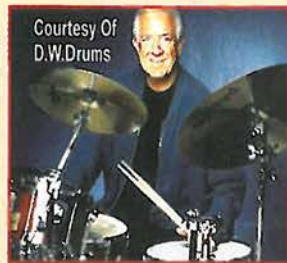


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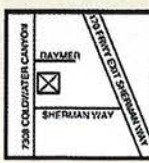
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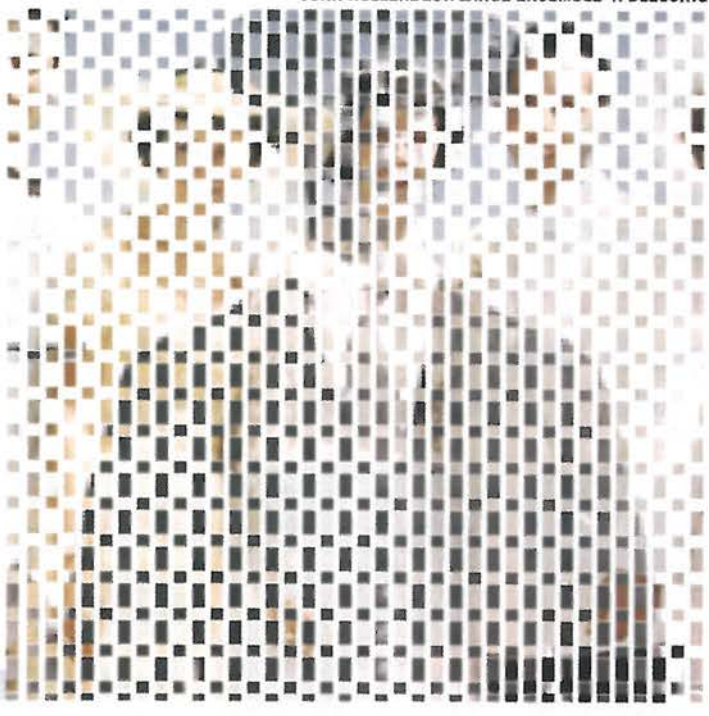
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# RECORDINGS

## JOHN HOLLENBECK LARGE ENSEMBLE: A BLESSING



### John Hollenbeck Large Ensemble

A Blessing (OmniTone)



JOHN HOLLENBECK'S nimble, textural drumming is plenty admirable, but the star of *Blessing* is his rich composing/arranging. The leader's innovative eighteen-piece ensemble paints an intoxicating tableau straddling progressive big band jazz and "new classicists" such as Steve Reich. The long-unfolding works

reveal stunning, surprising timbres, and overlapped hypnotic rhythms orbited by elegant improvisations. Although precise and "intellectually" constructed, the results are ultimately moving and organic, as carried by the ensemble's soulful, spiritual ebb and flow. Be swept away. (www.OmniTone.com/ablenessing) **Jeff Potter**

### For The Ride Home

(other stuff we're digging this month)



#### Roky Erickson

I Have Always Been Here Before (Shant Factory)

#### Githead Profile

(Swain)

#### World Leader Pretend

Punches (Winter Disc)

#### The Twilight Zone/Volume 4

Original Television Scores (Various Soundtracks, 1984)

#### Black Mountain

Black Mountain (Jagjaguwar)

#### Don Cherry

Complete Communion (Blue Note, 1965)

#### Jimmie Rodgers

Country Legends (RCA, 2002)

#### Ari Hoenig

The Painter (Smalls)

### Ray Marchica In The Ring (Sons Of Sound)



Esteemed as one of New York's most versatile drummers, **RAY MARCHICA** canvasses the city, whether as house drummer for *The Rosie O'Donnell Show*, helping a Broadway hit, or navigating Zappa's music with The Ed Palermo Big Band. On tracks and/or tour he's grooved the gamut from James Brown to Johnny Winter to Bernadette Peters. Ray's welcome leader debut showcases his formidable jazz chops. With **Rodney Jones** (guitar), **Lonnie Plaxico** (bass), and **Teodross Avery** (sax), Ray delivers crisp, popping drive and artful dynamics. Be it straight-ahead or funky, his energy, accuracy, and supportive interplay give soloists the fuel they crave. **Jeff Potter**

### Motion City Soundtrack



Commit This To Memory (Epitaph)



Motion City Soundtrack bursts forth with a pop-punk sound filled with energy and hooks. Melodic vocal and synth lines are driven by guitars and **TONY THAXTON**'s solid, driving, and supportive drumming.

The twelve short, to the point, and rock radio-friendly tracks also allow Thaxton plenty of fills, energetically heightening the moment when it's called for. Tracks like "Resolution" and "Feel Like Rain" show him injecting creative hi-hat and drum parts in spots. Yet the spirit of "Attractive Today" and "Everything Is Alright" presents the band at its driving best. Fun and upbeat, there are plenty of memorable moments here. **Martin Patmos**

### Foo Fighters In Your Honor (Capitol)



Pity **TAYLOR HAWKINS**. Would you want to play in a band whose leader is one of the most influential drummers of the past twenty years? Taylor acquits himself quite well on this double disc of pop-metal and acoustic unplugged tracks, his resonant touch

and speedy strokes an ample foil to **DAVE GROHL**'s gut-smashing pummel. If we are to believe that Hawkins does indeed handle all the drum duties, then smokers like "No Way Back," "Hell," and the extremely Queens Of The Stone Age-sounding "DOA" are successful because Hawkins' groove is so insistent, consistent, and nerve-rattling. Taylor's solo album is due in the fall. **Ken Micallef**

## Significant Reissues

by Ken Micallef

### Deep Purple

Released two years after *Machine Head*, 1974's *Burn* is a neo-progressive blast from the most underrated of legendary hard rock bands, Deep Purple. **IAN PAICE** never sounded better, whether dropping double-sticking bombs on "Lay Down, Stay Down," going cowbell crazy on "You Fool No One," or scorching buzz rolls on "Burn." It's not only Paice's sweltering sticking that is so remarkable, but his intense time feel and touch. Remixes and one new track are included. (Rhino/WB)



## Yo Miles! Upriver (Rune)



Yo Miles! is the Bay Area collective led by trumpeter **Wadada Leo Smith** and avant-rock guitarist **Henry Kaiser**, with a burning Nor-Cal rhythm section of **STEVE SMITH**, bassist **Michael Manning**, and percussionist **KARL PERAZZO**. Much of the time Smith is in the Al Foster role—that is, heavy and open (hi-hat) grooves. His own Vital Information stuff has been leaning towards more grooving, almost jam-like structures, and the drummer succeeds in laying back here. And Perazzo shows off great hands and an appreciation of the musical moment. **Robin Tolleson**

## Static-X Start A War (Warner Bros.)



Spazzed-out, striking, startling—just a few words that help summarize Static-X's latest, *Start A War*, the first of the band's albums to feature drummer **NICK OSHIRO**. Static-X's blend of metal, industrial, and Goth elements are readily apparent here, but the decision to give the acoustic drums more of a presence has really enhanced the band's groove. Even when relegated to its most simple form ("Dirthouse," "Just In Case"), Oshiro locks in tight with a mechanical form and never lets go, devising the perfect, sparse backing track for frontman **Wayne Static**. Things ramp up considerably for "Otsego Amigo," on which Oshiro alternates between machine-metal to thrash-punk in a pinch. Hold on tight! **Waleed Rashidi**

## Jim Payne énergie (Savant)



Folks will know right off that they like **JIM PAYNE**'s new all-instrumental album, and drummers will know why. Payne is a drummer's drummer, and he makes everything feel good and everyone sound good. In a trio setting here with guitarist **Bill Bickford** and organist **Jerry Z** (kicking some Roccolike bass), Payne's playing is solid and spirited, whether sparking the Latin 12/8 of "Cafe Joanna" or piloting the new jack swing of "Old Point Groove." Drummers will love the understated approach to "Jabo" and the over-the-top pocket of the celebratory "Clyde," where Payne is joined by another giant of groove, **MIKE CLARK**. **Robin Tolleson**

## Tom Rossi Salma Har (Ajna Music)



Composer and multi-instrumentalist **TOM ROSSI** draws on a wide variety of influences for his music. Singing wordless vocals and playing a wide variety of percussion as well as flutes, piano, guitar, and other instruments, Rossi creates a mellow, new age/world music tapestry. Although the recording/production is on the smooth side, there is a diversity in rhythms between the pieces that keep things moving and lend the music an honest foundation. Percussion breaks featuring tabla and various hand drums add excitement in many spots to this music, which is at times meditative, joyous, introspective, and appreciative. **Martin Patmos**

## Lighting The Fuse

**Scott Henderson, Sean O'Rourke, Bill Connors**

by Mike Haid

Guitar master **Scott Henderson** explores his innovative fusion of jazz and blues on *Live*, his first-ever in-concert trio recording. The telepathic synergy between Henderson and longtime drumming mate **KIRK COVINGTON** is inspiring, as these two technical monsters bob and weave in and out of dynamic musical passages with passion and fire. (Tone Center)

Atlanta session ace **SEAN O'ROURKE** (Mothers Finest/Aquarium Rescue Unit) explodes with rhythmic intensity on his first outing as a solo artist, *Primal Colors*. O'Rourke's instrumental material fuses jazz, funk, techno, industrial, Latin, and rock, with the emphasis on the rhythmic ele-

## Art Of The Improvisers

**Wayne Shorter, Danilo Perez, Charles Lloyd** by Michael Dawson



The current incarnation of the Wayne Shorter Quartet has been turning the jazz world upside-down since the release of *Footprints—Live!* in 2002. On *Beyond The Sound Barrier*, the group picks up right where it left off, with a collection of highlights from their 2002-2004 tour. Armed with little more than melodic fragments, the quartet embarks on a series of free-form journeys that are full of unexpected twists and turns. Drumming ninja **BRIAN BLADE** is at his best, transcending traditional technique with an innovative style that's explosive, dynamic, and endlessly creative. (Verve)

*Live At The Jazz Showcase* demonstrates why virtuosic pianist Danilo Perez and his trio are also at the cutting-edge of the modern jazz scene. In this one-hour set, the trio leads a captive Chicago audience on an improvisational thrill ride that pushes the boundaries of spontaneous co-composition. Throughout the set, drummer **ADAM CRUZ** pairs flawless technique and a crystalline touch with a level of prophetic intuition that is awe-inspiring. (www.artistshare.net)

Drummer **ERIC HARLAND** steers through dynamic waters on saxophonist Charles Lloyd's latest offering, *Jumping The Creek*. From the ebb and flow of "No Me Quitte Pas" to the stormy frenzy of "Song Of The Inuit," Harland knows exactly when to push, pull, or let it flow. He's especially evocative during the duo sections of "Ken Katta Ma Om," "Jumping The Creek," and "Both Veils Must Go," and the drum 'n' bass-inspired vignette "Canon Perdido." (ECM)

## Of Further Interest

MD Fest 2005 performer **CHRIS ADLER** can be heard and seen on *Killadelphia*, Lamb Of God's new live DVD. (Epit)

*The TRILOK GURTU Collection* assembles tracks from the groundbreaking drummer's CMP Records catalog. Cuts feature heavyweights like Joe Zawinul, Pat Metheny, and Don Cherry. (Times Square)

Two classic '80s-era Steel Pulse albums, *Earth Crisis* and *True Democracy*, have been reissued with extra tracks. **STEVE "GRIZZLY" NESBITT** is the riddim-ologist. (Rune)

Buzz through the new double-disc comp of guitar giant Allan Holdsworth, *Against The Clock*, and you'll hear prime **TONY WILLIAMS**, **KIRK COVINGTON**, **GARY HUSBAND**, **GARY NOVAK**, **CHAD WACKERMAN**, and **VINNIE COLAIUTA**. Need we say more? (Altnity)

*Mangled Demos From 1983* offers early tracks from the original, pre-Dale Crover Melvins lineup. The drummer on these performances is founding bandmember **MIKE DILLARD**. (Epit)



ments of these styles. Here O'Rourke proves he's got chops, a deep pocket, and quality production skills. (Inio Music, www.seanorourke.com)

*Return*, by guitar great Bill Connors, represents timeless fusion music. Compositionally strong, sonically beautiful, with tasteful musicianship, this material might not be overly intense, but it's certainly technically challenging. Connors brings out the best from drummer **KIM PLAINFIELD**, whose excellent dynamics, advanced technique, and sensitive musicality bring these instrumental gems to life. (Tone Center)



## DVDs

### Gary Husband's Force Majeure

Live At The Queen Elizabeth Hall, London (RSJ Groove Productions)

level: all, \$67 (2 disks)

World-class drummer Gary Husband lets his songwriting talents shine for this double-DVD set. Husband gets a workout, darting from his piano stool and drum throne to center stage, where he conducts this jazz orchestra. Reaching down deep for these lofty jazz compositions is a cast of versatile all-stars, including (among others) electric violinist **Jerry Goodman**, trumpet player **Randy Brecker**, and Armenian percussion genius-jokester **ARTO TUNÇBOYACIYAN** (who, at one point, captivates the audience with only a half-full bottle of beer and a tambourine). Husband often flashes his considerable drumming chops, but the real story here is the cathartic piano passages and the textural minimalist flares. Like its namesake, Force Majeure is unpredictable and irresistible.

(www.rsjgroove.com)



Will Romano

### Performance & Technique

by Bobby Jarzombek (Warner Bros.)

level: intermediate to advanced, \$24.95



One of metal's strongest double bass drummers, Bobby Jarzombek, offers over two hours of useful drumming information here, discussing his unique technical approach and advanced stick-twirling concepts. Having performed and recorded with metal heavyweights like Riot and Halford, Jarzombek shares his knowledge of over-the-top metal drumming by performing to various tracks and then discussing ways to spice up your chops. His "double drop" technique opens a whole spectrum of groove, fill, and solo

ideas. Most useful are the thoughtful bonus chapters featuring Jarzombek selecting cymbals, working in the studio environment, and soundchecking the drumset in live performance.

Mike Haid

### X Live In Los Angeles (Shout Factory)

In the rough-and-tumble world of late '70s/early '80s American punk rock, nobody sounded quite like X. While most of their contemporaries were firing off blasts of paint-by-numbers slam rock, X melded punk, rockabilly, folk, and unique male/female vocal interplay into what still stands as one of the most original sounds in pop music. And crucial to that sound was drummer **D.J. BONEBRAKE**, a classically trained percussionist whose playing straddled the line between pulverizing power and dexterous musicality. Filmed during a 2004 West Coast regrouping, *Live In Los Angeles* finds Bonebrake and the original X lineup in fine fighting form. Bonebrake is in full command, with blazing-yet-lithe performances. The highlight here is "The Hungry Wolf," a tom-driven arm-twister of a drum track that reminds that Bonebrake is just as adept with complexities as he is with straight-ahead punk. This is rock 'n' roll drumming at its best.

Jon Wurster



## BOOKS

### Essential Latin Styles For The Drumset

by Doug Auwarter

level: intermediate, \$16.95

In a market well stocked with Latin books, *Essential Latin Styles For The Drumset* is neither the most complete nor cutting-edge to be found. It does, however, deserve praise for its clear guidance offering jobbing drummers a practical survey of Latin rhythms that are immediately gig-friendly. Profiling Cuban, Brazilian, and salsa styles, the text smartly explains appropriate rhythm applications including helpful

"do's and don'ts." Snippets of accompanying rhythm section parts are included, and free mp3 examples are available on the author's Web site. For 101 songo-fusion variations, look elsewhere. To conquer the intimidation of approaching Latin rhythms, check this out.

(www.dougaauwarter.com)

Jeff Potter



### Reading, Rudiments & Marching Cadences For Beginning & Intermediate Drummers

by Joel Rothman (J.R. Publications/independent)

level: all, \$14.95

Designed for students under teacher tutelage, this book (perhaps unintentionally) encourages beginners to approach these easy-to-grasp developmental exercises as a self-teaching device. And it's all good. Novice and intermediate players will keep busy with an abundance of alternating sticking and hand-control examples, accented cadences, advanced rudiments, and modulated patterns. Brevity and variety give an extra push to complete every single exercise. (Comic strips appear on the back page for those who triumphantly cross the finish line.) Mind you, this work is not just for pupils. Advanced drummers might peek inside for pointers on real-world musical applications. Simply, this book throws down the gauntlet: Accomplish these tasks and you'll see rewards. (www.drumplace.com)

Will Romano

### Taking The Reins

#### New drummer-led releases on CD

Tony Renold Quartet, *Timeless Flow*, www.CeDe.ch

Joe Derenzo, *Of Night And Day*, www.joederenzo.com

Tim Solook, *Ability*, www.cdbaby.com

Yoav Zohar, *Trio*, www.yoavzohar.com



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On any given afternoon, Adam can be found crumpled on the floor under a pile of all that stuff, the unfortunate result of an over-enthusiastic air-drumming episode.

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### Study Materials

[www.easyreaddrumcharts.com](http://www.easyreaddrumcharts.com). Hundreds of top-40 drum charts, accurate, neat, most will print out on 1 A4 sheet.

**Hardcover** drum books by Joel Rothman. Complete Rock Drummer, Complete Jazz Drummer, \$99.95 each. Send for free catalog. J.R. Publications, Charles Dumont & Son, #1085 Dumont Dr., Voorhees, NJ 08043. Tel: (800) 257-8283.

**"Fast Hands For Drummers."** To order, send \$12 to: John Bock, 9 Hillview Place, Elmsford, NY 10523.

[www.tigerbill.com](http://www.tigerbill.com): Study tension-free drumming at TigerBill's state-of-the-art studio—(908) 638-5545.

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[www.bryanwest.com](http://www.bryanwest.com): Techniques In Interdependence available now! Wertico and Collins endorsed!

### Instruction

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**NYC—Westchester.** Learn the art of playing the drums. Students include platinum artists. All welcome. "It's about time." [www.edbettinelli.com](http://www.edbettinelli.com). Tel: (212) 759-2631, (914) 674-4549.

**Instructors:** Get your custom Web page and email from [www.drumlesson.us](http://www.drumlesson.us). See Web site or call (559) 355-3619.

**Online drum DVD rentals**—huge selection, free shipping, and free trial. Act fast, you're sure to see big changes in your playing. [www.drumflix.com](http://www.drumflix.com).

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**Silver Springs, MD**—Mike Reeves. Beginner to advanced. (240) 423-8644.

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### Wanted

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Spizz cymbals. Keith. (713) 669-8229, [nonduality0@mailstation.com](mailto:nonduality0@mailstation.com).

Wanted: Korg Wavedrum with RE-1 controller, rim, accessories. [Info@synthsational.com](mailto:Info@synthsational.com).

### Miscellaneous

New! Video clips, free drum lessons, drum videos, monthly giveaways at Dave Bedrock's [americandrum-school.com](http://americandrum-school.com).

[www.buildyourowndrums.com](http://www.buildyourowndrums.com).

Drumwear.com: T-Shirts and gifts for drummers—shipped worldwide.

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Drum Bum: T-Shirts and gifts. [www.drumbum.com](http://www.drumbum.com).

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## Vintage Corner

### For Sale

**Vintage Drum Center**—Buy with confidence from an expert! Ludwig, Slingerland, Rogers, Gretsch, Zildjian, and more. Money-back guarantee. [www.vintagedrum.com](http://www.vintagedrum.com). Tel: (800) 729-3111.

**A Drummer's Tradition** features an incredible collection of vintage drums for sale. Visit our shop in San Rafael, California, or check our Web site at [www.adrummerstradition.com](http://www.adrummerstradition.com) for weekly updates. We are always buying! Call 10-6 PST, Mon-Sat, tel: (415) 458-1688, fax: (415) 458-1689.

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The Ludwig Book! by Rob Cook. Business history and dating guide, 300 pages (64 color), Wm. F. Ludwig II autobiography, books on Rogers, Leedy, Slingerland, calfskin heads, gut snares, and more. Contact Rebeats, tel: (989) 463-4757, [Rob@rebeats.com](mailto:Rob@rebeats.com), Web site: [www.rebeats.com](http://www.rebeats.com).

### Wanted

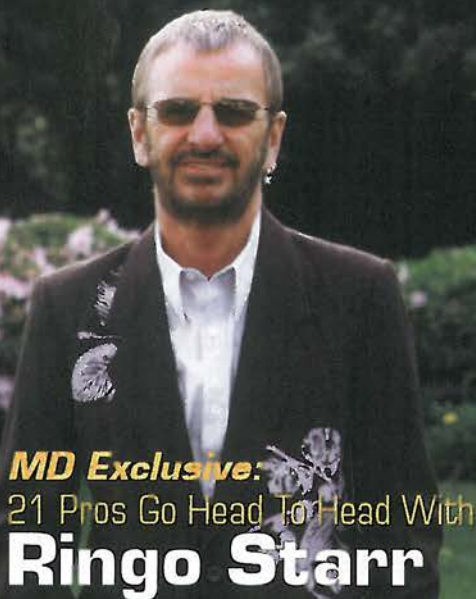
**Unusual-finish** drums: swirls, stars, top hats, engraved, etc. Also Camco, George Way, Gladstone, and Ringo drums. (800) 839-6634.

**Immediate cash**—Gretsch, K Zildjians, Ludwig, Rogers, Slingerland, Leedy. Vintage Drum Center. Tel: (800) 729-3111, or (641) 693-3611, [vintagedrum@lisco.com](mailto:vintagedrum@lisco.com).

### Miscellaneous

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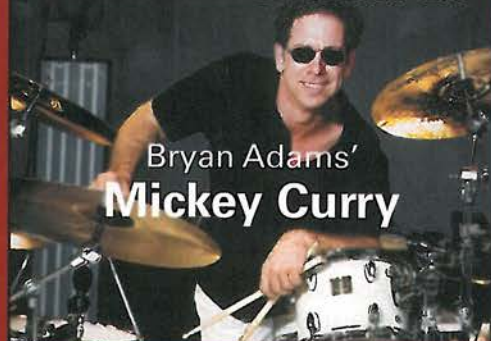
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# 2005 Cape Breton International Drum Festival



Uriel Jones

The fifth annual Cape Breton International Drum Festival took place in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, Canada, this past April 30 and May 1.

The Festival was opened by the historic Louisbourg Fife & Drum Troop. Tiger Bill Meligari followed, using a 16" hi-hat to demonstrate a technique called

dual-speed sticking: striking the cymbal with both ends of the stick. After a period of instruction and audience participation, Bill finished with a loose and relaxed solo.

Tambourine virtuoso Alessandra Belloni then enthralled the audience with a variety of dance, vocal, and rhythm

pieces. She was later joined by drummer Sergio Bellotti, as she continued to explore the different musical possibilities of the various tambourines she played.

Saturday's Otariion East Coast Showcase featured regional drummers Matt Casey, Simon Miminis, and Alister Hunston. They were scheduled to be followed by an acoustic/electronic drum duo featuring First Nations drummer Keith Dawson Jr. and festival co-host Bruce Aitken. Unfortunately, health reasons prevented Aitken from fully participating, leaving Dawson to play some powerful drum pieces before combining with drummers Skip Hadden and Marcel Bourgeois. Ultimately, however, Aitken did appear, receiving a rapturous reception as he and Dawson played together on one track.

Motown legend Uriel Jones came on to play with some of the many hits he recorded. When asked about the lack of ride cymbals on Motown recordings, he quipped, "A ride? They'd *ride* you out of there!" On keeping good time, his comment was, "It was the difference between being able to eat and not to eat."

Studio and touring drummer (and *MD* columnist) Billy Ward played along to several different tunes, then spoke about different beats and ghost notes. He pulled some material from his *Big Time* DVD, including examples of good drumming ergonomics. He also urged the drummers in attendance to collect "a suitcase of influences."

As a special feature of this year's show, studio great Hal Blaine was presented with the first CB Drum Festival Legends Award. Hal could not attend the event, but he sent a recorded greeting to acknowledge the honor.

Canadian drum star Vito Rezza closed day one by playing along to a variety of tracks. Rezza's comedic side came out when he invited a youngster on stage to play his kit. His no-nonsense observa-



**Will Kennedy**



**Yvette Preyer**



**Vito Rezza**



**Billy Ward**



**Marco Minnemann**

tions made even the most under-confident drummers take heart.

Day two of the festival started with Gil Sharone, who focused on traditional ska and reggae beats, and also gave a powerful demonstration of brush techniques. He was followed by Michael McDonald's Yvette Preyer, who demonstrated her ability to sing and drum at the same time. She pointed out that drummers who can do both are more marketable to bands or artists.

Sunday's Otation Showcase featured the talents of regional drummers Joel MacNeil, Joe McIntyre & The New Brunswick Percussion Ensemble, and Doug MacKay. They were followed by Bernard Purdie, whose effortless playing, gentle humor, and interaction with the audience made him an instant hit. In addition to playing along to classic tracks he had recorded, Purdie spoke about his career making hit records. He finished off with a disciplined, delicious solo.

Former Yellowjackets drummer Will Kennedy opened with a challenging track. Then he got the audience involved, bringing in every section of the theater to create a living drumkit. Will finished off with more sublime playing that brought the crowd to its feet.

Marco Minnemann wowed everyone with his speed and independence. After a blistering solo, he played along to a video of *Monty Python's Life Of Brian*, using drums and cymbals to coincide with each syllable being spoken in the film's dialog.

Dom Famularo closed things out with his inimitable mixture of stunning playing, words of encouragement, and humor. Dom paid tribute to festival co-hosts Bruce and Gloria Jean Aitken and to the other festival artists, noting that everyone had witnessed a work in progress, as "we continually learn the craft to make it better." All of the drummers from the weekend then came on stage with an assortment of percussion instruments, joyfully launching into the festival's traditional finale.

**Story and photos by Jim Cornall**

To see more photos, go to [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).

# 15th Annual International Custom & Vintage Drum Show

When I was a kid, only a handful of drummers did clinics: Carmine Appice for Ludwig, Roy Burns for

Rogers, and Billy Cobham and Lenny White for Tama. So I was flattered when I was asked to be a clinician at Rob Cook's 15th Annual Rebeats International Custom & Vintage Drum Show (known as "The Chicago Show") this past May 14-15, in St. Charles, Illinois.

In addition to drum clinics and discussions, the show features exhibits of drums by vendors from across the country. Collectors like Woodstock Vintage Drums, Doug Carrington, Tim O'Hara, and J.D. Music had vintage snare drums that looked more like museum pieces than items for sale. Snare drum builders like Craviotto and Beni were also represented. And innovative manufacturers like Trick and Thunder Echo Drums showed that drums didn't have to be made before 1959—or even made out of wood—in order to be cool.

There were impressive vintage drumset collections to be had, too. Guys like Steve Maxwell, Skins & Tins, Randy Rainwater, and Chuck Scalia had everything from Rogers Beavertails and Ludwig Vistalites to Slingerland Radio King bass drums and enough White Marine Pearl to cover the state. Ludwig's Todd Trent and Jim Catalano had many "one of a kind" exotic wood and Black Beauty snare drums for sale (Bill Ludwig II and Bill Ludwig III were both in attendance), while DW displayed retro Radio King-style snare drums and sets. The esoteric merchandise included Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa T-shirts, a 1965 Ringo doll, a 1970s Fibes six-piece clear acrylic drumkit, and an original Gretsch drumstick store display.

Clinicians for the show were all from the Chicago area. Bun E. Carlos from Cheap Trick presented a complete walk-

through of rock drumming from the late 1950s to the '70s. He played examples of drumbeats from '60s hitmakers like The Dave Clark Five, and then showed how he incorporated them into Cheap Trick's top-10 hits.

Styx's Todd Sucherman gave a clinic highlighted by odd-tempo fusion beats and a chops-filled playalong with the Styx hit "Renegade." Then there was Don Osborne, known for appearing in 1970s Slingerland catalogs as Buddy Rich's protégé. (I didn't realize Buddy talked to anyone but Johnny Carson, Gene Krupa, or Frank Sinatra. He mentored a kid?) Don is a masterful technician with sticks and brushes.

Paul Wertico, best known for his work with the Pat Metheny Group, dazzled the crowd with his eclectic, progressive drumming style. Renowned drumming



Exhibitors like Steve Maxwell showed beautiful vintage kits and individual drums.



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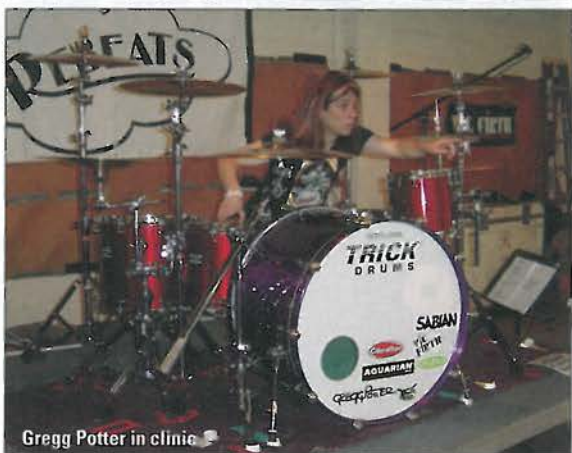
This original Beatles kit was a feature of Dick Schory's lecture on Ludwig history.



Todd Sucherman in clinic



Paul Wertico in clinic



Gregg Potter in clinic

# In Memoriam

## Frankie LaRocca



Frankie LaRocca, a drummer for David Johanssen and Bryan Adams, and who later signed the Spin Doctors and Mr. Big while working for Epic Records, died this past May 12 shortly after undergoing heart surgery. He was fifty-one.

Drummer Myron Grombacher, who shared tours with LaRocca, commented, "Frankie was one hell of a great rock drummer. His playing on David Johanssen's solo albums and John Waite's *Ignition* album still sounds fresh and slamming today."

educator Joel Spencer was as precise as a college course, complete with jazz history notes. And Dick Schory, former director of Ludwig's advertising and educational departments, spoke of Ludwig's boom years. He even brought a Ringo drumset along as a prop. (A *real* one? Hmm.)

My clinic was on Saturday, *after* Bun E. Carlos. (Lucky me, right?) My playing was based more from a performance perspective than a teaching one. I was able to slip in my Buddy Rich under-the-hi-hat technique, but for the most part I showed what makes a powerhouse rock drummer tick: big double bass drums, heavy snare chops, and over-the-head behind-your-back cymbal crashes. I will say that the story that I told about Slingerland's Tony Bellson yelling at me for breaking bass drum pedals monthly, while his brother Louie used the same pedal for years, got a great response.

I displayed two of my custom kits from when I was a Slingerland endorser in the 1980s. One was a yellow-and-black striped double bass kit that I used with Steve Dahl & Teenage Radiation. The other was a pearl-pink outfit custom-painted by the Hamer guitar company and emblazoned with green graphics of the Rat Fink character by Ed "Big Daddy" Roth. Along with a snare drum covered in a "one of a kind" speckled fluorescent guitar pick material, a gold-plated brass snare, two custom canister thrones, and custom pink, yellow, and black bass drum pedals, my kits were well received.

The 2006 Chicago Show is set for May 20-21. Don't miss it; it's better than eBay. For further information contact Rob Cook at (989) 463-4757, or go to [www.rebeats.com](http://www.rebeats.com).

**Gregg Potter**

To check out additional photos from the Custom & Vintage Drum Show, go to [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).

## Jimmy Vincent

Jimmy Vincent, best known for his work with the comedy/novelty band The Goofers in the 1950s, passed away recently. He had also recorded and toured extensively with the popular jazz duo Louie Prima & Keely Smith.

Drum legend Hal Blaine said of Jimmy, "He was a sweet guy, and he played his buns off for Louie & Keely and The Goofers. He'll be missed."



# Indy Quickies



Long-time Billy Joel drummer **Liberty DeVitto** recently visited Public School C.E.S. 158X in New York City, where he taught drums to more than thirty enthusiastic students. Liberty also helped deliver new guitars, basses, keyboards, and drum equipment purchased with funds raised by Band Together NYC IV, a benefit concert held in New York City and headlined by Liberty's band, Hit Squad.

This was Liberty's second visit to a classroom under the auspices of the **Little Kids Rock** program. Said Little Kids Rock founder Dave Wish, "In addition to

being a successful drummer, Liberty is also one of the kindest, most generous individuals I've ever had the honor of working with. Watching him interact with students is a real treat."

**Francis Seriau**, founder and director of **Drumtech** drum school in London, has been made a fellow of the Royal Society For The Encouragement Of The Arts.



**Regal Tip's** E series recently received the MIPA award for best drumstick of 2005. The award represents the votes of fifty-eight music industry magazines from around the world. It was presented at the recent Frankfurt Musikmesse in Germany. Regal Tip's E series offers the durability of nylon with the warmer, darker sound of a wood tip.

**Slug Percussion Products** celebrated their tenth anniversary this past July.



The accessory company is the brainchild of drummer **Eric Behrenfeld**, who is credited with US patents for the Tweek Drumkey-clip that attaches to hardware stands, the Power Head tapered-shaft self-adjusting beater, and Batter Badge vented impact pads.

The **Meinl Drum Festival** will be held in Gutenstetten, Germany, on Saturday, September 10. The festival will present a variety of Meinl artists, including **Mike Terrana** (RAGE), **Benny Greb** (Joreobeam), **Johnny Rabb** (Super Action Heroes), **Shauney Baby** (Hilary Duff), and **Thomas Lang**. There will be an exhibition of Meinl cymbals, guided factory tours, cajon and djembe workshops, and more. Go to [www.meinlcymbals.com](http://www.meinlcymbals.com) for information regarding tickets.

## Who's Playing What

Yamaha was the official supplier of drumkits to the recent **New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival**. Among the kits supplied for the Festival's thirteen



stages was one shown here, painted with the Festival logo by Yamaha drummer and artist **Prairie Prince**.

New Yamaha endorsers include jazz vibist and marimbist **Stefon Harris** and drummer **Swiss Chris** (John Legend).



DCI Division I drum & bugle corps **Magic Of Orlando** and **Southwind** of Lexington-Winchester, Kentucky will perform exclusively on Ludwig field percussion and an all-Ludwig/Musser front ensemble for the 2005 DCI season.

Top Puerto Rican conguero **Carlos Maldonado** (Tercer Planeta, La PVC,

Victor Manuelle) is now playing Meinl percussion. New Meinl cymbal artists include **Chris Cano** (Orson), **Gabe Lindeman** (Tsunami Bomb), and **Todd Hennig** (Death By Stereo).

New Zildjian cymbal artists include **Matt Johnson** (Rufus Wainright), **Alan Estes**, **Francisco Mela** (Berklee College of Music), **John Ramsey** (Berklee College of Music), **Obed Calvaire** (Manhattan School of Music), **Craig MacIntyre** (Josh Groban), **Brian Rosenworcel** (Guster), **Andy Burrows** (Razorlight), **Sebastian de Krom** (Jamie Callum), **Paul Thompson** (Franz Ferdinand), **Nick Hodgson** (The Kaiser Chiefs), and **Riley Breckenridge** (Thrice).

**Mike Orris** (MD's 2003 under-eighteen Undiscovered Drummer winner) is endorsing Vic Firth drumsticks and touring with John Lee Hooker Jr.



Mapex has added **Will Calhoun** (Living Colour) and master clinician **Dom Famularo** to its artist roster.

Recent signings to Sabian's artist program include **Derico Watson** (Victor Wooton), **Ryan Dusick** (Maroon 5), **Chris Dave** (Me'shell N'Degeocello), **Joey Zehr** (The Click), **Rexsell Hardy Jr.** (Mary J. Blige), **Yvette Preyer** (Michael McDonald), and **Tony Hammons** (Montgomery Gentry).



**Alicia Warrington** (Kelly Osbourne, The Bruises) is endorsing Evans drumheads and accessories, while the **University Of Southern California (USC) Trojan** marching band is now outfitted exclusively with Evans MX marching drumheads.



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Ahead Drumsticks	www.bigbangdist.com	65
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Ameriwest Technology	www.powerstix.com	124
Aquarian Drumheads	www.aquariandrumheads.com	9
Attack Drumheads	www.universalpercussion.com	48
Audix	www.audixusa.com	96
Auralex Acoustics	www.auralex.com	150
Black Panther Snare Drums	www.blackpanthersnares.com	54,80
Black Swamp Percussion	www.blackswamp.com	151
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# Campaign For Lissa

Readers of *Modern Drummer* should certainly be familiar with the name and the work of Lissa Wales. Lissa is one of the best-known and most popular photographers in the music field. Her photos have graced *MD*'s pages for many years, including the cover photos shown below.

Lissa is currently waging a battle with leukemia. And while her prognosis following a complete bone-marrow transplant is encouraging, her medical costs have been staggering. With that in mind, an account has been set up with the online transaction service PayPal to receive contributions on Lissa's behalf. Simply go to [www.PayPal.com](http://www.PayPal.com), click on "Send Money," and use email address "drumpics.com." Contributions from *MD* readers will be greatly appreciated.

We're happy to report that Lissa's friends in the drumming community

have rallied to her support. In addition, Tesla drummer Troy Luckketta has organized a benefit concert to help with Lissa's medical expenses. The concert, to be held on September 10 at the Celebrity Theater in Phoenix, Arizona, will feature drummers Carmine Appice, Billy Ashbaugh, Jimmy DeGrasso, Dom Famularo, Dom Moio, Denny Seiwell, Danny Seraphine, Chad Smith, and Troy himself, each playing with an all-star house band directed by Marc Bonilla. Additional artists are yet to be added. More information can be found at [www.wakeuptolove.com](http://www.wakeuptolove.com).



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