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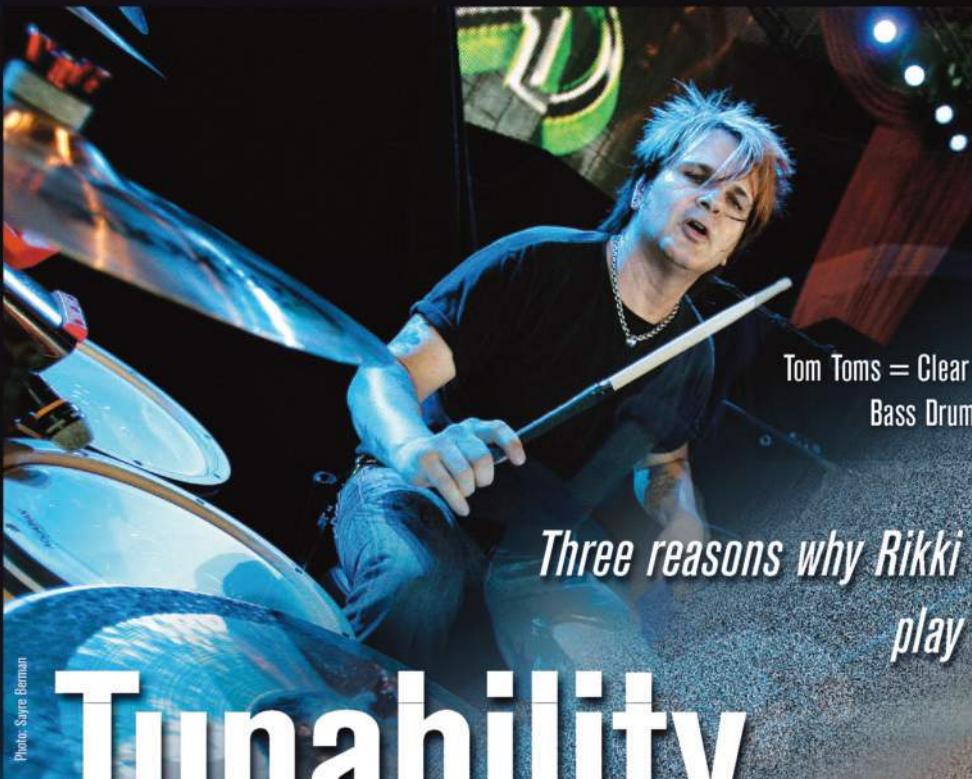
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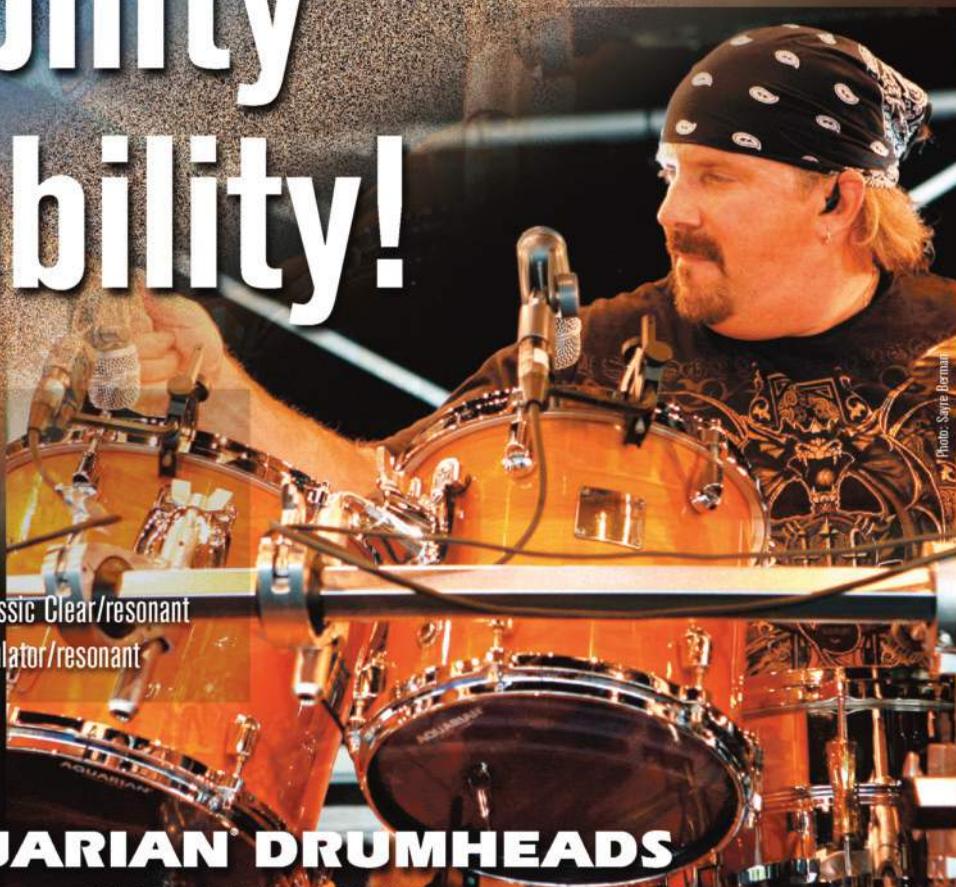
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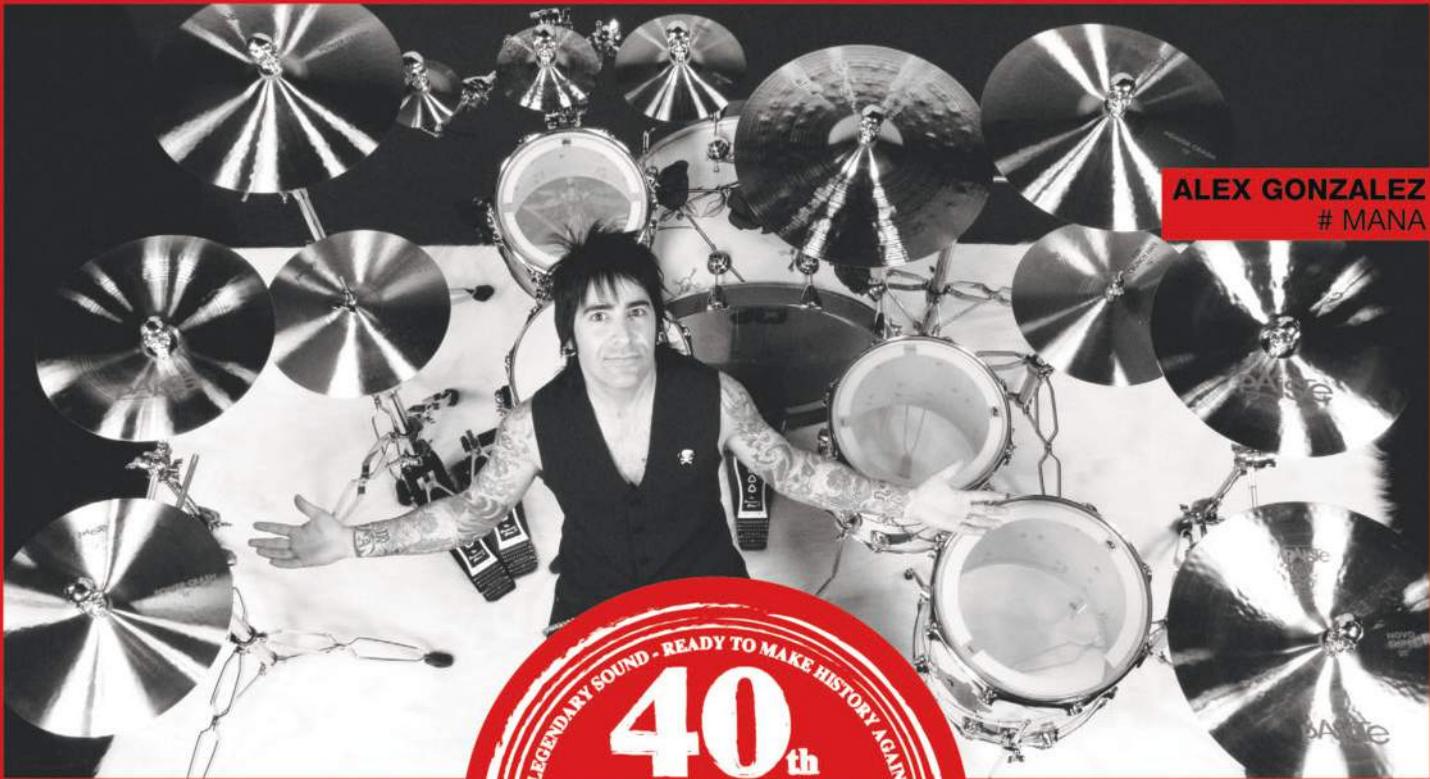
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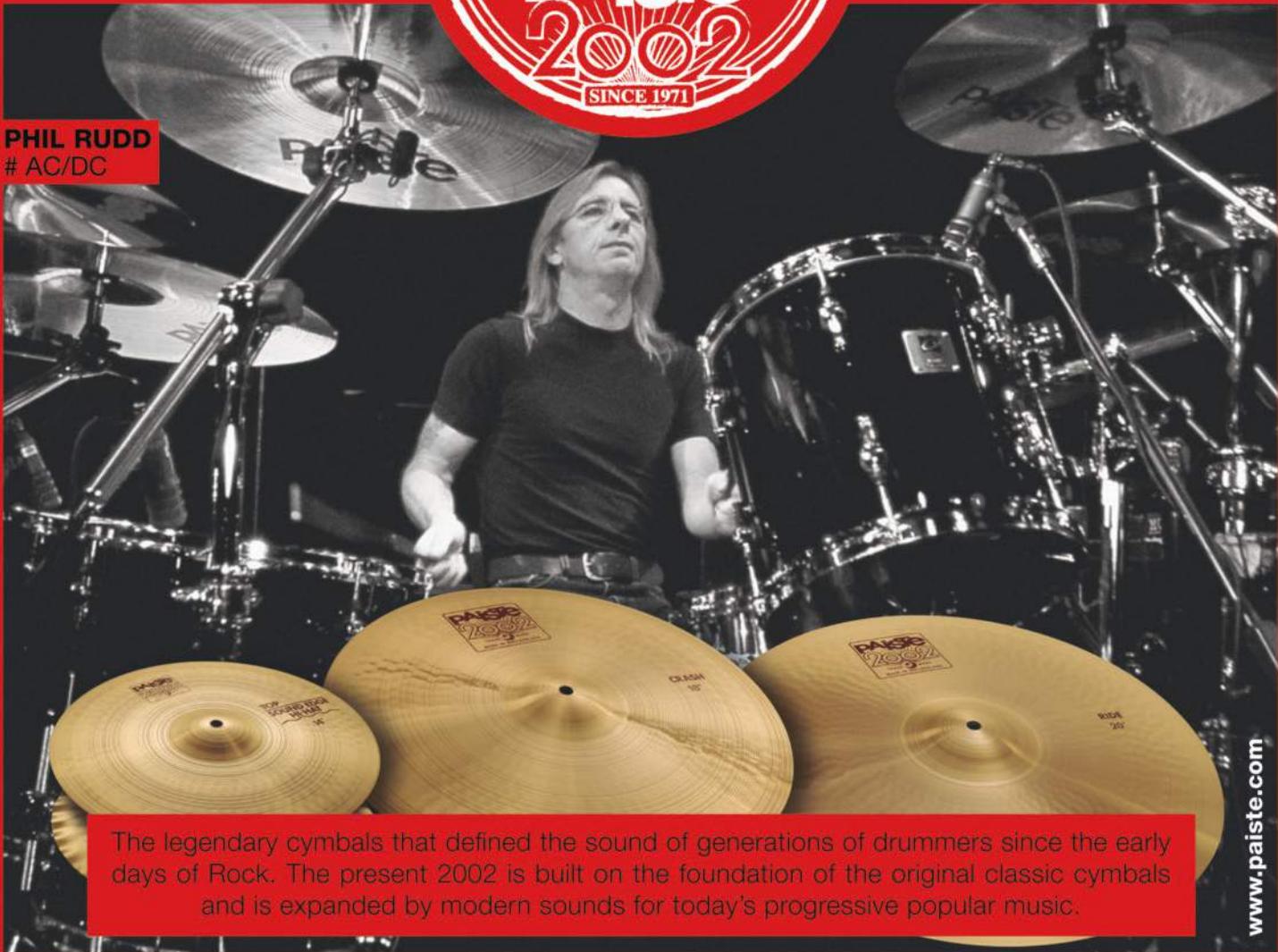


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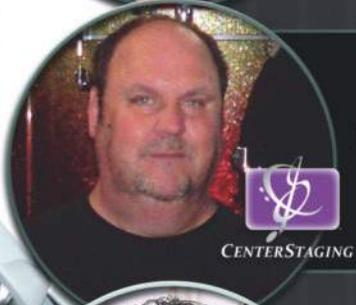
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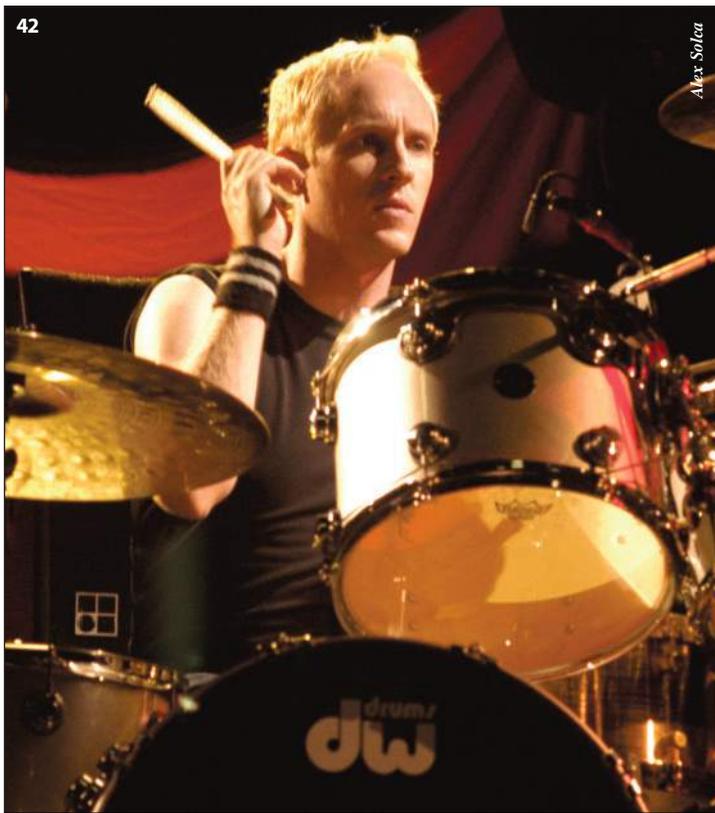
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Alex Solca

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He might refer to himself as just a punk kid from Jersey. A better way to describe the heavy hitter—who can claim credits like Billy Idol, Foreigner, Ozzy Osbourne, Slash’s Snakepit, and now Whitesnake—would be to call him a study in perseverance.

34 **JOHN VON OHLEN**

He’s one of the only drummers in history who pleased the notoriously picky swing king Woody Herman with his playing. A living guru of big band drumming says follow your heart—and the horn chart—and the world is your oyster.

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By day he lays down seamless tracks for tomorrow’s pop megahits. By night he blasts out aggressive, cutting-edge beats with A Perfect Circle. And when he’s not doing all *that*, Josh Freese is the man who Weezer, Devo, Sting, Paramore, and nearly everyone else calls when they need a drummer to save the day.

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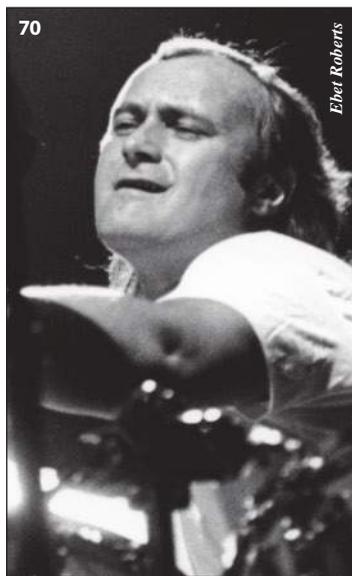
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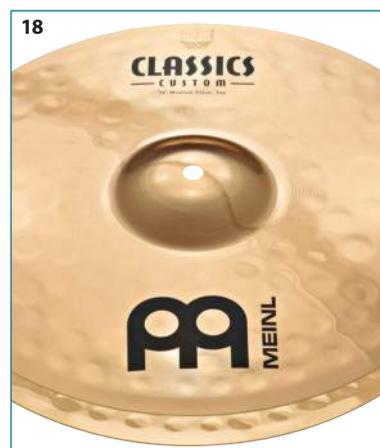
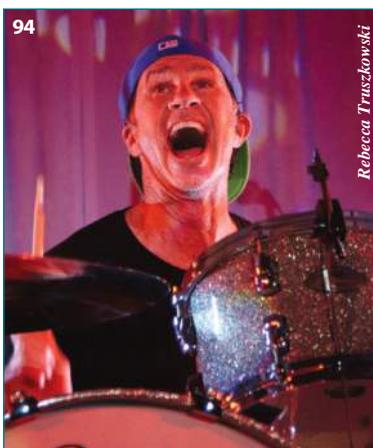
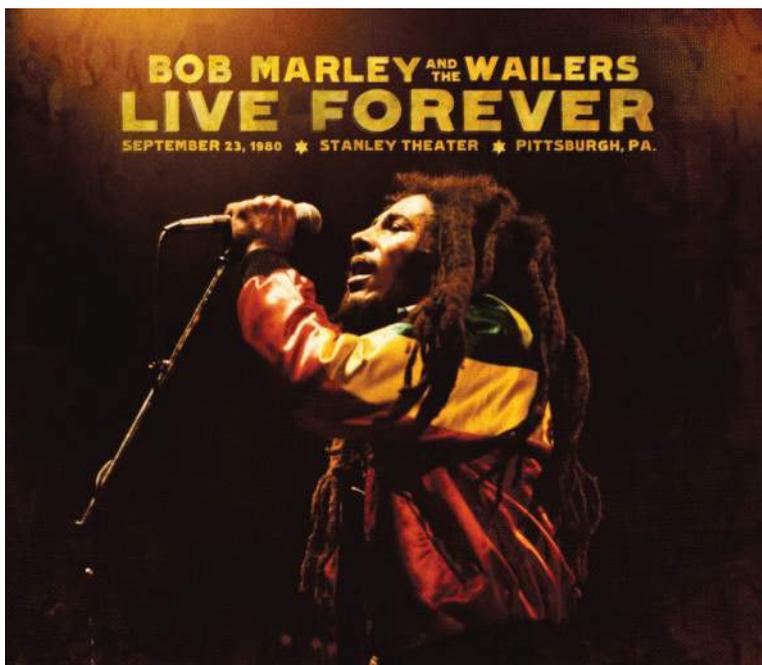
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Drumming And Beyond

I wish I had a dollar for every time someone asked me, "What's the secret to becoming famous?" Don't get me wrong, I'm flattered that people assume I might even have a clue, but I don't have any secrets, only suggestions—and, like most musicians, strong opinions on the subject.

You're reading *MD*, so if fame is a goal of yours, it's obviously about becoming a well-known drummer. My first bit of advice: If you're only in it to become famous, then you're in the wrong business. And if you're only in it to be rich, I hate to burst your bubble, but maybe you'd better get out now. I'm not saying that it's impossible to become rich and famous by playing the drums, but, more often than not, fame and fortune arrive unexpectedly. In either case, they rarely come knocking together—and never unaccompanied by hard work and dedication.

When my son, Matty, became a drummer at age five, I couldn't foresee where he would be now at twenty-two. I watched his innocent passion for playing grow stronger every year, and the only suggestion I made to him strongly was, "If you want to work steadily in this business, learn to write songs," something I've done since I was fifteen. He was already a pretty good drummer by the time he hit his early teens, so it wasn't a total surprise that he took my advice and picked up the bass, then guitar and keyboards, and then he started to write. These days I can proudly say he's working regularly, and, more important, he loves what he does for a living.

For those of you who've been playing drums for years and already play other instruments and write songs, you know what I'm preaching. For those who are just starting out, play and practice your drums *every day*, and join a band as soon as you can play a few beats and keep a steady groove. Then, after your band has been rehearsing regularly for a while, for the last half hour of your practice sessions, try having everyone switch instruments and teach each other the basics. Playing drums is all about groove and time—something every musician needs, no matter what the instrument. All of us should be playing drums! And besides making you and your bandmates more well-rounded musicians, it will make each of you better at your own instrument.

Now, say your passion is only playing the drums. You can still be involved in writing songs—you can contribute to the lyrics, you can sing melodies you've come up with, and you can write the most important part of any song: the hook. If you think about it, you're probably already adding parts and making suggestions to your bandmates; sometimes your suggestion might be what really makes the song.

In a recent conversation, Rick Marotta (Carly Simon, Steely Dan, John Lennon) told me how years ago he decided to focus on playing piano and writing. He eventually became very successful with those skills, writing the theme song for the TV show *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Rick's decision clearly paid off big time.

Another conversation I had a short time ago, with original Blood, Sweat & Tears drummer Bobby Colomby, echoed this idea. When I asked Bobby (who went on to be a driving force behind the scenes in the music biz), "What advice would you give to *Modern Drummer* readers who want to be better at the drums?" without hesitation he said one word: "Piano."

These sentiments are supported by the careers of several of the artists featured in this issue, including Phil Collins, Josh Freese, and Brian Tichy, all of whom play and write on other instruments. Even those who aren't known as multi-instrumentalists, such as Three Dog Night's Floyd Sneed or founding Chicago drummer Danny Seraphine, have seen their arrangement and hook ideas result in their bands' songs becoming hits. And a quick scan of the *Billboard* charts at any given time will reveal at least a couple of top producers and songwriters who started their musical lives as drummers.

So if you're looking for advice about achieving fame, I might not be the best person to ask. But if you're asking how to be *successful*—not necessarily rich, and not necessarily famous, but in demand for your musical skills and proud of the music you produce—I'd absolutely say you should become the best drummer you can be and seriously think about being more involved in the process of writing songs.

The old joke "There are musicians, and then there are drummers" is long dead. Drummers *are* musicians! Now go out there and prove it.



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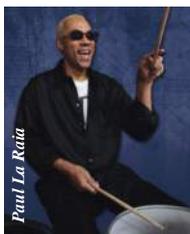
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Tony "Thunder" Smith

I was thrilled to see your feature interview with Tony "Thunder" Smith in the March 2011 issue. I was fortunate enough to study with Tony in New York during the mid-'90s. As an educator, Tony sets the bar extremely high. I remember times at his Hell's Kitchen studio when the lesson went significantly beyond the hour that I was paying for, and Tony wouldn't dismiss me until I learned the material. It proved to me that he was extremely devoted to the art of drumming and took pride in his teaching. Not to mention that he's one of the nicest guys you'll meet.

Jon T. Fishman

The Power Of Positive Thinking

I learned to play drums when I was around twelve years old. After a while, I lost my direction and stopped playing. I always regretted stopping, but at the time I couldn't see how I could support myself and carry such a cumbersome instrument. I now realize my mistake. Playing is worth any sacrifice. There's nothing I can do about the past but learn from it. I'm now fifty-one, and I just got a used set and started to play again. To anyone out there: Believe in yourself, and be ready to do everything it takes to keep at it. As Chris Coleman says in the January 2011 issue: "Through diligence, perseverance, and focus, all things are possible. Always remember that music is all about the moment. Just get in the moment and have fun, and good things will happen!" His comments and the ones from Michael Carvin in the same issue remind me how important a positive attitude is in being successful. Keep up the good work!

Sylvain Pilon

The Groove Remains The Same

Anthony Biuso's moderndrummer.com article "John Bonham L.A. Tribute: The Groove Remains The Same" brought back wonderful memories of my youth and one of the reasons why I began playing drums many years ago. Drummers of all ages owe a debt of gratitude to Bonham and to Brian Tichy for organizing a tribute to one of the greats. My only regret is that I was not there to witness it in person.

Chris Koerner

For more on the tribute to Bonzo, check out Brian Tichy's feature in this issue.

MD 35

Modern Drummer is the best damn magazine!

David Roseberger (via Facebook)

Loving all your stories and following the legends as well as the up-and-coming risers.

Marie Haney (via Facebook)

The best drum magazine, period. I've read MD for years and years, and it always has great cover stories and helpful information. Thanks, *Modern Drummer*—you've helped a whole lot of us. You rule!

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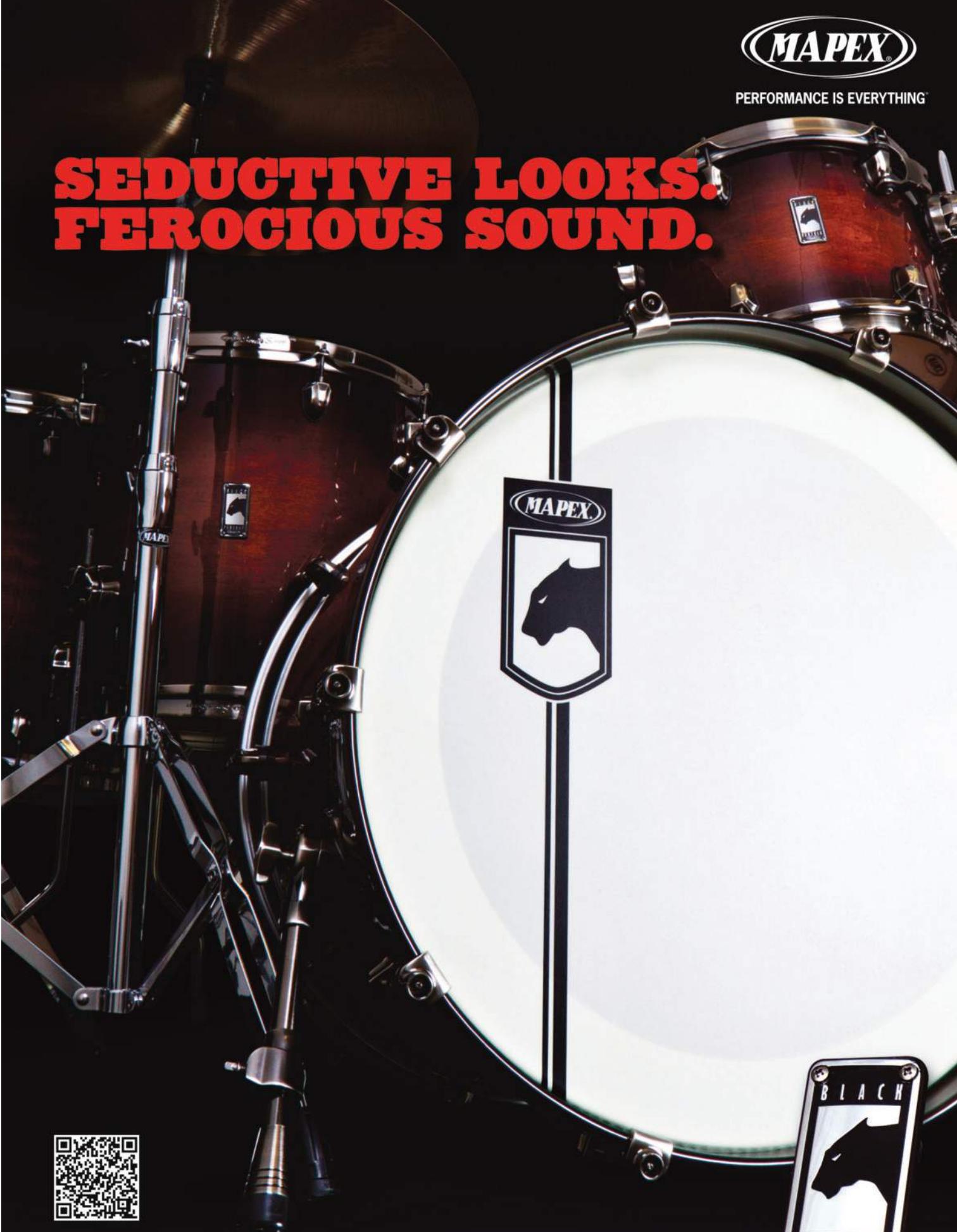
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LENNY WHITE

Returning to grooving and rocking, forever

Lenny White has a problem with musical labels. "What's called fusion now, we used to call jazz-rock," the legendary drummer says. "So I just went back to that." White's latest album, *Anomaly*, indeed has an emphasis on rock, with heavy Bonham-esque beats, distorted guitars, and a weighty mix. "'Black Dog' and 'In My Time Of Dying' were my favorite rock tunes, and I read that John Bonham used to listen to Tony Williams, Billy Cobham, and me, so that made my day!"

Besides recording his own music and producing other artists, White participated in the highly anticipated 2008 reunion of Return To Forever. "I've always tried to make the most sound with the least amount of effort," he says, reflecting on what it took to play RTF's demanding music again. "It's how you apply your energy. Back then it was athletics—how fast and how loud and how complex you could play. As you mature, you find ways to play more musically. You learn how to make things work."

And what's the secret to meshing with some of the finest bassists ever? "The ride cymbal is key—getting it to speak and swing, and pinpointing your playing and how it fits with an acoustic, electric, synth bass, or organ," White says. "And with Stanley Clarke, Marcus Miller, and Ron Carter, you sit back and you groove." Not one to rest, White recently appeared on organist



Pete Levin's record *Jump!*, produced an album for the Italian singer Letizia Gambi, and has begun to plan more shows with a slightly altered Return To Forever lineup. But it's no mystery who will be on drums. **Ilya Stemkovsky**

DANNY SERAPHINE

With a new DVD and autobiography, **the founding Chicago drummer** is looking to revive the art of jazz-rock timekeeping.

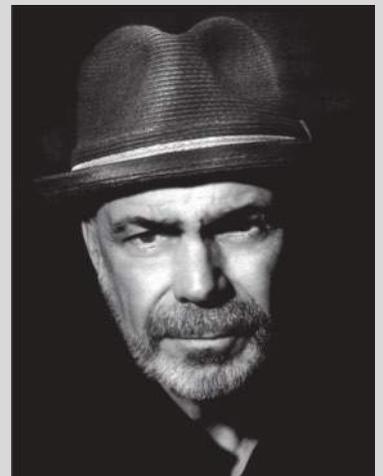
As a member of the band Chicago, Danny Seraphine was a pioneer of the jazz-rock genre, influencing thousands of players with his performances on hits like "25 Or 6 To 4," "Make Me Smile," "Saturday In The Park," and "Feelin' Stronger Every Day." Seraphine's sudden 1990 ousting from the band caught everyone, the drummer included, by surprise. After achieving some minor success in the ensuing decade—not at the kit, but producing artists and soundtracks for Broadway shows—Danny felt there was something missing. "I produced some really great but unknown artists," he says. "The lightbulb finally went off in my head: *Get back to playing*. So I took some refresher lessons with Joe Porcaro to work on my technique, and here I am."

Beginning with an electrifying appearance at the 2006 Modern Drummer Festival with his own California Transit Authority, Seraphine has been on a mission to rejuvenate an art form that he feels has been overlooked lately. A master of groove *and* technique, Danny sounds as fresh today as he did forty-three years ago,

when Chicago burst on the scene.

Now, coinciding with the release of his autobiography, *Street Player: My Chicago Story*, as well as a new DVD, *The Art Of Jazz Rock Drumming*,

Seraphine has been conducting drum clinics, making personal appearances, and reading CTA's sophomore effort, *Promises*. His DVD offers a wealth of drumming tips, while his candid observations in *Street Player* are invaluable to musicians of any age. "I want to share whatever I know," the drummer says. "I've had a chance to do things that most people can only dream of." For more with Seraphine, read his Web-exclusive interview at moderndrummer.com. **Bob Girouard**



On Tour

Louis Vecchio with New Politics /// **Adam Marcello** with Katy Perry /// **Jon Larsen** with Volbeat /// **Jason Ganberg** with Purple Melon /// **Doug Yowell** with Ari Hest /// **Matt Ochoa** with the Dirty Heads /// **Todd Sucherman** with Styx /// **Rodney Howard** with Avril Lavigne /// **Deen Castronovo** with Journey /// **Jim Riley** with Rascal Flatts /// **Brittany Brooks** with Cee Lo Green /// **Abe Cunningham** with Deftones /// **Van Romaine** with Enrique Iglesias /// **Alan White** with Yes /// **Billy Hawn** with Jason Reeves /// **Craig Pilo** with Frankie Valli

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JOE RICKARD ON RED'S *UNTIL WE HAVE FACES*

According to Joe Rickard of the Christian rock band Red, the making of the group's new album, *Until We Have Faces*, differed from the typical creation and writing process for an album. "A lot of our demos and song ideas started with one of my drumbeats," Rickard explains. "Basically, I would think of a song idea, visualize its structure, then lay down tracks at my house. I would send the tracks to the rest of the guys, and they would come up with riffs and other ideas by feeding off my drums. Later on we would come up with the final structure and finish the song. We tried out a lot of drum ideas in the studio, always taking the approach that was best for the song. After hearing the finished product, I feel like the process was a success. I'm very proud of our whole team and of *Until We Have Faces*."



Also On The Shelves

Avril Lavigne Goodbye Lullaby (Rodney Howard, Josh Freese) /// **Panic! At The Disco** Vices & Virtues (Spencer Smith) /// **Los Lonely Boys** Rockpango (Ringo Garza) /// **Dropkick Murphys** Going Out In Style (Matt Kelly) /// **Alex Skolnick Trio** Veritas (Matt Zebroski) /// **Matt Lowell** Swan Lake (EP) (Joe Tomino) /// **Henry Wolfe** Linda Vista (Josh Collazo) /// **Steve Earle** I'll Never Get Out Of This World Alive (Jay Bellerose) /// **Cavalera Conspiracy** Blunt Force Trauma (Igor Cavalera) /// **Members Of Morphine With Jeremy Lyons** The Ever Expanding Elastic Waste Band (Jerome Deupree) /// **The O'Farrill Brothers** Giant Peach (Zack O'Farrill) /// **The Cookers** Cast The First Stone (Billy Hart) /// **Crowbar** Sever The Wicked Hand (Tommy Buckley) /// **New York Electric Piano** Keys To The City Vols. 1 & 2 (Aaron Comess) /// **Gene Lake** Here And Now (Gene Lake) /// **Ben Kono** Crossing (John Hollenbeck) /// **Blue Coupe** Tornado On The Tracks (Albert Bouchard) /// **Greg Lewis** Organ Monk (Cindy Blackman) /// **Zach Hill** Face Tat (Zach Hill) /// **Thursday** No Devolución (Tucker Rule) /// **Mister Barrington** Mister Barrington (Zach Danziger) /// **Henry Threadgill** **Zooid** This Brings Us To Vol. II (Elliot Humberto Kavee)

ROBERT SWEET

With a new album, management, and tour, the pioneering Christian heavy metal drummer is ready to embrace 2011 with gratitude.

The *Covering*, a collection of songs that had a major influence on Robert Sweet and his Stryper bandmates while they were growing up in Orange County, California, is the group's ninth album since its 1984 debut, *The Yellow And Black Attack!* When asked what challenges he faced while attempting to replicate parts created by drumming legends, Sweet responds, "There weren't any. I was having a good time. I think when you play music you have to enjoy it and not stress out so much. I stuck pretty close to most of the original drum parts, though of course every now and then I'd add something a little different."

Sweet says he's fully aware that some conservative Christians may not endorse covers of songs like "Breaking The Law" by



Judas Priest or "Heaven And Hell" by Black Sabbath. "But we went out of our way to pick songs that had inoffensive lyrics," Robert explains. "Plus, a large part of our audience has always been non-Christians who we hope to reach. I know there are some who may not like it, but we mean no harm. Good music is good music."

"Pistol" Pete Kaufmann

KEVIN CRABB

Passing along the wisdom of drum gurus—with a little help from some heavy friends



Rob Shamahan

Something was ready to give. The walls of his house, Kevin Crabb figured. The Sunday gatherings he'd been hosting to keep alive the words of L.A. drum gurus Richard Wilson and Murray Spivack were threatening to spill out onto the street. If anyone else was allowed in, the fire marshal would surely shut the operation down. How did a simple act of reverence come to this?

The story begins in late-'80s Toronto, when a former child jingle singer and celebrated actor named Kevin Crabb suddenly abandoned script and made off to Los Angeles. There he worked on snare drum execution with Spivack before undertaking intense studies in technique and composition with Wilson, another child prodigy. When Wilson passed on, Crabb convened the first of his Sunday get-togethers. The L.A. drum community responded enthusiastically.

In May 2009, the KC Drum Hang, now a monthly event, found a more spacious home at the hot spot Spazio, then at the L.A. Music Academy, eventually moving to the prestigious North Hollywood club the Baked Potato. Guest performers have included Virgil Donati, Chad Wackerman, Clayton Cameron, Jake Hanna, Patrice Rushen, Alphonso Johnson, and Louis Van Taylor.

Why does Crabb persist, year in, year out? "Richard Wilson shone a light on great art," Kevin explains. "He was a noble, powerful guiding force, unparalleled in his technical comprehension and communication skills. It all comes down to an adage he paraphrased from Plato: Teaching is only achieved by example. That's what's happening at the Baked Potato, and in my own teaching, one on one or via Skype, I'm doing my best to spread the traditions." **T. Bruce Wittet**



HORACIO "EL NEGRO" HERNANDEZ

You want something done? Ask the busiest guy in the room. This month, an *MD* Pro Panelist hips us to how he finds time to compose while touring, rehearsing, and recording 24/7.



How do you manage to fit composing into your busy schedule?

Recording a rough idea for a song is very easy to do on an airplane these days. Any decent laptop has programs that allow you to do this, and it's something that all drummers should know their way around. It's a great tool for drummers to start working with bass lines and piano and guitar parts; it's important to be able to hear instruments individually.

What gear do you recommend?

Certainly try to get the most powerful computer and programs as possible. I have a MacBook Pro, and I use Reason, which is a fantastic sequencer program. It has instruments from any part of the world you can imagine. Through that I get ideas for songs; it could be as simple as a drumbeat. And then I use Logic, which is a recording studio program. When I get home to my studio, I sometimes replace the electronic drums with my real drums and start replacing the other instruments with real musicians' performances.

So you'll use that initial Logic demo as the basis for the final track?

Sometimes I build up right from there, and sometimes I get the idea down and go into the studio and start working up the song from zero in a different platform. What's also great about these programs is they teach you a lot about sound. The first day you start EQ'ing or putting effects on a snare, it gives you an amazing contact with the electronic world.

Do you mostly use the effects that are included with Reason and Logic, or do you download plug-ins?

I'm not really a sound engineer. And what's already in there is pretty amazing. I've learned a lot about how a studio works, which is exactly what you have virtually in the computer.

Anyone who works with a computer has to deal with the issues of power and memory. You could find yourself on an airplane for eight hours; that's a long time for a battery to hold out, and a lot of time to use up memory.

This new Mac is great; its battery lasts four or five hours while you're working in a heavy program. But these days they have power available at most seats on airplanes. And I always carry four LaCie 500GB hard drives with me; they're very small and lightweight.

Do you keep any files on your laptop's hard drive?

No, it's better to have your computer as clean as possible. It runs a lot better that way.

Traveling can be an uncomfortable, annoying thing; often people just want to sleep and read something mindless. Is it difficult to get into the right headspace to compose?

Believe me, it was a lot worse when this gear didn't exist—when we had nothing to do during an eight-hour flight to Paris or something. You just think, okay, now I'm going into a composing session. It's great to have the opportunity to get into your music and put down any new idea that you have, right in the moment.

As a composer, who are you inspired by?

There are a few drummer/composers who I've been a huge fan of. I love the music on Bill Bruford's solo albums, which he composed. Of course Tony Williams, with his band Lifetime, made a great impact on music. And I'm a great fan of Peter Erskine's records.

It was a big thing for me to see that we drummers can put out everything that we have inside us musically. You just have to learn how to do it, study music every day, and keep trying to make your music better. And I have to say, it's a little bit of a fashion now, drummer/composers. There are many good ones out there. The first question musicians ask you these days when you tell them you have a new record is, "Who wrote the music?"



El Negro has released a number of albums featuring his original compositions, including two from his band Italuba as well as *El Negro And Robby At The Third World War*, with his drumming brother Robby Ameen. Several new albums featuring Horacio's playing and writing are due out soon.



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Drums In Extreme Conditions

I'm about to buy a Yamaha Birch Custom Absolute drumset for a student. He lives in the mountains, and the shells on his old drumset are not in round anymore. He thinks this is probably due to the weather where he lives, which is cool in the summer and very cold in the winter. Is there something we should do with his new drumset to keep the wood from deteriorating over time?

Marcel Chalhoub

According to Yamaha Drums product manager Jim Haler, "Yamaha uses an exclusive process for manufacturing our shells, called the

Staggered Diagonal Seam/Air Seal System. This allows us to craft shells that are round and gives the shells the stability to stay round for the life of the drum, even in very extreme weather conditions. Our Absolute Birch drums are manufactured in Osaka, where the temperature and humidity reach extremes from very cold and dry to very hot and humid. I'm not suggesting you put your drums under water, but I've actually received email from drummers who've had their Yamaha kits submerged in water during a hurricane. After the water subsided, they cleaned and dried their kits and found no damage to the shells."



Mind Matters

Overcoming Common Mental Barriers In Music

by Bernie Schallehn

Band Versus Solo

I always wanted to play drums, so I bought a cheap set at a garage sale. When I come home from school, I go into my basement and pound away. I have fun playing along to CDs, which helps me unwind after a stressful day.

I'm a high school senior and a member of a local drama club. Rehearsals for a play will be starting soon, and I'm also active in my church. Here's my problem. My church has live music. The regular drummer got sick recently, and my minister asked if I could be the new drummer. Several of my friends also keep asking me to start a band with them. I have no motivation to be in a band, and I don't feel qualified to play in church. One of my friends gave me a copy of *Modern Drummer* in hopes that it would inspire me to start rehearsing with him. That's how I came across your column. Can you offer any advice?

Carson W.

I'm sorry, but I can't help you—because you really don't have a problem. You're playing your drums exactly the way you desire. You're using the drumkit like someone else might use a treadmill or a set of free weights. As you clearly stated, "I have fun playing along to CDs, which helps me unwind after a stressful day."

Humans vacillate between having a need for solitude and a need for communion. Spending time alone with your drums fulfills your need for a little escape from the world. The drama club and your church activities give you the camaraderie and connections that can be had only by being with other people. From your letter, it seems as if you've established a nice balance of the two.

The only problem I see in your situations is with friends who are pestering you to take your relationship with the drums to a different level. Have your friends who are bugging you to start a band ever been in any sort of musical ensemble before? (And I'm not talking about school-sponsored groups, where many, if not all, of the managerial details have been taken care of by school personnel.)

Starting and maintaining a band takes a tremendous amount of work. Let's use your drama club as an analogy. Members of the club and its advisor decide which play you're going to perform. Then you hold auditions, followed by weeks, or even months, of rehearsals. Then you have a series of performances.

If your friends keep insisting that you form a band together, try asking them a few of these questions:

1. Where will we rehearse if not in my basement, and how often?
2. Who chooses the songs?
3. When we have enough songs to play out, who will book shows for the band?
4. Where will we play?
5. Does anyone have a PA? If not, how will we go about purchasing one?
6. Do we—or our parents—have a vehicle large enough to carry our equipment to shows?

If your friends are still intent on recruiting you, simply look them straight in the eyes and say, "I have no interest or time to do this." That should get your point across.

Lastly, I'm assuming your minister accepted your refusal to be the church's new drummer. If he or she pushes the issue, push back (gently) by highlighting the fact that you really don't have any interest in playing drums publicly. Simply continue to enjoy drumming as a solo hobby that offers escapism and stress relief. (Remember to wear ear protection!) And don't ever be afraid to say no. It's your life, and how you choose to spend your free time is ultimately your choice.

Bernie Schallehn has been a drummer and percussionist for over forty-five years. He holds a master's degree in counseling psychology and, while in private practice, held the credentials of a certified clinical mental health counselor and a certified alcohol and substance abuse counselor.

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MEINL

CLASSICS CUSTOM SERIES CYMBALS

by David Ciauro

Drums throughout the world must be bulkin' up and rockin' out, because there's been a recent surge in cymbals targeting heavy hitters. Meinl's Classics Customs are no exception. Made from B10 bronze alloy (10 percent tin and 90 percent copper), Classics Customs create tonal landscapes that appeal to drummers looking for powerful cymbals that maintain musicality. Today's aggro-melodic rock genres often require gear that provides edgier sounds while still delivering clarity. Classics Customs achieve this by focusing on a fast, glassy attack and an up-front tonality with a quickly descending decay that makes way for the next strike.

IT'S ALL IN YOUR HEAD

The 8" splash (\$109) sounded exactly the way I think a splash cymbal should sound—all splash and no trash. It had a slick, focused attack, and its immediate decay made it an excellent fast-acting accent cymbal. The 10" splash (\$129) blended a subtle trashiness with the more sonorous qualities of the 8" model, and a slightly lower pitch and fuller tone added to the decay time. I found myself returning to the 8" more often to meet my splash needs.

TIGHT HI-HATS

My personal hi-hat tastes favor sloshy, open sounds. I quickly learned, though, that both the 14" (\$364) and 15" (\$420) Classics Custom Medium hi-hats sounded best when played tightly closed. The more open I held them, the more static-like the wash became, which I felt diminished the hats' musicality. Their tinny tonality made for a short, glossy stick sound that kept most every hit on an even keel. This proved to be great for consistency but not so beneficial for hi-hat patterns with a lot of inner dynamics.

CRASHES

The 18" Classics Custom Medium crash (\$292) had a go-to quality that made it immediately likeable. There was ample brightness in the attack, followed by some body in the overtones and a reasonable decay. Crashing and riding on this cymbal produced good results in rock-inspired applications. The only quirk of the model was that it played with a personality more

MODERNDRUMMER
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akin to a 16" crash. Conversely, the 16" Classics Custom Medium crash (\$238) was the most lackluster of the sampled bunch. In terms of presence and shimmer, it paled in comparison to the 18" Medium or any of the heavier Powerful models.

The 18" Powerful crash (\$292) had more fullness of tonal character than the 18" Medium. The overtones tended to hang around a bit longer, with a somewhat chime-like wash. This was only noticeable, however, when I played the two 18" cymbals side by side. When I played them with a full kit, the differences weren't as pronounced, especially with regard to overtones. The 20" Powerful crash (\$328) had the brightest, most intense attack of the review group, yet it quickly faded to a bellying wash that I found very pleasing. Of all the Classics Custom crashes, the 18" Medium and 20" Powerful were the ones that made their way into my gig bag.

STICKY RIDES

If stick definition is what you look for in a ride, the Classics Customs deliver it in spades. The 20" Powerful ride had definition and clarity aplenty, especially in the bell. Its decay would perhaps be too long if you tend to play with a loose, open feel, or if you like to crash your ride. The 22" Powerful ride (\$400) was crystal clear without sounding too metallic. Its character was reminiscent of the thick "ping" sound that's been recorded on so many memorable rock albums.

Both rides worked better

when I played faster patterns, including double-stroke rolls that required clear articulation. Crashing the rides didn't prove to be a good idea, but the crashes I mentioned earlier would cover the crash/ride arena well enough.

CHINAS

Both the 16" (\$238) and 18" (\$292) Classics Custom Chinas had fairly stock sounds. They hit the trashy mark, in a manner that was a bit brash due to the brightness of the B10 bronze. Their firm overtones would likely be covered up on stage in larger rooms. But don't be surprised if your bandmates start yelling at you for bringing these loud and aggressive-sounding cymbals to a small club gig or to your rehearsal space.

CONCLUSION

Meinl has an impressive offering of cymbals and has risen to worldwide notoriety on all musical spectrums. Surely there are more diverse product lines in its roster, but props to the company for not leaving rockers in the lurch when it comes to making quality cymbals. I also appreciate how Meinl has embraced the fact that not all cymbals have to be "complex" or "sophisticated" in order to be the perfect sound for a genre.

meinlcymbals.com

SIFTING THROUGH THE NOISE

The B10 bronze alloy used in the Classics Custom series has an inherent metallic quality that lends itself nicely to heavier rock situations. It's as if there's built-in EQ that allows these cymbals to have the proper volume to cut through and still sound musical. Classics Customs possess a tenacious shimmer and purposeful suddenness, emphasizing brighter shades that are loud without being noisy.

FORD MAVERICK SERIES DRUMSET

by Waleed Rashidi

Drumpers often spend years, decades—heck, entire lifetimes—buying and selling gear in hopes of finding that one kit that'll become a jack-of-all-trades for gigs and sessions. After spending a few weeks putting the Ford Maverick drumset through its paces via polar-opposite gigging situations (from delicate jazz to rimshots-only rock), I can say with confidence that this latest offering from the southern California-based company had no trouble adapting. And based on its stout construction, the Maverick will likely hold up to the various abuses that come its way without a single scar to show for it, making it a great heirloom kit for future generations of drummers.

THE VISUALS

One of the Maverick's most impressive features is its finish. Our Fusion pack tester kit was in the striking pearlescent "abalone flake," with subtle sparkles that reminded me of the opulent hues you see on a luxury car. Whether indoors or outdoors, the shells shine tastefully, letting the audience know that this is no bargain



setup. Also in line with the overall theme of being understated yet well apportioned are the kit's discreet logos and badges, and the smallish aircraft-grade aluminum

lugs (with aircraft-grade metal inserts and screws) are a nice match.

The exterior finish of the Maverick kit is extremely tough and durable, due to the BTS Kevlar-bonded coating that Ford claims is "virtually bulletproof." While we didn't engage in any ballistics tests, it's easy to note that these shells appear immensely well protected.

DRUM BY DRUM

Our test configuration consisted of 10-ply maple 10" and 12" rack toms (with suspension mounts) and 14" and 16" floor toms. I used various tom arrangements, depending on the gig. Versatility is the key here, because no matter which configuration I chose, the Maverick was impressive to the eyes, ears, and hands. All four toms, which were fitted with 2-ply clear Aquarian Response 2 batter heads and Classic Clear bottoms, were quick to sing yet easy to control. When miked, they rang a little strongly, but that was quickly remedied with a few twists of the drum key. In fact, I rarely touched the toms' tension

throughout the course of the kit's stay, as the drums arrived nicely tuned. My favorite of the lot was the 14" floor tom, which made it to every gig and practice.

The Maverick snare has a 5 1/2 x 14 maple shell that I dubbed the Gentle Giant. It's a giant because it excelled in the rock realm, taking a bruising of continual rimshots from thick 2B sticks. These endless strikes revealed a cutting, full-bodied sound. The slick variable throw-off also made quick changes in snare sensitivity a snap, and the drum itself—equipped with a durable Aquarian New Orleans Special batter head—was easy to dial in. The gentle side kicked in when I used the snare with a relatively quiet jazz quartet. The sensitivity was rather impressive, with the drum sitting squarely in the band's mix as my 7As tickled the head with light strokes.

WHO'S IT FOR?

A kit of this quality comes at a price tag that's too steep for most entry-level drummers (\$5,845 list, \$3,995 street). But for a high-end boutique set with such a gorgeous finish, clear and versatile tones, and an extremely durable construction, this rig clearly has long-term value. It's been said that you can't please everybody, but the Ford Maverick comes close—it's a jack-of-all-trades, and a master of many as well.

forddrums.com

A BIG KICK WITH A SOFT SIDE



The 18x22 Maverick bass drum proved to be much more versatile than its beefed-up size would imply. It features easy-to-adjust legs and was a snap to tune. With the pre-muffled Aquarian Super-Kick 2 batter head and Regulator front, plus some minimal internal dampening, the drum had plenty of resonance that helped it speak clearly during rock band rehearsals without the need for a mic. On a gig with a female jazz vocalist, the drum proved versatile enough to act subtly, responding to the felt beater with a feathery pulse. This kick impressed the other musicians in the band so much that they went out of their way to comment on how they loved its presence and how well it blended into the ensemble.

DIRIL ASSORTED CYMBALS

by Anthony Riscica



AD SERIES CRASH

The 18" AD series crash (\$415) in this review is lathed very lightly so that some of the raw metal still pokes through. This medium-thin cymbal provided a nice, round set of dark overtones. It had many of the same characteristics as the Jazz crash, but with a larger, warmer palette of colors.

In his early twenties, Ibrahim Diril left Istanbul Cymbals and his tutors Agop Tomurcuk and Mehmet Tamdeger, with whom he'd been studying for five years. He moved back to Samsun, Turkey, where he worked with a relative and eventually collaborated with Meinl on the Byzance line and with Paiste on the Twenty series. In 2008, Diril quenched the "burning desire to start my own company" and developed Diril cymbals. His objective? Simple: to produce only the finest-quality instruments available. We were sent a wide range of Diril cymbals to check out. Here's how they stacked up.

TRADITIONAL SERIES

The Traditional series was the most versatile of the lines we reviewed. The 14" hi-hats (\$600) had a responsive chick and a round overall sound. These hats would be an ideal choice for all-around applications, due to their modest sensitivity for jazz settings and their ability to cut for louder rock gigs. We also received 16" (\$325) and 18" (\$415) Traditional crashes, which fell into the all-around category as well. They could handle full swipes with a 5B stick, producing a good deal of volume. On the flip side, they offered enough tone at lower volumes to be used in a small club with a jazz trio. In fact, I used the 18" crash as a ride in this setting, and it worked quite well. The medium-thick 20" (\$475) and 22" (\$550) Traditional rides had a good stick sound. While they were a little too thick for a standard jazz setup, they could easily cover everything else—from big band to rock—with class.

JAZZ SERIES

From the Jazz series, we checked out a 17" crash (\$375) and an 18" flat ride (\$415). The crash lived up to its description, "splashy and transparent." The cymbal made its presence known but didn't cover up anything, and it got out of the way quickly, which is exactly what you'd want out of a "jazz crash." The 18" flat ride is relatively thin and couldn't be coaxed into being loud. Its minimal overtones were sophisticated and more than pleasant to the ear. This would be an ideal cymbal when you really need to keep your volume in check.

RAW SERIES

From the Raw series, we received only a 20" ride (\$475). This cymbal has a medium-heavy thickness and, like the name implies, an unfinished appearance. Diril dismissed any lathing and relied on hammering alone to shape the tone. The result is a dry sound with a very articulate stick attack. The bell was slightly chime-like, but striking it did awaken some of the cymbal's minimal dark overtones.

ICE SERIES

The Ice series consists of shimmering sounds designed to cut at any volume. The beauty of these models is that while they're loud, they still retain some of the complexity that's prized in Turkish-made cymbals. The 14" hi-hats (\$600) are heavy. The chick they produced was full and cutting, as was the stick sound—even with the cymbals loosened up for a bit of wash. The Ice hi-hats retained some tone as well, which is a bit unusual for plates as thick as these.

The 16" (\$325) and 18" (\$415) Ice crashes are also heavy and loud. In a rock band rehearsal, they cut right through. The 16" had a higher set of overtones, which was useful for occasional punctuations, plus enough sustain to sound appropriate during bigger moments. The 18" had a shiny, explosive sound that was useful in bigger crash/ride choruses.

Relative to the crashes, the 20" Ice ride (\$475) was a bit less thick. This was a good thing, as the cymbal had plenty of volume while providing more tone underneath the stick sound. Its wash was glassy, and the ride cut well while maintaining rich color. Add to that a huge bell sound, and you've got a great choice if your goal is presence plus complexity.

SAMSUN SERIES

The Samsun line combines the bell construction of the Raw series with the bow of the Ice. The result is a group of cymbals that were brighter than the Raw models, while maintaining more earthy darkness than what's found in the Ice series. The 14" Samsun hi-hats (\$600) displayed the same stick-sound characteristics as the Ice models when played closed, but when they were loosened a bit, darker overtones started to reveal themselves. The same was true of the 16" Samsun crash (\$325). It opened up with a shimmer from a light tap, but when I laid into it, I heard a darker, more raw sound. This was a nice all-around cymbal that would especially appeal to drummers who like a bit of trashiness in the mix. The 20" Samsun ride (\$475) also displayed a good union of Raw and Ice characteristics. It had a somewhat bright stick sound, but with noticeably darker overtones than its 20" Ice counterpart.

CONCLUSION

From the diverse range of sounds we explored in this review, it's obvious that Diril's combination of expert experience and youthful energy has made for quality cymbals that rival competitors' models. We expect to see more great things from the company in the future.

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YAMAHA

POCKETRAK W24 AND C24 HANDHELD RECORDERS

by Butch Jones

This is a side-by-side review of the ultra-compact Pockettrak W24 and C24, the latest mobile recorders from Yamaha. The W24 weighs in at 3.25 ounces (AA battery included), and the C24 tips the scales at 2 ounces (AAA battery included). Shared features include a metronome, a tuner, 2GB of internal memory (expandable with SD memory cards), a high-pass filter, a peak limiter, a speed control (MP3 audio only), a set timer function (delayed record start for eliminating hand noise while pushing the record button), and a hold/lockout button. Both products come with a DVD-ROM containing Cubase AI 5 software for editing recorded audio transferred to your computer using the supplied USB cable.

NAVIGATION

The controls on the W24 are clearly marked and easily accessible. On the left-hand side are the headphone jack and ALC (automatic level control) and mic sensitivity (high-low) switches. The faceplate has the record/pause, stop/esc, and play/speed buttons, as well as a round navigation toggle ring, which is used for setting record and playback levels. In the center of the ring there's a menu/enter button. The right-hand side of the W24 has an external mic/line jack, a hidden SD memory card compartment, a USB jack, and buttons for power, delete, and other functions. The bottom of the device has a speaker grill, a hold button, and a 1/4" threaded socket for attaching the unit to a tripod or mic stand.

The controls on the C24 are more condensed, requiring a little more care while navigating through the various functions.

W24 REMOTE

The RC-P1 wireless remote control that comes with the W24 is a drummer's delight. Once you've found the hot spot for placing the recorder, you can use the remote to set your levels and start and pause recording from behind your drums.



The C24 and W24, shown at actual size



The left-hand side has a headphone jack and SD memory card slot. The faceplate has a ring for play, stop, and cursor navigation, with the record/enter button in the center. The right-hand side of the C24 has an external mic/line jack, an input level/speed toggle switch, an ALC/delete button, and a playback toggle control. The bottom has a speaker grill, on/off/hold and line/mic switches, a battery compartment, and a slide switch for extending the USB connector out of the recorder. If you purchase the C24, you might want to get a USB extension cable so you don't need to connect the recorder directly to your computer.

A mounting clip is included to secure the C24 to a mic stand, music stand, or other steady surface.

MICROPHONES

The dual microphones on the W24 are set in a fixed X/Y configuration behind a protective wraparound rail. The C24's stereo omnidirectional microphones are designed to cover a wide field of recording, and they're recessed in the casing for protection.

After recording drums, percussion, and acoustic guitars with both units, I found the W24 to have great stereo imaging and impressive room clarity. There was a slight bump in the higher frequencies, which gave the sound a nice sheen. Because of the nondirectional omni pickup of the C24, its recordings had a monaural sound, without the same high-end shimmer that I got from the W24.

RECORDING SETUPS

Both units record in the PCM WAV format at 44.1, 48, 88.2, or 96 kHz, with 16- or 24-bit depths, or in the MP3 format at 32, 64, 128, 192, or 320 kbps.

The W24 has four preset "scenes" (not included in the C24), which are accessed by pushing the scene button on the right-hand side of the recorder. These presets (Practice, Studio, Outdoor, and Live) contain combinations of record mode, sample rate, input level, mic sensitivity, limiter and mic settings, and more. You can also save up to three user presets. Just be sure not to overwrite the factory presets when you create your own; they're not protected.

PLAYBACK

The W24 and the C24 come with a five-band graphic equalizer for adjustments at 150 Hz, 500 Hz, 1 kHz, 4 kHz, and 12 kHz, plus six EQ presets (Flat, Bass1, Bass2, Pop, Rock, and Jazz). There are several repeat modes, and you can change the playback speed without affecting pitch when working with MP3 files. A good use for the speed control would be to help lock down a song's tempo during a songwriting session with your band. Both recorders also allow you to add a fade-in or fade-out, and you can split recordings into separate files using an internal editor.

CONCLUSION

After taking the time to navigate through all the options on the W24 and C24 Pocketrak digital recorders, I found both devices to be user friendly and easy to set up. By making use of the presets in the W24, you'll be ready for most recording situations in a matter of seconds. If quality music recording is your main focus, then I suggest grabbing the W24 (\$299). But for those of you who just need something simple and portable so you can capture thoughts and ideas before they slip away, the super-slim C24 (\$199) is the way to go.

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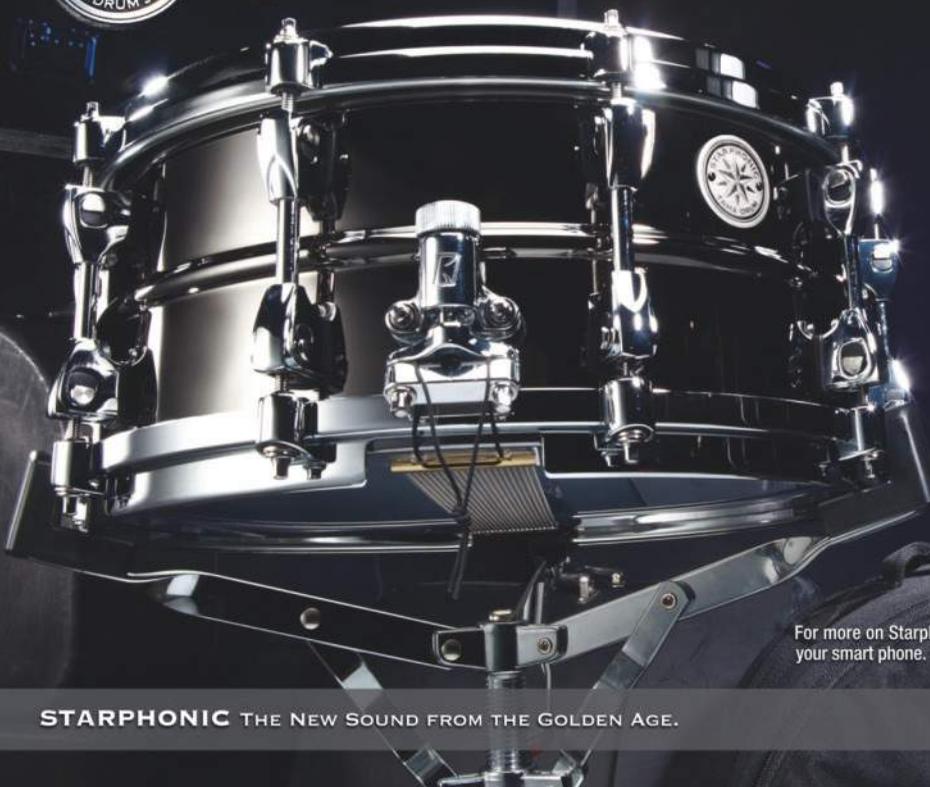
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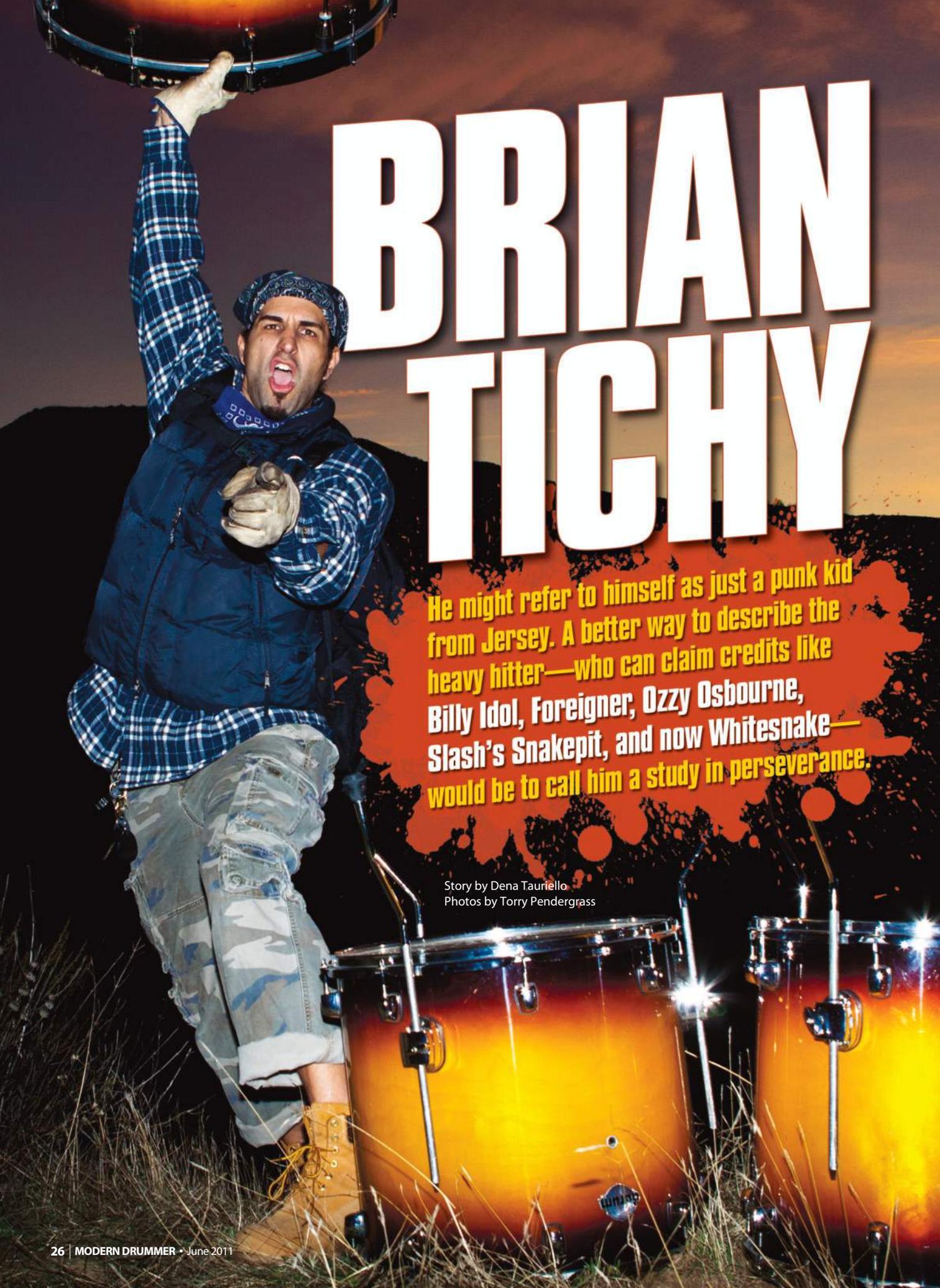


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BRIAN TICHY

He might refer to himself as just a punk kid from Jersey. A better way to describe the heavy hitter—who can claim credits like Billy Idol, Foreigner, Ozzy Osbourne, Slash's Snakepit, and now Whitesnake—would be to call him a study in perseverance.

Story by Dena Tauriello
Photos by Torry Pendergrass

For over twenty years Brian Tichy has applied tremendous energy to every gig, delivering a perfect balance of personality and precision. Blending his own style with the signature fills of classic rock drumming, Tichy communicates his passion for the music from the moment he lifts a stick. Deftly using his Berklee experience and connections, the drummer, who's currently with Whitesnake, has enjoyed steady work with some of rock 'n' roll's heaviest acts, including Foreigner, Ozzy Osbourne, Velvet Revolver, Zakk Wyld, Slash, and Lynch Mob.

Tichy learned the basics while growing up in New Jersey, and then it was off to Boston's prestigious Berklee College Of Music. Brian quickly applied what he learned in school to real-life situations; when stepping into a new gig, he delivered only what was necessary. He also stayed true to his rock 'n' roll roots of Zeppelin, Kiss, and Aerosmith, opting to practice his double bass chops by playing along to records rather than to a click track.

It was at Berklee that Tichy became tight with bassist John DeServio. Around 1991, "JD" brought his pal in to drum for six-string virtuoso Vinnie Moore, just as the guitar-hero movement was taking off. Tichy

traveled the country in a van, taking part in Moore's club tour and opening ten arena shows for Rush. This led to one of the drummer's most notable moments: playing Neil Peart's kit during a soundcheck, and getting attention and respect from none other than Peart himself.

Soon Tichy moved to California and began networking. During demo sessions for Canadian rock vocalist Sass Jordan's 1994 record, *Rats*, Brian laid down the drum track for "High Road Easy." The demo ended up being the keeper, and the song became the album's first single, climbing to number nine in Canada while also receiving airplay in the States. A Canadian tour followed, after which Tichy found himself back in L.A.

The drummer didn't have much time to think about his next step, though, as he was immediately invited to be part of Ozzy Osbourne guitarist Zakk Wyld's first project as a leader, *Pride & Glory*. Tichy toured with P&G throughout 1994, including stints in the U.K., Europe,

and Stevie Salas.

In 1998 Tichy made a more radical change and started his own group, BALL, in which he sang, played guitar, and did much of the writing. The band signed a deal a year later with Time Bomb Recordings but never saw the release of its *American Aggression* CD, due to the demise of the label.

While working on BALL, though, Tichy became the drummer for Foreigner and spent the better part of the next three years on tour. In 2000 he left Foreigner to play with Ozzy Osbourne on *Ozzfest*; by the end of the year Tichy found himself once again looking for a gig.

Enter drummer Mark Schulman, who asked Brian to fill in for a month with Billy Idol. Tichy and



Japan, and the U.S. By year's end, the band was done, and Brian was in another transition phase, spending most of 1995 on Slash's Snakepit world tour. In 1996 he shifted gears once more, focusing on the band Nickelbag, featuring Bernard Fowler, Carmine Rojas,

Idol ended up spending the next seven years writing and recording. *Devil's Playground*, from 2005, was Idol's first album in more than a decade and featured eight tracks cowritten by Tichy, including the single "Scream." On 2006's *Happy Holidays* Christmas album, Tichy

proves to be invaluable to Idol, playing most of the instruments, coproducing, and cowriting the two original tracks. *Idolize Yourself: The Very Best Of Billy Idol* followed in 2008, featuring three new tracks cowritten by Tichy, including the single "John Wayne." During his tenure with Idol, Tichy also subbed for Matt Sorum in Velvet Revolver.

In 2007 the drummer stepped back into Foreigner, filling in for Jason Bonham, who took leave to work with a re-formed Led Zeppelin. Tichy subsequently drummed on all but one track of the band's 2009 album, *Can't Slow Down*, its first studio release since 1994. At the end of the year—which also saw Brian doing a one-month sub for Seether drummer John Humphrey—George Lynch of Dokken asked Tichy to join Lynch Mob, which did a U.S. tour with Michael Schenker as well as a

European tour.

In early 2010 Tichy was faced with a dilemma: His work with Foreigner had left him with the ability to do little else. It was time to choose—stay in a band you enjoy working with, or step down to create an open road of opportunity. Tichy chose the latter, coming off tour in April. As fate would have it, two days after getting home, he received an email from guitarist Doug Aldrich of Whitesnake. Tichy had been in contact with bandleader David Coverdale around the group's 2002 reunion but was committed to Billy Idol at the time, so Tommy Aldridge had returned to the fold. This time, however, the circumstances were perfect. *MD* caught up with Brian as Whitesnake was gearing up for its 2011 world tour behind the drummer's debut recording with the group, *Forevermore*.

HONORING BONZO

In August 2010, Brian Tichy had a brainstorm. It was really just happenstance; his mind drifted to Led Zeppelin, and he realized the thirtieth anniversary of John Bonham's death was around the corner. What better way to celebrate than to assemble some of the world's greatest drummers to pay tribute live, on a Bonzo replica kit.



Tichy shared the idea with his promoter friend Joe Sutton, who happened to have L.A.'s Key Club on hold for September 25—the actual anniversary of Bonzo's passing. Brian spent the next six weeks assembling the band, coordinating rehearsals, researching, and planning. There would be only two rehearsals prior to the show, during which each of the eighteen drummers would get one take only. Ludwig provided an amber Vistalite kit, and the Bonhams—John's wife, Pat, sister, Deborah, and children, Zoe and Jason—were all in the house. Also present were members of Atlantic Records and the local radio station KLOS. (DJ legend Uncle Joe Benson hosted the event.) Deborah and Zoe fronted the band, while Jason closed the show with "Kashmir."

In addition to Tichy and Jason Bonham, the featured drummers included Steven Adler (Guns N' Roses), Vinny Appice (Black Sabbath, Dio, Heaven & Hell), Kenny Aronoff (John Fogerty, John Mellencamp), Bobby Blotzer (Ratt), Frankie Banali (Quiet Riot), Danny Carey (Tool), Fred Coury (Cinderella), Jimmy D'Anda (BulletBoys), James Kottak (Scorpions, Kingdom Come), Abe Laboriel Jr. (Paul McCartney), Khurt Maier (Salty Dog), Stephen Perkins (Jane's Addiction), Chris Slade (AC/DC, the Firm), Chad Smith (Red Hot Chili Peppers, Chickenfoot), Joe Travers (Duran Duran, Zappa Plays Zappa), and Simon Wright (Dio, AC/DC), with special video performances by Carmine Appice (Vanilla Fudge, Rod Stewart) and Mike Portnoy (Dream Theater, Avenged Sevenfold).

The evening was such a success that other shows were scheduled to coincide with January's NAMM show in Anaheim, California. Keep an eye out, as Tichy hopes to make this an annual event in honor of the beloved Led Zeppelin drummer.

BRIAN'S SETUP



Drums: ddrum

- A. 6 1/2x14 wood or chrome snare
- B. 10x14 tom
- C. 14x16 floor tom
- D. 16x16 floor tom
- E. 14x24 bass drum
- F. 16x18 floor tom

Brian also has a set of Deccabons placed behind his throne.

Sticks: Vater XD-5B

Heads: Remo Emperor X snare batter and Ambassador Snare Side bottom, Suede Ambassador tom batters (CS black dot on left-side floor tom), and

CS black dot bass drum batter and Coated Ambassador front head

Hardware: ddrum, including Vinnie Paul signature double pedal

Cymbals: Paiste 2002

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BRIAN TICHY

MD: You've worked consistently for years with a number of high-profile artists. How do you get gigs as an independent drummer?

Brian: If you meet one person and they say one good thing to one other person, that can get you another gig. Some people are great schmoozers, and others are so kick-ass that somebody just has to notice them, and bam! Then there are people like me who just do what they do as much as they can and hope that it translates.

MD: What's your advice to drummers in terms of auditioning?

Brian: Play the flavor of what you think the job calls for. Why would you want every flavor in your ice cream cone? Sometimes I've gone on auditions where I've tried to be too exact, playing overdubbed drum parts mixed in with the real track. You try to play two things at once, but it starts to sound confusing. If it's a new band, it depends on what they're going for. You may come in and add something to it, or they may say they need more of this or that. It's a hard call.

MD: How do you approach the gig once you get it?

Brian: I go into gigs as I would play to a



RECORDINGS
Pride & Glory Pride & Glory /// **Whitesnake** Forevermore /// **Stevie Salas** Back From The Living /// **Sass Jordan** Rats /// **Vinnie Moore** Out Of Nowhere /// **Billy Idol** Devil's Playground, Happy Holidays /// **Derek Sherinian** Blood Of The Snake /// **Foreigner** Can't Slow Down /// **Lynch Mob** (new album to be released later in 2011)

INFLUENCES
Led Zeppelin all, bootlegs included (John Bonham) /// **Van Halen** all (Alex Van Halen) /// **Rush** Moving Pictures, Exit Stage Left (Neil Peart) /// **Kiss** Alive! (Peter Criss) /// **James Brown** In The Jungle Groove (Melvin Parker, Clyde Stubblefield, John Starks) /// **AC/DC** If You Want Blood You've Got It (Phil Rudd) /// **Deep Purple** Made In Japan (Ian Paice) /// **The Knack** Get The Knack (Bruce Gary) /// **Missing Persons** Spring Session M (Terry Bozzio)

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record when I was a kid. That's the simplest way to put it. I want to fit in with the sound I love, so I imitate it and emulate it. With Foreigner, I'm going to try to play "Hot Blooded" the way I loved it as a kid. I'm going to try to give off that same vibe that I heard. Same with Billy Idol. To play "Rebel Yell," you want it to have the intensity that you felt when it was a huge hit. I want to at least start with that. If they say, "We're going to do an acoustic version," or, "Drop it down," fine. But I want to start with what I think people paid money for—the way they heard it on the radio.

MD: Let's go back to when you first started hearing some of those classic rock songs, the ones that you'd eventually be playing on stage with the original artists. What was your first kit?

Brian: I started hitting a kiddie snare at eight, then at nine I got a Sears Dynamite drumset with flames painted on it. After I trashed the Dynamite, I built my own kit outside in the yard. They were paving our driveway and left five buckets of tar there, all with different amounts of tar in them. I set them up left to right, pitched high to low, and sat on the fifth one. Then I grabbed a tree branch and broke it in two. That was my kit for the next couple days, until they finished paving!

Then on Christmas day in fourth grade I got a late-'60s Leedy kit. I still have the snare. In fact, I used it on the entire *Pride & Glory* record and tour, on *Slash's Snakepit* tour, and on a few other records.

MD: When did you start taking lessons?

Brian: That started months before getting the Leedy kit, with the understanding that if I did well in lessons I would get a new set on Christmas. My teacher, Bob Cook, was great, a hard-core big band jazzier with lots of fire and attitude and a rabbit right foot—heel down, very Buddy Rich.

MD: How did you like your Berklee experience?

Brian: It was awesome. You're screwed if you interpret Berklee as reality, but not if you look at it and go, "What an amazing tool."

MD: You've worn many hats, including drummer, writer, guitarist, producer.... Which role do you prefer?

Brian: I love guitar, always have. Don't get me wrong—drums are one of the coolest things in the world. But I've put in a lot more miles behind the kit, which makes the guitar seem more mystical and challenging. I'm a better drummer than a guitarist; playing drums is more natural to me.

MD: What's your practice routine like

today?

Brian: The practice routine now is to *think* about practicing. [laughs] It's pathetic—I just don't have much time for practice. I do warm up, though. These days, drumming is an extension of my speed-bagging skills. I got so obsessed—it's all about rhythm and accuracy and precision. The first time I sat down at the kit after a couple weeks of speed bagging, I was like, "Whoa!" My balance and equilibrium got better.

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BRIAN TICHY

I definitely felt a difference.

MD: You're a father of two. How does being a dad impact your career?

Brian: It makes leaving difficult. As soon as you get an itinerary, the first thing you do is look at when you get home and when the breaks are. Then you gauge everything around that. I can't stand being away from my kids. But you can't complain about hitting drums for a living. Things could be so much worse, but it does change things.

MD: What would be your dream gig?

Brian: Led Zeppelin. If you're a rock drummer and that's not your dream gig, then I think there's something really wrong with you! [laughs] But really, I would want to be playing guitar in my own band. It's so different now, though. I don't even know how a new band gets going, because do you really want to sign with a major label now? It's kind of scary.

MD: What advice would you give to drummers looking for touring or session work?

Brian: You have to be yourself but also be some sort of chameleon. You want to have some personality, but it's not about breaking ground, like you're reinventing the drumset. You have to be able to go in there with a smile and kick ass quickly. You have to make sure the song sounds good and the hit single is a bigger hit single because of the groove and feel.

MD: What have your greatest moments been?

Brian: When people you grew up idolizing or people you respect compliment you. Having Neil Peart, Joey Kramer, Vinnie Paul, or Tommy Lee say some nice stuff has been awesome. After that, it's writing with Billy Idol, because I've gotten to write music with a proven hit songwriter and pop icon and then watch those songs get played on the radio and supported on tour. I have something to look back on that's a tangible thing forever.



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John Von Ohlen

by Paul Francis

He's one of the only drummers in history who pleased the notoriously picky swing king Woody Herman with his playing. A living guru of big band drumming says follow your heart—and the horn chart—and the world is your oyster.

Growing up in Ohio, I heard quite a bit about John Von Ohlen. The musicians that I played with during high school were always talking about this great drummer who lived in Cincinnati and was revered for his work with Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, Rosemary Clooney, Mel Tormé, Carmen McRae, and many others. I was about to start my freshman year in college when I finally decided to go and check out “VO” for myself. I made the two-hour drive to the Blue Wisp in Cincinnati and sat down right in front of John’s drums, intent on picking his playing apart. To me at the time, if a drummer didn’t have blazing chops, I didn’t have any use for him.

As the music started, I was immediately taken by the way Von Ohlen had the entire ensemble smiling and having a great time. It didn’t seem as if he was doing much, but the band was on fire. When the shout section of the first tune came around, I noticed that John would set up the band with just one or two notes instead of a blazing fill around the toms, like I was accustomed to hearing drummers do. What he might have lacked in

chops, though, he more than made up for in feel and musicality. The way he played and supported the band, there was no way the group couldn’t swing.

“The Baron,” as Stan Kenton dubbed Von Ohlen, is a musical guru. He began his journey on the piano and then played the trombone for several years before he discovered the drums. Though humble and self-effacing, VO also possesses a confidence that can be instilled only by years of experience. Now in his seventieth year, John still holds down five steady gigs a week in the Cincinnati area. The following interview finds him honest, forthright, and more than willing to impart his considerable wisdom.

MD: What made you switch to drums from piano and trombone?

John: When I was fourteen years old, I got to see that great Stan Kenton band with Mel Lewis playing drums. It was at a ballroom, and I stood right in front of Mel. They were playing all those great charts by Bill Holman and Johnny Richards, and Mel’s drumming just took me. When I woke up the next day, I was a drummer.

But I didn’t start playing drums until two or three years later, because we didn’t have the money for a set. I just stayed with trombone. A friend of mine who was going into the navy had just bought a Gretsch set, and he offered to rent it to me for \$12 a month. It was a brand-new set—cymbals and everything. I think I was about seventeen when I started on the drums, and I just taught myself. I kept playing the trombone professionally until I was about twenty-four, and then I pretty well hung it up in favor of just playing drums. I still play piano for my own amusement and

for composing.

MD: Do you think that learning harmony from playing the piano has helped your drumming?

John: I'd say to anybody who wants to play drums that it would be good if they also took up piano. The piano is the king of instruments—it's got rhythm, harmony, and melody. Most instruments can only play one line, but the piano is the whole ball of wax. If you've got that in your subconscious from playing piano, you'll hear those things when you play drums.

I'm not saying that a guy who just plays drums is not going to hear those things, but I notice it right away if a guy has played another instrument like piano. They play differently—more musically, as opposed to being “a drummer's drummer.”

MD: Many drummers learn by taking lessons and playing out of books like *Stick Control*. You, however, learned by playing along with records. How did learning to play in this way shape the musician that you are now?

John: I took one lesson from a drummer that had great rudimental chops, but I just didn't shine to that. My thing was playing to recordings. I did that for six, eight hours a day or more. When I first got on the drums, it was a real honeymoon love affair, and I couldn't get off of the things. I just kept knockin' away until it was right. I taught myself, which I think anybody could do.

I never learned the rudiments. I still don't know them, and it shows, there's no doubt about that. But you get your own technique after a while, which is not necessarily based on rudiments. I've got a pretty natural, good open roll and press roll, and that's about it.

MD: You don't discourage anybody from learning from a teacher, do you?

John: Oh, no! In fact, to me, rudimental drumming is like playing the piano and learning your scales. It's a really good way to go. I played drums without lessons, playing in every conceivable situation for so long. When I eventually got around to taking lessons and I tried to impose the rudiments on my natural playing, it just didn't work. If I

had done it right off the bat, it would have been great, but I was lazy and didn't like anything academic.

MD: I've heard you tell many a drummer to read the lead trumpet part instead of the drum chart. And I've seen you look over and read the trombone chart when you're playing with the Blue Wisp Big Band. Is that because if you can see that the lead trumpet part is higher on the staff, it will be louder and you should kick the band a little harder?

John: Right. It's like Woody Herman told me: “Get your head out of the drum part—it's a guide to insanity.” And it's true! The drum parts usually tell you what *not* to do, not what you should do.

I think it's much better in a big band for the drummer to just have the brass parts. Over at the Cincinnati Conservatory, where I'm teaching,

“Woody Herman told me, ‘Get your head out of the drum part—it's a guide to insanity.’ And it's true!”

I coach the drummers while they're playing in a rehearsal. I'm looking at the drum parts, and it's a wonder that they can play anything at all. And yet, if they had a trumpet part, they could see exactly what's going on with the band. You see the shape of the line.

MD: Let's talk about your time with Woody Herman. At that point in his career, he was known to fire drummers on the first night. What was it that made Woody keep you?

John: It might be that most drummers dig playing in small groups more than playing in a big band. My first love has always been big band. Still is. The drummers Woody had before me didn't have their heart and soul in big band like I did. I had been playing in big bands since I was a little kid, and I had the concept down. Now, playing



on that big-league level? I wasn't there yet, but he saw that I had potential, so he kept me.

MD: I've heard you talk about taking the attitude of, "I don't care what you think—this is how I play." How did you come to this realization?

John: I was in a difficult situation when I gave Woody my notice. The band had those great tenor players like Sal Nestico who could really play. They kept riding me all the time, wanting me to play on top of the beat and all this crap. I tried to do it, but all it did was make everything real nervous sounding. In fact, Woody came up to me one time and said, "I think you should lay back a little." I do know that when I started to do my own thing and not what the tenor players were telling me to do, they dug it. They actually wanted me to stay. I was finally doing it my way, not theirs. It's the only thing you can do.

MD: What advice would you give a drummer who wants to learn how to

play in a big band?

John: These days, you can't play in a big band every day. And sometimes there's not one around to play in at all. So I would say that the second-best way to learn is to play to recordings. Set up in your studio where you can play constantly, and teach yourself to play with recordings. Play what you like, what's important to you. I think you'll advance faster that way than if you try to take on all of the things that are going on nowadays.

As a professional drummer, you do need to know how to play everything. But if you really want to advance your own style, I think you should keep coming back to things you really like. Emerson said that you only need a few books in your life. I feel that way about recordings. I still play to recordings, and I play to the same ones that I did in high school.

MD: Let's talk about your technique a little bit.

John: Or lack of.

MD: It's been said that your fills sound like "sneakers in a drier." What's your approach to setting up a band? How do you come up with these crazy fills and then come out on the 1 every time?

John: It's totally instinct. I was doing those fill-ins when I first started playing.

MD: Was any of it inspired by Don Lamond?

John: Not really, because I didn't hear Don do it on records until later. It might have been some small-group drummers like Roy Haynes, the stuff he did in the early '50s. He did some off-the-wall licks. I kind of lit up to that and threw them in with a big band.

MD: How do you think those fills affect the band?

John: The best way I can put it into words is that if you're inclined to do those kinds of fills, you've got the time inside you so strongly that the band feels it. Very rarely do I throw the band off, but every once in a while I blow it. It's really funny when I do, because it just train-wrecks the whole thing, and everybody has to claw for it to get back. [laughs]

MD: How is your approach different in small groups versus big bands?

John: There's hardly any difference. I'm not a real great small-group drummer...at least I don't think I am.

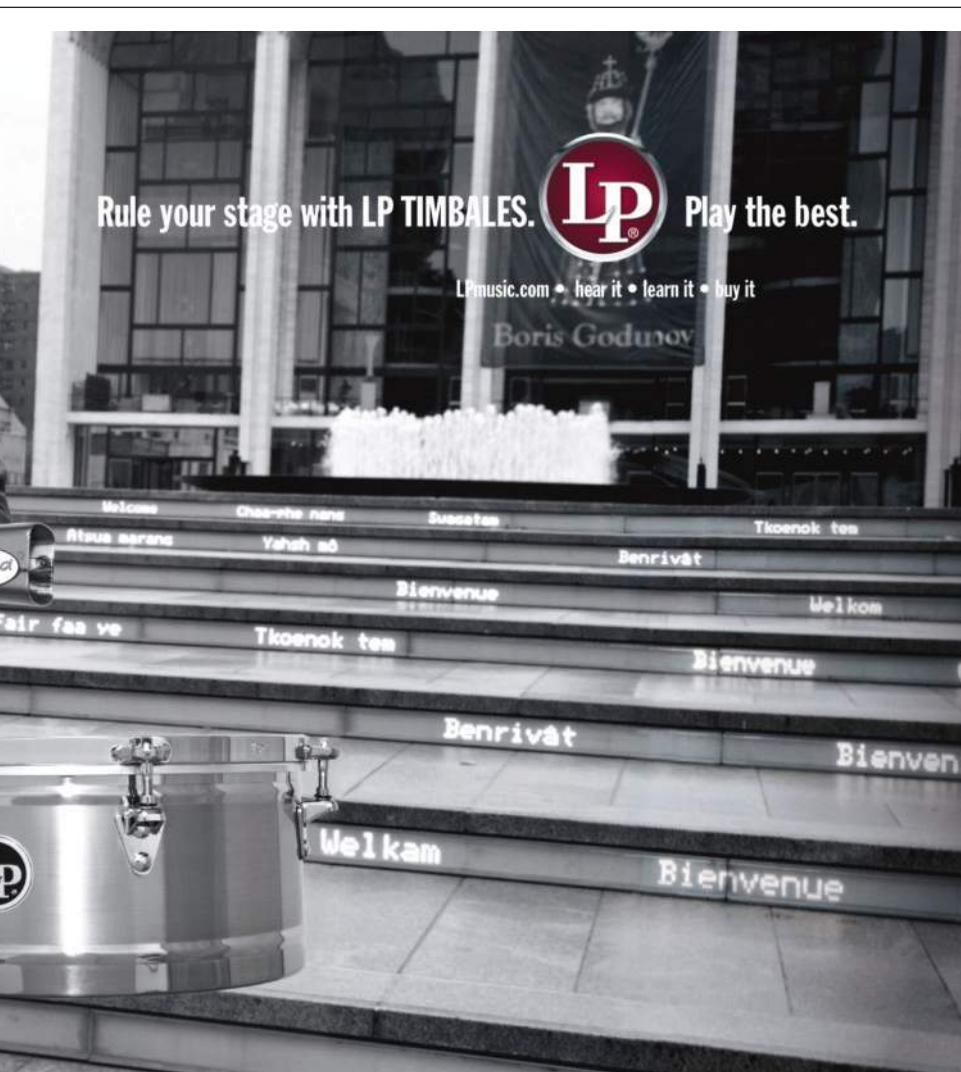
MD: Yet you're playing in a small group four nights a week.

John: Yeah, but someone like [Cincinnati pianist] Lee Stolar plays the structure of the tune the same way every time. So I just treat that like a big band, only softer.

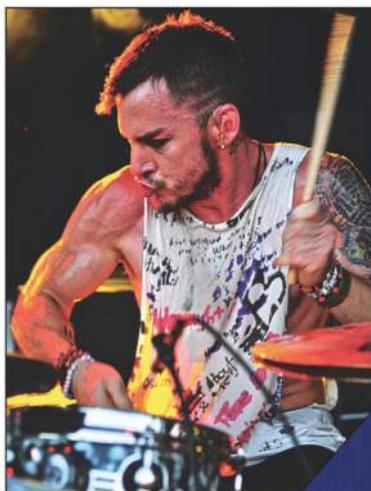
MD: You've played with some of the greatest singers in jazz. When backing a singer on ballads, you don't play brushes. You just play with your feet keeping the time.

John: It's funny how just that little swirl will make everybody keep talking. But if you don't do the swirl and you've still got that beat going with your feet, it silences the club. Not all the time, but at least half the time it just quiets the club right down. And I know if I had that swirl going, that wouldn't happen.

MD: Where did you get this idea?



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John: From a great drummer named Sol Gubin. He was one of the great unsung drummers. When I was with Woody's band, we did a double bill with Tony Bennett, and Sol was playing drums. When a ballad started, he just played 1 and 3 on the bass drum and 2 and 4 on the hi-hat, with no brushes. That pushed Tony's voice right out in front.

MD: One of my favorite recordings of yours is Carmen McRae's *Dream Of Life* album with the WDR Big Band. Do you approach backing up a singer differently in a big band from the way you would in a trio?

John: Well, in a big band you just pretty well hang it out. In fact, that's what they like. John Clayton was writing these hot arrangements, and I wasn't going to sit dead on those. I think the singers like it when the drummer is letting it hang out. That's the reason you've got a big band. On the ballads, John wanted to hear the swirl. He said, "I want to hear the smoky nightclub feel on this." So I did it at the rehearsal, but on the gig I just couldn't do it, because he had such beautiful writing in there with her singing, and I didn't want to hear that swirl clutter it up. So I just didn't do it, and I think it made the chart stand out more.

MD: Jeff Hamilton cites your brush playing and your "lateral motion" concept as a major influence on his playing.

John: Coming in from the side gets a *shhhh* sound, whereas doing a vertical stroke gets a tap, like a stick. I don't do it all the time, because sometimes I want a more pronounced brush beat. I've got different brushstrokes, like we all do.

MD: You're known as a great admirer of calfskin heads. Why do you like using them so much?

John: With the bass drum, calfskin is just ridiculous. It sounds like a bomb going off under water—it's physical. You can feel it out in the audience hitting your gut. There's nothing like calfskin on the bass drum, especially if you tune it low. Calfskin goes lower without wrinkling. If you take a plastic head and lower it, it wrinkles pretty easily. But calfskin just keeps going low.

When you first put calfskin on your drums it's like another world, but it's a

pure sound. They try to get plastic heads that sound like calf, but it's like trying to imitate water. You can't do it.

MD: A lot of jazz drummers like to tune their drums to higher pitches. What inspired you to go for a lower tuning?

John: When I was a kid I used to watch *The Arthur Godfrey Show* in the morning. It was a variety show, and they had a band. I would use two cardboard cylinders from a coat hanger as sticks and pretend that I was the drummer on the show. I'd slap the cylinders on the couch, and I think that's the sound I've been trying to get the whole time.

MD: Do you think a low tuning blends with the band better?

John: Oh, yeah! If you play in a big band long enough, you have to tune your drums low. If you don't, you're going to conflict with the horns. You need to get underneath them. If you've got your drums tuned up high, you're in the horn register, especially the trombones and saxes. And drums tuned up high don't get that good punch. If you listen to any big band drummer that's been around for a long time, they've got 'em down pretty low.

MD: You're still leading the Blue Wisp Big Band after almost thirty years. How has your approach to playing with a big band changed over time?

John: When I left Stan Kenton, I went back to Indianapolis and had time to record myself and study what I was doing. I started concentrating on trying to get the best sound from the cymbals, drums, and brushes, a hundred percent of the time. I'd go for sound instead of worrying about the rhythm or the tempo rushing or dragging and all that crap. I found that when I went for sound, my body relaxed and I got a good stroke on the cymbal. When I started playing with the Blue Wisp Big Band, I think I played better because things started falling into place.

Before I made these changes, I was just power driving. Everybody thinks that when you're with a big band you've got to play loudly, but that's not true. If you get the right feel going in your hands, especially the touch on the cymbal, it relaxes the rest of the limbs. Then you've got the whole band in the palm of your hand.





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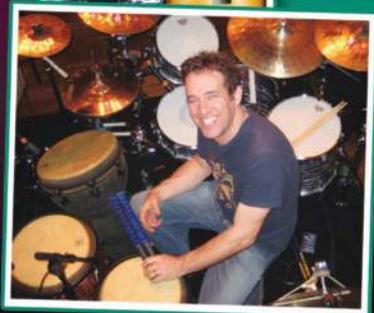
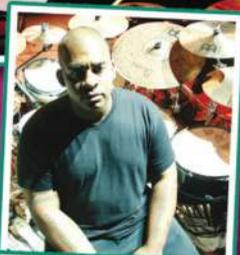
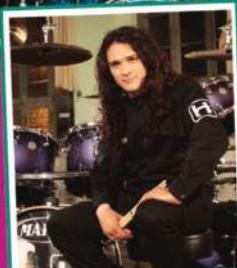
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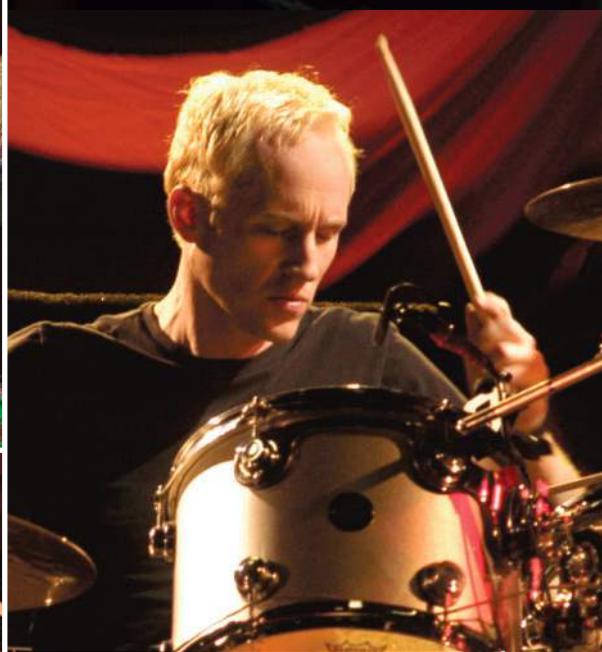


FREESE

That Josh Freese has so deeply lodged himself in our consciousness as *the* guy to call, for any number of musical situations, is a true achievement. But what might be most fascinating about Freese's career is that he's done it while being his own man. The complete opposite of the cliché studio chameleon who can blend in with the musical furniture, Josh imbues his playing with boatloads of personality. And not chopsy, scene-stealing personality—though he's certainly capable of that—but rather soulfulness and the kind of unpredictability that draws attention to a particular musical passage, not just to the drummer. It's a rare skill, one made even more remarkable by the fact that Freese has exhibited it since he was quite young, elevating the music of veteran players twice his age and setting an example for the rest of us for how it's done.

The other important part of the puzzle is that Freese is just plain fun. The music industry has certain archetypes, and Josh gleefully destroys them every time he releases one of his solo albums, uploads another DIY video to YouTube, or poses for a photo. You really don't need to get very far past the cover of his 2000 album, *The Notorious One Man Orgy*, to pick up on the fact that Freese has no intention of taking himself too seriously—after all, how tough can a guy look while holding a doughnut and a cup of coffee and wearing an argyle sweater under a plaid sport jacket? Clearly, it's not fan-boy adulation that Freese is after with his own music, just our presence at his party.

Perhaps the best example of Josh's healthily skewed view of the rock life can be found in the self-propelled publicity efforts surrounding his 2009 album, *Since 1972*. The drummer thought it would be fun, and hopefully raise awareness of the album, if he offered the LP in a selection of progressively expensive packages, including versions that comprised his taking fans out to lunch at P.F. Chang's and on tours of Disneyland, and writing and producing songs and videos about them. Freese nearly went nuts following through on his promises while



keeping up his already insane freelance schedule, but we're happy to report that he survived, and even came out of the madness with a brand-new EP to share, appropriately titled *My New Friends*.

In early 2010 we came up with the concept of trailing Josh for a year as he went about his job of being drummer to the stars, getting regular updates on all happenings in Freese Land. The idea was that after twelve months we'd report back to readers what it's really like to be working at the absolute top of the game in the modern music industry. A funny thing happened on the way to the interview, however. Even though the period between June 2010 and May 2011 was a typically active one for Freese, including recordings and live work with A Perfect Circle, Sting, Weezer, Devo, Paramore, and Michael Bublé, the well-publicized collapse of the record industry has left all musicians—even those as successful as Josh—unsure of where they'll be professionally in the coming years. Therefore much of our discussion with Freese focused on this new reality and the implications it has, not only for first-call drummers but for all of us trying to make a buck or a name for ourselves as drummers.

When we last spoke with Freese, he was touring South America with Paramore, replacing recently departed drummer Zac Farro and enjoying a bit of a change of perspective....



MD: So what's it like playing with Paramore?

Josh: First off, the band is *really* popular right now, and they cater to a younger crowd. On tour in South America, every time we landed at the airport or left the hotel, it was like Beatlemania—kids jumping on the van...real teenage hero-worship stuff.

Plus this was the first time I was in a band where I'm old enough to be their dad. I've always been the young guy, whether it's in Devo, the Vandals, A Perfect Circle, Weezer.... I have to bite my tongue when I start telling stories about, like, Warped Tour '95, which seems like yesterday to me. They're like, "Oh, yeah, I was in fourth grade then...." After a while I was thinking, *I'm like some big shot here—I'm going to enjoy this while I can!* [laughs]

MD: Does the age difference translate to the playing at all?

Josh: It was a very easy situation for me to slip into. You never know with these things. There are bands I play in where the guitar player's great but the bass player lags, or the bassist is great but the guitarist can't play 8th notes to save his life, and it makes it tough.

With these guys it's a breeze. They all play really well, including drummer Zac Farro, who left the band recently. Some people who see them on MTV might be like, "Aw, come on, man," but there isn't a weak link in the band. They play with a click live too, and they play really well with it. And physically it's been fun for me. There are a lot of parts going on, and it's pretty nonstop. They gave this old man a good workout.

MD: You recently told us you're feeling more inspired about playing drums than you have for a while.

Josh: Some of that has to do with feeling like I want to reinvent myself somehow. I find that I'm not being inspired by the same bands I've always listened to; I'm wanting to get into something new, whether that's playing drums or.... I feel like talking about this is walking on dangerous ground, like I'm setting myself up for something....

It's not like I want to start a bebop band. But I've never really made a record that features the drums at all.

A YEAR IN THE LIFE

Even in a down music-industry economy, Josh Freese's calendar is pretty darned full. Here's some of what the drummer has been up to over the past twelve months.

MAY 2010

- Live gigs with Weezer
- Recording sessions with Richard Marx and Italian superstar Zucchero
- Corporate gig with Sting in Dallas
"The day of the gig, Stewart Copeland was in town rehearsing with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. I hadn't played drums in four days, I hadn't played with Sting in eight months, and we were only getting to practice during soundcheck. And Stewart's on the side of the stage with his arms folded. Earlier in the day Sting was messing with me: 'You know, Stewart's going to be there.' But after a while I was like, 'He's one of my favorite drummers ever, but I have to not care. What's he gonna do, grade me? Is my life going to be over because I blew a fill?' It's not worth it to give yourself a heart attack."

JUNE 2010

- Weezer gigs
- Late Show With David Letterman, Colbert Report, and Live! With Regis And Kelly TV appearances with Devo
- Sessions for Ricky Martin's new album with producer Desmond Child at Bob Clearmountain's studio
- Interviews for *Since 1972*
- Sessions for Dynamite Walls with producer Paul Fox
- Wiring done for home studio in Long Beach, California "Hopefully soon I'll be able to start doing sessions for people there. Up to now I've worked on my own stuff all over the place, wherever I can go in quickly and cheaply. I might be set up at a friend's studio doing tracks for some other project, and we'll finish up and I'll go, 'Listen, can you give me five minutes on my hard drive? Lemme do two takes.'"

JULY 2010

- Devo show at Hollywood Park Racetrack in Inglewood, California
- Touring Midwest, East Coast, and Canada with Weezer
- Sessions for new Kelly Clarkson album

AUGUST 2010

- Devo dates, including Lollapalooza in Chicago "The second we went off stage at 5:50, I ran in my Devo outfit across the street to my hotel, peeled the wet clothes off, jumped in the shower, and in fifteen minutes was in a cab to the airport, where I had a 9 o'clock flight to L.A. because the next day I had a Weezer gig at like 3 P.M. in Huntington Beach."
- Weezer gigs at Reading and Leeds Festivals in England

SEPTEMBER 2010

- East Coast Weezer dates
- Vandals gig
- Recording for producers Howard Benson and Scott Cutler
- The Tonight Show with Weezer
- Tom Weir soundtrack session
- Mixing *My New Friends* EP
- Rehearsals with A Perfect Circle for first shows in six years "We rehearsed in a little room in North Hollywood. We did it in bits and pieces, rather than cramming, since the shows weren't until November. I've held A Perfect Circle dear to my heart for many years."

OCTOBER 2010

- More Perfect Circle rehearsals
- A Perfect Circle plays Jimmy Kimmel Live!



NOVEMBER 2010

- 3-week Perfect Circle tour "We played three nights in five different cities, and each city was pretty close to L.A., so in between I'd come home, sleep in my own bed, take my kids to school.... I had my fourth child, Lucy, on a day off between shows in L.A. and Seattle. We'd planned to induce labor on that day."
- Gigs in L.A. and San Francisco with Weezer

DECEMBER 2010

- Session with the Dwarves "One of my favorite bands of all time. We did what might be the best song I recorded all year, 'Fake ID.'"
- Sessions with the Calligraphers
- Weezer shows in Colorado, Boston, and New York
- Got a vasectomy "This was on Terry Bozzio's birthday, December 27, which I remember because I used to be such a fan boy when I was a kid. I filmed the whole thing. The doctor and I hit it off when he told me he likes to film his family vacations and edit them himself; all we did was talk shop about cameras and editing software. So he was down for my weird art film."

JANUARY 2011

- Starting Paramore rehearsals
- Soundtrack session for Mark Isham
- Weezer gigs in Chicago
- A Perfect Circle rehearses new songs to be released this year
- Sessions for Michael Bublé "I played on his last couple records, including the hits 'Everything' and 'Haven't Met You Yet.' I'm really proud of that stuff, because I get pigeonholed as this hard-hitting alternative rock drummer, but I like playing really quietly."

FEBRUARY 2011

- Paramore South American tour "I read a thing online where some kid goes, 'That's amazing that they got Josh Freese to go with them to South America! He's unbelievable, even though he's, like, old.' I'm like, I'm old! I actually got a kick out of it."

MARCH 2011

- Paramore South American tour continues
- Publicity duties leading up to April release of *My New Friends*
- Devo shows

APRIL 2011

- A Perfect Circle recording sessions
- Weezer shows
- Rehearsals for upcoming Perfect Circle shows in May



JOSH FREESE **drums**
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JOSH'S SETUP

The DW Collector's series kit Josh put together especially for the studio shots in this feature includes a 10x13 tom, 12x14 and 16x18 floor toms, and an 18x20 bass drum, plus a 5 1/2x14 aluminum snare. The Paiste cymbals are, from left, 14" Signature Dark Crisp hi-hats, a 19" Dark Energy crash Mark I, a 21" Twenty series ride, and a 17" Signature Full crash. The DW hardware includes a 9000PB single pedal and a 5500TD hi-hat stand.



The kit's wonderful graphics were created by Freese's son Hunter. "He does these really involved drawings," Josh explains, "so I let him take a Sharpie to this old set I had. They look really cool."



Freese also provided the following run-down of the different setups he uses for his main gigs. (The live photos in this feature are from a Perfect Circle concert.)

Devo: 22" bass drum, 12" and 13" toms, 16" floor tom, 14" snare; 14" Dark Crisp hi-hats, two 18" Full crashes, and 19" Full crash (all Signature series)

Sting: 22" bass drum; 10", 12", and 13" toms; 16" floor tom; 14" snare; two 6" Rata toms; 14" Dark Crisp hi-hats, two 18" Full crashes, 19" Full crash, 21" Dry Heavy ride, 8" and 10" splashes (all Signature series); double pedal

Vandals: 22" bass drum, 12" tom, 16" floor tom, 14" snare; 14" Signature Dark Crisp hi-hats, 21" Twenty or 22" 2002 series ride, 18" Signature Full crash, 19" Signature Full crash; double pedal

Weezer: 22" bass drum, 12" tom, 16" and 18" floor toms, 14" snare; 14" Signature Dark Crisp hi-hats, two 19" Signature Full crashes, 21" Twenty series ride; double pedal

A Perfect Circle: 22" bass drum, 10" and 12" toms, 16" and 18" floor toms, two 14" snares; 14" Signature Dark Crisp hi-hats, 18" Signature Full crash, two 19" Signature Full crashes, 21" Signature Dry Heavy ride, 21" Twenty series ride, 20" Signature Thin China on top of 20" Signature Full crash; double pedal

Freese's heads of choice are Remo, including Coated Controlled Sound snare batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, Coated Emperor tom batters and Clear Ambassador bottoms, and Powerstroke 3 bass drum batters and Ebony Powerstroke 3 front batters. His sticks are the Vater Josh Freese Player's Design H-220 model.

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JOSH FREESE
DEVO, WEEZER



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I've got this record out now, you know, sort of following through on all that publicity stuff from the last album. But I'm already working on my next record, and I'm thinking of it being more...progressive, for lack of a better word. Maybe it'll be an instrumental record and focus on me playing the drums. Maybe it'll have "real" musicians playing on it instead of just me doing the guitar parts. And that's real exciting for me.

You know, it's been years of me saying no to doing things like the Modern Drummer Festival—number one, because I'm super-busy. But also out of insecurity, because I've got that just like anyone else. I've always felt weird about putting myself on the spot. Especially in a room full of people who are there to just see you—not your band

or to see you play with someone else. **MD:** There's nothing to hide behind. **Josh:** Right. But I had a conversation with Liberty DeVitto and Dom Famularo at this book signing a couple months ago, and Liberty was telling me how Dom had helped him when he started to do more clinics. And Dom was like, "You should be out there doing this stuff. I'll tell you what I tell everybody: You just gotta put your big-boy pants on and do it." And I was like, "You're *right*—I have to stop being a baby or being so insecure about what people might think."

You know, I'd go to clinics as a kid and see people who would just blow my mind, and because of my own insecurities I'd think, *I'm not going to blow anybody's mind, so why should I do it?* I mean, I've loved Vinnie Colaiuta since

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JOSH FREESE

I was eleven years old, and even though I know I have some of his influence in my playing, I'm not Vinnie. But maybe when I do a more drum-centric record, that'll be something that works as a jumping-off point in that kind of setting.

So I am more inspired these days. In the past, when I've been really busy doing freelance stuff, I've sort of rested on my laurels—I've always taken pride that I never, *ever* warmed up, for instance. But now I've been taking a practice pad with me on tour and playing for a half hour before I go on stage. It really feels good, and I feel like I'm not being a lazy jerk.

MD: That doesn't seem likely.

Josh: Well, it's not a matter of being busy; I just feel like I've got these great opportunities. Who am I to say no to the Modern Drummer Fest or Drum Day L.A.? I basically need to get off my ass, is what I'm telling you. [laughs]

I recently flew to Seattle to record with ex-Fastbacks singer/bassist Kim Warnick's new band, the Calligraphers, with Stone Gossard, who's one of my best buddies in the world—such a great

musician and a great spirit. Stone's always on me, like, "You writing music?" "Well, I've been busy...." "Man, you gotta be writing music! Just pay for the engineer—I'll let you use my studio for a week, do whatever you want, stay at my house." He's always getting people off their asses, which I love about him.

MD: When we've gone through your calendar over the past year, sometimes you've mentioned doing a session for producers like Howard Benson, Tom Weir, Brendan O'Brien, or Matt Squire, but you don't always immediately recall the name of the band the session was for.

Josh: All these producers I mention are super-talented guys and easy to work with. When Howard Benson or Brendan O'Brien or Rick Rubin calls, I don't go, "Well, who is it for?" and then decide whether I'm going to play. It's like, this is what I do. These guys know they can count on me, and unless I'm on the other side of the world, I'm going to do it. Or unless I have some major problem with the artist—which

has never happened—they know they can count on me to be professional and do my stuff and make it easy on everybody. I kind of show up no matter who it is.

I feel very grateful and blessed to be in a position to have these guys call me and allow me to make a living playing drums. And even if it isn't a great artist, the fact that I'm playing and I'm seeing friends of mine in the studio, and I'm having to learn the song.... Even if it's not a great song, I'm having to rise to the occasion quickly, and that's all great experience.

MD: You're so busy that there must be times when you have scheduling conflicts.

Josh: Usually I can plan far enough ahead that there aren't conflicts, but sometimes I just can't do a show if I've already made a commitment. It's especially hard with Devo, because they were one of my first favorite bands ever. Whenever I can't do a Devo show I feel like my wife is running around town going on dates with some other guy. I feel territorial about it. As I grew up, no



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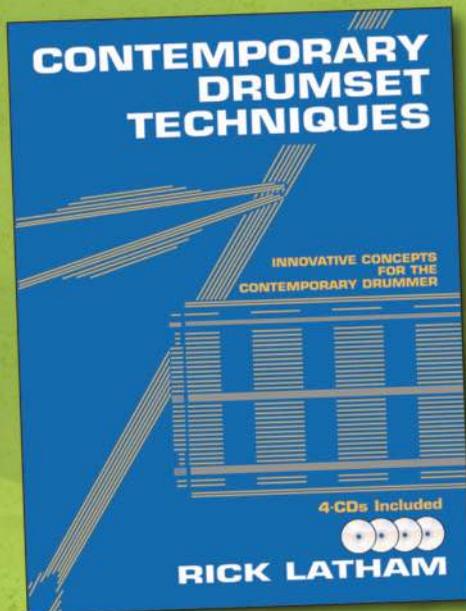
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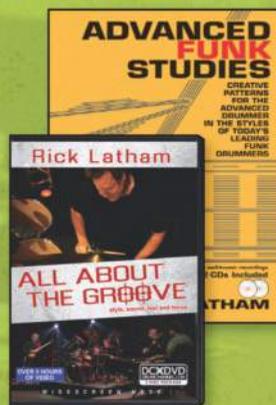
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matter what, whether I was in my jazz fusion stage, my punk rock stage, or my Frank Zappa phase, I always loved Devo. So having to sit stuff out with them is a drag.

MD: Do you have an idea of what your average fan is like? For instance, who are the fans who bought the higher-priced packages of *Since 1972*?

Josh: That's a good question. I've worked with so many different kinds of artists. There are sort of dark alternative rockers who know me from A Perfect Circle and Nine Inch Nails, and then there are people twenty years older than me who love Paul Westerberg or Devo. The guys who bought the expensive *Since 1972* packages were pretty much split between drummers and other types of musicians.

As far as the drum community, I'm not sure who my fans are. I think some of them border on the drum geek guys, but then I think some of the drum geeks think I'm too much of a rock 'n' roll drummer to be any good, or I'm not enough of a full-bore chops guy for

their taste.

I've come to wonder not only who my fans are but who I am in that respect, because I flip-flop between doing some bonehead punk thing and loving it and being on stage the next night with Sting playing delicately. These days I find myself watching YouTube clips of Weather Report for the first time in fifteen years, so it's not just about the Descendents or the Circle Jerks for me right now. Actually, right now I'm huge into Jaco Pastorius, just getting into his whole thing. Aside from revolutionizing electric bass, he was such a character, which I guess is part of my fascination. I've read his book a few times, and it's really sad and interesting and inspiring.

MD: Speaking with you about the *Since 1972* special-package takers, it's clear you're still in touch with your inner fan boy.

Josh: I think so too. Mark Mothersbaugh of Devo said to me, "Josh, your personality is perfect for what you're doing." Because not a lot of people could say with a straight face,

"I'm taking you on a personal tour of Disneyland, and then we're going to go to Sizzler for dinner, and then I'm gonna give you a haircut and we'll get drunk!" [laughs] It really is who I am. Part of me is like this total Peter Pan. I think a lot of musicians, especially rock musicians, do have that not-wanting-to-grow-up thing. The only part that has made me grow up is that I have to answer to my kids. So I can't just be a *complete* freak; I've had to tone down some of my creative traits. And hopefully my kids won't hear these records until they're teenagers anyway.

MD: On the other side of the spectrum, you played on Michael Bubl 's big hit "Haven't Met You Yet."

Josh: On some of the stuff I play on, I don't like the way I sound. But I think it's important to be able to pat yourself on the back sometimes. That's one track that I listen to and really love the way it sounds. One of the reasons is because it's a shuffle, and it can be tough to make shuffles feel great. They're the one thing you can't learn out of a textbook. When I

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JOSH FREESE

started playing with Sting in 2005, one of the only songs I was freaked out about playing with him was "If I Ever Lose My Faith In You," which has a real nice shuffle to it. Vinnie plays on the record and it sounds beautiful. And I'm wondering: Am I going to be able to make it feel that *expensive*? But Sting told me I completely nailed the feel on it, which made me beam.

Back to Michael Bublé, early this year I spent a couple days recording with him at the Capitol Records studio, for his upcoming Christmas album. It was the first time in a while I'd been nervous

about a session. We cut live with a forty-piece orchestra, and I'd never done that before. These days, 90 percent of the time it's just me and a producer with a Pro Tools rig, and we can go over it as many times as we want. But here we were going for takes with the full band, background singers, Michael singing.... Everyone's on the clock, and they're all super-pro one-takers and sight-readers. If I mess up in the last chorus, I've got sixty people looking at me: "Drummer!" I'm not the star on this session. Lots of cases I walk in and they go, "Ooh, we got Josh Freese." Here I'm one tiny

piece of this huge puzzle. If I mess it up, I mess it up for everybody and I cost them a lot of money.

MD: Over the past year we've talked a lot about the changes in the music industry and how they affect freelancers like you.

Josh: In the last year or so in the studios I've definitely felt the effect of the record business collapsing, between the economy and people getting music for free and no one buying records. There aren't really budgets for recording anymore, and I've seen the amount of my work in the studios shrink a bit. As a freelance drummer and a father of four, it can be scary sometimes. If I'm not working as much, what about the guy who normally works half as much as me?

I've been fortunate my whole life; I've always waited for the phone to ring, and it always has, which is great. But there have been times when I've thought maybe I should be more proactive. That's why I've been trying to think of interesting ways to kind of reinvent myself. Plus I like to be optimistic and look at the situation as inspiring—like, people need to figure out how to do it on their own now. If you can scrape up some money to get a laptop and some crummy microphones, if the content is there and you have the means to record it decently and get it out for people to hear, you're making opportunities for yourself.

I get emails from kids all over the world: "I want to come to L.A. and break into the studio scene...." And when I answer them I try to be optimistic and give them some words of wisdom and encouragement. I think what it comes down to is that hopefully you started playing the drums because you got off on doing it. Hopefully it wasn't just to make money. I mean, no one's guaranteed a job in music just because you're good or because you went to music school. I've probably spent more money in a month making this new record and hiring a publicist and getting it printed up than I'll ever make back from it. And at one point I thought about this like, *Why AM I doing this?* Well, I'm doing it because I love doing it. It's what I do.

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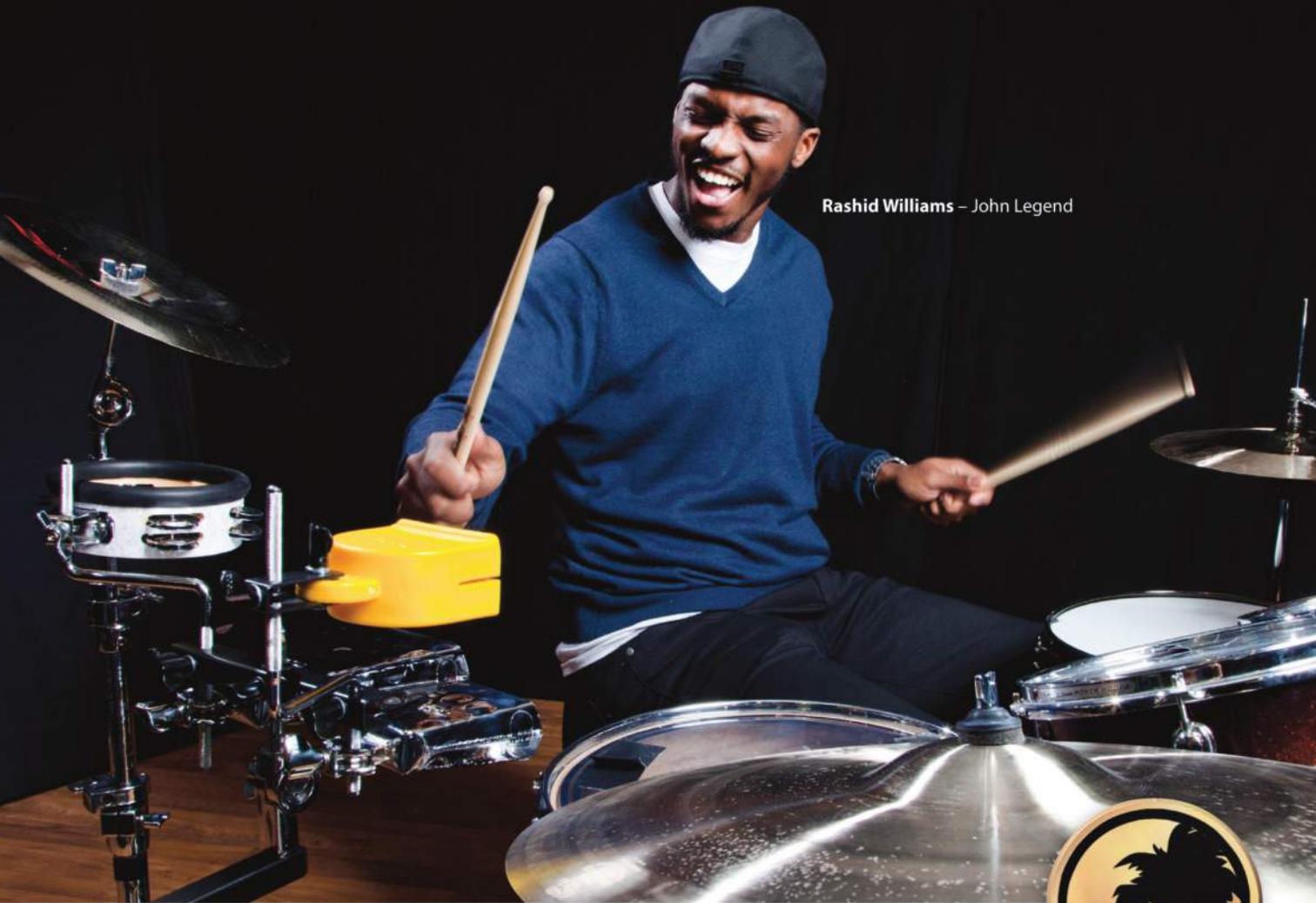
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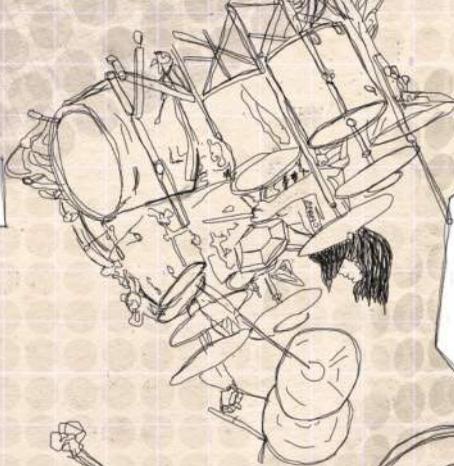
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STAGE PRESENCE



Stage presence—the way musicians visually communicate the emotion and meaning of the music they’re playing—can come in many different forms. Some players, like bebop pioneer Max Roach and the Rolling Stones’ Charlie Watts, are comfortable adopting an image of refined sophistication. Others have a flair for the dramatic—think of the nonstop antics of the Who’s Keith Moon or the upside-down theatrics of Mötley Crüe’s Tommy Lee.

Despite the number of us who filled every spare inch of our school notebooks with sketches of Billy Cobham, Carl Palmer, or Travis Barker tearing it up on some imaginary stage, many of us have never thought hard about the way we look to the crowd. But by ignoring our own stage presence we’re limiting our power as musical communicators—and,

literally, the size of our audience.

Professional performers are keenly aware of the image they’re sending out, not only with their playing but also with their body language, their clothing, even their facial expressions. They know that giving attention to their image doesn’t necessarily lessen what people think of their skills as players—in fact, it can actually improve perceptions.

MD spoke with three drummers who definitely don’t take the concept of stage presence lightly—Vince Neil’s remarkably energetic Zoltan Chaney; Royal Crown Revue’s modern swing maven, Daniel Glass; and GWAR’s Cretaceous comic book hero come to life, Brad Roberts. Whether or not you adopt their particular methods isn’t the point—the important thing is inspiring you to think more about making the most of your *own* visual potential.

ZOLTAN CHANEY

Vince Neil Band

MD: What does performing mean to you?

Zoltan: It's an opportunity to share a passion. Once I'm on stage, performing becomes a platform to come up with something visually that I haven't seen or done before. When it comes to drumming, it's not like anyone is reinventing grooves and beats. But the visual aspect doesn't have an end—it can always be innovative and fresh. I'm trying to pioneer a movement where no one has gone visually. Performing is an opportunity to try something in the moment and be able to share that with a crowd, because it may not happen that way again. There aren't any words to describe it when I'm in the zone.

MD: How do you get into that headspace?

Zoltan: For me it's thankfulness, humility, and understanding. When the moment comes for you to use your gift, there should be a sense of urgency and appreciation. You never know if it's the last opportunity you have to fulfill that desire. Life is temporal—maximize the moment.

MD: How do you best connect with an audience?

Zoltan: I believe that whatever a drummer does, if it's genuine, people will be impacted, influenced, and inspired.

The connection I have with the audience is intense, aggressive, and never lacking in fun. I myself don't have a script of what's coming next during the show, but I know I'm going to try something, whatever its outcome.

MD: What drummers do you draw from theatrically?

Zoltan: Really just Jim Henson, who created Animal, because I can't say I draw from any non-Muppet drummers. I draw more from Travis Pastrana, who pioneered the freestyle motocross movement. He has opened up opportunities for other riders to be able to make a living through endorsements and new events. He does things that no one envisioned could be done on a dirt bike, so my connection with him is that I've always tried to do the same with drumming.

MD: What is your image on stage?

Zoltan: I don't tag myself as having an image, but most of the chatter I hear from people at the shows actually does compare me to Animal. It's really an infectious output of energy that draws in all witnesses. People come to be elevated and entertained, so I really put my entire being into what I want to convey.

MD: Your life revolves around it?

Zoltan: Performance for me is not a routine, it's a mindset. You either have the confidence to try something different or you're afraid of what others might think if you do. Fear of other

people's opinions will paralyze your creativity. Every fiber inside me screams, "I was created to do this!"

MD: How seriously do you take performance?

Zoltan: It has always bothered me to go to a concert and see drummers not putting any effort into it. I will never understand the disconnect or lack of effort or acknowledgment of the fans. People paid to see them and are literally providing them with a job, and in a lot of cases a career. If you don't love what you do, then let someone who *does* get behind the kit.

MD: What do you bring to the table?

Zoltan: First would be my attitude. I play with urgency and fire because that's who I am as a person. As for showmanship, I've tried to come up with a visual style that I haven't seen before, while still playing with consistency and authority. It's all inspired by my desire to share that visual innovation with the audience. I've been told by other drummers that I've inspired a whole drum community and raised the bar. I just want to give people my best, put a smile on their face and some joy in their heart.

MD: How do you want audiences to remember your performances?

Zoltan: I want people to take home unbridled enthusiasm, expectancy, excitement, and memories. I want to inspire them to be the best that they can be in whatever area of life they're in. I believe that everyone has a purpose and a destiny, so my hope is that when they see me perform they'll rise up on the inside and transfer that passion into something that sparks them. I want to be totally depleted when the show is over, and to make sure people got what they came to see.

Our Contributors



Zoltan Chaney's work with Mötley Crüe frontman Vince Neil has drawn admiration from some of rock's heaviest hitters. Chaney's theatrics involve walking around the kit, crashing with whatever's available (including other cymbals), and simply using his lanky frame to manhandle the drums.



In addition to drumming for Royal Crown Revue, **MD** 2011 Pro Panelist **Daniel Glass** has played with Bette Midler and Mike Ness. An in-demand teacher and clinician, Glass conducted a master class at the 2010 Modern Drummer Festival.



Few bands are driven by theatrics at the level that **GWAR** is. Drummer **Brad Roberts** has directed the group's special brand of costume-rock drama for the past twenty-two years.

DANIEL GLASS

Royal Crown Revue

MD: What does stage presence mean to you?

Daniel: It's important that we see that our role as a musician is to entertain people. With Royal Crown Revue we always think about what we're doing on stage. We present music in a classic



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style, and that's our goal in what we wear, how our set is put together, and what our attitude is. I always ask myself, "What is our presentation to the audience?" All of us have a solo in our show. One of my things is playing part of my solo on the bass strings, and I do a lot of stick clicking, playing rudimental and melodic grooves.

It's important to know that most of the time we're not playing for other drummers—we're playing for regular people. Gene Krupa would have these drum battles with Buddy Rich, and even though Buddy was a better drummer, Krupa would always win. The reason was simple: What he played resonated more with the fans. Buddy Rich would play these amazing things, but outside of drummers in the audience, the people wouldn't react the same.

MD: How do you make your performance genuine?

Daniel: I have to be present in the moment every single night. That means that if the bass player is out of time or the PA sucks, I still have to be present at that moment. I remember studying with Freddie Gruber, and one thing he always said was, "When you're in the practice room, just practice; when you get up on stage, let the moment dictate what's next." I tell my students the same thing today.

MD: How can a drummer command a room?

Daniel: If you watch someone like Steve Gadd, he's always in this zone, and he's never distracted or looking around the room. He's just channeling something outside of himself. All of his chops, limb independence, and coordination are just there in the service of the song. Gadd can play the simplest rock beat and the pocket is so great that everyone in the room will stop what they're doing. The way to grab people is by setting down a serious pocket from note one. You have to literally say, "This is where the time and feel are for this song."

MD: What drummers do you draw from in terms of showmanship?

Daniel: Of course Gadd is a huge influence on me; I love the way he expresses himself musically and the way his time feels. By the nature of what I do in Royal Crown Revue, I'm influenced by the older generation of showmen from the 1930s and '40s, guys like Gene Krupa, Papa Jo Jones, Buddy Rich, and Sonny Payne. The more I've studied these guys, the more I've found that everything traces back. If you dig Tommy Lee, find out who he listened to—it was probably John Bonham. So then check out what John Bonham was listening to, which was Little Richard's band.

MD: What holds back drummers' performances?

Daniel: Sometimes excuses are our big downfall. We'll be very critical, or not feel good about a fill we screwed up, or get distracted by the girl in the front row. In the jazz world I hear a lot of drummers complain about playing the same songs over and over again. Our challenge as a drummer is to say, "I've played this song a thousand times—what am I feeling in the moment to bring freshness to it?" It's about being honest and allowing whatever is inside you to come out. Frankly, it takes a completely different set of chops, just like practicing our paradiddles and our rudiments or playing with our band. At the end of the day, *that's* what's going to give you a career in drumming.

MD: What differentiates a good performer from a great one?



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Daniel: The great drummers are the ones who can dig deep and find that zone to perform in every single night. The way I connect is I look to guys that have the groove thing handled. I've found that the deeper my groove gets, the faster I can grab an audience's attention. Showmanship, energy, and looking appropriate are all part of it too. Have your eyes open, and engage people. It's important to put out enough energy to reach the back of any room.

MD: How much does image matter?

Daniel: In our band the look is really important. Everyone has some kind of image that they project on stage. We wear vintage suits. When I first joined the band I started going to antique malls and picking up vintage suits and ties and tie bars from the '30s to the '60s. Even if I go out and do a jazz thing in New York, I try to wear a little something to tie into what I'm doing. Style is important, because it's another reason people may or may not remember you.

BRAD ROBERTS
GWAR

MD: What does performing mean to you?

Brad: My everyday life is performance. It's not like we put costumes on and perform—we wear this stuff every day! You should treat every moment of your life as a performance, because you never know if GWAR will be behind the corner to kill you with a rubber sword.

MD: How does Brad Roberts connect with an audience?

Brad: Drummers have always been in the back with mountains of gear. The drummer connects on a physical level with the audience; it's using the most basic form of music—rhythm and beats—to connect. You don't have to be a musician to tap your foot or clap your hands.

MD: What drummers do you draw from?

Brad: Early on it was Alex Van Halen and AC/DC's Phil Rudd. Then there's Bill Stevenson from Black Flag and the

Descendents. Black Sabbath's Bill Ward was the orchestrator of drumbeats, Zeppelin's John Bonham was the timekeeper. What I got in the early days is that you should exist inside the music and really make the song swing. **MD:** In GWAR your persona is JiZMaK Da Gussha.

Brad: Yes, we have our suits of armor to go into battle. It's a ritualistic preparing of everything. I developed what I needed to be able to play the drums in that stuff. It took a lot of perseverance and determination. GWAR's a very theatrical and art-driven thing, and we tackle a lot of themes and ideas. We use those ideas to govern where the stage show and musical ideas will go.

MD: You're one of the few bands whose music is secondary to the stage show.

Brad: We write songs based on the-atics, and my job is to accent those things. The idea is that I can play the kit any way I want when I'm in costume; I have a lot of fun because of the outrageousness of it all. All the music, especially the drums, are moving along to the production and the the-atics and the dynamics. I am the overseer, because when the monsters come out, I'm leading the dynamics and looking at the character of the monster and what the action calls for musically. Everything we do is well thought out thematically and choreographed with everyone on stage. It's like you're coming to see a live rock opera.

MD: The costumes you wear are outrageous—and huge.

Brad: It's hard to do this job. I don't know if anyone else could come in and play a gig with a monster head and monster feet on. I know tons of drummers who don't even want to try on my helmet. I had to learn how to play with my head and my feet covered and half my body in latex. Most of the time I can't even see the kit. GWAR's motto has always been "Don't talk about it—just do it." There are a lot better players out there than me, but I would challenge anyone to put on the bucket and go out there and play.



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Revising The Standard Drum Rudiments

Is It Time? by Jim Riley

Yes, it's time to revise the forty international rudiments. There, I said it. (Someone had to, right?)

But before I could consider the best way to revise the rudiments, I first had to define what this group of forty really is. Any list of rudiments that I've seen, especially the earliest ones, shows a collection of patterns that were essential to the drumming style of the day. So let's take a look back in time.

The history of rudimental drumming is said to reach back as far as the 1300s, when the Swiss military began using fife and drums to signal troops into battle. This style of military communication spread through Europe over the next few centuries and eventually made its way across the Atlantic to the young United States Of America.

As rudimental drumming took hold in U.S. military branches, there was a lack of standardization. By the late 1800s, there were three separate texts in circulation on rudimental drumming. Then, in 1933, the top rudimental minds of the day, headed by William F. Ludwig, got together to share ideas, and they came up with a list of thirteen essential rudiments. They later added thirteen more, to create what's commonly known as the standard twenty-six drum rudiments. This was the definitive list until the Percussive Arts Society came along in the 1960s. PAS rearranged the original twenty-six and added fourteen Swiss rudiments, to create the forty international drum rudiments.

It's been more than forty years since there has been any significant attempt to update this list. But think of how far rudimental drumming has come in just the last thirty years. The introduction of the Kevlar head in marching ensembles created a high-definition sound that completely changed how rudimental music is written for snare drum. Having been classically trained by a member of the Boston Symphony, I had mastered the forty rudiments and had studied from all of the standard rudimental books. When I showed up at the University Of North Texas in 1987, however, I was shocked when I realized that there was a new list of what are called hybrid rudiments, which I was completely unaware of. I did what I could to catch up, but I always wondered why these rudiments weren't taught along with the standard forty.

Fast-forward to today, and it's clear that what were cutting-edge techniques for drummers in college and DCI corps thirty years ago are now very common for today's high school-level drum lines. We've entered an age where the forty international drum rudiments don't sufficiently prepare our students to play in even their own school ensembles. As an educator, I can no longer remain silent on this subject. I believe it's time

to create an updated list that will adequately prepare our students for their drumming future.

Updating the standard rudiments will require adding some of these new hybrid patterns—and we may also have to consider eliminating a few of the more antiquated or redundant ones. To begin, let's look at a few rudiments that I feel deserve to be on the new list, which I'm unofficially calling the Modern Standard Drum Rudiments.

The Cheese Family

The forty standard rudiments are broken down into four sub-groups: rolls, diddles, flams, and drags. In modern rudimental drumming, there's an important fifth group that consists of what are known as "cheese" rudiments. Don't be fooled by the name. These things are crucial. A cheese is performed by placing a grace note before a double stroke.

1

l R R r L L

The rudiment called cheese invert is played just like an inverted flam tap, only substituting a cheese for the flam.

2

l R R L r L L R

This next rudiment is based on a flam accent, using a cheese in place of the flam. This pattern is very common in the modern drum-line repertoire. I call it the cheese accent.

3

l R R L R r L L R L

One of my favorite hybrid rudiments is the flam five, which is created when you add a grace note before a five-stroke roll. This rudiment belongs in the cheese category because it incorporates the flam/diddle concept.

4

l R R L L R r L L R R L



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You can also combine cheeses with traditional flams to create unique and useful patterns. This next one is called a cheese cha. It's similar to the cheese accent in Example 3, only you add a flam to the last 8th note of the pattern.

5

I R R L I R r L L R r L

We could go on and on with cheese variations based on the standard rudiments, like the flam paradiddle and pataflafla, but I don't think that would best serve our objective, since hybrid rudiment enthusiasts have already come up with more than a hundred of these new patterns. Instead, I would like to point out some other patterns worthy of consideration for our new list.

Eggbeaters And More

The eggbeater is another modern rudiment with a funny name, but it's a cool and unique pattern. It's formed by playing three notes with your right hand followed by two notes with your left hand. Although the eggbeater is a five-note pattern, it's usually felt and phrased more like a triplet.

6

R R R L L R R R L L

This next rudiment, called the herta, is one that's frequently played in a drum line on quads (marching toms), but it's also often used on drumset. Hertas are based on triplets and consist of two 16th notes followed by two 8ths.

7

R L R L R L R L

Speaking of kit applications, this next pattern, often called blushda, gets used so frequently by drumset players that it should be included in the mix. It's based on a flam drag, but it doesn't alternate.

8

r L R R L r L R R L

What To Leave Out?

The previous examples are just a few of the more modern rudimental patterns that are worthy of consideration for our new list. As I mentioned earlier, in order to add rudiments it's likely that we'll have to cut some of the originals. This will be easier to do if we establish criteria for inclusion on the new list. I believe a pattern must be useful, essential, elemental in nature, and, most of all, unique before it can be

considered a rudiment.

Many of the standard forty rudiments are either variations or combinations of more basic rudiments. To me, any roll longer than a nine-stroke becomes a long roll. Do we really need to delineate ten-, eleven-, thirteen-, fifteen-, and seventeen-stroke rolls? Or are they simply long rolls of varying durations? Other rudiments that fall on my endangered list include the drag paradiddle #1, drag paradiddle #2, and flamacue. Sure, they're great combination patterns, but are they unique and essential enough to be considered rudiments?

There are also inconsistencies in the standard list. The current roster of forty rudiments includes single, double, and triple paradiddles but only single and double tap drags. Why isn't there a triple tap drag? The dragadiddle, on the other hand, has no variations. Double and triple dragadiddles could be really cool. So how do we handle these seemingly arbitrary inclusions and omissions? We may want to consider eliminating all double and triple variations and instead call them what they are—*variations* of the original rudiment.

The flam paradiddle-diddle is named incorrectly. A paradiddle-diddle (which is an awesome rudiment, by the way) doesn't alternate, while the flam paradiddle-diddle does. So shouldn't it be called an *alternating* flam paradiddle-diddle? Also, the standard list includes the flam drag. If you peel away the flam in the flam drag, you would have something called a tap drag. But that pattern isn't included in the current list. Instead, it's written in its inverted form and called a drag tap. This is another inconsistency worth addressing.

A Call To Arms

Right now many of you are probably saying to yourselves, *Who does this guy think he is?* I'm just a longtime drummer and educator who feels that it's time to open up a dialogue regarding what's currently taught as the standard drum rudiments. I don't believe I have all of the answers on this subject. On the contrary, I'm calling out to the titans of the rudimental world to bring this discussion to the forefront. I firmly believe that rudiments are the building blocks for our creativity as drummers, and it's time for the rudimental experts and educators of the world to come together once again to exchange ideas and create an updated list that will better prepare students for the modern repertoire that awaits them.



Jim Riley is the drummer and musical director for Rascal Flatts. He marched in the University Of North Texas drum line from 1987 to 1991 and was a member of the Velvet Knights drum corps in 1989. You can contact him through jimrileymusic.com.



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Write Creative Drum Parts

Part 2: Anticipated Rhythms

by Chris Prescott



MUSIC KEY

H.H.	C.C.	R.C.
T.T.	()	
S.D.		
F.T.		
B.D.		
	Ghost Note	

In part one of this series (April 2011), we discussed various ways to make a direct connection with the rhythms found in other musicians' parts. For this installment, I'd like to take a slightly broader approach. In addition to the interpretation of the rhythm of a song's melody, it is extremely important to know simply how the music flows from measure to measure. We can observe this through the way chords and melodies are introduced and stressed within the meter. The downbeat on the 1 often maintains the strongest emphasis, but this isn't always the case. Listen closely to the music and notice if melodies or chord movements are instead anticipated.

An anticipation is defined as a rhythmic attack that occurs ahead of the downbeat. Using a typical measure of 4/4 time as an example, we expect a strong beat on the downbeat of 1. If this accent is moved ahead to the "&" of beat 4 of the previous measure, then the accented note occurs an 8th note earlier than expected. This anticipation gives music forward motion that effectively builds momentum and energy.

Do not confuse anticipations with pickup notes. A pickup is an unaccented note that occurs before the first beat of a measure. The difference between the two is not where they occur in time, but rather how they are stressed within the song's rhythm.

Regardless of how closely you choose to connect with your musical counterparts, creating a drum part that emphasizes the song's harmonic movement serves to strengthen and bring cohesion to the overall sound. In a simple drum accompaniment, the placement of these few accented notes becomes especially important. After you become aware of where the chords change, you can begin to focus on the details. Try to listen for the notes or chords that are stressed and therefore require special attention in your drum parts. Either ignoring or incorrectly interpreting a song's anticipated chordal movement can get you into trouble. Of all the connections in your part, this one requires extra attention. Playing a strong downbeat on 1 when the guitar part is clearly stressing an anticipation might cause the music to feel cluttered or give the impression that you're out of sync with the band.

Here's a typical anticipated guitar-strumming rhythm and some ways in which it can be interpreted in a drum accompaniment. Notice how the chords are introduced on the "&" of beat 4.

When an accented note is surrounded by empty space or quieter dynamics, that note will draw more attention. I find that in most instances leaving the downbeat empty following a strong anticipated accent will add power to the part.

Another good reason to rest on the downbeat is based on practicality. If you're playing at a faster tempo and leaning into big crashes on these anticipated accents, the rest gives you a moment to get your hands back in position to continue your pattern. Here are some examples that leave a rest on beat 1 for dynamic contrast. Notice the move from the hi-hat to the crash cymbal on the anticipated accents.

It's critical to incorporate anticipations into your fills as well. Here are some examples that connect with an 8th-note anticipation. These accents are most often played with your dominant hand, since you'll have time to continue your regular cymbal pattern without too much struggle.

To this point we've discussed anticipations at the 8th-note level, but anticipations can be quick 16th-note accents as well. In our next example, the anticipation falls on the "a" of beat 4, preceding the usual downbeat of 1. Try playing these anticipated accents with your non-dominant hand along with the bass drum, instead of scrambling to get your lead hand to catch the quick rhythms. It's great to be flexible in this regard, so if you currently avoid using your non-dominant hand to play accents, take some time to get confident with this sticking. Be careful not to get tangled as you bring your hand up to catch the 16th-note accent when keeping time on the hi-hat with the other hand. It's often easier to execute these patterns if you clear the path by playing time on the ride cymbal instead.

5

(1) e + 2 + 3 + 4 + a

6

Here are some fills that incorporate 16th-note anticipations. Again, you may want to accent with your non-dominant hand. Always be open to different sticking possibilities—but know that sometimes the path of least resistance can help you keep your rhythm consistent and confident.

7



Chris Prescott is a San Diego-based multi-instrumentalist who currently drums for Pinback. His recently published book, *Creative Construction*, is available through his website, ccdrumbooks.com.



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A Lesson With Philly Joe Jones

Swinging The Rudiments

by Jim Payne



Tall and strong with big hands, Philly Joe Jones was a commanding figure. He was powerful, but he was also sensitive and compassionate. His drums could roar or whisper, depending on what suited the moment. I took several lessons with him in the early '70s, when he was living in the East Village of New York City. For those of you who aren't already familiar with Philly Joe, he was one of the most respected and accomplished jazz drummers of the bebop and post-bop eras. Early in his career, people confused him with the great Count Basie drummer Jo Jones, who's also known as Papa Jo Jones. So, after Joe moved to New York from his hometown of Philadelphia and became the house drummer at the Café Society Club on Sheridan Square in Greenwich Village, he added "Philly" to his name.

Philly Joe toured and recorded with the legendary Miles Davis Quintet from 1955 to 1957. The band featured Davis on trumpet, John Coltrane on tenor sax, Red Garland on piano, Paul Chambers on bass, and Philly Joe on drums. Miles acknowledged that Jones was his favorite drummer, which is amazing when you consider the guys he played with: Max Roach, Kenny Clarke, Art Blakey, Jimmy Cobb, Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette....

When he was in Davis's group, Philly Joe was criticized for being too dominating and for playing too loudly. But to many, that just meant he was doing his job—taking charge and leading the band. Miles loved what Philly Joe was doing, and it set a new standard for post-bop drumming.

I went up to Philly Jones after one of his gigs in New York and asked if he would give me lessons. He told me to get Charley Wilcoxon's *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos For The Advanced Drummer* and bring it to our first lesson. I told him I had already studied the rudiments, but he said this was where we should start—and he was right.

Yes, I had studied rudiments, but I hadn't really learned how to use them to make music. Philly Joe based many of his solos on rudiments, but he reconstructed them in his own way, incorporating a lot of syncopation and swing while always maintaining a clear sense of form.

I was very nervous when I arrived at Jones's apartment, but he was cordial and friendly. We sat down at a pair of practice pads and started working through Wilcoxon's "Rolling In Rhythm." We broke the solo into four-bar phrases. Philly Joe was very particular about the accents. He played them about twice as loud as the other notes, which were treated more like filler.

The first two bars of "Rolling In Rhythm" are based on 16th-note double-stroke rolls. Starting on the "&" of 3 in bar 3, we have three successive five-stroke rolls. Each roll takes

up three 8th notes, creating a three-over-four feel. This motif is used throughout the solo and is a very useful technique for adding rhythmic interest to any style of playing.

1

RLLRLLRRLRRLRRL RLLRLLRRLRRLRLL

3

RLLRLLRRLRRLRRL RLLRLLRRLRRLRRL

Philly Joe would also play the solo on a pillow so there was no bounce at all, or he would use brushes. Practicing that way definitely helps strengthen your hands and wrists.

Measures 5 and 6 are pretty straightforward. Just make sure the accents come out strong. Measures 7 and 8 are fairly easy to play because of the long roll in bar 7. The three-beat five-stroke roll happens again in measure 8. The phrase ends with an accent on 4. The two 16th notes at the end of the line are a pickup into the next measure. When I practiced this solo, I repeated each four-bar phrase until I got it down.

5

RLLRLLRRLRRLRRL RLLRLLRRLRRLRLL

7

RLLRLLRRLRRLRRL RLLRLLRRLRRLRLL

Philly Joe talked about how you don't hit down to make the sound—you pull the sound out of the drums.

Starting on beat 3 of measure 9, the three-beat five-stroke roll appears again. Just repeat it four times, and that's it! Measure 11 starts with another three-beat figure (two 16ths followed by two 8ths) that's played three times. Measure 12 is a long roll with an 8th-note flam at the end.

9

RLLRLLRRLRRLRRL RRLRRLRRLRLLRLL

11

RLRLLRRLRRL RLLRRLRRLRRLRLL rL





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10 Reasons To Love

PHIL COLLINS

by Ilya Stemkovsky

Over the course of a storied forty-year career, Phil Collins has graced countless songs with consistently inventive drumming, repeatedly shape shifting his sound and approach while maintaining an unmistakable musical identity. From his beginnings as percussionist extraordinaire in one of progressive rock's grandest bands, Genesis, to his monumental solo success, Collins has changed the pop landscape with sonic innovations while still managing to write hit after hit. Against all odds, he succeeded original Genesis singer Peter Gabriel and continued to work the kit, subsequently taking the group to previously unimagined commercial peaks.

Whether playing thick backbeats, blazing fills on slappy concert toms (no bottom heads needed, thank you), or programming an understated loop to support an atmospheric vocal, Collins, who's produced radio gold for a wide array of artists, has always been a true original. Remarkably, as his solo career and Genesis ran parallel for decades, he showcased a seldom-seen ability to be a chart-topping pop star *and* an accomplished instrumentalist. In the process, he influenced an entire generation of drummers. And here's a mind-boggling stat: Collins is one of only three recording artists (Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson are the others) who have sold more than 100 million albums worldwide both as solo artists and, separately, as principal members of a band. So if all you know is Disney's *Tarzan* or adult contemporary balladry like "Separate Lives," explore these reasons to love the amazing—and, outside drummers' circles, often underappreciated—Phil Collins.

GENESIS, "SUPPER'S READY," FOXTROT (1972)

A brash twenty-one-year-old Collins makes his presence known on this ambitious suite, the centerpiece of Genesis's early live shows. Phil's warrior snare groove (6:33) is offset by perfectly placed crashes, while the British martial rhythm of the "Willow Farm" section features cool linear patterns, delayed snare hits, and sly

beat flipping (11:50–11:58). Later, "Apocalypse In 9/8" is a study in how to navigate odd times, as Collins delights with an extremely quick combo of kick doubles and splashes (17:11) and general tension-and-release mastery. Check out the live version from 1977's *Seconds Out*, where Collins and his in-concert drumming foil, Chester Thompson, lift "Supper's Ready" to even greater heights.

GENESIS, *THE LAMB LIES DOWN ON BROADWAY* (1974)

The last record to feature Peter Gabriel on vocals, this double album is a Collins tour de force. "In The Cage" features a heartbeat-like kick pattern that flows into steady quarter notes, with nifty tom hits on the "&" of 3 in the 3/4 beat (1:18), plus colorful bell hits for the keyboard solo (3:22–3:27). Simple, funky, and totally effective. "Back in N.Y.C." finds Gabriel in full-on punk attitude mode, and Collins' perfect accompaniment is supportive and conversational. When Phil opens up on his ride (1:08) and arrests the music with jabbing flams over the insistent keys pattern (1:35), it's clear that the '70s British groups, and their drummers, had the green light to try anything.

FUSION? BRING IT ON!

Ever the workaholic, Collins joined the (mostly) instrumental group Brand X in 1975 and found an outlet for his most chops-oriented playing. Having long admired drummers' drummers like Billy Cobham, Collins took the challenge to demonstrate his more fusiony side. Brand X's "Nuclear Burn," from 1976's *Unorthodox Behaviour*, is a linear funk workout in 11, while "Malaga Virgen," from 1977's *Moroccan Roll*, is a Jaco Pastorius-style "(Used To Be A) Cha-Cha" up-tempo samba. Peripherally, Genesis also benefited: "Los Endos," from 1976's *A Trick Of The Tail*, would feature a show-



stopping, tom-pounding live drum duet with Thompson, and "Down And Out," from 1978's *...And Then There Were Three*, contains outrageous 10/8 snare/hats/crash flurries when the beat kicks in. The fiery Collins had something to prove.

PHIL'S FILL (YEAH, THAT ONE)

Is the colossal drum entrance on "In The Air Tonight" the most air drummed figure of all time? Whether it's done by a gorilla in a Cadbury commercial or by Iron Mike Tyson in *The Hangover*, or it's covered by the hip-hop community, this iconic piece of drumming from Phil's 1981 solo debut, *Face Value*, is simply part of the modern cultural canon. But what a subversive drumming performance it is: The eerie synth and Roland CR-78 drum machine loop builds practically unbearable tension leading up to the powerful beat that finally arrives at 3:40, complete with Collins continuously blurring the 1 while still singing. (Check YouTube to see that feat in concert, and witness how the drummer dramatically stalks the stage, eventually arriving at his kit.)

"Often, when I bump into strangers on the street," Collins told England's *Mail On Sunday* paper, "they won't speak to me—they'll just act out the drum sequence from 'In The Air Tonight.' That song just won't lie down."

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GATED REVERB

Perhaps Collins' biggest trademark is his super-compressed, in-your-face, "gated reverb" drum tone, which would transform recorded kit sounds in the '80s and spawn countless imitations. With help from the brilliant producer Hugh Padgham, Collins cut short the natural echo of his drums, creating a massively punchy mix that would become synonymous with his music. And who needs cymbals? The gated drums were so distinctive that entire songs were built around tom- and snare-heavy Collins patterns employing no cymbals at all: "Intruder," from Peter Gabriel's 1980 self-titled third solo album, which is entirely cymbal free; "In The Air Tonight"; "I Don't Care Anymore," from Collins' 1982 solo album, *Hello, I Must Be Going!*; and numerous others.

GENESIS, "ABACAB," ABACAB (1981)

As Genesis's material began to adhere more closely to pop conventions, Collins' drumming displayed a newfound economy. Less is definitely more regarding the crushing beat on "Abacab," and the sudden disco hi-hats (3:08) add just the right spice at just the right moment. Later Collins continues to truck away with pure power at the relentless 2 and 4 during Tony Banks' keyboard solo—nothing superfluous, no notes wasted. The old prog faithful might have cried foul, but this was undoubtedly a modern Genesis and a sign of things to come from the drummer.

GHOST (NOTES) IN THE MACHINE

Collins embraced e-drums, loops, and programming early on, incorporating them into the very fabric of his compositions. From the offbeat tambourine loop of "Mama," from 1983's *Genesis*, to the killer multiple LinnDrum overdubs of "Sussudio," from 1985's solo *No Jacket Required*, to the ping-ponging tom patterns of "Tonight, Tonight, Tonight," from Genesis's 1986 multi-platinum smash, *Invisible Touch*, the synthetic beats *make* the song. Using "fake" drums was a courageous choice for Collins, who long had a serious drum technician's reputation. Obviously he was on to something: The title track to *Invisible Touch* was a number-one hit, with nary an acoustic drum heard. (Ironic twist: "Invisible Touch" was replaced in the top spot on the *Billboard* charts by Peter Gabriel's only number-one song, "Sledgehammer.")

PHILIP BAILEY, "EASY LOVER," CHINESE WALL (1984)

Obviously a drummer mixed this, because it's *slamming*. From the huge crashes and

monster fills that open the track, it's clear that Collins the drummer, singer, and producer means business on this duet with Earth, Wind & Fire vocalist/percussionist Philip Bailey. Check out the syncopated snare and crash plus the descending tom stutter setting up the second verse at 2:12. And is that a sped-up version of the famous "In The Air Tonight" fill at 3:01? Other artists clearly liked what they heard—Collins would go on to produce, record, and tour with Eric Clapton and to drum on Howard Jones's hit "No One Is To Blame." And of course Phil's patented slap enlivens 1984's all-star Ethiopian benefit track (and one of the U.K.'s best-selling singles), Band Aid's "Do They Know It's Christmas?"

JULY 13, 1985

Simply saying Collins "participated" in Live Aid would be selling his accomplishments short. How about this itinerary of events: Collins plays with Sting at London's Wembley Stadium, doing solo hits and Police numbers like "Roxanne," flies on the Concorde to Philadelphia to drum in Eric Clapton's group, laying it down for "Layla" and "White Room," then later takes part in a Led Zeppelin reunion alongside Power Station drummer Tony Thompson, killing it on "Whole Lotta Love" and "Stairway To Heaven." "Owning" Live Aid is more like it. Concurrently, the soothing "One More Night" graces every dentist's office in the country. In the '80s, Collins is *everywhere*.

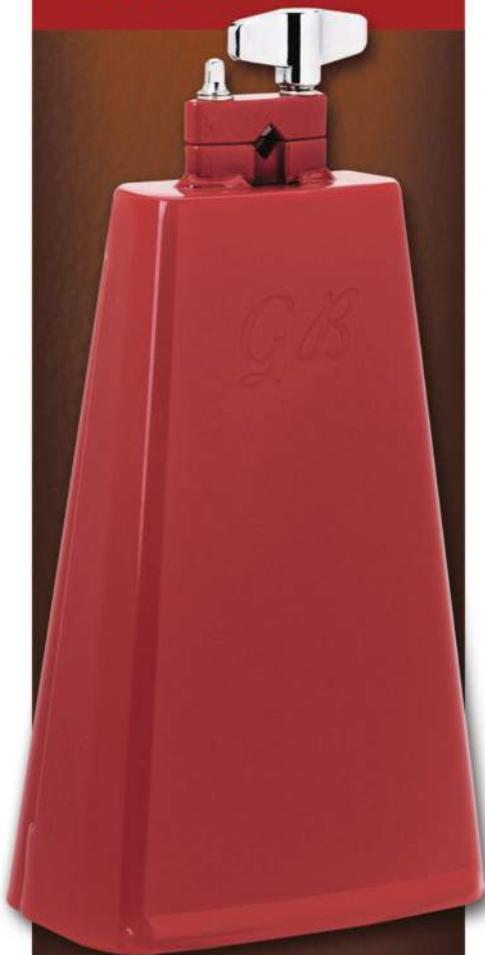
A GROOVY KIND OF DRUMS

With all due respect to Bill Bruford, Carl Palmer, and other British progsters, Collins' sense of pocket is unmatched. With a fully formed sense of groove on even the earliest Genesis songs—"I Know What I Like (In Your Wardrobe)," from 1973's *Selling England By The Pound*, is just plain funky—Collins has the soul of a Motown drummer, and he scored a hit with a 1982 cover of "You Can't Hurry Love," which was made famous by the Supremes in the mid-'60s. His love for groove-based horn-section material also comes through on 1989's "Something Happened On The Way To Heaven" and the heavy quarter-note snare pulse of 1996's "Dance Into The Light." Check out the tom/snare intro to *Face Value*'s "I Missed Again"—it's the same lick you hear the Funk Brothers' Benny Benjamin playing on so many '60s classics.

Collins' latest record, *Going Back*, is an all-Motown covers disc, proving that no musician ever strays too far from his roots. Phil says a spinal injury has forced him to retire from drumming, but still, we can dream—we hope he's far from done.



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Ludwig Amber Vistalite Snare

by Harry Cangany



The last major addition to the Ludwig line before the death of founder William F. Ludwig Sr. was the acrylic shell option known as Vistalite, which was introduced in 1972. The idea of using a non-wood shell was not unique to Ludwig. A small manufacturer called Zickos also explored the concept starting in 1969, and acrylics have been used by Fibes, Slingerland, Sonor, Tama, and other companies as well.

Vistalites, however, are the best-known acrylic drums. They initially came in clear and blue, but by 1973 Ludwig had added yellow, green, red, and amber, and the company later offered other colors and swirl patterns. The least common of the solid-color Vistalites are those in green and amber. Part of the appeal of amber is that it was the color of choice for Led Zeppelin's John Bonham.

The typical Vistalite set was the Big Beat—a 14x22 bass drum with a double tom holder, 8x12 and 9x13 rack toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and a matching 5x14 snare. There are 6½x14 Vistalite snares, but they don't seem to be as popular. There are also Vistalite snares with extended Super Sensitive strainers. The amber Vistalite snare shown here has ten classic "bowtie" lugs. A version of this lug with a center cut is used on

student-level Acrolite drums.

Today's acrylic shells sound similar to wood. Back when this snare was made, acrylic drums had their own unique sound. There are no pores in the shell to absorb vibrations, so the tone is harsher, with a lot of ring. Drummers either loved or hated this more aggressive sound, but the semi-



transparent look was the obvious selling point. Ludwig later introduced the Jelly Bean kit, where each drum was a different color. Original Vistalites will have the company's blue-and-olive badge. The series fell victim to high oil prices and low demand by 1980, but Ludwig revived the line a few years ago, just in time for the 2007 Led Zeppelin reunion featuring John Bonham's son, Jason, on his own signature yellow Zep kit with black powder-coated hardware.



GEARING UP

DRUMKIT DETAILS, ON STAGE AND UP CLOSE

Interview and photos by Sayre Berman

Robert Plant's **MARCO GIOVINO**

Drums: vintage Slingerland, Ludwig, and Rogers

- A.** 7x15 Slingerland Radio King snare (modified by Andy Foote at Drum Supply House in Nashville)
- B.** 12x15 early-1970s Ludwig parade snare
- C.** 12x14 1940s Slingerland Radio King tom
- D.** 5x12 Joe Montineri jingle snare
- E.** 16x16 1940s Slingerland Radio King floor tom
- F.** 16x18 Rogers floor tom
- G.** 10x14 Ludwig parade snare
- H.** 14x24 1940s Slingerland Radio King bass drum

Giovino often swaps the Radio King snare with a 6¹/₂x14 Ludwig Supra-Phonic or a 5x14 Rogers Powertone. "My drumset looks like a garage-sale kit," Marco says. "I used to teach at a store in New Jersey called Ritchie's Music. George Sigler, who runs the drum department, knew that I loved old drums, so he always gave me first crack at the ones that came in. That's how I got the Slingerland bass drum and



toms. They have 3-ply mahogany shells; no other drums sound as warm, fat, and fuzzy as these do."

Cymbals: Hammerax, Zildjian

- 1.** 18" Zildjian K Constantinople crash
- 2.** 24" Hammerax flat ride
- 3.** 19" Hammerax Liquicy ride
- 4.** 18" Zildjian crash/ride with 16" Zildjian K crash and Hammerax Nu Bell on top
- 5.** Hammerax Boomywang

"My cymbals now are mostly Hammerax. Their stuff is just so unique and cool sounding. Robert didn't want me to use any hi-hats. The thing you see in

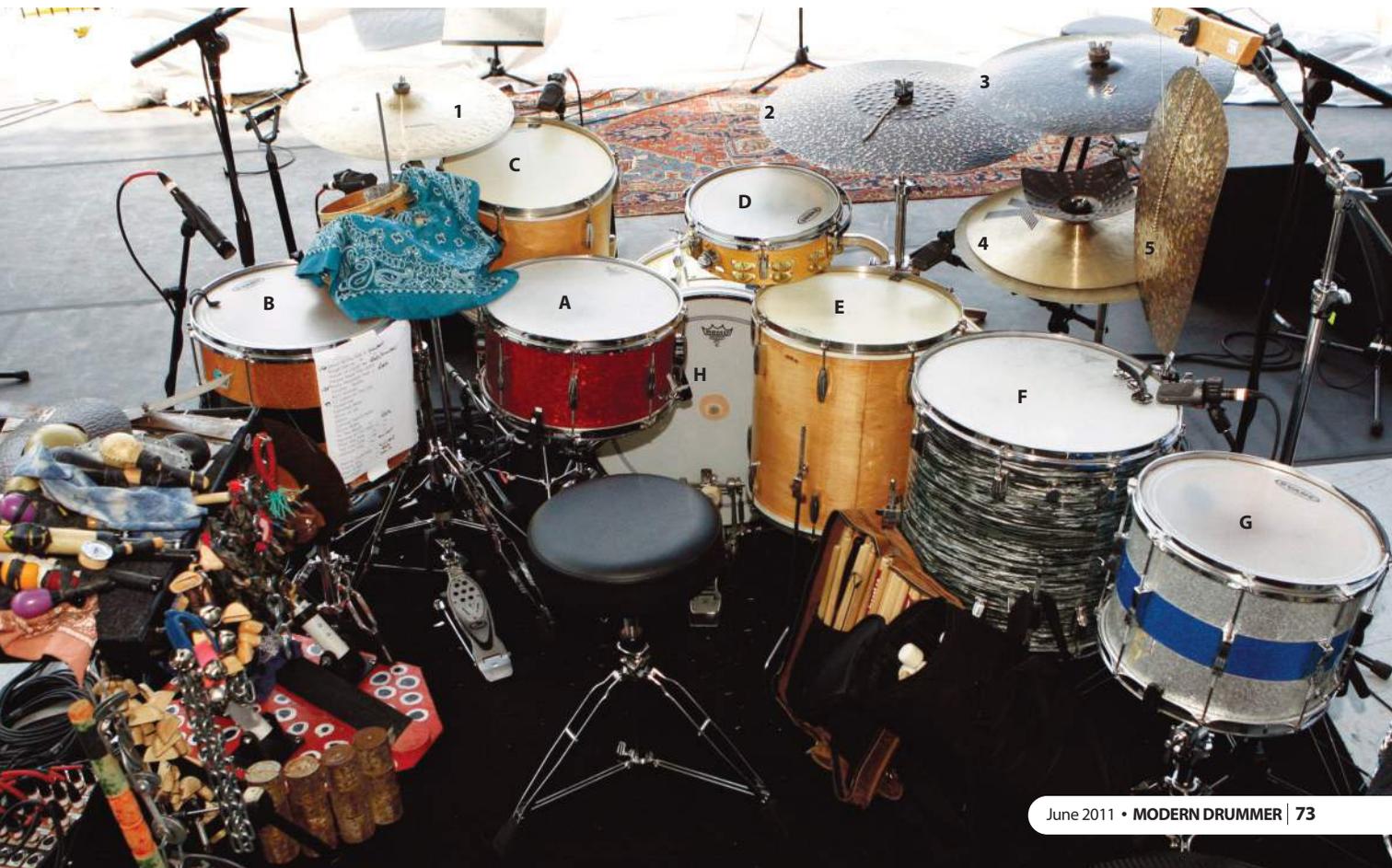
the picture is something on a hi-hat stand, but it's my own little creation. We'll leave it mysterious like that."

Sticks: Wincent rods, brushes, and drumsticks

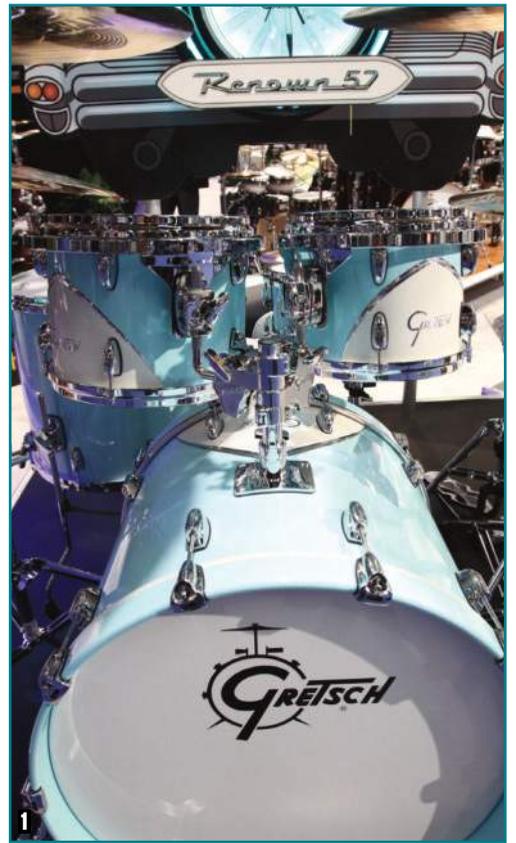
Heads: Evans, Remo, and Stern Tanning

"In the studio I used calfskin heads from Stern Tanning. They sounded so warm. The combo of those heads and these vintage drums creates a lot of low end."

Hardware: Pearl



The winter NAMM show was held this past January 13 through 16 in Anaheim, California. This annual event gives manufacturers the chance to show off their new models, revamps of old standards, and off-the-chart creations that will help guide the industry in new directions. Here's a glimpse of some of the most noteworthy products that will soon be available at your local drum shop. *by Rick Long*



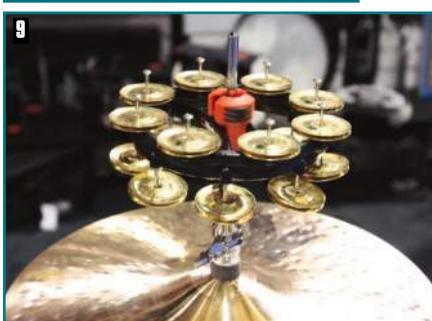
1. GRETSCH's classic-car-inspired Renown 57 kit has a low street price of about \$1,900 and comes with a matching throne.

2. MEINL's percussion catalog continues to grow with innovative products like the FX Pedal, while new cymbals include additions to the German-made B20 bronze M-Series, a 22" Byzance Vintage Sand ride, perforated Vintage Trash crashes, and aggressive-sounding B10 Classics Custom models.

3. MAPEX's Blaster kit is based on the Black Panther Blaster snare drum shell formula and features thin maple shells with walnut sound-shaping rings. Each drum is accented with brushed black chrome hardware.

4. SONOR rolled out its signature Benny Greb 5³/₄x13 beech snare drum.

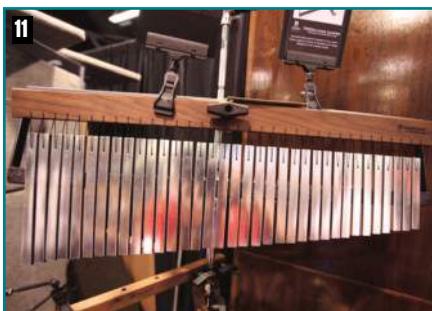




5. HAMMERAX offers some unusual cymbals and gongs, including Photon series crashes that can be inverted to create China sounds and the ameobic-looking Boomywang instrument shown here.

6. TURKISH produces a full line of cymbals, including the recently launched Vintage Soul series.

7. YAMAHA introduced the vintage-inspired Club Custom line with "mod" swirl finishes in blue, black, and orange.



8. GMS displayed new snares with exotic veneers, like this ebony macassar over maple.

9. RHYTHM TECH has a new take on the hi-hat jingle attachment, the Hat Trick G2.

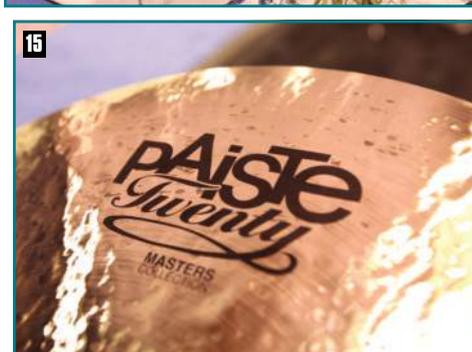
10. REMO's Powerstroke Pro line of bass drum heads features permanently mounted foam muffling rings.



11. TREWORKS has created the TRE35rc limited edition flat-bar chime, which features rectangular bars for a distinctive sound.

12. VIC FIRTH is now part of Zildjian, but the two companies will continue to operate separately.

13. BRADY is an Australian company known for its high-quality, beautifully constructed stove- and ply-shell drums. In addition to some innovative new kits, Brady displayed the latest additions to its one-of-a-kind Walkabout snare series.



14. NATAL, a drum and percussion company from England, offers drumsets and stove-shell snares in maple, birch, ash, and bubinga.

15. PAISTE created a big buzz at the show with the release of the Twenty Masters Collection—which includes the 24" JR Robinson Signature Groove Deep ride—and the reintroduction of the legendary Formula 602 series.



16



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16. SABIAN's all-purpose Omni crash/rides were developed along with electronica great Jojo Mayer, and the company's Holy China was designed in collaboration with Chili Peppers drummer Chad Smith.

17. LUDWIG displayed Joey Kramer's setup with white hardware, along with a slew of cool offerings like the green Vistalite kit shown here.

18. ROLAND is now offering DW hardware packages with various V-Drums sets, in addition to more customization options for the high-end TD-20KX (shown) and a new mesh-head KD-9 kick pad for the affordable TD-9 and TD-4 kits.

19. CALATO's Regal Tip drumsticks were the originators of the nylon tip. New models featuring the serrated E series tip sound more like wood than nylon.

20. DREAM cymbals have good sound and are a great value. This is the Dark Matter Energy ride.

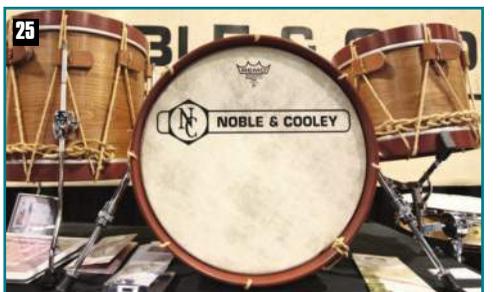
21. AQUARIAN surprised everyone with an electronic drumhead, the inHEAD, that turns an acoustic drum into an electronic trigger.

22. DRUM WORKSHOP's Performance series is making the DW name affordable to more drummers, without sacrificing the quality of the construction or tone.

23. LP, under the category of new and portable, offers the Laptop conga.

24. TRICK's Predator remote hi-hat has a long footboard that resembles the company's popular Dominator bass drum pedal.

25. NOBLE & COOLEY displayed solid-shell snares, a CD Maple series drumkit with a cool quick-release tom mount, and a few vintage-style rope-tuned drums.



25



26. ZILDJIAN's technology division, Gen16, has released the Digital Vault, which includes multi-sampled recordings of various lines of Zildjian cymbals, to be triggered with FXpansion's popular drum sample software, BFD2 and BFD Eco.

27. TAMA's low-price Silverstar series features all-birch shells.

28. AHEAD's Armor padded bags are teardrop shaped and open extra wide to allow a better fit.

29. TYCOON displayed an electric cajon with a built-in speaker.

30. TAYE offers a very cool StudioMaple wood-hoop snare drum and has added brass shells to its highly regarded line of metal drums.

31. EVANS now offers its 12 mil single-ply G Plus drumhead with a traditional white coating.

32. ISTANBUL AGOP made additions to Cindy Blackman's Om series and updated the Matt Chamberlain signature ride to be a little thicker than the original version.

33. PEACE displayed pro-level gear with stunning finishes, plus a new full-size electronic drumkit.

34. PRO-MARK is now part of the D'Addario family, which also owns Evans Drumheads.



35. CRUSH is a new company that offers high-end kits and snares at reasonable prices, in birch, ash, maple, bubinga, acrylic, and carbon fiber.



36. SLEISHMAN's all-maple Omega and exotic-wood custom drums come with the company's patented suspension system.



38. DRUMCRAFT has been in business in Germany for a couple of years now. It's coming to the U.S. for the first time in 2011.



39. CYMBAGS help keep your cymbals clean and well protected between gigs. They slip on without having to remove the cymbal from the stand.



40. ISTANBUL MEHMET is celebrating its sixty-first anniversary with some new rides.



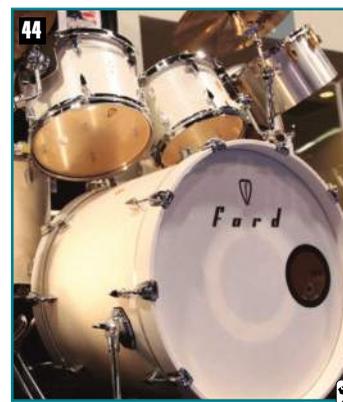
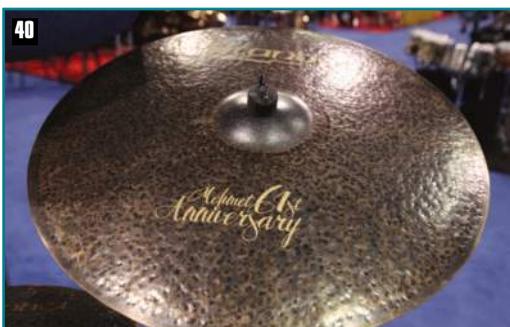
41. SOULTONE expanded its Vintage Old School line with 1964 jazz crash/rides, which are based on the sounds of Tony Williams' cymbals from that time period.



42. DUNNETT CLASSIC DRUMS had models in different booths at the show. Here's an example from the James Trussart Collection.

43. TRX's Icon Stackers are vented cymbals that can be played alone or layered with other cymbals for short, trashy sounds.

44. FORD's Maverick drumkit has a tough exterior finish that prevents road wear. (For a closer look at this exact kit, check out the review on page 19.)



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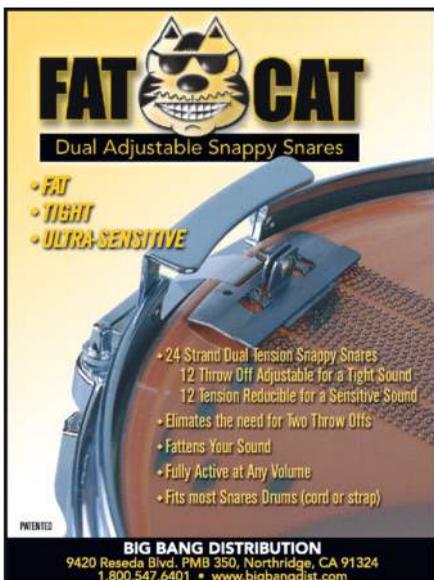
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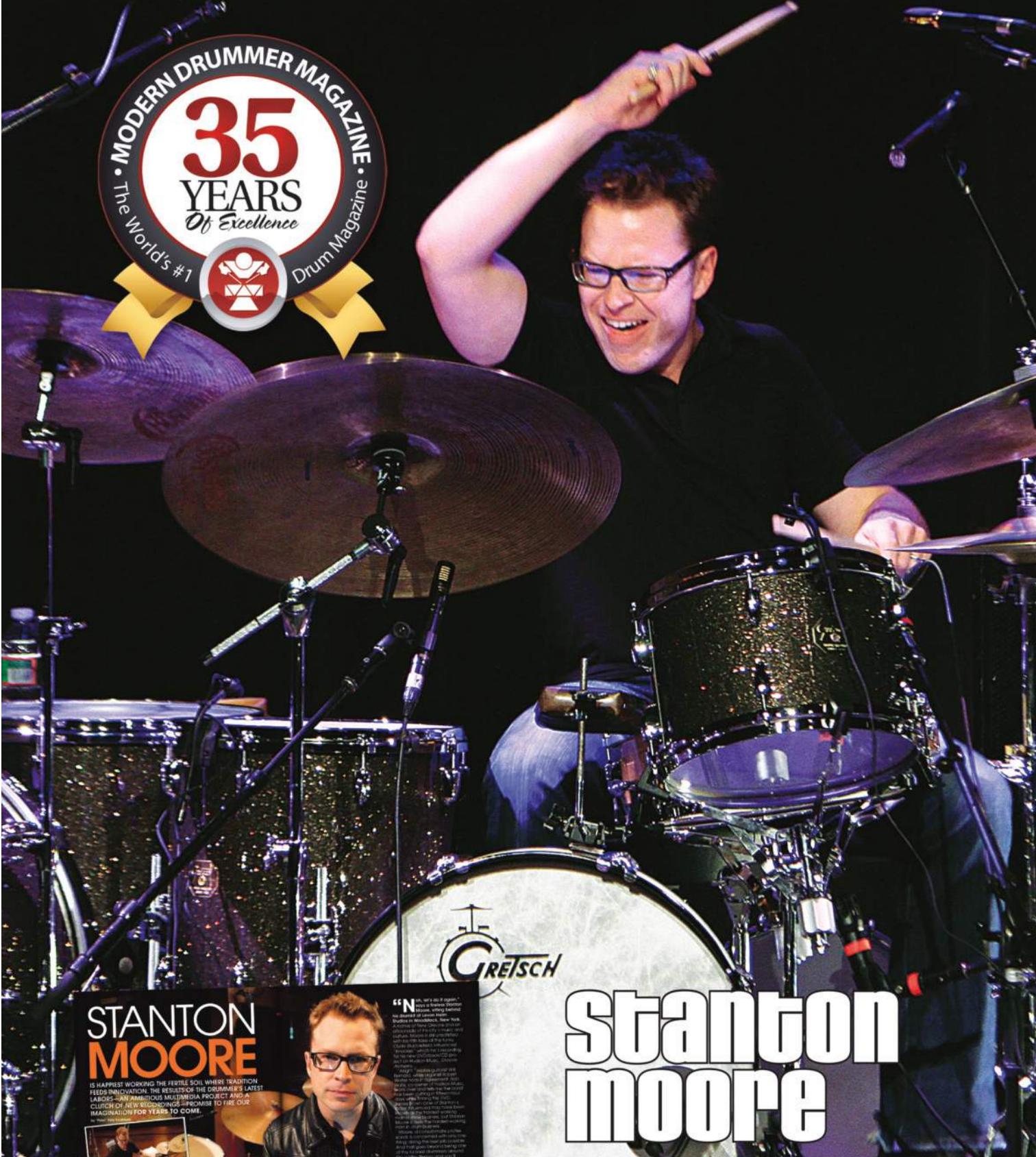
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By Blair Brannaman

"Now, let's do it again," Stanton Moore says, smiling broadly in Woodstock, New York. A former member of the rock band The Roots, Moore is sitting behind the 19th hole of the famous "19th Hole" course, a hole that has been named after him. Moore is wearing a black leather jacket and glasses, looking directly at the camera. The background shows a drum set and a microphone.



"As a young drummer, I eagerly looked forward to receiving each new issue of Modern Drummer in the mail. I learned my first Clyde Stubblefield, Jabo Starks, and David Garibaldi grooves from MD. The magazine has always contained a wealth of information about classic and modern players as well as the gear we all need to know about."

—Stanton Moore (Galactic)

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Ronn Dummett

TROY ZEIGLER

by Michael Dawson

"It's really your personality and your ego that influence everything in a given group," says Serj Tankian/Juliette Lewis drummer Troy Zeigler when asked how he ended up landing a pair of gigs supporting two very strong personas.

The Tankian position opened up first, when top touring/session drummer Bryan "Brain" Mantia decided not to go on the road to support the release of the System Of A Down frontman's 2007 solo debut, *Elect The Dead*. A who's who of alternative rock drummers was put to the test at Tankian's studio to determine who would be the best fit, but ultimately it was Zeigler, a relative unknown outside an inner circle of Los Angeles musicians, who ended up in the drum seat. "I just went in without any pretense," Troy explains. "I did my homework, which is very important, and I knew I was a good enough drummer to be there. But beyond that, it's the inexplicable sentiment and the identity that you bring forth in your playing. If you're a total demonstrative asshole, people can feel that in your playing. So I try not to be too much of an asshole...at

least not in auditions."

Last summer, Tankian brought Zeigler into the studio to record the majority of the drum tracks for his sophomore release, *Imperfect Harmonies*. Unlike *Elect The Dead*, which was a more straightforward rock album, *Imperfect Harmonies* features a lot of syncopated rhythms, dense orchestral-type arrangements, and multiple layers of loops and programmed drum parts, all of which has added an extra challenge for Zeigler now that the band is preparing to play the tunes on stage. "I have to sing a lot more, while also playing these semi-syncopated parts that I recorded for the album," the drummer says. "On top of that, I'm running loops from a laptop, and I have to play to a click track, which we didn't do on the last tour. But I love the challenge of trying to execute something that's conceptually difficult. My sentiment is: Bring it on!"

Zeigler's other main gig, as one-fourth of actress Juliette Lewis's high-energy rock quartet, came about during some downtime between touring with Tankian in support of *Elect The Dead* and recording

Imperfect Harmonies. The story behind how Troy found himself in this highly coveted drum chair (which was previously occupied by Patty Schemel, Dave Grohl, and Thomas Pridgen) again comes down to bringing the right vibe for the situation. "I got the audition with Juliette through this guy Barry Squire, who puts together bands for artists here in Los Angeles," Zeigler says. "Over the past ten years, he would call me for auditions, but I never went because they're usually cattle calls. That environment is just rife with bad energy, and the gigs were never anything I was that interested in. When he called me about the Juliette gig, I was skeptical at first. But when I heard a couple of the songs from her first album, they struck a chord with me."

Like the initial tryout with Tankian, the audition for Lewis's band was a pressure-cooker environment. "They tried out about sixty drummers," Zeigler recalls. "There was one guy who looked scared out of his mind, so I started talking to him to try to ease him down a bit. He went in before me and played really well. But



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when he walked out, he was so far gone in his spiraling confusion that he didn't even look at me and just jetted.

"I went in, carrying my sticks and the main section of my double pedal, which still had the two beaters on it," Zeigler continues. "When Juliette saw that, she said, 'Oh, you're not playing any double bass.' Instead of getting all muzoid and saying something like, 'Well, I play double bass and I'm pretty fast, but your music couldn't handle it,' I just said, 'Oh, this isn't the Slayer audition?' That kind of set the vibe. I didn't think I played as well as I could have, but a couple days later they called me. I figure that my ability is what got me to the audition, but it was the vibe—plus a bit of luck—that got me the gig."

Despite his often menacing and aggressive stage presence ("I sometimes get into these blackout places where I'm taxing my body like I never have before—hitting the crash cymbals so hard they're choking out and the snare is about to break apart"), Zeigler is one of the most laid-back and gracious people you'll ever meet. So where does all of this rage come from? "Being really shy when I was younger, along with not being good at sports and being picked on for being different, created this sentiment for music that's

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

WITH SERJ TANKIAN

Drums: Tama Starclassic Bubinga in burnt copper sparkle (6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ×10 and 7×12 toms, 13×15 and 15×18 floor toms, 17×24 bass drum, 5×12 side snare), 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ×14 George Way Elkhart copper snare

Cymbals: Sabian 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ " HHX Groove Hats top over 13" HHX X-Celerator bottom, 6" HH splash, 20" HHX O-Zone ride (used as crash), 10" HHX O-Zone splash stacked on a steel disk, 24" HHX Groove ride, 19" HHX X-Plosion crash, 19" Paragon China, 8" HH splash (used on snare)

Electronics: Mandala drum, Apple MacBook Pro

Heads: Evans Power Center Reverse Dot snare batters and Hazy 200 bottoms, Onyx tom batters and clear G1 bottoms, GMAD bass drum batters and Onyx Resonants

Hardware: Tama, including Iron Cobra double pedal with Grip Peddler footboard pads

Sticks: Vic Firth Danny Carey signature with wood tips

WITH JULIETTE LEWIS

Drums: Tama Mirage acrylic in "black ice" (9×12 tom, 14×16 floor tom, 20×22 bass drum), 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ×13 Dunnett James Trussart Collection snare

Cymbals: Sabian 15" HHX X-Celerator Hats, 20" HHX O-Zone ride (used as crash), 22" HHX Groove ride, 20" AAX X-Plosion crash

unapproachable by anything else in my life," the drummer explains. "I feel like I'm on a fairly even keel as a person because I shed that furious nature inside me on the drums. Drums are an extension of my psyche. It's the self-loathing, frustration, anger, love, elation, and joy that all come

out when I'm playing. There are times when I'm using completely improper technique, swinging my arms wildly and literally trying to break my cymbals in half. But that's great because I'm able to come off stage and I'm all puppy dogs and ice cream."



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DRUMMERS ALIVE

This month we take a special look at some live CDs and DVDs that have come out over the past year or so, plus a cool new photo book focusing on the art of live drumming.

RECORDINGS

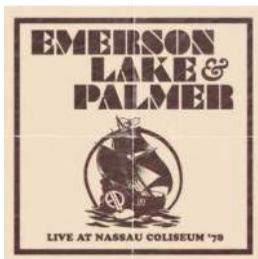


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Bob Marley and the Wailers were to reggae what the Beatles were to pop music—the most popular exponents, and the *best*. Unlike the Beatles, the Wailers have provided us with several live albums that clearly capture the band at its most incendiary. This double CD, which was recorded

at the Stanley Theatre in Pittsburgh on September 23, 1980, presents Marley's last live performance before he succumbed to cancer the following May, and respectfully adds to the legacy of such classic albums as 1975's *Live!* and 1978's *Babylon By Bus*.

"In this great future, you can't forget your past," Marley sings in "No Woman No Cry." He's of course talking about the bigger picture, but the sentiment absolutely applies to drummers wishing to understand the roots of modern boundary-pushers like Jojo Mayer, Mark Guiliana, and Gil Sharone, whose unique styles wouldn't be imaginable outside the context of the reggae and dub experiments of Marley's longtime drummer, **CARLTON BARRETT**. Beyond his work with Marley, Barrett played on hugely influential dub albums like Augustus Pablo's *King Tubby Meets Rockers Uptown*. And it's not a stretch to say that Carly's spacious, playful feel, perfectly between straight and swung, *defines* classic '70s reggae. When you hear any of his best work now, the links to today's meter manipulators are impossible to ignore. We all wish we could be so in command of the time yet sound so relaxed, all the while slipping in ridiculously badass commentary at just the right time. Covering many of Marley's greatest songs, this set is yet another source of understanding how deep Barrett's contributions were, not only to reggae drumming but to the evolution of *all* intelligent rhythm making. (Island) **Adam Budofsky**



●●●●●
EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER
LIVE AT NASSAU COLISEUM '78

Although ELP would disband within a year of the performance, this previously unissued live recording from 1978 finds the progressive rock giants at the height of their powers. Remastered from the original analog tapes, the sound of this February show is clear and full. As a band, ELP is tight, energetic, and both driving and serene. **CARL PALMER** is exemplary throughout, whether providing a locked-down rock foundation, acting as a classical percussionist, or issuing rapid tom barrages. Featuring a strong sampling of the trio's classic repertoire, including the epic "Tarkus," *Live At Nassau Coliseum* will delight fans and newcomers alike. (Shout Factory) **Martin Patmos**

MULTIMEDIA



●●●●●
TRANSATLANTIC
WHIRL TOUR 2010

DVD (2) LEVEL: ALL \$24.98

After a nine-year hiatus, this all-star neo-prog quintet comprising keyboardist Neal Morse (Spock's Beard), drummer **MIKE PORTNOY**, bassist Pete Trewavas (Marillion), and guitarist Roine Stolt (Flower Kings), along with guitarist/keyboardist Daniel Gildenlöw (Pain Of Salvation), delivers as a cohesive unit throughout a nonstop roller-coaster set of epic material. Cofounder/audience motivator Portnoy injects commanding chops and respectable lead and harmony vocals, and his over-the-top rhythmic gymnastics get to breathe a bit within the appealing context of Transatlantic's lengthy melodic voyages. Disc two of the set includes behind-the-scenes footage, interviews, and a bonus track featuring Transatlantic covering the classic Genesis song "Return Of The Giant Hogweed" with guitarist Steve Hackett. Overall, *Whirl Tour 2010* is an excellent blend of old-school and modern-day prog. (Metal Blade) **Mike Haid**



●●●●●
BEHEMOTH
EVANGELIA HERETIKA

DVD (2)/CD LEVEL: ALL \$29.98

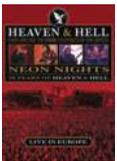
With approximately five hours of content on two DVDs and a bonus audio CD, Behemoth clearly spares no expense to give its fans a generous "all access" experience with *Evangelia Heretika*. The DVDs contain two entire concerts as well as two tour documentaries, behind-the-scenes footage, and interviews. The CD features a concert recorded live in Warsaw. The in-depth tour docs are informative and entertaining, though some content gets lost in the translation from Polish to English. What does come across is the band's heartfelt dedication to its music and its fans. Beyond the corpse paint are four guys who are critical of themselves and their performances and who strive to do everything at the peak of their capabilities. Drummer **INFERNO** brings the blast beats with unrelenting fury but displays some human moments as well during the live sets. (Metal Blade) **David Ciauro**



TRAFFIC LIVE AT SANTA MONICA

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$19.95

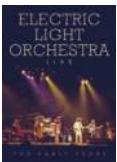
This concert, taped at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium in 1972, admirably represents the great jazz-folk-rock band's later-period lineup that featured percussionist **REEBOP KWAKU BAAH**, Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section members **ROGER HAWKINS** (drums) and David Hood (bass), and regulars **JIM CAPALDI** (vocals, percussion), Chris Wood (flute, sax, keyboards), and Steve Winwood (vocals, keyboards, guitar). Though this version of the famed British ensemble especially embodies the term *jam band*, at its heart Traffic was always a soul group, and bringing in Americans Hood and Hawkins was a great idea on paper *and* in practice, amping up an already exciting concept even further. Fans of the first three Traffic albums might miss Capaldi's aggressive kit work. (Jim moved upstage live, providing background and some lead vocals.) But Hawkins, having helmed important records by Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and Leon Russell, among many others, is obviously a groover of the highest order, and he brings to Traffic a super-pro but down-home feel. It's especially fun to hear his effortless bass drum dance and sweet snare singles on the more upbeat numbers, like Capaldi's vocal highlight, "Light Up Or Leave Me Alone." Meanwhile, Reebop's ever-present congas add a unique color to the band's palette. Deep stuff. (Cherry Red Films) **Adam Budofsky**



HEAVEN & HELL NEON NIGHTS

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$14.98

The untimely 2010 passing of vocalist Ronnie James Dio marked the end of an era of metal royalty. When Black Sabbath first parted ways with Ozzy Osbourne in the late '70s, the band called upon Dio's powerful, dominant voice, which quickly became the standard for the emerging metal genre. Dio's first recording with Sabbath was the 1980 classic *Heaven And Hell*. When original Sabbath members decided to regroup, the recurring Dio version of the band became Heaven & Hell to avoid conflict. This 2009 concert (Dio's last filmed performance) gives an accurate account of second-generation Sabbath, with drummer **VINNY APPICE** and the group performing gems from the "Dio years" catalog in full force. More structured and straightforward than early Sabbath material, the overall vibe of Heaven & Hell is dictated by Appice, who incorporates a straight-ahead, machine-gun-like groove, as compared with original Sabbath drummer Bill Ward's loose, swinging feel. This is a must-have DVD for fans of Dio, Sabbath, and old-school metal. Horns up! (Eagle Vision) **Mike Haid**



ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA LIVE: THE EARLY YEARS

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$14.98

This ninety-minute DVD collects three early live performances from the hugely successful progressive pop band. The four tunes from the 1973 Brunel University show are a bit rough sonically and visually, but the *Rockpalast* German TV performance from '74 is an improvement, reprising three of the Brunel tunes with greater fidelity and a bit more tightness from the band. We get some nice shots of drummer **BEV BEVAN** too, and it's cool to hear him funk up the bass drum part on "Showdown" as compared with his approach on the album that ELO was touring behind at the time, *On The Third Day*. It's also fun to witness the evolution of Bevan's drumset over the course of several years. By the time we get to the 1976 "Fusion" concert from London's New Victoria Theatre, surrounding the drummer are now two more toms, additional cymbals, a set of timpani, and a gong. Bev also sounds stronger here, and the song selection is better, representing the group's creative peak with highlights from the albums *Eldorado*, *Face The Music*, and *A New World Record*. Though the band's album sales would skyrocket and its stage shows would become much more elaborate in the ensuing years, this DVD might be the best place to start your ELO/Bev Bevan research. (Eagle Rock) **Adam Budofsky**



A DRUMMER'S PERSPECTIVE BY DAVID PHILLIPS

BOOK LEVEL: ALL £29.99 (approx. \$48) plus postage

As Drum Workshop's European artist rep for the past few years, drummer/photographer David Phillips has enjoyed a bird's-eye view of many of the greatest players on the planet doing their work. This book is a collection of some of his most exciting photographs, and it's a treat to pore over his high-quality portraits of Ray Luzier, Gene Hoglan, Joey Castillo, Josh Freese, and many other drumming giants in the heat of performance. American drummers are also treated to great images of and stories about top-notch players who are less known on these shores, like Dr. Feelgood's Kevin Morris, Mark Knopfler's Danny Cummings, Robbie Williams' Karl Brazil, Kasabian's Ian Matthews, and Jamiroquai's Derrick McKenzie. Since it's a photo book, *A Drummer's Perspective* focuses on the image, so there's not a lot in the way of academic discussion of the players' technique. But Phillips does include anecdotes from most of the shoots, allowing us to feel we're in on the play-by-play. VIP tags and other bits of show paraphernalia add a nice touch, and the large-format hardcover presentation complements the energy and bigness of the photography. (music-images.co.uk) **Adam Budofsky**



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FLOYD SNEED

Few people have played on as many hit songs—and looked as cool doing it—as **Three Dog Night's** drummer. And though the band's time at the top of the charts has passed, the sights and sounds of its influential double bass demon will never fade.

by Bob Girouard



Three Dog Night put a lock on the pop charts in the 1970s. What began as a working outlet for the talented studio backing vocalists Chuck Negron, Cory Wells, and Danny Hutton morphed into a mighty musical ensemble that scored twenty-two Top 40 hits between 1969 and 1975. That's roughly one Top 40 single every three months for six years straight. "Mama Told Me Not To Come," "Joy To The World," "Black And White," "Shambala," "An Old Fashioned Love Song," "Liar," "Never Been To Spain"...the singles and albums flew out of record stores faster than they could be made.

The rhythmic powerhouse fueling these songs was Floyd Sneed, whose innovative blend of African, Latin, R&B, gospel, and country styles was the perfect complement to Three Dog Night's wildly diverse catalog. The humble and unassuming Sneed grew up in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. "My parents bought a piano," he recalls, "but I wasn't interested. From the time I was three years old I wanted to play

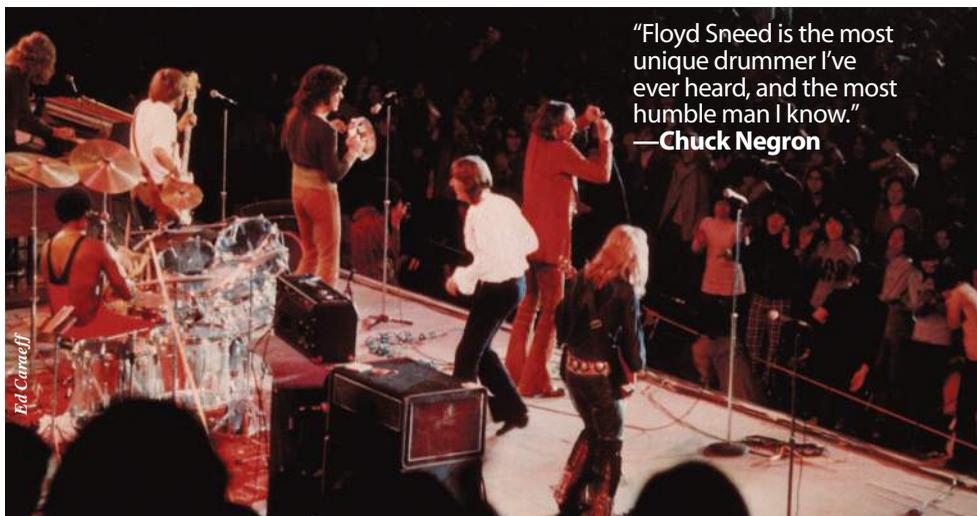
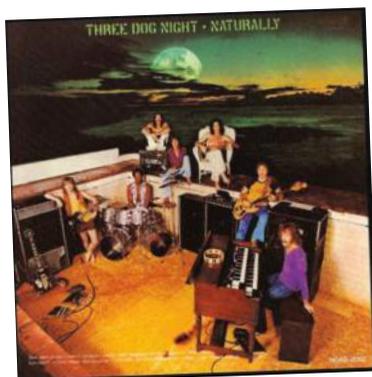
drums, so I taught myself how to play. I used to listen to everything on the radio, including a lot of country-and-western music, jazz, and big band. Guys like Elvin Jones, Art Blakey, Max Roach, and Tony Williams were big influences, as was Buddy Rich, who later became a friend of mine."

Sneed's first major gig was with Conway Twitty, when the pioneering country great came to Vancouver, where Floyd had relocated. The drummer also worked early on with his then brother-in-law, famed comedian Tommy Chong, who at the time had a serious rep around town as a guitarist with Little Daddy & the Bachelors. The gig eventually led to opportunities in the States, including an unusual "audition" for a newly formed group called Three Dog Night.

"I was working in L.A. with a band called the Heat Wave," Sneed remembers. "We were doing the last live performance at the Ambassador Hotel on Wilshire Boulevard and at the same time working at a club on Hollywood

Boulevard called the Red Velvet. Joe Schermie, bassist for Three Dog Night, happened to be passing by the club one night while en route to McDonald's. Joe asked the doorman, 'Who are the drummers playing on stage?' and the guy told him, 'There's only one drummer, and his name is Floyd Sneed.'"

Six months after joining, Sneed had his first hits: "Nobody," "Try A Little Tenderness," and "One," all of which appeared on Three Dog Night's self-titled 1969 debut album. Over the next seven years, the band was America's most viable pop entity. Delivering a killer live show, Sneed and his brethren powerfully backed three of the best blue-eyed soul men this side of the Righteous Brothers—and introduced the American public to many of the finest songwriters of the day, including Laura Nyro, Paul Williams, Hoyt Axton, Harry Nilsson, and Randy Newman. Consistently a huge draw, Three Dog Night was also the first rock act to do stadium tours on a massive scale.



"Floyd Sneed is the most unique drummer I've ever heard, and the most humble man I know."
—Chuck Negron

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Despite such gargantuan success, though, the band, like many of its peers, eventually disintegrated due to drug and alcohol abuse, inflated egos, and the impact of disco. Sneed quit in 1974, and later that year he, Schermie, and guitarist Michael Allsup launched the short-lived SS Fools. "I loved that band and the album we did," Floyd says. "Our record continues to sell in places like Japan, where it's in big demand for serious collectors."

Though the original members of Three Dog Night reunited in 1981, Sneed was gone for good by '84, briefly running a restaurant in Santa Monica, California, called Floyd's Rock 'N' Riginal Chicken & Ribs. Two distinct manifestations of the fractured band are still active today, however. A Hutton/Wells-led version continues to perform with original members Allsup and keyboardist Jimmy Greenspoon, and Sneed appears fairly regularly with Chuck Negron's soulful touring show. The drummer, who says he still gets along with all three singers, remains active in the music, art, and film worlds, including being featured as an actor in various Cheech & Chong movies. *MD* recently sat down with the classic rock vet, who, rather than mulling over the past, insists, "I'm getting ready for my next forty years."

MD: You've always had an interesting approach: funky, but non-traditional. The way you syncopate your double bass embellishes what you're playing on top, and you use your feet to initiate patterns and accentuate fills. How did you develop all that?

Floyd: I used to practice on just bass drums and snare, making patterns out of that. I developed some good rhythms just using

that approach. I actually made the move to a double bass kit with Three Dog Night, a Rogers set with black and white stripes.

MD: Did the variety of styles that Three Dog Night covered influence your multi-tom setup? You had something like four rack toms and two floors.

Floyd: As we progressed, on every song we recorded I took a conscious approach to make it sound different from the last one. So the extra drums did afford me some additional colors to place in the songs.

MD: Are you still using two separate bass drums?

Floyd: Today I use a five-piece kit with a double pedal. I like it, and when I'm touring with Chuck Negron I play his other drummer Frank Reina's kit. I also play percussion.

MD: In the mid-to-late '60s, guys like you and Ginger Baker were experimenting with polyrhythms. Is that where your self-coined "L'African" playing style came from?

Floyd: Yes, it is. It's a combination of African, Latin, R&B, and even a little country thrown in.

MD: You and Joe Schermie were one of the tightest rock rhythm sections ever. What made you two so special?

Floyd: Growing up in Phoenix, Joe had a lot of Mexican and Latin influences. With my African influences, we understood how to stay out of each other's way yet make things funky. We just gelled.

MD: Like several other players of that time period, you were somewhat under-recorded, meaning the nuances and the power you were bringing to the music on stage lacked presence on your records.

Floyd: I think that was partly due to the fact that the focus was on the vocalists. It was like, "Turn the drums down—we can't hear the vocals." But I think my presence was felt on most of what we recorded.

MD: Did you use your stage setup in the studio or a pared-down set?

Floyd: In the beginning I used a basic four-piece kit in the studio, then later I added more pieces. If the track needed more drums, I added or subtracted accordingly.

MD: Along with John Bonham, you popularized the acrylic drumkit. Were the wood drums you were using at the time not punchy enough, or did you just want a different look?

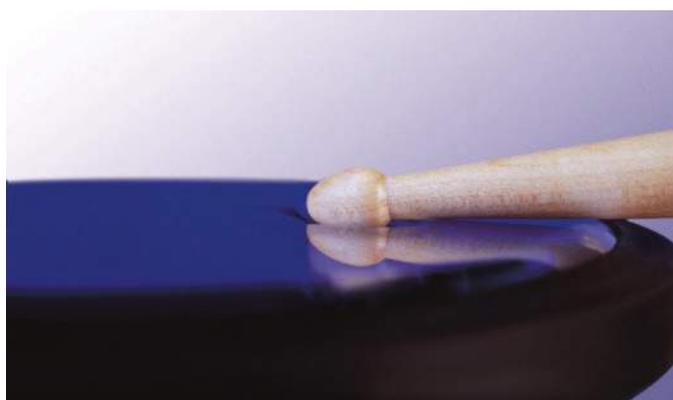
Floyd: A little of both. The Zickos drums, which were the first and best Plexiglas sets made in the USA, gave me looks and sound. I had a total of 500 rhinestones put on those drums! I mean, when the lights hit those things, it was *unbelievable*. Keith Moon also had a set with the Who. The kit was larger than a normal kit at that time. It looked good, and I adjusted everything to where I needed it.

MD: What cymbals were you using back then?

Floyd: Mostly Zildjians and Paistes. I liked to use a 20" ride and various crashes. And I still like to use a sizzle cymbal because it's so versatile. My setup is pretty much the same today.

MD: What drummers are you enjoying these days?

Floyd: Neil Peart, Vinnie Colaiuta... there are so many. Also, the great jazz players: Art Blakey, Max Roach, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams... Buddy Rich was the greatest, the absolute epitome.



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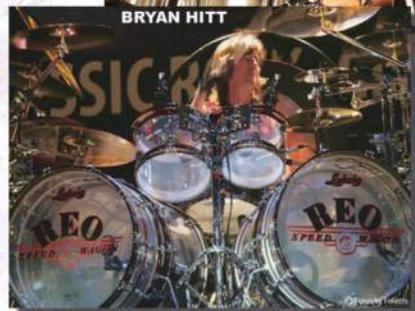
EXHIBITORS

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SABIAN LIVE AT WINTER NAMM



Mayer and Guiliana

Courtesy of Drummerszone

As usual, Sabian Live, held this past January 14, was the social happening of the winter NAMM convention. Cool and unusual musical pairings are common at the event, and this year was no exception, with rising drum star Mark Guiliana and his group Beat Music being accompanied by electro-groove

with the occasional demanding time change, but loose enough that you feel as if you're actually watching the band at a sleazy club at two in the morning, not at an industry mixer in an oversize hotel meeting room. Closing the show was an all-star ensemble featuring Walfredo Reyes Jr. and Ray Yslas and

WHO'S PLAYING WHAT

Yamaha has welcomed **Tommy Igoe** to its roster of endorsers.



Now playing Pearl are **Julian Dorio** (the Whigs) and **Nick Hughes** (L.A. sessions).

New Zildjian artists include **Shawn "Clown" Crahan** (Slipknot), **Kim Schifino** (Matt & Kim), **Chris Fryar** (Zac Brown Band), and **Zac Farro**.



Joining Los Cabos Drumsticks are **Johnny Rowe** (Tin Star Orphans), **Mike Fitzpatrick** (Downchild), **Brad Rice** (Jason Boland & the Stragglers), **Brittany Brooks** (Cee Lo Green), **Michel "Away" Langevin** (Voivod), **Taya Perry** (Homemade Jamz Blues Band), **Brad Morgan** (Drive-By Truckers), **Justin Peroff** (Broken Social Scene), **Aaron McNeil** (independent), **Josh Ingram** (We, the Undersigned), **Joshua Van Tassel** (David Myles, the Outlanders), **Phoenix Arn-Horn** (Courage My Love), **Liu-Kong Ha** (Random Recipe), **Matt Oliver** (Jettblack), **Dan Wilding** (Trigger the Bloodshed), and **Ryan Halsey** (independent).



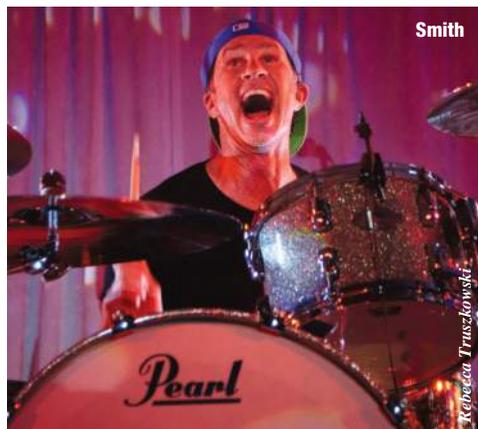
Neil Sanderson (Three Days Grace) has joined the Gon Bops artist roster.



Daisy Lai (Never A Hero) is endorsing SJC Custom Drums.

Revolution Drum has teamed with Big Bang Distribution and Ahead to launch a new line of heavy-duty bags called Ahead Armor Cases. **Daniel Glass** (Royal Crown Revue) is an endorser.

Scott Travis (Judas Priest) is using Vater sticks.



Smith

Rebecca Traszowski



Yslas

Rebecca Traszowski



Reyes

Rebecca Traszowski

god Jojo Mayer for their encore. Guiliana's unique and genuinely futuristic approach was enough to send a wave of "What's *this* all about?" through the crowd.

Chad Smith's Bombastic Meatbats followed Guiliana's set. The Meatbats are a perfect vehicle for Smith—tight and intense classic-rock-style grooves

their band, Sinverguenza, with Ruben Blades bassist Oskar Cartaya, keyboardist Matt Rohde, and the Shameless Horns.

Joining Sabian in sponsoring the event were KMC Music, Remo, Gon Bops, Evans, Pro-Mark, Audix, Sonor, Vic Firth, No Worries Productions, and Regal Tip.

COVERBAND 2011 DRUM WINNER TOHBIAJ JUNIEL

Out of hundreds of entrants, Tohbius Juniel was named the winning drummer in the CoverBand 2011 contest, which invited individual musicians to upload a two-minute video to coverband2011.com between July and December of last year. A public vote determined the finalists, and a panel of celebrity judges then selected the winner in each of seven categories (vocals and various instruments), who would ultimately join forces to become CoverBand 2011.

A trip to Anaheim to perform at the NAMM show was part of the prize for the winning band members. For the thirty-one-year-old Juniel, that was just part of the thrill. He also received a brand-new Gretsch Renown four-piece kit and Full Range hammered steel snare drum, complemented by a cymbal package from Sabian and hardware from Gibraltar.

Juniel also got a special additional prize: the chance to meet personally with company president Fred Gretsch, who was pleased to learn that the drummer is already a dedicated Gretsch player. As Tohbius explains, "I've been playing Gretsch drums for most of my career, so I'm thrilled to be getting a new Gretsch kit to work with." When asked how he came to be a drummer, he replies, "My father, Chester Juniel, was the director of a drum-and-bugle corps in the Denver area, so from the time I was about two years old I was always around drumming. I learned how to read music and how to read books at the same time.

"My father also played drumset," Juniel continues, "as did my older brother Steven. So I was playing on a set by the time I was in elementary school. When I was fourteen I was playing with cats in their forties and fifties. Fortunately for me, a local drummer named Rudy Royston took me under his wing."

Juniel's entry for the CoverBand 2011 contest was a mix of funk, pop, and fusion-esque styles that burned and grooved at the same



time. "I really love to play everything," Tohbius says. "Right now I'm playing a lot with a singer-songwriter from Nashville named Calvin Locklear. And I'm playing in a funk/alternative band in Denver called Bop Skizzum. I play pop, R&B, Latin... I love it all. I feel that as a drummer it's important to be diverse.

"Right now I'm looking to move up in my career, to play on the big stages. I'd really like to get some tours and some recording sessions with top artists around the world. I also want to do some writing and see where that goes."

Text by Rick Van Horn
Photos by Tom Schwarz,
courtesy of KMC Music



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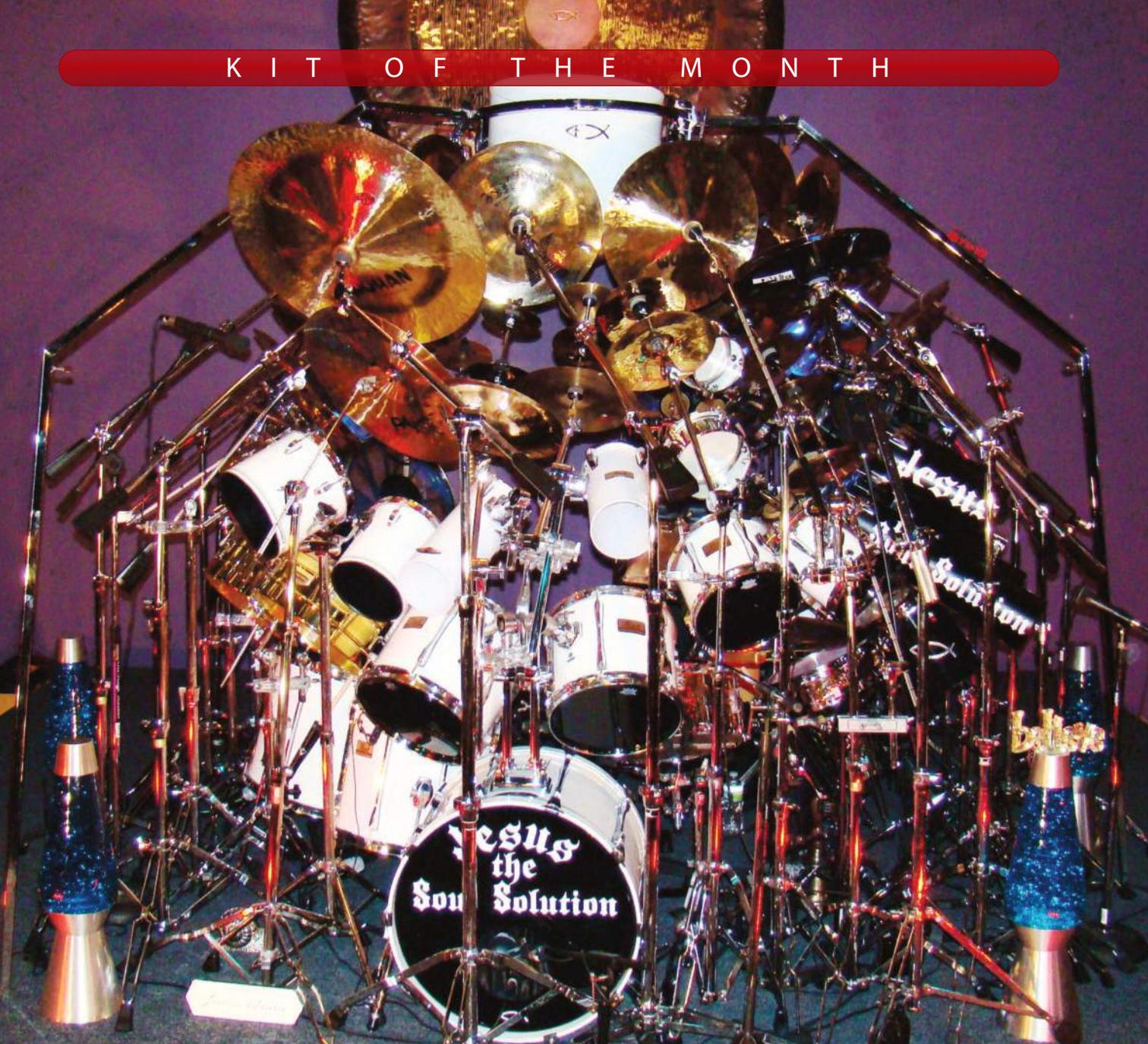
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REACHING FOR THE HEAVENS

This month we've got what just might be the largest kit on earth. When we ask its owner, Mark D. Temperato of Lakeville, New York, why he favors such an enormous setup, he replies simply, "Why not?" He continues, "As an agent of rhythm, I built my set to be one of a kind, with different makes and models of quality drums and cymbals for a fresh combination of sounds."

The kit features a whopping seventy drums (by Pearl, Tama, Ludwig, Remo, Pacific, LP, and Toca, with heads by Remo) and seventy cymbals (by Zildjian, Paiste, Sabian, Wuhan, UFIP,

Agazarian, and Stagg). Rather than mounting it all on a rack, Temperato uses stands, because, he says, "I like the whole massive chrome 'root' look. I could also fit more drums and cymbals with only a 1/2" space between them." The stands and mounts number more than a hundred.

It's hardly a surprise to find that Temperato needs a hand with all this stuff. "It takes a four-man crew six to eight hours to set it up and six hours to take it down," Mark says. "The equipment is transported in a carpeted forty-eight-foot custom tractor-trailer. Each piece has its

own case and compartment for the road, with eight large wheeled cases with custom tubing to hold the stands. The gong has its own insulated aluminum crate."

Temperato ends on a personal note. "I play drums as an expression of my love and passion for Jesus Christ," he says. "I have played for Him since 1978, and everyone else just gets the overflow!"

Photo Submission: Hi-res digital photos, along with descriptive text, may be emailed to billya@modern drummer.com. Show "Kit Of The Month" in the subject line of the message.



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