

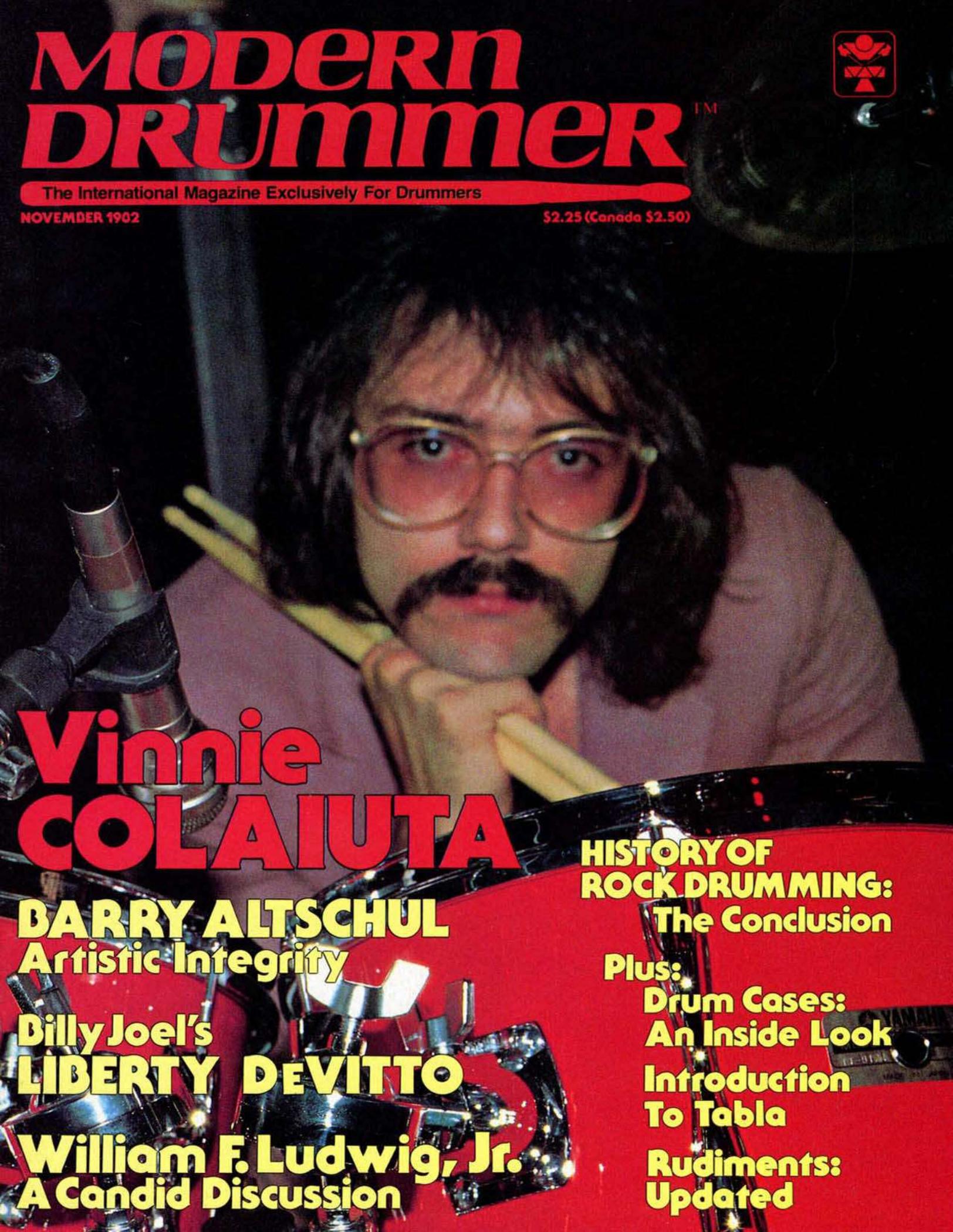
MODERN DRUMMER™



The International Magazine Exclusively For Drummers

NOVEMBER 1982

\$2.25 (Canada \$2.50)



Vinnie COLAIUTA

BARRY ALTSCHUL
Artistic Integrity

Billy Joel's
LIBERTY DEVITTO

William F. Ludwig, Jr.
A Candid Discussion

**HISTORY OF
ROCK DRUMMING:**
The Conclusion

Plus:
Drum Cases:
An Inside Look
Introduction
To Tabla
Rudiments:
Updated

A photograph of Alan Gratzer, a member of the band REO Speedwagon, standing next to a Ludwig drum set. He is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, a red tie, and blue trousers. He has long, wavy brown hair and is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. His right hand is on his hip, and his left hand is pointing towards the drum set. The drum set is a Ludwig 'The Set-Up' system, featuring a bass drum with the 'LUDWIG' logo on the front head, a snare drum, and several tom-toms. The background is dark and out of focus.

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Cover Photo by Rick Mattingly

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Occasionally, a lot of people will start talking about a certain musician—"Hey, have you heard...?" Most recently, Vince Colaiuta has captured this kind of attention. First coming to prominence with Frank Zappa, Vinnie has gone on to make his mark on the L.A. studio scene. MD caught up with Vinnie, and probed the background of "the new guy in town."
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BARRY ALTSCHUL

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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



No doubt about it, the MD Circulation Department receives its fair share of complaint mail, as do *all* consumer magazines. Approximately 75% of our circulation detail work is handled by computer, but that's absolutely no guarantee problems won't occur. In some cases, the computer causes more problems than it solves. Other times, problems are directly created by people. Either way, we're forced to deal with subscriber problems on a day to day basis, and willingly accept the blame when we are at fault.

However, there's another type of circulation problem which tends to be more frustrating, simply because we have little or no control over it. A good example would be subscribers who voice annoyance over receiving their copy of MD after their neighborhood music dealer. Let me explain:

MD's distribution is handled through our printer in the Midwest. Upon completion of the printing process, address labels are affixed and the magazines are zip-sorted for mailing. Within two days, every subscriber copy is in the mailstream and in the hands of the United States Postal Service. When the subscriber mailing is complete, bulk shipments are packed, labeled, and on the way to music shops across the country. However, the bulk orders are delivered by United Parcel Service (UPS). And even though the music dealer shipments enter the distribution stream *after* the subscriber copies, the dealer will usually receive his magazine first. The reason is simple: United Parcel Service is faster than the United States Postal Service.

The frustration is rooted in the fact that there really isn't very much we can do about it. And until someone devises an alternative means of getting MD to your mailbox in less time than it takes a specialized parcel carrier, one questions whether it's worthwhile to lose any sleep over it.

In the final analysis, it's a matter of what you value more. There *are* certain advantages to subscribing, not least of which is your assurance of obtaining a copy before your dealer runs out. And if you don't live near a shop which carries the magazine, then the home delivery route is the only way to go. However, if for some reason, you absolutely *must* have your copy before anyone else, then purchasing MD at your local music dealer may be the best answer for you.

Though it's true, we occasionally tire of having to explain this to an irritated customer, it *is* somewhat flattering to realize we have readers who obviously wait with baited breath for each new issue to roll off the press. And really, there isn't a circulation problem big enough that could take away from the pleasure we get out of that simple truth.

RS

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READER'S PLATFORM



I would like, if I may, to say a very BIG thank you, not only to four fantastic drummers, but four very thoughtful human beings: Steve Smith, Jeff Porcaro, Peter Erskine and Vince Colaiuta. They are pictured here with me while I was recuperating from an appendicitis operation in Atlanta. I am very lucky to have friends like you. Once again, my sincerest thanks, and I hope to see all of you soon.

ALAN CORNETT
SILVER SPRINGS, MD

Editor's note: We were intrigued when we saw this letter, so we asked Peter Erskine how this came about. He explained that they learned that Alan had come to Atlanta in the hopes of hearing some of the drummers who were participating in the NAMM show. Unfortunately, Alan was struck with appendicitis upon his arrival in Atlanta, and was unable to attend any of the concerts. Jeff, Steve, Vinnie and Peter decided that if Alan couldn't come to see them, they would go to see him. Four very thoughtful human beings indeed!

ROY BURNS

I was pleased to read "Put-downs, Put-offs and Put-ons" by Roy Burns in your April issue. As a drummer/producer I face the same criticisms and more. I showed the article to my wife who's a working singer/actress. She was so impressed by it that she read it to all of her friends. I'd like to compliment Mr. Burns for his sensitivity as a great musician and human being! It shows that a positive person accomplishes positive things.

JERRY "J.D." DeKRANIS
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

"PLAYING" SECTIONS

A word of thanks for the "playing" sections of MD: *Strictly Technique*, *Rock Perspectives*, *Drum Soloist*, etc. Coming from full-time playing and teaching to only part-time, MD keeps me up to date with new material. I'm now using the different columns as extra material for my students. Also, a request for an interview with Vinnie Colaiuta.

MARK SMITH
MONONGALIELLA, PA

ROCK CHARTS

In your July issue you have a transcription of The Police's song "Don't Stand So Close To Me" by James Morton. I've been searching for accurate rock transcriptions for some time now, and not only did I find this one exact, but also a pleasure to play.

STEPHEN DONELAN
AKRON, OH

Your June issue was exceptional. I got my students involved with the *Rock Charts* and the results have been tremendous. Please continue with such material. My students and I thank you.

DON PATE
ROHNERT PARK, CA

KUDO'S FOR DEARING

I'd like to commend Jim Dearing for *How To Mentally Prepare For Drumming* (Aug./Sept. '82). I employed some of his techniques and found them very beneficial to myself and my band. I'd like to see more articles of this nature.

JEROME A. ABRAHAM
ATWATER, CA

CHARLIE WATTS

Your Charlie Watts interview was excellent. It proves that a good basic drummer can still survive in this all too technical world. Nothing against proficient, professionally trained players. I'm just stating that ordinary, basic players deserve a little credit'also.

STAN ZEMAN
PITTSBURGH, PA

TIME VS. FEEL

Just a note to let you know that I felt Mark Van Dyck's article "Time Players vs. Feel Players" was excellent. It's definitely the best analysis I've read on rhythm sections. His thoughts were also conveyed in a direct and clear way; easy to understand and to the point. At any rate, I just wanted you to know that I thought the article was great.

ROY BURNS
AQUARIAN ACCESSORIES CORP.

M.D. PERFORMS

I particularly like your balanced coverage of different kinds of drummers, and the care and detail with which you allow them to express their feelings on their life and art. You are performing a service to drummers for which I feel a true measure of gratitude. There is one drummer, however, I feel has exerted an enormous, although largely unrecognized, influence on modern drumming: Milford Graves. I know that his ideas and thoughts can be enormously beneficial to those trying to understand what the "new music" is all about.

GREGORY PAI
HONOLULU, HI

"THE JOBBING DRUMMER"

I think your wonderful magazine should spend some time in evaluating the needs of the part-time drummer, in terms of equipment, styles, etc. I don't want to change the focus of your magazine, but just open it up to people like myself.

SAM OSAKI
CAMPBELL, CA

Editor's Note: We've had more than one request of this type, and as a result, MD will soon debut "The Jobbing Drummer" department, specifically designed for the serious part-timer.

continued on page 109

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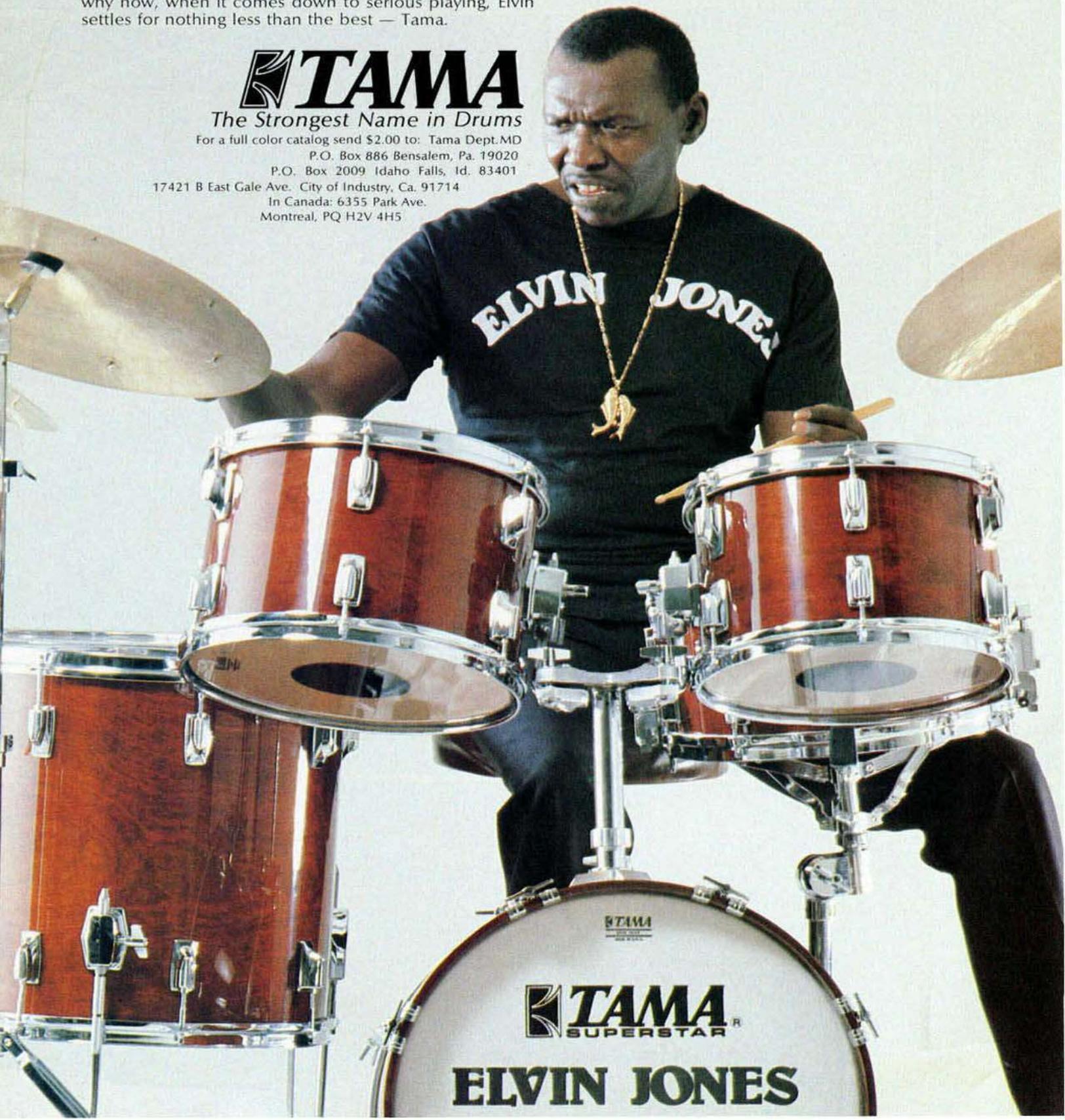
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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Have a problem? A question? Ask MD. Address all questions to: Modern Drummer, c/o It's Questionable, 1000 Clifton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07013. Questions cannot be answered personally.

Q. I'm planning to start building my own drum cases from wood. I wonder if you have any helpful hints on the best way to build them?

T. L.

A. Contributing writer Vince Gutman wrote an article called "Upstaging" in the April '81 issue of MD. This article—which is too lengthy to cover in an It's Questionable answer—not only tells you the best way, it shows you. It's available in the MD Treasury "The Best of."

Q. I play a lot of casuals and studio work. The big bulky hardware is sturdy and flashy, but is there a company that makes aluminum drum and cymbal stands?

C. L.
Buena Park, CA

A. To the best of our knowledge, no one makes aluminum hardware. However, most drum companies offer a line of hardware that's lighter in construction and less expensive than the "bulky" hardware. We're sure if you did a little research in this area you'd find what you were looking for.

Q. How can I contact my favorite drummer, Stewart Copeland?

T. S.
Trenton, N.J.

A. You can write to Stewart in care of MD. We'll forward your letter.

Q. Are there any small cowbells that sound like large cowbells?

H. E.
Skokie, IL

A. We asked Latin Percussion, Inc.. They said, "No." The wide opening on a cowbell is what makes the deep sound. The depth of a cowbell will also alter the sound. In short, if you want a large cowbell sound—you need a large cowbell.

Q. Please advise me how to get books or help to get more finger control or wrist action.

T. P.
Union City, N.J.

A. The best way to acquire more finger control and/or wrist action is to practice, preferably with a competent teacher. Joe Morello, Sonny Igoe and Henry Adler are three teachers in your area who could probably help you. If you can't contact them on your own, you can write to them in care of MD and we'll forward your letter.

Q. I was wondering if an Evans Looking Glass head on the top and an Evans blue Hydraulic head on the bottom would be a good combination for 12", 13" and 14" toms?

H. W.
SevernaPark, MD

A. Our experience has been that most drummers use the Evans heads on top with a thinner head—either coated or clear—on the bottom. Since the Evans heads are relatively dead-sounding in comparison, most drummers use the thinner heads to round out the tone of the toms. However, "sound" is a personal matter. You might try the combination you mentioned and find that it's exactly what you've been looking for. Perhaps you could try it on one tom before investing a lot of money in drum heads.

Q. I've been searching all over for *The Chinese Wand Exercise* book by Bruce L. Johnson and have made no progress. The book was mentioned in the April '81 MD by reader Neal Speer as an excellent book for physical exercises to improve drum playing.

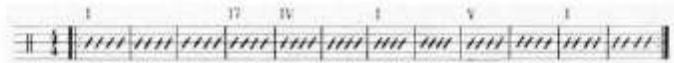
R. P.
Kingston, Ontario

A. *The Chinese Wand Exercise* was published by William Morrow in Manhattan. We called them and were told that the book is out of print. Perhaps some of our readers know where to obtain copies. We'd be glad to pass the information along.

Q. I heard that most studio musicians use a shorthand letter and number system to help them through a song, without reading the full sheet music. Does this system apply to drummers as well?

J. E. M.
Cincinnati, OH

A. The numbering system refers to chords used in songs. Using a basic progression, let's say a song was written in a twelve-bar blues format using the chords B-flat, B-flat seventh, E-flat, and F major. This is referred to as a 1 - 4 - 5 progression. The B-flat is the tonic (I), the E-flat is the subdominant (IV), and the F is the dominant chord (V). Instead of writing out all the chords in musical notation, a studio musician (drummers included) might see it written as shown below. If a drummer understood chord progressions (which most studio drummers do), he would have no trouble following this pattern. Unless the producer or artist wanted a specific drum pattern or fill used, it would allow the drummer to create his own part as he followed along with the music. The lettering system refers to song structure. Using the most common 32-bar song structure, the drummer might see AABA on a chart. He'd know that the first letter referred to the first eight bars, the second letter to the second eight bars, the third letter (B) to the bridge or release of the song, and the last letter would refer to the last eight bars.



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David Garibaldi

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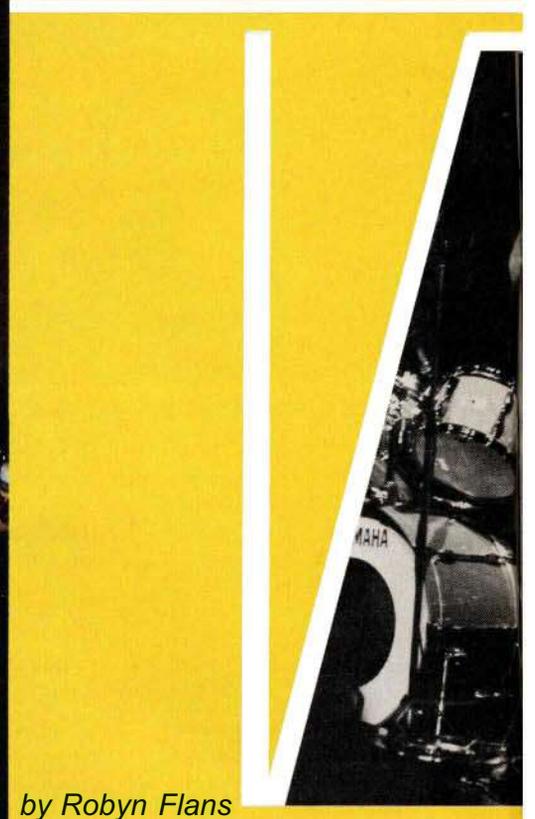
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CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS



VINNIE



by Robyn Flans

A producer once told Vinnie Colaiuta that if you threw Tony Williams and Steve Gadd into a blender, Vinnie would be the tasteful concoction. He laughs modestly while he shrugs off the compliment, but it is probably an accurate description. Justifiably, he is the talk of the town and drummers pack into the L.A. club where he plays three nights a week. One drummer comments that Vinnie is the best drummer he's ever seen and another puts it simply, repeatedly exclaiming, "Monster!"

Innovative, colorful and tasteful, Vince Colaiuta began, as did many, playing pots and pans while growing up in Pennsylvania. After graduating to toy sets with paper heads, his parents finally bought him a semi-professional Japanese set which he'd play with the neighborhood kids.

There was never any doubt that his instrument was the drums, even though he also had an electric guitar and took organ lessons. In fact, when he expressed the desire to play drums in the junior-high-school band, the band director informed Vinnie that there were too many drummers and he should take up another instrument. He played flute for a year until the drummer vacated the seat into which Vinnie slipped. Once the lessons began, Vinnie recalls, "I couldn't get enough of it. I was real interested in music notation and rudiments and technique whereas a lot of guys didn't dig that stuff. I learned real fast be-

Photo by Lissa Wales

NOVEMBER

COLAIUTA



Photos by Rick Mattingly

cause I was always practicing. I would go into English class and sit in the back of the room with a Remo practice pad and practice double-stroke rolls and get kicked out of class."

When he finally got a good drumset at age fourteen, he was extremely grateful. "I was overjoyed when my parents bought me the set, because up to that point, I had only been studying on the snare drum. When I sat down at the set, though, for some reason I didn't have any problem. I just sat down and played, probably because of all those toy sets. Coordination didn't pose much of a problem until I started getting into the stage band and had to read drum parts with the foot and everything. When I first saw that, it was a trip reading drumset stuff—the hand, the hi-hat, the bass drum, independence and all of that—but I just went and practiced." Drum corps, summer camps and a succession of lessons followed, and after finishing high school, he worked in local bands for a year before enrolling in Berklee, a decision inspired by many of his classmates and a chance meeting with Berklee student Steve Smith, who came through town playing with a big band.

"I wanted to gather as much information as possible. I thought it would give me the chance to polish everything before I went to step out. I knew it would be tough and I wanted to be ready for it. When I got

out there, it was really good that I did that. I also wanted to learn more about music theory in a practical sense and anything that would help me in the most remote way, whether I was going to learn writing to use it to write or just to give me a different perspective to music. It really did make me listen to things differently and it gave me a different awareness.

"When I got there, all I knew was the reputation that Berklee had and I didn't really know what to expect. My first day, orientation at 7:00 in the morning, there were 800 drummers and like 1500 guitar players; totally different from what I expected. I was expecting big bands and seeing Buddy Rich walking around picking like, 'I like this trombone player—wanna be in my band?' I just took my tests and placed in a bunch of classes, like beginning arranging, because I didn't know anything about that, and an ear training class. The writing department there was really great, except they have their own way of doing it which is unlike any other place. Like the way they teach you to arrange. They teach it to you with terminology that you don't use once you get out of that place. It's only a means to learn it, but it's an efficient means to cram it into you fast. In the two semesters that I went there, I learned how to arrange for six horns. I used it a couple of times until I said, 'I'm not going to do this. There are cats who do this for a living.

I'm a player'

"After I completed a year there, I wanted to go back only for the writing, because I was really getting into it, but I didn't have the money. I passed out of the percussion department in one semester. I studied with this guy named Gary Chaffee for two semesters, but the first semester I pretty much whizzed through everything that he had. He was a wonderful teacher and the greatest guy and he had a really great method. The whole school adopted his method. He was doing things like applying polyrhythms to the drumset. He had a certain manner of teaching independence by getting into funk drumming, Tower of Power stuff, and weird groupings that were really cool. He would show you how it was broken down and rhythmically what it's based on. It was real interesting and he had it planned out real intelligently. There were all these Chaffee clones running around because he really had it together and everybody was using his method. So I went through that the first semester. By the time the second semester rolled around, the drum lessons turned into a scene where I would go in there and Gary and I would put on a Tony Williams record and listen to it and sit down and play things together and just rap. Then Smitty [Steve Smith] and I took group lessons for the second half of the semester. We'd just go in and play and have a good

". . . YOU HAVE TO KEEP UP WITH HIM [ZAPPA]. THERE'S SO MUCH INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE COMING OUT OF HIM SO FAST THAT YOU HAVE TO BE ON YOUR TOES EVERY SECOND. ITS INCREDIBLE."

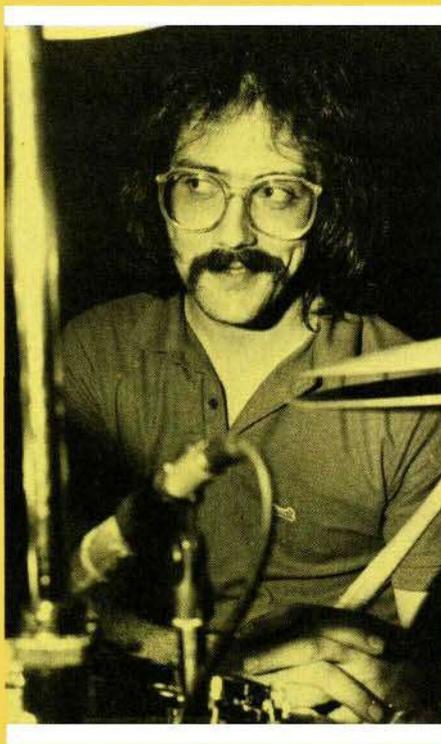


Photo by Lissa Wales

"I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF AS A SESSION PLAYER, AS MUCH AS I LIKE TO THINK OF MYSELF AS A MUSICIAN WHO HAPPENS TO PLAY DRUMS."

time and it was a gas. Then Chaffee said to me, 'Man, why don't you just move to New York when the school year is over?' He felt I was at the point where I should just get out there but I told him I wanted to come back and do more writing and stuff. Finally I realized that I was going to be a player. I couldn't get the money to go back to school anyway, so I just hung around Boston for a couple of years. There were a lot of good players there. I was playing these top-40 gigs to survive. I wanted to do the jazz gigs, but there was no money in the jazz gigs."

During those two years he also worked with a band which hooked up with Al Kooper. After going on the road with Kooper, he offered to produce the rhythm section. Recalling his first major recording experience, Vinnie laughs, "I didn't know anything about getting a drum sound or anything. I was just into playing. Getting a good track was something I had no concept of. I wanted to play for the tune and just play. Kooper would say, 'Well, save that for your first solo album, okay?' My drums sounded like shit, but I was having a good time. I learned a lot from doing that, though. There were probably a lot of people who had never been in a studio before and didn't know how to get a drum sound, but when they went in, people hipped them to it real fast. What happened with me was that I didn't know anything about it when I

got in there. But they didn't say, 'Well, change your head. We're not going to get a good sound with these heads.' It wasn't anything like that. They just took the drums that I had and I think they might have said something like, 'Could you tune this a little different?' The producer came out and hipped me to some things like tapping the snare drum up. Eventually I ended up getting a liveable drum sound, but now when I listen back to it in perspective, it was horrible. On the other hand, you can go into a studio even if you *have* had studio experience and still get a lousy drum sound, so you never know. I've been in studios in New York where they've had the worst set of drums in there. The engineer messes around with it a little on the board, puts some tape on it and bingo, ten minutes later you can't believe he got that sound out of those drums. Sometimes you'll go into a studio out here with a great set of drums, and the guy starts giving you a hard time about it, so you still never know."

After returning to Boston, Vinnie finally made the decision to move to L.A. permanently in January, 1978. A few months of rough times followed until April, 1978, while doing a gig with Tom Fowler. Fowler mentioned that Frank Zappa was looking for a rhythm section.

VC: I had always been a big fan of Zappa's

and had every record. In fact, I had just bought *Live in New York* and loved it. It was funny and it was musically great. The irony is that I called the office and bugged the hell out of them, asking if I could bring a tape by. They said, "No tapes," but I dropped one by anyway. I'd go there every day until one day they called and said, "Alright, Mr. Zappa will listen to you Wednesday night." My heart dropped and I literally sank to the floor. I was so happy, not just at the prospect of a gig, but because it was *him!*

RF: What was the audition like?

VC: I just went in there with the attitude that I was going to shoot my shot and was not going to get real uptight because it was Frank Zappa. I would just go for it. This was it and I was going to put it all forward. I went there and was watching these people audition. The average time they lasted was like fifteen seconds.

RF: Why do you think they weren't cutting it? What was lacking?

VC: It seemed as though they just couldn't go through with what Frank wanted out of a musician. Frank would put this music in front of you that was ridiculously difficult, like equally on par with 20th-century compositional kind of stuff, and rhythmically it was incredible. These guys would sit there and they could play grooves but they couldn't read or vice versa. He looks for a special combination of elements in a per-



son and I guess they weren't there.

I auditioned on Bozzio's drums. I had never played on two bass drums, but I said, "Screw it—I'm going for it!" He put this thing in front of me, "Pedro's Dowry," and it was the melodic part that I had to sight read in unison with the marimba. So I sight read a little bit of that. I just had to concentrate on it completely, and to my surprise, I didn't make any mistakes. He was about to give me "The Black Page." I had tried my hand at transcribing it, so I had it memorized and before he gave me the music, I started playing it. I got about two-thirds through it and I guess he had heard enough because he said, "Okay, yes, you *can* read." Then he started playing this thing in 21/16 and he wanted me to play along. I grasped it; it was all subdivided in threes and twos. Then he told me to take a solo, so I played on it. Then he came back in and played and said, "Okay, that's enough of that." He started throwing tune after tune and we went through about four tunes. The whole thing lasted about fifteen minutes, which was like a record. Then he pulled me aside and asked me when I could start. I turned white and said, "Anytime." And that was it. That bailed me out of my whole living and financial situation.

RF: Terry Bozzio said he almost felt at times that Zappa would write these ridiculously difficult things to taunt his players

to see if they could actually do what he'd written. Although I'm sure some of what Bozzio said was tongue-in-cheek, how do you feel about that?

VC: I've seen situations like that where I've pondered the same thing. But I don't doubt the sheer musicality of it for one second. I think it's brilliant and as far as I'm concerned, Frank is one of the most gifted composers of all time. I don't think he's been duly recognized as such.

RF: You played double bass with Zappa?

VC: Here's what happened. When I started with Frank, for the first two tours, I had this little Gretsch set with one 20" bass drum and he loved it. But after a while, I wanted to go out and get a bigger bass drum, a 22" or something. He said, "No, I'll make it sound good." So he went out and got a lot of outboard gear and made it sound good. He just loved the idea of this little set I was playing. I sat like two inches off the ground and he kind of liked the concept of where I was coming from. I guess he wanted to get into a different approach, drumwise. Finally, on the last tour I told him I wanted to play two bass drums. He said, "No, because we'd have to leave one mic' open all the time and there would be problems acoustically." But finally I convinced him and just took them on the gig. I didn't really practice on them, but when you rehearse a tour with Frank, you rehearse for like two months, eight hours a

day, before you go out. So I got a chance to get used to them in rehearsals. But it took a while. We went on the road for three months or something, and by the middle of the tour, they started feeling good.

RF: With two bass drums, the question invariably comes up as to the utilization of the second bass at the expense of the hi-hat. Can you describe your approach?

VC: My approach differed as time went on. I wanted to play two bass drums, but I just wanted to play them as a supplement, to add some bottom heavy color, and it did do that. Sometimes I'd play them in unison and it was an effective thing to use on solos, just independence-wise. It developed that kind of strength and technique in my left foot and that was good and it makes it sound real big. It's funny, because my whole equipment scene evolved to a point with Frank where at the end of the time I was with him, I had two bass drums, I had a Synare electronic bass drum in the middle of those two drums, a real snare, a Synare snare, timbales, four *Syndrums*, five Synare tympani, tom-toms, *Roto-toms*, the two cymbals on top of one another, and one of those splash cymbals that is cut out of a hi-hat so it sounded real thick. I was starting to think of it more like all these sound varities to the point where I'd come up with grooves that you wouldn't normally do on a hi-hat and one bass

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BARRY

Born in the Bronx in 1943, Barry first became involved with drums at the age of eleven. After the usual amount of practice, jamming, freelance gigs and lessons (with Charli Persip), Barry happened to meet Paul Bley, and was invited to play. This was in 1964, and Barry continued playing with Bley until 1970. During this time he also studied with Sam Ulano and did a variety of recordings as a Sideman. Altschul's next major association was with the collective group Circle, which featured Dave Holland, Anthony Braxton and Chick Corea. The group was together two years and was considered very influential. For the next few years, Barry played with the Anthony Braxton Quartet, as well as, the Sam Rivers Trio.

After leaving Rivers, Altschul decided to follow his own path, and became a bandleader: first with a quartet, then with a trio. For the past four years, the trio, called Brahma, has featured the same personnel: Altschul, trombonist Ray Anderson, and bassist Mark Helias. They have managed to work consistently throughout the years, and have released a number of albums under Barry's name. Their music covers a wide range of influences, from Dixieland to avant-garde, in such a way that it is all blended together to form a cohesive whole, with an emphasis on improvisation.

RM: I've heard you express the philosophy that concept must come before technique. Would you elaborate on that?

BA: When people first start playing, it's because they want to play to a music they hear. So kids pick up some drumsticks, get their little tin-can drumset together, and start playing something with no technique before they start learning anything. Already, there's some kind of a concept—they hear something that they want to play. Now from that point, yes, I believe that one should learn certain basics of the instrument. There's a certain common language that one must learn in order to get these things out. But just learning technical aspects of drumming does not make music. I consider myself a musician first, whose instrument is the drums. So when I started practicing years ago, it was like I heard something and tried to play it. I couldn't, so then I searched for *how* to play it. By finding out how to play it, you run across whatever technique is needed to play this thing. Usually this technique is one that everybody knows; it's a standard technique. But if you were to just learn all of the standard techniques, and you don't have a conception, then you can't use what you have.

So what I think is, if you hear something to play and can't play it, then you sit down and practice to develop the technique to play what you hear. The more you learn to hear, the more technique you find to play it. So I feel the concept stimulates the technique to play the music. I don't feel technique stimulates a concept. I don't feel that just learning technical aspects of the instrument will help you learn to improvise, or help you learn to swing, or help you do any of that. To me, the technique is the easiest part of the music. It just takes practice—the more you practice, the more technical you become. But that doesn't necessarily mean that what you play will be musical. I mean, I know some great "drum-pad drummers," as I call them. But when you put them with a band, they don't really make music.

RM: So if people naturally start out with some kind of concept, why do so many get sidetracked and become hung up with technique?

BA: That's a very interesting question. I think it has to do with many, many aspects of one's life. It depends on their creative goals; what they want to achieve as a musician; what kind of contribution, if any, they want to make, or if they just want to use music as their job to make money. It could be the psychology of the person—what they're made to feel is important in their environment. In the Western environment, technique is the tool; it's not the end. It's just the means to get to a place; it's not the place you

arrive at. So I think many people get caught in the theory that if they become great technicians, they will be great musicians. They do go hand in hand—you do need technique, and nowadays you need more technique than ever before because of all the different things a drummer is called upon to do.

RM: I wonder if a lot of the fault is with teachers who do nothing other than teach techniques.

BA: It is the responsibility of the teacher to stimulate the student into what it's really like to be a musician, rather than just give that particular side of it. I studied with two teachers. One was strictly to learn to read, and he was great for that—Sam Ulano. I knew what he was going to give me when I went to him, and that's what I wanted. And that was later; I was in my twenties when I felt I really needed to get into some serious reading studies. When I was seventeen years old, I studied with Charli Persip. I studied with him formally, and other times we just hung out. He really put the idea of playing music into my concept. It wasn't about technique. I credit him with putting me on the track of using technique to get your ideas out. "Play what you hear, and if you can't play it, then practice it." It was great advice.

RM: What are some of the things a teacher can do to help a student learn more than just technique?

BA: Helping another person to play music involves more than technique and reading. It involves things like what to listen to, different approaches to music, how you feel with yourself, what it's like on a bandstand playing with other people, what the business is like, what the frustrations are like, and all those kinds of things. Through the years I've developed an eleven-step form that I deal with when I teach, which gets into all of these areas. Plus, there are a couple of things on the form that leave room for what the student wants to do. There's always a time in the lesson where I say, "Okay, what *are you* dealing with in your life, playing with friends or whatever, and what are your problems?" I do that every lesson. I always make it clear to my students that I am just giving them me, and whatever I feel is important for them. But I tell them if I'm not doing something they feel is important, to bring it up. If I know about it, we get into it. If I don't know about it, then they turn *me* on. I don't really teach a concept *per se*; then I would just be sitting someone down and teaching them my licks—how I approach these things. Instead, I try to make them find their own approach. They will come in and say, "I heard this and tried to do it, but it just didn't work." Then I say, "Well, let me see what you're doing." We talk about it and I see where I can help them

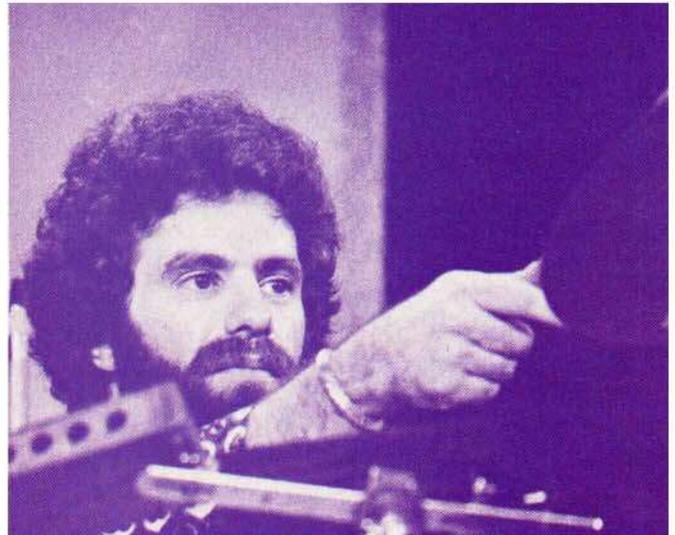


Photo by Laura Friedman

ALTSCHUL

NOVEMBER 1982

by Rick Mattingly

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"A LOT OF THE SERIOUS STUDY THAT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR YEARS WITHIN THE EVOLUTION OF THE DRUMS IS BEING DISREGARDED. IT SHOULD BE THE OPPOSITE WAY. EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN DONE SHOULD BE USED, AND EVERYONE SHOULD BE THINKING UP NEW THINGS TO USE IN ADDITION TO WHAT'S ALREADY AVAILABLE."



technically or whatever, and we deal with it like that. But each student is different. I don't teach the same thing to each student. Each student is on a different level and should be approached individually.

I enjoy teaching. It's a responsibility that I feel is an important one. I feel a lot is being lost; a lot is being forgotten about; a lot is not being done anymore. I feel that people who know about certain things should keep those things alive. For example, jazz, American improvisational music, is an oral tradition. It was learned by being passed on. There was a lot there; a lot was discovered, a lot is still being discovered, and I believe that people who are involved in that should keep passing it on. Otherwise, it will become a dying thing. What's being done now with the drums is more geared towards money making. I think a lot of the individuality in drumming is being forgotten. People are thinking, "Steve Gadd is doing this, and he's doing it very well, and he's making a lot of money, so that's what I will do." With my teaching, I'm into the students finding their own individual ways of playing. That's what turns *me* on.

RM: I've heard successful musicians talk about the encouragement they received, and how much it helped them. I've heard other successful musicians talk of receiving discouragement from others, but they said that helped them too because it made them try harder.

BA: That's right, and that's probably why, subconsciously, those things are done—to get you ready for the real world. When I was young, I was actually kicked off the bandstand several times. But it wasn't discouraging because it was done in such a way where they would say ". . . and come back when you can play." It wasn't like, "Get outta here and never come back." It was like, "You ain't makin' it now, but if you're serious, go home and practice. When you think you've got it together, come back and we'll see what's happening." So you go home and you either give up or you practice. That happened to me a few times. Of course, at the time, it was shattering. But looking back on it, it was great. It was honesty, that's all. I felt I was ready to play with these people, but I wasn't.

RM: Do you think there can be such a thing as too much encouragement?

BA: Well, not too much encouragement, no. I feel there *can* be too much praise from an audience. That might turn someone's head. I feel praise from your peers is more honest. Also, criticism from your peers is not anything but them trying to help. But with an audience, if they tell you that you were playing great, you know yourself if you were happening or not. You have to be honest with yourself and look at it in perspective.

RM: You are involved in a lot of "free" music. I'm reminded of the saying, "You have to know the rules before you can break them."

BA: Yeah, I can agree with that. I could also see another approach of starting without any rules and then learning them afterwards.

RM: What was your approach? You talked earlier about the im-

portance of carrying on a tradition.

BA: For me personally, yes, I've been very involved in the tradition of the instrument, and my study has included Dixieland, swing, bebop, into freer playing. And every few years I go back into the woodshed and start from the beginning, re-educating myself in all those areas and in whatever other areas I happen to be turned on to that are new for me. So yeah, I believe in learning what the drums have been in music. And then, if you want to expand the role, and you have the talent to do it, you can. You *should* do it if you have the talent. It's part of the responsibility of passing on and extending the tradition. I myself feel that I come from the tradition of what's commonly termed the "jazz drummer." I'm very steeped in those roots.

RM: Some contend that learning tradition will taint the ability to truly play free.

BA: Yeah, but eventually everybody has to learn the same things about their instrument. Everybody has to know what makes the instrument work, and what the things are that get the sounds, and whatever else. It's a pretty standardized thing.

RM: I guess for a really pure approach, the person would have to have absolutely no influences, if such a thing is possible.

BA: Probably, but influences are good. I mean, imitation is how we learn. When children are learning how to talk, they imitate their parents until they learn the words and learn how to think for themselves. Then they come out with their own ideas. I think it's the same thing with music—with improvisational music anyway. There are certain influences, certain things that appeal to you, that you copy until you learn those things. Then you start to make your changes and deal with them in your own way; sometimes to the point of changing them completely. I mean, the innovators in music all got things from their predecessors, and then changed them to the point to where they became innovations. Elvin Jones, for example, was very influenced by Max Roach, and then he changed it to a point that became a new basis for playing. Tony Williams came out of people like Roy Haynes, Alan Dawson and Art Blakey, and then found his own way of doing things that became an-



other standard. Most of the people who contribute to the role of an instrument, I feel, come out of what went on before them.

RM: How valid is it for an aspiring musician to just focus on one thing? Let's say he wants to play bebop, so that's all he listens to.

BA: Well, you might be individual, but you will probably be limited. You will only be individual in this one form of expression. But then, bebop is a wide area of music in itself. If you really do just listen to bebop, you also, through assimilation, listen to all of the things that have influenced bebop. Maybe you don't know that Max was influenced by Jo Jones or Sid Catlett, but through Max, you get the influence of those other people. When you listen to Dizzy, you get a lot of Latin influence. And then the blues have always been closely related to jazz, so bebop has that in it. I guess if somebody really did just listen to bebop, that could still be pretty positive.

RM: What about people who refuse to acknowledge anything past Coltrane?

BA: Well, in the '40s and '50s, Charlie Parker had a very hard time. People were listening to Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins; they didn't want to hear Charlie Parker. It's taken thirty or forty years after the fact for it to really be accepted. That seems to be the case with all music that's pretty much improvised. It's realized for what it is twenty, thirty, forty years after the fact. I guess that's human nature to a degree. I mean, it's been going on forever. Something new or something different has always been frowned upon. It had to prove itself, and that can take many, many years. Prove itself for what, I don't know. But the fact is, if someone comes up with something new and says, "Here's an approach—let's check it out; let's play it," it gets pounced upon. It gets put down, the people who are doing it get insulted, and all they are doing is what they are supposed to do: playing their instruments and trying to develop something. Look at technology—it's been developed to the point where the world could be destroyed in seconds, and yet they are still trying to develop it even more. But nobody pounces on that the way they pounce on artists who put something out that shakes people one way or another. I think that's totally ridiculous. I think there's room for everything.

You know, in Europe, there's the same audience for all types of music. You can have a punk-rock group, or an avant-garde group, or a classical Indian group, or anything, and the same audience will come because the radio stations play all the music. There are very few specialty shows. One tune will be a rock tune, the next tune will be bebop, another tune will be free, then there will be some classical music—you just turn on the radio and hear everything. So there's not the same prejudice against style. There are likes and dislikes, but all of what's offered is at least accepted.

RM: In America, everyone and everything has to compete.

BA: Well, there has to be something to make you want to develop, and I guess in the West, competition is where it's at.

RM: The trouble with that is, a lot of people approach competition by trying to tear down others rather than by building themselves up.

BA: Well, then they're not truly developing. I think competition stops at a certain level. It stops when one has it together; when one can play. When we were all younger, maybe it was about competition because that's what stimulated each one of us. "I've gotta go

home and practice so I can do what he's doing." It was just to become better at what you were trying to do. Then you reach a certain level and it's no more, "Who's best?" We're all playing—this is the way *he's* playing, and this is the way *I'm* playing, and if you want my style you can call me and if you want his style, call him. We've each created an individual style for ourselves. Once you're on a certain level of playing, it's not better or worse—it's different. So let's enjoy everybody's style.

RM: I see a problem with listeners more than musicians. They feel that they have to pick their favorite.

BA: Well, a lot of that has to do with the media and how people are made to think a certain way. You are bombarded by a certain kind of music, so that might have something to do with it. Also, the media is geared for what is making money, so that is what you are bombarded with. The people who are into jazz become very dogmatic because there is so little of it that that's all they want to hear.

RM: It seems to be a circle sometimes. The audiences are trained by the media to like certain things, and so the audience demands those things from the musicians.

BA: To me, the audience shouldn't control what I give them. Sometimes it's difficult. In certain musics, the audience is coming to you to hear what they heard on the record. So if they are into it, you have to give that to them or you won't be successful. For me, I want the audience to enjoy the music, and we're doing whatever we can to make the audience enjoy it. But initially, I hope they enjoy what we, the band, want to give them. There's a certain responsibility of showing people things, and letting them have a choice. But some musicians don't really show anything other than what they're told to show. They might become successful, but as soon as the audience outgrows them, they're not successful anymore.

RM: Would you say that getting an audience to accept what you're doing involves communicating *with* them, rather than just *to* them?

BA: That's right. I've found that when you're in communication with an audience, you can pretty much do what you want and they'll be there with you. When you're on a stage, you are dealing not only with your own energy, but you also have all of this energy in the audience that's being fed to you, that you can use. And they recognize when you are using their energy. When they react to something you do, and you feel their reaction, it stimulates you and you give more. It becomes one big energy, and I guess spiritually, that's a place that people talk about getting to. It's where all is one. You put the music out there, the audience comes up to the music, and you all meet where the music is. It becomes this big mass of energy that the music is actually in control of.

I once played a concert in Italy with Sam Rivers, and there must have been 15,000 people, or something like that. We ended the concert on a very high energy level. We felt we were finished, but the audience wasn't finished yet. The promoter of the concert came running backstage: "You've gotta come back out. They're starting to rip up the seats!" So we went back up and played something very soft and peaceful. It cooled the audience right down and we left the stage. So the power of the music to change people's emotions is very strong.

That's the place where everybody meets. You affect them and, in turn, they affect you. And hopefully, when people walk away, no matter what you put on them, everybody has a good feeling. The musicians come off and say, "Yeah, that felt good," and the audience also walks away saying, "Yeah, that felt good." Some of it could even be hard to listen to, in the sense that dissonance and arhythmical patterns sometimes make people feel uncomfortable. But if you deal with it in certain ways—tension and release, tension and release—everybody walks away feeling good. And they heard something that they wouldn't ordinarily have heard, because you didn't just bombard them with the same thing for an hour.

RM: You need to build bridges, in a sense, to help them get to new places.

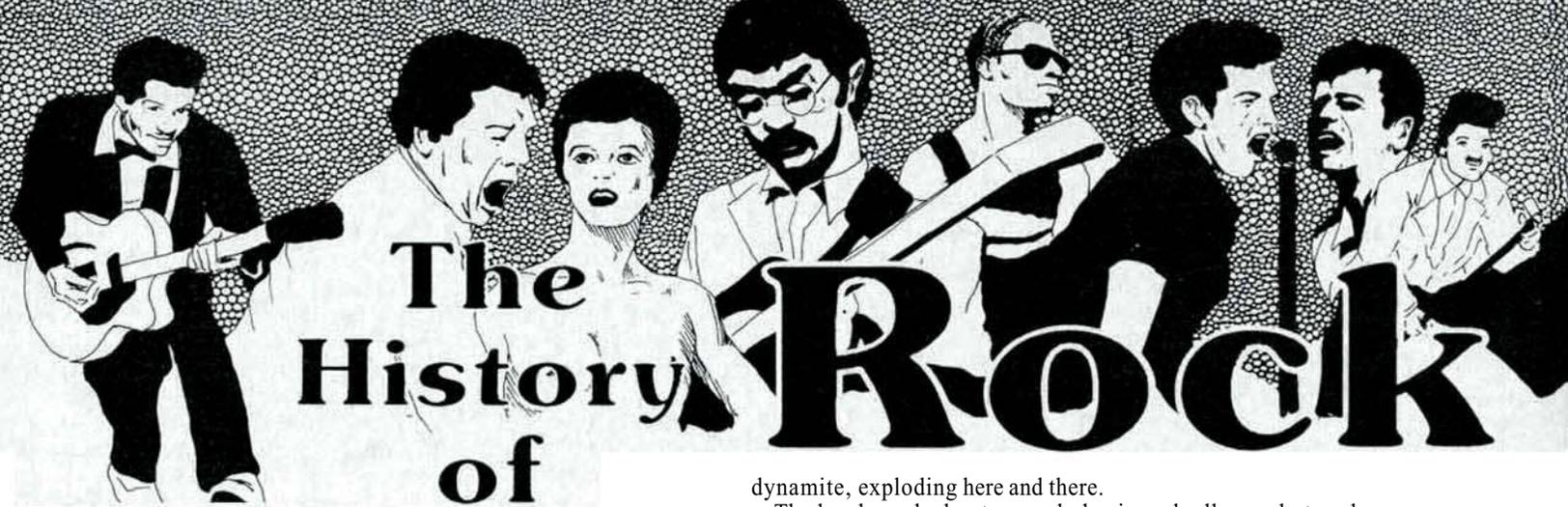
BA: Right. You play something where they can lay back and groove. Then you lay something on them where they can still groove, but they also have something to think about. Then you come back to where they don't have to think; they can just groove. By doing that, they'll walk away and think about that little thing you made them think about, and not feel bad about it. And a lot of

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Photo by
Laura Friedman

"IF YOU HEAR SOMETHING TO PLAY AND CAN'T PLAY IT, THEN YOU SIT DOWN AND PRACTICE TO DEVELOP THE TECHNIQUE TO PLAY WHAT YOU HEAR. THE MORE YOU LEARN TO HEAR, THE MORE TECHNIQUE YOU FIND TO PLAY IT."



The History of

Rock

The Final Chapter

by Scott Fish

The '70s were a drummers smorgasbord. You could have as many drummers as you wanted and as much of a variety as you wanted. It seemed like rock and roll branched off into hard rock, heavy metal, jazz rock, country rock, soft rock, disco, soul, r&b, pop, art rock, punk rock, new wave . . . nothing was simple anymore. The boundaries between popular music, classical and jazz were broken down, but it was as if the boundaries had been made of mercury. They scattered all over the place.

In 1969 an album was released called *The Allman Brothers Band*. The Allman Brothers were a hard rocking band who had the ability to improvise like jazz musicians. The band showcased the talents of Butch Trucks and Jaimoe Johanson—a dual-drummer combination who were like Mutt and Jeff. Butch's background was rock and roll with a twist of classical music. Jaimoe was also out of the rock and roll tradition with heavy jazz influences. When they played, Butch was like a D-9 bulldozer and Jaimoe was like

dynamite, exploding here and there.

The band cranked out several classic rock albums, but perhaps the best was *The Allman Brothers Band at Fillmore East* in mid-'71. This is a brilliant live album that captured the drive and improvisatory skills of each of the band members. The Allman Brothers Band suffered the loss of two key band members, Duane Allman and Berry Oakley, early on. After a couple of reformations, Jaimoe finally called it quits in '81 and went on to pursue a solo career. Drummer Frank Toler took his place alongside Butch Trucks. Butch and Jaimoe became role models for a whole string of "country/rock" bands who were to follow.

On Time hit the record stores in 1969. That album was the beginning of the phenomenal success of Grand Funk Railroad, a power trio (until '72 when Craig Frost was added on keyboards) that had the rare distinction of disgusting critics and journalists for years, while at the same time delighting fans and knocking out one gold album after the next. Drummer Don Brewer played solid rock and arguably had the ability to play convincing solos. The group disbanded in 1976 after their final album *GoodSingin' Good Playin'*, which was produced by Frank Zappa.

1969 was the year Jethro Tull released a brilliant album called *Stand Up*. Tull's music was originally a blend of blues and jazz, and Clive Bunker was on drums. Bunker played incredibly well; an authoritative player who could play solid backbeats, had the ability to solo and improvise, and was extremely colorful. Bunker left in 1971 after the release of *Aqualung*. In 1972 the "self-taught" Barriemore Barlow took over the drum chair for almost the next ten years. "Since that departure," he said, "I've been involved with various experimental units, working with musicians of the highest calibre. The new outlook is very refreshing."

King Crimson, another band that received tremendous acclaim and was the launch pad for other great bands, actually culminated in '68 with guitarist Robert Fripp and percussionist Michael Giles. Giles had had more than eighteen years playing experience by this time, yet he was only twenty-six years old. He began playing in '54 in jazz and skiffle bands, and during the '60s he traveled throughout Europe with several bands and was also a very active studio drummer.

In The Court of the Crimson King became one of the best sellers of 1969, and the follow up album, *In the Wake of Poseidon*, sold as well. By 1972, Giles had left the band and his position was taken over by Bill Bruford. Giles has remained off the scene for too many years. His name keeps popping up as being a significant influence on many of the best drummers in rock music today.

Bill Bruford debuted in 1969 with Yes, a drummer who ". . . is very rarely content to just play a straight beat. He usually figures in with the whole rhythm of the song and the bass player a lot." Bruford usually played the unexpected, and even his drumsets were unique and everchanging. In 1979 he told MD correspondent Michael Shore, "In Europe and England there's a looser attitude toward the set-up. One might start out with a marimba and a snare drum. It's a much healthier attitude. If the rest of the world is . . . on a conventional kit, you sound that much more unique. I'm a rock drummer but I don't like most rock drummers. They tune the



Drumming

PART V

heads slack. They plod and are unimaginative. I love jazz. My style is in the grey area between rock and jazz."

Bruford left Yes after the *Close To The Edge* album and was with King Crimson until that band broke up in '74. After playing with Gong and Genesis for a short spell, Bruford recorded four solo albums on Polydor records: *Feels Good To Me*, *One Of A Kind*, *The Bruford Tapes* and *Gradually Going Tornado*, which are all out of print! (Readers can write letters of protest to Polydor.) As of '82, Bill is back with a reformed King Crimson and continues to be a pioneer, particularly in the electronic percussion field.

Santana was the first rock band to incorporate Latin music. The original percussion section consisted of Mike Carrabello on congas and Jose "Chepito" Areas (a poll-winning percussionist in Central America) and seventeen-year-old Mike Shrieve on drums. The band's appearance at the Woodstock Festival catapulted them to stardom. Shrieve was a fiery player with a lot of chops and a lot of taste. He has credited Chepito as being a tremendous aid in his understanding of Latin rhythms. Shrieve left the band in 1977 and had a band called Automatic Man and then Go with Steve Winwood and Japanese percussionist/composer Stomu Yamashta. Go released three albums, including one live package, all of which have a tremendous amount of energy and creativity. Shrieve is brilliant on these albums. I interviewed Mike in 1979 while he was forming a band called Patterns, that disbanded. In 1982 he formed Novo Combo, one of the better new bands to emerge in the last few years.

Alice Cooper became a success in 1970 with the release of *Love It 'To Death*. The drummer was Neal Smith and the band was mainly noted for its gruesome theatrics. The original band broke up in 1974 and Whately Glans played for Alice Cooper, while Neal Smith formed a band called Billion Dollar Babies with three of the ex-Cooper members.

ZZ Top blew in from Texas with drummer Frank Beard. This trio played the blues and rocked it up quite a bit.

Neil Young started releasing a bunch of good rock and roll after he left Buffalo Springfield. He worked with a band called Crazy Horse which had Ralph Molina on drums and had two hits with "Cowgirl In The Sand" and "Down By The River." In 1970 he joined the existing Crosby, Stills & Nash and they released *Deja Vu* with Dallas Taylor handling the drumming. Perhaps his biggest selling album was *Harvest* in 1972 with some excellent rock drumming by sessionman Kenny Buttrey.

Several singer/songwriters became incredibly popular throughout the '70s, supported by the talented drumming of Russ Kunkel. Russ played on James Taylor's second album, *Sweet Baby James*, which had a single called "Fire And Rain." Kunkel used brushes on the record in a non-traditional manner. He played the brushes as if they were sticks and he got a tremendous sound out of the drums. "Fire And Rain" was the forerunner to Carol King's albums (she played piano on *Sweet Baby James*) like *Tapestry*, one of the best selling rock records in history.

Russ Kunkel is extremely important in the history of rock. He went on to record almost all of Taylor's records and he also

worked with Linda Ronstadt and Jackson Browne among many, many others.

Studio great Hal Blaine was being kept busy in the studio and on the road, particularly with John Denver. In 1971 Denver's hit "Take Me Home Country Roads" catapulted him to superstardom.

California gave us one of the greatest rock and roll bands ever with Little Feat in 1969. *Little Feat* was the first lp, followed by *Sailin' Shoes*, *Dixie Chicken*, *Feats Don't Fail Me Now*, *The Last Record Album*, *Time Loves A Hero* and an excellent live album with the Tower of Power Horns called *Waiting For Columbus*.

Richie Hayward drove this band through it's tumultuous tunes without mercy. Basically a self-taught drummer who used to listen to a lot of jazz records, Hayward was one of those drummers who do almost everything wrong (if you're going by the book) but has created one of the few original styles in rock drumming. For some reason, despite great critical acclaim for their albums, their live performances and their individual abilities as musicians, Little Feat was like the Wright Brother's plane. It would get off the ground for a short time and then it would come back down again. Such was the career of this band. Chief songwriter Lowell George died in 1980 and the band dissolved for a while. In 1981, Paul Barrere took all the existing members, except keyboardist Bill





Steve Gadd

Payne, and did some dates. But as far as rock drumming is concerned—they don't come much better than Richie Hayward.

Genesis was formed by Peter Gabriel, who was playing drums for the band originally. John Mayhew took over the drum chair and recorded the band's first album in '69, called *From Genesis To Revelation*, which was not well received. A second lp, *Trespass* was cut and Mayhew left and was replaced by Phil Collins, an ex-child actor. Collins has developed into one of the most creative people in rock and roll. Onstage, Genesis starting using "visuals and theatrics on which they would subsequently found their reputation." The '71 album, *Nursery Cryme*, was followed by *Foxtrot* in '72 with two of Genesis' best-known songs, "Watcher of the Skies" and "Supper's Ready." A 1973 live album, *Genesis Live*, was well-received and preceded *Selling England By The Pound* and the band's first hit, "I Know What I Like."

When Peter Gabriel quit in 1975, drummer Phil Collins became the lead singer, and in '76, Chester Thompson joined the band on drums to take some of the load off Collins. Also, in '75 Collins recorded two lp's, *Unorthodox Behaviour* and *Moroccan Roll*, with Brand X.

Genesis continues to be a top-draw act. In 1981, Phil Collins released a solo album called *Face Value* that had to have been one of the best rock albums of that year at least. His drum sound on records was like artillery and his songs were excellent.

Mick Fleetwood was mentioned earlier as an original member of Fleetwood Mac, an English band that was originally a blues band. In fact, in 1969, they released an lp entitled *Fleetwood Mac In Chicago* and the British version was *Blues Jam At Chess*. Fleetwood was a solid blues/rock drummer and at one time that band employed three of the finest British blues guitarists: Danny Kirwan, Jeremy Spencer and Peter Green.

Between 1970 and 1975, Fleetwood Mac went through several personnel changes and released a string of good albums in *Kiln House*, *Future Games*, *Bare Trees*, *Penguin*, *Mystery To Me*, and *Heroes are Hard To Find*. In 1975, Mick Fleetwood and John McVie (the band's original bassist) along with Christine Perfect, a singer/songwriter/pianist who'd been with another British blues band called Chicken Shack, and who was married to McVie, teamed up with Lindsay Buckingham and Stevie Nicks for the new Fleetwood Mac. In '75 they released *Fleetwood Mac* which became a monster record, followed by *Rumours* in '77, another monster

record.

Mick Fleetwood plays exceptionally well with McVie on bass. Fleetwood's use of tom-toms in unison with McVie's bass lines is very subtle, but it creates an incredibly strong bottom to the band's music and is quite unique.

Perhaps the most popular rock drummer of '69 and the most influential was John Bonham. Led Zepplin grew out of a resurrected version of The Yardbirds, and Bonham was actually the second choice. Guitarist Jimmy Page had wanted Procol Harum's drummer, B.J. Wilson, but Bonham got the job. His style was extremely aggressive and perhaps the most amazing characteristic of Bonham was his ability to play intricately and forcefully at the same time. Anyone who has seen Zepplin's movie, *The Song Remains The Same*, might've had the same feeling that I did. How does he keep up that pace? From 1969 until the death of Bonham in 1981, Led Zepplin grew into a monster act that influenced hundreds of bands. The tragedy of Bonham was his inability to channel his tremendous energy and creativity, and his phenomenal success into healthier activities. Still, John Bonham earned himself a secure place in the history of rock drumming.

Jim Keltner was thrown into the public eye around 1969. An extremely versatile, gifted and creative drummer, Keltner propelled bands like Delaney & Bonnie & Friends, Joe Cocker's Mad Dogs and Englishmen, George Harrison, John Lennon, Ry Cooder and Ringo Starr, and he became a role model for the next generation of studio drummers. (Bob DiSalle's description of Keltner's style in this issue is so beautiful that I won't try to improve on it.) Recently Jim has been recording with Bob Dylan and Ry Cooder, as well as touring with both men. Like Bill Bruford, Keltner is always restless to improve, expand, tear down and build up his abilities. He co-lead a band called Attitudes that released a couple of albums, he co-wrote and sang on Ry Cooder's last album and he's been experimenting with electronic percussion.

Another drummer who broke tradition in 1969 was Gregg Errico with Sly and The Family Stone. On songs like "I Want To Take You Higher," "Stand," and "Everyday People," Errico's funk use of the hi-hat and bass drum particularly were very innovative. Sly's music set the stage for major changes in rock music, but this was also the music that inspired many jazz musicians to "cross-over" in jazz/rock fusion.

Drummer Tony Williams had been hailed as a "boy genius" in jazz circles since he first appeared with Miles Davis when he was seventeen. Around 1970, Tony left Miles and formed a band of his own and released a record called *Emergency* with Larry Young on organ and John McLaughlin on guitar. Most people consider this



Photo by Lisa Tanner

Phil Collins

record to be the first "fusion" album, from a band that influenced the entire musical direction of the '70s. Williams has said, "From my standpoint there were bands that influenced me at the time. I remember Gary Burton's band with Steve Swallow and maybe Larry Coryell. Then I would listen to the Charles Lloyd group. I was also heavily influenced by Jimi Hendrix."

Williams' drumming at this time was awesome. Carmine Appice told me, "Tony Williams was the only drummer to ever floor me in twenty seconds. Totally blew my mind. When I was with the Fudge, I was on an ego trip. I went to hear Tony and said to myself, 'Alright. Let's see what you can do.' He had a four-piece set with an 18" bass drum and I didn't know where he was coming from or where he got his rhythms from."

Tony released *Turn It Over after Emergency!*, then *Ego*, *The Old Bums Rush*, *Believe It*, *Million Dollar Legs* and *Joy of Flying*. His contributions to both jazz and rock are immense. When we realize that Tony was seventeen when he joined Miles, and that he was only twenty-two when he recorded *Emergency!*—his contribution is even more staggering.

Williams' guitarist John McLaughlin went on to form the Mahavishnu Orchestra in 1970, a band that showcased one of the great innovators in drums: Billy Cobham. Cobham had come up playing jazz and r&b and his first shot at success was with a short-lived band called Dreams, that also featured Michael and Randy Brecker, and John Abercrombie. Cobham developed a massive drumset and he was one of the few drummers who had the technique and the taste to play it all. The Mahavishnu Orchestra created challenging music using a variety of time signatures and tempo changes. Cobham was one of the first drummers who made other drummers think about the way they were holding their sticks. Most of the great "technicians" up to Cobham held their sticks traditionally (Rich, Bellson, Morello), and Billy used matched grip, plus he had a right-handed drummer's set-up but played his hi-hat and ride cymbal with his left hand (although he had the ambidexterity to play either way). Billy was also on Eumir Deodato's record, "2001," which became a hit single. That record was certainly one of the first "crossover" records and the unique musicianship influenced a ton of people.

Billy left the Mahavishnu Orchestra, formed his own bands and recorded several records under his own name; the most successful and talked about is probably *Crosswind*. Today, Billy has a new band called Glass Menagerie and remains a very well-respected percussionist.

Miles Davis recorded *Bitches Brew* in 1970, that featured Jack DeJohnette, Lenny White, Charles Alias and Jim Riley (three



Photo by Kathy Sloane

drummers and a percussionist). This was a milestone recording that smashed the walls between rock and jazz. DeJohnette remained with Miles for a while before going off on his own. He recorded several albums for CTI records—a company that was thriving at this time. Jack remains an enigma in drumming. He's well respected by almost every drummer and although it would be easy to say that his own music leans more toward jazz—that wouldn't really be accurate. DeJohnette's the "thinking man's drummer" who can handle himself in any situation.

Lenny White joined up with Chick Corea in Return To Forever. "I played high-energy music, all dexterity, a lot of emphasis on notes/technique." RTF was really coming out of the same mold as the Mahavishnu Orchestra. After RTF, White formed his own band, Twennynine, that played primarily dance music.

Weather Report released their first album in 1970. The drummer was Alphonse Mouzon and the percussionist was the brilliant Airtio. Mouzon played very well on this record but his stay was short-lived. He went on to play and record with McCoy Tyner and then with Larry Coryell and The Eleventh House, and then released solo albums.

Airtio should be included here because he was one of the first percussionists in rock/jazz. He performed with Weather Report and Miles Davis in addition to just about everybody else who was making records at this time. After Airtio, rock bands started to add percussion players and drummers were aware of more possibilities for sounds than the basic snare, bass, toms and cymbals. "Percussion does not mean just time," Airtio said. "Percussion means many colors." Airtio also played amazing drumset on some sessions, including the original Return To Forever albums.

1970 also gave us Tommy Aldridge with Black Oak Arkansas, Corky Laing with Mountain, Bill Ward with Black Sabbath, Jocko Marcellino with Sha Na Na, Nigel Olson with Elton John, and Bob C. Benberge with Supertramp. The Winter Brothers, Edgar and Johnny, had a succession of fine drummers including Red Turner, Randy Z., Bobby Caldwell, Bobby Ramirez and Chuck Ruff.

Jim Gordon surfaced with Delaney & Bennie, then Mad Dogs and Englishmen, and the legendary Derek & The Dominoes band. Gordon is a well-schooled musician with a thorough knowledge of all aspects of his instrument. His work in the studios in the '60s is phenomenal, and like his close friend Jim Keltner, Jim Gordon

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Photo by Rick Malkin

I've always had a soft spot for Canada. In fact, my office looks like the Canadian Embassy with pictures of the Rue de la Montagne in Montreal, aerial views of Vancouver, and the Canadian Rockies plastered all over the walls. Some of my favorite musicians are Canadian: The McGarrigle Sisters, Joni Mitchell, Gordon Lightfoot and Bruce Cockburn. Cockburn's music was introduced to me by Rob Witter, proprietor of Kropotkin Records. Often I'd walk in the shop and hear music coming from the record player. "Hey, that music sounds great. Who is that?" Or, "Man, that's a nice song. Who is that?" Or, "Boy, that guy's a good guitarist. Who is that?" Rob would always say, "Bruce Cockburn." Many U.S. residents first knew him by his hit single, "Wonder Where The Lions Are," back around 1980.

So, it was an exciting day when a letter came from the southern part of the U.S. from a reader who asked, "Why don't you interview Bruce Cockburn's drummer, Bob DiSalle?" I picked up the newest album, In The Falling Darkness, and Bob DiSalle was playing fantastic drums.

I found out that Bob has an exciting career up in Canada. He's a busy studio drummer, he's gigging with several bands and/or artists in addition to Bruce Cockburn, and he's consistently exploring new ways to do old things. So, several months

ago was a possibility. It wasn't just something that you did for a while and then you went to school and got "serious" about things. I just followed through.

SF: Had you ever considered a career other than music?

BD: Nothing seriously. I never even considered music seriously! I came to Toronto when I decided to seriously play professionally. Shortly after I moved here, the band I came here to join broke up. Another band was formed and then it broke up and everybody went their separate ways. This was 1970-'71. When that last band broke up that was one of the toughest times. At that point, after doing some touring and playing the bars, I was really trying to decide if it was really worth it. My decision was to go ahead with it and to get back into some studying. I found a teacher and began to lead a band. We got a bunch of musicians together and started to work enough from week to week to make enough money to stay alive.

SF: Had you studied with any teachers before that?

BD: No. In Sudbury—my hometown—my Dad was a member of the Caruso Club. They had a concert band that I played snare drum for marches and Christmas carols for a few years. It was a fairly big band; about thirty pieces. I did that to try to learn to read.

After I left that I decided I wasn't inter-

ested more than anything else.

Then I studied with Pete Magadini for about eight months. When Peter decided to go back down to San Francisco, he did me a really nice favor. He knew this fellow that was coming to Toronto and said that he was a good teacher and if I wanted he would speak to him and see if he could get me in. It turned out to be Marty Morrell who was with Bill Evans at the time. I had just seen Marty at a club in Toronto, Bourbon Street. I was just totally destroyed by the band. They were so good. It was Eddie Gomez, Marty and Bill Evans.

I studied with Marty about five months. Marty said, "Throw all the books away. Get into a lot of playing and hanging out." I would go over to his place and play the drums for an hour and he'd play, on piano, Latin music, some jazz and different feels. He was very constructive in his criticism. He would hardly ever say anything while we were playing. At the end of the hour, Marty would say, "Do you recall when we went into *this* type of feel? You might consider trying to do this sort of thing." He dealt basically with the feel for the music. He also got me into some conga things. He was telling me to go out and do as much playing as I could, and as little practicing at home as I could, although you've got to do both.

Then I studied with Jim Blackley about a year later at a time when I really needed

BOB DISALLE:

ago we taped this interview. I did the next best thing to being in Canada. I leaned back in the office chair and looked at the Rue de la Montagne, Vancouver, and the Canadian Rockies, while we let the tape roll and captured the Bob DiSalle story.

BD: There was a fair amount of non-professional music in my family. My dad played, and still plays, sax and clarinet on weekends. My brothers play as well—one professionally and two not. We always were in bands. I guess if there would be any one thing that made me decide to become professional, it would be that The Beatles came along. That made it a little more glamorous and a little more realistic. All of a sudden these four people brought it to the world's attention that young people could do well just playing music; that mu-

estic was a possibility. I didn't become interested in music technically anymore. I played with groups and worked on my own. I bought the Ludwig book *Modern Jazz Drumming* and did some work with that. I got my Dad to help me in reading to where I could understand musical notation, enough that I could work things out. If I had a problem, I could subdivide the notes and figure out where I was going.

When I moved to Toronto I just played in rock bands, goofed off and had a good time. It took me about two and a half years before I realized that I was going to put a band together and decided, "You're going to do it. You've got to do it." That's when I started to find some teachers. The first teacher was RUSS Fearon, a local musician I studied with for four or five months to get my reading back together and to build con-

some direction. He was a great teacher.

SF: You never felt a conflict between playing rock and jazz?

BD: From time to time I did. At that time I was playing rock and roll and getting involved in jazz. Fortunately for me we had a keyboard player in the band named Jon Goldsmith. He was very influential in my playing.

Working with the whole band, but especially the keyboard player, really helps a drummer's independence (following a pianist's left hand), and being aware of the melody and following chord changes, especially if the keyboard player is rhythmic and percussive.

Jon and a friend of his, Kerry Crawford, started doing jingles in Montreal and Toronto and we put a band together called

a view from

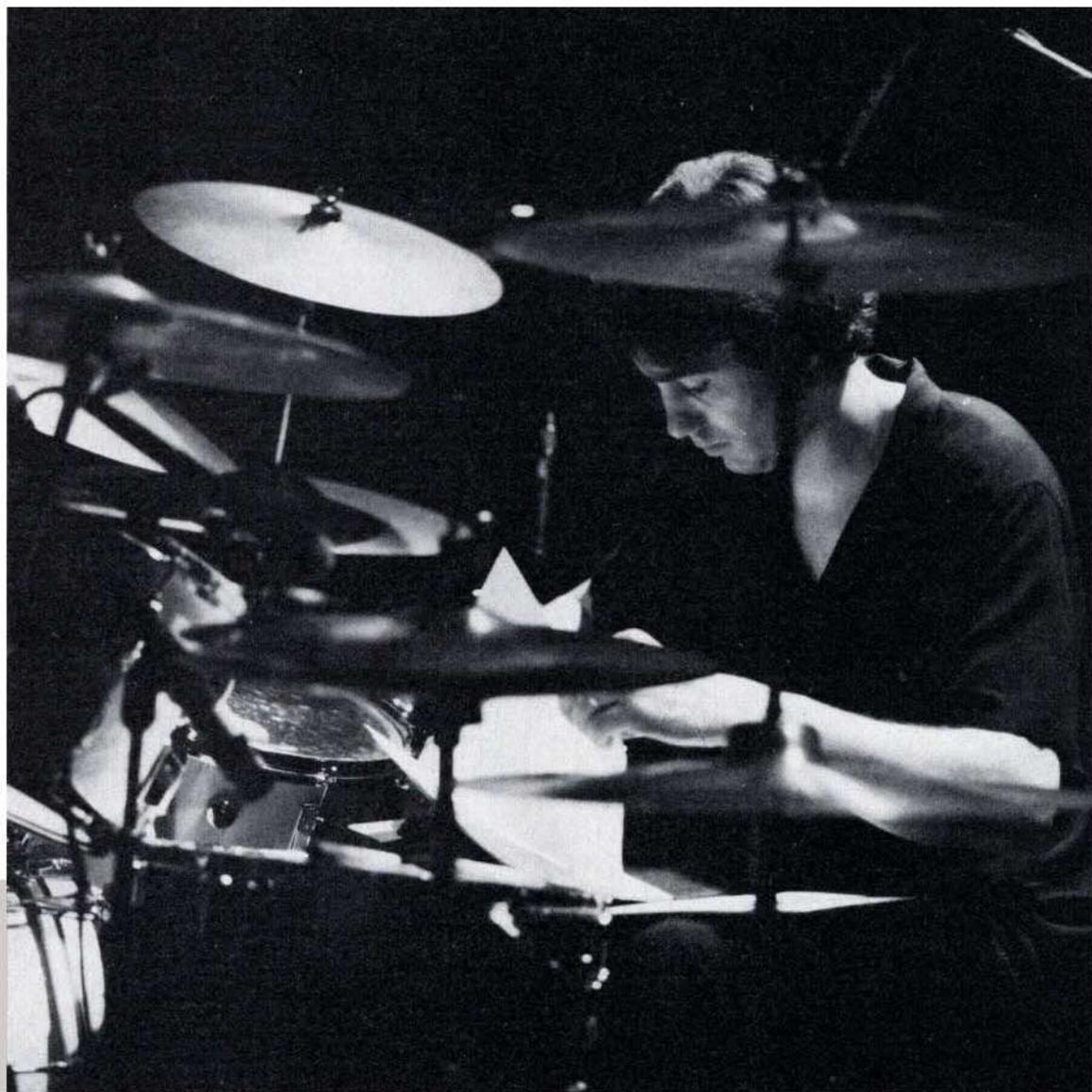


Photo by G. Whiteside

China. It was the ideal concept for a band. No matter what anybody else did during the day we would get together three or four nights a week and work with the fake books, pull tunes out and play them. If we made mistakes, we made mistakes. Nobody worried about it. The idea was that the band would eventually try to get work. We got into a lot of original material, some remarkable writing. The writing was way ahead of what the band could actually perform. We didn't work very often, but we made some recordings for ourselves. The band was basically a study band. We would try to stay alive by playing the jingles, stay in town, and not do a lot of traveling.

SF: At that time, what drummers were most influential to you?

BD: That was about five or six years ago. One of my favorite players at that time was Eric Gravatt.

SF: Was this when he was with Weather Report?

BD: Yeah. His approach to the time. I liked Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Charlie Watts, Ringo and all the drummers that go way back, but Gravatt got to me with his style. Listening to drummers like that really helped. I also got involved with piano lessons for a year and a half. That was very helpful. I had to stop because I got pretty busy and our first son, David, was born. There was nowhere to practice piano in the house without waking the baby all the time! When the baby got to be about six or seven months old and could start sleeping through some noise, I decided to

go back for another six months.

When I was studying piano, I'd spend five hours a day at it and still not go to my lesson prepared! It was a whole new trip trying to learn what to do with ten fingers. But, what was really a help for me was that I could memorize the tunes—mainly because I had to play them almost 4000 times before I'd understand what was going on. By learning them very slowly and trying to learn them right the first time, I would hear the melody and I'd be able to sing it. Then I'd be able to play the notes. I bought a bunch of composition books and I'd still really like to get more into that. I've played guitar for about fifteen years for fun. I learned a lot of chords from my brothers. I could never sit in with a band. I'd really like to be able to compose at the piano. I'd

Toronto

by Scott Fish

like to come up with a concept for a song and be able, for example, to call four or five players and write for horns in the right keys, and know where to write for certain instruments; what works for this and that. Like, "How many strings in a section?" Just a basic understanding of what everybody else is doing. I'd like to study music that has been done in other cultures as well as North American jazz.

SF: Do you do much studio drumming when you're not with Bruce Cockburn?

BD: A fair amount. I've done some CBC documentaries, some things for CBC television shows and worked with local artists like Jackson Hawke, Lisa DelBello, Kathryn Moses and Bruce. But, I've done about twenty-two albums. I've played on a lot of jingles over the last four years and it's been a great experience getting a really tight rhythm section together with piano, bass and drums, as well as being on a lot of sessions where there are big bands. I've been on a few things where there's like a thirty-three piece orchestra which is really frightening. They scared the hell out of me, but I managed to get through. I look forward to doing that, although I feel more comfortable with smaller situations with people that I've worked with before.

There's a certain understanding that comes with doing orchestra dates. I guess the first time you do anything, you're terrified because it's a group of new people,

years. That's a pretty intimidating concept.

BD: I learned a lot about reading from the string players. They play the classics all the time in the Toronto Symphony and what they come across for reading is so difficult on a day to day basis, that when they get in to do the jingles it's very rare that any jingle writing gets complicated enough that it would bother them. The Armin String Quartet is a group that works here in the city. One of them was playing in the studio, not reading the chart or anything. There wasn't one there. The guy in the control room was saying, "Well, could you play us a little bit of the chart so that we could get a sound on you." And he said, "Well, I don't have one. Just a minute ... here it is." The arranger went by and gave him a copy and he just put it down on the music stand and played it! Just like that. He didn't even take time to glance at it to see what the meters were or anything. He just sat down and played it. I don't know if it was perfect, but it certainly sounded good to me. Had I been in the control room, I would've said, "That's a take."

SF: What exactly did you learn from the string players?

BD: Their discipline. When they're in the studio they have an understanding of what's required of them and they sit down and they do it. They know their axes.

where they were talking about drummers being able to go from total freedom to total discipline and then back to total freedom. Both of those steps are incredibly difficult because if you just play to have fun it's really hard to sit down and spend the time to try and learn something about your instrument. When you do get into that it seems like you wind up being totally preoccupied with the academic view of it, which is really a trap. When you've really disciplined yourself, enough to where you feel comfortable reading for and playing your instrument, then you've got to try to get that total freedom again, so you don't make the listener feel like you're playing it note for note.

SF: What were the circumstances that led to your landing the gig with Bruce Cockburn?

BD: At that time I was working with China. We had a gig down at George's, one of the jazz clubs in the city. I believe Bruce had hired another drummer for the recording. At the last minute something didn't work out and I knew Gene Martynec, the producer of the album. He brought Bruce down to the club. Bruce was looking for somebody that was split right down the middle, between playing rock and jazz. He liked the band and he liked my playing, I guess, and the next day Gene called and asked if I was free to record with them. I said, "Yeah." That was in '76. I

"WHEN YOU'VE REALLY DISCIPLINED YOURSELF, ENOUGH TO WHERE YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE READING FOR AND PLAYING YOUR INSTRUMENT, THEN YOU'VE GOT TO TRY TO GET THAT TOTAL FREEDOM AGAIN, SO YOU DON'T MAKE THE LISTENER FEEL LIKE YOU'RE PLAYING IT NOTE FOR NOTE."

and if you're a section player in the strings, horns or woodwinds, not that it's an easy out, but if you miss a note or two, there are three or four other people there to possibly cover you up. But if you're the keyboard player, bass player, or the drummer, if you blow it you've got forty people in the studio looking at you! I'm speaking for myself. Instead of attention being focused on the music—which it should *always* be and *will* be the more you do those kind of things—your attention is focused on not making a mistake. Only by doing a lot of that can you get to the point where you can feel comfortable and confident.

SF: I'd always heard the mark of studio players was that they could be handed a sheet of music, and no matter how difficult the writing was, they could just play it the first time like they'd been playing it for ten

That's the trick. I'd like to get into learning much more about drums and much more about music. They know their instruments inside out and backwards. I aspire to that, to try and learn to treat my instrument, perhaps, the way that they do.

SF: I have a theory that drummers who concentrate to a very large degree on developing great reading chops almost inevitably sound stiff when they have to improvise a part.

BD: True, yeah. But it's a marriage of everything that you have to achieve, right? To be able to see a page full of black notes in somebody's script or handwritten music and to not be terrified by the music. That's what I'm saying. To approach it where you study it and try to learn as much as you can from it, without being caught up in the technical aspect of it. I read somewhere

did that album with Bruce and I was terrified. Kathryn Moses was on that session and a really fine bass player, Michel Denato, who's now in Montreal. Just to be in that company was a jump from the regular thing I'd been doing.

I started doing some tours with Bruce and we got along really well. That's one of the nicest things about working in Bruce's band—the chemistry of the people has always been right. If you've been on the road, you know what it can get like if people can't get along, or if they can't work things out.

Everything started to work for Bruce when the reggae single came out, "Wonder Where The Lions Are." I didn't play on that single, but I played on the album and that single really opened a lot of doors for Bruce. Although we'd done Canadian

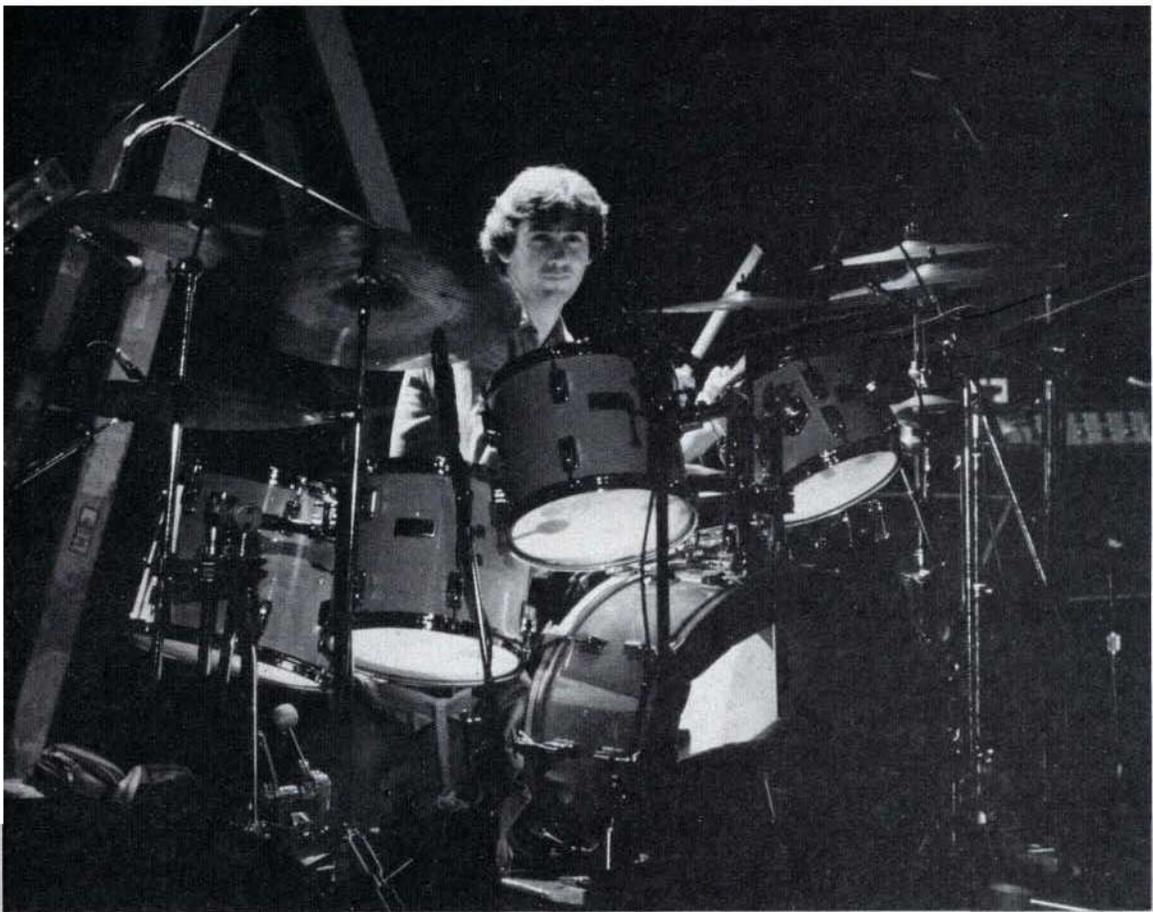


Photo by G. Whiteside

tours, the touring really intensified after that and we went to England and Italy. We did one U.S. tour that touched most of the North and Midwest and the East Coast. Then we came back and did another Canadian tour coast to coast, and then back to the States. That was a six-week tour. The response was really good. People knew Bruce. Although he was opening new territory, he had enough of a following that would come out and be very receptive.

SF: Do you think a band could subsist in Canada if they never wanted to leave that country?

BD: Yeah, they could exist but it's the age old story of how long do bands stay together? There are exceptions to that. Groups do hang out long enough to make it. But, it's just not the same here. If you're going to do it you should go to where it's

really happening, if you want to make it as a band. And I mean if you want *to make it*; you don't just want to play, make some records and make a little bit of money. If you want to make it, then you go to where the Mecca is. And in Canada I guess the Mecca would be Toronto. If you lived in Canada and you didn't want to go to the United States you could come to Toronto first and try to get some experience playing in clubs, and doing some recording. I'd say the next thing would be to move to the States or to try to influence people that were down there, whether you moved there or not.

I think Bruce is a good example. He had a following in the States, but it didn't really break big until he'd recorded, I think, eight albums. Eight or nine albums that he'd already done in Canada. What

opened doors for him was the fact that "Lions" did well *in the States*. Not so much that it did well here.

SF: Has the band ever considered moving to the States?

BD: As a band we don't think that way. Basically it's Bruce's band. I've never assumed from one album to the next that I would be the one to play on it. Bruce is faithful to the people he works with. A lot of people will use musicians to tour with, but when it comes time to go into the studio they'll hire other people. Bruce has allowed the musicians in the band to mature by doing the touring. Then when we go into the studio it's not the technical thing that seems to be the main priority—it's the feel that comes behind the music. We're not just playing the music. We enjoy it.

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LIBERTY DEVITTO:



Photo by Stephen A. Weiss

on the roo

Liberty DeVitto's personality reflects a man who is seemingly unaffected by his tremendous success. Working his way from playing weddings on Long Island up to touring all over the world as Billy Joel's drummer, De Vitto keeps a low-keyed attitude about his ability as one of rock's most prestigious drummers. In addition to recording and touring with contemporary music's "hottest act," Liberty has recorded with Phoebe Snow, Karen Carpenter, and Melanie, just to list a few.

DeVitto is also proving his talents as a composer. While recording Melanie's album at Long View Farms Recording Studio, Peter Schekeryk, Melanie's producer/husband told Liberty he wanted her to record a country tune for the next album. Liberty played a song he had written, and Peter and Melanie decided to include DeVitto's song "Foolin" Yourself."

Liberty lives in Massapequa, New York, with his wife Susan and their daughter Devon. When he finds time from his busy schedule, Liberty enjoys riding his Marley Davidson, which was a present from Billy Joel.

CI: How did you hook up with Billy Joel?

LD: Me, Russell Jarvis and Doug Steigmeier were playing on Long Island. Billy, at the time, was in California. He'd just finished his *Street Life Serenade* album. When Billy did the *Street Life* tour, Doug played bass for him. When Doug used to come home we would play local gigs together out on Long Island. So Billy decided to move back to New York and he wanted to do a new album with a New York band. He fired his whole band and just kept Doug. Doug came back to New York with him and Doug told him about me. Me, Doug and Billy did all of *Turnstiles* by ourselves. We needed guitar players to overdub so we got Russell. That's how the whole thing started rolling. We've been through a million guitar players, but now we have Russell and David Brown permanently. We have used Steve Kahn, Hiriarn Bullock, and Hugh McCracken on the road.

CI: What drummers do you enjoy listening to?

LD: I'm not a jazz drummer at all. I see a lot of guys in *Modern Drummer* who are jazz guys and they always talk about the sixteenth rudiment on the ride cymbal in five zip time. I don't know any of that stuff. I just like rock and roll drums. When I was growing up it was Beatle time, so

Ringo Starr was one of my biggest influences. He never did a drum solo; he just played a song. I like playing a song the best. Jim Capaldi from Traffic was a drummer I enjoyed listening to. Now I love Gadd. Joe Morello was always one of my favorite jazz drummers though. I don't like drum solos. There aren't too many creative drum solos that start from down here and then build themselves up. But Joe Morello did a solo on a Dave Brubeck album called *Time Further Out*. The cut was "Far More Drums." It's in 5/4 time, and it builds into this great thing where he gets to a point that makes you wonder what more could he possibly do, and he keeps going and going.

CI: And he only used a four-piece set. Quite small in comparison to some of the extensive drum kits I see being used today.

LD: Right, he had this little set! He is really a melodic drummer. I just saw him endorsing some gadget in an ad in a musician's magazine. There was a cup or something inside the drum shell, so that when you played in that area it changed the tonality. There are so many gadgets, nobody's playing just the drums anymore. It's like recording techniques. Nobody's playing rock and roll like they used to, with one microphone to mike the drums. Now there's a million mic's and stuff.

CI: In the studio there is such a wide variety of special effects and outboard equipment that is being used to alter the sound of the drums. Most of it sounds great, but it's very rare that you get the true sound of the drum on tape. The player is no longer in control of his instrument's sound.

LD: What did they do? Did they forget it, or forget how to do it? Or is it offensive to the ear of someone listening on the radio? On those old Elvis Presley records, the snare drum was tight and snapping. Now they put tons of tape on it and it sounds like a box.

CI: When you go into the studio, are the tunes already rehearsed, or is it more casual than that?

LD: In the studio, usually it's me, Doug and the guitar player with Phil Ramone. Now if Billy's going to have ten songs on the album, he might have written five. So we go through these five tunes, and we play them just to get them on tape. Then we go back in the studio and talk about the five things we just did. Then Phil Ramone and Billy will select one of the tunes to do tomorrow. We take a tape home and listen to

the tune we're going to do when we get in the studio. Then we sit down in the studio and the thing just starts to build from there. Like "Just The Way You Are," Billy had written it and we started to do it live. It sounded like a Stevie Wonder type song, you know, with the hi-hat and bass drum. We couldn't do that. That kind of thing had been done already. So to make that drum beat, I remember Phil telling me, "Just pick up a brush and a stick and see what happens." I could see Phil through the glass in the control room making a motion as if to say, "Hit it now!" So between the two of us, we came up with that beat using the brush with the right hand. It's actually the guitar that's making the song flow.

CI: Many people do that tune, from major recording artists to groups that play weddings. But every time I have heard that song played, the rhythm was never quite the same as the record you played on.

LD: I know what you mean. See, they try to make the drums create the groove. It's not just the drums, it's the guitars too. The guitars are playing the rhythm in the background and that is making the pulse of the song.

CI: How long does it usually take you to get the drum sounds when you go into the studio to lay down the basic tracks?

LD: You hear about guys getting drum sounds by working eight hours. With Jim Boyer, the engineer, if I'm sitting behind the drums for fifteen minutes it's a long time to get a drum sound. He knows me; he knows the room. Why should it take so long?

CI: Do you have anything to say when it comes down to the final mix of the drums? Do you sit in on that part of the session?

LD: We sit in and we all listen to it. Phil likes help from everyone else, but he does such a great job, that's it.

CI: Do you ever get involved with the miking of your drums during live performances?

LD: No. The places we play are so big that if it wasn't for Brian Ruggles who works the board, no one would hear what I was doing. He takes care of all that. I've heard some drummers, and their sound engineer is so bad. The drummers will play this really fast stuff and you can't hear it. It gets lost. Brian will tell me if I play something that's really fast. On "Fantasy," for instance, Brian said, "You're wasting your energy. It can't be heard." The sound



Photo by Stephen A. Weiss

just gets lost. So my style has reached a point where everything is precise. It has to be very definite so it will carry to the person in the back row. And Brian has it miked that way, and he gets the sound of the drum so the person in the back row can hear it. When a drummer is playing a strong straight beat on the cymbal, and the other hand is dragging little beats across the snare drum head, all those little things are nice on a record but you'll never hear them in a big colliseum. I like to learn the lyrics of a song I'm playing. It helps me accent certain parts of the music. The hardest gig I ever did was playing with Bob James because it was instrumental. I don't read music so I learn the words to a song and when the vocalist is singing it, I know what the next part is. With Bob there were no words, but it went well.

CI: Do you get the chance to practice much now?

LD: Not a whole lot. A long time ago, a friend of mine, who was Billy's old drummer, started working in the office of Home Run when the band started to take off. And I found we were playing less and less. He said, "You'll see that the bigger you get, the less you are going to play." We used to go on the road for nine months out

of the year. We used to play Manhattan College one day, then it was upstate Rochester, then it was down to Trenton, New Jersey, and Newark. Now you play the Garden, and then you go to Cleveland. So you don't play as much. But I get a lot of studio gigs.

CI: When you were on the road nine months out of the year, how did you deal with that?

LD: Well, we were a lot younger than we are now and I was single. We used to drive around in Pinto station wagons from town to town. Unbelievable—five guys in a car stopping at McDonalds. The car stunk of McDonald's French fries. Now it's really easy flying everywhere.

CI: Did you ever think it would get this big?

LD: It's nothing like I thought it would be when I was sitting in high school saying, "I want to be a big star drummer someday."

CI: What is different from what you imagined?

LD: You feel like you have accomplished a lot. But I thought when I was in high school that once you made it, that was it. I never dreamed of what would come after it. It's like you still want to do more. You always want to keep going. You're always

working on new things and trying to get new sounds. And it is hard to stay on top. Once you're there, it's harder to stay there than it is to get there. I mean, Billy could be gone tomorrow. The next album could bomb, after selling so many records.

CI: Would you agree that after an artist has reached the stature of a Billy Joel, you are guaranteed X amount of record sales?

LD: There are always the die-hard fans that will buy the record just because it's out. Elton John has all those fans. Now he's not as big as he used to be. And there will always be those fans with Billy. But to go to Madison Square Garden and sell it out five nights with no strain, how long can that last? The Beach Boys could do it now. Look how long they've been around. You know, Billy keeps changing his style. He gets bored. We all get bored playing the same thing over and over; we like a change. He gets bored with himself, which is a positive for him.

CI: What would you do if Billy Joel suddenly decided to pack it in and not play any more?

LD: I'd get a gig with someone else. I turned down a couple of things. I was supposed to go on the road with Meatloaf, but I couldn't do his tour because Billy went in

"WHEN YOU'RE ON THE ROAD, YOU'RE ONLY PLAYING FOR TWO HOURS . . . YOU GO BACK TO THE BAR AFTER THE SHOW. WHAT ELSE ARE YOU GOING TO DO? . . . THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW, YOU'VE GOT THE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS OFF THE WALL. ITS HARD TO KEEP YOURSELF AMUSED ON THE ROAD."

"ONCE YOU'RE THERE, ITS HARDER TO STAY THERE THAN IT IS TO GET THERE. I MEAN, BILLY COULD BE GONE TOMORROW. THE NEXT ALBUM COULD BOMB, AFTER SELLING SO MANY RECORDS."

the studio to do a new album. I got a call to go on a tour with Stevie Nicks, but I couldn't do that either because Billy's in the studio. Billy will always be number one for me, but now I want to break out and do other things. He likes that. He's proud when he hears us on someone else's records, or when someone else wants one of his band members. But he knows we'll always go to him first. Like Russell, the guitar player, is going to make his own album. He's with CBS. He just got the deal. We'll all be doing that with Russ.

CI: Have you ever given any thought to doing your own solo album?

LD: Yeah, I think about it, but that's about it. Someday it might be nice.

CI: Have you ever had any drum students?

LD: I wouldn't have the patience. I took lessons for about a month. I had two different teachers. One guy I went to for about a week. I couldn't stand him. I used to go there and he would show me how he played. He would play all the time. "Watch this!" He'd say, "One day you'll be able to do that." Then I went to another guy who was really good, but he didn't know how to read. He played just like Buddy Rich. Maybe he really didn't, but I thought he did then. He was great. But that only lasted for about a month.

CI: So you really didn't have that much formal training.

LD: No. In sixth grade, I joined the band in school, but it was really an uphill battle.

CI: Did you always want to be a drummer?

LD: Yes, but I don't know what made me decide that. There's a little gap in my life that I don't know why I picked the drums.

CI: What was your first set like?

LD: It was a set of silver-sparkle Tempo drums—really cheap. Now I endorse Tama drums. Tama drums were around back then, but they were a very cheap outfit then. Tama is the grandmother's name. Tama Hoshino is the grandmother. Then the other Japanese companies got the Koreans to make them so cheap that they under-priced the Japanese. So Tama had to decide to either go out of business or make a great drum. And I think they make a great drum. Tama was the first one to make the very heavy hardware. Now everyone is trying to make their hardware similar to their specifications. They are a very good company because they listen to everything you say. If you make a suggestion, even casually, the next day they've got it there for you.

CI: What kind of set up are you using at

the present?

LD: I have two sets. One is like a Royal Pewter color and the lugs are black. They made the lugs black for me. It looks sharp. It's their *Imperialstar* set. There's a 22" bass drum, 8", 10", 13", 14" tom-toms, and a 14 x 16 and a 16 x 16 floor tom. Double-headed drums. They are wooden shells, but they have a thin plastic finish. The other set has 8", 10", 12", and 13" toms with the same size floor toms and a wooden 8 1/2"-deep snare drum. And live, you don't have to put anything on it. I use an *Emperor* head. It isn't like the one filled with oil. This is just two heads pressed together. I use that on the snare drum and the bass drum. You can tune it up really high and still get a good tone, because it's extra thick, and it doesn't break. As a matter of fact, if it does split in the middle, you can peel one layer right off.

CI: What heads do you use on your toms?

LD: The regular *Ambassador* white heads. They're thin and they ring more. But they have to be changed every night. Halfway through the show one head goes dead.

CI: What foot position do you use when playing your bass drum?

LD: I use my toe. Sometimes I get a cramp in my leg from hitting so hard. I went to the hospital once; I was really scared. I had a weird feeling in my shin. The doctor said I developed shin splints from hitting so hard. I was wearing those Japanese shoes—those black slippers. It happens sometimes if I wear cheap shoes. So I play in sneakers now and that creates a cushion between the pedal and my foot.

CI: What kind of monitor system do you use when you are performing on stage?

LD: I use two studio monitors. I've got my

drums, Billy's piano, vocal, and guitar. It sounds like my stereo. My bass drum sounds better than any record I've ever heard. It makes you want to play, it sounds so good. We have our own monitor mixer, who also does Bruce Springsteen. His name is C.J. Patterson. Out front helping Brian is Dave Cobb. We always use the same guys.

CI: When you get a chance to play the drums by yourself, do you practice, do you just jam on the set, or what?

LD: I just play grooves. I don't practice rudiments.

CI: What's your definition of "being in the pocket"?

LD: "Street Fighting Man" by The Rolling Stones. He's building the drums up in that song and it makes you automatically tap your foot. That groove is just right. You can feel him more than you can actually hear him. When Charlie Watts plays "Street Fighting Man," it makes you want to break windows and everything. It's not playing anything spectacular. That's something that can't be taught. You can learn how to play a fast buzz roll or a fast double-stroke paradiddle or whatever. You can't be taught how to play like Charlie Watts or Ringo. It doesn't matter how many notes you play—if it don't feel right, it ain't gonna rain.

CI: Are you using any electronic percussion instruments in your playing?

LD: In Australia once, Derek Pellegrini from the Little River Band bought his Syndrums down to a gig we were playing. If Billy hadn't been so far away from me at the time, he would have come over and thrown them off the stage. It was unbelievable.

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Photo by Lissa Wales

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS: a candid discussion with **William F. Ludwig, Jr.**

by Dave Levine

The history of the Ludwig Drum Company actually began in 1885, when a six-year-old German immigrant named William F. Ludwig arrived in Chicago with his father, mother, brother Theobald, and sister Elizabeth. Young Willy's father was a professional trombonist who had come to this country to live, work, and raise his family.

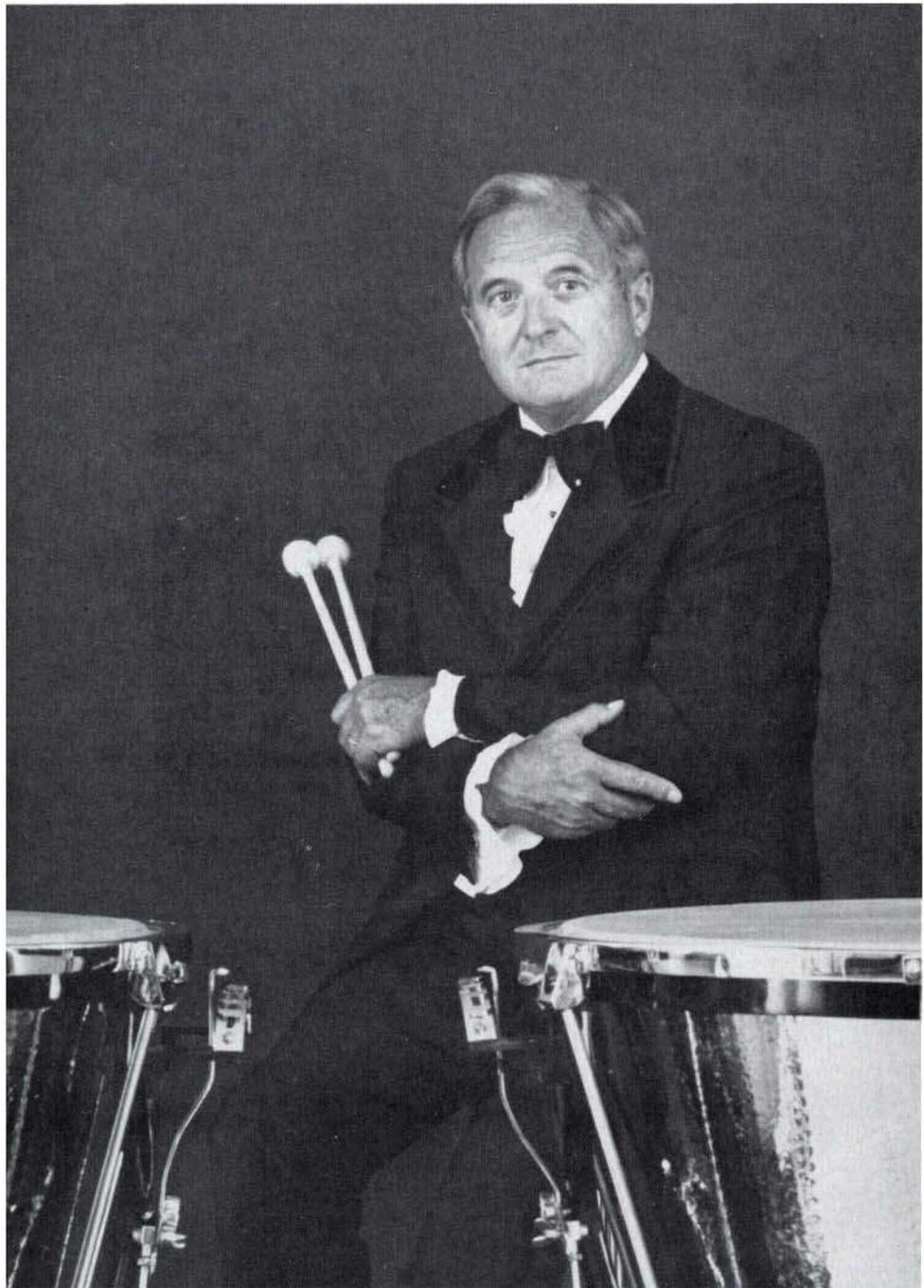
Unfortunately, soon after settling in Chicago, Papa Ludwig was involved in a political quarrel that loosened some of his teeth, making trombone performance difficult. Not surprisingly, it was at that point that he decided that none of his children would play wind instruments.

Little William tried piano and violin. He took to neither. One day his imagination was captured by a drummer in a drum and bugle corps. He stuck with the drum and was soon working shows and concerts in Chicago's theaters and parks.

Between afternoon and evening performances, William and his brother, Theo, operated a small drum shop in the theater district. They sold and repaired drums as a hobby. Because the brothers were musicians, not businessmen, they recruited their sister, Liz, to do the book-keeping and collect a spindle-full of unpaid bills. Liz's husband happened to be an engineer named Robert Danly.

Sometime in 1909, William was working a show and was unable to keep the fast tempo the conductor wanted. His "swing" pedal, which hung from the top of the bass drum, simply could not achieve the required speed. Ludwig immediately went to his shop, where he began working on a pedal that could do what he needed. He and Danly developed the first Ludwig bass drum pedal and the Ludwig & Ludwig Drum Company was in business.

William Ludwig married in 1914 and in 1916 his son and heir, William F. Ludwig, Jr., was born. When William, Jr. started working in the family business he had no way of knowing that under the combined guidance of father and son the Ludwig Drum company (and later Ludwig Industries) would become the biggest, most innovative, leader of the ever-growing percussion industry. William F. Ludwig III joined Ludwig Industries in 1977. He is the third generation of Ludwigs in the percus-





Rare photo of Ludwig & Ludwig's final assembly department, circa 1917.



Typical of many small companies in the early 20s, Ludwig maintained their own truck for local deliveries.



Vintage shot of Bill, Jr., at age 11, performing with the Culver Military Academy Drum & Bugle Corps.



On leave in 1942, Boatswains Mate Bill Ludwlg, Jr., looks over an all-wood marching drum with company founder, William Ludwig, Sr.

sion business.

Why was Ludwig so successful? They were certainly not the first American drum company. Rogers made drums during the Civil War, Gretsch started in the 1880's, and when the Ludwigs first opened their shop in Chicago they sold Leedy drums. If the history of the Ludwig Drum Company shows us anything, it is that destiny and strategy are equal components of success.

The quarrel, the drum corps, having an engineer in the family, all the chance events that occurred; these things could not have been planned nor could their significance have been immediately understood. Yet they forever changed the history of drumming. The mergers, product development, personnel selection, and marketing decisions were made, however, with greater knowledge and intent. Staying active, taking risks, and keeping competitive may be the best paths to success. Perhaps there's a lesson we can all understand.

William F. Ludwig, Jr. is himself a friendly, likeable, fatherly person whose

first place in the national competition held in Evanston, Illinois. I joined the musician's union when I was fifteen and I played in the Chicago Civic Orchestra (the training orchestra to the Chicago Symphony) and the Chicago Light Opera Co.

The National Music Camp at Interlochen was the next great motivator. Playing symphonic music and associating with Dr. Frederick Fennell sharpened my appetite and created the desire to practice and do better. Following high school, I attended the University of Illinois, where I was privileged to perform under the late, great, Austin A. Harding.

DL: When did you decide to go into the drum business?

WL: From the age of ten it had already been decided that "little Willy" would follow in his father's footsteps. When I left college my father said, "Get in the car tomorrow morning." I didn't know where we were going. We ended up at the drum factory. That was forty-five years ago.

DL: What was it like being William F. Ludwig Sr.'s son?

you have to ask, "Is it the best?" That's one of the most important lessons my father taught me.

DL: What is the history of your early involvement in the Ludwig Drum Co.?

WL: My early days with the company were wonderful. The giants we revere today were, back then, just damn good players. Gene Krupa wasn't a legend; he, Ray Bauduc and Ray McKinley were just good fellows and good players. Who knew, until you looked back, that these guys would be giants?

My father had sold Ludwig & Ludwig to C.G. Conn in 1929. The big depression hadn't happened yet but another kind of depression had. When talking pictures came in 1927, it cancelled out a lot of pit musicians. Over 50% of Ludwig & Ludwig's business at the time was in sound effects; bird calls, whistles, horses hoofs, pistol shots. Suddenly, that was all gone. By 1929 the music business had been devastated. My father sold his company to Conn and so did U.G. Leedy of Indianapolis.

Conn moved the manufacturing divisions of Ludwig & Ludwig and Leedy into one building in Elkhart, Indiana. They kept the offices of Ludwig & Ludwig in Chicago, however. Conn maintained separate catalogs for each company. The hardware differed but the drums were the same.

In 1937 my father and I wanted to get back into the drum making business. We couldn't use the Ludwig name so we formed the WFL Drum Company. For years we were actually competing with Ludwig & Ludwig drums. Needless to say, this was quite confusing to our customers.

After World War II, Conn decided, in the interest of saving money, to put the offices and manufacturing plants of Ludwig & Ludwig and Leedy together in Elkhart. They then called the company Leedy & Ludwig.

By 1955 Conn's interest had been captured by the electronic organ and they started to produce Conn organs. They ran short of money so they began to sell off some of their subsidiaries. It was then that "Bud" Slingerland (founder and owner of the Slingerland Drum Company) and I made Conn an offer. Slingerland got the Leedy name and tooling and I got my name back.

DL: Did you foresee the approaching drum and percussion eras or was it just good timing that you got the company back when you did?

WL: We worked to serve the growing percussion market. Had I known those were eras I would have paid more attention. We just went to work every morning. We went into the office, took off our coats, sat down at our desks, and then the phone would ring. When we had time we would roam the plant and get involved in one thing or another.

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"SOUND IS NEBULOUS. YOU LIKE A SOUND-I DON'T. I LIKE A SOUND THAT YOU DON'T. THE NEXT FELLOW DOESN'T LIKE EITHER-HE LIKES ANOTHER SOUND. SO, WHEN WE SAY THAT A DRUM SOUNDS GOOD, TO WHOM DOES IT SOUND GOOD?"

personal knowledge of the drum industry seems unending and unmatched. He maintains the Ludwig museum and library which spans the history of American drumming, still works in the plant five days a week, yet he'll pack his tool box and drive to a local school's band room if their tympani pedal needs adjustment.

With the drum industry going through some major changes and realignment, I was pleased to have the chance to sit down and talk to the man who was responsible for the growth years of the '50s, '60s, and '70s.

DL: How did you get started on the drums?

WL: My father gave me rudimental drum lessons when I was eight. My mother, because of her operatic background, insisted that I also take piano. I played in a Boy Scout drum and bugle corps and when I got into high school I played in the high school band. I didn't take it too seriously until a notice for contests appeared on the high school bulletin board. Contests were a spur to my learning; that got me going.

I went into my first contest and got beaten badly. Then I practiced. In 1933, when I was a senior in high school, I won

WL: My father taught me a lot about the drum business. It was great being the son of an important man. It was also demanding as hell. A father and son act is difficult.

My father wanted to hold back. I wanted to expand. He was less quick to approve new products in the outfit field than he was in the classical field. We had tumultuous meetings and often disagreed on policy or philosophy or even on how to make percussion instruments. But, in the end, we were always together in attempting to produce a product that we could be proud to hang our name on.

When you're a family business you're very sensitive to criticism. It's tough to take. That's why the quality had to be up there. We still have that tradition. We still ask, "Is it the best?"

It goes back to a statement made by Mr. Danly, the engineer, in questioning my father's directions on the pedals being made back in 1911. Mr. Danly wanted to make 1,000 pedals in a run. In those days that was a lot of pedals. My father said, "There aren't that many drummers in the whole country." Mr. Danly replied by asking, "It's a good pedal, isn't it?" My father answered, "It's the best!" That's all



Clowning with Bob Crosby's drummer, Ray Bauduc, at the Ludwig plant in 1940.

A proud father and son team in front of a day's production of bass drums during the mid 40s.



Bill Ludwig and daughter Brooke, present a gold plated snare drum to Ringo (and friends) at the Chicago Amphitheatre in 1964.



Three generations of Ludwigs (l to r, William, Sr., William, Jr., William, III) entertain picnic guests at home with a dazzling display of rudimental drumming techniques.

The Eighth-Note Triplet



by Nick Forte

Triplets are considered "artificial groupings" because note values (durations) are changed. The player will know when the change to the triplet value occurs by a small "3" placed above or below a group of notes. In its pure form, a triplet is a group of three equal notes that assumes the same value that two of the notes had originally. To analyze an eighth-note triplet, we say that two eighth notes equal one quarter; therefore, three eighth notes (in triplet form) also equal one quarter. Since a quarter note usually equals one beat (4/4), the eighth-note triplet equals one beat. In order to play an eighth-note triplet properly, you must sub-divide a one beat's count into three parts. Each part (or note) has a duration of one-third of one beat. To insure that each note of the triplet is spaced just right, I would recommend that you *count out loud* in the manner described in Example #1. Counting is an integral part of the understanding and performance of this and all the other triplet forms that follow. I realize this suggested counting system may be a little different for most of you; but I assure you, it works very well, especially with the more complicated triplet forms. However, after trying my way for a few days, if you would feel more comfortable with your own system, by all means use it. You must, however, be able to relate it to what you see in these lessons.

Ex. #1

Count: 1 a n 2 a n 3 a n 4 a n

Count the number, a long "A" sound, and a long "N" sound. Practice Example #1. Play it slowly, at first, to be sure of the note placements. *All the notes are equidistant.* This Example should be practiced starting with the left hand, as well as, starting with the right.

EIGHTH NOTE TRIPLET GROUPINGS

It would be helpful to become familiar with the way rests are used in triplets. In Example #2, I have listed all the most common eighth note/rest triplet forms. Memorize each.

Ex. #2

A)

B)

C)

D)

E)

F)

G)

H)

I)

J)

K)

L)

Remember, don't take note values for granted. For example, don't confuse letter B with letter F, or letter C with letter H, or letter E with letter I. Played on a snare, they sound very similar.

Each one of these groups may be repeated (back to back) several times, or mixed and combined, to form additional rhythmic groupings.

SNARE DRUM READING

Musical score for Snare Drum in 4/4 time, marked *mf*. The score consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a 4/4 time signature and a *mf* dynamic marking. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and eighth rests. Numerous triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes) are present throughout the piece. The score concludes with a dynamic range from *p* (piano) to *ff* (fortissimo).

DRUMSET EXERCISES

Musical score for Drumset Exercises. The score is written for Cym., S. Tom, Snare, L. Tom, Bass, and Hi-Hat. It features a series of rhythmic patterns, primarily consisting of eighth notes and quarter notes, with triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes). The score is divided into four measures, each containing a different rhythmic exercise. The exercises are marked with accents (>) and dynamic markings (> and v).

continued on next page

Musical notation for Drum Solo #1, consisting of two staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, primarily triplets, with accents and dynamic markings such as > and ^.

DRUM SOLO # 1

Musical notation for Drum Solo #2, consisting of two staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, primarily triplets, with accents and dynamic markings such as ^ and >.

DRUM SOLO # 2

Musical notation for Drum Solo #3, consisting of four staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, primarily triplets, with accents and dynamic markings such as mf, pp, and ff. A crescendo hairpin is visible at the bottom of the staves.

The author will personally answer any questions about this column. Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Nick Forte, 18 Catherine St., East Haven, CT06512.



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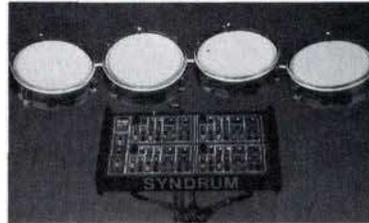
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PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

Tama Super X-Tras 50 Drum Kit

by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

Hoshino USA, distributors for Tama Drums, are celebrating their 10th Anniversary. A new catalog is out, and they've added the *X-Tras* line. Being deeper than standard sizes, Tama claims 30% greater interior volume.

The *X-Tras* are part of the Tama *Superstar* series, and have 6-ply birch shells made in Japan. The shells have angled seams for greater strength, and are molded in a heat-compression process.

Components of the *X-Tras 50* kit are: 16x22 bass drum, 11x12, 12x13 toms, 16x16 floor tom, 6 1/2X14 metal snare drum, and *Titan* hardware. The complete outfit retails at \$1858.00.

BASS DRUM

The 16x22 bass drum has 20 lugs with T-handle rods. Tama has thoughtfully included two key rods to replace the bottom two T-rods, so pedal mounting is easier and not upset by a T-handle turned the wrong way. I wish more companies would start doing this! A felt strip is included for head dampening. The hoops are 6-ply birch and match the drum's finish. A single venthole with logo badge is located near the front of the shell. Spurs are of the disappearing type, secured in their brackets by a T-screw. The spurs are set at a 45° side angle and a 20° forward angle. They have convertible tips, from rubber to steel spike. However, on a wooden floor, the drum did slide just a bit under heavy playing.

If you leave your front head off, consider Tama's shell-supporter post which is available separately. The post fits inside the shell to give it more strength, thus keeping it from ovaling out.

The drum is fitted with C.S. clear heads on overring, and the drum's sound was tone and depth, and more than enough volume, with a hard attack sound. I had to use an external muffler on the batter side in conjunction with the felt strip to cut down on overring, and the drum's sound was more contained. I imagine it would be great with a *Pinstripe*.

MOUNTING SYSTEM

Tama's *Omni-Sphere* tom-tom holder is standard on all kits. A large diamond-shaped base block is installed near the front of the bass drum shell. This block accepts a 1", single-post down tube with a memory ring. A T-screw pressing an internal-spring steel strip secures the

down-tube height. Atop the tube is a large, satin-finished, V-shaped casting, which holds the ball-and-cage system. T-screws conveniently placed on the tops of the cages are used to adjust angle by loosening the ball inside. The L-arms are not adjustable back and forth inside the ball, and this really doesn't matter because the *Omni-Sphere* affords practically any desirable position or angle. The tom-toms are fitted with column brackets, having an eye-bolt inside, locked with a T-screw. Nothing protrudes the shell. Tama has included *Key-Locks* on the L-arms—their version of a memory ring. Here, the rings have a protruding collar which fits tight against the tom-tom bracket, and arrests all twisting and turning. The *Omni-Sphere* holder does not shake about like many L-arm type holders do. It's very sturdy and simple to operate.

TOM-TOMS

The 11 x 12 and 12 x 13 toms have 12 lugs each. The 16x16 floor tom is a standard *Superstar* drum with 16 lugs, and three legs secured directly by T-screws. None of the drums have internal mufflers. Tama's *Quick-Release* externals are optional at \$13 each though none were included here. All the toms are double-headed with triple-flanged hoops, and are fitted with C.S. clear heads top and bottom. The C.S. heads gave somewhat of a "whap," but the toms still had good definition and tone. For rock playing, they do need dampening, especially if miking.

The sound was tighter with Evans *Hydraulics*, but still loud and extra-clear with no need for dampening at all. Each drum had a definite pitch. Throughout testing, the floor tom really amazed me with its extremely powerful sound. Tuning intervals between drums were sufficient, but I can't help feeling that a 13 x 14 tom would have been more sensible than the 12x 13. In any event, the extra depth on the 12" and 13" naturally gave quite a deep sound. Very impressive.

SNARE DRUM

Tama includes a 6 1/2X14 seamless metal-shell snare with this kit. The drum has ten double-ended lugs, extending almost the full depth of the shell. The lug nuts are held with a nylon retainer instead of the usual spring. Detuning from hard rim shots is practically nil as the retainers have a thread-lock built in. Both hoops are diecast, with the snare-side hoop having a large, extended gate. An internal muffler is



fitted. Tama's knob-operated *One-touch* muffler can be preset for the degree of dampening desired, and lock on or off for quick changes.

The strainer is of the cross-stick type with a fine-tune knob on the throw-off side. A fat, two-piece block serves as the assembly, with a roller bed on both the throw-off and butt sides. The snare unit is 18-strand, held not with string, but with strips of glass tape which is less prone to stretching or breaking.

The drum required some adjusting because of excessive snare rattle. I found it to have a typical, dry, metal sound with a tiny timbale-like ring (fitted with an *Ambassador Coated* batter), and perhaps even a little thin-sounding for its 6 1/2 inches. I would think that a wooden-shell snare (8 inch?) would be the better mate for the *X-Tras*.

HARDWARE

The *Titan* hi-hat stand has a double-braced tripod base with large rubber feet, and a slightly curved split footboard. Linkage is accomplished by a short chain which connects with a double pull rod. Action relies on a compression spring. Since the adjustment is at the top of the external cylinder housing, tension is very easily adjustable from the playing position. There is a knurled knob sprung spur point at the base, and a *Key-Lock* for the height tier. Bottom cymbal angle can be locked in, thanks to a counterlock washer on the tilt cup. The action was good, noise-free and responsive, though a bit too springy for my personal taste. Also the top rod would be too short for some players. An optional extender could be helpful.

Two cymbal stands are included with the *X-Tras 50* kit. These too, have double-braced tripods with fat feet. Each stand has two adjustable tiers with set-in nylon bushings, and are extendable to six feet. The tilter is a sprung modified ratchet, offset to fold down neatly against the top tube. On top is a special one-piece nylon-sleeve nut which screws down on the tilter stem. This replaces the traditional rubber

sleeve and wing nut, and assures that an unknowledgeable player cannot tighten his cymbal down all the way, which can cause cracking. There are no *Key-Locks* fitted. They're not needed anyway, as the stands are very sturdy, sensibly designed, and will not sink or twist.

Tama's *Titan* snare stand also has the double-braced tripod and a nylon bushing at its height joint. Drum angle is achieved by a brake drum tilter with a conical inner piece. It holds the drum using the common basket design with a threaded post and carriage ring. The stand may not go low enough to hold today's 8" snare drums, but nevertheless, like all *Titan* hardware, is sturdy and efficient.

The *King Beat* pedal has the same footboard as the hi-hat: slightly curved with a split heel, and a built-in toe stop. It features a large, square single post which encloses a compression spring. Tension is adjustable via a large slotted cap at the bottom of the post. The pedal must be removed from the drum hoop to operate this cap. Three "memory-marks" are notched into the side of the post for use as adjustment reference. The *King Beat* has a unique heel plate: Beneath the plate is a screw-adjusting, hard rubber circular pad. When the pad disc is rotated, the heel plate can be elevated, changing the footboard angle.

Beater angle is adjustable via a ratchet cam. Beater height is set with a wing screw and eye bolt. Linkage is a 5/8" metal strap. The pedal clamps to the hoop using a plate and cam lifter. After presetting the plate to fit your hoop thickness (via a drum key), the clamp is activated by a lever at the bottom left of the frame. After the initial setting, the lever is all that's needed to lock on or remove the pedal. The pedal's base also has a pair of spring-adjust spur points.

The *King Beat* had decidedly better action from the last time I saw it (*MD Oct/Nov 1980*). I could definitely get used to this pedal. Action is strong but not sloppy, however, I still feel the whole unit is too large.

FINISHES

The *X-Tras* series drums are offered in two high-gloss finishes: Super Mahogany and Cherry Wine. Both are genuine wood veneers. The kit reviewed was finished in Mahogany. Tama has truly done some extraordinary work here. Each drum was perfect, with a *masterful* appearance. Tama's finishing is one of the best I've seen, though I do wish they'd add more finishes.

Tama drums have a five-year guarantee against defects in materials or workmanship. The *X-Tras* are well constructed, and would be ideal for rock. Deeper shell does mean deeper sound, and the *X-Tras* punch out with good volume. The sound is impressive, and the hardware has become somewhat of an industry standard.

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TEAR OFF OR MAKE A PHOTOCOPY

Soloing On An Ostinato Bass Drum

by Ken Meyers

A driving, repetitive bass drum pattern, often known as an ostinato, can be a very effective solo device when used properly. Fluent use of the ostinato lends an uplifting sensation of forward momentum when used beneath a time-structured solo, and acts as a

foundation on which to build.

One of the most popular patterns is the samba ostinato which can be used in jazz, rock, fusion and Latin.



A certain degree of independence is required to enable the solo to flow freely above the repetitive bass figure. The easiest way to develop the necessary independence is to practice a series of commonly-used rhythmic figures against the ostinato. Eventually, the

right foot becomes conditioned to the pattern and remains undisturbed by the figures played above it.

Repeat the following twelve patterns at least twenty times each, until a free-flowing, comfortable feeling is achieved.

Twelve numbered musical patterns for soloing over the ostinato. Each pattern is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The patterns are:
1. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
2. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
3. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
4. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
5. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
6. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
7. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
8. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
9. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
10. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
11. Triplet eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.
12. Triplet eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5.

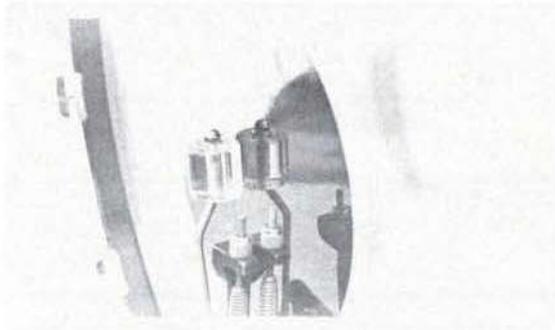
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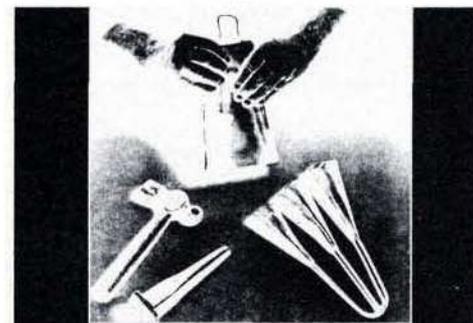
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Eight numbered musical staves (1-8) showing various rhythmic patterns. Each staff consists of a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The patterns are as follows:

- 1. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.
- 2. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.
- 3. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.
- 4. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.
- 5. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.
- 6. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.
- 7. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.
- 8. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2.

The following group of one-bar practice patterns utilize some interesting mixed figure combinations with accents:

Ten numbered musical staves (1-10) showing rhythmic patterns with accents (>). Each staff consists of a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The patterns are as follows:

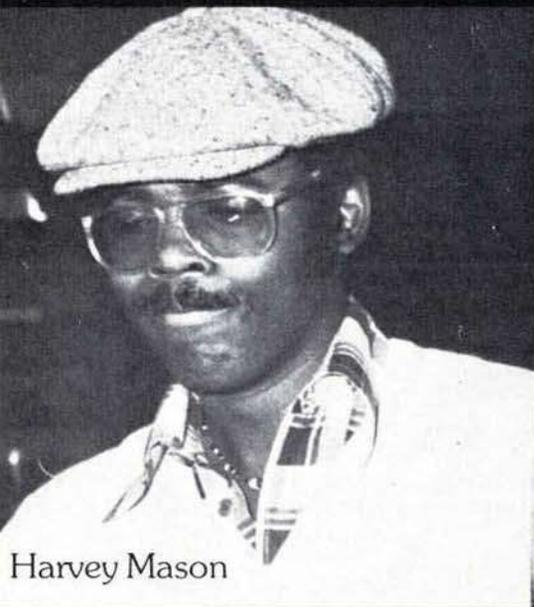
- 1. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4, B4.
- 2. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4.
- 3. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4, B4, C5.
- 4. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4.
- 5. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4, B4, C5.
- 6. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4, B4, C5.
- 7. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4.
- 8. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4. Triplet '3' over B4, C5.
- 9. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4, B4, C5. Triplet '3' over B4, C5.
- 10. Quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Bass: G2, B1, D2, F2. Accents on G4, A4, B4, C5. Triplet '3' over B4, C5.

Once you've developed a feel for the ostinato, practice the patterns around the drums for even greater variety. And be sure to experiment with your own extended ideas. The possibilities are

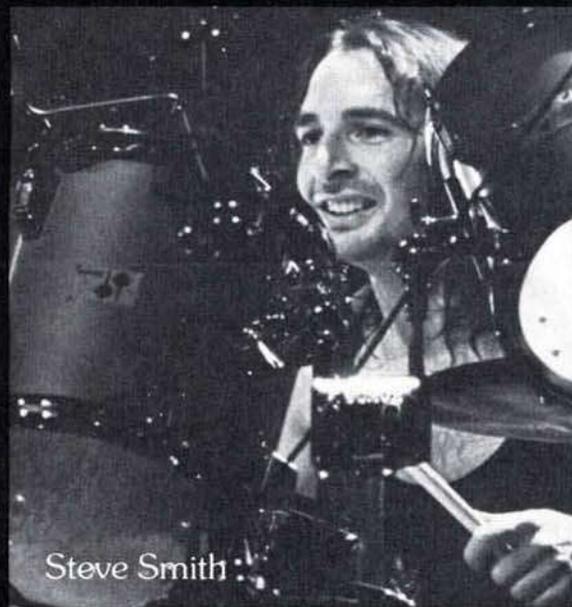
limitless. You might want to think of the ostinato bass as still another weapon in your solo arsenal.



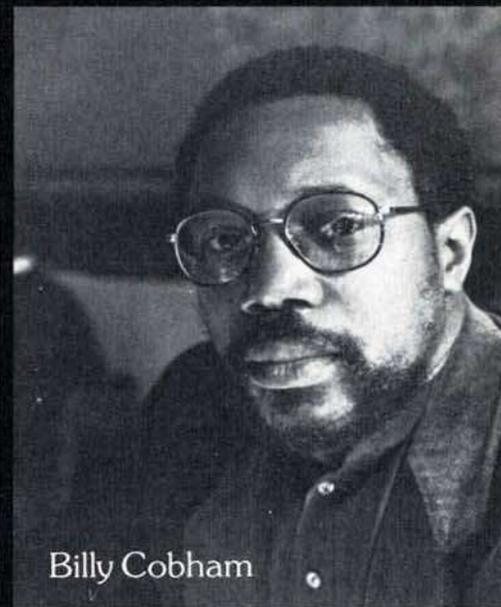
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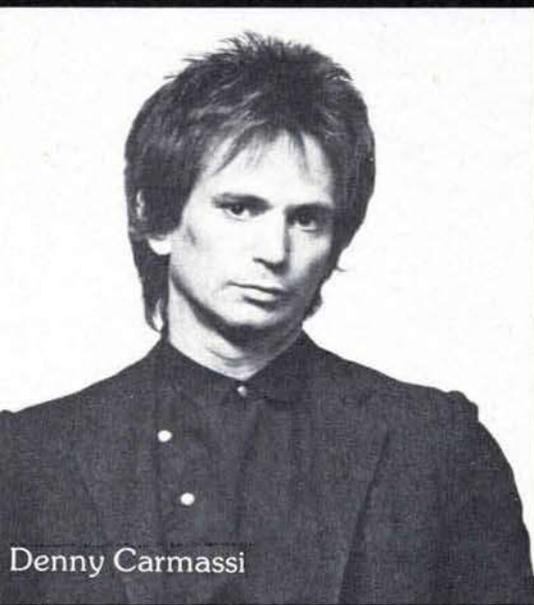
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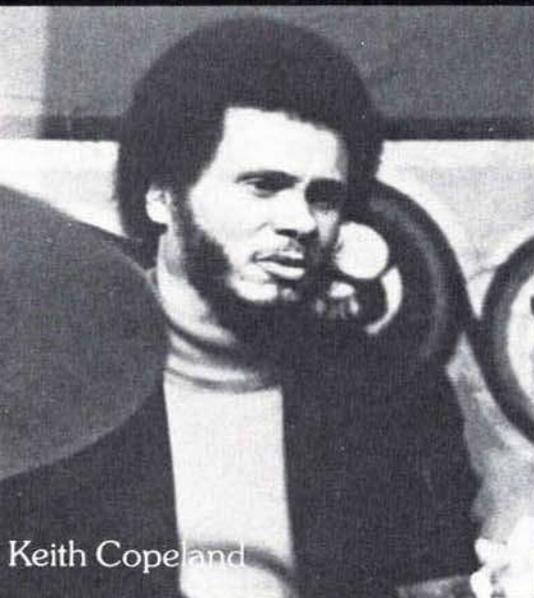


Denny Carmassi

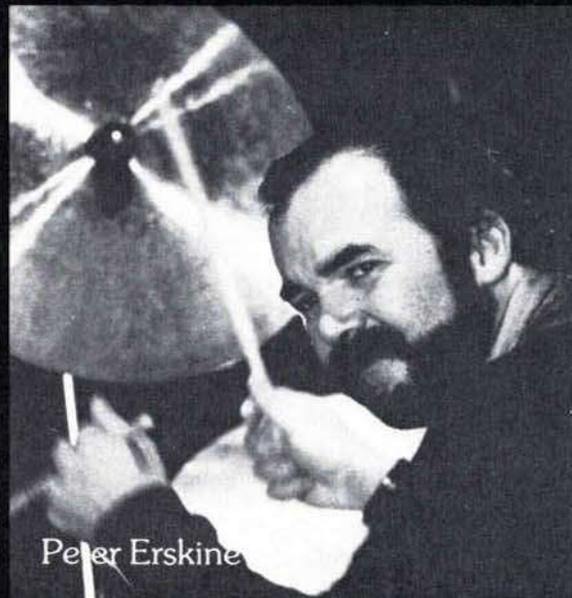
“What do these great artists have in common?”



Akira Tana



Keith Copeland



Peter Erskine



They all make time with my sticks.”

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"Can You Play Like John Smith?"

by Roy Burns

Recently, a friend of mine was asked to do a commercial recording session. During the session, it became obvious that things were not going well. Finally, the producer asked my friend, "Can you play like John Smith?" (John Smith doesn't exist. Put the name of any famous drummer in place of John Smith.)

The point is a simple one. My friend felt like saying, "Why didn't you hire John Smith?" However, he kept quiet and tried to do the best professional job that he could. When we discussed it later, it was apparent that although my friend plays very well, he just wasn't the right drummer for the situation.

Why Does This Happen?

Sometimes the other musicians admire and like a famous drummer, such as my imaginary John Smith. They expect to hear and feel that same style. When the new drummer plays, it is not what the others have been anticipating. Hence the question, "Can you play like John Smith?"

My friend was disappointed because he realized that his style was not what the other musicians wanted. Even though he plays very well, he could not really

"groove" with this particular group.

Occasionally, this same problem will exist between the bass player and the drummer. However, it is usually the drummer who is asked to change. Rarely is it the bass player or other members of the group who are asked to make the adjustments they expect from a drummer.

I suggest that the reason for this is because the entire group depends so much on the drummer. He is the center of the wheel or the base on which others build. Each beat the drummer plays, or doesn't play, affects each of the other players.

In most cases, the other musicians (even arrangers and especially producers) do not know enough about drumming to make specific and clear suggestions for what they want. So they fall back on, "Can you play like John Smith?"

This question is not intended as an insult. It is their hope that you will be familiar with the drummer in question. If that is the case, then the drummer could play something that would be close to the feel being sought.

All-Star Bands, both live concerts and recordings, have produced some really strange-sounding music. Players who win polls are usually solo players with very individual characteristics. When thrown together in an All-Star Band, the style combinations can be pretty weird.

I heard one such group at a major jazz festival and the style combination was as follows: a swing-style big band drummer, an upright accoustical bass player who played mostly with trios, a young fusion/rock/jazz guitar player who knew only his own music, a bebop/fusion trumpet player, a saxophone player from a well-known swing big band, a pianist who played with a classical third-stream jazz group, a violinist from Poland, a vibist from Hungary, and a harmonica player from Holland.

All of these musicians are great players in their respective styles. However, when combined into a unit as a result of the polls and the whims of the concert producer,



Photo by John W. Wright

they were not at their best. The music they produced sounded like a bad rehearsal of semi-pro players who all have different record collections.

One famous music critic (who is hated by most professional musicians) wrote in his review, "The group didn't seem to jell." As a matter of fact, they all sounded very, very uncomfortable. The music was disorganized and all involved breathed a sigh of relief when it was over. So did the audience.

Now please don't misunderstand me. All-Star Bands can be interesting and exciting. The point is that some similarity in style or point of view must be there in order for the music to be successful. When this is present, the music can be quite stimulating.

Don't Take It Personally

This is an important point to understand. Each person works very hard to develop ability and style. Many years of work go into learning to play well. Each of us has a lot of effort and pain invested in our playing. When someone else says, "Can you play like John Smith?" it is not intended to wound your ego. It may be that your style is not right for that group.

Don't be defensive or put down other musicians. People have different backgrounds and widely varied levels of study and experience. The trick is to find some other musicians who feel somewhat the same as you do about music.

As far as being versatile is concerned, it is a good idea to learn different styles of music and drumming. Some players, such as studio musicians, become very good at playing different styles of music. However, just remember that music is like the ocean: there is enough for everyone. No one drummer plays every style better than anyone else. Play the best you can in every kind of music.

If you hit one of those situations, like my friend did, just remember to do your best and not take it personally. Learn what you can from it and go on to the next one. It is all part of learning the music business.

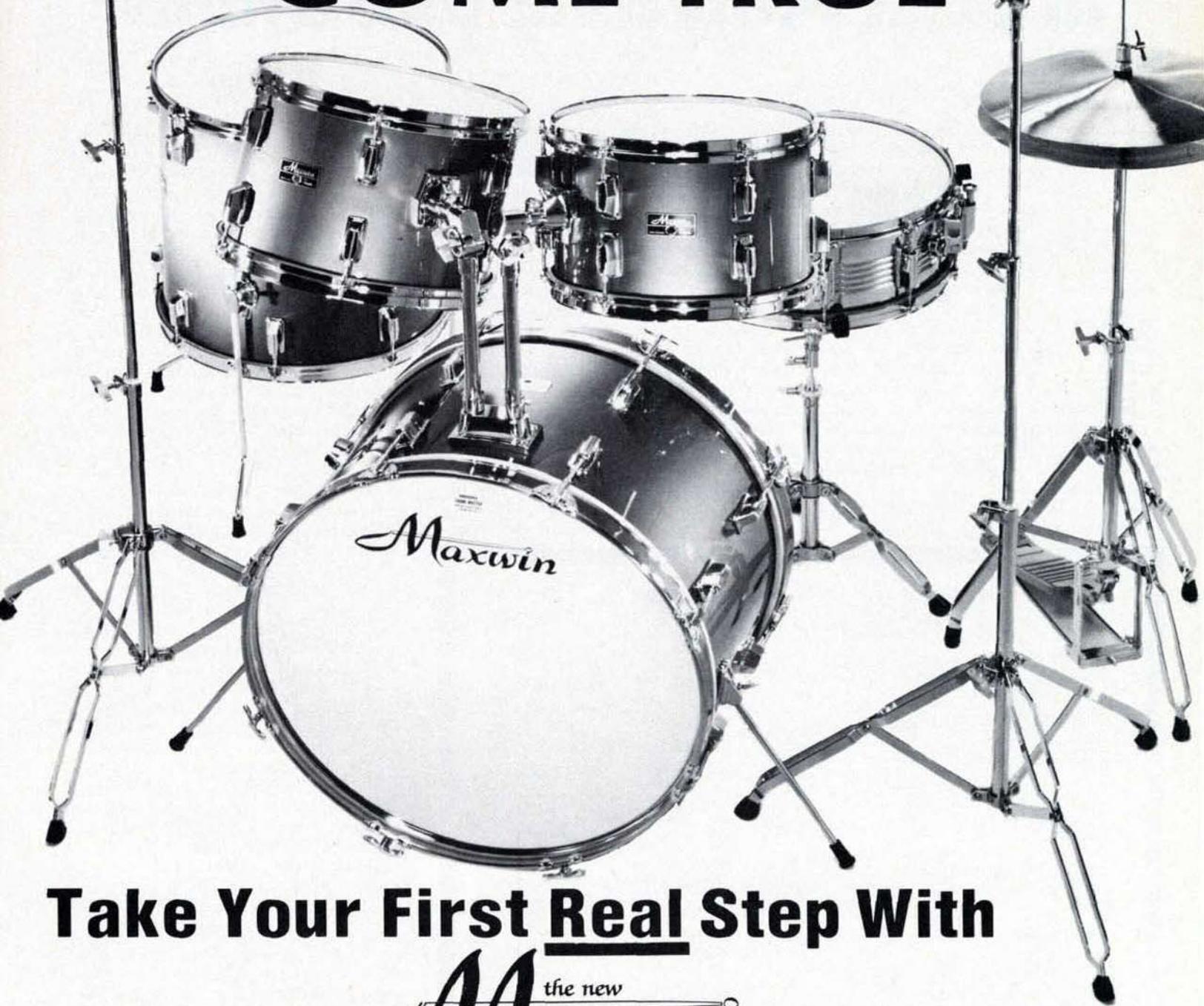
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In Case: Protecting Your Drums

by Rick Van Horn

I've been a club drummer for almost twenty years, and over that time I've been asked a lot of questions regarding my playing and equipment. One of the questions asked most frequently by young drummers getting started in regular club work is: *How important are cases for my drums?*

This is a question that merits some examination, because a few considerations are involved. My first inclination is to say that cases are the next most important thing after the drums themselves. But I recognize an economic situation today that puts a young drummer between a rock and a hard place. On one hand, if you're talking about drums recently purchased, that means you've just spent some serious money and probably don't have much left over for cases. On the other hand, the very fact that those drums represent such a large investment, makes the reason for

protective cases that much more important.

It's also important for the aspiring club player to consider the situation in which the drums will be used. If you plan to work locally, and can carry your drums in your own vehicle, then you might be able to hold off on the cases until you can earn the money to buy them. If you're lucky enough to get a long-term gig in one place, so that moving the drums is minimized, that too can help put off the necessity of purchasing drum cases. But if the drums are going on the road right away, *even on a local basis* (meaning lots of one-nighters, set-ups and pack-ups), then the cases are necessary right away, and *should* be budgeted into the drum purchase.

Actually, that budgeting would be my initial recommendation to any drummer buying equipment. Think of the equip-

ment and the case as a total package, and budget accordingly. If it takes a few more weeks to earn the price of both, then wait. No guitar player I've ever known would think of buying a new axe without a case to carry it. And yet, I'm amazed at the number of drummers playing club gigs who walk in with their drums under their arms and their hands full of stands. Invariably, they have been in the business a long time, and their equipment looks it. Since they're coming in as I'm packing out, I very rarely get to hear these drummers play, but I have to think that there's a certain attitude demonstrated by their lack of concern for their equipment. I believe that respect for one's instrument will manifest itself in how one plays that instrument. Conversely, a lack of respect must also show in performance.

In my last article, I described some of the problems of commercial travel that drums are likely to face, such as handling abuse, mechanical conveyers, bad weather, etc. But drums can get pretty roughly handled just getting into and out of your own vehicle, depending on how much time you have and who's helping you pack up. If you play a lot of one-nighters, and travel a great deal, the wear and tear on the drums builds up quickly. You should be aware of this and take the proper precautions to protect the equipment on which your livelihood depends.

With this in mind, let's take a look at what's on the market in the field of drum protection products. There has been a refreshing growth in the selection of cases in terms of sizes, shapes, styles and price ranges. At this point, there seems to be something for everyone.

Soft Cases

These are usually canvas or vinyl covers shaped to fit over the drum. They have a strap for carrying, and open with a zipper. These are little more than dust covers, and afford no shock protection whatever. They will protect the finish from some weather, and might be all right for a drummer personally moving his drums a minimal amount of times. Otherwise, they are *not* suitable for serious travel.

Fibre Cases

The familiar black cylindrical case is still the standard of the industry, and for good reason. It's still relatively inexpensive and



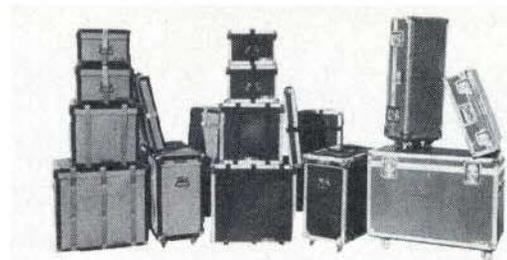
Ron Humphrey, famous drummer with Danny Davis and The Nashville Brass, comments on the Corder Drum:



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Ron Humphrey



A selection of cases currently available from Anvil Case Company. Not the only source for high-quality cases, Anvil's products are representative of state of the art.

provides reasonable protection for drums. Although available without, most of these cases now come with foam linings installed, which is a good form of shock protection. It also adds a little insulation against bad weather.

A recent trend in fibre case design has been the box-shaped case. The theory seems to be that the material is easier to work with and holds up better if all the surfaces are straight-sided, rather than curved to conform to the drum. I would imagine the initial construction process is simplified using this design. The box shape allows for the use of either plastic or metal reinforcement strips at all the edges, and metal cornerpieces. This gives the case added strength and durability, and an attractive "professional" look, very similar in final appearance to an ATA-type case. So your choices in fibre cases might include: standard cylinder without foam; cylinder with foam; plain box without foam; box with foam; box with plastic edging and steel corners and foam; box with aluminum edging, steel corners and foam. That's quite a selection. All of the above use nylon web straps, as leather has become economically impractical, and *not* as durable. Box types in some larger sizes have metal grips with reinforced backing plates to aid in carrying heavier drums. Large drum sizes and trap cases are offered with casters installed for rolling. Keep in mind that if you use deep-shell drums, with the heavy hardware and thicker-ply shells, you are asking your case to carry substantial weight. Make sure you get a case that can hold up to sudden lifts and jerks without literally "coming apart at the seams," leaving your drum sitting on the floor while you hold a bottomless case in your hand.

Plastic Cases

A recent innovation in the case field has been the plastic case, such as the *Anvilite* from Anvil Case Company or the *Titan* from Roadrunner Cases. The plastic material is similar in thickness to the fibre, but stronger, more waterproof, and still lightweight. These cases come in a variety of design styles, and some colors. *Anvilite* cases originated in the traditional cylindrical design, but it was found that the plastic

material tended to split under the stress of both curvature and corner molding. Now the box style is used exclusively. Both Anvil and Roadrunner offer box cases with either plastic or metal edging and steel corners. This is a high-protection case in a medium-price range, and might serve even a busy travelling drummer very well for all but commercial travel.

ATA Cases

These are the cream of the crop. This is what you see on the stages of concert halls and sports arenas. ATA stands for Airline Transport Association, the organization that sets the standards for safe air travel when it comes to luggage and equipment handling. The ATA case is constructed of plywood, covered on the outside with a plastic or fiberglass layer, and then edged with aluminum and braced at the corners with steel cornerpieces. The cases are strictly box-type, with recessed handles and "coffin-latches" which prevent snagging on mechanical conveyer equipment. These boxes are relatively heavy, and many come with casters installed. These are the Rolls-Royce of cases, and are priced accordingly. They are also *more* than the average travelling drummer needs. But if you regularly have occasion to travel by commercial carrier, and must entrust your drums to the not-so-tender mercies of baggage handlers, the peace of mind given by the ATA cases can be a valuable commodity in itself.

I would like to say something about trap cases in particular. The trend towards heavy-duty hardware has placed an added burden on trap cases. Fibre cases do not fare well with a lot of weight, unless they are reinforced with a plywood sheet bottom, and all the handles are well-backed and securely attached. Even then, most drummers have a tendency to overload them. I've seen innumerable trap cases with broken handles, or holes in the fibre sides due to a carelessly thrown stand. If you have a lot of heavy hardware, either separate it into two or more cases, or consider using an ATA trap case which has the structural integrity to withstand the weight. You'll definitely want it on casters.

Anvil is the largest manufacturer of drum and percussion cases in the world,

and the name Anvil has come to be synonymous with the ATA case. However, ATA cases, as well as all the other types, are manufactured by several companies throughout the country. And fibre cases are offered by very many local outfits. Do some *serious* shopping when it comes to cases. Be sure to get what you need, but not *more* than you need, unless you're investing towards a future goal and have the extra money to spend. And keep in mind, this is the best thing you can do to help your equipment help *you* to be the best possible player.

This article has been predicated on the idea of buying new cases for your drums. In my next one, I'll focus on creating your own cases, and on maintaining the cases you already have.

THE MUSICAL CATALOG

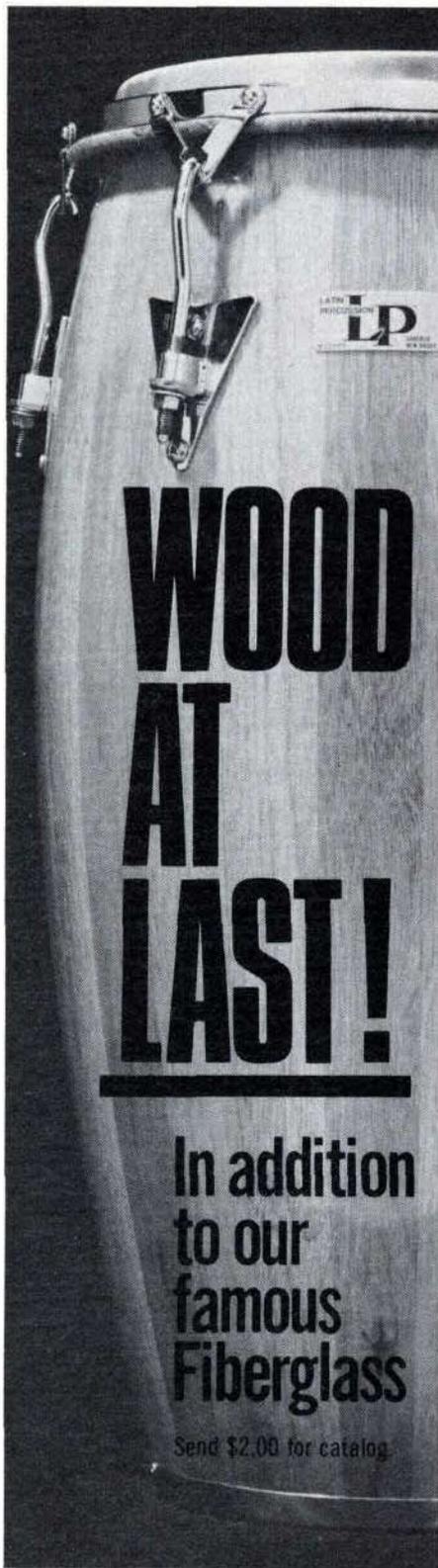
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drum. Nowadays, I'm playing one bass drum, two tom-toms, two floor toms, a ride cymbal, two crash cymbals and a hi-hat. You just have to think about it if you want to play things that are different because there are sounds that aren't there maybe. On a big set-up like the one with Zappa, if you have radically different sound sources available, I think that's the most musical way to approach it.

RF: Your version of "Peaches en Regalia" is very different from Aynsley Dunbar's version. I wonder whether that was your doing or how much Zappa dictated what you did.

VC: He totally rearranged it. We had done "Peaches" and he said he wanted to do a completely different arrangement. We just took the whole thing apart and rebuilt it like an erector set.

RF: Was it a "we" or a "him"?

VC: In terms of arranging, it was pretty much him, like, "You play this and you play that." I pretty much played the groove that was on the record except when it went into another section that wasn't there before. He said, "Okay, we're going to go into reggae now," and for four bars I'd play reggae. Then it went into some kind of Devoesque kind of thing at the end and I played a weird Devo kind of drum part. He just told me what to do in that sense. The tune opens with this drum fill and sometimes I'd play it like the record and sometimes I wouldn't and he'd say, "No, play what's on the record." Other times he wouldn't say anything. Other than that, he would say, "Play it like this or play it like that," and on that particular tune, that's what happened. Other times we'd be playing a tune and I would just come up with my own part. Then there would be another tune where he would hand me a written drum part or he would say, "Play this against that, or play five against four." I don't know if it was to challenge me or not, but if it was, man, you gotta meet the challenge.

RF: So you found it challenging?

VC: Oh yeah, it was great. I learned so much from that. It was a great challenge for me. I had a pretty fair knowledge of polyrhythms and stuff like that before I got in the band, but nowhere near what it became. I mean, I knew what they were theoretically, but in terms of approaching them the same way he did and using them on the drumset, no way. I got all that from him. In the two and a half years I was with him, it was incredible what I learned. If he sees you have it to begin with, you have to keep up with him. There's so much information and knowledge coming out of him so fast that you have to be on your toes every second. It's incredible. I didn't want to think of it like, "Oh God, I have to keep up." I just kind of went along with it and knew that I had to meet the challenge. I

enjoyed it, got off on it and learned from it. I noticed that it changed my way of thinking to the point where it started coming out of me. I would play behind his guitar solos. He said, "I want you to listen to what I'm playing because I'm playing all those rhythms. When you accompany me, I don't want you to just try to guess what they are and play some standard rhythmic fill. I want you to understand exactly where I'm at and communicate with me on that level." That forced me to try to improvise these polyrhythms and think in that way, which is not the norm by any stretch of the imagination. People just don't do that. I don't care how stretched out you get when you jam, people just don't do it that way. It forced me to do that and I think he saw that I had a talent for doing that.

RF: I'm tempted to say that you seem just as at home playing odd time as you are playing regular time.

VC: Pretty much I am, yeah. I spent a lot of time practicing it when I lived at home. I'd go up in the attic and play in seven for half an hour.

RF: You mean as a kid?

VC: Yeah, because once I left home, or actually, once I left Berklee, I couldn't really practice. I still can't out here. I've been living in an apartment for three years and I can't play drums in my apartment. I practice when I work, which is a drag in a lot of ways, but it's like a language. If you don't do it for a couple of months and suddenly you're at a gig and somebody throws a tune at you that has shifting time signatures, run through it a couple of times and then bingo. That's what it's like for me. If I'm doing it a lot, it's easier. It's like reading; if I don't read stuff that's that hard, sometimes I'll go home and just whip through some literature that I haven't seen in a long time to brush up on it. The thing about sight reading is that you have to read things you haven't seen before.

RF: With Zappa you really went out there at times.

VC: Yeah. In the beginning, when I first started doing it, I was pulling it off, but there were a lot of loose spots. But I had to make it come out in order to develop it, otherwise, how was I going to do it? Then I got more accustomed to it. I'd sit there and think about it and listen to the road tapes and it started being more comfortable to me where it just started oozing out of my pores, which I think Frank really enjoyed. I had a good time doing it because it was the only time and place I could do that. Frank loved it because he said, "This cat has the capability to do it and I'm going to get it out of him one way or another." He would make me do it, so I started developing it. If it wasn't for that, I probably wouldn't have gone for it.

It *did* get loose every once in a while.

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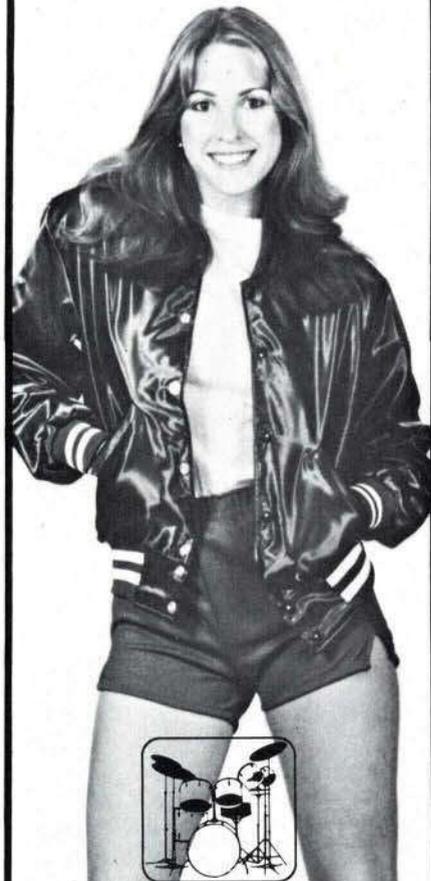
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We'd be out there, and when you've got four or five guys playing along and the drummer is going out on Mars, what are they going to think? They've got to get used to it too, if it's something they haven't encountered. It was kind of hard for me for a couple of tours, until the last tour. I had taken time off from the band. I came back, not having done that stuff for a while, but having done other things, like playing in a studio a lot, which matured my concept in other ways, which fed that. One hand feeds the other and it all helps and your time concept gets stronger. I had gotten a lot stronger doing that in being able to read Frank and gauge the other guys in the band. It wasn't like when we were doing that stuff, it was just me and Frank and the other guys were sitting back wondering what to do, because those guys were all real strong musicians. I had a rapport with the whole rhythm section and those guys were right with me. I got to the point where I was able to follow Frank and do that stuff much more confidently and accurately, plus monitor, with another part of my ear, exactly what was going on in the rest of the band too.

RF: What are you thinking of when you're out there? Are you keeping count or what? What do you think is the secret to playing odd time?

VC: I definitely think that the key to it is counting first. Then you become comfortable to the point where the count becomes ingrained in your subconscious. You learn how to do it from counting it and then it's feeling it. A guy who can't read, or who can read but isn't an ace reader, can feel it. There was one guy in the band, Ike, who hadn't really had any formal training in terms of polyrhythms and stuff. But this guy could feel that stuff. I used to go out there, to Uranus and back, and this cat was right there, always. We've had discussions about it and he told me he just feels it. It's like a pulse to him.

RF: Then you were really allowed total freedom when it came to stuff like that?

VC: Pretty much, but only to the point where I'd better know what I was doing. And I had to prove that I knew what I was doing, and I did.

RF: There was one song, "Keep it Greasy," where I wonder how you were thinking of the time signature.

VC: There's this one part where the actual time signature is 19/16. The feel is like it is 4/4 with three 16th notes tacked onto the end of it. Then there's another part in 21. It was all one live take; no splices or adds or anything. We just rehearsed it. We used to play it on the road and Frank said, "Okay, we're going to elongate that in the studio and that's going to be a solo. You're just going to vamp out until I give you a cue and then we'll go into something else." And bingo, he gave us a cue and zipp, we were in 19/16. We just cut that track with

guitar, bass and drums. I don't recall if there was electric piano in that particular solo section or not. We went to Village Recorders one day and just churned out tune after tune, all live, no edits or anything.

RF: Zappa's studio tracks are a lot cleaner than his live recordings. How different was that process from a playing standpoint for you? Was it a lot more dictated?

VC: For example, on certain tunes on the *Joe's Garage* record, there were tunes that were pretty much groove tunes and I played them like that. I was really enjoying going in there and trying to play great tracks. On, I think it was, "Token of my Extreme," we just grooved out and tried to make it feel as good as possible and not get in the way of anything that was going to go on top of it. On the other tunes, like "Keep it Greasy," it was as if we were going to play it live, except the time *really* had to be cool. Frank told me once that he found it difficult to get people to peak in the studio, so you can never get too energetic for him. It really wasn't much different.

RF: Why did you leave Frank?

VC: I was going through stuff like, "Wow, I'm on the road all the time and when I get off the road I can't work." I wanted to get into the studio.

RF: Why?

VC: Because I like recording a lot. I love playing in the studio; I love the way it sounds and feels in the studio. When I was back east, there were three studios in town and it was something that always fascinated me and something I wanted to do as a musician. Even though I enjoy going out on the road, after a while I said, "I want to be at home and I'll never work in the studios if I'm not around long enough for people to call me." Just because I can go out live and play my ass off, doesn't mean I'm going to be able to go into the studio and play well, unless I go in there and do it and work for different people and be able to please all kinds of different people.

RF: Define what a good drummer is.

VC: A good time keeper, first of all, and a person who has a good musical sense.

RF: How does a good live drummer differ from a good studio drummer? You just said that sometimes you can't apply one to the other.

VC: Sometimes yes and sometimes no. I've seen people play live where the entire band sounds like a record and then I've seen other situations where it was totally creative. Take a live situation like the Doobies or Boz Scaggs or something. I'm not saying that those guys don't stretch, but it's very orchestrated, which is great for the music and everybody's playing parts that fit and make that music happen. But, now take the Art Ensemble of Chicago. How avant-garde can you get? Those are two live situations. Those guys aren't thinking like studio musicians so it just differs with

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RF: Now that you're immersed in the studio scene, what do you see that makes a good studio drummer? What are the producers in the studios wanting?

VC: Somebody who has real good time, is an excellent reader, whose drums sound good, someone other musicians are comfortable playing with, and who can assimilate a variety of styles. It's a real personal thing, trying to read their minds, depending on how tangible the producer or the artist is. It's great when somebody comes up with a tune and it's just a bunch of chords on paper. You're sitting there and nobody has any idea of what it's like except it's in 4/4 and has this amount of bars and you're able to make it work. Again, there's so many different factors. It's almost like you have to have a good knowledge of all the elements of music and be ready to draw on that mental rolodex at any time and really be able to efficiently pull it off, despite the amount of communication you have with who you're working with. Sometimes it happens and sometimes it doesn't. It depends on how difficult the people are to work with, it depends on the other musicians and how competent you are. At least, that's what I've found.

RF: How did you break into the studio scene?

VC: Probably the one person most responsible was Neil Stubenhaus. The first date I can remember being hired on was a date that Neil said, "You have to get Vinnie." He's helping me so much in my career. I think the people mostly responsible for getting me work were Neil, Tom Scott, Pat Williams and Hank Cicalo. It does have a lot to do with people you know.

RF: What, to you, is a positive session?

VC: A positive session is when you go in and the producer and the engineer are so together that you don't spend the entire session trying to get a drum sound. Some dates go on for six, seven or eight hours, and constantly through the date, they're still getting your drum sounds together. It's like, "Wow, didn't you get it together yet?" Or a positive session is when the producer is not a jerk and when the guys on

the date are the right guys. When the producer picked the right guys and you're not saying, "I've never worked with this bass player before, and wow, he's great, but for some reason it's not clicking." He might be sitting there thinking the drummer is a jerk. It's the same thing with a band. When you play with a band who plays together all the time, it gets tight, like ESP. I work with Stube [Stubenhaus] in the studio a lot and I know when Stube is there it's going to happen because he knows every minute thing that I'm going to play and I know every minute thing he's going to play. That helps a lot right there. And if it's a new musician that I haven't played with, but he's happening, it's still going to click. The challenge of the studio initially is that you have to go in and make music out of what is placed in front of you right away. You have to interpret what's in your mind and what's on the paper. But they can make it easier for you if you don't take it too out, like if they don't make you do it 99 times for no reason. For example, you're running a chart down and you immediately play the right stuff. But for some stupid unexplainable reason, they have to go by way of China only to arrive three hours later at what you initially played. What's the point? When you're playing the right stuff, they acknowledge it, it's happening, they're real easy going and they don't exert unnecessary pressure on the guys, it's positive. Some musicians tell me that there are certain people who have philosophies that it's good to make guys do it over and over again, to the point where the emotion becomes totally detached and they're just playing it like a machine. To me, that's not happening. To me, you reach a point where you know the song and you burn out on it, you've peaked on it, you're bored and want to go home. If they want you to play it emotionless, why don't they just tell you to play it that way? So, I guess a positive session is where there is no ego bullshit or a producer who thinks he knows what he's talking about, but he doesn't know anything. He tells you to play something and you literally play it and it's totally stupid, where you play exactly what he sings to you. You can't do that. They have to know what you sound like and that they're going to hire a bunch of musicians who know what they're doing. If they hire a bunch of guys who know what they're doing, they're going to go in there and do it right. After that, it's just a matter of the producer being a guidepost, kind of guiding you along in a real sensible manner without all that other crap.

RF: What are some of the sessions you've been doing recently?

VC: I did Gino Vanelli's *Nightwalker* album a while back. I did a few tracks on an album called *Swing* with Richard Perry that he's really behind, which is '40s music. I just did the title track and a couple of

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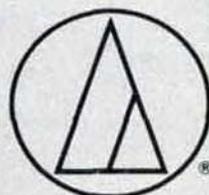
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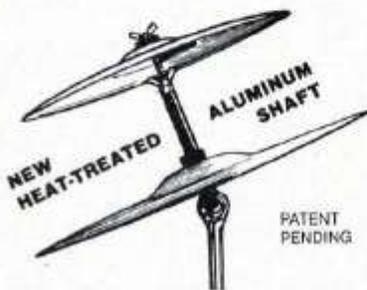
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tunes for Joni Mitchell's new album and all of the Judy Collins' album, which was an interesting project. It was really a pot-pourri of musical tunes and musical styles and the musicians were great. I've done a few major jingles with Charlie Calello with such artists as Janis Ian and Nancy Wilson. I also did a scene in a film with Bette Midler a couple of months ago where we spent eight days filming a five-minute scene, and a new film with Richard Pryor that Pat Williams composed the music for. I've also done some TV themes that Pat also composed the music for such as *Lou Grant*, *The Two of Us* and a new TV show called *Making the Grade*, which Tom Scott composed the music for. Actually, I've been doing a lot of varied things.

RF: What about working with a click track? Did you find that difficult to adjust to?

VC: Not really. Maybe at first it kind of took me aback, but it was a kind of thing where you'd better get used to it real quick or else. So I did. You approach it cautiously until you're comfortable with it. If you have a good intrinsic sense of time, then you can probably adjust to a click track well. I suppose if you play with a click track, it could help your time. But if you have a good intrinsic sense of time and you're not playing with a click track, it's not like you're going to conceptualize your time or try to play like a click track as much as you are just making the time be real good and feel good. From my experience, sometimes I've worked with a click track where it helped and it was definitely advantageous to use it. Other times it was like, "Why are you putting this thing on?" There are situations where the producer thinks it's just the right tempo, although it's too slow. The musicians are just sitting there suffering through it, but the guy insists on it and can't hear that it's killing the tune. You have to do it anyway and just go through it. Meanwhile, the tune sounds like it's lumbering along to its own natural death.

RF: You mentioned time as being the main ingredient to being a good drummer. How do you work on that?

VC: I'm still learning. When I first got to L.A., I thought if I was able to do as many little demos as possible, it would help me. I don't think that way anymore. I think now, that trying to play with the best players possible will develop your time, if you can get them to put up with you if you're that bad. If you are talented and have pretty good time and you play with guys who are willing to play with you who are better players than you are, you can gain more from that than playing with players who are terrible. You either have the talent to have good time or you don't.

RF: Did you ever work with a metronome?

VC: Yeah, at certain points. When I would enter into these little local contests playing

snare drum solo when I was in junior-high, I'd work with a metronome to make sure I didn't fall behind. I never really did that with the drumset, though. I didn't have a really terrific metronome and I didn't have any headphones. The only time I did that was when I got into the studio and had to play with a click track and I had to learn fast. I just didn't have that available to me at that time. I don't think I really thought of it at that point either. It all happened when I was in the studio. I don't think of myself as a session player as much as I like to think of myself as a musician who happens to play drums.

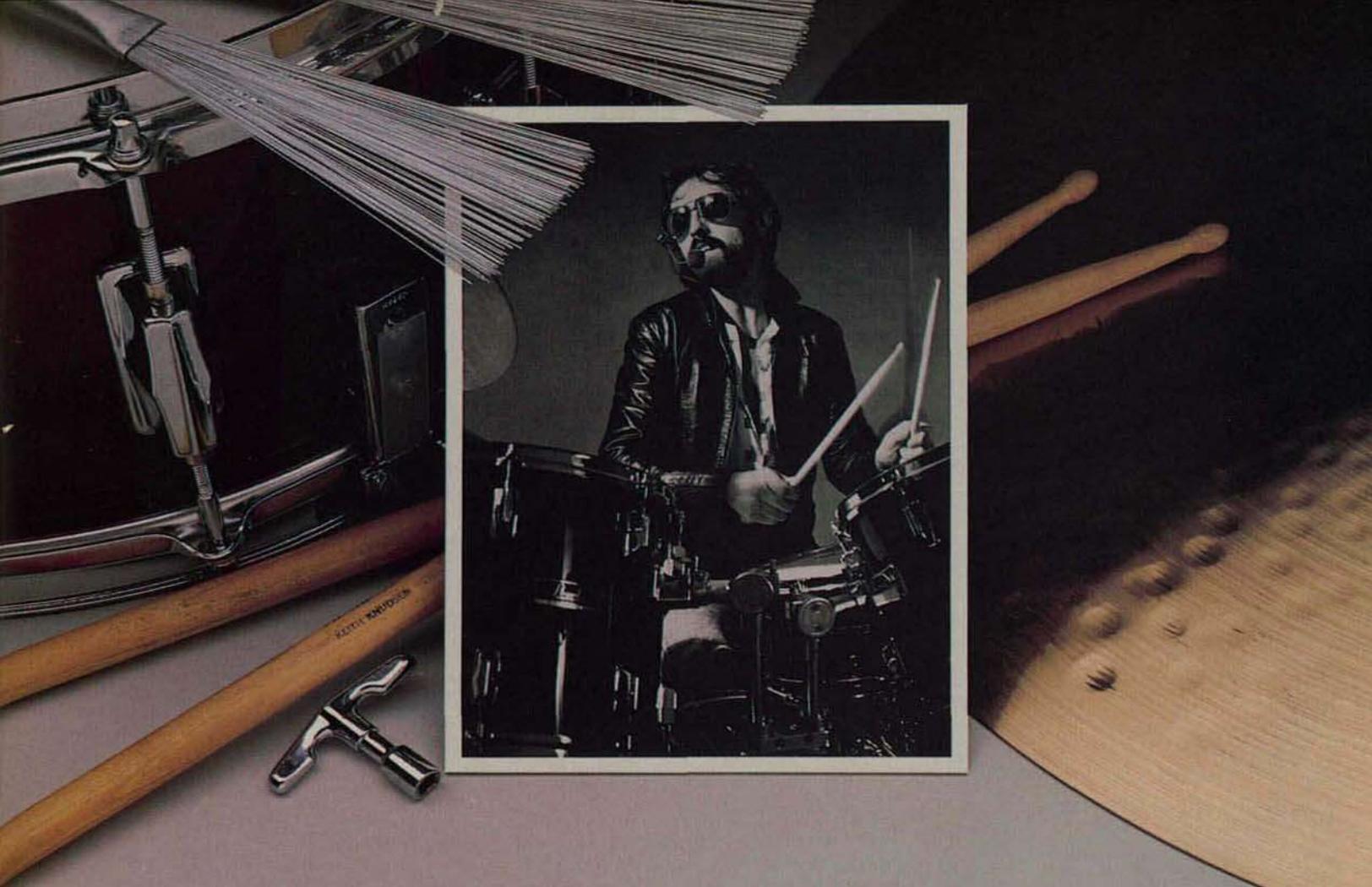
RF: How are you differentiating?

VC: I think a lot of it might lie in attitude. There are a lot of musicians who are great in the studio but who are just great musicians to begin with. You can get better from getting more studio experience. You can mature and become a better musician. But when I was learning to play, it wasn't like, "Well, I've got to have this, that and the other thing together so I can get into the studios." It was that I felt a need to have that because I heard it and I wanted to be able to do things that I heard. It just so happens that it increases your capacity. When you translate that into the studio and you cross the recording threshold, it isn't like you have more capacity than you need. You just have more information to draw on, which can only help you, not hurt you.

RF: How do you achieve your own style?

VC: I don't know. That's something I've been pondering for years. I don't know if it's something you attain consciously or subconsciously. I'm not sure. I can't provide the answer to that, but just drawing on influences, to the point of where you're not going to become a clone of one person or one idol. That's how I learn, from listening to records, transcribing, listening, trying to absorb it all and hash it out. I felt that I started establishing an identity when I was with Frank in terms of trying to improvise those polyrhythms and stuff and doing something that I had never done before. Trying to apply stuff like that in commercial situations is a different story, though, and still have something that people can identify all the time. People have told me that I have my own style and they can identify me on a track. I don't know if I agree with them, even though I can usually tell when it's me and sometimes I don't dig it. It's like, "I'm on this record? Take it off! Too bad, it would have been a great record, but it's only an okay record since I'm on it." But if you have something to capitalize on, then you're really identifiable as opposed to being able to do something in only one situation. If you have your own sound that you can use in every situation, people cash in on you. I was in a store one time where they had one little

continued on next page



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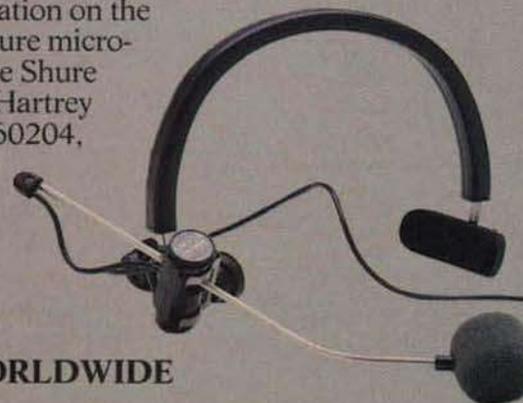
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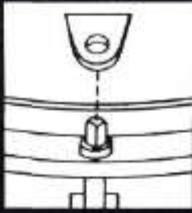


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speaker. I couldn't even tell who the artist was or what the tune was. I heard about one bar and said, "That's Steve Gadd." I waited until the announcer came on, and it was. Or I can say, "That's Jeff or that's Harvey or so and so."

RF: Can you tell from the way they play or the way their drums sound?

VC: Well, it varies. The first giveaway in that instance was that in the first second I took an educated guess because I thought that was Steve Gadd's cymbal sound. Then I heard something—maybe it was just the way the time felt—and in the next two and a half seconds, I knew.

RF: What would you say your forte is?

VC: I don't know. I guess I consider myself a pretty good reader. Some people say I have good technique. I don't know.

RF: What about musically? What do you think your forte is?

VC: There's only two kinds of music to me. It's probably been said a million times, but I'm going to say it: There's good music and bad music. In terms of what my forte is, I don't even know because the things I might feel at a particular moment that are not as strong, I'll immediately try to make them stronger and it varies with the situation. For example, let's say I were to play one kind of music good, say in the style of Jackson Browne or something. What if I went into one of that cat's dates and I was cutting the whole album and then he pulled out one tune that he might have written from a certain experience that I have no idea how to interpret? To me, it goes even beyond the idiom and the artist, down to the tune. Then what are you? If there's something that throws me like that, I just have to try to remember that specific situation, analyze it, think about it and then figure out how to deal with it from there.

RF: Is there a particular kind of music you enjoy playing the most?

VC: Good, and that's it. Good music. Everything that's good. There are so many kinds of music that I dig and there are certain things that hit me emotionally, like the Beatles' song "Martha My Dear," which is probably my favorite tune. I dig the time that's on there. It's not a drum concerto or anything, but who gives a shit? It's a great piece of music and I could never play that, or anyone else, better than Ringo did. He played it and that was it and that's the only way it's going to be. But if I were playing that particular piece of music, I'd enjoy the hell out of it! Or like, "Adagio for Strings" by Samuel Barber. It's one of my favorite pieces of music and there are no drums on that. I did a record in Europe last year with a Viennese cat and he was trying to explain to me what the lyrics meant in English, figuring it would help me interpret the song. Finally I said, "You know, I don't hear any drums at all on this." The guy ended up cutting it just with strings and it made it.

RF: Why did you decide to stop using double bass?

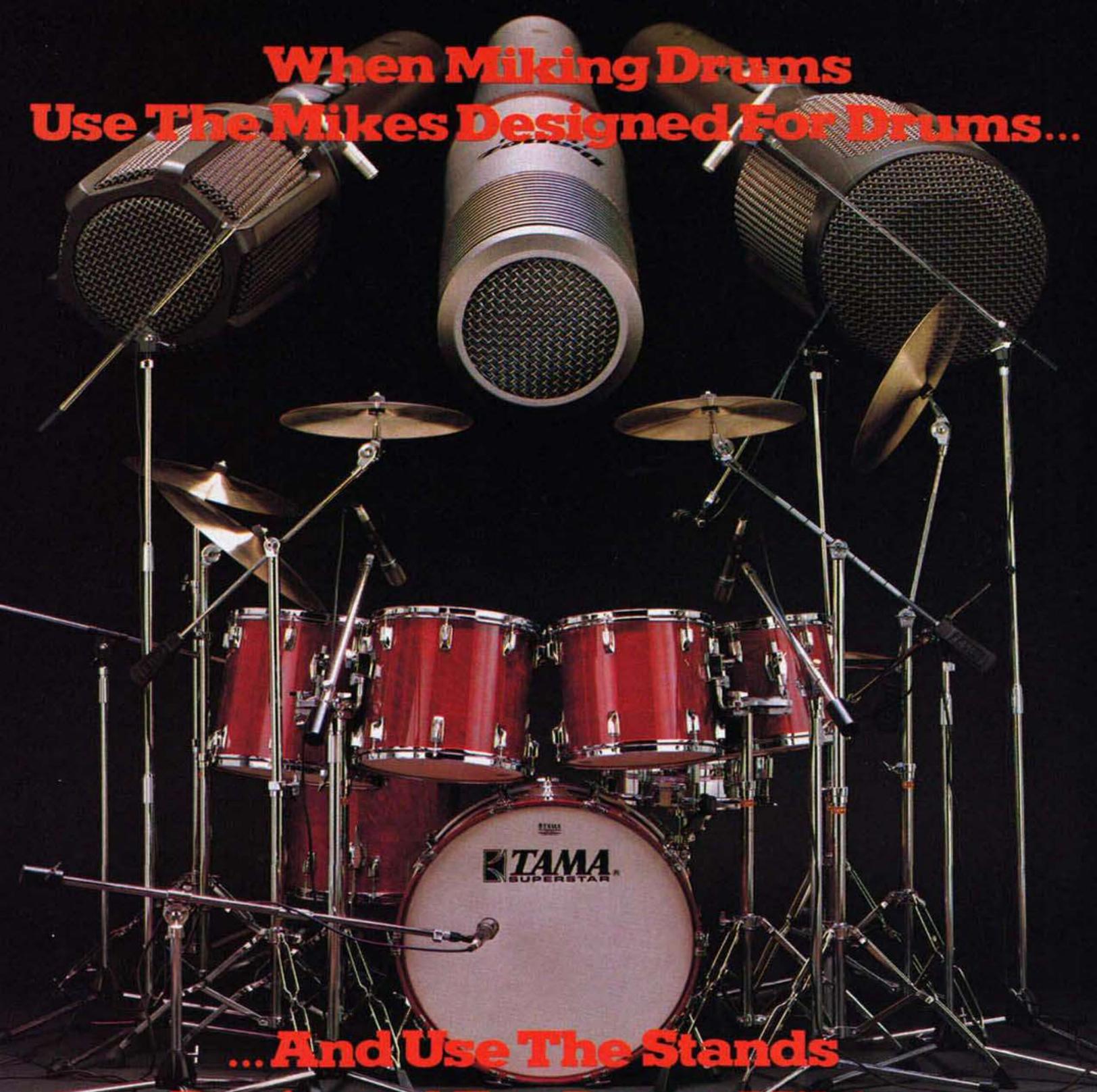
VC: No one ever uses it in the studio situation where you get called as a Sideman. And just conceptually, I was in a different frame of mind where I was just geared to one bass drum and getting things out of just what I had. I remember at Berklee I used to go into the practice room with just a ride cymbal and a snare drum and maybe a hi-hat. I was surprised at what would come out and what you can get out of what you have and how you have to change your head. Most people think, "I can't do this. I only have a hi-hat and a snare drum." But you can if you just apply yourself to it. Less is more if you can really play. It's all in how you *approach* what you have as opposed to *what you have*.

RF: Could you talk a little about tuning?

VC: Tuning is something I've really learned a lot about from being out here in L.A., just talking to different people about it and a trial and error process. I just tried to learn as much as I could about my drums. Say I have an 8 x 12 tom tom—I'll get an *Ambassador*, top and bottom, and tune both heads the same until I get them to a perfectly pure fundamental tone. If I want a dip or something, I can usually get it on a drum that doesn't have that many lugs, like a smaller diameter drum with only five lugs. I just detune one of the lugs on the top head and then I'll tape it up. Past that, it's just feel for me. It's something that I don't even know how to analyze. I just learned through trial and error and feeling it out. Recently I've discovered some different tuning methods. Every drum has a comfortable pitch area to the point where it sounds out of its range, high or low, and if you tune the top head looser than the bottom, it'll get flappy and messed up. I tried something recently where I tuned them almost too low and taped them and the guy messed with the EQ in the control room. They came out sounding with lots of slap and echo, and he put some echo on them. I've gotten that two or three times already and I felt like I hit on something. I don't really know how to explain it, though. I just mess around with it until it happens. As far as the little drums, I'll just put the heads on and tune them up, top and bottom, to get good fundamental tones out of them and they sound real pure. There's an actual pitch. It's not like I tune them to fourths or something; just where it sounds like a good pitch range where the drum really resonates, which sometimes doesn't help with snare buzz. But I don't usually have that many problems with it. I don't tune it like a blanket. I used to think I had to do that to get a deep sound out of a snare drum, but I found that that's not true. You don't have to tune a drum head until it's dented and put four wallets on it. When I did *Joe's*

continued on next page

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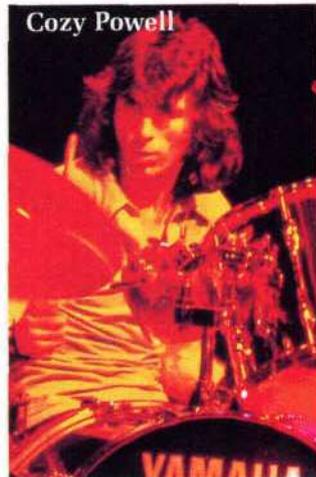
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Garage, it was kind of difficult for me because the drum head had a dent in the middle of it in order to get that fat snare sound. But like now, I've got a snare drum that's a 5 1/4" and I've got it tuned to an actual tone and I can actually get a rebound out of the head and it actually sounds deep enough. It's something I can't exactly explain. I think tuning is real personal.

RF: You sit very low.

VC: I always use a Tama drum seat because they seem to go real low, or at least when I discovered it, it seemed that it was the lowest one. I had a roadie chop it off so it would go lower.

RF: Why?

VC: Because I was real comfortable sitting like that. It didn't even go quite low enough. I wanted to sit lower, but now I don't chop the seat anymore. I just sit as low as it will go—and it's still pretty low. I get a lot of power out of my feet that way too. It never affected my leverage or my speed that much, especially not now because I don't chop it. It's comfortable for me. I mean, my knees aren't up to my chin or anything. I felt uncomfortable sitting real high. It just never felt good.

RF: How do you feel about drum computers, etc.?

VC: I've been kind of toying around with the idea of a digital drum set-up. I thought about it; not just interfacing a Linn Machine with drums, but like when I heard about these Simmons Electronic Drums, I thought if these things had a digital brain happening and the playing surfaces themselves are touch sensitive, then that is it! It turns out that they weren't. They are just a regular old beefed-up *Syndrum* type scene with a bunch of tone generators and oscillators. When I found it out, I was kind of bummed out. The guy said I could buy one of these things and hook it up to a Linn Machine and have the digital sounds with the Linn Machine so when you hit the Simmons pad, you hear the digitally-programmed sound in the Linn Machine. It would be touch sensitive, but it would be what you physically played with the time element the way you played it, as opposed to your programming a beat into it and adjusting it to perfect time.

RF: You obviously don't like that.

VC: Well, I don't *dislike* it. It serves a purpose and as a matter of fact, I think it serves a wonderful purpose. But I don't think it serves a purpose of replacing drummers or the purpose of creating new jokes about drummers, like, "What happens if your drummer doesn't show up or if he shows up an hour late ..." Come on! You gotta program the machine and if the thing messes up and fries a chip or something, then you're out of luck. And it only plays what you programmed into it; it doesn't have a mind and it can't jam. But it's a wonderful addendum and something that's an addition. I've played around with

the Linn Machine and I've dug it, but what bugs me is, cats will get it and get carried away. Frank got one. I was rehearsing with him to go on tour and he brought the *LM-1* to rehearsal. I was messing around with it and finally he came up to me and said, "Why don't you just take that on tour? Take the *LM-1* on tour and a couple of incidental tom-toms to bang on. Play the Linn Machine as your primary axe and just take a couple of tom-toms to play fills on." Give me a break! Months later I called him and he was telling me he had all these tracks with the Linn Machine. I went up there expecting miracles. I figured he could just push the buttons to his heart's content and get anything he wanted out of it. I walked out of there a little let down. I've heard that thing on a number of albums. Some albums I've heard it on, it sounded great and others it sounded like shit.

RF: What, to you, is a good solo?

VC: About the only thing I can say about that is, to me, a good solo is something that makes sense musically in a way that is overall one complete musical statement. But within itself, it has to tell some kind of a story where the whole thing starts at one point, goes to a climax and has an end and is a statement, regardless of whether it has sections to it or it is a free-form solo. I suppose, depending on the type of solo, if it's a live situation where you have to capture the audience's attention, you have to really think, to a certain extent, about being effective. You can't lose them with anything that's too cerebral and you have to think of the stuff that's going to be effective. You have to think about the form and make a valid statement for that particular song. That's pretty much what interests me. As far as effectiveness goes, again, I suppose it depends on the tune, the audience, and whether or not it's a concert situation or say, a jazz situation. When I was playing solos with Frank, it varied. I would play a solo in the same place every night and I would try to do things that were effective and things the audiences would enjoy. After a while, I got to the point where I said, "Can I solo on a different tune tonight?" That's just where my head is at about it. I'm not the type of person who can say, "I've got this solo worked out and *dig this!*" To me, that's where I'm going to improvise. So I improvise and if it gets to the point where I don't feel I have anything to say on a particular tune, I don't want to do it. Sometimes it's like, "Let me trade fours with the bass player on this funk tune and maybe I'll have something to say." Maybe I just don't want to do a solo. I have nothing to say and that's the only kind of soloing that interests me. If I have to play a solo at a certain place and I'm getting paid for it, if I'm capable of doing it, by all means, I'll do it though.

RF: To you, playing with a good bass

player is really important.

VC: Yeah, it is.

RF: What do you look for in a bass player?

VC: Someone who is just comfortable to play with. The bass player and the drummer have to have a communication. It's one thing to have a bass player who'll play to try to make the drummer sound good. But if the bass player and the drummer share a similar concept of the way they play time, if that's happening, if you both individually have good time to begin with and you can fit together, it's great. It's funny, because there are a lot of bass players and drummers who have great time, but for some reason, they just don't mesh. Like Stube and I, when we play, it's second nature. I know the way he plays and he knows the way I play and it fits perfectly. There's a communication there and that's just magic.

When you have players that are real competent, or more than just competent, you never know what's going to happen as far as spontaneity, the magic and the energy. Jeff Berlin and I play a lot of gigs and we just go for it. Some of the things that happen are just great. At any given moment, something magical could happen. A lot of times, I play gigs like that and I wish I had a little tape recorder going. I used to get together with this sax player and we'd just get together on sax and drums. But in a regular rhythm-section context, the bass player is real important. It's definitely the bottom line to making a track happen.

RF: What was the band Karizma that you were in?

VC: It was an original band with a bunch of real good musicians in town here. I got in that band during the time that I was still with Frank, but off the road, which was 1979 through the middle of 1981. We used to play the Baked Potato for about a year every Tuesday and then we took some time off and went back in for about four months and played on Sundays. It was a bunch of local guys playing original tunes and they were great writers too. We really had a good time doing that and we stretched a lot, to the point where we'd just play what we wanted. Creatively, there was a lot of energy and the tunes were great.

RF: What about the band you're playing with locally now? Is that because you really feel the need to play live?

VC: It's good, because I need a good balance of live and studio playing. All those guys are great musicians and the tunes are fun and it's just a real fun situation. It's three nights a week and it's great to have a place to do that. It's real organized and structured, but we can stretch also and it's a real stimulating situation.

RF: Is there a goal either to continue the studio scene or be a member of a band?

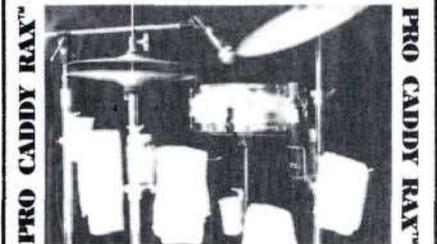
VC: Let me put it this way: I don't think the studio is an end in itself, but on the

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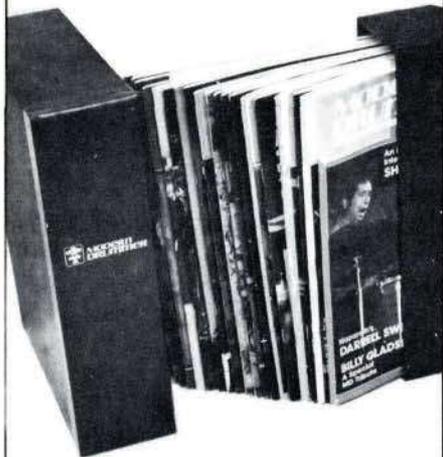
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other hand, I wouldn't feel insulted if I were a full-time studio musician. I love doing it. Some guys have the attitude of, "You want to be a session player for the rest of your life?" I say, "What the hell is wrong with that?" On the other hand, it's not something that I'm saying to myself, "Yes, this is it! I've found my holy grail and that's it." I'm just enjoying it for the moment. If somebody came along and I was offered a position in some band that was musically great, and/or offered me the chance to enjoy some sort of unbelievable financial wealth and/or status, I certainly wouldn't reject it. It's hard to find that kind of situation where the chemistry works out and everybody gets along. Or if it's not a band that's established and you've got a bunch of guys who want to start a band, that's tough too. Every once in a while I get a creative urge to write also, and I've often wondered if I have any talent that lies in that direction. But I'm just going to take it as it comes. I'm not pushing anything. I'd like to try to learn more about that kind of stuff, get a piano in the house and sit down and mess around and write tunes and see if I can come up with anything. Right now, though, I'm just concentrating on my career as a player and trying to have that be my musical medium. I have a lot of real misty visions of the future, but who knows what the future holds for all of us? I don't really know what to prepare for. I've done a lot of preparation for what I do now, so I feel like I'm still beginning at what I'm doing. So I try to concentrate on that full time. It's hard. It's like a big scene being in L.A. and working as an independent person. It takes up a lot of my mental energy.

RF: We once started a conversation about channeling hyper energy and I am sure that is a problem a lot of drummers have. Can you shed any light on the subject?

VC: It takes a lot of mental discipline, I think. In a recent issue of *Modern Drummer*, Roy Burns wrote an article about overcoming the "horribles," which was an excellent article. I've had people come up to me and say things like, "Are you going to go out and take it all out on the drums?" To me, that is a total misconception. I know a lot of drummers who are really energetic and are real relaxed human beings. I'm just not that way. But when that green light goes on, you just have to turn on the switch. It's funny, though, because in terms of getting nervous or anything like that, it takes a lot of mental discipline, which I think is often a collective kind of thing. Say for example, you're in the studio trying to cut a track and you've got three people cutting a track and everybody is nervous. If you sit there and try to make yourself calm and the other people are still nervous, it won't work. Everybody has to be cool. If you're nervous and everybody else is cool, then it's just on you and it's

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something you just have to develop. It's just a matter of fully concentrating on what you're doing at that moment and that's it; just pure concentration without any kind of nervousness. Channeling energy for me has a lot to do with the stimuli I get from the other musicians, too. If everybody is starting to crank and other people's creative juices start to flow and I'm really concentrating on the music, I can really pick up on it. It's really an admirable quality to see somebody who has a real shitty scene at home and his dog just died and then he goes into the club and plays his ass off. You have to shut a lot of that out. It's hard to do, but someone like that just has his concentration completely on the music.

RF: Is there a way you strive to get a balance in your life?

VC: Yes there is, but I'm not sure I've found the answer. It depends on my entire existence, where I live, what my domestic situation is like, what's happening to me musically and just trying to be strong in general, mentally. It's something I can't really provide the answer to because it's a day to day experience and struggle. But as you saunter through the giant Maytag of life's expectations, find out your own needs and weaknesses and be true to yourself.



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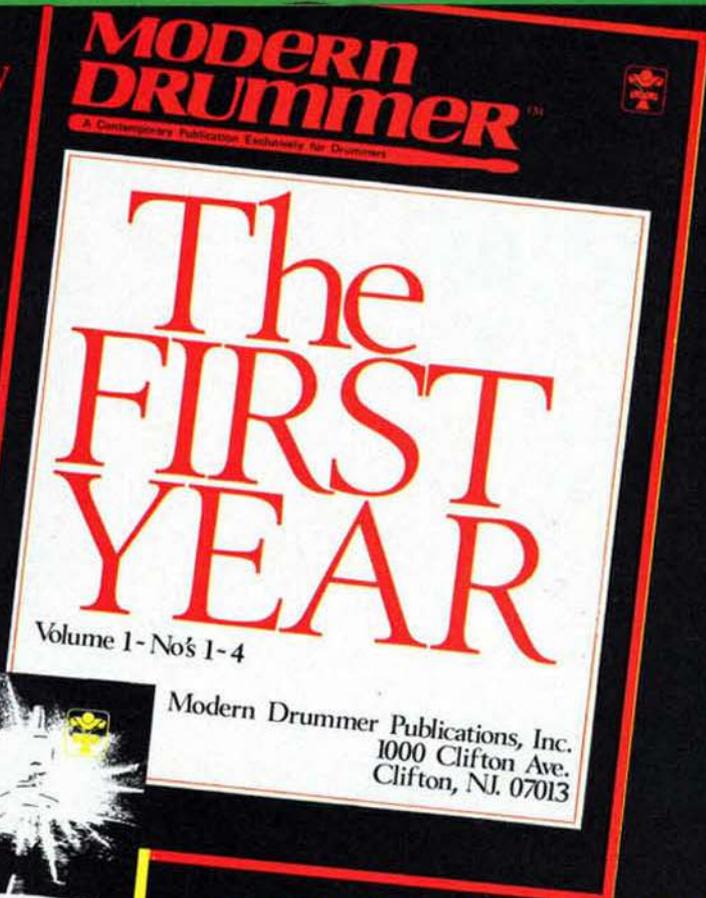
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Altschul continued from page 15

it has to do with how you feel, too. If the band is feeling good and having a good time up there, the audience does pick up on that and they start to have a good time too.

Music is a very powerful force. Technology is now involved with sonic machines for hospitals. The machines send out certain notes that correspond to certain organs in the body and promote healing. In ancient times, in India, they did it with the voice. People sang notes to different parts of the body. Music also affects your moods, and a lot of other things. Most pop music, I think, is geared to a certain level that just deals with the physical. It doesn't get too involved with the spiritual, emotional or intellectual levels. It's mostly about physical expression using one or two emotions. I have nothing against that, but there's a lot more that music can convey besides just a physical expression of sexuality. But most pop music is just dealing on that level, and so it appeals mainly to teenagers who are dealing with their own puberty for the first time. And they buy most of the records.

It's interesting that jazz seems to last through all the generations, whereas most commercial music just has short periods of success. It makes enormous amounts of money, but has short periods of success. So it's really not that lasting. I was watching a television quiz show, and one of the questions was, "Who was the only artist to have million-selling records over four decades?" There's only one person: Frank Sinatra. Now a lot of people may put Sinatra down, but he has sung the music that he wanted in such a way that he's made the audiences dig it. I think that's possible in every area of music. In jazz music, Coltrane records are still selling, Miles' records are selling, Bird records are selling—not in the large numbers, but over a period of years it adds up. Whereas the pop music that was big in the '50s is gone. Some of it is re-emerging as nostalgia, but that's only because the industry is searching for something different and can't find it. Instead of trying to upgrade the listening ability of the people, they're going backwards to the more simplified, less meaningful music.

RM: What about the idea that each new generation needs to start with something simple?

BA: I think for the listener, whatever you put on them when they're young will become their basis. When a friend of mine, the late drummer Stu Martin, became a father, he programmed a synthesizer to lull the baby to sleep. Now the kid is ten years old, he plays drums, and is involved in all kinds of music. For his own intellectual level at this point, he's into The Police. But he also listens to 1957 Miles Davis, and he listens to [Anthony] Braxton, and he listens to electronic music. It's the environment. So I think that if you put very complex music on the younger generation from the beginning, sure, they'll start with that. A lot of fifteen and sixteen year-olds were listening to John McLaughlin and the fusion people, and what Chick [Corea] was doing with his commercial music was more complex than a lot of the other music. If you just start putting this music on the radio along with everything else, more people will buy it, more people will be exposed to it, and more people will understand it. But for some reason, the media is afraid to give the people in America what is actually going on creatively. It's all formulated: if this works, let's use it until it stops working and then go to the next formula.

RM: Speaking of formulas, this is the age of drum machines and click tracks. These things are used in the interest of having perfect time, but what is the relationship between *perfect* time and *good* time?

BA: Perfect time is for machines; good time is for humans. Everybody vibrates at a different speed, everybody's heartbeat is a little different, the way people approach a beat is different. When you get excited, you sometimes rush. When you're bored, or your mind wanders, you sometimes drag. Those are the human qualities in the music. Of course, the less you do that the better it is for certain musical ends.

Originally, the click track was for films, because you had to play the music within a certain amount of time within the scene. Then

they started using it in disco music because that's for dancing and it has to be steady. But I don't think that when you're playing a concert you want to use a click track. I certainly wouldn't use a click track to play improvised music. It would take away part of the human element that is so necessary for that music.

As far as the electronic drum thing is concerned, there again, it's synthetic. The sound is synthetic, the feel is synthetic—it's just not the same. With a lot of the drum synthesizers, you don't have to know anything about drums to be able to play them. You just have to know about the synthesizer. Now the synthesizer is a valid instrument, but I wouldn't call a person who plays the drum synthesizer a drummer. A drummer plays the drums. A synthesizer player plays the synthesizer, whether it's a keyboard synthesizer or a drum synthesizer or whatever. It's another instrument. I mean, I totally believe in new instruments. It's a new time, a new age, there should be some new instruments. But not to take the place of other instruments. A lot of times, they're using synthesizers just to copy other instruments. Why should I copy another instrument when I can get the real instrument? That's one of the reasons I use percussion instruments as part of my drumset. I found that some of the textures that synthesizers give off can be brought in with acoustic percussion instruments. So in that sense, I guess electronics have been an influence on me, along with Spike Jones, [laughs]

RM: I would have said Baby Dodds.

BA: Oh, of course, Baby Dodds was . . . well, actually, "trap drumming" meant not only playing the drumset, but also playing the "trappings" which were the percussion instruments, sound effects, and things like that. So sure, it's a very old tradition.

RM: So you like the idea of new instruments, but for yourself, you choose to play the traditional instruments.

BA: Right. I would, for example, play in a band with someone else playing them. We would play together. But I want to play *these* drums. I kind of feel that maybe a synthesizer player shouldn't first be a pianist, or shouldn't first be a whatever. They should just learn the synthesizer. *That's* the instrument. It's a universe in itself.

RM: So anyway, people are trying to apply things like click tracks to jazz.

BA: Well, that's a big mistake. If you are relying on the machine, that means you have to listen to the machine and the other musicians are listening to you, who are listening to the machine—it's so far removed from the moment that for improvisational music, it's much less spontaneous. You know, sometimes a tune will start off too slow, and the mood of the evening is not that slow. So someone in the band starts to pick up the tempo a little, and everybody agrees, so you all go there. That's part of the moment of improvisational music—to make it feel the best at that moment, by common agreement of everybody in the band. Also, a machine can't swing.

RM: In classical music, a piece may have a basic tempo, but within that there will be ritards and accelerandos. Just little things . . .

BA: But see, a lot of those minor things—those subtle things—are not being used anymore in commercial music. In improvisational music it's a necessary part. In most pop music, dynamics, for example, are just not happening. It's about how loud you can play. To play soft is, first, unheard of, and second, people can't do it. They approach softness with a different intensity than they approach loudness. You can approach both with the same intensity, except it's a different dynamic level. That's all. And most pop drummers don't know how to play with brushes. So a lot of the serious study that's being going on for years within the evolution of the drums is being disregarded. It should be the opposite way. Everything that has been done should be used, and everyone should still be thinking up new things to use in addition to what's already available.

RM: Could you explain your concept of playing "implied" time?

BA: By that I mean time that is felt, but is not stated. Technically

continued on next page

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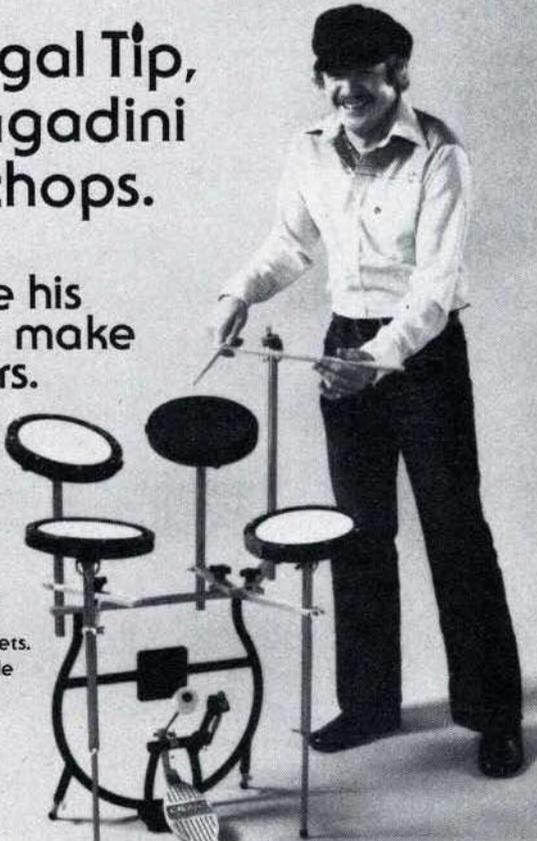
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speaking, it's like you eliminate bar lines from tunes, but the speed of the tune is still the same. It would be more horizontal, or circular, than linear. For example, picture a clock with a second hand. If you take away all of the little things that mark each second, it still takes the hand the same amount of time to make a revolution, but in between, it's more flexible. So it's about speed and motion rather than about tempo.

RM: That makes me think of chord voicings—you don't have to play all of the notes to hear the whole chord.

BA: Right, exactly. You imply the time, just like you can imply the fifth of the chord. With all of the sound and motion and energy you're setting up, the tempo would also be felt. But it's not actually stated.

RM: Another term I've heard you use is "non-time."

BA: I guess if you want to verbalize it, non-time is like a European classical approach to percussion where you're dealing with space, sound, color and texture, rather than time signatures and rhythm patterns and so forth. In other words, it's not used as a cushion for the band; it's not like everyone is going to lean back on you to keep the time. You're going to become part of the total sound that's going on, in a freer, improvisational sense.

RM: That leads into free playing. A lot of people take that to mean that you do what you want, when you want; no rules.

BA: Oh no, that's absolutely false. Free playing means different things to different people, I suppose. To me, free playing means having the vocabulary on hand to be able to play anything that happens at the time in a band, with complete agreement from everyone else in the band. For example, if you're improvising in a certain area, and all of a sudden the creative energy has been used up, then someone else who has the creative energy at that moment becomes the band leader and changes the direction. In order for that to work, everybody has to agree. And you have to be able to go in that direction spontaneously. It's like, the more words you know, the more things you can talk about; the more you can express yourself. So the more you know about playing different areas of music, the freer you are.

RM: Someone might interpret that to mean, "The more techniques you know, the freer you are."

BA: What if you think of something to play that doesn't have a standard technique? That's what jazz cats have been doing since jazz was born. All of a sudden, you want to play something that a flam doesn't encompass, or a paradiddle doesn't encompass, or anything else. What is it? Maybe it's a flubadub. I don't know, but you play this flubadub, and the only way to play this thing is to use the technique you discovered to play it. So you have added to the standard technique by playing this thing. And if you can use it musically—it works! There is no right and wrong. If it's musical, it works. So just to sit and practice standardized techniques from drum books will not make you freer. The concept makes you freer, not your technique.

I don't really feel there is anything all that new. I just think there are different ways of putting things together to make them different or fresh. The thing about technique is, it should become as easy to you as talking. As we're having this conversation, I'm not really thinking about each word. You ask me a question, and that stimulates something in me and I give you an answer, and my answer stimulates something in you and you give me a reply, and so on. We're not thinking about each word before we say it. It's the same thing with playing—you don't think about what you're doing when you play. It becomes second nature. You hear something to play and it comes out. Now that's what practicing technique is really supposed to be about: to develop this second nature, so that whatever you hear is translated into this technical thing to get it out. And that's where it stops.

RM: So when you're playing, you don't listen to yourself; you just listen to what the other musicians are doing and react to it.

BA: Right. If you are thinking about what *you* are playing, then you are not in exactly the same place as everybody else. You're not in a *group* consciousness—you're in your own consciousness.

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Therefore, your involvement in the music is not as full as you might think it is. Now you might be cutting the music, but your involvement isn't there. So if you're listening to yourself, while you are thinking about what you just played, the other cats in the band are on the next note. So you're not in the same place with them—you're a step behind. You have to listen to the other cats in the band, because that's what a band is all about—a group of people playing music. The music is the sum of all the parts; the parts are the musicians. If you're not in the same place, it's like a puzzle with one of the pieces sticking up.

RM: What about planning in advance? You know the bridge is coming up so you plan how you are going to play it.

BA: Well, here again, my main experience is with improvised music. Unless the composer has specified that the bridge should be Latin or something, I don't really think about what I'm going to do. For improvised music, it could be too planned for that moment.

RM: When playing free—something that doesn't involve time or a standard song form—what are some of the considerations for structuring your playing?

BA: Melody, motion, color, texture—I feel rhythm is inherent in the instrument, so except for developing a good time sense or flow, one doesn't have to think rhythmically in free music. You can play melodically, simply by going to certain sounds for certain parts of the melody. So that would give a certain contour to what you're playing. Also, you can deal with other aspects of life in the music. For example, if you're playing a piece with no time in it, you can deal with trying to play the sound of waves hitting against the rocks in the ocean. The splash of the water goes in so many different directions, and it's a wave of sound instead of a linear thing. Or you could deal with the sound of two trucks crashing, with the pieces falling in no real pattern of time. So you could think like that. In certain free music, that's what happens. A lot of people say that free music is chaotic. Well, chaos is a part of life, and so that's

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one element that is in the music. So sometimes there's chaos, but also there's beauty, and there's everything. That's what improvised music deals with—as much of the emotional scale as is possible for the musicians to project. Whereas commercial music is quite limited to certain emotions that they want to stimulate in people who listen to that music.

RM: Changing the subject entirely, when you hear a drummer, do you care what kind of equipment is being used?

BA: No, not really. I mean, if something sounds great I might say "What kind of cymbal is that?" or something. But no, I don't care. When I was very young, being brought up in New York, I was very fortunate to have personal relationships with great drummers. And when I was about sixteen years old, Philly Joe Jones said to me, "You should be able to play on anybody's instrument, without changing anything, play like you, and get your sound." Good musicians will get whatever they want out of whatever they play. Of course, it will be easier for them to play on the kind of equipment they like, but then again, the challenge of playing on something else might make you do something you never did before. But no, I don't care what drumset Jack is using, or Billy, or Elvin. I'm interested in Jack and Billy and Elvin—how they play the instrument. The instrument does not play any of us; we play the instrument.

RM: So many people are concerned with equipment.

BA: Maybe they think a better drumset will make them play better. That's not true. A good drumset will maybe hold up better on the road. If your drums get knocked around a lot you might need heavy-duty hardware so it doesn't break. Okay, that's fine. But as far as making you play better, I don't think the drumset has anything to do with it. All a drumset gives you is an avenue for sound. I don't think the master drummers go to a particular drumset because it's a great drum. I mean, there *are* special drums. I have a couple of snare drums that I feel are very special. But most of the drums that are made with today's technology are good drumsets. A lot of the cats, for example, will play the drumset where the company gives them the best deal. It's not making them play better or worse. It's like, "This is the company that's giving me the deal; I'll set up the drums the way I like them, I'll get the sound I want, and I'll play 'em." The cats that are really into the drums will be able to play any drumset. As a matter of fact, sometimes it might be better to start on a terrible, beat-up old drumset so you learn how to get a sound. If you can get a sound out of a beat-up old set of drums, then when you get a good set of drums, you'll *really* be able to get a sound.

But then again, in the pop music that's happening now, people aren't interested in sound. They're deadening the sound and making it sound like a piece of paper with no tone to the drum. When they say, "I have a great snare drum," it's because it's loud and cuts through all the electricity. I don't feel the pop drummers of today are involved in the sound that the instrument can give. Today, you have to learn how to stick newspaper inside the drums, rather than learn how to get tone out of the drums.

RM: Would you ever be willing to play any commercial music?

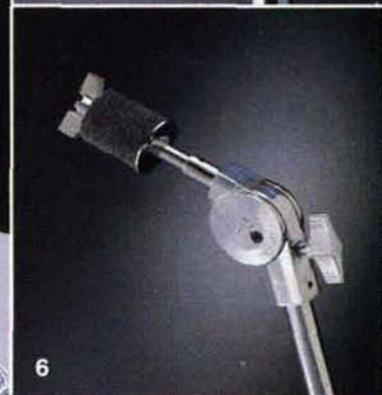
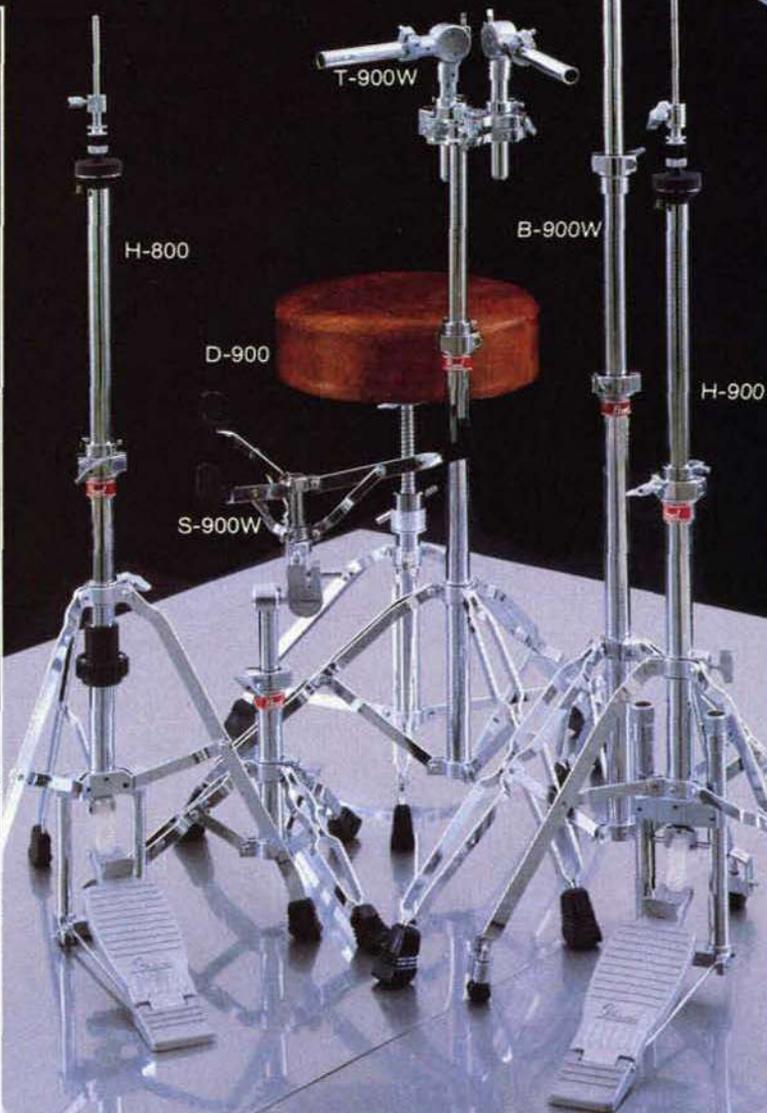
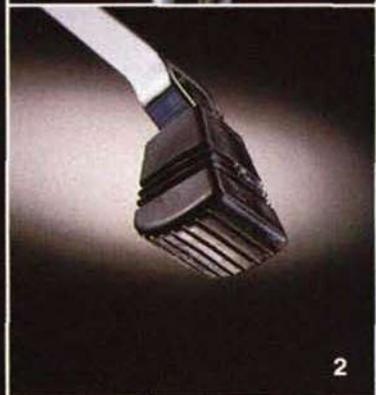
BA: I've done that. I have nothing against the commercial music providing that I can feel an honesty in the people who are performing it. If I don't feel that honesty, it's a drag. It's also a matter of ability; it's like some people can do a certain thing and some people can do another thing. I did some studio dates for Phil Spector in the early '60s that were hit records for their time. I did an album with Buddy Guy, which was all blues. So I've done various things like that. I enjoy it for the flash; for the difference. But I don't want to make a career out of it. I don't even want to do it for long periods of time. I turned down a gig with Jimi Hendrix, and I turned down a gig with LaBelle because they wanted long-term commitments. I would love to make a lot of money, but I'd love to do it playing the music that I feel I play the best, and in which I feel that I can offer some kind of contribution. I don't want to play music that I know will make money, but will limit my own potential.



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History of Rock Drumming *continued from page 19*

served as a role model for the studio drummers who came after him. (Look for a Jim Gordon interview in the Jan. '83 MD.)

Last, but not least, Carl Palmer blew lots of people's minds with his drumming in Emerson, Lake and Palmer. It was written that, "After their first appearance in the Fillmore East in New York City in May 1971, the *Cash Box* critic stated emphatically, 'Emerson, Lake and Palmer have no faults.'"

Carl had enormous technical facility—he'd started out to be a jazz drummer—and began his professional career with The Crazy World of Arthur Brown and then The Atomic Rooster. Brown had a hit called "Fire" in 1968. ELP's debut album was *Emerson, Lake and Palmer*, followed by *Tarkus* and then *Pictures at an Exhibition*, both in 1971. Fans loved the band, but soon after '71 the music was called "techno-rock" and if the sales of records were any indication of their popularity, ELP had lost much of its popularity. Finally, Carl, Keith and Gregg went separate ways (although Palmer insisted the group hadn't broken up), and Carl went to work rehearsing a band called PM. When that didn't get off the ground he became part of a supergroup called Asia.

In a *Down Beat* interview, Carl discussed his own conception: "My approach, in general, is to be as musical as possible. My own personal attitude toward percussion has been to develop two things: the technical side of it and the musical side of it. To commit yourself to one style inhibits your progress."

After 1971 ticked past we'd seen Stephen Bladd with the J. Geils Band, John Willie Wilcox with Todd Rundgren, John Hartman and Keith Knudsen with The Doobie Brothers, Tris Emboden with Loggins and Messina, Albert Bouchard with Blue Oyster Cult. ELO introduced Bev Bevan, and Cat Stevens, in the singer/songwriter tradition, had a string of tremendously successful Lp's, especially *Tea for the Tillerman* and *Teaser and the Firecat*.

Stevens' drummers were Harvey Burns and Gerry Conway.

Styx began recording in 1971. John Panozzo, on the band's first hit single "Lady," brought in a Bolero rhythm! He continues to draw from various influences and it's a credit to both he and the other members of Styx that they're able to create popular sounds from such varied influences. (Panozzo was interviewed in the July '82 MD.)

A funk group called Tower of Power came out of the Bay Area of California in 1971 with *East Bay Grease*. Drummer David Garibaldi made *everybody* take notice of his funk style. Together with conga percussionist Brent Byars, they formed a killer drum section. Garibaldi's time was impeccable—it had to be for him to work out the beautiful musical patterns he played. Tower of Power disbanded, and Garibaldi left around the mid-'70s to pursue spiritual studies. He worked with a band called Takit for a while and he's been the winner of the R&B Drummer category for the past four years in the MD Reader's Poll. Presently, David is doing clinics, teaching privately, and playing with various groups on the West Coast. "My style or feeling on drums is what many people consider a black style," Garibaldi told *Down Beat* magazine. "But, there are a lot of players that have that feel. There's one drummer I don't want to forget to mention so younger drummers who haven't gotten into him will hopefully do it now. He's Mel Lewis. I used to listen to him on old records of Maynard Ferguson. Mel is doing all this great left hand stuff all the rock and roll players are trying to get into now."

Andy Newmark left a strong impression on the music scene for his drumming on Carly Simon's hit single, "Anticipation." Newmark went on to record with Sly Stone, particularly on a track called "In Time" which again blew everybody's mind. That track in particular turned into a tremendous favorite with jazz players. The album *Fresh* was used extensively by Miles Davis as an instruction record for his band. Newmark remains a top session player, turning up on albums such as John Lennon's *Double Fantasy*.

Drummers Howard Grimes and Al Jackson were working with Al Green to knock out a new sound. Green's records were arguably the first to feature the drummer playing a backbeat on a tom-tom instead of a snare drum. Green said, "Al Jackson was the most influential drummer that I have ever known. He played things that wouldn't normally be played. So, when we had the misfortune of losing Al Jackson it kind of dampened my spirits as far as the package was concerned because I rode on the rhythmic patterns that he played."

Isaac Hayes wrote the music for the movie *Shaft*. The drumming on that record started a new trend, particularly with the sixteenth notes on the hi-hat.

Maurice White had been a jazz drummer and a session player at Chess Records in Chicago. Among other veteran jazz musicians, he'd worked with Ramsey Lewis. Jazz artists like Les McCann, Ramsey Lewis, and The Crusaders, along with Sly Stone from the rock side, inspired a while new assault of black bands like the Ohio Players, War, Kool and The Gang and perhaps the most powerful and far reaching of them all—Earth, Wind and Fire. MD correspondent Robyn Flans did an excellent interview with the band's percussionists: Ralph Johnson, Freddie White and Philip Bailey in the Feb./Mar. '82 issue. All three are tremendously talented drummers with a firm grasp of jazz and rock. Maurice White also found ways of introducing traditional African instruments, such as the kalimba, in the band's repertoire. E, W & F is still going strong today and they've had hits like "That's The Way of The World," "Shining Star" and "After The Love Is Gone."

Rod Stewart's first real claim to fame came with the 1981 release of *Every Picture Tells A Story* and the hit single "Maggie May." The drummer on the date was Mickey Waller, another rock solid English drummer. Waller had teamed up with Stewart in Jeff Beck's band on an album called *Truth* released in 1968 and *Beck-Ola* in '69.

Marvin Gaye rhythmically broke out of the somewhat tradi-

tional Motown mold with his "concept" album, *What's Going On*, in 1971.

In 1972 Corky Laing reappeared with West, Bruce & Laing, a short-lived power trio. Foghat started kicking out their versions of essentially British blues/rock with Roger Earl on drums. Steely Dan's first record was released, called *Can't Buy A Thrill*, with drummer Jim Hodder. The writing team of Becker and Fagen presented some challenges with the other "band" members. They didn't want to tour, for one thing. So, the band broke up, and in 1975, *Katy Lied* came out with Jeff Porcaro on drums.

Jeff Porcaro became one of the top studio drummers; one of those guys where it would be easier to name the people he hasn't played with than the people he has. Jeff's drumming has always been poignant and correct.

Don Henley was a founding member (and drummer) of The Eagles in 1972. All of the members, including Henley, had experience in many other rock groups such as Poco, Flying Burrito Brothers and Linda Ronstadt's backup band. The Eagles were unquestionably one of the hot bands of the '70s. Henley was a functional drummer—but then again, you wouldn't want to stick Elvin Jones in a band like The Eagles. Henley's drumming was perfect for the material. Don also wrote or co-wrote much of The Eagles material and sang on a few of their hits. "Witchy Woman," "Take It Easy," "Desperado," "Hotel California" and "Life In The Fast Lane" were some of The Eagles hits.

Somewhat in the wake of Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On* album, Stevie Wonder gave us a series of brilliant albums: *Music of My Mind* and *Talking Book* in '72 and *Innervisions* in '73 that . . . were enormous successes both critically and commercially, and sealed Wonder's status as the most influential and acclaimed black musician of the early '70s," according to *Rolling Stone*. The drummer who played on many of these records—although Wonder has a great unique style of funk drumming and played drums on several tracks—is Dennis Davis. The drums on Wonder's records seemed to scrape away some of the "technical" aspects of funk drumming. Not that the rhythms weren't sophisticated, perhaps they were just more musical than anyone up to that time (with the possible exception of David Garibaldi in Tower of Power).

What do Willie Nelson, Kiss, Bruce Springsteen, Herbie Hancock, The Marshall Tucker Band, Bob Marley and David Bowie have in common? They were all making musical waves in 1973.

Herbie Hancock, a pianist in the Miles Davis band with Tony Williams, branched out even further in his solo career (he'd already established himself as a prolific songwriter and recorded some albums, such as *Maiden Voyage*, that became jazz classics) and got into jazz/rock. *Headhunters* was released featuring Mike Clarke on drums (not the same Mike Clarke from The Byrds!) and the sophisticated funk was penetrating. Clarke's drumming, along with Cobham and a few other "hot" drummers, was taking funk drumming to the extreme. It was fine drumming and necessary, but for rock music it could be paralleled with the evolution of jazz drumming. If you listen to, say, Elvin Jones in his peak years with Coltrane, and beyond Elvin to totally free-form drummers like Rashied Ali—it's a long way from "ding-dingda-ding"!

Arranger Gil Evans made a comment on this era of music in an interview at this time. He pointed out that rock and jazz had gotten extremely elaborate and experimental melodically and harmonically, but rhythmically it had never made such extreme steps. Evans said that it seemed that the pendulum of rhythm was swinging far left to make up for lost time, and he predicted that it would soon settle back to midpoint.

In what had become country/rock music, several bands had sprung up in the wake of The Allman Brothers. The Marshall Tucker Band came out of Spartanburg, South Carolina with their first album *The Marshall Tucker Band*. They've had several hits over the years that have crossed over into pop, rock and country charts like "Can't You See?," "Heard It In A Love Song," and "Searchin' For A Rainbow." Drummer Paul T. Riddle is one of

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the nicest guys in the business. He came up listening to jazz records, and his drumming has a jazz touch. He is well aware of song forms and is one of those drummers who keeps growing and learning. He recently started an instrumental band called The Throbers that allows him to stretch out and use his jazz roots a bit more, but The Tucker Band have always been improvisors. I interviewed Paul in the May '81 MD and asked about the Tucker Band's commitment to each other. He said, "When the six of us got together, musically speaking, it was all or nothing. And it's always been that way. If we fall we're gonna just all fall together. If we make it, we're gonna make it together."

Also in the country/rock vein, but of a harder nature than The Tucker Band, came Lynyrd Skynyrd from Florida. Bob Burns was the original drummer and appeared on the first album, *Pronounced Leh-nerd Skin-nerd*. Lillian Roxon wrote: "The key to Skynyrd's success, aside from their crisp, clean brand of rock, was their no-nonsense visual approach to music. They traveled. They played. Period. No frills." Burns played on "Sweet Home Alabama"—the band's first hit, and was replaced by Artimus Pyle in early 1975.

Pyle is an extremely colorful individual, another good human being, and a man with more guts than most ten men put together! Pyle's style of drumming was "no frills" rock and roll. In 1977, after the release of *Street Survivors*, the band was involved in an airplane crash that took the lives of three of the band members and a member of the road crew. Recently, Pyle has his own band called the Artimus Pyle Band, still knocking out rock and roll and he is trying to pass on his valuable knowledge to those who are coming up the ranks after him.

Another extremely popular country/rock band that came to life in 1973 was a band formed by a fiddle player who had been a Sideman on albums like Dylan's *Nashville Skyline*, *New Morning*

continued on next page

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and *Self Portrait*, and Ringo's *Beaucoups Of Blues*—Charlie Daniels. This was another two-drummer band with Fred Edwards and Don Murray originally. Murray was replaced by Gary Allen, and after Gary Allen left in 1976, he was replaced by Jim Marshall. *Fire On The Mountain* is arguably the most popular Charlie Daniels Band album, and they've had several hit singles with "Devil Went Down To Georgia," "Fire On The Mountain," and "The South's Gonna Do It." Daniels' music has always been a blend of rock, country fiddle tunes, and western swing, and the intensity of the band has varied with the different mixture of drummers.

Disco came into vogue around 1973 with the stylings of Barry White and tunes like "I'm Gonna Love You Just A Little More Baby." Probably no music caused more uproar among drummers than disco. It was definitely "dance" music and the drummers played the most simplified versions of funk drumming imaginable. In the later '70s, artists like The Bee Gees, Donna Summer, and Michael Jackson would have tremendous commercial success built on a disco format. Disco drumming was a double-edged sword. For years the trend had been moving towards "perfecting" a studio sound in drums. Disco had a fascist effect on drumming in that it tried to get everybody to sound the same and succeeded to a great degree.

The movie and movie soundtrack to *Saturday Night Fever* gave the call-to-arms for the whole country to go disco. *Rolling Stone* writer Tom Smucker wrote: "For everyone who had never been out dancing and couldn't quite figure out the scene, *Saturday Night Fever* wed the music of the Bee Gees to the unthreatening images of John Travolta's glides and struts. And when that wedding turned out to be the most lucrative in the history of pop, old rock stars from Rod Stewart to the Beach Boys rushed to cash in; radio stations didn't just add disco, they went all disco; and record companies competed to hire disco insiders and disco artists."

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The basic disco beat was either 1 and 3 or 1,2,3,4 on the bass drum, 2 and 4 on the snare, and playing the "and" of 1,2,3,4 on a hi-hat or bell of a cymbal.

Kiss became a media phenomenon and easily one of the most popular rock bands of the '70s. Drummer Peter Criss, inspired by Gene Krupa, Charlie Watts and Ringo Starr, became part of what he called ". . . the greatest rock group in the world." Criss even studied with Gene Krupa for a while. In MD's Feb./Mar. '81 issue, he told Rick Mattingly: "I still use the things he [Krupa] showed me whenever I play. In fact, my solos in Kiss were often based on Krupa's "Drum Boogie." Peter left Kiss in 1980 because, "Kiss is a heavy metal band, and my material was different." He'd written a ballad called "Beth" which became one of the group's biggest hits, and none of the other band members played on the cut. While he was still a Kiss member, he released a solo album that went platinum and was nominated for two Grammy awards. His second solo lp, *Out of Control*, was released, and at present Peter is recording a third solo lp, that he hopes will give him more recognition as a singer/songwriter.

Elektra records released the first album by Queen in '73. One English writer wrote: "Queen is to heavy metal what the Vatican is to the local wood church. Olympian in sound, majestic in scope and quite pretentious in nature . . ." Most critics cite Queen as having a heavy Led Zeppelin influence. *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Rock* said: "In 1973-74 Led Zeppelin . . . (was) largely unavailable to British audiences and along came . . . Queen." The theory being that if Led Zeppelin had been more visible, Queen wouldn't have hit as big. Being that there is really no such thing as "if," Queen *did* hit it big. Drummer Roger Taylor's style of drumming, coupled with bassist John Deacon, was described as ". . . constantly conjuring up visions of the *Titanic* bubbling to its fate." Queen always had very strong vocals and Taylor remains a

popular rock drummer. In the early '80s he released a solo lp called *Fun In Space*.

Journey was formed with Aynsley Dunbar on drums, later replaced by Steve Smith. Aerosmith featured Joey Kramer, 10cc brought us Paul Burgess and Stuart Tosh, Orleans (a good band that never quite hit a top level of success) had a super drummer in Wells Kelly, David Bowie knocked out some great rock using Woody Woodmansey, Andy Newmark and Dennis Davis.

Reggae music took a chunk of rock and roll. Bob Marley and The Wailers released *Burnin'with* Carlton Barrett on drums. Paul Douglas played drums for Toots and the Maytals, and perhaps the best known "reggae" drummer is Sly Dunbar. Similar to funk drumming, reggae drumming was as much built on what *wasn't* played as what was played.

"Mighty" Max Weinberg, whose dream was to "be like Ringo," was the third and final drummer with Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. Springsteen had released *Greetings From Asbury Park and The Wild*, *The Innocent and The E Street Shuffle* around 1973 using drummers Vinnie Lopez and Ernie Carter. Weinberg answered an ad in *The Village Voice* and was chosen from more than fifty hopeful drummers. *Born To Run* was released in 1975 followed by *Darkness on The Edge of Town* and *The River*. Max was pure rock and roll drums. He'd been in rock bands since he was thirteen and played in the pit bands of some Broadway shows. His playing with Springsteen has evolved into consistent rock solid drumming, and Max had done records with Meatloaf, Jim Steinman and Gary "U.S." Bonds, among others. Like the rest of the E Street Band and Bruce Springsteen, Max is carrying on the pure rock and roll tradition.

Finally, 1973 brought pure country music into vogue, pioneered by "outlaws" like Wille Nelson and Waylon Jennings. Nelson had been using his drummer for almost twenty years, Paul English, and then added Rex Ludwig for a while, but for the past few years it's just been Paul. Waylon Jennings used Richie Albright for years until Albright left the band to produce records and his spot was filled by Buddy Holly's drummer, Jerry Allison.

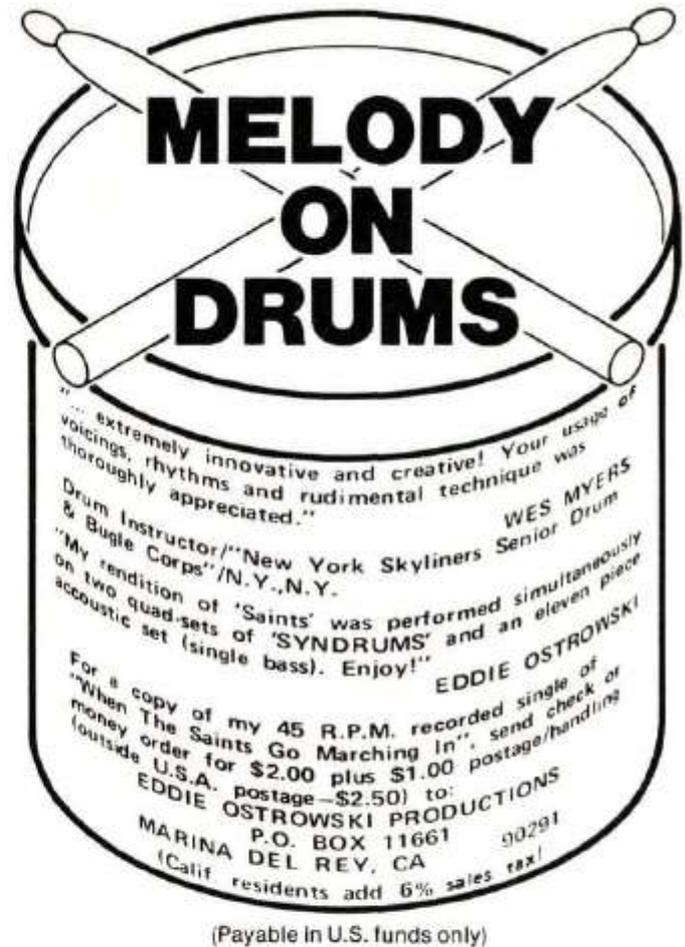
Neil Peart has won the Rock category in the MD Readers Poll every year. This past year he also won in Recorded Performance for *Exit:Stage Left* and All-Around Drummer.

Peart was actually the second drummer in Rush. John Rutsey played drums on the first Rush album released in 1974, but he quit soon after and Neil joined. Neil writes the lyrics to many of Rush's songs and he has the unique position of being respected for his drumming and his writing. If he can't inspire a fan to play drums, it's a safe bet that he'll inspire them to try to write.

Lillian Roxon wrote about Rush in her *Rock Encyclopedia*. She said, "The band has successfully bridged the gap between fantasy proper and fantasy rock, emulating the works of Ayn Rand and, generally, slanting their power-trio antics toward ideas of the future." In the Apr./May '80 MD, Peart credited Bill Bruford, Keith Moon, Carl Palmer, Phil Collins, Michael Giles, Kevin Ellman, Nick Mason and Tommy Aldridge as influences. He's known for his ability to glide through odd time signatures and for his multi-percussion work.

The Average White Band blew everybody's minds. Here was a Scottish band playing funk like black Americans. I remember a black comedian telling a talk show host that he was going to start a group called The Average Black Band that played European classical music like Bach and Beethoven! "Cut The Cake" was the band's first single in 1974. The horn lines were crisp, almost like bebop riffs, and drummer Robbie McIntosh played great. McIntosh died from snorting an overdose of heroin and was replaced by Steve Ferrone, who has proved himself to be one of the better drummers in this genre.

Bachman-Turner Overdrive were cranking out some solid rock and roll in '74, driven by Robbie Bachman, and Led Zeppelin had put the stamp of approval on a new band on Zeppelin's record label. The band was called Bad Company, who had a smash single



called "Can't Get Enough" and they recorded four albums up until 1977. The band had a sabbatical for a while and is about to release a new album. Drummer Simon Kirke was a talented heavy-rock drummer who had joined the band after being with Free.

The '60s Jefferson Airplane had broken up, but several ex-members formed a new band called Jefferson Starship. *Dragon Fly* was the band's first album spotlighting drummer Johnny Barbata, ex-member of The Turtles. Barbata played great and was with them until a few years ago when a serious car accident forced him out of commission for quite a while. His spot was filled by Aynsley Dunbar. Dunbar remains an exceptional rock drummer. He'd been with John Mayall, The Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation, The Mothers Of Invention and Journey. Rick Mattingly had an interview with Aynsley in the May '82 MD.

A few strong acts came out of 1975 with some noteworthy drummers. A band called Kansas came out of the state of Kansas and had a sound that's been called a composite of Cream and Yes. Phil Ehart gained tremendous respect as a drummer to reckon with.

Heart, a Canadian band, broke in the States with a self-distributed album that went platinum called *Dreamboat Annie*. Heart toured with and opened for acts like the Jefferson Starship and Journey, and finally broke loose as one of the major attractions of the '70s. Michael Derosier was with the band until very recently when he was replaced by Denny Carmassi.

A group that had called themselves The Jazz Crusaders for almost twenty years dropped the name "jazz" and started selling records like a major pop act. They released an album called *Chain Reaction* which was a monster and showed the talents of drummer Stix Hooper. The Crusaders are still very popular as an act. Each band member has released solo albums and they are all much in-demand studio musicians. Hooper had proved himself an excellent

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straight ahead jazz drummer and now he was leaning more on his Texas R&B roots with The Crusaders.

Peter Frampton had a flash of success with his album *Frampton Comes Alive!* John Siomos, ex-drummer from Mitch Ryder and The Voices of East Harlem, accompanied Frampton on three huge singles: "Show Me The Way," "Baby I Love Your Way" and "Do You Feel." This was a refreshing sound in the singer/songwriter tradition.

Tom Waits, another singer/songwriter in a Bohemian tradition, had his most popular album *Nighthawks At The Diner* released in '75. Waits wrote about the B-side of life: The losers, the hookers, the crooks, pimps and runaways, and he captured the lower essence of the '50s beatnik era by blending his songs with a jazz cabaret flavor. He chose excellent musicians for his albums, usually a quartet format with Waits on piano, an acoustic bassist, a tenor sax, and either Bill Goodwin or Shelly Manne on drums.

One of the big surprises of the year was when rock and roll guitarist Jeff Beck came out with *Blow By Blow*, which was one of the best jazz/fusion albums ever. The follow up album was *Wired* and after that the least successful of the three albums, *With The Jan Hammer Group*.

Then at the peak of disco, Van McCoy had a hit with "The Hustle." The record was a monster and its drummer was a young man from Rochester, New York who would stop everybody in their tracks, make them re-examine themselves, and start a trend of clones in his wake: Steve Gadd.

Steve Gadd is the perfect blend of jazz and rock drumming. He became the most in-demand studio drummer and it seemed like there wasn't any style of music that Steve couldn't burn up. His timing was impeccable, his ideas were fresh . . . possibly the only criticism that could be leveled against him was that he was over recorded. Gadd became part of a band called Stuff along with

drummer Chris Parker, and for a span of a few years, these guys played on everybody's records. They became the sound that every producer wanted. As we approach 1983, Steve Gadd remains one of the consistent drum heroes. That almost every studio drummer has tried to emulate his style is a testimony to his talent. Gadd seems to have built his style around Tony Williams and Elvin Jones to a large extent, and he is well schooled rudimentally.

From 1976 to 1979, rock and roll went through one of its rebellious cycles. New Wave and Punk Rock reached back into the '50s and '60s and mixed it with a citylife feeling, a frenetic anxious sound. Topper Headon with The Clash, Paul Cook with The Sex Pistols, Tommy Ramone of The Ramones, Clem Burke with Blondie and Stephen Goulding and Terry Chimes with Graham Parker were some of the new drummers of 1976. Boston was a semi-heavy metal band that had a hit single with "More Than A Feeling" and Sib Hashian was on drums.

In 1976, Capricorn records (the same label that had released records by The Allman Brothers and The Marshall Tucker Band) released *Free Fall* by The Dixie Dregs. The Dregs were a totally instrumental band that combined the technical aspects of, say, The Mahavishnu Orchestra, with a down-home country music. Drummer Rod Morgenstein hailed from Long Island, New York and he was a left-handed drummer. "I play like a right-handed drummer backwards," he told Robin Tolleson in the Feb./Mar. '81 MD. "When you're five guys in an instrumental band," he continued, "you have to be thinking of ways to get as many sounds as possible out of the instrument you play. You want to constantly keep variety of sounds, as well as variety of styles. Always change the sound. Always hit a different drum. Think of the drums as one of five instruments, as in this band, and what can they do to round out and complete what the others are playing. That's a good way to think."

1977 gave birth to another heavy metal band that has sold six million records to date—Foreigner. This band was made up of ex-Spooky Tooth and ex-King Crimson people, and Dennis Elliot had played drums on a tour with Ian Hunter and Mick Ronson in 1975.

Ex-Allman Brothers drummer Jaimoe Johanson showed up again in Sea Level, a band that was similar in content to the ABB, but had more of a flair for pop tunes. Jaimoe left and was replaced for a while by Joe English, a superfine rock drummer. English left the band and joined Paul McCartney and Wings after Denny Siewell and Geoff Britton and recorded *Venus And Mars*, *Band On The Run* and *Wings At The Speed of Sound*.

Joe English left McCartney after *Wings At The Speed Of Sound* and has released two albums of his own, Christian contemporary rock, on the Refuge label.

Two New Wave bands of lasting merit from 1977 were Talking Heads and Elvis Costello and The Attractions. Talking Heads were from the U.S.A. and the rhythm section of Tina Weymouth on bass and her husband Chris Frantz on drums was a simple and solid support for the band. Their albums *Talking Heads '77*, *More Songs About Buildings and Food*, and *Fear of Music* sold reasonably well. In '78 they had a modest hit with a version of "Take Me To The River," written by Al Green. *Rolling Stone* wrote that the band's success was due to their chief songwriter/singer, David Byrne's ". . . unwavering vision of a bleak world that transcended normal human emotion."

Elvis and The Attractions came from Britain and their drummer, Pete Thomas, is one of the most creative of the new wave drummers. Elvis' first lp, *My Aim Is True* was recorded with a country/rock band called Clover. It's a great album. The Attractions played on his next three, *This Years Model*, *Get Happy!* and *Armed Forces*. "In (Elvis) songs, life occurs as a nightmare where the personal contacts that might provide a haven merely become an intimate extension of the web society has spun to imprison us all."

In 1978 David Robinson and The Cars surfaced and Robinson was incorporating electronic percussion in an interesting way. Devo also came out of Ohio and their drummer, Alan Myers, had a mechanical style that blended perfectly with the group's music. Bruce Gary played some solid drums with The Knack.

I'm sure MD's readers will be familiar with who's who in drumming from late 1979 to today. Simon Phillips and Stewart Copeland come to mind as just two of the drummers who are extremely popular and are inventing new concepts.

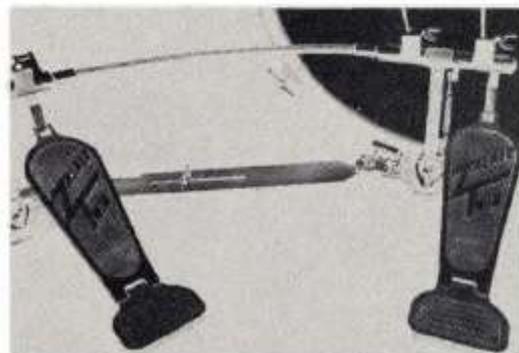
Perhaps the biggest invention in recent years that has succeeded in angering some drummers; putting the fear in others; is used by still others as a creative extension, is the drum machines. The Linn *LM-1* and the Oberheim *DMX* seem to be the most popular as of this writing. These machines are actually replacing drummers in many instances and in other instances they are used in conjunction with a flesh-and-blood drummer.

Writing this five-part series gave me the first opportunity to look analytically at the history of rock drumming. I must confess that as I neared the close of this fifth installment—it was as if I was writing a sad ending. I don't think the drum machines are to be feared. Rick Mattingly pointed out that not too many years ago, bands had a snare drummer and a bass drummer. The invention of the bass drum pedal knocked about 50% of the drummers out of the market. We forget that today. If anybody is to blame for the use of machines—we have to blame ourselves. We've created our own Frankenstein.

In one of his columns for this magazine, David Garibaldi wrote of a yearning for the ". . . return of the thinking drummer." Drummers like Philly Joe Jones used to speak about being able to swing a seventeen-piece big band with a pair of wire brushes and a telephone book. The majority of young drummers today feel that they can't be creative unless they have eight mounted toms, two floor toms, a deep snare, multiple cymbals and double bass drums! There is no magic in a drumset. We could walk through the showrooms at any NAMM show, late at night when no one's there.

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We'd be surrounded by every single option available in percussion. But, there'd be no sound. No music. If, for instance, Vinnie Colaiuta happened to be there and he sat down behind a massive drumset—then there'd be magic. By the same token Vinnie could make magic on anything. Steve Gadd used a pair of wire brushes and a cardboard box on one cut on the new Rickie Lee Jones album!

The magic is inside each and every one of us. Imagination, creativity, attitude, enthusiasm—all these are much more important than what we play on. We need to become individuals in our approach to music. If we're all trying to sound like whoever is the hot drummer of the day—then what difference does it make whether record producers use drum machines? Every hot new drummer is hot *precisely* because they took a new approach to the drums. The clones might achieve fleeting or momentary success—but it can't last.

I feel it's vital for any drummer that's going to create something new to be well versed in the old. Terri Lynne Carrington was in my office yesterday. Terri is a seventeen-year-old who has been playing with the greats of jazz since she was twelve! I asked her what she did different from all the other seventeen-year-olds to be as far advanced in jazz drumming as she is today. She said: "I started at a very early age and I was lucky enough to have parents who were supportive. And I listened to the music since I was five years old. My father started me off with music that I'd understand like James Brown, Ben Branch, Jimmy McGriff, Jimmy Smith, B.B. King. As a baby I played with those records and it just kept developing on from there."

I believe that same approach needs to be taken by anyone who seriously wants to pursue rock drumming. Hopefully, this *History of Rock Drumming* will inspire several pioneers to study the roots of the music and their instrument, and we'll see the return of the thinking drummer, because I hate sad endings.



Owen Hale



by Scott Fish

From time to time, readers ask us to spotlight qualified drummers who aren't in the public eye as much as some others. Several months ago, I was on the phone with Roger Hawkins. In the course of our conversation, Roger mentioned Owen Hale as a new studio drummer in Muscle Shoals who deserved some attention. When Roger Hawkins puts his stamp of approval on a drummer, it's a good idea to pay attention.

What follows is the result of a phone interview with Owen. He is indeed a relative newcomer to the studio world, but many readers will recognize the names of the hits he's played on. This is a classic story. A trumpet player for fifteen years, Owen didn't start playing drums until he was about twenty years old. Too many drummers would consider that an excuse for failure, but on top of that, Owen plays his drumset backwards! An interesting interview with a great person, designed to blow away all the excuses.

SF: How did you first get into studio drumming?

OH: I was in Jackson, Mississippi working in clubs, doing a little bit of studio work, trying to break into this little studio down there called North American Recording. Mike Daniels owned it and leased it. One night Rick Hall, who owns Fame Studios in Muscle Shoals, called and talked to Mike in his office for about an hour. We were wondering what was going on. Mike comes back out and says, "Well, do you guys want to move to Muscle Shoals?" I said, "Sure!" Rick was looking for another rhythm section to cut his demos. It was a good start so we came up. Rick wanted somebody he could rely on and he knew we were young, fresh, and really wanting to do it. I walked in here as green as hell, and felt very fortunate to learn in Muscle Shoals.

I played trumpet for fifteen years, so I can read real well. But, when I got to college I started messing around with drums and got real interested in them. I wanted to buy a drumset. I taught myself how to play, really got into it—and forgot about my trumpet! I just went 100% on the drums. This job is the result. I've had no lessons at all. I've got the thirteen basic rudiments down and I learned the paradid-

dles and different things from friends. I've had four years of college as a music major, but I didn't start playing drums until I was twenty or twenty-one. I'm thirty now.

SF: What was the first recording date you did at Muscle Shoals?

OH: The first *master* date was probably a Janie Fricke album. Then I did Tammy Wynette and a couple of David Allen Coe albums.

SF: What's the procedure inside a studio on a master session?

OH: The musicians would go in and we'd do a drum check first. Then we get the charts and run down the songs until it's right. I was nervous at first. I had the "red light" syndrome, but that eased away little by little. It takes a while to get rid of that. Now I'm getting to where I'm real comfortable. In Muscle Shoals they basically want a good solid track. I feel fortunate that I have good enough ears to hear parts. I think that's because I played trumpet for so many years. Playing drums is like a natural thing for me. I wish I knew more about it, but I'm learning. I'm not going to stop here. I learn more by listening to other people and studying. I'm just really getting started. The sky is the limit.

SF: Did you plan on becoming a studio drummer?

OH: When I first started playing drums I had no idea this would happen. I was in different rock and roll bands and played all around the Southeast in clubs. I'm originally from a little town called Lumberton, Mississippi, way down in the southern part of the state. I moved to Jackson in 1973 and played there for about a year. I was thinking, "Am I going to be doing this for the rest of my life?" I decided to go into the Air Force. It was the *wrong* decision and I got my ass right back out!

I moved back to Jackson in 1975 and started playing clubs again with my cousins and friends. At the same time, I was going over the North American Recording studio a lot, really bugging Mike Daniels. I'd say, "Look man, give me a break. I want to learn. I want to get in the studio." He'd say, "Well, I'll give you a call sometime." I just kept on. I was very persistent because I knew I wanted to learn studio drumming.

James Stroud and Roger Hawkins were big influences on me. James was playing in

Jackson and I'd always go hear him play. I knew he was at Malaco Studios as a studio drummer and that's about when I got interested in it too.

I finally got in with Mike Daniels. He gave me a call and I went over and worked on a Marissa DeFranco session for Elektra records. That was the first thing I did. I heard that other people suggested Mike give me a call; people who thought I was fairly good and thought that he ought to give me a try. Those people really helped by backing me up and believing in me. From then on, Mike started using me a lot. I was learning more and just loved it.

SF: Do you have much control over how your drums are going to sound in the studio?

OH: I *care* very much about the drum sound. I've gotten some new Pearl drums. I've got 10", 12", 13", and 14" mounted toms with the extra length on them. They're doubleheaded. They've been sounding real good. I try to get a good drum sound all the time. Engineers are all different. You get different drum sounds everywhere. Now that I'm putting together a good drumset, I want to go for a drum sound of my own and get it down and try to keep it in relation to every studio. No matter how long it takes, I want to get that certain sound.

Besides the four mounted toms I've got a 16" floor tom, a 22 x 16 bass drum, and an 8 X 14 snare. All of the drums are wood.

SF: Do you use a variety of drumheads in the studio?

OH: Doubleheaded drums give me an option. If I'm on a date and they don't want a lot of tone, but more "thoomp" without the bigness, I'll take the bottom heads off, tune them up real quick, pad them a little and I'm set. But I prefer using both heads; *Pinstripes* on top and *Diplomat* clear on the bottom. I use an *Ambassador* on my snare. Roger Hawkins gave me an old '62 Ludwig 8 x 15 snare drum that's deadly. It's going to be a killer for ballads and r&b. It's got that big fat sound.

SF: Do you have any practice routines to keep your studio skills up?

OH: I've got practice pads that I work with, and books that I read to keep up with phrases and patterns. I learn real quick. When I played trumpet, I always memo-

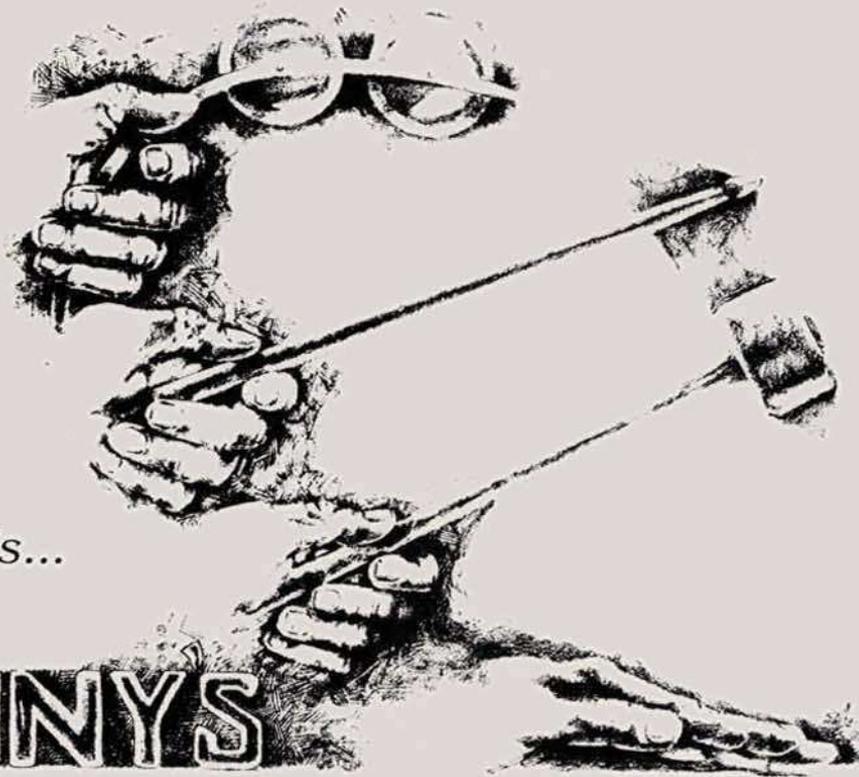
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rized things, and I didn't mean to. I memorized or remembered how the songs went and what the parts were. I think I've been gifted with being able to remember things. When I go do a date, we'll run the song down a couple of times and I'll know it.

SF: Is that a quality most studio drummers have or acquire?

OH: Sometimes. It's good to have that quickness and speed and still be able to have a good feel. If my drums are recorded in the first take or two—that's my best takes in most cases.

SF: Are most of your sessions done live or with overdubbing?

OH: Billy Sherril was producing Tammy Wynette's albums, and he always went for takes using all the instruments and Tammy's singing. Other times the artists will come in and then come back again after the rhythm tracks have been recorded to do their vocal over. It doesn't matter to me as long as the singer is there while we're cutting it. I listen to the singer real close when I'm cutting in order to get the feel of the song, and I try to surround the vocals and make it fit. Usually we'll work with a "pilot" vocal. They don't keep the "pilot" vocal track. It's just used as a point of reference.

Sometimes when we do Walt Aldridge's songs over at Fame Studios, me and him will go in by ourselves. Walt's a songwriter for Rick Hall at Fame Studios. I'll get on the kit and he'll be in the control room at the machine, plus have his guitar running direct. He'll hand me a chart and we'll do his song. Walt will come back and stack all the parts: vocal, bass, keyboards, and whatever's needed. I love it! Especially with Walt because he writes different. He's a very versatile writer. He can go from basic country to new wave. I love working with him in that respect because I know his ideas and I like to play them. They're fun. He writes all the parts out—note values and everything. When it's sitting in front of you you'll do it in one or two takes if you're a good reader and a quick learner. That's when it's real fresh and feels the best. Walt has really been an inspiration.

SF: Are there *specific* drum books or exercises you use to keep sharp?

OH: I don't really use those drum books much. I read trumpet melodies and try to keep up with melodic figures. Down here in the Muscle Shoals, Nashville, Atlanta area, the reading is not as much of a requirement as in Los Angeles or New York. That's not to say I don't like to read the books at all. I'm trying to learn new things all the time. But it's not as much of a requirement down here.

SF: What would happen if you were called to play a session in New York or Los Angeles?

OH: I'd love it. I love challenges. That's the only way to keep learning! Sightreading is one of my strong points. I always did

really good in sightreading when I tried out for All State Band in high school. They'd whip a thirty-two bar piece in front of you and say, "Alright. You've got a minute to look at it." You had to whip out the melody, phrasing, and everything—forte's, pianissimo's—all the stuff. You had to be real aware of it.

SF: How did you learn to phrase on a drumset?

OH: Through listening. I could read and I knew the note values. I knew what to play because I played trumpet for so long. I don't do a lot of written dates. I would love to do more with big orchestras, where everybody has their part written out, and it's count it off and go! I really haven't done any of those but I want to.

SF: When you're reading a chart, how do you determine if you're going to execute a phrase on the snare, bass drum, toms, or cymbals?

OH: It varies. If you wanted a real *short* note you'd probably play it on a snare. If the note was tied over and you wanted it to last, you'd probably hit it on the cymbal. It's according to how the producer wants it. There's not really any set rules. I'd first play it the way I felt it.

SF: For drummers who are aspiring to be studio drummers, how would you advise them on developing a balance between being good sightreaders and being good listeners?

OH: I wish I would've taken drums in high school. It's not really hurting me, but I could've learned a lot back then. But, maybe I wouldn't play like I do now, which is comfortable for me. Get your reading chops down for sure. A lot of the charts down here are numbered chord charts. They'll have I, IV, V, for instance, for the tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords on the chart. If you can count to four you can do that! If they want a little pattern to be played they'll write out the notes or the rhythm pattern. Maybe you just add the right feel.

SF: When you're home do you listen to many different styles of music?

OH: Oh yeah! I try to keep up with all the new stuff. I'm really into The Police. They're great. Al Jarreau's new album just knocks me out. Steve Gadd and Jeff Porcaro are two of my favorites—*definitely* Jeff. He was probably my biggest influence because I loved the way he played drums; his feel, his parts. I love how he plays the songs. It seems to me that Jeff sings with the song. He doesn't play too much or too little. He knocked me out on Larry Carlton's *Room 335* album, Les Dudek's records, *all of* Boz Scaggs' stuff, Toto and of course, Steely Dan! Whatever artist Jeff's with he puts it down for them the way they want it.

SF: Has Roger Hawkins helped you out a lot?

OH: Roger's been great. All the guys at

continued on next page

Muscle Shoals Sound are. If he needed another drummer over there or anything—he'd call me. He lets me use his equipment sometimes, or I'll go over and we'll talk drum talk. Roger's a legend. He's one of the few drummers that has a style that I really love. I have a lot of respect for him. He's real sensitive when he plays, and he plays incredible grooves.

SF: I got a letter from an MD reader who wanted to know if he could make enough money as a studio drummer to consider it a "steady job."

OH: I worried about it for a while, but it's getting better all the time. From being in these playing drums I'm also learning production, publishing . . . a lot of it. I don't want to *just* rely on being a studio drummer all my life. I want to learn *all* aspects of the whole business. Even though I'm comfortable making a pretty good living playing drums, I'm still learning. Maybe later on down the road I'll still play drums but just branch out. It takes a lot of determination, drive and luck.

SF: I think the reader may have been referring to "job security."

OH: Security? That used to scare the hell out of me. But, I had the determination and thought I was good enough, and had good enough ears to make it. It was just from sheer determination that I'm here right now. But, for the guy that was asking: Being a studio drummer is scary and very challenging. There's a lot of competition out there and you have to keep on your toes. Maybe I won't get a paycheck for a month, but the next day I'll get four or five. That's the way it is; it's none of this *weekly pay* thing, until you get up there with the Gadd's and Porcaro's who are so busy they can't breathe! Once you get that momentum going, the dates start coming in and your security will get better. But, you have to work harder. It's really been great for me. I can't believe how much I'm working. I feel a lot better about the whole situation. I was twenty-seven when I moved to Muscle Shoals. I said, "Alright Owen. I'm going to give it until you're thirty. If you don't see that it's happening, or you don't think it will happen for you—that's it!" But, I'm not going to do that. It's been real good and it's getting better.

SF: Is it important to maintain a balance between work and play so that you don't kill yourself?

OH: Studio drumming is hard work. I've seen Larrie Londin up in Nashville just like he was worn out! I just want to work all the time right now. That's all I think about. I don't think of it as "Boy, I'm working so much I need a break!" I hope that day comes. But, I don't think I'll even take a break then, because I love to play. But, you *do* have to keep a balance and it's easy to do in Muscle Shoals because there's no pressure. It's very comfortable. I'm really enjoying living here.

SF: When you're not drumming in the studio do you have any other activities of interest?

OH: I like to play paradiddles on tables and do weird tap dances with my feet and hands. I read trumpet books to refresh my mind with rhythms, and I keep up with the trumpet still. I'd also like to get a good band together. I miss live playing.

SF: Levon Helm is one of the greatest rock and roll drummers. What were the circumstances that led to you playing drums on his latest album?

OH: Levon was in New York, I think. They called me and said, "We've got to do these three tracks to finish up Levon's album." I said "Great!" Levon came back to do the vocals a month later. I went over and he and I got together and had a great time. I had an offer to go on the road with him. It was a hard decision not to, but my studio work was picking up.

SF: He decided to leave your drum tracks on the album?

OH: Yeah. What really flipped me out was to be able to play with Roger Hawkins. I've always looked up to him for so many years. I respect him to the utmost, and it was a thrill to play drums together.

SF: Which album that you've played on are you most proud of?

OH: Levon's album. I'm on the track "Lucretia." Most of the playing I've done is basically for the commercial market. Have you heard Bertie Higgins' single "Key Largo" or his album? I like the playing I did on that.

SF: Do you use click tracks?

OH: Not really. I have before. It's not very much fun but sometimes you have to do it. It works good on certain things. Drum loops are happening a lot now. Olivia Newton-John's single "Physical" is a drum loop. The drummer will record four real steady bars with a good sound, and they loop it on the tape. Then the drummer overdubs his crashes, tom-tom fills and whatever they want. I'm kind of anxious to do that because "Physical" is a steady pulse with a human feel that comes off good.

SF: Have you experimented with the Linn LM-1 machine?

OH: Wishbone Recording Studio just got one. We were listening to Jermaine Jackson's new album which is *all* Linn drums. It really surprised me. I don't like the sound of it. It seemed to me that the bass drum was kind of distorted. It wasn't that *thump* that I like in a bass drum. It sounded like a machine even though it does sound like drums. The machine's amazing! It does all the percussion, handclaps, ungodly things . . . you can program it to do just about anything. But, I don't think the drummer will ever be replaced—even though these machines are being used—because of the spontaneity and magic things that can only happen on the drumset.

SF: Would you ever consider leaving the studios to go on the road with a band?

OH: If I ever get to the point where I'm doing a lot of sessions and a good band or a certain artist asked me to go on the road with them—if the situation was right—I'd probably do it. I love playing live. It's like night and day between studio playing and live playing. It's two different worlds.

SF: You play the drums in an unorthodox manner. Can you tell me about that?

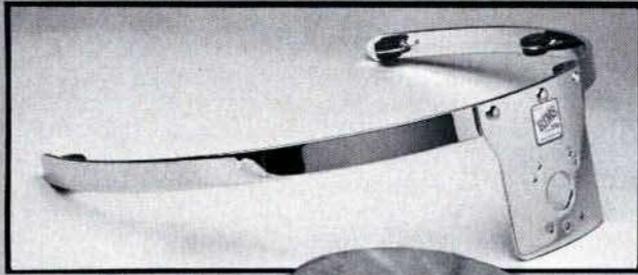
OH: I play on a right-handed kit, but I play my snare with my right hand, and I ride the cymbal or hi-hat with my left hand. That's the way I learned. I'm getting to where I'm ambidextrous on the drums. I used to bat right and left when I played baseball. When I bought my drums I just started playing and I wasn't aware of how the drums were supposed to be played exactly. I just knew I wanted to play them. I started seeing other drummers and I'd think, "Wait a minute! What is his right hand doing over *there*?" But I couldn't change. It just felt natural to me. It used to hinder me when I first started in the studios for little things, but my style is working *better* now. On certain beats that need to have a certain touch on the hi-hat, I can play it better with my right hand crossed over. I have more freedom with my right hand this way to play tom-tom things and still keep a cymbal going. I love Billy Cobham's playing. I practice his licks all the time because my ambidexterity gets better. When a drummer is able to use four limbs independently—he's going to kill! Steve Smith is a good example. He's a real powerful drummer. There are so many good drummers with different tastes. If everybody was the same it'd be boring. I like to hear a fine technical drummer, and I like to hear a Russ Kunkel who just lays it back and kills with the feel.

SF: Unfortunately, many people feel that country drummers are basically "back-beat" drummers who can't really play.

OH: That's not altogether true. I work a lot in Nashville, too. A lot of drummers that get into that bag—this "boom-chik, boom-chik" syndrome—they tend to get lazy. They tend to get into the thinking of, "Well, this is what I do for a living and that's it" I'm not like that. I *wan!* to learn. I love to play all kinds of music and there's no way I would play just "boom-chik, boom-chik" all the time. I just couldn't do it. I think it would get very stale. I don't ever want to get into thinking, "Well, I'm going to play this beat and get by." I like to try to create things when I can. There are always those moments of spontaneity which are really great. If I ever quit learning . . . I'd rather sell shoes. Music is constantly changing and you have to change with it. If I ever get to the point where I say, "Well, I'm good enough. I'm going to play the basic groove and get by"—I'll quit.



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Jopa: Old World Craftsmanship

were made in Cuba, by hammering them out on an anvil. Even the rock musicians were asking me to make bells for them. I had so many requests that I went into business."

In 1973, Papo seriously decided to make this line of work his profession. At the time, he and his family were living in a four-and-a-half-room apartment with half of the kitchen utilized as a workshop. After many hard hours of making instruments with just the right sound, Papo walked into a major music store in New York City with a milk crate full of bells and asked the store manager if he would like to buy them. The manager decided they sounded like good bells and told Papo to leave them on the counter. When Papo returned the following week, the store owner said, "They're all gone! You'd better bring another six of each."

By 1976, Jopa's growth forced Papo to move the business to its present location. The metal bending and rolling machines which Papo needed but could not find, he built himself. On some of his rebuilt machines, the dates read 1890, however, they appear to be in mint condition. Though not an ultra-modern facility with the latest in assembly-line production, the success of Jopa can be traced to the care its founder takes in his products.

"Everything that goes out of my shop is approved by me personally. That's why it's very common to see stick marks on my bells when you take them out of the box. Before any instrument is packaged, workers line them up on the packing table so that I can test each one. I prefer to test them a few weeks after they're made because some bells change in sound after they've completely cooled. There is tremendous heat involved in the welding process.

"Some of the bells lack a certain personality, which means they cannot have the Jopa label. The sound of each bell determines the area of music to which it's best suited. If a bell doesn't have a particular personality, I throw it into a pit outside until the steel rusts. Then I remove the skin by scraping off a thickness which only a micrometer could measure. This is called 'picketing' the steel. I also use a special powder which hardens the steel even more once it is heat treated. This usually brings the personality back to the instrument.

"Whenever I select steel, I hit the metal sheet with a small hammer," explained Papo. "I've noticed that you get a higher, more resilient sound out of a particular colored steel. For the most part, I've found the bluer the steel, the purer. It means there's less garbage in it, like melted down road signs or car fenders."

Papo's dampening process is also as interesting as everything else in the small, unadorned Jopa workshop.

"After the bell has been played for a while, it experiences a certain amount of metal fatigue," explains Papo. "This is referred to as 'breaking in the bell.' We use tar and sawdust inside the bell to dampen it. They've been doing that in Cuba for the last hundred years. By the time the tar and sawdust dissipates, the bell is broken in."

Though the Jopa company has become well-known and respected in professional percussion circles, it still remains a relatively small concern among today's commercial enterprises.

"There have been many people who have wanted to back my business," says Jopa's proud owner. "They've said, 'Papo, we've got to get you to produce these instruments faster. You've got to push this stuff out a little more.' I said, 'No senior. I'd rather do it my way.' When I die, so will the business."

Jopa founder, Papo Daddiego, handcrafting a percussion instrument in the tradition of the old-world craftsmen.

by Cheech Iero

Papo Jose Rosario Pedro Quentico Daddiego is a musician who guarantees the instruments he makes for a lifetime. "I defy anyone to do it the way I do it," claims Papo. "They cannot. They don't know how and they don't have the tools."

In essence, Papo practices an art in which conception and execution are governed by imagination and pride; a likeness to an artisan from some bygone era. And it is because of this that the small company called Jopa has made such inroads in the percussion market. Jopa products can be found all over the United States, and are also exported to Brazil, South Africa, New Guinea, France, Japan, Italy, Sweden, Denmark and Germany.

Papo's love for playing has been satisfied in performances with Sammy Davis, Jr., The Latin Jazz Quartet, Jose Feliciano, Richie Havens, Melba Moore and others. "I used to make my own bells, and when I'd go on the gig, some of the musicians would ask me to make them bells. When the U.S. had trouble with Cuba years ago, it was difficult to get the real thing. So I made them the same way they

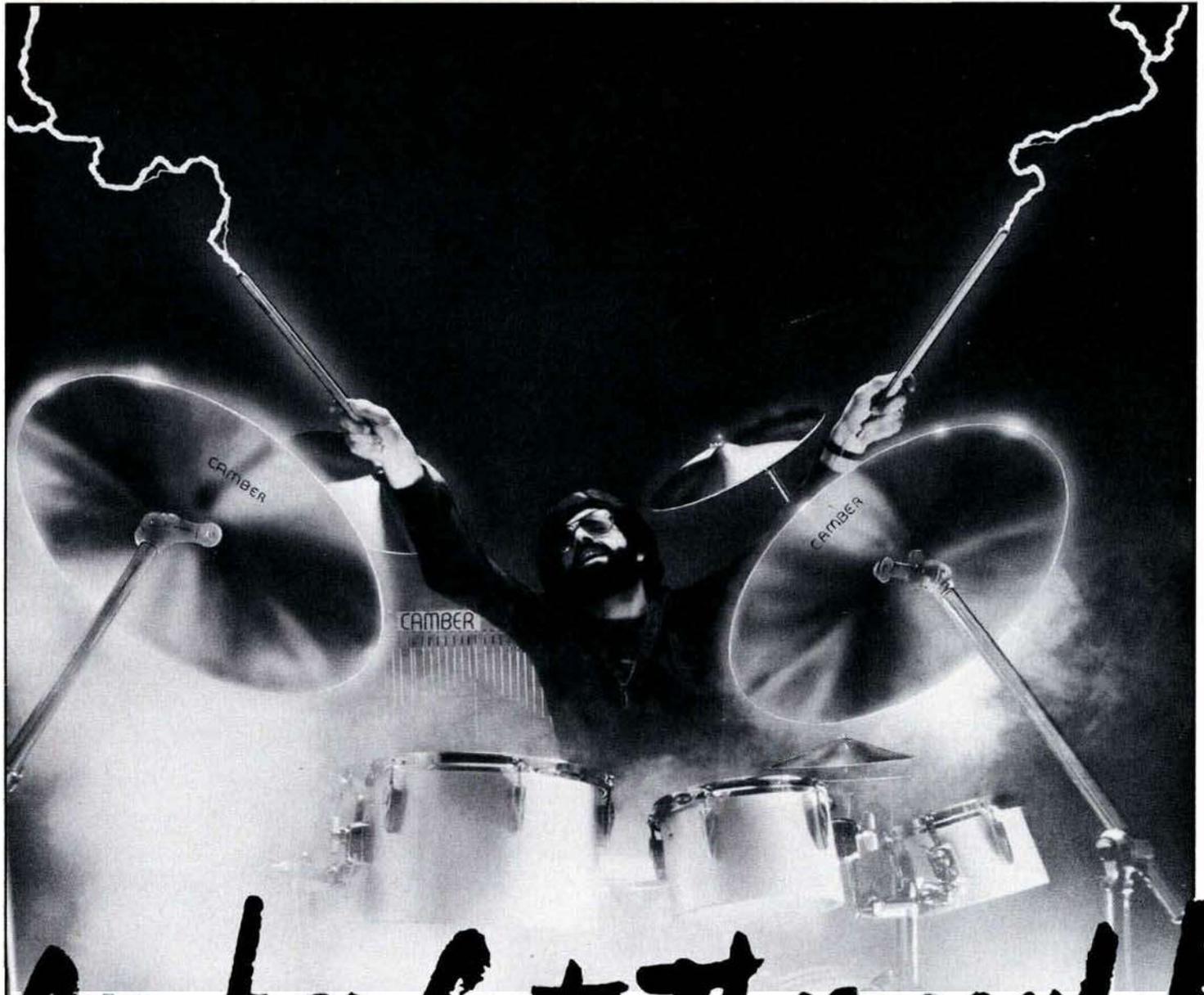
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Triplets With Paradiddles and Doubles



by Brent Brace

Practice Exercises 1-4 playing the triplet figure first. Use a metronome for all exercises. When the figure feels comfortable, add the bass drum and then the hi-hat. Don't play the exercises too fast in the beginning. Make them groove. These figures should help you develop a sense of independence while playing polyrhythmic lines within the time.

Exercises 3 and 4 provide a polyrhythmic concept for playing 4/

4 or 6/4 within 12/8—which can be found in Latin music. Exercise 3 is played with the hi-hat on 2 and 4. Exercise 4 uses the hi-hat in 6/4 or on every quarter note of the 12/8 time signature.

Exercise 5 is essential for developing strength in playing accents in a rudimentary way. Many drummers have problems accenting with alternate hands when playing double stroke. Practice the double-stroke triplets slow but strong. You'll be amazed how this exercise will increase your strength and coordination in accenting.

1

B.D.
H.H.
Hands

2

Hands

Paradiddle Ride

3

Ride Cym.
Sn.
B.D.
H.H.

4

(As in 6/4)

Double Stroke Triplets

5

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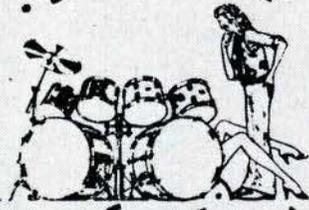
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DiSalle continued from page 23

SF: So you have no contract with Bruce?
BD: No, it's never been that and it's been an ideal situation for me; a really good working situation. We've been a good touring band and we've always come back to Toronto and we've been a part of the albums as well. That's the icing on the cake. I've gained a lot of experience from doing that. I've played on other albums but I've never had the opportunity to have that really relaxed feeling in the studio. We usually take one week. We do maybe four days of sessions and then we go in and record the bed tracks. Bruce usually knows pretty well everything he wants on it, but he'll take maybe a month putting all the overdubs on and mixing it. But, usually a

month after the first day we go into the studio, the album is complete.

Bruce is not only a fine singer/songwriter—he's an excellent guitar player. So, it's never been, "Here's my song. You guys take it and I'll play chords behind it." Bruce knows what's going on with everybody's instrument all the time. He doesn't crowd people. He lets you feel free.

SF: So, you've got a free reign as to what you're going to play in the tunes.

BD: Yeah. Then if there's something that he doesn't like, he doesn't hesitate to speak up. Everybody has the freedom to basically do what they want. I'm really into the lyric, so I try to judge—partially anyway—what I'm going to play on drums just by the mood a lyric would set for the tune.

SF: I noticed on the last album that a lot of the drum parts were played in unison with the vocal line.

BD: I try to do that without getting in the way. That's hard to do sometimes because of the way Bruce writes. There have been times in the past where I'll often get in the way of where the lyrics are falling. I'm just starting to feel comfortable with that now.

SF: Did you have to change your style when you started playing with Bruce?

BD: I don't think I changed the style so much as I developed one.

SF: It seems that many people would look at being the drummer in Bruce Cockburn's band as a final goal. You don't seem to have that attitude because you're not even *planning* on being on the next tour or record. How do you manage your life around that insecurity?

BD: Well, I don't plan too much. In the music business you can't assume anything. By using that attitude I've saved myself a lot of grief or heartache over things that would go wrong.

If you don't count on things you don't

get let down. One of the things I always go back to—when I started playing with Bruce I was thinking that what was most important of all wasn't making money at the time. It was trying to play with the best people that I could. I mean that two ways: people with good attitudes, and good musicians. That's what I look for. I've been fortunate to play in Bruce's band and with the musicians that've been in that group. I don't think the thing with Bruce will, or can, last forever. It's got to end sometime and I'm prepared for that. I've got other things that I do. That's why the situation with Bruce has worked out. Some artists say, "You can't do anything else because you're working with me." Bruce would call when he needed me and in the meantime, whatever I'm doing in Toronto, I do! So, I have my jingle thing happening and that's working out for me. I work with a group called Edward, Harding & McLean. They play the clubs around Toronto, and just released a new album that's the second one I play on with them. I record with other people as well and that seems to get me by. Then when work with Bruce happens, that's extra for me. That's been the nicest thing that's happened in my career so far.

SF: So, you stay diversified to protect yourself.

BD: Yeah. I try to do that. Two friends, Memo Acevedo and Gary Morgan and I put together a sixteen-piece Latin band here called Band Brava. For about two years I got totally immersed in Latin music from guaguanco to merengue—all the rhythms that you play on jobbing gigs but never get a chance to really learn what they're about. The percussionists were from Kali, Bogota, and Uruguay. I learned a lot from them. My attitude all along has been: If you're going to play your instrument you should always try to learn as much as you can about it. If you've got that together and consider that the most important thing, then usually other things start to work.

There are a lot of things involved with playing drums; far more than just being technically proficient. Sometimes it's hard to sit back and just play 2 and 4 and just stay out of things. Stay out of everybody's way and play in the pocket so that as soon as the time is counted in, the song just sits there.

SF: Did you have to add on to your original drumset because of sounds you needed for Bruce's music?

BD: When I first started working with Bruce, although I didn't add to the

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drumkit, I bought African drums and things like that to use on the recordings. Recently, I bought a new set of Pearls. I've gotten used to those: A 22" bass, and 10", 12", 13", 14" mounted toms and a 16" on the floor. But, I can't play all those toms up there because my cymbals are too far away. So, I moved them all over one space and got rid of the floor toms. So, I use the 22" bass with the 10" and the 12" over the bass drum, and then the 13" and the 14" mounted on a stand on the floor.

When I got into jingles, a lot of times they would ask for more of a variety of sounds. So, a few years ago I added concert toms to the set. They're 6", 8", 10", 12", 13", and 14". I mount the 6" and 8" just above the 10" and 12" and then the 13" and 14" are on the floor. Some people have four or five toms in front of them but I can't get to my cymbals when I do that.

SF: What's your cymbal set-up?

BD: I use different ones depending on the situation. With Bruce, onstage to my left I set up a Paiste China-type cymbal, but it's set flat through the top post of the cymbal stand. All the rest are Zildjians. On the stand itself is a 16" crash. Then I have an 18" on my left which is a medium ride. I have a 20" ride cymbal. My hi-hats are 15". On my right I have a heavy sizzle cymbal that's set up the same as the China cymbal. On top of that cymbal stand I have another 16" crash. Between the toms I can set up a little splash cymbal. But, that's not regular for me. I'm most comfortable with the hi-hat set up, a crash on the left, a ride, the sizzle and a crash on the right. I always like the flat sizzle cymbal because whether it's jingles, jobbing gigs or whatever—to get any kind of sustain sound with brushes, I always like to have the sizzle there.

SF: Have you worked a lot on brush technique?

BD: Not formally. My Dad always used to tell me, "If you want to be a drummer you've got to be as good with the brushes as you are with the sticks." I always played the brushes and I've always liked them. Marty Morrell and Pete Magadini showed me some very nice brush techniques.

I sometimes use brushes even on fairly loud tunes when the drums are miked. I like the sound they get. If they're properly miked onstage or in the studio, they can give a really nice effect.

SF: Do you prefer different drumheads for different situations?

BD: I've always used Remo *Ambassador* heads more than anything. I used them on Bruce's newest album and I always play

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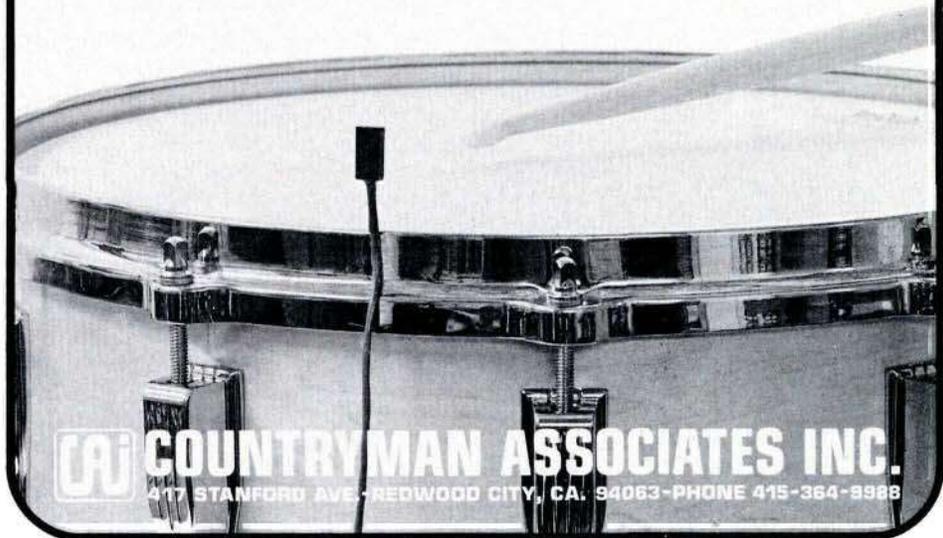
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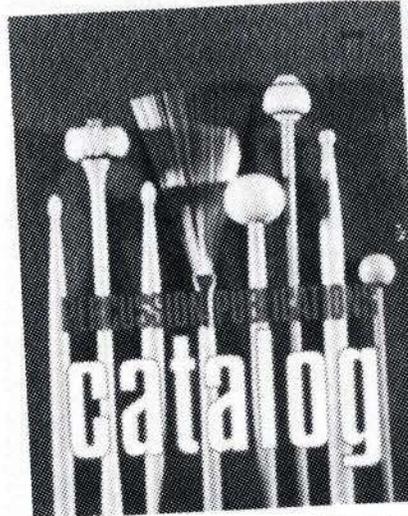
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double-headed drums. For the last tour I bought some *Pinstripe* heads for playing harder on stage and they last longer. The sound is a little more dead than the *Ambassadors*, so I put *Diplomat* heads on the bottom.

In the studio I use that combination of heads and my drums are all different sizes. I've a really old Gretsch kit with just 12" 13", and 16" toms and a 22" bass. I use them in the clubs a lot and I put the Remo heads on them. Then I've got a small little Gretsch kit with an 18" bass; a maple kit that I use with the concert toms. I use the Pearl kit onstage with Bruce. I used that little Gretsch kit on every one of Bruce's albums except the last one, where I used the Pearl drums. I tune all my drums really loose. Small drums cut well when you tune them down and use very little dampening—just on the top head, a little bit of tape or kleenex. Whether that works or not I don't know, but it pleases me! The bigger the drum, the more you get that really heavy bottom end. Onstage you get so much overtone that they can't EQ the drums properly.

SF: Do you still practice?

BD: I practice a little bit every few days. I can't really bang with the new baby in the house. I find some of the columns in MD—like David Garibaldi's material—very useful, or sometimes I'll buy four or five albums and just do some listening. But, I don't really have any consistent direction for practicing. On this last tour, after the soundchecks, I'd hang around and practice rudiments really slow on my Gladstone pad. I found it helped me and really got me in touch with my hands. I just did a whole turnaround and really started concentrating on that more than anything. I tried to spend some more time looking at music and doing some playing.

But, as far as rehearsals at home—this is the first time I've been home this long. I'm getting used to our new son and house and I'm relaxing. It's really hard because my newest son, Steven, was born when the band was in Raleigh, North Carolina on tour. I still had almost two weeks of the tour to go before I could go home. Talk about feeling useless, totally useless. There's nothing you can do. Fortunately the baby came really quick and my wife didn't have any problem getting to and

from the hospital. Family was here to help her out.

When I was studying with Jim Blackley, I remember telling him, "I'm really confused. I'm working really hard. I don't think I'm a great player, but I think I'm good enough to work and do more than I am now. I'm barely getting by and I just wish that things would happen." My wife and I were talking about starting a family and wanting to buy a house—just the things in your private life that you want to keep together. Jim said, "Just keep working and don't worry about it. Take the weight off yourself. Just play. Put half your efforts into the music and with the other half, keep your private life together and keep yourself together." I'd walk away from my lesson feeling like there wasn't any weight there and that sooner or later things would work out. It just seemed that shortly after I adopted that attitude of relaxing and letting things go the way they would, things started to work out. That's when I started working with Bruce. I started to get more work around town. The jingle thing started happening. My wife and I got our family started. We bought a house last year and we've got another little addition in the family. Things—privately and musically—seems to be working towards where I would like them to be.

SF: It sounds like your wife has been supportive of you all along.

BD: Yeah. That's an important part of everything as well. When my wife was teaching, she was supporting me and there would always be money there to go to my lesson as long as I wanted to study. We would work that out as part of the budget. She worked for twelve years. We've been married for ten. With the birth of our second son she's just now taken some time off. Now it's my turn to try to keep things going. But if it wasn't for her support and attitude—which has been very much a part of everything for my career—I can't say I *wouldn't* be here today but there's a good chance I might not.

When I read Jim Keltner's interview, it was really refreshing to hear somebody talk as a human being as opposed to being a "drummer." You're *that* before you're anything else. You may be a really hot player but you're a person first. It seemed to me that Jim has tried to be as realistic with himself as possible. Like when he'd see Buddy Rich or Elvin Jones play and think, "I'll never play like that." Not that he was saying it as a personal putdown—but just saying, "Maybe I'm not that ag-



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gressive to pursue that style of playing." Because you play what you are. That's really important. That's what makes every musician unique. Basically, no two people should play the same because no two people *are* the same. Unless you make a study of picking up somebody's licks to the nth degree.

SF: Which is the same as doing nothing.

BD: I don't claim for a moment to be innocent of that because I must admit I'm a thief myself! If I like someone's playing I try to sit down and understand what they're doing and how to execute it. I mentioned earlier that I like Steve Gadd. I like Jeff Porcaro's playing a lot, also Jack DeJohnette and Bernard Purdie. If I could play time the way Bernard Purdie plays time...! And I love Jim Keltner's playing, especially on Ry Cooder's albums. I don't know if this is a good analogy but it's the only thing I could think of. When you listen to Jim Keltner play on Ry Cooder's albums it's almost as if you pulled somebody off the street who had no idea of how to play the drums, but had excellent time and musical sense, and you just said to him, "Here are some sticks," and just let him play. Jim doesn't sit down and play a really rigid groove. The groove *is* there, it's definitely there, but it's not like he pinpoints a certain thing. He plays all around it while always staying within the context of the song. On one sixteenth note there's the bell of a cymbal, and there's a little ruff on the snare, and then a sloppy little tom-tom fill that just fits perfectly, and then space. It's just his attitude towards playing. But try to play like that! That's what I mean about the freedom thing. It's like you want to get to the point where you don't feel like you're being pressured into a certain type of playing; that you can sit back and *play* anything, as long as it's within the context of the song, hopefully. But, not that you'll feel pressured that somebody will listen and say, "Oh wow, man. That guy's got terrible chops. Look how sloppy he is." To be able to overlook what your peers or anybody will say about what you do. Just to be able to say, "Hey! This is the way I play! This is the way I feel this tune and this is the kind of groove I want to put to it."



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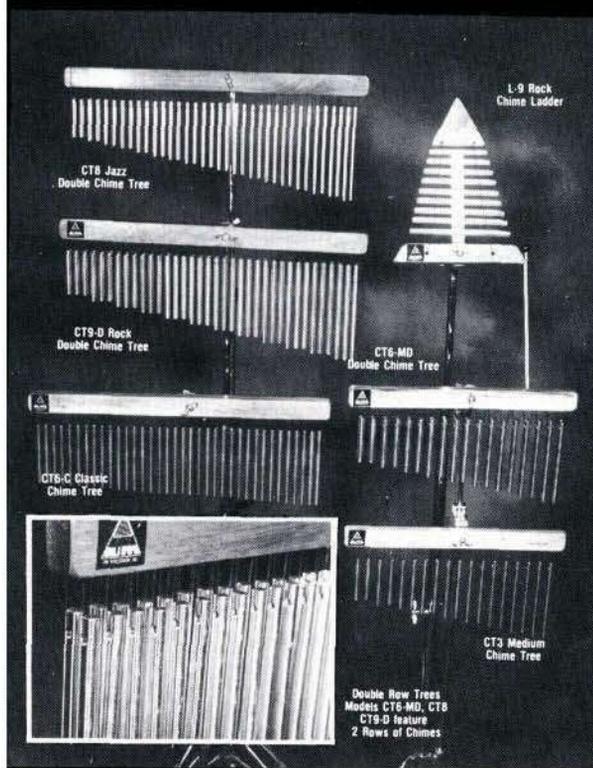
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"Touch and Go"



by James Morton

Rock Charts continues with The Cars, the popular new wave quintet from Boston. "Touch And Go," from the *Panorama* album is an exercise in meter change. The basic feel of the verse (letters A,C,E) is an interesting two-measure 5/4 pattern, which

shifts to a driving 4/4 rock beat during the chorus (letters B,D,F). Those new to time changes should be reminded that while the meter (or count) changes, the tempo does not. The pulse remains the same. The drummer is David Robinson.

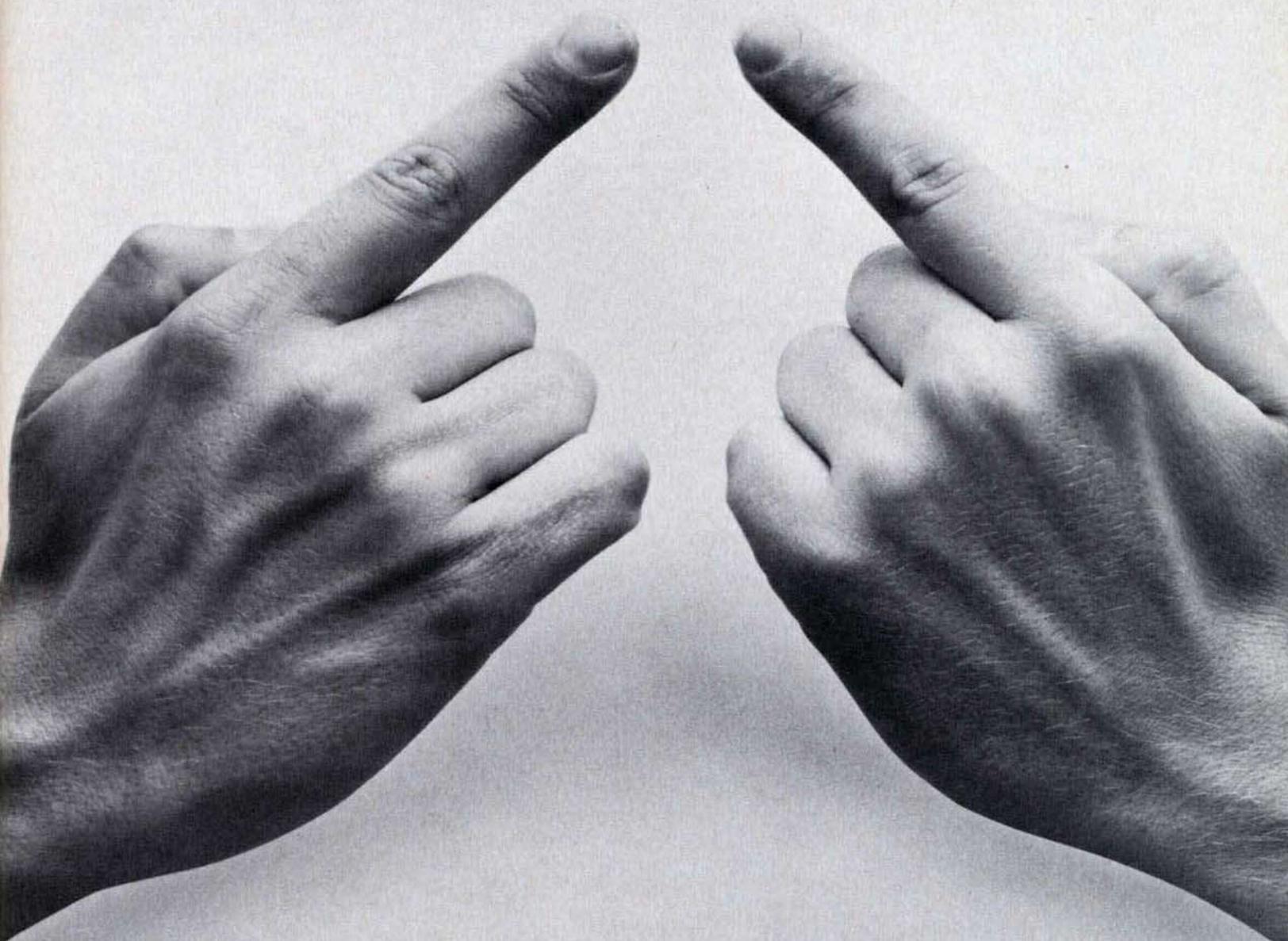
crash
hi-hat
sm. tom
snare
lg. tom
bass

The image displays ten staves of guitar tablature. The first staff begins with a key signature change to E major (indicated by a box with 'E') and a 5/4 time signature. The second staff features a 2/4 time signature. The third staff is in 4/4 time. The fourth staff returns to 2/4 time. The fifth staff is in 4/4 time. The sixth staff is in 2/4 time. The seventh staff is in 4/4 time. The eighth staff is in 2/4 time. The ninth staff is in 4/4 time. The tenth staff is in 5/4 time. The tablature includes various rhythmic patterns, accidentals, and dynamic markings like accents and slurs.

Do you have a favorite song you would like to see transcribed in Rock Charts? If so, you may write me direct: James Morton, 939 E. Washington Ave., El Cajon, CA 92020.



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Introduction to Tabla

by Brian Knave

Oddly enough, it was "Black Mountain Side," an acoustic guitar piece from Led Zepellin's first album, which turned me on to the exquisite sound of the tabla. "Tabla drum?" I asked myself. "What in the world is a *tabla* drum?" I ignorantly imagined some sort of *table* which the player beat on—until I checked a Beatles's anthology book which depicted brightly clad George Harrison sitting placidly in the midst of sitar master Ravi Shankar and an unidentified tabla player. ("Love You To," from the Beatles's 1966 *Revolver* album, was Harrison's first recorded attempt at Indian music. Before *Revolver*, most Westerners knew nothing at all of East Indian music or culture.) Instead of tables, the drums looked like small kettles. But the picture did little to quench my curiosity about the queer-sounding foreign instrument. This urge eventually moved me to San Francisco where I studied with tabla master Zakir Hussain. Since then I've read several inquiries about tabla drumming in MD and other music publications. There are obviously many players out there who nurture a keen interest in the ancient Eastern rhythms. This article will serve to introduce the physical aspects of the drums, along with some basic techniques, information, and East/West comparisons.

In India, because the technology of communications has progressed less rapidly than in the West, styles and instruments change considerably from North (Hindusthani style) to South (Karnatic style). A drummer from Bombay will develop patterns and combinations of licks which a Calcutta drummer may be unfamiliar with—and probably on a modified instrument. There is a certain beauty to this arrangement, and it is in one sense unfortunate that Western technologies have spoiled the likelihood of a similar situation in America. For instance, a drumset bought in New York is practically the same as a set bought in Florida or California. Not so in India; there, because instruments are handmade and traditions localized, the

assortment is endless. Other popular Indian drums include the dholak, khol, pakawaj, and mridangam (a double-ended drum). It has been suggested that the tabla, which did not actually evolve until the 1400s, were first formulated when an experimenting drummer cut his mridangam in half. But this is a little more than speculation. However they were created, the tabla are fascinating instruments around which an infinitely rich and complex rhythm system has been molded.

The drums themselves occur in a pair: the *baya* (the wider, deep sounding drum) and the *tabla* (also called *dayan* or *daina*). Together they are referred to as simply the tabla. A player sits cross-legged on the floor (with clean, bare feet), the *baya* to his left, the higher-pitched *tabla* drum to his right. Since Indian customs maintain that the head is the highest part of the body, the feet the lowest, a respectful student will not point the feet towards the teacher, nor step over the instruments or touch them with the feet.

The drums rest on two separate and colorful *rings* which keep them from tipping over. They are tuned with a small, metal hammer. With this tool the player knocks the cylindrical wooden inserts up or down beneath the leather straps. Placement of these pegs determines the overall tensioning of the head. To fine tune, the player taps on the braided leather outer-rim of the

head, being careful not to hit and damage the straps. The drum is in tune when the tensioning is even at all points around the head (this is not as crucial for the *baya*), and the subsequent tone matches the "sa" or keytone of the song or raga. Because Indian music is free from chord changes, the *tabla* drum must be in tune with only this one note.

Here is an interesting point: a serious Indian musician refuses to play an instrument out of tune. If I'm playing a top-forty gig at Harry's Bar and the guitarist goes out of tune during a disco number, because the dance floor is full (*and* because we Westerners are conditioned to finish things), that guitarist will play right on through the song, out of tune or not. The crowd—and the band—would be shocked if the guitarist suddenly stopped playing just to tune the guitar. But during an Indian concert, this is exactly what one can expect. If the sitar goes out of tune, the *tabla* player will go to a "vamp" while the sitarist gets right with the instrument. This is masterfully done, of course, and many listeners will never know the difference. If the *tabla* goes out of tune—which is common—a really good player will continue the beat while using the hammer to correct the tonal imbalance. The player will cleverly shape the sharp blows of the hammer *into* the music! Being in tune at all times, musically and spiritually, is vital to the phi-



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losophy of Indian music. In the words of Maestro Ali Akbar Khan, Indian sarod master of this century, "Any kind of music, in rhythm, in tune, gives you food for your soul."

The high-pitched drum, the tabla, is made of wood, usually rosewood, tun, or shisham. It is 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 inches in diameter, preferably fitted to the player's right hand. The baya, about nine inches in diameter at the playing surface, is made of clay, rosewood, or, more often, a chrome-coated nickel alloy. Both drums stand about eleven inches from the floor. The heads and straps are made from goat hide. On both drums the heads are divided into three sections. On the tabla they are named as follows: *kinar* (outer ring), *sur* (middle ring), and *gab* (inner black dot, pronounced gob). The gab, which accounts for the drum's unique overtones, is a peculiar fixation on the playing surface. Composed of iron filings, ash, and rice paste, it looks like the dry skin of a reptile. Though many right-handed strokes land on the gab, the baya's gab is never directly struck. The actual playing area on the baya is small. Like some styles for conga, there are no cross-hand patterns in tabla playing. But unlike the conga, the tabla are never forcefully struck. They are quiet drums; the strokes come from the fingers and wrists, not the arms and the shoulders.

One enthralling aspect of tabla art is the drum language—the words or *bols*. Each stroke has a name, thus any pattern which can be played by the hands can be spoken by the mouth. In fact, it is good common practice to recite a pattern before applying it to the drums. (This seemed strange to me at first—until I realized that I have similar "words" in my head for drumset licks: doon-doon-chickun-tss-doon-doon-chick, etc. These mental sounds are of great value in memorizing beats, songs, and fills.) A tabla player's tongue is often as fast as the player's hands. During a solo—which may last a half-hour!—one might hear the drummer chanting bols while executing a difficult passage. The player may even stop playing entirely, letting the recitation alone express solo ideas. (Hear Zakir Hussain on Shakti's *Natural Elements* album—"Get Down and Sruti.")

There are said to be twenty-one strokes on the tabla drum alone, but there are definitely seven *basic* and distinctly different-sounding strokes: na, tin, tu, te, tre, tete, and tere. The first four are played with the index finger; the others use all four fingers. Na (or ta) is the rimshot sound. Tin comes from an overtone on the sur. Both these strokes are dependent on the ring finger lying correctly dormant on the sur, close to the gab. When the drum is really in tune, the tin sound rings out like a wind chime. Tu is a quick bounce off the gab; te is a flat slap on the gab. Tre is a

flam, tete and tere are double-strokes. The name reflects the sound of the stroke.

The baya has two basic strokes, *kat* and *ghe* (closed and open), the last of which can involve modulations, or changes in pitch. These modulations, which are effected by pressure and placement changes of the lower left wrist, can cover a full octave. In this sense the baya often serves—at least to the Western ear—as the bass guitar. An accomplished drummer can play incredible melodic lines on this instrument alone. Finally, there are the endless combinations of strokes: na + ghe = dha, tin + ghe = dhin, etc.

Since both hands can play doubles (the left plays gege on the baya), there are actually four parts which strike the drums. If these are likened to the four limbs of a trap player, it is clear that a tabla drummer can play as many notes as a trap player. In addition, tones can also be changed on the baya *during* a lightning-fast roll, a capability not inherent in the trap set. However, the tabla, while agreeable with most music, cannot play all styles. Zakir Hussain suggests experimenting with the tabla in any style of music except bebop and hardcore country.

Another fruitful feature of the classical Indian music is the well-rounded manner in which it is taught. The drummers learn the scales and ragas, and the melodic instrumentalists learn the bols and rhythm cycles. In this way, the musicians are knowledgeable of each other's parts. Too often in the West the drummers learn rhythms and the other players learn scales and chord progressions—period! But to become a proficient musician within the vast Indian boundaries (which takes usually 20 years), one *must* know what the other musician is doing. Odd-time signatures are common to the music. A composition may call for *Tintal*, (a 16-beat cycle), *Ektal* (12-beat), *Jhaptal* (10-beat), or *Rupak* (7-beat)—and the mature player knows what to do. And what if someone wants to play one of the *Upa tals* (such as 6 1/2, 8 1/2, or 11 1/2-beat cycle)? Because Indian tradition calls for a musically complete "educa-

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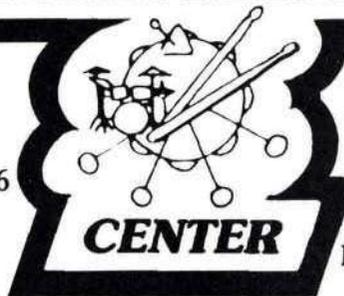
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tion, everyone develops good ears and good rhythm. This all-inclusive approach is parallel to the Yogic concepts of balance and union: the Indian music path (called *Nada-Brahma*—"the language of God") offers not only joy and entertainment, but also devotion and self-realization. According to Ali Akbar Khansahib, "The music works like a breath of fresh air to help get rid of craziness and unhappiness. It is one kind of yoga. Real music is not for wealth, not for honors, nor even for the joys of the mind, but is a path for realization and salvation; which pure your soul, mind, and give you longevity; and this is the way which can reach to *mukti* (liberation) and peace." 

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DeVitto *continued from page 27*

But it was the first time I ever sat down behind them, so I was experimenting with all the sounds. Tama makes something that hooks right on to your regular drum. I want to try it in the studio to see if I can get that thing and the tone of the drum at the same time. With the Syndrum, you only get that electronic sound.

CI: Have you ever worked with a percussionist?

LD: Well, Ralph MacDonald did a lot of stuff on "Just The Way You Are." He's a brilliant percussionist. But he does all that after we lay down the basic tracks. I don't think I ever played at the same time with a percussionist.

CI: Do you find it difficult to keep yourself amused on the road?

LD: When you're on the road, you're only playing for two hours. You sleep all day. You go back to the bar after the show. What else are you going to do? "Bar-tender, give me a drink." The next thing you know, you've got the fire extinguishers off the wall. It's hard to keep yourself amused on the road.

CI: So you do find it boring at times going from city to city, even though you are traveling first class now.

LD: Well, we fly coach on the airplanes and take commercial flights.

CI: Every little bit saves, but it's a far cry from riding in the Pinto.

LD: It's boring, because every coliseum looks the same, every hotel room is the same. The big thing on the road is, like okay, we're going to Milwaukee and in the Vista Hotel there's a great restaurant. We can't wait to go down and eat. Or in Florida we couldn't wait to go eat at Bobby Rubino's Rib Place.

CI: What's your favorite city to play?

LD: New York. They go wild. Philadelphia is a big draw for us too. I like going to Australia.

CI: Tell me about your experience there.

LD: The first time *Turnstiles* was out it was a hit in Australia before anyone ever heard of it here. So at the time, Billy's management company was called Home Run and it was in his house. His wife was running the whole thing from in his home. I walked in the house and on his dining room table she had this big map of Australia, and was mapping out where we were going to play. So Brian Ruggles, the second engineer, was sitting there biting his nails, because we were going to use sound over there, and he was thinking, "They're going to have kangaroos setting up the P.A. system." When we got there, the sound company was as good as any sound company here in America. They really worked hard, and the halls we played in were beautiful. It was just like the U.S. except it seemed as though they were a couple of years behind. But they were so interested in American music it was great. We played five nights at the Sidney Opera House the first time we were there.

NOVEMBER

CI: What album did you tour Europe with?

LD: We went with *The Stranger* the first time we toured Europe. We played Drury Lane; it only has about 1,500 seats. And the last time we went we played two nights at Wembley Hall which was 6,000 seats. We had a promoter, Alec Leslie, who really believed in us. He made it grow into this huge thing in England. We played in Germany and had a good time. It's not as wild in Europe. I hate France. The French got highly insulted when Billy did that song "Get De Tois" on the *Glass Houses* album. "You're not speaking the language correctly." It was ridiculous.

CI: How many times have you toured Japan?

LD: Three times. We played three nights at the Buddacan. You get off the plane . . . here's a present. "Good to see you in Japan." They can't do enough for you. You have to learn how to read them though. They'll say yes to everything. But certain tones of yes means no. But they'll always say yes.

CI: Would you ever consider taking on any private drum students?

LD: No. It's too hard. I don't know what to teach. How could I teach somebody? They would have to want to learn how to play like me. How does Buddy Rich do that fast roll? I don't know, he just does it. Some guys who have the patience to teach don't have the patience to go on the road. You have to have the head for it.

CI: Do you do any warm-up routine prior to performing?

LD: We have a sound check for an hour. We go there about five-thirty and sound check until about seven. We play everybody else's songs. We play "Born To Run," we play Rolling Stones tunes and Beatles songs. Maybe just the first tune we start the show off with so they can set up everything ready to go. That's the most fun.

CI: What were some of your early playing experiences like?

LD: I played weddings for two years with the bass player Doug out on Long Island. I learned more about bullshitting your way through music by playing weddings—like you're playing the bossa nova beat or a merenge or a thing where there should be a regular set of drums plus a conga player or something, but you'd have to fill in for everybody. So new beats came up from that. Like, if you're playing in a top-forty band, you try to copy the record. You're the only drummer but you know there's a percussion player and everything on the record. You come up with new things. It's a challenge. But you have to make it seem full. You can't drop out of one thing and go into the other part. That's what happens with the "Just The Way You Are" thing. They're trying to duplicate what they hear on the record but there's so many

continued on next page

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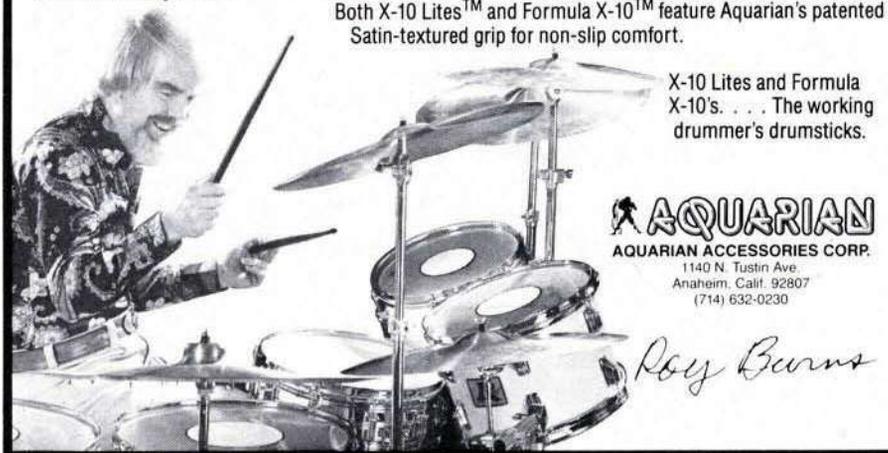
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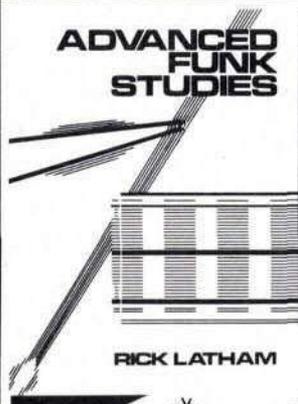
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other things involved in that drum beat. The guitar player is really making that drum beat walk along.

CI: The last tour you did with Billy was during the summer. Do you prefer one season over another to be on the road?

LD: I like to go on the road during the fall. It's nice and cool. That summer tour will be the last we ever do in the summer. It was sohot.

CI: Do you ever do outdoor concerts?

LD: We never play outside. Billy doesn't believe in playing outside. If you are sitting listening to the speakers and a gust of wind comes by it blows half of the sound away. And the weather—if it rains, so many shows go on in the sloppy mud. It's not for us that he doesn't want to play outside; it's for the audience.

CI: You never use an opening act. Why?

LD: In Australia, their union requires you to join to play there. Then you have to hire the same amount of Australian musicians as you have in your band. So instead of hiring a whole band, we hired a six-piece string section. They just set up on the corner of the stage and we had them play classical music as the people came in. No, we don't like to use opening acts. When I go to see a band, I don't want to see the opening act—I want to see the band.

CI: Some musicians enjoy having a strong opening act, claiming it gives them the incentive to play at their top level.

LD: How many groups actually see the opening act? You don't get there until about five minutes before you're ready to go on. The audience is into throwing frisbees, beach balls and those little green things that glow.

CI: Have you ever been hit by anything while you were playing?

LD: Yes, from behind sometimes they want your attention while you are playing. So they throw whatever they have. Sometimes they even throw money. I can't move, being behind the drums, I'm a sitting duck.

CI: You did a Phoebe Snow tour not too long ago. How did you like working with her?

LD: Phoebe is great. We had bad luck though. We were in Denver—it's a mile high and the oxygen is next to nothing. So she was breathing oxygen before the show and they say when you breathe oxygen, it dries you out. So she popped a blood vessel or something. She couldn't sing for a few weeks, and we had to cancel half the tour. I also played on her last album, and I did one song on her *Against The Grain* album.

CI: You are doing more studio work with other artists than I realized.

LD: I did twenty songs with Karen Carpenter for a solo album she was going to do without her brother. Something happened and it did not come out.

CI: Phil Ramone is somewhat of a legend

among record producers. Tell me about your experience with him.

LD: The first time I ever met Phil Ramone . . . you know, you're nervous the first time you meet big people. We played three nights at Carnegie Hall; we were still working our way up to the Garden. Phil Ramone came to see us.

CI: Was he invited by Billy?

LD: Yes, he invited Phil, George Martin, Jimmy Guercio—all the producers Billy was interested in. Jimmy Guercio was involved with Elton John. Elton had just had a fight with his band and they broke up. So Jimmy wanted to use Elton's band with Billy. As a matter of fact, the whole *Turnstiles* album was re-recorded with Elton's band backing Billy, but Billy didn't like it. So he fired Jimmy Guercio, then me and Doug went in and did the whole thing. Then George Martin didn't want to use Billy's band. He loved Billy but didn't like the band. Billy was into, "Love me—love my band," because he liked playing with us. Phil was the first guy who said, "I see something in those guys. They're good." He can bring out the best in a musician. He just pulls it out of you. I was uptight when I first met him. He brought me, Richie, Doug, and Billy into the studio to play a little before he brought in the other musicians, just to make us relax. It was getting to know each other. Now, working with him, I have fights with him and everything.

But he's always right. When we were doing "My Life," at the time, disco was really big. "My Life" was kind of a straight beat. I said, "I'm not going to play that. It's a disco beat." He got up and banged on the console and said, "You get out there and play that. I know a hit record when I hear one. Don't tell me what you're not going to play. Get out there. Trust me. That's the whole thing, you're supposed to trust your producer." Okay, I went out there. Now, there's a gold record of "My Life" hanging on my wall. Between Ruggles and him, the album that's recorded in concert sounds so much like us. It's not like other live albums you hear that are thin, where there's no bottom or top, but all middle. Besides the vocals, the drums are the loudest thing when we play live. That's the way it's recorded. If I close my eyes, I'd swear I was in the coliseum listening to us play. Ramone could take a song from just the drums and work it up. If the other musicians make mistakes and the drums are good, no problem, you can punch in the other guys.

CI: Do you use a click track when you record?

LD: I tried to once but it was such a tight thing, there was no relaxed feel. So we said, "Forget it."

CI: If you couldn't play the drums, what would you like to do?

LD: I really wanted to play the drums seriously since the eighth grade when the Beatles first came out. I knocked around as a plumber's helper, and I was playing wed-

dings. I was in a car accident when I was twenty-one years old. I almost had to give up the drums. I got engaged to some girl then and to try to save some money, I was playing weddings on the weekends and working as a plumber's helper during the week. Sometimes, working in a machine shop trying to use a honing machine, the blades were cutting my fingers. No way.

CI: When will you go back into the studio?

LD: There's nothing for me to do right now. They're doing overdubs. I won't go in until Billy writes another song.

CI: There must be quite a great deal of pressure involved in having to write material for a deadline.

LD: He doesn't feel pressured to write another song now, because we have so much time to work on these other things like overdubs, etc. Before we went into the studio with this album, me and Billy would go riding our motorcycles together and I would ask him, "Do you have anything new?" He'd say, "No I don't have anything. I can't think of anything!" Then he'd go, "I don't know if I could write another album." He just signed with CBS for eight more albums. If there are ten songs on each album, that means he's got to write eighty more songs!

CI: I saw you perform on *Saturday Night Live* recently, but I noticed the group was minus a sax player.

LD: The new stuff Billy's writing doesn't call for it. But the new album is very orchestrated. There's a lot of interesting material on it. On one cut, called "Scandana-

vian Skies," I play five drum tracks on it. We did something the other day, it was the first time the engineer and I ever did anything like this. We punched in a whole section of drums. I did something with splashing cymbals and it didn't sound good. It sounded too Broadway. But the rest of the track was great. Billy wanted me to play straight through that part. So we did it. The engineer punched it in exactly in the right spot.

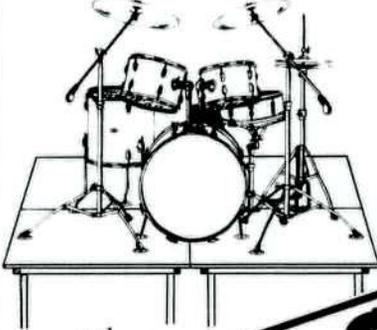
CI: Last night you went to see the Police perform. What did you think of Stewart Copeland's playing?

LD: It's very interesting what he does between the reggae and the rock. It's also interesting to observe how much influence Sting the bass player has on Stewart's playing. Sting is singing and playing at the same time, the way McCartney sings and plays. Their vocal style comes off of the bass. Like Billy would much rather sing while he's playing the piano. He sings differently. When you're playing with someone else, your style is influenced by their playing and vice versa.

CI: Let's say Stewart was playing with Billy for example. His playing would be different.

LD: Right. Let's say we switched drummers. My playing would be more like that, and he would be playing more simple, like I do, which is the way you have to play in that particular role. No matter what situation you are playing in or who you are working with, you have to play together!

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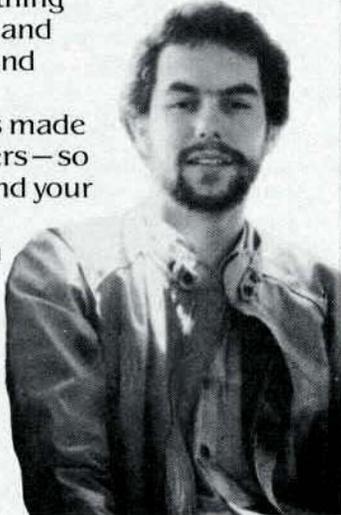
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RUDIMENTAL SYMPOSIUM

Rudimental Positioning For Set And Snare

by Mark Van Dyck

When the word "rudimental" is mentioned, many set drummers quit listening or dive behind a wall of prejudice. The term often brings mental pictures of regimented and inflexible technique to kill your style and fun in a boring jumble of details.

However, set players who've trained their hands through good rudimental practice will testify that the truth of rudimental study is just the opposite. Rudiments can be a real asset to all drummers.

A quick check of the world's best percussionists will reveal a very high degree of stick control. These drummers are able to play at high speeds with power and strength, finesse and softness, all according to the demands of the music. Good rudimental training can help develop these kinds of hands.

There's a big difference between just learning the rudiments and good rudimental training. In drum corps and on the set, the idea is not simply playing the correct sticking. The idea is to perform complex sticking combinations, accents and over-all dynamics at high speed with complete control. This means playing consistently without error. Everyone makes mistakes, but good rudimental training can greatly reduce the frequency of errors.

The height of the drumstick over the playing surface is the answer to many stick control problems. This is known as *positioning*. You can't play consistently error free without maintaining the proper height for each stroke. *This isn't theory*. You can prove it for yourself. It applies to almost every aspect of set playing where the sticks are utilized. Cymbal lines and fills definitely improve with good stick control and proper positioning.

One of your major aims should be to eliminate excess, unnecessary and uncontrolled motion. Fast playing originates in the reflex centers of the brain and brainstem. It's therefore important to pre-plan and pre-train your reflexive hand and finger movements so that they don't become confused and disorganized in actual playing situations. This is where rudiments and rudimental positioning come in.

Not all of the twenty-six "Standard American Drum Rudiments" as adopted by the National Association of Rudimental Drummers are as widely used today as they once were. In their place, some alternate stickings have arisen. I've used the stickings I thought applicable to the present day situation, and re-ordered the rudiments into more logical groupings.

Some rudiments, such as *the flam paradiddle diddle*, are rarely used today. Others, such as *the flam tap and flam accent* are extremely useful on both snare and set.

Proper use of these rudiments as *exercises* will enable you to develop playing habits that yield a high degree of stick control at widely varying speeds and volume levels.

Three main positioning rules have been applied to each rudiment.

1. All hits should begin in a low position unless specified otherwise.

2. A hit may begin in a high position *only* if it's accented or is the main stroke of a flam or ruff.

3. When the main stroke of a flam or ruff appears in the same rudiment with an accented hit, the accented hit takes precedence and is played from the high position. The main stroke begins from a medium height.

Once the correct sticking, spacing and positioning for a rudiment becomes automatic and accurate at a slow speed, gradually increase your speed. Accuracy is much more important than speed at this stage. *Never sacrifice accuracy for speed*. Once accuracy, control and correct technique have become habitual, speed will be relatively easy.

Before long, you should be able to smoothly play each rudiment "open" (slow), picking up speed until it's "closed" (fast), gradually slowing again until it's once more "open" (slow).

Use the sticking, spacing and position *exactly* as indicated. Repetition is important to establishing proper reflexes and good playing habits.

Low position is two to five inches above the playing surface, Medium position is five to eight inches, and High position is eight to fourteen inches. Be consistent within these limits. For example, if volume requirements dictate a low height of two inches, play all your low strokes uniformly at that height.

Once a hit is made, the stick should rebound directly to the correct height for the next stroke without any extra motion.

Whatever care and effort you put in will pay off later, so be patient, relax and have fun.

All strokes even height
Single Stroke Roll

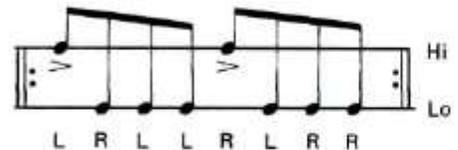


Long Roll

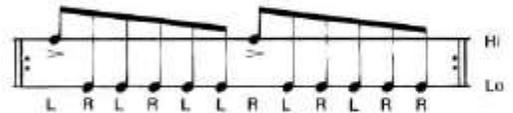


All strokes even height

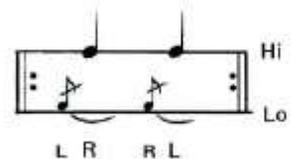
Single Paradiddle



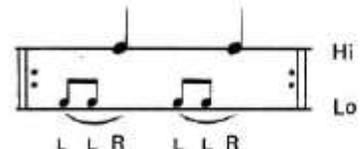
Double Paradiddle



Flam



Ruff



Flam Tap

LR R RL L

Flam Accent (American)

LR L R RL RL

Flam Accent (Swiss)

LR R L L R R L

Flam Paradiddle

LR L R R L R L L

FlamParadiddle-Diddle

LR L R R L L R L R L L R R

Flam Double Paradiddle

LR L R L R R L R L R L L

Flamacue

LR L R L L R

RUFF RUDIMENTS

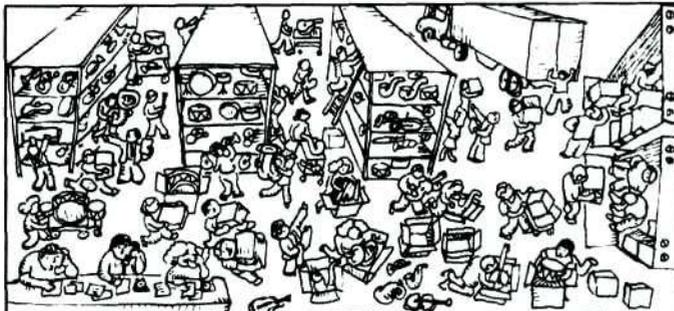
Single Drag

LL R L R R L R

Double Drag

LL R L L R L R R L R R L R

continued on next page



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Drag Paradiddle 1

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

Drag Paradiddle 2

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

Lesson 25

L L R L R

R L L R L

Single Ratamacue

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

Double Ratamacue

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

Triple Ratamacue

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

ROLLS

5 Stroke Roll

L L R R L R R L L R

9 Stroke Roll

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

13 Stroke Roll

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

7 Stroke Roll

L L R R L L R

11 Stroke Roll

L L R R L L R R L L R

15 Stroke Roll

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

10 Stroke Roll

L L R R L L R R L R



Does anybody remember Woozie Fisher?

"Woozie Fisher? Yeah, I remember Woozie Fisher. Played the big bands behind Fats Walrus."
 "Naw, he was with that other fella, what's his name?"
 "Duke Wellington."
 "Yep, sure played a mean saxophone, ole Woozie!"
 "You're nutty as a fruitcake! Woozie was a drummer if there ever was one!"
 "Oh yeah! Played hard and sweated a lot. I remember the night his sticks slipped out of his sweaty hands and cleared the dance floor!"
 "Yeah! And after that he swore he'd figger a way to hang on to his sticks."
 "Ain't he still at it, sandin' the shafts of red hickory drumsticks so other drummers can hold on to 'em?"
 "Can't say as I remember."



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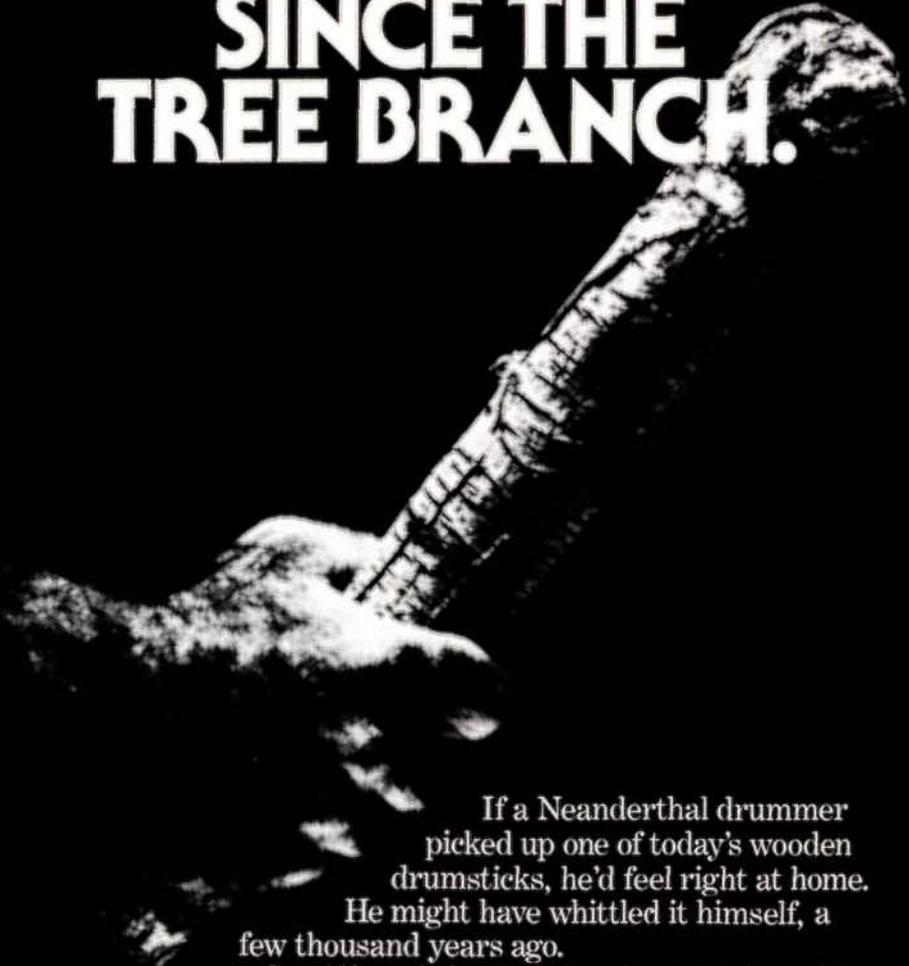
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DURALINE

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Ludwig continued from page 31

It was exciting. We worked 5 1/2 days a week; five days in the factory and the other half-day in the office. Sometimes, on Saturday afternoons when no one was around, we'd play tympani or drums, or set up outfits. Sunday we rested up for Monday. At night I would go out to listen and talk to drummers. From them I learned what was needed and then we would develop products that would meet their demands. We lived and worked from year to year; from catalog to catalog.

DL: Ludwig was quickly established in the rock and roll market because of the fact that Ringo played Ludwig drums. How did that come about?

WL: He bought them. We never gave Ringo anything. In 1963 the Beatles burst on the scene and for two and a half years we were producing four-drum "Beatle" outfits on double shifts. This is the way it happened:

Up until 1960 we hadn't thought much about exporting drums. There was a lot of business in this country, plane travel took longer than it does today, and communication wasn't as good. Exporting was complicated.

In 1960 a British entrepreneur, Iver Arbiter, visited a convention and asked if he could distribute our products in England. Nobody had ever asked us before. We said, "Why not?"

At the same time, we had received a new finish from our supplier of pearl. It was black, and also came in blue and pink. We decided to accept it and test it out on the market. I was called upon to give it a name. All I could think of was that it looked like the inside of an oyster shell, so I called it Oyster pearl.

This British distributor ordered a dozen sets in Oyster black and a dozen in Oyster blue. We put them all together and sent them to him. He put them in his store, which was just off Picadilly Circus in London. One of the Oyster black four-piece sets was put in the window.

The Beatles had just returned from their success in Hamburg. Ringo had a few pounds in his pocket so he went shopping for a new set of drums. He went into Arbiter's store and asked for a certain make of drums. The clerk, however, had been told by his boss to push the Ludwigs. He directed Ringo's attention to the window, to that black oyster set. Ringo was swayed by the fact that it was from America. The clerk gave him a good price and Ringo bought the set on the condition that the Ludwig logo be painted on the front head of the bass drum.

When I saw the pictures I didn't think it was such a good idea to be so blatant about putting the name on the bass drum. But, Arbiter said that his customers were asking for the sets that way. We made decals for the English shipments. When the Beatles

appeared on the Ed Sullivan show we had to go out and buy thousands of decals. We started putting them on all the bass drum heads.

We never made contact with Ringo. He picked Ludwig that day, in that store. He was never an endorsee. We could never get in touch with him because he was always surrounded by such a large, protective, group. The closest I ever got to him was at a press conference at the Amphitheater in Chicago. We had made him a gold-plated snare drum. When I gave it to him, I don't think he knew who I was. As a matter of fact, the last time I saw that gold-plated drum it was under the arm of a police security guard.

DL: What other trends started in the '60s?

WL: There was the Beatles and there was "Total Percussion." At the time, our marketing department was led by a very innovative and brilliant young man named Richard Schory. Dick Schory was quite a visionary. He coined the expression "Total Percussion." I gave him free reign and he ran with the ball. Dick Schory was looking past the Beatle era while it was still going on.

Dick searched out composers and commissioned them to write short, programmatic pieces for percussion ensemble. Ludwig underwrote this enterprise. The software created the desire to form percussion ensembles which made a market for total percussion, not just drumsets. To this day a good part of our business is in school orchestras, bands and marching groups.

All areas of percussion grew in the '60s. The marching percussion scene was truly exciting. We got involved in manufacturing portable tympani, we pioneered *Timp-Toms* and multiple carriers. We also improved our symphonic tympani and our orchestral line.

The '50s and '60s were great eras but there's a lot more going on today. Ideas were germinating in the '60s but today is the most marvelous age of percussion *ever*. Don't confuse the excitement of the opening of an era with the climax of the era.

DL: Some of the major developments in the last few years have been in the versatility and strength of hardware. How do you decide which products to make?

WL: We're all trying to be different. That's why there have been so many "bummers" on the market. You think of something nobody else has and you beat them to the market. History has shown which ideas worked and which haven't.

To expand on Danly's question, "Is it good," you also have to ask, "Is it needed? Is it an original idea or is it an improvement on somebody else's idea?" Most improvements come from a combination of inside (factory) and outside (consumer) developments.

The first counter hoops were straight

continued on next page

THE FIRST REAL DRUMHEAD BREAKTHROUGH SINCE THE ANIMAL HIDE.

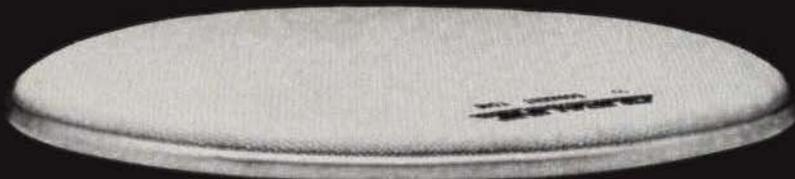


Cavemen stretched dried animal skins over their drums thousands of years ago.

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strips of steel. Somebody put a single flange [bend] on it because the sheer edge of the hoop cut the calfskin as it was drawn down. Then, to further protect the head, somebody created the double-flange hoop.

In 1939, our chief engineer came down from his second floor office and handed me the first triple-flange hoop the world had ever seen. He had taken a pair of pliers and bent the top edge of a double flange hoop out to make a third flange. He asked me, "Do you think there would be a market for this?" I told him I didn't know.

We put it on a drum and beat it up a little. The first thing we noticed was that it was easier to make rim shots. The second

thing was that it didn't chew up the stick. But the third, and most important thing, was that nobody else had it.

We took the hoop to drummers and the response was good. We showed it at the summer convention and we took some orders. For fifteen years we were the only ones to have the triple-flange hoop.

For a long time nothing much happened. Then, about fifteen years ago, the age of high tension came upon us. Drum corps, in an effort to gain an advantage in the field of competition, would tighten their drums to great limits. Eventually, they reached the point where the steel hoops would bend. Even when we used

steel that was twice as thick they bent.

Diecasting is the only type of construction that would take the stress of 40,000 pounds per square inch. It's solid. But, even diecast hoops with ears bend. That's why we went to an "ear-less" hoop; twin channels of metal with holes drilled through for the tension rods.

They were designed for drum corps needs where they're tightening the heads that tight to win a contest. The winning edge, in the contestant's mind, is defined as a half turn more tension than the other corps. They're already tight, as tight as a table, but in the nervous anticipation of stepping out onto a field of combat they'll go around one last half turn to get 'em up. It isn't exactly a musical need.

DL: So, at least in this case, bigger is better.

WL: We're not talking bigger, we're talking stronger. We're talking about mechanically answering high-tension needs. We now build wrenches to tighten heads because a regular drum key won't work.

You always have this tendency to think that bigger is better. That's why battleships were built. Carriers got so big that when an airplane came along it easily sank them. Bigger was not better. It didn't make any difference how big they were.

In jazz, four drums and medium weight hardware is enough. Hard rock takes a lot of pounding. If you're going to play rock, with the butt ends of 3S sticks, you're going to push the drums around something bad. When you hit everything so hard, it shakes and shakes loose. Then you need heavy-duty hardware. What the drum industry is doing is answering a demand. That makes hardware heavier, longer to set up, and longer to knock down.

DL: Is there an end? Is it big enough?

WL: Yes, there's an end. There's already a reaction setting in. I'm getting more and more letters saying, "Your stuff is breaking my back. Make something lighter." Our modular line is our maximum. That's heavy enough, but we're not the heaviest on the market.

DL: What is the Ludwig philosophy of how to make drums?

WL: We make everything in our own building. My father was a firm believer that if you make it, you control it. You control the process, the prices and, above all, you control the quality. My father taught me a few secrets so that I can take any drum off the assembly line, glance at it, tap it, run my finger over, and then reject or pass it. I also have a tape measure that I carry with me at all times. That's as much as I can tell you about that.

My father also believed that a drum should be lightweight but strong. The lightest construction that he could conceive of, and he made hundreds of thousands of drums, was 3-ply construction with a reinforcement ring to provide

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"Stanley Spector has helped me to improve my sense of Time and my feeling for rhythm and swing. I would hear drummers and there would be a rhythmical energy in their playing, and I always wanted to play like that. I can play that way now because of the direction I received from Stanley Spector. It has nothing to do with playing fast or loud.

I am a much happier person. I am not frustrated. I don't feel that I have to prove anything to anyone or myself. I can sit down in a room by myself day by day and play the drums and feel the same energy flow as when I play with good musicians.

I once took my personal problems to a psychologist for help. Stanley Spector is better. Mr. Spector made it clear to me that he is not a psychologist, but he helped me to understand that playing the drums is not something separate from life, but when approached with a high level of attention is life. When I caught on to the fact that the same quality of attention can be applied to every other activity in life, the personal problems no longer exist in the same way."

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strength at the tensioning edges.

The reinforcement ring was never considered to have any direct link to sound. No one thought about what it did to sound; it was a construction must for better than sixty-five years. A 3-ply shell without the reinforcement ring distorts and is not rigid; that ruins the sound.

Rock drummers, however, need a wide range of tones. That's a characteristic of rock drumming. To get that variety of pitches you have to mount a variety of tom-toms on the bass drum. Therefore, you have to have a metal framework that will support a number of drums. When you add that weight you add stress to the shell. The 3-ply shell was no longer strong enough. The drum companies were faced with either blocking up the interior of the drum or adding more plies to the shell.

It was easier to add more plies. It wasn't for sound alone. We thought of a mechanical manner in which we could make the middle of the drum strong enough to support the increased stress. We went to six, thick plies so you had strength at the edge of the shell and all the way through the shell. It was no longer necessary to have reinforcement rings. That changed a lot of things.

DL: What types of materials do you use for your drums?

WL: We use maple because it's a hard wood and it finishes up great. We use mahogany because it's a softer wood and it's easily malleable. We use the combination of maple and mahogany because of their compatibility. Those are the woods that are available in large supply at the lowest price. We don't use exotic woods because they're expensive and have no acoustical advantages, that I can detect. I don't think it makes any difference whether you use maple, mahogany, or rosewood. The important thing is that the drum is made of thick plies that are cross-grained.

The cross-grain, and the evenness of the molds (around which the plies are successively laid and cured with heat and pressure from the flat to the round state), are going to determine the strength and long-lasting attributes of the shell.

Brass is used for snare drums because it is malleable, ductile, reasonably priced, plentiful, takes a good plating job, and sounds well.

We got into stainless-steel drums because we wanted to make a lightweight metal snare drum with a tough finish for the field. Stainless steel drums are perfectly round and will last forever. People who bought stainless steel drums invested wisely. We have all the molds and machinery to make stainless steel drums, but, unfortunately, the price went out of sight.

I don't know if shell material makes any difference in the sound. *Vistalite* drums weren't for sound as much as for a visual

effect. Users did tell us that they were different to play on, though.

Flutes used to be made of wood. For the better part of a century, flutists insisted that there was no better sound than a wood flute. Today, they're all metal. What happened? Yet, when H.M. White, the founder of King Band Instrument Co., attempted to switch the trade from wood to metal clarinets it was an utter failure.

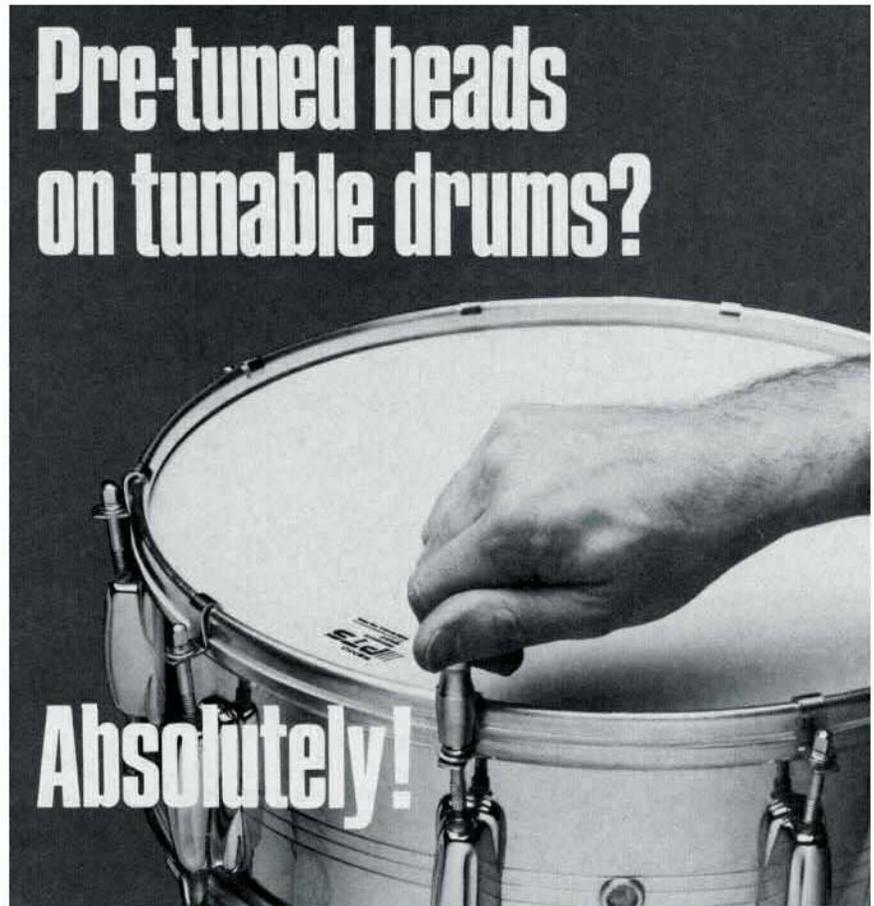
I often marvel at young people who tour our factory. They'll see some all-wood drums and say, "Man, those sound wonderful!" They've never even played them. But, put a pearl or cortex covering on the drum and they'll say it doesn't sound as

good. They're "cross-sensing"; they're hearing with their eyes.

Sound is nebulous. You like a sound—I don't. I like a sound that you don't. The next fellow comes along and doesn't like either of the sounds we like; he likes another sound. So, when we say that a drum sounds good, to whom does it sound good?

I wish that there was a machine that you could put a drum in that would say "good sound" or "bad sound" on an indicator. It would be easy. We wouldn't sell the drum that had a bad sound. Drums sound different; there are no two alike. But never

continued on next page



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say one sounds better than another.

DL: Why are certain drum sizes standard? Were drum companies originally limited to making only those sizes?

WL: No. We could make any size. All the drum companies could make any size. I came into the business in 1937. The first tuneable tom-toms were introduced a couple of years prior to that. In those days, drums were single-tension to keep the price down. The top head was calfskin and the bottom head was pigskin, tacked to the drum.

The Dixieland drum setup that Ray Bauduc used with the Bob Crosby band at that time was a 7x11 and an 8x12, mounted on the bass drum, and a 14 x 16 on the floor. Because of his fame, that setup was a stock item in our catalog for quite a while.

The 9x13 was also of that era. Gene Krupa chose that size and used only one tom-tom on the bass drum. After that, everybody who wanted to play swing went to 9x13.

DL: So there was no acoustic reason that the drums were certain sizes? They were just what was being used?

WL: I don't know why it came to be 9 x 13. It could have been 9 x 14 or 8 x 13. There was never any question, until you brought it up, as to why. That shows you what *Modern Drummer* is doing: It's finding

out; it's questioning. In addition to producing a desired sound, the shell size was often determined by its compatibility to available holders and manufacturing equipment.

The Dixieland sound was short and muted. The swing sound was more resonant and open throated. What worked for Dixieland wouldn't work for swing.

There is no reason to think that we conducted acoustical research at the factory. We didn't hit a drum and say, "Oh, that one sounds better than this." Remember, when you say one sound is better than another, who's to say it sounds better? You, or me? We're both different. Even back in the '30s you couldn't get people to say that an 8x 12 sounded better than a 9x13 because what do you mean "better"? Ray Bauduc loved his sound. Gene Krupa loved his, and later, Ray McKinley went to a 16 x 16 because he wanted to slug it out in a lower register. He added a couple of inches to the shell depth, that's all.

And there it hung; 9x13 and 16x 16. I used to listen to bands and say, "That's the ultimate. There'll never be a need for anything but those two sizes." But drummers started to experiment and styles changed.

DL: What factors should be considered when deciding which drum to buy? Shell, hardware, finish, sound, ads, who else plays that make; in short is a drummer buying product or image?

WL: All of that: product, image, reputation, history, service, friend's recommendations, and gut feelings. For a drum company to be successful it has to do everything. We wouldn't be in business if we didn't have a decent product, at a fair price, year in and year out, backed by parts and service. You should always play the drum you intend to purchase. It has to sound and feel right to you; you're the one that's going to play it. Remember, the choice of one drum over another is a matter of personal taste.

DL: Has everything that can be done to a drum been done? Haven't we reached the end of drum development?

WL: I don't see how you can make a statement like that. That's like saying nobody's going to think anymore; nobody's going to invent anymore. There's going to be a lot of new things done. I've got two inventions sitting on my desk right now.

We're alive; percussion is alive. But, you don't just sit down and say, "Now I'm going to invent a new pedal." No way! You sit down and you get some pedals and you study them and you take them apart and put them back together. Then you say, "Hey, here's something nobody's thought of."

You make a model. Now, who's going to make the pedal? You find someone to make it. Now, who's going to buy it? Ninety-seven percent of all patents taken out are never produced. Of the 3% that

find their way into production, only half are successful.

That's 98.5% failure. It's a high risk. Success doesn't come easy.

DL: One of the things that the Ludwig Drum Company has always been involved in is the area of education. How did that come about?

WL: My father never tired of telling me how, one day in 1925, he got a telephone call from Joliet, Illinois. In those days, that was long distance. The band director of the Joliet High School band asked my father if he could come out and get his drummers organized. My father was interested.

He started out one morning in the old Stanley Steamer. He went to that school and he was appalled at the condition of the drum section. He gave the kids a lesson and the band director thanked him by buying all Ludwig equipment. My father never forgot that.

He wrote books and published them. He standardized the rudiments and passed them out to drummers. It built the business, but above all, he was doing something that he enjoyed. He was helping young people. That's been the spirit of the company. To this day we have an extensive educational department.

DL: How does a drummer become a Ludwig clinician and who, besides the drum company, benefits from it?

WL: Generally, you endorse a drum just by playing it. We'll hear about a player from a dealer or someone on our staff. A player's reputation, name recognition, visibility, demand, and his presentation determine his value to the company. For example, Ed Shaughnessy, and his drums, appear before fourteen million television viewers every night and Ed is a great clinician.

The bottom line for the drum company is to sell drums, but we're not the only ones who benefit from the program. The dealer needs sales to live. We try to give him a clinician that will help his sales as well as educate. The drummers get an opportunity to see a professional drummer and they also get information. The clinician gets a fee that has been set by prior arrangement. He also gets exposure. Each endorsee or clinician has an arrangement that has been adjusted to their needs and abilities as well as ours. Everyone involved benefits.

DL: Some people say that the American drum companies allowed the Japanese to get into the drum market. How do you feel about it?

WL: Well, I've heard this in a few places and to me, it's just foolish. You don't allow a competitor to come into the market; he comes in. You don't allow him or disallow him. The competition decides he wants to be in the drum business and he's in it. We didn't "allow it"; we objected, but they did it anyway.

Of course, we competed and struggled to keep them out. We always took them seriously. But, because of lower labor costs and preferential tariff treatment, it has become more and more difficult to compete on an equal basis.

For instance, drums are imported into the United States from Taiwan duty-free, yet when we ship our drums into Taiwan, a duty of 50% is slapped on them, plus additional tariffs and penalties amounting to another 65%; total 115% on top of the price of the drums.

Look at automobiles, look at steel, look at electronics; all are now Japanese dominated. Our government says, "Come in and sell your goods in America so that you will be strong and help us resist Communism." American industry is a victim of a larger picture. I don't see how anyone can say we, the Music Industry, or any industry "allowed" the Japanese to penetrate our markets.

DL: Ludwig was the last major drum company to be sold to a larger company. Why did that happen?

WL: The business has changed. It has become as important to finance dealers as it is to design and build good products. What kind of terms can you provide? What kind of interest rates? Do you have a lease plan for schools? We, at Ludwig, were aware of our limitations. We don't have the capital that a large company, like Selmer, has.

We were also aware of our limitations in marketing. For instance, we had thirteen salesmen on our sales force; Selmer had over thirty. Since both call on the same dealers, we found we could combine the two sales forces into one.

Thirdly, The Selmer Company has the engineering experience to assist Ludwig's engineers in developing new products and continuing our forward momentum through the 1980s.

What I did was join a larger company with the management and financial ability to merchandise Ludwig products under more lenient credit terms. All the domestic drum companies that were private are now part of the larger companies for strength. My family and I didn't have to sell the company, but now Ludwig offers more than it could when it was just a family business.

DL: How will the recent merger with The Selmer Company affect Ludwig Industries?

WL: Things are better than ever. I am working for Selmer as the president of Ludwig Industries. Selmer is going to manage and operate the three plants of Ludwig Industries in conjunction with the total operation of their seven other plants, all of which make musical instruments. That leaves me free to pay more attention to research and design, quality control, and to get out and meet my friends again. 

Readers Platform continued from page 4

JAKE HANNA

Regarding your portrait of Jake Hanna, I was appalled to see this man, respected as a wonderful drummer and musician, spend so much energy telling us how the only good music was written forty years ago. He also spent too much time putting down the modern musicians whose music and styles are as foreign to him as his were to his predecessors. The only thing he didn't mention was how much money rock musicians make. That would've iced the cake. As for old music being the only good music—this comes from Mr. Hanna's closed-mindedness and his inability to adjust with changing times. Finally, Mr. Hanna kept stressing taste. I question how much taste it takes to being in a position of being portrayed by MD, and then putting down other musicians that play a different style. I don't ever remember hearing a rock musician so generally demean "those jazz musicians."

CHUCK WOODHAMS
WRENTHAM, MA

TRIXON DRUMS

In your July article, *From The Past*, I must take issue with your assessment of Trixon Drums as worthy of the "Bomb Of The Century Award." Though never having owned such a set, I had the opportunity of taking a close look at one back in 1967. I found nothing objectionable in the Trixon asymmetrical bass drum, other than head availability. I can't believe that Trixon's engineering and production staff would tool-up for such a design just for the sake of being "gimmicky," any more than I could accuse the North people of being fiberglass freaks. In retrospect, I would commend the designers, for the most part, on their creative approach to what could have been just another third-rate drum company. Thanks for an otherwise interesting article in a fine magazine.

JAMES NEVERMANN
AUBURN, WASHINGTON

LM-1 VS. SOCIETY

The development of the *LM-1* tells us a great deal about the way our society is going and how this is being reflected in music. Like Dr. Johnson's famous remark about a dog walking on it's hind legs, "The wonder is not that it is done well, but that it is done at all." There's no way a machine will ever sound like Shelly Manne or vice versa.

BRUCE MORLEY
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

PROS AND A CON

Being married to a drummer, I picked out MD as a "stocking stuffer" for my husband for Christmas. I've been reading some of the articles and I'm learning to understand his love for drums and much more. Super articles like *The History of Rock Drumming* really help me. Another great article I cut out for a booklet for my granddaughter was *Carolyn Brandy/Barbara Borden: Alive!* One sorry note of displeasure is the Dean Markley ad in the July issue. It's not worthy of your great magazine. I'm also writing to them and I'm sending a copy of the ad to *MS Magazine* who often show these as bad examples of advertising. I know ads are necessary, but good ones are possible.

MILLICENT LYNN
SHILACTA, PA

ROLAND VAZQUEZ

Many thanks for the interview with Roland Vazquez. His comments concerning the emotional aspects of music was enjoyable reading. What wasn't as enjoyable was that Vazquez will rob L.A. of the cultural integrity—which the city badly needs—if he ever settles in New York City.

J.D. MITCHELL
LOS ANGELES, CA

OHIO U. CLINIC

I'd like to put in a good word to three very special people in drumming. I recently attended the Summer Jazz Drumming Clinic at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Ed Soph, Guy Remonko and Bob Breithaupt were tremendous. Their patience and understanding equal their ability to play. Not only was it a pleasure to see them play—they explained and made applications on drumming that were easily understood. Those who attended also had the pleasure of hearing and talking to Alan Dawson. So, thanks to Ed, Guy, Bob and Alan. This aspiring drummer gained many new ideas and a great experience.

MARK SCHAFFIRT
MIDDLETOWN, OH

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continued on page 120

by Hal Blaine

Q: I've written a song that I'd like John Denver to see. You're one of my favorite drummers, and John is one of my favorite male singers. How can I reach John Denver, and do you think he will listen to my songs?

L.S.

JEFFERSON CITY, MO

A: John is always open to singing other people's music if it's good. Send the material to Mr. John Denver, Aspen, Colorado. He'll absolutely get it; he's the only John Denver up there. I'm sure he'll listen to it because he always does. You never know when that next big "Country Boy" song is coming.

Don't forget that there are other artists who are looking for good songs. It's really quite simple. Find out what label they're on and send the song there. Be sure that you have it copyrighted first. It's not that anyone's going to go out and steal your song, but sometimes people hear things and get ideas. It'll save you a lot of heartache.

If you don't have a publisher and can't copyright immediately—write your lead sheet or melody and a copy of the lyrics down on paper. Put it into an envelope and seal it. Take it to the post office and register the envelope to yourself so that in the event of any legal litigation, you can take this to court and it'll stand up. The best way to protect yourself is to get a copyright and do it through a publisher. If you have a publisher, then they should be sending your music around.

Q: I'm eighteen. I decided to send this demonstration tape and letter for you to listen to. I'd appreciate it very much if you could give me any advice or help in getting started as a professional drummer.

T.S.

STOUGHTON, MA

A: I just listened to your tape and I'm really impressed. You say you want to become a professional drummer—I think it should be quite easy. It sounds like you have dynamite fast hands, but I want you to remember that that's not all of being a drummer. A drummer's place, generally, is in the rhythm section. They hire you to help keep the beat, hold a steady tempo, back up the singer, back up the lead guitar player, and back up whoever's playing so-

los. When it's your solo, then you can go crazy and do anything you want. But, I think the big thing you're going to have to think about if you do want to be a professional drummer is that you are a part of a unit; part of a group. I know that we're all showoffs, but you really do your best showing off when it's your turn. When it's your solo, it's helpful to really build a foundation for the musicians that you're working with. They want to hear and feel you play. They want to know that you're holding the beat for them. That's part of the rhythm section. Keeping the beat constant and steady—that's one of the big things to work on.

Q: First, I want to compliment you on your Staying In Tune column. Due to positive thinking I feel my drumming has improved and doors are starting to open. I'm seventeen and have been playing drums for five years. I'm currently in my school dance band, marching band and concert band. I plan on taking music courses in college and becoming a professional studio musician. How did you begin your career as a studio musician? Do you make your own hours? Is it a hectic life? Do you have time for your family and yourself? Do you receive a gold record every time you play on a gold record?

D.R.

BALTIMORE, MD

A: I'm glad that my article gave you inspiration to practice. Practice makes perfect. That's an old cliché, but it's true. I'm happy to hear that you want to do your own thing on drums. I think it's very important that everyone do their own thing on drums. Learn from the pros—learn to copy. That doesn't hurt a bit. Get the good licks—get all the licks, then make up your own licks.

I'm really happy that you're in the school band, concert band and marching band and that you're going to take music courses in college. I can't stress enough how important it is, if you're going to be in a profession, to really know it backwards.

I really started my studio career with Tommy Sands years ago. He was a superstar in the late '50s. My career kind of blossomed from there.

It is a hectic life and you will not have a lot of time for your family and yourself if

you overbalance yourself in the studio. I've talked about balance before. It's very important to not do just one thing all the time. Find things that you can get away from music with, that you can clear your head with, so that you don't become just "a drummer." You've got to be a human being.

As far as making my own hours, nowadays I'm very fortunate to be working mostly in commercials and I don't have to take up all the hours that it takes to make records. Commercials usually only take an hour or two. It's kind of nice to do one or two of those a day.

As far as the gold records—many years ago I was, fortunately, doing a record with The Byrds called "Mr. Tambourine Man," and at that time, I asked producer Terry Melcher if I could have a gold record if the song was a hit. It was a hit and the rest was history. Whenever we did gold records after that we asked for them. There were a lot of hits and a lot of gold records that did come in from producers who were very gracious enough to give them to some of us.

Q: In touring the country, I'm constantly asked by drummers about drum endorsements and equipment. There seems to be a lot of talk about Tama and Pearl. With so much gear being put on the market, it has a lot of young drummers wondering what to do. I know it's a touchy subject, but there are a lot of drummers interested in what you have to say.

J.J.

NASHVILLE, TN

A: Tama and Pearl make very fine drums. I don't know if you're going to find one drum that is absolutely the finest. It's a personal thing. I've played on just about all the sets of drums and they all have something I like. It's just like test driving: Get out and look at these drums and feel them out. If you're a professional, most drum shops will let you look over anything you want, knowing that you're not going to break anything. I don't think anyone can really tell you that anything is the finest, because one drumset might feel good in the recording studio and it may not feel good on stage, or vice versa. That's why some guys have more than one set of drums for various things.



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ASK A PRO

Q. In the MD interview with Steve Smith, he said that you had a concept as far as time is concerned that really helped him. Could you elaborate on that for me?

Tyrone Waller
Chicago, IL

PETER ERSKINE

A. I'm coming from basically a jazz

drummer's point of view, and in jazz, timekeeping takes place mainly on the ride cymbal. So what I did with Steve was basically tried to get his ride cymbal playing to be very strong, so the quarter notes would always be driving ahead. In other words, the beat always has to be moving ahead. A drumbeat is not just a static thing—it's actually a propulsive, continuous series of rhythms that keeps the song moving along. And so in timekeeping, it always has to be moving forward. Everything you play has to contribute to the forward motion of the music. As a matter of technique, you've really got to dig into the ride cymbal. You've got to develop a certain snap on the cymbal, while playing with a lot of looseness. Before your timekeeping can become complex, you have to master the basic, but difficult, chore of being able to swing and play very simply. If the basic timekeeping is real strong, this underlying strength will support any kind of subtle or complex syncopation that you want to put on top later on. With Steve, it works dramatically well with what he plays with Journey. His playing is very strong, yet he's throwing in a lot of subtle jazz things. He's got the jazz influence, and you can hear it.



Photo by Lissa Wale

MAX WEINBERG

Q. What type drum sticks do you use and why?

Scott A. Fox
Racine, WI

A. I use ProMark hickory 5B with a nylon tip for concert/stage work. I use a ProMark hickory 5A in the studio where volume is not as important a factor. I use hickory because the resiliency takes the shock away from your hands and leaves it in the stick.

A. I first played with Mike and Randy Brecker at an Arista All-Stars concert at Montreux, Switzerland, around 1978 or 79. It wasn't really billed as the Brecker Brothers, but the band consisted of Mike and Randy, with Mike Mainieri, Warren Bernhardt, Tony Levin, Steve Kahn and myself, and we did a lot of Brecker Brothers material. The only Brecker Brothers album I played on was Detente, on Arista.

I use Yamaha drums, but I also have a variety of snare drums that I like to use periodically. I have a collection of old "classic" snare drums. I like to look for old, deep, wood Ludwigs, plus I have a couple of Black Beauties, an Eames snare drum made by Joe Macsweeney, and a Frank Wolf drum. But Yamaha drums are the drums I love as far as the rest of the kit goes. For cymbals, I'm an old K. Zildjian advocate. You can't find them so I always hunt for them. There are people who know I use them so they save them for me when they run into them. Sometimes I'll use an occasional A. Zildjian, but it has to be an old one.

STEVE JORDAN

Q. How long did you play with the Brecker Brothers? Did you record with them? Also, what kind of drums and cymbals do you use?

Patrick Bradley
Navan, Ireland



Photo by Barry Goldenberg

ARTHUR PRESS

Q. In your book *Mallet Repair*, you state that 100%-nylon yarn should be used to re-wrap marimba mallets. I've tried many yarn shops and they all told me that there's no such yarn. The closest they could come was 55% nylon/45% acrylic. Where can I obtain 100% nylon yarn?

Anonymous

A. Unfortunately, 100% nylon yarn is very difficult to obtain. The 55% nylon/45% acrylic combination is very good and should last quite a long time before having to recover, assuming you don't have to play too many glissandi.

JOHN PANOZZO

Q. I'd like to know what kind of microphones (make and model number) you are using on your drumset. Please include all the microphones—overhead, tympani, bells, etc.

P.W. Bolander
Minneapolis, MN

A. I turned this question over to my sound engineer, Yaz Mataz, and he provided the following information:



Photo by Warring Abbot

CHANNEL	MICROPHONE	PROCESSING
1—Vocal	Shure SM10A Headworn Mic	Slightly Compressed with DBX 160. John has an on/off footswitch to help control leakage.
2—Kick (Stage R) 3—Kick (Stage L)	EV RE-20 EV RE-20	(for each): Valley People Kepex II Orban 672A Parametric EQ DBX 160 Compressor
4—Snare (Top)	AKG C414EB Cardioid Pattern 10 dB Pad 75 Hz Roll-off	Valley People Kepex II DBX 160 compressor Orban 672A Parametric EQ EXR SP-1 Exciter
5—Snare (Bottom)	Sony ECM-51 Telescoping Mic	Valley People Kepex II, triggered by Channel 4 (Snare Top) Output
6—Hi-Hat	Neumann KM-85i	
7—Hi Rack Tom	EV RE-16	(for each): DBX 901 Noise Gate
8—Hi Mid Rack Tom	EV RE-16	Orban 622B Parametric EQ
9—Lo Mid Rack Tom	EV RE-16	EXR SP-1 Exciter
10—Lo Rack Tom	EV RE-16	Tom-Toms are then submixed to a stereo pair.
11—Floor Tom	EV RE-20	
12—Cymbals (SR)	Sennheiser MK416 Short Shotgun	
13—Cymbals (SL)	Sennheiser MK416 Short Shotgun	
14—Lo Timbale	Sennheiser MD421U	Omnicaft GT-4 Noise Gate
15—Hi Timbale	Sennheiser MD421U	Omnicaft GT-4 Noise Gate
16—Octoban (Hi Quad)	Crown PZM-6LP	Omnicaft GT-4 Noise Gate
17—Octoban (Lo Quad)	Crown PZM-6LP	Omnicaft GT-4 Noise Gate
18—Finger Cymbals & Triangles	Crown PZM-6LP	
19—Orchestra Bells, Wind Chimes, & Bell Tree	AKG C414EB Bi-Directional 10 dB Pad, 150 Hz Roll-off	
20—Cowbells, Tamb.	Shure SM-57	
21—Chimes	AKG D224E	
22—Tympani Lo & Mid	EV RE-20 (Placed above and between the two Tymps)	
23—Tympani Hi	EVRE-20	
24—Tympani Cymbal	AKG C451	

The MD feature on **Terry Bozzio** (Nov. 1981) left off with Terry pursuing a record deal. After continuously being rejected, but still believing in their music, Missing Persons persevered and borrowed money to press their own ep. Putting an ad in the *Album Network Tip Sheet* and distributing the record themselves, they succeeded in getting airplay on twenty-two stations across the country, and it even reached #1 on three of them. They ended up selling 10,000 records, something they hadn't even sought at all. What they simply wanted was a record contract, and after a year-and-a-half of trying to attract attention in L.A., Capitol Records signed the band. "Rupert Perry at Capitol was interested in us from the beginning, but he couldn't get anyone else in his office interested," Bozzio explained. "When we first started the band, we thought with our connections and who we had been with, we'd get a deal in three weeks. We were figuring on three weeks of rehearsal and no one losing any of their life savings, but we learned real fast that nobody wanted to know anything about it. In the process of having it take so long, we got an incredible education. We now know what it takes to get a record from your mind to the man on the

street."

Terry always aspired to have his own group, but it took a long time for him to believe it would actually work. "My wife, Dale, was real supportive. We had a lot of positive thinking along the way and decided to take the bull by the horns. You just have to go for it and once you get started, you don't stop and you don't take "no" for an answer. Being a drummer, most of the time you're stuck in the background and you don't have much to do with what's going on. That always rubbed me the wrong way because I felt I was intelligent and had something to say. I studied music and I'm very interested in composition and have a lot of aspirations in that direction."

Each member contributes to the writing, and right now, Terry is the only member who writes independently at times. He admits, however, that for a long time he was quite insecure about his writing. "Zappa was so heavy, and when you're a player, you have a certain level you look at your whole situation with. As a writer, especially if you're a novice, it's hard to see yourself playing the garbage you think you're writing. It seems so simplified. But the turns of events and my getting tired of

playing esoteric, complicated, intellectual music and wanting to play something simpler, made it happen the right way. I figured that the kind of stuff I could write would just be right for the public because it's not that complex. We're making a conscious effort to be accessible as possible. Basically, the man on the street doesn't know about odd times and weird dissonant harmonies and doesn't want to know about them."

To Bozzio, it is the perfect situation, and working closely with his wife has been a positive experience. "It's actually better than when I used to go on the road and be gone for six months. That's the opposite extreme and probably the worst because when you come back, there's a totally different person. It's hard to explain the things you've been through and try to share the separate lives you've led for half a year. When you're with someone twenty-four hours a day—working with them, in love with them, married to them, eating, sleeping and living together—it does get a little hard sometimes, but we try to give each other space. But it's a great situation. I've got my best friends and my wife in the band and I feel like I have heaven on earth."

Robert Williams is another drummer who regards his independence as ideal. After moving from Boston to L.A. in 1977, his first job came quickly with Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods. He then radically switched gears when he became the drummer for Captain Beefheart's Magic Band. When Hugh Cornwall, from England's Stranglers, asked Robert to make a record with him, Williams had his first taste of freedom. Essentially, Cornwall handled the guitar and Williams handled the drums, but each of them shared the playing of all the rest of the instruments. "And then I realized I could do it myself," he said. "In the early days, I was so idealistic about playing in groups,

thinking someday I'd be in a group and be able to get together with these guys, who ever they'd be, and they'd be real amenable and we'd really work together. I never really met those guys. I realized the only way to get any music out there the way I wanted it to be, was simply to have my own band. I was so sick of being told what to play on the drums. Drummers are constantly told to stay in their place a lot, so I wanted to do it on my own."

Currently, Williams is on an extensive tour supporting his first A&M album, *Late One Night*, released last month. (Previously, he had a four-song ep, *Buy My Record*.) All the tunes (except for George Harrison's "Within You Without You")

were self-written and sung by Williams, although he admits that it wasn't easy singing and playing together at first. Prior to cutting the album, however, Robert took a series of vocal lessons and worked on the difficulties. "One of the problems of playing and singing is the high frequencies of the cymbals smashing while you're trying to sing. You can't really hear what the monitors are putting out. Also, just the idea of the timing difference. I sing a song called "Buy My Record," which is in 7/8 time and the singing is in 4/4 so I've got to sort of chew gum, walk, etc., etc., at the same time. What I did was just memorize the beat so well that I wouldn't have to think about it that much and mostly concentrate on my singing."

Jim Keltner doesn't have his own band, but often is allowed the luxury of creative freedom on a project. Earlier this year, Ry Cooder included two songs he co-wrote with Jim, "UFO" and "Drinking Again," and in fact, Jim was an integral part in the making of that album. Keltner admits, however, it turned into a disappointment. "That album was supposed to have a sound that Cooder and I were trying to get for the last couple of years. We thought we

had it at one point, but we were warned that we weren't doing it right and it wouldn't come out right on acetate. In the end, I had to go in and overdub all the drum tracks, except for two songs. It hurts now when I listen to it because I see about a 50% drop in performance. The drums and guitar on Cooder's albums are really a big part of the album and it was just blown. It was nobody's fault but mine and Ry's. We had it great, but we had done it in a very

unorthodox method and when we had to do it over, it suffered in the process."

Last month, Jim began working on another film soundtrack with Ry, and during the last few months, has been working on such artist's albums as Bill Burnette, Gary Busey, Neil Diamond, Danny Ferguson and Jack Lee. In September, Jim also had the pleasure of taking his son, Eric, into the studio with his group called Rapid Youth.

continued on page 120

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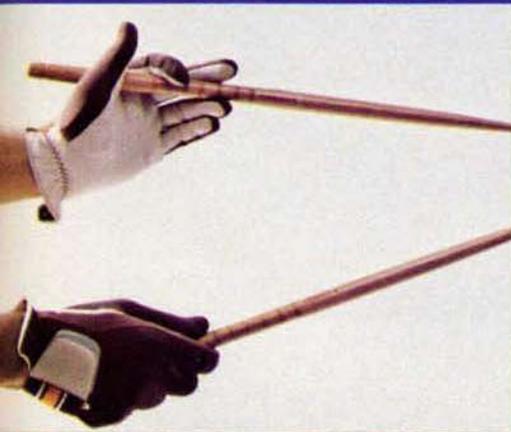
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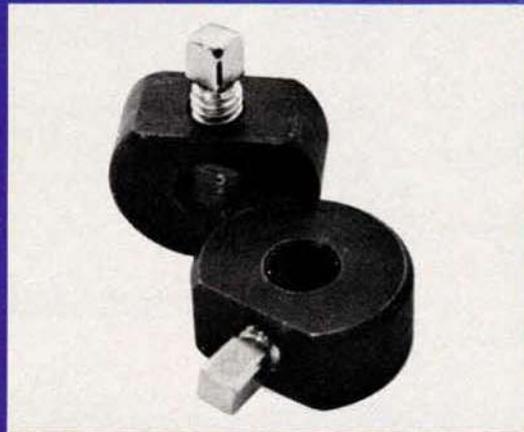
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Photo by Karen Diercksmeier

INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

SATTERFIELD AND HERNDON AT CHILD ABUSE BENEFIT



Photo by Don Putnam

Top country-rock drummers Fred Satterfield of *The Oak Ridge Boys* (R) and Mark Herndon of *Alabama* got together backstage at the fourth annual Stars for Children benefit for the prevention of child abuse. Stars for Children, a non-profit organization chartered by The Oak Ridge Boys approximately five years ago, has now raised in excess of \$400,000 for work in the prevention of child abuse in our nation. Proceeds have been used in various ways, including direct funding to The National Exchange Club/SCAN program, which is setting up counseling centers throughout the U.S. A series of national public service media spots, featuring The Oak Ridge Boys and promoting SCAN Centers, are now being aired across the U.S.

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continued on page 120



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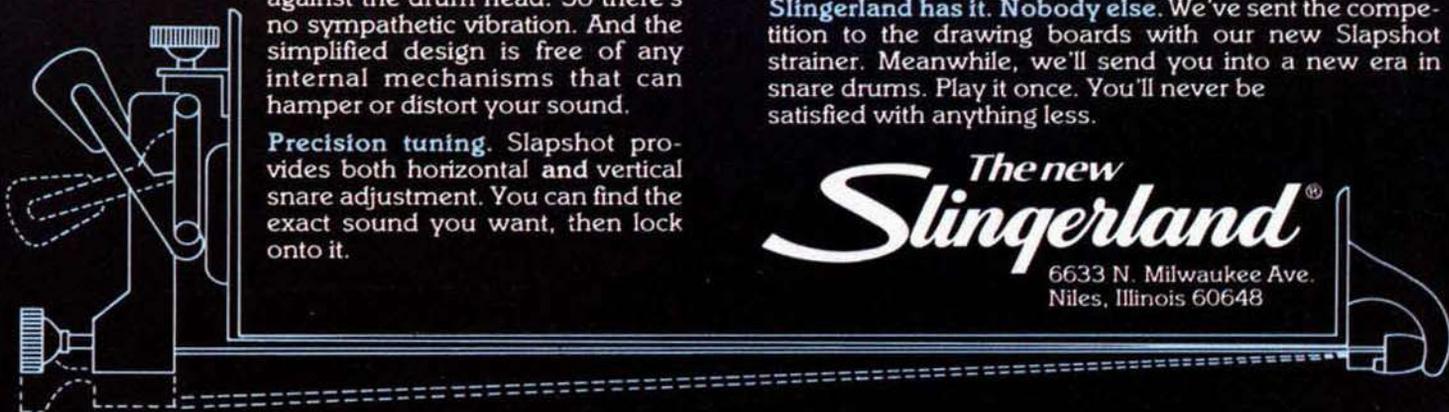
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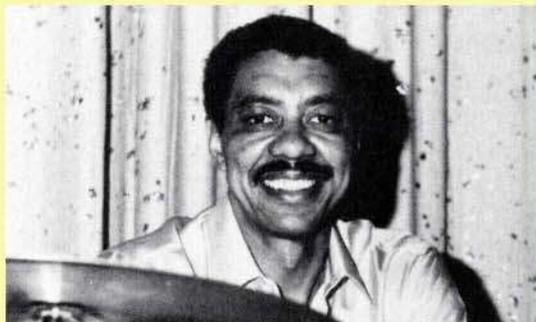
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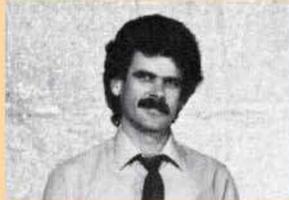
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For information: Dick Grove School of Music, 12754 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604.

**PSA DRUM &
PERCUSSION CAMP**

The Percussion Society of Australia, under the direction of President Keith Harrison, recently conducted a three day, live-in drum and percussion camp at the Naamaroo Conference Centre in Lane Cove. The students, from many sources of interest including professional players, music teachers and school students from throughout the state, were graded into groups according to ability and instruments. Students attended lectures, not only on their own instrument(s), but on all aspects of percussion. Over the three days, they were actively involved with tuned percussion, sight reading, the development of drum solos, playing charts, the history of drumming, plus lessons in jazz, rock, studio and Latin American drumming.

The camp's success guarantees the Percussion Society of Australia's second live-in camp to be held in 1983.

Update *continued from page 116*

Look for **Jack DeJohnette's** album with Special Edition on ECM. **Stewart Copeland** is writing the music for Francis Ford Coppola's upcoming film, "Rumble Fish." **Harvey Mason** produced the just-released Lee Ritenour album. **Thom Mooney** can be heard on Rita Coolidge's current release. At this year's Montreux Music Festival in Switzerland in July, a group consisting of **Billy Cobham** (drums), Jack Bruce (bass), Didier Lockwood (violin), Alan Holdsworth (guitar) and David Sancious (keyboards) blew audiences away. The set was recorded for

hopeful future release. E/A recording group Pieces of a Dream, with drummer **Curtis D. Harmon**, will be heard on Grover Washington Jr.'s upcoming album after opening for and accompanying Washington on his most recent tour. Percussionist **Bobby Campo** has departed Louisiana-based LeRoux and is currently freelancing in percussion and trumpet. Chick Corea's *Trios* album features **Roy Haynes**. Don Cherry and **Ed Blackwell** have a new album called *El Corazon*. **Bob Benberg** in the studio with Supertramp. **Willie Wilcox** on the road with Utopia. **Gary Mallaber**, who co-wrote eight of the

ten songs on Steve Miller's current album, as well as acting as co-producer, is on the road with Miller. **Brian Glascock** on the road with The Motels. **Mark Craney** is on the road with Gino Vannelli and doing clinics throughout the country. He can also be heard on Vannelli's upcoming live album. **Kenny Aronoff** is currently touring with John Cougar. Outlaws drummer **David Dix** has been gigging around upstate New York with members of the band Pictures. The band is billed as Rick Cua and Friends. Finally, congratulations to **Craig Kramph** whose wife, Susie, recently gave birth to their third daughter, Courtney.

Drum Market *continued from page 111*

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WANTED: Rogers Floor Tom, Black Stratta, Daytona area. Call Kenny Anderson (904) 252-7851.

JOBS OVERSEAS—Big money fast. \$20,000 to \$50,000 plus per year. Call 716-842-6000, Ext. 271

“Pearl drums are just like me— Fat and Sensitive.”

I love how they respond to any kind of tuning and head combination. The X-1 snare strainer is a beauty. It's the smoothest most precise I've ever seen. I have basically always felt that a drum is a drum, and generally all or most of today's drum companies make good quality drums. So what can be so different from one brand to the other?

Jim Keltner



...It's just something you feel...I feel it in Pearl drums.”

A product of **Pearl International, Inc.** 408 Harding Industrial Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37211

In Canada contact Pearl Music Division, 161 Alden Road, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R 3W7

PREMIER CROWN OUTFIT

New wood finishes have just been added to Premier's latest *Crown* outfit, and the drum shells have been thickened. Combined with the new stands and fittings, these latest improvements make *Crown* even more attractive and better value than it was when the prototypes were shown at the Frankfurt Music Fair earlier this year.

The deep-gloss wood finishes are achieved by staining and varnishing the natural wood shell, and the three choices are Birchwood, Cherry Rosewood, and Dark Walnut. Five very attractive colors are also available (red, black, silver, white and blue) and there are options of *Tristar* or *Trident* stands and a choice of additional drums and accessories to extend or change the outfit as fashions and needs change.

These *Crown* outfits are in the mid- to low-price market and will appeal very much to semi-professional players.



MOUNTS FOR LP TIMBALES AND TIMBALITOS

A means that permits LP Timbales and Timbalitos to be used as conventional tom-toms in a standard drum kit set up is now available from LP.

Pictured with the CP327 Power Tom-Tom Stand are 14" and 15", and 12" and 13" LP Timbales and a set of LP Timbalitos. This arrangement, used over a bass drum in place of, or in addition to, traditional tom-toms, is one of the newest trends in percussion today.



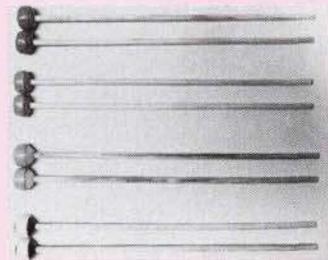
NEW ENCORE MALLETS

Encore Mallets is a new line of marimba, xylophone, and bell mallets produced by Dan Lidster. These mallets feature a 100% virgin-rubber covering. The use of the latex covering coloring system gives a more resonant tone by bringing out

the fundamental of the note. All mallets, except for six selected hardnesses of plain rubber balls, are latex wrapped and are available as: plain latex, yarn wound, cord wound, graduated sets, two tone, double headed, and amplified vibe.

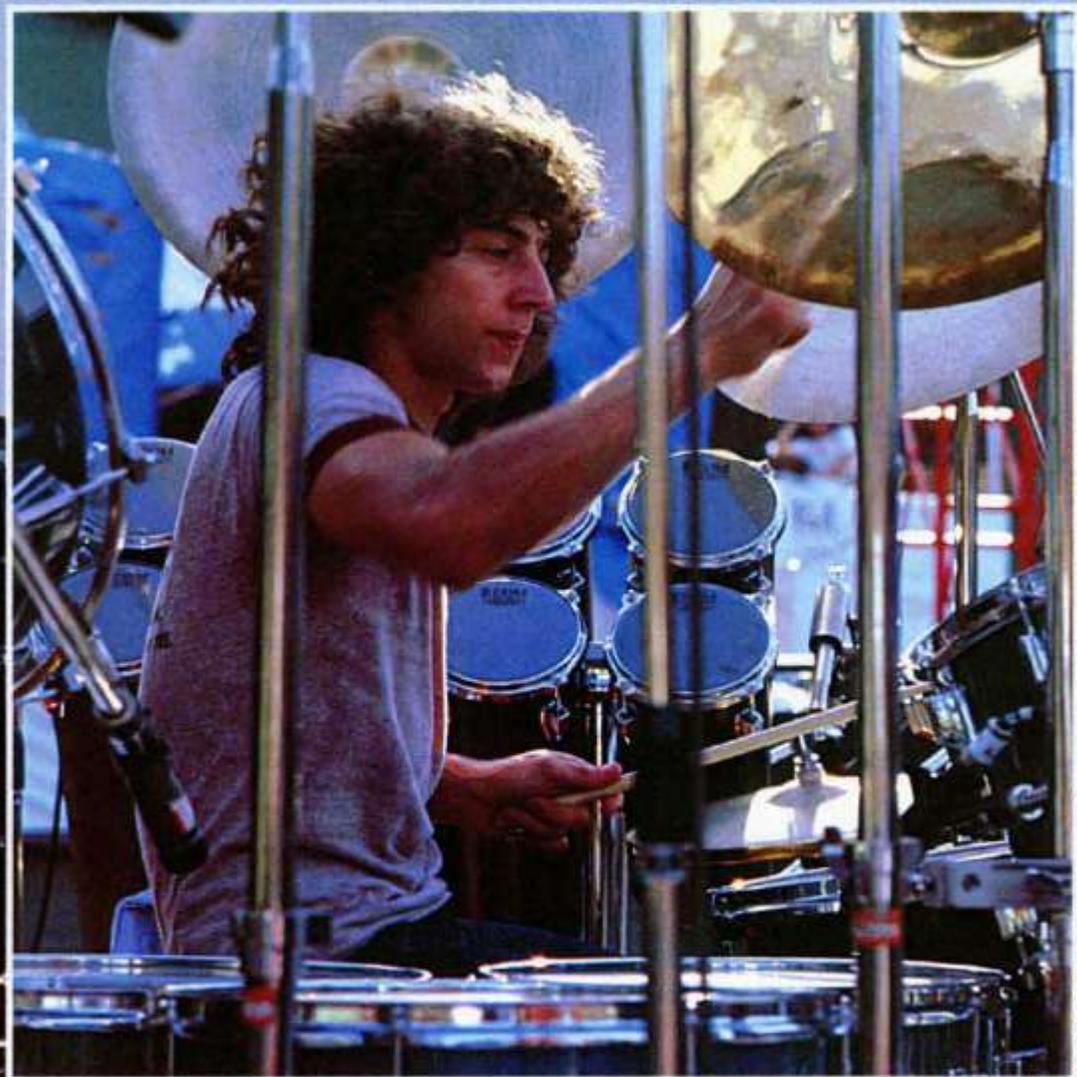
Including four sets of marching mallets, there are 78 which are available in both birch and rattan handles.

For further information write: Encore Mallets, Attn: Dan Lidster, P.O. Box 2029, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48106.



continued on next page

WHETHER IT'S ON THE SKINS, IN THE STUDIO, OR OUT ON THE ROAD



SIMON PHILLIPS GETS AROUND

Simon Phillips is all over the place these days. On the road with Al Di Meola, in the studio with Jeff Beck, on video with Pete Townsend . . . another tour . . . another session. With scheduling like that, it's easy to see why Simon does his getting around on the strongest name in drums — TAMA!

**JEFF
BECK**

THEIR AND BACK

Tama drums deliver the kind of top notch, dependable quality, pros like Simon demand from their equipment, no matter how tough the going gets.

So, when you find your musical needs demanding the most, demand the best — TAMA.

TAMA

The Strongest Name in Drums

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17421 B.E. Gale Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748 • In Canada, 6355 Park Ave., Montreal P.Q. H2V4H5

PRO MARK INITIATES NEW PROMOTION

The "Pro-Mark Promise" promotion enables drummers to buy a pair of Pro-Mark Hickory sticks for just \$2 (retail price: \$6.50), which essentially will cover the cost of shipping and handling. In return, the drummers who receive the sticks promise to tell their local retailer "how great our new hickory sticks feel, sound and play."

The promotion is designed to better acquaint drummers with the new, Texas-made hickory sticks, and ultimately to encourage music retailers to stock the new product, according to Pro-Mark President Herb Brochstein.

"I know that many drummers prefer hickory wood over all other kinds of wood, and though this is an expensive promotion for us, it's the quickest way I can think of to get a pair of our new hickory sticks into their hands," says Brochstein.

Pro-Mark Hickory is the first line of drumsticks to be produced in Pro-Mark's new manufacturing facility in Houston, Texas. The line is available in eight wood-tip models and six nylon-tip models.

Pro-Mark also produces handmade oak drumsticks in Japan and handfinished drumsticks in Taiwan, and recently resumed production of eleven models which previously had been suspended because of a severe worldwide shortage of white oak wood.

Due to the increased use of *Roto-toms*, Gauger Percussion has now adapted RIMS to *Roto*'s using conventional drum-company hardware. This allows the *Roto-tom* to be positioned much closer to the player as a more integrated part of the drumset. The instrument is now tuned by turning the handle of the center *Roto* shaft instead of the entire *Roto-tom* itself. The RIMS will fit 8" thru 16" *Roto*'s and provides total suspension of the instrument. No modification of the *Roto-tom* is required and can be placed on the RIMS mount in minutes. For more information write to Gauger Percussion Inc. 15108 Highland La., Minnetonka, MN 55343.

RIMS FOR ROTO TOMS



NEW DRUM NOTATION PAPER

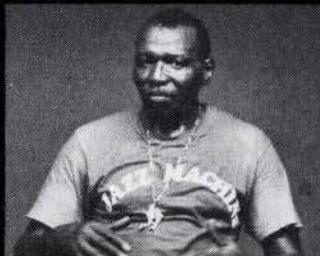


N O W Percussion Co. has recently introduced *drum-write* notation lines. The concept originated and has been successfully tested with students during the past five years. This unique line of manuscript paper will provide the teacher and student with a series of notation lines matching the popular drumming texts used. Styles range from a single line to twelve lines for the expanded set-ups.

Contact: N O W Percussion Co., P. O. Box 1234, Blaine, WA 98230.



DECEMBER'S MD



ELVIN JONES



JAMES BLACK



JOHN DENSMORE

AND MUCH MORE

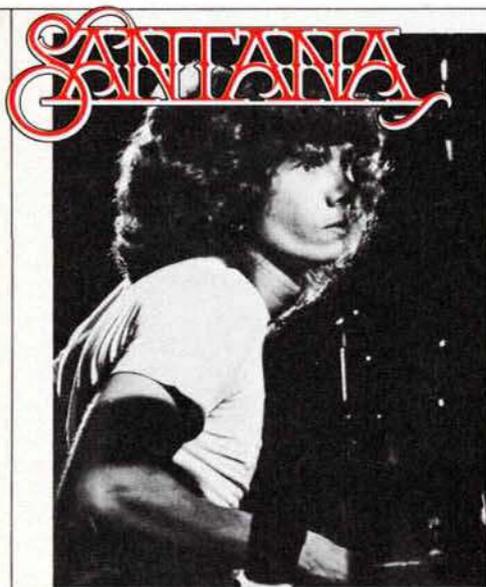
DON'T MISS IT!

**Plus:
Miking
Techniques**

**Inside:
Drum
Workshop**

We asked Graham Lear what he liked about Gretsch Power Drums.

He said you can't beat 'em.



Santana's Drummist, Graham Lear laid all of the following on us, without missing a beat.

"I've tried a lot of good brands but Gretsch has all the elements I want, starting with the resonance of a maple shell—I've always liked the sound and, now, the Power Shells are even better for my purposes.

"The Power Toms have a deep, round tone, and the snares cut through everything. That's important, playing with Santana, because we're so percussion oriented. My drums

Diecast hoops for a true, round sound, crisp rim shots.



have got to project, as well as cover the full range of what the music requires. My Power Drums cut through the loud amplification, especially important in live situations ... and they do it without any unnecessary tuning changes ... no sacrifice of tuning.



908 W. Chestnut,
Chanute, KS 66720
(316) 431-4380

"Gretsch has all the sizes I need, all the individual elements I was looking for. The hardware is exceptional too ... sturdy and handsome, great cymbal stand—not too much weight at the top, great hi-hat, double tom mount, diecast hoops, the stands fold easily and compactly ... the drums are beautifully crafted ... I'm really impressed by Gretsch, all the way down the line."

What more can we say, except listen to Graham ... and Gretsch, on Santana's explosive Columbia album release Chango, coming soon.



We caught Graham in an obviously unposed moment of reflection.

Graham and GRETSCHE

The Unbeatables.



WHEN BILLY COBHAM PLAYS HIS ZILDJIAN, HE'S PLAYING WITH DYNAMITE.

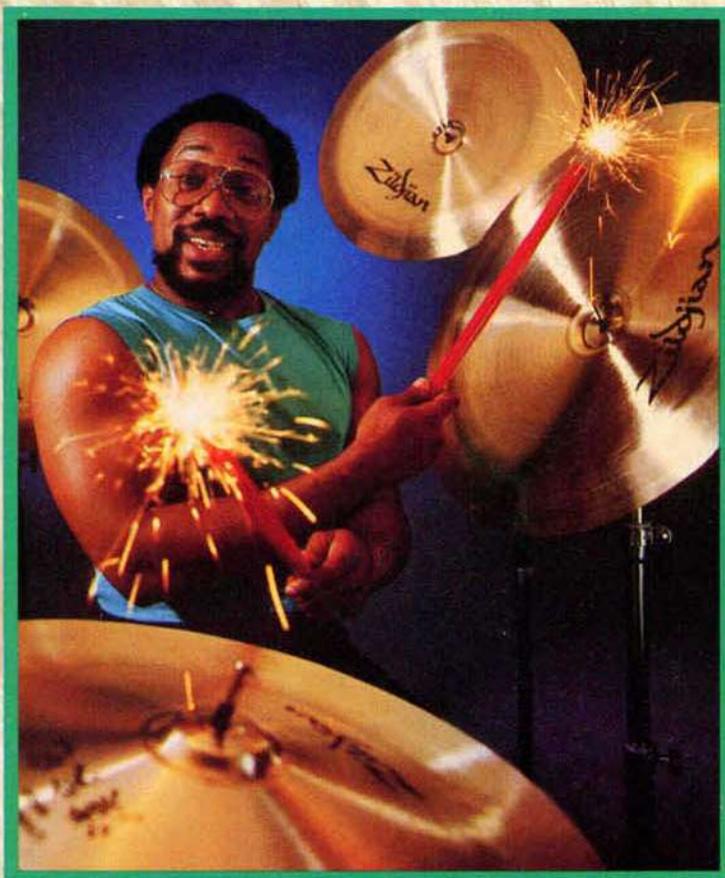
Someone once said of Billy Cobham: "He does certain things because he just doesn't know they can't be done." In the course of doing things that "can't be done" with his own Glass Menagerie group, with the likes of Bobby and The Midnights, George Duke, Stanley Clarke, and Freddie Hubbard on some 300 albums, he's been named Down Beat Drummer of the Year time and time again.

Here are some of Billy's observations:

On His Schooling.

"I graduated from Grossingers resort up in the Catskill Mountains. No, I'm just kidding. Actually, I went to the School of Music and Art in New York City, but at graduation time I got a gig at Grossingers and they had to send my diploma up there."

On Playing Cymbals Upside Down. "I first got the idea of inverting my cymbals a few years back when I was in Finland. I was at an outdoor concert and a band from Prague was playing about 500 meters away. The drummer had an old Chinese cymbal and he was playing it upside down, way up above the drum set. You could barely hear the rest of the band at that distance. You just heard this great explosive cymbal sound. Now I play one 22" China Boy High upside down and one 18" China Boy High in the regular position. The reason I play one upside down is the way it projects.



Why does Billy use our new China Boys for his crash and ride Cymbals: Explosive POWER!

It can be the loudest sound on stage. What happens with the cymbal is that when it is projected up at the room, it makes the whole room vibrate from the cymbal sound."

On China Boy Cymbals.

"I started using China Boys for my crash and ride cymbals because of the explosive effect they have. When you hit them you get this 'POW'! There's an amazing amount of projection. I can get a lot of different effects from my China Boys. If I play them upside down, hitting the outer lip will give me a nice slapping solid stick sound. They also sound great with mallets, almost like small gongs. You can ride on them and get a very different

kind of ride sound. And because they cut out fast, you can get very nice short crashes."

If you're a serious drummer, chances are overwhelming that you, like Billy, are already playing Zildjians. Zildjian—a line of cymbals played by drummers on six continents—a line of cymbal-makers that spans three centuries.

For your copy of the full color Zildjian Cymbals and Accessories Catalog and Cymbal Set-Up Book of famous drummers see your Zildjian dealer or send \$4.00 to Zildjian, Dept. 12, Avedis Zildjian Company, Cymbal Makers Since 1623, Longwater Drive, Norwell, Mass. 02061, USA

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