

MODERN DRUMMER™



The International Magazine Exclusively For Drummers

February 1983

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Toto's **JEFF PORCARO**

CLEM BURKE The Backbone Of Blondie

BILLY HIGGINS

Guide For The
College-Bound
Drummer

Plus:
Developing
Style
Simplifying
Set-Ups
Intro To
Solos





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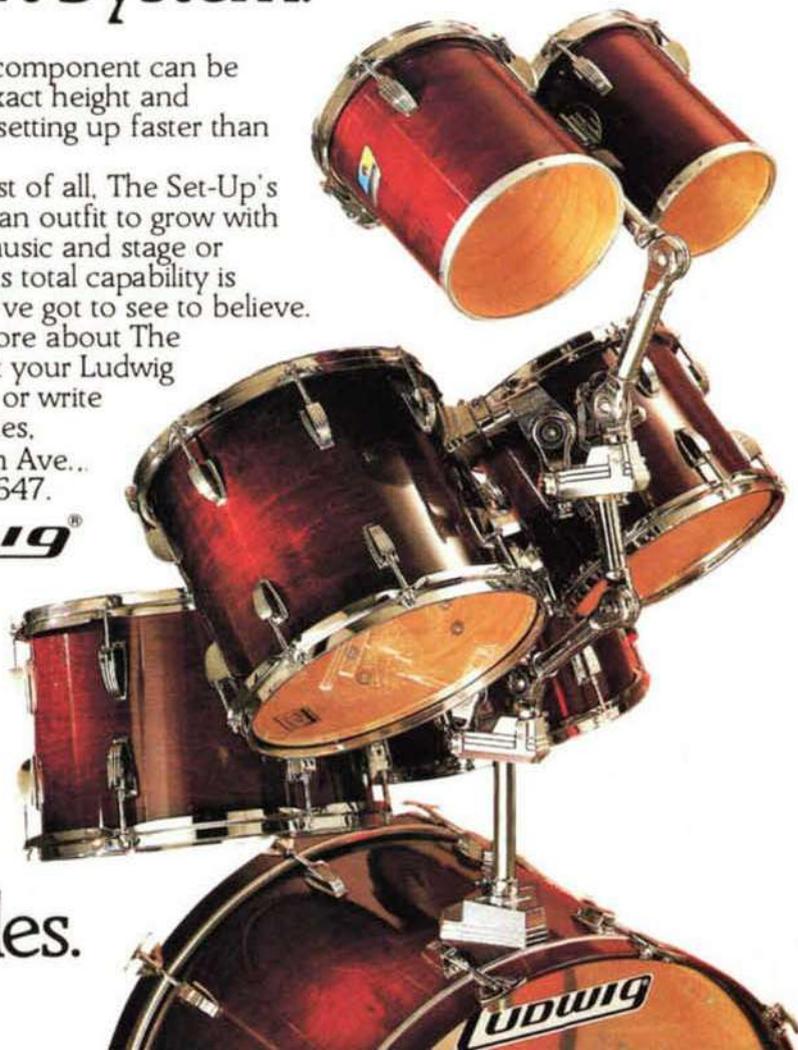
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CLEM BURKE

If a group is going to continue past the first couple of albums, it is imperative that each member grow and develop. In the case of Blondie, Clem Burke has lived up to the responsibility by exploring his music from a variety of directions, which he discusses in this recent conversation with MD.
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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



Drumset on Campus

It occurred to me, while reading through the page proofs of *Jazz Educators Roundtable* in this issue, just how much progress the jazz study programs have made within the colleges and universities of this country.

It's no secret that the music departments of our major academic institutions have always placed an emphasis on the 18th-century, classical European tradition. And with the exception of a select few, most had managed for many years to completely ignore the only musical art form indigenous to America. However, we've witnessed considerable change in the thinking of music department administrators over the past few decades, and new opportunities continue to open up every year. Best of all, the young, college-age drummers of the '80s have received the peripheral benefits, particularly in regards to the relatively recent acceptance of drumset on campus. Things have certainly changed. The situation wasn't *always* this good.

I can recall my own college experience of some twenty years ago, where performance opportunities were limited to concert band, orchestra and percussion ensemble. And though much was gained in terms of a total overview of the percussive arts, very little attention was given to the drumset aspect of our development, except when an occasional percussion ensemble piece necessitated it.

I also recall, midway through those formative years, how a group of young, slightly rebellious jazz-oriented students (myself included) had their earnest attempt to assemble a music-department stage band, completely thwarted by department faculty members and administrators. We were flatly told, "your venture has *no place* in the music department." It was an example of incredibly narrow-minded thinking which disturbs me even now as I reflect.

However, despite the obvious attempt at discouragement, and at the risk of jeopardizing our credibility as *serious* music students, we went ahead anyhow. We cautiously passed the word along, purchased our charts with whatever monies we could scrape together, located an *off-campus* rehearsal facility—and proceeded to go to it! It was a wonderful learning experience; one we'd have unfortunately missed had we not been determined despite the resistance.

Nowadays, it's an exhilarating experience to return to my alma mater, primarily because I get to hear a very swinging stage band in performance, under faculty supervision with administration's blessing. The band is now a prestigious musical organization, and accepted within the music department. And though it's made up of a new generation of students, I still like to think of it as *our* band. Topping this is the fact that drumset has also been included in the percussion program. Quite a victory, to my mind.

Many music departments of our major colleges and universities, today, *do* offer opportunities for the set player. And though traditional training must always remain an essential aspect of the music curriculum, at least other learning and performance opportunities are being made available. Sure, it took a while, but all good things take time. At least it's happening, and college-age drummers of the '80s will ultimately reap the benefits. Things sometimes *do* change for the better.

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READER'S PLATFORM

SCHOCKED

I got totally P.O.'d and disgusted when I saw a transcribed Rock Chart of "Our Lips Are Sealed." The Go Go's are a limp band and "Our Lips Are Sealed" is not the slightest bit challenging. Just because Gina Schock is a woman is no reason to give her space in this magazine. Perhaps it was James Morton's fault. Maybe he just wanted his name in your magazine. How about some transcriptions of Rush or Genesis songs?

Becque Venus
Percussion Inst. of Tech.
Fullerton, CA

Editor's Note: "Rock Charts" was designed to deal with drummers who wanted to learn to read charts; who weren't well versed in reading. The idea belongs to James Morton and we've received many notes of praise from teachers and students alike for focusing on songs that are relatively easy to play, and are familiar to many young drummers. James will be focusing on songs from various groups that are varied in terms of being challenging. Complex doesn't always equal the best.

BURNS'"OPEN MIND"

Roy Burns' article in the Oct. MD entitled "Respect: The Key To An Open Mind" was excellent! All drummers and musicians must respect each other in order to grow. I've always felt that one of the nice things about music is that it permits us to keep on learning indefinitely, and we can never learn it all. I encourage all drummers to read Roy Burns' fine article.

Mike Wagner
Houghton Lake, MI

ED MANN

I was particularly interested in Ed Mann's discussion of Zappa's use of very unusual subdivisions within the beat in the Aug./Sept. MD. Would it be possible to see some examples of this?

Rick Willis
Perdido Beach, AL

Editor's Note: Ed Mann is in the process of writing a series of articles for MD on the subject of polyrhythms and polymeters. Watch for these articles in future issues of MD.

PEART & RODERICK

Congratulations to Adam Roderick on winning Neil Peart's drums. Such a generous gift from such a generous man. Also, a generous act on Adam's part to pass his set on to second choice, Tom Wolf. We can all be winners if we dedicate ourselves to whatever path we choose to follow. To help others—as Neil did—is a gift in itself.

Peter Hammours

JIMMY MADISON

The interview with Jimmy Madison was most informative and brings up a thought. As depressed as the musical entertainment industry is, I know there must be more than a car-full of drummers supporting families and making a living in a hundred mid-sized cities without feeling the need to move to either coast. It would be most uplifting to read a periodic interview with such a drummer.

Bob Laushman
Wichita, KS

I found Jimmy Madison's interview very disturbing. I thought his comments on players he'd been associated with in his early days were thoughtless and cruel. Secondly, Madison's assumptions concerning Tony Williams and Steve Gadd were absolutely appalling! It sounds to me as though Madison is just sour grapes over his more popular and successful contemporaries. Finally, his views on contemporary music were shallow and myopic considering his experience. Why he needs to draw dividing lines between musical styles seems sophomoric and limiting. I always understood jazz to be improvised music from the heart. If someone can be touched by it, then it's that much better. Music should make people feel good. That's the bottom line. Who needs dividing lines?

Doug Plavin
Sunderland, MA

ONE MAN'S OPINION

Many drummers are having a hard time gelling a good sound simply because they don't know how to tune the heads. A drum head must be tensioned perfectly even in order for the drum to produce resonance. This is apparently a law of nature. We need

to train people to bring drum heads in tune with themselves so this generation of "dead drums" will come to an end. This should be a national movement.

Another disgusting product is Remo's Pre-tuned heads. These heads are pre-tensioned, not pre-tuned. There's a great difference. They sound like tin cans and the drums on which they're mounted are dead and produce no resonance. Shame on you, Remo!

The best drum heads are medium weight general purpose. Dotted heads, laminated heads, oil-filled heads, heavy heads and Evans heads cannot take a true tuning and are dead in character. Since drums are naturally louder when the heads are in tune, you don't have to hit them as hard and they produce a beautiful sound.

Charlie Lynch
Greenwood, DE

SYNTHETIC DRUMSTICKS

Your article on synthetic drumsticks in the April '82 MD was a great disappointment. I came away from Bob Saydlowski's article feeling an injustice done to the average drummer who can't afford to sample each stick, and to the manufacturer of Riff-Rite drumsticks—a truly superior product.

I expected the criteria for such a test to be the degree of natural wood sound and feel maintained, while offering greater durability. Instead, the *X-10s* are extolled for their front-heaviness, while the Riff-Rites received a backhanded compliment for their superior feel and response, saying they would be ideal for a "quieter type of gig as they are the lightest of all the slicks reviewed here." The *5B* model is sufficiently heavy for any rock gig!

As far as rimshots are concerned, why were the more uncommon cork-handled Riff-Rites used instead of the standard model? The fact that a cork handle will decrease the volume of a rimshot isn't really a startling revelation!

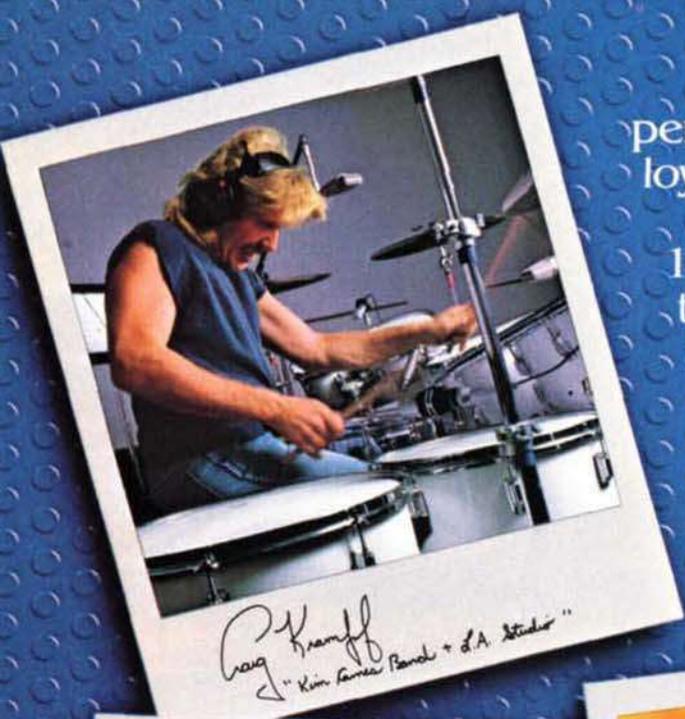
Furthermore, "furring" of the *X-10* is touted as saving cymbals, while "furring" of the Riff-Rites is suggested to make them no better than wood. At least be consistent!

Dick Moore
Owner, Drum Quarters
Duluth, Minn.

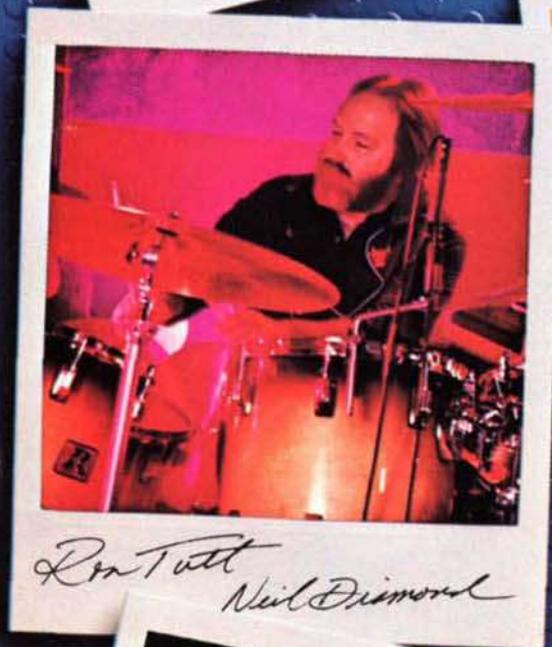
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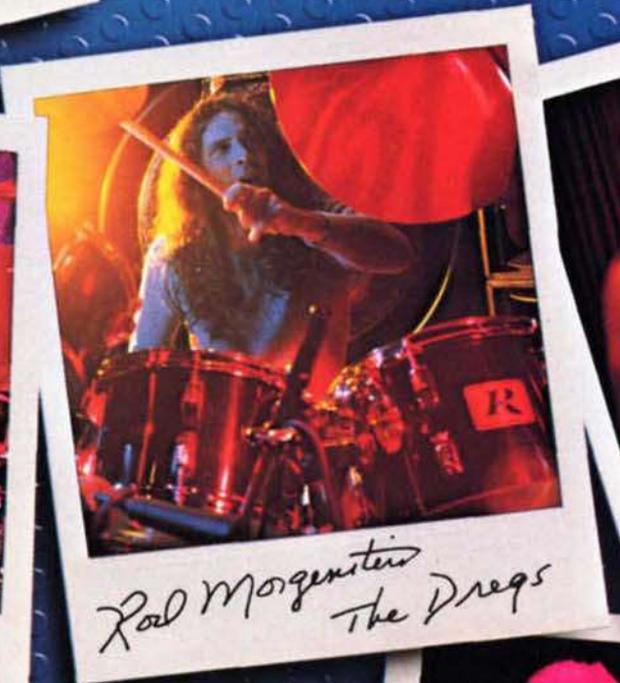
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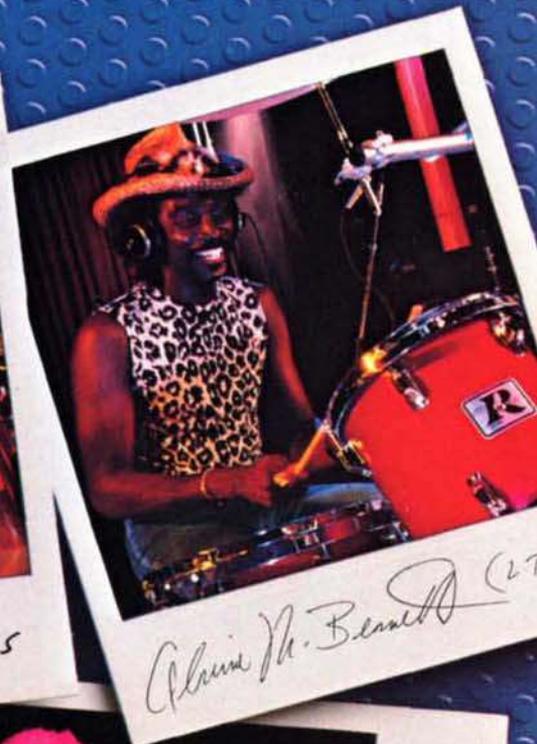
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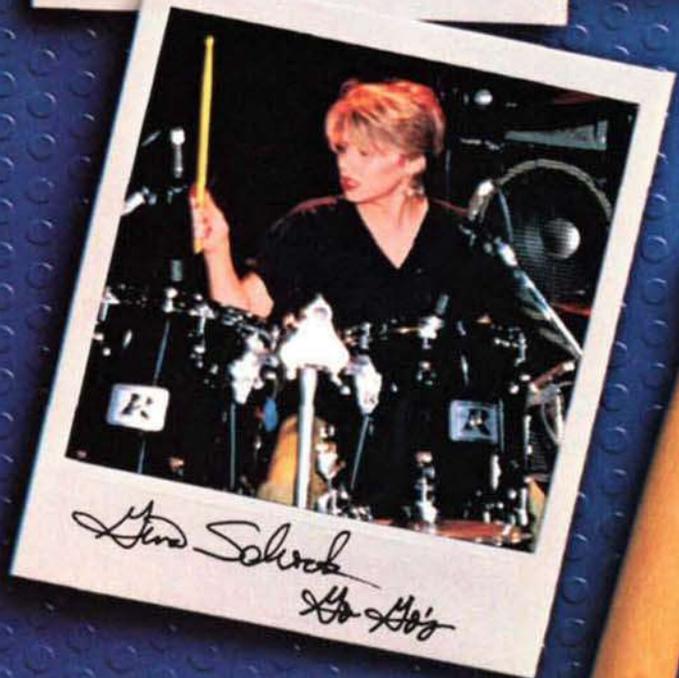
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Neil Diamond*



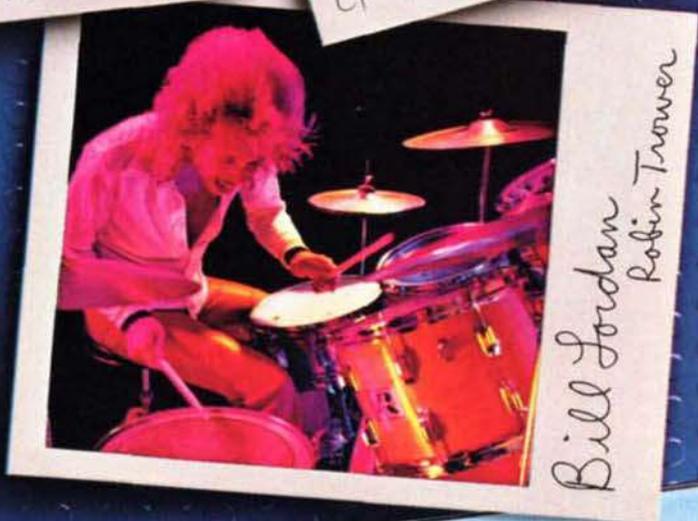
*Rod Morgenstein
The Drags*



Alvin N. Bennett (2)



*Linda Schrock
H.A.'s*



*Bill Jordan
Robin Trower*

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ASK A PRO

PHIL EHART



Photo by Lissa Wales

Q. Are your muffling techniques different for live and studio playing?

Frank Perko
Burgettstown, PA

A. My muffling techniques are basically the same for live and studio. I like a real open sound. The heads I'm using are the heavy Ludwig Rockers, tuned fairly open, with maybe a bit of tape toward the rim to kill the ring. The bass drums, of course, are muffled with large pieces of foam around the edges. They're miked with the RE-20 Electro Voice, mounted permanently inside. All my drums are double headed.

I don't like the "dead" sound for Kansas drumming and I also prefer the response of a much livelier, boulder head. For the type of music we do, an open, live sound is best.

ROD MORGENSTEIN



Photo by Lissa Wales

Q. I noticed that you have a very heavy duty, customized mount for your Roto-Toms. Could you give me some information about how you put this together?

Brett Mullinix
Clemmons, N.C.

A. It's all done with stock parts, using Rogers Memriloc hardware as the base. The set up was designed for me by John Cermanaro, who's in r&d at Rogers. Here's how it works: You have

two tom-tom mounts that fit into the bass drums. On my left bass drum, the tube mount fits in and points to the right. On the right bass drum, the tube is pointing towards the left, almost touching and forming a "bar." I have two extension clamps on the right-hand side of the "bar" and one on the left. The rods from the Roto-Tom then fits into the corresponding clamp. Normally a cymbal mount would fit in there. I also use two locknuts that go on the rod before putting the clamps on the bar to act as extra tighteners because these things will move around. There are also wing nuts that hold in the mount onto the bar itself. To get them in the position you like, you have the clamp, which will swing 360 degrees, and the tube itself is on a ratchet to allow it to go up and down to change the plane of the surface. You can also shorten and extend the mount that forms the bar to bring the drum closer to or further away from you.

RUSS KUNKEL



Q. Could you please tell me how you tune your snare drum?

Rick Baier
Omaha, NE

A. I generally use a Ludwig Black Beauty and the majority of the sound

comes from the drum itself. These drums are really alive and resonant. I try to tune it so that it's in tune with itself, at the lowest pitch it can be so that it doesn't sound like a box. It's hard to get the bottom and top head of a snare to be in tune to the same note. But the basic idea is to get the bottom head to the right degree of tension where it allows the drum to sound with a clean hit, but not going off with sympathetic vibrations of the other drums or instruments. I like to keep the top head open with no muffling inside or outside the drum, except every once in a while a little piece of tape on the top head to cut down on ring.

A RESPONSE FROM NEIL PEART

I would like to clear up a question that was raised by a reader in a letter to Sandy Slavin of the group Riot. Sandy was asked how his band got to play on our shows last year, and replied that we had heard their album, and had heard that they were good live, and we therefore requested that they be on our show. Now, I really have no wish to cause anyone any embarrassment, least of all Sandy as he is a fine drummer, and I am sure that this is the story that he was told by some well-meaning but unprincipled merchant of hype; but it just isn't true.

There is an important lesson here for the young musician in the mechanics of hype, and how it can be used against you. I don't know who was the creator of this particular tale, but it's usually managers who will give you these kinds of stories, thinking that they inspire confidence, and will embroider them with tales of record-company excitement, radio enthusiasm, and a list of great gigs that they have for you (almost confirmed). Beware! When these things prove untrue they do far more harm than good in terms of disappointment, disillusion, and a growing skepticism toward anything you are told.

The truth of this particular matter is that we usually request a particular group if there is one available that we like musically and/or personally, as when we have worked with Pat Travers, UFO, Max Webster, FM, and others. In a situation where no one like this is available, we will leave it in the hands of the booking agency to get someone that they feel deserves an opportunity to play for our audience. Of course, this runs into deep rivers of politics, with record companies, managers, and agents trading favors like stocks, and the questions of merit and suitability are not strong bargaining points in this market!

Again, I sincerely have no wish to cause any bad feelings, and I thought long and hard about whether I should even mention it at all, but first of all, I hate untruths, and secondly, I think it's a good example of the kind of thing that a serious musician has to watch out for. Pardon my lapse of taste.



“CYMBALS... MY ACCESS TO EXPRESSION.”

~Jeff Porcaro

“Every time I sit behind my kit, my cymbals inspire my expression. Very often, the first cymbal crash on the downbeat of a tune will set the mood of my performance—cymbals are that important.

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In addition to being a founding member of Toto, Jeff's perfect balance of taste and power can be heard on more records than can possibly be listed here. However, we do have enough space to list his Paiste's.

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- 1 ... 22" 2002..... Ride
- 1 ... 22" 2002..... China
- 1 ... 8" 2002..... Bell
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CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS



JEFF PORCARO

by Robyn Flans

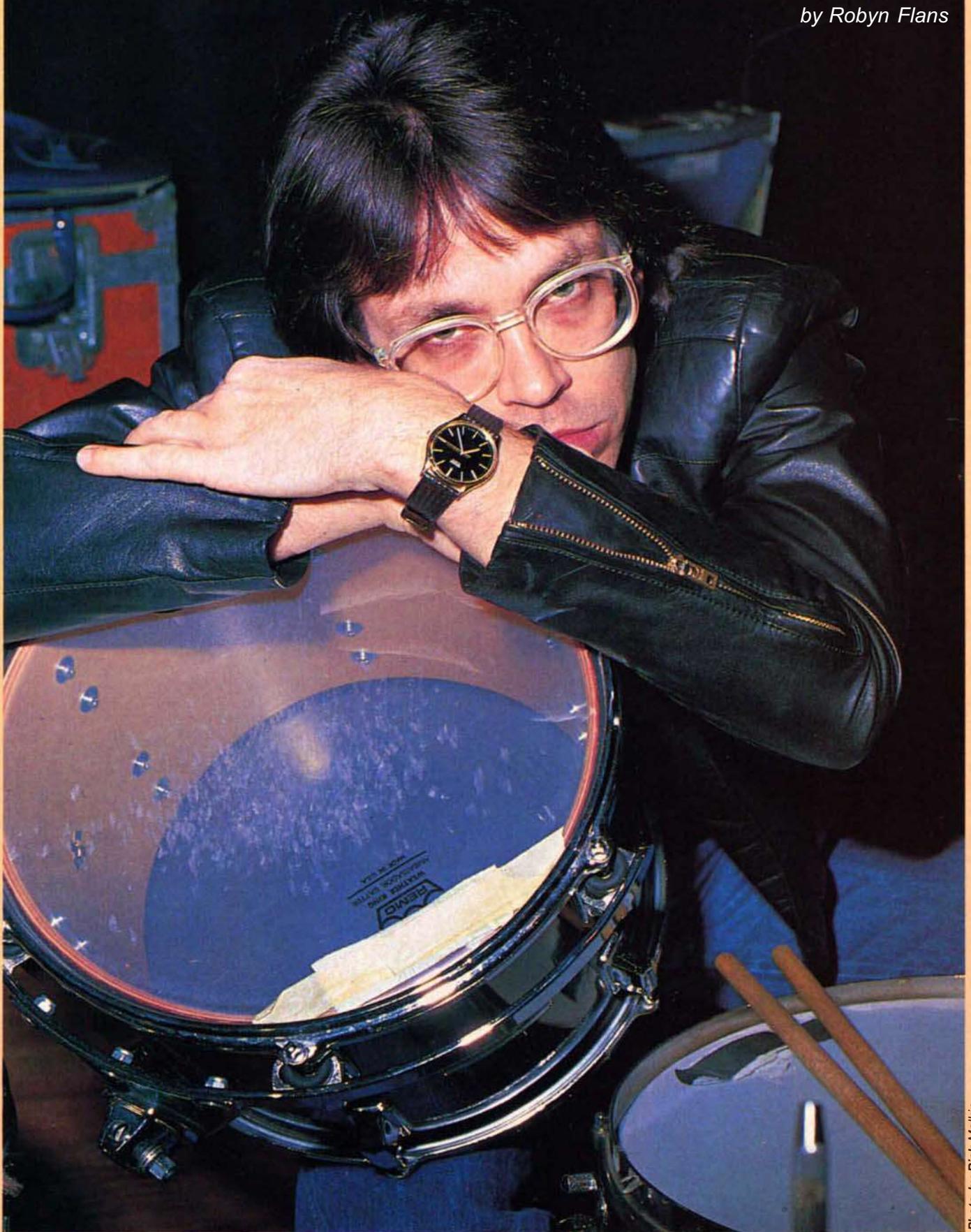


Photo by Rick Malkin

Whether listening to Jeff Porcaro on vinyl or watching him in the studio or on a live gig, a multitude of adjectives come to mind. First and foremost is finesse: an artful delicacy of performance, a tastefulness and subtlety. And then there's his impeccable time, which he is quick to dispute with a ludicrous utterance such as "My time sucks," however spoken in earnest. "Jim Gordon, Bernard Purdie, and Jim Keltner all have unbelievable time."

He is serious about even the most simplistic of studio gigs and conscientious and concerned about the outcome, always. He totally immerses himself in the music and his definition of a good track is the coming together of the tune where his part must be totally complementary.

"Nothing has been too ridiculous a demand, except for hours spent on mediocrity. *That's* ridiculous. When something is ass backwards, everybody knows it, and yet somebody keeps you there, working for endless hours, and it's not happening. There are times when you have to record six tunes in three hours and do it perfect, or there are times when you only have one tune to do and you have all day to do it and it's a big party. It depends on who the artist is. But the ultimate is that you've got to leave there knowing you've done your best. There's not one record that I can listen to all the way through that I've done without getting bugged at how I played. That's going to be there forever. Sometimes I'm unhappy about time, feel—certain things bug me; just things I've *let* bug me. In all honesty, I would have to say the Steely Dan tracks I've done are the most challenging as far as perfection goes, so I would say they're my personal favorite performances."

Jeff has played a varied spectrum, from Steely Dan to Barbra Streisand, and he is one of the integral forces of Toto. But then, according to Jeff, there have been an awful lot of non-successes in his book. So why do people hire Jeff Porcaro?

"If I asked myself that question, I'd be staring at the walls, all nervous and freaked out right now because I've tried to figure that out before," he laughs. "Seriously, if I looked at it seriously, half of it would be political reasons, a la, a name. No matter how ridiculous that sounds, I have definitely been hired by people who could have hired somebody else who would have done a lot better job, been more right for the music, and who maybe was starving a little more to do a better job. But they hired me because I've done other records. It's prestigious to have a name player on your first album, or something like that. That's one way of looking at it and that's real honest. In some instances, I know that for a fact, and I guess the others, well, maybe they just dig the way I play," he laughs.

It should be apparent by now that the

adjective "perfectionist" cannot be overlooked, and when it is suggested that we are our own worst critics, he responds, "No, because I'm not. I hate most of what I've done, seriously. I say this to people sometimes and nobody takes me seriously, but I enjoy listening and being a critic more than I do playing. As far as myself, I'll be the first to say if I did something cool. I have done a couple of cool things. I think most of the stuff I've done with Steely has been cool. I have no regrets about any of that stuff. That, and the stuff with Boz Scaggs, but see, now here's the thing: I listen to 'Silk Degrees' and I cringe, and anybody would if I pointed out one particular thing. As soon as people said, 'Oh yeah,' they would start hearing that thing all over the place and it would start bugging them too. But it was good for its time," he concedes.

Adjectives "quiet" and "shy" are accu-

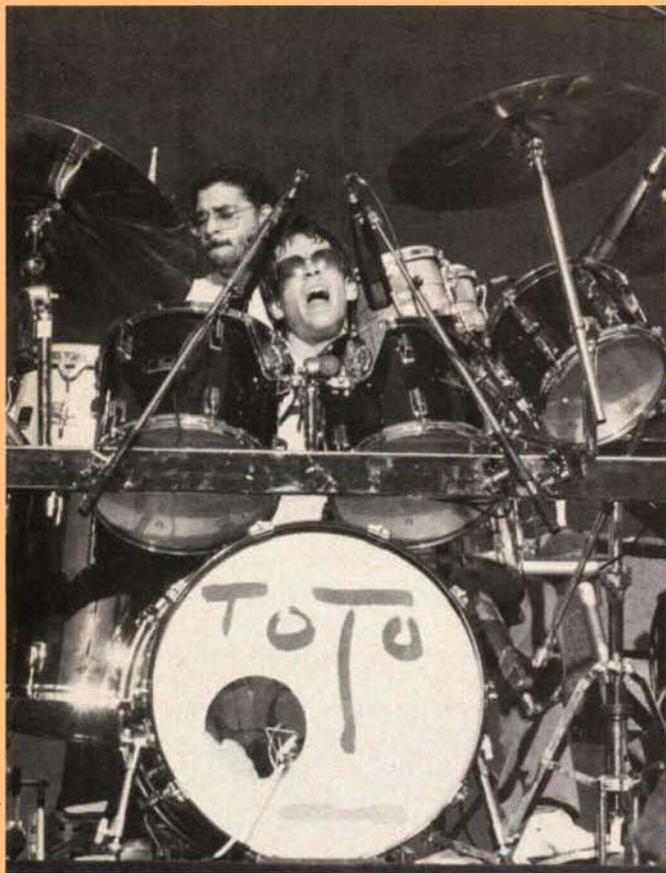
rate and "modest" is an understatement, yet, Jeff is personally assertive. He is the first to admit that studio work is not easy and one must roll with the punches. Yet, he has been known to stand up for himself as a human being on more than one occasion.

"In this business, you have to put up with temperaments sometimes, but you should never have to put up with abuse. I say that not from having an attitude, but as a person, you should be treated as one. You also have to put up with rumors and people talking, but you can't let those kinds of things get to you. You can't worry about what people think.

"I've seen situations where it's a guy's first session, and a producer or artist destroys him in front of a lot of well-known musicians, who the guy was very excited about being there with. And I've seen guys cry in the studio. People can get affected that way, but you can't let someone do that



Photo by Rick Malkin



". . . I COPIED GORDON AND KELTNER AND ALL THESE GUYS I DUG. I REMEMBER REALIZING THIS, BUT AFTER A WHILE, THE ACCUMULATION OF ALL THE GUYS YOU COPY BECOMES YOUR OWN THING, HOPEFULLY."

to you. They're just people, and you've got to put everybody in perspective."

And he does. He is unpretentious and attempts to maintain a healthy perspective on his profession, not allowing it to be an all-consuming lifestyle.

"I think more people should have a balance. I think it came on pretty naturally for me because of other interests outside of music, like art and landscaping. I wanted to be a gardener and loved making money working in people's yards. I could dig interior decorating also. I think the balance for me is that I don't have any drums at my house, so when I'm not working with anybody, I'm not around drums. I think even if I weren't successful at music—if I'm supposedly 'successful'—music and drumming wouldn't take up any more time than it does now, because if I weren't successful at drumming, I'd have a job being some sort of an artist. That's a job I'm more comfortable at than trying to get gigs or letting people know I'm a drummer. I've never had the moxie to call somebody to say I'm available. I'm too shy a person to come on like that."

He had that attitude even on his very first gigs, even though one would think an aggressive attitude would have been paramount to a kid starting out. "It's hard for me to say. Maybe it would have been paramount if I had been older and had a wife and kids, but I left high school doing a gig. Imagine some 18-year-old kid in 1972 who listens to Jimi Hendrix and then gets a gig with Sonny & Cher. I kind of approached it like a circus more than a serious gig."

Jeff might have actually gone off to art school had he not gone to Leon Russell's

house one night, where David Hungate happened to be. About eight months later, Hungate, who was playing with Sonny & Cher, suggested they audition the 17-year-old Porcaro, and in May, 1972, right before his high school graduation, Jeff left school to go on the road with them.

"When you're 18 and you're away from home, as I was on the road with Sonny & Cher, you're sitting there going, 'Well, what am I going to do with my life? Is it always going to be a party like this or what?' I dug art, but the reality of getting into art is real ugly. So it was the kind of thing where I said, like with Sonny & Cher, if I played my cards right, it was a steady gig, plus they did a TV show which I did for their last two seasons. So I figured if I stayed legitimate here, at least I'd know there's some security if I kept my head together and did the gig right. And I could put some money away if I played Mr. Straight for a while.

Actually, all the Porcaro boys started out on drums, due to the influence of their father, Joe. Jeff can recall watching his dad give lessons in a drum shop in Connecticut at an early age. It just so happened that Mike, who Jeff says was much better on the drums than he was, switched to bass and Steve took up piano prior to their move to California in 1966. Jeff stuck with the drums and his dad taught him from age eight to eleven, and aside from a couple of private instructors and those in school, Jeff taught himself, either by playing with records or playing with bands.

"I used to practice in junior high and every day, after school, I'd go into the den, put on headphones and play to 'Boogaloo

Down Broadway.' The drums were cool on that and I used to dig that feel. I used to play with all the Beatle records, all the Hendrix records and that's where I think I got a lot of the versatility as far as being able to play authentically one kind of music as opposed to the complete opposite. It's copying what every other drummer did on records. If a drummer takes something Bernard Purdie played on and sits for two weeks with the 'phones so he can still hear Bernard but he's also playing along where he doesn't hear himself flammimg with him or rushing—just grooving with the tune—the next time he goes to play a tune that's similar, he might start playing that feel. I can't tell you how many tunes I've played

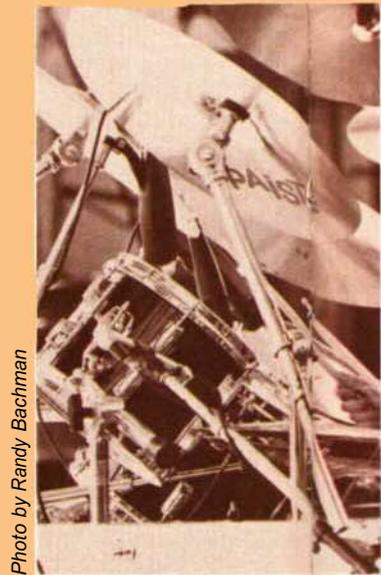


Photo by Randy Bachman

where I've ripped off the same thing Jim Gordon used on 'Charlie Freak' on *Pretzel Logic*. The beat I used on 'Lido Shuffle' is the same thing Gordon did except at twice the tempo. There's no originality there. I think it's bad to clone yourself after someone, although, I actually cloned myself after Jim Keltner when I was 17 and 18. I even thought it was cool to wear a vest and I copied his style. A drummer's own style comes from eventually being on his own, but I copied Gordon and Keltner and all these guys I dug. I remember realizing this, but after a while, the accumulation of all the guys you copy becomes your own thing, hopefully.

"In high school, there would be some of these little stage bands and then right across the street from Grant High School was Valley Jr. College. Sometimes I would cut school and go over there where they had the bands that would sight read charts. When you're dealing with 8th notes and reading figures that you would do just hand-to-hand on a practice pad, it's pretty much the same as reading a chart. The figures are there; you know what they are and it's just applying the fact that you're playing time and then you want to kick a figure or play a figure. I'm really not an incredible, incredible reader, but I can read well enough to do what I've done so far. But you just get to know it. It's like reading words. You'll see two bars playing a groove, and eight bars ahead on the paper you see this figure coming up and you don't even have to read it. All of a sudden, the figures look like a word; you know what it says just by the way it looks.

"I'm not a career drummer. It wasn't like, 'I'm a percussionist and if I'm going to call myself one, I should be as good at it as I can.' Everybody's situation is different. I'm just comfortable with the way I do it and it suits the way I live. And then there are things I can't do. Zappa's called me at least once a year for five years to do some-

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Photo by Rick Malkin

How I Did It

by Jeff Porcaro

One of the questions I'm frequently asked is how I come up with certain patterns or grooves on various songs. Let's take the song "Rosanna" as an example.

When I first heard David Paich play the tune, the Bo Diddley groove was very obvious.

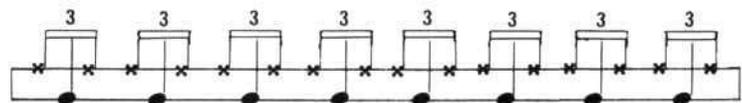


Because the tune was a shuffle feel, I felt that the half-time shuffle thing would feel the best. The tune also reminded me of the New Orleans type second-line drumming.

So the first listening of the tune brought forth all the old haunts from drummers to groups of that era that I had tapped from and stored away for this very moment. Shit, this work ain't so hard!



The following exercise will help you understand the inside snare drum thing. It was played to keep the 16th triplet groove going. Play this exercise with the right hand on the hi-hat and the left hand on the snare drum. The snare drum should be a softer dynamic to attain the "lope."



Once you feel comfortable with the exercise above, add the snare drum back beats on "2" and "4." The you will have ripped off the same beats from Bernard Purdie and John Bonham that I ripped off five years ago.

CLEM BURKE

by Rick Mattingly



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Something strange happened on the last Blondie tour. Usually, when the reviews come out, Debbie Harry is talked about as though she is doing a solo act with anonymous back-up musicians. But on this recent tour, although Harry still received the bulk of the attention, one of the musicians was consistently singled out: drummer Clem Burke. The Tampa Tribune stated: "One needed only to look to the right and watch Clem Burke tirelessly flail away at his drums . . . to figure out who's the backbone of the Blondie sound." The New York Times called the concert itself "a decided disappointment," but referred to "Clem Burke's authoritative drumming" as an "attractive, redeeming quality." From a review of the same concert, Billboard called Clem "one of the most dynamic drummers in rock." The Minneapolis Star compared Clem's stage presence to Debbie Harry's, commenting: "Blondie drummer Clem Burke was an equally appealing show as he bashed away at the drum kit with all the abandon of the Who's Keith

Moon. Burke is the backbone of this energetic, eclectic band . . ." And the Miami Herald put it quite simply: "Cool, maniacal Clement Burke may be the best drummer in rock."

Not bad for a kid from Bayonne, New Jersey, who started off by playing along to Beatle albums. But then, he made his Carnegie Hall debut at age 15 (with his high school band). Clem Burke has been the drummer for Blondie ever since the group formed in 1975. They developed their sound and style in Bowery clubs such as CBGB's, and were a part of the Bowery circuit that included such bands as the Ramones, Television, and The Heartbreakers. They recorded a single, "X Offender(s)," with producer Richard Gottferrer, who also produced their first album, Blondie. Both were released on Private Stock records, but with their second album, Plastic Letters, the group began their association with Chrysalis Records, for whom they continue to record. Their third album, Parallel Lines, was released in 1978,

and soon went platinum. This was the album that contained the hit, "Heart of Glass." Eat To The Beat followed in '79, with the hit, "Dreaming," after which, the group took a break from touring. They returned to the studio in the summer of 1980 to record AutoAmerican, but afterwards, took another break during which the individual members pursued a variety of independent projects. They finally regrouped in January of '82, going into the studio to produce their sixth album, Hunter, which they followed with a major tour.

RM: Blondie was relatively inactive for almost two years. What were you doing during that time?

CB: The last live gig Blondie had done was March 1980 in Paris. Since then, first, with Blondie we did the AutoAmerican album. That gave us the chance to sort of branch out, musically. I got to play with Ray Brown, Tom Scott and people like that, which was very interesting for me. I felt I was broadening my horizons, so to speak, by getting to play with people of that stature.

I was also trying to get involved in production work; trying to learn more about the studio and seeing what it's like on the other side of things. Chris [Stein], Jimmy [Destri] and I have been involved in production work for a couple of years now. We've found that it really helps us when we go into the studio as a group because we've seen the other side of it. So I produced a couple of records— independent records—one for a local group called the Colors. I just did an album with them as well. I did another record with a band called the Speedies. Sort of developing the local talent in the neighborhood, so to speak. Then I went to England and did an album for RCA with a band called the Eurythmics with Connie Plank.

RM: Were you doing any playing during the layoff?

CB: Once we realized the layoff was occurring, it took me a while to realize what I was going to do with my time, so I didn't play my drums for a good six months. Virtually didn't touch them at all. Then I started to get various little offers here and



Photo by Rick Mattingly

controlled craziness

there and I slowly got back into it. I moved to Europe and lived in London for six months and tried to work as much as possible. I was trying to expose myself to as many different musicians as I could, because working with different people makes you stronger when you come back to your regular group. So I did some playing with Steve Jones and Paul Cook from the Sex Pistols, then I did a mini-tour with Nigel [Harrison], our bass player, and Michael Des Barres. I also did some stuff with Brian James for Miles Copeland's label, IRS. And then, with only five days' notice, I did a six-week tour with Iggy Pop. That was a lot of fun, and I found it very rewarding. His words to the band before every show were basically, "I want you guys to go out there and play as loud and as hard and as fast as possible." He sort of leaves everything open so your playing can become uninhibited,

which can be a good thing, at times. Playing with him for that six weeks really helped develop my chops, because it's a very intensive form of rock 'n' roll. It's very grueling and can be very exhausting if you're not in shape for it. It was a fairly long show—an hour-and-a-half to two hours—and it was all very "up" music. He has such a wealth of material that we were sort of spanning his whole career. He was a particular inspiration for me, musically, so it was really great to play with him. And then I recently did an album with him.

RM: How did not playing for six months affect your drumming?

CB: You feel like you're playing great for the first week, and then you realize that you have some catching up to do. I was

pretty amazed that I could fall right into it. I think that comes from having played so much. I mean, Buddy Rich says that he never practices, right? I always sort of contended that I never practiced, but I did practice to get in shape for the *Hunter* tour.

RM: Back when you were saying that you never practiced, weren't you playing almost constantly?

CB: Right. That's the thing, I was always playing. If you play all the time, you don't have to practice. It was after I hadn't played awhile that I realized I had some catching up to do.

RM: Some people feel that getting away from the instrument occasionally can be good because you will come back to it with a certain freshness.

CB: Yeah, you definitely do find that, and if you don't leave it too long, you can always get right back into it. I think chops are the main thing. You have to have a lot of endurance to play

rock 'n' roll, so I've been working out—lifting weights and all that kind of stuff. I find it really helps with my playing. To play any sort of intensive music—really crazy big band music or really crazy rock 'n' roll—you have to have chops and endurance to be able to withstand the pace. I haven't ever really gotten tired from playing. I find that after I play for a couple of hours, I want to keep going. I'm sort of disappointed when a rehearsal is over. I always feel more could get done. It's just my particular personality I guess. But it's like jogging—after the first couple of miles you can just keep going. With drumming, it's the first two hours that you feel it. But after you get over that certain hump, you just keep going and it's easier to do things.

RM: When Blondie got back together to do the *Hunter* album and tour after the layoff,



Photo by Rick Mattingly

did the group have to work very hard to get tight again, or does that tightness come back immediately?

CB: There was a certain tightness already there. For one thing, I think Nigel and I are probably one of the best rock 'n' roll rhythm sections, because we never really have to work out parts together—they just always seem to fit. We know how to play around each other, and obviously, interaction between the bass player and drummer is really important. In the old days, I think I tended to overplay and he would underplay. But then I started giving him a little more freedom, just by holding back a bit in my playing. Now we've reached a happy medium where we can really interact properly. And then he and I were in Europe, playing with Michael Des Barres together. I think it's really good that we spent that time together playing, because it really helped us coming back into the Blondie thing.

I think the key to group playing is working with the same musicians. It can work against you in that it can get stale, but that's where a layoff can help. I think that's one of the assets of longevity of a group: you can come back into the fold and achieve a certain tightness that would normally take a while to work up to. You know, when a group of musicians get together for the first time, you have to feel each other out. If I find myself in a studio situation with musicians who I haven't played with before, I always tend to be a little apprehensive about what I should do. But with Blondie, yeah, when we got back together to play, there was a certain tightness already there. That's one of the real assets of staying together.

RM: Rock musicians generally seem more willing to make a commitment to a group than, say, jazz musicians.

CB: That's really important. In jazz circles, it seems like one usually serves an apprenticeship with a well-known player, and then goes on from there, like the people who have come

of wanting to see what we are up to these days, being that we came out of there, back when.

"THE AVERAGE PERSON WOULD BE SURPRISED AT THE AMOUNT OF PEOPLE WHO PLAY TO CLICK TRACKS. SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT'S CHEATING, BUT IT'S REALLY NOT."

out of Miles Davis' groups—McLaughlin, Corea, and all those people. In rock, it seems that maybe people do sort of stay together more. Maybe it's based more on friendship. I don't know. To be involved in any sort of business with your friends is a luxury—and rock 'n' roll is a business like anything else. In Blondie, we're pretty fortunate that way, and you get a certain pleasure from that, for sure. I think it helps it to be a tight unit.

RM: When you were rehearsing for the *Hunter* tour, I presume you had to go back and work up some of the older songs. When rehearsing older material, do you have the freedom to try something new?

CB: Oh sure. We're constantly trying to do that. One of the reasons Blondie has been together so long is that everyone has sort of a give and take approach. We have the freedom to start from a basis and expand it from there. We're trying to do some songs a little more laid back and we're trying to do other songs a little more up. Everyone works sort of collectively on the arrangements. I'm usually pretty good about coming up with endings for songs.

RM: Would you imagine that the average person who is regularly going to CBGB's bought Blondie's *Hunter* album?

CB: Good question. I would like to think that they did, out

of wanting to see what we are up to these days, being that we came out of there, back when.

It's hard to say. I think Blondie's not, in the eyes of the average person who goes to CBGB's, considered to be "hip" these days. We're probably considered to be more established. I always love it when people still think we're weird, because a lot of the things that we sort of developed and stood

for have become really commonplace these days. I'm convinced that if we made the album we made in 1976 today, it would be considered really hip. But for us, that's what we did seven years ago.

RM: I guess it's like asking if the people who used to hear the Beatles at the Cavern bought *Rubber Soul*, or *Sgt. Pepper*.

But then, how well would "Norwegian Wood" have gone over in a place like the Cavern?

CB: Right, you wonder. The sound changes over the years, but that's inevitable. I think it's healthy. Our music has become more sophisticated and more eclectic. But I think eclecticism has always been one of the big things with us, like trying to pull these really off the wall influences into our music. We're still trying to do that.

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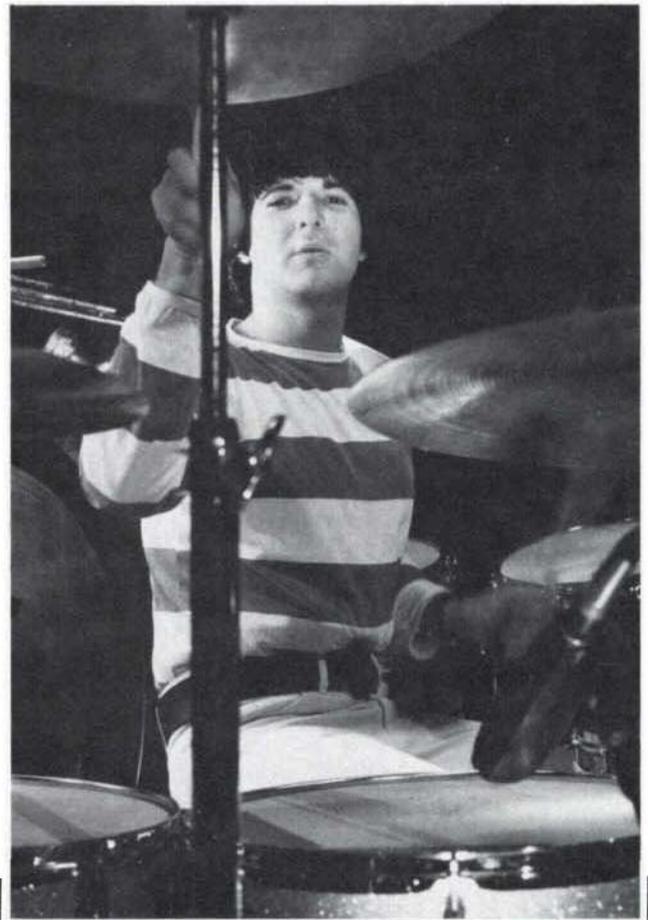


Photo by Rick Mattingly

DRUMS AND EDUCATION: Guidelines

As professional standards rise, and as competition increases, more and more musicians are turning to formal education to help them prepare to meet the challenges of being a musician in the '80s. Should one go to college to become a musician? If so, what are some of the considerations for choosing a school? And once a school has been chosen, what will be expected of a drummer before the school will admit him or her? To answer some of these questions, we first held a roundtable discussion with drummers Mel Lewis and Charles Braugham, vibist David Samuels, and Pat Castle, who is director of jazz studies at New York University (NYU) where Lewis, Braugham and Samuels all teach. Following the roundtable, percussionist Donald Knaack discusses some of the things one must consider when choosing a school. Finally, Anthony Cirone, F. Michael Combs and Vic Firth give guidelines concerning what they look for when auditioning students for their schools.

RM: When I was in college, I would sometimes play gigs with older musicians. Often, when they found out I was majoring in music, they would laugh and say something like, "Back in my day, if you wanted to be a musician, you didn't go to school—you went out and played!"

LEWIS: I come from those days and we *did* go out and play. But you have to add that we had lots of places to play. I played somewhere every night. We could go to a club just about anywhere and sit in and have sessions. Then the Musicians Union decided to start clamping down and stop people from sitting in. Those clubs that were having the jam sessions, and doing good business because of it, found themselves having to change their style of music and everything. That didn't help us at all. So today is a different story. Music is harder now. I think you need the schools. Music demands so much—it's not a place for basic players anymore.

SAMUELS: I totally agree. The level of musicianship is much higher now, even to start out with, than it ever was. But even before there were schools, people still studied. You sat in and you practiced and you talked to people and had an informal relationship with other musicians, and you studied in that sense, rather than in a classroom. I think schools have taken over that responsibility because that kind of interchange isn't as possible now as it was years ago. But it's still basically the same premise: to expose someone and to communicate, either one to one or in a group situation, so they can learn to do it themselves.

BRAUGHAM: I think it behooves people to get as much education as they can, not only in terms of playing music, but because of the demands on an individual in today's society. That would make it a little bit easier to live life.

RM: One complaint I sometimes hear about school is that you don't really learn about life there.

BRAUGHAM: The teacher should be doing that. While I think that there should be a teacher/student relationship as such, there can still be a one to one interchange of ideas and feelings. The student might be able to learn from the experiences of the teacher.

LEWIS: Whenever I have a class, I get very personal with the students. I'll leave music entirely just to tell them about little facets of life that can really interfere with the learning process. For instance, I'll say to guys who are studying, "How many of you are involved

with women?" They all start smiling. And I'll say, "Well, you've got a problem right there." A lot of guys say, "What the heck's he talkin' about?" But I'm serious. I've seen a lot of young musicians go down the drain because of their love lives. It interferes with the learning. I mean, I'm a family man. I've been married thirty years and I've got three daughters, and everything has worked out fine. But it wouldn't have if I had allowed all of that to interfere with what I had to do. And I tell this to the students; I think it's important.

CASTLE: Last semester, when you brought up that very topic, I could sense the wave of surprise that ran through the class that you would even bring up such a thing. And yet, six months later, I can see how some of those people have made changes in their relationships. The serious music students are starting to readjust their priorities and think about things in a little larger perspective.

SAMUELS: It seems that a common problem most people have, no matter what they do, is the tendency to separate and isolate certain parts of their lives from the rest of themselves. It's like cutting off your finger and assuming it won't affect anything other than your hand. Your body is a totality, just as your life experience is a totality. Everything has some effect on everything else. Students have to learn to view their commitment to music in terms of their whole life style, and not just, "I go to school at nine in the morning, I'm through at five, and after that I'm free." That's not what education is about. They really have to view the total picture, which most people don't do.

RM: Could some of these problems be caused by people graduating from college and immediately taking teaching jobs, without getting any experience in the "real" world?

LEWIS: I don't think anyone in music has the right to go directly from school into the teaching profession. I think he's got to get out there and work and play for a few years and get his final education. You need the school today. But then you need to put your knowledge to use by playing with other musicians. That starts in school, but it has to continue at least a few years after that before you can call yourself a professional. Only then can you have the right to stand in front of young musicians and tell them what to do, because you really know what you're talking about.

SAMUELS: If someone is teaching performance skills, it's diffi-

MEL LEWIS

PAT CASTLE

Jazz Educator

For The College-Bound Drummer

cult to translate any kind of experience if you've had no experience. And that's basically what we're talking about—performance music. You can get a real distorted view of reality from someone who has had no experience out there. Their impression of what they *think* is happening may have no connection with what *is* happening. So it's extremely important that someone who is involved in teaching performance has performed.

BRAUGHAM: Regardless of how sophisticated or good a school is, an educator is not going to learn his craft fully without some experience outside of the university environment. So if he doesn't have that outside experience, he is shortchanging himself as well as his students.

CASTLE: One of the nice things about jazz education is that rather than looking for teachers who have degrees in music education, the major thrust is finding performers who can communicate. Most of the jazz faculty in schools are there because they have the experience of playing and the ability to teach.

RM: Usually, a person who goes to college with the intention of being a musician majors in music. And yet, there are those who contend that many musicians suffer from "tunnel vision," and to avoid this, it would be good for musicians to study a variety of subjects in order to have different sources to draw from. How important is it to actually major in music?

LEWIS: If I am going to be a musician, I'm going to major in music. If I'm going to be something else, I would major in that and say, "Music is going to be my hobby." If you're going to be a musician, what do you want to study something else for? If you're not sure of the music, then you might want to major in something else, but then again, if you're not sure about music by the time you've entered college, you're not going to be a musician. Being a musician is something you decide when you're too young to decide, and you stick to it after everybody tries to talk you out of it, which they will. Let's face it—to become an artist of any kind, you've got to be nuts! And that nuttiness has to start when you're very young and you become enthralled by an instrument or a player and you say, "I want to do that."

In my case, my parents tried to talk me out of it. I was listening to them and taking science courses in high school, and failing them. If I had been taking music courses, I would have been getting high marks, and I would have liked school better. So I had to drop out of school and go on the road in order to be a musician, because what I was studying in school had nothing to do with what I wanted to be. So either be a musician or don't be a musician. Don't go half way. There are enough half-assed musicians in the world.

SAMUELS: My own personal experience was different than that. I certainly agree with the premise that if you're going to do something you should be committed to it. But I don't think you have to

be committed to it to the exclusion of other things. I did not major in music in college, but that is not a commentary on my musical experiences in college. That only means that the piece of paper I received at the end of four years did not say "music" on it. I found that the other subjects that I was exposed to were really valuable, just in general. I can't relate specifically that "this course helped me with this tune" or something like that, but it did help me just in terms of exposure, and that was my main reason for not majoring in music. Musically, I felt I was getting everything I needed by taking some courses, studying with people and doing a lot of playing. So I had the option of being able to expose myself to things that I never would have been exposed to. I really value that. I didn't feel I was giving up any commitment.

RM: Even when you major in music, you will take a certain amount of non-music courses.

SAMUELS: Yes. The fact is, if what you want to do is perform, no one will ever ask you if you have a degree, or where you went to school, or even *if* you went to school. No one cares. I have never been asked, I probably never *will be* asked, and I would never think of asking anyone else.

BRAUGHAM: In my case, the degree I received had no bearing on whether I worked professionally. My experiences in the course of getting that degree lead me to the position of being able to agree with both Mel and David on this point. I followed the advice of various people who suggested that the best thing to do was to get a degree in music education so I would have something . . .

LEWIS: To fall back on.

BRAUGHAM: To fall back on. Yes. There's that favorite phrase.

LEWIS: The big cushion.

BRAUGHAM: So I fell for that, and I agonized with it. As a result, that four-year degree took seven years. I really wasn't enjoying it, although along the way, there were some non-music courses that I took which were interesting and now I realize that they helped me in a lot of ways. But getting the degree had no bearing on the playing I do now. So getting back to the original question of majoring in music—if you're going to be a musician, the thing to do is major in music. But, as with everything, there are always exceptions. I can think of people who didn't major in music and who have become excellent musicians.

RM: Rather than enrolling in a degree program, what about simply taking whatever courses appeal to you?

LEWIS: Definitely. That's what you're going to school for. You shouldn't be forced into doing something you don't want to do. If you have specific ideas about what you want to do with your life, then nobody should dictate that you have to do this and have to do that. I think that's why we're not getting musicians to come to school. The school needs the degree money. You can't have teachers and a school without money, so the student has to pay. Okay.

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**CHARLES
BRAUGHAM**

DAVID SAMUELS

s' Roundtable

by Rick Mattingly

Choosing a School -And Getting In

Music has always been a generally unstable profession in the United States. With the depressing state of the overall economy, the decision to become a professional musician must be given serious thought. Once the decision to enter the profession *has* been reached, the next step is to acquire the proper education. How does one begin? Is a formal education necessary for you to reach your goals? If so, how do you find a school that will help you to obtain your goals? Perhaps you may not have well defined goals, such as being torn between being a jazz drummer or an orchestral percussionist.

As music is a labor of love and devotion, most students begin at a young age—performing for enjoyment. It can be difficult to realize that becoming a professional musician is not only a commitment to that labor of love, but also a commitment to a business—the music business—from which you pay the rent, and perhaps someday support a family. Therefore, it should be treated as entering an independent business in which your survival will reflect your musical and business abilities.

Once you have made the decision to continue your education through a school or university, there are four areas to consider: Your major instrument/major area of study; The overall education you are seeking; Sociological concerns; Finances.

Major Instrument Area

Percussion can pose problems in choosing a major instrument/area due to the diversity of instrument and styles: Jazz drummer, orchestral percussionist, jazz vibist, studio musician, Latin specialist, timpanist? It is very common for a student to reach college level and to be undecided upon a direction or maybe have interests in several areas simultaneously. If you are undecided, the ideal situation is to find a school that has faculty and/or resources in the areas you are interested in. Many schools have several faculty members who can cover a wide area of styles. The other solution is to choose a school in a town that is large enough to have professionals in the areas of your interest that cannot be taught by the school you have chosen. If you are certain of direction, try to think of geographical and political considerations that may be beneficial later. For example, if you wish to become a timpanist in a major East Coast orchestra, do not go to school in Los Angeles, but rather study in the city you wish to eventually live and work in. This way, you will be able to develop a long-term relationship with future employers. You will know their style; they will know your ability. This could prove to be a distinct advantage in the future. If you want to become a jazz musician, you must look for a school that offers a complete curriculum in that medium and not just a few token courses. If you want to become a studio player, you need a diverse teacher(s) and a commercial music curriculum. It would also be helpful if the school was located near a major recording center.

Look at the track record of schools and their teachers. Are the graduating students accomplishing what you hope to accomplish musically and business wise (a gig)? You can obtain this informa-

tion by reading articles on performers in magazines to obtain general information. The best way is to visit specific schools and talk to the students.

Overall Education

There are many possibilities: conservatory, specialty school, liberal arts college or university. All have advantages and disadvantages. A conservatory has a very narrow curriculum designed to produce musicians who play their instruments, primarily in the classical mode. They have only minimum requirements in outside areas such as literature, art, etc. This would be the case in a specialty school. A liberal arts education is more broad and whole in a general sense. Any of the above schools can, and has, produced brilliant musicians. The choice is personal and is based upon desire, outlook on life and intellectual requirements.

Sociological Concerns

If you have close family ties or obligations, you do not want to go to school across the country without a great deal of thought. If you are used to a certain life-style, make sure that your school

choice is sympathetic to that life-style. For example, if your overall demeanor is conservative, you should choose a school that fits that mode. Also, there is a good chance that as a professional musician, you will have periods of unemployment. It is helpful to choose a school that acknowledges that problem and offers courses and training in areas such as: business, career enhancement, how to obtain a manager/agent, music copying, piano tuning, and so on.

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Finances

There are many creative ways to manage the financial aspects of an education. It requires much

research and creative thought. Perhaps you want to study in New York in a curriculum of all-around percussion. You have several choices:

1—Attend one of several major conservatories all with impressive reputations. The tuition is expensive. They do offer scholarships and other forms of loans and work programs.

2—Considering that most large cities have the same faculty in their quality schools, many times a smaller, state or city college/university will have the same faculty as the more expensive conservatories. You can obtain nearly the same education for half the price—sometimes even less. If you lived out of state, perhaps it would be worthwhile to move to the city and work, perhaps studying privately for a year to establish a residency that would make you eligible to attend the city or state school.

Also, look into scholarships and work/study programs, both inside and outside of the school system. There are many foundations that offer financial aid to students based on religion, nationality, veterans dependents, etc. For a fee of approximately \$20, you can research all aid programs, country-wide, through the Grantsmanship Center in New York. They research via computer which bases its information upon a questionnaire you fill out.

The ideal situation for getting into a school is to begin early—at least two years prior. Try to obtain as much knowledge about the



Thoughts on College Auditions

Before one can enter a music program at a conservatory, college or university, one has to be accepted, and to be accepted, one has to audition. What do college percussion instructors look for when they audition potential students? What can a person do to prepare for such an audition? MD spoke with three top percussion instructors, representing schools in three separate parts of the country. The question asked was: "What do you look for when auditioning potential students for your school?"



Anthony J. Cirone
San Jose State University

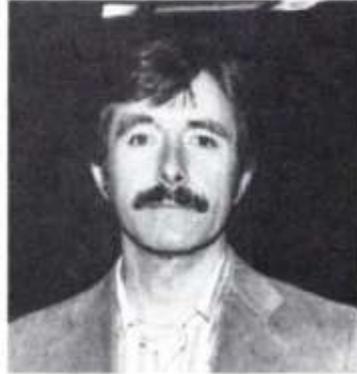
We get students from three different levels. The first level comes from our feeder schools—the high schools in our area—and we get a good part of our people from there. The second level comes from junior college people and from drum corps such as the Vanguards and the Blue Devils. And the third level consists of graduate students from all over the country. With each of those levels, I look for different things.

With the first level—an entering freshman who came from a high school situation—many of these kids never studied before, privately. They've only had their high school training. Many of them are deficient in many of the percussion areas; they may just play drumset or snare drum.

"I look for people who are not so into their own way of playing that they can't adjust and maybe learn a little on top of what they already know."

Now we're a State University, so I have to accept those kids for one semester, because the State already accepted them based on grade-point averages. So when I audition these people, I'm looking for potential; I'm not looking for accomplishment. I see what they've done on snare drum, and how much they've learned about reading. I give them material to sight read, and from that I try to get a feeling of their potential in this business. If I had to tell one of these students what to prepare for an audition, I would tell the student to prepare something on the mallet instruments. That would impress me. When I see a kid coming from high school who knows a little bit

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F. Michael Combs
University of Tennessee at Knoxville

First of all, what I look for more than anything else is potential. These days, it's unusual for a student to come in with a poor background—not having had much experience with mallets and so forth. But students without strong backgrounds can come in and do very well if they have the potential, number one, followed by drive and ambition. Often, though, students without background and training have a lot of trouble keeping their drive and ambition going, because they have to spend so many hours working on basic fundamentals, that their ambition tends to diminish very quickly. Those students with good experience in public school music and with good past training will tend to have more

"What worries me is having a student without the potential, or having someone who I can't get turned on to percussion."

drive and certainly will tend to show their potential a lot more as they go through their college experience.

After potential, the second thing I look for is basic rhythmic sense, basic control, and a basic fundamental understanding of music. Very low on the list would be the person's ability to play something like the Creston Marimba Concerto, or a knowledge of advanced orchestral excerpts. Those are things that can be taught. Teaching things like that is the least of my worries, because that's a very tangible thing. What worries me is having a student without the potential, or having someone who I can't get turned on to percussion. That's

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Vic Firth
New England Conservatory

Let me first give you a brief background on the problem of many schools today, but particularly the New England Conservatory. We are limited to X number of students per year. If only two students graduate in a given year, then out of the 90 or so people we listen to, we're only allowed to accept two. In another year, we may have six graduate, so then we have six openings. We have auditions that will last one or two days, with anywhere from 60 to 110 people showing up to audition, plus we receive tapes. When you have those kinds of numbers, from which we may only take six to eight people, the competition becomes very keen.

When we listen to the people, we ignore

"The bottom line is still the basic God-given talent. If that isn't there, the teacher can't develop it."

the number of openings. We simply hear all of them, and judge them on the basis of how they play. Then, when we finish with that, we may have 15 people out of the group who we feel are top candidates for the openings. Then we find that we may only have five openings that year. That's when it gets tough. That's when we have to sit down with the registrar and get into SAT scores. The main emphasis is on the musical ability, but we have to consider all factors because there are more applicants than there is space to accept them.

Now let's get back to music. We ask that every applicant play something on timpani, on mallets, and on snare drum. They

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Photo by Gary Evans Leyton

the traditional roots of

Billy Higgins is a modest human being who is proud to be part of jazz history. If playing is an extension of an individual's personality, then that statement has no better empirical proof than in the presence of Mr. Higgins. When listening to him play, one is struck by the extreme positivism of his musical statements. This writer found him to be a thoughtful person who is considerate of others, and exudes self-confidence that can best be described as warm.

The tree of jazz has many branches and its roots run deep. Billy Higgins' drumming is an integral part of that organism. His artistry has contributed to jazz for close to thirty years. In 1958, he joined the Ornette Coleman Quartet. This group's recordings and live performances literally turned the world of jazz upside down. Pianist Cecil Taylor on the East Coast, and saxophonist Ornette Coleman, trumpeter Don Cherry, bassist Charlie Haden, and drummer Billy Higgins on the West Coast, almost single-handedly laid down the foundation of what was to be known as "free jazz."

However, don't be fooled; Bill Higgins' musicianship goes beyond any singular musical categorization. He is, in the purest sense, a jazz musician. Billy is a knowledgeable and capable player who can play in many contexts. The names of people he has performed with reads like a list from a Who's Who in modern jazz. In sum, he has three important qualities that best describe what jazz drumming is all about: individuality, taste, and the ability to swing.

CB: Could you please tell the readers some pertinent facts about your background?

BH: I was born in Los Angeles in 1936. I went to school at 49th Street and George Washington Carver in East L.A. Later, I moved to Watts and lived the rest of the time there, and went to Reese High School.

I played with people like Teddy Edwards, Don Cherry, and George Newman. In 1959, I went to New York with Ornette Coleman. After that, I played with Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane, Lee Morgan, Jackie McLean, and I spent about three years with Sonny Rollins. In New York, I've also done a lot of recordings.

CB: Do you have any idea how many recordings you've made?

BH: I don't know, I never counted them. I'd say, maybe, two to three hundred.

CB: How old were you when you started to play the drums?

BH: Five years old.

CB: Was it the usual thing with banging the pots and pans around the house?

BH: Yeah, but then the people in my neighborhood were musicians and my sister was a dancer. She used to work in pictures like *Stormy Weather*. Bill Robinson taught her how to dance. There was always music in my family.

CB: Didn't you play in R & B bands before you worked in jazz?

BH: Yeah, I did.

CB: Was that because there wasn't much work for jazz musicians?

BH: In order for you to work, that's what you had to play. At that time, there was so much talent around playing jazz. There were guys who had been playing all their lives. And they were still trying to get gigs.

CB: Who were some of the people you worked with in R & B?

BH: Brook Benton, Arthur Wright, and Jimmy Witherspoon.

CB: Didn't you also work with Bo Diddley?

BH: Yeah, a long time ago.

CB: What did playing in R & B bands do for your conception of playing?

BH: Well truly, it was just the feeling of the music and participation. But I was always trying to play something else anyhow. I know that's what everybody does, but when I started playing, I was trying to play jazz. So when I played R & B, there really wasn't that much enjoyment in it for me.

CB: You mean it was more like a job to you?

BH: In a way it was a job. But I learned a lot because the feeling of playing was good and just learning how to play with people.

CB: Do you remember the best advice you ever got in regards to drumming? Was there anyone in particular that stands out?

BH: Yeah, a couple of people. Johnny Kirkwood, who always told me to listen. And Teddy Edwards gave me some very good advice about brushes.

CB: I'm not familiar with Johnny Kirkwood.

BH: He was someone who could teach you something as a person and about life at the same time. He didn't just tell you to do this and that, but by example. It's very important for a young person to see that, because sometimes they don't.

CB: Seeing older musicians in varying situations is very important for young players.

BH: Right. Sonny Greer once told me something. He said finesse is very important on the drums. Because you can always relate to music if you use finesse.

CB: Were there any approaches or instructional material that helped your playing?

BH: No, more than any approach it was the experience of playing with people and watching other drummers. At the time I was coming up, there was a lot of camaraderie.

CB: You have a delicate touch and yet you can really kick a band. How and why did you develop your touch?

BH: I've always wanted to hear what everybody else was playing.

CB: And if you play too loud. . .

BH: You can't hear. I really enjoy hearing other people play. But first, the most important thing is to get a "sound" out of your instrument. I don't like to fight the drums. If I've got to fight them, then it's a physical chore to play them. I try to get a little "air" with the instrument.

CB: Do you also mean space?

BH: Yeah. Space and air. There's something about all instruments. The drums are a vehicle for all instruments to bounce off of. Elvin plays real hard, but that's his sound, and that comes from within. So that's his conception. When he plays, he gives all the other instruments a certain sound. Everybody's got their own sound.

CB: Who are your biggest influences and why?

BH: Kenny Clarke for sound and conception. Max Roach for melody and always playing the right thing at the right time, and Art Blakey for feeling and conception.

CB: You once mentioned in an interview that Frank Butler was also an influence.

BH: Frank Butler. He's unique and very good. A lot of people never really got to hear Frank. He's a natural musician. And Lawrence Marabel is another favorite.

CB: A lot of people might not be too familiar with either of those drummers because they were popular around the West Coast in the '50s.

BH: Lawrence was one of the first guys I ever saw who could really play that style [bebop]. When I was a kid in Los Angeles and would go to dances, Lawrence would be there playing. He really influ-

BILLY HIGGINS

by Charles M. Bernstein

enced me a lot. Today, he's one of my closest friends.

CB: When you play, you always look extremely happy. I also noticed that there were a couple of figures you played and some physical movements that reminded me of "Papa" Jo Jones. Was he also an influence?

BH: Probably he was unconsciously. I never really got to see him that much until I got to New York. I used to see him on film. In fact, I know his son better than I know him and he's a very good drummer. But Papa Jo was so influential, you could be influenced by him by listening to other people.

CB: Frank Butler was not only a big fan of Papa but was also influenced by him. As I recall, Papa Jo said that Frank Butler was one of ...

BH: The greatest drummers in the world. Papa Jo was another drummer who got a "sound" out of his instrument and he plays brushes so beautifully. Brushes are a lost art. Well, not really, but there aren't many people who play them anymore.

CB: One of the similarities I've noticed about some of the drummers who have influenced you, particularly Kenny Clarke, Frank Butler and Lawrence Marabel, is that they all utilize the snare drum quite a bit when they solo.

BH: I remember when I used to hear Lawrence, he wasn't playing anything but a snare drum and a bass drum. I also remember when I heard Klook [Kenny Clarke] on some records, that's all he ever used. A long time ago I used to use that set up. When I got the toms that was a different story and then I had to relate to those. You have to come up with a sound with only a bass drum and a snare drum. Like you play a little on the snare drum and then turn the snares off to get a tom sound and then use your bass drum.

CB: When you're only using bass drum and snare drum . . .

BH: You've got to come up with something. And of course, you had to carry them around.

CB: At the present time, why do you still use the small four-piece jazz set?

BH: That's the way I feel comfortable, and I've been playing on those sizes a long time.

CB: What are your thoughts about the melodic aspects of playing the drums?

BH: Max Roach and Blackwell. But Blackwell's got another kind of conception about playing. He's rough. Extra rough. But Max and Philly Joe Jones, they're both melodic. Whatever the form of the song that's going on they have a very high level of conception of the rhythm. They can stop it, turn it around, slow it up, extend it, but you still get the essence of what's going on. They approach the instrument like a horn player.

CB: Is that more or less the way you define melodic playing on the drums?

BH: Yeah. The thing about it is that most of my influences come from other instruments. I used to listen to Art Tatum, Bud Powell, Charlie Parker and Milt Jackson for that kind of conception. You listen to people like that and figure out that you can also imply melody on your instrument. The drums are the hardest instrument to get music out of. You can play a lot of rhythms and a lot of other things, but it's the hardest because you don't have that much to work with, so you've got to be thinking that way.

CB: Your left-hand figures remind me of the way piano players

comp. I noticed that particularly when you played with Ornette and that band didn't use a piano player. How did you develop those types of figures?

BH: When I first heard Elvin Jones I went out and got his records. In other words, I heard him first on records before I met him. I had every record he made, and at that time he had made only four or five records. His conception—I said, "Wait a minute! Without a piano!" That means you've got to play the role of the piano. Plus I've been very fortunate to play with some excellent piano players. So if you play with somebody every night, then you do get something from them.

CB: How important was bassist Red Mitchell in your career?

BH: Very important. I made my first record with him.

CB: Wasn't the name of that album *Presenting Red Mitchell* on Contemporary Records? And if I'm not mistaken, wasn't it released

"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET A 'SOUND' OUT OF YOUR INSTRUMENT. I DON'T LIKE TO FIGHT THE DRUMS. IF I'VE GOT TO FIGHT THEM, THEN IT'S A PHYSICAL CHORE TO PLAY THEM."



Photo by Veryl Oakland

in 1958?

BH: Yeah. Red's a dynamite human being. Very dedicated. I played with him and Lorraine Geller [piano]. We played together a long time.

CB: Can you describe your relationship with Ed Blackwell?

BH: I heard Blackwell when I first heard Ornette. He impressed me so much because I had never heard anyone play drums like that.

CB: In what way?

BH: It was his conception. When you hear people play they either sound like somebody else or they give you the impression that they have an original conception. At that time, I hadn't heard anyone else incorporate all the drums into playing rhythms. Total rhythm. He wouldn't play on the cymbals all the time, because he could play on the drums and the bass player would still be playing and it would make sense.

CB: Do you think one of the reasons he approaches the drums in that way is because of his New Orleans heritage?

BH: It's New Orleans, but still, I never heard anyone from there play like that. I've heard New Orleans drummers play with a certain feeling, but Blackwell's very individualistic. I'd put him in the realm of Art Blakey and Roy Haynes. All those cats got their own style. As soon as you hear them you know it! And you do that without saying to yourself, "That might sound like so and so." It's like they found their target and what anybody else does might influence them a little, but they already got their feet on the ground. But Blackwell, he's good.

CB: Some people have stated that Blackwell was your teacher. Was he, or was it a friendship?

BH: It was a friendship. I admire Blackwell so much, and I learned so much from being around him and listening to him. Plus again, it goes past the drums to the point of what kind of human being he is and his conception. Particularly at that time, because before I met Ornette I was playing different. He had been playing with Ornette and there was something about his and Ornette's conception. After playing with Ornette, I could see how Blackwell got into certain things. Both of their approaches made each of their conceptions grow.

CB: Yet you made the first recordings with Ornette rather than Blackwell. How did that come about?

BH: That's because Blackwell was in New Orleans. Ornette was writing a lot of music. We started playing the music together and learning.

CB: How much direction or freedom did Ornette give you?

BH: Ornette never said anything but, "play your heart out!"

CB: In other words, Ornette left the parts up to the player's discretion.

BH: Right, he left it up to you. When somebody has that much confidence in you, well, you *have* to come up with something.

CB: One can assume from what you've just said that if Ornette and another player had empathy, then everything after that fell into place.

BH: That's what people are supposed to do. You make me do something and then I make you do something. It's give and take.

CB: It must have been wonderful to have that much freedom to



Photo by Chester Ralph

express yourself.

BH: Well you know, it was the way he wrote and the way the music was. It was a natural thing. He was just so wide open. Whatever you wanted to do was okay. If you didn't feel like playing, you didn't have to play. He said, "If you can't think of nothing to play, then don't play."

CB: Did he, at any time, give you charts?

BH: No. It was like him, Donald and Charlie would look at certain things. We didn't have any music on the bandstand. That was a no-no! Once you start playing together, a whole lot, you start breathing together and then it becomes natural. It's like speaking to your wife, or whatever; it's something that becomes part of you, and it becomes so natural that it's no mystery.

CB: Who was the most challenging musician you ever worked with and why?

BH: Most of them are challenging. It's hard to say which one. I've gotten down to the point that it's not any one person. It wasn't the musicians, it was the music. The music was always the challenge, regardless of who it was.

CB: Cedar Walton, the late Sam Jones and yourself worked together quite a bit as a rhythm section called The Triangle. Could you describe the interaction that you all shared?

BH: Heaven. Pure Heaven! That was really a beautiful experience. It helped me grow. Sam Jones was a beautiful man, plus his conception and everything about him. I've learned so much from him and Cedar. It was so easy to play with them. All you had to do was

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Larry Blackmon became a feature interview by way of a lucky accident. Lucky for us. I had a call from Sheila Eldridge at Orchid Public Relations & Publicity in Los Angeles about Larry. In the course of conversation I found out that Sheila was closely related to one of my favorite trumpet players, jazz great Roy Eldridge. On that basis I agreed to listen to Cameo's music and then agreed to interview Larry Blackmon.

Larry's not just a drummer. He's also a bandleader, a choreographer and a record producer. Larry's band, Cameo, has a new album out called Alligator Woman on Chocolate City/Polygram records. The Los Angeles Times said the album "... may be the best Cameo LP yet. Larry Blackmon . . . is one of current soul music's brightest rising stars." Alligator Woman is the result of changes that Larry speaks candidly about in this interview.

LB: My career started in New York City. I played a lot in the now famous, legendary rehearsal studios like the Daily Planet and Baggies downtown on Grant Street. Billy Cobham and Stevie Wonder used to rehearse there in the late '60s and early '70s. I started out playing drums behind singing groups. East Coast was my first professional group with GFS Records. My experi-

ence playing behind the vocalists and singing groups gave me a sense of choreography in expressing the tunes and the feelings. Musically my interests grew and East Coast was more of a band situation than anything else.

I moved on to a group called New York City Players. We did a demo and Casablanca Records was interested. We had to change the name to Cameo because there was some conflict with The Ohio Players. I used New York City Players as my production company. I wanted to form a group that had the versatility of a singing act, and the "bad" individual instrumentation, and structure it so no *one* person dictated the economical or financial status of the group. I'd been through enough of that. I wanted to form a group centered around myself as conceptual leader, but that showcased individual members that were very, very good.

Since then we've recorded seven albums, four of which are gold. Our fourth album, *Secret Omen*, was our first gold. Since then we've been up in the 800- to 900-thousand mark on all the albums.

This is the first time I've been off the road for this length of time in about three years. Cameo has always done 180-plus days a year. If the band wasn't on the road playing then we were rehearsing. To pay

the bills and keep everybody in New York City in hotels got to be very expensive and very taxing. So we relocated the group in Atlanta, formed another production company named Atlanta Artists, and I just made a label deal with MCA. The name of the company is Atlanta Artists Records. On that label we have a group named L.A. Connections, a group named Seventh Wonder, and a group called Knights of the Sound Table. *That* group consists of the people who I rearranged from Cameo. I'm executive producing that. What I'm trying to do is build our own autonomy and keep the musicians working! When a musician has devoted a certain length of time to something—you just don't let people go. Now we can all have the same musical relationship we had, and they can stretch out. But, since I'm executive producer I can be sure that whatever is coming out on them will be able to sustain a living for them.

SF: I know from experience that each additional person in a band creates a new challenge. What went through your mind when you decided you were going to put together an 11-piece band?

LB: First of all there has to be an agreement. You have to be dealing with people who are reasonable, and who are not into that phase of the business to satisfy what-

saying socialism *does*, but, if you're genuinely dedicated to the overall well-being of everyone there, including yourself, the people should go along with that. Everybody gets involved in things because of what's in it for *them*. In the beginning, if you talk about your goals, like, "What did you get into this business for in the beginning?"—then once everybody understands everybody else's goals, then you see if you can form the group in a way that's going to take everybody where they wanted to go. At the same time you can branch off and do other things and still keep the group together. Look at Fleetwood Mac, and Earth, Wind & Fire.

As long as the person with the last or only word has a plan for everybody getting there—and it's all agreed upon—then everybody else should rest assured that this person is going to get them there. They'll be able to see by results. But, you have to give the *belief* until you see some results.

SF: Did you find that most of the musicians knew what their goals were?

LB: Some did. I've always considered myself a person that recognized talent and possibilities of talent in the idiom we're in. They told me what they wanted out of the business and I told them what I thought they could get and the way to get it by what

LARRY BLACKMON

by Scott Fish

ever personal problems they might have. It's hard when you're dealing with a group of people as large as Cameo. People come from all different type of backgrounds. If everybody follows one concept for putting a band together—you can't go wrong. First, you have to understand that everybody is a particular component in an overall machine. One person might be a battery, the next might be a fan belt, the next might be a spark plug. As long as they're working at their optimum in their agreement on *which* part to play, then it can all work properly. It's when the backbiting and second guessing starts that there are problems. From the beginning—if you sit down and talk to each other and say, "Okay, I feel I'm most qualified to do *this* in the group"—some might see a person as a leader and others might not. Whatever decision is made then everybody else will have to give their word that they'll give their faith and belief even in times of doubt. You can't give a person support if you're constantly second-guessing and backbiting. It's understanding from the beginning—an agreement that as a gentleman you will hold to that agreement.

SF: Are you the "last word" in Cameo?

LB: I was the *only* word! Democracy in a group like that really doesn't work. Democracy as a whole doesn't work. I'm not

I say. In most cases it matched.

SF: How long was it before you were able to make money with Cameo?

LB: It was really on the first album. Cameo has been known to be a touring group. We work and work some more! We had the help of the record company and other people to get us work but it was hard. No way was it easy. I see a lot of groups trying to get something going and—first of all—you have to look at things from a serious side. You have to be at peace with yourself *first!* A question everybody's got to ask themselves is, "What am I happy with? What am I unhappy with? How can that affect what I'm about to do with this group of guys? Should I spare them of what I am unsure about?" First be honest with yourself. If you're not—then you can't be honest with anyone else.

SF: It's rare to find a musician talking about goal-setting and being at peace with himself. Were you raised with those values?

LB: No. These are things that I discovered along the path. I owe a lot to things like meditation and Eastern religion. I owe a lot of what's going on to that because I gained peace within myself and I was able to see what had to be done. I was good to myself in spite of myself! You have to deal with yourself as well as you deal with

Soul Inspiration

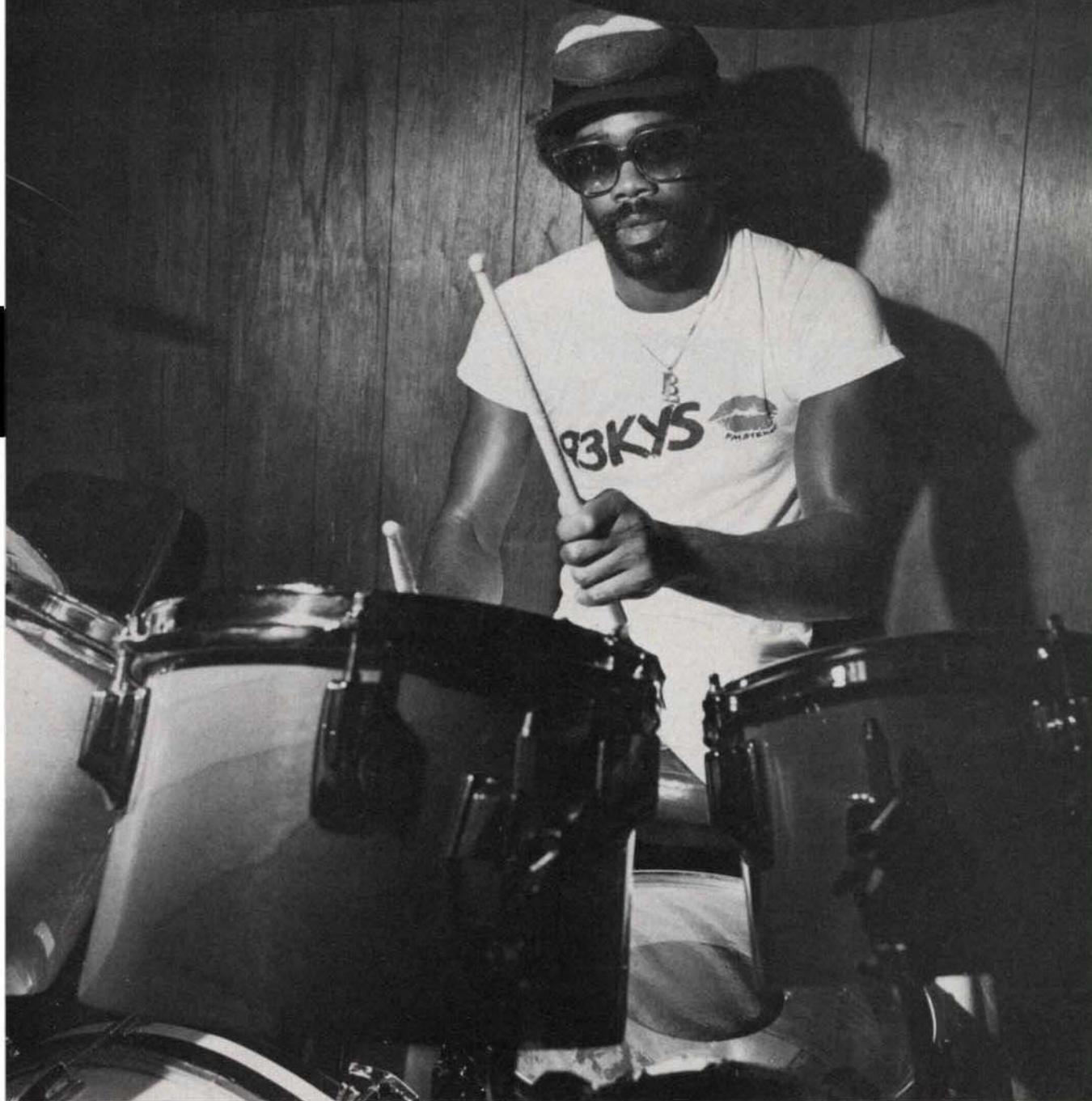


Photo by Ly Bensons



"YOU HAVE TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT WHAT YOU DO, WITHIN YOURSELF, EVEN IF IT'S NOTTO SOMEONE ELSE'S WAY OF THINKING."

everybody else. You have to know what's fair. You have to have humanity's interest in mind, and your fellow man's interest in *mind first*—at the same time making sure that you're making the right business decisions for yourself.

SF: Was your business background the School of Hard Knocks?

LB: Yes. And other people's hard knocks! I was always into *why* certain things worked and others didn't. There's no way one can be as seasoned in business as they are in their particular craft. It's impossible. The main thing is to have an attorney and your business thing together from the very beginning. In most cases money is the problem. You have to find that money or go out and make it and hold it together until your business thing gets together. The longer you wait, the more people change. Sometimes paranoia sets in.

SF: Procrastination?

LB: Yes. I brought Cameo to this point and along the way you have personal things that people have to satisfy as far as other things they want to do besides Cameo. That's all well and good but it wasn't part of the particular agreement for that person. Before you know it you have disharmony. There is nothing in the world that is going to survive with disharmony! I asked myself, "Do I let everything else go down the drain?" Then I came up with the

idea of forming the other group. I'd already made up my mind that I would take the steps necessary for Cameo to continue, but I cared about the people who weren't happy in spite of themselves.

Do what's right by God and *not* by what's right by everybody else. *You* know what's right or wrong. Look out for others. Don't look out for what you're going to get immediately so much. It's the way of the world that you're going to get back what you put out. You can't plant potato seeds and grow apples!

SF: The Law of Compensation.

LB: There it is. It works. Right now there are five guys in Cameo. I'm going to keep it at that. Everybody will be able to hear what they've been listening to before, and more. Now I can do a little more than I did before.

Imagine what it was to be a leader and a drummer? You've got a little less respect automatically. You have to get your goals straight up front and make sure everybody's head is in the right place. It was a hard job. I can say I did it because we always moved in an ascending direction and my work will speak for itself.

For Cameo's music to sound good, you have to connect with it—being a drummer—from a special way. All that an instrumentalist is supposed to do is translate *feeling*. When you're in a group you're

only supposed to put the medicine to it. You don't have to prove anything to anybody. You needn't prove things to yourself. That's where most groups have conflicts. It's with guys overplaying.

SF: What's the concept of Cameo? Would you consider it first a dance band?

LB: Up to this point I directed Cameo for the people. A person who buys an album—they don't go in to buy ego. I tried to connect with what I saw out there. People want to feel that this group is actually doing this for them. That's the bottom line. Let's go back to the Law of Compensation. That's where it's at, man. How can you expect to be successful and hold success and be happy without giving to God's people free of yourself? Being selfless. In creating, I tried to get feelings that were euphoric and feelings that felt good. We were genuinely playing it that way. Our objective was to please. In return, it got Cameo what it has.

With the new album you'll see that the lyrics are more inspirational, too. People need some direction. It's not all about Watergate and somebody ripping somebody else off! We've gotten to the point now where people are looking for money before the job is finished. That's not normal and everybody's thinking that it is. It's about

the Law of Compensation. I don't want to categorize the band, but everybody says it's r&b based. So I guess it is. But, as far as changing to go pop—I don't believe in that. I believe that things will come around if you're growing.

SF: What's your background on drums? Do you play other instruments?

LB: I write mainly with the bass guitar. I play guitar also. I understand that Jaco Pastorius plays drums as well as bass. He's my idol as far as the bass is concerned. He's so expressive! I'm not well versed in the technical aspect so much that I would be able to talk about some of the super technical things. I operate off of feeling. I got into some very bad head space early in the game when my reading and technical ability weren't up to par. My concept was self-contained and I knew what felt good, and I wanted to play something different. So, I got my chops together and I played.

SF: How old were you when you started playing drums?

LB: When I seriously started banging on drums I was about fourteen. I was influenced a great deal by James Brown. Since then it's been Billy Cobham because of what he said when he played. Those two were my main influences as far as drums. I used to play Ludwig drums and they used to sound dynamite back then. But, I use Tama now. I have been for the last two

years.

SF: Did you have any formal training?

LB: I went through the rudiments early. But, for where I wanted to go I was either going to be a fantastic soloist or I was going to do what I wanted to do: make music. I'm one of the best drummers in my field. But that wasn't my objective. It was to be clean, effective, straight to the point and simple. Simplicity is the secret. If you can play well, simple, and put the medicine where it needs to be you're much more effective than sounding like rocks rolling down a hill all the time! That's been my impression of a lot of drummers. Generally, I can pick out a drummer's personality if they're overplaying. They're not playing music.

SF: Perhaps there's a tendency among listeners that simple drummers have said, "Well, I'll learn two or three beats and go for it."

SF: It's not so.

LB: Do you listen to many different kinds of music?

LB: Oh yes. Being a producer, which is my forte, is a wonderful world. You get to do so many things. You have to listen to everything that comes out. Weather Report is one of my favorite acts. Al Jarreau. The higher side of things. Maurice White.

He's a drummer *first*. As far as personal wisdom, he's where I want to be; where his head has gotten through research. He's a hell of an individual. I was attracted to that in the very beginning with Cameo a little bit. I saw that E, W, & F had an autonomy and the group was built for the group's sake. I admired that, especially in black musicians; to be able to get their business together so it would take care of everybody.

SF: I've had the opportunity to speak with many of the great black jazz drummers that came out of the '40s and '50s. Many of them feel that the younger generation of black kids have kind of ignored them and their music. How do you feel about that and the contributions that those players have made?

LB: It's hard sometimes for people to recognize contributions, unless they follow the path of that person. We are here to give what we give. That's hard to say. Philly Joe and those cats—everybody appreciates what they did. We all feel sometimes that we're not appreciated. But, they don't know about the guy that's sitting in Pontiac, Michigan in his basement with his three drums listening to Philly Joe. I was about twenty-four before I heard a lot of the music I'd missed beforehand. What

about the young people who aren't aware of Miles Davis and what he contributed to the whole business? To music in general? It's impossible unless you're feeling those same feelings from those times. But, I feel people receive what they give.

I was born and raised in New York. The musician scene is too cliquish and a lot of the language they talk isn't the same as everybody across the country and how *they* look at it. I think the reader should read between that or at least wonder what's the vibe among musicians who're doing the most work, and what's the vibe among the cats who are not that lucky. They're two different languages.

SF: I'd say that the bottom line of an out-of-work musician is his attitude.

LB: That's true. Which goes back to finding peace within yourself. You'll find that some people will never be pleased.

SF: What's the musical roots of the music you're playing now?

LB: James Brown, Sly Stone, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. As far as vocal concepts it would be some of the earlier producers from Motown. Hendrix' *Band of Gypsies*. I wore out the grooves in that record! Chicago influenced me. As far as composition and arrangement I've got to

continued on page 80



UNDERSTANDING RHYTHM

by Nick Forte

Half-Note Triplets

The construction of this triplet utilizes the same method used in the construction of the quarter-note form. If you make half notes out of the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the quarter-note triplet, you will be left with the exact placement of the half-note triplet, the count of which is: "1" the "A" of 2, and the "N" of 3. See Example #1.

Ex. #1

Example #2 supplies a complete listing of all the *basic* triplet forms discussed in this series.

Ex. #2

1 A N 2 A N 3 A N 4 A N

Example #3 should be practiced repeatedly until you are comfortable with the sound and the *count of that sound* at a variety of tempi. Start with either hand and keep a strict tempo! Bass and hi-hats may also be used.

Ex. 3

1 A N 2 A N 3 A N 4 A N 1 A N 2 A N 3 A N 4 A N

Any note(s) in triplet form may be subdivided in as many ways as ordinary notes. That is to say, there will always be two eighths in a quarter, two quarters in a half, etc., whether in triplet form or not.

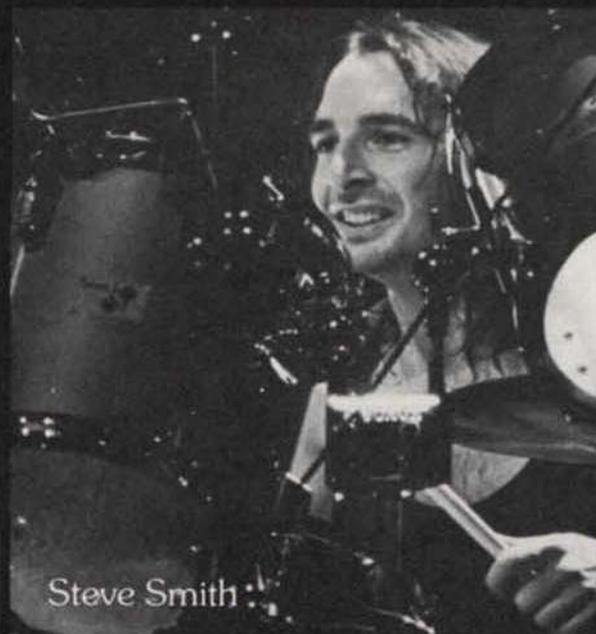
SNARE DRUM READING

continued on next page

ARTISTRY IN RHYTHM



Harvey Mason



Steve Smith



Billy Cobham



Denny Carmassi

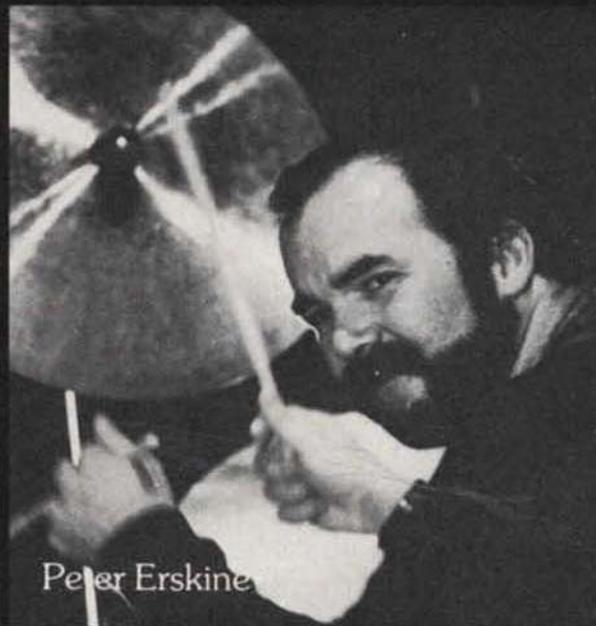
“What do these great artists have in common?”



Akira Tana



Keith Copeland



Peter Erskine



They all make time with my sticks.”

vic FIRTH
INCORPORATED

Three staves of musical notation for drumset exercises. The first staff contains a sequence of eighth notes grouped in threes, with dynamics *pp*, *ff*, *pp*, and *mf*. The second staff features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, some with accents. The third staff continues with eighth notes and includes a triplet of eighth notes.

DRUMSET EXERCISES

Two staves of musical notation for drumset exercises. A legend on the left identifies the parts: Cym. (Cymbal), S. Tom (Small Tom), Snare, L. Tom (Large Tom), Bass, and Hi-Hat. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs, with dynamic markings like *pp* and *mf*.

DRUM SOLO

Three staves of musical notation for a drum solo. The notation is highly rhythmic, featuring complex patterns of eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in threes. It includes various drum symbols like cymbals, snare, and tom-toms, along with dynamic markings and accents.

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, CT 06512.



STANLEY SPECTOR MAKES THE DEAN'S LIST

I'M STANLEY SPECTOR. WHILE I HAVE NEVER SET FOOT ON THE CAMPUS, NOR HAVE I SAT IN THE SAME ROOM WITH MY STUDENT, I HAVE MADE THE DEAN'S LIST. THE FOLLOWING LETTER IS FROM THE DEAN OF A MAJOR UNIVERSITY.

Office of the Dean

Dear Mr. Spector:

I wanted to make an opportunity to tell you how much I appreciate the work you have done with Mr. R—, a student in the College. The College is designed for highly motivated undergraduates who work in a variety of academic areas, including the performing arts, computer science, pre-law, pre-medicine, environmental studies and a host of others. Mr. R— is one student who has made very responsible use of the flexibility he has in the College. I remember the day he came with the idea to do an independent study with a percussion instructor in New York and to do this study through the mail using audio tapes. I must admit that I was somewhat skeptical about both the content and the method of what he was proposing, but after having conversations with him and with Mr. S—, the Director of the University Jazz Ensemble, I decided to approve this unusual project for academic credit. As time progressed and Mr. R— shared with me the voluminous correspondence he was having with you, and with reports from Mr. S— about the remarkable progress that Mr. R— was making, I became convinced that this is one of the best out-of-class learning experiences that any of our students have had.

We employ a variety of teaching techniques, many of which include students working away from campus and being supervised by project directors and faculty at some distance. After observing Mr. R—'s experience and having an opportunity to read through the correspondence that you have exchanged over the past months, I believe that the technique you have developed is one of the best used anywhere. You have demonstrated that a supervisor can monitor the content of an experience and give appropriate critiques while maintaining a high level of rigor and quality in the absence of direct surveillance.

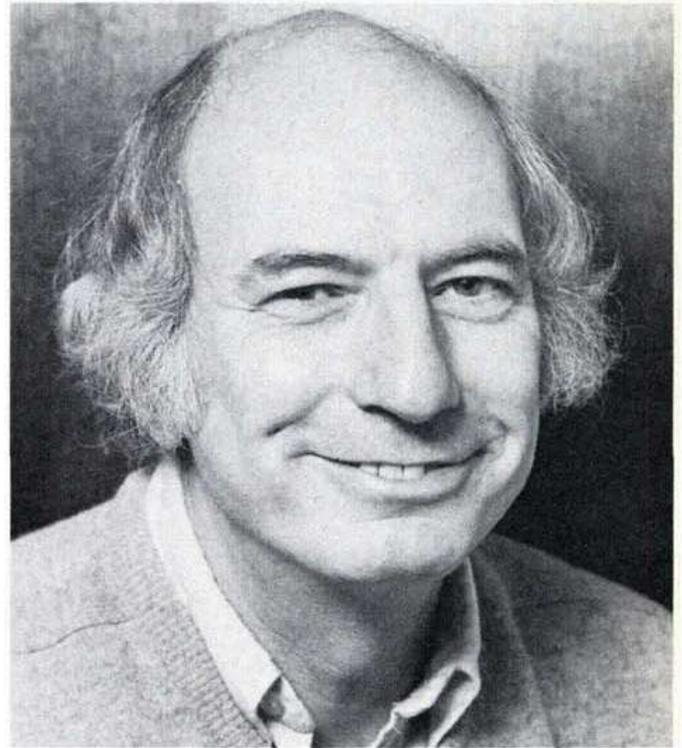
All of this is to tell you how impressed I am with this project and with your involvement with Mr. R—. I want to express my appreciation for the work and time you have given to this outstanding and deserving student.

Carbon copies to:
Mr. R—
Mr. S—

Sincerely,

Signature of the Dean

The student involved received four academic credits a semester. A copy of the letter with the full identification of the University and College as well as the people involved, is part of the information package we send out.



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PRODUCT CLOSE-UP



Pearl *Export 052*, shown with *700 Deluxe* hardware.

Pearl has recently introduced a new series of lower-line drum kits designed for the budget-minded or semi-pro player. The drums themselves are made by Pearl/Taiwan, while the hardware is from Pearl/Japan.

The shells are made of 9-ply wood, molded under heat compression with no reinforcing rings. They have angled seaming, staggered joints, and are coated on the inside with *Acousticoat* sealer. Five drumkit configurations are being made available, either with *700 Deluxe* or *800 Pro* hardware.

The *Export 052-Pro* kit consists of: 14x22 bass drum, 8x12 and 9x13 tom-toms, 16x16 floor tom, 5x14 metal snare drum, and the *800 Series* hardware. The complete kit retails at \$925 (\$850 with the 700 hardware).

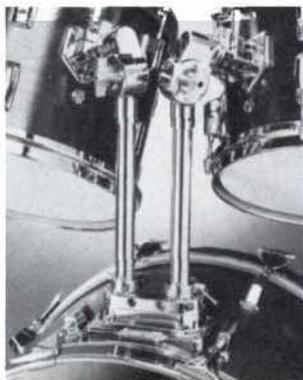
BASS DRUM

The 14 x 22 bass drum has 20 lugs with T-style tension rods and channeled metal hoops inlaid with plastic to match the drum's finish. A rubber strip with adhesive backing is supplied which fits into the hoop's channel for pedal mounting.

Pearl has designed new spurs for the *Export* kits. They are similar to the professional model, having a telescoping inner leg—in this case, adjusted with a drum key. The spur tips can be converted from rubber to spike point by rotating the tip up on the threaded shaft. Instead of locking into a pre-set forward angle like the pro model, these spurs move freely. The player sets the desired angle. For packing, they fold flush to the shell. The new spurs are very efficient and hold the bass drum in position easily.

The drum is fitted with Remo's epoxy-hoop, coated *SoundBlaster* heads, and oddly enough, this particular drum had no felt damper strip included. The drum had a full sound, but would need muffling for modern playing. For home use, the *Soundmasters* are fine. In live work, I'd opt for a stronger head (CS, *Pinstripe*, *Fiberskyn 2*) as the *Soundmasters* do tend to wear out pretty quick.

MOUNTING SYSTEM



TH-80

Pearl has developed a new holder, replacing the old 727 model (which has since been given to Cosmic Percussion and Rogers for their budget kits). The *TH-80* uses the same base plate as the professional holder, having a hole for each arm to pass through. Each arm is secured by indirect pressure, a split clamp, with a T-bolt on one side, and a sprung square-head screw on the other. The holder arms use concealed ratchets adjusted by a center T-bolt, and give approximately 13 inches of height. A shorter model is available for use

Pearl

with floor stands. The tom-toms have mini-versions of the base plate, once again, secured by indirect clamping.

Pearl has fattened up their memory locks, now with tongues at both top and bottom. The tube that passes through the drum has a memory lock for angle/distance, and a memory lock is on each down tube for fixing holder height. The *TH-80* is a very impressive holder. It is strong, will not sink or twist, and is easily adjustable.

TOM-TOMS

The 8 x 12 and 9 x 13 toms have 12 lugs each, and a single venthole directly below the holder bracket. The 16 x 16 floor tom has 16 lugs and three legs which are knurled for their top half and secured in their brackets directly by a T-screw. All the drums have internal mufflers on the batter side and triple-flanged pressed hoops. They are fitted with coated *Soundmaster* heads top and bottom. The *Soundmasters* are okay for keeping price down, but I'd recommend changing them to *Weather Kings* to get a cleaner tone. The drums do have nice resonance, but the *Soundmasters* seem to inhibit this. And, under hard playing, the *Soundmaster* heads dent up a great deal.

SNARE DRUM

The snare drum included with the *Export* kit is a 5 x 14 metal shell with ten double-ended lugs, 20-strand wire snares, and an internal muffler. The strainer is of the side-throw type, and has a fine-tuning knob on the throw-off side. The throw-off lever is covered with black plastic, molded to fit the shape of your fingers. The snares are connected at the throw-off and butt by plastic strips, not cord (an increasingly popular measure). The strainer is simplistic, but works well. Pearl also has a somewhat more sophisticated bridge-type strainer on some of their other *Export* snare drums. The snare drum had a dry tone, with that all-too-familiar metallic overtone. Again, changing to regular Remo heads made the drum come alive a bit more with better response for soft playing.

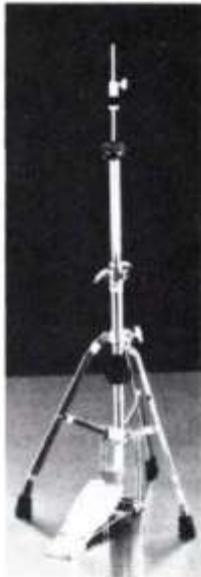
Export 052-Pro Drumkit

HARDWARE

Pearl has totally re-designed all of their hardware lines, and re-numbered them for an easier matching system. The *800 Series* included with this kit have thin black nylon bushings at their height joints, and new rubber feet for better surface gripping.



C-800



H-800

Two *C-800* cymbal stands are included here. They have single-braced tripod bases, and two adjustable tiers (indirectly secured). Pearl's rotor tilter has been enlarged, but still follows the concept of their popular *Vari-Set* tom-tom arms. Practically any desirable angle can be achieved, since the tilter relies on a smooth "drum" rather than ratchet teeth. The tilter has an extra-long post to accommodate large cymbals at acute angles. A cast T-screw locks the angle. The tilter can also fold neatly against the stand itself for packing.

Pearl has also done away with their nylon cymbal stabilizers (which I liked) and have reverted back to the usual assortment of felt and metal washers, nylon tubing sleeve, and a very large wing nut designed not to spin up or down while playing. The

stands will not slip or sink. They afford more than ample height, and will fit into a standard trap case.

The *H-800* hi-hat has a single-braced tripod base, and a split sand-blasted footboard with an adjustable/removable toe-stop. Spring tension is adjusted via a large black cylinder which operates with a threaded sleeve on the shaft. It is easily adjustable from the playing position. Pedal to pull-rod linkage is done with a fat nylon strap (not flexible). There are sprung spurs at the base, and a memory lock on the height tube. One slight problem involved the tilter screw on the hi-hat cup: it seemed to back off while playing, dropping the bottom cymbal to a flat angle. Perhaps a counterlock would be a good idea. Nevertheless, the *H-800* is quiet, has efficient action, and stays in position.



P-800

Pearl's new *P-800* drum pedal has a split footboard matching the hi-hat's, as well as a toe stop. Tension relies on a single expansion spring stretched downward. Linkage is done via a synthetic strap wrapped around a wheel on the axle. The strap can be adjusted for length. The beater housing/action wheel combination may be positioned anywhere along the axle, and is set with allen screws. Length of stroke can be adjusted by moving the spring along a slotted side piece, which while angling the spring, also angles the beater and footboard. Spring tension is adjusted via a knurled cylinder with locking nuts. There are two sprung spurs at the pedal's base. Pedal clamping is done with the usual wing-screw/plate, adjusted from underneath the footboard. There seemed to be a

dead spot in the pedal, which could perhaps be solved by including different strength springs. The one fitted was a bit too loose. The *P-800* is quiet and sturdy. In fact, its construction is miles above the type of pedals usually found on second-line kits.



S-800

This test kit was supplied with the old model *906* snare stand instead of the new *S-800* which is normally included. The *S-800* has a tripod base, and like all the new Pearl stands, has a lowered basket. Instead of being atop the angle hinge, the basket is directly in line with it. This provides for set-up of deeper drums, as well as the regular 5" and 6" depths. The basket arms grip the drum via the common threaded casing nut beneath the basket's shaft, which is set away from the stand.

FINISHES

The *Export* kits are available in four plastic coverings: jet black, pure white, silver flash and green flash. A special *Export* kit with birch shells comes in either wine red or walnut lacquer. All of Pearl's logo badges now have serial numbers. However, the *Export* kit badges are glued on, not tacked like the pro drums. To complement the *Export Series*, Pearl has recently come out with a budget cymbal line: *CX-500*.

The buyer of this kit is getting quite a good deal with the *800* hardware. When it's time to move up, I'd suggest hanging on to the hardware and only changing the drums. Pearl's *Export* kit is a genuine bargain for the beginner or semi-pro player. Even a pro could use it as a second kit for those around-town jobs.

Visualizing For Successful Performance

What mental picture do you have in your mind when you are practicing? Are you picturing your favorite drummer? If you have an important concert coming up do you picture what might go wrong? Do you imagine that others may be critical of you? If so, you are very normal. These typical mental pictures can be helpful—or extremely harmful.

Role Models

When we are young we usually have a hero or favorite drummer. In order to improve, we tend to copy our heroes. We listen to their records, go to their concerts and read all we can about them. This is all positive but only up to a point. Sooner or later we have to break away and develop our own style of playing.

However, the mind can be a repetitive mechanism. Years after we have stopped copying and have begun to create our own style, those old "pictures" may still be there—obsolete pictures that no longer help us. In fact, they often hold us back and inhibit our development as musicians.

Negative Pictures

A negative picture is one in which we imagine in our mind's eye that others will criticize us. Although we may understand that we can't please everyone, the fear is still there. Some people use this negative picture to "psyche" themselves up. "I'll show them" is a common way to do this.

We may find ourselves getting angry as we think about the imagined criticism and even draw strength from that anger. For some people, this negative psyche job will work. However, it has negative side effects.

People in this state of mind may indeed play well, but they are not much fun to be around. They are often grouchy and sullen. They may seem to be self-centered or egotistical because it takes a lot of energy to function negatively. People like this

tend to be impatient and critical of those they work with. They are hard on themselves and on others.

Positive Pictures

A positive picture occurs when we visualize that we are going to do well. We mentally see ourselves as well prepared for a good performance. We realize that we can't please everyone. However, if we can please ourselves and the people we work with, we know we have a good chance of pleasing the audience as well.

We have all had experiences where things just seemed to click. If we think back carefully, we see that it was often because we anticipated having a good time. No negative pictures came into play because there was no fear.

New situations create tension and anxiety because of fear of the unknown. When we are with people we know, it is easier to picture a successful performance.

Getting Rid of Negative Pictures

The old approach was based upon breaking bad habits. This usually tends to reinforce what we are trying to change because we keep thinking and picturing in a negative way.

However, there is a much easier way. Don't worry about the old mental pictures. Just create new, more positive ones. For example, if you are practicing and you catch yourself picturing your favorite drummer—stop! Relax for a moment and then try to picture *yourself*. Picture yourself in your own mind playing really well.

Try to remember what you might have looked like on one of those nights when things seemed to click. Mentally tie this positive picture to the emotion of playing well. This will give the new picture strength. In time, the old picture will fade away due to lack of attention.

If you feel fear before a performance just accept it as normal stage fright. It usu-

ally disappears once you are into the first tune anyway. A little anxiety is not all bad. It keeps you on your toes.

Visualizing Techniques

The mental pictures we have are usually arrived at by accident. Some are good and some are not so good. However, if we can find some good ones just by accident, we should be able to do really well on purpose. Before practicing, performing, or before going to sleep at night do the following:

Sit or lie down in a relaxed comfortable position. A nice easy chair is good during the day. Lie on your back with your arms at your sides if you are getting ready for sleep.

Mentally picture each part of your body and silently say, "Relax." First the head, neck, arms, torso, legs, spine and so on. Go through each part, even your fingers and toes. Really relax.

Once you feel relaxed, imagine that you are looking at a movie screen in your mind. You are the projectionist, both literally and figuratively.

See yourself playing well. You are confident and relaxed. People are observing you doing well. Picture yourself as having lots of energy. Complete this positive performance in your mind. Visualize others coming up to you and saying something like, "That was hot. You are really playing better and better all the time." Picture yourself saying "Thank you" in a friendly, relaxed way.

One Last Thought

In order for visualizing to be of maximum benefit, you must also prepare for a successful performance. You must practice and do your homework. Learn the music and be ready. In this way you will be prepared musically *and* mentally.

Remember, they are your pictures in your mind. You always have the choice to picture success. It's all up to you.

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A concise 32 page text on the best ways to notate and read music for the drum set. Included are the 3 basic "fills" and the 10 most important Latin rhythms, styles, how to use page turns effectively, brushes, and the notation of rolls. The Jazz-Latin rhythm alone is worth the price of the book.
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Simon Phillips Offers A Few Tips On Choosing A Drum Set Within Your Budget.

"I find when choosing a kit, the two main things to keep in mind should be sound quality (of course) and durability. No matter what your budget, make sure that you're pleased with the sound of what it is you're buying. After all, this instrument is your medium for musical expression.

Also, keep an eye out for construction. With the kind of

gigging most players are doing today, a set has to be able to handle abuse. You don't want to find yourself in the middle of a set and discover that your kit is falling apart. That's the reason I'd recommend Tama drums to anyone looking for a set. Tama makes full sounding, well built drums in a variety of models and prices within the limits of just about anyone's budget."

"Tama Swingstar offers unbelievable quality for under \$850.00"

"Tama Royalstar cut through with outstanding clarity and xtra deep sound"

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Swingstar set 55522
Finish shown: Jet Black



Royalstar set RS592
Finish shown: Brazilian Grain



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by Scott Fish

Photo by Clark Pardee



Paul Jamieson

Paul Jamieson's name keeps popping up in interviews with professional drummers. He's the behind-the-scenes person who has built and customized drums that have been used in concert and in the studio by the likes of Toto, Steely Dan, Boz Scaggs, The Eagles, The Doobie Brothers, Fleetwood Mac, The Average White Band, Bee Gees, Christopher Cross, Brothers Johnson and Styx.

We managed to track Paul down on the West Coast, and he was kind enough to share some of his ideas on drum customizing.

PJ: Basically I build custom drums and drum equipment. Along with that I have a studio rental business. I rent my custom snare drums and drumsets to groups and individual players as they're working in the studio, or here in L.A. if they're doing TV dates, Academy Awards, Grammys, and so forth. I also have a service where I'm like an in-studio roadie. I arrange for cartages to make sure the equipment's delivered to where it's supposed to be. I do the set up and maintain the drums, keeping fresh heads on them, plenty of sticks in the bag; I tune the drums and work with the engineer in getting the sound if the player wants. Not all players have me tune their equipment. During the session I hang out. If something goes wrong, I fix it.

SF: When did you first discover that there was a need for your kind of service?

PJ: Six years ago Gerry Brown was here to do a session. The rental set of drums was a Ludwig *Vistalite* set that sounded horrible. I had my Ludwig maple kit at home sent out to me. A week later they were used on a Chick Corea Return to Forever album. I'd always worked on the road as a drum roadie. Working as a roadie you work one tour and then all of a sudden you're unemployed. I had Jeff Porcaro, who I worked with for four years, have me come to his

sessions and make sure all his stuff was right. That was four-and-a-half years ago. I've been doing it that long.

SF: It surprises me that so many drummers in the studio don't know how to tune a drum.

PJ: I don't want to give you the wrong impression. Jeff doesn't have me tune his drums. Some of these guys ... if they were football players they'd be All Pro's. It would be an insult to Jeff if I tuned his drums. But, some guys don't know how to tune the drums, which is really amazing to me. There are a lot of guys who haven't been in the studio that much or they're in there for the first time. With the cost of recording today, it's worth it to the producer or the engineer to pay someone who knows how to do it, as opposed to wasting time. It costs \$150 an hour, on the average, for a good studio and engineer. If the guy's an inexperienced drummer and there's a rattle in the floor tom, they might work on the floor tom for an hour. Right there it costs you \$150 to get a sound out of a floor tom. I've seen people take two *days* to get a drum sound! That's anywhere from four to eight hours per day. All of a sudden you've spent \$2500 on a drum sound when you can pay somebody \$50 to \$100 to come in and have a sound for you in 20 minutes. You're spending money to save money.

SF: Are you a drummer?

PJ: I'm a frustrated drummer. I bought my first set of drums when I was 19 years old and never really learned how to play them. At that point in my life I was at the crossroads. Should I learn how to play and make \$200 a week playing in a corner bar, or set somebody else's drums up and make \$700 or \$800 a week and see the world? I took the latter.

SF: What bands have you worked with on the road?

PJ: Toto, Rare Earth, Boz Scaggs, The

L.A. Express, The Crusaders, Chick Corea, Return to Forever, Stanley Clarke. Being a drum roadie is like being part of a pit crew for a race car. Everything has to be ready *before* the show. During the show you're there babysitting the equipment. Anything that goes wrong you're on it immediately. After the show there's the tear down and loading the truck. There are the logistics of making sure the transportation's together to get the equipment to the next gig.

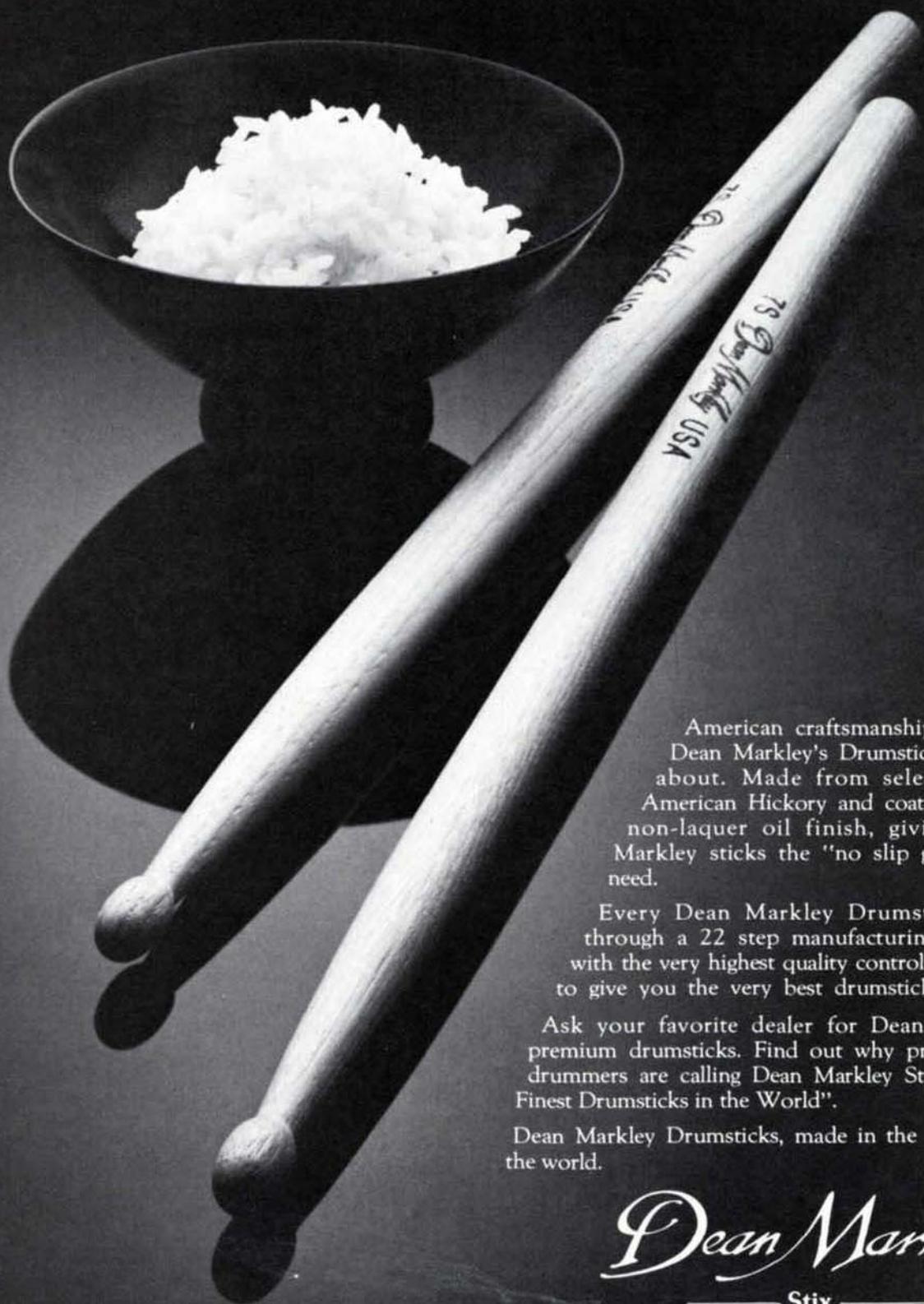
SF: Are all of the rental sets you have the same make of drums?

continued on next page



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PJ: No. I use Gretsch and Ludwig drums. I prefer the Gretsch. Most of the ones I have are from the late '50s or early '60s. There's a black Yamaha 9000 and a new Pearl powertom set on the way from Japan. I have ten rental sets.

SF: Why would an old Gretsch drum be better than, for example, a new Tama drum?

PJ: First off, the die-cast hoop is a big part of the Gretsch sound. They're the only company that has die-cast hoops on every drum. Most of the companies are waking up to the fact that a die cast hoop is where it's at. But, they only have it on the snare drum. The shells are the three-ply *thick* shells. It seems to me that the *less* plies, the better the sound. For instance, the solid-maple snare drums sound better than the plywood snare drums. I've found that a three-ply tom-tom shell sounds better than a six-ply. Gretsch is just the best-constructed drum I've found. All the lugs are good metal instead of the cheaper metal. Like the ad says: "It's that great Gretsch sound."

SF: Have you ever worked with any drums that you thought were really garbage?

PJ: I don't want to point the finger at anybody. Everybody makes their good model and their cheap budget model. I find that a lot of the companies make good equipment. It's just that no *one* set has everything. I prefer Gretsch drums, and a certain kind of hardware, rims and cymbal stands. On a set I put together it's mix and match.

With my rental sets I use Ludwig tom holders because just about every drummer can adjust it. It's real self-explanatory and it seems like everybody—at one time or another—has had a Ludwig set of drums. By having all Ludwig holders everything's interchangeable.

Pedals are an individual thing. I try to keep a stock of just about everything that's currently popular. I have the chain pedals, *Speed Kings*, Pearls, Yamaha, Rogers. When I have a rental I can ask a guy exactly

what he wants. Most drummers are familiar with their set-up and they like to feel at home. This way, if a guy calls I can have the same kind of pedal for him, the same kind of hi-hat and even the throne!

Hardware-wise I prefer the old-style Ludwig tom-tom holder. I like the Yamaha cymbal stands with the mini-boom. I like the Yamaha snare stand. I like the Pro-Mark hi-hat and I *love* Frank Ippolito's chain-drive pedal.

Drum heads are individual preference. I recommend white coated *Ambassadors* across the board, with a *Diplomat* on the bottom of the snare. Sometimes I'll have requests. Like Steve Gadd wants *Hydraulic* heads on his drums. Some guys want *Diplomats* on the bottom and *Ambassadors* on the top. Some want the dot heads. If I know ahead of time, I can have them.

SF: In the studio are you a middle man between the drummer and the engineer?

PJ: I'm like a foreign ambassador. It boils down to time is money. A lot of the engineers like me because I'm helping them speed the thing up; I'm saving them money. If it's right on the tape when you record it, then when you mix it you're fine. If it's not right on the tape, they can spend hours trying to re-record, re-EQ and try to get something out of the drums that wasn't there originally. You have to have it right the first time. You can't go back and put something there that wasn't there.

SF: Are you in business to rework the "guy on the street's" drumset?

PJ: Sure. The only people I don't tend to do those things for are the actual studios themselves. By doing *that* I slit my throat on my rental business.

SF: What's the favorite snare you like to use in the studio?

PJ: I have an array of snare drums. I customize snare drums. I try to keep all the bases covered. There are certain drums I prefer, but anything the guy wants, within reason, I try to come up with.

SF: What could you do to improve, for example, a stock 5 x 14 wood Gretsch snare drum?

PJ: First I would strip the shell. If it was a pearl finish I'd strip the pearl. I would fill all the external holes. I'd remove the muffler and fill all the holes with wood dowels. I'd make sure with a piece of glass that the shell is completely flat across the top and bottom except for the snare bed. You've got to be sure that the drum is round. In some cases I would re-bevel the edge, depending on what kind of drum it was. I'd use fresh inserts on the lugs and pack them so that the springs wouldn't rattle. Instead of using the regular screws, I'd use lock-washers and Allen-cap screws when I re-installed them.

If it wasn't a Gretsch drum I would put die-cast rims on it—either a Gretsch rim or possibly a Tama rim. I've seen the new Ludwig rim but I haven't actually tried one yet. Maybe I'll love them!

The strainer depends on what the guy wants. On some drums I use dual-tension strainers on both sides. On some I use a locked strainer on one side and a solid butt plate on the other.

Then I recommend a white *Ambassador* head on the top and a clear *Diplomat* on the bottom. According to the particular sound the guy is going for I use either 20-strand or 40-strand snares, or I make my own Hinger-style snares.

A snare drum is just like a guitar. You use a Gibson 335 for the rhythm tracks, a *Stratocaster* for the little chord riffs, a *Les Paul* for the solo. The snare drums are the same way. You use a certain sound for a ballad, for a rock tune, for a fusion song. There is no *one* drum that does it all.

SF: You'd suggest that any serious drummer should have several snare drums?

PJ: Oh yeah. I work on the side with Jeff Porcaro, Russ Kunkel, and Gerry Brown. Jeff, for instance, has seven or eight snare drums that go to each session. Russell has five or six, and Gerry has three or four. It depends on what they're doing. They use a different drum for a lot of different sounds.

SF: Can you do much to doctor up a metal snare drum?

PJ: It all depends. I've had more luck with the older shells. Once again, if it's an older drum, often the answer is to strip it. I've found that on the bottom of older shells, where the lip is bent back in, it's closed in on the top so there's no airlock, but it's still hollow on the inside. I fill it with sand to deaden that because you have an overtone ring when that's left open. Jim Keltner showed me a trick on the newer style drums that are just bent up like a "V." You take a fan belt off a car and you can lay it sideways and glue it in there all the way around. That will fill that groove. After that it's basically proper head combinations and tuning. Most drums, if they're maintained right, will talk.

SF: Tell me a little more about your rental business.

PJ: It's based in North Hollywood and I work out of Leed's Musical Instrument Rentals, 11131 N. Weddington, N. Hollywood, CA. I've got ten drumsets that are all set up for the studio. They're all packed and quiet. They don't make any noise. No rattles. They are ready to go. I have an array of probably 40 snare drums to choose from. I can tailor make a drumset to a drummer's needs so they can play on what they're comfortable with.

All my drumsets are maple drums. I have 20", 22", 24", and 26" bass drums. I have 8", 10", 12", 13", 14", and 15" tomtoms. The floor toms are 14 x 14, 16 x 16, 16 x 18, and 18 x 20. With the Ludwig holders a guy can order whatever he wants because everything is interchangeable.

SF: Do you rent cymbals?

PJ: Yeah, but we have a problem with them breaking and being stolen. With my studio-musician customers who come in

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from out of town—mostly New York—they'll bring their own cymbals. But, you can walk in with nothing. I've even got sticks!

SF: Who are some of the drummers you've built sets for?

PJ: Most of the rebuilding I do is on snare drums, although I have done some sets. We've got Jeff Porcaro, Russ Kunkel, Gerry Brown, John Guerin, Jim Keltner, Mick Fleetwood, Simon Phillips, Michael Walden, Tony Smith, Keith Knudsen and Chet McCracken, Bun E. Carlos, Steve Ferrone, Harvey Mason, Don Henley, John Panozzo, Jamie Oldaker, Alan Gratzer, The Bee Gees, Danny Seraphine, Casey Scheurell, Graham Lear, Joe Vitale, Jack White, Tris Imboden . . . do you need any more?

SF: Is that from word-of-mouth advertising?

PJ: Yeah. Some of these people have called me; most of them I've gone to myself. Oddly enough, when I get there to talk to them they say, "Oh I heard about you."

SF: Why is it that drum companies don't do similar things to their own drums?

PJ: It's too expensive. The other thing is that most of the drums I sell are antique drums that I've reworked. It's the old adage, "They don't make them like they used to."

SF: You work with the Slingerland *Radio Kings* a lot, don't you?

PJ: Yeah, and the Leedy *Broadways*, Gretsch *Rockets*, and the older brass shells from Ludwig, Leedy and Slingerland.

SF: Do you ever mess around with the RIMS system?

PJ: Just a little bit. I really like the idea. Truthfully, I don't know why I don't have any. Russ Kunkel has them and he told me that they're really happening. I like the idea of not mounting the toms to the bass drums. I don't like anything where the rod comes into the drum. For some reason you can hold the drum when you're tuning it and it's fine. As soon as you put it on the stand it's gone. I don't know if it's because of the hole the size of a 50-cent piece in the shell, or if it's because the drum itself is being warped the way it's hanging.

SF: Tell me about the drumsets you've built.

PJ: I've built a six-piece Gretsch Cherry Sunburst set for Jeff Porcaro; a five-piece North set painted in flames for Gerry Brown; a five-piece Pearl deep-shell kit with a custom rack for Jeff Porcaro and, among others, my own ten studio kits. Basically, the snare drum is what I can really stretch out on the most. What I'm doing is giving the guy a quiet set of drums. In the studio they hear everything.

SF: Would what you're doing to drums apply to jazz drummers?

PJ: It's just making the instrument more responsive and quieter. So, it'd work for everybody—even a Polka player!

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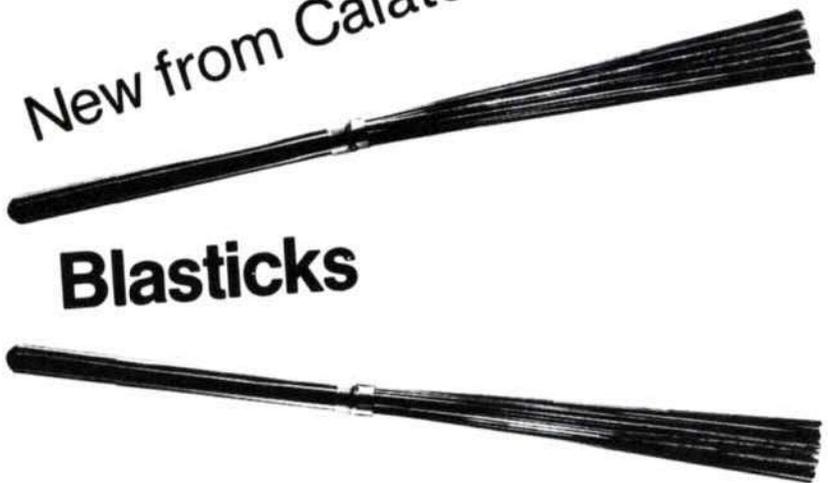
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thing. I've always said 'No' because I just know what his charts are like and I know I couldn't sight read one of his things. Guys like Vinnie [Colaiuta] and Terry Bozzio are unbelievable with Zappa's work. It's too hard for me. Once in a while there's a musical idea that my mind says, 'Go, do it.' But I don't have the facilities to do it because with some things, you need to sit and woodshed and work out before you can do them. But that takes time, and so I say, 'Right now, at this point in my life, I can't sit and take that time off.' Maybe there will be a time where something will force me to, but that's a decision that everybody has to make on his own.

"I wish I took piano. Talk about a guy who, right now, would have the prime opportunity to do tons more writing and to really cash in on a certain situation. But I can't do that, and for me, personally, there's not that kind of incentive. But if I had done it when I was 15, I'd be shakin' right now! So sure, in retrospect, I wish I had more training, but this is where those judgments come along. I say, 'Yeah, I wish I had more training,' but I can also say if I hadn't tripped off into the hills to Leon Russell's house one night, I would never have met Dave Hungate for him to say to Sonny Bono, 'Why don't you call this kid up to audition?' Now, also, if I hadn't played at Dantes one night with this guy I couldn't stand, Fagen and Becker [Steely Dan] would never have seen me play when they happened to walk into that club that night to get a drink. Those two nights, for me, are what I could say started my whole career."

It was the end of 1973, when, while still with Sonny & Cher and doing an occasional stint with Seals & Crofts, Porcaro was playing at Dantes, a small L.A. club. He had just turned 19 and was earning \$1,500 a week. But he quit Sonny & Cher without a moment's hesitation when Steely Dan offered him only \$400.

"When I went with Steely Dan, that was my first taste of being in what I thought was a so-called hip, cult rock 'n' roll band. It was my first taste of being on the road with a band that I thought was cool. I was totally in love with the fact that I was playing with those guys." Although he admits that recording with Steely Dan is a grueling experience, it is a creative environment in which Porcaro thrives.

"Two years ago with Steely on *Caucho*, I went to New York to cut the tune 'The Gaucho.' It was Steve Khan, Anthony Jackson on bass, Rob Mounsey on keyboards and Fagen, and I think that was all who were there. The plan was to rehearse the tune in the studio because Fagen and these guys are meticulous. You rehearse from 2:00 to 6:00, take a dinner break, and at 7:00 you come back to the studio, start the tape rolling and start doing takes. Well, this stuff is rehearsed so heavy that some of the spontaneity is gone maybe.

They demand perfect time and it's too nervewracking. Yet, I love it, and I guess there are some of us who love it. That kind of pressure with those guys is cool because from my point of view, their music is the most prestigious music that's ever existed and it's great to hear, no matter what. Some people can't stand the perfection, though. So we started doing 'The Gaucho' and they went through every musician's part so it was perfect. All they were going to keep at the end was the drum track, but most of the other musicians didn't know that. I just knew it from experience. Their idea is to get everybody else in the band and put them through all the shit in the world to make sure they play perfect, just to get the perfect drum track. And these guys are sweating—beads of sweat rolling down their foreheads—nerves, shaking while they're playing and they don't know what they're playing is never going to be used. We went to 3:00 in the morning and I don't know how many takes we did. Fagen walked out in the studio and it was something like, 'Guys, does everybody know what this tune is supposed to sound like?' We're all looking at each other going, 'Yeah!' He says, 'Good. You guys know what it should sound like, I know what it's supposed to sound like, then that's all that matters. We're done.' And he splits. So we're all sitting there in the studio like, 'What?' So we all got pissed and said, 'Screw it, we're going to work on this track and get it!' So just Gary Katz [Steely's producer] was there and we continued to do five or six more takes. The final product on that album came from those takes. That's the kind of shit where most people would have packed up and split, but we just sat there feeling we had to get it, and we did."

After the first tour with Steely Dan and recording the *Katy Lied* album, doors began to open for Porcaro, who, along with a cast of characters, were considered to be quite revolutionary.

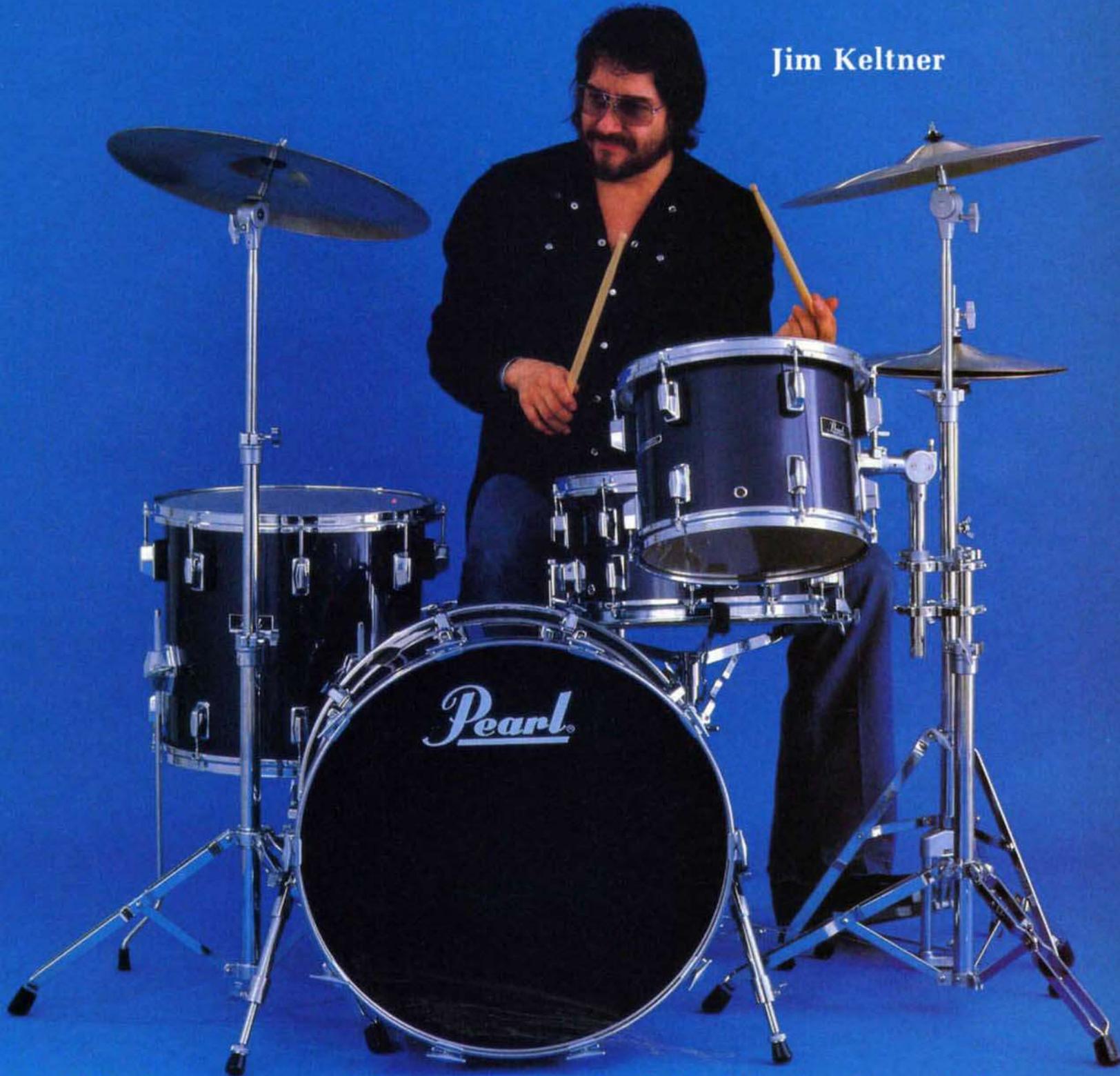
"Paich, Hungate, myself and a few other guys like David Foster and Jay Winding, all started getting into the studio thing at the same time. At that time—I'm talking about '72, '73 and '74—there was a real echelon of older guys like your Gordons, Keltners and even Hal Blaine. The other pressure was always being the youngest guys being studio players in this town, doing sessions. We were real radical. I mean, I know myself, we hated contractors. I just remember a time observing studio sessions when nobody said anything. You didn't speak your mind; it was 'yes sir' and 'no sir' and you just did your stuff. We weren't brought up to be studio musicians. We were guys who played in power trios; rock 'n' rollers who happened to read and play Barbra Streisand dates too, so we were a bit radical and outrageous for the times. People didn't know how to take 19-year-old cats speaking musical sense. I was never meant to be a legitimate studio

continued on next page

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drummer and I get irked when people say 'studio drummer.' Hey, I just walked in and played and had fun playing. But I always hated the politics and how you're supposed to perform and act as a studio person. I don't have a book and I don't go to the phone and call my answering service and say, 'What's next?' "

Still, he loves his work—and hates it. The ultimate positive session for him is leaving a gig knowing he's pleased the writer/artist. It's the consistent obstacles that seem to be the nature of the beast that Porcaro abhors.

"I think the statistics of how many musicians in the world are allowed to do studio gigs and why, says it all in itself. It's a real pro gig. Ask any artist or producer or engineer who uses studio musicians why they're using studio musicians and not their bar band or the guys in their local town. Why do studio musicians exist? Sure, there are different levels of music you hear performed by studio musicians, but they're not in control of what music they're playing.

"The only time I'm ever bothered when I leave is one of these situations where the artist is a groove, you love him, but you can't stand the producer. All artists who don't have a lot of control over the situation are nervous as hell until the album is done, hoping that they will get what they really want, even though they can't speak their mind most of the time because of a certain producer. So when you leave knowing that they got what you have, in spite of their producer, then I feel good. But when I leave a session and know I could have done a lot better, it bugs me. It's like wasted money.

"Some of the tracks have been done on the first takes and those are the magical moments. I did a Jimmy Webb album not too long ago where almost every track we did was a first take. And there are those times when the rhythm section guys are tuned in really great and it happens. When I was really into the studio stuff—before Toto started happening—one morning I would do Archies cartoons and in the afternoon I'd do a Helen Reddy album and that night I'd do a Tommy Bolin album. So there are those three spectrums. What's great about studio stuff is that you can walk in and do, say, a Streisand date where maybe I'd use a different drumset because there are live strings and it's all done live. At night with Bolin, maybe there would be a headband and deerskin boots and a completely different attitude and approach, which I always thought was like an acting gig. It's fun to change attitudes because your environment is always changing. It's like getting yourself psyched up; you're still the same person, but if I'm playing with Dolly Parton, I'm going to have a completely different attitude in my energy and in my playing than if I'm doing an R&B thing or something else. That's not something you can learn, but you can get a

collection together of records of different styles that you can force yourself to learn, and if you sincerely enjoy any kind of music, you know what that attitude is. But say it's your first gig; you're starting out and nobody knows who the hell you are. A contractor hires you for that artist or that producer and he's your boss. If you screw up, he doesn't ever hire you again because *his* gig is on the line, and that's the whole political bullshit about the studio system. Plus, there's the pressure once you're there and you have your first opportunity to play. Number one, you feel you want to be sure you have the kind of energy you want to give them. You want to give them your all and try to impress them, which usually ends up backfiring if you go in with that attitude. Your whole basic thing is just to keep time. I have fun helping with arrangements of tunes or suggesting song structures and knowing songs, instead of, like some guys I meet, no matter what instrument, still to this day have no idea about a song or tune structure. You should have a real good sense of a tune or the song—verse, chorus, bridge, dynamics and stuff like that. Just keep trying to keep the best time and be as simple as possible.

"A helpful hint for anybody who is doing sessions, really the number one rule is, don't even be thinking about what you're going to do, or how people in the studio are going to look over and dig that you're doing a good job. Try to be completely aware of the song; try to hear the song as many times as possible and play for the song—not for yourself or for the contractor or for whomever else. Show up early, work with the engineer to tune your drums and, if you can, look at the stuff ahead of time in case it's something that's too hard for you to do so you can woodshed. Be polite and don't stay on the phone too long. Don't do any dope, not because dope is bad, but I know where certain drugs affect some people's time or their concentration or their attitude. The most damaging thing of all, to me, is the monetary strain it can put on people, which has bad psychological effects as well. If you're a musician, that's not too steady a gig. Don't think because you're into dope that's going to make you hip or will get you into certain crowds or cliques. People would not believe how many people are *not* into dope, moreso than people who are into it as far as working goes. I can't tell you how many drummers got too messed up on coke, where their attitude or something became a problem, or how many gigs I've gotten because the guy they used before me was showing up late or his head was in another space and people were paying \$150 an hour for the studio time. People aren't going to buy that bullshit."

Approaching a new musical situation, Porcaro immediately tries to establish a mutual comfort between himself and the artist, "because it's the first time they're using you and they feel uncomfortable

too. I've run into situations where I'd walk in and meet the artist for the first time and they'd be nervous about meeting me too because it's their first album and they think I'm some sort of big studio drummer. They expect to see some tall guy who is 250 pounds or something and I hate that. I hate anybody thinking they have to bend over backwards for me. I think, 'Why?' I'd rather split and not exist if I think people have to change their ways or something because of me. There's no reason for it. Usually I think just my general personality doesn't threaten anybody though."

Toto was a dream realized a few years ago, but even before the Sonny & Cher gig, he and David Paich, introduced through their musical fathers, would talk about it.

"We knew so much about the realities of being in a group. That's why we did all the studio stuff. There was a point where, for two years, I did everything I could, even if I didn't feel like playing, just to save up money so I could take two years off and give the group a try."

Interestingly enough, however, the fact that Jeff, along with co-members, are in-demand studio musicians seems to be the main criticism of the press. According to critics, studio players are supposedly too polished and too rigid to create excitement necessary to stir an audience. Porcaro disagrees: "Every studio musician I know can go on stage and play. Nothing happens to you when you're in front of people. My God, the pressure of playing in front of an audience is nothing like the pressure of a chart with Paul McCartney in front of you and you've got to do something right. What is that? You think the people who write about you and the people in this town are going to make you uptight and nervous compared to what we face in the studio? No way. Because the people who write this shit about the studio thing don't have the faintest damn idea of what they're writing about."

"While I'm in Toto, it's a fact that I will work every breathing minute of my day. If Toto isn't doing anything—we're not on the road, we're not in the studio, we're not getting together to write—I will stay busy. I feel sorry for people who don't. I can't see being a musician and just being in a band. If you're in a band, you only get to do one album a year, maybe two. At the most, you're talking about twenty songs a year and maybe a couple from previous albums when you go on tour. So these great bands—these genius bands—go out and play twenty tunes. Now I personally love playing. I get up early in the morning on days I have free and somebody will call and ask if I'll play. I'll play and I'll play for free for somebody. I'll play anytime anybody calls me to play because I like playing. At least I know that at the end of the year I can say, 'God, even if only I know, I've accomplished a lot of shit. I've played a lot of music and I've used my full potential. Whatever gift God gave me for what-

ever reasons, I've used it to its full potential.' And people call and ask if I'll play on their album. Even when I'm tired or sick, if they say, 'Will you please play? We'd love you to play,' then it would be my privilege to play."

But Toto definitely remains the prime love and commitment. "I think anybody would be happy to be given the privilege to have a group that's yours, and you get to go into the studio. Money is given to you to make the kind of music you want to make, you're the boss and it's your baby. That's incredible. I think that's anybody's ultimate goal if they're into doing their own thing, themselves or with five other comrades."

"It's an emotional investment when you get six guys together and from the beginning, you have a dream. I wish I could control Toto the way I see it, but so does everybody else in the band. That's individually. We all keep it to ourselves though. When we work together, nobody comes on stronger than another person. We all pretty much think the same because we've gotten very used to compromising. What usually happens is that it comes out kind of the way we want it individually."

Having been on the road for six months out of every year since he was 18 and up to the beginning of Toto, Porcaro enjoys even the simple elements involved in the travelling—such as just sitting on the bus looking out the window or sketching in his hotel room—aside from the pleasure he derives from playing live.

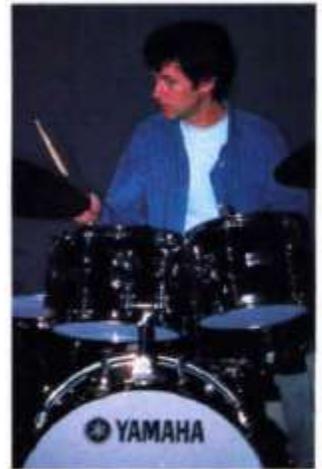
"A good touring drummer differs a little bit from a good studio drummer, but it's primarily the same thing. You can't be busy and tripping off because in a band like Boz's or even Steely, the bands are so big you basically have to keep time. And you have to stay healthy so you can show up the next night."

"Physically it takes its toll. My hands are small and they're not meant to do what I do to them. Actually, though, I'm a lot stronger than I ever was before, drumming-wise. My hand used to go into spasms where all my fingers would come into the center of my palm and my tendons would stretch my skin. The pain was unbelievable. You could not physically pull the fingers from the palm of my hand. It happened starting at age 15—every other week during my playing—and what I did to change that was sand the lacquer off the end of my stick. What would happen was I'd be playing and unconsciously hold the stick tighter and I'd cramp up. So it hasn't happened in a couple of years. I also think it has to do with playing and relaxing, even though it may not look like I'm relaxing. You've got to stay loose. Nerves are the worst thing for a drummer."

"I don't warm up before a gig, but I should. But before a gig, my mind is on so many other things that I forget to warm up. I do think it's a good idea to do,

continued on next page

Pick Withers' reasons for playing Yamaha System Drums.



It's easy to find a true note on my Yamahas. In the past, it's been hard for me to get a true sound on other drums, they didn't tune evenly. I have a thin (5½") snare and it's really crisp and responsive. The finish on the drums is absolutely amazing.

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For more information about Yamaha Recording Series, Tour Series and Stage Series Drums and Yamaha Hardware, write: Yamaha Musical Products, A Division of Yamaha International Corp. Box 7271, Grand Rapids, MI 49510.



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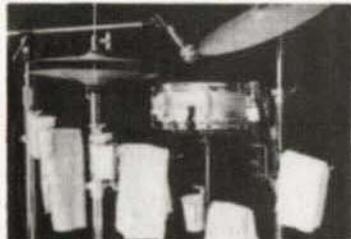
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though, so you're loose and stuff. There have been so many times where the first tune is a big burner and I didn't warm up and maybe I hadn't played in two days and everything was tight.

"I hate solos," Porcaro continues. "I don't have the chops to play a solo anyhow. Seriously, I've always hated drum solos. The only ones I ever liked were Elvin Jones' stuff—jazz players—because they played 12-bar phrases and they were real musical. But I never came across a musical composition that I played on that was worthy of a drum solo, aside from some obnoxious 'show-off-your-shit' kind of thins."

Porcaro has always been reluctant to discuss his equipment since it has changed so frequently, but before this past tour, Jeff began endorsing Pearl Drums. What does he look for in a set? Replying, he laughs, "I don't know jackshit what I'm talking about, just what feels right. Most all drums feel good to me, sincerely. Drums are drums, depending on the kind of head and how you tune them. Sometimes just the look of one will make me partial to that one for two weeks; just because it looks different and it's new. I always set up differently. Sometimes there'll be a lot of tom-toms, sometimes just two, depending on what I'm doing. Or sometimes I'll go into something where usually I'd have a bigger kit and the music kind of demands it, yet I'll go in with completely the opposite, which is kind of interesting. In the studio, my set changes for every tune. Every tune on this current Toto album has a different set or different components. It depended on the tune. If we were doing a real heavy tune, pretty broad rock 'n' roll type thing, I used a Gretsch 24" bass drum and a 14 x 10 or 14 x 12 (I'm not really sure of the size) mounted tom and a 16 x 16 floor tom and maybe two crash cymbals and that's it. On some tunes I may have used a larger set with more toms. It just varied, depending on the type of tune and what the tune required from me musically or from the drums. You play differently when you set up differently and that's interesting too.

"Last year when Toto went to Japan, I went to Yamaha, not for an endorsement, but because I loved the drums. I was real shy and all embarrassed and asked if they could make me a custom set. I mean, I was ready to pay for it, and two days later, they came with four drumsets. One was a custom color and there's no other color like it. So it's not that I really endorse them; they just gave me the stuff. But I've never signed anything."

He is endorsing Pearl however, and his current tour set-up is a 22 x 18 bass drum, with toms in the sizes of 10", 12", 13" and 16", extended shells. All his drums are double-headed, and he uses Remo *Ambassadors*, top and bottom, although sometimes a *Diplomat* on the bottom.

"You're asking the wrong guy about

tuning tips," Jeff laughs, although he manages to describe his instinctive method: "I just wish we had one of my drums from any drumset to take a picture of. You put it on a flat table and look at it and you'll see maybe one of the top rims at an angle. When I put a new head on, I do not evenly tune the drum around. I've never in my life hit every lug to see if it's right. I guess it's all feel. I can tune a drum to hear a pitch, and I can just tell by the feel of the key on the screw that goes to the lug, and how loose or tight that feels, where that drum is at.

"Every engineer is as different as every drummer and engineers will drive you up the wall. With some engineers, you'll walk in and never hear the words, 'Let me hear the snare drum.' I know engineers who don't need you to get a drum sound; they know how to mike you so they're getting the sound your ears are hearing out there. Some guys have everything closed miked and they've got to do it their way. All studios are different, all boards are different and some guys take two hours for the drum sound. It bugs you when you've just left one studio and never heard your drums sound better and people are raving. And then you take that same set to another studio and you've never heard it sound worse and people are getting on your case. You just have to smile."

He laughs at the mention of his extensive snare drum collection. "I do have a lot of snare drums, but I only use one," he laughs. "I've got it down now, but it all changes. Four years ago, you could not walk into the studio without somebody saying, 'How come you don't have a deep drum? I want that low sound.' And now, most of the rock 'n' roll dates I've been doing, I've got your regular Ludwig 5 1/4" chrome snare, both heads tuned as humanly tight as possible. They sound like timbales with the snares loose; no muffling on it whatsoever and ringier than all hell. It all changes. Everybody has his own way. That's why I always used to have lots of different snare drums. Now I basically use three of four I have with me. One is a deep wood, an old *Radio King*, and I have a lot of old antique drums that sound great. I really don't collect anything just to look at."

He bought the very first snare drum that Paul Jamieson made, explaining, "It's all a matter of who you are if you want to buy a custom drum or not. It's just like looking at a painting and asking yourself if it's worth a thousand bucks or not. You may not if you don't like it, but if in your eyes it's a great painting, you'll pay for it. Now, if you really want to get down to it, you go try to find a 1934 *Radio King* shell—forget about any hardware on it or anything, just the shell itself—you'll have to go to Evansville, Indiana, to some old hardware store to find it. Monetarily, those drums are worth some money, just for how old they are and the wood. If I had the money, I'd

buy one. As far as wood drums, the old shells are better and the rims and hoops are too. If you buy a new wood drum, you can't get too live with it. It's hard to explain, but with the old *Radio King* shells that are real thick, I have the insides veneered and they're real live. In the studio, I generally use the metal snare. On the road I always use an old *Radio King*, and it's just as live as any metal drum, yet a lot more musical."

Also before this tour, he began using RIMS because, "the tom-tom stays floating; there's nothing going into the shell, so you're getting the most out of the drums."

He is endorsing Paiste Cymbals, using two 21" 2002 crashes, a 20" 2002 crash, a 19" 2002 crash, a 22" 2002 ride, a 22" 2002 China, an 8" 2002 bell and 14" 2002 heavy hi-hats.

He also uses a drum rack invented a couple of Toto tours ago (1980). "I usually work on the stage set-up for Toto and I like to keep everything clean on stage. So when it got down to the drums, I wanted the drums mounted on something that would be real easy to set up and real sturdy when I play and that would be great for a roadie to change if anything happened during the show, like my breaking a bass drum head. So Paul Jamieson and I got together and designed this three-sided rail which has sleeves where all my cymbal stands and tom-tom mounts go in, plus, all the microphones and booms clip onto the outside and go over the drums. There's a banana cable that runs on the inside for all the mic's, done by our monitor mixer, Shep Lonsdale, and this way, nothing ever moves. Plus, when you look at the set, there are no floor stands or mic' stands of any kind, so the only thing that is not on the rail itself is my bass drum, floor toms, snare drum, hi-hat and stool. That way, say I broke a bass drum head. The guys in the crew would just have to go in front, slide the bass drum right off without moving one tom-tom or anything, and slide in another bass drum, which can be done in two

continued on next page

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FEBRUARY 1983

Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs, cowbells, rubber feet, temple blocks, tambourines, drum keys, mallets, pop gun, snare drum stands, Roto-toms, muffers, crotales, tuning forks, brushes, cases, ratchets, congas, music stands, metronomes, sistrum, aimglocken, tabors, maracas, stick totes, sirens. REALISTIC ROCK—Appice, PICKERING, RUDIMENTAL JAZZ—Morris, RHYTHMIC ANALYSIS—Albright, PROGRESSIVE STUDIES—Gardner, FUN WITH TRIPLETS—Rothman, PORTRAITS IN MELODY—Cirone, TRANQUILITY—Houllie, SUITE FOR SOLO VIBRAPHONE—Lepak. Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs, cowbells, rubber feet, temple blocks, tambourines, drum keys, mallets, pop gun, snare drum stands, Roto-toms, muffers, crotales, tuning forks, brushes, cases, ratchets, congas, music stands, metronomes, sistrum, aimglocken, tabors, maracas, stick totes, sirens. REALISTIC ROCK—Appice, PICKERING, RUDIMENTAL JAZZ—Morris, RHYTHMIC ANALYSIS—Albright, PROGRESSIVE STUDIES—Gardner, FUN WITH TRIPLETS—Rothman, PORTRAITS IN MELODY—Cirone, TRANQUILITY—Houllie, SUITE FOR SOLO VIBRAPHONE—Lepak. Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs, cowbells, rubber feet, temple blocks, tambourines, drum keys, mallets, pop gun, snare drum stands, Roto-toms, muffers, crotales, tuning forks, brushes, cases, ratchets, congas, music stands, metronomes, sistrum, aimglocken, tabors, maracas, stick totes, sirens. REALISTIC ROCK—Appice, PICKERING, RUDIMENTAL JAZZ—Morris, RHYTHMIC ANALYSIS—Albright, PROGRESSIVE STUDIES—Gardner, FUN WITH TRIPLETS—Rothman, PORTRAITS IN MELODY—Cirone, TRANQUILITY—Houllie, SUITE FOR SOLO VIBRAPHONE—Lepak.

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bars. Plus, it's real sturdy and durable."

And for those who missed the Feb-March, 1981 issue of *Modern Drummer*, Porcaro also works with the Linn LM-1 drum machine with a set of *Synares* working from the bass drum pedal, interfaced with the Linn Machine.

"The machine is fascinating. It's real drum sounds recorded on digital chips. Usually you program a beat by hitting buttons. The way I have it set up, I can sit down with all four limbs and play spontaneously. Instead of hitting buttons, there's a *Synare* pad that I hit and it's the same sound as the button. I've got a little Roland foot switch so when my foot is down

on it, it's a closed hi-hat sound and when I lift my foot up, it's open. Then there's a bass drum, snare drum and tom-toms. So it can keep repeating or you can do a five minute tune where every beat is different. I just think that the future for that is incredible. Obviously, in two years, the sounds will get better, it will be a lot cheaper and believe it or not, instead of going to Miami to work for the Bee Gees, all I would have to do, in theory, is have them call me at my home. They'd put a time code of a demo of the tune they wanted me to play on, it would come over the phone lines and the time code would go into my machine. It's just like what everybody does with com-

puters and telephones. You have a computer in your hotel, you call the main office, you put your phone down and all the computer information stores into your home office. It's the same thing. The time code will come in and go into my Linn machine, so now I know the tempo and the tune. I sit there at home in the morning and play my idea and that registers in the Linn Machine. I call them up, send my time code to them and the Bee Gees have automatic arms with real drum sticks and real drums that, through a synthesizer or computer, will go down and whack when you hit something. So my idea will go into their Linn machine, and from the outputs it will go to the automated arms and they can hear my idea for their tune that I heard, exactly, except it will be in perfect time. That's a whole other thing. With perfect time, there's no emotion involved, which is the drawback, but the potential is great, especially for drummers. Just imagine getting up and doing three dates within a two-hour period of time from your home and having the rest of the day just to play. Everybody's whole purpose in doing this is so they can make money and eventually they can retire and enjoy music. Realistically, you want to hear a drummer who enjoys it, but you also want to buy that computer thing that costs money and you aren't going to get it playing some club. So you've got to do jive-ass sessions and people call you a funky person and everything for ten or twenty years while you do that."

Still, all in all, Porcaro enjoys what he does and makes the best of it when he doesn't. "No one individual session sticks out in my mind. They've all been learning experiences and growing experiences. Probably there were some that stuck out at the time they happened, but knowing me, I'd sit here for three days trying to remember one. For me, at least, I think every day has been a learning experience. Every day there's something, whether you make a discovery about yourself, or a discovery about other musicians, or the way people play together, or producers, or groups, or a studio, or engineer—just everything. There's always a new discovery whether it be bad or good, especially because there's such a variety of the things I run into every day. Of course, there are sessions where the music is unbelievable. If you work for Fagen or Becker, it'll stick in your mind forever. And then there's also the opposite end of the spectrum where you do something that is so stupid and horrible and you can't understand why it exists and why people are spending \$150 an hour in the studio with this person. You don't have to accept it, but if that's your way of making your living, then you say, 'Yeah.' And it's a great way to make a living.

"In closing, the best thing for drummers is to have fun. Even if you're falling apart inside, you have a great outlet to express your emotions, whether you realize it or not."



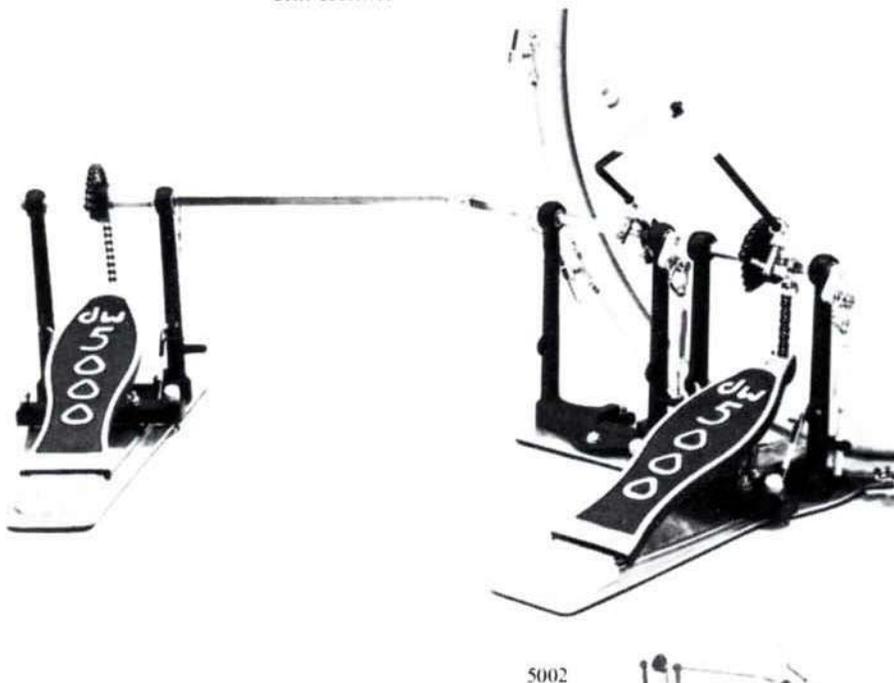
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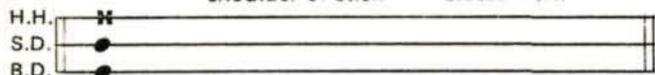
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by John Xepoleas

Same Old 16ths?

● = tip of stick ○ = open H.H.
 - = shoulder of stick + = closed H.H.



Playing a beat with 16th notes and alternate hands on a closed hi-hat is nothing new. This concept has been used in Latin, disco, funk and rock musics. Below, I've written a common beat using this concept.

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

By simply accenting on the "and" of the beat you can give an old idea a new and exciting feel. Play the accented notes with the shoulder of the stick on the edge of the hi-hat cymbals. Play the unaccented notes with the tip of the stick on top of the hi-hat cymbals.

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

When you have a feel for the accented 16th notes, explore some different snare drum variations. Remember, you're using alternate hands on the hi-hat. The snare drum might be played with either the right or left hand, depending on where it falls in the beat.

Here are two examples with simple bass drum variations. Try these and work out some variations of your own.

By incorporating the five-stroke roll, you can add a spicy dimension to the hi-hat figure.

R R L L R L R L R L

For added flavor, open the hi-hat on the accented upbeat. Close it on the downbeat. This results in a tasty swish sound.

+ ○ + ○

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Developing Your Own Style

The exciting, aggressive world of drumming is famous for highly skilled players who love their craft. Added to them are drummers of every skill level, some up-and-coming, some content with their present status and some on the way down. You may be asking where you fit in this picture and how you go about carving a niche for yourself.

The answer is to develop your own style. To do so will require maturity, patience and hard work. It will involve refinements in most aspects of your drumming.

All attempts to develop a drumming style must begin with technical mastery (or at least technical proficiency) on the drumset. There are many options as to what and how you play in any given musical situation. You are in bad shape if you play a certain way simply because it's the only way of which you are capable. You should never have your style determined by a lack of skill. Therefore, you must learn new beats and fills, and you must be able to generate several different sounds and feels from the same beat.

Technical mastery of the drumset requires an ongoing learning program, because the best drummers are themselves continuously developing new skills. Lessons from a topnotch instructor are always beneficial. However, if you have good reading and transcription skills you can continue to grow through study of the best teaching methods and by listening to (and transcribing) the best drummers.

Before you can develop your own style, it is important to be aware of what is already going on around you. The great classical composer Johann Sebastian Bach spent large amounts of time in his forma-

tive years simply copying by hand other composers' best material. In this way, he closely acquainted himself with their styles and methods. When it came time to develop his own music, he did so from a veritable treasure chest of knowledge, rather than from a vacuum.

The same principle applies today. Copying top performers is a great way to learn about style. You should have listening habits that cover a broad spectrum of music (the broader the better), and as you listen you should pick out the *good* from the *bad* in each genre and analyze as best you can what makes the *good* good and the *bad* bad.

Once you have achieved the necessary technical skills to give yourself plenty of options, and you are aware of what other drummers in the field are doing, it becomes important to have the proper attitude in each particular playing situation. We should be more than drummers—we should be musicians, creating mood and effect. At all times, be aware of the emotion your drum sounds are carrying.

The best musicians are those who make the players around them sound better. Their aim is synergistic teamwork (individual performances that, when taken together, increase each other's effectiveness). To be like the best, you must reject the desire to show-off. Your job is to help create quality music. Sometimes that means you will have to play an inconspicuous role; at other times you will have to carry the band and play a prominent part calling for lots of flash and pizzazz. Whatever the situation, remember that your goal is to create the best music possible, whether or not you shine individually.

To further understand what style is all about, you should keep several basic elements in the back of your mind. The first of these is the question of complexity—how simple or fancy should you play a particular song? Ask yourself if the song would be better with a cluttered and busy drum part or with an open and roomy drum part. Further, ask yourself if the tonality of the song requires a broad spectrum of sound from the drums (full of high and low tones) or a limited range of pitches (possibly just the bass, snare and hi-hat).

Next is the question of dynamics. You should be skillful enough to perform

equally well loud or soft, and you should be able to change the volume of one of your multiple lines without changing the other lines. For example, given any beat, can you change the cymbal volume up and down without affecting the bass and snare, or vice-versa?

This next aspect of style has to do with your relation to the beat *as it is perceived by the other players*. In theory, the downbeat is a point in time with no dimension. In actual practice, however, it has width. In a properly flowing performance, some players are "on top of the beat" (that is, rhythmically arriving at the beat just slightly ahead of the rest of the band), some players are "behind the beat" (rhythmically arriving at the beat just slightly behind the rest of the band) and some players are "on the beat" (rhythmically arriving at the beat somewhere between the "top of the beat" players and the "behind the beat" players). It is crucial that you choose the proper spot in each song in order for each song to fall into the right "groove."

In weighing the overall aspects of style (and in using both intellect and instinct to decide just what to play), it is also necessary to consider the limitations of the genre in question and whether or not you are going to stick within those bounds. For example, country drumming normally calls for simple snare, bass and hi-hat lines, short fills (if any), few cymbal crashes, and emphasis on your relation to the beat. On the other hand, new wave drumming will often enthusiastically utilize fast 8th-note cymbal and bass drum lines, and long fills composed of straight 16th-note runs across the toms. So be aware of genre, and weigh its limitations.

The final aspect of style deals with your approach to the business of playing. The key words here are dependability and integrity. Once you have worked long and hard to develop your own playing style, be careful not to let extraneous things interfere with your working relationships.

Drumming is more than an artform. It is also a business, and requires proper style on both counts. Hard work should allow you to carve a niche for yourself. You can give and receive much enjoyment in the exciting, aggressive world of drumming by developing your own style.



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RM: Some of your old fans might feel that you've betrayed them, but how long can you play the same thing? You have to try to grow.

CB: Yeah, that's true. But then I remember back when I was a 16-year-old kid. Even with groups that I was totally keen on, after their third album or so, forget it. Give me something new. I like to think that we are still doing things that people are interested in, and that we're still innovative.

I think all the things we've done, like the layoffs, and the music changing, have made for the longevity of the group. As you said, if we had just hashed out *Parallel Lines* again, and things like that, it wouldn't have been the right approach. But I also think that in the future, there is a chance that we can sort of go back to what we once did, and do it better, because of the changes. Perhaps it's time to come full circle.

Debbie and Chris have brought a lot of different styles of playing out of me, which has really helped me. I mean, a long time ago, it took me forever to figure out how to play a disco beat, because I had no interest in it whatsoever. Even though it's a simple thing, it was just alien to me. So this band has really helped me grow as a musician, that's for sure. I can see it when I look at other groups who sort of came up with Blondie, but who have continued playing the same sort of music they started out playing. They haven't really progressed as musicians. I think it's the attitude of openness that's important, and I think music is pretty open now. I think things like Miles Davis having a rock guitar player, and things like that, are really positive things. Some of the jazz freaks may say, "What is this guy playing this crap for?" But you have to be open to it.

RM: One thing that a lot of people are not open to is the use of drum machines, and things like that.

CB: Lately I've been getting into programming a drum machine and then playing drums along with it. I think that's where the real strength lies—in the combination of the two. There's probably a bit of resentment among drummers in particular about modern technology, but I don't think that's a very healthy attitude because these machines do exist. Drummers shouldn't feel that these machines are going to put them out of work. They can be a real asset.

What I've been getting into is practicing and rehearsing with the drum machine. It's much the same as practicing with a metronome, except that you can set up a counter rhythm with the machine and play against that. I find that programming the machine will give me ideas that I can then take further with the drums. It really helps me come up with a lot of interesting patterns. So modern technology is here. People should get into using them to their fullest potential, instead of shying away from

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them. It's all part of modernization and I really think it's important.

RM: Have you ever used one on a record?

CB: Yeah. The first time we did it was with "Heart Of Glass," which we recorded in '78. I think that was probably one of the first pop records to incorporate a rhythm machine and a sequencer into the final mix.

RM: Did you have any trouble staying with the machine?

CB: Yeah, I did at first. But that was a very mid-tempo disco beat, so it wasn't that hard. I have a hard time playing to a straight metronome. I don't particularly enjoy that. So I try to get a really swinging counter rhythm happening against straight time. That way, the machine is not just clicking away time like a metronome; it's really like another instrument playing a rhythm. That really inspires my playing and I find it very helpful.

RM: I think what bothers a lot of people is the idea that the drummer is leaning on a machine.

CB: I would say to use it just to inspire your playing; not to use it as a crutch. I approach it by thinking of it as a separate instrument unto itself, and then playing together with it. I really think that state-of-the-art drumming involves the use of both a real drummer and some sort of rhythm machine. People probably don't realize that most people do play to click tracks in the studio. I'm not talking about total, crazed punk rock or something, but on professional rock 'n' roll records, I think the average person would be surprised at the amount of people who play to click tracks. Some people think that's cheating, but it's really not.

RM: *Plastic Letters* had a statement on the back that said, "An Instant Record." What did that mean?

CB: That was Richard Gottehrer's company. His concept—which I sort of agree with—is to make records very quickly. His company started around the time of our first album, and the idea was just to go in, cut the tracks, and put it out—hence, "instant records."

RM: I thought maybe it meant that it was all live; no overdubbing.

CB: No, but a lot of the early stuff was just one or two takes. When the whole group is recording together, you obviously get a certain spontaneity and a certain live feel. But it can also tend to come out very sloppy. I think the happy medium of that is maybe for the group to play together to achieve the right feel, and then going back and redoing certain things. People have made records in the past totally live, but I think it just comes down to state of the art, really. I think you tend to follow a certain route that is sort of the accepted way of making records. You are working with people who are making records professionally, and they know how other professionals are making records.

Nowadays, I really enjoy laying down a drum track, and then doing everything else

over that track. There's one track on the *Hunter* called the "Orchid Club," which was done totally from scratch. It began with just a rhythm machine and a sequencer. Then I added a tom-tom pattern, and then a counter pattern to that, and then I used a synthesizer for the bass drum. I think building a track that way gives you more time to be creative. Doing a live track, maybe you can achieve spontaneity, but perhaps you put less thought into it. You don't want the track to sound clinical either, but you can go back and pick and choose what you do.

We have done things live. The first track on the *Hunter*, "For Your Eyes Only," was basically live, with just some guitar overdubs, and that achieved what it was supposed to achieve in that respect. And then on "Call Me," the entire band was playing, but we were playing to a sequencer click track. With that, we could play like the first 16 bars, stop, listen to it, make sure it was happening, and then continue from there. That's the other thing about playing with a click: you can stop and start. To the average person at home this might sound like a really clinical way to do things, but it does go on and it does achieve a certain quality that one wouldn't particularly get by going in and just banging out the tracks. So I think there are things to be said for both ways of doing it. It's a lot quicker—quicker meaning cheaper—to just go in and cut something live. Building the tracks takes a lot more time. Sometimes with Blondie, we'll cut a drum track and we won't know exactly what's going to go on top of it, aside from the particular melody. But that gives us the chance to get the drum track down properly and then go back and really think about what's going to be lying on top of that track. So that's where you have the difference. In the studio, I enjoy being more technically minded. Live, it's a whole other thing.

RM: When you are recording then, are you influenced by the thought that at some point you will have to perform the tune live?

CB: Well, with the *AutoAmerican* album, we were in the situation where we didn't intend to go out and tour for that album. So you approach the record from an entirely different point of view. When you're in that situation, you don't have to worry about how you're going to recapture that sound.

State-of-the-art wise, I think replicating live what you do in the studio is a very old concept. I don't think one should have to worry about that at all. You're making a record; a piece of vinyl. It's not a live performance; it's something else. I also think there's a good deal of enjoyment for the audience in hearing a record a particular way, and then hearing it interpreted live, because it's going to be different. I think *Sgt. Pepper* probably changed the whole

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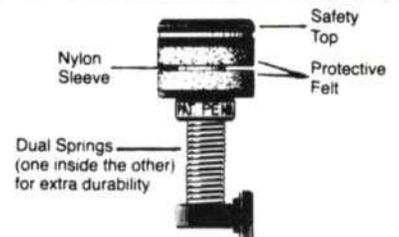
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concept of what a record should be. Of course, with all of the synthesizers and technology available today, the Beatles could probably duplicate it now, with just the four of them. But anyway, I don't think there's any reason to hold back on an idea in the studio just because it can't be duplicated live. With Blondie, we really try to use the studio as the musicians' palette. Although I think anything we've recorded we could go out and play. It all involves music.

Another thing is the quality of sound. It's a lot more easily controlled in the studio than it is live. Studios are built to enhance the acoustics. In a live situation, you could be playing in a skating rink or something like that. You're not going to get the sound you get in a controlled environment. I see live performance as mildly verging on chaos, as opposed to the studio, which is very controlled. It's not necessarily clinical; just a different atmosphere.

RM: People contend, though, that in many cases overdubbing is used to cover up bad musicianship.

CB: I think in rock 'n' roll, the idea and the attitude are more important than the actual playing. If you don't have ideas, you're not going to achieve anything worthwhile. I mean, if you can learn to play Beethoven's 5th, then you're a wonderful musician, but you haven't created anything. Without ideas, chops and technique aren't worthwhile, just for the sake of ability. I think these ethics apply to my particular genre of music—rock 'n' roll. I don't think it necessarily applies to capturing a jazz performance, or something like that.

RM: You have different goals. Jazz musicians are interested in capturing the way a musician played at a certain moment. You are not so much interested in capturing a performance as in realizing compositional ideas.

CB: Right. And also, I'm dealing in a more commercial medium than jazz. You have to consider the marketability of your product, so to speak.

RM: Marketability has always been a concern, but given the condition of the industry in the last couple of years, it seems to be a higher concern than ever.

CB: The music business has changed considerably in the last five years. I think it's taken this long for the big companies to take the little companies more seriously. I think they've also learned a lot of lessons from the small, independent companies about scaling down their operations, and things like that. The bigger record companies are trying to figure how they can get a return on a smaller investment, whereas in the '70s, they were giving away these really lucrative contracts. They would sign a group who was very successful at the time, and guarantee them millions of dollars on albums for the next ten years. That probably has a lot to do with the economics of the business right now, because you still

have some of these groups who are no longer selling records, but yet are guaranteed millions of dollars upon delivery of an album, and the record company knows the album isn't going to sell. I don't think you are going to see that again for a while.

Everybody's saying the music business is in terrible shape, but I think for the new groups coming up, it's a very healthy situation. I think the big companies are more receptive to new things now than they ever were. Not that they're willing to take a chance on it, but I think they respect it at least. The credibility is there now for people to work independently, whereas when we started out, it really wasn't. You had to be signed to a major label or you didn't matter. Nowadays, I think every record can stand a chance. IRS Records is a prime example; they're very successful and they have a relatively small operation. The whole attitude of the majors has changed. They see a small record company selling 100,000 albums and having a good return, whereas a major company has to sell two-million albums to get a good return. So I think things are getting scaled down a little bit. We're not seeing albums sell ten-million copies anymore. The contracts they were giving away and the money that was there five years ago just isn't there any more. The standards of mass marketing and selling were too high. The expectations got blown out of proportion. The record companies were spending too much money, the staffs were too big and all that kind of stuff, and they just had to come to grips with it. It took them a long time, because maybe they thought things would just keep getting better by magic, but that's not the case. Once it's all scaled down, I think it will all start over again. Record companies will be more receptive to going to clubs and finding bands.

RM: The industry is blaming a lot of the problem on home taping. As a musician who is part of a group that makes records, do you feel threatened by home taping?

CB: No, I don't. If you're a working musician, the record is only one part of the whole entity; the whole way of making money. No one can duplicate a live performance. And then, this might sound corny, but no one can duplicate the creative packaging. If you give people an interesting package—the music, the photographs on the cover, lyric sheets or whatever—they won't just want a tape. Records from the '50s and '60s always had liner notes and good packaging. But then in the '70s there wasn't really a lot of information on an album. The record companies were just slapping a picture of the group on the cover, putting out the album, and then selling millions of copies without that much effort. I think maybe it just got too easy. People will have to get down and work a little harder now. People thought it was going to go on forever, but things change. Every business goes up and down, but I figure the record industry will get

back on its feet.

Another thing to consider is that the whole economy is bad right now, and also there are more things to spend money on. I think a lot of people might prefer to spend their money to see the band live, rather than to buy the record. They don't have the money to do both. And then the whole video thing is biting into the record industry too, from kids spending five dollars a day playing video games to adults spending \$60 to buy a movie, instead of spending that money on records. All of the technology that's been developed over the last ten years is now becoming consumer oriented, but at a time when there's no money available. So people have to decide. If they want to buy a video deck or something, they have to make payments on it. There are more things to buy than ever before, and people want things like video recorders and all that kind of stuff. So basically, entertainment has diversified.

Home taping is biting into record sales, but a bigger problem is the counterfeiting of records. That's detrimental to the whole business. But home taping—what can you do about it? I don't really think they could work out a royalty on blank tape, which is what they're trying to do. I think *Walkmans* and things like that brought about a lot of home taping.

RM: But they also brought about a big increase in the sale of pre-recorded cassettes.

CB: Right. You've just got to make records that people will want to buy. That's the whole thing. I think if a person really likes the group, they will go out and buy the record and support the group. I'd like to think that, anyway.

RM: Could the musicians themselves be doing more to hold down costs? For instance, you hear stories about groups going into the studio not even knowing what they are going to record.

CB: Right. Well, once again, that way of thinking is sort of outmoded nowadays.

RM: Is this something you try to control with the young groups you have been producing?

CB: What I try to do is make sure the group is fairly well-rehearsed and prepared to go in and do it. With the *Colors* album, we did something like 20 tracks in two weeks. It was fun like that; less boring.

As a producer, I see my role as being a helping hand to people who are new to the situation. I choose to work with people who are new to the studio because I'm new to production. It's nice when you see a group live, and then you take them into the studio and record a few tracks with them,

continued on next page

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and then when you see them live again, you see how they've developed as musicians just from being in the studio that short time. With my productions, I've used up a lot of time getting drummers to play with the click track, but in the end, it pays off. And even the time you spend just banging on the snare drum to get the proper sound will help you develop as a drummer. It can be an alienating experience to go into a studio because it's a whole other way of playing and a whole other way of working. So even though you may be in the studio for ten hours, and you only spend two or three hours of that time playing, just being in the studio will help you develop as a drummer.

The production thing is really fulfilling, and at some point, I would like to produce another group and work with a really good engineer. But I've now done a lot of the things I wanted to do, so right now, I'm more interested in drumming than in anything else. For the last year-and-a-half, I've been drumming pretty constantly, and I'm really starting to see the accomplishments of that coming out in my playing. So I'm interested in taking it even further.

RM: Are you interested in trying to do regular studio work?

CB: I think I would enjoy doing that, because of the opportunity of playing with a lot of various musicians. There's sort of a "big brother" thing in the studio world, so to speak. There are certain respected players who get all of the work, and then they sort of pass on their spillover to players who they think can cut it. So I've been trying to get involved in that. I've been speaking to a few people about it who said they're going to try and get me some extra studio work.

I think one of my major assets lies in the fact that I've been in the studios a lot over the last four or five years. I'm totally accustomed to it, totally relaxed in that environment, and really do enjoy being in that environment. A lot of people don't enjoy being in the studio. It can tend to grate on your nerves, being in there for three months without ever seeing the light of day or something. But I understand what it's supposed to be and what's supposed to be done. And I enjoy making records. I feel very capable of laying a drum track down and making everything very solid and precise, so that other musicians can create on top of it. I guess the reason I feel that way is that I see myself as being a lot more controlled than I once was. Probably because I'm a bit older now. I mean, Moon is still my favorite drummer, and I really enjoy playing that style of drumming. But in the studio, I enjoy the challenge of getting the drum track right. I don't think I'd like doing 25-million sessions a day, but I'd enjoy some freelance things.

RM: Do you think you could be happy just playing in the studios and not doing any live playing?

CB: Nothing takes the place of live performance. When you're not in the studio

environment, you can just play and go wild and have fun. I think that's what live playing is all about. The more serious stuff comes in the studio. So I think I'm ready to mix both of them for a while.

RM: Your set-up has remained pretty consistent over the years.

CB: It's still basically the same. I'm still using Zildjian cymbals because they don't break. I've added a couple of *Syndrums*. I'm still using Premier *Resonator* drums. [8 x 14 snare, 14 x 24 bass, 12 x 15 rack tom, 16 x 16 and 16 x 18 floor toms.] My kit is going to be changing soon; I've ordered a kit with four rack toms.

RM: A lot of rock drummers use single-headed drums, but you've always used both heads.

CB: The *Resonator* drums are designed to be used with two heads. Basically, I'm still pretty traditional. I find I get a better sound using two heads and miking them properly as opposed to just sticking the mic's up underneath and just getting volume.

RM: I've always thought it was odd having a mic' up inside a drum, because drums are designed to project sound, and they usually sound better when you hear them from a distance.

CB: Well, we have ambient mic's in the studio that pick up the room sound. Even though I've recorded in some big rooms, I would really like to record in a cathedral or something like that, and have it close miked, and also have the ambient mic's. The definition comes from the close mic's, and then you use the ambient mic's to give some air to the sound.

RM: Have you ever gone into a studio and had an engineer start to remove your bottom heads?

CB: I've been fortunate in that I've been able to get the people to work with me. I like to have a certain amount of input. I mean, I believe that the engineer does his job, and the drummer does his job, but there should be some sort of give and take and a sort of happy medium. I'm more into the ambient sound. I always thought John Bonham had a good drum sound, and I've been told that if you put a mic' anywhere near Bonham's drums, he would immediately start to complain, because he didn't want that close-miked sound. I think today you find a lot of people going for a more ambient sound. You should have a couple of tracks that are just reserved for, like, air. You can always shut those mic's off later and not use those tracks, but I think you need that ambience.

RM: Your drumming tended to be busier on the earlier Blondie albums than on the last two.

CB: I'm really trying to come up with a happy medium of the two ways of playing. One of the reasons I played a lot of fills was because we had a bass player who had only played a week before he joined the band. So there seemed to be a lot of gaps to fill, and it just seemed to work at the time. As

time went on, I think the proficiency of the musicians I was involved with got better—not to say that I was any more proficient by playing a million drum rolls, because that's a fallacy.

And then the music that the writers in the band have been writing calls for a different sort of playing than it once did. I never had much use for brushes and things like that, but on *AutoAmerican* we got into a couple of lighter, jazzier type things that I used brushes on.

RM: When you play some of the older tunes, do you go back and play them the same way you did five years ago?

CB: I try to play them a little more controlled. The early stuff was done very quickly, and *that* was really representative of a live performance. So that's the way I was playing then. Also, it's a lot harder to get all that stuff in when you're playing to a click track. That's the thing I'm trying to achieve though: using the click track not just to keep the beat, but to make all of the rolls and fills become real even. Another thing is that we are now doing a lot of things that are r&b and disco oriented now, and that calls for more of a Bernard Purdie style of drumming—just keeping the beat. And then, like I said, I look at the studio as being a more controlled atmosphere.

When I played with Iggy Pop, I got a chance to just blow out and play as crazy as I wanted to. I'm still looking forward to being in a situation where I can do something like that again. I'm really looking to make a super rock 'n' roll record—really loud, crazy, guitars and all of that. If I can get a session like that, I'd really like to do it. I really do think that's my forte, although I am capable of being a controlled player. But I really think if you want to get the best out of me, just tell me to go crazy. I'm real accomplished at that.

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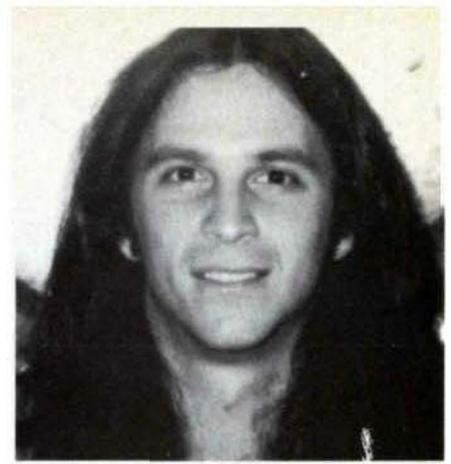
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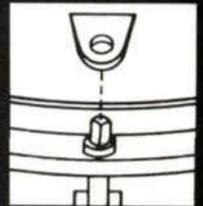
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by Rick Van Horn

Simplifying Set-Ups

One of the aspects of club playing I enjoy the most is the fairly regular change of scene that goes along with moving from club to club. I've worked engagements of several weeks duration in one club, and I've worked a series of one-weekers from time to time. But while the constant variety of location, audience and playing situation is pleasant, the hassles of breakdown and set-up are not. For the casual drummer who has to relocate on a nightly basis, the hassles are multiplied even more. So it's not surprising that I've received several letters asking for ideas on how to speed up the breakdown and set-up process, and how to overcome the frustration of having the kit set up perfectly in one location, and then having to spend several nights making minor adjustments in an attempt to recapture that set-up on the next gig.

Let's start by assuming you have achieved the ultimate set-up. As it stands now, your kit is exactly the way you want it, with all stands at the proper height and angle, all drums at the right spacing, all tripods and legs arranged without tangling. How do you keep that arrangement for the next set-up?

Obviously, you have to mark the position of all drums and stands. Since a few years ago, when Rogers introduced the *Memri-Loc* system, almost all the major drum companies have incorporated some form of locking collar onto their stands. These collars interlock with the stand fitting bellow, to hold the position of the drum or cymbal at the proper height and angle. If you have this type of hardware, then 75% of your work is already done. But if your hardware pre-dates the memory systems (and a lot of mine does), then you have to create your own. There are several methods of doing this:

1) *Gaffer's (or duct) tape*: This is the cheapest and quickest way. Once your drums are set up the way you want, you

simply place a loop of tape around each stand above where it fits into the next stand section. This will give you the point at which the sections meet so you can put them up that way next time. A simple ink mark on the tape, corresponding to the tightening bolt of the section below, will give you the exact horizontal adjustment of the stand as well.

One of the drawbacks to tape is that it can slip under the weight of the stand if the tightening bolt loosens or lets go completely. As the stand section slides down, it can force the tape out of place. It is also aesthetically offensive to some people to see tape on drum hardware, although the piece need not be large. This, of course, is up to you. But I would like to point out that this system is quick to install or remove, making it especially good for marking *experimental* position changes that you might not want to keep.

2) *Hose clamps*: For several years, many drum companies used standard hose clamps to mark height adjustments on stands. Slingerland is a notable example. These work pretty well for marking purposes, but cannot be relied upon as a second holding device if the main tightening clamp lets go. They also do not lock in the exact angle by fitting into any other part of the stand. Both of those features are exhibited by the modern memory collars. But if you have older stands of small diameter, hose clamps work well for marking height settings, and you can install them in such a way that some particular part of the clamp (say the short space between the two ends of the tightening screw) lines up with the tightening bolt of the section below, giving you the angle setting as well. Hose clamps are very inexpensive and readily available in the hardware store, or local auto parts store.

3) *Shaft collars*: These are the closest thing to the machined memory collars that

come on modern drum hardware, and that's because they are designed for machine work. Shaft collars are small steel doughnuts with a specific inside diameter and a set screw fitted through one side. They come in a wide variety of sizes, from quite small up to about an inch in inside diameter. Mark Sanders, currently with Tower of Power, showed me how he uses 3/8" collars on the ends of his floor tom legs to give instant height and leveling adjustment. I'm using several on vintage cymbal stands, and also on some newer stands which do not incorporate memory collars in their design. The shaft collars are sturdy, lock firmly in place, and since they are a machined steel part, seem to blend in and appear as part of the actual drum hardware. You can achieve the proper angle adjustment by lining up the set screw with the tightening bolt of the stand section below. Shaft collars are available at most well-stocked hardware stores, or you might call a nearby machine shop for other local sources.

Even if your equipment has memory collars now, there are a few places you might be able to use homemade ones additionally. I've already mentioned floor tom legs. I've also set shaft collars on the inside ends of my disappearing bass drum spurs. All I have to do is run them out till the collars stop them, and they're at exactly the right length. This is important since one of my rack toms mounts from the bass drum, and if the bass drum isn't set properly, the height of the rack tom is thrown off as well.

Once you've gotten all the stands and drums properly locked in with memory features of some kind, you might find it beneficial to take a hard look at your breakdown procedures. Just because a stand breaks down in several places is no reason that it *must*. Don't break any stand down more than absolutely necessary to fit into the trap case. This is especially impor-

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tant if you're using multi-clamps and extension booms. If you have to re-create a customized stand arrangement from scratch for each gig, you're wasting a lot of time and calling for a superhuman memory effort on your part. The solution is to leave the arrangement as fully set up as possible, and place it into the case that way, so it can go back up quickly. I have an oversize trap trunk which I built specifically to place many of my boom-stand combinations inside without having to move the critical boom settings, or dismantle the multi-clamp fittings. Only the tripod base sections are removed, and those re-fit immediately due to memory lock features. It's simple physics: the less you have to take apart, the less you have to put back together. The fewer critical adjustments you have to dismantle, the fewer you have to find all over again. This is a trade-off decision you have to make for yourself: a larger trap case, and perhaps a re-thinking of your packing procedures, versus a much quicker, more exact set-up each time.

Even after you've gotten each individual stand set up just the way it should be, you have to arrange all the stands and drums, to assemble the total kit. Once again, you're faced with trying to re-create a combination of legs and tripods that worked perfectly the last time. The way to do this is to employ a technique called *spiking*. This technique comes from the placement of scenery on theatre stages, and has been borrowed by stagehands placing equip-

ment onto rock concert stages. These guys have to get the equipment where the artists want it. It must be done correctly and it must be done quickly. What they do is mark on the drum platform, either in paint or with gaffer's tape, little "U"s where each stand foot comes down. The open end of the "U" points back along the angle of the stand leg. This achieves the double benefit of putting everything where the drummer wants it for playing, and re-creating an untangled stand arrangement each time. I use the same technique on the top of the drum platform I carry with me. You can also use gaffer's tape on your drum rug. If you don't use either a platform or a rug, I suggest you invest the \$20 or so necessary to get a carpet remnant and start using it, if only for the ability to spike your stand positions. Even if you play on club stages already carpeted, the addition of one thickness of carpet will make no difference in your stability, and the benefit of having your own personal stage layout to carry with you is enormous. If you've ever spent the first three nights adjusting stands and drums by fractions of inches, you'll appreciate what I mean.

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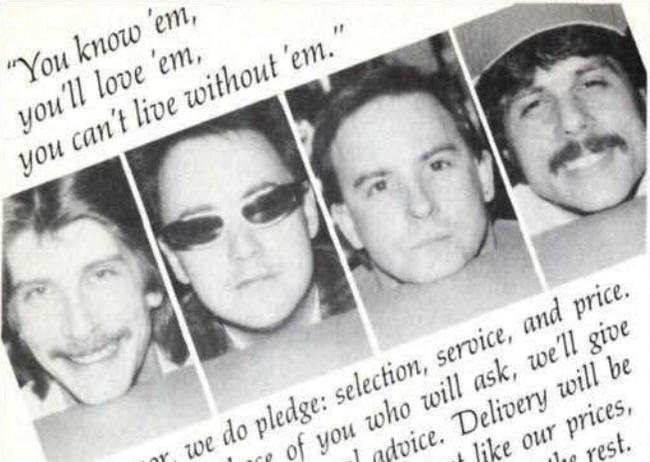
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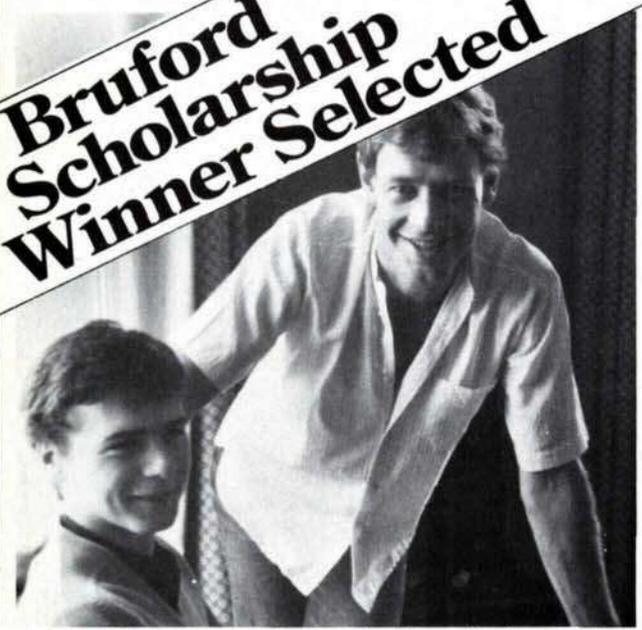
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Roundtable continued from page 17

Make it possible for the student to pay by the course. You can charge them the same as what they would pay for the degree, but let them have their choice.

SAMUELS: I agree with what you're saying, but I think someone's ability to make all those choices is dependent on a certain amount of self-awareness that the person has about his own personal needs. If people are in a position where they're very clear about what their goals are—absolutely. They really should have that kind of option. Unfortunately, I think the system is basically set up for people who *don't* know what's going on. The premise is: "They don't know so we'll take the responsibility away from them and just tell them what to do." Often, the students are not really involved in what's going on. They just sit there sort of sponge-like and soak up whatever is thrown at them.

I think the people who get the most out of schools are the ones who are already motivated. As educators, our responsibility should be to expose them to things and open them up, rather than to just give them specific things.

CASTLE: But a lot of times, those programs where the students write their own ticket seem to be worthless, because there is no focus in any one area. If you tell the incoming student, "We'll teach you anything you want but we're not going to tell you what to learn," four years later, that person might be able to do one or two things, but won't be professionally equipped. The student would be, however, if the faculty had chosen certain fundamental things that the student should know.

BRAUGHAM: While in school, I encountered a number of individuals who, for one reason or another, had broken the usual sequence of graduating from high school and immediately going into college. They had gone out and done other things—some had been in the service, others had worked—and more often than not, when those individuals came back to school, they had a very clear idea about what they wanted from the institution. I'm not suggesting that everybody do that, but perhaps certain individuals could attempt to play professionally for a while, and find out exactly what's going on. Then, when they decide to take advantage of a college or university, they will know exactly what they want to do with their time and money.

LEWIS: The only way they are going to figure out what they need to learn is by getting out there and failing a little bit.

SAMUELS: Right. You've got to get out there and find out what's going on. Most people in schools are too young in terms of their experiences to really benefit.

LEWIS: Going from high school right into college is not a good idea. There should be a point where you go out into the world and find out what you need an education in. You also find out if you really want to do what you think you want to do.

RM: When a student comes in who is uncertain about what to do, the advisor can either say, "Don't declare a major yet. Take a variety of courses to see what's there," or he can say, "Go ahead and get into a formal program." A lot of advisors seem to do the latter.

SAMUELS: But ultimately it's the student who is going to have to decide if that's right or wrong. That's what it really boils down to. If the advisor says, "Do A," and the student does A and enjoys it—that's okay. If the advisor says, "Do A," and the student *doesn't* like it, but continues doing it, who's responsibility is that?

RM: That's my question. How much responsibility does the advisor have to force the student to make a choice?

SAMUELS: In terms of the way I deal with my students—if a guy comes in and doesn't know exactly what he wants to do, I expose him to a general kind of thing; a little bit of this and a little bit of that. After a certain point, I say, "The next time you come back, and it doesn't matter how long it takes, it's *your* responsibility to come in here with questions. I'm not here to entertain you. I want to give you what *you* want, and it's your responsibility to be aware enough to ask me questions. Otherwise, it's a waste of your time."

As far as a college program, it's almost a moot question, because in order to get into the jazz program here, for example, they have already made the commitment that that's what they want to do. So it's not like they're being forced into something they don't want.

LEWIS: That's right. If you go to a school to study jazz, you take whatever goes with it. If you want to get a degree, you will have to take things like English and Math and so on. I had to take those things in high school. But then, Math has a lot to do with music—figuring out the value of rests . . .

BRAUGHAM: Or how much you're going to get paid.

LEWIS: Right! [laughter] Very important. Most musicians just want to take music courses. It would be nice if a university could be just a little more flexible with that, even for a degree. There should be a change made where really irrelevant courses don't have to be part of it, just because the state says so. The state is going to have to make a move too. These rules were made a long time ago.

RM: How much continuity does a student need in school? If after a year or two he gets an offer to go on the road for a while, should he do it?

BRAUGHAM: I would have to say yes. If a person has displayed enough ability to be offered a chance like that, I think it would almost be a crime not to take advantage of the opportunity. Especially if it's a top-name band.

RM: What if it's not a top group? What if it's the Holiday Inn circuit?

LEWIS: As long as he knows he's going to come back to school, I think he should do it, because that's excellent experience. You have to think about it, but if it's a reasonable job, I would take it, especially if it's for a length of time. I wouldn't leave school just to go out for a month. I'd make sure it was for six months to a year, and then go back to school.

BRAUGHAM: The school is not going anywhere, and it would be more meaningful after that experience.

RM: Can school be viewed as a place to escape from the pressures of the world for a while in order to concentrate on your instrument?

SAMUELS: Well, if you're lucky enough to be supported while you go to school, then you, in fact, have that kind of luxury. You don't have to deal with everyday kind of problems, like making a living. That's one of the advantages of going to school.

LEWIS: Frankly, I think it's good for you to get out and pay your own dues. It's part of your education. I had a job in a fish market. It made me work a lot harder as a musician, because I hated working in a fish market. But I think it was good to do it. It made music that much more important.

RM: Schools need students, but in order to get students, are they encouraging people to go into music who have no business going into music?

SAMUELS: Certain schools have an open-door policy of letting anybody in, which is nice in theory, but it only works if you clean house at some stage. It's nice to have the front door open, but don't lock the back door. That's kind of a hard question to answer. You can't make it the school's responsibility to refuse people from entering, because how do you know beforehand if someone is going to blossom or isn't? The responsibility of the institution is to foster whatever is inside a person. But is it also the school's responsibility to establish standards that they feel are valid and stick to them.

The music field is immense—absolutely immense. It can absorb a lot of different people on a lot of different levels. Everyone isn't going to be a player; everyone isn't going to be a star; everyone isn't going to be recording day and night. But there are a lot of different avenues.

BRAUGHAM: In the process of going through school, maybe that person will experience some related subject, like recording. Maybe he will find a niche for himself in the studios as an engineer.

RM: That sounds like a good argument for getting into a formal program. The required electives would expose the student to these related areas.

CASTLE: Many times, students find out half-way through a course that they really do like the subject. Many people come into an arranging course who are primarily performers, and when they get into transpositions and copying parts—forget it! But then they finish one or two arrangements, and when they hear it, they get

continued on next page

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bitten by the bug. It may not take over entirely from their performing, but they find out that this is worthwhile. So the degree program exposes them to this, whereas if they were given a choice, they would probably avoid it.

RM: What should a student look for when choosing a school?

LEWIS: First of all, where is it? Do you want to spend four years of your life in that area? If you like winter, don't go to Los Angeles. And if you're afraid of New York City, don't come here. Also, while you're in school you can be establishing yourself in that town. So you might consider whether you might like to live there the rest of your life.

The other thing to consider is the faculty. If it's a jazz course, are the teachers genuine jazz musicians?

BRAUGHAM: And are they there?

LEWIS: Right. That's a problem at many schools. They may get fine teachers to come in as guests, but they are not going to be there day in and day out.

These things are pretty simple, but I think they are the basics: Who is going to be teaching you and where are you going to be living?

RM: What does one get from going to school that can't be gained simply from taking lessons from someone?

LEWIS: You don't take "lessons" anymore. You come here to gain knowledge. Lessons are something you take when you begin in order to get technique. People are too concerned with technique. Technique is just the process of making sound. If Charley plays a roll his way, and I play a roll my way, we both have technique. Sid Cattlet and Dave Tough had technique, but they couldn't play fast. They sure played pretty, though. They made music on their drums, and that's a technique too. But everybody just talks about chops. The reason they could play like that was because they had a complete knowledge of music. They knew what was happening around them. That's what a drummer should want to learn. Come to school and take music courses and become a better drummer. Don't come to school to learn to play the drums—you should have already done that.

SAMUELS: Another thing that happens in school is that you'll be meeting people who will become part of a musical community.

LEWIS: You make lifelong friends. When you're in one place a long time, you'll always end up with somebody that will go on in your life with you. You're learning together, you're going through it together, and you help each other. We all help each other. Everybody here is a teacher, because we all have something to learn from each other. You're coming here for knowledge; you're not coming here for lessons. Drummers who want to take drum lessons should go to a drum teacher. If you want to learn to become a musician, then come here. By the time you're eighteen, everybody who is going to tell you that you shouldn't do this has already told you. So when you decide to enter the university, you already know pretty much what you want to do.

Choosing A School continued from page 18

schools that interest you—their strong and weak points as pertaining to your particular needs, and their academic and musical criteria for admission. It is good to begin this search at least two years prior so there is enough time for a thorough search and so that you can adapt your high school curriculum to meet the requirements of the college(s) you are interested in. Also, do not rely on choosing one school—choose from three to five schools. There are many factors that enter into admissions procedure. It is best not to have all of your eggs in one basket. Most important is that in order to be admitted to a music school, you must show proficiency in all the basic music skills; melodic, rhythmic and harmonic—whether on marimba or piano, this is a must. The days when a percussion student could enter a college with only a knowledge of snare drum have long since passed. A serious student should have at least two years private study in keyboard and percussion prior to testing for admission. If you have the talent and the desire, you can create a place for yourself in the music world. Your education is the first and most important step.

Cirone continued from page 19

about the mallet instruments, I know that student has done a little something extra.

The second level is the students who come from the drum corps area, as well as the junior college area where they've already had two years experience on the college level. And the drum corps people also have more experience because the drum corps are really moving fast and training their people—not only in rudimental techniques, but also mallets and timpani. So these kids have had that exposure. The problem I often find with these players is that all they can do is play the tough rudimental style. They've never learned to loosen up. So that's what I look for in these kids. If in an audition, I can get them to loosen their grip and play with a little more freedom, then I know I can work with them. I also look for mallet experience, because mallets are so important today in the training of percussionists. So for these people coming in, I would say they should have a mallet piece prepared, and they should work on their sight reading. Reading is another weakness I often see in drum corps players because they learn a lot of things by rote. But if they can sight read something, I'm impressed. I know I can work with them and we'll do fine.

The third level consists of graduate students who have already had four years at a university somewhere. They can read music, they can play solos, they've played the repertoire, they've done the basic work, but a lot of them have been trained to play differently than I play. So we have to talk about that. I don't expect them to come in and change their technique all around; I only have them two years. But we talk, and if they're willing to adjust to some of my ideas—because I can work better with my ideas—then I know I can work with these people. So for that level I look for flexibility. I look for people who are not so into their own way of playing that they can't adjust and maybe learn a little on top of what they already know.

One characteristic for all of these people is that they should have sight reading down. Our business demands sight reading. You can't go home for a month and learn the piece and then come back and play it. In our art, when music is put in front of you, you should be able to perform it on your instrument with relative ease.

Combs continued from page 19

the frustrating aspect, and that's what would lead me to advise a student that the University of Tennessee—or percussion in general—might not be for that person.

Firth continued from page 19

have to be proficient in all three areas. So if you don't play timpani or mallets well, you're going to be at a disadvantage, because out of all those people, there are



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bound to be six people who are proficient in all three areas.

Then we start picking things apart. We'll get a guy who'll come in and play snare drum; fantastic rudiments or something that'll blow you away. However, if you ask him to change some little thing, or ask him to read something, you find that he has no artistic sense other than chops. You try to be selective but fair. Now a young kid out of high school maybe hasn't had much training, and so there are little things you can overlook if you can sense a genuine talent there. If you've got some musical experience, and you listen to someone play, after they've played ten seconds you already know if there's something worth listening to or not. If they've got a feeling or a flair, you can hear it instantly. And then if you sense that something is weak, you still sense that there's an embryo there that's got a lot going for it. Given some time, patience and a lot of hard work, you can make the person play. So what I'm most interested in is the basic talent. Chops are impressive, but too often you don't hear anything to go with them. The bottom line is still the basic God-given talent. If that isn't there, the teacher can't develop it.

In terms of our auditions, we ask them to play a piece of their choice in the three areas. If they play something really well, we probably don't even ask them to play something else. After a while, you hear so many, you can almost tell by the piece

they've chosen whether they've got something going or not. A point I always make is: *Don't go in over your head.* If you operate at 100%, do something at 90%. Leave something to spare, because you're going to get nervous, or somebody's going to say something that rattles you. If you hear something intermediate played very well, you know you can develop that. If you hear somebody who thinks he's better than he really is, already you've got a problem.

You've got to remember that we're dealing with an age bracket where people are just about to take off. An 18-year-old kid—no matter how good his background, or how not-so good—can take off in the next two or three years. I've seen a pattern. The first year they come in, they've just gotten out of the house, they've got a lot of newfound freedom, and they like to raise hell. But by the end of the first year, they suddenly think, "Gee, what did I accomplish this year?" Then they get deadly serious, and that's when you start to see kids take off.

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Born in Capetown, South Africa, Anton Fig moved to Boston at age 18 to enroll in the Boston Conservatory. While there, he began playing with local bands in various genres, including orchestral, big band, jazz, chamber, everything but rock 'n' roll. He was in the band that performed at the Smithsonian Institute in a concert in memory of Duke Ellington. After leaving school, Anton worked with such artists as Pat Martino, Robert Gordon and Link Wray, and the group Topaz. After moving to New York City, Anton joined with two friends from South Africa, and they formed a group called Siren. During this time, Anton did the drumming on the solo album by Kiss member Ace Frehley. Siren eventually changed its name to Spider, and they recorded two albums for Dreamland records. Recently, the group signed with Chrysalis records, changed their name to Shanghai, and released an album.

WM: What led you to become interested in drumming?

AF: I never really decided to play drums. I just found myself beating on tin waste-paper baskets at an early age. It was never a conscious decision to play drums.

WM: What was the music scene like in South Africa?

AF: Well, at the time I was living there you got quite a bit of rock music. British

groups like Cream, Hendrix and the Who were pretty big, and there was quite a bit of jazz, but not as much as in the U.S. And also African music. It was a mixture, with classical music as well. But mainly British rock and some American rock.

WM: What type of African influences do you think you picked up while living there?

AF: I don't know if they were conscious. It was mostly from the radio and coming in contact with black people from the area. There's a terrible political situation there. I don't want to get too much into that. I used to play and jam with black people at my house because that was the only place I was allowed. We weren't allowed to do it publicly, except if we slipped into a club, because the politics are messed up. So I did get a chance to play with the people down there, but I really don't know how it affected me. It was just that I grew up with it around me.

WM: Were black people allowed to play in the clubs there?

AF: Yeah. They had black clubs and white clubs. They wouldn't allow the bands or the audience to be integrated. On some occasions a black band would be allowed to play in a white club. Our band went into a black club to play and we were the only white band to play the club. We had to get permits from the government. I haven't been in South Africa for ten years now. I think the situation has probably gotten worse.

WM: Are you interested in different kinds of fusion music?

AF: I like Weather Report. I don't think they're that much fusion anymore. They seem to be going in a much more jazzy direction lately. I've always loved Miles Davis. He's been my hero for years. When the jazz/rock groups first came out I really liked the early things by Chick Corea. Then all of the bands started playing that style and I really only stuck with Weather Report. I don't seek out that kind of music now.

WM: Did you have formal instruction?

Anton

AF: I went to the New England Conservatory in Boston for four years and got a degree in percussion. I studied under Vic Firth, timpanist for the Boston Symphony. I was studying timpani, mallets—the whole range of classical instrumentation.

WM: So the bands you were listening to while you were developing musically were bands like Cream and Hendrix?

AF: Well, also my dad listened to jazz. He had a lot of Bud Powell and Oscar Peterson records that I'd listen to. I heard a lot of that kind of stuff. When I was a teenager I was totally into rock music. Then when I came to America I started listening to jazz again, which I studied and tried to play for about five years, all around Boston. At the end of this time I started playing with Pat Martino. I also played one concert at Carnegie Hall with Tony Williams. I used to play with George Russell in Boston and he wanted me to rehearse with his big band because Tony Williams couldn't make it to rehearsal. After the rehearsal he said, "I'd like you both to play." It sounded totally nuts to me because Tony Williams is the greatest. He is my favorite drummer. Anyway, I did the gig. I was totally overwhelmed and it was a really fortunate thing to do.

WM: How old were you?

AF: About 23.

WM: What do you remember about your early career playing with the rock band, Kammak, in South Africa?

AF: Two of the people in the band now were in Kammak. We got together because I had a friend who was into jazz. I said "You get a few of your friends who are into jazz and I'll get a few of my friends who are into rock and we'll put a band together." This was around the time of Blood, Sweat and Tears but our band was nothing like that. So we put this band together and really worked at it. At the time we were playing around just for fun. All of a sudden, from playing to no people, we went to this one gig and the place was

Fig

by Wayne McLeod

packed. The thing I remember most about it was that I really don't know what happened. The band just caught on, I don't know why we caught on or what we did that was right. All of a sudden we were the band to go see.

WM: Do you still practice?

AF: I haven't really practiced lately. When I was on the road I was playing every day. I've found being on the road is really good for building up my chops. The main problem was that I was playing the same songs every night. Now we're rehearsing new stuff as well, so I've been concentrating on getting songs together, rather than practicing to become more technically proficient. I bought these pads to practice with when we're on the road, usually an hour before we go on stage. I also had two pads for bass drums because I use two bass drums on-stage. I would sit for about an hour and do rudiments and stuff.

WM: Do you do anything to stay in shape?

AF: I stopped smoking and drinking before I play. When I toured with Robert Gordon and Link Wray across Europe, I used to come offstage and feel totally exhausted because I played so hard. I gave up smoking during the tour and started to feel a lot better after we played. Another reason I played so hard was we didn't have good monitors as the opening band. Sometimes I couldn't even use my toms. I had to stick to the snare because it was the loudest drum. The snare and the cymbals.

WM: What kind of set-up are you presently using?

AF: I use Zildjian cymbals. I was fortunate enough to get an endorsement from the Zildjian people. I've found that they've been the best cymbals because of their wide range of sounds. I also use Tama drums. They've worked out really well, especially for the road. I have a Ludwig set that I use in the studio and I keep them in town in case I need a set to jam on. It's about an eleven-year-old Ludwig set that's sort of a psychedelic mud orange. They're the old thick Ludwig shells that give you that big,

warm, powerful sound.

WM: How do you position your drums?

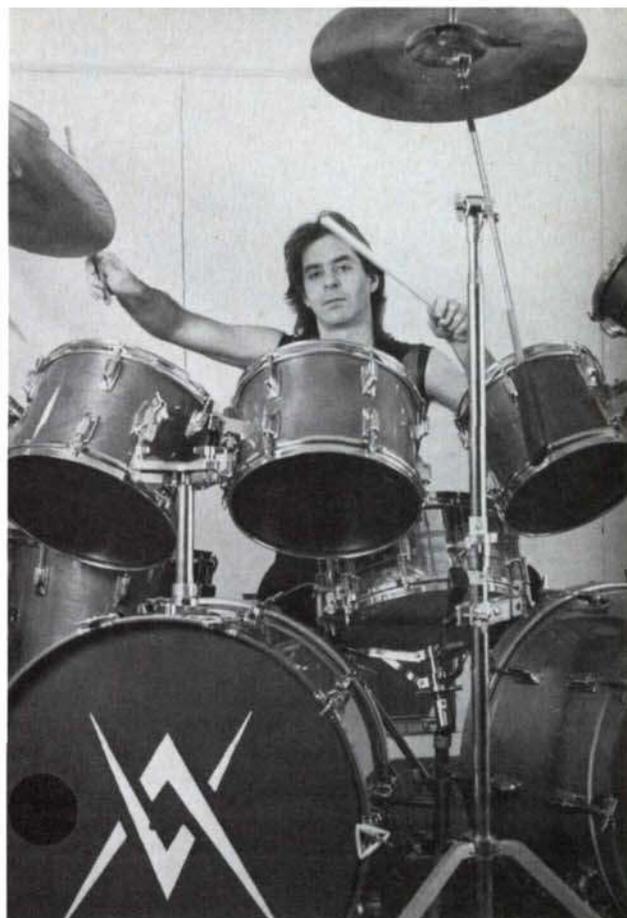
AF: As my chops get better I tend to change the position of the drums, especially on the road. When I was playing jazz I had my snare set up for army grip. For rock I had to get that power, so I switched back to matched grip and tilted the snare towards me. I suppose that every one just positions their drums for what suits them best.

WM: When you play different types of music do you tune your drums differently?

AF: For rock I tend to tune the heads a little looser than for jazz. In jazz you're not playing quite as hard and you tend to need a little more speed. In rock, you try and lay down a heavier backbeat. I tend to make the heads a little looser to get a heavier and deeper sound. Basically I think it would depend on the overall sound of the ensemble.

WM: What's your impression of the multiple drum setup?

AF: It all depends on the music you're playing. I'm using a big setup right now, but I don't feel that it's essential to playing drums at all. If you have a snare, bass



drum, tom, cymbal and a hi-hat—I think that's plenty. You can really play anything with just that. If you want to get all those extra sounds, I don't think that there's anything wrong with that either. I don't think someone should buy a big setup just for looks. If you can't utilize all those drums, then what's the point?

WM: A few years ago Ginger Baker did a few sessions with African drummers. Has there been anything else happening along those lines that you know of?

AF: Mick Fleetwood recently cut a record in Ghana. I haven't heard anything from it yet but I'd like to. In new wave music there seems to be a lot of fusion with African rhythms. Basically these guys are just ripping off what's happening down there and putting it into their music. The Talking Heads album, *Remain in Light*, has a lot of those rhythms. The band was basically an art/rock band and they got Busta Jones [bassist] and the funk groove and then they added African rhythms and the art/rock thing on top of that.

WM: Are there any musicians or projects that you'd like to hook up with?

continued on next page

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AF: I really like doing musical things where I can play all the instruments myself. Lately I've been doing the Moog synthesizer music for a black and white avant-garde film. Also, some quasi-disco music where I play all the guitar, bass and drums. I can play a little piano and guitar but I can't really play a lot of riffs or anything like that. I have an understanding of chords and scales, enough to work out songs. In the case of this soundtrack, I had to slow the synthesizer down and work out the line note by note. Then I would just speed it up to the tempo I wanted.

WM: I would imagine having a little knowledge about other instruments would also help your drumming.

AF: It really does. If you can hear where the chord progression is going you'll be able to know when to set up a section or to back off. The key to playing with anybody is listening.

WM: What direction did you and the other members of Shanghai have in mind when you first got together?

AF: We were into sort of a fusion thing. If you take heavy metal on the one extreme and pop on the other, we're sort of in the middle, playing melodic catchy stuff with a lot of power. Not sacrificing melody or power, just making them meet at a certain point.

WM: What artist that you've played with gave you the most room to improvise?

AF: Link Wray. He's incredible. I was looking for work and called up a friend of mine. He was about to go on tour with Dylan but he told me Robert Gordon and Link Wray [Rockabilly Rebels] were looking for a drummer. So I auditioned for them and went off to do a tour of Europe with them. Link really encouraged me to play out as much as I wanted, bearing in mind the restrictions of the tunes themselves.

Link was the first guy to turn his amp up really loud and play with feedback. He was the guy who influenced Pete Townsend to use feedback. Townsend credited Link with having made him pick up the guitar. Link really inspired the whole '60s psychedelic thing, although his image was really the '50s.

WM: Could you credit one drummer as being a main influence to you?

AF: Tony Williams. I used to listen to a lot of Elvin Jones and Jack DeJohnette too. Those are a few of my favorites. Lately I haven't really listened to a lot of drummers. I've been concentrating more on performing songs and getting Shanghai together, than really technical drumming. Tony Williams sort of bridges both fields. You can listen to him from a jazz point of view or a rock point of view. There are a lot of brilliant drummers on the scene but I'd have to go with Tony.

WM: It's funny hearing of a rock drummer who's so influenced by jazz.

AF: I know! I wanted to become a better

rock drummer so I listened and played a lot of jazz when I came to Boston. The record *Infinite Search* by Miroslav Vitous was the first album I bought when I came to America. I especially liked his arrangement of "Freedom Jazz Dance." I swear I listened to it every single day on my roommate's hi-fi. The minute he'd leave I'd just turn it up and blast it. I couldn't really understand the music because it's pretty avant-garde, but I just knew that it sounded really incredible. I learned a hell of a lot from that song. I was also learning by jamming with other people and listening to other music. When I'd put the record on again I'd hear more things than I'd heard before. The players on that album were the best. Jack DeJohnette, John McLaughlin, Joe Henderson and Herbie Hancock. That was sort of my Bible. I'd refer all of my knowledge back to that cut and see how much more I could hear out of it.

WM: Do you feel you learn most by jamming or playing in a group?

AF: I really enjoy playing with lots of different people because you learn much more that way. However, there's much to be said for playing with a band and really getting a song down so it sounds tight in the studio, so there's no bullshit in the song and there's nothing wasted. There's something that can be said for that kind of discipline as well. I like to have a balance of both. I wouldn't want to have just one without the other.



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Photo by Paul Natkin

"Start Me Up"

While styles come and go, the Stones' success seems to be based in their unwavering dedication to their trademark: basic and unpretentious rock 'n' roll. "Start Me Up" is the latest in the long line of Rolling Stones' hits, and Charlie Watts, as from the very beginning, is laying down the beat.

Intro:

Crash
Hi-hat
Snare
Floor Tom
Bass Drum

This page of musical notation is for guitar and consists of ten staves. The notation is written in a standard staff format with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped with slurs. There are several instances of chords and articulation marks, such as accents and slurs. Specific measures are marked with circled letters 'C' and 'D'. The notation is dense and detailed, typical of a guitar score.

This page of musical notation is for guitar and consists of ten staves. The notation is written in a standard staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. There are several instances of accidentals, including naturals and flats, and some notes are marked with a circled 'o'. A dynamic marking of *fade* is present in the final staff. The notation is dense and complex, typical of a technical exercise or a piece of music requiring precise fingerings.

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Notes On The Making Of MOVING PICTURES Part III



Photo by Paul Natkin
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I would like to cover a few aspects of individual songs on *Moving Pictures* from the drummer's point of view. "Tom Sawyer" is an enjoyable piece of work, mainly based on a funky backbeat rhythm in 4/4, with an instrumental section and rideout in 7/8. I'm playing full strength for the whole track, and it took about a day and a half to record. I remember collapsing afterwards with raw, red, aching hands and feet. I had been playing the bass drum so hard that my toes were all mashed together and very sore. Physically, this was certainly the most difficult track, and even now it takes as much energy to play properly as my solo.

On all the songs on *Moving Pictures*—except for "Vital Signs"—we used front heads on the bass drums. I have always preferred the increased feel and tonal dynamics of closed bass drums, but was always strongly assured that they wouldn't work in the studio. We experimented a bit on the last album with "Different Strings" and "Natural Science" and the results were very pleasing. Sometimes we placed the mic' inside the drum through a small hole in the front head, as we do live. Other times we placed the mic' in front of a solid front head. It just seems more expressive than the invariable "thunk" of a single-headed drum. That's just my opinion—don't get insulted!

Another little electronic trick that our co-producer Terry Brown used more than once, was to reverse the phase on the bass drum mic'. This would somehow intensify the depth of the note, giving a round, "cushiony" low end to the sound, allowing it to sort of sit below the rest of the track. There was an increase of presence, in effect, without increasing the level. I don't know why. You'd have to ask a wire-head!

The accents which punctuate the 7/8 sections in the middle and end came about in one of those strange and wonderful ways. While we were making demos of the newly written songs, I got a little experimental (lost) in the end section, and fought my way out with a series of random punches. Listening back to this "mistake," I loved

it, and had to learn how to do it so I could put more of them in.

"Red Barchetta" is probably a drummer's dream. The tempo is exactly right for really opening up when necessary. The dynamics allow soft subtlety on the hi-hat and wild flailing around the kit. It's challenging enough to make it enjoyable to play night after night. It was surprisingly easy to record. After one run-through to check sound, Terry suggested I change one fill, and the next take was the one! That doesn't happen very often, especially with the high standards of perfection we aim for. When it does happen, it's a pleasure.

"YYZ" is something of a rhythm section "tour-de-force" for Geddy and myself, and we indulged ourselves richly! The title refers to the identity code used by the Toronto International Airport. We used the Morse Code signal emitted by the control tower as a rhythmic device for the introduction (-.-/-.-./-.-.) dah dit dan dah/ dah dit dah dah/dah dah dit dit, = Y-Y-Z. The body of the song is influenced by the side of rock/jazz fusion which leans more towards rock, like Brand X, Bill Bruford, and some of Weather Report's work.

Because of the complexity of Alex and Geddy's parts, we decided to record each instrument separately, so that everyone could concentrate solely on his own part. This is very unusual for us. We usually record the basic track as a trio, then overdub or redo parts as necessary, later on. It was interesting to be all alone in the studio, humming the song to myself while playing to nothing! Fortunately, the arrangement was very organized, and I knew the song well enough to imagine the other musicians. It was not really as weird as it sounds. Actually, I quite enjoyed it! Who needs those other guys?

"Limelight" employs a variety of time signature and rhythmic shifts around a constant pulse, combining alternating patterns of 4/4, 3/4, 6/8, and sections of 6/8 in which I play a revolving 4/4 over the top. It doesn't sound as complicated as all that on record, which is probably good. The double bass drum triplets which anticipate the flams off the top are inspired by something

I learned from Tommy Aldridge a few years ago. I used to watch him anticipate his flams and downbeats with a quick two beats on the bass drums. I simply made it into three beats.

"The Camera Eye" was the first song to be written for the album. It's not surprising that it combines so many of the circumstances and intentions under which we approached the writing. It certainly blends the clear-minded relaxation of returning from summer vacation, with the eager energy of getting back to work. The intention to streamline our arrangements, and base the changes around good grooves can also be contrasted with the length of the song, and its relative simplicity.

Although admittedly a bit of a bluffer in rudiments, I have always loved the ominous, insistent delicacy of the distant marching snare. Once again I found a place to do some dabbling on the snare drum in the introduction to "The Camera Eye." We were looking for a dramatic, soundtrack-like feel to this one. That sort of "Mission Impossible" stuff works well.

During these sessions we were experimenting with an unusual type of microphone called a "PZM," or Pressure Zone Microphone. It only picks up direct sound—no reverberated signals. On this track and on "Vital Signs," we used it taped onto my chest! It re-created that special "drummer's perspective"; the balance and dynamics that you hear when you play. In the overall mix it's used as an overhead or ambience mic' to enhance and naturalize the complete drum mix. If any of you happened to see the video that we made for "Vital Signs," you may have noticed the great lump of metal that was growing out of my chest. That was the PZM.

In the reprise of the song introduction, beginning at the second half of the track, I used an unusual two-handed ride. My right hand played upbeat quarter notes on the bell of the ride cymbal and the downbeat on the snare. My left hand played eighth notes on the hi-hat. This allowed for interesting accent variations between my left hand and right foot, and give a nice quality of motion to the rhythm.

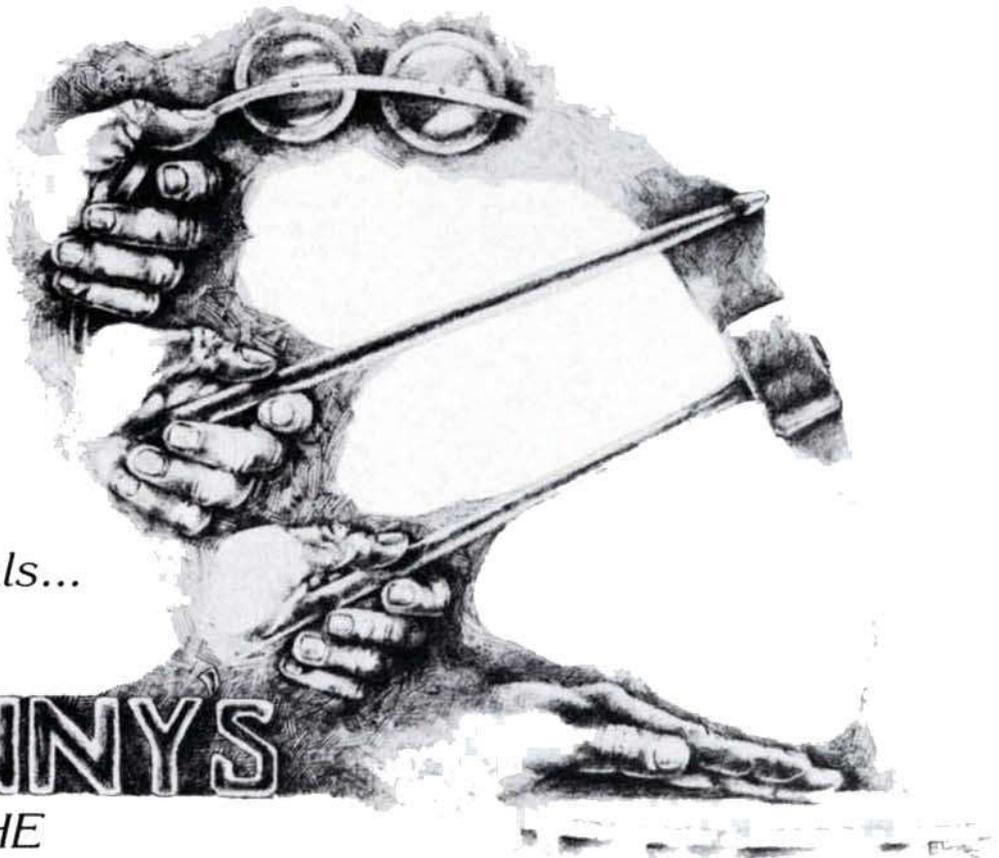


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Higgins continued from page 23

sit up there and the drums would play themselves.

CB: In 1968, I read a record review that critiqued you and Cedar Walton. The critic stated that the empathy you had with Cedar bordered on ESP. Do you have any thoughts on that statement?

BH: Yeah, Yeah, Yeah! We played together so long, and played so many different types of music. There, again, it had been a relationship. As far as Cedar and ESP, that comes over a long period of association. His conception and mine kind of fall into place. He always has a high form of excellence in everything he does. Cedar is a complete master of the keyboard. He's very thorough and his writing is a certain kind of way and it's effortless for him to read other people's minds. That's also part of music as far as playing together. I've had some really beautiful moments playing with him and Sam. It's hard to put into words.

CB: With the right people and the right musical connection the ...

BH: Magic happens.

CB: Have you ever felt like you've been left on the sidelines as far as getting recognition for your contributions to jazz drumming?

BH: That never really bothered me. I think I get a lot of recognition. What really bothers me is that the music doesn't get the recognition. That's a different story. If the music gets the recognition then the musicians will get it too. In a sense, I think I've gotten more recognition than Coleman Hawkins and Kenny Clarke, and I think that's a drag! It's only because of the times and the media.

CB: Would you also agree that the availability of the records has something to do with it?

BH: Yeah, you know what I mean. As I said before, we need a higher level of recognition for the music and all the people that have played jazz. There are some people playing the music who can play their hearts out and nobody knows about them.

CB: It seems that it's always an uphill fight for jazz.

BH: But it keeps on going because jazz is beautiful and it comes out of this country. It's a shame about the lack of recognition. I was just talking to Harold Land and I was telling him that I was walking down the street and they were piping out jazz in front of a department store. It was such a joy to walk past there and hear that.

CB: Instead of Muzak.

BH: Right! And then you turn around and everything you see is beautiful. Jazz presents such a high level of beauty.

CB: Can you describe your contribution to jazz drumming?

BH: The first thing that I'm thinking about is that I'm able to play music and be a link in the chain. Jazz is a family. It's a blessing just to be in that link and be a part of it, because there are so many and it's a big family.

CB: In regards to drumming, do you have a philosophy or a set of values that are important to you?

BH: I'm just trying to keep up the tradition and be able to spread the music, and at the same time, try to better myself if I can.

CB: To rephrase what you just said, do you find it easier to better yourself when you're playing?

BH: Yeah, cause it's hard. Music ain't easy. You have to constantly tune yourself up spiritually in order to stay on a certain level. We always speak of the intellect and that's part of the spirit. But, sometimes people forget that you also have to tune up your spirit like you tune your mind up. In order to do that you've got to stay in touch heavily with the Creator, because if you don't it will be about something else. I just hope more people become aware of that. It's a means to an end that keeps going because there are so many cats who played before us. Jazz is an art that started so long ago and it's still going on. You've got drummers like Kenny Washington who works with Johnny Griffin. A young guy; a kid. It makes me feel good to see this cat because he's got his head screwed on right. He's serious and he can play. Kenny's a very advanced little cat.

CB: Then you'd say being aware of tradition is important.

BH: Being aware of tradition is important and doing your homework. Also check out everyone from Baby Dodds to Tony Wil-

Hams. Listen to all those cats and listen to other instruments. Listen to Bird and learn all the forms of the music. Even when you practice, learn the forms of the music. There's a really beautiful tune, Coltrane's "Giant Steps." Now that is a beautiful vehicle to practice with.

CB: Do you mean practice to the record?

BH: No. Practicing to records is one thing, but set the drums down and try to hear or play the composition yourself. Sometimes we approach the drums so drumistically that if you don't have anybody to play with, you can't play nothing.

CB: Or it ends up sounding like a bunch of "chop" exercises.

BH: Yeah! If they tell you, "Okay, play some music," you should be able to get down and play a composition like a piano player. You have to think composition.

CB: Are there any projects that you would like to do in the future?

BH: I'd like to play with a nice drum ensemble. I did that once with seven drummers and seven bass players. It was nice. Different instrumentations are nice if you hook them up. It's nice to be able to let everybody express themselves like they want to, instead of playing a role. Sometimes, drummers have to play a role all the time.

CB: Do you mean the famous "time-keeper syndrome"?

BH: That's cool too—that's beautiful if you incorporate what you do inside the music and make it better. But what I mean is, sometimes the drums are put in the background too much. There are a lot of drummers who have a lot of ideas, but it never comes out because they don't get a chance to do it until they get with each other, and maybe then they can do something. Or if they get fortunate to get with a band, then they've got a vehicle if it fits what they want to do. Then they can grow. Growth and development are very important because in a sense, it seems like the drums have gone backwards instead of going forward—and in other ways, they've been going forward. But, as a whole, you'll hear a lot of people with differing conceptions. If they had more freedom they could do more.

CB: Do you see any future trends in drumming, like more percussion music?

BH: I never thought of it as percussion. Percussion ensembles yeah. But I'm just speaking about the trap drums. The rest of it has a certain place, because you have African drums. In Africa, they have a conception that everybody is trying to get to now. They already did it. What they are trying to incorporate now, they watered down too much. But, you can take that same conception and put it on trap drums. But it's got to be an individual conception. You can listen, then you find out what you want to play and play it. Sometimes, people will say to you, "No, don't do that," and you're going to stop. But what you did was alright, because that's what you're supposed to do. You've probably come across that yourself.

CB: Plenty of times, and it wasn't because I was necessarily wrong. Sometimes it was because I didn't fit that particular musician or group's conception.

BH: You should also check out all kinds of music from different countries and put it in with your own conception. Because it's all valid. If it wasn't valid it wouldn't be there.

CB: The other night Todd Barkin, owner of the Keystone Corner in San Francisco, introduced you as "the Universal Soldier." What does that term mean?

BH: Because I'm travelling all the time. Most of the time I'm on the road, which is beautiful because I get to go places and play. That's the only way I can stay at the drums every night.

CB: Are you satisfied with the way your life is going?

BH: I'm so happy that I've got the blessing to play the drums and so that covers everything. I've got my health, and I thank the Lord for blessing me, because I've been through some funny things in life. And to get to the point where I am now, it's just good to be able to play, to look at life and different situations and it's not a hassle. There's always going to be some hassles, but no big ones. Nothing that I can't overcome. Just so I can get to my instrument, play, and bring music to people. That's because people need music.

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Open Roll Exercises

The exercises below involve open double-stroke rolls in various rhythmic contexts, within a single measure of music. Because of the changing note values and artificial groupings, you'll be playing multi-tempo rolls within a constant pulse.

I'd like to suggest these studies be played first *without* a metronome to get the feel of each set of roll relationships. As a result of such preparation, the use of the metronome will become less frustrating. The metronome markings merely suggest very general tempos in which each exercise may be executed.

A recommended practice routine is as follows:

- (1) Practice each exercise leading with the hand you normally lead with. Do *not* alternate, except where noted.
- (2) Practice each exercise leading with your weaker hand. Once again, do not alternate, except where noted.
- (3) Practice each exercise substituting *single* for double strokes, and leading with both hands: This should not be attempted until you've mastered the two preceding methods.

The Five-Stroke Roll:



The Thirteen-Stroke Roll:



The Nine-Stroke Roll:



The Seventeen-Stroke Roll:



$\text{♩} = 80$

R R L L R R L L R R L R R →

$\text{♩} = 80$

R R L L R R L L R →*

L L R R L L R →

$\text{♩} = 200$

R R L L R R L L R →

$\text{♩} = 200$

R R L L R R L L R →

$\text{♩} = 132$

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

$\text{♩} = 120$

R R L L R R L L R R*

L L R R L L R R L L

A Prescription For Accentitus

I see a lot of developing drummers become discouraged and disgruntled over the playing of accents. All drummers know an accented note is played louder or stronger, but the problem comes when *too much stress* is placed on the accent above and beyond the call, resulting in undue stress on remaining notes in the measure or phrase.

There are several schools of thought on how drummers should tackle accents. My best advice to drummers is to follow the Three Point Prescription:

- 1) Count everything out in the accented music. Know exactly *where* the accents fall.
- 2) Use a light touch, playing both accented and unaccented notes the same sound level, at first.
- 3) Keep a light touch—and accent the accent.

This is not a new discovery. Rather, it comes from the "Hippocratic guide to drumming": the rudiments. Yes, being familiar with rudiments will ease accent problems.

The next time you scan a rudiment sheet, notice how many rudiments require accents. Perhaps rudiments have become a back-shelf technique for many modern drummers, not because they're associated with marching music so much, but for the simple reason

that their accents immediately create stress.

Major problems usually arise from pounding notes so out of proportion, the rest of the rudiment is trampled to death out of sacrifice for the accent.

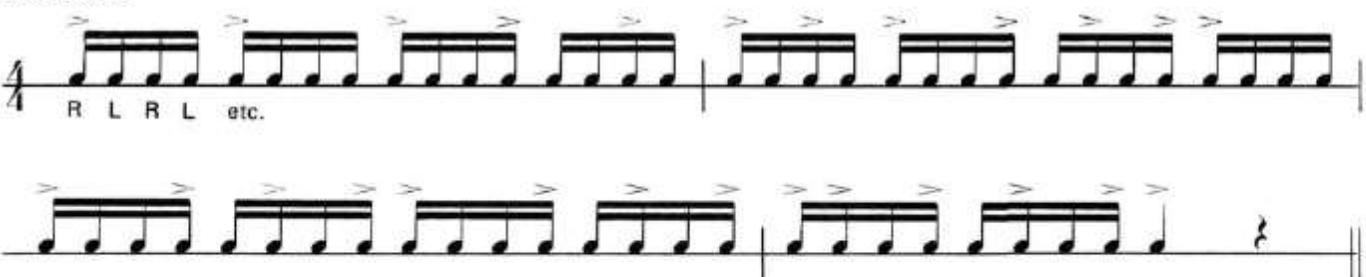
In Example A, we are told to play four sets of sixteenth notes. The accents are on the third sixteenth note in each set. *Don't pound.* Instead, play four, steady, alternate strokes *without* the accents. Then play the written music, keeping that same light stroke, except when you reach the accented note, make the stroke a little harder than the other three. The key to playing accents is to *keep the unaccented strokes light, and the accent sounding like its name.* Interpreting accented music is very similar to talking. If you want to stress a certain point in a conversation, you place more emphasis on key words rather than screaming *every* word of a sentence.

Exercise A



Example B is a handy piece to try out your accent knowledge. Try it first with straight rhythm, no accents. Then play it once more with accents. Quite a difference? Only if you played the unaccented notes lightly, did not over-compensate on the accents, and kept a steady pace.

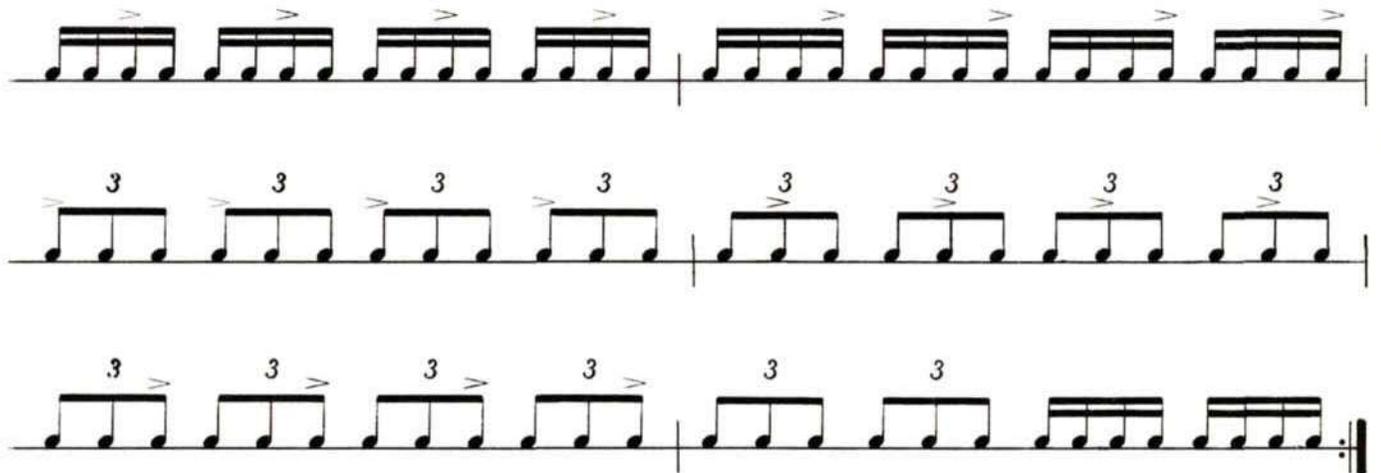
Exercise B



I'm sure Example C has been around for quite a while. I also realize that exercises are sometimes dull. However, a good dose of this one will help combat any outbreaks of accentitus. Practice it slowly, or increase your speed, but play it as an entire piece. Don't stop at the end of every set. The most important aspect of the exercise is to train your hands, for a light touch or heavier stress stroke, to change on command.

Exercise C





Accents and drumming go hand in hand. There's nothing like a quick-count, syncopated snare solo, or an upbeat, hard-rock break to keep an audience spellbound. But always keep your audience spellbound over smoothly played accents. Remember—count everything out, lighten your strokes in between, and accent the accent.



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Blackmon continued from page 27

include the Beatles. If anybody listens to the Beatles for what they did and rated them as songwriters, and listened to all their material, they've got to say, "Damn! Those guys were really imaginative." And ask them where they got their roots from.

SF: We're discussing the Law of Compensation and Eastern philosophies. I'm sure some readers are going to wonder if there's any source material available that would help them in understanding.

LB: There's a book called *Law of Success* by Napoleon Hill. That's a fantastic book and very metaphysically oriented. A good background on what our purpose on earth is or to trigger the mind to ask questions like, "What if. . .?" Another good book is *The Ultimate Frontier*.

SF: How did you find out about *Law of Success*?

LB: Through a friend of mine. I was looking for answers to questions. Also, I practiced TM for nine years. That was the beginning of being able to see things from a different perspective. Relaxation techniques. I would suggest those things because as musicians we vibrate at a higher frequency than other people. We are transistors and we transmit the vibrations from the ether into whatever we're doing. In order to receive those vibrations properly you have to be pretty centered. Some people can receive those vibrations and be all over the place! Some can't. Chances are by being centered, you can.

SF: What's the difference in Larry Blackmon before and after *Law of Success*?

LB: Most of my misunderstandings came from a general misunderstanding of how the whole scheme of things went. I didn't understand the order of what was to be and how considerate you had to be for the next person. I wasn't *inconsiderate*—but I didn't respond properly. I was confused most of the time because I was fighting between what I *felt* was right and what I *thought* was right. The duality was tearing me apart, as was the inability to make an immediate decision. I went through a lot of mental anguish. I was looking for a way to rest assured that I was going the right way.

You have to feel good about what you do, within yourself, even if it's not to someone else's way of thinking. And you have to know you're right by the way the overall scheme of things is supposed to work on this planet in this lifetime. You have to find out what those things are, and once you get a pretty good idea you can go for it. I've been going for it.

SF: What about the musician's attitude that in order to be a true artist you've got to be broke or into drugs or drink?

LB: That's a crappy way to think. How can you receive the proper vibrations if you're not centered? By getting into all those other things it just keeps you more and more away from whatever your goal is. Anyone that's successful and happy—very successful and happy—is healthy in a

good state of mind. They have to get there in various ways. That doesn't mean that the road is rough getting there. That just means that that's the ultimate trip. If what they want is really that important to them then they'll eliminate those other things in their lives that will hold them back. Talent determines how far you will go but it's *mentally oriented*. Everything is. You *feel* and then you make the logical decisions. It seems so simple.

SF: Do you dream a lot about where you're going to be in the future?

LB: I visualize what I want to happen and I make that happen. There's something inside each of us that we were born with—and I really feel strongly about this—that if you visualize something that you really want, *exactly* the way you want it; just close your eyes and think about it everyday for five minutes—as long as it's not hurting anybody or imposing on another human being, then there's something inside you that will trigger something that will get you there. It will give you the thoughts to take you there. That's true. If we all felt and thought that way, the whole place would be a better place to exist.

SF: Someone told me that God wouldn't give you a vision if he wasn't going to also give you the means to get there.

LB: Exactly. If you can see it—you can get it. First you have to see it.

SF: I think a lot of people are frustrated because they're not aware of that. They have a vision and they have no idea how they're going to attain it. What price did you pay to finally get Cameo off the ground?

LB: It wasn't that hard because everybody saw we had something. I started out with Gregory Johnson and myself. Everybody really wanted to do it bad. I told them what the plan was, what we could pay immediately if *anything*, and where it was going. And people *believed*. The five people who came together in the beginning are the same five people who are with the band now.

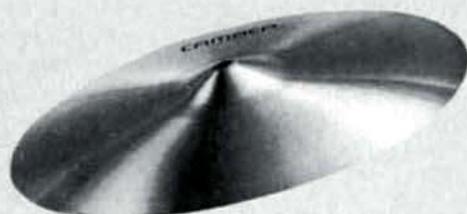
SF: As a drummer/leader, what qualities did you have to acquire?

LB: Wisdom had to be number one. Selflessness. You have to be selfless. You have to have self-discipline. There's a lot of self-discipline and lip biting. You have to be prepared for it. If I'd had another outlet for all the other energy it would've been a lot easier.

Also, you have to make it a point, as a drummer/leader, to get into what everybody else is doing and try to feel a little bit of what their instrument is about. That's essential for the leader in any group in order to understand a person's feelings. I don't think any person should play *just* drums and not have an awareness of other things that are going on. If they do—they should be just a drummer, and just a musician, and make up their minds that that's

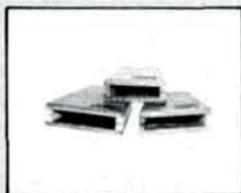
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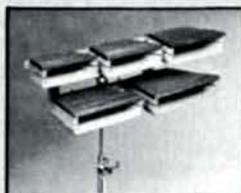


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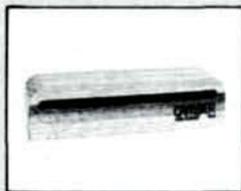
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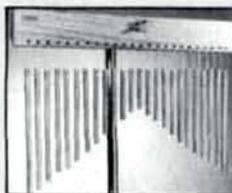
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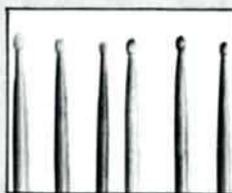
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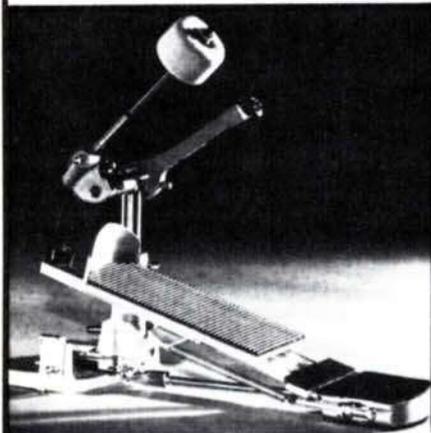
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what they want to be and do. In order to be a leader you have to lead. You have to make decisions and devote all your time. When everybody else goes home and gets on the phone or watches television—you're the one that has to go home and think about what happened at rehearsal, and what's going to happen at the next day's rehearsal.

SF: Do you watch television?

LB: No, man. I watch it when they have something on that's worthwhile watching. I'm not into that idiot box. I think it's poison. But to each his own. You can't feed an animal if he's not hungry. Or a person.

SF: What do you do to keep yourself motivated?

LB: Belief. Development. Being able to see that I'm moving in a certain direction. You look back and see some of the things that you've done. I'm a person who would think of some of the things that I haven't done first. But, every once in a while you need to treat yourself and smell the roses that you've grown.

SF: After you became aware of success principles and started to apply them, did you find that your circle of friends changed?

LB: Not necessarily. I knew how to put everybody in their proper perspective. Before I read *Law of Success* I expected too much out of people, because I looked at things the way I saw them. I didn't give respect to that person and their path in life. I always expected a person to come back with a certain kind of thought. I set myself up for a big letdown because I kept thinking, "Well, they're going to feel this way and that way." When in actuality it wasn't that way. I kept setting myself up for disappointment.

After I read that book I was more at peace with myself and I worried less about certain things. I applied the principles and it was easy to go from day to day. You have to find out how to deal with that much pressure. This is the most amount of pressure I've ever experienced in my life because of the size of the organization, the different facets, people, their lives and my own personal life. That's a big conglomerate in itself. You have to find some outlets in order to deal with that success. If you don't, it can send you off the deep end. I intend to succeed.

SF: How would you define success?

LB: Success is the achievement of goals that you set out for yourself. When you hit a goal you go for another one. I'm sure we're not all one place in mind. Musicians always expect other musicians to have the same interests. That's not so. We don't have to live up to each other's expectations. We have to live up to our own.

SF: So you see no conflict between drumming, producing and choreography?

LB: None whatsoever. I do all of it where it needs to be applied. I try to keep those talents limited to maybe three that I will actively do. I keep them honed sharply so that when I do them I can apply them as

well as anyone else. If it's vocals—then I'm going to do it as well as someone who does *only* vocals. If it's drums—I'm going to play drums as if I was just a drummer. It takes a lot of time to do that.

SF: Are you still practicing drums?

LB: Everyday. Rudiments and dexterity. Keeping myself so that I can play anything I feel like playing when I have to.

SF: How would you advise someone who wanted to prepare for the road you've traveled?

LB: Once they decide that they want to be in this business they should look inside themselves. Feel good. Prepare yourself for what needs to be done. Sit down and plan it out! Get information from professionals, attorneys, and other people. All it takes is a telephone call to ask a question. It doesn't cost anything. Get as much information as possible from *those who are doing it!* Compile all of that and then *make a decision*. If you decide to get into the business—plan it out. Be true to yourself.

SF: So it's important to set goals?

LB: Right! If you don't it's like someone saying, "Hey, come on." And you say, "Where am I going?" Once you decide to get in the music business, once it's in your blood and you set out a plan and know it's right, then at a certain point you have to play it by ear. Opportunity can pass you up by you being too rigid in your dates. It's the law of doing more than what you're paid for. You're going to have to pay dues.

SF: What level of commitment did you give the music business?

LB: Full commitment. That's very important. If you decide to give it a shot, then do it upon a logical decision. Nothing is guaranteed. Nobody owes us anything. There's no such thing as job security. Period. You have to look at the probability and the percentage. But, even if you worked for IT&T it would be the same thing. Job security? Look at the people we're turning out here. We've got the concept all backwards. It should be that way. Think for a minute! That other person's job security *is your* job security. Not just *you* and *your* job security. Everybody suffers by inflation and unemployment. These things are everybody's problem. Nothing happens on this earth without everybody being affected by it. I don't care what it is, you're going to feel the ripple. It's a big job to clean up the garbage, but where do we start?

SF: Where do you see yourself in the next few years?

LB: I see myself being head of an organization, part of an organization that employs a great deal of people, that's making changes, and that's influencing other people's lives. As far as dollar figures are concerned, I think that we'll be well taken care of. What those dollar figures will be I don't know. I'm not insecure. I have no problems that way. I know what I have to offer if the plan doesn't work. As long as I have that, and as long as I have what God has been giving me, it's alright.



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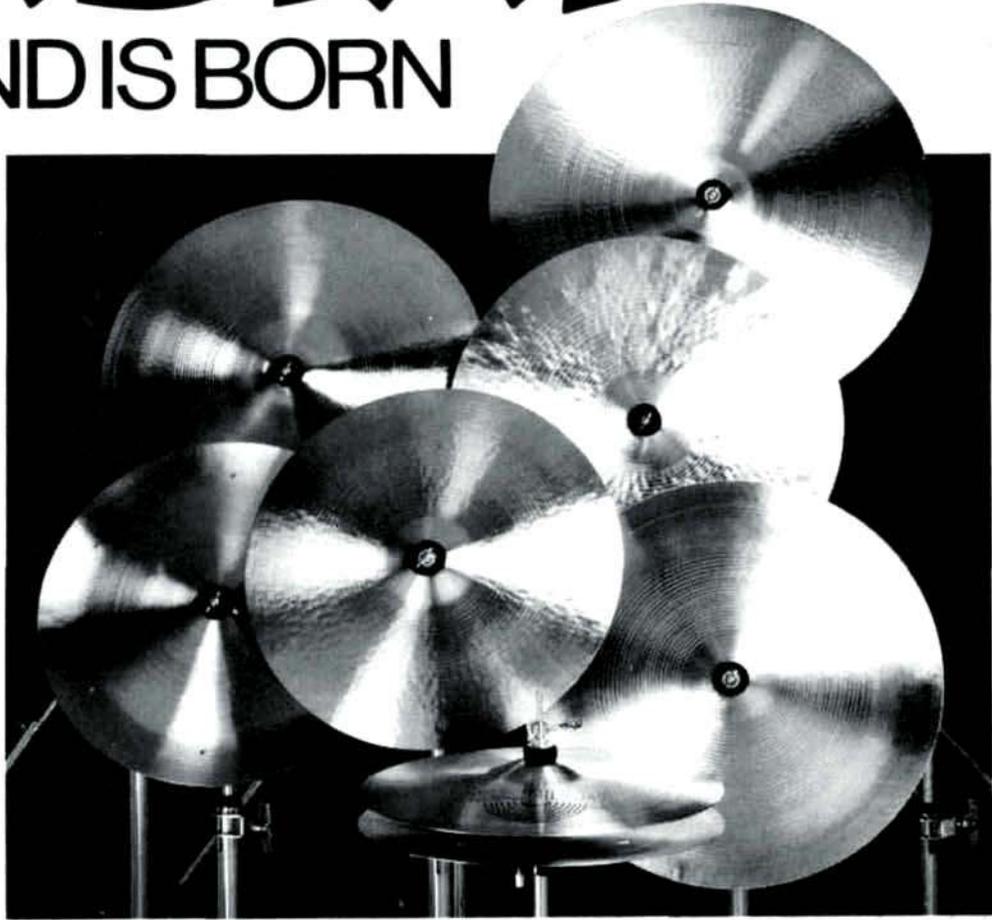
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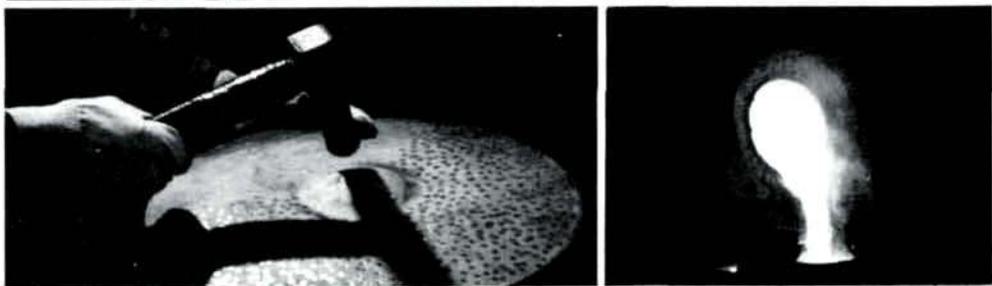


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continued on page 100

Introducing the Drum Solo

One of the most exciting aspects of learning for the student is the introduction to his first "solo" on the drumset.

At first, the instructor may ask the student to just play what he "feels." However, this is often too mind-boggling for a beginner. This sudden thrust of total freedom produces frustration. A typical reaction to this lack of structure may be, "What do I do?" "Anything you like," replies the teacher, a seemingly simple statement.

So simple, in fact, that it more than likely produces insignificant results. The student, having all the freedom to do what he likes, does not have the tools or knowledge to begin.

Listening to records, prior to the initial instruction, is beneficial and produces enthusiasm. By the teacher advising good listening, the student can see the accomplishment achieved only through continued discipline and practice.

However, having a method that musically, progressively, and constructively introduces the solo is essential.

I'd like to offer the following introduction; a method which uses the single paradiddle as its crux. This rudiment, with its double lefts and rights, enables the student to use all drums at his disposal with little concern for cross sticking. In addition, the rhythmic drive of the paradiddle adds an innate musical characteristic that can be discussed by the instructor as the student's solo matures. Thus our primary rhythmic pattern will be:

1.

The preceding pattern may begin on the snare drum. Later, with little adjustment, this initial base can be adjusted to any tom-tom(s) for additional sonorous variety (Examples 12 & 14). Initially, however, the following variations may be introduced:

2.

3.

4.

By intermingling the above, and still not having used more than the snare drum, the basis for our solo has been laid.

Introducing the small tom-tom to the solo can naturally follow by the use of these patterns:

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

Employing the floor tom-tom is simply another paradiddle variation:

10.

11.
 R L R R * L R L L R L R R * L R L L

12.
 S.D.
 B.D.
 Hi-hat
 R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

13.
 R L R R * L R L L R L R R * L R L L

For additional variation, the use of both tom-toms may follow:

14.
 Sm. T.T.
 T.T.
 B.D.
 Hi-hat
 R L R R * L R L L R L R R * L R L L

15.
 Sm. T.T.
 B.D.
 T.T.
 B.D.
 Hi-hat
 R L R R * L R L L R L R R * L R L L

Again using the same rhythmic pattern, the crash cymbals and/or ride cymbal may be used accordingly:

16.
 Cym.
 S.D.
 B.D.
 Hi-hat
 R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

17.
 Cym.
 S.D.
 H.H.
 B.D.
 R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

The aforementioned patterns, when intermixed, can be musically constructed to form a varied, musical solo, and serve only as a small sampling of the variations that may be used.

The scope of this article does not permit all possibilities and nuances of the solo, nor does it intend to be a complete system to the topic. Certainly variety, phrasing, development of the soloistic idea, dynamics, listening, being cognizant of the ideas of others, and exposing oneself to a substantive discography are all essential. This article, however, when incorporated in the instructor's own teaching style and method, will aid in introducing the drum solo.



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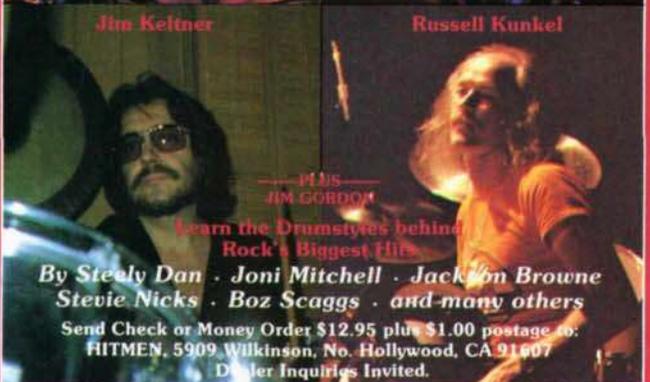


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Q. The rubber tips on the legs of my Rogers Samson stool seem to wear too quickly. One drummer recommended grinding the leg flat parallel to the floor, and adding a washer and Sonor hard ball to each leg. The legs would first have to be taped and then the balls glued on using Epoxy cement. I have not made this modification yet and would like to hear your thoughts regarding it.

V.D.
Chicago, IL

A. We turned your question over to Club Scene columnist Rick Van Horn, who offered the following: "The rubber feet on my throne wore out quickly too, and I think it has to do with the fact that when packed up, the legs fit very flush—very tightly together—and the rubberfeet get sandwiched in between, creating a scissors action that tends to tear them sideways. The sides of the rubber feet split long before the bottoms wear through. The Sonor hard balls would work only as long as you didn't try to fold the seat up completely when packing up. If you avoided doing that, any brand of feet would work as well without having to grind down the legs. If your problem seems to actually be the bottoms wearing through, then you've come up with a pretty good solution."

Q. I'm interested in combining my practice routine with weight training but I don't know anything about it. I don't want to become muscle bound and I don't want to hurt myself. Where can I go to learn more about weight training for drummers?

D.O.
Lodi, NJ

A. We referred this question to Jim Dearing, who contributed an article on weightlifting and drumming to the December, 1980 issue of MD: "If you can afford it, I recommend joining a spa. If the spa has some small, empty rooms and provides a gym locker, ask if you can bring a practice pad and sticks, combining your weight workout with drum practice. If you haven't lifted before, certainly request the advice of an instructor. Most gyms require this for insurance reasons. Tell the instructor you want to lift relatively light weights with many repetitions. If you want to lift at home, go to a gym first to learn correct lifting procedure. After they set up a routine for you, return home and apply their information to your own weights."

Q. I'm not getting enough volume and projection out of my bass drum. It doesn't cut through the rock music that my band plays. I've tried wood beaters, stomping harder, less padding etc. The drum is a 24", three-ply Slingerland. What can I do to make the drum louder?

T.M.
Los Angeles, CA

A. If asking the electric members of the band to turn down doesn't get it, how about miking the drums? There are plenty of relatively inexpensive mic's on the market. Check your local music store. You might consider tuning your drum to a higher pitch, as this helps the sound cut through a group of instruments. A few coats of high-quality polyurethane inside the shell can help project more sound by acting as a sealant. Wood shells are fibrous and "soft," so the polyurethane provides a smooth, hard surface for the sound waves to bounce off of and project out before they have a chance to be absorbed. Fiberglass drums are generally more live for this reason.

Q. I plan on getting a college degree in percussion. Which schools in California would you recommend? What kind of curriculum would you suggest?

D.M.
Southgate, MI

A. There are too many variables you've left out to give you a cut and dry answer. Why do you want a degree? Are you planning on teaching in a school system? If so, what grade levels? Or are you interested in concentrating on being a performing musician more so than a teacher? There are several different types of music schools to attend. Go to the best library in Michigan and look through as many college catalogs as possible. Read through as many music publications as possible and write to any of the music schools that interest you. Once you've narrowed it down, it would be worth a trip to check out the school(s) before you apply. Also, find a musician/teacher/performer who is where you'd like to be career-wise and find out what he or she did to get there. This information will help you decide what courses to study.

Q. I am seriously considering music as a career. To make it in the business, do you feel it is essential to be able to read music?

K.P.
Auburn, NY

A. As in any business, the deeper your understanding of all aspects of your chosen field, the more options you have available to you. The music business today is extremely competitive in every arena, from rock bands, to the studio, to weddings and Bar Mitzvahs. You need keen ears no matter what, but if you're also able to read, you can be in line to do a broader array of jobs with confidence and authority. As a professional, you'll never know what you may be called upon to do. Especially in today's uncertain economic times, you probably won't want to turn down a job you want or need because you can't read. In terms of your understanding of music, reading is an important component, in that it makes available to you a lot of literature written specifically for drums that can be an aid to practicing and conceptual studies. For well rounded musicianship and longevity in a volatile business, reading? . . . yes!

Q. I have a set of Ludwig drums in a maple Cortex finish. I want to re-cover a few drums and add them to my set. Can you refer me to someone you know who sells this veneering?

R.F.
Oak Lawn, Ill.

A. We spoke to Bill Ludwig, III, and unfortunately, this finish has been discontinued. We suggest that you take the drum to a woodworking shop in your area and try to match the veneer out of their stock. If not, perhaps they will be able to steer you toward their suppliers who may be able to help you.

Q. I have a Ludwig snare that I use six nights a week. I have a problem with the cords that hold the snares to the snare head. They keep breaking. Can you give me any helpful advice?

B.N.
Howell, NJ

A. This is a common problem and easily remedied. If the snares are inset in metal pieces through which you thread the cords that attach the snares to the strainer, check the holes carefully for sharp or jagged edges. Frequently when these holes are punched out, they are not adequately filed, causing them to quickly wear through the strainer cords. Remove the snares and file off any rough edges with a fine metal rasp. Then try a plasticized cord, which you can get at your local hardware store.



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STAYING IN TUNE

MD readers can write to Hal Blaine in care of: *Staying In Tune*, Modern Drummer Magazine, 1000 Clifton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07013

by Hal Blaine

Q. I think I have problems. I've been playing since I was eight and I'm 24 now. I live for my drums. Everything I do is associated with them—lessons, the best equipment, writing music. I'm getting my Associate Arts degree in Physical Education. I take Tae Kwon Do and try to practice my drums every day. I'm into health because I believe you can play only as good as you feel.

But, if something doesn't happen soon, I'm going to cry. I'm running out of bucks. I don't even have a place to play anymore. I'm not going to give up—NEVER. But, if I have to go through another 16 years, I'll probably be too old, broke and starved. Got any ideas?

B.F.

Rock Island, Ill

A. Your's is the plight of so many drummers; flat broke and busted. First of all, you're doing the right thing. You're going to school, you're working on a degree, you're taking care of your health. When you've got that, you've got everything. It might be easy for me to say that, but, by the same token, you tell me that you're 24 years old and you've been playing 16 years. I want to tell you that I'm 52 and I've been playing over 40 years, I guess. I'm healthy, I've taken care of myself and that's an important part of it. If you're sick and can't do what you want to do, it's really tough. So, a guy like you, into the martial arts, in top shape—why in the world you're having these mental problems I don't know. You're only 24. Things don't really start happening until you're into your thirties. You have another six years to think about and, between now and then, you'll really start getting more of a taste of life than you've had before. Soon, you'll be the one making the decisions about which band to play with, or which school to teach at or which students to take.

There are people—students—who need physical help. There are so many handicapped people out there that need people like you who are physically together. Music is one of the things that consoles people. And here you are, walking around with all this music and all this health, the perfect example of a guy who can get out and do so much for those who really need the help. You say you won't give up. Great! There's no reason why something good shouldn't happen, and I'm sure something will.

I don't want you to get mad at me, but you say that if something doesn't happen,

then you're going to sit down and cry. Well, maybe that's what you need. Maybe you're so tense that it's tearing at you and that's no good. Sometimes a good cry's better than anything.

As far as running out of bucks, I don't think you will. If you're that physically together, there's no reason why you shouldn't be working in a hospital, doing physical therapy with the handicapped or, with the degree you have coming, in a rest home or helping the elderly. There's no reason why you can't be working. Put a band together and go to some of these hospitals and play for these folks. Make them feel good! Those are the kind of things that make other things happen. Somebody sees you, wants you for a party. Before you know it, you're working parties making good bucks. Get out and pursue it. Find some guys like you, sitting around wishing they were making music, and go make it.

Q. Although I've been drumming for quite a while, there is still a problem that comes up from time to time. While doing fastfills, I have a tendency to get ahead of myself and miss, hitting rims, breaking sticks, not to mention the "off" sound this creates. Slowing down and repetitive practice seems to work for a while, but I still find myself getting ahead. Is there any technique I can work on to get my hands going as fast as my mind?

R.W.

A. Your plight is that of most drummers at the beginning stages. One thing you have to learn first is your drumset. Always be sure they're set up the same way so that you can play with your eyes closed and know where every piece of equipment is as you reach for it. This way, you'll learn how to hit just a little off-center on the drum. Every now and then you'll still hit a rim. That's just one of those things.

As far as time goes, start working with a metronome. Start putting in some hours. Really work for X-amount of weeks, sticking with that click. There are all kinds of metronomes, with earphones to keep you aware of the click. When we do commercials and movies, that's what we have to do. Somehow that brain computer takes over and lets you know where that tempo is and if you're getting faster or slower. Before you know it, you'll find that you're absolutely staying on the beat. It's something that you have to spend lots of time on. Let me know how you do.

Q. I'm 23 and really want to get my drumming career under way. I've been on the road for 1 1/2 years steady and I'm feeling it. In your column, you said that you try to mix several elements in your life; health, recreation, rest and work. Being a road musician, trying to get ahead and make some money, how would you suggest I break up my day? What do you suggest for physical and mental health? I also have a habit of holding my breath while playing and humming at the same time. I hope you can help me Hal, and I hope we can meet face to face sometime and rap.

B.B.

Alberta, Canada

A. I hope we do get to meet sometime. As for holding your breath and humming, well, that's exactly what I do. I've heard myself on tracks, when they isolate the drums, humming away. It's crazy. I've been doing it for forty years, so, whether you'll ever break that habit, I don't know. It's not so terrible as long as it's not too loud and you're singing in the right key. It's possible you should be singing background in the band. Or featuring yourself. That's up to you and how well you sing.

As far as getting ahead and making money, that's something we all have to do. When you talk about breaking up your day, what I try to do is jog when I first wake up. You can do it in place in your room if you want. I have worked myself up to twenty minutes. My minimum is 12 1/2 minutes by the clock. That should help the mental and physical. As far as the travel, get out in the street in a new town and see what it's about. Maybe they have a museum, a library, an art gallery, a community center, anything to clear your head and meet people. Maybe you have a camera. If so, how about photography? Anything to break up the day. Just keep yourself away from drugs and alcohol. Don't fall for any of that stupidity. There are going to be times when you're tired of the road. There are times when you'll be sick of seeing the same faces out in the audience. By same faces I mean the lost souls that wander into the places you're working. You know the ones I mean. It's okay to offer them music, but to get involved with those people is dangerous. They can drag you down to their level. Stay with the people that you can help and who can help you and you'll be fine.



Editor's note: The reader response to "Staying in Tune" has been so great that we cannot possibly answer all letters as promptly as we would like. Because of the urgency and sensitive nature of many of these letters, Hal would like to assure our correspondents that all letters *will* be read and answered with all haste and in the order received. Thanks for your enthusiastic response and continuing patience.

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UPDATE

When **Stix Hooper** was interviewed for his MD feature (Feb/March 1982), he had not yet been immersed in his solo projects. A few months ago, he released his second solo album *Touch the Feeling*, and the name is indicative of his objectives. "I want to open people's eyes and show them that music can speak for itself with a voice that can create a mood. I've given myself a pretty big order of what I want to achieve. I know that in the commercial aspect of recorded music, it might take a while. I'm going to have to make a certain amount of compromises," Stix admitted, "but certainly not to the point of prostitution."

The entire motivation behind his solo projects is the desire to expand all areas of his creativity, including his writing and vocals, in hopes of reaching still a broader audience than the Crusaders. He emphasizes his desire to make the drums a melodic instrument. "If you heard my first album, I want to take what I did on 'Jasmine Breeze' a step further, melodically. You get tired of hearing that the drummer is just the guy who keeps the beat; always pounding or beating the drums. I always use the term 'pulsation' or 'feeling,' anything but 'beat.' The original concept behind the drums was not to keep rhythm; it was a communication instrument. Certainly the rhythmic feeling is part of it, but a lot of it had to do with tones. I don't think that has been dealt with in the light it should have been. I think the instrument has much more to say and I'm just in the beginning stages of it. The timbre of playing a tom-tom and also encompassing a triangle, bell or windchime enhances the chart you're playing. All of these can add to the harmonics. If a piano player is playing a chord and you play a triangle with certain frequencies that are compatible, that adds to the whole timbre; the whole chord. That's the kind of sensitivity I want to get into."

His plans definitely include taking his own project on the road. "It won't be total technique and flams and paradiddles, and not everything will be total high energy. I will be an artist, hopefully, who will encompass my drums as a means of expression, my vocal efforts and also my writing and putting together those compatible musicians and presentation in general."

Aside from working with Frank Zappa these days, **Ed Mann** is enjoying playing in a band he formed just over a year ago called Jackolope. The band is primarily comprised of *Zappa* players as well as Ambrosia band members and he describes the music as "cowboy-reggae." "It's a bit different, but it's an extension of what I've been doing recently. It gives me the chance

A day after the Doobie Brothers' last performance, **Keith Knudsen** was on his way to Japan to work with one of that country's most successful artists, E. Yazawa. Two years ago, Doobie's percussionist Bobby LaKind was in Japan with Nicolette Larsen and he was approached to produce Yazawa's first English-speaking album. Both Chet McCracken and Keith Knudsen (as well as Richie Hayward and Rick Schlosser) played on the album. On the next album, however, produced by LaKind and Doobie guitarist John McFee, Keith played all the tracks. That album was released last month.

"The Yazawa tour was probably one of the best experiences of my life," Knudsen said. "It couldn't have been a better group of musicians. We had a great time and worked very hard." The band may end up doing some recording of its own, but right now, he's enjoying the freedom to work for whomever. Two days after his return from Japan, he cut seven tunes with Emmylou Harris, and just a week later, he was on his way to Nashville to do a promo concert with Karen Brooks, a country artist on whose album he played.

He is also enjoying being a singular drummer once again. "I love Chet and I love playing with him, but after nine years of playing with another drummer, that's one thing I *won't* miss about the Doobies. It was a good thing and I think we did it as good as anybody, but playing alone is great. Going off the Doobie's tour and right into another one where I was playing alone felt great. I got to stretch out a little bit, although my style didn't really change that much because I'm a pretty basic drummer. I like a backbeat and not all that many fills.

"I just want to become a better drummer," he said of his goals, which also include future producing. "I just want to play as many different kinds of music as I can. I'm really looking forward to it. A lot of people assumed I would take a vacation after the Doobie tour. That's the last thing I wanted to do. I want to work and that's what I plan on doing. The Doobies were really good to me—the people in the band and the fans—but I was really looking forward to doing other things."

to function on mallets as a traditional comp instrument a little bit more than I'm used to doing with Frank. It's not to say that I don't do that kind of thing with Frank; it's just that with Frank, there are also two keyboard players, but in this, it's just me. It's kind of a different sound, and the thing that's really strong about it is that Michael Ward is a really strong song-

by Robyn Flans

Look for **Jeff Porcaro** on upcoming Michael Jackson and Al Jarreau albums. New Cars' album due out shortly with member **Dave Robinson** on drums. A few months ago, **Roger Hawkins** spent ten days in the Bahamas cutting tracks for Eric Clapton's new LP which is due out soon. Hawkins is thrilled about the fact that he will also go on the road with Clapton for five weeks beginning this month. **John Panozzo** on the road with Styx. **Stewart Copeland** and Police recorded in Monserrat starting in December and the album will be out within a couple of months. **Myron Grombacher** on the road with Pat Benatar. War's new album is due out this month with **Harold Brown** and **Ron Hammond** on drums and **Dee Allen** on percussion. **Gina Schock** enjoyed experimenting and coming up with a part on percussion (playing along with a rhythm machine) for a Nona Hendryx track "Design for Living," from the album due out this month. EW&F's new album *Powerlight* is due out this month with percussionists **Ralph Johnson** and **Philip Bailey** and drummer **Fred White**. Former Youngbloods drummer **Joe Bauer** recently died of a brain tumor. **Bob Moses** is in Brazil. Ric Ocasek (Cars) used two drummers on his current solo album and said he went out of his way to give new people a chance: **Stephen George** and **Miss Linn**. **Curtis D. Harmon** is in the studio with Pieces of a Dream working on third E/A album. T-Connection, a dance band from Jamaica, was produced by **Bobby Colomby** using the Linn drum machine as well as their regular drummer, **Kirk Coakley**, with Bobby playing some cymbals as well. **Kenny Malone** did some tracks for the Whites, a family bluegrass/country group whose debut Elektra/Curb LP is due out shortly. Congratulations to **Danny Seraphine** whose wife gave birth to a baby girl in November. **Danny Gottlieb** is looking for drummers who like to go bowling. So if you'd like to go bowling with Danny, write to him in care of MD.

writer. He writes real concise, good songs; good verse lines and strong hooks. We function as an arranging tool for that. There's really no way to describe it—you have to hear it." While off the road, Mann says, "I've been trying to focus my attention on new projects as well as whatever presents itself here in L.A. I'm trying to develop something that will present a little more of a future, as opposed to a session or series of sessions, this and that."

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INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

ELVIN JONES GETS FIRST SET OF K. ZILDJIAN CYMBALS MADE IN U.S.

Photo by Rick Mattingly



The Avedis Zildjian Company has begun full-scale production of the legendary K. Zildjian cymbals at their Norwell, Massachusetts plant, and jazz drummer Elvin Jones was presented with the first complete set ever produced in the United States because of his lifetime devotion to K. Zildjian cymbals. He admits to having played nothing else during his long and notable career.

Armand Zildjian, president of the Avedis Zildjian Company, made the presentation during a recent clinic featuring Elvin Jones at the Professional Percussion Center in New York City.

Like A. Zildjian cymbals, the "K's" are individually cast from Zildjian's own secret al-

loy in a process that has remained with the Zildjian family for over 350 years. However, more hand-work is involved in making "K's", which allows Zildjian's craftsmen to create the rich, dark, dry "K" sound much sought after by the world's most accomplished musicians.

North American distribution of the new K. Zildjian line is being handled exclusively by The Gretsch Company, P.O. Box 1250, Gallatin, Tennessee, 37066, 615-452-0083. Sales to Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East are being handled by Zildjian's International Liaison Office, 4a Church Street, Epsom, Surrey KT17 4NY U.K.

LUDWIG AND DISNEY

Ludwig Industries has announced that its line of marching percussion instruments has been selected by officials of the Walt Disney World staff for use by the percussion section of the 450-piece All-American College Marching Band which was featured at the grand opening of Epcot Center, Walt Disney Production's spectacular showplace in Orlando, Florida.

A week prior to the opening, 56 young percussionists selected by Disney from 148 American colleges as being tops in their classes, arrived at Disney World for a week of intensive rehearsal and instruction. This elite group of highly talented musicians performed

throughout the Epcot Center in parades, concerts, and in support of a stellar group of guest artists, during the grand opening celebration.

Epcot Center, Walt Disney's living showcase for the technologies and dreams of tomorrow, featured the superb talents of these young musicians whose performance was highlighted through the use of Ludwig Industries newest marching percussion innovations. This cooperative venture between Ludwig Industries and Walt Disney Productions was the first in a series of promotional projects planned by the two organizations.

CARMINE APPICE JOINS SLINGERLAND/J. C. DEAGAN

Photo by Rick Maikin



Carmine Appice will be joining the endorsers of Slingerland/Deagan products. The company plans to incorporate Carmine's expertise in the rock field in several different areas. In the educational field, Slingerland plans to expand his

concepts into workshops and rock symposiums which will include other famous rock drummers teaching and performing. In addition to his five rock drum methods already available, Carmine plans to add two new publications, *Realistic Reggae* and a children's rhythm method book. Also, his clinics and techniques will soon be available via cable television and cassette marketing. The Slingerland Company will also be utilizing Carmine's knowledge and expertise in the design and marketing of instruments for the rock drumming field.

Carmine states, "The reason for my playing Slingerland Drums is they have the capability of building specific types of custom drum outfits that my style of playing demands. It's a great sounding drum and together we have designed a custom outfit that I will be playing on the Ted Nugent Tour."

AIRTO AT DRUM FEVER



(Left to right) Dick Richardson, President of Slingerland Drum Co., Airtto, and Bill Crowden, President of Drums, Ltd. Chicago.

In his first clinic appearance in Chicago, the unique Brazilian percussionist, Airtto, captivated an audience of over 800 amateur and professional percussionists. Sponsored by Bill Crowden's Drums Ltd. and the Slingerland Drum Co., the annual "Drum Fever" clinic was held on October 18, 1982 in the ballroom of a suburban Chicago Holiday Inn.

Crowden's "Drum Fever" series has always featured powerhouse names from the world of percussion, but this rare clinic appearance of Airtto seemed to attract a wider variety of players. In addition to his flawless and expressive playing, Airtto shared with the audience his philosophy toward performance and his thoughts on

being a musician in general.

Shown for the first time was the Slingerland "Magnum" hardware series and the May EA (electro-acoustic) drums with microphones specially shock-mounted in the drum shells. Airtto performed with the EA drum.

In addition to the rewards of the clinic, several suppliers donated door prizes. Slingerland gave a lucky winner a chrome snare drum with the new *Slapshot* strainer, and Zildjian gave a lucky clinic attendee a pair of *New Beat* hi-hat cymbals.

For further information concerning the annual "Drum Fever" clinic, contact Bill Crowden's Drums Ltd. at 218 South Wabash, Chicago, IL 60604. Phone: 312/427-8480.

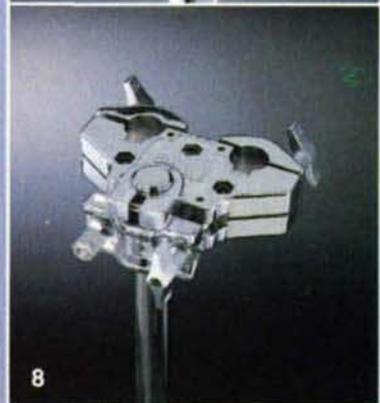
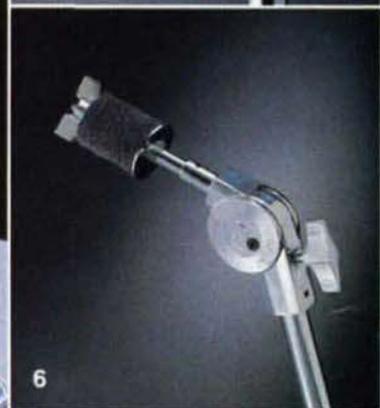
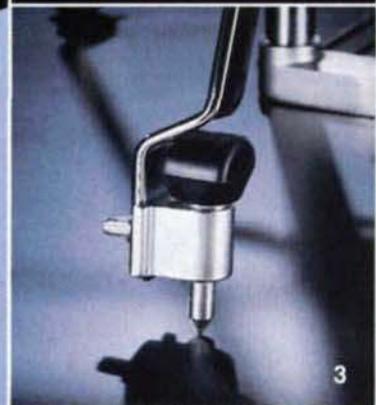
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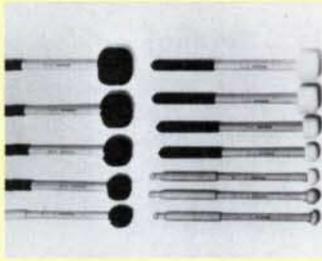
LUDWIG POWER LINE MARCHING MALLETS

Ludwig has recently announced the immediate availability of 12 new mallets for marching band and drum corps.

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A complete detailed brochure on each *Power Line Mallet* model is available at all authorized Ludwig-Musser dealers or by writing to: Ludwig Industries, Marketing Services, 1728 North Damen Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60647.

MUSSER ANNOUNCES NEW MALLETS

Ludwig has recently announced the availability of seven new Musser mallet selections. Further diversification exploring the needs of all mallet players, for metal, rosewood and Kelon bar instruments has created the need for additional tonal characteristics.

All models are available through authorized Ludwig-Musser dealers. The addition of these new mallet models enhances the sound possibilities of all keyboard instruments. Select models are available in plastic or rattan handles for player personal preference.

For further details, contact: Ludwig Industries, Marketing Services, 1728 North Damen Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60647.

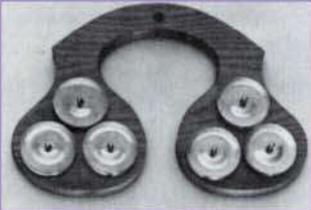
CB700 PARALLEL LAY SNARE DRUMS



Kaman Music Distributors, C. Bruno & Son, and Coast Wholesale Music, have announced the arrival of the new CB700 *Parallel Lay* snare drums. These new *Mark Series* drums represent fine, uncomplicated precision, with double snare tension, full vertical and horizontal adjustment, dual cam-activated snare strainer and much more.

For more information on these new snare drums, write: CB700, Box 1168, San Carlos, CA 94070.

NEW PRO PERCUSSION FROM CAMBER

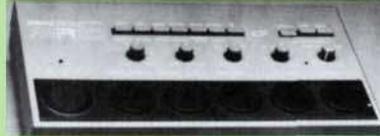


Camber has introduced a new instrument, the *Camberine*. A dynamically improved version of the classic tambourine, the *Camberine* offers maximum sound output, great versatility and convenience of playing.

Crafted of clear lacquered hardwood, the *Camberine* utilizes quality nickel jingles affixed with specially threaded nails for a permanent bond. According to Marty Cohen, Director of Marketing, "The *Camberine* gives the percussionist the freedom to play in three different ways. It attaches directly to a hi-hat stand, face up or down, it attaches directly to cymbal stands, and can be hand held."

For more information on the *Camberine*, write Mr. Marty Cohen, Director of Marketing, Camber USA, 101 Horton Avenue, PO Box 807, Lynbrook, New York, 11563.

PRODUCER SERIES MR10 DRUM MACHINE



The Yamaha *Producer Series MR10* Drum Machine is unlike other rhythm machines that only take over for the drummer. The *MR10* allows the drummer to join in by using the manual finger pads.

The *MR10* offers 12 basic preset voices that can be mixed in any arrangement for a wide range of possible rhythms. Or you can completely ignore the presets and create your own patterns by using the finger pads which are: Bass Drum, Snare, High Tom, Low Tom and Cymbal. You can even use the preset for rhythm backup, adding fills and variations using the finger pads. For drummers who would rather use a foot instead of a finger for the bass

drum, an optional bass drum pedal (*KP10*) will be available.

For extra versatility in setting up your own sound, there is a Tune control to vary the pitch of the snare, high tom and low tom. There are also individual level controls for the bass drum and cymbal. To eliminate any rhythmic confusion, an LED indicates the first beat of any measure. The Rhythm Variation control adds a rhythmic fill every 4, 8, or 16 bars.

Alongside the fingerpads for the individual drum sounds is a sixth pad for Start/Stop. The speed of the auto-rhythm is varied by the Tempo control. This addition to the *Producer Series* is portable and battery operated.

RICH AND BELLSON ENDORSE DANMAR



Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson head the growing list of top jazz and rock drummers who are using the Danmar *Black Shaft*, no-bend bass drum beaters. These beaters combine the

strength and power needed for today's rock drumming with the balance and speed jazz players require.

For a complete hardware and accessory catalog write: Danmar, 13026 Satcoy St. #26, North Hollywood, CA 91605.

DW PEDAL PLATE



Drum Workshop has developed a new *Pedal Plate* which attaches to any of their chain drive or nylon-strap bass drum pedals. The plate relieves stress and gives a more solid feel while adding stability and strength. A non-skid rubber pad and two adjustable spurs help prevent bass drum crawl.

DW is also now equipping all of their pedals with the Danmar *Black Shaft*, no-bend beater.

For more information: Drum Workshop, Inc., 2697 Lavery Ct. #16, Newbury Park, CA 91320.



IM76

IM80

IM70

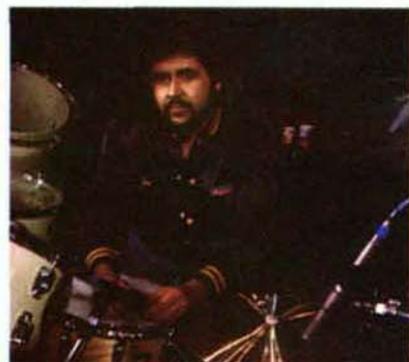
A Lesson On Miking Your Drumset... Brought To You By Ibanez, Tama, And Joe English.



The IM76...for the low end, such as floor toms and bass drums.



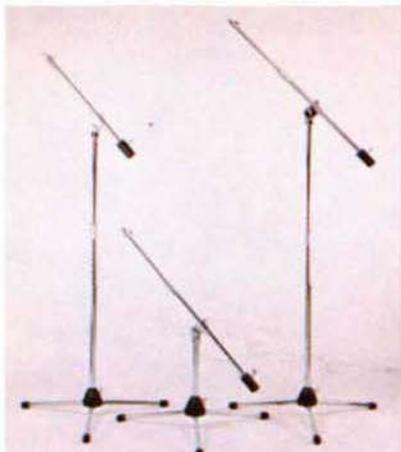
For clean, bright highs from cymbals, bells or gongs...the IM80.



And for penetrating sound with a sharp attack...the IM70.

When I heard that Ibanez had come up with a new line of microphones designed exclusively for use with drums, I was anxious to hear the results. If you have experience with miking drums, you know how their sound can present a problem. And because drums are so unique as a sound source, it's important that each area of the set is handled in the right way. Now, Ibanez has virtually eliminated drum miking problems with the introduction of their Tech II microphone line. The Tech II line has been carefully designed to accommodate every aspect of percussive sound, from the splash of a cymbal to the kick of your bass.

Tama Strongman Mikestands



MS 155 MS 455 MS 355

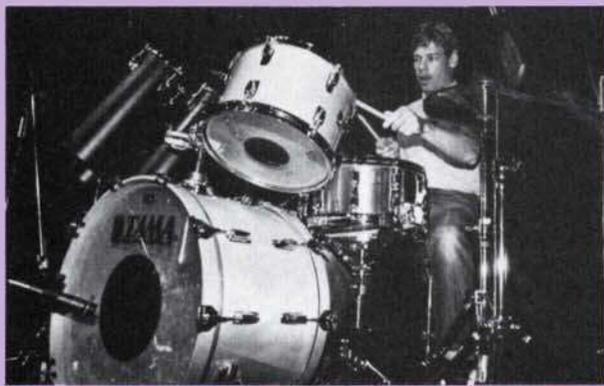
What's the biggest problem with mike stands when it comes to miking drums? You've got it... "Boom Sag." You've probably been faced with this problem many times but just didn't know what to do about it. Most mike stands weren't designed to hold up under the kind of heavy duty usage required in drum miking. The answer to this problem is simple. Tama Strongman Mike-stands. Tama mikestands incorporate many of the same rugged features found in Tama's Titan line of hardware, so you know it's the strongest you can buy. Thanks to Ibanez mikes and Tama mike-stands, there's finally a complete system for miking your drums.

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For a full color catalog send \$2.00 to: Ibanez/Tama Dept. MD; P.O.Box 886 Bensalem, Pa. 19020; P.O. Box 2009 Idaho Falls, Id. 83401; 17421 B East Gale Ave. City of Industry, Ca. 91748; In Canada: 6355 Park Ave. Montreal, PQ H2V 4H5

BRUFORD CLINIC



Photos by Paul Johnson

Yes, King Crimson, Genesis, National Health . . . Bill Bruford's list of credits is long and impressive. So, it is no surprise that his drum clinic at California State University at Northridge (CSUN) was packed with 1,200 anxious drummers. Bruford is well respected in the music world and Action Drum and Guitar in Granada Hills was offering a golden opportunity to meet and learn from one of rock music's finest drummers.

The Tama drum company co-sponsored the clinic along with the music shop. Action owner, Bill James, contacted CSUN's Joel Leach who provided the room for the program. Included in the clinic

were representatives from Paiste cymbals and Anvil cases.

Action's Ross Garfield began the program by introducing a video presentation, *Bruford and the Beat*. In this video, Bruford plays as well as discusses his playing, composing and direction. Steve Howe and Robert Fripp also appear, talking about Bill's playing and contributions to their respective bands.

Also included was footage of Bruford playing with Yes and King Crimson. It was a very informative and interesting presentation.

Bruford then appeared to tumultuous applause. He began with "a little something to say hello and start us off"; a very

musical solo which held the collected drummers spellbound. Then he opened up the floor for questions. Since the audience was restricted to drummers, the questions were concerned mostly with drumming.

Bruford proved himself to be a friendly, informative and quick-witted clinician. He fielded questions ranging from when the next King Crimson album was to be released, to how to make the left hand stronger. He emphasized the fact that he likes to keep changing, saying, "I'm more interested in going into a new situation."

Besides doing some more work with Annette Peacock, he is holding off from doing more solo work right now. He is presently concentrating on King Crimson, which he describes as "a communal virtuosity instead of individual virtuosity. You sublimate yourself to the musical whole. I'm kind of a team player. We're all self-effacing people in the band. With Crimson, we are asking the audience to actively listen."

He also emphasized the idea of being an individual and not sounding like everyone else—something that many record

producers want drummers to do. Bruford stated, "The whole art of the drummer is not required by American Top-40. We have to change that. Come into a new band with a clear mind and develop new things."

"The idea of a drum fill is more of a passe thing to me now. I'd rather play more textured things."

When asked about the differences in playing surfaces of his acoustic drums and his Simmons electronic drums, he agreed that it takes some getting used to. He also commented that it's difficult at first to adjust to the fact that the sound from the acoustics is coming right from the drums, whereas the electronic sounds come from an amplifier sitting behind the kit.

He demonstrated many of his answers and ideas for the audience and made the point that, "The best drummers you meet are entirely noncompetitive."

Bruford ended the clinic with a solo and then the audience was invited up on stage to look over the equipment and products displayed there.

by Susan Alexander

Drum Market continued from page 85

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Instruction Book—Sanford Moeller—The Art of Snare Drumming—Good Condition. W.V. Sauerwein, 1817 McClure, Irving, TX. 75062.

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WHEN STEVE SMITH RIDES HIS ZILDJIAN, YOU'RE IN FOR AN EXCITING JOURNEY.

Steve grew up just around the corner from The Zildjian factory. Of course, for the past few years he hasn't been around all that much, what with his touring with Jean Luc Ponty, Ronnie Montrose and of course the enormously successful group, Journey. However, recently Steve took a break in his wild schedule and had a chance to sit down and talk with us.

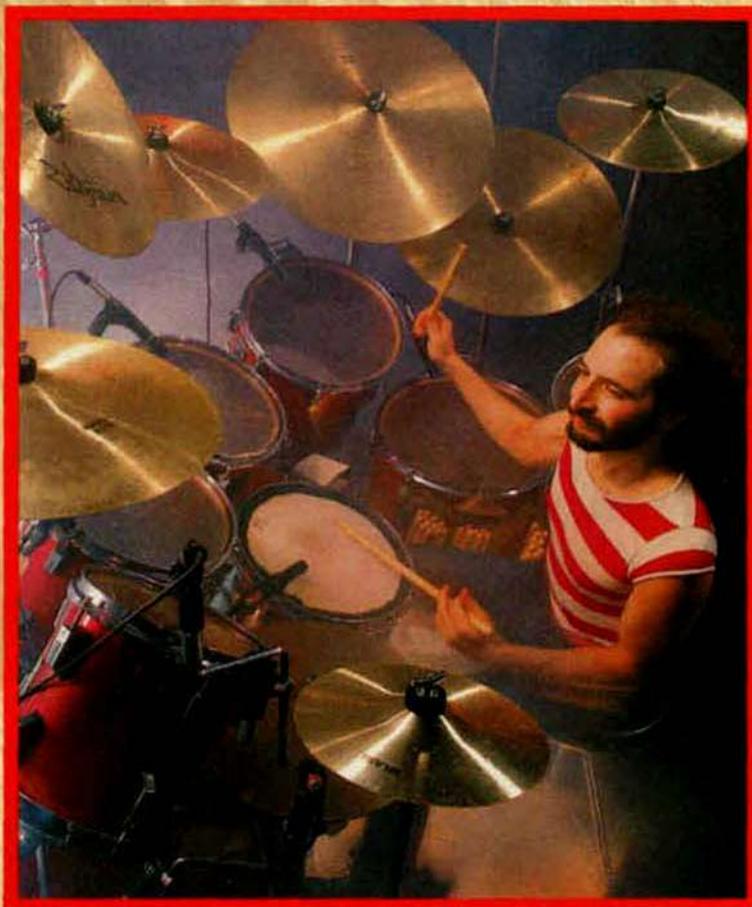
On Starting Out.

"I started out playing in the fourth grade when I was nine years old and had a really good teacher. When I was in high school I got serious about playing and I got a job as a paper boy to save money to buy cymbals. My teacher used to bring me to the Zildjian factory so I could go in and pick out my own set of cymbals."

On Rock and Roll. "After college I had a lot of experience playing jazz and fusion and I had virtually no experience playing rock and roll professionally except for some high school rock things. I really wanted to follow that direction, because

nowadays a drummer has to play rock and roll as well as jazz in order to be well-rounded as a musician."

On Zildjians. "The kind of music we play with Journey demands a lot of power. I've found that the cymbals in the Zildjian rock line are the only ones that can



Flying high with the success of Journey, Steve Smith is one of the most versatile and talented drummers in music today.

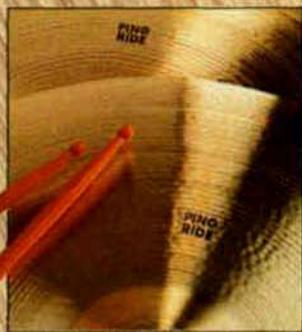
really do the job for me—that can carry the big halls and not sound thin. Zildjian cymbals have extraordinary projection but at the same time they have this wonderful, full musical tone. I also particularly like the Ping Ride—I got my first one back in the eighth grade and I've been playing one ever since."

On Career. "You know if you should get into music. It's something you can just feel. If you have to ask yourself the question, then don't bother. Being a musician isn't just a career it's a way of life."

"I find that most successful musicians don't think about success as much as they think about being a good player or songwriter."

To try to focus on success is a little too contrived and usually just doesn't work."

If you're a serious drummer, chances are overwhelming that you, like Steve, are already playing Zildjians. Zildjian: a line of cymbals played by drummers on six continents—a line of cymbal-makers that spans three centuries.



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